

There are few voices in New York R&B quite like Nobu Woods. The singer-songwriter and producer prioritizes vulnerability and honesty in his work, offering an antidote to the Big Apple's relentless hustle. The Queens-born Woods is making boundless and rule-breaking music, earning a devoted audience with 2022's *IRIS* and 2023's mixtape *MIDNIGHT MOTIONS*. While those projects found him putting a subtle spin on modern R&B, he steers into even more unique, individual, and vulnerable terrain on his new Warner Records/Second Estate singles "SAVIOR" and "SPLIT."

On "SAVIOR," Woods cues up a bouncy 808 bass and hand claps to accent his yearning, warbling vocals. Hazy synths and hi-hat triplets give the song a similar energy to 2010s trap music, showcasing his ability to blend R&B melodies with production that dips and dives between genres. The lyrics find Woods looking fame directly in the eye, asking why a potential partner had no interest in him before he found success, but now has come knocking on his door. Over his own production (Woods handles most beats himself), he croons: *"Back in the day, you prayed I'd be down / Now I'm your favorite."*

*"All of my songs are about something that I've gone through, something that I've dealt with alone. But then I realize a lot of other people have gone through something similar," he explains. "Hearing their perspective can really change how I perceived it, or how I experienced that time in my life."*

*The singer was born in Jamaica, Queens, two blocks from where Nicki Minaj was raised, but went to school a full 45-minute train ride across the borough in Corona. Between hanging out with his cousins at home and being introduced to music production at the house, Woods grew up in two communities with different rules, music, and culture, all of which have informed his style. "SAVIOR" is the story of a particular experience that negatively affected him, but part of his brilliance as a songwriter comes from his ability to take personal experiences and make them relatable.*

*Woods' music honors the sounds and rhythms of the music of the Dominican Republic, where his parents are from. He grew up listening to merengue and bachata, and incorporates those sounds into many of his songs. On "SPLIT," he croons over a shuffling groove that interpolates the rhythms he grew up loving. The lyrics retain Woods' mysterious edge, diving into the woozy late-night world he loves to conjure up, but the skittering electro synths blend the sultriness of bachata with something more bubbly and approachable.*

*Shortly after graduating high school, Woods was introduced by a cousin to FL Studio. He soon grew obsessed with production, deep-diving into the software and creating beats in his bedroom at home. Meanwhile, he held down jobs at LaGuardia Airport and as an overnight stockist at Burlington Coat Factory.*

*The 20-year-old Woods was content to work day (or night) jobs to support his production career. He was making instrumental tracks, looking for other artists to rap and sing over his beats. He had no confidence in his own voice, but after one fateful studio session, his entire life changed.*

*"I was just throwing ideas out one night, and the engineer was like, 'Bro, you should write music.' I was like, 'I don't think it's for me.' I was still super shy in my cocoon," Woods explains. "I went back to the studio and my friend's uncle was there and he tried to get me to freestyle. I wouldn't do it, and then he looked at me and said, 'You don't hear nothing in your head when you listen to this?' I did hear something, and I made a track."*

*Although that track never saw the light of day, Woods became more confident in his own vocals, and he began to write more personal lyrics. He released a handful of singles during the pandemic and then the independent album, IRIS, which led to a groundswell of success and the record deal with Warner in 2024.*

*Nobu Woods knows his self-belief has taught him a valuable lesson, one he thinks about every time he hits the studio: "I just follow what I hear in my head," he says. So far, the sounds and ideas that float through his mind have built an audience that spans generations and locales. With his upcoming music, he wants to highlight his emotional being even more. "I want my music to be memorable," he explains. "I do that by building songs around moments from my life."*