The Stander: Music and Poetry

An Honors Creative Project (HONRS 499)

by

Josh Kunkel

Advisor: Dr. Lauren Onkey

Ball State University

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"It is through the subconscious mind, which is part of Omnipotence, that the inspiration comes."

-Johannes Brahms

My creative project has ultimately turned out to be a synthesis of poetry and music, a self-analysis of the creative process, and a commentary on the spiritual, healing nature of music.

I spend most of my free time writing, playing, thinking about, and listening to music. It is a force that I feel deeply. Rhythms, tone-colors, all of it- it all adds up to something big, but like the Zen master says, one can only point at it. When you name something, it ceases to be itself. I feel music is very important. I feel equally as passionate about writing. Writing is a specific and very important part of my music. Words communicate and create themselves on a conscious level. Music tends more to the subconscious. They communicate well alone, but together they communicate more fully, I think.

But the creative process is not so simple as that. It is subtle, complex, mysterious; it lingers at the edges of the conscious mind and quickly disappears below the surface when one becomes cognizant of it. Brahms, Beethoven and Mozart (not to mention adepts in other fields) all felt that their ideas were divinely inspired. Although I am hesitant to compare or associate myself with some of the greatest artists of all time, I am divinely inspired, too. It is not so pretentious as the words would have it sound. Music for me is a simple, special relationship between a man, his maker, and the music itself.

What I have done is arrange each song with a verse introduction, echoing poetically what the song might suggest musically. Following each song is a handwritten commentary. The commentaries consist of notes about the creative process, the composition of the song itself, the lyrics and other things I felt appropriate to facilitate understanding. The last song, "Soundstory: Ani-Kituhwa", has a typewritten commentary, and is also recorded on a cassette tape. The second section consists just of poems, free from the weight of analysis. I hope they will stand on their own. I also performed these songs at a show I set up specifically for the project. The promotional materials are included. Special thanks to the MT Cup, and to Dr. Lauren Onkey for her guidance.
The Stander

Introduction: A man in a white tunic
dances through despair,
to a blue-metallic-celtic guitar.
He jigs effortlessly through the jihad,
mindfully,
naturally.
He is standing stone-still.

I kick up ashes like a demon
I see the writing on the ceiling
It says now is not the time for reason
release yourself and let your spirit fly
high!

I see souls burning on my way up
But I can't lend a helping hand
I am a moonbeam
A star across the skies
Sometimes you've got to stand
for something

It's a song that you've heard long ago
I will take you back
You were that song
that strained across the night
Have you forgotten-

Have you forgotten?

And I see the birds upon the wing
An old oak that won't sway in the storm

And the season is getting longer
And my body is getting colder
I stand for freedom

I stand alone

In a magic circle,
forever.
Well, I think I got sucked by the old suit and switched, but I got a good book out of the deal. I just left Dr. Wagner's office and some dude who said he was a monk stopped me and told me a little about the ballads of aT. For a small donation, I could have it. I gave him a small donation (that's all I ever have) and he gave me a little softcover book. Oh well, it's still cool. I'll read it anyway.

Well, I keep waking back collecting some thoughts to put down here. I was afraid they would all fly away. This happens with creative inspiration. I am a writer and a musician, and inspiration comes when you do not expect it when you don't have a pen or you or your guitar is at home but you do your best because different ideas will soon follow. It's a game to win in your head. If you are open to it, the muse will never leave you.

Music is sound of the soul, and the most precious soul is the soul of life. Take note of the sounds around you and know that they blend together, not with notions of harmony and equality and those tools of the composer but they blend into a precious and holy harmony, a song to all that is good in the world. This song I've been working on (it came last night) is really great. I am proud of it.
I got the first notes with that hammer and shit thinking to figure out "Inside looking out" by Grand Funk. It is ending up like it's from "Night of Bald Mountain". I think it's mystical. Mysticism cannot be achieved through a set of notes, specific.

Like blues is realized through the pentatonic. Mystical music is indefinable. I think it is a certain modality, but I'm not sure. Mostly it just comes from nowhere.

I don't profess to know shit about music because I don't. I have been blessed with the talent to make music and I am ever grateful for that.

Music should never be for the gratification of the ego, because it does not work that way. Music attempted in that manner will never last. It will wither and fade in the splendor of music made for the love of music. I am putting my ego on the page here, but I need a viable solution to my project problem. I have to make it legit. I'd rather not talk about it though. It seems pretentious. I just want to play.
WE GOT SO MANY IDEAS, BUT I DON'T WANT TO WRITE THEM DOWN. THERE ARE MANY, I AM INTERESTED IN THE SPIRITUAL AND TAILORED MUSIC INTO THE FUTURE. THAT MEANS GOING BACK TO DIP INTO THE COLLECTIVE UNCONSCIOUS. THAT'S WHAT ALL MUSIC IS. EVERYONE ESSES AND PICKS THROUGH TRADITION. I AM INTERESTED IN PUTTING NATURE IN MY MUSIC. I AM INTERESTED IN MAKING MY OWN INSTRUMENT. A NEW INSTRUMENT AND PLAYING TO AN ALBUM. A GUITAR WITH SOME SORT OF DECIBELS ON IT FOR A DANCE EFFECT. SHIT IT LIKE THAT. I WANT A FLUTE. OH SHIT. I JUST REMEMBERED IDEA! WE SOME PAID PIPER TYPE PIPES. COOL. WATCH THAT BECOME A COMPONENT OF OUR SOUND.

I LOVE THAT GIRL.

ALSO LAST NIGHT I FINISHED MY SONG. THE SONG THAT BUMPS AROUND YOUR HEAD UNTIL YOU GET IT IS SOMEWHAT OF A FIXED FORM, WHERE THE REST IS JUST KIS ON THE CAKE. IT'S CALLED "THE STANDER" IT'S A BIT DARK. IT'S ABOUT THE ESSENTIAL ISOLATION OF THE HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS. BUT "THE STANDER" IMPLIES A RESOLVE TO "STAND TALL" AGAINST IT. IT IS JUST A FACT OF THE UNIVERSE. IT NEEDN'T BEAT YOU DOWN. WHAT IS, IS WHAT IS.
The Name Of The Poet

Introduction:

twelve-string magic carpet guitar
floating low over hills
gently rolling, gently rolling
rocking
a shot up through the clouds imperceptibly fast
a woman frowns, then laughs at the picture she makes
a mind wanders through the clouds in Paradise
the clouds of Paradise are very near, pink and fragrant
they smell clean like babies
feel like peace of mind
it is the incense of heaven
A man walks alone across a hard, grassy plain
to lie under the tree of sadness

Verse I. Sometimes

Sometimes,
when night is black and heavy in your eyes, baby
and no trace of heaven will languish in the skies for you

just believe in me
I can set you free

Verse II. I Have Been Born

I have been born
for thousands of years
Time is not to me

the name of the poet, the name of the poet-
the truth shall set you free

Verse III. Behind The Indomitable Veil

Behind the indomitable veil,
I have watched what you will be

the name of the poet, the name of the poet-
the truth shall set you free
set you free

you free

free

free

Ending:
flower petals, gentle ripples on a clear cloudless pond
The name of the poet hearkens back to the Zen idea of not naming. The name of the poet would imply the truth about poetry. That is why I SA I the name of the poet is... the truth shall set you free. Meaning the truth about poetry is not evident in its name, in its essence. Of course, the truth will set us free, but that was not why to do it. I the name of the poet, poetry. This song is composed of several sections. I wanted to write something soft, beautiful, and I wanted to write in the key of C. Over the key of C and key of G, we common producers E is usually resolve for something slower, rockier. E and A.

Keys whose unique position on the guitar lend themselves easily to the soft and beautiful.

I see the change to A as the shot through the clouds happening imperceptibly fast, faster than the cloud.
CHARGE. C# minor is the word

During the laughing, the

Next section C# to C major feels

Like getting floating. It is seen and

C# to C might suggest subtle gesture movement,

Since it is a gesture move to make a

Half step C# to C. The final section

Of the intro is the great descending

C em Am. After the verses is

Am, the song ends with the same

Slow roll as the beginning. This time it is

Floral petals on a road. Full circle

The twelve string gives nice harmonics

to counterpoint throughout
Lady Of The Clouds

Introduction:
The singer sings high, solitary,
strums his lute as his heart, sings as his soul
Night-jasmine flushes pink and purple at his sorrow
Recoils, redoubles efforts, is repulsed at ignorance of mutable law
The trees bloom of canary and chandelier this autumn,
orange-and green oriflammes.
They shimmer from a shower of tears
Lady Of The Clouds

Love shot with a million arrows
pierced the heart of him who never loved
Love missed with a million sorrows
his airy queen cries from above

Her bleary songs rain down
he never hearing
a cry of love
from a soul so weary

tears glance off
his hard-heart-armor
never knew autumn to be warmer

(The wind picks up, the rain might feel a bit like a sting)

The singer sings his song
O, high and lonesome
whispered only to the wind
carried off to the sea
drowning there, never to be cherished
Is not now was it ever to be?

Be, be-ee-ee, hee-hee-hee,

He calls out a name
but he does not know
a queen lives not upon this globe
high as the moon
she walks on air
Lady Of The Clouds
a lady fair

da ir-a-air-a-uh-air,

(The soft storm ends with the sun coming out, a blue-grey B flat major
to a yellow F
to a pink and purple G,
Flourish.
bells gently rock out a joyous sound,
bright violet and green, yellow-pink birds sing along, an avian, chittery chorus)

Lovely knell of parting sorrow
holder there of bright tomorrows
Lady Of The Clouds
my airy sovereign
to you, humbly,
I bow.

(The singer and the lady lock hands,
hearts
They walk down the path, into the trees
The birds sing on,
invoking the song within the song,
a gentle wish, a hope, a gift)

They sing:

"song skip light

'round the sun

Dry up tears

of everyone

Love is and will always be

the answer, the door,

A window

and the key."
LADY OF THE CLOUDS WAS WRITTEN ABOUT MY GIRLFRIEND. FROM THE VERY START I CONSIDERED IT ROSE AND PURPLE, PINK AND GRAY. I LIKED IMAGES OF A PLACE WHERE THE NATURAL SCENERY WAS THOSE COLORS. I DID LIST THE END TO BE A GIFT, A WISH, A HOPE, AND OF COURSE JUST THAT I WANTED IT SO. INCIDENTALLY, MY GIRLFRIEND IS A PAINTER AND SHE WORKS WITH BRIGHT AND DUSK COLORS. I DID NOT MAKE THIS CONNECTION UNTIL A LONG TIME AFTER IT WAS WRITTEN.
This Is To Say This Is Not Prophetic

Introduction:

(like you might do the hand jive or tap your fingers, getting into a syncopated rhythm, like you might jangle down the street, or slap your thighs. This is played on the muted strings of a guitar, but you may do as you wish)

Chicka-chicka-chick
Chicka-chicka-chick-chicka-chick
Chicka-chicka-chick-chicka-chick
Chicka-chicka-chick
Chicka-chicka-chick-chick
Up, up, up
Up, up, up,
Up, down

G A       (chicka-chicka)
C A       (chicka-chicka)
G G A A C C A A G A
G A       (chicka-chicka)
C A       (chicka-chicka)
G G A A C C A A    chicka-chicka-

chicka-chicka-chicka-chicka-They were lovers
Yes, and they were friends
and they knew their young love would never end
(in A minor seventh)

Did you see her sneak in the back of the hall
with flowers in her basket?

Seven heads
Ten horns
A million mouths
She strode forward to call

G A (chicka-chicka)
C A (chicka-chicka)
G G A A C C A A G A
G A (chicka-chicka)
C A (chicka-chicka)
G G A A C C A A chicka-chicka-
chicka-chicka-chick-Bedecked in purples and scarlet
precious stones and pearls
she lifted her cup
and she drank a toast
as she shook her coalish curls

(Am7)

She said:
"To all ye devils
do I drink
and all ye angels, too.
Now come with me
upon the brink,
we'll dance to the fiddler's tune."

G A (chicka-chicka)
C A (chicka-chicka)
G G A A C C A A G A
G A (chicka-chicka)
C A (chicka-chicka)
G G A A C C A A chicka-chicka

chicka-chick- "O, I cannot go,"
I said to her, as I fell down to my knees,
"Don't make me go!
O no no no!
Don't make me go
O please!"

(Am7)

"Don't you know about fate?" she said,
"It is your destiny.
And destiny is like fate, you see, in that way,
So stop your begging to me."

G A (chicka-chicka)
C A (chicka-chicka)
G G A A C C A A G A
G A (chicka-chicka)
C    A   (chicka-chicka)
G    G    A   A   C   C   A   A   "But isn't
destiny just a thing,
like so many other things?
Can you fly if you can walk?
Can you sing if you can talk?
Can you love a man without condition?"

(Am7)
"Submission," she said, "it is the way,
love your neighbor 'till your arms they bleed.
Give up your will,
don't climb that hill,
stay back and give the world what it needs-
and that is love."

(Now the music is a calliope or a nursery school)

Love
La-la-La-la
Love
La-la-la-La-la
Love
La-la

(Fmajor-strong slide to G major- ascension, tension- A minor 7th-boom-explosion into:}
I will ask you no more questions
All your mouths, they talk together
I could never understand what you said
I am going home forever
I will meet my maker later
You can be sure I won't see you there
This is to say this is not prophetic.

I really tried to represent music with words in this song. My friends that know the song can read right along. I couldn't note every pause every beat but it is basically all there. Usually a pause would be signaled at the end of a line. The placement of the chords (GA CA CA go AA CC AA go) suggest a rhythm as well as the "chicka-chicka" phrase which is used to approximate the sound of muted guitar strings. The rhythm of this piece is central to its specialness.

The word in the piece is the whole or basis of revelation. I thought of her more as just a creature—temptress. The song is an exploration of the problems of living to please oneself when in live in society. It illustrates the importance of living for others.
Travelin' Trackside

Introduction: a sad, slow, spare, minor acoustic guitar, long pauses like tension

Jimmy was the engineer
of Old Number One
and Jimmy was a drunkard
That's how he had his fun
and I was travelin' trackside
kickin' rocks upon the rails
and I saw Old Number One go down
with a ticket straight to hell

(guitar, lonely, dark)

The fireboy asked Jimmy
if he thought it wise to drink
Jimmy smote the boy across the cheek
and said:

"Boy, I'll think what I 'll think.
I follow no laws, no laws but my own,
and I'm a Christian, damn you alive.
And I'll drink
and I'll do
what I damn well please,
'cause God is on my side."

(guitar, spare, mostly absent)

The fireboy left
to the hot, grey night
and never was heard from again
Jimmy took a draught
from his bottle
and started around the bend
I looked at the cars
as they rumbled and shook
'neath the brown and burning sky
and on the platform I saw old Satan
Wavin' for Jimmy goodbye.

(guitar, spare, mostly absent, absent, disappearing)
(Silence)

(The hell-train comes roaring back around the bend, wheeling in a progressively faster strum, it blows by and fades out again)
A FIREMAN IS ONE WHO STOKES THE FIRE OF THE ENGINE ON A TRAIN. THIS SONG IS A CAMEST FOR SOMEONE WHO HAD THE WRONG IDEA. (I HAD NO CLUE WHAT WOOD TO USE, WHO ELSE IS THERE OUTSIDE THE ENGINEER TO WORK ON THE CAB? THE FIREMAN IS THE ONLY ONE.)

THE STRENGTH OF THE SONG IS THAT IT IS MOSTLY A CAPPELLA. THE GUITAR MOSTLY SUGGESTS A STRUCTURE. IT IS TENSE THE WHOLE WAY THROUGH, SOMETIMES I END IT WITH A FAST STRUM THAT SUGGESTS A SLOW TO

TRAIN. SOMETIMES I END IT ON THE IV INSTEAD OF THE I CHORD, LEAVING IT UNRESOLVED, DRAWING THE TENSION OUT TO DISSIPATION. THE BLANK PAGE IS TENSE SILENCE. THE PROGRESSION THAT COUNTERPOINTS EACH VERSE IS STATIC AND HORRIBLE - AM G AM F E
Baby Blue

Introduction:

*banjos ringin'*
everybody singin'
down in Dixieland

*there's a boll weevil*
in the cottonfield inside my head

*Verse 1.* (sang with twang, now)

Well
that ocean is deep and wide, babe
seem an ugly shade of blue
and I hold my breath
it's sink or swim
'cause, babe I gotta find you
and I feel like Jesus Christ
and I'm walkin' on water
and I love you with the love the knew about
change water into wine and wine to sand

*Chorus*

Well
baby baby baby blue
I'm so lonesome on the dark side of the moon
and I'm standin' on the sand
with a teardrop in my eye
don't let it
fall in the water
that much more for me to get by

*Verse 2.*

Well
baby, things ain't been the same
since you left our happy home
and all I can do
is stand on the beach
and wring my hands and moan
and I moan like a lonesome whippoorwill
while you buzz like a honeybee
and the birds and the bees mean nothin'
you're the only woman ugly enough to love me

Chorus

Well
baby baby baby blue
I'm so lonesome on the dark side of the moon
and I'm standin' on the sand
with a teardrop in my eye
don't let it
fall in the water
that much more for me to get by

Bridge

And my dog up and died
and the t.v. set is busted
and monday they turned off my phone
and I'm thinkin' about my baby
with some high-falootin' Pierre
kissin' him in the sunny streets of, uh . . .

Europe (is that a city or a country?)

Verse 3.

Well
the tears roll down my cryin' face
and the ocean, she rolls on
my baby is somewhere over the sea
and all I had is gone
Sunday Feb 19, 1995 1:03 AM

There's a funny movie on TV, a Japanese fuck called "Frankenstein Conquers the World." There's monsters, nazis, Frankenstein's heart in a jar, a mutant boy who won't stop growing. Even so, it's funny as hell. It's so bad it is hilarious. I wrote a song in g tune, I can't see it with words or anything else, just acoustic with a little slide. It's rather pretty. I wonder what I think it should be like that, (I'm thinking) I don't know. Perhaps simply because that's the way it should be.

The Next Day

I just glanced at my book "Talks with Great Composers" and it reminded me that Brahms said his ideas came from God. It struck me that some people would scoff at that, I believe in it, but it is not as grandiose as all that. I forget who described religion as a simple relationship with a man and his maker, but that's what it is. My ideas are divine inspired, but I believe that...
God is simpler than a golden kiss in the
sea of water. Certainly it's as
important but it's not special. (is but it
isn't) it's simple. There are paradoxes involved,
but I accept paradoxes, I can
separate through them in them, so I accept
paradoxes. However, you speak on spirituality,
you are wrong. You are limiting the idea to
the words we have to express a huge idea.
"One" works best for me. It implies the
interconnectedness of all things. The song
"SAD, SAD, SAD, SAD, BLUE" (Segue) is a
cute song, I wrote. I wrote the signature riff
on piano then transferred it
to guitar. Then I came up with some chords
and words. The speaker is a caricature
of a man with no lot of money, and no
lot of brains either. There was a time when
I never would have written a song like this.
I had been having in my songs before, but not so
outrageous, and never sang through the
person of a mentor or other. The initial idea
came through the recurring motif of
ocean as a divider between my girlfriend
and I. I would think about how lonely it must
be out on the ocean at night, if you were
the only one around and I thought about
how lonely I was out there. Estates who
wanted to keep it simple, so in the
chorus, I used one of the easiest (simpler is
a better word) changes in music. III to I, I stay;
i am back to IV. Anyway, it's actually easier
"THAN THAT (I'LL HAVE TO SHOW YOU SOMETHING)"

THE BRIDGE HAS THE STANDARD COUNTRY CAMP'NT: "MT DIXIE DINNER." THE SPEAKER'S T.U. SET IS "BUSTED," IMPLYING HE DOESN'T DO A LOT. PERHAPS LATER T.U. T.U. IS DISGUSTING OR TERRIBLE. SOMEONE CALLED IT "A GLASS TEA" AND I THINK THAT'S VERY APT. THE SPEAKER PROBABLY ALSO DOESN'T KNOW THAT EUROPE IS NOT A COUNTRY, SINCE HE SINGS "KISS ME IN THE SUMMIT STREETS OF EUROPE." ONE WOULD ASSUME SUMMIT STREETS ARE IN ONE PARTICULAR CITY, BUT HE PROBABLY THINKS EUROPE IS A CITY, TOO. WHO KNOWS? THERE ARE ALSO A FEW OLD BLUES REFERENCES IN THERE. WRITE MY HANDS AND NOAH AND THE IDEA OF A HONEY BEE BUZZING AROUND THE WORLD FROM MUD TO LATER'S "HONEY BEE." NORMALLY I WOULD NOT KEEP SUCH BLATANT COPPIES IN A SONG, BUT THAT'S WHAT WE DO IN THE BLUES! THERE ARE RECURRING MOTIFS, PHRASES, SIMILARITES IN THE FORM, AND I AM PROUD TO BE IN THAT TRADITION. I ALSO FEEL I AM KEEPING THE BLUES ALIVE BY DOING SO. IT'S NOT THEFT, MAN, IT'S BLUES!

"WHY I'M THE BIGGEST SONG STEALER THERE EVER WAS"

- WOODY GUTHRIE
WED. FEB 22, 1995 4:44 PM

Something I've always drawn me to do what needs to be done at the right time. Right now I'm trying to transcribe "Baby Blue" back onto the banjo, which I originally wrote the signature lick on. The verse riff, banjo is a near instrument. It's hard to play some chords because the neck near the tuning pegs is so small. My dad got bigger fingerpicks that he thought and he could do it. Also you like to watch filling the higher string on some chords because you can fret it in my first position chords because the strings of the goes halfway up the neck. Plus, it's hard to play with picks on your fingers, as opposed to flat-picking on a guitar. I'm trying to do fingerpicking, which was invented by Earl Scruggs. Before that, the method generally employed was the claw-hammer method. I can't tell the difference between the two in sound. Of course, it's been a long time since I've heard clawhammer. I love bluegrass music. When I was growing up, my dad played banjo and hung around bluegrass bands. We went to bluegrass festivals where there would be hayrides and a fat dead pig being roasted inside a makeshift shed built over a fire pit. People would camp for days on somebody's farm and just jam out. It was like a salt of the earth woodstock.
I didn't appreciate the music that much then. I was just starting adolescence then, and that shit was old news. As a matter of fact, I didn't become a musician until late in high school. I always listened to music more than the average kid, I think. But I was raised on Top 40 radio and Anne Murray and The Carpenters (my mom's music) when I got out of Top 40 music. In middle school, I listened to rap. I still defend rap (at least what I listened to) because then it was new and fresh. I was a hell of a social critic, but I left it after I discovered classic rock, Jim Croce, CCR, The Stones. All these came to me as a complete revelation. I was buying odd diddley tapes just because John Fergiey would mention him in an article. I read an article on Robert Johnson, and before I knew his great influence, I was just intrigued by him. I bought the tape (this was before that box set came out) and it was not an instant love affair. I was still soaking off pop sensibilities and such, but gradually I came to love him. Of course he is one of the greatest blues men of all time, if not the best.
Love

Introduction:

an acoustic guitar

In the distance,
a sweeping spirit pedal steel guitar
ebbs and flows,
washing, cleansing

To believe
is the hardest thing
To give your soul away

To roll the dice with your life
and I know that you're scared, sometimes

But when you feel
you're all alone
Just remember
love

Love is where you came from
and love will never leave you

Just believe
in the gifts
that you were given

Just believe
in your name

And when you feel
you can't go on
and the world
is spinning all wrong

Just remember love

love
LOVE IS WHAT I FINALLY REALIZE MUSIC IS
ABOUT FOR THE MOST PART. YOU CAN DECONSTRUCT
AND PUSH DEFINITIONS, AND THAT IS FINE. I ENJOY
THIS MYSELF. BUT A GOOD SONG CAN BE SO MUCH
MORE POWERFUL. I ENVISION THIS SONG WITH
A STEEL GUITAR, GIVING IT A COUNTRY FLAVOR.
IT HAS SIMPLICITY AT THE CORE, AND THAT IS ITS BEAUTY.
Heaven Is A Place

Introduction:

a martin (acoustic) alights on the gate
for a purposeful moment
then flits off
the traveler steps to the road

the traveler looks up

Verse I.

How many roads have I rambled?
How many nights have I tried?
How many times I been wasted
tryin' to find the
thing that always seemed to hide?

the people
they seemed to me
like people in a dream
wastin' their time
payin' no mind-
"Life's mighty fine!"
all the point of the scheme

Chorus:

but
heaven is a place
you can hold in your hand
Come with me, child
Let's understand
Sing it with me now
Ring it over the land
heaven is a place
you can hold in your hand
Verse II.

Well, I ain't no prophet
but I do know
that I can see what I can see
and I still do not like it when the grey men waltz in
speaking in low tones, and killing me

But you will
get yours, brother
in the end
I'm sorry you must pay
Pay back everything
You've stolen
Come the Judgment Day
Yeah, Yeah, Yeah

Chorus:

Heaven is a place
you can hold in your hand
Come with me, child
Let's understand
Sing it with me now
Ring it over the land
Heaven is a place
you can hold in your hand

Verse III.

So all you people
I sing this song to
I don't know
'cause I ain't been told, but
lookin' for heaven
in the sunny skies above
you're just gonna grow old
Yeah Yeah Yeah

Chorus
I believe that everything in the universe is connected and that all the elements for human happiness are here. One just has to open one's eyes and breathe and be happy. To me, it is a state of mind. We are not cast adrift in a void. We are here now. We make things like happiness and reality real through our minds.

"In the beginning, we created ourselves and in whatever image we choose do we create us."

The song is for lack of a better word folk; it is upbeat, happy, self-assured, and pretty accurate in its perceptions. I think as Mark Hamilton said, "there is some perfection between me and the world." A sense that all things have purpose. That things are as they are, therefore perfect in a functioning universe. The world is not humdrum.

Before enlightenment: chopping wood, carrying water.
After enlightenment: chopping wood, carrying water.

- Zen Proverb
Soundstory: Ani-Kituhwa

I have tried to retell through sound and music the experience of the Cherokee Indians, from their origins, their first contact with whites and their removal from their lands and new placement, to the modern period. It is a story told mostly with music instead of words. The fact that I call it a story is significant. In the title, I use the ceremonial name for the Ani-Tsalagi (the traditional Cherokee name for themselves), Ani-Kituhwa. Commonly, they called themselves Ani-Tsalagi. Stories and music are associated with magic in the Indian psyche. They have power. I consider this story to be a ceremony. I hope to invoke some sort of magic, some power, some help, some change, with this story, not in a moralistic, journalistic way, but in a real way. I am part Cherokee. My great-great grandmother was a full-blooded Tsalagi. I hope in creating this story, I am creating some kind of reality, some sympathetic magic, and in some way bringing some hope and peace.

Words are used to frame the story. It begins with the traditional phrase, "This is how they say it was a long time ago..." the signal for the beginning of the story, and seems to conclude with "Ho", the signifier for the end of the story. "Ho" is repeated over and over again in section IV, announcing the end of the traditional Cherokee way of life. This should technically be the end of the story, but it is not. Life is an always unfinished story. The ending, which features the same double-chambered flute as the beginning, completes a cycle and expresses a hope that the traditional ways may be regained, or if that can never be again, that a new tradition may be started.
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The song is arranged in five parts:

I. Choluk

This part consists of the phrase "This is how they say it was... a long time ago..." This is when the Cherokee people emerged from underground, leaving a mountainous land full of caves. This was in another time, an ancient time, distinct from the present, when things were not as they are now. The word Choluk comes from the Mobilian trade language, a corrupted Choctaw jargon formerly used as the medium of communication among all the tribes of the gulf states, as far north as the mouth of the Ohio, and means pit or cave (Mooney 15-16).

II. The Gift of Bird

The flute (played by my friend, Little Crow, a Cherokee himself) represents the traditional ways. The flute was a gift from Bird, which is why Cherokee flutes often have a stylized bird atop them. The flute at the beginning of the section sounds slower, simpler, with sharp trills and stops that might suggest a bird song, a bird chirping. As the section progresses, it becomes more complex, more musical, more human. The Cherokees can talk, they can sing now. They have everything they need to be happy.

III. Then, The Gift of Blankets

This section represents contact. In this section, The guitar plays the part of General Jeffery Amherst, the man who presented blankets contaminated with smallpox to the
Cherokee, or perhaps Andrew Jackson, the man who repaid Cherokee friendship and valor at Horseshoe Bend with the Trail of Tears. The tom-toms, rattle and bells represent the Cherokees. The guitar is just "playing along". It mimics the sound, the spirit, of Cherokee music, but not the truth. For any one to properly compose that, he would have had to experience the horrors of the 1838-1839 Cherokee emigration, "The Trail Where We Cried," the Trail of Tears.

IV. Nunna dauł Tsuny

This is the Trail of Tears. This section ends with the flute fading in, playing for a while, then fading out again.

V. Uk'ten'

This section begins with the phrase: "This is the way they say it was... a long time ago..." It is a new beginning.

The attributes imputed to the Uk'ten' are strikingly similar to those ascribed to the European dragon. The Uk'ten' represents to the Cherokees something more than an inimical aspect of nature: To some extent it symbolizes satanic deceit, confusion, and negation. Still, oddly enough, in defeat the power of the Uk'ten' is reversed: the scales of the Uk'ten' provide protection and healing (Kilpatrick, 43).

Asudi, a 92 year old storyteller, on the Uk'ten':

He (the one who killed the Uk'ten') was told to hit him upon the seventh spot. On the fourth time he drew his bow, the arrow hit right upon the seventh spot. Then he (the Uk'ten') fell over and floundered about and tremendous thunder and lightning appeared all about, they say.
It continued to thunder and flash lightning... He caused it to rain hot fire... the fire rained until he was completely dead. The people came from their hiding places after that. They say that's what happened long ago.

This Uk'ten' who lived long ago could have devoured all the people. But that's the way God willed it: that people should live, multiply, and love each other. The reason that we are here is that God is powerful. No man on earth has made things the way they are. It is God, who is so powerful, who has made everything the way it is... God decides whether we are to live or not.

(Kilpatrick, 44).
Works Cited


II.
Poems
I send my wild ecstasy across veil of sky and blanket of water

Sky Church, Earth Church, Love Church, Electric Guitar Church

I Stand For These
I. Invocation

The gates of The City are open

THE GATES OF THE CITY ARE ALWAYS OPEN
The fisherman enters The City
crown of thorns in his side
bow-tie drawn, ready to attack
cardboard and staples
crossing, crossing the lake of fire
he is thirsty
cross
They come to The City
The City holds up heaven
THE CITY BLOCKS OUT THE SKY
Stamping, steaming, rolling, making all day and all night
Chunk-Chook-Ahh
SSSS
Kunk-Kook-Ahh
SSSS
Stamping, steaming, rolling, making noise all day and all night
They are stamped out
They are stamped out
He accidentally staples his hand down
can't get loose
staples his feet
can't get loose
staples both shoulders
can't get loose
staples his heart
staples his spirit
can't get free
can't get free
run run, fisherman
run back home, get off this land
land of pain, land of cry
drown yourself before you die
drown yourself before you die
A ghost of a warrior on a holy horse
appears in the stale lunch hour light

II. Ceremony

Firebird, firebird rising new

Firebird, firebird rising new
From the ashes of the jew
THE AMERICAN JEW, THE AMERICAN JEW
From the ashes of the jew
Firebird, firebird rising new
Firebird, firebird rising new

-Josh Kunkel
north star in my car
sometimes I get enlightened in everywhere

"Hey."
"What?"
"Come here."

Do you ever feel like a bitch in heat?
Have you ever considered divinity and twisted it backwards upon itself?
Come crashing down on a spiritual enigma too hard and smash it with intellect?
Watching your back and finding you've broken your neck in the process?

The man said, "When you analyze the truth, you break it apart in your clumsy mortal fingers. That's facts."

SSSSSSSSssssssssssssssssssssss

"Did you hear that?"
"What?"

ssssssssssssssssssssssssssssssss

"That."
"Man, I never hear that."

God told me when you drink in the dark, you drown in it.
He said it is there to sample, to compare, to illuminate.
He told me this on a Sunday, when I was in bed
I heard the bells twitch at St. Vitus's,
and I knew that it was a good death,
on a good day to die.

In my past one day,
racing with reverie across plains of sorrow

I needed meat, not sorrow

Presently, I drink wine like a Maenad,
I am but what could be.

God has told me things. He played me a song on his God-instrument. (godtar)
Countless strings radiated out from the source of all knowledge.
He played me an untitled song. It must be that way.
He played sounds that were smells, visions
sounds that left me lingering in the timeless void of one second before orgasm,
when the only sounds are acceleration
sounds that turned from sound to light, sounds that tinkled in soft delight
sound of blood, sound of fist, sound of gong-

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(trying now to funnel the powers of the universe into my throat, not caring if my teeth explodes outward with my vocal chords, or even if I spit out my soul into hell)

"Your name, you bastard, your fucking name!!"

I screamed with all my power with everything I had ever wanted to know, needed to know, I screamed for every lost soul like me, that burnt up in their beds at night over questions, I screamed for rabbis, and for Jesus Christ and mouths belching acid above hungry distended bellies devouring themselves and I screamed for the crusaders and the inquisition and ten year old boys who thought they might go to hell for jerking off and nuns who hit students and for the holocaust and for oppression for dead daddies and people in ghettos people with no hope love betrayal the ultimate betrayal do it to him not me not me ugly people missing people people who I don't know a word to put for them and their unspeakable what that makes them want to die every day god god god god god gone gone gone gone every one everyone everyone and show me the fucking truth damn you screamed all night all night screamed I went mad

Next day: (take the train or leave it.)

The man at the train station told me, he said
"The sun don't always shine, but it don't always rain either."
Then he chortled up a fat laugh from his guts.
I didn't.
I put it away in my pocket.
For a rainy day, don't you know.

"Did you hear that?"

-Josh Kunkel
Got drunk last night

Got drunk as fuck last night
Didn't learn anything
Didn't expect to, though
I was standing to leave, looking at the kitchen carpet
All of a sudden it was an ugly and whirling
Pattern of unconsciousness. I began to spin
with the prevailing mood.

I staggered like a dance, a dervish, or a devil.

I have a cut on my lip, which is my badge

But it is also a scar, too.
I think we all slip and fall down sometimes in the dark.

I died a little death last night, and I did not care.
I did not care to tell everyone I was alright, that my whiteness
was just on the surface. (My blackness inside, oozing from unconsciousness)

I joined the allegiance
It was my destiny
I made a dark communion last night
Sacramental beer, and a human sacrifice
Ruminations on prison

"The picture of death is always there," the man said, "you can't see it though."

"It's pitch black."
You look around

"Man, how did I get in here?"
What did I do?

Matter of fact, who are you?

Jail is rumination
constant
utter
apprehension of chaos in perceived order

"Order is chaos," says Bogo, street philosopher, pimp, musician,
"Time is nothing. You've got time enough. Time to think yourself into madness or out of it.
You can't skim the surface. You got to dive deep. Forty years I been here. I know."

"Hey, you got a smoke?"

lions   beetles        in a cage
warehouse   business
Don't cry    Not on my shift
sucker      scam

"You! In there! That's what I said!"
every minute
never been to a discoteque
never carnivals

freak show neck watch
sand tick zoo

"When you're a lifer, there's tick but no tock. It's all the same time until you die."

never been fishing,
never been to a circus

ball in court
make sure no one sticks a shank in me

I saw a motherfucker get his throat cut with the top of a tomato can cut in half

"... a motherfuckin' tomato can, man!" (cries.)

I wanted to make a difference
I ruined this life
maybe the next one

"Next!"

Fifteen years old gun
against the wall

game deadly game

"I'm not gonna be friendly."
"You think it's funny?"

My mom used to tell me
when to go to bed

Christmas

Now the warden tells me.
You're telling your mother to kiss your ass
Now the warden tells me
when to breathe

D.O.C.

Stupid is your middle name
Your mother does time, too
Looking out from behind glass
"Hi, mom."

wet phone

"You think it's a joke?"

Reflect
why not you, son?
It's not going to be a visit
Why did you choose?

"I liked robberies. I liked the feeling of power I got from holding a gun to a person's head."

think
For You: There are the knowns and the unknowns

The unknowns are simple, often. They lie
as snow piled up against the windy side of a fence post.
They lurk easily underneath your kitchen table next to ancient bubble gum.

Did you know you too are ancient? Did you know you are dust
of an ancient temple, and hair from a pope, and a compound concocted in a
labratory long after your body slips away into love?

You have been blown across the sea and back and forth countless times
You and your mother and father have flown under the sun with God
As an ozone molecule and a mite upon a tick upon an eagle's stretching wing.

Did you also know you have travelled the stars for this?
You have shot for the moon, and made the universe.
This, too, has happened countless times.

Can I take you back to an ancient song you will recognize?
You were that song and rhythm and vocal chords,
screaming across primordial night, chanting in modalities long forgotten
over here where the sun sets. Remember now.

And as the sun rises, so you rise. As the sun sets, you die.
Every day the infinite takes place. Today, in this dire hour,
when you need it most, it comes to you. I cannot name it, though,
I can only point.

Look out now, the world needs you.
Robert Johnson Said

I got womens in Vicksburg
    clean on into Tennessee
I got womens in Vicksburg
    clean on into Tennessee
But my Friars Point rider, now
    hops all over me

    -Traveling Riverside Blues

Dunt-dunt-dee-nuh
    Dunt-dunt-duh-nuh
Dunt-dunt-dee-nuh
    Dunt-dunt-duh-nuh

    Right now I'm sayin' that I'm traveling Cool Creek and I am being shown a new
    world
    It makes me feel like humming to myself
I say:

    Lord, I'm goin' to Rosedale, gon' take my
        rider by my side
    Lord, I'm goin' to Rosedale, gon' take my
        rider by my side
    We can still barrelhouse, baby, 'cause it's
        on the riverside

    -Josh Kunkel