



**IAN SHAW**  
**THE THEORY**  
**OF JOY**

For this collection of songs I was keen to capture the relationship between "The Jazz Singer" and his trio. This is the first entire album of mine to explore this very particular, and I guess, traditional sound (think Carmen, Ella, Sarah, Betty Carter, Mark Murphy). My previous releases have been textural, layered and arranged, style-specific to big band, string quartet, pop/rock-meets-jazz, acoustic funk...or simply piano/vocal.

Spending time in the acoustically beautiful Snap! Studios, with the engineer I've worked alongside (albeit as me-as-producer on many a vocal-led album), Joe Leach, of Cowshed Studio fame, with my trio, felt like a natural process, and a logical conclusion to touring these songs for two years. Having the esteemed, sharp and honest ears of one of the world's greatest jazz singers, Claire Martin, oversee the recording affair was an inestimable luxury. We are close friends, through work and through life, and her sage advice, musical and otherwise, has always enhanced my decisions.

The songs were all arranged by me. I'm forever singing over other people's work (which I love!) but, as a direct result of showing audiences the world over how affecting the lyrical twists of a Bowie, Bart or Legrand can feel, with just piano, bass and drums, this ownership feels right.

There's a tune of mine here and there too. "All This And Betty Too" tells (through a be-bop workout with the trio) the story of my frequent visits to the legendary Ronnie Scott's jazz club in London's Soho, especially to hear and watch the daring onstage antics of Betty Carter. A masterclass for me (and Claire, as you'll hear!) in the true art of (fast) jazz singing, how to float over the chords, the sheer thrill of unison bass and voice, and how to hear the drummer. "My Brother" is everyone's tale, and takes its cues from the kind of 45rpm records I bought as a kid (Gilbert O'Sullivan, Elton John). It took twenty minutes to write. So did "Somewhere Towards Love", originally a solo recording (from the album of the same name), here re-recorded, extended a bit and Jobimified for the album.

There's a Joni Mitchell, a Bob Dorough/Fran Landesman, a Cy Coleman (chosen by Claire), a Traffic song I've always longed to do, a song that Streisand sang in a film . . . and a Brel song where I break the mould and play the piano for myself. It was, after all, a Bosendorfer. I'm only human.

Ian Shaw, Summer 2015.

## All This And Betty Too

At war with mediocrity  
The lady gives it all she's got  
Weaving and ducking and diving  
Blowing be-bop, icy hot  
Sweet Benny meets her gaze  
Tight and loose  
Junk that juice  
Breathing, sighing in a sequined hat  
She needs a bit of that

In time with no one else but she  
The verses sigh, the quavers sway  
Valentine, funny, hello  
To Everytime We Say Goodbye  
She's singing out with Ray  
Feel the cold  
Jelly Roll  
Dancing, smoke and shizzle, booze and hiss  
She loves a bit of this

I sat with my best pal, Claire Martin  
In the well at Ronnie Scott's  
Scored to the gills and inspired  
Moonbeams, stars and polkadots  
We end up dropping things  
Of one mind  
Carter's kind  
Scowling, prowling, an Egyptian cat  
Give me a bit of that





## My Brother

My brother  
My brother  
My brother would have kept a close watch  
Explained the unknown  
Played the bass trombone  
In a marching-band

My brother  
My brother  
My brother would have married a nurse  
I could have played in the church  
Watch him carefully find his sweetheart's hand

My brother was strong  
From our father's side  
His back, straight and long  
And when my father cried  
Because he didn't understand what I just couldn't say  
My brother was there for us all anyway

My brother  
My brother  
My brother would have bought me a beer  
In a New York bar  
Said I'd gone too far  
"Try to be a better man"

My brother  
My brother  
My brother left a message for me  
He said he'd left his wife to be free  
We're not all perfect, you'll see  
My brother and me

My brother was tall  
From our father's side  
Too tall to tumble and fall  
But when my father died  
He gathered us in like little birds in a nest  
He did what he could, he just did his best

My brother  
My brother  
My brother lies in peace, so they say  
Like we all do one day  
Whatever the hell we believe

My brother  
My brother  
My brother still keeps a close watch  
Still explains the unknown  
I hear his bass trombone  
Sometimes

## Somewhere Towards Love

It's the space between the houses where the sky is showing through  
It's the chapter in the book you didn't think was really you  
It's the look across a room from a man you'll never know  
It's a shadow in July, it's a whisper, it's a show

On a day like any other with a half-remembered friend  
It's the table in the corner, it's the song without an end  
It's a quarrel over something that you really didn't say  
It's moment in a moment, a play within a play

Some things you can hold, tight in your hand  
Some things unfold, some things are planned  
Sometimes beyond, sometimes above  
Always for you, somewhere towards love

From a heart that's growing darker with the passing of the years  
There are blessings to be counted at the end of all the tears  
It's the one who wouldn't leave you, it's the one that got away  
It's the child you couldn't father or the words you couldn't say

It's the touch of a perfect stranger who became a perfect friend  
It's the waiting for the phone call, it's the card you mustn't send  
To the one who'll always be there when your days are getting rough  
He's the one who thinks about you but it isn't quite enough

Some things you can hold, tight in your hand  
Some things unfold, some things are planned  
Sometimes beyond, sometimes above  
Always for you, somewhere towards love

It's the coolest of encounters, it's the shortest sweet embrace  
It's the sudden lightning shock you knew that one day you would face  
It's a wink, a smile, a simple touch, your fingers couldn't trace  
It's the one you thought you'd need so much nobody could take his place

Some things you don't see, some things you let go  
Some things you free, some things you let show  
Sometimes beyond, sometimes above  
Always be true, somewhere towards love

