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## INTERVIEW: MAKAR - LOVE AND CONFUSION

December 16, 2021

**Makar's** spontaneous, blues-infused compositions strike a unique balance of optimism and sorrow, responding to our divided modern culture with a varied and intelligent combination of indie rock. Makar was founded in 2002 by husband and couple Andrea DeAngelis and Mark Purnell as a "...dark and funky small New York band." It was not their aim to form a band around their friendship, but after a futile hunt for membership in their individual bands, they dared each other to compose their own stuff. Soon after, they were joined by guitarist Vicente Viray, bassist Dan Coates, and drummer Jorge Arias, and they began on their first nail-biting New York shows, later that year releasing their debut album, *99 Cent Dreams*.

By [Kamil Bobin](#)

Discovered via [Musosoup](#)


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**Hey Makar, super nice to have the chance to chat with you. What strengths do you have that you believe make you a great musician?**

Mark: Super nice to have the chance to chat with you as well and thank you so much for chatting with us. Music is a lifelong pursuit and a musician should humbly approach it backed by one overarching driving force...love of music. I love music. I live for music. Music gets me through the day and I can't live without it. Wouldn't want to. Music is great, not me, but more importantly, as John Lennon wrote, "whatever gets you through the night, it's all right, it's all right."

Andrea: I keep trying to play better. I allow myself to play instruments I have no idea how to play. I also feel a need to express myself. Everyone has that urge but I sadly think it's suppressed after childhood when it should be embraced.

**What is your creative process when making music?**

Mark: The way we usually create albums is to write the songs spontaneously during rehearsals, play them out live until refined, then record when they're fully developed. We record, produce and mix the albums ourselves, going into a professional studio only to get the bass and drums down so our neighbors don't shoot us. Then we do all the piano, guitar and vocals at home, as well as the artwork. Everything is recorded in our home studio using our Digi 001 Pro Tools setup on the last Gateway computer in existence. Yes, it's from 2002, but the little bundle of outdated tech goodness is Makar's lucky charm. When we've obsessed over an album long enough, we send it off to be mastered. Fancy Hercules was mastered by Andy "Hippy" Baldwin from Metropolis Studios in the UK and manufactured by Discmakers.

Andrea: Mark is very attached to the old Gateway. Very attached. Sometimes, I get an idea for a song and I try to find the chords and melody or the words. Sometimes poems or bits of fiction resurface and reform as lyrics or some morsel of music we were

messing around with floats and fits with lyrics or an idea I had. Those less spontaneous songs are usually much more difficult to complete.

**Your latest track is 'Love and Confusion'. Can you share with us the background of its creation and did any unusual things happen during its creation?**

Andrea: I know there's really no resemblance to this but when I started this song I was listening to Love and Happiness by Al Green over and over again. I mean it sounds nothing like that song, it's just the longing in it. It's my little Indie nod to Rev. Green. I just love the way he begins the song. He whispers in your ear, sets your soul on edge, talking just to you, telling you a truth. I like the beginning because it feels so quiet and yet so powerful.

What surprises me with this song's creation is that it alludes to other songs we've written and I wasn't even aware of it at the time. The lyric, "the sky is falling down" connects with another song on the album, Devil Don't Do Me In lyric – "Do I give into depression or does the sky simply fall on me?" Emotions always threaten to burst through and are frowned upon in the day-to-day grind.

It's funny, I only see all these intersections with in hindsight. Even in our second album, Funeral Genius in the title track, I wrote "the sky below is always falling a little." And the sky is that feeling when depression starts to circle and you feel if only you fight hard enough you can hold up the sky and push back the depression. I tend to write about the same things unknowingly – insomnia, depression, anxiety, wanting to belong.

In the recording of Love and Confusion, it became a very different song. It was angrier before (<https://yo...GHqsKfA4bo>). I had this desire to play it in a higher octave and in those higher octaves, Mark and I found all these different harmonies I could sing as well as the ooooo in the bridge. I can't imagine the song without the oooo.

While I like the original version, the final version on the album with all the high / low harmonies and the high energy made the song

take off. Add a little timbales and the song transformed.

### **What accomplishments do you see yourself achieving in the next five to 10 years?**

Mark: Artistically we're very fulfilled, but commercially, we're striving for a licensing deal in TV and movies, top 30 NACC charting, top 200 billboard placement, a Grammy and a national or international tour. Any or all of that would be a dream come true and we're working very hard towards achieving it. Fancy Hercules has several top ten adds on core NACC stations and top NACC 30 charting reports, so that's already going very well. As Recording Academy members we're going to submit Fancy Hercules for Grammy consideration next year! So very exciting. And to accomplish all of this we're focusing on building our following through social media, releasing lots of videos and songs which we've never done on an ongoing basis and playing live digitally until we can actually tour.

### **How do you nurture your own creativity?**

Andrea: When we were recording Fancy Hercules, we basically isolated ourselves most Saturdays, we allotted the whole day to rehearsing and recording. It's a discipline but also a luxury. Putting aside a couple of hours or even just twenty minutes to write or play a song is a necessary indulgence. You have to be ready and allow yourself to jot something down on the bus, because eventually those thoughts lead to or coalesce into a form you can use.

### **What interests or hobbies do you have outside of music?**

Mark: Andrea and I love writing fiction. We're both working on our debut novels, Andrea – Pushed, Mark – Little Owen Way, and we both just got into Molotov Cocktail's yearly Anthology for urban legend fiction: Andrea's about the ghosts of children being eternally chased by a demon in the Sonian forest and Mark's about Jim Morrison still alive and living in Mexico, hanging out at his favorite local hangout, La Puerta (The Door). Andrea is also a published poet ([www.andrea...ngelis.com](http://www.andrea...ngelis.com) & <https://ww...blications>) who has given many readings around NY. We love

movies, museums, walking around NY, seeing bands, plays and ballet, going to readings, supporting the artistic endeavors of friends, swimming and being in nature whenever we can.



Love and Confusion

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### What inspires you as an artist?

Andrea: Artists. Other artists whether they're fellow musicians or visual artists, filmmakers, actors, comedians, dancers, poets and writers provide fresh and at times raw perspectives. When NYC re-opened after the first frightening COVID wave, one of the first excursions we made was to MoMA PS-1. It's not the same online or in books, you need to see and feel visual art and sculpture in its element.

NYC itself always inspires, there's an energy in New York that you don't get anywhere else. That energy may be manic, neurotic but there's also surprising stillness, waiting for the subway, for the whoosh of the train to take you to someplace else entirely.

Also, folklore and mythology. There's a universality to even some of the most unusual and unsettling stories. I like to read and imagine retellings about the monsters, how they became a monster or were they not the monster at all? I look for the stories untold, the minor characters who didn't have a voice but sing to you.

Also, horror even though I try not to consume horror before bed, I have enough trouble sleeping as it is. I feel of all the genres, horror at its best is examining societal taboos and the horror within humanity as opposed to the supernatural. Horror dares and probes which is what all good art strives for.

### If you could change anything about the industry, what would it be?

Mark: The best thing about being in the industry is that it's exciting and challenging. There is no road map to artistic or

commercial success and fulfillment. You have to be as creative on the business side as you are at making music. And today there are so many more avenues open to indie artists that just weren't there when we started out. The worst thing about the industry is the same as it ever was, the bad label deals for artists. And now with 365 deals, labels are trying to take artists' merch dollars which is the life blood for lower and middle income bands. Bad enough when you're getting 10 cents on the dollar if you're lucky for a recording deal, but then they take a band's merch dollars on top of it? Not cool man and thankfully many artists are opting not to take a label deal. They just don't have to any more. You can truly make it on your own. And we love that, but yeah, I'd change the 365 deals for sure. Also, all venues should pay artist to play and not the other way around.

### **What's the best piece of advice another musician ever gave you?**

Andrea: My guitar teacher Steve Tarshis said, if the band stays together long enough to record an album you're ahead of the curve.

Mark: My guitar teacher from Sam Ash said, your musicality is already inside of you. You just need to learn how to express it on an instrument.

### **What are your plans for next year? Do you have any material ready to be released?**

Andrea: We have a whole bunch of new songs that we're working on! There's no end in sight. We plan on creating a music video for each one of our songs off our new album, Fancy Hercules. Eventually we'd like to create a music video for each song on all of our past albums. But our main focus this year is getting Fancy Hercules into as many ears as possible by the interweb, mail, canoe or pneumatic tube.



Top tracks for Makar



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- 1 Love and Confusion 2:22
- 2 Devil Don't Do Me In 4:15
- 3 Ellipsis 4:40
- 4 I'm Alright 2:17
- 5 Zombies Have Rights Too 4:25
- 6 17 Year Locust 0:35
- 7 I Can't Tell You to Stay 3:33
- 8 Devil in a Dream Part II 3:11
- 9 Then Never 3:04
- 10 What Can I Tell You 1:49

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