

ELBURY – MARCH 2017

*Loiter and linger. Lick at wounds.
Blush or burn. Become a better you.*

Songwriting and storytelling lie at the core of Brisbane-based alternative folk group, Elbury. Born in a brick-and-concrete pillbox on the side of Red Hill, as an acoustic folk duo. Awkward tunes in minor keys; awkward lyrics, obscure themes - the standard output of any new band trying to mark out a piece of original territory. Through the churn of the low-profile/no-profile original music scene, Elbury persisted - knowing that a band can find their own sound and beat a path forward on their own terms.

With the introduction of bass, drums and synth in recent years, the band have shifted from traditional acoustic folk to a darker alt-folk-rock sound, including progressive and ambient elements. But the music, at heart, remains the same: honest observations, translated into verse, and multiple musical elements jostled into occasional cooperation. The band defy easy categorisation, shifting between mellow jazz interludes, rollicking folk-rock triumphs and intricate Baroque passages. Winsome melodies take centre stage, with three-part harmonies and a close weave of organic and digital textures wrapped around. Without the power and bombast of harder styles of music, the beauty of the phrase and the arrangement becomes make-or-break.

In concert, Elbury's music is energetic, constantly surprising and always engaging. Songs (and sets) that lead the listener through moods, through lightness and darkness, through lush warmth and brittle emptiness. Deceptive complexity that rewards close attention. And even the odd danceable number! Elbury will take to the road in August 2017 to promote their debut LP, *Haunting Ground*.

Haunting Ground (2017)

In June 2016, the band spent eight days in the studio recording their 2017 debut LP, *Haunting Ground*. This full-length work builds on two previous EPs - *Report on the Night* (2013) and *Demasquerade* (2015). The emphasis, from the outset, was on variety of textures, moods and weights. Arrangements were adapted on the fly to build in space and to allow diverse instrumental parts to be worked in, including the glockenspiel, the melodica, the honky-tonk piano and the Animoog iPad synth.

The album deals with themes of nostalgia and obsessive reflection on the past. How do we think about our past achievements and failings and how does this shape us? Self-improvement, self-defeat, self-censorship and the little voices inside our heads.

Lead single, *Past Life Memories*, layers rich three-part harmonies over ambient guitars, building to a rolling folk-rock chorus. The song imagines a chance encounter with an old school-friend. "Hey, how are you these days?". The questions and comparisons that will inevitably arise, and the possibility of ducking down a laneway and avoiding the situation altogether. Later tracks evoke familiar suburban scenes - lazy Sunday afternoons while baking smells waft over, delving deep into family history and hardship, some summertime rain...

And, underneath it all, the hometown, the haunting ground - where the memories were made and the mind was cast.

