

# Adam Arcuragi

## *I Am Become Joy*

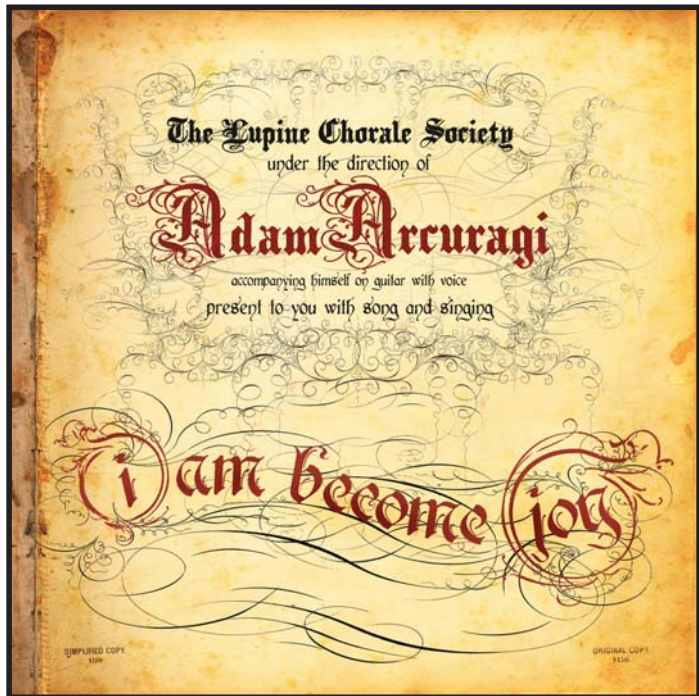
**HIGH  
two**

HT024 • CD / VINYL / MP3  
JAN 2010

High Two Recordings  
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Full-color images available upon request.



### ALBUM INFO

#### Side A

1. She Comes to Me
2. Math
3. People and Private Music
4. Almost Always
5. "Go With Them"

#### Side B

6. We Steal People's Medicine
7. The Guns That Bring the Morning Home
8. Her Festival Song
9. The Long Route 38
10. Lunch in Field Four
11. Bottom of the River

Recorded by Carter Sowers  
All songs written by Adam Arcuragi

*I Am Become Joy* features contributions by:  
Brian Christinzio of **B.C. Camplight**  
Jesse Elliott, Tom Hnatow of **These United States**  
Josh Newman of **Fan of Friends**  
David Hartley of **War on Drugs**  
and **Dawn Landes**

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"I don't know much about [Adam Arcuragi],  
but I found myself putting [his] CD in my player  
over and over again."

– *Bob Boilen, NPR's All Songs Considered*

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Like a rejection of destruction; like an answer to anxiety; like a reversal of death – *I Am Become Joy* is a prescient cut across the grain of this new depression. Adam Arcuragi's new 11-song album confirms his importance as one of the most gifted songwriters today. In some ways harkening back to the origins of recorded American folk music and in other ways continuing lineage of American independent rock, Arcuragi has positioned himself as a unique and visionary voice.

On his second full-length, Arcuragi expands on the dark, sparse style of his preceding 2006 untitled album and 2008 EP, *Soldiers for Feet*.

In the past few years, an attempt was made to create a banner under which any rotating cast of characters could rally under; a sort of brotherhood or secret society that members could join and leave at will. The Lupine Choral Society, in Adam's mind, would become a nebulous trade union of musicians for which he could recruit from locations near and far. Under that waving standard a "chapter" could be whipped up in Los Angeles and then allowed to go their own way while the trip was made to points unknown, only to find another group in another city that was ready to take up the cause again for this magnificent record album.

The backing vocals on *I Am Become Joy* invoke the feeling of a ramshackle choir almost as if each song was tracked in a different church across the wide swath of Route 80 that cuts from southern Georgia to Mississippi. There is also a rotating cast of instrumentation layered with pedal steel, dulcimer, accordion, trumpets, and even a singing saw, each song has a unique arrangement to compliment Arcuragi on vocals and guitar. *I Am Become Joy* shows the full width of Arcuragi's brilliant songwriting style in a manner befitting a man who proudly made up what he lovingly refers to as his "own phoney baloney fake religion."

This album was pointedly cut in "live chunks." Any overdubbing was done over a core of three to four live instrument takes with Arcuragi singing live for each song. The focus of the sessions (be they in New York, San Francisco or Philadelphia) was on the importance of multiple human beings playing ensemble. The idea was to record less like painting a picture and more like taking an aural photograph of a moment-span in time.

*I Am Become Joy* features guest appearances by Dawn Landes and members of like-minded artists B.C. Camplight, These United States, Fan of Friends, and The War on Drugs.

The album art for *I Am Become Joy* (which exists in three different versions for CD, vinyl, and digital download) was done by illustrator Peter Wonsowski, who also contributes his musical talent to the recordings, playing singing saw and accordion.

### ADAM ARCURAGI ON HIGH TWO



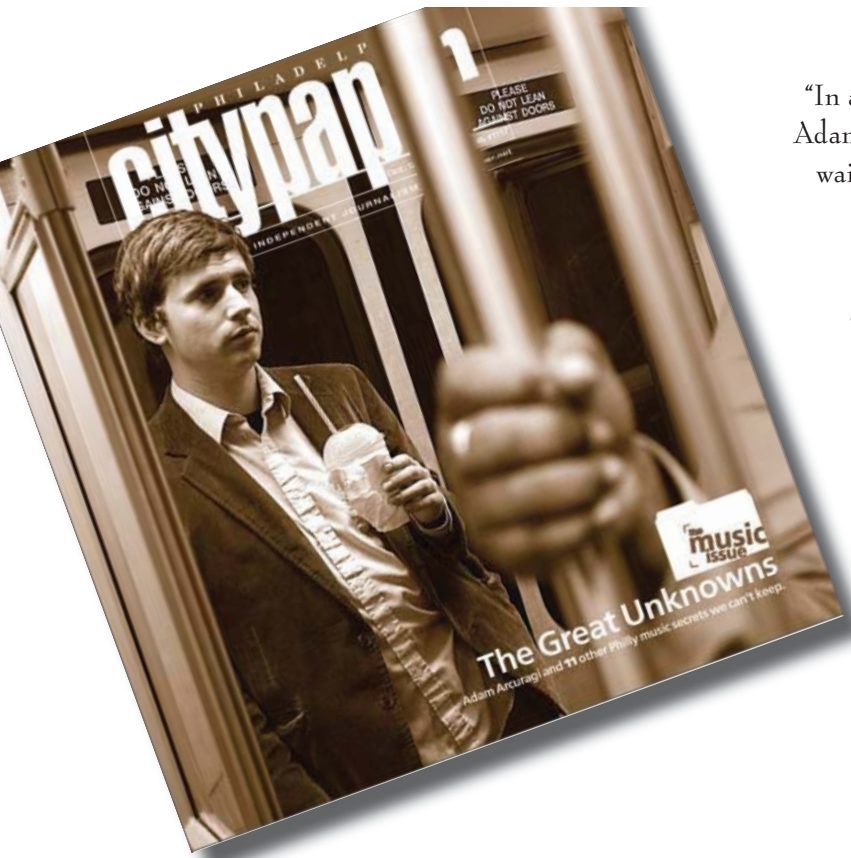
untitled debut LP  
MARCH 2006



*Soldiers for Feet* EP  
MAY 2008

# Adam Arcuragi

## SELECTED PRESS



ADAM ARCURAGI on the cover of PHILADELPHIA CITY PAPER (Music Issue 2006)

SIGNS OF LIFE IN MUSIC, FILM AND CULTURE

## Paste

### ADAM ARCURAGI ★★★½

Adam Arcuragi

[HIGH TWO RECORDINGS]

*Quiet, pleasing debut by Philadelphia poet and playwright*

You could credit this gorgeous acoustic album's success to the



melodic songwriting, the evocative lyrics or the ear massage it offers. But the biggest

draw is Arcuragi's voice. Somber but gentle, it has the mellifluous tone of an American Nick Drake, with the gruff edge of a man who can still catch his own food. He reaches for bliss again and again on this ballad-heavy album, and he finds it often enough to set this apart from all the other singer/songwriter fare it nominally resembles. *Chris Dablen*

### NPR Song of the Day {Ben Westhoff}

"In addition to his work as a poet and playwright, Philadelphia's Adam Arcuragi crafts raucous Americana ...with its from-the-gut wails, religious-themed songs and utter lack of detachment, his new album *I Am Become Joy* feels like the real deal.

### Philadelphia City Paper {Patrick Rapa}

"The new album is frickin amazing, too. Seriously. Listen to *I Am Become Joy*.... It's an earthy, dreamy, Neutral-Milky, catchy-but-not-too-catchy little epic."

### Washington Post {David Malitz}

"You hear *I Am Become Joy* and the light bulb goes on. .... The voice hits you in the gut and makes you want to be one of the people singing backing vocals. If you want to see troubadouring done right, it's your duty to catch Arcuragi."

### All Music Guide {Jon Schacht}

"There is unbridled joy inherent in even the saddest of these songs, and unforgettable images in almost every verse... An impressive debut from a promising talent."

### Paste Magazine {Catherine Prewitt}

"Adam Arcuragi makes music like some folks host parties. Equal parts revival tent and corner pub, his sophomore LP *I Am Become Joy* sounds like get-together where everyone feels at home—in the room and in their own skin—and seamlessly connected. Rife with rowdy choruses, banjos, horns and handclaps, the record invites anyone listening to the party, too, calling us in to have a beer and sing along with a collective of folks called humankind, spanning time and distance."

### Philadelphia City Paper {Patrick Rapa}

"'1981' feels like the song of the century."

### Harmonium {Brian McMurray}

"It's hard to deny Arcuragi's talent, and his debut has christened the birth of another amazing singer/songwriter for us to drown our tears in."

### The L Magazine {Mike Conklin}

"[Arcuragi's] approach to standard singer-songwriter fare is impossibly refreshing"

### Philebrity {Joey Sweeney}

"[Arcuragi's] got this record, and listening to it is like crossing the finish line of a seven-year long marathon and finding that on the other side of the flag, you are greeted by sixteen vestal virgins."

### Treble {Paul Bozzo, Apr 2006}

"Challenging songwriters are a blessing to the industry, making sure that popular musicians are always on their toes, never letting new sounds stagnate. Arcuragi's unique method and performance of relatively simple songs will surely turn a few heads and get the rest up to speed."

### Everybody Taste Music {Matthew Carr}

"His words are woven into a timeless and detailed collection of portraits, musings, and stories, each accompanied by a multitude of acoustic instruments and lush choruses sung by a rotating cast of musicians. Over course of the album, Arcuragi establishes his place amongst the likes of Josh Ritter, M.Ward and Jim James as one of the most talented and important young American songwriters. With the completion of this record, Arcuragi's talent is now as clear as day."

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## MUSIC IN BRIEF

The self-titled debut LP by Philadelphia singer-songwriter-poet-playwright **Adam Arcuragi** (High Two) skips in the shadows of ambitious neo-folkies like The Decemberists and Mark Kozelek, with a sound that's slightly less distinct, but with melodies that stand up to his troubadour elders. Arcuragi's greatest strength is his lyrics; on sprawling ballads like "1981" and "Delicate," they tell free-associative stories of vibrantly emotional moments between friends and lovers... **B+**