

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

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By Chris James

Contents

Introduction.....	3
Early Years.....	4
My First Band	11
Caerphilly Mountain	13
Bewegung	18
Country Boy 1972.....	20
Touring the UK.....	22
Touring Denmark.....	25
Back in Wales	28
Roy Fox & Felicity Jane	29
Bob Barry & The Wild Ones	36
Steve Phillips to the rescue	46
On Tour in Europe with the Jesus People.....	55
Arrival in Amsterdam	62
Life in Noddy Land.....	68
The Shades	73
The Sisters & Etersheim	85
Dicky & The Fruitcakes.....	91
Songwriting at Rick & Reina's	91
Working in America	91
Four Months in China & Tibet.....	91
Dylan Christian James	91
Portugal	92
Musician & Songwriter or Computer Programmer	92
Stuttgart and Boeblingen.....	92
Lakeside Stories - Singer Songwriter Collective ..	92

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

Sailor's and Musicians	92
Song Catalogue	92
All Alone 1997.....	92
Building Bridges 1997	93
Cardiff Re-visited 1997.....	95
Caribbean Greetings 1983.....	97
Change Team Blues 1987	98
Child Suicide 1989.....	99
Communist Orphans 1990	100
Dylan Christian James 1987	101
Gameboy 1995	102
Help 1989.....	103
If Not For You 1996	104
In My Car 1989.....	105
Jamie's Birthday 1996	106
Jig 1998.....	108
Lullaby 2000	109
Mystical Myrthe 1999.....	110
Nervous Breakdown 1990.....	110
One Population 1990.....	112
One Hundred Oange Balloons 2001	113
Though for another time 1992	114

Introduction

This book is a biography intended to chronicle my musical journey through life. It will include stories and anecdotes of my adventures and friends that became part of this exciting experience, starting at an early age and continuing right up until the present.

I would like to dedicate this book to my son Dylan Christian James and to my family and friends who have been part of this musical experience, in particular Steve Phillips and Ian Moffatt who have accompanied me along the way.

It may also be of interest to other musicians and Singer/Songwriters, hungry for information and real life experiences regarding the mystical art of songwriting, and the less mystical, but highly eventful activity, of hanging out in bands.

This book will provide an insight into my personal experiences, and how some of them have contributed and shaped my catalog of songs which are listed in the latter section of this book. It will also describe how you can gain access to rough and ready recordings, lyrics, foto's and newspaper clippings, legally and free of charge.

These resources will be posted on the Internet via www.chrisjames.nl to which you are invited to submit any relevant contributions you may have lying around somewhere collecting dust.

Early Years

I was born on the South Wales peninsular known as the Gower Coast on the 3rd of June 1956. My unmarried mother Margaret, who lived in the Llanelli area, had become pregnant from an older German man who was working in South Wales for a company performing mineral exploration in the area. Apparently my father had found much more interesting things to explore in the Welsh Valleys than just the coal and minerals.

Pregnancy at the tender age of nineteen was not exactly what Margaret's mother had had in mind for her daughter. Hence she decided to take control of the situation and enlist the help of her local MP.

Together with the help of the MP, Marget's mum lobbied my dad's company pressing them to take appropriate action against the perpetrator. As a result, he was soon transferred to another location somewhere in the Southern Hemisphere. My Grandmother also made suitable arrangements for Margaret and she was discretely sent off to a nursing home for young women in similar circumstances. The nursing home was to become home for Margaret during the latter stages of pregnancy until my birth and subsequent adoption, for which they entered a partnership with an adoption agency.

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

The nursing home was situated a few miles away from the hustle and bustle of Llanelli town on the Gower coast which was renowned for its beauty and its peace and quite. Not too many prying eyes there! It must have been a terribly traumatic experience for her. That is, to be away from home for a long period and then to have to give her baby up to someone she would never even get to meet. For me on the other hand, it wasn't such a bad thing. And looking back in hindsight, I guess I should consider myself lucky to be born in such a tranquil place as the Gower with all that fresh sea air around.

As fate determined, I grew up in Cardiff with my new mum Dorothy Elisabeth Kate James completely oblivious to the circumstances surrounding how I had entered the world. Dorothy was a great mum and gave me all the love and affection that a child could have ever dreamt for. Although Dorothy did inform me about my adoption when I was about 4 or 5, I never felt as if I didn't belong with her. In fact we were very close and I was her only child. Dorothy fulfilled the mother role perfectly, which was fortunate for me as I never had to doubt her validity as mum and didn't arouse too much curiosity to find my biological mum until much later. In fact Dorothy was the only mum I really needed, well except for all those girlfriends then!

We lived in the Roath area of Cardiff in Cottrell Road and 'we' consisted of my mum and dad and my mother's father, and my grandfather

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

Harry. He was at the grand old age of eighty two years old when I was born, but extremely active and healthy, despite the 4 packets of Woodbine cigarettes he would smoke everyday.

I could have only been a few months old when my first recallable event was logged in my memory. I was lying in my pram and a few of my mothers girlfriends were peering down into to the pram to admire her new baby. I'm sure that they all were all very friendly and meant well. However, they were much too close with their huge heads and had definitely entered too far into my comfort zone. That is when I must have first discovered that I could make a lotta noise with my Welsh voice, screaming continually until they had retreated to their previous positions. They were probably saying 'oh poor thing, he must be having stomach pains' or words to that effect, but no, they themselves, with their high pitched voices, were the cause of my distress.

I used to be very fond of Stan my Dad too, but he ran off with another women, which wasn't so much of a problem in itself, but as a result of the strained relationship with my mum, we saw less and less of each other until his visits were down to about once or twice a year, when he would pick me up from school in his car and embarrass me in front of my friends, none of which knew that I even had a father. I think I used to invent stories about him in an attempt to save my face at School. In fact I even believe that I once told some friends that he

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

had been knocked down and killed bus a bus or died in a plane crash. Strangely enough around about the same time my biological father was soon to really die in an plane crash in South America or at least that is what I was later told. Perhaps the fantasy story about the accident was some kind of psychic premonition.

At the tender age of six years old I became interested in the piano as one of my neighbours and good friend, David Pough, had just started piano lessons. David was able to play a few tunes and that impressed me to no end. In fact I asked him if he would teach me what he had learned, and that is how I got started on the piano.

Living together with my mum and her father Harry, my Grandfather, we were not too well off and could not really afford expensive piano lessons. My mum was also able to play a bit of piano herself and was very excited at the idea that I had taken an interest in the instrument. She soon bought me a piano and asked a local pub pianist, Mrs Malluwish, if she could teach me the basics. This worked out wonderfully as I deeply admired her playing and marveled at the pub style glissando's that she would play when she let her hair down now and again. Her repertoire of Pub standards was breathtaking and endless. Also she could play the piano and hold a conversation at the same time and best of all, she was able to play almost any song without the aid of sheet music. Despite all this

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

natural talent she did teach me to read music but didn't reprimand me for improvising now and again.

I guess this is as good a start as any musician could hope for, and as a result, my progress was fast. My goal in life had changed from wanting to play like David Pough to wanting to play like Mrs Malluwish even though it seemed impossible to me that anyone could ever equal her.

I quickly followed Mrs.Malluwish's fingers up and down the piano keyboard and became her most talented prodigy. After just two years, Mrs.Malluwish decided she couldn't teach me any longer and that my talent would be best developed elsewhere, for example under the supervision of a well established Piano tutor. My mother and I reluctantly agreed to try someone that she had recommended and I was enrolled with a Piano tutor near Roath Park Lake, which was a posh area of Cardiff. When my new teacher asked me what type of music I liked playing the most, I gave her a round of 'Roll out the Barrel' which completely disgusted her. My recital was immediately aborted and I was strictly forbidden to play any more of that 'horribly vile and tasteless pub music'. 'If you really want to become a concert pianist you will heed my advice', she sternly snapped.

The lessons were tediously boring and there was no real connection with Mrs. Lewis and her style of teaching. The only thing that I can remember well about the lessons was the

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

smell. I believe she had sented the house with lavender or some other herb. Although the smell was not grotesque, it didn't smell like a house that I was used to and that smell became to represent a side of music that did not spark my interest at all, symbolizing things like; piano etudes deprived of melody, discipline, sitting upright and worst of all, playing what was on the sheet music instead of what was in my head and what sounded nice to me. 'Christopher your improvising again', she would moan as I played my own variations on Chopin's Waltzes. "Thou shalt not improvise" was her eleventh commandment. I'm sure that Chopin would have loved to see a young kid improvising or jamming away on one of his Waltzes or Etudes, but not she.

Over a period of 3-4 years I started taking my exams and progressed fast, passing my Royal College of Music Piano grades with ease. At least up to grade 5 or 6. At the age of 10 I had had enough and stopped my piano lessons with no real desire to ever start again.

No sooner than I had stopped with the piano I started to try my luck with other instruments. Violin, Glockenspiel, Recorder, Flugel horn and Organ to mention a few. One of the most interesting instrument was the Church Organ which I learnt to play at St .Annes Church where I was a member of the choir. Having been patient enough, I soon graduated to become deputy head boy as the older boys voices broke one by one. The head boy's name was David Hallot and we became the

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

best of friends. David had a great voice and his older brother Paul was a very talented pianist and organist. He was also the leader of the church choir. I was used to play at David's house regularly and every now and again his brother Paul would teach me some new pieces to play on the organ. Soon I became more proficient on the organ and after Paul had taught me to play with both hands and feet and, at the same time, keep a watchful eye on the devilish choirboys below through a mirror that was mounted above my head, I became his stand-in for Church services and sometimes a Wedding at St. Annes Church.

The choir practices and organ playing revived my interest in music and also started off an interest in musical arrangement.

My church career ended abruptly when the local priest caught me upstairs in the organ loft with a girl from the choir. I was busy practicing the organ for the following Sunday's Mass when one of the choir girls had passed by and found her way up into the organ loft. She had come with a mission, and it wasn't just to turn the pages of Bach's Fugue in D minor. After seducing me into kissing and groping her, we were suddenly surprised and busted by the priest, who just by chance had stopped by. His discovery that church had become a multifunctional location for romance did not amuse him in the least. In fact he sacked me on the spot and my career as a church organist was over, just like that.

At this point I decided that I had had enough with Churches, choirs, piano's and organs and would teach myself to play guitar. I wasn't very good, but did manage to learn a few chords and before I knew it, I was giving guitar lessons myself to three blushing sisters just around the corner from the St. Annes Church where I was no longer welcome.

Although my church going days seemed over and done with at the time, it had made a profound influence on me musically as I would later re-discover while writing songs and arranging vocal harmonies.

After all those years of nerve racking piano lessons, playing guitar seemed like a piece of cake, and with immediate results to show for it. The three giggle-prone sisters, all much more interested in me, than in learning to play guitar where to become my first musical students. What more reward could a musician in puberty ask for?

This represented an important turning point I guess. Not just with regard to music but also the kind of people I hung out with, not to mention the dubious types of activities I would soon start to indulge in.

My First Band

During my teens I started a band at school so that we could enter a school competition. It was a very poor attempt, but we had our three

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

minutes of fame in the grand school hall at Howardian High School trying to attempt cover a McGuinness Flint number called 'When I'm Dead and Gone'. We soon noticed that we had achieved our goal when some girls from the adjacent Lady Margaret School became interested in us due to our newly acquired status as a band.

This was the start of a new era in which I would start to hang out with the 'wrong types of people' as my mother would call them. What she meant was people who would be able to influence me, and I suspect I was very easy prey at the time.

During this period I started smoking cigarettes and experimenting with other things that would affect my behavior and thoughts.

It was around this time that I reunited my friendship with Steve Philips, We had met years earlier living quite close to each other in Roath, Cardiff. However Steve attended a different school than I and we lost sight of each other for a few years. At the age of thirteen we found ourselves in the same School. Howardian High School for Boys only at the time. Steve was to become my life long companion.

Steve and I first met when we were quite young, on Christmas day in fact. Father Christmas had brought us both football gear. Steve was all dosed out in his West Ham outfit which was Claret and Blue and I can't

remember what mine looked like, probably the blue of Chelsea.

It was kind of strange, two kids on their own in the middle of 'The Rec' which is how everybody called Roath Park Recreation Ground in Roath, Cardiff. It was Christmas day we both were wearing new football gear and both had nobody to play with. After kicking a ball around for a while we carefully started a conversation up and probably found out that we had more than just the football gear in common.

Although this was a brief and uneventful meeting, it would become the first of many, some more exciting than others.

Some years later when we found ourselves in the same school, we started to hang out more often together. Steve had already a band consisting of Kevin Richards on Drums, Dave Cogan on Bass and himself on Guitar. None of them could play exceptionally well, but they really had the attitude that accompanied a rock band. I.e. very arrogant and trendy.

Caerphilly Mountain

One of my most memorable experiences with Steve was on Caerphilly Mountain. Steve, Dave Cogan and myself had decided to bike it up to Caerphilly Mountain on a Saturday afternoon. I took a small garden tent with me so that we could pitch it on the mountain and use it as a base from where we could play.

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

It was a very destructive afternoon as I can recall. We spent most of it smoking methol flavoured cigarettes in the tent and then when we got fed up of that, we discovered how we could wreck our bikes by pushing them down the mountain without rider to see how far they would go before they crashed below. By the time we had finished that game the bikes were in need of serious repair.

Our bikes almost destroyed, we got the idea to camp out on the mountain in that little tent of mine. There were however some practical problems facing us. For example; the tent didn't have a ground sheet and we also had no sleeping bags and no mattress or blankets. This didn't seem to deter us at the time and we set off to find the nearest telephone booth to call our parents and inform them of our daring plan.

My mum, although very skeptical about the idea, consented after knowing that I was with 2 other boys. Dave's parents were not so easily persuaded and ordered him to go home. Steve's dad took the same decision, and before the hour was through, Steve's dad had arrived on the mountain in the car to collect Steve, Dave and me. We were to leave our bikes on the mountain until they could be picked up.

Dave seemed quite relieved to know he would be spending the night at home instead of on the mountain. Steve on the other hand was

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

incredibly disappointed that his parents wouldn't let him stay as my mother had done.

Needless to say I had no plans to camp out on that mountain all on my own and was planning on getting into the car together with Dave and Steve. To my horror Steve started pleading with me not to get into his Father's car and to stay behind on my own just to demonstrate to his parents that there was no justification for their cautiousness. He also promised me that he would be up on the mountain early the next morning to meet me. I was petrified at the idea of staying on that mountain all alone and in the dark. It was a kind of wilderness up there with no houses people or other buildings within miles.

Steve wanted desperately to prove to his father that it could be done and I was the only person who could do it. After some hefty discussions at the roadside I reluctantly agreed and as a result saw Dave & Steve whisked away back to Cardiff in the car.

Shortly after they left I climbed back up to the mountain top where my tent was pitched. With the dusk drawing in, it no longer felt the same as when Steve and Dave were around. Instead it became cold, dark, damp and deserted. It got even worse when thick mist descended down on the mountain and visibility was gone. The mist then turned into rain and complete darkness.

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

Shivering, I got into my tent, but soon discovered that without a groundsheet, the floor which had been dry grass was rapidly becoming damp, wet and later soaked as it continued to rain. After just two hours I was no longer able to sit on the grass but had to huddle up into a position half standing, half scooping down in order to stay relatively dry.

There was a sense of eeriness, and I felt like I was lost on the moors and that the hound of the baskeviles was about to get his next meal. It was getting colder and grimmer and I was very scarred but not yet pannicstrikken. The mist had become fog and it was so thick that I dare not venture out of the tent as as would probably never find it again. The idea of trying to get down the steep mountain face in the fog was also not very inviting.

Minutes seemed to pass like hours and hours like days. At about 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning I thought I could hear something like a faint voice shouting in the distance. This scared the living daylights out of me. Who the hell would be out on the mountain top in the damp fog at this time in the morning. My heart started pumping at triple speed as I definitely heard a voice getting louder. Could it be a ripper or a tramp. Now I really was starting to panic. Then all of a sudden I heard that it was my name that was being called. And after shouting back Steve emerged out of the fog, completely soaked to the skin and exhausted.

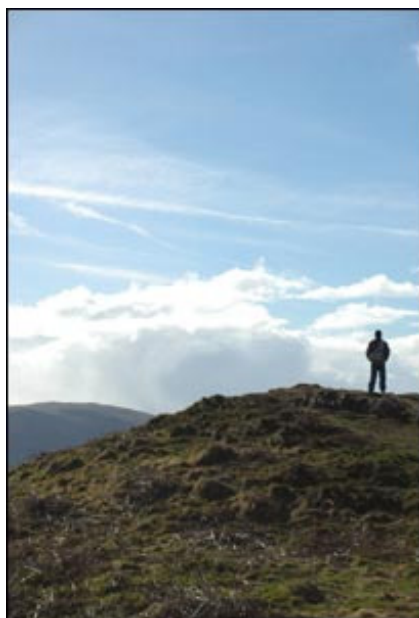
Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

Apparently Steve had been feeling a bit guilty about leaving me there on the mountain and quite rightly so, God bless him. In order to ease his conscience he had planned a great escape from his house after his parents had gone to sleep. After getting out of the house, he started to hike back up to the mountain which was over 8 miles or so. Even after reaching the mountain he had to get up to the top where the tent was. This must have been very treacherous in the thick fog, so it was really quite amazing that he managed to find me.

Unfortunately for Steve the tent couldn't offer him any more shelter than it was offering me, and after a half-hour we decided to climb down the other side of the mountain and head for the next town, Caerphilly. Not that there would be anything open or anything to do there. It was just a way of passing the time, waiting for the Sun to arise.

It took us an hour or so to walk down and when we arrived at 4 or 5 in the morning the town was completely deserted, except for a police patrol who did stop us but we were not detained. When the dawn had finally broke we got back up the mountain and at about 8 or 9 o'clock Steve's dad was back up in the car after he had been alerted to Steve's disappearance. He was not amused and took us back into Cardiff where we were happy to sleep off our ordeal during the day.

Cearphilly Mountain in broad daylight!



Bewegung

A few weeks afterwards, Steve asked if he could practice with his band in my front room.

I had a very large front room that overlooked the shopping district of Albany Road in Cardiff.

We lived above a doctor's surgery where my mum worked as the receptionist and caretaker.

I agreed and Steve arrived with his band and all their gear. Kevin Richards was the drummer

and had some very heavy duty equipment, Dave Cogan played the bass guitar and Steve

was on lead guitar. They invited me to play along on my acoustic piano, but you couldn't

hear much piano against the racket they were making.

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

Steve's band called themselves BEWEGUNG which is German for 'Movement'. This seemed like the real thing and although Steve and his friends did not have a musical background like me, they were definitely 'cool' and more into the scene than I was. My grandfather was well into his 90's at the time and could not hear too well. He was in the room reading his beloved newspaper when Steve and his mates set up their equipment comprising of a drum kit and a Marschal stack amplifier. My grandfather didn't seem too concerned until Bewegung started to play their grungy music as loud as they possibly could. My grandfather finally left the room of his own accord and retired to the back-room to continue with his newspaper in peace and quite. In the meantime, the 'music' had not escaped the attention of the shoppers and shop keepers below in Albany Road. Some of which started to hurl abuse up at us, and a few shopkeepers were becoming hostile as we were noticeably distracting their customers.

I was deeply concerned about the trouble I was about to get myself in with the neighbours, when Steve pointed out that across the road, the female staff of Boots the Chemist had also been drawn from their counters to listen to our racket. Their waves of encouragement was exactly the sign we were looking for.

Fuck the shop keepers, we're on our way to fame and fortune, was our quick analysis of the sticky situation.

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

This was the start of the band era for me and I soon became involved in a thriving music scene and found myself playing with two older guys

Dereck Morgan and Gordon Keer. They were both very proficient musicians. Dereck was a musical all-rounder, playing guitar, bass, piano, organ and other instruments while Gordon Keer was a brilliant guitarist. They were both very mystical people and encouraged others in the same direction. Dereck was the organizer and was always scheming and up to something or other. Gordon had always remained loyal to his first ever guitar, purchased at Woolworth's I believe. It had a fret action that made it look more like a steel guitar than a normal one. Gordon was the only person in the world who could play that wretched instrument and as a result he had his own sound. He could have easily passed for Jan Akkerman as far as guitar ability goes. He would cut his own plectrums out of plastic Squeezy bottles, washing up liquid.

Our band was called Dunmow Flicht and we were mostly inspired by folk-music and bands like Folk Fairport. Our repertoire consisted of a selection of Jigs and we started experimenting with music that Dereck Morgan had written.

Country Boy 1972

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

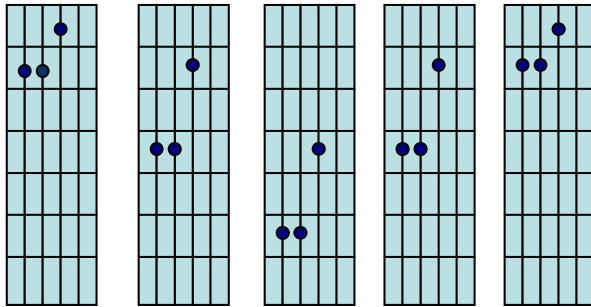
It was during this period that I had my first bash at composing my own music. My first composition was called 'Country Boy' and it was in the key of E major.

Messing around on my guitar I believed I had stumbled upon a new chord sequence and consequently I based my song around it. This method of songwriting is quite common for novices and in fact was quite common in that period around 1971. First you create a riff then you put a melody line to it, and then finally you write some lyrics to fit on top. Believe me, this must be the most uncreative way to go about songwriting but I guess that's how most people start.

Although the chords were not actually as weird as they seemed to me at the time, it is also not the kind of sequence that you would expect someone to use for their very first composition. Whatever, this was my first song and I called it Country Boy.

The lyrics weren't too hot and to be quite honest I really didn't know what I was trying to say in my song. But it was a song and I had written it.

Country Boy Guitar Chords



The lyrics went something like;

I am just a little country boy and there's a lotta
nice people hanging round.

I don't plan on stayin too long, Cause I don't
think I can stand my ground.

I wanna go, I wanna show

You the place from where I came from

I had never attempted to record this first song
until now and would probably have never done
so had it not been for this book for which I
wanted to provide a sound snippet.

Touring the UK

While playing with Dereck Morgan in Dunmow
Flicht he came into contact with a band called
The Sin of Igor who were a well established
professional band playing covers and doing the
social clubs and night club circuits. They were

looking for a bass guitarist and a rhythm guitarist. Dereck was a multi instrumentalist like myself and was equally proficient on the bass guitar as he was on his other instruments. Dereck didn't really trust the guys in Sin of Igor and asked me if I would come along as the rhythm guitarist. I had taught myself to play guitar a few years earlier but wasn't very good. However I was good enough for The Sin of Igor, in fact Emile Vodden the lead guitarist of the band and one to the two Vodden brothers in that band was so bad himself, that he was quite pleased to have someone in the band who was worse than him. Hence Dereck and I joined the Sin of Igor.

After a few gigs in South Wales, the band was off to Manchester for a few weeks playing every night of the week in Social Clubs and Night Clubs and earning a decent living from it. At the time I was still in Howardian High School in Cardiff having finished my GCE exam's in November after a re-take. This meant I had to wait until next September before I could start college. It was during the Easter vacation and I was off to Manchester with the band. Needless to say I never attended school again and didn't go to college either!

My mum was very disappointed but saw that I was doing something I really liked and reluctantly accepted my choice.

The Sin of Egor where playing all over the UK, but mostly in the areas surrounding Manchester where their agent Barry Helmes was situated. This meant we were usually

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

staying in digs in Manchester, Sunderland or Blackpool. The digs in Manchester where we stayed was something else. It was run by a German Lady known to her customers and residents as Ma. Her house was situated in the Wally Range, a very rough area of Manchester, notorious for its street prostitutes, pimps and drug addicts.

Ma ran a boarding house which specifically catered for people working in the entertainment business. This meant that you could get breakfast at 1 pm in the afternoon and come back at 3 am in the morning and have a bevy with the other bands and artists also staying there.

During the period we stayed at Ma's we had regular contact with famous bands like Mud and Desmond Dekker and the Aces who preferred to stay at Ma's rather than check in to a regular Hotel. Being at Ma's was like being at home with both the advantages and the disadvantages. For example, my mum used to call Ma on the phone and feed her with information about me and ask her to keep an eye on me and make sure I didn't get into trouble. Now that was the kind of mission that Ma was looking for and she certainly gave me a hard time if she felt I had been drinking or smoking too much. There were no loose women or drugs allowed on the premises and Ma was notorious as a vigilante in fighting the prostitution business on her doorstep. If she suspected a car of curbing-crawling. She would stand in the middle of the road and when the

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

car had been stopped she would rock it back and forth cursing the driving and threatening to trace his registration so she could inform his wife and employer.

Her house rules were well enforced and she didn't care who she was dealing with. She once kicked Desmond Dekker out of the house in the middle of the night for being disobedient to her rules.

One of my most warm memories of being at Ma's was watching a broadcast of BBC's Top of The Pops. Sitting on the settee together with our house mates, the band MUD, who had a number 1 hit at the time. Top of the Pops was presented by Tony Blackburn and was not live. Mud's singer stood next to the Television and mimicked himself while the band looked on almost uninterested. At this point I was almost certain that within a year or so, we would also be there on Top of the Pops and could do the same thing at Ma's with our pre-recorded Top of The Pops appearance.

Touring Denmark

After playing in Sin of Egor for a few months our agent Barry Helms tipped us off about an audition to be held near Bath. It was organized by a Danish agent who was booking bands to play in top venues in Copenhagen, Denmark. At that time there was some crazy kind of law in Denmark which made it cheaper for clubs to

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

contract live bands than to pay for a license to play recorded music. Very strange!

We passed the audition and were one of the few bands that were selected to play in the top venue in Copenhagen. We were to play for the complete month of July in 1972, playing every night of the week without one day off during the whole month. In the weekend there was a local band that would play in between our sets. Both bands playing 4 hours between 20:00 until 04:00.

It was a grueling schedule but it also had it's advantages as our equipment stayed put in one place the whole month, and we did not have the hassle of traveling, that is except from our Hotel to the club. The Club was very exclusive and situated in a location called The Circus right opposite the main entrance to the Copenhagen Tivoli Gardens. There was no place more central than that in the whole of Denmark and we sure did have a lot of fun there.

Our predecessors where a band called Sweet Sensation, a black soul band from Liverpool with a number of hits in the UK, a bit reminiscent of the Jackson 5, except there were about ten of them! We were not in the same league as them, and we did notice that certain sections of our regular audience were a little bit disappointed with us at first, but after a week or so we were packing in the crowds and the audience seemed to accept us.

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

Our first night was really strange, when we had finished our last set and the club was closing down on a Monday night I believe, I noticed that a number of young ladies had begun to assemble near the rear entrance. I asked the girl behind the bar what they were waiting for and she said. The band of course.

These are your groupies. 'Ven you and your band are ready, they vil take you back to your Hotel and you vil have a fucky fucky.' I didn't believe her at first but her prediction was spot on. The only detail she missed was that they first took us to an all-night liquor store to stock up on drinks. After that it was back to the Hotel in a taxi. When we tried to explain to the Taxi driver where our Hotel was, he said I know, everybody knows, and sure enough we arrived at our Hotel on the Vesterbrogarde without saying much more.

Well I'm not sure whether what happened next was to influence my songwriting or not, but I can remember running down the street early the next morning leaping into the air with joy and knowing that finally, at the age of seventeen, I was no longer a virgin. As it happened I ended up sleeping with 2 Danish girls and not just one at one of the girls parents apartment just a short work from our Hotel.

Back in Wales

After our successful and exhausting month in Copenhagen we returned to Cardiff. The two wives of the Vodden brothers were on the war path. Apparently one of the brothers was daft enough to give his address to some of his new female Danish acquaintances. Before the boys returned home they were preceded by postcards and love-letters from their Danish admirers explicitly describing the details which the Vodden boys had been keeping secret from their spouses.

Luckily Dereck and myself were happy, free and single and did not have the same hostile reception when we returned home. We considered ourselves damned lucky that we didn't need to see the doctor or receive the dreaded umbrella threatment that Emile Vodden had been scaring us with. Emile was an ex-ambulance driver and loved to talk about disasters and doomsday scenarios, especially when driving the van late at night.

After a week back in Wales we were back in the social clubs and night clubs playing about 5 nights a week. Shortly after returning I can remember picking up a female admirer at one of our gigs. We went out for a walk and I immediately proposed we do it in the van. She was visibly shocked and ran back inside. At this point I really knew for certain that our

Danish trip was over and done with and that we were now back in Wales where flirtation was primarily the name of the game.

Roy Fox & Felicity Jane

During our time in Denmark we had gotten ourselves a new manager for the band. His name was Roy Fox and he was assisted by his charming wife Cynthia.

They lived in a tiny miners cottage up in the Tonypandy area of the Welsh valleys, however Roy was a Londoner and ex- Hackney cab driver. He was looking hard for a way to escape the hard grind of the Welsh valleys and the sure destiny that would await him and Cynthia in South Wales.

Roy had invested in a smart briefcase and a white suit, and using his London accent, could put on quite an impressive show bluffing his way around the band scene. Depending how gullible you were, he could convince you that he had turned down The Rolling Stones because he saw more potential in us.

Roy and Cynthia did not get on too well with the Vodden brothers. Dereck and I also found them much too dominating for our liking. In close conspiracy with Roy we decided to quit Sin fo Igor and start up our own band under the name Felicity Jane. Roy put up some venture capital and we got ourselves a PA and a Ford

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

Transit van. The two essential ingredients in order to get a band back on the road.

We needed a Singer, a guitarist and a new drummer to complete the band. Dereck suggested asking 'Moff' the nickname of a guy at School who's real name was Ian Moffatt.

I think I only found out that he actually had real name, after years of playing with him. Moff was a Londoner like Roy, so they hit it off straight away and our otherwise Welsh 'Taffy' band all of a sudden had a certain cosmopolitan air about it.

Moff had been playing with a black band Messiah, in the Tiger Bay Dockland area of Cardiff and had earned a lot of respect from his peers at Howardian High School, as most of them, in fact most people in general, didn't even dare to venture into that part of town, and that including the local police force. Hence there was a lot of stuff going on down there.

Moff and Dereck already knew each other so now we just needed a guitarist and a singer. I don't know how and where we found Hayden Ward, but all at once he was playing guitar for us and he was pretty good at it too. Hayden had a very melodic guitar style and was greatly admired by us all. Hayden also had his disadvantages and revelled in being outrageously disgusting especially in the mornings.

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

Breakfast could be quite embarrassing with Hayden around. He would sometimes take up acrobatic positions around the breakfast table, which he claimed would enhance the sound volume of his farts. Needless to say, not all the hotel guests were so appreciative of his talents and he could clear the breakfast room quicker than any kitchen maid could even dream of. Whatever the case he was as good as they get as a guitarist or at least as good as we could get and fitted well into our band. Beside that he was good fun, and as Moff later pointed out to me, I was his greatest fan.

We never did get ourselves a singer and before I knew it I was singing. Although I didn't have much experience as singer in a band I could sing, and my days in St. Annes choir certainly helped me to adapt my voice so that I could sing lead vocals.

Felicity Jane was put together in 1 week I recall and subsequently we were contracted up North in Sunderland and Newcastle area for about a month or more.

During that period I purchased an organ so I could switch from playing rhythm guitar to organ or just sing. Hayden was so good we didn't need a rhythm guitar anyway.

One night we were playing a classy night club in Sunderland called Wetherals. The bouncers wore yellow and brown striped suits and they looked like Butlins Red Coats, only Yellow.

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

We were waiting for Moff to show up and we asked the bouncers if they would bounce him when he showed up. Shortly after he arrived and was immediately set on by two of the yellow bouncers. They got him outside within about 20 seconds and his feet didn't even touch the ground. We were all very impressed, even Moff said at the time, Christ these guys are real professionals.

Later that evening Moff and I spotted two ladies who seemed interested in having some fun. They were not from Sunderland but came from the County Durham area, about 20 miles outside of Sunderland. One of them told me that her parents were on holiday and that they were both staying in the house without parental supervision. They invited us back for some drinks, but really they were just looking for a lift home instead of forking out on a taxi.

Dereck was the only person in the band who could drive and who had a driving license, but Dereck was not in for any fun that night and left for our guest house as soon as our last set was done. Moff and I continued to pursue our luck with the ladies and we really wanted to take up their offer to drive them home. However we didn't have the money for a taxi for such a long ride. As the night went on we had more and more to drink, then suddenly I had an idea. What if I were to drive? I had never driven a car let alone a Van before and had also never had any driving lessons.

We put the plan into action and went back into the guest house and removed the car keys

from Derecks coat while he gently snored away. It must have been about 1 or 2 o'clock in the morning and there was no traffic. After a few stalls and shunts. The Van was in gear and we were off to Durham. We were all very chuffed that our plan had worked and we had a pleasant evening at the girls house. Next morning was a different story. It was Monday morning and the traffic was very heavy getting back in to Sunderland. How I managed to drive the Van back I still don't know, but I can remember pulling up at a traffic light next to a police car and then stalling the Van when the light changed to green. Believe it or not, somehow we got back with the Van safely, but Dereck Morgan was certainly not amused.

Another little adventure I experienced together with Moff was up in the valleys at Roy & Cynthia's. For some reason we had decided to go up and visit them probably to discuss some business with Roy. However after a few cans of beer, we headed down to the pub to continue our discussions while doing some serious drinking. Roy always loved to take us down to his local so he could brag about 'his boys' and how we would soon become mega stars under his expert management. After a few beers and some Gin and Orange for Cynth, Roy started talking to some local girls. This had caught Cynthia's attention so she had decided to have her little flirt too with me and Moff. She had done this quite often, but as she got more and more drunk the tone became more serious and she suggested some kind of orgy. Moff and I were not really into that kind of

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

thing and we also saw some obvious practical obstacles, like what to do with Roy for example.

We knew Cynthia was serious when she suggested spiking his drinks. Now Roy had already had quite a bit to drink which was reflected in his loud conversations with the local girls at the bar, and we guessed he would not need too much more to drop off into oblivion.

However we were wrong. Roy seemed to go on for ever drinking all kinds of concoctions and mixes that we getting more and more potent as the evening went on. Due to the large rounds with dubbel vodka's mixed with gin and fruitjuices our money was running out fast, and come closing time Moff and I were beginning to wonder whether this was such a good idea after all. Then the bell rang for last orders and Cynthia went to the bar to get Roy the ultimate night-cap. I don't know what went in it but it looked pretty deadly. 'There you are darling' she said with a wicked look in her eye and smiling at us as if to say 'now it won't be long'.

We walked back from the pub our arms linked together and singing and shouting as we made our way back up the mountain side where Roy and Cynthia lived in a little terraced cottage. It was a very basic dwelling probably previously belonging to a coal miner. There was no toilet in the house. The toilet in fact was on the other side of the street up some steps and there situated on the top of a kind terrace was a small

shed with two entrances. One for the outside toilet and one for the coal supply.

We had no sooner gotten into the house and opened our first can of beer when Roy stood up and headed for the toilet across the road. Cynthia had a big smile as she eyed us both up. Don't worry about him she joked, he won't be back for a while. Moff and I didn't feel very comfortable as Cynthia made her advances towards us, teasing us and letting us feel various parts of her anatomy. After a half an hour Roy still hadn't come back from the toilet and I started to become suspicious. Cynthia did not want to stop our little game and said oh leave him he's probably puking his load and he doesn't like company when he's puking you know.

Despite her attempt to play down the situation, I decided to take a look for myself. I carefully approached the shed, half expecting Roy to be angry or hanging over the toilet, but to my surprise there was no Roy.

I was just about to run back into the house to report Roy missing when I heard a groan coming from the shed, and yes Roy was still there alright only he had gone into the wrong entrance and was lying facedown on the coal with what had been his fancy white suit. The suit wasn't looking too fancy anymore covered in vomit and coal and Roy was barely conscious. I helped him stand-up and down the steps and into the house. Where he immediately went upstairs and continued to

throw up for about an hour until everything went silent.

In the meantime Moff and I were having a jolly good time down stairs with Cynthia who was showing us a trick or two. This went on until the early hours until we had all exhausted ourselves and indulged at the expense of poor old Roy. I never saw him again in that white suit.

Bob Barry & The Wild Ones

I can't recall why or how Felicity Jane split up but it was as if we were gone as fast as we had come on to the scene. After a few weeks at home, we started putting a new band together. This time Dereck Morgan was no longer part of the setup and I started to play bass. Moff and I were the only remaining members of Felicity Jane. This time we hooked up with a greasy motor mechanic from Shroud near Bristol. His name was Bob and his stage name was Bobby Barry. At thirty-four years old he was twice our age and I guess you could say that there was quite a big clove between him and the band. Bob was a crooner who put loads of brillcream in his hair and wore a shiny glittering gold suit in a futile attempt to impress the audience with his 50's style performance.

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

This was Bob's come-back as he put it and he needed a band crazy enough to back him. We found two longhaired guitarists Steve Mitchel and Ricky to complete the line-up. Cynthia came up with the name Bobby Barry & The Wild Ones and after a few days of practicing we were ready to go out on the road again.

After a few local gigs we were back up North touring the night-club circuit known as the Baileys circuit and doubling up with gigs at nearby social clubs. In this manner it was possible to play all the week days at social clubs and do double gigs on the weekends first doing a short set at a social and then racing across town to start later at the night club. In this we were able to make a reasonable living from our music. If we were lucky we would also get booked for the Sunday afternoon bingo matinee at the social club which was a men's only event. The reason being that the event was usually graced by the presence of a local stripper. Quite often we would have to share the same dressing room with the stripper which was hilarious.

After a few weeks up North in Manchester we were off for our next German Tour in which we would be playing in various US military bases in the South and West of Germany.

It was nearing Christmas and we had been practicing a week in Wales before we left for a few more days near Bristol at Bob's house. My mum had been quite ill in fact she had been diagnosed as having breast cancer and I discussed the tour with her as it would involve

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

me not being at home for Christmas. She must have known she was nearing the end, and insisted that I go on the tour. She had been into hospital quite a few times and every time she seemed to get better so I was not too concerned that it would be any different this time. I left her on 20th December and we spent two days in Shroud near Bristol at Bob's house. Bob lived with his wife. We used to call her Violent Violet as they were always fighting and arguing.

Just before we left for Germany Cynthia called me up to tell me that my mum had taken a turn for the worse and possibly I should not go to Germany but return home. I called my mum immediately but she re-assured me that she would be fine and that I should go to Germany as planned.

At that time 1972 it wasn't common to call home from abroad and there weren't any telephones at hospital bedsides, hence I never spoke to her again.

We had been in Frankfurt leading up to Christmas and had some free time while we were awaiting our first assignment at a US base. We finally got the news late on Boxing day that we were to drive to Nürenberg to play at a large US base for the first month. We set off late in the afternoon and at about 12:00 o'clock we decided to go and look for a Hotel in a small place called Erlangen. This had not been planned but, we reckoned we had more

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

chance of finding a Hotel at 12:00 rather than at 02:00 when we had reached Nûrenberg.

We pulled off the motorway and after about 10KM we came across a small simple hotel. The lady was not very friendly and could also not speak English. Being in the middle of the woods, there was nothing to do but to get some sleep before we continued our journey the next morning.

The next morning we were woken up by the lady of the Hotel and said that there was somebody on the phone and they wanted to speak to Christopher James.

I knew something was wrong as nobody knew that we were staying at that Hotel, in fact nobody knew where we were apart from somewhere between Frankfurt and Nurenberg.

The news was delivered immediately by the US Millatary Intelligence Agency. My mother had passed away on boxing day.

I was devastated and spent about a half an hour crying on my bed while the other members of the band waited outside. When I finally emerged, they tried their best to comfort me and they were as good they could have been under the circumstances. The US Inelligence Agency that had located our whereabouts gave us instructions to proceed to a US military base near Nûrenberg where we were due to play for the US soldiers Christmas ball.

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

The US military were very good to us and provided me with a free telephone connection so I could call my cousin who was making arrangements for my mother's funeral. The first flight out didn't leave until the next day and hence I had to spend the evening at the US base where we had been booked to play that evening.

In the meantime the US military had assigned one of their chaplains to look after me. He was a black man and had a lot of empathy with me, had also did a good job of getting me back on my feet again stilled shocked by what had happened. The master of entertainment had found a bass guitar replacement who could fill in for me while I went back to Wales for the funeral, however the minister was keen for me to play that evening instead of just have me sit around and be miserable, and unbelievably so I even managed to enjoy the evening between all the emotions.

The next day I was off to Nurenberg airport where I would fly back to London Heathrow. Now having much money, I decided to Hitchhike back to Cardiff.

When I got home my Aunty Vera had closed all the curtains of the house as this was the customary thing to do when someone had died. The place now looked horribly empty as my grandfather had also died just 2 months earlier and no there was nobody except me in this big dark house.

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

I couldn't deal with the curtains closed and opened them all up to the disgust of my Aunt Vera. 'Haven't you even got any respect for the dead' she angrily snapped when confronted with daylight in the house. I couldn't give a damn what her motive was. The curtains were going to remain open for the rest of the week.

The house where we had lived belonged to the Doctor's surgery below and it went with the job of Doctor's secretary. Now that my Mum had gone there was nobody to deal with the out-of-hours calls which was part of her job.

On my first day back I was told that I had one month to move out. However now I was playing in Germany and I was only given only one week by our agent to get back and rejoin my band. I decided that I would use that week to move all mine and my mum's valuables to my Aunty's house and sell off all of the furniture and larger things.

It was quite an undertaking, but I organized it very efficiently together with my friend Eric Kitchen.

Eric's father had once lived at our house as a lodger before permanently moving down to Cardiff from Manchester with his family. Eric was very business like and handled that side of the sale very well.

After the funeral we auctioned off the rest of the stuff at ridiculously low prices and spent the

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

last night cleaning the house out and all sorting out various bits and pieces. Now the house was empty. Everything was gone, my mum, my grandfather, our possessions and our house.

This was quite a daunting thought knowing I was now on my own at the tender age of seventeen, however I managed to produce enough adrenaline and energy to deal with the situation. Strangely enough I was raring to go, full of ideas and lots of positive energy. It was a very strange experience and my high lasted for about six months before I finally started to understand the consequences of my situation.

After staying up all night with Eric at my house, I closed the door behind me for the last time, said goodbye and thanked Eric and set off back to London, hitchhiking my way to Heathrow. Everything went fine and the band where in Frankfurt to meet me as we were playing somewhere in the vicinity that very evening.

After a few weeks in the Nurenberg area near Fürth we headed down to Ludwidshaven near Stuttgart where we were booked to play for a month until the end of February 1973.

We were very happy to play in one place for a month as this meant less traveling and no humping equipment around. Also it provided us with lots of time to practice in the day and enhance our repertoire. When you're playing 7 nights a week and practicing in the daytime

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

then its not surprising that the band starts sounding tight. Not only did we polish up our sound, but we also Polish(ed) up the band after engaging the services of three young Polish girls living in Ludwigsburg as refugees I believe. They were an instant hit with the GI's Even the GI's who were fucked up by the war found them interesting enough to distract their attention for a while by moving their hips synchronously to rhythm of the music.

Although the band was getting better and better we were getting more and more pissed off with Bob Barry. He was no fun and we didn't really socialize much with him. In fact it became a kind of sport to play nasty childish tricks on him like start a song in the wrong key just to put him off and make a fool of him on stage.

As our residency in Ludwigsburg neared its close we started looking for more perverse ways of irritating him.

One day when Bob was out, and having nothing better to do, we got together with the band and discussed what we could do that would constitute the ultimate embarrassment for his evening performance.

The ideas where flying around the room like wild-fire in something that resembled a brainstorming session. Before long, we had drawn up a mischievous plan. We had decided to draw lots and the person who lost the draw would masterbate into Bob's bottle of

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

Brillcream. Bob used to put on great amounts of his brillcream just before going on stage every evening and the big question was. Would he notice or not?.

The draw was made and one unlucky band member had to retire into the bathroom with the bottle of brillcream. The two elements did not mix too well and this resulted in the top part of the brillcream turning into an unstable gooey slushy substance. Half liquid and half cream.

Before we could mix it in further we heard Bob drive into the parking lot below our residency in the Army barracks. We just put the lid on and hoped for the best, or the worst, however you look at it!

The day seemed to last for eternity as we were so excited about our devious little plan and couldn't wait to see the end result.

Finally, our patience was rewarded and we were in our dressing room and all eyes were on Bob. I think he even commented in his West Country accent. Hey you guys seem chummy tonight, what's up. 'Nothing Bob, it's almost time to go on, are you ready?'. As he reached for his brill-cream bottle a deadly silence fell on the dressing room. He must have sensed something and I was almost expecting him to inspect the bottle before use, but no. He just took the lid off and plunged his middle three fingers into what had become spunk-cream instead of Brillcream and without looking he

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

was massaging it into his half length greasy black hair.

There was a big sigh of relief our mission had been successful and we were all eyes on him. Unusually complimenting him for his Rock 'n Roll crooner look.

As it happened we were not the only ones to know, we had informed most of our regular military audience in the meantime so this was a real gig to remember and Bob was the laughing stock without him actually knowing himself at the time. I think I did tell him some weeks later at which he grabbed the kitchen knife and held it to my throat. Ricky had to rescue me from being butchered by Bob, but that must have been weeks later.

After a month in Ludwigsburg we headed further North to play a last month in Worms am Rhein. All these places we played in were US military bases with differing levels of security.

This move of location did not turn out so well for our three Polish backing singers. We were politely asked to get rid of them as they posed a security threat to our new Army base. Apparently they were regarded as potential East Block spy threat. The soldiers did not agree with their commander and they tried desperately to make an exception for them but it was not to be and so we reluctantly sent them back to Ludwigsburg.

The German tour slowly came to an end after another month at the American base in Worms am Rein. It was a strange experience playing every night to the same fucked up American GI's. Most of them had just returned from Vietnam and had seen and done some horrific things and lost a lot of their fellow soldiers. All they wanted was to get home and forget the whole episode. Also there was a lot of tension between the black and white soldiers as the black power movement was very prominent at the time. Often this would flare up in the night club just over minor things like whether the band was playing country music or soul. Luckily we were Rock 'n Roll and hence somewhere in the middle. Not always the best place to be when knives are being brandished. In fact, the Russian Roulette that the soldiers were notorious for playing in Vietnam also took its toll in the German bases. A few times the black community would arrive in large numbers sporting red, green and gold colored walking stick with a sharp iron point attached. Quick a scary experience. Fortunately for us they did not seem intent on harming the band.

Steve Phillips to the rescue

After the successful tour of Germany we returned to England and went up North again. This time we were booked in Liverpool, Blackpool and Newcastle. Instead of just the working mens clubs we were now booked into an up-market night club chain called the Baileys circuit.

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

In Blackpool we did two weeks in Paddy McGuinty's Goat Nightclub. It was a disco come nightclub and swarming with young women, most of which were on vacation in Blackpool and looking for fun. I think we all had our fair share of girls in those weeks. I had hitched up with two girls from Leeds and we had a great time wandering around Blackpool in the day, then playing in the evening. Rick our guitarist met a local girl from Blackpool and to everyones astonishedment only having been with her a few days, he decided to quit the band and his wife so he could move in with her. Her name was Lynn which was also his wife's name, just by coincidence.

As this was all very sudden we needed a replacement at very short notice as we were playing in Sunderland night club the very next week.

After discussing who we could call in Cardiff to help us out I mentioned Steve Phillip's name who, at the time, was working for Brittish Steel in Cardiff. Steve literally jumped at the chance. He immediately quit his job and took the first train up to Sunderland where we started practicing with him. We had a few social club gigs in between the night club weekly residence and slowly Steve began to learn the numbers. Steve had not much musical experience outside of his first band Bewegung, but mangaged to hold his own and become part of the band.

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

Strangley enough we had not been doing much drinking during all our tours up until then, but that was all about to change with Steve's entrance to the band.

I can remember one evening we were playing at the British Legion Club in Runcorn near Liverpool and Steve invited me for a beer drinking competition in between the sets which we were playing. Things go totally out of hand and before we knew it, we were drunk and fighting in the dressing room. It was not a real fierce fight but more like fooling around squirting each other with talcum powder which Steve used to massage the neck of his guitar. The dressing room was in a hell of a state but then Steve turned his attention to plaster on the toilet wall. Using just his bear hands he had discovered that the plaster and brickwork could be demolished without the use of heavy-duty equipment.

I believe it all got too much for me and I went for a drive in the Van in between the second and third set. When I arrived back Steve literally had finished off the toilet wall and all 51 committee members were ranting and raving about it. We played our last set before being interrogated by the Club's commodore with regard to the damage.

We strongly denied any involvement with the distruction work Steve had meticulously performed, however somebody had seen Steve at work and had reported it.

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

To make things worse before we left the club I believe we 'borrowed' one of the clubs microphones.

This was the last straw for the club and they got in touch with the press and with our Agent Barry Helms in Manchester.

Little to say, Barry was not amused and confronted us with the newspaper clippings and the damage we had done to his reputation as sleazy Booking Agent.

Barry saw very little future for us as a band in the UK as we would undoubtedly be blacklisted in retaliation. We called him later to explain that Bob Barry had taken the microphone and that he was the cause of the problem.

Without hesitating Barry the agent said 'You have to dump Bob', get rid of him somehow and maybe I can get you some work over in Germany under another name.

This was the kind of news we had been waiting to hear for ages. Finally we had a valid and supported reason for dumping Bob.

Bob was not aware of our sinister plan until one evening on our way back from Manchester to Wales we stopped at a Motorway Petrol station to fill up.

Bob got out of the van to go and pay for the fuel. When he had payed we drove off leaving him behind with his fists tightly clenched

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

making threatening gestures at us as we drove off. None of us would ever see Bob again.

After regrouping in Wales we had about a week before our gig started in Germany. The problem was that our other Guitarist Steve Mitchell had had enough and was not coming on the German Tour. The other problem was that we didn't really have a lead singer.

We auditioned an older lady in Cardiff but all she had to offer was sex and no voice, so Steve roped his very shy girlfriend Lindsey into joining the band. Lindsey could not sing to save her life and her dancing wasn't too hot either. She finally ended up playing a bit of tambourine while I attempted to sing. It was nowhere near the standard we were used to playing at and I soon realized that I had a lot to learn as a front man.

After just two weeks playing in Nurenburg we were fired by our agent after various bad reports had been filed with regard to our poor performance. Lindsey was an asset though, as she diverted the attention of all those lonely GI's away from our pathetic sounding band. Quite a few of the GI's took pity on us and treated us to champagne after our gigs just to cheer us up a bit.

After just two weeks it was all over and we were on our way home back to Cardiff with no future as band and for me personally nowhere to go.

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

It had been more than a half a year since my mother had died and this was the first time I was feeling uncertain and worried about what I would do and where I would go. The seriousness of my circumstance really started to hit home as we drove from Nurenburg via Frankfurt and Cologne towards Belgium where we would take the ferry later that night. When we arrived in Cologne at about six o'clock in the evening the stress had become too much for me to bear. Without a doubt in my mind I decided that I was not going home and would hitch-hike to Denmark instead.

We had no money, apart from the money the band needed to pay for the ferry crossing. Although the band tried hard to persuade me otherwise, I left the van in Cologne with just a small backpack, my acoustic guitar and two West German Deutschmarks.

I spend it immediately on a packet of cigarettes and set off slowly walking out of town towards the motorway on a road running along the Rhein riverbank.

It was not a good place to hitchhike as there was no real place to stop. In fact it took hours for me to get my first lift. By that time it had gotten dark and the river embankment was swarming with rats. I was getting quite scared when I finally got a lift. The German man was not going too far but he could take me to a better place where I could get a lift in the general direction of Denmark.

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

By the time I got my next lift it was well into the night and I was hungry and thirsty. The next car to stop was a Mercedes and the driver tried to sexually assault me. This was all I needed to drive home my precarious position. After surviving all his advances, he finally put me off at a Autobahn Raststätte, a truckstop. Having no money I looked around the self-service café for food that had not be completely consumed and for the first time in my life started to eat the remains of someone else's meal.

I reckoned now I had stooped this far then I might just as well jerked the guy off in the car for the 10 marks he had promised me. I was clearly getting myself into the survival mode which you most certainly need if you are to survive for any amount of time without money or people who care about you.

After hitchhiking all through the night and the best part of the next day, I finally arrived in Putgarten, from where the German Ferry leaves for Rodby Havn in Denmark. I quickly whipped out my Guitar and started to play some Bob Dylan songs at the Ferry terminal until I had earned enough money to buy a ticket on the boat.

It was only a short crossing but I was very tired having not slept. My plan was to be the first passenger off the boat, so that I could get through immigration in time to start hitchhiking before the cars started to disembark. I had planned to arrive in Copenhagen before midnight and look up my former girlfriend there.

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

Never doubting for one minute whether she would be able to put me up or even want to see me.

When the boat docked, I was off down the foot-passengers exit like a shot, only to find myself getting singled out at the Danish customs and immigration desk. 'How much money do you have and what are you planning on doing in Denmark', the guard sternly growled. 'I have just 10 pfennigs and I plan on playing in the Streets of Copenhagen and will stay with a girl I met when I was last in Denmark', I replied with an incredible sense of innocence.

The guard just laughed. I thought he had approved my reason to enter the country, and said I was in a bit of a hurry in order to get a good lift all the way to Copenhagen before all the cars had departed, but he had other plans for me.

He told me that I could take the same boat back to Germany at the courtesy of the Danish government. He subsequently stamped my passport with a big red stamp with AVIST on it. I imagine it means refused or rejected and I was on my way back to Germany

To get so far and then be turned back was completely contrary to the script I had written for my adventure. I was literally devastated and morally at an all-time low. Such an anti-climax after putting in all that effort. I trudged into the ships lounge and just sat down and cried my heart out.

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

After about a half an hour the boat started to fill up with people traveling in the other direction. I had no idea what I would do, but I was determined that I needed to get into Denmark and away from Germany.

While I was sat down in the lounge feeling miserable. A long tall Swedish guy called Christer came up and sat down next to me. He was very cheerful and spoke very good English. He asked me where I was going and where I was from. First I thought it was another gay man homing in for the kill. Then he told me that he was from a religious group of musicians who were embarking on an European Tour, starting on the Island of Sicily in Southern Italy.

I told Christer my story and he seemed very moved by it. Especially when I told him that I had no family left in Wales to go back to.

He said, just wait a minute let me see if we can give you a lift. At least we can give you some food and you can sleep a little. I saw no reason not to accept his offer and both the thought of sleep and the food seemed like a bloody good reason to travel with them whatever direction they were going in.

When the boat docked, I walked back through customs and immigration together with Christer. Yet again I was picked out, this time by the German Guard, who saw no more reason to accept me than his Danish counterpart on the other side of the water.

On Tour in Europe with the Jesus People

After spending what must have been at least ninety minutes in the custody of the German border guards, I was finally released. Needless to say I had expected Christer and his Swedish colleagues to have long gone.

To my dismay the bus was still there waiting for me. Apparently they had been busy praying for my release! So when I finally got on their bus instead of being very irritated and pissed off at the long wait they we're all very happy singing and thanking God for my safe return from the nasty looking border guards.

It was all a bit too much to take in for me at the time. I had had no sleep for about 48 hours and was at the end of my tether. Despite the fatigue, it was great to receive such a welcome after feeling so desperate and so alone.

First I was encouraged to get washed and was fed until I could eat no more. Soon afterwards I was sound asleep as the bus drove in a Southerly direction through Germany. Before I passed out, they told me that I was welcome to drive with them for a day or so until I was in shape enough to carry on my journey alone.

The next morning I was awoken to the sound of Swedish Gospel sounds and a great

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

breakfast Swedish style. Probably I wouldn't have dreamt of eating that kind of food just a few weeks ago. However now I had experienced what it was like to be hungry, even only for a short time, and so now everything tasted excellent.

The Christianity thing was not exactly what I was looking for, having just dropped out of a rock n roll band, but I had quite some experience with the Church of England as a child and therefore it wasn't too much of a shock.

One thing I did notice was that these people seemed to take their religion very seriously and where praying , singing or speaking in strange tongs most of the day.

I was expecting them to kick me out after a day, but instead they asked me to leave the bus at a truckstop for a while so they could have a meeting. I assumed it would be a spiritual gathering or something like that. After an hour I was invited back into the bus. The leader immediately asked me to listen to his proposition on which they had just reached agreement. He said that they had unanimously agreed that I was welcome to accompany them on their European Tour which was due to start in Sicily in Italy just a few days later. The Tour would cover 10 countries over a 4 month period. The only thing they asked back from me was that I would respect their religious beliefs and adhere to the 'rules', which basically meant no smoking joints and no

fucking their women. Further they asked whether I would like to participate in their musical production and play along with my guitar.

This seemed like a reasonable deal, and it didn't take me too long to say YES!

I had never visited Italy before and the journey was long but very interesting. The group had acquired an old Swedish city bus which had been discarded when the Swedes changed from driving on the lefthand side of the road to the right and hence the Steering wheel was on the wrong side!

They had done a great job in converting the bus into a traveling home which had a kitchen at the front, about 20 seats in the middle and six beds at the rear end of the bus. Due to the limited amount of beds we had to take it in turns to get some sleep while we were traveling, however this problem had been overcome as the trip had been well planned and every town we were due to visit we were welcomed into the homes of the locals who shared the same Pentecostal denomination.

After 3 days we arrived at the Strait of Messina where we boarded the ferryboat over to Sicily. I can remember being quite distressed that the boat was being followed by a large group of sharks who fed of the food being thrown overboard. I had really been looking forward to getting into that deep blue sea and swimming, but not know, knowing that the waters were shark infested.

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

Our first port of call in Sicily was Catania which lies at the foot of the Mount Etna Volcano. It was amazing to see the snowcapped summit while being at Sea level and in the heat of 33°C.

We spent a full month in Sicily and traveled all over the island. The local people were incredibly hospitable and generous. Because we were such a large group we were usually split up at the various locations and taken in in small groups by local families.

The Italian cooking really made a big impression on me and I managed to eat mountains of Pasta dishes. Apparently in Sicily the more you eat at someone's house the bigger the compliment for the cook, usually the Mama of the house. I had not understood this well and as a result I would carry on eating as long as there was food on offer. Quite often the host would be cooking a new pot of pasta just so I could have my fifth helping!

One of the smaller towns we visited in Sicily was Enna which is pitched at the top of a steep mountain in the middle of the Island. The sister village is just a few kilometers away at the same height, yet you would first have to go down to the ground level and back up again to travel from one town to the other.

In the meantime I was becoming interested in all the spiritual going on's of the Pentecostal religion, and although declining to join I was

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

very impressed at some of the stuff that happened. It would appear that everytime we were in need of something they would pray and within hours, sometimes only minutes our needs would somehow be answered.

After a month of annoying the local catholic mafia who were eager see us leave, we headed up north to Grosseto where we stayed another 3 weeks. It was here that I finally did give in and concede by being baptized as one of the group. I was serious at the time but in hindsight I guess I must have given in to a sense of wanting to belong somewhere rather than to actually change as a person. Whatever the case I guess you could say I gave Christianity a try and it lasted about four months before finally becoming disillusioned by it all as I was earlier in my life when I had been in Church in Wales. Mind you this time it was much more compelling and serious.

After about two months in Italy we finally made it to Switzerland where a ten day holliday had been planned. We stayed at a small camping ground in Vevey on the great lake Lemon in the French Speaking part of Switzerland. While the others went smimming in the lake and sightseeing. I was off every day to busk with my guitar. I had discovered that the rich Swiss women could be very generous to a teenage busker and it was indeed a lucrative business, picking up about 300 Swiss Francs for about two hours work.

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

The amount of money depended not so much on the place I chose to play but more by the time I was allowed to play before the police would arrive and arrest me. They didn't move people on like in London and Paris but took them down to the station where they meticulously counted out all the takings, took a statement then solemnly warned me to get out of town or risk being deported. This led me to a different town every day and after a few days in Vevey, Montreaux, Lausanne and Geneva, I had earned a significant amount of money. More than a thousand Swiss francs.

I decided to give it to Bjorn who was our leader as he and the group had basically paid everything for me from food to clothes and more. He took the money but said that he would return it when I left the group a few months later.

After the vacation we went on to pray and play in Austria, Germany, Luxembourg, France, Belgium and Holland before making our way back to Denmark to do our last session in Arhus in Jutland.

In fact I was sleeping in the bus when we actually crossed the Danish border this time by land. Luckily, the German border guard didn't check my passport as it had already been stamped as 'REFUSED Entry'. So I had successfully made it after 4 months back into Denmark. I left the group in Arhus and thanked them graciously for taking me in and looking

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

after me during what was nothing less than a crisis.

Bjorn gave me back the money that I had earned busking and I was off to Copenhagen.

The girlfriend I had earlier planned on visiting was not so pleased to see me, and was now living with another guy, who also was not too pleased with me showing up unexpectedly.

I did not make much of it and ended up in a nightclub bar where I met some other shady characters. By this time I was making up for lost time being a Christian and was drinking and up to all sorts of mischief.

The stay didn't last long in Copenhagen, just a few days, but it was enough to empty my pockets of money which I was no longer used to handling.

Broke once again, I decided it was time to go back to Wales and opted to hitchhike back through Germany to Amsterdam where I would take the ferry back home to the UK.

My plan was simple, I would do some busking in the Streets of Amsterdam until I had enough money to pay my passage back home via Hoek of Holland – Harwich.

Arrival in Amsterdam

After a long sequence of lifts from Copenhagen to Holland, I arrived in the middle of the night in the city Centre of Amsterdam.

Having no money and no place to sleep, I headed towards the Central Station where I decided I would sleep outside lying on my guitar to protect it from thieves.

I must have slept very well because when I woke up at about 07.00 amidst the hustle and bustle of the morning rush-hour I realized that my guitar which had served me so well was no longer lying underneath me and had been stolen during my sleep.

This was a real setback as I now had no means of earning any money. Taking stock of the situation I decided I would try and borrow a guitar at one of the two Christian Youth Hostel's in Amsterdam. They had been very cooperative when we were visiting Amsterdam a few months earlier. However I was in for a shock. They did not want to lend me their guitar. They did however give me the opportunity of working in the hostel cleaning the dormitories and toilets. It was hard work seven days a week but relative short hours. Only two to three hours a day. The money was not too good, only paying about nineteen Dutch Guilders a week plus free board and food.

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

With all the nice things to do in Amsterdam it would take me for ever to to earn enough money to get back to Wales.

As it happened I no longer wanted to go back to Wales and was having a great time in Amsterdam, showing tourists around the town, and taking a moderate commission on the various herbal items I helped them purchase.

I had make friends with a black south African guy called Martin who was a political activist and asylum seeker in The Netherlands. This due to his opposition of the apartheid regime of the former White Government of South Africa.

Martin was also a good guitar player and singer. We sang together and played in various Cafes and did some acoustic gigs. Martin was being helped by Amnesty International, who finally found him a temporary accommodation in Amsterdam Oost (East). At the time I was having problems with my boss at The Shelter, The Christian Youth hostel in the Amsterdam Red Light district. Apparently I was not obeying the curfew law that everybody had to be in the hostel by 00.00 everynight.

As a result one night I was sacked and not allowed in. Martin offered me accommodation in his one room dwelling on the fourth floor of an apartment building. In fact it wasn't a real accommodation, but more like a room for storage and it belonged to a couple who worked for Amnesty International.

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

Needless to say it wasn't very comfortable and a bit crowded. Nether the less it was better than The Shelter's six berth dormitories.

One day I went to a snackbar near to Martin's flat to get some chips or 'patat' as the Dutch call them. While waiting to place my order I got chatting with a Dutch guy who spoke very good English. In fact he gave English lessons at a technical school. His name was Gijsbert or Gilbert as he translated his name into English.

He invited me around to his flat which was just around the corner from where I was living with Martin. Gijs lived on his own in a large three room apartment on the Pretoriaplein, which was rather ironic taking into account I was living with a South African at the time.

Gijs loved to speak English and was also quite lonely. When he heard about the conditions we were living in he offered me a room at his house for a minimal rent. I had no money but he said that he could help me get a job and that I would pay rent when I could afford it.

First I thought that he must have been a homosexual in order to make me such a generous offer, but as it turned out he was just lonely guy and saw me as a means to improve his English and have someone to practice his beloved Shakespear on.

I used to call him 'Gekke Gijsbert' or Crazy Gilbert as he would often go completely off the handle. He was very expressive which meant

that he would often dance and sing if he was happy, but that could soon turn into shouting and rage when he became angry.

I guess the big significance to me was that Gilbert was the first Dutch relationship I had made and I soon noticed that I began to learn how Dutch society functioned and how to make contacts. Up until that point I had only really met people like myself who were passing through or had just started to live in Amsterdam themselves. Now I was really beginning to discover the real Dutch world.

Gilbert took me to visit his family in Oostzaan which was a very traditional Dutch village just outside of Amsterdam. There I met his brother Martin who was an amateur boxer at the time and his next door neighbor Henry van der Zee who had once been a famous Dutch boxer.

Henry's son Johan played drums in a local band in Monickendam, another village nearby. When I told Johan I could play guitar and piano he immediately asked if I would join his band in Monickendam. It seemed very impractical to me, as I had no form of transport and also didn't have an electric guitar at the time. However Johan said that he would pick me up with his car in Amsterdam and that the band could provide me with a bass guitar.

So there I was playing in my first Dutch band. They were not very good at the time, in fact they sounded quite bad, however it was nice for me to get out of Amsterdam once every

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

week and they were very nice guys, so I had no problem with it. Nico, one of the band members was related to the famous Dutch Band The Cats.

I hadn't heard of them until I found myself in Marken a small fishing village near Volendam and when I went up to the jukebox to put some music on, found out that the whole jukebox was exclusively records of The Cats. It was an unbelievable experience for both me and the people in the bar who could not understand how anybody on Earth could not have heard of the The Cats!.

Playing in this band made my realize that I had to get my act together and find a job somehow so I could buy a new guitar and get back into music as a means of living.

A legal job was not possible as I only had a visitors passport at the time. I decide to go back to Cardiff for a few weeks. Get a job manual job and earn enough money to go back to Holland with a Guitar.

Gijs also thought it was a good idea and promised that if I came back within 3 weeks then he would keep my room on for me.

When I arrived home I found a job within a day at the local bakery. It was hard work including night shifts, but the wages were reasonable and I was earning again.

I decided to stay to 5 weeks instead of 3 just so

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

that I could save a bit of money to buy me some time in Amsterdam. I knew that finding a job would not be so easy. Especially not being able to speak Dutch. In the meantime I got myself a proper British Passport which would allow me to work in The Netherlands.

When I arrived back in Amsterdam I was in for a shock. Since I had not called Gijs during the five weeks, he had assumed that I would not be coming back and had decided to rent my room out,... to a girl this time. Gijs had in fact placed an advert in the local newspaper and was busy making appointments with prospective tenants.

He had received many reactions as room space was very scarce in Amsterdam at the time. Gijs invited me in and we discussed the situation and he said. OK you can have your room back, but I still want to interview all these women who will be coming to view the room this evening.

Gijs told me that he would do the interviewing and that I should not say anything but just sit there and study the movements and habits of these women.

About seven or eight women showed up at various times that evening and Gijs was felling completely in his element, knowing that both they and I had something that he could decide over.

The idea was that Gijs would interview all the women, ask them all sorts of questions and then call them the next day to tell them that the room had been hired, by me of course.

After an exhausting evening for Gijs we started to discuss all the candidates. I told Gijs that they didn't seem too interesting as people with the exception of a young girl called Marion Raven. She looked very naive and was looking for a room as she was working in Amsterdam and living up in the North of Holland.

Life in Noddy Land

Marion came from a little village called Lutjebroek, which is a name that the Dutch use similarly to Timbucktoo. Everybody's heard of it but hardly nobody knows where it is located.

I confessed to Gijs that I was really interested in that girl and wouldn't mind having her in my room. Gijs took my joke seriously and said, 'here is her telephonenumber. why don't you call her and tell her that she can move in with you'.

I laughed but noticed that he really was serious. If she really wants the room she will have to put up with your snoring he said with a laugh.

I was a little worried and uncertain about how to go about such a task. I finally picked up the phone and to call her. I hadn't made any real preparations for the conversation at all. When I

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

finally had her on the line, she quickly said Oh you must be the roommate of Gijs. Can I have the room? Well, I stammered its like this,..... She soon said please tell me can I stay there or not. I said 'yes', but before I had time to tell her that she would have to share the room with me, she was screaming with joy and said she would be around soon with her things to move in. She had already hung the phone up leaving me with the horn in my hand, and still stumbling to utter the words but you will have to share the room with me.

I realized that I had gotten myself into a right mess and that it would not get easier now she had been told that she could move in. I decided that I would break the news to her as soon as she had arrived, however I had not anticipated that she would bring her boyfriend along to help her move in.

Later in the evening she arrived with her belongings together with her muscular friend. They brought all her stuff up into what was my room. She was a little astonished to find my suitcase and some stuff in the room, but carried on to install herself unaware of the actual situation. I was still shell shocked and unable to muster up the level assertiveness necessary to reclaim my room.

All I could do was to turn to mad Gilbert and ask him for advice. He reacted very business like and said. Listen, its your own fault. Either you or she can live here, or you can both live but then occupying one room.

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

He said that I could sleep on the couch until the end of the week, and that I had just a few days in order to hit it off with Marian as she was called or I would have to go and find a new dwelling.

My put my sinister plan into immediate effect and was making definite progress with Marian. However there were setback's and 'sort of boyfriends' to deal with. It was all very complicated and energy consuming. The five days turned into five long weeks and then finally we really fell in love with each other and started our relationship together and we did live for a while in our room at Gijs' house.

Gijs became a little jealous because all my attention was now focused on Marian and I had very little time to listen to his tirade of Sheakspeare monologs and hear him out. In fact not long after he asked us to leave and find somewhere else. Marian was surprisingly enough quite eager to leave as she could not deal with Gijs' tantrums and self pity.

We had a few room's and temporary apartments in Amsterdam before finally moving in with her mother and brothers and sisters. They all lived in a tiny village in the north of Holland called Lutjebroek.

Lutjebroek is The Netherlands equivalent of Timbucktoo. Everybody's heard of it, but very few people have ever been there or even know where it is located. As it happens it is located in

between the towns of Hoorn and Enkhuizen about an hour away from Amsterdam by train.

Lutjebroek with it's 4 or 5 streets was quite a contrast to metropolitan Amsterdam. It was a village where people did not lock there doors and left their bikes unlocked in the frontgarden. It reminded me of Noddy Land with Noddy, Big Ears and little weed. Everything was so nice orderly and open. Nobody would draw the curtains in the evenings hence you could stare into every house and see what they were doing or eating as you walked along the street.

Marion's parents were divorced and her father was living nearby in the next village. Her mother lived in the house together with her six children, Ellen, Marion, Margaret, Stef, Jose and Franky.

Ellen was the oldest and the most serious. She was the academic of the family. At the time she was doing her O and A levels, but she would later go on to become a Univeristy Professor and lecturer. Marian was more like a butterfly and very unpredictable in both her way of thinking and her state of mind. Margaret was more of a mischievous nature and was a lot of fun but also with her head in the clouds. Stef was a bit more reserved and was more interested in his rabbits than in the strange Welshman which had just joined their household. Jose was about 8 or 9 at the time and very shy and giggly, while Franky at 6 or seven was too young to be able to put things into perspective.

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

For me it was the first real encounter with Dutch culture and in particular the culture prominent in that particular region of the country North Holland. Basically people are blunt and to the point up there. They say exactly what they think and are not afraid of confronting other people with their opinions. Even if it means confronting you with their criticism. This of course is in very deep contrast with the kind of culture which is prevalent in most parts of the UK where you are supposed to be polite and only talk about people behind their back's instead of straight to their face.

This was accentuated during the first Santa Klaas, which is the festival to commemorate St.Niclaus which is basically when the Dutch give each other presents, like Christmas in the UK and America.

Quite often the presents are accompanied by a rhyme or limerick kind of poem. These poems can be very personal and very embarrassing. However custom has it that you are obliged to read them and read them out loud so that all can hear. Even if you can't speak the language.

I was shocked to find out what I had expected to be a very friendly family event could be accompanied by such implicating and satanic verses.

The Shades

After about a year or more in Holland and still living in Lutjebroek, I called up my good friend Steve Philliops to see what he was up to and find out if he fancied coming over to Holland so we could continue musical aspirations together in Holland and set up a band in Holland.

Similar to when Steve had given up his job to join our band in Sunderland two years earlier, he also didn't need much persuading this time. In fact when I mentioned that my girlfriend had fun-loving younger sister, the deal was sealed and Steve was over within weeks.

For a while Steve came up to Lutjebroek and stayed at Marian's mum's house, and sure enough, within days of his arrival he had hit it off with Margaret Raven which made in my brother in law for as long as it lasted.

Shortly after Steve's arrival Marian and I moved back to Amsterdam where we found a nice little room smack in the center of Amsterdam. The house was divided up into about 6 rooms with a communal kitchenette and wc and shower. They were practically all foreigners coming from various countries like Italy, USA and the UK which made the largest contingency. Hence English was the house language and speaking Dutch or Cloggy as it was called was frowned upon as anti-social

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

behaviour even if the perpetrators were both Dutch nationals.

After Steve's relationship fell through with Margaret he moved to Volendam where he had been asked to play in a local top 40 band. He had also found work in the nearby town of Edam and hence was rapidly getting himself established in Holland.

Steve's band was called Hope, but there was no much hope of them actually getting anywhere apart from playing the bar-dancing cafés up and down the country. The band where probably better aligned to bricklaying than to music. It was interesting to see how their self-confidence and behavior was differ depending on their whereabouts. In the native Volendam they were very loudmouthed in bars and behaved almost like rock 'n roll heroes. This was completely the opposite to their behavior at gigs outside of Volendam. The further away the more reclusive they would become. I can remember Steve inviting my to come along to one of their gigs in Denekamp in the far East of The Netherlands. Before and after the gig and during the intervals Steve and I would be in amongst the people, probably trying to pick up some girls. The band would not leave the dressing room and did not want any encounter with people from outside Volendam. Needless to say they were not too pleased to have me around either.

I can remember staying at Steve's new loggings in Volendam and walking to the

highway the next morning to hitchhike to work. Normally I would never have to wait longer than about 5 or 10 minutes to get a lift, even in the rural areas of North Holland. This was not the case in Volendam. Probably because I was unknown nobody stopped for me and I had to walk the 4 miles before I could get a lift on the main highway into Amsterdam. Out of frustration I had been skipping and dancing along the roadside as I made my way to the highway. One of the people who passed me with offering me a lift was one of Steve's band, who later reported back that I was probably insane as he had spotted me skipping down the road.

After a while Steve and I got together and started to scheme about getting our band back together only this time using The Netherlands as our base from which to tour.

Steve was really pushing to get this idea moving and before long he had found a location where we could all live. It was a farm house in the tiny village of Middellie which was just a few miles away from Volendam.

The farm house was no longer used as an animal farm and was undergoing a process of transformation into a large house with plenty of rooms for hire. Because of the deafening noise we were planning on producing with our future band a separate little cottage caught our eye. It was just one large room in fact, but it was a little distant from the farm house and provided us with an accommodation that we could also

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

use to practice and record. Besides that there were other advantages too like less tentant control from our host Mrs Hooiberg which we immediately Christened 'Ma' or Ma Hooiberg bringing back memories of our German 'Ma' in Manchester.

Firstly Steve and I moved in then we discussed who we would like to complete the band and where we were to find them.

As this point in time I had been living in Holland for about three years or so and Steve for about one year. We were both going through a transitional phase in which we were very negative about Dutch people in general. They have a strange taste in music, they pronounciation of English is sometimes very amusing, They eat very boring food, They can't strike up a groove and worst of all they can't clap probably. Ie When the Dutch clap along to a song they will either clap on the 1st beat and the 3rd beat of the bar instead of the more rhythmic 2nd and 4th or they will clap on all four beats in the bar, hence removing the very presence of rythem from the music.

Partially because of our doubting nature with regard to the prospect of finding good Dutch musicians and also partially due to the fact that we thought we would have more change of success with an all English speaking band, we decided to look for English or Welsh musicians. We had decided that we would go for a drummer and and a bass guitar player and that

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

I would just sing and play a bit of organ or whatever.

Ian Moffatt was our ideal candidate for the vacancy of Drummer, however we had to lure him away from his cushing little job at Welsh Breweries planning dept. Moff also new of a bass guitar player of which I can only recall his last name being Barrett.

After we had been able to persuade them to both quit their jobs and come over to Holland they eventually arrived today and moved in at the farmhouse. Barrett was a bit of a dark horse and didn't mix too well either Steve, Moff or myself, and after two weeks or so he left. The only real reason that I remember him at all is that he brought a disease over with him called 'the mumps' and shortly after he had left I developed the first symptoms which entailed a hideaous itch all over your body including body parts which where itching for other things!

After Barret had left and I had recovered from my 3 week sickness, we discussed how to continue without a bass guitarist. It was soon decided that I should temporarily take the position of Bass Guitarist and learn to sing and place bass at the same time. Although it sounded like a daunting task at the time, I soon became quite proficient in the art of multi-tasking.

Being a three-piece band certainly had its advantages. Firstly we didn't need a lot of deliberation in order to make swift decisions

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

and quite often it was easier to arrange and practice our music. Besides that, there were less people to have to share the gig money with and more complementary bar consumptions to go around.

We were looking for identity and discussing what kind of repertoire we should go for. Steve was very impressed by the Sex Pistols at the time and he launched the idea of becoming a punk rock band. Punk at that time was synonymous with UK bands which made us an immediate commodity in The Dutch youth club circuit. Most of them didn't have enough budget to bring over UK bands, while we were sitting there right on their doorstep. We soon found ourselves playing a combination of new-wave music with Punk rock. Neither of us were real punkers. In fact most of us resented them. However Punk was in and it looked as though it was to remain that way for some years to come.

Steve had been doing some songwriting and recording onto his AKIA 4 track machine while living in Volendam. I was very impressed at what he could churn out using the Sound on Sound technique to keep adding new tracks by mixing and bouncing various tracks back and forth.

We discussed the idea of a song/writing partnership similar to Jagger/Richards or Lennon and McCartney and that was what happened. Most of our songs we actually written separately, but we had some kind of

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

agreement to collectively share the credits and at the same time double our own personal collection of songs. We later went back on this agreement and only attributed the songs we had really written together to us both.

Moff was a bit like the Ringo of the band. We tried diligently to discourage him from singing and getting too involved in the songwriting. As a result, Moff had in fact, perfect the art of singing without a Microphone to a fine art.

This technique is commonly possessed and applied by opera singers and politicians, but practically unheard of in the more contemporary music genres, and most certainly not very practical as a Punk Rocker.

I have often heard Moff using this technique, even in recent times at Jam Sessions. It can be very reminiscent of a Fog Horn at Sea. Just to give you some idea. Try opening your mouth about to halfway, then blow air out from your lungs letting you whole body resonate a bit like making a sound through blowing into an empty bottle of beer for example. The fact that both your head and diaframe our vibrating to the same souce will provide you with additional amplification of your 'sound'.

So hence Moff's singing wall of sound was born and became quite popular with our local group of friends and followers which were growing quite fast.

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

This group was later to be known as The Shades Society. It was certainly not your regular fan club as we ourselves were the driving force and participated fully in all of its activities. I guess it was more of a club of friends, but with our band on center stage.

The founding members were Marriet de Haan and Janet van Dort, both from Oosthuizen, a small village nearby. It was to become an important place for us as it hosted the nearest bar and discothek called Ans & Piet. We soon became regular visitors there and before long we had our long awaited gig at Ans & Piet in Oosthuizen. This certainly got us established within the local community and our following became even bigger.

As we were now billing ourselves as a Punk band, we had to do something with our image and basically we were much too nice and friendly to make any real impression in that scene. Hence we decided that we would become less nice and to be quite abnoxious. We drank and smoked ourselves into oblivion before we went on stage and quite often could even play when our time came. This got the audience nice and angry and so we regularly got into spitting battles with the audience which we inevitably always lost.

I can remember one evening being booed off stage and absolutely covered in spit and thinking to myself. I would rather go and sing about Jesus and eat lots of pasta rather than undergo such a humiliation.

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

However Steve and Moff were always there to pick me up after a show and usually our malice didn't stop after our last number, but we would go on to wreck things and damage the youth clubs we played in.

On one occasion we were carting the equipment down a flight of wooden stairs at a youth club in Landsmeer. Steve suggested we let the force of gravity do most of the work and we let the speaker cabinets hurtle down the staircase damaging the property below. Our antics hadn't gone un-noticed by the caretaker and without us noticing he had confiscated one of our guitar amplifiers to use as collateral in getting us to somehow pay for the damage.

We only noticed the missing amp after returning home and loading our equipment back into the house. By then it was 3 o'clock in the morning and nobody would be there.

The next day we called up the caretaker to discuss the missing amp. He immediately owned up, and said that we could get it back, but first we would have to settle some damages. We arranged to meet him the next afternoon. We arrived but the bell was not working due to the damage we had brought about. After ten minutes of ringing without answer we tried throwing small stones up at the office upstairs, until we succeeded in attracting the caretaker's attention, but not before we had broken a window by throwing stones.

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

We had expected some hard bargaining and were even prepared to use force to get our amp back, however that was not necessary as the caretaker and the manager who had probably not heard how bad we had played made us a strange proposition. We would have to play the club again but this time without any money and the club would pay for the damage from what they could collect at the door. It sounded like a good deal to us and especially after we had secured an unlimited amount of alcoholic consumptions as part of the deal.

I don't remember much of our punishment gig as we were too pissed to even see properly. In fact that is the only I can remember about it. It was standing on the stage making a lot of noise and there was someone standing next to me doing the same. I was sure it was Steve but I could only see a blur and could not recognize him as such.

In the meantime back at the farm-house we had discovered that Ma had a daughter who seemed to take an interest in us lads and so the affairs started. First with me, then with Steve and finally with Moff. This cycle was repeated a number of times with various young ladies from the surrounding area. A girl who was unfortunate enough to have indulged in sex with all three of us was immediately promoted to the rank of three star general within The Shades Society. I won't list them in this account to save them the embarrassment. They probably all have grown-up children

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

these days who would certainly frowned upon their permissive behavior back in those days.

The musical aspirations of The Shades also started to take on new dimensions when we started writing more of our own material.

One of our first songs was written by Steve which was called "Funk It". It had a very catchy chorus in which the words Funk It were repeated over and over until Fuck it rang out.

Later we wrote more traditional types of songs like You're So Cruel, The Blues, I Hear Them Talking and De Bluuz, which was our first and only attempt at writing a song in the Dutch language.

Back at the farm-house Ma was beginning to regret she had ever let the likes of us stay there. After finding her daughter regularly in our sleeping quarters her patience finally snapped during a visit from some family from Germany. The visiting relative also had a daughter accompanying her. Ma warn us and me in particular to say away from the visitors and we were actually banned from entering the main house during the visit. However temptation got the better of me and the young German lady who had been given a similar lecture by her mother. Don't go near those Punk Rock boys. On her very first night we met up in Ans & Piet's bar and were really knocking the drinks back. On our way home it was obvious that the German lady was not heeding her mother's advice and in fact was actually

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

asking for exactly what she had been forbidden. The only problem was she was a bit shy and didn't want to go into our bedroom which we shared. Instead she told me that there was a spare room at the house which she had noticed earlier and that we could sneak in there.

I certainly didn't require much persuading and so we found the room and made good use of it. The next thing I can remember it was early morning and suddenly the door flung open and there was Ma' panting with rage because of our disobedience. "I knew it" she snarled and when I laughed it was too much for her and she demanded that I leave the premises and not come back.

I can remember Steve sticking up for me later and he actually tried to reason with her, but that didn't help matters as she had made up her mind and decided that Steve could go too. Only Moff was allowed to stay as she regarded him as the lesser evil of our band.

I guess this was a defining moment as it split up the band. Moff still living in the farm-house with Ma and Steve and myself living about 5 kilometers away on the other side of Oosthuizen in a tiny village called Etersheim.

We were very quick to find our new home which was a deserted sheep shed, in fact two deserted sheep shed's. The living conditions would have been considered subnormal even in the poorest countries of the world.

No water, no electricity no central heating an asbestos roof and concrete on the floor, oh forgot to mention...and one big toilet,.. which was the field we shared with a herd of sheep and also their toilet too!

Our new host was a mildly cynile man called Cor Meerdeboer. Cor was rarely visibly happy although he did seem to take a delight at hearing some of our stories and how we had out-stayed our welcome at Ma Hooyberg. Ma had recently entered into the same antique business as the time, so there was quite a bit of competition amongst the local and animosity was never far away.

I often wondered why he had taken us in, I guess it was partly loneliness and partly because he could get some inside information about what the other antique dealers were up to in the Oosthuizen and Middellie area.

The Sisters & Etersheim

Steve and I soon found ourselves living spartanic conditions in the middle of a field. We had taken up residence in the one little shed while we soon started fitting the other one out to function as our new practice room and recording studio. During our first week we in Etersheim we had managed to dig a long trench of about 80 meters so that we bury a long mains cable which would provide both sheds with electricy. The trench was necessary so that the cable could be buried deep enough

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

to protect it from the frost and also from our new neighbours, the ever grazing and shitting flock of sheep.

This was our first step back to normality. Now we had electricity the second step was some kind of heating. We then bought a small portable gas stove which had a bottle of propane gas in it.

Finally we added a jerry can with a plastic tap to give us a limited but refillable cold water supply.

Cor was a real humanitarian and even allowed into the house for a shower about once a week.

Becoming separated from Moff who was still living in the relative comfort of Ma's farmhouse, we soon found ourselves in a sort of loyalty crisis with regard to Moff. It seemed like we were drifting apart and the The Shades were now split along the lines of Steve / Chris and Moff. In fact it was much more complicated than that because all kinds of new friendships were being formed with the locals of Oosthuizen.

One of the more memorable highlights of The Shades was the Talent Contest we enter in the North Holland village of Spierdijk.

We had read in the papers that the record label EMI in close collaboration with a local newspaper De NoordHollands Dagblad, would be organizing a talent competition for which the

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

first prize would be a demo recording at EMI studio's under the supervision or a professional supervision of a well known producer.

This plus all the additional publicity via the newspaper was too tempting and we decided to go for it.

We had quite a few compositions that we were either trying to record ourselves or planned to record.

There were so many entries for the talent competition that the organizers had decided to hold preliminary rounds to decide which bands would go through to the final.

We were so confident that we would get into the final that we had lost focus of the competition and were busy fooling around as usual. When the results came in from our round we barely scaped through to the final, qualifying as last and sixth band out of about twelve.

This didn't position us very well for the final which was a few weeks later and we basically had to adjust our expectation accordingly.

One of the things that we had overlooked was that fact that the village hosting the event was a little further away from our local domain where we were better known. Secondly, the public comprised of farmers and were not really interested in punk rock or new wave or Brittish music and musicians in general.

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

As it so happened, during the period between the qualifying rounds and the final, I got into trouble with my bank The Rabobank, which was founded by farmers for farmers!

They had given me a 1000 guilder loan on which I had defaulted. What had started as a trivial argument had escalated out of control due to the farmer-like bureaucracy of the Rabobank and as a result I vowed never to pay back the loan.

In the true nature of a aspiring Punk Rocker I had written a song to vent my disgust about the Rabobank. The song was entitled Rabobank we hate you, Rabobank you stink.

Well when the final came around we had included this number into our repertoire and were amazed at the reaction it got in Spierdijk, where every had an account at their local Rabobank.

It was a great performance which made a big impression on both the audience and the jury.

Despite our success there was still some tough competition and plenty of time to get up to new mischief. Steve had 'found' a nice camera, which later turned out to be the camera owned by one of the newspaper journalists who had taken pictures of our performance just minutes earlier.

After hearing all the bands entries to the competition, the jury retired for a while to make

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

their decision. When they return they announced The Shades as the victors of the talent competition.

We had to go and receive our prize from the Lord Mayor of that area and Moff wanting to get in on the action had hidden some silly putty in his hand. When the Lord Mayor had given us the prize he shook hands with us all, however Moff had the silly putty in the palm of his hand and pushed into the palm of the Lord Mayor.

He was very professional about it and did not want to look silly in front of all those villagers so he tried to ignore it, and tried to subtly rub it off his hand before having to shake with some else. His beige tweed suit was to become stained as the silly putty took out all the color of materials that it came in contact with.

Hence within minutes the Lord Mayor's suit was covered in patches of a significantly lighter shade of beige and this was just the start.

We were now really confident that EMI would give us a record deal as they had also done with the Sex Pistols.

A week or so after the competition we were visited by Pim Koopmans who was assigned as our producer. He came up to Etersheim to listen to our music and select 3 songs for the recording.

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

Around about the same period the relationship between The Sex Pistols and EMI had gone sour and they had written a similar song about EMI as what we had done with Rabobank.

Despite the Sex Pistols break with EMI and EIM's break with punk in general, they did record our 3 songs in their Studios in Heemstede.

Unfortunately for us EMI didn't give us a record contract nor did they give us the tapes they had made of us.

We spent weeks telephoning them and got very angry but it all didn't help much. The tapes had mysteriously 'disappeared' they would never surface again.

This was the closest we would ever get to a proper record deal, and in the meantime the personal relationships within the band were getting very strained due to the promiscuous nature of our relationships and the girl-friend swapping and stealing that was going on throughout.

Finally Moff announced that he had had enough and quit the band. Despite the breakup of the The Shades, Moff stayed on in Holland and was still very much part of our social club that we used to call The Shades Society.

The Shades Society was not a fan club but more like a group of friends centered around our band. We would typically organize short

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

trips to the beach, rowing expeditions, visits to Amsterdam, ect. etc.

Soon amongst the Shades Society a new band was emerging with Franciose Kooijmans, Rik de Haan, Almer Vet and guess who,.. Ian Moffatt on drums.

Dicky & The Fruitcakes

Songwriting at Rick & Reina's

Working in America

Four Months in China & Tibet

Dylan Christian James

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

Portugal

**Musician & Songwriter or
Computer Programmer**

Stuttgart and Boeblingen

**Lakeside Stories - Singer
Songwriter Collective**

Sailor's and Musicians

Song Catalogue

All Alone 1997

All alone
Not afraid
Here I stand
For you I wait

And all the time
That it may take
I won't falter
I won't break

Like on the moon
You dance your day
Worlds apart
Far away

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

So would you please
Drop me a line
To let me know
That your doing fine

What's the use of hanging on
Is it right or is it wrong
But just for you
I will reveal
My only motive
That's the way I feel

So don't give up
Keep on loving me
You and I
Eternity

And yes, we will win
We will find a way
To redeem
Our love someday

Just you and I
Sitiing by the fire
All alone
Yes that's home

Building Bridges 1997

Our project was doomed for failure
Before we even tried
We could not reach consensus
On choosing a design
Because our allocated time
Was running out real fast

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

We marched outside to get it done
And give it all our best

But building bridges ain't no easy thing to do
With building bridges we bit off more than we
could chew!

Frits was doing the talking
You could hear him miles away
With arms stretched out and fingers pointing
He tried to save the day
But nobody was listening
We did not hear a word
For we all knew deep down inside
That it would never work

Chorus

Dee was getting so frustrated
We blew away his plan
He wanted to replace the poles with strings
Which might have work out well
But Dee had lost some credit
On the night before
Marching at strictly 60 degrees
Swiftly across the moors.

Chorus

Joost was visibly impatient
He even got involved
Which did not help us in the least
Our problem, still unresolved
I guess we're just another loyal group
Like the one before
Not like those juvenile delinquents

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

God I bet that man is bored

Chorus

The psychology department
Looked on and seemed amused
Jotting down their learned notes
That they would later use
In a personal confrontation
With two of them and you
You don't stand a chance in hell
They've know you through and through

Chorus

Well the moral of this story
Is hidden in the tail
If you want to build a bridge
You just have to prevail
Cause we are International Business People
Not International Business Machines
And there I lay my case to rest
Now all has been said and seen

Building bridges ain't no easy thing to do
With Building bridges we bit off more than we
could chew!
Building bridges ain't no easy thing to do
Especially when that bridge is between me and
you

Cardiff Re-visited 1997

Walking through deserted streets
The rain pouring down
Some soaked faced people looking miserable

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

No smiles to be found
But my spirit is at an all time high
For this ain't no foreign place
This is my homely ground

Back again, back again, back again

There's a church on the corner
The one I used to attend
It's where I learned to sing a song
And throw my voice in tune
And do all those naughty things
That choirboys do
Except sex with the vicar
For he was heterosexual too

Back again, back again, back again

Across the football park that we used to call
"The Rec"
Then through the flower gardens
Into the wildies next
We cross the road to Roath Park Lake
Roses full in bloom
Some broken glazed greenhouses
From stones that we once threw

Cardiff's City Centre is no longer the same
St. Davids cultural temple and a shopping mall
maze
A project developer's paradise
A citizen's hell
But no-one stops things changing
And I guess that's just as well

Back again, back again, back again

Caribbean Greetings 1983

Doomed to be encountered
By an alien force in space
Only then will we realize
That we've left it much too late
People will greet people
Whether they're black or red or white
And we will stand there side by side
United as we fight

But it won't be there tomorrow
And it won't be there next week
It won't be there on Christmas day
It won't have changed a bit

Politicians busy
Trying to make their point of view
While Africans are out there starving
When they're just like me and you

Humming...

Chorus

A special Christmas message
Filled with wishes warm and true
That all the very nicest things
Will find their way to you
Caribbean greetings from a girl so far away
I wish I could be with you there,
And I wish it could be today

But I won't be there tomorrow
And I won't be there next week

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

I won't be there on Christmas Day
I won't be there to sing.

Change Team Blues 1987

As a member of the change team we spend
our working day
Fixing all those APAR's that the SE's throw
your way
It's a pity we can't tell them that we have our
problems too
Like when Big Blue comes to tell you
It's time to try a something new

Chorus

All change, everybody needs a change team
All you have to do, is try something new
Change team, well if you can't try nothing new
Then just stick around and sing along with the
change team blues

Wednesday afternoon meetings that's when
some programmers start to fret
The dilinquency of APAR's means that
deadlines can't be met
Just put the blame on someone else and
you've got yourself one week
To get your shit together before Coen
van.Beeten starts to heat

Chorus

When Mr.Eddy Kroonsberg comes a knockin'
on your door

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

Cause he knows some football referee who
you could be working for
And if you wanna meet him then he'll arrange it
all today
Don't worry about your level boy it's going
down anyway

Chorus

Now even for sub-contractors there is life after
death
Even in the wake of a departmental aftermath
Just cut you hair, put on a tie and paint your
brain blue
And you could be an IBM employee too

Child Suicide 1989

Did you read the evening papers
They called it a child suicide
She filled herself up full of pills
And didn't take the time to say goodbye

A girl with a future
Branded "a beauty queen"
She signed a million dollar makeup contract
At the age of barely sixteen

Too many people breaking
Too many hearts
Why should it hurt so deeply
When lovers part

Born without a father
But lived a quite normal life

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

Then one day she met her daddy
For the very first time
A few weeks later
It ended with a lovers row
Why she had to take her own life
Nobody will ever find out now

Too many people breaking
Too many hearts
Why must it hurt so deeply,
When lovers part

***Communist Orphans* 1990**

How long does it take
Before you look in the lake
And you see you going nowhere now
It's never too late to correct a mistake
And use it to help somehow
But it takes a positive mind to correct itself
And put the past far behind

But who cares, who cares
About the millions of communist orphans out
there
Who shares, who shares
We only see the pictures of Tianaman Square
So who cares, about the reds

A labourer's dream
Came onto the scene
It took us all by suprise

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

Nobody knew just how big it grew
Until half the world was sucked up inside
Now there's no room for fun
In that second to none
Political party in rule, so who cares..

Well they pulled down the wall
And said goodbye to it all
Yet there is always someone left behind
They are sitting at home
Their reputation has gone
Leaving memories of a wasted life
Now there sons and their daughters
Have big chips on their shoulders
'Cause their parents where on the wrong side

Dylan Christian James 1987

When you open up your eyes
You look around and you wonder
Isn't life a big surprise
In fact they say
'That it's a wonder'
So welcome to the world
Dylan Christian James
Your mother's labour pain are over now
So don't cry baby

What a lot of faces, what a lot a lights
All over you they seem to hover
Is it day or is it night
What's all the fuss, why all the bother
So welcome to the world
Dylan Christian James
Your mothers labour pains are over now

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

So don't cry baby

Your a little late but that's OK
The party's begun but it's not over
For the rest of my life I want to share with you
Let's just make sure that it's a good one
So welcome to the world
Dylan Christian James
Your mothers labour pain are over now
So don't cry baby

Gameboy 1995

When I look around me
What do I see
Little children focused
On some stupid L.C.D.
So life is just a game
Life is just a game..boy

Load up your lasor gun
And let them monsters have it
You can kill a million
Without causing havoc
Well life is just a game
Life is just a game..boy

Why do you look so pale
Why don't you eat your dinner
Instead you start another game up
And you know its gonna be a winner

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

But life is just a game
Life is just a game boy

I know you think it's cruel
That you have been deprived
The toy that's in your dreams
The one your dad won't buy
Now dry your eyes and listen very carefully
Have you ever heard about the game
They call reality

You can get it, if you want it
Who am I to say no son
And keep you from it
Cause life is just a game
Life is just a game...boy

Help 1989

Sitting here in my room
Thinking about writing songs
Recalling good times that have past
Old time memories
Have become my destiny
Are they to recover
Where can they be found

Chorus

I want your help
I need your help
I want your help
I need your help

Give my something
Like your loving

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

I'm not happy as I am
Only you, can pick me up
Fill me with your tender touch
Don't want to keep this frown
I just want to smile again

Chorus

I guess I'm not beaten yet
Though I have reasons to regret
The way that I mistreated you
Oh how it hurts my pride
To know that I have lied
My fate is well deserved
And it hurts me more each day

I want your help

If Not For You 1996

You caused me so much pain
But I love you
You made my tears fall like rain
Every night
Could I be wrong
To let you slip away
Could I be wrong
Or am I right again

I'm missing you so bad
Missing you already
This hurt is deeper
Than any pain
My heart is weak
My mind is not much stronger
And I can't take

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

This pain no longer

It could be a sign
That I am changing
It could be a sign
That I am growing old
It could be a sign
That love is waning
Or it could be a sign
That I am just going mad

Please believe me when I say
I'm truly sorry
Words just can not explain
How I feel
If we both know
That there is no solution
Then we must fight, Fight to break away

In My Car 1989

In my car when there's no-one beside me
In my car and I'm out on the highway
Well I'm doing 95 and my wife is miles behind
When I'm in my car
In my car I get so excited
In my car I just get can't hide it
When I'm holding that wheel
It gives me that feel
I'm in my car

Now down in the subway where the heat is on
They'll pick you out if your not strong
They'll mug you.. and beat you up
Rob you of your very last buck

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

But in my car nobody defies me
In my car, it must be my style of driving
That makes old people run
Yeah, that's my kind of fun when I'm in my car

And when my car needs a little bit of service
I don't take her to the garage
Cause I don't want some greasy mechanic
Looking un-der her bon-net! neah
I'll fix her, You'd better believe it
I'll role up my sleeves and slide underneath
her
She'll recover completely and she'll be purring
to me sweatly again
In my car I meet a lot of women
In my car things really start a-swingin'
I just pull up at the corner
Blow my horn and start to holler ...
Get in the car, get in the car, get in that god
dammed car, m...f....car

Jamie's Birthday 1996

We spent our '96 summer vacation
About a day's sail away from Hoorn
Across what they used to call the Zuider Zee
Until they built a road from shore to shore
They built a road from shore to shore

It's my sons favourite camping / harbour
Where boats and tents converge
When the weather is nice it's all so pretty
And when it rains it's not much worse
When it rains it's not much worse

There are all walks of people

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

We always meet someone new
This year it was the Fennel family
And their ship called Kuanyin
Their ship called Kuanyin

Come next year we'll set our sails
And point the bows to north
We'll be back to have some fun
Yes we'll be back for more
Back for more

They bought the ship in the Caribbean
Then sailed it all the way back home
I bet those cockroaches got real sea-sick
Or are they glad they came alone
Are they glad they came alone

Dylan, Jamie and Frieda
They played, they sailed and they swam
While their fathers talked about the deep blue
sea
And their plans to sail the world
Their plans to sail the world

The subject was navigation
The beers flowed to our heads
It got so late Dylan fell asleep
He had to sleep in Jamie's bed
He had to sleep in Jamie's bed

Come next year we'll set our sails
And point our bows to north
We'll be back to have some fun
Yes we'll be back for more
We'll be back for more

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

Well it's our last night at The Kuilaart
And it's Jamie's birthday too
So a very good reason to have a drink
And sing a song or two
I'll sing this tune for you.

Jig 1998

You've been so nice
You've been so good
You hung around
You understood
You gave me something
That I call support
So stay here while I thank you all

I needed someone to sing along
So I called up 'tricia
She said "your on"
Just come on over and bring your gitaar
We'll show 'em how to sing ooh aah

Ooh Ooh Aah
Ooh Ooh Aah
gitaar
Ooh Ooh Aah
Ooh Ooh Aah
I'll help you one day girl
Just like you helped me

You've been a lovely audience
I'd love to take you home with us
But you wouldn't come
And I didn't really mean that anyway
I'd rather stay here and play the night away

Lullaby 2000

Hasn't time flown
The evening has past
But not all alone
I wished it would last
Welcome aboard
A ship blown off course
There's no sight of land
In a sea full of sand

What is your secret
How much do you know
Of what I was thinking
But trying not to show
Taken by surprise
Surrender I
For you I sing
This sweet lullaby

Now you're gone
And we're so far apart
Memories
Are all that's left in my heart
And each and every stranger
Is whispering your name
And so many people
Are wearing your face

Bear with me now
I'm almost through
How can I find out
What's inside of you
Here in my heart
That's where you'll stay

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

Tomorrow I'll dream
Of yesterday

Mystical Myrthe 1999

Mystical Myrthe sleep don't you cry
Drink up your bottle then we'll say good night
Here's mummy and daddy and pussy cat too
Sleep little Myrthe
There's dreaming to do

Mystical Myrthe don't be affraid
We won't desert you, we won't betray
Cause all of our loving is coming your way
So mystical Myrthe
There's no time to waste

When night's are long and your nappy is full
We'll be right by your side
When friends come around drinking and
singing
And we having a real good time

Mystical Myrthe our beautiful child
Give us a hic-cup and then a big smile
Soon you will grow up and have your own
friends
'till then dear Myrthe just sleep and pretend

Nervous Breakdown 1990

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

I wake up in the morning, have a bite to eat
Comb my hair and brush off my teeth
Put on a shirt and knott up a tie
I'm looking pretty neat but I don't know why I
do it

It's because my will is too weak
That I don't start to holler not even a squeak
Just give me a little time and I'll convince
myself
That it's not worth the effort cause we're all
going to hell

I'm having a nervous breakdown
A very nervous breakdown
I'm having a nervey breakdown
I'm having a nervous breakdown now!

Lying in my bed
I can't get to sleep until all my tears are shed
While the presure builds on me
To sign my own declaration of insanity

"What I'm saying here right now is
I think I'm gonna have another nervous
breakdown
It won't be long and they'll be giving me
A whole load of sedatives and all for free"
signed

Chorus

You just can't get things right
When you work all day and you drink all night
And your body's feeling low
Your mind is dizzy and your blood won't flow

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

Both feet are off the ground
While you burry your head and think outloud
"What's wrong with me,
Oh please someone help me it's help I need

One Population 1990

Say hey you government officials
And all you people of the world
I've got something I want to say to thee
And I don't want to be misunderstood
I'm not going to be telling you
How to live your lives
But I just want to draw your attention
To a problem for all mankind

Why can't we feed our people
While there's food enough for all
And use some of that technology
For something else than war
But no-one is in a hurry
To change it all today
We're too busy making money
There must be a better way

Well if we have one population
Why don't we have one civilization
And if we had one congregation
We would see the same revalation
So if we have the same flesh and blood
Then there's a firm foundation
To rid this world
Of war and starvation, war and starvation

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

Now I'm not saying I know better
But I surely know no worse
If only we could find a way
To brake this fatal curse
They started the United Nations
To solve the problems of the World
Yet 50 years later
Hungry cries can still be heard

Just look all around you
There's poverty everywhere
Governments protecting governments
For their people they have no care
And people will fight people
And culture will fight culture
And if we can't find an answer
Then the whole world will suffer

Chorus

One Hundred Oange Balloons 2001

One hundred orange balloons
Released into the sky
A hundred unknown destinations
To which they will surely fly

Driven by the Southerly wind
They slowly drift apart
High above the fields and wavey sea
They carry their message card

Like a hundred lonely hearts
Floating through the sky

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

Looking down on humanity
Where ever it may lie

I pass one on a sailing yacht
On my way to Hoorn
Bobbing up and down on the gentle waves
It makes its way along

I try to retrieve it from the water
But that was not to be
Some will travel far away
While others stay near to me

One hundred orange balloons
Over the sky they flew
One hundred orange balloons
All reminding me of you

Though for another time 1992

There is a place somewhere that I want to see
And I want to see it with you
Not right now, not even next year
For we both have many things to attend to

There are dark streets to wander
And there's people to meet
There will be breakup's and indifference
While the world is at your feet

Yes there is money to squander
And there is music to make
While being spotted through a telescope
Having sex, with yourself, in a boat, on the lake

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

Oh the sirenes are howling
The police had arrived
They're looking for a maniac
And your the only one they can find!
So you row your boat ashore
To give yourself in
Just remember that embarrassment
Is not equal to sin!

Well when we're old and gray
And have mellowed our ways
I hope we'll find some time to spend as two
But until that day, just this I will say:
Enjoy your life, but let life,.. enjoy you

Confession of a Singer / Songwriter

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