

# BABY ET LULU

On their third record, *Album Trois*, faux-French Australian duo Lara Goodridge and Abby Dobson mix classic *chansons* with original tunes. Marc Andrews reports.

**DNA:** Your new record is probably as close to Paris or France as most Australians are going to get for quite some time.

**Lara:** Indeed. We are their portal or, *le portal*. I'll have to google that! I might be using that a lot now. We're essential workers!

**This is your third album as Baby et Lulu so "third time's the charm"?**

**Lara:** It is very much something we love doing.

**Abby:** We were supposed to do this last year, but we have another tour from October touring Australia nationally, fingers crossed.

“  
We're looking more and more like drag queens, caking on the makeup a bit more every show!

**Where did the idea come from to form a duo?**

**Abby:** It was just a folly. It wasn't a business idea at all. Lara and I found ourselves in Paris at the same time. We'd long been associates and friends because we were in bands together at the same time, then Lara had a record label and signed me for a solo album. We met for a drink in Paris and she was carrying a book about 20th Century *chansons* under her arm and we didn't realise we both spoke and loved the French language. We were just playing with the idea of singing in French, especially because I'd always thought of her as a maestro violinist, not a chanteuse.

**She obviously has many strings to her bow.**

**Abby:** You have no idea! So, we were just floating the idea and a few months later did one song with an accordion on milk crates at a warehouse party that ended up on our first album.

**Does that make you both confirmed Francophiles then?**

**Lara:** Absolutely! Not exactly Francophones but Francophiles. We've both individually had such



a romance with France since childhood.

**Your album is, intriguingly, both covers and originals.**

**Abby:** On the first album we just curated our cover songs and then we decided to write songs. We were surprised by how much the audience often loved our original songs more than the covers. Our originals have been very well-received even by the French.

**The album's first single is *Jardin Aux Souvenirs*, a French language version of *Moon River* from the movie *Breakfast At Tiffany's*.**

**Abby:** We thought it was the perfect melody and sentiment for Baby et Lulu so we hunted for a version. Audrey Hepburn (star of *Breakfast At Tiffany's*) really should have been French.

**You also cover French artists from classic Edith Piaf to recent hitmaker Stromae.**

**Lara:** From the very first show we didn't want to be too niche so have spanned the decades through the three albums.

**Your new album seems tailor-made for a gay audience.**

We often feel like we're looking more and more like drag queens on stage. We're caking on the makeup just that little bit more every show.

**Abby, you previously worked with gay Aussie musical icon Paul Mac.**

**Abby:** That was a lovely, long association I had with Paul. It was a great part of my life touring and making records with Paul.

**Lara:** I'm in the middle of doing a masters at the Conservatorium and had Paul Mac as my one-on-one teacher for two years, which was amazing. He's just finished his PhD, too.

**Could Baby et Lulu be gay icons in the future?**

**Lara:** I would love that. It would be so beautiful. The *joie de vivre* that Baby et Lulu embodies is so much a part of the gay community. That celebration of life and connection and joy... and so often through music.

**When you two get together do you converse in French?**

**Lara:** Never! We do if we are telling each other secrets in front of the band or if we see someone cute in the audience. Abby has lived in France in different periods of her life and I have studied French into post-grad so we do understand and speak it but not like a well-oiled machine. We have fooled some French people into thinking we are French though!

**MORE:** Album Trois is available now in Australia. For more go to [babyetlulu.com.au](http://babyetlulu.com.au)