

“Arkells’ Gradual Rise to Fame” by Jake Goode



“It’s a weird time to be a rock band right now,”

- Max Kerman

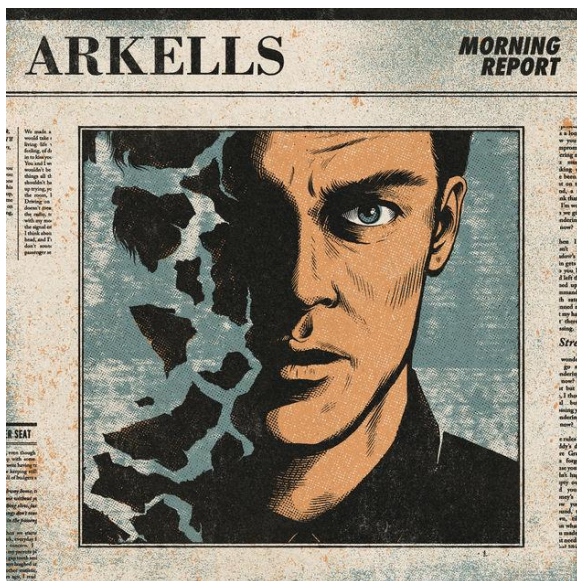
Formed in Hamilton, Ontario; the Arkells are a contemporary indie rock band that have just begun to make their appearance on the stage of modern rock. The band debuted their first professional album in 2008 called *Jackson Square* featuring the song “John Lennon”, for the band is heavily influenced by classics like John Lennon, Elton John, and even some Motown. This album earned them an extensive amount of local fame. As a result of their 2014 album *High Noon*, the Arkells were placed on Billboard’s “Canadian Hot 100” chart at #88. *High Noon* also earned the band two awards at the 2015 “Juno Awards” for best group, and best rock album. The very same album also saw international success, for the band toured in the U.S. with artists like Sam Roberts, and band such as X Ambassadors.



Max Kerman is the group's main vocalist, head lyricist, occasional guitarist, and really the voice of the band. One may say Kerman carries the weight of the band as he’s always in the spotlight; however, it’s easy to overlook the efforts of the other members. At the end of the day each member has an equal contribution to the music they put out. “Everybody gets their hands on the songs from there and we hack away at them until they feel good” explains Kerman.



The rest of the band's roster is as follows (left to right). Nick Dika, bass; Anthony Carone, vocals, keyboard, guitar; Max Kerman; Tom Oxford, drums, percussion; Mike Deangelis, vocals, guitar.



Since their rise to national fame, the Arkells have released four albums and won four Juno Awards. Two of these Juno's are attributed to their most recently made material. Their album *Morning Report* released 05/08/2017. Two of the six singles on the album “Private School” and “Knocking At The Door” immediately peaked at number one on the Alt Rock Charts the very summer of its release. Max Kerman proudly claims the album as their “Most honest work yet” according to an article written by AllMusic.com. Other songs on the album like “Round and Round” were featured in EA Game’s NHL 2017 soundtrack where players hear the song upon launching or playing the game.

Morning Report's success is no surprise, for each of the album's songs are written with

purpose and intent. As a music buff myself, I personally love “Come Back Home”, “Making Due”, and “Private School”.

“Come Back Home” is about a breakup that has occurred. Whether the Arkells are speaking of true events is unclear. Upon hearing this you may be thinking “oh great another break up song, how boring”; however, this cliché concept works because the emphasis is not on the break up itself. “Come Back Home” commentates on the very real emotions one may have after a breakup, and the yearning desire one may have for an unsustainable relationship.



From an interview between Exclaim.ca and the Arkells, Max Kerman states how “Making Due” is about “grappling with the feeling of helplessness” that arises upon hearing news about forgotten people and communities. Having said this it’s fair to say the songs lyrics are very interpretive. Without an explanation from the Arkells’ themselves, the theme of the song is hidden behind Kerman's ever so poetic lyrics. The traits I hold most desirable about “Making Due” is Mike Deangelis’ rhythm guitar, and Kerman's complementing melodic vocals. Needless to say this song has definitely earned its place on the album.



Having heard the Arkells perform “Private School” live in celebration of Canada’s 150th birthday, it’s no surprise this track made it to #1 on Canada’s Alt Rock charts. The catchy chorus is perfect for crowd participation, for Kerman often que’s the audience to respond to his call when performing live. Despite the lyrics’ edgy connotation, “Private School” reflects on individuals who are born into privilege, and put on a pedestal. The Arkells’ put being “Born on third base” into perspective, yet convey that one shouldn’t pity themselves. Pity the privileged, and those who value materialism over others. “Private School” Deserves a to be on this album because it assures the listener that everything is ‘okay’.

Overall the Akrells’ *Morning Report* is a massive milestone for the band. From numerous awards, abundant sales, and multiple tours through Canada and the US, the Arkells can only

grow bigger and better as an indie modern rock band. With a snowballing and diverse fan base it's going to be exciting to see where the Arkells lead us next, and whether they can top their latest hit. *Morning Report*.

Overall Rating: 7.5/10

Songs:

“Come back Home”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DNFAtS-AABs>

“Making Due”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DEVqL20yPPQ>

“Private School”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E7V30rKiikA>

Sources:

<https://genius.com>

<https://en.wikipedia.org>

<https://www.allmusic.com>

<http://www.songfacts.com>

<https://exclaim.ca/>

<http://www.arkellsmusic.com/>

<http://themusicexpress.ca>

www.google.ca

All sources were records from the web as the Arkells probably wouldn't have arranged for an interview with a highschool student across the country. :)

