

## Land of Talk Bio

After more than two years of touring for their debut release, and having gained and lost a few members, Land of Talk retired to their hometown of Montreal to roll tape on a batch of new songs.

Singer/songwriter/guitarist Elizabeth Powell set about making an album that could encompass a great deal with very little, an aesthetic in stark contrast to the orchestral pop and digi-tweaked indie chic. With bassist Chris McCarron and drummer Andrew Barr (The Slip), the band set up in an old converted church outside of Montreal and recorded 9 songs with the helping hands of Justin Vernon (Bon Iver). The tenth and final track "Troubled" was recorded in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, at Vernon's parents' home.

Land of Talk isn't so banal as to pretend that a new album is a departure, or a disconnected effort from the last. There's a longer narrative at work here and this isn't some paint-by-numbers pop. It's simply a continuation of the internal conversation Powell has been holding with herself since she began this musical lark, more than a decade ago, with a 14 year-old's creaky-voiced acuteness, spouting the uncomfortable truths of a woman thrice her years and many times more guarded.

The album opener, "Yuppy Flu", and the two songs that follow, "Death By Fire" and "The Man Who Breaks Things (Dark Shuffle)", are stealthy nods to Land of Talk's much ballyhooed debut EP *Applause Cheer Boo Hiss*. Powell is as unrelenting in her appraisal of the world as she's ever been, and it's a world as pitifully vengeful as it is lovingly rendered. These songs might easily have sat in tandem with the urgent rawness of the EP tracks but with Powell's sense of story and Vernon's fresh perspective, they find better use on the new album. Here they set a perfect bridge from the jangling dissonance and ferocious doubled voicings of the debut, towards the road-weathered clarity and reflectiveness she has now begun to own so fully—a narrative string from there, to here, and beyond. When the titular track hits four songs in, it's clear why "Some Are Lakes" is the album's anthem call, as much a nostalgic tramp through summers past and love unending as a backhand ode to the very album it appears on. It's a statement of intent with a sea change at its heart.

"It started at a summer lake / a sentence and a name / If only for a moment's sake / We called it and it came" Powell sings. The fierce spotlight of Powell's attention points inward and has begun exposing a more private side of the nascent iconoclast. There's nothing fragile in it. The honesty makes it steel. That in itself is a kind wonder. Where once one might have questioned whether Powell was shielding herself under the gauze and frenzy of her music, songs like "It's Okay," with its Afghan Whigs-inspired soul, and the alt-country amble of "Troubled" prove that she is ready to strike at the heart of even her own cherished conceits, and come out of it fresh, fighting fit and game for putting herself on the line in the spirit of true musical confession.

As a portent of things to come *Some Are Lakes* is nothing short of inspiring. On its own merits, it's simply striking. The simplest things are the hardest to make.