



CULTURE VULTURE

2022 Wrapped is here.

Unwrapping Spotify Wrapped

Last week, Spotify released the long-awaited Spotify Wrapped – a breakdown of your listening habits, as well as a playlist of the top 100 songs you’ve listened to in the last year (or in this case, 101). The campaign, which officially started in 2016, has gained traction across social media, with people sharing their top artists, and top songs, to Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat and TikTok alike.

Many enjoy perusing their Spotify Wrapped, to gain insights into how their taste may have altered. The service also shows you how many minutes of music you have listened to in the year, making it a competition amongst friends and peers to see who can listen to the most music. But how has this concept changed since the way we listen to music has changed? A case must be made for the influence of TikTok. Flicking through TikTok seems to have replaced television and YouTube as the new preferred form of entertainment. The app has over one billion monthly users, surpassing social media giants Snapchat and Twitter, and in the UK, the average user spends 41 minutes per day on TikTok.

It is no surprise that it is now a great way for new musicians to get exposure. UK artists Caity Baisier, Arthur Hill and Michael Aldag all found fame with their viral TikTok songs, giving them a place in the UK charts. Baisier's catchy 'X&Y' was even ranked highly in my Spotify Wrapped.

The change in how we find our music – from records to tapes, tapes to CDs, CDs to MP3s and MP3s to streaming sites – has slowly let our music tastes become more widespread. Gone were the days where you would buy one album and listen to that; now Spotify can build you a whole playlist off one artist you like, pulling in recommendations from those you’ve never heard of.

The influence social media giants have had on this allows singers like Hill, Baisier and Aldag to have a place on your playlists, alongside mainstream giants who dominate the UK charts. Spotify kindly reminds us of this diversity year by year, with its breakdown showing you all those you have obsessed over.

As more and more people share music on social media platforms, it is only right to assume that Spotify Wrapped playlists around the world will become more diverse, as new singer-songwriters are given a place to share their music, with a hope they have the next viral hit. This may even allow people’s individual annual breakdowns to become more unique, as you find the next voice that matches your specific taste.

The popularity of Spotify Wrapped has also led other streaming services – like Apple Music – to release their own versions of the internet sensation. So, hopefully next year, you will be able to share all the music that you love with your friends (even those unfortunate enough to use Apple Music), and find new artists because of it.

Tea - Carol Anne Duffy

I like pouring your tea,
lifting
the heavy pot, and tipping
it up,
so the fragrant liquid
streams in your china cup.

Or when you're away, or at
work,

I like to think of your
cupped hands as you sip,
as you sip, of the faint
half-smile of your lips.

I like the questions -
sugar? - milk? -
and the answers I don't
know by heart, yet,
for I see your soul in your
eyes, and I forget.

Jasmine, Gunpowder,
Assam, Earl Grey, Ceylon,
I love tea's names. Which
tea would you like? I say
but it's any tea for you,
please, any time of day,

as the women harvest the
slopes
for the sweetest leaves, on
Mount Wu-Yi,
and I am your lover,
smitten, straining your tea.

Student Review: Tea by Carol Anne Duffy



A student explores Duffy's poetry, and how her work inspires feelings of innocence and comfort

"tea and coffee is everything [...] it means a lot to people [...] it's like a heartily gesture. Can I make you a tea? It's like saying can I give you a grand" - Gemma Collins. If like Gemma Collins and so many others, you love tea, you drink it, you make it, you enjoy it, you will understand the poem Tea by Carol Ann Duffy.

Tea is a part of Duffy's Rapture collection, originally published in 2005, containing fifty-two poems. This collection takes us on the journey of one of Duffy's relationships, the life-changing impact of its glorious beginning then devastating conclusion. In this dramatic re-enactment of the rise then eventual fall of their love, Tea is situated in the ascent of the relationship. We can also see how it is the beginning of a relationship, as she takes us on the path to discovering more about her, such as how she takes her tea.

I chose the poem Tea as I think it encapsulates the feelings of innocent love at the early stages of a relationship. Her way of using simplistic words in complicated and careful ways brings out the feelings of the love they share coming naturally to them both. Focusing on the poem individually, without the rest of the collection let's readers solely pay attention to the sheer amount of frisson that is joined to her emotions about her. She allows us an insight into her romantic feelings, showing a fixation on her new love. Although tea can be seen as a fairly mundane drink, Duffy is able to manipulate our view to allow us to see the comforting connotations it can hold. Comparing new and old loves of tea and a person, but also letting them intertwine and interact with each other. Showing how a relationship with a person shouldn't take away from her other passions.

Carol Ann Duffy has achieved a significant amount in her poetry career. However, I personally consider her being appointed poet laureate of Britain the biggest. It's a very prestigious position which had been given to different poets over the last 341 years. Not only is Duffy the first woman to hold the position, she is the first mother, and the first lesbian. She uses this position of power to voice her contemporary feminist views, supporting sociosexual liberation of women. She does this through reconfiguring the pain patriarchal oppression had caused, shifting it into a pleasurable freedom that positions women as equal.

Poetry is like a human necessity; it allows humans to develop their ideas and evaluate their opinions. It's an ancient way of communication, meaning it's a more accessible way of reading stories, that almost everyone has read and analysed before, giving you many interpretations to consider. A poem is the fastest way to get mental energy and gratification. Unlike finishing a complex book poetry allows you more time to analysis and consider different interpretations, that you may not feel able to do with a longer story."

Top 30 Albums of 2022: 20-11

Molly Shillinglaw continues her album countdown, including a wide variety of EPs, first albums and seasoned singers.

20. WOLF ALICE - BLUE LULLABY



Favourite track – Lipstick on the glass
A five-track EP that reimagines a select few songs from their last album, Wolf Alice reveal a more acoustic, vulnerable side to their music without stepping out of their shoegazey, dream pop comfort zone.

19. ECOO2K & BLADEE - CREST



Favourite Track – 5 Star Crest (4 Vattenrum)
A combination between rap and hyperpop, the experimental album transcends boundaries between the two genres that no one would expect to be combined.

18. ROSALIA - MOTOMAMI



Favourite Track – BIZCOCHITO
The third album from the Catalan pop-star, showing off her talent to stretch pop music over multiple genres. The artistic fortitude of the album allows Rosalia to take inspiration from experimental artists before her whilst staying relevant in mainstream pop.

17. KARDASHEV - LIMINAL RITE



Favourite Track – Lavender Calligraphy
A twist of post-metal, shoegaze and ambient that creates a hauntingly dark experience which is never uninteresting due to its exchanges between loud and quiet.

16. NINA NASTASIA - RIDERLESS HORSE



Favourite Track – The Two of Us
A first album in 12 years for Nastasia, the album is an exorcism of abuse and hate manifesting itself in the form of melancholic, folk songs which serve as a healing process for Nastasia herself.

15. KATHERYN JOSEPH - FOR YOU WHO ARE THE WRONGED



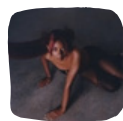
Favourite Track – until the truth of you
A quiet album which is complimented by faint swells of synth and heartbeat rhythms, it creates an extremely intimate listening experience which goes beyond the fence of emotion.

14. JUST MUSTARD - HEART UNDER



Favourite Track – In Shade
Mastering the art of atmospheric rock, Just Mustard create a tumultuous listening experience which makes use of post-punk revivalism, bedroom pop and shoegaze.

13. RAVYN LAE - HYPNOS



Favourite Track – Skin Tight (feat, Steve Lacy)
The neo-soul debut that effortlessly flows, proving that Lae might be one of the most ambitious, creative R&B artists of recent years.

12. WEYES BLOOD - AND IN DARKNESS, HEARTS AGLOW



Favourite Track – A Given Thing
Following on from the themes of her last album, comfort is found in the existential loneliness of Weyes Blood's music as she reflects on the chaotic mess of the world.

11. BILL CALLAHAN - YITJAEЯ



Favourite Track – The Horse
Callahan's solo albums have taken a more philosophical perspective as he pulls a creativity out of the seemingly mundane aspects of life, this third album creates a fragility out of intricate and quiet compositions.



Student Review: The Menu

Sam Stone reviews new thriller 'The Menu', and argues its case for being the best film of 2022.

If you like comedy horror films, you will love this. And if you don't, you will still love this. The Menu is a film that manages to be disturbing, hilarious and shocking within the same minute. From the director of Ali G Indahouse, the film follows a foodie, played by Nicholas Hoult, and his girlfriend, played to perfection by Anya Taylor-Joy. Tyler (Hoult) has dragged Margot (Taylor-Joy) along to a ridiculously expensive restaurant on a remote island, that is run by renowned Chef Slowik (played by Ralph Fiennes). They are joined for this culinary experience by an ensemble of characters, from an action movie star to a food critic. We get to follow them through the menu that has been carefully prepared by the chef to take them on a journey of taste, however it doesn't take long before the customers start to feel as though they have had their fair share of Slowik's food. The film maintains a tense and eerie feeling throughout, akin to that of Midsommar, with genuine laugh out loud moments that do not detract from the tension; they add to it in many ways. While the plot pushes boundaries, it is the acting performances that bring this film to life. Every actor plays their role brilliantly, especially Fiennes and Taylor-Joy, who have an unpredictable but impressive chemistry on screen. My only advice would be to not guess where the film goes or try to overanalyse it too much. Sit back and enjoy everything that is thrown at you and you might agree that this is one of the best films, if not the best, of 2022.

"ALWAYS BE A FIRST-RATE VERSION OF YOURSELF, INSTEAD OF A SECOND-RATE VERSION OF SOMEBODY ELSE."

Judy Garland

Best releases of 2022:

Elvis



The Woman King



Top Gun: Maverick



See How They Run



Black Panther: Wakanda Forever



Where the Crawdads Sing



The Batman



Do Revenge



Bullet Train



WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

As the weeks progress, we are hoping Culture Vulture will become jam-packed with student articles, recommendations and reviews. If you would like to make your own creative suggestion, or have a piece of work that you would like to see in the next magazine, scan the QR code.



Alternatively, if you would like to contribute an article, film, album, book or podcast review, or have an itching to write a features piece about a current cultural affair, email either theysham@gordanoschool.org.uk or pramsay@gordanoschool.org.uk with your idea and they can point you in the right direction. Who knows - you may see your name in print!

Make sure to encourage your tutors and friends to get involved, and let's make creativity central to the Gordano Sixth Form experience!

