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Fearlessly honest and undeniably magnetic, 17-year-old singer/songwriter GAYLE creates the kind of self-possessed pop music that’s empowering for both artist and audience. Since making her debut with the boldly confessional “dumbass”—a heavily playlisted track that premiered in early 2020—the Nashville-based musician has independently released a series of singles built on her unfiltered yet beautifully nuanced brand of songwriting. Atlantic Records / Arthouse Records recording artist GAYLE is sharing songs that reveal her larger-than-life personality and willingness to expose her deepest insecurities and desires.

Her debut single for Atlantic, “abcdefu” arrived as a glowing example of GAYLE’s gift for fusing that raw sincerity with her idiosyncratic and sometimes-irreverent perspective. With its minimalist backdrop of jagged guitar work, the tongue-in-cheek breakup song explodes into a glorious free-for-all at its gang-vocal-fueled chorus (sample lyric: “Fuck you, and your mom, and your sister, and your job, and your broke-ass car, and that shit you call art”). But in a sharp contrast to its thrilling catharsis, “abcdefu” also telegraphs a refusal to compromise her own needs. “That song came from a place of trying so hard to be the nice, respectful ex-girlfriend, to the point where it was negatively affecting me,” she says. “It’s about asking, ‘Why am I being so nice to this person who completely took advantage of me?’, and allowing myself to express my anger about that.”

The now RIAA Platinum-certified “abcdefu” has racked up over 1B streams to date and held #1 on Top 40 radio for 3 consecutive weeks, along with hitting #3 on Billboard’s “Hot 100” after reaching #1 on a range of charts, including sitting at #1 for four consecutive weeks on the Billboard Global 200 and #1 on the Billboard Global Excl. U.S. charts for nine consecutive weeks. Recently featured as YouTube’s “Artist On The Rise,” an Amazon “Artist to Watch 2022,” MTV’s February “Global Push Artist,” a Billboard Music Award finalist, and one of Billboard’s “21 Under 21: The Ones To Watch,” further press highlights include a Billboard magazine Chartbreakers feature that highlights GAYLE’s chart-topping success with “abcdefu.” GAYLE made her late night network TV debut earlier this year with a captivating interview and electrifying performance of “abcdefu” on NBC’s *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon*, and recently visited CBS’s *The Late Late Show with James Corden* for a spectacular live performance of “ur just horny.”

Growing up outside Dallas, GAYLE first started singing at the age of seven after learning about jazz vocalists like Ella Fitzgerald in school. “I went home that day and wouldn’t stop scatting,” she says. “I loved the idea that you could just sing things on the spot to make everything a little less quiet.” Thanks to her mom, GAYLE next discovered the classic soul singers like Aretha Franklin, whom she still considers her number-one inspiration. “From the first time I heard Aretha, I felt like I didn’t need anything else in the world—I just needed to sit and listen to whatever she had to tell me,” she says. Within the next few years, GAYLE had taken up piano and guitar and started writing songs of her own. “I’d always have a notebook with me, and I’d write in it obsessively,” she says. “Because I was so young, I was mostly talking about emotions I’d never experienced—a lot of times I’d watch a movie, and then try to write a song that created that same feeling.”

Determined to take her songwriting to the next level, GAYLE made her first trip to Nashville at the age of 10 and soon began playing in bars around town. “I very luckily found some people who were willing to write with a 10-year-old, and fell in love with the whole process of collaboration,” she notes. After nearly two years of traveling back and forth from Texas—at one point averaging 90 gigs in six months— GAYLE and her family relocated to Nashville, where she started booking up to five co-writing sessions a week. By the time she was 14 she’d crossed paths with famed pop songwriter/publisher Kara DioGuardi, who promptly took on the role of her mentor. “Kara always pushes me to be the most honest I can possibly be,” GAYLE says. “It’s completely changed my writing, and taught me to really show my vulnerability rather than trying to hide it.”

A perfect embodiment of that approach, “dumbass” marked a major artistic breakthrough for GAYLE. “I’d gone through a phase where I was focusing all my writing on a boy or something else external, so that I didn’t have to write about myself or my own emotions,” she says. “But then one day I saw this quote that said, ‘Your fear of looking stupid is holding you back,’ and I realized I needed to stop worrying about putting myself out there.” Co-written with Jesse Thomas and Grant Averill, “dumbass” took shape from GAYLE’s improvisation of its unforgettably forthright opening lines: “I do this thing where I close off/My feelings, and I take my clothes off/So I don’t have to open up to my boyfriend.” “I remember Jesse saying, ‘Maybe that’s more of a second-verse lyric’—and I told her, ‘No, we *need* to start the song like that,” GAYLE recalls. Her instincts proved right on target, with “dumbass” landing on coveted playlists like Spotify’s New Music Friday and TIDAL’s Rising: Pop soon after its arrival in January 2020.

As “dumbass” gained traction online and inspired remixes from The Him and Ashworth, GAYLE made waves with her follow-up singles “z” (an up-close-and-personal commentary on Generation Z), “happy for you” (a heavy-hearted exploration of a toxic relationship), and “orange peel” (a dreamy piece of R&B-pop that flaunts her fierce wordplay on lines like “I can make a man go, like a motherfucking mango”). Her breakout success quickly caught the attention of Atlantic, who signed GAYLE in May 2020, right around her 16th birthday. “Atlantic was Aretha’s label so it was my dream to sign with them,” she says. “It’s the best birthday present I could’ve ever asked for.”

Now fresh off the release of her debut EP *a study of the human experience volume one*, GAYLE is intent on making music that offers her listeners a certain emotional freedom.  “After ‘dumbass’ came out, I had a lot of people telling me how brave I am,” she says. “I thought, ‘I’m talking about something that almost everyone has gone through at some point—is that really that brave?’ With all my songs I’m just writing about my own experience, with the hope that it’ll give people space to feel more comfortable with their own emotions. I just want everyone to do what makes them happy, and be more confident in who they really are.”

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