

Artist Spotlight: Micheal Kiwanuka

By Eduardo Gomez

Micheal Kiwanuka makes his way into the rotation this week with his acoustic, blues-folk style music. Born in Muswell Hill, London, the 37 year old British singer-songwriter and producer draws inspiration from 70s soul and skillfully blends rock and soul influences. He is often compared to iconic artists like Curtis Mayfield, Terry Callier, and Van Morrison.



Image by: Dena Flows

Journey Through Music

His debut album, *Home Again* features influences from the Golden Era. Bob Dylan's songwriting, the demeaning power of late Bill Withers and the evocative mood of Marvin Gaye led to the creation of the album. The album explores themes of coming to terms with mortality and the wonder of life's ambitions while also embracing the inevitability of struggle.

The singer's 2016 album, *Love & Hate* expresses early struggles with identity and expectations that stem from race. The album mixes dark soul and rock to create a haunting record, drawing significant influences from artists like David Gilmour, famously known for atmospheric guitar work and vocals with Pink Floyd, Marvin Gaye, a pioneering figure in shaping motown in the early 60s, and Otis Redding, one of the most powerful and influential artists in Southern Soul.

The 2019 self-titled album, *Kiwanuka* boldly embodies self-discovery and confidence in Micheal's unique artistry and sound. Taking inspiration from the black music of the 70s and previous albums, Micheal ventures deeper into eccentric artists with psychedelic approaches and artists that "went against the grain in terms of who they were expected to be."

Micheal serves as a source of inspiration through his life journey. His experiences have taught him that failing early on is the best way to learn. He believes that self analysis can cripple who you are and over influence what you do. As someone who is striving for purpose within the music industry, Micheal's insights are profoundly impactful and resonate deeply with me.

Favorite Album: *Love & Hate*

Favorite Tracks: *Cold Little Heart*, *Final Days* and *Rule The World*