

# UMBERTO BRAVO

\* SACRED SINNER \*

## GUILTY PLEASURE VERSION

Umberto Bravo's new single "Sacred Sinner - Guilty Pleasure Version" is a different, sexier version of 'Sacred Sinner', his previous release. The song is alternately smooth and blustery r&b/gospel lament of devotion with a soupçon of pederasty devotion. Whispery and intimate during the verses, commanding and declamatory during the chorus. The song celebrates forbidden desires, with elements that nudge the lyric toward off-limits territory. Without those elements would be a far more conventional and much less compelling song. They serve as crucial metaphors that brought Umberto Bravo as close as he could to writing from the heart a song about sex, without alienating his audience and the industry. Sacred Sinner's supremely sensual release sprung from Umberto Bravo's erotic and chaste relationships alike. The third single to be pulled from his forthcoming debut album, a weary, sad ballad, the kind of song that bears the scars of experience which establishes Umberto Bravo both as a nuanced grown-up and as a skilled singer-songwriter, able to intertwine racy innuendo and romantic steadfastness.

As a vocal performance, "Sacred Sinner" is a textbook example of how soul can often be a matter of control. Umberto Bravo builds his performance, keeping himself in check throughout most of the song and letting loose at crucial points, moments that accentuate the meaning of his lyric. Part of its serenity centers on the omnipresent synths that sounds like moogs and organs from the '80s, a keyboard designed to evoke the church and rooted in r&b changes. The keyboards hang suspended in midair, following the chords so subtly it doesn't appear to actual shift tonalities — an illusion that makes the recording feel modern, as it's not terribly far from how British contemporaries embrace '80s synthesizers as a form of aural color. Perhaps its foundation is reconstituted soul-gospel, but it's not old-fashioned, not attempting to be a re-creation of a style Umberto Bravo never experienced firsthand. He's interpolating sounds he's loved at a distance, bending them to suit his perspective, and that's why the song is extraordinary. "Sacred Sinner" finds Umberto Bravo embracing vulnerability but, by the end of the chorus, he decides to address that experience as something exciting and refreshing, singing 'nothing ever felt so right', a moment where the singer decides that maybe it is worth risking it all, while being used and abused by his sexual partner, even though he is still looking for love. The song is accompanied by an uncensored video, where nothing is left to the imagination.