



## The National Talk Grammy Nomination & Hypnotic New Video for 'Sleep Well Beast': Exclusive Premiere



When The National began to work on their seventh studio album, September's *Sleep Well Beast*, they enlisted friends to create a community-based work of art. Among their tight-knit group of artists and designers was Luke Hayman of Pentagram, photographer Graham Macindoe and visual artist Casey Reas. The indie rockers' newest video for "Sleep Well Beast," the title track from their Grammy-nominated album, flawlessly incorporates an artistic element from everyone involved -- and is being shared exclusively on Billboard.

The layers of intense use of color and vibrant photography create a haunting and visually stunning video for the track. "The music has a collaborative energy in it," guitarist Bryce Dessner tells *Billboard*. "It's kind of like a conversation. This song in particular is the most reflective of that, and that translates to the actual video."

Vocalist Matt Berninger explains most of the imagery is all Macindoe's photography, while Reas then used the imagery like layers of painting. "If you pause at any time in the video, you see a number of different levels of information happening," Berninger says. "He's using a number of different algorithms and tools. It's a combo of programming, tech and the strange ways you can make that organic. It's just a bunch of stoner nerds who are into art and rock."

One such "stoner nerd" is Hayman, who helped design the album, which has since been nominated for two Grammys: best alternative album and best recording package. "This is an old group of friends that have all gone on to different things, and now here we are," Berninger says of the nominations. "It feels so good that [our collaborators] are getting recognized."

Adds Hayman of the packaging nomination: "The idea [was] that The National, the band, were somewhat of a movement, so we designed an identity [made] for this organization." It's fitting, then, that the band would also have its own festival. The event, named Homecoming, will see The National work alongside Ohio-based organization MusicNOW (Dessner has been working with the organization for 13 years) and return to its home of Cincinnati this spring to host a weekend of music, art and more.

“As a rock band, we play with other rock bands. But we also do projects with visual artists. We all grew up [in Cincinnati], it is very much deep in our DNA,” Dessner says. “It’s a beautiful city with a lot of culture. It’s changing a lot -- and we [want] to be a part of that.”

Tickets go on sale Friday and can be found [here](#). In the meantime, watch the video for “Sleep Well Beast” below.

