

## AMERICANA UK (3/17)

<https://americana-uk.com/video-premiere-love-by-numb3rs-oak-tree>

### Video Premiere: LOVE BY NUMB3RS “Oak Tree”

March 17, 2022 [Andrew Frolish](#)



Photo credit: Cam Jones

Check out the outstanding new video for ‘Oak Tree’ from Portland-based trio LOVE BY NUMB3RS. Both the song and video are genuinely atmospheric, with the rich imagery of the video mirroring the song’s expansive sound and beautifully poetic lyrics. Anna Lombard’s vocal is elegant and haunting, delivering incredibly evocative and rich descriptive language set to a gorgeously-building melody. She is utterly engaging as she sings: *“Climb up that old oak tree // Build me a fort with four walls // A hammer, a handful of nails // Boards that were thrown away // Carve both our names in the bark // Take only what we may need // A pencil and paper to start // Look up at the birds as they sing // If only these walls could speak // Oh what a tale they would tell // And just like the roots of this tree // I’ll never let you down.”*

Lombard is joined by guitarist and singer Dan Connor, whose voice complements Lombard’s perfectly, adding depth and texture. Multi-instrumentalist Jon Roods rounds out the trio, contributing an astonishing array of instruments, including Moog synth, Hammond organ, percussion and exquisite pedal steel, all of which create dreamy sonic layers that transport us into the heart of a relationship and a deep, immersive, all-encompassing love. The pedal steel and, later, the electric guitar emerge at just the right moments, growing organically with the song.

The impressively absorbing video is self-directed, shot at the band’s house and studio in Maine. It succeeds in drawing out the mood of the song and enhancing its story, complete with images of creeping roots, burning trees and a woven crown of leaves that complement the lyrics.

If you like this, seek out the six-song EP ‘Colours’, which was released in November 2021 and includes this track. Later in 2022, we can expect the band’s second album, which promises to be tuneful, artful and memorable. Many thanks to Annie Lombard for sharing her thoughts about the song and video below. Such insights enhance our experience of the song all the more. Enjoy.

## **Can you tell us what inspired “Oak Tree” and its themes of love and devotion?**

ANNA LOMBARD: *The writing process for this song began with an idea from Dan—some working/placeholder lyrics and a rough sketch of an arrangement. I began thinking about how it’s been 16 years since I first met Dan. I was freshly 21 and we were introduced at a bar by a mutual friend who had told him I sang. We sat down with a guitar that night and he taught me one of his songs he had been working on (as well as an entire solo record) and when I started singing, he somewhat jokingly re-tells it as he knew he immediately needed to trash everything he had already recorded and make a record with me. When the words for “Oak Tree” came to fruition, I had been thinking about how much I have learned from Dan as a writer over the last decade and a half. He really encouraged me to spend these years (pre-LBN) to study the art of song-writing...arrangement, things like inversions of chords to make them more interesting, lyrics, etc. He gave me so much of his time and focus because he really wanted me to “get there” as a writer. I would get so frustrated in my early twenties because even though I grew up writing poetry, I hadn’t found my ability to write songs. I specifically remember expressing that to him and his response was, “Look, just trust me. When you get there (as a writer), you’ll know.”*

*This very relationship between him guiding me to get to where I am (I think?) now, reminded me of the book *The Giving Tree* by Shel Silverstein. Say what you want about that book and whether or not it encouraged selfishness or negatively portrayed how friendship works to children...I never thought of it that way. To me, it symbolized the tree loving this boy so much, that it literally gave him anything he ever needed. I love that. To me, it’s what you do when you love someone. You do anything for them, no matter what. And, sometimes, to the point of it being self-sacrificial.*

*One morning, I thought we should use this idea in *The Giving Tree* for this new song. I popped over at Dan’s later that same day and walked into the kitchen and the damn book was just out on his kitchen table. I was like, ok this is too weird. The third line in that book says: “And everyday the boy would come and he would gather her leaves and make them into crowns and play king of the forest.” So, the chorus was meant to kind of pay homage to the book as with hopes of people reading that line and putting 2+2 together.*

*So it’s about giving your all for love. Selflessness. Sacrifice. Friendship. And learning things about the world through the eyes of the people with whom you are close. “I’ll never let you down” was my way of promising Dan that I’ll take everything he’s taught/given of himself to me and never stop writing or playing music, no matter what. That’s my promise.*

*And we wanted the chorus to be big coming in after a kind of a slow, haunting verse...kind of like the way this feeling hits when the chorus comes in on Pink Floyd’s track “Us & Them”—we wanted it to be a bit more musically heavy...and impactful.*

## **For the song’s video, which possesses the wondrous abstract imagery that has come to define the band’s videos, let us know what the band’s creative intentions were? And who directed the video?**

LOMBARD: *All of our videos are self-directed. Jon had this idea of using the childhood doll house my father built me as the “fort with four walls”—then he built a set in the garage to mimic the inside of the dollhouse for us to film ourselves in—and then juxtapose that with the miniature inside of the dollhouse for this kind of trippy perspective change. Then, he built a 10 x 3 foot bed, dumped soil in it, and told me to get in it. So my hair was meant to look like roots of the tree. And we put little dollhouse-sized furniture, instruments, pencils in it for another perspective-bending idea. We wanted it to look a little psychedelic to match how we made the song feel/sound. We always just want our videos to tell the story of the song and be visually stimulating and at times...just weird. It was filmed mostly in our garage, backyard and our basement aside from some of the nature shots.*

## **Were there any challenges in shooting the video?**

LOMBARD: *The night Jon climbed 16 feet up a tree and secured the dollhouse on a little platform for some drone footage was absurd. I mean, it was 6 degrees outside and we are out in our backyard at*

*2 am with work lamps and a drone flying around my old dollhouse. Those are the moments I pray our neighbours are fast asleep.*

**What do you feel the song and video say about the band's heart and soul?**

LOMBARD: *We just love what we do and we really love each other like family. It's a lot of work but we love it. It's why we get out of bed in the morning, you know? I think this song and video kind of speaks to our focus on being good to, and caring for, one another. That's LBN.*

