



Arturo Got The Shaft presents:

**A Life Without Fireflies**

Arturo Got The Shaft was:

C. Howie Howard - trap, keys, and  
harmony

Scott Morris - keys and percussion

Rob Spectre - frontman

Additional contributions:

Emily Jarvis, voice actor

Produced, mixed, and mastered by  
C. Howie Howard.

Music & lyrics by Rob Spectre.

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Thanks:

Rob's mom, Howie's mom, Howie's dad, Scott Morris, Mr. Furious Records, the long list of musicians who ran through the revolving door of the Shaft (T-Dub, Nugget, Scott, Drew, JC), the Blue Moon Cafe in Hastings, Wickenden Street, The Living Room, Nicki Kennedy, Rex Rock and Rusty, the cities of Providence, Boston, New York, Dublin, Galway, and St. Petersburg. howie&scott, Shacker, Hot Buttered Jesus, The Nice-ups, One Track Mind, The Bright Side, Andrea LaFazia, ilyAIMY, Gein and the Graverobbers and the couple other hundred bands we played with once and never saw again. The staff of (d)NOt. Aaron Traffas and his family. Rochelle Witchelo. Ted Weil.

This record would have never happened without the dogged will of Howie Howard and his continued refusal to accept anything less than this record's release. Five years is a long time to not give up a ghost.

In memoriam - Vickie Lackey, lucky girl.

This record was inspired by the rising tide of the 21st century and released in the turbulent wake of its beginning. Fight the future. Dream not of today.

Rob is also the editor of gonzo blog Dream Not Of Today (<http://www.dreamnotoftoday.com>).

A production of Mr. Furious Records (<http://www.mrfuriousrecords.com>).

		<p><b>A Life Without Fireflies   Primer: Primary source</b></p>	<p><b>Secondary - 2008, November</b></p>
<p><b>2003</b></p>	<p>March 25, Tuesday</p>	<p>Rob, from <a href="http://www.dreamnotoftoday.com/?p=103">http://www.dreamnotoftoday.com/?p=103</a> ;</p> <p>Hang on to your pants people, this .plan entry is coming from the Project: Echo G4 Mac. Yes, this is still Rob typing and, yes, I feel very dirty. I'm planning on immediately submersing myself in a gigantic vat of boiling canola oil so that not only would the filth be off me, but I will also be delectable and tasty with ranch dressing.</p> <p>Bottom line: this place is crazy. We have more gear, more equipment, and more instruments strewn about this little room that ever previously witnessed, arguably in the history of the home. To give you an idea about where "Fireflies" is being recorded, it is a studio secreted deep within the dark, innermost sanctum of the Howard Family abode. A smallish room marked with sinister, foreboding grandmother clocks and landscape oils providing antithesis to the mess of bastardized and conglomerated technologies employed specifically for the purpose of making this record rock harder.</p> <p>Even the Man is on to our revolution. The moment I pulled up to Howie's place, I was getting ready to hop out when I noticed immediately that there was a Crete City police car lights twirling behind me. Naturally, I was less than pleased. Here I am, with Mama Howard waiting up for me... getting pulled over by the cops in front of her goddamned house. Not precisely the most opportune moment. And on pullover number 34 I finally got my first ticket: a fix-it for a left taillight. If the fuzz is on me just as I pull up to begin the record, we're probably going to have the National Guard send in a unit by the end of this week. However, it is our rock and this Revolution shall prevail!</p>	<p>Foreward:</p> <p><b>A Life Without Fireflies is a record that took two weeks to track, three months to mix and five fucking years to release.</b> Serving as the coda of my education, it was recorded over the spring break of my senior year at Howie's parents and then the week following my graduation in my mom's basement. Howie and I both participated in a singular collective of musicians in central Nebraska and that year he had started a record label out of his dorm room in an effort to get that collective on wax. He had already put out a few records with his band howie&amp;scott and one of my favorite indie rock records of all time (<i>Shacker's Pardon My Pretension But Isn't It Blackbeard's Birthday?</i>). When he indicated Mr. Furious Records would be interested in putting out a full length for Arturo Got The Shaft, I immediately seized on the opportunity to put out a punk rock opera that in my head at least was unprecedented in the history of popular music.</p> <p>It was the spring of 2003. At that point in the music project I called Arturo Got The Shaft, I'd gone through half a dozen different players and before its demise in 2006 would go through a couple dozen more. It was the last year of Bush's first term before the campaign and already it was a world</p>

March 26

Rob, from <http://www.dreamnotoftoday.com/?p=104> ; Project: Echo Log, Day 2.

**Our first full day of recording began with a chilly, mostly cloudy March 9am with plenty of promise and hope.**

However, things were not destined to go well this first day. With a new hard drive to install and drum mic-ing not completely tested, technical problems plagued the hardworking men of the Geek Rock Revolution.

Howie quickly was met with much consternation as he suffered the slings and arrows of outrageous snare tone, while I attempted to forge ahead despite heart-stopping ProTools failures and a reinstall. I seem to be taking the nonproductive day a bit easier than Howie, though my only troubles today were technical rather than musical. I suppose if my guitar was giving out hosed tone, I'd be a little more pissed off.

After some potato soup and card playing at Katie's, it is my sincere hope that tomorrow will meet early success to carry us through the rest of the day with much ease. Also, we'll have some pictures to put up and some mp3 snippets for you crazy .plan fans only.

howie: I'm amazed how much I've forgotten in five and a half years. Like Rob getting pulled over in front of my house. Or that after full days of recording, we went out to gigs and shows; sleep, eat, rinse, repeat.

My main memories of the first half of the sessions are of me manically jumping back and forth between the computer and the drum kit, incensed at myself for not being able to mic or play the drums as well or as fast as I thought I should, and doubly so because I was painfully aware I was burning up Rob's time.

gone mad. While the world was not at peace, war had seemed inconceivable just a short while ago. When we set in to record, America was balls deep in Afghanistan. We had just taken Baghdad and Bush had told the world in his flight gear that the mission was accomplished. Israel was starting to wall in Gaza. But more disturbing were the hundred little seeds of war that seemed to sprout from the conflicts we had birthed. North Korea going nuclear started to seem inevitable. The sharp-looking mayor of Tehran was promising a revolution of the Iranian youth. The Russian Federation's patience was beginning to wear with the former Soviet republic of Georgia. Even in the relative isolation of the Biblebelt, we were all feeling as though we were watching the waters recede as an awful tsunami approached.

The sharp agony of 9/11 was just starting to fade from our lives. We were getting used to the color-coded threat levels and airport security lines. The wiretaps and the waterboarding wouldn't be known until a few years later, but the public taste for the loss of peace and civil liberty was just beginning to sour. The protests were picking up even in Lincoln, NE; fear was giving way to alarm.

We would book shows in empty coffee shops and dives, driving hours to play for 45 minutes and no money.

<p>March 27</p>	<p>Rob, from <a href="http://www.dreamnotoftoday.com/?p=105">http://www.dreamnotoftoday.com/?p=105</a> ; Project: Echo Log, Day 3.</p> <p>The day that followed disaster found the Shaft working diligently and now productively towards the end goal of carefully crafted, yet hard thumping rock. Verily, we have faced much frustration and the seemingly unconquerable quandries of tone and micing, but the demos are getting fleshed into album-worthy tracks.</p> <p>Howie has almost completed all the kit tracking for the album, while I've been occupying myself crafting bass lines and doing sampler work. "Still a Princess" is kicking the both of us in the head, the speed too great for Howie's sticks or my fingers. Tomorrow bodes well for heavy rock, so it is likely that we will blast those out and get to guitar and vocal work as the weekend approaches.</p> <p>Tonight, Shacker plays in Lincoln and I'm tagging along roadie-style to get terribly soaked in Knickerbockers filth. I must remember plugs to preserve my ears for the rest of the weekend's recording; the idiot sound guy they always seem to have down there could blow the rest of this record's tracking into a tonedead land of broken promises.</p>	<p>Scraping together bills from our loose but loving network of associates, we were swimming upstream against both environment and atmosphere. The backdrop of the Britneys and the Backstreets were not yet complete farces, but a few enthusiastic crackpots with acoustic guitars were plenty far from what Nebraska wanted to hear in those times. I wouldn't describe us as soldiers then, fighting the good fight against desperate odds. What we were doing I think would have happened irrespective of any popularity we did or didn't get.</p> <p>We played shows because that's just what we were meant to do.</p> <p><b>With a dozen or so songs in tow, we went to work to making this single, loud statement against the future we were handed.</b> The boomers were gifting us a dying planet at war packaged with a cotton candy bow and we thought if we could just make one record that described it for what it for what it was, we could turn back the tide. With one piece of harmony and poetry, we could buck predestination and forge our own path. We could fight back.</p> <p>The title for the work - <i>A Life Without Fireflies</i> - came from a magic moment that might never have been. My first college sweetheart came to meet my family in Kansas and was introduced to "lightning bugs" for the first time. In that</p>
<p>March 28</p>	<p>Rob, from <a href="http://www.dreamnotoftoday.com/?p=106">http://www.dreamnotoftoday.com/?p=106</a> ; Project: Echo Log, Day 4.</p> <p>Thanks for sticking through all the site problems. They should be resolved now. For the full skinny on the situation, the folks at Spooky will let you know what has been happening and what they did to resolve it. On the stick, as always.</p> <p>The dark demon of despair fell upon our heroes as the immensity of the task that lay ahead of them becomes fully realized. The kit is now, thankfully, officially done but more important done extraordinarily well. The percussion on this record is far better than it has any rightful business being, and due solely to the three full days we've dedicated to it. We</p>	<p>The title for the work - <i>A Life Without Fireflies</i> - came from a magic moment that might never have been. My first college sweetheart came to meet my family in Kansas and was introduced to "lightning bugs" for the first time. In that</p>

captured some very fine performances by Howie and laid the foundations for what is going to be a great, not good, record.

However, **we now realize it is not at all going to be complete with the 2 days we have left.** In fact, it is very clear we are very embarrassingly behind. The goal now is to have the 12-string and bass finished by Sunday night and hopefully leave time to do some lead work and/or possibly finally laying down some rhythm. The logic employed is sound and I believe this is the most efficient use of our time. My bass playing has long since dwindled since the days of Emotional Feedback, but my music knowledge has increased greatly. The combination effect is something that does sound quite good, but also something that cannot be rushed under any circumstances. For this reason, we have selected to prioritize the bass as rhythm guitar will require a much smaller time allotment, giving me the needed cushion to fuck up.

I would type more, but I'm afraid my hands are beat to absolute hell. I played with howie&scott versus DJ Crampton in 3 long hours of hand percussion playing to a DJ spinning records. It was a real pleasure to participate in the project, made all the better by Scott's swooning of a jazz-lovin' lady at the end of the show. Ladies and gentlemen, yes, he got her phone number. w00t!

March 29

Rob, from <http://www.dreamnotoftoday.com/?p=107> ; Project: Echo Log, Day 5.

Desperation begins to change to resignation as the Shaft resolves itself to the very cold hard fact that the record is going to take a lot more time than previously anticipated. **Howie, Scott, and I are, by now, very mortally attached to "Fireflies"** and the standard that has been set requires an amazing amount of effort and time to get right. This is good, because the record will be quite excellent... But, unfortunately, I'm a graduating senior and Howie has a recording Inbox stacked a mile high even before he begins to consider howie&scott.

second when she saw one light up on her finger, it seemed to ignite a new possibility, maybe a new worldview. Her life before that moment and the promise of the life that followed served as a perfect metaphor for what I was trying to say with this record. During that spring in the dawn of the 21st century, **we were all living our lives without fireflies and searching desperately for a light that would fundamentally change the dawns that followed.**

A few years after the first aborted push to put out *Fireflies* Howie observed in an email that "our reach had exceeded our grasp." In most respects, he was right. I had no business making an opera of any sort and the product of that attempt was telling. A lush wall of instrumentation with dozen-part breakdowns and epic Highlander-esque crescendos was something I had wished desperately was within my capacity.

But were wishing to make it so, I'm not sure it would have endured the five years and three different tries to get the album out. **As the world started to crater under the weight of the bullshit that first began to pile in the spring we made this record, these songs just seemed to become more true.** Britney Spears would self-detonate, making "Silent Sparkle" seem prescient. A senator literally responsible for the Iraq war would get convicted and make

March 30, Sunday	

The master list has been made of all the parts that need to be recorded. We put a reasonably large sized dent in said list today with 12 string recording and basswork. We are on track for yesterday's goal of getting the 12 and bass tracks laid before departing and spending a whole lot of time away from the record, unfortunately more by necessity than choice. The semester is only going to get worse, so I fear I won't be able to touch the record again until school is over.

In other news, I am now a faithfully converted disciple of Blacklight Sunshine. Howie and Scott have sang their praises for almost a year now, but I have failed to see them until tonight with Scott and a few of his friends. Man, they are certainly not lacking in the rock department. Or the professionalism department. Or the chick-getting department. Or any department really; these fuckers bought up the entire rock n' roll mall. Amazing, amazing instrumentation in the strangest, yet catchiest time signatures... Tons of polished breaks all over this angst-filled rock that makes metal fun again. Top this off with top notch \*performances\* by all involved, this band is as much fun to watch as they are to listen to. There's a reason why they are one of the biggest names on the scene.

Rob, from <http://www.dreamnotoftoday.com/?p=108> ; Project: Echo Log, Day 6.

What had intended to be a swift 6-day affair has instead turned into a monumental undertaking. Today we finished some bass tracks, bounced tracks, and did some organizational planning for the completion of the record after the semester is over. The idea was tossed about to head down to Medicine Lodge to finish the album, and the more I think about it the more attractive an option it becomes. The album is still a distance away folks, but we are going to keep on top of it. Scout's Honor.

The results really are astonishing. **The album has taken a life of its own** completely independent, though built on, the efforts of

"Open Eyes" a fortune cookie for our country. And Alf would finally return to the screen, giving the mainstream an idea of who Gordon Shumway was.

These tunes were born some time ago but never mattered more than today. **It is hope hidden in nonsense; a prophecy disguised as a punchline.** We can still have a good time as the world comes crashing down around us. These are serious times indeed, but we'll only suffer more if we take them too seriously. We need to dance and to sing and to reach beyond our grasp now - this day, this year - more than ever.

This record is that anthem. I hope your life without fireflies ends today.

-Rob

		<p>myself and the other fine men involved. All hype aside, this CD is really going to make you happy.</p> <p>I was introduced to Atom and His Package by the same guy who took all the new pictures in the photo gallery. I definitely recommend his song "Upside Down From Here;" inspiring and fun. I also recommend the pictures... We had a lot of fun in this last week. Now it's time for the final push to graduation; finally, I'll be able to get some sleep.</p>	<p>Rob and howie finish their semesters; Rob graduates. <i>Fireflies</i> is on pause.</p> <p>h: I remember packing up the studio and driving to Hastings to meet Rob after commencement. We loaded up his Falcon, and I gave him a couple CDs for the drive that I nicked from KDNE, the college station I worked at, including Sigur Ros' (). He hadn't heard the band before. I don't know what I listened to on that long, surreal drive to Medicine Lodge - except I was fascinated at hearing Coldplay's "Spies" on the radio in the middle of nowhere - but Rob spun () several times. I'd never been through western Kansas before. The pancake-flat plains, occasionally broken by weird, sharp, jutting - hills? Not mountains, anyway - were out of a dream.</p>
	<p>March 31 - May 17</p>		
	<p>May 18, Sunday</p>	<p>Rob, from <a href="http://www.dreamnotoftoday.com/?p=139">http://www.dreamnotoftoday.com/?p=139</a> ; Project: Echo Log, Day 7.</p> <p>The mission continues.</p> <p>The first day of the second Fireflies session was occupied primarily with moving vital rock-making equipment to our secure, undisclosed location in the wilderness of Kansas. Secluded and far from any distractions, our rockstar heroes will be galvanizing themselves to the task of finishing this record in a week without the tangential shows either performed or attended.</p> <p>In traveling to our secret underground lair, Howie mentioned that if one were to remove the rampant industrialization, change the climate, add ubiquitous deciduous growth, and change the population to predominantly black people, Kansas would resemble the coastal plain of Ghana a great deal. The resemblance, needless to say, is tenuous at best.</p> <p>Gear will be set up into the wee hours of the night in the anxious anticipation of a solid day of rocking on the morrow. <b>The second session has officially begun.</b></p>	

<p>May 19, Monday</p>	<p>Rob, from <a href="http://www.dreamnotoftoday.com/?p=140">http://www.dreamnotoftoday.com/?p=140</a> ; Project: Echo Log, Day 8.</p> <p>The first full day of recording for the second session was a grueling 12-hour affair with Slavemaster Howard whipping his lackey into shape. The brutal Kansas weather reflecting the atrocities occurring in our underground rock bunker, I got my ass *romped* today.</p> <p>The day began innocently enough. Waking up at the crack of dawn (or 8:30am), I went on a cosmically-assisted search for a bass with which to finish the last three album tracks. I wanted to rent but ended up borrowing from Darryl Schiff, who actually had both a five-string bass and the *exact* same bass amp we had used in the earlier Fireflies session. After banging out the tracks in the morning, we went back to return the rocked out item when we discovered a further synchronistic coincidence: Earthwood strings that I had so desired for the acoustic. Rock indeed!</p> <p>The afternoon and evening (until literally 10 minutes ago) were filled with laying down acoustic track after acoustic track for this dense, texturized record. The afternoon's results were less than desired, but Howard will not take "Sir, I cannot rock any longer" as an answer. Tomorrow we have four of the trickier acoustic tracks to lay down, leaving the rest of the week for me to fuck up with lead guitar, voice, and sampler work. <b>We are now back on track to completion.</b></p>	<p>h: Another thing I'd forgotten; we drove to Kansas to finish the record, including bass tracks... <i>without a bass, or knowing where we would find one in a town of 2,000 people.</i> The chutzpah! I hope we still have it.</p>
<p>May 20, Tuesday</p>	<p>Rob, from <a href="http://www.dreamnotoftoday.com/?p=141">http://www.dreamnotoftoday.com/?p=141</a> ; Project: Echo Log, Day 9.</p> <p>Bottom line: we came to play. The second day of the second session chronicles our heroes overcoming mighty foes of blazing Shaft songs and distortion tone. Banging out the last of the acoustic rhythm tracks in the morning and finding proper tone for the wickedly punk electric were the main preoccupations of the second Shaft day, which began most appropriately enough with a Gateway Shuffle followed by a Ballad of Fallen Angels.</p>	<p>h: In addition to recording <i>Fireflies</i>, I had a singular aesthetic experience during this week. When Rob and I got too tired or frustrated to record, we'd watch Cowboy Bebop. Rob took me through the whole series, and somehow the show harmonized with the intensity of the recording experience and resonated in me like television never had, and never did again, until I was</p>



	<p>Spirits are high as we enter midweek; we've kept on top of our game and the move to Kansas seems to have facilitated that greatly. With the exception of an occasional game of frisbee and a wonderful pasta meal, absolutely no distraction has been allowed to interfere with the production of the record. In fact, only one visitor has come by... Mike of Mike's Bar, at which I'll be playing with Aaron this weekend. He was a bit alarmed at seeing two grown men answer the door in our pajamas, but we assured him, no we were not gay, and that we had been up since 9am rocking this mother.</p>	<p>introduced to Joss Whedon's... Firefly. Weird.</p>
<p>May 21, Wednesday</p>	<p>Rob, from <a href="http://www.dreamnotoftoday.com/?p=142">http://www.dreamnotoftoday.com/?p=142</a>; Project: Echo Log, Day 10.</p> <p>Sweet Jesus, this record is going to rock. Hitting the midweek turn in the second session, we finished all the electric guitar rhythm and lead tracks to absolutely astonishing effect. The songs have taken a very advanced state and their final shapes are almost palpable.</p> <p>About mid-day I broke a string on the electric which led to a horrible 3 hour fiasco in an attempt to get back the tone that we so carefully nurtured out of my Frontman amp. To make things worse, the break occurred just as I was about to pound out the second to last electric track on the record. Son of a bitch! After two different sets of strings and a whole lot of intonation fucking, I finally got the tracks done... and done to very good effect.</p> <p>Tonight we did a little preliminary vocal work on the punker tracks... I have to admit I've never felt so good singing before. <b>Finally, the symphony that has been playing in my head these past two years in the Shaft has materialized</b> in full band glory. I'm trying to remain as objective as possible in this, but I am very serious when I say this is going to be an incredible record. All bullshit and arrogance and personal bias aside, this record is going to rock your socks off.</p>	

<p>May 22, Thursday</p>	<p>Rob, from <a href="http://www.dreamnotoftoday.com/?p=143">http://www.dreamnotoftoday.com/?p=143</a>; Project: Echo Log, Day 11.</p> <p>The homestretch is here for our heroes, with the final vocal work getting cranked out this morning and afternoon. After working solidly on the record in a desperate attempt to catch up, these last two days allow us a bit of a breather and early evening - pay off for a record well rocked.</p> <p><b>The natural frustrations of reality are beginning to set in a bit, especially after the high of last night.</b> However, the Shaft remains undaunted in the face of cracking voices and unpracticed pipes. It occurred to me while singing today that, vocally, this is probably the worst of all possible times physiologically to be singing. With the absolutely *insane* last two weeks of class and graduation, my body is still going through the natural recovery that it always must go through at the end of a semester. This time around was even worse, however, because the long nights of paper writing after which I am usually able to slip into a coma afterwards were stolen by the time-consuming logistical planning of moving and getting down to Kansas.</p> <p>But, after kicking the hack onto the goddamn roof on the first kick and a little frisbee, some quality vocal work was accomplished - in my opinion, the best the Shaft has seen. Tonight I'm going to take the new record and listen to it after a run through of <i>Yes, Ray</i>. I imagine that we have all come a long way since then.</p>	
<p>May 23, Friday</p>	<p>Rob, from <a href="http://www.dreamnotoftoday.com/?p=144">http://www.dreamnotoftoday.com/?p=144</a> ; Project: Echo Log, Day 12.</p> <p>Conclusion.</p> <p>All tracking for the next release from Arturo Got The Shaft is complete, with the final supplementary parts arranging and backup vocals laid down today. The day was marked by pretty heavy humidity and temperature, resulting from the exhausts of both our rock energies and the heat generated by our</p>	<p>h: howie&amp;scott's "next album" Rob refers to is <i>signs.comets</i>, the double-CD recorded in the upstairs chapel of our home church in Crete, NE and released in early '04. The shows following marked the conclusion of regular activity for h&amp;s, as I moved to Minneapolis late that summer.</p> <p>The mixing of <i>Fireflies</i> took</p>

respective computers. I shit you not, that basement was like a goddamned jungle today. Maybe Howie was on to something in finding resemblance of Kansas to Ghana. The owner of our underground stronghold today said that we could do this again any time, but I seriously doubt she is going to follow through with that offer once she discovers that her basement will reek of Shaft for the rest of recorded history. And, either literally or figuratively, that is never good.

For fans of Shaft heartbreaker “I Love You Too,” I hope you are fucking happy. **The record, for the most part, has been marked by cosmic coincidences that consistently fall in our favor**, a synchronicity that will come through in resonating clarity throughout the tracks. However, that particular son of a bitch (and, yes, that bitch was me) did *\*not\** under any circumstances want to get made. Between losing an entire vocal take to a freak computer process and utterly obliterating a guitar punch requiring a complete re-do, it was easily the hardest song to lay down on the album. This is not good for a song weighing in at a whopping three tracks.

Sequencing talk and reminiscing about the experience have predominated teardown, with Howie departing tomorrow before Aaron and I obliterate Medicine Lodge through rockioactive blast. Mixing will largely be done over the course of the next few months as howie&scott finish their next album, and we all get some time to step away from the songs and gain perspective. **With these two sessions two months apart, distance has added perspective that gave the record all kinds of dimension. Hopefully, this effect will be the same for mixing...** arguably just as important of a part of record-making as recording or songwriting.

Check back in a few days for a special sneak preview that I’m going to sneak past the submersion guards... I can’t wait until people hear what we’ve done.

place while Scott and I were recording, during nights ScoMo couldn’t come to the studio. Being alone in such an empty, old, dark, hot place was probably not conducive to successful mixes; I was frustrated by the difficulty of recording *signs.comets*, our pace of progress, and the physical conditions. We were fighting to translate the magic we felt making the record into a coherent listening experience, and getting farther away with each round of mixes.

Eventually, in early October, I left to spend a semester in Ghana while Scott worked on the pressing of our record and Rob pulled a new Shaft together in Rhode Island.

*Fireflies* was pushed to the back burner by circumstances; it was vulnerable because the mixes weren’t working.

2004	
2005	April 24
	December 26
	October 2, 3:27 P M

Howie, from <http://mrfuriousrecords.com/wordpress/2005/04/a-eureka-moment/> ; “Rob and I also recorded a full record, plus b-sides, together in spring/summer 2003. It yielded some solid stuff, but *A Life Without Fireflies* was ultimately abandoned - Rob and the Shaft are very active in Rhode Island right now, using much of the Fireflies material.”

Howie, from <http://mrfuriousrecords.com/wordpress/2005/12/mixing-pecan-tassies/> ; “Rob and I recorded together in summer 2002 [sic], and I mixed that record over and over and over. The result was thin; not a pleasant pastry. This fall, when I noticed that those mixes were still up on Rob’s MySpace, I took an afternoon off and remixed half (the punk half) of *Fireflies*. I was decisive (didn’t over-work) and sensitive (didn’t over-cut); the result was a big, warm, energetic sound.”

From: howie@mrfuriousrecords.biz  
 To: Rob@theinternet.web  
 Subject: Fireflies thought

OK, I've been listening to the 2005 remixes and the last version of the full record. I'd forgotten that after I made those remixes, I deleted the ProTools files to open up some space for other stuff. :- ( One more lesson in the value of removable HDs, I guess. So we have what we have.

h: After coming home the second time from Ghana I was living at home, writing my senior thesis, playing with Scott to promote *signs.comets*, and recording the first echoes EP, *nickel*. I don’t know now if I worked on *Fireflies* at all, if Rob and I had agreed on the status of the album and where work on it was headed, or if all the energy behind it just diffused into the ether.

h: In the fall of 2005 I remixed six songs from Fireflies for the Shaft’s MySpace page

h: At some point in summer 2008, I found Rob’s new blog ( [www.dreamnotoftoday.com](http://www.dreamnotoftoday.com) ) and we started talking about *Fireflies*.

A Life Without Fireflies EP

1. Prologue/Silent Sparkle
2. Pants & Backpacks
3. Still a Princess
4. Open Eyes
5. Like a Dreamer
6. Hey! Gordon Shumway

===Alternative=== Fireflies LP

1. Prologue/Silent Sparkle
2. Pants & Backpacks
3. Only Way She Knows How (remaster from 2003 mix)
4. Open Eyes
5. Like a Dreamer
6. Imagine Nations (remaster from 2003 mix)
7. Something Transcendent (remaster from 2003 mix)
8. Still a Princess
9. I Love You, Too (from 2003 mix)
10. Hey! Gordon Shumway

Furious Instance: Blame it on the Beer

XMAS: 25d (new)

Only Way, Imagine Nations, and Something Transcendent are all better than I remembered. I'd like to at least burn a new copy and listen to something like the LP tracklist above, and see what it does emotionally.

The Revolution is a good song, but never quite gelled in the studio. Thunderheads has the awesome fingerpicked part, but the rest is a bit over-wrought - more in the production than anything else. It has some lyrics I really like, too, but it's on *Yes Ray* and *Blades* so I think it's represented well.

I guess the question I'm trying to answer is "What combination of songs will lead other people to an experience of what Fireflies means to me?" Or something like that. Which is why I want to consider a range of things. On the one hand, I like how the EP is this quick punk blast through your worldview and story.

		<p>On the other, there's a depth and diversity to the "Fireflies" concept that you don't get from the EP.</p> <p>Or I might be overthinking... -h</p>
	<p>October 11, 10:10 P M</p>	<p>From: Proost, CJ  To: Rob@theinternet.web  Subject: the good ol' dayz</p> <p>hey I'm sure your sick of these e-mails but do you where I can get some Arturo got the shaft cds/mp3s I miss you guys. I hope your doing well in cali.</p> <p>C J</p>
	<p>October 22, 2:15 P M</p>	<p>From: howie@mrfuriousrecords.biz  To: Rob@theinternet.web  Subject: do you want to release Fireflies on nov. 23?</p> <p>... as a DIY, punk rock middle finger to GN' R?</p> <p>-h</p>
	<p>2:21 PM</p>	<p>From: Rob@theinternet.web  To: howie@mrfuriousrecords.biz  Subject: RE: do you want to release Fireflies on nov. 23?</p> <p>Are we confident Chinese Democracy is actually coming out then?</p> <p>*rimshot*</p> <p>... Absolutely I would love to pick a fight with Axl Rose and, in many ways, <i>Fireflies</i> is the exact opposite of everything that <i>Chinese Democracy</i> represents ... Rob</p>

