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## For Your Entertainment: British singer drops new album in the States

By Autumn Barker

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Photo by Courtesy of Atlantic Records | The Independent Florida Alligator



English singer-songwriter Jasmine van den Bogaerde (better known by her stage name, Birdy), released her sophomore album, *Fire Within*, in the United States on June 3. Birdy rose to fame in the United Kingdom in 2008 after winning the national Open Mic competition at the age of 12. But it wasn't until her cover of Bon Iver's "Skinny Love" went viral that she gained international recognition. Her eponymous debut album featured 11 tracks, which consisted of covers of songs like The xx's "Shelter" and The National's "Terrible Love", as well as two original tracks.

Where her debut album highlighted the 18-year-old's soulful vocals and prowess on piano, *Fire Within* introduces Birdy's songwriting abilities and impressive vocal range. Each song feels deeply personal, like you're reading a page from her diary, while also connecting with the listeners to remind them of their own experiences. The emotional depth Birdy conveys in her music is impressive for one so young, she portrays love and heartache with wisdom beyond her years. The album features 11 tracks that highlight

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everything from bluesy, groove-inspired numbers like "Light Me Up", to gentle piano ballads like "No Angel", that are more reminiscent of the style showcased on her debut album.

I had the opportunity to talk with Birdy about the new album, her writing process and her collaboration with Ben Lovett from Mumford and Sons.

**AB:** Your new album, *Fire Within*, just released in the States. Unlike your debut, this album features all your original work. How has this release been different for you?

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**B:** I was definitely a bit more nervous for this one. I did some co-writing on this album which I'd never really tried before. It was really interesting and kind of terrifying just because you're working with someone you've never met before and sharing your ideas with a complete stranger. But I absolutely loved it and I'm just really excited about its release in America.

**AB:** You've got a song on the new album that you co-wrote with Ben Lovett from Mumford and Sons. What was it like writing with him?

**B:** Yeah- I actually got to meet him before which was quite nice, because I sang with Mumford and Sons on their song for the Pixar movie, *Brave*. Then we decided to work together again. I went to his flat in New York and we wrote this song, "No Angel", which is on the album. With him, it was really fun because he writes some poetry- well I don't know if he writes them- but he tries working some anonymous poems with music to them. It's just really interesting and kind of strange and fun, and he's got really cool results.

**AB:** When writing, do you have any specific traditions or a mood you have to set before you can begin, or do you just sort of go at it?



**B:** It kind of just happens when it happens. When I'm at home, I usually tend to write at like three or four in the morning. I just sort of stay up really late in my room where it's quiet because my house is mad with all my brothers and sisters, so that's when I write then. On tour it's just whenever I feel inspired.

**AB:** There's a lot of imagery in your music and a kind of poetic feel to your lyrics. Do you write poetry as well? Is that an element you try to incorporate in most of your work?

**B:** I don't write poetry a lot, but it's something I loved doing while I was at school and I'm really interested in it. My dad's a writer, so I think that kind of comes from him; the storytelling and the imagery. It's something I really love.

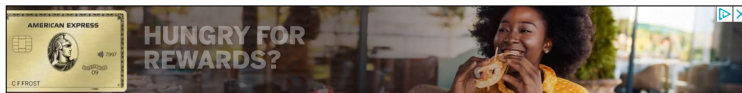
**AB:** What's your favorite song on the new album, I'm sure it's probably difficult to choose one, but if you had to, which would it be?



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**B:** [laughs] It changes all the time depending on which one I'm playing the most and which one is really getting on my nerves. At the moment, I'm really loving playing "Words As Weapons". There's a new version on the US album- it's just kind of upbeat and it's really fun, it's got a real drive to it. I'm excited for you to hear it.



**AB:** I'm looking forward to it! Okay, time for the fun questions. What's your guilty pleasure song or band?

**B:** I love Carly Rae Jepsen's "Call Me Maybe", it's just really catchy.

**AB:** Such a good guilty pleasure song. If you could collaborate with anyone, who would it be and why?

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B: If he was still alive, I'd love to work with Jeff Buckley. I've grown up listening to him, so I'm a big fan.

AB: Thanks for speaking with me. I can't wait to check out the new album!

Be sure to check out *Fire Within*, you won't regret making it the newest addition to your music library!

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