

# Prince's falsetto hits sexy notes



SARAH  
STEAD

A&E  
Commentary

"Shortly after telling someone that I'm a faithful Prince listener, I'll be asked for the reasons behind my fandom. It's simple: his music makes me want to dance. My hammer, anvil, and stirrup make sweet, passionate inner-ear love when his falsetto vocals hit my ear drum."

Before I begin, I have a confession to make: I'm a huge Prince fan. No, I'm not talking about anyone in the royal family—I'm talking about the guy who played the Superbowl half-time show last year; the guy who notoriously changed his name to a symbol, the guy who was in *Purple Rain*, the guy who Dave Chapelle says could kick your ass at basketball. *That Prince*.

Whenever the topic of favorite bands or artists comes up, I'm regularly criticized for openly liking Prince. But when I talk to people about why they don't like his music, more often than not the person has never listened to anything by Prince, and their reasoning for disliking him is "I heard the movie *Purple Rain* sucked" or "He wears frilly shirts and purple velvet and dances like a fruit."

Now, while this may be true, the problem is that they have absolutely nothing to do with his music.

In a conversation about music criticism, it follows that the object of criticism should be the music, not the person or people creating it. People become so clouded by the personal antics of celebrity

musicians that we forget what they do in the first place.

Shortly after telling someone that I'm a faithful Prince listener, I'll be asked for the reasons behind my fandom. It's simple: his music makes me want to dance. My hammer, anvil, and stirrup make sweet, passionate inner-ear love when his falsetto vocals hit my ear drum. He's a proficient and talented guitarist. His lyrics are naughty and fun to sing in the shower or into a hairbrush as I get ready in the morning.

So naughty, in fact, that his track "Darling Nikki" off the *Purple Rain* soundtrack is one of the reasons Tipper Gore and the "Washington Wives" started the Parental Music Resource Center and why some CDs now have explicit lyric stickers on them. His music opened important debates on musical censorship and freedom of expression—all because he sang about masturbation and sex.

Another poor reason to not listen to an artist is because they've become too popular. In a recent conversation with a co-worker, we debated whether or not Feist had sold out by allowing "1, 2, 3, 4" to appear in an iPod commercial. I say no way; it's

sad when success is solely equated with selling out, especially because her album *The Reminder* is fantastic. It's about time Feist started receiving more attention, and her rising popularity shouldn't change the way fans relate to her music. We need to be supporting flourishing artists, especially when they're homegrown like Feist, who grew up in Calgary.

Yes, she probably got a decent paycheck out of the exchange, but what's wrong with that? Musicians need to make money too, and with the amount of illegal downloading that goes on, it's becoming increasingly difficult for artists to be paid fairly for the music they're creating.

Liking or disliking any band or artist should be based on whether or not you like their music. I like Feist because I enjoy her songs and think her voice is incredible, and my love of Prince has nothing to do with his velvet suits, alleged basketball skills, or personal life—it has everything to do with the way his music makes me feel.

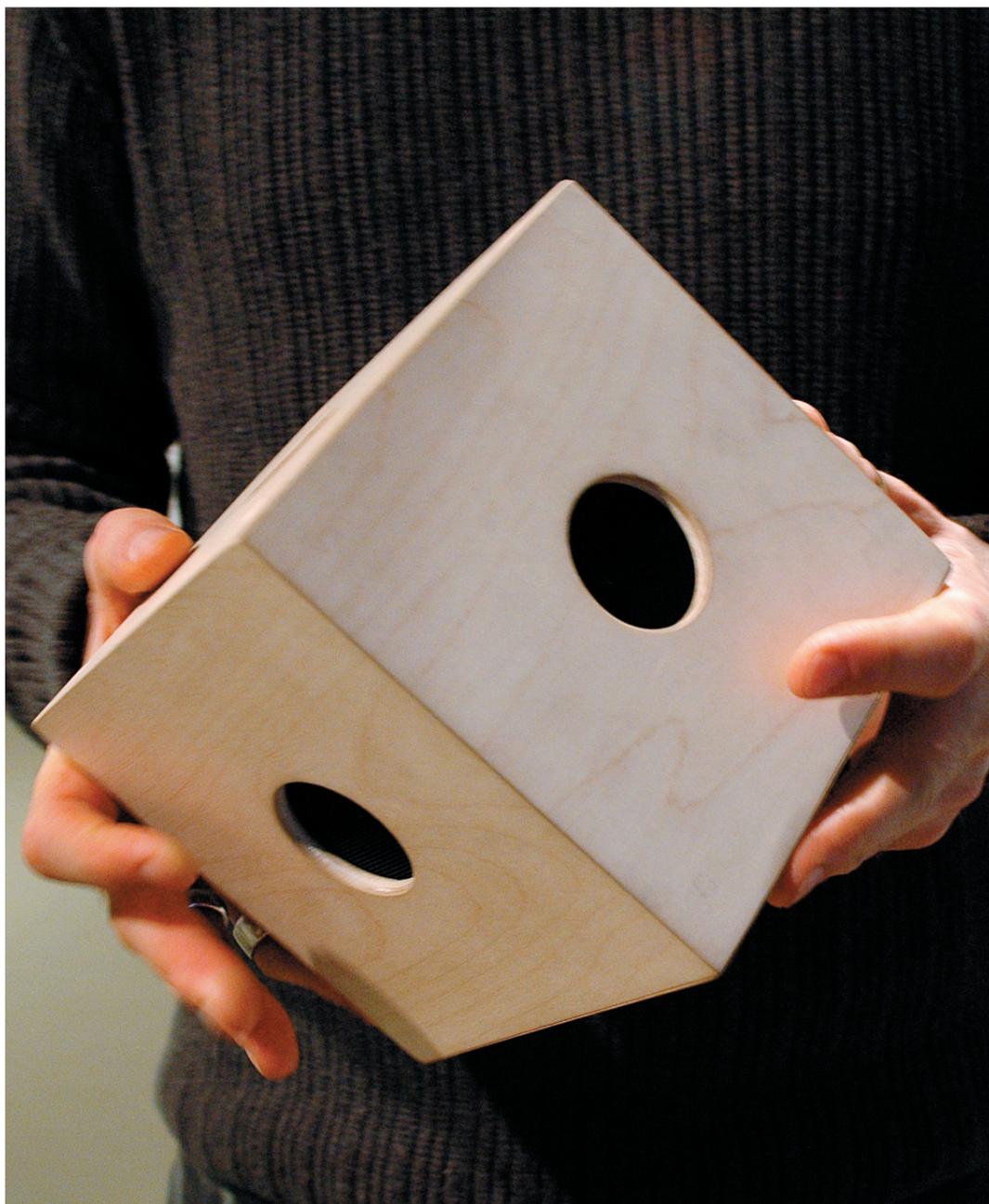
If you hear a song and it makes you want to bust a move, smile, tap your foot, or sing, what other justification do you need?



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