

For Rick
Interview
unedited -
Marsha

GARY

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**Ian Anderson Interview - Jethro Tull
Call from London, England
July 25, 2003 (1:45 pm)**

Hello is this Marsha? Marsha, this is Ian Anderson from Jethro Tull here with my apologies for being 15 minutes late getting to you. Unfortunately, I just had a long day of promo and everything seems to run a little late. You're my last girl today so I will give you my best shot, but it's 15 minutes late for which I apologize.

Question #1

Re: Jethro Tull Tour

I'm coming out next week for five weeks with the Jethro Tull Tour and coming back out twice more in the fall with the Rubbing Elbows Tour. Three US tours this year. The summer tour is a Jethro Tull Tour and we are just kind of out and about across the country doing some weird stuff. You know, a couple of casino's, festivals, the Sturgis Bikers Rally in South Dakota. Just kind of summer fun. Summer Madness- that's a good idea- a Summer Madness tour. But when I come back with the Rubbing Elbows Tour, I'll be doing a more structured focused thing doing art centers, small theaters and doing a very specific kind of show, which is quite different from the Jethro Tull Tour.

Re: Audience Intervention with "Rubbing Elbows" Tour

There is sort of audience input in terms of having chosen guests from the audience who get to come up on stage and we chat. We also have co presenters from local radio, sometimes TV and have musical guests who come on and we become their back up group. So we usually try to find a local artist, who is a newcomer to the music world and we, through local radio, pick an artist and a song and we let them come on the stage and let them have their big moment. We do our best to be their all-star backing band. It's kind of fun. A lot of improvisational moments. A lot of humor. A lot of interesting chats but it's still 2/3 musical performance.

It works to a pretty strict timetable of events. A lot of improvisation. Never the same two nights running. Different places, different people.

Re: XMAS CD:

2

I like to think that when I am presented with the challenge in trying to come up with an Xmas album its got to have some weight and it has to have some authority. It's got to have some musical gravity. It's got to have some credentials. It's got to have some underlying serious music going on. So if I can present it in an upbeat kind of way and make it feel a little more festive and warm, that's what I am trying to do and I hope that is what I've done.

I am really not trying to make a cheesy-crass money grabbing record just to cash in on Xmas. And I know there are going to be a lot of people out there who are going to say this is exactly what I've done. I try to take this really, really seriously. I'm doing my best here to give our fans an album that is overall having an upbeat kind of feel to it. But there is some pretty serious music going on in here.

As flute players go I'm up there... There's not a lot of flute players ..(paused)... I know what I can do and what I can't do so what I'm presenting on this album it's for sure you are not going to find another album-Xmas or otherwise- hat bring the flute into the world of jazz and folk and I don't like to say rock music because it is not really rock music. But into that broad kind of genre, I think I'm kind of out there on my own and I know when I've done a good job. I know when I've done a bad job. This time I've done a good job. So I am really pleased with the album and I really enjoy listening to it which is always the ultimate test.

Traditional?

There are a few traditional pieces. A couple classical traditional pieces. Some traditional English church songs, Xmas carols (or whatever you want to call them), some new songs. Than there's some remakes of some older Jethro Tull songs that over the years I had written that were related to the Xmas spirit. So, it's a mixture of different things really.

“Rupi’s Dance”-comparable to “Secret Language of Birds”?

3

Oh, it’s really much in a similar vein.

I’m an acoustical musician. I do this whimsical kind of acoustical type thing that is kind of a little bit chocolate box- some of them.

I love cats

I love girls

Sort of fundamental emotions in life.

I’m a bit of a softie

Alice Cooper is probably a bit of a softie but he plays golf

Stings a bit of a softie he saves rainforests

I’m a bit of a softie I sing about cats

But (pause) only four cat songs in 36 years

Inspiration “Rupi’s Dance”?

Right after I wrote Old Black Cat (see *next page*) I got a phone call from my wife who said these abandoned feral kittens had been found 50 miles away from our home and so she went back to get them.

They were too little to survive. For the next few weeks we reared these kittens to where they could go off to become pets with people. Except for one little kitten that was too sick to go. So we kept her. She finally got well and we called her Rupi. It’s a Hindu name meaning beauty. So I wrote a little song about her. But it could just as well been a song about an Indian girl with beautiful long black hair, with a very seductive dancing manner and trying to seduce me into her bed but unfortunately, it’s just a song about a little kitten (laughs).

RE: Old Black Cat/ Double Meaning

4

I had an old black cat who died right before Christmas of liver cancer. I wrote a little song about him called Old Black cat, which I wrote an hour after he died. It was very sad. In what I am singing about in Old Black Cat- I’m not just singing about that particular guy.

I am singing about all the things that we take for granted in life. Our friends, our husbands, our wives, our children We kind of live with these things day to day. They are there and we just stop noticing them after awhile.

But this old cat – he was like ^{that}at

He wasn’t a good cat

He wasn’t a bad cat

He was just there

We took him for granted. After he went and we were over the shock we realized what a great guy he was. What a character he was and that’s what I am trying to reflect in the song. It’s not just a song about him but the way we do disservice to the people around us. We don’t appreciate them until it’s too late...it’s a bit of an object lesson that I’m trying to say.

5

Re: DVD

That's an interesting point because I was just on the phone with EMI records trying to get them to postpone a release date of a DVD from some historical Jethro Tull stuff, video clips and things that they wanted to put out. Would you believe the same week the solo albums coming out which is really not such a good idea. So we got them to slightly reposition that. Than next year a DVD is coming out on the Isle of Wight from the 1970's which will be released in February next year. Recently we recorded all the performances of the Monterrey Jazz Festival in Switzerland.

Yeah, I'm sure there will be some more Jethro Tull stuff in the future. I'll probably be recording on of the Rubbing Elbows dates later this year. There will be some more DVD stuff from Jethro Tull for sure. You don't want to flood the market with these damn things- just one at a time. Also, the remaster stuff as well you see.

We are remastering all the old Jethro Tull catalogue with EMI, which is much higher digital, higher resolution, much better quality of sound.

I mean this year alone there are 3 remasters another three in the fall, an Ian Anderson solo, A Jethro Tull Xmas album, a Martin Barre-our lead guitarist- solo coming out next month, new stuff in the spring of next year. For the hard core Jethro Tull fans there's a lot of stuff to spend their money on. In fact, I may even have to make some low interest loans to enable our fans to make their purchases. We could do some good business here. We can help people finance their record purchases. Almost like being a credit card company. And if they default on their payments boy, they are going to have to pay through their nose (laughs).

RE: Pied Piper

It disturbs me because the Pied Piper of Hamel) in the traditional folklore is about a mysterious Piper who comes into town to rid the town of its rodent problem who seduces the rats and takes them away and they never were to be seen again.

The people of the town they didn't pay him for his good work so he came back and used his flute to seduce the young children of Hamel. They all followed him out of town and he took them into a dark cave and no one was ever seen again.

And this is kind of a folklore thing but actually based on some degree of reality.

There are stories to suggest that its not just some sort of fairy tale. It's spooky because the flute is an instrument of seduction. It is not only found in the story of the Pied Piper but in the mythology of the Hindu Religion.

In India, The Lord Krishna, for example, uses his flute so we are told, as an instrument of seduction to lure the young female goat herders into the act of copulation. In Central & South America and in North America there are American Indian gods who are also depicted playing the flute in sort of a seductive way – standing on one leg- would you believe? So this is sort of a universal phenomenon. There is something a little spooky about it. Playing the flute standing on one leg.

It's not a negative thing but its just so damn weird. It's just because it crops up in so many different parts of society. In so many periods of history. You know the one-legged flute player in mythology, could be a future episode of the X-Files. And what's even weirder is I was born in 1947, the year of the Roswell Incident. I have some sort of sneaking suspicion that maybe my mother, God bless her, was impregnated by aliens back in 1947. In fact maybe I'm the flute player from a parallel universe My mother was impregnated by aliens. Of course I'm saying this in sort of tongue-in-cheek matter but it's kind of a spooky nature of the world. We keep making these connections between one incident and another. They can be tens of thousands of years apart. Strange and corky universal kinds of truths on this planet. About our folklore, our mythology, our folk heroes.

I'm just a small cog in a big wheel. I'm just one of those one legged flute players who seems to have accidentally picked upon the same demonstrative stance, (**the tape made a funny far-away type sound here*) the same instrument giving it the same role being quite a seductive instrument. It's a very phallic instrument.

The point where I draw the line is, I'm interested up to a point in this sort of stuff because if you get to interested you start believing your mother was actually impregnated by aliens. There's a point where I kind of turn off from it. I'm a little bit fascinated but only for a couple moments at a time. You don't want to start getting crazy about this stuff, than you might start believing it.

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**If one was to write a song about you what
Landscape could one put Ian Anderson in?**

Very interesting point-it's the best question I have had all day. It's absolutely, distinctly answered in a song I wrote with that in mind. "Lost in Crowds", on my solo album, that is coming out.

That's my landscape. I'm the guy you could visualize in a crowded place, in an airplane^{part}, in a train station, walking down a busy street in London.

Just one of the crowd. Just sort of the faceless guy in the middle of it all and I feel quite comfortable there. But where I feel really uncomfortable is when I am in a smaller crowd of people and people know who I am. Being watched, being looked at and I feel real uncomfortable. It is lyrically dealt with in the song "Lost in Crowds" from the LP "Rupi's Dance". The lyrics are on the website to get an idea of what I am talking about

Landscapes from a Jethro Tull point of view one of my all time favorite songs is "Budapest" from Crest of a Knave" back in the late 80's. It's about a young girl in Budapest. It's very much a documentary piece of writing- about a real life person in a real life environment. I'm very pleased with that one. I sing this one on stage this coming tour. It's one of my favorite Jethro Tull songs.

On a solo level its difficult to pick a single one because when you make solo albums they tend to be a little bit more personal, a little more intimate. A little more likely to bear the soul. It's hard to pick individuals out of these.

The two songs that come to mind on the new solo lp "Lost in Crowds" and "A Hand of Thumbs"- slightly more bearing the soul. Talking about me as an individual, my insecurities. Not my strengths but my failings. It's not difficult to write about it's just difficult to talk about. I suppose this is why we make records, write lyrics, make movies or write novels. But we don't do is talk about it easily. It's hard to verbalize except through the things that we do that is our "creative sport" I like to call it.

I mean, I think we feel compelled to exorcize demons. That's what comes out of this. It's part of getting something out of our system that is difficult to do through more normal means. It's difficult to share with people through conversation or the usual verbalizing. The usual dialogue. That's what makes creative people. That we're folks who need other ways to express ourselves. You know exactly what I'm talking about, you're a writer. I think what you don't want to do is sing songs about personal relationships. Anything that would embarrass them- would compromise their current relationships in a way they would feel unhappy about.

I really would stand by some kind of ethical resolution that I've had. I would never do it...I'm talking about shagging other peoples wives (laughs). It wouldn't be good to go and write about a relationship you had 30 years ago. Your first girl friend. It's not good to sing about because that person is probably married with a bunch of kids and I think it is something we shouldn't do. We can sing about the topic. We can sing on the subject but we have to change the scenario, we have to make it a little more generic, not to be specifically about a single person. That's my belief about these things. Never use a personal experience in life to create a song that is literally about that one episode in that one persons life. It's something I'd never do and never done.

Press Misconceptions

8

I guess there are people who think I'm a perfectionist. A control freak. Those two areas of my personality and character are probably a little bit flawed.

I don't believe in perfection but I'm not afraid to try and attain it. But these are two different things. In seeking perfection it just means you are trying to do better everyday. In what ever you do-whatever walk of life you happen to tread. You try to do a little better but it doesn't mean you're a believer in perfection or that you will ever achieve it. You are just someone on a learning curve. That's the way I think of it. So I'm not a perfectionist. I am just someone who likes to improve what I do.

Control Freak – I like to exercise a measure of authority but I am still a team player. I am still a person who requires and relies upon the people around me to play that part in what is a team effort. But every team has to have a captain. Every factory a boss, every government has a president/prime minister. I guess I play that role. But ultimately, every president has to be a team player, every prime minister has to be a team player, every football captain has to be a team player.

I would just like to modify those perceptions of me a little bit. I like to have authority and I like to have some measure of strong input into the things around my life but I don't think I'm a control freak. I rely on a lot of the people a lot of the time to give me the input that allows me to make the final decisions a lot of the time. Similarly I don't feel I'm quite unauthoritative as maybe sometimes I'm painted. Certainly not a perfectionist. I don't believe in perfection for a minute. I just believe I am trying to get one step further down the line to achieve goals basically but perfection? No! It's not on my horizon at all. I don't believe in perfection.

RE: FAMILY

9

My son is a musician he plays drums. He plays with me on my new albums. He's kind of involved in some other aspects of the music side of our work as well as playing with other people. My daughter is not really involved with music. She a television production assistant. In fact, she just called me this afternoon and she just finished her contract with a production series that's been going on for a couple of months. So technically, she is an out of work person. I think she is quite pleased to be out of work. She's been working lots of late nights these past few months and she's happy just to be temporary without a job. She's involved with TV not in music.

My wife. We met because she was in press and promotion. When I met her she came to work for us in an administrative capacity and we became involved in a personal relationship and we married. Her background is in the music industry. These days and two children later she's back working, at least part time, involved in coordinating press and promotion. She looks after the financial stuff. She travels with me. She's part of the working team...and she gets paid for it.