

Madison Cunningham

Depending on the game, an Ace can be the highest or lowest card, zero or infinity. A breakup feels similar—one path crumbles, while all others remain infinitely possible. How do you write about heartbreak when you're going through it? Ace, GRAMMY award-winner Madison Cunningham's third record for Verve Forecast, tracks every part of it: falling out of love, having your heart broken, and then falling in love again. Co-produced by Cunningham and Robbie Lackritz (Feist, Rilo Kiley, Bahamas, Peach Pit), the fourteen-track album is honest and full of heart, even as it breaks.

Ace builds off of the success of Revealer (2022), a darkly funny portrait of an artist that won Cunningham her GRAMMY for "Best Folk Album," but it is a different record. A slow burn until it wasn't. It follows a period of writer's block. On Revealer and her debut album Who Are You Now (2019), Cunningham says that she was writing songs about heartbreak, but they weren't about her heartbreak. They were sketches, observations. Cunningham wanted Ace to be emotions first. Heartbreaking and lush and bold.

Cunningham's first single from Ace, "My Full Name," was released to praise by PASTE who calls the lyrics, "simultaneously sprawling and intimate," recalling "an ancient work of poetry." On Ace, which Cunningham serves as co-producer, she wanted piano to move into the foreground. "I wanted it to feel like a mountain peak," says Cunningham, "I wanted Ace to feel like a mountain we built together." Ace is a record that feels alive and lush in all the ways Cunningham hoped for when she started writing. It is a record of mastery and honesty. Cunningham loves every single song on it. You can tell.