

One of the most iconic 4th generation Korean pop girl groups, Aespa, spiced up the autumn season with their latest comeback known as *Whiplash*. This project, being Aespa's 5th mini album, experiments with techno/tech house genres of electronic dance music, as well as some alternative/hip-hop mixed into the b-sides. When I first listened to this album, I was commuting to my internship, and my expectations were blown out of the water so much so I was expressing my emotions out loud. This is easily one of Aespa's most interesting and exciting projects, but not in the way people may think, which I will get to in my impressions.



Source: Spotify

Debuted in November 2020, Aespa has been typically known for intense electronic sounds and a diverse range of vocal styles covered by their 4 members Giselle, Karina, Winter, and Ningning. From rap to eloquent vocals, this group rapidly grew the love of many K-Pop fans with past songs such as "Illusion," "Drama," and more recently, "Supernova." With every new project that they release, Aespa strives to constantly try new sounds out, and *Whiplash* is a prime example of that. Released on October 21st, 2024, *Whiplash* compared to other records they have released, there is a lot more emphasis on instrumentation and how the girls utilize their voices to adapt to any type of genre while staying true to their electronic K-Pop identity.



Source: SMTOWN

I feel like the overall theme of this project remains similar among most works from Aespa, a mix of empowering music that can sometimes even have deep meanings, all with catchy choruses designed to make the listener throw them on repeat. Songs such as “Whiplash” and “Pink Hoodie” encourage the listener to be confident and free, while songs like “Kill It” and “Just Another Girl” throw criticism towards problematic people in one’s life such as hateful people and traitors in relationships.

The two tracks that stand out most to me are “Flights, Not Feelings” and “Just Another Girl” since these songs have dreamy vocals that go perfectly with their respective instrumentals. While every track on here is amazing in its own right, ironically enough, I feel like the title track: “Whiplash” is not the best song on this album. Compared to other K-Pop singles this year, including the singles from Aespa’s own *Armageddon* album, I feel like it just is not at the top. “Whiplash” and “Pink Hoodie” however, are songs that fit every aspect of Aespa’s older songs, which helps keep Aespa’s identity clear in this project. “Kill It” and “Flowers” are also fantastic, but not as fantastic as my top two of course.

Overall, I give this album a **4.5/5**. I love the execution and ideas on this album, but what keeps me from giving it a perfect score is how I don’t think I would consistently loop the album. “Kill It” did not feel as exciting as my first day listening to the album, while songs like “Flowers” and “Pink Hoodie” had to grow on me through time.

Word Count: 505

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Aespa - Whiplash - The 5th Mini Album

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