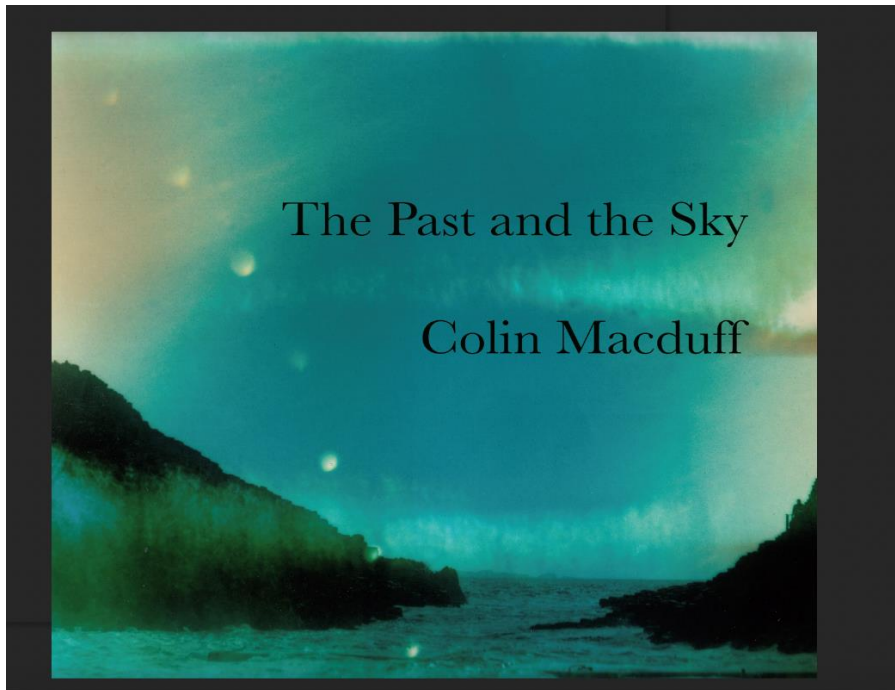


The Past and the Sky

Colin Macduff



Album Lyrics

All songs

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but they are yours to sing!

To hear you sing

Main verses

In the early days I'd hear you sing
Chart songs, nonsense, everything
A window on the child within
The joy of being in your skin

Your words ran with the bathroom's tides
Behind the door they'd soar and glide
Chorus, hook or greatest hit -
You were up to murder it

Bridge

But now the mud has choked the spring
It's so long since I heard you sing
So many cares benight your day
I long to hear them wash away
While you're gripped by the hands of fear
I'm staying near, I'm staying here
And I would give most anything
Just to hear you sing
Just to hear you sing

Chorus

To hear you sing, to hear you sing
I would give most anything
I'll give you the morning star*
The mountain pool on Lochnagar
The earth that moves & lives & breathes*
The sky uplifted at the eaves
The morning dew laced on a string
Just to hear you sing
Just to hear you sing

So lose yourself to find yourself
In song we can remind ourselves
We're anchored by a common root
First the flower then the fruit

Breathe me in and breathe me out
Balm to salve the scars of doubt
In music we can all belong
From sunrise through to sunset song
(Day and night I'll always long.....)

Chorus

To hear you sing, to hear you sing
I would give most anything
I'll give you the morning star
The mountain pool on Lochnagar
The earth that moves & lives & breathes
The sky uplifted at the eaves
The morning dew laced on a string
Just to hear you sing
Just to hear you sing
Just to hear you sing

**Adapted from lines in Sunset Song, Lewis Grassie Gibbon's great poetic novel*

Mirrors, walls and windows

I was half way to a hippie
You were cool as students get
One Afghan coat, one duffle coat
Ten menthol cigarettes
Countdown to the great escape
When our London lives begin
Mirrors, walls and windows
Looking out and looking in

Me and you outside the zoo
Tried to hitch 'til it got dark
A pair of frozen monkeys
On the streets of Calderpark
Bus back to my Mum and Dad's
Sometimes you just can't win
Mirrors, walls and windows
Looking out and looking in

But my pillows held the echoes
Of a thousand teenage tunes
And those curtains looked the other way
When you sneaked into my room
London just a memory
As we lay there skin to skin
Mirrors, walls and windows
Looking out and looking in

Forty years since we stood here
And gave up on that dream
The monkeys have all packed up too
The zoo's a housing scheme
And London coped without us
Guess they took it on the chin
Mirrors, walls and windows
Looking out and looking in

What's for you won't go by you
Our hard won rule of thumb
But you learn some things the soft way
When you're new in love and young
For there's no other surface
That can speak to you like skin
Our mirrors, walls and windows
Windows, walls and mirrors
Mirrors, walls and windows
Looking out and looking in

Tipping a hat here to the great Rab Noakes (Together Forever). My first proper gig was at Green's Playhouse, Glasgow 6/10/72, admission 85p. He opened the gig solo, followed by Genesis, then Lindisfarne who were top of the bill. Quite a night!

A garden with a swing

Take your job and shove it

Is what I didn't say

You have to rise above it

With a baby on the way

We moved house to the edge of town

Neat, en suite and everything

We set up for the settle down

And the garden had a swing

Happy home card on our table

Lay still in the envelope

I tried but was unable

To bear the weight of all that hope

Most friends tried to be there

But some said the strangest things

Guess we don't know what clothes to wear

When winter, when winter

follows spring

Bridge

We battled on, then you were gone,

I told myself *I will survive*

But there were times I'd check my pulse

Just to feel I was alive

New hand on my shoulder,

New coat around my chair

You brought out something in me

That I didn't know was there

But May's nights are the hardest

Hanging from the edge of spring

I see a flower in the darkness

In our garden, in a garden

In our garden, in a garden

with a swing.

You

You were born in a hurry
Somewhere over the sea
Crib of clouds for our stowaway
We took off two, landed three

Middle name from the stewardess
Now Grace follows Skylar
Hoping you'll grow to like your name
Whoever you are

*Kith and kin and their ghosts come by
Gran arrives in your smile
Some will stay as the years go by
Some rest only a while*

All the hope of the morning
All the day's mystery
Will the core of the apple
Hold the whole of the tree?

In the net of the night sky
There's a fine catch of stars
They'll be shining down on you
Wherever you are

*On the cusp of those cotton clouds
In the doors to your dreams
Through each threshold and story
Thread your light, sew your seams*

Live with grace Skylar Armour
May you get as you give
Flying high like the day you came
As long as you live

Here for you as you need us
Hands outstretched, hearts ajar
Every day that we're granted
Wherever, Whatever,Whoever you are

Blue Lullaby

I know I should sing of sweet dreams on the wing
And paint the night bright with my song
But I've had a bad day, pride got in the way
And the right got washed out by the wrong

Life's turning the screw, I've drunk one or two,
And my lullaby's turning to blue
But hush, little guy, you need not know the why,
Or the when, or the where, or the who

Chorus

My blue lullaby, to dream is to fly
But no guarantee's absolute
Poor boy you've no choice but to hang on my voice
And float down in its worn parachute

Once those eyelids slip down, you'll be tomorrow bound
When we'll walk hand in hand to the town
And we'll pass that old place where I first saw Mum's face
As she laughed when I acted the clown

I've long since got that part, I've learned it by heart
Through the smiles and the tears and make up
But that show has moved on, like your Mum, now long gone
Still I hurt every day I wake up

Our blue lullaby, to live is to fly
But turbulence happens, it's true
This blue lullaby longs to wake to blue skies
We'll rise high when that new dawn breaks through

Oh blue lullaby, be it live, dream or fly
There are no guarantees absolute
Draw, lose or win, now it's time to turn in
And pack up this old worn parachute

Glasgow's glow

Dusk falls round the city's rim
Lights bubble up to the brim
Glasgow from my window seat
I drain the glass, the taste is sweet

Flying back from Amsterdam
High and happy from the dram
Thinking of a girl I know
Thinking of the Glasgow glow

And I know there's plenty darkness in the space between these
lights
There's harm and hurt and heartache, and shouting in the night
But you're seldom far from kindness
Or distant from a smile
So many in this city who will go the extra mile
More than show, way to go
That's Glasgow's glow

You meet me at Buchanan Street
Our faces melt the gentle sleet

Streeling through the streets we go
Laughing as it turns to snow

Past the smokers, in the door
Wet coats dripping on the floor
The smell of beer, the dancing tongues
The promise of the night to come

And we talk of friends and family, and the days and nights we
spent

Sharing flats and parties in those draughty tenements

You can say my specs are rosy

You can say my heart's enlarged

Tonight we're here and cosy, and I'm guilty now as charged

Gonnae no ever go

That Glasgow glow

You could say the drink is talking, you could say it's a pure dive

But there's no other city where my life feels so alive

There's a spark

From the heart

That's Glasgow's glow

The graveyard of the greats

Last night I took a walk along to the graveyard of the greats
I was whistling my latest song as I passed between the gates
Then up rose Frederic Chopin, in his eyes the summer moon,
He said "That one's got me hopin' I can join you for a tune"

"If you're coming back again tonight, could you bring a piano?"
I said "Fred, the baby grand's not light, has to be my Casio"
"Right", said Fred, "see my fingers ache to play the music in my head,
But I'm stuck in this place night and day – it's a hard thing being dead"

I came back with my old keyboard and an extra battery
I demo'd, he cried out "My Lord!", I said "Fred, that's flattery.
But now it's your turn, have a go, if it's got you in the mood,
I'd love a nocturne that I know or, maybe, a wee etude"

Instrumental bridge

Then his fingers flew across the keys quick as bats from out their
caves

The music tender, wild and free resonating round the graves

They rose and slipped their bonds of earth, then danced around the
stones

Some body booked the rhythm berth, banging on a box with bones

Jim Morrison said he was on to get up and sing a song,
We were howling out in unison, "I've been down so goddam long!"
Up from her gaff Edith Piaf gave us all "La vie en rose",
"Je ne regrette rien" she laughed and the show came to a close

As the morning light came creepin', I exchanged farewells with Fred
With the streets of Paris sleepin', I rolled homewards and to bed
When I woke ten new tunes lingered as the sunlight bathed my
hands,

Ten long moondust-spangled fingers and that waiting baby grand
ah that waiting baby grand.

Dog days

One of these dawns like a premonition,
Open your eyes and you'll light the fuse
On a damp squib or a demolition -
Turn either way, it's the morning blues
Looking ahead and the mirror flinches
Facing up now to your old dog days,
Looking back down and you've missed by inches
One of these days when you pee sideways

Too much to ignore, mop the floor,
No, you can't blame the dog, now he's more control than you
And he's waiting down there at the foot of the stair
Sabre knows what he needs to do

Out front to the hedge as the edge of a hearse and cortege
Pulls alongside in full view. Moving so slow,
Surely they know that a dog's gotta do what a dog's gotta do
Showing respect as you bow and collect,
Hoping the ground will swallow you (too/two)

One of these days, just one of those days, one of these days.
(Walkies Sabre!)

Or, one of these days when the sunshine wakes you,
A loved one lying by your side
Get up and go where the feeling takes you
Out to a world still open wide
Looking ahead and the mirror's winking
Whispering *you still cut a dash*
Listen, it's not just wishful thinking
It's one of these days when you make a splash

Out off the lead, guaranteed that Sabre will speed
For a sniff around the park
Next thing he's found some clothes on the ground
And he starts to jump and bark

Looks first like a doll, then all the limbs are moving
And you hear a crying sound
One baby girl, new to the world on this bright September day
The foundling was found by a curious hound
So the evening papers say
On one of these days, just one of those days, these old dog days
Repeat

Leaving

Hospitals build high
Hospices stay low
A bedside in the sky
A garden when you go

So hard to be here now
And it's harder leaving you
But tomorrow's sun will rise
And gem the morning dew

Gem the morning dew
Gem the morning dew
Tomorrow's sun will rise
But it's hardest leaving you

A last dance

I watch time move across your face.

A sunbeam laps around your lids,

Wrinkles bathed by ebbing light,

Tidelines worn with grit and grace.

Above a photo from your wedding,

Dust is dancing in this sunset spotlight.

“Stardust” plays. One more

Encore before the curtains’ last closing.

Your hand, translucent now,

And vein-ribbed like a fallen leaf,

Still holds a feint glow. Warm

From life’s dance, ready for the final bow.

The past and the sky

Strange as it seems
I hardly noticed then
Sometimes old dreams
Get in your eyes and when
The ground slips away
You're falling through the day
Gravity and history and me

That look on your face
Somebody stole your scone
Visible from space
Now all the love has gone
You're as bad as me
Embarking up the wrong tree
History and gravity agree

Bridge

All the while
The past gets bigger
What, where, when, who, why?

The future shrinks
Into a puddle
But the puddle holds
The puddle holds.....the sky

So, bathe me in new rain
The day will see me dry
Tomorrow comes again
I'll still be aiming high
History's behind
Gravity's a state of mind
A wing-warm wind is all I need to fly
A wing-warm wind is all I need to fly

*Life can only be understood backwards,
but it must be lived forwards (Soren Kierkegaard)*

Glide

Too long since I was with you
There where I feel I belong
We can't meet so I'll have to
Embark on the wings of a song
Turn your head to the west wind
Hear me nearby your side
Run with me now, we can take off together
Eyes to the sky, spread out our feathers
And glide, glide, out over green mountainside
Glide, glide.....

Far below see our shadows
Ripple on out down the glen
Lithe and liquid like minnows
We follow the river again
Over rocks smooth as old bones
On to a wild waterslide
Trust in our skin, we can surf it together
Let it begin, we've got magic whenever
We glide, glide, over the wild waterslide
Glide, glide.....

Bridge

Run with me now, take off together
Eyes to the sky, spread out our feathers
Run with me now, take off together
Eyes to the sky, spread out our feathers

Trust in our skin, we can surf it together
Let it begin, we've got magic whenever
We trust in our skin, surf it together
Let it begin, we've got magic whenever

We glide, glide, glide

Glide, glide, glide

Glide, glide, glide

Glide, glide

Glide to the sea with the outgoing tide

Weightless and free on the ocean so wide

As we glide, glide,

Glide, glide, glide...(too long since I was with you)

Glide, glide, glide (too long since I was with you)

Glide, glide, glide.....