

Occupying Harrisburg

Roger Hammer

© 2012, 2026 Roger Hammer

<https://www.rogerhammer.net>



Guy Fawkes image by Bernhard_Staerck from Pixabay

Occupying Harrisburg

Seasons / Changes

1. Bad Spring
4. Diamond Sounds
3. My Back Yard
4. Mammal, Fowl and Bug
5. KC BFF
6. Easter
7. Forever
8. Equilibrium
9. Sun, Moon &*

Reflecting on Everything

10. W5
11. Drug-of-War
12. Another Easter Sunday
13. Ask Me Again in a Million Years
14. For My Love
15. Symmetry Thing
16. Centered (All or Nothing)
17. When Science Writes a Poem
18. Making It

Being There

19. Waters Old is New
20. Drain the Swamp, Fill the Bank
21. Capital Construction - Redaction
22. The Path
23. Woodlawn
24. Bass, Man
25. A New Day
26. It's Now!
27. Occupying Harrisburg

Bad Spring

Your icy hands slapped my face again
Then you spit on me cruelly, snarling
“I am colder, wetter, and longer than you like.”

“Why is it so hard to escape you?” I pondered,
Since the months have already changed from March into April
While you continue to be a menace to outdoor fun in May.

Surely time will overcome you, I reckoned.
Soon the sun will melt you away and slap you down
Letting me walk once again in warm, friendly Summer.

My Back Yard

Hauling up leaves again in Autumn
Drips of my sweat falling on dry piles
Thinking what use is all my labor again this year

Stopping to breathe deeply I realize
I can briefly know each one of them
To love all of the fallen ones

Why not name each tree claiming where they first fall?
Constellations of the ground beneath my feet
Perennial features of my outdoor life

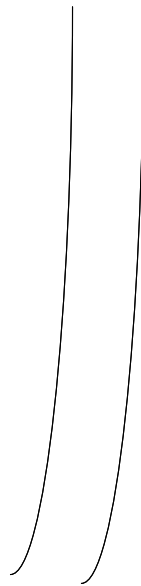
Their oxygen abundantly given to us
Sustaining us with energy and strength
Filling the air for me, my family, our neighborhood, and all the Earth



Ham



Oak



Fire
Shadow



Nuts



Hilly



Baby



Birdy



Tiny



Woody



Twins



Easter

Ponder the miracle of Easter
Is it more than a celebration of Spring?
Surely bright eggs and bunnies are hopeful
With the symbols of new life they bring

What is the reason for Easter
If there's nothing beyond these few things?
If we notice no change in our living
Or reach out with love to other human beings?

This is the miracle of Easter:
That old ways be laid to the grave
With new life arising each morning
Thanking god for his grace to be saved

Give thanks for the miracle of Easter
For the life of our lord to be followed;
His example mixed hard truth with mercy.
Within his gates let us all be allowed.

W5: What Went Wrong With Wisdom

You were born of Nothing/Everything
Teaching mortals the Oneness of life
Love was pouring from Your lips
With each breath calling us in

Where did You go wrong in teaching
Where did we go wrong in learning
Messages from the highest mountain of Life
Causing us to turn the flow to destruction and Death?

Light to dark
Brother to murderer
Lover to hater
Holy religious2bomber
Wrong wrong wrong wrong wrong

Stop you Lords - be born no more!
No more Gods coming down here
Cause us to disagree no more - say no more
Make no promises and prophesies

Teaching is now but treachery
Hearing only twisted echoes of truth
Selfish words from the highest mountain = games of you Gods
NO MORE!

Forever

Although I don't say it near enough
It really isn't all that tough
To look at you, or think about you

And know how much I love you

For all the things you do for me
For creating and raising our family
I have the world to thank you for

Please know how much I love you

If things don't always go so well
You're always there to show and tell
The way to get together again

No matter what, I love you

For all these things and so much more
But most of all- for who you are
No one could be luckier than I, when I say

Forever, I love you

Ask Me Again in a Million Years

This is not with malice toward any particular kind of people
but a Marriage can
in my mind
only be Redefined when

the Moon starts illuminating the Sun
two South poles or two North poles have magnetic attraction
two sperm cells or two egg cells can unite to grow more cells

which will be about when hell freezes over
thankfully I will be long since dust again by then
and if not still dust, born anew through the only way possible

Until then
no more discussion please
the silence will make room for natural, if not more rational, sounds of love
this fruitless noise from a vocal few is now drowning out

Diamond Sounds

Strike!

The batsman strikes out.

Safe!

The runner on first safely steals second,
Sliding with stealth under the shortstop's glove

Sounds of the park are transmitted on radios

Sports announcers list players' names

Umpire shouts consecutive balls and strikes

Fans scream, vendors shout

Fireworks salute homers

Coaches chew and players spit

Scoreboard shows all league games in progress

Secret signs set up the next play

Seventh inning stretch singers excite the crowd

The only sound everyone wants to hear is We Win!

Drug-of-War

Ohh, not feeling well today
Those countries out there are bothering me

I need something to help calm this malaise
A ballistic aspirin for my aches and pains
Something much stronger than a little conciliating pill

I will do anything now to take away the vacuum inside me
Anything to relieve me of the dreadful, peaceful, void I feel
To feed my deathly hunger for tension and strife
I just gotta have my war drug

Wheels in motion, yes, the feeling fills my veins
Prospects of spilling hot flowing blood of others are so soothing
Starting to take my pain away now, but still I need more
One war is not enough, I need to double the dose
I will need another war soon

There, I should feel better now with a double beheader going on
Dragging our country's young and best to hell
Enemy lives stopped cold by high powered steel
Explosions of misery everywhere should make me so happy
This is what I wanted, justified, sold, packaged, deployed
But it will never be enough

Another Easter Sunday

I looked around the room today
To find myself and what I'd say
When all my years had melted away
And I had reached the end

I saw an old man praying there
For what I know not, nor really care
But I know he deserved repair
For what he could not mend

A mother next to me was busy
With crying kids who made me dizzy
Jumping around with hair so frizzy
I wished that peace be with her

Some kids I knew were looking around
For something beyond the boring sound
Of organs, trumpets and the singing
That happens every year

With my dad and brother next to me, alone
I turned into a sinking stone
Removed from everything but my bones
Until I found the answer

I'm not just sitting in this place
Not just another hopeless face
Standing in line for holy grace
I'm who I am, no other

So thank you for the friendly smiles
The times that we walked down the aisles
I know that when I've walked the miles
You'll always be there with me

Equilibrium

I wonder what I know
Or do I know only that I wonder
About connections between ourselves
As singularities, couples, collections, parties, countries

I wonder how I know
What to wonder about next today
Tomorrow, yesterday, lives past, days passing by
Seasons and years spinning and falling all around the clock

I know that I wonder
About too much, too little, the big and trivial
Necessities and frivolities looking like twins down the street
Choices blurring in signs, signals, traffic, transport or tranquility

I wonder if I know
Anything I should by now
Passport and spare change in pocket
Ready for anything, everything, happening, ongoing

I wonder why I wander
Incessantly around the music of words
Sounds, signs and symbols of actions heard on pages
Silent until spoken, dormant until woken, taken for granted

I wonder nothing more
Than time allows her children to know
If order consumes chaos, good cards trump evil
As wondering and knowing become one and the same

For My Love

For who you are
 What you do
 How you will always be

From shy beginnings you quickly developed
Friendships and capacity to love that will know no end
You hold in your heart the flame of a
Brighter light than I have ever seen

Since I first saw you standing tall
Before me, beside me, near to me
Soon we would be seeing each other often
Kissing our first kiss of many, endless, unforgettable

How I loved our love
Early morning
Late at night
Being together in any light

Our first flower born uneasily
Son became the center of our world
Growing, walking, talking
Making us family

Soon we would grow again with
A boy eager to be with us
Playing with all-stars
Growing so tall

As blessed as we were
There would still be more
A son completing our family handful
Smart, polite, promising

But it's all due to You whose strengths embrace love and hope:
When surroundings weigh too heavily I wish I could just lift
All the cares, complexities, inequities, perplexities away
Transporting you to a world where joys are freely given and taken

We will always grow closer together
Even if having to work apart

By keeping close to each other
We remain one forever

Some day you shall ride your dream horse
Gallop freely under the open sky
Hair and mane both flowing in the wind
Both of you rich with smiles inside and out

Then you shall receive
More than you ever dreamed
Rivers will be overflowing with thanks to you
I found my best self loving you

For who you are
 What you do
 How you will always be

Mammal, Fowl and Bug

In their own words on the pluses (+) and minuses (-) of their lives

M+

By day we rule jungles and forests, in various forms populating all of earth
Swim in seas so vast the humans barely understand
Our kind is smart, often fast, always warm of heart
Those of us living with people may climb to highest levels of karma

M-

To live in the wild I must kill and eat, not of choice but high design
Hunger dominates many of my days and nights
Those of us kept and fed by people may be fattened for slaughter
Those not experimented upon in cages feel the destruction of our habitats

F+

No other can soar as do we
Silently above an endless choice of fields and lakes
Singing as we swim through the air, envy of those who dwell on land
Bringing songs of joy to humans in every season

F-

Our eggs are sought after by others across animal and human domains
While flying we may be killed in "sport" (though we never owned a gun)
Walking - you know, pigeon-toed, waddle like a duck - may appear awkward to many
But trading our wings for a mere pair of arms is not in our blood

B+

We small creatures outnumber and outwit all the rest
Whether seen or unseen, often dwelling in places least desired is no problem
Capable of crawling on all 6 or 8 feet, or none at all, or flying too fast to see
We truly dominate the cycles of life though often are we despised

B-

Dark earth, cold caverns, slimy places are our home
We never rest, eating the decayed matter of higher life
Causing disease but enabling the synthesis of building blocks for new life
Minds too small to know this, not programmed to even wonder how and why
We Win in the End.



Photo by the author

Waters New is Old

© r.f.Lee

Broad flowing river, friend, I walk beside you

My first acquaintance in this neighborhood

I will never forget first sight of bridges skipping across you

As if arches of concrete could prevent us from

Wanting to feel your flowing waters

Broad and shallow but deep in history

I speed on bicycle paths to city's end

By day baseball games play under summer sun on your island

By night citizens walk across their footbridge glowing with white lights

Yet who else must have felt the same attraction

Standing, walking, sitting by your side

Before concrete steps contained you, highways crossed you

Wading across on foot or crossing on horseback

You my new friend have been an old friend to many

Living by your banks, drawing from your endless flowing resource

Susquehanna

Capital Construction – Redaction

Standing Here I begin to wish I were
On a city tour going Somewhere else until
Concrete reality blocking what is There sends me hack

Starting each new day on this Spinning wheel
I look for exits for Jumping off never thinking of landing or
Connecting with next possible Levels of tangled mazes in the endless spiral

Going around, coming around, never capable of Predicting
Anything about our Future ability to know about winds of
Constant change in Direction wearing and tiring the soul engine

Repetition grinds on to the point where I ask only to Simplify
Reduce and stop needless wasted motion as if we are all Re-member-ing
Vital parts divided, degraded, and consumed from what was once a perfect One:

To Give less than using, giving back to
Build tomorrow in the vision and example to naturally
Sustain life, troubled since the beginning of time, using our capabilities today.

Here
Somewhere There
Spinning Jumping Levels
Predicting Future Direction Simplify
Remembering One: Give. Build. Sustain.



Photo by the author

The Path

This is it!

Once I thought as a path lie waiting before me
On which I could walk on soft grass and freshly fallen leaves
Between perfect rainbow rows of brightly colored flowers

Next I wondered *

On the other side what about that contrasting choice built upon
Sharp-toothed rocks, thorns, and dead twisted branches
In constant twilight never allowing any hope for the dawn

While considering them /

What if I could pretend to be anyone on broad yet narrow big city streets?
Under bright lights, with pretty people, fast-paced social life and socialites
Playing on stage after musical stage of drama, comedy and adventure

No, this one ~

Beckoning from the back alleys another compelling vision so alluring
Poured from liquid lust, so hot, so burning in the night that
Its lights blinded the eyes with promises of sex never ending

But not everything.

None of these journeys would be worthy of merit for either truth or reality
Unlike libraries and halls of scholarship petitioning me to study as
An apprentice of philosophy, arts, and sciences

Then enter God:

What truth or reality could there be without constants, ultimates, absolutes
Without a proven path of a tradition handed down from chosen ones to chosen few
Acolytes motivated by selfless giving as saints through history to this very day

While pausing there,

All of these ways would become too serious, weighted down by cosmic importance
There must be a carefree lifestyle, fun, without worry, without
Responsibility, without anything at all except vanity = just me

That's not all @

Needing more (and needing money) streets of industry could become the critical path
Practical. Ordinary. Routine. Regular. Possibly fulfilling while
Adding value to the world through good ol' fashioned work

Two paths join >

Above all these choices a beautiful soul mate might fly into my life
Could I make her my lover, my world, my lifetime partner?
Could this be my Everything if I choose her alone?

Still more paths #

Could we together, by grace of the God of Life
Create children and a new generation like us but like no other before us
That they might walk as we have and be able choose freely for themselves

Surely this one?

At last I ask: Why did I choose none of these paths as The One?
Finally I know the answer- it is so simple:
I've travelled all of them.



Photo collage by the author

Woodlawn

I often walk to a quiet place
Disguised as a neighborhood park offering
Gentle hills, trees, grass, flowers and fresh breeze
Waving flags on gravestone roofs over homes of the dead

Quiet paths lead left and right
To choose either is to circle back to the very same end
Upon passing statue-stations generously and thoughtfully placed:
Silent and motionless they surely thunder and move all who visit

Here, a couple carved in stone
Embrace each other, gazing skyward in loving harmony
Eyes following sun and clouds by day, moon and stars by night
Endlessly. Never moving they move me with their thoughts

There, a half dozen men circle
Around their master: three standing, two sitting, one kneeling
Viewed from every direction they modulate the master's words
Missing timeless truth filtered by selfish, trivial, human thoughts

On top of the hill, a dozen others attend supper
Flanking the master on each side like so many shadows
Drinking, breaking bread, trying to listen and also hear
Arguing among themselves, worrying about tomorrow, boasting who is best

Alone, on the far side stands the master, a magnificent singular icon
Hands raised to the sky, eyes radiant, projecting a rainbow of peace and hope
Causing me to stop. Reflect. Tune in. Resonate. I tremble
In the presence of life coming and going; coming back without end

Though special, there may be many similar places where one can walk
Where life once turned cold and dark lives on in warm bright light
The place may be in your neighborhood, or anyone's around the world
Or simply visited at any time or any place within yourself.

Sun, Moon &*

Today
For us to know
How power of ten harps
Play logarithmic musical scales
Expressing (r)evolving universe sounds
Colors / magnetism / fusion / space and time
We view planets, moons, stars, constellations, galaxies &*
Through technology's knife on the edge of science and ancient arts

Bass, Man

Music takes you to the stars,
up the stairs and to the bar,
down the stairs into the garden
weaving through tonight's table settings
to the place you want to go

Why I love Bass is this:
rumbly sound of pedal tones
bottom to whatever is doing
low E makes the bones get going
puts the boogie in the woogie

Intervals 1-4-5 eternally iconic
space within to get harmonic
love walking around that structure
knowing what is coming next is almost
predictable until we change it

Jams on blues riffs are pure golden
changes on the chord we're holdin'
hold the tension to perfection
till the time is right to modulate
making magic in real time

Axe of wood so perfectly crafted
steel strings and electromagnetics grafted
thanks to Fender and other authors
writing that page for me to be
the Bass Man.

Making It

Visit any time or any place
Within yourself and you will find
All or Nothing

Between extremes you hang struggling for hope

As for the All:
You have infinite capacity to
Draw upon universal energy around you
You are an endless resource unto yourself
If indeed you need no one else you need to
Belong everywhere you are:
Stand on no forbidden premises
Make no false statements or promises
Betraying your capability to rise eternally

As for the Nothing:
Select not this option!
Pretending some substance pervades when
Only thinly veiled membranes hide the world there
Cleverly disguised but Infinitely less than All

An ordinary middle ground is not failure
Doing something is not shameful
Making one connection is better than breaking one

Do not settle for a Zero sum.

Visit your inner strength.

Make it better.

It's Now!

Looking for the perfect time to realize your dreams
Waiting around for your life to be more than it usually seems
It's now!

Wondering when you should reach out to someone there
You've seen so often but never dared to admit you care
It's now!

Wishing you could try something new you've never done before
Hoping that golden chance will magically knock on your front door
It's now!

Thinking you can make the jump from nothing to infinity
Leaping out the window, flying freely without impunity
Just seeing if you are paying attention; no, not now

Eventually some day you're going to change your ways
Give up all manner of bad habits, clean the closet, lose some weight
It's now!

When you paint your masterpiece you can't wait to get the paint
Take stock, get ready, you don't know when but you know you can't wait
It's now!

As for me, I hear everything that I am saying, reading it as sure as ink
Knowing that I can't be late, must look ahead before I reach the brink
It's now!

KC BFF

Precious golden ball comes home
first steps wobbly, uncertain
already showing love for life
growing into our family naturally

Speaking loudly when missing us
lying quietly beneath our resting feet
ever there with bright brown eyed smiles
being all he can be for us

Chasing balls, count one, two three
throw them out there endlessly
down the hill, in the lake
never stopping, going going, endlessly

Walks together up and down, summer sun and winter snow
pulling ahead with joy, excitement, energy
never stopping (except for necessities 1 or 2)
oh how we loved to be together

Furry as a long haired bear,
raining hair everywhere
endless sunshine among us
special breed and favorite son
Casey - my best friend forever

Symmetry Thing

Odd one
three five
seven nine

Even two
four six
eight ten

Do better
get ahead
make it

Move ahead
lean forward
back up

Go slow
speed up
never mind

Focus once
divert twice
split infinitely

What's wrong
what's right
that's that

Here there
everywhere somewhere
anything nothing

Plus minus
hot cold
short long

Opposites attract
likes repel
not always

Big deal
short change
grand scheme

Hold on
let go
sit tight

Crystal symmetry
amorphous blob
beauty beast

Spinning wheel
balance beam
symmetry thing

Drain the Swamp, Fill the Bank

Our country should be the land where
All Citizens realize their abilities through education
Using their capabilities and working together for
The common good

A population of ignorant, prejudiced people (subtracting the above)
With guns, spurred by a shallow, moneyed, self-righteous
Ruling class, is not where I want to live or will I
Raise my children in such an environment

Too much money increasingly in hands of too few
Drains our great land of opportunities to be shared.
In response, an independent, mindless party of anger
Cannot solve anything

You may pray to god
While loving your guns
Say you want the best
But only for yourself

You cannot fill the bank by simply seeking to
Lazily draw blood from someone else
We feel the needle and have withdrawn
You must drain a swamp somewhere else

Centered (All or Nothing)

Visiting
Any time any place within yourself
You find All or more than Nothing waiting there

You have infinite capacity
Drawing upon universal energies around you
You are an endless resource, recourse, purpose unto yourself

While you may need no one else
You do need to belong everywhere you are
Else risking unrealistic first premises, thin false premises
Betraying your capability to rise to higher levels of being

As for the Nothing
Select not this option
Pretending any substance lives there:
Its thin membrane bursts next to any better choice

Ordinary middle ground does not constitute failure
Doing something rather than nothing bears no shame
Making one connection is better than breaking one

Do not settle for a zero sum
Visit your inner strength, make it better
Centered

A New Day

Today yawns from dawn's teasing light

A silent bridge carries yesterday across to tomorrow

Daily planet editors write the new front page

On slow back burners people's activities begin to heat up

Cool open sky smiles turn tepid, then darken into cloudy frowns

Freshness evaporates – old emotions boil over

What happened to the plan, the profit, my personal perks

This costs too much - that was my idea - I was here first

I am right – you are wrong - my attorney will be calling you

Around the globe the warming trend continues continent by continent

Country vs. country, system vs. system, persons nonexistent

Driven into the night before close of business

Ashes of yesterday's burned receipts yield a small margin of hope

Contingent on narrow chances to make it better tomorrow

But how can this endless cycle be escaped?

Reboot the system and start a new day.

Occupying Harrisburg

They gave away the heart of America through
Greed, cooking books, while pretending it was *our* fault.

Only those who held the purse could run away better off
While getting bonuses again next year for doing it all over again.

Out went the regime of smug indifference and vest pocket patriotism
Blaming incoming vectors of change for having to post *their* bail.

Too big to fail vs. too small to make any difference to the machine:
Millions of citizens fall into the hellish crevice of crumbling economics.

Yes I have been there too. Twice. My life robbed to inflate golden parachutes
This time finding need for my skills with a company in the village of Harrisburg, PA.

As for the Occupation: peacefully, without fanfare did I pack a few things
Driving across 5 states to the city whose Capitol is the 1906 Palace of Art

Like any good soldier, saying goodbye to family, I went
Not to not a bad place after all, thanks to so many of the 99% there.

And upon finding a room on Sussex did truly occupy Harrisburg
Working again, paying rent, supporting city commerce and the arts.

Did the founding fathers ever dream this would happen across the USA?
Do they not roll over in their graves knowing what is taking place?

Have we lost more than gained in 1776 and the following Century?
Progressive struggles since 1906 for a place in the palace for all Americans?

We must reclaim our rights to work for the common good, to rebuild
Capitol neighborhoods and reclaim capitalism for those who work to add value

Taking back what is ours from false free enterprise job creators : destroyers
Waving the flag to cool their brows sweating from the effort of counting cash

This is how I occupied Harrisburg. Not my first choice, nor close to my last.
I wish the rest of us could be so lucky.