

BRADFORD WRITES!
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An Artist's Growth: Phoebe Bridgers

By Addie Neuman

In her early career, Phoebe Bridgers identified as an alternative rock singer and songwriter. She began to pursue her musical career at the age of eleven and participated in choirs, at bars, and in people's grunge basements. Bridgers's big break came in 2012 with the release of one of her first songs.

One of her first released songs, "Waiting Room," could be categorized as an alternative, sad song. The agonizingly beautiful heartbreak song was written and played by Bridgers herself on guitar. In a soft key, the artist strums the same four to five notes. Each note builds up like a wave about to break on shore. Despite the heaviness of the lyrics, the tune is slightly upbeat, which is a common theme in Bridgers's music. She sings, "Who am I to ask for more, more, more? But you're breathing in my open mouth... You're the gun in my lips that will blow my brains out." She delivers fans some of the most wretched truths in these lyrics, yet wraps the news in an appealing melody, like a perfect silk bow.

After the first chorus, the artist's drummer joins in, which almost overpowers Bridgers's vocals. Her voice is soft throughout the song until she begins the ending chorus, telling the listener that "It is for the better." Accompanying her vocals are her refined guitar skills and heavy percussion. As the song ends, the guitar and drums fade out in an eerie manner. "Waiting Room" is categorized as an alternative song and did not get Bridgers very far within the rock community; however, in seven years this would change.

As previously stated, Phoebe Bridgers is an alternative rock artist; however, she was not always viewed as one since her break into the industry came from a melancholic song. In 2020,

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Bridgers released her second album *Punisher*. In comparison to her earlier works, this album displays her rock abilities and solidified her place within the rock community. In *Punisher*, Bridgers utilized the drums and picked up electric guitars with heavier bass. These changes are present in her song “I Know the End.” In this song, she also begins singing softly but starts to belt and scream, which fully displays her vocal range, unlike in “Waiting Room.” This song also showcases her musical abilities and her drummer’s skills in a much better light.

Despite their differences, the two songs have the same energy; they are sad songs wrapped in melodies that cause you to sway and dance. Bridgers’s lyrics and writing style has remained consistent throughout her albums and singles, which can be seen when listening to a song of hers from 2012 to 2020. However, her genre has finally been solidified and Phoebe Bridgers can now proudly claim to be a rockstar.