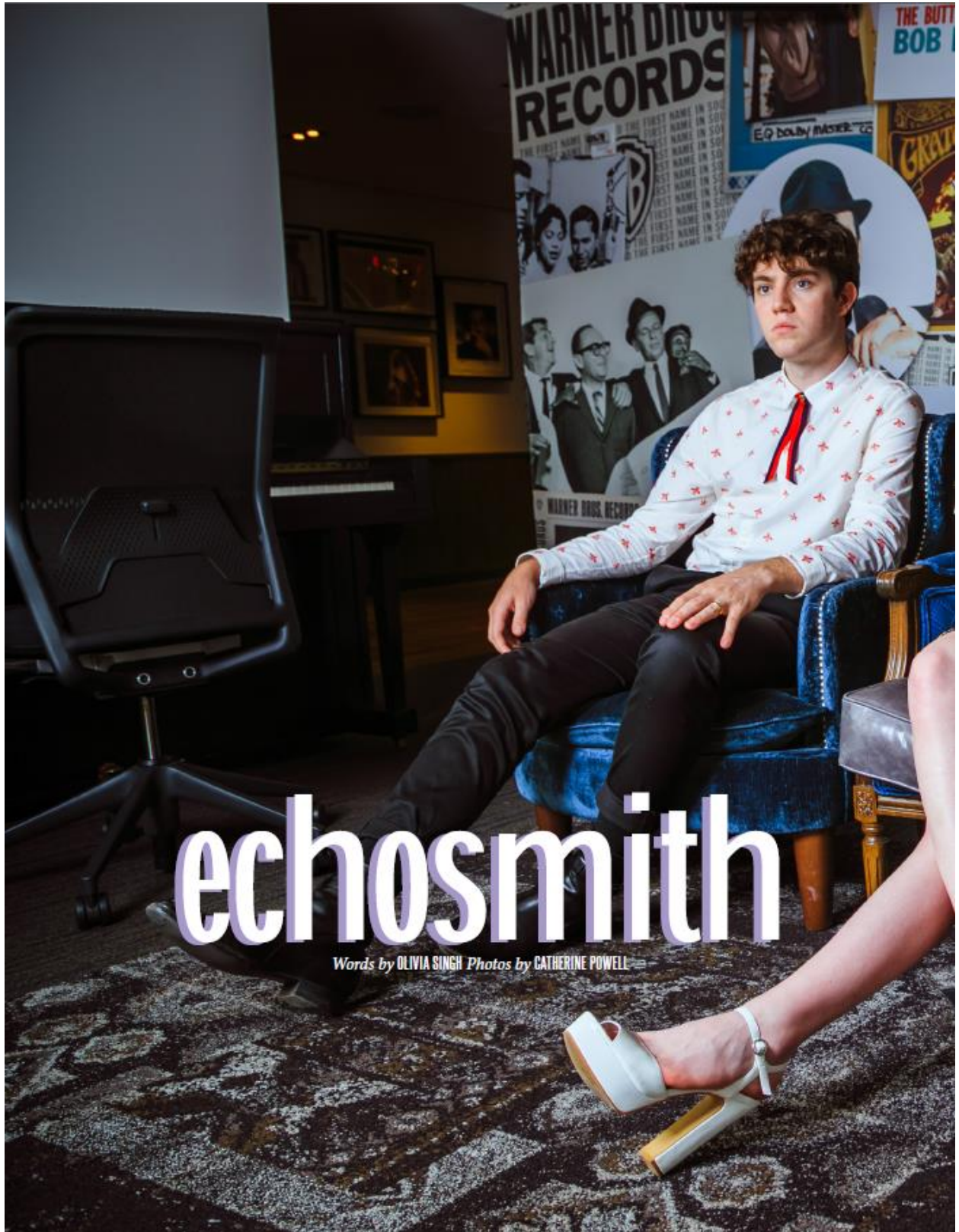


# NKD MAG

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# echosmith

Words by OLIVIA SINGH Photos by CATHERINE POWELL

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ECHOSMITH HAS BEEN A GROUP FOR 11 years now and they have no plans of slowing down any time soon. The members/siblings, Sydney, 20, Noah, 21, and Graham, 18, have been working together for so long that things seem second-nature to them. They're seasoned professionals and with their latest album, *Inside A Dream*, Echosmith continues to spread hope, love and positivity to listeners.

The earliest form of Echosmith began in Los Angeles, at the Sierota's Toluca Lake home. Growing up with a music producer as a father, Sydney, Noah and Graham naturally became interested in music. Noah, the band's bassist, recalls learning to play the instrument at 6-years-old, while Graham, the band's drummer, began playing around the age of 5. The Sierotas joke that Sydney started singing as soon as she came out of the womb, but on a serious note, Sydney estimates that her earliest memories of singing occurred at 2-years-old.

"I think we all wanted to do [music] professionally forever, at it wasn't really until we were a bit older that we actually wanted to do it together as a formed group," Noah recalls. "But even just on our own, we all just loved playing instruments and music and creating and writing songs. It was such a big part of our lives from so early on, so doing it together just made a lot of sense."

Sydney, Noah and Graham's first show together happened 11 years ago when they played a benefit concert in their neighborhood, but they weren't known as Echosmith at the time. The group was initially called The Water Bottles, went through a series of other names and settled on 'Echosmith' after being signed to Warner Bros. in early 2012.

They considered countless names, but when their mom suggested

'Echosmith,' it clicked right away for everyone.

"We had the idea of shaping sounds, so we created this word 'Echosmith' and it's kind of cool because obviously that's what a band does, but it also just had this little ring to it," Sydney says. "It was the first name after going through hundreds of names, the first name that we all felt good about and excited about."

Echosmith gained national attention with their track "Cool Kids," off their 2013 debut album. It went platinum and peaked at #13 on the Billboard Hot 100 – but it almost didn't appear on *Talking Dreams*.

"We weren't totally sure if we knew what we wanted to do with the song when we were writing it," Sydney recalls. "We wrote the song and had a bunch of different versions of it with different lyrics in the verse especially."

Constantly working on the song was frustrating and Echosmith considered excluding it from their album, but seeing crowd reactions at Warped Tour in 2013 made all the difference.

"We noticed while we were on tour, people started to sing along to that song specifically, and we were like, 'What is going on?' because we didn't really have fans yet," Sydney says. "We were just building from the beginning and it was cool because the fans chose the single. It's not like we had a big talk with the label and said, 'OK, what song's going work at radio?' It was literally the people deciding, and I think that's honestly the best opinion that you can get, because all that matters is that our fans and our fan base love the music."

For Echosmith, the success of "Cool Kids" was surprising, but it gave them encouragement to make another album that is just as honest and appealing as their first.

"Naturally, there's a little bit of pressure and nervousness going into a new album in general, but especially when you're lucky enough to have success with the first album," Sydney says. "There is a little bit of 'OK, how do we make something just as powerful or meaningful?' And you kind of just have to mentally tell yourself to stop thinking like that, because 'Cool Kids' didn't come because we were trying to write a cool song. We were trying to write a song that was just our story and our feelings into a song."

With their latest album, *Inside A Dream*, Echosmith had to find a way to follow the buzz surrounding *Talking Dreams* – but they also had to do so with one less band member.

In November 2016, Jamie announced that he would be leaving the group to dedicate more time to his wife and son. The absence of Jamie meant that Sydney, Noah and Graham had to reassess the band and their sound.

"It's still Echosmith at the core, but of course we're going to evolve naturally," Sydney says. "But ever since Jamie, our brother – the guitar player – left, of course that left a hole in the group, so we had to kind of figure out how we wanted to fill that hole and who Echosmith is outside of Jamie."

Without a lead guitarist, Echosmith explored other instruments and sounds in order to create *Inside A Dream*. Whereas the first album was driven by the guitar, the second album incorporates more keyboard melodies. The result is a "dreamy pop" vibe, which inspired the album's title.

"I think sonically, it does kind of resemble that, being within a dream – like a cool, ethereal vision that we wanted to create with our music videos, with the music, with everything," Noah says. "But also just kind of a continuation of our last record, *Talking*

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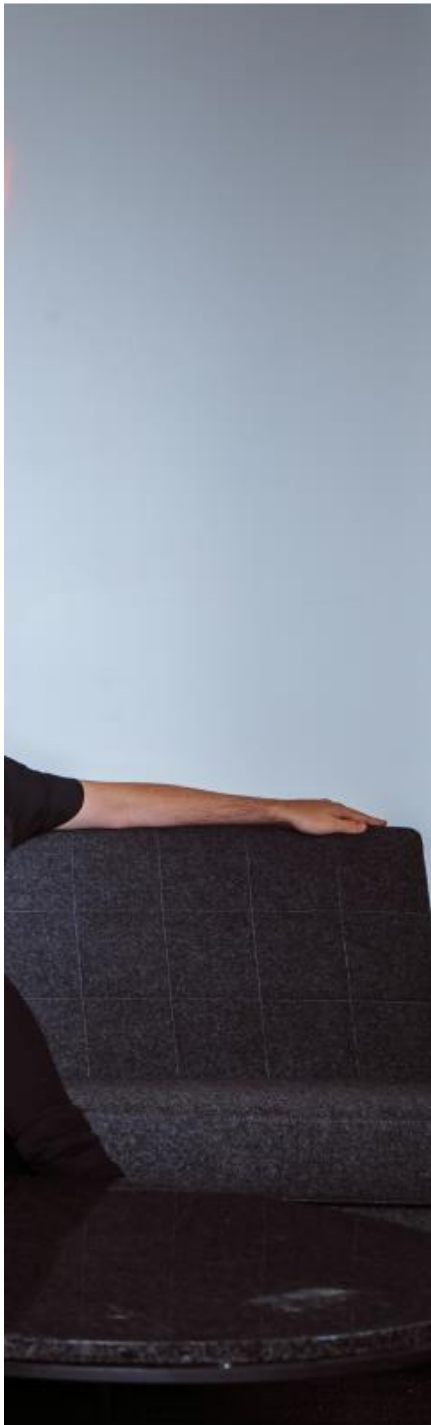
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*Dreams* and it's kind of a momentous point, a pinnacle of just telling the world that we've actually gone to do some really amazing things. Those things we dreamed of, we're actually getting to live in now, and that's really, really exciting for us."

*Inside A Dream* is largely inspired by themes of life, love and self-actualization – and Echosmith doesn't shy away from songs that discuss the less positive, difficult aspects of life.

"I think it's a bit of a coming-of-age album as well, just about learning who you are in the young adult period of life when you're transitioning into all these different phases and you're learning more about who you are and experiencing more things in life," Noah says. "It's fun to write about, because it feels so real and personal."

"With 'Goodbye,' musically, we kind of wanted to create a subtle, fun, almost danceable kind of song and that one was really fun to make, because it was the first song I'd actually ever played guitar in," Noah says of the first song of the new album. "I'm a bass player and keyboard player, so playing guitar is a little bit different for me."

"And lyrically, it's about letting go of someone when it's important to, so they can find themselves, rather than them trying to find themselves relative to who you are. And to have just a healthy relationship, to be able to step back at times when it's necessary," he adds.

"Future Me" is a high energy track and reassuring letter to your future self.

"It serves as a reminder of, 'Hey, it's OK that times are hard right now, but it will get better,' because it's so easy to forget, even if you've gone through the most amazing transformation two years ago. If you're going through something now, it's so easy to forget that it can get better," Sydney explains.

"It's kind of a fun little letter to yourself and I think everyone could use that. And also just deciding who you want to be ahead of time is the privilege that we have. It's cool that we don't have to wait until tomorrow to go try to live our dream or be a good person."

With the release of *Inside A Dream*, Echosmith is looking forward to touring across America again in 2018.

"We love getting to connect with our fans, and Twitter and Instagram and all those are awesome; it's great that you can message somebody all the way in Egypt, but we love the human, face-to-face interaction, and honestly, I feel like a live show is the best way to get that face-to-face experience," Sydney says. "Even if you're not getting to meet every single one, you're getting to make eye contact on stage and that's a really beautiful moment when you make eye contact with somebody, even if they're all the way in the back. I think that's definitely one of our favorite parts of it."

When Echosmith last appeared in *NKD Mag* in 2014, Sydney said, "I hope we can do this forever." Three years later, her hope for the band remains the same.

"I just want to keep doing this," she says. "It's such a great privilege that we get to tour around the world and do awesome things, like go on TV and all these milestone moments. But even just getting to do music full time and nothing else is amazing, and I just want to be able to do that forever."

"We just want to reach people and bring hope to people," Sydney adds. "I think especially right now – and always – everybody always needs more hope and love. But especially right now, we hope that our new music can just bring some love to people who need it and let them know that they're not alone in their experiences." ■