

Into pop's dark prism

Amber DeLaRosa's solo music takes a complex, moody turn



Alas, poor disco.

PHOTO COURTESY OF AMBER DELAROSA

BY JENNAH BOOTH

"I was feeling really starved for connection and actual intimacy," she said. "I went to my piano, and I just sort of like sobbed out this verse: 'How close can you get to me without putting your hands on my body?'"

The skeleton of "Get to Me," and fragments of a coming album, lived solely on DeLaRosa's piano for months. The music only came to fruition when she reached out to her now producer and boyfriend, Michael Franzino, who helped develop the song further.

After the final rounds of production, recording and mastering with producers Paul Parks and Dryw Owens, the single found its final place in the dark pop genre.

Branching away from Flourish's angsty, acoustic sounds, DeLaRosa says her dive into pop music is uncharted territory for her.

"I started looking at pop as a challenge, whereas maybe in my past, I would have discredited pop music as not being artistic enough," she said.

Although it's a new creative direction, she describes it as a bold but necessary step.

"This whole thing has been such a leap of faith for me," she said. "I've been painfully debating for years over my piano, and it's sort of like I have to just throw myself to the wolves to find out."

But Borja, who has watched her daughter's journey, says she has faith in DeLaRosa.

"I am so excited for the horizons that have opened up for her," Borja said.

No matter what genre, DeLaRosa says her drive has always come from the same place, and always will. Now, she's putting everything she has into it.

"It's embarrassing to tell people what your dreams are. And it should be, because your dreams should be scary enough, or lofty enough," she said. "I want to share my music with everybody. That feels like my dying need." □

Learn more about Amber DeLaRosa at amberdelarosa.com.

When 6-year-old Amber DeLaRosa belted out Bette Midler's "The Rose" at a karaoke party, her mother knew she was destined for something special.

"I just had this feeling that she was more than I'd ever imagined," Tammy Borja said. "Amber was humming before she could talk."

As DeLaRosa grew, so did her artistry.

After a lifetime of creating music and four years spent in the indie band Flourish, DeLaRosa, now 25, made her solo debut to nearly 9,000 people when she opened for Hobo Johnson & The Lovemakers at Concerts in the Park in early June.

Shortly after, she released her first single, "Get to Me," and the moody, dark pop song has since racked up more than 14,000 views on YouTube, 42,000 views on Facebook and more than 40,000 Spotify streams. It has all led to even wider exposure: DeLaRosa will perform at ALT 94.7's City of Trees festival on Sept. 21.

The inspiration for "Get to Me" arrived during an aimless time in the singer's life. "I was at this huge fork in the road in my life," she said. "I'd had writer's block ... and was struggling with really deep fears."

In her search for direction, DeLaRosa attended a women's circle that focused on sexuality and intimacy. During the session, the group posed a question that resonated with her: How often does your partner touch you, caress you and give you affection without it leading to sex?

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Amber DeLaRosa
singer

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