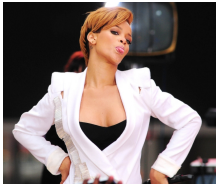


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By: Elena Gorgan, Life &amp; Style Editor



Rihanna performs tracks off her latest album, "Rated R," on Good Morning America. Wenn

## [Rihanna on "Rated R" Album, Being a Pop Star](#)

*Singer opens up in new interview about her music and her aspirations*

Today, Rihanna stands in a league of her own, what with her eccentric sense of style, always funky hairdos and accessories, and, most importantly, her music that is so hard to define in one single word. It wasn't always like that, though, the singer says in a recent interview with the [New York Times](#), recalling a period when it was her record label that got to call all the shots.

When Rihanna first emerged on the scene she was, although a hot commodity, not too much unlike other pop artists of the moment. Before she was even able to make a name for herself as an original singer, she too had to go mainstream initially - and that meant doing everything that her record label told her to do, she recalls. At one point, she came to realize that time for a change had come, and, in all fairness, things have been going wonderfully for her ever since.

"In the beginning, everything was a little more manufactured. It had to be safe, and in order for it to be safe, it had to be done before, which made no sense to me," Rihanna says in the NY Times interview. It even got to the point where the label had the final say even where her appearance and lipstick color were concerned. "I was like, 'What do you mean, I can't cut my hair? It has to be long and blond, like every other female singer in the game? No, I'm not doing that'," the singer further says.

As for her latest album, the recently released "Rated R," Rihanna says it's the result of much introspection and careful consideration of the way she could evolve as an artist. At the same time, it's also a venue to vent pent up anger and frustration, wherefrom the edgier, more aggressive sound characteristic to it. This also explains why it includes no ballads at all, because they simply did not suit the stage Rihanna had reached musically.

"It was exactly what I tried to stay away from," she says of why there are no slow-paced tracks on "Rated R." "When I was about to start the record, that was the first thing I said: 'I don't want no sad songs. I don't want no songs about love.' I turned away eight ballads: 'I don't want to do that, that's totally expected'," she adds.