

00:00:00	Music	Music	“Crown Ones” off the album <i>Stepfather</i> by People Under The Stairs
00:00:06	Oliver	Host	Hello, this is <i>Heat Rocks</i> , and I’m Oliver Wang, flying solo today. Morgan Rhodes will be back next week. Every episode we invite a guest to join us to talk about a heat rock that is hot lava put to record, and today we will be globetrotting back to 2007 to talk about <i>Kala</i> , the sophomore album by M.I.A.
00:00:26	Music	Music	<p>“Paper Planes” off the album <i>Kala</i> by M.I.A. An upbeat song that starts a little slow and then introduces a steady drumbeat.</p> <p><i>I fly like paper, get high like planes If you catch me at the border I got visas in my name If you come around here, I make ‘em all day I’ll get one down in a second if you wait</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades, but continues quietly as Oliver speaks.]</i></p>
00:00:48	Oliver	Host	<p>In 2005, Maya Arulpragasam, better known as M.I.A. lit a fuse with her debut album, <i>Arular</i>, that ignited into a glorious conflagration two years later with her follow-up, <i>Kala</i>.</p> <p><i>[Music comes to an end.]</i></p> <p>While prominent film and trailer placements helped turn the song “Paper Planes” into the album’s primary hit, all of <i>Kala</i> crackled with frenetic, kinetic energy, drawn from the album’s embrace of various underground dance cultures from around the global south.</p> <p>Anchoring it all was the piercing brogue of M.I.A.’s voice, whose use of repetitive chants, yelps, and hollers, in addition to her lyrical and political bravado, was a sonic weapon all its own.</p> <p>I reviewed <i>Kala</i> for <i>NPR</i> back then, when it dropped, and wrote this at the time: “At a time when globalization is both dissolving and reinforcing national identities, M.I.A.’s music speaks from a blurry borderland, through a lingua franca of agitated, propulsive pop. The energy should be familiar to restless youth almost anywhere.” I can only hope my observations have held up as well as this album has.</p>
00:01:50	Music	Music	<p>“Paper Planes” starts up again as Oliver finishes his previous sentence.</p> <p><i>M.I.A., third world democracy Yeah, I got more records than the KGB So, uh, no funny business!</i></p> <p><i>Are you ready all? Some-some-some I-some I murder Some I-some I let go Some-some-some I-some I murder Some I-some I let go</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades, continues quietly as Oliver begins speaking again,</i></p>

and then fades out entirely.]

00:02:14 Oliver Host *Kala* was the album pick of our guest today, journalist and critic, Lorraine Ali. Her career as an arts and entertainment writer spans two decades, much of that having been spent at the *L.A. Times*, where she currently write about television and politics, though I first started reading her byline when she was still penning music criticism for the likes of the *Times*, the *L.A. Weekly*, *Rolling Stone*, and *Newsweek*, amongst many other outlets.

She's also been one of the leading journalists to cover the Muslim-American community, but I didn't realize until this week that she used to contribute a car column to *UHF Magazine* back in the day. Truly, a modern renaissance writer, Lorraine Ali, welcome to *Heat Rocks*.

00:02:52 Lorraine Ali Guest Thank you. How did you find that car column? *[laughs]*

00:02:56 Oliver Host I think it was probably on *Wikipedia*, but you know, I try to do my homework, so.

00:02:58 Lorraine Guest *[laughs]*

00:03:00 Oliver Host I love that you wrote a column. We're just gonna start completely off-topic here. How did you end up writing a car column?

00:03:06 Lorraine Guest The car column was sort of like my love letter to L.A. I felt like we needed something that—you know, I'm a native Angelino—and I felt like we needed something that got at L.A. culture by something that was extremely, rooted in this city, and I was like—

00:03:21 Oliver Host Sure.

00:03:22 Lorraine Guest —"What better than a car column?". My father had been in the car business, whether it was like rental cars, you know, an entrepreneur in the car business. Kind of like, rental cars, selling used cars, all of that stuff. So I had a new car probably like every six months—a new, old car—

00:03:41 Oliver Host Got it.

00:03:42 Lorraine Guest —and all my friends were like, "you really need to write about this." Like, a car column, why not?

00:03:48 Oliver Host That's awesome. Well, taking it to M.I.A. and *Kala*. Let's start with the artist. How did M.I.A. first land on your radar?

00:03:55 Lorraine Guest Well, I was a music critic at the time, and I think I was with *Newsweek*, and *Arular* came out, and I remember hearing—I think it was "Galang"—and she had these chants in there, and I think it was the—

[singing] "ya ya, hey!"

[speaking] And I thought, "What is this? This is amazing," and I just wanted to know more about the artist behind it.

00:04:13	Music	Music	<p>“Galang” off the album <i>Arular</i> by M.I.A begins quietly over Lorraine’s last sentence and then grows louder. A fast-paced electronic song with a heavy drumbeat.</p> <p><i>Ya, ya, hey!</i> <i>Whoa ay-oh-ay-oh-ay-oh</i> <i>Ya, ya, hey</i> <i>Ya, ya, hey!</i> <i>Whoa ay-oh-ay-oh-ay-oh</i> <i>Ya, ya, hey!</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out as Oliver begins speaking.]</i></p>
00:04:35	Oliver	Host	<p>I think, much like you, I had a very similar reaction to first starting to hear M.I.A., and <i>Arular</i> was certainly— it made a big enough splash, even though <i>Kala</i> was I think the bigger album, and a lot of that is in terms of the success of “Paper Planes”, but it’s not like <i>Arular</i> was some obscure first album that nobody had heard of. Like, M.I.A really helped blow up on that.</p> <p>I didn’t listen to a lot of electronic dance music, I was primarily a hip hop guy, especially at the time. So, I can’t say whether or not what M.I.A. was doing was wholly unprecedented. I can say that, as someone who listened to mainstream pop music, to your point, I didn’t really think there was anyone else that was doing stuff like this. Especially drawing in this very syncretic way, from all of these different club cultures from around the world.</p> <p>And I think, especially between these first two albums, it really felt like it was almost like an ethnic graphic guide for dummies to all of the underground music that was popping off in different places around the world. Especially, as I was saying in the intro, around the global south, and I’m wondering, was that the same impression you came away with at the time?</p>
00:05:38	Lorraine	Guest	<p>It was, and I <u>had</u> listened to a lot of electronica and EDM or whatever you wanted to call it at whatever point it was at, and there wasn’t anything out there that I had tripped upon that was like that, and, to your point, I always was thinking, “Here we have this opportunity to—technologically but also because it’s just so much easier to access music now—to pull all these things together,” and nobody was doing it. I was like, “Where is that?” and when I heard bits off <i>Arular</i> I was like, that’s—it’s almost like I brought it into being by thinking about it! It’s like, here it is, oh my God.</p> <p>The world is a really big place, and it just felt like music was getting smaller and smaller and smaller here in the U.S. Which is one of the reasons I kind of started getting out of music criticism.</p>
00:06:24	Oliver	Host	Mm-hm.
00:06:25	Lorraine	Guest	<p>This was one of the bright lights where, wow, this was opening it up the other way, and I just didn’t hear a lot of people doing it, and the fact that it was a woman, I was like, “Thank you.”</p>
00:06:30	Music	Music	<p>“XR2” off the album <i>Kala</i> by M.I.A. A fast-paced electronic song that</p>

fades in as Lorraine finishes speaking.

*This is how we do it in the XR2
The boys look fine, stereos Alpine
20/20, Thunderbird, 12:09
Took a pill, good time, all the time
This is how we do it in the XR2
The boys look fine, stereos Alpine
20/20, Thunderbird, 12:09
Took a pill, good time, all the time*

Brick Lane Massive, we were like grime...

[Music fades out as Oliver begins speaking.]

00:06:49	Oliver	Host	When we were discussing what album you wanted to talk about, we went back and forth between <i>Arular</i> and then <i>Kala</i> , and you ultimately decided on <i>Kala</i> . So I'm wondering, why <i>Kala</i> ? What makes that particular sophomore album a heat rock for you?
00:07:03	Lorraine	Guest	I think <i>Kala</i> was just a better album. I think she had really gotten into her own... sort of groove, so to speak—
00:07:12	Oliver	Host	Yeah.
00:07:13	Lorraine	Guest	—with <i>Kala</i> , and you know, she had been with Diplo before, with <i>Arular</i> , and it was interesting, but people had given him a ton of credit for that, and we can get into that later.
00:07:22	Oliver	Host	Oh, we are definitely gonna get into that. Yeah.
00:07:25	Lorraine	Guest	Yeah. Imagine that, they're giving the white guy all the credit! That's crazy!
00:07:28	Oliver	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:07:30	Lorraine	Guest	<i>[Laughs.]</i> But I felt like <i>Kala</i> , when that came out, it was <i>Arular</i> realized in much more depth? But it kind of also went wider, it was weirder, but it was also bigger. I mean, it was amazing kind of, how she was able to go much more specific, and in doing that make it much wider. It was also more focused just in terms of being topical. I felt like it really hit on things that were happening at the time, in a way that <i>Arular</i> was much more scattered, and kind of much more about like a dance club experience. <i>Kala</i> seemed to be a mix of that, but also, you know, kind of a topical road map of what was happening around the world.
00:08:11	Oliver	Host	Mm-hm. This—I dunno if this is the best analogy, but it makes me think of the relationship between Public Enemy's <i>It Takes A Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back</i> , which was their sophomore album, compared to their first one, which is that you can absolutely see what they were going for with that first PE album, but <i>It Takes A Nation</i> is where it deepens, and they really develop, I think, in a sense, an identity for themselves as a group.

I feel like there's something similar happening in that transition from *Arular* to *Kala* as well, is that—M.I.A., you can really hear her coming into her own, and I think part of what you're bringing up is the role that she plays as a co-producer on this album, I think, makes a really significant difference here.

For those unfamiliar with the backstory here, originally Timbaland, right, it was supposed to have produced much of that second album, but the reason why that didn't happen—well, one of them at least—is that M.I.A. was denied a visa for coming into the U.S. and that was obviously going to make a challenge to her working with Timbaland, who's based here in Virginia Beach, and so as a result she had to switch things up, and her—and her primary co-producer on this album was Switch, Diplo I think has a handful of tracks as well—but they basically, instead of coming to the U.S. to record the album, they just started traveling the world and going to these different cities and bringing their mobile production equipment with them, and that's a lot of how *Kala* was produced, and I feel like you can really hear that global sense of it going from city to city.

00:09:41 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Lorraine: Yeah, I have to say, it's one of the few times that, you know, Homeland Security really, really like, their-

Oliver: Did a favor for us?

Lorraine: Yes!

Oliver: So the music's cool, listeners.

Lorraine: It really—it turns out—[cuts off, laughing]

Oliver: Ouch.

00:09:53 Lorraine Guest

Their denial of not letting a great artist in worked in our favor. So yeah, I never thought I would say thank you to Homeland Security, but God, thanks.

00:10:00 Oliver Host

[laughs]

00:10:01 Lorraine Guest

Because if you listen to the one Timbaland track on *Kala*, it is the weakest track on there, and I often find myself just... skipping it.

00:10:09 Oliver Host

It's not like, the worst Timbaland beat I've ever heard. It's also not the most memorable. But—and I don't mean to pick on Tim Mosley, because God knows that guy's a genius in a lot of ways—but his guest verse on here is terrible. It's garbage.

00:10:21	Music	Music	<p>“Come Around” off the album <i>Kala</i> by M.I.A. A slower, electronic dance song with a steady beat.</p> <p>M.I.A.: <i>Dun da da dun da da dun dun</i> <i>Beat goes on</i></p> <p>TIMBALAND: <i>Hey, hey!</i> <i>Baby girl, you and me, need to go to your teepee</i> <i>The moon is full, and I'm shining</i> <i>Baby, I know you see me</i> <i>Put a hump or two on your back, just like that</i> <i>Ooh, girl you're on fire</i> <i>I don't wanna be in love with you</i> <i>I'mma just break you off and say goodbye</i></p> <p><i>[Song fades as Lorraine speaks.]</i></p>
00:10:39	Lorraine	Guest	<p><i>[mocking song lyrics]</i> “Baby girl.”</p> <p><i>[Laughs and continues laughing as Oliver speaks.]</i></p>
00:10:41	Oliver	Host	<p>But it’s the teepee part, like. She’s South Asian, but she’s not that kind of Indian, you know what I mean? Tim, like, what were you thinking at that time? At least Jay-Z had the presence of mind to make the joke about red dot versus feather, like, he understood there were two different kinds of Indians, but like. It’s just, it’s so bad.</p>
00:10:59	Lorraine	Guest	<p>It’s really bad. Yeah, and you know, the idea that it—the denial of getting into this country and working with him pushed her out to record all over the world, and you hear it all over the album. And just in the percussion and the drumming and even some of the field sounds, you know, from, jungles, birds—</p>
00:11:19	Oliver	Host	<p>The sound of children’s voices!</p>
00:11:21	Lorraine	Guest	<p>Yes! All of it!—and you really hear it mixed in there in a way that, right, we would have not had that.</p>
00:11:27	Music	Music	<p>“Birdflu” off the album <i>Kala</i> by M.I.A. An electronic song with a steady beat.</p> <p><i>I have my heart down so I need a man for romance</i> <i>Streets are making 'em hard so they selfish little roamers</i> <i>Jumpin' girl to girl, make us meat like burgers</i> <i>When I get fat I'll pop me out some leaders</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades as Lorraine speaks.]</i></p>
00:11:45	Lorraine	Guest	<p>And also, your point about Public Enemy, that—I do see—that’s a really good comparison, because I think with <i>Kala</i> you also hear so many more layers of sound, which was the same with Public Enemy, you started hearing—</p>

00:12:00 Oliver Host *Bomb Squad* really—that density of sound.

00:12:02 Lorraine Guest Exactly, the density, and inside of that you can listen to *Kala* over and over and over again, and you hear something new, something new, something new, another layer, another layer, another layer, and it happens also with her lyrics.

Because you can flip them around much in the way... when Jay Z—when you listen to Jay Z, it can mean like three different things, the wordplay bouncing off each other, similar in that way, but also very much her own, because her experience is so unique, and you didn't hear artists out there with her kind of life experience, with her kind of immigrant background, with her kind of understanding of the plight of refugees, of what it means to have to move to another country, learn a language, all of that. You just didn't hear it out there.

00:12:46 Oliver Host The moment in which this album drops, right, so we're talking about kind of mid-late, first decade of 2000, post-9/11, post-Iraq War or Gulf War part 2, and I—that's certainly all of that in the background. I mean, the fact that she was denied a visa by Homeland Security, that probably would not have happened if this album had been recorded ten years earlier, and so I'm wondering, when you were engaging with it, how much of that—the larger social historical backdrop—was also informing your ears, in a way.

00:13:15 Lorraine Guest Hugely. This album spoke to me in a way that nothing else did, because of what I had been through with my family. I'm half Iraqi, and my family on that side had all been in Baghdad up until 2003 and the invasion and the war there, and at the point that that album came out, many of them had scattered, and they were refugees. They were either in Jordan, and also in Syria—which, that's a whole other continuing story—and I set out to reconnect with them, because I had lost them during the Saddam Era. We didn't have a lot of conversation back and forth. My father had passed away and he was the one link to them. So I was kind of reconnecting with them at this point, and that was the soundtrack to this journey, I have to tell you.

I mean, it spoke to me in a way that nothing else did, because... there was so much pain in there, but there was also so much anger, and that's what I was feeling, and when she was talking about one track she did. She had percussion on there, and she said it would sound like, what it would be like when the people were fleeing in a boat, refugees, and if they were banging on the side of the boat. And I just thought, "Oh my God, who else is doing that? My family didn't have to escape in a boat, but, fuck. Who else is doing that?"

So, it spoke in a way that nothing else did. It was genuine. It wasn't looking at it from the outside, and I remember reading a review from somebody on Pitchfork that was like, "Well, her muddled politics, you know, get in the way of things," and I thought, "You know what? No, they don't. Her muddled politics are something you don't understand, because you don't see what's going on there yet," and now those quote-unquote "muddled politics" are what is essentially

like, rocking everybody's world right now, it has changed the globe.

She was way in the forefront of at least trying to get that out there through art, and at the time, all the other offerings out there, you know, what was it? It was, you know, *[laughs]* Nelly Furtado, it was Fergie, you know, Taylor Swift. You know, not to harsh on them, they were doing whatever they were doing.

- 00:15:23 Oliver Host Right. But they were not speaking to this.
- 00:15:26 Lorraine Guest They were not speaking to the moment in any way. There was nothing even about war on there, nothing, and I'm not saying it's gotta be "raise your fist in the air and, you know, march forward with a flag", but, something to show you actually live on the same planet that, you know, all of the rest of us are living on.
- 00:15:42 Oliver Host Lorraine, is there a song on this that you feel really captures some of the essence of what you're talking about?
- 00:15:47 Lorraine Guest The beginning of "Twenty Dollar", she just kind of does this wail.
- 00:15:49 Music Music "Twenty Dollar" off the album *Kala* by M.I.A. A fast electronic song with crashing cymbals, gunshots, and a drum beat.
- M.I.A. sings several long, sustained notes.
- 00:16:10 Lorraine Guest Just that one guttural wail spoke to the moments so much. Gunshots. There's gunshots in there.
- 00:16:30 Oliver Host I don't think I picked up on the autotuning of it, either. So it has that disembodied effect that autotune tends to do as well, and so—again, as you were saying earlier—there's a lot of layers to the kind of sonic textures on this.
- We mentioned a little bit earlier about some of the production controversy—or not even, that's not even the right way to put it, it was just the ways in which, when *Arular* blew up, there was this kind of backlash towards M.I.A. by saying, "yeah, she's cool; but really we're giving her too much credit, and really it's Diplo who's basically creating this whole soundtrack. It's really him who should be given full credit for creating this particular, distinctive sound."
- 00:17:09 Lorraine Guest It was almost so predictable, wasn't it? That, you know, well clearly, it was—the same thing happened with, you know, Courtney Love when she did, you know, *Live Through This*, "well, clearly Kurt did the whole thing," and "oh, well, clearly M.I.A. was hooked up with Diplo, so clearly he did the whole thing." Not only just white male, he's American, right?
- So, uh... you know, she's got all these counts against her culturally in terms of people giving credit. She's brown, *[laughs]* she's a woman, so of course she's not gonna get that credit; and I'd like to say a lot of the backlash was driven, you know, by that kind of Pitchfork-y male critic. I hate to say this, but it—it just is.
- I mean, I grew—I came up in the world of rock critics, of hip-hop,

you know, writers, whatever it is, whatever you wanna say, and there was probably about like 98% men, 2% women... women of color, like, none. You know, barely. So, you know, the narrative that was going out there about what an album was, how the artist had changed, was very much driven by, you know, the kind of guys that look like Diplo.

So, when she came out with *Kala*, it was just—it was like a victory dance, in a way. It was like, right? You thought that was him? Oh, listen to this, mother fuckers. Like, this is what it is. Boom. And there was no disputing, or no denying, and as a matter of fact, what *Kala* did was take what had happened to *Arular* and make it much more meaningful, deeper, more eccentric. It should've been something that didn't hit on as big a level as it did, and in fact it went wider.

So—and they—at that point they take diverging paths, right? Diplo does his whatever you wanna call it, global dance party, but it's pretty much devoid of any like, deep meaning. It's fun, right? But, you know, you look at some of his album covers, or you look at some of the things he does on stage... It's totally exploiting those cultures. It's cultural appropriation. He's got all these like, black women dancing around in thongs. It's like, oh really? So, like, you just landed in Havana and you're gonna like, pick a prostitute. [Laughs] I don't know!

00:19:24	Oliver	Host	[Laughs.]
00:19:25	Lorraine	Guest	I mean, that's what it looks like to me! It looks like, those dudes who go, you know, to countries where... I'm not gonna get into that. But it's just, it's really ugly to me. It's really ugly where that went, and at that point, for people to say, "he was all of it, she was just sort of the icing on the cake," was like, oh no. <i>Kala</i> just wiped that slate clean.
00:19:47	Music	Music	"The Turn" off the album <i>Kala</i> by M.I.A. A slow, hip-hop, electronic dance beat. <i>The war in me makes a warrior Like a pitbull getting with a terrier I'm better off in North Korea Yeah, dropping from a barrel of a carrier</i> <i>Coz I got enough to be more It's hard enough to get more I shut the door on everything Just to let my head blow</i>
00:20:08	Oliver	Host	I remember reading criticism about her in particular, and this is largely coming from the radical left of critics of color, especially those who are, you know, focusing, or have some training in subaltern studies, basically accusing her of kind of appropriating all of these different subaltern sounds and communities and politics in a way that wasn't necessary representative of the stuff that she, specifically, lived through or could represent.
00:20:34	Lorraine	Guest	It's really interesting, because some of the hip hop artists that got huge—what do you wanna say, Tupac, Biggie, whoever it is—are

you gonna mine their stuff to see, like, “was that really authentic?” Going back to like, *The Dirt*’s big now, Mötley Crüe, were they really fucking twenty women in the closet? You know, but no, let’s celebrate it! So why with M.I.A. is it that we go back and go, “how authentic is that?”

I mean, if there’s anybody out there that could at least speak to the experience of growing up, um... looked at as the enemy in one culture, which we’re talking about the Tamil, you know, think Sri Lankan, and also looked at as the terrorist. I mean, if there’s somebody that can speak to that in music, she can, right? And I don’t think she was ever saying, “look, here I am, I am the POL, I am, you know, this, I am the African refugee.” She was at least touching on it, and bringing those elements, and I don’t know that we put under artists under scrutiny that did that... that were men of color, and I also think there’s an issue in music where we look at—in America particularly—where we look at like, race and color in black and white. Right?

00:21:47	Oliver	Host	Mm-hm.
00:21:48	Lorraine	Guest	There’s like five billion shades in between, and it’s important that we’re looking at all of it, right? But, I mean, there isn’t only one experience. It’s like, “well, there’s a multitude of white experiences, and there’s one experience of color”. No. There’s not, and I think what we were talking about just in terms of the layers of the music, the gradations, the depth, I think she also hits that on the level of bringing all these cultural things in. You know, I never listened to it thinking, “Wow, she’s really like, trying to speak for everybody.” It was like she was throwing these elements in; here’s my experience, listen to all the stuff underneath it, and hear how it sort of informs it all.
00:22:25	Music	Music	“Mango Pickle Down River” off the album <i>Kala</i> by M.I.A. A mid-tempo electric song. M.I.A.: <i>I had to jump town and my money's all spent</i> THE WILCANNIA MOB: <i>When it's really hot, we go to the river and swim</i> <i>When we're goin' fishin', we catchin' the bream</i> <i>When the river's high, we jump off the bridge</i> <i>And when we get home, we play some didge'</i> <i>When it's really hot, we go to the river and swim</i> <i>[Music continued quietly as Oliver speaks.]</i>
00:22:38	Oliver	Host	Well, we will be back with more of our conversation about <i>Kala</i> , the album by M.I.A., with our guest, Lorraine Ali, after a brief word from some of our sibling Max Fun podcasts. Keep it locked.
00:22:51	Music	Music	<i>[Music gets louder again.]</i> THE WILCANNIA MOB: <i>We-we-we play some didge'</i>

*We-we-we play some didge'
We-we-we play some didge'*

COLIN "COLROY" JOHNSON:
Well Colroy's here, have no fear...

[The music fades out.]

00:23:03 Danielle Radford Promo *[In announcer voice]* Macho Man to the top rope! The flying elbow! The cover!

[Crowd counting to 3.]

We've got a new champion!

[Sound of bell ringing.]

00:23:13 Music Promo *Tights and Fights* theme song. Upbeat song similar to what you'd hear during a wrestling match.

00:23:15 Lindsey Kelk Promo We're here with Macho Man Randy Savage after his big win to become the new world champion. What are you gonna do now, Mach?

00:23:20 Hal Lublin Promo *[Doing Randy Savage impression]* I'm gonna go listen to the newest episode of the *Tights and Fights* podcast! Oh yeah!

00:23:25 Lindsey Kelk Promo Tell us more about this podcast!

00:23:27 Hal Lublin Promo *[Doing Randy Savage impression]* It's the podcast of power, too sweet to be sour, funky like a monkey, woke discussions, man, and jokes about wrestlers' fashion choices, myself excluded. Yeah.

00:23:39 Lindsey Kelk Promo I can't wait to listen!

00:23:40 Hal Lublin Promo *[Doing Randy Savage impression]* Neither can I! You can find it Thursdays on Maximum Fun! Oh yeah, dig it!

[Music ends.]

00:23:48 Lisa Promo *[Upbeat, cheerful music begins.]*

Hey, if you like your podcasts to be focused and well-researched, and your podcast hosts to be uncharismatic, unhorny strangers who have no interest in horses, then this is not the podcast for you.

00:23:57 Emily Promo Yeah, and what's your deal?

00:23:58 Lisa Promo *[Laughs.]*

00:23:59	Emily	Promo	I'm Emily.
00:24:00	Lisa	Promo	I'm Lisa.
00:24:02	Emily	Promo	Our show's called <i>Baby Geniuses</i> .
00:24:03	Lisa	Promo	And its hosts are horny adult idiots. We discover weird <i>Wikipedia</i> pages every episode.
00:24:08	Emily	Promo	We discuss institutional misogyny.
00:24:11	Lisa	Promo	We ask each other the dumbest questions, and our listeners won't stop sending us pictures of their butts.
00:24:15	Emily	Promo	We haven't asked them to stop, but they also aren't stopping.
00:24:18	Lisa	Promo	Join us on <i>Baby Geniuses</i> .
00:24:20	Emily	Promo	Every other week on Maximum Fun.org.
00:24:24	Music	Music	A few notes from "Crown Ones" off the album <i>Stepfather</i> by People Under The Stairs
00:24:27	Oliver	Host	And we are back here on <i>Heat Rocks</i> talking with Lorraine Ali about <i>Kala</i> , the sophomore album from 2007 by M.I.A. Lorraine, before we get back to the album, I wanted to ask you something about your relationship to music as a writer, because you now are now I think officially a television critic, and I don't know when the last time you were more or less writing about music full time, but I'm assuming it's been a minute. Do you miss it at all?
00:24:54	Lorraine	Guest	I do. I do miss it. I think about this often, because when I'm writing television pieces... I feel like I'm using a different part of my brain. With music, when you write about it, or when you think about it, or when you listen to it... you are giving it the narrative. I mean, I'm—and—when I listen to music I'm kind of not interested what the artist's idea of the story is in the film—in the music. In the film. See? I just did it.
00:25:21	Oliver	Host	Yeah, see, there you go.
00:25:	Lorraine	Guest	But, you know, you are adding the narrative to it, and I think it hits on a much more guttural, emotional level, and it seeps in that way, and it becomes really personal. But it's also a collective experience, right? Many other people are listening to it. So in that way it's hyper personal, but it's also something that we can discuss on a collective level. Television, and I think more so—it's gotten more personal, because it's gotten a lot better, but I don't think it hit those same chords for me, at least back in the day when I was writing about music.
00:25:52	Oliver	Host	I mean, part of why I'm curious about this is I have not written about music fulltime in—I mean, since my daughter was born. It's been 14 years. I still write about music occasionally, but it's few and far between; and in a lot of ways doing this show scratches the itch that I have to talk about music, which is different than having to sit down

and pen like 400 or 800 words about a new album. And, th—I have so much respect to my colleagues out there who, that’s what they’re still doing, and they’re grinding doing it.

I’m so happy that I don’t have to do it, and I think part of it is I like talking about music in the way that you and I are talking about it, I don’t like having to form some critical opinion about something, outside of just saying, “I really like this” or “I didn’t like it.” *[Laughs]* But I don’t want to have to explain my likes and dislikes to anybody else. So I’m always curious talking to people who used to write about music but don’t anymore. Yeah, is your relationship to music similar or different now that you’re not writing about it in a professional way?

00:26:51 Lorraine Guest Yes. I thi—you know, and—and to the point, it... it sounds ridiculous because I was a music critic for most of my career, I really hated deconstructing it. I almost didn’t want to do it, because I wanted to keep it the thing that I loved. I wanted to keep it the thing that just came into me and moved me, right? And then, you know, after a while I started to think, like, I don’t want it to be a job listening to music. Which sounds also ridiculous, but you get to that point, and yeah, my relationship is different. I can listen—

Like I was excited about coming on the show. When I was driving down here I was listening to the album in the car, and I was listening to it in a different way now than I would have if I had to sit down and review it.

00:27:33 Oliver Host Yeah.

00:27:34 Lorraine Guest And I almost—many of the albums in the beginning, when I would sit down and review them, I would review them, I’d do it, but then I would go back and listen to them as what I would call a human. *[Laughs.]* A civilian.

[Laughs again, and continues laughing as Oliver speaks.]

00:27:46 Oliver Host *[Laughs.]* A civilian. I like that.

00:27:47 Lorraine Guest I was able to forge my own relationship with the album, outside of what I just gave everybody else, because I want some of that stuff to be my own as well.

00:27:55 Oliver Host Right, right. Well, along those lines—I’m bringing this back to M.I.A—and I don’t know to what extent you’ve thought about this, but it seems to me that, pun intended here, that M.I.A. is largely M.I.A. from the current pop scene, in a way that’s surprising only because you would think that her politics, or the ways in which we interpret her politics at least, would be so much—as resonant now, if not more so than it was 15 years ago when she first started, given like, post-Trump, given post-Brexit.

You know, all of these things in which the kind of backlash around globalization, she could really—you know, refugee crises everywhere, including here at home—that... a voice like hers would be able to speak to that. And while she’s still making music, it’s not

like she disappeared, her prominence seems much dimmer than it was, um, when those—as opposed to those first two albums. I don't know if that's her, I don't know if that's the music industry, I don't know if that's me. I'm just wondering if you really thought about the general arc of her career.

- 00:28:53 Lorraine Guest Well, in terms of the... just the music industry, she was an outlier then; and I—I don't... I hoped at that moment that, look, this is opening it up, this is actually starting to expand what we're hearing, what's out there, but that didn't... really happen in a big way, in a significant way.
- The arc of her career, I think, is... it's almost indicative of coming from the margins, of thinking differently, of feeling embattled. Really, her whole upbringing she felt embattled. Her whole upbringing she was the other, um... and she was that in music as well, and you can't keep going like that. You burn out. And I could see it. I interviewed her after this album came out. And she was... she was embattled. She was burnt out. She was tired of people deconstructing her, um, deconstructing her poltiics, of her catching death threats for what people had said, that she was a terrorist, things like that, and I could see it on her. It was wearing. *[Beat.]*
- And I don't know, um... I often see that artists who are really highly creative, btu also angry and combative, they burn out really fast. And I feel like that's what happened to her. It's a shame. It's really a shame, but her next album was not bad, but it was so off the rails in many ways—
- 00:30:25 Oliver Host It was dark.
- 00:30:26 Lorraine Guest It was really dark.
- 00:30:27 Oliver Host It was a really dark album.
- 00:30:28 Lorraine Guest —and the funny thing is, is she told me this album's just free. It's free, it's freedom. And this—if this is your freedom, going into this darker place, I can see which way you're headed. Although, I loved "Bad Girls."
- 00:30:40 Oliver Host Crazy video, too.
- 00:30:42 Lorraine Guest Oh, my God. The Saudi drifting.
- 00:30:43 Oliver Host Yes!
- 00:30:44 Lorraine Guest It was amazing, and to hear all the Arabic melodies in that, and the video with the Saudi drifters. And it's like, I knew that was going on, because I—you know, but to see it in a video—
- 00:30:54 Oliver Host A lot of us had never—unless you'd traveled there—you know, we'd never seen that, you know, out here in the U.S.
- 00:30:58 Lorraine Guest Right, and to see these guys also that—all you ever think about of these guys in galabias is they're, you know, they're just like heading off the haj or they're, you know, they're... holding a gun on a rooftop and shooting at U.S. troops. No, they're drifting!

00:31:10 Oliver Host They're doing dumb shit in cars, just like us!

00:31:12 Lorraine Guest Just like American guys! Stupid shit in cars, right.

00:31:14 Music Music "Bad Girls" off the album *Matangi* by M.I.A. Fast, hip-hop beats.

My chain hits my chest when I'm banging on the dashboard
My chain hits my chest when I'm banging on the radio

Oh back it, back it
Yeah pull up to the bumper game read the signal
Cover me, cause I'm changing lanes
I had a handle on it
My life, but I broke it

00:31:31 Lorraine Guest The art that she was doing, the music she was doing, I don't know how she could sustain, because the rest of the world hadn't even budged in that direction. As a matter of fact, it felt like it was getting—music industry at least was even getting more vapid.

It's like, "let's celebrate Lady Gaga, she's really confrontational and different." It's like, that's what we were worshipping, and how do you keep going with that intact and not just either buy into it or totally burn out?

00:31:56 Oliver Host Well, I will say this much, is this album still sounds as resonant today as it did, you know, twelve years ago when it—when it came out, and partly I think that the music itself has aged really well; but as I was also alluding to, I think listening to it in this current moment, it still feels like it speaks... sadly, actually, in tragic ways, but it speaks very well to, sort of, what's happening in the world.

00:32:19 Lorraine Guest It's so—it's in fact now more resonant about what is going on, exactly what you just, than it was even then, and I— [*sighing*]. I, it makes me sad that there isn't something else out there from her right now that's new; but then maybe this is the album that just came out too early, and it's speaking to the time. I don't know.

But yeah, who else can we turn to right now musically, without having to dig super duper duper deep, that would speak to this moment? Who else?

00:32:47 Oliver Host Right. I mean, we're all waiting for Beyoncé or Kendrick Lamar, but... there's a whole world of other artists who probably are doing it, they just don't happen to have the same profile.

00:32:56 Lorraine Guest Yeah, and Beyoncé and Kendrick Lamar can't do it all.

[*Oliver laughs.*]

Come on, folks, snap it up out there! Stop laying everything on their shoulders!

00:33:03	Oliver	Host	Alright, well let's get back into the specifics of <i>Kala</i> . If you had to choose a fire track off of here, what would it be?
00:33:11	Lorraine	Guest	I'm gonna say "Boyz."
00:33:12	Oliver	Host	Great.
00:33:13	Music	Music	"Boyz" off the album <i>Kala</i> by M.I.A. A fast, hip-hop beat. <i>Na-na-na-na-na-na-na-na-na-na</i> <i>Na-na-na-na-na-na-na-na-na-na</i> <i>Boys there! (How many?)</i> <i>Boys there! (How many?)</i> <i>How many, how many, h—</i> <i>How many, how many, h—</i> <i>How many, how many, h—</i> <i>How many, how many, h—</i> <i>How many tequilas in the place?</i> <i>How many beers are in the case?</i> <i>[Music fades out as Lorraine speaks.]</i>
00:33:30	Lorraine	Guest	<i>[Laughs.]</i> It's so good! <i>[Continues laughing.]</i> It's so good! It's just... I will blast that in my car now, still, if I'm going to a situation where I know there's gonna be conflict.
00:33:47	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Oliver: Yeah, that— Lorraine: Like, say, perhaps at work! Not that that happens at the <i>L.A. Times</i> — Oliver: That's your fight song? Lorraine: Just saying, that is my fight song. I just blast that thing and it's like, "okay, I can do anything now. I can do anything now."
00:33:56	Music	Music	"Boyz" off the album <i>Kala</i> by M.I.A. <i>What we do now? Duppa bounce</i> <i>Dem der, duppa bounce</i> <i>What we do now? Duppa bounce</i> <i>Dem der, duppa bounce</i> <i>What we do now? Duppa bounce</i> <i>Dem der, duppa bounce</i> <i>What we do now? Duppa bounce</i> <i>Dem der, duppa bounce</i>
00:34:16	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Lorraine: It's a fight song. Oliver: Yeah. Lorraine: It's a revolutionary song— Oliver: Yeah, yeah.

Lorraine: —but it's also fun.

Oliver: It's super fun.

Lorraine: Yeah, you can dance to it, it's fun, but it's also pissed off, and it's also super powerful, and it's called "Boyz" and she's singing it.

00:34:34	Oliver	Host	Yeah. "Boyz", I think, ranks really high for me as well, but in relistening to this album, the song that jumped out to me again, as it did when I first listened to it all those years ago—uh, so, my fire track would be "World Town."
00:34:47	Music	Music	"World Town" off the album <i>Kala</i> by M.I.A. A fast-paced, electro-hip-hop-dance beat. <i>A-ni-ni-ni-ni</i> <i>A-ni-ni-ni-ni</i> <i>Sick of all the shit that's keeping me down</i> <i>If you're dead from the waist down</i> <i>It's easy staying down</i> <i>I never thought about it twice</i> <i>But you do pay the price</i> <i>[Music fades out as Oliver speaks.]</i>
00:35:03	Oliver	Host	I think a lot of it is just on a sonic. This is—and this whole album is just bombastic—but this one is the first among equals in that sense. Especially just the squeegee synth that's in there, the use of the gunshots. There's a lot of gunshots in this album.
00:35:21	Lorraine	Guest	There is.
00:35:22	Oliver	Host	They're using the gunshots as a percussive device. There are just so many... we keep using the word layers, because I don't know of a better term to use here, but I just love that just... <u>cacophony</u> that comes at you on this. Again, it's not the only song on the album that you could pick, but it's the one, to me, that just keeps slapping me upside the head every time I listen to it.
00:35:44	Lorraine	Guest	Yeah/ Yeah, it is. It almost goes to war on the dance floor. It really is

the gunshots, and the—but then the beat, and I also love that she weaves in these things like—I listen to a lot of Bollywood tracks at home. My husband’s Indian. So it’s like—and we listen to a lot of classic Bollywood, and I also listen to a lot of the old... Arab hits. I don’t know what you would call them, because I was so disgusted with my dad when he’d play them in the car when I was young. I was just like, “oh, God, turn that down, my friends are outside.”
[Laughs.]

00:36:14 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Lorraine:** You know?

Oliver: Right.

Lorraine: And now I can hear it in here—

Oliver: It was deeply uncool at the time.

Lorraine: It was so uncool, and now I can hear it in here, with the pop stuff I grew up with, with the hip hop, with all of that.

00:36:24 Oliver Host Now, it’s fun that you bring this up, because I was thinking about what the sleeper jam on here was for me, and one of the songs that I kind of fast-forwarded through back in ‘07, was probably “Jimmy.” Partly because “Jimmy” didn’t really, to me, sound like “Boyz”, it didn’t sound like “World Town” or “Paper Planes”. But listening to it now, I’m like, you know, it’s actually pretty cool that M.I.A. tried to pull off a 1980’s Bollywood style disco jam.

00:36:49 Music Music “Jimmy” off the album *Kala* by M.I.A. A Bollywood-style disco track.

And I still don't know what you're saying (Jimmy)

*You told me that you're busy
Your loving gets me crazy
I know that you hear me
Start acting like you want me
You told me that you're busy (Jimmy)
Your loving gets me crazy (Aaja)
I know that you hear me (Jimmy)
Start acting like you want me (Aaja)*

[Music fades out as Lorraine speaks.]

00:37:07 Lorraine Guest The great part about that is that all of those Bollywood movies were fashioned around American films, right? I mean, the early ones were echoing the Elvis films, or echoing some of the—even *A Star Is Born* at one point. This is the *Saturday Night Fever*, and the fact that she’s pulling it back and doing it the other way, it’s so great. It’s like been recycled three or four times by the time it gets to her, and it’s—it’s just great. It’s such a wonderful way to sort of rethink it.

00:37:35 Oliver Host Is there a sleeper jam on here for you? A song that maybe the first time you listened to this, you weren’t as into, but as time has gone by, you actually find yourself gravitating towards more and more?

00:37:45 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Lorraine:** Oddly enough, it’s “Paper Planes.”

Oliver: Okay!

Lorraine: And that was the one that—right?

Oliver: Of course, that was the megasmash, yeah.

00:37:50	Lorraine	Guest	<p>That was the hit, right, and when I had heard it in the <i>Pineapple Express</i> trailer... You know, I thought it was good; but it didn't hit me in a way that a lot of these other tracks did. Then when I was alone with it, then I sort of— I think I rejected it in a way, because it was like, it came to me through a movie trailer, and I was like, meh.</p> <p>When I heard it on my own, it sunk in, in a way of like, wow. The cash register, again, the gunshots... but also such a lovely melody. It's like, oh, we're vacationing in this tropical paradise, but underneath that vacation resort that you're in, there's like cash for guns, and there's a—there's a fucking war outside of the resort. That's what it sounded like to me. Like, wow. She captured all of that in one song.</p>
00:38:35	Music	Music	<p>“Paper Planes” off the album <i>Kala</i> by M.I.A.</p> <p><i>Everyone's a winner, we're making our fame Bona fide hustler making my name</i></p> <p><i>All I wanna do is [gunshots] And a [cash register ding] And take your money All I wanna do is [gunshots] And a [cash register ding] And take your money All I wanna do is [gunshots] And a [cash register ding] And take your money All I wanna do is [gunshots] And a [cash register ding] And take your money All I wanna do is [gunshots] And a [cash register ding] And take your money</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out as Oliver speaks.]</i></p>
00:38:52	Oliver	Host	<p>I love that you picked “Paper Planes” because, number one, regardless of the fact that it was the big hit, and as music folks, maybe we want to be the cool kids and not go with the obvious choice.</p>
00:39:02	Lorraine	Guest	<p>It's like, ugh, it's so obvious.</p>
00:39:03	Oliver	Host	<p>But the song's really good!</p>
00:39:04	Lorraine	Guest	<p>It's so good!</p>
00:39:05	Oliver	Host	<p>It's so good! And to your point, like, that chorus with the gunshots, with the cash register. You know, we ask our guests about what their favorite moment on an album is; and to me, this is at least my honorary mention. Just the chorus on “Paper Planes” I think is</p>

fantastic, and just the song as a whole.

I think it's a really interesting example, too, of how a really good sample choice does a lot of really heavy lifting. And I think... this is not to take anything away from, uh, Diplo and Switch, who—who, uh, both who helped produce the song, but... you gotta give it up to The Clash and "Straight To Hell", because if you have never heard the original source material... it's like, they didn't have to do a ton to make this sound great.

00:39:46	Music	Music	"Straight To Hell" off the album <i>Combat Rock</i> by The Clash. A mid-tempo, slowly building rock intro that was sampled for the beginning of "Paper Planes".
00:40:04	Oliver	Host	I mean, the four and the floor kick drum is there, obviously that repetitive guitar riff. All love to The Clash on this one, and then they took that and flipped it into "Paper Planes."
00:40:15	Lorraine	Guest	Always loved The Clash though. Always. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:40:19	Oliver	Host	I did say that "Paper Planes" was my honorary mention for favorite moment, because again, I do love the chorus on there, but I think the moment on the album that really jumped out to me when I listened to it the first time, but it still does the trick for me now, is on "Hussel". And it's when Afrikan Boy cuts in around the 1:20 mark, where you don't—if you'd never heard the song before, you wouldn't anticipate it. The song shifts, it goes a capella, and then you get that grind, crazy synth chord that kicks in.
00:40:49	Music	Music	"Hussel" off the album <i>Kala</i> by M.I.A. A moment of fast synth music that drops out as Afrikan Boy begins singing before resuming halfway through his section.

M.I.A.:

Why does everyone got hustle on their mind?

AFRIKAN BOY:

*You think it's tough now? Come to Africa!
You think it's tough now? Come to Africa!
You think it's tough now? Come to Africa!
You think it's tough now? Come to Africa!
You think it's tough now? Come to Africa!*

*Out there, we are grinding like pepper
You can catch me on the motorway
Selling sugar, water, and pepper
I rep Africa, not Miami
Hustle, hustle with M.I.A
I'm broke, I've got indefinite stay*

[Music fades out as Oliver speaks.]

00:41:11 Oliver Host Yeah, I just— Oh my God, I just love everything about it.

00:41:14 Lorraine Guest Well, that's the thing that M.I.A. does so well, too. It's like, don't get too comfortable here, and don't take this too lightly, because [*imitates tearing sound*] I'm gonna rip this through, and you are gonna wake—am I allowed to cuss?

00:41:25 Oliver Host Yeah!

00:41:26 Lorraine Guest And you're gonna wake the fuck up. Like, it was just like, [*imitates tearing sound again*]. No, I know this is like easy breezy for you, but it's not gonna be, because it's not easy breezy for him, and just like ripping.

00:41:34 Oliver Host Not to put you on the spot here, but do you have a favorite moment on this album? You said many, but, yeah.

00:41:40 Lorraine Guest I have so many favorite moments on this album. I think one of the songs I went back to and listened to was “Bamboo Banga.”

00:41:49 Oliver Host Yeah, the lead. Good song, yeah.

00:41:52 Lorraine Guest Yeah! And... I feel like that whole song is one great moment. [*Laughs.*]

00:41:54 Music Music “Bamboo Banga” off the album *Kala* by M.I.A. A fast song with a heavy drumbeat.

*Road runner, road runner
Going hundred miles per hour
Road runner, road runner
Going hundred miles per hour
With your radio on*

00:42:15 Lorraine Guest There's this amazing percussion, and I think these were Indian percussionists? I can't remember exactly.

00:42:22 Oliver Host Maybe Tabla players. Something along those lines.

00:42:23 Lorraine Guest Yeah, something like that, because she was supposed to work with A.R. Rahman on this album, and... I think this was coming off of *Slumdog*. That didn't happen, but he had, in fact, turned her onto these all these percussionists; and that's what we're hearing here, and then it goes into this sort of... EDM. But the whole thing is, to

me, is one crazy moment. *[Laughs.]* I don't know. I almost don't think of it as a song.

00:42:50 Music Music "Bamboo Banga" off the album *Kala* by M.I.A.

I'm big timer
It's the bamboo banga
I'm big timer
It's the bamboo banga
I'm big timer
It's the bamboo banga
I'm big timer
It's the bamboo banga
I'm big timer
It's the bamboo banga
I'm big timer
It's the bamboo banga

00:43:08 Lorraine Guest It's also the beginning of that song reminds me of going to the Indian weddings with my—it reminds me of my own wedding with my husband. I mean, at the three day long reception *[laughs]*. The drummers come in and everybody just gets down on the floor, and he's Caribbean-Indian, so it's mixed—

00:43:26 Oliver Host Wow!

00:42:27 Lorraine Guest —with all that stuff!

So I hear a lot of that in here, too. Where—I didn't hear that anywhere else, unless I would actively look for it, in, you know, dance hall stuff, or whatever it was, chutney. But it's in here, you know, and for a song to start with that, it's like, *[gasps]* she knows. She's talking to me! *[Laughs.]*

00:43:43 Music Music "Bamboo Banga" off the album *Kala* by M.I.A.

M.I.A. coming back with power-power (Power-power!)
M.I.A. coming back with power-power (Power-power!)

00:44:04 Oliver Host This is a cruel question to ask of a writer.

00:44:06 Lorraine Guest Oh, no, you're going to be cruel?

00:44:07 Oliver Host Yes.

00:44:08 Lorraine Guest You already made me cut this down to one song, come on.

00:44:11 Oliver Host If you had to describe *Kala* in three words, what three words would you choose?

00:44:17 Lorraine Guest *[Beat.]* Fierce, revolutionary, and fun.

00:44:20 Oliver Host You know, that is... actually pretty fast. Most of our writers take the longest—

[Lorraine laughs.]

—because they're always just kind of, you know, meticulously going over their word choices, but no, you—you got that out quite nice.

- 00:44:30 Lorraine Guest You know what, can I just say, when I interviewed her— I just wanna say—I brought this quote, because I had to look it up again, um—but she said, about the album, “I just don’t want to go on and on about coming from a war, and guns, and bombs, and blah blah blah. I wanted to talk about economy, and education, and how the first world is collapsing into the third world. How everything’s changing.”
- I love her saying, “I wanted to talk about the first world collapsing into the third world,” when I interviewed her. I just thought, “That’s it. That is what I’m hearing, right there.”
- 00:45:03 Oliver Host Right, right, and we are certainly still living through that.
- 00:45:04 Lorraine Guest We are. We are. Although, it seems if you listen to music, that’s totally stopped. Everything’s really fun right now. *[Laughs.]* Pick up Taylor Swift’s album, it’s really good right now! What are we complaining about?
- 00:45:17 Oliver Host We just need the escapism, perhaps.
- 00:45:19 Lorraine Guest We do. It would be nice, though, if we could deal with some of the other side of it. That’s what *Handmaid’s Tale* is for.
- 00:45:25 Oliver Host There you go. *[Laughs.]*
- 00:45:27 Music Music “Paper Planes” off the album *Kala* by M.I.A.
- ... and take your money!*
- [The song comes to an end.]*
- 00:45:39 Oliver Host If you liked *Kala*, we wanted to give you some recommendations; and since Morgan’s not here, I asked Lorraine to step in with hers.
- I’ll start, though, and the album that actually came to mind is a far older album, one from 1976, which is *Diga* by the Diga Rhythm Band, which was a collaboration between Mickey Hart, who was a drummer for the Grateful Dead, and master tabla percussionist, Zakir Hussain.
- The *Diga* album, from memory, is I think a purely instrumental album, so it doesn’t have the same kind of thematic politics of M.I.A.; but sonically, I thought its exploration of different rhythms and textures reminded me a lot of what I thought really worked with what M.I.A. and Switch were playing with on *Kala*.

00:46:20	Music	Music	“Razooli” off the album <i>Diga</i> by the Diga Rhythm Band. A mid-tempo percussion-heavy, slightly jazzy tune.
00:46:35	Oliver	Host	Lorraine, what would you recommend people check out?
00:46:37	Lorraine	Guest	You know, it can’t be one thing, because M.I.A. mixes it all together; so I’m just going to squish this all together. I’m going to say anything by Muhammad Rafi, just beautiful Bollywood singer, God rest his soul. Uh, and then, you know, <i>Monsoon Wedding</i> soundtrack, beautiful. Then Dancehall, Cutty Ranks. Um, some of the older Sean Paul stuff. <i>[Laughs.]</i> What else can I throw in there? Um.
00:47:03	Oliver	Host	See, what people should do is load up those songs in GarageBand and multitrack it, and then hit play and see what happens.
00:47:09	Lorraine	Guest	Yes, and then drop the slits in there, and then you’re done! You’re done. You got it. <i>[Laughs]</i>
00:47:13	Music	Music	“Humko Tumse Ho Gaya Hai Pyar” by Mohammad Rafi and Kishore Kumar. A Bollywood tune with lots of strings and percussion. <i>Kabhi boloon main, kabhi bole tu</i> <i>I love you, love you, love you</i> <i>Love you, I love you, love you, love you</i> <i>Maine tum pe, tumne mujh pe kar diya jaadu</i> <i>I love you, love you, love you, I love you</i> <i>[Music fades out.]</i>
00:47:32	Oliver	Host	On that note, that will do it for this episode of <i>Heat Rocks</i> with our special guest, Lorraine Ali. What are you working on right now?
00:47:38	Lorraine	Guest	Well, I’m working on something that’s so similar to M.I.A. It’s <i>Stranger Things</i> . <i>[Laughs.]</i> Watching it, writing about it, why it appeals so much. It’s like one of the few things parents can watch with their kids. That’s super fucking boring.
00:47:53	Oliver	Host	Where can people follow you online or find your stuff?
00:47:55	Lorraine	Guest	You can find my writing for <i>L.A. Times</i> on LATimes.com . Twitter at Lorraine Ali @LorraineAli, and, um... that’s about it.
00:48:04	Oliver	Host	Thanks so much for coming through, this was so much fun.
00:48:06	Lorraine	Guest	Yeah, it is fun, thank you! Thank you for having me.
00:48:09	Oliver	Host	You’ve been listening to <i>Heat Rocks</i> , with me, Oliver Wang, and Morgan Rhodes.
00:48:12	Morgan Rhodes	Host	Our theme music is “Crown Ones” by Thes One of People Under The Stairs. Shoutout to Thes for the hookup.
00:48:19	Oliver	Host	<i>Heat Rocks</i> is produced by myself and Morgan, alongside Christian Duenas, who also edits, engineers, and does the booking for our shows.
00:48:26	Morgan	Host	Our senior producer is Laura Swisher, and our executive producer

is Jesse Thorn.

00:48:31	Oliver	Host	We are part of the Maximum Fun family, taping every week live in their studios in the Westlake neighborhood of Los Angeles.
00:48:38	Christian Duenas	Producer	Hey, this is producer Christian. Just jumping in here with a quick tease for next week's episode. It's another solo episode. This time, Morgan Rhodes is talking to soul legend, the one and only, Lee Fields, about Sam Cooke's greatest hits compilation, <i>Portrait of a Legend</i> .
00:48:55	Lee Fields	Guest	I think Sam sang about the wind at the end and at the beginning, the gospel, and then he sang about the way people actually felt, and I think, you know, it's up to different opinions. Nobody knows but God.
00:49:09	Morgan	Host	Right.
00:49:10	Lee	Guest	But I truly believe that, uh... the stuff that he sang that weren't gospel were giving people a positive feeling about themselves, because he sang about how people love each other. You know, like Frankie and Johnny.
00:49:29	Morgan	Host	Right.
00:49:30	Lee	Guest	He sang about reality, to people who did those things, and are still doing those things, still hurting each other. I could play it in front of my child, without having to close the door.
00:49:40	Morgan	Host	Sure.
00:49:41	Lee	Guest	Because he said it in a fashion that where, we knew as adults what he was talking about, but children that were underage, you could play it for them. They wouldn't even know. If we followed Sam's pattern, and his way of doing things, we'd be a lot more, uh— show a lot more courtesy, and I think there'd be a lot more love in the world today.
00:50:04	Music	Transition	A cheerful guitar chord.
00:50:06	Speaker 1	Guest	MaximumFun.org
00:50:07	Speaker 2	Guest	Comedy and culture.
00:50:08	Speaker 3	Guest	Artist owned—
00:50:09	Speaker 4	Guest	—Audience supported.