



1. Fly Bird
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Produced and arranged by Rob Freeman
for Titlewave Productions, Inc.



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In an increasingly disposable world, Rob Freeman and Barry Blinderman have maintained their close friendship for over four decades. Their love of music brought them together as teens in the Lehigh Valley of eastern Pennsylvania. Barry had gotten his first guitar not long after seeing the Beatles perform on *Ed Sullivan* and was singing and playing in a folk duo, while Rob, a self-taught accordionist and pianist, already had his own sound-on-sound recording rig with original songs in the can. This album's title, also the name of its closing tune, alludes to their frequent practice of staying up all night—whether at the end of a deserted country road or in the den of Rob's split-level house—strumming songs, playing four-handed piano, and waxing philosophical. In their junior year of high school, they formed a band, Bleu Grass—recently described in *Rocktober Magazine* as a “Jewish garage psyche teen band.” Using the prize money they won in a local battle-of-the-bands competition, they recorded their first (and only) single, “What I Know” b/w “Strange Haze.” In the summer of '69, the two friends attended Woodstock together and reveled in the sounds of The Who, Jefferson Airplane, Mountain, Janis Joplin, and so many others.



Bleu Grass, 1968, clockwise from left: Rob Freeman, Bruce Shellal, Gregg Smith, Barry Blinderman, John Frazz



Rob and Barry at Woodstock, 1969
Photo by Elliott Landy

The next year, hitchhiking back and forth between Syracuse University (Barry) and Penn State (Rob), they laid down their first tracks as a duo, including “Are We Lost?,” rerecorded for this collection. In the mid 1970s, while Rob was in New York engineering records for such luminaries as The Ramones, Richard Hell, and Blondie, and Barry was pursuing his M.A. in Art History at University of Pennsylvania, Rob would bring Barry into Plaza Sound Studio in Radio City after hours to record newly composed songs. Although they never recorded together again between that time and the beginnings of what would become *Music for the Sunrise*, they've maintained a musical dialog over the years via email, Soundcloud, and CDs sent by snail mail.



Barry and Rob in Bar's Syracuse University dorm room, 1970

After many years as a successful record producer/engineer in New York, Rob moved to Miami in 1989, refocusing his sound production skills toward recording sound for feature films, television shows, commercials, and documentaries. Barry ran contemporary art galleries in New York's Soho and East Village from 1980-1987 and then moved to Bloomington-Normal, Illinois, where he is Director of University Galleries of Illinois State University. Over the past few decades he has organized the first U.S. museum exhibitions for Keith Haring, Michelle Grabner, Martin Wong, David Wojnarowicz, and other prominent artists.

The yearlong recording fest that culminated in *Music for the Sunrise* was prompted by a spring 2013 feature on Bleu Grass in *Ugly Things* issue #35 written by Zak Boerger, who contributed electric guitar tracks to this album. The unexpected attention this story received online led the five former band members to discuss a possible reunion concert in Allentown, PA, scheduled to occur in the fall of that year. Unfortunately, that reunion never took place, but as part of the process of compiling a set list of songs Bleu Grass had performed “back in the day,” Barry sent Rob a quickly recorded demo of “Fly Bird,” the second song he ever wrote, with voice, guitar, and organ so Rob could relearn it. Rob responded just as swiftly with a lilting keyboard part that gave the plaintive tune its wings. They liked the new mold for the old song and began swapping more sound files via Dropbox from Florida to Illinois and back again to recreate a second Bleu Grass song, Rob's incantatory “All Around Me.” Next came Barry's “Can You Read Lips?” whose title was inspired by a line of graffiti spotted on a Philly underpass and which was first recorded in 1979 by his power-punk trio, Ice Nine.

With momentum building, they committed to the creation of a full album. Rob suggested they create redux versions of both sides of the 1968 Bleu Grass single, adding an accordion part to the new version of “What I Know” as a nostalgic nod to his earliest days as a musician. Rob was also working on a new arrangement of his haunting “Are We Lost?” based on a harrowing series of events the two weathered at the 1971 May Day antiwar rally in Washington. Then followed “Autumn Song (Comin' Home),” a hopeful song of love and foliage Rob composed in his head while zooming across Interstate 80; “It's Not in Me,” the album's ballad, Barry's disillusioned account of the end of an affair; and Rob's “Music for the Sunrise,” originally entitled “I Have a Friend,” an ode to special places, times, and thoughts shared by a pair of soul-searching youths. [“Yes, we could have told them all what there was to living, if there was anything at all.”] The last song they undertook was Barry's “Tell Me Another Story,” an upbeat number stacked with poker-room references that was originally recorded on a 4-track reel-to-reel in Rob's 4th floor Manhattan walkup in 1976. The new version closes with a melodic line played note-for-note per the original on the actual instrument used years before.

Lest the listener assume that Blinderman & Freeman have no newer songs to record, in fact, over the years the two have penned over two hundred songs between them, many recorded as solo projects, some covered by other artists or placed in movie soundtracks. The decision to limit this collaboration to their nascent songwriting years from 1968-79 was based on a mutual desire to bring to fruition words and melodies from a turbulent and exhilarating era that might have otherwise been lost.



Barry and Rob at University Galleries, Normal, IL, 2014
Background: “Of the Valley,” 2013, by Erin Hayden

FLY BIRD (3:12)
(Blindeman)

Fly bird, you're free
But look what you've done to me
You cross my path but you never embrace
You hide behind your pretty face

So come on, leave the earth below
You'll never know
That while you're up, I'm down
Go scale the sky but you'll never land on me
So fly, fly, fly while I cry

Conquer your new worlds
Leave the life you promised me
Horizons lie beyond
Holding shadows you can't yet see
Yes I was just your launching pad
Pretty soon you'll say I was just a fad

So soar, till you can't get higher
Soon you'll find it's like playing with fire
Cuz what goes up comes down
And even you can't defy gravity
So fly, fly, fly while I cry

What's that I hear?
Some bird can't fly no more
They tore your wings by leading you astray
But I haven't missed you a single day

Tell me how does it feel to be free
Tell me how does it feel to be free

Barry Blindeman: lead and harmony vocals,
acoustic and backwards guitars, underswell organ,
electric bass slides
Rob Freeman: drums and percussion, key-bass,
piano, organ
Joe Cady: electric guitars, emancipated bird calls

Music and lyrics by Barry Blindeman
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AUTUMN SONG (COMIN' HOME) (3:27)
(Freeman)

Fire by the side of the highway
Clouds in the sky
Nature moving southward
And I watch her fly

But you know, I'm comin' home
Can you wait 'til then
You know, I'm comin' home
Just to love you again
Just to love you

You know that I have missed you
I have for a while
These roads lead me to you
And they end in your smile

Waiting by the side of the road
Can you hear the voices sing
It can be whatever we want it to be
As we gaze up at the clouds
With our backs to the earth

Flicker with the dance of a candle
Happy in the autumn wind
Nature soaring upward
And they watch us fly

But you know, I'm comin' home
Can you wait 'til then
You know, I'm comin' home
Just to love you again
And you know, I'm comin' home
Can you wait until then
You know, I'm comin' home
Just to love you again
Just to love you

Barry Blindeman: lead and harmony vocals
Rob Freeman: drums and percussion, key-bass,
keyboards, guitar, wah-wah barpin,
background vocals
Mickey Freeman: acoustic guitar line
Zach Zakin: electric and acoustic guitars, ebw

Barry Blindeman: lead and harmony vocals
Rob Freeman: drums and percussion, key-bass,
keyboards, key-guitars, wah-wah barpin,
background vocals
Mickey Freeman: acoustic guitar line
Zach Zakin: electric and acoustic guitars, ebw

Music and lyrics by Rob Freeman
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IT'S NOT IN ME (4:22)
(Blindeman)

There's not much I can tell you
It's better left unspoken
Let's just call it a night
I'll get my raincoat on and run
As I drive I'd like to wash you away
Win the wave of a windshield wiper
You want me to stick around and bow
And get soaked to the bone
In all your tears and promises
Now... show me the door

Cuz I can't love anymore
I can't love anymore, anymore
It's not in me
You took all of it
So many times before

I'll turn up the radio
I can't hear your voice now
They're playing a song about emptiness
Yes, I think I know the score
Daddy said that you can't live without them
No matter how you try
He never told me how they phone you up
And heat you up, and then hang you out to dry
And that's why

I can't love anymore
I can't love you anymore, anymore
It's not in me
You took all of it
So many times before

The shower's ending
The city looks much brighter
I'm gonna climb to the top of the highest building
That I can find and catch some sun
Everybody looks so small from up here
As they run from the time they're wasting
I can see you clearly now
You're waving your white flag
And screaming that I won the war
Aw, honey, what for?

You see I can't love anymore
I can't love you anymore, anymore
It's not in me
You took all of it
And I won't take this any more
I can't love anymore

You see I can't love anymore
I can't love you anymore, anymore
It's not in me
You took all of it
And I won't take this any more
I can't love anymore

Barry Blindeman: lead and backing vocals,
acoustic and "tenor" guitars, bass guitar
Rob Freeman: drums and percussion, keyboards,
key-bantone sax, mellotron strings
John Hollis: saxophone

Music and lyrics by Barry Blindeman
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TELL ME ANOTHER STORY (3:44)
(Blindeman)

Is it true you can't take it with a smile
Dealing time like a whore?
Wouldn't it be easier to turn it all around?
Stop trying to squeeze through my door

Tell me another story
Sing me a brighter song
I've traveled far enough into this darkened alley
Been carrying candles too long

You've got to pay more attention to the score
Play for keeps or not at all
No more twisted minds to smooth or reconcile
No false alarms to install

Clear the table
Baby, close the door
Turn those new pages
I want to hear more

Never mind what they said about my pa
He got too tight to unwind
Raise the ante and I'll be the first to call
If you're not caught on the line

Tell me another story...

Clear the table
Baby, close the door
Turn those new pages
I want to hear more

There'll come a time when I'll peel through your veneer
Dear you cards you can't refuse
Though you know I'm not as calm as I appear
Don't think I'm too wild to choose

Tell me another story
Sing me a brighter song
I've traveled far enough into this darkened alley
Been carrying candles too long

Barry Blindeman: lead and harmony vocals,
acoustic guitar, harmonica
Rob Freeman: drums and percussion, keyboards,
key-mandolin, melodia, background vocals

Music and lyrics by Barry Blindeman
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WHAT I KNOW (2:50)
(Freeman)

Well you know, life is hard to define
And you know, I've searched deep inside my mind
Well, some things make me blue now
Others give me kids now
But the answer I can't find

Well you know, life is hard to bare at times
And you know, all I want is peace of mind
There are some things I am sure of
Others make me ponder
But still the answer I can't find

Well now I know, life is never too kind
And I know, this is what you will find
The world is one big merry-go-round
You can't jump off
And land with your feet flat on the ground
And land with your feet flat on the ground

Barry Blindeman: lead vocal
Rob Freeman: background vocals,
drums and percussion, key-bass, keys, accordion
John Fretz: secret bass slides
Zach Zakin: electric and acoustic guitars

Music and lyrics by Rob Freeman
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STRANGE HAZE (3:35)
(Blindeman)

There's a strange haze over the city
Above me all of the time
All the people around me say they can't see it
I guess it's all in my mind
Cuz when my girl told that she was to leave me
A reason for living I can't find

I'll just have to get her back
I know it may take long
Cuz she's the only one who can clear
This fog upon my mind

As I'm walking along all I see is a vision
And the picture's tearing me down
I think of all the times I mistreated her
Not caring if she was around

But now I know that I'm nothing without her
I need her back to live again

Please come back and love me girl
I can't stand the pain
I gotta get out of this daze
Before I go insane

Well that strange haze is leaving the city
It's faded out of my way
My baby's come back, she says she'll never leave me
I know she's here to stay
And I've learned my lesson, I cherish the thought
That every night I'm gonna see her again

This haze may have caused me pain
But one thing I know for sure
Well it made me realize
That I need her most of all

Cuz she's the only one who can clear
This fog upon my mind
Fog upon my mind

Barry Blindeman: lead and harmony vocals, bass guitar
Rob Freeman: drums and percussion, piano, organ
Gregg Smith: '68 f-hole guitar slide
Joe Cady: electric guitars

Music and lyrics by Barry Blindeman
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ALL AROUND ME (4:15)
(Freeman)

I see the world clearly through my window
I hear the wind whisper to the earth
I see white fields where I can run free
Oh, what a strange and wondrous world all around me

I touch the sky I can feel the clouds
I feel the pulsing of life all around me

My mind is sometimes hazy
My window is sometimes fogged
But now I see life through a crystal, yeah
I know how to see

I hear the sound of a thousand voices praying
Look at our lives we want to see too
My mind's a window tinted in colors
And I know the closeness of life all around me

All around me
All around me

I see the world clearly through my window
I hear the sound I can feel the clouds
Look at the light beaming in my eyes

Barry Blindeman: lead vocal
Rob Freeman: bridge vocal, drums and percussion,
key-bass, keyboards, key-guitar, mellotron

Music and lyrics by Rob Freeman
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ARE WE LOST? (5:17)
(Freeman)

Come with me to the place to which no one wants to go
Try to keep from learning all the things we never wanted to know
Won't you smile at me
Please let your eyes be kind to me
For we might be here a very long time
We might be here forever

Come see the ruins of the city of the sun
Down among the ashes and the rubble we can run
Learn from the ancient mistake
Tryin' to find our way (home) with each turn we make
And we will be here a very long time
We will be here a very long time

Are we lost (are we lost)
Are we lost (are we lost)

No...body knows where we are
Or just how far we must go
'Til we are no longer so alone
And we have been here a very long time
We have been here forever

Tell me, is it real and is it now
And is it what we've found
Tell me why we're here and just how
To find our way around
Help us just to feel
And to lift ourselves up off the ground
My mind is made of steel
And I cannot hear any sound

Now if you take the time to know
Just where it is that we have gone
You may understand why we fear
That something has gone wrong
And always listen to your song
For life itself is short
And the time it is not very long

Are we lost (are we lost)
Are we lost (are we lost)...in Washington

Tell me, is it real...is it now...forever
And we will be here maybe forever...in Washington

Rob Freeman: lead and harmony vocals,
drums and percussion, key-bass, piano, organ,
key-guitars, mellotron, 3-finger horns
Barry Blindeman: fawer awes 8 "mind of steel" vocals
Mickey Freeman: acoustic guitar

Music and lyrics by Rob Freeman
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CAN YOU READ LIPS? (3:56)
(Blindeman)

Sit down beside me and be still
Turn up the music inside you
Beauty's a screen words can't pass through
There's just one way to unwind you

Can you read lips?
They're talking to you
Can you read lips?
It's the only way I know to get through to you

You used to live in a looking glass world
The mirror fell down from behind you
Now all the pieces must be rearranged
In their reflection you'll find you

Can you read lips?
They're talking to you
Can you read lips?
It's the only way I know to get through to you

Let go your fear now and be filled
See through the chains that bind you
There's not a dream that can't be willed
I'll send you the sun to remind you

Can you read lips?
They're talking to you
Can you read lips?
It's the only way I know

Can you read lips?
They're talking to you
Can you read lips?
They're talking to you

Barry Blindeman: lead and harmony vocals,
electric guitar
Rob Freeman: drums and percussion, key-bass,
electric piano, key-"glass" guitar
Zak Boeger: chunky rhythm guitars, fuzz guitar
Tommy O'Donnell: electric guitar lines and solo

Music by Barry Blindeman, Jim & Ron Robinson
Lyrics by Barry Blindeman
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MUSIC FOR THE SUNRISE (2:45)
(Freeman)

I have a friend
It wasn't long ago we went out to the country
And there we'd sit and there we'd talk about
How good it is to feel
That what you know is real will never leave you

I have a friend
It wasn't far away we used to laugh for hours
Making music for the sunrise
Then we'd stop and wonder why
Time would not allow us to be free

In our day we solved a million problems
Yes, we could have told them all
What there was to living
If there was anything at all

Blindeman & Freeman: lead and background vocals
Rob Freeman: drums and percussion, key-bass,
keyboards, key-guitar, contemplative flute, strings
Barry Blindeman: acoustic phase guitar
John Hollis: saxophone

Music and lyrics by Rob Freeman
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Producer's note:
I dedicate my portion of this album to my beautiful wife, Thaimi, whose enthusiasm and support during the seemingly endless days it took to put it together were so appreciated. Thanks to Danny Caccavo and Michael "Mac" McNamee for generously lending their ears. My deepest gratitude and respect go to Bar (of ROBAR) and all the amazing musicians who graced our music in such inspired ways.



Barry dedicates his portion of this project to Gabriel Nordholm Blinderman and Leah Edwards-Blinderman. Special thanks to Karen Heller for her support and encouragement, M.B. for her inspiration...and, of course, Rob (of ROBAR), whom he affectionately refers to as "Chief."

—
Tambourine presence on each song was highly encouraged.
Best when heard in stereophonic headphones.

Produced and arranged by Rob Freeman

Recorded June 2013-August 2014

Recorded by Rob Freeman at Titlewave Productions, Hollywood, Florida
and by Barry Blinderman at Normal Sound Studios, Bloomington, Illinois

Mixed by Rob Freeman — Mastered by Zach Ziskin

Post mastering curve by Michael "Mac" McNamee

Photography by Caitlin Cox

Cover artwork: *Vacation from the Self*, 1986, by Walter Robinson

Album package design by Rob Freeman



Background: *Ziggurat*, 2007, by Phil Wagner