



ANDREW MCKNIGHT
TREASURES IN MY CHEST



Produced by AM & Dustin DeLage

Recording, engineering and mixing 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

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

The Songs

1. [Embarking](#) 1:12
2. [Margaret/Treasures in My Chest](#) 4:56
3. [Web of Mystery](#) 3:24
4. [Left Behind](#) 3:55
5. [Passage/\(Fathers Now\) Our Meeting is Over](#) 2:10
6. [Aretas Culver](#) 4:13
7. [A Dram to the Holidays](#) 5:13
8. [The Gift](#) 3:58
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10. [My Little Town](#) 3:35
11. [Long Ago and Far Away](#) 1:50
12. [Entrelazando](#) 0:49
13. [Anniversary \(2,000 Years Ago\)](#) 4:23
14. [Our Meeting is Over \(Reprise\)](#) 1:13
15. [When My Time Comes](#) 3:53

The Band

AM - vocals, acoustic & electric guitars, slide guitar,
Native American flute

Rachel Taylor - cello

Michael Rohrer - electric and upright bass

Lisa Taylor - drums, harmony vocals

Jeff Arey - mandolin

Stephanie Thompson, Tony Denikos - harmony vocals

Other Essential Musical Pieces

Aly McKnight - piano (Margaret)

Warren McKnight - piano and organ (Sons & Fathers)

Madeleine McKnight - fiddle (Long Ago & Far Away),
ensemble vocals (Fathers, Reprise)

The Meeting Ensemble

Dustin Delage, John Rickard, Les Thompson, Tony
Denikos, Stephanie Thompson, Madeleine McKnight &
Lisa Taylor

More About the Album

[Thank You](#) • [About The Guitars](#)

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

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Andrew gratefully endorses Fairbuilt Guitars and Elixir Strings.

The Songs and Performances

1. Embarking

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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

Scent of cedar rising, as I open up the lid
childhood things and so much more, darkness kept safe hidden
and it holds my stories like a sailor's prized possessions, while he's out to sea

Wrinkled scraps of paper, and faded photographs
my name on a manuscript, and notes upon the staff
the lines unfolding on these pages I am holding, written long ago
are the gift running through my veins, and fingers on the strings as they flow

From these treasures in my chest
timeless rhythm beating, steady in my breast
memories and hand me downs present from the past
countless treasures in my chest

Pieces of this puzzle, of how I came to be
family names and question marks, somehow part of me
now I'm climbing up this tree exploring, branches that I see for the first time

samaritans and saints, rogues and renegades, all come alive

Message tone awakens me, from my imagining
connections in the here and now, that music brought to me
for they've sat here at my table, raising toasts and breaking bread, and it was real
we are bound by magic twists, and proof that they existed, now revealed

I'm rich with treasures in my chest

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

I've been trying to touch the past, I wanna know just why I am
reach back through the mists of time, so much I want to understand
You were a child once like me, full of wonder, full of pain
I know sometimes that you were scared, I know that sometimes, you were brave

ah ha, ah ha ha
ah ha, this is the only life I've known
In part you gave it to me
look behind or look ahead, you are woven in the thread
in my web of mystery

I'm still trying to touch the past, while the present slips away
I gotta know how your part goes, before those pages fade to grey
You were old once like me, I wish that I could see your face
no one else knows what's passed our eyes, hurt and anger, love and grace

Someday centuries from now, like coaxing ember into flame
since I've left a verse or 2 behind, someone might still speak my name
someone might still speak my name
someone might still speak my name

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

My people braved boats over angry seas, risked everything giving life to me
Left the home they'd known for a stranger's shore, hope and hunger for one chance more
Irish blessings at American wakes, glasses raised to the hearts that break,
gathered at the door to see them go, of the rest of their lives, we'll never know

hold on tight, storms on the ocean
hold on tight, storms on the ocean, hey
break through the doors slammed in your face, with the love that remained

Left behind, left behind, I'll never let go in my heart and mind
of all their prayers and desperate dreams
Left behind, left behind, forever changed once you cross that line,
the great divide that lies between, the leaving and the left behind

coyote howls in the Mayan night, a boy in the shadows slips from sight
the packet in his belly is his only chance, at someone else's promised land

put one foot down, in front of the other
one foot down, in front of the other, hey
climb the wall rising in your face, with the love that remained

A newborn face in the morning sun, another journey has just begun
for time is a river and the river flows, through a mother's love towards the letting go

don't turn back, even if you want to
can't turn back, even if you want to
the way ahead is yours to claim, with the love that remains

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

Fathers now our meeting is over, fathers we must part
and if I never see you any more, I'll love you in my heart
til we land on the shore, til we land upon the shore
til we land on the shore, and are safe for ever more

Mothers now...

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

My name is Aretas Culver, in summer of '62
I traded in my papers, for a uniform in blue
I took Abe Lincoln's bounty, and Union swore to save
what I've seen, since that day, haunts me to my grave

We were farmers, merchants, clockmakers, and I knew all their names
some escaping trouble, still others seeking fame
proud we marched down Main Street, while Bristol rang her bells
none could know our destiny, to glory or to hell

ohh-oh, I can't escape the dreams
ohh-oh, don't you hear their screams
ohh-oh, I will kill no more
ohh-oh, let them fight their civil war

Put on a train to Maryland, with but a single drill
to Antietam's killing fields, upon that cornstalk hill
we faced their fiercest legion, in a withering hail of lead
in terror ran while rebel yells, echoed in our heads

We dug graves for many days, watched by lifeless eyes
then rifles marching at our backs, in hands that fought at our side
Little Mac called it victory, but for failure we were blamed
and if I might survive this war, I vow to clear my name

Four nights surrounded, siege at Plymouth town
til our white rag of surrender, stopped the shells from raining down
to Andersonville through gates of hell, its deadline we had crossed
when they paroled my skin and bones, my soul had long been lost

I am Aretas Culver, my breath is fading fast
tell my wife and children, I loved them to the last
the curse I leave this world with, before the fighting's done
is those that vote to start the wars, be those that face the guns

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

A flickering candle, on cold window glass, brave and small in the dark
it beams like a lighthouse, on winter shores, guide me safe home in its glow

The wee ones a'slumber, deep in their beds, tucked close in a room much too small
their dreams burn brightly, far more than they should, have reason enough to believe

Lord give them reason to believe

raise a dram to the holidays, long may they last
where hopes for the future dance, with ghosts of the past
hold tight to the best of what's been
we're still here at the holidays again

they come home off the water, and home from the mines, with worry lines worn in their souls
outside the revelers, filling the square, voices raise hymns up on high
proclaiming that Christmas is nigh

the longest of nights, gives way to the dawn, its radiance christens the sea
there's sweets in the oven, a log on the fire, and an angel rests high on the tree
blessed angel keep watch over me

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

It sits here in my living room, on the stand with window view,
somehow the strings stretch out of sight, wrap softly round the words I write
I cannot tell you what it means, family ghosts and ancient dreams,
in moments where the veil is thin, I feel their presence beckoning

Like a king returned his family sword
Torn battle flag or coat of arms,
and gold coin in a peasant's palm,
All the things I might become,
with this gift of family

A double helix crossed the sea, part of you the same as me
the proof is singing in my hands, magic sound from distant lands
On some far-off moonlit night, long after I have passed from sight
Will it still know these songs I weave, held in hands not yet conceived

The papers on my table, the lines that fill my head
a spirit-conjured melody, mystically surrounding me

Like a king returned his father's sword
Torn battle flag or coat of arms,
Gold coins in a peasant's hand,
All the things that I now am

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

We are all born screaming, naked and afraid,
looking back it's funny seeing, all those plans I made
We'd throw our balls and race our bikes, sometimes dare to dream
manhood ain't as hard as, fathers make it seem

I guess it's just the way of things, we take our place in line
like our fathers and their fathers did, when it was their time
Now we're slowly trading places, I suppose those are the rules,
father time won't suffer any fools

all those things we cannot say
perfectly imperfect at, getting out of our own way
but we do not, we will not, could not though we know it's true
Nothing else gets quite as tangled up in knots, as sons and fathers do

Leave behind settling old scores
Gotta meet him where he's at, on the bridge or that far shore

Now it's my turn in that easy chair, it's the hardest thing I've done
Though any man can take the gig, it ain't for everyone
the have tos and the must dos, credit and the blame we earn
Hoping what we teach, is what they need to learn

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

We close our road, on the 4th of July, for the kids to ride by
with streamers on their bikes, in red and blue and white, let the judges decide
bring a dish to share, and your favorite folding chair, try to stay cool,
we read the famous words, just like we've heard, since we were kids in school
in my little town

Renamed for Honest Abe, somehow it became, where I put roots down
graveyard stones, hide more than bones, in the red clay ground
these sunken gravel roads, wind back in time and slowly disappear
the last dairy farm, keeps holding on, another year
in my little town

when the fire breaks out, when the roof caves in
when the snow's piled high, times are worst they've been,
or progress of the present brings the future crashing down

stand up with each other here in our little town
try not to blink and miss, our little town

The holiday lights, cold winter nights, herald angels sing
from door to door, just like the year before, firelight caroling
we pray that it lasts, cherishing our past before it's gone
where neighbors still wave, stories we still save to pass on down
in my little town

a world of change swirls around my little town

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

When I was just a child, full of hope and dreams
of everywhere I'd go, and everything I'd see
My grandmother's knee and stories that she'd saved,
of lives, that we'd lived, long ago and far away

In the face of my child, full of hope and dreams
of everywhere she'll go, and everything she'll see
I will keep treasures safe, and pass to her one day
twice the tales that were lived, long ago and far away

When I'll wear, shades of gray, around my wrinkled face
a child of my child, held in my embrace
in her turn she will share, stories that she saved
When it is I, who once lived, long ago and far away

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

Two thousand years ago today, a farmer walked his fields,
Wondered what the land would yield, before the winter snow

Two thousand years ago today, two young lovers kissed,
laughed and made a wish, beneath a shooting star glow

Someday in a far and distant future
Millennia beyond imagining
as time ticks away, what will remain
of how we lived and loved,
today

Two thousand years ago today, anger hurled a stone,
to break another's bones and keep some fool upon a throne
Two thousand years ago today, a cog in a war machine,
drew his last breath on a distant plain, as he dreamed of home

Two thousand years ago today, a mama hushed her little ones,
kissed them on the head and tucked them into bed
turned her face towards the sky, for blessings from on high
prayed to guide them safe, on the unknown path ahead
she wondered,

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

Brothers now.our meeting is over, brothers we must part
and if I never see you any more, I'll love you in my heart
til we land on the shore, til we land upon the shore
til we land on the shore, and are safe for ever more

Sisters now....

15. When My Time Comes

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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

When my time comes, don't shed a tear (repeat)
I've got all I need and it's beautiful here

When my time comes, raise your voice & sing (repeat)
it sounds like angels when, that joyful noise rings

When my time comes, hold out your hand (repeat)
don't worry about me, lift up your fellow man and woman too

When my time comes, yeah ring them bells (repeat)
until we meet again, fare thee well

All of My Gratitude

To **you**, dear reader and listener, just for being here.

To **my parents**, whose cells sent us all on this crazy journey

My dear **Michelle** and **Madeleine** who put up with long periods of my obsessive research, intellectual focus and resulting invisibility

To **my family**, for more of the same – but especially those who contributed their talents to make this happen too.

Dustin Delage, for helping bring this to life!

Michael Rohrer, Lisa Taylor, Rachel Taylor, Jeff Arey, Jon Carroll, Tony Denikos, John Rickard, Stephanie and Les Thompson and especially **Madeleine**, for sharing your talents with my ancestors

Bill Wolf for being the Ace of Mastering

Stilson Greene for the incredible graphic design for this whole project

My Lincoln neighbor **Christi Porter** for her photography talents

Aimee Weakley at Oasis Duplication

Michael DeLalla & Lisa Taylor have been my most dearly trusted artistic advisers throughout this recording.

A lot of folks gave generously of their heart to make this crazy notion evolve into these songs and stories.

Priceless Treasures – the Mitchell and Langley families, Eileen & Mark Murphy, the Langley Family, Scott & Becky Harris and the Catoctin Creek Distilling Company, Elizabeth Krousel Simmons & Steve Simmons, Betty & Larry Nilson, Bill Sergeant, Tony & Susanna Pangilinan, and Anonymous Angels

Golden Treasures - Don Bunker & Becky McEnroe, Lori Rock & Pat Crotzer, Leslie Murphy, Nancy Clark, Sarah Harper, Amy, Stephen & David Brand, Cindy & Lani Pearson, Jesse Gallagher & Seery Strings of Bristol CT, Joan Clark, Tony Denikos, Laura Solomon

Cherished Treasures - Jane Bagby, Bob & Doris Murray, Marjorie McKnight, Susan & Danny Anklam, and Bev Turner, Mary Chapman Cole, Laurie Grekula, Mel & Carol Harkrader-Pine, Betsy Dake, Brian & Susan Giblin, Peggy Fallon & Bill Schell, Paula & Scott Moore, Bob Sneed, Chris Nicholson, Susan Couture, Eva Belt, The Schimmoller Family, Annie Jenkins, The Mills Family, Leslie Solitario, Tamar Datan & Sandy Shihadeh, Jenna & Wyatt Korff, Frannie Taylor, Elizabeth Menist, Jim Dake, Kevin & Jayne Keegan, Reverend Jo VonRue, Debra & Paul DeKeyser, Tom Cardarella, Barbara McKee, Chris Haines, Jeff Edgin, Paul Laughlin, JoHanna (J) Whitfield-Brogan, Dan Tappan, Terrie McClure, and in loving memory of Jack Drucker.

The Guitars (not remotely in order of appearance or frequency)

1976 Fender Stratocaster

1994 Lowden acoustic (DADGAD & CGDGCD tunings)

1991 Martin MC-68 acoustic

2015 Fairbuilt OM Native Wood Series acoustic

1974 Marcelino Lopez classical

2012 Gretsch Retro Series resonator guitar (model?)

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