



Fruition

How To Make Mistakes

Three songwriters. Five bandmates. More than 15 years together, building a grassroots audience with a combination of stacked vocal harmonies and collaborative, song-driven Americana. Fruition is proof that there's strength in numbers.

How To Make Mistakes, the band's first studio album in four years, showcases a reinvigorated group at the peak of its powers. This is American roots music at its broadest and boldest — a melting pot of rock, soul, folk, and pop. What began as a bluegrass band has evolved into something more eclectic, rooted not only in the unique delivery of three different singers, but also the cohesion of five friends who prefer their music to be homegrown and honest... mistakes and all.

"This is the first studio album that we've recorded entirely live," says guitarist Jay Cobb Anderson, who shares frontman duties with multi-instrumentalists Mimi Naja and Kellen Asebroek. "We recorded 17 songs in 7 days, with everybody playing together in real time, and we didn't overdub anything. The songs sound honest and real. They sound like us."

Co-produced by the bandmates themselves, *How To Make Mistakes* restores the momentum that Fruition nearly lost in 2020, back when Covid-19 forced them off the road and into quarantine. At the time, they'd been playing some of the biggest shows of their lives, crisscrossing the country in support of their most recent release, *Broken At The Break Of Day*. The album's lead single, "Dawn," had even become a hit on Americana radio. Years of relentless work had taken a toll on Fruition's mental health, though, and cracks were starting to show in the band's foundation. "We were so deep into the tour hustle that a lot of our cohesive vision might've gotten lost," Naja admits. "Like anybody in any work force, we'd all learned to put our heads down and keep moving forward, even if that wasn't the best thing for us."

When the band reunited one year later for a long-overdue jam session, they took stock of everything that had changed during those 12 months apart. Some members had started families. Others had gotten sober. All of them had made the conscious decision to return to music. Fruition funneled that growth and maturity back into their new songs, which doubled as rallying cries for a band eager to chase down success once again. "We all had the time to ask ourselves some big questions like 'Do we want to keep doing this?'" Naja adds. "The fact that we reunited in such a reinforced way after all that time apart... I think it says a lot about who this band truly is."

And who, exactly, is Fruition? On songs like "Lonely Work," they're a folk-rock band powered by pedal steel and lovely, loping tempos. On "Scars," they're a group caught halfway between the earthy textures of Americana and the spacey sweep of something far more ethereal. Fruition's acoustic roots are evident throughout *How To Make Mistakes*, too, from "Can You Tell Me" — a rough 'n' rowdy folk song laced with resonator guitar, mandolin, and upright bass — to the campfire ballad "Never Change." *How To Make Mistakes* embraces the full spread of the band's past and present, mixing unplugged instruments with electrified arrangements, creating a sound suitable for arenas one minute and front-porch picking parties the next. It's the widest net Fruition has ever cast, and it's also the truest representation of the band's wide, all-encompassing sound.

"When I think about this record, the word that comes to mind is 'trust,'" says Asebroek. "We trust each other. We trust the strength of our songs. We've come to really know ourselves as individuals and as partners, and instead of trying to prove something to the outside world, we're trying to show the world that we are who we are, and we love ourselves."

When Fruition formed in Portland in 2008, the band's three songwriters earned their first fans by busking together on Oregon's street corners. Those informal gigs were raw and real, filled with all the honest imperfections of a live performance. Thousands of shows later, *How To Make Mistakes* revisits that flaws-and-all approach, using it as the foundation for the most definitive album of the band's career. Tracked live at eTown Hall's recording studio in Colorado and engineered/mixed by the band's own drummer, Tyler Thompson, it's an album that embraces not only the in-the-moment immediacy of a live band, but also the love, longing, loss, and sheer life lived during the band's 15+ years together.

"If you listen closely," Anderson points out, "you can hear tempos fluctuate. Maybe you'll have somebody finger-picking slightly out of time. But that's part of the whole idea of learning to embrace your true identity. We're a band that would rather lean into a mistake than use studio tricks to erase it. With *How To Make Mistakes*, we wanted to say, 'This is us, with all of our flaws and all of our strengths.'"

All of their strengths, indeed. Collaborative, consistent, and musically cohesive, *How To Make Mistakes* is the sound of a band rededicating itself to the long haul.

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