

Chloe Stroll

Bloom in the Break



photo credit: Kayt Jones

“I use music to heal - it’s an important tool for me,” says Chloe Stroll, whose debut album *Bloom in the Break* showcases her gift for incisive, yet compassionate lyrics and her strong voice. With her keen ability for pinpointing feelings’ tiniest nuances, Chloe can fully embody the hurt described in the spectral, trip-hop-tinged “Thin Air” as well as she can communicate the safety described by the grand ballad “Home.” Her first full-length runs the emotional and musical gamut with confidence and grace.

Born and raised in Montréal, Chloe discovered her passion for music early on, nurturing it throughout her school years – though it took a backseat for a while. In 2020, after she’d completed business school and embarked on her own career,

she recommitted to her path as a singer-songwriter, and began work on what would become *Bloom In The Break*.

Over the next five years, Stroll’s life would change - she got married to Olympic medalist Scotty James in 2023, and she had a baby in 2024. But her commitment to music remained steadfast, and she wrote about her journey with candor - and sometimes, like with the knife-edge depiction of a terrifying moment “Run,” with an urgency reflects her ability to translate real-time emotion into music.

Chloe wrote more than 70 songs in total, and she recorded them at studios around the world with collaborators like the genre-bending producer Swagg R’Celious (Babyface, H.E.R.), the pop alchemist Kevin Bard (Andy Grammer, Dan+Shay), and the Grammy-winning ballad master Walter Afanasieff

(Mariah Carey, Céline Dion). A dozen of those songs became *Bloom in the Break*, a full-spectrum portrait of where Chloe is and where she has been - and one that, she hopes, people will be able to find comfort in while also enjoying the music.

"This album... I really wanted people to be able to relate to it in their own ways, and in their own struggles," says Chloe. "Your problem is your problem, but when you're standing up against a wall, we're all facing that same wall. That was my North Star."

When did you start studying music?

I would say it was probably when I was about three. I was really fortunate; my parents loved music. Anytime they hosted a dinner party, there was always a pianist playing and singing. I loved it. I'd be in my Disney costume - usually my Jasmine or Cinderella dress - and grabbing the microphone and singing whatever I could.

I grew up super attached to the piano, and at every family function, people would ask, "Well, what's Chloe singing?" Whether it was my dad's birthday, my mom's, or any other celebration, there was always an expectation that I had a song prepared. I was really fortunate - when my mom realized I didn't just love to sing but actually had a decent voice, she leaned in. She found amazing vocal and piano teachers for me. The school that I was at when I was younger - around five or six - had a great music teacher who told me, "You should be doing singing lessons outside of school."

When did you start writing songs?

The first song I clearly remember writing was when I was about nine. But I was always into creative

writing - by five or six, I was already crafting little stories and poems. As I got older, creative writing quickly became my favorite part of the day. I was always lost in fantasy and fairy



album artwork

tales. I loved poetry, I loved writing stories. Songwriting came soon after. I realized poems were just songs waiting for melodies, and that was an exciting discovery.

How has your songwriting process sort of evolved over the years? You play piano—do you tend to come up with melodies first, or with lyrics?

It comes so differently, and it also depends on the environment I'm in. There are parts of the piano that I'm much more drawn to—I love minor chords, which always strike something in me, and I love sad songs. Even my happy songs sound sad. I usually find a chord or two, and I'm like, "That'd be cool"—and then, seven months later, I'll think, "Oh, maybe I could write something to that." My comfortable place to start is probably with the lyrics, because I love telling stories with my songs.

I like being cryptic enough that you might think that a song is about something completely different than what I might think it's about. But they're detailed enough that there's a story and you can follow along.

When did you decide that you wanted to pursue music as a vocation?

When I was about 14, I was approached to pursue singing further and was offered a record deal. At the same time my brother had also gotten accepted to F1 Ferrari Academy - and my parents had to make a choice - you couldn't have both kids go off at the same time. I'm happy that I didn't at that stage. I think I'm a much different artist today than I would have been when I was a kid.

My parents wanted me to go to college, and I wanted to get that education as well. I put music on the back burner and eventually

I thought it was over for me, but I always kept singing. I never really told anybody. One night, my dad looked at me and said, "I don't really get why you're not doing it anymore." I was 24, about to turn 25, and I said, "I thought that was a dead dream." Both my parents looked at me and were like, "You have to go for it!"

That was March of 2020 - about a week before the world shut down. I spent six months in lockdown in Australia with my then-boyfriend, now-husband, and during that time, I started thinking seriously about music again. I used those months to work on my voice and ease back into something that had always been a part of me. It never really went away. I just needed some space to return to it with a fresh perspective.

What does the title of the album, *Bloom in the Break*, mean to you?

This is a collection of songs that come from so many different parts of my life. Some of them I wrote five years ago, others I wrote a year ago. I write about everything, I've experienced something in each of those songs - there's beauty, there's adversity, and there's sadness. But I thrived through it, and I am who I am because of it.

When I was looking for a title, I thought, "I really want to picture someone thriving through the pain, where as much as life throws at you, you are the best version of yourself." It sounds cheesy to say, but I feel so blessed every day. I'm obsessed with my husband. I think he's the most beautiful man inside and out, our son is incredible. Our dog, our life - I'm so grateful for it. And I bloomed through, no matter what happened. When I found the title, *Bloom in the Break*, I pictured something so beautiful - literally the most beautiful flower, blooming through breaking glass. Because no matter what happens, the bloom is still going to prosper in these spectacular ways. I loved that image, and I thought that it went so well with what I want this album to represent.

Was there a moment, or a song, where you realized, "OK, now I have an album!"?

"Home" is my keystone song. When I finished it, I was like, "Holy cow, this is so nail on the head of what I want to say, and exactly the emotion I want to feel." It was probably the most rewarding song to write. When we finished the vocals, I was eight and a half months pregnant, and I burst into tears in the studio, I had never had that reaction.

I love all the songs, don't get me wrong. They're all amazing, and I'm really proud of them. But "Home," especially for that pivotal moment in

my life - about to give birth, and start my family - It was like, "Holy shit, this is the album. This is what I was looking for."

You've worked with a few collaborators on *Bloom in the Break* - Swagg R'Celious, Kevin Bard, Walter Afanasieff - and you recorded the album at places like Henson Studios, The Hit Factory and Metropolis Studios in London. How did those people and places inspire you to push your songwriting and performing?

I loved every place, because every place had such a unique history. Studio energy is amazing - I could live in the studio forever. It's where I thrive. Every studio is quirky and cool in its own way, but in each one, I felt so blessed to be there. I felt so fortunate when people were telling me the history - "This happened in this room,"

The co-writers and producers that I was working with brought songs out in me in totally different ways. It's a different experience with everybody. Kevin and I laugh a lot, and everything is very fast, New York-paced. It's a totally different energy than Swagg, who is super chill and laid back. We'll have a good chat, and then we're recording stuff that's a bit more R&B, with more of a jazz beat, so the energy's completely different. Walter is all about ballads, so I'm finding my inner child who was obsessed with Disney, and with fairy tales. I want the huge climax to the song, then everything needs to come down. It's completely different energies and different parts of me as an artist, all of which I love equally.

On a lot of these songs, your voice is the only voice - you sing lead and background, and layer the tracks. How does that

feed into your overall vision?

This album is me, and I don't think it would have been right to have someone else's voice on songs like "Water Over Sand." If you would have put someone else's voice in there, it would have had a completely different feeling.

Speaking of "Water Over Sand," this album has a lot of water imagery. When did you notice that it was an inspiration of yours?

When I was a child, I was a mermaid, in my head at least, and I would swim for as long as I could. I've always had that love for water, and there's something so fascinating and calming about it. Now, I live by the water, and I stare at the sea forever. I can sit on the beach with a cup of coffee and stare at the waves and listen. It brings this calm serenity to me.

The album ends with "A Lot to Give," which ends with you singing, "Oh, I've got a lot to give." What's next for you?

That was the first decision I made about the sequencing: "Whatever I do, the album will end with this song." I haven't thought, really, about what is next, but what I know is that I've got 70-plus songs that were written, and a lot of them recorded, a lot of them not on this album. There are more songs that I'm still very excited to share with the world, so I'm hoping to release another album at some point.

At the same time, I'm trying to be present with this one and enjoy the fact that it's finally here. That's such a new theme for me - I'm someone who shoots for the moon. But right now, I hope for the best, and I hope that there's another one after.

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