

boredom breeds curiosity
j mundok



art & notes

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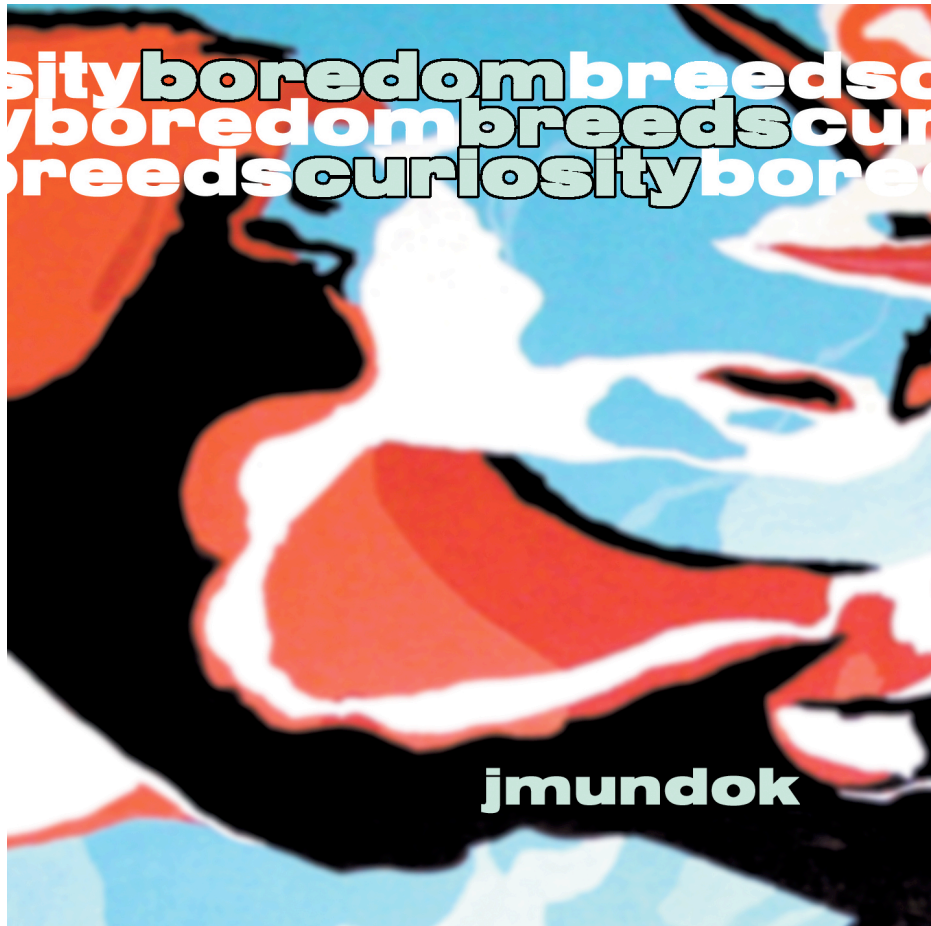
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Art

The following two pages contain printing templates for the CD cover art and labels. Individual cover art graphics (.jpeg) are also available on CD extra versions and the J Mundok website (www.jmundok.com). Dave Bellard (Studio Ha!, Jesters Longevity) created the cover art and layouts. I have known Dave for fifteen years, after meeting on our first day of college at Clarion University of Pennsylvania in 1989. Since 1998, Dave and I have been partners in the musical studio project, Jesters Longevity.

Also scattered throughout the lyrics and notes pages are the six remaining pieces of my own artwork. As an autobiographical sketch of my first thirty years, I wanted to include these rare, by important aspects of the visual side of my creative mind.

1. Hands (1989): The first of two colored pencil drawings created during the summer of 1989, an exceptionally creative time.
2. Idoeno (1989): The second of the two colored pencil drawings from the summer of 1989. The originals have yellowed terribly over the years, but with the help of scanners and software, I was able to restore them to a cleaner original state.
3. Flower (1994): This painting hangs in my Mother's house in Marco Island, Florida. It was a gift that originally hung in the house on the hill in Barnesboro, Pennsylvania. This is one of three turtle creek pieces, created while living in Turtle Creek apartments in Nashville, Tennessee.
4. Self (1994): A colored pencil self-portrait drawn as a gift to my mother. This also hung in the house on the hill and now resides in Florida. Created while working on *Never To Return*, the fish theme became prevalent in my music and art during that time. It is also a turtle creek piece.
5. Fish Head (1994): The final turtle creek piece, this drawing hangs in our house in Mount Joy.
6. Friday Night #1 (1995): I painted this while living at Stewart's Ferry Apartments in Nashville, Tennessee. Susanne and I spent many nights recording music and experimenting with video and art. This is my only visual art relic from that time, but some old video footage and *The Pepper Ring* document the period well.



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Recorded at Studio Frog, Mount Joy, PA 2002-2003
All songs written by J Mundok except:
"Finally" by J Mundok, Joe Kury, Bryce Hoch and Sam Rivera.

All songs performed by J Mundok except:
Steve Slessor: drums on "Discover" and "Summer"
Joe Kury: guitars on "Green Grass"

Thanks to drumslive.com, breakbeatsonly.com, loopgalaxy.com
and e-drummer.net for loop downloads.

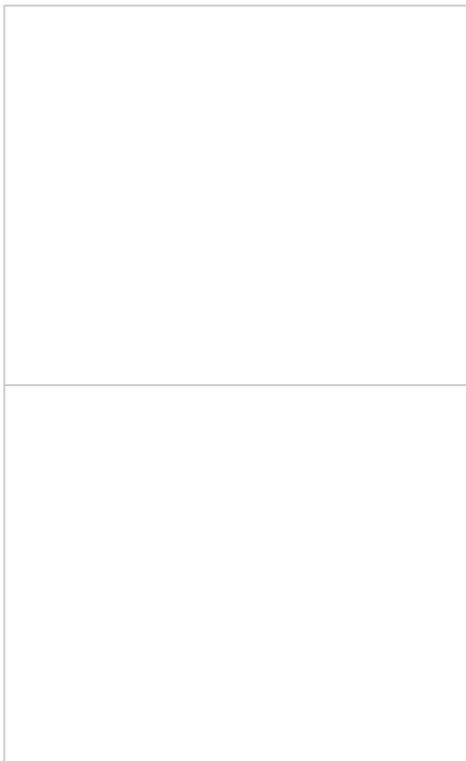
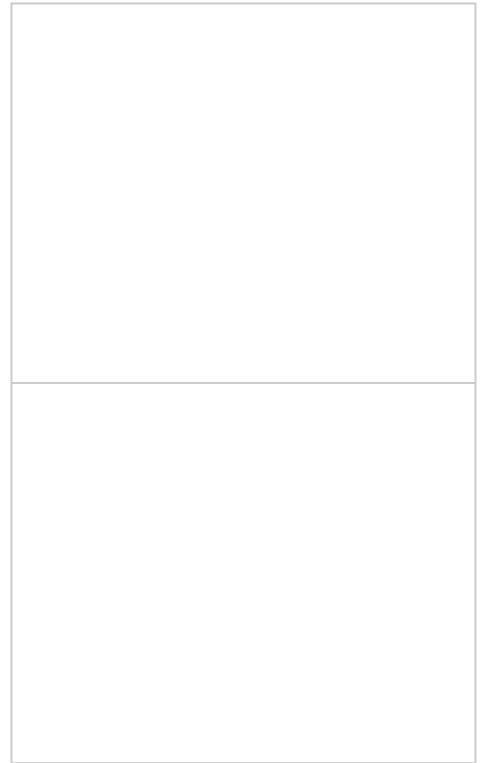
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**boredom
breeds
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**Cover Art: Studio HA!
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Concept

Introduction

A young teenage boy moved with his family to a new house in a new neighborhood. The boy didn't want to leave his friends and school behind, but power beyond his control forced his father to take a new job, and therefore, he ended up in this neighborhood where he suddenly played the role of stranger. Shortly after the family settled, but without enough time to meet new people or make new friends, the boy began to grow weary and bored. On a rainy Saturday afternoon, with little to do, he investigated the house's basement and came across an old journal stuck in the ceiling rafters of a corner of the room. Someone who once lived in that house had documented his life in this journal from childhood through about thirty years. It was my own.

The journal piqued the boy's curiosity, so he dusted off the binding and opened to the first pages. With nothing better to do, he read about the three phases of my life: childhood, adolescence and adulthood, spending the rest of the rainy afternoon going through his new discovery.

Each song on the album reflects a time period in my life. Some verses recount a memorable conversation; others reflect an entire season and some even cover a span of years. Everything directly relates to distinct memories that I have from years past.

Reasoning

Many artists spend much of their time trying to avoid autobiographical bias in their work and I have admittedly done the same in the past. So why write such a blatantly autobiographical album? Susanne and I welcomed our first daughter, Ruby, into the world in June 2001. In September 2001 I completed my 30th year on earth. As a result of those two important life events, I spent a lot of time that year thinking about and documenting my life. We organized our photographs and made sure old journals and notebooks were safely stored away. I also began a long process of digitally archiving demos and recordings that were being stored on analog cassettes. I also purchased a video camera to document our new family.

As I went through old pictures, videotapes and recordings, I recalled how a stimulus, such as an image, sound or even smell can trigger memories so vivid that one can almost relive a different moment in time. I had an idea to create the stimulus that would remind me of particular moments in my life through music. I wanted to be able to remember certain events for as long as I live, but couldn't guarantee that in thirty more years, I would come across the same stimulus to relive those events in my mind. An album written with those events in mind would be my own document to insure that those memories would remain alive for years to come.

I have always been good about keeping journals, so I decided they would be a perfect medium to deliver the key moments in my life. What events, thoughts and feelings would I include in a comprehensive journal to illustrate the first thirty years of my life? To answer these questions in an organized fashion, I first divided my life into the three

decades that I had recently completed. Next, while focusing on each section, I outlined key moments, thoughts or moods surrounding each time period and tied them to specific memories. I made some notes about the specific memories that I wanted to include in the lyrics and the type of song I imagined describing those memories. Finally,



#1

I aligned guitar riffs that I had been stockpiling with the song ideas. The original ideas weren't perfect, but they gave me a foundation from which to build.

I decided to reprise the major theme that began the album between the three acts and again at the end. What did the major theme represent? I wanted to avoid the direct delivery of memories. I didn't want the album to simply be a collection of songs about my life, which would have been inferred had I kept the original title, *Chronicles*. What would it be like if someone randomly found my old journals? Who would really care to read them? I imagined that someone would read them out of curiosity, or perhaps out of boredom. Often times, boredom leads to curiosity. We notice things when we are bored, that we never would have noticed otherwise. We look for patterns on the walls of a doctor's office or we study the license plate of a car in front of us during a traffic jam. If a

boy was bored enough, he may find himself snooping around a basement and actually take a serious interest in an old journal that he found in the rafters. His interest and curiosity became the main theme of the album. By reprising that theme, we are reminded of that the reason for the telling of the story is curiosity spawned by boredom, not just story telling for the sake.

Challenge

In 1994 I wrote and recorded a concept album called *Never to Return* that remains a proud musical moment. Since then I have recorded several albums, but none have been a full concept. But being a long time Roger Waters and Pink Floyd fan, the ideas for concept albums constantly roll around in my head. As 2001 came to a close and I finished recording *The In Between*, I felt the time was right to take on a concept project, which was both a blessing and a curse.

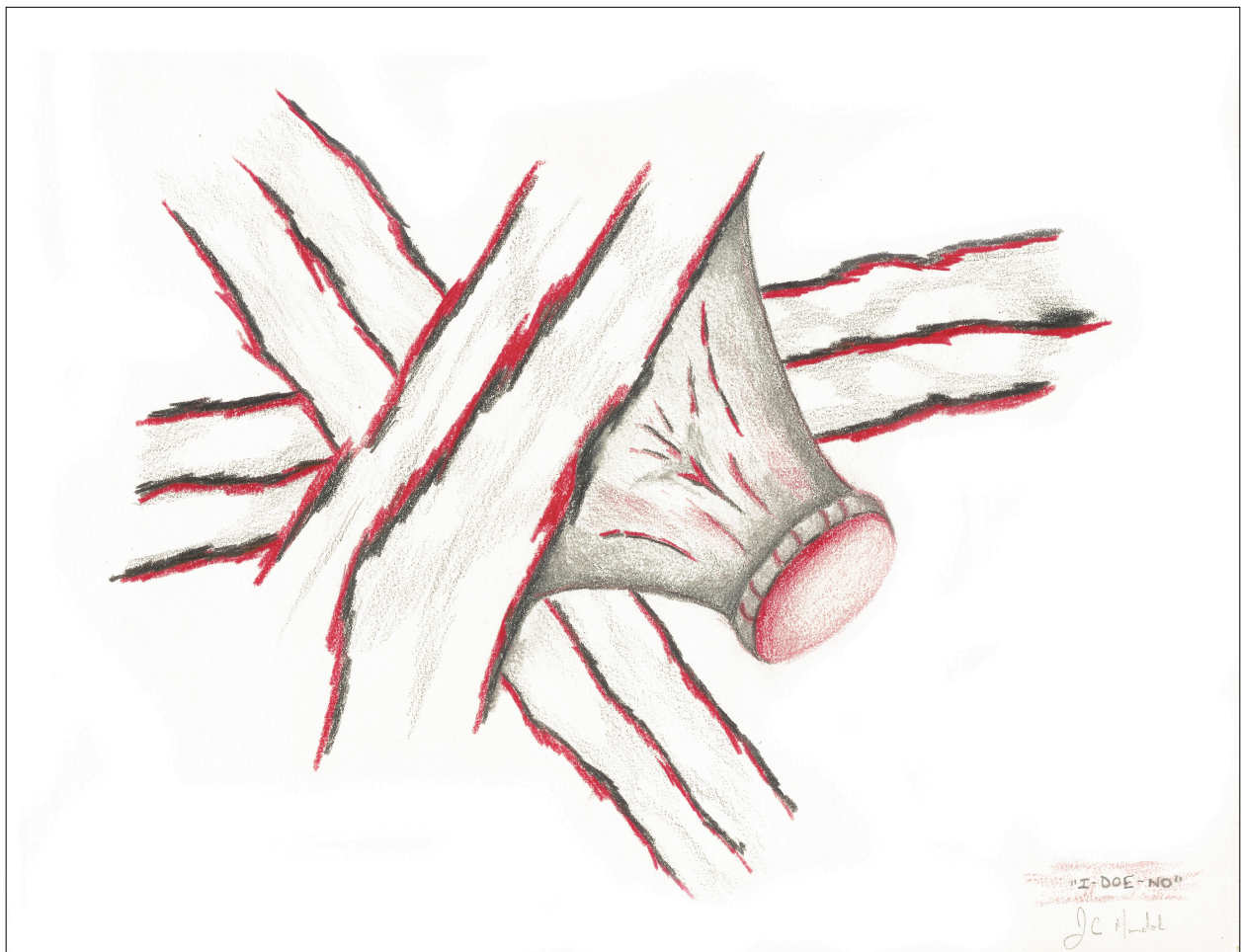
Any time I start a project, I must complete it, regardless of how long it takes. Although I knew how involved a concept album could be, it had been a long time since *Never to Return* and I felt that it wouldn't be that big of a deal. Two years later, I remembered that it was a big deal, but the completion of this album was the accomplishment of a great musical goal, unlike any that I have accomplished in the past.

The advantage of writing an album, instead of a group of songs, was the predefined topics, based on the outline and major theme. I was able to brainstorm ideas for all the songs first, so when it came time to work on a particular piece, I already had a rough idea of the lyrical content. This also allowed me to work out of order. When I came up with a new musical piece, I simply looked down the outline to a section of the album that had a matching feel and inserted the piece. The obvious disadvantage was the limitations as the album neared completion. By the time most of the music and lyrics were in place, I was forced to finish the outline, regardless of my mood at the time.

Another challenge that I faced while making this album was staying focused during two very transitional years. Between the time that pencil first touched paper through the last mix down, Susanne and I bought a house and had our second child, while I started school for a Master's degree and changed jobs twice, within the same organization. I also joined a cover band to supplement the income of our growing family. Needless to say, focus came at a premium, but determination reigned at the end of the day. Although there were many months where no progress was made, there were as many inspired marathon sessions that exceeded all of my expectations.

Music

The musical idea for the album began in late 2001 as I finished the recording of *The In Between*. I started playing with a guitar riff that I had been developing during the year. I had shelved the riff after scribbling some lyrics about Sam Gamgee, which drew inspiration from reading *Lord of the Rings* the year prior. The media hype and upcoming release of the LOTR films caused me to scrap the lyrical idea. After I finished recording *The In Between*, I revisited the shelved song and I loved the riff enough to consider it the possible cornerstone for the concept album that had been swimming around in my mind. That riff eventually became “Discover” and is reprised throughout the album.



#2

One evening I played the “Discover” riff with a capo on the second fret and decided that I liked the sound of it better. Since I often wrote songs in the same key of A minor, I thought it would be interesting to write an entire album with a capo on the second fret, forcing my usual patterns to fall into the key of B minor. The difference in my playing style would be minimal, but my vocals would certainly be different, singing a whole step higher than usual.

I wanted the overall mood of the album to be poppy and spacey, my usual preference, but I didn't want to restrict myself to a balanced album, as I had done in the past. I was often concerned that an album was too much one direction or the other and tried to balance the styles. As long as the feel of each song aligned with the concept and properly reflected the conceptual time period, it could all be one feel. Of course, it became a balanced collection of tempos and moods, by the very nature of a life reflection that spans thirty years.

The following pages include the lyrics to each song with notes that explain some of the stories behind the lyrics and some of the reasoning behind the decision making process. If you would rather not be exposed to the meaning behind the songs, do not read the following fourteen pages. You've been warned. Of course, some mysteries will remain hidden for further exploration on the days when boredom leads to even more curiosity.

Lyrics

Discover

On a day no different than others
The uncovered tales of another
Hidden away in the place where he
plays
Waiting for him to discover

Boredom breeds curiosity
To notice what went unnoticed
And time after time occupying the mind
Leads him to all things unseen

*Did you ever go back?
And walk down the old path?
In a corner of black
To let him go back
Through words from the past*

Guided by intuition
He reached through a hole in the ceiling
Out of a nook, he pulled down a book
And wiped the dust clean from the
binding

A glimpse into the past
Left there by one who once lived there
Page after page the spirit survived
And opened a door to former times

*Did you ever go back?
And walk down the old path?
In a corner of black
To let him go back
Through words from the past*

To document is to live again
Chronicles never end

*Did you ever go back?
Take a walk down the old path?
In a corner of black
To let him go back
Through words from the past*

Notes:

This was the catalyst that began the entire album. I couldn't stop playing that riff.

Our story begins with the boy, on a rainy Saturday afternoon, exploring the basement of his family's new home, a home that he didn't want. Bored and lonely, in a neighborhood that was yet to be warm, the boy notices a crack in the ceiling of a dark corner of the room. His investigation reveals a book, covered with dust and obviously left behind.

After retrieving and cleaning the book, he realizes that inside is the journal of a man who once lived in the house. It is a record that chronicled the first thirty years of this man's life. The life of the man beyond thirty years remains mystery.

Curiosity, with a lack of better things to do, prompts him to crack the book and spend the afternoon learning about the stranger.

To go back and walk the old path through documentation is to live again in the only way that we can.

Curiosity

On the outset
Back to years gone by
But what of this reflection
Has been altered with time?

The opening tales
Inspired by conversation
Mixed with fragments of memory
Creates reality

Curiosity of this biography
The pages will reveal intent of a mystery

In a small town
In the heart and concrete
Built from coal and steel
To fulfill our needs

In the room above above the alley
The first place that I recall
We'd go through the door into the store
Where we play all day

Curiosity of this biography
The pages will reveal intent of a mystery

The Buick gave way to an Oldsmobile
Plans were laid for a house on the hill
And Alice introduced me to Charlie
In a chocolate factory

Curiosity of this biography
The pages will reveal intent of a mystery

The land was cleared
The pile burned for years

Notes:

So begins the tale of this man's life, and therefore my own story.

With thoughts of an apartment above an alley and behind a store, the first setting of my first memories, I wanted to preserve what I could of that place that was destroyed by fire in the early 1980's.

Barnesboro, Pennsylvania depended on the coal and steel industries that boomed for decades. The tiny downtown, though only a few blocks wide and long, was very urban, with little vegetation and an abundance of concrete. We spent the first few years of my childhood living in the downtown, behind my Grandfather's hardware & auto parts store. The outside entrance to the apartment and a first floor garage led into an alley. That garage housed our gray Buick that eventually became a big brown Oldsmobile.

I attended Mrs. Brown's nursery school in those days. Her granddaughter, Alice Lynn, babysat me and was responsible for some of my first literary memories.

House On the Hill

An empty room with matching walls
Show cars zipping by from every side
Stopping to notice and hearing them call
I head for the closet to hide

*Please don't take me away
Don't take me today
Don't take me away
I don't want to go*

*Please don't take me away
Don't take me today
Don't take me away
This is my new home*

The carpet is soft on my feet
As orange as the autumn leaves
That fall from the trees I see out my
window
And cover the ground like a sheet

*Please don't take me away
Don't take me today
Don't take me away
I don't want to go*

*Please don't take me away
Don't take me today
Don't take me away
This is my new home*

The called in the earthmovers
And I joined them to do what I could
Chipping away at this pile of rock
I joined them to do what I could

Notes:

The house where I grew up sat at the top of pool hill in Barnesboro, in a previously wooded corner lot. My parents built the house in the mid-seventies, just before I started school. My room was decorated with orange carpet and brown and orange animated car wallpaper. During one of the first visits to the new house, while the rooms were still vacant, I refused to heed the calls of my parents and hid out in the closet, refusing to leave.

Before the house was completed, I did what I could to help my Dad, with hoe in hand, clear the land that would eventually become our garage.

As the land was cleared, the trees and brush were piled in a lot behind ours. More lots were cleared and the pile grew so each year we would light the pile on fire in a sort of neighborhood burning ritual.

I have fond memories of that house, as I spent the dozen memorable years of childhood and adolescence there. In 1989 I moved out to attend college in Clarion, Pennsylvania, only to return for holiday breaks and the occasional weekend visit. My parents finally sold the house in 2000 before relocating to Florida.

Signals

Smoke signals rise to the sky
From trees on the creek side
Where we'd hide from our lives
With creatures of the night

We stared at pictures of our heroes
Wishing we were them
From a hospital bed I made my request
For one that played like his

Signals...we're sending

Playing basketball
With writing on the walls
The music changed our lives
And all the comrades
Like other short-lived trends
Were changing all the time

She liked way I talked
On the boardwalk
Two young merry souls
And on a Friday night
Through flashing lights
We watched a building burn

Signals...we're sending

--- end of act I ---

Notes:

On December 8, 1980 Mark David Chapman shot and killed former Beatle John Lennon.

On March 30, 1981, John Hinckley shot President Ronald Reagan in a failed assassination attempt.

Both of these events had a memorable impact on me at the end of my first decade. Although I don't specifically remember hearing the news of Lennon's death, I had recently purchased *Double Fantasy*, one of the very first rock albums that I found and loved on my own. His death confused my nine-year-old mind. Why would something like happen? We will never know.

On the other hand I was waiting in my Mother's classroom after school one day when another teacher told me to turn on the television. The news of Reagan's assassination attempt was chilling and of course we had to wait until later that evening to find out he wasn't dead.

A few events from the middle school years that soon followed make up the foundation for this song:

My friend, Alan, and I spent many days getting into trouble in some woods behind the Giant Eagle supermarket.

The one that played like his had four strings.

With Buffalo Dick airing Sunday nights on Q94, my brother and I played nerf basketball on our court in the basement.

Marisol liked my accent

One Friday evening an era ended.

Discover Reprise I

Notes:

The transition from childhood to adolescence occurred during the early 1980's. As a big fan of television, some programs during that time influenced me greatly, while others simply entertained me mindlessly.

Miami Vice, *Cheers* and *Sanford and Son* were some of my favorite television shows in middle school, but the moment I stumbled upon *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* late one Friday night on PBS, my whole perception of humor changed. I had never seen anything like it and it made me hungry to seek out new and different media that I had eluded me growing up in small town America.

The final sample is from a speech given by Ronald Reagan after a suicide terrorist attack on a Marine barracks in Beirut, Lebanon on October 23, 1983. Although at the time I was only vaguely aware of such world events, I found this speech to be a haunting foreshadow of the times in which we now live.

September Cold

*With the crack of a cue ball
And Friday night football
And books I had to memorize
I walked around all through this town
With music in my earphones
They said we had the time of our lives*

Notes:

My birthday is in late September, so that month has always held a special place in my heart. Inevitably, every year the weather would turn cold just prior to my birthday, forcing celebrations indoors and starting the long cold western Pennsylvania autumn and winter.

In October 1996, I took Susanne to Barnesboro for the first time and she videotaped me standing on the back of my Grandmother's porch, which overlooks the town. I explained to her my unique impressions of the town and how it related to the outside world.

Approximately ten years earlier, on January 28, 1986 a seven-member crew, including teacher Christa McAuliffe died in the explosion of the space shuttle Challenger. We had a day off from school because of the weather so my band, Fantasy Black, got together to jam at drummer Bob Stauffer's house. His mother called us down to the living room where we watched the explosion on television.

Like most high school kids, I spent a great deal of time by myself during that time, learning about who I was and trying to figure out who I would become. The town and the times were such that I could walk anywhere at anytime. The streets of that town were my sanctuary, with the soundtrack of my life playing on a Walkman.

Summer

I walked out the door for the last time
And I turned to raise a fist
With tears in our eyes we said our
goodbyes
And took our names off of the list

Underneath houses we sang with a
voice
That no one heard before
But the music we made when we played
all night
Showed me an open door

*And the summer rolled on and on
The ending of twelve revolutions
The summer that rolled along
The start of a new declaration*

I met love under rockets above
Realizing what I had missed
Swimming the same deep water as her
We knew it would come to this

And I found salvation in the same room
In music that sang from our amps
It would have been great if we got out of
the gate
But the Bonnavill ran out of gas

(chorus)

I walked down the hall for the first time
And read the first page of my book
The jester looked up when I walked in
his room
I said, "Hey, can I borrow a smoke?"

*And the summer that rolled along
Ended that day to give way to the fall
And the summer that rolled along
Ended that day in silence*

Notes:

The summer of 1989 brought the end of the twelfth cycle. They reported the final grades and we walked away. I would leave in the fall for college, but I knew it meant more than just going away for a while. But that still left the summer.

Jim and I formed a band called Dawg. We would rehearse through the night in my basement, writing music like I had never heard. Breaking free from all that we had known, we were unafraid to experiment. The basement became known as the Dawg Pen.

As one band became another, Matt and I formed Bonnavill. Playing our own songs, our own way, I learned how to focus on creation, instead of imitation. Though it didn't last very long, the Bonnavill experience was the foundation for the way I would do things for many years to come.

Leaving the habits of heavy metal behind, the alternative post-modern music of those days became a primary part of my life. Together with my first true love, I experienced the music that would influence my own music forever.

That summer ended with a warm August day on the second floor of Clarion University's Campbell Hall. Nothing would ever be the same again.

It

In the heart of an abstract conversation
Over a pack of cigarettes
Challenging the answers to the
questions
We hadn't had the nerve to ask yet

*It all comes down to this
The state of everything we've done
And what we haven't yet
It all comes down to it
The state of everything we've done
And what we haven't yet*

In a moment we celebrated freedom
From all of our existing inhibitions
And clarity and focus of the answers
Revealed what we never realized

*It all comes down to this
The state of everything we've done
And what we haven't yet
It all comes down to it
The state of everything we've done
And what we haven't yet*

Is relevance connected to our actions?
Can anyone begin to understand?
The past is gone and all but long
forgotten
But the promise of the future yet to
come

--- end of act II ---

Notes:

In a brief moment of clarity, Mike D and I spent one of the most abstract nights of my life in a room on the second floor of Campbell Hall. During the autumn of 1991, I paid him an unexpected visit. We hadn't seen each other in a while and struck up a conversation over a pack of reds.

I will never remember the beginning of the conversation, only the middle and the end when we defined the undefined, looked into the eyes what we could never have seen prior and, for a moment, answered the unanswerable questions.

I might refer to it as the first truly religious experience in my life, one that I would lean on again in a few short years and repeatedly since. We tapped greatness that night.

Discover Reprise II

Notes:

As a nod to true boredom, I couldn't pass up an opportunity to include the late night Sally Struthers correspondence course commercials repeated over and over and over, while waiting for Dave Kendall to bring us the latest world premiere video.

The transition from adolescence to adulthood truly came after graduating from Clarion University in 1993. By the end of that summer I unexpectedly found myself in Nashville, Tennessee. Away from all that I had known and all that I had become, I could truly start over.

Green Grass

I left it all behind
The time had come to start another life
Little did I know what I would find
Images of bridges burning in my mind

But it's okay, it's far enough away

The end began the cycle once again
To be a stranger wasn't strange to me
then
It was harder to forget what I'd become
Than to figure out what I was there to
overcome

But it's okay, it's far enough away

I thought I had it all under control
But I didn't realize
The green grass never grows on the
outside
On the outside you never really know

Then everything was clear
Arising from the culmination of my fear
That nothing here would ever really
change
If I failed to start another day

*It's not okay, is it ever far enough away?
Can it ever be okay? I have to go away
again*

I thought I had it all under control
But I didn't realize
The green grass never grows on the
outside
On the outside you never really know

Notes:

Pennsylvania had run its course. I didn't know where I needed to go, but I knew I couldn't stay there. On a suggestion by Mother and a connection through my Brother, Nashville seemed as good as anywhere else.

With no vision, goals or experience I felt my way around until things started to fall into place. But there came a realization that nothing would change for all that surrounded me, if I were to suddenly disappear. That is the ultimate reaction to the action of leaving everything behind and starting over.

Hindsight taught me that Pennsylvania wasn't the place where the grass wasn't green, but, of course, hindsight can't come until after the fact. Tennessee was as green as anywhere else.

Death of Melancholy

I knew I couldn't stay forever
Just long enough to work things out
Before I knew I was on my way back
Still full of doubt

On the night before the New Year
We talked like we'd known each other
for years
Nothing was strange to me then
With you I found it again

*It's never the same
The choice is made
This is the end of melancholy*

At dawn a new beginning
With fading thoughts of the night before
I needed to sleep with strangers
To understand what the lesson was for

And on my way back
I knew everything would be different
I would never go under again
I'll never go under again

*It's never the same
The choice is made
This is the end of melancholy*

Notes:

The bottom was a hard place to be and the gentle sadness of melancholy was no longer a friend. I was forced to grow up. The responsibilities were mine and mine alone.

I met an angel on a flight from Florida to Tennessee during the evening of the last day of 1993, a very transitional year. To her I was a friendly face and a nice conversation. I will never forget her.

I still benefit from the choices that I made that night. As the next day broke, everything would change for the rest of my stay.

I believe that we are in control.

Together

The stages got bigger and so did our heads
But we always made it okay
And the summer laid my theory to rest
We took any doubts away

We moved from the city and closer to friends
In a house with a yard and a fence
We rescued the Stone from certain death
And gave him a place of his own

*We knew what we had to do
As long as we did it together*

In the afternoon we'd drink out of cans
That later we'd shoot off of buckets
The neighbors we had, we never heard
Unless they were shooting off rockets

So I picked up my fiddle, and took up my pen
And pulled myself up from the bottom
I sat on the couch and sang to the walls
Until artichokes sprang from the garden

*We knew what we had to do
As long as we did it together*

We made friends with Kevin and played where we could
Until mood reached the maximum levels
Of all the good things that came to an end
That's one I'll always remember
Feeling the pressure, the fear of mundane
The fear of what we were becoming
One thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine
Began with a sort of homecoming

Notes:

And so Susanne and I were married in May of 1997 and moved to a little house on the outskirts of Murfreesboro, Tennessee. We had been together for a couple years while I was playing in some bands and recording music under the name m-theory.

The year before we were married, we had seen *Braveheart* several times and it became a staple of our relationship. To me, Uncle Argyle represented the foundation for Wallace's later success.

That summer marked a new beginning, not only for Susanne and I, but also in a musical sense. I spent a great deal of time writing the music that would eventually become *Artichoke*.

Susanne and I formed a band with Kevin that produced some of the most remarkable and magical music that I have ever made. We experimented with different sounds and gear and captured much of it on tape, though it has only been exposed through the *Lost Monkey* collection. Like most of my musical projects, it was short lived.

Nashville was losing its appeal, so together, Susanne and I decided to move on.

We uncovered the origins of the unusual nickname, Pete, for a guy named Larry.

Finally

I spent two weeks near the city
To get ready for the summer
And ended up across the sea
With my uncle and his friends

Back in time for autumn
We settled in the north
The jester came to see our place
And close the century

And now...finally

Up on the hill they closed the door
And left that house behind
So I read the final chapter
And closed the book for good

A brand new time, a brand new town
Figured we would hang around
Plant our feet into the ground
And take a new book off the shelf

And now...finally

Notes:

The third act winds down with our roots being planted in a small town in central Pennsylvania, but not until after we spent an unexpected summer in Ireland with Poor Uncle Harry.

We avoided the wrath of Y2K unscathed and the key to the house on the hill was passed to others. Closure happened all around us.

Beginning

My baby, come with me
This is your century
The lady of my dreams
Is waiting for you and me

Notes:

The original inspiration for this song, Ruby Margaret, was born a few months prior to the completion of my thirtieth year. Weeks before my thirtieth birthday, the most important event of my life took place, the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center towers in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C.

Had I worked on this part of the album earlier, I probably would have stayed clear of that event, but two years had gone by when I began recording the ambient intro tracks. The inspiration now included our second daughter, Jaina Iris, and the world had changed dramatically around us. I did not want to forget it.

I imagined how haunting this ambience would be with a few news clips from that day. Our children will never know a world prior to September 11, 2001. None of us will ever forget it. When I listen to the confusion and fear in the voices of the newscasters I remember the uncertainty of that day, the red dawn of not knowing if planes would just begin falling from the sky. But for the children born in these last few years, they belong to a generation that marks the beginning of a new era; the era that will define the next thirty years of the man's life.



#3

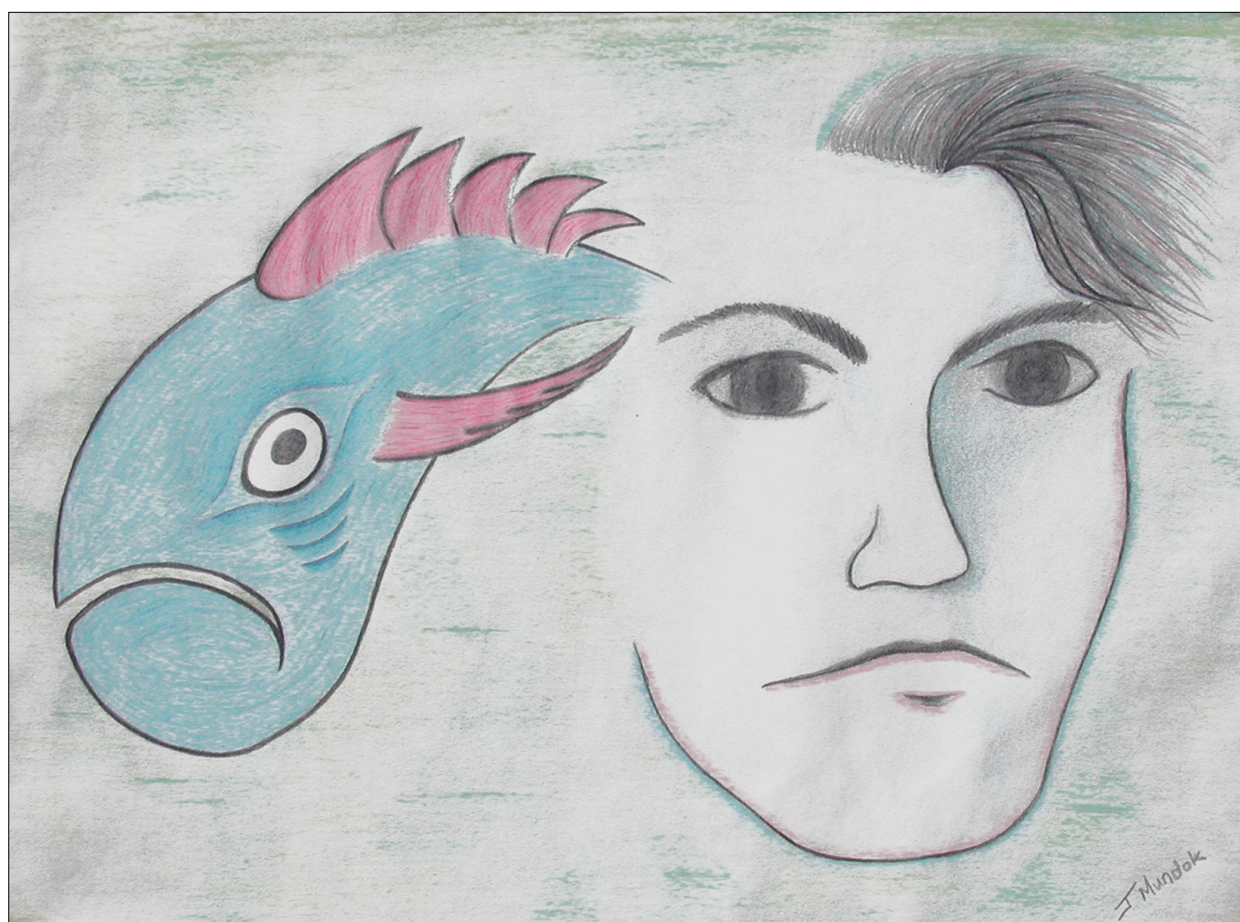
Players

I played most of this one myself, not necessarily by choice. The first tracks were written during the first two months of 2002. I didn't waste much time before recording some demos. I invited my friend, Steve Slesser, over to record some drum tracks on my Yamaha electronic drum kit. The intention was to simply get some ideas onto the hard drive. He recorded "Discover", "1989" (which later became "Summer") and "Green Grass." The demos were simple arrangements using drums, acoustic guitar, bass and vocals and I was pleased with the sound and the direction of the songs. Since I was playing a lot of acoustic shows at the time and was really hungry to play in a band environment, especially after hearing the new songs with a band sound.

I decided to form a band that would develop the songs live, and then record the album as a group. As the weather broke in the spring of 2002, I began placing ads on the Internet for players. In the meantime, we bought a house down the street from where we were renting, which meant a serious hiatus from music, so I could not only move, but also figure out where to build the new studio. I met guitarist Joe Kury around that time

and he began playing some acoustic shows with me. He also helped me build a room out in the garage that became the new home for Studio Frog.

By August 2002 the new band had Joe Kury playing guitar, Bryce Hoch on bass and Sam Rivera on drums. Although only about sixty percent of the songs for this album were fully written, I took more time off from the recording to work with the band. During the fall, we rehearsed several times and played a couple shows in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. We spent most of that time working on older material and getting to know one another. After a brief holiday hiatus, I had a great opportunity to start a graduate school program, studying for a Master's degree in instructional technology and Susanne and I had our second daughter, Jaina. I was running out of time to spend with the band, so in late January 2003 I decided to break it up and reorganize my direction. The experience of the J Mundok Band, though brief, was imperative to the development of the album. It gave me a fresh perspective of playing with an original band and gave the songs time to develop on a much deeper level.



#4

As a group, we had completely rearranged “Green Grass” and I managed to get Joe into the studio later in 2003 to record the parts that he had developed in the band. We also had come up with the original idea for the song that ended up being “Finally”. Bryce

and Joe were jamming on the main riff one day at rehearsal, so Sam and I joined them. Luckily I had the computer recording. I had developed the chorus part and introduced it to the guys at the next rehearsal. Again, I recorded the session. Later, when struggling with the original idea for “Finally”, I remembered that riff we had recorded and I decided to use it for the song.

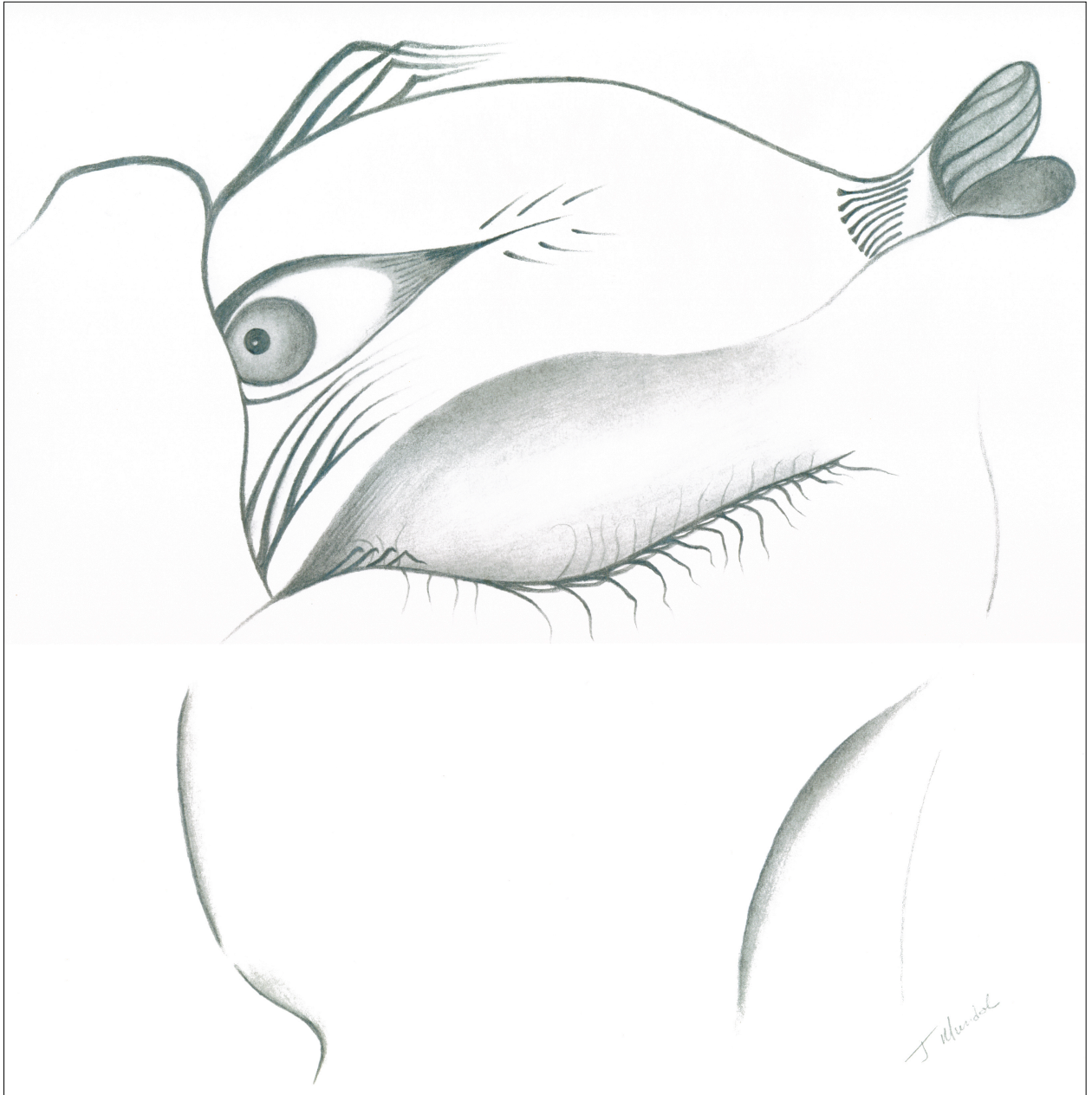
During that first semester of school the weather was unusually cold, so I brought most of the studio into the basement and set up a small workstation. I had been listening to albums by David Gray and David Kitt, both of which have acoustic music with minimalist electronic percussion. Realizing how difficult and time consuming it would be to have other musicians learn and develop the music, I decided to record the album by myself using drum loops, programmed percussion and performing the rest of the instruments myself. I took advantage of any spare time that I had during that first semester to download free drum loops from a host of websites and work on programming percussion for the album. My goal was to build a percussion loop-based foundation for each song by the summer of 2003. I reached that goal and more. By the time summer rolled around, I had the percussion recorded for each song and about sixty percent of the entire album tracked. I felt myself burning out on the project and decided to take another break.

In desperate need of more money, I spent the summer of 2003 looking around for a cover band. I tried out for a couple bands and played a couple shows with another before finding Squeeze Play, which turned out to be a great match. I officially joined them in August and we spent my first couple months learning songs and rehearsing. The album remained on hold until November 2003. With a long semester break around the corner and a good grip on the Squeeze Play repertoire, I focused on finishing the album by the end of the year. As the temperature dropped, I desperately wanted to finish tracking vocals and acoustic guitars out in the garage studio. November and December were filled with marathon recording sessions in sometimes sub-freezing temperatures. On the night of December 13, my Squeeze Play band mate, Jeremy Chubb, and I shared a bottle of Crown Royal, as I sang the vocal tracks for the remaining six songs, in what was one of the most productive and memorable sessions of the entire album.

Thanks

I thank my great friend and partner, Dave Bellard (Studio HA!, Jesters Longevity) for providing the awesome cover art work for this album. I have always loved his art and mind, as a self-portrait of him hangs in Studio Frog, showering inspiration over all projects recorded there. Also, I thank the musicians who played on this record, or touched it in some other way, either through suggestion or inspiration: Joe Kury, Bryce Hoch, Sam Rivera, Steve Slessor, Jeff Lehmer and Jeremy Chubb. Finally, I thank Susanne for the ongoing support of my addiction.

Log on to the website for more about J Mundok music:
www.jmundok.com/music



#5

Journal

The following diary was written as the process rolled. The first half was written privately and later entries were part of the weblog on my web site. I guess it would have been silly to write an entire album about documentation without at least keeping a journal.

January 20, 2002

I spent 2001 recording *The In Between*, which would be my first solo full length CD since *Saturated* in 1999. Since moving to Pennsylvania in late 1999, the following year was consumed doing remixes and really just sorting out my life and what I wanted to do with music and my studio situation. By the Spring of 2001, after a few failed attempts at putting together cover bands and enough electronic music to last me for a while, I purchased a new computer to be the cornerstone for Studio Frog and started recording a new album based around a bunch of acoustic songs I had been writing. I finished the recordings in fall and finally finished mixing by November. The art was completed and the record sent off to be made by Christmas 2001. I managed to get out and play some open-mic nights solo in the spring, but it wasn't until my 30th birthday that I finally played a full gig. I played three gigs throughout the fall, two at a coffee shop in Lancaster called Square One Coffee and one at a little independent film theatre called Zoetropolis.

Over the holidays, I hadn't booked any gigs and I was waiting for *The In Between* to be pressed, so I started playing with some new ideas. I started working on some lyrics to a couple riffs I had been fooling around with and nothing was working at first. I thought about the possibility of writing another concept album and that brought about its usual concerns. I decided that *Never to Return* actually turned out really well and since that was my only real attempt at a concept album that was completed, it would be worth a shot.

I'm still very interested in the idea of tying together music and other types of art in some kind of "grand ongoing project", so I was thinking in terms of a narrative visual, sort of like a movie. I began thinking about the content of a story that would be appealing to me, and as usual I was coming up short at first. Then it dawned on me about the importance I had placed on documentation over the past few months. Documentation is the key to being able to go back and reflect on your life. My experiences really started in the spring when Susanne was pregnant. Our first child was due in June and I would be turning 30 in September. Those things combined, sent me into a frenzy of thought about documenting the baby's life which lead to looking back on my own and organizing my own artifacts. I was thinking in terms of a child growing up and wondering what his or her parents were like at different points of life. I would be in my mid-forties by the time my first baby was mid teens. Would they even know that I was a musician? Would I still be one? What were we like when we got married? And on and on the questions went.

Susanne and I decided to finally organize all the photographs that we had collected in that cardboard box. There were pictures of mine going back to high school in that box,

pictures of Susanne going back to her trips out west and loads of pictures of us together since we met. That project lasted for months but it led to getting organized in other regards. In the spare time I had when recording *The In Between*, I started going through and converting old demos to digital audio files on my computer. I even totally remixed, and re-mastered *Homicidal Wristwatch*, a cassette release I did ten years prior, and re-released it as a CD. That was inspired from the rehearsals of some of those songs for my live shows. There's plenty more music and other artifacts to archive, but the ball is rolling.

While documenting all of these items from the past I was reminded of how easily a photo or a song, or even a smell for that matter, can send you back to a place. If you close your eyes you can almost feel like you're back there in college or in an apartment you once had or even a place you visited briefly. I always wanted to be able to go back and just experience certain points in my life, if only for a few minutes, just to taste something or feel a certain way.

Obviously it's impossible to literally travel back through time, but since certain things can trigger those memories and take you as close as possible, I thought it would be interesting to document some of those key moments in my life through the music. That way, I would always remember those moments anytime I listened to or played any of the songs from the new album.

With the over all theme determined it was time to bang out a rough narrative to make it all come together. I started with a journal, which would be the logical place that someone would have access to someone's life story in one place. From that I came up with the following basic storyline:

A young person probably around age twelve to fourteen is hanging around in the basement. This person notices a hole in the corner where some of the ceiling was pulled down. Out of boredom he or she investigates and realizes there's something up there. This person's parents weren't the original owners of the house, which makes it very inviting. He or she pulls down a dusty old journal and starts to read it, which will then chronicle events that occurred from childhood up until the time the author was about 30 years old. The songs would be each event or timeline that I was interested in writing about, but in this case they are being read by this discoverer.

This gave me a great starting point to work from. An outline was very possible filled with different times throughout my life and different events that occurred during those times. For example, during the mid-seventies I was only a child, but we moved into our new house, which opens the door for several key events, impressions and memories. The perspective obviously changed as the time went on since my actual perspective changed. I can change my own thoughts and memories about something that happened to me as a ten year old. Since I was ten, I remember how things seemed as a ten year old.

February 16, 2002

The week of February 3, 2002 was my first vacation from work for quite a while, so starting on Groundhog Day I planned to not do much except work on music for at least a few days. Dave Bellard was coming down the following Wednesday to finish the latest Jesters Longevity album so I had a few days to concentrate on my new record.

I started tracking on Friday night, February 1, 2002. My goal was click track at least the first six songs that were fairly complete, at least as far as the writing process was concerned. After laying clicks on Friday night, I started laying down guitars and vocals and in some case went as far as a draft bass line. The six songs that I started with are sporadic throughout the album, in other words they're not the first six or last six songs, they're all from different points on the album.

Upon completing these demos, I realized how helpful it would be to at least have a rough idea of the musical and lyrical direction of each song so I could plan the general tempos and ideas without the fear of duplicating a style on a song directly before or after it on the album. That's one of the biggest tricks about writing a concept album in my opinion. Because the album works together as a whole, it really has to be written as a whole. When I wrote and recorded songs for *The In Between* or *Artichoke*, they were all just individual songs without one having much to do with the other. Of course, you don't want to have a whole album of songs with the same groove, but each idea is unique to itself. With this album I have to really be conscience of what the song before and after sound like when working on a particular song. My next step then would be to complete a rough musical and lyrical draft of the missing songs on the album to start seeing a big picture.

Lyrically the album is broken into four parts: the beginning, the journal reflecting birth through grade school, high school and college, post college. The beginning really is the thread of the record with a common musical theme that will reoccur between the acts and will reprise at the end. This part is really from the perspective of a boy who discovers a journal in the ceiling of his basement. The journal was written and hidden by someone who once lived in the house. Each act are sections of the journal that the boy is reading, learning about significant parts of the author's life. Between each act, the record will snap out of the content of the journal, bringing back the boy laying on the basement floor reading. Finally at the end of the album, the boy is somehow called away and he puts the journal back where he found it to save it for another day.

The first act or second part of the album contains three songs about pre school childhood. The first one focuses on what I can remember about living behind the store in the apartment in Barnesboro. I tried to paint a bit of a picture about the town itself as a set up to that part of the album. The other two songs deal with the new house that we moved into and moving into adolescence or I suppose the middle school days as well.

During the second part of the album I'm focusing on high school and college times where I wanted to get out of Barnesboro and was first out on my own. The first song of

this act was supposed to be a bit darker than the others keeping the whole teenage angst in mind. At first most of the songs were a little too dark, especially “September Cold”, the tentative title for the first song in the second part, but I didn’t want to fall into the trap of writing too much about teenage angst. I had my questions and problems like all teenagers do, but for the most part it was a great time in my life with my wonder and amazement. As time wore on the focus changed to some of the more uplifting parts of that time in my life. The demos that I finally hammered out for that song became much more positive.

While working out some of the rough drafts for the missing songs during that first week in February, I came up with a great idea for events that took place in 1989. This second song of the second act will focus more on the music and the beginning of my songwriting during the summer after high school graduation. That summer really marked the start of my interest in writing songs that meant a great deal to me. The ideas were so fresh then and even though a lot of the music that I wrote then was very adolescent and immature, it started something that continues today with this album. It’s the magic of the art of writing songs that didn’t exist until I created them, something all songwriters must realize at some point.

This section ends with the discovery of “it”. This was a pivotal point in my life that happened in Campbell Hall at Clarion University of Pennsylvania. It was really nothing more than a visit with my friend, Mike Diethorn, one evening where we starting talking about this and that and the abstract questions about the purpose of it all came to mind. We sat and talked for hours about what it’s all about and made the realization that the concept is beyond a simple explanation and will always remained shrouded in an unspeakable language. I guess we were ultimately talking about some sort of mental or emotion bliss. A content that exists when only that moment is of concern and during that moment have no regard for the past or the future. “It” is the moment that nothing else matters except that moment, but as I mentioned above, this explanation really can’t do “it” any justice, because it’s indescribable.

Act three starts with a move to Nashville, Tennessee and all that I expected to gain from moving far from Pennsylvania. Tennessee truly began life on my own and my first years of adulthood. It was hard to balance a lot of the freedoms of college life with the responsibility of all that comes with being on your own.

A very important event that occurred at the end of 1993 and the beginning of 1994 was a plane ride from Florida, where I visited my family over Christmas, back to Tennessee on New Year’s Eve. That night changed my life and is the focus of the second song in act three.

This middle of act three takes place with the first few years of my life with Susanne and the time we spent leaving Tennessee and spending some time in Ireland back in 1999. All of these events brought us here to the present situation living in Lancaster County, PA and settling down with a new family and totally different style of life.

I have a track at the end about Ruby and Susanne and what it means to reach thirty years of thinking, questioning and answering. There are so many things and factors that make everyone's life story unique. Each event leads you to the next crossroad that will ultimately write the story of your life and the events that I chose to use for this Cliff Notes version of my own life will tell a story, not the full story of course, but a story of different events that I believe helped me move to the next.

The first song that I wrote for the album is called "Discovery", which will be the first song and was truly the basis for this whole project. Back in the late summer of 2001, when I was still working on recording *The In Between*, I came up with a riff that I really liked. I started to write some lyrics about Sam Gamgee, a character in the *Lord of the Rings* that I had recently read. I had a verse or two scratched out and a really rough recording on my micro-cassette recorder. After putting the song on the backburner while I completed recording *The In Between*, I would often play the two main chords in the song when sitting around playing guitar. The movie for *Lord of the Rings* to be released in December and the hype was already starting in the fall, so I decided to stay away from writing tracks about a movie that could become a huge hit. I felt that might seem too bandwagon, especially after seeing the first Burger King commercials selling merchandise for the movie.

Based on two chords, the thought crossed my mind that those chords would make a great theme for a concept album...a theme that could be reprised throughout the album. I spent the fall listening to a couple records by one of my old favorite metal bands, Fates Warning. Those albums, *A Pleasant Shade of Gray* and *Disconnected* were both released in the late nineties and were virtually unknown. Unlike most decent metal bands from the eighties that really sucked after that decade, Fates Warning got better with time, expanding their style from straight technical metal to extremely intelligent progressive rock...a bit heavier than the old school progressive bands. I really fell in love with those records and that helped fuel the fire of a concept album built around those two chords. I wanted to try a concept album that was more complex, with a lot more orchestration and instrumentation, while maintaining my own style of ambient and moody pop music. To my knowledge this combination of post-modern college rock and orchestrated concept music wasn't tried often, but seemed like the perfect way for me to blend the different types of music that I liked, while approaching the next album with a "project" mentality, instead of just a group of songs.

The theme for the lyrics was a natural progression, as I had spent the last year of my life thinking about documentation. Ruby had been documented extensively during the first several months of her life and I had spent the other time doing a lot of my own cleaning with regards to old writings, photographs and music.

The strongest musical song at this point is "Death of Melancholy", the second song in act three. After recording the basic guitar/vocals demo last week, I spent some time working up a solid bass line, that of course, won't be really solid until I can get a drummer in to lay down some beats. There's a pretty clear musical picture forming for that one that puts it in the lead right now.

“Discovery” is probably the most complete song with “Curiosity” and “Green Grass” running right behind it. I want to give each track a lot of thought on the musical direction so for the time being, I really need to focus on lyrics. After I can get the solid foundation for these songs lyrically, I can start playing them at my acoustic shows, which I think will ultimately help the vocal patterns. If I can be honing the vocals live, that will give me time to spend on the music in the studio. I feel extremely comfortable with my studio set up now and I think that’s going to help me really expand my horizons with this record.

March 9, 2002

I haven’t done much work at all on the album since I last wrote. I’ve been consumed by a number of things. First I’ve been playing a few live gigs, which haven’t been going great, but every gig is an opportunity and every gig adds to the collection of gigs that I have under my belt. Secondly, I started taking a poetry class at Elizabethtown College in hopes of helping me finish the lyrics for this album and getting me more energized for upcoming projects. Finally, I started scoring *The Crusader*, which is an independent movie being made by my old pal Mark Naccarato.

I was hoping to have most of the songs clicked and recorded at least in rough draft by now, as well as playing some of them live. That hasn’t happened but the break will probably do me good in the long run. I can approach the tracks with fresh ears when I finally return to it.

The poetry class has been a bit less than I expected. It’s basically just a series of exercises in and out of class that sends all of us on our own way to return and share what we came up with. There hasn’t been anything really about technique or style, but the instructor asked what we expect for the final three sessions and I suggested a look at the formal styles of poetry would be helpful. I did manage to start working on a poem about my main character and his discovery in the cellar that I hope will end up good enough to include on the cover of the album.

The music for the movie is really removed from this project focusing mainly on industrial type riffs and heavy beat driven songs for a chase scene. I don’t expect to be able to really incorporate anything on this new album, but I am trying some new recording techniques that should prove helpful.

April 28, 2002

I’m finally recording demos for *Chronicles*, after a long hiatus. I spent March and most of April working on the music for *Crusader* and starting to piece together a band. Joe Kury became the first to join and we’ve been rehearsing for him to start playing acoustic shows with me next month. I also tried out Steve Slesser on drums and his friend Brian on bass. Though nothing has been settled on those spots, Steve did start recording drum tracks for the new record.

I began serious work on demos for “Discovery”, “Green Grass” and “1989” with Steve’s help. After an evening of laying some decent drum tracks I went back into the original tracks, redid some of the guitars and vocals and added bass lines. I’m really pleased with the way things are coming together with those tracks, but they’re still in an early draft stage.

Last night, while converting a video of Ruby, I finished some of the lyrics to “1989” and also toyed with the idea of renaming that track to “Summer”. Next time we get together, I’d really like to get drum tracks down for “Curiosity” and “Death of Melancholy”. Those were my two favorite tracks, but since we began working on the others a bit more seriously, they’re becoming a bit overshadowed.

I’m really pleased so far with the way things are shaping up with this album, but I know that I’m falling a little behind schedule. We’re in the process of buying a house, which will really set things back even further, but I’m still shooting for a fall release. Hopefully next year, being in a set environment, will allow me to spend a little more consistent time on the records and band overall.

December 8, 2002

Well, things certainly changed course last summer. After we decided to buy the new place, I started working toward putting together a band. The new house had the potential for a studio out in the garage, but that would require a lot of work first. Steve and Brian never worked out beyond one rehearsal as they decided to stay focused on their own band, but we found Bryce Hoch to play bass around the time we settled on the house. It took me about a month straight to fix up the place and move in, which meant I wasn’t rehearsing. We got a temporary studio worked out by August and started trying out drummers. We finally settled with Sam Rivera, who I met when he played bass for Spek. It was September before serious rehearsals started and, of course, we were working on material from the last album first. We scheduled a couple gigs for November and are now finally continuing work on the new tracks. I haven’t had the time to even start working out the lyrics for the rest of the album, so we’re basically picking things up where I left off in May. It was a six month “break” from this album, but a lot of the foundation for the future was been worked out, so I’m not disappointed, in fact, I’m so pleased with the line up that I think it will ultimately be a much better record in the end.

We worked out four songs so far: “Discovery”, “Curiosity”, “Green Grass” and “Summer”, which originally was called “1989”. This band is making a big difference on these songs so far. The input that each of the guys have contributed so far has really taken things in a completely fresh direction. Including the fresh interpretations of the older songs, there seems to be a lot of Police type styles creeping in, but I’m not sure why. They are one of the bands that we all like, but individually none of us seem to have come from a Police background.

At this point the band seems to be sold on the concept ideas and I'm hoping they will all make contributions to other aspects of the project as well. That, of course, is yet to be determined.

February 11, 2003

Well, the holiday season came and went without much musical attention. Soon afterwards it was time for our new baby, Jaina, to be born. She was born on January 13, 2003. My mother visited for a couple weeks to help out and then Susanne's mom and Skip came by for a week or so. The weather has been awful and the temperatures haven't been much higher than freezing since my last entry. That meant one thing for sure; I haven't done much to progress this project in the recent past. It has now been over a year since I first started thinking in terms of a new album. I originally wanted to have it completed by now and I've barely started, but there are a few key lessons that I have learned along the way.

The first lesson is that at my age, which is now 31, and my status in life, which is married with two kids, it's not a good idea to start a band with four other people in the same boat and expect much availability on a regular basis. The second lesson is not to bite off more than I can chew in general, which has happened in the past but for very different reasons. The third lesson is that in my case, I really must decide between doing live things and doing recordings. There just isn't enough time for both.

I started a Master's program in January, which is something that I couldn't pass up. I will be in class on Wednesday nights for the next three and a half years. The workload is moderate at this point taking up a night or two each week beyond Wednesdays. At the end of that time I will have a Master's degree in instructional technology. I'm sure the degree will lead to much better things for my career. We not only have two kids now, but Susanne is going to start working in March, which should take up a few more evenings and weekend days.

In order to even dream about finishing another album this year I had to make the hard decision to put the band to rest and send the men on their way. Of course, their work on the first few songs from the album has helped considerably and I'm hoping they'll still record them with me. It's come down to a matter of time and priorities. I think I love recording most of all when it comes to music and I can enjoy a recording for a lifetime, but a show comes and goes and depends way too much on too many factors to be guaranteed a success. I consider any documented recording a success.

I have been working on some more of the songs lately and I have a decent demo going for "It", which I've been recording on my impromptu studio set up in the basement due to the damn weather. I'm going to record when I can, and go from there. Soon I will do another installment of my self video diary and hopefully I will have a chance soon to sit down and figure out what I've got done and what still needs to be done.

March 9, 2003

I spent a few hours last night reworking "Discovery", the first track from *Chronicles*. I'm recording everything based on loops now, so I had to rework some drum tracks that Steve Slesser laid down for me in the past. I'm going to do the same thing with "Green Grass". That's not to say that I'm not going to perform the tracks live, it's just a way for me to sync everything and be able to drop things in and out, change arrangements on the fly, etc. It's turning out to be a great way to record. I came up with a beautiful keyboard part and a new bass part that I'm really pleased with. It's taking the song in a slightly more ambient direction, but that seems to be where I'm going right now. I did some work on a new ambient piece as well, but I just laid down the basic groundwork. I'm going to build some ambient tracks over time, adding small pieces here and there. Maybe each time I work on some album tracks I'll wind down by adding one or two things to the ambient pieces.

March 19, 2003

I spent some time Friday evening working on the new album. I was focusing on a song called "House on the Hill". It's shaping up a bit. I needed a third verse for about the last year, and this evening I was fooling around and landed some good ideas. Of course Ruby was scribbling all over my notebook at the time, but I managed to erase a section and put some of it on paper. Later I spent a few hours programming and recording. I decided I'm going to do some programming on this record. I haven't programmed for a while, but I've been listening to a lot of David Gray and paying some attention to how he works his beats in to a guitar based sound.

April 1, 2003

In an attempt to relax a bit this evening after the long day, I did some work on the new album. I ended up doing some major revisions on a track called "House on the Hill". It was starting to bother me a bit so I completely scrapped the keyboard tracks, and several guitar tracks. I ended up with something I'm very pleased with so it was rather productive. The question, though, is whether or not I'll agree with that in the morning.

April 5, 2003

After a long day at work and kid duty, I spent a few hours working on the new record. As a result, I scrapped the whole looped out drum track for a song called "Signals" and decided to program a new one. Other than a mix with an old school hip hop track in the chorus, it's all programmed. I'm really into the old sound of programmed beats...this week, at least. I also worked out some keyboard parts for the end of "It", which hadn't been touched since before winter. The progress so far is a strong foundation for "Discovery", "Curiosity", "House on the Hill", "Signals", "Discovery Reprise: One", "Summer", "It" and "Melancholy". I have six tracks yet to lay down the basics for, and a couple to actually finish writing, so there's a lot of work to be done yet.

If you haven't been keeping score at home, there are 14 tracks for the new record that are basically written at this point, with some more than others. I'll be working out the others soon. I've been recording in my basement, since it's been too cold to be out in the studio I have built in the garage. Since the weather is starting to break, I think I'll move everything back out soon. I've been working on this record for about a year, with a bunch of stuff in between. I'm looking forward to finishing it, if for no other reason, it'll be a nice break when it's finished.

April 30, 2003

My friend, Joe Kury, came by this evening to lay down some guitar tracks. We worked on a song called "Green Grass", that we used to play together in the J Mundok Band last year. The tracks came out great and that song is near completion. We also worked a track tentatively called "Tennessee", where I had Joe do a single muffled guitar hit and we used a bunch of delays and phasers to make it trail out throughout the song. It's a great addition to the song that is built in a phased out beat to begin with. He's going to lay some more guitar tracks in a couple weeks, as I'm doing what I can to marathon through these weeks that I'm off from school.

May 7, 2003

I was working on some bass tracks this evening when I realized that it was pouring down rain outside. Not to miss a golden opportunity, I cued up "Discovery", set a condenser mic near the opened studio door and hit the red button. I let the mellow sounds hit the (virtual) tape for all of about seven minutes. What beautiful ambience rain makes when recorded, not to mention the cool breeze that filled the studio. Lovely...just, lovely.

November 17, 2003

It's been many months since I touched the music that will someday be *Chronicles*. After beginning the project in the early spring of 2002, I took a break that summer to buy our house and horse around with the J Mundok Band. During the spring of 2003, after demise of JMB, I got the record to about a 60% state and stopped again during the summer of 2003 to see what I could do with some cover bands. Now that school will be breaking for a month over the holidays, I decided to take a stab and finishing this project. Saturday I managed to lay down several tracks in what was probably my most productive day since the beginning. All remaining tracks were still mapped out on my white board, thanks to good planning last spring and I just started going through each song, finishing all tracks but vocals. With three songs to go, I will have everything finished except vocals for all of the songs, hopefully after the next session.

I will be taking a couple days in December to do vocals and I plan to mix before the New Year. It would make me very happy to have the project completed before school starts next semester. I still plan to make it exclusively available for download on my web site. I

really enjoyed going back and listening to what I have done so far. I'm very proud of where it stands.

November 23, 2003

I had an opportunity on Saturday to spend about five hours in the studio working on *Chronicles*. I was able to finish all of the non-vocal tracks for all of the songs except three, the 2nd main theme reprise, and the two last tracks. That puts me in an excellent position for next week, when I hope to spend Thanksgiving Monday recording. My goal between now and then is to finish the lyrics to track 13, which is untitled at the moment. It is also the only song without completed lyrics. If I can finish those lyrics by then, I should be able to finish the instrument tracking and possibly get a start on vocals. I would anticipate two full days of vocals. I will start doing mix downs while recording vocals, one of the benefits of digital recording, so I would expect another two full days of mixing. I'm starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel, and I've even started thinking about art, so I'm getting close.

December 1, 2003

I spent most of today recording more tracks for the new record, now tentatively called *Boredom Breeds Curiosity*. I finished all of the instrument tracks and now I'm going through the tedious process of cleaning up the tracks and compressing everything. I'll start vocals soon, and then it's time to mix. If you know me, you know that mixing is not one of my favorite things to do, but a necessary step, obviously.

December 8, 2003

I spent a great deal of time this weekend going through old videotapes to pull sound clips for the new record. It was a lot of fun revisiting many different periods of life between 1985 and the present. I've changed so many times, it would be hard for an outsider to believe that I've been the same person the whole time. I find it hard to believe myself. I'm very happy that I've had access to video cameras throughout my life and I only regret that I didn't always have one around. I now recognize that there are dead years that are gone and never to return. I can still remember many of those times, but it's a shame that I can't look back on them like the others. Our kids are lucky that we'll have moments their whole life documented. I would love to see what I was like during the 70s, but I'm afraid that will never happen.

December 12, 2003

It's been a very productive month so far. After finishing instrument tracks for the new record, I started on vocals on Wednesday evening. I guess I spent about five hours in the studio and I'm very pleased with the results. I finished four tracks that evening and laid out a plan for the rest. Also, I have officially changed the title of the song about Tennessee to "Together". The album itself will be forever known as *Boredom Breeds*

Curiosity, with the last minute title change, and my partner in Jesters Longevity has agreed to do the artwork for me, which makes me very happy. Speaking of Jesters, Dave and I will be working on a new Jesters album upon the completion of *Boredom*, and a well deserved break.

December 24, 2003

What a fantastic marathon session I had on Saturday night. I got started late in the afternoon and knocked out a few songs worth of vocals early. After supper, my pal, Jeremy, came by and sat in while I finished all of the vocals for the new album. We cracked a bottle of crown as the temperature began to dip, but it was one of those nights where things were just clicking. I guess we wrapped things up about midnight. By the last song, "Summer", I was able to see my breath while singing in the cold. It was an ironic twist on the theme of the song. By finally finishing vocals, though, I was able to move all of the gear indoors on Sunday. So, Studio Frog is officially closed for the winter and my poor space heater can take a well-deserved holiday break.

I have to add some special little things to a few tracks and then it's time to mix. The beauty of digital recording, of course, is that I've been mixing a bit as I go, so I don't feel that it will be so daunting a task. The next couple weeks should provide plenty of time to wrap this project up for good.

January 6, 2004

The first week of 2004 is the week of the mix. I spent the last couple nights doing my first round of mixing for *Boredom Breeds Curiosity*, and let me tell you, it's my favorite thing to do (sarcasm for those of you keeping score at home). I'm going in order and finished all but two tracks. Later in the week I'll wrap it up and do some basic mastering. Then it will be time to listen for a few days, do my tweeks, and then final mastering. The light is at the end of this tunnel.

January 9, 2004

I finished the first round of rough mixes last night for *Boredom Breeds Curiosity*. I've given it a few listens already and I've been making notes. Most of it is fine, but there are some things I'll definitely have to work on this weekend. I started working on this record almost two years ago, which is hard to believe. Even though I'm not going to complete it until 2004, I'm going to consider it a 2003 document. Most of the work was recorded in 2003 and I feel that this will be a more reflective archive of 2003 than 2004. The end is near.

January 12, 2004

Well, mixes have been finalized for *Boredom Breeds Curiosity*, or so I think. I did some mixing over the weekend and burned a master copy. I was going to listen to it at work today, but forgot it in my excitement that it's Monday morning. If it checks out after

listening to the whole thing in earphones, I will call it finished and make it available for download. I'm going to make the music available as soon as possible. I'm still working out the art with my friend, Dave. That may take a few extra weeks to be finalized, but at least anyone who wants can download the tunes.

After all of that I plan to release an album synopsis, including explanations of each track and reasons for making each decision that resulted in the final project. I will also release lyric sheets at the same time. Personally, I'm really enjoying listening to the final output.

March 6, 2004

It is complete. Late on a Saturday night, I just finished editing this document and can finally say that the goal has been accomplished. It has been a long and windy road, as this journal has shown, but well worth it in the end. I have the feeling that it will be a while before I start another concept album.

Boredom Breeds Curiosity: A Poem

March 2002

Sitting on the floor, staring at the walls

The fixed up cellar was maybe once
Intended to be a family room
Or maybe just a place for people like him
To hide from the fears of adolescence

Whoever came before never finished the job
The dropped ceiling was a start
But at least the worn but recycled carpets
Prove it was more than just another cellar

Sitting on the floor, staring at the walls

The new neighborhood hasn't been kind
The closed-door policy makes it seem deserted
And makes him remember the where he came from
Over and over again with nothing to do but remember

But the cracked tile in the ceiling's corner
Brings him hope on the endless dreary Saturday
A day no different than others
On a day he would never forget

Boredom breeds curiosity
Interest leads to discovery
A journal filled with history
Expressed through hand-written memories

Sitting on the floor, reading.



#6