

# Poetry Express Newsletter #56

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Boy Meets Girl by Alisha Sufit



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# Events

**January 11th** saw a quiet but spirited 2018 start at the Poetry Café. The main spot featured the eloquence of **Sophia Jackson**, read by **Razz**. Sophia sustains a staggering level of pure heroism and dynamic self-assertion in her proclamations against her handicaps. There was an interesting new arrival with **Ryan Bloodworth**, who read from his novella *Fabulous Riders*, reviewed in this issue. Some new material from **Jessica Lawrence**, including poems with a geological emphasis, and from **Frank Bangay**.

**February 8th** featured **Kath Tait**, with her ever-potent cocktail of cynicism and sensitivity. That event saw the appearance, after a long absence, from **George Tahta**, with a panorama of time travel and a touching tribute to the late **Dan Driscoll**.

**March 8<sup>th</sup>** was a breath of spring after an Arctic winter. Great opening from **Razz** with *Forgiveness*: “No way I can be forgiven if I can’t forgive myself. Sophia Jackson’s input was exceptional, with *Shadow of a Girl*, epic of a heroic struggle for identity in the face of chronic disability and marginalisation (This poem is featured on p xxx) Some Anglo-Saxon Shamanism from **Andrew Ray**, with *Night Watch*. Some powerful new contributions from **Jessica Lawrence**, with *Two Screams for Joanna Yeats*, and *Pillaging the Landscape of the Brain*. The latter is an indictment of misogynistic neurologists (Jessica had to go to the USA for proper treatment); the poem makes brilliant analogies between surgery and the abuse of the environment. Brilliant main spots from **Jude Cowan Montague** and **James Shapiro**. Jude gave a tour-de-force with a ‘definitive’ version of a folk ballad, *Shameless Joan from Finsbury*. What thorough editing! I have not heard the like since Martin Carthy’s unleashing of *The Famous Flower of Serving Men*. Dark, surreal and at points hilarious – a true apotheosis of folk balladry. She also treated the audience to some of her poetic witticisms, including *Boots* and *Banged Up* (‘closest I have come to alien abduction’).

James has recently had a novel, *Sunrise Over Belet*, published by Austin Macauley. **Helmut Scholz** did his combination of wild virtuoso violin and poetry, including *Church Bells* and his homage to his violin. I shall never cease to marvel at his enthusiasm to come over from Germany to be with us. **Mama Purple** read *One Year* (Celebrating the anniversaries of deceased superstars), and *Feeling Better* – ‘feeling beyond the meaning of all your projected feelings’.

In the second half, there were welcome newcomers in the form of **Cathy** (who also videoed the event), and the Japanese **Ima**. **Paul Riley** announced the forthcoming release of his album *Jazz Mods*; he also read *Pleasure Node* and *Domesticity*. **Frank Bangay** was on form as ever with *I am blessed*. **George Tahta** eloquently expressed some long-term angsts. Some lyricism from **Lucy Carrington** and musical imagination from **Declant** concluded the evening.

As is generally known, Razz had sadly to return to hospital; all our thoughts go out to him in his critical condition. **April 12<sup>th</sup>** at the Poetry Café was impeccably emcee-ed by **Steve Dowsett**, who also made a spirited musical contribution with *Birth Rights*, *Phoney Love* and *Gandhi to Stalin*. **Kath Tait** did a heartfelt reading of **Sophia Jackson’s** *The Love Horizon*, which, true to Sophia’s form, contains an array of memorable utterances, such as ‘clothes underneath the skin’ and ‘just like Special Needs drumbeat’. More robust antiquarianism from **Andrew**. A welcome newcomer in the form of **Shashe Golob**, from the

USA. Keith Bray confronted the radical feminists with *A Goddess and Cinderella – a Gone Suffragette*. New music from Spanish **Anna Keeta**, with *Ashes to Ashes* and *Memory Lane*; some fine theatricals with greater costumery and blackening of left-hand side of face. Sasha proclaimed the campaign in Uxbridge against 'redevelopment' and destruction of trees; she also did a musical feature, *Real Love*, with recorded backing track – dynamic indeed.

The main spot that evening was **Wendy Young**, at full power, with *Obituary*, *Bummer Bill from Lodge Hill*, *Trolley Folly*, *Entrepreneur*, *Big Man*, *The Glass Pig* (in honour of a war casualty), and finally the dedicatory *A to Z of Razz* – 'not Daz, but I love a sprinkling of powder'.

The second half included **Peter Beverley** – some pungent wit including "I bet Sylvia Plath hated Christmas." **Jessica Lawrence** spoke out for threatened trees, and then delivered her requiem for Razz, putting the emphasis on past, happier and healthier days. Another strong musical contribution from **Declant**. Warm conclusions from **Frank Bangay** and **Lucy Carrington**.

**May 10<sup>th</sup>** saw an Open Mic Session, dedicated to the memory of Razz. There was a great confluence of his devotees, going back several decades. With great generosity the Poetry Café waived the rental for that evening, and assisted with extra publicity to draw a capacity audience. Highlights of the event were **Simon Jenner's** dedication, read by **Debbie MacNamara**, and equally impassioned declarations by **Isha** and **Jessica Lawrence**. Jessica made valiant efforts on Razz's behalf, and managed to prolong his life for a year or so, contrary to the predictions of the medical authorities. Other poetic contributions came from **Maggie Hoolihan**, **George Tahta** and **Beowulf Mayfield** (whom I had first met via Razz's 'World Oyster Club at Bunjies), **Frank Bangay** (close friend of Razz over many decades) and **Gail Campbell**. **Ikram**, a newcomer, who had not previously met Razz, delivered two poems concerning death and the renewal of life, which were totally in the spirit of the occasion. The evening had a really nice balance of Spoken Word and Music: musical contributions came from **John Arthur**, **Kathy Toy** (a welcome return after a long absence) **Steve Dowsett** – with a special dedicatory song for Razz – *Technicolor Poet*, **Rachel** with a **Victor Jara** song dear to Razz's memory, **Alastair Murray** with **John Maclean** and **Jenny**, and **Lawrence Renée**. For me the special musical highlights were the imaginative delicacy of **John Peacock** and the lyricism of **Chris Leeds** and his home-made harp. The latter made a glorious finale for the evening.

On **June 14<sup>th</sup>**, the 'new régime' had an excellent start under the sensitive guidance of **George Tahta**. As **David Kessel** was unable to make it as scheduled, Dave Skull did the main spot, in true Blakean spirit, and with some moving a cappella vocals. Plenty of highlights that evening, including Shaman **Andrew's** raw, blustering evocation of antiquity. Interesting new arrival in the form of **Bob**, and some gems from **Jessica Lawrence**, including Ode to a **One-Legged Blackbird**. Robust contributions, as ever from **Jeanette Ju-Pierre** and **Frank Bangay** Good balance of words and music too, with 'on-form' song performances from **Madeleine Smith**, **Declan** and **DD** (some great Hispanic sounds); great clarinet solo, and some fine lyric poetry, from **Keith**. **July 12<sup>th</sup>**, featuring **Frank Bangay**, saw many new faces, whilst on **August 9<sup>th</sup>** there was a capacity audience. The main spot was **Richard Downes**, who treated the audience to the extraordinary depth of his experiences. Another special spot was the playing of sound recordings of **Joe Bidder's** poetry, presented by **Frank David**. Joe's massive contributions to literature, and his superb

administrative acumen in founding and sustaining Survivors Poetry & Music, deserve vast acclaim. **R D France** made a confrontational impact, as did **Ben Glass**. There was a good balance of poetry and music thanks to the songs of **Maddie Smith**, **Alastair Murray**, **John Arthur** and **Armored Weston**, and some great flute improvisations by **Keith Bray**. There was also an announcement of the decease of Jazzman John Clarke, a frequent performer at Survivors.

**Dave Russell**

# Razz: A Night-Time Tribute

by **Simon Jenner**



All his life, Razz exulted in peering at a slight tilt to the universe, more particularly that part of it between Tottenham, Camden and Covent Garden. Even though he walked like a sailor and hailed loudly from Portsmouth, he once said his Great-Uncle was an Admiral.

Razz excelled in his truth, a Sagittarian one – where language protest and song commingled just as they did for all visionary outsiders, from Blake to Ken Campbell. In fact, I often wonder if Razz had strayed out of The Warp, The Illuminati, and needed to find his way back in. We all do.

Joining survivor groups in the 1980s he emerged from around 1990 as the coalescing star that became Survivors' Poetry. Running gigs at the Poetry Café with Xochitl Tuck he had a problem with the movement becoming established. It meant organisations like the Arts Council demanding tick boxes and stats, which – if they'd been the right GSM, Razz would've consigned to Rizlas: best place for them. One of the funniest forms was a trustee wanting to know Razz's 'real name'. He became Razz, short for Razzmatazz, in about 1972; he told me he was thus named by people he shared a squat with.



By the time I came to SP in 2003, Razz had been running his gigs for 13 years. Though it was my first job, I was Director, in charge of a budget where Razz only got half of Xochitl's pay. He didn't like paper being put to tree-adverse uses. So in a way I became part of the tree problem. Having been on the dole a lot myself, even when Director, this was more ironic than a JSA concession at the Savile Club. But it meant I had glimpses of Razz ever hunted down by hunting pink chits of paper, admin queries from people from whom I had to protect him – the bizarre spectacle of officialdom snapping at the people who made it actually tick.

Razz's brilliance was airborne; his wit could sometimes be devastating though never cruel – even when dealing with Enemies of the People. He could keep a lyric aerated with a lilt that feathered its flight, often unvarying in any subtle details but building intensely to a kind of joyous, sometimes desperate plea for the world he'd seen snuffed in the 1980s, which he lived to see welcomed back by far younger people. Dangerously generous with his time, he lived in order to perform, and never showed a trace of nerves once anywhere near the mic.



Many people combined to help Razz. Penny from Tottenham Chances gave Razz a new lease of theatrical life by throwing her venue open to him, and allowing him to make it his own. It continues today – a brief hiatus, ironically involving squatters, will no doubt end by July- August. Debbie McNamara is in contact with the venue.

The Poetry Café too has been very generous and is not charging us for tonight. Thank you. Debbie McNamara has taken over the organising of both this and Tottenham Chances, with a rota of 3 rotating MC's at The Poetry Café: Dave Russell, George Tahta and Alastair Murray. It'll be a whole new phase, but keeping 'the tribe' together and the same fantastic generation.

Razz's gift for friendship attracted the best. Dave Russell has been an anchor here, a laconically wise presence at the Poetry Café and a vastly talented composer/performer with a defiant repertoire, who's about to publish a book and who keeps editing and designing *Poetry Express* too. Kath Tait has been instrumental in keeping the Poetry Café together since Razz was taken more gravely ill. Equally famed as a composer of memorable, lyrically gnarled and funny songs, Kath helped to promote us through social media. It's fitting too to pay tribute to Ingrid Andrew, whose work anniversary keeps coming up on social media, asking me to congratulate her. A superb artist and poster designer, her early death was tragic, but she'd no doubt smile at her anniversary.

The first I knew of Razz's illness was Anna Menmuir calling me. She, and many others behind the scenes – too many I don't know – made life easier for Razz long before and during his illness. Debbie McNamara of Mad Pride, organising fame for starters, ferried Razz to and from gigs, counselled and helped him in many everyday tasks. She's since helped him through his illness and indeed is sorting his effects with his family. She read to him in hospital. Wendy Young is another SP regular who knew Razz well and kept in touch and visited him to his last days. She was joined by Keith Bray and SP co-founder Frank Bangay, and there are so many more who came and went who others never saw at all. You know who you are. I wish I did.

At least I could organise filming of Razz. Last night I was reviewing at the Southwark Playhouse and tonight I'm at the National (sorry Razz, that'd raise a laugh). But I was with the man who filmed him, Hugh Ellacott. Hugh didn't know and was upset. He pulled out his phone and before the lights went down he played the one he shot of Razz outside St Paul's. Razz's voice arced and rasped in the darkening theatre – I said he's with anarchic life enhancers like Ken Campbell. Razz's sing-song delivery made a faultless fade to a bunch of under-25s walking on, skirling but sanguine in the hope that something better was about to bulldoze everything that tottered in his way. Pink forms, pink scans, purple people. Me probably.

## **In Memoriam Grahame Feasey 'Razz'** **December 21<sup>st</sup> 1952-April 25<sup>th</sup> 2018**

<https://vimeo.com/15995943>



## Dear God by Razz

[vimeo.com](https://vimeo.com)

Razz, known to many as compere of Survivor's monthly open mic night in Covent garden, goes all existential on us. Will he be struck down?

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# Alisha Sufit – Featured Artist

**Alisha Sufit** was born in 1946 in London, and is best known as the singer-songwriter with the 1970s band *Magic Carpet*. She is also a visual artist, author and poet. She attended **Chelsea College of Art**, London, the **École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts** in Paris, plus later completed a postgraduate illustration course at Central St. Martin's. On leaving Chelsea College of Art in the late 60s, she began playing guitar and writing her own songs, performing in clubs and colleges around the UK, self-accompanied on guitar and Appalachian dulcimer. In 1971 she joined with ex Chelsea College of Art fellow student **Jim Moyes**, plus two musical friends, to form the 'psych prog folk' band *Magic Carpet*. In 1972 the band released an eponymous album, *Magic Carpet*, described as "one of the finest Indian-influenced psychedelic folk albums of the 1970s". After a launch at the 100 Club in London, a performance at **Cleo Laine** and **Johnny Dankworth**'s Wavendon, radio airplay on **Pete Drummond**'s BBC *Sounds of the Seventies*, plus several club and festival appearances, the group disbanded in 1972.

During the 1970s and 1980s Alisha Sufit was supporting artiste alongside numerous musicians of the era including **The Enid**, **Fairport Convention**, **Terry Reid**, the guitarist **Davy Graham** and the Incredible String Band, amongst others. The *Magic Carpet* album began to receive acclaim some 15 years after its release, the original LP now a sought-after collectable, currently re-issued on CD by Magic Carpet Records (UK). It was also re-issued on heavyweight vinyl, a signed limited edition that quickly sold out.

Alisha Sufit has also produced a large volume of art – mostly drawings, some paintings – and she continues to work and write. In 1993 she released the album *Alisha Through the Looking Glass* on CD and heavy-weight audiophile vinyl, and in 1994 the album *Love And The Maiden*, a signed limited edition CD compilation of her early recordings with sleeve notes by UK guitarist Davey Graham. In 1996, *Magic Carpet* sitarist Clem Alford and Alisha collaborated to record the album *Once Moor*, subtitled *Magic Carpet II*, featured in *Sound On Sound* magazine. In 1999 she contributed two tracks to the compilation CD *Women Of Heart and Mind*, a collaboration of



women singer-songwriters, and in 2005 she was included in a compilation album entitled *Many Bright Things*.

In 2008 Alisha Sufit's song *The Phoenix*, from the Magic Carpet LP, was included in the double CD album *A Monstrous Psychedelic Bubble (Exploding In Your Mind)* compiled by **Gaz Cobain** of *Future Sound Of London*. The album was highly praised in the media by **Noel Gallagher** of Oasis who invited Cobain and his partner, Brian Dougans, of FSOL to remix the Oasis single *Falling Down*. Alisha Sufit was a featured vocalist on the track.

She also joined **The Amorphous Androgynous**, the live band associated with FSOL, to perform in Kazan and Moscow in 2008, and in Kiev and the Green Man and Electric Picnic festivals in 2009, plus the HMV Forum in London. Alisha Sufit was lead vocalist on the Beatles song *Let It Be* with The Amorphous Androgynous Band for the commemorative anniversary album, *Let It Be Revisited*, released with Mojo magazine October 2010.

*Falling Upwards*, her first novel, was published in November 2012 in ebook format. The paperback version was published in December 2012.



**Queen Titiana by Alisha Sufit**

## Some Memories Of Razz

I first met Razz in 1979. I can't remember how the meeting came about, but I think someone that I knew at the time introduced us to each other. In the early 1980's I would see Razz at Ignition Poets. A poetry group that met in a house in Hackney Wick East London. I would also see him at the Monday poetry nights at the Troubadour Coffee House in Earls Court, West London. During this period of time I was also organising gigs at the Friday Club that met in the Psychiatric Department of St Georges Hospital in Tooting, South London. I had been a member of that club since the mid 1970s, when I had been living in the Borough of Wandsworth, of which Tooting is part, and using the Borough's Mental Health Services. Razz would often perform with his partner Sam, who played violin to Razz's guitar and singing. The combination was a treat to listen too. They were a popular act when they played there. As the decade went on I started organising benefit gigs for a mental health campaigning group that I was involved with. Razz and Sam took part in some of these events. I would also sometimes visit them up in Tottenham, North London; they lived at a few different addresses in the area. Tottenham seems to be quite a big place.

Early in the 1990s Survivors Poetry started. We were granted Arts Council funding. I worked as the London Events Programmer organising performances and writing workshops in Day Centres, Sheltered Housing and other such venues around London. Razz and Sam performed at a number of these events, Razz also worked as a facilitator at some of the writing workshops that I organised. However, in the 1990s I was going through many difficulties; my mental health was in very poor shape. I found Razz and Sam very supportive. I would often visit them up in Tottenham. I spent some Christmases with them. Razz and I both took an interest in cacti and succulent plants; we made a number of trips to Kew Gardens. On a few occasions during this decade, we also went to see Kevin Coyne. Also in the early 1990's Razz started running the World Oyster Club at Bunjies Coffee House in Litchfield Street, near Leicester Square. A new vibrant acoustic music scene started at Bunjies at the time, reviving the rich musical tradition that had been active at Bunjies in past decades. I would often attend the World Oyster Club and

sometimes do guest spots there. However the Performance Poetry world in the 1990s became very competitive. This had an effect on me; I know that it also had an effect on Razz.

Early this century Razz suffered a big blow when his partner Sam passed away. Shortly after this, Survivors Poetry lost its Arts Council funding. However, alongside Xochitl, Razz kept Survivors Poetry going by running the nights at the Poetry Cafe and at Tottenham Chances. After Xochitl died, Razz continued with the work on his own. I respect him for this, and his dedication to the cause. I also admire the bond he built with Sophia, a lady who while being unable to walk or talk properly writes lots of poetry. Every month she came down to the poetry cafe and Razz read out her poems. I was very moved by the interaction they had with each other. It is vital that someone else in attendance will be volunteer to carry on reading Sophia's poems. Last Summer Razz and I spent a couple of enjoyable afternoons at the Chelsea Physics Garden, one of my favourite places, of which I am a member. We talked and shared a little humour. Taking in the beauty of the garden and admiring the beautiful and interesting plants growing there. On the second trip Razz bought us both tea and cake from the garden's restaurant. We watched some pigeons walking on the tables and pecking away at crumbs until someone shooed them away; I am glad that I got to take Razz to the gardens. A couple of days before Razz died, I visited him at the Hospice. He could hardly talk and I felt a bit awkward – not really knowing what to say. Before I left he held my hand; after a while I let go and left the room. However, I felt that perhaps I should have stayed a little longer holding his hand; goodbyes can be hard to say. But there are a lot of positive things that I will remember Razz for. It is a shame that he didn't release any recordings or books of his poetry. While unfortunately he won't be around to see it. I hope something can be done to remedy that situation. Preliminary steps have been taken towards publishing and recording his work.

**Frank Bangay**  
**May 2018**



**Beyond All that by Alisha Sufit**



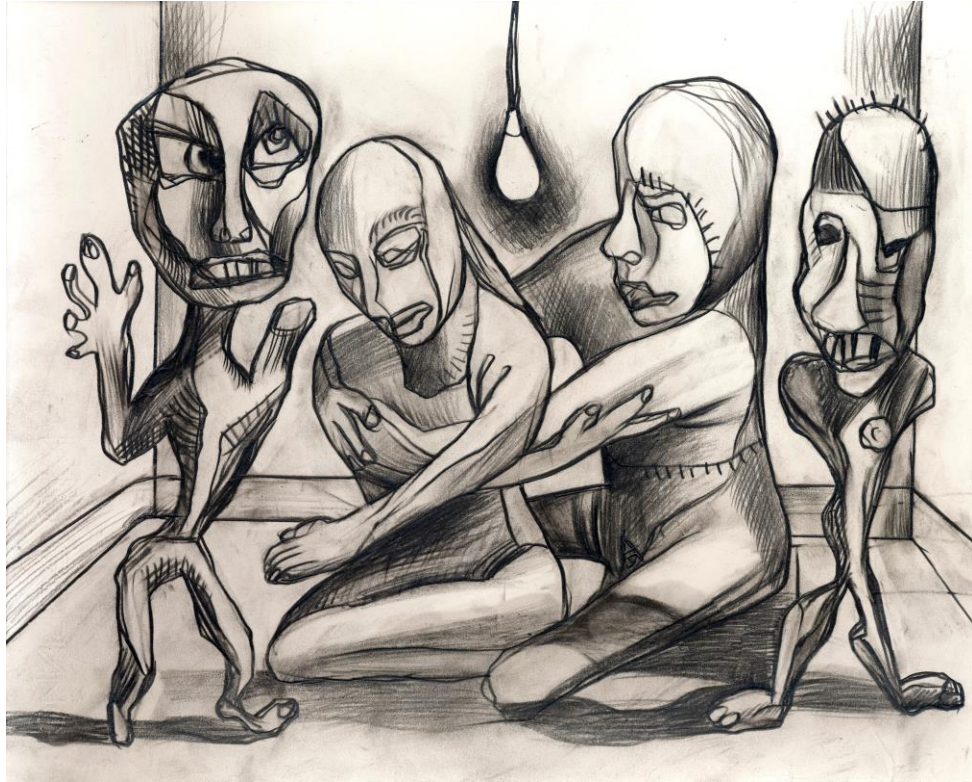
**Duo Walkers by Alisha Sufit**



**Heart on Your Sleeve by Alisha Sufit**



**Female Friends by Alisha Sufit**



**Look Who's Taking Over by Alisha Sufit**



**Princess Zebra by Alisha Sufit**



**The Bar by Alisha Sufit**





**Odd Couple by Alisha Sufit**



**Princess Zebra by Alisha Sufit**



**Slight Evolutionary Detour by Alisha Sufit**



**The Long Road by Alisha Sufit**

## **Fabulous Riders, Ryan Bloodworth, 2017    ISBN 978 153 773 5894**

In the author's words: "Fabulous Riders encapsulates the experience of an English black man as he battles with the establishment and goes deep into his mind exploring his African roots." In a way, this work depicts the struggle for a 'balancing act' between being true to one's roots and breaking down barriers. Its historical span is comprehensive, covering African antiquity, the Slave Trade and its consequences, and inner urban life of the 1990s. Geographically, it reaches as far as Tibet. Concerning the latter, there is a great eulogy of dance music: "The music broke down doors and barriers between people. In the ecstasy fuelled nights of 90s clubbing culture the bloke that might have bottled you down the pub was now hugging you like a lost friend." This culture is opposed to the machinations of 'the haters', who control bureaucracy and psychiatry.

There is an in-depth exploration of black roots culture in relation to the psychiatric system. In terms of setting, there is an excellent counterpointing of the free, enlightening ambience of the Trance Dance floor, with the cold oppressiveness of the psychiatric institution.

Interestingly, the book's dedication is to 'the freedom of Tibet (from totalitarian oppression) and Maitreya's vision'. The figure of Maitreya has always had a dual significance, as a supreme enlightener and as a deceptive Antichrist.

## **Kevin Coyne in the early 1980s**

During the late 1970s Kevin Coyne started to receive some well-earned praise in the music press. For example one week in early 1979 his photograph appeared on the front page of the NME. However, as the year went on, things started to change. *Babble* received much misunderstanding, particularly in the Sun newspaper, and the play got banned (for the full story visit the Kevin Coyne facebook page). I saw Kevin live in late January 1980; the event took place at Battersea Town Hall. A lot of the gig was just Kevin on his own, with his frantic guitar playing. He did a great version of *Fat Girl*, there was also *My Evil Island Home* from *Case History*, and *Pointing The Finger* – with different lyrics from the version that appeared on his 1981 album of the same name. There was also *Dance Of The Bourgeoisie* performed with a drum machine backing. It was a powerful performance. It seemed that the knocks Kevin had experienced with *Babble* had an effect on him.

Spring 1980 saw the release of his next album, *Titled Bursting Bubbles*: this is a collaboration with Brian Godding, a guitarist who had worked with Kevin on *Babble*. Brian has a long career going back to the mid 1960s when he was part of a band called *The Ingoes*, and then became a part of *Blossom Toes*. Musically this is a very sparse record – with guitar, drum machines and saxophone on some numbers. The opening track, titled *The Only One* is a song about loneliness, on the next track *Children's Crusade* Kevin sings “some good advice to children today, don't let the terror hold sway”. *Learn To Swim Learn To Drown* seems to link the traumas in the world with the traumas in the mind. “The rain it falls, barricades burn, the world turns”. On the following track *Mad Boy No. 2* the backing track is the previous track played backwards including the vocals. Here the mad person points a finger back at the normal world. “You're just the human race; I don't feel out of place”. Side two of the record opens with *Dark Dance Hall* – a song about noisy discotheques; it also seems very much a song about depression. Loneliness runs through *I Just Don't Know What To Do* while in *A Little Piece Of Heaven* we find Kevin singing about a holiday with fish and chips and ice cream. Later in the song he sings “when you hear me screaming in the night, everything will be alright” as he thinks of the voices and names that he can't get right. While not easy listening, it is a powerful record, well worth investigating.

Around November 1980 I saw Kevin live at the Greyhound in Fulham. He was performing with a band called GLS. It featured Brian Godding on guitar Steve Lamb on bass and Dave Sheen on drums. The band were loud, with Kevin singing over the top of the music, showing himself again to be one of the most powerful vocalists around. It was an intense gig that featured in the set some of the songs from *Bursting Bubbles*. The autumn of 1980 saw the release of *Sanity Stomp*. This is a double album: Disc 1 was a collaboration with punk band *The Ruts*. This was shortly after their singer Malcolm Owen had died. It features some fine performances in the New-Wave style of the time. Examples of this are *Taking On The World*, *Fat Man*, and *Monkey Man* (not the Toots and the Maytals song of the same name.) Performed to a reggae tune this song would often be featured in Kevin's gigs. Something about the song would often bring a smile to my face. Also on Disc 1 is a song called *No Romance*, accompanied by Paul Wickens piano: this is one of my favourite Kevin Coyne songs. The lyrics have an ongoing relevance as Kevin sings “give this little dictator half a chance, and he will crush us all with his misery”. Disc 2 is a collaboration with Brian Godding and Robert Wyatt. One song, *A Loving Hand*, offers some important sentiments and would often appear in Kevin's gigs. This is followed by the up-tempo *A Fear Of Breathing* then *In Silence*.

For me the three songs seem to follow on from each other. Some of the songs do sound different from what we were used to hearing from Kevin. He has said how his mental health was in poor shape at the time; but it is a valid statement of Kevin's experiences. *Wonderful Wilderness* features an atmospheric tune created by Bob Ward, over which Kevin recites some interesting poetry. In this he blesses different people from the midwife to the meter reader to the bartender. *Taking On The Bowers* features Kevin singing over Robert Wyatt's drumming with sentiments like "god bless the homeless suicide. *The World Speaks* is a humorous piece: Kevin and Brian Godding offer peace to different people both unknown, imaginary and famous, it includes the late Bernard Manning, a comedian often seen as being politically incorrect. He sits here alongside people such as John and Yoko, John Peel and George Harrison. The album closes with the acoustic *You Can't Kill Us*. That song is very much a statement of intent.

I saw Kevin and GLS a couple more times during late 1980 and early 1981. Both these gigs were at the Half Moon in Putney. Again the band was loud and Kevin was in strong voice. However, at times I remember him sounding quite vulnerable. During 1981 Kevin left Virgin to sign with the then new independent label Cherry Red. Shortly after came the release of the previously mentioned *Pointing The Finger*. Like some of *Sanity Stomp*, Kevin sounds a little different from the Kevin Coyne that we are used to. It did take me a little while to adjust to this record. Once I did I found myself playing it a lot and identifying with some of it. Records like *Case History* and *Marjory Razorblade*, while being personal statements, often featured Kevin drawing inspiration from his work experience at the Whittington Hospital in Preston and his experience as a social worker in Camden. On *Bursting Bubbles* and *Pointing The Finger* we have Kevin singing directly from the experiences that he was going through at the time. In the sleeve notes, Kevin talks about experiencing severe depression and aching paranoia. Musically it features the previously mentioned GLS plus Steve Bull on keyboards. One distinctive feature is Steve Lamb's fretless bass. The opening track *There She Goes* is dedicated to his first wife Lesley. It features a heartfelt vocal from Kevin. Here he sings about being destroyed on drink and believing voices in his head. In the next track, as I recall, he expresses the aching paranoia that he was going through at the time, while in *One Little Moment* he sings of the depression he was experiencing looking for a moment's peace in the turmoil. Here Kevin delivers a powerful vocal as he searches for that precious moment of peace. Side one of the record ends with *Let Love Reside*: in the sleeve notes Kevin describes the song as 'an agnostic hymn to self awareness'. Side Two opens with *Sleeping Waking* – a song about the change and turmoil created in the

early days of Margaret Thatcher's government. The title track *Pointing The Finger* has different lyrics to the version that he did at Battersea Town Hall. Here he sings about England's empire fading away. The closing track on the album, *Old Lady*, is a song about old age. While the lyrics talk about the way old people are misunderstood by society, the song has an upbeat tune.

After *Pointing The Finger* Brian Godding left the band. He was replaced by John Etheridge who had been with Soft Machine, but as far as I know he never actually recorded with Kevin. John Etheridge was then replaced by Pete Kirtley, a guitarist from Newcastle who in the mid-1960s worked with a South London band called *Loose Ends*. Pete Kirtley has also worked with Alan Hull and Bert Jansch. I next saw Kevin live in the spring of 1982, again an enjoyable gig, but not as loud as the GLS band.

In the spring of 1982 Kevin released his next album *Politicz*. Side One features Kevin singing over Pete Kirtley's acoustic guitar: Side Two features Kevin singing over Steve Bull's keyboards.

Side one opens with *Your Holiness*, a song dedicated to the pope, Kevin himself being an ex-Catholic. The next track *Liberation* is a song about the plight of women who are abused by their husbands. It also addresses the insensitivity that the police sometimes show in such matters. *Fun Flesh* is the story of a man preoccupied with pornography and out of touch with his feelings. The closing track on Side One, titled *Flashing Back*, looks back to what seems like happier times while trying to face the reality of the present, but not always able to face up to what is expected of him. Pete Kirtley's guitar playing throughout is a treat. The first four tracks on side two feature Kevin singing over Steve Bull's keyboards. The keyboard playing is very basic which is how Kevin liked to work. However Steve Bull has said how he had wanted to develop the music a bit. One track, *Banzi* – a song about the Japanese work ethic, features some strange vocal mannerisms, another track, *Poisoning You* is a song about suffocating relationships. The side ends with a song called *I've Got The Photographs*. This is an upbeat number that again features Pete Kirtley on guitar. 1983 saw Cherry Red releasing the wonderful *Beautiful Extremes* compilation. At the time I read the NME every week, they gave the record a negative review – which I felt was very unfair. However, that seemed to be the way the NME treated Kevin at the time. I did read a good review of the record in a short-lived music paper called *Soundmaker*; they also published a nice interview with Kevin.



I next saw Kevin live in the summer of 1983. The gig featured Kevin accompanied by Pete Kirtley on guitar. Again it was a good gig; Kevin would often stop mid-song and start rambling on about something before returning to the song again. However, as funny as it was, it did seem like something was going on for Kevin. He did seem a little bit drunk as he often was at the time; but it also seemed like he was losing his grip a bit. During 1984 Kevin released his next album *Legless In Mallia*. No longer on Cherry Red, the record was released on Kevin's own label Collapse records. It was the first of Kevin's records to be recorded in Germany, also the last of his English records. The line-up is Kevin on vocals and guitar. Steve Lamb on bass, Dave Sheen on drums and Peter Hope Evans on harmonica.

This record sees Kevin returning to his blues roots. The opening track Big Money Man rocks along with some nice harmonica. Then comes *Gina's Song* – an acoustic love song that often became a part of Kevin's set during the 1990s. Another song, *Raindrops On The River*, with lyrics written by John Pigeon finds Kevin singing over Steve Lamb's fretless bass. "When you lose your mind, friends are hard to find". Side one ends with the upbeat Nigel in Napoli. Side two opens with Zoo Wars a creepy song. Here he paints a picture of a disorientating zoo where the animals take over. Black Cloud is a lovely little song with acoustic guitar and harmonica. The black cloud follows Kevin everywhere he goes. But he believes that one day the sun will shine again and he will be heaven bound. The title track again has lyrics by John Pigeon, but like *Raindrops on the River* it does seem to reflect what Kevin was going through at the time. He sings "You're a walking shipwreck; each day could be your last". The record closes with an upbeat song called *Cycling*. Kevin sings about carrying on through all the changes.

Around this time Kevin also recorded a live album titled *Rough*. I think it might have been a German import at the time. Pete Kirtley return to play electric guitar, it contains some fine performances. There is an emotional version of *House On The Hill*, *Gina's Song* and a manic version of *Pretty Park*. The record closes with *Old Fashioned Love Song* and a short poem titled *I Wander*.

The record was released on CD in the mid 1990s with some extra tracks. There are emotional performances of *Saviour*, *Sunday Morning Sunrise* and *Black Cloud*. A song called *Happy Holiday* sits between *Old Fashioned Love Song* and *I Wander*. This is a studio recording from that time; however it does seem a bit intrusive. I would much rather the *Old Fashioned Love Song* had been followed by *I Wander*. But mustn't

grumble: it still is a nice record and contains some nice Kevin Coyne artwork.

Kevin's marriage was falling apart and his drinking was getting the better of him. Then halfway through 1984 he moved to Germany eventually settling in Nuremburg. There would be some tough years ahead, but with help from his future wife Helmi and some local musicians Kevin would eventually pull through. Between 1984 and 1986 He worked with a guitarist called Martin Odstrcil. From their bootlegs that I have heard, they worked well together; however, I don't know if they ever recorded.

In the late 1980s he returned to recording again. The records might not be Kevin at his best, but it was Kevin coming back from the edge and rediscovering his confidence. I felt that the records did contain some fine songs, some examples being *Victoria Smiles* and *Love For Five Minutes from Stumbling On To Paradise* and the *Bungalow Song* and *Passion's Pleasures* from *Wild Tiger Love*.

However in Brittan we hadn't seen Kevin since 1984. His records were becoming very hard to get hold of. I had spent much time wondering what had happened to Kevin, as no doubt had many other fans.

So it was good to see him back again, to see him sober and in good voice and humour. It was also good to hear his new records even if they weren't Kevin at his best.

He had also developed a career as a painter I find his artwork most interesting. As the 1990s went on Kevin got back into his stride again. My favourites from this time being *The Adventures Of Crazy Frank* and *Sugar Candy Taxi*.

At the beginning of this century he started to work with his son Robert who added a punk edge to his music. All this is material for a future article. But I wanted to shed some light on his music in the early 1980s – A time when, in England, Kevin would fade from the limelight.

## **Frank Bangay, December 2017**

*For more about Kevin Coyne visit The Kevin Coyne facebook site. Pascal's fans website doesn't seem to be active at the moment. However if you can get access to it then it is worth checking out. For bootlegs and other info visit an internet site titled The World Of Kevin Coyne.*

# CAN YOU HELP?



As part of her work for the Independent Review of the Mental Health Act, Dorothy Gould is trying to collect as many examples as possible of alternatives to detention/sectioning.

Because the Review is drawing primarily on a medical model, she would particularly like to hear of non-medical alternatives, including ones which are user-led and/or stem from black and minority ethnic groups and other particularly disadvantaged groups.

If you are able to help, please can you send information to her at [gould.dorothy@gmail.com](mailto:gould.dorothy@gmail.com), using the questions below:

**1(a)** What alternative services have helped you to avoid detention/sectioning and (b) How did they help you to avoid it?

or **2(a)** What alternatives would have helped you to avoid detention/sectioning (if available) and (b) How would they have helped you to avoid it?

**3(a)** Are there useful alternatives to detention/sectioning which you have heard about from others and (b) If, so, is there information which you can forward about these and their benefits?

[Article reproduced from NSUN e-bulletin 09/07/18]

NSUN: [www.nsun.org.uk](http://www.nsun.org.uk)



## Meditation on Medication

When woe or a trauma inside,  
Persists for too long unresolved,  
Or cuts too deep to the core,  
Emotional stress crystallises in the will.  
Feeling out of meaning manifests,  
As long as meaning repeats,  
Feeling is conditioned deeper still.  
So repeating cycles of stress and strain,  
Form a descending bottomless spiral,  
Of tragedy, suffering, torment and despair,  
Until you hate yourself for being the victim,  
Too weak to deserve happiness or love.  
The only way to heal the wound,  
Is to talk to someone that you trust,  
Who you believe will understand.  
So that their compassion and wisdom,  
Can elevate you to a new perspective,  
From where a way out or escape route,  
Now at last appears to be possible.  
That positive wave of release you feel,  
The lifting of the weight off your shoulders,  
Is the dissolving of the emotional tension,  
As endorphins reset the synapse code,  
To a more positive emotional fractal.  
So as that we emerge our true selves,  
Free of the pain that we once felt.



# Shadow Of A Girl

And when love goes sour and stale  
you fail to see the beauty in me  
and this is what I was told as a child  
as I wanted to fly away like a butterfly  
but I'd lost my way that night  
as I flew through the air.

No: there was no time to transform –  
I was malformed because I had to escape  
from the burning flames of my childhood  
or be locked up in hell – imprisoned  
despite being well, for I was different to them  
but they didn't treat me as an individual;  
they didn't see my need to be free  
and how I could illuminate the world  
with my difference –  
like a butterfly lightening up the sky  
illuminating the darkness  
with my rainbow coloured wings  
but I was just a shadow of a girl  
because life had entrapped me back then;

And like shadows, semi-invisible  
for a moment they thought I was there  
but I was gone; I was not even a memory  
an imprint on their mind  
for they saw right through me as if I were made of glass  
I would shatter under their stare, but they didn't care  
for I was not delicate like them, you see –  
but their pieces of glass  
were broken inside me, cutting me from within  
I cannot tell why the pain  
took years to come up consciously  
and took another decade to dispel into the air  
but the mist clung to me  
it was invisibly around me

and then it hit me like a brick.

I was sick for so long  
but I appeared to carry on in life  
as if nothing had gone wrong;  
but if you ignore your emotions for too long  
they'll become louder, drowning out the peace  
and the silence inside you,  
as they bang at the door of your conscious mind  
and you fumble like a fool in the dark for the key  
but the bridge is broken  
and you don't want to step out into thin air;  
and you invite your dreams  
to make a bridge brick by brick, dream by dream  
as they teach you about reality consciously  
it's where most people fear to tread  
ghosts from the past come and whisper in your ear  
about life that they experienced when they were alive  
and when you didn't hear them, you nearly died:  
for their messages were locked up inside you.

And then finally you released the door  
to the conscious mind. and nightmares spilled out  
on to the floor, and then in a while  
you were silent again, and the floor was littered  
with your thoughts of yesterday  
where nightmares roamed your mind's eye  
holding you down like lead balloons;  
but really you were a bird of peace now  
and you wanted freedom in your way  
you couldn't stand it any more  
you wanted to get out of here  
I say; but you couldn't –  
your wings were clipped back you see  
in the dark skies above you, you wanted to be free.

**Sophia Jackson**  
**Edited on 09/02/2018**

# Paintings Inspired at and by the Razz Memorial Event

by Colin Hambrook



**Baffled Angel**



**Be Good to Yourself**





Calling Missing Persons

# Waterloo Press Summer Newsletter

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As promised, a summer update from the seagulls and pelicans here at Waterloo. We've been busy plotting the year ahead, and a multitude of feathers are slowly falling into place. We're very pleased to report that the website re-design is well underway, and the relaunch is planned for September. Meantime, the Waterloo Press Twitter account will be reactivated soon, and a new Facebook page is forthcoming.

There will be more on these developments and new publications in the autumn newsletter. For now, the big news is our call out for LIT-UP. Details below: please circulate far and wide!

## LIT-UP

### Call out for Poets of Colour (self-defined)

**Waterloo Press invite submissions for LIT-UP, our new Arts Council England-funded mentoring and publishing scheme for emerging poets of colour.**

We encourage submissions from faith, lgbtqi, disability, Roma, working class, refugee and/or additional perspectives. The two-year project will provide ten poets with a digital platform on our new website as well as the necessary mentoring and editorial support to produce a pamphlet or a first poetry collection, all to be celebrated with a live closing event in the Spring of 2020.

There is no age restriction (from 18+) and no entry fee. Poets should be resident in the UK and have a track record of publishing and/or performing, with a portfolio at least 20 publishable poems.

1. In the first instance please contact LIT-UP Project Manager Monika Akila Richards on [akilalive@gmail.com](mailto:akilalive@gmail.com) and request the information/application form for completion, stating LIT-UP in the subject line.
2. Along with the completed form, submit up to 5 poems in no more than 8 pages in a pdf format. Each poem must be single spaced (except for stanza breaks) and start on a new page. Font type must be 12. Please do not write your name on the poetry pages. Please number and state LIT-UP in your header/footer on each page. State your name and LIT-UP in the subject line of the email.
3. Poems may have been previously published in journals, anthologies, podcasts and pamphlets, and on websites. Send us your best work!
4. Poets who have already published a first full collection are ineligible.
5. The deadline for submissions is **31<sup>st</sup> August 2018**.
6. The shortlist will be decided by **15<sup>th</sup> September 2018**.
7. Shortlisted poets will be asked to submit a further 15 – 45 poems. The successful ten poets will be announced on Oct 15th.

We wish you all the best in your submission and very much look forward to hearing from you.

## **The LIT-UP Team**

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# Me2/Orchestra Members

*(listed alphabetically)*

## Violin

Erin Burkholder,  
                    Concertmaster  
Heidi Keegan  
Ally Little  
Roya Moussapour  
Haley Rayburn  
Jessica Stuart

## Viola

Ariel Chu  
Prill Ellis  
Marcia Zuckerman

## Cello

Carl Dresselhaus  
Ali Fessler  
Betty Hillmon  
Howard Katz  
Janice Wallace

## Bass

David Cordes  
Kristen Cullity  
Sandy McCahill  
Sydney Nolan  
Dana Schaul

## Oboe

Ariel Branz

Sherry Grossman  
Zoe Weng  
Janet Yardley

## Clarinet

Howard Bernstein  
Bob Crabtree  
Joel Rosen

## Bassoon

Emily Lewis  
David Hancock

## Trumpet

Elliot Pittel  
Sam Sheffield

## Horn

Peri McKenna  
Caroline Whiddon

## Trombone

Eli Badra  
Myles Collins-Wooley

## Timpani

Charley Gillette

Me2/Orchestra: Music for Mental Health

# Ronald Braunstein

Music Director & Conductor

# Program



Slavonic Dances, Antonin Dvořák

No. 6, Allegretto Scherzando

No. 7, Allegro Assai

No. 8, Presto

Violin Concerto No. 3 in G Major

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Adagio

Erin Burkholder, violin

- Q&A session -

Overture to *The Barber of Seville*

Gioachino Rossini

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The mission of Me2/Orchestra is to erase the stigma surrounding mental illness through supportive classical music ensembles and inspiring performances. To find out more, please visit [www.me2orchestra.org](http://www.me2orchestra.org).

Me2's 2017-2018 concert season is generously sponsored by Sunovion. This evening's performance is presented by the Metro Boston Area Office of the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health.



**Ronald Braunstein, Music Director & Conductor**

Ronald Braunstein received his musical training at The Juilliard School, Salzburg Mozarteum, Fontainebleau and the Tanglewood Music Center, where he conducted in master classes of Leonard Bernstein and Seiji Ozawa.

At Juilliard, he studied composition with Elliot Carter and Milton Babbitt and was a winner of the the BMI Award to Student Composers. He later entered the school's conducting program, graduating with a Bachelor's of Music in Conducting.

Following graduation from Juilliard, Braunstein won first prize in the Herbert von Karajan International Conducting Competition in Berlin and spent the four years that followed working with Maestro von Karajan and the Berlin Philharmonic.

Braunstein has conducted orchestras all over the world most notably the San Francisco Symphony, Berlin Philharmonic,

Stuttgart Radio Orchestra, Residentie Orchestra of The Hague, Israel Sinfonietta, Swiss Radio Orchestra, Auckland Philharmonia, Oslo Philharmonic, Kyoto Symphony, Osaka Symphony, National Orchestra of Taiwan and the Tokyo Symphony.

Braunstein served on the conducting staff at Juilliard and the America Opera Center, where he performed cornerstone orchestra repertoire and operas. He also served as Music Director of the Juilliard pre-college orchestra for six seasons. He later became Music Director of the Mannes School of Music's Philharmonia, a position he held for several seasons.

Braunstein was diagnosed with bipolar disorder in 1985. In 2011, he and his wife, Caroline Whiddon, launched Me2/Orchestra because of their desire to support others who struggle to maintain good mental health.

Braunstein has given presentations for Grand Rounds at Stony Brook University and the University of Vermont. Recent speaking engagements also include the Mental Health Matters Conference at UVM and the Kennedy Forum's annual meeting in Chicago. Braunstein's story was recently featured on the cover of bpHope magazine.

A pair of independent filmmakers are currently documenting the story of Ronald Braunstein and the Me2/Orchestras. To learn more about the upcoming film, "Orchestrating Change," please visit [www.OrchestratingChangeTheFilm.com](http://www.OrchestratingChangeTheFilm.com).

## Erin Burkholder, Violin

Erin Burkholder was born and raised in the mountains of British Columbia, where she first began taking violin lessons with her grandmother. She completed her undergraduate performance degree at McGill University in Montréal, where her quartet, the Vicus Quartet, won the McGill String Quartet competition and won a residency at the Summer Academy Mozarteum in Salzburg, Austria.

Burkholder is currently finishing her Masters degree at the New England Conservatory under Paul Biss, and next year will start a fellowship at the Orchestra Now program at Bard College, following her upcoming second summer at the Tanglewood Music Center.

As a passionate chamber musician, Erin's quartet, the Mazarine String Quartet, is involved in a number of community performances and outreach endeavors in the Boston area. She has served as concertmaster of Me2/Boston for the past two seasons. She also currently plays with the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra, and has been a member in the past of Pronto Musica of Montréal and the Symphony of the Kootenays in British Columbia.



## Me2/ Board of Directors

**Annamarie Cioffari**, Director of the SNHU Graduate Program in Community Mental Health  
**Gary Clark**, President of the Vermont Studio Center; **Wendy Hoffman**, attorney, Legal Services Law Line of Vermont; **Michael Murphy**, mental health advocate, musician, volunteer; **Logan Selkirk, Ph.D.**, Project Coordinator for the SAMHSA Recovery and Resiliency Grant, Vermont Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health; violinist, Me2/Burlington; **Jessica Stuart**, Peer Support Specialist, Riverbend Community Mental Health; violinist, Me2/Boston

### Co-Founders

**Ronald Braunstein**, Music Director & Conductor  
**Caroline Whiddon**, Executive Director

## Werewolf in Manchester Classic Moments

*Here, you can't do any harm with that*

His running joke cast me as Laurel,  
because I was the girl who put her  
absent-minded  
sandwich back in the cupboard  
then spent twenty minutes looking for it.

He knew the set pieces. 'Shakespeare.  
Longfellow. What goes up the chimney  
but doesn't come down?' 'Smoke.'  
He knew the dialogue. 'She talks to you  
like water off a duck's back.'  
He knew the character actors too,  
and not just James Finlayson.

A sash-wearing, fez-topped Son of the Desert,  
forever running from his wife, he's not  
in Honolulu, but at the convention in the sky.

### Jude Cowan Montague

## Frank Bangay – I Wonder Why



Another lively and varied selection, once again recorded at Core Arts Studio, featuring Frank solo, and backed by various Core Arts 'house' musicians, and some great gospel-style vocal harmonies from Natasha Mallet.

*Those Einstein Blues* – the problems of the outsider; the tragedy of significant people being ignored if they cannot fit in. Bo Diddley said "You can't tell a book by the cover"; Frank said "Don't judge a book before you read it." We must all get pulled up some time about being dismissive great blues backing with boogie piano and harmonica. *Comfort Eating Blues* – a good-humoured take on this widespread problem; how many people are able to avoid it? It offers a 'conducted tour' – from breakfast table, to sweetshop, to doctor's surgery. Nice vocal backup from Natasha.

With *Big Frank And Little Spyder* and *Happy In My Skin*, I was so flattered that Frank applied my slide guitar style to this new material. In the former, there is some of the creepiness of The Who's *Boris the Spider*, as well as a struggle between compassion and Arachnophobia. But there is also deep compassion about letting a poor creature in from the cold. *Happy In My Skin* expresses a personal struggle: "So often I feel violated." Frank has had many years of bitter struggle with painful skin conditions, which still, all too often, have stigmas attached to them. The day-to-day struggle must go on; he must fight back as best he can. *OCD Blues* has powerful echoes of the old Muddy Waters band, with *Mannish Boy* – including some very Little Walterish harmonica. It struggles to look on the 'bright side' of this condition, which can sometimes lead on to great achievements. A protest against the prejudiced: "I wish your voices would just shut up."

Spirituals, fairly recently discovered by Frank, are quite prominent in this selection, beginning with a highly sensitive treatment of the Appalachian hymn *Wayfaring Stranger*. This song has always lived for me, ever since I heard Burl Ives singing it on the radio in the 1950s. Frank's take has a rockabilly backing. The influence of gospel singer Blind Willie Johnson continues with *If I had my Way I would Tear this Building Down*: great re-telling of the Bible stories of Samson and Delilah, Daniel in the Lions' Den. Frank acknowledges his additional debt here to the Reverend Gary Davis. Frank's comments here are highly illuminating.

The other gospel number featured here, *Jesus on the Mainline*, was learned from Mississippi

Fred McDowell. Frank adds some valid contemporary reference – to mobile phones; he and Natasha work out a great 'call and response' pattern here. Frank's own comments here are highly illuminating:

"What happened was that I found it hard to learn all the lyrics to the Blind Willie Johnson version, so I took the lyrics from the Reverend Gary Davis version, which I found easier to learn. Musically I thought I would do my own thing with the song as a kind of Rap. I think I started with just vocals, drum-beats and harmonica – possibly bass as well. Then I thought I would try to add a bit of Dub to it, which I thought would work well with the theme of Sampson tearing the temple down.

*The Boat Sails*; many cultures have the tradition of funeral boats. This number conveys the thought of the deceased going on their heavenly journeys. *Roses In Your Room* is Frank's sensitive take on a song by his favourite Kevin Coyne. Tasteful folk-rock accompaniment.



Some colourful Frank Artwork for the inlay; I was so glad to have featured him as an artist a few issues back

**Dave Russell**