

THE MAKING OF A WORLD ANTHEM

By Kevin Reid

The Journey Begins...

In the summer of 2004, I received an email from Aretta Swanson, the mother of two former piano students at Musical Expressions, a school I founded in Naperville, Illinois in 1989. The email spoke of her involvement with a friend and his vision to start a company focused around a "universal flag" he had created that represented oneness and other spiritual truths. She had been getting strong intuitive guidance to contact me for three weeks.

I was immediately inspired by the idea of a flag to represent humanity's oneness and felt it needed an anthem, "a world anthem" was the phrase that came to mind. I turned to God and remember thinking, "it it's meant to be, let's do it." The next morning I awoke to the song waiting to come through. Still half asleep, it pushed me out of bed to my guitar. Within 30 minutes it was complete. The energy pouring through and around me was intense. I saw it being performed throughout the world. And every time I played it thereafter, I would distinctly hear a different voice singing each phrase.

I called my younger brother Jimmy, a professional musician in LA to help me produce it. A month later, I flew him into Chicago to begin production. We had 12 days. After discussing production options and budgets, we realized that hiring musicians and going into a studio was not creatively or financially feasible. I was used to working with my own equipment, but what I had was limited. Jimmy mentioned the equipment he had stored in LA, which he used to make his last record. I said, "let's go get it". I'll never forget his laid-back "okay" reply. This was late Tuesday night on October 19, 2004. We now had 11 days.

We left the next day driving 36 straight hours to LA. Got in Friday. Rested and rummaged through storage bins and boxes to find the gear we needed. Got up Saturday and drove straight back to Chicago arriving Monday. Crashed. Woke up Tuesday and went into six days of production until literally rushing Jimmy to the airport Sunday evening. This completed the initial stage of production. Each day an aspect of the song's production revealed itself. The "we are one vortex", as I would come to call it had begun...

The Journey Continues...

I can't believe it's March 17, 2006. What started as a 3-minute song has grown into a 10-minute piece of music with an "overture", 3 main sections (the middle one being the anthem) and a jubilant South African reprise. We've produced 80 sessions to include people of diverse backgrounds from scores of nations. To date 167 people have been recorded for the project as I've flown my brother back and forth from LA so many times I've lost count. I've put over 20,000 miles on my Pathfinder and managed every aspect of what seemed like a never-ending production process.

We drove to New York, Cleveland, Indianapolis and all over the Chicago area as we turned my SUV into a digital editing suite to make use of our limited and costly time together. We packed up our Apple laptops and set up our recording equipment in houses and apartments as we made new friends and formed new bonds, while coming together to deliver a message of unity and love to the world. We also held sessions at Musical Expressions to include students, teachers and parents and had a cool session with 41 kids at a municipal building where the Young Naperville Singers rehearse.

The journey has been overwhelming as it pushed us to personal and professional limits time and again. We've cried in joy, yelled and screamed in anger and frustration, prayed and rejoiced in gratitude and humility, while overall seeing and feeling the power of "divine grace" working through and around us during every session and stage of production. The stories of "synchronicities" and remarkable occurrences are numerous and profound...

It's May 4, 2006. We're heading to Future Studios in Sedona, Arizona to mix a shorter version of what's emerged. The project has grown with 10 more sessions to over 200 people. We held one session at a Unity church adding 35 people to the Om Choir. It was a beautiful experience. Too much work and cost remains to complete the 10-minute version. We're burned out. My dad has convinced me to stop production for now and mix a "single"...

It's August 6, 2006. We spent 21 days at Future Studios with the challenge of mixing over 700 hundred tracks. Now I'm at the Mastering Lab in Ojai, California for the third and final time trying to get the mix to sound the best it can. We've run into some sonic challenges that's forcing us to compromise one aspect of sound quality for another. Jimmy has since quit. He did an amazing job. It's been an enormous and unimaginably long undertaking for one song. I'm grateful for his hard work, love and dedication. I couldn't have done it without him. Now it's up to me to finish the process and make the final decisions. Good for my confidence issues...

It's April 3, 2007. I can talk for hours about what has happened (though anyone who knows me knows that's never been a problem) and not even begin to capture the enormous depth of this project. From production to personal interactions, to needs being met in consistently unexpected ways. This has truly been a remarkable journey...

My personal hope for the anthem, along with the purpose of my life is to inspire unity and love throughout the world as more and more of us awaken to the eternal truth of Oneness and strive to live it. "We are one" is not a lofty abstract platitude irrelevant to our daily lives. It *is* the awareness needed to shift our individual and collective consciousness from separation and fear to unity and love. It's up to each of us to '*be the change we wish to see in the world*' as Gandhi stated. The time has come to remove the obstacles within that keep us from living "the truth of who we are" for the blessing of our families, communities, nations and the world.

*The release of "**WE ARE ONE (A World Anthem)**" on Light, Love & Power Records debuts mysticpop recording artist **Kevin & The Sacred Fire**. To hear the anthem, meet the performers and learn more about Kevin Reid visit **aworldanthem.org**.*