

*Circles*, an album by Mac Miller

Annelise Pinjuv

Columnist

@Annelisepin

By now, I believe we all know the name, Mac Miller. Whether you've been a fan since "K.I.D.S." or you fell in love with him because of "The Divine Feminine," we all felt that deep pit in our hearts on Sept. 7, 2018. I remember exactly what I was doing, where I was and who I was with. I remember crying for an entire week after he passed because I thought I would never be able to hear a new piece by him again.

I'm so glad I was wrong.

On Friday, Jan. 17, "Circles" was released, an album meant to complement "Swimming."

I was introduced to the amazing world of Mac Miller when I was in fifth grade. I was sick and stayed home from school to watch "Teen Nick" on the couch all day. A music video followed each episode, and Mac's song "Party on Fifth Ave" was on repeat. It was quite possibly the catchiest and funkiest song I had ever heard. I was hooked. After binging "K.I.D.S.," "Best Day Ever" and "Blue Slide Park," I couldn't wait for more.

In no way did Mac disappoint. After releasing his first album in 2010, he created and helped others create immense amounts of art in an eight-year period. Year after year, he released new albums while his style and message were ever-changing and complexifying.

Some people don't understand the power of good music. Some people don't understand how music shapes our day-to-day lives, our feelings and our moments. In so many ways, Mac Miller shaped my adolescence. And I'm not alone in that. If you go to any of his songs on YouTube, almost every comment reads something along the lines of "RIP Mac. You helped me through some tough times."

And although Mac played a large part in the lives of his fans, we got to watch him do some growing up, too. We saw him as an 18-year-old, fresh out of high school, and ready to take on the world on "K.I.D.S." We saw him beginning to struggle with addiction and fame on "Macadelic." We saw him look inside himself on "Watching Movies with the Sound Off." We saw him have fun and let go on "GO:OD AM." We saw him fall in love on "The Divine Feminine." Each album only got better. An article written by Tayler Montague for PitchFork.com stated how Miller's "GO:OD AM" was his most refined and well put-together project. But they said that about every album.

Then came “Swimming.” I love all of his music, but this album completely changed the game. The shift from rapping about partying in his first few albums to expressing intense emotion in his last few albums made his career so valuable. He taught about change in the most melodic way. The impression I received from “Swimming” was about letting go, and “Circles” is about moving forward. However, his life was cut short and moving forward was no longer an option. He will, however, remain in the hearts of his fans forever.

Composer-producer Jon Brion, who worked closely with Miller in the early stages of “Circles,” believed that Miller would have wanted his fans to hear it. I could not be more thankful to Miller’s family for deciding that the best choice was to release the album. For me, it is the perfect closing to his perfect career.

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