

Ian Anderson of Jethro Tull

Ian Anderson is known as the voice and legendary, original member of classic rock band, Jethro Tull. In addition to music staples of Aqualung, Thick As A Brick and Living In the Past, Ian introduced the flute into the world of rock forty years ago and has kept the foothold in its embraces ever since. "I like small, defined, perfectly formed things of life," explains Ian. "I like the miniature 35 mm cameras. I like mechanical Swiss watches. I like the small, petite female form as well. I don't like big Amazonian



creatures. The flute fits into this small, compacted form. When I first saw the flute, I didn't know how to play it but I wanted to learn. It felt like the right thing to have. Its compactness appeals to me. I couldn't bear to play the tuba or saxophone, to me its like plumbing."

Ian continues, "The guitars I play are also tiny, parlor guitars. They are much smaller than what everyone else plays. They are beautiful objects because they are petite and have small curves. I'm not a fan of big truck driver acoustic guitars."

Ian is currently on a tour of the United States where he will perform Jethro Tull classics as well as new material that was specifically written for this tour. "It's an ongoing process. I have written about six or seven new songs that are under review at the moment. I will probably play four of them or so for the upcoming tour. It's a tradition for me to introduce new material. You need to road test your material in the best way possible.

You don't want to over do it, of course. The audience is coming to see the benchmark material. I can't be too selfish about what I play; I have to keep the audience in mind. I am there to broadly present the big picture."

Inspiration for creating material is always an ongoing process and a bit easier these days with the development of modern technology. "I travel with a notebook computer these days, so I always seem to be writing something," said Ian. "Whimsical moments of writing, methodical moments - that's the way I've always done it. You grasp the essence of a song that floats past you like a butterfly that you try to cup in your hand. So you very gently try to get close to it; give it a little time to reveal themselves before making them into a final song. Other times I can write something out of the blue and it's done and dusted. There are no rules for song writing and if there are any rules, they deserve to be broken."

Instrumental pieces also have their independent creativity without lyrics to explain the way. "Instrumental pieces are bringing elements together that have a feel. I often have these funny, visual pictures in my mind that may suggest something to me," explains Ian. "The images or colors are something that sticks with me all the way through even while I'm playing the music. More often it's like a picture postcard in your



head and that's the visual reference that you're playing and carrying with you even when you are on stage at night."

Ian enjoys performing in front of an audience and has a knack for what frame of mind he should be in to deliver for his fans. "I'm always uplifted by the spirit of the audience. In some ways, it's a challenge because you have to serve them and serve yourself. There is a fine nuance to go out on stage and get the job done. Music is a career that combines balance, challenge and yet you can still be whimsical and have fun. You've got to have fun while doing this stuff and yet still be a real professional. Your day has to be focused and built upon your performance for the evening. For those couple of hours, you have to be at your peak and a live audience can help you do that."

For more information of Ian Anderson and Jethro Tull, please visit:

www.jethrotull.com

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