

GENEVIEVE STOKES BIO

Come down the rabbit hole with Genevieve Stokes.

The 21-year-old singer-songwriter is one of alternative pop's brightest stars. She garnered acclaim from the likes of *Complex* and *Earmilk* all while gaining 7 million streams independently after uploading songs to SoundCloud while in high school. After signing to Atlantic Records, Stokes released her critically acclaimed debut EP, *Swimming Lessons*, in 2021. The seven-song project carried a delicate balance of nostalgia and angst, translating her high school experience into a mature and evocative collection of songs.

Stokes opens up a new world of imagination with her forthcoming EP *Catching Rabbits*, a dreamy exploration of what it means to heal and unlock your inner child. Inspired by the likes of Regina Spektor and Fiona Apple, Stokes creates vivid, emotional and complex sonic tapestries that transport you to another world right along with her.

Born and raised in Portland, Maine, Stokes' hometown has had a massive effect on her music. She continued living at home with her parents while recording *Swimming Lessons*, which was made in a cabin in Maine. Even as she's moved around to and spent time in cities like Los Angeles, New York City and New Orleans, she can feel the pull of Portland in her memory and songwriting.

"My perspective on it is changing constantly," she says. "[I'm] reconnecting with my childhood version of Maine."

Storybook and fairy tale allusions seep through the lyrics and visuals of *Catching Rabbits*, a much-needed escape from the darkness she was clawing out of while writing it. She began struggling with her mental health after her first EP came out, and writing *Catching Rabbits* allowed Stokes to find the "vibrancy in life" again and reconnect with her childhood imagination.

"I was able to access parts of my creative mind that I had never experienced before," she explains. "I was simultaneously struggling a lot mentally so it was this weird split thing where I felt life was beautiful but also really dark. It went back and forth."

To bring her storybook songs to life, Stokes linked up with esteemed producer Tony Berg (Phoebe Bridgers, Paul McCartney, Taylor Swift) in LA. For the first week, Stokes would go to Berg's home and practice the piano for five hours a day before workshopping the songs she had already written. Then the pair recorded most of the songs at the iconic Sound City Studios, the same place where legends like Nirvana and Fleetwood Mac were born.

"[Tony's] so specific. Watching him through the production process, he's so decisive and clear-minded," she says of her musical partner. He inspired her to shed some of her own imposter syndrome and trust herself more.

Stokes, of course, grew up loving fairytales like *Alice in Wonderland* and especially loved the phrase "chasing rabbits." She chose the title *Catching Rabbits* to flip the other phrase on its head and embody the idea of "chasing the impossible in life." The EP opens with first single "Habits," a whimsical exploration of the split light and darkness she was experiencing as the EP was being penned: the demise of a relationship juxtaposed with the beauty and promise of spring created an interesting dynamic in both Stokes' reality and music.

“It felt kind of comforting to sing about things that I was upset about but also be surrounded by light and magic and springtime.”

On the lush and catchy “Can I,” Stokes uses fragmented memories of her recently ended relationship to write an indie film score of a song. “The chorus gets really sad. It’s like an explosion of my emotions.”

Meanwhile, tracks like “Book of Memories” and “Mara” more acutely address the mental hardship she endured during this period. They are two examples of the type of brave, gorgeous and honest writing Stokes can do even through the lens of childhood fantasies.

Catching Rabbits creates the first chapter in a storybook that will extend to her future full-length album, that she’s already begun writing. Like all great songwriters she’s starting to pick up on the common threads in her own songs that create one extended arc, like lighthouses, forests and tarot. She’s folding her musical journey into a visual one, creating a whole world out of her music.

“I’m excited to see where this storyline goes,” Stokes says, reflecting the same anticipation of her growing fandom. “It’s just fun to piece everything together.”