

# THE MUSTANG P O S T




**FINAL ISSUE  
EVER?!?!?**




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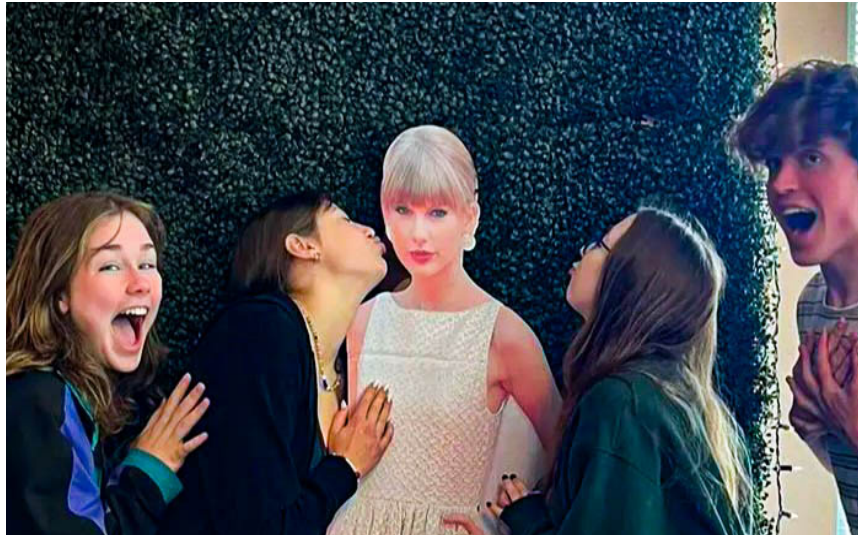
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Cover Image: Swiftie's swoon over cardboard cutout

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# letter from the editor

The school year coming to an end is always a sad thing with all the memories coming back in quick flashes. Yet there certainly is an indescribable joy that comes along with the anticipation of summer.

Of course, all of us here at Mustang Post News will miss sharing our passions with you. We thank you for your unwavering support throughout a very uncertain year, full of surprises and unexpected challenges.

We are so thankful for the opportunity to use our creativity to spread information and provide our genuine opinions on cinema, music, and pop-culture trends.

As for me, I have come down with a severe case of *junioritis*, as I'm sure most of you can relate no matter what stage of life you're in.

Overall, this school year would not have been complete without journalism, and we thank you all for making it possible. Enjoy your summer, Mustangs!

Over and out (for the summer – YAY),

*Hailey Boehme*

Hailey Boehme, Editor in Chief





# YUME NIKKI MAKING PERFECTION BETTER

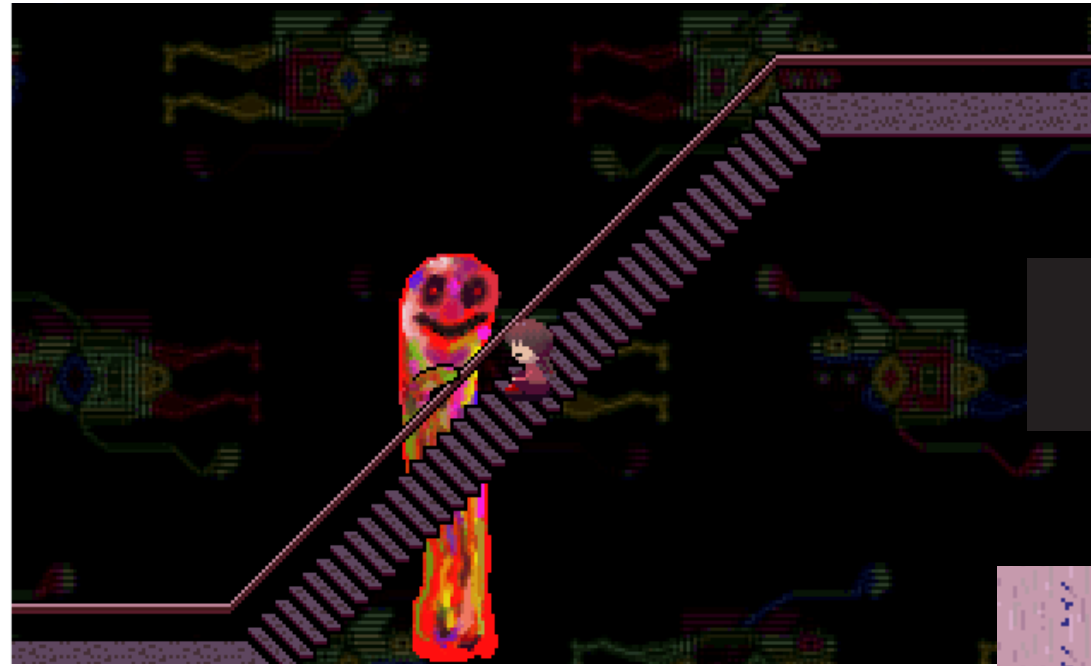
By Logan Jacobs

As mentioned in a [previous article](#), Yume Nikki is a cult classic indie game that was released all the way back in 2004 that explores a young shut-in's dreams.

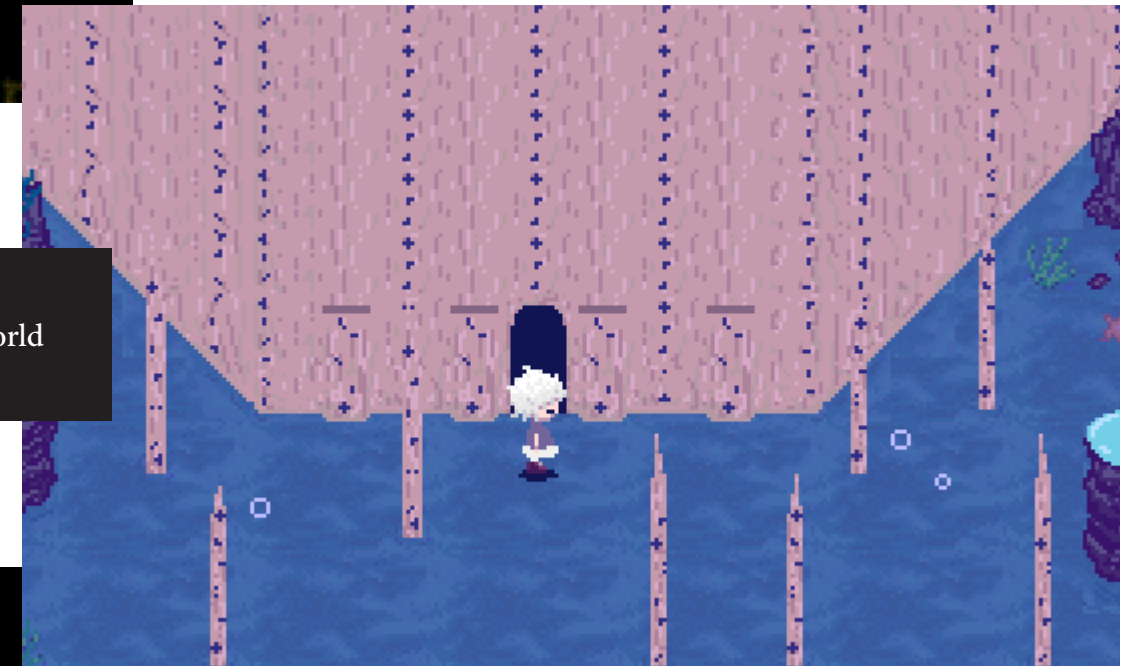
While Yume Nikki's influence can be seen in many different corners of the indie scene, the game hasn't received any updates in almost ten years. Just because there haven't been updates doesn't mean the community hasn't been active; in fact, some of the community has taken it into their own hands to continue the series.

"Dot flow" and "Yume 2kki" are arguably the best and the most popular fan games released. The problem with these two games is just how hard it is to play them. Even with an English translation, there's still many other steps needed to play them.

Yume Nikki Online Project or YNOP aims to fix that and add even more onto the games. YNOP is a free fan-made port of Yume Nikki, Dot Flow, Yume 2kki, and even more games all modified for online play complete with English translations. The best part? No downloads are required.



Yume Nikki's *Kyuu Kyuu Kun*



Dot Flow's underwater temple world



Yume 2kki's flower garden world



Kikiyama is the creator of Yume Nikki, and much like the game itself, he is shrouded in mystery.

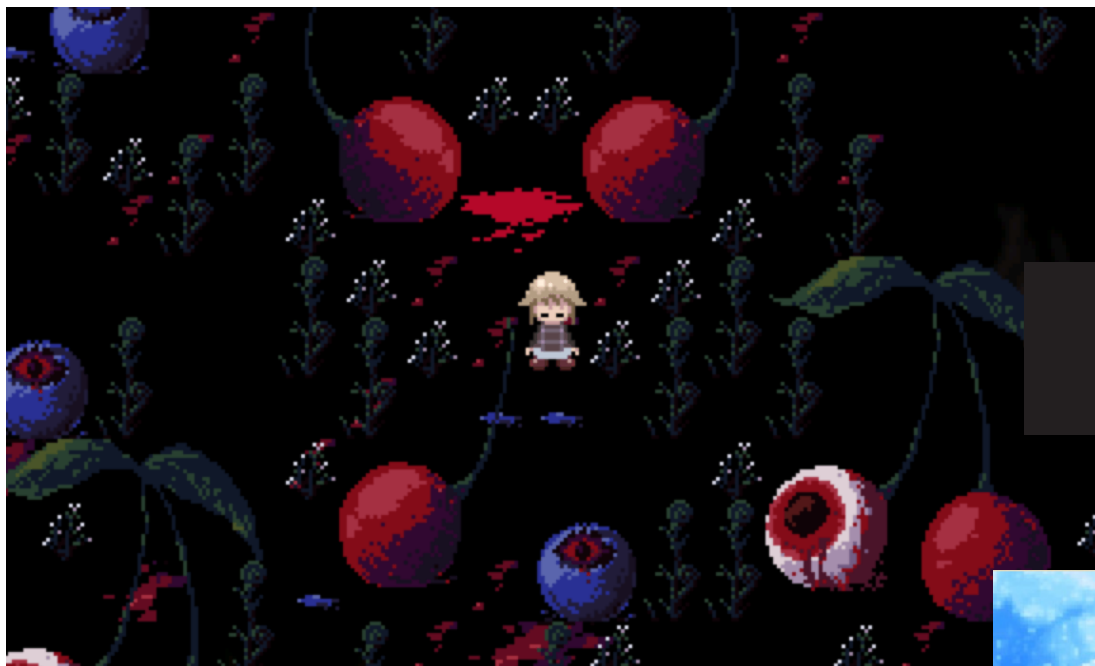
Kikiyama has all but disappeared since the last official release of Yume Nikki, only having appearances when a remake of Yume Nikki came out and doing one interview with other indie game developer, Toby Fox. This appearance and interview really are loose terms: signing off on the game's release and nine yes or no questions is all there was, but nonetheless, he's out there.

Yume Nikki's inspiration can be seen far and wide across the indie game spectrum but the inspiration for Yume Nikki can be found easily, in fact, you can just look at the title. Yume Nikki directly translates into dream diary in English. Because of this many have theorized that Yume Nikki is Kikiyama's dreams, giving an explanation as to why there is little to no story.

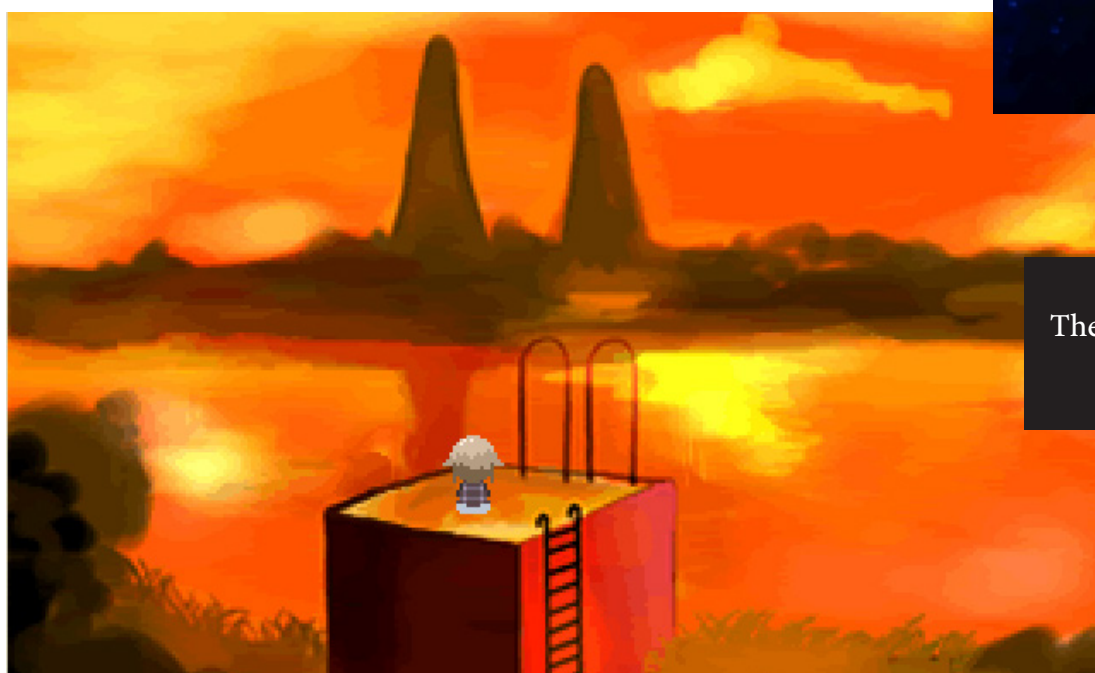
When playing Yume Nikki for the first time some players may be expecting a more horrific experience or even more in-depth exploration of the dream world.

Dot Flow and Yume 2kki aim to solve both those problems. Dot Flow, unlike Yume Nikki, does not shy away from body horror and tries to make the player uncomfortable. Dot Flow consistently offered up scare after scare that all worked well in tandem with the deteriorating mental state of the protagonist.

Yume 2kki is a project for fans by fans, made by over 100 different developers Yume 2kki does not disappoint in the content section. With 36 worlds the player can choose from when entering the nexus Yume 2kki makes sure to never let the player think they know what is going on.



A more horrific room in Yume 2kki



The last room along a long winding path in Yume 2kki



A quiet and tranquil room from Yume 2kki

As mentioned previously, Yume Nikki follows a young shut-in named Madotsuki and their dreams. Yume Nikki establishes a few very important concepts that Dot Flow and Yume 2kki both expand on like the nexus and effects.

In Yume Nikki, the nexus describes the place just outside of Madotsuki's room which can only be entered in their dream. The nexus as its name implies serves as a connector to many different dreams, in Yume Nikki these dreams are represented by doors with symbols to represent the world.

In Dot Flow the doors are completely gone in favor of exits in each of the cardinal directions, while this does reduce the number of entrances in the nexus it makes it easier to get to important worlds that may serve a story purpose.

Yume 2kki decides to expand on the nexus even more making the nexus an even bigger room with objects to interact with that represent the world.

The other concept, effects, is harder to explain because of the many purposes they serve. The main purpose for effects is to reach the end of the game, which can't really be called an ending in the context of a story because there really isn't a story. Effects also serve as transformations that have a variety of effects on the player like making them go faster or being able to light up a world.

Yume 2kki doesn't just expand on existing effects, giving them new purposes for example. But it also adds an entirely new feature in combining effects. This along with improved menu UI and having more effects in general really make Yume 2kki a never-ending game. Dot Flow, despite not changing any major features about effects or even the rough number needed to complete the game, the effects in Dot Flow are an improvement. This is entirely because of the story that is placed around getting the effects and rust.





# TAYLOR SWIFT THE ERAS TOUR



## Era's Tour ...Ready For It?

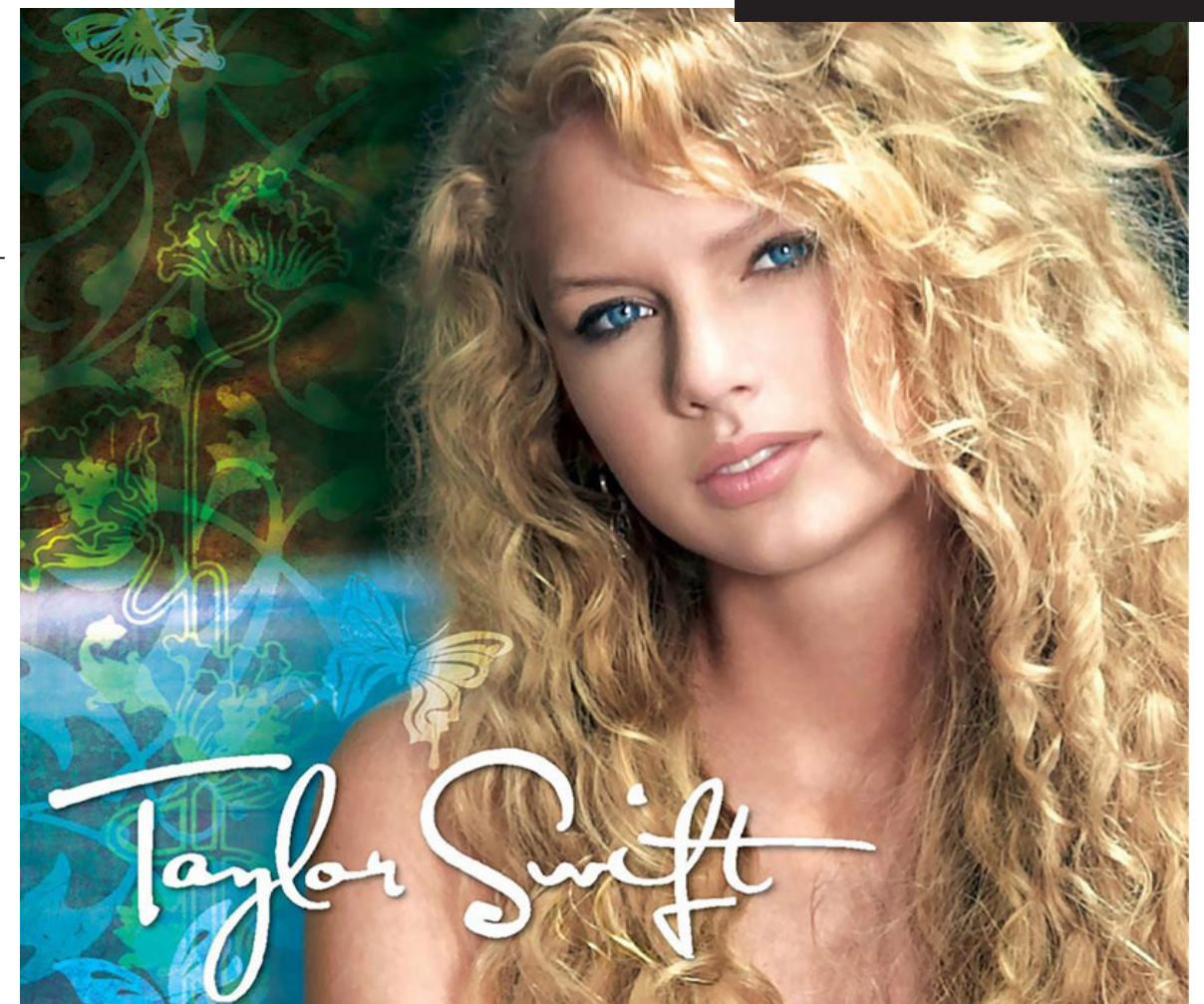
By Hailey Boehme

If you've been on social media lately (I know you have), you've probably seen the hype surrounding Taylor Swift. Whether you're a fan or not, her "Eras Tour" refuses to go unnoticed. Gaining the support of one of the largest fan bases ever, this tour is nothing like you've ever seen before.

If you are new to Taylor Swift's "Taylor Nation", you may be confused by the meaning behind her tour's name. The title of "eras" describes each of her albums as they shift through different phases of Taylor's life.

Her first album known as the "Debut Era", is her 2006 "Taylor Swift" album. The tracks on this album encompass the artist's most country-like music. It features hit songs such as "Tim McGraw", "Our Song", "Picture to Burn", "Teardrops on My Guitar", and "Should've Said No".

Debut Era: The "Taylor Swift" album cover.



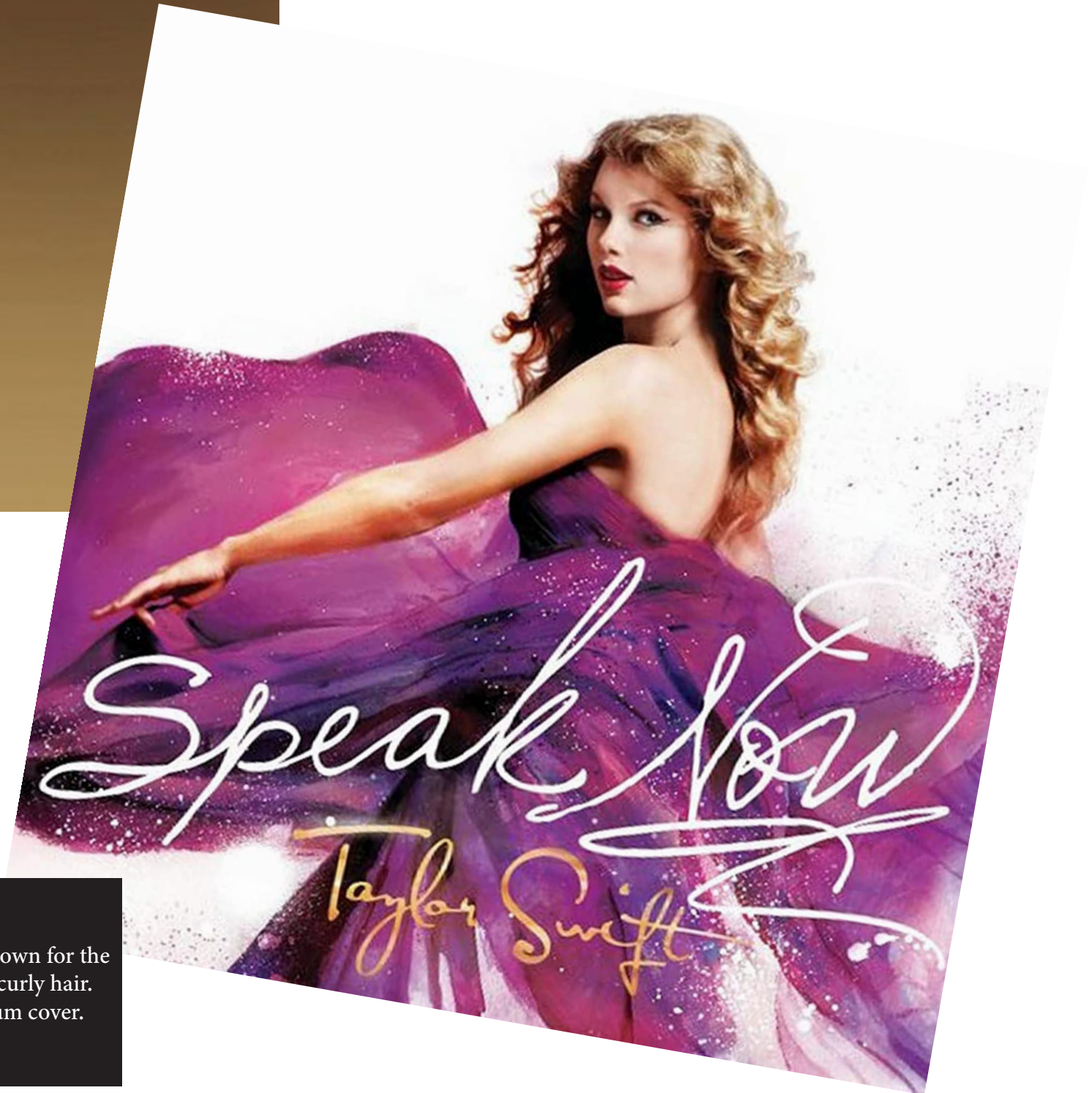




The Fearless Era has come a long way since 2008. The “Fearless (Taylor’s Version)” album cover.

The next album Swift released was in 2008 and is titled “Fearless”. This is in my top 3 personally, as it encompasses some of my favorite songs such as the classic “Love Story”, “White Horse”, “Hey Stephen”, “Fearless”, “Fifteen”, “Forever & Always”, and a few amazing songs. This album is currently available in (Taylor’s Version), which gives credit back to Taylor for her songs that belonged to a record company for over a decade.

Following the 2008 tracks, she came out with another personal favorite album of mine, “Speak Now” (2010). This contains the very popular “Mean”, “Speak Now”, “Back to December”, and “Dear John”. As of April 2023, there is no official (Taylor’s Version) of this album.



The Speak Now Era is known for the purple dress and long, curly hair. The “Speak Now” album cover.





RED Era is known for the iconic red scarf and bold, red lipstick. The “RED (Taylor’s Version)” album cover photo.



Bracelets for Era’s Tour on Poshmark by: skylardaniel  
Etsy is also a good site for bracelets like these!

Taylor’s next album was her first tour album titled “Red”. The release in 2012 gained traction very quickly with hits such as the song “Red” itself, “I Knew You Were Trouble”, “Stay Stay Stay”, “22”, and “Everything Has Changed”. This album, when released as (Taylor’s Version), also included a few songs labelled “from the vault”, which meant they were previously unreleased.

Her most popular vault song has a comically long title and is the star of many Era’s Tour friendship bracelets which feature the abbreviation “ATWTMVTV”. Some even chose to include what TikTok calls the spin-off of “Hot Girl Summer” trend, which of course is now referred to as “Sad Girl Autumn”. In short, the “All Too Well (10 Minute Version) (Taylor’s Version) [From the Vault]”, yes that is the shortest title, was a major hit amongst fans. Taylor mentioned in an interview that she was shocked the song gained so much popularity due to its extremely specific, detailed description of what lyric analysts seem to think is about her past relationship with Jake Gyllenhaal.





1989 features some of Taylor's most popular music. The outfits from her album covers have been replicated and are available for purchase online.



The Reputation Era is the source of many outfits for the tour. Fans have put their own creative twist on Taylor's album cover look with DIY crafts.

Onto the next tour album, "1989" (Taylor's birth year). Tracks include "Style", "Blank Space", "Bad Blood", and of course, "Shake it Off". This album holds some of the most recognized music because of how often it would play on the radio, it seemed every other song would be a 1989 feature.

"Reputation" produced in 2017 showcased Taylor's most powerful, confident, revenge seeking era. It's known to be symbolized with black, snakes, and her newspaper album cover look. Part of the track list is lash at Kanye West that at the time, "ruined Taylor's reputation", and it couldn't be more perfect. After years of fueds, the truth would come out years after this release (2020) about Kanye and his reckless actions, along with his wife: Kim Kardashian. "Look What You Made Me Do" rocked the internet with its catchy nature, but even that couldn't overshadow the amazing "...Ready for it?", "Delicate", or "Don't Blame Me".





The Lover Era is known for the cotton candy sky, all things glittery pink, and hearts EVERYWHERE. Recent speculation of Taylor and Joe breaking up has caused fans to come back and relisten to this album with a new perspective on her love songs.

Her next album was probably the one that received the most backlash as fans felt her style was changing. The "Lover" track list was originally known for the songs "ME!" or "You Need to Calm Down". Though those songs are iconic now, the older Swift fans tended to stick to "The Archer" and "Cruel Summer". My personal favorite from this album is "The Man", I can just never seem to get this song out of my head.

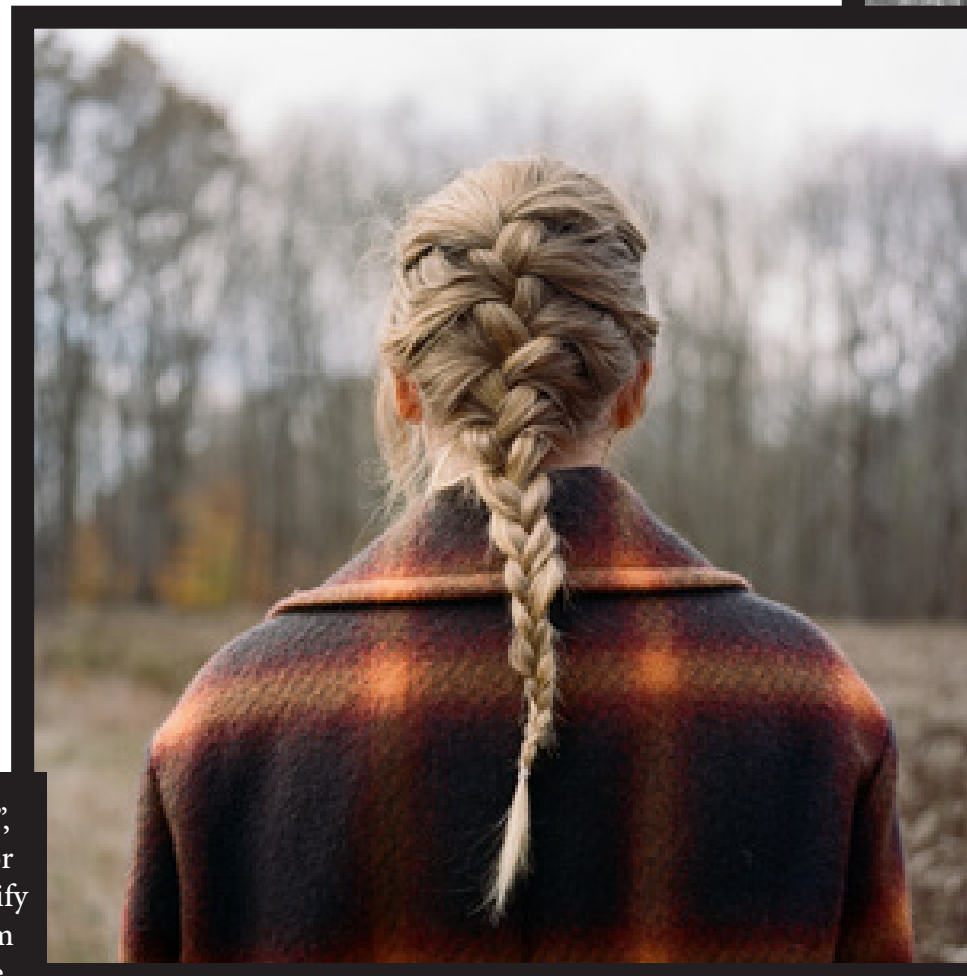


MY FAVORITE ALBUM IS “folklore”. Picking a favorite seems nearly impossible, but this track list steals the show. Heart breaking, yet relatable, is how I would describe these songs. From “this is me trying” to the most perfect song “mirrorball”, Taylor does NOT mess around here. Honorable mentions are “cardigan”, “illicit affairs”, “august”, and “invisible string”. Honestly, should I just name all of them?? SO GOOD.

Don’t worry, we are nearing the end, “evermore”, released in 2020 is the last album before her newest release “Midnights”. Very similar to “folklore” (they are considered sister albums), this is an album of grief, but also of healing. Within my top 10 songs of all time, there are more heartbreakers: “tolerate it”, “closure”, “happiness”, “majorie”, “willow”, and “champagne problems”. “evermore” truly has a song for everyone, especially if you’re a fan of her slower paced, introspective tracks.



The Folklore Era is a beautiful album that makes falling apart seem graceful, yet messy at the same time. **HIGHLY RECCOMEND!**



Evermore, which is Folklore’s “sister”, is the better, more healed version. For the full experience, an album on Spotify features all of the tracks in order from these two albums as though they are telling a complete story.



Finally, the 2022 masterpiece “Midnights”. Many were very unsure of what to expect from this album, and some were even disappointed after their first listen. Eventually, though, it became hard to deny that the album was extremely catchy. Fans reported that they absentmindedly have been singing, “It’s me, hi! I’m the problem, it’s me!” Hit tracks include “Anti-Hero”, “Would’ve”, “Could’ve”, “Should’ve”, “You’re on Your Own, Kid”, “Question...?”, and “Maroon”.

All of the above albums, or “eras”, have been wrapped up into one giant tour. Taylor’s set list can be found online, and every concert features an additional song that is unique to that venue and won’t be performed again on the tour.

“Swifties” have shattered the internet in search of tickets for a concert close to them, some willing to travel across the country to see their idol. Taylor recently expressed her disappointment with the Ticket Master company for the failure to stay true to their promise of being able to handle the stampede of fans that raced to secure tickets. Many speculate that some will go as far as trying to sue the company for jeopardizing the event.

Those who did get tickets to the show have taken to popular apps, such as TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram to show off their looks. Outfits inspired



by song titles, favorite lyrics, or a specific “era” in general have shown the world just how passionate these fans are. Some have spent thousands of dollars, countless hours, and infinite creativity just to make sure they are looking their best for what some have started to refer to as “Mother Taylor”.

The crafting doesn’t stop at the clothing though, themed friendship bracelets are also on trend for this concert. Fans plan to trade with each other as they camp out in front of the concert venues nearly a day before the opening acts. Why are they doing this? In hopes to take home a special edition Taylor Swift “Eras Tour” merchandise.

The merch, however, isn’t perfect either. Complaints have started to roll in from customers, begging for a limit to what each person should be allowed to buy. Yet, even if someone did manage to get their hands on the sought after clothing, fans have issued warning to others saying that after the first wash, their shirts had faded significantly.

Despite ticket complications and merchandise frustrations, concert attendees still deem the experience as being worthwhile. Many have noticed the singer’s improved dancing skills and complimented the choreography.

The choreography may have blown viewers away, but what left them in awe was her raw vocals

Midnights is a blend of falling in love, falling out of love, confidence, revenge, guilt, and betrayal. It seems to encompass emotions from multiple eras.





Photo courtesy of the Fashionista website -  
“Eras Tour Wardrobe”

and blink-of-an-eye outfit changes. Throughout the tour, Taylor has been careful to keep outfits similar and represent each of her “eras”. She switches between these outfits as the night goes on. She often disappears for mere seconds before re-appearing in another stunning costume. Her styles have ranged anywhere in between glittery body suits and long, flowing dresses.

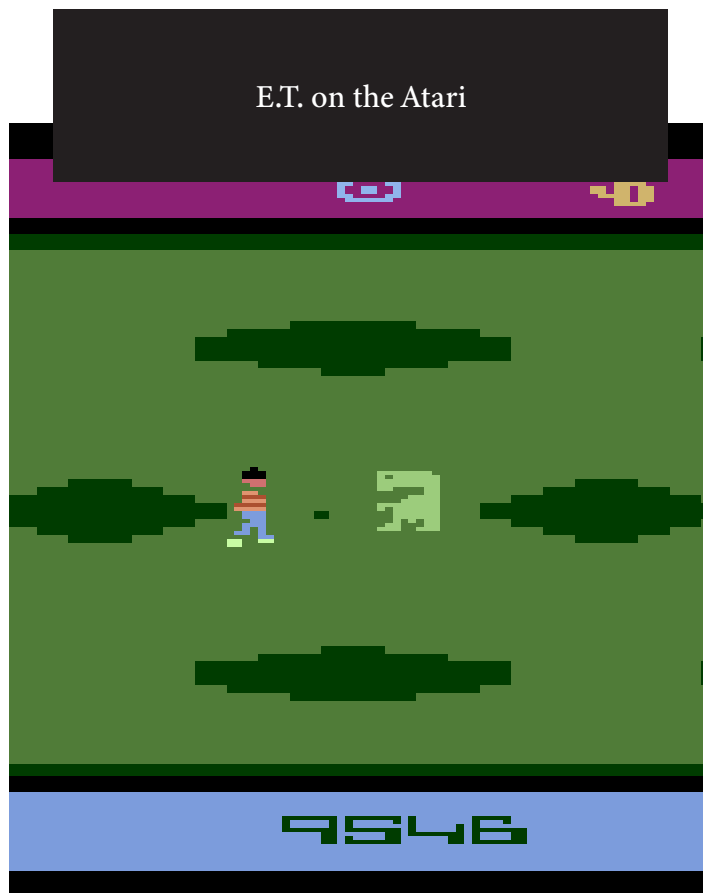
In conclusion, nothing could be more perfect than a concert by Mother herself. Her passion, dedication, and character make these concerts a once in a lifetime experience. Though Taylor does advise against taking advice from someone who’s falling apart, I highly recommend her music to anyone. Whether you’re going through a heart aching breakup (I Almost Do), going through a mutual breakup (Happiness), going through an angry breakup (We Are Never Ever Getting Back Together), grieving a death of someone close to you (Bigger than the Whole Sky), feeling like a baddie (I Did Something Bad), are madly in love (Stay Stay Stay), feeling like your best friend is now a stranger (Last Kiss), need some background music to study to (ANY SONG), or something to scream with the car windows down (SERIOUSLY, ANY SONG), Taylor Swift has your back.





# YIIK

## The Worst Game Ever



By Logan Jacobs

When discussing the worst games ever made many people jump to games like E.T. for the Atari or the original release for Final Fantasy 14, maybe even No Man's Sky. These games are among some of the most buggy, poorly designed, and rushed games in history. But what if the worst game wasn't buggy at all? What if it had 8 years of development time? What if it had a good concept with a strong base to build off of? The game that fits into all three of these criteria? YiiK, stylized as YIIK and pronounced YEEK.

YiiK is a self-described "Post Modern RPG" with all the classic RPG elements: turn-based combat, quick-time events, and party members.

YiiK follows Alex Eggleston, a college graduate coming back to his hometown, while meeting the protagonist the player will encounter the biggest flaw in the entire game, the writing.







YiiK's poor combat system

Long droning monologues that provide context already given to the player combined with an extremely unlikable and static protagonist culminate in making some of the most difficult writing to sit through.

Arguably the worst part about the writing is the lack of consequences to Alex's actions. Alex is constantly the worst person possible in every situation or interaction and unlike games such as The Witcher or Skyrim, these actions aren't the players' choice, it's just who the character is, what he says, what he does.

After playing the game for some time players may expect Alex to grow throughout the story, even if that growth isn't earned story wise. This doesn't happen. Alex stays the same morally questionable, sometimes even morally reprehensible character that only thinks about himself, and the game agrees with him.

(the next paragraph contains spoilers for YiiK, if you

would like to play the game, please skip it)

Throughout the game Alex only thinks about himself, he truly believes the world revolves around him and at the end of the game it's revealed that the world does. While I won't get into massive lore details just know that Alex is right in believing that he is the most important in the universe by virtue of being Alex Eggleston.

While the writing may be bad, that alone wouldn't ruin a game. The combat mechanics of the game also help to make it the worst game.

Slow, basic, and repetitive are used best to describe the combat of YiiK. At first glance the combat system may not seem horrible; this illusion is washed away by the end of the first hour of gameplay. To understand the games short comings, it's important to look a game that did this combat style, based around timing inputs, well.

Paper Mario, for the N64. This game had one of the



Paper Mario's combat system

most innovative combat systems found in a turn-based RPG, letting the players' skill determine how much damage is done. On top of the skill-based combat it also hosted a large variety of moves/attacks. This is where YiiK fumbles.

YiiK's combat system does not change. The best moves or attack order will always stay the same, there is no room for variety in the game. Another major problem with YiiK is the scripted fights/losses. Multiple times throughout the story you MUST lose in a fight to progress, this is disheartening when playing.

It sows a sense of doubt into the player. It makes them wonder if they even need to try for this boss. If it would just be better to lose instead of trying just in case. And that mindset isn't even wrong. It would be easier to just lose every boss before actually attempting them.

The last important thing to mention is how much

potential that YiiK had. The game had some of the best video game composers making music for it. YiiK also had an interesting idea; a unique art style that was modern while still being blocky/polygonal.

That's my biggest problem with YiiK. It had potential, YiiK could've been a great game and it still can be. Currently the developers are working on the 1.5 update, this update is promised to change the problems that plague the game. Changing the story direction, improving combat and the dungeons found in the game. This update could be what the game needs to switch from being the punchline of jokes to being a great game. When it comes out, I will be playing it and I implore you too as well.



YiiK's infamous golden alpaca scene



YiiK's overhauled menu system



# GROUP SOUNDS: THE JAPANESE ROCK MOVEMENT IN THE 60S

By Benjamin Lopez

In the west, we're all too familiar with bands such as the *Beatles* and the *Rolling Stones*, bands who dominated the music sphere and culture and continue to influence music to this day. Even as far as Japan, their influence spread and dominated their youth music scene almost as much as it did ours.

In the 1960s, the Japanese rock scene almost parallels ours. Yet how did it reach Japan, a nation so far away from the United States and United Kingdom geographically and culturally? It all had to do with the American occupation between 1945 and 1952.

After the destruction caused by the Second World War, the United States wanted to help rebuild the country and turn a former adversary into a current ally. With the influx of western aid and American soldiers, the cultural mixing changed Japan and shaped them into the nation they are today.

In these U.S. military bases formed the most popular style of Japanese rock of the time with influence with western bands such as the *Rolling Stones* and the *Beatles*, groups would form to play western-style music with loud guitars, heavy drums, and punching lyrics.

One group of people would form the band *The Blue Comets* in 1952, created by those who would tour U.S. military bases and jazz cafes: places where Group Sounds would commonly be heard. Jackey Yoshikawa (real name Itaoka Koichi) would join the band in 1957 and become the band leader in 1963.

One of their most popular songs to this day is "Blue Chateau" released in 1967. According to lead

vocalist Tadao Inoue, the song is supposedly "a tragedy" for Group Sounds as a genre. "But actually, [making Blue Chateau] was a dilemma, because I made something that was the opposite of what I had been aiming for. It was also painful that other GS band began to imitate it. I think GS's tragedy began with that song."

Other notable bands include *The Mops* and *The*

*Spiders* who are said to have created the first true Group Sounds or GS (American rock-influenced, Japanese music) song, "Furi-Furi" released on May 5, 1965.

As American rock movement was associated with delinquency and bad youth, so were certain parts of GS in this time. *The Tigers* were one such band, with influences directly stemming from *The Beatles*, wouldn't see huge popularity until their single "My Marie" released in March 1967. Some of these groups would embrace the style, and others would reject it.

Pictures of the *Blue Comets* show the group in clean suits, neat hair, and formal poses, while pictures of *The Tigers* and *The Mops* show long hair, leather jackets, and clothing reminiscent more of *The Beatles* in the late 60s. As the movement carried on through the decade, these cleaner groups would become more widespread and mainstream while those truer to the fashion of GS would fall to obscurity and typically disband.

*The Blue Comets* would see themselves on the popular Ed Sullivan Show in 1968, whereas *The Dynamites* would disband in 1969 after four years of relative obscurity. Yet when it comes to all new genres, some original bands would rather go out



Jackie Yoshikawa and his Blue Comets



with the original musical intent than succumb to being “mainstream” as some thought *The Blue Comets* had become.

As of 1970, most GS bands had already disbanded or fallen to obscurity. *The Blue Comets* released their last hit in 1971 with “Ame no Sanbika” (Song of Rain) selling less than 4,000 copies of their single. In 1972, many of the members would leave, informally disbanding the group. Most GS bands after disbanding would either form new groups, or reform their old ones such as *The Spiders*, *The Tigers*, and some continue to this day like *The Blue Comets*.

Some of these groups would be seen as pioneers of other genres, such as *The Mops* for Japanese psy-

chedelic rock. In the following decades, especially the late 1980s, these groups would see a resurgence in popularity, and would continue to have popularity within the older generation.

On May 30, 2000, leading vocalist, and songwriter, Tadao Inoue (changed to Daisuke Inoue) committed suicide due to issues from retinal surgery and fatigue from caring for his ailing wife. Following this tragedy, in 2002, *The Blue Comets* would return as a group and play a tribute to him, and *The Spiders* would play tribute at his funeral.

Group Sounds would forever be remembered as an old genre of rock music from a time long gone, during the Showa era. Most of the original “found-

ers” or pioneers of the genre left their groups long ago. Very few bands still hold the GS genre these days. Two such bands that were formed after 2000 fit into this genre, such as *Kinoco Hotel* and *The Captains*, self-proclaimed the “last Group Sounds.”

*Kinoco Hotel* has more of a unique sound than replicating the old style like *The Captains*. They have a style of jazz, progressive rock, and GS inspiration in their music. *The Captains* by far more popular still, and is the most traditional to how GS sounds as a whole.

The legacy of this genre is one that is almost forgotten by the younger generations. It is seen as an old person’s genre, and is mainly remembered by

older people in the east and the west.

The popularity cannot be understated; however, because this phenomenon was incredibly impacting on Japanese culture. It was one of the first times East and West met within music, and a divider between the traditional older generation and their children born after the war.

It’s something worth remembering, and worth a listen. What was once a big shift in the landscape of Japanese culture is now the tradition. Same as it was here, what was once counter culture is simply just culture.



The Mops



Kinoco Hotel - Untamed Woman



# A Life on Celluloid

By Carter Philips

Without memories, what do we have left? How do we fill our life with meaning? As a stream of seemingly unimportant home video clippings flood through the screen, Jonas Mekas contemplates these very questions, intercutting scenes with splices of poetry and thoughts in his massive four hour, forty-eight-minute masterpiece: *As I Was Moving Ahead Occasionally I Saw Brief Glimpses of Beauty*, where the audience is taken on a journey through the pages of a man's life.

It is a film without plot or structure, and seemingly without any importance, but it is the substance within these small moments in montage, that when all together, create an undeniable representation of the human condition.

This memoir is less structured like a documentary but more like music or poetry. Unlike a book, the film expresses memory through words, music, and narration. Intertitles and images combine not just to describe memory but to share it. You see the world with wonder and weariness through the eyes of Jonas Mekas.

In short, to ask, What is the meaning of this film? Is to ask, what is the meaning of life.

Leaving Lithuania, he became imprisoned in a German labor camp with his brother, and after escaping they went into hiding in a farm near the Danish border. When the second World War ended, he moved to the United States, bought a camera, and started shooting documentary movies.



A still taken from the film of the director's child as a snapshot of his life.



Promotional photo taken for the film before its release in 2000 depicting cells of frames.

Today he is known as the godfather of American avant-garde cinema.

In 1961, he and twenty-one other independent mostly experimental filmmakers including Andy Warhol founded The Filmmakers Cooperative, a non-profit distribution center for a new age of avant-garde film.

He soon became one of the most influential names of the New Cinema Movement creating inventive and unique documentary films including *Reminiscences of a Journey to Lithuania* (1972) and *He Stands in the Desert Counting the Seconds of his Life* (1987). *Brief Glimpses of Beauty* came out in 2000 and is a culmination of his style.

I've had some trepidations about writing an article on this film because it's so massive, yet understated and most importantly, unconventional.

It's a rare opportunity for an audience to see a person's life on film, comparable to Gordon Parks' *Moments Without Proper Names*, but not parallel in sheer length and substance.

As a reoccurring intertitle reads: Nothing happens in this film. Later corrected with: Everything happens in this film.

*As I Was Moving Ahead Occasionally I Saw Brief Glimpses of Beauty* is an optimistic film about life, but also a weary film, made by a man aware of his mortality, reflecting on scraps of memory, coming to terms with age, the past and dying.

Jonas Mekas says it best, in the opening words of the film, "I have never been able, really to figure out where my life begins and where it ends. . . There is some kind of order in it—order of its own, which I do not really understand, same as I never understood life around me. The real life, as they say, or the real people, I never understood them. I still do not understand them, and I do not really want to understand them."



# THE MUSTANG

# P O S T

