Brie Stoner

*Me Veo*

It is human nature to sort; to categorize and compartmentalize. Yet in doing so we risk perceiving separations where none exist. Brie Stoner is multicultural and multilingual. She is a songwriter, vocalist, visual artist, and author. Really, though, these are all harmonious facets of her unique ingenuity. Working with producer David Vandervelde (Father John Misty), Stoner has distilled this creative essence into *Me Veo.*

A languid, hazy dream-rock meditation on identity (“Me veo” is Spanish for “I see myself”), the record is a testament to freeing oneself from labels, and a celebration of the myriad, mystical threads that make up the whole cloth of the human spirit. “I think I’ve been writing this record my entire life” says Stoner. “Ever since I was little, I’ve been told I’m either one thing or another, that I have to pick one identity over another; but of course, I’ve always been more than one thing.”

Growing up in Madrid, Spain, and now living in Grand Rapids, Michigan, Stoner is no stranger to moving fluidly between languages, identities, and forms of expression. A creative code-switcher, Stoner’s visual art mirrors the elegance of her music; her lyricism the intuitive ease of her prose.

As a musician, Stoner has worked with producers Jay Bennett (Wilco) and Vandervelde. Her music has been featured on Ralph Lauren’s runway during fashion week, and in campaigns by Victoria Secret, and *Orange is The New Black*. As a writer, her work has been featured in *The Call To Unite: Voices of hope and Awakening*, a book featuring inspirational voices such as Oprah, Tim Shriver, Elizabeth Gilbert and many more. Stoner was a co-host of the *Another Name for Every Thing* podcast, garnering millions of downloads, before launching her own podcast *Unknowing* in 2021, which explores the path of creative possibility in conversation with artists, authors, and activists.

Stoner had become a modern woman’s heroine, a dynamo of unstoppable inertia. Yet soon, as with the rest of the world, her reality was frozen in time by the global pandemic. It was precisely at this time that she turned back to her truest native tongue – music – and wrote *Me Veo.*  “The organization I was working for shut down, and I realized that the thing I was most longing to do was recenter my artistic expressions, and particularly to write songs again” explains Stoner.

“The pandemic was a time of reckoning for all of us,” says Stoner, “but in my case it was the

moment I finally felt permission to let all of these parts of me be and exist at once. Spanish

and American. Intellectual and artsy. Spiritual and sensual. A mother. A lover. Fiercely bold and alluringly feminine. Everything belongs because I finally belong to myself in that way. And I had to sing in different languages because, the truth is, there are things you can say in a given language that just get lost in translation.”

Working with Vandervelde, Stoner has graced us with a record that harkens both to the lush production style of late-Sixties French pop and the shimmery psychedelia and spare, fragile folk of '90s alternative dream pop. *Me Veo* is more than a record; it is a nuanced, atmospheric world that envelopes the listener. In a world that has become rife with slick production this record feels thoughtful and authentic; imbued with courageous vulnerability.

Thematically, *Me Veo* delves fearlessly into the psychological and spiritual. “There are so many references to my influences and inspirations in this record” says Stoner. “From *Seven Storey Mountain* by the mystic Thomas Merton in “Soledad” to the poet Rainer Maria Rilke in “Run,” there are many hidden gems shining within this record.”

Rilke, in particular, can be found laced throughout *Me Veo*. “In his poem ‘I am much

too alone in this world, yet not alone,’ he says ‘*I want to mirror your immensity…I want to*

*unfold. Let no place in me hold itself closed, for where I am closed, I am false.’* I carry

that torch in this record…” explains Stoner. “I’m trying to be as brave as I can be, to admit with tenderness and tenacity the things I see in myself, without apology. And hopefully in so doing, help others feel that same kind of permission.” *Me Veo* shines as a melodic mirror at the center of Stoner’s soul, a sonic vessel that not only is carrying her home…but brings us into the beautiful journey of self-discovery.