

August 10th, 2014: [I Partyed \(Almost\) Every Night I Was on the Planet:](#) In the obscure ways of art, or distraction, this mix started with a song from a cd my son Tom left in my car years ago. For some reason that I mercifully can't recall, I named the tune "miscommunication" and started a mix with that name. Through many permutations of the mix, I kept that song, only much later identifying the actual song and looking up the title, Tir na nOg. As you can see from the front cover, the song (or at least the title of the song) has some relevance for a tired, old palooka who has been having sinus headaches for the past six months. (Tir na nOg is also, inevitably, a video game!) I waited and waited to get over the headaches before I published this mix. Alas, I still have them. In an act of faith, in concert with the mix's theme, I am letting it go. Because after all, rain or shine, I have actually partied (almost) every night I've been on the planet, most especially – but not exclusively – when the day's work has gone well.

Here was an earlier effort to launch this mix (and the cover photo is from this night; the back photos are from a weird art installation in Paris and me in our kitchen insisting that "I partied every *expletive deleted* night I was on the planet."

March 28, 2014: I've had what I hope is a sinus headache for close to two months. I'm thinking I got it one rainy day, wait, I'm an historian, I can at least identify that day, February 17th, so perhaps it isn't two months or, more likely, I already had it then. So let me begin again. I think I got it walking the 2.5 miles to Xavier on one of those really cold days in January. I think I had it by late January or early February. The point is that for the last two months of the gestation of this mix, I've been trying not to think I have a brain tumor. So I finally went to the doctor and am seven days into the antibiotics. It does seem to be going in the right direction but the pain in my forehead (or perhaps not even pain, more like an inflated balloon in my head) is still undeniably there. So, my larger point is, what, I thought at 58 my themes were going to get more light-hearted? No, death, decline, and degeneration remain. But, with reference to the title, well, I'm at it again tonight. Why the hell not? This might be my last night on earth. And I've, on the whole, enjoyed earth. So I'm savoring the day, a long good day that started at 5:30 this morning, moving now into night. Cooking up a storm and reflecting on why I enjoy it so much: cooking is a momentary stay against confusion (to borrow Frost's famous line about poetry). No matter how the day has gone, cooking always seems to make sense, something needed and purposeful, pulling together disparate things, fighting entropy, and (briefly) bringing something new into the world. And then it's over and only disorder remains.

Side one: Angst and Anger 1. dreams old men dream – cold war kids: the chorus is what gets me and then it ends with this: "What would you think of me/ if I told you I haven't slept in weeks/I've been up chasing my childhood with a pen/ These are dreams old men dream" 2. Anhoi polloi – the most serene republic: after Tir na nOg, this cut is

the genesis for the mix (with its “I see real as an aging face”). It even seems to reference my headaches: “I hope, I plead/This reaches someone soon/ - before this head becomes nobody much later.” Then ends with this: “The blitz is in the grandkids now, with elders feeling so left out” 3. Pray for rain – massive attack: “as they crane their necks to pray for rain” – shift from personal decay to broader environmental collapse, still one of my favorite themes 4. Pine st – cold war kids: “but I could never show you/the inside of my home” – I love that. “Hear my best friend’s voice over an old friend’s song” – in a house with bad wiring and collapsing stairs. 5. Never going home – phantogram: the opening line, “baby, don’t die on me/I believe in trust” drew me to the song. Here’s the middle verse: Mama you scream to me/“After all these years”.../Daddy you point the gun/Oh this holiday is fun. 6. The point of it – yo la tengo: I guess, generally, this is a fairly dark song. It ends: Say that we’re afraid/Say the night is cold/Honey, that’s okay/If we’re getting old/If we’re not so strong/If our story’s told/That’s the point of being loved. But it does have these lines too: When I’m standing next to you/That’s the point of it/When there’s no one but us two/That’s the point of it.

Intermission 7. Backyards – broken social scene: I love these guys; they don’t publish enough music. “They lost their lives in backyards.” 8. But we are on mars – the tipsy Fairfields: I was trying to fix my mom’s message machine. It would keep one message, but then wouldn’t answer for a second call. I got it to accept a second message, but it was distorted, and so I left the message: “Eureka. Message Two. It works. Only we’re on Mars.” The point, of course, is to have my brother Jeff’s infectious laugh on the end of the clip. But also note how my mom is with me, trying to help me get this recorded. She has the first words, “we’re all set?” and then, if you listen very carefully, right after I say, “everyone be quiet because I have to record this,” you can hear her say, quietly as instructed, “ok.” I guess she does love me. 9. Tir na nog – alcest: although one critic suggests the song provides a sense of “yearning, nostalgia, triumph and blissful peace, all without a single lyric in (discernible) English,” others say the lyrics are actually in French. Here’s one supposed version (though it doesn’t sound like this to me): Les yeux livides, s’efface lentement ma vie/Liberant, un trop plein de souffrances/ mon corp, las d’un douleureaux passé/ Fige par la peur et la mort/ J’implore la vie de laisser s’enfuir mon ame/ de cett prison de lamentation et d’agonie. Loosely (inaccurately) translated: Livid eyes, slowly clears my life/ Releasing, too full of suffering/ my body, weary of a painful past,/ Frozen with fear and death./ I implore life allow to escape my soul/this prison lament and agony. Cheerful!

side two: Intoxication and Affect 10. Strange attractor – animal kingdom: it must be chemical 11. The day you died – phantogram: I like how this echoes the attraction in the last song 12. Bottled affection (Cathedral Version) – Cold War Kids: haunting 13. You know you like it – alunageorge: weird 14. Stay ups – the most serene

republic: if you can resist this song, check your pulse. The beauty at 2:26 is
overwhelming; all about intoxication with life 15. Saturday come slow – massive attack:
don't hurry through life.