

love like hate



A Journey into the Rabbit Hole:

The Emergence of Love Like Hate

by Avril Bylok-Collard

It's Saturday afternoon and Heather Cheketri is basking her feet in the warm Queensland sun. With enthusiasm she asks how I am - "well thanks, you?" - and twitters away about the sunshine up north. I have just shrugged out of three layers of winter woolens after braving the Melburnian winter; to say I was envious would be an understatement.

Heather Cheketri is the vocalist and guitarist for **Love Like Hate**, and along with fellow member Sonja Ter Horst, the pianist, they have just released their first EP entitled *Rabbit Hole*. Classifying themselves as "a combination of post-punk, electric guitar, and free form piano melodies held together by rock drums", *Rabbit Hole* is all of that and more. It expresses influences such as PJ Harvey, The Breeders, and many others.

"It took us two years to create our sound" says Cheketri, admitting that the band only just started playing live last year. Therefore, in retrospect, since **Love Like Hate's** genesis in 2009, the band has come a long way. Though Cheketri admits "we'd love to be further ahead".

Rabbit Hole is an EP that ensnares you from the first piano chord of '21'. From there, it leads you through post-punk riffs present in 'Bleed' down to dramatic piano ballads found in 'Porcelain Brothel'. The record has an intricate depth that enraptures you wholly, before softly depositing you at the end with the title track 'Rabbit Hole'.

It is one of those EPs where you lay on the floor and purely listen to the music. The emotive power of *Rabbit Hole* can be compared to that of The Jezabels, the band whom inspired Horst and Cheketri to seek out Lachlan Mitchell.

Lachlan Mitchell is a Sydney-based producer and is notorious for his production of all three EPs and the debut album released by Sydney band The Jezabels. Every release has gone gold. Cheketri admits that after seeing the band live, then purchasing their first EP, Horst and Cheketri knew that Mitchell had to be the man to produce their first EP.

"Stand up for yourself, be yourself. Don't fit into popular culture. Don't fit into the stereotype of what you look like and what you're supposed to sound like."

"He brought out The Jezabels by times a hundred", and to **Love Like Hate** this was paramount. "Stay true to yourself and the music, otherwise you're a sellout," remarks Cheketri when asked how important creative control is to the band. Cheketri discusses passionately that the band will essentially remain "always independent". This viewpoint can be felt even more through the duo's creation of Saturn Eve.

Saturn Eve was held earlier this year, February the 11th to be precise, at The Loft on the Gold Coast. Organised by **Love Like Hate**, it operated to promote local all-female musicians in one night.



It featured Brisbane artists Kristy Apps, Nikolaine Martin, and Sonia Serin. Saturn Eve received a great reception and Cheketri hopes for a repeat of the event later this year. She assures me that if the event did tour Australia-wide, each city would provide their own local all-female acts.

Cheketri says the band is very passionate about maintaining integrity as artists, particularly dispelling the sexualized image women portray in the music industry today - "it's our unique selling point". Though Cheketri says they "didn't set out to inspire a female niche" she acknowledges that they inevitably will. Therefore, she gives me the motherly tête-à-tête :

"Stand up for yourself, be yourself. Don't fit into popular culture. Don't fit into the stereotype of what you look like and what you're supposed to sound like."

Advice that could be applied to any individual, but in an industry where more women use sex to sell, it is refreshing to have artists like **Love Like Hate** who maintain their own image and music.

"We rarely write together," she explains - both her and Horst compose different components to each song, then "come together and make the song". Sometimes they "write each other's song", particularly the ones where the emotion overpowers the music.

When asked what her best memory has been so far, Cheketri fumbles over words before settling on a thoughtful response: "My only low is we didn't get to make any more [songs]" says Cheketri, highlighting their recording with Lachlan Mitchell. She enthusiastically details how the experience was "all highs"; they learnt how to perform in a studio, how to layer tracks, timing and a plethora of other useful things.

Love Like Hate have performed at many venues since last year, but Cheketri acknowledges performing at the Rick Spa is one of her favourites. "I think we played our first gig there," she says reminiscing about the cool atmosphere and smooth acoustics. For the ignorant, think of the Rick Spa as the 'it' place to perform in Brisbane, akin to The Epsy in St. Kilda.

Albeit being young on the music scene, **Love Like Hate** exhibits an eagerness to prove themselves. Cheketri admits they've penned half of their first album already. Nevertheless, their current priority is "touring and getting ourselves out there".

Love Like Hate will be performing at The Cornish Arms in Brunswick, on August 17.

Purchase *Rabbit Hole* at: <http://lovelikehate.com.au>.

SINGLES



AINSLIE WILLS
Stop Pulling My String

Slow burner from 'Fighting Kind' writer Ainslie Wills leaves us wanting a bit more. Actually a lot more. The track opens with the line 'Gonna shout at the top of my lungs'. Unfortunately all we get is a slight wheeze.

2 stars - Dale Carnegie



RED INK
Euphoria

Power pop cruising over a reggae rhythm section leads us to a carefully crafted chorus.

John Jakubenko sounds like a cross between Kav Temperley and John Stevens. And the band hold him up beautifully. Just a glimpse of what this band might be capable of.

4 stars - Luke Axelby