



Resurrected Melodies: Bruce Moody's Musical Journey Across Decades

by patrickdonders



During the pandemic, [Bruce Moody](#) revisited songs he had begun in the 1980s. Working comfortably at home in his new studio, free from time constraints, he meticulously 'restored' and creatively embellished these pieces. The outcome is a rejuvenated and distinctive sound that beautifully mirrors two incredibly creative eras, separated by four decades.

You can discover 'I'm Gonna Tell Her Tonite' featured on the [Best Power Pop of 2024](#) Spotify Playlist.

Can you take us through the creative journey of bringing this album to life? What were the key milestones, challenges, and breakthroughs you experienced along the way?

Initially, I didn't set out to create a new album at all. During the spring of 2020, the Covid pandemic was starting to present itself as something very serious with no end in sight. I decided that if I was going to have to quarantine until the medical community got a handle on things, I was going to occupy myself creating music.

For starters, I completely re-did my studio with a nice Digital Audio Workstation. I had recently been going back through a lot of my old reel-to-reel demos and studio tapes, and I found a couple of songs from the mid-1980's that I thought might be fun to bring some new life to them. I re-imagined a lot of the song's existing parts and then worked with the arrangements with my new recording system as a work tool to experiment with different sounds and instruments.

After I got the basic music tracks recorded for those two new songs, I started working on the lead and harmony vocals. It had been a while since I played in a band and done live gigs and I didn't know if my voice would be up to it. I spent some time working on my singing and just trying different things to see if I could improve my vocal style.

Since there were no time constraints, I just took my time and made a few modifications here and there on how I would otherwise normally approach recording my vocal part. In the end, I was really happy with the results on those two songs! I went back to my old tapes and repeated the process, again, taking the time to experiment with the instruments, melodies and vocal. IT was during this time that I had a couple of health challenges that I had to deal with, not the least of which of contracting Covid three times! Before I knew it, three years had passed, and I had twelve songs recorded. So, I thought, "Well, I guess I'm recording an album now!" (laughs)

How would you describe the evolution of your sound in this new album compared to your previous works? Were there intentional shifts in style or themes?

With my new digital recording system, I was able to explore the possibilities of using different sounds and combinations of sounds more fully, due to having a limitless number of tracks available to record on. My earliest recording efforts in

the late 1960's consisted of having a friend borrow his dad's reel-to-reel tape recorder, setting everything up in someone's basement and having the band play and sing live while the songs were recorded.

After that, we recorded in a four-track studio, a major luxury in those days because you could come back and record the vocals after you had recorded the basic instrumental tracks. Over the years, we had eight, sixteen and twenty-four track capabilities, which gave you even more creative freedom. Flash forward to 2021 and I now had a Digital Audio Workstation with an infinite number of tracks to work with! This was most welcomed, as I did most of the instruments and vocals on the album. I could also take my time and experiment with different instruments like steel drums, synthesizers, brass instruments, strings, sitars; any number of things. It was very liberating!

Albums often involve collaboration with various musicians and producers. Could you shed light on how these collaborations contributed to shaping the album's identity?

My long-time friend and contemporary Terry Carolan was immensely helpful in crafting this batch of songs into a legit album. Terry's advice on all sorts of things relating to my new digital recording system, from advice on various plugins, and especially mixing techniques, was crucial to the project's completion. Terry also played a couple of cool guitar parts and did a couple of nice harmony parts on the record. Jeff Tracy from Blue Cartoon contributed a couple of great guitar tracks. Kei Sato from Japan's The Choosers did a smokin' Rickenbacker guitar part on 'Keep It Together'! Also, George Palmer, who played keyboards in my very first band, sent me some very powerful piano tracks for 'Shy Girls' and 'One By One'.

I'm incredibly grateful to these guys for their contributions to the album! The wonderful thing about recording digital music, considering geographic distances and especially when the pandemic was in full force, is that these guys could send me their individual parts over the Internet that I could just drop into the mix as newly added tracks.



While you can't dictate how people interpret your music, are there specific elements you wish to highlight that set your songs apart?

I've always tried to have interesting themes and melodies in my songs that complement everything else. I want my songs to be musically interesting. I work hard on creating lyrics that tell compelling stories. I also like altering otherwise conventional sounding instruments into something completely different; like playing a guitar line and then doubling that line note for note with a melodica, or

even a kazoo. It adds an extra musical texture that wouldn't be there if one or the other were just used by itself.

I had the most fortunate opportunity to work with Buddy Holly's producer/manager Norman Petty in 1979 and 1980. Norm once said "Always try to leave a little surprise towards the end of your song, or even during the fade out, that the listener hasn't heard elsewhere in the song; something they're not expecting to hear." He also told me something once during a session that has always stuck with me: "An artist creates his art with the tools he has available to him at the time." I will never forget that!

Was there a particular moment or experience that struck you, signaling that you were onto something special with this project?

Here's something cool thing that happened during the recording process. My dog Copper likes to hang out in the studio with me when I'm recording. On one of the last songs I recorded for the album, a song called 'Turn Away', Copper was laying down under the mixing desk while I was doing a vocal take. At the perfect emotional moment of the song, Copper howled and barked in time with the music! At any other time, the take would have been ruined. But when I listened to the playback afterwards, it seemed like he knew exactly what he was doing, so I left it in! It's great when those fortuitous things present themselves that you couldn't have otherwise planned for! Of course, Copper is included in the Special Thanks section on the CD! Good dog!

At some point, I realized that there was a really nice, natural flow going on with creating this album. The songs sounded like all the parts were being performed by an actual band playing together, verses a guy recording a solo album playing all the instruments himself. The special guest players certainly helped that a lot. But I was also hearing something in the rough mixes that I really liked. Something a little different from my last album. I wasn't even sure that this album could be called Power Pop. I was speaking with a friend about this as I was mixing the album and he said he thought the songs on PopCycle, if anything, sounded more like "Power Pop Plus!" I laughed when he said that, but I really like that term!

Among the gigs you've performed, which one holds an indelible place in your memory and why does it stand out?

In 1983, we did a gig opening for The Beach Boys at a Spring Break concert on South Padre Island, Texas. Just before the show, I had lunch with Mike Love and then they put us into these open Jeeps and started driving us towards the stage along the beach! The driver was hitting all these dips in the sand while trying not to run over any sun bathers! We got stuck in pedestrian traffic with people walking along the beach to the concert and we ended up driving partly into the ocean to get to the stage! We were a little late arriving and we had to go on-stage immediately. As we were walking up the ramp, my bass tech said, "Dude! There are over 60,000 people out there!" The concert was videotaped for MTV, and we sounded like we were playing at twice our normal speed. They put us on a small plane and flew us to Brownsville, Texas for a late show in a club there. We flew back to South Padre the next morning and started shooting a video for MTV at 8am. We finished about 4pm, went back to the hotel, showered, ate, then got into those Jeeps again so we could go open for A Flock of Seagulls! Today, it feels like those two hectic days were compressed into about two hours! (laughs!) I have quite a few unique memories like that!