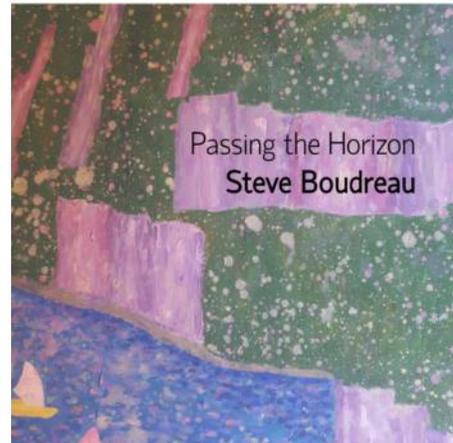


Passing the Horizon (Home Tapes Vol. 4)

Steve Boudreau - piano

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Recorded in Ottawa, Canada in August, 2020 by Steve Boudreau.
Mixed and Mastered by Philip Shaw Bova at Bova Lab Studio
Released November 1, 2020.

This album contains original material that spans the last twenty years. A lot of the pieces stem from travel and places that are off-limits to visit as I was practicing and recording them. Working out these pieces for solo piano also resulted in the reliving of good and bad moments from the past that I hadn't thought of in quite some time.

One Way, Round Trip The two types of bus tickets you can purchase. My first few trips to New York City involved driving from Ottawa to the Syracuse train station and taking a bus from there to Manhattan. For these early trips I didn't have much money to spend so during the day I would spend a lot of the time during the day at the desk wherever I was staying working out ideas on paper and listening to music before heading out in the evening to see one great show after another.

Elizabeth's Piano was inspired by harmonies of renaissance composer William Byrd, whose works are prominent in the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book, music for early keyboard instruments. I played through a lot of this music in grad school, but I think I was first introduced to a lot of it when I played various pieces in recorder ensembles in school. When I recently visited London, I saw Queen Elizabeth I's virginal on display at the British Museum, it didn't seem as far removed from the piano as I had thought it would be.

Lullabye for Isobel is a piece based on a short melody I wrote on a nylon string guitar very quietly late at night. Often when I work on a piece, if I don't write down or record my best ideas I'll forget them the next day, but in this case, I came back and played the same kernel of an idea several nights in a row. Pianist Frank Kimbrough once told me that as he got older he instinctively knew what to do with musical ideas he had previously left incomplete. I think this piece was like that for me.

The Lonely Diner refers to a lot of people and places. The notion of artists working in coffeeshops is more romantic than diners, but I prefer the bright lights and simple food when I'm working. I also generally like trying out restaurants by myself, for the experience as much as the food. A lot of people

who do this kind of thing observe other people, but I often found I used the time to observe my own thoughts, and take time out from whatever else was going on.

Don't Leave is a more recent composition that uses a chorale-like structure, where each melody makes a short statement, moving phrase-by-phrase. There are some beats left out here and there, the way a country or folk singer might drop an odd number of beats to catch up to the pacing of the lyrics. For improvising I sometimes play over the exact time signatures, and sometimes stretch the chord progression to fit more evenly into 4/4 time.

Still Beating was written around the same time as “Gone”, a piece for someone who had passed away. Often when someone important dies we take special note of those living legends who are still with us, although it feels like bad luck to point to anyone specific. This piece is for the people who I want to make time to see right now, in the present.

Harvest Stroll was written after taking a leisurely walk in the Experimental Farm in the fall. Once September and regular work schedules settle in there aren't many other visitors around during the day. Fall is a nice time, but as someone who is always looking ahead, I'm always thinking about winter being around the corner, and there's some of that in this piece as well.

Away From Home is a piece I wrote when I moved out of my first apartment, I remember thinking how important it felt that I had built my own 'home' that I was entirely responsible for, with varying degrees of success. The foundation of my practice routine started taking shape there, and it was there that I made my major decision to become a full time musician, even though that was one of the reasons I could no longer afford to live there by myself.

Built with Balsa is a loosely structured improvisation based on simple building blocks. Originally the piece had more of a repetitive melody and more structural markers, but in this version I started from a freer introductory statement and kept building that way instead of forcing it back to the original plan. I did a few takes both ways and this approach sounded closer to what I wanted from this piece.

Almost Home is a piece by singer-songwriter Joe Brownrigg. Joe and I went to high school together and played in bands on and off for over twenty years. He has written hundreds of songs across multiple genres, this one was based on a version he sent me to check out that was just him playing guitar and singing, very simple but very real. When I play this song I try to keep myself from over-embellishing the piece because it stands on its own without any flourishes.

This project is dedicated to Jennifer Giles, who I met while studying at Carleton University in 1999. I think of her every day whether I'm playing or teaching.

We acknowledge the support of the Canada Council for the Arts.



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