

## I. Introduction to Tame Impala

Tame Impala is a music project created by Kevin Parker that combines elements of psychedelic rock, pop, and electronic music (ATX Afterglow, 2020). They have released four studio albums, including their latest, *The Slow Rush* (Velasco Ana, 2020). Parker has morphed his sound from one genre to another, drawing inspiration from many well-known artists and has collaborated with artists ranging from Lady Gaga to Mick Jagger (ATX Afterglow, 2020). Their debut LP ‘*Innerspeaker*’ incorporated sounds of distorted electric guitar and echoing soundscape vocals from the 60s psychedelia (ATX Afterglow, 2020). *Lonerism* featured both pop-driven elements and synthesized strings as well. Their 2015 release, ‘*Currents*’, marked their shift to more electronic beats and synthesizers. ‘*The Slow Rush*’ merges this newer sound with inspiration from pop, French house, easy-listening, and operatic stadium rock (ATX Afterglow, 2020). Parker’s latest album was recorded at the beautiful Wave House in Yallingup with views of the Indian Ocean (Velasco Ana, 2020).

## II. The Creative Process of Tame Impala

Tame Impala, headed by Kevin Parker, is known for their unique sound and genre-blending music. Parker’s sound started as experimental and evolved into headlining festivals like Coachella, playing psychedelic rock, pop, and electronic music. Parker recorded their album *Currents* in Yallingup’s Wave House in Western Australia, which has picturesque views of the Indian ocean (ATX Afterglow, 2020) (Jenke Tyler, 2020). Parker has morphed his sound from one genre to another, drawing on influences from various artists and blending elements of different genres, which has created an easily recognizable but nonetheless unique style that is all his own. Tame Impala’s first LP, *Innerspeaker*, drew heavily on ’60s psychedelia, using distorted electric guitar sounds and echoing soundscape vocals (Velasco Ana, 2020) (Jenke Tyler, 2020). *Lonerism* experimented with pop music while still maintaining psychedelic themes, featuring synthesized strings intricately woven into the fabric of the album’s music. On Tame Impala’s third album, *Currents*, Parker switched from relaxed, distorted guitar sounds to perfectly timed synthesizers, loops, and electronic drum kit beats (Velasco Ana, 2020) (Jenke Tyler, 2020). Kevin Parker recorded all of the instrumental and vocal tracks himself for every one of Tame Impala’s studio albums, producing each album himself with hundreds of vocal takes in the making of one song (ATX Afterglow, 2020) (Velasco Ana, 2020) (Jenke Tyler, 2020). The new album, *The Slow Rush*, showcases obvious inspiration from new facets of pop and a gentle fusion of genres featured on Parker’s previous three albums, epitomizing Tame Impala’s musical journey so far (ATX Afterglow, 2020) (Velasco Ana, 2020) (Jenke Tyler, 2020). Disco cymbals and a funky French house beat reminiscent of Daft Punk round out the opening track “One More Year” and “Glimmer”, and the track “Breathe Deeper” is Kevin’s ode to pop songstress Mariah Carey. Despite the range of influences from various genres on *The Slow Rush*, it maintains that distinct “trippy” drug-induced sound that Tame Impala

fans love (ATX Afterglow, 2020) (Velasco Ana, 2020) (Jenke Tyler, 2020).

Interestingly, Parker’s creative process is often driven by unexpected song ideas that come to him when he is not thinking of writing a song. For Parker, song ideas unexpectedly come to him most of the time outside the studio, a creative process he explains, “tries to isolate what makes him think of ten songs in three days sometimes and then nothing for five months”. His method of capturing his ideas is to record a voice memo of the music he is currently thinking of when he goes from a loud and energetic place to one of quiet and calmness (ATX Afterglow, 2020). In June 2018, a large blaze in Malibu destroyed Parker’s home resulting in the loss of some of his creative work (Jenke Tyler, 2020).

In summary, Tame Impala is Kevin Parker’s artistic project with music that transcends genres, and this unique sound is achieved through his production, recording, and mixing process. Parker’s incredible work ethic is evident by the fact that he produced each of the band’s albums himself, recording all of the instrumental and vocal tracks himself. While Parker’s musical style has morphed over the years, it still retains that distinct and recognizable trippy, psychedelic rock and pop feel.

### **III. The Distinctive Sonics of Tame Impala**

Tame Impala’s unique sound has made it stand out as one of the most innovative and versatile indie-rock projects of the past two decades. The project began as experimental music and has since morphed into headlining Coachella and other international music festivals by playing psychedelic music . Kevin Parker, the creative genius behind the project, has managed to create an easily recognizable but nonetheless unique style that is all his own by blending elements of psychedelic rock, pop, and electronic music. Parker has drawn on influences across genres, and this has contributed significantly to his experimental and innovative approach to creating music. Tame Impala’s debut LP *Innerspeaker* heavily drew on ’60s psychedelia, and *Lonerism* features synthesized strings woven intricately into its music . *Currents*, however, abandons the relaxed, distorted guitar sounds seen on *Lonerism* and gives way to perfectly timed synthesizers, loops, and electronic drum kit beats (Jenke Tyler, 2020). Lastly, *The Slow Rush* is characterized by its distinct “trippy” drug-induced sound, fusing elements from new facets of pop and Parker’s previous styles .

Parker is well-known for producing every one of Tame Impala’s studio albums himself and generating all of the instrumentals and vocal tracks (Velasco Ana, 2020). Parker’s creative process begins with unexpected song ideas that often come to him outside the studio, when he is not consciously thinking about writing music. He claims that songs come to him under such circumstances and tends to record voice memos of the music he is currently thinking of when he goes from a loud and energetic place to one of quiet and calmness (Velasco Ana, 2020). With the release of *The Slow Rush*, Tame Impala continued to experiment with pop music while still maintaining the psychedelic themes that

are prominent in Parker's music (Jenke Tyler, 2020).

However, Tame Impala's journey has not been entirely smooth-sailing. For instance, in 2018, the California wildfires burned down Parker's house in Malibu, where he was working on some elements of *The Slow Rush*. As a result, he had to relocate and complete the album elsewhere (Jenke Tyler, 2020). Despite such challenges, Tame Impala has continued to release albums showcasing its experimentation with different genres while still remaining recognizable as Tame Impala. Furthermore, Parker has become more comfortable with expressing his interest in pop music while branching out from psychedelic rock. Tame Impala's production quality has also improved notably over the years, refining a raw and organic sound into multiple variations of waves that have created its signature sound (ATX Afterglow, 2020). In conclusion, Tame Impala's ability to seamlessly morph its sound from one genre to another, using techniques and stylistic choices unique to its approach, represents the height of creative genius in contemporary music.

## References

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