After more than a decade in New York City, Anthony D'Amato headed west for his new album, At First There Was Nothing, relocating to American Fork, Utah, for recording sessions in the autumn and winter with acclaimed songwriter and producer Joshua James. Bristling with joyful energy and piercing insight, the record marks D'Amato's first full-length collection in six years, and the growth is palpable, with sprawling, unpredictable arrangements accompanying some of his most gripping and incisive lyrical work yet. Drawing on everything from hazy '60s soul to rootsy '70s rock and roll, the songs are loose and playful here, even as they grapple with faith and trust, mortality and loss, resilience and regret, all set against sweeping sonic backdrops every bit as epic and rugged as the landscapes that inspired them.

Born and raised in New Jersey, D'Amato first rose to international attention with 'The Shipwreck From The Shore,' his 2014 debut for New West Records. Inspired in part by time spent studying with the Pulitzer Prize-winning Irish poet Paul Muldoon, the album garnered rave reviews on both sides of the pond, with NPR inviting D'Amato for a Tiny Desk Concert and lauding that "he writes in the tradition of Bruce Springsteen or Josh Ritter," and Uncut proclaiming that his songwriting "echoes with early Bob Dylan." D'Amato followed it up in 2016 with the Mike Mogis-produced Cold Snap,' which earned him his first national TV appearance along with an Artist You Need To Know nod from Rolling Stone, who hailed his writing as "folk music raised on New Jersey grit" In 2017, D'Amato released a collaborative EP titled Won't You Be My Neighbor?, which raised more than $10,000 for refugee aid, and in 2019, he returned with the Five Songs From New Orleans, a stripped-down acoustic collection that earned even more praise from Billboard to Rolling Stone. Along the way, D'Amato toured extensively across the US and Europe, sharing bills with the likes of Ben Folds, Valerie June, Keb' Mo', The Felice Brothers, American Aquarium, and many more.