

MATTHEW KOMA

KISSES BACK

Matthew Koma is one of the music industry's most sought-after songwriters and producers, having worked with such pop artists as Kelly Clarkson, Brooke Candy, Tinashe, Hillary Duff, and Shania Twain (he also remixed his idol Bruce Springsteen's song "Rocky Ground," which The Boss chose as his radio/video single). The Seaford, Long Island-raised Koma — who was playing in a punk band with his older brother at 14, and grew up enamored with classic storytellers like Springsteen, Elvis Costello, and Tom Petty — is also known for bringing an emotional, singer-songwriter heart to chart-topping hits for some of the dance world's biggest artists, including Zedd ("Spectrum," the No. 1, Grammy Award-winning single "Clarity," "Find You"), Tiësto (multi-platinum-selling No. 1 dance single "Wasted"), Alesso ("Years"), Hardwell ("Dare You"), and Showtek (No. 1 UK dance track "Cannonball (Earthquake).") He has also been featured on and co-written songs with Giorgio Moroder, Steve Aoki, Afrojack, Sebastian Ingrosso, Flux Pavilion, RAC, Fedde Le Grande, Audien, Dimitri Vegas & Like Mike, scoring eight Beatport No. 1's, and four *Billboard* Top 10's along the way, and leading *Entertainment Tonight* to dub him "The Man with EDM's Golden Touch."

"It was a very unique time period to be a singer/songwriter who wrote singer/songwriter songs," Koma says of the past two years when he became EDM's go-to guy and performed at the world's largest festivals including Coachella, Ultra Music Festival, Lollapalooza South America, and EDC Las Vegas. "I still hear 'Clarity' sometimes and think 'Those are complicated words to have been embraced by such a universal audience.' I was able to be a writer who pulled from the heart, someone who listened to Springsteen and Costello, and wrote about emotions that felt spiritual, and then paired them with a genre that hadn't necessarily focused on words or storytelling."

Koma draws from both worlds on his upcoming debut album for RCA Records *Eros Ludus*, which pairs his well-crafted, emotionally resonant pop songwriting with cutting-edge electronic production by such dance world innovators as Louis The Child, Jai Wolf, Grey, Steve James, and Flux Pavilion. "This is the first window I've had to make a body of work that's cohesive and not serving other people's intent," says Koma, who adds that he stepped away from collaborating with other artists over the last year to focus on finding his voice as a solo artist. "It's been a definite shift to ask myself, 'Okay, who am I and how are these songs unique to *me*. I had to get into that selfish mode of digging. It was the only way the songs would be different from any of the things that I had been a part of."

Koma telegraphs the intimate results with the album's title, *Eros Ludus*. "Eros and Ludus are two types of love," he explains. "Eros is erotic, committed, and passionate, and Ludus is the opposite - it's Latin for game. It's the person who is incapable of being able to attach or commit. So when Eros and Ludus are paired together, it creates mania, which speaks to a lot of the lyrical content on the record. I've always been in relationships where I'm battling it being romantic and also completely unstable. One without the other doesn't seem to work for me. So the title encompasses the narrative of the songs, which are about love, but also about relationships with yourself, with your success, and with your humility."

Koma's candor and willingness to reveal his vulnerabilities is evident from the Flux Pavilion-produced first single "**Kisses Back**." "It's a face-value infidelity anthem," Koma says. "It's about that regret and resentment when you find out there was dishonesty in a relationship and how something so intimate could be ruined upon finding out more information: How kisses shared could feel different in retrospect after finding out somebody was unfaithful."

For Koma, *Eros Ludus* feels like "the beginning of my story," he says. "I've created a body of work that I feel is a fair introduction to what I do. I feel like people are going to get an accurate snapshot of who I am and how I tell stories from my vantage point. Because this was me, in my bedroom in Woodland Hills, writing every song. "Well, actually, to be fair," he says with a laugh, "at my coffee shop in Woodland Hills, writing every song. Every day."

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