

Flying into Mystery

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Jim Higgins	Percussion, Organ
Seamie O'Dowd	Guitar, Harmonica, Bouzouki, Mandolin, Fiddle, Banjo, Bass, Vocals
Andy Moore	Vocals
Gavin Murphy	Keyboards, Orchestral Arrangements
Mark Redmond	Uilleann Pipes
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Sleeve Design	Point Blank

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Recorded in the Sandymount Hotel, Dublin, in Prosperous, Co. Kildare and in the City of Derry.

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Track 1 **Johnny Boy** Written by Gary Moore (1952-2011)

I met Gary Moore briefly when he came to a Planxty gig in Cecil Sharpe House, London in 1972. We met again at Jimmy Faulkner's Memorial Concert in the Olympia Dublin in 2008. We did not know each other, but I have long since loved his soulful music. A true Master of his instrument, his playing is simply beautiful; his memory lives on. I spent a long night last year listening to Gary Moore's legacy. Late that night this song appeared, a simple, soothing, soulful ballad. It evokes different emotions, recalls different events in my own life. **Johnny Boy** creates a space that any listener can inhabit.

O when I hear that wind blow
All across the Wicklow Mountain

Is it you that I hear calling
Johnny Boy O Johnny Boy

And when I look to the West
Far across the River Shannon
Is it you that I see smiling
Johnny Boy O Johnny Boy

When the leaves they turn to brown
And wintertime is coming
As I watch the sun go down
I'll be thinking of you

So when I hear that wind blow
All across the Wicklow Mountain
I'll know it's you that I hear calling
Johnny Boy O Johnny Boy

When the leaves they turn to brown
And wintertime is coming
As I watch the sun go down
I'll be thinking of you

So when I look to the West
Far across the River Shannon

I'll know it's you that I see smiling
Johnny Boy O Johnny Boy

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Track 2 **Clock Winds Down** Written by Jim Page

Jim Page arrived at Carnsore Point, County Wexford in 1978. He came with the dawn and left on the wind, leaving a basket of good songs in his wake. Some of us sang them. (I sang "Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Russian Roulette" on the 1981 album *Moving Hearts*). Last time Jim showed up was at a gig in City North, County Meath in March 2020 (my last gig before lockdown). Afterwards we shared a few songs over strong tea – that's when I first heard "Clock Winds Down". The inevitable happened. I wanted to cover Jim's song. He gave me the nod. I've messed it around a bit, juggling lines and verses, but Jim is a patient man and the song will always be his.

It's hard to know what to say
As the world around us fades away
Reason falls on deaf ears
And the Truth dissolves and disappears

As the Clock Winds Down

Warning signs years ago
We did not want to know
All consuming selfish ways
Now there's a price to pay

As the Clock Winds Down

The ice caps melt The Amazon burns
To the point of no return
The grid goes down Screens go blank
We'll be walking down the plank

As the Clock Winds Down

See the children take to the streets
When they hear Greta Thunberg speak
Watch the young warriors climb down from the trees
Chain themselves to machinery

As the Clock Winds Down

It's hard to know what to say
When a child looks up and says
Hey old man, what did you do
We were depending on you

Now the Clock Winds Down
Now the Clock Winds Down
Now the Clock Winds Down
To Zero

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Track 3

Greenland

Written by Paul Doran

I've previously recorded two Paul Doran songs, "Natives" back in 1987 and "The Gardener" in 2016. I fell beneath the spell of **Greenland** when Paul shared it with me last year. It took months for me to find my way into this landscape. The melody stretches to the upper and lower limits of my vocal range but I was determined to sing **Greenland**. Not since "Lord Baker" have I been so transfixed by a song, 'floating on a picture of the sky'. An extra pleasure to sing this song with my son Andy.

We filled the boats with what we hoped would last us for the journey
Silently we gathered on the shore
On us shone the midnight sun and everywhere around us
The land where we could stay no more

From the shelter of the bay out to the open water
Floating on a picture of the sky
Leaving what we knew not knowing what's to come
One last look and then we said goodbye

To Greenland, Greenland

My soul is in the rock in the grass and on the air
It moves between the Caribou and the Puffin
Dives beneath the ice sheets with the Narwhale and the seal
Feels the hunger of the bear

Endless days, restless nights, stories from the past
Remembering the Mother of the Sea
In her tangled hair she holds the sins of Man
Every missing creature there would be

The harshness of the hunter's life the struggle to survive
The frozen beauty of the land
The wandering spirit of Qivitoq who chose to live apart
Like a Man-Dog in the wild

We filled the boats with what we hoped would last us for the journey
Silently we gathered on the shore

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Track 4 **Flying into Mystery** Written by Wally Page and Tony Boylan

Previously recorded as "Sixteen Fishermen Raving" back in 2005, I first heard Wally sing this in The Cobblestone, Dublin in 1999. I played it in last year's lockdown sessions and again at a streamed gig from Vicar St. Dublin. Since then the song has gained greater popularity and newfound interest. A different version 16 years later. My hairy ears seem to detect variations in the timbre of this ancient voice box. Perhaps this 76 year old instrument gains fresh intonation from the experience and the trauma of recent events. (Pseud's Corner here we come). I still carry my own caul. Safely tucked in my breast pocket alongside a double-michelle-pfizer-vaccination-passport.

Sixteen Fishermen raving out on the town on E
Sixteen peacocks leave their nest and go flying into mystery

They try to cut the Spanish look but they look so untidy
Don't ask too much, you'll never get enough when you're flying into mystery
Flying into mystery when they should be out seafaring
Run out the jib and rig the boom, step back reality

When their ship is on the ocean their nights are so empty
They weary of the smelly fish and the wash of the salty sea
Sixteen jolly ravers each one carrying his own caul
They believe it will keep death away when they face the angry squall
Why face the angry squall when you could go Go-Go dancing
Run out the jib and rig the boom, step back reality

Yabba Dabba Da, Yabba Dabba Da, yat tie a rat tie a rat tie a rada
Yabba Dabba Da, Yabba Dabba Da, yat tie a rat tie a rat

To the Sixteen Fishermen raving O the girls look so fancy
You could ate your fry off the back of her neck if you want some more say please
When fishermen are feeling good they feel it musically
They go down singing shanties to the dance floor all at sea
To the dance floor all at sea go the Sixteen Fishermen raving
Run out the jib and rig the boom, step back reality

Flying into mystery when they should be out seafaring
Run out the jib and rig the boom, step back reality

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Track 5 **Gasún** Written by Tom Tuohy and Ciaran Connaughton

This beautiful song was sent to me by Tom Tuohy. I recorded his “Honda 50” some years back. Two songs that illustrate the diversity of his writing. Tom has flown from the boglands of sweet Kildare and now resides with his family somewhere over on the European mainland. While **Gasún** is laden with the hopelessness and despair of homelessness, other elements appear in its short verses. I hope Tom continues to write and record. Every time I hear from him, his music has developed, his skills advanced, yet he remains a Bog Man to his very core. Ride on Tom Tuohy.

Gasún, Gasún why do you walk alone
Must be the strangest feeling
Gasún Gasún you don't have no one
All has lost its meaning

As the apple falls from the orchard tree
We grow slow as time
Walk through all those golden fields
Through the barley wheat and the rye

And now you say to me
There must be a way
For all that time will bring
Is another day

Remember when we used to talk
Down by the old oak tree
Winter nights are colder now
It's been so many years

And now you say to me
There must be a way
To find a home for you
A place for you to stay

O Gasún where are you
Lost like a bottle
Washed out across the sea
Soon to be forgotten

Ní neart go cur le chéile
Conaic mé solas san spéir

Ní neart go cur le chéile
Conaic mé solas san spéir

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Track 6

All I Remember

Written by Mick Hanly

Previously recorded with Moving Hearts in 1981, Mick Hanly's opening verse brings me right back to my first day in infant school (Sept 1949). Sister Philomena sought to comfort us with Honey Bees. Sister Rose lurked in the background. Those Brides of Jesus were primed to prepare us for the 15 years of doctrine and programming that were to follow. Patrician Brothers and Dominican Priests continued the process, some with decency and kindness, others with violence and frustrated intolerance. Some of us slipped the net, others took the cloth, some lived on blissfully, a few unfortunates took the high jump or made for the river. Mick well describes elements of our early lives as we grew up in a culture that was tightly controlled by the power from Rome. Over the past 10 years Jim Higgins repeatedly called for this song at sound checks. It began to drift back into the set list. He remembers seeing the sleeve of the 1981 Moving Hearts single in his father's record store (Music City, Shop St. Galway).

And still they keep on ringing the bell.

I was lured by the rockin horse, sweets and the búl-a-bos, 50 wild boys to a room
Sing lámh lámh eile the dish ran away with the spoon
Black shoes and stockings for those who say don't Blue is the colour outside
God made the world, and the snake tempted Eve and she died
Wild Christian Brothers sharpening their leathers, learn it by heart that's the rule
All I remember is dreading September and school

And they made me, for better or worse
The fool that I am or the wise man I'll be
And they gave me their blessings and curse
It wasn't their fault it was me, the one that you see

The priest in confession condemns my obsession with thoughts that I didn't invite
I mumble and stutter he slams down the shutter, goodnight
Stainless as steel you know how I feel someone shoot me while my soul is clean

I don't think I'll last, my vow to abstain is obscene
Arch-Confraternity men to the fight raise up your banners on high
Searching for grace securing my place when I die

And they made me, for better or worse
The fool that I am or the wise man I'll be
And they gave me their blessings and curse
It wasn't their fault it was me, the one that you see

God kept a very close eye on me
All round my bed in the darkness he spied on me
Caught me in the long grass so often he died for me

Ballrooms of Romance in Salthill and Mallow I stood like John Wayne by the wall
Lined up like cattle we wait to do battle and fall
You can't wine and dine her in an old Morris Minor but ask her before it's too late
I danced on her toes, accepted rejection as my fate
Drink was my saviour it made me much braver but I couldn't hold it too well
Threw up on the coach, it ruined my approach when I fell

And they made me, for better or worse
The fool that I am or the wise man I'll be
And they gave me their blessings and curse
It wasn't their fault it was me, the one that you see

God kept a very close eye on me
God He kept a very close eye on me
God She kept a very close eye on me

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Track 7 **December 1942** Ricky Lynch

I thank Ricky Lynch for sharing his song with me. It is a privilege to have been given the opportunity to sing it. I dedicate this recording to Tomi Reichental. Tomi's lifelong dedication is an inspiration. For decades now he has been commemorating the six million Jews murdered by Nazi Fascists in the Holocaust of 1939-1945. Tomi's life story is well described in his book *I Was a Boy in Belsen* (O'Brien Press). I recommend it. Ricky Lynch is an artist at the heart of the Cork music scene for many years. He sings, writes, paints and nurtures the live music scene in his native city.

It's freezing cold the snow comes down there's ice on the barbed wire
Everything is ready right on time another train is due
Now it's coming down the line it's heading for the fire
Just another December day in 1942

The train is packed with dispossessed people from the ghetto
Treated worse than animals in some cruel filthy zoo
Terrorised and beaten starved into submission
So it was on that December day in 1942

The train came to a stop to unload its human cargo
Met by demons and by devils and their savage dogs

Curses blows and whips rain down on those exhausted people
But their deadly nightmare had only just begun

And they cried out to the Lord God Creator of the Universe
In our despair we call on you
But all their tears and all their prayers they went unanswered
On that God-forsaken December Day in 1942

Women men and children in that freezing winter twilight
Families torn in two by thugs with sticks and guns
Made to undress driven and naked to the slaughter
And then into the chamber they were forced to run

When the doors were locked and sealed no mercy and no pity
The word came down the line and the orders were carried through
Just another number to add to their statistics
On another God-forsaken day in 1942

And they cried out to the Lord God Creator of the Universe
In our despair we call on you
But all their tears and all their prayers they went unanswered
On that God-forsaken December Day in 1942

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Track 8

Van Diemen's Land

Christy Moore (Trad Arr.)

I played Waterson's Folk Club in Hull in 1968. Later, Mike Waterson sang this song for me. A unique and influential singer, Mike was a member of the Watsons. Their sound still reverberates around this poor old head. Verse 6 always gets me. Earlier verses describe miscarriages of justice, slavery, savage cruelty and terrible exploitation but the heart-breaking loneliness of Rosanna from Wolverhampton has kept me singing this song for over 50 years. I recorded it once before in the 1970s. There are many different versions of Van Diemen's Land. One which has a Tipperary setting. I sometimes get to sing this song in the Góilín Singers Club. It lifts off when 80 singers join in the chorus and harmonise with gusto.

Me and three more went out one night into the Squire's Park
We were hoping that we'd get some game the night it being dark
To our sad misfortune they captured us with speed
And they brought us down to Warwick jail it caused our hearts to bleed

Young Men all be aware
Lest you be drawn into a snare

Come Monday morning at the court we did appear
Like Job we stood with patience our sentence to hear
No jury, bail nor witness our case it did go hard
Our sentence was for fourteen years straight away being sent on board

The ship that bore us from the land the Speedwell was her name
For full five months and upwards we ploughed the ragin' main
We saw no land nor harbour I tell you its no lie
All around us one Black Ocean above us one Blue Sky

About the Fifth of August its then that we made land
And at 5 o'clock next morning they tied us hand to hand
To see our fellow sufferance it filled me heart with woe
There's some chained to the harrow and others to the plough

To see our fellow sufferance filled me with despair
They'd leather smocks and Lindsay shorts their feet and hands were bare
They tied them up two by two like horses in a dray
And the ganger he stood over them with his Malacca cane

There was a female servant there Rosanna was her name
For 16 years a convict from Wolverhampton came
She often told her tale of love when she was young at home
Now its rattling of her chains in a foreign land to roam

So come all of you young poaching lads and a warning take from me
Mark you well the story that I tell and guard your destiny
It's all about transported lads as you must understand
The hardships we did undergo going to Van Diemen's land

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What more can I say. Growing up we were surrounded by Turf; *“cuttin it, footin it, clampin it together, bringing home the turf no matter what the weather”* - Luka. Those great black sods would glow in the hearth all the year round, centre point of the Dowling household. Thousands came to harvest the black loam. It fuelled the nation, but like all good things it has (almost) come to an end. I still love to walk the bog.

She spent seven days creating the World, the Sun the Moon and the Stars
The Plough, and the Milky Way, then Jupiter and Mars
Then She opened up her rib cage, pulled out a little man
She put him down near Timahoe, that's where it all began

As to why she picked the Shortgrass God only knows
Life began for the Bord na Móna man without a stitch of clothes
Go forth says she and multiply God mam and I will begod
What better place to start the race then below in the Yellow Bog

Don't you know he'll never go
Once he gets his foot half in the door
He's sound as a bell he'll work like hell hire him if you can
'clare to God you'll never meet the beat of the Bórd na Móna man

At the edge of Tankard's garden he built a lonely cell
Where he contemplated Limbo, then Purgatory and Hell
With the barbed wire in his Calvin Klein's the poor man couldn't sleep
All he had for company was jockey boys and sheep

When he'd converted Moorefield, Raheens and Ballitore
He set sail down the Grand Canal 'til he came to Lullymore
Where he broke up the Bordellos and smashed the Poitín Stills
Began to bale the briquettes around the Sandy Hills

And don't you know he'll never go
Once he gets his foot half in the door
He's sound as a bell he'll work like hell hire him if you can
'clare to God you'll never meet the beat of the Bórd na Móna man

He opened up the Klondike, and he blazed the Yukon Trail
Crushed grapes in California before Columbus had set sail
He Drank tea on top of Everest before Hillary was born
Blindfold up the North Face, backstroke around the Horn

Way back in the 1960s when the world was facing ruin
The East and West were neck and neck to be first on the Moon
When the Yankee steered his module down on the moon to land
Who was there to hold the ladder but the Bord na Móna man

And don't you know he'll never go
Once he gets his foot half in the door
He's sound as a bell he'll work like hell hire him if you can
'clare to God you'll never meet the beat of the Bórd na Móna man

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Track 10 **Myra's Caboose** Christy Moore (Trad Arr.)

I arrived into Miltown Malbay, County Clare in the winter of 1964. It was there I met the Uilleann piper Willie Clancy. Seeing a guitar, Willie asked me did I know "Liverpool Lou", a Dominic Behan song then riding high in the charts. I sang and Willie backed me beautifully on his legendary chanter. Sadly (or gladly) there was not a single smart phone in the house. Later in the night he sang this song which is known locally as "The Gander". It has always remained with me and resurfaced in recent lockdown times. I always felt that Myra was overlooked in the narrative and decided to re-name the song. I imagine an old railway carriage re-purposed as a trailer and parked in verdant forest. A rambling House where Myra and Bill were the most welcoming of hosts.

It being one evening of late as I strayed and I rambled through fields
Where oft times I wandered in haste and very quick speed
I was going to a wake where the rakes and factions do meet
There' be drink and strong tea, hot cake and things that were sweet

O when the evening being freezing, indeed and it was very cold
With corns on my heels and my ankles 'n cramps in my toes
I thought it no harm to warm me shanks by the fire
Thinking Myra and her daughter surely would me admire

O when the tea it came round in big geowls it was stuff very strong
When Myra said speak up or make us the verse of a song
Old Bill by the fire he was cursing and swearing with fright
For his gander was stolen and roasted last Saturday night

This Gander was graceful and gentle, both sturdy and strong
He never grew cold although he lived very long
His beak and his legs were as yellow as the gold that does shine
And his gob it would bore an inch board in a very short time

Well I've travelled Killarney, Kilgarvan, Kanturk and Kilmeague
Down around by Cork Harbour I was dealing in turkeys and geese
In all of my rambles and travels I never did see
O the likes of Bill's gander for grandeur and Championship breed

The Boys and the Girls gathered at Myra's Caboose
For they'd heard of the name and the fame of Bill and his goose
They'd measure this fine gander's legs with a carpenter's rule
And they never would leave 'til they saw the length of his wings

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Track 11

Zozimus and Zimmerman

Written by Christy Moore and Wally Page

We've been attending Zimmerman gigs for over 40 years. We've been singing Zozimus songs even longer. Valerie and I have long since followed Bob whenever given the opportunity. Nights at the National Stadium, RDS, The Point, Vicar Street, Slane, Kilkenny, Finsbury Park come to mind, but best of all was that night in Slattery's of Capel Street, Dublin when he got up and played with Myself and Wally. Disguised in his suit of Pearly King, no one recognized him nor realised the significance of the moment. He's been on our case ever since. You can't get too much of a good thing. Last time he busted his skull off a gable wall at the end of a top shelf stagger.

Zozimus - Michael J. Moran (c.1794-3 April 1846), popularly known as Zozimus, was an Irish street singer from The Liberties. He wrote, among others: "Praise of Poitín", "The Twangman", "Finding of Moses", "Pharoah's Daughter", "The Night Before Larry was Stretched", "St. Patrick Was a Gentleman" (this list is neither precise nor complete). We await correction.

Zimmerman, Song and Dance Man (still delivering the goods) "Whack Fol de Diddle", "Ar Fol de Dol Doh", "Toora Loo Loo", and "Wid Me Toorim Minya" etc.

Zozimus was singing the Pharoah's daughter
As Me and Valerie we left O'Donoghue's
On Butt Bridge we crossed the River Liffey
Down along the North Wall we joined the queue
There was Hippies there and Lurchers from Dunmanway
Flash Harrys down from Killiney Hill
Quare Hawks in Limousines and Helicopters
To hear Zimmerman the King of Vaudeville

The lights went down and the crowd went cat melodeon
We were all revved up and ready to engage
Having hitch hiked all the way from Minnesota
Zimmerman was there before us on the stage
He made his way to the piano
One by one the Band began to play
When he laid his fingers down upon the keyboard
He opened up with Lay Lady Lay

Homesick Subterranean
Hard Rain Gonna Fall When the Boat Comes In
Black Diamond Bay
The Dirge and The Hurricane
Hattie Carroll and Hollis Brown
Summer Days Forever Young
St. Augustine Maggie's Farm
And Like a Rolling Stone

Some old singers rest upon their laurels
Some old hoofers hang up their dancing shoes
But when Kings and Queens and Laureates came calling
Zimmerman still had lots of gigs to do
He's up there now blowing hard upon his Hohner
Zozimus and Zimmerman were born to sing
Like two old buskers down at Puck Fair in Killorglin
Two old tanglers at the Fair of Spancilhill

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Track 12

Pity the Poor Immigrant

Written by Bob Dylan (to an older air)

I recorded this previously with Planxty in 1982. I feel more at ease 40 years on. I love the abstract nature of these three verses. My favourite song from the song and dance man. Singing it has knocked me sideways betimes. One night in London, out of the blue,

the emotion caught me. I choked up. Liam O'Flynn recognised my predicament. He took up the melody and carried it away. I dedicate this version to the memory of my late Uncle Jimmy Power of Ardmulchan, Co. Meath.

I pity the poor immigrant who wishes he'd stayed at home
Uses all his power to do evil, in the end is always left so alone
That man who with his fingers cheats who lies with every breath
Who passionately hates his life and likewise fears his death

I pity the poor immigrant whose strength is spent in vain
Whose heaven is like ironsides, and whose tears are like the rain
Who eats but is not satisfied, who hears but does not see
Who falls in love with wealth itself and turns his back on me

I pity the poor immigrant who tramples through the mud
Who fills his mouth with laughing and who builds his town with blood
Whose vision in the final end must shatter like a glass
I pity the poor immigrant when his gladness comes to pass

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