

Ben Will Interview Transcript

Sara Nishikawa (she/her): So i'm just going to start with what was your first album or song that you bought when do you think about it, and when does it come up in your life.

Ben Will (he/him): So I don't think about it much and i'm a little embarrassed about Well, my answer is actually kind of two answers, because the first album I remember buying was the Marshall mathers LP by eminem when I was in like the seventh grade, I had no business buying it. I think I even had to like get someone to service like a proxy for me, because you know when it's explicit, you have to be a certain age in order to actually purchase it and I was definitely probably about 13 and was just trying to keep up with my friends by buying it, so I can look cool and listening to it at night, so my parents wouldn't find out on my little CD player with the headphones. And then I also remember buying the miseducation of lauryn hill around the same time which you know, is just a beautiful work masterpiece that I didn't realize how profound it was when I was listening to it. But I think the fact that I got those two albums around the same time, you know with my own money, the first time I was able to kind of buy music kind of speaks to the duality within me as a creative. Because I kind of go back and forth between these two different worlds, and I also know that i'm a bridge between many different worlds and many different people as well and oftentimes. I know in my career sometimes people like, then, what are you doing here like, why are you here and i'm like I just think i'm supposed to be in this space, you know because I find myself and really interesting places so. I think the fact that, like you know Eminem album and Laura hill album were like the first music CDs that I purchase, I think that really does kind of speak a little bit to who I am even though i'm a little embarrassed about the Eminem but still I think it kind of shows, who I am.

Sara Nishikawa: How does music play a role in your life outside of maybe your profession or how you know your job, but how does music play a role there.

Ben Will: Well, I definitely use it as like a mood lifter and to support like mental health. I have a shower playlist I have a workout playlist I have a warm up playlist I have. I listened to coffee house music when i'm working because I can't listen to music lyrics because I get distracted i'll start singing so I have to listen to like either lo fi or like coffee house jazz that doesn't have any vocals and not a whole lot base, because if it's too much bass, the ancestors with me start dancing to it, so I have to make sure that I'm a focus of what i'm working on, but music is very much so part of my life, you know, there are songs i'd love to live inside of there are songs that I hear playing during like really monumental moments in my life. When someone wants to ask me like what song, are you feeling right now I think in like an icebreaker or something a couple of years ago and that's something that I always it's always kind of resonated with me like what's what's on to this moment was what I forgot what to say like, how would I capture this moment in the song like What would it be and then also i'm a songwriter myself singer and songwriter myself so i'm constantly writing jingles and new songs all the time, so I will say music is very much so, in grafted within within my life with who I am and i'll take it with me, you know everywhere, I go.

Ida (she/they): When you're in a creative fun is there, like an activity that you do that's separate from art itself to kind of like jog up and spark you?

Ben Will: I found like prayer meditation that can kind of help me to get a little bit sooner when i'm in like a Funk i'm going for walks helps me to, going for a drive that can help me. I also noticed that sometimes when i'm kind of stuck in a creative place, I take a lot of showers

because, like I don't know, for whatever reason I get really creative when i'm in the shower is I compose full symphonies like I have some of the most amazing concert some really incredible melodies in the shower. Similarly to like going for a long drive and then I also have a habit of listening to certain podcast and then like just you know cuz podcast or it's like hearing from the people that you find most interesting you know, whoever, you know that is for you, those usually power podcast we kind of gravitate to and since you can't actually jump into the conversation with the podcast sometimes it a movie to creating something myself, you know my oh that kind of makes me think about this. So I have like been in the middle of driving somewhere listening to a podcast got inspired by something that will say, and then that i've been turned on my voice recorder because I need to capture idea or melody I just got from what was being spoken about in that podcast, so I would say, probably those.

Sara Nishikawa: If there's anything else you want to add...?

Ben Will: Only other thing, you know, I have a hard time having conversations about music and not mentioning that Stevie Wonder is the greatest artists of all time and it's important that people know that. Um so I had to make sure that that was covered so that no one who listens to this years from now, thinks that I didn't honor the greatest musician in the history of music um but other than that I think that's all I got.

Sara Nishikawa: Up next, you'll be hearing Stevie Wonder in Ben Will's curated playlist