

Clairo on embracing vulnerability in her newest album, 'Sling'

Clairo, the indie-pop sensation known for her introspective lyricism and dreamy soundscapes, has once again captured the hearts of listeners with her sophomore album, 'Sling.'

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Intimate lyrics, dreamy melodies, and ethereal vocals: Claire Cottrill, known professionally as Clairo, has emerged as a prominent figure in the indie-pop scene. From her humble beginnings as a bedroom pop artist to her meteoric rise to fame, her music has resonated deeply with listeners, offering a window into her world of introspection and self-discovery. Unlike her debut album, *Immunity*, Clairo approaches music very differently in *Sling*. We can hear her transition to a folk feel that is evocative of musicians like Joni Mitchell, who she has referred to as one of her "musical heroes." In a way, the record sounds pristine and is better suited for fall than the intense heat of mid-July.

We watch as Clairo grows older with *Sling*, methodically expanding her knowledge—or confusion—of a wide range of subjects, such as domesticity, comfort, mental health, and the outdoors. The first lyric of *Sling*'s song, *Bambi*, makes this quite evident: "I'm stepping inside a universe designed against my own beliefs." Clairo no longer has the same perspective on the relationships in the world and how it functions. What she had previously considered to be true is no longer the case. Clairo believes that her only option is to "take it or leave it" and keep experiencing everything that this new world has to offer. A vast contrast from *Pretty Girl*, *Bambi* is a languid song that sets the tone for much of what's to come and encourages the listener to experience a more sophisticated, mature Clairo.

Cottrill got a taste of country life back in the fall, when she spent a month at Allaire Studios, recording her second album, *Sling*, with producer Jack Antonoff. Located on Glen Tonche, a 20-acre estate hidden on a mountaintop outside of Woodstock, New York, Allaire is one of music's best-kept secrets, a spot where artists like David Bowie and Norah Jones have recorded in relative seclusion.

The haunting melodies and evocative vocals create an atmosphere of intimacy, enveloping listeners in a whirlwind of emotions. Similarly, *Amoeba* delves into the depths of longing and desire, with the introspective lyrics and soulful delivery evoking a sense of yearning that resonates on a deeply personal level. As the album unfolds, tracks like *Harbor* and *Wade* offer moments of introspection and personal reflection, inviting listeners to contemplate their journeys of self-discovery. Tracks like *Blouse* and *Zinnias* showcase her ability to craft lush soundscapes that complement her introspective lyrics. Through her emotive storytelling and soul-stirring melodies, *Sling* becomes not just an album, but a companion for those navigating the complexities of life and love.

Comfortable and reflective, *Sling* makes Cottrill seem like she may be sitting in front of a piano she recently learned to play, taking inspiration from musicians such as Blossom Dearie, Judee Sill, and Carole King, as shown in a picture by Henry Diltz from the 1970s. Cottrill says that because the CD was recorded upstate, it had horns and strings. "When you're making music, I feel like I should put a horn on a song because I see mountains every day," she explains. In addition to being seen on the cover of *Sling*, where she is seen cuddled in Cottrill's arms in the snow with her paw resting on her cheek, Joanie also has a track named after her. Throughout the track, we hear brief clips of her snoring and hitting the chimes with her tail.

The last track on *Sling* is *Management*, a catchy song that examines the idea of nurturing and managing from three distinct angles: Clairo's own in the second verse, in connection to her dog Joanie; her mother's in the first verse; and finally, Clairo discovering how to defend and maintain

herself. In this lovely song, amidst perplexity, Clairo learns to be gentle to her thoughts and works to let go of anger.

Sling stands as a testament to talent and authenticity. By sharing her most vulnerable moments with the world, Clairo has forged a deep connection with her audience, inspiring them to embrace their own emotions and experiences. *Sling* is more than just an album—it's a testament to Clairo's artistry and her ability to capture the complexities of the human experience through music. As she continues to navigate the ups and downs of life and love, Clairo serves as a source of comfort and inspiration for fans around the world.