

V INTERVIEW/BOOK RELEASE

By Helen Marketti

Jennifer Juniper

A Journey Beyond the Muse

Jenny Boyd was part of the swingin' 60s crowd when the era was hot with sounds and melodies of defining music, culture and fashion. She knew Mick Fleetwood (Fleetwood Mac) from their days at school as teenagers and later married him. She had a modeling career that she left to pursue



a more meaningful path. Her older sister is Pattie Boyd, who was married to George Harrison and later to Eric Clapton. Jenny's recent memoir, "Jennifer Juniper" (Urbane Publications, Great Britain, 2020) takes the reader on a journey from her childhood in Kenya, Africa, to working with individuals who have struggled with addiction and, in between, a rock and roll life that did not always glimmer brightly.

"I began writing down memories of my life about twenty years ago, not thinking it would one day become a book. It was more about trying to make sense of my life. I was working for an addiction treatment center at the time, so my writing was quite sporadic. It was only in the last four years that I knew I wanted to write a memoir," explains Jenny.

The title of the book, "Jennifer Juniper," is an appropriate term as it encompasses a time in her life as well as a song written for her. "The title came to me when I realized my story was not only about the innocence of the 60's but also what the song, 'Jennifer Juniper' represented, which was written for me by the singer Donovan because he had a crush on me in those early days. My story continues to further take the reader to the decadence of the 70's and beyond."

Finding her place in those awkward adolescent years, Jenny crossed paths during high school with a classmate named Mick Fleetwood. Gradually they became a couple and got married. It was during their marriage that Fleetwood Mac began taking shape and the album *Rumors* was beginning to fast gain



momentum. "I guess you could say Mick and I grew up together from knowing one another at an early age and no matter what we have been through, we have a very special bond."

Working on the *Rumors* album kept Mick away from home and the family unit. He and Jenny had two daughters. She was navigating motherhood in a rock and roll world. "It was a very challenging and complex time in many ways, especially at that time as a mother of two little children living in a different country and away from our families.

I was happy for Mick that his dream was coming true. Fleetwood Mac had definitely got the recognition he wanted and what they deserved but it came at such a price. I loved listening to them playing, or creating songs in the studio, but I also wanted Mick to be a father to his children. The alcohol and drug-taking had become as big a part of the scene as their music. At times I could join in but not all the time, it was counter-productive to the life-style I wanted for our children."

Jenny and Mick married and divorced twice. Skyrocketing fame usually comes with a cost

at other levels. Focusing on the band and their future success did not leave much time with family. "I think Mick would agree with me when I say he wasn't fully present in our marriage. The band was the number one priority. It didn't mean that he didn't love us, it was just the way it was, and I was fully aware of it."

Many readers and fans will marvel that Jenny's brother-in-law at one time was George Harrison of The Beatles. He and Jenny always had good rapport. His advice to her once when attending a gathering was to "Just be yourself". "Without me realizing it at the time, that advice has been like a mantra to me throughout my life. It's exactly the same as finding one's voice, finding one's creativity and express yourself. It is the same as the message in my previous book, "It's Not Only Rock n' Roll," she explains.

We discussed how sometimes many of us are not comfortable being ourselves in certain situations. "It's a process. It's about learning to trust yourself and value your beliefs, knowing you have every right to them as much as others do to theirs. It's about being true to oneself. Challenge yourself, go out on a limb, try something you haven't done before and see how it feels. Slowly, confidence builds and we can become more comfortable in our own skin."

Several years of turning to alcohol was the way Jenny had lived and coped. It



Jenny with George Harrison

became a way to mask feelings that were painful to accept. Eventually she realized this way of life was no longer satisfying nor did it allow her to be true to herself. It was during some of these dark days when she knew she needed to do better for herself and for her children while knowing her marriage to Mick was over. "I knew it was time to change when I had a near-drowning incident in Hawaii. It was a wake-up call for me and the beginning of a completely different way of living my life. It made me realize it was time to give back in some way, starting off with making the



Jenny with Mick Fleetwood

commitment to go to college and find out what I wanted to do for myself."

Her desire to change led Jenny to AA meetings, returning to school, earning degrees, and starting Addiction/Recovery programs. "After twenty-something years, I am no longer involved in the addiction field. I used to set up bringing therapists to the UK from the United States to help people with self-esteem issues, relationship problems and self-awareness. I gave it all up about five years ago and began writing full time," explains Jenny.

When asked what her relationship is like with Mick Fleetwood today, Jenny said, "Mick is not only the father of our children but he is also a very good and supportive friend. We share grandchildren. We have shared so much over the years, learned many lessons and throughout it all he has remained a very special person in my life."

Readers will want to have a copy of "Jennifer Juniper." Detailed insight from someone who has lived a variety of lives will shed light on what we can do when our minds have set a goal. "My wish would be that my reader might feel inspired after reading my book, that they know through adversity one can become stronger and it's never too late to find your own voice. I have found throughout my life, that once I commit to taking a leap in the dark, staying true to what I believe in, it's as if the universe supports my decision. As mythologist Joseph Campbell said, 'Doors will begin to open that you never knew were there.' For me, whether it was the decision to attend college, write my book on creativity, work in the addiction field or write my memoir, I would always meet someone who believed in me and with their support would give me the courage to believe in myself. My greatest advice was to be kind to others and to 'Just be yourself.'"

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