**Duke Special**

**‘Oh Pioneer’
Out 9th July 2012
Label: Adventures in Gramophone**

Duke Special is an artist aptly named. Dynamic, musically ambitious & bracingly eccentric, with his inimitable style and lush musicality. Hailing from **Belfast** with a sound that is self-confessed “hobo-chic”, Duke Special - AKA the endlessly inventive **Peter Wilson** - is once heard, never forgotten. Blissfully at home in his own alluring genre of beautifully bruised romanticism, Duke Special inhabits a world unlike any other - a world filled with vaudeville-esque sensibility, sing-a-longs and addictive melodies.

On July 9th, Duke Special will be releasing his first new “commercial” music album ‘Oh Pioneer’ since "I Never Thought This Day Would Come" in 2008. Of his new record Duke has this to say;

"*Standing on the edge of releasing a new album is a daunting task. Behind you are the sessions and songs you have recorded previously, some popular, some well known, some dear to your own heart but not celebrated, some completely overlooked...  ahead are other peoples' expectations, your own hopes for the record, the worry of shitty reviews, paying the bills and so on but... I love the adventure.*

*"Wooden Fingers Puppet Theatre Company, The Bank of Ideas, a banned Iranian children's book about a fish, a pirate who wants to retire, a bar man who hears people's stories whether he likes it or not, the human condition and late night conversations with friends on the roof of the 'Oh Yeah' building about your dreams are just a few of the ingredients to go into "Oh  Pioneer".”*

It is these ingredients and more importantly Duke’s lyrical and song craftsmanship that makes ‘Oh Pioneer’ such a joy to listen. Highlights include ‘**Stargazers of the World Unite’**, ‘**Little Black Fish’**, ‘**How I Learned To Love The Sun’** and of course ‘**Punch Of A Friend**’ which is available as a free digital download via his website, [www.dukespecial.com](http://www.dukespecial.com).

In support of ‘Oh Pioneer’ Duke will be heading out on an extensive tour this May across the UK.

**Tour Dates**

Tue 15 May Birmingham Glee Club

Wed 16 May Nottingham Glee Club

Thu 17 May Stockton ARC

Fri 18 May Edinburgh Pleasance Theatre

Sat 19 May Glasgow Oran Mor

Sun 20 May Leeds The Wardrobe

Mon 21 May Cardiff Glee Club

Tue 22 May Colchester Colchester Arts Centre

Thu 24 May London Union Chapel

Fri 25 May Manchester Deaf Institute

Sun 27 May Norwich Open

Mon 28 May Exeter Exeter Phoenix

Tue 29 May Brighton Komedia

**Social Media Links**

[www.dukespecial.com](http://www.dukespecial.com/)
[www.facebook.com/DukeSpecial](http://www.facebook.com/DukeSpecial)
[www.twitter.com/dukespecial](https://twitter.com/#%21/dukespecial)
[www.youtube.com/dukespecialofficial](http://www.youtube.com/dukespecialofficial)

***Editor Notes – Tracks Listing and Background***

1. *Stargazers of the world unite* - (A love song for astronomers)   A group of friends on the roof of the Oh Yeah building in Belfast, having a few drinks and daring to tell their dreams to each other

2. *Little Black Fish* - I heard a documentary about a children's book written by the Iranian author Samad Behrangi. Although written for children, the story was a thinly veiled critique of the authorities and their attempts to curb freedom of thought. Behrangi was imprisoned for his writing.

3. *Punch of a friend* - In John Steinbeck's novel 'East of Eden' there is a character called Adam Trask who at one stage in the book has been shot and abandoned by his wife. She leaves him wounded, depressed and alone to bring up their twin boys. After a few months, in which the character sinks further into depression, neglecting to even give his children names, a friend who is a neighbouring farmer decides he must do something about it. Upon visiting this extremely despondent and listless soul he makes him stand up and in an act of brave friendship he punches him to the ground before helping him up and sitting down with him to give his children names. This marks the beginning of Adam's awakening back to life.

4. *Snakes in the grass* - Two intrepid adventurers hiding in the grass at the border of a country they would very much like to go in to. They are tired, parched, hungry and getting more and more irritated at each other.

5. *Condition* - A reflection on being human.

6. *Nothing shall come between me and you* - A song of love and resolve.

7. *Lost Chord* - I remember reading somewhere that blues music was the search for the lost chord. In 1877 Arthur Sullivan wrote music to a poem by Procter which describes the author hearing the most beautiful music which included the elusive lost chord. For me the lost chord signifies our search for meaning.

8. *My Lazy Saviour* - I had the occasion to visit the abandoned RBS bank near Liverpool St Station in London a few days after members of the Occupy movement climbed through a window to set up the Bank of ideas. It was so inspiring to meet a group of people who were incensed enough by circumstances to actually act. Whatever you think of their agenda or whatever new problems arise from their actions, at least they are doing something. I found this a huge challenge to me.

9. *How I learned to love the sun* - Recently I spoke with the actors from a puppet theatre company who were telling me that many fairy tales and especially tales of monsters were based on real life persons or happenings. For example, a returning soldier disfigured by war is transformed by the tale into a creature who might steal through the bedroom window to carry the children away. I imagined being one such person, an outcast, vilified and branded but determined to re-write his own story.

10. *Always been there* - An attempt to put into words the longing which seems to attach itself to all of us. Impossible.

11. *Twice around the island* - So this pirate is having misgivings about his choice of career and his life so far. As he tips the last drop from his bottle of rum he decides to pull down the Skull and Crossbones. Sitting reflecting on a new direction for the future with his back against the side of the decking, he realises that he still loves sailing. Maybe he'll keep the boat and set out once again for the open ocean

For interviews, more information, images, and other feature ideas please contact:

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