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<https://ventsmagazine.com/2022/09/27/interview-anna-lombard-of-love-by-numb3rs-talks-and-premieres-new-single-dont-be-so-hard-on-me-video/>



INTERVIEW: Anna Lombard of LOVE BY NUMB3RS Talks (And Premieres) New Single “Don’t Be So hard On Me” + Video

Portland, Maine-based indie trio **LOVE BY NUMB3RS**—co-vocalists **DAN CONNOR** and **ANNA LOMBARD** and multi-instrumentalist **JON ROODS**—today (September 27) return with “**Don’t Be So Hard On Me**” via a track + video premiere at **Vents Magazine**. It’s the second single/video from their sophomore album **EARTH NEEDS A MOON** out this **Friday, September 30**. Produced by **ROODS** and **LOMBARD**, the album follows the acclaimed band’s November 2021 **Colours EP** and doesn’t repeat any of its songs.

Sonically, “**Don’t Be So Hard On Me**” is big-sounding, soulful and rootsy, with **ANNA**’s gutsy and moving vocals illuminating a difficult, fractured relationship. The video is cinematic, mysterious and evocative. The video was directed by **ROODS**, filmed in **Industry, Maine** at their friend’s barn and shot in a deliberately distressed style, with imagery that is striking and intense.

We get to sit with Anna to discuss more about the song, video and more!

–Congratulations on the release of “Don’t Be So Hard On Me.” It’s a lyrically candid and very raw song about a fractured and seemingly destructive relationship, with such lines as “*I miss the way you screamed my name/When you were angry/Nothing left but you, your pride & me/That’s how I loved you in the end.*” What inspired you to write it?

ANNA LOMBARD: The song started with a single line, “don’t be so hard on me...” When I began writing the lyrics for the song, I tried to imagine myself as a person within a relationship who knew it was falling apart. In the heat of an argument, our instinct can often be to say hurtful things to the ones we love most. We’ve all been there. We isolate, because it’s easier than facing the issue head on, whatever it may be. We stray. We lose ourselves. We ignore the advice of friends or shut them out because we don’t want to hear what they have to say...and this fear of something ending or things changing kind of silently travels through us until we’re ready to face it...so this was the narrative that originally helped me finish the story. But the more I listened, the more I realized that this song was less about being hard on a partner within a relationship, and more about being hard on yourself...It became more self-reflective. I know I’ve had to learn how to be easier on myself and forgive myself and others through my own life’s trials and tribulations. If we cannot be kind or love ourselves, it makes it very difficult to love and be kind to someone else.”

–The song also features your most intense vocals to date, underlining the rawness of the lyrics. Can you tell us what it was like to record this in the studio?

ANNA: This was honestly my fastest vocal take of all time. I really prefer to be solo and run the console when I’m tracking...I don’t love other people being in the room, besides Jon if it’s an absolute must. So we had laid down the musical beds for the song...just keys, bass and drums...and I kicked Jon and Dan out of the studio. I’ll never forget the look on their faces as I walked out of the studio and said, “okay, all done.” I think it took me a total of 26 minutes from start to finish. The cool part was that the lyrics were sketched out with about five pages of verse options... and a couple of the lines that ended up being in the song were improvised...so they felt natural and just right. It was also the first time I ever sat down while recording vocals, because I was running the board at the same time.

–“Don’t Be So Hard On Me” has that trademark LBN sound: minimal but big-sounding, very edgy but finely etched and rootsy, too. What goes into the creation of this sound?

ANNA: We had been listening to a lot of Donny Hathaway (specifically, “I Love You More Than You’ll Ever Know”) and from the start of the song, I really wanted to try and tap into some Betty Davis vocal style...throaty blues...lots of space...with simple, autobiographical lyrics. Throughout this album, Jon wanted the musical beds of each song built with all of us playing together live...the use of real instruments, keyboards, pianos, Hammond organ, synthesizers and very little editing...to be as true to late 60’s/70’s recordings as possible. I tracked my vocals on an SM-7 microphone through a vintage tube pre-amp with the gain cranked. It dirtied up my vocals so that when I pushed my voice, it allowed the rawness and cracks in my voice to come through.”

–LBN is also known for its visually striking videos. In this one, the imagery is arresting: you flip over a table, you emerge mysteriously from a body of water, instruments are smashed. And the video is shot in a deliberately distressed style. Please tell us about where it was filmed, who directed it and how you feel the video illuminates the song?

ANNA: We filmed this in Industry, Maine at our friend John Moore's barn. We looked for weeks for a beat-up, empty warehouse around the Portland area but had no luck. We wanted the vibe of the video to look the way it sounds—raw, vintage, stripped down. This video was directed and filmed by Jon, as all our videos are done in house.