



DOCTOR X

A CABINET OF CURIOSITIES



This album - a "Cabinet of Curiosities" indeed - is a collection of songs that I had neither finished nor recorded properly over the past 40 years that are finally seeing the light of day. Something about the pandemic made me want to tie up loose ends - and *these* loose ends had been bothering me for years. Here's a blow-by-blow account of these wonderful little tracks:

1) Get Thee Behind Me, Satan - All I had was a vocal riff that I didn't know what to do with. This lasted more than a decade, if I remember correctly. The trouble with songwriting is that once the song is born, it's your kid and you need to take care of it, even if it decides not to grow. Well, one day during the pandemic lockdown I decided to figure this baby out once and for all. Ridiculously, it only took about an hour to complete. I still wasn't sure if it was any good, but I sent it to Billy Carl anyway to see if he could rip guitar all over it, and he reported that it made Ruby dance in the kitchen. At that point, I knew that the kid was going to turn out all right after all. *Tim Casey - loops, drumming, synths, guitars, bass, vocals / Billy Carl Mancini - lead guitars*

2) In My Hour Of Dying - This song had also been languishing for years. I already knew in my head what the music would be - a 12-bar shuffling blues in E - so I really had no excuse for not writing the lyrics. However, all my attempts had always sounded stupid. Then, a couple of days after I did "Get Thee Behind Me, Satan", I started thinking about this song again. I did the music in one take (not as impressive at it seems, since it had been circling around in my head for years) and wrote the lyrics during lunch, reflecting on all I had seen in the past year. The vocals were done after lunch and are also first takes - which goes to show how much you can write in your head without ever needing to hear it. *Tim Casey - drumming, acoustic guitars, vocals / Andy Hollinger - resonator slide guitar / Glenn Williams - uke bass*

3) Danger Zone - Flashback to the eighties and the band I was in with my buddies Glenn and Frank. "Danger Zone" was a kick-ass live song we always did that somehow never appeared on our albums. Then in 2014, when I was producing the live-music TV show "Transmission Hour", I was convinced by friends to perform on it myself with a band. Glenn, Billy and Larry agreed to be the band, bless their hearts. I dusted off some songs that had always gone over well on stage, including this one. Most of the songs we played at the taping at BNN-TV made it on the broadcast show, as well as the resulting studio album "um... whaddup, doc?" (LBCD73), but this one fell through the cracks. The live version really rocked, so I worked on those BNN multitracks in 2020, adding synth horns, organ and background vocals. I wrote a new chorus and rewrote some of the verse lyrics, so I'm kind of glad the song had never been etched in stone before this.

Tim Casey - rhythm guitar, keyboards, vocals / Billy Carl Mancini - lead guitar / Glenn Williams - bass / Larry Harvey - drums

4) All I Want - This was another song from the eighties that we never recorded. It was called "Watch That, Jack" and the lyrics dealt with the singer berating a jerk and threatening to steal his girlfriend. Somehow that didn't seem appropriate for me now that I'm 63 years old. But it's such a great power-pop song that I recently re-recorded all the music and agonized over new lyrics for a couple of months.

Then one day I was listening to Alanis Morissette's excellent "All I Really Want" where she's writing about finding the perfect partner, and in the back of my mind I thought "Wow - I can come up with a *lot* more things to want than just that!" (of course, this is coming from someone who already has a perfect partner). So I made up a list of "wants" both large and small, and a fun song was born. Music from a fiery twenty-year-old coupled with lyrics from a much wiser senior citizen - it doesn't get better than that. And this new recording features the original band! *Tim Casey - guitars, keyboards, vocals / Glenn Williams - bass / Frank Molina - drums*

5) Bela Lugosi's Dead - We did this cover of the Bauhaus tune for Halloween 2020 to try to cheer people up a bit during the pandemic (I made a great video of it for YouTube). Billy Carl Mancini did the rhythm guitar in the right channel and the rock leads, and Kerry Maxwell did the guitar stuff that doesn't sound like guitar stuff at all. Bill Allen did the saxes, recording with his iPhone in his garage! The song came out so good that it deserved to be on an album, so here it is. *Tim Casey - drumming, guitars, bass, keyboards, vocals / Kerry Maxwell & Billy Carl Mancini - guitars / Bill Allen - saxophones*

6) You're Pouring Water On A Drowning Man - I recently discovered this song while listening to Percy Sledge's album "When A Man Loves A Woman". I was disappointed to find that the album sounded nothing like the iconic hit - most of it is kind of an upbeat, Marvin-Gaye-type Motown party (I got over my disappointment fairly quickly). The Percy Sledge version of this song was a 12/8 shuffle arranged like "Some Kind Of Wonderful". Wanting to do something different, and wanting to show off my new way of playing guitar with the Keith Richards tuning (DGDGBD), I turned it into a straight 4/4 rock song. *Tim Casey - drumming, guitars, vocals / Andy Hollinger - guitars / Glenn Williams - bass*

7) Playing In The Band - this song (and the next three) were all in various states of composition / recording when I finally had to quit the band in '86 and focus on getting my electrical engineering degree. I had the chords in my head and a few fairly cynical lyrics but never got around to working the song out - probably because it's hard to get pumped about being cynical. The song came back to me recently and I decided to pull out the guitar and figure out what those chords were, playing them with the new tuning. Then I started thinking about what it's like being in a band from the age of sixteen through your early twenties, and these lighter (and funnier) lyrics started pouring out. We really did move all of our amplifiers and drums on public transportation from Dorchester to Roslindale in the middle of the day when we were

teenagers. It was pretty funny - but the bus driver on the final leg didn't see the humor in it. *Tim Casey - guitars, vocals / Dalia Davis - piano / Robert Black - lead guitar / Glenn Williams - bass / Frank Molina - drums*

8) In The Middle Of The Night - I tried doing an album by myself while in college, but the tape deck was falling apart, I couldn't afford to get it repaired, and the resulting collection of tunes sounded technically awful. This song was one of the casualties, so I finally decided to do it justice. I changed the lyrics a bit, dropping a typical rock and roll reference to a seventeen-year-old girl. Let's face it - when a 78-year-old Paul McCartney sings "well she was just seventeen - you know what I mean!", it kinda makes you cringe... *Tim Casey - drumming, guitars, clarinet, bass, vocals*

9) Shutting Down - Another song from the disastrous college tape. This was originally called "Teenage Suicide". When I recently decided to record it properly, I felt that the title would be insensitive. After batting it around for a couple of weeks, I came up with "Shutting Down", a reflection on what the world looked like in 2020. Between the pandemic and the US election, it was surreal in a bad way. *Tim Casey - drumming, acoustic guitars, synths, bass, vocals / Kerry Maxwell - electric guitars*

10) Dirty Old Town - This was originally called "Welfare Town". I wrote it in the eighties while I was renting an apartment in a building owned by a single mom who was on welfare. The utilities kept getting shut off, we'd run out of heat in the winter, and the neighbors looked at anyone who lived there like they were scum determined to bring down their property values. It was a real drag, so I finally decided I had to get out.

I'd attempted to record the song a few times over the years, but it never sounded right. When I revisited it this year, I was afraid that "Welfare Town" would be feeding into the "welfare queen" urban legend, so I changed the refrain to "Dirty Old Town" to avoid any racial connotations. (Funny thing was, everyone in the house was white). And "Dirty Old Town" has a better rhythm to it, so I'm much happier with this final version. Kerry had always wanted to do a dub song when Chillgroove was active, so I turned it into one for him. It was a lot of fun! *Tim Casey - drumming, guitars, synths, vocals / Kerry Maxwell - guitars*

So here's a collection of curiosities that I found in my cabinet, proving that you should never throw anything out, because it might be useful someday if you just polish it up a bit. And, weirdly, it proves that you can improve with age. I found it much easier to write these lyrics and to sing and play these songs at 63 than I did at 23!

Thanks to everyone who contributed to this album. Without you... meh!

Enjoy!

- *Tim Casey*

