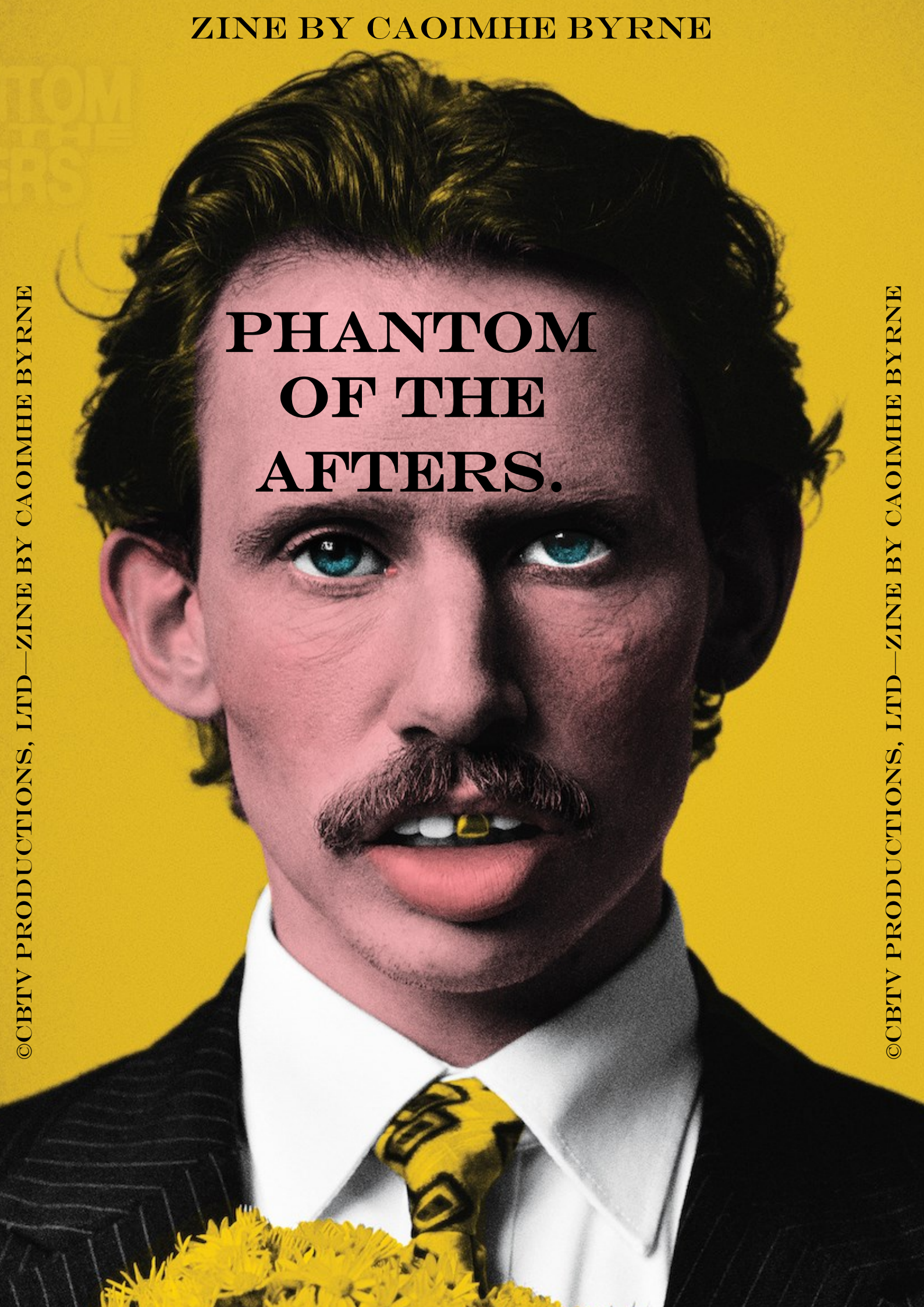


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PHANTOM
OF THE
AFTERS.

W

elcome to the 2nd volume of the CBT
Production's Fanzine— this edition will
be a review of Irish hip-hop rap sensa-
tion Kojaque's latest album, *'Phantom of the After's'*.
Dublin born artist, Kevin Parker has been making music
since before his debut album *'Deli Daydreams'* in which
contains the most angelic song *'Eviction Notice'* is fea-
tured. This, however was only the beginning of his jour-
ney to become one of the most successful hip-hop rap
acts from Dublin to date. I do not own any of the images
included in this publication nor do I have rights to print
any of them. ☺

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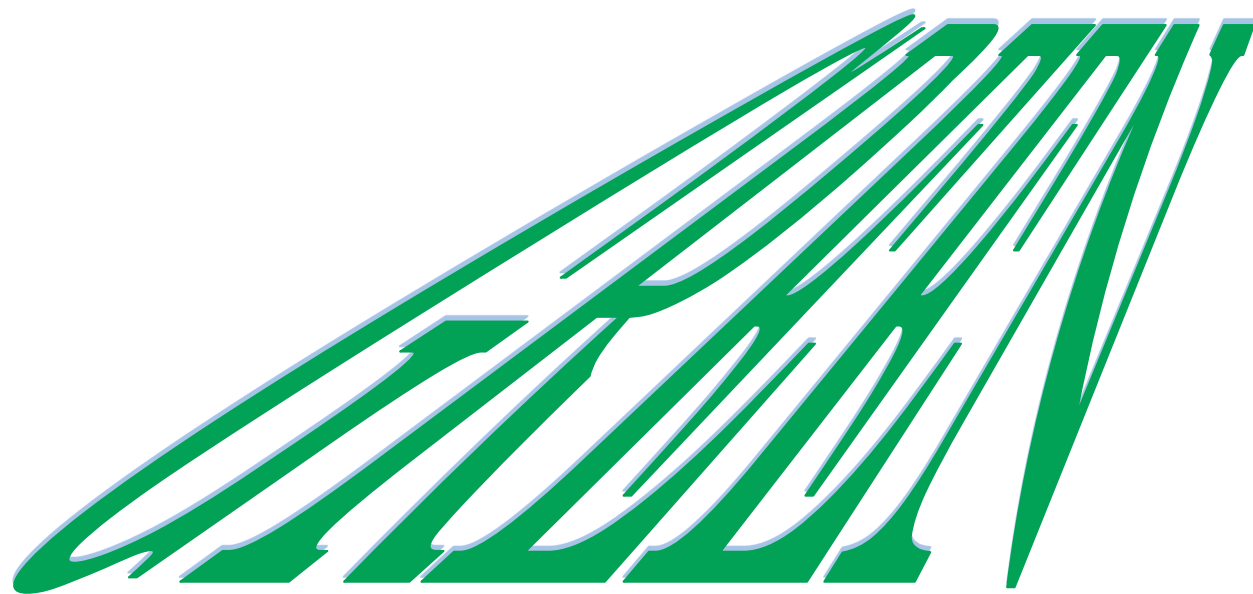
GOODBYE, JACKIE DANDELION,
LARRY BIRD,
CABRA DRIVE,
& FEATURES.

◆ ARTWORK & DESIGN

◆ GIG REPORT

◆ EDITOR'S NOTES





SOFT
BOY
RECORDS

PHANTOM OF THE AFTER'S

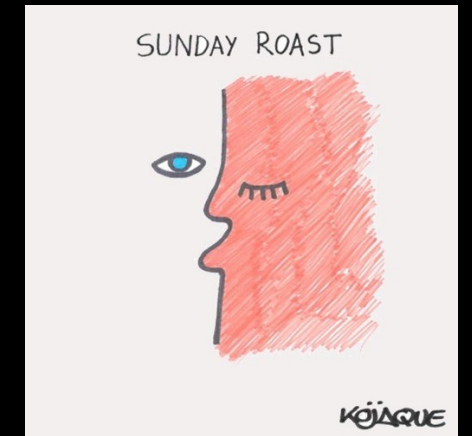
ALBUM REVIEW

‘GOODBYE, JACKIE DANDELION’ opens as the first track of Phantom of the After's. It begins with the faint sound of seagulls squawking and muffled chanting. Later, the chanting became louder and clearer unveiling that the voices were saying ‘Jackie Took the Soup!’.

They repeat this 64 times throughout the track. Clapping is also to be heard in rhythm with the chanting – when another sound enters the track. A powerful lowing of a foghorn or perhaps a ship's horn blares, as it repeats it gains volume as the intervals between the honking becomes shorter. Tensions grow as the chanting continues and then met with an abrupt ending. The track is a mere 0:29 minutes long, acting as an interlude and context on what the album is about.

EDITOR'S PICK:

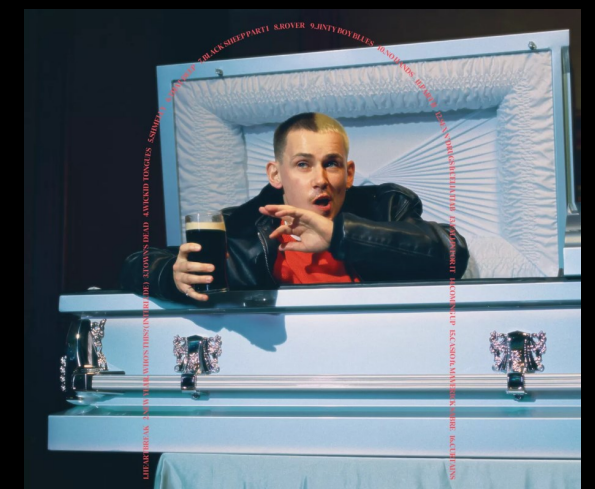
- ◆ Some of Kojaque's earliest work includes this experimental but authentic EP—*Sunday Roast* (2016), pictured to the right. This seven track album is not available on Spotify but can be found only on Youtube and Soundcloud. His themes remain the same but portrayed in a more meditative context. ‘FiFtyFiFty’ produced by Jinsang, tells the same love story as he does in some of the tracks in ‘*Phantom of the After's*’, staying true to his ‘soft boy’ nature.
- ◆ ‘*Midnight Flower*’, gained Kojaque a lot of his first viewers and listeners. As we have seen from the surplus of music videos he has directed and been directly involved with—it's clear that he has a knack for storytelling and visuals. The uniqueness of the music video is dependent on the fact that he holds his breath under water for three minutes straight in order to produce this one-take masterpiece.
- ◆ **Next Edition:** Review on ‘*Town's Dead*’, Kojaque's 2021 Album.



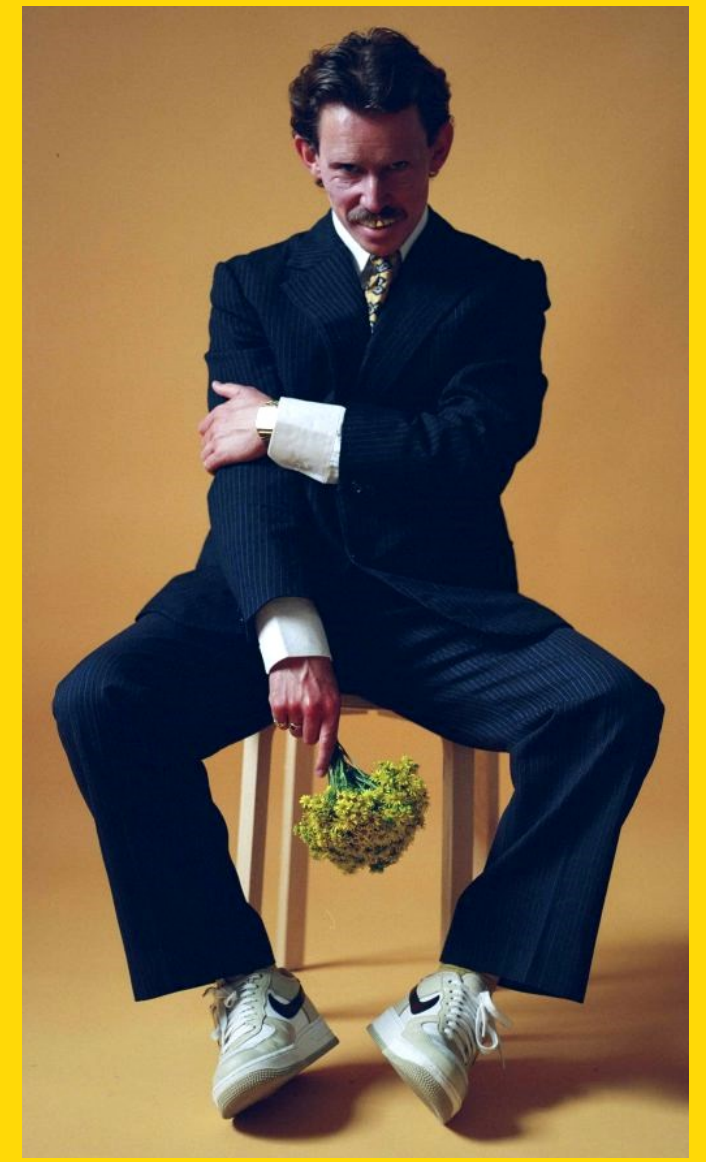
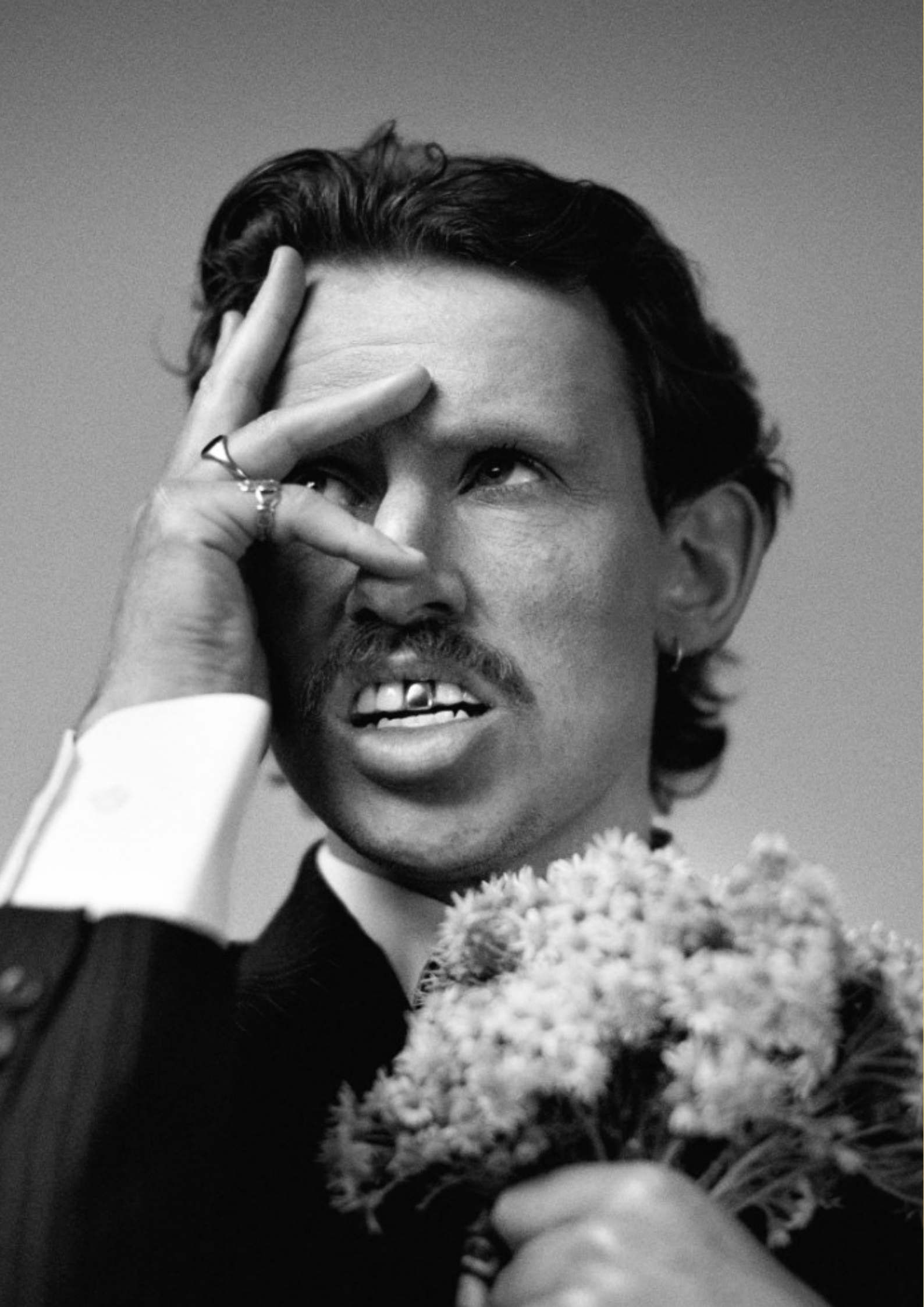
COVER ART— 2015 & 2016



STILL FROM OFFICIAL MUSIC VIDEO



IMAGES BY OSCAR TORRANS



PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICH GILLIGAN FOR CLASH MAGAZINE

Jackie is Kojaque's character throughout the album and as the chanting refers to him 'taking the soup'. 'Taking the soup' seems to be a reference to the Irish Famine, that was directly caused and worsened by British imperialism. A playful and irreverent take on the concept of relocation and immigration, warning Kojaque of the loneliness and isolation he will experience culturally.

‘LARRY BIRD’, opens with dreamy strings, playing a stunning delicate loop of chords while a conversation plays out over the phone between two lovers. One of them says ‘It’s like half an hour away,’ impatiently confident the relationship will survive. This song is a denial of all that could go wrong as Jackie faces London. He has booked his flight, as we hear an in-flight announcement for Stansted Airport, London. The announcer then goes on to explain the inflight entertainment, but she is then cut off by Larry Bird, when he interrupts ‘Yeah Gimme the Mic.’



MY VISUAL INTERPRETATION OF LARRY BIRD

Some parts of the concert i wasn't expecting, for example when Kojaque and Luka Palm performed not one, but two songs from their 2019 EP, ‘Green Diesel’. They performed ‘Phoenix’ and ‘Date Night’ - i would've loved if they had played ‘Paris, Texas’, but i understand that it wouldn't have worked as effectively here as it would slow everything down from the more energetic and up-tempo music we are expecting at a live concert.

Kean Kavanagh and Kojaque performed the most stunning version of ‘*Bubby’s Cream*’ I’d ever heard. I’ve seen them both together and separately at concerts and they have never failed to entertain me. I attended Kean Kavanagh’s concert in October at Whelan’s, and found this to be a much better set up for an intimate performance. In fairness, the place wasn't packed because it was the same night as Ireland were playing some important rugby game. On the flipside, the crowd were amazing and there was definitely a calmer more cozy atmosphere. Previously to this concert, I’ve seen Kojaque performing as an opener for Lana del Rey and some other acts, but also when he released ‘*Town’s Dead*’ in 2021. He performed at the Olympia which i think was incredible and wish he would’ve done it there again, rather than Vicar street. He also performed a spoken word version of ‘*White Noise*’, which reduced the room to silence, I’m sure I wasn’t the only person to fill up with emotion as lyrics hit harder than ever before. The track, written over 5 years ago, about Dublin city has never been more relevant. Honourably, he followed with another poem of which I didn’t manage to record – ending with a declaration of ‘**Free Palestine,**’ as the crowd cheer in solidarity.



GIG REPORT

FRIDAY 17TH
NOVEMBER
2023
VICAR STREET
DUBLIN.

He opened the show with ‘*Goodbye, Jackie Dandelion*’ intro-lude – thumping a unique energy through the crowd,

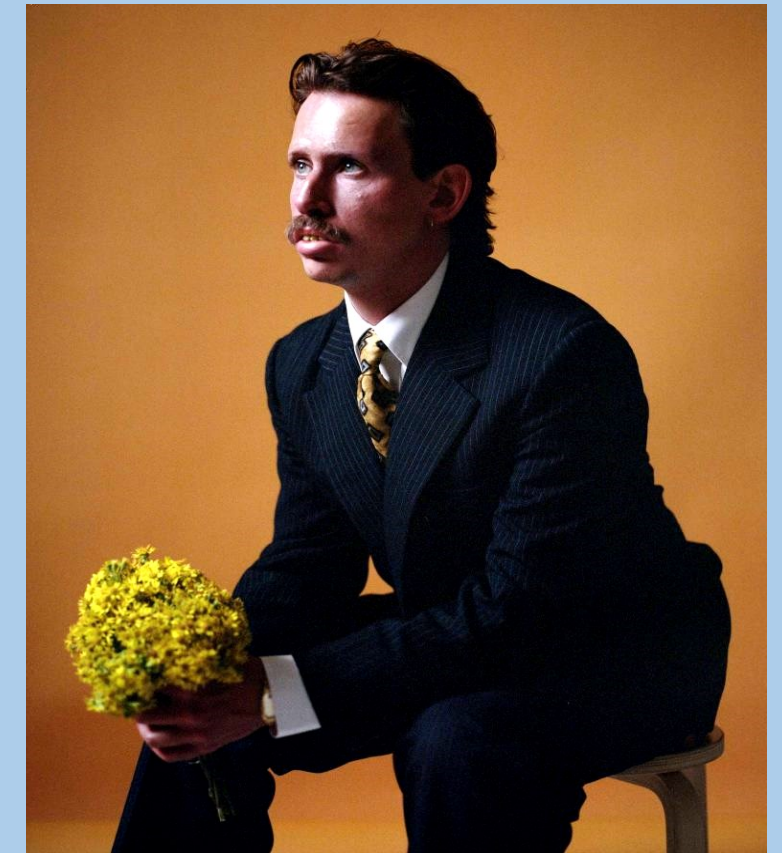
in total darkness, his absence confusing us, as the heartbeat of ‘the soup’ builds tension and excitement before a sharp silence.

Lights on, spotlight reveals Kojaque positioned within the crowd. He stands glowing on the right-hand side of the gallery, suspended from the theatre's balcony – as the intro notes of ‘*Larry Bird*’ play.

Kojaque passionately bellows braggadocio, while equipped with his prosthetics – an incredible atmosphere full of energy and excitement cheer and whistle and whop as he exclaims

‘The Fuck you mad about?

This is what I was made to do, Nobody stole your ambition, it's just escaping you’.



KOJAQUE PHOTOGRAPHED BY RICH GILLIGAN

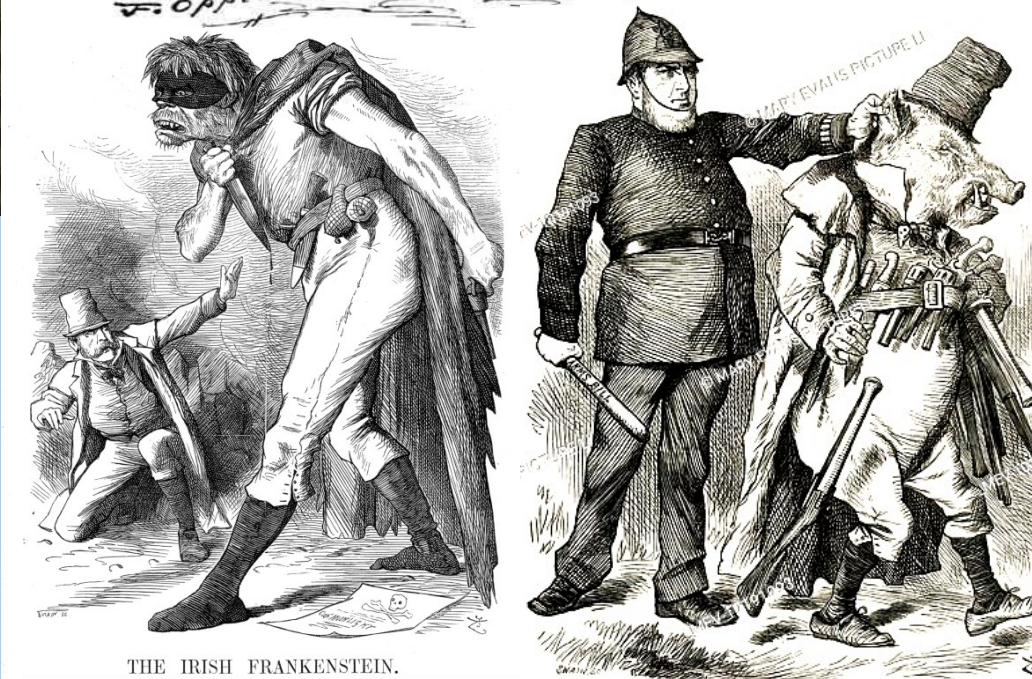
We are then met with punchy, confident lyrics, bellowing pure braggadocio as he sets foot in the UK. He is proud and ready for this new challenge, as he reflects on childhood trauma. His lyrics have his whole heart in soul embedded in the song accompanied with stunning strings echoing. Poverty, abuse, single mother household struggles and substance abuse are all themes of this album, but in this song, it is completely suppressed as he raps triumphantly about his incredible successes, drugs, girls, and sexual relations. Keyword – braggadocio. Another title track of Kojaque’s from EP, *Deli Daydreams* - ‘Love and Braggadocio,’ 2018.

‘**C**ABRA DRIVE,’ opening with a twinkling keyboard, and punchy bass – ‘Cabra Drive’ pays homage to his roots. This track is dedicated to his childhood world, things he observed and experienced and struggled with as he grew up in Cabra, an inner suburb on the northside of Dublin City. The first verse is a nostalgic warm recollection of what he spent his days doing – soon referencing ‘*No Hands*,’ as he flew down the cul-de-sac.

‘*Cabra Drive*’ echoes the pain of his father's death, not understanding the implications and later emotions. While moving away from the grief, he recalls the charm and simplicity of growing up in Cabra. Homesick Kojaque fondly recalls his hometown, even upon returning it's not the same, he reveals in an interview with Hot Press that ‘*Shit really does change, it can be hard to even know who you know anymore. It's kind of alienating, you feel a bit like a caricature of yourself.*’



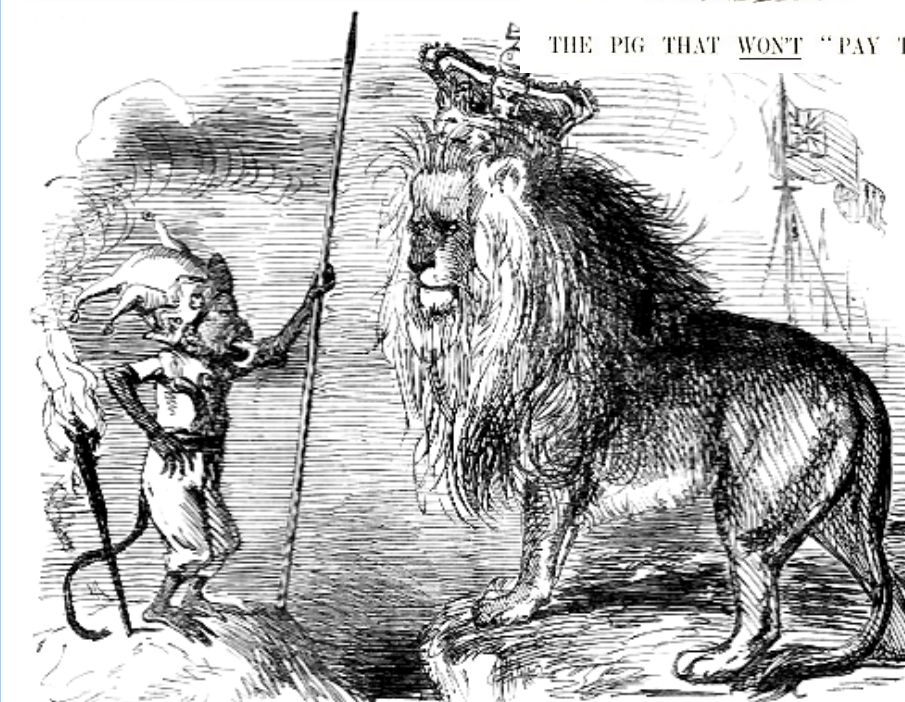
THE REAL POTATO BLIGHT OF IRELAND.



THE IRISH FRANKENSTEIN.



IRISH EMIGRANT.



THE BRITISH LION AND THE IRISH MONKEY.



THE ENGLISH LABOURER'S BURDEN;

The portrait, styled in caricature, exaggerates both natural and prosthetic features, embodying satirical art's essence. The term "*caricature*" derives from Italian words meaning "*to exaggerate*," coined by artists Annibale and Agostino Caracci in the late 1590s.

This caricature theme delves deeper into Kojaque's experience as an Irishman in London, where he encountered culture shock, facing accents mimicked and jokes at the expense of his Irish identity.

This reflects the feeling of being a caricature, not taken seriously by dominant power structures like the British Empire.

Embedded in post-colonial history and generational immigration, the album resonates with the Irish diaspora, exemplified by the growing number of young people from Ireland relocating to places like London, Canada, or Australia due to economical difficulties, and to find a better life.



SCAN QR CODE FOR MUSIC VIDEO



KOJAQUE PHOTOGRAPHED
BY ARANN MCCORMACK



Jackie Dandelion and 46A Productions took to the streets of Cabra to film the accompanying music video – where Kojaque performs and dances with a mic and boombox on the side of the road. Equipped with an aesthetic that is just so distinctively ‘Celtic Tiger,’ the cultural and economic relevancy of this video directly contrasts with the cost-of-living situation we are currently in the depths of. Kojaque’s lyrics are often politically charged and passionately executed – proving quite effective in building a relationship between the listener and the artist. It’s no secret that Kojaque is not only a talented music artist but also an incredibly creative film-maker and director.

STILLS FROM OFFICIAL
‘CABRA DRIVE’
MUSIC VIDEO



Kojaque's portrait on a bright yellow background showcases his distinctive features: bold fake teeth, one gold, and facial prosthetics. His pink, grainy skin complements piercing blue eyes. His hair, a blend of yellow and near black, adds intrigue. In a sharp black pinstriped suit with a white shirt and a snazzy yellow tie, Kojaque holds a bouquet of yellow dandelions, a nod to his alter ego, Jackie Dandelion, inspired by a playful joke with a friend from Fontaines DC.

ARTWORK & DESIGN

He has directed most of his music videos, starring in almost all of them— making him an actor too! My favourite music video by him, co-directed by Sam McGrath would have to be ‘*Town’s Dead*’, (2021). I love how it gives off ‘*Alice in Wonderland*’ vibes, but also just pure violence and chaos being unleashed by the energy of the melody.

With politically charged and passionate lyrics, you can see how the video reflects the anger and desperation for peace.



KOJAQUE PHOTOGRAPHED BY RICH GILLIGAN



COVER ART FOR SINGLE, ‘BAMBI’.



IMAGE FROM THE BACK OF THE ALBUM VINYL.



STILLS FROM OFFICIAL ‘WOOF’ MUSIC VIDEO

FEATURES:

◆ ‘WHAT IF?’ FEATURING CHARLOTTE DOS SANTOS

Emotionally honest lyrics, surging and spiralling his thoughts out-loud like a journal, yearning for the girl on the other end to hear him. Long-distance relationships or just estrangement from the Ireland he once knew, and the girl he once knew.

◆ ‘JOHNNY MCENROE’ FEATURING WIKI

My first impressions was that it gave off a distinctive MF DOOM sound—I learned later he was a new York rapper too. Bound by a catchy and flashy hook, and a title dedicated to a famous American tennis player in the 80s –Wiki chimes in for verse two. With an accompanying music video shot in NYC starring both Kojaque and Wiki drinking pints of Guinness, and strutting the streets. Again, the idea of emigration and historic trauma lingers but in such a pseudo-confident and chaotic way. I love the style of this, its shot in a home-movie aesthetic, featuring 00s style cuts, effects and transitions. According to fans, whenever Wiki performs in Ireland, he makes sure to wear his Italia 90 Jersey!

◆ ‘WOOF’ FEATURING BIIG PIIG

Biig Piig’s stunning voice introduces us to Kojaque’s first verse where he convinces a love to stay—punchy lyrics with a syncopated beat you can’t help but believe him. He exclaims he ‘Got no time for boo-hoos, Got no time for ccs’, reflecting his busy career in the music industry—the balance between work and relationships, long distance relationships etc. Further, the music video takes place at what seems to be the morning of an ‘*After’s*’, if you will, as they yearn for comfort. The hazy, messy backdrop gives an authentic comforting aesthetic, along with the entanglement of legs arms and bodies sprinkled around the apartment peacefully.

◆ ‘BAMBI’ FEATURING GOTTS STREET PARK

A meditative love song, Kojaque recalls fondly a night he shared with another, singing of how nervous they both were—then the consequences of time passing between the two. The music video stars Kean Kavanagh as he hobbles in on crutches, asking Kojaque does he want the light off, as he lies out in the snow, fixing his headphones. Throughout the video he is dragged by the snow machinery until the end, where he unties his ankles and walks free as the credits roll. I think this signifies his experience of life just going on around him rather than living life in the present, he admits ‘we never got the time quite right’.



CHARLOTTE DOS SANTOS

Charlotte Dos Santos is a Norwegian singer, songwriter, and producer known for her soulful and eclectic music. She was born and raised in Norway to a Norwegian mother and a father from Angola. Dos Santos blends various genres such as jazz, soul, R&B, and Brazilian influences into her music, creating a distinct and compelling sound.

WIKI

Wiki, or Patrick Morales, is an American rapper known for his contributions to the hip-hop scene. He gained prominence as one-third of the hip-hop group Ratking, formed in New York City in the early 2010s. Ratking, consisting of Wiki, Hak, and Sporting Life, garnered attention for their sound, while mixing elements of hip-hop, experimental music, and punk.



BIIG PIIG

Biig Piig is an Irish singer, rapper, and songwriter accredited for her genre-blending music that fuses elements of R&B, soul, hip-hop, and jazz. Biig Piig gained attention with her debut single “*Vice City*” in 2018, followed by her EP “*Big Fan of the Sesh, Vol. 1*”, later that year showcasing her smooth vocals and introspective lyrics.

GOTTS STREET PARK

Gotts Street Park is a production trio from Leeds, England, consisting of Tom Henry, Josh Crocker, and Joe Craven. They gained much attention for their unique sound that merges live instrumentation with electronic production techniques.

