

Ed Morneau

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August 2022



Dave Mason



Ed Morneau



Vaneese Thomas



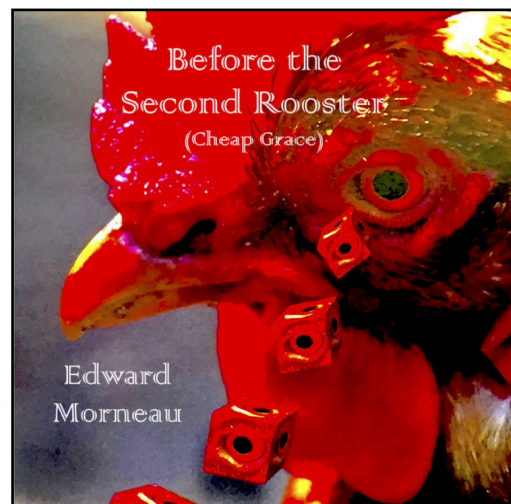
Ed Morneau is a multi-faceted mensch who, at any given moment, can wear a different hat with the same enthusiasm and conviction as the last Stetson he wore. Activist, teacher, collagist, musician, historian, human rights director, Holocaust student, author, and song crafter are all titles he bears with great pride. So, it was indeed a pleasure for this scribe to speak with a man whose zest for life is rivaled only by his exhilarating new album entitled, *Jacquerie*.

METRONOME: How long was *Jacquerie*, in the making?

Ed Morneau: A long time. Some of the songs were written very early on

during the George W. Bush era. A lot of them we're coming together and I needed some kind of cathartic, musical experience to expel all these things out of me. *Jacquerie* is actually a compilation of two previous CD's that I recorded. One was a sprawling body of work called *Trepanning* that was a full-blown exorcism of my political anxieties during the post-9/11 years. The follow up to that was called the *Before the Second Rooster*. Both CD's featured Paul Lawrence on bass, Eric Meyer on drums, Ruby Bird on keyboards & harmonica, Lillian Belknap on viola, Jesse Lewis on cello, and Joe Brogan on saxophone.

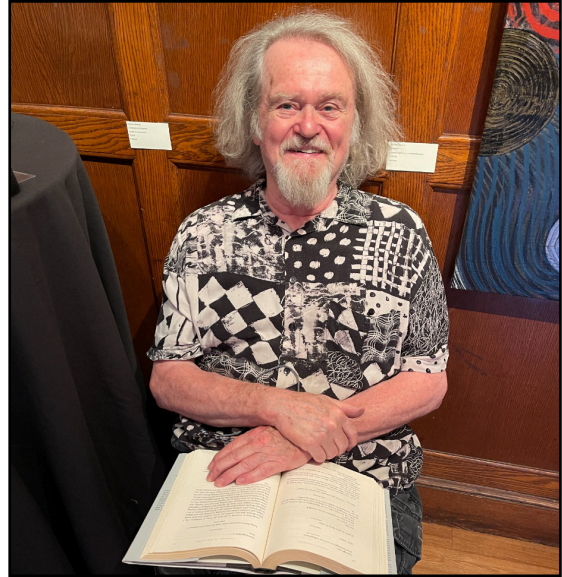
METRONOME: What year did *Trepanning* come out? That came out in 2008.



METRONOME: When did you start planning to put *Jacquerie* together?

I went to a wedding in Vermont and met some very interesting people that were involved in SDS and stuff like that. I laid copies of both CDs on them. They got back to me and said *Trepanning* was too hard to handle. It was 79 minutes long—said it would make a stunning CD if it was only 12 or 13 songs. Then they gave me a list of the songs that they thought worked from both CD's. Their ideas were great. I went back to Second Story studio and started working.

METRONOME: How did you meet Bill Mason from Second Story studio?



Mr. Curt Naihersey friend, mentor, collaborator (Photo: Rick Berlin)



Mr. Curt turned me onto those guys. As soon as I met them, I felt like I was in really good hands.

METRONOME: Were the 2008 and 2009 albums recorded at Second Story? Yes. The first album I did with Bill Mason was *Trepanning*. It took almost a year to record. Then I took a couple of months off and did a folky kind of thing that came out called *Before Second Rooster*.

METRONOME: So *Jacquerie* is the best material from those two albums?

Yes.

METRONOME: Did you re-record all the songs?

No. Some of them came right over, but there were a couple that we remixed and did some tweaks to.

METRONOME: The songs on *Jacquerie* were highly original and very entertaining. Did the writing emanate from a stream of consciousness on your part?

Working backwards from the album, the last song, "My Heart Waits For a Cure," was written while I was watching that vampire show called *True Blood*. I wrote it from the point of view of a vampire. It was a sneaky way of expressing the dark times we had been living in. That song actually came at the end of *Trepanning*. The song, "Cathedrals

of Sticks and Pins,” came from a kind of stream of consciousness reflection. I wrote the song to escape from some of the darker themes of the other songs.

METRONOME: The recording features all sorts of instrumentation and percussion. Was that a lot of work for you to put together?

I had told Mr. Curt that my goal was to record a simple CD with just guitar and my voice, with minimal overdubs. I wanted the songs to stand by themselves and not be too decorated. The more I sunk my teeth into making this a solo acoustic-vocal thing, I thought I was misrepresenting the songs in a way that really didn’t do justice to how I wanted them to sound. So, I contacted two former students of mine—Paul Lawrence on bass guitar, and Eric Meyer on drums. I had Ruby Bird play keyboards and I did most of the guitar work. Billy stepped in and did some really crazy guitar stuff on “Radio Shills.” Then, my nephew, David Morneau, who is a sound architect out of New York City, created some sound collages for me. He did a magnificent job.



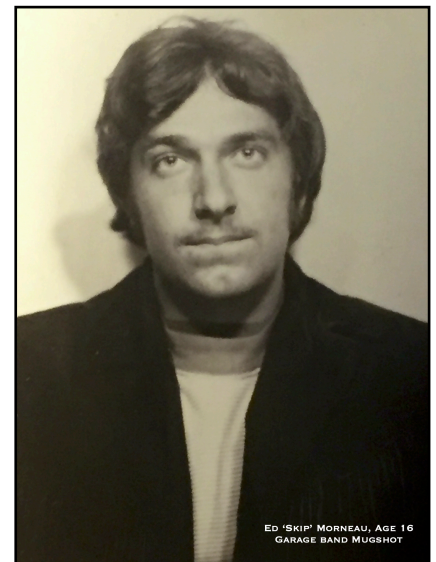
METRONOME: Who are some of your favorite songwriters?

Early on, my lifelong obsession with great songsmiths like Brian Wilson, Lennon & McCartney, Joni Mitchell, Bob Dylan, Ray Davies, Stevie Wonder, Randy Newman and Andy Partridge supplanted my dream of being a great guitarist and performer. I’ve always believed the song is preeminent in music. I’ve tried to spend as

much time trying to write songs with interesting musical turns, while honoring forms and traditions. This has been the approach to music that has lived in my heart since I wrote my first tune at fifteen. It hasn’t ever, even for a second, left my soul.

METRONOME: Where did your social awareness come from that informs your music?

When I was a kid, our kitchen table was a table of conversation. We would sit down at 5 o’clock for dinner and sometimes we wouldn’t get up until 9 o’clock. It was always interesting. My mom and dad weren’t terribly educated, but they were always interesting and provocative. Their biggest dream was to make sure all the kids went to college. My older brother was a political science major and history major. Believe it or not, I took a foreign policy course in community college when I was 19. I was asked to justify South Vietnam’s foreign policy to the United States. My brother helped me and I became entrenched in a lot of political views born from that time. Of course, I grew up with the Kennedy assassination and all the other assassinations that





EDDY WITH VENTURES MOSRITE, 1966

took place during that period. You just can't help but to glean from those things some point of view and create your own interior political architecture. I am an incurable liberal—not that that needs to be cured—and will defend it at any time. That wasn't my original intention of writing music. My first love was for Surf guitar music. I was a huge fan of The Ventures, Duane Eddy, The Astronauts, The Chantays, and Dick Dale. I was thirteen years old. Before the Beatles appeared on Ed Sullivan, The Chantays appeared on—of all shows—*Lawrence Welk*. It was a vindication for me that they were being recognized on perhaps the most homogenized TV show in the history of television.

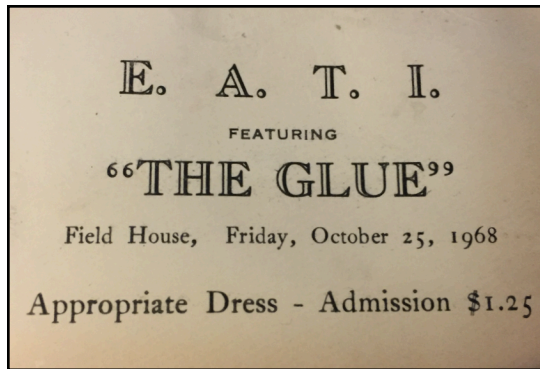
METRONE: Who/what else influenced you musically?

Going across country at seven years old, I was staying in a hotel with my parents. We were moving to California. We were watching the Everly Brothers on the Ed Sullivan show one night. That was a coming home moment for me. I thought, That can be done. And then of course, The Beatles on Ed Sullivan. These were revelations in Pop times. The Beatles single-handedly sent Fabian and Paul Anka and all those people back to Las Vegas. The rest is history, of course, but it was an earthquake for a lot of kids.

The girls got it on an even more subliminal level. I think The Beatles put an imprint on young men about machismo and misogyny that was in the air in post World War II, that needed to be tamed by something, and why not have it be tamed by the music? Who else was really writing songs like "She Loves You?" It was amazing. After I saw The Beatles on Ed Sullivan, I wanted to conquer the world.



GLUE (L-R): John Grocki (bass & vocs), Skip Morneau (guitar & vocs), John Cole (drums & vocs), Bob Porter (guitar & vocs), Gary Richards (lead vocals).

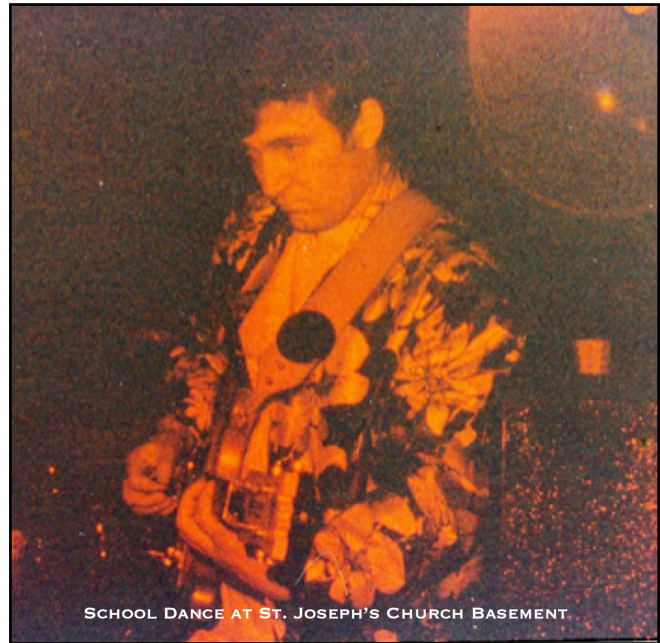


METRONOME: I understand you're a big Beach Boys fan as well...

The Beach Boys were out before the Beatles. When Brian Wilson started writing songs like "In My Room," I think that had a great effect on not only my generation, but generations abroad. The Beatles loved The Beach Boys. A lot of progressive pop music at that time manifested so many cultural and musical awakenings in people—for the better I thought.

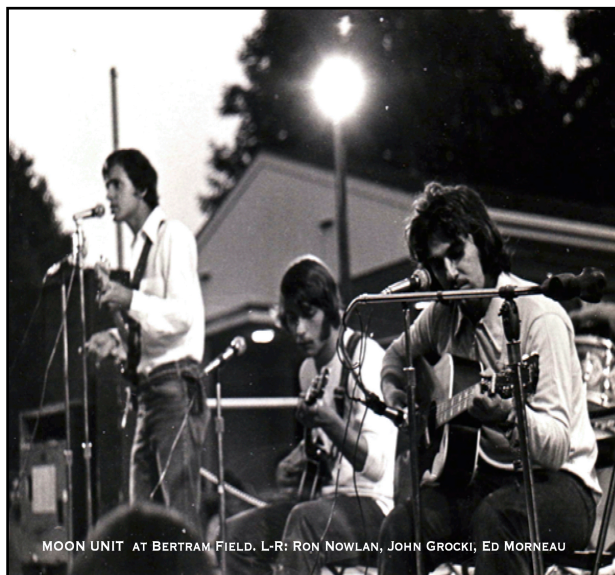
METRONOME: What kind of guitars did you use for Jacquerie?

I have a lot of guitars. Do you remember when Wurlitzer's used to be on Newbury Street in Boston? I knew a guy that worked there named Levi. He dug out of the cellar, an old National Steel Dobro. I asked him I could take it home and clean it up and then make an offer?" He couldn't refuse because I had just bought five guitars from him for some of my colleagues at school for their kids (laughs). He was so thankful for the business. I cleaned it up, played it, and wanted it. Gave me a great deal. So, that guitar is on there. I have a Takamine nylon string guitar that I used on a few songs and I also used a single cutaway acoustic/electric Martin.



METRONOME: When you play live, is it with a band or solo?

I've always been in a band at some point. In Salem, MA. I started out with a band called **The Glue**. At full strength we were John Cole on drums, John Grocki on bass, Bob Porter on guitar, Gary Richards on vocals. We played YMCA's "Teen Town," some church gigs and a lot of odd venues. Then Jimmy Kelly replaced Grocki, Ron Nowlan replaced Richards, we added Ruth Porter on vocals, and did a few original recordings at **Onyx Records** in Methuen. Then there was **Moon Unit** with Ron, Grocki and Brad Delp. Brad left after a few weeks to join Boston with Tom Scholz.



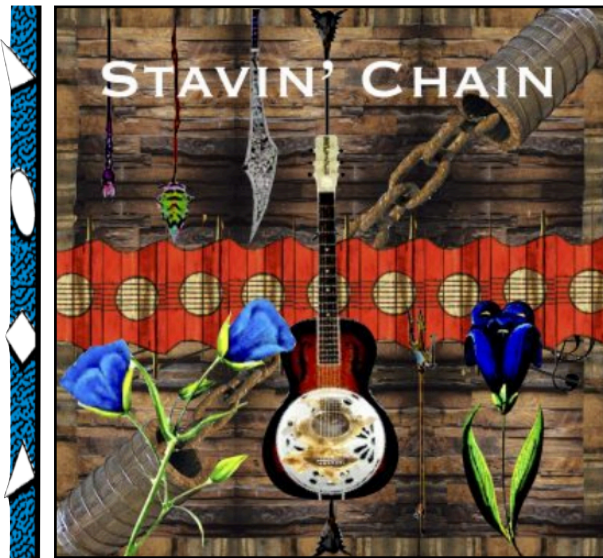


In 1974 I joined a band called **The Cleaner Brothers**, featuring local luminaries Jimmy Collins on guitar (**The Warlocks; 1276**), singer Richard Kramer (1276), Billy Corelle on bass (**Teddy & the Pandas, Dr. Feelgood**) and Peter Goutzos on drums (1276). We gigged a lot, but broke up over which direction the band was going—whether to be an original group or a cover band. (See “Where Are They Now” at end of this profile.)

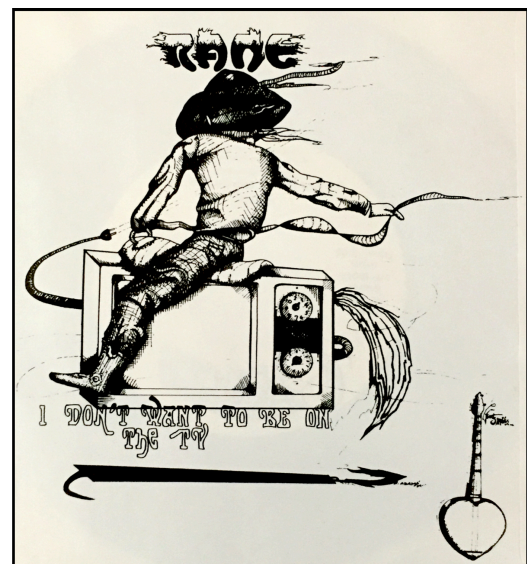
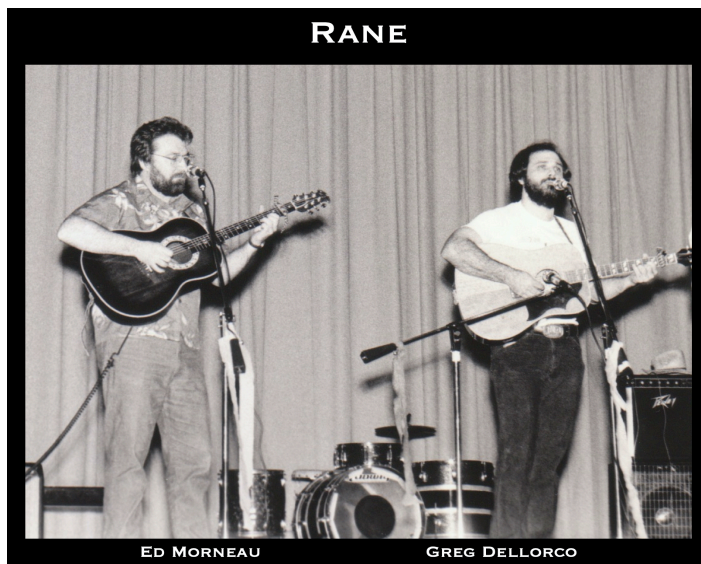


At Raymond High, NH, I was in a blues-folk group called **Stavin' Chain**, with fellow educators, Chris George on vocals & guitar, Mary Maloney on vocals, Cindy Young on vocals, and myself on classical slide guitar. We played at the school a few times and made a bunch of home recordings. That was a ton of fun. It really opened my eyes to the blues form and got me engaged in playing slide guitar. Chris and I continued playing together as **The Stutter Brothers**—more folk madness and invention.



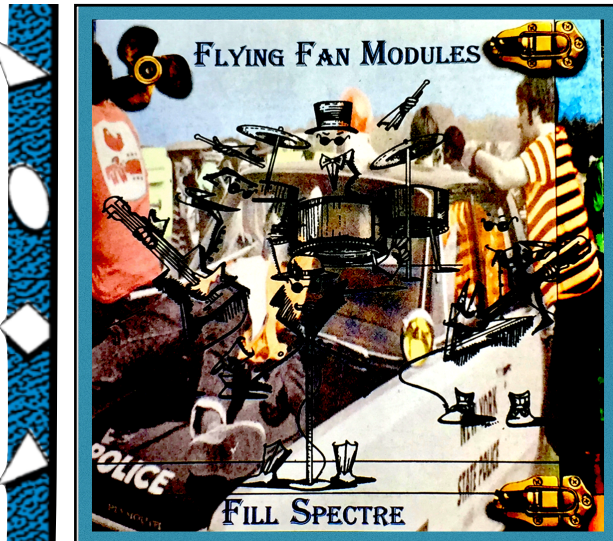


When I moved to the Norwood, MA. area, I formed a country-rock duo with Greg Dellorco—a fellow teacher. We called ourselves **Rane**. We recorded two Christmas songs with Mark Longo on bass, Dick Kochakian on drums, Richie Kramer on vocals, James Weaver on percussion, and Leah Sklar on piano; and two country pop songs, with Jimmy Kelly on bass, Kochakian, Kramer, Barbie Buck on backing vocals, and James Anderson on piano. One of the country songs, “I Don’t Want To Be On The TV,” made it to #45 on some obscure country chart.



I was knee deep in my teaching career, getting more involved in media and theatre production and taking on more teacher union responsibilities. In short, I was burning out and subsequently did a year-long sabbatical to ponder my life in regard to music. I had to do something with the backlog of songs that was piling up, so a former student —Steve Mammone, who was also a member of **Panhead** and a vintage guitar enthusiast—encouraged me to go all-DIY and record and release some songs on a CD. So, I invested in some recording equipment, a keyboard, and spent the year making *Fill*

Spectre by **The Flying Fan Modules**. Greg and I continue to play music together as the **Delmo Brothers**, occasionally recording and gathering together songs we've recorded.

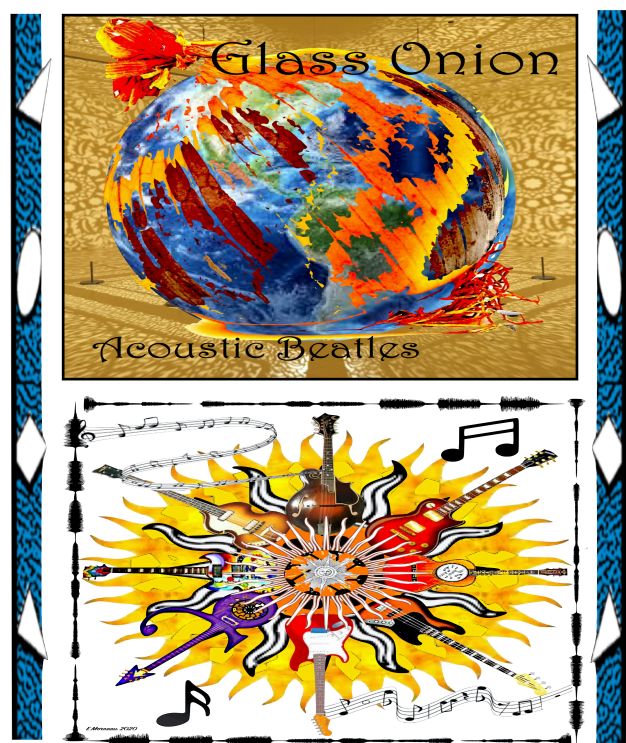


METRONOME: Tell us about The Beatles tribute band you put together.

When I moved back to Salem after being away for 40 years, I regrouped with some former mates to form a Beatles acoustic tribute band called **Glass Onion**, with Bob Porter (guitar, voice), John Cole (vocals and percussion, my niece, Anna Morneau, on keyboards, and I played guitar and sang. We played a few gigs together, then Covid struck. Since then we scaled it down to a duo, with Bob and myself.



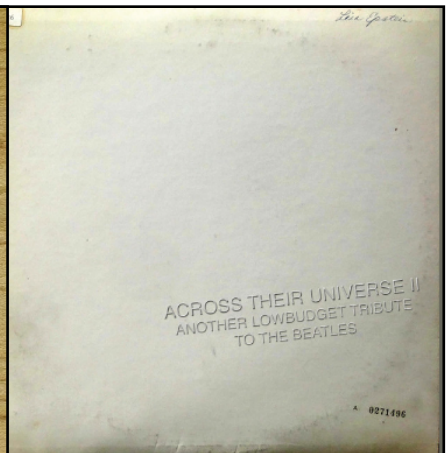
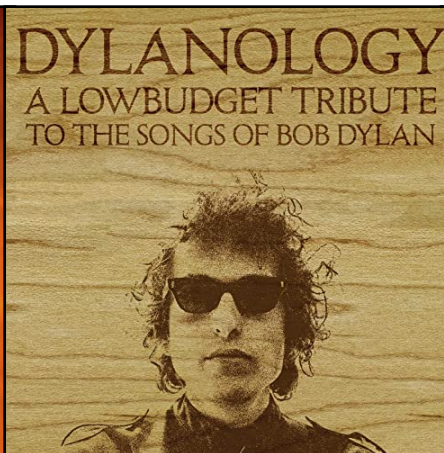
L-R: JOHN COLE, ED MORNEAU, ANNA MORNEAU, BOB PORTER





METRONOME: You've contributed a lot of singles to Tim Casey's Lowbudget Records compilations. How did you get involved with that?

I was introduced to Tim through Mr. Curt. I've done three of those records: Bowie, Dylan, and The Beatles. Tim is brilliant. That was a ton of fun. I recorded those songs at Bill Mason's studio, with my former student Keira Flynn-Carson collaborating on drums, percussion, and vocals. We contributed "Kooks" and "Man Who Sold the World" to the *Loving the Alien* Bowie tribute, "A Hard Rain" and "4th The Around" to the *Dylanology* tribute and "Yes It Is" and "And Your Bird Can Sing" to the *Across the Universe II* tribute.



METRONOME: You've had a long career as a teacher. Was it in music or were you an English teacher?

My background is in English, theater and film, and because of film—media studies. I had four weapons of educational content in my arsenal and it really served me well. I taught media courses, film courses and a variety of English courses. I was also the president of the teacher's union. It was a great career. I was blessed.

METRONOME: Who did the artwork for *Jacquerie*?

I did that. I'm a collagist. I've been a collagist since I was a kid. My mom was a professional seamstress and had an industrial sewing machine. She would sew together these gigantic books of blank pages. When I would get in her hair, she would give me scissors and some paste and say, "Here, go take an old *Life Magazine* story and cut out the pictures and tell *me* a story." From then on, I just fell in love with the whole idea of linking unlike things together and making collages. I've made hundreds

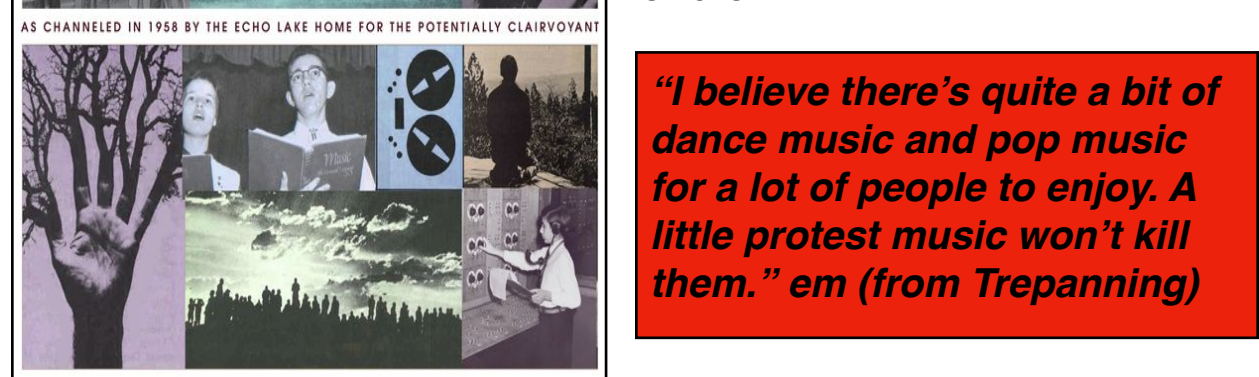
Most recently, I was invited to contribute two songs, "Please Please Me" and "I Saw

We're called The **Two of Us**. Beyond that,



I'm looking for a recording studio around here so that I can knock off a classical guitar CD that I've been wanting to make for a long time. I have hundreds of songs I want to record. Then in the winter, I'll start on my next pop-rock CD with Bill Mason, because his patience and musical insight bring out the best in me.—**Brian M. Owens**





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The Time Machine



The Cleaner Brothers

Musical Achievements: The Cleaner Brothers came together out of their mutual love for music making during the mid-70's. Billy Corelle came up with the band name. All the members had paid their dues in former groups that included renowned Northshore bands like Dr. Feelgood, Teddy and the Pandas [Tower Records], Twelve 76, The Warlocks, The Lancasters, Gyro Lula and Moon Unit [featuring Brad Delp]. Many of those outfits were well known for their regular Friday night sold-out shows at the Vittori-Rocci Post Veteran's Social Club in Beverly, MA. as well as club gigs throughout Massachusetts.

Where Are They Now: Singer Richie Kramer went on to sing with the vocal group, Scrimshaw, as well as playing solo shows on the Northshore. Drummer Peter Goutzos continues to play to this day with his group, Gyro Lula. He also played drums with The Vinny Band when they toured South America in 1983. Ed Morneau continues to make music and has released three solo records. He has also appeared on three Lowbudget Records compilations. Read about him in this issue. The whereabouts of Jimmy Collins and Billy Corelle were unknown at press time.

Photo circa: 1975

It is difficult sometimes to see-feel-hear brilliance in this dark, dead age we find ourselves in musically and otherwise. It is out there, just no longer in the mainstream. Ed Morneau's work is an elusive musical white truffle buried in the Earth. Find it and let your ears eat it."—Sal Baglio (Stompers, Amplifier Heads)



Jacquérie

Edward Morneau

Available through Bandcamp. Go to www.cranialheap.com



Hearings

Top 5 for July 2022

(In NO Particular Order)

- Edward Morneau
- Red Pants
- Bennett Matteo Band
- Christine Sweeney
- Bananafish

EDWARD MORNEAU JACQUERIE 13-SONG CD

- JACQUERIE
- RADIO SHILLS
- FROGS WILL NEVER FALL FROM THE SKY
- SOUL RENDEZVOUS
- SELECTION
- TIDDLYWINKS
- BACK WHERE THE SOLDIER FELL
- HIGHWAY 10
- ASH WEDNESDAY
- WELL, I DON'T KNOW
- THE DAY THE BIRDS STOPPED SINGING
- CATHEDRALS OF STICKS AND PINS
- MY HEART WAITS FOR A CURE

Ed Morneau's new album Jacquerie is a thought provoking encyclopedic volume of music that touches down on everything emanating from Morneau's deepest imaginations to rivetingly stark realities, firmly coupled to well performed playing from musical cohorts, Paul Lawrence on bass guitar, Eric Meyer on drums, Ruby Bird on harmonica, accordion and keyboards, Jesse Lewis on cello, Lilian Belknap on viola and the talented Mr. Morneau on lead vocals and guitar.

Just when you're ready to categorize Morneau in to a tidy little musical package, he jumps out of the shrubs with a touching, heart-felt ballad, a Pink Floyd-esque dreamscape, a country-tinged toe-tapping ditty, a marching song, a Louisiana bayou swamper, a lilting lullaby, or a bounding folk rocker, all done with immaculate capacity. Harry Nilsson comes to mind when assessing Morneau's songcrafting skills.

Recorded and mastered at Second Story Studio, engineer Bill Mason captured Morneau's quirky creativity at it's glorious heights. Don't miss this record. Outstanding from start to finish! [B.M.O.]

Contact-- www.cranialheap.com