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ALBUM REVIEW

Shlomo Franklin Mines Emotional Gold

[Shlomo Franklin \(/artist/shlomo-franklin\)](/artist/shlomo-franklin) - [_\(/album/dont-love-anybody-ep\)](/album/dont-love-anybody-ep)



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MAY 28, 2018

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A great album assaults you with its honesty. It's almost like a punch, where you observe something important is happening, but don't feel it until after it happened and you've processed it a little bit. Shlomo Franklin's EP, *Don't Love Anybody*, is a punch you don't see coming (and that you enjoy--I'm assuming if you're reading this, you're not in a fight club). Franklin is from upstate New York, the product of a Hasidic community. His voice isn't traditionally beautiful, but there's an honesty and desperation to it, and his lyrics, that's positively addictive.

On "Waltz for You," a country-tinged track, he sings "I'm a fool for you / We both know it's true / I'd throw my whole life away / Just for you," and his tone tells you that he's totally serious. Even "About Last Night," which is a little more optimistic musically, is harrowing lyrically: "I don't want to face those teary eyes / And I don't want to talk about / I don't want to talk about last night."

The production is just as honest and intense. Franklin's acoustic guitar provides the shape of most of the songs, but there are lots of nice accompaniments, like the strings on "About Last Night." "Don't Love Anybody" has a pretty slide riff that sounds a lot like Santo and Johnny's "Sleep Walk." "Cruel Intentions" even has some distorted electric guitar textures.

Together, the directness of the vocals and the Zen-like production, where not a sound is wasted nor is any instrument carelessly placed into the mix, combine for a special album. Shlomo Franklin is a great songwriter but his ability to tap into the emotional center of his lyrics also makes him a great performer. *Don't Love Anybody* is an intense but worthy listen.



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