

wave to earth

New album *bad pieces* coming this summer

Wave to earth is ready to begin its next chapter.

The trio of Daniel Kim (vocals and guitar), John Cha (bass), and Dong Q (drums) has already toured the world and won international accolades for its music. On wave to earth's third album, *bad pieces*, the band takes stock of its place in the world with honesty, admitting that nobody's perfect and inviting listeners to join them on their journey.

bad pieces also represents a musical shift for wave to earth, whose spin on lo-fi jazz made them a streaming-era sensation. In keeping with the album's introspective, yet hopeful themes, the band switched up its approach to making music, experimenting with



photo courtesy of wave to earth

instruments they'd never used before—a nylon-stringed guitar, a Minimoog bass, and a CP-70 piano. "As we started using these new sounds, we felt like... they bring a certain type of inspiration," says Daniel.

The title of *bad pieces* is inspired by the "Bed Peace" sign that hung behind John Lennon and Yoko Ono during their 1969 Bed-in protests, an event that,

despite happening nearly six decades ago, resonates with the band's three twentysomething members. "We felt like John and Yoko were having a state of peace within their bed," says Daniel, "and I felt like that had a lot of similarities with our music."

wave to earth's new chapter is one about finding common ground with their listeners,

inviting them to sit beside the band without worry: “Come as you are. Let courage find you,” they say. Their new approach to making music has led to a new sound—one that feels like the next step in a natural process of self-discovery for the band individually and collectively. Lead single “heaven and hell” reflects that approach. “We want to resonate with the lyrics of ‘heaven and hell,’” Daniel details. “We’re trying to find and live with the naivete and the purity of a child, even as we’re getting older.”

We talked to the three members of wave to earth as they were in Seoul:

Q: When did you start working on this project?

DANIEL KIM: It hasn’t been long. Once we started, it gained momentum, and we were moving very quickly.

Q: Could you talk a little bit about the process of writing for this album? Do you always work together, or do some of you write stuff individually and then bring it to the group?

DANIEL KIM: Usually, I would be taking the lead on the songwriting process. However, for this project, we got a lot of input from all the members. I feel like this [music] is closer to the essence of wave to earth than ever before.

Q: What inspired that shift? Was it being together for as long as you have, or was there anything that kind of made you come together closer as creative collaborators?

DANIEL KIM: I think it’s a natural progression of this band, and of being in a band. I’ve been in a band since I was young, and I always thought that each member’s individual musicality should be showcased in the band. As time progressed, we naturally came to this state.

Q: Would you also say that playing live has also led to that? You’ve toured extensively.

JOHN CHA: wave to earth was founded about seven years ago. The vision was always that we would make our own music and contribute to the band; we all have this dream to be like The Beatles. We thought it would be quite great to do each of our own songs—while we all have a common sense, at the same time, we are little bit different. The songs that we each provide have their own distinctive characteristics, and that offers quite a bit of variety.

Q: Speaking of The Beatles, John Lennon was an inspiration for this record—*bad pieces* is a riff on “Bed Peace,” which was a phrase on a sign at his and Yoko Ono’s 1969 Bed-in protests. How did your knowledge of that event affect the record, and the messages you wanted to send with it?

DANIEL KIM: When we saw the Bed-in protests, we felt like John and Yoko were having a state of peace within their bed, and I felt like that had a lot of similarities with our music. When people listen to this album, I want them to feel like they are in a state of peace within the space where they’re listening to it.

Q: The song “courage” stuck out as having a John Lennon vibe.

DANIEL KIM: When I received that demo from John [Cha], it was in a much more minimal state. But while we were rearranging it, we felt like the Lennon/McCartney sound would be very fitting, so we began to lean in more toward that sound.

Q: On *bad pieces*, you use a nylon-string guitar, a Minimoog bass, and a CP-70 piano. What drew you to those instruments? How did they reorient the ways you put your songs together?

DANIEL KIM: We studied a lot of records from the past, and we wanted to incorporate the sounds and the instruments used on those records. As we started using these new sounds, we felt like, apart from them feeling analog, they bring a certain type of inspiration.

Q: The first single from *bad pieces* is “heaven and hell,” How did that song come about?

JOHN CHA: I realized that trying to find an answer to life is not the most important thing. Living with love and humbleness is more important. Each person has their own version of heaven and hell. But the world cannot be divided in a binary form. Rather than trying to find a heaven and hell, or an answer, what’s most important is trying to find out how we should live in our current life. In the lyrics, we talk about living with the pure wonder of a child. We want this song to be interpreted freely. It could inspire someone to think one

way, but the interpretation is different for everyone.

Q: “heaven and hell” feels like a fitting introduction to the album’s themes—humility, honesty, being yourself. Are those the reasons why you made it the first statement from this album?

DANIEL KIM: The world is getting heated. There’s a lot of news. Within this noisy world, I wanted to throw a moment of pause, a moment of peace—a question worth sitting with about how one should live in this world.

JOHN CHA: Sonically, it’s about establishing a new sound for wave to earth. We were talking about how, maybe, we can’t do what that we did before, because that sound was already out there. We were trying to find some new sounds. Daniel tried some new instruments, and he also made a new studio. New environment, new instruments, new sound, new inspiration.

Q: The “heaven and hell” music video was shot in Mexico. You’ve toured the world—when you went there, did you feel a special bond with that place?

DANIEL KIM: We went to Mexico for the first time on our last tour, in 2025. It’s not easy

for us to go to Mexico—it’s very far away—but when we arrived there, we felt a special sort of feeling. Hard to describe. When we finished making “heaven and hell,” we felt an energy in the air that reminded us of the scenery of Mexico, the air we felt in Mexico. Shooting the music video in Mexico was the right choice for us, even though we can’t go there ourselves at this moment.

Q: You have a big tour coming this fall—are there any particular places that you’re excited to play?

DONG Q and DANIEL KIM: Radio City.

Q: The tour is a couple of months off, but do you have an idea yet of how your new material will fit into your set?

DONG Q: We’re in the process of trying to fit our existing songs into this new sound that we’re showcasing on *bad pieces*. We’ll try a lot of new things onstage, and a lot of changes in our instrumentation. It’ll be more stripped-down musically than our usual sets while maintaining the vibe of the large venues we’re playing.

Q: Is there anything that you’ve been listening to lately that’s really inspired?

JOHN CHA: Recently we’ve listened to lots of Bon Iver, especially *SABLE*, *fABLE*. We’re all very inspired by the session musicians on that record, who also play with Dijon.

Q: Are there any other tracks on the record that really have a particular resonance for you?

DANIEL KIM: There’s a song called “hyang”—its English translation would be “scent.” Lyrically, it’s about thinking that you knew what love is, but then you find someone who opens your eyes up to true love. It’s a very warm song.

Q: What message do you hope people take from *bad pieces*? What does it say about where wave to earth is right now?

DANIEL KIM: The three of us are inching towards age 30, and it feels like we’re closing our first phase of life. It’s a very important period for us. In this period, we want to resonate with the lyrics of “heaven and hell”—we’re trying to find and live with the naivete and the purity of a child, even as we’re getting older. This is our message to us, and we want our listeners to feel the same.

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