



by Arik Roper

**HONEST STRINGS  
A TRIBUTE TO THE LIFE AND WORK OF JACK ROSE**

No sane person could argue that Jack Rose's influence was not immense in a number of regards, be it his fierce powers of friendship, his ability to instill artistic inspiration in others or the lessons taught through his take-no-crap, determined spirit. In all of these ways and so many others, Jack truly was a real-life inspiration to those who were close to him and/or his music. Through all of the comments offered by folks regarding Jack subsequent to his passing, the words of our mutual friend Elisa Ambrogio really resonated with me as they got to the essence of his deeply inspirational spirit:

"You could mentally tell a lot of people to fuck off if Jack Rose ever told you he liked (what you were doing). He did that for a lot of people, was sure for them, when they were not."

Jack was a rock in an all-too-frequently unsteady world. Every measure of encouragement and trust he offered any of us regarding our respective craft was the ultimate recognition that we were really, really onto something. While I will never forget any of the words of encouragement that I received from him, it is also comforting to know that both his memory and his albums remain to continue to stoke inspiration for us all.

Jack was not the world's biggest fan of "tribute" albums, although he certainly was not afraid to contribute his time and efforts to one when he felt that the cause was right. Knowing how Jack valued his relationships with his friends, I feel that he would be genuinely touched by the collection of material offered forth in celebration of his life and collective creative works.

Jack – you were a great friend and I really miss you.

Cory Rayborn  
March 11, 2010  
High Point, North Carolina



1. D. Charles Speer – “What’s That?”

Miss you brother man, wish we could sit down for a sip tonight...

Written and performed at home on Powers St., Brooklyn, New York by David Charles Shuford (vocal, guitar, mandolin). Recorded January 18, 2010.

2. Six Organs Of Admittance – “Drinking With Jack”

This song was originally written and recorded for the *By The Fruits You Shall Know The Roots* triple LP that Nemo and Ed put out about six years ago on their Time-Lag and Eclipse Labels. Six Organs was opposite Jack Rose on our LP and so I thought it was appropriate to write a song celebrating some of my favorite times in this life with one of my favorite people. I rarely play the song live. The last time I did was in Philly when Jack was there. I didn't announce the name of the song but after the show the first thing he said was, "Drinking with Jack!" He then told me that one day he'd have to write a drinking with Ben song. Well, if that song isn't written by the time I see him next I'm going to be pissed.

Written and performed by Ben Chasny. Recorded at home in January 2010.

3. Charlie Parr & Mike Gangloff – “This World Is Not My Home”

Recorded October 2009 in Ironto, Virginia.

4. Chris Forsyth – “(Now I’m A Pharmacist) Boogie”

This one's for Jack. I stole the title from him, via lyrics his brother read at the funeral that Jack apparently wrote as a kid shortly after getting his first guitar. It was a blues, something about being blind and, as a result, unable to find a job, but in the last verse, he did find a job - as a pharmacist. I laughed so hard and it felt good on that sad, sad day.

Recorded January 2010 in Brooklyn, New York and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Thanks to Peter Kerlin, Koen Holtkamp, and Josh Clark for recording and mixing assistance.

5. Cian Nugent – “Fresh As A Rose”

6. Nathan Bowles – “Charlie’s Pontoon”

About my friend Charlie Parr and for my friend Jack Rose.

Five string banjo recorded at Black Dirt Studio in Westtown, New York, by Jason Meagher in the early a.m. of 1/20/10.

7. James Toth, Kerry Kennedy and Jason Meagher – “The Time Machine”

Recorded January 2010, Black Dirt Studio, Westtown, New York.

I arrived at my old friend Jason’s studio without much of a plan. The night before, I emailed him a few demos of tunes I was working on, with the idea that maybe we’d record one for this tribute album for Jack. Maybe Jason would have something he’d like to record together. Actually I was hoping he had something - this particular compilation was proving more vexing than any I’d ever agreed to do. As Jason would later put it, Jack was always so resolute about what was bullshit and what wasn’t. In his absence, the thing I feared the most was creating some bullshit in his name.

I quickly discovered Jason was having the same problem. Obviously, we couldn’t treat this like we would any other compilation. Toss off some desultory cover song or piss-take? Unthinkable. Pillage our respective archives for a tune that didn’t make the cut elsewhere? Frivolous. Attempt to write and record something germane to Jack himself, specific to his life and what his friendship meant to us, at the risk of contributing something corny and overly sentimental (not to mention, something Jack would most certainly disapprove of)? Worst idea yet. To coin a phrase I think Jack would appreciate, it’s a fine line between poignant and pussy.

Then there’s the pesky matter of Jack’s legendary musical proficiency. With all due respect to my co-conspirators, none of us are really fit to boil Jack’s old guitar strings, so an ‘interpretation’ (or even a bogus ‘re-imagining’ - blech) of one of Jack’s bravura compositions was most certainly out.

This was, as they say, a real pickle.

Then, after much hemming and hawing, an epiphany: We recalled how Jack always spoke openly about how his personal ‘folk music’ - the formative, coming-of-age stuff - was shit like Un, The Dead C, and Sun City Girls. Generally speaking, the whole late 80s / early

nineties Siltbreeze / Majora scene was a major touchstone for many of us hermenautic weirdos, Jack included. We decided that this was the common bond that brought Jack into our respective lives and us into his. This strange and beautiful subculture that blurred borders and backgrounds was also our most crucial overlap of shared tastes and inspirations. Finally, we were on the right track.

It was Jason who proposed we 'set up a couple of mics and see what happens.' My friend Kerry Kennedy was traveling with me and offered to contribute some electric guitar. Though she'd never met Jack, like many others, she knew him by reputation.

We played for about an hour, determinedly wending our way through the miasma of loss via the vocabulary of noise rock's indelible golden age.

I knew what we were doing was right when I started feeling what Mike Bernstein once referred to as being 'stuck' (which I think is a pothead term) - the moment of near-catatonic transcendence, the celestial dissolve. I literally forgot that I had an instrument in front of me, ceased being aware of anything but The Sound, and became part of a creation.

Discussing it later, Jason and I agreed that the attainment of this specific state is precisely what made our years of performing improvised music in No Neck Blues Band and Wooden Wand & The Vanishing Voice, respectively, worthwhile. Also, maybe, worth remembering. It's possible we'd both forgotten, but, through Jack, we were suddenly reminded.

When it was over, no one spoke for what felt like minutes. I broke the silence. "That was fun."

We adjourned to the control room for a brief playback. After 30 seconds or so, Jason abruptly shut off the tape and said "Yep, sounds like a 90's Siltbreeze record. Let's go eat."

He wasn't being flippant - we all knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that we'd succeeded in paying tribute to our friend in the most appropriate way we knew how. Sure, it sounds like a 90's Siltbreeze record - better than *Montezuma Baby Duck*, perhaps, but maybe not as good as *Operation of the Sonne*. But I think Jack would approve.



Jason edited the track down and called it "The Time Machine." I think the title is appropriate.

We love you, Jack. This skronk's for you.

James Jackson Toth  
Lexington, Kentucky  
February, 2010

8. Hans Chew – "The Heart Is Deceitful"

Written by Hans Chew for, and inspired by, Jack Rose.

Recorded Wednesday, January 20th, 2010, at Seizures Palace, Brooklyn, New York by Jason LaFarge.

Mixed by, and additional recording by, Clint Steele at home in Brooklyn, New York.

Hans Chew played piano, organ, drums, percussion, and sang.

Clint Steele played bass guitar.

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9. Luther Dickinson – "Blind Lemon And The Hook Man"

Written and performed by Luther Dickinson. Recorded at Zebra Ranch Studio in Independence, Mississippi on January 18, 2010.

10. Danny Paul Grody – "Candle"

His light burns bright and eternal.

"Candle" was recorded and mixed at home using acoustic and electric guitar.

11. Byron Coley with Son Of Earth – "One For Jack"

what can i say? jack was a great friend of all of us, supportive as hell even when we were at our most idiotic. it would be incorrect to pretend he cut us total slack, but if he was into yr schtick he was one of the best audiences around. and now the world's a meaner place.

Byron Coley – voice  
Matt Krefting – keyboard  
Pete Nolan – weasels  
John Shaw III – wooden flute

Aaron Rosenblum – vibes

Recorded at House of Walter Studio, Holyoke, Massachusetts in January 2010.

12. C Joynes – “Bellwether”

C Joynes wrote “Bellwether” on the day of Jack's funeral, while sitting in the house of his parents playing a 60 year old homemade electric lapsteel on loan from their neighbours. While the performance here provides some evidence of the fact that it was the first time he had played such an instrument, it seemed appropriate to include this selection given Jack's advocacy of the lapsteel.

Recorded by the Leith Hill Recordings Mobile Unit, Histon in January 2010.

13. Hush Arbors- "Seem'd Like"

Keith Wood- vocals & instruments  
Lizzie Oswell – vocals  
Recorded in London in January 2010.

14. Jenks Miller – “Small Song For JR”

Recorded by Jenks Miller at the Chateau, 2009.

15. Pigeons – “Wherever You Will”

16. Bill Nace – “Can You Give Me An E (One For Jack)”

17. Steve Gunn – “One For The Doctor”

Recorded on January 24, 2010 in Brooklyn, New York, by Steve Gunn.

18. Coach Fingers – “For”

Recorded December 2009, Black Dirt Studio, Westtown, New York.

19. Alvarius B. – “Nasty Plumage”

Composed, performed and recorded by Alvarius B. in 2001.

20. Stuart Leslie Braithwaite – “Song For Jack”

Recorded in Freaky Room Studio, winter 2009.

21. Cath & Phil Tyler – “Golden Ace / Courting Is A Pleasure”

“Golden Ace” written by Cath & Phil Tyler. “Courting Is A Pleasure” is traditional.

Produced by Andrew Gardiner. Recorded at Morden Tower, Newcastle Upon Tyne in July 2009.

Originally appears on the album *The Hind Wheels Of Bad Luck* (No-Fi Recordings).

22. MV & EE – “Flow My Ray”

Matt Valentine - guitar/harmonica/vox  
Erika Elder - lap steel/vox

Recorded at Maximum Arousal Farm.  
Produced in MVspectrasound.

23. No Neck Blues Band – “deczystd”

Recorded April 2009, Grim, Marseille, France.  
Mixed December 2009, Black Dirt Studio, Westtown, New York.

24. Elisa Ambrogio – “Old Airs”

All instruments performed by Elisa Ambrogio.  
Recorded at home in Seattle, Washington, in 2010.

25. Langtry – “One Bright Mile”

Recorded November 2005 in Tallahassee, Florida by Patrick Klem.

26. Lloyd Thayer – “Lily In The Sun”

This is an instrumental that I wrote specifically for this project. It was played on my 1929 National Tricone squareneck guitar played lap style... no overdubs or edits etc.

I first heard Jack’s music when I came across a vinyl copy of *Raag Manifestos* at Twisted Village Records in Cambridge Mass. I had never heard of Jack, and bought the album solely based on the cool-



looking cover – a method that never fails in leading me to great discoveries. As I listened to it, I was struck by the weight of it, and the density....there was an uncompromising power to it that really drew me in. I had spent a lot of time with it before I realized my neighbor Glenn Jones was mentioned in the liner notes, and that they were friends. As time passed I heard more of Jack's music, but I always return to that first experience, and the power and intensity of the music which I once overheard someone describe as 'sad joy'. I hope many more people will get to hear that music - the world needs more of it.

27. Black Twig Pickers – “Wild Horse Of Stony Point”

Mike Gangloff – fiddle  
Nathan Bowles – banjo  
Isak Howell - guitar

Recorded January 2010 in Ironto, Virginia.  
Mixed January 2010, Black Dirt Studio, Westtown, New York.

28. Spectre Folk – “Meet Me At The Bald Spot at 6pm”

Jack: Thanks for your music that got better and better. Thanks for lending an enlightened ear and words of wisdom and encouragement. Thanks for living up to the name “Dr. Ragtime.”

Pete Nolan : electric and acoustic guitar and voice  
John Shaw: Farfisa and skins

29. C Joynes – “Broad Church Traveling”

“Broad Church Travelling” is a gospel fantasy containing fragments and themes from a number of traditional hymns, gospel tunes and spirituals, including “Jesus Loves You The Best”; “Laid My Burden Down”; “Paved With Gold”; “Some Bright Morning” and “He Arose From The Dead”. It is possible that other sources may also feature.

Recorded and edited by the Leith Hill Recordings Mobile Unit, Elham – Histon in December 2009 - January 2010.

30. Un – “Can Of Beans”

Performed by Marcia Bassett, Grant Acker, Thom Roach.  
Recorded circa 1996/1997.

31. Rick Tomlinson – “Mahogany & Wine (Improvisation for Jack Rose)”

Recorded in London by Rick Tomlinson in January 2010.

32. Heather Leigh – “Spangles Are Purple And Green”

33. Bardo Pond – “We Loved Him Madly”

34. Zaika and Loren Connors – “New York City”

Performed by Marcia Bassett, Tom Carter and Loren Connors.

Both the Zaika with Loren Connors & Zaika with Paul Flaherty sets were recorded in 2008 on the No More Bush tour, featuring (among many others) Jack Rose. It was a pleasure to eat, drink, and spin the tires down one last stretch of turnpike asphalt with him. The finality of that experience was – and remains - ungraspable.

35. Nathan Bowles and Scott Verrastro – “Dialogue Of The Bums”

“Don't diss my homies!” - J.R., quoting V.H.

A tribute to Jack informed by such percussion dialogues as Graves/Cyrille (hence, the title) and Bruford/Muir (ironically, as Jack hated prog). The majority of the pieces in this tribute will undoubtedly be guitar-based, so we felt like we could translate Jack's spirit using rhythm, texture and melody via drums, cymbals, bells, shakers, gongs and whatever else we could hit, scrape, scratch or bow.

Duo percussion improvisation recorded live on January 19, 2010 at Black Dirt Studio in Westtown, New York.

36. Spiral Joy Band – “Whiskey On The Grave”

Recorded November 8, 2009, at The Frequency, Madison, Wisconsin.

Performed by Patrick Best, Mikel Dimmick on the fiddle, Harmonium, Jupiter Machine, Rings of Saturn Machine.

37. Sunburned Hand Of The Man – “Wedlock” (Side 1)

Originally released on LP by Eclipse Records in 2004.

Recorded on the West Coast & Wasilla, Alaska, June 2003.

Performed by David Bohill, Chad Cooper, Chris Corsano, Critter, Phil Franklin, Paul Labrecque, John Moloney, Marc Orleans, Rich Pontius, Robert Thomas, Ron Schneidermann, Christine Steele and Val Webb.

38. Kohoutek – “The Slumbering Alligator”

Scott Verrastro - percussion

Craig Garrett - bass

Scott Allison - electronics

Dave Fishkin - amplified tenor sax

This was recorded live in a South Philly dive bar called JR's, the night before Jack's funeral. There was no deliberate attempt to sound like anything in particular; Kohoutek did what we normally do, which is attempt to create something new every time we perform. Jack's passing was on our minds and in our hearts and his inspiration continues to live on.

39. Zaika and Paul Flaherty – “New Haven”

Performed by Marcia Bassett, Tom Carter and Paul Flaherty.

40. Pelt – “Louisville Susurrations”

Recorded June 2008 at Terrastock 7.

Performed by Patrick Best, Mikel Dimmick, Mike Gangloff, Amy Shea, Nathan Bowles on gongs, bowls, bells, harmoniums, fiddle, esraj, bowed cymbals, flute, voice, New Jupiter Machine.

41. Joseph Mattson – a reading from the novel *Empty The Sun*

DISPATCH ON BREATH and FINGER FROM LOS ANGELES, 31.JANUARY.2010, *THE DARK ILLUMINE* AS ONCE WAS WRITTEN, MY BELLY BRIGHT WITH WHISKEY FOR THE BURLY BEAR, JACK ROSE—a bear of a man indeed, tender barrel of dynamite in a land rife with impotence. My time with him over the years was all too brief but full of the good stuff: drinking whiskey, dodging hippies, getting joyfully cranky and crankily joyful—and, best above all, to hear and see the man play. Yes, Jack could charm the gods, and he could make the devil run. A gunslinger of the highest order. I, however, am not a guitar player. But the protagonist of my book, *Empty the Sun*, a novel with soundtrack by Six Organs of Admittance, is. And Jack was de facto one of the singular,



numinous inspirations I turned to/was fueled by/robbed from to get a handle on the characters and on the general air and landscape of the book. The novel had just come out the last time I saw Jack, and he got to page 35 before crossing over. The accompanying audio recording was done in my shack and is a somber but ultimately quietly angry and ecstatic reading of those 35 pages in honor of the man. Best wishes most of all to his wife, Laurie, and also to the network of friends. It's strange and confusing when the young and the godlike-talented get called up by the Dark Magnet, and I guess now Jack will have to kick God's ass in Heaven. R.I.P., Jack. Go get Him.

Cheers,  
Joseph Mattson



by Brad Hodge

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Paintings are © 2010 Arik Roper and Alex Jako.

Photography © 2010 Brad Hodge ([www.bradhodgephoto.com](http://www.bradhodgephoto.com)).

Mastering by Patrick Klem of Klemflastic Sound ([www.klemflastic.com](http://www.klemflastic.com)).

Sequenced and curated by Cory Rayborn.

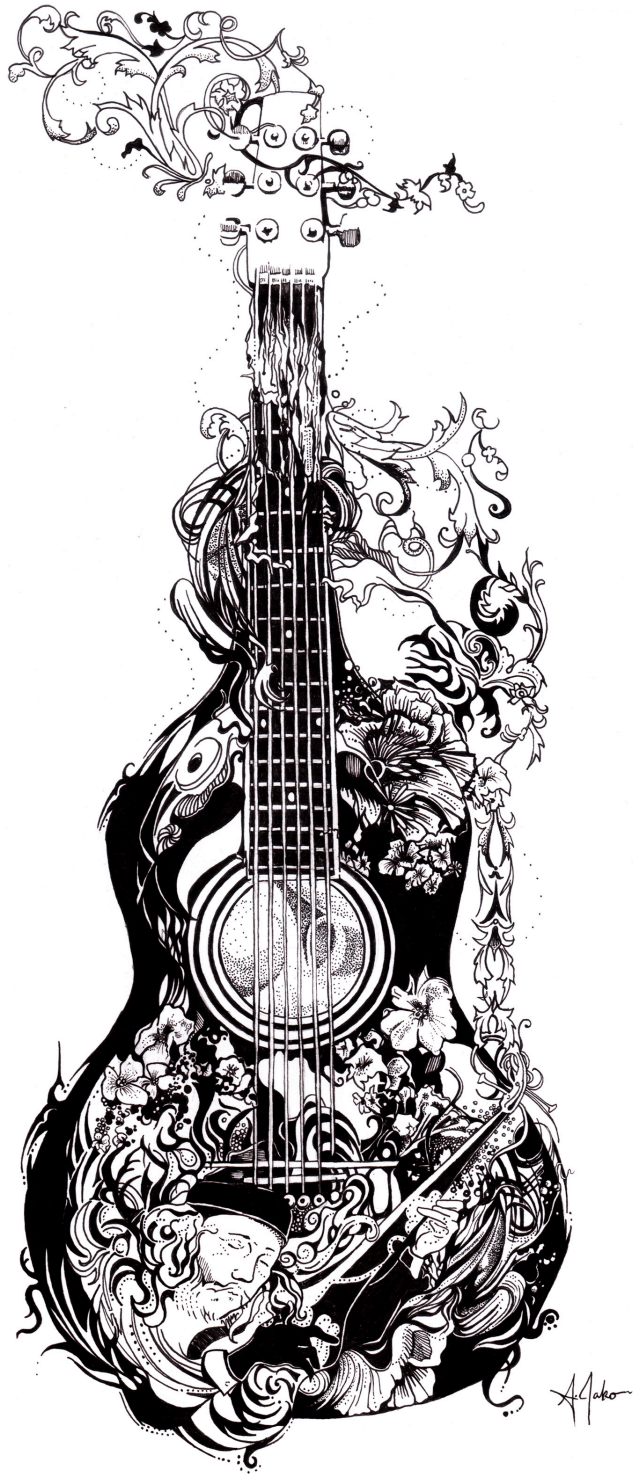
Exceptional thanks to: Jason Meagher for the generous provision of his fine studio space at Black Dirt Studios and a helping hand for artists in need; Patrick Klem for lending his fine mastering ears to this massive project; Arik Roper, Alex

Jako and Brad Hodge for allowing their fine graphic talents to be displayed herein; Bettina Richards for providing overhead-free hosting and sales for this project via FINA; and, naturally, all of the exceptionally talented and giving artists for volunteering their artistic talents in memory of a mutual friend.

Prepared with love for Laurie Sutherland.

For reams of additional information about Jack Rose, please visit:  
[www.drragtime.com](http://www.drragtime.com)





*The Two Trees*

by Alex Jako