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- Miki Vale would tell her younger self “to not waste time stressing over a job that doesn’t make her happy.”
- [Musician Interviews](#)

### **Miki Vale: Rapper, Scrabble Gamer, Lover of Cats**

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By [Jay Allen Sanford](#), July 11, 2012

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‘I’m a hip-hop artist, with ‘artist’ being the key word,” says MC and rapper [Miki Vale](#). “My music is free-flowing. I do whatever I feel in the moment. My voice is the paint, the beat is my canvas. I create colorful sounds with words.”

Originally from Oxnard, Vale says, “I was voted class clown of my high school senior class and homecoming princess the same year, which seems like an oxymoron to me.”

Vale scored her first SDMA nominations in 2007. “I always thought San Diego was a good place to try to make a mark on the music scene,” she says, though she feels the ten-year “acceptance curve” was because “people’s interactions with me always seemed to at least somehow reference either my gender or my race.”

Regarding the former: “If I’m talking to you about business and your response is some slithery ‘Where your man at?’ stuff, don’t expect a response.”

As for race: “Not utilizing your full potential and wasting time is ancestral treason and betrayal.”

One of the city’s most socially conscious and politically active performers, Vale says, “Both music and politics could use more diversity. The racial climate in America is not one of acceptance of people of color, especially black people. One look at the racial representation in the House of Representatives will show that race is clearly not giving black people a boost in politics.”

Vale hosts Eargasm Wednesdays, a spoken-word open-mic at Mo J’s on Euclid Avenue. Last month, she won DJ Bille Knight’s San Diego Artist Search MC competition, taking home a \$500 prize. Vale spins every Friday at Til-Two, and she’s working on a local-centric all-female compilation CD with area MCs like Kandi Cole.

Miki Vale appears on July 11 at the Kava Lounge and will perform during the San Diego Pride Festival on July 21.

#### **WHAT’S IN YOUR MUSIC PLAYER?**

1. Jimetta Rose, *The Barber’s Daughter*. “It’s like musical therapy. Her voice is so pure and beautiful, and the music has great production.”
2. SoulKiss, *Soul Sessions*. “It’s a mixtape of hip-hop and soul from artists such as Mos Def, Boog Brown, J\*DaVeY, Jill Scott, and others — basically a whole bunch of my favorite songs on one CD. It hasn’t left my player since I put it in.”
3. *Mos Def & Talib Kweli Are Black Star*. “I like to revisit this album sometimes, to get that nostalgic feeling of one of the best eras in hip-hop.”
4. Common, *Like Water for Chocolate*. “Another classic feel-good album, with bangers all the way through. I’ve been kind of bored with new hip-hop, so this helps keep me inspired.”

#### **MUSIC YOU WERE EMBARRASSED TO MENTION?**

“Probably every Gucci Mane song.”

#### **FAVORITE CONCERT?**

“Hands down the best was the Fugees, after they reunited in 2006. They did a free show on the corner of Hollywood and Vine in L.A., and it was amazing. Because it was a free show, I thought it would be really short, but they rocked for a couple hours and did all my favorites, even some tracks off the *Bootleg Versions* album.”

#### **WHAT WOULD YOU TELL THE YOUNGER YOU?**

“Focus. A year from now, you’ll be glad you started today. I’d also tell her to not waste time stressing over a job that doesn’t make her happy or isn’t what she wants to do in life, and instead use that time to cultivate her life goals. Jobs are replaceable. Time isn’t.”

### ITEMS ON YOUR BUCKET LIST?

“Travel lots and spend as much time with loved ones as possible, visit every place in the world that I’ve ever wanted to go, and write an autobiography.”

### SOMETHING YOU NEVER RUN OUT OF?

“Water. I feel like the world is coming to an end if I don’t have water.”

### YOUR CELEBRITY DOUBLE?

“People always say I look like Marsha Ambrosius, from Floetry.”

### HIDDEN TALENT?

“I’ve got a mean Scrabble game. You don’t wanna see me on the boards.”

### WHERE DO YOU TAKE OUT-OF-TOWN GUESTS?

“The Spruce Street suspension bridge that crosses Kate Sessions Canyon.”

### BEST MOVIE BASED ON A BOOK?

“*The Color Purple* is my favorite movie of all time; I never get bored with it. The storyline, characters, cinematography, and everything is great. I’ve watched it countless times and still cry every time.”

### FAVORITE QUOTE?

“Cornel West: ‘You can’t lead the people if you don’t love the people. You can’t save the people if you don’t serve the people.’”

### SOMETHING WE DON’T KNOW ABOUT YOU?

“Up until a few years ago, I had a serious dislike for cats. Then I was asked to cat-sit this lady’s two cats for three months and I fell in love with them. Now I have two cats of my own that I adore and call my children.” ■

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