

BLUE HORSE OPERA by RICK MADDOCKS

New Album inspired by the climate emergency and spaghetti-western soundtracks

Album release date: November 7, 2025

BLUE HORSE OPERA is the new 17-track album by Rick Maddocks, inspired by the climate emergency and spaghetti-western soundtracks. This song cycle is not an *opera* opera—it's a *horse* opera, as in the old slang term for a western film. The songs and instrumentals fuse folk, indie, classical and country music, evoking vast, surreal landscapes and some surprises along the way. **BLUE HORSE OPERA** imagines a world upside down in which the blinding deserts of spaghetti westerns have become the toxic oil sands. A cinematic narrative unfolds against this backdrop, exploring environmental and emotional depths as it charts an oil baron's destructive path. Maddocks, composer and vocalist, also shares guitar duties on the album. He's joined by a dozen of western Canada's finest musicians, offering a rich and eccentric musical palette on which diverse sounds and motifs collide.

Supporting cast: *JP Carter - trumpet; Dory Hayley - soprano vocals; Stephen Lyons - drums; Liam MacDonald - percussion; Geronimo Mendoza - oboe and English horn; James Meger - bass; Tyson Naylor - keyboards and accordion; Dayna Szyndrowski - flamenco dance; Jon Wood - electric guitar, banjo and lap steel; Joshua Zubot - violin; Leah Abramson and Julia Ulehla - backing vocals.*

SONGS and VIDEOS: [South of Circumstance](#) and [Miner](#)



HI-RES PHOTOS: click [here](#)

THE OBLIGATORY BIO: Rick Maddocks was born in Wales, emigrated to Ontario in his youth, and eventually moved out west where he worked on literary songs and musical stories while the oil sands approached. As the years galloped past, his poetic, highly-conceptual work was interpreted by acclaimed Vancouver groups The Beige and Sun Belt. His recordings with The Beige include *01* and *El Ángel Exterminador*. With Sun Belt, he released the album-book *Cabalcó: An Extracted History* (OffSeason/Anvil Press, 2015), a faux-history about an oil-sands company town, that paved the dusty way for the **BLUE HORSE OPERA** project. **BLUE HORSE OPERA** has been presented onstage in 2025 by Pi Theatre, Vancouver Opera and VIFF Live. Maddocks's work often bridges music, fiction and stage performance. His experimental chamber opera *The Meal* premiered at the PuSh Festival in 2011, was restaged at Pacific Theatre, and was named one of The Vancouver Sun's Ten Best Concerts of the Year. It was an independent album release by The Lost Gospel Ensemble (a group of heretics). Maddocks has also published *Sputnik Diner* (Knopf/Vintage, 2001), a linked story collection, and various works of fiction in Canadian magazines and anthologies.

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MORE ALBUM INFO: <https://rickmaddocks.bandcamp.com> and www.bluehorseopera.com