



Wild Moccasins *Look Together* (2018)

Fronted by Zahira Gutierrez (vocals/keyboard) and Cody Swann (guitar/vocals), Wild Moccasins' forthcoming third full-length serves as a new beginning for the group. *Look Together* tackles themes of repairing relationships, shedding insecurities, and fresh starts, with vibrant guitar and synth lines layered under Gutierrez's soaring pop melodies. The impassioned 12-track LP began to form merely a week after the release of 2014's *88 92*, as Gutierrez and Swann's decade-long romantic relationship dissolved.

Healing proved to be a burdensome task, as Wild Moccasins were charted for two years of extensive touring. Gutierrez and Swann would spend countless hours positioned in a shared tour van, painfully staring each other down on stage and ultimately exchanging exaggerated he-said-she-said's through songwriting.

"When you're going through a breakup it's not uncommon for heartache to steer your mind toward resentment," Swann says. "But I never imagined how jarring it would be to hear it sung to me on stage."

Emotionally aggressive tracks like "Doe-Eyed Dancer" examine the complexities of observing an ex from afar, as Gutierrez bitingly sings, "And I bet you thought you wouldn't get caught/It's not entirely her fault/But she will never love you, no." The combative opener, "Boyish Wave," tackles misguided judgment through feisty guitar riffs and antagonistic percussion. *Look Together's* title track details love lost and the respective vows that come with the territory, while the album closes with the deeply pain-stricken, "Waterless Cup," in which Gutierrez laments through flawless vocals, "After all, I'm the one who poured the salt/The one with the change of heart/After all, it's all my fault."

Gutierrez and Swann began their writing partnership roughly a year into their romantic relationship, in 2007. The group has undergone numerous roster changes over the years, but currently exists with the addition of Avery Davis (drums) and original member Nicholas Cody (bass). The dynamic quartet's 2009 debut release, *Microscopic Metronomes*, is purely indie rock-driven, bolstered by dancey guitar riffs and tightly knit vocal harmonies; while full lengths, *Skin Collision Past* (2011) and *88 92* saw the band add more new wave influences with shimmering synth underlays. Their latest effort is highly pop-powered, with Ben H. Allen (Gnarls Barkley, Deerhunter, Animal Collective)

at the production helm. Recorded at Atlanta's Maze studios, Allen encouraged the group to revise their approach to the writing and recording process. The result is a diverse album that blends the signature, guitar-driven elements of Wild Moccasins' early discography with expansive electronic and '80s/'90s pop components.

For most romantically intertwined bands, *Look Together* would have never happened. Dissolving the group would seem to be the logical conclusion of their romantic split, but instead, the former couple chose to reconcile their differences the only way they knew how – working towards a common musical goal. Songwriting has been habitually engrained in the duo, and while being emotionally vulnerable with a former partner was difficult, it helped to construct the bridge between confusion and solidarity, culminating as a resilient and volatile break-up record co-written by exes.

“I think we look back on that time and take some comfort in knowing that we went through that together,” Swann says. “It needed to happen in order for us to have this resolve.”

“Yeah, it needed to happen,” Gutierrez adds. “Now, when I sing the songs, I find myself breathing a sigh of relief.”