



Thanks to Sven Kramer of krameronline for this new banner. Please feel free to use it.

It is nearly time for the Tokyo gigs and Russ is busy rehearsing. If anyone who receives this newsletter is going, please email me and let me know.

Please get in touch with your stories, with questions or just comments. We thought we would have a "Letters" section so you can make a comment or have a say even if you don't have a story or a question. I often get emails from our readers so, if you would like something to go into the newsletter, please make it very clear that it is for the newsletter and not just for me and/or Russ.

Just a little something to get us in the gig mood....Argent at Shepherds Bush Empire February 2012 and Liar. A great performance and a brilliant video by Ian Street.

<http://youtu.be/ldS9Wyrj8MM>

Don't forget to look on the Russ Ballard Facebook page.

Sue



Another photo from Gareth Hughes

## NEWS

Although Bob Skeat is a member of Russ's band and was included on the banner in the March newsletter, unfortunately he won't now be in the band for the Tokyo shows. Bob plays with Wishbone Ash and their American tour has been extended so he won't be back in time. His place will be taken by Stuart Marchant. Russ: *"Bob [Henrit] and I drove to*

*Bournemouth to have small rehearsal. It was mainly to meet and play with Stuart Marchant, who is playing bass for us in Tokyo. He is really very good and a great man. Stuart had the songs well rehearsed....I'm looking forward to being on stage with him."*

Russ is still working in the studio... *"I'm still writing with Lynne Jackaman. We have some exciting tunes and she has the sound to get the best from them."*

Russ's son, Christian, has an exciting new project, which seems to be attracting a lot of attention. He and his friend, Lavvy Levan, have an EP, "Toe in Water" on their new label "Friday Fox Recordings"

Russ: *"Christian and Lavvy are doing great stuff and getting good reaction....I'm always amazed when I go in to his studio.... they're mixing all kinds of music....Pop with Jazz....Dance, House, Drum and Bass."*

This is from their PR for the EP and a bit of background about Christian's work...

" After the successful launch of **Friday Fox Recordings** earlier this year, **Christian B & Lavvy Levan** return with a groovy remix package of their brilliant '**Toe In Water EP**' and a brand new song, '**Beatroot**'. London's **Robot 84** takes '**Insatiable**' to a new level, injecting unrelenting House music energy, holding down classy groove that rises from simmer to boiling point. **Mark Rapson** launches '**Now?**' into the soulful playing field, armed with warm pads and a lovely piano hook, '**Two Sides**' gets thrown in the mix by deep house guru, **DSHunt**, who adds a shade of melancholia to his keys, backed by punchy beats. The boys' brand new song with its humorous title '**Beatroot**' carries a heartfelt message to be true to yourself from Lavvy, over a subtle platter of catchy vocal hooks and hypnotic 90's piano flavoured house vibes. Rounding off the package is a nifty radio edit of the fabulous '**It's On**'.

**Christian B** and **Lavvy Levan** have always had music at the core of their friendship. The early days included forays into Rave and DnB, Pirate Radio sessions among other musical adventures. Musically reunited in 2013, they decided that the time was right to create **Friday Fox** and give birth to some individual yet accessible dance music and make their mark on the scene. Christian B's family have a long history in music with his Dad

being a prolific musician Russ Ballard, with a career spanning 5 decades. Christian's environment growing up was always focused around the studio, and it was clear from an early age that music would be his profession and passion. Meanwhile, Lavvy grew up in a house filled with the sounds of Funk, Soul and Disco. As such, the natural attraction to unusual and funky music came early for Lavvy – and he started his vinyl collection at young age. While Lavvy explored the UK club scenes with his DJ sets, Christian moved into professional studio production writing and producing for Pop Idol and The Voice stars in UK and Germany. He's also had 5 top tens in the UK and 4 in Germany and was part of the remix team for **Christina Aguilera, Leona Lewis, Alicia Keys** and **Lemar**, among others. Christian also produced House music for Stip Records, more recently releasing with Bonnie Bailey on Strictly Rhythm and Fierce Angels. Christian & Lavvy's paths moved in different directions for a number of years, before re-connecting last year. Both bursting with fresh ideas, they jumped into the studio to write for themselves, emerging with 4 fantastic house cuts, making up the aptly titled '**Toe In Water EP**' and launching their own label **Friday Fox Recordings** in early 2014. **Christian B & Lavvy** are definitely one's to lookout for this year, have perfectly positioned Friday Fox to be one of the breakthrough labels of 2014; pushing fresh UK talent."

## TRACK LISTING

- 1 Insatiable (Robot84 Full Vocal Remix)
- 2 Now? (Rapson Remix)
- 3 Two Sides (DSHunt)
- 4 Beatroot
- 5 It's On! (Radio Edit)

Try this to hear a taster and details of where to buy the EP...<https://soundcloud.com/fridayfoxrecordings/toe-in-water-remix-ep-preview>

For Friday Fox Recordings Facebook page....<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Friday-Fox-Recordings/415985281850189?ref=hlhttps://soundcloud.com/fridayfoxrecordings>

Christian's website....[www.christianballard.co.uk](http://www.christianballard.co.uk)

## YOUR QUESTIONS

Would Russ like to tell us something about his songwriting process?

Russ: *"I'm writing in different ways now...I used to start with a lyric or title and write at the piano....A lyric is still a good way to start [for me]. A title suggests the energy....soft, hard...fast, slow....aggressive, non aggressive etc....Now I'm starting on guitar more [not always]. I'm putting down more sounds...chords, riffs....chord progressions are inspiring...People that know me well know that I like to vary ideas....if I write something aggressive, I will probably start with something*

*'down' next time....It's interesting at the moment, writing with Lynne [Jackaman], because she often come up with the words, which is the way I usually started writing a song."*

## LETTERS

Following on from last month's story from Gareth Hughes, a letter from Marsie.

"Oh, Gareth! What a lovely tale! I am so proud that "Our Lads" are such gentlemen and treat their fans so well. I am certain that the memory of that evening will forever be engraved in your heart.

Thank you for sharing!

Sincerely,

Marsie"

## HITS FOR OTHERS

Russ has written so many songs that have been hits for other artists, I thought we would include some of them in the newsletter.

In 1982, Frida of ABBA recorded her first solo album called "Something's Going On", which became a worldwide success. The album was produced by Phil Collins, who plays drums on it. The single from it, "I Know There's Something Going On", written, of course, by Russ, topped the charts in Switzerland, Belgium, Costa Rica and France, where it was no 1 for 5 weeks. It also reached the top 5 in Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, Norway and Australia amongst others. In the United States, it reached no 13 on the Billboard Hot 100 and was the 20th biggest selling single in the US in 1983.

<http://youtu.be/372436tJiaM>

## YOUR STORIES

From Greg Zimmermann

I haven't got a story at the moment, but I do want to share the setlists of the two gigs I attended.

### **First gig: Spectrum, Augsburg (Germany), 14 May 2007**

René Didn't Do It

It's My Life

Dream On

I Can't Hear You No More

I'm A Scorpio (Intro)  
The Fire Still Burns  
Hold Your Head Up  
Like Father Like Son  
Mankind (Chris Winter)  
So You Win Again  
You Can Do Magic  
I Know There's Something Going On  
New York Groove  
Voices  
On The Rebound  
God Gave Rock'n'Roll To You  
Since You've Been Gone  
It's Too Late

**Second Gig: Rock Of Ages, Seebronn (Germany), 31 July 2010**

René Didn't Do It  
It's My Life  
Dream On  
I Can't Hear You No More  
I'm A Scorpio (Intro)  
The Fire Still Burns  
Hope  
So You Win Again  
You Can Do Magic  
I Know There's Something Going On  
New York Groove  
On The Rebound  
Since You've Been Gone  
Voices  
Hold Your Head Up  
God Gave Rock'n'Roll To You  
Little Queenie

I haven't got the "official" setlists, I simply put these together from my memory (and I did scribble down a few notes during the shows). Midway through "God Gave Rock'n'Roll To You" Russ switched from the Argent version into the KISS version of the song, I thought that was hilarious!

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