

## Notes on Crossing Dragon Bridge by Steve Wynn

The days during my three weeks in Ljubljana were pretty simple. I would wake up early and leave my apartment on Trubarjeva Street and cross Dragon Bridge in search of a good cup of coffee which I would sip as I watched the vendors in the open market as they sold cabbage, purses, cheap watches and anything else that might be worth a Euro or two. I'd watch this panorama of commerce and barter and think about which song I would drag into the daily laboratory that was Chris Eckman's home studio.

I had never made a record like this before. I was in Slovenia, far from my New York City apartment and in a musical world that had shrunk down to just two people-me and Chris, the multi-talented producer (Midnight Choir) and bandleader (Walkabouts, Chris & Carla). He had been wanting to make a record with me for many years and seemed particularly intent on stripping things down to my voice and my acoustic guitar and then building up another universe from there.

No band. No session players (until later). No passing of the baton in this relay race. Even Chris would hesitate when I tried to get him to play something. Guitar, bass, keyboards, vocals-if I could do it, I had to do it. And that's why "Crossing Dragon Bridge" sounds different from other records I've done before but also more like the sound inside my head than anything I've done before.

But it's not a record I would have made in New York. Or in Tucson. Or in Los Angeles, Tokyo, Moscow or Mali, It's not like a record I would make on the moon or on Mars or in New Jersey. It has the sound and the mood and the sights and the overall vibe of Ljubljana. I swallowed the city whole and then waited for the meal to work itself into a digestive hallucination before spitting it out again each day at Chris' place. And then it was back for a pint of Union beer by the river before starting all over again.

When I left Slovenia a few weeks later both of us knew we had something special. And then we proceeded to add the extra bits that would take the experience further. An eight-piece orchestra was added in Prague to a bunch of the songs and a woman's choir in Ljubljana was added to others. Linda Pitmon, Kirk Swan, Chris Cacavas and Tim Adams (Teenage Prayers) chimed in from New York, Los Angeles and Germany bringing in elements of familiarity from my past and present.

Finally the whole thing was filtered through the creative and impressionistic mixing skills of Tucker Martine (Decemberists, Laura Veirs) and turned into the record that you hold in your hands. It's a snapshot, a dream, an acid flashback, a tourist guide, a midnight snack, a morning cup of coffee-it's the other world that happened around me and inside my head for three weeks last September. I hope you enjoy taking the trip back there with me.