# Jensen McRae releases evocative new album reflecting resilience and self-discovery



California-raised singer-songwriter Jensen McRae is gaining increasing recognition for her evocative songwriting and recent album release, "I Don’t Know How, But They Found Me!," which debuted on 19 July 2024. The album, blending folk and pop influences, reflects a deeply personal journey through the musician’s early 20s, framed by themes of resilience and self-discovery.

McRae first drew widespread attention in early 2021 with the release of “Immune,” a song inspired by a tweet she posted anticipating the kind of songs that might emerge from the COVID-19 vaccine rollout. She had joked that fellow musician Phoebe Bridgers would record a track about “hooking up in the car while waiting in line to get vaccinated at Dodger Stadium.” Bridgers did not release such a song, but McRae delivered a creative response in Bridgers’ contemplative style. This release preceded McRae’s debut EP in 2021 and her first album in 2022, which led to opportunities including touring with acts such as Muna and Noah Kahan. Last year, she signed with Dead Oceans, a record label that also represents Bridgers.

The newly released album’s title is a nod to “Back to the Future,” McRae’s favourite film. The phrase “I don’t know how, but they found me” is a line spoken by the character Doc Brown in the movie. McRae explained to The Associated Press, “At the end of the movie — which, there’s no spoilers, because this movie’s 40 years old — you find out (Doc) was wearing a bulletproof vest the whole time. And that to me sort of is what my 20s have been like. There are all these events that are happening that feel like they should take me out, but I just keep standing up anyway. That’s kind of the narrative of the album.”

Produced in North Carolina with Brad Cook, a collaborator known for work with Bon Iver and Waxahatchee, the 10-day recording process was particularly impactful for McRae. Cook praised her, saying, “Jensen flat out blew me away on every single level... I got a master class from her as well, frankly. Jensen's just so organized, emotionally and spiritually, it was just really easy to go where the songs needed to go.”

One track that gained significant pre-release attention was “Massachusetts,” which McRae shared as a snippet on TikTok in autumn 2023. The clip amassed millions of views well before the full track was released in July 2024. The song, focusing on the lingering memories after a relationship ends, ended up closing the album. McRae shared that despite initial hesitation about releasing “Massachusetts,” a social media endorsement from pop star Justin Bieber influenced her decision to include it. The song’s minimal production highlights McRae’s vocals and acoustic guitar, emphasising its intimate nature. Cook described the album's production approach as “a lesson in getting out of the way of the song as much as you’re reinforcing it.”

McRae’s songwriting has long reflected resilience and honesty. Her debut album "Are You Happy Now?" addressed challenging topics such as sexual predators and racial microaggressions, while exploring identity, love, and growth. She told The Associated Press that by age 25, a writer has often experienced enough to inform their work for a lifetime, a view born from years of reflection and practice.

Despite moments of viral fame, including the success of “Immune” and the TikTok buzz around “Massachusetts,” McRae remains focused on the creative process. She said, “Every decision I’m making about this is like, ‘Do I want this?’ And ‘Is this going to be a good move for my career?’ Because eventually, no matter what I do, the viral moment passes.” Such experiences have given her insight into what listeners connect with: “When you’re going through something difficult, intellectually, you know you’re not the first person to whom it’s happened. But it feels that way... Revisiting it now — one or two or three years after having written the song — I have an appreciation for how, like, of course people are going to have these songs resonate with them.”

As McRae prepares for an upcoming tour, her work continues to explore the universalities of personal trials and growth, positioning her as a distinctive voice in contemporary folk-pop music.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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2. <https://www.songhall.org/scholarships/view/jensen_mcrae> - The Songhall page details Jensen McRae’s upbringing in a bi-racial family and her early involvement in music, including attending GRAMMY Camp and her later success as a musician.
3. <https://thecreativeindependent.com/people/musician-jensen-mcrae-on-asking-for-help/> - This article provides insights into Jensen McRae’s creative process and personal journey, including her experiences as a Black Jewish woman and her approaches to writing and music production.
4. <https://www.youtube.com/@jensenmcraeofficial/about> - Jensen McRae's official YouTube channel offers an overview of her career, including her debut album 'Are You Happy Now?' and her musical influences.
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6. <https://Pitchfork.com/search?q=jensen%20mcrae> - While not directly linking to a specific article, searching on Pitchfork can yield reviews and discussions of Jensen McRae’s music, aligning with her evolving career in the music industry.
7. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/phoebe-bridgers-new-york-covid-california-doc-brown-b2739673.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data