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Peter Gabriel.

Having left Genesis the previous summer, Peter's first solo album arrived in February 1977. He was 26. With legendary producer Bob Ezrin taking charge the intention was to make something more direct and tougher than what had come before.

"With the first album I'd just left Genesis and had been used to having roles defined, and so suddenly to find myself in a studio full of serious musicians (serious in terms of their ability and what they'd done and so on) was unnerving. It took me three albums to get the confidence and to find out what I could do that made me different from other people. And the first record really was a process of trying... I'd chosen Bob Ezrin to produce the album, after having met with many producers, and he was based in Toronto at the time. We were working in his studio there, and there was a selection of people that he'd recommended and some that I'd brought in. It was an interesting thing to see how it would work.

Peter in the control room by Larry Fast.

I really wanted the first record to be different from what I'd done with Genesis so we were trying to do things in different styles. A bit of barbershop, which Tony Levin helped with, there were more bluesy things, a variety of songs and arrangements that were consciously trying to provide something different than what I'd done before.

Harmonium in the bathroom by Larry Fast.

The sessions were in wintertime in Toronto and there was a lot of snow around. I had a bicycle and that was a good way to discover Toronto. It was so long ago that Tony Levin actually had hair, which is something very hard to believe now. He's been bald for so many years, and of course, now I'm the same way myself, but looking back at the photos that was the most shocking thing.

About to go on-stage by Larry Fast.

The album cover was done with Hipgnosis who I'd worked with a little bit during the end of the Genesis period and Storm (Thorgerson) and Peter (Christopherson) particularly from there. I think that they are very important in the way that album sleeves have developed over the years. Storm had a very dry, laconic, sense of humour that made it a lot of fun to be around him. You ended up the butt of some of his jokes, but I always enjoyed working with him and it was actually his car that I was sitting in on the front cover. I liked the idea of the water and the black and white and the blue colour.

The picture was taken in Wandsworth, London in Storm Thorgerson's car, a Lancia Flavia. It was sprayed with water from a hose and Peter sat in the passenger seat. Originally in black and white, the artwork was then hand-coloured and each droplet highlight patiently scraped clean with a scalpel by Richard Manning.

One idea I'd had for that first cover was to do mirrored contact lenses and it took me about a month to find someone who would manufacture mirrored contact lenses. Someone in America, I think in Boston, agreed to do it, but they made me sign something that if I damaged my eyes they wouldn't take any responsibility – because they'd put a bit of mirror on the back of these hard lenses. They were very painful to wear, but the effect was fantastic; it was like having steel balls for eyes. I remember putting them on in an aeroplane at one point and scared quite a few people, which gave me a lot of pleasure at the time. But, eventually the mirror gradually eroded from the back of the lenses.

Another photo session around that time, which I enjoyed, was with Terry O'Neill who's a really good photographer. I wanted to do this smoking underwater thing and he found a place in London which was this old seventies disco with coloured lights and a mini pool in the centre of it, which I'm sure they would fill with scantily dressed young ladies in a very Hefner seventies vibe. I went in this pool to get filmed and the lights had shorted and so I got quite a shock underwater as I was doing the filming, but that was quite fun that session.

The first time I went out on the road with another band, other than the one I'd grown up and been to school with, was also a very different experience. Some of the musicians were very much professional musicians and would be flying back to New York between dates to do early morning jingles. Others came from a similar background to myself and were more about the music than maximizing the income.

But it was a lot of fun and I remember we had this percussionist, Jimmy Maelen who sadly died, but he was always a great performer and used to have these two huge gongs at the back of his percussion kit and he would set them up very carefully before the show, and they would be up above so that he had to jump up to the top height he could reach before he could hit the centre of them. So it was always maximizing the drama.

The video for Modern Love was done with this director Peter Medak (I'd seen the film *The Ruling Class* which I really enjoyed, a great film with Peter O'Toole) and he did that with me in Shepherds Bush. They were just putting in this new shopping centre with moving escalators which seemed very 'of the future' at the time. We did something with Solsbury Hill later, just messing around at Real World with a painter friend of mine Graham Dean. Unfortunately, we didn't really have budget to do much in the way of video at that time."

Bob Ezrin talking to CBC Radio in Canada in May 2019 about the making of the album:

So, then we got together in Toronto, I put together a band. We made this record here on Hazleton. I had a studio here by then [Hazleton Avenue is the address of Ezrin's Nimbus Studios] which was really good and I was quite sure it would work well for him. I didn't want to be away from my family any more than I had to and so I put together a band, which was like the Dirty Dozen; a bunch of people he had mostly never met before, including Tony Levin who has stayed with him all this time and Steve Hunter who played that guitar part [referencing Solsbury Hill]... and Jimmy Maelen and Allan Schwartzberg, a phenomenal drummer. He introduced me and Peter to Larry Fast who came and played synthesiser and Joey Chirowski who was in a band called Crowbar, who played piano, a local guy. And Peter said 'can I have a Brit?' And I said, oh ok, you can have one draft pick, who do you want? 'Well, I'd like Fripp', so I said can't you get someone who's decent? [laughs!] So we brought Fripp over to

join the band. This group of people... I like to say that miracles happen when you have a confluence of disparate, brilliant personalities. These were as different as you could get, everyone came from a different discipline and had a different background, but when they got together and started playing this stuff, which they did live in the studio, it was unbelievable, magical.

.peter Sun album download.

The final part of the two-letter, single-syllable trilogy. Produced by Peter (and mixed by Tchad Blake and Stephen Hague). Hundreds and hundreds of hours of recordings were made, ultimately being slimmed down to the final ten tracks.

UP soon reveals itself to be another deeply personal statement, with birth and death being near-constant themes. Mostly recorded at Real World (although some initial recordings were made in Senegal, France and on a boat on the Amazon), the album sees contributions from the likes of Peter Green, Danny Thompson, the Blind Boys of Alabama, Daniel Lanois, the Black Dyke Band, Peter's daughter Melanie and the late, great Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan.

Peter Gabriel in the Big Room at Real World Studios, by Arnold Newman.

"UP" was conceived as a title about eight years before [the album release]. I was thinking that I had a lot of material even then and still quite a lot of it was positive and I was thinking about rivers and playing with an 'Up the Khyber', 'Up the Ganges', 'Up the Mississippi' series where I would send the record off to a group in different countries and they would do their interpretation of it and then we would try and pull something together out of that or put those out as individual things so it was an sort of UP package. I think I mentioned that to Michael Stipe and they were the first to come up with a record called 'UP'. Although I think now Shania Twain is going to have a record called 'UP' and Ani de Franco had a record called 'UP, UP, UP'. There was some argument whether it's passed its sell by date and we actually put it up on the website and asked whether people wanted it or not and I think it was just in favour of the 'UP' vote and so I decided to keep 'UP'. 'UP' is a positive word and I think if I listen to the music now there are some pretty miserable songs there so I don't know if it fits that well but I've sort of grown with it and I think personally I'm in a good place at the moment and probably more up than the previous couple of albums so maybe there is some relationship there but, I don't think there is so much relationship in the music itself. I've always found it harder to write happy music than sad music. I enjoy the process of making music better than being a travelling salesman, so I think, in part, I've been avoiding getting into it and then I do tend to get attracted to detours. 'OVO' with the Dome was one of those detours and then there was a soundtrack 'Long Walk Home'.

Photo by Arnold Newman.

I also want to try and take stuff in because often when you make a record you're spewing stuff out but unless you've had enough input how can you expect [what's coming out] to be interesting or have any new things to reflect on or comment on? I think that process is a slow process for me and if I go into the studio we've got 130 song ideas, not all finished songs, that we were working on and so I would go from one thing to another and then to another and I wasn't really focused on a small group of songs. Always on every record there have been one or two songs that has been left over from the one before and 'Sky Blue', on this record, came from an earlier period. I think I just throw up stuff that interests me whether it's melodically or more often rhythmically and just keep trying to develop it. It's like trying to grow fruit and eventually it feels heavy enough or ripe enough, if you squeeze it, that it might bear some juice. Well some of the [lyrical] ideas are there early on and so help to shape the feel of the music but the actual slog work of the lyrics is something I have to go away for usually and it is anything from half a day to ten days for me to nail a lyric. I would go away and stay in a bed and breakfast or drive around a place and I had to do that on my own. In fact, I think that travel is good for lyrics for me. [See 'OVO' release page for more on this.] I have a sort of messy sprawling technique of writing really in which you throw all this stuff at the wall and then you just chip away and spiral inwards and try and find the centre. I remember talking to George Martin about this as a sort of production technique and he was appalled on the sort of waste involved as he could only envisage in having a definite result in mind which you went straight to and you knew how to get there. I mean I've tried that too but I'm not very good at it and I work this other way. We started off when I had a place in Senegal and we went out there to do some of the writing and work with some of Youssou's guys who I've worked with many times now and they're fantastic. I didn't at that point have much in the way of songs developed so it was a little premature but it was interesting because then we went to the mountains in France and went out learning to snowboard at that time. It was interesting comparing the hot environment versus cold environment because my house [in Senegal] didn't have air conditioning or anything like that so I would sit there sometimes with a towel on my head full of ice cubes, water dribbling. It was incredibly hot and everything in Africa takes about five times as long to get done as you imagine so what is already a slow process was even slower there, even though the musicians and the people were fantastic. France while we were there was great. We would work in the morning, we'd get out on the snow in the afternoon and we'd work in the evening and it was the most efficient, creative period for me even though it sounds a bit of a con. I find too, when I'm on the snow, I cannot think about anything else but 'stay up and survive' so it's really relaxing. I think some bits [of this record] are personal and some bits are less specific about relationships and more observations on life really. I would say it's less relationship focused but still quite a personal album. 'Darkness' was titled 'House in the Woods' and is about fear. For myself and other people it's the fear that stops you doing things that you could gain an awful lot from. So, I was just looking at that in myself. It feels to me more of a book ends record and looks on the beginning and end of life more than the middle period and so the sort of childhood references in this song. I grew up on this farm near Horsall Common which is where the Martians landed in H.G Wells' 'War of the Worlds' but it was quite a moody place to play in as a kid and there was this woman who was squatting in the woods in a caravan and you could never tell if it was occupied but we'd heard noises in there from time to time and there was newspaper over all the windows so you couldn't look in but to our five/six year old imagination she was a witch and very scary. So we always ran very fast when we crossed the path by her caravan. 'Growing Up' - My brother-in-law died of cancer, my parents are getting a little older I've seen a couple of friends die and so death has definitely been more present in the last ten years and it's been quite interesting in some ways and I've read a bit more about it and so on and I think there's this sense very often that people seem to retain their 17 year old selves through out life in some way, they may peg it at a different age but I don't think people feel old internally or very rarely. 'Sky Blue' is the oldest track on the record and in fact we had one go at it on the last record and it may have been before then. The original riff is probably fifteen years old but it was something I always liked and felt had good emotion in it and as a teenager I was very influenced by soul and blues and that was my starting point to a lot of music and I think this was

definitely an influence on the track. We made it less of a band piece and emptied out the mix and I had the wonderful chance to work with the Blind Boys of Alabama and they're extraordinary voices, extraordinary people too, but their voices are lived-in and they have a different type of quality to them than young voices. I think its one of my favourite emotional bits on the record. The rhythm track of 'No Way Out' was one of the earliest we began working on and then it had more of a Latin feel. Chris Hughes took it and did this sort of programming thing with it with a thing called 'Supercollider' but what it tends to do is break everything up into lots of little pieces and then reassemble them but still very granulated and it has this strange mysterious percussion quality to it. I think throughout I've been lucky enough to work with the best drummers in the world and some extraordinary percussionists and that is definitely one of the things that give me pleasure 'I Grieve' – One of the things over the years that sort of amazes me is how people use your songs once you've said goodbye to them. There was one American comic who came up to me, and I'd always liked his work, and said "you know I think that song 'Don't Give Up' saved my life, I was suicidal and just kept on playing it" and all sorts of other people use that song as an emotional tool really. I started to think, well, if you have songs as emotional tools what do we not really have? There aren't many songs that deal – I mean there are some but not a lot – that deal with grief properly. So, I thought I would try and deal with a grief song and it starts off with this pretty melancholy loss and then you have a sense that life is coming back in the middle and then at the end a gentle reminder that actually you have lost something you loved. So it was constructed as an emotional tool. 'The Drop' has a melody that I had actually proposed for the Dome project but it had been rejected but I always liked it and so I thought I'd do a lyric to it. It's of the book-ends approach lyrically it's the tail end that you are looking at there. A parachute drop without knowing where you are going to land! 'The Barry Williams Show' is definitely an observation on TV culture and I didn't realise at the time of choosing the name Barry Williams, which was effectively out of a hat, that there would be various well known Barry Williams; there's a Welsh Rugby Player and there's an actor who was in the Brady Bunch in America... and now we've got samples [of the track] that have been running on our website and so people are speculating on why I would make references to the Brady Bunch! We are also dealing with the lyrics and whether they are going to get on radio now which is something which hadn't occurred to me because I don't think any of the lyrics are things you wouldn't find in a Sunday newspaper or teenage magazines in some way but it was quite fun writing it. The mood of 'My Head Sounds Like That' was something that I liked and there was a moment in Africa when one of the echo machines jammed and started malfunctioning and I liked the sound of it and so the loop which begins that track is actually from this Delta Lab Echo Unit which was crapping out at the time. I was just thinking about a depressed state but where you have suddenly heightened consciousness of sound a bit like when you are about to throw-up when suddenly smell goes into 3D, if you know what I mean, it becomes a sort of heightened experience and so I was just trying to picture it. 'More Than This' came right at the end and I'd started a thing with guitar samples. I was mucking around with guitars and Daniel Lanois left his beautiful Telecaster here. I can't play guitar to save my life but I can make noises on it. The samples that we were getting I was then manipulating on the keyboard and the first sound that you hear on this track is that sort of thing and the track was built around that. I'd always liked it and in fact it was actually driving through the Italian Alps, again it is one of these scenic detours, and I found this old cassette which had this stuff on it where I'd been playing around with a different groove and that started all to make sense to me at that point. 'Signal To Noise' – Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan was one of the most extraordinary singers of our time and it was very sad for us to lose him and I was very lucky that he worked on this track before he died. It was just such a powerful thing that I was really keen to finish it and make it a centre piece for the record. It was a much starker track that he sang to but I wanted to try it in this string version and I think in a way it is almost filmic. I think they are going to be using the instrumental of this in 'Gangs of New York' now but I'm happy with that because it always seemed a large visual song. Working with the strings at the end was a slow process and I spent a week working through it with Will Gregory, who has been doing the Goldfrapp material with Alison, and but is another local Bath person and very talented and it's the dirtiest I've got my hands in the actual string arrangements and that was very satisfying in terms of generating some melodic and harmonic things that were quite clashing in places and then hear them all put together, so that was the other thrill for me on that track."

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Unremittance (Remix/Remaster) by Teeth.

Visceral and uncompromising UN.

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Excellent expansive Black Metal UN.

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18 artists: Norman Bambi, Jean-Jacques Birgé, Mami Chan, Dragibus, David Fenech, Groupe d'essai 3, Ilitch, Konki Duet, Stephan Lakatos, Guillaume Lozillon, Markus Muench, Xenia Narati, Les productions de L'invisible, Pusse, Joseph Racaille, Laurent Saïet, Samon Takahashi, Hervé Zénouda.

Pionnier du 'cross over' entre les frontières stylistiques, la musique de Moondog puise son inspiration dans des genres très variés (influences médiévales : canons, passacaille, rondes...), de jazz et de musiques traditionnelles : des Caraïbes, des Indiens d'Amérique...) tout en gardant un style immédiatement reconnaissable. Compositeur, musicien de rue, créateur de ses propres instruments, Moondog a influencé de manière souterraine de nombreux compositeurs contemporains.

« Réunis par un label français, les protagonistes d'Un hommage à Moondog tentent de se réapproprier ce singulier héritage. Le projet est périlleux,

[...] il tient pourtant la route : Rythmé par de courtes interventions parlées de Moondog lui-même, il mêle les excellentes contributions d'instrumentistes en liberté (M. Muench, X. Narati...) et de membres actifs de l'internationale underground (H. Zénouda, Konki Duet, D. Fenech, S. Takahashi...). » Richard Robert. *Les Inrockuptibles* (2006)

« Entrecoupé de brèves séquences où le musicien répond en 1971 à quelques questions de Saul Smaizys pour Radio Triade, à Chicago, cet album regorge de petites merveilles, comme une série de chansons arrangées et traduites en français (Les Productions de L'Invisible), Heimdall fanfare nappé de guitares grâce à Laurent Saitet, All is loneliness perçu à la manière d'un mantra par David Fenech ou encore Pigmy pig dans un arrangement très Residents (Dragibus). [...] G. Loizillon offre un élégant Tribal tribute pour balafon et électronique tandis que le violoniste Markus Muench reprend un canon à 5 voix de Moondog, dont les accords sont répétés et ralentis, à la manière de Pachelbel dans *Discreet music* d'Eno... » Franck Mallet. *Classica-Repertoire* (2006)