

Don't Sleep on This!: Alt-Funk Group grizzlies. release their EP hibernation.



grizzlies. consists of vocalist Cynthia Munrayos, guitarist Josh Zenil, bassist Mike Villani, keyboardist Emily Iwuc, and drummer Harrison Dolan. Together they developed an eclectic mix of soul-pop, bossa nova, funk, big-band and even a little ska that is nothing like anything I've heard before. I love the way they're bringing back these older styles and making them new and relevant.

Their first EP, *hibernation.*, is available now, and I am obsessed with the harmonies in "No Blue," the guitar solo in "Ain't Even a Thing" and the storytelling in "Bead Song." With an intensity and grit rivaling that of alternative favorites like *Florence and the Machine* or Amy Winehouse, grizzlies. is a band you don't want to sleep on (pun fully intended).

"The first chapter of our journey has culminated in these five songs. *hibernation.* has taken over two years to release, and we are immensely proud of it," said the grizzlies.

I recently talked to the band about their new album, their artistic process and influences on their sound.

Angelina Singer (Motif): How did you guys meet and decide to start a band?

Josh Zenil: grizzlies. started as a way for Cynthia, Mike, former drummer Kennedy Phillips and me to participate in an open mic. After that night, we received positive feedback from our peers and set our sights on becoming a full-fledged performance band. Due to school commitments, Kennedy had to step down from her position as our drummer. Coincidentally, I met our current drummer, Harrison, at an open mic event. The both of them decided to jam one day and during that session, the foundation for the first grizzlies. song was conceived; that being "Ain't Even a Thing." After about a year of playing in the Providence music scene, we decided to keep an eye out for a possible addition to the band. Harrison invited his classmate Emily to join our practice session one day, and she fit perfectly for keyboards.

AS: What sorts of challenges have you come up against since starting the band?

Cynthia Munrayos: Like most bands, it was definitely hard for us to find time to practice since we were all in college focusing on our own studies. We would practice in our club's office located in the student union. We all understood we had our own goals and ambitions outside of the band, but always found time to practice and improve ourselves for the band. Music was what we loved to do outside of school, and we wanted to evolve it into more than just a hobby. It has gotten more difficult to find time to practice since two of us have graduated and other members are still in school, but we make it work and do not have plans to stop *grizzlies*. any time soon. Musically, we haven't really had any issues. We all connect very well as friends, and it makes music fun for us. We all want the same sound and work well off of each other. With that we have learned to define our sound a bit better every time.

AS: What is your proudest moment as a band so far?

Mike Villani: Our proudest moments are playing at Columbus Theatre in Providence and releasing *hibernation*. We put a lot of hard work into it, and even though there were some imperfections to it, it took time and patience and we were happy with it. We were proud to have something we all collectively agreed on musically.

AS: Which song off *hibernation*. best defines you as a band?

Harrison Dolan: We feel that "Bead Song" and "Ain't Even A Thing" reflect our style; however, our debut EP *hibernation*. isn't the best representation of our sound. We love all of the songs, but we've come a very long way since that project, and if you see grizzlies. live, even those songs will sound different.

AS: How did you develop your sound?

HD: Our sound is an innovative mix of our influences and a desire to create something new. Whenever we write a new song, our priority is to make music that sounds as un-generic as possible. We always strive to tread new ground, and we have a wide array of influences to help us achieve this (Santana, Tool, Prince, Kali Uchis, etc.). Getting influence from very different styles allows us to blend them into our own unique sound.

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youtube.com/channel/UCATT7zDwTsueg97gu3RTnVA/featured; bandcamp:

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