

All throughout *Brain Worms*, it's apparent that this is a band in very fine form. Album opener 'Common Ground' sets the tone for what's to come; a shiny, thrilling, punch of an album, with all the beloved RVG hallmarks. Vager's voice is unfiltered and commanding as ever when delivering her clever, not-quite-ironic lyrics. Here, though, those lyrics feel so much less resigned to yearning, and so much more defiant and joyous.

'Tambourine' is the only Covid song Vager wrote when "trying not to write Covid songs", and it's a painfully honest portrait of grieving mid-isolation. 'Brain Worms' tells the all-too-familiar story of a person falling down the internet rabbit hole and finding comfort in conspiracies. 'Nothing Really Changes' is a keys-heavy new wave-ish thing, while closer 'Tropic of Cancer' sparkles with Vager's self-assured new manifesto: *I know what I'm like, and I know how I get. If you think I'm strange, you ain't seen nothin' yet.*

Bloxham, Nolte, and Wallace are flawlessly adept in bringing Vager's songwriting to life. Recorded in London at Snap Studios with James Trevascus (Billy Nomates, Nick Cave & Warren Ellis, The Goon Sax), all ten tracks surge with lush sounds and clear intentions — and the magic of an acoustic guitar once owned by Kate Bush, given to her by Tears for Fears (who, legend has it, wrote 'Everybody Wants to Rule the World' on it).

After a momentous first five years — finding critical acclaim for debut *A Quality of Mercy*, landing on countless end-of-year Best Of lists, and playing alongside some of the world's biggest acts in Pixies, Kurt Vile, Pete Doherty, Sleaford Mods, Camp Cope, Shame, and more — RVG released second album *Feral* as the world was locking down. *Feral* was called "masterfully executed" by The Big Issue, "the record of a lifetime" by Rolling Stone Australia, and given four-and-a-half stars by the Sydney Morning Herald.

But between the four bandmates — lead singer and guitarist Vager, guitarist Reuben Bloxham, drummer Marc Nolte and bassist Isabelle Wallace — this is the most confident they've ever felt in RVG. They've moved past their influences, pushed themselves, and tried new things. And they have made a record they can, by all accounts, call their best.

"Hype is scary. After two years of Covid it felt like the hype had gone down so we were able to just do stuff," says Vager. "This time around we were like, this is what we're doing, we're taking control, we're taking risks, and we're going to make an album that sounds big so that when we hear it on the radio we want to hear it again."

"If we could only make one more album, it would be this one," says Vager.