

Songs of My Life



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These songs are a part of a collection of music that I have written over the course of my life. I will be posting new songs every few weeks as there are over 100 songs that I would like to capture as my legacy. Please be sure to check back from time to time to hear new material. Also, please feel free to drop me a line to provide some feedback (see form on the Contact Page.)

Thanks for listening! Hope you enjoy!

All words and music -written by Richard Onorato

All songs performed by Rich Onorato using the Yamaha MOX8 Music Production Synthesizer-which has incredible samples of almost every musical instrument imaginable .

All vocals performed by Rich Onorato

Drum Samples were taken from the Alesis SR-16 and the Yamaha MOX8 Music Production Synthesizer

All songs were recorded on the Tascam DP 24SD Digital PortaStudio and were Produced, Engineered and mixed by Rich Onorato



1. *Living For Today*

... "maybe we'll ride to the top of the world."

Growing up in the northern New Jersey suburbs of New York City, we were blessed with having 2 State Parks (Harriman State Park/ Bear Mountain State Park) within 20-30 minutes of our house. At any given time we would drive up to these parks to Hike, Camp, Picnic, Swim, Hang out, Drink, Make out, etc. This song captures the spirit of High School years of driving up to the parks at any given time to celebrate the great outdoors and to create good times, enduring friendships and everlasting memories. Based on a traditional Rock I, IV, V arrangement with a differentiated bridge. Check out brass, scat singing and sitar!



2. Turn Around My Heart

.... "someday, someone's gonna turn around my heart"

This song as always played out live when I was in J20 and captures the awkwardness and angst of high school years when we all search for love and acceptance.



3. I Can't Walk Alone

... "when I was young I wanted to sail away"

Originally written on the boardwalk in Seaside Heights, NJ in 1981 when I was waiting for college friends to join me at a house we rented on Samson Street. I never finished the song- it needed a bridge and some more lyrics. Almost 40 years later, I got the chance to finally finish it Listen to the Ian Anderson (Jethro Tull) inspired flute solo-



4. Fate

... I think I'll lose my mind"

This song is about how fickle FATE is - The background orchestration was inspired by the Temptations' "Poppa Was a Rolling Stone". I always loved the complexity of the instrumentation of that song and the arrangement is amongst the best of all time. I tried to do the same thing where the Bass and Drums drive the rhythm and the strings, guitar and piano, organ and orchestration provide contrast and "color"..



5. Came from the East

.... "I remember your eyes when you sat down and cried"

I wrote this song when I was 16 years old and it was a live staple with my high school band "Phenomenon". In this recorded version, I decided to use a Latin beat and the saxophone solo brings it "home".



6. Fault Line

.... "Remove me now from shaky ground"

This song was written in the 1980s when I was with the Strangers, however we never incorporated this into our repertoire. I finally completed the lyrics when I recorded this in early 2021 and incorporated a slide guitar and two solos -(piano) and then electric guitar) separated by the song bridge.



7. Slip Away

.... "I can't wait for time. Time won't wait for me"

When I graduated college in the early 1980s I went the unconventional route of following my passion for music and tried to make it in the music business. Although I had the support of my parents, there was always this undercurrent of time slipping away -preventing me from getting established in the real world". This song was written during that time and was pretty much forgotten (by me) until now. I pulled this one out of the archives and recorded it using a Steve Winwood/Traffic like rhythm, instrumentation and arrangement.



8. (She's So) Delicious

.... "And I'm feeling fine ..all the time"

My father always had Brazil '66, Jobin, Stan Getz playing on the stereo- so he really influenced my love for that kind of music - so I decided to write a bossa nova song and dedicate it to him.. When I was writing this song in 2009, A very close friend had a daughter- who was around 9 or 10 years old- Every time I would ask him how she was doing- he would glow and say "She's So Delicious" I always liked that- so I incorporated that idea into the song.

Finally- when writing the words- I used the perspective that this song could be a sequel to the classic Antonio Carlos Jobin song - "The Girl From Ipanema"- where the guy finally gets the girl that he longs for- has a torrid affair- only to lose her as she has to go back home to Spain.

9. Dancing In the Moonlight

... "such a pretty sight to see..."

A beautiful, mysterious woman dances in the moonlight and captivates my imagination. Need I say anything more? An R&B influenced song with guitar and piano trading solos.



10. Sister Heather

... "she rocks and rolls and rolls and rocks" ..

Sister Heather was a live staple of my band the Strangers in the 1980s. At that time we were playing lots of clubs and many of the songs that we wrote were used as vehicles for getting the crowd up to dance. This song pays homage to Ray Charles' "What I Say" and infuses a 1960s style na na na refrain. My good friend Chris, recently shared that you can't go wrong with a song that has na, na, na, na in it. It was a lot of fun to play the bass and guitars and to add the brass section which was always swirling around in my head.

11. Longing

... "and that I am longing for some happier days"

This is the most recent song of this initial collection and was one of many songs that I wrote during the COVID-19 pandemic. After being cooped up in my house for months I was inspired to write a song about returning to normal, happier times. I think that all of us can identify



12. In Too Deep

... "love finds the reason and it's heading out my way"

Inspired by Led Zeppelin songs featuring synthesized stings played by John Paul Jones, In Too Deep is a song about love, and commitment. Check out the synthesized strings solo and you'll appreciate the influence!



13. Is There Something I Should Say?

... "is my message coming through?"



This song pays homage to the 60s and 70s pop songs that were playing on AM Top 40 radio when I was growing up. When I write music I always like the challenge of incorporating a differentiated bridge which gives the song variety and provides contrast between the verses and choruses. Also, I use the bridge to drive the underlying message of the lyrics "home".

14. Stormbringer

... "carry me away. All night and day"



I always liked recordings that incorporated sound effects into the song. One of my all time favorites is the Doors' "Riders on the Storm" from where I take my queue to incorporate the sound of thunder and rain throughout the recording. This song personifies a Storm descending into a small town and the longing of the singer to be carried away from the monotony of small town life. Check out the interplay of saxophone and marimba in the solos section of the song..

15. Somebody Stop Me

... "somebody stop me now. I'm wasting my time"



When performing showcase sets of original material in New York City with my band J2 O, we used this song as the closing song where we would introduce the band members and give each player an opportunity to showcase his musical "chops". Based on a blues progression it is about a one night stand gone wrong. Recording this song gave me an opportunity to add saxophone and trumpet solos into the mix of bass, drums, guitars, piano and organ solos.