

Dean Owens has a new single out today – A Song For the Dark Times

The new single released this week by Edinburgh singer Dean Owens has the same title as Ian Rankin's latest book, and that is completely deliberate.

The singer was chatting with Ian Rankin at the Cash Back event in Fife which Dean organised and Rankin was speaking at. Two weeks later the lockdown began and Owens was woken each morning by the blackbird outside his window. At 4.30am each day the bird was singing its heart out while we are all told to stay indoors.

Dean says: "The blackbird's song really got stuck in my head, and one morning instead of tossing, turning and cursing, I got up and the song just came out. Ian's book title was also resonating in my head and it all just came together. I let Ian hear a rough sketch and he really liked it".

The next step was to send it to Calexico drummer, John Convertino in El Paso, Texas, with whom Dean had recently collaborated (along with the rest of the band) on his next album, *Sinner's Shrine* (due out in 2021).

John was likewise very enthusiastic and offered to come up with drum parts from his home studio. The song was completed by AMA-UK Instrumentalist of the Year Thomas Collison in London, who added keys, mellotron, bass and slide. It was then

mixed and mastered at Slate Room Studio, Scotland. The result is a beautiful piece of melancholia, with a touch of Ronnie Lane and a bit of a “last chance saloon” feel, especially via Convertino’s drums.

Dean: “I was bowled over that John liked the song so much. He’s reckoned to be one of the best drummers ever, and I’m delighted he has been so enthusiastic about collaborating. Tom Collison is part of my Southerners band and it’s been so frustrating not to be out on the road with them this year, so being able to collaborate long distance is a little bit of compensation”

Finally, Dean’s regular video maker Ruth Barrie (Waltzer Films) was inspired to come up with a video (at very short notice) that is ethereal, moody and slightly psychedelic, enhancing both the darker shades and the lighter moods of the song beautifully.

A Song For The Dark Times – the book, the song and the video, continue to be tied together – with Rankin’s book being published today 1 October and Dean’s song released tomorrow, 2 October. It’s available on all digital platforms, but especially on the highly musician friendly site [Bandcamp](#). And a lucky few early bird Waterstones customers in Scotland can get a free download of Dean’s single when they buy a copy of Ian’s book.

A Song For The Dark Times is Dean’s 5th single release since lockdown. The 4 previous ones – *Hope*, *Rise*, *To Where The Heart Is* and *Let The Day In* (with Denmark’s Oscar Mukherjee) – are now gathered together, with 3 other tracks, on an exclusive Bandcamp bundle – *Single File*.

