

Hit maker 幕後歌手

Pharrell Williams completes his transformation from behind-the-scenes guru to centre-stage star with his second solo album, *Girl*, writes Dorothy So

隨著第二張個人專輯《Girl》面世，Pharrell Williams成功由幕後音樂鬼才蛻變為幕前巨星，請看Dorothy So的評析

Pharrell Williams has been a trendsetter for years. As one half of the incredibly influential music production duo The Neptunes, he's reshaped the careers of countless hit-makers, from Britney Spears to Kelis and Snoop Dogg. In fact, Williams' creative presence is so prevalent in the modern music scene that his contributions have often been taken for granted by those listening beyond the recording studio.

It's impossible, however, to overlook his involvement in two of the biggest hits of 2013, namely Robin Thicke's *Blurred Lines* and Daft Punk's Grammy Award-winning *Get Lucky*. The latter track's overwhelming success, in particular, is what pushed Williams to release *Girl* – the long-awaited follow-up album to his 2006 solo debut, *In My Mind*.

The standout from the 10-track release is the Oscar-nominated lead single, *Happy*. Originally written for the animated film *Despicable Me 2*, the song is exactly what its name suggests – a slice of breezy, sonic sunshine served over a funky loop of claps and harmonies. This pulsing positivity defines the album. In *Brand New*, it's expressed as an exuberant falsetto sing-off with Justin Timberlake that's punctuated with short blasts of brass. Then there's the brilliantly spaced-out disco synth that drives *Gust of Wind*, which features none other than the robotic French duo, Daft Punk. All the time, Williams remembers to keep his music classy with glistening orchestral strings arranged by Hollywood's Hans Zimmer.

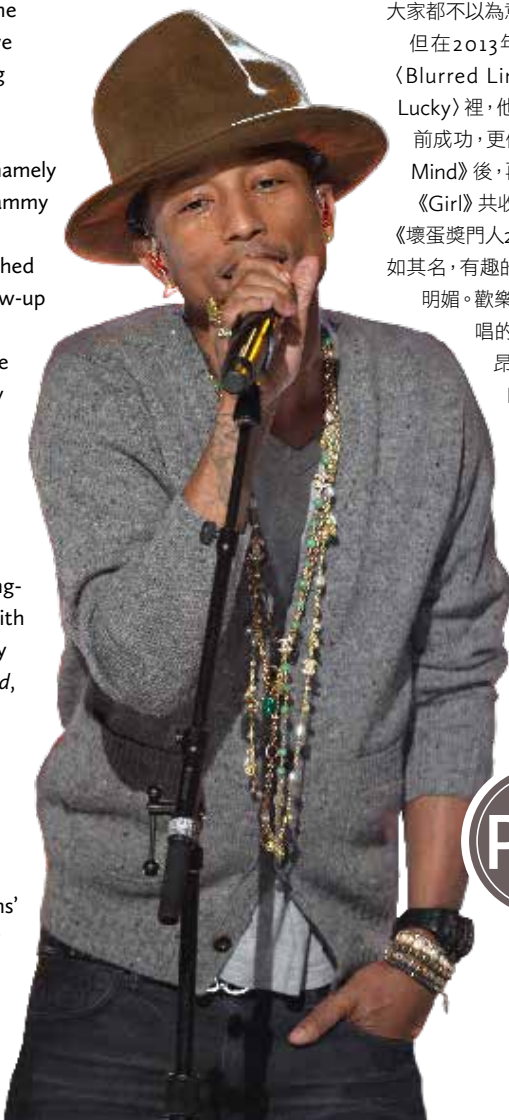
Brimming with infectious energy and cross-genre appeal, *Girl* is an amalgamation of Williams' best works for other artists over the years. Only this time, he's getting the credit he deserves.

其實，Pharrell Williams過去多年一直帶領樂壇潮流。作為二人組合The Neptunes成員之一，他與拍檔以音樂監製的身份協助Britney Spears、Kelis、Snoop Dogg等歌手再創事業高峰。事實上，Williams之所以沒引起樂迷注意，大概是因為他足跡遍佈當今樂壇，大家都不以為意而已。

但在2013年兩首頂頭大熱歌曲：Robin Thicke的〈Blurred Lines〉及Daft Punk的格林美得獎歌曲〈Get Lucky〉裡，他的參與卻無法讓人忽視。〈Get Lucky〉的空前成功，更促使Williams繼2006年的個人專輯《In My Mind》後，再次推出新碟《Girl》。

《Girl》共收錄十首歌曲，焦點作是獲提名競逐奧斯卡的《壞蛋獎門人2》插曲〈Happy〉。〈Happy〉（意為快樂）歌如其名，有趣的拍手聲及和音，令旋律有如和風輕拂、陽光明媚。歡樂氣氛貫穿整張大碟，與Justin Timberlake合唱的〈Brand New〉，大量運用假音，並伴以激昂的銅管樂。再次與法國機械人二人組Daft Punk合作的〈Gust of Wind〉，當中舞曲風格的電子合成音樂尤為出色。《Girl》請來荷李活配樂大師Hans Zimmer負責管弦樂部分，為了配合悠揚的管弦樂，Williams不忘在每首歌曲中注入的古典味。

《Girl》的音樂滿載活力，曲風多元化，可說是Williams多年來為他人作嫁衣練就的成果，但這次他終於自己當主角，親自接受歌迷的掌聲。



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Positive outlook: Pharrell Williams is on a roll

信心十足：Pharrell Williams正狀態大勇