

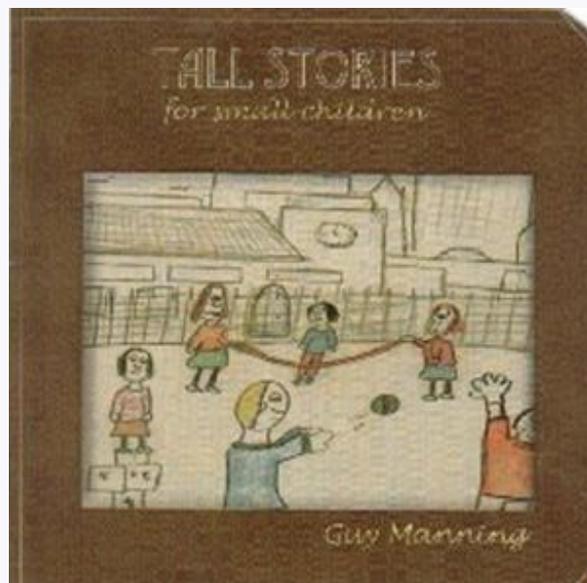


This is an untraditional interview and a rather short one centered around Guy Manning's many excellent albums and in particular; his new album. We did an **interview** with him fifteen months ago where the usual subjects normally covered in a ProgArchives Inquisition would be covered so this is just an update on his activities.

Here is what Guy had to report.

I have been listening to all your albums during the last year or so and have found a lot of hidden gems there. Some of them have been re-released this summer too.

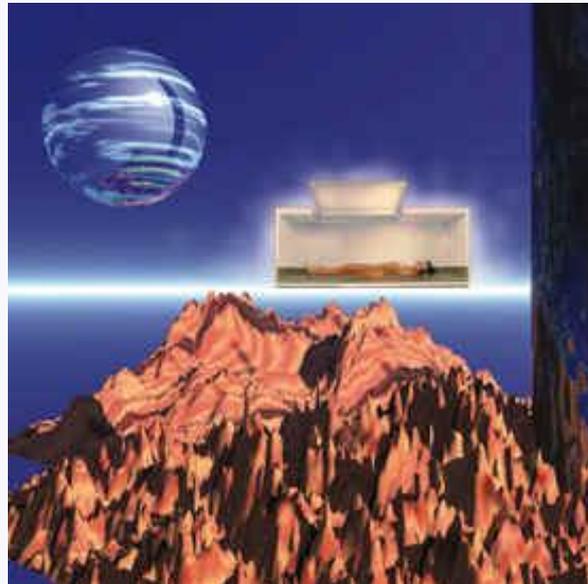
It would therefore be gross insult of us not to run through them and get your brief/long comments on each of them, beginning with.....



Tall Stories For Small Children from 1999

"The Candyman" was written for my children. It is song about questioning how you might be remembered in the World after you have gone. Maybe as a song writer, a great explorer, top athlete etc....

But for many of us, we make most difference and are remembered in the ways in which we teach and pass on to our children and they in turn teach theirs We cannot /should not mould them around our own aspirations, but nurture their dreams and help them to achieve those



The Cure from 2000

"Songs of Faith" is one of my favourites from this album. It is the key moment in the plot for the Protagonist and the whole storyline turns on this moment I also got a chance to imagine what it must be like to Space walk with the whole Earth spinning under the floating foot in an endless expanse of black and stars



Cascade from 2001

This is one of the 'forgotten' albums of mine. It was only pressed in a limited run of 500 which soon sold out. We now have a new slim line {2008} edition for those who want to complete their MANNING collection!

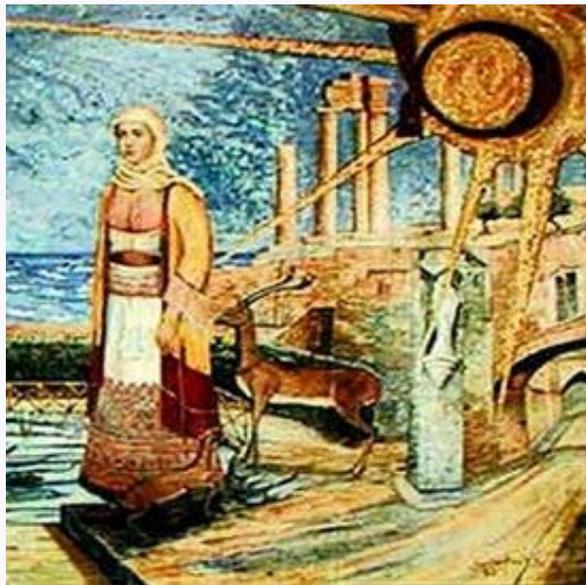
There is one song on there which has some personal resonances for me "Owning Up". Have you ever gone through some personal turmoil or devastation and felt that you had to show some emotion?

Some people when their parents go or friends die suddenly, throw themselves in to grief yet some cannot seem to cry or show anything as their own internal emotional clocks stop

Then there is the guilt of NOT feeling anything, why can I not grieve? So, to compensate, they overreact. Somehow, the Princess Diana phenomenon was a reaction like that...an over spilling of external visible grief by hundreds even though most mourners had never met the woman or been anything to do with her in any way at all. This is not being judgemental, just observation.

I went through a similar process when someone I cared for died suddenly. Only with some years gap could I look back and actually put the relationship into some perspective.

That did not mean I cared any less for her, just that I understood it all better and was more honest about the state of things.

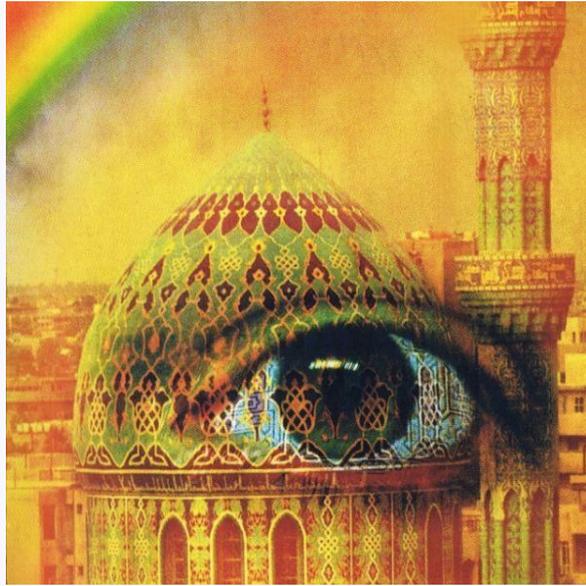


The Ragged Curtain from 2002

An Album of 2 halves with a linking piece

1. The beginning, middle and end of a relationship. My first marriage....not at a detailed autobiographical level, but as more of a generalisation about the stages of love and loss

2. The elemental World as seen within the correlation of Water and Earth, Sea and Stone...with man stood in the middle of it all battling one by using the other as protection



The View From My Window from 2003

1. Suite: Dreams was a chance for me to slip into the dimension of R.E.M. and the subconscious. From the falling asleep (with the chance to dream), through to the other side and waking up.

2.. "The Rut" I wrote for my dad (and for myself as well) It goes out to all those people who have a passion for something that they cannot follow because it is not financially secure enough to allow them to support their families if they pursue it

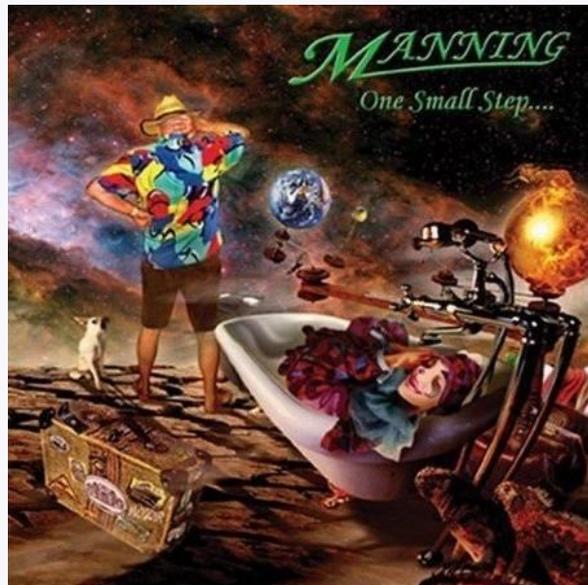
My father was a World class bridge player. He was the England and Yorkshire Bridge Team Captain for some years. Nothing would have given him more joy that to be allowed to follow where that path led, but he could not and support my mum

and his three sons. He laboured as a dentist (which he hated) until he retired and only a relatively few years after that died. I understand but grieve for his lost dream



A Matter Of Life & Death from 2004

When I first wrote the end of the story of Abel Mann on "Tall Stories..." , I did not think I would return to it, but return I did. It gave me the opportunity to examine in far more detail, just what had led this man to the point of his own suicide and ultimate redemption. It is indeed a fanciful view of Purgatory but I thought it a great narrative image and the fact that we go on again is unusually hopeful for me! My band says that all I write about is Water and Death...they may be right!



One Small Step... from 2005

The meanings behind the Epic suite is covered in more detail on the re-issued

album, so may be a look at " Night Voices".

For some time, after my friends wife died very suddenly, tragically and quite horrifically, he felt he could not really function.

But one night he had a strange dream. He dreamed that he walked through a wood in the middle of the night into a clearing where there was bridge on which he met his dead wife. There in the absolute peacefulness, they were able to hold each

others hands and express all the things they had wanted to be able to say to each other in order to say good bye properly. He awoke from the dream rested, cleansed and positive and for the first time in many months, able to move forward.



Anser's Tree from 2006

It is a shame that not more people saw the full genealogical family tree we created and printed for this album. It only came with the albums directly bought my website.

A lot of work went into positioning the Anser family characters in their time zone and lineage to get from Margaret Montgomery in the 1600s to Dr. Jonathan Anser in the future.

The annoying and often bizarre questions being asked by the little boy Joshua Logan were based on the exasperating experiences I had with my son Nathaniel as he grew up!

Diana Hordern is a strange tale of the cat and mouse plot between a police woman and a serial killer, done in the style of a 50's American movie.

One of my favourites is William Barras. The mining disaster in Wallsend did actually happen, I researched it and this was my visualisation of that story.

I have had mails from people that actually had family/friends die in a mining disaster that this hit close to the heart of it and had a very strong resonance for them



Songs from the Bilston House from 2007

Covered in the re-issue really! Understudy is close examination of my own upbringing being made to follow religious doctrine for no good reason at all (we were ALL non believers) but simply to save face in the wider community / family I hated every second of it and ran screaming away and raging from the first moment I was allowed to live my own life at last



Number Ten from 2009

"The road less travelled" is a satisfying narrative story (if that is the right word) about the nature of death and the afterlife. The central character drives his car up to a crossroads in the thundering rain. Stuck in a long traffic jam... he sees a light along one of the alternative forks and decides to follow that and see what is up

that road. Suddenly, he is plunged onto a bright and liberating endless hot desert road winding around mountains and through valleys which he follows until he arrives in an odd picturesque mid-western small town. Parking the car, he walks down the main street, whilst all the time feeling a sense of familiarity in the smells, noises and people that he sees. He is in fact dead and this is his entry into the afterlife.

"Bloody Holiday!" is about my own trials and tribulations on going on a holiday abroad via a plane. I am not a good traveller! The seats are always too small, the food awful and I have the fear of crashing whenever there is the slightest tremble or

turbulence! Like that scene in 'AIRPLANE' where the in flight movie on the fictional plane show aircraft disasters occurring, when I go onboard, I always think of two 10cc songs "Clockwork Creep" and "I'm Mandy Fly Me" (both referencing potential

airplane disasters). When I came to write the song I wanted to make it light and humorous but I also wanted to incorporate that 10cc imagery in there too. I had an idea to use some of the 10cc lyrics/titles and also in the melodies and arrangements...but now of course I had to get permission from 10cc. I tracked them all down individually, Kevin Godley, Lol Creme, Graham Gouldman and Eric Stewart and each in turn gave me permission and also their best wishes...Thanks boys!



That brings us over to this year's Charlestown. Please give us the concept of the album and a run through each track on the CD.

There is no central concept to the album this time, the main piece is a long 35 minute multi-sectioned evolving epic piece and the other songs support / contrast this.

1. CHARLESTOWN - follows the voyage of the Waterwitch from Charlestown in Cornwall along the South Coast and around Lands End and up to Bristol via a ruthless wrecking crew and a horrendous and finally overpowering storm
All the worst elements of voyages of the late 1700s rolled into one tall tale!
2. CALIBAN & ARIEL - the two characters from Shakespeare's the TEMPEST could not be more different. One the earthbound ugly hulk, the other, the spirit of Air and magic. My fanciful idea was that whilst being opposite in nature, they could be drawn together at midnight to dance on the sands of the island for a short while each night
3. THE MAN IN THE MIRROR (not the Michael Jackson song) is loosely based on my own variation on "Jean De Florette" and "The Hunchback of Notre Dame". An ugly (in the eyes of the surrounding people) and lives apart from the community, works hard and lives a simple pure life until, in a time of famine, the real ugly people (i.e. the villagers) rise against him, run him off his own land and steal the product of all his hard work No happy ending here
4. CLOCKS - An earthbound spirit has one chance at being brought back from Death, but in the end his former lover's courage fails here and she cannot face him and so all is lost
5. T.I.C. - A song about the end of a relationship, where one party cannot seem to keep away from the other and is inevitably drawn back to them like a ship afloat on the tide is drawn closer to the shore
6. FINALE (Instrumental) - the band asked for something 'hard' to play so I obliged. The piece is based on variations and themes found in the title track "Charlestown" with some odd time signatures stuffed in.

The line up on the album and your gigs this year has been presented at your website so it only remain for me to wish you all the best with this album and the gigs.