Maude Latour has had a whirlwind few years. The 22-year-old singer/songwriter signed her first record deal, graduated from Columbia University, amassed a passionate fanbase, and appeared on the cover of the *Chicago Tribune* and in the pages of *The New York Times*. The whole time, she’s been honing her musical craft, pushing herself to tackle uncomfortable truths in her lyrics and blow open the idea of what a pop song can be. *001*, Latour’s latest project, captures her at a turning point. She’s coming out of the sorrow that dominated her last EP, 2021’s *Strangers Forever*, and looking within to realize that incredible things have surrounded her all along.

The seven songs on *001*, which Latour largely recorded and wrote with producer and chief collaborator Mike Adubato, shows the emotional richness that results from her growing gifts as a songwriter. Opening track “Headphones” finds Latour on the verge of a journey inside herself, realizing that the music she’s making as a result of her intuition will “lead the way, so I can show you who I am.” As she puts it, “This project is about letting people in and coming back to myself at the end. Finding love, beauty, and meaning everywhere—in trees, in friends, and even in the chaos of the world.” A glitched-out vocal effect on the chorus only adds to the magic and wonder she infuses in her expansive work.

Growing up in London, Hong Kong, and Sweden before arriving in New York, Latour experienced a lot of different cultures at a young age. She began writing songs at 15. Then, years later, at the beginning of the pandemic, the wordy, catchy “One More Weekend” went viral on TikTok, and she signed with Warner Records the next year. Simultaneously pursuing Ivy League studies and a pop career might seem like a lot, but it’s all connected to Latour’s view of life and her art’s place in it.

“I don’t want to flippantly put things into the world that I haven’t chewed on,” she explains, “and philosophy has shown me that it’s important that my words are what I mean to say. It keeps that standard high. I want every song to feel like a secret or a truth coming out of me.”

Latour has already played some of *001*’s songs at her live shows, making a powerful connection with her ever-growing fanbase. In concert, she dedicates the dreamy yet resolute “Lola” to victims of sexual assault. The performance—which includes Latour wailing the lyrics *“Keep my girls protected / I’m turned on when I'm respected”*—creates a space where, she says, her audience members “truly find intimacy and healing. The song is for protecting the people you love. It’s for protecting my sister and myself and my friends and trans people and queer people—it’s for a solidarity between people.”

Other tracks on *001* combine vivid imagery with Latour’s precisely honed yet conversational lyrics to sneakily staggering effect. “Trees” resembles a walk in the park on its surface, its strutting beat and glossy guitars sounding like a sun-dappled day amidst nature—but its lyrics are bittersweet, longing for her deceased grandmother. The pulsing “Cyclone” uses imagery borrowed from heavy weather to explore the turmoil and intensity of close friendships. The beautifully minimal “Living It” is similarly tender and emotional, digging into, as maude puts it “the difficult emotional parts of working on a friendship—feelings that were sticky.”

*001* reaches an apex with its larger-than-life title track, a darkly hued, urgently stream-of-consciousness cut that features Latour laying down mantras like *“I’d like to shine bright like a fuckin' star”* in her upper register, which is then unnervingly refracted by electronic effects. It’s a stark sonic departure from the rest of *001*, and it represents the evolution Latour has experienced over the course of her career—including on this EP.

“We started in *Starsick*, then we went into the clouds with *Strangers Forever*,” she says. “Now we are on the earth. This is the beginning of me actually writing about *me*, and not about how other people make me feel. *001* is the first time that I’ve had words for the feelings in my body—before this, it was me observing my feelings from above.”

On the nostalgia-tinged “Probabilities,” Latour sings, *“Baby, don’t be scared / I can tell the future’s bright,”* her soothing words paired with pealing guitars. Her music exists on that edge of possibility, with the singer/songwriter always on the hunt to challenge herself musically and philosophically—and she invites audiences to join her.“I think you come to my music when you’re on a journey of sorts,” she says, “whether you’re looking for a euphoric feeling or an excavating-your-soul feeling.”