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Leigh-Anne Pinnock Is Excited to 'Unlock' Her 'Potential' with Solo Music Outside of Little Mix (Exclusive)

"When you're in a group, there's only so much you can show of yourself," the "Don't Say Love" singer tells PEOPLE at the 2023 BET Awards

By **Nathan Vinson** | Published on June 25, 2023 08:40PM EDT





Leigh-Anne Pinnoch. PHOTO: JOHNNY NUNEZ/GETTY IMAGES FOR BET

Over a year since [Little Mix](#) announced its hiatus, [Leigh-Anne Pinnock](#) is exploring solo stardom with her debut single, "Don't Say Love."

The British singer-songwriter spoke to PEOPLE about the new song and her upcoming album on the 2023 BET Awards red carpet on Sunday, noting that she's excited to "show everybody what I'm made of."

"I feel good. The reception to the single's been incredible. I'm excited to be in the States promoting it, and just seeing everyone's reaction has just been amazing," Pinnock, 31, tells PEOPLE. "It's been fun."

Released earlier this month, "Don't Say Love" was co-written by the recently-married musician alongside Gregory Aldae Hein, Jon Bellion, Jimmie Gutch and Pete Nappi. It's a dance-pop song with elements of U.K. garage sounds, marking a slight departure from Little Mix's signature style while remaining familiar to longtime listeners.

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But Pinnock says the song is merely the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the sound of her upcoming debut solo album. "For me, it was important to incorporate the genres that I've loved listening to growing up and even now," she says of her new music's inspiration. "So, reggae, R&B, Afrobeats, a little bit of garage."

"I wanted to fuse these genres and put my stamp on it. I'm really excited for the album," she teases. "It's coming together really nicely."

With the upcoming project, Pinnock says fans will get to see a side of her that she wasn't able to fully express in Little Mix. "I definitely think there's a lot more to Leigh-Anne than you even know," she notes.



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"When you're in a group, there's only so much you can show of yourself, so I think that's the exciting part," she says of the "Confetti" trio, which also includes [Perrie Edwards](#) and [Jade Thirlwall](#). (Original fourth member [Jesy Nelson](#) [left the group](#) in November 2020.)

Pinnock adds, "I get to unlock all this potential now and show everybody what I'm made of and what I can do."

In December 2021, Little Mix announced that the band would be [taking a break following their 2022 tour](#) as they assured fans that they were "not splitting up."



Little Mix. PHOTO: JEFF SPICER/GETTY

"We wanted to let you all know that after the Confetti tour in April/May next year we are going to be taking a break from Little Mix," the group wrote at the time. "It's been 10 amazing years, a wonderful non-stop adventure, and we feel the time is right to take a break so we can recharge and work on some other projects."

The "Shout Out to My Ex" performers thanked their fans for the love and "never-ending support" since their start on *The X Factor* in 2011.

"We are not splitting up - Little Mix are here to stay," the group clarified. "We have plans for more music, tours and performances in the future. We've made so many incredible memories with you all, and we can't wait to make so many more."

Originally written by [Jack Irvin](#)