

Stela Cole

Strange bedfellows often make for superlative synchronicity.

Humming barbershop harmonies over rap beats and flaunting high-fashion streetwear style topped off by a fifties 'do, Stela Cole finds the sweet spot between doo wop, pop, and hip-hop. The Atlanta-born and Nashville-based singer, songwriter, and multi-instrumentalist stirs up a sound akin to Yeezus producing The Chordettes—all hard-hitting maximalism, unpredictable rhyme schemes, and sugary melodies. Most importantly, the music reflects her personal spirit with crystal clarity, charisma, and confidence.

“I wanted the music to perfectly represent who I am and what I want,” she affirms. “I love the music scene in Atlanta, but I’m obsessed with barbershop girl groups from the fifties and sixties. When you listen, it’s important for you to get to know me.”

Born and raised in the Georgia suburb of Peachtree City, she started playing piano at the age of six despite preferring the soccer field to the stuffy regimented lessons. After herniating a disc at 16-years-old, she wholeheartedly embraced the instrument and picked up guitar as well. Influenced by everything from The Andrews Sisters and The Mamas & the Papas to OutKast, 2 Chainz, D.R.A.M., and Tyler, The Creator, she tirelessly developed her vocal chops and settled in Nashville. Immersed in “Music City,” she devoted countless hours to writing and recording.

“It took a lot of hard work,” she goes on. “I was practicing every day until I got the perfect combination of genres. Lyrically, the songs are super colorful. When you smash hip-hop and doo wop influences together, it creates this ridiculous, but really whacked and cool world. Each song needs all of those aspects to work. I finally found the perfect balance just by sitting in a room with a piece of paper, my guitar, and my piano right next to me for as long as I could.”

Uploading her music online, Stela stirred up a palpable buzz in 2017. Early acclaim came from *Huffington Post* and more as record labels started reaching out. Signing to RCA Records, she dove headfirst into making her 2018 major label debut EP, *Throwing Up Butterflies*.

The first single “You F O” illuminates her singular spark, style, and sound. Airy production underscores her delicate croon before ramping up towards the nimbly rhymed refrain, “I go like Cinderella, laser gun like Barbarella, ‘Bout to blow your mind like I’m interstellar. I been thinking why don’t you F O?”

"It's about a guy I used to date who did not treat me the way he said he was going to," she explains. "The reason I broke up with him is he told me I was going to hell for celebrating Halloween! Can you believe that? The hook for 'You F O' originated from the double Dutch jump rope chant in elementary school. It's based on the nursery rhyme, 'Cinderella, dressed in yella, went downstairs to kiss a fella'. It felt like a great way to knock the fucking doors down."

Elsewhere, glitchy beats and synths energize the "confidence anthem" of "In My Pocket." In many ways, the dreamy piano, finger-snaps, and sassy delivery of title track "Throwing Up Butterflies" sums up her approach.

"The whole point of the song is to talk about the feelings you get when you first fall in love with a person," she elaborates. "At the time, I was thinking about this guy I really liked and looking at a bowl of SpaghettiOs—which I still love! I was spelling out names and doing bizarre things because I couldn't get him off my mind. When you initially like someone, you're so excited that you throw up butterflies."

By simply being herself, Stela will undoubtedly inspire.

"The main purpose of my music is to show the truest form of who I am as a person," she leaves off. "The main thing I want listeners to take away is they should feel empowered in who they are and what makes them unique. I'm doing my thing by being confident and weird; I hope you can do the same."