

NEEDTOBREATHE  
“The Heat”  
Song by Song

Spare the Time:

We were tossing around the idea of an intro for this record and decided we wanted to keep it really simple. One guitar, two voices. It's basically an invitation to the listener to listen to the record and find out what we're all about.

Restless:

We wanted the first song on the record to have a lot of energy and be automatically engaging. Throughout the record, we explored using loops in a very organic way, and on this track it ended up sounding like a Gorillaz record, so we turned it up. The loop is something that Rick created from the actual drums to add another layer to the song. The starts and stops in the beat reflect the lyrics, adding to the theme of discomfort and uncertainty. We also felt like it was a good way to start because it represented a new direction in our band of trying to diversify the beats and cadence of the songs.

Again:

Again is a bit of a deceiving song. On the first listen, it may sound like an average love song, but it's actually about trying to end a relationship that you know isn't going to work. All of us have either been in or known someone who has been in a relationship for way too long, but can't seem to break from it. Most of the time we talk ourselves into staying in the situation because of familiarity or possibly the fear of having to start over. We wanted to have the song represent not only the moment when you've decided to move on, but also the struggle to get there. We wrote a lot of the songs in preparation for going into the studio, but this was one that we wrote while we were in the recording process. That helps to keep songs close to their most organic form because we don't have the time to over-think things.

Return:

It is a love song...a plea for reconciliation. We tried to write some love songs that were as simple as “when a man loves a woman” and try to capture some of that power. Return is the only song on the record that never changed from its original demo version. We liked the vibe of the song so much we didn't see any need to change it. The vocal we used was the first and only vocal take on this song and was sung about five minutes after we finished the lyrics.

We Could Run Away:

We Could Run Away was the very last song that we recorded for The Heat. Bear had started writing it while we were on tour with Jars of Clay. We started kicking it around in sound check and it really started to take shape, so we put it down while we had a short break at home. It's also the first song we've ever done with a key change...a little treat for the hair metal fan in all of us.

Streets of Gold:

This song is about death. We wanted to write a song that addressed the hope that you can find in the passing of someone you love. The person in the song is making a change in their life, changing locations and letting go of the pain they feel because they realize that they will be reunited with the ones they love in Heaven.

#### More Time:

We wrote More Time about the immense patience it takes to be in our industry, both for us and our families. When you sign a record deal you get so many assurances of success that just never seem to pan-out in exactly the way you thought they would. You keep telling yourself that everything will work out in a couple more months, and then months turn into years. As much as it speaks to frustration, it's also a song about devotion. It's about knowing you're doing what you're supposed to be doing and having the patience to see it through to the end. This song has the first appearance of slide guitar on a NEEDTOBREATHE record, and we think we chose a pretty good spot. We mention that because at end of working on every song the first question we always ask is, "does this need harmonica or slide?"

#### Signature of Divine (Yahweh):

This song was originally written as a worship song that we performed in our church. We've had a rough live recording of it for a couple years, and every time it came up on shuffle we found ourselves talking about what a great song it was. When we started getting songs together for this record we decided to take a shot at reworking it. Bear rewrote the verses based largely on an interview he heard with Donald Miller. They speak of how so much great art has been inspired by God, but we are God's greatest masterpiece.

#### Looks Like Love:

Looks Like Love is a song about being willing to take the risks that come with love. We may have been hurt in the past, but love is worth risking everything. "I've slept through the sunrise" is one of our favorite lyrics on the record, and I think is not just how it pertains to the song but also the fact that most of us do.

#### The Heat:

This is a song about worship. It's about getting to the place where you are enveloped in the presence of God and everything else fades away. We wanted this song to have a different sound than we've done before. We relied heavily on programmed beats to form the foundation in the verses and brought in the real drums as accents.

#### Nothing Left To Lose:

Nothing Left To Lose is about sacrificing everything for what you believe in. It's about complete and utter devotion. This song was actually written in preparation for our first record, Daylight. For whatever reasons, we didn't put it on that record, but we always thought it was a great song.

#### Movin' On:

Movin' On is another song we wrote after the majority of the record was finished. We had a couple days off in Chicago, so we booked some studio time to try and get this song together. We finished the drums and were listening through, and we couldn't escape the feeling that this song would be perfect for a horn section. The owner of the studio then informed us that some of the best horn players in Chicago were in the back studio doing some work. We figured we might as well give it a shot, and after we promised them some free pizza, we had our horn section.

Washed by the Water:

Bear wrote this song about his dad. Anyone who has a parent involved in the ministry knows the struggles involved with being a spiritual leader. People aren't always going to agree with you and sometimes it can get ugly. This song is about working through those hardships and holding on to your calling, no matter what happens. We really wanted a gospel choir on this song. After searching all over we finally found the right choir at Set Free Christian Fellowship in Powdersville, SC. We packed up Seth's studio one night and took a field trip to Powdersville to record the choir ourselves. It worked out great and gave just the right lift to the end of the song.

Second Chances:

This song is partly about getting another chance to make a record, but it also speaks to a theme on this record of trying to experience things fully. There are a lot of experiences that go along with making a record and touring it, and we felt like we were too concerned with what other people thought of us to enjoy those experiences on our first record. We are very grateful to have another crack at it and also to have matured enough to truly experience it. Towards the end of our sessions with Rick we started feeling a little experimental. Rick happened to have an old pump organ from sometime way back in the day, and Bear started messing around on it one night. He started playing a chord progression and the vibe was absolutely amazing. Bo grabbed his acoustic and pretty soon we had Second Chances.