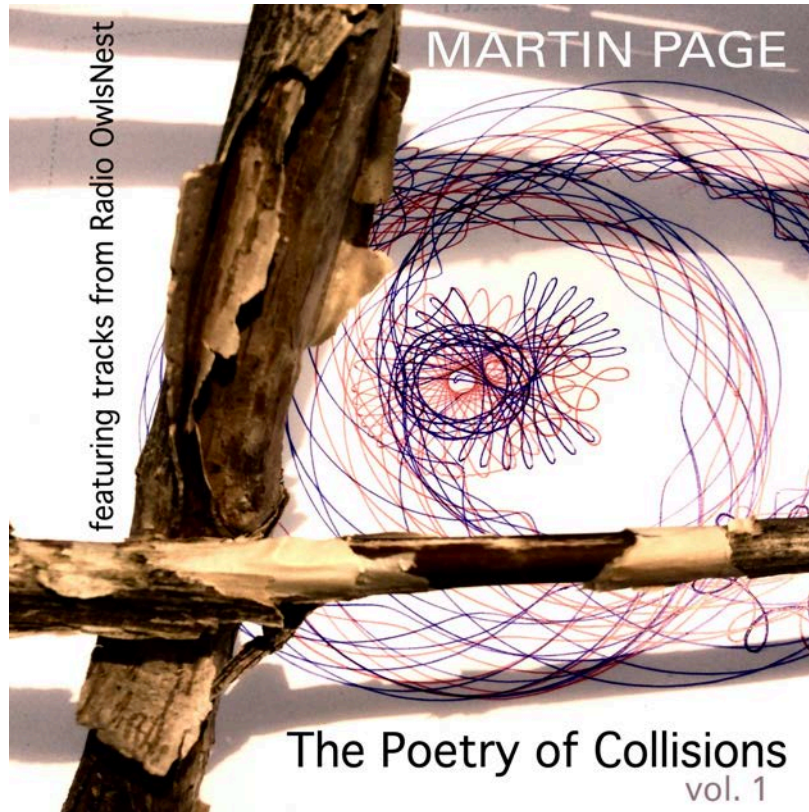


A Brief History Of The Songs And More
On
THE POETRY OF COLLISIONS, VOL. 1



1. **Church of The Groove**

Written in 2020. I was in the Prince, Robert Palmer, Peter Gabriel funk spirit. Recorded on Pro-Tools digital HD. Virtual instruments with analog synthesizers - Roland Gaia, Roland Jupiter 80.

In troubling times, we often turn to music – the uplifting pulse of groove. We are all addicted to something. The church of The Groove is the religion of dance, the Shamanistic call of rhythm. Had great fun experimenting with various vocal FX, and hitting the power button of sonic freedom.

All instrumentation and vocals – me.

2. **Big View**

Written for the album, “In The Temple of The Muse” around 2008. Featuring the live drums of Jimmy Copley and electric guitar of Neil Taylor. Recorded on Studer 24-track analog tape recorder. Dolby SR. Written about the myopic view of most politicians. Analog Synthesizers. The fade of the song is an effort to re-create the spirit of “All The Young

Dudes” by Mott The Hoople. There’s also a nod to The Verve’s “Bitter Sweet Symphony”. It didn’t make the actual album – probably because of its derivative influences. Alas, I would love to have had the chance to mix this 48-track with the great engineer, Mike Shipley. Today I enjoy its “feel” – the drum and bass. Besides Jimmy and Neil – All instrumentation and vocals – me.

3. **Endure**

Written in 2020. Recorded on Pro-Tools digital HD. I was looking for intimacy and minimalism. Majority of track played on Oberheim 6 analog synthesizer with some virtual keyboards.

Although a simple message, I feel that the pulsing chordal inversions point towards a deeper reverence for the power of one’s strength and conviction to undergo - without yielding – immense pressure.

All instrumentation and vocals – me.

4. **Good Heart**

Demo written in 1986. Recorded on Studer 24-track analog tape recorder. Dolby SR. Analog synthesizers, including DX7II, Roland D50 and Akai S1000 sampler. Roland S550 sampler, MPC60 drum machine. Looking to create pure pop, e.g., The Eurythmics. The song was eventually recorded by Starship on their "Greatest Hits (Ten Years and Change 1979-1991)" album, and also by Jason Donovan on his 1993 album, "All Around The World". At the peak of my high vocal singing. All instrumentation and vocals – me.



5. **I Guess This Is What Love Feels Like**

Written in 2003. Recorded on Studer 24-track analog tape recorder. Dolby SR. Smooth minimal R 'n' B influenced. George Michael comes to mind. All analog synthesizers. MKS20 piano, Roland JD800; Acoustic Taylor guitar. Determined to write simple, direct, personal, vulnerable lyrics, e.g., Mr. Phil Collins. Wondered if the track was a touch too slow. Also, in hindsight, it possibly could have been edited shorter. Looking for that hypnotic simplicity of sensual soul ballads. Synth'd-up Marvin Gaye. I think it would have made a strong reggae track. All instrumentation and vocals – me.

6. **The Admiral's Daughter**

Written around 2011. Recorded on Pro-Tools digital HD. Taylor acoustic guitars, Hofner violin bass, Fender Telecaster electric guitar. Drums and percussion live. Demo written for a potential Robbie Williams folk-oriented album. Robbie (a friend) asked me to prepare some traditional folk songs for him. After submerging myself in traditional folklore songs of the past ... and studying roots music of both Europe and North America, this song appeared. Nothing programmed on the song – an all-live performance tempo. Hugely enjoyed writing a story lyric, which most true folk is based on. Stomping on my elevated wooden home studio floor added to the aura. All instrumentation and vocals – me.

7. **Compass**

Written around 1999. Recorded on Studer 24-track analog tape recorder. Dolby SR. Analog synthesizers – Roland JD800, Roland D50, Roland S550 sampler. Fender Stratocaster electric guitar. Original drum machine program augmented by live percussion recorded later, around 2017, on Pro-Tools digital HD. Fretless bass programmed and played live. Sang lead vocal on AKG 414 mic – when I had a slight cold. Looking for a gospel-come-slight African feel – Hall and Oats / Boz Scaggs texture. All instrumentation and vocals – me.

8. **Animal Instinct**

Demo written and recorded in 1984. Recorded on Fostex 8-track 1/4 inch analog tape recorder. Recorded in front room of rented apartment on Crescent Heights in Los Angeles. All analog synthesizers – Roland Jupiter 8 and Casiotone 202 keyboard (the same keyboard I used on Ray Parker, Jr.'s "Ghostbusters" smash); Linn drum machine. All played live – no computer sequencing. Even the tom fills in the bridges are played live on the Linn drum machine drum pads - very Q-Feel "Dancing In Heaven"! A time when I prided myself on my precise live groove synthesizer playing. Eventually recorded by the Commodores on their 1985 "Nightshift" album. Title track. Gold album. Became second single from the album, reaching 22 in the US Black R'n'B chart. My demo has the obvious overtones of the Michael Jackson era.

A period when everything I wrote had the energy of my European techno new wave heritage (Q-Feel), adjoined to my love of traditional American soul. Leaning on my newly found falsetto vocals for illustrating range and production values of a song. I recall how you'd have to plan and organize your tracks ahead of time on an 8-track tape recorder. You'd have to have a precise vision of where you were going from the very start. All instrumentation and vocals – me.

9. **Glide (Alternate Version)**

Written in 2013. An alternate version of a song I wrote for, and contributed to, the "Firework 2013" compilation album. Firework is a music-based charity that benefits childhood cancer. Recorded on Pro-Tools digital HD. Virtual instruments. Live Stingray Music Man bass, live Gretsch White Falcon electric guitar, acoustic Taylor guitar. I stumbled upon this version while exercise-walking with my iPod on. It was an early rendition of the song ... a building-blocks, finding-my-way version. I was struck by its freer attitude than the finished, mastered version - particularly the synth solo and the rather looser lead vocal. I was newly taken by its more experimental approach. I used to walk around a lake early in the morning, and see birds gliding effortlessly just above the water. I saw a suffering soul doing the same. All instrumentation and vocals – me.

10. **No Man's Land**

Demo written and recorded in 1984. Recorded on Fostex 8-track 1/4 inch analog tape recorder. Analog synthesizer – all Roland Jupiter 8. Linn drum machine. Written for my 80's new wave techno band, Q-Feel. Kim Carnes asked me to produce her on the track, and serious preparation and production began on the song at the Soundcastle Studios in Los Angeles. The early work was aborted when Kim felt she could not do the song justice. The demo reflects a period when I was beginning to understand my singing voice – particularly full voice - and my burgeoning rhythmic nuances. A Wang Chung and Arcadia sensibility is obvious. Staccato samples make their abrupt appearance on the stage. All instrumentation and vocals – me.

11. **When You Gonna Make My Telephone Ring**

Written around 1990. Recorded on Studer 24-track analog tape recorder. Dolby SR. Live performance on mini-grand White Yamaha upright acoustic piano. Music Man Stingray bass. Analog synthesizers – Roland JD800, Roland D50 and D550, Roland S550 sampler. Electric Fender Stratocaster guitar played by Brian Fairweather.

A period when my vocal range was at its rangiest/highest. Gospel influenced country blues ballad – Vince Gill / The Eagles spirit. Particularly hits home for me when I add the harmonies to the last chorus: A "Desperado" moment. A time when Brian Fairweather regularly dropped by my home studio to add his guitar expertise to my demos. Our diverse and extensive understanding of each other, I think, is self-evident here. We're on the same page. I would love to have put live drums on this track eventually. Besides Brian's guitar – All instrumentation and vocals – me.

12. **Who's Gonna Take You Home Tonight**

Demo written in 1989. Recorded on Otari 16-track 1-inch analog tape recorder. Analog synthesizers – Jupiter 8, Roland JD800, Roland D50, DX7II, Akai S1000 sampler, Roland S550 sampler. I played Gibson Les Paul electric guitar; the solo was played by Brian Fairweather on Fender Stratocaster electric guitar through Rockman processor. Mixture of MPC60 drum machine and Akai S1000 sampler for drums and percussion. Eventually recorded by Sir Tom Jones and produced by me on his 1989 "Move Closer" album. It was also cut by Terri Nunn (Berlin) on her 1991 solo album, "Moment of Truth". This demo was vari-speeded up from its original recording; I was looking for the sweet spot of tempo energy. A period when my main focus was on writing memorable choruses. During this time, I often wrote the choruses first. It was the beginning of stadium rock pop crossover, and this demo, I think, illustrates that transition. Besides Brian's guitar – All instrumentation and vocals – me.

13. **It's No Sacrifice**

Written in 1990. Recorded on Studer 24-track analog tape recorder. Dolby SR. All analog synthesizers – Roland D50, Roland JD800, DX7II, Akai S1000 sampler, MKS20 piano. I played a Gibson Professional 335-S Deluxe electric guitar.

A period when my writing wasn't afraid to become more intimate, romantic and melancholy. When a more internal expression became important to me. I'm taken by the background harmonies on this track, when a dark Celtic romanticism started creeping more bravely into my composing.

All instrumentation and vocals – me.

14. **Blessed**

Originally written and recorded in 1995; alternate version recorded in 2006. The original version was featured on my 2008 solo album, "In The Temple of The Muse". Alternate version recorded on Pro-Tools digital HD. Virtual instruments. Fretless bass sample - Akai S1000.

This demo was prepared for Josh Groban, who had taken interest in the song while recording my song, "Mi Morena", for his 2003 album, "Closer". The main song arrangement differs from the original with some different chord inversions and alternative lead vocal melodic phrases. There are a few bar length changes also. The extremely observant will notice some tasty variations on the string arrangement too. I enjoy the concept of the new version, reaching for a more expansive expression – in range and tonality.

Instrumentation and vocals – me.

15. **Magnetic**

Demo recorded in 1993. Recorded on Fostex 8-track ¼ inch analog tape recorder in manager's living room (Diane Poncher), Olympic Blvd., Miracle Mile, Los Angeles. This version taken from cassette master. After meeting with Earth, Wind and Fire's leader, Maurice White, he asked me to write a single for the band's forthcoming album, "Electric Universe". I wrote Magnetic under this direction. All analog synthesizers - Jupiter 8 and Oberheim DX drum machine. All played live, no computer sequencing. Looking to create metamorphosis of new wave tech with old-school funk. Obvious Thomas Dolby influences. The demo illustrates my

awareness of EWF's expansive vocal ranges, falsetto. Simulation of syncopated horn stabs on synth. Trying to intrigue Maurice with modern technology. Magnetic was released as the first single from the Electric Universe album. It reached Top-10 in the US Black R'n'B charts. I remember that I couldn't come up with the title of the song for the longest time ... my manager suggested "Magnetic" and I was off! This version is transferred from a TDK SA cassette – the only version I have. So the drop-outs, hiss, clicks, break-ups, distortion, etc., are all par for the course. Old-school retro, I'm afraid ... or should I say I'm happy for and charmed by it. All instrumentation and vocals – me.



16. **Shallow Grave**

Written in 2012. Recorded on Pro Tools digital HD. All Taylor acoustic guitars and mandolin.

Composed during period of collaboration with Robbie Williams. Robbie had asked me to write a folk-oriented album for him. Shallow Grave is a ghost story alighting upon a period in English history (17th & 18th centuries) when Royal Navy press gangs were abundant. The key being in "E" helps the song have a big, open acoustic guitar largeness. Free time tempo – no programming – all live. First take lead vocal.

All instrumentation and vocals – me.

17. **Wicked**

Written in 1989. Recorded on Otari 16-track 1-inch analog tape recorder. Analog synthesizers – Roland JD800, D50 and D550, DX7II, Akai S1000 sampler; MKS20 piano, Roland S550 sampler. Fender Stratocaster electric guitar through Rockman processor. I was asked by Jive Records to write a song for Tom Jones, who was making a “comeback” after his hit rendition of Prince’s “Kiss”.

Wicked was my attempt to keep Tom within the production values of the “Art of Noise”. The practice of studio sampling was prolific on contemporary records, and I attempted to demonstrate that on this demo. A period when I was having fun going for the jugular of dance/rock music.

All instrumentation and vocals – me.

18. **I Rock My Child**

Written in 2016. Recorded on Pro-Tools digital HD. Taylor acoustic guitars, Gibson ES-335 custom electric guitar, Aria Pro II bass guitar. Played live – tempo-free – no programming. Virtual keyboards.

A song about parents’ devotion to their children. Each verse navigates a time in history when a family’s safety is threatened, from prehistoric times to the nuclear age. Hints of Crosby Stills, Nash and Young and America come to mind. I was engrossed in writing songs on acoustic guitar during this period, determined to gain a deeper understanding of the guitar as a historically-based accompanying instrument. Proud of the melodic bass lines on the fade.

All instrumentation and vocals – me.

19. **Our Time Has Come (Cats Don’t Dance)**

Written in 1996. Recorded on Studer 24-track analog tape recorder. Dolby SR. Analog synthesizers – Roland JD800, D50, Akai S1000 sampler, Roland S550 sampler; MPC60 drum machine.

I was asked to write the theme song for the animated 1997 movie, “Cats Don’t Dance”. Mercury Records (whom I was signed to at that time) were putting out the soundtrack and they suggested I write the main title. I’d recently made inroads as a solo artist with, “In The House of Stone and Light”, so Mercury Records and the film people thought it was a good idea. After viewing the opening sequence to the movie, I wrote and recorded

this demo. I’m a devoted cat lover, so I threw myself into the project. The demo did the job and the song was accepted. Recorded by an orchestra for the opening movie titles, and recorded as a duet by James Ingram and Carnie Wilson for release as a pop single. I fashioned the song on an up-tempo double-time Motown beat.

All instrumentation and vocals – me.

20. **Nelson’s Blood**

Written in 2017. Recorded on Pro-Tools digital HD. Virtual keyboards and samples. Stingray Music Man bass guitar, Fender Telecaster electric guitar through Electro-Harmonix Talking Machine pedal. I’m a die-hard reggae fan, especially the authentic reggae of the 1970’s, and I’ve always harbored the desire to record a reggae/ska album of my own. Nelson’s Blood is my beginning stroll toward that intriguing fantasy. Lyrically based on the true fact that Lord Nelson’s body was transported back to England (after his death at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805) in a casket of red wine/rum, to preserve his body. The story goes that the sailors often took a tip, a sip from the casket on the journey back, drinking Nelson’s Blood. I sang the lead vocal on a Shure SM57 microphone (usually used for recording electric guitars) to achieve that rougher retro 1970’s low-fi reggae vibe.

All instrumentation and vocals – me.

21. **Let It Be Me**

Written in 1992. Recorded on Studer 24-track analog tape recorder. Dolby SR. Analog synthesizers – Roland D50 and D550, Roland JD800, DX7II, Akai S1000 sampler, Roland S550 sampler, MKS20 piano, MPC60 drum machine. Music Man Stingray bass guitar, Fender Stratocaster electric guitar.

A song I recently discovered again while dredging deep into my song archives in 2020 on my Radio OwlsNest Songwriter Podcast. Touching upon Celtic romanticism. Reggae-influenced bass line and busy double-time drum programming to propel slow tempo. I fancy my electric guitar chordal phrasing was influenced by Scottish band, The Blue Nile. I saw it possibly as a B-side to any future solo artist single releases of mine around that time. My manager, Diane Poncher, always felt that this track was stronger than I thought it was.

Today, I have a renewed fondness for, and a different perspective of the song – the appreciation of time.
All instrumentation and vocals – me.

22. **Native Son**

Written in 1987. Recorded on Otari 16-track 1-inch analog tape recorder. All analog synthesizers – Roland Jupiter 8, Roland JD800, MKS20 piano, DX 7II, Akai S1000 sampler; Linn 9000 drum machine. Music Man Stingray bass guitar, Les Paul Gold Top electric guitar.

I believe this to be an extension of writing the song, “Hell’s Half Acre”, with Robbie Robertson for his debut solo album of that period. Hints of Big Country. I was enjoying touching upon folklore story lines amalgamated with strident Celt rock power. Written on guitar, which forced me to compose within a more insecure landscape. A hybrid of electric folk and modern rhythms. The chorus “Townsend” guitar strikes cannot be disguised. When I was struggling to find more material for my live “In The House of Stone and Light” tour, this song was trotted out to boost the repertoire. It provided a wonderful showcase for a drum solo spot.
All instrumentation and vocals – me.

23. **Cup of Tea**

Written in 2000. Recorded initially on Studer 24-track analog tape recorder. Dolby SR. Future overdubs completed in 2017 on Pro-Tools digital HD. Analog synthesizers – Roland D50, DX7II, Roland S550 sampler, Akai S1000 sampler. MKS20 piano, MPC60 drum machine. Virtual keyboards. Fender Telecaster through electro-Harmonix voice emulator pedal. Live percussion.
An exercise in cool jazz/reggae – obvious Sting connection and overtones. A track that appeared out of thin air as I jammed and played about on old-school midi keyboards. It’s rare for me to bring humor into my work; I think I’m charmed by the fact that I wasn’t taking things too seriously for a change. Come on – how many songs have the word “propriety” in them?
All instrumentation and vocals – me.

24. **Moon of Bitter Cold**

Written in 2015. Recorded on Pro-Tools digital HD. Virtual instruments. Dampened Music Man Stingray bass guitar, Gretsch White Falcon electric guitar. Live drums and percussion.

A song about the plight of the North American Indians. The story touches upon “Red Cloud” (a Lakota Sioux war leader), and his battle with encroaching white settlers. I saw this as a tone poem of sorts. The song grew out of the organic distant chanting melody (background vocals) on the chorus, like distant wails coming from a far-off mountain. This conjured up the taste of the whole track for me. It became a hymn for me, a hymn of a forgotten desert wind.
All instrumentation and vocals – me.

25. **World At Play**

Written in 1997. Recorded on Studer 24-track analog tape recorder. Dolby SR. Analog synthesizers – Roland JD800, Roland D50 DX7II, Akai S1000 sampler, Roland S550 sampler; Linn 9000 drum machine. Jack Hues (Wang Chung) played Fender Stratocaster electric guitar through a Rockman processor. I was asked by my publisher to have a go at writing the theme song for the 1998 FIFA World Cup tournament, held in France. I’m a soccer nut, so this was something I jumped at. There’s a rhythmic affiliation with my song, “In the House of Stone and Light” here. I was looking for a celebratory groove with tribal/worldly connotations. Jack’s guitar part touches upon Françafrique – France’s close affiliation with Africa. This propels the inner nature and character of the song. Unfortunately, the song wasn’t chosen, although I was told it had made it into the final four. I had to be satisfied with a semi-final placing! Besides Jack Hues’ guitar -
All instrumentation and vocals – me.

26. **Proud**

Written in 2015. Recorded on Pro-Tools digital HD. Virtual keyboards. Aria Pro 11 Fretless bass, Gretsch White Falcon electric guitar. Live percussion.
A song about my father. An exercise in writing with whole tone chords. It’s quite rare to hear whole tone chords utilized in contemporary music, and somehow, my fresh identifying with the harmonic structure of these chords

conjured up the identity of "Proud". Personal yet somehow disengaged. A longing that's always seeking resolution, a quite beautiful suspension of emotions. I related that musical

half-light tonality to the lyrics I wrote to my father.
All instrumentation and vocals – me.

More Info:

All my vocals on this album were recorded through Neumann, AKG, Bruel and Kjaer, Breyer and Shure microphones.

Pre Amps and Limiters/Compressors were by George Massenburg and Neve.

Some mastering utilized the SSL Fusion.

Guitar and bass amps were by Matchless, Fender, Marshall, Acoustic, Vox and Orange.

All the recordings on this album were made in my various home studios, and engineered by me.

Album cover design: David J. Knight

Personal Management: Diane S. Poncher

The majority of the tracks on this album are demos from over three decades utilizing different recording mediums of the particular period. Apologies are made for such sonic artifacts as hiss, clicks, dropouts, pops, crackles and distortion, etc., which occur as a result of the source material being initially recorded on or transferred from cassette analog tape, 1/4 inch analog tape and DATs, etc., along with the natural aging process of time. The utmost effort has been made to rectify these sound quality problems in the mastering process.

Personally, I like a bit of retro magic painting the picture.

THANK YOU to all my supporters who encouraged and inspired me to put this compilation together. You know who you are.

SPECIAL THANKS to Vanessa Leavitt.

Love, peace, compassion,

Martin



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