

Artist Spotlight:

Stromae

By Eduardo Gomez

Paul van Haver, professionally known as **Stromae**, is a Belgian artist renowned for blending elements of hip hop with a taste of electronic music. He gained widespread recognition following the release of his 2010 hit “**Alors on Danse**” (“So We Dance”). The song creatively expresses the use of dance as an escape from life’s pressures.

Before launching his career and gaining global acclaim, the artist self-produced and released his own music online. In brainstorming his stage name, he drew inspiration from commonly used French slang techniques that consist of splitting and rearranging syllables in a word. Originally, the artist thought of the name “*Maestro*”; however, the use of linguistic play led to the creation of “*Stromae*.”



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His journey to success stems from a strong interest in rap, leading to the creation of a small rap group with friends in school. Now, Stromae aims for the public and fans to concentrate exclusively on his music, in an attempt to create a distinction between his personal life and his artistic endeavors.

Personal Favorites

“Tous les mêmes”, The electro-pop song is written from the perspective of a woman and explores the concept of complexity and fluidity of gender roles in relationships and the frustrations accompanied with traditional norms of masculinity and femininity.

What sparked my interest is the use of split-screen cinematography to portray himself simultaneously as both a man and a woman in the music video. The exploration into gender identity within the visuals challenges viewers to reflect on how conventional gender norms can shape our perceptions and experiences.

Sante, directly translating to the French word meaning “health,” but also serving as a term used in celebratory toasts, is a tribute to often overlooked individuals in society that lack the luxury of celebration in life. The song ventures into scenarios where workers are taken for granted and treated poorly and pays homage, vocalizing the significance of empathy, respect, and the value in an individual's work.

“Celebrate those who don’t celebrate”

