

GROWING IN BETWEEN

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On the twenty-sixth day of December, two thousand twenty-five, I present my debut studio album, *Median*. Those anticipating this release may be curious toward the nearly full year elapsed between its recording and its publication. The solution lies in the album's title, *Median*. Precritically selected during the songwriting stage, the wisdom of this title has progressively unfolded in a manner explicable via Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's concept of the dialectic.

In his *Encyclopaedia Logic*, Hegel identifies the threefold dialectic as a diagnostic tool for understanding the formation of thought. The first stage is the *abstract*, which can be viewed as the initiation of a thought. This *abstract* is necessarily incomplete. The *negative* follows as the second stage, in which the *abstract* is contradicted. Third, the *concrete*—a negating-overcoming or *Aufheben*—emerges like a phoenix from the ashes left by the clash of the *abstract* and the *negative*.

In his *Theses on Feuerbach*, Karl Marx modifies and instrumentalizes the Hegelian dialectic toward a greater purpose than mere description, saying: "The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world, in various ways. The point, however, is to *change* it." It is through this application of the dialectic to the *proactive formation* of history that we return to this album's title and concept: *Median*. Soon after frenetically writing, recording, and arranging this album at the beginning of this year, a convergence of factors permitted me to spend seven months in abject misery and existential dread. By way of an encounter with Søren Kierkegaard's *The Lily of the Field and the Bird of the Air: Three Godly Discourses* on October 24th, God revealed His hand of healing and direction to me – and, of course, it had been there the entire time. It took the clash between an *abstract* of clarity and a *negative* of confusion to create the *concrete*: this project.

On a busy highway, the median is the space between the two opposing flows of vehicles rushing by, desperate to reach their destination. Often, medians are populated with plant life. Kierkegaard says that the lily of the Gospel of Matthew is not a motif, but a teacher. In its utter silence before God, the humble lily teaches us to be still and to come before God in fear and trembling: to *become silent*.

This lily which freely grows between the torrential currents is also *not hurried*. It is in no rush; it is not anxious for the changing seasons, nor does it wonder when it will finally complete its mission of growth. Even its growth is entirely outside of its control and awareness. In a sense, it *does nothing*. It waits, and it listens. In doing so, it aligns with the will of God.

We have much to learn from the median. In the median, there is silence and calm, despite the hustle and bustle right next door. The median is unbothered. Just as the lily of the median *does nothing*, so must we do nothing – *except through Christ who strengthens us*. The median is also the *concrete* of the historical dialectic, for neither the vehicles charging in one direction nor the other tell the whole story. It is in the median where our joy, contentment, and Truth ultimately lie.