

Andrea Ramolo Bio

Andrea Ramolo, one half of acclaimed Canadian folk-pop duo Scarlett Jane, has a new solo album, *NUDA* (Italian for *naked*). The album emerged out of a deep depression following a romantic breakup and a shift in her artistic path; but brought about a hugely positive metamorphosis, personally and creatively.

Cool, dark, understated and melancholy, the alternative-folk album produced by Michael Timmins — a man who knows about melancholy and understated in his own band Cowboy Junkies — has a companion version of the same songs without a full band. Stripped down to its barest form, *Da Sola* (meaning *by myself*), was produced by her pal Faye Blais and features Andrea singing and playing either baritone or acoustic guitar.

“It was written during an exceptionally dark time where I was painfully shedding pieces of who I thought I was — as an artist, as a lover, as a woman,” says Andrea. “I wanted the project to unabashedly expose that process; that battle with ego and identification in an attempt to just be, to reveal all my cuts and bruises in this process of becoming.

“I thought I’d shovel out my insides for listeners in my never-ending attempt to connect because all of us on this earth have two things in common: love and pain.”

The lead track and first single, “You’re Everywhere,” is the epitome of *NUDA*. Written around her kitchen table by lamplight, the song is her attempt at moving past the agony of a lover left behind; moving past her own expectations

“The song is about that state of soul possession that happens when you want to purge yourself of the past — the sex, the joy, the broken promises and empty dreams — but it has a hold on you and the only way out is to face your demons and let them destroy you over and over again until one day, out of the ashes, you’re reborn, only different,” she says.

“I needed to write through this experience. I needed to heal through it. I needed to get into those really uncomfortable dark zones and that’s where this album grew from,” Andrea explains. “Michael is a lover of the darkness like me so it was a perfect collaboration.”

Andrea met the Cowboy Junkies’ guitarist working on Lee Harvey Osmond’s *Beautiful Scars* with Tom Wilson. *Timmins produced the project and* Andrea sang on a few tracks, including her and Tom’s co-write “Hey Hey Hey,” a conversation between two lovers on the brink of falling apart. She re-recorded the song for *NUDA* as a duet with Skydiggers’ frontman Andy Maize.

“Michael allows you be the artist that you are,” she says. “He wants your sounds, your voice. He wants you to find that. He gives you the freedom, but creatively guides the

process. For me, he allowed me the space to be honest with my pain and vulnerability... and that's what NUDA represents."

Born in Toronto to Italian immigrants — hence the cover of the Italian love song "Caruso" on *NUDA* — Andrea began her artistic life as a dancer and actress, but picked up the guitar in 2003 when her mom was going through breast cancer treatment "to heal myself and do something productive." The rudimentary country-folk tracks ended up on her 2008 debut, *Thank You For The Ride*. She followed it up in 2011 with the Tim Thorney-produced *The Shadows and the Cracks*, which earned her a nomination at the Canadian Folk Music Awards.

She then formed Scarlett Jane with Cindy Doire and spent five years extensively touring behind two albums, 2012's *Stranger* and 2015's eponymous offering, earning accolades from press and fellow musicians across the country and two more CFMA nominations.

"I've definitely matured and acquired this confidence in my writing and in my voice as an artist," she says. "Sharing the stage with Gordon Lightfoot, Ron Sexsmith and Adam Cohen, and doing a couple of shows with Lee Harvey Osmond and Blackie & The Rodeo Kings, showed me that living in a van for three-and-a half-years in the early days of my solo career, honing my craft, paid off.

"Now I feel like this language of music is a part of my vocabulary as a human being and that filtering life through song is just second nature. After almost a decade of touring and recording, I know now that music is not only a job, but a necessary part of my existence."

- Karen Bliss

Karen Bliss is the Canadian correspondent for Billboard, in addition to writing for Rolling Stone, MSN, AOL and many others publications and sites in Canada. She is also founder/editor-in-chief of www.samaritanmag.com, a music-heavy original news magazine, and runs Canadian music column musiclowdown.com.