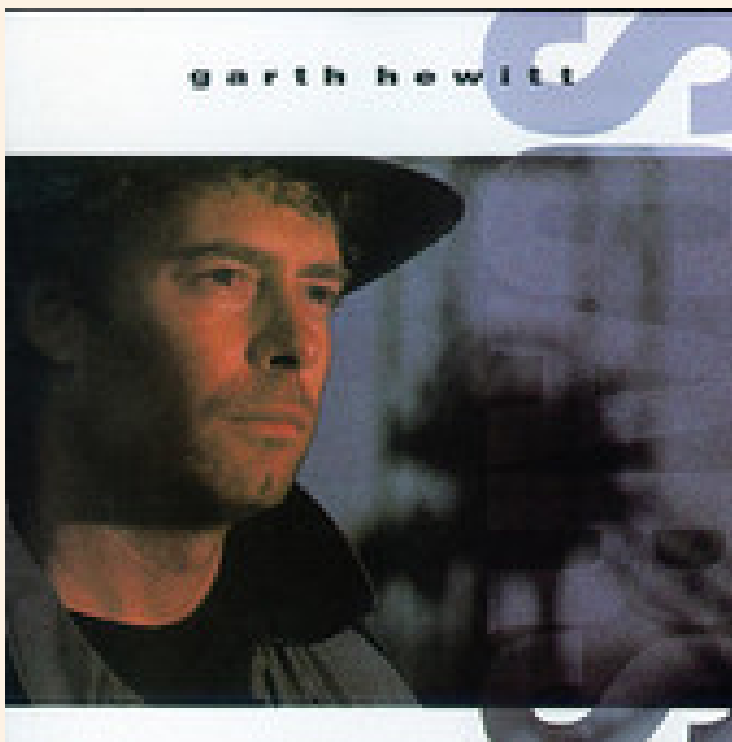


Hello again,

Recently I was interested by a programme on **Wandsworth Radio**. It was presented by **Mark Ryder** - every week he takes an album and plays it right through, and he did that with my album **Stealing Jesus Back**. I actually found it quite fascinating to think about the different tracks and it reminded me of things I'd forgotten. So I thought in this newsletter I would tell you the story of another album which is one of the ones that **GingerDog Records** have recently put up online.



It's the album **Scars** which was recorded in 1989, subtitled **Songs of Struggle and Hope, Regrets and Homecomings**. I've been quite fascinated to go back to it because it brings back memories. Not least with the cover which was a photo session done beside a Welsh coal mine. You can just vaguely see the outline of the mine on the front cover, better on the back cover and more

clearly on the lyric sheet. I can't remember exactly where we were but I know we were not far from Aberfan.

This was the last album I did in vinyl - so far! I do want to make at least one more album available on vinyl. There's something quite special about it, both in sound, and the design you can do on the cover.

The album starts with the song **Namibia**. Every now and again I complain that my songs don't go out of date - what I mean by this is a song I've written about Palestine, for instance, maybe 20 years ago, is just as relevant today if not more so because things have only got worse. So it's good to listen to Namibia which is a strong protest song about apartheid time. I did two songs, one called Litany for Africa, which was released on a special 12" single by the Greenbelt Festival specifically about South Africa and was a prayer for justice to come - but both that and Namibia have seen the end of the Apartheid dominating them. It's been nice to listen to Namibia again and in particular hear Tom Blade's great guitar on this song.

The next track is called **Strange Weapons**, a song sparked off by an incident outside St George's Cathedral in Cape Town where the clergy and priests and nuns were demonstrating led by Archbishop Tutu and they had to seek sanctuary in the Cathedral when the police attacked. The power of that non-violent witness was undoubtedly a weapon of love. Later I did a concert in the Cathedral and you could still see purple marks on the pews - this was the purple dye that had been sprayed at people to break up the demonstration and it was on their clothes when they rushed into the Cathedral.

The other day my son Ben was down at the Cathedral - it was an amazingly moving moment for him because Archbishop Desmond Tutu was celebrating the Eucharist and Ben received it from him and later had breakfast with him.



Archbishop Desmond Tutu with Ben Hewitt

Ben was talking about it afterwards and it sounded like a parable - that one side of the road you had the World

Economic Forum surrounded by incredible security to keep people away, to make sure only the rich and famous could get inside; and then beside it the Cathedral where one of the most famous figures in the world had no security and was calling out to everyone that they were welcome.

Archbishop Tutu's witness has been a constant ongoing inspiration and as I say in the chorus of the song, talking about Tutu and the others, "They're the ones who hold the power to change the human heart, with their strange weapons of love."

Next on the album comes the first song I ever wrote about Palestine - **Where is the Land of Palestine**. Because of this song I was invited for the first time to Palestine in 1989. I wrote this song before I'd been there.



Then comes the song **When Johnny Cash Sang Man in Black** - I was recording this album in Hendersonville, right next to Nashville. Indeed, Hendersonville is where Johnny Cash used to live beside Old Hickory Lake, and whilst I was doing the album George Hamilton IV called to ask if I would like to come and sing a

song at The Grand Ole Opry - it was an utter privilege and he was such a lovely guy and introduced me so warmly, so the first time I ever sang When Johnny Cash Sang Man In Black live was at the Grand Ole Opry.

The next song is **Our Silent Eyes** which soon afterwards I was to record in Spanish as **Ojos Silenciosos**. I've sung that so often in Nicaragua in Spanish that when I was asked what the song was about I couldn't remember the English! It was a song sparked off by Isaiah 53.

Then comes **Tears of God** which you would think might be a gentle song but in fact it's a bit of a rocking bluesy number, yet somehow managing to end with part of the Magnificat!

Next, **Peace Like a Phoenix** which is a prayer for peace in Northern Ireland. This one is a gentle, meditative song. I used to tour regularly in Northern Ireland and this was a prayer for that situation.

Side 2 of the vinyl starts off with **Amusing Ourselves to Death** - a friend of mine in Poland had said he wanted me to write another uptempo rock and roll song and I was reading a book with that title at that moment - and so it came together.

Thirty-two Years came from an incident on the news that I was watching when a man lost his job in a factory and was interviewed on television, and he broke down and wept. I was on tour in Australia at the time.

Then comes **The Sky that Wouldn't Weep**, which was written about a severe drought I saw in Northern Kenya.

In a Polish Winter is the story of my first visit to Poland - more than 30 degrees below freezing and the first verse is about an encounter with a wolf in the snow that walked passed our vehicle! The third verse was about a visit to Auschwitz, which had a big impact on me. At that time Poland was still ruled by the Communist regime and occasionally we would be followed - and in some ways I wrote this in code as I was thinking about Narnia where it was always winter and never Christmas, and that seemed to be how Poland was at that time.

And of course we were in Nashville recording, and the news came that George Jones' band was in town and so we managed to get Hank Singer to play fiddle and mandolin on the album, and I absolutely love his fiddle on this track and I was most impressed that he played for George Jones.

Finally there's a new recording of **Get Up and Dance**, which I wanted to try in a slightly different style, and then the album ends with the poem of Edward Shillito, which I put to music, called **Jesus of the Scars** - "The other Gods were strong but you were weak, they rode but you did stumble to a throne, but to our wounds only God's wounds can speak, and not a God has wounds but you alone." That is still a favourite song of mine.



Coming back to **Scars** has been enjoyable for me - I like the variety of music on the album, I like the theology of the album very much.

Periodically I will revisit my older albums and chat about them.

Prayer

O Jesus of the scars, we seek you now
O Jesus of the scars we seek you now
We must have sight of thorn marks on your brow
We must have you, O Jesus of the scars

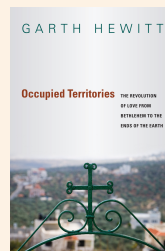
In our world of violence and greed at the moment
A world of oppression and suffering
Your scars are the signposts of hope and healing
O God, we have been betrayed by the 'gods' of
materialism, power and violence
But this strange, humble God
offers peace and a way of life
that brings hope
in a wounded, puzzling and violent world

Lord God, show us the paths of
simplicity
humility
justice
compassion and
joy
So that we too can be part of those
who bring hope and peace

Garth Hewitt

Scars, along with several of Garth's earlier albums, is now available for download or
on CD on the GingerDog Records website [here](#)

We'll let you know as more albums become available soon!



To buy Garth's latest album or book click on their images



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