

**RUSS BALLARD**

*official* **NEWSLETTER**



(Banner by Sven Kramer)

It is good that we have a steady trickle of new readers; welcome all!

Thank you to this month's contributors. Please feel free to take part in the construction of this newsletter. You know what we require by now! Gordon's set list is the last one I have so, if you haven't sent one in, please do it and it will be welcome and included in a newsletter. The set lists have been enjoyed by many.

Six of the new tracks on the album, "It's Good To Be Here" are now available on UMU Music.

We have the competition winner! Was it you?

And another great Russ story from Dave. Please click on the attachment and read the letter in which he tells a friend about his trip to Russ's gig post Argent.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Sue

## NEWS

In March 2016, Russ will be playing at the HRH AOR Festival in North Wales. (See attachment for the poster.) HRH (Hard Rock Hell) is a three day music festival held at a holiday camp so everything, including accommodation is on one site. For all information see their website <http://www.hrhaor.com/> and their Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/HRHAORFestival/timeline>

## THIS MONTH....

*Russ: "May has been a busy time, apart from working in the studio - [remixing, mainly] - we've had a couple of birthdays, Bob Henrit's and Christians...It's a year since the group and I flew to Tokyo to play two shows. As it was Bob's birthday we turned the flight in to a bit of a celebration and we talked....champagne in hand....about our lives in music - It was quite special. It seems crazy to think it's a year ago.*

*Karis arranged a surprise party for Christian (it was his 40th) and invited about one hundred friends. There were many surprises. Some people he hadn't seen since childhood showed up - It was brilliant....also, Sada Vidoo arrived from Denmark, with her friend Sandra. Christian and Lavvy Levan had flown to Copenhagen three weeks before to appear with Sada on the Danish DJ Awards Show. Christian and Lavvy's latest Friday Fox track 'Stand Up' also entered the charts in May and stayed there for four weeks...so, May has been a hectic time.*

*I was invited to guest on Sue Marchant's BBC radio show - that was good fun... Sue is really 'clued up' and had everything well prepared. I took a guitar and played an acoustic version of "It's My Life Stand in My Shoes" [from Book of Love] - I am aware I've been around the music scene for many years, but when someone starts asking questions going back so many years, it seems like it was another life....There was a strange moment as I walked in to Sue's studio, on the her desk, there was a new biography on the life of Adam Faith, it's called 'Big Time'. Sue explained that she'd just interviewed the authors David and Caroline*

*Stafford and I told Sue that they had interviewed me last Summer, wanting to hear of my recollections on my times with Adam, or, Tel, as we used to call him, so, the show had great continuity.*

*I also had lunch with Lynne Jackaman. I knew she'd been studying piano since we last met - she played and sang to me - she's brilliant. She also has a great new single and EP coming soon.*

*Three weeks ago I took the family to Turkey. I'd never been there before but it was great being together for a week. Archie, Emilio, Lennie and Elodie we're brilliant...I could spend all day just watching them. The boys attended the Chelsea Football School everyday and that was very special, - [even though I'm a Spurs fan]. It's strange suddenly stopping work and lying on a sun bed, my body seems to relax but the brain keeps going 100 miles an hour for two days before it starts to slow."*

## THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

*Russ: "When I made my 'Book of Love' album, I wanted to make each song a sign post on the journey to find... what love is... [or isn't]. My thought when writing 'Love Works in Strange Ways' was I needed a song to start the search....I had the lyric idea first - It goes...'Before you open up the door...Do you know what you're looking for?....Someones arms to have around you...or, a stage, a battle ground, where you play out your wildest fantasies, or is it deeper? you fear the reaper - so, you look for something, call it love, and invent the Father up above...Love Works in Strange ways....' There's a lot more words to the song but I won't bore you with the rest now...As I've said before, 'LOVE' is a word we use easily, about a great many things. I LOVE these shoes - I LOVE this jacket - We also say I LOVE my child....Can one actually feel the same about shoes as a Son or Daughter? I don't think so. Then I wondered about a definition of the word — 'LOVE' - I remember M. Scott Peck in 'The Road Less Travelled,' said, to him, Love is always action. It's not a feeling or a description....If Love doesn't come with action, then, it isn't Love. His definition of LOVE is 'THE ACT OF EXTENDING ONESELF FOR THE PURPOSE OF NURTURING ONES OWN AND/OR SOMEONE ELSE'S SPIRITUAL GROWTH' - That definition really affected me when I first read it and it makes so much sense...it also negates, Loving ones shoes, shirt, car, guitar etc....and it means we can Love a stranger, if we're giving ourselves to make them feel better.*

*Thanks for being there....I wish you all an uplifting June and see you in July....LOVE Russ x"*

## COMPETITION

Thank you to everyone who entered the competition in the May edition of the newsletter. It wasn't an easy question but we had some very good guesses, a few of them very close.

Here is the email from Russ with the answer to the competition question.

Subject: Newsletter competition

From:

Date: Sat, 9 May 2015 07:12:21 +0100

To: [russ.b.news@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:russ.b.news@hotmail.co.uk)

' I have written 312 published songs ', Russ

Sent from my iPhone

Many congratulations to Dave Williams, who used his knowledge of Russ's work to come up with an estimate of 318! Dave wins a subscription to UMU Music!

## INTERVIEW

Thanks to Liam Wilson for finding this...the transcript of an interview Russ did with Robert Sliverstein of [MWE3.com](http://www.mwe3.com) recorded live on February 10th 2009, talking about his career, his guitar playing and some of the tracks on The Book of Love.

<http://www.mwe3.com/archive/pastfeature/featureRussBallard2009.htm>

## YOUR QUESTIONS

What inspired the song "Madman" on the album "Into The Fire"? There's quite a bit of ancient Roman imagery there. The Madman lyric has always been one of the more unfathomable ones to me.

Russ: *"I can't quite remember all the words to 'Madman' - However, I think the idea behind the song was the madness of Human existence.- it's as mad today as it was three thousand years ago. I heard someone say there's been a war every year for three thousand years...well, that's madness, isn't it! - And you know every writer, I believe, is looking for new ways to write, and it is quite satisfying when you find something a little different. I thought it would be poignant and freaky to hear a little girls voice in the middle and make the point stronger....She was my manager's daughter, Petra Stanley, I think she was eight or nine then. She did that well, I thought."*

## RECORDED BY OTHERS

How many of you know this one? (Naughty Russ!) "Love On The Line" by Blazin' Squad written by Russ, Christian and Andrew Murray.

Blazin' Squad was a young, 10 piece English "boy band", put together in the early 2000s. Their music was a mixture of Hip Hop, R&B and pop. Their first single "Crossroads" made #1 in the UK charts. "Love On The Line" was their second single, released on 11th November 2002, and went to #6 in the UK Singles Charts.

<https://youtu.be/aofKdMiO9MA>

## IDEAL SET LIST

From Gordon Dickson

A difficult task given the amount of amazing songs Russ has recorded. I have purposely refrained from including too many numbers penned from his spell with Argent. Have also compiled the set in chronological order of the original recordings - something more bands should do !

LIAR

YOU CAN DO VODOO

SHE'S A HURRICANE

KICKS

VENUS ( SHINE YOUR LIGHT )  
LOOK AT HER DANCE  
I'M A SCORPIO  
JUST A DREAM AWAY  
ON THE REBOUND  
FEELS LIKE THE REAL THING  
I CAN'T HEAR YOU NO MORE  
VOICES  
HEY BERNADETTE  
GUILTY  
DON'T GO TO SOHO  
TONIGHT  
HOUSE OF FOOLS  
IT TAKES A MAN TO WALK AWAY  
LIKE FATHER LIKE SON  
BOOK OF LOVE

Encore

I DON'T BELIEVE IN MIRACLES  
SINCE YOU BEEN GONE  
GOD GAVE ROCK AND ROLL TO YOU

## YOUR STORIES

From Dave Williams.

[Sue: In the March newsletter we had some notes about Russ's top 12 songs sent to Dave by a friend. This letter is his reply, which gives an account of Dave's outing to Russ's gig in St Albans in 1976. There should be no problem accessing the letters but I have found that if I click on the first one and use the arrows, the pages come up in random order. It works best to click on the pages separately. They are in the right order as you see them here.]

Dave: With reference to the attached letter, a few comments:

(a) I commented that I heard Russ can be unfriendly. This turned out to be the biggest injustice ever. It was based on a comment made on the paper insert in the LP Altogether Now. The comment implied that Russ doesn't suffer fools gladly, more specifically people in authority. I took this the wrong way. I think they call such people "jobsworths" and I have little time for them either. Russ was in great spirits when I met him after the show. He didn't rush me or any of the others out of the room so he could get on with celebrating with the family. He was interested to hear what we had to say.

(b) The rough looking guy called Fred turned out to be the Road Manager and not many Road Managers are kind enough to approach a handful of fans to ask them if they'd like to meet their hero, To actually allow us to help him carry the silver discs into the changing room where Russ was hosting a family gathering, made our day. Fred was a real gentleman that evening, again blowing my first impressions out of the window. I was very saddened when I heard he'd passed away.

(c) Funny how I said the whole trip cost £10, as if that was a mortgage. I remember I was only earning £27 a week back then, so I suppose it was a lot. Now you see why that £12 haircut was pricey!!

Russ B has files to share with you on OneDrive. To view them, click the links below.





CAMP HRH, NORTH WALES, 10<sup>TH</sup>-13<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2016

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