



MC Taylor of
**HISS GOLDEN
MESSENGER**

on Brightblack Morning Light's
Brightblack Morning Light

As Told to Chris K. Davidson

I first heard the record when it came out in 2006. I was in my previous band at the time [The Court & Spark], and it really struck me, this record. I was living in San Francisco at the time, and that band, Brightblack Morning Light, was based out of Northern California as well. They were friends of friends, which is how I heard about them.

The first song ["Everybody Daylight"] is an incredible opening song. The whole record has a flow. It's hard for me to separate the songs. It's a mood record, for sure, where they find their zone and they stay in it.

It's not necessarily my favorite record of all time, but it's a record that hit me at an important time of my life. I had seen the band play a few times before that record came out. I thought that they were fine. But then that record came out, and it was a huge leap forward.

Evolutionarily, it was astounding. A lot of the electric piano playing was very gospel-influenced. No one was playing like that. The harmony singing was super deep. They've got the McCrary sisters on there, who are in their own right, famous gospel singers.

They were doing something at that point in time that I wanted to do, but I didn't know how. Just rhythm and vibe-wise, they magically created this record that did this really deep stuff. I remember listening to it on headphones when I was on tour in Texas. I was at Barton Springs in Austin, which is a big public swimming spring. I was listening to that record thinking that I was energized by it and also that my ego was hurt because they had found this thing. I felt like I needed to turn a page in my musical life because there were young people that were harnessing these components of music that I love and making their own sound out of it in a way that was very convincing to me.

They didn't last for very long, but that particular record is a deep one. It's a classic to me. There are a lot of heads out there that know that Brightblack Morning Light record as a secret gem. There's a lot of mystery surrounding that record. I don't know who can be credited for all those rhythms. The way the high-hat works on that album is really deep. It's a funny one because I was pretty close, in terms of proximity, to the circle of people that were involved with that record, but I know nothing about it. The mystery is intriguing to me. I suppose I could go ask someone, but I prefer to let it in this hazy space that exists in my mind.

(MC Taylor is the guitarist and frontman of Hiss Golden Messenger, an indie folk group based in Durham, NC. Their latest album, Terms of Surrender, is a 2019 release on Merge. Portions of MC Taylor's conversation have been abridged and edited for structure and flow.)

