



ALDORA BRITAIN RECORDS

The Underground and Independent Music e-Zine
Issue 80, Wednesday 30th November 2022
“Tomorrow’s Music Today”

FEATURING

Mute Swan, Jackie K, Broomdasher, Guthrie Trio, IO
Audio Recordings, Liseth and The Satellites, Kelly
Williams, Larry Dearing, Glass Island, and Mint
Biscuit Sounds

Compiled and written by Tom Hilton

Contents

Mute Swan, Arizona, USA (pg. 2)

Jackie K, Saskatchewan, Canada (pg. 6)

Broomdasher, London, England (pg. 10)

Guthrie Trio, Rockingham, Australia (pg. 15)

IO Audio Recordings, California, USA (pg. 20)

Liseth and The Satellites, The Netherlands (pg. 26)

Kelly Williams, Georgia, USA (pg. 32)

Larry Dearing, Georgia, USA (pg. 36)

Glass Island, Wroclaw, Poland (pg. 41)

Mint Biscuit Sounds, Cockermouth, England (pg. 46)

“We all deserve a chance to join in the dance...”

Jacob Tucker, Grey Star Ghost



Life-Like Dream

MUTE SWANS are a band that have been flying in formation since 2013. Based in Tucson, Arizona, this modern alternative collective combines the best elements of guitar-based music from the last several decades. There are the dreamy escapades of shoegaze, the industrial backbone of post-punk, and the wildly colourful tones of psychedelia. It is a sound that has been previously summarised, very aptly, as 'thought rock'. This otherworldly sonic blend has been committed to tape on more than one occasion. *Only Ever*, for example, the band's 2021 LP, a nine-track journey of brilliance that has been at the centre of widespread acclaim across the independent underground. More recently, Mute Swan also unleashed a collaborative effort with an artist called Sonoda. This track, entitled 'Phantasms of The Living' gives listeners another insight into this up-and-coming indie powerhouse. Earlier this year, vocalist and guitarist Mike Barnett chatted to *Aldora Britain Records* about the band's journey so far.

Mute Swan have previously contributed their track 'Burnt Almonds' to our 'Hawk' compilation. Listen and download [HERE](#).

Aldora Britain Records: Hi Mike, how are you? It is such a buzz to be talking to one of the masterminds behind the brilliant Mute Swan. Thank you for your time, I am a big fan. I want to start our interview by travelling back. What are some of your earliest musical memories and what first pushed you towards pursuing this passion of yours?

Mike Barnett: I remember in the early 90s, when I was like five or six, my mom had the car radio on and Nirvana was playing. Me and my brother were in the backseat probably punching and kicking each other ha! I liked some of that dancy and poppy stuff like The B-52's, Ace of Base or whatever, but definitely leaned much more into grunge. I also idolised my uncles who were serious music heads. One of them was a really good guitar player, and one was giving me a lot of tapes like Soundgarden's *Superunknown* and Bush's *Sixteen Stone*. When I was ten, I got an electric guitar and started locking myself away in my room. In high school music and guitar were pretty much all I cared about. My sister used to throw her shoes at the wall between our bedrooms late at night when she was trying to sleep to get me to stop playing. My parents would take away my guitar when I was grounded. I made most of my friends through music. Either playing in bands or listening to stuff at houses and smoking weed. After college, I was living at my parents figuring out what to do with my life. I got really into meditation and had the 'a-ha' moment that if I wasn't working on music, I was wasting my time. Not because I didn't have anything better to do, but because I'm going to die eventually anyway, so it would be insane to not do what I want.



Turn over for more Mute Swan...



Aldora Britain Records: And now, let's leap forward to 2013 in Tucson, Arizona and the formation of Mute Swan. Those early days must have been an exciting time. It has certainly led to some pretty impressive music since! How did the band come to be? How did you guys meet and what was the spark that initially brought you together musically?

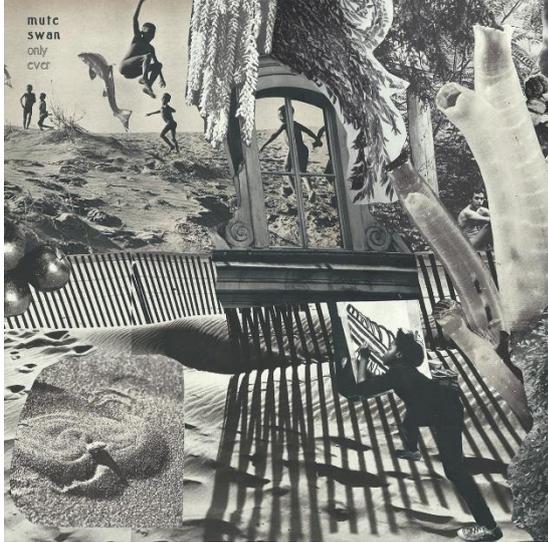
Mike Barnett: In 2012, I was in a band called Mombasa with Mute Swan's original drummer Roger. Meanwhile, Tom and Prab had a band called Peaks. For about a year, I joined Peaks on drums and Prab joined Mombasa on synth. I liked what Tom and Prab were doing with Peaks but I didn't want to stay on drums. When Mombasa started falling apart, I asked Roger, Prab and Tom if they wanted to start something new. So, half of Mombasa merged with Peaks and became Mute Swan. The other half started another project called Forest Falls. The basic idea for Mute Swan was to be deliberate about every part. No jamming. This was to create our own voice and to make it accessible even when it gets weird. We each picked a cover to learn as a group to kind of figure out a direction. So, we ended up learning a song by Black Moth Super Rainbow, Unknown Mortal Orchestra, Maserati, and The Black Angels. It took a year to write a set, we still play 'Feel How It Sees' from that batch of songs.

Aldora Britain Records: There is something really special about the band's sound. The songs that you write are so big. You get these awesome and expansive soundscapes with a foundation in a colourful take of rock and roll. How did this sound come about, what would you say goes into it, and who are your biggest influences as a band?

Mike Barnett: I think a big sound mostly comes from the chord voicings of the guitars, which are basically power chords with a major 7/9 on top. When you're strumming all six strings like that, it

“The basic idea for Mute Swan was to be deliberate about every part. No jamming. This was to create our own voice and to make it accessible even when it gets weird.”

takes up a lot of space. And in the recordings those parts are double, or triple tracked. Not to mention all the delay on almost every instrument. It gets pretty thick and washed out. We like a lot of the weird chords that bands like Boards of Canada and My Bloody Valentine use when there's unexpected, but not jarring, key shifts throughout the chord progressions and the melody ties it together. It's a fun challenge of how weird you can make it, but still feeling good and meaningful.



Aldora Britain Records: My introduction to the band came through an album that you released back in February 2021, and I still listen to it regularly. This is, of course, the stellar, *Only Ever*. Just fantastic! What are your memories from writing, recording and releasing the album, and how do you reflect on it now as a whole?

Mike Barnett: Thanks for the kind words! *Only Ever* took four years to finish, which was a lot longer than we would have liked. We had a batch of songs ready to go and we teamed up with Frank Bair thinking it would be a breeze. But the songs required a lot more experimentation and re-recording tracks to get them to feel right. The recording and mixing process felt

like re-writing the songs because the parts that are exciting during a live performance of a song do not always translate to a recording and vice versa. And sometimes, a fake drum sounds better than a real drum, and you have to sit and edit that in one hit at a time. *Only Ever* was a lot of back and forth between my weird ideas and Frank's trained ear. One of my favourite tracks off the album that never gets much attention is 'Dissolution'. All those guitar layers are Tom recording one track over another. No one else is on that track except the simple bass part I put in. The arrangement came during the mixing phase. Kind of like a remix. And we've never played it as a band.

Aldora Britain Records: I would like to pick out two of my personal favourites from the album. It is a truly brilliant recent, but these songs really connect with me. 'Burnt Almonds' and '4 Over 3'. For each, what is the story behind the song, did anything in particular inspire them, and what do they mean to you?

Mike Barnett: 'Burnt Almonds' came from expanding on that riff in the beginning in 9/4 time. The lyrics are very stream of consciousness. I think it's about having something to teach someone, but nothing really means anything. The title is from an Alan Watts lecture about a guy who wakes up from anaesthesia and says, 'Everything in the universe is the smell of burnt almonds', as if he had discovered the secret of the universe. '4 Over 3' is about my dad.

Aldora Britain Records: More recently, in August of this year, you released a collaborative effort entitled 'Phantasms of The Living'. Can you tell me about the song and how it came about? You collaborated with Sonoda here. What did they bring to the song and how did they get involved in the first place?

Mike Barnett: 'Phantasms of The Living' was written during lockdown. We couldn't get together to practice so we decided to meet up on Zoom and exchange song ideas inspired by a few different bands.

"*Only Ever* was a lot of back and forth between my weird ideas and Frank's trained ear."



One of the sessions was dedicated to My Bloody Valentine and 'Phantasms...' was an idea that came from that. Sonoda is the project of Lisa Sonoda, who we played a show with and became friends with a few years ago. We wanted to feature her in the song because she's a great singer and that vocal part just needed to be a female voice. Lisa also connects her spiritual practice to much of her music. So, I thought of her first for this song, considering the lyrics.

Quickfire Round

AB Records: Favourite artist? **Mike:** Right now, my favourite artist is Windows96.

AB Records: Favourite album? **Mike:** Bitchin Bajas, self-titled.

AB Records: First gig? **Mike:** First big show I went to was In Flames and Killswitch Engage.

AB Records: Style icon? **Mike:** Like fashion icon! I don't know anything about that, but Thundercat always looks cool.

AB Records: Favourite film? **Mike:** *Being There*.

AB Records: Favourite up and coming artist? **Mike:** George Clanton.

If you enjoy this content, please consider making a small, magazine-sized donation at the following link: <https://paypal.me/aldorabritainrecords>. Thank you!

Turn over for Jackie K...

Dandelions Everywhere

North Battleford, Saskatchewan is home to talented contemporary singer / songwriter Jackie Kroczyński, better known by her stage name **JACKIE K.** Canada has been producing an unending stream of fantastic grassroots songwriters in recent years, and Jackie fits right into that tradition. She burst onto *Aldora Britain Records'* radar with her 2020 single 'Night at The Opry'. This was a track that would go on to feature on her 2021 EP, the stunning *Look for The Little Things*, a release that really cemented Jackie's place, in our eyes, as a shining light of the 'Canadiana' movement. A four-track set that brought together folk, country and Americana with a brilliantly atmospheric production. Not one to rest on her laurels, Jackie has already produced a follow-up single in the form of 'Nurse Jane', a composition that provides a tantalising insight into what is to come, and the progression that Jackie is making with each record. Following the release of *Look for The Little Things*, Jackie kindly stopped by to talk to *Aldora Britain Records* about her musical journey so far.

Jackie K has previously contributed her track 'In My Oasis' to our 'Renaud' compilation. Listen and download [HERE](#).

Aldora Britain Records: Hi Jackie, how are you? It is really great to be talking to such a talented singer / songwriter today. I am a big fan, thank you for your time! I want to start off by travelling into your past. What are some of your earliest musical memories and what first pushed you towards pursuing this passion of yours?

Jackie K: I'm great, thanks so much! I have always loved music. My dad had a Gibson guitar, which is mine now, and he loved to strum and sing 'Five Foot Two, Eyes of Blue'. And we had a piano and my mom would sit and play. It was all for fun. I started piano lessons when I was four. I loved it. I was hooked. It just blossomed from there. I played in the school band, then the community band, then the jazz band, then the summer band, and I went to university to get a degree in Music Education. Now I teach band and guitar to high school students. It's really been my whole life. In terms of pursuing music, it just felt like this was the right time. That I could finally take the time to start writing and performing more and begin to take my own music more seriously. And I am loving every minute of it!



“It just felt like this was the right time. That I could finally take the time to start writing and performing more and begin to take my own music more seriously.”

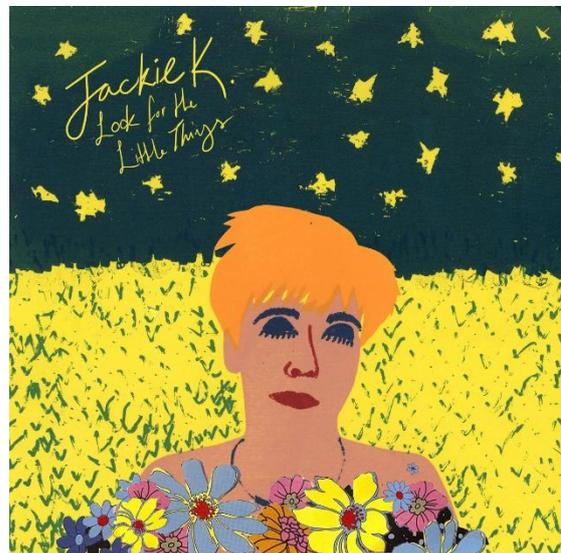
Aldora Britain Records: And now, let’s jump forward. I am really loving your solo output just now. You are building up a superb discography. I would like to discuss your creative process and where the songs come from. How does this part of the process work? Do you take inspiration from anywhere in particular? Do you commonly write from a certain perspective? Personal, observational, fictional?

Jackie K: The songs just come from wherever they come from. I will be releasing my first full-length album in March of 2023 to coincide with International Women’s Day. Ten songs that I hope will highlight the spirit of women living through a variety of trials and triumphs. Those ten songs are all of those things – personal, observational and fictional. For example, ‘Madame Sun’ is a spicy little number about a woman that I observed while on holiday in Mexico. ‘Honour Her Spark’ is a song about the missing and murdered indigenous women in Canada. It is powerful and honest. ‘We Can’t Quit’ is a fun one about how being married is hard work! It’s lots of fun.

Something will catch my ear, lyrically or melodically. Even with a short motif or riff, sometimes it takes a while to build something from it. My song ‘Night at The Opry’ from *Look for The Little Things* was written for my dad. He passed away in March of 2019 and was a great lover of traditional country music. In March of 2020, I took thirty students to Memphis and Nashville to play music. When we went to a show at the Opry, it really hit me how much my dad would have loved it there. He never had a chance to visit. We returned to Canada on March 10th and school was shut down a few days later. The song came all at once shortly thereafter.

Aldora Britain Records: I was first introduced to your music through the superb EP *Look for The Little Things*. Great music and a great title! What are your memories from writing, recording it and releasing it, and how do you reflect on it as a whole now?

Jackie K: Thanks so much for the compliment! The title, *Look for The Little Things*, comes from the song ‘Dandelions Everywhere’. ‘The big things are getting me down, so I look for the little things’. It was a real thrill to make and record this EP for so many reasons. Being my first EP made it special and recording it with my family made it even more special. My son Sean produced *Look for The Little Things*, my husband Tom played bass on the EP, and my son Connor played saxophone on the EP. My other two kids also play music! The whole family! My friend Patrick Whelan also played fiddle and some slide guitar on ‘Night at The Opry’. I recorded it in Edmonton, Alberta with Sean at Riverdale Recorders in July of 2021. We had Phil Rodda on drums. We got all of the bass, drums, piano and lead vocals done. I was so fortunate; I was able to send Sean tracks from home that he would put into the mix. And then when I had the whole family home, Connor recorded some of the sax. I did the background vocals at home. Sean then added lots of great stuff at his end. Guitar, some great sound design, and more. It was lots of fun. For the cover of the EP, I used a self-portrait



“Being my first EP made it special and recording it with my family made it even more special.”

that I made a silkscreen of many years ago when I was working on my Visual Art degree. Nice and bright. I love colour! Hindsight is always twenty / twenty as they say. I’m proud of this EP because it marks a beginning for me. If I could do it all over, would I change things? Well, of course!

Aldora Britain Records: The sound is really cool and right up my street. It is a great rootsy style with strong Americana – or should I say Canadiana! – flavourings. How did your sound come about, what would you say goes into it, and who are your biggest influences as an artist?

Jackie K: My sound is really a mix of lots of things. As I write the lyrics, I hear the sound of the song, sometimes with a strong melody. I really feel that the lyrics inform the style of the music. I really like Brandy Clark and Allison Russell. That kind of folk and Americana sound. But I also play the trumpet and I love jazz. I really like incorporating horns into my music. The New Orleans piano sound of James Booker and Professor Longhair are two of my favourites. It’s fun to squish these kinds of things together to see what I can come up with.



Aldora Britain Records: I would like to pick out two personal favourites now. These are ‘In My Oasis’ and ‘Dandelions Everywhere’. Superb tracks! What are the stories behind these songs, did anything in particular inspire them, and what do they mean to you as their writer?

Jackie K: Both of these songs are my yard ha! ‘Dandelions Everywhere’ was actually written during a songwriting workshop over Zoom in February of 2021, during the thick of COVID. I met my co-writer Evelyn Saungikar online for the first time, and we had three hours together to write a song for an artist. In this case, the artist was Suzie Vinnick. Evelyn lives in Toronto, Ontario, and we were both tired of winter and tired of COVID. So, the dream of the mighty dandelion was even something that we were excited about. It would mean yellow and green with blues skies and a return to outside! Hopeful. ‘They tell me better weather’s coming on’.

‘In My Oasis’ came from sitting outside on a spring morning just feeling grateful. Grateful for my health and the light and the sunshine. My kids had given me a big red ceramic teacup filled with purple flowers, and it sat there collecting the sun and it was really a reminder that I had all that I really needed. As a songwriter, lyrically, they mark a particular place and time. I do love the hopefulness and the upbeat feeling. I feel very close to both of these songs.

“They mark a particular place and time. I do love the hopefulness and the upbeat feeling.”



Aldora Britain Records: You are from the territory of Saskatchewan. I have noticed some great songwriters coming from that part of the world. I am curious to know what the scene is like there for an up-and-coming musician. How are you finding your place in that 'scene' and community?

Jackie K: I've always known lots of musicians, but as I venture out into performing and writing, I'm starting to see how many people in Saskatchewan work in the industry. I live in a small town and there is usually not a lot of work here for performance. But that doesn't mean there isn't music around. It is a fairly active community. There are many talented musicians here. Lots of my connections come through my work as a music teacher in the schools. I feel really lucky to know so many great people that are excited to help me get moving. It's a very giving community and I'm glad to be a part of it.

Quickfire Round

AB Records: Favourite artist? **Jackie:** Elvis Costello.

AB Records: Favourite album? **Jackie:** This is so hard! All-time, *King of America*. Right now, Allison Russell, *Outside Child*.

AB Records: First gig? **Jackie:** The first big concert I saw as a kid was Loverboy.

AB Records: Style icon? **Jackie:** Caroline de Maigret.

AB Records: Favourite film? **Jackie:** Hmm. *Moulin Rouge* or *La La Land*.

AB Records: Favourite up and coming artist? **Jackie:** Sean Davis Newton.

If you enjoy this content, please consider making a small, magazine-sized donation at the following link: <https://paypal.me/aldorabritainrecords>. Thank you!

Turn over for Broomdasher...

The Country Diary in Song

Traditional folk takes on many forms throughout the British Isles. London-based group **BROOMDASHER** seek to do things a little differently through using their brilliant and mesmerising acapella approach. The band itself first came together in 2017, but the individual members have a wealth of experience that goes back much further. Together, they have enjoyed many outings; radio specials, festivals and folk clubs up and down the country, and a fantastically intriguing concept LP entitled *The Country Diary in Song*. This fifteen-song opus brings a vocal setting to Edith Holden's 1906 *The Country Diary of An Edwardian Lady*. Broomdasher combined this influence with the folk collection of Cecil Sharp to create something very unique. As the group's Bandcamp page says, they 'restyle Edith as an Edwardian eco-warrior, recalling an era which is slipping away, as growing industrialisation changed the landscape, culture and society in Britain'. To discuss this intriguing concept further, *Aldora Britain Records* caught up with band members Deena, Richard and Josephine, as well as musical director John.

Aldora Britain Records: Hello Broomdasher, how are you? It is a real pleasure to be talking to such a talented and versatile group of singers today. I was wondering if we could start off by jumping back in time. What are some of your earliest musical memories and what first pushed you towards pursuing this passion of yours?

Deena: I always loved singing. I sang a lot at home and school where we had choirs and music lessons. My parents had friends who were folk musicians come around regularly for singing evenings. And as a child, I was encouraged to sing and be part of the adult folk sessions. Also, as a family, we were involved in the early CND movement, which had a lively ongoing living folk tradition, and was part of the earlier folk revival. I learnt guitar from Leon Rosselson and sang with him in a group as a young teenager. I also was singing solo on the folk scene in the folk clubs of London.

Richard: Earliest memories were of my dad always singing around the house and also the radio. Pursuing my passion, I jumped, I wasn't pushed! I can't remember a time when I didn't sing, and I asked for a recorder when my older brother started to play it at school.



Turn over for more Broomdasher...

“The original group were all keen to keep acapella folk singing alive and mainly perform British songs.”

Josephine: Music was all around me as a child. Lots of opera and Scottish music in *The White Heather Club*. Dad played bagpipes and us five children would sing and dance along. Singing in church and school choirs, and later with friends in folk groups. I have memories of playing cello, and studying voice and piano formally to a high level. And I love trying out different instruments too. Eventually I might be fluent in them! I can't imagine life without music, however, for me, it's been as a semi-professional.

Aldora Britain Records: I know you have a vast amount of experience in music, but I wanted to jump forward to 2017 and the formation of Broomdasher. This must have been a really exciting time. How did you meet the other members, and what was it that first brought you together musically? How did it all begin?

Deena: Me, Chris, Margaret and Jo sang together in the Cecil Sharpe House Choir for many years. This was before deciding to create a small acapella folk group. We later added Richard, who also sings in Dorton Yonder as our bass and brings great talent, writing many of our five-part harmonies.

Richard: Although I was not an original member, I already knew Chris from local folk clubs. I heard on the grapevine they needed a bass singer, and thought I'd give it a go.

Josephine: Deena, Chris, Margaret and I met at the Cecil Sharp Folk Choir and the sing-arounds at Sharp's Folk Club. Richard came along a little later when we were looking for a bass with lots of folk experience. We don't use instruments often, but Richard does bring in the fiddle, recorder and whistle, which we've used occasionally. The original group were all keen to keep acapella folk singing alive and mainly perform British songs. Also, we like each other, but don't live in each other's pockets. It grew from there.



“I felt part of a swelling tide of music, telling stories of working people through traditional English folk music.”

Aldora Britain Records: You are all huge fans of folk music, and that really comes through on your album. I love the folk tradition and the relatability of it. The way all these songs get passed down through generations. What first drew you to folk music and why do you think these songs have endured for so long? What is its importance in your opinion?

Deena: I was obsessed with anti-war protest and justice as a teenager in the 60s. To me, the lyrics were more important than the melody. I was listening to early pre-electric Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, Pete Seeger, and all the British protest singers, Ewan MacColl, Ralf Bellamy, Sydney Carter, to name but a few. I felt part of a swelling tide of music, telling stories of working people through traditional English folk music.

Richard: I was drawn to folk music because people played guitars! My older brothers brought folk records into the house and introduced me to folk clubs. There is such a wealth of talent. The songs endure because they have good singable tunes. The words cover everything from gripping ballads to sentimental love songs. Something for everyone.

Josephine: Great tunes and Scottish history. Telling a story about our heritage, people and moments in time. It is about being a part of a community, which is there to share and enjoy, and not to judge.

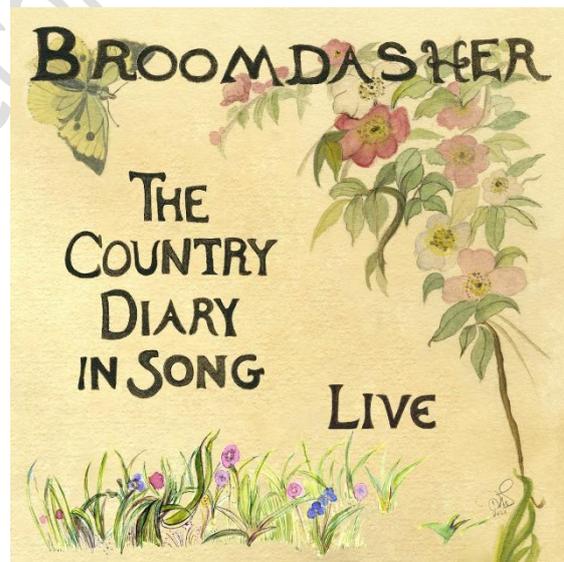
Aldora Britain Records: And now, let's talk about *The Country Diary in Song*. This is such a great project and I want to say 'thank you' for releasing it! It has a fascinating back story, inspired by the life and times of Edith Holden and Cecil Sharp. Can you tell me about it?

Deena: Ask John!

Richard: My most pertinent comment is to recall an audience member saying, 'All my favourite songs in one show!'. It attracted died-in-the-wool folkies, and people who didn't know such songs existed, but knew about *The Country Diary of An Edwardian Lady*.

Josephine: Leave that to John!

John: It was Edith Holden's 150th anniversary and her book was a phenomenal and unexpected success when it came out in 1977. She was an illustrator and school teacher, and the diary was a homemade textbook she used to teach an appreciation of the countryside to her pupils. At the time she was teaching, Cecil Sharp's first book of *Folk Songs for Schools* came out, and almost certainly, her pupils will have sung songs from it. So, we thought, 'What if we used Cecil Sharp's folk songs to illustrate the writings and paintings of Edith'. Thirty songs and twenty shows later... it worked. She was also a follower of the arts and crafts movement, as was Cecil Sharp.



Turn over for more Broomdasher...

“Then advantage of a live album is the work has already been done! And a record is just that, a record of what happened at that point in time. Let it be.”

Aldora Britain Records: What are your memories from recording and releasing the album, and how do you reflect on it as a whole now? Is there anything that you would change or edit?

Deena: *Country Diary in Song* was a live album. We had fun, worked hard, and tried to imbue both our love of singing and the music in the recording. It captured the essence of our country garden as we were performing it at the time.

Richard: The advantage of a live album is that the work has already been done! And a record is just that, a record of what happened at that point in time. Let it be.

Josephine: The recording was live so captured that feeling but isn't note perfect. Neither should it be, it's 'in and of the moment'. Anyone can get perfection by recording in a studio.

Aldora Britain Records: Previously, you released a CD entitled *Nothing to Do with Me*. How would you say you have evolved as a group since and what are your memories of this particular release?

Deena: Our first CD was a blast. We had a fantastic first studio experience, especially as Broomdasher was a relatively new group singing together. We have been together for a good few years now. We have weathered COVID and are now on the road all over England with Pub to Pulpit, our second show, and numerous gigs. As part of Broomdasher, I feel pretty established as a group of friends and fellow musicians able to work and build music together.

Richard: That was recorded almost immediately after I joined. So, a mixture of good fun, getting to know the rest of the band, and sheer panic! I think we are all more relaxed and cohesive now, an organic unit.



Turn over for more Broomdasher...

“As part of Broomdasher, I feel pretty established as a group of friends and fellow musicians able to work and build music together.”

Josephine: We are more relaxed singing together. We’re more of a family, able to speak frankly and still be together. We know each other’s strong and less strong points. I love knowing my family and friends will be able to hear the group sing lovely songs, now and in the future. As it’s in the British Library, I hope students of folk music in the future will be able to use it too.

Quickfire Round

AB Records: Favourite artist? **Deena:** Nancy Kerr or Fay Field. **Richard:** Anyone from a long list.
Josephine: Brenda Wootton.

AB Records: Favourite album? **Deena:** *Leveret*, *Blue* by Joni Mitchell, any Waterson album.
Richard: Currently, I’d say *American Beauty* by The Grateful Dead.

AB Records: First gig? **Deena:** Melrose Quartet. **Richard:** The Pink Fairies at Bolsover council office grounds. **Josephine:** Sparks were my first big gig.

AB Records: Favourite film? **Deena:** Too many to name over too many years. **Richard:** *Night of The Hunter* or *The Big Lebowski*. **Josephine:** *Mary Poppins*.

AB Records: Favourite up and coming artist? **Richard:** Couldn’t say. Thankfully there are quite a few. Though by the time I notice them, they’ve up and come!

If you enjoy this content, please consider making a small, magazine-sized donation at the following link: <https://paypal.me/aldorabritainrecords>. Thank you!



Fresh Ground

Blues-inspired reggae and roots music from Rockingham, Australia. Lyrics with bite and worthy observations of today's peculiar world. This is what **GUTHRIE TRIO** does best. Under the stewardship of Darren Guthrie, the band has released some wonderful music. Most recently, the three-track reflective EP *Seeds of Change: Revegetation*, and the socio-political single 'Freedom of Choice'. Previously, Guthrie Trio gave us the *Fresh Ground* EP, the record that introduced *Aldora Britain Records* to their music. This particular collection features five wildly diverse tracks with a significant deeper meaning behind each. A catchy pop sensibility is key too, the Guthrie Trio's tracks are not easily forgotten and definitely stick in the memory. Following the release of *Fresh Ground*, Darren Guthrie spoke to *Aldora Britain Records* about his music and the story behind it.

Guthrie Trio have previously contributed their track 'Legal Lies' to our 'Play On' compilation. Listen and download [HERE](#).

Aldora Britain Records: Hi Darren, how are you? We are finally here, in the same room as the mighty Guthrie Trio. Thank you, this is going to be a good one! I would like to start off by stepping into the time machine. What are some of your earliest musical memories and what first pushed you towards pursuing this passion of yours?

Darren Guthrie: Thank you for having me here today, Tom. Looking back at my early musical memories, probably the earliest ones that come to mind are my mother playing piano around the house when I was a child, and my father blasting The Beatles out and singing along. I started playing guitar in primary school when I was nine years old. I remember getting so damn frustrated with the instrument to begin with ha! I think it was probably in my early high school years that the passion for guitar and music really took a hold of me. I remember my father taking me to see Carlos Santana and



I was just in absolute awe at how that man could play a guitar. This definitely fuelled my passion to keep learning along with some friendly competition amongst the other guitarists in the high school. When I was about fifteen, my father got me in to some blues jam nights at a local pub, and I had an amazing time performing with a full blues band. From there, I just knew I wanted to create music with others. It wasn't until a good six or seven years later that I put together Guthrie Trio. Prior to that, I played in some local bands, filled in for guitarists when they were sick, and then performed around as a solo performer.



Aldora Britain Records: And now, let's fast forward to the formation of Guthrie Trio. How did it all come about? How did you first meet Max and Paul, and what was the initial spark that brought you together musically?

Darren Guthrie: Well, Max and I were actually working at the same music shop. He was teaching percussion there, and I was doing retail and admin work. I was recording my first album, *Seeds of Change*, at the time and just asked him one day, 'Would you like to play drums on my album?', and he said yes. After jamming in the studio, and having a great time putting together the album, I asked him to be a part of my band. And seven years later, we are

still making music. We also performed around together as a duo for quite a long time in venues that weren't suitable for the band's energetic reggae rock.

As far as our bass player goes, we've actually had a couple of different bass players. For *Seeds of Change*, our first unofficial album in 2015, we had a close friend, Jase Le Scelle, perform bass for us on a few tracks, and then he joined the band and toured with us for a few years. Eventually, Jase needed a break to focus on his family and the demands from his work made it impossible to keep performing with us without sacrificing the majority of his family time. So, we auditioned a bunch of new bassists and had a few fill-ins. We ended up recording *Fresh Ground* with a bassist from the Netherlands, who had just moved over here, called Spyro. We toured with him for a year and a bit until his work demands also got to the point that it wasn't possible to be performing as much as we needed to be. So, at that point, we had to make a decision to find another bassist, and Paul, having performed in the local scene with other bands we knew of, just seemed to be the perfect fit. We had him jump up for one gig and he absolutely nailed it to perfection. So, we invited him to keep performing with us. It has now been over twenty months of solid gigs and we have released a couple of tracks with him.

Aldora Britain Records: You are instantly recognisable for the energy in your music and the eclectic rootsy sound that you have. You captured this on *Seeds of Change* in 2016. How do you reflect on this record now? What were some of your main influences as a band during this period?

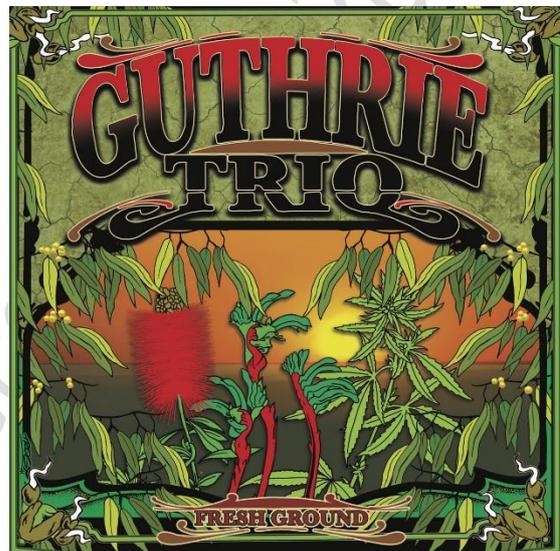
Darren Guthrie: To be honest, when we look back at *Seeds of Change*, I hear so many things I could've done better, but that's the perfectionist in me ha! This album also lined up with me completing a degree in sound production and engineering. So, I decided to record the whole thing myself and mix it, which was the first time for me, and it is why I hear so many things I could've done better. It was really just the start of me learning how to utilise the studio environment and technology. During this time, I was very inspired by The Beautiful Girls and Mat McHugh, Bob Marley, and early Nahko and Medicine for The People. I like to think this was reflected in the release by how raw the

“All the songs on *Seeds of Change* had quite a lot of socio-political meaning, and that was definitely something that we carried forward into our future compositions.”

instrumentalization and recordings were. We ended up having Ian Pritchett master the album. Ian plays bass for, and also mastered and mixed, a lot of The Beautiful Girls' releases. So, that was something really special to me. Then, having internationally acclaimed artist TROG do the album artwork was another dream come true. *Seeds of Change* was a crucial point for Guthrie Trio. Even though it wasn't released as a Guthrie Trio album, it was unofficially our first album, and we had such a great time launching it that we had to continue performing together as a band. All the songs on *Seeds of Change* had quite a lot of socio-political meaning, and that was definitely something that we carried forward into our future compositions.

Aldora Britain Records: I first discovered your music through 2020's offering, *Fresh Ground*. I think it is fair to say that it has left quite an impression. What are your memories from writing, recording and releasing this record?

Darren Guthrie: There are honestly so many good memories associated with *Fresh Ground* that I think I could write a book ha! Like with *Seeds of Change*, we decided to record *Fresh Ground* ourselves, so we hired a few studio spaces. I remember a lot of late nights at John Butler Studio in Fairbridge, which is a beautiful area surrounded by nature. I can remember one night Max and I recording all the guitar takes of a few songs until the early hours of the morning. We



exited the studio and there were stars everywhere. The sun was a few hours off rising, so there was a little bit of ambient night light, and the studio car park was surrounded by kangaroos. We were so exhausted as it had been easily eight hours of recording. But we both had to take a second to appreciate where we were as it was just too beautiful not to.

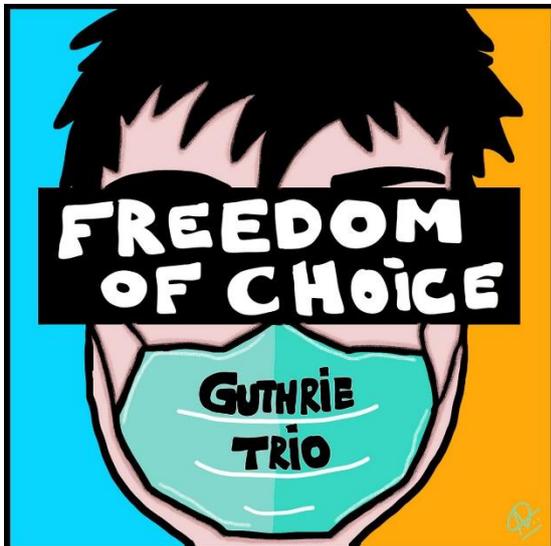
I remember spending hours upon hours mixing the songs on *Fresh Ground*. Doing things the hard way by individually mapping out the volume of every word sung so it sounds consistent, understandable and had impact. Right at the end of the mixing process we got some help from Peter Renzullo of Scudley Records. He showed us an application that did everything I had taken two weeks to do in less than thirty minutes. That taught us an important lesson, ask Peter for help ha! We've since had Peter Renzullo help us on a bunch of our recordings with mixing, mastering and even production. The man is just an absolute master of the studio. It was really interesting working alongside him with the final mixes of *Fresh Ground* as Peter is legally blind. I did not know this at the time and I was just so confused why everything on the screen had to be so massive, and how he could just make instantaneous mixing changes to the song without even looking at the screen. It didn't take me long to soon see Peter really knew what he was doing and knew it more by what he heard, and then using keyboard shortcuts, than by seeing it. It was something truly awe-inspiring to witness.

Turn over for more Guthrie Trio...

“There are honestly so many good memories associated with *Fresh Ground* that I think I could write a book!”

Aldora Britain Records: I would like to discuss ‘Legal Lies’ now. How did this song come about? Did anything in particular inspire it and what does it mean to you?

Darren Guthrie: ‘Legal Lies’ is a song that was written to highlight the corruption that exists between parliament and the justice system. This song was written in early 2019 before there was a medical cannabis market available to Australians. It was a critical time where people were being raided and charged by the police for very minute amounts of a natural plant that was helping them live a better life. Some of these people were the medically ill and disabled. I just felt a song was needed to highlight the injustice that was going on. People who needed this medicine were being treated as criminals and the justice system didn’t care. Instead, it just profited off these people. We later filmed a music video with the help of Peter Renzullo that really showcases our message in the song, but in a slightly humorous way. You can check it out at guthriemusic.com.



Aldora Britain Records: More recently, the Guthrie Trio have released ‘Freedom of Choice’. A very topical song in today’s climate. What led you to write this song? Do you think it is important to make political and cultural observations through music?

Darren Guthrie: ‘Freedom of Choice’ was a song we had to write and release. It was composed at a time when the Western Australian government was metaphorically tying peoples’ hands and pushing them into a decision. This was, if you want to keep working and making money, you need to receive the COVID vaccine. If you didn’t, you couldn’t work, and you also couldn’t receive financial assistance. This unjust ruling led to unvaccinated people being

segregated from local businesses. And in some cases, not being allowed entry at all. There were adverts pushed by the Australian media to encourage segregating these individuals, throwing more fuel on the metaphorical fire. This created a mass amount of division in the population, and friends and families split from associating with one another. The tension got to the point that it almost seemed like both sides of the argument had lost sight of the real issue at hand, which was not whether the vaccine was effective, or whether we should wear masks, but rather the right for an individual to choose what goes into their own body. We have always been a band that has supported the right to an individual’s freedom of choice. Especially when it comes to what you put into your body. Prior, we have had songs highlighting the right to consume what you wish like cannabis, the right to not have chemicals put in our drinking water, the right to do as you please if it doesn’t hurt others. So really, ‘Freedom of Choice’ was a similar message for us put into a new tune, sprinkled with some social observations about what we saw happening.

“I just felt a song was needed to highlight the injustice that was going on.”

Turn over for more Guthrie Trio...

“I think it is important for music to have meaning ... political and cultural observations presented through music can often break past the walls or barriers that people put up.”

I think it is important for music to have meaning. And my belief is political and cultural observations presented through music can often break past the walls or barriers that people put up, allowing them to consider a different perspective. I almost think that's the responsibility of the arts, especially comedy and music. To present a different perspective whilst entertaining. It is important to encourage people to question things and to embrace growth as individuals and as a society.

Aldora Britain Records: I see you have a new single release set for December 2022 called 'In the End'. Could you tell me a bit about this song and where people will be able to find it?

Darren Guthrie: 'In the End' is actually an old tune I wrote in 2015 that has developed more and more over the years and has never really been recorded how we wished. In 2015, we recorded a very different version of it for the *Seeds of Change* album on ukulele and cajon. Later, we released a festival live recording of it under Guthrie Trio. That was slightly closer to how it is performed today. We are really excited to announce that after many requests for it, we finally have an official studio recorded version ready to release. 'In the End' will be available online from December 2nd through our website, guthriemusic.com, along with Spotify, iTunes and YouTube. We will also be launching the single locally with a gig on December 3rd at Bar Orient in Fremantle. The song is an upbeat rock anthem that delivers an important and meaningful message that everyone can appreciate and singalong to.

Quickfire Round

AB Records: Favourite artist? **Darren:** That is incredibly hard to answer. Mat McHugh and The Beautiful Girls, The Beatles, B.B. King and Bob Marley are all tied for first place ha!

AB Records: Favourite album? **Darren:** *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* or *Rubber Soul* by The Beatles. *Kaya* by Bob Marley's also close.

AB Records: First gig? **Darren:** Proper first concert my father took me to see was Carlos Santana.

AB Records: Style icon? **Darren:** Musically, probably Mat McHugh and The Beautiful Girls.

AB Records: Favourite film? **Darren:** I rarely watch movies. I am a bit more of a documentary kind of guy. Some I've loved were *The Spirit Molecule*, *The Union: Business Behind Getting High*, and of course, *Searching for Sugar Man*.

If you enjoy this content, please consider making a small, magazine-sized donation at the following link: <https://paypal.me/aldorabritainrecords>. Thank you!

IN THE END
GUTHRIE TRIO

SINGLE LAUNCH
DEC 3RD 8PM @ BAR ORIENT
W/ ALEX WAYNE & SISTA CHE (DJ)
39 HIGH ST, FREMANTLE WA

PRE-SAVE THE SINGLE AT
WWW.GUTHRIEMUSIC.COM/ITE

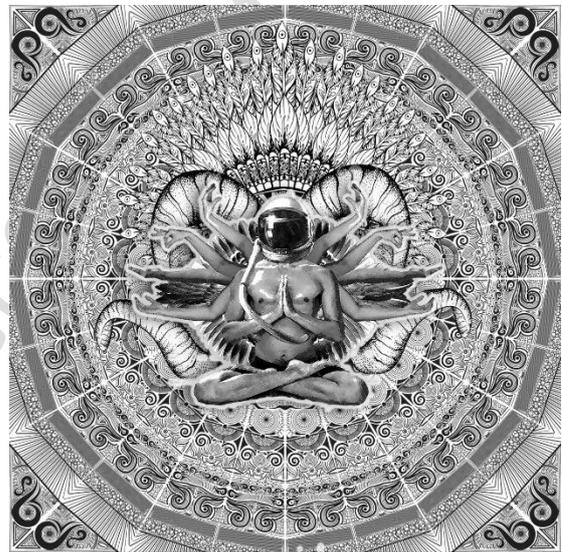
AVAILABLE TO STREAM DEC 2ND
WWW.GUTHRIEMUSIC.COM/INTHEEND

Sunrise and Overdrive

Experimentation in rock music has been ever expanding since the 60s, possibly kickstarted by the original psychedelic era. It is a pursuit that has never faltered, and many more disciples have initiated themselves with impressive grooves, other worldly riffs, and mind-blowing melodies. One such project, based in Orange, California, is the free-flowing **IO AUDIO RECORDINGS**. This is a musical endeavour that brings together the realms of space rock, Krautrock, and neo-psychedelia in an appealing melting pot of sonic brilliance. Releases such as *Awaiting the Elliptical Drift* (2022) and *A Guide to Drowning* (2021) have really cemented IO Audio Recordings' place in the canon of modern day underground rock and roll experimentation. The musicianship on show is a stellar outpouring of guitar-based perfection. Following the release of these two recent records, *Aldora Britain Records* had a chat with Jonas of IO Audio Recordings about the project's evolution so far.

IO Audio Recordings have previously contributed their track 'Awaiting the Elliptical Drift' to our 'Renaud' compilation. Listen and download [HERE](#).

Aldora Britain Records: Hello Jonas, how are you? It is such a pleasure to be talking to such a creative and innovative musician. I love what you are doing with IO Audio Recordings. I would like to start off by jumping back in time though. What are some of your first musical memories and what pushed you towards this passion of yours?



Jonas: I'm doing well, thanks for asking. You know, I'm not entirely sure what it was that pushed me towards doing sound and music. All I know is that as far back as I can remember, I've always had a fascination with sound, but why that is I have no idea. I didn't come from a particularly artistic or musically oriented family. Quite the opposite in fact. There wasn't anything I can think of, or point to, and say, 'This is the moment where I knew that I wanted to create sounds and music'. It's just been a drive that has always been with me for as long as I can remember. Some of my earliest memories are of me spending an inordinate amount of time with this portable record player that I had. I had these sets of seven-inch records that came with these booklets that would teach kids how to tell time, or learn their ABCs, and I would just play them constantly. However, it's worth noting that it really wasn't the learning material that I was attracted to. It was the player itself. I'd play the records at different speeds. Or I'd play them backwards by manually spinning the records. I was just super interested in the results. Things really took off when I discovered a reel-to-reel tape recorder that my parents owned. Once I had this device, that not only helped me to manipulate sounds but allowed me to record my own sounds, it was just a revelation. I spent so much time with that thing. I've often told people that my two favourite toys as a kid were my Lego and that reel-to-reel tape recorder.

“My two favourite toys as a kid were my Lego and that reel-to-reel tape recorder.”

Turn over for more IO Audio Recordings...

“The Beatles ... Martin Denny ... both of those artists contained elements that piqued my interest, but they never really scratched the itch. And so, I was left wanting more.”

What’s also really pertinent here is that, not only did I just seem to naturally have a fascination with recording and manipulating sound, but early on I had this drive to find music that I could consider ‘rock and roll’. This was less about a distinct musical genre and more about this concept I had somehow created in my little kid brain of a style of music that was just wild, crazy, and totally out there. Again, I have no idea where any of this truly stems from. I’ve just always been attracted to things that push the envelope. For instance, art-wise I became fond of surrealist artists like Salvador Dali at a very early age, maybe first grade, just by flipping through encyclopaedias that we had in the house, and seeing pictures of his artwork. In a way, I guess I wanted the musical equivalent of that and somehow figured I’d find it in this world of rock and roll that I knew nothing about, save for the lone copy of *Meet the Beatles* that my parents had tucked away in a collection that largely consisted of stuff like Johnny Mathis and Andy Williams. In fact, it was probably that Beatles record, and two Martin Denny records, *Exotica* and *Quiet Village*, that could be said to have formed the starting point on my musical quest. *Meet the Beatles* had a semblance of the energy I wanted to hear. Martin Denny had the weird factor with all those strange animal noises that would occur during the songs. In short, both of those artists contained elements that piqued my interest, but they never really scratched the itch. And so, I was left wanting more and that’s really the point here. I had somehow acquired this drive to hear this sound that I had in my head and would come across things that kind of satiated that to some degree or other, but not totally. For a long time, that is where things were left. My exposure to media was pretty limited. For years, all I had was my parents’ record collection and snippets of things I’d hear while out shopping with my mother or whatever. I didn’t have musically inclined friends. My parents were really strict about what I watched on television. It wasn’t until I was in sixth grade, when I got my first radio, that I really started discovering things outside the bubble of my parents’ record collection. First it was hard rock and early metal, which is incidentally where I first fell in love with the sound of distorted guitars. To this day, that is my favourite sound in the world. Then punk rock, then post-punk, and so on. The next thing you know, you’re listening to Steven Stapleton play the squeaky chair or Alvin Lucier repeating ‘I Am Sitting in A Room’. It’s really hard to overstate just how important that drive to find music that was just a bit more adventurous than the last thing was to my musical education, and the development of my personal music philosophy.



Aldora Britain Records: And now, let’s take a leap forward. Let’s look at the beginnings of your current project, IO Audio Recordings. It is a project full of experimentation, mystery, and maybe even a little secrecy! How did it come to be? Is it an output for your solo musings or more of a collective feel?

Jonas: I guess the answer here is that it’s always been an output for my solo musings. The roots of IO Audio Recordings is based in IO, a recording project I started to satiate my more experimental, ambient, and avant-garde leanings, while I was playing with others in more rock oriented bands. Even after those bands ceased to be, I just kept recording my own stuff. The

“It’s that innate drive I have to hear and create something I could consider to be just a bit more ‘out there’ than what one might normally expect to hear within a chosen genre like rock.”

irony here is that when I shifted from IO to IO Audio Recordings, it was a very conscious attempt to focus on doing more rock oriented, distorted guitar stuff. This is in large part because a few years prior, I had gotten my day job as a sound designer for a video game company. It’s how I’m employed to this day. I spend eight hours a day making sounds for environments, fantastical creatures, magical spells, etcetera. I’ve often told people that I get paid to do my most experimental music. And yes, I do consider it music. Something that curiously seems to upset a good number of people. So, the point here is that by the time I decided to do IO Audio Recordings, since I felt that I was already making experimental music at the day job, I’d try to create something that was more rock based. Albeit coupled with generous helpings of experimentation because I can never fully get that out of my system. Again, it’s that innate drive I have to hear and create something I could consider to be just a bit more ‘out there’ than what one might normally expect to hear within a chosen genre like rock.

Aldora Britain Records: The name, IO Audio Recordings, has a story behind it too. For that, we need to take a trip to Bakersfield, California and the height of the Vietnam War. Can you tell me about the project name and what is its relevance to what you are doing? Why IO Audio Recordings? It certainly fits in with the boundary-pushing themes of the music.

Jonas: As I mentioned in my previous response, the name ‘IO Audio Recordings’ has its roots in my first experimental project, ‘IO’. Initially, it was just a name that just kind of came to me out of nowhere, and the more I thought about it, the more I liked it. I just kept finding more and more possible ‘meanings’ and symbolism related to it. The obvious one is that it’s a



moon of Jupiter, and themes of space and the cosmos are interesting to me. It could be seen as ‘input / output’, which has the obvious audio relationship, not to mention electricity and a whole host of other things. I also began to notice how many power switches to electrical devices would use an ‘I’ and an ‘O’ to signify on and off. Graphically, it’s just a straight line and a circle, which is interesting to me on a lot of levels. They are these really primal and fundamental geometric figures. I’ve heard of them being graphically representative of the male and female genitals in certain cultural and spiritual traditions. So, the list goes on and on. The important thing to note here is that I’m not saying ‘IO’ means any of these things. What is interesting to me is that it can be thought of in so many different ways, that most of those ideas I’ve personally come across were in and of themselves interesting, and I liked how they made me feel.

Functionally, I tacked on ‘Audio Recordings’ for a couple of reasons. One was that I had discovered there were other bands named ‘IO’. Second was that, since the original intent of IO was to be an experimental project, changing the project to a more rock and experimental hybrid project felt like it required a hybridisation of the name as well. As with the name ‘IO’, I like the sort of space that a name like ‘IO Audio Recordings’ puts me in. Is it a band name or a brand name? is there even any difference?

“My goal with anything that I’m putting out there, whether it be music or text, is to simply define a space, but to leave enough room in that space for others to be creative and sort of put their own personal spin on it.”

Maybe it’s a record label? Or a piece of hardware? Ultimately, my goal with anything that I’m putting out there, whether it be music or text, is to simply define a space, but to leave enough room in that space for others to be creative and sort of put their own personal spin on it. To me, that dynamic has the potential to foster some really interesting conversations. I’m honestly not interested in telling people what things ‘mean’. I think that once that happens then the conversation becomes very narrow, and things start to feel more like a guided tour. I want to be more like the guy in that helicopter that drops you off in the middle of God knows where and takes off saying, ‘Explore! Good luck!’.



Aldora Britain Records: 2021’s *A Guide to Drowning* was my introduction to your work. Man, I love this record! There is so much going on in there. How do you reflect on this outing now, and how would you say you have progressed as an artist since?

Jonas: To me, the main thing that comes to mind when I think about that period of time is how much I grew as a recording artist. With the first few IO Audio Recordings releases, my focus was very much on just kind of churning out songs – ‘defining the space melodically’ – with very little attention paid to how a sense of space can really be enhanced by exerting conscious control over the recording quality of said songs. In honesty, I really kind of revelled in the sort

of chaos of those recordings. *I Can Hear the Hiders Coughing* was the first release where I really tried to figure out how to wrangle these songs, particularly the more polyphonic and noisy parts, and gain more control over how they were presented. This was mostly because I wanted to sort of evolve said spaces, as well as get more volume out of things. *A Guide to Drowning* was the first release where I felt like I was finally pulling the songwriting and the recording process together in a way that felt right.

As far as how I’ve progressed from then to now, I’d like to say that I’ve improved my recording skills. I feel like I’m presenting more immersive, compelling aural landscapes. I try to challenge myself in different ways as a songwriter, and while I don’t know if that constitutes progression, I’d like to think that it helps keep things fresh, interesting, and yet ‘related to each other’, something that I think is equally important.

“I feel like I’m presenting more immersive, compelling aural landscapes. I try to challenge myself in different ways as a songwriter ... I’d like to think that it helps keep things fresh, interesting, and yet ‘related to each other’.”

Aldora Britain Records: We have to talk about the sound now. It is psychedelia, it is space rock, it is progressive, it is avant-garde, it is experimental. I could go on! How did this ever-expansive approach come about, what would you say goes into it, and who are your biggest influences and inspirations for IO Audio Recordings?

Jonas: Oh man, that's a big question. The simple answer is that IO Audio Recordings is where I take everything that I love about experimental and rock music, and I mix them together in ways that feel right to me. Things can get strange. Things can rock out. That's pretty much the general mission statement right there. As far as influences are concerned, I suppose the best way to tackle that is to speak in terms of experimental and rock. Two terms which I'm going to use very loosely for the sake of ease. As far as experimental is concerned, the most influential would include... Zoviet France, and various offshoots such as Propeller and Rapoon. Nurse with Wound. The Hafler Trio. Arcane Device. Nocturnal Emissions. Kluster, and early Cluster. N.N.A.S., and Christoph Heemann's solo work, as well as side projects such as Mimir. Etant Donnes. Jim O'Rourke, particularly his albums like *Disengage*. Lee Renaldo, specifically his *From Here to Infinity* album. Pan Sonic. Strafe FR, particularly the album *Ochsle – Bad People Have No Songs*. Vladimir Ussachevsky. Early Beequeen. Stars of The Lid. Organum. Crainioclast. Lustmord. Omit. PGR. Early Current 93. John Duncan. Throbbing Gristle. Coil. Psychic TV. The obvious influences in rock that people tend to pick out are Loop, and Main, Spaceman 3, and a wide swathe of Krautrock which includes Neu! and La Dusseldorf, Faust, Can, Amon Duul II, Dom, Ash Ra Tempel, Xhol, Agitation Free, Harmonia, and Guru Guru. However, there are other inclusions such as Slint, Stooges, MC5, Cherubs, US Maple, Doldrums, F/I, Flying Saucer Attack, Helios Creed, Godflesh, Magical Power Mako, Pelt, Sonic Youth, Pink Floyd, Plasticland, Steefeel, The Spacious Minds, Cocteau Twins, Windsor for The Derby, Big Black, Bauhaus, This Heat, Black Flag, Bad Brains, Butthole Surfers, Cindytalk, The Cramps, Drive Like Jehu, Gang of Four, Joy Division, Virgin Prunes, Red Lorry Yellow Lorry, Swell Maps, Wire, June of 44, Royal Trux, Black Sabbath, Monster Magnet, Sleep, Sun Dial, 500 Ft. of Pipe, Archers of Loaf, Badhead, The Cure, Earth, Flaming Lips pre-*Soft Bulletin*, Gastr Del Sol, The Jesus and Mary Chain, Love and Rockets, Mercury Rev, early Psychedelic Furs, Rain Parade, Screaming Trees, Shipping New, and Brise Glace. Honestly, that's a pretty sizable list right there and it's missing some things – where do I put Kraftwerk! – but I think that gives a pretty good idea of the things that have helped shape my musical outlook.

Aldora Britain Records: *A Guide to Drowning* was followed by *Awaiting the Elliptical Drift*. This is a brilliant progression! What are your memories from writing, recording and releasing these tunes? Tell me all about it!

Jonas: Hmm, most of my recollections from that period don't really have much to do with the writing and recording of the material. That process was really pretty effortless, and not unlike the process I'd gone through with previous releases. How can I challenge myself a bit? What have I done up to this point and how can I do things a bit differently? Most of my songs tend to be long. Can I write a shorter one? I just bought a sitar guitar. How can I use



that? That process is pretty standard for all my releases. However, a lot of recollections do pertain to the releasing of *...Elliptical Drift*, or the attempts to. I remember the limited edition boxes I made for it really took an awful lot of time. I remember how I initially really wanted to try and follow through with this idea of releasing smaller, more frequent releases. Something that I continued through with the following release, *VVK*, before I realised that ultimately I prefer doing longer, full-length releases

rather than EPs. I think about the struggles involved in getting ...*Elliptical Drift* out on vinyl. Initially, ...*Elliptical Drift* was intended to come out on the label as a vinyl EP, but there were various issues that arose which caused me to pull out of that deal, and that was pretty annoying. Thankfully, I was able to hook up with Echodelick Records, and ...*Elliptical Drift* and *VVK* were able to come out together as a full-length LP. And that process was largely pain free with the exception of the fact that record pressing plants are just slammed right now, and the turnaround time can be rather long. I also think about how, through the course of those EPs, I missed making sculptures like I had made to house previous releases. So, that's something I definitely want to get back to doing.

Quickfire Round

AB Records: Favourite artist? **Jonas:** Of all time? I really couldn't say. There are just too many artists that I love deeply to kind of stiffly rank them in some sort of order, which itself shifts and changes depending on mood, place and time. The best I can say is that right now, in the moment, I've really been enjoying Fossil Aerosol Mining Project an awful lot. And I've been into USA Nails quite a bit.

AB Records: Favourite album? **Jonas:** As with artists, there's no way that I could narrow things down to a single album. There are just way too many important albums to list. However, at this current moment in time, I've been listening to Loop's *Sonancy* more than most of the stuff I've picked up lately.

AB Records: First gig? **Jonas:** Ha! I think technically that would be seeing Jerry Reed at a county fair when I was a little kid. That wasn't a show that I chose to attend, however. I think I was there just because my family went to the fair and somehow wound up at this show. It's kind of strange because I don't think either of my parents were Jerry Reed fans, and I personally couldn't tell you the name of a single Jerry Reed song. I really just remember him as a guy who was in the movie *Smokey and The Bandit*.

AB Records: Style icon? **Jonas:** When you say style, do you mean in terms of music, art, dress, fashion? I'm assuming you mean dress or fashion, and if so, the honest truth is that I don't really have one. My fashion sense is largely shaped by the area where I grew up, the rural Central Valley in California, mixed with rock and punk. So, western style shirts with sleeves rolled up over a T-shirt, usually band related and preferably from a show I attended, jeans, a ball cap, and most importantly pointed toe creepers. I've really become fond of my pointed toe creepers. I own quite a few pairs.

AB Records: Favourite film? **Jonas:** Again, I suppose I'm not really into the concept of having a single 'favourite'. There are a lot of films that I like. I can say that I typically like the films by directors such as David Lynch, Ben Wheatley, and Peter Strickland to name a few.

AB Records: Favourite up and coming artist? **Jonas:** I don't think I have my finger on the pulse of the music world to even know who could even be considered 'up and coming'. It's just not something I concern myself with... finding young, up and coming artists, the next new thing. Likewise, the term 'up and coming' seems to indicate someone who is destined for 'success', but what does that even mean? Money and fame? I'm the wrong person to ask about that. I'm just concerned with finding music that I like. Music that is new to me, which often times are artists that have already been around a while and I just hadn't discovered them yet, because there is just so much music to discover at this point.

If you enjoy this content, please consider making a small, magazine-sized donation at the following link: <https://paypal.me/aldorabritainrecords>. Thank you!

Wherever You Are

In the Netherlands, a new band, **LISETH AND THE SATELLITES**, are exciting fans of underground music with their beautiful and intricate blend of Americana, indie folk, and alternative country. Built around the powerful and compelling voice of Liseth, the eponymous frontwoman, this musical collective is certainly one to watch. Fresh from releasing their 2021 EP, *Miss*, the band have already followed up with a live recorded outing at Uncle Gabe's. Liseth is also a performing and recording artist in her own right, previously releasing *Kites and Traffic* in 2015, and unleashing her meaningful new single, 'Happy Hour (Sunflower)', in 2022. For songs of love, melancholy, and loss, mixed in with compositions of hope and tender joy, Liseth and The Satellites are the ones to follow. It is certainly an exciting time for new fans and listeners to come on board. Earlier this month, *Aldora Britain Records* was granted an audience with Liseth Horsten. We discussed her brilliant musical journey so far.

Liseth and The Satellites have previously contributed their track 'Miss Those Days' to our 'Hawk' compilation. Listen and download [HERE](#).

Aldora Britain Records: Hi Liseth, how are you? It is great to be chatting. Thank you for introducing me to great rootsy music from the Netherlands. I was wondering if we could start off by jumping back in time. What are some of your earliest musical memories and what first pushed you towards pursuing this passion of yours?

Liseth Horsten: I like that as a first question! The earliest musical memory I can think of is that when I was a toddler the first artist I recognised on the radio was Gilbert O'Sullivan. Well, it's hard not to recognise his voice, isn't it? My mom liked his hit song, so she taught me how to pronounce his name,



“Even when I started to make music my profession ... my own original songs were always dangling somewhere on the lowest rung of the ladder. They didn’t pay the rent! That frustrated me more and more as time went by.”

which I sort of could. The guitar entered the scene years later when my two older sisters joined a Christian teen club with lots of singing and guitar playing and got themselves a nylon-stringed acoustic. That was way cooler than the recorder they’d made me play in primary school! The other advantage of having older sisters is that they bring home albums and cassettes they get from their friends. Yay! So, as a teenager in the 80s, I’m pretty sure it was U2’s Adam Clayton that made me want to play bass guitar. Being in a band sounded to me like the coolest thing in the world, but I didn’t know any musicians. I didn’t know where to start. Except for tuning the guitar strings down to ‘flabby’ to play ‘bass’. And then I met a guy from a local rock band who was looking for a bass player. They were so kind to get me my first second-hand bass guitar – sponsored by their parents! – because I had no idea and no budget. It was quite heavy and very rock and roll, a multiplex Ibanez Rickenbacker copy. I sold it a decade later to a friend who later on became a producer. It has now shone on several alternative albums, isn’t that cool? So, that’s what pushed me first. Other inspirational artists and events would happen later, and made me realise even more that music was not just some crazy teenage dream, but something I really wanted to have as a part of my life. In the meantime, I went on to study as an art teacher, which was a more normal and accepted career option in our family, which is cool in itself by the way.



Aldora Britain Records: And now, let’s jump forward to 2015. This is when you released *Kites and Traffic Lights*, a brilliant and early snapshot of your songwriting prowess. How would you say this part of your process works? Where do the songs come from? Are you drawn to any themes in particular? Personal, observational, fictional?

Liseth Horsten: Quite a jump! Personally, as well as musically. I had been writing some guitar songs in the 90s after the band had broken up and I had discovered I had a voice, and I made some demos. I did some performing solo and later with my then band. We even did a small tour, but I still had other priorities and no idea how... that is a bit of a long story

though, so I won’t get into that! Even when I started to make music my profession later on, my own original songs were always dangling somewhere on the lowest rung of the ladder. They didn’t pay the rent! That frustrated me more and more as time went by. So, when I got the opportunity to record with two of my own favourite artists, another one of those stories I won’t get into now, it really was a new start for me. It was a big investment by myself, but I wouldn’t have to do it alone! Anyway, that was not an answer to your question, but it’s the background story.

The first song on the *Kites...* EP is an older one that I thought was worth re-recording. The others are about things from that particular time. It took me quite some effort to start writing again. I had to overcome a few things, and still have to every time I write. My own life is where most songs come

“I had to overcome a few things, and still have to every time I write.
My own life is where most songs come from.”

from. Although, every once in a while, a fictional character pops up. And I’m happy when that happens, because it opens up more possibilities than writing about myself with that giant pitfall of needing to stick to the truck, and to try not to hurt anyone’s feelings. I find that the main themes in my songs up until now are love and loss. Subjects such as friendship, family matters, spirituality, and a relationship and the end of it. On our latest EP, *Miss*, there are two songs about memorable moments I had with my dad who passed away a few years ago, two in which I look back at myself at a younger age, and one about an ended relationship. I guess time confronts you with all kinds of memories and with the inevitable ending of everything. So yes, quite personal lyrics, which makes it a bit scary to write at all. But I think the best song lyrics are the ones that are so personal and naked that everyone can relate to them in some way, whether the story is one hundred percent true or not. I have some more work to do to get that good!

Aldora Britain Records: Following the *Kites...* EP, you formed a band, The Satellites. I love what you guys are doing just now. Tender and relatable rootsy folk songs. How did the band come to be? How did you meet the other guys and what was the initial spark that brought you together musically?

Liseth Horsten: I had played with Lucas Beukers, the bass player, before. Someone had hooked us up when I had a gig for a certain occasion in my hometown. So, he was on my radar already. And I had met Eric van Dijsseldonk, the guitarist, a long time ago when he beat me in a singer / songwriter contest. And years later, he showed up as a teacher in the music school I attended. He was the kind of guitarist, and the kind of person, I wanted to work with. When I got into the *Kites...* EP project, I asked Eric to give me feedback on my songs with the intention of checking out whether he liked them so I could ask him to play in my band later ha! I think what brings us together musically is our common love for that great mixture of Americana, well written classic songs, and the organic electric guitar sounds of the 60s and 70s.



“I think the best song lyrics are the ones that are so personal and naked that everyone can relate to them in some way, whether the story is one hundred percent true or not.”

Aldora Britain Records: As we have mentioned, your sound is a melting pot of rootsy styles. Folk, blues, country, Americana, soulful touches. How would you say it came about, what goes into it, and who are your biggest influences as an artist?

Liseth Horsten: We love different kinds of music, and we carry that with us inevitably. Eric and Lucas are both wonderful and in demand session players for various artists on the Americana scene. I experimented with styles in a couple of bands and projects, and I've gotten pretty good at 'acoustifying' songs of all colours and shapes in my commercial projects. Choosing one style is great for a particular band project, but I want my own music to be able to go anywhere it wants. It will always sound 'Liseth' anyway. We play some Americana covers in our set though to keep the audience on track ha! Some Neil Young songs for example. I already know these because I also play in an annual Neil Young tribute project. I tend to indulge in his 70s repertoire. I believe I've learned a thing or two from him. And besides his rootsy songs, and his particular voice, I like unwillingness to stick to the rules and expectations. I don't like his experimental records, but I like that he made those! And he seems to still have this childish enthusiasm when he plays electric. Just having fun making noise.

But more artists have inspired me, of course. Either musically or with their performance. Or even something they stand for. I tend to listen to just two or three records for a week or longer. Sometimes by the same artist. 'The mood of the week'. Something to immerse myself in, hoping it will rub off on me a bit. I like the big sound-over-sense soulful voice of early Van Morrison as much as Dolly Parton's unmatched soprano. To name two of the world's biggest. I'm also lifted up by Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, The Band, and Led Zeppelin. Just as much as I am by Wilco, Elbow or R.E.M., and a dozen others too. Each bringing their own musical legacy. I just wish that someday I'll be able to write and play songs like theirs.

Aldora Britain Records: The *Miss* EP came in 2021. I still look back on this record very fondly. It must be such a buzz to have released something so great. What are your memories from writing, recording and releasing it, and how do you reflect on it now?

Liseth Horsten: Thank you again for the compliment! The Satellites don't have a drummer, but I wanted to make a band EP this time because some of the songs that we already played were initially written with a band sound in my head. We asked Gabriel Peeters, who has also done the mastering for my *Kites...* EP, to be our drummer and producer. We rehearsed together a few times so that we would really sound like a band. We wanted to record the basic tracks

live. For me, there is nothing more fun and rewarding than being in a recording studio with a handful of great musicians in a good mood, making something beautiful together. And Gabriel was great coaching me through my vocal sessions. I could rely on his ears and just focus on singing. The whole process, from the excitement of arriving at the studio to fixing takes until they are good, I just love. I



“There is nothing more fun and rewarding than being in a recording studio with a handful of great musicians in a good mood, making something beautiful together.”

wish I could afford to do it more often! Releasing *Miss* was not such a big live event as the release part for *Kites*... That one was recorded in the USA, so it had a story, and so people were obviously more interested. And now, we were just another band releasing an EP ha! But also, the aftermath of COVID didn't give many options for venues. So, we presented it with a video of live performances from in the studio, an interview, and some footage of the recording sessions. It's still up on my YouTube channel.



It is a funny contradiction. The ridiculous amount of blood, sweat and tears going into a project, and the simple reality of being just one of the many in an enormous pool of great artists releasing great stuff. But perseverance is the key. I do this because I want to, and because it makes me proud of myself. ‘Hey, we’ve made this out of my song, and we sound pretty damn good together!’.

Aldora Britain Records: More recently, you have released a collaborative track entitled ‘Happy Hour (Sunflower)’. What is the story behind this project, did anything in particular inspire the song, and what does it mean to you?

Liseth Horsten: Yes, that’s a funny story. I got in touch with Kevin, the writer of the song, on YouTube. He asked me whether I was willing to demo one of his songs. There had been a few people telling him they really liked this particular song. So, he wanted to have a good and simple demo with just a ukulele and female vocals. And I liked the song as well. So, once I started recording,

I kind of let myself go a bit with the production ha! Via email, we were chatting about the sunflowers in his garden and how we worry about the extinction of pollinators. So, the next day, I suggested to release it on Bandcamp and donate all proceeds to bee conservation – please feel free to donate!

It was fun and challenging to record and produce another person’s original tune. It got quite some airplay on local radio stations because it’s such an uplifting and catchy love song. And it’s fun to present myself in a different way than with my own songs. But beside that, it was new to me that YouTube is also a channel to meet people, and even start a project together. Plus, for me, it was a good way to get going again with recording at home. Because it’s about time to start our next EP!

Turn over for more Liseth and The Satellites...

Quickfire Round

AB Records: Favourite artist? **Liseth:** See the above answers! And, as I said, a dozen others.

AB Records: Favourite album? **Liseth:** Wow! I really couldn't mention just one. There's quite a few that have been important to me and that I get back to every once in a while.

AB Records: First gig? **Liseth:** I think that was probably a guy named Gerard van Maasakkers, a quite well-known Dutch singer / songwriter. My dad and his wife took me to see him in the lobby of a local theatre. I must have been ten or eleven or so. Fun fact is that a quarter of a century later, he presented a show with music theatre students in it, and me!

AB Records: Style icon? **Liseth:** Ha! Icon? I'd say I'd like to be somewhere fluctuating in between Patti Smith and Marc Bolan. 70s rock stars in general, I guess. But most of the time, I'm just dressed comfy-alternative. I don't know about Eric and Lucas, but they both love printed or cowboy style shirts. Just like our music, we bring our own style and complement each other.

AB Records: Favourite film? **Liseth:** I don't have one.

AB Records: Favourite up and coming artist? **Liseth:** I've been thinking about an answer to this question. And I'd prefer to introduce you to some peeps that have been around for ages, doing their thing, and being their creative selves no matter what happened in their lives. They have stood the test of time. I personally find that more inspiring and interesting than 'up and coming' because I can relate to that. So, take a listen to English Fen dweller, The Dan the D. This rootsy rocker inspired me in the late 90s when I wrote my first songs, and we worked with the same agency, and he still does with his perseverance and ongoing creativity. As a graphic designer and videographer, he's the ultimate DIY artist.

Also, check out Texan singer / guitarist Tess Wiley. Another that I hung out with when she came over for a tour. She was an example for me in those 90s day. Talking about style, I'll never forget her lederhosen-and-braids, and her glitter shorts. Being cool on either big or small stages. She lives in Germany now and she still rocks. Cowgirl boots and all.

Oh, and be sure to check out 'Onestringpunk' on Instagram. This guy reinvented himself so many times that only one string is left!

If you enjoy this content, please consider making a small, magazine-sized donation at the following link: <https://paypal.me/aldorabritainrecords>. Thank you!



Turn over for Kelly Williams...

On the Outside Looking In

KELLY WILLIAMS is a singer / songwriter who took the long road to recording and releasing music. At the age of forty, Kelly took up her childhood guitar once again, and began taking vocal lessons. These excursions led to something rather magical in November 2021 with the release of her beautiful album, *Outside Looking In*. This was a real 'full circle' moment, and one that has given the world an exceptional and underrated independent record. Tunes like 'Old Tin Moon' and 'Mama, I Can't Thank You Enough' are brimming with relatable sincerity, compositions that audience members will also hold close to their hearts. It is a remarkable story and living proof that it is never too late to pursue a dream. Kelly is truly an example to us all. With talk of new music on the horizon, *Aldora Britain Records* caught up with this Atlanta, Georgia-based artist to chat about her musical journey so far, and what is coming up next.

Kelly Williams has previously contributed her track 'Mama, I Can't Thank You Enough' to our 'Hawk' compilation. Listen and download [HERE](#).

Aldora Britain Records: Hello Kelly, how are you? It is a real pleasure to be chatting to such a brilliant contemporary songwriter today. I am a big fan! I was wondering if we could start off by jumping back in time. What are some of your earliest musical memories and what first pushed you towards pursuing this passion of yours?

Kelly Williams: Wow, thank you so much! I really appreciate that. From an early age, I loved listening to music. My mom always had great music on in the car, so I grew up enjoying the sounds of Fleetwood Mac, James Taylor, Jackson Browne, The Eagles, The Beatles, and Linda Ronstadt, just to name a few. When I got my own stereo system, I was listening to everything from Michael Jackson, INXS, The Indigo Girls, Tracy Chapman, and U2. I'm not from a musical family, but my mom did sing in the church choir when I was growing up. She has a beautiful voice. In middle school, I began piano lessons, and I was given my first guitar at twelve. I never had guitar lessons, but I taught myself enough chords to play and write. In high school, I really got into theatre, performing in both musicals and straight plays. I guess all of those experiences from my childhood formed the foundation of my passion for music that I'm finally pursuing thirty years later.



Aldora Britain Records: And now, let's take a jump forward. You took a long and winding road to the singer / songwriter life. You locked away your musical dreams for many years, but were drawn back at the age of forty. What initially took you away from your music and, vice versa, what drew you back to writing songs at the kitchen table?

Kelly Williams: College took me away from my music. I was so focussed on acclimatising to college life and my studies that I never picked up my guitar again. I was on a theatre scholarship during my first year of college at The University of Mississippi, but I soon realised that was not the direction I wanted to go. I transferred to The University of Georgia, and changed my major to interior design. After graduating, I worked with two different architectural firms and a commercial interior design firm,

“I guess all of those experiences from my childhood formed the foundation of my passion for music that I’m finally pursuing thirty years later.”

developing my skills as a designer. This was until my husband and I had our first daughter, and I chose to stay at home. Two years later, we had our second daughter. I loved being home with my girls, but I was always searching for a creative outlet. In 2006, my oldest daughter inspired an idea for my first picture book. Between 2006 and 2014, I worked with a writing critique group, and I joined the Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators to develop my craft. During that time, I wrote close to a dozen picture book manuscripts and two middle grade novels. I believe those years of writing were preparing me for my true calling to songwriting.



Aldora Britain Records: I think your songwriting is one of your biggest assets as a musician and creative mind. Your songs are so beautiful, emotional, and relatable. I think this is quite rare in the modern world. How do you approach the creative process? Where do your song ideas come from? Are you often drawn to specific themes? Perhaps personal, observational, or even fictional.

Kelly Williams: I can’t say I have a well-defined creative process. Each song seems to develop differently. I will say the easiest songs to write have a very clear idea or hook. For example, ‘The Price I Pay for Loving You’ was inspired by a conversation I had with my co-writer Carol Garcia. She was telling me about her fifteen year relationship and all the things she’d given up to make it work. I thought to myself that there was a price she paid for loving him. I started thinking about the ways we pay for things in the world, and how I could use that metaphorically about their relationship. I wrote the first two verses and the chorus in less than an hour. The entire song was finished in a day. Some ideas come from simple images and a story unfolds. Some from conversations, some from TV shows, some from writing prompts, and some just come in as random lines and the song slowly reveals what it’s meant to be. Those are the hardest to write.

I guess I’m drawn to more nostalgic and reflective topics like childhood and growing up, family, and loss of love. I’d always heard the phrase ‘write what you know’. But I soon realised that if I only wrote from my own personal experiences, I was going to run out of material and start repeating the same topics. I learned from two of my teachers, Mary Gauthier and Gretchen Peters, that you don’t have to tell your literal truth, but you have to tap into an emotional truth. By using different points of view from my narrator, doors suddenly opened to new songs. For example, in my song ‘Old Habits’, my narrator is a middle-aged woman, struggling to find work and love and turning to her tried and true pick-me-ups to get her through. The emotional truth is that we all have habits we fall into when we’re stressed. My recent single is told from the point of view of my family table. The table was a perfect

“I guess I’m drawn to nostalgic and reflective topics like childhood and growing up, family, and loss of love.”

“I haven’t taken the typical path by starting so late in life. I feel a bit like an outsider in the industry.”

vehicle to express the emotional truth of the disconnect we can feel in our families as our children age. I do have songs told from my point of view, several of which are on my album.

Aldora Britain Records: November 2021 saw you give us a fantastic album. This was, of course, *Outside Looking In*. A superb set of songs with a wonderful title! What are your memories from writing, recording and releasing this work, and how do you reflect back on it now as a whole? Is there anything that you would change or edit?



Kelly Williams: I’m so glad you like the album! *Outside Looking In* is a collection of songs that I wrote over a six-year period. The title felt like it fitted my journey. I haven’t taken the typical path by starting so late in life. I feel a bit like an outsider in the industry. I tried to choose songs for the album that best reflected me as a writer and artist. I didn’t have a clear sonic vision for these songs going into production, but as I began working with my producer, Bryan Austin Cuevas, a sound started to emerge that felt authentic to me. I gravitate to the sounds of bluegrass, classic country, and folk music. I am a huge sucker for the fiddle, mandolin, and slide guitar. It was such a joy to hear my music come to life with the help of Bryan and Jimmy Mattingly, who played all of the fiddle and mandolin on the album. Stylistically, there isn’t anything I would change. But I do think my confidence and vocal range has grown as a singer, so I would adjust some of the keys a little higher if I could.

Aldora Britain Records: I love your rootsy style on the album. I believe it is what they call ‘Americana’ these days! But there is so much more going on. I think it is quite in touch with the country tradition, for example. How did your sound come about, what would you say goes into it, and who are your biggest influences as an artist?

Kelly Williams: Yes, I would say I fall into the Americana genre. It’s a pretty broad umbrella of musical styles, but I think I fit somewhere between country and folk. When I first started writing, I wasn’t really trying to emulate anyone. I just wrote what felt good to me. I’m sure, subconsciously, the music I grew up listening to influenced my melodies. I would say the artists that have had the greatest influence are the ones I was introduced to as I learned to write. Some of my biggest influences are Lori McKenna, Brandy Clark, Patty Griffin, Brent Cobb, Chris Stapleton, and Guy Clark. Listening to their music taught me so much about good storytelling.

I’m excited to tell you that I will be releasing a new EP in 2023. I had a much clearer vision for this one, wanting to shift my sound more towards my folk influences. I began looking for a producer to help me find that sound and was blessed to be introduced to Neilson Hubbard in Nashville. I’m so excited to share this music, and I’m hoping this new sound will resonate well with my listeners. This collection of songs touches on elements of my faith journey, dealing with themes of loss, uncertainty, doubt, hope, love, and redemption.

Turn over for more Kelly Williams...



Aldora Britain Records: I would like to pick out two favourites from the album just before we finish. These are 'Old Tin Moon' and 'Mama, I Can't Thank You Enough'. For each, what is the story behind the song, did anything in particular inspire it, and what do they mean to you as their writer?

Kelly Williams: I always love to hear which songs resonate with people. You chose two of my favourites. 'Old Tin Moon' is one of those songs that came from a simple image. I could see this old tin moon hung between twinkling lights. First, the scene was set in a backyard on a cool fall evening. But then it slowly shifted to a barn for a summer dance. My teacher, Stefan Cashwell, who gets a co-write credit

on many of my earlier songs, taught me how to use imagery to draw in the listener, helping heighten the emotional depth of the song. This song taught me so much as a writer.

'Mama, I Can't Thank You Enough' is the most autobiographical song I've written. Both stories in the song are true. They were moments in my life that best showed the grace and love my mom always gave me. This song was her seventieth birthday gift.

Quickfire Round

AB Records: Favourite artist? **Kelly:** Currently, Brent Cobb.

AB Records: Favourite album? **Kelly:** Currently, I'd say *Keep 'Em on They Toes* by Brent Cobb, and *Last of The True Believers* by Nanci Griffith. It's so hard to choose because I have a lot of favourites.

AB Records: First gig? **Kelly:** Alabama in the 80s.

AB Records: Style icon? **Kelly:** I'm not really into style trends. But I guess I would say Elle MacPherson. She has the classic, bohemian look I like.

AB Records: Favourite film? **Kelly:** *Moonstruck*. I can watch it over and over and never get tired of it. It always makes me smile.

AB Records: Favourite up and coming artist? **Kelly:** I have two. They are both Atlanta-based singer / songwriters. Andrew James and Ben Strawn. I met them at open mics here in town. They are really talented! You should check them out.

If you enjoy this content, please consider making a small, magazine-sized donation at the following link: <https://paypal.me/aldorabritainrecords>. Thank you!

Turn over for Larry Dearing...

John Tallow's Canon

There are many beautiful attributes to underground music. One of the most brilliant is the fact that no stone gets left unturned. For example, take Atlanta, Georgia-based artist **LARRY DEARING**. Larry confessed, 'I play early music'. He is not joking either, this particular musician's repertoire ventures far back in time, stopping off in Medieval times and music of the Renaissance. It is a niche approach, but it brilliantly captures Larry's fantastic talent as a musician and historian of musical heritage. There are few places where listeners can indulge themselves in music of the very distant past. These are fascinating time capsules conveyed with modern flair and genius. 2021's *Sine Nomine* is a quintessential introductory listen, focussing on Medieval and Renaissance music, and the follow-up, *Les Estampies Royales*, focussing on French dance music from the 1300s, is coming soon. Now is an exciting time to come on board with Larry's journey into the past. He very kindly had a chat with *Aldora Britain Records* about his unique and fascinating music career.

Larry Dearing has previously contributed his track 'Bransle De La Torche / Prince Rupert's March' to our 'Making Up for Lost Time' compilation. Listen and download [HERE](#).

Aldora Britain Records: Hi Larry, how are you? It is a real pleasure to be talking to such a unique and interesting artist. Thank you for your time. I was wondering if we could start off by rewinding a little. What are some of your earliest musical memories and what first pushed you towards pursuing this passion of yours?

Larry Dearing: And thank you Tom, for the opportunity to share some things about early music and the Medieval and Renaissance soundscapes, and for your interest in my music. Wow, first musical memories. Riding in the car with my parents as a kid. The AM radio was always on. I remember



“A lot of people play early music expertly ... In my mind, the question is are many people playing it accurately?”

vividly learning about Petula Clark, early Beatles, Jimmy Dean, Johnny Cash, and all the pop and country stars of the early 60s. Consequentially I suppose, I've always had fairly eclectic musical tastes.

What got me started on this journey was basically just a whim a few years back. I was listening to a lot of these neo-Medieval and pagan folk groups out of Germany and I loved the sound. I've always been an early music geek, so the connection with that genre was easy. I loved the sound of the recorder solos and one day thought, 'Hmm, I wonder if I could do that'. I got my first cheap plastic alto recorder and found out I apparently could! A few years later, my wife and friends encouraged me to try out for the local Renaissance festival – shoutout Georgia Renaissance Festival, aka GARF! – and they put me in their musicians cast doing solo stage shows and playing the lutes. I love playing lutes... I found out I'm a street musician at heart.

Aldora Britain Records: And now, I would like to jump straight to your sound, your style and the way you approach your music. I think it is fair enough to say that not many musicians expertly play Medieval and Renaissance era music in the current climate. How did this come about? What appeals to you about these historical times and their music? And did anyone in particular inspire you?

Larry Dearing: Actually, a lot of people play early music expertly, but as a sub-genre of classical. In my mind, the question is are many people playing it accurately? When you do hear early music, it is usually played and sung as classical music, though the stylings we associate with classical music had not been developed yet. Voices were not highly trained and polished. Instruments were not of high precision. This was the music of the people. I think the reason this came about is that, before the internet, this music was rarely accessible outside the halls of classical institutions and music schools,



“Voices were not highly trained and polished. Instruments were not of high precision. This was the music of the people ... Not in concert halls, but in the streets, pubs, and inns of the time.”

and naturally became part of the Western classical music tradition. Now, with greater accessibility, more people are starting to play early music in a much more folk-friendly manner. You see this in recent years in the rise of neo-Medieval groups in Europe. They are playing actual early music pieces alongside modern original material. All in a traditional folk styling. This is how I approach early music.

I try to present Medieval and Renaissance music in a manner somewhat resembling how it might have been played. Not in concert halls, but in the streets, pubs, and inns of the time. I was certainly inspired by groups such as Faun, Estampie, Gjallarhorn, and others that are moving Medieval and Renaissance music back towards what I would consider to be its roots. I suppose the pull for me is owing to my long interest in history and the medieval period, my degree in History, and I’ve always loved the music of the period. That and just the purity of the sound. It’s elegant in its simplicity.

Aldora Britain Records: I was first introduced to your music by way of 2021’s *Sine Nomine*. It was an intriguing listen, especially the first time I approached it. I think this may have been because this style of music was so totally alien to me. As a big history fan, and a music fan too, I was fascinated and truly do enjoy this collection. What kind of reaction do you aim to get from a listener? Is there a bit of education going on in your music too? Keeping this tradition alive for future generations and such.



Larry Dearing: Actually, I like to get exactly the same reaction from listeners as the one you had. About half of my audience stumble into the music, hearing it at Medieval or Renaissance festivals, or from friends that are fans of the genre. They have never really experienced it before. This music has a past and often a good story attached. On the albums, I always list the century its from, and often include a country or region. When I’m performing at festivals, I try and always say something about the song’s provenance as well. I guess I feel most successful when I create a new early music fan.

Aldora Britain Records: The selections on the album are a curious mix of compositions that range from the thirteenth century to the sixteenth century. How do you select the tracks you wish to record and where do you find them? Is there something that you are specifically looking for when you are hunting for the tunes you play?

Larry Dearing: I look primarily for two things. First, a song from the period between 1100 and 1650. This encompasses the late middle ages, when we have a considerable amount of surviving music through the late Renaissance; and early Baroque periods, when the music shifts dramatically to what we would consider more classic in style. The second thing I look for is simply if I like it. I have to like it. I just don’t think I can do the song justice or present it the way I’d like to if it doesn’t hit me just so. That’s why my repertoire is really heavy on the Medieval end of the spectrum. I seem to like the real oldies!



When I first started performing at Ren Fairs, I was searching the internet constantly for any period music to play. I also found many good songbooks and sheet music sources out there. Amazon is a great source, as well as many other online repositories of sheet music. All of this stuff is in the public domain now and pretty readily available. At this point, I no longer have to actively look for new music. Being a huge fan of early music myself, I'm always exposed to new material listening to early music radio stations online. The first station I followed, Treasury of Early Music on Live 365, is no longer broadcasting, but was a great source for Spanish and Sephardic Medieval music. Currently, I listen to both Ancient FM, offering more secular music, and CEU Early Music, offering a wealth of central European early music. Both are available direct or on radio.net. So, I'll hear a great song for the first time and say, 'Hey, what a great song! I'd like to find that and add it to my repertoire!'. Then it's off to track it down online.

Aldora Britain Records: I want to pick out a tune now. 'Bransle De La Torche / Prince Rupert's March'. Can you tell me about the song and its history, and how you came to perform it? It is one of my favourites.

Larry Dearing: Yes, I've always thought 'Bransle De La Torche' was lovely with that light and delicate B section. As with the titles, and the progression of the piece, this is obviously two songs. One of the more fun characteristics of performing early music is putting two, or sometimes more, short songs together that complement each other well. Sometimes there is a logical connection, and sometimes it's simply that they sound good together as with 'Bransle De La Torche' and 'Prince Rupert's March'. I had been playing both of these songs for years, and one day out in the lanes, I played them back-to-back and realised they sounded really good together. Since I did the arrangement for *Sine Nomine*, I've been playing it that way since. 'Bransle De La Torche' was published by German composer Michael Praetorius in his 1612 compendium *The Terpsichore*. Though the song had circulated earlier in the mid to late sixteenth century. It is indeed a simple country dance, but quite a marvellous one. 'Prince

“One of the more fun characteristics of performing early music is putting two, or sometimes more, short songs together that complement each other well.”

Rupert's March' was written a bit later to commemorate James 1st's grandson Prince Rupert's fame commanding the Royalists' cavalry during the English Civil War. It was published in John Playford's *The English Dancing Master* in 1651. Both works are excellent examples of late Renaissance music.



Aldora Britain Records: You previously released the record *In Tempore Spiritus*, an album that explores a slightly different era of music. What are your memories from recording and releasing this, and how do you reflect on the album as a whole now?

Larry Dearing: *In Tempore Spiritus* is from 2017. My first album was all about presenting Medieval and Renaissance music while capturing the moods and sounds of a Renaissance Festival. The slightly different era wasn't really intentional, but rather the time span the selections fell into. Like *Sine Nomine*, it has got selections from some of my favourite collections such as the thirteen century C.

Cantigas de Santa Maria, and the fourteenth century C. *Llibre Vermell*. I wanted to do something more than just play recorder on the album. This was before I started playing hammered dulcimer and psaltery. So, I had several of my Rennie buddies in to help out. It started with a wonderful ancient poem, 'Gaia', backed by a recorder solo to a tune recorded by Faun, with permission from Oliver Pade of Faun. During the twelfth century Crusade song 'Palastinalied', I had a friend do a dramatic reading of one of the actual verses. And the album wrapped up with a dramatic reading of Puck's soliloquy from 'Midsummer'. I also brought in some other musicians with lute, guitar, bouzouki, violin, and viola to give more depth and layers to some of the songs, and a variety of special effects are sprinkled throughout. I'm particularly proud of the way 'Quen A Omagen Da Virgen (CSM 353)' turned out.

The original production was not as tight as I would have liked it. Earlier this year, I took the best six songs, my favourites, and remastered them. I then re-released it as an EP on Bandcamp. The original 2017 release is still available on Bandcamp under the artist name of Peter D'Piper, my Renaissance festival character name. All and all, it was and still is a great, fun album to sell out of your tip basket at a festival!

Quickfire Round

AB Records: Favourite artist? **Larry:** Dead Can Dance.

AB Records: Favourite album? **Larry:** Paul Simon's *Rhythm of The Saints*.

AB Records: First gig? **Larry:** Clark Terry, trumpeter from Doc Severinsen's Tonight Show Orchestra. This was a school assembly in the early 70s. It began my interest in jazz.

AB Records: Style icon? **Larry:** If you mean fashion, your typical 90s grunge band. If you mean music, Estampie or Qntal.

AB Records: Favourite film? **Larry:** *Wizard of Oz*. Yep, got me!

AB Records: Favourite up and coming artist? **Larry:** Fabis Tunes. Multi-instrumentalist and vocalist in the neo-Medieval genre. I don't know her actual name, but she's worth giving a listen.

If you enjoy this content, please consider making a small, magazine-sized donation at the following link: <https://paypal.me/aldorabritainrecords>. Thank you!

Something Must Be Done

Europe is a natural home to hard and heavy modern styles of rock music. This is especially true of the progressive rock movement. It certainly has a home in Wroclaw, Poland under the stewardship of Wojciech Pieluzek's experimental collective **GLASS ISLAND**. An impressive career began with the *Secular* EP, released in May 2020, containing three tracks which provided a fascinating early snapshot of this progressive journey. The debut full-length LP, *Glass Island*, followed in October 2021, and cemented the band's art-inclined prog credentials. The compositions were already more sophisticated, with some songs clocking in at over ten minutes in length, and Wojciech's creative vision was beginning to become more fully realised. *The Damage Report* is the most recent addition to the Glass Island discography, a fifty-minute song cycle, showcasing connectivity and a forward-thinking mindset. Following the release of this record, *Aldora Britain Records* was lucky enough to have a chat with Wojciech about the project's evolution so far.

Glass Island have previously contributed their track 'All Out' to our 'Hawk' compilation. Listen and download [HERE](#).

Aldora Britain Records: Hello Wojciech, how are you? I am very excited to be talking to the mastermind behind Glass Island. I am a big fan, thank you for your time. I was wondering if we could start off by rewinding the clocks. What are some of your earliest musical memories and what first pushed you towards pursuing this passion of yours?

Wojciech Pieluzek: Thank you so much, Tom. It's a bit of a tough question. I guess I have been a big music fan ever since I was a little kid in the late 80s. But I never really thought about making music myself until I went to secondary school and there was an extra-curricular classical guitar class. My parents got me a nylon string guitar, which I still occasionally compose on, and even though the class got cancelled after a couple of weeks, it gave me enough of a start to carry on. I wasn't that focussed on the instrument itself, but I must have already had a pretty good sense of harmony back then as I was able to make arrangements for songs I liked, so that I could play and sing them. I think I wrote my first song in about 2000. And then around 2002, I put together my first and only 'real' band,



Lavender. After reluctantly presenting the guys with some of my ideas and getting a positive response, I felt encouraged to write more music and that has never really stopped.

Aldora Britain Records: And now, let's fast forward to 2019 and the formation of the fantastic Glass Island project. How did the band first come to be? How did you meet Krzysztof and Krzysztof, and what was the initial spark that brought you together musically?

Wojciech Pieluzek: Well, it wasn't by design, that's for sure. In fact, the songs that made up the first album existed before the project ever came to life. Anyway, I've actually known Krzysztof Tulecki for twenty years. He was the bass player in Lavender. After that band sort of fizzled out around 2007 / 2008, I didn't perform or publish any music for several years, but I kept writing. I guess that was always my primary passion. Then in 2015, I started the project Strange Moments with my old friend Joanna Lukaszuk as the singer, and while it was originally just a bit of fun, it started picking up some momentum. We made a forty-five-minute demo, played a few acoustic shows, and there was talk of making a proper album in 2017 with a few other musicians. But it just never really went anywhere. Still, all that time I kept writing and demoing songs on my own as well. At some point in 2019, I played the demo of the song 'Secular' to Krzysztof T. He liked it and suggested we record it properly in the studio. As it turned out, the keyboard player of his current band Digital Angel, Krzysztof Witos, owned a studio and was also an engineer, mixer, and producer. Krzysztof W was very enthusiastic about the song as well. And he was happy to do it. The two of us became fast friends and we've got along well ever since. One song became three, that was the first EP, and only then was the name 'Glass Island' finally created. Then came the whole album and the rest is, as they say, history.



Turn over for more Glass Island...

Aldora Britain Records: I first discovered your music through your self-titled LP, a great introduction as far as I am concerned. How do you reflect back on this album now, and how would you say you have progressed and evolved since?

Wojciech Pieluzek: So, that was actually my first experience recording in a professional setting. And while I felt slightly intimidated at first, I got used to it quite quickly. Still, it was a learning curve for me and Krzysztof W as well, since my approach to arrangement is more complex than most of the music he's involved with on a daily basis. We gradually had to find out what worked best. Also, it was great to work with Krzysztof T again. We hadn't recorded



anything together in about fifteen years at that point! Our next project was the *Strange Moments* album, which finally came out this March. So, by the time we got to recording *The Damage Report*, I felt much more comfortable and relaxed about the whole process. Moreover, as Krzysztof T is a very busy man, he couldn't commit to those albums, so I decided to pick up the bass and learn to play it myself. I ended up doing most of the bass on *Strange Moments*, and all of it on *The Damage Report*. That was quite a step for me.

Aldora Britain Records: More recently, you have unleashed another great offering, *The Damage Report*. How did this album come about? What are your memories from writing, recording and releasing it? This particular release is a continuous piece of music.

Wojciech Pieluzek: Well, this time I was actually writing with a specific project, and a proper album, in mind with only a fraction of the material being drawn from the vaults. I wasn't sure what direction to go first, but I had the song 'Postscript' which I knew would close the album. Now, the original demo was in a key that was a bit straining for my voice, so I decided to lower it for the studio version. This meant I had to tune down the guitar to the so-called 'dropped D' tuning to be able to play some of the parts. That in turn inspired me to compose some more music in that tuning, which actually lends itself well to heavy metal. That's why there are so many heavy riffs on the album. As for the structure, the idea to link all the tracks together, in the form of a mock letter, came very early in the process. So, I kind of had the overall shape of the album in my head even before most of the music was written, which actually became a great creative tool. It felt more like filling in the gaps than having to come up with something from scratch. For instance, even before I actually wrote it, I knew the first track would be called 'Dear'. I later changed this to 'Deer' as I thought it was more intriguing and less obvious, and that it would be based on the musical themes of 'Postscript' to provide a bookend structure.

“That was actually my first experience recording in a professional setting ... it was a learning curve for me.”

Turn over for more Glass Island...



Aldora Britain Records: I am curious to learn more about your creative process. To do this, I would like to pick out two of my favourite compositions by Glass Island. 'All Out' and 'The Damage Report'. What are the stories behind these tracks, did anything in particular inspire them, and what do they mean to you?

Wojciech Pieluzek: Well, these two were actually both written a while back. In 2018, if memory serves right. 'All Out' was written in a rather traditional way, coming up with parts on the guitar. There are four distinctive sections in the song, and I must confess I don't remember what order I wrote them in. Or at what point I came up with the vocal melody or lyrics.

Speaking of lyrics, it's a song about being stuck in a failing, dysfunctional relationship, and finally doing something about it. It wasn't actually inspired by anything in particular in my life, but I guess it's something most of us can relate to on some level. 'The Damage Report' was mostly written with a keyboard and a computer. I was working on the basic arrangement at the same time as I was writing the music. To a point where the border between these two elements gets blurry. That's been my main method of writing for several years. I find that it allows me to make complex arrangements without them feeling superimposed onto the songs. Lyrically, it's made up from notes I made while watching some YouTube video. I'll often jot down interesting phrases I hear in clips or films. I find that really helpful with lyrics. I guess I was trying to express the confusion a regular Joe might feel in relation to the overwhelming amount of news we consume every day. There's also a plea for self-reflection and keeping an open mind in there. That's something I wrote quite a bit about on the first album too.

Aldora Britain Records: I love the sound and style of Glass Island. Very progressive, very experimental. How would you describe it, what would you say goes into it, and who are your biggest influences as an artist?

Wojciech Pieluzek: Well, I'm not a critic or journalist, I just make music. So, I don't know if I know or ever care how to describe it! But I guess it's ambitious rock music which amalgamates various eclectic elements and doesn't always follow the traditional form. Still, I'd like to think there's always a good melody in there. As for the influences, I've always loved classic prog. Pink Floyd, King Crimson, and Genesis in particular. But I'm a huge fan of The Who and Queen as well, and I've always admired the uniqueness of artists like Kate Bush and David Bowie. Then in the slightly younger generation, I have to mention PJ Harvey, Garbage, and Porcupine Tree. And recently, I totally fell in love with Catherine Anne Davies a.k.a. The anchoress, a stunning artist.

"I was working on the basic arrangement at the same time as I was writing the music. To a point where the border between these two elements gets blurry ... I find that it allows me to make complex arrangements without them feeling superimposed onto the songs."

Turn over for more Glass Island...

Quickfire Round

AB Records: Favourite artist? **Wojciech:** Got to be Pink Floyd. No other band has consistently fascinated me like them.

AB Records: Favourite album? **Wojciech:** Today I'd say *Quadrophenia* by The Who.

AB Records: First gig? **Wojciech:** Genesis, 31st January 1998, Katowice, Poland.

AB Records: Style icon? **Wojciech:** I have no interest in that, so I'll say Mark Knopfler!

AB Records: Favourite film? **Wojciech:** *This is Spinal Tap*, of course!

AB Records: Favourite up and coming artist? **Wojciech:** The Anchoress. She's been around a while, but she's yet to get the mainstream recognition she deserves.

If you enjoy this content, please consider making a small, magazine-sized donation at the following link: <https://paypal.me/aldorabritainrecords>. Thank you!



Turn over for Mint Biscuit Sounds...

No Blankets Required

'Melodic cacophony oozing loneliness'. Welsh singer / songwriter **MINT BISCUIT SOUNDS** is carving out a niche for himself in the alternative arena. Originally an indie rock band in Richard Thomas' university days, the Mint entity has continued and is now the pseudonym for his solo outings. Richard's reputation is growing on the worldwide independent underground too with recent international exposure, including radio play on independent channels in Australia. Most recently, Mint Biscuit unleashed a fantastic set of originals entitled *A Trip Outside*. This particular record brings together the very best of songwriting styles. Indie with blues, alternative with folk, and rock with Americana. The album is brought together with a fiercely DIY style too. It is done Richard Thomas' way and that is the beauty of it. He very kindly recently chatted to *Aldora Britain Records* about his journey up to this album and so much more.

Mint Biscuit Sounds has previously contributed his track 'No Blankets Required' to our 'Coltrane Blues' compilation. Listen and download [HERE](#).

Aldora Britain Records: Hi Richard, how are you? It is a pleasure to be talking to the man behind Mint Biscuit Sounds today. Thank you for your time. Let's start off by rewinding the clocks. What are some of your earliest musical memories and what first pushed you towards pursuing this passion of yours?

Richard Thomas: Thanks for having me about the good ship Aldora, Captain Tom! Did I ever tell you, I used to work on a real tall ship, Captain Cook's *Endeavour*, that he sailed halfway round the world in, and discovered Australia in in 1770? Ooh! The starting point for me was being played The Beach Boys and The Beatles by my parents. They had a long teak record cabinet with a Panasonic turntable and a load of 60s and 70s vinyl. I used to love carefully dropping the needle onto their EPs and hearing the sounds that emanated. I was in awe of the surfer on the cover of *Surfin' USA*. Also in their collection were Pink Floyd, Santana, Cat Stevens, Simon and Garfunkel, Joni Mitchell, Bryan Ferry, Fleetwood Mac, The Who, The Doors, The Animals, The Rolling Stones, The Kinks, Cream, Jimi Hendrix, Stevie Wonder, and a whole load of Bob Dylan. A great starting point for any young music fan.



Although the 80s were a funny time for music in my view, my parents kept us going with Dire Straits, Eurythmics, M People, and UB40, now on tape cassette. You could listen in the car! Then, going away to school in 1992, I was exposed to all sorts of music at once. From Ace of Base – my first ever album, to R.E.M. and Nirvana, to The Stone Roses, The Prodigy, and all sorts of jungle and rave music. I didn't really listen to the radio at all until fifth form, but I had a 'ghetto blaster' – double tape cassette deck – again by Panasonic, that I kept in school in the prep room. I allowed anyone to use it, so long as they asked nicely. This threw out some interesting choices of music!

The music that convinced me to have a go at playing guitar though was Britpop. All the bands from Oasis and Blur through to Supergrass, Paul Weller, Reef, Levellers, Ocean Colour Scene, Bluetones, Gomez, Feeder, Stereophonics, Super Furry Animals, and Manic Street Preachers. Some US acts such as Beck, Kyuss, Sonic Youth, Mudhoney. And, of course, Radiohead! Some of these artists were Welsh

“I had started my own band ... which gave me a musical outlet and a sense of purpose and identity beyond sports, academic grades and exams.”

even, which brought the dream closer to home! Several top acts recorded at the nearby Rockfield Studios in Monmouth, including Oasis at the peak of their fame. I decided to get in on the action!

I persuaded my mum to buy me an electric guitar, a Squire Stratocaster, and a couple of chord songbooks. I was away! Within a couple of years, I had started a band of my own, Rich T and The Biscuits, with Harry, Lawrence and Tom. I formed another too, Audiofidelity, with Chris, Crispin, Alan, and Joe, which gave me a musical outlet and a sense of purpose and identity beyond sports, academic grades and exams. We went busking in Cardiff and annoyed our housemaster by practicing loudly in prep time. We played just two gigs! But these set the idea in my head that I could maybe do something with this. I became an addict to the sound of the guitar and the screams of the crowd. We were called Rich T and The Biscuits, and we began our set by throwing biscuits into the crowd... to get them to come closer! Chocolate Digestives and Rich Teas! Crumbs everywhere, all over the assembly hall. Ha!



Aldora Britain Records: You formed a band during your university days. What are your memories of your time with Mint?

Richard Thomas: At Durham University, I was there to study Engineering, but I soon got bored of that and decided that I could have more fun playing music. I gathered a group of likeminded mates, and we organised a live acoustic night. It was loosely based on the MTV unplugged shows from the early 90s. It was called ‘Trev’s Unplugged’. Trevelyan being the name of my college. Guitars, pianos, strings, brass and woodwind, accordions, djembes, didgeridoos even. It became an instant hit. And in fact, it still runs to this day

at Trevelyan. From this, sprang my involvement with another band, already established in college. We ditched the name PMT and our singer Stuart, and began to call ourselves Mint. After the Geordie phrase, ‘That’s mint, eh?’, meaning, ‘That’s great!’.

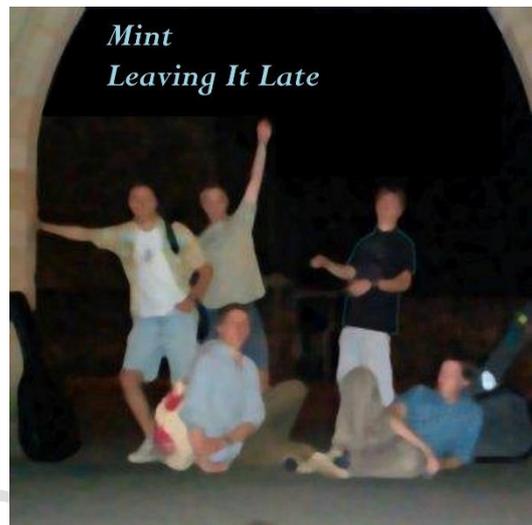
With Mint – Andy, Benn, Simon, Nat and Stuart – I really learned my chops, playing all sorts of rock and roll covers at balls, bops and events across the university campus. We headlined at the Van Mildert Jam Night event at our sister college, just across the road from us. We achieved a certain level of fame and adulation amongst our peers, and we had a blast. We had one amazing year where the four of us lived right opposite each other in college. So, we were constantly in and out of each other’s rooms with new musical ideas. At the end of our second year as a band, we recorded the album *Leaving It Late* at a studio in Durham. We played on for another year, becoming increasingly Spinal Tap-esque, before splitting due to God’s calling – Nat, our lead singer, went on to become a missionary in Japan. There were also musical differences, graduation, exhaustion, geographical distance, breakdown in relationships, ill health, and running out of money.

Looking back, it was a unique time in our lives, coinciding with falling in love, learning a whole lot about the world and ourselves, working like Trojans, going out all the time, or staying in playing music,

“I think that, out of the chaos and conflicting ambitions, we produced a beautiful album ... that can be treasured.”

drinking alcohol and taking illegal substances, and staying up all night. It couldn't last. But I think that, out of the chaos and conflicting ambitions, we produced a beautiful album, *Leaving It Late*, that can be treasured, and should rightly have earned more plaudits than it ever did. A modern classic, born of intense emotional experience. Go listen to it!

After Mint split, three of the boys – Andy, Benn and Simon – went on to form another band outside of uni, down in York. This was Cardboard Radio. A wonderful punk blues band with energy and spirit who played all round Yorkshire, the UK and Europe, even at Leeds Festival. They eventually called it a day in 2008. Integral to the New Yorkshire scene and the Revolutionary Freaked Out Fuzz Club in particular, where they used to run DJ nights. I used to go and see them play in York, and for several years there was an annual summertime musical get-together in Andy's parents' back garden in Doncaster. That was called Gainestock. This was a load of fun with the amps and drums set up on the patio, barbeques in the middle of the garden, and tents at the back. We could be heard by half the town! They played at my wedding, to my wife Rachel, and I was fortunate enough to be able to join them on lead guitar for a couple of numbers. We have remained friends, but drifted apart, ever since.



Aldora Britain Records: Your more recent solo output is more centred around your songwriting. How do you approach this part of your creative process?

Richard Thomas: With Mint, and the album *Leaving It Late*, our songs were all team efforts, but sparked by one or another of us having a vision for the song and having worked out pretty much all the lyrics and structure themselves. We shared the job. We then practiced like hell. In the studio, we worked together to polish up the lyrics and add overdubs and sections we hadn't thought of before. It was a team process. Also involving the engineers from Coastal Dune, another Durham band.

Since the band broke up, I've been completely on my own in my music making. Solo as Mint Biscuit this time around. I've been suffering from severe mental illness and have not been the easiest person to work with, due to developing paranoid voices and a fear of people. Yeah, sounds rough, it has been. Getting back into music making has been a big challenge for me. I've never been the most outrageously talented musician at the best of times. And it only comes naturally to me once in a while. Picking the guitar up whilst you are hearing voices telling you that you are 'shit', and other basic insults, is a test of anyone's mettle. But I decided that I wasn't going to be beaten. And more than that, I was going to make beautiful music. Or beautiful to me at any rate. Music that I wanted to hear. Music that my wife wanted to hear and sod the voices.

“I decided that I wasn't going to be beaten. And more than that, I was going to make beautiful music.”

And so, I decided to put some of my experiences and perspectives in my lyrics. 'River Carry You' is all about the feelings of paranoia and isolation that I have experienced over the last few years. 'Round the Twist', 'Spent Some Time', 'Jackals'. The titles speak for themselves. In about 2015, I went back to the drawing board, and started recording myself, playing on a regular basis. At first, just instrumentals. And later, I wrote some fully-fledged songs.

If I'm honest, I don't practice enough. I get bored of playing very quickly and do not have a lot of stamina. I'm too afraid of the outside world to play gigs. But that's not to say that I can't gain enjoyment from making music. I still consider myself a valid musician. The big revelation to me was learning to use Audacity software to boost my tinny little recordings and to add effects. I suddenly realised I had a back catalogue of decent enough music that I could release on Bandcamp and Soundcloud.

Recently, I have produced a number of limited runs of CDs. This is of the sets that I am most proud of. Including re-releasing some old Mint tunes from back in the day. I have posted these out for free to friends and family. It has been a joy to work on these, designing the artwork and mastering the tracks, and getting in touch with old friends who remember and love our band from uni, but have moved on to other more respectable lives now.

Mint Biscuit
A Trip Outside



Aldora Britain Records: *A Trip Outside* is your most recent record. How do you reflect on writing and recording it?

Richard Thomas: It has been a labour of love. Cathartic. Recorded and produced on a shoestring budget in my front room. I feel like I have purged myself of quite a lot of anger, frustration and feelings of inferiority in the making of this record. It was a triumph to get it done at all. I am pleased with almost all of it. The vocals on 'Summer Song' could be better perhaps. I just wish I had the money, the drive and the musical contacts to make it more of a full band effort. There's only so much I can be bothered to do all by myself.

I often read my lyrics back to myself, and always get a good feeling. Sometimes more so than listening to the actual songs. They're poetic, in a way! So that maybe tells you something about how I feel about the album. I've got my ideas across. But maybe not in the most virtuosic or professional of performances. Being a perfectionist, listening back to my own creations is not always easy. The album is worth a listen though, don't get me wrong ha!

Aldora Britain Records: What is the story behind the song 'No Blankets Required', and what does it mean to you?

Richard Thomas: Around Christmastime last year, I wrote a loose Led Zeppelin-inspired riff on my new Gretsch guitar. It was entitled 'Blankets' as I had just eaten a load of pigs in blankets. I uploaded it to Soundcloud and thought nothing of it. Suddenly I got a message from a guy in New York state, Billy Schaefer, saying he loved my tunes, and would I like to work with him on a track? I was like, yeah, sure, okay then! Within about a day, he had taken my riff and laid it down as a complete backing track with drums, bass, rhythm guitar, and a face-melting solo too! All I had to do was write some lyrics,



which came to me easy as pie. Bingo! We have a hit. I think Billy is an ex-session musician, certainly very talented. It was a privilege and joy to work with him on this number.

I call it my Tom Jones, 'Sexbomb' song. The lyrics are a bit cringey, crooney in places. 'She had a perfect body, but a wicked soul'. But I tried to deliver them with a sense of irony and enjoyment. It's all about a 'larrikin lover'. The one who got away. Their fire burned hot for a while, but he found out that she was 'just digging for treasure', and so had to send her packing! It's not based on any real relationship of mine, I have to say! I've been lucky enough to fall in love with my woman early on in life and stuck together through thick and thin, for better and worse, richer and poorer. Love you, Rachel!

Funnily enough, Tom Jones – the real Tom Jones! – used to live in the same village as my parents. Down in south Wales. He eventually sold his house to the Welsh footballer Gareth Bale, what a claim to fame!

Aldora Britain Records: How have you adjusted and kept the fires burning in this new world that we live in? It has been a crazy ride over the last few years.

Richard Thomas: Good question. Often, I don't feel like I am succeeding in doing that at all. Thankfully COVID hasn't caught us yet. So, the biggest challenge is dealing with the demands of the modern age. Keeping up with the emotional treadmill that we all seem to be on. Keeping happy is difficult sometimes. But recently, making music and producing CDs and online albums, has given me a lot of reward and pleasure. A creative outlet. It has also made me some new friends and given me something to live for. You can't ask for more than that! All my music can be found by searching online for the label name, Mint Biscuit Sounds.

Turn over for more Mint Biscuit...

Quickfire Round

AB Records: Favourite artist? **Richard:** Of my generation, Reef. Their first two albums, *Replenish* and *Glow*, are a real knockout punch. I used to get my dad to drive me and my brother to the beach with Reef pumping out of the VW Passat stereo with the windows down. Hoping to impress some young lady surf girls! We used to play a Reef cover, 'Naked', in Mint. And I'll have you know; I used to play the Kenwyn House guitar riff and sing the Gary Stringer vocal all at the same time! Alright now! Favourite band of the last twenty years, I would have to say Dead Meadow, a psychedelic ensemble from San Francisco. They have a way with a Tolkien-esque lyric and an alternative tuning. But can also rock a fuzzy blues riff.

AB Records: Favourite album? **Richard:** *Electric Ladyland* by Jimi Hendrix. It has it all. *Bitches Brew* by Miles Davis. These two records really fucked with my head! I should mention here that I got quite into jazz as a student. Massive Attack, Botchit and Scarper, Roni Size, John B and Keiretsu began a love affair with dub, breakbeat and drum and bass, which persisted beyond my uni years. Since then, I have got really into electronic music of all kinds. And a fair bit of reggae too. Sounds of The Universe / Studio One being my go-to label for this.

AB Records: First gig? **Richard:** R.E.M. supported by Belly, Del Amitri and The Cranberries at Cardiff Arms Park on the *Monster* tour in 1995. I was fourteen. I can still hear the intro riff to 'What's the Frequency, Kenneth?' bursting forth from the PA and rattling the roof of the old stadium. Michael Stipe leaping across the stage dressed in some spangly outfit. Brilliant!

AB Records: Style icon? **Richard:** *Back to The Future*, *Easy Rider*, and anything with Tom Hanks in, a fellow Aston Villa supporter!

AB Records: Favourite up and coming artist? **Richard:** A young lad from Whitehaven, Aaron Spencer, has impressed me recently. My friend Stuart Sidney, local Keswick guitar teacher, plays guitar in his band. Ooh, and the Dirty Denims, of course! They are a brilliant happy hard rocking band from Eindhoven in The Netherlands. A real class act and lovely people to boot!

If you enjoy this content, please consider making a small, magazine-sized donation at the following link: <https://paypal.me/aldorabritainrecords>. Thank you!



All views, comments and opinions expressed within are those of the artists and organisations represented. Aldora Britain Records does not necessarily endorse all of these viewpoints.

All rights reserved. No part of this e-zine can be reproduced without properly crediting the author(s).

Rewind...

Please check out these recent past issues of the Aldora Britain Records e-zine:

[A B Records Issue 79 \(November 2022\)](#)

Featuring Portobello Express, TONG, Andy Bob Beaumont, Jostaberry, Sky Diving Penguins, Paul Inglis, Andy Salter, Deep Mud, Hoorsees, and Stan Matthews.

[A B Records Issue 78 \(November 2022\)](#)

Featuring Noah and The Whale, Seas of Mirth, Paul Mitch, Wynton Existing, Charming Disaster, Secret Monkey Weekend, Katvanger, Sophie Kay, Volfodemo, and Ruth Hazleton.

[A B Records Issue 77 \(November 2022\)](#)

Featuring Sid Bradley, King Kerosene, Vanishing Faces, Phanerons, Charlie Marks, Brocken Spectre, Mordecai Smyth, Kate Ellis, Unconcealed Glory, and Bedsit.

[A B Records Issue 76 \(November 2022\)](#)

Featuring Jack Yoder, Adrienne Pecheuse, Mr White, Munich Syndrome, Bruno Karnel, Drool Brothers, Stefan Neumann, Miles Island, Shwarma, and Blouzouki.

[A B Records Issue 75 \(October 2022\)](#)

Featuring Four Star Combo, T.E. Yates, James McKeivier, Moonlit, The Ormidales, Chris Browne Browne Project, Globo Cons, Scratch Buffalo, Nicholas Rowe, and Fieves.

Aldora Britain Records Est. 2013

And it's thank you to...

All the bands and artists from all around the world who have featured with *Aldora Britain Records*, it wouldn't happen without you. **Malcolm Hilton** for proof-reading every word in every e-zine, many hours well spent. **Dana Berry** for organising our *Tomorrow's Music Today* livestream events, a lot of hard work and a great exhibition of the true ABR spirit. **Chris Chin** from Mark Skin Radio, Boston, Massachusetts, for giving us the remarkable opportunity to have a mini segment in his weekly radio show, Christian's Cosmic Corner, and taking ABR to the next level. Indiana singer / songwriter extraordinaire **Joel David Weir** for all his support and kind comments, allowing ABR to reach a new audience and for more people to discover great new music, and, of course, for your amazing records too. **Holger El Pres** for all your backing over in Germany, it is pretty special to have *Aldora Britain Records* radio specials broadcasting out of mainland Europe. **Scott Gordon** and **James Walsh** for curating the first ever *Aldora Britain Records* live music showcase, hosted in Gloucester in 2022, the first of many. Our label collaborators all over the world, including Rex and Christina from **Big Stir Records**.

Aldora Britain Records Est. 2022