

This album has been 40 years plus in the making. I thought it was high time to record my first solo album, so armed with bags of encouragement from my wife Janie and many friends around the globe, I finally embarked on that journey and here is the result. Hope you like it.

I start off with a personal favourite of mine, **Freeman**, written by my friend *Tim Wood* who recently left us far too soon. This song is about an Irishman trying to find fortune in England and, as so many before him, finds himself frowned upon for being Irish.

For the Love of it All is a song written by *Janie Meneely* (lyrics) and myself (music) and is all about setting a good example in today's world for the next generation.

Cage Load of Men is a poem by Scots miner *Joe Corrie*, which I set to music. It is about the everyday life of miners in Scotland during the 1920s, but I'm sure it could be about miners everywhere throughout history.

Palestine was written by my pal and fellow Dutchman, *Paul Metsers*, about how Britain ended its mandate for Palestine following the Balfour Declaration of 1917. This paved the way for the creation of a Jewish State at great cost to the Palestinian people, then and certainly now.

Gathering Storm was written by my musical partner of many years *Alan Reid*. It's about the uncertainties that are happening politically on a global scale.

Byker Hill is a traditional coal miner's working song from the Byker and Walker area of the East-end of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. This version bears my own tune; the guitar work was inspired by my mate, *Martin Carthy*.

Peace Must Come is another beautiful song from the pen of *Paul Metsers*. Its title says it all. It has a brilliant chorus to sing along with.

Saints and Sinners was written by *David Francey* about the fact that there is a bit of good and bad in each and every one of us. It's another great chorus song.

Rout of the Blues is the first folk song I ever learned nearly five decades ago, and I'm still performing it, and I still love doing it as much as when I first learned it. Here I have slowed the song down and applied a picking guitar style. It was collected by *Cecil Sharp* near Armscote in Warwickshire in 1909.

I finish this album with **The Blacksmith**, another song by *Janie Meneely* (lyrics) and myself (music). It's based on the quote by Martin Luther King, Jr., that "the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice." Janie thought it might not bend by itself and needs a blacksmith or two to hammer it in the right direction.

- . **1 Freeman** (*T. Wood - Celtic Music*) 6:10

- . **2 For the Love of it All** 4:20
(*J. Meneely / R. van Sante*)

- . **3 Cage Load of Men** 3:36 (*J. Corrie / R. van Sante - Redsands*)

- . **4 Palestine** (*P. Metsers - SAGEM*) 3:47

- . **5 Gathering Storm** 2:58
(*A.Reid - Kinnmor*)

- **6 Byker Hill 2:54** (*Traditional - R.van Sante*)
- **7 Peace Must Come 3:45** (*P. Metsers - SAGEM*)
- **8 Saints and Sinners 3:29** (*D. Francey - David Francey Music*)
- **9 Rout of the Blues**
(*Traditional / Arr. R. van Sante*)
- **10 The Blacksmith**
(*J. Meneely / R. van Sante*)

Produced by **Rob van Sante**

Engineered, edited, mixed and mastered by **Rob van Sante**

Recorded at **Falcon Audio Visual Arts**, Whitby, United Kingdom

Sleeve design by **Rob van Sante**

Drawing of Rob on the front by **Ken Wilson** Photo on the back by **Scott Wicking**

Photo under CD tray by **Erik Sharar**

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Rob van Sante - *vocals, backing vocals, guitars, baritone guitar, bouzouki, electric bass, electric guitar, mandolin, drum programming, percussion, piano, synthesisers*

Bob Butterfield - *tenor sax*

Ciarán Boyle - *bodhran*

Chris Parkinson - *piano, accordion*

Tom McConville - *fiddle*

Janie Meneely - *backing vocals*

Lynda Hardcastle - *backing vocals*

Alan Rose - *backing vocals*

Alistair Russell - *backing vocals*

I would like to thank all the fine musicians who have leant their talents to this project: You're all brilliant.

Also a big thank you to those who encouraged me to take to the road as a fledgling musician all those years ago and indeed those who have encouraged and stood by me along that road. I've been in this game now for the best part of five decades and, believe it or not, this is my first solo album. Better late than never.

My biggest thank you goes out to my dear wife Janie Meneely for believing in me and looking after me.