was the main focus initially. Different amp sound and different tone on the guitar parts. Throw some contrasting effects in there. Often they'd be playing the same part just to get a mini wall of sound going. But then I'd have different parts too, say one guitar taking a solo. The opening song "Child's Play" was a bit different because actually I had recorded the basic idea before starting the album. John at the label thought it had to be on there and I agreed. I have to say it's a big help having John to bounce off. When it came to finishing that track I ensured it was consistent with the other material on the album. I'm trying to control my randomness and make things cohesive. Organized chaos. Retaining a sense of freedom but within certain parameters so I don't get lost.

NG: I've heard all your albums and there's a real range of material in terms of arrangements and styles but when I've seen you play live it's always just you and an acoustic guitar. I presume you pick the songs best suited to that?

I could probably do versions of any of my songs but I like to try stay true to the feel of how I recorded them so I choose ones that suit the acoustic guitar or where the recordings were originally underpinned by acoustic guitar. I think in a way I'm more a recording artist than a performing artist. That's not to say I think I'm a shabby performer, just I convey what I want to convey when I record a song and it's important to me that I try and stay true to that live. "LaLa Land" from "Tish" is an exception. I reworked it considerably to play it solo. I thought it important I played at least one song off the EP at that time. Plus it does lend itself to a more acoustic feel that one. Obviously when I first arrived in China it was good to just hit the ground running and get out there because I can perform solo no problem. But I don't really see myself as an acoustic artist per se. I'm not knocking it, I love the acoustic guitar. But I'm the generation that grew up with Nirvana In Utero and Nirvana Unplugged in New York. I spent the best part of a decade playing in rock'n'roll bands after university and I was playing in pubs and bars from the age of 15 as part of an Indie group during my school days. But I was playing acoustic guitar all through that period too.

NG: Any plans to get a band together then?

I've always recorded simply how I feel like recording, performing live an afterthought. However, this time I wanted to focus on the live aspect. I considered the limited equipment I have that can be transplanted into a live setting. Guitar. Effects pedals. Bass. Synthesizer. Sampler. That's basically it. I used the sampler as a drum machine. Found the right sounds and beats. Planned out the song instrument by instrument imagining what each band member would be playing onstage. OK, with "Child's Play" I'd already started that so it was a little different but even then I finalized it with a view to performing it live. Across the album I deliberately kept the drum patterns simple so a short loop for each song can be re-imported onto my sampler for live use, still retaining the feel of the songs as they are on the album. I wasn't using this formula overly obsessively. A lot of the engineering is reliant upon computer processing and there's little bits of midi in there for the sake of boosting the production side of things, but I believe this music can be replicated live