

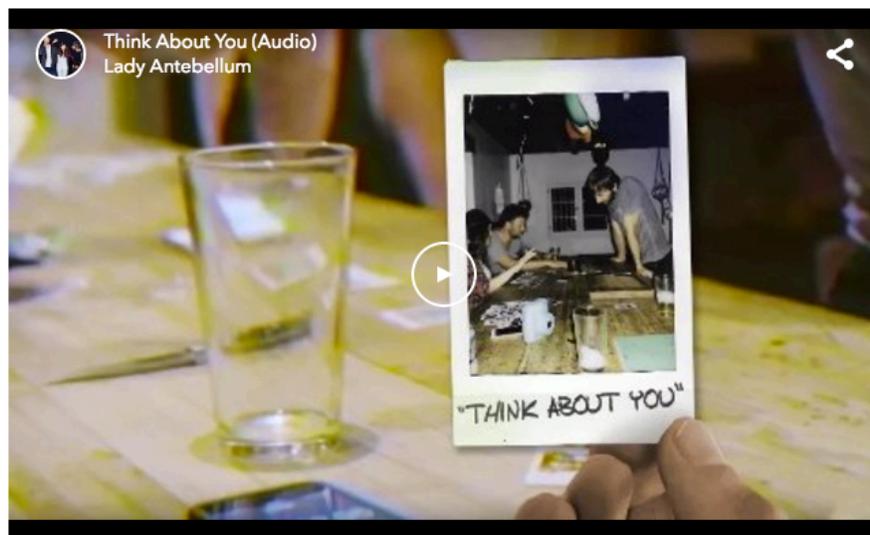
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MUSIC

Lady Antebellum go behind their recent break — and the buoyant album that came out of it

Plus, stream the lyric video for 'Think About You'

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In the beginning of 2015, country trio Lady Antebellum took the first hiatus of their near-decade long career. During that break, which lasted through the end of last year, singers Charles Kelley, 35, and Hillary Scott, 31, each launched solo projects, and, along with multi-instrumentalist Dave Haywood, 34, they each took time to focus on their growing families. “You just see all these stories about other bands that don’t make their friendship a priority,” Scott tells EW, “and then it explodes and it all falls apart. We made a conscious decision to do everything in our power to prevent that. Giving ourselves this creative reset is going to propel us way further moving on.”

Now, they’re readying for the release of their sixth studio album, *Heart Break*, due Friday. And today, EW is thrilled to share a new video for standout track “Think About You.” The group recorded the album in both Florida and Southern California, where they teamed up with producer and frequent cohort busbee (Maren Morris, Keith Urban) to craft the 13-song set. Eleven of the tunes bear the group’s writing credits, and Scott says she hopes fans will find the record both familiar and fresh. “I hope they feel that it is, at the core, the Lady A that they’ve always known, but I hope that their ears are perked up and excited by the new sounds and the different production and the new lyrics.”

Below, EW chatted with Scott about hitting pause, what new song makes her cry, and why she can’t wait to get back on the road.

ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY: The group took the first hiatus of its career last year. You released a gospel record, *Love Remains*, with your family; Charles released his debut solo LP, *The Driver*. When did you guys start

discussing getting back to work together?

HILLARY SCOTT: When we initially decided to take a little creative reset time, the plan all along was to reconvene at the end of last year and start the process. We Airbnb'd in Florida and Southern California and we ate meals together and listened to our favorite past and current music and old Lady A songs and laughed at how awful they were — you know, songs that nobody ever heard, thank God. As you get older and more responsibilities get piled on you, there's only so much room for everything. Giving ourselves this vacation mentality to create in was just so special, and it was so amazing of our families to give us that time. Our children and our spouses hopped in and out quite a bit and they were present, but for the most part, we just got to really be creative and not have an agenda or a time frame.

You were still in college when Lady Antebellum really got started. Now everyone is married and has ever-expanding families. What was it like to have the three of you living under one roof again?

I definitely had moments when we were recording [of] feeling like, "Oh my gosh, we are the same kids. We are the same exact people." And then having moments of, "Wow, we have gotten so old!" [Laughs] Like Charles would start FaceTiming his little boy and I would think back to 25-year-old Charles and go, "Gosh! You've changed!" But then he would tell a joke, just like something he would tell when we were young, and I'd think, "You haven't changed at all!" It was really special and funny and beautiful to feel that.

Did you have any goals you wanted to accomplish when it came to writing the songs on Heart Break?

We wanted this album, from top to bottom, to be our story. And not all of it's current, like where we are right now — there are some songs that are a reflection on past loves and experiences, but there are some that are extremely timely and present. Like, "The Stars Ain't Got Nothing" is about our little ones. It's almost like a prayer to them, like, "Okay, the world isn't always going to go your way but always remember how I see you, which is that the stars ain't got nothing on you and you can do whatever you want."

What song maybe echoes from your past?

"Hurt" is one of my personal favorites. That's one of the only two that we didn't write on this record and we were extremely picky with what songs we chose, and that song, I am so proud of. Thinking back on my life, there are moments where I've hung in a relationship with someone who didn't appreciate me enough. I mean, I've had a hard time singing that vocal.

Did anything about the experience of recording Love Remains inform your process here?

The biggest thing [with] my family project was that we bared it all. We were willing to talk about the highest highs and the lowest lows. That's one thing that I took back to the creative process with the boys is that feeling that we've got to be authentic and genuine — also giving ourselves enough space in our calendar to let ourselves go there. To dig deeper, to really flesh out all of that, you really need more time than what we were able to give ourselves years prior.

You just launched a massive tour that stretches into October. This many years in, is that a well-oiled machine? How do you approach such a full datebook?

There's definitely moments for me of panic of just looking at the calendar and going, "How do we make this happen?" But we're so excited to [be] back on the road. The way that everything has come together — the production, stage design, our openers, Kelsea Ballerini and Brett Young — we feel so thankful to have the team in place and just the live stage energy. It's so electric. It's so just like, shoots through your veins, when you see the lights and hear the crowd roar. There's nothing like it.

"Think About You" is streaming above. Heart Break, which releases tomorrow, is available for pre-order.