



a L B U M o f m A N

Performed by:

Hugo: Bass and Acoustic Guitar

James: Drums

Marcus: Lead Guitar

Jon: Guitar and Vocals

The Creation Dream

It's Alive (The Philosophical Baby)

Unconditional Lie

All Suns Die

Known

Harden To Art

Taste of Doom

Being Human

Free Will

Air (We Have Come So Far)

Album of Man contains more positively human-based philosophising than its predecessor, *The God Album*, which was almost solely concerned with the dangers of religion. There is an overlapping theme regarding the importance of our humanity and how we should not to be deceived by irrelevant mythology in the modern world; however, this "sequel" of sorts has perhaps a broader, more hopeful, outlook.

We have come so far; why not a little farther.....

Recorded, Mixed and Mastered at Earth
Terminal Studios, Hampshire, UK by
Lewis Childs; April - August 2010.

The Creation Dream

Purest dream instantly conceived
Seven days make the weak
Cells divide, code propelled
An imagination is born

Warm hum, pervades prevailing atmosphere
Explore a womb, introverted inner space

From the moment that life was made out of nothing
In the absence of light, but still it finds a way

In the dreaming
The secret to creation

Rainbow of thought, sans prior knowledge
Perceive new shapes, new colours not yet seen

From the moment that life was made out of nothing
In the absence of light, but still it found a way

In the dreaming
Safe from outside influence
Forge a new year zero
Sum of the parts equal sentence

"The Creation Dream" essentially explores the path from conception to birth of a human being. One particular aspect is at what point a foetus begins to dream; an interesting idea since there would be no experience to draw upon and hence its imagination is completely pure. The lyrics were written about the time of the birth of my daughter, although I had an interest in the theory of dreaming in utero well before that.

Musically the song has heaviness yet with opportunities to breathe which is a bit of a new direction for the band. We had been known for fairly dense compositions but now the layers are starting to get peeled back.

It's Alive (The Philosophical Baby)

From the first breath is breathed a rare wisdom
It is not stained by any experience
Quite overwhelming
World to be discovered

All the right tools to learn the true story
Before it becomes a war of uncertainty
Base existence
Honest point to build upon

Wondrous time to ponder the master scheme
Imagine a beam of light to travel on
Endless prospects
What a time it is to be alive

"The Philosophical Baby" is the title of a book by Alison Gopnik which will raise your awareness regarding a young child's capacity to think and reason. The lyrics follow the purity of imagination philosophy from the opening track and expand it to the next stage of life, i.e. from the first breath of air to the end of childhood.

The "beam of light" is an homage to Einstein. In my opinion, one reason he was so successful as a scientist was his ability to imagine/visualise extreme aspects of the Universe, particularly what it would be like to travel at the speed of light; the mathematics comes later. Being able to tap into this kind of imagination is maybe the greatest asset humanity has and we should not forget it.

Unconditional Lie

In possession of a genuine sense
Presented with a question to ask
"Why is the sky blue?"
Answer points to providence, as if it is fact

In isolation what path would a child take?
There is a temptation to repeat the same mistakes

Loss of objectivity
Not close to a balance
Only report what you see, the rest is theory

Conflict of multiple ideologies
Damaging irrecoverably
Abusing your children with an unconditional lie

Just as a man loses the status of a hero
The day will come when a parent is fallible
Some things are rightly beyond their control
One thing that is not is this unconditional lie

In isolation what path would a child take?
There is a temptation to repeat the same mistakes

Slipping back into territory already covered at length by The God Album, this track is a case study in why religion is mental child abuse; because children are born helpless and trusting of their carers who would preach "theology" as statements of truth.

Consider this thought experiment: take a child to an island and raise him according to the best available information about the world, in a loving environment and where all his basic needs are met. Then, at a later age, introduce him to religious stories and present them as fact. He would consider you mad and in most cases would be repulsed rather than entertained by the tone of the tales.

The sad truth is that parents who, through later cynicism, barely believe the old stories themselves, still subject their own children to the same lies. It is a vicious cycle and one that can easily be broken by rational people. Give your children the benefit of your cynicism by letting them live a happy childhood away from religious influence.

If, in later life, they turn to religion for comfort and direction then the path is theirs to take. They will have made a personal choice. As children they make no such choice.

All Suns Die

Innocence is a blissful state
Hold on for as long as you can
Trap
Its purity

The day I first faced my mortality
Was the day I found out the Sun would die

All Suns Die

If it were possible to turn back time
To avoid the moment of discovering
The lie
Would you try?

The day I first faced my mortality
Was the day I found out the Sun would die
An end to childhood, which would start the journey
To build foundations for what I will become
The day I first faced my mortality
Was the day I found out the Sun would die

Watching a movie based on a book I loved as a child, "Where The Wild Things Are", brought back a memory from when I was 8 years old. I could recall my teacher writing a very large number on the black board which corresponded to when the Sun would expand to a red giant and destroy the Earth. I now know he probably wrote five billion years but it seemed longer so perhaps it was presented in days for dramatic effect. Either way there were a lot of zeros for an 8 year old.

That was the day I first realised I would die because if the Earth could be consumed in fire, so too would everything on it.

It is a truth that maybe we are never ready for. After all, the temptation of religion is that it solves the problem of dying, however, I do not recall being too upset at the time. It seemed like a really long way off.

Known

Could you have known?
In such a short time
Tragedy impacts so many lives

The weight of a soul
Cannot be lost
Energy back to the great reservoir

The burden may not
Become any less
For all of those left behind

Cruelty is blind
Not malevolent
There is no blame to assign

Death is just one ending
To open a beginning
But do not let them tell you what is next

It's hard to find comfort
From words in the dark
When there are they that don't make it home

The very worst hour
Of hollowness
Was standing alone in an empty..... room

Do not let the pain take you
Somewhere you cannot return

This is by far the most personal song I have ever written, although it is not about me but for a friend who lost his son at birth (it was not a complication with childbirth per se so thankfully his wife was fine). From my perspective the situation was even worse because their baby was due on almost the same day as my own, hence I have always had a bizarre guilt at my happiness versus their tragedy.

However, while the lyrics are not about my own experience, by coincidence they are directly relevant to my family, because I lost a brother soon after birth. So perhaps there is some therapy here on several levels.

As to where "Known" fits in with the overall theme of the album; dealing with loss is something every human has to face. Some of the ideas were reinforced by another friend who told me of his father's funeral and how it was fitting that, while there was a priest hovering around, that role was diminished, just as the father would have wanted. Death is a source of confusion and fear for most people; which is only natural. It is perhaps

misleading to have a line like "death is just one ending" but I am comfortable with it since no one knows what to expect and if death is final then there will be no pain and there will certainly be no eternal damnation either way.

I ended up cutting the last lines during the outro section (which is now instrumental only) because maybe the tone was too emotional for a heavy metal album. Here they are for completeness:

Father, it may not have been fair
But wherever I am, I wish to make it known
Your son will always be with you
These are the words I never had a chance
to say: I love you

These lines still choke me up so probably just as well there is no "bursting into tears" moment halfway through the album every time I listen to it!

Harden To Art

To change from one state or concept, move on
At its core: animal modulation

Harden to art as the cynicism starts

Rage grows, hate flows

Uncompromising, a strength and weakness
No will to bend will leave a broken mess

Make a transition from an angry young man
Or end up in the cold: lost

Hugo writes the grindcore songs for Monsterworks albums and I speedily pen some lyrics to fit the urgency. Harden To Art is some kind of oblique reference to the anger of youth and the transition we should all make to become more considerate individuals; which are the only type of people who should be allowed to have children and pass on their wisdom.

There is something deeply profound about the title "Harden to Art" but none of us know what it is, so if you work it out please call the band on 555 66627.

Taste of Doom

General talent, not to be overlooked
Underestimate good judgement
There will be times of snark hunts
And many more blind alleys
Or a quest for phlogiston
History is a colourful journey
Respect for real progress
It might still pull us back from the edge of doom

Masters of an age:
The anthropocene

Selfless acts are not so rare
Basic nature is not evil
Could perfection be a pipe dream?
With no heaven or utopia
Intrinsic, key values
Must change for a chance to be had
Education, critical thinking
End tradition for its own sake

Masters of an age:
The anthropocene
While the resources are there
So too is a threat: a taste of doom

I am intrigued by the idea that the age of mankind has a geological term: the Holocene; but that even this may have been superseded by a new age of modern man, due to our massive impact on the environment in the last 100 years. This is known as the Anthropocene.

Of course, this is just scientists doing what they do: categorising things. It is kind of amusing to be living in a transition period between theoretical epochs.

So that was the basis of the song. There are clear references to our relationship with the environment and the slippery subject of humanity itself. Are we good or bad? If you judge us by our actions there are a very wide range of interpretations.

Finally, the title comes from a very real possibility that we may have to experience a pretty serious, almost catastrophic, event before mankind wakes up to its fate and the prospects of survivability. We need a taste of doom to avoid us falling over the edge...which I suppose is the equivalent of eating a whole meal of doom.

Being Human

Prayer is a mask for the helpless
Hiding from the unknown that they have been told to fear

The proudest achievement is to experience when your child (thinks to) prove you wrong

Being human
A gift wasted by some
Being human
Give a thought to what that means

This short acoustic piece was written mostly by Hugo, rehearsed and recorded with a single mono microphone in my lounge, with a baby babbling and shaking a rattle in the background. A few acoustic layers and vocals were added later.

I hope that I can remember and respect the statement about being proud of being proven wrong by my child when it actually happens. I hope I am not too old and cynical by then.

Free Will

To test faith: tempt alternatives
Your devil is your potential....

A priest lies to protect a redundant view
Tho' never real it enslaved the world you knew
Men behind the curtain pull the strings
Open your eyes, learn for yourself

Why must tradition hold you back?
Why is what you have not enough for you?

For every child that died unnecessarily
There is a stooge that worshipped popularity
Perhaps one piece of the fiction could be true?
And that is this: free will

Every creed there ever was
Has nothing to hide behind
All faiths will dissolve
In the passages of time
If your god would punish you
Two thousand years of servitude
Perhaps he is no god
The god is you, (inside) free will

When the clouds have moved aside
You will see the puzzle gone

Forevermore resist the mythology
Criticise with what you can verify
A choice apart from blind faith:
The greatest sin of all

All faiths will dissolve

Free Will: Do we have it? This is the topic of many a theological/philosophical ramble and here is no different; i.e. it gives no useful answers. However, the perspective of the song is that, yes, we do. There is no predestination and if we are able to think for ourselves miraculous things can be achieved.

Air (We Have Come So Far)

From the Earth, to the air
To the moon,
Next step, to the stars
We have come so...

This mind to achieve will not stop
Just shows that hope is there
We have come so far!

You can go crazy musing on the vastness of space
Time is a thought in a Universe fourteen billion years old

When I face the void, I will be complete
Finally free to know the ending
Realm of darkness awaits all the faithful
As it does everything else that ever drew breath

Science does not have all the answers
But your doctrine, it has none
There is no pain in being wiped from existence
Disappear as if taken into thin air

As afternoon moves to the evening
The cult of one Empire will close
Too many shades for just one lifetime
The wind will never blow the same again

This song is one of my favourites of all the Monsterworks tracks to date, both musically and lyrically. "Air" has quite a sonic variety across it, but is uplifting overall; which is perhaps ironic because it is generally about death, that black curtain behind which we never get to peek before it is finally time to walk through.

The title was more or less set regardless of the topic (hence why it is a bit abstract to the subject matter), because it is supposed to be a sequel to "Fire" from The God Album and this, in turn, will be superseded by "Earth" on the next album. The sub-title "We Have Come So Far" is more appropriate, which is why it is stuck there. In the context of those words, the song is also about mankind as a whole (and not just an individual's death) because our achievements live on for as long as history is recorded.

I have often pondered whether I meant to be as blunt as it comes across with the line "realm of darkness, awaits all the faithful" because I am not qualified to assert that as a truth. No one knows of course what happens at the moment of death; whether we are whisked away to a magical land of fluffy clouds if we are good or molten brimstone if we have been naughty boys/girls (or gay); or our consciousness folds into an eleventh dimensional pathway where we can soar across the Universe for eternity.

Yep. Not for me to say, mate. You draw your own conclusion.

Jon

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