



(Header by Sven)

May 2025

A big welcome to our new readers. Many have joined us during Russ's tour.

It has been a very busy month, with the album and the tour. Everything comes at the same time! The album....it is a masterpiece, isn't it? Well, I think so and I have had it on repeat. There are some congratulations and thanks to give. First to Russ, of course, for all the hours he has spent in the studio producing these wonderful songs. To Christian for his finishing touch of magic with the mixing. To Sven for his brilliant art work and graphics; the look of the album is all his work. To Frontiers, the record company, for doing a brilliant job in getting the album out there. And a personal touch, to my husband, Bob, for his inspiration with the title, Songs From The Warehouse. (I wish I had thought of it 🙌). Dave has done a review of the Songs From The Warehouse disc with some insights you might have missed on first listening. No sooner was the album released than Russ had his tour in Germany and Switzerland. Again, hugely successful. Why aren't UK audiences like that? There are lots of videos on YouTube from all the venues. Ian has written a tour diary, which I will send out as a separate email. At two of the venues the show was recorded by a professional video maker. This will result in a DVD, which will be on sale later in the year.

Thanks to Rainer, David and Dave for their contributions.

Sue

THIS MONTH - RUSS'S DIARY

It's certainly been an intense couple of months.... Videos, rehearsals and recently podcasts - then phone interviews and, from the end of April to early May, the tour of Germany....What a great tour it was - From Hamburg in the north to Bavaria in the south....I want to thank the people who made me and my great band, Marc, PJ, Roly and John, so welcome again, as well as singing along with us to make every show something to really remember.

Special thanks go to my dear friends - Sue and Carole, who after decades still inspire me, also Dave Williams who, after many years, has been and still is focussed on my behalf.

Thank you... Sven for everything, from putting together my Website and also dealing with many enquiries - Not to mention your great talent in photography and designing album covers for me.

Last but not least.....Ian, for supporting me in many ways....initially....your great enthusiasm, which has morphed in to Super Roadie and MC and Ringmaster.....

You're all special to meThank You.....Lots of Love, Russ xxx

RUSS - LIFE STORIES

I ended last month's biography telling the story of our introduction to Richard Anthony in France, along with his staff, road managers Claude and Alain.....I begin now after an horrendous journey from Gatwick Airport to Paris Orly....Claude and Alain thought it a good idea to lose their five new English friends to be....as we followed [actually chased them] the four hundred kilometres along the RN7 to Lyon, where we stopped for the night.

We left our hotel early the next morning as we still had a long journey to Cassis on the French Riviera where we were due play our first show of a four month tour.

Everything I'd heard about the south was true, the style of the French, the sun, the Mediterranean sea, it was all so impressive. We found the casino and met Claude and Alain who were setting up the instruments for tonight's show. On the stage there appeared a very tall man who stood by an electronic keyboard, Alain

introduced him, I want you to meet your keyboard player, Marcel Hendrix. This came as a surprise, we didn't think we needed a keyboard player. Richard explained, it was a directive of the French Musicians Union, that we had to have a French musician in a foreign line up. Marcel, who couldn't speak much English turned out to be a nice guy and a good musician.

We'd rehearsed Richard's songs in London - the show was some of his hits and some newer songs. 'Monday Monday' became LUNDI LUNDI...also we played Richard's hit at that time - I don't remember the title but it was a cover of Dusty Springfield's hit at the time - 'You Don't Have To Say You Love Me' ... Then there was his most famous song, 'Le Train'... Before we took the stage that night in Cassis, Richard advised us what we would do if the songs were too fast, too slow, too loud or too soft [Well he didn't have to worry about the too soft part], we were never too soft for him, as in the Adam Faith case, we were usually too loud. Richard said, for too slow he would place his hands behind his back, clasp them together and wave his fingers rapidly up and down....If too loud, he would hold his hands behind his back and point his fingers to the ground....His gesticulations became a problem - Bob thought Richard's speed up meant get louder....Mod thought 'get louder' meant 'slow down'. Bob thought they all meant 'get louder' - Well after all, get louder was Bob's favourite place.....

More next month.....

FESTIVAL - MOSBACH

On 26th July 2025 Russ is playing, with his band, at the Rock Night festival in Mosbach, Germany. If all you lovely people in Germany need an extra Russ fix, here you are.



FROM THE TOUR

From Rainer Huengerle

Now to the gig in Karlsruhe:

It started right on time at 8 o'clock. Russ had a support act this time: Michael Voss & Van De Forst.

Michael is a well-known German hard rock singer/guitarist who used to sing/play with the German Bands ,Casanova', ,Mad Max' and ,Bonfire' and sang on the recordings of ,Heavysaurus' (a metal band for children who perform live in dinosaur outfits). He has Van De Forst with him as support because, as he says himself, the very high notes no longer work for him as they used to. This is the young singer Vanessa von der Forst, who is also Michael's stepdaughter. The two of them played a 30-minute acoustic set (guitar and vocals), mainly titles from Michael's former band 'Casanova' and at the end "*Sweet child o' mine*" by 'Guns 'N' Roses'.

This was the perfect warm-up for the following gig by Russ, who kicked off with his tried and tested band at 8:50 pm after a short break. The first track was "*It's only Money*", an Argent title from the "*In Deep*" album. And the fact that the second song was already "*New York Groove*" already suggested that a few more well-known hits would follow. „*New York Groove*" is and remains a ,good mood song' and is by far one of the most popular songs in the field of glam rock. I still enjoy listening to it today and I think many fans in the audience feel the same way, because the atmosphere was already good at this point. I didn't remember the exact order of the songs, but a few more classics such as "*The Fire Still Burns*", "*In The Night*", "*Dream On*" and the two new songs "*Courageous*" and "*Resurrection*" followed over the course of the evening and the atmosphere got better and better. Russ communicated with the audience between songs and occasionally talked a little about the background to the songs, as with "*Liar*" from the debut album 'Argent'. This song later became a chart hit for the US band 'Three Dog Night'. For all those who didn't know 'Three Dog Night', he briefly sang "*Mama told me not to come*".

Or "*No More The Fool*", a very expressive song that was originally intended for Kim Wilde, but was then taken over by Elkie Brooks. For me personally, Elkie is one of the greatest rock singers ever and this song fits her voice perfectly. I was lucky enough to see her live in 1974 with her former band 'Vinegar Joe', in which Robert Palmer also sang.

I think some of the audience only really realized during the course of the evening that many of the songs that have helped other bands to great success were written by Russ and so there was plenty of room for more hits for the rest of the evening. These included "*Hold Your Head Up*", one of my favorite songs

from 'Argent' and "*Since You've Been Gone*", which Russ wrote in 1975 and which was taken over by 'Rainbow' in 1979 and became a hit. This song became so well known and popular that it was later played by Brian May (Queen) and his band at their concerts (see the following link):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T3qqRZhWzDI>

From about the second half of the evening, some fans danced and during "*Voices*", a gentleman next to me, who had obviously had some back problems from standing for so long, couldn't be stopped at all and danced with his wife.

Of course, "*God Gave Rock and Roll To You*" was not to be missed as an encore. Russ was inspired to write this song at a young age by his religious mother, who said this very sentence to him. The US band 'Kiss' will thank her, because this song became a world-famous anthem for Kiss.

It was a great concert - just under two hours - and the time flew by. Russ put it in a nutshell in one of his announcements:

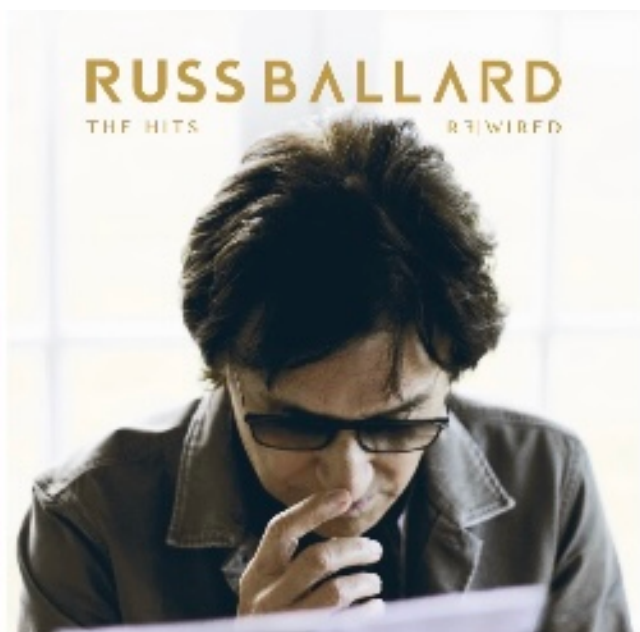
"Music is magic and this magic is transferred to you. And we feel the same way. Love your neighbors. That's important with all the problems in the world (Russia, Ukraine, Lebanon etc.). Don't think about yesterday or tomorrow, but enjoy the moment".

I can only agree with him!

Best regards

Rainer

SONGS FROM THE WAREHOUSE / THE HITS RE-WIRED



Here are some of the international reviews sent to us from Frontiers.

PRINT

Good Times (DE) – "His melodies and choruses are simply catchy, but also thrive on clever, varied arrangements and mostly move in the mid-range, sometimes even quiet tempo range. First-class adult rock!"

Rock Hard (DE) – "The latter can simply be described as a good rock album, which, while also subtly playing with newer influences, still retains the charm of the past and audibly comes from the pen of a master."

Rocks (DE) – "The 79-year-old unfolds a panorama of exciting music that doesn't seek the fastest route into the listener's ear, but, despite all its catchiness, remains somewhat unwieldy, dark, and always touching."

Rock It (DE) – "The Hits Rewired, on the other hand, truly radiates a new freshness and lets the discerning listener revel in past and supposedly better times."

Hardline (DE) – 10/10 "You won't find any bad songs on this album. ...With "Journey Man," "The Wild," and "Last Man Standing," he once again has good to excellent songs on offer. ...With his second album, he has once again created a monument to himself, which will surely delight all his fans. One can only take one's hat off to the man and say thank you for the wonderful hits that thrilled the masses, so this one can only give full marks."

Empire (DE) – "Russ Ballard is definitely a quiet icon of rock music, and his new album once again demonstrates how good songwriting can be done. Great record!"

Metal Obs (FR) – 4.5/5 "At almost eighty, Russ Ballard is in great shape and also knows how to adapt by building a bridge between the past and the present, but above all remains a key figure in the history of rock in general over the last fifty years. An artist still capable of composing quality tracks that exude sincerity and offering us songs that could be future hits!"

Rock Tribune (BE) – "The first album contains new songs that show that he is still a top-notch composer [...] A beautiful double album, especially for the new material."

Rock Hard (IT) – 8/10 "New Songs From The Warehouse presents a Ballard who, as he approaches eighty, has not lost the brilliance of his best days: the compositions are intense, the melodies are still strong and compelling but not banal, the voice still holds up and the lyrics are profound and largely introspective. Two albums, two different sides of Russ Ballard, but so much great music!"

ONLINE

Defenders Of The Faith (US) – "Songs from the Warehouse / The Hits Rewired serves as the perfect two in one primer to acquaint yourself with this legend amongst men. Over the course of two discs and 26 songs, Ballard blurs the line between past, present, and future, openly embracing his legacy, while eagerly expanding upon it with the same passion heard on his classic '70s and '80s albums. Indeed, the fire still burns!"

Heavy Music HQ (US) – "It's interesting to hear songs made popular by other artists being done by the guy who wrote them, and at age 79 Ballard still sounds great."

Get Ready To Rock (UK) – 5/5 "As a showcase for an already established artist, this living, breathing collection of songs is an object lesson in how to do it, and do it right."

Metal Digest (UK) – "When it comes to songwriting, Ballard still has it, being able to craft simple but memorable tunes."

Markus Heavy Music Blog (DE) – 8/10 "Russ Ballard's new effort features new songs that represent well-crafted rock music, while the second disc of this release takes you back to the heyday of rock and hard rock. Each of these songs shows talent, experience and a passion for music that comes from the heart."

Hellfire Magazin (DE) – 8.5/10 "The legend combines his hits from the 80s with new songs. Russ hasn't forgotten a thing over the years. His expressive voice remains unchanged from his previous sound structure. Welcome back! A clear, pure sound with a catchy tune."

Neckbreaker (DE) – "The listener is introduced to the significance of a great, multitalented musician who never adhered to conventions and, with his understanding of the mainstream, paved the way for many top-class hard rock bands to enter the charts. He captured the zeitgeist of the 1980s like no other composer and, despite his age, demonstrates that he still possesses a versatile voice and excels in precise guitar work. The double album is entertaining."

Headbangers Lifestyle (NL) – "Ballard's ability to bridge past and present as well as a multitude of genres and styles is what makes 'Songs from The Warehouse / The Hits Rewired' so immensely compelling as a whole."

Maxazine (NL) – "The collection offers a pleasant dose of craftsmanship and nostalgic flair. It shows that Ballard's compositions have withstood the test of time quite well."

Metallus (IT) – "Certainly of interest for delving into the songbook of an author who, willingly or not, has marked an era with his songs but does not intend to stop."

Truemetal (IT) – 81/100 "'Songs From The Warehouse/The Hits Rewired' represents an enjoyable and surprising return of an artist who, on the one hand, manages to make us listen to new, fresh and enjoyable compositions and, on the

other, reminds us of what his calibre as an author is and has been with a handful of hits (mostly interpreted by other artists) that we all already know but which, placed one after the other, really make an impression."

AND FROM DAVE

Songs from The Warehouse reviewed

8th May 1976, I'm sat on a bench outside St Albans City Hall listening to Russ Ballard sound checking ahead of his much-anticipated solo gig, only his second UK appearance since leaving Argent. Next to me are an elderly couple. The man remarks to his wife that the singer has a wonderful singing voice. Exactly 49 years later to the day, I am about to review Russ's new album. I'm full of anticipation and eager to hear how that singing voice sounds almost 50 years later.



Russ Ballard – Songs from The Warehouse – Frontiers Records FR CD 1478

Songs from The Warehouse is actually a double album. The first disc consists of 13 new songs and will be the subject of this review. The second disc features The Hits Re-Wired, which features Russ's own renditions of 13 songs that were recorded by other artists, and this will be assessed next month. Originally these were intended to be two separate albums, but the record company decided to issue them in one package.

First of all, a word about **Frontiers Records**. Founded in 1996 in Napoli, Italy, by Serafino Perugino, the label specialises in melodic and progressive metal, classic and hard rock. They have brought about the return of classic artists including Journey, Toto, Yes, Blue Oyster Cult, Asia and Def Leppard among others. They have now added Russ Ballard to their roster.

Songs from The Warehouse features 13 new songs and kicks off with **Resurrection**, co-written with Roly Jones, guitarist in Russ's touring band. He is a great songwriter in his own right. Featured as the first single, it received healthy exposure on social media and begins with a vocal introduction, "Loneliness is leaving me stone cold, reaching out for no-one, there must be someone somewhere". The song bursts into life "It was 'YOU' my resurrection". The chorus is powerful and contagious. This is followed by **Courageous**, which is about a young girl who takes on the role of raising her brother and sister after her mother is no longer around. Again, Russ sets the scene against a piano backing, but soon the chorus kicks in, packed with power chords and a backing melody made up of oohs and ahhs. "You have the light, you have the power to stand strong". Even if only subconsciously, you feel compelled to sing along. Track three, **Journey Man**, is a killer. Vintage Russ Ballard. It begins with an innocent guitar riff over which Russ sings "How did we get here, stranded in this place?" while in the background a counter vocal can be heard singing "the world keeps turning and I never stop learning, voices are longing to be free". The guitar riff then switches to a two-note guitar pattern which repeats through most of the song. Simple but effective. The fuse is now lit, and when it reaches the gunpowder, Kapow, the chorus gets straight inside your head. It might be based on a four-chord sequence that everybody uses, but Russ seems to be able to conjure magic where others can't. It is underlined with a nice deep bass guitar, reminiscent of the rawness of his 1979 album *Barnet Dogs*. *Journey Man* made a lasting impression on me and is definitely one for the air guitarists. Already a lot of fans claim this is their favourite song, but trust me, this album is far from a one-track pony.

The One Who Breathes Me also begins with Russ singing over a simple guitar pattern, which continues throughout the song. A solitary note on a bass guitar appears in the background, building in volume, becoming more prominent. What I love here is the strong percussion backing track and the strings. The more I hear this song, the more I like it. The song fades out with the same guitar pattern that introduced it.

Next up is **The Wild**, and it's another masterpiece, a real rocker, beginning with some guitar distortion leading into the verse driven along by organ stabs. I'm reminded of **Won't Get Fooled Again** by **The Who**. There's some great melodic bass guitar, which would have made **Jim Rodford** proud. The chorus is full

sounding and infectious. Some years ago, a singer called **Paula Cole** released a single called **Where have all the cowboys gone?** It featured a chorus with someone singing “do do” behind the main vocal on the chorus. It made the song stand out, and was possibly the reason it became a hit. Well, nobody does “do do’s” better than Russ, and that’s what makes this another ‘best song’ contender. Welcome to the wild!

Charlatan is a more serious song, with a big orchestral arrangement and moody string backing. Very dramatic in its delivery, it deals with the subject of obsession and provides a perfect contrast to the songs that precede it. This leads into **Soul Music**. I was expecting something with a Stax or Motown flavour, fast and danceable, but this is a lovely slow ballad. Russ admitted recently that it’s difficult to write a love song once you pass a certain age. Well, he pulled off a great love song here, and it certainly has ‘soul’.

Russ then takes us **Sleepwalking**. In my opinion, this song has Kate Bush written all over it. Back in her youth, I could just picture her singing the opening lines as she sleepwalks across the stage in costume. Even the powerful chorus would suit her. I’ve never heard of her covering anyone else’s material, but Wow, Wow, Wow, Kate Bush covering a Russ Ballard song, imagine that. Somebody needs to have a word.

I caught a hint of Cilla Black’s **Step Inside Love** on the opening piano bars of **The Last Man Standing**. It is another album favourite, and with good reason. The mellow piano and strings intro is short and sweet, the body of the song being heavily based on rock guitar riffs. This deserves to be heard with the volume turned up. Make sure the neighbours are out and crank the volume up to 11.

Make Believe World tells a story of a spoilt child raised in a wealthy family. “You can’t live in the clouds with your feet on the ground” sings Russ. It’s quite a dramatic song with lots of chord changes, ascending as it builds, and it ends with a sequence of chords descending in the opposite direction, presumably bringing those feet back onto the ground. On the next song, the subject turns to that of a young couple falling in love, and the consequences that follow. **The Family Way** is driven along by heavy drums and bass. As the title suggests, the unmarried girl falls pregnant, bringing shame on her parents and family. It reminded me of my schooldays when one or two girls found themselves in this situation. Tongues were wagging and the girls were taken out of school by their parents and never seen or heard of since.

Two songs remain. At just over two minutes long, **Fearless** is short and sweet, but not lacking in quality. It has a punchy and catchy chorus like so many of the songs. The album closes with the appropriately named **The Last Amen**, which features a lovely acoustic guitar and strings opening. The arrangement of both the vocals and the instrumentation is excellent, and the lyrics are mysterious. Is

there a true story hidden behind them? Only the writer knows. It's a great song to close Part 1 of the album.

I regard **Songs from The Warehouse** as a fabulous Russ Ballard album. I believe it is one of his best. It does require a number of listens in order to become fully familiar with the 13 songs. Like **Book of Love**, some of them grow on you very quickly, others take time, but the more you hear it, the more you appreciate it. The amount of hard work that has gone into the arrangement and production is perceptible. Hats off also to **Christian Ballard** for his mixing skills. The sound quality is impeccable. As he first did in 1975 on his solo debut, Russ plays all the keyboards, guitar and bass parts himself and sang vocals, and wrote all the songs, with the exception of Resurrection, which as previously mentioned, features the talents of co-writer Roly Jones.

Sven Kramer was responsible for the stylish sleeve design and graphics and also handled the photography. His elegant work looks even more impressive when seen full size on the 12" vinyl album version. Russ has a good team supporting him, and this extends to Frontiers Records. Russ now has a record company that is backing him with powerful marketing and promotion. Hopefully their faith will be rewarded, and in turn, we can look forward to further releases and even the possibility of a live DVD.

I was nervous at being asked to review this album for the newsletter. What if I didn't like it? Before listening, I decided that I would be objective and flag up anything that I considered to be not to my liking or below expectations.

Fortunately, I genuinely love this album, and even as I write this, the line, "the world Keeps turning and I never stop learning" is rooted deep inside of me and I can't get it out of my head. Today I'm eating and breathing **Journey Man**, tomorrow it could be **Soul Music** or **The Wild**. That's how it is with Russ Ballard songs, and it's been the case since I heard and bought **Can't Let You Go** by **Barry Ryan** in 1971, though at the time, I was unaware of the writer.

Finally, in answer to the question I raised at the beginning, I'm delighted to confirm that the singing voice that sounded so good in 1976 is still going strong 50 years later.

Coming next month: **Songs from The Warehouse Part 2 – The hits Rewired**.

READERS LETTERS

Hi Sue.

I met Russ nearly! At Waltham Cross boys club. I went to Cheshunt Sec btw. Cliff came to see a play of mine. Early sixties

The unit four plus two, were rehearsing and I kind of stumbled into the practice room Then again at Goffs Oak Village Hall by chance. He was jamming with Buster. A former band member. When on a home visit from Hamburg ,Germany. Where I was living.

I have also a love of songwriting and lyrics. And co wrote with an old friend. The late. 'Jimmy Bowien' Deutcher Gramophone producer.

My sub conscious led me to google Russ Ballard last night. He came into my mind and I didn't know why. Until I later picked up the novel I'm reading. 'The Waiting' by Michael Connelly. The main character being. Renee Ballard. That was the trigger. Name association. I'm very glad did.

Love and peace
David JW

DAVE'S COVER QUEST

As mentioned last month, UK disco and soul band **Kandidate** released two Russ Ballard songs as singles on RAK Records towards the end of the 1970s. Last month we featured **Don't Wanna Say Goodnight**, which was the first of five singles they released on the label with the handsome tall ship label design. Here is the last of those five releases, later covered by retired **Kiss** drummer **Peter Criss** in 1982.

No.81



Let Me Rock You by Kandidate

Kandidate featured in two consecutive months? Is he running out of artists and songs I hear you ask. Don't you believe it! I still have over 300 covers not featured yet, including a few oddities genre-wise.

Here's their final single released in 1980 on RAK Records titled **Let Me Rock You**. Kandidate was quite popular group in the UK, and only one of their five singles under **Mickie Most**'s guidance failed to chart. This **Russ Ballard** composition achieved No.58 in the UK charts, bringing back some of their previous success after the previous release proved to be a 'miss'. An unsuccessful transfer to Polydor would follow, before Phil Fearon went on to create 80s hitmakers **Galaxy**.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5NoN130VEJY>