

half • alive

Music lives and breathes. It grows and changes over time. It exists in a state of constant flux between humanity's extremes.

The music of half•alive pushes and pulls in similar fashion. Inextricably connected to the Long Beach trio—Josh Taylor [vocals], Brett Kramer [drums], and J Tyler Johnson [bass]—the sonic DNA spans R&B, funk, pop, rock, soul, and more under a glow of disco ball bliss. This unpredictable and ever-evolving palette becomes projected widescreen in equally vibrant visuals and energetic live performances.

As a result, the experience iterates in a fresh form every time.

“Our goal is to make music flexible enough to change as we change, so we’re not stuck playing songs that were only meant for one season of our lives,” exclaims Josh. “Sigmund Freud theorized that the ‘*Super Ego*’ and ‘*ID*’ sat on opposite ends of the spectrum, with the ‘*Ego*’ landing in the center. Carl Jung proposed a similar theory of shadow self—the things that we don’t wish to acknowledge within us are competing against the things we love about ourselves. Both agree on a beautiful expression of tension that we go through. It’s a pull between light and shadow, spirit and flesh. One brings us into life and another leads into death, leaving us in a state of being half alive.”

“Aesthetically, we will change,” adds Brett. “How we write songs will change. The message will always be there though. It’s how we relate to people.”

They uncovered that message by way of some diligent digging. The genesis of half•alive can be traced back to a 2015 challenge to Josh from a songwriting mentor and friend. In order to hone his chops, Josh accepted said challenge to pen 50 songs during his seven-month break from film school. Along the way, he began cultivating “*a small universe for people to get lost in,*” joined by Brett halfway through.

The musicians eventually retreated to a studio in the Mojave Desert where they crafted the independent 3 EP throughout 2016. Released in 2017, 3 highlighted an enigmatic chemistry. Soon after, J Tyler joined the fold.

The EP sparked a palpable buzz as single “The Fall” surpassed 3.1 million Spotify streams and 1.4 million YouTube views in under a year. Meanwhile, “Aawake At Night” also crossed the 1 million mark on YouTube. Over the course of the next year, they crafted what became the 2018 breakout “still feel.,” which actually started as #11 among the original 50 in the challenge.

Powered by a slick beat, handclaps, warbling bass, wild horns, shimmering keys, and an ecstatic falsetto-inflected chant, “*I still feel a•live*,” it became something of a clarion call for the boys—oddly perfect for either a midsummer festival or a dance sequence from *Pulp Fiction*. Bringing the song to life, Josh drew on his film school background and self-directed an impressively choreographed video by JA Collective evoking vintage pops of color and the kind of throwback seventies spirit you only get from P.T. Anderson flicks.

The video organically attracted shares among fans as views surpassed the 10 million mark within two months. It gained prominence on reddit, and the song also garnered acclaim from NPR’s coveted “All Songs Considered,” and many more.

“Lyrically, it’s focused on a point in my life when I was in transition between work, friends, relationships, and everything else,” Josh admits. “I felt like I lost my roots and I was floating. The story could’ve gone either way. At the same time, I knew that there was something more to bring me back to a place of feeling rooted again. It’s the push and pull once more.”

“still feel.” took off, and the band’s profile burgeoned as they inked a deal with RCA Records to help grow their vision.

Launching 2019 with a bang, the trio sold out their formal debut headline tour.

Setting their sights on the future, half•alive once again openly welcome change and emerge as a thrilling presence because of it.

“Everything is interweaved; the music is connected to our experiences and the stories we tell through them, but in the end, we hope that our character will speak louder than our songs,” concludes J Tyler.

“Hopefully, you end up on the journey with us,” Josh Taylor leaves off. “That these songs make their way to your heart, and there’s a hopeful reaction.”