

Mykki Blanco

A fearless artist at his challenging yet melodic best, Mykki Blanco releases his debut album "Mykki" (produced by Woodkid and Jermiah Meece) on 16th September on Dogfood Music Group / !K7.

Mykki Blanco has metamorphosed many times. The multi-faceted star was a child actor who founded a performance art collective as a teen, ran away from home, and won scholarships to two prestigious art colleges, quitting both as he realised that "the art world is just one big scam for rich people" - an idea touched upon in album track "High School Never Ends" written with Woodkid, which premiered on FADER in May.

Finding fame first as a fearless noise rap poet, he published a book "From The Silence Of Duchamp To The Noise Of Boys". Then what started as a video art project about a "teenage drag rapper" transformed into 2 years of Blanco living as a transgender woman in his personal life. Though eventually not transitioning, Mykki Blanco graduated in real life experience as well as artistically into the non-binary gender-queer post-homo-hop musical artist that we see before us today. Needless to say, it's impossible to pigeon-hole Blanco and his unique and beautiful sound is no exception.

Amassing a vast online following with a savvy and savage social media output, Mykki is hailed online as a digital warrior princess who rules across the underground music scene with mixtapes like *Gay Dog Food*, cult hits like *Kingpinning* and sensational videos like *Coke White*, *Starlight*, *The Initiation*, *Wavvy*, and *Haze Boogie Life*. Blanco's output to date has been hailed as razor sharp, ahead of its time and sometimes deliciously far out. Yet this album seems to leave much of the mayhem behind, marking yet another departure, this time in favour of melody and musicianship, and Mykki comes of age as a serious chart contender.

"I realised as an artist I need to focus on myself and on my work. Arguments with people online distract from that. I used to have a problem with the media trying to define me, either as a drag queen, or a transvestite, as a homosexual rapper, a transsexual or an HIV positive pop star, but most people need labels and my true fans know who I am and what I'm about"

The spaced-out touchdown track 'I'm In A Mood' sets the tone for this challenging eponymous debut, a synth-layered and classically-arranged landscape that frames a vivid tableau from within which Mykki muses and provokes across thirteen fascinating tracks.

The summery pitch-shifted slopes of 'Loner' hint at the looming isolation of "social media" and the notion that the big bad wolf is, in fact, a lone wolf. "High School Never Ends" is an epic ballad that queers the Romeo & Juliet story to expose growing racism in Europe, the despicable refugee crisis and society's increasingly relinquished appetite for diversity, much of which Mykki observed first hand while touring internationally for the past 4 years.

However, the old Mykki Blanco who likes to keep the internet awake at night is never far away. "Fuck being low key!" spits Mykki at the start of "Fendi Band", a filthy twister of a track that trades in straight jackets, handcuffs, duct tape and whips. Mykki exposes his cheek on "My Nene", a mysterious siren-call which plods along hauntingly before unapologetically dropping its knickers into a sexually-charged ass-banger

before dissipating into the spiralling-cynicism of “The Plug Won’t”, a curb-crawling hymn to the deceitful face of club culture.

“Shit Talking Creep” is a daring shooter glass of hip hop and global politics with echoing militant cries and gritty mud-groveling effects. The track shines the mic on hatred and intolerance in Russia, while toeing a line of pornographic innuendo – “Fuck n*gger, NO, I’m coming with the Russians” – a commentary on the country’s hypocritically large output of gay porn. The track’s shock blanket of tribal war drums are both ejaculative and quite literally ‘re-percussions’.

“For The Cunts” is a self-conscious gay club party anthem that perhaps ridicules and mimics the club-boppers in Mykki’s fan base more than he’d care to admit. Meanwhile “Rock n Roll Dough” hangs low like a vintage Snoop Dogg track, punctuated with minimal snares, it catches the light with the hard-faced campness you would normally get on a Gwen Stefani classic. “You Don’t Know Me” touches upon Blanco’s openly HIV+ status but underlines a determined unwillingness to be unfairly defined by this reality.

Mykki Blanco’s referential framework is both archival and futuristic: a myriad of culture references, spiritual anecdotes, designer labels, make-up brands, hippie jargon, Fendi here and Snapchat there – all perfectly reflecting the creative dialogue digital landscape we live in.

What stands out above all of this though on “Mykki” is the musicianship, melody and depth, that help Mykki Blanco birth a heavyweight album about feminine empowerment, the discovery of one’s “second soul”, giving a voice to the marginalised and scratching a question mark that cuts deeps over and over again.