CARLY RAE JEPSEN IS BACK WITH A DOUBLE ALBUM

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"Day and Night" by Carly Rae Jepsen released Friday, Sep 18. It is Jepsen's first album since 2023's "The Loveliest Time."

Jepsen who is most known for the 2011 mega-hit single "Call Me Maybe," has turned into a critical darling, with raving reviews from critics and on online forums. She has a very strong discography without a blip on her record so far; her 2015 album "Emotion" being her most regarded record to this day.

"Day and Night" is a double album that extends 24 tracks and is almost 90 minutes. Has Jepsen topped "Emotion"? Has she finally flopped; or is this another great album to add to her catalogue? Let's dig in.

"Day and Night" serves as two parts: "Day" and "Night." The songs in "Day" have a retro style to them, akin to the 1960's and '70s. While "Night" has more elements of electro-pop, reminiscent of the '80s.

This format is nothing new for Jepsen; most of her records are followed by a B-side that holds its own next to the A-side.

"Day" begins the album, with 12 tracks of its own. It overall feels lighter compared to "Night." We don't have the bumping club beats that come later, but these are very groovy and smooth tracks. They are very lush and feel like a breezy day on the beach. Tracks like "Habits of Creatures," "Versailles" and "Soft" serve that sound very well.



The album cover for Carly Rae Jepsen's new album, "Day and Night." The album released on Sept. 18.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CARLY RAE JEPSEN ON FACEBOOK

"Habits of Creatures" has very fun lyrics, and the chorus is a play on the common phrase "creature of habit." I'm also a sucker for a track that's chorus is the album's name — it feels like a title card in a film.

"Versailles" feels like Frankenstein's monster of tracks, with the way the rhythm feels stitched together, to the beat switch in the chorus and the abundance of tempo changes. It's one of the best tracks on the album.

The retro aspect of "Day" comes through in songs that sound straight out of the late 60's or early '70s. The guitar picking on "Blue Skies" feels like it could've been created during writing sessions of "Sgt Pepper." The backing flute feels like something from "Apple Venus" by XTC.

"Burning Heart" has a driving guitar line that chugs along, leading to the earworm of a chorus. The song also has this killer saxophone solo — I'm reminded of "Born to Run"-era Bruce Springsteen on this track.

Jepsen sounds great on all these songs. Her best vocal performance comes on the lead single "One Wires," a great piece of piano pop, with raw, gritty power from the instrumental and Jepsen's voice. The chorus then hits you like a hydraulic launch.

The stripped-down tracks provide a nice contrast. "Wild Child" has a very interesting vocal melody that prevents it from being boring. This is Jepsen almost dipping her toes into Americana; it nears being a country song. "Just a Little Walk on the Moon" helps to add contrast, but the track is very lo-fi and doesn't leave much of a mark on a 24-song track list.

The sun sets and "Night" begins with "Never Let a Good Thing Die." Immediately you can feel the darkness of the track, more synths and great production. At over 5 minutes, it doesn't drag at all. It wouldn't surprise me if Kevin Parker had production credits on this track.

"Hold Me to the Light" shares this dark, raw style. The track feels ripped straight out of pop radio from the 2010's, which is a good and bad thing. It has a great chorus, but the country "minion" vocals on the bridge left me puzzled.

The two singles on "Night" are "Don't Leave Me on the Dance Floor," an electro-pop goliath, and "Motivation." The synths and production of "Don't Leave Me on the Dance Floor" are so tight, it makes me want to get up and dance wherever I am. It also has an atomic bomb of a chorus that you will be screaming along to after just one listen.

"Motivation" is possibly Jepsen's oddest song, with a shouting refrain opening the track, which hangs around for its majority. Then the chorus of "We go hard in the family" is jarring at first, before considering Jepsen just became a mother. It feels like a sweet tribute to her newborn son.



Carly Rae Jepsen in her music video for the song "Our Wires." The song is part of Jepsen's new album "Day and Night."

PHOTO COURTESY OF CARLY RAE JEPSEN ON FACEBOOK

"Patience Power Passion," is a vocal melody that is sweet on the ears. There's strong 1980s synth pop on this track, feeling like something early "Depeche Mode" could've come up with.

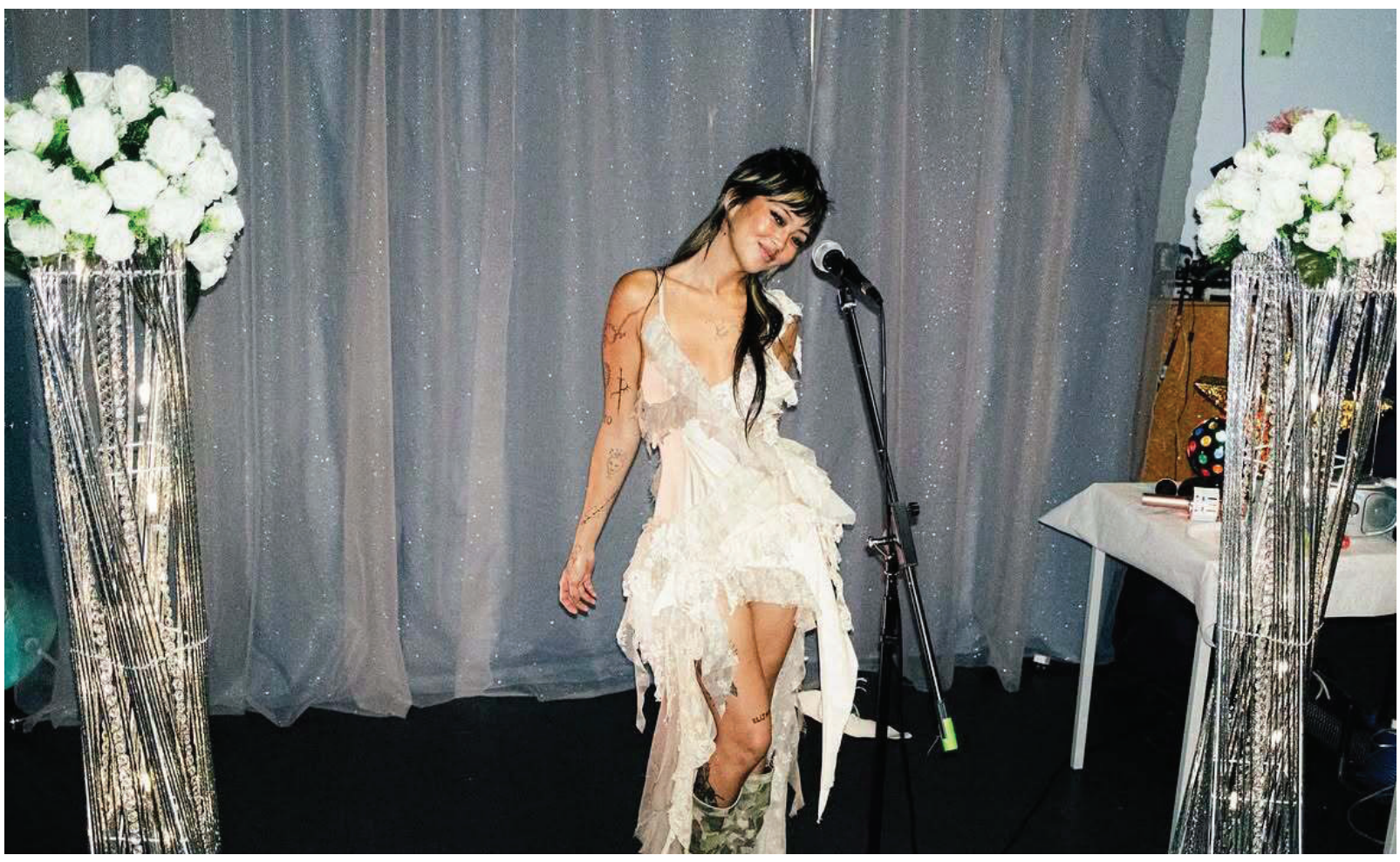
"Near or Far" is my least favorite track on the album. It has a quirky synth line in the breakdown that is evocative of trip-hop acts. Other than that, the song is unremarkable; it builds but leads to a lackluster climax.

The album ends on a strong note with "Super Sage," a song that creates a lush atmosphere. I close my eyes and imagine floating around in space with Jepsen's vocals running over me like the galaxy itself is communicating with me. If you are a fan of Magdalena Bay, this is the track for you.

"Day and Night" is a strong addition to Jepsen's stacked discography. For a 24-track double album, it didn't overstay its welcome. Some of Jepsen's most unorthodox tracks appear on this album — it feels similar enough to not stray from her distinct sound, but different enough to feel like something she's never done before.

Rating: 4/5

'PYLON': BEABADOOBEE STEPS OUTSIDE POP WITH NEW '90S ALTERNATIVE-INSPIRED ALBUM



Beabadoobee recording the music video for the song "Memories" on her new album "Python." Her latest album released on Sept. 18.

PHOTO COURTESY OF BEABADOOBEE ON FACEBOOK

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With a star-studded lineup of collaborations, including Paramore's Hayley Williams and Chino Moreno of Deftones, Beabadoobee's new album "Pylon" takes on a heavier sound for the singer than previously heard.

Beabadoobee is known for her bedroom-pop hits like "the perfect pair" and "death bed (coffee for your head)" and having a largely popish, folksy tone, before her albums recently grew into a more alternative sound.

"Pylon" takes this sound to new levels for the singer, with songs like "Sun has Set," displaying a feistier mood and fuzzy guitars, with help from Title Fight's Shane Moran.

Like her many of her previous albums, the lyrics of "Pylon" have romantic themes and reflective attitudes, and it mostly consists of love songs. However, the album is more instrumentally sophisticated than the others, so it doesn't feel repetitive.

Each song holds creative structural changes and consists of enticing melodies, like "Write Me a Letter," which had help from Matty Healy and George Daniel of The 1975. This song is very well produced and features an interesting vocal layering technique.

We have been watching Beabadoobee's career unfold over the last few years, and now fans get to see her take things to the next level creatively. The album is certainly shoegaze influenced, showcasing fuzzy ambience and piercing guitar feedback on songs like "Radio," which feel Duster or Slowdive inspired. The album simultaneously juxtaposes the harsh atmosphere and Beabadoobee's dainty, tweeish singing voice that gives it great contrast sonically and makes it engaging to listen to.

Songs like "Nothing to Prove" with Hayley Williams and "Powerlines" with Brendan Yates of Turnstile deliver a simpler, indie sound that gives the album movement and variety.

The album also features Evan Stephens Hall from Pinegrove, who Beabadoobee has publicly been a huge fan of.

"I like to take inspiration from Evan's songwriting," she said in an interview with Pitchfork.

We can see this inspiration reveal itself heavily in the album not only on "Spark," which Hall helped write, but with the atmosphere of the entire album, and the imagery it creates.

The imagery of "Pylon" can be interpreted as something electrical, (hence the title of the album and some songs) for its heavy distorted guitars and ambient sounds, but also for its lyrical themes.

"It was kind of this object [Pylon] that I gravitated towards on the road, which is kind of what this album is about, it's about being away," Beabadoobee said in a recent interview with Radio X.

"That helped me feel connected to everything I missed," she added.

The final song on the album "Satellite," featuring background vocals from Moreno, seems melodically predictable, however redeems itself with Beabadoobee's aggressive singing in the chorus and sludgy guitar riffs throughout. The song acts as a good close to the album with lyrics that hold undertones of acceptance and resolution.