

From The Basement Episode #259 October 19,2024

The mysterious "radio muse" returned after an abrupt departure.

Set One

New Stuff Includes:

Jesse Malin & Ian Hunter

Songs: Ohia

Darrell Scott

Graham Nash

Joe Henry

Plus

Lowell George and Linda Ronstadt together and live on the radio... specifically WHFS / BETHESDA,MD in March of 1974. For the last few weeks I have been a bit off, unsteady, out of sorts and perhaps feeling a tinge sorry for myself, which is not unusual at this time of year. But finding this show and my old pal Steve Poltz somehow telepathically helped me turn towards needed mental clarity.

Steve Poltz begins FTB #259 by covering his own enormous hit song that, by its conclusion, lands me in front of the mixing board with my head on the table laughing so hard there were tears streaming down my cheeks. It was 2004 and from one of my favorite early Loft Sessions. Steve Poltz is entirely too talented to be as famous and wealthy as he deserves. If you somehow managed to secure a gathering of Steve, Robin Williams, Warren Zevon, John Prine, Bill Hicks, Martin Mull, Harvey Lembeck (as Eric Von Zipper) and Dick Shawn it might make the news cycle since only Steve would be able to attend, the rest are at the After Party hanging in a saloon with Country Dick Montana. If he started performing in the early Sixties he would have been a famous celebrity, with a massive hit single that he wrote for Michelle Phillips. There would be

featured guest spots on McMillan and Wife and he would have tried to seduce Susan St. James. I don't think he would have done Love Boat, but Columbo, Cannon, McCloud, a surfer on Hawaii 5-0, an arc on The Rockford Files. He would be on all the late night talk shows and a regular on The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson. Everyone would call him "A Great Entertainer." He would be tan and drive a convertible and one day the center square for Paul Marshall on Hollywood Squares. That is if managed to forget that Marshall's real last name was LaCock and his son played for The Dodgers. Steve loves his San Diego Padres. He would have created the TV Show "Cops." If you left Steve out of the gathering and put all the others in a blender, you would go to prison, but get an idea of what you may experience at one of his shows.

He wrote the following.

Steve Poltz on Paul Komanski, October 6, 2024.

Paul Kamanski passed away yesterday. I hear it was a heart attack. Man, I was on a plane and we were just taking off from Nashville to Chicago to Arkansas. I was aimlessly scrolling through FB and saw a post about Paul. It's the kind of thing where you audibly gasp and the stranger next to you glances over and you lock eyes for just a second and they go back to reading their book. I scratched my head and teared up. Good lord I hate death. It's so final. And it just keeps happening. The hits keep coming. It's a fact of life that we all meet our demise. We just don't know when it's our turn.

So back in the 80s when I was at USD and then when I graduated in '84, I used to frequent many San Diego bars in search of music. There was a place called The Mandolin Wind in Hillcrest that had a hot moment. I can't remember the best night of the week to go but I wanna say it was every Thursday. The place would be packed and there was a scene. To me it was the beginning of what we might call Americana. The band at the center of this movement were called The Beat Farmers. There were a lot of bands making great albums like The Blasters and Los Lobos and X. But for my money The Beat Farmers were the

kings. Their shows were the stuff of beer soaked legend. So anyways, The Mandolin Wind was where all the musicians would hang out and play music and drink tequila and sing songs. Jerry Raney, Joey Harris and Mojo Nixon would be there. The Farage Brothers. They're twins! They were in a band called The Sidewinders. And also DFX2. But on Thursdays every musician would be at the bar. Country Dick Montana would be holding court around a bottle of mescal.

But there was one mysterious dude named Paul Kamanski. He had beautiful wavy long hair. Wore cowboy boots. Very handsome. He was the songwriter of songwriters. He studied at the altar of Neil Young, Springsteen, The Replacements and Dylan. He wrote cool lyrics and hooks. I remember one night after a few shots of tequila I was at that packed Mandolin Wind bar and I had just enough courage to go up and talk to Paul Kamanski. I was standing next to my friend Lorna and she told me to compliment his guitar playing. I was nervous so I drained another shot and I walked up and tapped him on the shoulder. His eyes were beautiful and mischievous and I said, "Hey man, my name is Steve Poltz and I write songs too. I really love your song 'Bigger Stones' but I REALLY love your guitar playing!" He thanked me and shook my hand and then went back to talk to some friends he was with. I hadn't played that many shows yet but just meeting him gave me a jolt of energy. I remember telling Lorna that I complimented Paul's guitar playing and she said something like, "You're like a golden retriever. You didn't shake his hand, you hugged him and probably scared him. Don't worry, I know him really well. I'll tell him you're an ok dude." Sometimes Paul would play these duo acoustic shows with Joel Harris. Another legendary songwriter and Beat Farmer member. They'd play these shows at a bar in Coronado called McP's Irish Pub.



I would watch Joey and Paul sing all these old and new songs. They'd wear cool cowboy boots and their guitars were banged up and I'd lean in and listen to every song with all of my attention. This was my real college degree. I may have been at USD but this is where I'd get my education.

Well the years have certainly whizzed by and now we are deep into 2024. Over many years I became friends with Paul Kamanski. He married a wonderful girl named Caren and had a beautiful daughter named Tennessee. We sporadically kept in touch. I became a full time traveling bard with my own banged up guitar. On September 17, 2023 I was driving from a festival I played called Millpond and I was in Northern California headed to Grass Valley to play a show with my friend Shawn Mullins. It was a special day. The sun. The weather. The blue skies and puffy white clouds. The flowers. The water. Everything was perfect. I was driving all alone in silence. One of those moments where everything was just right. A feeling of gratitude enveloped my entire being. Then I looked ahead and saw a sign that said Walker, California. I thought to

myself "I think Paul and Caren Kamanski live in this little town." So I called Caren. I couldn't believe it but she answered the phone. I told her where I was and she screamed, "you have to come over. We wanna see you and show you our studio." So there we were on Sept 17, 2023. I was with one of my teachers. A man I drunkenly hugged in the 80s. Here I was at his compound in Walker, California. He and Caren made me some coffee and played me music they were working on. They talked about wanting to have a festival on their land. They built a stage. They said I could sleep in their super cool Airstream trailer next to their house. Shoot, I would've stayed for a week but I had shows to play. So we hugged and professed our love and I hugged 'em both again because that's what golden retrievers do. I'm so glad I stopped in Walker, California last Sept 17, 2023. I'll see you on the other side. Enjoy every cup of tea.

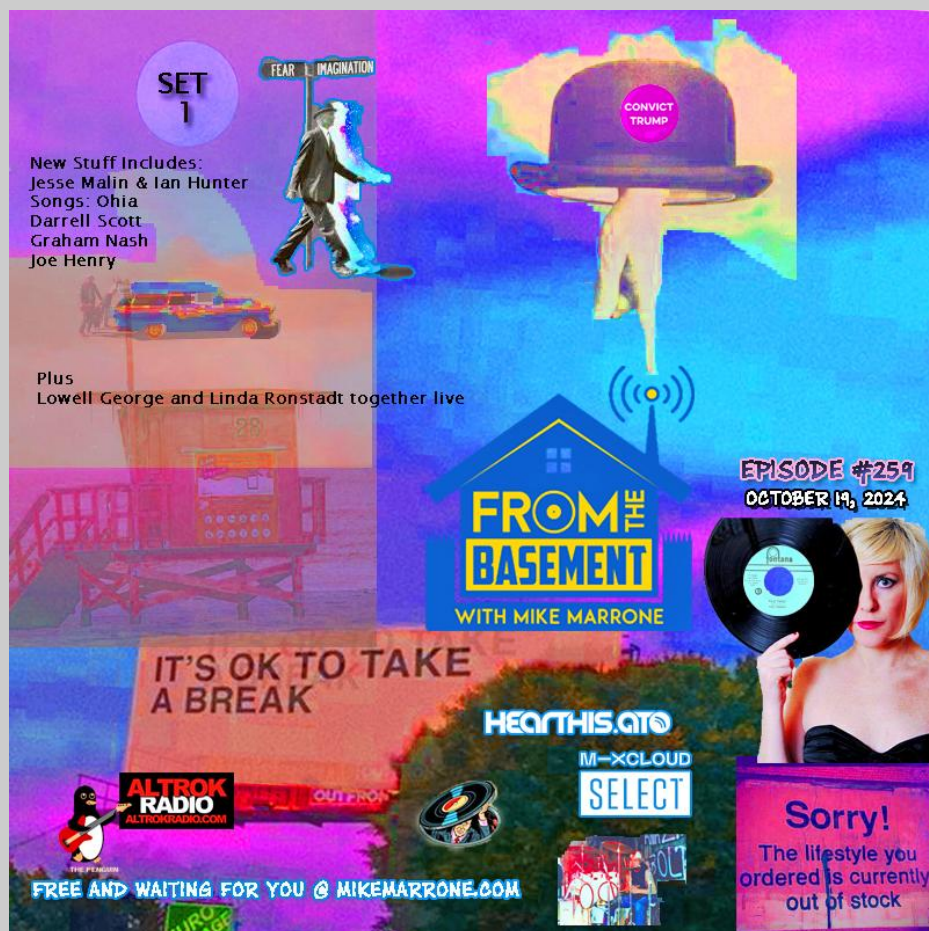
Now he's gone. Just like that.
God bless you Paul Kamanski.

Look at these lyrics and listen to this song "Bigger Stones" by The Beat Farmers. Paul wrote this. It's beautiful.

*Sometimes I wanna fall asleep and die off in a dream
The music takes me back to my old past when I was young and feelin' mean
And as I stare into the spotlight it's like drivin' my car
We had the girls and a will and a bill on a stolen credit card
Sayin' someday we'll be stars, Joe
Now, I feel the pain of growin' old I hear voices in the rain
I see a vision of doubt that keeps rollin' through my baby's eyes
When she calls out my name each time that she complains
Seems like we rolled bigger stones back then
Seems like we rolled bigger stones
Seems like we rolled bigger stones back then
Seems like we rolled bigger stones*

Musically speaking, the unpacking, purging and cataloging marches on and yielded a few things I thought were lost forever. Top of the list, a pristine WHFS Aircheck from 1974, with Cerphe hosting Lowell George and Linda Ronstadt live on the air playing and singing together, educating the audience about incredible musicians like Roy Estrada, Lowell's bandmate in The Mothers Of Invention and the beginning of Little Feat. They were buds, and seeing their names on that first Feat record is why I bought it unheard, as a new release. There are no current broadcasts like this anymore. It is truly live, unscripted and entirely reliant on the willingness of the musicians to allow magic to occur with not an algorithm in sight. It was honest and presented with love by all involved. Absolute magic and it made me so sad listening to it the other day. The business I worked in from 1974 until getting sick in 2018 was gone. That old saying is absolute truth, "Do something you love and you will never work a day in your life."

I've had many different bootlegs of this WHFS broadcast since 1975 and never stopped looking for the best possible source. This was duplicated and packed away years ago. I saw them at least 4 times in Maryland, NJ/NY and Philly between '74 and '77 and for my money there wasn't a better American band at the time. Ritchie Heyward was as much of a personal inspiration as Bill Bruford, Buddy Rich, John Bonham, Tony Williams, Dino Danelli, Ginger Baker, B.J. Wilson, any and everyone playing with Zappa at any time (Aynsley Dunbar, Paul Humphry, Chester Thompson, Terry Bozio, Vinnie Coliuta, Chad Wackerman, Ruth Underwood and Ron Selico -- who only ever played on 1 Zappa tune "Peaches En Regalia," my long-time theme music. Great trivia question, "Peaches" used only three musicians, Frank, Ron and a bass player. Who played Bass?), Lenny White, Carmine Appice, David Garibaldi, Shelly Manne, Art Blakey, Joe Morello, Elvin Jones, Cozy Powell, Mitch Mitchell, and about 100 more I could think of instantly...definitely Ian Paice, who is still amazing today in his late 70's. There are so many more.



PLAYLIST

Blue Text denotes a New Release including remasters/reissues and Deluxe Versions.

Steve Poltz	- You Were Meant For Me - LiVE@The Loft XM 02/26/04
Beat Farmers	- Bigger Stones
Jesse Malin & Ian Hunter	- Dead On
Songs: Ohia	- Nobody Tries That Hard Anymore
Jimmy Reed	- Honest, I Do (Remastered 2024)
Lowell George	- Sailin' Shoes/Willin' (with Linda Ronstadt) (Live: WHFS-FM, Bethesda, Maryland 19 Mar '74)

Frank Zappa/ Mothers Of Invention	- Who Are The Brain Police?
Lowell George	- Heartache (with Linda Ronstadt) (Live: WHFS-FM, Bethesda, Maryland 19 Mar '74)
Ryan Adams	- Desire (live)
Darrell Scott	- Jesus Was A Capricorn
Darrell Scott	- American Tune
Graham Nash	- I Used to Be a King (Live)
Graham Nash	- Be Yourself (Live)
Joe Henry	- The Man I Keep Hid
Jesse Malin	- She Don't Love Me Now (feat. Bruce Springsteen)
Ryan Adams	- Harder now that it's over (live)

Set Two

New Stuff Includes:

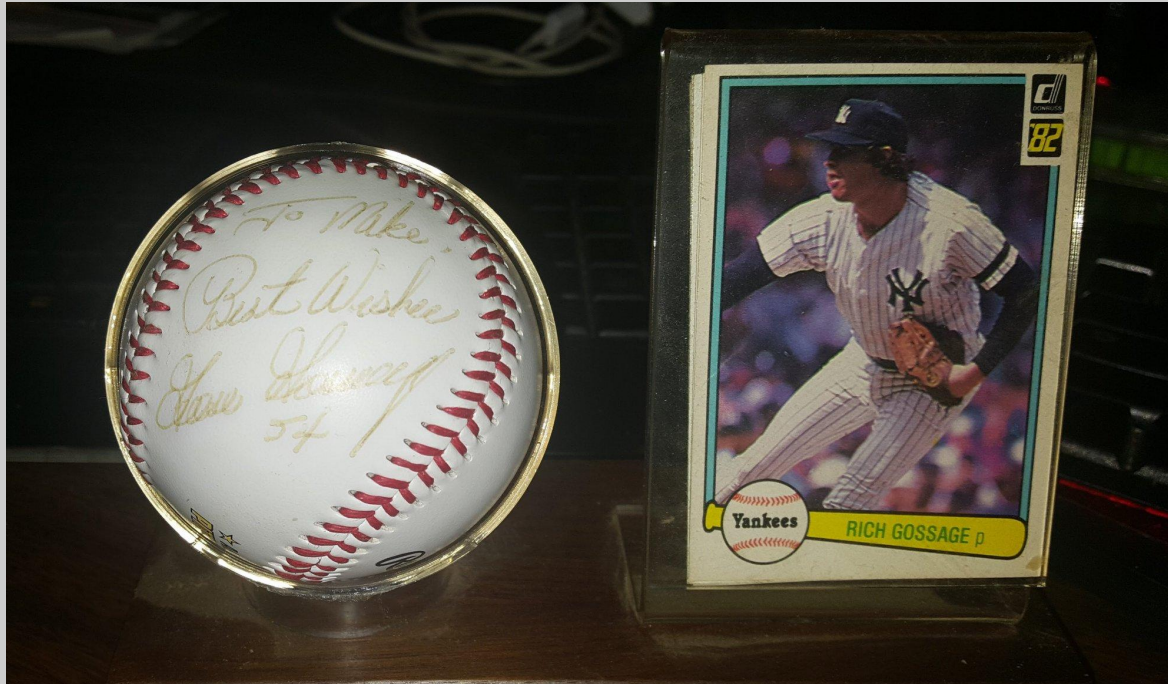
Suzanne Vega
 John Lennon
 Paul McCartney & Linda McCartney
 Ben Lee
 Paul Kelly
 Primal Scream
 Fantastic Negrito
 The Devlins

I need to call Steve and thank him for giving me a spark that helped the fog fade. I owe him a call but have avoided trying to explain to him why I haven't even watched a single Yankee game since I've moved back home to NJ. We talked a lot of Baseball over the years, I even revealed my 1984 Yankee Boycott to him and my defection to his Padres, because that's where George traded Nettles and The Goose. Of course they wound up in their first World Series, losing to The Tigers. I bought a George Steinbrenner Dartboard at a flea market and felt somewhat responsible when their attempt at a speed team built around new signing Dave Collins failed miserably. He was a fine ballplayer

but there was no way it had even a ghost of a chance. I'm looking at it right now.

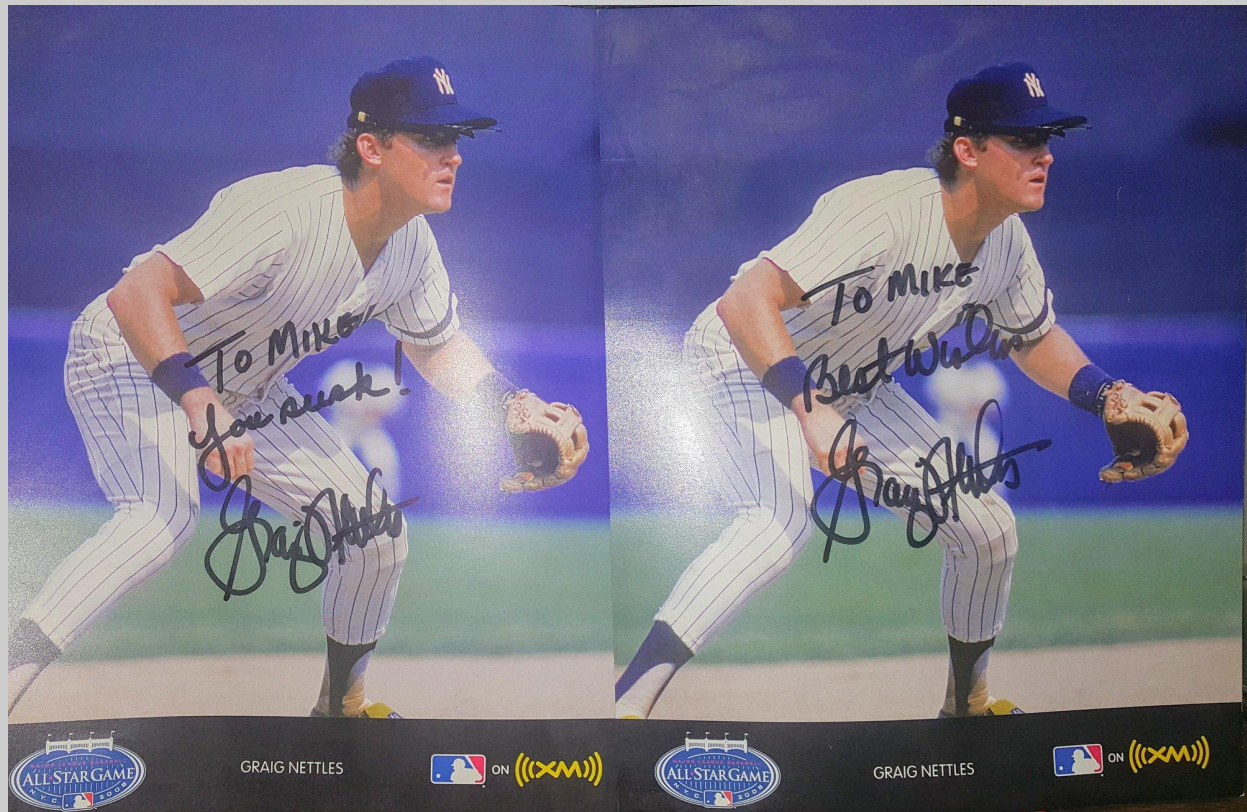


To quote a leading Baseball philosopher, the great Earl Weaver during a post-game Manager's Corner found him answering a question about why he didn't emphasize Team Speed, "TEAM SPEED? Bunch a gnats runnin' around the bases, gettin' picked off. Just give me some big cocksuckers who can hit the fuckin' ball out of the ballpark and we'll be fine." Earl also had some advice to caller Alice Sweet for asking about planting tomatoes. But we'll leave that for another day. I was blown away that during the early years of XM we became the home of MLB and that was after I found out Goose Gossage was a fan of my channel and sent me an autographed baseball.



It would be joined less than a year later by a pair of 8 x 10 color action shots from Graig "Puff" Nettles (in a NY uniform). They were both inscribed in Sharpie "To Mike", the first says "You Suck" the other "Best Wishes." This was the work of Kevin Straley, the VP of Talk radio and a diehard Red Sox fan. I miss working with Kevin. He is now the Chief Content Officer at TuneIn. A great Human. We became fast friends. Moving to Washington from 5 years "in enemy territory" (Peabody, MA) my neighbor Kenny was also a diehard Red Sox fan. Constant pranks and hijinx were hilarious. Yanks get swept in a series by his Sawx, he's on my back desk sweeping it with his broom. Later that night I put a video tape of "the" Bucky Dent HR in between his screen and front doors housed in a plain white sleeve with "Have you seen this missing child" in neat block letters on front. Real Baseball fans know, true nerdy diehards get along fabulously and have the most fun with it. Bandwagon jumpers get in fights while Baseball Junkies are incredibly knowledgeable, not just about their chosen team, but the Sport itself and history of the game. We identify with each other. Geography was the primary factor and if we grew up where they did team loyalty would be reversed. Kevin and I instantly made a yearly wager with a twist. Whichever team finished higher at the end of the season won.

Winner gets a case of beer of his choice from the loser, BUT the loser must present it with a concession speech from the "overlook area" in front of the entire staff. We each won once. It was prior to 2006 when I turned 50 and drank my last beer.



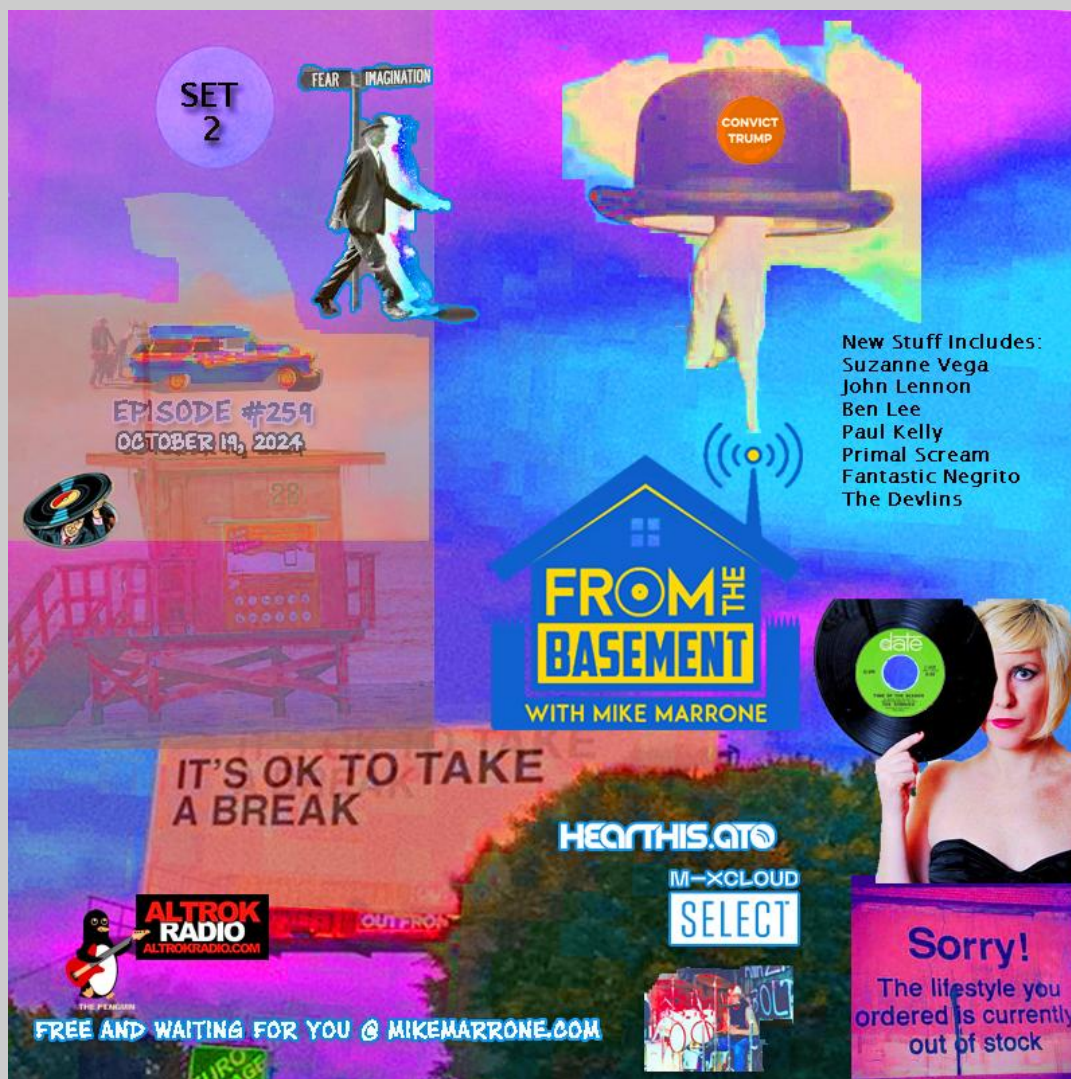
As a true Gemini I possess the superpower to call a mandatory meeting with myself. I confirmed this power when creating and running The Loft during the first 4 years, aside from Genius Audio Animator Pants, the best production person I ever encountered,



I had no staff at all. I did everything myself and through the magic of computers programmed every day's music, mixed every element by hand and most of the time even ingested it into the system, while completing all the necessary metadata. I was heard on the air 23 of the 24 hours, 7 days a week. My weekly hour total for that period averaged out to around 80. I'm not complaining as I would do it all over again, plus the programming staff were all (mostly) working that type of schedule. With my fog of funk starting to clear it was time to call my first meeting in a long time. After long, tense deliberation a binding agreement was reached that if any game went into extra innings and they put an automatic runner on second base to start the 10th, that would be it. Complete deal-breaker. Sure enough, Thursday night Yanks/Cleveland goes into extras and I had my finger on the button... but THEY DIDN'T USE IT. I know it was in use during the season so I may be returning if they drop it completely. The pitch "clock" was my initial issue, but this boneheaded T-Ball element was a bridge too far. Honestly, the pace of the game has definitely

improved, which was nostalgic. I still don't understand how the Umpires refused to control this aspect of the game. From the 1960's through to the round the steroid era it was the job of the Umpire to keep things moving and they ruled with a iron-fist. I remember seeing Whitey Ford pitch a complete game shutout in no longer that 1 hour and 45 minutes at the old Stadium. A Sunday afternoon contest. There was no stepping out, stepping off or any unnecessary delay. As another great Baseball philosopher Lee Elia once opined, "You pitch the ball, hit the ball, catch the ball and get the fuckin' job done. That's Baseball, fellas." The only time I have reached for the remote so far was the Intentional Walk issued to a batter, without the Pitcher throwing a pitch. That still pisses me off because I had instinctively moved to the edge of my seat, anticipating a Wild Pitch due to the fact, as we used to chant, "Pitcher's Blowing Up." Alas, another rare delight for the true Baseball fan is lost forever.

As far as the music in this set, This track from Suzanne Vega is an uptempo semi-punkish tune that grabbed me by surprise as I was not expecting the new sonic vibe but love it. I have been a fan since the very beginning and she was a core part of every station I have programmed. The Fantastic Negrito album blows me away. I've been a fan for years and played the hell out of his debut, his growth is remarkable. The Devlins are another band that I have loved from their debut and "All The Days" doesn't disappoint, same goes for Ben Lee and Paul Kelly. Interestingly, aside from Fantastic Negrito all of these artists recorded Sessions with us, Suzanne and Ben multiple times.



PLAYLIST

Blue Text denotes a New Release including remasters/reissues and Deluxe Versions.

Suzanne Vega	- Rats
King Crimson	- Sex Sleep Eat Drink Dream
The Shangri-Las	- Sophisticated Boom Boom

The Beatles	- Baby's In Black
John Lennon	- Out The Blue
Roxy Music	- Out Of The Blue
Paul McCartney & Linda McCartney	- Smile Away
Ben Lee	- So Damn Hard (to be So Damn Good)
Paul Kelly	- All Those Smiling Faces (Album version)
The Farmer's Boys	- I Built The World
The Teardrop Explodes	- Bent Out Of Shape
Primal Scream	- Ready To Go Home
The Gap Band	- You Dropped A Bomb On Me (Single Version)
The Temptations	- Shakey Ground
Jimmy Cliff	- World Upside Down (acoustic live)
Fantastic Negrito	- First To Betray Me/I Hope Somebody's Loving You
Fantastic Negrito	- Goddamn Biscuit [E]
The Rolling Stones	- Sway (Remastered)
The Rolling Stones	- Moonlight Mile (Remastered)
The Devlins	- Dark Star
Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young	- Carry On (2021 Remaster)
Jimmy Cliff	- The Harder They Come

Set Three

New Stuff Includes:

Dr. John

Santana

U2

MC5

Robin Trower

Jimi Hendrix

Jesse Malin and Counting Crows

In early 1980 I had been playing in my favorite band ever for about a year, having left a band that did Pink Floyd and Who tribute sets. Joining up with

my dear old friend and hot shit guitar slinger, Hot Dog Johnny Cook. We formed The Amazing Bolts and were working and having a blast. We were completely out of our minds. Someday I will write it all down, but we had 2 unbreakable rules: no facial hair and no sleeves. If asked any question, the only allowed answer was, "Because it makes us want to kill." The most used slogan was "Everything On 10 and sleeves OFF!" We would throw our no longer needed sleeves by the bagful to the crowd at dramatic moments while calling for an immediate Coast Guard Alert, our code to bring drinks to the stage PRONTO. They named a Sub after us in a Belmar or Manasquan Sub Shop. The Amazing Bolt - everything on it, ends off! The previous Spring both bands did a song each at our wedding. The band I was leaving did "Squeeze Box" while we chose "Frustrated" ... we did have a Wedding band (who were very good) but they welcomed us with open arms and seemed just a bit afraid. Nobody wanted to leave. By the next year, I was 24 and getting restless . I didn't want to end up playing cocktail music in a Holiday Inn at 40 and there was no future in cover bands, as it looked like the 18 to drink law was rumored to soon be raised back to 21, and there was an escalating amount of DWI crackdowns. You could go out any night of the week back then and find live music, unlimited choice. We had a few originals and I proposed we all get day gigs and work on expanding our originals with an eye toward getting a record out. Now 24 and married to the remarkable woman that is still here, I knew that although a solid drummer, I would never be Chad Wackerman or any of the other great players listed in Set One. The first time I saw Chad play with Zappa, I came home, threw my drumsticks against the wall in frustration and vowed to somehow make a career that involved music without working in Retail, unless I could own the store, not just run it for someone else. When an offer to work at Jem Records came my way (thanks always, Phyllis) I asked the guys one more time if they wanted to get out of the Cover Circuit and change direction but it was not to be. Still love them as true brothers to this day and we have remained in each other's lives ever since. Johnny, Tommy and Mikey Bolt. Same father, different mothers.

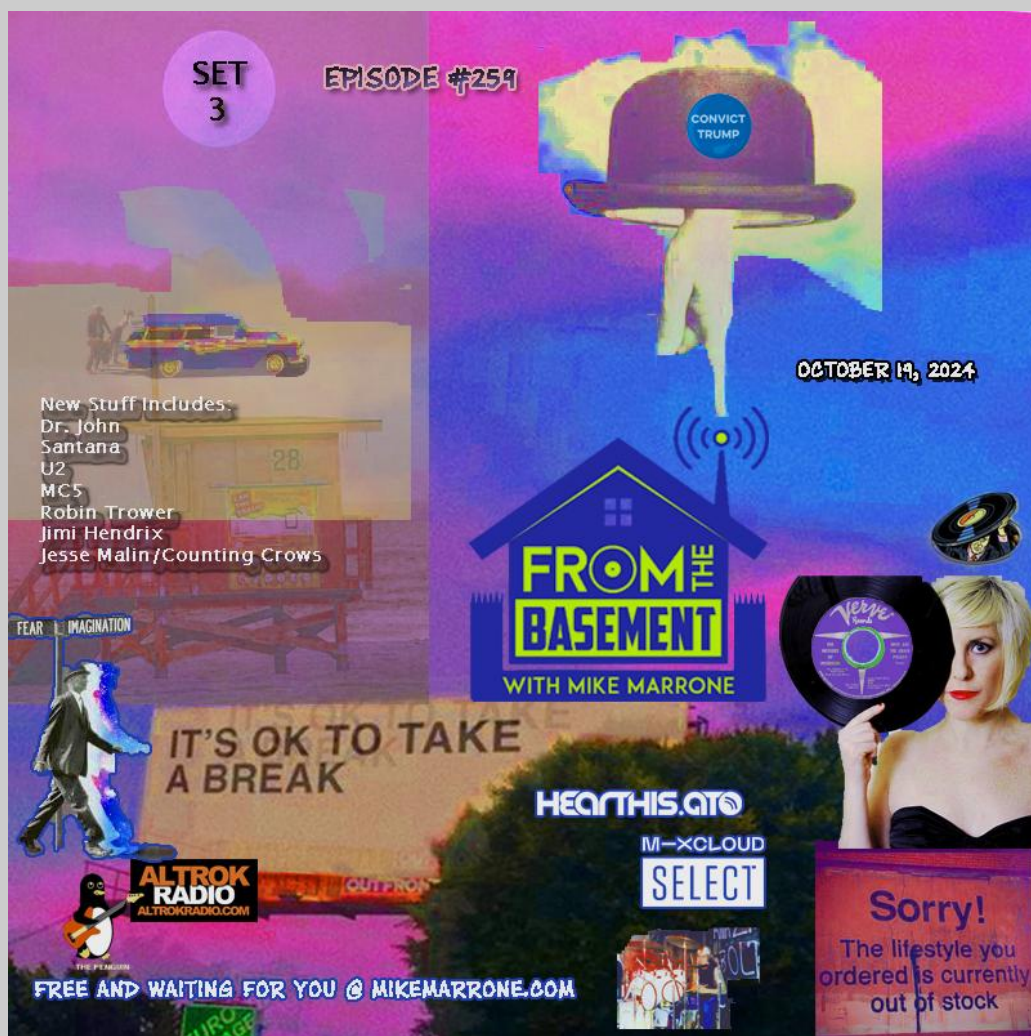
We lost our brother Petey Bolt (aka Dodge/Margaret/D.D.) to Cancer about 6 months after I came home to Jersey. It was during Covid and while we were living with my closest pal, Joe and his wife Robin. Joe and I were closer than the others. He was my drum roadie in the band days and whenever I DJ'd a gig of any kind. In my many moves around the country, he was the expert at moving my ridiculous collection, setting up the studio/Music Room, but above all he was my very best friend. Joey Bolt had colon cancer and I had survived Stage IV Lymphoma. They had just moved to a new very large house and could use some help, so we helped each other. Because of the pandemic we were there way longer than planned, but it was all good. He was putting on weight, getting healthier. We continued to search for a place to live and finally had a sort of plan. About 2 weeks after we found this place in Absecon, he dropped dead from a massive heart attack. Joey Bolt had recently turned 60. We have been in this house 4 years this month, he never even got to see it. And I am still not fully unpacked or set up.

Well, it's Saturday and I promised to deliver this today and I never miss deadlines. The biggest musical surprise of the new things in this set was how fucking great this song from the first new MC5 album in a staggering 53 years is! Of course it's not "the single" but the first of the pile for my ears is a blistering tune called "Change, No Change." The album came out yesterday and I have played that song 5 times already. Produced by Bob Ezrin "Heavy Lifting" is by far the best sounding MC5 record ever, sonically speaking. Wayne Kramer announced this project a few years ago and wrote 13 of the songs, 2 of which feature original drummer, Dennis Thompson. Also helping out are Slash, William Duvall, Vernon Reid (Living Colour), Don Was, and Tim McIlrath (Rise Against). Also Vicki Randle (Aretha Franklin), Stevie Salas (Parliament Funkadelic and Rod Stewart), Abe Laboriel Jr. (Paul McCartney), Winston Watson Jr. (Bob Dylan), and Joe Berry (M83). Wayne Kramer died February 2, 2024 following a bout with Pancreatic cancer. Drummer Dennis Thompson passed away at age 75, May 9, 2024 at a nursing home following a heart attack a month before in April. Both men were the sole surviving members of the original band's lineup.

I was reading an interview about this project a few years back that stuck with me, especially Wayne's motivation. explained his reason for doing it after so many years and band members had already passed. I tracked it down to get his correct quote, ""Some bands need a little time between records. I needed a lot of time between records!" He said Donald Trump's presidency and the effects of the pandemic were creative influences. "I know myself well enough to know that the treatment for my meaninglessness was to take creative action."
(<https://ultimateclassicrock.com/wayne-kramer-new-mc5-album>)

Donald Trump has also been at the root of my mental distress. For the last decade his never ending barrage of lies, narcissism, hate, fear mongering and greed (to name just a few) and his bloviating ignorance and unbridled racism have inspired a movement that has the thumbless mouthbreathers celebrating Berlin in the 30's and The Fuhrer's idol Mussolini. Given a choice for how it should end I would vote for Benito's farewell from the Italians. Make sure to include Fox News, the chickenshit Republicans that continue to enable him and kiss his diapered ass and last but certainly not least, Thomas, Alito, Roberts, Kavanaugh and Gorsuch.

VOTE!



PLAYLIST

Blue Text denotes a New Release including remasters/reissues and Deluxe Versions.

Gil Scott-Heron	- I'm New Here/Home Is Where The Hatred Is
Gil Scott-Heron	- Lady Day And John Coltrane/Is That Jazz
Dr. John	- Let's Make A Better World

Dr. John	- Don't Want No Monkey in My Business
Santana	- Black Magic Woman (live in Japan)
James Brown	- Time Is Running Out Fast
Sly & The Family Stone	- Babies Making Babies
U2	- Picture Of You (X+W)
MC5	- Change, No Change
Robin Trower	- About To Begin
Robin Trower	- Bridge Of Sighs
Jimi Hendrix	- Drifting (Takes 1 & 2) - Drifting (Alternate Version - June 29, 1970)
The Sound	- Where The Love Is
Jesse Malin and Counting Crows	- Oh Sheena (feat. Counting Crows)
The dB's	- Think Too Hard
Grin	- White Lies
Jason & The Scorchers	- White Lies
The Replacements	- The Ledge
The Fall	- Cruisers Creek
Ed Sanders	- The Iliad
The Fugs	- Wide Wide River

If you have made it this far, you deserve [this](#).