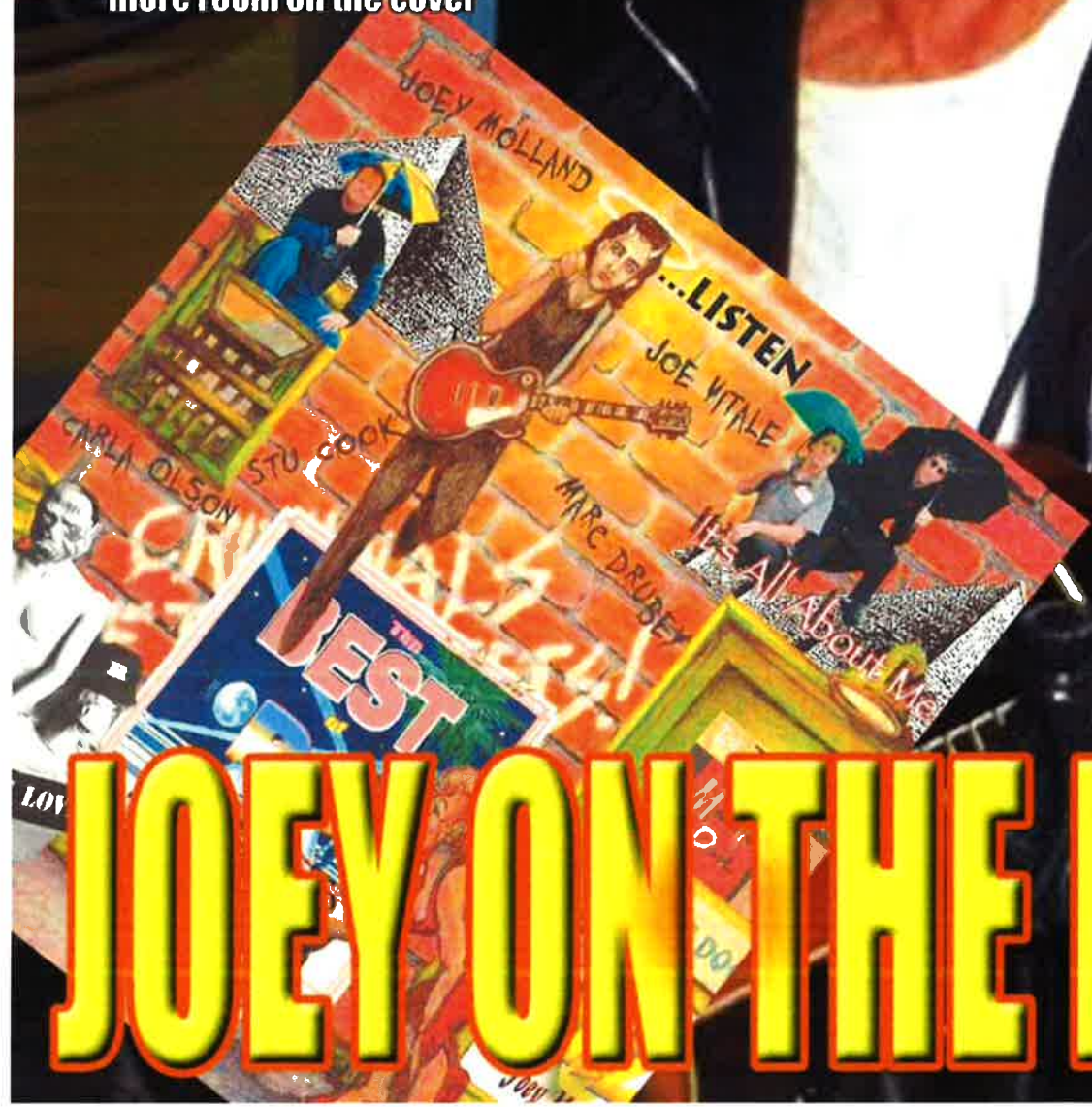


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GONZO

The legendary **Joey Molland**, last man standing from **Badfinger**, talks about his work with **The Raz Band**, Doug gets enthusiastic about **Happy the Man**, John gets all existential about the **future of live music**, Alan remembers **Daavid Allen** the poet, and there is lots more, however no more room on the cover



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JOEY ON THE RAZ

JON MEETS JOEY

Rudyard Kipling is probably the greatest influence on my writing, believe it or not. And together with Robert Heinlein he is probably my favourite author if I was forced into a corner and made to make a decision. Probably my favourite of his books is *Stalky and Co* which tells the story of his schooldays in North Devon about a hundred years before and five years away from mine. In amongst the prose is a poem:

Let us now praise famous men"--
Men of little showing--
For their work continueth,
And their work continueth,
Broad and deep continues,
Greater then their knowing!

I have been writing about music for over forty years, which is a particularly galling thought. The other night whilst I was having trouble sleeping, instead of counting sheep, I tried to make a list of all the people whom I have interviewed over the years. And like Kipling I have praised (and occasionally castigated) famous, infamous and non famous men who have interested me over the years.

I have always been vaguely tempted by the idea of writing a book of rock and roll sociology, describing the various ways that the music industry, and in particularly the artists who work within it, operate. Over the years I have encountered all sorts of models by which bands have operated. But I don't think that I have ever encountered such a peculiar story as that of the Raz Band.

Last year Gonzo Multimedia released the first Raz album created with music legends Joey Molland (Badfinger) & Joe Vitale (Joe Walsh/Crosby, Stills & Nash/The Eagles) as full band members. While they've been recording together for years, this is the first album that was planned to be a RAZ Band album and not a RAZ album, hence, "The RAZ Band". The catalyst that led to the Madison Park album was a RAZ show at The Whisky A Go Go in Hollywood. Their guest performers were Joey Molland,(Badfinger), Gary Duncan,(Quicksilver Messenger Service) & Carla Olson, (The Textones). Raz recalls, "Whenever Joey Molland came to LA we would record RAZ songs. This time we recorded Joey's great song, 'Love Me Do' from the amazing Badfinger album 'No Dice'. To add to the fun, Gary Duncan was able to join us for this recording session.

"When Joe Vitale came back to LA, RAZ went into the studio to record. "We recorded a new song that we wrote, 'S1.50 For Your Love'. After cutting the back tracks with scratch vocals, Vitale said, 'This song is a hit song, and let me tell you, I know what a hit song is'. And of course he does, he co-wrote 'Rocky Mountain Way' with Joe Walsh. "A couple days later we went back into the studio with Vitale and recorded another one of our favorite songs, 'Shoot 'Em Up'. This is from Joe Vitale's great album, 'Roller Coaster Weekend'. "Fast forward a couple of years and we recorded many other songs I had been writing, including a very cool new version of 'Time Marches On' from the album 'The Best of Los Angeles 1987'. We recorded some oldies that Hutch & I loved as kids. We recorded twenty five



songs in all. 'Madison Park' shows many sides of the RAZ musical spectrum and it was made with lots of love and laughs and aha moments."

Joey Molland says: "I met the Raz almost 40 years ago and he's been knocking me out ever since, the truth is in the songs. I don't think he ever had an idea outside of that idea, so I started playing on his sessions like a lot of other people, we've done gigs separate and together for all those years and here we are with our first record deal, thanks Gonzo, hello world, will anything ever be the same? sure it will, 'cept you'll have the RAZ band to make sure."

And Joe Vitale says:

"Raz came to some of the Joe Walsh shows and my solo shows I did as far back as the early 70's...we've been friends ever since...both personally and musically! We've recorded a ton of GREAT Raz originals and yes...miracles can happen...in this century....A RECORD DEAL! Well, being a couple of devoted Beatles' fans, we have a similar sense of 'song'....the RAZ catalogue is massive, current and rockin'! They are ALL fun grooves and great lyrics!! It's GREAT to introduce the RAZ band to the world!"

I have heard stories of people who have ended up working for their heroes. Hawkwind, for example, currently boasts as singer/bassist Mr Dibs, their onetime roadie and longtime fan. But I have never

heard of someone who starts off as a fan, forms a band, and then eventually has his idols join his own band! This is more than remarkable, yet this is the story of The Raz Band.

And now there is a Raz Band greatest hits:

This is a CD featuring songs by RAZ starting with Raz's critically acclaimed 1984 debut record, *Criminals Off The Streets* through *Gonzo's* release in 2015 of the *Madison Park* CD by The RAZ Band.

This 19 song CD also includes songs from the Raz's album, 1988 and Raz's cassette EP *Listen* produced by Joey Molland, the *Tough Love* CD produced by Joe Vitale, the *It's All About Me* CD produced by Michael Raz, Jeff Hutchinson, Joe Vitale & Joey Molland, + 2 bonus tracks recorded, Live in 1984 at the legendary Los Angeles nightclub, Madame Wong's West.

So I did what every good rock journalist would have done under these circumstances. I telephoned Joey Molland to ask him for his side of the story....

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