

## Tamar Berk – Start at the End (Q&A)

4-5 minutes : 4/28/2022



'Everything will now be measured by the me before my dad died and the me after. And even though his life and my life as it was ended, I need to start over.', says Tamar Berk.

The new songs came about during a difficult period for Berk. [Start at the End](#) is therefore an emotional and very personal record.

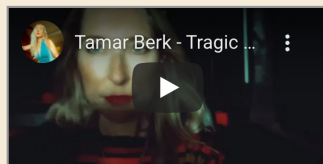
It's easy to imagine that all of her future music will be compared to this new milestone in her career. That's because it so good!

### **Start at the End has a different, richer sound than its predecessor, or do I hear things that aren't there?**

"Restless Dreams of Youth" was a collection of older and newer songs. Some songs that I've had for years that I had lived with for a while, I wanted to keep those as true to the original intent as possible. I also wanted a more light-hearted nostalgic vibe.

On my new album "Start at the End" most of the songs are new. I wanted to explore more instrumentation and layering to mirror how complex my feelings and emotions were in regards to dealing with the death of my father, Covid, my feelings towards life and death in general, and the emotional and existential crisis I was going through.

I was deliberately trying to capture that with more richness and complexity of the songs.



### **At what point did you know you were making your best record?**

I did not at all. I was crying a lot during the making of this record. I changed the structure of the songs many times, asked for advice from many folks, almost cut songs and actually, had close to a complete breakdown a few times to the point where I almost put it on hold.

So yeah....I did not know.

But my family kept encouraging me.





**I have a feeling the record came about in a tsunami of creativity, and it wasn't an endless puzzle to find what you were looking for?**

Yes....I had some sketches for songs but after my father died in June....I was overflowing with emotions and confusion. I locked myself in my studio and just wrote and composed for hours. I was mourning through the songs.



**How much fun was it writing and recording Real Bad Day?**

AHHH! That is one song I've had in my pocket for several years. I always wanted to put it on an album and actually, almost didn't put it on this album. But I was listening to it one night and thought about the fact that it was a song talking to my mom about having a bad day....and I realized that I only had my mom now, so I wanted it to be a dedication to her.

As far as recording it, I remember Matt Walker texting me and saying that he had SO much fun playing drums on that song and Allen Hunter who played bass sent me his tracks and mentioned that he sweated up a storm while playing that! There was a lot of good energy that went into the making of that song!

**I was wondering what's the story behind the photo you're using as the cover?**

The photo was taken on New Year's Eve 2000 Y2K. The person sitting next to me was my boyfriend at the time but we were in the midst of breaking up. I knew it was the end of our relationship and yet, we decided to go to this party. I was pretty miserable in the photo, but I tried to act like I was in the spirit by blowing into that noisemaker. The thing is, I knew that though it was the end of our relationship, it was the beginning of a new chapter for me. I felt hopeful too and I suppose that's what endings are...just new beginnings—starting at the end of something.

This also is the same way I needed to feel after my dad died. I will never be 'Tamar' the same way again. Everything will now be measured by the me before my dad died and the me after. And even though his life and my life as it was ended, I need to start over. I thought the photo was a perfect depiction of the bittersweetness of endings and new beginnings. Isn't that what a new year is symbolically?

## Tamar Berk – The Restless Dreams of Youth (Q&A, and more ...)

3-3 minutes : 2/28/2021



[The Restless Dreams of Youth](#) is Tamar Berk's first solo record. Her music has been compared to that of Liz Phair and Juliana Hatfield. You could also compare her sound to that of Gretchen's Wheel.

Beautiful, thoughtful Indie Pop that sometimes jumps up to dance.

Sweet Sweet Music spoke to Tamar about how The Restless Dreams of Youth came about.

### What was the moment you knew you were on to something?

I was in my little basement home studio in Chicago and I sat down and wrote and recorded a demo of Shadow Clues. I liked the song and felt that it had some cool imagery and was different from many of the songs I tend to write. I felt that it tapped into something very honest and that's when I thought that maybe I could put together a solo album.

### How did this record come together?

Once I decided that at some point I would be putting something out, it was a matter of writing the other songs, finding the demos that I wanted to rework, and starting recording them by myself in my studio. After I felt like I had a collection of songs that told the story I wanted, I found some incredible musicians in San Diego and we started rehearsing the songs to be ready to record in the studio.

But then Covid happened and I had to rethink the whole thing.

So I went back to my demos and reworked them so they had click-tracks and called my friend Matt Walker to play drums on the album. Matt has played with Morrissey, Smashing Pumpkins, Garbage, and many more and he's also a composer himself so I knew he would breathe some new life into the songs. He was living in Chicago so we worked over the wire.



### The meaning of success has changed over the years. What would success look like for the new record?

I don't know if the meaning of success has changed for everyone, but for me it has. I will always want people to love my music, play my music and share my music, and today, I can find my audience and my audience will find me. That feels like success to me.

### How great is the urge to stay creative? To keep writing songs and lyrics?

I've been writing songs since I was a teen so that urge never goes away. And I think for many when you put something out that you're proud of, you end up inspiring yourself and feeling more confident in your abilities.

