



For nearly a decade, Oregon-bred indie-pop trio Joseph have performed a certain emotional alchemy with their music, channeling their deepest inner tensions into songs that spark a life-changing shift in perspective. In the making of their third studio album *The Sun*, Natalie Closner and her sisters, twins Meegan Closner and Allison Closner focused their soul-searching songwriting on the quietly damaging forces that keep us from living fully in our truth (e.g., gaslighting, cultural conditioning, unconscious yet painfully limiting self-beliefs). Rooted in a newly emboldened sound that lets their breathtaking three-part harmonies shine more brightly than ever, the result is a body of work that radically expands our sense of possibility, ultimately illuminating a path toward greater peace and self-reliance even in the most chaotic of times.

The follow-up to *Good Luck, Kid*—a 2019 release that reached #4 on Billboard’s Heatseekers Albums chart—*The Sun* builds from its predecessor’s cinematic pop and imbues a thrilling new energy into each elegantly sculpted track. In bringing the album to life, Joseph worked with acclaimed producers like Tucker Martine (My Morning Jacket, First Aid Kit, Laura Veirs), Christian “Leggy” Langdon (Meg Myers, Amos Lee, BANKS), Jessica Dobson (Deep Sea Diver), and Joey Burns (Calexico), alongside songwriting collaborators including, Tayla Parx and Wynne Bennett, known for their work with artists such as Janelle Monae, Twin Shadow, Haim, Khalid, Normani and Ariana Grande. Collectively shaping an irresistibly vibrant sound encompassing everything from the moody grandeur of the album-opening “Waves Crash” to the pure anthemic glory of tracks like “Kicking Up The Light.” With the band taking a decidedly more hands-on role in the production process, *The Sun* continually achieves the exquisite feat of spinning incredibly complex concepts into sing-along-ready pop songs, providing a captivating backdrop for Joseph’s fearlessly personal storytelling.

One of the first songs recorded for *The Sun*, the album’s shimmering title track served as something of a sonic breakthrough for Joseph. “We’d already played that song live so many times and sung it in a particular way that was more dramatic and had a kind of gravitas to it, but Leggy took it in a more buoyant and summery direction,” Natalie explains. Inspired by Meegan’s experience in working through the lessons of a past relationship, “The Sun” now centers on a lush arrangement of galvanizing rhythms, radiant piano tones, and gorgeously euphoric harmonies—all of which lend a profoundly triumphant spirit to the song’s statement of self-celebration (“I thought I was the light switch you turned on/But I was the Sun”). As Natalie acknowledges, that shift toward a more joyful and resplendent presentation perfectly mirrors *The Sun*’s underlying narrative. “The whole album is a sort of thinking through of the story that you tell about yourself, to yourself,” she says. “It’s about looking at whatever is diminishing you or making you believe in these limitations you’ve put on yourself, and then finally asking, ‘What if I’m more than that?’”

“All of our therapists were a huge influence on this album,” Meegan noted. *The Sun* endlessly reveals Joseph’s commitment to the clear-eyed self-reflection that’s guided the band since their earliest days. Raised in a musical household (their father was a jazz singer and drummer, their mother was a theater teacher), the three sisters officially formed Joseph in 2014 and got their start playing house shows,

quickly landing a deal with ATO Records. After making their widely lauded debut with 2015's *I'm Alone, No You're Not*, which featured their hit song, "White Flag," the band went on to attract the attention of artists such as Billie Eilish, and tour with the likes of James Bay, Amos Lee and most recently The Shins, in addition to taking the stage at major festivals like Coachella, Bonnaroo, Austin City Limits, Glastonbury, and more. While *Good Luck, Kid* marked a bold departure from the dreamlike folk of their first full-length, Joseph felt called to push their musical boundaries even further on *The Sun*—an endeavor that repeatedly required them to assume a new level of courage and agency in the creative process. "We grew a lot in learning how to say 'no' and speak up for ourselves," Allison points out. "The idea of saying 'no' in order to allow for a better 'yes' later on—that was a lesson that we had to learn," Natalie adds. "It could be uncomfortable at times, but making sure that we stayed our course was really powerful for us."

Over the course of *The Sun*'s 10 soul-stirring tracks, each member of Joseph adds new texture and detail to the album's emotional arc by sharing her own distinct viewpoint on the journey toward self-realization. On the sweetly emphatic lead single "Nervous System," for instance, Allison opens up about learning to undo the thought patterns that contributed to her longtime struggle with anxiety. "I know it's not everybody's experience, but I've found a lot of power in understanding my own ability to self-soothe, instead of turning to other people or some kind of distraction to try to feel okay," she says. Meanwhile, on the wistful yet wildly effervescent "Fireworks," the band speaks to the self-doubt and frustration that sometimes accompany refusing to compromise your romantic ideals.

For Joseph, the act of fiercely protecting their artistic vision closely aligns with the abundance of insights threaded throughout *The Sun*. "As Closners and as women—or maybe even just as humans—it can be very hard to tell someone that something isn't working for you," says Allison. "But this album was a unique experience, because we learned to step up and stand our ground and speak our truth when we needed to." And with the release of *The Sun*, Joseph hope that listeners might undergo a similar transformation in their sense of strength and self-assurance. "I want people to feel empowered," says Meegan. "I want them to recognize the power with themselves, and to know that they're good—that they're more than they think they are."