

Bea Miller

not an apology

In making her first full-length album, Bea Miller's vision was clear. A singer/songwriter whose raspy vocals and sharp-edged pop have already earned her recognition as one of [Rolling Stone's "10 Artists You Need To Know"](#), as an [MTV "Artist to Watch for 2015,"](#) and as one of [Billboard's "10 Artists to Watch in 2015,"](#) Bea's main ambition was to create songs that spoke the sometimes-messy truth and helped others overcome their own hurt. "When I was younger, I never felt like I had a female artist who wasn't afraid to speak her mind, someone I could relate to and look up to," says Bea. "Now that I'm making my own music, I want to be there for people so they can feel less alone in whatever they're going through." Recorded over the last year—with time out for an autumn 2014 tour with Demi Lovato—***Not An Apology*** finds Bea fulfilling her mission by infusing her punk spirit into impassioned pop songs with a fiercely uplifting power.

Featuring several tracks co-written by Bea (including her debut single "Young Blood," a darkly charged anthem that hit the *Billboard* Hot 100 soon after its April 2014 release), *Not An Apology* mines her everyday experience for unapologetically honest lyrics about everything from bullying and backstabbers to isolation and breakup angst. "When you're writing you have to get down to your deepest, darkest emotions, because that's what makes a great song," says Bea. "You need to be totally real and just put it all out there." To capture the tension between toughness and vulnerability that propels much of *Not An Apology*, Bea teamed up with producers like busbee (P!nk, Kelly Clarkson), Jarrad Rogers (Icona Pop, Demi Lovato), Mike Del Rio (Kylie Minogue, Selena Gomez), and Matt Squire (Ariana Grande, Ke\$ha) to craft a melody-fueled mix of gritty guitar riffs, fuzzed-out grooves, and awesomely heady beats.

Kicking off with "[Young Blood](#)" and moving into its defiant yet dreamy follow-up single "[Fire N Gold](#)," *Not An Apology* delivers anthem after anthem, each with its own nuanced message. Tracks like the shimmering "**I Dare You**" channel the quiet power of reclaiming your self-confidence, while the triumphant "**We're Taking Over**" serenades the misfits of the world and promises future glory ("*This is for the girls who like chicks/And this is for the guys who like chick flicks/Baby, the world is yours and mine*"). One of the album's most stunning moments, "**Paper Doll**" plays off its soft/loud dynamic to show the unrest and loneliness that comes with being bullied. "When you're bullied, it truly feels like no one cares about you, which is one of the worst feelings I can think of," says Bea of "Paper Doll," another of the tracks she co-wrote for *Not An Apology*. "I'm not usually open to talking about my own experience with bullying," she continues, "but it was important for me to put that song out there so that other people would know they're not the only ones dealing with something like that." Proving Bea's easy versatility as a vocalist and performer, *Not An Apology* also offers up songs as eclectic as "**This Is Not An Apology**" (a fired-up, dance-ready tribute to all those scrappy girls "*laying in the dirt/Rather ripped-up jeans than a mini-skirt*"), "**Force of Nature**" (a stripped-down love song built on acoustic guitar and Bea's sweetly starry-eyed vocal work), "[Dracula](#)" (a hip-hop-inspired track with fantastically twisted fairytale imagery), and "[Rich Kids](#)" (a punk-powered takedown co-written by Good Charlotte's Benji and Joel Madden).

To keep her music instilled with real, raw emotion, Bea maintains five different notebooks (each with its own purpose) to record what's on her mind from day to day. "I'm constantly writing, either poetry or rants or just getting my thoughts out so that I can eventually turn them into a song," she says. And though Bea made her first attempt at songwriting at an early age, her storytelling-based approach to lyric-writing has much deeper roots. "Instead of playing with dolls when I was young, I had them act out these movies I was making up in my mind," she says. "And then when I got really into music it was like, 'Oh, cool—you can tell an entire story like a movie, but in three minutes.'"

Growing in Brooklyn and New Jersey with her two moms and twin kid sisters, Bea began singing as a baby and never really stopped. Early on, a classmate's parent took note of Bea's talent while working with her on a school play, and soon

introduced her to a well-known music producer who offered Bea her first record deal (an offer she turned down in order to take time to let her voice develop). Around the same time, Bea landed a role in *Homeland* director Michael Cuesta's feature film *Tell Tale*, followed by a part in *Toy Story 3*. Bea also began tapping into her vocal prowess by belting out "America the Beautiful" after a Venus vs Serena match at the 2008 U.S. Open, singing for a crowd of thousands and sparking a serious desire to devote her life to making music.

Several years after her singing debut, Bea auditioned for the second season of *The X Factor*, emerged as a top-ten finalist, and quickly signed a deal with Syco Music/Hollywood Records. In the meantime, she widened her following by posting covers of tracks like "Smells Like Teen Spirit" by Nirvana (a band she names among her key inspirations, along with The Pretty Reckless and Hayley Williams from Paramore). After putting out her debut EP *Young Blood* in spring 2014, Bea threw herself into the writing and recording of *Not An Apology*. By the end of the year both "Young Blood" and "Fire N Gold" had turned up on *Billboard's* digital-singles chart in the very same week, and Bea's achievements had included getting selected as *Rdio's Artist to Watch* for January 2015.

With the release of *Not An Apology*, Bea's most excited about performing her new songs live and deepening her connection with her fanbase. "One of the things I love most is singing for the people who I originally sang all these songs for, hearing them sing back at me and getting to have that direct interaction with them," says Bea. More than anything, that closeness hinges on her commitment to keeping completely honest in her music, even when it's painful. "A big part of the reason why I made this album was to show people that there'll be dark times when you feel like no one understands you, but that good things are going to happen too," Bea says. "I'm not trying to be super-positive and tell you that everything's going to be okay all the time, because that would be a lie. The truth is that things will knock you down, but you can always pick yourself back up and make it through whatever gets thrown your way."

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