

Stef Chura

Stef Chura's debut studio album, *Messes*, is born of her years of experience playing around the Michigan underground, setting up DIY shows in the area, and moving around the state. "Right when it starts to feel like home/It's time to go," she sings literally on its opening cut, 'Slow Motion', a twisty, dim-lit guitar pop song where she curls and stretches every word. There are worlds of emotion in the ways Chura pronounces phrases with twang and grit, alternatingly full of despair, playfulness, and abandon. Chura calls her music "emotional collage," eschewing start-to-finish storylines in favour of writing intuitively about feelings, drawing from experiences and references related to a certain sentiment.

Originally from Alpena, Michigan, Chura moved to the Ypsilanti area in 2009, where she began playing shows before ultimately moving to Detroit in 2012. Chura has been home-recording and self-releasing her songs for six years, playing bass in friends' bands as well. With a trove of demos and 4-track home recordings, some of which she'd released on small runs of cassettes over the years, Chura says she wasn't sure what to do with her life before heading into the studio. "One of my best friends passed away and I thought, what do I have to do before I die? I have to at least make one record."

She recorded the entire album with Fred Thomas (*Saturday Looks Good To Me*) throughout 2015. Thomas plays bass on most of the record, and a bit of guitar and drums. Drummer Ryan Clancy of Jamaican Queens and Dale Earnhardt Jr. Jr. adds the bulk of the drums. Through intricate guitar work and warm, textured production, *Messes* finds her trying to make sense of life's ups and downs. "It's about emotional mess, not physical mess," Chura says. "The title track is about knowing that you are going to do something the wrong way, but you're doing it anyway because you want that experience. I've had to do a lot of things the wrong way in order to figure out how to live my life."