

Noah Rinker Bio

There are a few words that singer, songwriter, and musician Noah Rinker likes to use throughout conversations about his artistry, recurring themes and umbrellas under which so much of the 22-year-old's fledgling career can neatly fall under.

Community drives Noah's sound, his lyricism, and his entire point of view. Growing up in small town Shaver Lake in the mountains of California, an hour east of Fresno, in a non-musical family, he found song wherever he could. Playing a family friend's upright piano by ear at age 5 led to piano lessons, which blossomed into him playing hymnals at his church's weekly services, which "helped me build up an ear for chord structure and arranging, because those standards are just so musically consistent when you think about it."

All the while, his family—parents, grandparents, his 98-year-old great grandma (who lives on his property to this day), his two younger brothers, cousins, aunts and uncles—raised him "doing mountain stuff" on afternoons and weekends; they'd play with sticks and rocks in the creek near his house. "They're my rock and my world," he says. When his dad wasn't teaching him how to run gas line or set up meter interface as part of his propane utility company, he was taking him snowboarding and mountain biking and wake surfing. Life was simple; everyone knew everyone in the small community, and for Noah, his love of music, hometown, and nature intertwined as he grew.

Aspiration led him to pick up the guitar at 14, borrowing a cousin's instrument and learning to play it like a lap steel because he assumed the fretboard might work the same way a keyboard did. At 16, he wrote his first song, inspired by artists he was listening to on the radio as he'd drive around, lyricists and "truly world-builders" like Shawn Mendes and Ed Sheeran. After a few years of posting songs online, future collaborators reached out to set up sessions with him outside of Shaver Lake. And "what really changed the game was having the opportunity to leave the place that I was so used to, to get a different perspective, then realizing how inspiring home really was all along," he says. "Leaving made me realize that home was the thing that made me who I was all along."

You see that connection between song and soul in his videos, a steady stream of simple acoustic performances on his Instagram that set the scene: Noah, a guitar, and the place he grew up. Sometimes you'll see the mountains sprawled out behind him as he plays; other times, he's cloaked in darkness, only lit by a crackling campfire. There are covers mixed in with originals; snippets of works-in-progress tossed in to workshop, and to gift to listeners needing a respite, and to crowd-test; paired with months-in-the-making singles he's on the cusp of releasing.

The music: it's real, it's raw, and it's Noah Rinker distilled and at his truest essence. Songs like "Save My Soul" and "The Place I'm From" and "I Hope It Hurts" introduce the world to a storyteller doing what he does best—digging deep, baring his soul, and laying

it out on the page for just a few minutes of honest connection. “I try to write a lot of everything outside when it's nice enough,” he says. “It's just usually me and a guitar, and I'll just play for a couple hours and figure out a riff. And if I'm being really honest, a lot of the writing just falls out when I'm mumbling. The best stuff that I feel like I've ever done has just blown right down from above and it's magically exactly what I wanted to say but I would have never said it that way but my subconscious just worded it perfectly.”

Because so much of his music first finds traction in acoustic social media videos, the translation process between what fans heard first and what hits their ears on record has become one of Noah's favorite parts of the process. “To me, music production is about capturing the performance of a record, so I take the time to just whittle down what I want the performance to be like,” he says. “And because I'm still new to the production side of things, I just take what I have up at my house—which is a condenser mic, a Focusrite Scarlett interface, and Logic Pro. And I set it up, and I get a really solid guitar take and I just try to get the most authentic base to build upon.”

Attention remains one of Noah's pillars; it's a focus he returns to time and time again. “How do you get someone to stop distracting themselves? If you would like to stay, come hang by the fire, see the dogs, get to know me. That was the whole plan” he says of meeting people at the intersection of artistry and attention. “I believe that it happens when you have a connection between the real authentic visual connected to the art that lives synonymously with that visual. You're giving people an escape out of whatever reality they're in, and you get to let them into your world. But it doesn't work if your world is fake; it only works if your world is authentic to you, and it's something novel. That's when I realized that me being from the mountains of California and living the life that I've lived is what sets me personally apart from the rest.”

Ultimately, for Noah, it all comes down to connection—bringing people into his world, the mountains, and bringing his world to the people. “I couldn't imagine going through any type of emotional turmoil or heartbreak or feeling something amazing and having the best day of my life or the lowest day of my life and not being able to write about it,” Noah says. “Being able to do that and knowing that humans have all the same sets of emotions—something that I feel you've felt before and 8 billion other people have also felt before in their own individual ways—that is why I do it. I've never cared about anything else than reaching people, having something to say, and giving something to people that they can connect to.”