

ALDORA BRITAIN RECORDS

The Global Independent and Underground Music e-Zine
Issue 109, Wednesday 19th July 2023
"Tomorrow's Music Today"

FEATURING THE SOUNDS OF...

Joel Murach, JunkBond, La Tragedie, M.X.
Turner, Of Conscious Mind, David Futur, Palila,
Sargassi, Peter Lehndorff, and Alex Wurlitzer

Compiled and written by Tom Hilton

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“We all deserve a chance to join in the dance...”

Jacob Tucker, Grey Star Ghost

Highlight of The Day

This week's 'best of', the 'greatest hits' package. Our featured artists discuss origin stories, their influences, the sounds of tomorrow, and much more.



Joel Murach, solo artist: *"Sometimes I start with the words, sometimes the music. Sometimes both come to me at the same time. Sometimes they come in a flash, like a bolt of lightning. Other times, I peck away at a song for years until it feels like it is done."*

Simon Roberts, JunkBond: *"I decided to just start recording these song orphans I had lying around ... This gave me the energy I needed to see lockdown through and allowed me the opportunity to get this music that I love on tape at last."*

David Atman, La Tragedie: *"I'm bored by metal bands who can't play anything smooth. I'm bored by post-rock bands who can't be more aggressive or sloppy once in a while. I want La Tragedie to be loud and soft, sometimes within the same song."*

M.X. Turner, solo artist and The Spunk Lads: *"It's simple. I get bored with an entire album of the same kind of song. I know producers and labels want that ... I cut my musical teeth on musicians that put out albums full of variety."*

Beth Svahn-Monroe, Of Conscious Mind: *"The lyrics are inspired by my own journey ... acknowledging the usefulness of music and songwriting as a healthy outlet for big feelings."*

David Futur, solo artist: *"I began to experiment with electronic tools ... and I really enjoyed it. That gave me many new ideas ... I began writing several songs. Then I thought it could be a good idea to go further down this path."*

Mattze, Palila: *"We love good music but we also think that a good song doesn't necessarily need perfection ... With Palila, we simply try to play, throw stuff up against the wall, and see what sticks."*

Gabriele Martelloni, Sargassi: *"Sargassi was officially born in 2019. I had written mostly acoustic songs, different from the sound of my historic band ... It's an open project because different musicians collaborate."*

Peter Lehndorff, solo artist: *"I really didn't know what I was doing or even what chords I was playing. I would just move my fingers around until I could solve what I was thinking. I learned from listening to Peter, Paul and Mary records and Tom Rush. That led me to playing blues and a few jazz chords."*

Alex Wurlitzer, solo artist: *"I didn't know who to trust back then and my heart kept telling me that these songs were real. So, I went by that. I didn't know much, but I loved these songs. I started learning guitar, self-taught."*



I Was Born in California

The brilliant legacy of California's singer-songwriters is still very much alive and thriving. Hailing from Fresno, **JOEL MURACH** is a voice for today's generation with a rootsy inclination. Having served his apprenticeship thrashing out classic garage rock gems with his brother, Joel has taken a diversion to a subtler destination. His current output is emotive, intensely relatable, and tender in equal measure. *Lost in the Last Light* is the quintessential example of this. Released in January 2022, this record, featuring eighteen tracks, is a spellbinding snapshot of Californian songcraft with a fresh and modern twist. Tracks such as 'Yellow Green', 'Old Black Crow', and 'A Beautiful Day at the Playground' stand out from the overcrowded realms of contemporary singer-songwriter Americana, each highlighting different aspects of Joel's natural flair, songcraft, and musicianship. Earlier this month, Joel took some time out from his current schedule to reflect on the making of *Lost in the Last Light*. We also take time to discuss his musical roots and his current influences and inspirations.

Joel Murach has previously contributed his track 'Old Black Crow' to our 'Rock & Roll's Different Shapes & Sizes' compilation. Listen or download [HERE](#).

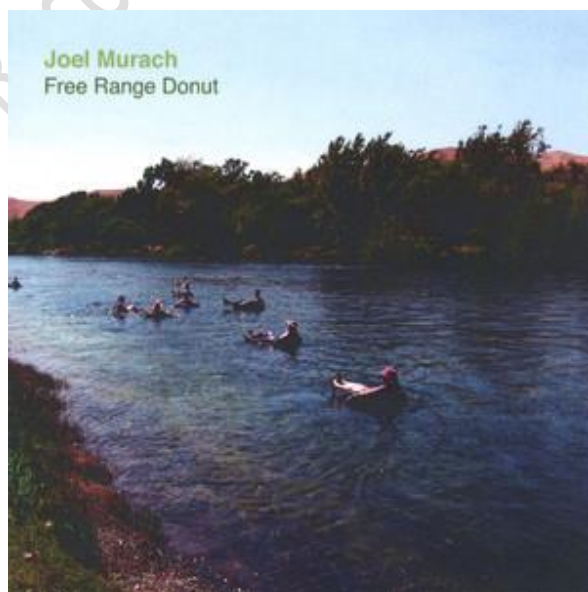
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Aldora Britain Records: Hi Joel, how are you? It is a real pleasure to be talking to such a brilliant contemporary songwriter and musician. I was wondering if we could start off by travelling back in time. What are some of your earliest musical memories and what was it that first pushed you towards pursuing this passion of yours?

Joel Murach: Hi Tom. I'm doing well these days, and I'm flattered that you like my songwriting. To answer your question, one of my earliest musical memories is my dad singing around the house. He wasn't musically trained, but he had a great voice and he loved to sing. He had a rough childhood, and I think singing made him feel better about life. He loved musicals, so my first exposure to many of those great songs was my dad singing them around the house. Another early musical memory is of my mom deciding to learn the piano when I was about ten or so. The only time she had to practice was after me and my brothers went to bed, so I remember drifting off to sleep while she practiced a handful of classical tunes that she eventually learned. I think I figured if she could learn to play music, so could I.

When I was about ten, my mom took me and my brothers to the record store and said we could get three records. We got one Elvis record, *Live in Las Vegas*; one Beatles record, *Rock 'n' Roll Music*; and one Beach Boys record, *20 Golden Greats*. To be honest, those were the only three bands that we'd ever heard of. We played those records so many times we wore them out, and I eventually became fascinated by The Beatles, and that's what pushed me towards wanting to learn how to write songs and play music. It seemed like they knew the answers to all of life's mysteries. And when I was about twelve or thirteen, I decided that I wanted to learn how to do what they did.

Aldora Britain Records: I am a huge fan of your songwriting and songcraft. Your songs have such a relatable feel, and that means a lot as a listener and a music fan. How do you approach your creative process? Do you have a set method? Are you drawn to any themes or topics in particular? Perhaps coming from a personal or observational standpoint?



“Sometimes I start with the words, sometimes the music. Sometimes both come to me at the same time. Sometimes they come in a flash, like a bolt of lightning. Other times, I peck away at a song for years until it feels like it is done.”

Joel Murach: I don't have a set process. I just try to write some words or music that makes me feel something. I start by trying to get a few lines or a melody or a riff that I like. Then, I follow the thread until it leads to a song. Sometimes I start with the words, sometimes the music. Sometimes both come to me at the same time. Sometimes they come in a flash, like a bolt of lightning. Other times, I peck away at a song for years until it feels like it is done. I try to write a lot, so I can throw out the stuff I don't like. I try to play with other people because that helps me to see whether a song really works. And I try to play live because that also helps me see whether a song is working.

Lyricaly, I try to write about my own life experiences because I want my songs to be real. My hope is that subjects that resonate with me will also resonate with others. I still sing from other points of view sometimes, and I use plenty of artistic license, but I try to keep it grounded in something that I have experienced. I was born in California, and I have lived here my whole life, so that's a key part of my experience. Because of that, my songs have a lot of references to California. I guess you could call me a regional songwriter.

In my early songwriting days, I wrote a lot of songs that were mostly landscapes with just a hint of a character lurking off to the side. But the emotion in the song came from the way the character viewed the landscape. If I were a painter, I'd probably paint landscapes. I guess I'm always trying to paint a picture with my songs. Lately, I seem to have become interested in light and waves, maybe because I spend a fair amount of time surfing and thinking about how waves work.



Aldora Britain Records: In 2022, you released a fantastic album called *Lost in the Last Light*. This was my introduction to your music, so it still holds a very special place in my collection. What are your memories from writing, recording and releasing it, and how would you say you reflect back on it as a whole now?

Joel Murach: I'm glad you like *Lost in the Last Light*. I think it's the best album I've made since I made *Lucky One Way* back in 2009. The writing for *Lost in the Last Light* was spread out over many years. Since about 2010, I have been accumulating songs that didn't really work with my old band The Low Rollers. So, I had a bunch of songs that I wanted to record. And then The Low Rollers broke up, and I moved from San Francisco to Santa Cruz, and the COVID pandemic hit. I was making demos of the old songs, so I wouldn't forget how they went, and then I hit a good stretch of songwriting, which was probably spurred on by the excitement of

being in a new place and having a lot of extra downtime courtesy of the pandemic.

I had about thirty demos recorded, and I didn't know what to do with them, so I ran them by one of my favourite local songwriters, Joe Rut. He picked about fourteen or so that he liked, and he helped me improve them. He was riding out the pandemic at a cabin near Yosemite and he invited me up there to record the voice and guitar for the songs. I went up there and he recorded me playing guitar and singing for most of the songs over the course of a weekend. It's always great to make music with Joe and it brought back a lot of memories since I had recorded my first solo album with him at that cabin back in 2003.

Anyhow, I brought the guitar and voice tracks home and loaded them onto my computer. This was still in the middle of the pandemic, so I had this idea that I could get some of the musical friends that I've made over about thirty-five

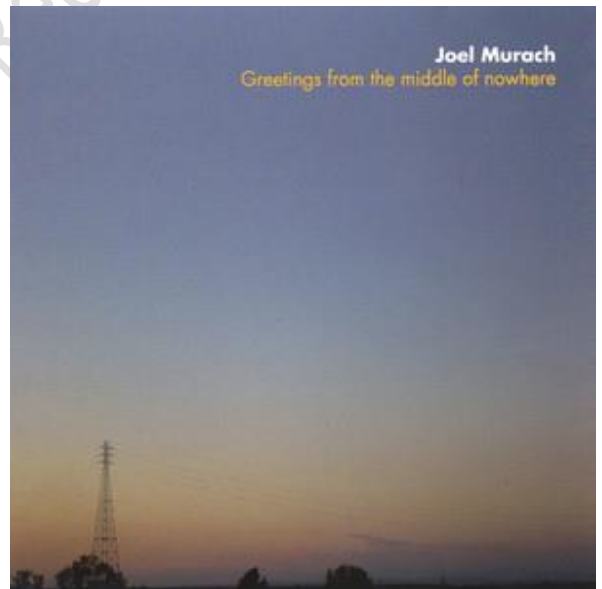
“This was still in the middle of the pandemic, so I had this idea that I could get some of the musical friends that I’ve made over about thirty-five years of playing music to contribute ... I thought it would be cool to try to get a wide range of friends that spanned from high school to the present.”

years of playing music to contribute tracks to make the arrangements for the guitar, and also the voice tracks, more interesting. I thought it would be cool to try to get a wide range of friends that spanned from high school to the present, from old friends in the San Francisco music scene to new friends that I’ve met here in Santa Cruz. So, I started emailing tracks out to friends and I started getting tracks back from them. This turned out to be a lot of work and it took me a year or so to complete, but I was thrilled with the results.

I mixed the album myself, a first for me. Then, I released it by making some CDs and putting it up on Bandcamp, which is how you found me. As I reflect on it now, I like how this album shows the transition that I made from San Francisco to Santa Cruz, in both lyrical content and in the musicians who participated in the overdubbing process. I think the songs tell the story of this change in a non-linear way, and that’s kind of cool, at least to me.

Aldora Britain Records: I am a big fan of the album, from top to bottom, but I would like to pick out some personal favourites. Let’s go for ‘Yellow Green’ and ‘Old Black Crow’. For each, what is the story behind the song and can you remember the moment it came to be? Did anything in particular inspire them and what do they mean to you as the writer?

Joel Murach: ‘Yellow Green’ has a long story to it. I wrote the opening riff in the early 90s. It was supposed to be a song for my old band Paddlefoot, but I couldn’t figure out how to turn it into a song. But the riff stuck with me, and I finally came up with a melody and some words for it in 2019 or so. Unfortunately, I didn’t like the words. I had been writing a lot of songs at that time and I had exhausted my lyrical toolbox. I was just going over the same ground that I always go over. It was something about driving around near the ocean or something like that. So, I decided to look for some fresh new ideas from another source.



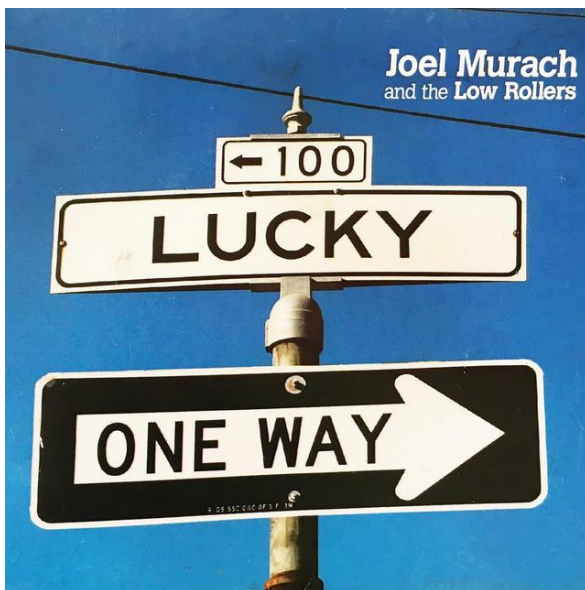
As it turned out, my friend Mike DeCapite, who is one of my favourite writers of all time, had sent me a rough draft of his latest novel, *Jacket Weather*, and it was sitting on my desk. So, I paged through it until I came upon a paragraph that seemed like it was right for the song. His words mostly fit my melody, so I just had to make a couple of small adjustments and add one line and the song was done. I love it. I would’ve never come up with phrases like ‘in the bleached light of spring’. Interestingly enough, Mike’s editors cut the paragraph that I used from the novel, so it isn’t in the published version, only in the rough draft that I had. So, I guess it’s good that I got some of his brilliant writing out into the world, even in a different form.

The story behind ‘Old Black Crow’ is shorter, ha! I was just messing around with some alternate tunings since I had extra time on my hands during the pandemic. I tried this D-A-D-A-A-D tuning, and I then came up with the guitar fingerpicking for the tune. I started singing nonsense words over the guitar part and ‘old black crow you’ll never know’ jumped out, probably because the house where I live in Santa Cruz is part way up a hill where there are a bunch of crows around. Anyway, I just followed the thread and the rest of the lyrics tumbled out. I distinctly remember finishing the third verse while jogging on a trail through the redwood trees. The words are a bit abstract, but it’s easy to see how they were inspired by the loneliness of the pandemic years.

“I went through a blues phase, a folk phase, a country phase, and an alt rock and post-punk phase. But really, it’s all just music, and now I just try to play whatever seems right to me.”

Aldora Britain Records: I love your tender and heartfelt approach to Americana. It is a sound that I need more of in my life! Especially with your strong country and folk leanings. How would you say this style of yours came about, what goes into it for you, and who are some of your biggest influences and inspirations as an artist?

Joel Murach: I started out playing in a rock band when I was in high school, but a lot of rock music is based on blues and country and folk, and I later got into the source music. I went through a blues phase, a folk phase, a country phase, and an alt rock and post-punk phase. But really, it’s all just music, and now I just try to play whatever seems right to me. I have too many influences and inspirations to list, but I’ve always gravitated towards songwriters who write great lyrics such as Bob Dylan, John Prine, Tom Waits, and Paul Simon.



Aldora Britain Records: You made a big move to Santa Cruz in 2019, a chance to ‘dust off’ your alternative folk songs. How would you say you have grown and evolved as an artist since the move? It is never easy to set up in new surroundings either. What are some of the challenges and obstacles that you have faced as an independent artist?

Joel Murach: I think moving to Santa Cruz has helped me grow by letting me see how my songs work in a new context. Fortunately, it seems like most of them still work pretty well! I’ve been really lucky since I moved here. My brother who plays drums also moved to Santa Cruz, and I have met a bunch of people to play music with. I started a new band called Lefty that includes my brother on drums. And I’m playing bass in a Velvet Underground tribute band called the Velvet Underpants. I wish there were more small and medium sized clubs for independent artists to play around here,

but Lefty has been playing once a month or so at a nearby microbrewery and that has been great. I hope we can keep that going for a long time.

Quickfire Round

AB Records: Favourite artist? **Joel:** After all these years, I still love The Beatles.

AB Records: Favourite album? **Joel:** *Up on the Sun* by the Meat Puppets.

AB Records: First gig as an audience member? **Joel:** R.E.M.

AB Records: Loudest gig as an audience member? **Joel:** I don’t remember the name of the band, but I once saw a show at Under Acme in New York City where the band was so loud that the soundwaves pinned me against the wall.

AB Records: Style icon? **Joel:** Unfortunately, style is a blind spot for me.

AB Records: Favourite film? **Joel:** *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest*.

AB Records: Favourite TV show? **Joel:** *The Wire*.

AB Records: Favourite underground artist? **Joel:** Joe Rut, a singer-songwriter from Oakland.

Wrong Side of the Line

Sheffield musician Simon Roberts is an artistic mind who is always tinkering away, perfecting his latest composition. This has been his habit for the last twenty-five years, a creative period that has led to an astonishing record, his brilliant 2022 masterpiece, *Spring the Locks*, released under the penname of **JUNKBOND**. The LP is an amalgamation of all of Simon's eclectic musical influences, as listeners would expect from an album that was written over the course of two decades. Everything from Soundgarden and Radiohead to Elvis Costello and Crowded House. *Spring the Locks* is also the sound of time and growth, a fantastically crafted soundtrack of adulthood and beyond. Tracks such as 'Wrong Side of the Line' and 'Laughter Lines' testify to this, underground gems from the alternative rock universe. During a break from new recordings, Simon had a chat with *Aldora Britain Records*, specifically reflecting back on the process that paved the way for *Spring the Locks*. That conversation is published here for the first time.

JunkBond have previously contributed their track 'Laughter Lines' to our 'Rock & Roll's Different Shapes & Sizes' compilation. Listen or download [HERE](#).

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Aldora Britain Records: Hello Simon, how are you? I am excited to be talking about JunkBond today. I am a big fan of what you do with this project. I was wondering if we could start off by rewinding the clocks. What are some of your earliest musical memories and what was it that first pushed you towards pursuing this passion of yours?

Simon Roberts: Hi Tom, I'm very well, so thanks for talking to me. Glad you like the music. Going back to the start for me, as with most people, has to be about my parents' tastes and the kind of things we listened to on cassettes during car journeys. The Beatles, Blondie, Paul Simon, Dire Straits, Elton John. So, a good melodic pedigree right off the bat. I do also remember playing air guitar in my pyjamas with my little brother, playing along to Duran Duran. So, there was a rich vein of pop music going through my childhood. I started playing guitar as a teen, became obsessed with heavy metal, the big four plus things like Sepultura, Pantera, White Zombie, and somehow combined The Beatles with Metallica in my writing, which started in my late teens, early twenties. I found, once I started, I wrote prolifically and the passion grew from there, creating and consuming as much music as possible.



“I decided to just start recording these song orphans I had lying around ... This gave me the energy I needed to see lockdown through and allowed me the opportunity to get this music that I love on tape at last.”

Aldora Britain Records: And now, let’s fast forward to the present day and your fantastic JunkBond outlet. The early days of this project must have been such an exciting time, especially after twenty-five years of writing. How did it come to be? What was the initial spark? Is it more of an outlet for your solo musings or a collaborative kind of effort?

Simon Roberts: I have been in several bands. bRoKeN fAcE, The Letter, Morricone Dancehall, O Battery Chang. I have recorded and released music with all of them, but I’ve always written more material than got ‘used’, so there has been a backlog of tunes that never quite found a home over the twenty-five plus years that I’ve been doing this. My current band, The Farewell State, had several failed attempts to record an album over the course of the twelve years we’ve been together, and in 2019, COVID was the latest reason the album sessions were canned. So, rather than get depressed about it going wrong again, I decided to just start recording these song orphans I had lying around under an alter ego, and JunkBond was born. The name is linked to the idea of the songs being a ‘bad debt’, but also, it’s just lifted from an Elliott Smith track, ‘Junk Bond Trader’. This gave me the energy I needed to see lockdown through and allowed me the opportunity to get this music that I love on tape at last.

Tom Henthorn, who produced the album, is someone I’ve known a long time, and some of my first professional recordings were done with him, so the project was a good excuse to reconnect with him. Even though it was a ‘solo’ LP, the project was highly collaborative as we have always had a marvellous creative back and forth. Tom was between studios when we started JunkBond, meaning a little guerrilla recording work was required to make it happen. Drum sessions in one place, guitars in another, vocals here, bass there. It was huge amounts of fun! As well as Tom, I got some of my ex-bandmates in to add drums, guitars, even harmonica. Using Tom’s contacts, we had a father and son horn duo come in for one track, adding trumpet and trombone. That was probably my favourite session of the whole album because it was so unexpected and beyond my wildest dreams for that song when I first wrote it.



Aldora Britain Records: In early 2022, you released your album, the impeccable *Spring the Locks*. A brilliant set! And, as we have said, twenty-five years in the making. What are your memories from writing, recording and releasing this set, and how do you reflect back on it as a whole now? Is there anything that you would edit or change?

Simon Roberts: Looking back, three years on from recording, I am still so pleased with the album. It was done in two parts. Four tracks were constructed over one year, the other four took another twelve months. The first set of songs were done very much on the fly due to the location-hopping and lockdown. The second set was a bit more labour intensive but were all done in Tom’s studio that he acquired during that time. That is where he is fully settled now in Sheffield, Make Noise Studios. It’s an amazing hub of music and community that comes highly recommended.

As for writing *Spring the Locks*, the songs were created over twenty-five years, so each one has its own story. I did a series called ‘Song Evolution’ on the JunkBond Soundcloud page, which is a load of playlists with the various demos of the album tracks. From scrappy Dictaphone recordings through multi-track tests to the final studio versions. Putting out a ‘solo’ album was never really planned but COVID and lockdown allowed me the opportunity to do it and I’m incredibly pleased and proud of the collection and how I made the best of a bad situation. I wouldn’t change any of it.

“Alternative rock in the 90s was a big thing for me. The combination of noise and melody appeals to the two halves of my musical brain.”

Aldora Britain Records: I love the sound of the project. It has a driving alternative rock foundation but travels in many different directions too. How did this style come about, what goes into it for you, and who are some of your biggest influences and inspirations as an artist? I have a feeling it may be quite an eclectic list.

Simon Roberts: Alternative rock in the 90s was a big thing for me. The combination of noise and melody appeals to the two halves of my musical brain. I love catchy choruses and layered vocals, but I love a good riff with masses of distortion. So, that influence is very much at the front of *Spring the Locks*. My favourite artists are the ones who straddle that same balance of light and dark. Soundgarden, Radiohead, Bob Mould, Sparklehorse, Neil Young, Elvis Costello, Metallica, J. Robbins, The Afghan Whigs to name a few. While my tastes are firmly rooted in rock music, I'm into other things too like DJ Shadow, Boards of Canada, Neil Finn, Acoustic Ladyland.



Aldora Britain Records: I would like to pick out some personal favourites from the record now. Let's go for 'Wrong Side of the Line' and 'Laughter Lines'. For each, what is the story behind the song and can you remember the moment it came to be? Did anything in particular inspire them and what do they mean to you as the writer?

Simon Roberts: 'Wrong Side...' was something I toyed with for many years. When The Farewell State started twelve years ago, it was one of the acoustic songs I had on the go, but it was missing a good arrangement, which got ironed out with the band and it was in the live set for a couple of years. The song comes from quite a bad place, however. The subject matter is that of a dysfunctional relationship and how it had gone beyond saving. So, lyrically and musically, it is very much an exorcism of all that, and by 2013, I was in a much better place personally. So, singing this song just wasn't something I felt I could do anymore, so it was dropped and there it stayed for about five years until JunkBond happened and I couldn't pass up the opportunity to finally do the song justice. Laying those old ghosts to rest. Now when I play it, the song comes from a more cathartic place, a celebration of my past, good and bad alike.

'Laughter Lines' is the polar opposite of 'Wrong Side...'. A song that came very quickly and from a much more positive place. The subject matter is growing old, but still having that spark to create. However, instead of fighting against the world, you are fighting for it because you have something good in your personal life after many years in the doldrums. Musically, it just came together superfast and wouldn't leave my head for days. A proper earworm. I was convinced it was someone else's tune I'd accidentally lifted because it was so catchy!

Aldora Britain Records: You have been writing original music for over two decades now. What draws you to this creative pursuit? I hear many songwriters talking about the cathartic quality. Are you drawn to particular themes or topics? Perhaps from a personal, observational or fictional standpoint?

Simon Roberts: Inspiration is best when you don't force it. I've written a lot of songs over the years but the ones that stick are the ones where they just kind of happen. That's not to say they all pop out of my head fully formed. There's some that do but others have to go back on the shelf while you live life and gain the experience to finish them. 'Blessed or Cursed' on the album is a prime example of this. I had it kicking around for about eight years but just couldn't finish it, and then, after some mental and physical issues one year, I picked up the guitar and the missing piece just came to me and that's what you hear on the LP.

“Inspiration is best when you don’t force it. I’ve written a lot of songs over the years but the ones that stick are the ones where they just kind of happen ... There’s some that do but others have to go back on the shelf while you live life and gain the experience to finish them.”

My songs have one theme really and that’s the ‘silver lining’. I’m not one for total despair, I have to have some hope in the mix. Aside from that, it’s all personal feelings and emotions and you never know where the lightning bolt will hit you, so having the technology to get the ideas down fast is also hugely inspiring. The scope of which I can now flesh things out is such an improvement from the old days of toiling away over a hot multi-track. I can see the next JunkBond album being done in my home studio now, which is very exciting and liberating.

Quickfire Round

AB Records: Favourite artist? **Simon:** Soundgarden. The perfect blend of loud and quiet, hard and soft, weird and wonderful.

AB Records: Favourite album? **Simon:** *Superunknown*, the best album from the best band.

AB Records: First gig as an audience member? **Simon:** Guns n’ Roses, Faith no More, Soundgarden at Manchester Maine Road in 1992. The first steps into a wider world of rock and roll.

AB Records: Loudest gig as an audience member? **Simon:** Metallica, Sheffield Arena, 1992. It deafened me for a week but set me up to withstand pretty much anything in live music!

AB Records: Style icon? **Simon:** Ha! Never, ever been asked that! Not that I have much style but Chris Cornell, RIP.

AB Records: Favourite film? **Simon:** *Blade Runner* or *Blues Brothers*, depending on my mood.

AB Records: Favourite TV show? **Simon:** Currently, *Ghosts* on BBC. But of all time, probably *The Wire*.

AB Records: Favourite underground artist? **Simon:** My friend Mathew records amazing music as Neuri. His album *Wood Skin Wire* is a thing of dark beauty with many twists and turns.



Diligence

Quebec in Canada is home to a rich tapestry of creative minds and artists. David Atman, and his band **LA TRAGEDIE**, are very much part of this boundary-pushing underground scene. Promoting an enticing blend of French-language experimentation, driving post-punk, traditional elements of the chanson genre, and avant-garde rock and roll, La Tragedie have intrigued audiences with their brilliant approach to musical conception. This has been captured exquisitely on offerings such as 2020's *En Decrochant Neptune*, and more recently, 2022's *Couper les Cordages*. Further essential listening can be found in the form of David's fantastic solo record, *La Gestion Calculee de L'energie*. Back in March 2022, David Atman took some time out of his musical schedule to chat with *Aldora Britain Records* about his musical journey and growth to date. With upcoming shows scheduled in Quebec throughout August and September, it seems like the perfect chance to publish that conversation for the very first time.

La Tragedie have previously contributed their track 'La Derape' to our 'Dear Rowdy' compilation. Listen or download [HERE](#).

If you enjoy this content, please consider making a small, magazine-sized donation at the following link: <https://paypal.me/aldorabritainrecords>. Thank you!

Aldora Britain Records: Hi David, how are you? It is a real pleasure to be talking to such a talented and diverse artist today. Thank you for your time! I was wondering if we could start off by rewinding the clocks. What are some of your earliest musical memories and what first pushed you towards pursuing this passion of yours?

David Atman: As long as I can remember, I've been playing music and dreaming about being in a band and touring. At around twenty years old, my first band, a grunge quartet, was getting a bit more serious and that's when we started booking tours outside of our province, playing anywhere we could. We played a house show one time in a small suburban city near Toronto called Lindsay. We played for a small crowd of no more than fifteen kids. That show changed our lives forever. What was amazing about it was that the kids were yelling and moshing inside the house. I got the name Lindsay tattooed on my arm to help me remember how my career began all those years ago, and to remind myself that it's way more fun to play for fifteen people, who are really into the music, rather than for an indifferent larger audience.



Photo by Anne Lamarque.

“It’s way more fun to play for fifteen people, who are really into the music, rather than for an indifferent larger audience.”

Aldora Britain Records: I would now like to fast forward to the brilliant La Tragedie quartet. A great band with a great style! How did the group first come to be? How did you meet the other guys and what was the spark that brought you together musically?

David Atman: The band La Tragedie has been playing for a decade now. We had a few lineup changes before settling with the current members. There is an age gap between the band members, so we have differences when it comes to our main musical influences. When we first got together, I’d say that we were really into the bands Isis, Mars Volta, and Tool. Our appreciation of those three bands has shaped who we are as a band.

Aldora Britain Records: *En Decrochant Neptune* was the record that you released in 2020 with La Tragedie. It is a really interesting project that ties into a novel that you have also written. Can you tell me a bit about this, how it came together, and how the music and the book complement each other?

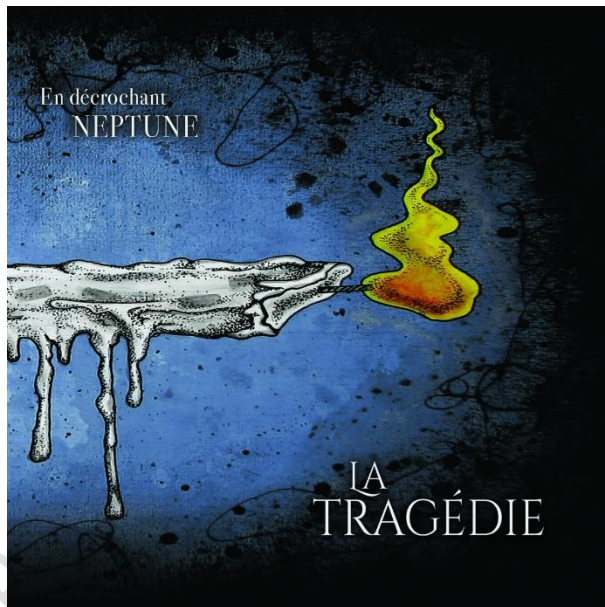
David Atman: I’ve been working on my novel *La Gestion Calculee de L’energie* for over ten years before it was released by an editor, LDG Editions, specialising in novels based on music-related topics in Toulouse, France. I worked on the novel in between touring gigs with my band. While on tour, you spend most of your days either driving or waiting for your show. The novel is about touring and the touring lifestyle. Near the end of the writing process, while I was doing the editing, I realised I could use scenes from the book as inspiration for new songs. I got really inspired by the novel, much more than I anticipated, and I decided to write the whole album based on the book. The album and the novel are two distinct pieces of art, but they respond to each other like a conversation.

Aldora Britain Records: I think the album represents the diverse and varied sound of La Tragedie. You list folk, prog, grunge, and psychedelia as important touching stones. How would you say the band’s style has developed, what goes into it, and who are your biggest influences as a band?

David Atman: As I said before, we all have very different influences. I think that is precisely what gives us a unique sound. I get really bored by bands who keep releasing the same kind of album over and over again. I’m bored by metal bands who can’t play anything smooth. I’m bored by post-rock bands who can’t be more aggressive or sloppy once in a while. I want La Tragedie to be loud and soft, sometimes within the same song. I’m a huge fan of the hardcore band Converge, and I mostly enjoy their softer, slower songs. La Tragedie is the Francophone, Quebecois, post-modern equivalent of Jim Morrison’s project, which aimed to infuse rock music with poetry. Our goal is to make art. We don’t follow a specific style or trend, and a record deal wouldn’t make us change direction. We aren’t entertainers, we’re artists. We are also influenced by many local Francophone artists from Quebec, but our sound is similar to a mix of King Crimson and PJ Harvey.

Aldora Britain Records: I would also like to touch on your brilliant solo LP, *La Gestion Calculee de L’energie*. I really enjoyed this one too! What are your memories from writing, recording and releasing this album, and how do you reflect on it now as a whole?

David Atman: My first solo spoken word album project wasn’t planned. The pandemic forced us to stop our activities, and I was looking for a way to keep creative juices flowing. A good friend of mine Thomas Simon Saddier, a French musician and record label founder, loved the novel and offered to create ambient music to make a spoken word album



“I’m bored by metal bands who can’t play anything smooth. I’m bored by post-rock bands who can’t be more aggressive or sloppy once in a while. I want La Tragedie to be loud and soft, sometimes within the same song.”

with me. We thought we’d be writing and recording three or four tracks, but we ended up writing eighteen. We even transformed the album into a spoken word show that was presented for the first time in February. Although the words are the same, the spoken word album offers the listener a different experience from the reader’s experience with the novel. It’s like when you’re reading the novel, you’re inside my head. But when you’re listening to the album, it’s more like I’m sitting right next to you as I empty my soul. There’s a shift in perspective.

Aldora Britain Records: ‘Les Furoncles de Bukowski’ is my favourite song off that record. What is the story behind this track, what inspired it, and what does it mean to you?

David Atman: That song refers to a part of the novel where the characters are on tour and end up crashing in somebody’s home. But this place is just dirty, smelly, and just plain disgusting, but it’s the only place where they can stay. Even though the characters haven’t showered in three days and have spent all their time driving and giving concerts, the place is so squalid that they don’t want to take a shower in case they end up feeling dirtier than before. So, that chapter is about being broke and dirty and having nowhere to take a shit. Charles Bukowski’s writing was about that. So, this song is called ‘Bukowski’s Pimples’, which he described as inhumane in his autobiography.

Quickfire Round

AB Records: Favourite artist? **David:** The Doors. Morrison changed my life by showing me all the possibilities one can have with words. I started reading his favourite authors and now I’m a French literature graduate, and I have Nietzsche’s face tattooed on my arm, right above my Lindsay tattoo.

AB Records: Favourite album? **David:** I can’t choose only one. *An American Prayer* by Jim Morrison, *OK Computer* by Radiohead, *In Utero* by Nirvana, *Gone Again* by Patti Smith, and *Transmission* by The Tea Party.

AB Records: First gig as an audience member? **David:** Radiohead at the end of the 90s with Spiritualized.

AB Records: Style icon? **David:** I don’t care how I look. I don’t care how you look.

AB Records: Favourite film? **David:** *Almost Famous* and *Dazed and Confused*.

AB Records: Favourite up and coming artist? **David:** You guys should give a listen to Charlotte Brousseau, a wonderful artist from Quebec City who just released her first EP.



Photo by Anne Lamarque.

For You, Darlin', The World

A punk at heart with a newfound folk sensibility. This is the essence of the music of **M.X. TURNER**. Currently based out of the iconic city of New Orleans, Louisiana, M.X. has endlessly impressed underground music fans in recent years with the release of his fantastic snapshot from 2021, *New Frontier/Ancient Slab*. This record, featuring eighteen diverse and varied musical picks, uncovered an eclectic approach. The punk and folk backdrop was effortlessly mixed with diverse styles such as dub, country, and traditional Celtic, with hints even at a classic New Orleans jug band sound. Readers should take the time to look up standout tracks including 'Generacs and Sazeracs' and 'Little Liza Jane' to be converted immediately. More recently, M.X. has uncovered a fantastic new single, entitled 'I Will Never Sing Again', a story song with an emotive tale, demonstrating yet another side of his creative personality. In recent weeks, *Aldora Britain Records* caught up with M.X. Turner to discuss his musical journey so far with a specific interest in the unforgettable *New Frontier/Ancient Slab*.

M.X. Turner has previously contributed his track 'Generacs and Sazeracs' to our 'Exile on Charlton Lane' compilation. Listen or download [HERE](#).

If you enjoy this content, please consider making a small, magazine-sized donation at the following link: <https://paypal.me/aldorabritainrecords>. Thank you!

Aldora Britain Records: Hello M.X., how are you? It is a real pleasure to be talking to such a brilliant contemporary musician. Thank you for your time. I was wondering if we could start off by rewinding the clocks. What are some of your earliest musical memories and what was it that first pushed you towards pursuing this passion of yours?

M.X. Turner: God! Since I'm old, this'll read like a fraying ancient tapestry. I heard all sorts of 1960s music coming out of the radio. My mom played big band music from her teen years in the 40s. There's a photo of her and Peggy Lee at a Glenn Miller record release event. I also saw as much popular music on TV as TV back then would allow. My mom took to Frank Sinatra over Frank Zappa.



“Every day I’d come home from high school and play drums. I wore big Koss headphones and played along with every record I had. I tried to match James ‘Diamond’ Williams, the Ohio Players’ drummer ... By the time I left for college, I finally had a whole kit.”

I was a sports-crazed kid, so I can’t spin those ‘I was into rock and roll, soul, blues, country, when I was still in the womb’ stories that every musician seems to have. Until high school, all I knew was the soundtrack to *West Side Story*, the themes for various sports telecasts, and an occasional pop act that lodged in my cortex. Petula Clark, who I love to this day, The Beatles, Sly and the Family Stone. A week before high school, I panicked. If I didn’t know what everyone else was listening to, I’d be an outcast. So, I listened to the local Top 40 radio station, WCOG, non-stop for that entire week. I soaked up everything that was charting in August of 1975. I was still an outcast for all sorts of other reasons, but at least not that.

One day when I was little, a friend’s mom took us to a local football game. I liked the sport, but I loved the marching band. Loud, flash, a million things going on at once. On the way back home, in the backseat of her messy car, I found a little whisk broom. I started banging it on my knee. I felt like drummers I’d seen on TV who used brushes. To me, there in the backseat, it sounded just like those jazz drummers on the tube. I could do this! Unearned confidence is really useful when you’re a kid jumping into the unknown.

Every day I’d come home from high school and play drums. I wore big Koss headphones and played along with every record I had. I tried to match James ‘Diamond’ Williams, the Ohio Players’ drummer. Talk about unearned confidence. No one can match James ‘Diamond’ Williams. I was using an old red sparkle kit I had got from a neighbour, with a blue sparkle floor tom from the Sears Distribution Center in town, and a gold sparkle snare that the music shop was tossing that I fixed up. I played a whole year without a kick-drum pedal. By the time I left for college, I finally had a whole kit. College is when I started playing in bands.

Aldora Britain Records: I would like to jump forward to the early 2000s and the myth of The Spunk Lads. I still really enjoy the album that the band recorded! How do you reflect on this period of your music career now? Can you tell me about the ‘mythology’ of the band? Before the Sex Pistols, there was...

M.X. Turner: The Spunk Lads! Before everyone, there was only The Spunk Lads! Ahh, rock and roll legendry. I loved playing in that band. At the time, so many guitar bands in New York were boring shoegazers. The kind that asked the crew to turn down the lights and worried about sweating through their Oxford shirts. They’d forgotten how exciting and dangerous rock and roll had been and could be. Or worse, they didn’t care. The grave sin of making guitar rock



“The response at that first gig was great. The energy and sweat, even better. The bulk of the set would end up being our first release.”

defend the status quo. The Spunk Lads were a release from all of that. We bashed away on stage, people in the crowd threw themselves about. We all realised what was missing. Community, energy, sex, danger. It also came during a politically charged time in New York. The Lads were a way to express ourselves on those issues.

One day, Roger Paz, my friend a few doors up the street in Brooklyn, and I got to talking about all of this. He suggested that it would be great if one of the legendary London '77 bands had all relocated over the years to the States. And that, decades after losing touch with each other, they realised that they'd all settled in Brooklyn? With a twinkle in his eye, he said, 'What if they were the very first band, the Genesis story, the primordial goo, before the Pistols, Slits, X-Ray Spex, Clash, Jam, Damned, Sham 69? And everyone had forgotten them!'. Right there, on Prospect Place, we hatched a plan for The Lads and put it into motion.

We didn't mean to, but The Spunk Lads' trajectory sort of followed The Clash's. Our first record was hastily recorded and, we felt, amateurish. The second was the apex of our creativity and was both more polished and more intense. I guess we skipped the *Give 'em Enough Rope* phase. The third one, a six-song EP, was a *Combat Rock* last stab. I know, like everyone else, I'm excising *Cut the Crap*. I shouldn't, you should always tell the whole story. Plus, 'This is England' and 'North and South' are really good songs.

We made up a whole mythology about The Spunk Lads. I'll send you the bio, but in short, here's the story... "The Lads, full of football aggro, and impatient with pub rock and Hawkwind, got together in 1975, and the sound of a thunderclap, not Newman, created punk rock from scratch. Much like a loo-wrecking brawl, no one remembers the first punch thrown. The Lads were punk rock's first punch. In New York, the Ramones developed their style by listening to The Spunk Lads. The Ramones, in turn, came to England and everyone supped off of their sound. The Lads recorded three vitally influential albums, which by the end of the decade, were out of print. See, The Lads had signed to two different Belgian labels. They sued each other. Injunctions prevented both labels from releasing any Lads music. Sniffin' Glue accused The Lads of selling out well before they made the same claim against The Clash. Soon, Mark Perry, *Melody Maker*, and the *NME* completely forgot about The Spunk Lads. A collective amnesia that seemingly affects no other band. In 1978, The Lads broke up for all the reasons bands break up. Jealousies, poor sales, conflicting artistic visions, drugs, alcohol, exploitive management, and the discovery that they'd been sleeping with each other's partners. The final straw comes when the band discovers that they'd been sleeping with each other."



“It’s simple. I get bored with an entire album of the same kind of song. I know producers and labels want that ... I cut my musical teeth on musicians that put out albums full of variety.”

It was going to be a one-off gig at Freddy’s Backroom, our local, in January 2001. We hit the stage as cartoon punk rockers. The response at that first gig was great. The energy and sweat, even better. The bulk of the set would end up being our first release, *Paddington Station*. The second album is the one that you have, *G.M.T.*, our big opus. One more record got recorded, *Girl at the March*. Even though only Roger had a passable English accent, he’d lived in London for a couple of years, somehow people bought us being British... lock, stock, and barrel! We quickly moved from writing cliché punk songs to writing really pointed, passionate, political songs, and stretching beyond the cartoon punk act. Weirdly, people better related to our political songs when we pretended to be British than if we were just being ourselves. Roger and I would get together, brew a big pot of coffee, and write a dozen or so songs. I’d come up with a catchy guitar riff and he’d feverishly write lyrics. Roger’s an astonishing lyricist.

We took names. Roger was Nick Knickers. I was Bloody Dick. My terrible East London accent only worked when I delivered it with spit and fury! Our bass player was Prince Albert. Much like Spinal Tap, we had a procession of drummers. Spikey Dread, Sir Jack Hammersmith, Vinnie Spizz, Reggie Mental, and Jackson Bollocks. Brooklyn’s Anna Copacabana performed occasionally with us as Mary Queen of Cocks, dressed like a US cheerleader with an S and M attitude.



Looking back on it, The Lads might be my favourite band. The moment in time, the wildness, the way we encouraged people to remember the power of rock and roll. Happily, we’re going to release six different Spunk Lads collections this fall on Bandcamp and all of the streaming platforms. The three albums, an odds-and-sods B-sides collection, a live set from a radio appearance in New Jersey, and a boiled down greatest hits. Hits, you say! We’re The Spunk Lads, we can write any history we want to!

Aldora Britain Records: I am intrigued by your sound and approach to music making. You have the out-and-out punk rock of The Spunk Lads, but then you also explore folk, dub, and gospel through your solo work. How would you describe your style, what goes into it for you, and who are some of your biggest influences and inspirations as an artist?

M.X. Turner: It’s simple. I get bored with an entire album of the same kind of song. I know producers and labels want that, because they’re convinced that easily pigeonholed records are easier to market. I cut my musical teeth on musicians that put out albums full of variety. The Clash, Elvis Costello, Joe Jackson, and the greatest American band ever, Fishbone. Even the all-Irish album that I released in 1999, *Snipers in Derelict Houses*, a fundraiser for the Pat Finucane Centre in Derry, Ireland, had punk, trad, jazz, hip hop, ballads, spoken word.

A lot of bands that try to be varied fail because they try to faithfully replicate source material. Sometimes they don’t capture the sound, and when they do, it can be appropriative and that’s not good. I just write songs that are sparked by something I hear. Living in New Orleans these last five years, I’ve been exposed to so many great sounds. I have no interest in imitating Big Freedia, The Lost Bayou Ramblers, Rebirth Brass Band, Professor Longhair. But their amazing sounds have gotten inside of me and have ended up inspiring the writing and production.

Influences... goodness! That’s a long list. The Clash on so many levels. Billy Bragg has been there every step of the way. Public Enemy, one-drop reggae, Steve Earle, two-tone, Sanchai and the Unity Squad. The others listed above.

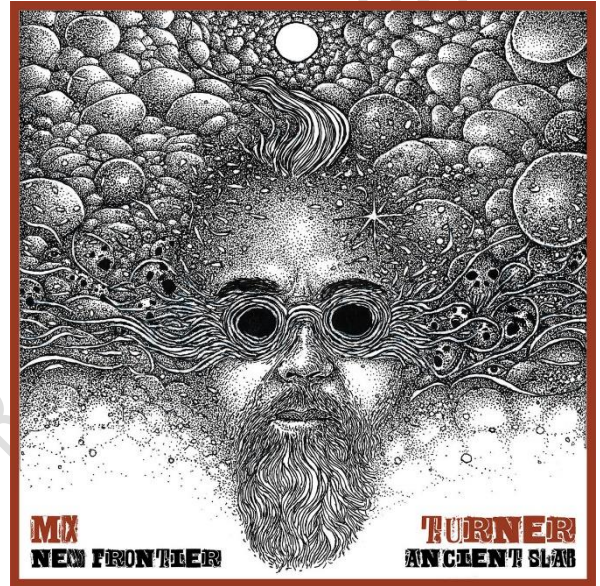
“The album was like one of those dry wafers you add water to until it turns into a sponge ... There were stretches where I just plain sat on it for weeks at a time. There were explosive events that demanded new songs.”

Again, Fishbone, the width and breadth of their records is astonishing, and the pure insane power of their shows in the late 80s and early 90s is unequalled. And again, all the styles here in New Orleans.

Aldora Britain Records: I first discovered your music in 2021 via a record called *New Frontier/Ancient Slab*. This is still an album that I look back on very fondly. It is a great listen from top to bottom. What are your memories from writing, recording and releasing it? Is there anything that you would edit or change with the benefit of hindsight?

M.X. Turner: Thanks, Tom. *New Frontier/Ancient Slab* was a pandemic project. Locked down with a home studio wasn't the worst thing. The album was like one of those dry wafers you add water to until it turns into a sponge. I got a lot of friends to play on it via remote sessions. There were stretches where I just plain sat on it for weeks at a time. There were explosive events that demanded new songs. The Black Lives Matter demonstrations in 2020, Hurricane Ida in 2021. A two-month project turned into a year and a half.

I don't have too many regrets about *New Frontier/Ancient Slab*. I did what I could under those conditions. I'm a big believer in working in the moment, in that specific point in time. It's magic, even when it's dark magic. Maybe some different production elements, and certainly some lyrics that could have stood another rewrite. I certainly would have preferred doing it all with a live band instead of piecing it together on my own. There's nothing like a band with all pistons firing. End of the day, I'm immensely proud of making a New Orleans album, even if it doesn't sound like anyone's idea of a New Orleans album.



Aldora Britain Records: I would like to pick out some personal favourites from the LP now. Let's go for 'Generacs and Sazeracs' and 'Little Liza Jane'. For each, what is the story behind the song and can you remember the moment it came to be? Did anything in particular inspire them and what do they mean to you as the writer?

M.X. Turner: I wrote 'Generacs and Sazeracs' on my front porch three days after Hurricane Ida blew through. Our city was spared the worst damage from that storm, and luckily our house was fine. So many others weren't. But the power went out for eight days straight. It was hot and humid, and most people I knew left town. Across the street, our neighbour's emergency Generac generator was going non-stop. Generators were loudly humming in every neighbourhood. It was a racket. You can hear it in the background of the demo I recorded on my phone. Again, a moment in time. When I finished scribbling the lyrics, I couldn't believe no one had ever rhymed these two odd words.

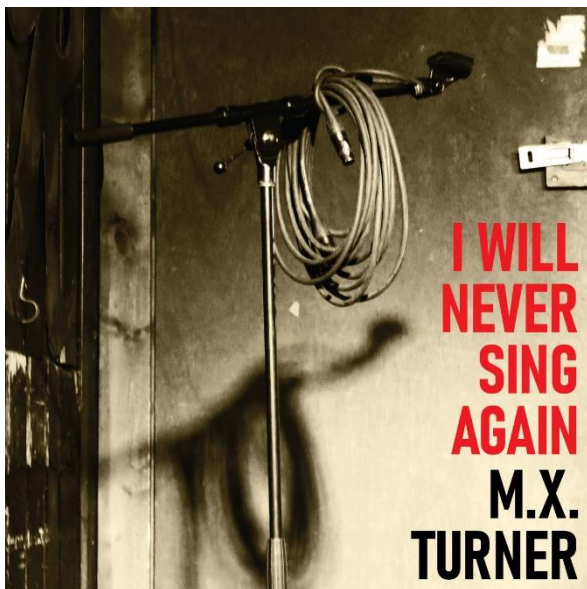
You know, my wife and I and the cats and the dog stayed in town for the hurricane and the blackout. We have a lot of neighbours who couldn't evacuate. They didn't have the money or a car or were stubborn. Most New Orleanians always insist the storm will turn. That's what they say down here, 'The storm'll turn'. And it just about always has. Katrina wasn't the hurricane's fault. It was a human disaster of poorly built levees and canal walls giving way and flooding the city. Also, hubris. Just about every natural disaster has human hubris baked in.

How the lyrics go in 'Generacs and Sazeracs' is how those eight days went. We stopped calling it Hurricane Ida and started calling it Hurricane Entergy, after the power company. I don't write story songs very often. This is one of the few. 'Generacs and Sazeracs' is that rare song where I remember the who, what, and where of what was happening at that moment here in New Orleans.

“Pete Seeger advised future singers to update folk songs for whatever the current struggle is. I did that here. I hope the ancestors are okay with that.”

‘Little Liza Jane’ is a traditional folk song down here. Its first versions came from enslaved people. I mentioned to Marie-Isabelle Pautz, the fiddler on the song, that I was going to record it for the album. She’s from Cajun country, out in Lafayette, and knows all of the folk traditions down here. She sent me the oldest known lyrics for ‘Little Liza Jane’, the enslaved people’s words. ‘I’m not singing those,’ I told her, ‘They’re not mine to sing’. Marie-Isabelle responded with a couplet that became the opening lines of the song. ‘We’re singing this song that’s not our own, we live on land that’s not our own’. I completed the verse and wrote the other two based on Marie-Isabelle’s main idea.

These days most versions of ‘Little Liza Jane’ are performed with fun and joy, with lines about having a girl in Baltimore and pining for her. That kind of thing. My lyrics were for ghosts, freedom struggles, tradition, and in the last verse, my own family. I hope you can still hear the joy in it. I lowered the guitar volume and emphasised Marie-Isabelle’s fiddle and vocals. She wrote all of those Cajun French lyrics in the song’s breakdown. I asked another great Lafayette singer, Emily Neustrom, to join in. The triangle I play I got from Louis Michot of The Lost Bayou Ramblers. Louis, by the way, gave me the album’s name. I was talking with him about how my discoveries of Louisiana music were influencing the album. He said, ‘New frontier, ancient slab!’. Pete Seeger advised future singers to update folk songs for whatever the current struggle is. I did that here. I hope the ancestors are okay with that.



Aldora Britain Records: More recently, you have released a brand new single, the brilliant ‘I Will Never Sing Again’. Can you tell me about the song and this new direction for you? I have also heard that it is the first in a series of new singles. What have you got planned? I am certainly looking forward to hearing more from you!

M.X. Turner: More to come! I’ll be releasing a few singles between now and the new year. It’s a whole different thing releasing singles instead of a complete album. The internet moves so fast, and so many people ignore albums to make their own playlists. I love albums as bodies of work with running orders. I love the challenge of making them cohesive. Not, you know, concept albums. Just getting all the pieces to come together. Doing a series of singles, though, lets you create new statements and vibes with just a song or two. And each single will sound a good deal different from the previous one. Ahmet Ertegun, the Atlantic Records producer, used

to say, ‘Miss it quick!’. That was his producer’s creed. Meaning, don’t spend forever on a project, the magic will get lost. Get it fast, and if you don’t, move on. Singles are great for that.

Thanks for your kindness about ‘I Will Never Sing Again’. I’m sure a lot of people nodded and said, ‘Good, we’ve been saying that!’. The song is about Linda Ronstadt, who you got to know is a total punk rocker. Her voice is amazing, she’s spent her career fighting for what she believes in and making the music she wants to. For the last decade though, she’s lost her ability to sing. Supranuclear palsy. I read about it when she told the world back in 2013. A couple of years later, I recorded a guitar, vocals, and harmonica version at Cobra Studios in Seattle. I added bass and drums here in New Orleans and put it out.

Ronstadt’s still fighting, still challenging the status quo, still speaking up for immigrant rights here in the US. We all lose our skills eventually. Sometimes they’re taken away quickly. I croak out songs, but imagine having a voice like Linda Ronstadt, something that’s thrilled generations and multiple communities, and then it’s gone. I’m not a super zen person. I can’t be at peace with the loss of that kind of beauty. ‘I Will Never Sing Again’ is a grieving song for someone who I’ve only heard, as the song says, galloping out of my radio.

Quickfire Round

AB Records: Favourite artist? **MX:** The Clash. I wouldn't have done anything crucial in my life without them.

AB Records: Favourite album? **MX:** The soundtrack to the movie *Days of Heaven*. Ennio Morricone with Doug Kershaw, Leo Kottke, and Camille Saint-Saens' 'The Aquarium'. I listen to it every time before I go on stage.

AB Records: First gig as an audience member? **MX:** Chicago, Greensboro Coliseum, 1977. Late bloomer, remember?

AB Records: Loudest gig as an audience member? **MX:** Weirdly enough, The Alarm at, I believe, The Ritz in New York City in the early 80s. They cranked the shit out of those acoustic guitars. All mid-ranger and highs. The only time I jammed napkins in my ears. Brutal.

AB Records: Style icon? **MX:** Elvis in the 50s. I mean, come on!

AB Records: Favourite film? **MX:** Terrence Malick's *Days of Heaven*.

AB Records: Favourite TV show? **MX:** Joss Whedon's *Firefly*. This is tough because I love a lot of TV shows. Whedon's a shit but this programme is a masterpiece.

AB Records: Favourite underground artist? **MX:** Las Cafeteras out of East Los Angeles. I don't know how underground they are. But you'll see them at the barricades when it all goes down.



Elbows on the Table

In New England, in Randolph, Vermont, a fresh phenomenon is brewing over. The sounds of indie groove rock are flowing out of garages and basements, ready to take the world by storm. The fantastic **OF CONSCIOUS MIND** are a band who fully embrace this brilliant new underground sound, truly making it their own, a force to be reckoned with. Taking influence from disparate points including Queens of the Stone Age, Tool, and even Joni Mitchell, these up-and-comers create a style and approach that lands between rock and roll, alternative indie, and jam-like colours. This creative process has led to a fantastic opening demo EP, and a more recent single entitled 'Dirty Grindy'. Both releases are currently available on the Of Conscious Mind Bandcamp page. In recent weeks, with shows coming up throughout Vermont and New Hampshire, bandmembers took some time out to chat with *Aldora Britain Records* about their journey to date. That conversation is published here for the very first time.

Of Conscious Mind have previously contributed their track 'Rise Above' to our 'Rock & Roll's Different Shapes & Sizes' compilation. Listen or download [HERE](#).

If you enjoy this content, please consider making a small, magazine-sized donation at the following link: <https://paypal.me/aldorabritainrecords>. Thank you!

Aldora Britain Records: Hello Beth, how are you? I am really excited to be getting to know Of Conscious Mind. I am a big fan of the band! I was wondering if we could start off by travelling back in time. What are some of your earliest musical memories and what was it that first pushed you towards pursuing this passion of yours?

Beth Svahn-Monroe: Hi Tom! Happy to oblige and thanks for asking. Our guitarist, and my husband, Mathe, grew up in Rutland, Vermont, in generational poverty. He'll be the first to confess that he didn't always make the best decisions in his youth and made the move out of Rutland to start fresh in the Upper Valley. When he and I met, he was taking classes at a local community college where I was working. He was a single dad supporting his nine-year-old son, whom he had full custody of while he was going to school. He was trying to get out of the fast food industry that he had spent over ten years in, and was just recently out of homelessness, having stayed several months at a local homeless shelter with his son. At the time, he had also just been diagnosed with Asperger's syndrome.



“We have grown so much over the six years we have been together building the music and finding our place. The name implies that we are all of one consciousness... every one of us.”

When we met, he was living in low income housing in New Hampshire. I was a single mom, a year out of separating from my daughter’s father. I would almost always bring a guitar to work and play in a nearby town park during my lunch breaks when the weather was nice enough. Mathe asked me about the guitar one day and we ended up discovering a mutual love for music. It blossomed from there, and a year later, we had written our first song together, ‘Rise Above’, which was released in 2021 on Of Conscious Mind’s self-titled demo. We set about gathering bandmembers and we feel we have been fortunate to connect with a really solid crew!

We have grown so much over the six years we have been together building the music and finding our place. The name implies that we are all of one consciousness... every one of us. And we should seek to be as present and authentic as possible in our relationships and interactions with others. The name Of Conscious Mind implies a journey toward self-awareness that spans the cosmos, coupled with a knowingness that we are all part of the same cosmic consciousness.

Aldora Britain Records: And now, let’s move forward to the ‘groove rock’ brilliance of the mighty Of Conscious Mind. The early days of the band must have been such an exciting time. How did it all come to be? How did you meet the other members and what was the initial spark that brought you all together musically?

Beth Svahn-Monroe: Of Conscious Mind formed from the pieces of many different projects we all had been working on or around. Mathe and I began a band called When Signals Fail with another drummer and bassist back in 2019. We only had one single release with When Signals Fail. We lost our drummer and bassist to other projects, but our former bassist, Sean Dollar, agreed to stay on long enough to finish recording our first release, a three-song demo, back in October 2021.

Sean introduced us to Kenny Bailey, who he met at an open mic. Kenny, a.k.a. ‘Silent K’, actually came down to meet us at The Underground recording studio in Randolph, Vermont when we were finishing up recording the demo. He lives walking distance from the studio, so it was a convenient connection to make, and his eclectic basslines, and commitment to the project, had us sold from the start. Kenny currently also plays drums with the band Wool. As his nickname denotes, Kenny is the silent type, so we love to ask him to sing on occasion.



“We decided that for budget and time’s sake, we would record it live ... The process to this day remains a bit of a blur, but it was certainly fun!”

We didn’t have a drummer for the 2021 demo release, but Vincent Freeman, owner and sound engineer at The Underground, recommended a studio musician he had worked with extensively, Titién Tolbert. Titién was, and still is, in many other projects, including Coquette, Peg Tassej and the Loud Flowers, and The Nailers. He rehearsed with us three times before recording the demo. He actually got a flat tire on his way to our first practice but persevered nonetheless! The demo was released in December 2021, and we began gigging throughout the Upper Valley. Titién joined us for a handful of gigs in 2022, though we did play with a few other drummers. Paul Picard of My Last Mile and The Robyn V Group; Alex Abraham of HAMCrafted, RIP Alex; and Vincent Freeman of The Party Crashers, and as mentioned owner of The Underground recording studio. We kept calling Titién for gigs and he kept coming out and not getting too sick of us, ha! He agreed to stay on for our just-released single, ‘Dirty Grindy’, and an upcoming five-song EP release titled *Spellwords*. He recorded drums and percussion for all of the tracks on *Spellwords* and we can officially say he has become an essential element of the Of Conscious Mind groove.

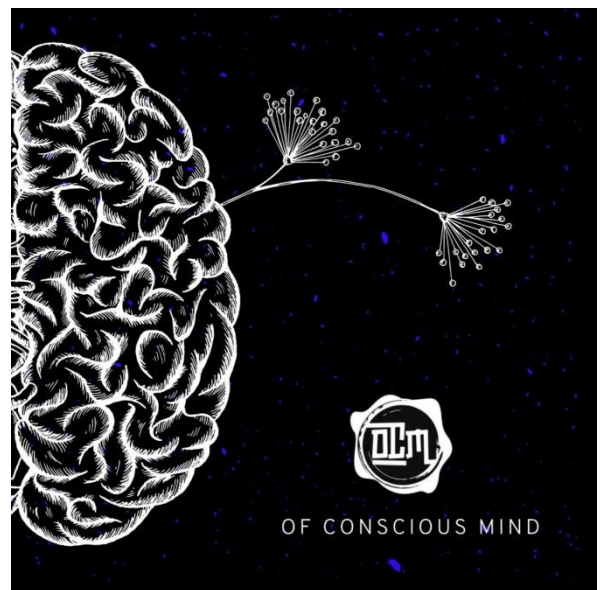
We met Scottie at an open mic in South Royalton initially. He was, and still is, a wind player for the band Wool, playing harmonica, alto and tenor sax, and flute. Scottie would come up and jam with us at various open mics including Whaleback Mountain in Enfield, New Hampshire, which we hosted; Crossroads in South Royalton, Vermont; as well as The Forge and One Main, now Kuya’s at One Main, in Randolph, Vermont. Scottie just seemed to fit from the beginning and his sound took Of Conscious Mind to another level of grooviness that we just couldn’t deny. Also, Scottie is an incredibly kind human. His indefatigable joyful spirit keeps us going when life gets heavy.

Aldora Britain Records: Our paths first crossed following the release of your fantastic self-titled demo EP. A promising opening statement in my opinion! What are your memories from writing, recording and releasing this set, and how would you say you have grown and evolved as a band since?

Beth Svahn-Monroe: In truth, we had no idea what we were doing with our first release, ha! Matt and I knew we had some music we wanted to record, so we reached out to Vincent Freeman at The Underground recording studio in Vermont after trying, unsuccessfully, to do it ourselves. Our drummer at the time was apprehensive of going into the studio and we ultimately decided to part ways due to creative differences. We decided that for budget and time’s sake, we would record it live. As I mentioned, Vincent hooked us up with Titién who was one of the studio drummers there.

The process to this day remains a bit of a blur, but it was certainly fun! We had three rehearsals before going into the studio. While there, we spent about six hours going through each of the songs about three times each in one room together. We kept the best take of each and patched in a little guitar and bass. Since drums and vocals were recorded in the same room, there was no room for editing those, so what we had was what we got! Mathe and I were really nervous since it was our first time in an actual studio, but Vincent was so professional and easy to work with that the process actually went quite smoothly. On the last day of recording, we actually met our current bass player, Kenny Bailey, and he’s been with us ever since!

Aldora Britain Records: I would like to pick out my favourite track from the EP now. It is a strong little collection, but let’s go for ‘Rise Above’. What is the story behind this particular song and can you remember the moment it came to be? Did anything in particular inspire it and what does it mean to you?



“It was like the floodgates opened. At this point, we probably have over fifty songs that are in various stages of completion. And they keep coming!”

Beth Svahn-Monroe: ‘Rise Above’ was actually the first song Mathe and I ever wrote together! When we started dating back in 2017, Mathe started playing guitar again. He hadn’t picked one up in a few years as he had been dealing with transitioning into fulltime single parenthood and out of homelessness. It took a year of him following me around the house with a guitar, playing the chords to ‘Rise Above’, before I actually laid down any lyrics for it. He kept saying to me, ‘I know you can find words for this!’. Well, he was right. After that, it was like the floodgates opened. At this point, we probably have over fifty songs that are in various stages of completion. And they keep coming!

The lyrics to ‘Rise Above’ are absolutely inspired by Mathe’s journey out of generational poverty. I like to think it encourages us all to listen to each other more. We believe that poverty and many other sad facts of human existence are so prevalent because we have forgotten how to look another human soul in the eyes and have a simple, authentic conversation. Polarities exist everywhere, and we seem to spend a lot of time ‘falling off ladders, pushed over by winds we create’. ‘Rise Above’ is a call to work towards breaking down internal and external barriers that prevent us from seeing our fellow humans as equals along life’s journey. We spend a lot of time ‘looking for answers ... never turning to the face in front of us’. We are here to help each other. Let’s do more of that.

Aldora Britain Records: I love your new and refreshed approach to that indie rock sound. I really like that term on your Bandcamp page too, groove rock. How would you say this style came about, what goes into it for you, and who are some of your biggest influences and inspirations as a group? I have a feeling it could be quite an eclectic list.



Beth Svahn-Monroe: Well, it’s pretty popular to invent genres today, so we figured why not jump on that bandwagon, ha! But in all seriousness, we weren’t sure what genre we really fit into. Perhaps it’s rock? Perhaps a little indie? Jam-like? The ‘groove’ element was actually a term coined by Jamie Gage, who interviewed us in January 2022 during our *Live from the Underground* performance following our 2021 demo release. Jamie used the term ‘groove-tinged rhythms’ in the press release. We liked it and it stuck.

Aldora Britain Records: More recently, you have released a brand new single, the fantastic ‘Dirty Grindy’. This is the first snapshot of an upcoming EP. I, for one, cannot wait! Bring it on. How did this track come about? Can you tell me about it and the new EP as well? It is certainly an exciting time for Of Conscious Mind!

Beth Svahn-Monroe: ‘Dirty Grindy’ chronicles a spat between two lovers – I wonder who! – and serves as a one-sided, blowing off steam ballad. It recognises the desire to extricate powerful emotions with destructive, yet oh so poetic, action in order to process a heated disagreement. While also, behind dramatic emotional outbursts, remaining deeply cognisant of the fact that anger itself is blurring one’s own ability to see a situation clearly. The lyrics are inspired by my own journey with understanding neurodiversity in my relationship with Mathe, acknowledging the usefulness of music and songwriting as a healthy outlet for big feelings. To sum it up, ‘I’m really angry right now and I want to smash things, but I know this too shall pass. So, I’ll do my best to remember I’m not perfect either, while I continue to smash lots of things – figuratively! – for just a little while longer. Love you.’

The upcoming EP, set to be released in October, is titled *Spellwords*, reflecting the idea that everything we think and speak is in reality casting spells on our reality. If we wish to improve our world, we must begin speaking to ourselves

“The lyrics are inspired by my own journey ... acknowledging the usefulness of music and songwriting as a healthy outlet for big feelings.”

and each other with more kindness and understanding. What we say to ourselves and others really does create our reality. We seek to be more mindful of what spells we are casting.

Quickfire Round

AB Records: Favourite artist? **Titien:** Hard to say but maybe Queens of the Stone Age. **Kenny:** Tool. **Beth:** Tough call but got to go with Joni Mitchell.

AB Records: Favourite album? **Titien:** No idea, ha! **Kenny:** Pink Floyd, *The Wall*. **Beth:** Katie Melua, *Piece by Piece*.

AB Records: First gig as an audience member? **Titien:** Alanis Morissette in Bangkok. I was four years old. **Kenny:** First real one was Metallica, *Black Album* tour. **Beth:** Does the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra count?

AB Records: Loudest gig as an audience member? **Titien:** Slayer and Marilyn Manson in Montreal. **Kenny:** Probably that Metallica show or one of the hardcore shows at The Underground Listening Room. **Beth:** Can't recall!

AB Records: Style icon? **Titien:** I'm digging what Josh Homme is wearing these days. **Kenny:** Kurt Cobain. **Beth:** I mostly shop at thrift stores and have no idea about style, ha!

AB Records: Favourite film? **Titien:** *Princess Mononoke* is up there. **Kenny:** *True Romance*. **Beth:** *The Shawshank Redemption*.

AB Records: Favourite TV show? **Titien:** *Game of Thrones* until the ending, ha! **Kenny:** *Curb Your Enthusiasm* or *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia*. **Beth:** *Foyle's War*.

AB Records: Favourite underground artist? **Titien:** Balaclava. **Kenny:** Cuzin It. **Beth:** Julie Vallimont.



See You Again

The worlds of cold-wave and post-punk are very much thriving in the hands of the spellbinding **DAVID FUTUR**. Based out of the commune of Fougeres in Northwestern France, David promotes his richly textured bass guitar tones through his truly unique musical output. His biggest passion in bringing together organic and electronic sonic spaces to create something modern, contemporary, and individual. On his album, the aptly titled *Futur Zero* from 2020, this sound is explored in a way that is both raw and melodic, allowing this underground creative mind to shine through. The authentic elements play off the pulsating electronic impulses to create fantastic indie tracks such as 'Cyclone', 'See You Again', and 'Everything is Right'. Back in December 2021, *Aldora Britain Records* first chatted with David about his musical journey to date. We discussed his artistic beginnings, his collaborative projects, the *Futur Zero* LP, and so much more. That conversation is published here for the very first time.

David Futur has previously contributed his track 'See You Again' to our 'Symphonies for a Modern Society' compilation. Listen or download [HERE](#).

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Aldora Britain Records: Hi David, how are you? I have just revisited the brilliant *Futur Zero* record and have reminded myself of how good it is. Thank you for the music! I was wondering if we could start off today by travelling back in time. What are some of your earliest musical memories and what first pushed you towards pursuing this passion of yours?

David Futur: I grew up in a family of musicians. My father plays the accordion, and my sisters play the piano and the violin. When I was a teenager, my elder sister was used to lending me her discs of rock music and I enjoyed it so much. I have been liking this rock energy ever since. During sixth form, I listened to a lot of independent music with my friends. Then, with some of those friends, I decided to create a rock band. That was at the age of sixteen. We were called Haze.



“I began to experiment with electronic tools ... and I really enjoyed it. That gave me many new ideas ... I began writing several songs. Then I thought it could be a good idea to go further down this path.”

Aldora Britain Records: You are quite an experienced musician and have played in many different bands. How did your solo project come about? What was the initial spark behind it all and what do you prefer about it in comparison to the band approach?

David Futur: My last rock band was a duo with bass, voice, and drums, with Tanguy Meheust, called Tachkent. We played for many years together between 2003 and 2016. Then he moved to a distant city. While I was seeking a new drummer, I began to experiment with electronic tools, such as Logic Pro, and I really enjoyed it. That gave me many new ideas to help me make music. Fairly quickly, I began writing several songs. Then I thought it could be a good idea to go further down this path. It was also exciting to play solo on stage, a new experience for me.

However, I couldn't say I prefer the solo approach. I like both. Playing solo is really convenient and gives you some certain freedoms. You can play as often as you have a moment. Right now, I am writing songs with my buddy Ben Cozik. I invited him to sing on my next record. Otherwise, I also play in a small band with my lover, Katy. We sing acoustic covers such as 'Au Café du Canal' by Pierre Perret.

Aldora Britain Records: The solo recordings bring in electronic elements and combine them with your love for rock and roll. How did this style come about? What would you say goes into it and who are your biggest influences as an artist?

David Futur: I really like the combination of electronic and organic sounds. It adds the power of the machines to the sensitivity of the instruments and the voice. For example, I am a huge fan of Big Black or Hint, who both make music this way.



Aldora Britain Records: Let's talk about *Futur Zero*. What are your memories from writing, recording and releasing this album, and how do you reflect on it now?

David Futur: The composition of the music was quite fast. Writing the lyrics wasn't! I made a demo of each song in a couple of months. For the recording, I wanted something which sounded live enough. So, I recorded the bass and the voice in one shot. All that was made at home.

Aldora Britain Records: I think my personal favourite from the album may be 'See You Again'. What is the story behind this song and what does it mean to you?

David Futur: My songs are not telling true stories. They talk more about feelings in a sort of impressionist approach. 'See You Again' is about love and desire in what is urgently needed.

Aldora Britain Records: You perform alone on stage. You describe it as like a sporting event, such is the show's energy. What would you say you aim to bring to the stage and what can a fan expect from their first David Futur gig?

David Futur: I think the music is deeply connected to the body. When you listen to a good melody, you want to dance. Even without thinking about it! It's intuitive. On stage, I try to let my body speak. As I play a lot of sport, I guess it's with quite a lot of intensity. If you see me for the first time, you can expect to feel a real rock energy and hear a good sound from the bass guitar. I hope you will find it original.

Quickfire Round

AB Records: Favourite artist? **David:** Shellac.

AB Records: Favourite album? **David:** *Liar* from The Jesus Lizard.

AB Records: First gig as an audience member? **David:** A rock band from Rennes, Wichery Wild.

AB Records: Style icon? **David:** Mr Bean.

AB Records: Favourite film? **David:** *Mulholland Drive*.

AB Records: Favourite up and coming artist? **David:** Ben Cozik.



Easy on the Drinks

Hamburg has had a heady relationship with rock and roll mania since the golden days of the late 50s and early 60s. The cultural exchange witnessed by this iconic port city has seen some of the finest artists and bands from the UK and the USA take to the stage. In more recent times, a contemporary rock and roll collective, the unstoppable **PALILA**, make Hamburg their home. With influences that range from Band of Horses to Neil Young, and Teenage Fanclub to Dinosaur Jr, this German powerhouse band are giving their own definition to the world of modern indie rock and roll. In 2021, they unleashed the direct and honest message that was *Rock 'n' Roll Sadness*, an epochal twelve-track set, and in 2023, they followed this up with the fantastic progression of *Mind My Mind*. In recent weeks, while taking a break from the band's schedule, and preparation for gigs in Dortmund and Langenburg, bandmember Mattze chatted with *Aldora Britain Records* about Palila's rock and roll rollercoaster so far.

If you enjoy this content, please consider making a small, magazine-sized donation at the following link: <https://paypal.me/aldorabritainrecords>. Thank you!

Aldora Britain Records: Hello Mattze, how are you? I am excited to be talking about the mighty Palila. Thank you for your time! I was wondering if we could start off by rewinding the clocks. What are some of your earliest musical memories and what was it that first pushed you towards pursuing this passion of yours?

Mattze: Hi Tom, thanks for having us. I loved music ever since I was a little child. Earliest memories are of me sitting in my mother's car, singing along to songs by Phil Collins, Michael Jackson, and Roxette. That must have been around 1989. When I was nine years old, I had my first Walkman and listened to tapes that my older brother recorded for me. Pink Floyd, Neil Young, Pearl Jam, Rage Against the Machine, Red Hot Chili Peppers. When I was thirteen or fourteen years old, a friend asked me if I wanted to form a band. I told him that I didn't even know how to play an instrument, but he said that his brother could teach me how to play guitar. When we visited his brother's band in their rehearsal room, I immediately fell in love with making music and listening to live music. It was a magical moment, and only a couple of weeks later, we started setting up our own rehearsal room in my parents' garage. I only knew two or three chords back then, but it was already enough knowledge to write our first songs.



“We love good music but we also think that a good song doesn’t necessarily need perfection ... With Palila, we simply try to play, throw stuff up against the wall, and see what sticks.”

Aldora Britain Records: And now, let’s fast forward to the classic indie rock sounds of Palila. The early days of the band must have been such an exciting time. How did it all come to be? How did you meet the other members and what was the initial spark that brought you together musically? It has certainly led to some fantastic output since.

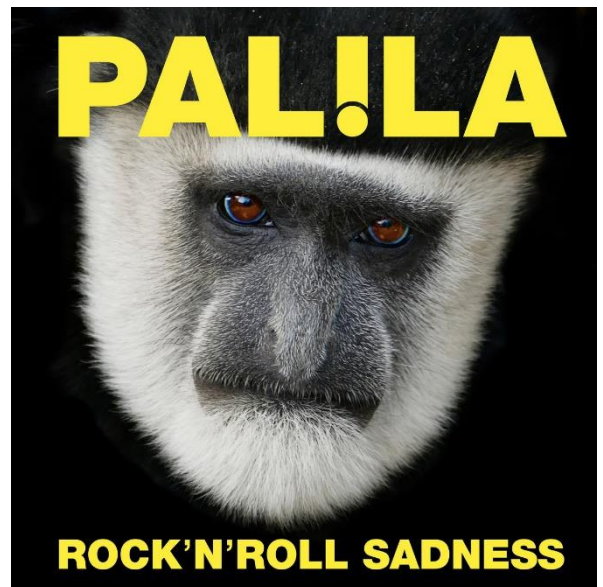
Mattze: Before I started Palila, I played for four years in a band called Hell and High Water. And even though it was loads of fun, we had different goals and different ideas of what we wanted the band to be. When they said that they wouldn’t want to play many concerts anymore, I figured it was time to start something new. Ever since I started playing guitar, I have recorded ideas quite quickly without overthinking them. So, during the past twenty years, I have collected around four hundred demos. I uploaded a handful on them to Bandcamp and asked around on social media platforms if anyone wanted to join. Only a couple of days later, Christoph e-mailed me and said that he would love to be on board. We decided to meet up in a bar and instantly got along really well. We both wanted the same things. Playing and recording songs, playing live as much as we can, and keeping things simple. We love good music but we also think that a good song doesn’t necessarily need perfection. I know there are lots of people out there who strongly disagree. But of course, we’ve set ourselves high standards. Before, we both played in bands where discussions led to more discussions. With Palila, we simply try to play, throw stuff up against the wall, and see what sticks. Sascha joined the band in early 2021 and understands our philosophy just as well, which is the reason we were able to record over thirty songs in the past three years. It’s been a blast so far!

Aldora Britain Records: I first discovered your music in 2021 with the release of the utterly brilliant *Rock ‘n’ Roll Sadness*. I still revisit this LP often. It is a very strong set of modern rock and roll! How do you reflect back on the album now? How would you say you have grown and evolved as a band since?

Mattze: When we recorded the album, we weren’t as prepared as we wanted ourselves to be. I do like the album still, but I wish we added a couple more days to the recording and mixing process. Just to spice things up a little. For our last album, we learned that we needed better pre-production, which is why the overall sound has grown some more. I personally love to add lots of backing vocals and some more guitars here and there. That’s what we did on *Mind My Mind* and that’s what I do on my solo works with WOULD. Since 2021, we have also played lots of gigs, which has helped us to find and embrace our sound. Maybe one day we can record a live session. We’d love that!

Aldora Britain Records: I love your sound. That classic guitar rock approach. Lots of indie, alternative, and garage vibes. I need more of that in my life, for sure! How would you say this style of yours came about, what goes into it for you, and who are some of your biggest influences and inspirations as a band?

Mattze: Thank you so much! I love visiting festivals and watching bands perform. But I kind of feel like I’ve been born in the wrong time. There is still lots of great music nowadays, for sure! Like Fontaines D.C., Wet Leg, Brutus, Phoebe Bridgers, Porridge Radio, and many more. But, at least here in Germany, it feels like there isn’t as much classic guitar sounds anymore. I guess Dinosaur Jr., Neil Young and Crazy Horse, Motorpsycho, Teenage Fanclub are my biggest influences in terms of guitar playing. When it comes to singing, I’m heavily influenced by Elliott Smith, Death Cab for Cutie, and Band of Horses.



“I think, when we started Palila, we didn’t want our songs to be that dark. Maybe the next record will be a bit more uplifting, but wild.”

Aldora Britain Records: In 2023, you released a follow-up record, the spellbinding *Mind My Mind*. I love this title by the way. Really cool! It is also a fantastic progression for the band. What are your memories from writing, recording and releasing it? Is there anything that you would edit or change in hindsight?

Mattze: Both *Rock ‘n’ Roll Sadness* and *Mind My Mind* were written mainly during the Corona years, which is why they are a bit sad and upset. I had just gone through a divorce and Christoph, who writes about 50% of the lyrics, also knew one or two people in his life who had to deal with depression. I think, when we started Palila, we didn’t want our songs to be that dark. Maybe the next record will be a bit more uplifting, but wild. There’s also one song that was originally written for my old band Hell and High Water, but I left the band shortly after I wrote the song, so it felt right to let it be revived with Palila. And we’re glad we put it on *Mind My Mind* because it’s a killer, especially live! In hindsight, I wouldn’t want to include soft tunes like ‘Done’ and ‘One Soul’. They were both written during 2006 and 2009.

Aldora Britain Records: It is a really strong LP from top to bottom, but I would like to pick out some personal favourites. Let’s go for ‘Restless’ and ‘Try to Fall Again’. For each, what is the story behind the tune and can you remember the moment it came to be? Did anything in particular inspire them and what do they mean to you?

Mattze: ‘Restless’ was written in October 2021 when the band was really busy with gigs, video shooting, etcetera for *Rock ‘n’ Roll Sadness*. I remember I was in a good mood and wanted to write a song that hits you immediately and that has some energy. Christoph wrote all of the lyrics, which is why I cannot really say what it’s about.

Christoph: The song is about falling short of the expectations you set for yourself. Or not achieving the goals that others have set for you.



Mattze: I wrote both songs in my bedroom where I set up a little recording studio. Before I start recording, I usually play around with an acoustic or an electric guitar, depending on the mood. When I come up with a melody or a riff that I like, I record it on my smartphone first and sing 'mumble tracks' while playing. I just looked up 'Try to Fail Again' on my phone and found the very first audio recordings for that song. It was on March 2nd, 2022. The first recording contains the verse only. The second recording has the verse plus the chorus. The third recording contains the bridge. In the end, I recorded all three parts and tried to find the right words. I wanted the song to be about failing and we all fail all the time in everyday life. But somehow failing is still frowned upon. So, in a way, that song is an ode to failure. I couldn't find the right words for the verse and the bridge, but eventually Christoph came up with the missing lyrics and helped me out... again!

Quickfire Round

AB Records: Favourite artist? **Mattze:** Chris Walla. I would love to work with him some day.

AB Records: Favourite album? **Mattze:** *Either/Or* by Elliott Smith. He's the best!

AB Records: First gig as an audience member? **Mattze:** Gluecifer. I was fourteen years old, and it was my first rock concert.

AB Records: Loudest gig as an audience member? **Mattze:** Dinosaur Jr. in Hamburg not so long ago at Ubel and Gefährlich.

AB Records: Style icon? **Mattze:** Lou Barlow. He's pretty chill when it comes to style.

AB Records: Favourite film? **Mattze:** *Back to the Future*, of course!

AB Records: Favourite TV show? **Mattze:** That one is tricky. I'd go with *Fleabag*.

AB Records: Favourite underground artist? **Mattze:** I really love The Glands. And of course, the new electro punk band that I formed with my brother during Corona. We're called Rotze. We only have nine followers or so. It's as much underground as it can get. Don't follow us!



Circolo Polare Catartico

Italian rock music is a field rich with harmonic brilliance. In the impressive city of Orvieto in the Province of Terni, a brilliantly fresh musical project ignites a truly independent and alternative sound. The project in question is the brilliant **SARGASSI**, led by the unstoppable Gabriele Martelloni. With a sonic palette that encompasses the influence of Pearl Jam, the Dave Matthews Band, and Franco Battiato, this modern creative mind seeks to go further than his contemporaries. Sargassi's 2021 LP, the Italian language *Circolo Polare Catartico*, provides the quintessential introductory listen. Compositions such as 'Come l'Indonesia' and 'L'Alba Non Vienne Mai' are testament to the glorious and spellbinding power of Italian alternative rock. In recent weeks, Gabriele took some time out from Sargassi's schedule to discuss the band's journey so far. We focus on his musical beginnings, the *Circolo Polare Catartico* LP, his progression as an artist, and so much more. That conversation is published here for the first time.

Sargassi have previously contributed their track 'L'Alba Non Vienne Mai' to our 'Supernatural Sound Selections' compilation. Listen or download [HERE](#).

If you enjoy this content, please consider making a small, magazine-sized donation at the following link: <https://paypal.me/aldorabritainrecords>. Thank you!

Aldora Britain Records: Hello Gabriele, how are you? I am so excited to be talking about the almighty Sargassi today. I am a big fan of what you do. I was wondering if we could start off by travelling back in time. What are some of your earliest musical memories and what was it that first pushed you towards pursuing this passion of yours?

Gabriele Martelloni: Music has always been a part of me. From the MCs of Italian singer-songwriters that my father used to put on in his car during family trips, to the first foreign bands I discovered on TV music programmes, I have always been attracted by the songs, by the musicality, and by the guitar in particular. This was the first instrument that I wanted to learn. In high school, I auditioned to join the school band, playing 'Runaway Train' by Soul Asylum, but I didn't get to be the guitarist. The music master listened to me and said, 'Okay, you're the lead singer!'.



“Sargassi was officially born in 2019. I had written mostly acoustic songs, different from the sound of my historic band ... It’s an open project because different musicians collaborate.”

Aldora Britain Records: And now, let’s take a leap forward to the beginnings of Sargassi. These early days of the band must have been such an exciting time. How did it all come to be? How did you meet the other members and what was the initial spark that brought you together musically? It has certainly led to some brilliant output since.

Gabriele Martelloni: Sargassi was officially born in 2019. I had written mostly acoustic songs, different from the sound of my historic band, Nonzeta. And so, I decided to launch a new project, starting immediately with work at the Bonsai Studio in Orvieto, recording the debut album. It’s an open project because different musicians collaborate, but the main nucleus is made up of me on vocals and guitar, Lillo on bass, and Luca, who played with me in Nonzeta, on drums. To arrange and record the album, a fundamental role was that of Andrea, who is the Bonsai Studio’s director.



Aldora Britain Records: In 2021, you released the fantastic *Circolo Polare Catartico*. This was my introduction to your music, so it holds a very special place in my record collection. What are your memories from writing, recording and releasing this set? Is there anything that you would edit or change with the benefit of hindsight?

Gabriele Martelloni: I have wonderful memories of the recording of *Circolo Polare Catartico*. The songs that took shape day by day. The friends who came to help, each with his own instrument, to build the album. And curiously, the recordings ended just when the country was closed due to the pandemic. I was sorry to remove two songs at the very last moment, but I wanted to also release a vinyl version and ten songs was the right choice to make a better sound. Even though ‘Arsenali’ and ‘L’Ora D’Aria’ were among my favourites, I felt they were the ones that still needed something

else. These days, I’m arranging them at the Bonsai Studio, and they will surely be part of the second work from Sargassi.

Aldora Britain Records: I love the band’s sound. That mash up of modern rock styles, an alternative blend! We need more of it in the world. How would you say this style came about, what goes into it for you, and who are some of your biggest influences and inspirations as an artist? I have a feeling it could be quite an eclectic list.

Gabriele Martelloni: I think that the sound of the album represents a kind of synthesis of all the music I’ve heard and played in the past. There is a grunge setting, which is more marked in the songs ‘Sotta a Chi Tocca’, ‘Cartilagini’, and ‘Vita di Prova’, but which blends with the acoustic key that I wanted to give to *Circolo Polare Catartico*. Some of my favourite bands are Pearl Jam and the Dave Matthews Band, and I think that comes through in the music that I write as well. And there is certainly, even in the case of the lyrics, an echo of the Italian singer-songwriters that I listened to a lot as a child and that I’ve been rediscovering with enormous satisfaction over the years. Above all, the work of Lucio Battisti, Lucio Dalla, Franco Battiato.

Aldora Britain Records: I love the record from start to finish, but I would like to pick out some personal favourites. Let’s go for ‘Come l’Indonesia’ and ‘L’Alba Non Viene Mai’. For each, what is the story behind the song and can you remember the moment it came to be? Did anything in particular inspire them?

Gabriele Martelloni: I had this beautiful acoustic riff with the guitar tuned in D, and I had been trying to find the right words to enhance it, but I kept deleting it and starting from the beginning. One day, while reading an article about Indonesia, I found out that the archipelago is made up of seventeen-thousand islands. I thought, ‘Just like me, I’m seventeen-thousand, but I’m still one’. As Whitman wrote, ‘I’m vast, I contain multitudes’. I had the chorus of the

“I wanted to write a simple but touching ballad about a tormented love. I hope I succeeded.”

song, then the rest came. Then for ‘L’Alba Non Vienne Mai’, the music came much before the words. I wanted to write a simple but touching ballad about a tormented love. I hope I succeeded.

Aldora Britain Records: The Sargassi project is from Orvieto in Italy. I have noticed so many incredible Italian bands emerging over the last few years. It has been so encouraging to see. How is the scene there for you? What are some of the obstacles and challenges that you face as an independent, underground artist?

Gabriele Martelloni: Orvieto is a little city full of musical life and it was even more so in my school days. There were no solo artists, we all wanted to be in a band. I started playing punk, then crossover, always singing in Italian. Over the years, there has been some great satisfaction and some strong disappointment, but the desire to write music and play it has always been intact. It’s not easy to stand out in the province, and sometimes it’s the province itself that doesn’t listen to you. Today, with social media, it’s easier to get outside of the borders but there’s also a lot on offer and a lot of competition. Each musical era has its possibilities and difficulties.

Quickfire Round

AB Records: Favourite artist? **Gabriele:** Alice in Chains.

AB Records: Favourite album? **Gabriele:** Alice in Chains, *Tripod*.

AB Records: First gig as an audience member? **Gabriele:** R.E.M., *Monster* tour.

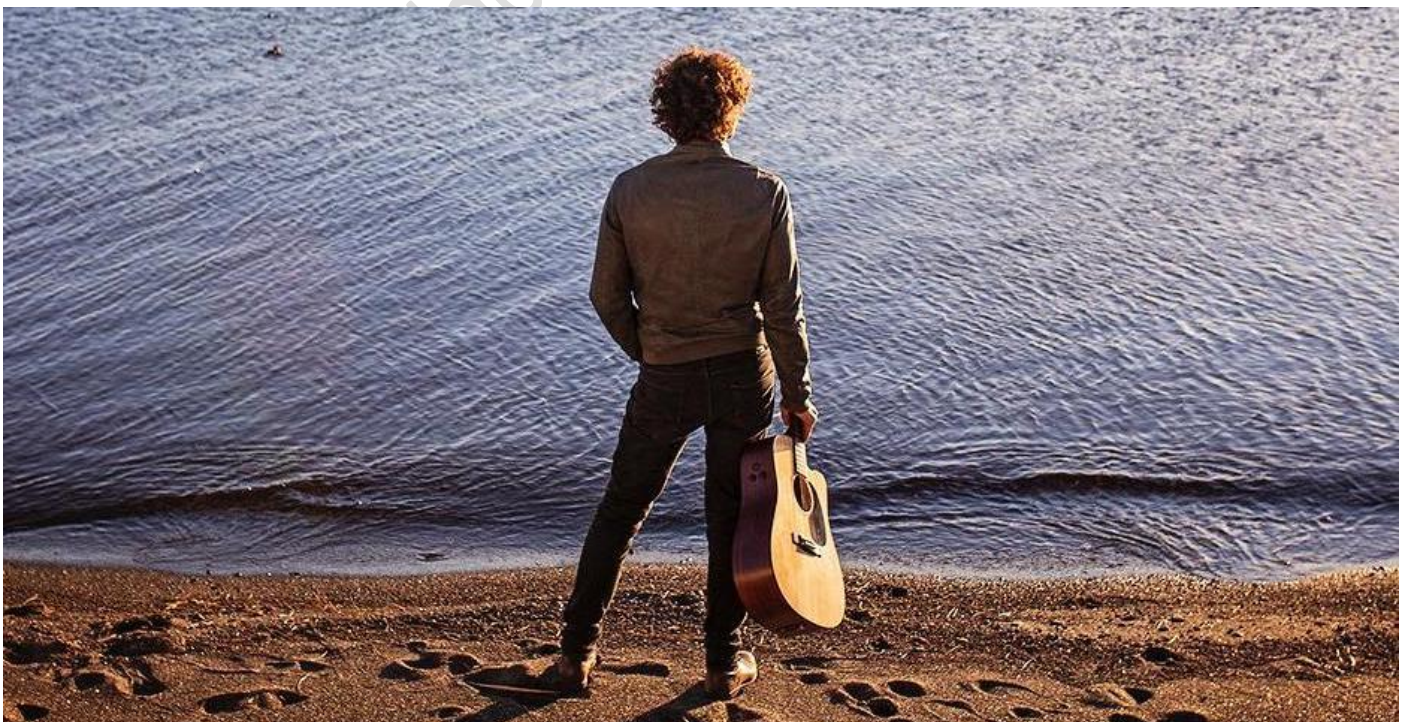
AB Records: Loudest gig as an audience member? **Gabriele:** U2, *Pop* tour.

AB Records: Style icon? **Gabriele:** David Bowie.

AB Records: Favourite film? **Gabriele:** *Clerks*.

AB Records: Favourite TV show? **Gabriele:** *Beavis and Butt-Head*.

AB Records: Favourite underground artist? **Gabriele:** Sufjan Stevens.



Don't be Discouraged!

PETER LEHDORFF is a creative mind that comes from a brilliantly intriguing lineage. A family of stories and history. His father, a citizen of Austria, escaped the Nazis in 1938, arriving in the United States with his cello in tow. His older sister Barbara witnessed coffeehouse renditions from Bob Dylan, Tom Rush, and Joan Baez in Boston in the late 50s and early 60s. This upbringing was then crossed with a love of Peter, Paul and Mary records, through which Peter honed his craft. Today, this Massachusetts-based singers-songwriter crafts intricate and relatable compositions, sometimes with humorous undertones and sometimes with melancholic feeling, and relays them to the world through fantastic records such as 2022's ten-track offering *Don't be Discouraged*. Further back, Peter unleashed *Love on the Line* (1996) and *The Songwriter Who Went Under Cover* (2013). On top of his musical ability and class, his output also seeks to raise money for The Huntington's Disease Program, a disease that claimed the life of the iconic Woody Guthrie as well as Peter's late wife. Taking a break from his other musical activities, Peter chatted with *Aldora Britain Records* earlier this month to chat about his artistic journey and growth to date.

Peter Lehndorff has previously contributed his track 'Reunion' to our 'Rock & Roll's Different Shapes & Sizes' compilation. Listen or download [HERE](#).

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Aldora Britain Records: Hello Peter, how are you? I am excited to be talking to such a brilliant artist from Massachusetts. It is amazing how music brings us together. I was wondering if we could start off by travelling back in time. What are some of your earliest musical memories and what was it that first pushed you towards pursuing this passion of yours?

Peter Lehndorff: I began playing guitar when I was eleven years old or so. Our family was very musical. My father had escaped the Nazis from Austria in 1938, bringing his cello and some books. Although he was a physician, music was his main release. My older sister Barbara was in college in Boston during one of the 'folk scares' in the late 50s and early 60s. She was routinely hearing Tom Rush, Joan Baez, and Bob Dylan in coffeehouses. She taught me a few chords and how to read chord diagrams and I was hooked.



“My older sister Barbara was in college in Boston during one of the ‘folk scares’ in the late 50s and early 60s. She was routinely hearing Tom Rush, Joan Baez, and Bob Dylan in coffeehouses. She taught me a few chords and how to read chord diagrams and I was hooked.”

Aldora Britain Records: In 2022, you released a fantastic record called *Don't be Discouraged*. This was actually my introduction to your music, and I still look back on it very fondly. What are your memories from writing, recording and releasing this set? Is there anything that you would edit or change with the benefit of hindsight?

Peter Lehndorff: I had been away from performing for nearly twenty years while I was a caregiver for my late wife who had Huntington's disease. I traded my services as a graphic designer to a friend of mine, Jim Henry, for studio time. He was putting out a book called *50 Pro-Tips for Musicians* and I designed it. It was a fun project and a funny book. Jim is a producer and sideman. He was in Mary Chapin Carpenter's touring band and backs up Tracy Grammer, who also plays with Dave Carter.

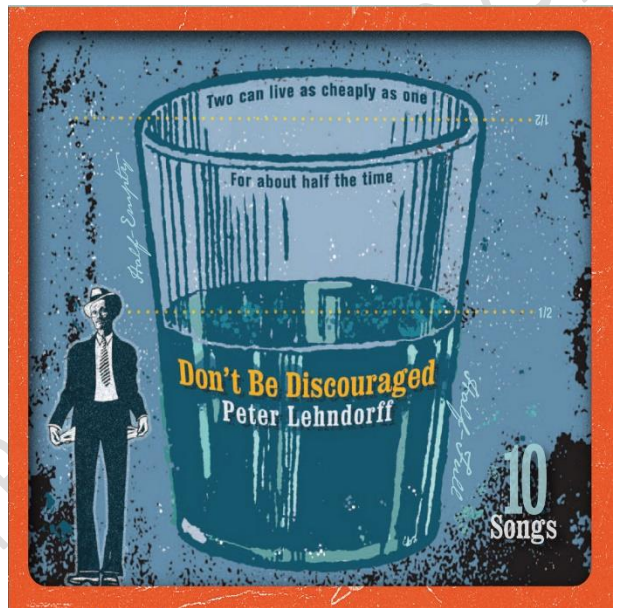
I had thought about recording most of it myself and just using Jim for guitar, mandolin, and dobro. But, as I talked to him, I decided to let him 'produce' the whole thing. He made suggestions and helped edit the songs. He rearranged some lyrics and even dropped some songs I thought I couldn't live without. Most of the other musicians were friends or acquaintances from our area.

I'm still very happy with the way it came out. We started recording the guitar parts before the pandemic. Then everything else happened remotely. The musicians sent in their parts, and I recorded my vocals at home as well as with my girlfriend Susan Hill. There are a few songs that I might have started with the chorus instead of a verse. Folk radio stations seem to like that better. Speaking of which, I did hire a radio promotion service to send the album to folk DJs, mostly in North America. The album reached Number 10, I think, on the Folk Alliance 'Folk DJ List' for a week or so.

Aldora Britain Records: I really enjoy the album from top to bottom, but I would like to pick out some personal favourites. Let's go for 'Don't be Discouraged' and 'Reunion'. For each, what is the story behind the song and can you remember the moment it came to be? Did anything in particular inspire them and what do they mean to you as the writer?

Peter Lehndorff: An early version of 'Don't be Discouraged' was in my head way back in the late 1990s. I had heard Julie Gold's masterpiece 'From a Distance', as covered by Nanci Griffith and Bette Midler. I started out wanting to write a secular hymn. My wife was just starting to show some signs of mental illness. That turned out to be Huntington's, a hereditary form of dementia. But at the time, I just thought she was getting short tempered! It kept on evolving as a song, and in reality, it wasn't going to be on the album. But after we gave up on another song, I decided I wanted to do 'Don't be Discouraged' as a tenth song. A different song, 'So Far So Good', was originally going to be the title track but a quick Google search showed that there were already a number of albums by that title. You can watch a lyric video for 'Don't be Discouraged' on my YouTube channel.

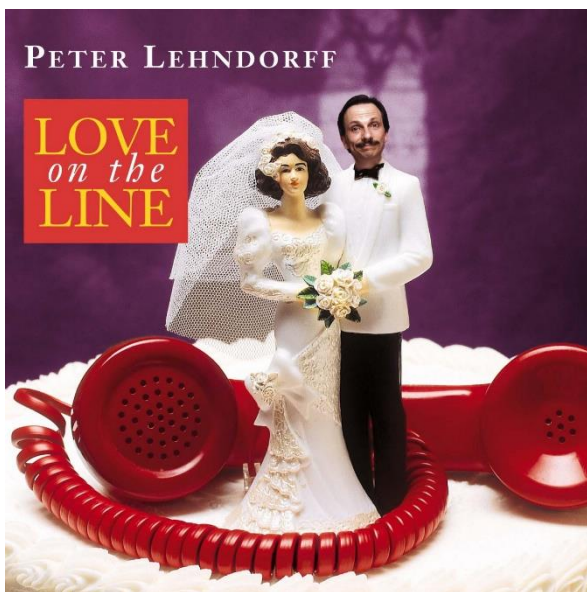
'Reunion'. In 2018, I went to my fiftieth high school reunion. I went to a really small, all-boys Catholic school. Fitchburg, Massachusetts was an old paper mill town, with a polluted river that changed colours, located in the middle of New England. There were only a dozen guys that made it to the reunion. As I worked on it, I thought I would try to include everyone who made it there. There were several guys that couldn't make it and I tried to include them as well. My plan was to just sing it at the next reunion. I tested the song at a few open mics and then at a gig. It seemed to resonate



“I really didn’t know what I was doing or even what chords I was playing. I would just move my fingers around until I could solve what I was thinking. I learned from listening to Peter, Paul and Mary records and Tom Rush. That led me to playing blues and a few jazz chords.”

with most of my ‘demographic’, people who are sixty and up. Jim Henry wanted to include it on the album, but we had to cut the number of classmates included to get the song to a reasonable length. I’m working on a lyric video for the song now. At least three of the classmates mentioned in the song, Nick, Frank, and ‘our quarterback’ Nelson, have since passed away. So, I feel a sense of urgency.

Aldora Britain Records: If we travel back further, to 1996, we can discover another fantastic outing of yours, the brilliant *Love on the Line*. I really enjoy this record too. How do you reflect back on this release as a whole now? How would you say you have grown and evolved as an artist since its release?



Peter Lehndorff: Absolutely. *Love on the Line* was primarily funny songs. I was reluctant to share my serious side. There is a song on there called ‘Paranoid’, a tongue-in-cheek look at my own self-doubts. A few years later, as my wife started to become ill, I was diagnosed with a low level anxiety problem and went through a few years of therapy. Talk about ‘life imitating art’, or is it the other way around? A few of the songs on that album were included on a National Public Radio show in the US called *Car Talk*. The song ‘Peugeot’ was included on one of their CD compilations.

That CD came out in 1996 on what was then a regional folk label, Signature Sounds Recordings. After that, as my wife got sick, I had to cancel gigs and focus on her health. But I kept writing and became part of a community of collaborators from all over the world on Soundcloud. I’m still proud of some of those songs and covers. I put out one collection of covers to benefit Huntington’s

disease called *The Songwriter Who Went Under Cover*. I learned a fair amount about home recording.

Aldora Britain Records: I love that nostalgic Americana country sound that sometimes comes through in your music. There is, of course, so much else going on too. It is a big melting pot of lots of brilliance. How would you say this style of yours came about, what goes into it for you, and who are your biggest influences and inspirations as an artist?

Peter Lehndorff: In high school, I started writing funny poems filled with puns and word ticks. I thought of myself as just a guitar player. I was too shy to get on stage. I really didn’t know what I was doing or even what chords I was playing. I would just move my fingers around until I could solve what I was thinking. I learned from listening to Peter, Paul and Mary records and Tom Rush. That led me to playing blues and a few jazz chords. Carol Kaye, the great bassist, gave me a few books of jazz chords one time when I met her as part of an interview. That helped me write songs like ‘Two Cents Worth’ on the album.

Aldora Britain Records: As we briefly mentioned earlier on, you are based in Massachusetts. *Aldora Britain Records* has some very strong links with Massachusetts and it is always a pleasure to hear all the bands and artists that you guys have going on! What is the scene like there today? What are some of the obstacles and challenges that you have faced as an independent musician?

Peter Lehndorff: New England has been a great area for folk and Americana music. There is a network of church basement coffeehouses where folks can get their performing legs underneath them. In Western Massachusetts and in Connecticut, there is a big community of musicians and songwriters. As far as obstacles, one of the biggest is age and

ageism. It is hard for some of the older performers like myself to find gigs. A further problem is that the audience for my type of music is getting older. The pandemic helped close a number of venues in New England. I was going to be booked at the Philadelphia Folk Festival, but financial problems have put them out of business for at least this year.

Quickfire Round

AB Records: Favourite artist? **Peter:** John Prine was a huge influence on me.

AB Records: Favourite album? **Peter:** The Band's early albums. Every song is like a play or novel.

AB Records: First gig as an audience member? **Peter:** I got to hear Dylan as Joan Baez's 'mystery guest' at a concert on the Boston Common in the 1960s.

AB Records: Loudest gig as an audience member? **Peter:** Actually, just last November, I attended the Northeast Folk Alliance in Asbury Park, New Jersey and some of the featured bands were painfully loud. My decibel meter on my phone was registering dangerous levels. I had to leave.

AB Records: Style icon? **Peter:** Leon Redbone. When I worked in Cambridge, Massachusetts, he would stand on the corner with his walking stick and never ever break character.

AB Records: Favourite film? **Peter:** At the moment, *It's a Wonderful Life* is on my brain. I perform a mash-up of 'Walk on the Wild Side' and 'Buffalo Gals'.

AB Records: Favourite TV show? **Peter:** I watch too much news and commentary on our MSNBC network. Sometimes I get song ideas.

AB Records: Favourite underground artist? **Peter:** Not really underground, but there is a group from Michigan called The Accidentals. They are great.



If I Can't Have a Martin Guitar

Rootsy American-style music with cosmic tendencies and German integrity. This is the name of the game for singer-songwriter and musician **ALEX WURLITZER**. Fresh from his *Big Business* LP, released in 2022, Alex is still crafting glorious compositions that fuse together disparate cultures, styles, and origins. Built upon a love of classic singer-songwriters, including Bob Dylan, Townes Van Zandt, and Mark Knopfler, *Big Business* provides listeners with eleven stellar tracks, each a quintessential example of this artist's immense and natural creativity. This particular outing also builds on a fabulous back-catalogue, which includes releases such as 2013's *Out of Stock* and 2011's *No Place Like Home*, a set recorded in collaboration with his Red Blooms project. In more recent times, in the last few weeks, *Aldora Britain Records* tracked Alex Wurlitzer down to chat about his musical journey and evolution to date. We discuss early musical memories, the *Big Business* LP, his influences and inspirations, and so much more.

Alex Wurlitzer has previously contributed his track 'Streets I Know' to our 'Exile on Charlton Lane' compilation. Listen or download [HERE](#).

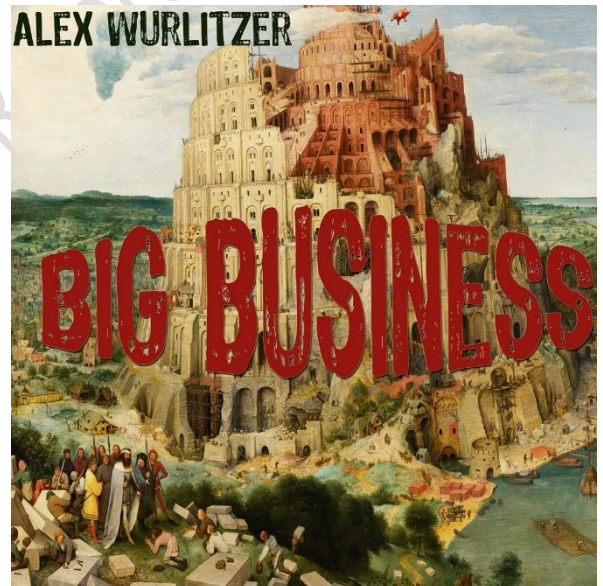
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Aldora Britain Records: Hi Alex, how are you? I am excited to be talking to such a brilliant contemporary artist. Thank you for your time. I was wondering if we could start off by rewinding the clocks. What are some of your earliest musical memories and what was it that first pushed you towards pursuing this passion of yours?

Alex Wurlitzer: Hi Tom, thank you, I am fine. Since I was a little kid, I loved music. My father has a Tesla B100 tape machine and recorded over one hundred and seventy hours of music from the radio. I know this because in 2003 he digitalised all the tapes to MP3. I now have these tapes on my Garmin watch and listen to them while riding my road bike. I must say that this was a major influence. The percentage of good music was much higher in mainstream radio back then. When I was five years old, I loved 'Sultans of Swing' by Dire Straits, amongst other Dire Straits songs, and 'Heart of Gold' by Neil Young. The first band I was a fan of was Roxette when I was about ten to twelve years old. Then I really got into music aged thirteen with rediscovering all the Dire Straits and Mark Knopfler stuff, as well as early R.E.M. and Pink Floyd. I didn't know who to trust back then and my heart kept telling me that these songs were real. So, I went by that. I didn't know much, but I loved these songs. I started learning guitar, self-taught, when I was fifteen years old with the aim of becoming a professional musician, practicing four hours after school each day.

Aldora Britain Records: And now, let's take a leap forward to your astonishing record from 2022, *Big Business*. This was actually my introduction to your music, so it holds a special place in my collection. What are your memories from writing, recording and releasing this set? Is there anything that you would edit or change with the benefit of hindsight?

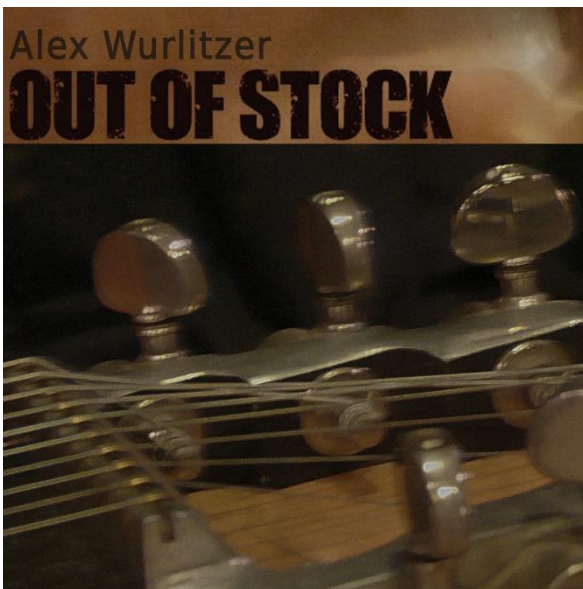
Alex Wurlitzer: I am really a project guy. I can put a tremendous amount of focus on something and when it's done, I almost forget that I did it. First of all, I was busy with working on other people's records for a couple of years, so I didn't pursue my own music. Secondly, I am completely happy working in the background, producing records for other people and playing guitar. I don't consider myself to be a singer. The finished product means everything to me and if I can contribute something valuable to a good album, I am blessed. That might just be putting the microphones in the right place.



“I didn’t know who to trust back then and my heart kept telling me that these songs were real. So, I went by that. I didn’t know much, but I loved these songs. I started learning guitar, self-taught.”

I had written some songs over the years and felt that it was time to do another record of my own. If I need songs, I write them pretty quickly. I think I wrote the missing four songs in one week. Then, I might not write a song for one year. ‘Big Business’ was a lyric I wrote in 2006. An acquaintance of mine told me a story of smuggling cocaine to Germany and I wrote the lyric and the melody. I wasn’t really happy with it, so it stayed on the shelf. Then I put new music to it and wrote another three verses and it was done.

I worked alone in the studio then I invited my go-to session friends. I really enjoy recording live, but I didn’t do it quite as much on this record because I needed time to see where the songs would go. But we did have a full band session. The outro of ‘Greedy Weeds of Darkness’ was played live. That instrumental is my favourite part of the record. I wouldn’t change a thing as it is a photograph of that time. I see records as photographs and I don’t like editing out people of old photographs when people separate, for example.



Aldora Britain Records: I love your sound. It has that expansive and colourful American feel with a strong rootsy vibe going on. That is perfectly up my street! I love it. How would you say your style came about, what goes into it for you, and who are some of your biggest influences and inspirations as an artist?

Alex Wurlitzer: Thank you! One major influence is Mark Knopfler, of course. I was really into him when I was fourteen to sixteen years old, and I still am. But it is important for me to make it my own and not copy somebody else. I have learned that Mark Knopfler took a lot from J.J. Cale who is another one of my heroes. I really love his music and him as a person. I deeply admire his ability to make over ten albums with a minimal amount of ingredients and yet find something new every time. I am going where my heart leads me. I was never thinking about how I should sound, just trying to find my voice. By now, I know that one of my

greatest strengths is to play guitar to a good song in a style that is more or less Americana, which has a lot of different influences. I like Townes Van Zandt a lot too. I like things that you can’t learn.

Aldora Britain Records: I really enjoy *Big Business* from start to finish, but I would like to pick out some personal favourites. Let’s go for ‘Streets I Know’ and ‘Circles Around the Sun’. For each, what is the story behind the song and can you remember the moment it came to be? Did anything in particular inspire them and what do they mean to you as the writer?

Alex Wurlitzer: ‘Streets I Know’ might be about going back to the things that have proven true for you, returning from a path you are not quite sure about. In my opinion, there are always more things that you are not that sure about than things that you really know well. Life might be good everywhere, but what matters is what is the right place for you as a person. I sometimes find myself in places where I don’t feel at home, so that might have an influence. But I am happy that I got to know many wonderful people, mostly musicians, where I don’t have to explain much.

‘Circles Around the Sun’ is about Neal Casal in particular who took his life in 2019. I have just one album from him, *Roots and Wings*, but it is in my car stereo all the time. I am sure I will get other albums from him, but I am so lazy with getting new music. Luckily, I have good friends who bring me music so that I don’t listen to the same stuff over and over.

“Life and music are often about finding the right expressions for your feelings. My feelings pretty much stay the same, perhaps a bit more mellow in recent years, but I can handle my toolbox better now.”

Aldora Britain Records: In 2013, you released another fantastic record. I am talking about the brilliant *Out of Stock*. This is a stellar earlier snapshot of you as an artist. I have been enjoying getting to know it. How do you reflect on this release now? How would you say you have grown and evolved as an artist since?

Alex Wurlitzer: I remember putting a lot of work into *Out of Stock* in 2013, as I always do with records I work on. I have certainly grown since then, but it is a photograph from 2013 that is dear to me. Life and music are often about finding the right expressions for your feelings. My feelings pretty much stay the same, perhaps a bit more mellow in recent years, but I can handle my toolbox better now. ‘Out of Stock’ and ‘Don’t Drink That Water’ are two of my favourites from that record.

Aldora Britain Records: I have also travelled back further. I discovered a different project called Red Blooms. Let’s chat about it! Specifically, there was a record called *No Place Like Home*. Can you tell me more about Red Blooms? What were you aiming to achieve with this project and this particular album too?

Alex Wurlitzer: Red Blooms was a former band that I founded, played guitar, and wrote most of the material. I really enjoyed that period and learned a lot at that time. Two other bandmembers were trying to find their personal voice and went from metal to Americana to chanson noir. The Americana period was the Red Blooms period. That was one reason the band split up after two years of intense work, one album, and some concerts. I don’t have regrets about that as life always goes on. The aim was to establish ourselves as a band. The best thing is that I was friends with Anna, Maria, Silas, and Ambrosius, then we had the band, then we split, but we are still friends now. Maria and Silas learned a lot of new instruments like the nyckelharpa, santur, and Irish whistle, and are making the music they want to make right now, so everything is fine. They make instrumental music as Ebenbild and songs as Aurago. I recorded their albums.



Quickfire Round

AB Records: Favourite artist? **Alex:** Bob Dylan.

AB Records: Favourite album? **Alex:** *Love and Theft* by Bob Dylan.

AB Records: First gig as an audience member? **Alex:** Perhaps The Yardbirds or Phil Suenfeldt in 2002 or 2003.

AB Records: Loudest gig as an audience member? **Alex:** Molly Hatchet as support for Deep Purple in 2003.

AB Records: Style icon? **Alex:** J.J. Cale.

AB Records: Favourite film? **Alex:** *The Big Lebowski* or *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*.

AB Records: Favourite TV show? **Alex:** I nearly don’t watch TV at all, but I used to when I was young. *The X-Files*.

AB Records: Favourite underground artist? **Alex:** Laura Baxter from Melbourne, Australia. She sings backing vocals with Georgia State Line, but also has great songs of her own and a wonderful voice.

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Rewind...

[A B Records Issue 108 \(July 2023\)](#)

Featuring Graceful, Elephants Through the Alps, Dusty Wright, Spygenius, Deedles and Company, Ken Newman, Full Fat, The Kookie Kutterz, Tobias Werner, and Ben Trickey.

[A B Records Issue 107 \(July 2023\)](#)

Featuring N.I./N.A., Jay Ottaway and the Lost Boys, Jasper de Moor, Wolfoni, Mick Shaffer, pMad, The Fisherman and the Sea, Falsetto Boy, Gentle Ihor's Devotion, and Tom Roznowski.

[A B Records Issue 106 \(July 2023\)](#)

Featuring Marcellus Rex, Kristin Young, Vandals in Sandals, The Grain Hoppers, Stefan Neumann, Joe Schaefer, RockTown Blues, Maple Mars, Joachim Fatio, and The Bob Wales Band.

[A B Records Issue 105 \(June 2023\)](#)

Featuring Endrick and The Sandwiches, Jim Baumer, Kyle Rightley, Will Rainier and The Pines, Lorraine Leckie and Her Demons, Allie Crummy, Alias Smith and Jones, PUKK, Broken Radio, and Cherry Heaven.

[A B Records Issue 104 \(June 2023\)](#)

Featuring Cece Yentzen, Faelris, Astral Construct, Boo Sutcliffe, Names Change, Luka Gluvic, House and Hawk, FI, TENT, and Remote Kontrol.

[A B Records Issue 103 \(June 2023\)](#)

Featuring J P Worsfold, Leaving for Arizona, The Agency..., The Mease, Shadow Folk, The So-Called, The December Flowers, The Telephones, Gunash, and Tony Mecca.

[A B Records Issue 102 \(May 2023\)](#)

Featuring Phil Matthews a.k.a. The Village, J.D. Miner, Air Show Disaster, Brook Adams, Nathan Landis Funk, Jesus Villa, Landis St., Marty Winkler, Kevin Figes, and Marv & Pie.

[A B Records Issue 101 \(April 2023\)](#)

Featuring The Strands, Rewilding, Anime Aliens, Richard Ohrn, Plasticine, Linnea's Garden, Fernando Neris, The Lassies, Chloe and The Opposites, and Chris Williams

[A B Records Issue 100 \(April 2023\)](#)

Featuring Nick Costa, Of Shadows and Lights, The Margaret Hooligans, Adrian Y Gof, Capital Sons, Colouratura, Linda Sussman, Degerwald, FIZZ, and Cy.

[A B Records Issue 99 \(April 2023\)](#)

Featuring Bedsit, Velibor Nikolic, Spaceship and Son, The Vodka Tourists, Sparky's Magic Piano, Andy Pratt, The Barbarian Horde, James Carr Band, The Other Hit, and Miss Leo.

[A B Records Issue 98 \(March 2023\)](#)

Featuring Limitless Horizon, Blackcat Elliot, Gavin McMaster, Merylyn Steele, Le Fondeur de Son, The Triptamynds, Jester Society, Banjo Jen, Christy Merry, and Hypnotic Eye.