

# AL BLOCH It Was All Once Bright Jewels

**Al Bloch:** This is an important album. To me at least, that's all I can say. But I'll say more.

The songs that appear on the new album of mine, "It Was All Once Bright Jewels" were written toward the end of 2019 and the first part of 2020, and recorded pretty quickly when I flew out to Seattle from my home in Roanoke, VA in March of this year. I was privileged to have on board my old buddy, Kevin Fitzgerald (Clean Lines) to play drums, and my brother Kurt Bloch to play guitar and produce. I played bass guitar, of course, because that's what I play. The title of the record comes from my favorite Procol Harum song, "Broken Barricades".

I was in bands for many years, many years ago, in both my home town of Seattle and then Los Angeles, but had not written a lick of music since I moved to Southwest Virginia in 2001. Then last year, Green Monkey impresario Tom Dyer dared me to write some new songs. He had just graciously put out CD's from my band from 1980 (WENIS), and my LA band from the 1990's (MY FAVORITE MARTIAN). I wasn't interested in writing new songs, but truth be told I didn't think that I could. Tom said, "Just do it". I thought, "OK". So then I did.

Instead of "crafting" "good" songs, I just decided to write bits, and then play them over and over until the bits turned themselves into songs, and then I pulled and bent them a little more until they turned into something interesting. All of a sudden I had a pile of songs. Fast songs, slow songs, long songs and really short songs. Songs full of hope, mischievous songs, and songs transformational to me and hopefully pleasing to other people's ears. Good songs, I hoped. I like the short songs best, because I have a short attention span. I think most people do these days. What was I talking about? There is a nice slower song, "Better Days", that clocks in at almost nine minutes, and is presented in three parts. Kurt Bloch played all the keyboards, and he was definitely wearing a cape while recording this song. That's a Rick Wakeman reference for you young folks, go ahead and Google him.

Starting off the album is peppy little number, "Alpha > Omega", which is also pretty short, and has a smokin' guitar solo by Kurt Bloch, who shed his cape to play some blazin' rock guitar. The lyrics reference many things, including the Book of Revelations and the Large Hadron Collider. It's not very uplifting, but it does get the toes tapping.

Speaking of the short songs, my favorites are "Unemployment Office", written about a guy I met once, and "Downtown", about another guy I met twice. They were very complex and disturbed people, and I thought they both deserved to have songs written about them.

I wrote a few songs about growing up in Seattle, a city I miss very much, although it's not the same city it was when I lived there. I have vivid memories of my Seattle Times paper route ("Sunday Morning, Feeling Fine"), which was difficult on Sunday mornings when it was dark and rainy, which it was a lot in Seattle. Summer sunny days in Seattle were magical ("The Best Song"), driving around and hanging out at Matthews Beach and Green Lake. Life got even more magical when I started playing in rock bands with my friends ("Fruit Bar", featuring Seattle legends the Fastbacks). Finally, there's a song about being the old guy I am, and longing to go back to Seattle, "For the Summertime". *I'm going back to Seattle before it's too late, before I reach my expiration date.*

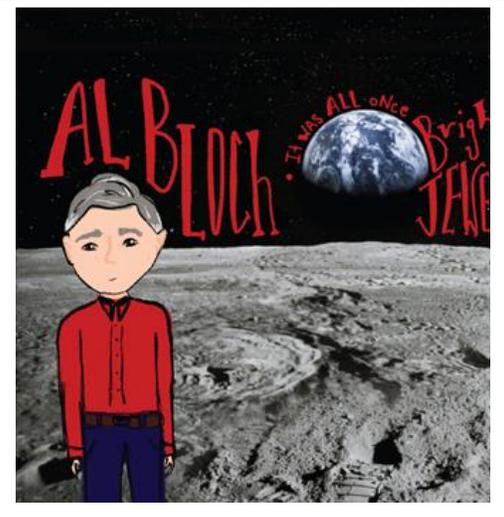
I moved away from Seattle to Los Angeles in 1985, and there's a song included about living in that city around then, "Cahuenga Pass". One night I had to walk home, all the way from Studio City to Hollywood. Some people would have hated that, but I walked a lot in Los Angeles when I lived there. I didn't mind. You tend to see a lot more interesting stuff when you're walking.

One of my musical heroes is John Cale, and I've been playing one of his songs for years. Just to myself. "Amsterdam" is not one of his better known songs, but it's one of his most exquisite and moving tunes. Great guitar orchestration by Kurt Bloch. Then there's the song called, "Stay Away From Steve" which is better left undiscussed. I could tell you why, but then I'd have to kill you. The crazy drums at the end make me want to jump off the Aurora Bridge. That's a Seattle reference for you East Coast folks, go ahead and Google it.

After many months of yakking to my brother about the recording of this LP, I finally made it out to Seattle in March 2020 with sheet music for all these songs in my attaché case. After playing for a few moments with Kevin and Kurt, I destroyed all the sheet music and trusted the arrangements to these two high caliber musicians and to the production expertise of Kurt Bloch. They both certainly delivered.

So now the record comes out, thanks to the fine folks at Green Monkey Records. The first songs I've written in over twenty years. If you like the record, it's because I'm brilliant. If you hate the record, blame Tom Dyer. Because he dared me to write these songs!

- EPK: <https://greenmonkeyrecords.com/artist-tom-dyer/>
- Bandcamp: <https://greenmonkeyrecords.bandcamp.com/album/truth-or-consequences>
- Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/TomDyersUnpopularMusic479699182040939/>



1. Alpha > Omega
2. Unemployment Office
3. Sunday Morning Feeling, Fine
4. The Best Song
5. Fruit Bar
6. Cahuenga Pass
7. Amsterdam
8. For the Summertime
9. Stay Away From Steve
10. Dude, What Were You Thinking?
11. Downtown
12. Most People Are Sad
13. Better Days

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