

R&B debut by Kali Uchis is a total triumph

Musician successfully mixes old-school styles with contemporary production

By YER CHANG  
Quill staff writer

Karly-Marina Loaiza, also known by her stage name, Kali Uchis, is a new R&B artist who recently released her first studio album, *Isolation*. Before this album, she released a mixtape called *Drunken Babble* in 2012 when she was a high school student. This was followed by her debut EP, *Por Vida*, in 2015. I think her vocals bring an old soul feel to a futuristic sound, which makes the album different than today’s typical hit music. I really enjoy the way her lyrics mean something to her while relating to her listeners, too.

Uchis’ album, which consists of 15 songs, features many other up-and-coming artists like Jorja Smith and Steve Lacy. One big artist Uchis has worked with in the past who makes an appearance on her album is Tyler, The Creator, who appears on track 13, “After the Storm.” Thanks to the contributions of Tyler, The Creator and bassist Bootsy Collins, this song feels very different from most other songs we hear on today’s radio stations. The song has a vintage, old-school vibe that is slow and uplifting. The lyrics are genuine and authentic, with Tyler’s discrete vocals adding a playful tone to the song. The track’s lyrics deals with how Uchis feels about not being able to guide her family and support them while she is in America and they are not. Uchis was born in Pereira, Colombia, but she moved to a town in northern Virginia while growing up. As she says in the song, she hates not being able to go home and it is not the same connecting with people over the phone.

Not only does she talk about her family on this song, Uchis also sings about her mentality. She says that we all face demons and we face those demons alone. Although we are alone, however, she says that we shouldn’t give up and we should be the hero in our own story. Not only is this song a beautiful masterpiece, the music video for the song has an amazing, dreamy aesthetic. I love this track because Uchis brings true emotions to it and addresses reality in a way that is relatable to her listeners.

The album’s next track, “Tyrant,” featuring Jorja Smith, feels timeless. The song is about summer flings and day dreaming, but also looking for someone who is willing to put the time and effort into a relationship. The song’s lyrics begin by commenting on the bad things that happen in the world, but eventually reach the overall message of just enjoying the moment. Jorja Smith’s vocals on the track bring a welcome tone and texture. The combination of her deep, raspy voice and Uchis’ soft, sweet vocals works well. I like this track because it is well-produced and well-performed.

Another standout song is track 14, “Feel Like a Fool.” This song is about feeling like a fool when someone that you like doesn’t like you back. This track draws inspiration from artists like Ella Fitzgerald and Amy Winehouse, featuring jazz instruments and R&B vocals. I enjoy this song because it is upbeat and she has a different musical style.

Overall, *Isolation* is a new experience and very different from other top 40 artists. Uchis shines thanks to her unique style and voice. I rate *Isolation* four out of five stars.

Infinitely entertaining *War* tells a compelling tale

*Avengers: Infinity War* does an excellent job of developing its central villain, the Mad Titan known as Thanos



Photo courtesy of MARVEL STUDIOS

Directors Joe and Anthony Russo manage to juggle dozens of superheroes in a satisfying way throughout the film.

By DYLAN HAJNASIEWICZ  
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Ten years of Marvel Studios films have built up to the massive movie called *Avengers: Infinity War*. It is a culmination of all 18 Marvel movies released to this point. This is the first time in movie history that this many films have been created as a lead-up to one movie. After seeing *Infinity War* just once, I can for sure say that it is one of my favorite Marvel movies to date.

*Avengers: Infinity War* is directed by Joe and Anthony Russo, who have previously directed two other Marvel movies, *Captain America: Winter Soldier* and *Captain America: Civil War*. Since they have such a good track record with Marvel films, it was hard to see them creating anything not worth viewing multiple times.

The story revolves around Thanos trying to acquire all six of the Infinity Stones that have been popping up in the earlier films in the Marvel franchise. There are two main differences between this *Avengers* movie and previous Marvel movies. First, the scale of the movie is bigger than any other film that has come out, featuring multiple characters and settings. Second, the movie doesn’t really focus on the *Avengers* as much as it does Thanos. In past Marvel films, there has never been a movie that focuses more on the villain than the main heroes, but *Infinity War* successfully changes that dynamic.

Portraying Thanos is Josh Brolin, who finally has a chance to fully flesh out the role of the Mad Titan. The film gives you so much time with him that you can almost find yourself rooting for him to succeed. Brolin’s portrayal of Thanos will go down as one of the best movie villains from the past decade as he perfectly shows the emotion and drive that the character has in order to acquire all of the stones.

The film does a good job at showing how big of a villain Thanos is in the

Marvel universe. Within minutes of the movie starting, you can see the fear in people whenever they talk about Thanos. He is by far the best part of this movie. It would have been easy for the Russo brothers to make him a one-dimensional character, but instead, they took the time in the movie to focus on him more than the heroes at some points.

In the film, Thanos is trying to do something terrible and is a terrible person, but you still feel bad for him at various times. Even when he is doing something crazy, it still seems understandable, which shows how smart he is and how well-crafted Brolin’s performance is.

Another notable performance comes from Robert Downey, Jr. as Tony Stark. He was the first hero in the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) and has been in almost half of the movies that have been released. Downey gives a great performance in this film, showing a lot more emotion because of the things that are happening to his character. I really love the relationship between Stark and Peter Parker in the movie. Stark acts like he is filling a father-figure role and Downey really shows how much Stark cares for Parker.

In past *Avengers* films, there has been a lack of attention to the lesser-known characters in the MCU, which I’ve never liked. However, like the Russos’ previous films, they balance the huge number of characters in the movie better than any of the other *Avengers* films to date.

The only really problem that I have with this film, which isn’t that big of a deal, is how little Thanos actually uses the stones. At some points in the film, you really only see him using the power stone. I would have liked to see him use some of the other stones, which is the case in the original comics.

Despite this, Joe and Anthony Russo have yet again made another amazing Marvel film. This film has such a good ending that it will be tough to wait an entire year to see how things play out in *Avengers 4*, which will be the last film in phase three of the MCU.

I give *Avengers: Infinity War* five out of five stars. This is the first time that a film like this has ever been made and it was done tremendously by the Russo brothers. They perfectly fleshed out a villain who has had little screen time before this film, while still giving the viewer a lot of great scenes with their favorite heroes and even some great cameos from new and returning characters.

Season two of Netflix's *Events* falls short of source material

While the continuing adventures of Count Olaf and the Baudelaire children are still engaging, the original novels are superior

By DYLAN HAJNASIEWICZ  
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*A Series of Unfortunate Events* is a Netflix original show based off of the children’s book series written by Daniel Handler. The Netflix series is directed by Barry Sonnenfeld and stars Neil Patrick Harris as Count Olaf and Patrick Warburton as Lemony Snicket. I have really enjoyed the first two seasons of the show. They are fun and keep you engaged throughout every episode.

Although the Netflix series is based off of the books, it doesn’t really follow the books completely. The show has added many characters throughout the two seasons, as well as adding a

whole new story arc about the Baudelaire children, their parents and all the guardians that they have throughout the show.

The first season did a great job of adapting the original books and focusing directly on what happens in the plot. This makes the first season really fun to watch, especially if you are familiar with the books.

However, the second season changes the story a little bit. In fact, some of the biggest changes from the books to the show come in the second season, which makes the latest season a little weird at times, but still good.

In the second season, the story from the books is overshadowed by a new story arc that introduces a secret

organization that the parents of the children at the center of the story were part of before the fire that starts the whole plot. While this new development really takes over the show in the second season, it still is a pretty good story that sometimes improves upon the original story from the books.

Neil Patrick Harris is amazing as Count Olaf. He looks just like the pictures of the character from the book covers and he is doing an outstanding job at bringing this character to life. For example, in season two, Count Olaf once again uses many different disguises. Every time, Neil Patrick Harris does an amazing job at using a different accent, moving differently with his body

and changing his appearance to meet the demands of the role.

Although Harris is still excellent, the solid second season does not hold up to the fantastic first season. Season two feels a little dragged out at times because the episodes are longer and the addition of the new storyline that is not in the books leaves viewers with a lot of unanswered questions that will not be fully addressed until season three.

At this point, I give *A Series of Unfortunate Events* 3.5 out of five stars. The first season was solid, but the second season takes it down a couple notches. The primary issue is the new story that strays from and overshadows the original story from the books.

New Weeknd release is the best kind of *Melancholy*

The Weeknd's long-awaited new EP, *My Dear Melancholy*, is a compelling exploration of relationship issues

By SARA OTHMAN  
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*My Dear Melancholy* is the latest project from Toronto singer The Weeknd. It is a six-song EP that is 21 minutes long, which is half the size of his previous mixtapes. The EP is filled with dramatic tempos, emotion and simple structures. Lyrically, the EP deals with relationships in a way that will connect with anyone who has been dumped before.

Since coming out with his hit album *Starboy* in 2016, The Weeknd

has been involved in many breakups, which is what drives *My Dear Melancholy*. His first song on the album, “Call Out My Name,” seems to refer to his relationships with Bella Hadid and Selena Gomez. The song is a loop of piano notes and sentimental words: “We found each other. I helped you out of a broken place. You gave me comfort, but falling for you was my mistake.” Right away, the listener knows this is a breakup album that addresses the way people can reminisce about someone that they dislike but still miss.

The Weeknd brings some inter-

esting beats to the song “Try Me.” This great track sounds like a more up-to-date version of Dr. Dre’s song “Keep Their Heads Ringin’.” The mix of sounds and tempos helps make this song bittersweet.

Another good song is “I Was Never There.” On this track, The Weeknd brings in Duke and Gesafelstein for a collaboration. The mix of their individual sounds and styles is ideal. The instrumentation features a lot of synthesizer, which makes the song appealing.

Perhaps my favorite song on

the album is “Privilege.” I especially enjoy this track’s lyrics, which include lines like: “Enjoy your privileged life, ‘cause I’m not gonna hold you through the night. We said our last goodbyes, so let’s just try to end it with a smile.” This song portrays The Weeknd’s emotional growth in relation to women. He forgives his exes, ends his relationships with a smile and moves on with his life.

*My Dear Melancholy* is a masterpiece. I can feel The Weeknd’s emotions on every single song. This EP deserves five out of five stars.