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Alt-rock Band Gets Real About Grief in "Half to Life"

Project Release: "Half to Life" single and music video by Wine & Warpaint

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Label: Independent

Website/More Info: wineandwarpaintband.com

After a period that included family loss, faith deconstruction, and a global pandemic, Richmond alt-rock band Wine & Warpaint are back with a brand new single and music video to announce their next EP, "Half to Life."

Not so long ago, Brandon O'Neill was in a very different place. The former worship leader's faith deconstruction was chronicled in Wine & Warpaint's debut, "HOMELESS EP," tracked in Atlanta, Georgia with Matt Goldman (Underoath, The Devil Wears Prada, Anberlin) and released in November 2018.

"On the first EP I was pretty brazen," O'Neill said. "I was angry and passionate. But recently I was reflecting on the past few years and I realized I'm not where I hoped I'd be."

This gave birth to the first line that became the titular single on Wine & Warpaint's newest EP, "Half to Life": **It felt like I had died and only come back half to life.** "I think anyone can relate to that feeling of life flying by," O'Neill said. "We aren't progressing as quickly as we should be. We aren't grieving fast enough. We aren't evolving fast enough."

In addition to his recent faith shift, O'Neill went through a significant amount of family loss, which was musically encapsulated in the band's November 2019 single, "We Don't Want It." In a two-month span following their summer east coast tour, O'Neill lost three immediate family members to health ailments, and another received a cancer diagnosis and entered treatment.

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Then the universally-felt effects of the COVID-19 pandemic set in. Over the course of 2020, O'Neill adapted Wine & Warpaint by self-producing 10 cover songs, with accompanying videos on Instagram and YouTube. This culminated with the release of the compilation album "Lonely Covers" on February 5, 2021. However, "Half to Life EP," recorded in O'Neill's basement studio in September 2020, is the heart and soul of the band, and the truest expression of O'Neill's processing of the past few years; 2020 included.

With the industry in turmoil, O'Neill opted to keep everything in-house, producing and mixing the record himself, playing every instrument (save for bandmate Colleen Christman's vocals and gang vocals from his wife, sister, and brother-in-law), and opting to have bandmate Taylor Bess mix the third track and master the EP at Richmond's own In Your Ear Studios, in friend and frequent collaborator Matthew Walsh's production room.

"It was out of necessity, but it was also a gift," O'Neill said. "Working with Matt Goldman on the first EP was a dream come true, but there was something really special about keeping this one within the Wine & Warpaint family, especially during a time where everyone could use the work."

The single "Half to Life" is now streaming on all major streaming platforms. The music video was directed by Caleb Gritsko. The "Half to Life EP" releases on Friday, April 2. Merch bundles are now onsale at wineandwarpaintband.com, as well as tickets for a live, virtual release concert on April 9.

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BIO

Richmond, VA based alt-rock band Wine & Warpaint seamlessly moves between brash rawness and contemplative restraint. The band's debut "HOMELESS EP" (produced by Matt Goldman: Underoath, The Devil Wears Prada, Anberlin) and its followup "Half to Life EP" channel an alt bite with a nod to mid 2000's pop rock. Brandon O'Neill, the multi-instrumentalist and songwriter behind the moniker, is joined live by Taylor Bess, Colleen Christman, Hunter Glotz and Hannah Haupt to create a diverse and energetic live show. Before COVID, the band played all over Richmond and toured the southeast, and since then has released pop and rock cover videos while producing their sophomore release, "Half to Life EP."