

STRAND  
OF OAKS  
HEAL

DEAD  
OCEANS

# STRAND OF OAKS

## HEAL

Goshen '97  
HEAL  
Same Emotions  
Shut In  
Woke Up To The Light  
JM  
Plymouth  
Mirage Year  
For Me  
Wait For Love

CATALOG #: D0C086  
RELEASE DATE: JUNE 24, 2014  
FORMAT: CD/LP/DIGITAL  
CD BOX LOT: 30  
LP BOX LOT: 25  
GENRE: ALTERNATIVE/INDIE ROCK  
KEY MARKETS: PHILADELPHIA, CHICAGO,  
NEW YORK, LOS ANGELES, INDIANAPOLIS,  
AUSTIN

TERRITORY RESTRICTIONS: NONE  
VINYL NOT RETURNABLE

CD UPC: 656605138626



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DIGITAL UPC: 656605138664



COLORED LP UPC: 656605138633



From the first bars of *HEAL*, the exhilarating melodic stomp of 'Goshen '97' puts you right into Tim Showalter's fervent teenage mindset. We find him in his family's basement den in Goshen, IN, feeling alienated but even at 15 years old, believing in the alchemy and power of music to heal your troubles. "The record is called *HEAL*, but it's not a soft, gentle healing, it's like scream therapy, a command, because I ripped out my subconscious, looked through it, and saw the worst parts. And that's how I got better." *HEAL* embodies that feeling of catharsis and rebirth, desperation and euphoria, confusion and clarity. It is deeply personal and unwittingly anthemic.

Showalter was on tour, walking home on a mild autumn night in Malmo, Sweden, when he first felt the weight of the personal crisis that would ignite him to write *HEAL*. "It was a culmination of pressure," Showalter recalls. "My marriage was suffering, I'd released a record I was disappointed in, I didn't like how I looked or acted...so I'd gone on tour, I was gone about two years! I didn't take time to think about failure, but I knew I was going deeper and deeper...I was thinking, I have this life, but it's not my life, I haven't done it right..."

When Showalter returned, he wrote 30 songs in three weeks, a process that proved difficult, but cathartic and at times invigorating. Previous Strand Of Oaks records were more skeletal, raw examples of folk-rooted Americana with occasional rock and electronic currents, that have now come to the fore. *HEAL* is a bold new beginning, with a thrilling full-tilt sound that draws on Showalter's love of '70s, '80s and '90s rock and pop, with the singer and guitarist playing the intense valedictory confessor.

Crucial to *HEAL*'s sound was the man who Showalter chose to mix the record, the stellar alt-rock icon John Congleton. Showalter also re-connected with Ben Vehorn, synth expert and studio engineer extraordinaire, and drummer Steve Clements, who provides *HEAL*'s thunderous, sinewy drive. Songs such as 'Shut In', 'Plymouth' and 'Woke Up To The Light' have a classic construction and mood, recalling '70s power-pop/ballads and the yearning ache of Big Star's late, great Chris Bell. Many of the songs on *HEAL* reveal an electronic undercarriage and towering drums that push the album's wired dynamic to its stretching point, especially on 'For Me', which expertly bridges the album's twin decades of influences. And if 'Goshen '97' recalls the molten energy of Dinosaur Jr, that actually is J Mascis on lead guitar. Despite the initials, the album's smoldering 7-minute epic 'JM' is not a Mascis tribute, but to the late Jason Molina, about having his music as comfort no matter how bad things get.

Which brings us to another crisis, this time much more serious and immediate. *HEAL* was scheduled for mixing on Dec. 26, 2013. Driving on the freeway Christmas Day, Showalter and his wife were involved in a car accident with a semi-truck, and were fortunate to walk away with their lives. Showalter suffered a, "pretty severe," head trauma, "which affected me much more than I realized at the time." Fearing delays, Showalter didn't let Congleton know about it, so the mixing session went ahead. "Being on the verge of death, and my thoughts being so closely tied to that, changed the album's direction," Showalter claims. "Together, we pushed it toward a much more cathartic sound that forces the listener to where I was at that exact moment, somewhere between almost dying and being absolutely fearless."

*HEAL* is not just a saviour for its creator, but for anyone who needs reminding of music's ability to heal, or just thrill. Showalter is taking out a full band to play, and finally, the kid who wanted to be a rock star at 15 might get his chance. Finally, he and Strand Of Oaks have much to celebrate.

### SELLING POINTS

1. On *HEAL*, Strand of Oaks moves from sparse folk songs into fully fleshed out stadium burners and a big rock sound, while losing none of the lyrical potency of their previous albums.
2. Lead single "Goshen '97" features Dinosaur Jr's J Mascis on guitar
3. Extensive US touring planned. Strand of Oaks has previously toured with Tallest Man On Earth, Phosphorescent, Crooked Fingers, and Bowerbirds.
4. Album LP will be available on limited-edition clear vinyl



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