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Treasures in My Chest – Andrew McKnight

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Produced by AM & Dustin DeLage. Recorded, engineered and mixed by Dustin DeLage at Cabin Studios, Leesburg VA. Additional remote recording by Ken Lubinsky at Black Hills Studios, Plainfield CT. Atlantic Ocean waves recorded by Michelle McKnight at East Beach, Charlestown RI. Mastering by Bill Wolf, Wolf Productions, Alexandria VA. Graphic Design by Stilson Greene, Leesburg VA. Back cover photo by Christi Porter Photography, Lincoln VA

The powerful tools of modern genealogy led the award-winning singer, writer and guitarist to extraordinary connections and discoveries about music in his heritage and his colorful ancestors. Released with a full-length companion book, *Treasures* is truly a sonic journey meant to be experienced in sequence like a classic album, from the richly layered "Web of Mystery" and the Celtic-tinged rock of "Aretas Culver" to the sweet folk treatment of "When My Time Comes" and the title cut. That experience is enriched by a wide range of styles, like jazzy-rock of "Sons & Fathers" and "Anniversary," an unusual dobro/cello duet. Additionally, threading together the full length songs are three short "interstitial" pieces that Andrew wrote and performed on instruments that were gifted to him.

FOLK RADIO SERVICE: Hudson Harding Music, hudsonhardingmusic@yahoo.com

All songs written by AM and ©Catalooch Music, BMI, except "Margaret" by Andrew McKnight ©1906, Success Music, and "Our Meeting Is Over" (traditional).

1. Embarking

2019 ©Catalooch Music, BMI

A slightly Celtic sounding melody created on a Native American flute, and set on the western shore of the North Atlantic. With thanks to my wife Michelle and her iPhone for recording the waves lapping along the RI beach, and to my friend Eva for the precious gift of the flute.

AM - cedar flute

2. Margaret/Treasures in My Chest

1906 © Andrew McKnight, Success Music/2019 ©Catalooch Music, BMI

This project took a big leap into reality in the spring of 2016 when my parents introduced me to their copy of "Margaret," published in 1906 by my great-grandfather whose name I happen to share. It was a profound experience to find an ancestor who also "hears the voices" and was also driven to turn them into verse and melody, and that experience became the seed to "Treasures in My Chest". It wasn't until I connected face to face with some of my musical second cousins in autumn 2018 that I realized that visit was what I needed to finish the song.

Aly McKnight – piano, AM - vocal and guitar

3. Web of Mystery

2018 ©Catalooch Music, BMI

Born of the realization that every one of those spaces on your family tree are essential to you being here, whether or not you know the name or anything else about the occupants of each space. That the gift of your life passed through all of them, and that they deserve to be remembered in some way, and hopefully someday, each of us will be too.

Jon Carroll - organ and accordion, Michael Rohrer – bass, Lisa Taylor – drums, AM - vocals and electric guitars

4. Left Behind

2019 ©Catalooch Music, BMI

The raucous and divisive rhetoric about people coming to these shores fleeing countries of origin for hope at something better is not new. Most of our ancestors left some similarly disparaged place to come here. Thus most all of us are not only descendants of immigrants, but our ancestors left behind family as well. Up until only a century or so ago, those who left might as well have died, for they might never be heard from again. To connect with the descendants of the "left behind" has been a powerful elixir indeed. But the concept of the leaving and the left behind is much more a part of the human condition than simply our physical movements.

Rachel Taylor – cello, Michael Rohrer – bass, Lisa Taylor – drums, AM - vocals and electric guitars

5. Passage/(Fathers Now) Our Meeting Is Over

2017 ©Catalooch Music, BMI/Traditional

The Lowden guitar that was I gifted by my Irish cousins during our 2017 visit is the gift that keeps on giving. Every time I pick it up it seems some new idea flows out. Passage was just a little instrumental noodling that hypnotized me, as did the traditional tune that I learned the previous summer in Maine from my friend Dick Scobie.

AM - vocal and guitar; Dustin Delage, Tony Denikos, John Rickard, Madeleine McKnight and Lisa Taylor - ensemble vocals

6. Aretas Culver

2018 ©Catalooch Music, BMI

It was quite a five-year odyssey from "meeting" my 3-times great grandfather face to face, to helping dedicate a veteran's headstone befitting a volunteer in Abe Lincoln's army. From Antietam to Andersonville, the story of Aretas and his ill-fated townsmen of Bristol CT will always stay with me. I'd like to think he'd appreciate the heart behind all of it.

Rachel Taylor – cello, Jeff Arey – mandolin, Michael Rohrer – bass, Lisa Taylor - drums and harmony vocals, AM - lead and harmony vocals, guitars

7. A Dram to the Holidays

2017© Catalooch Music, BMI

I felt that the first song I wrote on the gift guitar should have something to do with those shared ancestors to whom we all owe our existence. It was right before a show I was doing that Christmas, and I started to wonder about the hard lives they would have led in mid-1800s County Down. Around the time of the winter solstice there the sun sinks dreadfully early in the afternoon, and the hard work of manual laborers probably didn't slow much in post-famine Ireland either. Despite the title, it really has little to do with another skill attributed to "my people"; the distillation of spirits other than of the holiday variety.

Rachel Taylor – cello, Michael Rohrer – bass, Lisa Taylor - drums and harmony vocals, Tony Denikos - harmony vocals, AM - vocals, acoustic and electric guitars

8. The Gift

2019 ©Catalooch Music, BMI

When you go to a place you've never been and where your ancestors lived, and you meet living flesh and blood, and they send you back to America with their beautiful family guitar, made in the hometown of your ancestors, that is a life-changing moment worthy of more than one song. But this is the one dedicated to that precious gift, and all that comes with it.

AM - vocal and guitar

9. Sons & Fathers

©2019 Catalooch Music, BMI

In my 25-year career, I have performed with my dad playing keyboards many times, but we have never recorded together. On an album dedicated to family history that also belongs to him, it was not only right but essential. So I tried to write something musically in his wheelhouse, and I'm happy that he liked it enough to be willing to do it. From the perspective of "the bridge" between aging parents and being a parent myself.

Warren McKnight - piano and organ, Michael Rohrer – bass, Lisa Taylor – drums, AM - vocals and electric guitar

10. My Little Town

©2019 Catalooch Music, BMI

Every one of us in the seven generations I know of my father's father's line left home and started anew someplace else. My little village in Virginia is home to me in a way no place has ever quite been. A tribute to our ghosts and our perils too.

Jeff Arey – mandolin, Michael Rohrer – bass, Lisa Taylor – drums, Tony Denikos - harmony vocals, Stephanie Thompson - harmony vocals, AM - vocals, acoustic and electric guitars

11. Long Ago and Far Away

2019 ©Catalooch Music, BMI

My now 12-year old daughter engages in music in many different ways. I wrote this tune on her fiddle, which I don't play but she does

still now and again. It was different for both of us - me letting her hold up my singing with her playing. It's raw and emotive for me, much like contemplating my ancestors and her descendants all within the same song. Our porch functions like a family room for the warm seasons of the year; I hope this feels like you're here with us on a typical summer night.

Madeleine McKnight – fiddle, AM – vocals

12. Entrelazando

2019 ©Catalooch Music, BMI

My wife's family comes from Spain and eastern Europe, and has been much harder to trace than my own. But our kid is the only heir in the whole world to both Michelle's family stories and mine. My Cuban mother-in-law would appreciate that I titled this accordingly in Spanish, meaning "intertwining." Composed and performed on the beautiful Lopez handmade classical guitar from our dear friend Teresa, and dedicated to Queta and Madeleine.

AM - classical guitar

13. Anniversary (2,000 Years Ago)

2016 ©Catalooch Music, BMI

"On this day x number of years ago, y happened." Anniversaries are noted in news, on calendars and many other ways every day. And on this day long ago, some milestone good or bad happened for your ancestors and mine. Two millennia are too far back for me to visualize, so it's purely my imagination. And that somehow makes it feel quite real to me.

Rachel Taylor – cello, AM - vocals and dobro

14. Our Meeting Is Over (Reprise)

Traditional; arranged Lisa Taylor & Andrew McKnight

The voices of the ancestors come to life, a cappella. Arranged with my amazing friend and bandmate Lisa, and featuring some very dear people in my life too.

AM, John Rickard, Les Thompson, Tony Denikos, Dustin Delage, Madeleine McKnight, Stephanie Thompson and Lisa Taylor - ensemble vocals

15. When My Time Comes

©2019 Catalooch Music, BMI

Written for my friend Chris King's memorial service, held in our historic little chapel that he helped our congregation to buy some 20 years ago. Built by formerly enslaved families working by firelight in 1890, its wooden walls are soaked deeply with the hopes and despairs of people who lived through segregation and lynchings in the Jim Crow south. Chris had great reverence for them, and was committed to their story taking its proper place in our local history. He also was quite a scholar of the blues. I felt like an improvised slide piece of some sort would be a fitting sendoff, but on the morning of the service, the song wrote itself in fifteen minutes. I'll always consider it a treasured gift from my friend in the Great Beyond.

AM - vocals and slide guitar

Andrew McKnight Discography

Live: Bound for Glory (2016) - download only, radio concert, Ithaca NY

Live from the Appalachians to Austin (2013) - download only concert, Austin TX (DVD out of print)

One Virginia Night (2012) - Andrew McKnight & Beyond Borders live concert CD/download (DVD out of print)

Something Worth Standing For (2008) - CD/download

Beyond Borders (2005)- CD/download

Turning Pages (2001)- CD/download

Where This River Runs (1998) - download only

Traveler (1995)- CD/download