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The 1st - Willow

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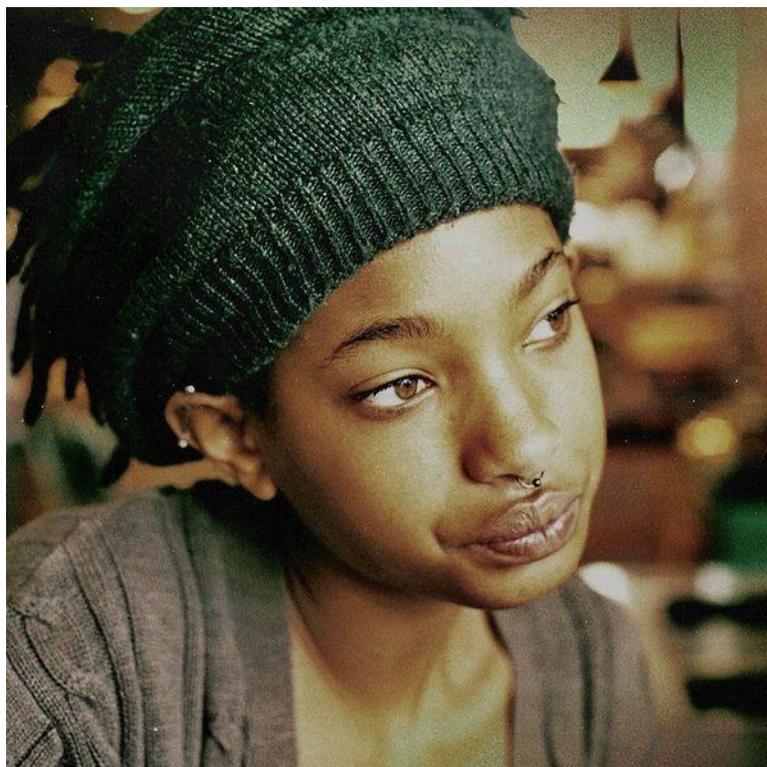
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The 1st – Willow

By: Olivia Valentino



Willow Smith is only 17 and this is her second album, which is entirely different than her first. Being the daughter of Will Smith, she was born into a musical family and obviously has experimented with her sound. This album starts with a song called “Boy” opening with invigorating violins. Willow kicks off the song by saying, “Hey Mom, I met a boy, he plays guitar, he likes

Quentin Tarantino and really sad songs”. By that you can tell that this album will have more of a diary theme and a coming of age story. This song is a perfect showcase of Willow’s vocal abilities; it provides a great introduction to what this album will offer.

Her song “Oh No!!!” opens with a soulful duet which then leads into a percussion-soaked switch and changes to Willow singing “I’m gonna break my heart because I know you won’t do it first, being in love is like suffocating, and I am drowning inside my own fakeness”. This album is an obvious journey through love, investigating the confusion of the mind when faced with complex emotions and arriving at the clarity of gratitude.

Willow told *Rolling Stone*, “We’re taught that love, when you’re younger, is caring for somebody and wanting their presence around you. As you start growing up, you’re like, ‘Dang,

that person can possess you.’ Me doing this album was me realizing my own craving for other people or certain reactions ... I realized that freedom is love. Real love is giving someone 100 percent freedom. *The Ist* is me realizing not what love truly is, but getting closer to that realization.” This album is truly about finding pure love, all kinds of love, all forms of love. In many of her songs Willow enforces self-love, because to be loved by someone else, you need to understand how you love yourself first.

Her last song on the album, “Romance”, has a contemporary sound, very simplistic but in a beautiful way. This song is the anthem of self-love and finding yourself. She has mesmerizing lyrics, that will give you chills once you repeat them.

“I’m imagining a different history
Where man and women stay equal
In the eyes of society
Where we don’t condemn different people
For exercising their freedom
Where sex stays sacred
And an act of divine love
And not perverted into violence and lust
Where we still honor our mother
In all of her burgeoning light
Where we do not kill our brothers
Or rape our sisters
Or enslave any life”

More than loving yourself or loving another person, Willow sings about loving everyone and everything on this beautiful earth. Our history is corrupt and we need to change how we treat one another. Love is freedom, being in love with someone or something else should not lead to closure and reliance on anyone but yourself. To be in love is to be free with someone who loves you just as much. This album genuinely proves that there are many aspects that go into being in love, whether it’s with yourself, a man, a woman, or a family member. No matter what, you should be happy with your life.

