

Gavin's Woodpile – The Bruce Cockburn Newsletter

Edited by Daniel Keebler

Issue Number 49

February 2002

Bwooce hits da woad!

January 31	Glasgow, Scotland	The Fruit Market
February 28	Keene, New Hampshire	The Colonial Theatre
March 1	Somerville, Massachusetts	The Somerville Theatre
March 2	New York City, New York	The Bottom Line
March 4	Glenside, Pennsylvania	The Keswick Theatre
March 5	Baltimore, Maryland	The Senator Theatre
March 7	Detroit, Michigan	The Second City Theatre
March 8	Chicago, Illinois	The Vic
March 9	Madison, Wisconsin	The Barrymore Theatre
March 10	St. Paul, Minnesota	The Fitzgerald Theatre
March 13	Denver, Colorado	The Fillmore
March 16	San Juan Capistrano, California	The Coach House
March 17	San Luis Obispo, California	The Chumash Auditorium
March 19	San Francisco, California	The Fillmore
March 21	Portland, Oregon	The Aladdin Theatre
March 22	Seattle, Washington	The Moore Theatre
March 24	Victoria, British Columbia	The McPherson Theatre
March 26	Cranbrook, British Columbia	The Key City Theatre
March 27	Edmonton, Alberta	The Winspear Theatre
March 29	Calgary, Alberta	The Max Bell Theatre
March 30	Winnipeg, Manitoba	The West End Cultural Centre

2002 Tour Gets Started

Bruce embarks on a solo tour following the January 15 release of Anything Anytime Anywhere. The CD is his first since having signed with Rounder Records of Cambridge, Massachusetts. Also in the works are a new studio album and the remastering of

seventeen of Bruce's previous releases. Keep tuned in at the Rounder Records website at www.rounder.com/cockburn.

On May 18, 2002, Bruce will perform in Vancouver, B.C., at the Spirit Of Haida Gwaii Concert for the Bill Reid Foundation. It will be taped for television broadcast. Details as they are available.

Anger And Artistry

by Grant Kerr

For the Saint John Times Globe

August 1998

If anger management ever takes the rock and roll world by storm, there would be a lot less great music out there. From Bob Dylan to The Who to the Sex Pistols to Ani DiFranco, many of the greatest songs in the last three decades have been written by songwriters who are being pursued by a big, black cloud.

Rock at its best has always been about grabbing listeners by the throat and giving them a violent shake.

For much of Bruce Cockburn's career, he has been able to turn his finely-tuned sense of outrage into exquisite poetry and song.

"I don't think I go around angry all the time, or anything like that," he said in a recent telephone interview from his Toronto home. "Generally, when you feel good, you are not as motivated to write. I am sure you have heard that from other writers, too. The sense of outrage is one source of creative energy, I suppose."

That's exactly how Marshall McLuhan's "The medium is the message" statement got twisted into Public Image Ltd.'s classic line, "Anger is the energy."

"Lately the thing that bugs me most over and over again is the whole greed-based globalization thing that is destroying everything, destroying some of the good things about the fabric of human society," Cockburn said. "It's destroying the environment hand over fist, all in the name of profits for a very few people."

"When I wrote Call It Democracy in the mid-eighties, that was based on my experiences in the Third World and seeing up close the effects of global economic policies on the people in the Third World. What they are doing with globalization is applying it everywhere. In one way it's healthy, I suppose, because it makes us realize we are all in the same boat. The GM workers in North America are faced with similar things, although nowhere to the degree of their counterparts elsewhere, in Mexico or Central America."

“Now we are starting to recognize it. That’s the good side. The bad side is of course because these greedy [expletive] are doing it to all of us and getting away with it. It’s pretty pathetic.”

He’s not too thrilled about former prime minister Brian Mulroney receiving a prestigious national award, either.

“Giving Mulroney the Order of Canada, or upgrading him in the Order of Canada, is a disgraceful maneuver,” he said.

But there is so much more to the 53-year-old Cockburn than the anger that has produced much of his greatest work. After all, a man who has recorded and released as much material as he has over the years (24 albums in 28 years) can not get by on one note.

His music, as well, has evolved markedly over the years, from the stripped down acoustic folk of his beginnings through the more freewheeling, improvisational approach in the late seventies and early eighties. That latter decade arguably produced his best-known work, but it’s a rare occasion that his songs can be found on the radio these days.

Of course, there will always be *Wondering Where the Lions Are*, a song that blew up the charts in 1979, eventually becoming something he grew to loathe doing in concert.

When he hits New Brunswick next week to play solo shows in Moncton and Saint John, it will be anybody’s guess what he will pull out of his repertoire. But don’t hold you breath for the biggies.

“You know, when I get to the point where I hate playing it, I just don’t play it. That doesn’t happen very often but it happened with *Wondering Where the Lions Are* for a while and I let it lie for a couple of years and then it was fine again. And I’m kind of feeling that way about *Rocket Launcher* right now.”

To this day, those two songs stand out as his best-known work, which is exacerbated by classic rock stations only playing the oldies even when Cockburn is still releasing so much good new stuff. But even the stations that insist on playing the same tired old songs day in, day out are giving short shrift to a man who has a world-wide reputation as a poet, activist, songwriter and musician.

If they are not on the radio, people don’t hear the songs. And if they’re not hearing it, the artist fades from the consciousness of the public who buy CDs and purchase concert tickets.

This chain reaction limits Cockburn’s ability to tour, especially in areas that are difficult to reach because of their large geography and small population. This, Cockburn explained, is why it has taken him nearly a decade to return to this province on tour.

“It bugs me to the extent that it’s hard to do a tour in Eastern Canada,” he said of lack of air time on radio. “That’s where it becomes problematic. It’s not a problem in terms of ‘Am I offended because my songs are not on the radio?’...But it does smooth the way. It makes it easier to get the songs to the people.

“It’s just become harder and harder to make a tour of Atlantic Canada work. I can do it solo, which is what we’re doing this time, but it’s just hard to find anybody that’s willing to put on the shows.

“That’s been a problem for years so I am really happy that we’re able to come down and do a few shows now, instead of just whipping in and out of Halifax, which is something I have done a couple of times.”

Never mind the fact that Cockburn, to this day, is releasing relevant music that resonates with conviction, passion and his own version of truth.

Take last year’s *The Charity of Night* for instance. It’s a 70-minute blast of poetry and beauty, as harrowing as it is inspiring. It’s also a return to a more stripped-down sound with just guitar, bass and drums on much of the album. Gone are the keyboards and some of the eighties frills that have dated some of his work.

There is also the recent five-song EP, *You Pay Your Money and You Take Your Chance - Live*, a souvenir of Cockburn’s worldwide concert tour last year.

Fans, of course, have come to expect the consistency that has marked his output over the last three decades. But for the more casual listener it’s easy to forget that he’s a man who carries an awful lot of the world on his shoulders. After all, many of his songs rail against environmental catastrophes, globalization, dictatorships, and social injustice.

But he doesn’t feel the weight. Since his self-titled debut album in 1970 and even before, Cockburn has worked for it, coveted it, and cherished his place as a spokesman for the generations.

“I am aware of having a certain responsibility. It’s a chicken and egg thing. I think I had the responsibility before I had the audience.

“There is a sense that with people who are listening to you, you need to offer them something like truth, whatever that is. Truth is different for everybody and you don’t necessarily have to talk about the same truth, nor does everybody have to deal with the same kind of things. I do feel that obligation, so I guess it is some kind of weight.”

Having said that, Cockburn added, “It’s not a very big burden because it’s what I want to do anyway.”

In conversation, he’s no-nonsense, thoughtful, friendly and forthright.

But he also has a dry sense of humour that shines through, which shows up in some of his work.

“I woke up thinking about Turkish drummers. It didn’t take long, I don’t know much about Turkish drummers,” are the opening lines of *Get Up Jonah* from the superb *Charity*.

His tour last year, with band, was in support of his most recent studio album. This time out, his solo show will be a wider-ranging performance that covers a good piece of his career and will likely feature a couple of new songs he has yet to record.

On stage it will just be the songwriter and a collection of his guitars, both acoustic and electric. His lyrics, philosophy and great songwriting skills are what he is known for primarily, but his musicianship is equally powerful. The command Cockburn has over the guitar is no less impressive and can be breathtaking live, especially in a solo format. Depending on how he is feeling on any given night, Cockburn could play just about anything, save for his earliest material.

“The band tours are less stressful because I am sharing the effort and the energy and the attention with other people, so it’s not as scary,” Cockburn said, laughing.

“There is a kind of communication that you obviously don’t get solo. The difference is, on the other side, the solo thing allows for much more intimate contact with the audience and allows for the listeners to focus on the song itself, rather than the performance, which I like. So they both work.”

When he’s not touring, writing or recording, Cockburn still spends much of his time travelling the world, working on environmental and social causes. He spent February in Mali taking part in a documentary which was being filmed on the desertification of much of the tiny African country.

“This otherwise dry subject matter, no pun intended, is lightened by putting me together with three Malian musicians during the film,” he said.

The documentary, being put together by TV Ontario and Vision TV will air some time in the fall.

His environmental crusades do nothing to exorcise his decades-old image of the rural folkie.

In fact, it’s been years since he lived in the country. He recently moved to the Toronto neighbourhood that used to be known as Little Italy, where he lives above a restaurant.

“I am an urban person, that’s who I am. You can be urban and value the natural environment. When I wrote about [the country] a lot in the earliest days, I was looking

for a language to talk about spiritual things and it seemed to be the imagery of nature provided that language more than anything else that I could see around.

“It’s kind of an on-going attempt to understand the relationship between the each of us, the collective and the universe. At first it was the city against the country and me against the city. And now it’s a bigger picture than that.”

Get Your Woodpiles Here

Following is a list of available back-issues for Gavin’s Woodpile. Each listing includes a brief description of the cover story. Through the years I’ve attempted to publish articles that span Bruce’s career—from the 1960s to the present time. I’ve chosen these particular articles because I personally find them interesting or noteworthy in some way. Additionally I have tried to include articles exclusive to Gavin’s Woodpile. I am thankful to those who have gladly given me their time for interviews, which have helped greatly in adding a sense of credibility to this home-grown project. My thanks to True North for allowing me access to shoot photos, which has added a fresh dimension to the newsletter. When I first started this I never suspected it would take me where it has. The first few years the newsletter was free—I paid for it myself because I wanted to get the word out. Eventually I started asking for donations but as the subscriber base grew, things got a bit out of balance. I began a subscription rate in 1996.

Back-issues are available for \$1 per issue by contacting:

Lo Baker
Coffin Brook Rd
HCR 72, Box 119
Alton, NH 03809
USA

I would like to take this opportunity to thank **Lo Baker** for everything she has done to help with this project. Her presence has been a wonderful thing.

1. February 1994: The first issue contains a pre-release review of *Dart To The Heart* by Daniel Keebler (DK), plus info on recent radio appearances.
2. April 1994: A 1994 review of the Winnipeg, Manitoba concert written by Stephen Ostick for the Winnipeg Free Press.
3. June 1994: A 1994 review of the Vancouver concert written for the newsletter by Byron Manering.
4. August 1994: A 1994 interview from *Network* magazine regarding the release of *Dart To The Heart*, by Maureen Littlejohn.

5. October 1994: A 1994 article written for the Gavin's Woodpile regarding Bruce Cockburn's work, titled Music That Makes A Difference.
6. December 1994: A 1994 review of Bruce's performance at The House Of Blues in New Orleans. Written for the newsletter by David F. Smith.
7. February 1995: A 1994 interview with Stephen Holden, music critic for the New York Times, regarding Bruce's work. Interview by DK.
8. April 1995: A 1995 press release regarding Bruce receiving the Global Visions Award, plus information on Bruce having been featured in an AIDS benefit book.
9. June 1995: A 1995 article on Bruce and his work in bands in the 1960s. Written for the newsletter by Alex Taylor.
10. August 1995: A 1970 article and interview from The Province, by Alan Walker.
11. October 1995: A 1995 article on Bruce's recent trip to Mozambique, by DK.
12. December 1995: A 1977 article and interview from the Toronto Globe & Mail, by Paul McGrath.
13. February 1996: A 1994 interview from Spotlight regarding politics and Dart To The Heart, by Margaret Davis.
14. April 1996: A 1996 interview with Stephen Hubbard of Network magazine regarding Bruce's work by DK.
15. June 1996: A 1994 interview regarding Bruce and his music videos. Written for the Gavin's Woodpile by Rob Otis X.
16. August 1996: A 1996 interview with David Wiffen, by DK.
17. October 1996: A 1996 interview with Fergus Marsh, by DK.
18. December 1996: A 1996 article written for the newsletter by Barry Wright, a Bruce fan since 1969.
19. February 1997: A late 1996 interview with Bruce regarding The Charity Of Night, published first in Gavin's Woodpile, written by Richard Hoare.
20. April 1997: A 1977 interview with Bruce from Cheap Thrills regarding In The Falling Dark, by Hugh Richards.

21. June 1997: A 1997 article presenting a view on how Bruce handles those that follow his work. Written for the newsletter.
22. August 1997: A 1997 interview with Bill Usher, by DK.
23. October 1997: A 1971 article from RPM on the founding of True North Records, by Walt Grealis.
24. December 1997: A 1997 recap of Christmas-related music that Bruce has recorded. Written for Gavin's Woodpile by Richard Hoare.
25. February 1998: A 1997 press release regarding Bruce's recent trip to Mali, by Susan Fisher of USC Canada.
26. April 1998: A 1998 article from the Ottawa Citizen regarding what has become of the folk movement., by Chris Cobb.
27. June 1998: A 1980 interview with Bruce about his guitars and recording process, by Steve Weitzman.
28. August 1998: A 1986 article from the Toronto Star regarding the relationship between Bruce and Bernie Finkelstein, Bruce's long-time manager. Written by Peter Goddard.
29. October 1998: A 1998 interview with Eugene Martynec, by DK.
30. December 1998: A 1998 interview with Miche Pouliot, by DK.
31. February 1999: A 1999 article from Billboard magazine, by Larry LeBlanc.
32. April 1999: Part one of a 1981 article from Maclean's magazine, written by Ian Pearson. Part two in the June 1999 issue.
33. June 1999: A narrative by Bruce from the book For What Time I am On This Earth—Stories From Mariposa. The book was published in 1977.
34. August 1999: A 1999 interview with Hugh Marsh and a review of Breakfast In New Orleans Dinner In Timbuktu, by DK.
35. October 1999: Report on a private concert Bruce gave in Seattle to promote Breakfast In New Orleans Dinner In Timbuktu. Reported on by DK.
36. December 1999: A 1999 interview with Dennis Pendrith, by DK.
37. February 2000: A 1976 article from The Canadian, written by Patricia Holtz.
38. April 2000: A 2000 article detailing the album Further Adventures Of. Written for Gavin's Woodpile by Richard Hoare.

39. June 2000: A 1972 article from Saturday Night magazine, written by Myrna Kostash.
40. August 2000: A 2000 interview with Tom Radford, director of Ernest Brown—Pioneer Photographer (1972), for which Bruce wrote the music. Interview by DK.
41. October 2000: A 2000 interview with Douglas Grossman, band member with Bruce in 1965 while attending the Berklee College of Music in Boston. Interview by DK.
42. December 2000: A 2000 press release regarding Bruce's induction into the Canadian Music Hall of Fame.
43. February 2001: A listing of all of Bruce's songs in tribute to his induction Hall of Fame.
44. April 2001: A 2000 narrative by Heather MacAndrew from the New Internationalist, followed by an interview from 2001 with DK. (Bruce wrote the music to Heather's documentary, The Man We Called Juan Carlos.)
45. June 2001: A 2001 article from the Ottawa Citizen, by Craig McInnis.
46. August 2001: A 2001 interview with Kathryn Moses, by DK.
- 47: October 2001: Press releases and information on True North having signed a distribution contract with Rounder Records in the U.S. and an article on two new releases planned for 2002.
- 48: December 2001: Exclusive review of Anything Anytime Anywhere, Bruce's new best-of CD. Reviewed by Richard Hoare.

News From The Catfish

CORRECTIONS

Anything Anytime Anywhere contains no commas. DOH!

My Beat: The Life & Times of Bruce Cockburn was directed by Nadine Pequenezza, not Robert Lang. However, Robert was a producer on the project.

Spelling correction from page six of issue 48: **Macky** Auditorium, not Mackay.

OTHER STUFF

Bruce visited four radio stations in the month of December, 2001, to help promote the release of A3:

December 11: KFOG in San Francisco
December 12: KINK in Portland, OR
December 13: KMTT in Seattle
December 14: KTCZ in Minneapolis

The visits included in-studio performances and interviews.

Bruce participated in the two-part tenth anniversary taping of **E-Town** at Macky Auditorium in Boulder on November 9, 2001. The program was fed to public radio stations via satellite on January 2 and 9, 2002. Songs performed were Justice, Rumours Of Glory, Lovers In A Dangerous Time, World Of Wonders and Last Night Of The World. Other guests included Lyle Lovett and The Fairfield Four.

Bruce will appear on the CBS Television program called the **CBS Early Show** on Saturday, February 16, 2002. Tune in.

Anything Anytime Anywhere is now available as of January 15. As a reminder, if you purchase the CD at Borders Books (in-store only, not on line) you will get a bonus CD with six live acoustic tracks taped for World Café in late 2001. This disc also contains interview segments.

February 11: Bruce will appear on NPR's The Connection as well as Boston's WXRV and WBOS.

Watch the website for more on the **Spirit of Haida Gwaii Benefit Concert** on May 18 at The Chan Centre in Vancouver, B.C. !

Issue Number 50

April 2002

Living In The Present Tense With Bruce Cockburn

by Mark Small

With a legacy of gold and platinum albums, awards, and accolades from every quarter behind him, Canada's premier songwriter Bruce Cockburn is firmly in the moment.

Not surprisingly, Bruce Cockburn '65, one of Canada's most revered singer/songwriters, is also one of the busiest musicians north of the border. On the heels of a few years of hard touring, Cockburn decided to lay back a little bit during the year 2001, but he ended up being straight out anyway, even without a major tour. In addition to moving, making a smattering of concert appearances, writing and recording a project with New York jazz pianist Andy Milne, and being inducted into the Canadian Music Hall of Fame, he had

TV producer Robert Lang and a camera crew following him around over several months collecting footage for a one-hour documentary about him.

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation aired the film, *The Life & Times of Bruce Cockburn*, nationally last fall. It punctuated a year that presented Cockburn with some outward reminders of his contributions to the music world and his staying power in what many experience to be a fickle industry.

Since the release of his self-titled debut album in 1970, Cockburn has seen 20 of his albums achieve gold or platinum status. He has also netted 11 Juno Awards—the Canadian equivalent of the Grammy Award—and a host of other music and nonmusic awards. Recognizing his gift with lyrics, two Canadian universities, York and St. Thomas, have bestowed honorary doctor of letters awards on Cockburn. In 1997, Berklee awarded him an honorary doctor of music degree.

Among the most obviously appealing features of Cockburn's music are his powerfully resonant tenor voice and his agile acoustic and electric guitar playing. Throughout his catalog of 26 albums, he has woven strands of folk, rock, blues, jazz, and world music together to fashion a sonic tapestry that is uniquely his own. Any Cockburn fan, however, will tell you that the lyrics are the heart of his art. For the past three decades, Cockburn has been sharing with millions of listeners his personal reflections on the human condition in song. He treats love, environmental concerns, human rights, landmines in Mozambique, his deep spiritual feelings, and a range of other topics with all of the finesse and passion of the best bards in the business.

Some artists, after turning 50 and reaching the lofty career heights he has seen, start to look back nostalgically, but that kind of sentiment is not for Cockburn. With his recent induction into the Canadian Music Hall of Fame, the *Life & Times* documentary film, and his latest CD *Anything Anytime Anywhere* (a retrospective of his work since 1979), it would seem that everyone but Cockburn is looking back.

I reached him by phone at his hotel in Boulder, Colorado, the day that he taped the E-Town 10th anniversary show with Lyle Lovett and the gospel group the Fairfield Four. While he spoke warmly of his youth in Ottawa, his Berklee days, and how his career got started, he was eager to note that his new CD of old songs opens and closes with brand new ones, and that he plans to record a new CD this spring. Cockburn is very centered in the present and told me that even he is anxious to see what he is going to do next.

Was there an early musical experience that you can remember that ignited your passion for music?

I think hearing Elvis and Buddy Holly for the first time gave me a desire to do this. I was 12 then, and at around 14 I started to play the guitar. I had been introduced to music before that but it wasn't until rock-and-roll came along and I got the idea to play the guitar that there was anything like passion involved. At that age, you don't have any idea what you are going to do with it. I wasn't sitting there saying, "I think I'll become a professional musician now."

Did you start writing your own songs from the beginning?

No, but I took guitar lessons immediately. At that time—about 1959—guitar playing was associated with rock-and-roll, which was associated with gangs, leather jackets, long sideburns, and switchblades. My parents bought into these associations, so they were nervous about me playing the guitar. They said they would support it if I promised to take lessons and learn to do it properly and if I promised that I wouldn't get a leather jacket and grow sideburns. It was easy to make those promises, so I started taking lessons.

Was your first guitar an acoustic?

No, it was Kay archtop with a DeArmond pickup on it. Acoustic guitar meant nothing to me in those days. It was the presence of folk music on the cultural landscape that pointed me to acoustic guitar. In the latter years of high school, I fell in with a bunch of folkies who taught me about fingerpicking and a wealth of music that I had never encountered before. At that stage I was listening to rock-and-roll and jazz but had not encountered many other types of music. I heard Brownie McGhee and Sonny Terry play live, and it was mind-blowing to hear the energy and depth in their music. They were the first blues guys I listened to.

What drew you to Berklee in the 1960s?

A lot of changes happened in a short time so that, at 17, I was listening to a lot of jazz. I was interested in composing for jazz orchestra. I had a book by Bill Russo called *Composing for the Jazz Orchestra*. That was one of the credentials that I could offer when I applied to Berklee. My dad and I sat in [late Berklee administrator] Bob Share's office for a meeting to see if I was a suitable candidate for Berklee. Bob said that if I had worked my way through that book, I would do okay.

At the time, I had no aspirations to be a songwriter. I was interested in writing for jazz orchestra. I was trying to write poetry and trying to make music, but I didn't think of putting the two together until after I left Berklee. I think I had written a couple of songs in my last semester.

Did you have any pivotal experiences at Berklee?

There was a tremendous positive influence from being so steeped in music. At that time, the jazz guys were starting to explore the music of other cultures. There were people experimenting with Arabic scales. That was exciting to me because it felt fresh. The school was on Newbury Street then. You'd walk up and down the alleys in the Back Bay, and from the apartment windows you'd hear people practicing. It was so rich and had a huge effect on me that hasn't gone away. Also, the Jazz Workshop [legendary jazz club] was around the corner, and I got to hear John Coltrane, Roland Kirk, and a host of people who were incredible players. The technical things that I learned at Berklee have not been a big part of what I do, but the process of learning them put me on a good track.

What did you do after leaving Berklee?

I joined a rock band back in Ottawa that was doing original material. That's when I started to think of myself as someone who wrote songs. For the rest of the '60s I was in

several bands and was writing songs for them. By the end of the sixties, out of the many songs I'd written, I had a couple dozen that really worked for me. They sounded better when I sang them alone than with the bands. I decided to go solo with just an acoustic guitar, figuring that there would be an audience for that kind of music. I recorded an album at the end of 1969 for the True North label, and it came out in 1970.

Isn't True North the only label that you have worked with?

Yes. Of course, we have had distribution deals with various labels in the States. When the first album came out, FM radio was new and very free-form. They would play whole albums on the air. A station in Toronto got my album and played it all. That was the beginning. It took a while to get the music spread around the whole country but by the end of the '70s it had happened.

It has been fortuitous for you to have wide distribution and yet be on a small label so that you can maintain creative control over what you are doing.

That was by design, but was lucky, also, because I was ignorant about how the business worked. I wanted to put these songs down on record the way that I played them. I was considering getting a classical producer or someone who would just make it sound good and not mess with the songs. A friend of mine, Eugene Martynec, ended up producing it. He knew Bernie Finkelstein, who owned True North Records, and brought him into the process. We recorded it in three days for about \$6,000. After it came out people got into it, and that was the beginning of my being able to travel around and perform the songs on a broader scale.

Who determines which songs will go on your albums, and has there always been a producer or co-producer involved?

It varies. I produced the last few albums with co-production help from Colin Linden. Before that, T-Bone Burnett produced two, and before that I worked with Canadian producers Jonathan Goldsmith and Eugene Martynec. The executive decision about what goes on the album is exclusively mine. I listen to other people's opinions though.

That's a unique situation. It's much different for artists on a major label.

I'd be very wary of signing with a major label. When True North made a distribution deal with Columbia in the States in the '90s, I was nervous because I thought they could swallow us up so easily. We built safeguards into that deal and dealt with the company in a very human fashion, and it worked out very well. I have seen some of my friends get caught in a bind by recording an album that the label doesn't like. Then the songs are tied up, so they can't go record them somewhere else and put them out. Some artists are seduced by the tour support and the advances that a big label can offer. But if their record is not a hit, they end up owing the rest of their lives to a bunch of bureaucrats. I feel lucky to have avoided that.

The fact that Bernie Finkelstein, your manager, is also the owner of your record label seems to have worked out very well.

He has allowed me to stand at arm's-length from the rest of the music business. I'm grateful for that. I wouldn't have done it any other way. When I started out it was a

different era and the vibe was different. I don't know what decision I would have to make if I were doing it now. At that time it seemed that for me to have total control was the only way that it was worth doing.

Does the inspiration for your songs come from a guitar lick, a melody, or a lyric?

It virtually always starts with lyrics. I will get musical ideas from sitting around and playing the guitar. Occasionally these ideas jell into an instrumental piece, but most often they sit there on file until there is some lyric to hang them on. The lyric side of it involves a lot of waiting for the inspiration to hit. Once there is something resembling a set of lyrics, I start looking for music that will carry it. I have compared the process to scoring a film, because the lyrics are so big a part of the song for me. You have these images, ideas, and sometimes characters that need to be supported by the music but not dominated by it. So I see it more like scoring a film than some songwriters do.

You are very adept at creating a scenario in your lyrics, giving enough information to bring the listener into a time, place, or situation, but keeping a lot of the personal meaning of the song hidden. That leaves a lot of room for interpretation of your songs.

I think people are going to interpret a song no matter how specific you make it. They will read their own things into it. The [Beatles] song "Helter Skelter" is perhaps the most horrible example of that. An important part of the exchange that happens between the listeners and me through the song is the stimulation of their imaginations. They can then bring their own experience into the song. The basic motive for me is to sound off and tell everybody how I feel. We all experience the basic elements of life, so it is often just a matter of presenting a different angle on something familiar. Each of us has the ability to offer that to each other. All of our experiences are our own even though the birth-death-infinity thing is the same for each of us. The songs are a vehicle for me to share the human experience. I don't like to impose too many preconceptions on what that is.

Are you typically revealing your own experiences in songs like "Pacing the Cage" or "Last Night of the World," or are you commenting on an issue through a character? Do you take both approaches?

Most often it is my experiences that I talk about in the songs. There are a few exceptions. The song "A Dream Like Mine" is more a character song. I was imagining myself as a native person. That is rare though. Generally, I am making lists of what I am looking at in my songs.

Has your attitude about being a spokesman through your songs changed after writing for and reaching a large audience for 30 years?

It has developed. I wasn't really conscious of any of the implications when I started out. I had seen people get up on stage and play, and that was what I wanted to do. I fell into it. With experience, you realize that when you are onstage in front of a group of people you become larger than life. What you say has the ability to influence people in some way—to horrify them, excite them, or motivate them. It's in that sharing that the truth comes out and the value of what an artist does comes out. It took me a long time to understand that. I don't like to think that I have tried to influence people toward a particular end. I

just want to tell them what I've seen and what I think about it. I just say it and they can do with it what they want. That is where I am coming from with the spiritual or so-called political stuff in my songs.

There was a period when your spiritual thoughts were very much on the surface in your music. Are spiritual matters still a big motivator for you?

Very much so. In the '70s, it was expressed in Christian terms and was more overt. Once you have said all that, you don't have to keep on saying the same thing. There are many ways to say that God is in your life or that you want God in your life. I don't feel constrained to say only that.

You like to include instrumentals on your albums. You don't often find them on a songwriter's album.

Some nonmusicians will say, "Oh, that tune is only an instrumental. Is it that way because you couldn't think of any words?" There is a resistance to accepting songs without voices or words among the public and radio. That is not a determining factor for me.

During the period that precedes the recording of an album when I am writing, some things come out as songs and some are instrumentals. Whatever I have when it is time to record goes on the album. "Mistress of Storms" was one of those that developed as an instrumental piece. As it was taking shape, I started hearing vibes on it. It was fun to think of it as a latent duet when I wrote it. It worked out very well in the studio with Gary Burton playing with me. I like the presence of instrumentals in what I do because it gives people a break from the density of the lyrics.

You started in a folk style and later incorporated jazz, blues, and world-music influences. It has become very difficult to put a stylistic label on what you do.

That is true, and it's unfortunate because the music business loves to label everything; it is part of the packaging and marketing to have a name to call it by. The record company rep goes into a station and has to give a long-winded explanation of what the musical style is instead of being able to give it a convenient label. I give everybody a hard time in that end of the business because they don't know what to call it. Radio doesn't know what to call it or where to fit me into their format. I have been treated very well by the triple-A stations in the States, though.

You were able to attract an audience with the help of radio before it became so formatted.

We all deal with whatever challenges are facing us. If I started out now, I'd be doing something, but it would be a very different scene than what I was confronted with when I started. Back then it was early FM radio and coffeehouses, where there was a sophisticated listening audience that was not drinking. That really colored my perception of what the artist/audience relationship should be. I have changed my attitude from thinking that the art was sacrosanct and that everyone had to be dead-quiet. Now my attitude when I am touring with the band is: the wilder the audience the better. The intensity of a band in a small club is great.

It is always encouraging to see artists like you who have drawn the market to themselves rather than adapting to what is happening at the moment with radio.

Once you have an audience, certain expectations are in place. The audience expects that you will always do the thing they like. But, of course, some people will expect you to introduce new things. There is pressure from the business to have one song on the record that they can send to radio. To some degree it is worth paying attention to those things so you know what is going on around you. But they should not be a determining factor; the music has to come first.

Does it work for you to write a song especially designed to get radio play?

I can't do it. There are songwriters who do that and they are very successful. Sometimes we end up really liking those songs. I can't think of a modern example, but a lot of songs that I feel nostalgic about from the '60s are like Tin Pan Alley songs. They are formula songs by people like Carole King. "Up on the Roof" and "Under the Boardwalk" are perfect examples, and they were written, presumably, with a different philosophy than I have when I write. Maybe the approach by writers in Nashville is similar. They call and make an appointment for 2:00 p.m. on Thursday to write a song with someone. Some of those songs come out well. But it's an aspect of songwriting that I have no affinity for.

Have you ever tried collaborating on songs with other writers?

Only a little bit. This year I worked with a young jazz pianist named Andy Milne. He approached me to collaborate with him on songs for his album. I was really excited about the idea. It is fun to work with somebody young and fun to expand into a medium that I haven't done anything with in a long time. Jazz is very different now. Andy doesn't do anything in 4/4 time; everything seems to be in 7 or 11 and it all grooves. The material consists of my lyrics and his music primarily. We came up with some interesting new songs and a reworking of one of my existing songs. It was a lot of fun.

Is there any particular style or genre of music that has really grabbed your attention these days?

I have been exploring electronica recently. I am not using it, but I am listening to a fair amount of it. I still find [trumpeter] Dave Douglas's albums to be great; I put them on all the time. There is a host of people doing a mix of eclectic music. I suppose I lean toward the jazzier end. But, really, I listen to all kinds of stuff.

After three decades as an influential recording and performing artist, is there anything in the road ahead that is beckoning to you?

I am just waiting to see what I do next. I had a long dry spell until a few months ago before I started writing again. That dry spell seemed to culminate in me being placed in the Canadian Hall of Fame. There was a certain irony in that. First of all, being in the Hall of Fame is kind of like being a dead guy anyways and it came at a time when I hadn't written anything in about a year. It really struck me that it was the closure of some chapter. So where do I go from here? The sensation of waiting to see what I do next is the predominant one right now.

When will you release a new album?

First there will be a so-called “greatest hits” album early in the year. Rounder Records will distribute that in the States. That will have a couple of new songs, and if all goes as planned, we’ll go into the studio in the spring to make a new album. I have songs that I know are going to be on that and some that may not make it onto the album. There will be others that I haven’t written yet.

Do you have a parting shot to give aspiring songwriter/performers out there?

Sure. It’s probably not healthy to think of it in terms of control, but placing the art first is a really important choice to make. I would encourage people to do that. Not everyone will want to or feel that they are able to do that, but the more artists we have who put the art first, the better. The ones who do are the ones that become an influence on others.

*My thanks to **Mark Small** for permission to reprint this interview here in Gavin’s Woodpile. Mark is the editor of Berklee Today, the alumni magazine for the Berklee College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts. It appeared in the Spring 2002 issue of the magazine. DK*

It’s electric - I can feel it crackling in my nails and hair

Bruce Cockburn at Celtic Connections 2002
31st January, Fruit Market, Glasgow, Scotland
by Richard Hoare

Richard excitedly hopped a plane from London and winged his way to Glasgow to catch Bruce in concert. He brought back this account for Gavin’s Woodpile...

This was Cockburn’s only UK gig this winter before playing a series of dates in North America from late February and his first full length concert in over a year anywhere in the world. Bruce had intended to take 2001 off to recharge his songwriting batteries. However he moved from living in Toronto to Montreal, compiled the singles compilation **Anything Anytime Anywhere** including recording two songs for that project, was involved in his CBC TV Life & Times show and made sporadic short set live appearances. It also transpired that he has been paying special attention to his guitar playing.

On stage Cockburn’s tech tuned two Manzer 6 string guitars and a Guild 12 string - not an instrument I had seen Bruce play before in over 20 years of attending his gigs. The atmosphere in this lofty old timber and cast iron market was charged with an enthusiastic crowd as a clean shaven Cockburn took to the stage and strapped on the older of the two Manzer 6 strings. He launched into a wonderful flurry of delayed feather-light notes up and down the scales which resolved into *A Dream Like Mine*. The sound was clear and cut the air like cheesewire. *Lovers In A Dangerous Time* followed and in both songs Cockburn’s delivery seemed to be lighter and more airy than normal. He settled into the gig with *Anything Anytime Anywhere* followed by a reinvigorated *The Trouble With*

Normal. After Cockburn finished the chunky chords of *When You Give It Away* he revealed he almost lost it while thinking of Elvis! He ran off stage to collect his notebook and read a funny Presley impersonators anecdote!

Back to the performance and Bruce played an air carving performance of *Tibetan Side Of Town* - phenomenal guitar work. The gig continued with *Tokyo*, *Pacing The Cage* and *Wondering Where The Lions Are*.

Halfway through the gig Bruce selected the 12 string guitar and fine tuned due to “the variable weather conditions in here”. He explained he was given the instrument by his girlfriend (fine artist, Sally Sweetland) who had owned it since the 70s. Cockburn played this guitar for the next three numbers starting with *My Beat*, the bicycle trip through his new patch in Montreal. The song is a magical combination of a host of influences from Bruce’s back catalogue but also sounds as fresh as a daisy. Cockburn then made some highly relevant references to September 11th for this European audience which I doubt he’ll repeat at the North American shows and treated us to a wonderful new number inspired by that terror, *Put It In Your Heart*. Bruce increased the volume of his vocal as he sang from the beginning to the end of each verse. This turned out to be the start of a run of “where the world is now” songs including *Let The Bad Air Out*, *Justice*- dusted off from 1981’s **Inner City Front** with a lyric already made for post 9/11 and *Call It Democracy*. These four tracks had a powerful affect on the concert. Cockburn then lifted the whole ambience with a judicious selection of songs to raise optimism reflecting the cherishing of life and marvelling at the good things. This atmosphere built from *Waiting For A Miracle*, through *Rumours Of Glory* where the rearrangement included layering the sound with delays, through *Last Night Of The World* to the climax of *World Of Wonders* where I felt as though I was riding on air - a magnificent adaption similar to the 1989 trio rendition.

I felt awash with oxygen as Bruce came back for encores of *All The Ways I Want You* and *Peggy’s Kitchen Wall*, topped off with a final visit to the stage for the instrumental, *Down To The Delta*, “as I’ve lost my voice.”

As I walked out into the Glasgow night I kept thinking ...it’s electric, I can feel it in my nails and hair. In case you think this is just another solo Cockburn tour let me assure you that he has raised his game yet again both in terms of playing and delivery. Not many people on this planet who started solo over 30 years ago are capable of achieving such a subtle and effective rejuvenation.

CORRECTIONS

The Winnipeg date should have been **March 31**, not March 30.

The May 18 benefit concert for the Bill Reid Foundation in Vancouver is called **The Spirit Concert**.

OTHER

The catalogue number of the True North release of Anything Anytime Anywhere is TND 267.

The Story Of Bruce Cockburn will air on Canada's Much More Music channel on April 10 & 11. This is not the Life & Times program that aired on the CBC in November, 2001.

My Beat: The Life & Times of Bruce Cockburn, is now available on video:

Kensington Communications
451 Adelaide St. West
Toronto, Ontario M5V 1T1

In Canada the cost is \$35 Canadian plus tax. In the U.S. the cost is \$30 U.S. These prices include postage. Checks payable to Kensington Communications. No credit card orders.

Concert Dates

May 10	Toronto, ON	Convocation Hall
May 14	Ottawa, ON	The Tulip Festival
May 18	Vancouver, BC	The Chan Centre*
June 29	Laytonville, CA	Kate Wolf Festival
July 5	Portland, OR	Oregon Zoo Amphitheatre**
July 6	Courtenay, BC	Vancouver Island Musicfest

* The Spirit Concert for the Bill Reid Foundation

** with Shawn Colvin

Issue Number 51

June 2002

In The Groove With Andy Milne

Daniel Keebler

On December 4, 2001, I spoke with Andy from his home in New York State. He had recently completed a recording project that included collaborating with Bruce Cockburn. Andy was born in Hamilton, Ontario. He moved to New York in 1991. Some of his musical influences include Thelonius Monk, Art Tatum, Herbie Nichols, Bela Bartok, Joni Mitchell and Stevie Wonder. -DK

When did you first become aware of Bruce's work?

I guess I first became aware of his music around the time I started high school. That's when I kind of remember hearing about him. I think it was one record my sister had and also just people I went to school with that were into Bruce's music. This is like the early '80s.

When did you actually meet him for the first time?

That was *recently*. Just last year. March of 2000, I guess. It still amazes me the ease with which this came together. A friend of mine always remarked, like when I first met her – I think *Breakfast In New Orleans* had just come out – I was playing that for her and she was like “Yeah, this is some interesting music. I like this. What's this guy's name?” And I say “It's this cat from Canada, Bruce Cockburn.” For people who know me they listen to that and think “Wow it's different.” They just assume jazz musicians sort of only listen to jazz or whatever, so they think “That's a different kind of music you're into. I like this guys voice,” or whatever. I've been a big fan of his for a long time, since I was in high school. I just dig different things about what he does or what he says. I always wanted to collaborate with him sometime.

She just laughed. She said “Man, I remember just the other day you were saying how you'd like to get the chance to collaborate with this guy – and now you guys are doing your record.” I realized it was deep. It wasn't like I was talking about it for years and years and years. It was like there was a certain point where I said I wanted to do this and cosmically things just ended up working where we got to hook up, and he was interested and schedules were going to accommodate it – and it happened. Often that just doesn't happen. You might have an *idea* about something you want to pursue creatively and you might not be able to fulfill it for a *number* of reasons. I was so surprised, really. I'm not saying surprised in *Bruce*, but just surprised in the universe I guess.

How did you guys come to work together on this particular project?

Basically I just asked him. I was introduced to him through Hugh Marsh, essentially. Hugh I had never met before either, but he was very familiar with the work I've done. The bass player in my band [Rich Brown] lives in Toronto. Rich knows a lot of cats in Toronto... because Rich is in the band and also just because of the work I've done, and because I grew up in Toronto... a lot of people in the jazz scene are familiar with me and see me play up there and know my work, so Hugh was very familiar with what I do. I think I'd been asking [Rich] “Do you have any connections... any way I could hook up with Cockburn?” He mentioned playing with somebody in some band that knew so-and-so who used to play with Bruce or knows him real well. I don't think he'd mentioned any names at that point. He said he would let me know in a couple of weeks. Then he said he was talking to Hugh Marsh and that they were going to be playing in New York soon. I said “Do you think you could get me in the show and I could lay a few CDs on Bruce and rap to him a quick second?” It's very strange how it worked out. They were playing Town Hall. It was like really short notice and I got tickets to the show. I went to the

show, went backstage, rapped with the guys in the band because I sort of know them through all these other Toronto connections. Then Bruce came back and I just introduced myself and told him I'd like to work with him. I gave him a couple of CDs and went on my way.

When you met him there at the theatre did he commit to a project then or did he get back with you later?

He said he would check it out. Subsequently I had to be in Toronto not long after that and I met Hugh. When I talked to him he was like "Yeah, I'll call Bruce and tell him he should definitely go for it." Hugh just told me how open Bruce is to a lot of different things and that he really wanted to try different stuff. Essentially, that was just very encouraging. Bruce called me and said he had a chance to check my stuff out and really liked it and would love to get a chance to collaborate with me. We talked and it was just pretty easy-going from that point forward in terms of us getting together and talking about creative ideas. That was way before we set any dates for recording... we just started working on music together. At that point we were both into it and that was that... which was really quite a short window from the time I met him. I think the first time we hooked up and started working on things creatively was like maybe two and a half months after we met.

Did you guys hook up in New York or Toronto and write things together? How did that work out?

We didn't do it in New York. We did it in Toronto mostly, and once in New Hampshire and Montreal.

How many songs will be on the CD when it is done?

Three.

Were they all co-written with Bruce?

The two songs that we wrote were co-written by Bruce and I. Kokayi, rapper lyricist in my group, also wrote a couple of verses in one of those songs. The other song was a re-working I did of one of Bruce's tunes [Let The Bad Air Out].

How did you come about selecting that song?

Actually, it was my idea. The harmonica player in my band, Gregoire Mare... [interrupts self] See, no one in my band had ever heard of Bruce before. For them it was like "What the Hell are you doing? Who is this cat, man? Nobody could really get at what my vision was about this, initially. They weren't necessarily being rude. They weren't saying "Man you're crazy. I don't understand. Who's this cat? We have a band. We've got our own thing. We don't need this guy." No one was getting off like that, but certainly it was an

interesting process where people came to understand what I was trying to get at with this collaboration.

I think I was just playing some rough recordings of Bruce and I working out a couple of these songs we had written to Gregoire. I guess he was a little discouraged trying to figure out where I was going to go with all this. He understands what the band sounds like and he's imagining "Okay, how are you going to fit all this together? I don't know if I really get this." Which is important because you need that support. At different times I played a couple of different recordings of Bruce's for different people in the band while we were on the road. I remember laying stuff on Kokayi a long time ago. He was immediately taken by Bruce's writing, because he's a real word-man. So obviously somebody else who is a word-man is going to be interested on a different level than another guy who is a note-man who would be impressed with some Coltrane-type shit. You don't hear that in Bruce's music so if you're that kind of person you might not necessarily get drawn to it immediately. So, the rapper was obviously the first cat to say "Wow!" The other vocalist who sings in the band [Vinia Mojia], she really liked it. The musician cats they were like taking a second to get where I was coming from.

I assume through the recording process everybody realized that Bruce can play the guitar a little bit.

[Laughter] Oh, yeah. The bass player, because he's from Toronto and he knew what Bruce was all about, he wasn't trippin'. He was in on it from the get-go because he was the connection for hooking up with Bruce in the first place. The drummer and the harmonica player—they didn't know anything about Bruce. They were like "I'm going to *trust* you, but help me out." [Laughter]

So, Gregoire was over at my house and I said "Let me just play you a couple of this cat's recordings, man." We were scanning through that CD [Breakfast In New Orleans Dinner In Timbuktu] and we got to that tune and it was like "Man I like this tune. Why don't you do something with this tune?" At that time I was trying to do all original material that Bruce and I had written. We weren't able to get together every week and work on music. We got two tunes out of everything we played around with. It's not like we had four or five. So, I guess I was really looking for something else to record with Bruce and that's how the Bad Air thing ended up coming to life. Essentially it's just a matter of me saying, "What do I like about this tune? How would I play it?" Then attacking and arranging it. I did that and Kokayi wrote a couple of verses. For me the whole point of really having him on the record was not just because I like Bruce, and he's a fabulous lyricist and everything, it was more I liked the idea of pairing together two different poetic oral traditions. To me Bruce represents one and Kokayi, coming from a Hip-Hop background, represents another one. I just wanted to put them together. Kokayi, the rapper, he liked the tune anyway. He could have free-styled if he wanted too, basically, and been able to say something in the theme of the song but he just chose to write stuff.

I know Bruce contributed to the CD vocally. Did he also play guitar as well?

A little bit. He would have played more. It was a big leap for him musically just because of the way we structure our music. It was a lot of rehearsal time and him really getting focused and hearing all the parts and trying to get used to how we phrase things. One particular tune that he played more guitar on, Trickle Down, would have needed a lot more time. So he played a *little bit* of guitar on *one song* and then played guitar on Bad Air. Even though we switched up a lot of things rhythmically there was enough that was constant in terms of how he relates to the sound. I purposefully did it in a way that it wasn't so off-the-wall... we talked about it. It was like "If you go crazy and do some really far out rhythmic shit, I'll be trying to figure out where to catch a groove with it."

Do you know what the running time of this CD might be [Let The Bad Air Out, Trickle Down, Everywhere Dance]?

Probably somewhere between 55 and 60 minutes.

Did you collaborate with Bruce on Trickle Down and Everywhere Dance as well?

Yes, especially Everywhere Dance. We both had a hand in every aspect of the song. On Trickle Down I more or less dealt with the musical material and he dealt with the lyrical material. We went back and forth and discussed different aspects of the tune, making suggestions and contributions.

The scenario would be you sitting there with your keyboard and Bruce with his guitar and you would work on the songs.

Just sitting there with the keyboard and the guitar and working it out. That song went through a major, major, *major* transformation. When I finished things I sent him a tape to check it out, and I realized I didn't like it. A song like this needs to have a melody that connects with the lyrics better. It has to *be* about the lyrics, almost. So, we just started the song over from scratch. It was one long, long day of laboring right through it. I was very happy with the result.

Was all the recording done in New York?

All the recording I did with Bruce was, yes.

You're mixing it there as well?

No, actually I'm mixing it in Annapolis, Maryland.

Is that at Sean Rickman's place?

Sean's actually producing it with me. It's not his studio, but it's a friend's of both of us who has a place in Annapolis.

Did all the members of Cosmic Dapp Theory participate in the project?

Yes, the whole band. Plus there are additional people I brought for certain tunes to contribute things that we needed. But at the core it's still a Cosmic Dapp Theory record, essentially. I guess you could say it's a Cosmic Dapp Theory record featuring Bruce Cockburn. Still, the way the record is going to sound he's going to fit into what we do... and yes, you're going to recognize him as Bruce Cockburn, but the goal is to still have it sound like a band.

Reflecting back, how was the experience for you to include Bruce in the project?

It was real a honor because I know he's not someone who does *a lot* of collaborations with people in this regard. It was something I'd always wanted to do in the back of my mind. I remember seeing Bruce when I was in high school... going to Massey Hall and having a lot of respect for him. I write *some* lyrics, but not extensively. When I do and I struggle over what I'm trying to say, I just marvel over people like him who say it so well. You get to the point where you wish you could write as well as this person can write. You respect someone who does something that *you* don't do, but somebody might respect *me* for something that *I* do because they don't do that. For me, being able to do this with Bruce, was a real learning experience. For both of us it was strange because most of the time neither of us works with someone else in this regard. It was real a stretch to get going because we didn't really have an M.O. in which to formulate our ideas. The first time we got together we were just kinda sitting there going off on tangents all the time, developing our friendship and talking about whatever. Very little music was getting created [laughter]... in terms of actual notes and words, but I think music was getting created just because we were developing our repertoire. I think that ultimately contributed to our ability to come together and work as a team. I was very happy to be able to do this and it still freaks me out that we were able to do it as easily as we did, really. There were a lot of obstacles... geography being major. I think we made it work.

At the time of this interview Andy was hoping to have the CD released by the Summer of 2002. When this issue went to print he was still looking for a label. Stay tuned... -DK

Re-issues

This summer **Rounder Records** will begin re-issuing part of the Bruce Cockburn catalogue. Below are the first six CDs to be re-issued. All will contain bonus tracks and will be digitally remastered (24bit). The artwork and liner notes will also be enhanced.

In The Falling Dark (1976)

Bonus Tracks: Red Brother Red Sister, Untitled Guitar, Shepherds, Dweller By A Dark Stream

Further Adventures Of (1978)

Bonus Track: Mountain Call

Dancing In The Dragon's Jaws (1979)

Bonus Tracks: Dawn Music, Bye Bye Idi

Inner City Front (1981)

Bonus Tracks: The Coldest Night Of The Year, The Light Goes On Forever

The Trouble With Normal (1983)

Bonus Tracks: Cala Luna, I Wanna Dance With You

Bruce Cockburn—Live (1990)

Bonus Track: If I Had A Rocket Launcher

The Full Re-issue List

Bruce Cockburn, High Winds White Sky, Sunwheel Dance, Night Vision, Salt, Sun & Time, Joy Will Find A Way, In The Falling Dark, Circles In The Stream, Further Adventures Of, Dancing In The Dragon's Jaws, Humans, Inner City Front, The Trouble With Normal, Stealing Fire, World Of Wonders, Big Circumstance, Bruce Cockburn—Live.

Watch for more information regarding the remainder of the re-issues.

Tour Dates - Summer 2002

June 4	Toronto, Ontario	Phoenix
June 29	Laytonville, California	Kate Wolf Festival
July 1	Reno, Nevada	Hawkins Amphitheatre
July 3	Bend, Oregon	Athletic Club Of Bend
July 5	Portland, Oregon	Oregon Zoo Amphitheatre*
July 6	Courtenay, British Columbia	Vancouver Island Musicfest
July 7	Vancouver, British Columbia	Malkin Bowl
August 4	Newport, Rhode Island	Newport Folk Festival
August 10	Hamilton, Ontario	Festival Of Friends
August 18	Owen Sound, Ontario	Summerfolk Music Festival
August 23	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	Philadelphia Folk Festival

* With Shawn Colvin

Come & Gone: Bruce played Club Soda in Montreal on April 27, 2002.

Bruce did not play the **Tulip Festival** in Ottawa on May 14, as the event was cancelled secondary to poor weather.

Issue Number 52

August 2002

Bruce Cockburn's Remarkable Teachers

The following was published by the Ontario College of Teachers in March 2002.

Bruce Cockburn remembers his years in Broadview Public School in Ottawa with pleasure, easily recalling a number of teachers whom he admired and liked for the enjoyment they seemed to feel in being in the classroom and teaching children.

Ruth Sutherland was his teacher in Grades 3 and 4. What stands out in his mind is not any particular subject she taught but the energy she brought to the classroom. "She inspired affection and enthusiasm for learning. She was excited about life," he says, and her engagement in what she was doing generated a zest for learning in her students.

A later teacher he remembers with affection – and the only one he met again once he had become a successful musician – was **Trudy Janowski**, his French teacher in secondary school.

"Mademoiselle Janowski was one of the best teachers I ever had," he remembers. "She treated us with respect and as if we were smart. That really made a difference."

In those days, Cockburn feels, the education system expected students to learn and wanted them to learn. Students got a more complete education and "there seemed to be more room to learn and grow. I suspect it's not the same now."

Cockburn later met Trudy Janowski again when he performed at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa. The former French teacher was by that time married to Hugh La Caine, the inventor of the first electronic synthesizer, and involved in Centre events. She reminded Cockburn of their past history.

"She said she had always thought I would amount to something because of the suspicious way I looked at everything," he recalls.

“I liked all of my public school teachers,” Cockburn says, but adds that **Elsie Beauchamp** “scared me to death.”

Elsie Beauchamp (pronounced Beecham) taught Grade 5 at Broadview in 1955, when Cockburn was 10 years old. “She was a strict disciplinarian and I didn’t appreciate the style,” he recalls.

He did appreciate her interest in history, which he shared. “Miss Beauchamp had a sense of the meaning of history. It wasn’t just a collection of dates we had to learn. She had a passion for the events of history.”

Elsie Beauchamp also pushed Cockburn into auditioning for the school choir, although he didn’t want to do it. During the tryouts, she and another teacher moved from student to student to listen closely to their singing voices. “I avoided getting chosen by pretending to sing really off key,” he recalls.

Today he thinks she was the first to introduce him to the idea of political activism.

It was the McCarthy era and Cockburn remembers Elsie Beauchamp talking about singer and peace activist Pete Seeger. Seeger was forced to appear before the U.S. House Un-American Activities Committee at that time but refused to answer questions about his political views or name associates, arguing that it violated his First Amendment rights.

Cockburn thinks that raising these issues in school was a courageous thing for a teacher to do. Red-baiting was not as rampant in Canada as it was in the United States, but the influence of McCarthyism was enough that activist sympathies were often viewed as a dangerous challenge to social peace and political stability.

That wasn’t the only discussion in Elsie Beauchamp’s class that stuck in Cockburn’s mind. In connection with some news item about Turkish political turmoil, she asked her students if they knew what the term ‘radical’ meant. They didn’t, of course, and she explained it to them. Cockburn can’t remember the language she used so long ago but he does remember the sense of her explanation – that a radical is someone whose conscience requires that they not accept the status quo without question, and that they work to change things that aren’t right.

Cockburn’s own social conscience and interest in world events began to surface in the late 1970s with *Wondering Where the Lions Are* and it motivated him to write some of his best-known songs, many of which appear on his newest album *Anything Anytime Anywhere* along with two new compositions.

Cockburn went on to become closely linked with social causes such as environmental preservation and political activism around struggles for democratic freedoms in Latin America and Southern Africa. “I never felt there was a direct influence. But obviously it had some effect. Everything that happens to you at that time influences what you become and school is a big part of your life so it clearly affects what you do.”

If the seed was planted in those early years, what caused it to blossom years after he left university? There were three catalysts, one being the birth of his daughter. “Like everyone else, becoming a parent made me look around at the kind of world I had brought a child into.” The second was travel – he began seeing what was happening in other parts of the world. The third was his brother Don Cockburn’s involvement in the political upheaval in El Salvador.

“My brother was always trying to get me interested in what was happening there and I became curious about what a revolution like that looked like up close since it didn’t seem to be what I would have expected.”

Cockburn has heard from teachers in Ontario who now include his work – particularly the words to his songs – in the classroom. He finds it flattering but can’t help feeling they should be studying someone like T. S. Eliot, he says.

News From True North

Toronto, ON— On July 1, 2002, Global television aired *Canada’s Walk of Fame*, featuring the Canadians who were inducted into the Canadian Walk of Fame on May 28, 2002. Among those honoured was Canadian painter **Alex Colville**, whose “Horse and Train” was featured on Bruce Cockburn’s 1973 release, *Night Vision*. In celebration of his induction, Cockburn performed a beautiful instrumental, which he composed as a tribute to Colville’s induction.

True North announces the launch of their own website, scheduled to be online on August 6, 2002. Find it at www.truenorthrecords.com or [.ca](http://www.truenorthrecords.ca). In the very near future expect to see a website specifically for Bruce Cockburn. The links will be found at the Woodpile’s website when they are available. -DK

G8 Press Conference

Bruce gave the following speech at a press conference in Ottawa on June 21, 2002. The introduction was written for Gavin’s Woodpile by Steven Livingston, Chairman of the Political Science Department at George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

The members of the Group of Seven (G-7) are Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States. Together, the G-7 account for approximately two-thirds of global economic output. The first meeting of the world’s top six economies took place in 1975. The following year, Canada joined the group. Since 1997, the standard reference has been to the Group of Eight (G-8), which comprises the G-7 nations plus Russia. Russia does not participate in financial and economic discussions, which continue to be conducted by the G-7. G-7 ministers meet four times a year to review developments in their economies and the world economy and to develop common

approaches on international economic and financial policy issues. Among the issues dealt with by the G-8 ministers are those concerning labor and the environment. Since the annual Summits began in 1975, they have served as a forum for the heads of state or government of the leading democracies to seek consensus on ways to address the major economic and political issues facing their nations and the international community. When the Summits began in 1975, the main focus was economic and financial issues -- macroeconomic management, international trade, international financial institutions and relations with developing countries. From this initial foundation, the Summit's economic agenda has expanded considerably to include microeconomic issues ranging from employment to electronic commerce. While the early Summits issued some statements on political issues, this focus has become much broader. The group's foreign ministers, like the finance ministers, meet prior to the Summit and issue statements and reports covering issues that range from terrorism to financial crime, nuclear safety and security, non-proliferation, human rights, arms control and regional security. Bilateral meetings among the different leaders are also an important feature of the Summit gatherings.

This summary is adapted from the U.S. Department of State's Office of International Information Programs.

Bruce:

I'm here as a concerned citizen, to lend my support to what I believe is a vital exercise of the democratic right of dissent. The silencing of dissent by various means - the attempted elimination of one whole side of the globalization debate is, to me, a worrisome sign of worse to come. I've done a fair amount of travelling in "developing" countries, much of it related to the work of various charitable organizations. I've seen what the kind of top-down aid advocated by the G8 has done to people. It doesn't look like development to me. The current fashion in the corridors of power, of reducing everything to the terms of the marketplace, is heart breaking for the poor of the world, for those of us committed to seeking something like justice in human affairs, for those of us concerned about the environment that gives us life. And for those of us who grew up in a Canada where freedom was a cherished value - where a government which was accountable provided some of the necessities of life for those in need. When a nation's government hands over the reins of all its functions to the private sector, what's left for it to run except the army and the police? I worry that the Canada I learned to love growing up will not be what my grandchildren, if I have them, are going to encounter.

There are other ways of doing things, and we must encourage our leaders to find those ways and pursue them. Otherwise we can look forward to a mobius strip of more inequity, more anger, more violence, more erosion of our civil liberties in the name of security, more anger, more violence...

Face it - the G8 leaders are facilitating the degradation of my country and my planet. I have to protest this!

So - I've taken a small role in the upcoming events in Calgary. Our plans for the week of the Kananaskis conference include a day-long teach-in, and a concert on the 26th

featuring Chris Brown and Kate Fenner, myself, and other artists. We'll be offering people a non-violent, informative option, which I think is going to be a lot of fun.

Globalization as currently understood is, to me, an evil thing - but that's not to suggest that all global connections are bad. There's so much we can all share to our mutual benefit. One important thing I learned in the early '80s hanging with dissidents in Pinochet's Chile, where dissent really meant risking your life, is that when you resist evil you are in fact celebrating life, and it's okay to have a good time!

Fields Of Motion Surging Outward

Creation Dream - the songs of Bruce Cockburn
Michael Occhipinti
True North TND 216/Rounder TNOR216
Single CD 71.48 mins
First released: September 2000

Review by Richard Hoare

There have been many cover versions of Cockburn's song catalogue but few artists have produced more than watered down copies which do not bear repeated listening. This project is different on several levels. Michael Occhipinti is a respected jazz guitarist who has assembled a group of musicians who do justice to the material. Bruce was sufficiently impressed with the project to provide acoustic guitar to one track. Cockburn connections include Hugh Marsh on violin who has played with Bruce on and off since the late 70s. Additionally Jon Goldsmith is the producer and contributes piano. Goldsmith (together with Kerry Crawford) took Bruce's record production to a new level in the 80s starting with *Stealing Fire* and became Cockburn's studio keyboard player for several albums. This is Occhipinti's third album and he worked this material up at his regular appearances at Toronto's Rex Jazz Bar. Michael is also the co-founder of NOJO, the Neufeld-Occhipinti Jazz Orchestra, a group of 16 improving musicians who have albums out in their own right.

Occhipinti anchors the sound with the bass of Andrew Downing and switches between drummers Barry Romberg and Jean Martin (dispensing with drums altogether on two tracks). The sound is augmented with the clarinet of Don Byron and the trumpet of Kevin Turcotte, sounding to me in places like Dave Douglas, a huge Cockburn favourite.

Michael has chosen to make an instrumental album and deconstruct the music with amazing and radical results. He still retains Cockburn's musical figures, which re-appear in a number of unexpected guises. The songs Occhipinti has chosen to interpret cover the twenty-year period from *In The Falling Dark* (1976) up to *The Charity Of Night* (1996).

1. Lovers In A Dangerous Time

The floating arrangement feels its way with the trumpet of Kevin Turcotte and Occhipinti's acoustic guitar. Kevin develops a solo, which gives way to light drums, and a solo from Michael. Trumpet and drums step up a gear and canter to a bass fade.

2. Mistress Of Storms

Originally an instrumental workout between Bruce on acoustic guitar and Gary Burton on vibes. This arrangement takes off at a faster pace and provides a vehicle for Kevin's trumpet and Don Byron who runs with his clarinet, twisting and turning at full tilt. Later Kevin and Don duel it out with short bursts before the music slows. Bass and drums float up and down in the mix.

3. Live On My Mind

The original languid feel is maintained with brushes, drums, and guitar harmonics before Kevin's beautiful trumpet floats in over a walking bass. Turcotte opens out the melody over subtle drums and ducks and dives sedately, exploring the figure. Some six minutes in Michael takes up the melody on electric guitar and he and Kevin play the tune out.

4. Wondering Where The Lions Are (Giftbearer)

This workout combines Bruce's Top 40 hit and his instrumental from *In the Falling Dark*, which always reminds me of the Codona band on ECM. This arrangement with an exquisite bed of percussive drumming is a wonderful landscape for Hugh Marsh's violin exploration. Half way through Michael takes up the theme on electric guitar and loops for his first real extended workout on this disc. Hugh comes back in and picks up the tune before faint tendrils of violin and guitar harmonics fade out on a bed of drums.

5. Pacing The Cage

Bruce provides the bedrock of acoustic guitar while Michael's electric guitar through a chorus surveys the bleached-out land with a delicate re-interpretation. The only other instrument on this track, Andrew's bass is also given solo reign to great effect. Bruce stretches out on acoustic before Occhipinti comes back in on electric. This is a very intimate arrangement.

6. Creation Dream

This tune is turned on its head trading Cockburn's acoustic guitar for a power trio arrangement. Michael's electric guitar with a controlled Hendrix-like tone circa '67 bursts forth. Bass and drums canter along as Occhipinti rings out a solo. Andrew's bass takes the lead and Michael provides harmonic fills.

7. One Of The Best Ones

Goldsmith plays sparse piano figures while Michael picks the melody on guitar backed with Romberg's light drumming & brushes. Jon develops the part with tumbling notes and Occhipinti opens up the electric guitar improvisation. A beautiful piece.

8. Rumours Of Glory

The wonderful bass clarinet of Don Byron provides a rasping beauty while Occhipinti's electric guitar takes on that Hendrix sound again. The familiar melody fades to a free-

form jam on both instruments returning to the melody before taking another left turn. The clarinet gains momentum and spars with the flanged guitar never losing the theme.

9. Homme Brulant

Only ever released as a live track by Bruce with the best jazz guitar solo of *Circles In The Stream*, this tune seemed an obvious one for Michael to tackle. Occhipinti takes this tune apart and reconstructs a piece for guitar and violin. This is one of the album's more abstract pieces but with many of Hugh's familiar sounds. Five minutes in the original tune floats off the violin strings.

10. If I Had A Rocket Launcher

Rattling percussion wakes the tune, which gives way to Don Byron's beautiful soulful bass clarinet moving around the melody, which develops into a squawking delight. This is matched by the combination of tuned percussion from Michael Occhipinti and Jon Goldsmith.

11. Lord Of The Starfields

Deep space is conjured up with the slowly expanding licks of guitar, violin and the tenor saxophone of Mike Murley, his only appearance. The melody is stretched out to almost unrecognisable lengths with these three instruments providing a delicate weaving interplay, which fades to silence.

I can return to this CD to time and again and discover nuances that I haven't heard before.

The package is a delight. A Man Called Wrycraft has fashioned a tip of the hat tribute to the German jazz label ECM with the artwork for the booklet, inlay card and disc - the cover seemingly the sea from the lyrics to *Creation Dream*. The sleeve notes by Ross Porter, who contributes to a variety of Canadian music media, set the scene and he makes two comments, which particularly resonate with me. Ross writes "Bruce has had a long career and there are not many artists with so many CD's who are still growing." I listen to a wide variety of music and this is exactly why, in my opinion, Cockburn stands head and shoulders above many other artists. Porter continues, "Bruce's sensitivity to jazz can be traced back to the 60's when he studied jazz composition at Boston's Berklee College of Music." Cockburn rediscovered jazz at the time of the album *Joy Will Find A Way* (1975) and it has and continues to inform his composition and playing for the better in so many ways.

If you have passed this by because other Cockburn covers haven't been very exciting or you don't think you can handle jazz, put your prejudices to one side and check this out. I am sure most of you will find this a wonderful addition to the Bruce Cockburn dimension.

Richard Hoare
©cala luna 2002

Tour Dates Added Since Last Issue

July 24	Milwaukee, Wisconsin	The Pabst Theatre
July 25	Chicago, Illinois	The Navy Pier
August 2	Portland, Maine	Merrill Auditorium

Magazine Issues Worth Having

Bruce is currently on the cover of two well-respected music publications. The Summer 2002 issue of *Sing Out!* (Vol. 46, No. 2) contains an eight-page article plus two pages devoted to the song, The Mines of Mozambique, which includes chords and musical notes. Also included are a discography and photos from the 1980s and the present.

The second article is in *Dirty Linen* (#101—August/September 2002). This issue contains a five-page article that includes a selected discography and a number of photos. From Paul Hartman, editor and publisher of Dirty Linen: We will have single copies for sale for \$4.50 plus postage (\$2.00 in U.S., \$3.00 Canada, \$8.00 elsewhere). All prices are in U.S. dollars. They can be ordered via our website, phone, fax, and snail-mail. Check the “Back Issues” page of our website www.dirtylinen.com. Phone: 410-583-7973 Fax: 410-337-6735 By Mail: P.O. Box 66600, Baltimore, MD, 21239.

Issue Number 53 October 2002

Cockburn’s Musical Odyssey by Mark McNeil

The following was published in the Hamilton Spectator on August 7, 2002, regarding Bruce’s appearance at the Festival of Friends in Hamilton, Ontario on August 10.

*We all must leave but it’s not the end
We’ll meet again at the festival of friends.*

– Festival of Friends (1975), by Bruce Cockburn.

The early ‘70s were the folkier of times in Ottawa and Bruce Cockburn was the king of a long list of torn-jean singer-songwriters who carried the music of the day.

He could play the guitar better than the rest and his songs sparkled with fresh imagery and unusual chords he learned at the Berklee College of Music in Boston.

Cockburn – who was born in Ottawa in 1945 and lived in nearby Burritt's Rapids through the '70s – would often perform for various causes around the city. I remember one evening he found himself beneath a Beluga-sized whale made of papier maché suspended from the ceiling of a small auditorium.

It was a Save the Whale benefit and the organizers didn't want anyone to forget the reason for the event.

But by the time Cockburn's turn had come, the beast had slipped in its wires.

It was quite a sight: The star of the evening in Going to the Country boots, round spectacles, a toothy grin and a paper whale bouncing off the top of his head as he played. Cockburn, 57, who headlines the Festival of Friends at Gage Park Saturday with a 10 p.m. show, has come a long way from those kind of performances three decades ago. He has had one of the most fascinating and prolific careers in Canadian music.

He's released 27 albums, 20 of which have gone gold or platinum in Canada. He's received nearly a dozen Junos, as well as numerous other awards and citations from Canada and around the world. Last year was inducted into the Canadian Music Hall of Fame.

He's a musician's musician who knows his way around folk, blues, jazz, rock and world music. But he can also write popular hooks that sell large numbers of records and fill seats in large concert halls.

He's a Christian social activist who frequently rails against corporate greed, polluters, landmines and Central American dictators.

But sometimes religion and politics collide. Religious groups have accused him of supporting "Godless communists" because of his criticism of the government in Guatemala.

His pacifist Christian fans had particular problems with his song, If I had a Rocket Launcher.

And while he tends toward the left on most issues, he has problems with government controls on gun owners. He has an extensive weapons collection himself, and feels that guns shouldn't only be in the hands of the police officers and soldiers.

He also has a curious relationship with technology. He comes across as a modern troubadour who is comfortable with new musical developments. Listen to the weird guitar effects on If a Tree Falls. Yet he doesn't own a computer and, he says, he's only been on the Internet a couple of times.

So where did this strange bird come from?

Cockburn was the son of a physician, and grew up in a comfortable family. But rather than take an interest in science, he discovered Elvis Presley, rock 'n' roll and the guitar.

By the time he was in his late teens, his parents became concerned with their son's musical passions. They wanted him to go to university to make something of himself. He wanted to play music. Eventually, a compromise was struck and Cockburn ended up at Berklee in 1964, to study jazz.

But two years later he dropped out and came back to Ottawa to play in various rock groups including The Children, The Esquires and Three's a Crowd. Bandmates at various times included Sneezey Waters and David Wiffen (both of whom have played the Festival of Friends on numerous occasions).

But after a successful appearance at Mariposa Festival in 1967 he decided to focus on a solo career.

His first album in 1970 extolled the virtues of rural life, simplicity and musical friends. It was sentimental and quirky and showed a songwriter who was still finding his voice.

But he evolved with each new release and his lyrics explored more deeply into love, life and faith.

His fourth album, Salt, Sun and Time was inspired by Gypsy jazz guitarist Django Reinhardt and it marked the point where he says he became a Christian. He dabbled before, but by this point he was certain.

The next album Joy Will Find A Way, released in 1975, featured East Indian sounds. But that was just a one-album kick.

A few albums later, his 1979 release, Dancing in Dragon's Jaws, contained his most successful song, Wondering Where the Lions Are. It reached the top 25 on the Billboard charts, and was a major breakthrough in the United States, a country that had ignored him up until then.

But by the early '80s, singer-songwriters were going extinct on the pop charts. Bands were in. He temporarily tossed his acoustic guitar and went electric with a new sound and a touring rock band.

Later, he travelled extensively through the developing world where his interest in world music was heightened and his songs became more political.

But by the 1990s, his persona was changing again. His songwriting was becoming more inward looking like it was when he started out, although it was more sophisticated. He

tried some new twists such as putting out a Christmas album and even showing some humour by recording Monty Python's Always Look at the Bright Side of Life on a live album.

But while he has put out nine albums since 1990, they didn't receive much airplay in his native country.

Now, two years into a new century, his name remains well known in Canada – from the strength of his previous work and continued television appearances – but few Canadians could hum a recent song.

According to his long-time manager Bernie Finkelstein, Cockburn is more successful in the United States these days.

“Bruce is not only popular in the U.S., his popularity is based on his new music,” he said. “So his audience is younger in the U.S. and his songs get a lot more airplay.”

In the United States, a large number of radio stations are formatted Triple A (Adult Album Alternative) and Cockburn's new music fits into the category.

Whereas in Canada, there is no similar rating and Cockburn's recent music usually gets overlooked.

“It's a sad commentary that Canadian radio is so conservative, so commercial and so up the centre,” says Finkelstein.

A recent deal between Cockburn's Toronto-based label True North and Rounder Records in the U.S. will see most or all of his music catalogue re-released.

The re-mastered CDs will appear in both the U.S. and Canada and will include additional songs that were discarded because of time limits on 33 rpm records.

The first six CDs are scheduled to be released in October. Also as part of that deal, a compilation CD called Anything Anytime Anywhere was released earlier this year.

It features singles from 1979 onward with a couple of new cuts tossed in: My Beat is a finely-crafted collection of observations while taking bicycle journey through a bleak section of Montreal. He moved there last year from Toronto. And the '50s sounding title track is a delightful love song that features the Gospel group Fairfield Four.

Cockburn says putting the compilation album and the re-releases together “was like looking through an old photo album. It brought back all kinds of memories.”

Asked what he sees when he looks back on his career, he said: “One simple way of dividing it would be into relationships, which I don't want to go into any great detail about... but I've had a number of relationships and those have been defining elements of

my life when they have been in progress and have in some cases been reflected in the songs.”

Speaking by phone from his Montreal home, he says, “The other way is to break it down in terms of travel. The ‘70s was characterized for the most part by travel across Canada and lots of it, especially the early part of the decade by road primarily.

“Later other countries showed up on my map. I toured outside of Canada and travelled for other reasons, doing development-related travel which was responsible for a great opening of my eyes and has reflected itself in an awful lot of songs over the years.”

The most abrupt change in his music took place in 1980 to ‘81 and was reflected in the albums *Humans* and *Inner City Front*.

“That was definitely a change from resisting urban life to embracing it which is the biggest influence on that record (*Humans*). Getting divorced was another big one.” It was during this time that he moved from the Ottawa area to Toronto.

“The entire ‘70s I was married and that ended at the end of the ‘70s and my life took a very different turn after that. It continues to move. There is movement all around all the time.”

But he says his process for writing songs has not changed much other than he is “fussier than I used to be. It takes longer to write a song because I don’t just write the first thing that comes into my head. There is a lot more editing and revision that goes into it then there used to be.

“I wait for the idea to come and then I wrestle with it until it starts to sound like a song. Then I just play it and play it until it sticks in my head and then I keep working on it until I am happy with it.

“The words go in my notebook of course. I’ve tried recording things at that early stage but I find it is more trouble than it’s worth.”

Interestingly, he wrote a song in 1975 called the *Festival of Friends* that appeared on the album *In the Falling Dark*.

Only it wasn’t about the music festival in Hamilton. The *Festival of Friends* didn’t exist yet. In the song the festival refers to heaven.

He wrote the piece for a couple who lost their child from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

“As far as I know the festival name was taken from my song to give a title to the festival... the festival did not exist when I wrote the song. But it did soon after the song came. So I assume there is a connection but no one ever actually fessed up to that.”

(Festival founder Bill Powell says the name was one of a number suggested by members of a committee that was overseeing the first festival, and he figures whoever came up with it was inspired by the song.)

Cockburn has been very popular in Hamilton over the years. His performances at Hamilton Place have brought out good-sized crowds, as have his main stage appearances at the festival in Gage Park.

One of his Hamilton Place performances still stands out in his mind.

“I was doing my rock and roll thing – or what passes for that with me – with Murray McLaughlin, and I tripped over a monitor and fell flat on my back.”

Luckily, he wasn't seriously injured. But he remembers the gasp when he went down.

“I just kept playing and the band kept playing. It was quite a moment.”

Burritt's Rapids, Ontario

The following was compiled by Richard Hoare

As Rounder are about to embark on a series of expanded CD re-issues of Bruce Cockburn's earlier work, I flipped through the original LP sleeves again and thought it was time to put together a few word's about that magical place name - Burritt's Rapids.

When Cockburn writes a song he often uses poetic convention by annotating the lyrics on album sleeves with the location and date that the words were written. Bruce has credited the following lyrics as having been written at Burritt's Rapids:

One Day I Walk - June 1970.
Festival of Friends - 5/4/75.
Gavin's Woodpile - 17/11/75.
Lord of the Starfields - 12/5/76.
Silver Wheels - 21/7/76.
Red Brother Red Sister - 26/7/76.
Can I Go With You - Dec 9/76.
Free to Be - 30/1/77.
Feast of Fools - Nov 6/77.
Rumours Of Glory - December 31/79.

Bruce Cockburn: “Went to England and Scandinavia for some months (mid 1973), came back and had a house built on some land my father gave me not far from Ottawa. This was the first time I'd actually lived in rural surroundings in a stationary way, as opposed to camper travel” (From World Of Wonders 1986 Tour Programme).

When Bart Testa reviewed Joy Will Find A Way in Crowdaddy in June 1976 he described Cockburn as a songwriter who seems to emerge once a year from his modest rural *maison* in the Ottawa valley with a packet of exquisitely crafted, poetically rich songs.

In Maclean's in 1981 Ian Pearson described Cockburn's career in the mid seventies as successful enough to allow for extensive travel and plenty of time to retreat to their country house near the Rideau River, South of Ottawa.

In 1998 I rented a tiny cottage near the southern tip of Cornwall, England for a family holiday. In the lounge were half a dozen novels plus Rideau Waterway by Robert Legget published by University of Toronto Press 1972. The following description is from that book:

Burritt's Rapids is a tiny community between Kingston and Ottawa on the Rideau Waterway where there is a single canal lock. The Burritt family in North America goes back more than 350 years. Colonel Stephen Burritt served 7 years in the famous Roger's Rangers. Towards the end of the 18th century Stephen Burritt came up from the St Lawrence to the Rideau settlements, made a raft in Cox's Bay and floated down the Rideau until he saw a location that appealed to him for his home. This was near the rapids that would henceforth bear his name. He built himself a log house and there the first white child in the district was born on 8th December 1793.

However Burritt's Rapids as a community almost didn't get started. Soon after Stephen settled in the log house he and his wife suffered an attack of ague and fever. Both were so ill neither one could help the other, and for 3 days they lay helpless in bed without fire or food. On the third day a band of Indians arrived at the rapids and disembarked for the portage. They sensed from the unnatural quiet that something was wrong. Entering the cabin they found the white couple in their critical state. The Indians prepared medicine and food and found fuel to warm up the cabin. The Indians waited until the couple recovered sufficiently to look after themselves. From that day on their house was always open to any Indian traveller. Burritt's Rapids was soon outstripped by its neighbouring settlement of Merrickville to some extent because of the coming of the railway. Burritt's Rapids remained a little centre in a backwater for the surrounding farms.

Bruce would move to Toronto in 1980.

Down From True North

In The Studio

Bruce will be back in the studio on October 7, 2002, to begin recording on his next release. Work on the album will take place in Montreal, Toronto, Nashville and Los Angeles. Hugh Marsh is expected to be involved in this project in some capacity. It will

be produced by Bruce and Colin Linden. Release of the work is expected in May or June of 2003.

Re-issues

The first six re-issues from Bruce's back-catalogue are scheduled to be released on October 29, 2002. Originally expected this past summer, they are: In The Falling Dark, Further Adventures Of, Dancing In The Dragon's Jaws, Inner City Front, The Trouble With Normal and Bruce Cockburn—Live. Details can be found in Gavin's Woodpile issue number 52 (June 2002).

Possible Benefit Concert In China

Bruce has been asked to participate in a UNICEF benefit concert in Shanghai, China this November. At the time of publication, Bernie Finkelstein tells me "Not yet confirmed... but awaiting Chinese government approval which may never come. We'll see."

The International Campaign To Ban Landmines

In Ottawa, in December 1997, 122 countries signed a treaty that bans the use, production, stockpiling, and transfer of antipersonnel mines. To date over 145 countries have signed and 128 countries have ratified the Mine Ban Treaty. One glaring hold-out is the United States. Bruce has been asked to participate in a function in Ottawa on December 1, to mark the anniversary of the signing of this treaty. While it looks as though Bruce will participate, nothing was confirmed at publication.

New Songbook for Anything Anytime Anywhere

This greatest hits collection from Canadian singer/songwriter Bruce Cockburn includes the best music from his 30-plus year career as well as two brand new titles. To ensure accuracy, these complete note-for-note transcriptions have been reviewed and edited by Bruce himself. Titles include: My Beat, Wondering Where the Lions Are, Lovers in a Dangerous Time, If I Had a Rocket Launcher, The Trouble with Normal, Tokyo, Coldest Night of the Year, Call it Democracy, Waiting for a Miracle, If a Tree Falls, A Dream Like Mine, Listen for the Laugh, Night Train, Pacing the Cage, Last Night of the World, Anything, Anytime, Anywhere. Published by Warner Brothers and available online at www.musicbooksplus.com. Check your local musical instrument store as well.

My thanks to Elizabeth Blomme.

Campaign For A Landmine Free World Benefit Shows

November 6 Raleigh, North Carolina Meymandi Hall

November 7 Asheville, North Carolina Thomas Wolfe Auditorium

November 8 Atlanta, Georgia The Tabernacle

November 9 Knoxville, Tennessee The Tennessee Theatre

November 10 Birmingham, Alabama The Alabama Theatre

Issue Number 54

December 2002

How The World Works

by Alexander Varty

There's no point in looking for complexity where none exists. And so, in turn, there's no point in looking for hidden meanings in the title track of Bruce Cockburn's recently released singles collection. One of two new compositions that bookend 14 familiar melodies, "Anything Anytime Anywhere" is a love song, pure and simple, set to a strolling, '50s-style beat. "I just want you to know/What I'm ready to do/Anything, anytime, anywhere/For you," Cockburn sings, and it's clear his tune is nothing more than a heartfelt declaration of devotion.

But by naming his greatest-hits package *Anything Anytime Anywhere*, Cockburn might also be sending us a clue about how his songwriting process works. Over the past 30 years, he's written about everything from love and God to pregnancy and car crashes, in locations ranging from his rural Halton Hills retreat in Ontario to the bustling streets of Toronto and Tokyo. For Cockburn, inspiration can indeed strike anytime, anywhere, even if the connection implicit in the CD's title is not one he had consciously made. "I wouldn't have thought of that, but I'd run with it if I were you," he says. "That works fine."

It works even better when you know Cockburn's latest love song emerged from the pages of a journal written by and for ruthless killers. "Where I actually got the title from was an ad in the back of *Soldier of Fortune* magazine," the veteran singer-guitarist says. "People used to advertise for work of any sort, mercenary work and whatever, and there was this one ad that said, 'Anything anytime anywhere.' The guy literally meant murder and

anything else, but I thought that it had the right flavour, to me, to be a profession of love as well.”

Title from an ad in Soldier of Fortune magazine

In a rather shameful lapse of journalistic acuity, it did not occur to me to ask Cockburn just why, exactly, he was reading Soldier of Fortune, or if he makes it a regular habit. But it's not quite as out of character as it might seem. Cockburn is driven to understand how the world works, and if that means considering the opinions of mercenaries as well as missionaries, so be it. He's never been afraid to incorporate the events of the day into his songs, and that's just as true of the new material he's planning to record this fall as it is of staples such as “If I Had a Rocket Launcher” or “Call It Democracy.”

At a recent Vancouver concert, Cockburn unveiled a brace of new songs that sounded as fresh as today's headlines - and that give credence to his contention that his next CD will continue with his “usual mix of jaundiced and semi-ecstatic views of humanity and the world.” “Put It in Your Heart” represents the more hopeful side of Cockburn's nature; although inspired by the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, it is a plea for reason over reaction, delivered in a tone of muted optimism. “Trickle Down,” though, is a far darker piece. A scathing indictment of laissez-faire capitalism, it is one of several new songs dealing with globalization and the corporate takeover of the industrialized world.

It's also one of two new tunes in which Cockburn embarks on a relatively untried course for him: songwriting collaboration. Working with others comes easily enough to him - especially in the studio, where he has enjoyed the input of several strong producers, including Eugene Martynec, T-Bone Burnett and Colin Linden. But the songwriting process has always been a solitary one for Cockburn, at least until his recent meeting with Canadian-born, New York-based jazz pianist Andy Milne. “He approached me, initially,” Cockburn recalls. “He gave me a couple of CDs he had done and said he was interested in collaborating on a couple of songs for an upcoming CD he wanted to do. So I listened to his stuff and I thought it was amazing - and it happened that he came along right when I was experiencing an uncomfortably long dry spell, and I thought, ‘Yeah, why not?’”

Songwriting collaboration ended a long dry spell

Working with Milne soon sprung Cockburn from his slump, although it was not without its challenges. “Andy's band does virtually nothing in 4/4 time,” he says. “Everything is in these weird time signatures, although they make them flow so beautifully that you don't have any sense of the time being dislocated when you hear the music. But it's difficult for somebody coming from my background - I sort of dropped out of the jazz world when people were just starting to look at those kinds of things, so I never really learned to do that stuff. But what Andy brought was an acute mind, and a whole different approach to music than mine. It's just a world away, and yet compatible enough that we were able to come up with something that worked.”

Plans for the new record are still being finalized, but it will certainly include “Trickle Down” and the other tune Cockburn wrote with Milne, “Everywhere Dance.” “That’s a kind of philosophical/spiritual statement about how the whole essence of the cosmos is motion, is flow, and is the dance, in effect,” he explains. Linden will be back to co-produce the disc, and violinist Hugh Marsh - who was responsible for introducing Cockburn to Milne - will be among the players. Beyond that, nothing is certain, except Cockburn does feel he may someday satisfy his own acutely critical ear.

“To get down to the point where you’re able to translate your inner impulses directly into something that’s communicable in the form of art, that’s the goal,” he says. “I feel like I’ve always been skating around that and never quite hit it, but I’m still hoping to hit it one of these days. I’ve gone a little bit this way and a little bit that way, and hopefully I’m spiraling closer.”

Alexander Varty is a Vancouver writer and arts editor for Georgia Straight. This article appeared in the September, 2002 issue of SOCAN.

Bruce Cockburn: The poet of the age, and how he relates to me by Sarah Knight

The singer/songwriter Bruce Cockburn is someone who has always had a giant impact on my life. At any point, no matter what I am feeling, I can find a song by him to express exactly what I am going through. Many people have yet to hear of this musical genius, but those lucky few, will understand what I am saying.

I’ve been listening to Bruce since before I was born. While my mother was pregnant with me, she and my father went to a concert on Bruce’s “Stealing Fire” tour. After I was born, I heard Bruce, Bruce, and more Bruce (well, to be honest, there was some Grateful Dead, Pink Floyd, and the Beatles thrown in there...). I grew up loving Bruce Cockburn’s music, and I didn’t understand why more people weren’t into him. In 1993 I had my dad yell out “Wondering Where the Lions Are” at the Winter Park Folk Festival. Bruce apparently heard it, and went into a little speech about how he had decided not to play it, because after it’s extensive airplay fans were getting sick of it. He dusted it off, and played it right there. It was the proudest day of my life—I got Bruce to play what was my favorite song by him at the time (Now it’s whatever I’m listening to at the time). I’ve met him, actually, at the Lyons Folk Festival. My dad, uncle, cousins and I waited afterwards until the last bus just to see him. He signed my Uncle’s cast (he had broken his arm recently), and he signed my T-shirt while I was wearing it. That replaced Winter Park as the proudest day of my life—Bruce had signed MY T-shirt.

Funny thing is - I really can’t call myself his biggest fan. Two reasons—first, I know my father is a bigger fan than I am, and second—I’ve only been around for the last 17 years of his career. Which, by the way, started before the release of his first solo album in 1970. I am 39 years younger than he is; I hadn’t even been born when his first big hit

came about (“Wondering Where the Lions Are”). But I would have to say, I’m probably his biggest fan under the age of 20 (Which isn’t saying much—at my last concert I only saw 4 other people with an under-21 “X” on their hand).

If you are looking for music that you can listen to, and realize that every word of it is true, go pick up a Bruce Cockburn CD. From the jarringly accurate accounts of “If I Had A Rocket Launcher” in 1984 to the haunting “Mines of Mozambique” in 1996, his lyrics touch upon issues that most musicians would ignore. He calls attention to the poverty in third world countries, mostly caused by the ill treatment of our own governments, and their local governments. He makes us brutally aware of how miserable the living conditions are when you have to fight for every scrap of food, and then avoid an easy death by stepping on a land mine. But, then again, one of his biggest hits among his fans is “The Trouble with Normal” (1983) which points out that normal always gets worse.

Not into political commentary? Well, Bruce is still the guy for you. If you are looking for a well-written love song, he’s got plenty. From his very first album, right up until his most recent, you can find a love song for any occasion. Some of the better known ones are “Love Song” (1971), “A Long-Time Love Story” (1975), “See How I Miss You” (1986), “Love Loves You Too” (1994), and quite a few from “Dart To The Heart” (1994). Bruce’s love songs are not just music, they are raw emotion put into words, and then those very same poetic words being sung against the back drop of liquid guitar song.

Speaking of Bruce’s guitar—Well, I think the best way I’ve ever heard it described is that he’s got “a whole band right there in his right hand” (My Beat: The Life and Times of Bruce Cockburn). If you listen to him playing solo, and close your eyes, you can convince yourself (quite easily may I add), that there are at least 2 guitar players... and then he makes it a little more difficult. The amazing thing about seeing Bruce live is that he can not only play the guitar like he was born with it in his hands, but that he makes it look so easy. He just stands there, barely moves his right hand, closes his eyes, and the music flows out of the speakers like water. If you want to hear his guitar in action, listen to a few of his instrumentals - remember to remind yourself that there is only ONE person playing the guitar. Some of my personal favorites are “Cala Luna” (1983), on German release of The Trouble With Normal, “Train in the Rain” (1994), and “Skylarking” (1975).

If you are looking for good music to cry to, something that will comfort you through your darkest hour, listen to some of Bruce’s more emotional work. “Joy Will Find a Way” (1975), “Closer to the Light” (1994), “Pacing the Cage” (1996), and “Isn’t That What Friends Are For” (2001) are all songs that I have cried to, most more than once. “Joy Will Find A Way” and “Closer To The Light” helped me get through such events as the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Columbine High School shootings. “Pacing the Cage” reminds me of what everyone in this world needs to hear—“Sometimes the best map will not guide you, you can’t see what’s ‘round the bend, sometimes the road leads through dark places, sometimes the darkness is your friend”. Bruce has a way of reminding us all that just because things get bad, it doesn’t mean that they aren’t good for you. “Isn’t That What Friends Are For” reminded me of why I have and keep the friends

I do. Many a time I have found myself crying to that one, simply because it reminds me how lucky I am to have the people around me that I do.

Bruce Cockburn has something for everyone and something for every mood. If I need cheering up, all I have to do is put in “Laughter” (1978) and sing along. If I’m in more of a political mood—enter “Call It Democracy” (1986), “The Trouble With Normal” (1983), “If I Had A Rocket Launcher” (1984), “Indian Wars” (1991), I could go on and on. Lost along the paths of love? “All The Ways” (1994), “Last Night Of The World” (2000), any of the dozens of songs Bruce has written about that emotion that we find so elusive. He has songs about nature, songs about life, he has songs about his career.

So my suggestion to you is if you are going out to buy a CD, pick up something by Bruce Cockburn. You won’t regret it. Oh, it doesn’t matter which you pick, because you’ll be going back for more soon anyway—they are all good. I have to say my life would not be complete without him. He is my happy music, my sad music, and everything in between. Bruce’s lyrics have played a key role in my life, and will continue to for as long as I live.

Sarah Knight, a longtime Woodpile reader, is seventeen years old and lives in Colorado. My thanks to her for the use of this article.

Cockburn Inducted Into The Canadian Broadcast Hall Of Fame

Ottawa, October 3, 2002 – The Canadian Association of Broadcasters (CAB) will honour singer-songwriter Bruce Cockburn later this month by inducting him into the Canadian Broadcast Hall of Fame. The induction ceremony will take place on October 22 in Vancouver, during the Gold Ribbon Awards Gala at *Broadcasting 2002: Leadership Through Public Service*, the CAB’s 76th annual convention.

Bruce Cockburn’s career has produced 26 albums, 20 gold and platinum records, and numerous awards both here in Canada and overseas, including the Canadian Music Hall of Fame and Italy’s Tenco Award for Lifetime Achievement. Bruce Cockburn has received a Governor General’s Performing Arts Award and has been appointed to the Order of Canada. After more than thirty years in the business, his appeal remains strong. In fact, Mr. Cockburn’s record company recently signed new contracts with important distributors in the UK and Australia. These new contracts will kick off on October 29, 2002 with six deluxe Bruce Cockburn catalogue packages, slated for release in Canada and around the world.

Bruce Cockburn’s first album was released in 1970, and this was followed by a string of records that gave full voice to his inimitable style of music. In 1979, he enjoyed his first major hit, “Wondering Where the Lions Are,” a song that marked the beginning of the singer’s international career. Throughout the 1980s Mr. Cockburn produced some of his most emotionally powerful music, songs like “The Trouble With Normal,” “Lovers In A Dangerous Time” and “If I Had A Rocket Launcher,” which received more airplay than

any other song in his career. These songs capture Mr. Cockburn's deeply-felt commitment to social justice, a theme that resurfaces in "Call it Democracy," "Waiting For A Miracle," "If A Tree Falls," and others. In the 1990s, Mr. Cockburn decided to try his hand at producing. Together with singer/guitarist Colin Linden, Bruce Cockburn created "The Charity of Night" in 1996 and the award-winning "Breakfast in New Orleans Dinner in Timbuktu" in 1999.

Over the years, Mr. Cockburn's music has been covered by such diverse artists as Chet Atkins, Barenaked Ladies, Jimmy Buffet, Dan Fogelberg, Jerry Garcia, Maria Muldaur, Anne Murray, Holly Near, and The Rankins.

"Bruce Cockburn combines tremendous musical talent, great skill as a lyricist and a deep concern for the welfare of humanity. He has given the world a collection of songs that will stand the test of time," says Glenn O'Farrell, CAB President and CEO. "Bruce is a true Canadian original. He continues to leave a deep impression on our culture and our collective conscience."

Mr. Cockburn joins Gordon Lightfoot, Anne Murray, Bryan Adams, Céline Dion, and Ian Tyson as the sixth member in the category honouring Canadian music stars. Inductees in the Canadian Music Star category are recognized for "outstanding talent and commitment, for enhancing Canadian culture and for enriching the lives of Canadians through private radio."

Broadcasting 2002, Canada's premier broadcasting event, is expected to attract more than 500 broadcasters, federal decision makers, politicians, and industry stakeholders from across Canada.

The CAB is the national voice of Canada's private broadcasters, representing the vast majority of Canadian programming services, including private radio and television stations, networks, specialty and pay, and pay-per-view services.

Stuph

www.brucecockburn.com is now up and running on the internet.

The first six **re-issues** from Bruce's catalogue were released on November 12, 2002. See issue 51 for details.

On May 18, 2002 Bruce participated in a performance in Vancouver for the **Spirit Concert** to benefit the Bill Reid Foundation. The performance was aired on CBC Television on November 14, 2002.

On November 16, 2002, Bruce performed in Shanghai, China, at the Grand Stage as part of UNICEF's Concert to Commemorate Universal Children's Day. On November 25 he traveled to Winnipeg to lend his support to the **David Suzuki Foundation**. Dr. David

Suzuki is a world-renown Canadian geneticist, broadcaster, author and teacher. The Winnipeg show was part of the six-city **Human Element Tour**, a multimedia event featuring David Suzuki, and an exclusive video presentation and musical performances by different acts in each city. More information on David Suzuki can be found at www.davidsuzuki.org.

Bruce has been **in the studio** working on his next release. In the studio with Bruce: Hugh Marsh, Ben Riley, Steve Lucas, Sarah Harmer and Andy Milne. I met up with Andy in Seattle recently, only a week after having recorded with Bruce, and he was very impressed with what he heard. He told me he is really looking forward to hearing the finished work.