

Dan Fogelberg reflecting on "Icarus Ascending" from *Full Circle*, 2003

"This is the high water mark of this record for me. This is one of the most recent, a very important song to me as a songwriter. It's a statement of my personal philosophy of being an artist. It does give hope for those who are willing to plumb the depths of individualism in any endeavor, in any art. The gift of art is an incredible blessing from the creator. I believe that. It's not an easy life, not a popular choice to make if you want to be everybody's friend. You have to listen to that unwavering voice that says, 'You're special, but it's not going to be easy.' It will be very difficult, but if you choose to pursue it unfailingly, I believe you will be greatly rewarded in a way people who are not given this creative spark will ever understand. It's perhaps as close as I will ever come to really expressing my core philosophy. I'm not talking financial here, but spiritual rewards. Many great artists never realized financial rewards. This is a song to those artists, more than someone like me, who has had every reward I can possibly think of. So many great artists struggled all their lives and will never see the perks. This song says you have to have enormous courage to follow the muse and that's Icarus. The Greek story is one of the great stories of optimism and foolishness, that he would make wax wings to fly to the sun. But as an artist you've got to be fearless and keep flying to the sun even though you know you might crash. ' There is a gamble in each proud act of flight' is one of the best lines I've ever written."