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For the attention of:

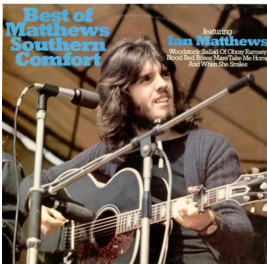
30 June 2009

Monday 20th July 2009
at The Ravenswood, Sharpthorne

IAIN MATTHEWS
Support: Mary Leay

When some artists are referred to as "legends" it is usually measured in years, or based on the quality of their music. Few are measured in both time and quality. One artist that has been judged by both is Iain Matthews.

As a founding member of **Fairport Convention** back in '67, Matthews appeared on the bands' first three recordings (Fairport Convention, What We did on our Holidays and Unhalfbricking) until musical differences caused him to leave in '69 during the recording of their third album.



In order to facilitate and develop his growing fascination with American singer/songwriters, in 1969 he formed his own band, **Matthews Southern Comfort**. The group spawned a massive European hit with the Joni Mitchell song "Woodstock".

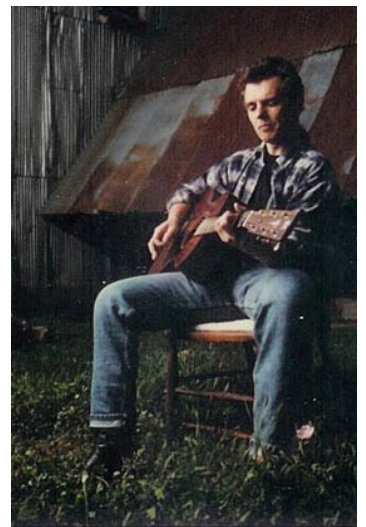
However, within a year, Matthews felt restricted and began his solo career, signing with the Vertigo label and a new era began. After 2 albums for the company, once again, he felt the need for newer pastures and in 1972

Plainsong, a quartet, was formed with friend Andy Roberts, where together and to high critical acclaim, they chronicled the exploits of American aviator, Amelia Earhart.

Within a year Matthews was again on the move, this time changing continents in a move to Los Angeles, where he established an artist, producer relationship with ex Monkee, Michael Nesmith.

Intending to make the one album, stay for a year and return to Britain, Matthews eventually became a US resident, staying for the next 28 years. Along the way, recording a further 15 solo albums, among other collaborations. In 2000 he returned to Europe and worked closely with Dutch singer/songwriter, Ad Vanderveen and together with Eliza Gilkyson, they formed the trio **More Than a Song**, recording and releasing 2 albums.

On his latest album, Joy Mining (with the Searing Quartet), Matthews says: "It's the best work I have ever done, without a doubt. It took me forty years to find this place and now I'm here, I wonder where the hell I've been looking all those years."



Joining the bill as support is Sussex-based Mary Leay, an exciting new urban folk artist with a timeless and authentic quality both in her voice and songs. Leay is a powerful lyricist with an ability to make you feel she's talking only to you. She already has writing and vocal credits on several films including the autumn 2009 release 'Heartless' starring Jim Sturgess. Most recently she's been writing and recording towards a debut album at the studio of legendary artist Steve Winwood. There are no gimmicks in Mary's music, no clever tricks, just a rare honesty and beauty that has captured the hearts of those that have discovered her so far. Watch out for this one!

Tickets are £10 advance online at www.acousticsussex.org.uk or tel.01342 714810.

More information can be found on the Acoustic Sussex website. *Iain Matthews biography overleaf*

What is Acoustic Sussex?

Acoustic Sussex is a non-profit making organisation that promotes quality singer/ songwriters and other acoustic musicians in the mid-Sussex area, using different venues. We encourage new and local talent by providing support slots for the main act and other opportunities such as 'open mic' evenings. Any profit we make from events is used for charitable purposes.

BIOGRAPHY – IAIN MATTHEWS



When some artists are referred to as “legends” it is usually measured in years, or based on the quality of their music. Few are measured in both time and quality. One artist that has been judged by both is Iain Matthews.

As a founding member of Fairport Convention back in '67, Matthews appeared on the bands' first three recordings (Fairport Convention, What We did on our Holidays and Unhalfbricking) until musical differences caused him to leave in '69 during the recording of their third album. It had become obvious to him that the group's newfound traditional folk/rock direction would involve him far less than its previous contemporary work.

The next two years would yield three critically acclaimed releases for his new band, Matthews Southern Comfort. Due to the fact he felt he wasn't yet ready for a solo career along with his desire to pursue his love of American country music, MSC provided the perfect vehicle for Matthews' musical growth. Some thirty years later, MSC's music continues to be held in high regard. The band went on to chart a #1 UK single with their version of Joni Mitchell's “Woodstock”. At the pinnacle of the bands' rise to stardom, Matthews found this overwhelming success to be fulfilling, but restricting. He quit the band to pursue a solo career.

The 70's, were extremely productive for Matthews, releasing 10 more albums as both solo artists and member of the band Plainsong. 1970's If You Saw Thro My Eyes would reunite him with his ex-Fairport mates, Richard Thompson and Sandy Denny. Matthews toured the US for the first time in support of this record, the band featuring Richard Thompson, guitarist Andy Roberts and bassist Bob Ronga. Five records followed in the middle of the decade, three with Elektra (including one with Plainsong) and two with Columbia. 1978 brought us Stealin' Home, thought by some as Matthews' finest effort of all time. Stealin' Home also yielded the Top 10 US hit “Shake It”.

His loss of direction in the early eighties proved frustrating for Matthews, and he gave up making music, choosing rather to take up positions as A&R rep's for Island Records and Windham Hill. In 1986, while appearing at the annual Fairport Convention reunion in England, Led Zeppelin's Robert Plant took him aside and impressed upon him the need to once again, rediscover that direction and give the fans a fresh dose of re-inspired Matthews. The fire in his belly roared, giving him the mindset to jump back into it, proving yet again the old adage - you can't keep a good man (dog) down. Case in point - 1988's Walking A Changing Line, the critically acclaimed collection of Jules Shear compositions. Iain Matthews was back!

Having relocated to Austin Texas, 1990 kicked off the next chapter in Matthews' career. Gold Castle released Pure & Crooked, which included the wonderful cover of Peter Gabriel's “Mercy Street”. Group efforts followed. Soon came several releases from Plainsong and Hamilton Pool (w/Michael Fracasso). In 1994, Matthews signed with Austin label Watermelon, releasing The Dark Ride followed by God Looked Down (1996). While with Watermelon, he also produced Eric Taylor's self-titled album.

In recent years, Iain has appeared on several high-profile releases, including What's That I Hear - The Songs of Phil Ochs (performing “Flower Lady”), and Nanci Griffith's Other Voices, Too (performing a duet w/Nancy on “Wall of Death” and providing guitar/backing vocals on “Who Knows Where The Time Goes”). He also toured the UK with Nanci in support of her record during the latter half of 1998. That same year saw the release of his highly acclaimed album Excerpts From Swine Lake.

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Early spring 2000 saw Matthews back on European shores, temporarily rooting himself in the cosmopolitan city of Amsterdam, and bringing us what will most likely be considered his best recording to date A Tiniest Wham.

An introduction to Dutch singer/songwriter Ad Vanderveen resulted in an instant musical bond, with the pair deciding to join forces and work together for the immediate future. Throughout the year 2000 they toured Europe and together with California native Eliza Gilkyson they formed More Than a Song, a singer/songwriter project. The self-titled album was released in late 2001, followed by an extended European theatre tour in February 2002.

It was during the warm up dates for this tour that Matthews unexpectedly met and fell hopelessly in love with not one, but two southern belles, the beautiful Marly and her 2 year old daughter Madelief. Resulting in him taking his music and his heart to the small border town of Horst, in Limburg, or "Limbabwe" as he chooses to refer to it. "A year and a half in the big city was more than enough time for me to rediscover my Europeaness and dive headlong into it. Now I'm ready for the sticks again," says Matthews.

Iain has been busier than ever since his move to Holland; a duet album with fellow artist Elliott Murphy, a tribute album to the late Sandy Denny. Both released on his own custom label Perfect Pitch.

Late in 2003, under the umbrella of Perfect pitch productions, was the launching of a new label, MK2 and the CD release of his 1970 folk/rock classic, If you saw thro' my eyes To complete an extremely productive year, October/November saw a very successful "thirty three and a third tour", celebrating the release of If you saw thro' my eyes when Matthews and a band played a string of 18 Dutch theatre shows.

With a four and a half year gap since his last solo album A tiniest wham, Matthews released his latest and possibly even better work than it's predecessor, Zumbach's coat in August 2004. With tours in Scandinavia, Germany, the UK, the USA and Holland, it was an exhausting, but exhilarating year and maybe the end of an era, of sorts. With his 60th birthday fast approaching, Matthews decided to call a halt to touring in the traditional sense and with the birth of his daughter Luca-Mae, took a year off. But with the music still flowing through him, in September 2006, he began playing a select number of solo dates. Mostly in his adopted Netherlands and within driving distance of family and home.

2006/2007 also saw the release of yet three more archival sets from our hero. To coincide with the concerts and with assistance from Iain, Sanctuary Records UK, reissued an extended, seventeen track version of his classic 1972 recording, Journeys from Gospel Oak. In the autumn of 2006, Inbetweens Records, Holland, released his very first solo concert DVD, Osolomeo A beautifully haunting performance, filmed and recorded in Carbondale. Colorado. A year later Blue Rose Records made available, Contact, a full concert DVD of his recent trio, featuring Dutch pianist Mike Roelofs and New Zealand guitar wizard, Richard Kennedy.

2008 became a most special year for Iain in a very unexpected way. Another chapter of his writer series, Common Grounds took place in January, at The Beauforthuis, in Austerlitz. Iain's guests were his old comrade Ad Vanderveen and a jazz combo, The Searing Quartet. As usual, it was policy for him to perform songs with each of his guests, but what transpired that night was beyond anyone's expectations, setting a new musical tone for the rest of his already glittering career.

Iain and Egbert Derix, the leader and key composer for The Searing quartet, decided to try out jazz versions of two of his older Plainsong compositions, 'Christoforo's eyes' and 'Call the tune' The resulting twenty minutes was both magical and hair raising. Something inexplicable and apocalyptic happened on stage, for both artist and audience. From here on, performing as he's known it will never again be the same. Fast forward nine months and a revolutionary new album, Joy Mining by Iain Matthews & Searing Quartet, released in November 2009. 'The best work I have ever done, without a doubt' says Iain. 'It took me forty years to find this place and now I'm here, I wonder where the hell I've been looking all those years'. After a successful appearance on Dutch television this February, the quintet plan to dedicate the foreseeable future to playing live together and 'just see where it takes us'. All in all, I think it's safe to say that Iain Matthews, microphone & guitar at the ready, passion in tact and eyes fixed steady on the horizon, is still moving forward and at the top of his game.

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