



Top Scores #14: Living With Yourself & Anna Meredith

Description



If you have a Netflix subscription then the likelihood is you know about ***Living With Yourself*** – a hot new comedy-drama starring the lovable **Paul Rudd** alongside the renowned Irish actress and stand-up comedian **Aisling Bea**.

The series follows Miles, a gloomy middle-aged man from the suburbs, who undergoes treatment at ‘Top Happy Spa’ in a desperate attempt to improve his life. However instead of getting the ‘better’ life he had hoped for, he realises that he has been replaced by a cloned ‘better’ version of himself. The show is surreal, unnerving and surprising; a comedy-drama that achieves

hilarity through its absurdity.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5w54yW2Ur50&feature=emb_title

Such a unique and exciting series calls for a boundary-pushing soundtrack: enter **Anna Meredith**.

Contemporary Scottish composer **Anna Meredith** is known for challenging musical tropes and delivering the unanticipated. She originally trained as a classical composer, later evolving into **electronics** and fabricating her own brand of **synth-pop**. Her unique and genre-bending style saw **Meredith** become the first woman ever to be commissioned for both **The First and The Last Night of the BBC Proms** as well as receiving an **MBE** for her services to music. As one of the most exciting contemporary composers of the day her music knows no bounds; she is the perfect artist to tackle the complex existential and abstract themes that lie at the heart of **Living With Yourself**.

Anna Meredith was approached by the series's directors **Jon Dayton** and **Valerie Faris** (*Little Miss Sunshine*) after they saw her **Tiny Desk** concert and recognised her artistic potential. They wanted **Meredith** to use her signature boundary-pushing approach to create the unexpected.

Having worked on several music videos themselves, the directors were very hot on the music. Not only did they want something **totally new** and unpredictable but they wanted a lot of it's fifty cues in total, she recalls [in conversation with NME](#). As a result, the soundtrack neatly weaves together parts of **Meredith's** back-catalogue alongside bespoke compositions.

It features [Nautilus](#), the opening track on her 2016 album [Varmints](#) as well as her 2012 EP [Black Prince Fury](#). The track takes its name from a unique and beautiful underwater mollusk that lives trapped inside a hard external shell. Her track also forges a **sense of entrapment** as two bellowing horns drive each other forward until they are locked into a dramatic stalemate it feels both limitless and doomed. The track's ambivalence sees to its **continuous reincarnation**; it repeatedly takes on new meaning as it crops up in new surroundings. It featured in **Lady Gaga's** documentary **Five Foot Two** as well as the film **Eighth Grade** in which **Meredith** also played composer. [Nautilus](#) circles back on itself in **Living With Yourself**; soundtracking two crucial scenes at the start and end of the series.

Nautilus simultaneously amps up the tension while undercutting it for comedy. It's the perfect accompaniment to the first of many offbeat set-pieces. There's terror and hilarity in those booming synths, and a raucous ensemble of brass and synthetic tones is the mainstay of the show's eclectic, invigorating score. ([Iana Murray, GQ, 2019](#))

Other existing tracks featured throughout the series include the hectic and cumbersome [Bump](#) which appears on **Meredith's** latest critically acclaimed album [FIBS](#). This album was heralded by **The Guardian** as [brimming with contrary combinations, irrelevant genre-bending and serious innovation](#).

Living With Yourself is filled with joy, laughter, fear and sadness just like **Meredith's FIBS** where no two tracks sound the same. As a composer who focuses on **dramatic rhythmic patterns** and **cycles of percussion** that slowly build to create tension, her style is perfectly suited to tell the tale of

Milesâ?? **existential boredom** and **suburban struggle**. Her soundtrack challenges the ordinary, adds comedy to the absurd, and highlights lifeâ??s constant battle of **living with yourself**.

Listen to the soundtrack in full:

Sources:

[Damian Jones \(NME\): â??Enjoying the disquieting music in Netflixâ??s â??Living With Yourselfâ?? Meet Anna Meredith, the accomplished composer behind itâ?•](#)

<https://www.classicfm.com/discover-music/periods-genres/film-tv/living-with-yourself-music-anna-meredith/>

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<https://www.theguardian.com/music/2019/oct/25/anna-meredith-fibs-album-review>