



the music of MORTOWN
MOON

*This album was conceived by musicians
Sandy Asirvatham and ellen cherry as a
40th anniversary tribute to Pink Floyd's
The Dark Side of the Moon. It celebrates
Baltimore's thriving arts scene and
features more than 40 performers
from many styles of music.*





BSO OrchKids



Jen Smith & Scott Smith



Lea Gilmore

1. The City Speaks (0:58) by Sandy Asirvatham

Mobtown Moon opens with a sonic collage. Baltimore's industrial side is captured in the whirr of a hydraulic lift, the quick pulse of a ratchet, and the grinding of a garbage boat in the harbor. Maryland Zoo trainer Mike McClure urges elephant Samson to "Speak!" A school pep rally goes into full swing and a raven caws. The sounds were collected by city dwellers as part of the Baltimore Soundscape Project coordinated by Hearing and Speech Agency (HASA).

2. Breathe (chant version) (1:11) by Roger Waters, David Gilmour and Richard Wright
vocals Brian Simms & Vincent Stringer

In this Gregorian chant-style invocation, opera singer Vincent Stringer holds down bass and baritone parts while tenor parts are handled by rock/pop vocalist Brian Simms (Junkyard Saints, Speakers of the House). The vast difference in their respective musical genres indicates things to come. The arrangement owes its sound to Asirvatham's 1990s experience singing early European church music with composer Toby Twining. It casts the album as a kind of secular service for those who "worship" the original.

3. Breathe (4:33) by Waters, Gilmour, Wright
vocals Sandy Asirvatham & Ellen Cherry; piano Sandy Asirvatham; trumpet Ben Frock; electric bass Jeff Reed; drums Frank Russo; guitar Scott Smith; accordion Brian Simms; background vocals Brian Simms & Vincent Stringer

One musical goal was to inject new rhythmic attitude into these songs, as in this jazz-pop treatment. Dual vocals by Asirvatham and Cherry highlight bittersweet lyrics. The track was recorded in April 2011 as a demo, but was clearly a keeper. Wistful accordion licks from Simms balance Gilmour-esque guitar work by Naked Blue's Scott Smith. Smith is also the recording/mixing engineer for the album (the "Alan Parsons" of the project).

4. On The Run (3:43) by Gilmour and Waters
banjo Andrew Grimm; pedal steel Dave Hadley; drum programming & bells Ellen Cherry & Scott Smith; sound assembly, tuning radio, & Moog Ellen Cherry

Originally a groundbreaking synth track, this piece was re-imagined by arranger Cherry as a trippy duo for banjo player Andrew Grimm (of June Star fame) and pedal steel master Dave Hadley. Reaching for a sound she imagined as "banjo whales," Cherry used looping, samples, digital effects, and programmed drums to create the background for this 'twang in the city' piece.





Todd Marcus

Jake Leckie

Femi the DriFish & David Ross

Brian Simms

Vincent Stringer

5. Time (5:11) Time by: Waters, Nicholas Mason, Gilmour, Wright; Breathe reprise by: Waters, Gilmour, Wright
lead vocal/piano/organ Brian Simms; guitar Warren Boes; electric bass Matthew Everhart; drums Christian Stengle; Breathe reprise vocal Vincent Stringer; background vocals ellen cherry
 Matthew Everhart, Christian Stengle, and Simms of bugaloo band Speakers of the House shaped the track's slow-rock groove and unique bass line. In his guitar solo, local legend Warren Boes (The All Mighty Senators) quotes Gilmour before staking his own territory. Things take a surprising turn when Stringer enters with an aria-style version of the Breathe reprise.

6. The Great Gig In The Sky (5:55) by Wright and Clare Torry
vocal Sandy Asirvatham; violin Nicholas Currie; viola Kačë Zahradnik; cello Tim Anderson; bassoon Bryan Young; organ Brian Simms; guitar Warren Boes; drums Christian Stengle; electric bass Matthew Everhart

Richard Wright's melancholy piano intro is transformed into an uptempo chamber group prelude for violin, viola, cello, and bassoon. This gives way to a slow rock groove on B-3 organ, bass, drums, and guitar. Asirvatham improvises a subdued and jazzy vocal line that slowly intensifies.

7. Money (4:24) by Waters
vocal/guitar Cris Jacobs; piano/keyboards Sandy Asirvatham; acoustic bass Jake Leckie; drums Mike Gambone

A rising star of the roots/jam-band scene, vocalist Cris Jacobs lends his bluesy sound and unique phrasing to this classic rock song. For the verse, Asirvatham, Mike Gambone, and Jake Leckie combined the original 7-beat bass line with a straight 4/4 blues. The result is a tricky 15-beat pattern (4-4-3-4).

8. Dream/Counterfeit (2:35) by Asirvatham (poems used by permission by David Ross and Munis Lawal)
spoken word David "Native Son" Ross & Femi The DriFish; guitar Cris Jacobs; piano Sandy Asirvatham; acoustic bass Jake Leckie; drums Mike Gambone

Baltimore's hip-hop tradition is represented by this commissioned piece featuring spoken word artists The 5th L (David Ross and Femi The DriFish). This track serves as a commentary on and coda for "Money," elaborating on the themes of the original song. The danceable groove is punctuated by piano and guitar fills.

9. Us and Them (7:40) by Waters
vocal ellen cherry; piano Sandy Asirvatham; trumpet Ben Frock; bassoon Bryan Young; cellos ellen cherry & Jen Smith; electric bass Jeff Reed; drums Frank Russo

cherry's rich voice underscores this melancholy masterpiece. The layered arrangement includes a contrapuntal bassoon melody from Bryan Young (The Poulenc Trio) and cello background figures from Jen Smith (Naked Blue) and cherry. Trumpeter Ben Frock (leader of 30-piece avant-garde-disco band Love Unit) contributes an extended solo. Highly melodic and nationally known jazz drummer Frank Russo adds nuance.



Cris Jacobs



Bryan Young



Ben Frock



ellen cherry



Sandy Asirvatham

10. Any Colour You Like (5:13) by Gilmour and Waters

alto saxophone Russell Kirk; bass clarinet Todd Marcus; acoustic bass Jeff Reed; drums Eric Kennedy

This acoustic jazz track was recorded live in studio. It features bass clarinetist Todd Marcus (acclaimed for 2012 CD, *Inheritance*), alto saxophonist Russell Kirk, and a rhythm section dream-team. Asirvatham recast the original jam for synth and guitar as an uptempo post-bop swinger with space for improvisation.

11. Brain Damage (4:56) by Waters

vocal Lea Gilmore; piano Sandy Asirvatham; tenor and baritone saxophones Craig Alston; background vocals Patrick Klink, Katie Graybeal, Brian Gundersdorf; electric bass Jeff Reed; drums Eric Kennedy

World-touring singer and activist Lea Gilmore interprets "Brain Damage" as a gospel number. Craig Alston comments on saxophones, and folk-rock trio We're About 9 (Patrick Klink, Katie Graybeal, and Brian Gundersdorf) provides background harmonies. Listen for the cheeky closing vamp.

12. Eclipse (2:52) by Waters

vocals OrchKids Choir directed by Dion Cunningham (Keyon Brewington, Nysae Cheatham, Jameria Crippens, Kayla Dickerson, Monique Graves, Lawrence Howell III, John McFadden, Joseph Wilkerson, Dasani Young), Patrick Klink, Katie Graybeal, Brian Gundersdorf; guitar & effects Scott Smith; electric bass Jeff Reed; drums John Thomakos

The final song marries an uptempo funk groove with vocal harmonies and counter melodies. Drummer John Thomakos (recently of Cirque du Soleil) lays down a fat groove. Smith adds rhythmic chords reminiscent of The Jackson Five. A nine-member children's choir from OrchKids (Baltimore Symphony Orchestra's neighborhood instrumental music program) carries the melody. We're About 9 lends supporting vocals. This brief, energetic finale demonstrates that joy can be found even in a song about despair.

All tracks arranged/orchestrated by Sandy Asirvatham, except Track 4 by ellen cherry, Track 5 by Brian Simms, Matthew Everhart, Christian Stengle, Warren Boes, cherry, and Asirvatham; Track 7 by Asirvatham, Mike Gambone, Jake Leckie, and Gris Jacobs.

