





William Britelle *Spiritual America*

Music, lyrics and concept by William Britelle

featuring Andrew Stack and Jennifer Wasner, Metropolis Ensemble,
and Brooklyn Youth Chorus

with special guests Ben Cassorla and Mark Dancigers

1. **Abattoir** 4:30
2. **True Hunger** 5:13
3. **Strange Asylum** 5:22
4. **Topaz Were the Waves** 5:59
5. **Forbidden Colors** 5:17
6. **Birds of Paradise** 7:01
7. **Spiritual America** 5:11
8. **I Know the Law** (Bonus Track) 4:10

1. ABATTOIR

I don't know what you mean
when you say you'll never die

There is a telephone wire connecting each house
that separates us from the mirror world of death

And I don't know what you mean
when you say he walked on water

When we drive home I am concussed

I don't know what you mean
when you say you'll never die

And cold were the hands that first brought us here
and cold are the hands that bring us back home
past the abattoir with a force as yet unyielding

When we drive home I am concussed

2. TRUE HUNGER

The cars outside never seem to die
that's why we go there when he frightens us

Will they turn to dust before me before us
I ask you this and you start to cry

Your cigarette has a bended tip
and smells of pine like your mother's did

There's an army base behind the gilded clouds
but it's silent now and we are breathless

Lie to me

Down the river comes a yellow cargo ship
it's filled with rusted tin we hear a caterwaul

From the water's edge it grows much softer now
the darkness brings us in it's falling over us

The cars outside never seem to die
that's why we go there when he frightens us

Lie to me

3. STRANGE ASYLUM

We are lost inside . . .

I park the jeep before a greyed rainbow
behind the factory a pale light shines

We're on the roof so high
as a cool wind blows

We find no need to speak
drinking Zima from a NASCAR cup

The factory is darkened now
where they once made magic markers

We are lost inside . . .

4. TOPAZ WERE THE WAVES

I dreamt I was in your house with your dad the alcoholic
there beneath a golden moon reading your mother's magazines

We were sitting in your room with the blue and silver curtains
the pages billowed like the ocean waves and covered up the stars

I dreamt that we were in your car by the grey and yellow prison
the windows all were fogging up no matter what we did

Somehow we were stranded there on an island in the highway
the cars a never-ending rush they covered us in ash

The paintings in your house are paintings of real paintings

I dreamt I was in your yard in the grass so long and quiet
And far off was the stadium and the thunder sound of cars

And by the lake where someone died we saw a boat of women praying
the sky above was darkening no matter what they did

5. FORBIDDEN COLORS

Naked ghosts cry out in ocean waves
of tv fuzz on channel seventeen

Men with makeup dressed like little girls
in the stadium framed by pentagrams

Nostalgia is a drug, nostalgia is poison

And in the grass I was herculean
I remember waves of light

No sound no words just light
waves and waves of light

The tape deck rewinding Theatre of Pain
behind the swimming pool by your pastor's house

I remember waves of light
waves and waves of light

As if I could forget it all

6. BIRDS OF PARADISE

In the golden grass there is a
billboard sign
it doesn't advertise

The hospital has walls of glass
so the sick can see

The diamonds in the jewelry store
are cut to capture light

Rings of purity arranged in rows
they won't tell us the price

We tell lies to go to the mall
the air is so cold the air is
so clean

Your birds of paradise
are porcelain
they don't need batteries

My medication traces
chemtrails in the air

I don't want to live anymore

Rogue waves in the distant dark
remove the stanchions

and pray

7. SPIRITUAL AMERICA

There are photographs
from beneath the waves
in your father's room

There are strange birds
on the power lines
outside your window

When we walk to town
there's always licorice
but you don't buy it

There's aluminum
in the coke machine
behind the glowing red

There's a man that says
our time will come
in the bottle line

I see a frozen fern
beneath a pale moon
in the timber brush

In the whitened woods
by your parents' house
I see a sign that says
we can't go home

8. I KNOW THE LAW (written by Andrew Stack and Jennifer Wasner)

In order to preserve the myth
I will answer according to it

I speak in its passages
and it keeps me safe in my skin

In order to preserve the myth
I will answer from inside of it

And in this life I see the truth
that I cannot deliver

What you are waiting for
it is already yours

In order to preserve this life
I have given my life precedence over yours

For love fully aware
and deserving of no reward

And even so it is true together or apart
light a little fire so you can feel it in the dark

I know the law

Produced by William Britelle and Zach Hanson

Mixed by Zach Hanson at April Base Studios in Wisconsin. Additional mixing by Andrew Stack.

Music Direction by Andrew Cyr.

Additional production by Ben Cassorla, Daniel Castellanos, Michael Repper, Andrew Stack, and Jennifer Wasner.

Music, lyrics, and conception by William Britelle. Words and music for "I Know the Law" by Andrew Stack and Jennifer Wasner, arranged by William Britelle.

Metropolis Ensemble and Brooklyn Youth Chorus recorded at Oktaven Audio, Mt. Vernon, NY.

Engineered by Ryan Streber and Charles Mueller, assisted by Nathan DeBrine.

Mastered by Zach Hanson at April Base Studios.

Design and illustrations by Brock Lefferts
Cover Photography by Mark Borthwick
Ocean Illustration by Matthew DiVito
Photo of William Britelle by Zack DeZon

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Jennifer Wasner and Andrew Stack appear courtesy of Merge Records.

Brooklyn Youth Chorus

Dianne Berkun Menaker, Artistic Director
Ezra Lowrey, Production Manager

Iyanu Miller Tahir, Nina Goldsmith, Rosa Jacobs, Zora Mussen, Daniella Micalizzi, Joan Marie Varous, Naia Shepherd, Jillian Dowd, Cora Clum, Helen Linaard, Lauren Berthoumieux, Lila Penenberg, Isabel Gilabert, Lyric Miller, Ava Chessum, Renee Ricevuto, Stevie Kim-Rubell, Isabella Gastel-Alejandre, Josie Shehadi, Teddy Winters, Reaiah Roberts, Isabel Soto, Melanie Macleod, Sicile Naddeo-Gjergji, Briana Sapini, Leo Hartley, Alexandra Conklin, Julia Konopski, Thalia Glyptis, Bailie Schaefer, Maya Barth, Quyn McCaffrey, and Samuel Larriere. Dianne Berkun Menaker, conductor.

Metropolis Ensemble

Andrew Cyr, Artistic Director

Violin: Katie Hyun, Clara Kim, Siwoo Kim, Jennifer Liu, Grace Park*, Henry Wang **Viola:** Dana Kelly, Ayane Kozasa, Ramon Martinez
Cello: Michael Katz, Sarah Rommel, Joann Whang **Bass:** Evan Runyon **Flute:** Jessica Han **Saxophone:** Cole Belt, Thomas Giles, Bryan McNamara **Trumpet:** Brandon Ridenour, Sam Wells
French Horn: Elizabeth Flemming, John Gattis, Bert Hill, Laura Weiner
Trombone: Michael Lormand, Burt Mason, Jonathan Greenberg
Conductor: Michael Repper

*Concertmaster

Vocals by Jennifer Wasner. Drums and percussion by Andrew Stack. Recorded on location in Durham, NC. Synthesizers, electronics, piano, and samples by William Brittelle. Additional samples by Andrew Stack. Electric bass by Zach Hanson and Andrew Stack. Additional vocals by Clyde DeForest Brittelle and Delphine Hyacinth Brittelle in "Spiritual America".

Guitars recorded, performed, and pre-mixed by Ben Cassorla at Martha's Room in Los Angeles. "Topaz Were the Waves" guitars performed by Mark Dancigers and pre-mixed by Ben Cassorla. Additional guitar on "Spiritual America" performed by Zach Hanson.

Spiritual America was composed on location in Blowing Rock, NC, Cold Spring, NY, Fort Tilden, NYC, and Gill, MA from 2011-2018. Very special thanks to NB/DB, RP/RP, and JG/MW for the hospitality and housing.

Project management by James Egelhofer. Additional project support and management by Kate Nordstrum. Assistant project management by Laura Nyhus Kaae. Copying assistance by Dominic Mekky.

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