

a c o m p a n i o n t o t h e a l b u m

# ALLSTON STREET



**k a r l o t a k k i**

m u s i c , l y r i c s , a n d m o r e

This is the story of a house, a three-story house with a basement, a house with a hundred different stories, a house that was a home to men and women; cats and rats; birds and dogs; bands and dot.com startups; the crazy and the sane; comedy and tragedy; the sublime and the fucking ridiculous.

The house at 48 Allston Street in Allston, Massachusetts was occupied for sixteen years by a diverse and creative group of people. I was there from the beginning and I was there until the end, and even in the middle of my residency I knew that someday I'd have to tell the story of the house.

It's taken a while because, though I was a twenty-seven year old musician with a clarity of purpose when I moved in, I left a forty-three year old shard of a human being who struggled with substance abuse and prison for the next fifteen years.

But we're here now and this volume, slim as it is, will suffice as the first telling of the story of a house, wrapped around a group of songs written during this time and in this place.



*Your humble narrator.*

# ALLSTON STREET

**k a r l o   t a k k i**

takkimedia  
boston, massachusetts

*For Miriam*

I'd like to gratefully acknowledge the help of my friends Scott, Tim, Frank, Lisa, Laszlo, and Chip, who offered their help when I so sorely needed it. That I didn't always accept their help is no fault of theirs.

*Except for Scott, Tim, and non-residents like Steve Barney and Frank Coleman, all of the names have been changed to protect innocent and guilty alike.*

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*Any resemblance to persons living or dead is purely coincidental.*



*She cleans up nicely*

A quiet place to make noise. That's the musician's dilemma, especially in a city. One needs quiet in order to hear that still inner voice. That's where the songs come from.

Noise is what anyone not directly involved in your music calls it. You may love the sound of an alto singer, a bassoon, jazz drums, bass guitar, but living next door to or upstairs from any of these is not an ideal situation. So musicians and songwriters look for quiet places to make noise, to put in the thousands of hours of writing, practicing, and rehearsing that goes into a career.

Usually, the solution is a windowless room in a rehearsal complex: light industrial buildings that have been subdivided into tiny firetraps, often with a room air conditioner set into a transom over the door. Bands split the cost of these rooms to save money, dividing weeknights into a rehearsal schedule, resulting in a small room made even smaller with two or three bands' equipment stuffed into a 10' x 12' space.

Walking through the halls of a rehearsal complex on a weeknight is like descending into an unknown circle of Hell: dozens of bands all playing different styles, different keys, different tunings, and an equal number of air conditioners spewing hot air into a narrow corridor.

Just thinking about it makes me homesick.

One of the alternatives is a group house: a bunch of musicians in a detached property with a cool, dry basement or garage. This is the story of one of these houses, but there's more to the story than that. For nearly two decades, 48 Allston Street was a haven for musicians, artists, Hampshire College dropouts, drunks, junkies, pot dealers, taxi drivers, software developers, computer animators, database administrators, video editors, and audio engineers. It began as a group house for musicians, evolved into a dot.com incubator, and then followed the downward arc of a deflating financial zeppelin.

The year 1987 was a busy one. I was playing keyboards and trumpet in the band Skin, and we were at the height of our (local verging on regional) fame. My personal life had taken a back seat to my professional life; since leaving a long-term relationship two years earlier, I had lived in about a dozen different places: rooming houses, on friends' couches, in Skin's rehearsal room, on the floor of a loft on Lansdowne street, with short-term girlfriends, and in the back seat of a junked taxi. I had a steady job as a radio dispatcher at Boston Cab, and drove part time as well. Money wasn't a problem; a tight housing market resulting from rampant condo conversions created a scarcity of rental apartments. So I couch-surfed or spread a sleeping bag out on a floor.

I didn't have very much time to hunt for an apartment, either. On top of my two day jobs and a busy gig and rehearsal schedule, Skin's lead singer and guitarist Ric Orlando and I were producing the band's debut LP (we'd released singles, EPs, and cassettes; this was our first full-length album).

It was 1987: there was no Craig's List for apartment hunting. If I wanted to find an apartment I had to get a Sunday Boston Globe, look through the classifieds, and camp out in the nearest phone booth with a handful of dimes. I had a computer, a Mac 512K that was the brains of a small recording studio I'd begin to build in 1985 (co-located with Skin's rehearsal room), but there was no commercial Internet to connect to, nor did I own a modem.

My situation suddenly brightened in the spring of 1987. An old friend, Tim Halle, who was also a musician and sometime crew member and soundman for Skin, invited me to live in an old Victorian house he and some other people were renting in Allston, Massachusetts, a neighborhood of Boston. Tired of looking for apartments, I eagerly accepted.

Allston is an urban isthmus, pinched off from the rest of Boston by the town of Brookline in the south and the Charles River to the north. West lies Brighton, another Boston neighborhood that, until the early 20th Century, was the site of stockyards and slaughterhouses. Both Allston and Brighton are mostly filled with wood-frame triple-deckers, a signature Boston housing style, and peppered with the occasional apartment block. Pre-war apartment buildings line Commonwealth Avenue, a main thoroughfare through Allston and Brighton. There are no malls: all commerce is street-level storefronts save for a couple of small shopping centers.

Because of its proximity to Boston University, Boston College, and Harvard, Allston has long been known as a "student ghetto". Harvard proper lies just across the Charles River from Lower Allston (an area separated from the rest of Allston by the Massachusetts Turnpike, which slashes across Boston like a knife wound). Harvard Business School occupies a large swath of Lower Allston, as does Harvard's athletic stadium. Harvard University has been quietly buying land in Allston, a source of contention with local com-

munity groups. Whether it's Columbia University and Harlem in 1968 or Harvard and Allston in 2018: large educational institutions don't interface well with high-density residential neighborhoods.

Allston still has a small matrix of long-time residents, working-class whites who'd bought or were born and raised in their homes decades ago. They are like the mortar and cement between bricks of students, immigrants, and lately, young professionals.

The advantage of living in a student ghetto is cheap real estate, cheap eats, and used book and record stores. The disadvantage is the late-night noise and the early-morning vomit on the sidewalk, though we'd contributed our own share of both from time to time.

Over the years, as long-time residents moved away or passed on, the character of the neighborhood slowly changed. First Vietnamese moved in, then Brazilians, then both groups moved on to other neighborhoods and suburbs. Allston has always been ripe for gentrification, since it's only a 20 to 30 minute trolley ride from downtown Boston. And that's what eventually happened.

However, Allston in 1987 was still a cheap, fun place to live, with Vietnamese restaurants on Brighton Avenue, dive bars that catered to students with fake IDs on Harvard Ave., two big liquor stores, inexpensive apartments and houses. I'd lived in a lot of Boston's





*Allston loves a parade*

neighborhoods up to that point, but never in Allston. When I left my rented garret in Brookline Village for a room in the house on Allston Street, I wondered why it had taken so long for me to make a home in Allston.

The house was a large Victorian that had been added on to over the years; a two-story rear annex hosted a pair of kitchens, and a single-story addition off of the first floor kitchen contained a small bedroom. But the main part of the house was a three-story hulk with a mansard roof. It sat on a large lot with a driveway, decrepit two-car garage, the remains of a vegetable garden, and was protected from the street by a pair of venerable and enormous oak trees.

I arrived in mid-June, a couple of weeks after the first of the housemates had moved in, and after most of the cleaning had been done. The previous tenants, BU students, had left a mess and, in an apparent attempt to lash out at the landlord, had done a bit of intentional damage to the floors and walls. We patched what we could.

The most interesting find was a not-very-well-hidden stash of porn magazines, mostly specializing in amputees. This is how the house became known as Stumpworld. (Remember this name, as it will reappear later in a most unlikely place.) From that day onward, this place would not be known as “Tim’s house”, “Scott’s house”, or “Karlo’s place”. It would be “Stumpworld”, as in “Hey, are you going to the party at Stumpworld?” or “I think I left my bra at Stumpworld”.

## THE EARLY DAYS

If this were a novel, it would be character-driven, not plot-driven (with the house, of course, as one of the characters). The reason for this would be the number of people living in the house and the amount of turnover during the course of the years.

The first cast of characters were mostly people from Hampshire College. Tim had attended briefly, as had his girlfriend and many of his friends. Hampshire, in Western Massachusetts, was one of those unstructured schools where one writes one’s own major. Dogs with bandanas around their necks roamed the campus. A haze of pot smoke lingered in the Pioneer Valley mainly because of Hampshire. Hampshire had legendary Halloween parties, and I had gotten to know Tim’s friends when my band Skin had played a couple of these events.

Chuck and She-Ra took the back room. Directly below was a basement root cellar, which became the rehearsal space in which his band, High Speed Vomit, practiced. Tim and his girlfriend Betty set up in what had once been the parlor, a high-ceilinged room on the first floor. Moira, an artist who did album covers for her boyfriend’s band (Dinosaur, Jr.) took the remaining first floor room. Tim and Betty also brought their pets, a polydactyl ginger tabby named Mister Cat and a part-Saint Bernard mutt named Yahweh.

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*Rub my love stump*



*Our spooky house, circa 1987*

Mal was on the second floor, a fine arts major interning at the MFA. Shane, from the band Dogzilla, and his girlfriend Kelly took the other second floor room. The third floor, which had once been servants' quarters, had two bedrooms and two smaller rooms that had once been bathroom and kitchen. Alicia, a sculptor, and Rick, a playwright, took the larger rooms. Chaz took one of the smaller rooms and I was left with the other, an L-shaped space of roughly 64 square feet. My futon took up half this space, but my rent was only \$110/month.

Along with two kitchens and two bathrooms, there were two living rooms (the house had been a single-family which had been split into two apartments before being rejoined; this would become a minor infrastructure issue later on). Of course, these became guest quarters from time to time.

We were separated from one neighbor by nearly a full lot. The house on the other side, however, was only the width of a driveway away. Fortunately, the occupant was a retired, deaf priest: Father Walsh. The only time he ever complained was when a riotous party spilled out into the street. Even then, it wasn't the noise so much as the fighting and vomiting.

Speaking of which, when High Speed Vomit broke up, I took the opportunity to move my band, Skin, into the basement to save some money. At the time, we had a loft space on Lansdowne Street, opposite Fenway Park. My recording studio was also located

there, in an alcove of our rehearsal space. While I did enjoy the convenience of having a space near work (and down the street from some of the busiest clubs in the city, which made for some memorable after-hours parties), we were trying to release an LP and money was tight. The basement at Stumpworld was free, so Skin moved in.

But this didn't happen until I'd been living in the house for a few months. Rick had moved out and I took his room, giving me just enough space to shoe-horn my studio gear into it. Alicia, in the meantime, had brought her sculpting equipment to the house: a complete oxy-acetylene welding outfit was chained to a post in the basement. Tim pointed out the fact that there were natural gas lines criss-crossing the ceiling so the flasks ended up in the garage. The oxygen went awfully fast once we found its efficacy as a hangover cure.



*Sunday morning coming down*



*Onstage with Skin in 1987*

**H**angovers. They were endemic. Stumpworld was a party house in a party neighborhood filled with party people who partied. I had developed a taste for bourbon from playing in Skin, where amber liquors and imported beer were baked into the contract rider. We'd have asked for a bag of weed and an eight ball of coke if it were legal to do so. Hampshire College also had a reputation for being a party school (as were most of the schools in Western Massachusetts) and we were a house of Hampshire-ites, artists, and musicians. The smell of weed and stale beer was like background radiation.

Every so often there would be an event, an excuse for a party. Halloween, a spate of April birthdays, or just the need to break up the boredom were the most common reasons. A keg of beer would be procured, the pets would be locked up for the night, someone would make punch spiked with blotter acid, and something resembling food would be provided.

Yeah, about that food: during one of the first parties, someone in the house (possibly a disgruntled resident, possibly a guest with a twisted sense of humor) put out a bowl of wet dog food, garnished with broccoli florets. By the time someone realized what it was and tossed it in the garbage, half of it had been eaten.

There was a definite "freshman year in a co-ed dorm" thing going on in the house. As the oldest resident (I was 27), I got to observe this with some detachment, but there were times when I got sucked into the vortex, too. There was a lot of hanging out and drinking during that first summer in the house, a lot of pot, and

numerous drunken stumbles back from the neighborhood bars that resulted in a fair amount of reckless hookups (and vomit in the carpet).

One warm, humid evening, I was hanging out on the front steps with Tim and Shane, when Mal, whose room was on the second floor facing the street, put on a record. He had invited his boyfriend Jet over, cooked him dinner, and now they were sequestered in Mal's room. On the stoop, we heard the scratch of vinyl and then the sound of Francis Lai's "A Man and a Woman" (from the 1966 Claude Lelouch film of the same name) began to drift out of the window.

[If you're not familiar with this song, it's a favorite of Liberace's, Mantovani's, and part of the 1001 Strings repertoire. It is sonic treacle, and if you want to torture a metalhead or punk, strap him to a chair and play this on repeat.]

On the steps, our conversation stopped cold. The next five minutes was spent trying to stifle hysterical laughter.

*"I think I was conceived to this song."*

**M**ick, an artist and Hampshire-ite who would later become a housemate, was a frequent guest, as was Budgie, the drummer for Dogzilla, Shane's band. The three of us would do the "cross-country" route to the bars on Harvard Ave., cutting across neighbor-



*Party in the backyard*



*The Summer of Death, 1988*

hood properties in order to find the straightest, most direct line. This included scaling chain link fences, retaining walls, and negotiating a sheer 20-foot drop into a parking lot behind Blanchard's liquor store (usually by jumping on to the roof of a box truck). The return trip (after an evening of drinking) was even more of a challenge. There was no end to the drunken mayhem we committed: Mick and I once tried to hot wire Budgie's vintage Cadillac, and we regularly barricaded the street with stolen orange cones and police sawhorses, just to watch motorists get vexed and confused.

Alcohol really allowed my inner asshole to emerge. This would later become a problem, not that it wasn't one already. The personality I called "Drunkenstein" was beginning to surface.

Tim was the acknowledged "house fascist", an official title that reflected his responsibility for collecting and disbursing rent and utility money more than any authoritarian leanings. One of the few times he did lay down the law was when Moira began to do "meat art". She had nailed a piece of beefsteak to the wall of her room and was doing a series of drawings as it decomposed. It was not a very hot summer but the maggots and flies were beginning to spill out of her room. Tim, who'd been a professional road animal (lighting and video tech for Metallica, among others), 6'4" and always well-caffeinated, showed admirable restraint letting Moira know that this was not acceptable behavior. She moved out a few weeks later and Mick moved in, preserving the artist/musician balance in the house.

Summer of '88 was a hot one, and it didn't help that tragic changes were afoot. Earlier that year, Tim and Betty had moved out, relocating to the West Coast. I had to take over as house fascist, chasing people around for rent and dealing with Bobby, our landlord. Stiv and his girlfriend Judi had moved in, taking Tim's room. Krash, Skin's road manager, had moved in as well, taking one of the small rooms on the third floor, as had a girl named Jem, who was a hot mess with a pet snake that preferred to get in bed with people instead of curling up around the heat rock in its open terrarium. Little by little, the Hampshire-ites were drifting away. I was determined to replace them with musicians and, if possible, older people who were a bit more stable personally and secure financially.

Skin would not last to the end of the year. The day after our SRO record release party at the Channel club our bass player decided to quit the band. That meant that our plans for a summer tour to promote the album were on hold while we found a replacement (it took six weeks). To add insult to injury, Ric, the lead singer, decided to move to New York and travel up for gigs and one rehearsal a week. It was a purely financial decision on his part: he and his wife had just had their first child, and moving closer to her family in Queens would give them free child care, allowing both of them to go back to work (Ric had been a stay-at-home dad for a while). The writing was on the wall: Skin's six-year ride was about to end.

The summer began with the death of my girlfriend from an overdose. She was a phone operator at the cab company whom I'd been dating for a few months. She was ten years younger than me, and sort of a townie Marisa Tomei, though with the intelligence of a golden retriever. I got the news when the police showed up at the cab company to question me. I knew she did the occasional speedball, but I didn't know who her dealer was and I wouldn't have told the cops even if I had. Because it was summer, the slow season, the cab company didn't replace her, so I was met by an empty seat in the radio room every day.

For this and other reasons, I quit the job I'd had for nearly seven years. Krash, who worked as a bar back at Bunnratty's, an Allston bar that featured local bands, got me a job, working with him four nights a week. Between my loss of a steady, good paying job, and the imminent demise of Skin, I was at a decision

point: what was my next act? I was 28, still young, and I loved my bohemian, futon-on-the-floor, rock 'n' roll life. But I also wanted to do something that was a money source, not a money sink. Running a studio seemed to be my best option.

Stiv and Judi's relationship brought a lot of drama to the house. Stiv was a hot-tempered young man, the son of a war correspondent who inspired a character in the movie "The Year of Living Dangerously". As a boy, Stiv had come home to find his father dead of a self-inflicted gunshot. That Stiv was as heavy a drinker as his late old man didn't help things at all. Rudi like to hang out with her two close friends (male and female), so much so that we referred to them as the Triad. It was Stiv vs. the Triad, plus an abnormally hot summer and limitless amounts of beer.

When Stiv got physically abusive with Judi, her friends hustled her away in a car. Stiv, clad only in a towel, gave chase down Allston Street in his bare feet, popping open a beer can like a smoke grenade and launching it at the fleeing vehicle. Stiv soon left and Mick took his room, which afforded him more space in which to paint, drink scotch, get dressed up, and blast either heavy metal or bagpipe music.



*The late Father Walsh*

Stiv killed himself a few years later, to no one's surprise.

To cap off that summer, both Krash and Mick lost their own fathers, this on top of some rancor between them involving a woman. By August, it seemed like there was nothing to do but drink a lot and smoke our fucking brains out. When our beloved deaf neighbor, Father Walsh, passed away, it was just one more drop in a bucket of tears.

By the Fall of '88 things had stabilized somewhat. Mick's co-worker Zorro moved in; finally, there was someone older than me living in the house. Allen, a Hampshire-ite holdover, had brought his old friend Scott into the house. Scott, a musician from Long Island, would figure prominently in the later history of Stumpworld. And, rounding out the household, were Carl and Gemma, whom everyone called "The Blonde Family" because they had poofy blond hair. Carl played guitar in a local metal band. Soon it became known that his girlfriend Gemma was turning tricks out of the house. Middle-aged men in large American cars would slow down and stop in front of the house, roll down the window, and ask if "Trixie" was around. Or "Tiffany". Or "Vicki". When we, the denizens of the front stoop, shrugged our shoulders, these johns would describe her to a T: skinny, shaggy blonde hair, tube top, leopard-print leggings. She wasn't bringing tricks into the house; it was car service only.

Hey, I didn't care. As long as the rent was paid, I was fine with it.

Skin finally reached the end of its string in November, playing our last gig at a Tower Records in Boston. It was a sad end to a group that had come pretty close to reaching its goals. The band's drummer, bass player, and I kept jamming in the basement of the house. Elly, a mutual friend, joined us on vocals. I wanted to switch from keys to guitar, but my chops weren't up to the punk-funk groove we were in. They went on without me and I went back into my studio. I had nearly enough material for an album on vinyl or cassette, songs I had



*The Stumpworld Liberation Army*

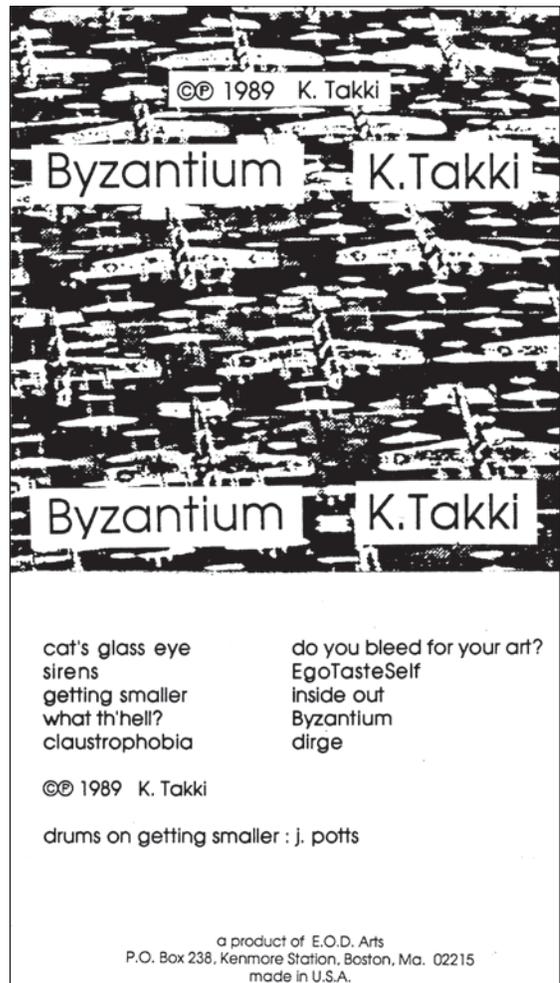
written that weren't right for Skin. As fall became winter, I busied myself writing melodies and lyrics; bass, keyboard, and guitar parts; and sketching out drum machine patterns in a weathered spiral-bound notebook.

Scott brought in the house's second computer, an Amiga 500. While it had the same CPU as the Mac 512K that was the heart of my studio, the Amiga had dedicated graphics chips and a color display. It had a simple but addictive game called Virus, in which one piloted a wedge-shaped craft and fought various UFOs and spores. But the most interesting piece of software was a 3D modeling and animation program called Silver. A true ray tracing package, we went nuts with reflective and refractive materials that brought the CPU to its knees. Just rendering a 640 x 480 pixel still frame of a reflective sphere on a checkerboard ground took nearly two days. Plumbing the depths of this complex piece of software and the rudiments of computer animation together marked the beginning of a partnership that would last the better part of a decade.

Throughout the winter of 1988-89, I worked in the studio until I had enough songs for a 45-minute

album. I didn't have the money to do vinyl, much less a CD, so I released the Byzantium album on cassette and distributed it to press and radio stations using Skin's old mailing lists. The cassette didn't get a lot of airplay but the Boston Globe did a piece in the Style section about it. Since I didn't have a band and didn't play gigs around town, that's about as far as it went.

Scott's old band Modern Art had recently disbanded as well. He had hooked up with a most unlikely group of musicians, a trio of 19-year-olds from Mississippi who had moved to Boston. They were young, enthusiastic, eager to learn, and their tastes ran to Bauhaus and Pink Floyd (as opposed to the normal Mississippi fare of C&W radio hits). Scott jammed with them but it wasn't a good fit, so he referred them to me. I went down to their rehearsal space at the original Sound Museum in Boston's South End. We smoked some weed, cracked some beers, listened to some tapes, and played. Though they were all ten years younger than me, I felt



*J-Card for the Byzantium cassette*



*busybox, circa 1990*

like we could work together. A few weeks later, they packed up their gear and we moved rehearsals into the basement at 48 Allston Street. We called the band Hunger Moon.

I taught them my songs, we learned a couple of covers to pad out the set (like a semi-metal version of Pink Floyd's "Lucifer Sam"), and four months of rehearsals later we played our first gig, at Green Street Station in Jamaica Plain. Going from Skin, a weekend headliner, to opening slots on Wednesdays and Thursdays was a step backwards, but a necessary one. You're never finished paying your dues.

Hunger Moon's first three-song demo, meant for getting gigs and airplay, was also the first band recording I'd done in the house on Allston Street. By this time I had relocated back to the two smallest rooms on the third floor, using one for my studio and jamming my futon in the other. In order to record the band, I cobbled together a multi-channel audio snake that ran from the third floor, down the back stairs, and into the basement. I had a reel of shielded twisted pair cable

that fell off the back of a phone company truck and XLR connectors that I had salvaged from dead mic cables. There was also a pair of unbalanced lines for headphones. The idea was for Justin, the drummer, to be the only one in the basement while Greg, the bass player, and Roy, the guitarist, played reference tracks direct in the control room. I kept an eye on levels and sang scratch vocals. It wasn't what everyone was used to, but it worked well enough. Later, I'd set up the bass amp in a corner of the basement and a guitar amp in the kitchen on the second floor with its own separate mic line (the amp was driven by a wireless guitar rig with an extended antenna).

Meanwhile, I went back to dispatching at Boston Cab, albeit part-time. Now that I had a working studio (I'd added a bunch of outboard gear, a Toshiba VCR that had a built-in PCM digital audio converter for mixing, and an array of microphones and stands) I could supplement my income with outside recording projects. And I had a band again. I was 29 and felt that time was running out on a career in music.

Scott had put together a band as well, and between Squid and Hunger Moon, things began to get a little noisy for the neighbors. A middle-aged lesbian couple had purchased Father Walsh's house. They made it pretty clear from the start that, while the realtor hadn't warned them about living next door to a rock 'n' roll incubator, they were owners and we were renters. We agreed to set a weeknight curfew and put up



*The audio snake, in repose*

some more soundproofing, but we were not about to stop. Nor did we cut back on the semi-yearly parties (Halloween, of course, and an April party to celebrate spring and various peoples' birthdays). For the first year or so, our parties didn't have bands playing in the basement; that was a later development. One Halloween party we did turn the basement into a haunted dungeon, complete with sound effects running on a 25' tape loop (locked in a back storage room, running on an old open reel deck, with mic stands placed around the room to keep tension on the loop). The next year, we had a quiet open jam in the basement, with instruments anyone could pick up and play. We found that we could fit about sixty people in the basement before the oxygen grew thin.

**M**ick had moved out as soon as his father's will passed probate, relocating to Arizona and then California. Moving west was a fairly common thing among my circle of friends in the late '80s. The recession had hit Boston pretty hard, and belt-tightening in the financial services sector meant lean times for the employees of restaurants, cab companies, and the building trades. Friends of mine who had been waiters in the '80s were looking at jobs as personal care attendants for the elderly and handicapped.

NOVEMBER 1989 **THE NOISE** ISSUE #89  
ROCK AROUND BOSTON  
inside: MINXKINER, BEST MILDAN, BELLOW BROWDY, THINE TIREZ, STUNGE FACTORY, SHMOO GAF -free-

**HUNGER MOON 3 songs**  
Karlo Takki ain't out to lunch on this one. The doomy "Falling Down", replete with gurgling bass, lives up to its premise and more. And if you like post-Syd Pink Floyd meanderings, check out the miasmic "On and On". The forboding "Remember You" puts me in mind of The Hollies on soporifics moaning out a rehash of "I Can't Let Go". S'good. A keeper. 5:15/15



**hunger moon**

Box 238, Kenmore Station, Boston, Ma., 02215 (617) 254-7969  
photo: Michael Fastoso

*Band on the rocks*

Allen went west as well, but to Alaska, canning salmon on the Kenai Peninsula before he got a position teaching in a village in the interior. San Francisco and Seattle were also drawing people from Boston, as if the looming wave of the dot.com era was pulling people westward before breaking over the rest of the country. Krash, ever the exception, went south to Atlanta.

Musicians replaced the people who had left, mostly from Berklee, my alma mater. I don't recall ever putting an ad in the paper (which would have been the Boston Phoenix, the local alternative weekly), so it must have been word-of-mouth. There was Maarten, a Danish jazz guitarist, and his girlfriend Mariko, who played piano. They actually went out and got a spinet piano for \$250; it took six of us to manhandle it up the stairs to the second floor. They converted the second floor living room to a bedroom/practice room, sealing off the archway that led to the kitchen. Maarten would occasionally have friends visit from Denmark, so the sight of a big-boned, topless blonde woman walking out of the bathroom was not an uncommon occurrence. Another newcomer was Giorgio from Switzerland, an alto sax player. He and I shared a phone line for a bit, and I would often get long-winded phone messages on the answering machine from his friends, in that very odd Swiss dialect of French.

More musicians in the house also meant more opportunities to record. I did direct-to-digital tapes of Maarten's jazz ensemble along with a classical piece he wrote for string quartet plus flute. And Scott's band,

Squid, was matching my band, song for song, tape for tape. The shelf of 1/2" reels and VHS digital mixdown tapes grew steadily.

Thus began a quid pro quo between Scott and me that became the kernel of our later business partnership. He had nearly matched my capital investment with a van-load of industrial-quality 3/4" U-Matic video decks, lights, cameras, a video mixer, and a maxed-out Amiga 2000 with a video frame buffer and a 68040 daughter board that could process video, generate titles, and render 3D animations. The Silver software that ran on his old Amiga was now Turbo Silver, then Impulse Imagine, and we both began to create a collection of 3D models and animated clips. Now, for every hour I spent recording his band, he would devote an hour to making music videos for mine. Eventually we stopped keeping track of the hours, since I was also doing camera work for his videos and using his gear to make experimental crap, like a split-screen intro/bumper shtick called "The Takki Brothers", featuring two of me doing a drunken banter.

By this time, Scott had taken the big room on the first floor for his video and computer gear and a bedroom on the second floor for the rare occasions when he slept. We were both pretty big consumers of marijuana (and coffee), but while I would also drink until I passed out (usually around 2 AM), Scott didn't imbibe. If he was not expected to be at work the next day he'd be up until sunrise.

I'm not one to obsess over process, at least my own. I'll geek out over everyone else's, reading interviews in magazines like *Rolling Stone*, *Keyboard*, or *Mix*. I'd had private composition lessons in high school where I'd learned everything



*The Takki Brothers*



*Scott and his trombone*

from medieval modal plainchant to Twentieth Century Serialism. I'd taken AP Music History where I learned about the aleatory (chance) compositions of John Cage and other post-modernists. Towards my major in Composition at Berklee (where I dropped out after five semesters to play bass full time with The Dark), I'd studied Schenkerian Analysis, deconstructing penciled copies of classical scores with an eraser in search of its essence (the *urlinie*). Even earlier, a trumpet teacher had shown me the rudiments of the Schillinger System, an algorithmic method of composition and arrangement (one of Joseph Schillinger's students was Lawrence Berk who, along with his brother Lee, founded the Berklee College of Music).

I'd written music on trumpet, bass, guitar, keyboards, and recorder. I'd written music on paper, I'd written music by programming drum machines and sequencers, and I'd written music by jamming with other musicians and using the rehearsal tapes to forge lyrics and melody. Now, with the house transformed into a factory for making CD-quality recordings and broadcast-quality videos (well, at least for the NTSC/Standard Definition 720 X 486 era), I found myself writ-

ing songs on the front porch the old-fashioned way: a guitar in my lap, recording Walkman next to me, and a six-pack of Bud and a bag of pot close at hand. I still wrote at the keyboard (an Ensoniq Mirage piano sample sound was my preferred patch) and did the odd industrial track with layers of drum machines and samples, but this back-to-basics method worked best for me. And the porch added a certain terror.

Scott, who sang and played trombone in his band, had gotten a multi-track cassette recorder and an Alesis drum machine for his compositional needs. I'd also sold him one of my spare keyboards, a Roland Juno-60. When that keyboard was stolen in a break-in, he took his renters insurance claim and bought more video gear (never mind that I'd sold it to him for \$100; the replacement value was much, much greater).

A couple of my bandmates had moved into the house as well. Greg, our bass player, left to return to Mississippi, so Squid's guitar player Chuck filled in for us as bassist. We eventually auditioned new bass players and Jim joined the band. (Greg had been a guitar player until I persuaded him to switch to bass.) Jim, however, was a true bassist, and not a bad drummer, either. Hunger Moon's music grew harder and darker, the result of more collective composition. I did not mind this one bit. This was how pretty much every other band I'd been in had operated. It seemed to me to be a more organic process that was driven by the nature and chemistry of the group. I still wrote melody and lyrics, and contributed my share of chord progressions, but the writing was largely collaborative.

And so, Hunger Moon became Bonesaw. The choice of name was kind of tongue-in-cheek, at least so far



*Eating Human Flesh: the Video*

as I was concerned. Stylistically it was the sort of funk-bottomed thrash metal that was current in the early-'90s. I drew a logo of a fat-bellied, fanged demon, sawing off the leg of the victim sprawled across his lap. This became our t-shirt (a lesson I'd learned in Skin was that t-shirts outsell records and are better advertisement than buying ads in the local zines).

I'd been managing the house for a couple of years at this point, and I should mention the landlords: Long Island Realty Trust was owned by a family of Iranian Jews, the Sanieoffs, who had emigrated after the 1979 revolution. Kyros was the head of the family and he delegated the shit job of collecting the rent and maintaining the property to his younger brother Bahram (who called himself "Bobby", though when Tim was running the house he referred to Bobby as "Sphincter Boy"). It wasn't until this point, 1990, that Bobby realized that I was Jewish (a result of the Ashkenazi/Sephardi divide). Not that we kept kosher or lit the Shabbos candles, but now Bobby was more inclined to give me a few more days slack in collecting the rent from my housemates.

My bandmates found apartments in the area so I filled the empty rooms with a couple of drivers I knew from Boston Cab, Wally and Jane. Wally was a drummer who had gone to Berklee and soon formed a band, with me on bass, Roy on guitar, another friend on drums, and Wally as lead singer. By this time our parties were also gigs, with three or four bands playing a set each. For the one and only party Wally's band played, he hired a stripper, who looked both skittish



and out of place in an underground dungeon full of drunken people.

Jane was the personification of a very depressed hippopotamus. I can't imagine why she stayed as long as she did, living in a first floor room above bands rehearsing four or five nights a week. I guess it's because she loved to hang out with people and do bong hits. She hooked up with a drifter named Tex, who looked and spoke like every serial killer from every TV movie on the Lifetime network. Eventually they split, leaving a few months unpaid rent and a box of used sex toys.

Since I was managing the house, I kept a formal ledger and covered the cost of empty rooms, recouping what I'd lost by deferring the electric and gas payments until later and goosing the rent on rooms as they became vacant. Because the house was previously split from a single to a two-family (and then rejoined), there were two electric meters and two separate bills. One was in my name. The other, through a data entry error by Boston Edison, was in the name of someone at 84 Allston Street, down the block. I always paid that one last, as it wasn't my credit rating on the line. Because state utility regulations prohibited gas or electric service from being discontinued between November and March, I would make nominal payments during the winter months and then set up a payment plan through the spring and summer. Gas heat and a big drafty house meant that a month's heating bill could be as much as \$2,000, nearly as much as we were paying for rent.

The separate electric meters also meant that there was a ground differential between the basement and first

floor and the second and third floors. I first encountered this when I was miking a guitar amp in the basement and brushed against a grounded guitar pedal while holding a jack connected to the monitor line that ran down from the third floor. It was a shocking development. I had to place an isolating transformer on the monitor line so no one would get electrocuted. Later on, this ground differential would wreak havoc on our house-wide computer network.

At some point during my first couple of years in the house, I consulted a book of American architecture and determined that the house was built around 1880 or 1890. There were capped-off gas light fixtures in the older parts of the house. Along the basement ceiling were remnants of the original electrical wiring: dual lines of copper covered in braided cloth, affixed to the beams and joists with ceramic insulators. The furnace and hot water heater were relatively new (though the water heater eventually rusted through and dumped 100 gallons on the basement floor)



*Rear Window*



*busybox*

and the windows were double-glazed replacements. Steam radiators in every room meant that for the first few weeks of fall/winter we'd have to bleed the air before the heat could reach the third floor, a tedious process.

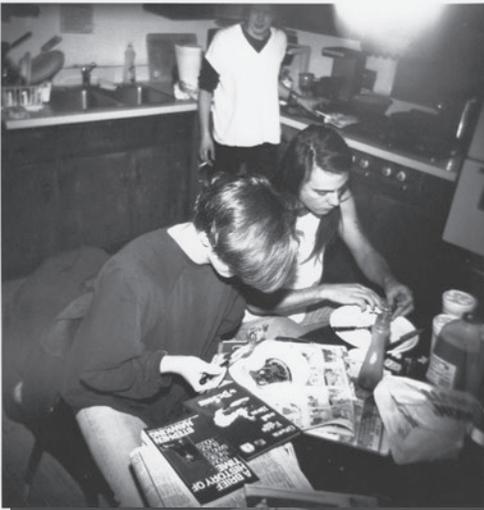
When we first moved in, some of the housemates took it upon themselves to strip the vomit-stained carpeting from their bedrooms. Beneath that was a layer of worn linoleum. Beneath the linoleum were wide pine floorboards, with a layer of newspaper in between. The newspapers were interesting artifacts, nearly all of them dating to the weeks after the fall of Nazi Germany in May 1945. We speculated that the family who had lived there celebrated the end of the war (and perhaps the safe return of a son in uniform) by splurging on new flooring. That or it was a case of "Welcome home, son, glad to hear you beat the shit out of Hitler, now help me with this fucking linoleum, willya?"

There wasn't much in the crawlspace except an empty case of Schlitz beer from the Sixties, when cans had seams and rims, and pull tabs were the newest thing. There were a couple of weird hidden compartments where the oldest part of the house met the first ad-

dition, but nothing so hidden that we couldn't find it. They were probably just a way of putting a newly formed void space to use. The property had a backyard, half of which was occupied by a dilapidated two-car garage with a derelict 1962 Ford Falcon in it. Next to the garage was an equally derelict vegetable garden in which cultivated grapes had grown wild. Again, there was groundless and idle speculation that perhaps the family who lived there had fermented wine during Prohibition.

Thus ends the early period of Stumpworld. Without even trying I had put my imprint on the house. It was filled with musicians and cab drivers. I was running my studio (*busybox*) out of the house, recording bands for \$15/hr. Scott and I had formed a partnership with a handshake and a bong hit, and we were producing audio and video on a shoestring budget (we both favored the punk DIY ethos). Squid and Bonesaw were both up and coming Boston bands, and our house parties always drew a big crowd (not to mention the cops every now and then).





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## DEMO DERBY

# Bloody good!

**Bonesaw are a cut above November's other finalist**

by Sandy Masuo

**T**hey say you can't judge a book by its cover, and apparently that pertains to cassettes as well, since this month's Demo Derby was a toss-up between two tapes at opposite ends of the packaging spectrum: from no-frills pragmatism to total thematic unity. In the end, neatness did count, and Bonesaw edged out Sexploitation.

It was hardly a surprise to find three songs entitled "Too Much Craziness," "The Waiting Song," and "Eating Human Flesh" by a band called Bonesaw inside a black matte envelope splattered with blood-red paint. What was surprising was the music: three tracks, sharply focused, but stunningly diverse in construction.

"I don't want to disclaim anything and say we're not metal but we are sort of metallic," explains frontman (and former Skin keyboardist) Karlo Takki, "or we're not funk but we're sort of funky, or we're not thrash but we are sort of thrashy. It's the music we enjoy playing — and categories mean nothing and they mean everything. But if you need a handle, 'loud and

hard' will do."

Bonesaw do indeed employ a lot of loud and hard metal, funk and thrash elements; but what sets their sound apart is the way they charge it with other influences. In spite of the band's in-your-face delivery, Bonesaw convey the same sense of detachment/alienation that often underlies industrial music. The metallic gestures are steeped in an earthy grunge, and the dark lyrics and textures stop short of death metal's shock treatment, evoking an abstract, almost gothic, gloom. Layers of imagery and sound abound, even in the ostensibly gruesome "Eating Human Flesh," which Takki says is as much a song about "obsessive behavior and not going mad in a big way, but just going slowly, methodically mad" as it is a love song.

The band's eclecticism isn't limited to music, either. The large house in Allston that is home to Bonesaw as well as members of two other bands also houses video production facilities, rehearsal space, and a recording studio where Bonesaw are working on an album (due early next year). Besides designing their own promotional materials, Bonesaw produce a cable TV show called *Feedback* that airs occasionally on the Boston Neighborhood Net-



**BUZZING:** Robert J. and Karlo Takki cut away loud and hard conventions.

work and features music videos and computer art.

"We were looking through the want ads," Takki explains, "and we kept seeing all these great, broadcast-quality video decks real cheap. People were just dumping them and trading up to SVHS, so we went out and got all these immense decks and all these wires and a couple cameras and went, 'Well, what do we do now? Let's lip-synch a video!' So you just learn as you go. Eventually we got a little more classy with our technique — like storyboarding things out and actually thinking about directing and lighting. But at first it was, 'Well, let's plug it in and do it.' Just like recording demos."

Although Bonesaw may have started

recording by trial and error, they've honed their craft considerably, learning to contain their massive sound on tape without diminishing its noisy intensity. "Too Much Craziness" starts things off with Takki's bracing vocals whipping through a blast of brash thrash that gusts along without sacrificing the abrasive textures that Takki and guitarist Robert J. grind together. "The Waiting Song" slaps the same textures into the brooding groove that bassist Chris Sabharwal and drummer Jason King roll out. "Eating Human Flesh" is slow and deliberate, reminiscent of Pink Floyd's moodier moments, with dark, reverberating guitar carrying Takki's vocals through passages of calmness and raging mania.

"These three songs just happen to be the Crazed Loner songs," Takki explains. "You know, Picasso had his Blue Period. I had my Crazed Loner Period."

Arriving in an unadorned, minimalist package, Sexploitation's demo might easily have been anything from stupendously slick synth-disco to artistic angst. I'm glad to say it turned out to be neither. The first two tunes, "Sequin Syringe" and "Sexual Revolution," twist the druggo, ebb-and-bliss that pervades T-Rex with a touch of dark, post-AIDS satire. Both are full of recklessly raw guitar work that lunges in and around a cool, understated groove. Intertwined with some vicious hooks are Jonathan Kelley's manic vocal gestures, which recall larynx contortionists from Stardust-era Rowie to the Divinyls' Christina Amphlett — especially during the last number, "The Fruit Song," a post-modern torch song that drifts along amid melancholy airs and twinkling chimes. □



# the songs

Except for *Paradise* and *Lies* (which were recorded at *busybox*, Stumpworld's sound studio), the tracks on the CD were re-recorded in a windowless space at the Sound Museum between 2016 and 2018. The original 1/2" mother tapes, dating from the late '80s to the mid-'90s, have succumbed to the flaking oxide syndrome that affects magnetic audio tape from this period. If they'd been usable, I'd have transferred them to a digital audio workstation, re-mixed, and re-mastered them. But by starting from scratch on a DAW, I was able to do what I couldn't with eight tracks on 1/2" tape.

Like **Bad Behavior**, the following manuscripts were written from memory during my years in prison, and may or may not exactly represent what's on the recorded tracks.

If you don't have the CD, you can stream the album for free:  
<https://soundcloud.com/karlo-takki/>

# Citadel

Everything that you hold dear  
Shrivels up and disappears  
Everything that's understood  
Pinches harder than it should  
Everything that you possess  
Brings you much unhappiness  
Everywhere you find yourself  
Holds you like a citadel

Everything you thought was fair  
Floats away in distant air  
Everyone you thought you knew  
Finds it hard to speak to you  
Everytime you thought you beat it  
In the end it's undefeated  
Everywhere you find yourself  
Holds you like a citadel

It's all the same  
It's all the same  
It's all the same

Everytime you shed a tear  
It whispers something in your ear  
Everytime you take a drink  
You drown yourself in piss and ink  
Everything you thought was true  
Turns around and shits on you  
Everywhere you find yourself  
Holds you like a citadel



It's all the same  
It's all the same  
It's all the same

# Citadel

Moderato (♩=112)

guitar

mf

Em D D9 D C C9 C A2

1. Every-thing that you hold dear  
 3. Every-time you shed a tear

Shri-vels up and dis-ap-pears  
 (It) whis-pers something in your ear

Em D D9 D C C9 C A2

Every-thing that's un-der-stood  
 Every-time you take a drink

Pin-ches lar-der than it should  
 Drown you self in piss and ink

Em D/F# C/G A2

Every-thing that you pos-ess  
 Every-thing you thought was true

Brings you much in-hap-pi-ness  
 Turns a-round and shits on you.

Em D D9 D C C9 C A2

Every where you find your self  
 Holds you like a Cit-a-del

Em A2 Em

F

A2 Em D D9 D C

oooooh

Em D D9 D C C9 C

mf 2. Every thing you thought was fair floats away in

A2 Em D D9 D C C9 C

dis-tant air Every one you thought you knew finds it hard to

A2 Em D/F# C/G

speak to you Every time you thought you beat it In the end it's

A2 Em D D<sup>9</sup> D C C<sup>9</sup> C

un.de feated      Everywhere you find your self      Holds you like a

A2 Chorus Em G C

Cit a del      f It's all the same

Em G C Em G C

It's all the same      It's all the same

A2 Em D D<sup>9</sup> D

guitar solo

C C<sup>9</sup> C A2 A2 D.S. al Coda

Coda Em C G Em C G

f It's all the same      It's all the same

Em 1.2. C G A2

It's all the same

3. C G A2

It's all the same      the same      the same      the

Same      the same      the same      the same      the

Guitar tacet      repeat + fade

Same      the same      the same      the



# Ship

Stately Rock  
(♩=112)

intro

A A/G# A/G A2

D/F# Dm/F A

rhy. gtr: G A G Bm

verses

A A/G# A/G A2

mp

1. Kill-ing time with needle and spoon on the floor of the liv-ing room  
2. Empty pockets empty fridge under neath the Brooklyn Bridge  
3. China white and Drano blue some for me and some for you

D/F# Dm/F A

rhy. gtr: G A G Bm

Waiting for a ship to come gonna take us out of here.

A A/G# A/G A2

mon day comes and Sunday goes witting like a paper rose  
Nodding off in titty bars Sleepily in a bandoned cars  
Kill-ing time with needle and Spoon On the floor of the liv-ing room

D/F# Dm/F A A2

Waiting for a ship to come gonna take us out of here. mf when it

Chorus

A G D A2 A

Comes oh oh - oh f when it

G D A2 A

Comes oh oh - oh mf We will

Em G D A A sus4 A

go oh oh - oh will go -

Em G D A

oh

Solo Verse

A A/G# A/G A2

mf

D/F# Dm/F A G A G Bm

A A/G# A/G A2

D/F# Dm/F A G A G Bm D.S. al coda

Coda Solo Chorus

A G D A2 A

f

A G D A2 A

Em G D A Asus4 A

mf

Em G D A

fin



## Ship

Killing time with needle and spoon  
On the floor of the living room  
Waiting for a Ship to come  
Gonna take us out of here

Monday comes and Sunday goes  
Wilting like a paper rose  
Waiting for a Ship to come  
Gonna take us out of here

When it comes  
When it comes  
We will go  
We will go

Empty pockets, empty fridge  
Underneath the Brooklyn Bridge  
Waiting for a Ship to come  
Gonna take us out of here

Nodding off in titty bars  
Sleeping in abandoned cars  
Waiting for a Ship to come  
Gonna take us out of here

When it comes  
When it comes  
We will go  
We will go

China white and Drano blue  
Some for me and some for you  
Waiting for a Ship to come  
Gonna take us out of here

Killing time with needle and spoon  
On the floor of the living room  
Waiting for a Ship to come  
Gonna take us out of here

## On and On

Lay in bed  
Counting sheep  
Count the seconds  
'Til I sleep  
Count the holes in the harvest moon  
Count the walls in my rented room

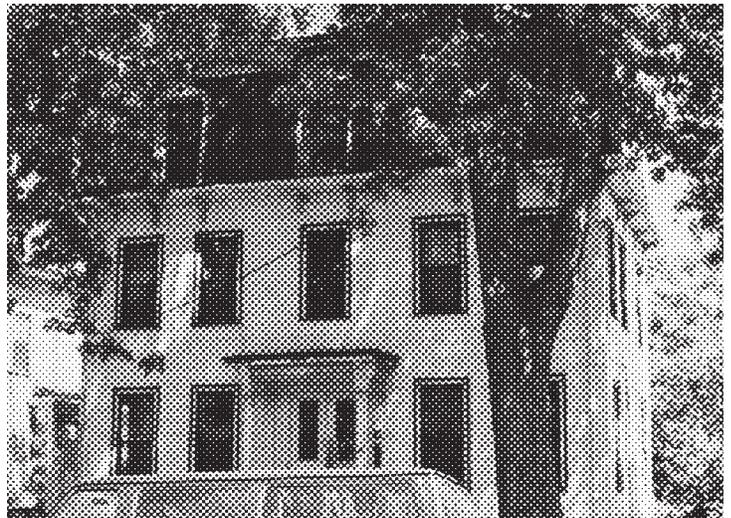
On  
On and On  
On and On and On

Take me where the flowers grow  
Lay in daisies  
Head to toe  
Feeling crazy  
Feeling sane  
Feeling wet from the morning rain

On  
On and On  
On and On and On

Everything I don't understand  
Like the dunes in the desert sand  
Like the crest of an ocean swell  
Like the way we betray ourselves

On  
On and On  
On and On and On



# On and On

Slow Blues (♩ = 60)

Intro

Em

Verse

Em

*mp*

1. Lay in bed counting Sheep count the seconds 'til I sleep

C Em

Count the holes in the har-vest moon Count the walls in my neu-ted room

Chorus

C B7 #C B7 A G D/F#

on on and on on and on and on

Em

Coda

C B7 A G D/F# Em Am E

on and on and on and on and on and on and on



# Eating Human Flesh

**intro**  
Largo (♩ = 5c)  
mp  
A<sup>2</sup> B<sup>b</sup>add<sup>#11</sup> A<sup>2</sup> B<sup>b</sup>add<sup>#11</sup> A<sup>2</sup> B<sup>b</sup>add<sup>#11</sup> A<sup>2</sup> B<sup>b</sup>add<sup>#11</sup>

**verse**  
mp  
A<sup>2</sup> B<sup>b</sup>add<sup>#11</sup> G F A<sup>2</sup> B<sup>b</sup>add<sup>#11</sup> A<sup>2</sup> B<sup>b</sup>add<sup>#11</sup>  
Oh I don't know why See the way things are I do the things I do See them as I do  
If you see me cry Take me by the hand  
Oh I don't know why See the way things are I live in side of you Deep in side of you  
If you see me cry Try and un der stand Try and un der stand  
Try and un der stand (Oh) I'm in side of you.

**pre-chorus**  
f  
E C A A<sup>2</sup>sus<sup>4</sup> E C A A<sup>7</sup>sus<sup>4</sup>  
Oh ——— It tastes so good Oh ——— it tastes so good

**Chorus**  
f  
1.:2. G A E G A E  
Eat ing Hu man Flesh ——— I'm Eat ing Hu man Flesh ———

**Chorus**  
f  
3. G A E G A E  
Eat ing Hu man Flesh ——— I'm Eat ing Hu man Flesh ———

**Chorus**  
f  
G A E G A E  
Eat ing Hu man Flesh ——— I'm Eat ing Hu man Flesh ———

**outro**  
ff  
G A E G A E  
Whoa ——— Whoa ———  
Whoa ——— Whoa ———



## Eating Human Flesh

Oh, I don't know why I do the things I do  
Oh, I don't know why I live inside of you  
Try and understand: I'm inside of you

Oh, it tastes so good  
Oh, it tastes so good  
Eating Human Flesh  
I'm Eating Human Flesh

If you see me cry, try and understand  
If you see me cry, take me by the hand  
Try and understand: I'm inside of you

Oh, it tastes so good  
Oh, it tastes so good  
Eating Human Flesh  
I'm Eating Human Flesh

See the way things are; see them as I do  
See the way things are, deep inside of you  
Try and understand: I'm inside of you

Oh, it tastes so good  
Oh, it tastes so good  
Eating Human Flesh  
I'm Eating Human Flesh



*I flossed.*

## An Untimely Death

Sitting on the front porch,  
Staring at the sky.  
Sitting on the front porch,  
Watching people fly.  
Another bad batch and a bigger hole,  
Television Man gonna take your soul,  
Take your soul away.

Tie one on me baby,  
Make it feel right.  
Tie one on me baby,  
Make it last all night.  
Another bad batch and I'll be okay,  
Television Man gonna take me away.

Where do you find yourself  
When you're on your own?  
How do you see yourself  
When you're underneath the lid?

It's just another Untimely Death.  
It's just another unsightly mess.

Sitting on the bathroom floor, way high.  
Sitting on the bathroom floor, waiting to die.  
Another bad batch and I'm soaking wet,  
Television Man gonna win the bet.

Where do you find yourself  
When you're all alone?  
How do you see yourself  
When you're nodding off for good?

It's just another Untimely Death,  
It's just another unsightly mess.  
It's just another Untimely Death,  
It's just another motherfucker who has suffered through  
his final breath.

# An Untimely Death

Moderato (♩=112)

Intro  
mf

gtr  
Bass

Verse  
mf

1. sitting on the front porch  
2. Tie one on me baby

Star-ving at the sky—  
make it feel ri-ight

sit-ting on the front porch  
Tie one on me baby

watch-ing peo-ple fly —  
make it last all ni-ight

An-  
An-

oth-er bad batch and a big-ger hole  
oth-er bad batch and I'll be o-kay

Te-le-vis-ion Man gon-na take your soul  
Te-le-vis-ion Man gon-na take me a-way

False Chorus

f Take your soul a-way —

re-Intro

Pre-Chorus

f Where do you find your-self when you're mp All a-lo-one?

mf How do you see your-self when you're un-der-neath the lid? f It's just an-

Chorus

oth-er Un-time-ly Death [yes it is] It's just an-

oth-er Un-sight-ly Mess [du-gtr]

piano/organ/synth solo

Verse 3

*p* sitting on the bath-room floor way - Hiiiiigh

*mp* sitting on the bath-room floor waiting to die — An.

*mf* other bad batch and I'm soaking wet Television Man gonna win the bet.

pre-chorus

*f* Where do you find your self when you're *mp* on your own — ?

*mf* How do you see your self when you're nodding off for good? *f* It's just an.

Chorus

*f* other un-time-ly Death *mf* yes it is It's just an.

1. other un-sight-ly mess yes it is it's just an.

2. other mother fucker who has suffered through his final breath *ff* [fry gtr.]

spoken: how dis-ap-pointing.

gtr:

# Truelove

Moderato (♩=100)

Intro

guitar *mf*

A open    G<sup>3</sup> A A<sup>7</sup>sus<sup>4</sup>    G open    C open    D<sup>9-11</sup>

D<sup>add4</sup>

D<sup>add4</sup>

Verse

*mp* #

1. True-love lives in a house by the river that flows through the ever-green trees —

A    G<sup>3</sup> A A<sup>7</sup>sus<sup>4</sup>    G    C    D<sup>9-11</sup>

D<sup>add4</sup>    A    G<sup>3</sup> A A<sup>7</sup>sus<sup>4</sup>

There she spends her days

G    C    D<sup>9-11</sup>    D<sup>add4</sup>

Reintro

*mf*

A    G<sup>3</sup> A A<sup>7</sup>sus<sup>4</sup>    G    C    D<sup>9-11</sup>

D<sup>add4</sup>

D<sup>add4</sup>

Verses

*mp* 2. True-love knocked on my door she said "Don't you come out, it's a wonderful day" —  
*p* 3. True-love left at dawn she said "Oh my God, what have I done?" —  
*f*

A    G<sup>3</sup> A A<sup>7</sup>sus<sup>4</sup>    G    C    D<sup>9-11</sup>

**Daddy** A G<sup>3</sup> A A<sup>7</sup> sus<sup>4</sup>

*mf* "No, thank you" was my re-ply,  
"Some people can't handle love" "I  
It's like

**G** C D<sup>9-11</sup> Daddy

have it got time giving a child to a come out and play"  
Loaded gun".

**A** G<sup>3</sup> A A<sup>7</sup> sus<sup>4</sup> G C D<sup>9-11</sup>

**Chorus** *f* True-love oh True-love oh oh oh oh oh oh

True-love oh True-love oh oh oh oh oh oh

**A** G<sup>3</sup> A A<sup>7</sup> sus<sup>4</sup>

True-love oh

**G** C D<sup>9-11</sup> Daddy

True-love oh oh oh oh oh oh

*mf* Oh—

**Outro** **A** G<sup>3</sup> A A<sup>7</sup> sus<sup>4</sup> A G<sup>3</sup> A A<sup>7</sup> sus<sup>4</sup>

True-love True-love Oh—

**A** G<sup>3</sup> A A<sup>7</sup> sus<sup>4</sup> A G<sup>3</sup> A A<sup>7</sup> sus<sup>4</sup>

True-love Oh— True-love [gtr.]



## Truelove

Truelove lives in a house  
Where the river flows  
Through the evergreen trees  
There she spends her days  
Writing simple songs  
About the birds and the bees.

Truelove knocked on my door  
She said "won't you come out  
It's a wonderful day"  
"No thank you" was my reply  
"I haven't got time to  
Come out and play"

Truelove left at dawn  
She said "Oh my God  
What have I done?  
Some people can't handle love  
It's like giving a child  
A loaded gun"

## Blessed Star

Blessed Star, where you are, shine on me again.  
Blessed Star, there you are, shine on me again.

It's lonely in this hole,  
I'm hungry and I'm cold,  
I've thrown away my soul,  
I'll never get it back.

Blessed Star, where you are, shine on me again.  
Blessed Star, there you are, shine on my again.

There's nothing that I wouldn't pay,  
For a single happy day,  
I'd give my life away,  
I'll never understand.

Blessed Star, where you are, shine on me again.  
Blessed Star, there you are, shine on me again.

It's lonely in this hole,  
I'm hungry and I'm cold,  
I hate to be alone,  
Compassion isn't home,  
It's gone to parts unknown,  
It's never coming back.

Blessed Star, where you are, shine on me again.  
Blessed Star, there you are, shine on me again.



*Winter is coming*

# Blessed Star

Moderato (♩=116)

guitar

mf

E E<sup>6</sup> D<sup>maj7</sup>/E D/E C<sup>maj7</sup>/E C<sup>6</sup>/E E

Refrain

mf

E E<sup>6</sup> D<sup>maj7</sup>/E D/E C<sup>maj7</sup>/E C<sup>6</sup>/E E

Blessed Star where you are Shine on me a-gain

E E<sup>6</sup> D<sup>maj7</sup>/E D/E C<sup>maj7</sup>/E C<sup>6</sup>/E E

Blessed Star There you are Shine on me a-gain

mp 1. It's  
2. There's  
3. It's

fine

Verses

Am D E Am D E

lon-e-ly in this hole I'm hun-gry and I'm cold mf I've  
 nothing that I would sit pay For a sin-gle hap-py day I'd  
 lon-e-ly in this hole I'm hun-gry and I'm cold I

Am D E F<sup>maj7</sup>(add#11)

thrown a-way my soul give my life a-way hate to be a-

[gtr] [pno] mp

E Am D E Am D

- lone f Com-pas-sion is-n't here mf It's gone to parts un-known

E F<sup>maj7</sup>(add#11)

[gtr] [pno] mp

D.S. al fine

# Wut Th'

**Allegro** (♩=132)

[guitar:]

**intro**

mf

A<sup>2</sup> C B B<sup>b</sup> A<sup>2</sup> C B B<sup>b</sup>

**verse**

mf

1. Walk-ing through the dead of night  
 2. Met-al dogs and con-crete cats  
 3. Man is wait-ing for his wife

A<sup>2</sup> C B B<sup>b</sup> A<sup>2</sup> C B B<sup>b</sup>

Eve-ry-thing in black and white  
 Pat-rol with mil-i-ta-ry hats  
 In his hand he has a knife

A<sup>2</sup> C B B<sup>b</sup> A<sup>2</sup> C B B<sup>b</sup>

Ob-jects I don't rec-og-nize  
 Peo-ple ly-ing on the ground  
 He is sit-ting in a chair

A<sup>2</sup> C B B<sup>b</sup> A<sup>2</sup> G E

Pressed a-gainst as bes-tus sties  
 Pi-ty no one makes a sound  
 She is float-ing in mid air

**chorus**

f

What the hell is go-ing on — ?

F G

Eve-ry-thing I know is gone —

(Reintro)

A<sup>2</sup> C B B<sup>b</sup> A C B B<sup>b</sup>

mf

2 (Break)

3 3 G# A<sup>2</sup> C B B<sup>b</sup> A<sup>3</sup> G<sup>3</sup>

f

F 3 3 G A<sup>2</sup> C B B<sup>b</sup> A<sup>3</sup> G<sup>3</sup>

(reintro)

F 3 3 G A<sup>2</sup> C B B<sup>b</sup> A<sup>2</sup> C

mf

3.

B B<sup>b</sup> A E F

ff

What the fuck is going on

G A E F

Every - thing I know is

(outro)

G G# A<sup>2</sup> C B B<sup>b</sup>

ff

gone gone gone gone gone gone gone...

## Wut Th'

Walking through the dead of night  
Everything in black & white  
Objects I don't recognize  
Pressed against asbestos skies

Wut th' hell is going on?  
Everything I know is gone.

Metal dogs and concrete cats  
Rats with military hats  
People lying on the ground  
Pity no one makes a sound

Wut th' hell is going on?  
Everything I know is gone.

A man is waiting for his wife  
In his hand he has a knife  
She is sitting in a chair  
He is floating in mid air

Wut' th' hell is going on?  
Everything I know is gone.  
Wut th' hell is going on?  
Everything I know is wrong.

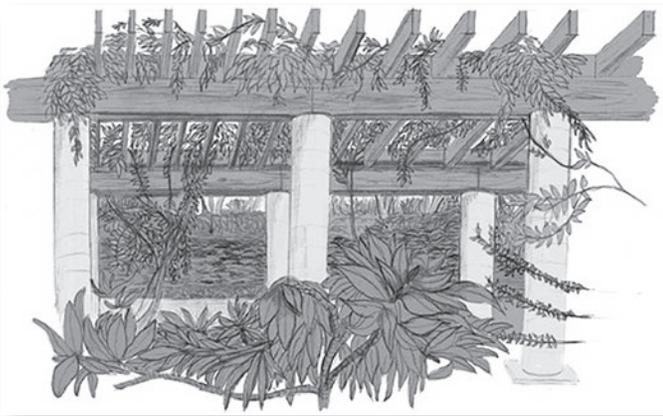
## Prozac

Time was running backwards  
I was plastered to the wall  
No one to look out for me  
Or catch me if I fall  
All of the mistakes I've made  
Were breathing down my neck  
These memories are making me  
A fucking nervous wreck

I'se gonna kill myself this morning  
But I wrote this song instead  
Inspired by the need to put  
A bullet in my head  
And fueled by the feeling I'd be  
Better off dead  
I'se gonna kill myself this morning  
But I wrote this song instead

I am master of my soul  
I am captain of my fate  
But we've run aground in Nantucket Sound  
And I fear it's much too late  
The crew are in the lifeboats  
The sea is at my feet  
I'm going down with this ship i've found  
In a sea of self-deceit

I'se gonna kill myself this morning  
But i wrote this song instead  
Inspired by the need to put  
A bullet in my head  
And fueled by the feeling i'd be  
Better off dead  
I'se gonna kill myself this morning  
But i wrote this song instead



# Prozac

Allegro (♩=142)

verse

1. Time was run-ning back-wards I was plas-tered to the wall

Em A G

No one to look out for me or catch me if I fall

Em A G

All of the mis-takes we made are break-ing down my neck these

Em A G

mem-o-ries are mak-ing me a feel-ing ner-vous wreck f I see you

Em A G

chorus

Kill my-self this mor-ning But I wrote this song in-stead in-

E C A G

spired by the need to put a bul-let in my head and

E C A G

we-led by the feel-ing I'd be bet-ter off dead I see you

E C A G

kill my-self this mor-ning But I wrote this song in-stead

E C A G Em

I wrote this song in-stead

A G Em

Empty musical staff with a double bar line and repeat sign.



# Karlo's Drunk Again

**Allegro (♩=158)**

**intro** [Rhy. gtr]

A (open) A<sup>7</sup>sus<sup>4</sup> A<sup>13</sup>(no 3, 9, 11) A<sup>7</sup>(no 3) A<sup>13</sup>(no 3, 9, 11) A<sup>7</sup>(no 3)

**verse**

f 1. Dropping in the hall  
 2. Screaming at the sky  
 3. Tripping in the hall

Shadow on the floor  
 Grunting like a pig  
 Glass up on the floor

Stain up on the wall  
 Tear-ing up his sty  
 Holes in all the walls

A knock on the door  
 He's flipped his wig  
 A knife in the door

Tir-ed of it all  
 Call him like a dog  
 Tir-ed of it all

the mouth's an o-pen sore  
 He does'nt know his name  
 The mouth's an o-pen sore

filled with al-co-hol  
 Mag-gots in his food  
 filled with al-co-hol

And leak-ing like a whore  
 He'll eat it all the same  
 And leak-ing like a whore.

**Chorus**

f Oh ——— no ——— Kar-lo's Drunk a-gain ———

Oh ——— no ——— he's drunk a-gain ———

Chords: Em, D/F#, G, A, A<sup>7</sup>sus<sup>4</sup>, A<sup>13</sup>(no 3, 9, 11), A<sup>7</sup>(no 3), C (open), D 9-11 (no 7)

Handwritten musical notation for guitar. Chords: A, A<sup>7sus4</sup>, A<sup>13</sup> (no 3,9,11), G. Lyrics: hes drunk a-gain

bridge  
Handwritten musical notation for guitar. Chords: A, A<sup>7sus4</sup>, A, G. Lyrics: He's drunk a-gain. Includes the instruction "smile..."

Handwritten musical notation for guitar. Chords: A, A<sup>7sus4</sup>, A, G. Lyrics: gain, He's drunk a-gain

3.  
double chorus  
Handwritten musical notation for guitar. Chords: G, A, A<sup>7sus4</sup>, A, A<sup>0</sup>, Em, D/F#. Lyrics: He's drunk a-gain, Oh, No

Handwritten musical notation for guitar. Chords: G, A, A<sup>7sus4</sup>, A, A<sup>0</sup>, Em, D/F#. Lyrics: Kar. lo's Drunk a-gain, Oh, No

(outro)  
Handwritten musical notation for guitar. Chords: A, A<sup>7sus4</sup>, A, G. Lyrics: He's drunk a-gain, He's drunk a-gain

Handwritten musical notation for guitar. Chords: A, A<sup>7sus4</sup>, A, G, A, A<sup>7sus4</sup>, A, A<sup>0</sup>. Lyrics: He's drunk a-gain, He's drunk a-gain

Em  
Handwritten musical notation for guitar, showing a single chord.



## Karlo's Drunk Again

Dripping in the hall, shadow on the floor  
Stain upon the wall, a knock on the door

Tired of it all, the mouth's an open sore  
Filled with alcohol, and leaking like a whore

Oh, no  
Karlo's Drunk Again  
Oh, no  
He's drunk again

Screaming at the sky, grunting like a pig  
Tearing up his sty, he's flipped his wig  
Call him like a dog, he doesn't know his name  
Maggots in his food, he'll eat it all the same

Oh, no  
Karlo's Drunk Again  
Oh, no  
He's drunk again  
He's drunk again

Tired of it all, the mouth's an open sore  
Filled with alcohol, and leaking like a whore  
Sleeping in the hall, glass upon the floor  
Holes in all the walls, a knife in the door

Oh, no  
Karlo's Drunk Again  
Oh, no  
He's drunk again  
He's drunk again  
He's drunk again  
He's drunk again

## I Don't Know

I Don't Know what to say anymore  
I Don't Know what to say anymore

I Don't Know  
What is wrong  
What is wrong  
What is wrong  
I Don't Know what is wrong with my life

I Don't know what to say to my friends  
I Don't know what to say to my friends

I Don't Know  
What is wrong  
What is wrong  
What is wrong  
What is wrong  
I Don't Know what is wrong with my life

I Don't Know how to live anymore  
I Don't know how to live anymore

I Don't Know  
What is wrong  
What is wrong  
What is wrong  
I Don't Know what is wrong with my life



*Happy Fucking Halloween*

# I Don't Know

Allegro (♩=164)

Voice

gtr.

mf 1. I don't

1. know what to say an-y- more I don't  
 2. know what to say to my friends I don't

Em G C A2 Em G C A2

know what to say an-y- more I don't  
 know what to say to my friends

Em G C A2 Em G C A2

know what is wrong what is wrong what is wrong I don't

B5 A5 B5 A5 B5 A5 B5 A2

know what is wrong with my life 2. I don't

Em G C A2 Em G C A2

# You Don't

Allegro (♩=144)

**Intro**

Am  Bm/A  Am Bm/A

f [rh gtr.]

**Verses**

Am Bm/A Am Bm/A

f

1. I found your ear-ring un-der -neath my bed  
 2. The well is deep the well in-side  
 3. Stit my wrists and bleed to death

Now it hangs from a hole in my head.  
 The well is filled with tears I've cried.  
 I'll call your name with my dy-ing breath

Am

mf you Don't love me no more

Am Bm/A Am Bm/A

mf I sit in bed and cry your name  
 A bless-ed joy be-comes a curse  
 or should I face the facts and have another shot?

G

Am Bm/A

f maybe you think it's just a fuck-ing game  
 why do things al-ways change for the worst?  
 Life goes on whether I like it or not.

Am

You Don't love me no more

Am Bm/A C/A  Dsus4/A  D/A 

[lead gtr ad lib]

Am Bm/A C/A Dsus4/A D/A

2.

Am Bm/A Am Bm/A

mf I

**Chorus**

D  Dsus4  D C  Csus4  C

live for you — I cry xx for you I

D Dsus4 D F  G 

laugh for you — [half-spoken:] I'll die for you

p

Am Bm/A C/A D<sup>sus4</sup>/A D/A

[leadgtr ad lib]

Am Bm/A C/A D<sup>sus4</sup>/A D/A

3. Should I

[rhyth.] F G F G

Coda

[half-spoken:] wait for you

[sung:] I'll wait wait wait-for you oh no-

Am Bm/A C/A D<sup>sus4</sup>/A D/A

Am Bm/A C/A D<sup>sus4</sup>/A D/A

[leadgtr or piano ad lib]

Am Bm/A C/A D<sup>sus4</sup>/A D/A

Am Bm/A C/A D (adj 9, 11)

f [rhyth.]

*[Handwritten signature]*

## You Don't

I found your earring underneath my bed,  
Now it hangs from a hole in my head.  
Ahhh...You Don't love me no more.

I sit in bed and cry your name,  
Maybe you think it's just a bloody game.  
Ahhh...You Don't love me no more.

The well is deep, the well inside,  
The well is filled with tears I've cried,  
Ahhh...You Don't love me no more.

A blessed joy becomes a curse,  
Why do things always change for the worse?  
Ahhh...You Don't love me no more.

I live for you,  
I cry for you,  
I laugh for you,  
I'll die for you.

Should I slit my wrists and bleed to death?  
I'll call your name with my dying breath.  
Ahhh...You Don't love me no more.

Or should I face the facts and have another shot?  
Life goes on whether I like it or not.  
Ahhh...You Don't love me no more.

I live for you,  
I cry for you,  
I laugh for you,  
I'll wait for you,  
I said I'll wait for you.

## Do You Bleed for Your Art?

Do you bleed for your art? Do you wish that you could?  
Pounding at the keyboard 'til your fingers turn to wood?  
Ranting at the critics over things misunderstood?

Do you bleed for your art? Does your art bleed for you?  
Shunned by all your friends 'cuz your style isn't new?  
Banned from all the galleries 'cuz your mother was a Jew?

Do you bleed for your art like you bleed when you shit?  
Drinking like a flounder 'cuz you never wrote a hit?  
Burning all your tapes in the fever of a fit?

Do you bleed for your art? Is your cash flow intact?  
Are you thinking of directing 'cuz you don't know how to act?  
Sucking up the pills 'cuz you know you're just a hack?

Bleed, bleed, bleed  
Bleed for your art  
Bleed, bleed, bleed

Do you bleed for your art in the comfort of your loft?  
Are you trashing all your paintings 'cuz your girlfriend puts you off?  
Sleeping on the floor because your mattress is too soft?

Do you bleed for your art? Do they know that you bleed?  
Did they cut you from the band because you're smoking too much weed?  
Did you shave off all your hair because it's starting to recede?

Do you bleed for your art? Did you bleed yourself dry?  
Did you burn your girlfriend's poems 'cuz she's with another guy?  
Did you blow another grant 'cuz you're always getting high?

Do you bleed for your art? Is there any other way?  
Did you lose your biggest buyer 'cuz you said you weren't gay?  
Did you throw out all your canvas 'cuz you've nothing left to say?

# Do You Bleed For Your Art?

Moderato (♩=124)

intro

G D/F# E

[gtr] mf

mf 1. Do you

verse A.

A7sus4 E

Bleed for your Art?  
Bleed for your Art?

Do you wish that you could?  
Does your art bleed for you?

A A7sus4 E

Pounding at the key-board 'til your fingers turn to wood?  
shunned by all your friends 'cuz your style is - it new?

C D add 9-11

Painting at the critics o-ver things mis-un-der-stood?  
Banned from all the galleries 'cuz your muth-er was a Jew?

1. 2. Do you

2. Refrain E

Do you Bleed For Your Art?

Chorus G D/F# E G D/F#

f Bleed Bleed Bleed Bleed for your

E G D/F# E G D/F#

Art Bleed Bleed Bleeeed

[gtr]

D.S. :&

E

mf Do you



# Sirens

Allegro  
(♩=152) D<sup>2</sup>

Intro

Recorder or flute ad lib

D<sup>2</sup>/C

simile

Orch.  
(strings,  
horns,  
keys)

D<sup>m</sup>

Keys  
(piano,  
marimba,  
celesta)

(keys simile)

Verses  
1+2

Dm

night I had a dream that you were float- ing at sea

night I had a dream that you were up in the sky

Bb Dm

un- der-neath a can- dy ap- ple sun.

look- ing down and co- ver- ing the sun.

Bb A7

Drift- ing in the cur- rents towards a ra- zor's edge hor- i- zon

Far a bove the build- ings and the side- walks and the streets

Bb A7

Watch- ing oth- er peo- ple hav- ing fun

Far be- yond the thoughts of eve- ry- one

mf When  
When

Dm

I'm a- lone at night I hear your voice in the hall but

I'm a- lone at night I hear your steps in the hall but

Bb Dm

when I go to look there's no one there

When I go to look there's no one there

Bb C

I go to look and no one's there

I go to look and no one's there

Bb C

There's no one there

There's no one there  
There's no one there

Reintro

1.  $D^2$  Recorder or Flute ad lib -----  $D^2/C$  simile

Orch.  $f$

$D^2$  simile -----  $D^2/C$  simile

$Dm$

keys  $mp$

LV 2. Last  $mp$

Orch. *f*

Recorder or flute *ad lib.* *D2/c* *simile*

Detailed description: This system shows the Recorder or flute part and the first two staves of the Orchestra. The Recorder part is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a 2/4 time signature. It features a melodic line with slurs and accents, marked 'ad lib.', 'D2/c', and 'simile'. The Orchestra part consists of two staves: the top staff is in treble clef and the bottom staff is in bass clef, both with a key signature of one flat. The top staff has a dynamic marking of 'f' and contains a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The bottom staff contains a similar rhythmic accompaniment.

Orch. *mf*

Keys

*Dm*

Detailed description: This system shows the Keys part and the top staff of the Orchestra. The Keys part is in bass clef with a key signature of one flat and a 2/4 time signature. It features a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes with a dynamic marking of 'mf'. The Orchestra part is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat and a 2/4 time signature. It features a melodic line with slurs and accents, marked 'mf' and 'Dm'.

*Bb* *Dm*

Detailed description: This system shows the Keys part and the top staff of the Orchestra. The Keys part is in bass clef with a key signature of one flat and a 2/4 time signature. It features a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The Orchestra part is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat and a 2/4 time signature. It features a melodic line with slurs and accents, marked 'Dm'.

*Bb* *C*

Detailed description: This system shows the Keys part and the top staff of the Orchestra. The Keys part is in bass clef with a key signature of one flat and a 2/4 time signature. It features a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The Orchestra part is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat and a 2/4 time signature. It features a melodic line with slurs and accents, marked 'C'.

*Bb* *C*

Detailed description: This system shows the Keys part and the top staff of the Orchestra. The Keys part is in bass clef with a key signature of one flat and a 2/4 time signature. It features a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The Orchestra part is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat and a 2/4 time signature. It features a melodic line with slurs and accents, marked 'C'.

Orch + Keys

D<sup>2</sup> fl: tr

f

keys: p

1. 2.

LV: mp 3. Last

Verse 3 Dm

night I had a dream that you were sit- ting in bed

Bb Dm

un- der-neath an in- can des-cent light.

Bb A7

Sip- ping a sol- u- tion of am- mon- i- a and lye

Bb A7

List- en- ing for Si- rens in the night.

fin

# Sirens

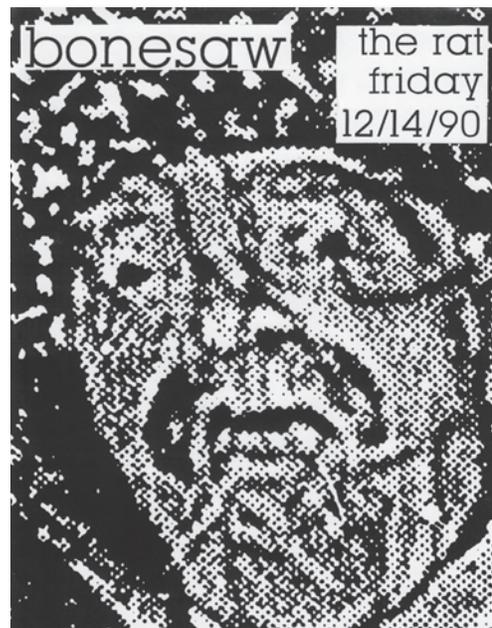
Last night I had a dream that you were  
Floating at sea  
Underneath a candy apple sun  
Drifting in the current towards a  
Razor's edge horizon  
Watching other people having fun

When I'm alone at night I hear your  
Voice in the hall  
But when I go to look there's no one there  
I go to look there's no one there  
There's no one there

Last night I had a dream that you were  
Up on the sky  
Looking down and covering the sun  
Far above the boildings and the sidewalks and the  
streets  
Far beyond the thoughts of everyone

When I'm alone at night I hear your  
Steps in the hall  
But when I go to look there's no one there  
I go to look there's no one there  
There's no one there

Last night I had a dream that you were  
Sitting in bed  
Underneath an incandescent light  
Sipping a solution of ammonia and lye  
Listening for sirens in the night



# Byzantium

Moderato  
(♩=102)

N.C.  
guitar *p* *mp*

*p* *mf*

Em(add9) G  
*mf* [let ring]

A2 C  
*mp* *mf*

Verse  
Em(add9) G  
*mf*

1. Li-ving by the mar- ket- place in old By-zan- ti-um-  
2. Chased a fil- thy le- per to an- oth-er part of town-  
3. For- ag- ing for wea- pons on the ru- ins on the hill-

A2 C  
*mf*

we broke a bunch of win- dows to break the te- di- um-  
fol- lowed by some chil- dren who watched us knock him down  
We drank a lot of whis- key and took a lot of pills.

Em(add9) G  
*mf*

Watch- ing as the neigh- bor takes his dai- ly dose of fun  
Honor and in- teg- ri- ty lay dy- ing on the ground  
Sum- mer brought us mis- er- y and too much time to kill

A2 C  
*mf*

Tor- tur- ing his lo- ver with a trunk and a gun  
They twitched a fee- ble spa- sm but did- n't make a sound  
Mur- der- ing us eve- ry- day and weak- en- ing our will

(rhy. gtr.)

Chorus

mf And I don't know where to go f

And I don't know where to go mf from here

1. G

[guitar] mp

2. We

2. G

D(add4) C2 G A2

mp [guitar] mf

D(add4) C2 G A2

mp mf

E(m)(add9)

mf [guitar]

3. G

E(m)(add9)

## Byzantium

Living by the marketplace in old Byzantium  
We broke a bunch of windows to break the tedium  
Watching as the neighbor takes his daily dose of fun  
Torturing his daughter with a truncheon and a gun

And I don't know where to go  
And I don't know where to go  
From here

We chased a filthy leper to the other part of town  
Followed by some children who watched us knock  
him down  
Honor and integrity lay dying on the ground  
They twitched a feeble spasm but didn't make a  
sound

And I don't know where to go  
And I don't know where to go  
From here

Foraging for weapons in the ruins on the hill  
We drank a lot of whiskey and took a lot of pills  
Summer brought us misery and too much time to kill  
Murdering us everyday and weakening our will

And I don't know where to go  
And I don't know where to go  
From here

## Lies

Try to picture a time, a place  
A candle by the bed  
An eerie light inside the room  
That casts the shadows red  
Something spoken breaks the spell  
And lingers in the air  
Something sharp to cut through lies  
And everything unfair

Tucked away in a hiding place  
Where no one ever goes  
Rewriting recent misery  
And smelling like a rose  
Lots of empty bottles  
And games of solitaire  
It seems like ancient history  
Is hanging in the air

It's been a year  
I don't feel any better  
I pour another drink  
And write you a letter  
I'm fine ... how are you?  
How was your holiday?  
When i'm done i rip it up  
And throw it all away



*Here be dragons*

# Lies

**Presto** ( $\text{♩} = 160$ )

**intro**

Flute or Recorder:  $\text{C}^{\#}7$   $G^6$

Tambourine:  $f$   $\text{C}^{\#}7$   $G^6$   $\text{simile...}$   $mf$

**Verses 1+2**

$mp$

1. Try to picture a time, a place a candle by the bed  
 2. Locked away in a hiding place where no-one e- ver goes

A eerie light in-side the room that casts the sha-dows red.  
 Re- cur-ring re- car-tis-er-y and smel-ling like a rose

Some-thing spoken breaks the spell and lin-gers in the air  
 Lots of empty bot-tles and games of Sol-i-taire

$mf$

Some-thing sharp to cut through Lies and eve- ry- thing in un-  
 It seems like ancient his-to-ry is hang- ing in the

fair air.

[Flute or recorder solo]

$G^6$   $\text{C}^{\#}7$

G6 C#m7  
 [verse 3] It's been a year

G6 C#m7  
 I don't feel any better. I pour another drink and

G6 C#m7  
 write you a letter "I'm fine, How are you?"

G6 C#m7  
 How was your hol-i-day? "mf When I'm done I rip it up and

G6 F#7(add11) Fmaj7(add#11)  
 throw it all a-way

outro C#m7 G6  
 [Flute or recorder ad lib]

C#m7 G6  
 Repeat and Fade.





## Paradise

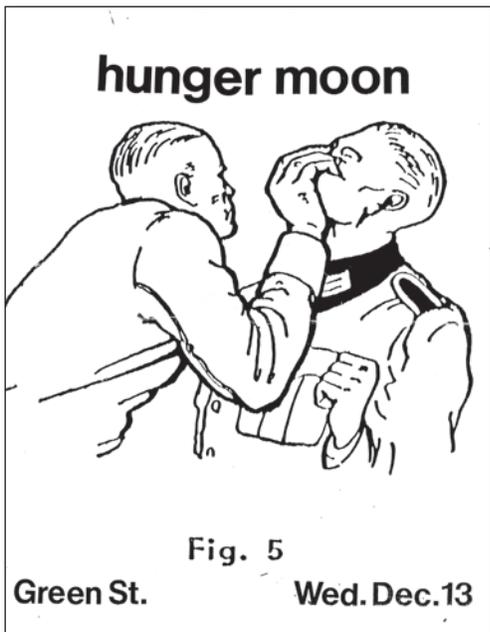
Three dimensions and a small abyss  
 It's gone amiss  
 There's no one there  
 And no one cares  
 Rolled the wagon off a rocky cliff  
 I'm sobered stiff  
 There's no one home  
 I'm all alone

Took a voyage to the southern sea  
 My dog and me  
 It's all the same  
 Except the name  
 In a hurry to depart the ship  
 It's so unhip  
 And so serene

Paradise  
 Paradise  
 In my head  
 In my head

Someone's whistling in the parking lot  
 An astronaut  
 Like Fred Astaire  
 With rubber hair  
 Took the wagon on a little trip  
 A southern dip  
 Along the coast, along the coast

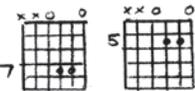
Paradise  
 Paradise  
 In my head  
 In my head



# Paradise

Moderato (♩ = 128)

Intro



D(add9) C/D D(add9) C/D D(add9) D(add9)

[d.gtr]



Bb(add#11) D(add9) Bb(add#11) D(add9)

Verse

C/D D add9 C/D D add9

mf 1. Three di-men-sions and a small a-buss it's gone a-mis-  
 2. Took a voy-age to the South-ern Sea my dog and me-  
 3. Some-one's whist-ling in the park-ing lot all as-tro-naut

Bb(add#11) D(add9) Bb(add#11) D(add9)

There's no one there and no one cares  
 It's all the same ex-cept the name  
 Like Fred As-taire with rub-ber hair

C/D D(add9) C/D D add9

mf Rolled the wa-gon off a rock-y cliff im so bered stiff  
 In a hur-ry to de-part the ship It's so un-hip  
 Took the wa-gon on a lit-tle trip a South-ern dip

Bb(add#11) D(add9) Bb(add#11) D

There's no one home im all a-lone F Pa-ra  
 And so ser-ene And so ser-ene  
 A-long the coast A-long the coast

Chorus

D(add9) BIG C/D D(add9) BIG

dise Pa-ra-dise In my

Bb(add#11) D Bb(add#11) C

head In my head Pa-ra

D(add9) BIG C D(add9) BIG

dise Pa-ra-dise In my

Bb(add#11) D Bb(add#11) D

head In my head



Stampworld Basic Tracks

Handwritten notes above the table: *gale/lin*, *gabe*, *gale/lin/eq*, *gale/lin*, *gale/lin*

| Line | 16 | 15 | 14 | 13 | 12 | 11 | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
|------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| pad  | X  | X  | X  |    |    |    |    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| gain | ○  | ○  | ○  | ○  | ○  | ○  | ○  | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| hi   | ○  | ○  | ○  | ○  | ○  | ○  | ○  | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

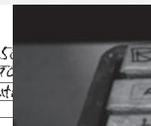
Notes on the right side of the table:

- aux1 - REXS
- aux2 - SPX 90
- aux3 - MONI
- exp monitors
- 1 2 3

Notes below the table:

- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
- 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20
- 2 3 4 5 6
- 1 2 3
- 4 5 6
- 7 8 9 10 11 12
- 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

Tech2 Navigator (Version 0.6, 3/7/95)





## THE MIDDLE PERIOD

**B**onesaw/Hunger Moon had been around for three years now. I had originally set an 18-24 month limit: if the band didn't get going in that timeframe then I'd cut bait and move to another project. The change between Hunger Moon (pop songs, mostly mine) and Bonesaw (dark metal, collectively written), hit the reset button on my internal timer: new project, new time limit. (My rationale behind setting a deadline was that I'd felt that Skin had outlived its welcome long before the six-year mark and that novelty and freshness were the virtues most valued in the Boston music scene). Above and beyond this local time limit was a self-imposed deadline: I was getting close to 35, the age at which I felt that I'd be too old to play rock 'n' roll. This was a decision I'd reached when I was 17, watching the 35-year-old Rolling Stones on stage at JFK Stadium in Philadelphia.

Say what you will about the absurdity of adhering to a decision made by a 17-year-old, my decision to pursue a career in music was made when I was 14. At least I'm consistent in letting teenagers dictate my life decisions. Also, I really didn't think I'd be living past 35, anyway.

Much as I loathe writing about my personal life (unless it rhymes and is set to music), I should mention that I'd been on a long binge since the summer of '88. Part of this was due to my inability to process my grief over my girlfriend's death that year. Part of this was my adherence to another ethos: "The road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom". Blake aside, I'd read a lot of Bukowski, Burroughs, and Lester Bangs, and thought that the dissolute rock lifestyle was necessary for "artistic integrity", if such a thing really exists. All the while I was the schmuck trying to keep the lights on and the heat from getting cut off, filing my Schedule C and self-employment tax forms, keeping the band's press list up to date and trying to book gigs.

In between being a responsible adult and an irresponsible child, my personal life was a boating accident. I'd had a couple of long relationships in my teens and twenties, but after I turned 27 it seemed that frequency went up and duration went down. I'd torpedoed a fairly steady relationship I'd had with one woman when she caught me in bed with another woman on the morning after a gig. My drinking didn't help at all, even when, no, especially when I was with someone who drank as much as I did. I was a blackout drunk seeking other blackout drunks so we could play a game called "Did We Use a Condom?" the next morning (*Pro tip*: check the waste basket).



*Goat-like boy*

My answering machine messages consisted mainly of “Hey, Karlo. Just want to see if you’re okay. You were pretty *wasted* last night.”

In time, my drinking affected my performance on stage as well as off. In 1992, my bandmates in Bonesaw fired me in the most passive-aggressive way possible: they quit the band and formed another. I’d had a warning that something like this would happen, but I didn’t heed it. I went through the Five Stages of Grief and eventually landed on Acceptance. And kept on drinking.

Pressing on regardless was my response: I kept writing and recording. I also quit my job at Boston Cab for good. Not that I was making enough from the studio to live, but I felt like I had to dive into the deep end of the pool to see if I could swim.

That lasted all of six months. By increasing rents on rooms when they were vacated, I managed to lower my rent to a minimal amount (I was occupying two tiny 7 x 10 rooms; one was the studio control room). I could get by on 20 hours of paid recording time per week. But anyone who has run a technology-oriented business knows that the monster needs to be fed. Maintenance, repairs, and keeping up with the state-of-the-art costs money.

Scott, who was a systems administrator for a consulting firm, needed an assistant at work. It was a six-month contract at a good price, so I accepted the offer. The firm analyzed companies in a particularly narrow sector: *in vitro* diagnostics. This ran the gamut of inexpensive reagents to complex million-dollar lab equipment. The head of the firm would attend an



*Even with a mask you can tell it's me*

annual gathering of manufacturers and investors and present his analysts’ projections for the coming year. The months leading up to this presentation would be spent collating and processing raw data, culminating in a frenzy of charting and graphing. Scott tapped me because he knew I could sit down in front of an unfamiliar piece of software and understand how to use it before the 10AM coffee and cigarette break.



*I'm in my happy place*

**A**round this time, an old friend of mine, Frank Coleman, got in touch with us. Frank was a drummer from New York City whom I’d met at Berklee during our freshman year. He was the master of odd time signatures, and cut an interesting figure with shaved temples and wraparound shades. Now Frank was putting together a consortium of musicians and technologists called 21st Century Art. Word had gotten back to him about the videos Scott and I had been producing, so he came by the house and we showed him the animations we’d been doing on the Amiga. He was impressed and entered an animation I’d created, a



*Life on top*

spoof of the AT&T “YOU WILL” commercials, into an animation contest. It won first prize in the humor category.

I wasn't sure what 21CA was supposed to do, but I attended the meetings anyway. Most of the other people were musicians and software developers for companies like Lotus and Kodak. I surmised that the point of 21CA was to develop interactive multimedia projects that integrated audio, video, animation, and programming into a seamless work of art. This was when everyone was on dial-up, few computers had CD-ROM drives, and CD burners were expensive and rare as hen's teeth. Tim Berners-Lee had invented the World Wide Web three years earlier but only academics knew about it, much less used it.

I felt a bit over my head. I knew BASIC from high school and from programming a tiny Timex/Sinclair computer I'd had ten years earlier. I'd read about LISP but hadn't tried programming it, and though I'd studied Z-80 assembly language (part of an attempt to build my own drum machine -- I went and bought

one instead), I was most definitely a fish out of water. But I was interested in making something that integrated music and visuals that wasn't just another music video, so I went to the meetings and tried to glom whatever meaning I could.

With my earnings from Boston Biomedical Consulting, I upgraded some of my studio gear. My 512K Mac was getting long in the tooth (I'd had it since 1985, an eternity in computer years) so I bought a Classic II. It never made it into the studio proper; I kept using the 512K for sequencing keyboard parts while the Classic II became an office machine, with FileMaker Pro and communications software. I joined a few local BBSs as well as CompuServe (71444,3100 was my C\$ log-in).

Tim returned from the West Coast and moved back into the house. He was working as lighting and video tech for touring bands, going on the road with Metallica and other A-list acts. Tired of the road, Tim wanted to put down roots. He bought a Mac Quadra 700 and configured it for audio and video editing. He was quickly recruited for 21CA.

Around this time, I'd been accruing songs for another release, tentatively entitled “Citadel”. When Bonesaw broke up, Squid inherited our bass player, Jim, who was now living in the house. I recruited him and Grant, Squid's drummer, to record basic tracks for five songs, three of which I finished by myself (vocals, guitar, keyboards). I now had a three-song demo, though no band with which to play gigs. I was playing solo acoustic gigs around town, accompanying myself on guitar, but I really had no motivation to form a new band.

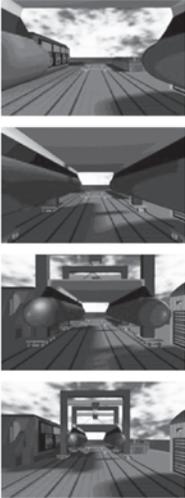


**nauticus**

Nauticus is a kiosk-based interactive exhibit at the National Maritime Museum in Norfolk, VA. Built by Tarragon Interactive for Chedd-Angier Productions, the exhibit features a virtual shipyard where the user can construct a ship.

In 1994, Nauticus won the Silver Medal at the New York Interactive Festival and a Bronze Medal at the Cindy Awards in Los Angeles.

Responding to a situation created by the sudden departure of the project's lead animator, KTMS stepped in and completed the modeling and animation. The 30 minutes of animation integral to the exhibit were completed and rendered in under four weeks.



[Credits](#)  
[DEC Dove](#)

Copyright © 1996 [k. takki media services](#)

*From the KTMS web site*

When my contract with Boston Biomedical ran out, I didn't have to rush to get another job. I had money in the bank and was getting gigs as a live sound engineer, even filling in for a friend as house soundman at a local club. But in early 1993 everything changed.

Frank called one evening to ask if I was up for an animation gig. Through a mutual friend, he'd heard of a multimedia company that was in dire need of an animator to finish a project in the face of a looming deadline. Though I had never done animation professionally, I agreed to take a meeting. Just in case this was over my head, I brought Scott in on the project.

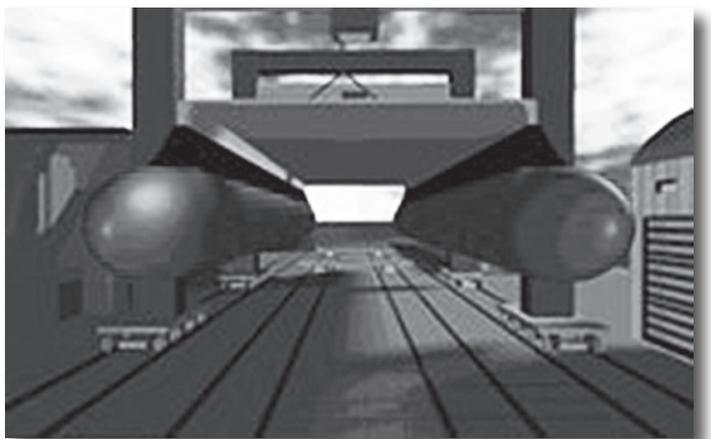
Steve Barney was the owner of Tarragon Interactive, a small company based in Woburn, which developed multimedia projects for other companies on a contract basis. The project in question was a stand-alone interactive kiosk for the National Maritime Museum in Norfolk, Virginia, known as Nauticus. Tarragon was subcontracting for Chedd-Angier, one of the companies producing exhibits for the museum. The kiosk was a shipbuilding demonstrator in which the user would choose from different hulls, superstructures, and propulsion systems in order to create a ship meant for a certain task. The kiosk had a touch screen and would be housed in a cabinet not unlike an arcade video game.

Steve's animator had left for a job with Digital Domain on the west coast. They had six weeks left to finish the kiosk and all they had was a model of a shipyard. We were given a storyboard with sketches of the various shipbuilding components, a copy of Autodesk 3D Studio (Release 3 for MS-DOS), and a Gateway 486-class PC to run it on. Beyond a list of deliverables, we were on our own. And there was a flat fee of \$12,000 if we completed the job on deadline.

I was living on roughly \$10,000/year. \$6K for 6 weeks work seemed like a fortune.

We set up the Gateway in the big room on the 1st floor where Scott's Amiga and video gear lived. Scott had his own PC by then, so we now had two copies of 3DStudio running (like much professional software of that era, 3DS needed a parallel-port dongle to run, acting as a physical key so the software couldn't just be copied and run on multiple machines). At first I modeled what I needed on the Amiga, converted it to an interim format, and sneaker-netted it over to the PCs on 720k floppies. But I soon found that the modeling tools in 3DStudio were more sophisticated than Impulse Imagine on the Amiga. The Gateway also had a copy of Photoshop 2.5 (before layers were added to the feature set by Adobe) running under Windows for Workgroups 3.11. Prior to this, I'd been using a bitmap editor on the Amiga called Deluxe Paint IV. Again, Photoshop was the more sophisticated and flexible tool.

To meet the deadline, we worked 15-18 hour days, ordering pizza or Shwarma King and eating at our desks, smoking joint after joint, and pouring coffee down our gullets. We had a list of animations that needed to be rendered, each representing a branch



*SWATH hull, ready to launch*

of the kiosk program's decision tree, combinations of power plant, hull, and superstructure being assembled with cranes, and a launch (or sink) animation for each one. The final week was a killer one for me: Squid had a gig in North Carolina, and with Tim as ad hoc road manager for this trip, I'd be on my own until deadline. Steve rented four brand-spanking-new Pentium 60 machines and we put together a network (3DS had a distributed rendering component that didn't require the dongle). I now had six PCs chugging away, churning out dozens of 6-second 320 x 240 clips. It was fucking glorious.

We made the deadline, cashed the checks, and now we were in the multimedia business. We even got a piece of the audio work, recording voiceovers for the interactivity ("You've created an optimal design!"). The kiosk was installed at Nauticus, the museum in Virginia, and won awards for Chedd-Angier, the prime contractor. There was now an informal agreement between Scott, Tim, and me: Stumpworld Systems was born (later it would be called SW Systems to placate squeamish corporate clients).

Even before the web became commonplace, corporate multimedia was a gaping maw hungry for content. We were not just Tarragon's go-to guys for graphics, animation, audio/video production, and programming. Digital Equipment Corporation, the Boston-based maker of mainframe and mini-computers, was one of our biggest clients. I did animations for a then top-secret project called "DEC Dove" (a Surface-like tablet that folded on top of its keyboard and automatically switched between portrait and landscape mode),



*DEC Dove*



morphing the device into a flock of birds that flew out of a conference room. A bonded courier from DEC's Maynard office dropped off a one-of-a-kind mockup that I had to measure, model, and animate.

It wasn't like my animation and graphics skills came out of nowhere. My mother was an artist; the smell of Grumbacher oil paints is one of my earliest memories. She copied paintings by Picasso, Mondrian, and De Chirico so we could have fine art hanging on the walls. I've drawn and painted all my life, and collage skills were crucial for making band posters in the pre-computer era. I'd make flipbooks when I was stoned and bored in the radio room at Boston Cab. So it wasn't like the Art Fairy whacked me with her wand and declared "*POOF! You're an animator!*"

As my career in multimedia ramped up, music tapered off. Sure, I still wanted to write and record music, but a new door had opened, one that felt as exciting as music had been when I was a teenager, seeing bands at CBGBs and wishing that I was the one on stage. Even before the web dominated the Internet, I felt like this was a new distribution channel that could bypass the traditional gatekeepers: major labels and commercial radio.

I was still recording bands, though I restricted my client base to people I knew personally. Squid took a lot of my time. Scott's new guitar player, Chet, had moved into the house. Tim was living there again, and we had a couple of new people: Trina, a hairdresser, and Jon, a trust-fund baby from Vermont who didn't do much of anything except work out, cook meat in a giant smoker, and smoke pot. Jon was in



*Flop House*

awe of our technical skills (we got Doom running on his IBM Thinkpad, which impressed him to no end), but was otherwise a complete slob and a pain in the ass. We tolerated him as a housemate because of his investment potential. Already we were thinking about our first round of angel financing.

Trina had musical ambitions, though she'd never been in a band before and didn't play an instrument. She had a strong voice, though, and a very striking raven-haired look. When Jon left a belt sander in the bathroom, Trina thought this was a passive-aggressive comment on the size of her butt (which wasn't all that big). She left a note in the bathroom: "Oh, joy: the sander's back. Ruler of my happy world..." This became the basis of a song I wrote with her. The song became the basis of a new band, with Chet on guitar, the bassist Jim on drums, and me on bass. Without even trying I was in a band again: dish. We recorded a few songs in the house and played a few parties. It didn't really go anywhere, but it was fun. Trina was an ingénue, excited to be fronting a band, and her enthusiasm was infectious.

Around this time, two friends of Jon, blonde sisters named Tammy and Tia, moved into the house. Like Jon, they had no visible means of support. Tia was bipolar and liked to go out to the neighborhood bars wearing a see-through lace shirt with no bra. Their residence was brief and filled with drama. Jon also had a sidekick, Ace, sort of a Sancho Panza to his Don Quixote. Ace was actually a cool, down-to-earth person who liked to work with his hands and build stuff, like elaborate Halloween costumes or temporary structures for Burning Man. Long after Jon left for

more adventures, Ace stayed behind and was a welcome presence in the house.

As for my own music, I still wrote and recorded, but it was something I did in between graphics and animation projects. I felt like this was what grounded me; I'd been playing music since I picked up trumpet when I was nine, and writing since I was 13 or 14. I wrote as therapy, as a means of digging deep into my psyche in search of nuggets of meaning. Then I found something buried deep inside me, an old childhood memory that stopped me cold. It was like digging a tunnel and coming up against an enormous rock and all I had was a spoon. The song I tried to write about it would be the last one I'd write for nearly two decades. I never recorded it, but I still remember the line "We sing the things we cannot speak".

I needed professional help to deal with this. I turned to Johnny Walker instead. Bereft, adrift, without music there was a huge void in my life that I tried to fill with drugs and alcohol.

And, of course, I lost myself in my work. I landed an enormous contract, producing schematics and graphics for an electronics distributor's training manual, nearly 2500 drawings of the internals of microchips. This was billed on an hourly basis so I hired a few people, paid them a decent hourly wage, and marked it up 125% for the client. I still did some of the more complex drawings but most of my time was spent managing, proofreading, and delivering the work. It was a rather dry subject matter, not as sexy as animating ships or tablet prototypes, but it was food on the table, clothes on my back, and a roof over my head. My urge to create something cool and interesting



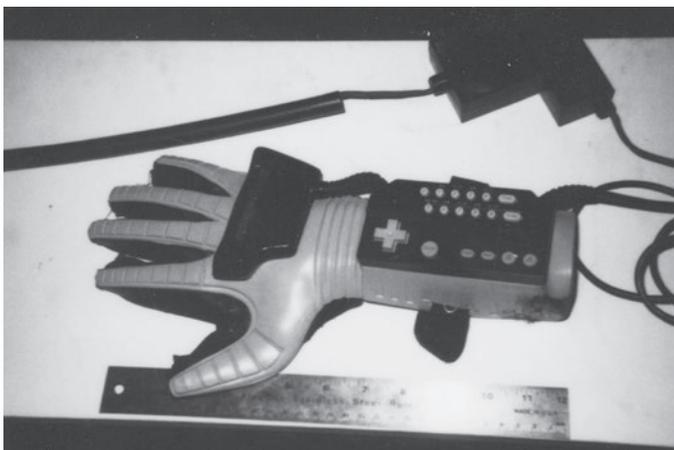
*Flop House*

eventually migrated from music to multimedia. I began to envision an interactive 3D world, a dystopian future that looked like a De Chirico painting. I created characters, a tenement building, a city, subway cars and a station. I began to experiment with different delivery methods, like Macromedia Director, the Shockwave authoring package, programming navigation and interactivity.

Virtual reality was just beginning to get traction. We couldn't justify the cost of a Polhemus headset at the time, but a cheap knockoff from Toys R Us that we hacked so it could connect to the Amiga sufficed. Scott coded a simple game of polygons in black limbo space to test the headset. Around this time, Frank gave us an old Mattel Powerglove, which we hacked into a MIDI controller, triggering drum sounds with hand gestures (it didn't have the resolution to do a chromatic scale, so we couldn't do a virtual Theremin).

This is what I mean when I say that this period felt like being a punk rocker in 1977 New York City (or how the music scene in Boston felt like in 1980). It was new, different, and exciting. New sounds, new sights, new feelings. A whole new world waiting to be conquered. Then the World Wide Web broke big.

**W**e'd been on the Internet for a couple of years, first on dial-up, connecting through Xensei, a local ISP. But connectivity for us meant e-mail, FTP, gopher, USENET, and telnet to various shell accounts. Now we had corporate clients asking us to come in and explain what this newfangled web thing was.



*All you need is Glove*



*12 phone lines and a fractional T-1*

Mosaic was still in beta (not ready for release) and there were only two choices of http servers (CERN and NCSA). The media was just starting to notice, though web sites were referred to as "Mosaic home pages". The look and feel of the web was nearly as primitive as cuneiform on clay tablets: medium grey backgrounds, Times New Roman text, links underlined in blue, static GIF and JPEG images only, no tables or frames.

I downloaded a free HTML editor called HoTMetal but found it so clunky to use that I began to create and edit web pages in a text editor, something I ended up doing for years. We upgraded the house's Internet connection to a fractional T-1, set up e-mail, web, file, and print servers, and networked all the computers in the house with 10-Base2, a coaxial cable backbone. This is where the separate electrical service between the first and second floors bit us in the ass again. The same ground differential that made running monitor lines down to the basement a hazard now started to fry network cards. Plugging a t-connector into a computer would give you a nice but non-lethal shock. Eventually, Tim solved the problem by putting together power strips that were grounded to the nearest radiator with a segment cut from an automotive jumper cable.

One of the fringe benefits of having the house networked was the ability to play Doom in deathmatch mode from different rooms in the house, which was an absolute blast. It was fun watching someone who had never played a first-person shooter physically duck away from the monitor when a flaming skull attacked him.



*Those bad boys of new media*

We also installed a multi-line phone system hooked up to a second-hand Nortel PBX in the basement. There were now 12 voice and data lines coming into the house and, between the phones, data network, video cables, and the audio snake, Stumpworld had a nervous system.

The web opened up a whole new class of client: the music industry. We had taken Pamela on as our business manager, a music industry veteran who had managed Simply Red, Iggy Pop, and other acts. She had connections at every label, and we were suddenly in great demand, explaining new media to the old media. Companies like Warner Bros., who wouldn't take our managers' calls when we were trying to get signed were now taking us to lunch and buying us the carpaccio appetizers and top-shelf scotch.

Meanwhile, we began to develop web sites for local clients. I had been writing reviews of new media products for *Paramour* magazine, which billed itself as "A Quarterly Journal of Erotica". Published and edited by a friend, *Paramour* featured erotic fiction, soft-core black & white photography, poetry, and columns like my reviews of the first erotic CD-ROMS produced by Vivid Interactive. We got *Paramour* a hosting package at Xensei and converted Quark XPress files to web pages. And all hell broke loose.

*Paramour* exceeded its data quota by multiple gigabytes in its second month. The publisher was having a nervous breakdown because she couldn't afford the data overage fees. Selling banner ads, some of the first web ads ever sold, averted the crisis.

Selling things over the web was still in the fetal stage,

and SW Systems was one of the midwives. Shop Therapy, a Provincetown-based retailer was an early adopter of e-commerce, which at this stage consisted of scans of their print catalog and a motley collection of Perl scripts on the back end. I'm not even sure they had an SSL certificate at this point. It was a much simpler time.

While web work became the new bread and butter, I kept graphics and animation as my focus. This eventually led to a split between Scott and me. He was moving towards a venture-capital funded software business, oriented towards producing a shrink-wrapped e-commerce solution aimed at small businesses (the sort of sector EBay and Etsy dominate right now). I wanted to stay in the media services business, hired guns of multimedia. SW Systems went one way, K Takki Media Services the other.

I had enough work to keep me busy: print illustrations for Harcourt, Brace; animations for DEC, Sodexo, and Tsoi/Kobus Associates; graphics for SoftKey; interactive projects for Gillette and Segue Software; and my crowning glory: a 3D model of the entire Boston Marathon course for the 100th anniversary of the race. With the help of Silicon Graphics, Inc. on the back end, we generated broadcast-quality animations for the race telecast on Boston's WBZ-TV. I was still



*The KTMS credits page*



*The Home Office in Allston, Mass.*

using 3DStudio for MS-DOS, albeit on a workstation with 512Mb memory instead of 32Mb, like my first PC.

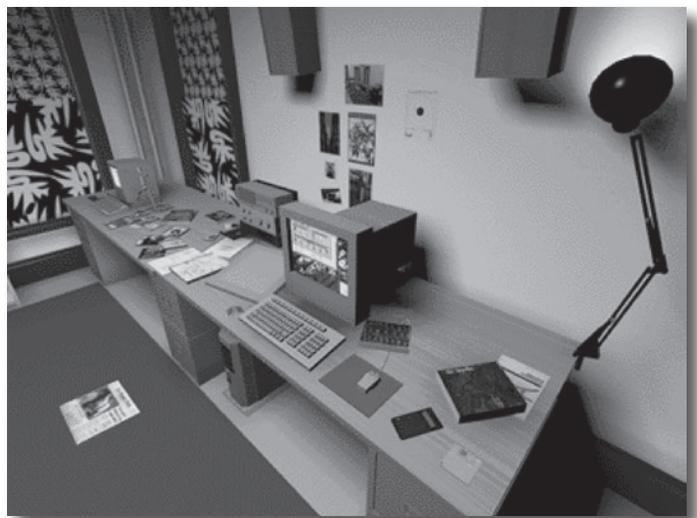
I had plenty of web work as well, and entered into a partnership with Viewfinder Magazine, a regional magazine aimed at film and video professionals. Viewfinder published an annual directory of production and post-production companies, and my first task was to automate the process of converting a ginormous FileMaker Pro database into searchable web pages with live links. As the client was reasonably proficient with Microsoft Office, I wrote a spaghetti bowl of Visual Basic macros that processed the database through Excel and Word and spit out HTML with live links. It was ugly as sin but it worked.

Despite the schism, I still did work with SW Systems, particularly when 3D graphics and animation was involved. The projects I was most interested in were those that involved navigable virtual environments, even without VR goggles. The most sophisticated of these was developed by NTT, the Japanese telco. SW Systems wanted to create a virtual shopping mall that would dovetail with their ShopWeaver e-commerce product. The NTT software only supported 256 x 256 pixel textures, but could handle complex models imported directly from 3D Studio. Even better, there was programmable interactivity, like triggering doors that could open and close, or play audio when the user's avatar approached an object. The programming

language was a subset of LISP, for decades the lingua franca of AI research, and here I had a chance to turn my passing familiarity with the language into real code. I created a futuristic nightclub, derelict space station, and adapted a model of a recording studio I'd made.

I'd taken over the second biggest room on the first floor for my office, though I was still occupying the two smallest rooms on the third floor. I had stopped recording other bands, hadn't written anything, and had no plans to record or release any music. I was an animator and web monkey now, not a musician, and any music I produced was background for my animation demo reels. I didn't know it at the time, but this would prove to be a catastrophic decision, akin to selling one's soul.

At this point, there were only five people actually living in the house. Tim had moved out and gotten married, though he still rented a room as space for Dr. Satan's Video Barnyard, which also had a 24-track tape deck. Pamela had the other 2nd floor room as an office. Only the back room on the first floor was being used as a bedroom, along with the third floor rooms and the converted living room on the second floor. Everything else was office space. And though SW Systems sometimes had people coding around-the-clock, the house was pretty quiet, the quietest it had ever been. No more bands rehearsing in the basement, no more recording projects, no more parties.



*The Home Office in VRland*

It was late in the summer of 1997 when I went slightly mad after a drunken night out. I woke up on the floor of my office with a bloody forehead and no idea of how I'd gotten it. I had an unloaded shotgun in my lap. I asked a housemate to drive me to the hospital, ostensibly to get stitches. I ended up committing myself to inpatient treatment of depression and alcohol abuse at a mental hospital. I was there for six days before I was released.

I'd been working too much and drinking too much. Ironically, the latest bender had started when I decided not to smoke pot anymore, something I'd been doing pretty steadily for 25 years. I had decided that I didn't want to be a middle-aged stoner. Being a middle-aged drinker, however, wasn't up for debate. To compensate for my THC deficiency I began to drink more. There was a tipping point somewhere but I didn't even notice it as it rushed by, receding into the distance with a Doppler-effected scream.

After my release from the hospital, I decided to unburden myself of the things that caused me stress. First and foremost was the management of the house, a load I'd carried for nine years. I gave that to Scott, who promptly renegotiated the lease with the landlord, threatening to move out unless the rent was nearly halved. It was a bluff, but it was a good one. I felt better without the stress, without the alcohol. There was still the nagging feeling that there was something that I wasn't seeing, like an invisible freight train about to squash me like a bug. But I was doing all the right things: I was seeing a therapist, going to AA-like meetings, staying sober, and putting one foot in front of the other.

On the advice of my therapist, I began to take an antidepressant, Paxil. It was bad advice, or perhaps I should have done my research and asked for a lower dose or different medication. I felt like a zombie, devoid of feeling, slogging along with a flat emotional affect. I cared about no one and nothing. I wondered if this was what feeling "normal" was supposed to be like.

One side effect was that I remembered what happened to me when I was nine years old, episodes of sexual abuse and torture at the hands of an older neighbor. I couldn't turn this into music; instead, I wrote down everything I could remember in a spiral-bound notebook. Then I burned it in the backyard.



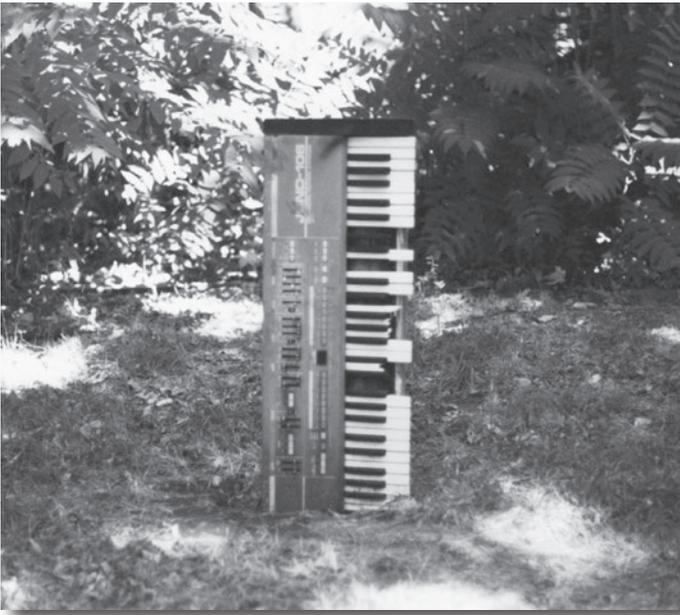
*VR Studio*



*Cleanest subway you'll ever see*



*Area 51*



## THE LATE PERIOD

**W**hen SW Systems moved out of the house and into commercial office space, I took their space over. I redid the network, swapping 10Base-T for the old coax backbone, connecting my personal collection of Macs, PCs, and Linux servers. This meant I was once again managing the house, but sobriety had given me energy. I had to fill the rooms that were vacated by SW Systems and Dr. Satan's Video Barnyard. Though the new housemates were mostly friends of friends or friends of friends of friends, only one or two over the remaining years would be musicians, and it would be rare for me to hang out with any of them.

The old "freshman year in a co-ed dorm" Stumpworld was a distant memory. The new Stumpworld was older and more professional. We even had a cleaning person come in once a week to do the common areas.

The two years I spent on Paxil became a lost period in my life. I spent most of my time playing online WWII dogfighting games on my computers, and don't remember doing much in the way of work (I have to consult an old appointment book to see what projects I'd been doing). This was around the time when the dot.com bubble burst, early 2000. Multimedia and VR work had already dried up; the web soaked up the money that would have financed these. I walked away

from Viewfinder.com, tired of correcting mistakes made by the publisher's boyfriend when he played at webmaster.

There were still a few projects that I can recall; one was an animation for a GIS (geographic information systems) start-up. The other was a series of animations for a feature-length documentary on the sewerage outfall tunnel that was built to clean up Boston Harbor. It was interesting work, and I almost got that spark back, the excitement I felt when I was bringing the Nauticus project to a successful conclusion. But the medication dulled the edge. I was beveled, blunted.

After a year or so of sobriety, I relapsed. First, I had a housemate who was dealing pot and, when he couldn't pay the rent, gave me bags instead. So I was smoking again. And I began to drink as well, beer at first, then wine. Finally, I was back on the scotch. I wasn't going to bars anymore and I wasn't blacking out; I drank alone and drank until I got tired and I did this for the next ten years. Drinking on top of Paxil was utterly stupid, so I stopped taking the Paxil. I didn't have health insurance anymore, anyway. I'd had an individual policy but when that went from \$150/month to over \$350/month I discontinued it.

I did have a blackout drunk episode that had terrible consequences. I'd joined a band called Serum, playing bass once again. Chet from Squid was one of the guitar players, and an ex-housemate named Cary was the other. We recorded a demo and had a gig at CBGBs. I don't remember anything from after the set, only that I was fired.



And this was the beginning of the end. I made the mistake of letting a couple of junkies live in the house. I had to kick Todd out for not paying the rent; when I cleaned out his room I found that he had been pissing in gallon milk containers and hoarding it (hardcore heroin users will drink their own piss when they can't scrounge up a bag). It wasn't sloth or laziness; the bathroom was only three steps away. Kelvin got the boot after narcotics detectives showed up at the house looking for him. This one actually tried to sue me, but my lawyer was better. He's still alive, somehow, wandering the Methadone Mile at the end of Mass. Ave. in Boston, a shambling suboxone zombie.

**O**n a bright, early September morning in 2001 I spent the whole day watching the Apocalypse on CNN, smoking pot with Ace, cleaning and oiling my AK-47. Even though I wasn't on Paxil anymore, I still had an I-don't-give-a-shit attitude about everything.

I stopped being me every so often. What I mean is that my identity was no longer a fixed value, a constant. Sometimes I was H., sometimes K., sometimes B., and sometimes A. A. wrote long, long erotic novels in which nothing was off-limits. B. went to orgies at hotel rooms in drag. K. missed being a musician and got no satisfaction from trolling on the Internet. H. tried to keep it all together, paying the bills when he could, calling his parents every week like a good boy. The only consensus was that we had to die, though whether to do it quickly or slowly was a matter for debate.

I tried to forget what I had remembered, but some things are indelible. One can only come to terms, an armistice, a truce. Even now, nearly 50 years later, a shot will ring out over the DMZ, a flash of memory like a muscle spasm. Drinking it all away didn't work, benzos and percs didn't do the trick, and pot just made it worse. Sometimes writing about it helped, but I had to be clear-headed and in the right mood and that didn't happen very often.

In early 2003, Sphincter Boy, the landlord, announced that they were selling the house. I was 27 when I moved in and now I was 43 and didn't know where to go. We had until September, and I cut a deal with Bobby, allowing us three months rent-free in return for leaving quietly and not burning the fucking place

to the ground. In August I had the mother of all yard sales and on September 1st I loaded a backpack, a laptop, and a cell phone in my little Ford Festiva and left Allston. Everything else I owned - computers, guitars, studio gear, books, records, floppy disks, reels of tape, small arms and ammunition, printers and monitors - was in a storage unit. I spent the next month driving around (New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Western Massachusetts), looking for the next Allston. Couldn't afford New York, Providence was a dreary little city, Western Mass. got too cold and snowy. I landed on Cape Cod, washed ashore like the survivor of a shipwreck, the sinking of the S.S. Stumpworld. For the first couple of months I lived in a motel, ate lots of seafood, and drank. I first found a job as a taxi dispatcher, then got a job with a small IT shop, first as a field service tech (leveraging my PC, Mac, and Unix knowledge), then as their systems administrator, webmaster, developer, and office manager. I rented



*B. wants to have a word with you*

an apartment, a one-bedroom. Just me, though there were four of me and it got a little crowded at times. I still drank a lot, just so I could go to sleep at night without lying awake, remembering the things that I'd rather forget, singing the things I couldn't speak, homesick for the house on Allston Street.

## AFTER THE FALL

Storage didn't do my reels of tapes much good, and when I spooled them up on the old Tascam 38 (fresh from an overhaul) they sounded like dirt. I've still got the digital masters, though the deck I recorded them on has gone missing. The tapes have HiFi stereo tracks along with the digital, almost as good, but not perfect. The last two tracks on the Allston Street CD were salvaged from those PCM digital masters, along with some of the sound effects, like the crowd at the beginning of "Karlo's Drunk Again". I've still got boxes and boxes of cassettes, which have aged better than the open reel mothers.

I re-recorded most of these songs digitally, start to finish, as a way of paying homage to these years, the most productive of my life. Without even trying to, I had a career as an artist and animator, using technical skills I had acquired from the recording studio and electronic music. And I'd put down roots, living in this house longer than any other place I'd lived.

More importantly, I think the history of the house is something that should be memorialized. A Canadian e-commerce company acquired SW Systems for \$20 million in stock (though during the two years that we were restricted from selling our shares the tech sector crashed hard, wiping out 90% of the value of the stock). Roughly sixty or seventy people lived in the house over the years of our tenure there, along with four or five companies and about a dozen bands. The neighborhood itself went through changes, first Vietnamese, then Brazilian, then Central American. Allston resisted gentrification for the longest time, but in a neighborhood so close to Boston proper, well served by public transportation, gentrification is inevitable.

I'd like to think we were a speed bump in the path of the gentry, a Victorian eyesore with peeling paint, backyard fire pits, wild parties two or three times a year, and bands like High Speed Vomit and Bonesaw rehearsing in the basement.

For me, the house will always be playing guitar on the front porch, or dropping our rotten Halloween pumpkin off the roof (and recording it for use as a percussive sample - it's at the beginning of "An Untimely Death"), or elbows deep in an animation project while WZBC plays on the office stereo and Trust Fund Jon smokes a pork shoulder outside, filling the house with smoke and the aroma of roasted meat, or tripping my brains out during an epic party and watching people's heads explode into thousands of multi-colored triangles while Squid or Gravyhead or Mother of God plays in the basement.

That's the house I'll always miss, that quiet place to make noise

- Boston, Massachusetts, 2018`



# about the author

Karlo Takki is a Boston-based musician, artist, and writer.

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