

WHO'S NEXT

SPENCER DAY

HOMETOWN: East Layton, Utah**INFLUENCES:** Joni Mitchell, John Lennon, Paul Simon**ALBUM:** *The Mystery of You*, out now**WEBSITE:** spencerday.com

MODERN JAZZ SINGER AND PIANIST SPENCER DAY learned the power of music during his troubled childhood. He grew up in a strict Mormon household in small-town Utah, and his parents divorced when he was young. His mother, a classical opera singer turned teacher, encouraged his love of music as a means of escape. He found comfort in the classic MGM musicals presented at his local theater, and often sang show tunes around the house. After moving to L.A. in his late teens, he began performing in piano bars and retirement homes. "I was probably three or four years into that when I realized it wasn't totally satisfying to me," he says. "I realized I needed to write as well."

Day composed in between gigs, and writing songs continued to help him cope with difficult times as an adult. On his new album, *The Mystery of You*, he examines the painful aftermath of a failed

romantic relationship. "It's been one of the hardest things I've ever dealt with as an adult," he says, "but it's also been a huge opportunity for growth." Sharing his experiences publicly has been cathartic during this period of self-discovery. "Each of the songs represents a different phase in that growth process," he says. "Along the way, I started trying to understand my own psychology."

Day hopes that by delving into various stages of the healing process, he'll inspire and encourage others in their own struggles. "It'll be a different experience for everyone, and tracks will resonate differently with each listener," he says. "But the goal is to let people find themselves, and find something in common with the experiences that inspired the writing of the music. I think the goal of any artist should be to take a situation that's personal and draw out things that are universal."