

Getting Curious with Jonathan Van Ness & Kim Petras

JVN [00:00:02] Welcome to "Getting Curious". I am Jonathan Van Ness, and every week I sit down for a 40 minute conversation with a brilliant expert to learn all about something that makes me curious. On today's episode, I'm joined by singer and songwriter Kim Petras, where we discuss how she writes music and how she is the incredible badass that she is. Did you have a good-, you look so rested.

KIM PETRAS [00:00:24] Thank you. I'm not.

JVN [00:00:26] How do you look this gorgeous?

KIM PETRAS [00:00:27] Concealer. It's just concealer.

JVN [00:00:29] What? Are you British?

KIM PETRAS [00:00:31] No, I'm German.

JVN [00:00:32] Oh.

KIM PETRAS [00:00:33] Yeah. Born and raised in Germany. So-.

JVN [00:00:35] Did a British person teach your English?

KIM PETRAS [00:00:37] No. No.

JVN [00:00:39] I didn't know you were German.

KIM PETRAS [00:00:40] Yeah. I'm German.

JVN [00:00:41] We have to record this.

KIM PETRAS [00:00:43] Yes!

PRODUCER [00:00:43] It's rolling. It's rolling.

JVN [00:00:44] It is?

PRODUCER [00:00:44] It's rolling.

JVN [00:00:45] Hey.

KIM PETRAS [00:00:46] Hey.

JVN [00:00:47] Oh, my God.

KIM PETRAS [00:00:49] Oh, my God. I'm so excited to be here right now. We've been trying to do this for like a ti-, a time period now. And I'm so stoked it worked out.

JVN [00:00:57] Me too. And, but can I tell you that I, I, you didn't mean to, but you almost caused me to, like, drown and lose my phone in Fire Island last summer because I don't know if you remember, but like last summer, I was Insta-storying to you in this scarf and I was just living my best life to-.

KIM PETRAS [00:01:13] Of course I remember.

JVN [00:01:14] And when you put on your Instastory, I, I lost my bodily functions. I was like halfway in the water when, when some, when I was showed it and I.

KIM PETRAS [00:01:24] Oh my God.

JVN [00:01:25] I was just, I really, I lived. It was fine but like, oh my God, I just, I love you so much. Your music is so incredible. You're so incred.

KIM PETRAS [00:01:32] Oh, my God. thank you so much.

JVN [00:01:32] Yes.

KIM PETRAS [00:01:33] You are.

JVN [00:01:33] But I just. I just learn that you're German. I didn't know.

KIM PETRAS [00:01:36] Yeah. No, I born and raised in Germany.

JVN [00:01:38] What town?

KIM PETRAS [00:01:39] Cologne, Germany.

JVN [00:01:40] Cologne. I took a train through there.

KIM PETRAS [00:01:42] Oh, you did?

JVN [00:01:43] Yes.

KIM PETRAS [00:01:44] Oh, my God. It's very tiny.

JVN [00:01:46] And churches are beautiful though.

KIM PETRAS [00:01:47] Yeah. Yeah. Like the big, the big one in the middle. Like where the train station actually is and goes through, that one is like sick. That one took like 300 years to build or something. So people that were building it died and never saw it finished, which is crazy. But yeah, I'm born and raised in Dutchland.

JVN [00:02:10] I love that you're a gorgeous German national.

KIM PETRAS [00:02:14] Thank you so much.

JVN [00:02:16] I didn't know. I am. I mean, this is a side bar, but like, I'm feeling like a little nervy for Angela like this, have you seen?

KIM PETRAS [00:02:24] Yeah.

JVN [00:02:24] OK. Like, I'm like queen. We need to get you an electrolyte drip. We need to get you some Gatorade. We need to get you some like, let's get her an iced coffee. I was reading about her, honey, that she has like the craziest working schedule. She's just like a night owl. And she's just is known to be able to, like, negotiate into the, like, wee hours of the morning.

KIM PETRAS [00:02:42] Wow.

JVN [00:02:42] I'm not. I am not that person.

KIM PETRAS [00:02:44] Wow.

JVN [00:02:44] At 10:30, if I am not performing like I need to be asleep.

KIM PETRAS [00:02:50] Yeah.

JVN [00:02:51] Yeah. Are you a night person or morning person?

KIM PETRAS [00:02:52] I am. I feel like I'm, I'm creative at night. I feel like I can go easily until like 4:00 a.m. or 5:00 a.m.. But that's, then, then that's it. Because it used to be longer. I used to like stay in the studio until, like, literally like the sun would come up. When I was just like, songwriting was like everything and I'd write for other people and stuff like that. But now that I like have an actual schedule and I need to like be places during the day usually and like answer to like emails and stuff like I can't. But I, but I, but I love like night I, I kind of like staying up till the sun comes up.

JVN [00:03:27] And you're like a gorgeous, I feel like performing, if you're like a musician I feel like your shows are probably just like naturally at night. A lot.

KIM PETRAS [00:03:33] Yeah. Yeah. I think, I think some of the best shows that I do are at night because I think that, you know, like with lights and everything just becomes like more magical.

JVN [00:03:41] Yes.

KIM PETRAS [00:03:42] When, when it's, when it's dark outside. But, but, yo, and got, some, some daytime performances also have the sauce. Triggered.

JVN [00:03:56] I'm a little triggered hearing you use your vernacular in front of me like it's no big deal. I guess I'm just like a person sitting in your presence. It's fine. OK, so you're minding your own business, honey. You're in Cologne, you're thriving. And then you start writing music cause you're like you want to become a gorgeous music, a gorgeous music writer. And then how did this-? You're quickly becoming like a household name, I feel. You're becoming an icon. Like everyone is like, how is this like, how's it been for you? It's, it's been success. I didn't know her.

KIM PETRAS [00:04:30] Thanks. Yeah. I mean, it's been, it's been really incredible. So I moved to L.A. from Germany when I was 19, and I had definitely been writing songs my whole life in Germany, like from when I was like 12, 13 years old, like just in my room, just like being on my computer all day, making like beats and tracks and writing songs.

JVN [00:04:50] So you do, you're all up in all your levels?

KIM PETRAS [00:04:53] For sure. I mean, I work with amazing like producers and people who are much better at that. Like I can definitely like I can put down what I want it to be. I can make like a drum loop. I can make a bass line. I can, you know, I could. I technically could, but I feel like I'm leaving that now to like, just like my, my friends who are producers.

JVN [00:05:11] But it's like your collaboration style be like, I imagine it being like, you know, whatever. And then like-.

KIM PETRAS [00:05:16] Yeah. For sure.

JVN [00:05:16] But then you can be like, this feels to like, uuuh, like right here.

KIM PETRAS [00:05:19] Yes. That feels like, that part feels like, ooooh.

JVN [00:05:26] Ooh. And you're like, can we just like-.

KIM PETRAS [00:05:26] That happens all the time. Yeah. But, but, you know, I feel like, I've feel like I've learned in the beginning. I really wasn't amazing at writing songs. But then I started writing every single day and really got into it. And I felt like it was kind of like my little, like, escape from my life that I didn't like in Germany because I'm not even like from Cologne. I'm from outside of Cologne, you know, like I would drive to school in Cologne, but I was like countryside cows, like no neighbors, like nothing going on. And I didn't like school and I didn't really have many friends. And I would just always go home and like, watch

Gwen Stefani music videos and Britney Spears music videos and like write little songs and like live in a little pop bubble. But then as, as I got older, I got really like antsy, you know, it's like, well, I got to do, you know, I want to like make like big, huge pop. And I felt, and I felt like in Germany, I just couldn't find anybody who wanted to do that. Ger-, music is very different there. There's a lot of like German music that's popin' there. It's a lot of like guitar, like songwriter music. And like nobody wanted to do like big fuckin like pink, gay club like bops, you know? So I was just like, I gotta go to L.A. and then I waitressed, saved up a flight ticket and came to L.A.

JVN [00:06:51] So you're just fucking literally waiting tables story to like songstress fucking story.

KIM PETRAS [00:06:56] Yeah.

JVN [00:06:57] I love that story. At 19, you came to L.A. so you're a baby still.

KIM PETRAS [00:07:04] Yeah, tiny.

JVN [00:07:05] Because that was like, just like a second ago. You're like a little teensy weensy baby.

KIM PETRAS [00:07:08] Yeah.

JVN [00:07:09] I was just remarking or you walked in that like how are you serving me this much like just rested fucking glowing baby skin. I mean this, it's a story of youth.

KIM PETRAS [00:07:22] Thank you so much.

JVN [00:07:23] I was asleep at 10:30 with like loaded cheese fries and like a s'mores pie that this really nice lady gave me from Butter and Scotch, which is this like bar in Brooklyn but they bake like all of these desserts, like they have the most beautiful-.

KIM PETRAS [00:07:37] I love desserts.

JVN [00:07:37] I love desserts. But so your inspos-, when you're a babykin's was like Gwen Stefani. Like top five?

KIM PETRAS [00:07:45] Top five. 80s Madonna. 80s Madonna to me is forever like my number one inspo. I just think she's like the Queen of the Queens, just like opening every door there is. Gwen Stefani, Britney. Probably like Boy George. I was really into Boy George and Kylie Minogue. Kylie Minogue. If you're, if you're, if you grow up in, in Europe in general, like she's like the queen of Europe, like everybody just loves Kylie so, so much. And then obviously Gaga. Katy. I mean, I love all the pop girls. Those were like the first concerts I like, saved up for, like the Lady Gaga "Born This Way" Ball and the Katy Perry like "Teenage Dream" Tour. So those were like the first concerts that I was saving up for. And so excited for.

JVN [00:08:31] What does it feel like now that you're that person for people?

KIM PETRAS [00:08:36] Amazing. I mean, it feels incredible. I feel like, I'm, it's all. It's been such a long journey. Like and now it's like all really fast kind of happening that I get to do all these things. I just finished my first tour ever, and it sold out like immediately.

JVN [00:08:51] Everywhere.

KIM PETRAS [00:08:51] Which is crazy. And my music's playing in clubs. And, you know, it was, it's, it feels insane and amazing. But also, I feel like I've, I've worked so long on it and, and so much on it that it just feels really great that I really, like, just get to be like this, this is sick and this is amazing. And also, just like the fans that I have are just like really like friends. Like, I feel like I never have, like, an encounter where it's like I'm on the street and I'm like bothered by somebody. It's always like the cutest, like most genuine, like, interaction. So it just like, it just feels like I have more friends like that's just all that like changed.

JVN [00:09:32] I love that story.

KIM PETRAS [00:09:34] Cute, right?

JVN [00:09:34] Yeah. How has it been-? Well, I mean, one, I didn't know when I found you as an artist and started just like listening, my friends introduced me to you like the week before I went to Fire Island last year. Have basically been listening to you for like multiple chunks of time, daily since. But like I didn't know. Well, I don't even know how to, like, bring it up and be cute about it, because for me, it's just like such a non-issue. And like, I just like don't, it's just such a non-issue for me outside of, like, it being an issue like politically, because I feel that we need to advocate for people that don't have advocacy.

KIM PETRAS [00:10:14] Yeah.

JVN [00:10:14] Especially in America. But like, I didn't even know that you were trans until I read it in an interview.

KIM PETRAS [00:10:18] Right.

JVN [00:10:19] But like how? Like I, like. But how is it, how has it been blending that and talking about that or is, can we talk about that?

KIM PETRAS [00:10:30] For sure. Of course. Well, it's, it's kind of just been a big deal, which was a little, a little, I don't know, in the beginning it was really hard to balance because I, I had been a songwriter for a long time. And before that, when I was a kid, I was doing a bunch of documentaries in Germany about being transgender and doing a lot of work, educating people on being transgender and kind of being like a little bit of a poster child of transitioning early and, you know, being very openly transgender. And at the same time, I was making music and at the same time I was doing all of these things and I don't know, it just became such a big deal. And like the press and everybody, just all they wanted to talk to me about was being transgender. And so when I kind of like didn't want to do that, I feel like I like, you know, really started from complete scratch with the music. And like, I really worked on myself and my writing skills and created something that I'm proud of. And, you know, worked on my skills. And then a lot of the like labels that wanted to sign me were just like either like all about that and like that's the only angle we want to push about you or like, a trans girl can never be a successful pop artist because it hasn't really been done before like that. So it was it was difficult balancing it. So I kind of, me and my team kind of made the decision to just not even have me on the covers of the songs, like just have those little neon heads on it, not-.

JVN [00:11:59] Oh yeah.

KIM PETRAS [00:11:59] Not talk about it in, in anything in the beginning and just kind of let the music speak because I, it's really hard because at this, you know, people can be really cruel and people can either, are either like you're using your story to get successful as an artist or they're like you're not talking about this so you don't support the trans community. So I just found myself in all these like little traps and all of these like balances.

JVN [00:12:27] Which is like so unfair because you've actually been like, I feel like, well, you're already an advocate just because you are. But like that was what your whole childhood was.

KIM PETRAS [00:12:39] Thank you. Yeah, totally. And for me, I mean, my-.

JVN [00:12:42] Oh, my God. Standy. My little baby Rae is like holding up my little baby beak sign. And I, don't want to like because-, do you need to pee or anything? Do you need water? Coffee?

KIM PETRAS [00:12:49] No, I'm great. I just chill out with you.

JVN [00:13:01] Welcome back to "Getting Curious", this is Jonathan Van Ness and we literally have, like, literal gorgeous, stunning Kim Petras and I feel like.

KIM PETRAS [00:13:11] Woo! Uh.

JVN [00:13:11] OK. Wow. I love you, that almost like literally made me teary eyed.

KIM PETRAS [00:13:21] No.

JVN [00:13:21] I am so, like I feel like I am so rare to, like, fangirl out on someone, but I am just, I am! I just love so much.

KIM PETRAS [00:13:33] No, I love you so much.

JVN [00:13:35] It's happening. Oh, my God. OK. So, no, I just think it's like-.

KIM PETRAS [00:13:36] You're a queen.

JVN [00:13:37] But-, so are you.

KIM PETRAS [00:13:39] Thank you.

JVN [00:13:39] I often just think it's like, well you got to hit the nail on the head too when you say like it hasn't been done in the way that you've envisioned it being done. And so I think it's. And I usually use this saying when I'm talking about things that are, been hard for me in a more like tragic space. And this isn't tragic. This is like successful and beautiful, but there's no roadmap, you know?

KIM PETRAS [00:13:57] Yeah.

JVN [00:13:57] I find myself in so many positions where it's like there's cues that I can take from people. There's like lessons and wisdom that I can try to, like, usurp from stories that I've heard and experience that I've had to try to make the best decisions I can moving forward.

KIM PETRAS [00:14:10] Yeah.

JVN [00:14:10] But it's like difficult. You know, when you're in the moment when you're trying to, like, navigate a path that has not really been like, clearly illuminated for you.

KIM PETRAS [00:14:18] Yeah. But I think, like everything where people are just like truly wanting to do their own thing and truly, truly trying to be themselves and do something new that's like in all of those areas that's, you know, like you can take inspiration from people and stuff like that. But the rest you kind of got to figure out yourself, if you wa, if you want to do something new. So I love it. At the same time, like, I'm really like, I'm really excited about just like doing it completely differently. And like it happens how it happens. And I feel like I've learned so many like life lessons from just like trial and error and, and failing and doing things right and learning and growing and all of those amazing things.

JVN [00:14:59] So last. So you, so you started coming out with the gorgeous neon baby outlines of your head with your cute little baby bow. And that was like your first. Is that called like an E.P. or something? Or were they just like singles or something like what's-?

KIM PETRAS [00:15:11] I refer to it as Era One. I mean, technically-.

JVN [00:15:14] What are they?

KIM PETRAS [00:15:16] Era One.

JVN [00:15:16] What's that? Era fucking One.

KIM PETRAS [00:15:19] Yeah.

JVN [00:15:19] Could you be any more major, girl? Please. So basically those were our Era One moment.

KIM PETRAS [00:15:27] Yes.

JVN [00:15:27] And then is "Clarity" like our first, your first, it's not, Jonathan, do not take ownership of it, it's not even yours. Don't be gross. Is "Clarity" like your first like official album collection or something? Or?

KIM PETRAS [00:15:37] Yeah. I mean, it's my first collection of songs, like there's so much pressure on like words and what you call something.

JVN [00:15:43] Yeah. Who gives a fuck, right?

KIM PETRAS [00:15:44] I don't, I just want to put out as much music as possible, so I don't know.

JVN [00:15:47] You don't mind what it's called?

KIM PETRAS [00:15:48] I don't want to call it anything. I just want to call it "Clarity".

JVN [00:15:51] I love "Clarity". Can I just tell you that the other day I was like really like sing-. I was practicing singing it on the way home from Philly the other day. It's hard to sing all in one breath. You've got some lung capacity that does not play.

KIM PETRAS [00:16:03] Girl. That's the German in me. I used to smoke like a chimney so that trained it.

JVN [00:16:11] I mean, it's, she's, but that song like has really been clutch for me these last like-.

KIM PETRAS [00:16:15] I saw the video of you dancin to "Clarity" which was lit.

JVN [00:16:20] I love this song. But I mean the "Clarity" era is beautiful.

KIM PETRAS [00:16:27] Thank you.

JVN [00:16:27] I love it so much. So what's your deal with, like songwriting? Like. Like I feel like I will think about like something that I want to, like, incorporate into my comedy. Like, lately I've, you know how like we, you know, we often champion, like, individuality and how like we're all like our own little gorgeous like, you know. But then I think when it comes to, like love, we all become like we're really quick to become experts and are like-.

KIM PETRAS [00:16:49] Yeah.

JVN [00:16:50] Well, you know, you can't put it on your gram for this long or you can't, like, fuck em for this long. Like, we just all like, you know, like and why it works for us and whatever.

KIM PETRAS [00:16:57] True.

JVN [00:16:57] But really if you think about love and how individual we all are based off of what I think at first, everyone's going to have like a different way to like finding a relationship.

KIM PETRAS [00:17:05] Yeah.

JVN [00:17:05] And what works for you and what works for someone else is like not always gonna be like the same.

KIM PETRAS [00:17:10] For sure. I think all those rules are like really scary. Like in general, like I feel like they just put so much like pressure on, like what a relationship is supposed to be. And I feel like a relationship can be anything and like love can be anything.

JVN [00:17:21] Yeah.

KIM PETRAS [00:17:22] That, which sounds so cheesy and Pride ended yesterday. So I shouldn't say this. Again. I'm kidding.

JVN [00:17:26] No, you should.

KIM PETRAS [00:17:29] No, no. But, but yeah I, I, I feel you. There's so many labels and boxes put on love and what's right and what's wrong. And I feel like that's a huge reason why like a lot of mine didn't work out because like ideas that I had of it, they were completely stupid. And then later on them, I'm like, wait a minute. Like there's not an actual rule.

JVN [00:17:49] Well, they weren't stupid. They're just like were, I think every, you know, I don't think like what you thought was ever stupid, but what I was trying to ask, which was not a question because I got too rambling.

KIM PETRAS [00:17:59] Yeah. Sorry. I ramble too.

JVN [00:17:59] Don't, you didn't not ramble. I swear to God, I'll flip this table. You can not be negative by yourself in front of me. I swear to God. I'll freak out. But like when I was thinking about that concept and I was thinking about like how I want to introduce talking about that concept into my comedy in a way that's like funny. Like is, like what is on your mind when you're coming in to songwriting? Like, what are you trying to convey? Like, it's such a massive subject and it's your art like.

KIM PETRAS [00:18:23] Yeah.

JVN [00:18:24] I think about so much when I'm thinking about how I want to do someone's hair. Like this is your art. Like, how do you think about it?

KIM PETRAS [00:18:31] I think about it in so many different ways. So I mean, going back to like Era One, that was my like escape era, like my life, I was like living in like an apartment with like five roommates on like a damn futon and writing-.

JVN [00:18:45] In L.A.?

KIM PETRAS [00:18:46] Yeah. And like, writing songs like really struggling, like.

JVN [00:18:48] And that's not where you live now? That apartment, obviously.

KIM PETRAS [00:18:50] No, I don't.

JVN [00:18:51] Where were you then? Just for a visual.

KIM PETRAS [00:18:53] In North Hollywood, L.A. Yeah.

JVN [00:18:56] Oh, my God. I just, like my grandma. She always like, whenever we'd talk on the-, she's not alive anymore. But when she was, like she was like she always wanted to see my apartment. So she had like a visual when we were on the phone, like talking about it.

KIM PETRAS [00:19:04] Yeah.

JVN [00:19:04] Like I, I'm just like dying for a visual. Like it was like on what and what-ish?

KIM PETRAS [00:19:08] Oh my God. Where was it? It was on, on Hawthorne. And there was a 7-Eleven around the corner.

JVN [00:19:15] And it's like teenage you?

KIM PETRAS [00:19:16] It's like, yeah.

JVN [00:19:17] Or 20 year old you?

KIM PETRAS [00:19:19] Yeah.

JVN [00:19:20] And you were a waitress?

KIM PETRAS [00:19:21] I wasn't. I wasn't in L.A. because in L.A. I had like, saved up money.

JVN [00:19:25] Already nailed it by then.

KIM PETRAS [00:19:28] No, not really. I wasn't like, I didn't have like money for long. But I was, whenever I was in L.A., so I would fly to L.A. and have like three sessions a day and work really hard and then crash on like a studio couch, in the beginning, before I even had an apartment. And then eventually I got a cut. My first cut was for the "Bratz" animated movie. And it took me like two years. So I was struggling and on and off waitressing and doing sessions for like two years.

JVN [00:19:57] What's a cut mean? And what do sessions mean?

KIM PETRAS [00:19:59] Oh, sessions. Sessions is like meeting up with producers and writing songs and coming up with beats or meeting up with different songwriters. So I knew a couple songwriters from the Internet, from like YouTube and things like that because I was I was doing covers on YouTube so I would fly out and just try to write with anybody I could. Make as many connections as I could. And yeah, it took about like a year and a half or two years before, you know, somebody took one of my songs. And that ended up being in a "Bratz" movie, which is amazing. Like, I could never have "Bratz" because they were like too, too slutty. So I had to have a song on the soundtrack.

JVN [00:20:44] I love that, so healing. Full circle.

KIM PETRAS [00:20:46] Full circle. Yeah. Finally, I could be slutty. But, and then Fergie cut one of my songs, so, sang one of my songs. Never-

JVN [00:20:57] Oh, my God, 'cause you-

KIM PETRAS [00:20:57] Never came out, but, and then I got a songwriter deal from that.

JVN [00:21:03] 'Cause you were songwriting first.

KIM PETRAS [00:21:05] Yeah. I was songwriting for other people for like three or four and a half years in L.A. before anything really happened for myself.

JVN [00:21:16] I feel like when I was younger, like in my teenage years coming up in like the Britney, Christina, like, you know, Mandy Moore, like that whole like, you know, teeny, like that was my first exposure. And like, I was obsessed with Hanson. And I also obviously love those girls, I loved Spice Girls. I love like everyone. I was obsessed. But I guess, when you think about the music industry, it's the, it's changed so much because of technology and the way that people are paid, the way that people come up, the way that like-

KIM PETRAS [00:21:43] Yeah.

JVN [00:21:43] And broadcast has change like that in a lot of ways. Like my family has, like a broadcasting company, it's like newspapers and TV stations and like, and radio stations. And that has changed so much because, like in the 80s, like if you had like a TV station in a small town, like the networks would have to pay you to carry their signal. Now, it's like, technology's changed, like everything. So there's a lot of like

industries that are just like, print magazines are a lot like that. They're just like a lot of industries that have changed so much and the-.

KIM PETRAS [00:22:09] So much.

JVN [00:22:10] And they become like profitable in different ways, like in some, in some ways there's more money for certain people, but less for others. And there's like less budget for different things. So it's like-.

KIM PETRAS [00:22:18] Yeah.

JVN [00:22:18] I guess I just like haven't really like been hip to the story of trying to make it in the music industry for a long time because I was just like trying to like pay my rent and feed my cats and like live my fucking life. So it's like when you're saying like sessions, producers, flying like, I don't.

KIM PETRAS [00:22:32] Yeah.

JVN [00:22:32] Like, I just I don't really, I don't understand.

KIM PETRAS [00:22:34] I always wanted to just, like, get discovered as a teen. I was like, why am I not on the Disney Channel? I'm a star.

JVN [00:22:41] And you were.

KIM PETRAS [00:22:43] Thanks. But, but I-.

JVN [00:22:44] Because you were doing documentaries and stuff.

KIM PETRAS [00:22:44] But at the same time, at the same time, I knew like nobody was ever gonna write me a song because I'm just like some girl from the middle of nowhere in Germany, you know? Like so I was like, I gotta learn this myself. And I think that was such a huge blessing for me that, that, you know, nothing did happen and that, that I did have to, like, learn this myself and had to become a good songwriter in order to, like, break into the industry, because that was the only thing, like I got like a couple of, like, commercials in Germany when I was, when I was a teen, which was like a laundry detergent commercial. And like, I would just, you know, be a writer. And that was like my realistic way into the music industry because just like becoming a pop star. Like, how does that happen? Like, does somebody, like, fly you out somewhere? Does somebody discover you like at a show? Like I was performing all I could and like, at like open mic nights and cafes and Pride and like all of these things, I was performing. But, but just like my, like, realistic way of like, how am I going to get into the music industry was just like get good at writing songs. And so it was really cool. And it also taught me a lot about just like artists, because I wrote with a lot of artists that I like admire before, before I wrote my own music. And I feel like they taught me a lot about how the music industry works, how to, like, stay a good artist and all of these things. I mean, I've always wanted to be an artist. I always wanted to end up as that, but I just didn't have the chance. So once I got a songwriting contract, I was like, OK, 360, I'm an artist now and kind of decided to run with it. And that also came with challenges because at that point, like, I just got my first big cut that was going to come out, just had a songwriting contract so everybody was trying to be like, write with this person, write with this person, you know, going in with this artist. And it was really like hard to, you know, be like, no, I really want to be an artist. But I'm really glad I did it.

JVN [00:24:35] Oh, because when you got that songwriting contract, they were like, oh, you should go be a main songwriter for so-and-so and so-and-so.

KIM PETRAS [00:24:39] Yeah.

JVN [00:24:40] And you were like, I really want to like sing my own music.

KIM PETRAS [00:24:43] Yeah, totally. Because obviously I didn't tell anybody, like, before I signed the contract, I was like, yeah, I'm going to write for everybody, you know, and then got it, took the money, made my own record. You know?

JVN [00:24:51] Secure the fucking bag.

KIM PETRAS [00:24:55] Secure the bag, sis. That's what I, that's what I had to do.

JVN [00:24:56] You did have to do it.

KIM PETRAS [00:24:58] I had to do it.

JVN [00:24:58] But you're still doing it.

KIM PETRAS [00:25:00] Yeah.

JVN [00:25:00] I mean, like which is so major. I love that. I mean because also it sounds like when, you kind of touched on it before like, it seems like you were saying that you can kind of make it in like a, I mean you can obviously be successful in Germany. And that's like major. But you were kind of going, like you want like a Netflix success in the sense that you want like 190 countries, honey. 110 million subscribers like we want to be like, we're trying to do like, we want to make the music everywhere and like, but-.

KIM PETRAS [00:25:26] For sure, but bottom line is, in Germany, nobody believed in me. Nobody saw it. Like that's, I never found anybody who was willing to work with me or sign me or anything, just like that's the bottom line. Like, I had to come to L.A. for people to understand, to be like pop music is great, you know? I don't know. In Germany, there's like a, I don't know. There's like a weird stigma that pop music isn't music or something, you know? So.

JVN [00:25:49] Ooh, talk about that.

KIM PETRAS [00:25:51] Yeah. I mean, I think a lot of, a lot of people in general have that, like, idea that pop music isn't like heartfelt music or it isn't like real music. And that it's just like, you know, formulated stuff, but to me-.

JVN [00:26:03] That feels so foreign to me because I just, it's my Bible. So I don't.

KIM PETRAS [00:26:07] Me too. But also, I know. But-.

JVN [00:26:08] I'm like, who said that?

KIM PETRAS [00:26:08] But like, we're like the LGBTQ community, you know? Like that's our life, you know? But like people outside of-. I don't know, I've run into a lot, of people being like, that's not real music. It's just like-.

JVN [00:26:21] It's my, my synapses are literally not computing. Stand by. We're going to take a really quick break and we'll be right back with more literal Kim Petras, right after the break. Welcome back to "Getting Curious", this is Jonathan Van Ness.

KIM PETRAS [00:26:45] Oh, uh! It's Kim Petras. Up in this, bitch.

JVN [00:26:47] I love you so much. It really hurts.

KIM PETRAS [00:26:49] Love you too.

JVN [00:26:50] Oooh.

KIM PETRAS [00:26:51] I'm so happy to be here. Again.

JVN [00:26:53] Yes, thank you for-.

KIM PETRAS [00:26:54] I love you. All my friends love you.

JVN [00:26:56] Really?

KIM PETRAS [00:26:56] Yeah. All my friends are so obsessed with you.

JVN [00:26:58] All my friends are so obsessed with you, girl.

KIM PETRAS [00:27:00] Oh, my God. All the friends need to meet.

JVN [00:27:01] OK.

KIM PETRAS [00:27:02] So we can all be-.

JVN [00:27:05] Friends.

KIM PETRAS [00:27:06] Friends. So we can all be friends.

JVN [00:27:07] But, ew pop music being, I don't like that. I think she's so expressive. It really helps me get out all my feels.

KIM PETRAS [00:27:13] Right? Me too.

JVN [00:27:14] So. You know when I want to learn a new gymnastics pass, like I go to the little gymnastics place and I train and I like, right now I'm like getting over a sprained ankle is really horrific for me, but I'm like totally like, it's better. I'm like, you know, healed pass it, but-.

KIM PETRAS [00:27:25] No, not a sprained ankle. How did happen?

JVN [00:27:27] Oh my God. I was just like warming up for gymnastics and I like was doing these plyometrics over these mats on my toes got stuck in a mat when I was jumping off of it and my whole body kept going, but my toes stopped. And yeah, it was the first time where I've ever had in my body, like, where like I felt a pop, like I felt like a pop or like heard a pop. Like there was like that whole pop that you hear people talking about.

KIM PETRAS [00:27:45] Yes.

JVN [00:27:45] Like I felt it.

KIM PETRAS [00:27:46] That pop.

JVN [00:27:46] Yeah. And then like my ankle was like as wide as my head.

KIM PETRAS [00:27:50] No!

JVN [00:27:50] And there was a green and purple like bruise that was in the shape of an "L" and it was awful. But the point of that story is that when, I know how to train for like a tumbling pass, when you say that you had to become a good songwriter, like you just feel like your younger years stuff was like just not the tea and you felt like it was like, you were just like, ew, my beats are dumb. Or like my lyric doesn't make sense. Or like that wasn't, like, like, you tried to make a song about talking about how love language can be different for everyone and relationships can be different. But then it was a song about like mountains and, or something?

KIM PETRAS [00:28:18] Yeah. I mean everybody like has to learn. But in the beginning, I was just like, I was not great. Like nobody's great starting out at something. Like-.

JVN [00:28:25] Are you being self critical because I bet it was like pretty good or something?

KIM PETRAS [00:28:28] It was all right. Like it wasn't like terrible. I've been saying that it like sucked, but like people liked it. Like my friends liked it, but like being self-critical of myself, like obviously like I knew I had to get a lot better. But yeah, I really feel like I, like, taught myself how to write a good song, during that time. And I also feel like kind of having, like I love when Rihanna like said that having really bad style in the beginning, like and really like, a lot of faux-pas, like she thinks she had made her like really like focus on her style and like that's the reason she's like look so amazing now it's because like she was like I got to get better at this, you know? And so I feel that way about like a lot of things. And I feel that way about like songwriting. That I just like, the beginning, I wasn't great and just had to, like, get better. You know?

JVN [00:29:18] When you were saying earlier about, like, you know, working with different artists and like talking about like balancing, do you feel like that just because sometimes like label will be like, oh, like upbeat stuff is really cool right now. So we want to keep, we, like we loved it how like "Hillside Boys" was more like up.

KIM PETRAS [00:29:32] Ew.

JVN [00:29:32] Like we don't want you to slow it down and like is that what you mean? Like just to be like, well no, I really am going through more of like, my "Clarity" phase actually has like some slower things. So actually like I'm feeling really strong, the fuck about that right now. Like is that what you mean? Just like balancing like label's expectations with what you think people might like, or, or being like, I don't care what people like, I want to express my own fucking vision?

KIM PETRAS [00:29:56] I, I am so selfish about just say the things that I like. I just I want to make the music that I want to make. You know, I'm just like, this is what I think is great. And this is what I'm going to make. And this is what I'm listening to. And this is what I'm going to make. And this is what's going to influence my music. So I really don't like, like to listen to too many, like, opinions. And I also don't like many cooks in the kitchen, I kind of just like love my little team I have of like friends, like actually like me and my roommate write all my songs together. Pretty much. He's like amazing, Aaron. And then kind of my like songwriter friends that I've liked, you know, kind of collected over the years, you know, just like when, whenever I'm doing something new, I just meet up and listen to the stuff that they like. And I always think it needs to come from a place where I just love it. But just like objectively speaking, just like in the beginning, I just like I didn't know what I wanted. I didn't write enough songs. And I, and I do believe in the like. You need to write like 500 songs or something before you get good at it, you know? So.

JVN [00:31:02] It's like pictures.

KIM PETRAS [00:31:02] Yeah, totally. It's like it's like anything that you want to get good at. You just got to put the hours in and then you'll become good, and I feel like now. Like what makes me good now I think it's just that I have a really good picture of what I like. Like I feel like my opinions just became really strong of what I like and what I don't like and what I want people to feel when they listen to my music and what I don't want to feel. So.

JVN [00:31:24] That's such an important thing to learn of like what? Tyra Banks was just talking about that on her Insta about like, you know, when you're in front of the camera, it's about like, you're not, it's not just like, ooh, I'm trying to look hot. It's like, what do you want that person to feel when they're seeing that image?

KIM PETRAS [00:31:39] Agreed. I think everything creative is like rooted in like how you want to make people feel. And I think that's so, like most important part of it. Is like the intention, you know, like, do you want to, like, look hot in something, you know, out of a selfish reason or do you want to like, you know, make people feel something? Or do you want to like make people think about themselves or make people

relate to what they're seeing or what they're hearing or, you know? So I always think that that stuff is great. Nothing wrong with looking hot, though.

JVN [00:32:07] I, I always, you know, I was just interviewing-.

KIM PETRAS [00:32:10] I mean, you just like, naturally always look hot.

JVN [00:32:12] Thank you. I.

KIM PETRAS [00:32:13] You don't have to think about it.

JVN [00:32:14] Have to agree. I was just interviewing Kat Cohen, who is this incredible comedian. And I was, I said something like I was like, how do you, like, identify? And she's like, incredible comedian. She's like, well, you know, model first, comedian, second. And I was just like obsessed. Because I feel like that, too. Like, I totally identify as model first, comedian second, hairdresser, you know, third, cat dad. Actually it's cat dad, model, comedian, hairdresser.

KIM PETRAS [00:32:40] Yeah, we stan.

JVN [00:32:40] Yeah. I mean, because I just think it's important, like it's like of course I can be funny and be sexy. Like we're allowed to be like multiple things. This is my question though. Yeah. The range, I have range. But like based off of who you said your pop inspirations are, your music inspirations are when like you were growing up, who are people who would be like the most surprised that's like on your Spotify playlist? Like that's like not of normal inspo that you just, like well not that, that's not normal, but-.

KIM PETRAS [00:33:00] Yeah.

JVN [00:33:00] You know what I'm saying.

KIM PETRAS [00:33:01] Well even though I feel like the pop girls are my biggest inspiration as far as like what, you know, I, I usually like do and the stuff I've done in the past, I feel like I do listen to like the greats in every genre. Like I love every genre of music. And I really mean that. I've been really obsessed with like Muse. I've been really obsessed with The Killers. Been really obsessed with Kendrick Lamar. I've been really obsessed with Post Malone. Love Lana Del Rey. I love Marilyn Manson.

JVN [00:33:30] Oooh. Reference.

KIM PETRAS [00:33:30] Like I love Nine Inch Nails.

JVN [00:33:32] Oooh.

KIM PETRAS [00:33:33] You know, like-.

JVN [00:33:34] Did you-?

KIM PETRAS [00:33:34] I love like Elvis? You know?

JVN [00:33:36] Did you see the "Black Mirror" with Miley Cyrus?

KIM PETRAS [00:33:38] I did. I love Ashley O.

JVN [00:33:40] Did you know that that was our cover of a Nine Inch Nails song?

KIM PETRAS [00:33:43] Yeah.

JVN [00:33:44] My friend told me that. And I was I, that song is about raping a dead person, according to my friend. I couldn't believe.

KIM PETRAS [00:33:53] I know.

JVN [00:33:54] I didn't know. I was shook. I just, I was just stanning the word "verve".

KIM PETRAS [00:34:01] Yeah.

JVN [00:34:02] Who knew what "verve" meant before Ashley O? I didn't.

KIM PETRAS [00:34:05] Trust. Ashley O.

JVN [00:34:07] Did you? Did you know what "verve" meant?

KIM PETRAS [00:34:09] I know, off the verve. Like the Bittersweet Symphony people.

JVN [00:34:13] Ooh.

KIM PETRAS [00:34:13] So I. So I, I do think that I knew what it meant. But just because of that, they also have a song called "The Drugs Don't Work", which is beautiful. Do you remember like Bittersweet Symphony? That song's so stunning.

JVN [00:34:25] Yes. When is verve in that song?

KIM PETRAS [00:34:26] No, that's the band name. That's their-.

JVN [00:34:31] I thought that was Oasis. Is that not Oasis?

KIM PETRAS [00:34:32] Wait, girl. I think.

JVN [00:34:35] I always just think that everything's like Oasis or like-.

KIM PETRAS [00:34:38] No, I think the verve.

JVN [00:34:39] I don't know. I just think, it's, here's. I have a confession to make. Everything that isn't someone who I listen to, I just feel like it sounds like Simon & Garfunkel to me.

KIM PETRAS [00:34:46] Bittersweet Symphony is the Verve.

JVN [00:34:48] I don't. I thought that was Oasis my whole life.

KIM PETRAS [00:34:50] Aw.

JVN [00:34:51] I'm not that great with, like, genres of music that I'm not, like, obsessed with. You know what I mean? Like.

KIM PETRAS [00:34:55] You don't have to.

JVN [00:34:56] Like I only like like soft rock by ladies or like Lady Pop people.

KIM PETRAS [00:35:02] Cute.

JVN [00:35:03] Usually.

KIM PETRAS [00:35:03] Do you like Blondie?

JVN [00:35:05] Yes. Yes.

KIM PETRAS [00:35:07] Hot. Me too.

JVN [00:35:07] Yeah. Yeah, I do. But I feel like I am a little, like. I feel like I have like a, like a male sexism bias in my music. Like I, like, like I just like I don't, like boys voices, like I don't, like I don't live for them.

KIM PETRAS [00:35:22] Ah, got it.

JVN [00:35:23] Not to be sexist, I just, I like, like high, I like, I like a, I like a, I like a. I like high.

KIM PETRAS [00:35:33] I feel you.

JVN [00:35:35] I like up.

KIM PETRAS [00:35:36] Same.

JVN [00:35:37] Wait. Actually, let me think about this.

KIM PETRAS [00:35:37] What about MJ? Or Bruno?

JVN [00:35:41] Love Bruno.

KIM PETRAS [00:35:42] Bruno can sing really high. What about Prince?

JVN [00:35:45] I think. Oh wait. I loved Prince.

KIM PETRAS [00:35:47] Yeah.

JVN [00:35:48] Yeah. I think there's also though, the, like boys always bullied me a lot growing.

KIM PETRAS [00:35:53] Trust. Yeah.

JVN [00:35:53] Like I was very. So I feel like I'm also kind of just like scared. Like I-.

KIM PETRAS [00:35:57] Totally.

JVN [00:35:58] Like I never felt I was going to be like, you know, very close with like a like that. Like I, like growing up I didn't think that, who? Like, I didn't, I knew Justin Timberlake and I probably wasn't gonna be like-.

KIM PETRAS [00:36:09] Oh Justin. I forgot about that one.

JVN [00:36:11] You know what I'm saying?

KIM PETRAS [00:36:12] Yeah.

JVN [00:36:12] Like, I mean, I'm sure he is like a really nice guy, but like growing up in junior high, like my likelihood of becoming best friends with like a woman felt much more comforting to me.

KIM PETRAS [00:36:23] Same.

JVN [00:36:23] Than like-.

KIM PETRAS [00:36:24] Totally.

JVN [00:36:25] Than a boy.

KIM PETRAS [00:36:25] No, I was, I was the same way as a kid because, because I always felt like they were like my imaginary friends, like in my, like, fantasy, I was like hanging out with them, you know? So definitely was more likely for like the girls to hang out with me than the dudes. So, so I feel you.

JVN [00:36:41] Like I was a gymnast. In my mind, like I was a part of the Magnificent Seven.

KIM PETRAS [00:36:44] Oh, my God. Cute.

JVN [00:36:44] You know what I mean?

KIM PETRAS [00:36:45] Yeah.

JVN [00:36:47] Oh, wait. She's Dutch. Sanne Wevers, reigning gold medalist on balance beam. Sanne Wevers.

KIM PETRAS [00:36:54] No.

JVN [00:36:55] She's major.

KIM PETRAS [00:36:55] Oh, she's dead?

JVN [00:36:56] No.

KIM PETRAS [00:36:57] Didn't you say just she's dead?

JVN [00:36:58] She's the reigning-.

KIM PETRAS [00:36:59] Oh.

JVN [00:37:00] Gold medalist. She's very much alive. She has a fierce triple pirouette on beam. She's so alive.

KIM PETRAS [00:37:05] Oh, my God. Yes. Please never be dead.

JVN [00:37:06] Yeah, she's so alive. I was just trying to think of like German gymnasts that are like fierce like. OK, but I have another question about Germany.

KIM PETRAS [00:37:14] That is a genre I know nothing about.

JVN [00:37:14] Really?

KIM PETRAS [00:37:15] Yeah, I'm sorry.

JVN [00:37:16] I feel like a German figure skating in German gymnastics are like underrepresented. I'm trying to think of, like, the most famous.

KIM PETRAS [00:37:23] There's a lot of skiing people.

JVN [00:37:24] Well, the 2012 vault gold medalist, I feel like was German, but she was like come from nowhere. Everyone thought McKayla Maroney was gonna get it, but then she actually fell on her second vault and like, no one saw it coming. It was really upsetting. That was a dark time.

KIM PETRAS [00:37:38] No, McKayla.

JVN [00:37:39] I know. We love McKayla Maroney so much.

KIM PETRAS [00:37:41] Love you, girl.

JVN [00:37:41] So I have a question about, like education in Germany and like how like you probably speak like eight languages.

KIM PETRAS [00:37:49] No, I only speak German and English.

JVN [00:37:50] Really?

KIM PETRAS [00:37:51] Yeah.

JVN [00:37:51] But don't you guys have to take like a lot of different language classes when you're little?

KIM PETRAS [00:37:54] We do. But I kind of made the mistake of taking Latin and that was so hard. And you can't speak it. Like.

JVN [00:37:59] Oh, because no one really speaks it?

KIM PETRAS [00:38:00] Yeah, no, people don't speak Latin, like it's like a dying language. And then like, then I picked French after that so I can speak a tiny little bit of French, but yeah. No, I just I can't really speak any other languages.

JVN [00:38:14] German school's pretty cool though, right? Like.

KIM PETRAS [00:38:17] Yeah. It's, the, there's some beautiful poetry in German, but it just always sounds really harsh. It's always kind of sounds like you're yelling.

JVN [00:38:26] So how did-? But you like learn English in school?

KIM PETRAS [00:38:29] Yeah.

JVN [00:38:29] Because your English is like gorgeous.

KIM PETRAS [00:38:31] Thanks.

JVN [00:38:33] It's, it's, like I don't know how to speak German, but I feel like listening to you talk, I feel like English is your first language. I just thought that maybe you're from London or something.

KIM PETRAS [00:38:40] Yeah, no. But.

JVN [00:38:42] Like very first.

KIM PETRAS [00:38:42] Yeah. But I, I do think like the English that they teach you in Germany is very British English, in the beginning. But then, then I also like, I just like, as, like a teen, I would always watch every like Nicole Kidman movie with her original voice because I didn't like her like overdub person. And then I would just start watching every movie and like because, you know, in Germany every, every actor and every actress has their own voice person that speaks them again, and records them in movies. And so I would just start watching the original versions, because I got really into like acting and I, I was really obsessed with with actors and actresses. And so once I started doing that, I'm just watching stuff in English. That's when I really, like, started picking up and really, like, learning even better. Like I learned like the basics of grammatic, of like grammar in school. But then I feel like movies and songs like taught me like conversational English.

JVN [00:39:46] So, question. So because you grew, so you were doing like YouTube before, like your first Era hit and before you became like a go-, like a gorgeous, more like household name. But like as like now that you're like in this space of, like, being successful, but like you were making, like you did like documentaries about like, which I haven't seen, and didn't know. But like, what is that, like do you look back on that now? Like. And like how do you look back on it? Does it? Because you're like a young person and

you were doing things on camera, like at a young age like did you, like? Because I always feel like looking back at myself, like I just feel like I still have like younger parts in me that like need a different kind of like, I don't know, like nurturing or something? I don't know if that makes sense to you.

KIM PETRAS [00:40:34] No, it does. Well, it's, it's difficult to look back at it because I did my, like, transition like 10 years ago, you know, like I did it really, really young. And back, and kind of back then, just like people were really awful about it. Like, I'm I'm going to be real. Like, people were saying awful stuff. People were asking awful things. And I wanted. I was very. My parents made me very aware that I was very lucky and that a lot of trans kids don't have parents that support them and that there's this extremely high suicide rate and that there's a lot of homeless trans people. And I was just like, I want to like, educate people because that's what my parents were like you have to do this because it's important and you have you have to give back. You're so lucky. You will get to live your life the way you want to live it. And not everybody's that lucky, which is a beautiful thing. So it was a beautiful thing that I did and I'm very proud. But there were a lot of moments where people would ask me very insulting things. People would go too far. Like, number one question was always like, so what's, who has better sex? Men and-, men or women? And like, so what's it like having a dick? And just like all these, like, awful, insane questions. And I was like 15. So looking back at it, I'm just like, that was really like not cool. And now I have the strength to, like, walk out of scenarios like that and not answer to that.

JVN [00:42:09] Do you feel like people still ask this level of disrespectful question?

KIM PETRAS [00:42:12] No, I think it's completely changed. And that's amazing. And I think there's so much more awareness and so much more beautiful people to look up to, thanks to social media, thanks to people being able to build their own platforms and not, you know, just like, I don't know, big corporations deciding about, like what can be seen on, like the TV or who can be a musical act. So a lot of things have changed in so many ways that it's so beautiful. But I sometimes look, look back at that and just like I'm mad at those people and the things that they, like, asked me. And, and I think it's, yeah, it's, it's really crazy that the way people used to be about transgendered people, but thank God it's changed. Thank God there's so many amazing, inspiring transwomen and transmen out there that are changing all of that.

JVN [00:43:05] OK. We have to wrap up in a little bit, but I just like just a few more minutes. I'm like, my mind is so scattered 'cause I love you so much.

KIM PETRAS [00:43:14] I love you, too.

JVN [00:43:15] Oh yeah. So I feel like, like coastily, I feel like it's changing and in the entertainment industry, I feel like it's changing, but I worry about like places like my hometown, places like just rural America. Rural Europe. Like just places that don't have as much exposure. So for like young people that don't have the support of their family, whether they're transgender, whether they're nonbinary, whether they're LGBT or L, G or B and don't feel supported by their family or don't feel safe to live an authentic life like I know I endured a lot of bullying, found a way to get to a place where I was like, happy with myself. But again, so much support. A lot of people don't have the support.

KIM PETRAS [00:43:51] Yeah.

JVN [00:43:51] In your case if you had already said that. But it's like, what advice do you have to like young musicians and like young creators that, like just based off like what you've went through and your experiences in this world?

KIM PETRAS [00:44:05] Well, I've also run into a lot of shitty contracts, a lot of things holding me up, a lot of like weird business people that were like shit. So no matter what, to get legal advice, like, honestly, I know it sounds so crazy, but there's really so many people out there who just want to sign young people that they think are going to do something and then do nothing as soon as you sign the contract. So you unfortunately have to, as well. I've learned this like the hard way, and you unfortunately also have to like research a little bit about like business and all of these things. But at the end of the day, like, never lose, like, you know, just like know what you want to do, really perfect it, really study music. I think that's really important. Just like knowing about the music before you and learning about those acts before you that, you

know, that can really inspire you and like not limiting yourself into anything because I feel like I've learned a lot from like documentaries and YouTube about everybody and their mom, you know, like and also not just musicians. Like anybody in the entertainment industry. But I think at the end of the day, like, don't be scared to do something that stands out and that people think is not gonna happen. Because for me, in the beginning I was making super bubblegum pop and everybody was like, bubblegum pop is over. Like. And, you know, so nobody really, like, believed I could do it. And now I'm selling out a tour, you know, like based off making bubblegum pop, which everybody was like, that's over. And this is what's hot right now. So, you know, don't, don't, don't lose what makes you special, I guess. Believe in yourself. Like, always feel free to evolve and all of these things. But yeah.

JVN [00:45:56] Who were your-? Who were your biggest people that you kind of learned about that gave you some sort of inspiration when you were coming up in the world? That you just like looked up to? That like weren't even necessarily in music, just like generally speaking, if there was like a rapid fire, like.

KIM PETRAS [00:46:10] Yeah.

JVN [00:46:11] Blah blah blah.

KIM PETRAS [00:46:12] Karl Lagerfeld for me was a big person because he's like one person of Germany that really, like, made it like out there and internationally. And I used to watch his interviews a lot. Like Christoph Waltz is one of like the few, he's Austrian. And he would you would hate that I just called him German. But, you know, same area.

JVN [00:46:32] Close enough. Yeah. Like the tri country region.

KIM PETRAS [00:46:36] Yeah, totally. Like other movie stars I'm really obsessed with, like Betty Davis, I'm really obsessed with Tippi Hedren. I am really obsessed with like Veronica Lake. You know? I just like, I love watching old like-.

JVN [00:46:53] Old school glamor.

KIM PETRAS [00:46:53] Hollywood like girls because, like, they added, and like Judy Garland, like they had it so hard. Like Jesus. Like we have it so good now, like I always find it so inspiring to go back into like that those OG stars that really had to do everything the hardest way possible. Like Fred Astaire, my mom's like a big like Broadway jazz person. So but also like, you know, Britney. Also like anybody from anywhere, like Nicole Kidman, Meryl Streep.

JVN [00:47:25] Oh, my God. "Moulin Rouge" really fucked me up, I loved it so much as a kid. OK.

KIM PETRAS [00:47:28] Jane Fonda.

JVN [00:47:28] Love Jane Fonda.

KIM PETRAS [00:47:28] I just like, I love like amazing like women. Like I think that's like most inspiring to me, just the strong women that did it before me.

JVN [00:47:39] And then first to last question. And they're really fast. Is like who is like giving you life right now that like we may not know on our Spotify? Like, is there anyone who you like is like new or that we like, like, like Kim Petras, you heard it first.

KIM PETRAS [00:47:52] Oh, my God. Kim Petras. You heard it first. Check out Dorian Electra. Bops. Check out, who else? I love this girl, Renni Rucci. She's an Atlanta rapper and she has a song called "Fuck Him Up, Sis", which is amazing.

JVN [00:48:11] Ooh, sounds fun.

KIM PETRAS [00:48:12] It's really good. Damn it.

JVN [00:48:16] Those are two really gorgeous places to start.

KIM PETRAS [00:48:17] Yeah. Two really gorgeous, gorgeous artists. I'm sure I have a million more but-.

JVN [00:48:21] So last thing is, no. Those two are amazing. And that was like a really rapid fire question. So like we, we made it to the end of the interview. It's like, is there anything that you want to say? Or that that I didn't? I always say it's like the end of a yoga class. Like, oh, fuck, I really want to do inversions or like splits.

KIM PETRAS [00:48:36] Yeah.

JVN [00:48:37] But they didn't teach it today.

KIM PETRAS [00:48:38] I really want to have baby goats step on me and do that.

JVN [00:48:41] You wanna do the goat yoga?

KIM PETRAS [00:48:42] Yeah.

JVN [00:48:42] That's a thing. Yeah. I'm sure you could do that if you ever have a day off.

KIM PETRAS [00:48:46] Right.

JVN [00:48:46] Your nails look so fucking good. Did May do those?

KIM PETRAS [00:48:49] Yeah, I May did them.

JVN [00:48:49] Oh my God. I love May so much. She did mine too.

KIM PETRAS [00:48:53] Shut up! May is a superstar.

JVN [00:48:56] She's so fucking major.

KIM PETRAS [00:48:58] Such a superstar. I went to lunch with-.

JVN [00:49:00] Let's make our nails touch each other and then it's like, oh my God, May is almost in the room. Wouldn't that be crazy if she just like popped up?

KIM PETRAS [00:49:05] I believe it. I believe she could.

JVN [00:49:06] Oh, my God.

KIM PETRAS [00:49:08] But yeah, I will. I had lunch with Marc Jacobs yesterday because he had May do his nails after me and we were all just talking about how big of a superstar May is.

JVN [00:49:19] She is. I got, I got to cut her hair, like, not that long ago. I love her so much.

KIM PETRAS [00:49:23] I love her like actually so much. Like what a special human being. I love her so much.

JVN [00:49:26] Like I always just want to be her last client of the day so that she can come over and I can order us food.

KIM PETRAS [00:49:31] Oh yes.

JVN [00:49:31] Like I just I love her.

KIM PETRAS [00:49:33] Me too.

JVN [00:49:33] Which it makes me feel scared cause like I always like hated it when clients would be like, oh, can I be your last client so we can go get dinner afterwards? And I'd be like, I really just want to go home. Like, can you like go fuck yourself? Like, you know, what I mean?

KIM PETRAS [00:49:43] Yeah.

JVN [00:49:43] 'Cause then you feel bad. So you're like fine.

KIM PETRAS [00:49:44] Totally. One of my best friends is a hairdresser, he always has that problem.

JVN [00:49:47] Do they do your hair?

KIM PETRAS [00:49:48] Yeah he's, he's in Germany but he, he does my hair. My hairstylist is also just like my, you know?

JVN [00:49:53] Your color is the next level, honey, she's so, so bright. Hitting your life.

KIM PETRAS [00:49:58] Thanks.

JVN [00:49:58] So pretty. Well, love you so much. Thanks for coming, I adore you.

KIM PETRAS [00:50:01] Thank you so much. I love you so much. Thanks for having me.

JVN [00:50:04] Love you more. Oh, my God. You've been listening to "Getting Curious" with me, Jonathan Van Ness. My guest this week with Kim Petras. You'll find links to Kim's work and socials in the episode description of whatever you're listening to the show on. Follow me on Instagram and Twitter @JVN. Our theme music is "Freak" by Quin. Thank you so much to her for letting us use it. If you are enjoying our show, honey, introduce a friend. Leave us a review and participate with us. Let us know what you want us to cover. Comment in our @CuriousWithJVN socials. We are loving all of your interaction there. So keep it coming @CuriousWithJVN on Instagram and Twitter. We'll see you next time on "Getting Curious", which was produced by Emily Bossak, Julie Carrillo, Rae Ellis, Harry Nelson and Colin Anderson and obviously, yours truly. Love you, guys, see you next time. Big kiss.