



Manning

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Songs from the Bilston House {10th Anniversary Edition} Press Pack & Song Lyrics

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Available through Festival Music, the Band Website plus via itunes, Amazon and through all good record shops.

All songs written by Guy Manning.

The Players

- * Guy Manning: Acoustic 6,12 & Classical, Electric Guitars, Keyboards, Bass, Bouzouki, Mandolin and Vocals
- * David Million: Electric Guitar
- * Laura Fowles: Alto Sax and Vocals
- * Ian 'Walter' Fairbairn: Fiddle
- * Julie King: Vocals
- * Andy Tillison (The Tangent): Keyboards, Drums and vocals
- * Steve Dundon: Flute

Song Titles

1. Songs From The Bilston House (06:03)
2. The Calm Absurd (07:24)
3. Lost In Play (07:05)
4. Understudy (08:13)
5. Skimming Stones (07:18)
6. Antares (07:10)
7. Icarus & Me (05:53)
8. Pillars Of Salt (10:35)
9. Inner Moment (07:33)
10. From The Heart (Demo) [Bonus]



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FOREWORD

In 2006, I was invited to play at the inaugural two day “summer’s end” music festival. The event was being held at Bilston, a town in the West Midlands of the UK.

I wanted to attend both days and so i booked into a hotel at the outskirts of Bilston. The hotel was remarkable for two reasons:

1. It was inhabited by a macaw called Barney, who, I was faithfully informed, did not bite!
2. At the end of the road, there was a large derelict property, boarded up and dilapidate; on the outside, nailed to the boards, was a sign which proudly read in large warning letters
“Do not enter here! the last person died!”

As I stopped to take a photo, several morbid thoughts ran through my mind...who died? how? when? where exactly? I wonder what else went on in there over the years?

The ideas percolated and as i started to assemble pieces for the new album, later in the year, this theme popped back to the surface again.

So, here we are then, with stories, observations and atmospheres which have been set within the walls of one building over time.

It should be stated that through no pre-determined method, many of the tales have turned out to be quite autobiographical in nature, although, most likely, these have been delivered to you in the third person (see “The Calm Absurd”)

At this time, I must also tender my apologies to the inhabitants of Bilston itself. in order to accommodate “Antares”, i have had to uplift the house and the town to the UK coast for a while. I promise I will return it one day!

Guy Manning
2007



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SONGS FROM THE BILSTON HOUSE

DOWN AT THE BILSTON HOUSE
THERE'S A WELCOME SECOND TO NONE
KNOCK ON THE BATTERED DOOR AND GO IN
DUST ON THE EMPTY FLOORBOARDS
SHOW THE PLACES THEY STOOD
CAUGHT IN THE MIRRORS AND IN THE AIR

EACH ROOM HAS AN IMPRINT
AND AN ECHO OF DAYS OF YORE
TAKE A PHOTOGRAPH FRAMED FROM INSIDE
OUTSIDE ON THE BOARDED WINDOW
THE NOTICE CATCHES YOUR EYE
'DON'T ENTER HERE, THE LAST PERSON DIED!'
BLUE PRINTS OF A MYSTERY
FLOOR PLANS ETCHED IN RHYME
I WONDER WHO WILL BE THE NEXT IN LINE

A BLACK EDGE TO THE CORNERS
PAPER ON THE WALL
THE VOICES IN THE SHADOWS, LOCKED IN TIME

HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE CROSSED THE PATH
OR HAVE THEY STAYED BEHIND
MARKS ON THE WALL RECORD THEIR HEIGHT
WHO WERE THE CHILDREN ON THE SECOND FLOOR
ON THE LANDING, ON THE STAIRS
SOMETHING IN THIS PLACE IS NOT QUITE RIGHT

JUST ANOTHER STORY FROM THE BILSTON HOUSE
WHERE THE ROOMS ARE TUMBLING IN
A THOUGHT IN THE MIND THAT STRUCK A CHORD
PERSONALITIES COME AND GO
AND SELDOM LEAVE THEIR MARK
SO MANY FACES WITHIN THESE WALLS
BLUE PRINTS OF A MYSTERY
FLOOR PLANS ETCHED IN RHYME
I WONDER WHO WILL BE THE NEXT IN LINE

A BLACK EDGE TO THE CORNERS
PAPER ON THE WALL
THE VOICES IN THE SHADOWS, LOCKED IN TIME



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THE CALM ABSURD

WRITING SIMPLE LOVE SONGS
WITH A SMILE UPON MY FACE
I'M WAITING IN ANTICIPATION
THAT EVERYTHING WILL FIND A PLACE
AND AS I SIT HERE NOW
WITH A PEN IN MY HAND
TRYING TO FIND SOME CLEVER RHYME
AND HOPING THE METRE TURNS OUT FINE

BUT THIS IS NOT THE KIND OF SONG THAT I FIND EASY OR
CLEAR
THE LYRICS SEEM SO CLUMSY AND THEY NEVER SOUND
SINCERE
I'LL TRY TO GO THIRD PERSON, SO THE MEANINGS ARE
OBSCURED
BUT THERE'S A CERTAIN CHARM TO TRIPPING UP
AND SPEAKING PLAIN WHEN YOU HIT THE FLOOR!

IN THE HANDS OF THE MASTER POET
THE MEANING SO EASILY COMES
ON THE BANKS OF EXOTIC RIVERS,
IN THE LAND OF THE MIDNIGHT SUN
UP THE FACE OF THE HIGHEST MOUNTAINS
AT THE BOTTOM OF THE DEEPEST SEA
SEARCHING FOR WORDS IN THE CALM ABSURD
WHEN THE OUTCOME IS PLAIN TO SEE



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LOST IN PLAY

CURTAINS PART ON A BRAND NEW MORNING
PUSH AWAY ALL THE MIDNIGHT BLUES
OUT OF SIGHT, THE CHILD IS CALLING TO THE DAY
LOST IN PLAY

THE BIRDS ARE SINGING IN MY SWINGING TREE
TOYS STILL OUT THERE WHERE I DROPPED THEM YESTERDAY
NO BLACK AND WHITE, WORRIES ARE FAR AWAY
LOST IN PLAY

RUN FAST, CATCHER MAN, FIND ME WHERE THE RIVERS RAN
I WILL RACE YOU THROUGH THE WIND AND THE RAIN
UP THE MOUNTAIN SIDE, RIDING ON THE COPPER MINE TRAIN
LOST IN PLAY

SOMETIME LATER AS THE SUN GOES DOWN ON ME
I STILL CAN CALL ON THE DREAMS AND FANTASY
A LONG TIME OVER, BUT STILL NOT FADED AWAY
LOST IN PLAY
SO, PLEASE DON'T FADE AWAY...



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UNDERSTUDY

I DON'T THINK ABOUT THE GOOD OLD DAYS
LOCKED IN THE CORNER OF MY EYE
A QUICK RESCUE FROM THE OLD FASHIONED
PRACTICE OF PULLING ME APART
TRADITION IS JUST A CONCRETE HEART
IN THE POCKET OF THE ONE EYED KING
A TUG OF WAR OVER FAMILY VALUES
TILL I JUST COULDN'T FEEL A THING
BUT I HAD TO FIND A WAY
AND MY ROLE IN THE PLAY

CAUGHT IN YEARS OF NON-BELIEVING
IN A THOUGHT FOR WHEN YOU DIE
CROSS BREEDING THROUGH GENERATIONS
MY BROTHERS AND I
FACE TO FACE AND TOE TO TOE
I STOOD UP TO PLAY MY PART
OF A WELL BELOVED UNDER ACHIEVER
WITH RELIGION IN A SHOPPING CART
BUT I HAD TO FIND A WAY
AND MY ROLE IN THE PLAY
WE ALL STARTED THE DANCE

FORTY YEARS ON THE DUSTY TRACK
ROUND AND ROUND BUT YOU NEVER CAME BACK
CLIMB UP THE MOUNTAIN, PARTING THE SEA
ALL TO MAKE A BETTER MAN OF ME
WRITTEN ON THE STONE
DELIVERED BY HAND
A ONE WAY TICKET TO THE PROMISED LAND
KEEP TO THE PATHS AND DON'T TALK BACK
A SNAPSHOT IN THE FAMILY ALMANAC



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SKIMMING STONES

AND IN THE END IT ALL COMES TO NOTHING MY FRIEND
THE CHURCH BELLS STILL WILL CHIME
ADMITTING THE CONSTANT FELLOWSHIP OF TIME
WHEN THE MOMENT COMES AND THE MOMENT COMES
UNANNOUNCED TO US ALL

I WATCHED MY FATHER SLIP AWAY
FROM THE BEDSIDE ARMCHAIR COMFORT ON A SUMMERS DAY
LOOKING FOR SIGNS
OF SOMETHING MORE THAN WASTEFULNESS
UNCONCIOUSNESS...PLAYING SKIMMING STONES
BY THE BANKS OF THE RIVER...SKIMMING STONES
THE BANKS OF THE RIVER...
SKIMMING OUR LIFES STONES

WITH A COIN TO PAY HIS FERRYMAN
I SET HIM FREE UPON THE SEA
FLOATING HOME, FLOATING HOME
A GARLAND ON THE OCEAN
AND TEARS IN OUR EYES
CONTEMPLATING EVERYTHING
IN THE SIGHT OF PARADISE...SKIMMING STONES

AND IN THE END
IT MAKES FOR EVERYTHING MY FRIEND
THE MORNING SUN WILL STILL ARISE
WELCOMING THE CONSTANT FELLOWSHIP OF TIME
WHEN THE MOMENT COMES, WHEN THE MOMENT
COMES...UNANNOUNCED TO US ALL...
SKIMMING STONES



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ANTARES

FAR OUT OF SIGHT ON THE CRESTS OF THE OCEAN
THE TRAWLERS ARE PITCHED LIKE FLOATS IN SLOW MOTION
MY FATHER AND BROTHER WITH THE NAME OF THE SEA
PULLING THEIR HAUL AND THE WEIGHTS UNDERNEATH
ROLLING THE SALT BARRELS, CASKETS OF ICE
THE NETS WILL BURST OPEN, LIKE BIRDS IN FREE FLIGHT
THE WIND AND THE WATER CUT THROUGH TO THE BONE
TURNING THE BOAT AROUND, HEADING FOR HOME

BUT THE LIGHT FROM ANTARES HAS TRAVELLED TO GREET ME
TONIGHT MATCHING THE CANDLE THAT WAITS BY THE WINDOW
AND CALLS TO THE NIGHT
THE LIGHT FROM ANTARES HAS TRAVELLED TO GREET ME TONIGHT
OUR OWN JOURNEY IS SHORT AND OVER SO SOON
AS THE RED STAR CASTS BRONZE ON MY FACE AND
THE WALLS OF MY ROOM

WE PLAY HOST TO THE GALAXY, BATHED IN DELIGHT
WE SPARKLE THE GLOBE, LIKE FIREFLY LIGHTS
MAYFLY MOMENTS AND LIGHTNING CRASH
LOST IN A SECOND OF BRILLIANT FLASH
WHILST STRETCHING ITS HEART ON A TRAVELLING SLEEVE
THE SOUL OF THIS GIANT IS BARELY PERCEIVED
IGNORING OUR TRANSITORY NATURE AND HASTE
IT STRETCHES ITS FINGERS AND FLEXES THROUGH SPACE

BUT THE LIGHT FROM ANTARES HAS TRAVELLED TO GREET ME
TONIGHT
MATCHING THE CANDLE THAT WAITS BY THE WINDOW
AND CALLS TO THE NIGHT
THE LIGHT FROM ANTARES HAS TRAVELLED TO GREET ME TONIGHT
OUR JOURNEY IS SHORT AND OVER SO SOON
AS THE RED STAR CASTS BRONZE ON MY FACE AND
THE WALLS OF MY ROOM



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ICARUS & ME

TONIGHT'S THE NIGHT WHEN ALL THE TUMBLERS CLICKED!
REMEMBERING THE PRACTICES, IT ALL WENT BY TOO QUICK
THERE'S A GUY ON THE SECOND ROW
AND HE'S PLAYING AIR GUITAR
IT SEEMS FOR ONCE THE PEOPLE
REALLY KNOW WHO WE ARE!

OH, LET THE EAGLE FLY!
CUT THE LEASH AND WATCH HIM SOAR ON HIGH
SOMEBODY'S SINGING NOW, I HEAR ALL THE WORDS
FLOODING BACK THROUGH ALL THE YEARS
WHEN IT WAS HARD LEARNED
STANDING IN LINE, JUST TO GET TO SEE THE BAND
PROMISES OF ONE DAY, LENDING A HAND

OH, LET THE EAGLE FLY!
CUT THE LEASH AND WATCH HIM SOAR ON HIGH
CATCH A SAILING WIND AND SET HIM FREE
STARTING ON THE JOURNEY, JUST ICARUS AND ME
AND IT SEEMS LIKE YESTERDAY
WHERE HAS ALL THE TIME GONE?
LOSING PRECIOUS MOMENTS...
SO LONG...SO LONG...

IT'S NO USE JUST SITTING ROUND
WAITING FOR THE PHONE TO RING
I SPENT SO MANY DAYS ALONE WITH THE ROOM CRUSHING IN
STUDYING MY HEROES, ON A SINGLE LINE DANSETTE
BASHING OUT THE TWELVE BAR BLUES
WITH ANY PLAYERS I COULD GET



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PILLARS OF SALT

SITTING IN THE PARLOUR
WITH THE BEATLES ON THE RADIO (OH BOY)
OUTSIDE IN THE AIR
THERE WAS MUSIC EVERYWHERE, ALL IN ONE VOICE
CAUGHT UP IN A MOMENT OF LOVE
WE WISHED THAT IT WOULD ALL BE ENOUGH
BUT THINGS PASS AWAY AND WE WANTED THEM TO STAY

FLOWERS IN OUR HAIR,
THE SMELL OF INCENSE BLOWING IN THE BREEZE
THE U.S. TIGERS WENT TO WAR
TO BRING THE FACELESS PERIL TO THEIR KNEES
CLINGING TO A PILLAR OF SALT
WOODSTOCK TO ALTAMONT
THE DARKNESS PUSHED ON WHILE WE SANG OUR SONGS

STANDING IN THE SHADOW IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY
WAKING FROM A DREAM THAT RIPPED AWAY
THE JOYFUL ECHO OF A DISTANT STAR
FORGETTING FOR A MOMENT WHO WE ARE
BATHED IN THE MEMORY OF A SUMMERS' NIGHT
WITH LOVE TURNED TO ANGER OVERNIGHT
WASHED AWAY IN THE OVERFLOW
BUT WHICH WAY DID THE SIXTIES GO?

MAKE HEADLINE NEWS WITH NO DELAY
MARTIN, MARILYN, JFK ARE ON DISPLAY!
HIDDEN VALUE, BLOOD AND GLORY
CAPTIVATING TRUE LIFE STORIES - TRUTH MISLAID!
WERE WE ALL SO EASILY CONFUSED?
MAPPING OUT A LIFE OF GOOD NEWS FROM PEACE AND LOVE
IN A WORLD OF PUSH 'N SHOVE

CLOUDS ARE RACING THROUGH IMAGINATION
THAT CHALLENGES MY MIND
RETROSPECT AND CONTEMPLATION
IN PLACES NOW HARD TO FIND
LOOKING BACK NOW ON ALL IT SEEMED TO BE IN MY HEART
THE FOUNDATION OF THE CONSTERNATION
IN THE FORMATION OF MY DOUBT!



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INNER MOMENT

THE CALL OF MY SOUL WHEN SOMETHING'S IN THE AIR
AND THE SUN IS SETTING SLOWLY LONELY OVER THE SEA
STANDING AJAR ACROSS THE GREAT DIVIDE
BETWEEN THE FUTURE AND THIS MOMENT

LEAVING ALL THE COMFORT OF MY HOMELAND, OF MY HEART
THE FIRST SHAKY FOOTFALL ON A PATH AND EACH OF THE FOOTSTEPS
FALLS IN BEHIND THE REST MILE UPON MILE UPON MILE
YOU ARE CALLING, YOU ARE CALLING THE DOOR IS STANDING OPEN
IT ONLY TAKES ONE STEP TO START UPON THIS JOURNEY
NO FORGIVING, NO REGRE MY HEART SKIPS A BEAT
AS IT RACES UP THE LANE TO WAIT ON THE OTHER SIDE
OF THIS MOMENT

LEAVING ALL THE COMFORT OF MY HOMELAND, OF MY HEART
THE FIRST SHAKY FOOTFALLS ON A PATH AND EACH AND EVERY FOOTSTEP
FALLS IN BEHIND THE REST TO GO MILE UPON MILE UPON MILE
WHEN YOU'RE CALLING, WHEN YOU'RE CALLING ME AWAY

WHEN I RETURN WORDLY WISE, A BETTER MAN WILL I STOP ALL THIS
WANDERING, QUESTIONING HARNESSING ALL I AM?
CONTENT IN MY JOURNEY'S END, THE TIDE WILL COME TO REST
ON THE FARTHEST SHORE OF THIS MOMENT

LEAVING ALL THE COMFORT OF MY HOMELAND, OF MY HEART
THE LAST SHAKY FOOTFALL ON THE PATH
AND EACH AND EVERY FOOTSTEP FELL IN BEHIND THE REST
I WENT MILE UPON MILE UPON MILE WHILE YOU WERE CALLING
WHILE YOU WERE CALLING ME AWAY

THE CALL OF MY SOUL WHEN SOMETHING'S IN THE AIR
AND THE SUN IS SETTING SLOWLY LONELY ON THE SEA
STANDING AJAR, ACROSS THE GREAT DIVIDE
BETWEEN THE FUTURE AND THIS ONE MOMENT
THIS ONE MOMENT