Wolf Parade

*Thin Mind*

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Every moment spent gazing at our screens is oversaturated with content, an ever-accelerated news cycle conditioning our ever-decreasing attention spans. The struggle to stay present, and to foresee a clear, sustainable future, feels very real.

Wolf Parade address this phenomenon head-on with *Thin Mind*, the band’s 5th full-length and second to be produced by John Goodmanson (Bikini Kill, Sleater-Kinney, Unwound).

“*Thin Mind* refers to the way that being around too much tech has made our focus thin,” says keyboardist Spencer Krug.

“It’s opening one more page, scrolling one more thing,” adds guitarist Dan Boeckner, “and the weird, sort-of hollow automaton feeling that you get from it.”

“This record is very personal, but at the same time, we’re all coming from the same place of a general sense of anxiety,” says drummer Arlen Thompson. “How do you deal with the constant barrage of having your opinions swayed by all these different actors when you don’t know who they are or what their purpose is? There is no normal anymore.”

*Thin Mind* marks a return to the original power trio of Dan, Spencer, and Arlen, following multi-instrumentalist Dante DeCaro’s amicable departure from the group in 2018, after the conclusion of their world tour supporting *Cry Cry Cry*.

One month later, the trio got together at Risqué Disque, an old stone barn-turned-studio in the woods of Vancouver Island, to begin writing *Thin Mind*—emerging with an album about making sense of the present while reckoning with visions of the future.

“It’s the first record where we did the whole thing in one place from start to end,” says Arlen. “It was just the three of us until John came in, woodshedding in this moss-covered, rotting building.”

Paradoxically, the band’s decision to forge a future-forward sound using a myriad of synthesizers—from ‘80s synths and ‘90s MiDi to more modern, kitchen sink instruments—recalls the sonics of Wolf Parade’s earliest EPs.

Album highlights include “Julia, Take Your Man Home,” “Forest Green” and “Against the Day”, with lyrics split evenly between Dan and Spencer.

On “Julia, Take Your Man Home,” Spencer imagines the worst version of himself over a deep groove and an exaggerated, fictitious caricature.

“It’s not literally me,” he says. “I’ve never carved shapes that look like dicks into a bar, but it is the toxic male version of myself.”

“Forest Green” gallops along to a synthetic clip of Arlen’s electronic drum kit while Dan’s lyrics encapsulate the profound beauty, and ugliness, of Vancouver Island—not only where *Thin Mind* was recorded, but where Arlen and Spencer now live, and Dan grew up.

“The island has a really weird, pervasive darkness to it,” explains Arlen. “It’s got amazing nature, and there’s an inescapable spiritual vibe to the place. But it’s held with this tension between real estate money and nature now constantly being logged and developed. It’s a process that’s been happening for maybe 150 years—you’re watching this beautiful place just kind of melt.”

“Against the Day,” which features shared verses from Spencer and Dan, similarly constructs a synthetic shell to examine what’s natural and what is not.

“Dan told me it was about two vampires exploring the human world,” says Spencer, who assumed the role of one vampire in his verses.

“I wanted to tell a story about Lovecraftian, geological love passing in a place,” says Dan. “and two souls that were connected to each other. Every era that they go through, they are always on the outside of culture, always outsiders.”

Ultimately, the band was only able to subvert the “thin mind” phenomenon by jumping right back into its creative process after *Cry Cry Cry*’s tour, with each member bringing their anxieties out of the modern world and re-examining them on an elemental level.

“There’s this positive element to *Thin Mind*, too,” explains Dan, “if you’re in that liminal, very modern psychological state in nature. At best, you become an incredibly powerful being for interpreting and processing information at a speed that our parents and grandparents couldn’t possibly comprehend. In the cognitive dissonance where we made this record, there was no escape.”

*John Goodmanson produced* Thin Mind *at Risque Disque on Vancouver Island, BC, and mixed it at Bogroll Studios in Seattle, WA. It was mastered by Noah Mintz at Lacquer Channel Mastering in Toronto, ON.*