

Here is my best stuff. My friends and I sorted it out via the blog at www.mrfuriousrecords.com, and the results are... scattered.

I don't have a sound or a style so much as a theme, or a posture; my songs aim to be unpredictable enough to have an edge, but catchy enough that there's a chorus or a riff or a line to hang on to.

There isn't a quintessential howie-record; there probably won't ever be; I wish there were. My repertoire is in a constant state of incompleteness, and it makes me uneasy. As beautiful as the Mr. Furious community is, I never get the sense that we succeed in telling the whole story. Maybe that's what keeps me writing.

Thanks for paying something for this record to help send us to Tijuana to build a house for somebody who doesn't have one. Your gift makes you present with us when we build; this music makes us present with you when you listen and sing along. All the legwork of a miracle is realized, whatever we choose to call it. -h

1- "Snow is a Bear"



Album: *XMAS* (Mr. Furious Records compilation), 2007-December-12

Vocal melody by Joel Hines, flute by Scott Morris

Even though it's a Christmas song, I wanted to kick off this comp with it because of the reaction listeners had to its release. The production seemed to strike people as a couple notches up from anything else I've done, and Joel's melody adds a twist to what otherwise would have been a very simple song.

2- "J. Cougar Mellensong"



Album: *Be A Ska Rat* EP, 2006-January-2

Backing vocals by Cory Kibler

I tried really hard to keep this song under two minutes, and it would have been if not for the distort-y organ sound at the end. It really is just a simple, fun, all-American song, which is the greatest challenge for me to write.

3- "Coast & Plains"



Album: *Furious Instance*, 2006-March-29

Lyrics and vocal melody by Cory Kibler

I recorded *Lone Wolf* in Nick King's spare bedroom, because singing in my apartment made me a bit self-conscious. Besides being the first tune that Cory and I co-wrote in a true 50/50 sense, I included it on *Wolf* as a preview of my *Ventura* album... which is still un-recorded.

4- "New Slow Sea"



Album: *It's A Trap* (Sally Ride), 2006-December-20

Backing vocals by Cory Kibler

The chorus and title for this song grew out of its pre-lyrics working title, "New Slow C" (for the key it's in). It's not one I play often because it captured the

feeling of waking up from a specific dream well enough to bring that emotion back, and it's not an easy one to live with. I know it's a favorite song of Cory's, though, and I trust his valuation; he's lived with this stuff at least as much as anyone else.

5- "What U Do 2 Me"



Album: *Don't Let Them Take Us... ALIVE!* (Sally Ride), 2005-October-30

Anti-shreddingest guitar solo ever and backing vocals by Cory Kibler

The *ALIVE!* record has held up better than I expected. Sally Ride started as a joke between Cory and I after I spontaneously wrote "A Come-On" (which was obviously not a howie&scott song); we laughed about how funny it would be to write a record that sounded like all the late-80s/early-90s indie rock we liked (Pixies, Weezer, Radiohead, etc.) and pretended like our songs had actually co-existed with that stuff. It took almost four years to get from "A Come-On" to the actual release of *ALIVE!*, but I continue to love the album because we fully realized it; the result does very nearly 100% of what we hoped it would.

6- "Open Columns" (acoustic)



Album: *Tonight the Lone Wolf Rides... Alone*, 2006-April-5

I remember writing this tune on my parents' back steps. Sitting on concrete, late afternoon summer sun, coffee mug, and having just finished reading "The Power of One." I don't remember many songs that way. "Chemicals" to

me means both external substances and brain chemistry; it seems that addiction to and abuse of cocaine, self-righteousness, alcohol, and pheromones all lead to similar places in our lives.

7- "Tired Chords" (live)



Album: *Summer's End* (howie&scott), 2006-October-1

Drums by Scott Morris

If there's one song of mine I want you to hear, it's this one. I don't know why. It has the elements I like to play with, but I feel something more in it too; something beyond me. There isn't a recording to do it full justice (yet?), but this one comes closest.

8- "Stop Walking" (live)

Album: *Summer's End* sessions; previously unreleased

Drums and sax by Scott Morris

We recorded *Summer's End* through one microphone placed in the back of the band room at Plattsmouth (NE) Middle School, as we played for Scott's band students. I couldn't hear my own voice when we cranked up. "We won't stop 'til we reach an end / but this feels like an end" – that line has become something h&s listeners share. Maybe more than a few of us feel the desperate hope, and are shocked near-to-paralysis by the agony we see in the world. I'm grateful we share it; after playing this song a couple times, I wasn't strong enough to carry it myself any more.

9- "Major & Minor" (acoustic)

Recorded at home, 2008-March-17

I wanted to include at least one new song with this comp, and based on comments at the MFR blog this tune emerged as an excellent candidate for an acoustic version as a fan fave from the howie&scott era. The chords have been re-arranged from *comets'* buzzy power chords to a more open feel. It was a first take. I do kind of miss ScoMo singing "Home!" behind the last lines...

10- "Set You Ablaze"



Album: *Killers in the Nebraska Territory* (Lone Prairie Records compilation), 2006-October-24

The crash you hear at the track's start is me breaking out of my glass-doored closet with a pants hanger, bloodying my knuckles. I'd put the mic in there, pressed "record," gone in and closed the door to get a dead, isolated sound... not realizing that there was no inside door handle. Lucky the door was glass; when I finished playing and realized what I had done, I thought for a second I'd die. That's the take you hear.

11- "Back in the Fire"

Album: *It's A Trap* (Sally Ride), 2006-December-20

Backing vocals by Cory Kibler, Katy Lindhart, Jill & Tim Gillespie, Joel Hines, Matt Pluff, Danny Lange, and Eric Cornwell

This is one of my favorite stories; a WWII sharpshooter who falls in love with his target through the sights of his rifle. Sally Ride stuff has accidentally ended up dealing very often with war and its impact. I love that all of my friends sing with me on "Crawl back in the fire..." and now whenever I play it I add Joel's obnoxiously awesome southern rock "There's nooooo neeeeeeed!" It's the kind of song I imagine I might be able to get away with playing at the Nebraska State Fair before Toto comes on.

12- "The Picture Song"

Album: *Tonight the Lone Wolf Rides... Alone*, 2006-April-5

"The Picture Song," formerly known as "Hymn for our TMD*" in its electric incarnation on howie&scott's *b.sides* EP, is a pretty weird song to have become a listener favorite. I wouldn't have picked it! Who knew that fractured reflections on transhumanism would resonate?

*Technological manifest destiny

13- "America Votes 2032"



Album: *nickel* EP, 2004-September-21

Speech samples from Eleanor Roosevelt, Hillary Clinton, and the former First Lady of Tennessee

I hope we elect our first woman to the Presidency before 2032 (we've already come closer, in 2008, than I thought we would by now!). As for the odds that she'll be a Republican, as she is in this song... well, here I betray my optimism. I love the riff at the end so much, and it's not a keyboard; it's my freak guitar pickup running through my freak octave pedal, which creates a near-perfect fundamental pitch with no higher harmonics (i.e., it sounds like a geek keyboard). We launched MFR with *nickel* and Shacker's *Knowing Her Best* as our first two releases.

14- "The Last Song"

Album: *Don't Let Them Take Us... ALIVE!* (Sally Ride), 2005-October-30

Lead guitar by Cory Kibler

Has anyone said?
Cacophonous whispers
I think we're alone now
Flying alone. And we're so fast, but it's
No vacation to be with you
Here or at home
So make it simple, make me believe
You can stop being honest
 So this is the message that I've
 heard
 First it's your President, and then
 it's your girl
 A voice from every angle,
 shouting broken dreams
 Everyone's an actor
 I'm waiting in the wings
 So you can stop being honest
 You can stop being true
 No one believes now, and no
 one knows what to do
Even with this letter, make me want
Who sees the forest now that it's dark?
What everyone said; I've heard enough
You can stop being honest