



(Header by Sven Kramer)

Welcome to our new readers of this month. Good to have you all with us. Our question, this month, comes from one of our new readers. Please feel free to send questions. If it is a good one for the newsletter, we will put it in. Otherwise, Russ will answer it for you privately.

Every month I open a blank email and wonder what I am going to put in it. A week or so later...we have lots for you to read. Russ has been 'in the mood for writing' and Dave took a little trip in search of Rock Candy. I wonder if any of our readers know of Dave's cover this month from Spanish singer, Miguel Bosé. So many songs!

We have a couple of videos, including a final visit to that great show in Estoril.  
Enjoy!  
Sue

## THIS MONTH FROM RUSS

**Russ:** *"Hi Everyone - Welcome to the September Newsletter. It seems in the past month my diary has suddenly filled with "stuff". Much, I'm glad to say, with BMG appointments or is BMG related. BMG are the super Book and Music Publishers now, also a record company. BMG have published my music catalogue for a few years and are now supporting and releasing my new album, "Its Good To Be Here". I have been invited to a BMG event in a couple of weeks called "The Artists and Songwriters Evening".*

*Recently the record company have released albums by Rick Ashley, Kylie Minogue and my friend Trevor Horn and BMG appear to have done a good job as they all charted. A few days later I'm hosting the PR company, 'Absolute' here. Absolute are working alongside BMG records in promoting 'Its Good To Be Here'. A couple of guys heard the album and phoned to tell me how much they enjoyed it - which is good as they're working on it. Next week I have an interview with a Polish writer from a magazine called 'Lyzard', the most popular music mag in Poland, I believe. The writers name is Kristian Czerwonki and he wants to do my life in music. Wow! He might have to stay for a few days."*

## **BOOK OF LOVE**

**Russ:** *"Last month Dave Williams wrote a great piece on my 2007 album 'Book of Love'. I did say I wanted to tell the story of how I came to write it and how it turned out to be a 'Labour of Love'. Since the seventies, when I started to write a lot of songs, there were, between the relationship tracks (Boy, Girl, Man, Woman songs), others that were lyrically deeper about the problems of the world...."Where Are We Going Wrong?" was one. That was on the 'Ring Of Hands' album that Argent recorded - the song started.....*

Think of the things a new day brings

A baby is born, someone dies

For everyone who shows that he sees

Another won't open his eyes

A new day, A new hope, the same thing, a tightrope

WHERE ARE WE GOING WRONG

*It was followed by quite a few others in a similar vein. I was always aware that these - (I guess you could call them message songs) were seldom as commercial as the 'relationship, boy, girl, man, woman songs. But I really felt the need to write about the madness of 'Man's inhumanity to Man' - I also believe, in a song, the lyrics get through to the listener more than just the verbal. Anyway after 'Where Are We Going Wrong' I wrote 'Chained ' - 'It's Only Money' - 'God Gave Rock And Roll To You' - 'Love' - 'Gonna Meet*

*My Maker' - and others for Argent and then many more for my own albums, 'Winning' - 'Danger Zone' - 'Cast The Spirit' - 'Song For Gail' - 'The Healer' and many more. The desire to record an entire album of what I call 'Emotional Growth' songs became quite intense. I haven't yet mentioned the fact that for thirty something years I had read many emotional growth books and followed the writings of great philosophical people - Jiddu Krishnamurti, Ramesh Baleskar, Swami Narayanananda and others. When I was very young it occurred to me, the Gurus and Yogis of The East always seemed chilled and at one with the world and Nature. So, I decided to write an album of songs about - 'Love' - People say the word a lot... "I love my wife and children" - quite right too - but we also say... "I love these shoes" - " I love these jeans"...How can we compare, it seems mad...I believe I've learnt a lot about life and the various emotions we all encounter and Love is definitely in the forefront... So I began writing 'Book of Love' - Attempting to 'get into' this word 'Love' - Talking about it in song...saying what you believe it is and isn't...Each song being a signpost on the way to finding it...It's so obvious, as humans we have so much in common. We might have different colour skin, different language...but get through the language barrier and you will find the Russian person , the African, the German wants the same as you and me...I want to feel loved, so does the Russian, I want my children to feel happy and secure, so does the African, the Indian and the Chinese person. Well that's how it started. Next month I'll get into the writing and the recording and five years of re-working to feel happy with the result. I look forward to bringing it to you."*

[https://youtu.be/rjdyk\\_Th4bA](https://youtu.be/rjdyk_Th4bA)



## [Where Are We Going Wrong - ARGENT](#)

Artist: ARGENT Album: RING OF HANDS Label: EPIC Year: 1970 Format: VINYL 33 rpm Country: U.K. SIDE A 1. Celebration Written By – Argent/White 2. Sweet Mary W..

youtu.be

## THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

**Russ:** A little something can go a long way.

*"Former world champion gymnast, Dan Millman, (now life coach) - told a lovely story about how a small gesture, that is done with love, can cause a ripple effect and become something much bigger. He says that going back thirty years ago, when he lived in San Francisco, he regularly drove across the Golden Gate Bridge. One morning he decided to do something that he continued to do - While paying the dollar toll, he decided to give the toll man an extra dollar "For the guy behind," he said, and as Dan drove away, he could see the driver and the toll man in conversation. When the driver left the toll, he accelerated to catch up with Dan - as he passed, he honked his car horn , wound down his window and yelled his thanks to Dan. Dan Millman went on to say that one dollar caused a great effect....Can you imagine when that man arrived at his place of work, telling the story about this stranger paying his dollar toll...and then, very likely, those work mates telling others - The wave effect can work in strange ways. Dan Millman has written some great 'Emotional Growth' books - very worth reading....'The Peaceful Warrior'. x"*

## ONE MORE FROM ESTORIL

The end of the show

<https://youtu.be/8FmgeU1CiC8>



[Russ Ballard "I can't hear you no more" live in Estoril, Portugal.](#)

[25/5/2019](#)

Last number of the evening and real Portuguese fave. The cameras are out!

[youtu.be](#)

## QUESTION OF THE MONTH

When did Russ first discover his singing voice and how has he taken care of it over the years. He seems to have been blessed with a real rock voice with lots of range.

**Russ:** *"Regarding singing, I always loved singing but I was a bit embarrassed to sing in front of an audience. I sang duets with Norman Jago when I was thirteen. It wasn't until I was seventeen that I became used to singing solo. As far as the 'range' goes - I found easier to sing higher than lower. When PA systems were more basic, I could never hear myself, although, I could hear myself when singing higher."*

## RUSS'S MUSIC HISTORY

By Dave Williams

### Sweet as Candy

As we approach the end of a pretty average UK Summer, a lot of readers will still be away. Not me unfortunately. I've not been anywhere yet. I'm good at leaving things late. I've almost made a career out of it. So often I'd hear my parents say, "that lad will be late for his own funeral". Quite probably. Given the choice, I might not turn up at all.



The August / September 2019 (Issue 15) of Rock Candy can be purchased through newsagents or downloaded directly from their website by subscription. <https://rockcandymag.com/>

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Writing last month's review of **Book of Love** presented quite a challenge. I thought I had a vague idea of the theme behind it, only to discover that I hadn't

really grasped it at all. Having looked at it more closely, I recognise what a fantastic piece of work it really is. What's more, despite all the work that Russ put into the lyrical content, he still managed to retain those melodies and hooks that he's become known for. Something that I failed to convey in the review. Obviously, I listened to the songs for reference purposes, only to find that for days afterwards I was walking around with the songs in my head. They are still there. Today it's **Wonderful World**. Yesterday it was **The Road that has no Turning**. Before that, **Just Like Me** and for two or three days **Is Anybody Out There** was embedded in my brain.

When Sue, the newsletter editor, drew my attention to the latest edition of **Rock Candy**, which features a multi-page article on **Russ**, I headed into town to W H Smith as this was the most likely place to find it. Nowadays good newsagents are as rare as good record shops, or any record shops for that matter. It required a drive to the edge of town followed by a long walk to avoid the ridiculous city centre parking charges. I was in luck. **Rock Candy** sat amid a myriad of other music magazines. The interests of guitarists, bass players and drummers are all well catered for, along with home recording enthusiasts, techno musicians and classical music lovers. Indeed, if there was to be a Washboard Weekly for skiffle lovers, W H Smith would be the place to find it.

One magazine caught my eye. **Music Week** has been around since the early 70s. Aimed at record sellers rather than buyers, it provided the full Top 75 Singles and Top 75 Albums charts, plus the US Billboard Top 100. The singles chart was used by the BBC and considered to be the bible of record charts. Each music paper featured the latest singles and album chart listings, but only **Record Mirror** used this "official" chart that featured in Music Week.



I used to keep a keen eye on those charts when **Russ** released a new record, hoping to see it break into the Top 75 as a "new entry" as a result of its inclusion on the **BBC Radio One playlist**. His records usually made that list. I remember

tracking the progress of **So You Win Again**, willing it to become the first No.1 for **Hot Chocolate** and more importantly it's writer. Mission accomplished on that one! I couldn't resist having a quick look at the latest edition. The charts are still there, now with additional ones including downloads, ringtones, compilation albums and radio airplay. So many collaborations between artists meant that the same names cropped up throughout. **Ed Sheeran's** name occupied several places in the Top 10, too many for my liking, most of them collaborations. If these placings represent sales it must be an indication that a lot of artists are finding it difficult to get a look in.

Back in my youth, rather than glossy magazines we had tabloid-like music papers such as **Sounds**, **Melody Maker**, **New Musical Express** and **Record Mirror**. I expect many newsletter readers still have cuttings relating to **Russ** and other favourite artists. They are interesting to look back on and transport you back to a time that seems like only yesterday. **Sounds** was my paper of choice, followed by **Melody Maker**. I never had a lot of time for **NME**, which happens to be the only one that has survived. Maybe there's a message there? They were great at keeping us informed on artist news, new releases, record and concert reviews and probably best of all, a listing of that week's gigs across the country. I speak only of the UK of course, but I imagine that the situation then and now is similar across the world. Now we can have instant access to all this information and much more via the internet of course. A case of swings and roundabouts, I guess.

Returning to the car, I passed the old record shops where, according to my dad, I used to squander my pocket money. Only his opinion of course. I recounted buying the first **Russ Ballard** solo LP and **Encore** by **Argent** from Melody Fayre, **Winning** from R.E. Cords, **Circus** by **Argent** from Record Collectors Ltd, the latter because I was curious to hear how the new line-up shaped up. Those shops are now all gone, either demolished or transformed into cafes and charity shops with no hint of the hustle and bustle that used to occur inside as record hunters searched their racks. **HMV** seems to be the only high street survivor and even then, only by its fingernails. I try to buy from there when I can.

Towards the end of my walk I passed **The Flowerpot**, where **Russ** played on his UK tour, and the **Jurys Inn**, where he stayed that night. I stupidly turned down an invite from Peter Ross to join the band for a drink after the show thinking they might be tired. The walk brought back many memories and I suppose it represented my own little journey from the past to the present. I have these daydreams now and then. It's a sure way to end up under a bus if you're not careful.

Never would I have imagined in 1969 that in 50 years' time I'd be buying a magazine featuring articles on **Free** and **Status Quo** let alone my favourite musician **Russ Ballard**. Opening my newly acquired magazine, I checked the index and headed straight to Page 78, **Wonderful World** still in my head. I felt at home with the sentiment. It amazes me that **Russ** can remember so much detail of events that happened half a century ago. There must be many more stories to tell. I long for the day when I'm heading back to W H Smith to purchase that autobiography if and when it becomes available. No pressure Russ!

## DAVE'S COVER QUEST

Whilst writing my articles I've discovered scores of versions of songs written by Russ, some well-known, others less so. There's lots of little gems out there and I thought it might be nice to share some of these discoveries with readers. His music knows no bounds and can be found all around the globe. This month features a star name from Latin America.

**No.14**



### **I'll Keep Holding On by Miguel Bosé**

**Miguel Bosé**, or **Luis Miguel González Bosé**, as he is properly known, is a Panamanian-born Spanish pop musician and actor. Born on April 3rd, 1956, his mother Lucia, was an Italian actress, and his father Luis, was a Spanish bullfighter. Miguel must have had an interesting upbringing as close friends of the Bosé family included **Pablo Picasso** and **Ernest Hemingway**. In 1971 at the age of 15, he began a career as an actor but chose to move into music four years later. As a singer he was signed by **CBS Records** in 1977, remaining with them until 1984 before switching to **Warner Brothers**. He became a teen idol in Spain and across Southern Europe and Latin America, resulting in several major hit records. His biggest hit came in 1985 when his song "**Amante bandido**" topped

the charts across Latin America and in Spain. Today at the age of 63, he continues to maintain his legendary status.

Turning the clock back slightly, in 1981 Miguel released an album called **Más Allá**, which I believe translates in English to Beyond. The final track on the album is this **Russ Ballard** tune called **I'll Keep Holding On**.

<https://youtu.be/AqMQD0IcgxA>

	<p><a href="#">Miguel Bosé - I'll keep holding on 1981</a></p> <p>Stay The Night (1981)</p> <p>youtu.be</p>
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