

Still bumpin' that, a review of the "Brat" remix album

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LIFE EDITOR

Charli XCX has had quite a year, with her album "Brat" becoming a cultural moment that became bigger than music, taking over both politics and social media in the months following its release.

Her newest release, "Brat and it's Completely Different but Also Still Brat," is the latest installment in the ever-expanding "Brat" universe and offers a variety of new takes by a host of collaborators.

This new project is more of a re-imagining than a remix and brings some spectacular changes to an already incredible project.

In most cases, remixes are either not different enough from the original to warrant listening to or they are so different that whatever made the original special is lost in the process.

"Brat and it's Completely Different" hits all the right notes and manages to present an entirely new listening experience while still retaining all the elements that made "Brat" so successful.

The title of this project

rings true, it's like a whole new album, but it's not.

The album kicks off with a brand new take on "360," this time featuring new production from Robyn and rapper Yung Lean on vocals. The track is still full of energy and the remix offers some variety both vocally and in the production that makes the track feel entirely fresh and unique.

"Club classics" includes a new rap verse in Spanish from Bb trickz and also includes verses from other songs on "Brat"; "360" and "365," which massively changed the song in an exciting way.

The new and improved "Sympathy is a Knife" features Ariana Grande on vocals and sees both artists muse on the pitfalls of fame and the heightened scrutiny that comes with it. Grande's vocals sound terrific and this track feels like a continuation of the deeply personal and introspective lyrics that were all over her last record.

Some collaboration tracks were released as singles during the album's roll out with "Girl, so confusing," featuring Lorde, "Talk, talk," featuring Troye Sivan, "Guess," featuring

Billie Eilish and "Von dutch" featuring A.G. Cook and Addison Rae, all sounding relatively unchanged with only minor tweaks made for the official album release.

These tracks remain standouts, particularly "Girl, so confusing" which saw Charli and Lorde "work it out on the remix" and break the internet in the process when the track was first released in June.

A particular favorite remix of mine was "B2b" featuring Tinashé. Tinashé's vocal performance is reminiscent of early Rihanna, whom I love, and, alongside the changed production, an entirely new sound was born.

One of the most transformed songs on the album is "Apple" with The Japanese House taking over primary vocals from Charli and delivering a new melody that leaves the track practically unrecognizable from its "Brat" counterpart.

Caroline Polacheck shines on the remix of "Everything is romantic" and the inclusion of rapper/producer Shygirl on "365" takes the song from a catchy pop anthem to an EDM banger.

"Rewind" featuring Swedish rapper Bladee, went from a traditional dance-pop sound on "Brat" to a more hyperpop sound on the remix.

"So I" featuring a new production from longtime collaborator A.G. Cook, serves as a heartfelt tribute to SOPHIE, a long time friend of Charli's and fellow musician who tragically passed away in 2021. The original was more of a heartfelt ballad and the new version is more upbeat and bouncy, sounding more like the music that SOPHIE herself primarily produced during her career.

"Brat and it's Completely Different" bends genres to great effect with the inclusion of features from The 1975, Bon Iver and The Strokes' Julian Casablancas, who all offer phenomenal performances that completely reshape their respective tracks.

The 1975's Matty Healy delivered an exceptionally emotional performance on the transformed "I might say something stupid" and Bon Iver's vocals are a most welcome addition to "I think about it all the time."

The remix portion of the

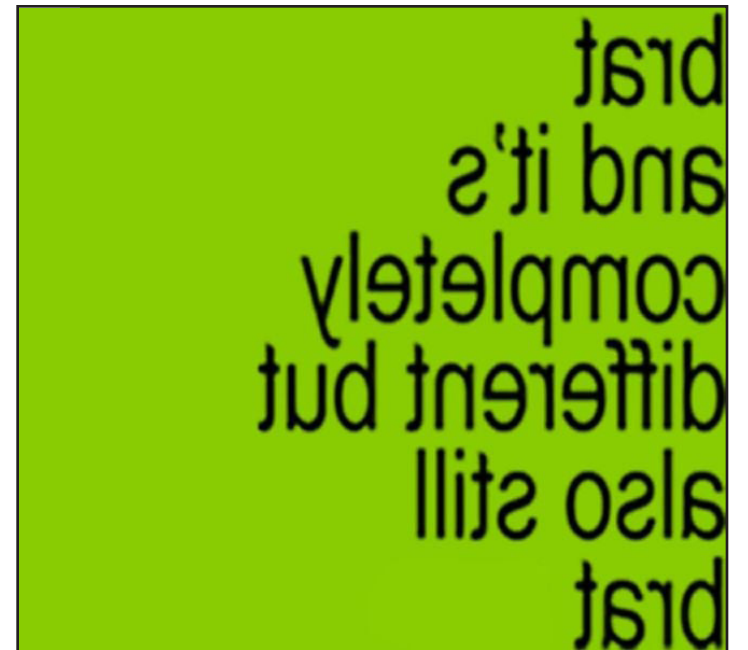
tracklist was rounded out by a re-imagining of "Spring Breakers," featuring Kesha. The track works exceptionally well for the pair of self-proclaimed "party girl gods" who both deliver exceptionally well on that title, bringing an incredibly up-tempo club anthem that is made for the stage.

Too often, remixes feel lifeless, like the artist just handed the original to a competent producer who adds a few bass drops and then calls it a day.

"Brat and it's Completely Different" is not one of those remix albums. It feels both unique and original while still maintaining the energy and vibe of "Brat," and in some cases, even improving upon it.

This album is a delight and well worth a listen for fans of "Brat," infectious pop music and high energy, creative song production.

Official Score: 10/10



COURTESY OF GENIUS

30 years later, "Pulp Fiction" still rules

WILL LIVINGSTON

SPORTS EDITOR

You've had 30 years; if you haven't already seen it, you need to watch "Pulp Fiction."

Released on October 14, 1994, this film follows the stories of several criminals, most of whom are associated with crime boss Marsellus Wallace, played by Ving Rhames.

The narrative is told out of chronological order, unfolding more like a novel than a film. There are three main stories that each feature a different protagonist: Vincent Vega, a professional hitman, played by John Travolta, Butch Coolidge, a prizefighter, played by Bruce Willis and Jules Winnfield, Vega's business partner, played by Samuel L. Jackson.

The story is divided into chapters and jumps forwards and backwards in time to weave an intricate web of a narrative that is both captivating and exciting.

"Pulp Fiction" has become a staple of American cinema since its release. Sure, there were plenty of crime movies before "Pulp Fiction," and there have been plenty made since, but few captivated audiences and impacted culture the way this film did.

While this wasn't Tarantino's first movie as a director, it was the one that fully established him as one of Hollywood's best. This movie firmly cemented the sort of "template" that many of Tarantino's subsequent films would emulate or even improve upon.

A reason this movie holds

up so well is because every single actor on screen is doing a fantastic job. By modern standards, the cast of this movie are top tier, A-List stars; but that was not the case in 1994.

Tarantino's writing is another major reason this film is so great. While every main character is a "villain" by any standard, Tarantino manages to humanize them to the audience, making you root for their success.

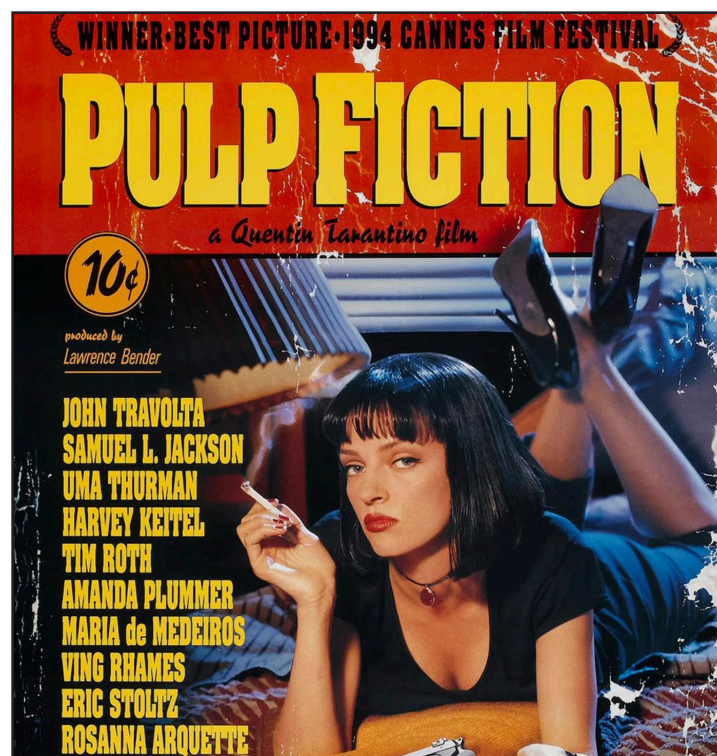
The dialogue in this movie is just so good. Every conversation sounds so casual and off the cuff that you can forget it's scripted. A great example of this is found in one of the first scenes in the movie, where Jules and Vincent are having a casual, mostly meaningless conversation about Europe and the differences with a

French McDonalds and their naming of a Quarter Pounder with cheese since they use the metric system and don't know how much a quarter pound is, all while preparing to murder people.

These sorts of conversations occur throughout the movie, often juxtaposed with something incredibly violent and dark, solidifying a now trademark humor that is present in all of Tarantino's work.

This film was a completely unique take on the crime genre that established Tarantino as an original creative with his own style and vibe that set his films apart from the rest.

"Pulp Fiction" continues to withstand the test of time and feel as fresh as the day it was released, even 30 years later.



COURTESY OF IMDB

THIS WEEK'S POP PICK

ELIJAH TEMPLETON | LIFE EDITOR

"SATURDAY NIGHT"



COURTESY OF IMDB

While watching "Saturday Night" the one thought that kept entering my mind is what a miracle "Saturday Night Live" (SNL) is.

The new movie depicts the chaotic 90 minutes before the first ever episode of SNL went on the air in 1975.

In the film, we follow Lorne Michaels, the producer and creator of SNL, played by Gabriel LaBelle, as he struggles to bring his vision for the show to life in a race against the clock before the cameras roll.

There are many things going wrong. A combination of drugs, egos, anxieties, budget restraints and skeptical studio executives all serve as roadblocks and logical reasons to explain why the show should not work.

But Michaels does not care about the odds.

He sees the show as a revolution for comedy and pop culture; a T.V. show made by the generation who grew up watching television. A groundbreaking blend of sketch comedy and music that is unlike anything ever seen on network T.V. before.

The cast is superb, with Dylan O'Brien and Cory Michael Smith being particular

standouts for their portrayals of Dan Aykroyd and Chevy Chase respectively.

The costumes are spot on and the entire film feels plucked directly out of 1975.

The film is intense and anxiety inducing, feeling more like a thriller than a comedy-drama.

The stakes are low for television standards. The NBC studio executives do not believe much in the show and are really using it as leverage for contract negotiations with Johnny Carson and his late night show.

If the show is not ready for air, they can simply rerun a past episode of "The Tonight Show" and try again next week. But failure is not an option.

The film is a story of the perseverance and ambition of a group of young creatives who should have failed spectacularly but instead created a titan of pop-culture whose cultural impact is still felt massively today.

See this film if you can, you will not be disappointed.

Official Score: 10/10

Life

From Querétaro to Jonesboro, Red Wolves proud of Hispanic heritage

LAILA CASIANO

OPINION EDITOR

SHELBY RUSSOM

PHOTO EDITOR

In 2017, Arkansas State University partnered with Querétaro to open a Mexico campus, the first A-State campus located outside of the United States.

Arkansas State University campus Querétaro (ASUCQ) permits 10 students annually to apply and enroll in the inter-campus exchange program between Querétaro and Jonesboro.

Executive Vice Rector Andre Possani of ASUCQ said he is overjoyed by the success many transfer students have had through the program.

"I am very proud of all my students, especially those who decide to continue their professional careers outside Mexico, overcoming very difficult challenges," Possani said. Students from ASUCQ

environment and bridging connections with new people, these students share their journey of challenges, growth and pride for their heritage.

Dani Flores, a senior biotechnology major from Celaya, Mexico, initially studied at ASUCQ because of her interest in studying genetics. She said she enjoyed the campus because of the friendships she had made and her part in the cheerleading team. Dani said these connections made the change from Queretaro to Jonesboro difficult for her.

However, she said her father's new job offer in the U.S. motivated her decision to transfer.

"I didn't want to come here at first, I took a gap year, and then I decided to transfer here because it was easier for me as an international student," Dani said.

Mauricio Bautista, a senior mechanical engineering major from Xalapa, Mexico, said enrolling at Jonesboro provided him an opportunity to

"In my first semester here, I would hear about all the events happening (on campus) and I was just excited that my culture was being celebrated here," Asis said. "I was happy to get a chance to experience something like this here in the U.S."

continue to contribute to the university's cultural diversity, even as their experiences with the celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month differ.

From adjusting to a different academic

continue studying abroad and improve his English speaking. These qualities influenced his decision to transfer.

"I was here for a year as an exchange student with my friend Jesus," Bautista said.



Photo by Shelby Russom | Photo Editor

From left: Mauricio Bautista and Jesus Cortés outside the Student Union.

"We noticed that it was a very nice campus, and we loved just how many opportunities were provided here."

While studying in a different country has offered unique and fun experiences, some transitions such as societal and academic adjustments have been challenging.

Jesus Cortés, a junior mechanical engineering major from Cadereyta de Montes, Mexico, said the individualistic mindset of his American peers differs from the community he found within the Mexico campus. He said this difference often makes it difficult to

connect with his peers.

"Here, everyone is more focused on themselves doing their own stuff," Cortés said. "Over there (in Mexico), it's more about community, here it's just everyone is by themselves."

Asis Flores, a sophomore psychology major from Celaya, Mexico, said she found the classroom environment challenging because of the language barrier.

"I learned English since I was in kindergarten, because I've been in schools that are bilingual," Asis said. "So for me, I will say that my English level is good but once



Photo by Shelby Russom | Photo Editor

From left: Dani Flores and Asis Flores hold up signs with the Mexican flag and the Arkansas State University logo.

I arrived here and started my first class, I got lost."

While 1,327 miles away from home, some use the combination of food and music to still feel connected to Mexico. Dani said she also makes an effort to go home every chance she can.

"Being away from Mexico makes me feel more connected to my culture," Dani said. "I miss it, so I try to find ways to bring it into my life here, like listening to music in Spanish or going back to Mexico whenever I can."

For the Querétaro transfer students, recognizing Hispanic Heritage Month is a unique experience, as it is an American-made celebration honoring Hispanic Americans.

Even though Hispanic Heritage Month is intended to celebrate all people of Latin American descent, Dani said she found it difficult to relate to celebratory events on campus. She said they seem to be targeted more toward Hispanic Americans rather than Hispanic students who were born and raised in Hispanic countries.

Bautista said Hispanic Heritage Month is not celebrated in Mexico because everyone there is Hispanic, so every day is spent immersing themselves in their culture. Still, he acknowledges its significance in the U.S.

"I think it's important here because it helps combat the stigma around Latinos, showing them as hardworking individuals who want to contribute positively to the U.S.," Bautista said.

Cortés said he doesn't care for the month, but he could still

see the personal connection one could exhibit when celebrating.

"It's part of you; you don't need to have a month just to remember that it's part of you," Cortés said. "It's part of your life and it's really good tradition because it's a way you can show, 'Hey, this is part of me, and this is what my family represents.'"

But for Asis, she said she found the commemorative month exciting, especially as an outsider looking in.

"In my first semester here, I would hear about all the events happening (on campus) and I was just excited that my culture was being celebrated here," Asis said. "I was happy to get a chance to experience something like this here in the U.S."

In reflecting on Mexican culture and contribution, Possani said ASUCQ organizes an annual event in November called "Celebrate Mexico Week." This week explores how Mexico and Mexicans have made an impact on a global stage through lectures and workshops.

"Although it is not officially part of the National Hispanic Heritage Month, these two events have similar objectives and activities that complement each other," Possani said.

Possani said commemorating Hispanic culture enriches and promotes profound significance, regardless of where it is celebrated.

"I think that celebrating Hispanic culture is a tribute to the rich variety of traditions, languages, and histories that unite us in diversity," Possani said. "It inspires us to embrace our shared humanity."



Photo by Shelby Russom | Photo Editor

From left: Asis Flores, Mauricio Bautista, Dani Flores and Jesus Cortés hold up signs spelling "Mexico."