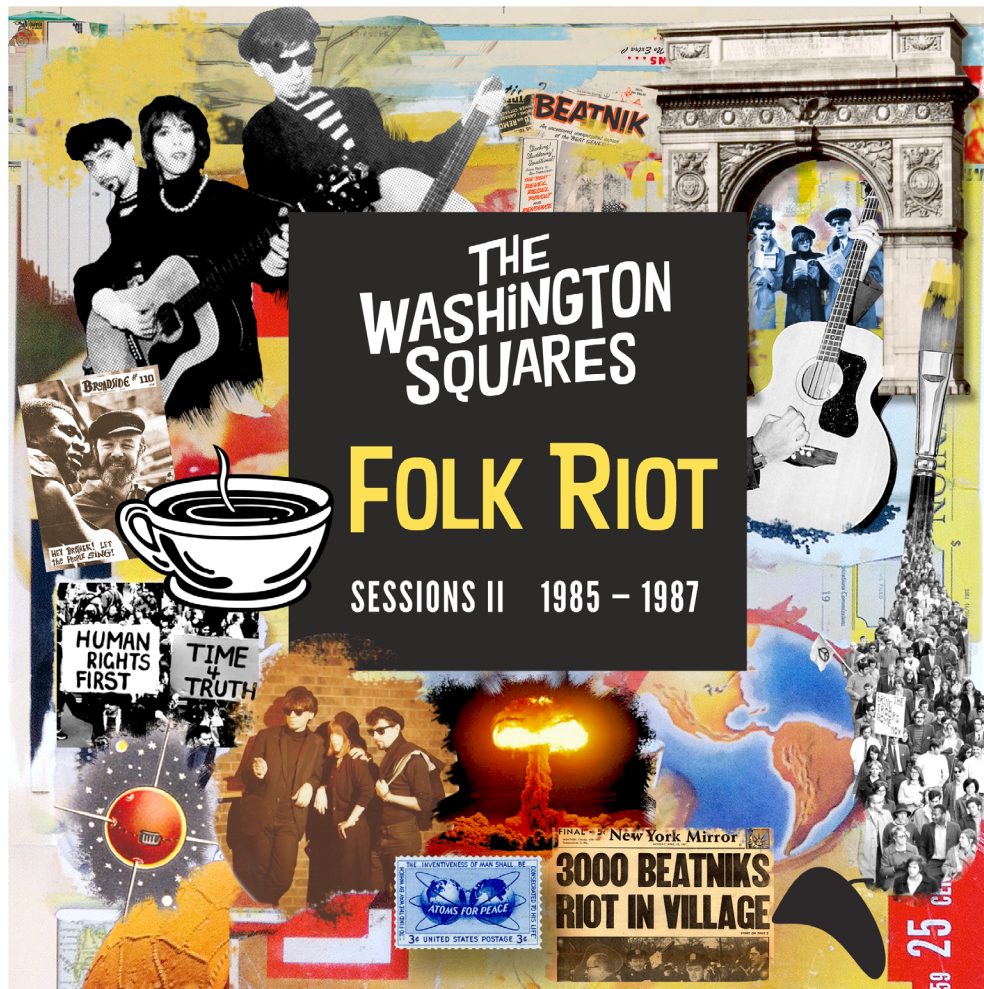


THE WASHINGTON SQUARES

FOLK RIOT

SESSIONS II 1985 – 1987



10,000 Watts of Folk

by Trixie A. Balm
(aka Lauren Agnelli)



By 1985, we Washington Squares, having worked, sang and played our way through the '80's Greenwich Village folk scene fray, were ready to record. The record company interest was there and soon serious recording contracts would dangle before our fresh (very fresh!) young smirks. First, the stalwart folkie label, Vanguard records-- recently restructured in 1985-- took a chance and had the Squares in to record some demo sessions. Though Vanguard liked the folk styled songs we penned, they especially dug the pop song parodies that we played at every show as our "MTV News."

Our Village audiences knew us to be not just musical, smart and serious, but often wild with comedy. Taking those traits onstage felt natural, especially in the politically fraught times of the Reagan era. Messages of social-political import, veiled in fastball comedy schticks, coupled with serious folk gave us our launch and helped us earn enough to keep our home launch pads.

Presented here for the first time are the song parody recordings from those years at the Vanguard sessions, including "I Ain't Kissing You," "Girls Just Want to Have Fun," "Bad Songs," "99 Blue Volkswagens," "When Doves Cry" and a few more.

Back to the dangling recording contracts: the somewhat hard and fast rule of the music business goes something like this: "You're either a comedy act or a serious artist," implying that a career in musical humor is lesser, and other, or "straight" material, is the greater path.

Along the way, our comrades included hip music deejay Meg Griffin, who was on hand to party and to introduce the band for our "Live at CBGBs" recording sessions with producer Mike Thorne for the A&M label.

Alas, that deal fell through. . . though the sessions remain, with Tom, Lauren, Bruce and Billy

playing "cover" songs as diverse and influential as the Statler Brothers' "Flowers on the Wall,"

Alas, that deal fell through. . . though the sessions remain, with Tom, Lauren, Bruce and Billy playing "cover" songs as diverse and influential as the Statler Brothers' "Flowers on the Wall," Richard Hell's "Love Comes in Spurts," Lou Reed's "Sweet Jane," and Johnny Thunders' "Chinese Rocks."

Having somewhat mastered those formative nuggets, we Squares upped the ante by rewriting classic folk songs like "Old Paint" (addressing the gentrification issue in Greenwich Village with the chorus "Drive around, little tourists, drive around real slow / See the last of the Village, it's ready to go"). So what if the non-commercial leftist politics of the Washington Squares clashed with our one-time pal, Mayor Ed Koch, who'd brought the band along to play a few parties at Gracie Mansion (reminding Ed of his salad days at Washington Square Park and the legendary "Folk Riot," no doubt)?

Our hope for a 1985 session now turned to 1986. Rebels to the core, we Washington Squares found ourselves next in Nashville, Tennessee, working with David Malloy, a hitmaking producer friend of the Gold Mountain Records VP who was trying to figure out if they could get a hit with the Squares. "Can't Stop the Rain" resulted-- from a typical lunchtime Nashville songwriting-session-by-committee: five songwriters, one room, one hour, one song. Boom! However, with its current club synth sounds and disco-beat track with no harmonies, the resulting production, once sent back north, didn't sound at all like the Washington Squares. Alas, too slick!

Back in NYC at producer Mike Thorne's studio, the Washington Squares recorded an extended play version of our political tour-de-force, "You Can't Kill Me." Celebrating the spirit of human rights and the dignity of all people, the song resonated thematically -- but the production, again, didn't sit well with the music suits: how can a folk band do a club/dance mix? These sessions also were passed over.

Meanwhile, due to our leftist leanings and omnipresence in the Village, activist Abbie Hoffman met with we three Squares and co-wrote a theme song for his new live radio show, "Radio Free U.S.A.": heard here for the first time since the debut show back in 1986 at the Village Gate.

At last, in 1987, Gold Castle/Polydor records who DID sign us to a deal found the perfect sound though producer Mitch Easter (of the group Let's Active-- he also recorded REM's initial sessions) who gave to us our debut album. In the legendary Electric Lady Studios, we Squares recorded song after song, sticking to our left leanings and folkie roots while electrifying our music with a bit of passion, energy, and a freshness hitherto unknown to us.

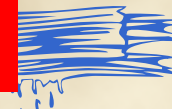
"10,000 Watts of Folk" is what we Washington Squares termed our rock-folk sound. . . and as we blazed our way across the U.S.A., we played full houses in LA, Atlanta and Chicago and everywhere in between. For me, meeting Studs Terkel in Chicago and talking on his show was just as much of a highlight in life as was belting out a chestnut like "Somebody to Love" onstage at Chicago's Park West for a live radio concert.

So party on, friends, like it's 1989 -- the rest is yet to come.

—Liner note essay,
"Folk Riot,"
by L.E. Agnelli



1. I AIN'T KISSING YOU (0:54)
VANGUARD STUDIOS, NYC
September 1985



Vanguard, an important folk label during the '50s and '60s was sold in 1985. Vanguard sold off their classical collection and reissued their folk and then started looking for new acts. With a bunch of well known original Vanguard producers in the control room: they examined us carefully here. First they liked the Squares folk and originals but they really wanted the band to do their well-known parodies-- which the Squares recorded here. To keep Squares audiences, especially the folkies, somewhat current with pop, the Squares would present their version of "the MTC News" at every concert-- some currently charting pop songs with a bit of news in them. So if the stuff seems very '80s here-- it is. As always-- Vanguard couldn't figure out if the group was serious or a parody. Since the Squares were, by then, selling clubs from coast to coast-- they didn't understand why people (the suits that controlled recording) didn't understand them. The suits always told the Squares "hey look- it's either this way or that way." So, since most of these record execs are now either out of it or have given up, and the only ones left standing are you Squares aficionados, therefore... here's this way AND that way.

There's a sore on the top of your lips
And it's starting to look pretty bad
Late last week, when it spread to your cheek
I said something to make you so mad

I ain't kissing you at all
'Til that thing's gone away

(new words by Bruce Jay Paskow)

"MISSING YOU" By John Waite, Chas Sandford and Mark Leonard
© Sony/Atv Tunes LLC Obo Markmeem Music, WB Music Corp. Obo Fallwater Music, Alley Music A/C Paperwaite Music And Trio Music Company Inc Obo Paperwaite Music

2. GIRLS JUST WANT TO HAVE FUN (1:03)

VANGUARD STUDIOS, NYC
September 1985

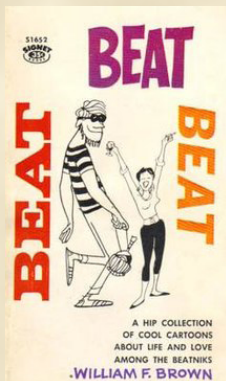
The privileged, well-educated singer songwriters in their 30s from the early '80s folk scene didn't seem to care for the alternative music scene a few blocks to the north. They didn't know Lauren as a Village Voice writer or from her band Nervus Rex, or Bruce from the Invaders, or Tom from his clubs and band (U.S.Ape). Tom was still helping run the popular Peppermint Lounge, had already established Irving Plaza and had just worked in bringing alternative music to the larger uptown Roseland ballroom with Gang of Four. Cindy Lauper had made her rounds through these venues and was involved with the Squares friend and fellow folkie, Steve Forbert. Lauren woke up one day with a "slow, sincere, folky a la Mary Travers" version of Lauper's joyous anthem in the tyle of "The Cruel War" in bringing this forward:

Some boys take a beautiful girl and hide her away
from the rest of the world

I want to be the one who walks in the sun,
and girls they want to have fun
That's all they really want, some fun

When the work and the
day is done,
girls they want to have
fun

Time after time
(big ending line
by Lauren Agnelli)
By Robert Hazard
©Sony/Atv Tunes Llc



3. BAD SONGS (1:16)

VANGUARD STUDIOS, NYC
September 1985

The Squares had a few bongo players prior to snagging Billy Picca. Viva Billy Picca! One was the Bush Tetras' Dee Pop, who Bruce renamed Deep Op. Anyway, the Squares were on the road with an early bongo player, Rex. Rex was an interesting fellow, because whenever an Elton John song came on the radio during a Squares road trip, he insisted on holding Lauren's hand - which Tom, Bruce, and especially Lauren had him cut this out immediately. This would make Rex even more emotional - which might have helped his stage presence, but earned him a ticket to bongo skid row in the Village. So there you have it: what initiated the Squares relationship with the music of Elton John. So Tom brought this forward:

I'm so broke... time to write
another bad song
When every little bit of coke
is gone
bad songs pay so much

I'll call up Sassoon... make
even more on the video
It takes a lot to be an Elton
John
and bad songs pay so much

(new words by Tom Goodkind)

"Sad Songs (Say So Much)"
By Elton John and Bernie
Taupin
©Universal-Songs Of
Polygrm Obo Hst Mgt Ltd
And Universal - Polygram
Int'l Obo Rouge Booze Inc



4. 99 BLUE VOLKSWAGONS (0:54)

VANGUARD STUDIOS, NYC
September 1985

Bruce was great at going Mel Brooks with German references. When the Squares played Toronto at a packed club gig on Queen Street, a pile of men dressed as Nazi officers sat in front of the Squares and Bruce just went off with top shelf Nazi jokes. The audience loved it - big chuckles, but Canadian/Nazis were not quite as entertained. They picked up their huge metal table and threw it onstage at the Squares-- a near miss. Well that seemed to spark WWII. A riot ensued at the club, the crowd ran for the door, police came, and the club was shut down. To top things off, all of this mayhem made a small news item in the local paper the next morning. The headline read "The Washington Squares Beat Nazis." Referring to his beloved 3 Stooges, Bruce called Tom and said, "this is the best press you could ever get for us." To this day, the clip can't be found.

99 Blue Volkswagens, a tape cassette of Nina Hagen
Going to my summer camp,
they all had copies of Mein Kampf
Looking like a super jock,
the all had ears like Mr. Spock

It is the evening of the day--
99 red luftballons go by
I believe in German ease.

(new words by Bruce Jay Paskow)

"99 Red Balloons" By Carlo Karges, Uwe Petersen,
and Kevin McAlea
©Emi April Music Inc Obo Emi Songs Musikverlag



5. LOOSE SHOES (0:39)

VANGUARD STUDIOS, NYC
September 1985

To loosen up for shows, Bruce and Tom would go out and see comedy shows, primarily to steal good one-liners. They were especially in love with Soupy Sales who was touring during these years. While Lauren was off vocalizing, Tom and Bruce would often go over topical lists of events where Tom would set up Bruce with a punch line. Both Lauren and Bruce would also borrow jokes from Tom's wife, Jill. Performing during a predicted hurricane, Bruce, borrowing from Jill called the now slight sprinkle a "tropical mood swing." When the Squares were on a double bill with Betty, Lauren was asked to sing a "lesbian song" the audience: she responded with a song Tom's wife taught her. In any case, the Squares loved Beach Boys harmonies, and toured with them, with Brian and Carl Wilson, to promote their first album. Tom's answer to a Reagan staffer stopping the Beach Boys from playing on the 4th of July is below:

Loose shoes,
loose shoes
Earl Butz is
singing the blues
Jesse, oh please
Why did you say
"hymies"

James Watt,
shut up

The Beach Boys are working, you're not
Loose shoes, small feat
Foot in the mouth disease
(new words by Tom Goodkind)



"Footloose" By Dean Pitchford and Kenny Loggins
©2010, Sony/Atv Melody And Sony/Atv Harmony

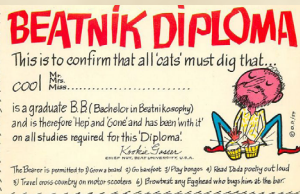
6. WHEN DOVES CRY (0:57)
VANGUARD STUDIOS, NYC
September 1985

Billy Crystal was already an established comedian when the Squares were asked to open for him on a tour of the Midwest in 1985. During the 2nd week of one nighters in the rust belt, Tom spotted Fleetwood Mac's Lindsey Buckingham in the audience. Lindsey and Kingston Trio's John Stewart were lined up to produce the Squares back in 1984 - a deal that fell through when A&M moved from the Squares to Susanne Vega. Tom asked Lindsey if he wanted to meet Billy Crystal, and soon Tom and Lindsey entered Crystal's dressing room. Crystal pointed to Tom and said "hey you - OUT!" Tom went to the Squares dressing room, crestfallen, and his pal Bruce took note. Bruce had memorized Crystal's entire routine and together, Tom and Bruce had an idea. For the next week, Billy Crystal was receiving "boo hiss" for some of his top jokes - the Squares already has these covered. It took about 7 days for Crystal to get this, and the Squares were removed from the tour and given warning from their agency, ICM. Hey - all in good fun!

Maybe I'm just too demanding (I want it)
Maybe I'm just like my father (daddy!)
Maybe I'm just like my mother (mommy!)
She's never satisfied (daddy!)
Maybe I should see a psychiatrist (shrinksville!)
Why do I hit the roof - when doves cry
(Bruce impersonating a dove crying)

(new words by Lauren Agnelli - with comments by
Bruce Jay Paskow & Tom Goodkind)

By Prince Rogers
Nelson
©Controversy Music
And Warner Olive
Music LLC



7. EVERY BREATH YOU TAKE... Etc. (1:00)
VANGUARD STUDIOS, NYC
September 1985

Sometimes there were simply too many pop songs to educate the Squares' folk crowds on, so they tried medleys.

Every breath you take, every move you make
Every breath you take, every move you make,
I'll be washing you (pass the soap)

Sweet dreams are made of these,
who am I to disagree
I travel the world for a piece of cheese,
everyone has a social disease

She works hard for the money,
so hard for the money
She works hard for the money,
so you'd better treat her right

(new words by the Washington Squares)

Every Breath You Take :20
By Sting
(c) Emi Blackwood Music Inc
Obo Magnetic Publishing Ltd.



Sweet Dreams (Are Made of This) :20
By David A. Stewart and Annie Lennox
(c) 1983, Universal Music-Careers Obo D.N.A. Ltd.

She Works Hard for the Money :20
By Donna Summer and Michael Omartian
(c) Sweet Summer Night Music And Universal Music Corp.
Obo See This House Music

8. CBGB Meg Intro (1:20)
CBGB, NYC
December 1985

KROCK's Meg Griffin (feedback by Bruce)

"Their very first record on A&M?" The Squares seemed to have a deal at the time - Mike Thorne producing. Would have loved to add the Tijuana Brass as horn section. This was their first of four "first albums" they recorded. Since our label (now Gold Mountain - Polydor/Universal) wanted it to be live at CBGBs - we decided to add some bluegrass (the BG in CBGB) style - which Billy (CB's main man) loved and review some of our friend's writings from our lives in the 70s. Getting Meg to intro us was essential as she brought punk and new wave to the airwaves first in NYC. Meg Griffin is an honorary Washington Square.



9. FLOWERS ON THE WALL (3:44)
CBGB, NYC
December 1985

I keep hearin' you're concerned about my happiness
But all that thought you're givin' me is conscience I guess
If I was walkin' in your shoes, I wouldn't worry none
While you 'n' your friends are worried about me I'm havin'
lots of fun

Countin' flowers on the wall
That don't bother me at all
Playin' solitaire till dawn with a deck of fifty-one
Smokin' cigarettes and watchin' Captain Kangaroo
Now don't tell me I've nothin' to do

Last night I dressed in tails, pretended I was on the town
As long as I can dream it's hard to slow this swinger down
So please don't give a thought to me, I'm really doin' fine
You can always find me here, I'm havin' quite a time

Countin' flowers on the wall
That don't bother me at all
Playin' solitaire till dawn with a deck of fifty-one
Smokin' cigarettes and watchin' Captain Kangaroo
Now don't tell me I've nothin' to do

It's good to see you, I must go, I know I look a fright
Anyway my eyes are not accustomed to this light
And my shoes are not accustomed to this hard concrete
So I must go back to my room and make my day complete

Countin' flowers on the wall
That don't bother me at all
Playin' solitaire till dawn with a deck of fifty-one
Smokin' cigarettes and watchin' Captain Kangaroo
Now don't tell me I've nothin' to do
Don't tell me I've nothin' to do

By Lewis Dewitt
(c) Unichappell Music, Inc.

10. SWEET JANE (4:00)
CBGB, NYC
December 1985

The Squares, all vets of the early punk scene downtown, paid tribute to an eclectic hodgepode of influences, including folk archivists and singers, plus the Iggy Pops and Lou Reeds of their own scene. The Squares always help spread the story (true or not - they were not bothered) that Sweet Jane is Jane Friedman. When Jane was a teen living with her family in the Village, beatniks would howl just outside her window till she shooed 'em away. Jane was an early booker of the Mercer Arts Center hosting the New York Dolls, then she started to "manage" Patti Smith — and the rest is punk history. In banjo-spangled folkie style, the Squares do this song for her.

Standin' on the corner, suitcase in my hand.

Jackie in his car, says Jane, who's
in her vest,
I'm in a rock n' folk band.

Sweet Jane, Sweet Jane, Sweet Jane

Ridin' a Stutz Bearcat, Jim,
y'know those were different times.
They studied rules in verse, ladies
rolled their eyes
Anyone had a heart,
they wouldn't turn around and
break it
Anyone had a part,
they wouldn't turn around and
fake it

Sweet Jane, Sweet Jane, Sweet Jane

Jack, he is a banker — Jane, she is a clerk.
They both save up their monies...
then they come home from work.

By Lou Reed
(c) Emi Blackwood Music Inc. Obo Oakfield Avenue Music
Ltd.

11. LOVE COMES IN SPURTS (0:55)
CBGB, NYC
December 1985

The Squares and Richard Hell were being interviewed by Meg Griffin uptown at the WBAI studio. During the Squares segment, Hell had said the Squares were "a sandwich" to which Bruce called Hell "a ham sandwich." A few years back, Tom had orchestrated a return of Hell at the Pepp, rehearsing his pogo stance he'd used while playing bass. We're so glad to have his Delaware mate Billy on drums.

I was a child who wanted love that was wild
Though tight as slow motion but crazed
with devotion

Love comes in spurts and it tangles and hurts
I was 14 and a half and it wasn't no laugh

Love comes in spurts - it hurts!

By Richard Hell
© Warner-Tamerlane Pub Corp.,
Warner-Tamerlane Pub. O/B/O Quickmix Music,
Warner-Tamerlane Pub Corp. Obo Dilapidated Music



12. CHINESE ROCK (1:28)
CBGB, NYC
December 1985

Bruce had kicked, he eventually contracted AIDS. He had started with a heroine substitute when the Squares started and did not know about the AIDS or being HIV positive until a marriage blood test during the Squares Electric Lady recording sessions. He kept this from nearly everyone - including the Squares - until his death. He never took a stand against drugs; he always enjoyed them and songs such as these. The Squares always supported legalizing drug use. Bruce would take legal injectable drugs on the road and would always be stopped and searched at airports and border crossing into Canada. Once he had some pot with him, and he was jailed in Chicago. The Squares legal pal, Chari Anhouse, help him out of jail, but the Squares had to do a gig in Missouri the next day without him. They recruited a Squares cover band who drove all the way from Chicago to do Bruce's parts. Bruce told us jail is unbelievably awful. He noted that the Chicago news station is always on in the jail, ticking away every minute, which feels like a lifetime.

Somebody calls me on the phone,
say "hey-man, is Dee Dee home?"
Do you want to take a walk,
do you want to go cop,
dO want to go get some Chinese Rock?"

I'm livin' on a Chinese Rock,
all my best things are in hock
I'm livin' on a Chinese rock,
everything is in the pawn shop

The roaches crawling up the wall,
my girlfriend's sleeping in the shower stall
It's hot as a bitch,
I should've been rich,
but I'm just fucking this Chinese bitch

By Douglas Colvin and Richard Meyers
© Pkm Music And Taco Tunes Inc

13. ST. MARKS PLACE (1:39)
CBGB, NYC
December 1985

This is Bruce's tribute to Trash & Vaudeville, which the Squares consider an amazing haberdashery. Who are you wearing? Trash & Vaudeville.

As I was walking St. Marks Place,
a maidenhead I did spy
A Mohawk haircut on her
head,
blue makeup on her eyes
She stood at Trash &
Vaudeville
looking at spandex pants
I sought after her
maidenhead,
I thought I'd take a
chance.

She said she was from
New Jersey,
or maybe it was Queens
Don't ever kiss a girl
like this,
you never know
where she's been

By Bruce Jay
Paskow
© Hargus
McSneakerbottom
Music



14. EVERY TIME YOU GO AWAY (1:42)
CBGB, NYC
December 1985

This really happened to Bruce and his junkie girlfriend.

Every time you go away,
you take a piece of furniture

(new words by Bruce Jay Paskow)

By Daryl Hall
(c) Unichappell Music, Inc.



15. SMALL TOWN/BORN IN THE USA (2:18)
CBGB, NYC
December 1985

Lauren set out writing this parody while Bruce then improved it into outer space with Tom's assist.

I live in Miami, it's very nice
I don't know why they call it Miami vice

I live in Manhattan, it's very large
I don't know why they can't,
have you live on a barge

I was born as a small clown
A little red nose in a small town
Got my fright wig in a small town
Saw my first circus and became a clown
My name is Bozo and I'm a small clown
I'm getting bigger and moving to a bigger town
I changed my name to Mellonhead
Because it seemed like a commercially opportunistic move

Born in the U.S.A.
Born in Armen-i-a
Born in Canada
Born in Canada
Bjorn in the U.S.A.
Bjorn, Bjorn in the Bruce driveway

I'm so Bjorn with the U.S.A
Playing tennis everyday

(new words by the
Washington Squares)

By: John Mellencamp
© Sony/ATV Music Publish-
ing LLC
By Bruce Springsteen
© Bruce Springsteen Music



16. OLD PAINT (3:00)
CBGB, NYC
December 1985

The Squares were invited a few times to play Gracie Mansion when Ed Koch was Mayor. The famous Greenwich Village Washington Square Park Polk Riot of 1961 put many folk singers in jail. The neighbors did not like that darned folk music and had the police restore quiet. But good ole Ed Koch defended the folk singers, and they were released. So the Squares figured, as a payoff, they would sing a song about the Village Tom had penned. Ed had already invited Tom into his Gracie Mansion bedroom to see his "big TV." Well, gentrification of the Village was not something Ed and his crew wanted to be serenaded with. In fact, Ed was on the wrong side of the issue. So went the relationship with the Squares.

I buy some old paint, feel like an old man
Going back to my apartment just to paint it up again
I work hard all my life, just to make ends meet
But one slip of a payment, and I'm out in the street

Drive around little tourists, drive around real slow
See the last of the Village, it's ready to go

Poe and Whitman at Pfaff's during the Civil War Strife
Mabel Dodge and John Reed fighting for the workers rights
Guthrie, Seeger, the beats, and the rock underground
All living life freer than the people uptown

Drive around little tourists, drive around real slow
See the last of the Village,
it's ready to go

When I die, please bury me deep
Close to my friends
on Bleecker Street
Who fed me when I's hungry,
quenched me when I's dry
In the heart of the Village, where my resting place lies

Drive around little tourists, drive around real slow
See the last of the Village, it's ready to go

By Tom Goodkind ©Hargus McSneakerbottom Music



17. CAN'T STOP THE RAIN (3:21)
NASHVILLE ALBUM SESSION,
Early 1988
David Malloy, producing

After the record label rejected the Square's LIVE AT CBGBs album with Mike Thorne, they shipped the band to Nashville, to work with the Gold Mountain VP's producer friend, David Malloy. Nashville? Seemed to work for Dylan. So David Malloy — who had a big hit with Eddie Rabbitt's "I Love a Rainy Night" — held a songwriting session with the Squares and they came up with another rain song (Rabbitt also wrote "Kentucky Rain" for Elvis in 1969). Thus, the Squares started recording their first album for the 2nd time. At any rate, they did co-write a pretty good tune:

Last rose of summer withered,
like the love gone in your eyes
Dry August nights just whimper and sigh
I feel the seasons changing,
like the summer you'll soon be gone
The days grow shorter as love goes by

Can't stop the rain, can't hide the pain
I see the flash, I hear the thunder
It's going to fall, despite it all
But I won't let it drag me under
No you can't stop the rain

You say it doesn't matter, acting like you don't care
I can tell you're keeping something inside
I know it's going to haunt you,
even after our love is gone
When you think of me, clouds will fill your eyes

Can't stop the rain, can't hide the pain
I see the flash, I hear the thunder
It's going to fall, despite it all
But I won't let it drag me under
No you can't stop the rain

By Lauren Agnelli, Richard Brannan,
Thomas Goodkind, David Malloy, and Bruce Paskow
(c) Almo Music Corp., Irving Music, Inc.,
Hargus Mcsneakerbottom, and Irving Music Inc.
O/B/O David Malloy Music Pub.

18. YOU CAN'T KILL ME (8:34)

NYC ALBUM SESSION,
January 31, 1986
Mike Thorn, producing

After the Nashville sessions were rejected by NYC as somewhat ludicrous ("that's not the Washington Squares!") - the band found themselves back in the studio in Greenwich Village with the great Mike Thorne - who was working a club/dance mix of "You Can't Kill Me" to start their 1st album off - the 4th session of the band's first album. This was very well received, but Gold Castle/Polygram-Universal wasn't going to commit the needed funds.

We ain't gonna read if you censor books
We ain't gonna pray to you old rich crooks
We ain't gonna live our lives to compete
Well you can kill yourselves, but you can't kill me

You can't kill me, you can't kill me
You can shoot, shoot, shoot, shoot but you can't kill me

I'm the southern man escaping for his life
South Bronx baby left alone at night
Hooker, bag lady, window washer, the thief
In jail for life, silenced with grief

You can't kill me, you can't kill me
You can shoot, shoot, shoot, shoot but you can't kill me

[80s news clippings, "Hand on the Plough" folksong,
"Song for My Father" quote]

I looked at him as I smiled my best
He strapped the leather across my chest
Pulled on the juice, full blast, away!
But I'm still alive, I'm here to say

You can't kill me, you can't kill me
You can shoot, shoot, shoot, shoot but you can't kill me

Escaping from South Africa or Philippine shores
Silenced by the death squads in El Salvador
Killed by the KKK in North Caroline
Assassinated in Frisco for a straight man's crime

You can't kill me, you can't kill me
You can shoot, shoot, shoot, shoot but you can't kill me
You can shoot, shoot, shoot, shoot

By Tom Goodkind
©Hargus McSneakerbottom Music

19. RADIO FREE U.S.A. (2:13)

THE VOLLAGE GATE, NYC
September 5, 1986
Abbie Hoffman radio show theme song

Abbie, reemerging from years on the run was a real friend of the band, and they all began to co-write. One tune "I Dreamed I saw Roy Cohen Last Night" was dirty as hell and never recorded (shame). Abbie landed a weekly nationally syndicated radio show on NYC's WBAI and asked the Squares to be his house band-- and this became the opening theme song.

You say there's no hope left and you gotta go straight
Today they take our rights while the people play
Each night they plot the war,
it's all gone down before

Radio free U.S.A., Greenwich Village, live today
Radio free U.S.A., coming your way through the C.I.A.

Dissidents, defectors, libelous planters, communists
Radicals, aliens, artists, spies and fugitives
Get off your ass and into action
Time to join a splinter faction

Radio free U.S.A., Greenwich Village, live today
Radio free U.S.A., speaking our minds and here to stay
Radio free U.S.A., on the air till they take us away
No way!

By Abbie Hoffman and the Washington Squares
©Hargus McSneakerbottom Music



20. Intro to TWO BROTHERS (1:22)

CBGB, NYC
December 1985

21. TWO BROTHERS (2:39)

ELECTRIC LADY, NYC
Album Session March 1987
Mitch Easter, producer

Finally, Gold Castle Records agreed to a producer for the Squares' first album: producer/musician Mitch Easter, who worked with the dBs, REM, and had his own '80s band, Let's Active. Easter was able to capture the authentic sound of the Squares that eluded all the other producers.

The following six songs were recorded for the Square's actual first album— at last! — and the record company really treated the band to a great long session at Electric Lady. This song was so popular at the Squares' respective sleep away camps and summer folk hootenannies that they loved bringing it out for a try. Lauren's vocal on the final verse always got to Tom.

Two young brothers on their way,
two young brothers on their way
Two young brothers on their way,
one wore blue and one wore gray

One wore blue and one wore gray,
fighting all along the way
The fife and the drum began to play
all on that beautiful morning

One was gentle, one was kind;
one was gentle, one was kind
One came back, one stayed behind;
a cannonball don't pay no mind

A cannonball don't pay no mind,
if you're gentle or if you're kind
Don't care 'bout the folks it left behind,
all on that beautiful morning

Two girls standing by the railroad tracks,
two girls standing by the railroad tracks
Two girls standing by the railroad tracks,
one wore blue and one wore black

One wore blue and one wore black,
waiting by the railroad tracks
For their lovers to come back,
all on that beautiful morning
All on that beautiful morning

By Irving Gordon
(c) Unforgettable Standards



22. I DON'T WANT YOUR MILLIONS MISTER (3:14)
ELECTRIC LADY, NYC
Album Session March 1987
Mitch Easter, producer



A great union song - and the Squares loved to play to strikers. On the way to a far off folk festival, the Squares noticed that airline attendants were striking. Then they saw many of their '80s folk heroes breaking the line to get to their jets. The Squares took out their instrument instead and started playing this song.

No I don't want, your millions mister;
I don't want your diamond ring
All I want is the right to live mister,
give me back my job again

We work to build this country mister,
while you enjoy a life of ease
You've taken all that we built mister,
while our babies starve and freeze
No I don't want, your millions mister;
I don't want your diamond ring
All I want is the right to live mister, give me back my job again

Well call me dumb if you wish mister,
call me green or blue or red
One thing I know for certain mister,
my hungry babies must be fed



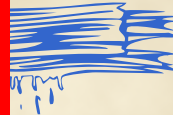
No I don't want, your millions mister;
I don't want your diamond ring
All I want is the right to live mister,
give me back my job again

No I don't want your cocaine mister,
I don't want your heroine
All I want is the right to live mister,
give me back my job again

No I don't want, your millions mister;
I don't want your diamond ring
All I want is the right to live mister,
give me back my job again

(last verse by Bruce Jay Paskow) By James Garland
(c) Figs. D Music, Inc. Obo Stormking Music

23. WHICH SIDE ARE YOU ON? (1:54)
ELECTRIC LADY, NYC
Album Session March 1987
Mitch Easter, producer



This is another great union song. The Squares despised Reagan and his conservative cronies working at breaking up unions, like the time the Air Traffic Controllers went on strike. The Squares picked up on union songs from many sources: folk singers like Utah Phillips, Pete Seeger, Dave van Ronk; histories of the Chicago Haymarket Riot; the Seattle clashes of the early 1900s; the songs & history of Joe Hill and the CIO; the songs of the Almanac Singers. They Squares located a copy of the Little Red Song Book and sang it loud & proud. They also loved writing singalong songs (Broadsides) for strikers, like the elevator workers at NYC: "someone's in the bedroom with Brademas, stealing all the money you make... someone's in the bedroom with Brademas, it is real estate." (To the tune of "I've Been Working on the Railroad" —John Brademas— who now has a building at NYU named after him, was the President of NYU at the time.)

Which side are you on, which side are you on,
which side are you on boy, which side are you on

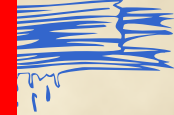
Our country stood for freedom
but now our freedom's gone
The time is right to stand and fight,
which side are you on
Which side are you on, which side are you on,
which side are you on, which side are you on

Oh workers can you stand it,
I don't know how you can
Will you be a lousy scab,
or stand up like a man or a woman
Which side are you on, which side are you on,
which side are you on, which side are you on

Don't scab for the bosses don't listen to their lies
Us poor folk haven't got a chance unless we organize -
tell me!
Which side are you on, which side are you on,
which side are you on, which side are you on - tell me!

(new lyrics by the Washington Squares)
Folk Song - Original Lyrics By Florence Reece
Lyrics ©The Bicycle Music Company

24. WALLS (5:26)
ELECTRIC LADY, NYC
Album Session March 1987
Mitch Easter, producer



The Squares had read about the heroism of Lech Walesa, who had formed the first independent trade union in the Soviet bloc - thereby winning him a Nobel Prize. There was a song these union workers sang, "Walls"; a Polish-speaking friend of a friend helped translate the song at Tom's pad. The song's bitter ending bookends the band's first album - mirroring the opening "New Generation" in that "every generation has to win it again."

He was a young and fiery man,
in darkness we followed along
His song it gave us the strength to fight,
as we prayed for the coming of dawn
We all lit candles and bowed our heads,
sang out together in hand
Singing the walls of this prison must tumble,
they must return into sand

These prison walls that hold us still
These whips and chains that break our will
The walls must tumble, tumble, tumble
We must bury this old world

So soon the song burned within
us,
a wordless tune alone
The message of a brand new dawn,
we shook from heart to soul
And so we played and sang and
clapped,
our hands like shots did applaud
The chain weighed down, the dawn
held back,
yet still we played along

These prison walls that hold us still
These whips and chains that break our will
The walls must tumble, tumble, tumble
We must bury this old world



Now brothers and sisters we knew we'd grown strong,
by the marching of thousands of feet
And we all sang a song to the coming of dawn,
as we stood in the dark city street
Shouting this one's with us and this one's against,
we toppled the statues of stone
But the singer was strong and he raised up his song,
even though he sang out alone

The even marching of the crowd
The young and honest men brought down
The walls are rising, rising, rising
Chains are swaying on the ground

Folk - Words by the Washington Squares
©Hargus McSneakerbottom Music

25. CAN'T STOP THE RAIN (3:34)
ELECTRIC LADY, NYC
Album Session March 1987
Mitch Easter, producer



(see #17)
Producer Mitch Easter - himself proficient on electric guitar - dug the Duane Eddy reverb chords that Bruce added to "Can't Stop the Rain," and stayed true to the Squares' sound and the spirit of the song.



26. YOU ARE NOT ALONE (4:05)
ELECTRIC LADY, NYC
Album Session March 1987
Mitch Easter, producer



This song came from the Nashville David Malloy sessions. The Squares had no idea who J. Snarz – the songwriter – was, and were at first resentful to be given a song penned by someone else. Once the arrangement came together and they sang the song a few dozen times, the Squares realized that 'You Are Not Alone' really worked, really made sense. It became a live repertoire staple, usually the second song in the set.

They've got the system, you're out on your own
They've got ways to make it seem like they're right,
and you're always wrong
They've got the power of the press behind them,
they can control what enters in our minds and
They can let your lonely heart sink like a stone,
but you are not alone you are not alone

There are many of us, walking 'round here,
carrying our scars
And we all know, what it feels like,
when the times are hard
We've got so many of us out there on our side,
we've got the numbers we just need to organize
So if you feel your spirit sinking grab the phone,
'cause you are not alone, you are not alone

It's ironic if you think about it,
they're just people too
They don't know it but the time has come
When the system's going to do it like they're doing you

You must admit that it's an education
but it's hard on a young one's dreams
It's no picnic finding out the folks you trusted were,
not quite what they seem
Now you know it but don't let your anger burn,
chalk it up to just another lesson learned
Rise above it and remember everywhere you go,
that you are not alone, you are not alone

By Jasey Schnaars (c) Nothin Like Music

27. WXRT INTRO Live Radio (5:43)
PARK WEST, CHICAGO, IL
July, 18, 1987



The band somehow was spreading the love of beatnik.

28. BULLGINE RUN Live Radio Concert (2:30)
PARK WEST, CHICAGO, IL
July, 18, 1987



This song always sounded kinda mixed up to the Squares – was the bullgine engine on rail or on ship? It appears that this working song of the sea neatly folked its way into the industrial age through rail. At least, that was the going interpretation of this rousing sea shanty that they heard on a Judy Collins album and proceeded to power up with seaworthy vocal harmonies and Tom's Deering long-neck electric model banjo.

Well the smartest clipper you could find,
heave away - haul away
Is the Margaret Evans on the Blackball Line
Clear away the tracks and let the bullgine run

Tell me now what you most done,
heave away - haul away
Everyday we're closer to home
Clear away the tracks and let the bullgine run

Well tell me now are you bound to go,
heave away - haul away
Off to Greenland where there's ice and snow
Clear away the tracks and let the bullgine run

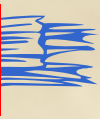
Tell me now are you bound to sail,
heave away - haul away
Off to Greenland to catch the wale

Well I thought I heard my Captain say,
heave away - haul away
In another week we will get more pay
Clear away the tracks and let the bullgine run

Tell me now what you most done,
heave away - haul away
Everyday we're closer to home
Clear away the tracks and let the bullgine run

(folk song)

29. SOMEBODY TO LOVE Live Radio Concert (2:30)
PARK WEST, CHICAGO, IL
July, 18, 1987



The Jefferson Airplane was and is a big inspiration on the Squares. Tom studied Jack and Marty, Bruce jammed with Hot Tuna, and Lauren figuratively cut her (vocalizing) teeth on singing Grace Slick.

And as an afterthought– once a Squares show completes – the band usually lets loose and picks favorites to play that may not necessarily be union or folk, like "In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida" which continues to be Billy Ficca's favorite Squares performance (in San Francisco headlining the Great American Music Hall).

When the truth is found
To be lies
And all the joy
Within you dies

Don't you want somebody to love
Don't you need somebody to love
Wouldn't you love somebody to love
You'd better find somebody to love, love

When the garden flowers
Baby, are dead, yes
And your mind, your mind
Is so full of bread

Don't you want somebody to love
Don't you need somebody to love
Wouldn't you love somebody to love
You'd better find somebody to love

Your eyes, I say your eyes
May look like his
Yeah, but in your head, baby
I'm afraid you don't know where it is
Don't you want somebody to love
Don't you need somebody to love
Wouldn't you love somebody to love
You'd better find somebody to love

Tears are running
They're all running down your breast
And your friends, baby
They treat you like a guest

Don't you want somebody to love
Don't you need somebody to love
Wouldn't you love somebody to love
You'd better find somebody to love

By Darby Slick
(c) Irving Music, Inc.



CREDITS

Produced by Tom Goodkind
mostly from stuff in his closet

Opening Liner Notes and Good Taste:
Lauren Agnelli

Mastering: Dubway Studios, FiDi, NYC
Spring '18

Art/design: @Marlene Weisman
From her Mac & outta her studio,
both in Brooklyn, NYC
www.marleneweismandesign.com
Instagram: @marleneweisman

Photography: at the lower Manhattan
darkroom of J.L. Goodkind

Bruce Jay Paskow passed in the
mid-90s and we miss him every day

His wife, artist Shary Flenniken,
assisted with this project acting on
his behalf

Much love to Bruce and Shary, and to
Matthew Male, and to J.L. Goodkind.

This is the second of three collections
and the fourth album by
The Washington Squares

See you next year for
Session III 1987 - 1990.

Meanwhile, don't be a stranger:
FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/WashingtonSquares/>
TWITTER: <https://twitter.com/WashSquares>

----- LA & TG
Greenwich Village
November 25, 2018

