MUSIC

EMERGING

AURAT REDEFINES REPRESENTATION IN ALTERNATIVE MUSIC

OCTOBER 02, 2020 · ELIZABETH RHODES · LEAVE A COMMENT

In our Spring 2020 Issue we launched a new music feature, Emerging. If you've been wondering what to listen to lately or pressed Spotify and social media searching for the next emerging band that would restore your faith in The State of Music, this feature is for you. We checked in with a few of the bands we think have a unique voice in the musical landscape to inspire a new generation of concert-goers and record-hopers alike. In this Auxiliary Online Content you'll find more background and photos on each band, this time we are focusing on Aurat.

Photo by Sherif Nice

Bali Call
Asmka Kamal: Vocals
Gil Talbot: Bass/Production
Nathalie Martin: Guitar
Victor Andrade: Drums

Emerging Band Mona Zamora of the Dessert Jade Sears

Taking cues from the sounds of darkwave, post-punk, new wave, and Bollywood, Aurat ("OH RIZT") are based in southern California with the goal of bringing this thing different to the current scene. We were so used to seeing the 'norm' and decided to break down cultural and sentimental barriers." With lyrics sung in vocalist Asmka's first language Urdu, they explain the band name Aurat ("women"), "is not an aesthetic but a form of representation that is open to any background, gender, and sensality. Aurat creates an experience that is equally open to anyone. It is a platform that allows individuals to vibe with the music even if they don't understand the language."

Photo by Sherif Nice, Photo by **Sherif Nice**

Gil Talbot, Bass/Production, Photo by **Sherif Nice**

Victor Andrade, Drums, Photo by **Sherif Nice**

Asmka Kamal, Vocals, Photo by **Sherif Nice**

Aurat released a self-titled EP in 2017 and have followed up with three full-length releases since then: *Sinner and Image* both in 2018 and their latest LP *Zohar* ("protect") in April 2020. When asked about Aurat's sound and musical influences, the band said, "Aurat is a mashup of the holy trinity of influences the further is from Deutschland, the sex is the classic Bollywood, and the holy ghost are the numerous punk bands that we love and extend before we were even born. This is music to wish to at 3am does an empty street. Although the band is inspired in part by classic electronic music, post punk, industrial, goth, and just about any 'wave related genre you can cite, the sounds are living personalities that can only be directed on a song-to-song basis. We have a plethora of musical influences that shape the way we play and apply our sound to each song."

Check out Aurat with some of their music videos. A good one, "Shalim" music video directed by Nathalie Martin from *Image* released in 2018.

And Aurat's brand new music video for "RAAT".

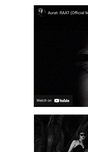

Photo by **Sherif Nice**

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For the Emerging feature we always ask how the location of the band has influenced their sound and what the current vibe of their local scene is. Aurat described the current music scene in southern California as, "thriving, even with the pandemic we are an array of artists utilize virtual platforms to keep the music scene alive. The Los Angeles and San Diego scenes are vigorously growing with bands popping up left and right but it's good that people can bring their flavor or style to the scene. Bands from other countries can easily come down here and get a full packed room." Although they have self-released all of their own material, when asked what is coming up next for the band they told us, "As of recently we got into an actual studio and had a whole different experience. The Case is recording studio in LA run by Josiah Wainscotte allowed us to integrate our talents as a whole band. We want to continue to make music and someday go on tour."

In a mainstream cultural landscape that seems to increasingly homogenize artists instead of celebrating their differences and unique aspects, Aurat is a reminder of how important it is to bring your experiences and culture into your art. As Asmka said of her inspiration to create music, "The most rewarding part of creating Aurat is having other Desi folks walking up to me after shows and telling me that they've never seen anything like this before. I love that I can represent my community and those who can connect otherwise. Being a South Asian woman inspires me to create music for an underrepresented community. In an industry that often challenges people of color, it is a radical form of love and action to continue to make music that is representative of us in a genuine way."

Lastly here is a look at Aurat performing "Behen" at Space Bar, San Diego for Manuequins Record Release Show in February 2020. Recorded by Xayn.

Listen to Aurat on Bandcamp and Spotify and follow them on Instagram and YouTube. Victor and Nathalie both play in Kamasaw (follow them on Instagram). Victor is a convener for Slash Dance a night that embraces the spirit of the Los Angeles Parade through those who spoon and thrive from its beautiful decay.

Check out the interview with Aurat in the Summer 2020 Issue. To read more about bands we cover for this feature, check out all of our Emerging interviews.

-Elizabeth Rhodes

Elizabeth Rhodes is the Music Editor at Auxiliary. Based in Los Angeles, she is a writer, DJ, modern mystic, and astrology junkie.

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