

## DRIVE-TIME BLUES (Wallace Baine, March 24, 2011)

Ken Elkinson isn't a local guy, but his new project certainly piqued my interest. The Los Angeles-based musician has released a new box set called "Music for Commuting," featuring three CDs and, well, the title says it all.

"I did it to help myself calm down," said Elkinson of his L.A. driving habits. "I found myself becoming a super angry driver, and I needed something soothing to relax me."

Elkinson has lived in New York, Atlanta and Los Angeles, all known for their heinous commutes. "I've been commuting my whole life, and you can't believe what you see out there. I've seen people while driving reading books, texting, talking on the phone, eating, shaving."

The box set's three discs are divided into six parts, corresponding with the days of the work week, and a final section called "Beyond." Elkinson designed the project to be listened to from start to finish, through the week.

"I start out on Monday in the beginning with a dark, droney thing to reflect what most people feel like on Monday," he said. "Then on Tuesday, a little glimmer of hope begins to emerge, and so on."

The music is largely a mix of synthesizer washes and textures, at times soaring and majestic, at other times, contemplative, even meditative. There is nothing here you're going to be singing into the steering wheel.

Elkinson said that there is no science behind "Music For Commuting." He hasn't perfected the transmission of the just the right alpha waves through music to keep the brain serene and alert.

"I'm pretty skeptical generally about things like that," he said. "I'm not qualified to do that anyway. This is just something that made me less angry behind the wheel."

You can learn more about "Music For Commuting," and order it, at [www.kenelkinson.com](http://www.kenelkinson.com).