

# Holland Hopson

## Tell a Gossip

The music on Holland Hopson's *Tell A Gossip* springs from new approaches to improvisation and sonic treatments suggested by a new instrument. Holland commissioned Jefferson Pitcher of Pitcher Guitars to build a custom electric-guitar/banjo hybrid. This new instrument allows Holland to harness traditional Appalachian banjo technique to the sustaining sounds of the electric guitar and elaborate worlds of electronic processing. "The possibilities of the new instrument really pushed my playing. The lovely sustain of the guitar encouraged me to slow down and listen during some pieces and explore the layering of sounds for others."

The seven instrumental works on Tell a Gossip range from contemplative modal tunes to droning textural explorations, from interlocking fingerpicked melodies to boisterous clawhammer blues. All of the pieces were recorded live without edits.

This is Holland's sixth solo recording and first release on Tape Drift Records.

Sound and media artist, composer and improviser, **Holland Hopson** records and performs on banjo and electronics. He often augments his instruments with custom-designed sensor interfaces connected to his own highly responsive, interactive computer programs.

Holland's previous recordings include the solo releases *Post & Beam*, *Wind Whistling in Overhead Wires*, *One 4 One*, *With Hidden Noises* and *Maps* (Grab Rare Arts)



### Tracks

Last Scattering  
Sideways Force of the Mountain  
Gravity Clocks  
Bluestone  
Texarcana  
Parallax Prism  
Just Like Today Only Slower

**Release Date** March 5 2021

**TD111**

**EPK** <https://hollandhopson.com/info/>

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## Reviews

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#### ***Post & Beam***

"...a haunting, often mesmerizing album of old songs and new sounds.

Throughout, he plays the banjo straight, with a gentle clawhammer behind his fragile-but-captivating voice. ...Hopson's individuality shines. ... It's a fascinating journey."

*The Albany Times Union* Albany NY

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#### ***With Hidden Noises***

"...a grab bag of rare sounds... like a post-apocalyptic radio transmission."

*The Austin Chronicle* Austin TX

### Gates Ensemble

#### ***16 october 2003***

"...fluent and imaginative, sustained electronic drones and whines weaving among dramatic instrumental colors."

*The Wire* UK

### For Geeks Only

For *Tell A Gossip* Holland programmed a system of audio-responsive delays using Cycling '74's Max software. He used the new multichannel capabilities of Max to divide the instrument's sound into multiple, parallel streams and process each one differently. "I love working with delays," Holland states, "but I sometimes get tired of hearing the mechanical repetition of the loops. Max allows me to subtly morph each delay and create textures that gently evolve over time." The effects range from synchronized, rhythmic gestures and overlapping accumulations of melody, to enveloping clouds of sound inspired by Robert Ashley's iconoclastic piece *She Was a Visitor*. Ashley described his work as "intended to be understood as a form of rumor." Hence, the title of Hopson's collection *Tell A Gossip*.

Holland created the album art using custom software that simulates the motion of particles interacting with virtual gravitational fields.

### Live Performances

"...a low-key but varied set that used a time-honored process in which live performance sets off computer processes..."

*The New York Times* New York NY

"And, a new and wonderful discovery for this reviewer, Holland Hopson set his haunting vocals about a desolate landscape...against layers of clawhammer banjo woven together via computer processing"

*ArtsBham* Birmingham AL

"Best Retro-Futurist: Composer and instrumentalist Holland Hopson has been a contributor to the region's avant-garde music scene for the better part of 20 years...the breadth and range of this iconoclast's musical journey has always been intriguing, albeit way outside of the box. Hopson's recent blending of traditional tunes (performed with vocals and banjo) and subtle electronics has turned him into one of the area's most mesmerizing and memorable live performers."

*Metroland* Albany NY