"A Bit Of Everything"

Hodge Podge

November 2008

Winter Issue

In this issue:

Jerry Markham: Then & Now

"Walking Walter" by David J. Horn

"Naked Girls" by Patrick Mackeown

"Midnight Run" by Ryan Hunter

"Pocket Rocks" by Adie Bishop

Volume 1 *Issue 1*

Welcome to the first edition of Hodge Podge magazine!

We hope that you enjoy the poetry, short stories, interviews, artwork and photography contained herein, and hope that you'll keep submitting your work to us.

Hodge Podge is a mesh of all things done creatively; a chance to see your work in print, or just add your name to something that will eventually become a respected and enjoyable magazine.

In closing, thank you so much for reading, and, as always, take care.

Adie Bishop

Adie Bishop, Editor

"Morning" by Adie Bishop

Sorry, no ads in this magazine!

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Sunday Mornings

In the tangle of
sheets, I find
your smile.
Eyes ablaze in
the morning light--
dazzle the day.
Soft lips caress
my own.
Laughing into the
pillow, mouths open
wide.
Your hand reaches
for my head,
tossling my hair
You sit up and
laugh out loud.
I
lay across your
chest, breathing
into your
skin.
Pulling blankets
over us, we
laugh in our tent.
Hands interlace,
legs intertwine,
We dance.

Raw

Scrubbed
my-self
raw
To rid
myself
of
you
Rinsed myself
in salty
tears
Silence
wraps around
my body
a reminder
of
your arms
I shiver
at you
knowing my
vulnerabilities
My skin
bleeds
in your
knowing

by Theresa C. Erbs

Table of Contents

Letter From The Editor	2
Pocket Rocks (by Adie Bishop)	4
To My Husband and Children (by Patricia Coleman)	7
Jerry Markham: Then & Now	8
Walking Walter (by David J. Horn)	16
Naked Girls (by Patrick Mackeown)	20
Midnight Run (by Ryan Hunter)	23
Sunday Mornings / Raw (by Theresa C. Erbs)	26

"Scape" by Adie Bishop, © 2008

Pocket Rocks by Adie Bishop

I was thirty-four when I died.

I should've known better than to go out that night, but Daddy wanted ice cream. The trucker that hit me got a fine and community service. I got a six foot three aluminum box.

But, I can't hold a grudge, not anymore. That trucker died two years later, leaving a mortgage and three kids. I helped him go where he had to; the wheel of karma never stops turning, if you really think about it.

Cole Porter was my Daddy, one of the finest men you'd ever hope to meet. He worked in the mines for most of his life before he retired to fish and pull guard duty from his couch. He watched Sanford and Son every evening while he smoked his pipe and waited for dusk. Down with the chickens, up with the chickens, he rarely used a light bulb, unless I came to visit. We'd walk past the tracks by the creek some evenings. Other evenings we'd sit out on the back porch with ice cream and watch the sun set. We'd talk about folks around town, the weather…sometimes nothing at all.

Daddy had lived alone ever since Mama had died in '78 from the cancer. He'd said several times that he was just buying time. His time ran out in '89, less than a year after I died.

I watched him go down hill fast, and although I was forbidden to stay near him, I watched from afar. It's agonizing, to watch someone you love die, especially when the only emotion you have is your memory.

I hovered the graveyard for two weeks after his burial, but never saw him. I imagine he went peacefully, and I was grateful.

Mama and Daddy stayed married for over fifty years, a thing that most people would laugh at today, but even back then, it was something. I never saw them argue, and I asked Daddy why one day. I'll never forget what he said.

"Why waste time arguing? You'll have all the time in the world for wasting time when you're dead."

"Yeah, well, since you are up do me a favor and turn on the light. Look at that thing. I really did a number on it. You can actually see it throbbing."

"I think it's your prostate."

"No, I'm pretty sure it's my toe. It would take a completely different set of circumstances to stub your prostate."

"No, I mean I think your prostate might be why you're peeing so much."

"I'm not peeing that much."

"This is the third time you've gotten up this week that I know of. I'm making an appointment for you first thing in the morning."

"You know, I had a feeling when you bought that damn table it would eventually lead to me having a large man cram his sausage fingers up inside me."

"No you didn't."

"Fine, but I always said it clashed with the curtains."

"Goodnight Hon."

"I thought there might be a burglar out here."

"I just told you I stubbed my toe."

"Yes, but how could I be sure there wasn't a burglar out here with a gun telling you to say you stubbed your toe?"

"Fair enough. And you brought the flyswatter to – what, ensure that our burglar wasn't annoyed by household pests while he did his job?"
"It was the only weapon I could find."

"I keep a baseball bat under the bed."

"I couldn't get to that."

"Why not."

"Daisy got scared when you knocked over the table---"

"This is a table?"

"What did you think it was?"

"I don't know, I assumed it was something French. What about Daisy?"

"She got scared and jumped under the bed when the table crashed. She must have been lying on the bat because I couldn't get to it."

"This would be Daisy the German Shepherd you adopted to protect us in case of burglary?"

"A bigger man would have refrained from bringing that up just now. Why did you stub your toe?"

"Just realized I hadn't done it in a while and thought I'd give it a try."

"I mean, why were you up walking around in the dark which led to your stubbing your toe?"

"I had to pee and I didn't want to wake you up."

"Good job on that."

He wasn't kidding about that one.

I hang out around empty schools, libraries after they've closed (I've read every great American classic at least five times, and my favorite is still Charles Dickens' David Copperfield), shopping centers (you wouldn't believe what kids are wearing nowadays), and ice cream shops. In life, my favorite ice cream was butter pecan. Daddy's was pistachio, and Mama couldn't stand the stuff.

"You'll blow up like a balloon if you keep eatin' that junk!" she'd tell us, but we kept eating anyway, it was a simple pleasure that we both shared, something that brought us closer together.

At the time of my death, my personal belongings consisted of one wallet, one driver's license, two photographs (Daddy and Mama at the beach in Virginia, and me as a kid with Daddy), twenty three dollars and forty-eight cents, and a rock. They gave my belongings to Daddy, and they're now in the dusty basement of the local PD, along with Daddy's belongings, in a box marked PORTER.

Daddy's belongings were his wallet, wedding band, movie ticket (he'd gone to see a movie that night, his first since the theater opened, and he'd had a heart attack after the opening credits), and one pound, nine ounces of rocks, found in his pockets.

He'd been collecting the damn things for as long as I could remember.

The first one sat on our mantle until after he passed, a three pound boulder that proved to be a conversation piece in and of itself. I can't count the number of times Daddy had told someone the story of The First Rock.

"I'd gone to the beach with friends, and that's where we met. I saw her, laying out tanning on that blue beach towel, her body glistening, hair still wet from a swim. She was so damn beautiful, lying there in the sun. I wasn't paying attention to anything after that, and stubbed my toe on that Baby. I decided to bring it home, and now, whenever I look at it, it reminds me of how I felt when I first saw your mother, Jack. It reminds me never to forget how precious she is to me."

"What about the scar?"

Daddy laughed. "Well the scar just reminds me how horny I got."

Mama rolled her eyes and tapped him on the arm. I shook my head; they stayed in love until the end. I'd like to think that they're together now someplace.

Since the boulder, Daddy would pick up rocks and stuff them into his pockets every time he wanted to remember something. When he died, the house was full of boxes of rocks and boxes of pants with holes in the pockets; Mama used to get onto him about leaving them in his pockets, and two years after he'd started his collection, Mama had

to get a new dryer.

I'd visited after Sanford and Son. We were sitting on the back porch watching the sun set when Daddy mentioned that he'd like to have ice cream. I laughed and told him I'd be back, walked through the house and out the front door. I stopped a moment to watch the sun set over the horizon, thinking it more beautiful than I'd ever noticed, and then I looked down. I found a beauty of a rock, smooth and rough, polished and not, hues of red and brown, like the earth. I wiped the dust from it and stuck it into my pocket.

My very first pocket rock turned out to be my last, but it held a lifetime of memories.

At my funeral, Daddy dug up a tiny one after they'd finished burying me. He kept it in his pocket always, and would tell the story of how I got my first rock, my last rock, to the barber every time he got his hair cut. The man chuckled, then got quiet, and Daddy thanked him for the haircut and went home.

On his last day, Daddy picked up another rock outside the movie theater: smooth and rough, polished and not, hues of red and brown, like the earth. He wiped the dust from it and stuck it into his pocket.

Midnight Run

by Ryan Hunter

"Aaaaaahhhhhh."

"Honey, what's wrong?"

"I stubbed my toe."

"Are you sure?"

"Well, I hope so, otherwise how would I account for the intense pain in my toe?"

"Oh, I was afraid you'd startled a burglar."

"No, my girly scream for startling a burglar is totally different from my girly scream for stubbing my toe."

"Oh, what did you stub it on?"

"What?"

"I said, 'WHAT DID YOU STUB IT ON?'"

"The – the thing in the hall. This whaddya-callit."

"What?"

"Can you please come here so we don't have to yell through the house?"

"Why don't you come in here?"

"Because I'm crippled at the moment."

"Oh, all right, here I come."

"What's with the flyswatter?"

benches, covered from head to foot in paint, I found all my naked customers.
"Mmmmm, mmmm!" one said.
"What?" I replied.
"Mmmmm, mmmmm, mmmm. Uuuu, mmm!"
It wasn't long before I realised that the poor man couldn't move at all. It took me and my ex-brother-in-law several hours to clean the men up and un-glue them from the benches.
"What the hell were you doing?" Carl asked.
"The naked women said that it was art!" one victim replied.
"Art?" Carl snorted. "Con-art, more like! What have you done with all your clothes?"
"Well, that's the thing!" the naked hotel guest replied. "The women said that our clothes would spoil the picture. So, while they were covering us with paint they took our clothes next door."
In the end I was eternally grateful that I'd kept all my staff that night. They ferried sheets and blankets over, so that we could wrap all Carol's victims up and transport them back to my hotel.
And, that's the story of how I came to be sitting among a dozen or so fleeced men, in a hotel bar, in the early hours of the morning.
"Give me a list of what's been taken," Carl ordered.
Carl's inventory was impressive. We had managed to lose a small fleet of cars, a dozen wallets and four solid gold watches.
"Next time you see naked women across the street," Carl told my customers. "Be good men, and close the curtains!"

Patrick Mackeown is the author of ***The Expendability Doctrine***, ***Hemispheric Verse 2007: A Poetry Collection***, and ***The Cardinal's Blood***. His works can be found at www.litarena.com and www.bookscape.co.uk/.

To My Husband and Children

by Patricia Coleman

It seems like only yesterday,
We even met at all;
Down at the jail-house,
In about mid-fall.

Remember what you said to me
The morning by the tracks?
I can still remember, plain as day,
The reply I gave you back.

Our lives are filled with happiness
We've never known before;
We hope our world will never change,
But last forevermore.

It seems like only yesterday
We whispered words of love,
And now we have two angels,
From God's Heaven up above.

We hold and cherish memories
That somehow linger on;
Although we know we can't go back,
To times forever gone.

And now the future is up to us,
And whatever it may be,
The four of us will be together
Through all eternity.

Jerry Markham: Then & Now

(interviews by Adie Bishop)

March 2003 Interview:

Some of you may know him as "the-Edit." Some may know him as "Joel Calibrate". Some may know him as Jerry Markham---but no one can mistake the uncanny likeness between his voice and that of singer Howard Jones.

I got the chance to chat with Jerry, and here's what he had to say.

> For those who're wondering, what does 'the-Edit' mean?

Way back in 1991 when I was writing my first demos I was actually cutting out my own paper cassette J-Cards with pictures of me and making a phony record label. I had edited the songs down and called them the edited songs and decided to call the tape 'theEdit'. But in 1998 my brother tried to make it a web site but it was being used as a business name, so he came up with 'the (dash) edit'.

> Who is Joel Calibrate?

Susan, [a fan], came up with that and I could never get rid of it. Joël was my name in French class for 2 years in High School. I tried several band names and that one stuck. Calibrate was my first album.

> A lot of people compare you to Howard Jones musically. Do you consider yourself a HJ protégé?"

I'm not ashamed to say yes in some ways and no at the same time. I never had a piano lesson. Howard was my teacher in a way. His songs were what I drew upon to learn to play; I learned every album to the note. At such an early age all of his stuff was popular to me. I was a teenager looking for a mentor. I wanted to be Howard Jones. I tried to do my hair like his, I tried to fake an accent around girls (and fooled many of them). I used to dress like him. But I reached a point early in my music writing that it was time to be me. Now I will admit that my first CD sounds very Howard. But a majority of those songs were written when I was still under that narrow influence.

"Well," I urged. "Can't you cover them up, or take them away, or caution them, or something?"
"Are they in a public place?" Carl asked.
"No," I admitted.
"And, are they looking at you, or are you looking in on them?"
At that point I struggled. My former brother-in-law was clearly not prepared to offer me the help that I needed.
I once tried drawing the lounge curtains. But that did rather make the room look as though it was being used to host a wake. And, in any case, my guests took to assembling in one corner, and lifting up the drapes, so that they could peer out underneath.
I was at that point that Carol appeared in our doorway. She was perfectly well dressed. And I must say, she even looked rather chic. I was the only person who recognised her. All the men in my bar looked chastened. And they hastily retook their seats.
"Isn't it rather dark in here?" Carol said, flicking her head towards my curtains. "Why don't you let a little light in?"
"Now's not a good time for that," I cautioned. "What can I offer you to drink?"
"Yes!" a chorus of men chimed in. "Why don't you let a little light in?"
I'm I realist, you know? I knew that I was beaten.
"OK," I said. "What the hell? What harm can it possibly do, that hasn't already been done?"
And so I crossed the floor and pulled back my heavy curtains.
Now there wasn't only one naked girl across the way. There were several of them.
"It's not a drink that I need," said Carol. "What I really need are naked men."
"I'll go!" one of my customers volunteered.
"Me too!" said another.
And, within no time at all, my bar was completely empty. Minutes later I watched the men appearing across the way. I saw one of them lifting his pullover off. And then Carol drew her blinds. That's odd. I thought. I wonder why she couldn't have done that earlier. I scratched my head. And then I set to straightening out the room.
By midnight none of my guests had returned. I started to get a little worried. I told myself that if they hadn't made it back in half an hour I'd go and have a look. Thirty minutes later they still weren't back. I pulled my jacket on. Carol's door was open. I pushed it. The house was silent.
"Carol?" I called. "Carol, where are you?"
Still I heard nothing.
At least I ventured into the showering room. And there, on rows of long

Naked Girls

by Patrick Mackeown

I don't know that much about naked girls generally. You see I'm not one of those myself. And so, as you can imagine, I did have a few problems when a number of them started to disorganise my hotel.
Perhaps I should explain myself a little. You see, the girls weren't actually in my hotel; they were across the street. But unfortunately their showering-room was at the same height as the windows of my main bar. And, of course, my drinking guests could all see directly into the ladies' bathroom.
Well, as you would expect any proprietor to do: When I noticed the first commotion of tipsy gentlemen pointing through my windows, I took myself off to see what had caused so much fuss. And, you'll understand my dismay, when I caught sight of a bare, young female in the room across the causeway, in the midst of her ablutions.
Post haste, I set off across the street to register my objections.
"You can't go around being naked," I said. "You never know who might see!"
One young woman, I later found out that her name was Carol, invited me inside the house.
"I can't stop," I explained. "I've got a hotel to run. But please would you instruct your friends to put some clothes on?"
Carol had a winning smile.
"I'll take care of it, right away," she said. "Are you sure you won't come in?"
I didn't quite understand why the young damsel was re-inviting me, when I'd made it perfectly plain that I was busy. I didn't answer her question. And I hurried back to see my guests.
By the time I reached my lounge bar, even some of my staff had taken to gawping through the window. One customer had even tucked himself in on the wrong side of the counter, and, was not only preparing drinks for himself, but for everybody else as well.
I shooed the bar-staff back to their positions. I would have liked to take some firmer action with them. But, it was rapidly becoming clear to me that I would need every worker that I had.

I knew a police sergeant. He was actually my ex-brother-in-law, but that's another story. I was desperate by that stage. So I called him on the phone.
"Carl," I said. "These women are naked. Isn't there something you can do?"
"Like what?" Carl replied. "I don't think I've got any clothes which would fit them."

But in the past few years I've been turned on by bands like No Doubt, Genesis (from the 70's) Bon Jovi and it's sounding less Howard-ish. My voice will always sound like Howard because I guess that just seems normal to me."

> So you learned to play piano, basically, by ear?

I learned to play by ear and in the 7th grade found a folder that someone had thrown out with a music book that taught you how to read notes. Choir helped out also.

> Who are your musical influences?

Howard Jones mainly, Phil Collins, Genesis, Information Society, Duran Duran, Depeche Mode, Pet Shop Boys, (Willie Nelson)....just teasing. I really do enjoy country music. I like to dance with cowgirls…they really know how to dance.

> When did you first start making music?

I started writing my 'own' music at about 17. I guess I may have written lyrics earlier than that and little musical pieces but they were not songs. I've written over 100 songs.

25 of them are quality, 25 are moderate quality and the rest are just sketches. As a songwriter, there's just not enough time to get back to them all. So you have to pick the ones that work and archive the rest.

> What was your first song?

"It's difficult to remember now but I believe it was 'Escape 111' which later became known as Oh Sarah! A few of the tracks on my first CD were actually my first songs."

> The album 'Calibrate'?

Yes.

> What was your inspiration for that album?

I guess my main inspiration for Calibrate was that I had many, many songs written…in fact, too many. I couldn't make up my mind what I wanted to

work on. I just had all of these songs/projects. So I solicited about 4 tapes containing about 10 songs each on to people I know who have critical tastes. I asked them what songs they liked the most and I went with the best ones. Sort of a 'Best Of' demos but polished up.

> The song 'Oh Sarah!' seems to be popular. Is it about an old girlfriend?

Actually, 'Oh Sarah!' is not about any girl I was ever with. It's about a guy who has tension in his relationship and just needs a friend (female, in this case) to talk to for advice and his girlfriend thinks he's screwing around. The song has always gotten a lot of attention from people.

> What kind of equipment do you use?

Roland XP-60 Music Workstation (Master Keyboard), Kawai K4 16 bit Digital Synthesizer (Keyboard), Roland A-37 (76 Key MIDI Keyboard Controller), Roland AX-1 (46 Key MIDI Shoulder Keyboard Controller), Behringer Eurorack MX1604A (12 Channel Mixer), Behringer Virtualizer Pro (Digital MIDI Multi Effects Processor), Behringer Composer Pro (Digital Compressor/Limiter), Furman PL-Plus (Power Conditioner, Behringer Eurorack MX602A (6 Channel Mixer), Behringer Truth B2031 (High-Resolution Reference Studio Monitors), 137GB Hard Drive All Digital Recording PC (AMD Athlon XP2000 1.67 GHz 512 MB of RAM Windows XP 2002 Version), Sonic Foundry Sound Forge Version 5.0b (2,000 to 192,000 Hz/32-Bit Digital Sampling/Recording/Mastering Software), Sonic Foundry ACID Pro 4.0 (High-Resolution Digital Looping Software), Cakewalk Pro Audio 9.0 (Digital Multi-Track Software), TDK Digital MixMaster (16x CDR Disc Recorder), Yamaha DTXpress (Digital MIDI Electric Drums), Samson Wireless Mic System.

Oh yeah and a Roland KC-100 Keyboard amp. And I didn't mention my Yamaha PSR-47 Keyboard that I learned on. (It's signed by Howard Jones twice.)"

> Are you interested in getting a record deal from a major company?

I've never put my music out to a record label. There is a lot to be said about signing your life over to a record company. What's the average career time expected in today's music scene: 2 albums if you're lucky?

So, if a record label signs me and they spend $1,000,000 to make the record

with his hose.

"I'm gonna shove that hose up your…" He squirted me again and I ran off dragging Walter all the way home, up the stairs and into the apartment.

I was done walking Walter. "Either Walter goes or I go," I howled but there was no one there to hear it. I was wet and paced back and forth with crazy energy. I cursed Walter. I cursed Jenny. I cursed my mother and father for producing me.

After all my cursing and pacing, I cleaned myself up and waited for Jenny. "Either Walter goes or I go," I decreed again, with a little less passion. The storm of my fury was weakening. I also knew that Jenny would kick me out without even thinking about it. So, I needed to come up with plan-b.

Later, when Jenny came home from work, I greeted her at the door.

"How was your day, honey?"

"Crappy," she kicked off her shoes.

"Mine too. I was attacked by the neighbor."

"What?"

"No big deal, but maybe we should talk about Walter." I tried to be as euphemistic as possible, "Do you think that it might be a good idea to put Walter down?"

"What?"

"Maybe it's the humane thing to do, I mean look at him."

Walter was inert as usual.

Jenny went inside the bedroom and slammed the door.

I knocked. "Jenny, sweetheart. I'm just thinking of Walter. He seems to be suffering so much."

Walter farted.

Jenny didn't say anything. She was too busy pitching my clothes out the bedroom window.

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He lives in Greece with his family.

though. But that didn't matter to Walter. Not Walter. He would go around pretending to piss on car tires. He would raise one of his tiny hind legs and try to squeeze out a drop or two. He really enjoyed pissing on car tires.

Sometimes he would piss on a car tire and then waddle into his own piss and stick his nose in it and get a good nose full. I was convinced that he could stand there sniffing his piss for hours. Sometimes cars would come down the street and Walter would be wading in his own puddle of piss in the road. I would let out his leash a little. Give him a little running room. Walter never budged and the cars always missed him. They would swerve at the last minute and the drivers would scream out, "HEY ASSHOLE, GET YOUR DOG OUTA THE ROAD." These walks with Walter convinced me that the world was crammed full of idiots and assholes.

Every afternoon we did the same route. And every afternoon our five minute walk was like a stroll through hell. I would yank Walter this way and that way, watch him stagger around in his puddles of piss, pick up little piles of poop, and the walk always ended with me rabid and cursing, carrying him home.

Besides wading in his own puddle of piss, Walter liked to shit in our neighbor's yard. Every afternoon he took a shit in that yard. And me, I would be there with my surgical gloves and a plastic bag, like some two-bit detective collecting evidence.

One day the neighbor was out. He was an old unhappy guy, with a white t-shirt, baggy blue shorts and black socks that he had pulled up to his thighs. He had a sour pucker of a face. He was standing in the middle of his yard with his hose, watering some dead plants. He saw me and Walter and shuffled over with the hose. "Hey you."

"What?"

"How come you bring your dog to my yard all the time?"

"I always pick up his business," I held up my hands so he could see my surgical gloves.

"Why don't you take him across the street? Will you get lost if you cross the street?"

"Why don't you go back inside and die, you old bag of shit."

The old geezer didn't say anything. He pointed his hose at me and squeezed the trigger.

I was soaked, and Walter was pushing out a fresh one. I picked it up and threw it at the old man's house.

"FUCK YOU," I yelled .

The old man squirted me in the face, my glasses went flying. I bent over to pick them up, and he squirted me in the ass. He was having a good time

and another $M to put it out...they would forward me a bit to get by on and I would receive my share until $2,000,000 is recouped. And if it's not recouped they drop me and my career is OVER.

I have a book I bought a few years ago called 'Everything You'd Better Know about the Music Industry'. It has enlightened me. I will release my material on MY label and distribute it in large when the time comes through an appropriate source.

> Well explained. In other words, if you could do it your way, for example, the way Howard has done with his own label dtox, would you?

Here we go Howard again, but very good example. Howard gets to keep the money. And he has control. I think I would be interested in making records for a living. I want full control of what I write, how I write it and how much I want to charge for it.

> So for now, until you get your own label, that is, where can fans find your music?

Currently they can go to http://groups.yahoo.com/group/jerrymarkham temporarily to get info on how to order or listen to some music. However, an official site will be up eventually. You'll be able to hear a lot of my work once it's done."

> Does continuous comparison to Howard Jones bother you?

It doesn't bother me at all.

> How big is your fan base as of now?

Virtually non-existent, a few online fans. Isn't that terrible? I just need to promote myself.

> Have you ever performed live?

One public, at 'O'Reiley's', an Irish pub in Dallas. It was a nightmare. The power kept failing and they wanted to hear Hank Williams Jr. But I used to play at church every Friday night for about 2 years. And I do karaoke every Thursday in town.

I won a contest there once. I sang Bon Jovi's 'Dead or Alive' and Phil Collins' 'In the Air Tonight'.

> So besides Howard, what made you want to become a musician?

I love to sing and I don't really like just standing there singing. I have to be doing something with my hands. I love synthesizers and really techy stuff. But on the other hand I love just playing acoustic piano. It really gets the girls.

> Have you ever written a song to try to get a girl?

Yes.

> Did it work?

I guess not. I'm still single. I wrote a song called 'Why?', which is on Calibrate, about a girl I just really wanted to get crazy with, but I enjoyed her company too. She was dating a guy out of town so I couldn't have her.

I've written one song about a loss. When Princess Diana was killed, it hurt me. It's strange but I had a crush on her in the 3rd grade. So I wrote 'Goodnight', which is also on Calibrate.

> Do you have any words of wisdom, etc, that you live by?

Well, I guess we could labor over a lot of important decisions, but eventually we have to make a decision and we have to go with it full throttle without looking back.
A plane only has so much run way to take off. I think that would be a good song idea…getting off of the ground…like driving a car.
1st gear is the Dream.
If you don't have a dream, then how are you going to make a dream come true?
2nd gear is a decision.
You have to decide if it's important enough to pursue.
3rd gear is the Goal.
Set a realistic date to achieve your dream.
4th gear is the plan of action.
Goals are achieved by having a plan of action.
And finally you have to do the work. But it all comes back to the Dream.
That 5-step pattern is how I try to go about my life. That doesn't mean I'm

friend of Jenny's.
"Walter tried to dig a hole in the living room again."
-- or --
"Walter ate his own poop again."
-- or --
"Walter hasn't farted in the last hour."
I did a little detective work and soon found out the secret behind the name. Jenny's father's name was Jason W. Pressbird. Good old **double-u**. Jason Walter Pressbird, I learned from Jenny, was a bit eccentric. He ran around saying things like, "I can hear gold fish farting." He was a real gem of a man. He died in his armchair when Jenny was 18. His last words were, "Don't gouge the god damned ice-cream."
The fact that Jenny named him after her dead father was a clear sign that she needed a shrink. Maybe someday she'd want to name me Walter. The whole pet/dead father thing was giving off a Psycho vibe. Then it got worst.
One day, Jenny told me, "Since you're home all day, why don't you take Walter for a walk in the afternoon."
"Darling, just because I don't have a job doesn't mean I'm not busy."
"You'll need these," Jenny wasn't listening. She handed me some surgical gloves. She had a box stuffed with surgical gloves.
"What the hell are these for?"
"So you can pick up his business."
I didn't know what to say.
"This way you can get to know Walter better."
"But he's just a dog!" Jenny had flipped out completely. What did she think, me and Walter would go to the park and mull over the meaning of life?
I looked at Walter. He was lying in the corner of the room like a sack of potatoes.
But Jenny wasn't kidding. She kissed me and whispered, "If you wanna get some, you gotta give some." Like everything in life, it all came down to sex. My will was weak. If sex meant surgical gloves and dog shit, so be it.
So, me and Walter went for walks.
Walter wasn't much of a walker anymore. He would hobble down the stairs of the apartment building and then would sort of stall. I would have to pick up the little bastard and carry him outside. I would plop him down in the grass and he would just stand there. His little dog brain was busy chasing its own tail.
I would drag him around the block, and he would try to piss on everything. He was marking his territory, and Walter believed that everything belonged to him. He would run out of piss pretty quick,

Walking Walter

by David J. Horn

I soon found out there was a lot I didn't know about Jenny. To start with, she had a dog – a decrepit poodley sort of dog with white scruffy fur and impossibly short legs. When I moved in, Jenny introduced me to the mutt.

"Jack, this is Walter," Jenny beamed.

Walter looked stiff.

"Is he dead?"

"Of course not," Jenny huffed, but the dog didn't seem to be breathing. I nudged him with my foot. He cocked his head, made an effort to look around, and then collapsed.

After I moved in, Walter was seldom in motion. He was probably a real yappy, bouncy son of a bitch in his prime, but now his yapping and bouncing days were long gone. He had as much energy as a pillow. He just lay around farting.

But then one night, Walter came racing into the living room. He was possessed by some crazy energy and he raced into the living room and tried to dig a hole in the floor.

"Look," I told Jenny, "Walter's digging his grave." Jenny didn't like me joking about Walter like that.

Walter did this little stunt every now and again. He would race into the living room, dig and dig and dig, and then slowly come to his senses. Walter was dying, but he wasn't stupid. He would quickly understand the impossibility of the hole and he would limp away and collapse somewhere. Defeated, until the next shock of life would send him digging. Whenever Walter had one of these "panic attacks," (that's what Jenny called them) Jenny never tried to stop him - even when he ripped the carpet. She never said a word. She just watched him, her eyes heavy with tears.

I found the whole thing kind of ironic. Walter dying, and trying to dig a hole in the living room.

I was not a pet person, and Walter really gave me the creeps. I had trouble with the name. What kind of person names a dog *Walter*? I couldn't understand why he had a person name. What was wrong with *Spuds* or *Rover*? A good old fashioned dog name. Did Jenny think he was human? Was she that stupid? Maybe she thought Walter was a cute name? What did the Walters' around the word think about their name being used for dogs? Damned Walter. Whenever we talked about Walter, I couldn't remember if we were talking about a dog or some subnormal

always successful but I get a lot further than those who wait for things to fall into their laps.

> So as a musician, what are your hopes for your music?

I want to write music forever. I want to lyrically offer a hopeful answer to everyday life situations, and I want to say things in songs that I can't say to people; like what would I have said to a girl if she hadn't hung up already or moved away so soon.

October 2008 Interview:

I've only been interviewed once. That was when you interviewed me.

>Well now you can be interviewed a second time.

Cool. More stuff to add.

>Okay. What's changed since we last spoke?

Well, I get to do more creative type work, I get to focus more time on my music than I ever did back then, just because of the crazy hours I used to work, you know, for Honda and what not. And…let's see, what else? What's changed for me, just on a musical scale?

>Yes.

I'd say my writing has gotten a lot better. It's kind of epic…I go through phases of writing and doing my artwork more now than I used to. Back then I used to just focus solely on my music, but I kind of go through waves now, of doing one or the other, but my music's gotten a lot more intense, and more involved. I spend a lot more time on working on a song that I used to back then.

>I think it shows because, musically, it's gotten a lot better.

Excellent. Yeah, I just need to find more time to spend on it.

>Okay now, before when I talked to you, you had done, one of your most popular songs was "Oh Sarah" and you have done since then, I think, you have done two albums. You've done "Big Deal" and the Rock A Bye soundtrack, and from the Rock A Bye soundtrack, "Music Is My Mistress" seems to be really popular. So what else have you done since the last time we spoke?

Since then I've gone through a collection of songs...I've got currently, three projects that I would like to get finished by at least Fall 2009. Since I've finished work on the Rock A Bye EP, I've gone back to some older songs that I was originally working on at the same time I was working on Big Deal and these songs are much less synthetic, and I really wanted to get kind of a, more of a band type sound for some songs of mine. Some of them date back all the way to the early 2000's...there were many songs that just came out of a relationship breakup that I went through, and I had to sit down, back then, and...I poured out all of this music. But I wanted to come back and fill them out and make them more of a solid rock type song, make them into full songs. So, there's many of the songs that I worked on back then that I've come back to reworking.

>Okay, 2008 to 2009, the three projects, do they have titles?

Well, I guess you could call them working titles...they could change, I change stuff all the time, but the thing I'm working on right now is about 8 songs, and right now I'm calling it "Thick and Thin," which was originally gonna be called "Stagefright." With this one I wanted [it] to be kind of rock...rock oriented type music...pop rock. The second one is gonna be "Stagefright," and that one's gonna be more progressive...plays outside the rules. It's not meant to be popular with a lot of people, it's just artistic. And currently, that one's only 5 songs...some of these songs are really long. And then the last one that I have set up for 2009 is...contemporary...and after that entire cycle I'll wanna do some heavy duty, industrial, electronic type stuff. Currently it's called "Joi de Vive," which means Joy of Life.

>Right…

But that's a long way off, and that one will have a very joyful type sound to it.

In between everything, I'm constantly writing new stuff.

>Do you still not want a recording contract? And is it for the same reasons?

Um, no. I've learned enough to know that that's not really desirable to me. With the internet, and the network of people, and the do it yourself websites that are out there, I think that there's enough out there, that if you put forth the effort that you really can do it, that you don't have to depend on this giant, corporate monster of a record business, to sustain your living. Because that can change at any moment, and then you're left uncertain, and...I've seen how things get manipulated and changed around, and I just don't see why I'd wanna be part of that. I have no interest in that...if I was a painter, I would not want someone telling me how I could paint...I look at music the same exact way.

I just love doing it. I love to write, and I love to record, and knowing that people are hearing my stuff, or if it makes an impact on somebody's life, or if it makes them see something in a brighter way, to me, that's the most important thing.

>To end, what are your hopes for your music?

That it will be of value to people...real value. That somebody who's struggling with something in life finds a fresh way of looking at something, that I could be a positive influence in someone's life, even if I never hear about it. Ultimately, of value...to me that's the foundation of it all, and I just wanna continue doing more of it.