

# To The Trees

## EXTENDED BIO

If there was an overriding vision for the talented Kitchener/Waterloo band To The Trees, it would be that they want the music they create to do more than just entertain. The quartet, which formed in 2015, makes music that takes the listener on a journey of the heart, mind and spirit. It is music that is more than mere background distractions or simply being the soundtrack of a good time.

To The Trees' unique and deeply engaging brand of synth-rock transports the listener outside of themselves, surrounding and infusing them with deeply poetic, sometimes darkly lyrical words, enmeshed in atmospheric musical soundscapes highlighted by moving melodies and pulsing rhythms.

Yet at the same time, there is a sense of humble authenticity to the band members themselves. Lead vocalist Katelyn Bearinger, guitarist Mike Johnson, keyboardist/vocalist Trevor Martin and drummer/percussionist Jake Bursey simply want to make music that they love, that makes them feel something and to evoke emotion, memories and contemplation from their listeners.

"Life is something we are all experiencing together. We're no different than the people in the audience or the people listening to our music at home. We are down-to-earth, and I think our music is very relatable because we're saying things that many people are thinking; we are writing about situations that most have gone through and we're wrapping it up within music that is very accessible and, again, relatable to so many people," said Bearinger.

"In a time of decreased human connection, we want to encourage and remind people to look past a lot of the material noise that often short sights us. It's important for all of us to take time to reconnect, and pay attention to what we value most. Perhaps our music can create a space for this," added Martin.

So much of what makes the music of To The Trees special is the very natural and organic way the band came together, developed and began to create memorable, emotionally immersive music. And it's why the songs and overall tone of the band's sound is so evocative – it's a spiritual escape.

"Trevor and I started playing folk music covers back in 2015 with both of us singing, him on keys and I played guitar. We would play porch parties and little community events, and it really built from there. We added a friend of ours on electric guitar and realized we needed some percussion too. From there, our sound began to evolve into a more synth-based idea. We started covering Metric, Dear Rouge and other bands with strong synth elements," Bearinger said, adding that in Bursey, they not only found a talented drummer, but also a prodigious and versatile songwriter who helped create the band's signature sound as they began to develop original songs.

"We sort of fell into this genre and ran with it, and found that it was something that came naturally to all four of us as we started chipping in to creating the sound, bringing our own individual influences to the table," Martin added. Johnson brings a technical virtuosity to the band, using his know how to develop his own unique guitar sounds and pedals that add a distinctly otherworldly element to To The Trees' music.

"Everything that's happened is very organic and it's quite wonderful how all the pieces have really fit together so well. We are always experimenting and trying new things, which I think is a real strength of this band. We have naturally settled into our roles where I tend to write the lyrics and Jake handles much of the instrumental writing. Trevor dabbles in both elements while Mike also brings his unique take on each song. We each play a role in putting together a song, it's not just one person," Bearinger said.

The band will be releasing the single Run From Fire in January, 2018. While a catchy and eminently memorable melody, the message of the song is one that argues sometimes it's better to flee than fight.

"It's based on a toxic relationship and understanding that there are toxic people that sometimes enter our lives. I wanted to let people know that in those moments and in those relationships, it's okay to run away for a bit. If it's a problem that can't be solved right in the moment, sometimes you need that relief and it's okay to run," Bearinger said, adding that she takes this literally often, running along the rural gravel roads and fields near her home when she needs to depressurize from the dramas of life.

Seasons is another strong track on the band's forthcoming EP. It, again takes a realistic look at modern life in a way that is reminiscent of the famous line from Hamlet, 'to thine own self be true.'

"It's about how we often take on the beliefs and opinions that are around us because we don't have the confidence to form our own. Sometimes, the seasons of our life change and we might really feel confident for a while but then there are times when things fall apart and through both of those scenarios, we need to find a steady acceptance of ourselves," Bearinger explained.

The song All I Ever Wanted was released in 2016 but has been re-recorded and remixed for inclusion on the upcoming EP. As with all To The Trees songs, it is atypical examination of a very typical situation. It is a break-up song, but it is also so much more. The songs for the forthcoming EP were recorded at Union Sound Company, under the direction of noted producer Chris Stringer, who has worked with the likes of Broken Social Scene, The Arkells and Tokyo Police Club, as has mixer extraordinaire Leon Taheny.

"The first two verses are talking about how this person wants to retain the relationship. They want to try again but the other person is obviously not interested. The third verse turns it around, almost as if the person is looking at it from the outside and asking can I see the life in what was lost? Can I reflect back on that relationship and learn something from it?" Bearinger said.

"That was my intention for writing it, but someone else said they identified with it as a song about grief, like after a family member passed away. That was how the song resonated with them because there is a similar finality of saying goodbye to a relationship and doing things like 'taking the photos of the wall,' that can be part of the processes of mourning someone's death too. I like that there are other interpretations for the song, and I think that's the case for many of our songs." The organic, natural feel of the music, even though it is synth-based, is the calling card for this band, with even the group's name representing deep rooted connections, be they to nature, to other people or to the music – or all of the above. It is indicative of a band that puts a premium on the power of music to transcend and transmit emotion, thought and spiritual strength in a way that is very real, almost elegantly so. To The Trees is more than a band creating music, it is a group of committed musical artists, with an agenda of spreading a message of connection, of emotional strength and of powerful honesty.