



I've always wanted liner notes.

Call it an homage to Blue Note, because they have the best liner notes ever. They give you an insightful, well-written essay on each track, recording its significance to the history of music-making. It is the perfect counter-point to your first listening of a newly-purchased album.

Of course, I do this all by myself, so modesty decrees that I can't do that here. And I don't presume that I have any significance to the history of music!

So I'll have to humbly follow in the footsteps of Questlove: a little exposition on where the tracks came from, how they came about, and maybe a little insight into why I sound like I do. Follow the bouncing ball, kids, and let's dive into the rusty corners of my mind...

GETUP

- 01: 180 promo
- 02: Twizzler
- 03: Discovery Park 01/03/04
- 04: Edgewood
- 05: Money Money
- 06: One Nation
- 07: Funky Indah
- 08: Utrechtseweg 225
- 09: Wok Fry Me Some
- 10: Rise
- 11: Thrombosis
- 12: Grinder
- 13: Sick Dog

01: 180 promo

In 2005 I was asked to play at one of DJ Sprout's bargin' house parties. And I used it as an excuse to do a little shameless self-promo. That's Elli talking, believe it or not!

02: Twizzler

Using most of the same sounds as Fwunk, (samples of my drums, and my old Mosrite bass), I turned it into a Dn'B track. It was "finished" for a long time before I went back and added the horn line, for that special final touch.

03: Discovery Park 01/03/04

I wrote this song sitting on a park bench in Seattle's Discovery Park, in the freezing cold. I was filling half a day before I had to head to the airport to catch a plane, and inspiration struck me while I was at the park. After a while, my hands got so cold that I had to go sit in the car. I probably looked like a crazed nut to the people passing by, and they were probably right!

04: Edgewood

Edgewood was the street we lived on in Atlanta for 2 years before we moved to Amsterdam, but oddly enough, this was the last song I wrote before I moved onto Edgewood Ave. It's a fairly typical Dn'B song for me: chilled out clicks lead up to a huge bass line and a jungle beat. The BPM is 180, but somehow that beat sounds incredibly fast - I love it!

05: Money Money

It's no coincidence that we use the same word to describe "no cost" as we use to describe "without constraints": free. It's why I call Fumbata "The Free Music Movement". As soon as you take money out of the picture, your options are completely liberated. Money is a disease. Free is the cure, and freedom is the side-effect of the cure.

06: One Nation

The lyrics came to me when everyone was debating whether students should have to recite the pledge of allegiance at schools, but it's not really about that. I get a sense that Americans are giving up on the political process because we don't feel like we have a voice anymore. Like I can shout "no" until I'm hoarse, but no one will hear me. I live(ed) in a state where my vote was more or less useless, and we somehow elected a president that no one wanted. This song is all about that sense of frustration that I think the majority of Americans feel in one way or another.

07: Funky Indah

I snuck this one onto a mix tape I made for some friends. Chrispy heard it and said: "It's funky! I was always surprised that your electronic music was so different than the stuff you like to play live (which tends to be funk/jazz/soul). It's cool to hear those two worlds come together." How right you are, brother, how right you are!

08: Utrechtseweg 225

I had just listened to a taiko-drum performance in the city square when I went back to my hotel and wrote this track. That's where the echoed-out drums at the beginning came from. I rarely write in odd-time - 5/4 doesn't usually sit well with dance music - but maybe I should try it more often...

09: Wok Fry Me Some

I helped my friend Grace record some of her bluegrass songs, and later I went back into those recordings and scavenged a few guitar chords and some oohs and aahs. Then I pieced them together, and ended up with this nice little ditty. I knew I had something nice when I played a little bit for the girls in the other room, and they didn't tell me to turn it down!

10: Rise

I love the swirling beats at the end.

11: Thrombosis

When I was living in dorms at college, a friend of mine had an ambient album that we listened to all the time. One of the songs had some people talking mixed into the background. It always sounded like there was someone standing outside our dorm-room door, and it always freaked us out. Hopefully this one will give you the same "who's out there?" paranoia experience some day. Big-ups to Photek for giving me the idea of pitching the snare hit differently on the 2s and the 4s.

12: Grinder

Ever since hearing Massive Attack's *Angel*, I've always wanted to do a song with a really slow build at the beginning, and then hit you hard over the head with a Dn'B beat at just the right moment. This is that song. I played this at a warehouse party on a massive sound system, and it knocked my socks off when that beat finally hit. I understand that most of my tracks are rather subdued, and make good background music, but for god's sake, turn this one UP! After the Dn'B beat, I needed something to maintain the energy, which is where the dictator-esque marching beat comes from. I'd have to sync it to marching hammers if I ever did a video.

13: Sick Dog

Bad-ass.



FASTFOGNY

- 01: Gammawrong
- 02: Beat Down
- 03: Leaves *feat. Grace Renshaw*
- 04: Bounce
- 05: Roll Dub
- 06: 3 Red Bags
- 07: Comfort
- 08: Spider Comfort
- 09: Honey
- 10: Van Gogh Clouds
- 11: Tabaksplant
- 12: Crystal Claire
- 13: The Process of Doubt
- 14: Risky

01: Gammawrong

This is an old one that wasn't quite ready for prime time when I released *clay : alone*. I don't think I've really changed anything since then, but it feels more *right* to me now than it did back then. I love the syncopation in the beat. That's one of the things I love about composing on the computer: I don't think I would have ever come up with this beat sitting behind the drums, or even be able to play it properly! But on the computer, I can micro-control everything so precisely that I am able to make stuff like this. I'm a nerd, right?

02: Beat Down

A few years back we went to a movie that featured Taiko drums as a big part of the background score. Elli was impressed and said I should write something like that, so I did. As usual, I wrote the main theme and then got stuck. I came back weeks later and worked out the downbeat part, and then revisited it almost a year later and realized that the two parts actually worked together. I played this track at a house

party and got some complements for playing NIN. I didn't think about it until later when I realized that the little piano progression in the middle is really close to one of the main melodies from *Downward Spiral*. I'm a huge NIN fan, so I guess it just crept in there subconsciously. If Trent hears it and gets pissed off, I'd happily change it. Hell - I'd be flabbergasted if he heard it, and probably do anything he asked!



03: Leaves featuring Grace Renshaw

Lyrics are often an after-thought for me. I write the songs, then try to match up the lyrics later. This is a good example of why it should be done the other way. For those who might of missed my metaphor, this is a song for my grandma, about how we should be there for our elders, and treat them with respect and care as they prepare for their "next great adventure".

04: Bounce

This was a little 4-bar loop that sat on my laptop for years. I'd open it up every so often, bob my head for a while, and then close it, not knowing what the hell to do with it. Then one night I took a stab at arranging, and the result was this monster of a song. I go back





and forth on my song writing philosophy: should my tracks be long, repetitive affairs, like most dance music, or should I mix it up all the time to keep things interesting? Establish a groove and ride it out, or hop around like a Russian composer? I don't think I'll ever know the answer to that one.

05: Roll Dub


Allow me to drop into a favorite musician's pastime here: over-analyzing your genre. What kind of music is this? Classical electronica? Not classic electronica (*Orbital*, *Kraftwerk*), but some weird melee of classical instrumentation/inspiration, hip-hop and soul elements against an electronic, vaguely dance-able backdrop. This track isn't my best work, but it's a good example of my sound, whatever that may be.

06: 3 red bags

This one was originally called "walking home" because I devised the piano part and beat while walking from the Marfa station up the hill to my little house on State Street. It's an old track: started on State Street, sampled on Edgewood, and mastered in Holland. The voice sample

came from George Mason University research into different accents from around the world. The Speech Accent Project recorded hundreds of people from all over the world saying a stock sentence so that they could compare and contrast their accents. This guy was the most interesting of the lot, but I can't remember where he was from. Thank you to Creative Commons for making this sort of sampling possible! You may notice my lovely wife chiming in just before the Dn'B beat hits, but I have no idea what she is saying!

07: Comfort



My music and my lyrics always come from two totally separate places: I write the music sitting in front of my laptop at home, and the lyrics are usually scrawled into a tiny notebook while I'm on the train. Sometimes I get lucky and they match up, which explains why most of these tracks are instrumental. Like most of my lyrics, these are vaguely political, and they go out to everyone effected by the current state of world fucked up-edness. I'd like to think



that if more people thought about compassion instead of confrontation, the world would be a vastly different place.

08: Spider Comfort

This is the sound I always crave late at night, when my eyelids are dipping. I want to be soothed to sleep by dubby soft distortion. But there is also something a little bit creepy-crawly in the way it holds you. So that's where the name comes from: spider comfort.

09: Honey

As a rule, I hate the whole 80's synth-emo thing. But I grew up smack dab in the middle of that era, and some way or another, it seeps into my music. This one goes out to my honey: bad, creepy emo vocals and all!

10: Van Gogh Clouds

The skies in the Netherlands are awesome. They just go on forever, and always seem to have just the right mix of clouds, blue sky, and light, as if an artist put them there with great care. The best views invariably come on train rides through the countryside, where the endless fields make the sky look even bigger. And this is what they sound like.

11: Tabaksplant

Written in a hotel in Amersfoort by the same name, it means tobacco factory in dutch. For some reason, the idea of a dutch tobacco factory seems to fit with the sound of soldiers marching in step! As with many of my

compositions, the best bits are at the end. Maybe I should throw away the first half of all my songs from now on?

12: Crystal Claire

Imagine me locked in the studio with the guitar turned all the way up, making rock and roll poses as I pound the guitar with my fist to get all that juicy feedback. I toned it down quite a bit during mastering - you have no idea how powerful a little guitar is. I don't think the dog (or the neighbors) were very fond of me that night. Anyway, I love jungle beats, and the repetitive drone of the Rhodes always gets me. I finished this track long before I ever thought of adding the guitar, but it was always missing "that little something extra". Once I dropped the guitar on there, I had it.

13: The Process of Doubt

Can music be hard and soft at the same time? I've always like the tension that you hear in a lot of drum n'bass music. It comes from laying a hard, fast beat and bass line against an ambient background. Photek does it the best, but I like to try my hand at it too. Of course, I also like a little classic Hammond organ along with my electronica. Does that make me inspired, or just crazy?

14: Risky

I know this is nothing like any of my other stuff. Elli listened to it and didn't think I wrote it. I love stuff like Air and David Holmes, and I thought I should write something that was all about the melody, where the drums weren't very important.

GET IT ON!

- 01: Funky Dead President
- 02: Promo 1st Jam
- 03: Mama
- 04: Unravel *feat. Grace Renshaw*
- 05: Fwunk
- 06: Say Fum-ba-ta
- 07: Beatbox
- 08: Demregular Trademark
- 09: Patterstorm
- 10: Bis Aria
- 11: The Theory of Live
- 12: Klee International

01: Funky Dead President

This has to be one of my favorite tracks. Like most of my good stuff, it just flowed out in the course of one night. Somehow, it still makes me grin every time I hear it.

02: Promo 1st jam

Another shameless self-promo, but it gave me an excuse to resurrect this track, which is the very first Reason song I ever did.

03: Mama

Another old track that I dug out of the archives to add to this monster album. This is a song that was supposed to have lyrics, but I never got around to recording them. It was going to be a stream-of-consciousness rant about a young new mother. I couldn't make it work, and it works better without them, anyway. Maybe I'll add the vocals some other time...

04: Unravel *featuring Grace Renshaw*

Amazing Grace. A statement of my Buddha nature. The phrase at the end: "when the wind blows it calls your name" is a little misleading. I mean that in a very spiritual sense, I am referring to the inter-connectedness of all things. It's not just one person's name - it's everybody's name, all at once, all the time.

05: Fwunk

Before we moved to Amsterdam, I sold my drum set, my bass, and finally gave Les his guitar and amplifiers back. But before I did that, I recorded a little bit of each instrument for posterity. This song is what happened when I chopped all those samples up and tried to make a song.

06: Say Fum-ba-ta

The voice was recorded in a hotel room in San Francisco using the little built-in microphone on my iBook. Who needs a recording studio these days?! The bridge sounds like The Prodigy to me - I think it's another one of those

little things that has subconsciously crept into my songs. Could I get sued for subconscious sampling?

07: Beatbox

I beat-boxed a little bit in Protools, chopped it up into individual samples, and then re-programmed everything in Reason. Props to Russell for the little voice samples, which were recorded for a website about DVD players. Here's to all my Brit homies in the ATLI (all 1 of them).

08: Demregular Trademark

All praise to Fela, the king of afro-funk. *Trademark* was completely inspired by Fela Kuti. In keeping with the inspiration, this one needed some politically fueled lyrics. I got those from the Pennsylvania Quakers, of all places. At the beginning of America's latest violent incursion into Iraq, I was furious, but I couldn't properly express how I felt. Then I saw it neatly summed up on a message board in front of the original Meeting House in Philadelphia: "There is no way to peace. Peace is the way."

09: Patterstorm

I'm going to geek out now and attribute this song to Reason 3.0 - I got the new software, and this is what came out of playing with my new toy. It actually started with the brushes-on-snare-drum jumble that is now at the start of *Patterstorm Redux*, but once I found that modulated synth sound, it took on a life of its own and became the song that you hear now.

10: Degree 180

This is another track that took a long time to graduate from a 4-bar loop into a full-fledged song. It is not really interesting as far as melody and progression goes, but I love the beat, and there's just enough stuff going on to keep it moving along for the whole song. Maybe it will make a good background track for a movie someday. All the voices were recorded in 2005 during a trip to Indonesia for my wedding. Thanks to the Stricklins, Coxes, and Hudsons for (unknowingly) contributing.

11: Patterstorm Redux

See *Patterstorm*. Someday, I'd like to put an album of hip-hop beats out on Creative Commons, and then let MCs have at it, and use it however they see fit. This track will be on there.

12: Bis Aria

More fun with the sampler! *Dark light leaves float down field, paper float stream*. I recorded these words sung at random pitches, then sequenced them later to make a melody. You figure out what it means. It's a haiku riddle!

13: The Theory of Live

Another purposely bad-ass song. Clocking in at 210 BPM, I could never fit this into a live set, which is a shame. I'd love to hear that growling bass modulation in a big, echo-ey hall.

14: Klee International

Written on an airplane, named after the artist, and tweaked whilst sitting up in bed during a late-night bout with insomnia. Sounds like it, huh?

Fumbata thanks:

Elli and Nick, for putting up with the noise, and for always supporting my all-consuming hobby. To all those I've mentioned in the liner notes, you've had a direct and positive impact on the music here. Special thanks to Grace Renshaw, for bravely performing my admittedly odd vocals. Props to the street artists who appear on the cover: thank you for knowing the difference between art and a tag. Peace, love, and happiness to anyone who listens.





Recorded between 2002 and 2006.
All composition, instrumentation and
production by Clay Stricklin, unless
otherwise mentioned.

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