

ABOUT ERIC PETERS

An artist can be identified in part by the materials with which he or she chooses to work. The work of Eric Peters has given way to a fascination for found objects for quite some time, revealing much about the heart and mind, the passion and the perspective of the artist himself.

Eric's affection for found objects is clearly seen within his artwork. They're beautifully displayed in his mixed media creations and compositions, random parts and spare thingamajigs positioned lovingly and carefully within a certain section of the color wheel that reveal a surprising and moving storyboard. Bits from a backyard. Remnants in a forgotten jacket pocket. Debris at the bottom of an old toolbox. Where the object originates is inconsequential; its crowning within a new creation is all that matters now.

Themes of lost and found, of self-worth, of identity are common fodder for Eric's music as well. Brilliant albums like *Scarce*, *Chrome* and *Birds of Relocation* all hold songs that wrestle with these ideas, and his latest album, *Far Side of the Sea*, is no different. While the musical canvas has shifted more than ever before — from the familiar acoustic structures of albums past to a new synth-pop soundscape with new producer Gabe Scott at the helm — Eric's lyrical focus remains firmly rooted in vulnerable soil.

Listening to Eric's catalog and especially *Far Side of the Sea* reveals his thesis: we are all found objects. We all come with such origin stories, picked up by a Creator from among the poor, the broken, the displaced.

"I'm not enough. I'm never enough. Nothing I do ever adds up to much. My fields are little more than permanent dust," Eric confesses on "*Field of Failure*." Fortunately the lyrical focus never stays in these determinant stages. Rather, the music always directs us, as listeners, toward the crowning, toward our ultimate place within God's new creation.

What makes Eric's music even more meaningful is that it acknowledges the movement between where an object (or person) is found and what it (or he/she) ultimately becomes. "*Farthest Shore*" documents "the change coming over" the artist. "I can feel the change," he sings. "Is this redemption for a dead, dry sea?" he asks. The exhibit is always singer-in-process, complete with the fear and insecurity, the hope and longing that comes with such a journey. It's a revelation of wounds, not an exaltation of them. There is healing ahead, after all.

Much of *Far Side of the Sea*'s second half contains wisdom gained between the end points of life. "Am I willing to be a nobody?" is the question asked on "*Nobody*," and it's a penetrating one for both artist and listener. The answer is not (and should not be) a simple "yes" without some real consideration of what it means. Looking at "the darkness in his chest" and "the sun that never sets," Eric admits his tendency to "run away and hide" on "*Worst Parts*." Accepting grace means abandoning shame, a much harder move than we might anticipate.

Eric Peters' art and music serve as a wonderful example of why this choice to decrease is a worthy one. A greater identity and purpose await all of us, just on the other side of our own efforts to strive and be something on our own. Even our greatest efforts to prove something in our own strength yields only fields of failure in the end. But if we're willing to let down our guard, to truly become a nobody, we will find ourselves as participants and co-creators on the *Far Side of the Sea*.