WORD OF MOUTH

BLACK MAGIC

Los Angeles-based singer-songwriter Banks is one of music’s most intriguing rising stars, with her smoky voice and R&B-inflected sound set against stark industrial beats; her film-noir-inspired videos only add to her dark allure. She describes her music as ‘raw and black-and-blueish, the colour of midnight’, and her lyrics are dripping with loss and heartache. The buzz about the 26-year-old began last year when ‘Before I Ever Met You’ was released on SoundCloud and streamed 250,000 times. Now after two EPs, ‘Fall Over’ and ‘London’, she’s playing at sold-out gigs. ‘I want my music to affect people’s hearts, minds and bodies,’ she says. ‘R&B forces you to move and feel.’

BANKS’ GUIDE TO LA

EAT
Inaka serves delicious macrobiotic Japanese food and the atmosphere is really peaceful. Echigo is in a random strip mall on Santa Monica Boulevard, but it has some of the best sushi in LA. I order omakase, meaning the chef gives you whatever is freshest.

SHOP
Just One Eye boutique is amazingly curated, with a lot of black – right up my alley. The clothes at Cerre are sleek and strong with a tomboy edge and Amoeba is my favourite indie-record store.

CHILL
I hike in Griffith Park and go to the observatory to see the stars. I meet friends in the forest room at the back of the Bougeois Pig, where you can drink inside a fake tree. BRITT COLLINS

Banks’ debut album ‘Goddess’ is released on 8 September

ON THE RADAR

WARSAW

Bright ideas abound in the Polish capital’s quirky shops and revamped factory spaces

The Communists’ philosophy of actively discouraging freedom of expression and creativity had the opposite effect in Warsaw, which has always been a buzzing hotbed of both. And as the city’s economy now flourishes, this has never been more true, with radical changes on the streets and a cutting-edge design scene emerging. From the red-and-yellow market booths of Servus, left, serving a gourmet version of the original zapiekanki (baguette crusts topped with mushrooms, cheese and tomato sauce) that were once everyone’s staple diet, to completely revitalised areas such as Soho Factory. The huge complex of post-industrial buildings across the Vistula River includes Magazyn Praga, one of the front-runners of Polish home design, and Neon Muzeum, bottom right, an eye-popping collection of Communist signage. Back in the city centre, Risk Made in Warsaw, top right, displays its wares in upside-down interiors – an inflatable Malafour sofa has been fixed to the ceiling – which reflect the brand’s back-to-front aesthetic as biker shirts, tux-style hoodies and retro dresses are created in a monochrome grey mix of fabrics. Scratch beneath the tough-looking surface and Warsaw hums with an exciting new energy. MARY LUSSIANA