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Lyricist v Songwriter 4-4

Linda Perry's Dos & Don'ts For Writing Love Songs

Source of article: <https://artists.spotify.com/blog/linda-perry%27s-dos-and-don%27t-for-writing-love-songs>

Continued from article 3:

Do: Know who you're writing for.

The process changes when you're asked to write for a specific artist. Then, it requires stepping outside yourself. "It's a different experience," says Perry. "If it were up to me, I would write sad, depressing, suicidal, Pink Floyd-ish type of songs. That's my style: I like being dark, I like living down a well. And that's where I feel the most."

That can make collaboration difficult, but it can also produce exciting results. "It can be tricky, because you could be dealing with someone who really doesn't have any experience of what it feels like to be really down and out or dark and suicidal. So now it's like: here's Mrs. Doom and here's sunshine and lollipops, and you gotta meet both worlds. I have to interpret the sunshine and lollipops and figure out how to make it me and how to make my doom and gloom them. It can become very interesting."

Perry is particularly fond of how this **juxtaposition** plays out in the love songs recorded by the Carpenters. "The songs are written by Burt Bacharach, the majority of them, and they're like, 'Why do birds suddenly appear...' The cheesiest freaking lyrics. But then you have Karen Carpenter, this very dark, very tormented woman. When she sings that line it's got this rich, soulful darkness in it, and it's like, 'Oh, my god!'"

Juxtaposition Definition. **Juxtaposition** is a literary technique in which two or more ideas, places, characters, and their actions are placed side by side in a narrative or a poem, for the purpose of developing comparisons and contrasts.

Examples of Juxtaposition in Literature

1. Shakespeare juxtaposes light and dark in *Romeo and Juliet*, which in a way juxtaposes the two young, innocent lovers and the darkness of their fate and their families' hate: "O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright! It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear."

Do: Make it stand out.

For Perry, the hardest part about writing love songs is making them fresh: There may be a lot of "guy who woke up and is walking down the street" songs, Perry says, but people don't judge them as critically as they judge love songs. That's why "you gotta come up with something clever."

Her example: "Baby Bitch" by Ween. "I just think that was so brilliant because here's this beautiful song that's telling this great story. What a great melody, and great lyrics. And then the chorus is all, 'Baby, baby, baby, bitch.'"

Don't: Share too soon.

"I would refrain from getting excited about writing a song and not really 100-percent finishing it yet, and then going to play it to other people," says Perry. "That could be very disappointing. You're just gonna have to be willing to understand that, most of the time, you're never gonna get the full reaction you want from people regarding your creativity. That's the nature of the game. That's the nature of the business. That's the nature of the talent. This is what we are blessed with and cursed with. You gotta stay strong with who you are and believe that if you love the song, that's all that matters."

Don't: Replicate what you hear on the radio.

Perry has put dozens of songs on the radio, but, she says, this only happened because she looked elsewhere for inspiration. "I would really not try to emulate or try to replicate anything that you hear on the radio, or anything that you might think is popular and what everybody else is listening to. That will just turn you into a generic writer. You won't be writing from your own experience; you'll be writing about someone else's experience. So don't duplicate. Just create your own sound."

Songs written by Linda Perry

Beautiful - Christina Aguilera
 Can't Get You Off My Mind - Michael Des Barres
 Favorite Year - Dixie Chicks
 Get The Party Started - Pink
 Hands of Love - Miley Cyrus
 I'm OK - Christina Aguilera
 Keeps Gettin' Better - Christina Aguilera
 Letter To God - Hole (L.Perry)
 Lift Me Up - Christina Aguilera
 My Love - Celine Dion
 Samantha - Hole
 The Long Way Around - Dixie Chicks
 The Thing About Love - Alicia Keys
 What's Up - 4 Non Blondes
 Wonderful Life - Gwen Stefani

Linda Perry with: Dolly Parton & Michael Des Barres



Freestyle Note: Kia ora whanau - use this space to write a message or write some notes:

Baby Bitch

Ween

It's been a while since I've seen you smile
 But now you've come back again
 Came into the room and you saw my girl
 And you asked her how long it's been
 "A year" she said and you shook your head
 Said "I'm surprised it's gone on that long"

Baby, Baby, Baby Bitch
 For words I am at a loss
 Baby, Baby, Baby Bitch
 I'm better now please fuck off

What else you gonna say when while you're back on your stay
 Maybe something, maybe nothing, we'll see
 It's just too bad, you're beautiful I guess
 I wasn't for you and you weren't for me

Baby, Baby, Baby Bitch
 Please slip back into yourself
 Baby, Baby, Baby Bitch
 Go conquer someone else

People say, "How beautiful, how sweet, how kind"
 You're perfect, you've got nothing to hide
 But I, for one, have seen the sun
 And the bitch that you've locked up inside

Got fat, got angry, started hating myself
 Wrote "Birthday Boy" for you babe
 Now I'm skinny and sick and paranoid
 Without a cent to my name

Baby, Baby, Baby Bitch
 Fuck you, you stinkin' ass ho
 Most beauty I've seen
 you come from a dream
 But I can't close my eyes anymore
 No, I can't close my eyes anymore

Songwriters: Aaron Freeman / Michael Melchiondo / Michael Melchiondo / Jr.

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And then the chorus is all, 'Baby, baby, baby, bitch.'"

Linda Perry

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 Contest (starting in 2020)**

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