

NOW WE'RE TALKIN'

By Helen Marketti

A conversation with Ian Anderson

Ian Anderson will be performing, "Jethro Tull, The Rock Opera" on April 11th at Akron Civic Theatre

Ian Anderson's career spans over 40 years with the rock band, Jethro Tull. He introduced the flute into his performances in the early days of the band. Ian's talent and creativity has made his next project an ingenious piece that he will be performing.

Ian recently telephoned from his home in England to discuss the tour and other current projects. "As I get older I need to rejuvenate myself with challenges or I can become bored quite easily," he said. "During the summer of 2014 I was driving through northern Italy on my way to another concert. I had access to the internet and decided to look up the life story and history of the 18th century agriculturist, Jethro Tull."

In 1968, the band's agent had studied history in college and suggested the band have the name Jethro Tull who was an 18th century pioneer that invented the seed drill.

"I started to wonder what thoughts and impressions he would have if he were driving through northern Italy, looking at the crops and agriculture. Through my research, I did find that he had been to Italy and charted his theories about agriculture and farming. He was thinking of ways on what could be improved upon based on what was available in those days," explains Ian. "As I continued to read about him it reminded me of songs I had written on similar topics. I made a list of songs and my approach is to describe his life style. I wanted to reposition Jethro Tull as if he were around now and use my songs as a narrative expression of his life albeit extracted into the present."

"This became the project I started working on in January of last year. I wanted to put it together, include video, and tell the Jethro Tull story. It's *not* my story of Jethro Tull, the rock band but the story of the re-imagined Jethro Tull in the near future as if he was called upon to use his inventiveness and creativity to bear upon the fruit shortages, difficulties that face agriculture, climate change, technology and so forth," said Ian. "If he were here today he may settle for a 50% royalty or maybe a substantial cash payment, I have no idea."

A career that is over the 40-year mark, Ian is always inspired and motivated to perform for large audiences. "I have always enjoyed performing, touring and playing for people around the world at many different concert venues which is a thrill of being a musical performer. I don't think I would become tired of doing this but of course age does become an issue sooner or later which is more of a reason to do this now and enjoy it while I still can," he said.

Ian enjoys painting and photography. "I went to Art College for a short while. Photography has been a hobby of mine. I enjoy taking photographs. Usually I have a camera or worst-case scenario I have my iPhone. I will be working on new art work as possible merchandise items for 2017," he continues, "I am working on a new record release for later this year, possibly around Christmas. It is a string quartet album, which will be The Best of Jethro Tull songs in a baroque string quartet fashion with flute and guitar. It's not going to be a big commercial offering. Some people will like it. It can be played at weddings, funerals or if someone wants to sit misty-eyed with a glass of wine on a summer evening and listen to a string quartet playing *Aqualung* in their backyard then it could work for them. I also have another album project in the works."

Ian shares some closing thoughts on his upcoming show in Akron. "When people come to the concert they will see the best of Jethro Tull. There is a story line with some complexity working behind each song. It's a question of sitting back and being entertained. There will be colorful images on the screen behind me. It is for the toe-tappers. I know this because I am one of them."

For more information on Ian Anderson and Jethro Tull
www.jethrotull.com

For ticket information on the April 11th performance at Akron Civic Theatre
www.akroncivic.com





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