

REG MEUROSS



Love, death, politics, social commentary, these are all tools of the singer-songwriter's trade and, whether drawn from life or imagination, Reg Meuross wields them with the best, crafting songs that touch the heart, stimulate the mind, leave you in a warm glow of contentment or a fire of righteous indignation in equal measure. That is certainly true of this collection of songs revisited from across his career.

Sounding a political note, **England Green & England Grey** details factory closures, corporate greed and the dismantling of the NHS to the backdrop of a hymnal tune that conjures the 'green' of a cultural folk tradition embodied in names such as John Bull, Cecil Sharp and Lennon and McCartney.

Two world wars find their way into the songs here. **And Jesus Wept** tells the story of Harry Farr who, in 1916, suffering from shellshock, was shot for desertion. It's dedicated to Farr's daughter Gertrude and granddaughter Janet whose efforts led him to become the first of the 306 British soldiers executed in such circumstances to be granted a posthumous pardon. Likewise, advancing the years to WWII, **For Sophie (This Beautiful Day)** tells another true story, that of Sophie Scholl, a young student at Munich University who, appalled at the activities of the Nazi Party, founded, along with her brother and friends, the White Rose movement dedicated to non-violent resistance and was executed for treason in 1943.

Another true story can be found with **The Band Played 'Sweet Marie'**, a tender piano waltz about the violin bought by Maria Robinson for her fiancé Wallace Hartley, the bandleader on The Titanic, who, according to legend, played her song as the ship went down.

**Looking for Johnnie Ray** references another real figure, Ray being a massive singing star in the 50s, best known for his recording of "Cry" and dubbed The Prince of Wails on account of his performing style. The gently swaying song uses him to exemplify the ideal man for an unlucky in love woman searching for "a guy who's not too tough to cry." Ironically, of course, in real life Ray was both gay and an alcoholic.

Love, its questing, comfort, fallout and heartache, fuels several songs - the prospect of returning to a lover's arms in **One Way Ticket To Louise**, the pain of a broken relationship that aches through **Jealous** and **I Need You** and the longing and loneliness that infuses **The Shoreline and the Sea**.

There's loneliness too in **The Man in Edward Hopper's Bar** as, far from home, the singer sits watching the nighthawk barflies that haunt the early hours of a back street dive, while the poignant **Good With His Hands** sees a son relating memories of his carpenter father, 'hopeless in love' and broken inside after his wife leaves him.

But after all the hurt, all the sacrifices and all the injustices, **Worry No More** serves to remind that there is yet a still small voice, whether that be the god of your chosen faith, a friend in need or just the man in the moon there to listen, to support and to bring light in times of darkness. Just like these songs.

**Mike Davies** / *Writer for "Melody Maker" and "Sounds" in the late 70s, has written for local, national and international music publications for over 40 years. Currently presents "Alternative Roots" on Brum Radio and is a regular music reviewer for various publications.*

## 1. GOOD WITH HIS HANDS

My father was a carpenter  
He made things out of wood  
And he made them strong, and he made them good  
He took me out on Sundays  
To gather fallen trees  
We'd find treasures in the bushes and pennies in the leaves

He said they came from fighter planes  
Many years before  
He said you needed empty pockets setting out to war  
I thought they came from heaven  
I prayed it could be true  
As he slipped another coin beneath his shoe

And I looked up, and I saw his eyes  
He was good with his hands but hopeless with lies

I saw him in the garden  
On the day she went away  
He was watering the roses, and he hadn't much to say  
I asked where she was going  
And he took me to the wood  
He said this time it's serious, I think she's gone for good  
I thought she'd gone to heaven

I prayed it wasn't true  
I had to fall in love before I knew  
And I saw tears behind his glove  
He was good with his hands but hopeless in love

She took away the life he knew  
So he made one for himself  
And he framed it, and he kept it on the shelf  
And she looked down his perfect bride  
He was good with his hands but dying inside

Reg Meuross  
vocal & guitar

Ian Melrose  
guitars

Lutz Möller  
keyboards

Lea Morris  
backing vocals

Antoine Pütz  
fretless bass



## 2. THE MAN IN EDWARD HOPPER'S BAR

It was a long cool September night  
I was far from home and the money was tight  
Down on the corner came a welcoming light  
From an empty back street bar

The bar man smiled in a slow sad way  
With a face unaccustomed to the light of day  
He poured a coffee, he said "You're ok  
Take a five cent cigar."

I'm the man in Edward Hopper's Bar

A couple walk in and they sit down  
Bartender knows them and he pours a round  
He looks like a man who knows this town  
She looks like a movie star

They're talking low, she seems upset  
Like he's done something that she can't forget  
She checks her nails, he lights a cigarette  
In Edward Hopper's Bar

And all I really want to do  
Is baby get back home to you  
Folks 'round here are much too blue  
In Edward Hopper's Bar

Bartender says "Business is slow"

I guess it is, I wouldn't know

"Yeah this is where the nighthawks go

To Edward Hopper's Bar"

First train home leaves at 5am

I guess I'll just stay here 'til then

And shoot the breeze

With my barfly friends

## In Edward Hopper's Bar

Reg Meuross  
vocal & guitar

Ian Melrose  
dobro

Beo Brockhausen  
tenor sax

Antoine Pütz  
electric bass

[illegible]

### 3. ENGLAND GREEN & ENGLAND GREY

England green and England grey  
Look out on a summer's day  
To all things bright and fair and gay  
To my home, my love, my England

I believe in dignity, rich or poor, we're all born free  
Austerity and slavery, I thought they were behind us  
I don't believe the BBC, monarchy or anarchy  
Or an empire built on piracy  
By our history you'll find us

For years our women had no say  
No right to work or equal pay  
God help the crippled and the gay  
The fragile flowers of England  
Shut the factories, shut the mines  
Punish those fell on hard times  
While they honour them who do the crimes  
The greedy men of England

How can a man respect a man  
Who steals his house and sells his land  
And takes the wages from his hand  
To pay his own expenses  
The NHS, our England's jewel  
Is bartered by Westminster's fool  
To justify his public school and military defences

Sing the songs of old John Bull  
Cecil Sharp and John and Paul  
Come English folk, come one and all  
To the sweet songs of our England  
Take my hand and walk with me  
Down the back roads to the sea  
Where in spite of all, we'll both agree  
There is none so sweet as England

Reg Meuross  
vocal & guitar

Ian Melrose  
guitar

Jean Kelly  
irish harp

Beo Brockhausen  
autoharp

Lea Morris  
backing vocals

Antoine Pütz  
electric bass

#### 4. ONE WAY TICKET TO LOUISE

Oh the shutter doors are closing down on Market Street  
And there's nothing in this town to keep me on my feet  
There's a night bus leaving from the corner house at ten  
By morning I'll be lying in my darling's arms again  
Can't wait to hear the driver mumble 'Destination please?'  
And say 'A one way ticket to Louise'

There are women on the corner with their hair pulled tight  
In white stiletto heels and legs for staying up all night  
The boys lean on their pool cues and they wonder with their eyes  
If they're man enough to deal with what is stirring in those thighs  
In the overheated bus I wrap my coat around my knees  
On a one way ticket to Louise

Roll engines roll  
Roar engines roar  
Go safely go  
To the girl that I'd stop travelling for

There are people going somewhere and there's people coming back  
Some stare at their reflection, as some just stare into the black  
I watch the moon go racing through a field of winter stars  
The red and white light ribbons of a carnival of cars  
It's a highway full of dreamers and I'm counting down the trees  
On a one way ticket to Louise



Reg Meuross  
vocals & guitar

Ian Melrose  
guitar

Antoine Pütz  
electric bass

## 5. FOR SOPHIE (This Beautiful Day)

You walk the university, your suitcase in your hand  
High upon the landing, by your brother's side you stand  
The voices of the innocents echo 'round the hall  
The flowering truth on paper, Sophie makes the petals fall

The greatest act of love to your country and your friends  
Is to stand up for the righteous cause and give your life for them  
You could have lied or made a deal, you could have walked away  
But the wall of shame would bear your name and that's too much to pay

These are the eyes of the child you saved  
Aryan blue, Hebrew brown and grey  
These are the hands that in gratitude pray  
For Sophie's life on this beautiful day

Seven sermons, seven lessons, seven calls to arms  
To the workers in the factories, the workers on the farms  
One life for ten thousand, when good hearts 'gainst evil stand  
Your future's only safe as this one heart and these two hands

Sophie at the window, Sophie lights the lamps  
To free her country, spread the word, Sophie buys the stamps  
And in the jail one final kiss, her brother and her friend  
To end in terror's better than a terror without end

The brilliant child of Germany has turned his mind to war  
He hears the windows breaking, but he doesn't know what for  
The ghettos' strangely quiet, just the constant trains go by  
But Sophie takes his hands and Sophie opens up his eyes

Reg Meuross  
**vocal & guitar**

Ian Melrose  
**guitar**

Lucile Chaubard  
**cello**

Lea Morris  
**backing vocals**

Antoine Pütz  
**electric bass**

*I was commissioned to write this song about the 21 year old German student Sophie Scholl. She was an anti Nazi activist and member of The White Rose resistance movement in Munich. She was caught, along with her brother Hans & their friend Christoph Probst distributing leaflets and executed by guillotine on 22nd February 1943. The leaflet was the 6th in a series of documents drawing attention to the growing evil of the Nazi regime. After her death, the 6th leaflet was smuggled out of Germany and retitled The Manifesto of the Students of Munich and redistributed in millions by the allies.*

## 6. AND JESUS WEPT

The moon is slowly sinking, the final moon I'll see  
My head is tired of thinking there's just the rosary  
An empty place at table, and my mother's eyes are wet  
The hand of God came down last night  
And Jesus wept

If I'd been a captain, they would have sent me home  
But I am just a private, condemned to die alone  
The firing squad's been drinking, it's a dawn they won't forget  
The hand of God came down last night  
And Jesus wept

Sound the drum for their young precious years  
But no glory will shine on my poor mother's tears

Reg Meuross  
vocal & guitar

Ian Melrose  
guitar

Lutz Möller  
keyboards

Antoine Pütz  
electric bass

A soldier's good for fighting, that's what my father said  
And if the man's not fighting, he might as well be dead  
Shame has drawn the curtains, and the neighbours won't forget  
The hand of God came down last night  
And Jesus wept

I got the shakes on Tuesday, I cannot go I said  
They sent me down on Wednesday, by Thursday I was dead  
I fought for king and country, 2 years without regret  
The hand of God came down last night  
And Jesus wept

We all fall in the cause of the free  
When the sun sets on England, will you think of me?

In unmarked graves in Flanders lie 300 boys and men  
Killed un-loved and frightened by those they thought were friends  
A nation's guilty secret is this generation's debt  
The hand of God came down last night  
And Jesus wept

## 7. THE BAND PLAYED 'SWEET MARIE'

I bought my love a violin, so he could play for me  
I bought my love a violin  
To calm the waves of the stormy sea  
Though he'd be gone the longest time  
He'd return again to me  
And every note my darling played  
Took further away my love from me

My name's Maria Robinson, he called me Sweet Marie  
And that's the song that all night long  
My darling boy would play to me  
All through that long remembered night  
I heard that melody  
And the notes he played, while the few were saved  
Took further away my love from me

That ship went down to the mournful sound  
Of my sweetheart's violin  
With no safety vest, he strapped to his chest  
The case he'd placed it gently in  
'Though the icy water froze his breath  
It never froze his heart  
By the song he played, a pact was made  
That my love and I would never part

I bought my love a violin, so he could play for me  
I bought my love a violin  
To calm the waves of a stormy sea  
There are those who say Wallace Hartley played  
'Nearer my God to thee'  
But our souls were bound  
As that great ship went down  
And in my heart the band played 'Sweet Marie'

Reg Meuross  
**vocal & guitar**

Ian Melrose  
**guitar**

Justin Ciuche  
**violin**

Lucile Chaubard  
**cello**

Beo Brockhausen  
**bowed psaltery**

Antoine Pütz  
**electric bass**



## 8. LOOKING FOR JOHNNIE RAY

She leans in a doorway  
Tears stream down her face  
Watching the highway lights  
And the man who upset her  
Well she knows he'll forget her  
And those all too few and tender nights  
And the guard on the beat crosses over the street  
And he asks her if she is ok  
She says "I'm tired of hard men  
with walls all around them  
And I'm looking for Johnnie Ray"



He asks her for coffee, she says "You mean coffee?"  
He smiles and he points down the street  
The soft moonlight glistens, sad eyed she listens  
Did she just hear her heart skip a beat?  
They sit over coffee, he speaks to her softly  
In a strong and a vulnerable way  
She looks in his eyes  
She thinks 'That's some disguise  
I was looking for Johnnie Ray'

"All I want is a guy who's not too tough to cry  
Who'll stay up when the nights are too long  
If he wants to play hero, let him be like DeNiro  
Not scared to own up when he's wrong"

They walked home in the rain  
And he sang that refrain  
She'd heard Johnnie sing so many times  
They stand on the step, she was tired of regret  
So she kissed him and asked him inside  
He put 'Look Homeward Angel'  
On her worn out Dansette  
And they danced all the darkness away  
She looked in his eyes  
And when he asked her why  
She said "I'm looking for Johnnie Ray"

Reg Meuross  
vocal & guitar

Ian Melrose  
guitars

Lea Morris  
backing vocals

Antoine Pütz  
fretless bass

## 9. JEALOUS

I'm jealous of the sun that warms your face  
That wraps itself around you in your state of grace,  
I'm jealous of its fingers on your skin,  
The way it lights your room now you won't let me in.  
I wish I was the sun that lights your life.

I'm jealous of the rain upon your lips  
That runs down your shirt and stings your fingertips.  
I'm jealous of the way it soothes your brow,  
The way it cools the places that I can't go now.  
I wish I was the rain upon your face.

I'm jealous of the moon that lights your eyes,  
That falls upon your bed and runs along your thighs.  
I'm jealous of the secrets that you share  
Up in your bedroom now I can't go there.  
I wish I was the moon upon your night.  
I wish I was the moon. I wish I was the rain.  
I wish I was the sun that lights your life.

Reg Meuross  
vocal & guitar

Ian Melrose  
bass-guitar

Beo Brockhausen  
soprano sax

Lutz Möller  
piano, keyboards





## 10. I NEED YOU

I used to be someone to you  
Someone you loved and looked up to  
When you let go, was me who pulled you through  
You talked about your dreams with me  
Your hopes and fears, you let me see  
Now I'd give anything to be with you  
To hold you in my arms again  
To be your lover, not your friend

I need you, I need you, I need you

With one foot always off the ground  
I knew I couldn't tie you down  
I didn't want to do that anyway  
And yet some force connected us  
Like tide or moon affected us  
It pulled us close, then pushed us both away  
I always thought I'd see you again  
But now your heart won't let me in

Our love was never meant to last  
We seized the time and used it fast  
We came as close as anyone can be  
Against the odds we took a chance  
We moved together in the dance  
I held you tight and you held on to me  
And at the end I said I'd be strong  
But now it seems that I was wrong

Reg Meuross  
vocal & guitar

Ian Melrose  
guitar & electric guitar

Lea Morris  
backing vocals

Hans-Jörg Maucksch  
fretless bass



## 11. THE SHORELINE AND THE SEA

If you love me, let me know  
Don't just close the door and go  
And if you shed a tear for me  
Turn your face and let me see  
I want to hold you oh so much  
I need love that I can touch  
Love that will wash over me  
Like the shoreline and the sea

I knew a man who lived alone  
I met him by my fireside  
He watched the dying flame and moaned  
"I can't recall when last I cried  
I used to have a lover once  
She used to come and go with me  
We were happy in the dance  
Like the shoreline and the sea"

I'm not asking for the moon  
Its light is all I need  
And I'm not asking for the sun  
Just let it shine on me

I knew a girl whose heart was broken  
She brought it out to show to me  
Her hands were warm, her lips were cold  
She sat all day and watched the sea  
Oh save me from a fate so cruel  
Speak your mind, be straight with me  
Love be constant, love be true  
Like the shoreline and the sea

Reg Meuross  
**vocal & guitar**

Ian Melrose  
**guitar, flute**

Antoine Pütz  
**electric bass**



## 12. WORRY NO MORE

If you need me, come and see me  
I will worry no more  
If you love me, go and tell me  
I will worry no more  
When you're down and on a low note  
And your lifeboat's a man-of-war  
Just call me and I will hear you  
I will worry no more

There are those who will always love you  
There are those who will let you down  
Just listen with eyes wide open  
You will know them by their sound  
When your dreams no longer flower  
And your power blooms no more  
Just call me and I will hear you  
I will worry no more

It's a hard world, a pick a card world  
What you deal is what you get  
I've been cheated but undefeated  
Though I bleed, I am not beaten yet  
Over mountains and stormy oceans  
Give your heart wings and let it soar  
And call me and I will hear you  
And I will worry no more

Reg Meuross  
**vocals & guitar**

Ian Melrose  
**guitars**

Lea Morris  
**backing vocals**

Antoine Pütz  
**electric bass**



[regmeuross.com](http://regmeuross.com)

Reg Meuross **vocals, guitar**  
Ian Melrose **guitars, flute**  
Lutz Möller **piano, keyboards**  
Justin Ciuche **violin**  
Lucile Chaubard **cello**  
Jean Kelly **irish harp**  
Lea Morris **backing vocals**  
Antoine Pütz **fretless & electric bass**  
Hans-Jörg Maucksch **fretless bass**  
Beo Brockhausen **tenor & soprano sax, bowed psaltery, autoharp**

## **RECORDING & PRODUCTION**

Günter Pauler

## **PRE-MASTERING**

Hans-Jörg Maucksch at Pauler Acoustics

## **STUDIO ASSISTANCE**

Inés Breuer

## **PHOTOS**

Front Cover: Jonti Willis  
Back Cover: Steve Best  
Disc Tray, Pages 18, 26: Peter James Milson  
Pages 5, 21: Billy Hutchinson  
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Page 28: Sue Foll  
Pages 8, 10, 24: Emre Meydan

## **ARTWORK & DESIGN**

Emre Meydan



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3. ENGLAND GREEN & ENGLAND GREY
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