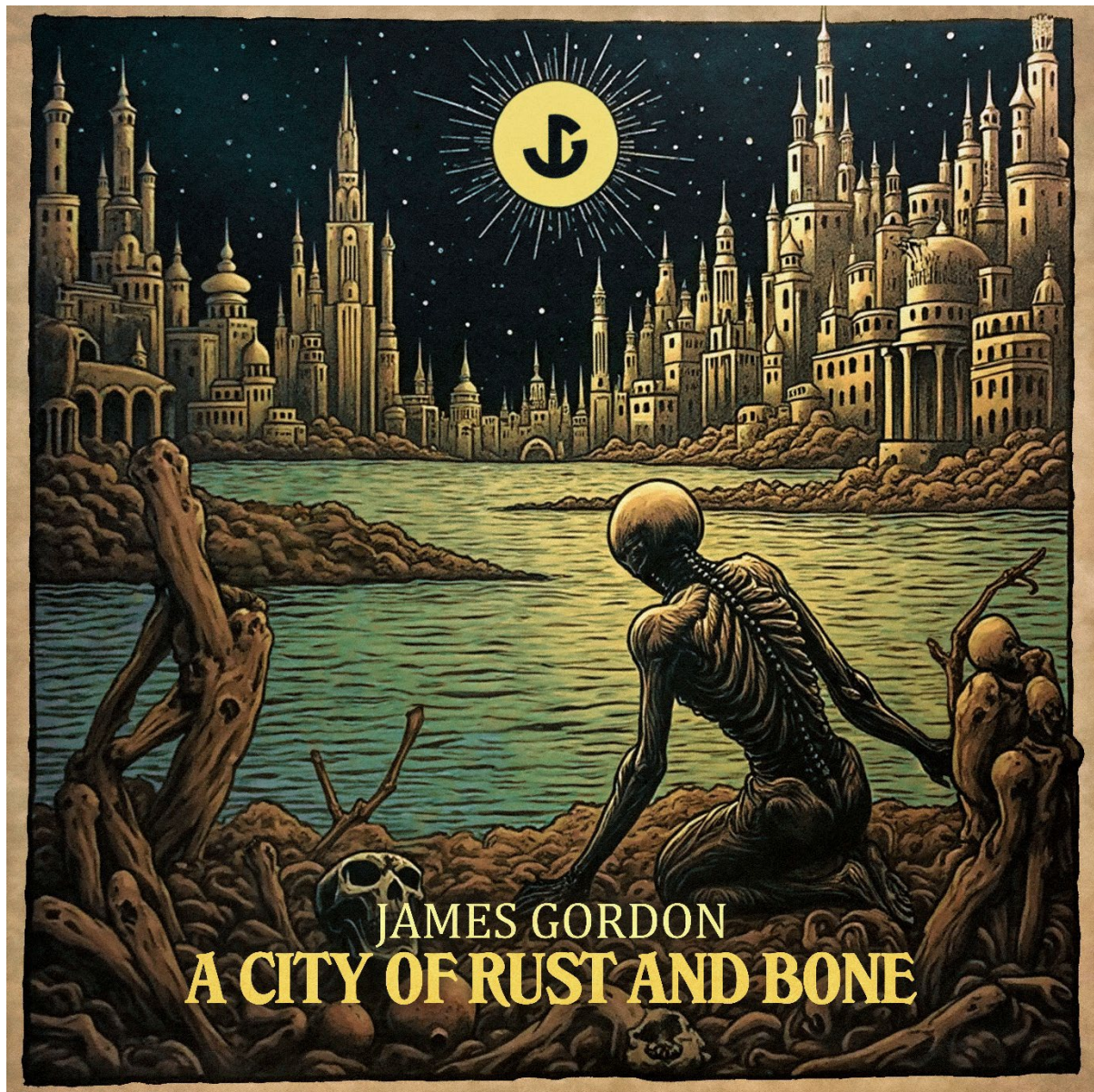


A City of Rust and Bone

Cosmic horror themes, using writers like Samuel Taylor Coleridge, H.P. Lovecraft, Robert Chambers, and Clark Ashton Smith as lyrical and thematic inspiration.

Length: 31:32



A City of Rust and Bone (4:05)

Collage technique used in the introduction, layering in sound design and samples and then carving away in a more gestural and sculptural approach to reach the final piece. Berio and

Wishart were seeded exemplars for the vocal sounds and the idea of struggling to speak and sleep talk/mumbling in the outro.

Clockwork Sky (5:57)

Built around an altered guitar tuning (D A D G# A D). Using Hungarian Gypsy scale as a jumping off point, this tuning led to different areas of compositional space than I would normally explore. Use of dodecaphony inspired by Schoenberg as a melodic idea, though adjusted slightly to fit the piece rather than strict serialism. Another use of breaths and vocal utterances inspired by Berio and Wishart's work.

Once and Future Queen (6:11)

Meter uses bars of 5/8 interspersed with 6/8 and 4/4, switching to 6/8 in the pre-chorus. Bowed acoustic guitar explorations and sound design in the introduction. Vocal improvisation in the introduction. Lyrical approach was inspired by David Bowie's collage method.

Orphan's Curse (1:16)

Miniature. Lyrically based on a section of Coleridge's 'Rime of the Ancient Mariner', I wanted this to evoke a sea shanty style piece, hence the 6/8 feel. One of the prompts for this piece was based on manipulating and altering the length of the phrases I was composing on the guitar for the main theme. Accordion was added right at the end when I queried the system and it offered a prompt about seeing the obvious.

Lords of the Lamp (6:38)

A piece that was prompted by words associated with lighthouses and the sea. The sound design came first, with a recreation of a piercing foghorn and the siren's song over the top. Lyrically and narratively, it hints at a murderer's descent into madness. The shift to a more dissonant harmony in the chorus led to a challenge of finding a pleasing melodic line for the vocal. This type of friction, a sense of being painted into a corner by the prompts and the previous choices I made and still trying to make it work, is a good representation of what The Composition Engine is useful for, pushing me into new areas of conceptual space.

Roll the Bones (5:54)

Another piece that began based on a shanty / work song rhythmic feel. This led to the lyrical aspects of the chorus touching upon shanties like 'A Drop of Nelson's Blood' – also known as 'Roll the Chariot' and 'Bully in the Alley' – as jumping off points. This ultimately led to the interplay of group vocals and lead vocal in a counterpoint in the verses. The clicking of the recorders, which I'd composed for another piece but had removed (prompt: recycle & re-use), reminded me a little of clacking bones. The canon-like round is inspired by 'Fire Leap' from *The*

Wicker Man. The shouted chant in the chorus was added at the very last moment to add some momentum to the piece.

Shadows Waiting (1:57)

Spoken word piece that serves as the epilogue for the EP, based on a small fragment of Lovecraft's writing shaped into something that knitted the narrative of the preceding songs together. My initial idea – again based on a prompt – was to explore the use of *sprechstimme* though the result ended up being more narration than anything else.