



HUNNY – HUNNY’S NEW PLANET HEAVEN

Out on Epitaph Records October 6th, 2023

HUNNY was born out of the tight-knit North LA indie-rock scene of the mid-2010s, sharing stages and even band members with acts like The Neighbourhood and Bad Suns from an early age. On the back of a shimmering blend of new-wave sheen, shoegaze gloom and angular guitar rock – all underwritten with cheeky, California cool sensibilities – the childhood friends racked up millions of streams of their self-released 2015 EP, *Pain/ Ache/ Loving*, thanks to undeniable songs like the hit “Cry For Me.”

By the time the band had secured a record deal with legendary Epitaph Records and released their 2019 debut full-length, *Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes.*, outlets like *Alternative Press* were hailing HUNNY – vocalist/guitarist Jason Yarger, guitarist Jake Goldstein, bassist Kevin Grimmett and drummer Joey Anderson – for their spin on “perfunctory electronic and new-wave pop, teeming with love, heartbreak, neuroses and impeccably sweet dancing shoes.”

“There was a production sheen to the album that was very cool,” Goldstein says proudly of *Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes.*, which was produced by GRAMMY-winner Carlos de la Garza (Paramore, Best Coast) and launched HUNNY onto global tours with the likes of

State Champs, Citizen and The Story So Far. “We got to record drums at Sunset Sound and all this epic rock stuff. That was sick, but I think we missed what made the early days special and wanted to take it back to the core of the band.”

The wide-eyed excitement and energy of those early years are all over **HUNNY’S NEW PLANET HEAVEN**, the group’s second LP for Epitaph that finds them tightening their social circle and distilling their art down to its purest form yet. While the pandemic kept the band apart physically, they were closer than ever on an artistic level, writing and demoing nearly 100 ideas for LP2 that eventually made their way to longtime friend and collaborator Derek Ted.

“We wanted to really workshop lyrics and melodies in a campfire-style setting and see how the songs would come out of that,” Goldstein explains. “Despite having been apart and writing on our own, we were finding a lot of common threads in what we were bringing to the table. We can’t escape that we’re in a band together and have similar tastes. We took a step back and looked at all the songs from a distance, then took the ones that felt like they really belonged together.”

Decamping to Ted’s LA studio (dubbed New Planet Heaven, begetting the album’s title), the band began to woodshed the record’s eventual dozen songs, focusing less on perfection and more on recapturing the unbreakable bond that colored early bedroom demos. (Listen closely, and you can even hear Yarger’s dog’s collar provide auxiliary percussion on the album-closing “palm reader,” a happy accident that’s ultimately emblematic of the leniency the band extended themselves throughout the process.)

The sense of comfort and nostalgia is there from the first single “action --> reaction,” in its transistor radio intro and undeniable vibrancy, its reclamation of youth and reverence for HUNNY’s hungrier, scrappier days. As Goldstein says: “There’s a sense of distance but also warmth to all our favorite songs, and that’s an element we wanted to bring to the album: a longing for a missed opportunity or chance or youth or what the past might have given you.”

Chasing 2022’s stopgap *Homesick* EP and mixed by former HUNNY guitarist Jacob Munk (5 Seconds Of Summer, Caroline Polachek, Miley Cyrus), **HUNNY’S NEW PLANET HEAVEN** finds the band playing in a brand-new musical sandbox, balancing the haze of hindsight with a sun-soaked SoCal summer. From the meditative “my own age” and breakbeat-backed, late ’90s-leaning “all my luck” to the lo-fi punk standout “ring in your ear” (featuring Motion City Soundtrack’s Justin Pierre) and made-for-dashboard-drumming “89cc” (complete with a searing sax solo) the album is a testament to the band’s musical fluency and dedication to their craft.

“We love genre play and pastiche,” the guitarist explains, “the idea of a record that sounds like changing the channels on a TV – distinct but still able to be enjoyed as a whole.”

Now, on the verge of entering their second decade together, it’s clear HUNNY’s greatest asset is their disinterest in doing anything besides what moves them. It’s afforded them great range as a band, the ability to naturally shapeshift on their own albums as well as win over audiences across the entire rock spectrum. Most importantly, it’s propelled them to be unapologetically themselves and trust what’s gotten them this far.

“We’re really trying to be less precious about what makes it out into the world,” Goldstein says. “We want to get out of our own way and release as many things as possible. Brett [Gurewitz, Epitaph founder] always says it’s the best way for us to be operating: ‘Keep putting stuff out, because you never know what’s going to work. If you’re inspired to create, create.’ Ultimately, that’s all we’ve ever wanted to do – oh, and be the biggest band in the world.” **XX**

