

THE CAST (in order of appearance)

Bennett Strauss	Ninja the Trained Monkey (Bass)
Hans Rheinschild	Daddy Glenn (Guitar, Banjo)
Jesse Olsen	John Glenn (Drums, Glockenspiel)
Bryn Mooser	Vivian (Saxophones)
Travis Magrane	Paulo (Guitar)
Michael Close	Space Lieutenant 1 (Cello, Bagpipes)

Sound by GC Bucknum

Lights by Garin

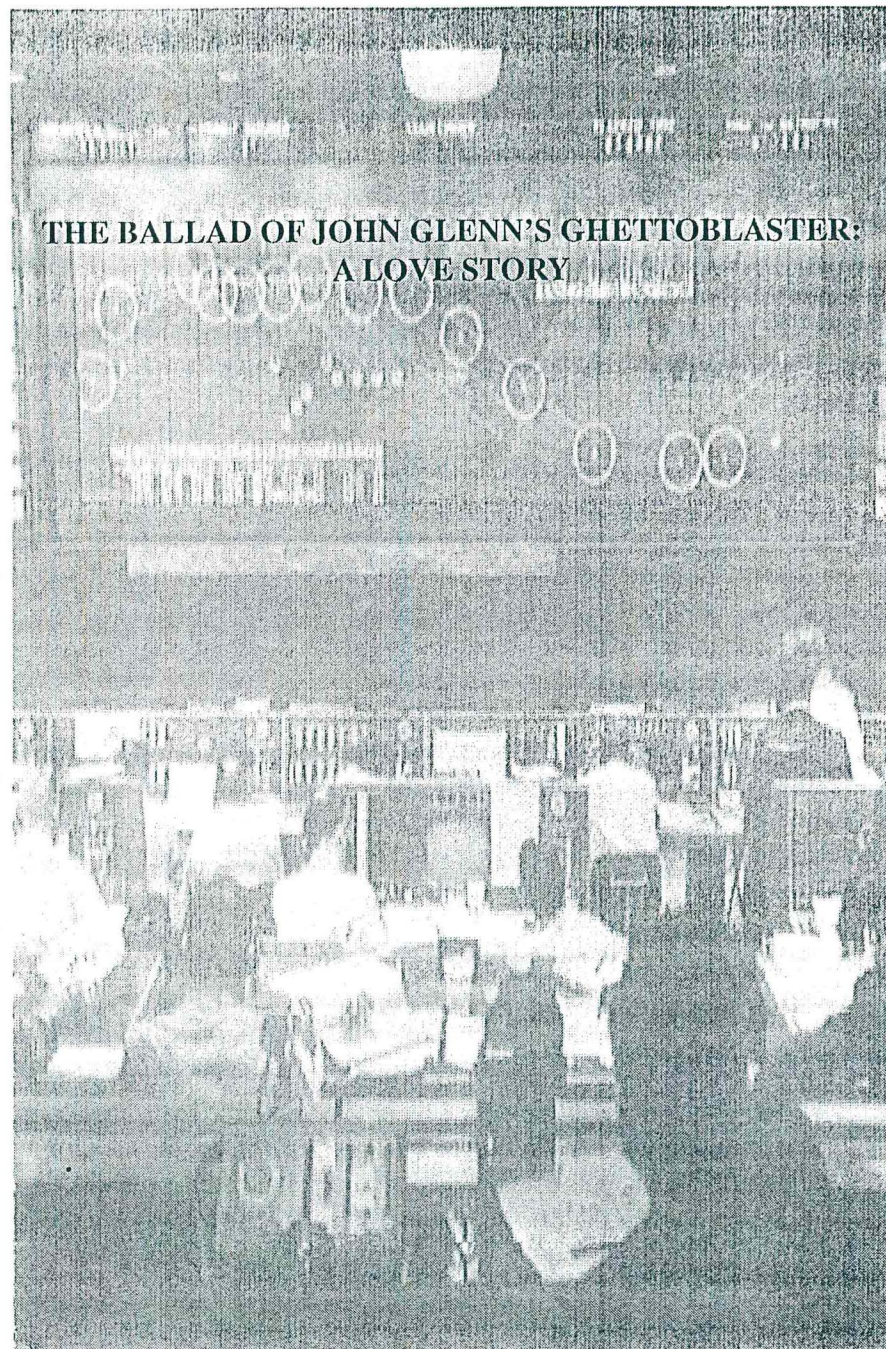
Sets by us

All music written by Jesse Olsen with help from the band.

Thanks to Bucknum, Arto, and NASA.

Any resemblance to actual persons or events is purely coincidental. The views expressed herein are not necessarily those of NASA or the John Glenn estate.

“The Ballad of John Glenn’s GhettoBlaster: A Love Story” will soon be available on compact disc. Talk to Jesse.



THE STORY

In July 1950, NASA sent a trained chimpanzee named Ninja into orbit. Ninja was the first living being ever to leave the earth's atmosphere. Due to a seemingly insignificant computational error, the spacecraft was dislodged from its orbit, and hurtled into the outer reaches of the solar system. Faced with the magnitude of outer space, Ninja achieved a heightened state of awareness, enabling him to telepathically send a distress call to the people of earth. Nobody heard him. But the message was received subconsciously in the dreams of baby John Glenn. Ninja implanted in John's young mind an unexplained desire to leave the earth, hoping that John will rescue him (**Monkey**).

Our tale begins in a small Idaho farmouse. John Glenn is but a small child, living with a distraught mother and a drunk father. Daddy Glenn sees the torment he is causing for his family, and abruptly abandons them, leaving behind only his ghettoblaster for little John (**Harvest Season**). Throughout childhood, the ghettoblaster is John's best and only friend, keeping him company while he dreams of escaping his tortured youth into the freedom of outer space (**Momentary**).

In high school, John meets two very special people: Paulo, a poor boy whose family immigrated from Argentina when he was small, and who becomes like a brother to John, and Vivian, a tall girl with beautiful blonde hair, with whom John immediately falls in love (**Your Blonde Friend**). Vivian asks John to the senior prom (**Prom Date**), and John is happy for the first time, spending time with people he loves, and, of course, never neglecting his adored ghettoblaster. Little does John know that Paulo has secretly been in love with him since the day they met.

John decides to attend space academy after graduation, and the night before he leaves has a tearful goodbye with Vivian. They pledge their unending devotion to each other, but Vivian is quite bitter at John for leaving her (**John Glenn's Goodbye**). She doesn't understand how John could value his career as an astronaut over their being together. She begins to doubt her feelings for him, and turns her attention instead to Paulo (**Love Triangle**).

Meanwhile, Paulo is equally as distraught about John's departure. He is confused and frustrated. He doesn't know who to turn to, and shows up at Vivian's door in the middle of the night. Vivian invites him in for a drink. Paulo has no idea that Vivian is planning on seducing him, to get back at John. Vivian tells Paulo that he just needs to relax, and casually suggests dropping a few tabs of acid to unwind. Paulo accepts, but the hallucinogenics only make him more confused, and he finds himself being driven towards insanity (**Seeing Spaces**). He and Vivian end up in bed together, and the next morning Paulo is gone before she wakes up.

When John returns from space academy, the night before he is to blast off, he becomes enmeshed in this demented love triangle. He is grateful that he will be leaving again, escaping this earthly torment. At his farewell party, he says his goodbyes, but Paulo is nowhere to be seen (**La Noche Noche Noche Buena**).

In fact, Paulo has lost his mind, and has convinced himself that there is only one way to rectify the situation. He devises a plan: late at night he will sneak into the launch site, and sabotage John's ghettoblaster (onboard the spaceship), fixing it so that the volume can be turned up but not turned down (**Sabotage!**). He carries out his plan, and returns to his home to wait in anticipation. The launch day arrives, John blasts off in ecstasy, as the music roars from his ghettoblaster.

As John reaches orbit, he is stunned by the beauty of space. It is everything he had hoped for. He turns up his ghettoblaster to 11, and releases himself into the music. As he goes to change his orbit parameters, he finds that the music is distracting him, and tries to turn it down. Of course, the ghettoblaster does not respond, and John, unable to concentrate on his task, falls out of orbit and plummets into the arctic sea (**Launch Sequence/Crash and Burn**).

Ten years later, Paulo thinks back to his youth. John's death left him tormented and depressed, and Vivian has long since departed. But Paulo knows that John is still there, watching over him from the outer regions of the solar system (**A Firey Grave**).