



Evynn Tyler performs as Franc Friday, whose debut album *Sanguine Years* was released last march. COURTESY/EVYNN TYLER

Back to work

Franc Friday

On Feb. 23, 2018, a post was made to the Facebook account of Reno rapper Franc Friday, the first in three months. It stated simply: "Hello. I am back."

"Not that I lost interest in music, but I had taken a break from it because I had so much else to be doing," said Evynn Tyler, who performs as Franc Friday.

For the past few years, Tyler's attention has been split between his job as a writer, researcher and strategist at a Reno-based marketing firm, and his studies at St. John's University in New York City, where he recently began his PhD dissertation. With a packed schedule and evolving musical tastes, Tyler felt his attention drifting away from music in general.

"For the first time, probably in years, I stopped writing music at all, which is something people don't know about me because I don't release a lot of music, but I'm constantly writing music," Tyler said. "There was a period where I was not doing any of that, and I'm thinking, 'You know, maybe it's time for me to kind of let this go.' Not that I don't love it, but I just felt like, kind of, the landscape of hip-hop music was not particularly interesting to me, and I didn't want to participate for a little while."

Early in 2018, however, Tyler received a few tracks from local producer and longtime collaborator Todd Hayes (who performs as Tea Haze) and felt his creative spark return stronger than ever. So much so that Tyler felt compelled to finish the project he had been working on for the past five years: Franc Friday's debut album.

Sanguine Years was released on March 27 of last year, featuring a mix of new tracks and music from Tyler's extensive catalog of material that he's recorded since 2013. Franc Friday's music is spread over various streaming platforms in the form of different singles, remixes, demos and EPs. To assemble the final album, Tyler said, he had to overcome some of his own perfectionist tendencies.

"I really wanted to create a body of work that was peerless and everything like that, and I really wanted to make some kind of crazy statement," Tyler said. "But then, when I had recorded the new songs, I think at the very beginning of 2018, I was thinking, 'Wow, my sense of what this needs to be has changed so much.'"

Tyler cut his teeth on complex musical compositions and a relentless flow in his early work, and said his message then was categorized by intense critique of the social injustices of the world around him. Adjusting to life in New York (although he visits Reno frequently), among other life challenges, has taught him patience and to prioritize healing over conflict—a progression that comes across in the album's eight tracks.

"My music has always been viscerally emotional, but it's changed in the sense that I think that it's OK to not focus too much on, you know, sabre-rattling and trying to be the best there is or whatever," said Tyler. "That's not really so important to me because in the past, I always felt like there was this onus on me to have such dense and intense music and to have this over-the-top lyrical prowess, which I still think is very valuable. But now I feel it's more important to, A, make a good song from which people can take something. And, B, I think it's just more important for me to experiment and to understand that I don't think about my music as a commodity."

In the , Tyler has released a slate of new singles and an EP that hints at some of his musical tastes outside of hip-hop. 2018's *Dreamless Sleep* EP is what Tyler calls "bedroom-pop," and he's hinted at new collaborations with other artists—a first for Franc Friday. Between his doctorate, his partnership with a new start-up company, and his full-time job, Tyler would have a reasonable excuse to continue his musical hiatus. He has other plans.

"Yeah, I'm definitely trying to stay busy," Tyler said. □

Sanguine Years can be heard here: open.spotify.com/artist/5g1FQDSbPztEIEWKoVILkQ

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