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MUSIC

Rock Music as Philosophy: A talk with Dreamers

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The role of the artist in society is to be a dreamer.

Or at least the LA-based rock trio of Nick, Nelson, and Jacob think so. The band came together a few years ago in New York when lead singer Nick, and bassist Nelson got together. With the addition of Jacob on drums in LA, the band released an independent EP. Shortly after the tunes made their way into rotation on SiriusXM's Alt Nation, the band inked a deal with Hollywood Records and hasn't looked back since. Having been on the road for two years promoting their well-received debut album, they're finally back with new stories to tell, and records to accompany. On Friday, the band released the first installment of their impending twelve track album in the form of the Launch EP. Moving a bit darker than previous releases, the band says it's just a taste of what's to come later this year.



Interview and Photography by Andy Gorel

Andy: So you guys were a New York band right?

Nick: Yeah, we started the band in New York where Nelson and I had lived for many many years. I had an old band that broke up and wasn't working out. I was writing a ton. I realized that if I lived in my practice space I could only work one day a week cause I didn't have rent. So I lived in a fucking box with no windows. Then I met Nelson and he was digging the songs that I was writing, and it just started from there. We eventually signed a record deal here in LA, so we live here now. We moved here and met Jacob.

Andy: Has your deal been with Hollywood Records the whole time?

Nick: It has!

Andy: When you first started Dreamers, what was inspiring you at the time? Whether it was music or art, etc.

Nick: We'd all been in many bands for years, and toured before, and travelled many different ways. We all related that we wanted to do it better, and really do it this time. We came up with the name Dreamers. We were inspired by..

Jacob: Deep conversations. When we're on the road and sitting in a van for ten hours driving, we go down these rabbit holes of philosophical thoughts. It's always kinda been the vibe.

Nick: We think the role of an artist in society is to be the dreamers, thinkers, imaginers, people who think ahead, and do that with their lives – come up with meaningful ideas.

Andy: Do you feel that sonically too?

Jacob: Yeah, we feel music is a very powerful tool to help people. It helped us personally, growing up, in a lot of ways.

Nick: Particularly, Rock for me can be philosophy. John Lennon – “They may say I’m a dreamer.”

Nelson: When I met Nick that was one of the things that was the genesis of this band. We just had really similar stylistic ideas. Like sonically. Similar influences like all this 90s rock through early 2000s stuff, and back to The Beatles. We had this whole thing where we kinda spoke the same language, and had this idea of making something new and different from all of these things. That was the jumping off point too.. “How do we take all of these things that we’re inspired by, take this whole music history, shake them around, and distill them into something that’s not really been done before?”

It goes with the philosophy thing too. Feeling like we had to do something new and different to reflect the time. That’s sort of the goal of that. To come up with something that reflects this time and space.



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Andy: 90s oos is definitely my thing too. Any mutual favorites between y'all?

Nick: Yeah, 90s Grunge is definitely a big thing for this band. Nirvana. Stone Temple Pilots. Marcy Playground. Cranberries.

Andy: I just saw Marcy Playground at the Fonda with Local H and Everclear. Local H is still super tight. If you get the chance, go see them.

Nelson: I saw Local H when I was like 15 years old. It was my first really big festival. I only knew "Bound For The Floor" at the time, but I was blown away. They were like the original two piece rock band. They're amazing.

Nick: Yeah, I grew up in Seattle so I was obsessed with grunge.

Andy: So you got together, signed to Hollywood, and made the first album. Was there anything before that?

Nick: Well we had released a self-titled EP on our own, which eventually got some play on Alt Nation. It did really well which was our jumping off point to start touring. We got picked to open for Stone Temple Pilots for a month, which was awesome, and that kinda led to the record deal. It's all been a slow building process since. We've been hitting the road like crazy for the past three years.

Andy: Did the first album accomplish what you thought it was going to? Or more? Or less?

Nick: I don't know. I feel like we didn't really expect anything. We just wanted to go as far as we could take it, and then see where it is. Then build from there. It was surprising though when we put out our song "Sweet Disaster." It did really well on the radio, and that was the first time we could tour around the US, and anyone in the US would know that song. So that's been awesome.

Jacob: It's definitely been surprising, the longevity of the album, the lifespan. That's not really a thing these days, but it actually was a slower burn for us. I think it was actually essential for writing the second record. We had two years to really get to know each other and discuss what we really wanted to do as a band.



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Andy: Were there any other radio singles on that album?

Nick: Yeah, there were four songs on the chart from that album. “Wolves,” “Drugs,” “Sweet Disaster,” and “Painkiller.” And now, just last night, you were at our EP release party, where we released the first songs from album two.

Andy: Moving into the new EP. How have things changed? You know, after you have one successful record usually there are a bunch of people that come into the picture. Are you working with different people? Has the creative process changed? It sounds linear with the first album.

Nick: Yeah, it is. I think we wanted to same like the same band. The vibe is a little different. We feel it reflects our last two years of living on the road and having this crazy experience. It’s kind of a breakup album. It ended up being one unintentionally. It moves a little darker than the first record I think. The first record was summery and fun, and this one is a little more autumnal and heavy. Just reflecting all those crazy experiences. Kind of the same as the first record. We all collaborate with each other, and ever since we moved to LA there are a whole bunch of other people. Out here it’s a very collaborative vibe. There’s a song on the EP we did with The Griswolds. We wrote one with Joywave. We did one with Dylan from Rad Horror, “Screws,” which is our current single.

Andy: I saw “Screws” just poked through on the Alternative charts the other day. I think it’s a good song. I’m rooting for y’all.

Jacob: Thank you we appreciate it.

Nelson: Rad Horror is actually coming on tour with us in the fall, which we’re stoked about. We’ve known Dylan for a long time. Love him, love what Rad Horror is doing too.



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Andy: The album then. Is it like the EP that just came out? Do you wanna talk about it?

Nick: Yeah, so it’s this album that we’re releasing as EPs. It’s like three episodes that are the album in the end.

Andy: Oh, you’re gonna do four, four, and four?

Nick: Exactly, yeah. So that way we feel like it has a story arc, kinda like a narrative. So we wanna tell it one piece at a time that way. We thought it was more fun to have bite size packages of music.

Jacob: Yeah, two years is a lot of time to say it all in one release.

Nick: And then eventually it will all be combined as an album, and there will be vinyls, and CDs, etc.

