



THE
LONGEST
TIME

Michael Vincent

The Longest Time

“We tried hard not to write the same song twice,” said Beatle George Harrison, and once past their Mersey Beat era, they kept their word. I’ve modeled after writers who share this p.o.v., and have, with great intentionality, written in different genres throughout each album, because they represent much more bandwidth of the human and musical experiences.

Each of my previous albums did this, yet still had their own ‘flavor’ to the overall production of the record. Where Radio still has a folk-rock feel to it throughout, Jump! has more of a power-pop feel. The Longest Time, my newest, is no exception.

I’d originally intended to make an all acoustic record from the start. But the concept evolved and morphed into what you hear now, with much more Blues influences, and a definitive ‘Roots’ feel to it – influenced by the great group of players we engaged to help make this record happen – veteran musicians from the North San Francisco Bay Area around Petaluma.

We recorded in the wonderful historical environment of Cotati’s Prairie Sun Recording (recent home to wonderful recordings by Tom Waits and Bruce Cockburn, among others) under the careful direction of film-maker/record producer Thom Butler (who produced my first album, released in 1993). With amazing players who turned out to be equally heavy-hitting arrangers (many of the gents from the-band-formerly-known-as-Cahoots) on everything from mando to banjo, from astonishingly bluesy gospel keys, to monster stand-up bass riffs, congas, cajon, full-kit drums, oud, and more, we were able to truly craft what I believe is my best recorded effort yet.





Janet and Michael



The Guys...



Vic, Kat, and Michael, doing From Here To You

This Is Love is for my sweetheart, and love of my life,
Janet Klein Hollingshead

In Memoriam - Matt Plock - great friend, wild inspiration, and drummer extraordinaire.

Dedications:

Amber Shades is for Dave Hermocillo and the boyz of Summit 2V1

Open Space is for Mark Sparacino, founder of and vision for the band Open Space (Psalms 18:19)

Fool, My Eye is for the myriad remarkable people on the streets, without a home.

Backwards Land is in support of Black Lives Matter.

From Here to You is for Bernal "Pop" Tate – father of Vic, Kat, and Michael, with love.

Special thoughts of love, to my children,
Stephen Michael and Beth Ann Hollingshead

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Produced by Thom Butler

Engineered by Nate Nauseda at Prairie Sun Recording, Cotati, CA

Mastering by Rainer Gembalezyk, Half Moon Bay, CA

Studio Manager and 'host': Eddie Strickler

Janet Klein Hollingshead – *la mere repaire du groupe* - merci
boucoup, Janet

Michael Vincent – lead and harmony vox, rhythm and lead acoustic guitar
Andy Dru Rodgers – mandolin, uke, baritone guitar, acoustic guitar, harmony vox
Eric Backman – drums
Andrew Tester – upright and electric bass, harmony vox
Craig Anderson – dobro, Weisenborn guitar, lap steel, piano, banjo, harmonica, harmony vox
Brooks Anderson – congas, cajon, et al percussive *toys*
Scott Warren – *lead acoustic 6 and 12 string guitars; lead electric guitar*



Caitlin Gowdey – lead vox on *Magdalena's Heart*
Mary Neidel – harmony vox on *Backwards Land*
Victor Hollingshead – lead and harmony vox on *From Here to You*
Kathryn Tate Jacoby – lead and harmony vox on *From Here to You*
Yousef “Oud Dude” Saadeh – oud on *Open Space*
Eric Young – Hammond B3 on *Backwards Land*
Mickala Cheadle and the Beth Eden Baptist Church Choir, Oakland, CA on *Backwards Land*
Rev. Dr. Dwight Webster – Preacher on *Backwards Land*



Rep. John Lewis – Speaker on *Backwards Land*
(*excerpted from speech at 1963 March on Washington*)

Tommy Norrie – Bullhorn on *Hope of the Hard Luck Stranger*



Musical arrangements by Michael Vincent, Andy Dru Rodgers, Andrew Tester, Eric Backman,
Craig Anderson, Brooks Anderson, Scott Warren, and Eric Young
Choral arrangement by Mickala Cheadle
Backwards Land sermon written by Thom E Butler

Video documentation – Robert Neidel
Front cover photo – Thom E Butler



The Longest Time

There are these secrets that I just can't say
They make no sense beyond my dreams
Believe me I would tell you, if I could
Damned if I could tell you what they mean
Shame that there's no story I can see

*Chorus: I've been waiting for the longest time
I've been calling from the moon
I've been drifting in and out of all these days
But I'm coming soon...*

There is this voice I know inside my heart
I have my fears to lay to rest
Between the two I swear I'm gonna tear apart
It's all a mystery at best
Chances in a million I could – never guess...

Chorus: I've been waiting...(etc)

Never before have I once had a dream
That I could ever make come true
But now it feels as though I just might find my way
Just as if it's all because of you
Following the daylight out of darkened blue

Chorus: I've been waiting...(etc)



Boulevard

Nighttime lost and I can
Only just imagine
All I've passed along the way
Streetlight fascination
Blinks me wide awake and
While I'm walking off the pain

*Chorus: Stand still time, it only crawls on by
Walking forward makes it move
All those thoughts about you
Fall like shoes – out on the boulevard*

Love – do what you want, do what you want, do what you love...

Night train destination
Screams like brakes are aching
You've been running through my head
'Walk/Don't Walk' is changing
Big red hand is blinking
"Walk away from her, instead!"

Chorus: Stand still time, it only crawls on by...(etc)

Love – do what you want, do what you want, do what you love...

Nighttime lost and I can
Only just imagine
All I've passed along the way
Streetlight fascination
Blinks me wide awake and
While I'm walking off the pain

Night train destination
Screams like brakes are aching
You've been running through my head
'Walk/Don't Walk' is changing
Big red hand is blinking
"Walk away from her, instead!"

Love, do what you want, do what you want, do what you love...



Magdalena's Heart

There ain't no tenderness from no one, ever gonna break my heart
So I' been sayin' - So I' been talkin' it up
It seems like no one recognizes all the ways that I've been
Out on my own for so long
Leaning on nobody's arm

I can't believe love if I'd want to
I tried believing when love lied
So many others came and frightened all away the feelings
Why run the risk my heart could die?

The sacred writings of the ancients seem to be the rules set by men
'Hearing the voice of their God - pardoning no one that's wrong
I get this feeling that I'm fated, making this the way it will be
Now and for always - dreams aren't for someone like me

I can't believe you'd even bother
Why in the world waste all your time?
I keep awaiting you'll be here today, and gone tomorrow
Why run the risk my heart could die?

'Seems like somewhere I remember, when I used to just like to curl
Up in my father's big arms - when I was a young girl so long
Ago, I almost still remember, how it felt to be loved
Just for that moment in time
But you have reminded me now
How to go home...



Fool, My Eye

"Fool, my eye" is what I'm thinkin'
I get no time when I'm blinkin'
I'm always trying to wake me up
And even more than I wanted
I find my head really haunted
By all I'm trying to figure out

*Chorus: There is this blackness to the gray line
There is this gray line to the blue
There are no angels that aren't gypsies anymore
Just broken glass beneath my shoes*

It takes so long when I'm waitin'
For some kinda life to be makin'
It's way to light up through this hole
To keep on walkin' when you're breakin'
To keep right on when you're achin'
This mystery somehow I'm must know

*Chorus: No beauty lasts along the jagged edge
There is no hope to staying down
I've got to find my gypsy angel
The one that wears the thorny crown!*

Hope of the Hard Luck Stranger

Dreams don't carry the weight that they used to
'Specially since reality hit this – hard luck stranger
It's been a long time since hopin'

Some folks livin' the way that they want to
Some folks livin' and they're doin' okay
I'm never real sure – why I call my life livin'
I'm just tryin' like crazy to get from the nighttime to day

*Chorus: Wake each mornin' – same old hunger
And every day I don't never get no younger
You gotta wonder – why in the world I'm still breathin'
Baby cryin' – wife be grievin'
None of the life that we want to be seein'
Shows up 'round here – only the noise of that poundin'
Same ol' wolf pounds the door, maybe sometimes
He's gonna get in, now...*

Dreams don't carry the weight that they used to
'Specially since reality hit this – hard luck stranger
It's been a long time since hopin'

Signs and wonders are your imagination
Wishful thinkin' when you're doin' okay
Ain't no matter – all in the same situation, now
We're all tryin' like crazy to get from the nighttime to day, yeah

*Chorus: But I had this dream once – some crazy notion
Like speed o' lightnin' he travel the ocean
God come to be here – set down beside where I'm livin'
Weren't no thunder – no, no angel
I look beside me and I sees a cradle
Had to been dreamin' – that ain't no way he'd be comin'
Sure way to die like a poor man and then
Come to nothin' at all.*

Dreams don't carry the weight that they used to
'Specially since reality hit this – hard luck stranger
It's been a long time since hopin'



This is Love

This is love – this is true
This is why we've come together - now we're '*me and you*'
There is time – for it all
Love, more than anything!

There is '*now*' – no more '*then*'
Put aside those lonely moments,
And trust you've found your friend
It's your heart – and mine, too
Love, more than anything!

*Chorus: Time, time ticking together
Both of our heart strings, now
We're both sure every day
That gets started anew
I'm not just easily saying, "I will do right by you"
'Cause you deserve the best of me, for all you are!*

This is love – this is true
This is why we've come together – now we're '*me and you*'
There is time – for it all - Love, more than anything!
There is time – for it all - Love, more than anything!
There is time – for it all - Love, more than anything!
And "*I do!*"



Got a Notion

Got a notion the lady can do what she wanna do, always
Got a notion that maybe she do, and be leavin' thata way
Make a note coming down, that she won't be coming 'round
In the next day
Got a notion of love from the feelin' that I'm keepin' at bay
Yeah, yeah!

Chorus: So we don't come callin' for fear of getting close anymore
And we both start fallin' all over ourselves, out the door!

Maybe loose in the reins'd be one way of makin' the highway
Maybe loose in the chain'd be one way of keepin' thata way
Make a note comin' down, that you won't be comin' round
In the next day
Got a notion of love from the feelin' that I'm keepin' at bay
Yeah, yeah!

Chorus: So we don't come callin'... (etc)



From Here to You

Is there a way to melt these hearts
To come together?
From all the distance and those years
Of days flown by?
With all these mem'ries light and dark
From quick goodbyes to all we loved
To walking on until the road begins to rise!

*Chorus: It's Love! From here to you.
It's love! Come breaking through.
It's love! From here to you, for all of you!
It's love!*

From every day of feeling like we'd fall to pieces
To bitter ends and our own need to find our way
In fits and starts we start to mend
In fitful dreams of home again
And not a moment sooner than our hearts would bend!

Chorus: It's Love! (etc)

In every pore from head to toe, we feel you moving
In every breath of song and drawing, there you are
From every sinew, fiber, bone
We never walk this way alone
And hear our hearts beat out their purpose, coming home!

Chorus: It's Love! (etc)



Rain Downtown

Looking out at the rain downtown
The sky a mixture of grays and then brown
I do believe it'll all fall down
And I love you...

I face the faces that mirror my own
Look in the window to see if I'm home
I never wanted to feel so alone
And I love you...

Do you know? Let's go.
Get out from under from watching some show
Just hand together a way to let go – and I love you

Did you go? Let go.
I never wandered away, so I know
Did something happen to make you not show
And I love you

Looking out at the rain downtown
The sky a mixture of grays and then brown
I do believe it'll all fall down
And I love you...



Backwards Land

We go a long, long way – way back from here
Learnin' to fight – for what we know is true
Those torch fire nights – where we'd run scared
Just brought us back – to face up to you!

Those backwards days – they pushed us forward
And there we were – a little green to grow
No congratulating ourselves as if we're believin'
That we'd arrived – at somebody's gate!

*Chorus: Cause here we are, in the public square
That violent call, tempting us all
But while arm-in-arm, the blue line won't stop us
You'll feel our rage – but not our hate!*

(Instrumental and audio sound-bite Interlude)

A long time ago, we started believin'
If we pushed real hard, that you could all relate
So we pushed real hard, and we made it to the flat screen
Where the gladiators, and the divas slay!

But in the day-to-day – here in Backwards Land
We still gotta face – what we know you're thinkin'
“*Stay in your place – and just entertain me...*”
“*Step outa line – and you know your fate!*”

*Chorus: Cause here we are, in the public square
That violent call, tempting us all
But while arm-in-arm, the blue line won't stop us
You'll feel our rage – but not our hate!*



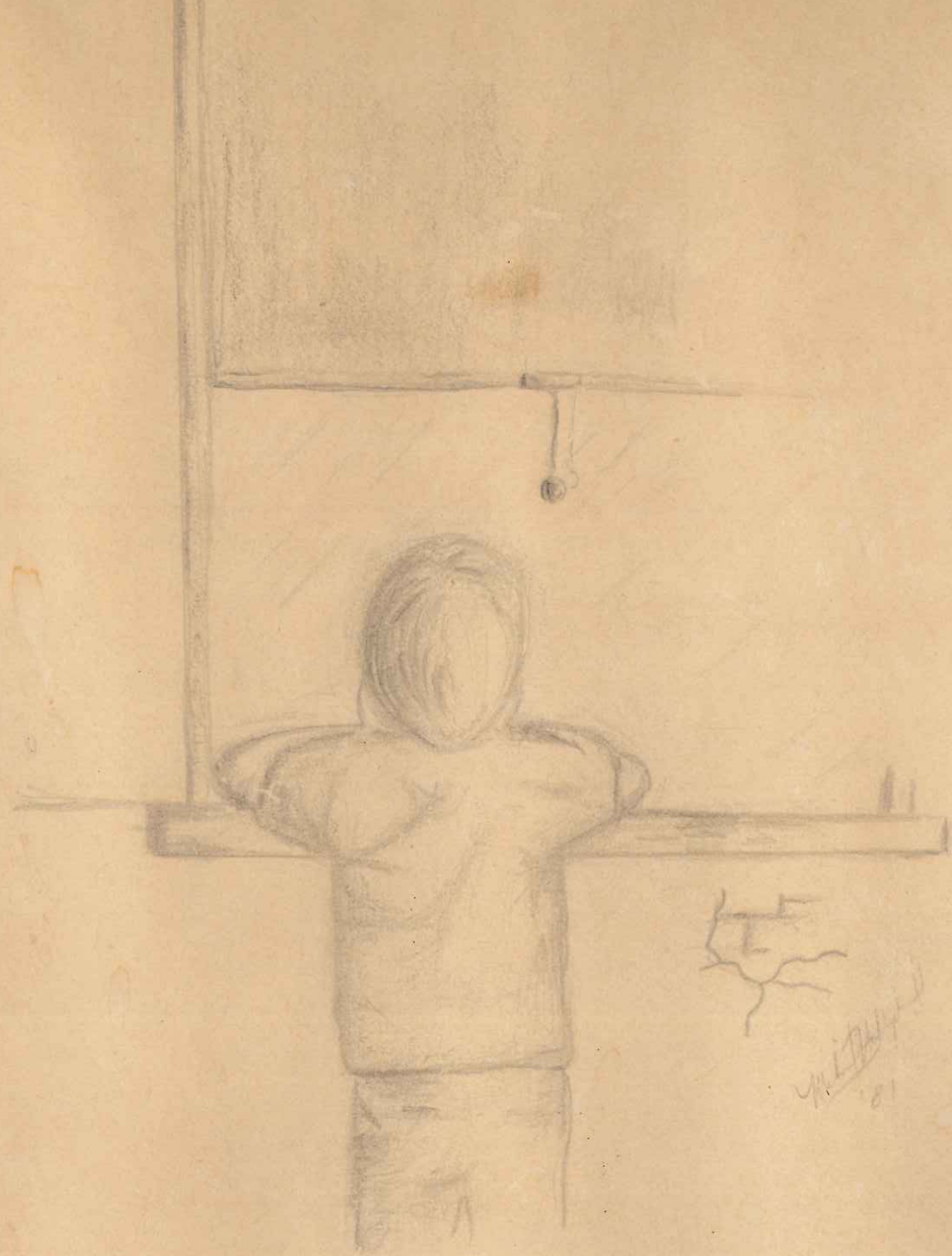
Preacher: I want you to listen to me now
Because it's important
Because you are important
We are not moving backward
We are marching forward
We are not giving up ground
We are taking new ground
We are not capitulating to the forces
Of interposition and nullification
We are instead paving a new road
Where justice will roll down like water
And righteousness like an ever-flowing stream
We do not and we will not live in a backward land
We are taking up residence in The Promised Land!

Chorus: Cause here we are again, in the public square...







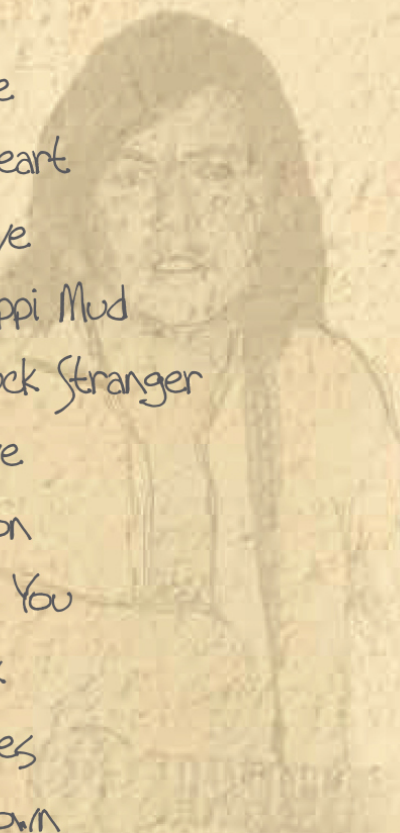


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1. The Longest Time
2. Boulevard
3. Open Space
4. Magdalena's Heart
5. Fool, My Eye
6. Willie Ry's Mississippi Mud
7. Hope of the Hard Luck Stranger
8. This Is Love
9. Got a Notion
10. From Here To You
11. Shadow Talk
12. Amber Shades
13. Rain Downtown
14. Backwards Land



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