

STORIES

# Dreamers Fly High on New Album

By [George A. Paul](#) on June 13, 2019



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Nick Wold is fascinated by what happens when we doze off. That’s why his band is called Dreamers and has a section at [dreamersuniverse](#) where fans can post their innermost thoughts. Three songs on the LA-based trio’s engaging new album *Launch Fly Land*—including current alt-rock hit single “[Die Happy](#)”—mention some type of floating in the lyrics.

“It’s probably not a coincidence, though it’s something I haven’t thought about,” explained Wold in a phone interview from New York City. “Before we came up with the name Dreamers, I had a lot of songs about sleep and dreams and I was obsessed with that idea. Just about every night we have this crazy psychedelic trip, but waking life is just as strange when you think about it. What does it all mean, you know? I think there’s a lot of floating, drifting and wondering, for sure.”

Wold often reads about scientific sleep studies: “I’ve nerded out quite a bit on that stuff. I used to practice lucid dreaming to see if I could improve it.”

He has even considered penning a sci-fi book about lucid dreams: “If I had time... and a box of [Adderall](#), I would write it.”

The front man enjoys flicks with plots that revolve around the topic, too. One is 2010’s Oscar-winning drama *Inception* with Leonardo DiCaprio.

“When that came out, I was like, ‘Oh my god, this is right up my alley!’ I’d also like to give a shout out to a really bad, but great, B-movie from the '80s, *Dreamscape*, starring Dennis Quaid.”

Dreamers get some wild responses from the website, which is designed like a low-budget surrealist art piece (think: David Lynch, Salvador Dali). In a similar vein, Dreamers did a short old school-styled [infomercial](#) for the new album reminiscent of what you might’ve seen back in the day on MTV’s *120 Minutes*.

“We grew up in the '90s, and I was obsessed with grunge music, so we have that DNA in our music. Also, when we first started the band, we wanted our website to seem like some weird lost corner of the internet from 1997 that you stumble upon. We have a hotline now. People call in and leave voice messages like ‘submit your dream to the dream center.’ Some people give crazy descriptions of dreams they had, their aspirations or their goals. We leave it open and like to play with that whole idea.”

Wold, a Washington state native, played saxophone in high school and studied jazz at NYU. Gravitating toward punk and alt-rock acts like the Strokes and Secret Machines after graduation, he concentrated on rock songwriting. Upon meeting fellow jazz student and bassist Marc Nelson, they formed Dreamers in 2014. Drummer Jacob Wick joined a year later. The Brooklyn trio eventually relocated to Los Angeles.



Their solid 2016 full-length debut *This Album Does Not Exist* featured co-writes with Smashing Pumpkins' James Iha, Eve 6's Jon Siebels and Keith Jeffrey of Atlas Genius. Dreamers landed a top 10 modern rock single with "Sweet Disaster" appeared at several major music festivals and received regular airplay on SiriusXM's Alt Nation, among other satellite and terrestrial stations. Six songs in total, including "Die Happy" and "Drugs," have cracked the modern rock Top 40 chart so far.

Having been raised in Seattle, where he was into grunge music and used to hang out at a park near the house where Kurt Cobain lived, it was a thrill for Wold when

Dreamers opened select concert dates for the Chester Bennington-fronted Stone Temple Pilots tour in 2015.

“It was absolutely a career highlight and really an early big break for us,” he recalled. “We grew up obsessed with them and other bands from that era and style. Even more than that, they treated us with such righteousness. We were this small opening band, but they displayed our name in really big letters on all the marketing and were just really welcoming to us. It showed us how we need to treat others as we grow. Chester bought us hotel rooms just because he saw us slumming it in our first van. No one does that. Truly amazing.”

Dreamers will be on another **high-profile tour** throughout the summer with 311, Dirty Heads and The Interrupters. It marks Dreamers’ first jaunt across America in amphitheaters.

“It’s going to be wild and awesome,” said Wold. “It’s what we love to do. They are some great bands, so we’re excited. It’s kind of a reggae vibes tour.”

The singer hopes to eventually have the same career longevity as 311. “We always say we’re lifers, and we feel like we, if given the opportunity, will keep going as far and as big as we can. We always say we want to play the first sold out show on the moon. Anything short of that goal is fine, too, but we’re going to get as close to that as we can.”

Last year, Dreamers recorded a memorable cover of “**Zombie**” by the Cranberries, a nod to Wold’s youth.

“I had an older sister who was in high school during that time. We had a good relationship, and she would always play me cool stuff like Nirvana and Weezer. I remember the Cranberries’ cassette tape we’d always listen to. That song always connects me with why I play music in the first place. We really wanted to play that song. We were out touring when their singer Dolores O’Riordan died in January 2018. That was a crazy moment. It’s still politically relevant as ever. A lot of people can

become zombies in the internet age. It changes the meaning a little bit. We love it. The song lives on.”

With 2018’s *Fly* and *Launch* EPs (the latter contained another hit, “[Screws](#)”) laid down between frequent touring, Dreamers originally intended to do another one called *Land* and compile all the tracks for an album.

Since Wold and the guys were still on a creative tear, though, they “had enough songs that we were just like, ‘Let’s make the album all new ones.’”

What resulted was an arc where “the EPs were kind of a breakup album.” The idea of *Launch Fly Land* is about “embarking on journeys that we go through in life. We all went through crazy stuff, like deaths in the family and breakups, but also great triumphs like things working out for our band and following our dreams. The process of going through something and seeing the album here is the last phase—the landing part and coming out of it. It’s a little bit happier again, like coming out of the depths.”

Dreamers worked with more songwriters and producers than ever this time around. Wold said the album was “done piecemeal over a long period of time... Los Angeles has this big collaborative vibe, so we know lots of producers and other artists. We write with people, co-write, make demos, etc. When we have the songs selected, we go and record them again and finish them ourselves. So, it ends up being this big group thing.”

For the insanely catchy “[It’s Something to Be Alive](#),” Dreamers hooked up with their friend and labelmate Daniel Armbruster of [Joywave](#). Both acts have played gigs together in the past.

“Me and Daniel related on this existential weird philosophy idea,” said Wold. “We ended up writing a song about how weird reality is and how it doesn’t seem like it makes sense or that it’s real. It’s all existential wonder.”

Among the album's standouts are the Radiohead-esque guitar squalls amid "Wanna Stay" and the psychedelic, Mellotron-laden closing tune, "Take Me Home."

"['Take Me Home'] is one the whole band wrote together, and it's a personal favorite. I insisted that it be the last song on the record because it finishes the story of *Launch Fly Land*. It's about having gone through something, being in the shit of it and then finally being ready to say, 'OK, I'm ready to move on.'"

Chatter emerges halfway through "Wanna Stay."

"We love hearing speech and found sound in songs, but had never done it before," explained Wold. "I'd always wanted some kind of dream sequence soundscape. That was the perfect song to do it, since it was about what it feels like to be on the road all the time, always being distant from people, or just meeting people and having to keep moving on. We used some recorded voices from the road. A bunch of it is us messing around in the studio. It was our 'Revolution #9' moment."

Other highlights include the joyous, yet thought-provoking "Celebrate" and "Die Happy." The former song and its chant chorus was partially inspired by Benjamin Curtis, a member of Secret Machines, School of Seven Bells and Tripping Daisy who died of lymphoma in 2013 at age 35. Wold had long admired the musician and was a casual acquaintance.

"It was this surprising thing. I was thinking about that as we wrote that song about how life is short [and to] live it while you can," he explained. "Live it big and let's have some fun. That's one of the reasons why we wanted to play music and why we decided to do this with our lives. You just get one."

Elsewhere, the dense-sounding "Insomniac" finds Wold singing, "Stoned at home/I can't sleep/I can't wait till morning."

Do any of the guys use cannabis to help get into a more creative mindset while writing or recording songs?



“I think of ‘Insomniac’ as Jacob’s song, since it came from an idea he had, though we all wrote it together and really related to the idea. It’s about being stoned and alone and missing someone, which we both had experienced. I don’t smoke really that often because it makes it hard for me to write in the studio... unlike some people I know.”

Still, it helps him in other ways.

“To me, cannabis is really helpful for listening back to something I’ve already finished and seeing if it’s any good,” Wold continued. “It gives me this new perspective and lets me experience it as if I’d never heard it. The ‘high test’ can be really revealing as to whether something is genuine or not. I’m a **sativa** man. Indica makes me sleep, while sativa makes me think and wonder, which are my favorite things to do.”

*Photo credit: Kelia Anne.*