

# Album Review: “Being Funny in a Foreign Language” by The 1975

**Julie Bobyock, News Editor**

Famous pop-rock band The 1975 are currently on tour for their newest album, “Being Funny in a Foreign Language,” released on October 15. Both the album and the band have been gaining more attention recently as the band is in the midst of their tour and Matthew “Matty” Healy, the band’s swoon-worthy lead singer and front-man, has been kissing—that’s right, kissing—fans on-stage.



Written in collaboration with pop music super-producer Jack Antonoff and bandmate George Daniel, the album is authentic, blunt and bold, yet still soft—somewhat similar to the personality of Matty Healy himself—making the work both musically and lyrically gripping. The band recognized that their last album, “A Brief Inquiry Into Online Relationships,” was more of a continuation of their previous work, and they wanted something of its own for this new album.

“I think I’ve realized what I do,” Healy said in an interview with the New York Times (NYT). “I write about how we communicate interpersonally in the modern age—mediated by the internet. Love, loss, addiction. That’s what I always do. Every other record has been a bit like, ‘Love! And me! And this! And that!’ I think ‘Being Funny’ is the first time where I’m a bit like, ‘Okay, right, love. Let’s do love.’”

To me, one of the things that makes this band unique is their intention—or rather, lack thereof.

“It’s difficult to be big and say—genuinely—that I have zero commercial ambition...I tend to say no to stuff for money,” Healy stated in the NYT interview. He explained that he turned down an opportunity to tour with pop music icon Ed Sheeran, that would have made him money that he’s “never seen or heard of.” But Healy put it bluntly, stating, “I don’t care. It’s not worth it.”

When you have a band that truly only does and writes about what they want, you start to listen more closely—and when it came to “Being Funny in A Foreign Language,” I couldn’t stop.

The album begins with their signature opening self-titled song, something the band has done throughout their discography. “1975” starts with a constant, bright piano that continues throughout the whole song, allowing the listener to focus more on the lyrics. With lines like, “You see I can’t sleep ‘cause the American dream,” “Feeling apathetic after scrolling through hell,” and “I’m sorry if you’re living and you’re 17,” Healy comments on the struggles of living in today’s society that, especially for younger generations, takes place almost entirely online and breeds competition and comparison.

“Happiness” is definitely one of my favorites, as the idea of writing a whole song simply about being happy emphasizes how difficult and rare that can actually be in the current world. The song is upbeat, catchy, and scattered with well-integrated horns and lyrics that capture the antithesis of a person being so in love that they’re “never gonna love again.”

The album has other upbeat songs like “I’m in Love With You” and “Oh Caroline” that are impossible to listen to only once. Leave it to The 1975 to turn simple, short lines like “I’m in love with you” and “Oh, Caroline” into something authentic and blissful that will be stuck in your head all day long.

My favorite song, "About You," is an example of the 1975's middle ground between a happy and nostalgic sound. Healy explains how sometimes a person has something "about" them that can't quite be identified, making your "heart surrender," and making the person impossible to forget. Lines like "I'll miss you on a train/ I'll miss you in the morning/ I never know what to think about/ I think about you" poetically express the unconscious drawbacks that can come with loving someone; once you're in love, are you ever truly out of it?

"When We Are Together" is a slower, softer song on the album. This one stuck out to me because of the strings, which added an authentic, clean tone to the song. Healy sings, "You ask about the cows, wearin' my sweater/ It's something 'bout the weather that makes them lie down," capturing the idea that sometimes the smallest, seemingly insignificant details about a person or conversation can stay in your mind, and even end up being the most powerful.

"One could criticize me for loads of things, but you can't criticize me for being insincere," Healy stated in the same NYT interview. "...If you're going to go there, go there. The only time you slip up is if you pull the punch a little bit."

One thing is for sure—Healy didn't pull the punch at all on "Being Funny." He wrote exactly what he wanted to—musically and lyrically—and landed with what I think is his best work to date.