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WHY DON'T WE

MOOD met WHY DON'T WE to talk about, maturing as a group, reinventing their sound and performance, and what's to come after their most recent chart-topping successes.



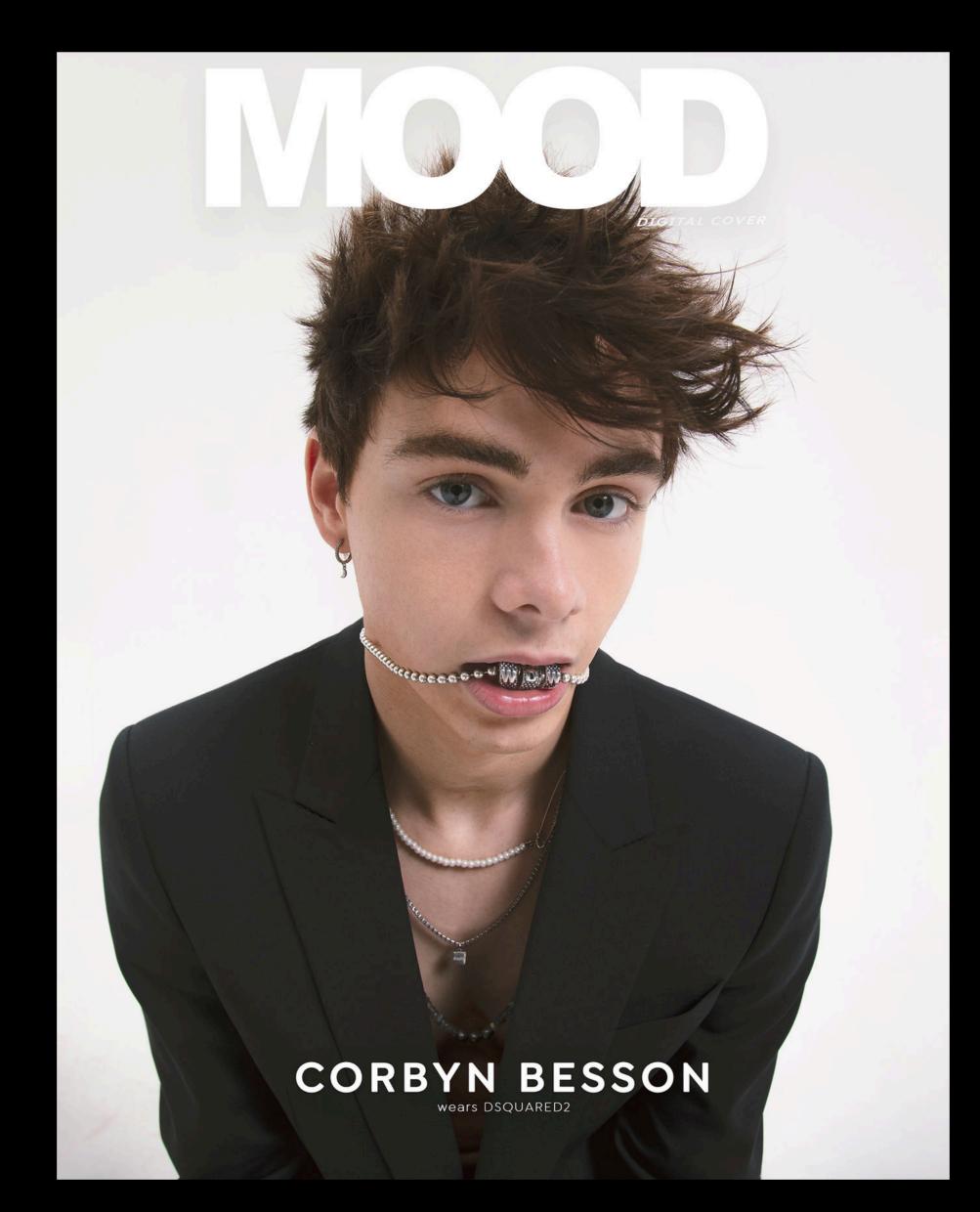
Daniel wears a hooded parka by **Rick Owens**, with a chain crew neck sweater by **Givenchy** and shorts by **Bottega Veneta**, look provided by **FWRD**, necklace by **David Yurman**, and rings by **Opened Jesus**, with **Cos** leather boots, Corbyn wears a double-breasted suit by **Dsquared2** with necklace by **David Yurman**, and, **Opened Jesus** rings, black suede cream lace to toe sneakers, **Eric Payne**, Jonah wears double-breasted over jacket by **Fear Of God exclusively for Ermenegildo Zegna**, with Denim Pants by **Raf Simmons**, provided by **FWRD**, with Dalmata necklace and **Opened Jesus** rings, with **Steve Madden** boots. Zach wears a varsity jacket by **Gucci**, with skinny stack velvet pants by **Amiri**, a look provided by **FWRD**, a necklace by **Dalmata**, and **Opened Jesus** rings, with **Steve Madden** boots. Jack wears a double-breasted suit by **Dsquared2** with a necklace by **Dalmata**, and **Opened Jesus** rings, with **Steve Madden** sneakers.

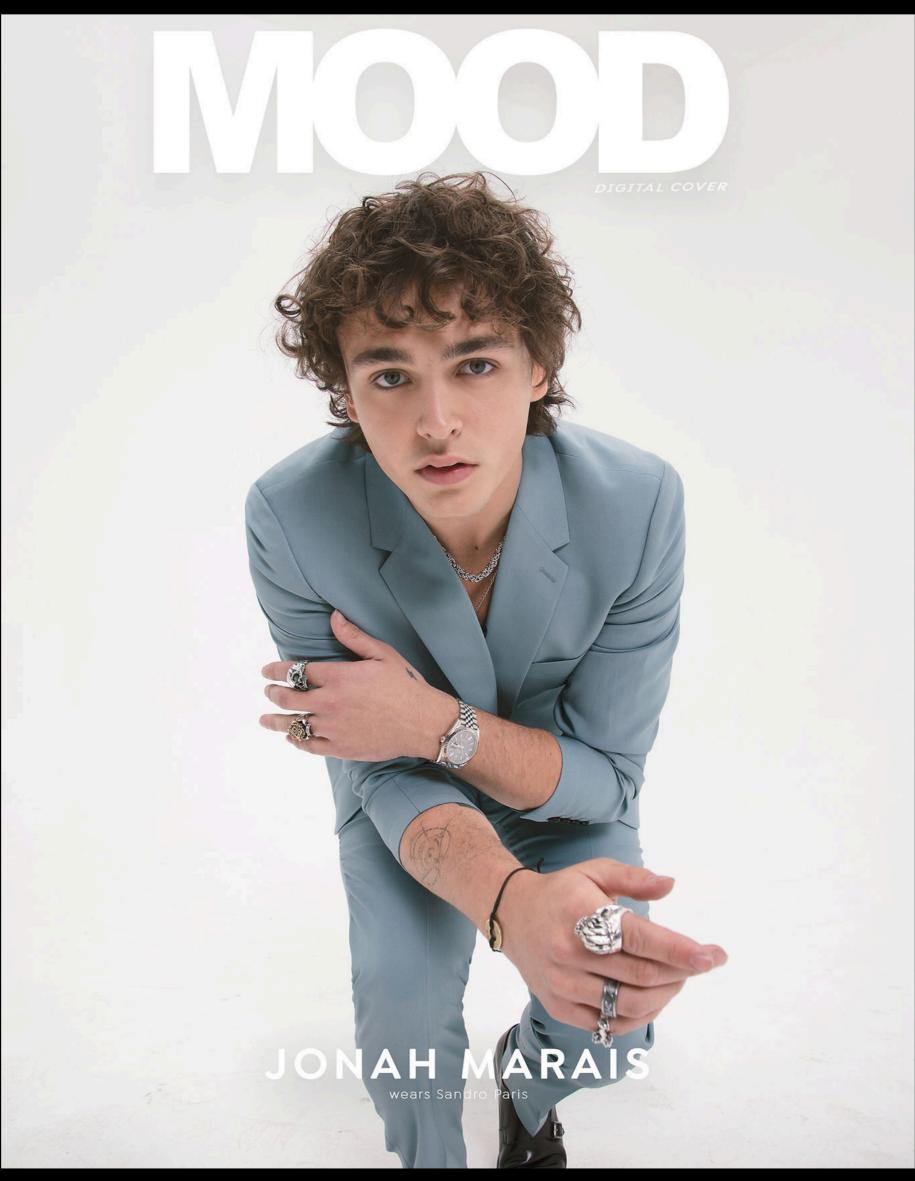
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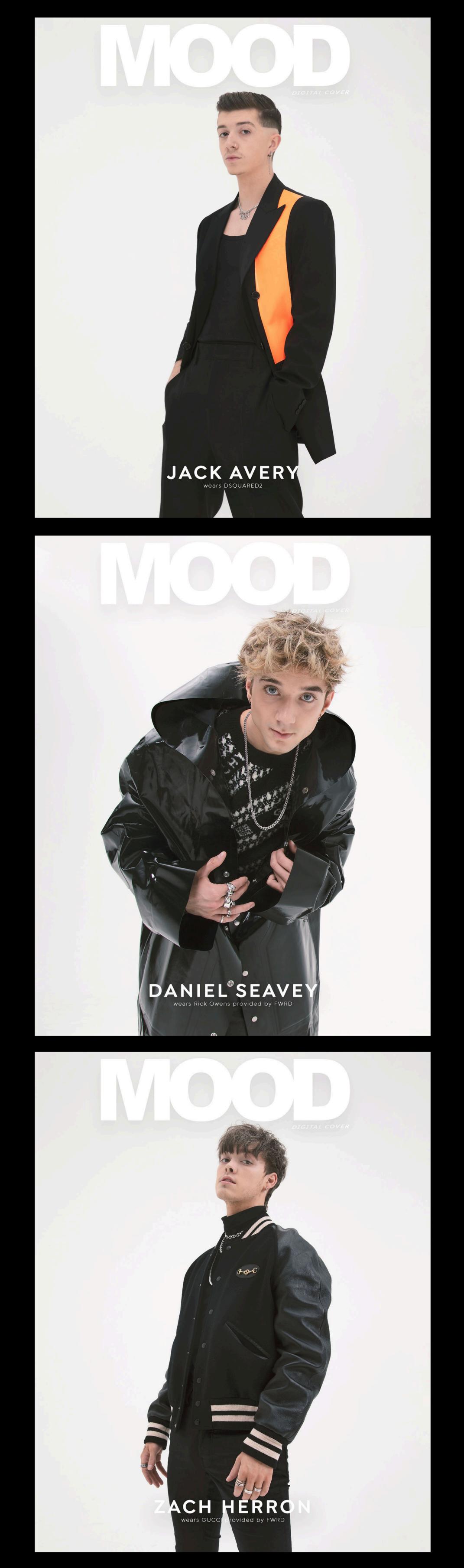
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It's been way too long since we last saw the guys from Why Don't We dancing on stage inside of a jampacked arena. When the pandemic shutdowns hit the United States back in early March of 2020, the band was already deep into a hiatus from social media so that they could put the finishing touches on their second album. The quarantining period forced the members of Why Don't We to halt their recording plans and head home for the foreseeable future. At that point, the prospect of finishing a follow-up album to their debut LP (8 Letters), seemed bleaker and bleaker. As the band drifted into the unknown, they all went their own separate ways in accordance with the new Covid-19 protocol. With so much uncertainty in the air, Jonah Marais returned home to Minnesota for some much-needed quality time with his family. "When I went home to Minnesota before we reconvened, I loved hanging out with my family a ton," said the singer-songwriter. "I definitely wrote a little bit while I was home, but not a ton. It felt like I was catching up on time I had missed with family because of the tour. Daniel and I Facetimed a couple of times and wrote the hook of "Stay" over Facetime in April." These sessions were very pivotal in the maturation process of Why Don't We. Because when dropped their first album, three years ago, none of the guys wrote any of the songs. But this time around they co-wrote their entire album. In fact, their bandmate, Daniel Seavey, co-produced it. Writing sessions between the group's primary songwriters resulted in their first number one album. As soon as September rolled around, accolades for The Good Times and The Bad Ones started falling from the sky like Autumn leaves on a chilly evening in Minnesota. Fallin' (Adrenaline)" was the name of the first song they released from their new LP. This track contains a sample of "Black Skinhead" by Kanye West. As songwriters, this seemed to signify a new direction in the group's overall sound. The mind-blowing idea of seeing their names next to Kanye West in the tracklisting section of their new album was a gratifying sign of validation for the group. "The idea to sample came about in the studio. We notice our favorite artists do it all the time and we wanted to give it a try," said Corbyn Besson. "Thankfully, it worked out amazingly and we wrote some great songs with the help of the samples we used. Shoutout to Kanye and The Smashing Pumpkins for letting us throw our spin on their (songs)!"

After the band released "Fallin' (Adrenaline)," they finally reemerged in the public eye...as a five-piece band! The live stream performance at the 2020 MTV Awards saw all five members playing live instruments on stage. A far cry from the choreography that played such a huge role in their live show for nearly two years. "I think we shocked a lot of people when we re-debuted last (October) under more of a 'band' persona. We all grew up playing instruments but for several reasons weren't able to showcase that on tour," said Corbyn. "When we began our hiatus we knew it was time to reinvent Why Don't We into the band we had always wanted to be. I think our music now and in the future will gain us even more respect than we've gotten since our album dropped." He's right, the guys are low-key musical prodigies. All in all, they play a combined total of 25 instruments. Three years into the game...and we're finally getting a glimpse of what they can do as live musicians. In all actuality, they look like seasoned veterans on stage with their instruments. The fact that they've just started to showcase their musicianship live has shot their artistry into a whole new stratosphere. It has also reaffirmed something else: Daniel Seavey is a badass drummer! The shocking image of him banging out drill fills during the band's live stream performance of "Fallin' (Adrenaline)" was like watching the year 2020 get KO'd in the first round of a celebrity boxing match. Cheers Daniel! We all needed that awesome moment!







"Fallin' (Adrenaline)" by Why Don't We, would go on to be their first single ever to enter the Billboard Hot 100 Chart. And two single releases later, their sophomore album topped the Billboard Charts for the week ending in January 21st. When news of their triumph broke, it sent the guys into a celebratory frenzy all over social media. The party didn't stop there because they were still riding high when they stopped by the MOOD magazine headquarters for their photoshoot with us a few days later. "We were on cloud 9. All-day. Still am honestly... this has been a goal of ours for as long as I can remember us being a band," said Daniel. So far, the year 2021 kind of feels like a swag bag full of surprises from Why Don't We. They have a number one album in the bag and now they're performing live sets as a musical ensemble. But...they still haven't released an LP with any guest vocalists yet. And now, they're two albums in. When we asked the band about this, Jack Avery responded with some really cool ideas. "I would love to collaborate with other artists. People like Post Malone, Billie Eilish, and Justin Bieber," said the multi-instrumentalist. His bandmate, Daniel agreed. And while they're at it, he'd also like for the guys to try their hand at co-writing songs for other artists. "We will definitely produce for other artists in the future. Collaboration is one of the most fun parts of making music," said the 21-year-old.

Jack Avery brought up a very compelling idea during our interview, the prospect of hearing Post Malone howling over a pop-rock song like "Lotus Inn" or Billie Eilish on an electro-pop track like "Look At Me" is a notion that probably would have rocked their fan's socks off. But hey, there's always next time. Having just released a banger back in January, supporters of WDW should remain satisfied with the creative direction of the group, as long as the guys stay present and they don't take another eight-month hiatus any time soon. "We have a lot in store! We're already working on the next album and we're trying to plan on touring as soon as possible. We will definitely do more virtual performances, but right now our main focus is on this next album and touring," said Zach Herron. Only time will tell what's in store for Zach Herron and the rest of the guys from Why Don't We. But the best is yet to come. They're all under the age of 22. And they're in the best shape of their lives. Heck, maybe someday they'll follow in the footsteps of one of their past collaborators, Jake Paul, and try their hand in the celebrity boxing arena.

If the price is right, all five members of Why Don't We just might consider taking on their pal in a 5-on-1 celebrity boxing match. "Getting paid \$5 million each to go five vs one against Logan is a no-brainer. I think his chances of winning that fight are slim but even if he did, I'll take \$5 million any day!!" said Corbyn Besson.

All jokes aside, the members of Why Don't We have proven that reinventing themselves as artists was definitely worth fighting for. If their second album was an indication of their full potential, then their third album should definitely be a knockout.





Photography: <u>Anthony Giovanni</u> Fashion: <u>Edwin J. Ortega</u> Grooming: <u>Florido Basallo</u> Words: <u>Miguel Costa</u> Location: <u>Grey Card Studio</u>

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