

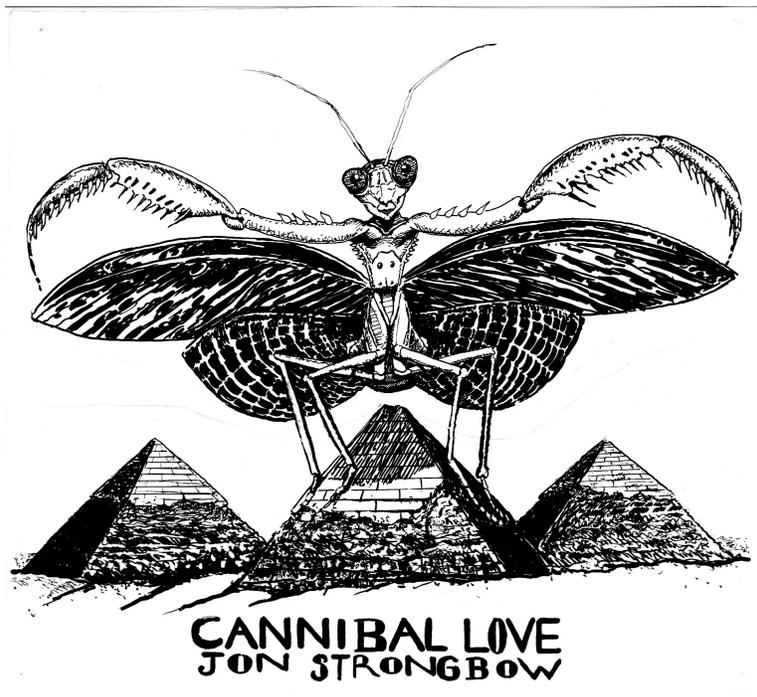
What It Takes (1990) Remastered 2021

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|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1) What it Takes | 9) Talkity Talk |
| 2) Watch Me Unwind | 10) Love Will Find You |
| 3) Stupid Fear | plus extras: |
| 4) Paper Guru | 11) Depression |
| 5) Boo Hoo Hoo | 12) Cannibal Love |
| 6) Rhythm from the Blues | 13) Fine Line |
| 7) Dead Sick Thing | 14) Breathing Lizard |
| 8) Little Crimes | 15) All The Nonsense Inside |

What It Takes is a ragged loose thing, lacking the tightness and sparkle of Something Different. It is also darker and more perverse. Part of the reason for this was that I had no benefactor, and took part-time jobs in order to pay for the recordings. This meant my mind was scrambled, and I had to work very fast in the studio in order to save money, hence the roughness.

The album was originally going to be called Cannibal Love, but at the time I felt that particular song eluded me, and I didn't have any definite chorus and generally felt it didn't work so I discarded the song...and the album became What it Takes ...

...Years later I discovered the original tapes and realized that with a few simple changes, the song 'Cannibal Love' could be a little gem of a masterpiece! (notice that part of the musical construction of the song is pretty much identical to the song 'Target Area' from Alien City) Still, the album is a hodgepodge!



What It Takes also features 3 tunes from the disastrous first, last and only session work the **Get Well Soon Band** ever made. This was done at Reciprocal studios and it was a nightmare weekend. The engineer sucked, the band sucked; there was dissension in the ranks. I was only able to salvage 4 tunes (out of more than a dozen!) one of which is an instrumental that is scheduled to appear on a future Mystery School album called **Child's Play**.

The song 'Stupid Fear' was a song the poet Asher Cohen and I wrote in Concrete, by the Skagit River. All the lyrics are Asher's except for the 'let go of that stupid fear and try to be more clear!' I consider it a crying shame that the tunes we sculpted together in the Skagit Valley in the early 80's were never recorded. We wrote enough material for at least three albums, and it was all really fantastic stuff. But I was off moving at the speed of light and didn't have the time or money to devote myself to recording those songs. I needed to have at least 2 clones of myself, seriously!



The **Get Well Soon Band** featured Monad Elohim and Dave Lafontant on saxophones, Dee Chapman on Bass, percussion and vocals, Jeff Greenlee on keyboards and sometimes bass, and Tom Richards on drums with Liza Ghitis on conga.



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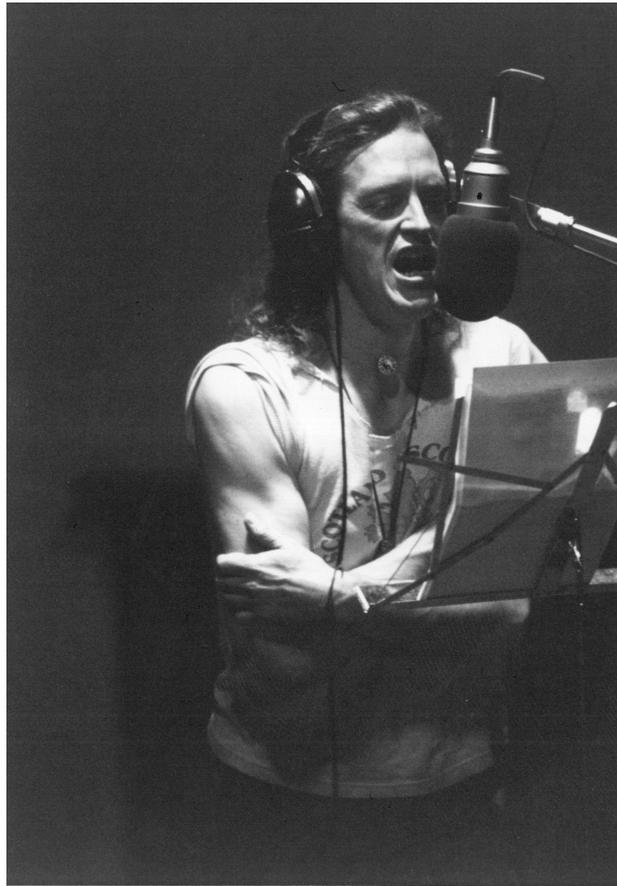




Most of this album was recorded in Patrick Donicht's basement studio called **The Audio Vortex** and sounds much cleaner than the Reciprocal tracks, , with Leo Leblanc on drums and Martin Sutlovich on fretless bass, and myself on vocals, keys and guitars and extraneous percussion. The title track 'What it Takes' was recorded with Pete Langhans on drums, Bill Bainbridge on bass and me on keys.

There were also two songs included as extras that were recorded in Robin Crestman's basement, with her on drums and her husband Jeff Miller on bass. So it's actually quite a crazy quilt!

But it contains a lot of gems. 'Paper Guru' is one of my favorites, a straight up prayer of thanks to a writer and a book that has helped a person go through bleak times. Another personal favorite is 'Little Crimes' which is a surrealistic cowboy song, an ode to being alive in a world gone totally mad. It seems hauntingly appropriate in the shadow of covid and the brave new world of disinformation, addictive drugs and masses of displaced homeless people that seem to have lost touch with the sacred thread of their own personal lives.



Vocal harmonies added in Patrick's studio

Talkity-Talk was an anthem that I loved to perform on stage with the Get Well Soon Band. Dee especially enjoyed 'bassing-out' as well as singing strong stand-out vocals.

Ned Gerhart provided the gritty sax solo on 'Boo Hoo Hoo', which was written a joke, but swings along with some great lyrics.

I did not intend to sound like a sex-crazed rock star when I wrote and performed 'Watch Me Unwind,' but many people accused me of doing just that. Yes, it has sex in it, but it is more about how each person is a blessing, each person is a healer that might have the 'antidote' and hold the key that will unlock the prisons that our minds have created for ourselves.

The song 'Love Will Find You' Is all about running from others, running from being vulnerable, running from a good love connection, running away from love and from life. I did my best to bring some humor into the song. I even turned it into an upbeat little ditty. But the subject matter is complicated and still remains true. As people, as human beings, we wander around all broken and bent out of shape, feeling unloved. But we have to remember to stay open so that love can find us. Without love in our lives we are totally lost and can become suicidal. But in short: We need to learn to love ourselves!

Featuring Ashleigh P. Jones, singing angelic back-up vocals.



This is the album that started me on the path of instrumental music! At the time I felt that the tempo of 'Rhythm From the Blues' was too fast, so I went into it, and turned it into an instrumental. But I kept the original version, and now I feel I was wrong to discount it as a vocal song. So I brought it back in its original form, and also as an unedited instrumental extra. An edited version appears on the **Mystery School** album **Unusual Tales**.

The short instrumental called 'Breathing Lizard' was developed from a jam session or maybe I should say 'farting around' in between recording songs. Later, Patrick and I played around with it and it appears in that altered form on the **Mystery School** album **Strange Cathedral**. Here is the untouched original version, which made me even more interested in expressing myself instrumentally.

Although I consider this album a positive album, it visits some really dark places and says many dark things, but they are things I felt needed to be said. I really labored on writing the tune 'Fine Line' in terms of telling the story. I wanted to show that power-crazed self-loathing was the main reason things are screwed up on the planet.

This song was a challenge to perform live, because I had to go really deep inside to dip into that cold pool of self-hatred and angst. It usually blew people's minds. 'Talkity-talk' was of the same ilk. I was utterly pissed at what was going down in the world when I wrote it. 'Depression' was part tongue in cheek, part horror, and the same goes for 'Dead Sick Thing.'

Actually, now that I think about it, it's a pretty dark album, with a few moments of love and clarity. I suppose that is why the original title was going to be **Cannibal Love**. There were even tee shirts printed with the mantis graphic, but no song was forthcoming or ever released, and the album ended up being called by a different name.

Now that song has been restored to the album, which is a minor miracle to me. Hell, the fact that this album exists at all is a miracle, considering what was happening at the time.

I rearranged the sequencing of the songs for this release, just to please myself. Hardly anyone has ever heard this album anyway as it was only released on cassette tape, and only about a hundred copies were ever produced. I *did* manage to sell most of those at various live shows however. I'm proud of this version, as certain mistakes have been corrected, certain tunes have been slightly altered and remixed and remastered. The extras are a welcome addition, and I am thankful for the help of Patrick Donicht, Tom Dyer and Steve Turnidge.

I hope you like it!

After this release, I will begin work on restoring my first vocal album called **A Normal Sort of Guy** put out by Green Monkey Records, all remastered, including a track previously left on the cutting room floor, as well as a few extra songs from that time period that have never been heard before.

Cheers!

