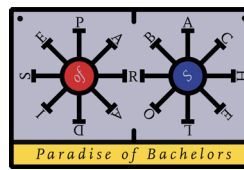
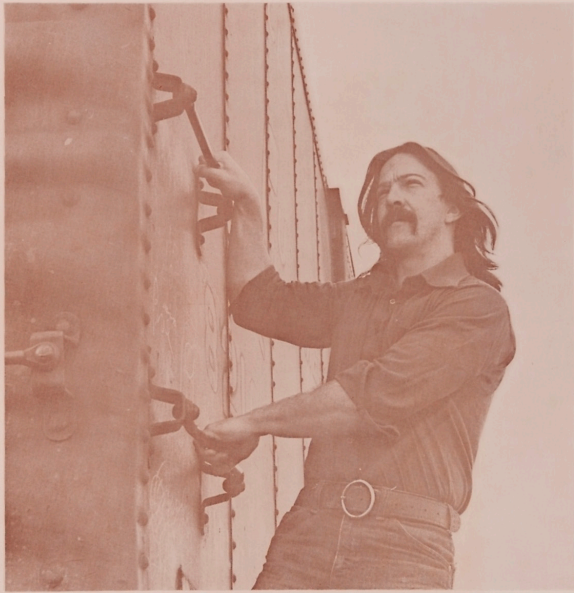


# KENNY KNIGHT • CROSSROADS •



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The first-ever reissue of the private-press country-rock rarity by Colorado auto body painter, Marine, and garage band lifer **Kenny Knight**—he played in the original '60s **Black Flag**—*Crossroads* recalls a homebrew *American Beauty*-era **Grateful Dead** in its world-weary, low-key mood and indelible songwriting. Faded, anxious, melancholy, and beautifully woozy, this out-of-time document belies its 1980 release date. Produced in collaboration with **Numero Group**, it features liner notes by writer and collector **Michael Klausman** and Kenny himself.

*"I've been shook up, stood up, and refused.  
 I've been put down, shoved 'round, and confused.  
 It won't be long; I'm holding on."*

I met up with Kenny Knight in the parking lot of a Guitar Center at the southern end of Denver a couple years back. He was there to drop off a guitar that needed to be repaired, and I took that as a sign that he was still involved with music. He did confirm that was the case, for which I was glad. Despite the intervening decades since Kenny had released his sole LP, it was easy to recognize him as he stepped out of his pickup truck; although his hair was shorter, he still retained the compact frame and thoughtful gaze you see on the cover of *Crossroads*. He struck me as being somewhat shy and diffident, a person who values his privacy and probably wary about some random guy being interested in the music he'd made long ago.

About a year and half before our meeting, I came across Kenny's record sitting in the bins at a shop in Denver, and it just had that look: sepia tones, a rugged guy hanging off a train, all original songs, a pedal steel player in the credits. Promising stuff, the only thing I was unsure about was its 1980 release. Yet from the first couple of notes I was totally elated, for these were beautifully well-crafted songs, timeless, really, and impossible to date if it hadn't been for the copyright on the back of the LP cover. It turned out there was nary a mention to be found on Google of this album, and none of my collector friends had ever seen it. Now, I realize there's nothing more obnoxious than reading liner notes which paint some self-aggrandizing portrait of the heroic record-digger, and that's certainly not what I'm trying to do here. The fact of the matter is this LP and its songs, which are simply undeniable; if I hadn't picked up *Crossroads* and passed it around, it would only have been a matter of time before someone else did.

There's a very singular combination of world-weariness and hope running throughout *Crossroads*, a still timely grappling with the realities of getting by in this country. You can hear it most clearly in "America," which is at turns a paean to this nation, as well a plea to it: "don't lock me out." This juggling of sophisticated dualities extends even to his love songs, as on "One Down" (possibly the album's finest track, and one which could sit comfortably next to *American Beauty*'s best), where he asks, "how much can one heart take?" while still acknowledging that he'll "stay in love forever more."

As so often is the case, life got in the way of Kenny's music, and even after crafting such a perfect LP, his hopes and dreams would remain unrealized, with family obligations and service to his country ultimately having to take precedence. As we talked in that Guitar Center parking lot, I discovered a quietly humble man, proud of the album he'd made and seemingly appreciative that I'd expressed interest, that the folks for whom I'd been playing it also thought it was great. It was sadly obvious, though, that he didn't think *Crossroads* had received the reception he felt it had deserved; he told me rather regretfully that he had tossed all the leftover copies of the pressing into a dumpster at some point during the 1990s. And while he didn't expressly say it, I got the sense that he had no other choice but to throw them out, as if he just couldn't face the album's commercial failure any longer. Some records take a while to find their audience, however, and *Crossroads* is one of them; it's just a matter of holding on.

**Michael Klausman**  
 Longmont, Colorado  
 January 2015

*"An understated Colorado country rock gem, unknown and unloved since its release 35 years ago. It's bound to get the audience it deserves this May, however, thanks to a reissue from the Paradise of Bachelors label. Blending the dusty acoustic rambles of the Dead circa 1970, the world weary ache of White Light-era Gene Clark and Knight's own brand of faded Americana, the ten tracks here offer up a shot of pure, private press pleasure. While the pedal steel and warm backing vocals are as lovely as a Rocky Mountain sunrise, there's an intensity and melancholy seared into every moment here."*

- Tyler Wilcox, Aquarium Drunkard

## KENNY KNIGHT CROSSROADS

- + **label:** Paradise of Bachelors
- + **catalog number:** PoB-18
- + **formats:** LP; CD; digital (*vinyl is not returnable*)
- + **release date:** May 12, 2015
- + **UPC-LP / UPC-CD:** 616892257646 / 616892257547
- + **genre(s):** country-rock/folk-rock
- + **territory restrictions:** Japan
- + **LP / CD box lots:** 10 / 30

- |                            |                                      |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| A1. "Does He Hide" 3.22    | B1. "To Be Free" 5.46                |
| A2. "One Down" 3.32        | B2. "Baby's Back" 2.05               |
| A3. "All My Memories" 3.24 | B3. "You Can Tell Me I'm Wrong" 4.11 |
| A4. "Carry Me Down" 3.32   | B4. "Whiskey" 3.25                   |
| A5. "Jean" 4.48            | B5. "America" 3.04                   |

- + First-ever reissue of the private-press country-rock rarity by Colorado auto body painter, Marine, and garage band lifer Kenny Knight
- + RIYL **The Grateful Dead**, **The Youngbloods**, **Gram Parsons**, **Gene Clark**, **Lawrence Hammond**, **F.J. McMahon**, pedal steel guitars, and Leslie speakers
- + Available on 150g virgin vinyl as an LP, with heavy-duty reverse board matte jacket, and liner notes by Kenny Knight and writer and collector **Michael Klausman**, as well as on gatefold CD and digital formats
- + Vinyl edition includes digital download coupon
- + For more information: <http://www.paradiseofbachelors.com/pob-18>
- + PoB artist page: <http://www.paradiseofbachelors.com/kenny-knight>



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