

### 1. **Restless Creature** (Brendan Gallagher)

This album is to celebrate 50 years as a guitar player, mostly covers with a coupla my tunes thrown in. My working title was *Some Bloke With A Guitar*, a pithy quote from fellow Dead Marine band member Bow Campbell. He was a late substitution one evening for a gig at an inner city Sydney venue and the pub owner wrote just that on the sandwich board out front.

But I decided it was bit too glib, and arrived at *Restless Creature* instead, a term my mother applied to myself and some of my brothers when she was mystified by our apparent purposelessness. Brother #5 Tim and I resolved early on that we would start a band and, as the *do as you like kids*, another of mum's descriptors, I started teaching myself on brother #4 Bob's guitar, and Tim bought a drum kit. We set the kit up just like a photo on an album cover (much like The Shaggs I guess) and both learnt to play by listening to fave Beatles and Stones records on the home stereo and figuring out, by torturous trial and error, what it was that Ringo and Charlie were doing.

So I wrote a song called *Restless Creature*, somewhat autobiographical, but a familiar story to other artists I'm sure, and, true to my mum's various folksy monikers (oh, I forgot pig-headed) I played everything. I think this may be my debut playing double bass on a record. Recorded at Bondi Pavilion Studio 1 and Declan Kelly's The Nest.

### 2. **Duchess** (Scott Engel)

I came late to Scott Walker. I was aware of him from going to The Drunk, The Monk & The Spunk gigs at The Sando in Sydney in '90s, but the penny didn't drop until Lindy Morrison switched me on to the documentary *30 Century Man* and I bought *Scott 4*. Much to like about that record - great songs, magnificent singing (no wonder Bowie loved him), outstanding orchestral arrangements and recordings (a lost age), and kilos of reverb! *Duchess* to me is the best Bob Dylan song he never wrote.

About ten years ago I formed a band/duo called B!G with Reels drummer John Boy Bliss, playing mostly covers, and *Duchess* was one of them. A great performance from JB, he don't play like nobody else. Recorded by Michelle Barry at Alberts, and at GPHQ.

### 3. **A Song For You** (Leon Russell)

Leon Russell I got early. I had a poster of him above my bed when I was 13, I'd seen the Mad Dogs & Englishmen film and bought the records. In '73 brother Tim and I went to see him play Randwick Racecourse with the biggest band I'd ever seen, two grand pianos for starters. Gobsmackingly fabulous, even if there was a torrential downpour halfway through and everybody ran for cover.

The older I got the better *A Song For You* sounded, until it became for me the textbook definition of the perfect song - heartfelt, true to life, incorporating the many styles of Leon's playing, romantic, Ellingtonian, New Orleans - and an imperfect/perfect vocal that sounded like Leon's life depended on it.

In 2016, a few days after he died, I found myself on a small stage in Beijing's Great Hall of the People singing *A Song For You* to a small but quality audience, including Paul Williams. He came up to me after and introduced himself and proceeded to tell me stories about his great friend Leon Russell. That was full circle for me.

#### 4. **You Can't Do That** (Lennon/McCartney)

Which Fab 4 song do you cover? All of them/none of them? *You Can't Do That* for me was always one of the early recordings that demonstrated the raw engine room power of The Beatles, the beat. This was another song I used to play with John Boy Bliss in B!G, but we really fucked with it. I went to see BB King in '76 at Hordern Pavilion, Sydney and when he came on stage the band, with a big horn section, kicked into the best shuffle I've ever heard. I wanted to play this song like that.

So I got Miles Thomas on drums, Jonathan Zwartz on double bass, and Reg Mombassa along with me on guitar in a room to track it live. We recorded it and two other songs and then went for a coffee. When we came back Reg produced a very fine bottle of scotch, a gift from someone, and said 'let's have a couple of these and do it again'. And that recording is what made the record.

The icing is Ilan Kidron from Potbelleez sharing vocals. What a singer! Reminds me of a young Mel Tormé. Oh, and I played my BB King special edition Gibson Lucille that I won off a label A & R guy in a bet, but that's another story. Recorded at Bondi Pavilion Studio 1.

#### 5. **Once** (McDermott/Joseph/Washington)

I loved this song by Ngaiire the first time I heard it and it would not go away. I wanted to play it on acoustic guitar but how? I was thinking Morcheeba meets The Faces, kind of, so Miles Thomas (drums) and I tracked it live, no click track, no edits, top to tail.

I built the rest of the arrangement around that, but with a stellar one off contribution from keyboard legend Wally Badarou. Wally was one of the Compass Point All Stars along with Sly and Robbie, and played on records for Grace Jones, Robert Palmer, Talking Heads, Manu Dibango and more. A more humble and gifted musician you wouldn't meet on a day's march. Recorded at Bondi Pavilion Studio 1.

#### 6. **Stone Free** (Jimi Hendrix)

I started playing guitar the week Jimi Hendrix died, in September 1970. I was in first form (year seven) at school in suburban Sydney when our teacher, Brother Linus, a thirty something Marist brother, walked in and said 'I'm not teaching today boys, Jimi Hendrix is dead' and sat down in a funk at his desk. Random. So I started listening to a lot more Hendrix.

This version, again with Reg Mombassa, Miles Thomas & Jonathan Zwartz (and Ilan Kidron on BVs), owes more to Australian 60s R&B/pub rock, like Billy Thorpe & The Aztecs and Purple Hearts. I went to a lot of gigs while I was still at school - Khavas Jute, Chariot, Band of Light (with Norm Roue on slide guitar), a nascent AC/DC (before Bon was the singer, with Dave Evans

dressed up like Gary Glitter), and Thorpie, with two drummers (Johnny Dick & Gil Matthews I think), the venerable Warren 'Pig' Morgan on keys, and very fucking loud. I think some of that rubbed off on me.

#### **7. Blue Gums Calling Me Back Home (Harry Williams)**

I first heard this song in, of all places, King County Park, Seattle USA in 2000. I'd been on a long tour with Karma County across Europe and North America where we occasionally caught up with Jimmy Little and backed him at a few shows. This was WOMAD Seattle, and Jimmy was on stage solo with some other famous artists like Alejandro Escovedo. When he sang *Blue Gums* us Aussies teared up, it made us really home sick.

I met the song again when I was music director for the live theatre show of Clinton Walker's epic *Buried Country*, the untold story of Aboriginal country music. Written by Wiradjuri man Harry Williams and recorded by him and The Country Outcasts, I never tire of singing it, and it takes me back to watching Uncle Jimmy charm that audience in Seattle one carefree afternoon in the northern summer all those years ago. Recorded at Bondi Pavilion Studio 1 with Miles Thomas on drums & Ollie Thorpe pedal steel.

#### **8. Mystery Train (Junior Parker/Sam Phillips)**

I have a connection with trains. My mum was NSW commissioner for railways' secretary before she got married, her uncle Pat Dooley was station master at Goulburn, and when I was 7 our family moved into a house next to the railway line at Eastwood in Sydney. The trains rocked us to sleep every night, and there are bits of many TV shows from the 70s I missed as the trains rumbled past. When I was 22 I worked on the track as a fettler replacing sleepers between Strathfield and Hornsby. I do love a train.

I can't remember a time when I didn't play this song, it's been in my back pocket forever. Once I played it to waiting passengers in the departure lounge of Cesaria Evora International Airport in Cabo Verde, it's ubiquitous. Recorded with Reg Mombassa, Miles Thomas & Jonathan Zwartz at Bondi Pavilion Studio 1.

#### **9. Prefab Heart (David Mason)**

Dave Mason is one of the great songwriters, anywhere, anytime. It has been my good fortune to be his accompanist on occasion over the years. What a gig, so many good songs to play - *Kitchen Man*, *Shout & Deliver*, *No. 3* and it's bookend *Return, Comedy*, and of course the timeless *Quasimodo's Dream*.

But *Prefab Heart* was where it all started for me. I asked Miles Thomas to listen to Ry Cooder's *Tatler* and play drums like Jim Keltner. And he did. Recorded at Bondi Pavilion Studio 1.

#### **10. A Simple Twist of Fate (Bob Dylan)**

I have more albums by Bob Dylan than any other artist (followed closely by Los Lobos, The Necks, Nick Lowe, Ry Cooder and The Beatles). Which song do you do, there's so many? But *Blood On The Tracks* is the big one for me, and *Twist* is the song. A most unusual form - 6

verses, 7 lines each, first 3 rhyme, next 2 another rhyme, next 2 another e.g. park, dark, spark, bones, alone, straight, fate. All over a recurring chord pattern, verses and refrain. I had a little fun mashing the riff from Blonde On Blonde's *I Want You* on to the top and tail.

I recorded the bed track with me on electric guitar and Stu Hunter on Hammond B3 at his Habitat studio in Sydney. Stu has guested on more of my records than anybody else. Halfway it switches to acoustic guitar, Jonathan Zwartz on bass, and Ollie Thorpe on pedal steel (recorded at Bondi Pavilion Studio 1). I didn't like the way I'd played on latter half of original take, but the different sound reinforces the narrative where, half way through the song, our protagonist wakes the next day. Oftentimes the music will point the way. Recorded at Bondi Pavilion Studio 1

#### 11. **Sweetie** (Brendan Gallagher)

So called because a friend told me about a film of the same name Jane Campion was working on and I pitched some music to her. It's an early composition of mine when I first started dabbling in open tuned guitar. I studied full-time at University of Technology, Sydney in the late 80s and for several years after I graduated I made recordings in the media centre in the basement of the tower building. They had a fabulous Otari 8 track 1" machine and it didn't get much use. I drove a taxi for a few years after getting my degree and if I was going past the uni I'd pull up outside and go in and put my name down for any sessions that were available. This is pre 9/11, different times.

I originally recorded this with drummer Pete Burgess from The Backsliders for a Leisuremasters' record, but I was never quite happy with how I played. This version with Miles Thomas on drums, who was my rock for this album. Recorded at Bondi Pavilion Studio 1.

Over and out... Brendo 2020