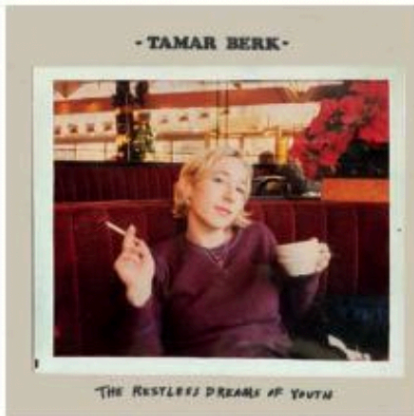


Tamar Berk / Shadow Clues



Music fans will want to hear Tamar Berk's solo debut album, *The Restless Dreams of Youth*, a stylistically diverse mix of alternative rock tunes with an excess of melody, strong enough to be a collection of singles. Highlights are many: moody introspective current single "Shadow Clues," lush, jangly rocker "Socrates & Me," adrenaline charged powerpop sing-along "Better Off Meditating," and current favorite, new wave / girl group inspired "In the Wild," amongst the gems.

It's all the culmination of an impressive life in music, that has seen Berk performing with a slew of notable bands starting with Chicago based 90's power-pop combo Starball, then Sweet Heat (w/ Kim Thompson of Delta 72) electro-punk group The Countdown, sixties inspired psych band The Pynnacles and rock opera influenced Paradise

Originally from Cleveland, with time spent in Chicago and Portland. Berk arrived in San Diego with her family circa the summer of 2018. "Prior to living here we were in Oregon," she said. "We both really loved Portland, but the grey, wet long winters were starting to

get me down. I also had a dream of one day living in Southern California and when the opportunity came up for my husband, we grabbed it." She's happy with her adopted home. "What's there not to love? The weather is incredible, we've met some of the nicest people and the music scene is diverse and rich. I pinch myself everyday at how lucky I am to live here."

Even a cursory listen to *The Restless Dreams of Youth*, reveals a real devotion to songcraft. "As a songwriter, my influences vary because I'm very much a song person and get inspired by a really good song," Berk remarked. "That being said, I suppose I've been influenced by artists like Liz Phair, Elliot Smith, Guided by Voices, Juliana Hatfield, Aimee Mann, ELO, and power pop groups like The Cars." She notes that as a musician, "it's slightly different because my first instrument is keyboards, (piano, organ, Wurlitzer) and that ranges from Deep Purple and Small Faces, Stones and ELO. I also play guitar and bass and I would say, those influences come mostly from power pop bands like The Cars, Cheap Trick and Thin Lizzy."

The roots of *The Restless Dreams of Youth* date back to Berk's days in Portland. "I have a home studio and I'm always writing and recording," she said. "Back in Portland, I sat down one day and wrote "Shadow Clues" inspired by Plato's cave allegory. It literally came out of me in 10 minutes...fully formed. It felt different, more mature and something I was really proud of. It was at that moment that I thought about



putting out a solo album." The songs included were written over several years "and then I had some very old four-track demos that I wanted to go back to and rework. In all honesty, the real push happened right before the pandemic and then I had to rethink how I wanted to do it and ended up producing it mostly by myself and working remotely with other musicians."

Amongst the musicians she's worked with locally are Chris Davies (The Penetrators) and Ron Silva (The Crawdaddys), an offshoot

of sitting in on keyboards with Chloe Lou and the Liddell's. "Well, Ron and Chris are in Chloe's band so when I asked them to work on some songs with me, it felt very organic," Berk said. "They suggested Danny Cress (True Stories) because they thought his varied background would be great. And it was - we had a blast!"

The music biz is tougher than ever - what motivates her to keep going? "I've been writing songs since I was a teenager, so it's the melodies can live in my head that I need to get out," Berk replied. "I am motivated by the idea that someone hears one of my songs and tell's me they are moved or they were inspired."

Although *The Restless Dreams of Youth* is just out, Berk is already looking ahead. "I've already started writing and recording and I'm currently looking for some other musicians that would be into playing my album live," she said. "I'm a creative person and writing songs is like an itch that needs to be scratched. I can't really describe it any other way."

www.tamarberk.bandcamp.com

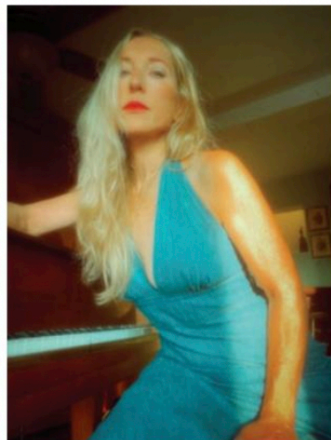
Tamar Berk / Start at the End

There is no question that musician Tamar Berk made an impact in 2021. A veteran of numerous bands, her debut solo album, *The Restless Dreams of Youth*, showed up on numerous music critic / DJ / blog Top Ten lists around the world. Meanwhile, on April 19 Berk will be a performer at the 2022 San Diego Music Awards, where she scored two nominations, for "Best Pop Album" and "Album of the Year."

It's just the latest chapter for this gifted performer. With the buzz still strong on her first album, new music is already on the way. Berk recently released a terrific keyboard based pop single, "Your Permission," in advance of her sophomore album, *Start at the End*, due out on April 22. In the meantime, she will be issuing a second single from it, "Tragic Ending," on March 29.

It's all a boon for fans of hook filled pop rock, though how to describe Tamar's music can be hard to pin down. "My music has been described by others as indie pop, pop, powerpop, indie rock, singer-songwriter...literally everything! Except metal," she said good naturedly.

Berk's music is basically pages in the story of her life. "My songs have



always been personal," she said. "The stories I tell are my own. It's really the only way I've ever written. I've always been prolific. There was just a span of years in which I was sort of a lost soul with my music. Those years were rough."

Start at the End is perhaps Berk's most introspective collection of songs. "I had started writing casually in the spring working on the song 'Your Permission' and writing lyrics and recording little riffs into my phone," she said. "I worked out a couple of song sketches but in June, my father became sick and did not seem to be getting better. I dropped everything and took a red-eye to Florida because I had a

terrible feeling. I felt uneasy and really anxious. When I landed in Florida, he had already been admitted to the hospital and a week later, he was gone. My life just kind of stopped. I was crying all the time and couldn't really understand what had happened. I felt like everything was so meaningless. I was literally exhausted from crying all the time, so I just started writing more and more until I noticed a theme emerging." She soon realized a new album would be possible from the pieces. "I started to feel the songs coming together. Looking at them now, I think some of the songs on the 'Start at the End' album are my most favorite songs I have ever written, but also, the most personal

and most difficult to have written. Completing this album took a lot out of me."

While Berk may tour a little and there are plans for a live-stream show, what she loves most "is making little mini-movies and videos. I love creating, so my favorite thing to do is the artistic side of promoting, through photos, videos or more," she said. "Videos are very important...especially when you are trying to enhance the meaning of the song. It can be daunting to come up with just the right concept! But I do enjoy editing. So far, I've made my own videos." Plans are for there to be four videos from the new album.

How does Berk feel about the success her first album has had? "I am overwhelmed. For real," she said. "I loved this album and every song. I just had no idea that others would feel the same. It's have spent many nights crying happy tears!" She's particularly happy with her SDMA nominations. "I've lived in many cities, played in many bands, and I work so hard at my song-writing," she said. "It's an incredible feeling to be actually recognized for it!"

www.tamarberk.bandcamp.com



FYI

Staring at the Sun XIII

By Bart Mendoza, September 2021

FYI SEPTEMBER 2021

This month we take a look at the latest edition of San Diego themed compilation album, *Staring at the Sun XIII*, ask Tamar Berk Five Questions, and talk cartoon characters with her as well as Troy Cook, Lauren Leigh Martin, Dave Preston, Audrey Callahan, and Monica Sorenson

Staring at the Sun XIII



Staring at the Sun Vol. XIII.

The latest edition of *Staring at the Sun*, the free San Diego music compilation album, debuts this month with a special free event at the Casbah on September 30. Volume XIII celebrates San Diego's music performers, San Diego's comics artists, local music program Loudspeaker and Balboa Park, with 47 tracks on two CDs in a special six-panel jacket, featuring exclusive artwork from legendary comics artist Scott Shaw!

It's an eclectic playlist, with songs from favorites such as the Sleepwalkers, the Monroes, Alvino & the Dwells, the Spice Pistols, Mittens, and the Wayne Riker Quintet, as well as rising talent such as Evening's Empire, Tamar Berk, Sorry It's Over, and Nathan

Raney. Then there's Electric Mud, Spiritual Motels, Enter the Blue Sky, the Original Starfires, Sometimes Julie, and the Dinettes. Meanwhile, Manual Scan, Pony Death Ride, Mojo Nixon, and Satanic Puppeteer Orchestra contribute radio station IDs. And that's not even half of the artists included.

Pick up your free copy of *Staring at the Sun XIII* at the Casbah on September 30. The free show kicks off at 8 p.m., hosted by Hairly Scary Spice of the Spice Pistols and Bart Mendoza, with performers set to include Nathan Raney, Evening's Empire, and more to be added. Notably the show will double as an album release event for Nathan Raney's new album, *Season of Serenity*. Support Local Music!

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Five questions for Tamar Berk



Tamar Berk

Powerpop fans need to pick up a copy of Tamar Berk's debut album, *The Restless Dreams of Youth*. An amazingly tuneful collection of songs, the album has real depth both lyrically and stylistically. And it's full of earworms, such as moody introspective "Shadow Clues," or bouncy, rockin' "Better Off Meditating." The songs couldn't be more different, but they're both just as good, the product of solid songcraft and arrangements. This month we ask Tamar Berk Five Questions:

Is there anything missing from your Discogs page?

It's pretty accurate, although it doesn't include all the fun little bands and guest appearances I made. One of my favorite tribute bands that I played in was called Deep Joy, a Small Faces cover band.

You have such a stylistically diverse discography - what's your record collection like?

Everything from Abba to Zappa. For real. Currently, I'm on a big Genesis kick. I've a very big fan of the soft rock of the '70s. The nostalgia of those tunes reminds me of the magic of growing up when radio stations ruled.

Who inspired you to play guitar?

Haha...well, the first guitar I bought was in Cleveland when I was a teen. I saved up for a Jumbo Yamaha acoustic. I was deeply inspired by Edie Brickell and the New Bohemians. I loved her band and her songs.



Was Starball your first band?

Yes, Starball was a power pop band that was my first band I formed when I lived in Chicago. You can still find some of those fun power pop tunes on Spotify!

You've performed with your husband in the Pynacles, while your daughter also has her own band. What's it like being in such a musical family?

Neither of my parents played music, but they put us in piano lessons as early as five years old! I learned mostly by ear since I had no patience to remember the notes. I would ask the piano teacher to play the songs over and over and knew about enough of the notes to make it happen. I'm very grateful for the background in piano. It's helped me in all aspects of my writing. The question I thought should really be



directed toward my daughter! She's been hearing my husband and I play, record, and write since she was a tiny baby so it makes sense that she has emerged with her own amazing San Diego-based indie pop band called the Fluorescents. Check 'em out!

www.tamarberk.bandcamp.com

What's Your Favorite Cartoon Character?

Tamar Berk: Bugs Bunny because he was a smart ass.

Audrey Callahan: I always had a fondness for Ariel from the Little Mermaid. Her tenacity and courage when it came to MAKING her dreams a reality always spoke to me. Even though her entire community, with good intentions, tried to stop her from achieving something that was so important to her, she persevered and came out on top.

Troy Cook/Ready Set Survive: Popeye! He's a great husband, he's always promoting healthy eating habits, and always standing up against the big bully!



Lauren Leigh Martin

Lauren Leigh Martin: My favorite cartoon character is She-Ra. She was my favorite when I was like three and four years old. I used to call her Sheila and my babysitter would be so upset not knowing who Sheila was, or how to get her to me. My father loved He-Man and saying his catch phrase "I have the Power!" and so naturally I wanted a girl version of that, so She-Ra it was. I think they did an amazing job with the reboot on Netflix, and I watch it with my son.

Dave Preston: C'mon, I mean, who doesn't love Fred Flintstone? Killer pad, hot wife, rad car, and he gets to operate a live crane!!

Monica Sorenson/Sometimes Julie: Old school: Bugs Bunny; Current: yhe Minions. Both are creative problem solvers with great senses of humor, and they are musical!



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SAN DIEGO Reader

Tamar Berk doesn't need your permission

"I see other women do this, too."



Tamar Berk

While still living in Chicago, singer-songwriter [Tamar Berk](#) played in power pop group Starball, known for their 2001 track "New Year's Day" ("I wanted to write a holiday song"). She moved on to an electro-punk duo with her husband, then a Small Faces cover band called Deep Joy, then Sweet Heat, then The Pynnacles, and her group Paradise recorded three albums, including a rock opera. After relocating to San Diego by way of Portland, her solo album *The Restless Dreams of Youth* was released last year.

A new single and video for "Your Permission" drops February 24. "It's the first single, of two, off of my upcoming LP that's slated to be released in April or May. I had written this song as a one-minute vignette, as sort of a little experiment a few years ago. There are days, or even periods of my life, when I just want to stop having to be me, and step outside of myself and be someone else — to not have to deal with my usual anxieties, issues, and the obsessive thoughts in my head. Just the thought of not being in my head, even for just a day, seems so incredibly liberating. My thoughts can be quite intrusive and annoying, and I suppose it would be nice to experience not having to deal with being myself for a day, or with making any decisions. The title of the song 'Your Permission' came to me as I thought about moments when I find myself apologizing for stating my opinion, needing something, or simply standing up for myself. My first

instinct is always to apologize, which I find myself doing sometimes. I see other women do this, too. The title is ironic. I guess I should say that, because, well, you never know.”

Berk wrote and produced the song, as well as playing piano, guitar, Wurlitzer, and strings. “The other local musician on the track is lead guitar virtuoso [Chris Davies](#)” of [Chloe Lou & The Liddells](#), and [The Penetrators](#). “My drummer, Matt Walker [Morrissey, Smashing Pumpkins, Garbage] recorded his parts in his studio in Chicago, and Matt Thomson [Maita] played bass on the track while in his studio in Portland. I’m lucky enough to have Sean O’Keefe (Plain White T’s, Fall Out Boy) who mixed and mastered the single, and who, incidentally, mixed the track in his Chicago studio.”

Video:

Tamar Berk "Shadow Clues"



Since the *The Restless Dreams of Youth* release, Berk has been awash in recognition. Her world-class single “Shadow Clues” earned positive reviews in *Northern Transmissions* and *Stereo Embers Magazine*. The track also appeared on the 2021 edition of the local music compilation series *Staring at the Sun*, and video versions include a *Tiny Desk Concert* duo rendition and a live-in-studio performance on Episode 12 of the local music internet program *MusicSceneSD TV*. Recently, the *Woody Radio (Cult of Woody)* blog feature Mike Lidskin’s Artist of the Year named her as this year’s Top Performer.

She spent New Year’s Eve wearing a favorite old dress. “It was the year 2001, and I went to the Grammys in this gold dress. I stayed with a friend who lived in the Hollywood Hills, and we took a limousine and I felt very important. I sat way up in the nosebleed seats, but I was in heaven. That particular year, Eminem was performing ‘Stan’ with Elton John, who was accompanying on piano and singing Dido’s part. I was literally dying: crying, shaking, and losing my mind. Madonna opened the show with ‘Music’ and NSYNC performed some really boring song, and Faith Hill was the queen of country with her song ‘Breathe.’ Afterwards, we party-hopped and I drank and ate at every party and then, somehow, I lost the folks I was with, so I just wandered around alone going from room to room, which was filled with lots of music industry people. I kept drinking and schmoozing and soaking it all in. I will never, ever give this dress away, because of that night and those memories.”

A direct reflection of the heavy times

Author : 6-7 minutes

Reader

A direct reflection of the heavy times

Wild Wild Wets, Sure Fire Soul Ensemble, Greyboy Allstars, Tamar Berk, Wanted Noise



Tamar Berk

The new release from rising singer-songwriter [Tamar Berk](#), “Tragic Endings,” is the second single off her upcoming sophomore album *Start at the End*, due April 22. The accompanying video features Berk performing the song outdoors on a rooftop, along with footage of her riding an oceanfront rollercoaster. Her earlier single “Your Permission” comes with two different videos, one a full production with her playing the song on piano as ghostly figures of herself display various personality types, while the lyric video unfolds a similar morphing presentation, confined to a closeup of her multitude of character faces.

Tamar Berk appears at Humphreys on Tuesday, April 19, at the San Diego Music Awards (her debut *The Restless Dreams of Youth* is nominated for Best Pop Album and Album of the Year). The bill includes fellow nominees [Mrs. Henry](#) (also competing for Album of the Year, along with Best Rock Album and Best Video), [Thee Sacred Souls](#) and the [Sully Band](#) (both up for Best R&B, Funk or Soul Song), [Slack Key Ohana](#) (vying for Best New Artist and Best World Music Album), [Riston Diggs](#) (Best Hip-Hop/Rap Album, Best Hip-Hop/Rap Artist, and Album of the Year), and the [Ira Liss Big Band Jazz Machine](#) (Best Jazz or Blues Album).

Pop

Tamar Berk



Members

Tamar Berk: Vocals

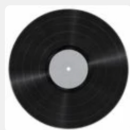
RIYL

Cleopatra Degher, Savannah Phillyaw, Cathryn Beeks, Cindy Lee Berryhill, Lia Johnson

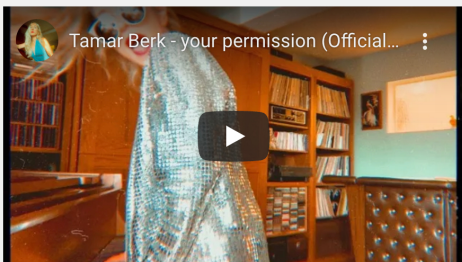
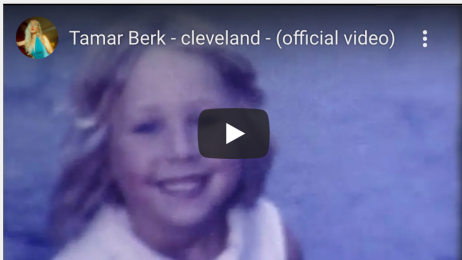
Influences

Liz Phair, Elliot Smith, Katy Perry, ELO, The Cars, Thin Lizzy, Joy Division, Regina Spektor, Soccer Mommy

Discography

The Restless
Dreams of Youth
2021Start at the End
2022

Video(s)



Indie pop singer-songwriter Tamar Berk grew up playing piano and started writing songs on guitar as a teenager. While living in Chicago, she played in regional bands like her first, power pop group Starball, known for their tracks like the 2001 song "New Year's Day" ("I wanted to write a holiday song"). She went on to play in an electro-punk duo with her husband that they named the Countdown, a Small Faces cover band called Deep Joy, and she briefly had a group with Kim Thompson called Sweet Heat. Relocating to Portland, she played keys with the Pynacles. Her group Paradise released three albums, including a rock opera. Among the labels her bands recorded for are Kill Rock Stars, Minty Fresh, and Invisible Records.

After moving to San Diego, her album *The Restless Dreams of Youth* was released in summer 2021. "I was an incredibly restless child. I was always dreaming and I could never sit still. I always wanted what others had, and had a deep emptiness that I couldn't really understand. I thought when I grew up, those feelings would disappear or at least change and I could find some peace within myself. But now, I'm just as restless, and when I look back at my life and where I am now, I still feel a deep emptiness and struggle with accepting myself. 'The restless dreams of youth' turned into a sort of love letter to myself. It was a very emotional journey and I realized that I'm still uneasy, and unsure and I might never be at peace with myself, and that's okay."

The album was preceded by singles for "Better Off Meditating" and "Cleveland." The video for the latter track matches her own super-8 home movies from childhood, alongside images of her grown up and making a life for herself in San Diego.

Another single, "Shadow Clues," earned positive reviews in *Northern Transmissions* and *Stereo Embers Magazine*. That track also appeared on the 2021 edition of the local music compilation series *Staring at the Sun*, and a Tiny Desk Concert duo video version was released as well. Berk also performed the duo concert version on episode 12 of the local music internet program *MusicSceneSD TV*.

The album includes local guests including Chris Davies (the Penetrators, Chloe Lou & the Liddells), who she first met while during San Diego tour dates with the Pynacles. Berk also frequently works with Chicago-based drummer Matt Walker, known from the Smashing Pumpkins, Morrissey, Garbage, and Filter. Her daughter has her own band, the Fluorescents, later known as The Inflorescence, with their debut album released in 2021.

In early 2022, a single and video was released for a track from an upcoming project, "Your Permission." According to Berk, "I had three versions of this video because none of them felt right. I really struggled with how to visually portray what I wanted to say without feeling like I would have to spend a ton of money. I wanted to think of a simple way to express what the song was about. So, after throwing out several versions of the video, I sat at my piano and just started filming and soon, the concept developed. Sometimes, I find that just starting something with no plan can often lead me somewhere unexpected! It was

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filmed here in town in my house."

"Tragic Endings" was the second single off her sophomore album *Start at the End*, released April 22, 2022. The accompanying video features Berk performing the song outdoors on a rooftop, along with footage of her riding an oceanfront rollercoaster.

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