

RUSS BALLARD

official

NEWSLETTER



(Banner by Sven Kramer)

Once again, welcome to our new readers. Some are not on Facebook, where the newsletter is often mentioned, so word is spreading and it is good to have them. It is good to have all of you! We are a large group of Russ's hard core fans. If you know of another who is not receiving the newsletter, please get them signed up.

We have a couple more "Ideal Set Lists" this month. Thanks to Liam and Greg for sending them in. There will be another one next month. I have been wondering whether the lists would be different according to gender. It would be good to have a few more in and we might be able to form some conclusions about that. Come on!....this is your "ideal list" so you don't have to choose the songs that Russ is likely to perform...just those you would really like to hear him perform.

I had an interesting item from Dave Williams this month. All connected with a list of Russ's top 12 favourite songs from 1975. Read about it below.

Good news about Russ's new album!!!! What are the tracks? See below!

There is a group of readers from whom I am hearing regularly. It is great to have some interaction and they are making very good suggestions. I

pass all the suggestions on to Russ for his opinion. It is always good to hear from more people, though, so if you have anything Russ related to say or offer please use this email address to contact me.

Sue

THIS MONTH

Russ: "I'm still going in to the studio almost everyday, finishing songs for my album....'It's Good To Be Here'....I'm playing more guitar these days than ever before in my life and I'm loving it. Even though I've been recording for decades, I never stop learning....mind you there's always new modules arriving on the scene, Eq's - Compressors - Reverbs - Effects....It's endless.

My friend Mike Richardson phoned the other day and asked if I would like to see Elkie Brooks, in concert....Mike has played drums for Elkie for 29 years....I went with my friend Peter Ross to Harlow Playhouse....Elkie was good. I hadn't seen her for about fifteen years and she is much more extrovert.....having long chats with the audience....and she looks fit, too!

My friends Angel Joy Andis and Ewan Carmichael paid a visit to Ware two weeks ago. Joy was over from the states and Ewan came down from Middlesbrough. It was good to see them again. My good friend Peter Ross joined us and we had a great Italian lunch. I intended to take them to see some football at Stevenage...sadly it was cancelled, so, we ended up having an Indian dinner in the evening...funny really!

My friend John Verity serviced my guitar recently, changing some fittings and cleaning parts. It's playing very well now."

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Russ:

'Thought'

"I first heard quantum physicist David Bohm discuss 'Thought' with Philosopher J. Krishnamurti....David Bohm started the discussion with what seemed to me at the time, an incredible statement.....'Thought, which we [Humans] consider our greatest achievement, is in fact, our biggest problem.....if it's not carried out properly'. - Basically, Thought is always the past... So we can't 'Live in the moment' while we're thinking..We have to observe without thought getting in the way.

What is thought? - It's everything we think we are - It's our History, which is the past, it's our culture, our language, Religions our images....the list is endless - So we can't truly live in the now without freeing our mind...as the T shirt said.

So, what do we do? - David Bohm and K. both suggested we observe without thought or reaching conclusions.....so, life can become one of meditation - Sounds great to me, although, not so easy to do, we're so used to thinking.

I saw them talking about this twenty years ago and it's never far away from me."

THE NEW ALBUM!!

Here is the track list for Russ's new album, "It's Good To Be Here", to be released on UMU Music soon.

1. Voices Space guitar
2. Time Machine
3. Where Were You
4. My Awakening
5. Colliding
6. Kickin the Can
7. The First Man Ever danced
8. Free From Your Hold

It is likely that there will be a ninth track but, up to the point of writing this, that had not been finally decided.

INTERVIEW

This interview with Russ was sent to the newsletter by a reader and was put on YouTube and Facebook by a friend of theirs. It was recorded at Brixton Academy, London in 1984. I think you will like it!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s52hLCGsFDo>

In the interview Russ mentions the London Symphony Orchestra recording of Since You've Been Gone. You can listen to it here...

<https://youtu.be/xMKZyJJRp8E>

IDEAL SET LIST

From Liam Wilson

"For me, the set list has to be "The Book of Love" from beginning to end. One of the best albums ever made. Truly inspirational."

And from Greg Zimmerman

Rock & Roll Lover
It's My Life
Two Silhouettes
You Can Do Voodoo
Once A Rebel
Kicks
Healer
Liar
It's Too Late
Cast The Spirit
I Don't Believe In Miracles
Love Works In Strange Ways
Since You've Been Gone
Is There Anybody Out There
I'm A Scorpio
Playing With Fire
The Fire Still Burns
= = =
On The Rebound (encore)
God Gave Rock'n'Roll To You (encore)
Wonderful World (encore)

YOUR QUESTIONS

Russ, what are your top 12 all time favourite songs?

Russ: "'Top Twelve' - I did do 'My Top Twelve' on Radio One, years ago, with Brian Matthew...I can still remember the songs I picked.....they will probably be the same today!"

- 'Heartbreak Hotel' - Elvis P.
- 'Whole Lotta Shakin' - Jerry Lee Lewis
- 'You've Lost That Loving Feeling' - Righteous Brothers

- *'Long Tall Sally - Little Richard*
- *'Rosecrans Boulevard' - Fifth Dimension*
- *'Alright Now' - Free*
- *'Nimrod' - From Elgars Enigma Variations - By The Berlin Phil.*
- *'Hound Dog' - Elvis*
- *'Hard Times' - Ray Charles*
- *'I Can't Stand The Rain' - Ann Peebles*
- *'Wasn't That A Mighty Day - From Black Navity - By The Alex Bradford Singers*
- *'When I Fall in Love' - By Nat King Cole*

Actually, I could pick Fifty easily but Twelve is difficult, I still love that 1975 twelve...."

Thanks to Dave Williams, who sent in Russ's original list of 12 from Brian Matthew's Radio 1 show in 1975. The notes on Russ's answers to the interview questions were written by a friend of his while she listened to the show as she didn't have a tape recorder handy. The comments after the last song refer to the tour written about in the last newsletter. Some of the original songs are still in Russ's list. Due to the difficulty of getting several photos into the newsletter at once, I have added the list as attachments. There are 3 pages. Please click on the attachments and have a look.

(If you get "Silverlight needs your permission to run" just right click on it and give permission. I haven't had any problems doing this).

RECORDED BY OTHERS

As Russ went to see Elkie Brooks this month this seems appropriate. The most well known of the songs recorded by Elkie and written by Russ is "No More The Fool" so here is a different one! This was on the album "No More The Fool", which was recorded in May and June 1986 and reached no.5 in the UK, as did the single of the same name. Russ wrote four of the songs on this album and this one was also released as a single in 1987. Break The Chain.

<https://youtu.be/XXC3ptCVKLU>

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himself & Colin Blunstone liked it & recorded it.
"Liar" was a success in the States for 3 Dog Night.
He wanted to get back on the road.

⑪ Little Queenie - Jerry Lee Lewis

⑫ Wasnt that a Mighty Day - Alex Bradford & The Stars of Fate

Being a producer he believes that to have a good song is most important. No amount of producing will do any good if the song is bad. He wants to get back on the road & they're working on a tour for April, & possibly to America at the end of April.

⑤ Hound Dog - Elvis Presley

At first Elvis Presley really made an impression on him. He first heard him at a party when he (Russ) was about eight. Elvis was the first white guy to strain his vocal cords.

⑥ Rose Crown (?) Boulevard 5th Dimension

He bought their album at the time "Every track was phenomenal" From the Soulettes he joined Unit 4+2. Bob Hentit & Russ Ballard were the "+2".

⑦ Long Tall Sally - Little Richard

He used to sing this song & "Lucille" about four times a night in a semi pro band. He thinks that many 1970s band have lost spirit. After Unit 4 + 2, Rod Argent asked him to join his band with Colin Blunstone. He was with Argent for 4 1/2 years. They're all great musicians & it was good experience.

⑧ Hard Times - Ray Charles

He thinks that Ray Charles doesn't get enough credit for all the people he's influenced.

⑨ I Pity The Fool - Ann Peebles

She's the best female voice around at the moment. Exciting.

He has a wide range of musical tastes. He liked melody & emotion in music. The next choice has both

⑩ Nymrod - Elgar

He wrote "Heartbreaker" which was recorded by Olivia Newton John although he didn't write it especially for her. He wrote "I don't Believe In Miracles" for

27/3/76 My Top Twelve - Russ Ballard

① Alright Now - Free

He saw Free on a television show five or six years ago, & he was very impressed.

He formed his first band when he was about sixteen (1963). He always wanted to go into the pop business. He had piano lessons for seven years starting when he was eight. Born at Watbam Cross, Herts..

② I Never Loved a Man - Aretha Franklin

He sung a few bars of this song whilst introducing it. He wanted to produce his own songs when he was with Argent, & spend more time writing.

"I wanted to spread my wings a little bit." The main things in his life are writing & recording. He receives letters from America saying how much they liked the first album.

③ When I Grow Up to be a Man - Beach Boys..

The Beach Boys were his favourite American band. When he writes a song there is a particular way in which he wants the instruments played. That's why he plays most of the instruments on his records himself.

④ Lean on me - Bill Withers

He has had a musical career of twelve years. He's been very pleased with the past eighteen months and the present. When he first started playing the piano, he composed melodies in his head. He wrote his first song when he was fourteen, then "The Lost City" which was recorded five years later by the Shadows when every bass player had blonde hair & a tremelo arm was very popular.