

MUSICAL INTRO:

If a tree falls in a forest and no one's around to hear it...it makes a sound.

Pipes. Creaks. Wind.

We are in...hard to tell...

An attic. It's an attic.

Attic sounds. The birds and the bugs living their life right outside. The voice of a woman, DEIRDRE GARDNER, broadcasts straight into your ears. Though her technical skills are suspect, she is, without a doubt, passionate, and determined to reach you. Especially you.

DEIRDRE GARDNER

Ladies and Gentlemen: we have found the music.

It had been lost, as so many things are lost, missing, disappeared, misplaced, vanished...every day, what falls into obscurity without anybody noticing, without anybody paying attention? What is locked in the attic?

A lone cricket chirps

DEIRDRE GARDNER

Let's talk about some things that have been found in an attic, or spaces like attics. Did you know that Van Gogh's "Sunset at Montmajour" was found in an attic? Or that the original handwritten manuscript of Huckleberry Finn was found in an attic? The Venus de Milo was not found in an attic, but buried in a farmer's field, unearthed by a peasant who came across some stubborn soil. Did you know that for thirty years the only copy of the pilot of I Love Lucy lay under the bed of Peppino the Clown, swept out by his widow when she finally cleaned up around the place and thought to herself "This is pretty funny." All these masterpieces only a broom sweep away from being lost to history's dustbins.

DEIRDRE GARDNER

And today, recovered from a neglected annex (that's an attic) of a suburban townhouse, one cassette tape destined to be sold in a garage sale, containing what is likely to be the first recorded concert of Wim Faros.

Pause.

DEIRDRE

So, who is listening?

The cricket.

DEIRDRE

Hello. I'm Deirdre Gardner. Welcome to my new show, "It Makes A Sound."

Deirdre hits an old windchime that has been dangling from a rafter for who knows how long.

DEIRDRE

....It's the... first and only show in the nation dedicated to Wim Faros, native son of our Rosemary Hills.

A very loud bird squawks in the distance.

DEIRDRE

Where together, we'll be part of a musical legacy. We will prepare to receive the genius that is Wim Faros, and return him like a prodigal son to this deprived land. I will be the one to provide you with news and up-to-the-minute information about the artist as I discover it.

Pause.

DEIRDRE

The name: Wim Faros. The subject: genius. And it's location. "Where is extraordinariness?" I ask myself. Don't you? Extra-ordinariness. Where is it today?

DEIRDRE

Where are the truly exceptional ones who, out of our sheer proximity to them, allow us to glimpse the intersection of our little lives with the profound? Who walks among us---is there anyone??--who walks among US...all the little us-es, us-es rolling lint off our pants, us-es squeezing avocados at the grocery store and never of course picking the ripe one, us-es driving up the side streets to work because driving frightens uses, us-es drinking chamomile, attempting inverted yoga poses, popping melatonin and crossing our fingers as we slink into bed for the night? Where can we look, here in the vast wearied landscape of Rosemary Hills, where our weathered old water tower reminds us in fading letters of past town mottos such as: "Golf Capital." Or--"Rosemary Hills Are Alive With the Whir of Commerce." Or--"Let's Tee- it in the Hills!" But where now, the best boast we can muster is "Easy Access to the Highway"? Well, here, amidst the now-abandoned golf course and its neglected grass, amidst the shuttered strip malls, and pot-holed streets, the *extra-ordinary* has tread. And the footprints linger, if you know how to look for them. And I think I do.

Pause.

DEIRDRE

My fellow people of Rosemary Hills, citizens of the world, what have we forgotten? What treasures have we hidden under cobwebs and dust?? What beauty awaits on the other side of the drywall as we wrestle fitfully in our sleep? What life lingers on these old fairways? What wonders just passed us by as we bowed our head towards a brightened 3-inch screen?

DEIRDRE

Our necks hurt, our brains are zapped from too much screen time, our souls ache, and suddenly decades have passed us by, like, poof. What are we missing? Do we remember what used to be held in the delicate folds of our heart? Don't we remember how things used to sound, smell, feel, taste? I want to.

It's time to UNPACK THE ATTIC.

Her chair squeaks. Wind through the uninsulated walls.

DEIRDRE

Today we have a mind-boggling discovery, a confirmed-to-be-authentic tape capturing what is known to be Wim Faros's debut public musical appearance, here in Rosemary Hills, in the year 1992. And so we're not gonna rush this moment, like we rush everything, we're gonna slow down, we're gonna savor, we are going to consider the tremendous significance of this relic in order to fully appreciate it.

Deirdre reaches for an object.

DEIRDRE

And thus, it is my privilege on this day of days to hold in my hands this freshly discovered tape. It's an ordinary looking cassette tape--but it's possible some of you have never held a cassette tape, I will explain. Because though it contains ...the stuff of wonder, to the human eye It is simply a 3.5"x2" plastic clear plastic rectangle, with two holes in the middle. The holes each have 6 little teeth...non-threatening black teeth, so that you can feasibly insert...a pencil, or a pinky finger, should something go awry, if the delicate tape needs your manual assistance.

She is handling the tape, working the holes with her pinky finger.

DEIRDRE

The tape is a very thin grey strip, of course containing some magnet-magnetic properties, spooled around the left hole, and as the tape plays in a cassette tape player, the tape will run along the bottom edge of the rectangle, across a tiny magnetic strip, and the magnets pull out the music with magnetic force, until it is fully spooled around the right hole, which means the tape is finished, and you have heard the music! And that's. How a cassette tape works.

I'm Deirdre Gardner, this is It Makes a Sound. I am describing a cassette tape, perhaps the most important cassette tape that ever was.

Now, on this particular model, we have a yellowed sticker covers the smooth section of this cassette. Written on that cover in purple felt tip pen, in bubble letters, is "WIM FA." But a water spot has obscured the "ROS," leaving a purply pink splotch.

It's...pretty...like a watercolor But Underneath, with that same pen: 1992. Crudely drawn stars in multiple colors of pen, speckle the entire sticker. I mean it's really incredible that one small object can capture so much about an entire era, even just aesthetically.

Deirdre puts the tape back on the desk, and sits back.

DEIRDRE GARDNER

We all seek the soundtrack of our lives, don't we, and wish to be privy to the voices of our generation.

DEIRDRE GARDNER

Yet it is a profound rarity that an artist like Wim Faros crosses into your limited sphere of existence, like an alien prophet touching down on an ordinary Tuesday afternoon in a chainstore called The Last Tupper, suddenly making the universe crack open to reveal infinite shards of meaning barely comprehensible to you, standing there in cargo shorts holding a casserole dish.

Yes, yes. It's hard to determine the full effect of Wim Faros' music upon the simple town of Rosemary Hills in the early to mid-nineties, difficult to quantify the extent of sacred devotion he inspired in his earliest fanbase.

How do you hold a moonbeam in your hand? That was a time without social media, and it's incessant public proclamations to #trending desires of the moment. Yesterday's youth had to be more...

intuitively united... in their common affections. Had to keep the faith that even in a friendless existence... for instance, as an example... living in an inherited, furnished townhouse on the edge of Rosemary Hills Gated Golf Course Community, there were kindred souls somewhere underneath the same blue sky, wishing and waiting for connection, just like you.

A loud bird is squawking in the distance

DEIRDRE

Though perhaps at times to love in solitude, from afar, in the most generic of settings, was lonely and painful, that melancholy was trumped by a feeling of purpose, the purpose that comes from knowing that if someone out there could so perfectly capture the nuanced secrets of your soul, there must be greatness and solace in the universe indeed.

DEIRDRE

Isn't that why we listen to the music?

Pause.

DEIRDRE

ISN'T THAT WHY WE LISTEN TO THE MUSIC.
We must ready ourselves to listen to the music.

An unsettling squawking in the distance.

DEIRDRE

But I will say--even without the ease (or benefit) of cachéd fanpages and blogs serving as testimony to the Early Wim Faros Effect, the artist did manage to be a catalyst of cultural awakening in the town's zeitgeist. If a town can have a zeitgeist. ...Sure...
There is archival evidence of early reactions to Faros's artistry. In fact I happen to be in possession of documents from a Rosemary Hills resident who encountered Wim Faros in his earliest musical phase. Some of these pages are enclosed within a purple velveteen diary that I now have in front me. The writing appears to be by the hand of a 12 year old (I would estimate), and the paper is wide-ruled. And I seem to have come across... a lengthy series of haiku.

She flips through pages

DEIRDRE

Perhaps I should share just a few of these with you, for the sake of research.

A new idea!

DEIRDRE

It's a segment! We'll call it "Poetry of a Little Us"

Deirdre decides she needs a SFX for this and searches around the attic for--something apropos. It's...like a gong. She reads from the purple velveteen diary. She hits the tiny gong.

DEIRDRE

You have changed my life
By allowing me to see
Even though you don't see me

Tiny gong

DEIRDRE

I am hard to see
In a golf community
With many sand traps

Tiny gong

DEIRDRE

You have a blindspot
For almost nothing but one
In the size of me

Tiny gong

DEIRDRE

I am the catcher
You are a rare butterfly
That I cannot grasp

Tiny gong

DEIRDRE

Butterflies up close
Freak me out but you fly free
Beautiful and free

Tiny gong

DEIRDRE

I catch butterflies
Yes but I am afraid too
A contradiction

Tiny gong

DEIRDRE

Faithfully you come
To the window of my dreams
Singing la la la

Tiny gong

DEIRDRE
 What is this music?
 Like, I never heard music
 Before you played it.

Final tiny gongs

She flips through pages of the diary.

DEIRDRE
 Now those are just a few haikus,
 and there are...lots more, written
 here in Rosemary Hills circa
 1991-92, likely/most certainly
 dedicated to one Wim Faros.

A squawking in the distance.
 Cicadas nearby.

DEIRDRE
 If you're just tuning in, Hello.
 Welcome. I'm Deirdre Gardner, and
 this is the first episode of my
 show, It Makes A Sound. A
 discovery has been made in an
 attic, it's Wim Faros's first live
 album, it's the real deal it's not
 a hoax, and it's so rare the only
 known copy exists recorded from
 some distance on a cassette tape.
 There is nowhere else in the
 entire universe where you will be
 able to hear a 16-year old Wim
 Faros shaping what comes to be
 known as the sound of an epoch.
 (E-P-O-C-H). Stay with me and you
 will hear it here first, folks,
 because I have the tape, and
 you're gonna get exclusive access.

Pause.

DEIRDRE
 So we're discussing Wim Faros's
 formative teenage years as a
 musician right here in Rosemary
 Hills. We've just begun working
 towards a fuller understanding of
 the human behind the mus---

Abruptly, Deirdre is interrupted by a loud yell coming through
 a monitor. Through static, we hear a woman harshly calling,

VOICE
Who's there??

Deirdre is startled by the interruption.

VOICE
I know. I know you!!

Deirdre listens. She waits. Static. Unintelligible murmurs. Then, snoring. A beep mutes what seems to be a monitor on Deirdre's desk in the attic. DEIRDRE continues as if nothing has happened.

DEIRDRE GARDNER
Ok...ok. Ok.
Everything is good. I'm back, and I'm excited to introduce a new oral history segment of the show based on town legend and lore around Wim Faros. It's called.....

Deirdre is moving around the attic. The wind chime sways with her movement. We hear her retrieving an object off of the shelves.

DEIRDRE
"A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A
YOUNG MAN:"

A long winding sound. Deirdre is winding a music box. A mechanical version of Erik Satie's "Gymnopédie" plays from the music box, a hypnotic underscore to Deirdre's testimony.

DEIRDRE
A light in the window on the second floor, the only window on the second floor, means Wim Faros is in his bedroom, and almost always when he is in his bedroom, he is drawing on the wall. What was on the wall?? Everything was on that wall. The winds of change blew on that wall. The unfettered scrawl of Technicolor wonders, the rainbow-- a paltry container for the variety of colors applied to that wall--new color names would have to be invented.

DEIRDRE

The ongoing, overlapping, shifting images and symbols--muraled, frescoed, appliquéd on that wall, all the ideas spewing forth from the eclectic multitudes of a single creative mind:

In a blue and tan flannel shirt, his right arm braced against the drywall in an L shape above his head, the bottom of his sleeve ripped and hanging down, he looks like he's whispering secrets in a confessional, but he is drawing. There is a lava lamp somewhere, out of view of the window, it casts blobby spots that climb up and down the room, catching Wim's distorted shadow when he is out of view from the window frame... his left hand moves delicately, or scribbles furiously (he is left-handed, as statistics prove most geniuses are). If you'd been watching, over the course of several months, you would have seen his fantastic mural take shape. In the center, a five foot tall octopus with the uncannily rendered face of Diane Sawyer, her arms spread open, Christ-like, as magnolia blossoms and spiders drip from her fingers. A flock of owls flying over a forest of pine trees. Each phase of the moon, paired with a pizza pie of differing toppings: 8 personalized pan pizzas for 8 moons. A ninja army battling a family of squirrels throwing sharp acorns.

A squawk in the distance. The music box Satie has slowed to a stop.

DEIRDRE

Pages falling from a Gutenberg Bible into the gaping mouth of a Native American chief. Snoop Dog. Scully riding a Mulder centaur as Ross Perot hoverboards over their heads. He was getting political... As the seasons pass, the wall incrementally becomes an intricate map of his fertile inner life.

DEIRDRE

Repetitions of hummingbirds,
starfish, cans of beans,
numchucks. Later, peacocks.

Another squawk in the distance.

DEIRDRE

A dragon breathing fire, melting
the iceberg before it sinks the
Titanic, which passes into clear
skies. Dracula playing video games
in front of a television set
flickering with an image of
outrage from the Rodney King
riots. Toaster Strudels flying out
of toasters into the rings of
Saturn. Kurt Cobain offering an
origami swan to sobbing River
Phoenix. And hundreds of other
elegantly drawn details too small
to make out from a distance that
create a constellation of
enlightened connectivity across
the peeling beige wall.

The wind is picking up against the windows of the attic.
The crickets and cicadas are making their presence known.

DEIRDRE

And almost every night, after all
the lights in the windows of the
bungalow go dark, if you cared
enough to pay attention, you would
see the single beam of a
flashlight splice a path behind
the house, pointed towards a
lopsided shed, some forty yards
away.
And if you were standing right up
against the fence that separates
Rosemary Hills Gated Golf Course
Community from the unincorporated
land that stretched out behind the
scattered
houses of Camelia Road, you would
have hear a soulful strum of
guitar, and a sudden crescendo of
drums.
Because in this decaying shed,
surrounded by the loneliest
darkness that is suburban
darkness, is where young Wim Faros
made the music.

DEIRDRE

It was that music that pulsed
 through this town, permeated the
 air, pumped through the water.
 Did everyone harken to the call?
 No. If a tree falls in a forest
 and no one's around to hear it
 fall, does it make a sound?
 Well, I'm here to tell you: Trees
 have fallen, trees are falling!
 And you may listen, but do you
 hear??

Squawk in the distance. Cicadas.

DEIRDRE

People of Rosemary Hills, it is
 time to hear. It is time to
 hearken. Hearken. I believe in
 your ears. Wim Faros sang for you.
 You didn't know. But he will sing
 for you again. He has been lost in
 the attic, but now he is found---
 and maybe, I don't know, maybe you
 have been lost in the attic, too.
 There was greatness in our midst--
 transcendence, eccentricity,
 nuance. I'm Deirdre Gardner, and I
 believe that when a tree falls in
 a forest it makes a sound. And I'm
 inviting you to try to truly hear,
 and to remember. So stay tuned
 for my next episode when that
 music, lost but now found, will be
 born again straight into your
 ears, when you hear the first
 track from Wim Faros' debut
 concert. The first track, perhaps,
 of the rest of your life.

This has been the inaugural
 episode of the first and only show
 in the nation dedicated to the
 music and legacy of Wim Faros.
 Thank you for listening. If you
 have any information about Wim
 Faros that you think should be
 shared with our listeners, or if
 own a working cassette player DO
 NOT HESITATE TO CONTACT ME.
 Um, I guess for now you should
 just email me at ddg@a--
 no, let's not do that.

DEIRDRE

I'll create a new--yes, you can
contact wimfaros@aol---
actually no. Please contact
itmakesasound@aol.com.
Thank you.
I'm Deirdre Gardner.
Til Next Time.

DEIRDRE hits the wind chime on the rafter. It continues to
clink as she leaves the attic, heading down the stairs.

(Music. End credits)

It Makes A Sound is created and written by Jacquelyn Landgraf.
Co-directed by Jacquelyn Landgraf and Anya Saffir. Sound
designed and engineered by me, Vincent Cacchione. Original
music composed by Nate Weida. With Jacquelyn Landgraf as
Deirdre Gardner and featuring Annie Golden as the voice from
downstairs. It Makes A Sound is a Night Vale Presents
production. For more information on this show and other Night
Vale podcasts, go to nightvalepresents.com. We hope you'll rate
and review It Makes A Sound on Apple Podcasts, and that you'll
tell your friends and all sorts of other humans to listen to
the show, to harken to the trees, and remember Wim Faros.