



(Banner by Sven Kramer)

Once again, a big welcome to our new readers.

Exciting times coming up...news about Russ's brilliant new album, It's Good To Be Here and another gig date. Russ is busy preparing for his tour coming up early next year. Watch out for dates coming up soon!

We are waiting for your contributions to the newsletter. It doesn't matter if you have contributed before...we are always glad to hear from you....your Russ story, a photo, questions (as many as you like), your ideal set list for a Russ gig, a letter, a review of It's Good To Be Here, anything interesting you might have found on the internet (it has to relate to Russ, of course!).

Looking forward to hearing from you.  
Sue

## THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Russ:.....'You Are What You Eat'...

*We've all heard the phrase many times - But it's true, isn't it? - without the food we eat, we wouldn't exist...so..When we eat the potato, the tomato, the bean and bread...they become a part of us, so, we're not separate from the food we eat....In fact, when we eat meat, Chickens, Pigs, Sheep and Cows etc... Those animals become part of us...without food, we don't exist....So, we are not only related to Animals - [and the broccoli]- They're part of us...Just like we're not separate from other Humans...Through emotions, Humor, Sadness, Pain, Fear, Conditioning, Love etc..."*

## **THIS MONTH....**

*Russ: "As usual I've been spending hours in the studio, not so much for recording, - [although, I put down a backing track that I thought sounded strong] - but going through songs that I'll be playing 'live', when I tour early next year. There's always plenty to remember, chords, song structures, words and which songs to leave out for the newer ones, but it's a nice problem...I'll probably end up doing them all.*

*I often pop in to Christian's studio, to see what he's up to and sometimes I'm invited to write something with whoever is there. He has a wide range of Artists... , Lavvy Lavan his partner in Friday Fox Records has been a regular, along with some 'cutting edge' DJ's...A few weeks ago, I saw a face that I recognized - [Actually, a beautiful face] - When she walked out to take a call, I asked Christian..."Who's that lovely girl?" - Alesha Dixon, he replied...Unless you've been living on the Space Station for the last couple of years, you will know, Alesha is the beautiful judge on 'Britain's Got Talent' - A past winner of 'Strictly Come Dancing' - and a member of 'Mystique',- [they had some great hits, a few years ago]. Anyway, I was invited to contribute some ideas on a song that Alesha, Christian and Arno Spires had just started...I suppose we worked for a couple days to finish it....Yesterday I heard Christian's mix and it sounded fantastic!! - Christian and Arno have collaborated on four songs with Alesha - Hopefully, they'll make the album!!*

*UMU Music's Peter and Tom Ross came over and made some videos for their site...I played a couple of songs from my new album - 'It's Good To Be Here' - I like doing new versions, you can go in to areas that are quite 'Alien' - Good fun!*

*Next month I hope to have news on the UK tour and other things...Be Happy... Love, Russ"*

Christian and his writing partner, Arno Spires co-wrote this track with Alesha Dixon. <https://youtu.be/Ue3pGI1zrSk>

## IT'S GOOD TO BE HERE

Someone has done an interesting video for Time Machine and put it on YouTube.

<https://youtu.be/7R54JEwYrww>

You can now buy the complete album, It's Good To Be Here, on download from UMU Music. Why not pop over there and have a look!

## GIG

Here is another gig date for your diary. This is The Great British Rock and Blues Festival at Butlins in Skegness on the weekend of 22-25th January 2016. See the attachment for the festival poster. This is an indoor festival and ticket price includes accommodation. I know a lot of readers are also Zombies/Colin Blunstone fans and you will see that Colin is also playing there on the Sunday.

## INTERVIEWS

A couple of months ago Russ wrote about an interview he did with Rob Jones. For the benefit of new readers, this is what Russ wrote....*"I had an interview recently in Camden. It will be syndicated - The Presenter was Rob Jones and his questions were like nothing I've had before...."Who was the last person to phone you?" - "What is your Motto?" - Interesting stuff..*

You can hear the interview here...

<https://youtu.be/ifyHi9Mwwf0>

An interview with Russ is included in Issue 71 of [Fireworks Magazine](#).

Available in newsagents or buy on-line via

<http://www.rocktopia.co.uk/>

I recently came across this interview with Russ and Rod Argent for Classic Rock in 2010 just before they reunited for High Voltage. Good stuff!

<http://classicrock.teamrock.com/features/2010-03-31/argent-bridged-a-gap-between-60s-pop-the-hard-rock-of-cream-led-zep>

Not an interview but a short video for Friday Fox Recordings, which is Christian and Lavvy's increasingly successful venture. Be a fly on the wall...Russ's kitchen wall...for a few minutes, while Russ, Christian and Lavvy discuss their current work and Christian makes tea!. A few dance moves at the beginning! I saw those many times and I know other newsletter readers did too.

<https://youtu.be/F9gbID9tNs4>

## LETTERS

When I read about Phil Wainman, a friend of Russ he had met in July, it occurred to me that it was Phil Wainman who wrote Hello's hit "Love Stealer" which reached Top Twenty in Germany in summer 1976. Interesting connection therefore because Russ wrote the two previous very successful songs "New York Groove" (released autumn 1975, Nr. 1 in several radio charts) and following "Star Studded Sham" (spring 1976) for Hello. After these two great tracks it was Phil to write this rock song that was later covered by Uriah Heep, Ian Lloyd and even Cliff Richard. Co-writer was Richard Myhill who made a one-hit-wonder two years later with "It takes two to Tango" - I remember that the edition for UK was a square single!

By the way I'm looking forward to Russ' gigs in Germany – hope he'll do a concert in Cologne where I saw him in the early 1990ies.

Best wishes from Germany,  
Markus Linten

Russ: *"Yes, I forgot Phil wrote that...I always thought of Phil as a drummer then producer...thank you, Markus for reminding me".*

## YOUR QUESTIONS

Without getting too personal, were/are any of your songs written for or about any particular person or is your song writing motivation quite different from that? I am thinking about Rock and Roll Lover for one.

<https://youtu.be/2YKQIUPOeic>

Russ: *"Were my songs written about someone in particular?" - Actually - quite a few of them -*

*Yes..,sometimes certain things get to you, and a good way to exorcise them is to express how you feel..,*

*It's one of the things I Love about writing...You can put down your thoughts about so many things... "*

*'Rock and Roll Lover' was just an observation, seeing girls in America following bands around the country, and others being 'there' for the next group that arrives it town. I think many of them were looking for a group member, anyway, I thought it was a good subject for a song..."*

## KRAMER ONLINE

You have all seen Sven Kramer's artwork in the newsletter. See Sven's website here with lots of promotion for Russ and the newsletter.

[http://www.krameronline.eu/russballard\\_newsletter\\_en.html](http://www.krameronline.eu/russballard_newsletter_en.html)

## RECORDED BY OTHERS

I wonder how many of you know this one! Written by Russ for The Gaff.

<https://youtu.be/B1QJSU8uea8>

The Gaff was a Hertfordshire band formed in 2002 and signed to the record company 2R in 2004. Hey Weirdo was released in 2005. Their vocalist, Matt Scales, suffered from Cystic Fibrosis and, sadly, passed away in 2007.

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