

New York, NY, US; October 20, 2023 — **JUNO**-nominated, NYC-based jazz drummer, composer, bandleader **Curtis Nowosad** will release *If I Had*, a soul-searching record that bears a message of social justice at its core.

The drummer has a gift for marrying the personal and the political — he did so to powerful effect on his self-titled 2019 release, which presented songs dedicated to civil rights activists, and on a subsequent 2022 remix album.

With *If I Had*, Nowosad picks up right where he left off, choosing legendary tunes like “By the Time I Get to Phoenix” and Nick Drake’s “Road,” then pairing them with some of the great socially conscious songs of the twentieth century: the famed protest anthem “If I Had a Hammer (The Hammer Song)” and Stevie Wonder’s “Heaven is 10 Zillion Light Years Away.”

“There’s definitely sorrow and despair in these songs, but there’s so much hope as well,” says Nowosad. “I believe as musicians, we have the power to put positive energy into the world, even when dealing with themes of sorrow, grief or injustice,” he says. “I personally feel a responsibility to deliver a clear message of justice, but that can be joyful, as well. ‘If I Had a Hammer’ is a joyful song, but it also implies that it takes work as a society to make things right. It really takes work. When you make a completely honest statement, such as these songs do, people can relate and connect to it.”

Nowosad also calls on two trusted collaborators, guitarist Andrew Renfroe and bassist Luke Sellick, both of whom knock it out of the park.

“Andrew is irreplaceable,” he continues. “Luke and I go way back. It’s the sign of a great instrumentalist when they deliver the message of a song without words. Andrew and Luke both capture the essence of what this song is saying, just from being the type of people they are.”

The EP will be celebrated with two NYC release events: November 1st at Smalls Jazz Club and November 22nd at Rockwood Music Hall, Stage Two.

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