The Chonny Jash Power Hour
Director's Commentary

The end of an era!
This little idea I had from noticing patterns in my Spotify playlist has turned into something much more full-on and ambitious than I realized it would be. About 6 months dedicated to three of my favourite artists, and then my own ego, has resulted in a pretty nice 20-song mini-discography that I'm honestly extremely proud of...

...but remind me to never fucking do it again.

But anyway! If you'll indulge me, I'm now going to go on and describe what exactly I was going for with these 5 most recent songs, and try to sprinkle in some interesting facts where I can think of any.
Also, for no real reason but fun, I'm going to talk about the songs in the order that I made them, as opposed to the order they released in.

Quick Fun Fact! I knew from the very start, before I even started the Tim Minchin covers, exactly which four artists were going to be covered, and exactly what order they were going to be in.
The specifics of which songs I was going to do by each was left pretty open, but even back then, I knew I wanted to revisit those three SoundCloud songs.

The Lie of Black and White

Or, "Chonny's Attempt At A Lil' Ol' Gay Anthem."

That's right! The last to release was the first I made.
I've had a bare-bones demo of this song in the WIP folder for the better part of 5 years or so now.
For a long time, I just didn't have the skill necessary to bring it to life in a way that I liked, and then began to relate less and less to the initial idea.
Then, once I decided to do a Power Hour of my own music back half a year ago, I realized it would be the perfect opportunity to finally finish it up.

It didn't even have a name initially, it was just called 'FNKY' as a lone FLP file in the folder.

The original was, essentially, the first third of the Final version spread over a whole song. It was written right as I was first introspecting and ruminating about my sexuality, when the emotions were fairly negative and confused. I might share that unreleased demo as an extra goodie alongside this, but if I don't, know that it's basically emotion thrown aggressively at FL Studio, back when I was still really bad at using both.

Fun Fact! The first chorus of the Final release features lyrics that were originally in that unreleased demo.
"Being stuck on the fence between romance is killing me.
Every moment I wait substantiates my misery."
was the original lyric, hence; "Back when I said" appearing in the new version before it.

Less Fun Fact! This song was meant to have a music video, which is the main reason why I made the song first. I knew that I was going to get a couple of Film Student friends to help out with the video, so I wanted to allow enough time to plan and storyboard without feeling rushed.
However, once we showed up to film at the abandoned warehouse we had scoped out, there was a good dozen or two construction workers around working on the place, and security guards that we couldn't get past.
We were able to film the shot you see in the YouTube video at an underpass nearby, but we weren't able to bring anything else from the plan to life.
That video might well get made one day, but I wouldn't hold out too much hope of seeing it any time soon.

Besides that, the song is pretty on-the-nose in terms of message, creating three vague "sections" or "ideas" throughout.
The first reflects on the original demo's emotion (the past fear/shame/confusion etc.) and the denial I felt back then.
The second is essentially how I feel now; the idea that in a terrifying, terrifying world, I can find solace and comfort in who I am.
The third is a hyperbolized - and frankly, angry - remembrance of the fact that there are many people who will try to taint that solace and comfort, as

well as remembering how lucky I am to have found it in the first place when there are people who suffer greatly just for trying to be themselves.

I have an extremely supportive circle of friends and family around me in regards to sexuality and identity, and it kills me to remember that that's not always common, so if this song brings comfort to even a single person in regards to that, then I feel extremely grateful to have been able to help.

Don't Take It Personally

Whoa, we're jumping all over the place.
But yeah! DTiP was second in terms of creation.

There really isn't a lot to say about this one. Two important things I wanted to keep in mind while working on it, though, were:

Increasing the Verses' and Bridge's length. The original always felt short and unfinished to me (in regards to mixing as well, but that's to be expected with a four-year gap) so I wanted to give myself some more space to write some more cool lyrics and reinforce the vaguely art-and-drug-related imagery.

Creating a bit more variance in intensity throughout. This is another thing that has come naturally as I became a better artist (in my opinion) but I really wanted to introduce some big troughs and peaks in terms of energy. For example, this can be seen in the first Chorus, where it slows down and becomes a lot more subdued, and the final Chorus, where I go ham on the vocal performance and fill out the band's orchestration a little.

also real quick i just want to passion project (verb me and my friends made up) a little with how cool i think the vocal effect is in the first chorus. i put two separate vocal takes into one channel, sent them as a bus to a new track, summed that track to mono, sent the first track to two separate reverb sends, summed one of THOSE to mono, and eq'd it all to sit nice and creepy, and it's actually just really fucking cool and a good reminder to experiment with weird random shit in any art project ok cool? ok cool.
-e.g. in Mayday I put one set of vocals through a (digital) guitar amp.-

...

...yeah that's kind of it? Other than the little Fun Fact! that I drew that hand myself. I literally just sat at the window, put my left hand into that position and treated it like a 2D Image, thinking less about the fact it's a real-life object with depth and instead trying to see the flat lines that that object naturally creates.

I said this in the Discord server but I used to copy cool frames from Anime I really liked, and the principles translate pretty well!

Push (Song)

The only one that's 1:1 with when it released!

This was a very fruitful exercise in trying to hold back. I found myself beginning to get flustered and overwhelmed around the time I started working on this one, so I tried to use that as an opportunity to focus more on the Mixing side of things instead of Writing/Arrangement/Layering. I'm still extremely happy with those aspects of this song, it just wasn't my main focus.

It's actually a rare instance where there's a decent amount of real/live instruments, instead of mostly Virtual Instruments and Synths. The entire first Verse and Chorus is comprised almost entirely of live instruments, the only exceptions being the Cajon, Tambourine, Shaker and that weird creepy Piano/Keys Synth. I even played Guitar myself for this one! :O

Fun Fact! The clicky percussion thing you hear in the right ear, beginning at about 0:43 (more prominently at about 0:57) is actually the left analog stick of a GameCube controller! (Put through a bunch of Chorus, Phaser and Flanger)

It also features a lot of samples from the original project file of the 2020 Demo, namely the Backing Vocals in the first verse, and some Acoustic Guitar stuff.

While the original Demo was written about someone I knew who seemed to be pushing away all their friends to wallow in their own negative mental state, this updated version is a sort of inversion; a sarcastic, dramatic message to myself - from myself - that pushing the people you love away is a terrible, terrible idea.
To that end, it starts off pretty blunt and on-the-nose, almost reinforcing the idea that I *should* push people away, then slowly gets aggressive in the idea, before boiling over to a warning ("I fucking dare you")

It also relates to an image I have of my past self, which is not a good one, to put it politely. I used to be an angry, resentful, arrogant and emotionally-unaware person when I was young, and while I was young enough that I can easily forgive that past version of myself, I find it important to remember just how much I don't want to become that again, which is where the lines like "that straw man you burned's just an effigy" and "He's nothing next to the man who you are yet to be." come into play.

Combining those ideas creates a song that is essentially me warning myself that if I'm not careful with how I treat the people I love, I could very easily spiral into a person even worse than what I consider to be the worst version of my self.

...man this commentary is beginning to feel very self-indulgent but WHATEVER Music Video time

Push (Music Video)

A Bright Silver Lining Attached To An Unexpected Grey Cloud

As mentioned earlier, this video was never really intended to exist, as we were meant to make a video for The Lie of Black and White instead. However, after arriving to the warehouse and realizing we basically had no way to bring what we wanted to life, I had a bite to eat, went to the gym, relaxed, calmed down and recouped my thoughts with my Film Student buddies and worked with them to create a different-but-also-very-cool music video, which we did successfully!

At the point where we were meant to film TLoBaW, the only other songs that were finished were Push and DTiP, and we all unanimously agreed that Push would work better for a strict deadline.
They had recently been thinking about this cool technique in which you speed up a song by 2x, sing along with it on-film, then slow it down for the video, and we thought it would be really cool to use that.
We then thought it would be a cool idea to have a bunch of shit thrown at me/poured on me while I was singing, partly to accentuate that faux-slow-mo feel, but also to create a feeling of pushing through the negative feelings to reach out to someone, in the sense of Me to my Friends, but also relating to Me singing a warning At Myself.

Everything else fell into place pretty naturally. We brainstormed and filmed over a total of like one and a half days so we went on a shopping run to find party poppers and streamers to use, as well as the infamous Black Charcoal Body Wash that was poured over my head, set up in their living room and filmed as many takes as we could (3) before we had to pack up.

It was pretty heartbreaking to lose the opportunity of filming that initially-planned video, but I'm very, very happy with what we ended up with.

Mayday

The One That Scared Everybody

Not Very Fun Fact! This was originally going to be a completely different song. I had this big, extravagantly dense song idea in my head that I thought would fit perfectly, but as my sight kept flitting back and forth between my mind's eye and the calendar, I began to realize that there was no way in hell that I could finish that idea + another song before my self-imposed deadline.
(A deadline which was set for some important real-life reasons.)

I have a weirdly vivid memory (though it was only a couple weeks ago I guess) of sitting at my computer, feeling completely overwhelmed and

afraid, slinking off of my chair, crawling over to the ukulele in my room and just playing how I felt as best I could.

Frankly, given my pretty abhorrent ukulele skills, I'm extremely proud of how that little jam played out.

After playing my sorrows away a little bit, I calmed down and remembered that at the end of they day, I make the rules here, and I can simply come back to that idea another time; for now I need to vent... so I did! And to be honest, that song might be my favourite out of the five (though that'll warp and change over time.)

The message of the song is once again pretty on-the-nose, so I won't spend much time on it. It's a pit in my stomach brought to life and played for anyone who wants to hear.

In some MUCH lighter news, I'm actually going on an overseas holiday for a full, whole-ass month soon. So for the many kind people wishing me to finally take a fucking break: you win!

I'll have some goodies lined up in advance to release while I'm gone, but I'm making it a rule that the moment I feel like I'm doing 'work', I stop whatever it is immediately.

Undoubtedly, this will result in me coming back ready to work on what I love, and more importantly for right now, should help assuage fears people might have about me overworking myself or properly succumbing to burnout.

Atlas is gonna put it down for a while, so let him rest when he does.

Compelled by Hindsight

fuck mate i dont even know.

I can't even lie, I was in a complete fucking fugue state when I worked on this song. I would get on the PC, blink, and suddenly I'd made progress on a song. Rinse and repeat for a bit under a week and apparently, the result is Compelled by Hindsight.

The only two conscious ideas I had in mind were:

1. I wanted it to be FUNKY

2. I wanted to slip in a bunch of lyrical references to past songs, some subtle, some not. There's a justification to be mined about "reconciling with the past" or something but I really just thought it would be cool.

Again, I was in a fugue state, so instead of trying to justify my decisions after the fact, I'm just going to list every intentional lyrical reference in the song.

*"All your **wiles** and painted plaster."*
  - Storm and a Spring, TFaR, Thermodynamic Lawyer

*"The **pain**. The regret. The slow **disdain**."*
  - bargaining/compromise (I also used to use 'disdain' a lot in general.)

"Every thought that you cannot dismiss."
  - The Moss

*"When did your **Ego** grow."*
  - Cage, Art and Nerd

"***The grin you wear** seems awful churlish."*
  - Fine, I'm Fine

"*Self-puppeted marionette plays poet, director **and whole damn cast.**"*
  - contempt.

"*but underneath that face, there lay it: **a message from the past.**"*
  - does it sound familiar?

"*so bust out those rotten **rose-tinters.**"*
  - I use 'rose-tinted' all the time tbh pick your poison

"*so get ready **the salt and the tincture.**"*
  - The Ballad of Dr. Jekyll and The Mr. Hyde Jive

*"A **thin veneer** stained faux-quixotic."*
  - The Mind Electric

*"Perfect your **novel**."*
  - Gothic Whore, or The Novel Lyric Hunt

*"**The Pan Man**."*
  - 20XX

*"**The Wicked.**"*
  - Ain't No Rest for the Wicked

*"**The Stranded Cynic.**"*
  - Taken for a Ride

*"**The Emperor's New Album**"*
  - Thermodynamic Lawyer

*"you're **sick of being the mean**."*
  - wings of wax.

*"your **sacred** wisdom..."*
*"...you're just **a simple, lowly, degradated human being.**"*
  - Greener

*"**Compare who you are to what you see.**"*
  - Savages

...and that's all! I really do appreciate all of you for letting me essentially scream at a void for a living. I would be doing this even if I were still working at my old, damned factory job, to an audience of myself, but it's nonetheless incredibly baffling and surreal that I can instead do it as a career.

So here's to a long one! Free from burning out and selling out alike!