

Smiley Rojas-Nunez is a bilingual hip-hop lyricist and performing artist that has never shied away from stepping out of his comfort zone. A risk taker at heart, Smiley left the birthplace of Hip-hop and the comforts of his Dominican neighborhood in New York City in 2019 to dive head first into a journey of self-discovery. Filling only a backpack, he moved to a city that he had never stepped foot in, Oaxaca, Mexico. He had no friends or familial ties, but did have a hunch and hope that there his true artist would emerge. Smiley takes cues from his favorites, including Lupe Fiasco, Mac Miller, Natalia Lafourcade, Childish Gambino, and Bad Bunny, in order to create story driven portrayals of visceral experiences reminiscent of J.Cole.

From the age of 5, Smiley was curious about poetry and performing in front of large groups; however, a childhood marred by gang violence and the stark reality of his family's lack of material wealth caused him to retreat and wander aimlessly throughout his teens. When he left NYC to attend college, his new environment allowed him to begin building his identity. During this period and throughout his early twenties, he saw glimpses of who he wanted to become, but found it difficult to stop obsessing over his purpose in life and ability to enter into healthy relationships with intimate partners.

At the age of 24, after coming to the conclusion that he needed to be more compassionate towards himself, he became open to the idea of exploring new forms of expression. That moment led Smiley to begin writing the songs that would eventually become part of his first EP, titled "Her Touch". Two years later, realizing that music was his driving passion, Smiley decided to risk it all and leave his office job in NYC in order to follow the sounds of his music to Oaxaca, Mexico. In Mexico, he has found a cultural hub that has allowed him to develop his musical voice and further mold his perspective.

By the end of 2019 Smiley performed several shows between Mexico and NYC including a few with his live band. He performed at his first music festival during the San Cristobal Jazz Weekend, opened up for veteran Mexican rapper Boca Floja, and had over 100 paying fans watch him headline for the first time during the Day of the Dead weekend.

Smiley Rojas-Nunez rounded out 2019 by independently releasing "Her Touch" in November. The concept behind this first look into the mind of Smiley Rojas-Nunez is simple: stripped back songs about intimacy and relationships anchored in the speakers' struggle with heartbreak, longing, love and lust. With this as his foundation, Smiley shows us his ability to use hip-hop to tell stories of both idyllic and challenging relationships as heard on "Run Away" and "Fade Away", respectively. In "Beautiful Morning" Smiley demonstrates one of his more unique abilities switching seamlessly between performing in English and Spanish, as well as leaning into his newly developing singing prowess.

In the new decade, we find Smiley Rojas-Nunez feeling emboldened. Hot off of participating in his first song-writers' camp, hosted by BMI and ScretHit in late February 2020, he will soon be releasing music videos for the tracks on "Her Touch". Continue to watch for Smiley Rojas-Nunez as he not only centers music but also his care for the environment, meditation, veganism, and collaboration with open minded artists.