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## 2D LIFE

### Sex, commitment focus of Pittsburgh rapper's fourth album

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USA TODAY

Five years ago, Mac Miller rapped about parties (*All Around the World*) and presidential hopefuls (*Donald Trump*) on his breakthrough mixtape *Best Day Ever*, whose boisterous rhymes and homespun beats made him a staple of college playlists.

Fast forward to 2016, and the Pittsburgh native is decidedly more mature in both his sound and lyrics: mulling matters of sex and commitment on his eclectic fourth album, *The Divine Feminine*.

The concept of *Feminine*, out Friday, stems from "love and the universe, and how they work together," says Miller, 24. Channeling his emotions and a so-called "female energy" into his songwriting, he saw the album as an opportunity to "really jump in and (be) vulnerable. Just rapping my way out of situations is awesome and it's almost like I can hide certain emotions, but this is just letting it all out."

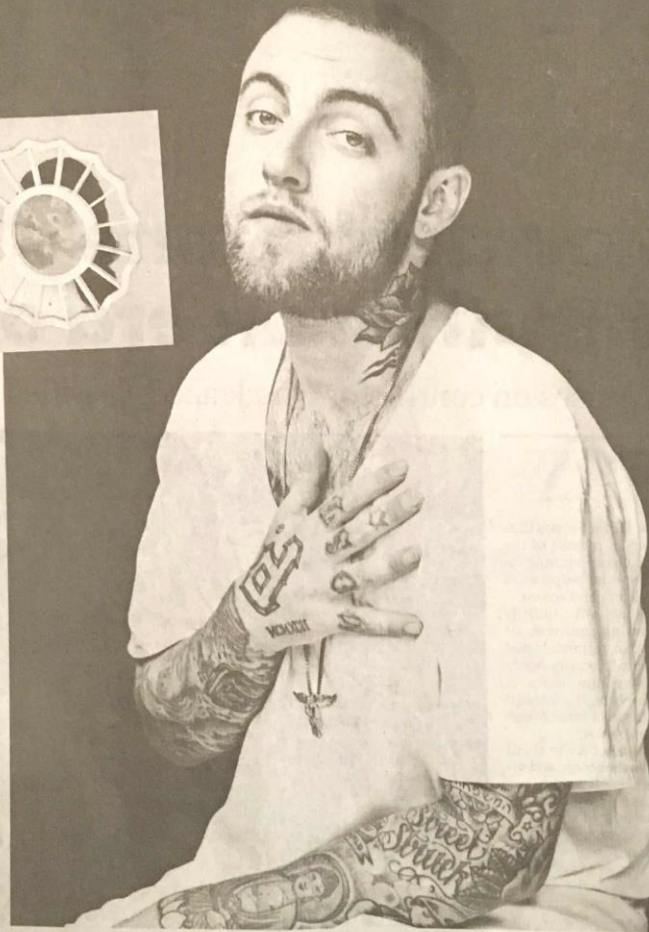
The results are more amorous, candid cuts such as *Soulmate*, a woozy ode to a celestial sweetheart, and *Cinderella*, featuring Ty Dolla Sign, about a long-awaited night of passion. Miller says the most special to him is *My Favorite Part*, a duet with Ariana Grande that "as far as vulnerability goes, takes the cake."

*Favorite*, the rumored couple's second song together after Grande's *The Way* in 2013, allows Miller to flex his pipes as he confesses his feelings to a casual lover. Going note for note with the powerhouse pop star, "I'm not going to out-sing her in any dimension of the universe; it's not going to happen," he laughs. When asked if he wrote the song about Grande, Miller cagily admits, "Yeah, but I was writing about certain aspects of our relationship from a long time ago."

Grande has proudly stated in

MUSIC

## MAC MILLER HAS LOVE IN MIND ON 'DIVINE'



Mac Miller, 24, returns Friday with his fourth album, *The Divine Feminine*.

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interviews and on social media that she is a feminist. As for whether he identifies as one as well, the rapper says, "Yeah, sure, I don't know what anything means by that term — I'm just a respectful human being and I love love. At the same time, I appreciate everything. I'm not like, 'Man, rap music needs to be more



Miller and Ariana Grande collaborate on his new album.

respectful to women.' I'm not saying that. I don't know what term that makes me, I'm just speaking from my perspective right now. I just love women, baby."

That affection comes through in *Feminine*'s sensual first single *Dang!*, in which he and rising rapper Anderson .Paak attempt to woo back their women over a hypnotic funk groove. The audacious anthem is a savory taste of what to expect on the rest of the album, which also includes jazz-inflected collaborations with Kendrick Lamar (closing track *God is Fair*) and CeeLo Green (the soulful *We*).

*Feminine* arrives just a year after Miller's well-received *GO:OD AM*, which he supported on tour through the spring. He is now gearing up for another three-month North American trek, which kicks off Sunday in his hometown Pittsburgh and is sure to include many new fans.

"I make so much music, so it's hard for me to gauge what the perception of me is," Miller says. "I forget that people don't know that I do all these things, so I'm really excited about that. It's interesting to see people seeing me do stuff for the first time and it's inspiring to continue that growth. I've been growing in all different directions and I'm really enjoying this particular journey."

GLASKEW