

# Chef Gardiner - Don't Look Back, A Retrospective

## Every Breath You Take - Sting

A really fine song Sting wrote and the Police recorded. The vocal is from the point of view of a somewhat despicable individual, a stalker apparently off of his meds. I recorded this one in my home studio using a variety of guitars, and bass. One has to occasionally remind people that the editorial opinions and viewpoint of the person in this song do not reflect those of the singer.

This song was recorded on the Island in my home studio.

## **The next few songs are from 1969 through 1972.**

I had the luxury of having access to about \$20K (in 1969 dollars) of professional recording equipment thanks to my friend Bob Orban who also appears on various keyboards, gong and Moog synthesizer on these older tracks.

The drumming was done by "Chicken" Hirsh, at the time (and again apparently) the drummer with Country Joe and the Fish. When Mr. Hirsh showed up for his first session with us he listened to a track for a short while in his headphones, slowly took the phones off and said, "You guys didn't use a click track, did you?" Bob and I looked at one another and then asked him, "What's a click track?"

In case you don't know, a "click track" is a metronome or drum machine track that's the FIRST THING one wants to lay down on a recording so that the track stays on tempo, so people can more easily play together in time especially when overdubbing (see *Cancion* below). Many recordings from the 50s and 60s were recorded using neither a click track or instruments tuned to a standard reference. Unless you had a speed control on your turntable ("What's a 'turntable', Grandpa?") it made it pretty hard to learn songs from the record ("What's a 'record', Grandpa?!")

1966 through 1972 was the period when I "morphed" from rock and roll lead guitar player into "folksinger", except for the summer of '68 when I was the lead guitarist in a San Francisco acid-rock group called Stonehenge.

In late 1966, I started showing up at a club called the Lion's Share in Sausalito, CA with my Gibson SG electric guitar and Fender Super Reverb and finger-picked Dylan songs during the 3am "breakfast shows" to the sound of forks clinking on plates. I got better. In early '67 I bought an acoustic guitar. Since having a long guitar strap carrying the guitar somewhere around one's knees was a dead give-away that one was one of them "electric guitar players", I shortened the guitar strap and voila! I was a folksinger.

### **While My Guitar Gently Weeps - George Harrison**

Love this song. You can hear my valiant attempts to get somewhere NEAR where Eric Clapton's lead got on the original recording. I wasn't even in the same universe as Prince's insane lead at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

You can also enjoy my attempt to get my baritone voice up in the stratospheric vocal range where the Beatles sang.

### **Instrumental 1969**

Just sitting in the studio with time on my hands. You can see how a simple theme/riff can get blown all out of proportion.

### **Once**

A longer, rambling, psychedelic "composition". Again really blown out of proportion (he-he). The sort of thing that my old band Stonehenge would do MUCH louder and for MUCH longer than this 7 and a half minute track.

### **Song for Claudia**

Sweet instrumental - My lament for an impossible infatuation.

### **Snakedance**

What happens when you put a guy behind a Moog 3 Synthesizer with sequencer and a few days to kill. The full-on, Stage III Moog we borrowed from Bernie Krause was an interesting, time-consuming beast to operate. Before EVERY take, one had to unpatch, re-tune the oscillators and then re-patch or else!

Through an interesting set of associations, I enjoyed the privilege of being an unpaid "junior engineer" on a live recording session at Grace Cathedral in 1971 for Beaver and Krause's *Gandharva* album that included Paul Beaver on pipe organ, Bernie Krause on that same Moog Synthesizer, Gerry Mulligan and Bud Shank on flutes/Saxophones and Howard Roberts on guitar. An amazing overnight experience. I was able to attend because their engineer, Bob Desouza of Sierra Sound Labs in Berkeley had borrowed my friend Bob Orban's Dolby "A" noise reduction hardware. Sierra Sound Labs is where Edwin Hawkins recorded "Oh, Happy Day". A little later that year I filled in playing bass behind Dorothy Morrison as she sang "Oh, Happy Day" at a concert in East Palo Alto. Of course, Sierra Sound is where Country Joe and the Fish recorded "Electric Music for the Mind and Body" and much later "Chicken Hirsh" recorded some drum tracks for Bob Orban and me. Interestingly, the first time I ever had pot and went to the Avalon Ballroom in SF in late '66, Country Joe and the Fish were headlining the show. In the mid-90s, I was playing a benefit in Berkeley where Joe was also on the bill. We were in the Green Room talking and I got to thank him for that night in 1966. Wheels within wheels within wheels, eh?

**By 1990** or so I had a Tascam 8 track reel to reel recorder that the insurance settlement from a burglary bought (I received the check a couple weeks after they cancelled the policy in retaliation for putting in a claim). I also had a few nice effects units, a decent mixer and again, a LOT of time on my hands. I recorded about 20 or 30 songs and finally in 1992 I picked the best of them and produced a cassette for sale. Luckily, I still have all of the DAT masters (digital tape - "What's tape, Grandpa?") so here are some of those songs for your listening pleasure.

### **Cancion**

A nice, smooth instrumental that kicked off the Cassette. Like most of the songs on this CD it was the result of many, many overdubs, recording additional parts while listening to what's already been recorded. It's sort of required when one plays all of the instruments and sings all the vocals.

### **Song for Tricia**

Written when my daughter was a mere toddler. Too bad I spent too many years ignoring my own advice. But I'm MUCH better now.

### **Quiet Wednesday**

An "outtake" instrumental that didn't make it onto the cassette. Recently rediscovered and I kind of like it. I hope you will like it too.

### **Learning Song**

Another lyric one should listen to and too often I don't.

### **Country Song**

The funniest thing about this song is that I'm finally, somewhat happily living in a VERY rural area but wish I could change one word in the lyric. Since my often inconsiderate neighbor harbored a dog that occasional has given us two to four hour concerts of non-stop barking in the middle of the night, I'd like to change "barking of a dog" to "croaking of a frog". Ah, but then there's the Coquí -- drat!

### **Louise - Paul Seibel**

This song was a CLASSIC that a lot of people used to do in the folk clubs back in 70s, especially after Leo Kottke and Bonnie Raitt's excellent versions.

### **Sweet for Bass**

I'm a bass player. This song features all three of the basses that I owned at the time. My bass collection has been as many as 6 but has now dwindled down to a more manageable four. My four string fretless and 6 string fretless basses are prominent here.

### **Island of Mercy - David Maloney**

I played with David for a while in the early 90s including at the Napa Valley Music Festival a few times and the Kerrville Folk Festival in Texas a couple of times. He's a great balladeer and this song is a great example of it. This recording is part of a live concert my 2nd ex-wife and I presented in Oakland, CA back in the mid-90s (I'm guessing '97). I recorded the concert on an ADAT 8 track digital recorder. You can also hear a large number of the 100 person audience joining in on the chorus. There were quite a few of our friends there who knew the chorus but to make sure we put a copy of the lyrics on each chair for those who didn't. An interesting tidbit about David and me. In the early 70s, David and his partner Ginny Reilly used to play at the Drinking Gourd in San Francisco. I was playing with various groups at the time including one that played across Union street at the "Mother Lode". But we never met until the early 90s 'cause we were both working nights at different joints.

### **Walk Away Renée - The Left Banke**

If you bought this CD at one of my concerts you probably heard me play this one. As I am primarily a musician, bass and lead guitar, I have a GREAT DEAL of trouble hearing lyrics 'cause my brain gets seduced into the music. So from the time this one was a hit in the late 60s I always heard "Don't Walk Away Renee". After my partner of 13 years recently "dumped me", and I started singing the song myself and finally heard the lyrics of this song clearly. The guy's cutting her loose, pretty much the opposite of what the guy in "Every Breath" is doing!

### **Darkness, Darkness - Jesse Colin Young**

I have loved this song ever since it came out in '69. I couldn't find my entry point into it until I began working with a special psuedo-slack-key sort of sound I'm developing using a cut capo (google "David Wilcox" -- the King of cut capos). This version is based on a finger-picked faux-slack key basic guitar part. Then, of course, I overdubbed a bunch of other stuff.

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Except the ones that weren't