



NEONCD013

Rab Noakes Standing Up Again



Track listing

A brighter blue
Come over here
High and dry
Nancy's minuet
Absence
Do that again
Darling be home soon
Heart of the darkness
Wrong joke again
Roll on Saturday
I'd never find another you
Mississippi
I forget
Dishonest
Show me the way to go home

This album was recorded at CaVa with Stephy and Brian McNeill in the control room. The basic tracks were recorded live with me adding guitars and harmony vocals on top. Of my songs there are eight new compositions, including one co-write (with Johanna Demker), plus one revisit. There are six songs from other composers, namely, Radiohead, Don Everly, John B. Sebastian, Gerry Goffin & Carole King, Bob Dylan and Campbell & Connelly. It was completed in December 2009.

A brighter blue

This is the third attempt at a lyric for this tune. I think it's as close as I'll get to what was intended. The chord sequence came first then the Brighter Blue chorus. It went through a euphemistic thing 'brighter blue will have to do' that sort of idea. Then one day Bryan Beattie, a playwright, talked about a series of songs about the misguided wanderer, a sort of Peer Gynt, Orlando character. I cornered myself to get it and this was the result.

Come over here

I was in Norway on a songwriting week with 20-odd people from all over Europe. It was very stimulating as these things always are. At the end of it I had a night by myself in Oslo before flying home. In my hotel room I had a go at writing a tune in Eb, probably the toughest rhythm guitar key (without using a capo). This is the result. The lyric is deliberately upbeat and optimistic and probably relates to holidays Stephy and I have which are always a mixture of exploration and loafing, activity and inertia.

High and dry

Radiohead are great at that quiet to loud, pathos to rage, dark to light kind of song. I thought there might be a way into something of theirs with just voice and guitar.

Nancy's minuet

The Everly Brothers made a lot of, to my mind anyway, perennially good records. The best period for me is the Warner Bros label era from 1960 onwards. The first of those, Cathy's Clown, was written by Don as was the second one, So Sad. The majority, though, were by other writers including Sonny Curtis, Goffin & King, John D. Loudermilk and, of course, Boudleux and Felice Bryant. Don Everly's songs didn't appear particularly prominently as time went on and were mostly found on b-sides, sometimes even using pseudonyms. This is one from 1963, the flip of a rather pedestrian piece, 'So it always will be'. I think it underpins the fact it is remiss of pop's history to undervalue Don as he truly is a songwriter of considerable sophistication.

Absence

The aforementioned Norway songwriting week produced a couple of good co-writes, including this. It was written with a Swedish singer and songwriter called Johanna Demker. It didn't take long, a couple of hours and it was done.

Do that again

I'm an easy size to fit and get lots of stuff off-the-peg. This song is an off-the-peg response to anybody who does, or tries to do, the dirty on you.

Darling be home soon

In the 1960s I was aware of The Lovin' Spoonful through the hits, Daydream, Summer in the City et al. Pye Records eventually released two budget albums on their Marble Arch label, Best of 1 & 2. I played them incessantly and really got to like John Sebastian's songs. Stephy has always liked Sebastian's stuff and suggested I do one on this album. I started this and it just came out, all there, despite the fact I hadn't sung it through in over 30 years.

Heart of the darkness

"Don't forget you don't get to come here twice." This song revolves completely around that one line.

Wrong joke again

This song was on the Red Pump Special album back in 1973. We were in the car one day with an iPod on shuffle and it played. I thought I should perform it again. I do and here it is.

Roll on Saturday

If there's a significant line in this song it is "I always loved it, I always will" and not only because, as a bit of a linguistic pedant, I like the way you can let yourself play fast and loose with grammar in a song lyric.

I'd never find another you

I, and many pals and gals, used to attend the Rev Frank Harvey's youth club in my home town, Cupar, in Fife. One week he brought a tape recorder and encouraged us all to have a go at recording something. It was around Xmas 1961 and for most of us, if not all, this was our first encounter with any recording apparatus. Hard to imagine now that most households possess a variety of very sophisticated recording devices. Anyway, I was always up for a song and I sang this into the microphone and the machine. In my head I sounded just like Billy Fury and I've seldom been as shocked or disillusioned as when I listened to the playback. I also like to speak up for the much-maligned pop years between Rock'n'Roll and The Beatles. There was some great stuff there, this song included.

Mississippi

Surely one of the artistic wonders of the world today is Bob Dylan's creative longevity. This song was recorded for the Time out of Mind album in the mid-90s. It first appeared legitimately in a different version on the Love & Theft album but it wasn't until Tell Tale Signs that we heard the Time out of Mind attempts. That's what bounced me into doing it.

I forget

I don't have any trouble with the aging process. I can't understand why anyone wants to deny their life-span. I also think that, most of the time forgetfulness has more to do with deficiencies in personal observation and mental filing systems than it has with inability to recall. Also, growing older is a sequence of occurrences when you turn round and something, or someone, isn't there any more.

Dishonest

Over the years I've had tremendous creative stimulation, good fun and friendship in the company of generously creative people. If there's a formula I've come across it is simply this - The most genuinely talented and able ones possess the most generosity of spirit while the most selfish and egotistic behaviour is always accompanied by a minimum of, if any, real talent or ability.

I have made the misjudgement on occasion of investing some of my own time and creative energy in characters from the latter category. Safe to say I've rumbled the lot of them and there'll be no more generosity in that direction from me. This song is for, and about, them.

Show me the way to go home

There are a few songs that feel like they've been in my life, all my life. This is one of them.