A Werewolf’s Thesis

An Album by John T. Wurzer

All songs Written, Composed, and Performed by John T. Wurzer

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Throughout 98% of the process of creating this album, the working title was “A Young Tom Sawyer”. Less than a week before I was going to release the album, I changed the name, changed a bunch of the songs and rearranged them all. I’m still trying to figure out what the Werewolf’s Thesis purports to explain. Regardless, I’m pretty sure it is uncorrupted by the moon. Below are the obligatory and possibly totally fabricated explanations of what the songs just might be about; but probably aren’t.

1. **Nonsense Tune** – While sitting under the deck behind our house I found myself spontaneously playing this melody on the guitar. All the while I was thinking to myself, “There is no way this ever becomes a song. It’s just too weird.” Eventually it turned into a journey through some of the major news stories of my lifetime; from the Vietnam war through the fall of the Berlin wall, the creation of the internet, and of course the 2016 election. As I said back in 2009 “It all makes perfect nonsense to me.”
2. **No Luck** – I was watching the TV news in a hotel bar and looked away from the screen towards the bartender pouring Jack Daniels into a bourbon and coke. Then I looked back up at the news and a song was born. At least that’s how I remember it. As a species, we could use a little good luck right now.
3. **Tempo** – This song originally had 10 verses so you would think that I might remember where and when I wrote it and what I was thinking. It was originally called “Where does it end?” which is probably the title that I made up after writing 10 verses about absolutely nothing. It’s just about how I wish life would slow down long enough for me to figure out what it is all about. Maybe the only time you figure out the meaning of life is in that brief millisecond yours ends.
4. **Streams of Tomorrow** – I finally finished my 28.5-year business relationship with Diamond Comic Distributors on April 30th, 2019. I wrote the lyrics to this song late that afternoon. Retirement is cool. Old age sucks. I feel very fortunate that I have Diane beside me to share both the blessings and the curses of my twilight years. I composed this music on the piano in our basement. About half the songs on this album were composed on piano rather than guitar; which is something I haven’t done in many years and I look forward to doing more often.
5. **Gluten Free Glutes** – It’s May 2019 and I’m sitting in the window seat of an airplane on the tarmac of Baltimore/Washington International airport waiting for my flight to Rochester, NY to back away from the gate and take off. The sky breaks open in a torrential rainstorm. I look out the window and see one of the luggage handlers out in the rain doing “step-back lunges”. (Yes, she was exercising.) I said to myself, “Self, somehow there has to be a song for this.” It turns out that this is it.
6. **A Young Tom Sawyer** – I spent a good portion of my 2019 summer grinding, sanding, priming, and painting 200 feet of badly rusted wrought iron fencing that encloses our backyard. By the time it was over it amounted to around 200 manhours of work. Yes, that’s one hour for each foot of fencing. While I was painting, I couldn’t help but recall reading about Tom Sawyer and his whitewashing escapade back when I was young. So, I downloaded the audio book and listened to it for a portion of the time I was painting the fence. While doing so I also put together this song in my head. It was quite a chore writing a song without a computer, pen and paper, guitar or piano. It’s no longer the title track; but it has a warm spot in my heart.
7. **Tale of a Slovenly Toad** – Many of the bars in Topeka have animals in their names. I wrote this song while sipping a beer at a bar called the “Lazy Toad”; not at the “Glazed Goose”, the “Blue Moose”, “The Celtic Fox”, or any of the other beast ridden establishments in this capitol city. This is just a song where I’m speculating on what will be next my next adventure on this road through life.
8. **Dustbowl Weather** – When I am asked to describe what the weather is like in Kansas; I tell people that it is as cold as Rochester, NY in the winter and as hot as Fort Worth, TX in the summer. Oh yeah, and it’s desert windy. I think that braving the weather here in Kansas is kind of a metaphor for what our country is going through philosophically, emotionally, and politically lately. Sometimes it is hard to see a hope for new life, new growth, and human kindness. All of that said, if you put the politics aside; the people in Topeka, Kansas are the warmest, friendliest people that I’ve encountered in any city that I’ve ever lived in or visited. So, maybe there is hope for this country and our world as well.
9. **Burger Theory** – Whenever I stay at the Hampton Inn near the Kansas City airport, I make time to walk down the street to the Holiday Inn where there is a Bar called Burger Theory. It opens at 5 p.m. The last time I was there it was 5 p.m., the bar was still closed; so I decided to write a jingle for them. Unfortunately, they haven’t picked it up as their theme song. I wonder why?
10. **Lost Mind** – Wrote and composed this this song at the piano. I’m not sure what it is about. I think I temporarily lost my mind.
11. **The Longest Song** – Well, it is the longest song on the album. Thus, this seemed like a good name for it. I wrote this on an airplane. Some of my favorite lines on the album are in this song. Still I had to cut it down from its original 10 verses. “Either I am getting taller or the ground is growing smaller or I’m much too high…”
12. **Tiny Bunny** – It was the middle of June and I still only had a handful of song embryos gestating for this year’s CD. I started taking an hour or two every late afternoon to sit under the deck behind our house with my notebook and write about whatever came to mind. One night, a bunny came up and started eating the bird seed underneath our feeder. He hung out in our yard for about an hour and a half and so I wrote him this song. He made it clear that in his opinion farmers should NOT own guns. He had very few other opinions to share.
13. **Lower** – I scratched a few frustrated lines of poetry in my book on New Years Eve when the neighborhood fireworks were going off. Six months and a few days later, on the fourth of July, when the fireworks were going off again until two o’clock in the morning, I decided to finish the song. Let’s be clear about this. Blowing things up is NOT the best way to prove to the rest of the world that you are free. There’s a bunch of “A Tale of Two Cities” language in the refrain. I revisited “A Tale of Two Cities” in audio book format while painting my fence as well. There are some scary parallels between that book and the current state of many of the societies in the world today as well.
14. **Stranger Things** – I wrote this at the Murder In The Mall, Topeka Civic Theatre event this past summer. It’s kind of a mash up between my observations while at the event and the Stranger Things television series. If one allows oneself to absorb everything going on in the world around them, the stranger things just start to jump right out into view.
15. **Mute** – I also composed this song at the piano. One of the hardest things to adjust to about retirement is that no one really cares to hear what I think about… well… about pretty much anything. Sometimes it’s just easier to keep my mouth shut. Becoming relevant in some way shape or form is probably something that I’ll need to address eventually; however for now I will just relax and enjoy the advantages of being invisible.