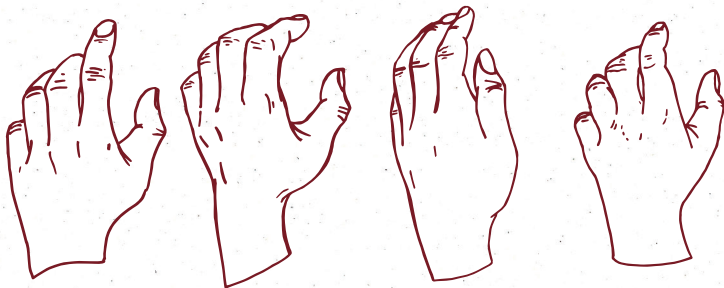


Greedy Magicians II - Return of the Idle Drones



In memory of Walter Hampson

This album was recorded at Pinhole Studios which is inside Wellington Mill in Ancoats, Manchester. In 1860 inside that same mill, Walter Hampson died whilst at work. He was 11 years old. The Coroner's report describes how he was seen to get into a teagle (a hoist/lift) and pull himself up. When he came down again he attempted to stop the teagle but failed. It went up again, and he, in jumping out, so injured himself that he died in the Infirmary on the following day. A verdict of "accidental death" was returned. It's worth remembering that fortunes were built on the labour of children like Walter. In many cases that wealth sustains their descendents to this day. Same old story.

Credits

Greedy Magicians II - Return of the Idle Drones
Matt Hill featuring James Youngjohns

Performance

Matt Hill : Vocals, Guitar, Percussion
James Youngjohns : Guitar, Lap Steel, Harmonium, Organ, Percussion
Adam Gorman : Piano

Songwriting

All songs written by Matt Hill
'Strike' and 'Build us Something More' were both originally written in 2015 during my time as songwriter-in-residence at The People's History Museum, Manchester.

Production & Recording

Recorded in March 2021 at Pinhole Studios, Manchester.
Produced by Matt Hill & James Youngjohns
Engineered and Mixed by Adam Gorman
Mastered by Russ Hepworth-Sawyer at Mottosound Ltd.

Artwork

Original Greedy Magicians sleeve design by K.Craig
Updated 2021 Cover design by David Armes
Design and layout by Jacob Kirk
Letterpress printing by David Armes at Red Plate Press

Greedy Magicians II -

Return of the Idle Drones

In 2012 I recorded an album of political songs called Greedy Magicians. I did it live in a Salford church in front of a live audience. I'd originally planned to do this sequel album in exactly the same way but pandemic lockdown put an end to that idea. So instead I teamed up with James Youngjohns, one of the musicians on the original album, and we did it live in front of no audience. What you can hear is the sound of the two of us sat in a room (two metres apart) and playing the songs as if we were live. This is a companion to the original album - many of the songs match the themes of the first record. Sadly 10 years on, the Greedy Magicians are still playing their conjuring tricks.

Matt Hill (Summer 2021)



King of Liars

A song for the post-truth era

There's something lurking out there I can't see
I don't even know its name but it sure as hell knows me
And there are lies - as many as the stars in the skies

A new world of machines is on the rise
the old order is fading and the sun burns through our eyes
and there are lies - as many as the stars in the skies

They're escaping from a mouth that just discovered it can shout
Trolling from the lips that dribble poison as they drip in the reign
In the reign of the king of liars

The king of liars, the king of liars,
Lies, lies, lies, lies, he king of liars

So scared of the future, we looked back
In search of golden summers that never came to pass
and there are lies - and some we chose to brighten up our skies

Proof has proven nothing, truth's not true
There's no evidence, it's evident justice isn't just
and there are lies - as many as the stars in the skies

Making Sense of the War

A song set in Nottingham in the years following 1945

He came back from the fighting to find he'd won the peace
A new house from the council, an indoor lavatory
And she'd find him in the parlour all hours of the night
Still on manoeuvres, with his dagger at his side

Making sense of the war, Making sense of the war
Making sense where there was no sense before

He tended his allotment he found a bombed out window frame
and built himself a greenhouse and grew tomatoes up a cane
He planted roses in a bucket He'd bring one home for Lil
She'd put it in a milk bottle, pride of place on the window sill

Making sense of the war, Making sense of the war
Making sense where there was no sense before

Sometimes fumes from the soap factory would catch upon his breath
And all the rendered fat and the tallow smell, they spoke to him of death

And then she'd always find him down by the railway lines
Just staring at the wagons lost in the corner of his mind
But Lil would guide him gently she'd say "C'mon now duck,
We'll have none of that, let's go home it's quiet there,
I'll pop the kettle on"

Making sense of the war, They're making sense of the war,
Making sense where there was no sense before

The Mob of Righteous Fury

A song about the fear of outsiders and how somethings never change

In 1645 in the English Civil War
They built a ducking stool by this waterfall
And when the moon is clear
you can feel the fear
Of a woman drowning
as her neighbours cheer

Bring me her head
Bring me her eyes
Bring me her soul
We'll hang it high
There'll be no judge, there'll be no jury
Just the mob of Righteous fury

In 1848 a gypsy caravan
Appeared one day on the village green
But as the morning came
In the dying flames
The villagers raked their bones away

Bring me their heads
Bring me their eyes
Bring me their souls
We'll hang 'em high
There'll be no judge, there'll be no jury
Just the mob of Righteous fury

In 1968 somewhere near Birmingham
A politician spoke to a crowded room

He said they're not like us
They're all no good
You're going to drown In a river of blood

Just last week on a local facebook page
Was a photograph of some old bloke's face
he'd been hanging round
the edge of town
He's not from round here
Let's hunt him down

Talking It Out

A song about the super rich

Inside the Hotel Sputnik in the former republic
It's all coming unpicked as they're talking it out
The People's Messiah, the climate denier
He's singing through the wire as they're talking it out

Whilst the Sheikh and the Baron load up zeros on his balance
While he's in the Sultan's palace and they're talking it out
Where the young serve old, they just do as they're told
Once you've showered in gold you'll soon be talking it out

Spends his weekends on a super-yacht
somewhere off the coast
It's so hard to be a businessman these days
With the swipe of a smartphone consider this a loan
From one man to another from one man to his brother

We're just talking it out, we're just talking it out
This is how the world goes round

And here's a minor royal, snorting coke, selling oil
He's so steadfast and loyal he's talking it out
Behind a fence made from razors, he's got a truck full of tazers,
He's flogging missiles and lasers he's just talking it out

Drinking whiskey that's older than that girl he left upstairs
It's hard to negotiate these days
He makes a phone call to the brethren
sings the praises of his host
From one man to another, from one man to his brother

We're just Talking it out, we're just Talking it out
This is how the world goes round

Times Are Getting Tough

A song about living with chronic ill health

I can't go to work this morning
And the work won't come to me
Then neither will the money
I don't own a money tree

So most days I try
But I'm not gonna lie
Right now I feel like giving up
Cause times are getting tougher
Times are getting tough

And if I'm not there tomorrow
He told me don't come back
He doesn't like folk over 40
I'm pretty sure of that

So most days I try
But I'm not gonna lie
Right now I feel like giving up
Cause times are getting tougher
Times are getting tough

Tramadol, co-codamol
Get me through the day
But all the same this chronic pain
Never goes away

And then I think about my Nanna
Cause Nanna had it rough
Even when she had the cancer
She never once gave up

So most days I'll try
But I'm not gonna lie
Right now I feel like giving up
Cause times are getting tougher
Times are getting tough

Strike

A song about the Bryant & May match strike of 1888

They gave her roses on the day she turned fourteen
When the colour of the sunrise was the only bloom she'd ever seen
'Cause from 6am to 8pm she never saw the sky
But she told the world the reason why

And the girls gave her courage when the doubt and fear set in
When the men said you'll get nowhere silly girl you'll never win
When the Foreman docked her wages because she wouldn't testify
She told the world the reason why
Together they screamed it to the sky

When you strike you make a light
A flame that burns so bright
And they lit it tenderly just to see what it would be
and it just went like tinder

It's hard to turn your voice from a whisper to a shout
When the air is full of poison and your head is full of doubt
And when the shareholders have plenty then the workers will scrape by
But you told the world the reason why
And together they screamed it to the sky

Born to Rule

A song about a Bullingdon bully

He walks on luscious carpets through the hallowed halls
And in his father's footsteps he can never fall
Privileged entitled superior and cruel
But there's not a shred of doubt
He was born to rule

From Eton to the City smashing glass and breaking laws
Leaves a trail of destruction to deny he ever caused
He becomes adept at stabbing backs telling tales out of school
But there's a shred of doubt
He was born to rule

But he's never scrubbed a toilet
He's never wiped away the dirt
He's never done the washing up
He's never ironed a shirt

He thinks nothings wrong in laughing
At the suffering of fools

But there's not a shred of doubt, Not a shred of doubt
There's not a shred of doubt he was born to rule

Scraps

A song about the myths and lies of aspiration culture

I woke up this morning
I rolled over and went back to sleep
And when I woke up this afternoon
And stumbled to my feet
I turn on the telly
and the first thing that I saw
Was some overpaid privileged prig
sneering at the poor

You see life is never easy
It's not fair and it's not kind
And it's not a bed of roses
And it's not an easy ride
They all seem to prosper
Oh they're all doing fine
But the rest of us can whistle
For the scraps they leave behind

Now they say dream big and you can have
All that your hearts desire
You've simply got to want it enough,
you've got to work hard, be a trier
Well I've put in the hours
Oh believe me I've worked hard
But there still some months when the leccy bill
Goes on the credit card

Now I don't believe in heaven
or that a better world awaits
And if the meek are gonna inherit the earth
It's getting kind of late
Cause I know some good good people
Sleeping out there on the streets
Whilst some racist tweeting rent-a-gob
Has the whole world at their feet

Same Old Story

A song about the recurring themes of history

The rich get richer, the poor stay poor
I'm sure you've all heard this before
The same old families, the same old tricks
The same old targets, the same old hits

It's the same old story, the same old song
We keep righting the same old wrong
Down the centuries whatever changed
Those vested interests always stay the same

If the King needs gold he starts a war
Raises an army from the poor
If the rich need oil they start a war
I'm sure we've all been here before

If your bank needs bailing? You know the score
You need a scapegoat? Blame the poor
If you get caught red handed? Just change the law
I'm sure we've all been here before

The End of the World is Here

A song about the apocalypse

You'll never see it coming, you'll only feel the wake
Keep watch upon the future keep your shoulders to the gate
Cause you'll only hear the sirens once you're diving in the lake
and the end of the world is here

I only know that distance cause I have walked the miles
I opened up the safe I shredded all the files
But I never danced with justice cause the judge fixed the trial
and the end of the world is here

And everybody knows it's clear
And everyone can see it's nearly here
It's everything we feared
But no one wants to be the one to say it's over

So listen to my warnings heed everything I've shown
Keep my words upon you carve them into stone
Cause one day all this data will be blown away like foam
when the end of the world is here

Build Us Something More

Another song about the years following 1945

The things we saw
In the wastes of war
we saw our cities made from rust
Our sweethearts turned to dust
And we swore we'll build us something more

The things we heard
Such harrowing words
we heard the last rites the wedding bells
Goodbye good luck farewells
And we swore we'll build us something more

We'll build us something good
Build us something great
And we swore we'll build us something more

Once the sounds of sirens filled these rooms
Now the cries of a million babies boom
The future's here, it's here right now
and we must build our own way out of here
We must build, build, build, build

Finally it's still
And the axis tilts and we build
Build Hospitals and roads, communities and homes
With no one left behind, with no one left alone
From the cradle to the grave, for the sacrifice they made
There must be something good, there must be something great
A golden welfare state, with food on every plate
And we swore, we'll build us something more
From the horrors of this war we swore

We'll build us something more

Two Bonus Tracks

Only available on the CD

Poundshop Albion - Written by Matt Hill

Shoulders of Soldiers - Written by Kirsty McGee

