

## **Twice Around The Mountain**

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Dan Oakenhead: vocals, guitars, whistles, piano, synthesizers, banjo, harmonica, percussion.

Background vocals: Boris Borealis, Virgil Brinkmann.

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Whistles.

\*All names mentioned in "Isn't It Amazing" are fictitious.

### **1. Aerial Dreams (So Long Michael Hedges)**

*This guitar improvisation is dedicated to the memory of Michael Hedges, one of the most inspiring and innovative guitarists of our time.*

### **2. 17 Rules**

#### **(Wonder Is The Key To It All)**

*My friend Happy Simpleton, close relation to Thunderman, brings back these wonderful thoughts and observations collected from far and wide, including visits to the Yak 'n Blab Café in Blue Glen, near Upper Lower Falls. No, this is not about being seventeen years old*

*and thus "seventeen rules!" Think again.*

You are infinite and eternal  
everything you do and think and say matters  
kindness expands you  
anger reduces  
wonder is the key to it all

giving is the quickest way to happiness  
sacrifice is a simple exchange of energy  
you are self luminous  
pain and suffering are reminders  
humor makes you into an angel

life is a journey  
heart is the guide  
laughter is the vehicle  
infinity's the ride  
I believe that Jesus  
is just what he said he was  
if you don't mind  
I think I'll take it from him

dying is a gateway to a light show  
mind can be your greatest enemy or a finer tool  
if you make it too serious  
it'll take you for a fool  
wonder is the key to it all

life is a journey  
heart is the guide  
laughter is the vehicle  
infinity's the ride  
I believe all the Buddhas  
are just what they said they were  
if you don't mind  
I think I'll take it from them

### **3. Thunderman**

He rides in at night  
on the winds of a thunderstorm  
wearing his ozone cologne  
his eyes are ablaze  
with the deep red reflection  
of the fabled philosopher's stone  
his cloudy hair falls in a tumbling nimbus  
of all the unknown and unseen

he touches each tree  
with his shining wet fingers  
running rivulets down to the ground  
every green leaf glows in the moonlight  
with the ultimate parting of clouds

he places his feet in the rich loamy soil  
making lakes with every stride  
he carries a staff of lightning and thunder  
which he casts about into the night

he's always followed by the wildest of ladies  
whose passions rain down on us all  
she washes us clean with her silvery raindrops  
at the Thunderman's echoing call

he booms and he rumbles  
like the movement of mountains  
from the deepest of dark mystery  
and he rides out by morning  
on the rays of the sunrise  
in the wake of a summer night's dream

#### **4. After The Storm**

*This piece began as a piano improvisation  
recorded in the summer of 2000.*

#### **5. Bound To Fly**

I'm not here and I'm not there  
an empty head with a mind of air  
oh I tell ya, I'm feelin' fine  
came in the front door, goin' out the back  
stepping off of this lunatic track  
don't hold me down 'cause I feel I'm bound to fly

it feels so fine to take my time  
to go so slow like a fine aged wine  
why was I runnin' from place to place  
you just can't win this human race

who was that laughin' in last night's dream  
what was so funny now, what did it mean  
I think I'll stay here til I work it all out  
when I finally read between the lines

I'll be long long gone on the other side  
don't try to find me 'cause I feel I'm bound to fly

when heaven called I was nowhere to be found  
I lost my place from all this foolin' around

that old road was a path of lies  
Beelzebub in a business disguise  
he took the wheel, nearly drove me on down  
I'm gonna stay here in the mornin' light  
gonna stay here til I get it right  
don't hold me down 'cause I feel I'm bound to fly

I'm not here and I'm not there  
an empty head with a mind of air  
way up in the southern sky  
lazin' 'round a magnolia tree  
is that a cloud above or is that me  
don't hold me down 'cause I feel I'm bound to fly

it feels so fine to take my time  
to go so slow like a fine aged wine  
why was I runnin' from place to place  
you just can't win this human race

gonna stay here in the mornin' light  
gonna stay here til I get it right  
don't hold me down 'cause I feel I'm bound to fly

## **6. Isn't It Amazing \***

Emmanuel can throw a football a hundred yards  
Anthony plays guitar like a wild man  
Nicole can dance and sing, isn't it amazing  
and young Lin Chen makes mathematics  
jump through rings  
isn't it amazing what the kids can do  
given proper avenues  
there's nothing they can't do

Jessica cries alone each day on the playground  
Mason sells weed out behind the school  
Terry points a knife at just about anyone  
Lisa says if you mess with her she knows  
where to get a gun  
isn't it amazing what the kids can do  
given proper avenues  
there's nothing they can't do

Franklin works each day until 9:00 p.m.  
but he gives Mason rides in his Lexus  
on the weekends  
Susan chairs countless committees,  
heaven knows she's committed  
Lisa says she hates her mom  
because she has so many jobs

old James goes wandering through  
the neighborhood  
has a smile and a seasonal greeting for everyone  
every woman man and child  
comes away with a newborn smile  
James keeps going from early dawn  
until the setting sun  
isn't it amazing what old James can do  
takes a kinder avenue  
there's nothing he can't do  
isn't it amazing what we all can do  
take a kinder avenue  
there's nothing we can't do

### **7. Twice Around The Mountain**

*In some cultures circumambulating a sacred place, such as a mountain, is considered spiritually auspicious. Makes sense to me. Thanks Steve Mesplé for emphatic enthusiasm about this piece, and for calling for absolute quiet in the shop while I played this one afternoon over at Wildwood Guitars.*

### **8. Old Songs**

*For nearly a decade I walked and hitchhiked tens of thousands of miles across the USA and Canada, and as far and wide as Ireland, Norway, Polynesia, and New Zealand. A look back at the yearnings for the open road, and the friends, songs, memories, and adventures that went with those times. Thanks to Mike Lipsey for the reminiscences, and for being out on many of those same roads.*

Over the meadow  
beyond the edge of the world

I saw a river of silver light  
through a wishful tear in my eye  
maybe you can tell me  
if you will just give it a try  
tell me what do you see  
what do you see

old songs  
Dylan and Simon  
old pages of Kerouac  
all seem so far gone  
harmony  
the eyes of tranquility  
waters of yesterday  
a dried up stream

I think I'll go out for a ride  
to the edge of the night  
and stand by the side of the road  
I won't be back for a while  
'til I've felt the miles  
and the easing of this heavy load

old songs  
Lennon and Sebastian  
Quicksilver Messenger  
brings it all into view  
home fields  
plow under another year  
thunder is echoing  
the memory of you

seems like a million miles gone  
since we said so long  
and I wish I could see you again  
you always saw farther than me  
felt the storms on the wind  
I could sure use the eyes of a friend

over the meadow  
beyond the edge of the world  
I saw a river of silver light  
through a wishful tear in my eye  
maybe you can tell me  
if you will just give it a try  
tell me what do you see  
what do you see

## 9. Utah Sunset

There's a cold wind blowing up the spine  
of December and the fire's burning bright  
in my shining home in Wondervu  
the winter's put out for the night  
the sky's so blue and the night's so clear  
and my heart still lingers there  
a lovely lady who lives so high  
used to comfort me at night  
and I don't know if I'll ever return  
and see those crystal skies  
and the stars that shower over the divide  
and its all that I can do sometime  
to lay me down at night all alone

now I love the rolling frosty hills  
of New Hampshire in the morn  
the October breeze blows the broken leaves  
'cross the shadows in the road  
the old white homes in the hills  
of New England are standing in the sun  
they have the softest glow for a  
wandering soul and a story to be sung  
so I think sometime I'll travel there  
and see the autumn dream  
and the miles and miles of rainbow colored hills  
and its all that I can do sometimes  
to settle down very long in a home  
'cause an eagle's hunting overhead  
across the yellow sky  
and I hear the message

I can see my troubles on a distant mesa  
covered by the dew  
as the sun goes down on an age old frown  
I head to Wondervu  
I left my blues on the Utah sunset  
painted in the sky  
with a desert brush and a loving touch  
and a goodbye tear in my eye  
and the north wind swept my blues to red  
and spread them far and wide  
as they melted into clouds in the western sky  
and its all that I can do sometimes to recall  
all the clouds I've let go  
'cause an eagle's hunting overhead  
across the yellow sky  
and I hear the message in his cry

## 10. Early Snowfall

*Written during the dead heat of summer,  
out back where only a faint warm breeze stirred.  
Apparently I was having winter thoughts,  
pointed out by Paul Martin when he came up with  
the title.*

## 11. Danny Has Wandered Beyond

*Long ago, growing up in Ohio, I would use up  
summer days laying on the grass watching  
clouds, on hot nights gazing at stars, and on rainy  
days sitting alone near a window watching raindrops  
ripple the reflections of tree branches in the big  
puddles outside. During those times I could easily  
glide out of myself and wander beyond. Fortunately  
some things are not forgotten.*

Lay in a field of rich summer grasses  
under an open sky  
lifting off on a cumulous passage  
into the far and wide  
so free and high  
master of the sky  
what is this magic inside of me  
the endless feeling  
the laughter and the reeling  
Danny has wandered beyond, beyond belief

lay in a field of rich summer grasses  
under an August night  
lifting off on a galaxy passage  
through the northern lights  
out beyond the moon  
I will not be home soon  
what is this power inside of me  
the endless feeling  
the laughter and the reeling  
Danny has wandered beyond, beyond belief

endless you  
endless me  
wrapped around eternally

all alone on a rainy Monday



in a silent dream  
easing in to double vision  
passing in between  
the peace within  
it never ends  
what is this heaven inside of me  
the endless feeling  
the laughter and the reeling  
Danny has wandered beyond, beyond belief

## **12. Peace Will Come**

I need one person to say that peace will come  
and I need someone to say I believe in love  
this old heart is pounding like a native drum  
sending out a message to reach someone

hold down the madness for just one more night  
come on up with me, we can make it right  
just you and me and the setting sun  
sending out a message to everyone

late last night I saw the flames up high  
a thousand years of smoke burning in my eye  
out here on Crazy Street it feels mighty hard  
where every eye conceals a lonely heart

open up your shade now, let the light shine in  
I need to breathe in your garden air again  
lay down your lovin' song  
one more time before you go  
sending out a message to ease my soul

I want to hear one woman say peace will come  
and I want to hear one man say,  
say I believe in love  
this old heart is pounding like a native drum  
sending out a message to reach someone  
I want to hear you say that peace will come

## **13. Home**

*Piano improvisation recorded September 3, 2000.*