



ALDORA BRITAIN RECORDS

A Global Independent and Underground Music E-Zine
Issue 162, Thursday 28th March 2024
“Tomorrow’s Music Today”

FEATURING THE SOUNDS OF...

It’s Karma It’s Cool, Thea Ennen,
Dreamcoaster, The Cameramen, Ali T, Alan
Lee Witherspoon, The Silverbeets, Kat
Reinhert, Rainsticks, and Meiosis

Compiled and written by Tom Hilton

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"We all deserve a chance, to join in the dance."

Jacob Tucker, Grey Start Ghost

Highlight of the Day

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



Martyn Bewick (It's Karma It's Cool): "One of the great things about this band for us, is that even though we're vaguely labelled an indie rock and powerpop band, we don't feel pigeonholed or stuck to write within any genre, and that is so freeing when it comes to writing."

Thea Ennen (solo artist): "Rolling hills, woods, and farmland. And we get all four seasons here, so the landscape changes with the weather, I guess I find a metaphor in all that in regards to our human journey."

Andrew Craig (Dreamcoaster): "We're starting work on a new album this year but even we're not sure what direction it will take yet, which is quite exciting."

Richard Sallis (The Cameramen): "Years of growing together makes us click naturally these days. It's the sort of relationship, creative and personal, you can only establish after years of working closely together."

Ali T (solo artist): "When I don't have anything going on in my life worth writing about, I will be inspired by stories from people around me ... many of my songs are personal as well, but these themes also tend to be relatable."

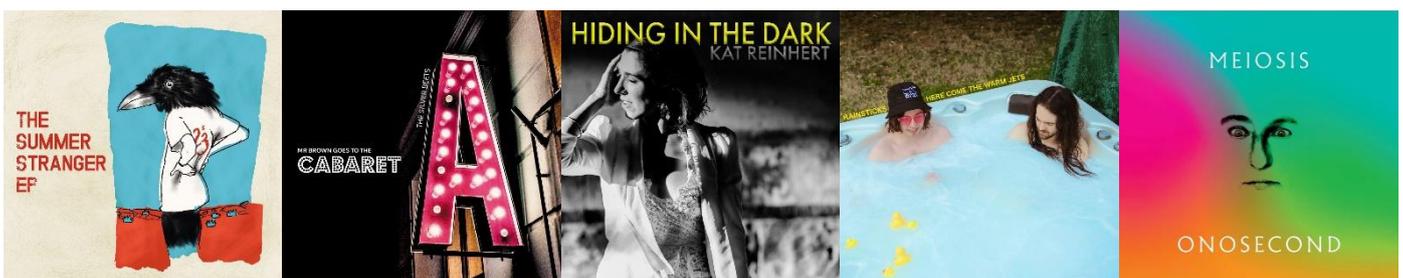
Alan Lee Witherspoon (solo artist): "The last few albums have leaned hard into the 70s singer-songwriter style ... 'yacht rock' or 'West Coast' or 'AOR'. So, it's going to have the obligatory sailing, beaches, and wind themes."

Farnz Cordeaux (The Silverbeets): "What I always want is to do things differently and create sounds and songs that are different from what we have done before."

Kat Reinhert (solo artist): "My approach to songwriting is probably best summed up with two words, curiosity and craft. I'm curious about how the puzzle of a song unfolds and also how the craft of songwriting informs how I put the pieces together."

Asher Horton (Rainsticks): "Every time I work on a record, I learn more about how I like to record and get the results I'm after, so while I partly wish the process of making this record took less time, I'm ultimately thankful for the extra experience gained."

Martin Thompson (Meiosis): "If you're going to get other people to join in, you might as well let them do what they are good at doing rather than dictating to them what you think is right."



Vacations in a Taxicab

Lincolnshire is home to a plethora of underground artists, from Bernie Taupin and Iain Matthews to Jack Broadbent and Boz Burrell, names that are associated with boundless talent, but also names that do not stray too close to the overbearing limelight. From this same modest creative crop, modern-day alternative rock powerhouse **IT'S KARMA IT'S COOL** step forth. Taking influence from such indie heroes as R.E.M. and Death Cab for Cutie, this British band are bringing their new age rock and roll style to listeners all around the world, all the while emphasising an irresistible underlying pop sensibility. This trailblazing formula has been caught on several outings, namely 2020's *Woke Up in Hollywood*, 2021's *Homesick for Our Future Destinations*, and 2023's *Thrift Store Troubadours*. Along the way, It's Karma It's Cool have even gained the patronage of Peter Holsapple of The dB's, leading to several collaborations. As the momentum behind *Thrift Store Troubadours* continues, the band took a short break to reflect with Aldora Britain Records once again on their journey so far.

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Aldora Britain Records: Hello guys, how are you? I think it is about time that we welcomed It's Karma It's Cool back to the *Aldora Britain Records* e-zine. The last time was back in 2021. It has been far too long! As always, I want to kick things off by rewinding the clocks. Jim, you previously talked about formative live memories of the Lincoln music scene. Can you tell me about this? What formative impact did this have on you?

Jim Styring: Hi Tom, it's good to be back with you! Lincoln's always had a healthy original music scene. There haven't always been the venues to play, but that's all changing now. It's pretty vibrant at the moment, the best it's been for a long while. A lot of people work hard behind the scenes to make it happen, not just the bands. I've always enjoyed going to see bands locally, it's always inspired me and made me want to get involved. It's vitally important to support your local scene, without the support it couldn't survive. And everyone is out there helping everyone else, there's a sense of community among the bands and musicians. It had a huge impact on me. I wouldn't be doing this now without the influence and inspirations all those bands gave me.

Aldora Britain Records: And now, let's tape a leap forward to the present day and the unstoppable It's Karma It's Cool. I am really drawn in by your impeccable songwriting and songcraft. That's what brings it all together for me. How do you approach this part of your creative process? Are you drawn to particular themes or topics? Perhaps coming from a personal, observational, or even fictional perspective?



“One of the great things about this band for us, is that even though we’re vaguely labelled an indie rock and powerpop band, we don’t feel pigeonholed or stuck to write within any genre, and that is so freeing when it comes to writing.”

Martyn Bewick: I’d love to say that there was a deep, meaningful, and thought out process behind our creative process, but the honest answer is we just do it. Myself and Mikey will pick up our instruments and we just see where our fingers land and go from there. One of the great things about this band for us, is that even though we’re vaguely labelled an indie rock and powerpop band, we don’t feel pigeonholed or stuck to write within any genre, and that is so freeing when it comes to writing. Personal meaning and emotion will always come out in our writing, but sometimes not related to what Jim sings about. When Jim enters the fray, things always take a turn for the better too. His energy always makes me and Mikey push even a small idea of a song into something fabulous, and that’s before he’s even started scribing lyrics. I’d say a lot of our music is based in the personal and observational side of things. The older I’ve got, the more I feel the emotion come out of a song, more so if it’s based in reality instead of escapism.

Aldora Britain Records: Just last year, in 2023, you unveiled another exciting full-length record. I am talking about *Thrift Store Troubadours*, of course! This album is such a fine addition to the It’s Karma It’s Cool back-catalogue. Thank you for the music! What are your memories from writing, recording and releasing this set, and is there anything that you would edit or change with the benefit of hindsight?



Jim Styring: Thank you, Tom, I’m glad you enjoyed it. It was more a bunch of songs, rather than any theme or concept, as we’d done that with the previous record. We just wrote until we had enough for an album. It all came together pretty quickly and was an enjoyable experience, from the writing to recording. The ideas kept coming, so we just kept writing. We didn’t want anything too deep, we wanted the kind of opposite to *Homesick for Our Future Destinations*, just a bunch of catchy pop songs.

We were also excited to welcome the legendary Peter Holsapple, who joined us on three of the tracks. Things like that don’t happen very often! Peter was a member of The dB’s and was part of the R.E.M. touring band for the *Green* world tour, he also played on ‘Losing My Religion’. I don’t think we’d change anything about the record. We don’t really dwell on things like that, we pretty much start writing for the next one as soon as the previous is released.

Aldora Britain Records: It is a gem of a record from start to finish, top to bottom, but I would like to pick out some personal favourites now. Let’s go for ‘Old Bones’ and ‘A Gentle Reminder’. Two pearls from the band! 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?

Martyn Bewick: ‘Old Bones’, musically speaking, was a personal love letter to a band I was very high on at the time, Bad Books, a side project from the Manchester Orchestra. You know when you just hear a mood that a band make, and you just get swept up in it. ‘A Gentle Reminder’ was actually the first song off the album we wrote. We didn’t know what we were looking for in a first song other than it needed to be in your face, upfront, and lively, especially after the much more subtle and moody *Homesick* album. My personal fave from the album is ‘Warmer Climes’, I think it just captured a great and unique mood that we haven’t touched before. And from a lyrical perspective, I love ‘Roll the Credits’, Jim just puts you in the brain of that person who could’ve made it but

“I think it’s important to be yourself, we’re all influenced by what we hear, but it’s finding your own path and originality that truly matter. I’m influenced and inspired by all kinds of music and people, not just musicians.”

didn’t. And it makes me feel sad for this fictional man, who smiles at all the good things in his life, but yet never truly smiles.



Aldora Britain Records: I always love to delve further into an artist’s roots. For me, it is actually one of the most enjoyable parts of any interview. Getting to know your musical foundations as it were. Last time, you namechecked *Automatic for the People* as an all-time favourite. Can you remember the first time you heard this record? How has it informed you and your musical output since? More broadly, who are some of your big influences and inspirations in 2024? I have a feeling it could be quite an eclectic selection.

Jim Styring: I guess I heard that album when it first came out and have remained a fan ever since. I know R.E.M. took some criticism from longtime fans at the time, but for me, the whole album has a timeless, magic quality to it. It was a band just doing their own thing, not really sounding like anyone else at the time. I think it’s important to be yourself, we’re all influenced by

what we hear, but it’s finding your own path and originality that truly matter. I’m influenced and inspired by all kinds of music and people, not just musicians.

Aldora Britain Records: Previously, if we travel back to 2021, you released yet another pearl of an LP in the form of *Homesick for Our Future Destinations*. Twelve gems from the band. It is one of those albums that has such a great and natural flow. How do you reflect on this set as a whole now, and how would you say you have grown and evolved as a band since its initial release?

Martyn Bewick: I make no quiet sounds when I say this, *Homesick* is my favourite album of ours. Being the producer, engineer, mixer of the band, I really wanted to improve on *Woke Up in Hollywood* in every way, and part of that was to make the album seem more of an album – adding connecting sections between songs, thinking about the flow of mood between the songs, where the high and low points should be, and plotting that out in the running order long before the album had properly taken shape. At the same time as we were doing this album, my other band at the time, Regulus, were also doing an album, and that followed a similar suit.

Man, I just love it when you can just press play on an album and it just takes you on that emotional rollercoaster. With *Thrift Store Troubadours*, we didn’t set out to write an album, we were just working on a collection of songs that could stand up on their own merits without the songs before and after. What the next album will bring who knows, but now we’re releasing *Solitary Bee*, I’m already very much looking forward to setting some time aside with the boys and making a start on album number four.

Aldora Britain Records: A broad question to finish. We have been through such a unique time in history over the last few years. Both politically and within society, and that is before you throw in the pandemic. How have the last several years impacted on you personally and as an artist? How do you think this time has changed the music industry, both for the good and the bad? I am curious to hear your insights.

Mikey Barraclough: The last several years have been relatively turbulent for me at least, both personally and musically, but the result has been significant growth in both regards. I suppose it’s the experiences you have over

“I suppose it’s the experiences you have over the course of your life that shape who you are as a person, and if you have musical inclinations, the way your thoughts and feelings creep into your songs.”

the course of your life that shape who you are as a person, and if you have musical inclinations, the way your thoughts and feelings creep into your songs. Most of the time it’s subtle and works on a subconscious level, though sometimes a certain feeling is very much at the forefront of your mind and it seems to guide you in your songwriting.

I know that people are feeling a sense of relief now that the coronavirus pandemic is over. I’ve heard more than one song reference about how constrained the many lockdowns made them feel, how low they got with the constant bad news, and how glad they are to be able to get out into the world again. ‘Go Get a Tattoo’ by Frank Carter and the Rattlesnakes, for example.

As for how the industry has changed, I’m seeing people working remotely a lot more, collaborating with musicians on the other side of the world via the internet to produce new songs. But for me, the biggest changes are happening locally. In Lincoln, UK, where Karma and Solitary Bee are based, we don’t have very many venues to perform our music, but in recent years, there’s been a real drive in our local scene to get more gigs on, get more venues open, and get more bands playing live. Plus, everybody helps everybody else out. There aren’t many big egos or difficult personalities down here in the cheap seats. So, there are some really encouraging signs for local music starting to appear.



Quickfire Round

AB Records: Favourite artist? **Jim:** Too many to choose from, depends what mood I’m in. **Martyn:** Anathema. **Mikey:** Guns n’ Roses, but Fleetwood Mac and The Rolling Stones aren’t far behind. **AB Records:** Favourite album? **Jim:** Would have to be a Beatles album, *Automatic for the People* by R.E.M., or *Transatlanticism* by Death Cab for Cutie. **Martin:** Baroness, *Purple*. **Mikey:** *Appetite for Destruction* or *Rumours*. **AB Records:** Last album you listened to from start to finish? **Jim:** The new Future Islands record. **Martyn:** Midlake, *Trials of Van Occupanther*. **Mikey:** I think it was Alice in Chains’ *Unplugged* live album at the Majestic in Brooklyn in April 1996.

AB Records: First gig as an audience member? **Jim:** It would have been a local band, too long ago to remember. **Martyn:** Earthtone9. **Mikey:** Good Charlotte at the O2 in Leeds, UK. **AB Records:** Loudest gig as an audience member? **Jim:** Tool. **Martyn:** Motorhead. **Mikey:** The Darkness. Perhaps not as loud as say Motorhead, but still plenty loud enough. **AB Records:** Style icon? **Jim:** My pet dog Sonny. **Martyn:** I’ve still not grown out of the late 90s MTV shock era! **Mikey:** Izzy Stradlin, Adam Ant, and Keith Richards.

AB Records: Favourite film? **Jim:** *Close Encounters* or *King Kong* from 1976. **Martyn:** *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*. **Mikey:** *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy. **AB Records:** Favourite TV show? **Jim:** I don’t really watch much TV. Is *The Old Grey Whistle Test* still a thing? **Martyn:** *Breaking Bad*. **Mikey:** *Sense8*. **AB Records:** Favourite up and coming artist? **Jim:** Check out your local music scene, everyone starts somewhere. **Martyn:** I run a rehearsal and recording studio, every band that grace my doors! There’s so much about it’s impossible to say. **Mikey:** I don’t know too many young bands or musicians, but there’s a band here in the UK called Soaper who blow me away every time I see them.

You Put a Spell on Me

The United States has a never-ending source of creative and innovative singer-songwriters. Out of Wisconsin, contemporary voice **THEA ENNEN** certainly stands out. Exploring the realms of folk music with a boundless passion and zeal, Thea also finds inspiration in what surrounds her, whether that is the natural world or her own personal heritage and history. It is this fantastic approach that has led to several outstanding albums in recent years, namely records such as 2011's *Coal Creek*, 2020's *Soul Bird*, and 2023's *Pirates of Zenith*. Each of these outings has a unique and refreshing foundation, travelling and roaming freely, guided by Thea's charming and warm songcraft. As this Wisconsin songstress looks towards the creative opportunities of 2024 and beyond, she took a brief respite to chat with *Aldora Britain Records* about her adventures in story and song to date. We discuss her songwriting process, big influences and inspirations, a selection of her recorded output, and much, much more. That exclusive in-depth conversation is published here in full for the very first time.

Thea Ennen with Dave Ja Vue have previously contributed their track 'Northside' to our independent, underground music sampler 'Hearing Voices and Quiet Noises'. Listen or download [HERE](#).

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Aldora Britain Records: Hello Thea, how are you? I am excited to be talking with a fantastic artist from over in Wisconsin. It is amazing how music can bring us together. Let's 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?

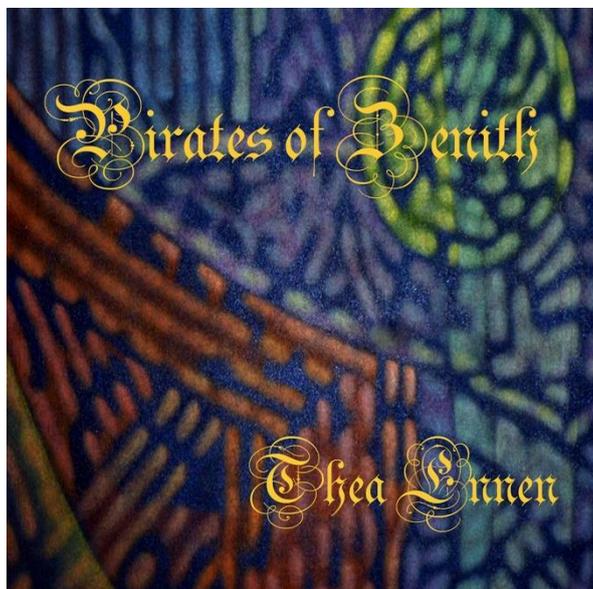
Thea Ennen: Some of my earliest musical memories were of my dad strumming a guitar and playing a bit of harmonica. He was a truckdriver and loved country and western music. My mom also liked old-time religious music and wanted all her kids to play an instrument. I loved to hear my older sister and my cousin play accordions. I opted for piano when it was my turn, so we bought an old Wurlitzer upright that I still have today, I've written many songs on it, it is a very dear friend. Though it no longer holds a tune, I can't part with it! I watched my older brother play 'House of the Rising Sun' and I was all in, I figured out how to play it on the piano and had other 'homemade' songs I liked playing.



“Rolling hills, woods, and farmland. And we get all four seasons here, so the landscape changes with the weather, I guess I find a metaphor in all that in regards to our human journey.”

Aldora Britain Records: And now, let’s take a leap forward to the present day and your impressive solo output. I am really drawn in by your impeccable songwriting and songcraft. How do you approach this part of your process? Are you drawn to particular themes or topics? Perhaps coming from a personal, observational, or even fictional perspective?

Thea Ennen: I think by sitting in front of my old piano and playing whatever old song I start with, leads me to create new melodies. I often write lyrics while I’m driving. I live in a part of Wisconsin where there are many country backroads within one minute of leaving town. Rolling hills, woods, and farmland. And we get all four seasons here, so the landscape changes with the weather, I guess I find a metaphor in all that in regards to our human journey. Sometimes I am trying hard to communicate with a loved one, someone important to me, and I can best express it through a song. I love nature and people. Sometimes I can’t help but be moved to write about a political issue.



Aldora Britain Records: In 2023, you released a fabulous record in the form of *Pirates of Zenith*. I have been enjoying listening to this album over the last couple of weeks. Thank you for the music. What are your memories from writing, recording and releasing this set, and is there anything that you would edit or change with the benefit of hindsight?

Thea Ennen: I’m glad you like *Pirates of Zenith*! I see on your personal ID icon that you are at a table with a child? The ‘Pirates’ song is for my two grandsons, we still play pirates when I go over there. I will always cherish that world I’ve been lucky to share with them. The album does contain some love songs to humanity, like ‘Borrowed from the Wind’ and ‘Better Things’, also a political commentary called ‘Trouble in the Town’. This group of songs was recorded during COVID days, and we wore masks to the studio, except when recording the vocal tracks of

course, but all precautions were taken in the best way we could think of. I wanted to add percussion to a few songs, that is one thing that I would change.

Aldora Britain Records: As you well know, I love the Thea Ennen sound and your approach to making music. Elements of folk, indie pop, singer-songwriter, roots music, and more. How did this style of yours come about, what goes into it for you, and who are some of your biggest influences and inspirations as an artist?

Thea Ennen: I love so many genres of music, I’ve never been sure which of them my songs fit most in, but I do listen to a variety of artists. I like writing songs where the lyrics count for something, even though I have songs that I’ve been playing for years in my own home that I’ve never recorded. I can’t decide whether to leave them as instrumental tunes or wait for lyrics to come. One of my favourite all-time groups is pure instrumental, Penguin Café Orchestra. But inspiration in my own writing probably came from the great singer-songwriters of the world, like Bob Dylan of course, Tom Petty, Joni Mitchell, and Laurie Anderson. But some of the atmospheric rock and roll groups I’ve loved are in there too, like Procol Harum and The Moody Blues. I guess I like a song to take me somewhere. I like folkies, currently Brandi Carlile, she is amazing. There is an instrumental group from Japan called The Jazz Avengers, I’d love to see them in concert.

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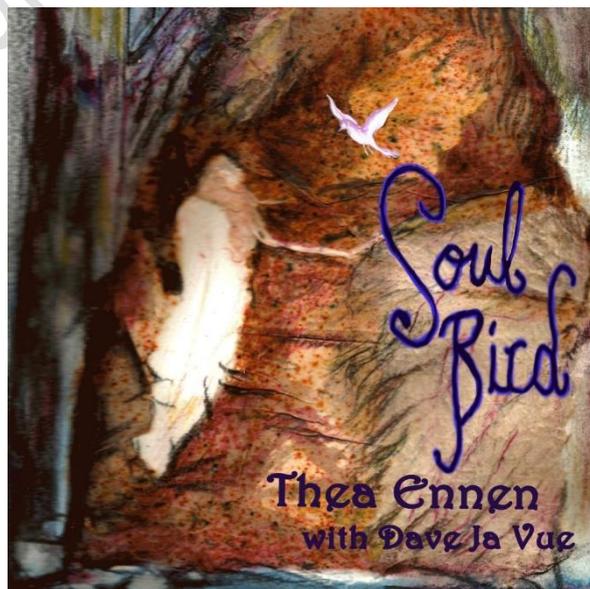
Aldora Britain Records: Previously, if we travel back to 2020, you unveiled another stellar record called *Soul Bird*. This was actually my introduction to your music, so I look back on it especially fondly. How do you reflect on this set as a whole now, and how would you say you have grown and evolved as an artist since its initial release?

Thea Ennen: I really appreciate that you like *Soul Bird*. I have favourites from that album, ‘Northside’, ‘Bad with the Good’, and ‘Soul Bird’ probably. It took me quite a while to complete, as I was strapped for cash and had to pace the recording sessions. I have done lots of house painting in my day and was lucky enough to swap for some of the studio time with the studio engineer and owner. So, I painted inside the studio for him and he did a nice job recording for me! I love that. I’m not sure if I’ve grown as a musician from that album, but I have lately been writing short stories as well.

Aldora Britain Records: I would now like to pick out two personal favourites from your discography. Let’s go for ‘Pirates on Zenith’ and ‘The Bad with the Good’. 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?

Thea Ennen: Okay, the stories behind ‘Pirates of Zenith’ and ‘The Bad with the Good’. I mentioned earlier that ‘Pirates’ was written for my two grandsons who I am lucky enough to share their magical world when I babysit them. We had a fabulous make believe world in being pirates. The oldest boy would declare himself to be the captain, and the younger boy would be the parrot, I was relegated to being the captain’s assistant. And the couch in the living room was our ship. The pirate adventures changed after some time, and now I have to be the parrot, the younger boy demoted me.

‘The Bad with the Good’ was a bit painful for me, it was a song that came all at once with the chord changes and words. One of those songs that by writing down the reality of the situation, it had the effect on me of healing and letting go. I always assume that humans suffer and celebrate the same things, and it is clear that people respond to that song in a way that they too have experienced some betrayal in their lives.



Aldora Britain Records: A broad question to finish. We have been through such a unique time in history over the last few years. Both politically and within society, and that is before you throw in the pandemic. How have the last several years impacted on you personally and as an artist? How do you think this time has changed the music industry, both for the good and the bad?

Thea Ennen: I’m not sure there is much of an ‘industry’ in the music world for the huge bobbing sea of songwriters like me. But as an artist, I’m compelled to continue no matter what. It is something I cherish being able to do. The world these days is in a precarious place. I want to believe that the ‘act’ of writing a song or singing a song from your deepest place might be a moment of offering a ritual prayer that counts in the large scheme of things. And whether you are on a large stage or in your own room, it matters.

Quickfire Round

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

AB Records: Favourite album? **Thea:** Penguin Café Orchestra, the album just titled that.

AB Records: Last album you listened to from start to finish? **Thea:** Penguin Café, *A Bootleg Collection*.

AB Records: First gig as an audience member? **Thea:** Neil Diamond.

AB Records: Loudest gig as an audience member? **Thea:** Hmm, maybe Jethro Tull?

AB Records: Style icon? **Thea:** Brandi Carlile, I just like how she presents herself.

AB Records: Favourite film? **Thea:** *Life is Beautiful*, *Jackie Brown*, and *Babe the Pig!*

AB Records: Favourite TV show? **Thea:** *Curb Your Enthusiasm*.

AB Records: Favourite up and coming artist? **Thea:** I love the Iceland group Hipsumhaps!



Space Invader

Tapping into the lush and effervescent soundscapes that were championed by 80s indie, Brighton's spectacular **DREAMCOASTER** have arrived in glorious fashion. This duo's jangly noise pop homebrew has been captured on spellbinding releases such as their recent EP couplet, 2023's *Say Nothing* and 2024's *So Long*, adding to older releases, including their spellbinding *Encapsulation* LP from 2020 and a brash self-titled offering from 2022. Across these outings, Jane and Andrew Craig resurrect a world that was ruled by underground heroes like the Cocteau Twins, My Bloody Valentine, and The Smiths. Whilst tapping into these old-time influences, Dreamcoaster touch on a new wave of British indie. As momentum behind their latest release *So Long* continues to grow, Andrew took some time out to chat with *Aldora Britain Records* about the band's growth so far. We discuss popular original compositions, big influences and inspirations, a selection of their recorded output, and much, much more. That exclusive conversation is published here for the first time.

Dreamcoaster have previously contributed their track 'Missed' to our independent, underground music sampler 'Return to Cherry Hill'. Listen or download [HERE](#).

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Aldora Britain Records: Hello Andrew, how are you? I am excited to be talking about Dreamcoaster today. Thank you for your time! Let's kick things 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?

Andrew Craig: I played a few instruments – badly! – as a kid, like piano and violin. Playing alone can be a nice way to escape homework, but the real pleasure came from playing music with others in school orchestras. This is where I grew a love of harmonies, social music, and full multi-instrument sounds.

Aldora Britain Records: And now, let's take a leap forward to the present day and the brilliant Dreamcoaster. The early days and beginnings of this band must have been invigorating times. How did it come to be? How did you meet each other and what was the initial spark that brought you together on a musical level?



“We’re starting work on a new album this year but even we’re not sure what direction it will take yet, which is quite exciting.”

Andrew Craig: Jane and I met through the music scene in Coventry in the 90s, spearheaded of course by The Primitives, then joined a band called Luminous when we moved to Brighton a couple of years later. It was fun and we had our moment, including working with Galaxie 500 producer Kramer, but I wasn’t songwriting and Jane wasn’t lead singer, so when we put Dreamcoaster together in 2018, we both got to play the roles we always wanted, Jane singing and me writing.

Aldora Britain Records: I would now like to pick out two recent single releases from the band, ‘So Long’ and ‘Say Nothing’. Two pearls from the group! 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?

Andrew Craig: To me, they’re both very different songs in style and meaning. ‘Say Nothing’ is a three-minute indie pop song that tells the story of a vindictive teacher from my school days. I kid myself that I can write the perfect song and this is probably the closest I’ll ever get.

I wrote ‘So Long’ after running my first marathon in Brighton, which damn near killed me. It festered for a year or two, then when I signed up to run the London Marathon in 2024 for Teenage Cancer Trust, I thought selling a record could help raise some funds. So, I rewrote the song a bit, adding the jangly riff and changing the verse melody. We manufactured thirty CDs as cheaply as we could so we could make as much profit for charity. We even burned the CDs ourselves one at a time! We raised over £150 and I’m really proud that our music has done some good.



Dreamcoaster
STEP OUTSIDE I WANT YOU WAKE UP



Aldora Britain Records: In 2022, you released an impeccable self-titled EP. I have actually just discovered this one over on Bandcamp, but I am absolutely loving it already. What are your memories from writing, recording and releasing this set, and is there anything that you would change in hindsight?

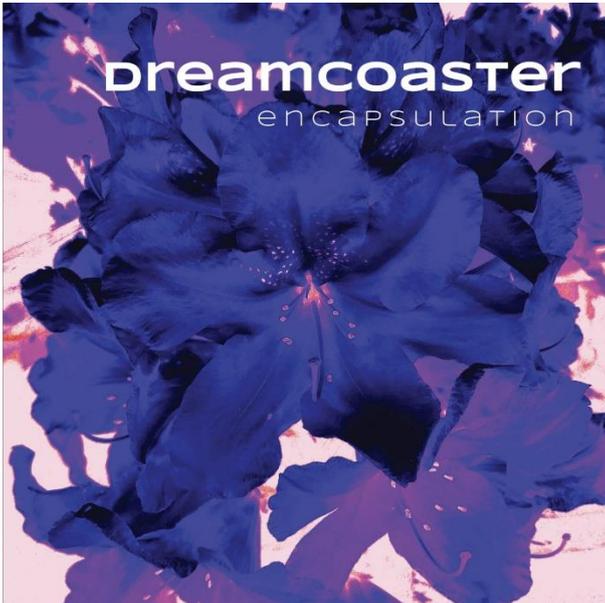
Andrew Craig: The *Dreamcoaster* EP was our first venture onto vinyl, courtesy of Lee at Spinout Nuggets. We had ‘Step Outside’ ready to go, originally called ‘Spring Song’, but only bits of other songs. With seven-inch vinyl, you only get around five and a half minutes of music per side, and we wanted at least three tracks on the record. So, we recorded ‘I Want You’ and ‘Wake Up’ as short as we could. We even had to speed up at the end of ‘Wake Up’ so it would fit on the record. That might not be true.

Aldora Britain Records: And in 2020, you unveiled a full-length album in the form of *Encapsulation*. This was actually my introduction to the band, so I look back on it very fondly. How do you reflect on this set as a whole now, and how would you say you have grown and evolved as a band since its initial release?

Andrew Craig: We’re really proud of *Encapsulation*, it was a huge effort to record and release but well worth it. Since then, we played live a few times and got to see how audiences react to the songs. ‘Space Invader’ became a crowd favourite and we were blown away by the reaction to ‘Lying Awake’. We’ve definitely developed since then, in our production skills, songwriting skills, and our venture into shorter indie pop songs, like ‘Say Nothing’ and ‘Step Outside’. We’re starting work on a new album this year but even we’re not sure what direction it will take yet, which is quite exciting.

“We’re now in a very different place where we do music because we love it and we have a small but lovely fanbase which grows steadily with each release. Shaking off the desire to be successful is truly liberating.”

Aldora Britain Records: As you well know, I love the Dreamcoaster sound and your approach to making music. Shoegaze, indie rock, dream pop, alternative rock, and more. 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?



Andrew Craig: A lifetime of listening to indie music has shaped most of what we produce. I’ve always loved female vocals in indie bands, like The Sundays, My Bloody Valentine, Cocteau Twins, Galaxie 500, and Alvvays, so there’s never any shortage of inspiration.

Aldora Britain Records: A broad question to finish. We have been through such a unique time in history over the last few years. Both politically and within society, and that is before you throw in the pandemic. How have the last several years impacted on you personally and as an artist? How do you think this time has changed the music industry, both for the good and the bad?

Andrew Craig: Like a lot of bands, the pandemic hit us at the wrong time, just as momentum was building. But on reflection, it’s no bad thing to slow down and treat music as a

long-term project rather than try forcing a lot of music out and not giving enough time for your audience to grow. We’re now in a very different place where we do music because we love it and we have a small but lovely fanbase which grows steadily with each release. Shaking off the desire to be successful is truly liberating.

Quickfire Round

AB Records: Favourite artist? **Andrew:** It will always be The Smiths.

AB Records: Favourite album? **Andrew:** The Cure, *Three Imaginary Boys*.

AB Records: Last album you listened to from start to finish? **Andrew:** Spiritualized, *Lazer Guided Melodies*.

AB Records: First gig as an audience member? **Andrew:** Gaye Bykers on Acid, somewhere in South Wales in the late 80s. It was a wild night.

AB Records: Loudest gig as an audience member? **Andrew:** My Bloody Valentine, Town and Country Club, London, 1991. My ears still hurt from the twelve-minute ‘You Made Me Realise’.

AB Records: Style icon? **Andrew:** Johnny Marr.

AB Records: Favourite film? **Andrew:** *Videodrome*.

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

AB Records: Favourite up and coming artist? **Andrew:** Nice Biscuit, saw them twice at The Great Escape Festival in Brighton last year and loved them.

Sea Creatures

In the city of Adelaide in South Australia, **THE CAMERAMEN** reignite a soaring chamber pop spark. Taking influence from such technicolour pioneers as Mercury Rev and The Flaming Lips, with Brian Wilson's mastery close at heart, this energising musical collective creates a unique sonic space. Their original compositions are ethereal takes on the indie pop paradigm, tapping into dreamy textures of psychedelia. This has previously been captured on an exceptional LP from 2020, *Good Things Do Happen*, an eleven-track odyssey that combines positivity and sensitivity in an intriguing and enticing performance. As this record approaches its fourth anniversary, bandleader Richard Sallis took some time out to reflect with *Aldora Britain Records* on his musical innovation with The Cameramen to date. We discuss popular original compositions, big influences and inspirations, the group's evolution since their inception, and much, much more. That exclusive in-depth conversation is published here in full for the very first time.

The Cameramen have previously contributed their track 'Blissfully' to our independent, underground music sampler 'Kerouac Said...'. 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 Richard, how are you? I am excited to be talking with such an innovative artist from Adelaide. It is amazing how music can bring us together. Let's 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?

Richard Sallis: Innovative! Gosh! That's very kind of you to say. My earliest musical memory is of mum playing me Enya CDs as an infant. She probably read some study that said playing calm music would have a positive impact on a child's development. What actually happened is I grew up having Enya permanently playing in a loop in my head, pretty much all the time. She wound up being a huge inspiration on *Good Things Do Happen*, and even more so on the album I'm working on now. I can't remember exactly what set it off, but as early as I can remember I wanted to grow up and become a rockstar. Even when I was five years old, I was playing the tennis racquet and yelling in band I formed called Rock 'n' Roll 2000. Not much has changed since then to be honest!



Aldora Britain Records: And now, let's take a leap forward to the chamber pop sensation of The Cameramen. The beginnings and early days of this band must have been invigorating times. How did it come to be? How did you meet the other members and what was the initial spark that brought you all together on a musical level?

Richard Sallis: We were born from the ashes of another band I led called Stock Exchange. We put out a record called *Casino* over a decade ago, richardsallis.bandcamp.com/album/casino, and it's still one of the best things I've ever done, I think. But when our rhythm section left, we decided to change the band name to The Cameramen. It was this weird daisy chain of connections. I met Oscar from Stock Exchange through my mum's friend, Oscar knew Aaron through his dad's friend, Aaron was dating Tom's sister at the time, Tom went to high school with Altmann, and Altmann was in a church band with Randall. We're now waiting on Randall to bring someone in. The newer members were fans of Stock Exchange before they were brought in, so they knew what they were getting into. The remaining Stock Exchange lads were quite different initially, but years of growing

“Years of growing together makes us click naturally these days. It’s the sort of relationship, creative and personal, you can only establish after years of working closely together.”

together makes us click naturally these days. It’s the sort of relationship, creative and personal, you can only establish after years of working closely together.

Aldora Britain Records: In 2020, you released a fabulously unstoppable album called *Good Things Do Happen*. This was also my introduction to your music, so I look back on it very fondly. What are your memories from writing, recording and releasing this set, and is there anything that you would edit or change with the benefit of hindsight?



Richard Sallis: I have extremely positive memories making this one. It came about at a time where I was losing faith in the music biz a bit, I was becoming quite jaded after years of failure and was wondering if it was worth doing anymore. The thing that made it worth doing was hanging out with my friends every weekend, working on songs together, going out to lunch or dinner afterwards, it was a great time. I’ve always gotten along really well with my bandmates, but that was the moment where we became a lot closer. It would’ve been so easy and logical to throw in the towel after Stock Exchange fell apart, we didn’t have any obligations to keep going. We were all there because we wanted to be there, and that was really special.

I’m really embarrassed by ‘Blissfully’, I wish someone was more successful in talking me out of including that one. I guess I felt like it had to be there because the album doesn’t have very much in the way of energetic moments. When the album was released, I felt like people didn’t really get what we were trying to do, probably because it’s so mellow and has a kind of childlike quality to it. That rubbed some people up the wrong way and kind of sucked the air out of the room when we performed it live. I feel like there was a context missing from the album that we failed to communicate to our audience. In retrospect, we should’ve made it more obvious what we were trying to do and maybe have had it rock slightly harder.

Aldora Britain Records: It is a gem of an album from top to bottom, but I would like to pick out two personal favourites. Let’s go for ‘Drunken Serenade’ and ‘Break and Enter’. 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?

Richard Sallis: I was just lounging on the sofa, probably watching *Dragons’ Den* of all things, strumming my guitar without thinking much about what I was doing. I stumbled upon a chord pattern I liked, went into my bedroom to record it, and ‘Drunken Serenade’ was pretty much finished in half an hour. It was pretty much exactly how you hear it on the record. It’s always wonderful when stuff like this happens, but it’s extremely rare. Usually what happens is I’ll spend six months getting frustrated with an unfinished song, screaming at my computer, ‘Become a masterpiece damn it!’, and it doesn’t happen. The lyrics are interesting. I guess I intended them to be romantic, but listening back it feels more like a confession of my own faults. But I like that about it, sometimes the music you write is unintentionally revealing.

‘Break and Enter’ is an Altmann song, so I can’t really tell you how he came up with it. I can tell you I was moving house when I wrote the lyrics for it. Out of nowhere we were being evicted, and I had less than a month to get out of the childhood home I’d lived in most of my life. So, I had to move everything, find a new place, and finish

“The thing that made it worth doing was hanging out with my friends every weekend, working on songs together, going out to lunch or dinner afterwards, it was a great time.”

recording these vocals in a very short time span. My dad was telling me about how if he could write the script for his own life, we'd still have the house and things would've been different. So, that got me thinking about the lack of control we can have over our lives and how people can unfairly beat themselves up over it. It's probably my favourite *Good Things* songs to perform live, it's an excuse for Tom to go wild with the saxophone. He's fucking brilliant as a live performer. He has a wireless mic attached so he usually jumps off the stage and runs around the audience with it. I really hope we get to do that again one day.

Aldora Britain Records: As you well know, I love The Cameramen's sound and your approach to making music. Chamber pop, alternative rock, dream pop, neo-psychedelia, progressive pop, and more. 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?

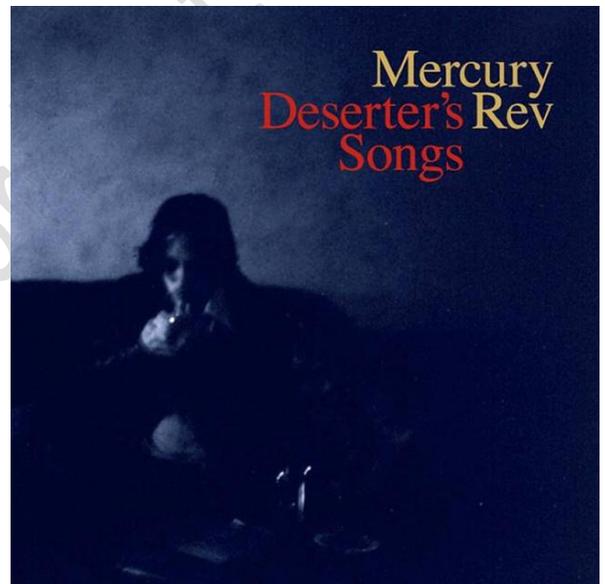
Richard Sallis: Every project I work on comes with a different set of influences. With *Good Things Do Happen*, I was trying to vocalise the sounds that have been in my head since early childhood. So, there's Enya as I've already said, but also things like the *Babar* theme song. I was trying to tap into that hard to describe feeling of subconscious childhood nostalgia, if that makes any sense whatsoever. It was stuff I only had fuzzy recollections of, but thanks to the internet and YouTube I was able to rediscover it all again.

At the same time, I was digging into the wider Beach Boys catalogue and discovering stuff like *Deserter's Songs* by Mercury Rev and *The Soft Bulletin* by The Flaming Lips for the first time. Plus, I'd seen Sigur Ros live and had my mind blown by that, so naturally they had to factor in as well. The writing happened during a period where my sleep pattern was terrible.

I was awake all night and sleeping all day, so I'd go into my backyard and look at the moon whilst writing songs. So, it became this whimsical, dreamy thing. Tom and Altmann were pretty much on the same page in a lot of ways, which was very lucky.

Aldora Britain Records: Previously, if we travel back to 2019, you released an EP entitled *It's Nice to Meet You*. I have just discovered this set over on Bandcamp, but I am loving it already. How do you reflect on this record as a whole now, and how would you say you have grown and evolved as a band since its initial release?

Richard Sallis: I've got to be honest, I don't love it. I loved recording it, we got to set up in a big church and basically take the thing over. They had a full drumkit set up, a gorgeous piano, and pretty much every other instrument you could want. I wish we could record all our stuff in there. But the whole thing was done to a tight deadline and I don't like working that way, I prefer to put stuff out when it's ready. So, there are things about the mixing and the artwork that I wish we could've worked on a bit more. I only wrote one song, 'Pulse Connection', which I actually wrote when I was a teenager. Why it ended up on that EP I have no idea. The rest are Altmann songs, and they're based on incredible demos of his. But I think we both agree that he was probably better off recording them in his own style, as opposed to warping them to fit the band. I don't really feel much of my own personality in them. I would never write a song called 'Dance Dance Dance' for instance. If Altmann sang that song, it would be amazing, but it sounds insincere when I do it.



“It’s just one of those things I’ve always wanted to do but never got around to. I hope the full album carries on in that same spirit, being raw and honest whilst pushing myself into places I haven’t been yet.”

Aldora Britain Records: A broad question to finish. We have been through such a unique time in history over the last few years. Both politically and within society, and that is before you throw in the pandemic. How have the last several years impacted on you personally and as an artist? How do you think this time has changed the music industry, both for the good and the bad?

Richard Sallis: In early March 2020, The Cameramen performed our biggest and probably best gig ever. It’s one of my fondest memories, I really wish you could’ve been there to see it. Funny thing is if the gig was booked a week later, we would have struggled for turnout. If it was booked a fortnight later, it would’ve been cancelled outright. The rest of 2020 was a write-off for The Cameramen basically. We were planning a new album and maybe a tour, it all just went out the window. We met up in 2021 and decided it wouldn’t be worth it that year either, as concert restrictions were still too strict for us to feel comfortable playing to an audience. By 2022, we’d all kind of moved on. Tom’s got a fulltime career now, Lenni got married, I also got married, I’m looking to have a kid soon.

I’m working on a new record at the moment. It started life as a Cameramen album, but given everyone’s availability, it’ll probably end up being released under my own name instead. The other Cameramen are contributing to it though. It’s kind of like a continuation of *Good Things Do Happen* but more ambitious. I’ve released two singles off it, ‘The Masquerade Ball’ and ‘The Kid Has Gone Missing’, at richardsallis.bandcamp.com. The former is the longest song I’ve ever written, the latter features a choir I built with about thirteen people contributing in the end. It’s just one of those things I’ve always wanted to do but never got around to. I hope the full album carries on in that same spirit, being raw and honest whilst pushing myself into places I haven’t been yet.



Quickfire Round

AB Records: Favourite artist? **Richard:** Daniel Johns. That includes Silverchair, The Dissociatives, and everything else. I'm obsessed with this man to a scary degree.

AB Records: Favourite album? **Richard:** *Neon Ballroom*. You'll never guess by who.

AB Records: Last album you listened to from start to finish? **Richard:** *Mountainhead* by Everything Everything. Jonathan Higgs really has a way with words that I could never hope to emulate.

AB Records: First gig as an audience member? **Richard:** I can't remember, it might have been The Wiggles. I do remember being very young and getting to meet Matchbox Twenty backstage at the Entertainment Centre. I was being a cringey, hyperactive idiot, which is exactly how I am when I meet my favourite artists nowadays.

AB Records: Loudest gig as an audience member? **Richard:** This is cheating, but every gig I've ever been to that's been unreasonably loud has been one I've played. Not because of us, but because of whoever the mixing person was. And I can say as an audience member because we'd have to sit through the other bands on the bill. I'd feel really guilty for leaving the venue if the other bands stayed for us, but my ears can only take so much. I'm a huge fan of Swans, but I'm hesitant to see them live for this reason. Might just stick with their records for now.

AB Records: Style icon? **Richard:** As a teenager, I loved the British indie look, like Jarvis Cocker, Alex James, Ricky Wilson, Alex Kapranos, Russell Lissack, that sort of thing. Over the years, that's gradually morphed into Bernard Black. I'll turn into Jeremy Clarkson eventually.

AB Records: Favourite film? **Richard:** *The Room*. No contest.

AB Records: Favourite TV show? **Richard:** *The Simpsons*, seasons three to eight, is the best television ever made. This is an objective fact.

AB Records: Favourite up and coming artist? **Richard:** British electronic artist Endling, at endlinguk.bandcamp.com, is a good friend of mine, I highly recommend his album *The Heavy Frigate* if you like your stuff more chill and ambient. I'm also very fond of Noise Beneath the Floor, they're an emo band from Ohio. They're incredibly hard working, so don't be surprised if you see them become huge in the next few years.

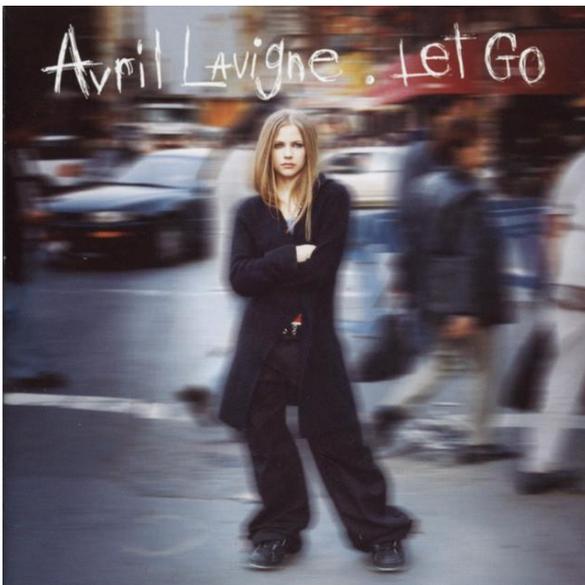


Magic (Wreaking Havoc)

An undying pop sensibility, soaring pop punk elation, a DIY indie mentality, and a hard-edged grunge undertone. This is the essential formula of Vermont's **ALI T**. With this approach, this alternative songstress has created boundless underground gems, such as those featured on her recent *Pancakes at Midnight* LP, released March 2023. This outstanding album provided the perfect follow-up to previous foundation records, 2019's *Smoke and Mirrors* and 2021's *The Makeover*. Across this output to date, Ali has blended the contemporary with nostalgic themes, arriving at an unforgettable take on modern and original pop rock. With *Pancakes at Midnight* having just passed its first anniversary, this American singer-songwriter took a brief respite to talk with *Aldora Britain Records* about her musical journey so far. We discuss big influences and inspirations, a selection of her recorded output, the impact of the COVID pandemic, and much, much more. That exclusive in-depth conversation is published here in full for the very first time.

Ali T has previously contributed her track 'Girl Meets World' to our independent, underground music sampler 'The Universal Thing'. 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 Ali, how are you? I am excited to be talking with such a fantastic singer-songwriter from Vermont. It is amazing how music can bring us together. Let's 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?

Ali T: Some of my earliest musical memories... My parents had a piano in our living room and my mom had an acoustic guitar lying around. I loved banging around on those and creating little melodies. When I was six, I started taking Suzuki piano lessons. Suzuki piano was all about honing the ear, so I didn't learn how to read music, but rather memorise what I was taught. One day I distinctly remember my parents having company over and I was alone in the living room flipping through TV channels. I came across a channel that was playing all things Britney

Spears, whom I was obsessed with at the time, like most girls my age. The channel was MTV, and from there my world was opened. Ha! Avril Lavigne came on the scene when I was in fifth grade and it was game over. I didn't want to play piano, I wanted to play pop and rock music on guitar and stand out from the crowd. Those are some of my earliest memories.

Aldora Britain Records: And now, let's take a leap forward to the present day and your impressive solo output. I am really drawn in by your impeccable songwriting and songcraft. How do you approach this part of your process? Are you drawn to particular themes or topics? Perhaps coming from a personal, observational, or even fictional perspective?

Ali T: Great question. I like how you ask if my writing is personal, observational, or fictional, because I have incorporated all of those perspectives. Sometimes when I don't have anything going on in my life worth writing about, I will be inspired by stories from people around me. 'Playing House' and 'Sitting Pretty' are examples of observational writing. An example of a fictional tune of mine is '5 Limes', which came to me in a dream actually. I woke up with the chorus' melody with the line 'can't fall in love again' in my head. It was kind of like a prompt. I took that and wrote a story around it. Of course, many of my songs are personal as well, but these themes also

“Sometimes when I don’t have anything going on in my life worth writing about, I will be inspired by stories from people around me ... many of my songs are personal as well, but these themes also tend to be relatable.”

tend to be relatable. A good example of songs coming from a personal place include ‘Lucky One’, about a tough year I had with my health and the stress of life at the time, and ‘Normal Days’, written about my biggest fear in life, grief. Unfortunately, that fear is not irrational and I know I’m going to have to grieve deeply a few more times in my life.

Aldora Britain Records: In 2023, you unveiled a brilliant studio record in the form of *Pancakes at Midnight*. I have just discovered this set over on Bandcamp, but I am loving it already. What are your memories from writing, recording and releasing it, and is there anything that you would edit or change with the benefit of hindsight?

Ali T: Thank you very much! A lot of the songs I had written during the pandemic. I was in lockdown with everyone else, so I took advantage of this downtime to write new material and record things here and there. Many times I will write something, record it, then come back to it a year or two later. ‘Static’, for example, I had almost all produced but shelved it. When I started putting together a track list for my album, I went digging through phone voice memos and lyrics I had written down under my notes. I had enough material for an album. I went back and listened to ‘Static’, then called ‘I’m Not Selling My Stuff’, and thought it had potential, so I rewrote most of the lyrics, re-recorded the vocals, and added more production.



I really had this idea in my head that I wanted to do the entire album myself, down to the graphic design, the instrumentation, and the production. I have been producing my own music since seventh grade, but I never touted that. I thought it was important to let listeners know that I didn’t write this stuff then send it all away to a production studio to make it less my own, you know? If I knew that the song I was listening to on the radio was completely by, say, Dua Lipa, that would completely change my listening experience. I believe that is what makes me unique as an artist, and I wanted to make people aware of that. I don’t just sing and strum chords. With that being said, I have a killer band that brings a lot of these tunes to life when we perform them live and I would love to incorporate their ideas. I might have to release some kind of deluxe version with the band in the future.

Aldora Britain Records: It is a superb album from top to bottom, but I would like to pick out two personal favourites. Let’s go for ‘Static’ and ‘Normal Days’. 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 and artist?

Ali T: Ahh! Amazing you brought up those two tunes. As I mentioned above, ‘Normal Days’ was one of the first tunes I wrote for the album. I still have the original voice memo, which I contemplated having on the album as an ‘acoustic demo’ track. As I said, this tune is personal to me in that it talks about my biggest fear, eventually losing the people I love. I often ask myself how I am going to deal with that grief when those horrible days come. Though it comes from a very personal place, I know it is a universal feeling. It is easy to take every mundane day for granted. So, the song is a reminder to myself to be thankful for every moment I get to spend with the people I love.

“I really had this idea in my head that I wanted to do the entire album myself ... I thought it was important to let listeners know that I didn’t write this stuff then send it all away to a production studio.”

‘Static’ started off as a melody. It reminded me of badass girl bands of the late 90s and early 2000s, and I think that sparked the lyrical theme of self-confidence and individuality. Over the years, I have gotten ‘unsolicited’ advice from all sorts of people. Musicians, non-musicians, men, women, etcetera. Mostly positive feedback, but there have been times where I get the sense that I will not be successful unless I change, unless I move to L.A., wear a certain outfit, sell my tunes. That’s where this song came from. I found a paper from first grade where the teacher asked, ‘Who do you aspire to be when you grow up?’, and my response was, ‘Me!’. So, I guess I started writing this song way back then.



Aldora Britain Records: As you well know by now, I love the Ali T sound and your approach to making music. It just seems to connect with me. Elements of pop rock, grunge, alternative rock, indie pop, and so much more. It is all in there! 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? I have a feeling it could be quite a broad and eclectic selection.

Ali T: Thank you! It is very hard to pinpoint my influences. I have listened to so much music over the years and I’m sure bits of all of it has left an impression on me. We would be here all day if I tried to name all the artists in the playlist of my life. Some of my favourite bands that have held the top spots for years, however, include Blink-182, Death Cab for Cutie, and my favourite band Brand New, who I was introduced to in high school. They all

represent my favourite styles. Alt rock, indie pop, grunge, pop punk. I actually do have a playlist on my Spotify artist page with some of my favourite tunes!

Aldora Britain Records: Previously, if we travel back to 2021, you released another stellar album called *The Makeover*. This was my introduction to your music, so I look back on it very fondly. How do you reflect on this set as a whole now, and how would you say you have grown and evolved as an artist since its initial release?

Ali T: Listening to *The Makeover* is like looking through an old scrapbook. All of the songs on the album were remastered originals from my past, high school through college and the couple of years after. I wrote ‘Footprints’ and ‘Puppet Master’ when I was fifteen. I wrote ‘Puppet Master’ on the piano and sang ‘Footprints’ at my high school graduation. I completely re-re-recorded those two tunes for the album, as I had recorded them on GarageBand when I was fifteen and it wasn’t quite the product I wanted to put out there. The original versions do still exist on YouTube though, along with a few more ‘unreleased’ tunes from the early years. ‘Spring’, ‘Sitting Pretty’, ‘Girl Meets World’, ‘All That I Am’, and ‘One Like Me’ I wrote in college, the latter two I completely re-recorded. And ‘Nights Like These’, ‘Amethyst’, ‘Invisible Nightmare’, and ‘Fine Wine’ came a year later in 2016, and these were edited or remastered for the 2021 album.

Aldora Britain Records: A broad question to finish. We have been through such a unique time in history over the last few years. Both politically and within society, and that is before you throw in the pandemic. How have the last several years impacted on you personally and as an artist? How do you think this time has impacted the music industry, both for the good and the bad?

“I find it discouraging that the music industry is becoming more about music business rather than the music itself.”

Ali T: The evolution of music has been crazy! It is hard to keep up with. It feels like every other month there is a new promotion technique we have to keep up with in order to beat the ‘algorithm’ to then maybe reach someone’s ears. Everyone’s attention span is so short too, it feels impossible to get any attention in a sea of targeted content. It’s tough! I have asked myself if I would still make music if I knew no one would ever hear it, and yes, I would. It would be sad, but I still would. I find it discouraging that the music industry is becoming more about music business rather than the music itself. I hate thinking, ‘I wonder how much money they had to spend to get that exposure...’. It seems unfair and feels like we are being told what songs or which artists we should like. As much as I could complain about the current music industry, in a world riddled with conflict and division, music is still one of the very few things that unites us. Thankfully, I don’t see that changing.

Quickfire Round

AB Records: Favourite artist? **Ali:** Brand New.

AB Records: Favourite album? **Ali:** *The Devil and God Are Raging Inside Me*, Brand New.

AB Records: Last album you listened to from start to finish? **Ali:** Blink-182, *One More Time*.

AB Records: First gig as an audience member? **Ali:** Christina Aguilera, 1999.

AB Records: Loudest gig as an audience member? **Ali:** Skrillex, New York City, 2012.

AB Records: Style icon? **Ali:** Almost every edgy female rockstar.

AB Records: Favourite film? **Ali:** *Lord of the Rings: Fellowship of the Ring*.

AB Records: Favourite TV show? **Ali:** *Friends*, it’s my comfort show.

AB Records: Favourite up and coming artist? **Ali:** Caroline Rose.



The Sounds We Left

Midwestern artist **ALAN LEE WITHERSPOON** is a child of the radio, reeling off classic singer-songwriter influences such as Elvis Costello, David Bowie, and Neil Young. This is before he ventures into favourite bands, which include such maverick names as Steely Dan, America, and the Eagles. These timeless inspirations don't pigeonhole Alan, however. Rather, they enhance his instincts for brilliantly crafted melodies and harmonies, allowing his original output to sit in a unique space between yesteryear's soft rock glory and the contemporary arena's indie pop punch. This style has been committed to tape on such fantastic outings as *Ocean Breeze*, *The Sounds We Left*, and *The Summer Strange EP*. As Alan begins to look towards the creative opportunities of 2024 and beyond, he took a short break to reflect with *Aldora Britain Records* on his life in story and song to date. We discuss big influences and inspirations, the impact of the COVID pandemic, formative musical memories, and much, much more. That exclusive conversation is published here in full for the very first time.

Alan Lee Witherspoon has previously contributed his track 'Back Seat' to our independent, underground music sampler 'Davenport'. Listen or download [HERE](#).

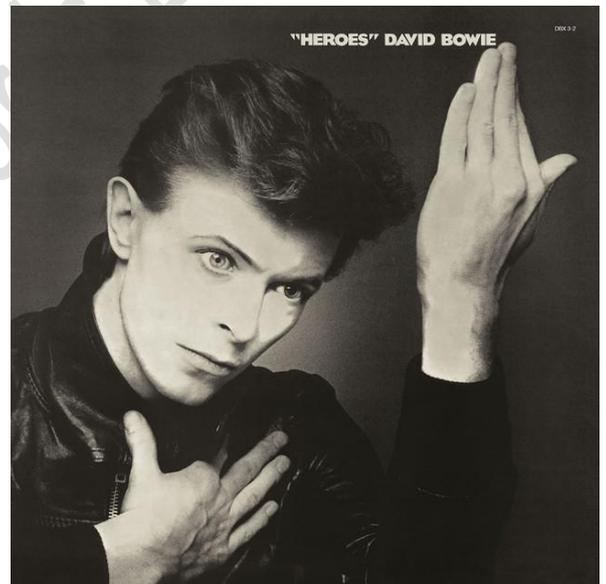
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Aldora Britain Records: Hello Alan, how are you? I am excited to be talking with such a brilliant artist from over in Ohio. It is amazing how music can bring us together. Let's start off by travelling back in time. What are some of your earliest musical memories and what was it that first pushed you towards pursuing this passion of yours?

Alan Lee Witherspoon: I'm good, thanks! Thanks for your time as well. Music was a big part of our household growing up. My parents had a sizeable record collection and my mother was always playing something on vinyl or had the radio on. It was usually something like Frank Sinatra or Johnny Mathis, which wasn't 'cool' at the time, but I appreciate now. But my folks could be hip too. My father had every ABBA album! My brother Harrison had taken up the violin and later sang in a rock band and that inspired me to begin playing music myself. I started with violin as well, but moved over to guitar when I was about fifteen and never looked back. I first learned chords from a David Bowie songbook, who was probably the first musical artist I was really obsessed with. I eventually ended up playing in a band with my brother, but outside of a very strange demo, it never went anywhere. Fun times though.

Aldora Britain Records: And now, let's take a leap forward to the present day and your impressive solo output. I am really drawn in by your songwriting and songcraft. How do you approach this part of your process? Are you drawn to particular themes or topics? Perhaps coming from a personal, observational, or even fictional perspective?

Alan Lee Witherspoon: My songwriting approach has changed somewhat over the years. I would typically have a notebook and write out the whole set of lyrics and marry those with instrumental demos I had been working on separately. Now those things are happening alongside each other more closely. As far as themes, I went through some depressing times in life, and so much of my earlier work was drawn from personal heartbreak. Just sad love songs and such, the usual teenage nonsense. I still write about those things, but life is pretty good now so they sound more hopeful. Hopefully? The last few albums have leaned hard into the 70s singer-songwriter style.



“The last few albums have leaned hard into the 70s singer-songwriter style. You could say ‘yacht rock’ or ‘West Coast’ or ‘AOR’. So, it’s going to have the obligatory sailing, beaches, and wind themes.”

You could say ‘yacht rock’ or ‘West Coast’ or ‘AOR’. So, it’s going to have the obligatory sailing, beaches, and wind themes. Maybe not as personal, but there are a few songs that are still introspective.



Aldora Britain Records: In 2021, you released an outstanding EP in the form of *The Summer Stranger*. I have actually just discovered this set over on Bandcamp, but I am loving it already. What are your memories from writing, recording and releasing this set, and is there anything that you would edit or change with the benefit of hindsight?

Alan Lee Witherspoon: The name is a nod to the *Strange Summer* EP I released previously. They aren't thematically connected. I just love a good play on words. For this EP, I did have a specific thought. I wanted to do something less 'slick' and more organic, so it was written and recorded quickly over a few months. I was going for a surf or garage rock vibe, which is a little different for me as well. I think the 70s still crept in there, but what are you going to do? Still, I feel like I captured the 'rawer' sound I was going for. There are mistakes all over the

place, but I just left them. It was liberating. I had enough songs to make a full-length album, but the other songs didn't fit the theme. So, if there's a regret, it's that maybe I shouldn't have been so married to the theme. I'll release those other songs eventually though.

Aldora Britain Records: Previously, if we travel back to 2020, you unveiled an unforgettable album entitled *Ocean Breeze*. This was my introduction to your music, so I look back on it especially fondly. How do you reflect on this set as a whole now, and how would you say you have grown and evolved as an artist since?

Alan Lee Witherspoon: Looking back at *Ocean Breeze*, I took my time with it and it felt like a 'proper' record when it was finished, you know? I mean, I'll never be as good as the musicians I was trying to evoke, but I felt like this was a halfway solid attempt at songs in that 70s milieu. It was a pretty chaotic time in our family, so I guess it's fitting I retreated into some light rock for comfort. And having my brother and wife do the art for the packaging made it a family affair. My brother has done the cover art for most of my music and I must say he's pretty amazing.

Aldora Britain Records: I would like to pick out two personal favourites from your discography. Let's go for 'The Summer Stranger' and 'Such a Short Time'. 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?

Alan Lee Witherspoon: The song 'Summer Stranger' just felt like the plot of an 80s movie to me. Just this guy that comes into town for the season, charms all the ladies and leaves them heartbroken for the hometown boys to comfort. Something starring John Cusack, maybe? I don't know. It just fit the 'summer' theme I was going for.

As for 'Such a Short Time', it's just a song about putting life in perspective. And it's probably directed at myself, mostly. The people who say they don't care what anyone thinks are the ones who care the most. And why do we do that to ourselves? I guess getting older inspired the theme. We waste so much time worrying about things that don't matter and make life harder than it has to be. But I guess if I played this song for my sixteen year old self, I'd still be playing violin.

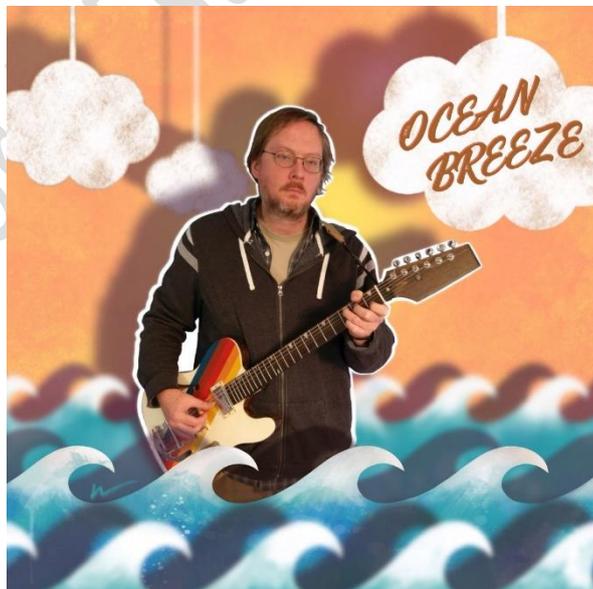
“I was ‘raised on radio’, and one station would play literally everything. You could hear ten different genres in the same hour and I am so grateful to have been exposed to so much variety.”

Aldora Britain Records: As you well know, I love the Witherspoon sound and your approach to making music. A magical blend of indie pop and soft rock, melodies and harmonies to the fore! 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?

Alan Lee Witherspoon: Thanks for saying that. Like many, I was ‘raised on radio’, and one station would play literally everything. You could hear ten different genres in the same hour and I am so grateful to have been exposed to so much variety. Probably my top three all-time favourite artists are Elvis Costello, David Bowie, and Neil Young. Now the only one of those I remotely resemble is Neil, but my love of wordplay came from Elvis C. And Bowie will always have a special place because those were the first songs I learned to play. There are a million honourable mentions. Steely Dan, America, Eagles. And there’s bands like the State Cows and Young Gun Silver Fox, who are current and doing that West Coast and AOR thing brilliantly. Huge inspirations.

Aldora Britain Records: A broad question to finish. We have been through such a unique time in history over the last few years. Both politically and within society, and that is before you throw in the pandemic. How have the last several years impacted on you personally and as an artist? How do you think this time has changed the music industry, both for the good and the bad?

Alan Lee Witherspoon: For me personally, I never thought I’d be working from home for four years. The extra time I got to spend with my family and amazing wife is something I will never take for granted though. As an artist, it did inspire me to try new things musically. I dabbled with electronic music, loops, and beats. I found that it isn’t really where my heart lies, but I may incorporate some elements of that in future projects. While I do try to avoid controversy, for the most part, I was moved by the civil rights protests of summer 2020 in the US. I wrote a song called ‘The Bells of Freedom’ and it’s just straight-up Roger McGuinn style, electric twelve-string and everything. My son-in-law was marching in the protests, so I thought the least I could do is write a song. I don’t know if anything ever changes all that much, but we try. And that’s what the song is about.



Regarding changes in the music industry, I discover 90% of new music on Bandcamp these days. So, when people say, ‘There’s no good music anymore...’, I say there’s twenty bands out there doing your favourite style of music. It’s harder to find, sure, but it’s still there. That’s why what you do is so important.

Quickfire Round

AB Records: Favourite artist? **Alan:** Neil Young. **AB Records:** Favourite album? **Alan:** *Sign o’ the Times*, Prince. **AB Records:** Last album you listened to from start to finish? **Alan:** *Long Cool Journey* by The Vinyl Skyway. **AB Records:** First gig as an audience member? **Alan:** Johnny Mathis, my mother wanted someone to go with her. **AB Records:** Loudest gig as an audience member? **Alan:** Gin Blossoms.

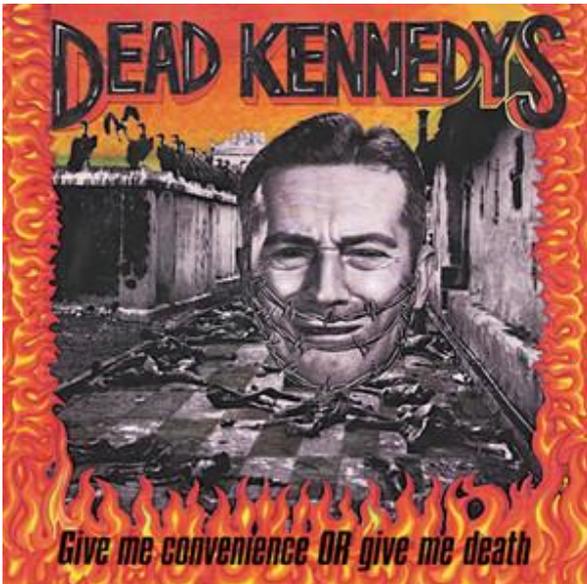
AB Records: Style icon? **Alan:** David Bowie. **AB Records:** Favourite film? **Alan:** *Casino*. **AB Records:** Favourite TV show? **Alan:** *Curb Your Enthusiasm*. **AB Records:** Favourite up and coming artist? **Alan:** Glee Crime Scene.

(We Mattered) Once Upon a Time

Australian alternative mavericks **THE SILVERBEETS** are the latest group to venture into the hallowed realms of the 'rock opera'. The fantastically titled *Mr Brown Goes to the Cabaret* will be released into the world in May of this year. A fourteen-song collection, the set explores the juxtapositions of the modern world, the lows of despair and the highs of euphoria. It is an extraordinary outing from an independent, underground band, marrying their love of psychedelia, pop sensibilities, and rock and roll's primal spirit. The LP also acts as an exceptional follow-up to 2020's *Halcyon Days*, Aldora Britain Records' initial introduction to the band. As The Silverbeets continue to prepare for the release of *Mr Brown Goes to the Cabaret*, bandmember Farnz Cordeaux chatted to *ABR* about the group's journey so far. We discussed the impact of the COVID pandemic, formative creative memories, the beginnings of The Silverbeets, and much, much more. That exclusive in-depth conversation is published here in full for the very first time.

The Silverbeets have previously contributed their track 'Cool, Like David Suzuki' to our independent, underground music sampler 'Locked Together on the Lines'. 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 Farnz, how are you? I am excited to be talking with such a fantastic artist from over in Australia. It is amazing how music can bring us together. Let's 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?

Farnz Cordeaux: Good morning, Tom. Well, it is morning when I am answering this at least! I am excited to be getting interviewed by you. My earliest musical memories are of the radio. My mum would, and still does, put the radio on first thing in the morning. So, for me, this was hearing things like Casey Kasem's American Top 40 and having road trips in the car singing 'We're All Going on a Summer Holiday' by Cliff Richard and the Shadows. I actually didn't start playing music until I was eighteen. Unfortunately, my grandmother who was a piano

player no longer had a piano when I was older, so I never really had a playing musical upbringing, but there were always songs to sing. I stumbled into a new group of friends at eighteen who were into alternative and underground music, of which I had little to no knowledge of, and it was so different sounding, the guitar sounds of Dead Kennedys and Sonic Youth were so new to me, that I just started, very slowly, playing and writing.

Aldora Britain Records: And now, let's take a leap forward to the present day and the brilliant Silverbeets. The beginnings and early days of this project must have been an invigorating time. How did it come to be? How did you meet the other members and what was the initial spark that brought you all together on a musical level?

Farnz Cordeaux: It was a very different kind of beginning. I was kind of doing this solo but had a friend just helping out with some of the tunes, and we were mucking around with arrangements, etcetera, and one day at work around a 'get to know your colleagues' session, it came out that I played and that someone else played bass, then someone inevitably said, 'You should start a band!', ha! So, we did. But as I was building it with the drummer, Bill and I got my vocal teacher Jamie onboard to do some lead guitar work. The bass player could no longer play for various reasons, this started the great bass player switch or The Silverbeets curse of the bass player, so I

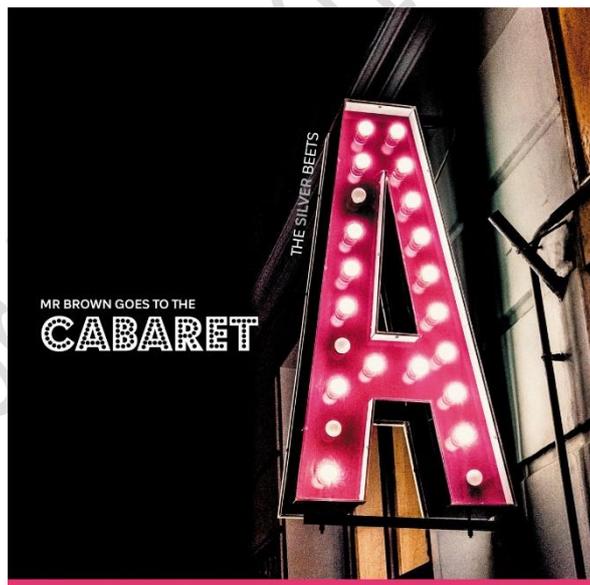
“What I always want is to do things differently and create sounds and songs that are different from what we have done before.”

invited Jeff, whom I played volleyball with and had hooked up to play in my partner’s band. So, he was now in three bands, ha! He recorded on *Purple Stems*, our first release from 2016. He also played many live shows with us.

I also then made the decision that the songs I had been working on solo were starting to sound so much better with other musicians and that I would pretty much start again. That became *Stay Tuned*, which was released in 2018. We also released a cover of Simon and Garfunkel’s ‘We’ve Got a Groovy Thing Goin’ around this time. I think by this stage I had gone through another three bass players until we finally found Nigel, and he’s been there ever since.

Aldora Britain Records: You are currently prepping for the release of an outstanding new album, *Mr Brown Goes to the Cabaret*. I have been enjoying getting to know these tracks already. What are your memories from writing and recording this set, and how would you say you have grown and evolved as a band since those early days?

Farnz Cordeaux: The album has been hard. In 2019, Jamie was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. That hit me hard. We were of similar ages, similar children age, etcetera. I stopped playing guitar and just lost a little bit of momentum, love, desire, I’m not sure. Most of *Halcyon Days* was recorded at this stage, with pretty much probably vocals the only thing not completed. I penned lyrics for ‘Smell the Roses’ at this point as that had started to be recorded musically. What I always want is to do things differently and create sounds and songs that are different from what we have done before. Well, as much as we can. When I did start to play a little more, I was trying to write things using different chord shapes or different progressions. I even started some songs off on the keyboard, which meant I wrote in different styles to how I would write on guitar. Nigel also was able to bring three songs to this album.



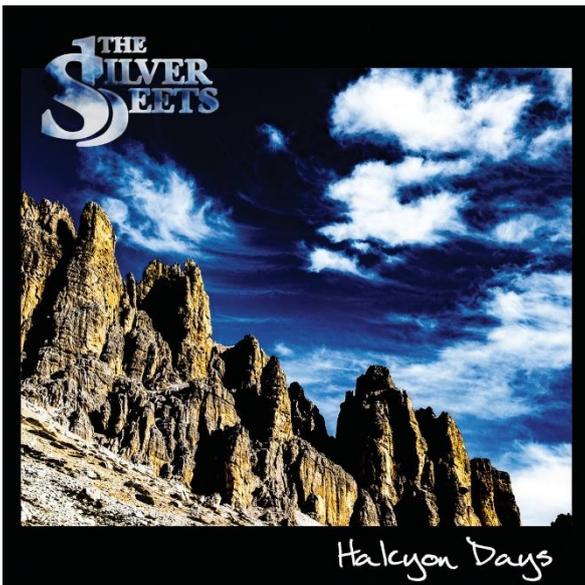
‘Better’, for example, I wrote on the keyboard, used that to write the words and the vocal melody, then stripped the keys out and gave it to the drummer and told him to not just keep time. Then the bass player had his go, then we got an amazing keyboardist and piano player in, Dan Sulzberger, who did the most amazing keys line. Handed it off to Joe Haley for some amazing guitar work, he did that in one evening. I sent it and he must have enjoyed it, because within a couple of hours I had the guitar back. If there is anything I set out to do with music, it is just to write as good a song as I can and try not to repeat things that we have done before.

Aldora Britain Records: Previously, if we travel back to 2020, you unveiled another impeccable album called *Halcyon Days*. This was actually my introduction to your music, so I look back on it especially fondly. How do you reflect on this set as a whole now, and is there anything that you would edit or change with the benefit of hindsight?

Farnz Cordeaux: I don’t know if I would change anything on *Halcyon Days*, I really enjoyed that album. I would have loved to have Jamie’s vocals on more of the tracks, but given his diagnosis, what I got I was so grateful for. Perhaps there needed to be one more track on that album, maybe something more acoustic. But really, I try not to look back, except with fondness for what we created. I am always amazed at what has been written. In some ways it is like, ‘Where did that come from? How did I write that?’

“I am one of those people that loves ‘music’ of all kinds, all styles. Some more than others, of course, but music is just amazing. This means that I wanted to work with musicians that were able to play all different styles. I can take inspiration from anywhere.”

Aldora Britain Records: I would like to pick out two personal favourites from your back-catalogue now. Let’s go for ‘Gravity’ and ‘Sexy Ted’. 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?



Farnz Cordeaux: I’ll start with ‘Sexy Ted’. I wrote ‘Sexy Ted’ musically in about 2010. I was actually thinking of how music had changed so much. You had The Beatles back in the 60s writing ‘I Want to Hold Your Hand’, which is quite lovely but very innocent. But now in the modern day, it has gotten so much more graphic and sexual. Things like ‘it’s getting hot in here, so take off all your clothes’ would have been unheard of in the 60s. I sort of wanted to utilise that but without being overly graphic. So, I came up with a character who was uber sexual, Ted or ‘Sexy Ted’ rather, but I also wanted to give the story a little moral, and usually Sexy Teds only appear in people’s lives when others aren’t paying attention to what they have in their life.

‘Gravity’ was a tune that Nigel had brought to me on the guitar. It had such a beauty in the chords, but for me to work with it and put lyrics and vocal melodies to it, I felt it moved way too much

and too far and I wasn’t able to utilise it the way I would have liked. Now, I could have settled on an instrumental piece and it would have stood up, but I asked our producer Ernie O to see what he could come up with on the keyboard utilising what Nigel had provided. This often happens with my songs, they start somewhere, then it gets passed to Ernie and they go in a direction I hadn’t planned or expected. It came back with the keys as they are in the produced version. I was then able to write the lyrics to the music. It had a sadness, but then it also had this uplifting section. And again, I don’t know where the words came from, but all of a sudden, the ‘Gravity’ lines started to come out and it felt like the song wrote itself. However, it wasn’t finished there. Nigel really wasn’t happy with how Ernie had played the bass. So, with a quick bass session laid down, the song became what it is.

Aldora Britain Records: As you well know, I love The Silverbeets sound and your approach to making music. Elements of alternative rock, garage rock, psychedelia, pop rock, and more. How would you say this style of yours came about, what goes into it for you, and who are some of the band’s biggest influences and inspirations?

Farnz Cordeaux: I am one of those people that loves ‘music’ of all kinds, all styles. Some more than others, of course, but music is just amazing. This means that I wanted to work with musicians that were able to play all different styles. I can take inspiration from anywhere. Doesn’t even have to be musically. ‘Siddhartha’ came about because of a Hermann Hesse novel of that title. Working with all these different musicians, who have amazing talent and have dedicated their lives to the perfection of their instrument, has allowed all these different sounds to coagulate and come together in what could be described as ‘The Silverbeets sound’. I would also add that Ernie O has a big influence over how that comes in its packaged form too.

As for inspirations, I have recently asked bandmembers for five songs by artists that have inspired them and put together a YouTube playlist for this very purpose. This gives a list of fifty different songs, other than Silverbeets

“I worry about digital. At any point, any of the providers can just wipe your music out of existence and off the planet, either on purpose or because the company folds.”

songs, that go some way to explaining our sound. [Note to reader: the playlist is called ‘Songs by The Silverbeets and songs that inspired the musicians...’ on ‘The Silverbeets Music’ YouTube channel.]

Aldora Britain Records: A broad question to finish. We have been through such a unique time in history over the last few years. Both politically and within society, and that is before you throw in the pandemic. How have the last several years impacted on you personally and as an artist? How do you think this time has changed the music industry, both for the good and the bad?

Farnz Cordeaux: It has affected postage I can tell you that much. I used to be able to send a CD anywhere in the world for about \$10. This has now become \$30 and it has pretty much put a stop to me providing CDs or even vinyl – more expensive! – to fans or reviewers. I worry about digital. At any point, any of the providers can just wipe your music out of existence and off the planet, either on purpose or because the company folds. You can’t hear everything you want on some platforms. Some platforms are deliberately going out of their way to make it so that independent artists are not heard. However, on the flipside of that, so much good independent music is out there and people aren’t completely reliant on record companies to get their music out.



Quickfire Round

AB Records: Favourite artist? **Farnz:** Depends on the day and how I am feeling. At the moment, I have The Streets’ ‘Dry Your Eyes’ stuck in my head. **AB Records:** Favourite album? **Farnz:** How many favourites can one have? Second favourites and third favourites and twentieth favourites, ha! *Kaya* by Bob Marley was always up there. The Beastie Boys, *Ill Communication*. Beck’s *Odelay* was incredible. Pretty much any Queen album. *Rubber Soul*. Too many choices. **AB Records:** Last album you listened to from start to finish? **Farnz:** It might have been *Plans* by Death Cab for Cutie.

AB Records: First gig as an audience member? **Farnz:** A punk band in Newtown Neighbourhood Centre called Tutti Parze. **AB Records:** Loudest gig as an audience member? **Farnz:** Either Ministry at Selina’s in Coogee, the whole show was so loud I had to sit in the foyer, or Beck playing ‘Mutherfukka’ at the Metro Theatre in Sydney. Damn, that got loud! **AB Records:** Style icon? **Farnz:** I’m not sure I really followed anyone stylistically. I always liked those who had style. Bowie, Perry Farrell, Freddie Mercury. Although I don’t dress anything like any of them. Probably closer to Kurt Cobain in dress sense, I suppose. I do like a good cardigan!

AB Records: Favourite film? **Farnz:** *Ocean’s* movies. I don’t know why, I can watch them over and over. **AB Records:** Favourite TV show? **Farnz:** At the moment, it is *Car S.O.S.* Always brings me to tears, of joy mostly, and gives me that lovely warm feeling that society isn’t completely doomed. And the fact that Fuzz is a fellow musician and artist and spends his time to help people who are unfortunate just shows artists tend to put people and society above monetary success. **AB Records:** Favourite up and coming artist? **Farnz:** I am not sure. I hear a lot of cool artists on our local community station Edge Radio. All of them sound pretty good, would be hard to separate one out from another because they all offer something unique and beautiful.

Following the Clouds

Existing in the fertile creative grounds between contemporary indie folk and old-school sophisticated jazz, New York based singer-songwriter **KAT REINHERT** plies her trade. Taking influence from soulfully inclined artists such as John Mayer, Joni Mitchell, and Brandi Carlile, this modern-day American tunesmith has already committed an impressive array of original compositions to tape, most notably on her *Dead Reckoning* album from 2021, but also on more recent singles such as 'Behind' and 'Hiding in the Dark'. Across this output and more, Kat demonstrates her honest relatability and musical prowess, combining both to create something that proves to be timeless and irresistible. As this New York artist prepares for a series of new single releases over the next six months, she took a brief respite to chat with *Aldora Britain Records* about her adventures in story and song to date. We discuss formative musical memories, her songwriting process, a selection of her recorded output, and much, much more. That exclusive conversation is published here in full for the first time.

Kat Reinhert has previously contributed her track 'Accidentally' to our independent, underground music sampler 'This Old Ghost Town'. 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 Kat, how are you? I am excited to be talking with such a fantastic songwriter from over in New York. It is amazing how music can bring us together. Let's 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?

Kat Reinhert: Like a lot of people, I think some of my earliest musical memories involve my parents. My mom would sing to us every night before bed and my dad would always play jazz, even though I didn't like it at the time. And in all honesty, I think it was fate that pushed me to pursue music. It wasn't something I'd really dream of as a kid, probably because there wasn't anyone around doing it, but I sang in choir and played piano and liked music. So, when it came to going to college, that's the road I took. The rest kind of came along for the ride.

Aldora Britain Records: And now, let's take a leap forward to the present day and your impressive solo output. I am really drawn in by your impeccable songwriting and songcraft. How do you approach this part of your process? Are you drawn to particular themes or topics? Perhaps coming from a personal, observational, or even fictional perspective?

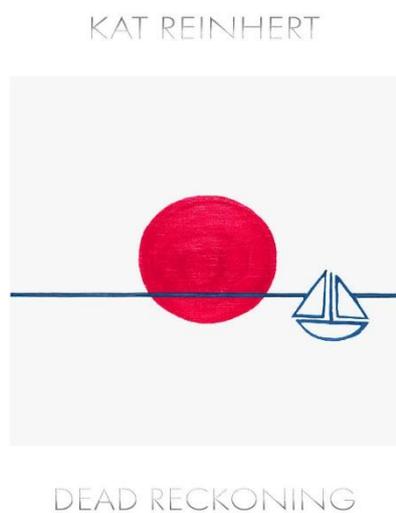


“My approach to songwriting is probably best summed up with two words, curiosity and craft. I’m curious about how the puzzle of a song unfolds and also how the craft of songwriting informs how I put the pieces together.”

Kat Reinhert: Oh, that’s incredibly kind! I’m almost speechless. Hmm, my approach to songwriting is probably best summed up with two words, curiosity and craft. I’m curious about how the puzzle of a song unfolds and also how the craft of songwriting informs how I put the pieces together. Or rather, how I figure out how the pieces fit together. I’m drawn to personal topics first – women empowerment, artistic struggle, life as you get older. Things like songs I’ve written called ‘Women with Babies Make Me Sad’ and ‘I Wanna be Like Steve Martin’. And then fictional ideas that are just fun to explore. I recently wrote a song called ‘Boyfriend Applications Open’ about this made up character named Georgia who decides to create a boyfriend application so that she can weed out the weird ones before she even goes on a date. Totally made up, but super fun!

Aldora Britain Records: I would like to focus more specifically on your two singles from 2021, ‘Hiding in the Dark’ and ‘Behind’. Two pearls from you! 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?

Kat Reinhert: ‘Hiding in the Dark’ was actually a prompt from a colleague who was looking for songs with the theme ‘Write a Love Song to Yourself’. It was actually one of the hardest songs I’ve ever written. But also, one of the most rewarding. The first two or three iterations of the song were so negative I actually needed to stop, take a break, go on some long walks, and figure some things out before I could come back and actually write the song. ‘Behind’ is of a similar cache, in that it’s intended to be a letter to my younger self. It’s funny, until just now I didn’t really realise that those two songs are kind of bookends of a sort to each other... interesting.



Aldora Britain Records: In 2021, you released your fifth album, a fantastic collection called *Dead Reckoning*. This was my introduction to your music, so I look back on it especially fondly. What are your memories from writing, recording and releasing this set, and is there anything that you would edit or change with the benefit of hindsight?

Kat Reinhert: Thank you so much! I wrote the music for this over about a four-year period when I was getting my PhD. It was the antidote to all the other things that felt so unlike myself that I was doing. A grounding of sorts. I actually wrote the title track at the gym. I had this idea pop into my head when I was lifting weights and in about three minutes I had almost the entire lyric entered into my phone. It was one of those moments, and songs, that quite literally changed the direction of my life. It was when I knew I needed to make some major life changes. I’d found the thing that I thought would lead me to where I thought I should go. I’m not sure it did. But I don’t regret the change either. I wouldn’t change or edit anything on that record, oddly. It’s something I’m incredibly proud of as a whole.

Aldora Britain Records: Previously, if we travel back to 2015, you unveiled another stellar snapshot of your artistry, the *Spark* LP. This is a superb earlier snapshot of you. How do you reflect on this collection as a whole now, and how would you say you have grown and evolved as an artist since its initial release?

Kat Reinhert: Wow. I feel when you listen to my albums, from *It Could Happen* in 2001 to *Chrysalis* in 2007 to *Spark* in 2015 to *Home Movie* in 2017, in pieces and never fully released but finished, to *Dead Reckoning* in 2021, and the four singles before and after *Dead Reckoning*, I can see the evolution of myself as an artist and songwriter.

“I can see the evolution of myself as an artist and songwriter ... I think I definitely discovered a deeper songcraft and became more confident in what I was writing.”

And between *Spark* and *Dead Reckoning*, I think I definitely discovered a deeper songcraft and became more confident in what I was writing. I have four singles coming out in the next six months and those are a further evolution of myself as a songwriter, and I’m also excited for them!

Aldora Britain Records: As you well know, I love the Reinhert sound and your approach to making music. Elements of singer-songwriter, pop, indie folk, and so much more. 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?

Kat Reinhert: Although I can’t really ever get the ‘jazz’ out of my sound, and wouldn’t really want to, I know that being a jazz artist for fifteen years definitely influenced my writing. But I’ve always been drawn to great lyrics and interesting melodies. Joni Mitchell, John Mayer, and Sara Bareilles are some of my biggest influences, while my friends and students and the music they make are generally my biggest inspirations.

Aldora Britain Records: A broad question to finish. We have been through such a unique time in history over the last few years. Both politically and within society, and that is before you throw in the pandemic. How have the last several years impacted on you personally and as an artist? How do you think this time has changed the music industry, both for the good and the bad?

Kat Reinhert: Such a huge question. For me, the pandemic was actually a blessing. I needed a reset. I needed time to figure some artistic things out. And my life just happened to align with that, and the need to be more introspective and to learn new things. During the pandemic, I learned guitar as well as production and I’m now able to do an entire solo set on guitar as well as play with my band, and I’m also able to produce my own music. Both of these things have made a huge impact on my writing and my confidence as an artist. However, it was also a time of great frustration because I’d left my gig in academia six months before lockdown to pursue being an artist fulltime. And well, that just didn’t happen the way I thought it would, because it couldn’t. I made the most of it, but I’ll always wonder what if.



“I think overall, we still don’t know the full effect of those two years. I know a lot of musicians and artists struggled and are still struggling.”

I think overall, we still don’t know the full effect of those two years. I know a lot of musicians and artists struggled and are still struggling. But I also know that there was some really great music being made, and continuing to be made, and I’m curious to see what happens. The industry itself gained and lost in many ways, with the hardest hit being live music. That still hasn’t recovered and it’s very sad. The value of live music remains, but people aren’t making the effort to go and hear live music as often, for so many reasons, and that’s really sad. I’m also sad that no new models of engaging have emerged in that field. I think there are actually a lot of cool opportunities out there, and maybe someone will come up with something new, a new way to do live music, but as of yet, it isn’t there.

Quickfire Round

AB Records: Favourite artist? **Kat:** Three-way tie, Joni Mitchell, John Mayer, Brandi Carlile.

AB Records: Favourite album? **Kat:** John Mayer, *Born and Raised*.

AB Records: Last album you listened to from start to finish? **Kat:** Beyonce, *Cowboy Carter*.

AB Records: First gig as an audience member? **Kat:** Don McLean. I was thirteen.

AB Records: Loudest gig as an audience member? **Kat:** Iron Maiden.

AB Records: Style icon? **Kat:** Coco Chanel or Diane von Furstenberg.

AB Records: Favourite film? **Kat:** *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back*.

AB Records: Favourite TV show? **Kat:** Anything *NCIS*.

AB Records: Favourite up and coming artist? **Kat:** Ooh! Lizzy McAlpine, Ahli, Nanseera.



It's Five O'clock Nowhere

A glorious and free-flowing menagerie of jangly Big Star pop sensibilities, colourful flourishes of Beach Boys psychedelia, and R.E.M.'s college rock punch. These are the ingredients of the **RAINSTICKS** sonic cocktail. Hailing from Nashville, Tennessee, this modern-day underground collective unleashes pop music with a truly rock and roll edge. Outings including 2020's *October Onwards* and 2023's *Here Come the Warm Jets* truly capture this spirit. Revolving around Asher Horton's impeccable songwriting, these compositions shine with vitality and energy, glistening in the sun-soaked creative universe of Rainsticks. As the band begins to look towards future endeavours and projects, Asher took some time out to talk with *Aldora Britain Records* about his journey with the group so far. We discuss how Rainsticks came together, a selection of their recorded output to date, popular original compositions, and much, much more. This exclusive in-depth conversation is published here in full for the very first time.

Rainsticks have previously contributed their track 'Last Frontier' to our independent, underground music sampler 'This Old Ghost Town'. 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 Asher, how are you? I am excited to be talking with such a fantastic artist from over in Tennessee. It is amazing how music can bring us together. Let's 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?

Asher Horton: I'm doing well, hope you are too! Well, my dad was a songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, producer, so I grew up in a pretty musical household. I don't really remember a time when I wasn't interested in music as a listener, though it took me a little while to become particularly interested in playing it. My parents had me take piano lessons for a number of years starting when I was six, which definitely planted the seeds even if I wasn't truly passionate about it yet.

Aldora Britain Records: And now, let's take a leap forward to your current project out of Nashville. The beginnings and early days of Rainsticks must have been invigorating times. How did it come to be? How did you meet the other members and what was the initial spark that brought you all together on a musical level?



“Every time I work on a record, I learn more about how I like to record and get the results I’m after, so while I partly wish the process of making this record took less time, I’m ultimately thankful for the extra experience gained.”

Asher Horton: Okay, I’ll try to keep this short. I met Ben Parks, the other main member of Rainsticks, in fifth grade. He was already playing drums in a band and after seeing them play I immediately wanted to be involved and I started learning guitar shortly after. So, we basically grew up playing music together. We were goofy little punks, a lot of Green Day and Ramones covers were played, you get the idea. By the time we were freshmen in high school, we had gotten into a lot of indie rock and powerpop type stuff and started a band called Fox Fun to play the songs we’d started writing. Flash forward another seven years or so and we’d finally gotten around to finishing *Elkmont*, our first full-length. I decided to change the name to Rainsticks to set it apart from the more garage-y type stuff we were doing with Fox Fun earlier on, and that’s the story!

Aldora Britain Records: In 2023, you unveiled an outstanding LP in the form of *Here Come the Warm Jets*. I have just discovered this LP on Bandcamp, but I am loving it already! What are your memories from writing, recording and releasing this set, and is there anything that you would edit or change with the benefit of hindsight?

Asher Horton: Thanks, glad you’re digging it! We ended up recording this record three whole times, first as demos, then in a studio, and finally in our respective homes. Every time I work on a record, I learn more about how I like to record and get the results I’m after, so while I partly wish the process of making this record took less time, I’m ultimately thankful for the extra experience gained while working on it. There’s not much I’d change about it, I’m pretty hands on with every aspect of our records, so if I’m not happy with a song it’s not going to get released.

Aldora Britain Records: It is a stellar record from top to bottom, but I would like to pick out two personal favourites. Let’s go for ‘Go in Blind’ and ‘No Time to Reply’. 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?

Asher Horton: I wrote ‘Go in Blind’ when I was bored and stuck at home during the early part of the pandemic. I was sitting on my back porch with the intention of trying to write something that sounded like The Feelies and that’s what I came up with. The lyrics are fairly stream of consciousness so they’re up to interpretation. A lot of the time I write songs like jigsaw puzzles, I come up with a lot of unconnected verses and choruses and later figure out which ones fit together the best. I had the verse riff for ‘No Time to Reply’ for years and wrote two or three different choruses, but it never felt finished until I came up with the final chorus while working on another song. I see that one as kind of a semi-humorous comment on making music for myself without knowing if there’s going to be any kind of audience for it.



Aldora Britain Records: Previously, if we travel back to 2020, you released an unforgettable LP entitled *October Onwards*. This was my introduction to your music, so I look back on it especially fondly. How do you reflect on this set as a whole now, and how would you say you have grown and evolved as an artist since its initial release?

Asher Horton: Thanks a bunch! I’m definitely still happy with how that one turned out. To me, there’s honestly not much of a progression between the three records we have now, and I’m perfectly fine with that. We know what kind of music we like to make and we’ve stuck to it. We’re not trying to be Radiohead here.

“A lot of the time I write songs like jigsaw puzzles, I come up with a lot of unconnected verses and choruses and later figure out which ones fit together the best.”

Aldora Britain Records: As you well know, I love the Rainsticks sound and your approach to making music. Elements of jangle pop, alternative rock, indie pop, and so much more. 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?



Asher Horton: I've always loved music with big hooks. With Rainsticks, I'm always trying to give listeners the little rush I get when I hear great, catchy melodies. As for our specific style, I'd say it's a sort of mixture of our favourite pop and rock from the 60s through 90s. A little Beach Boys, some Big Star, some R.E.M., a pinch of Fountains of Wayne and Teenage Fanclub. Throw it all in the pot and hope it comes out cool.

Aldora Britain Records: A broad question to finish. We have been through such a unique time in history over the last few years. Both politically and within society, and that is before you throw in the pandemic. How have the last several years impacted on you personally and as an artist? How do you think this time has changed the music industry, both for the good and the bad?

Asher Horton: Tough one! Obviously, the music industry has been a shitshow for quite some time, especially if you're an artist that isn't going for pop stardom. It's no secret that tons of great artists are struggling to find an audience and make any money. I play in a couple of other bands, Twen and Sun Seeker, both of which have been very lucky to tour a good amount and play a lot of cool shows, so personally I'm doing okay but music is probably going to keep getting further devalued until something changes. Better pay from streaming services and government grants for the arts would be a great place to start, but who knows when that's going to happen. Everything's pretty up in the air, but I continue to be thankful for all the inspiring art that's being made out there in the face of not great odds.

Quickfire Round

AB Records: Favourite artist? **Asher:** The Magnetic Fields.

AB Records: Favourite album? **Asher:** R.E.M., *Murmur*.

AB Records: Last album you listened to from start to finish? **Asher:** Marshall Crenshaw, *Field Day*.

AB Records: First gig as an audience member? **Asher:** David Crosby and Graham Nash.

AB Records: Loudest gig as an audience member? **Asher:** The Yo La Tengo show I saw last year.

AB Records: Style icon? **Asher:** Liam Gallagher.

AB Records: Favourite film? **Asher:** *Apocalypse Now* and *Paddington*.

AB Records: Favourite TV show? **Asher:** *Twin Peaks*.

AB Records: Favourite up and coming artist? **Asher:** Styrofoam Winos.

Play Games with the Freaks

'Wonky arty indie pop'. This is the self-description of Martin Thompson's **MEIOSIS**, as taken from Northeastern culture publication *The Crack*. The phrase certainly goes a long way to encapsulating something that is impossible to box off. The Meiosis formula is one that shapeshifts and zigzags, stopping off at various points along the popular music spectrum, from hard-edged Britpop to lo-fi indie rock and beyond. Throughout Meiosis' output, Martin has a natural disposition towards progressive alternative music, taking influence from such underground icons as James, Mercury Rev, Sparks, and so many more. Recent LPs *Be Nice to Everyone* and *Onosecond* are glowing testaments to the enduring power of Meiosis indie foundation. As Martin begins to look towards future creative projects, he took a short break to chat with *Aldora Britain Records* about his life in music to date. We discuss a selection of Meiosis' recorded output, his growth and evolution as an artist, popular original compositions, and much, much more. That conversation is published here for the first time.

Meiosis have previously contributed their track 'Let's Stay Apart' to our independent, underground music sampler 'Two'. 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 Martin, how are you? I am excited to be talking with the creative mastermind behind Meiosis. Thank you for your time! Let's kick things 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?

Martin Thompson: Hello Tom! I'm fine, thank you. 'Creative' I'll take, but I'm not so sure about 'mastermind'! The first 'proper' song I remember hearing was 'You Are Always on My Mind' by Pet Shop Boys. My big brother played it to me when I was about five years old and asked if I liked it. I did and still do. I started to take piano lessons when I was about nine but they push you to do exams, which I hated and honestly couldn't see the point. So, instead of practicing what I was given to practice, I'd just plonk around with my own stuff. I picked up guitar at around twelve and it's much easier to plonk around on a guitar, so I took to that a bit more. Again, never doing as I was told to and writing my own stuff as soon as I had enough chords in my arsenal to do so – probably two! – and I just never stopped really.

Aldora Britain Records: And now, let's move things along to the late 1990s and the inception of Meiosis. The beginnings and early days of this project must have been invigorating times. How did it come to be? What was the initial spark? Is it an outlet for your solo musings or more of a collaborative kind of feel and approach?

Martin Thompson: I released a self-titled *Meiosis* album in 1999. You could do it via a website called PeopleSound. They actually gave you £100 just for signing up. It was probably a forerunner to Bandcamp, but rather than downloading MP3s, you have to post off your CD-R and they would manufacture CDs to order. The first two albums I made were collections from music I'd recorded onto cassettes for over two or three years. They sound shoddy but the songs still mostly stand up, in my humble opinion. I released a second album really quickly, really just to get another £100! That was called *The Melon Shark Legacy*. I'm still playing songs from that live to this day.



“If you’re going to get other people to join in, you might as well let them do what they are good at doing rather than dictating to them what you think is right.”

At the time, I was studying popular music at college in Durham. As I was surrounded by musicians, a band was formed with the space of around three minutes whilst hanging around the smoking area. We played our first gig at Newcastle Arts Centre on 15th May 2000. Also on the bill were a grunge band called Garage Girl and a metal band called Skintrench. The three bands ended up playing gigs together a fair bit. Some members of Meiosis were also in Garage Girl and Simon from Skintrench is still helping me with Meiosis recordings to this day. Really, Meiosis is an outlet for my solo musings. Whenever there are other members, however, I tend to just allow them to write their own parts, as if you’re going to get other people to join in, you might as well let them do what they are good at doing rather than dictating to them what you think is right.

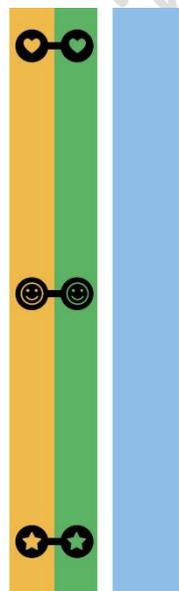
Aldora Britain Records: In 2023, you unveiled your tenth album in the form of *Onosecond*. I have actually just discovered this outing over on Bandcamp, but I am loving it already. What are your memories from writing, recording and releasing this set, and is there anything that you would edit or change with the benefit of hindsight?

Martin Thompson: *Onosecond* was intended to be an electropop record. I’m not sure it entirely fulfilled that brief in the end, but I found it helpful to write new songs by setting myself some rules to work within. It’s the first album since forever where all the songs are new and written specifically for that album. I often start an album by recording something from the past and then writing new stuff that kind of fits alongside.

As soon as an album is committed to release and it’s out there, you always then discover things you want to change almost immediately. I like *Onosecond* a lot but I really just did it for myself. I hardly did any promotion for it at all as it’s difficult to keep bigging yourself up all the time and I just wasn’t in the frame of mind to do all of that again. So, I guess, in hindsight I might have actually told more people of its existence. But it’s out there and I’m more than happy with that. CDs and downloads are currently available at bargain and discount prices at meiosis.bandcamp.com!

MEIOSIS

Be Nice To Everyone



Aldora Britain Records: Previously, if we travel back to 2020, you released another unforgettable record entitled *Be Nice to Everyone*. This was actually my introduction to your music, so I look back on it especially fondly. How do you reflect on this set as a whole now, and how would you say you have grown and evolved since its initial release?

Martin Thompson: *Be Nice to Everyone* is probably the most successful thing I have ever done. It sold really well. It was released in 2020 and I suspect the fact that everyone was being forced to stay home might have helped it along a fair bit. It’s probably the most Meiosis sounding Meiosis record, if that makes sense. I took a handful of old songs that have always gone down well when we play live, but were never recorded well, and wrote some new ones to fit around them. Then we took our time to record the songs to the best of our ability, which

ended up taking a couple of years. I dragged in Simon Chester of Skintrench and Psy of the Dead with his technical wizardry to help. He also has a tremendous amount of patience, so can put up with me being a total control freak over my songs. Ray Tsai also plays a lot of the piano parts on that album and he is hands down the most accomplished pianist I have ever met. Honestly, his skill has to be seen to be believed!

I think it may be the best album I’ll ever do. Of course, I’ll always try to better it, but in reality, there’s twenty years’ worth of writing on that record and do I have twenty years left in me to better it? There’s only one way to find out.

“The wonky pop thing ... No matter how hard I try, the style has never really changed. I must be on some kind of default setting.”

Aldora Britain Records: I would now like to pick out two of my personal favourites from your discography. Let's go for 'Superman Can Fly' and 'Let's Stay Apart'. 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?

Martin Thompson: Well, erm, let's see. 'Superman Can Fly' was a rewrite of a very old song that I liked but wasn't much keen on the lyrics. When I say 'rewrite', all that was really left of the song was a piano riff. The song was originally piano led, then my friend Gary Dempsey, who is a wizard with synths, got hold of it and turned it into the electronic synth fest that it is now. It was the first song I'd written for the album and it was planned for Gary to do more on other tracks, but the way I started writing them it was decided that there wasn't really much left for him to do. The chorus refers to how you used to hear stories of people thinking they were Superman and jumping from windows in the belief that they could fly. Which might seem a little morbid but morbid is probably my forte.

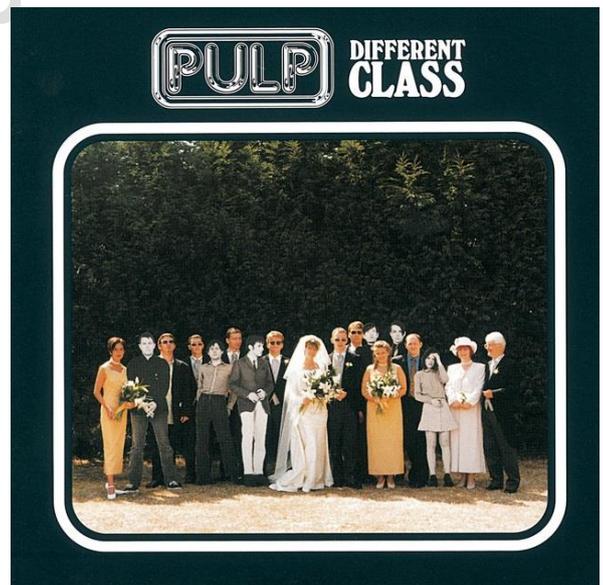
'Let's Stay Apart' is obviously a play on Al Green's 'Let's Stay Together'. It's just a 'breakup' song really, I suppose, but felt very apt at the time of release during COVID. I like it too, but it's a bit of a pain to play live.

Aldora Britain Records: As you well know, I love the Meiosis sound and your approach to making music. That good old 'wonky arty indie pop' as you say! 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?

Martin Thompson: The wonky pop thing came from a review in a Newcastle local magazine called *The Crack* and I thought it suited me, so stuck with it! No matter how hard I try, the style has never really changed. I must be on some kind of default setting. I've often thought about changing the 'band' name as I'm not overly keen on it and nobody can seem to pronounce it or spell it correctly, but after twenty-five years, it wouldn't feel right to do it now.

Influences, when I first started out, loads of people said I sounded like Bowie, but I hadn't really heard much of his stuff at the time. Of course, once I went to investigate, I was hooked and now I'm a mega fan. Loads of 90s British indie bands – I'm not using that word! – like Pulp, Blur, The Divine Comedy, Super Furry Animals, Radiohead, James, and The Boo Radleys. Also, some American indie, like R.E.M., Grandaddy, Eels, Arcade Fire, The Flaming Lips, LCD Soundsystem, Mercury Rev. Some Belgium bands, like dEUS, Moondog Jr. and Zita Swoon, I know they are the same band, right? Raymond van het Groenewoud would also get a shout. Chuck in some 70s glam and prog, like Roxy Music, Sparks, and Pink Floyd. I'm a huge fan of Scott Walker, Leonard Cohen, Elvis Costello, Morrissey and The Smiths, Iggy Pop, Lou Reed and The Velvet Underground, Roy Orbison, and of course The Beatles and all of their solo output.

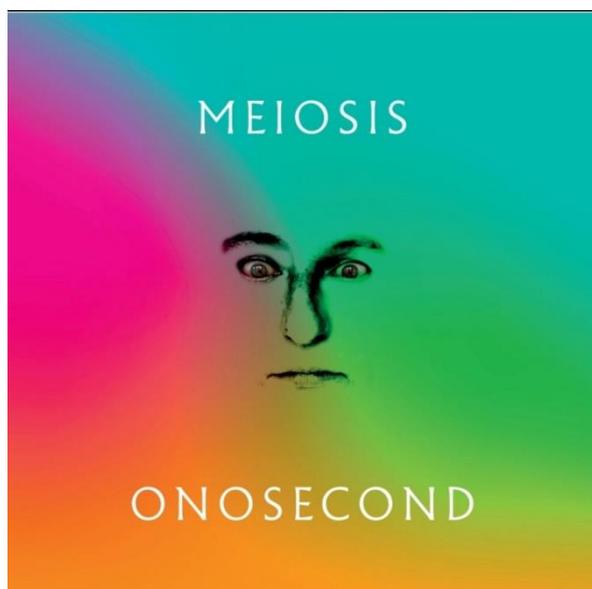
I'll also have a bit of 80s era Pet Shop Boys, Kraftwerk, Can, Tom Jones, Elvis, Brian Eno, Elton John. I've recently discovered Casiotone for the Painfully Alone, which is inspiring me with some of my new songs. Magazine, OK Go, Pixies, Teenage Fanclub, The Rolling Stones, Talking Heads, They Might be Giants, T. Rex, Sinead O'Connor, Kylie, Frank Sidebottom, Monty Python, Manic Street Preachers – just the one album really, aye, that one! I love some classical, Beethoven and Bach are probably the best there ever was. I love to hear French vocals. It just



“Tickets for gigs are also sky high after the pandemic and that needs to change in order to keep live music accessible to as many folks as possible.”

sounds so freaking sexy! Serge Gainsbourg, Jacques Brel, Edith Piaf, Charles Trenet. Loads of TV themes and film scores. The piano riff from my song ‘Play Games with the Freaks’ was inspired by the theme from *Danger Man!*

I put on loads of local acts in Newcastle, and of course you pick up bits and bobs from them that might lead you somewhere. St James Infirmary, Bugman, Nev Clay, and Psy of the Dead are all producing outstanding things locally. I love a band called The Agency so much that I joined them on guitar last year. I have just finished producing an album by The Young Property Developers, which might be one of the best things I have ever worked on and we’re really excited for its imminent release. Paul writes fantastic, short, thrashy songs coupled with such clever and thoughtful lyrics that I simply love, and by no complete coincidence also features a lot of input from members of St James Infirmary, Bugman, Nev Clay, The Agency, and Psy of the Dead!



Aldora Britain Records: A broad question to finish. We have been through such a unique time in history over the last few years. Both politically and within society, and that is before you throw in the pandemic. How have the last several years impacted on you personally and as an artist? How do you think this time has changed the music industry, both for the good and the bad?

Martin Thompson: I think the music scene may be thriving but maybe not so much the artists and folk who work within it. Spotify is raking in shit tons for the fat cats but really pisses on everyone else’s chips. Of course, I use it. It’s an amazing resource to be able to listen to just about anything at any time, but I wish they’d sort out their ethics. Yeah, I can dream, yeah? Bandcamp is great for musicians and I think if they managed to nail a great streaming platform, it’d be awesome. Although,

they have just been taken over and that dream might be over soon too. Tickets for gigs are also sky high after the pandemic and that needs to change in order to keep live music accessible to as many folks as possible. Musicians, producers, sound engineers, lighting, venues, record shops. All these people aren’t being paid any more money for what they do, so those kinds of people are the ones who are taking the hit. As well as the punters, of course, who are having to fork out more and receive the same as before. I’ll leave it there for the will of not setting myself on a very long rant.

I am, as are I’d expect most people you feature, a DIY musician. Not only do I write and record my own music, but over the years I’ve also had to learn how to be a producer, a promoter, a graphic designer, a copywriter, a sound engineer, a manager, a PR person, a distributor, a publisher, a stage manager, a sound engineer, a video editor, the guy who makes the tea. These days, I usually get people in to help me who are better at some of these things than I am, as when I got a little older, the stress of it all was just a little overwhelming. As much as I love it, you know what they say about a jack of all trades?

Quickfire Round

AB Records: Favourite artist? **Martin:** Pulp.

AB Records: Favourite album? **Martin:** I’m going with *Different Class* by Pulp. It’s what really started me off writing music in a serious way, and it came out at just the right time for me when I was about twelve years old.

I've told Jarvis all of this, not that he'd remember of course, but it was important to me that I told him how much it meant to me and my making music. So, I got that all out of my system with him. I heard Bob Mortimer talking about his favourite album being Roxy Music's debut, and that these days he might listen to it properly maybe once a year, and at his stage in life, he reckons he might only listen to that another fifteen or so more times, which he thought was sad. I was listening to *Different Class* at a similar rate, so I started listening to it more! It won't extend your life but it will extend your enjoyment of life, if you indulge in your favourite things more often.

AB Records: Last album you listened to from start to finish? **Martin:** I've been listening to the new James album *Yummy* – I can't get on with the title! – just today. I was just eight years old when 'Sit Down' came out. I loved them then and I still love them now. I think it's amazing that they are still going strong. I really like it. It contains some great pop songs and some beautiful emotionally charged and delicate songs. They are masters of both. There is just a little bit of cheesy production in there, but I think that's inevitable for artists who are getting advanced in their years but still hang around with the cool kids. It's a lush album though and my favourite track today from it is 'Shadow of a Giant'.

AB Records: First gig as an audience member? **Martin:** Proper gig, Pulp in Newcastle, 26th February 1996. Denim and Edwyn Collins supported. As I was only twelve years old and my brain wasn't yet addled, I remember every detail as if it were yesterday!

AB Records: Loudest gig as an audience member? **Martin:** Somewhat surprisingly, it would have been James in 1999, but I think they were topped a few years ago by Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds at the O2 in London.

AB Records: Style icon? **Martin:** It's got to be Bowie, hasn't it? I insisted on wearing suits for all Meiosis gigs up until around 2017, when I gave up for fear of passing out through heat exhaustion or something like that.

AB Records: Favourite film? **Martin:** *Back to the Future*. Any three of those. If it's on, and it's on a lot, I'll watch it! My friends used to call me 'McFly', just became my name is Martin really. 'Hey McFly!'.

AB Records: Favourite TV show? **Martin:** I'm a total comedy nerd. I honestly couldn't pick anything out in particular. Sitcom and sketch shows are the bee's knees to me. Maybe *The Smell of Reeves and Mortimer*. There, I did pick something out in the end!

AB Records: Favourite up and coming artist? **Martin:** Have Yard Act broke through yet? Probably. Man and the Echo, he's probably doing okay for himself too. I think The Young Property Developers have business to come, so since I'm involved with that project, I'm going with him!



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Rewind...

[A B Records Issue 161 \(March 2024\)](#)

Featuring Ted Barnes, Zachary Luka, Alain Pire Experience, The Galaxy Electric, Stan Matthews, Anna Greenwood, Bruce Moody, Changing Modes, Shitting Glitter, and Maddy Carty.

[A B Records Issue 160 \(March 2024\)](#)

Featuring Kissing the Flint, Jennifer Waescher, Beagle, Martin Gilmore, Howard Gladstone, The Honest Vultures, Matt Edible and the Obtuse Angels, PawnShop Motel, La Cerca, and Royce DeZorzi.

[A B Records Issue 159 \(March 2024\)](#)

Featuring Stu White, Christopher Peifer, Rick Szekelyi, Dolph Chaney, Sophie Bancroft, Sammy Warm Hands, Derek O’Kanos, The Taters, Justin VanCour, and Mamba Negra.

[A B Records Issue 158 \(March 2024\)](#)

Featuring Conan Neutron and the Secret Friends, Wilted, Sal Fratto, Dulci Ellenberger, Arcurus, Ronja Maltzahn, Saoirse Mhor, Jalapeno Dynamite, The Big Believe, and The Poly Sonic Tonics.

[A B Records Issue 157 \(March 2024\)](#)

Featuring Lisa Mednick Powell, Fat Jeff, Zak Gregory, Screamefeeder, The Fried Crowdaddies, Mike Kowalski, Ho-Mocha, Miles Island, Rich Mattson and the Northstars, and Simon Hudson.

[A B Records Issue 156 \(March 2024\)](#)

Featuring Andrew Ferguson as S.I.A.S.A., Steve Wharton and Danny Wood, Ambarian, Milito, 9,999, Scott Wolfson and Other Heroes, Magnus Wiik, S. Fairbank, Asphalt Flowers, and The Sitting Tenants.

[A B Records Issue 155 \(February 2024\)](#)

Featuring Dawn Brothers, Mallerstang, Ian Bruce, Prime Minister, Ryan Newton, Tony Mecca, Davide Cedolin, Bitterwind, Lee Baggett, and Donal O Connor.

[A B Records Issue 154 \(February 2024\)](#)

Featuring Jasmine Rodgers, Pete Dille, Georgia Lee Johnson, Stew Simpson, Mummy’s a Tree, Pistols and Parachutes, Sam Q’s Nightpatrol, Marc Bailey, Steve Ashley, and Lucy Sissy Miller.

[A B Records Issue 153 \(February 2024\)](#)

Featuring The Marrieds, Alias Smith and Jones, Steve Ison, Bourgeoisie Paper Jams, The CheeseBergens, Paul Inglis, The Magnet Hearts, She’s a Fish, Will Layng and the Ribs, and Lizzey Ross.

[A B Records Issue 152 \(February 2024\)](#)

Featuring The Lost Notes, Hello London, The Chimney Brothers, The Voltags, Brad Reid, The Bandulus, Deep Mud, Sill Crow, WIND, and The Yellow Melodies.

[A B Records Issue 151 \(February 2024\)](#)

Featuring Frankie Archer, Mark Moldre, Colorworks, Lasse Reinstroem, Ian James, B. Wurtz, The Bonny Men, Dorothy-Jane, Blue Svengalis, and Waterfahl.