



# Kitayah

## blog archive

### 2008

**JAN 2008**

### **'A RAVEN'S TALE'**

18.00 hours, I was on my way to the studio to do an interview for 'Magazine' radio then suddenly the rain came pouring down like pellets hitting the windscreen wipers of my car. Flashes of thunder and lightening rumbled in the sky as I started to recite the words to 'Self Victimised'. 'Ball and chain around my neck....' Hardcore lyrics? Dark maybe? The title for the album is a twist or should I say a play on the words alibi and lies. A personal journey of raw emotion and taken to a fifth element with the creative force of rock guitarist Steve Allsworth.

Pursuing a career in music was forbidden coming from my Middle Eastern background. As the black sheep of the family I rebelled! I went to study Performing Arts at The Arts Educational Schools then on to The Royal College Of Music, studying piano. There I met an inspirational musician. Ian Prince at age 17 was the youngest signed songwriter to EMI Music Publishing. He worked with Quincy Jones on Back On The Block. I would 'guide vocal' on tracks off the album and layer backing vocals for artists Ian was working with, from Siedah Garrett, Paula Abdul to Errol Brown and Sheena Easton. I lived in Los Angeles for 7 years, worked as a session vocalist and returned to the UK in 1994. I ventured into song writing had songs published with East West Records and Edel Music ? Finland and recorded with composers from Sibelius Academy.

I was very privileged to have amazing musicians offer the fruits of their labour on 'Raven Alibies'. Some I have known in the music industry for many years and in the days when I was a lecturer at The Academy Of Contemporary Music.

You'll notice the album isn't played or produced by the same musicians. Our commitment was to keep the tracks raw and un-rehearsed. What was recorded in the studio was engineered by the one and only guru of old school recording, Mr Clive Cherry. What can I say? Even my long raven hair can't complete with his trademark moustache. The vicious sound of noisy valve amps, vinyl records and ...f\*\*\*ing loud cans! I know the tools of the trade have changed and in my opinion cheapened an industry of synthetic sound, never to be compared to analogue.

19.00 hours. I have finally arrived at my destination BCL Studios. The rain has settled leaving a calm serenity of electric blue sky in total tranquillity.

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*APRIL 2008*

*'TIS THE BEGINNING OF MY SUMMER SOLSTICE...'*

...and the planets speak of my arrival at a turning point. Am I about to journey into 'Destination Unknown' or will my free spirited ways control my fate and final destiny,

which brings me to my inspiration for the meaning of title Summertime, 1969 Janis Joplin live at Grona Lund Stockholm. A sheer performance of expression, you've got to love her madness! In contrast and on our journey through the music time tunnel, more recently a friend of mine got me into some serious experimental and progressive therapy, listening to American rock band The Mars Volta, who were playing in London last month (shame I missed these volturess creatures!) In the days when I lived on the Boulevard streets of LA it never ceased to shock me how many musicians were constantly breaking the boundaries of their music (instead of smashing up their instruments on stage). I mean, what is the point of wrecking good gear? Anyone wishing to argue this point please send your reply to 'Dear MK' this stands for Madam Kitayah and given to me by studio engineer, IT specialist and web designer, Mr Richard Allen. The first multi-tasking male I have ever met on this planet! Since my last blog there have been signs of frantic madness at Kitayah (HQ). I can report 'all is good'. At least I can say there are those who show their appreciation for proper music. The live dates due to be released this month will surely bring some inspiration and creative energy to the fine male specimens playing in Kitayah. As well as featuring tracks off 'Raven Alibies' new material 'Neurotic' & 'Fable Of Seduction' will be experimentally tested to the ears? Who would like to hear my rendition of summertime?



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*MAY 2008*

### *'MUSIC FOR INDULGENCE AT 'THE GRAND'*

May 29th, 09.00 hours in a leafy suburb of Surrey, on our way to pick up Mikey 'goodboy' (Kitayah guitarist) we find ourselves reflecting on the past two weeks of rehearsals; the fun, the frolic and laughter and hearing a million times one of the boys in the band saying 'anyone got any earplugs?' Has our great journey along Britain's finest motorways reached it's pinnacle destination? 'The Grand', Clapham Junction, South London, with it's historic architectural features I can only say this bustling urban town seems culturally interesting? As we drive up to the stage door of the venue, 4 lined up vehicles park in convoy. Being the headline act we invaded the building as total gear junkies on a mission with the residents unaware of our arrival. One particular traffic warden springs to mind..... He was having a field day dishing out parking tickets, bringing in the heavies (the clamp squad) and having fisticuffs with members of the general public. I thought South West London was a civilized zone? At one point Paulyf (bassist) seemed caught in the riot. Then, from a distance I could see one of our 'Heroes' coming to the rescue. Running with force, it was 'Animal'; (drummer) Brad 'dw' Webb and where was the MD? My partner in crime guitar god Steve Allsworth was yet again fashionably late. He strolled into the venue and said 'thanks babe for getting my gear set up', I replied 'Cornford stacks are brutal bastards'.

As the day progressed an overwhelming sense of pride came over me. The general banter of the day got cruder as the bevee's kept flowing. I then realized that in In my career I've spent far too much time hanging around in men's toilets! Should I be scared of these raven rooks? Maybe others should 'be afraid....be very afraid'. Dining in their company and being the only birdie of the flock, I was distracted by this gorgeous, perfectly formed male sitting to my left, his pecs were more inviting than the wild mushrooms on my plate. I thought, how lucky can us fem fatelle's be when graced by 'only the crumbliest, flakiest chocolate.... tastes like chocolate never tasted before'. Serenade me Leon for 'i beg' I might have to rip off that leather waist coat of yours and whip you on stage.... my fetish boy! So what of the gig? 'a pure jaw-dropping spectacle of gothic craziness...superb singing' 'A mighty piece of god-like rock exhibitionism coupled with the purest burlesque nonetheless' - (Soulcatcher)

The documentary of Kitayah live 'The Raw Tour' will be released next month before distributed to Europe.

Achtung baby !

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#### JUNE 2008

##### 'INDIAN SUMMERS.... BOHEMIAN DAYS'

'Lying in the summer's green grass, butterflies free fall displaying their kaleidoscope of colors submerged by the sun's rays, I close my eyes and find myself walking along golden sandy beaches with swaying palm trees to an idyllic place of stunning beauty, Coco Beach - Goa. The most perfectly created wonder in nature's world. To go there is an invigorating experience of peace and tranquility, free spirit and wisdom. On my travels around the world this isolation from our materialistic day to day lives has always appealed to my aura. I guess you can't take the Bedouin/ Bohemian out of my soul. Like the caterpillar that became this butterfly in metamorphosis, I journey through flower fields and hills, to wander through the fields and hills, over streams and rivers in quest of peaceful 'Silence'. As final editing is being made to the live documentary I can only reveal 'Good things come to those who wait'. So until then..... Click to go to 'The Raw Tour' Documentary page.

'May these summer days shroud us in flower power love'

#### JULY 2008

##### 'GLASTONBURY 2008'

Seven miles to Pilton, Worthy Farm driving along winding country roads I can smell that Somerset cider air...'oo arr'. Must be seeing some cows by now? With no cattle in sight and as we come over the hill 'one is taken aback' by the vast sight ahead of us. Now I can appreciate why the locals don't take too kindly to the 154,000 festival folk that descend on their tiny village. As the sun's rays beat down I'm saying to myself 'no wellies this weekend perhaps?' Wishful thinking as the heaven's opened on Friday night. So what of the campsite? Well, being a veggie the smell of barbequed beef burgers and piggie sausages sizzling in the sun put me right off!... So let's talk about the music. The rock gods of America 'Kings of Leon' gave an awesome performance headlining Friday. Some truly inspirational moments felt by all watching the Pyramid Stage (shame the sound wasn't better). The NME indies coming from the Other Stage demonstrated just how appalling the state of the British Music scene is. Isn't anyone bored of this crap! It became apparent that so many of the artists featured at the festival were either, American, Canadian, Australian legends of any worth and not disposable garbage with a sell by date of 6 months. Controversial as Glastonbury may be I'm not

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#### *JULY 2008 – CONTINUED*

##### *'GLASTONBURY 2008'*

with the posse of Jay Z so let's move on to the Acoustic Tent shall we. The mighty Tom Baxter gave an impressive performance of his latest album 'SkyBound' to a small but perfectly formed gathering of supporters. What a waste of talent, he really should have played on the main stage. Such passion and deliverance given by his merry fellow musicians. 'Absolutely Brilliant Tom! ...And so to 'Jazz World' which was by far the best technical sound and creative vibe, embellished by the variable array of World Music, Jazz and Culture by a cast of many iconic artists. I feel truly humbled to have experienced seeing the great Billy Cobham with Azere on Sunday afternoon. The cultural bonding of folk and ethnic influence from Real World's 'Imagine Village' on Saturday was a performance of sheer passion. Whoever came up with this concept is a genius!...and getting a cast of many amazing musicians playing on this project deserves an Ivor Novello! Eliza Carthy, 'you're a gemstone of natural beauty darling.... Wonderful fiddle playing and you have a voice of such purity'. Joan Armatrading's Amazonian performance was an experience never to be forgotten in a lifetime. Let's not forget the Tadpole Stage ('mini artists with lots of appeal') I was inspired by American guitarist Randy Buchannen, acoustic blues songwriter who played two guitars at one time, one strapped between his knees with gaffa tape and the other played holding the guitar. He would combine the two playing fret from one and finger work from the other. A brilliant performance! Some great songwriting with a rawness of sound in his voice. Loved his lyrical content and his entertaining humour. As the weekend drew to an end the tent was packed away, (clean and tidy for a change) ready for 'The Big Chill' Eastnor in August and I continue on my travels as a bohemian Bedouin in search of music enlightenment.

#### *AUGUST 2008*

##### *'INTO THE WOODS'*

Monday August 11th 0.4.30 hrs. Is there any form of civilization out there at this unearthly time of the morning? Just thinking about what the day's events might entail was exhausting enough! As a mere humble musician, acting the stunt girl left me with cuts and bruises from brambles, branches and thorns and being dug into badger sets, crawling out of the ground. I envisaged a more 'Babes In The Woods' scene not as a hobbit from the 'Lord Of The Rings'.. One of our camera men suggested

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#### *AUGUST 2008 – CONTINUED*

##### *'INTO THE WOODS'*

'how about nymph in the woods or Lady Godiva?' I sharply replied 'you find me a white stallion around here mate and i'll ride him!' We were on location in the deepest darkest dells of Virginia Water in Surrey. Picturesque maybe, but a bloody hike in transporting the crew's equipment. Many thanks to the local resident's transport of a golf buggy (with on deflated tyre). After lunch things seemed to brighten up in the afternoon. We came across a vast cornfield. Like in the film 'Children Of The Corn' plotting their sinister act we were being watched by a police helicopter from above. With final editing in production for the preview release of 'Silence' on September 15th, seasons are changing!

#### *SEPTEMBER 2008*

##### *'FROM ROCK > ROOTS'*

Well what can I say?... Thanks to Hereford Council 'RocknRoots' festival had to be cancelled on August bank holiday and when rescheduled to Chepstow Racecourse for the weekend after, I started to say to myself 'this is seriously not going to be happening. Shame, we were looking forward to doing the first acoustic gig of the year and meeting up with an old friend, Steve H. of Marillion. A'h well, what was going to be a proper musicians shindig might have to wait another year boys! Time now to focus on some songwriting for the studio sessions at the end of Oct/Nov. Off for some lyrical inspiration..... This will keep me out of trouble!



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### 2008

#### *OCTOBER 2008*

##### *'IS THIS THE END OF BRITISH SUMMERTIME?'*

As the nights get longer and the days are shorter, when darkness falls I seem to wander around like a comatose psychotic. Am I insane? Are there others out there with this condition? I guess that we're all so fed up of hearing we're in this mighty depression. Come on 'British style genius', put your glad rags on, buy a Time Out and go get a bit of expressionism from the music scene. 'Raven Tales' - The Acoustic Sessions tour is coming to a London venue near you. Intimate and up close. Featuring tracks off the debut album and unreleased material due to be recorded in November on the 'Fables' project. (Dates to be announced).

#### *NOVEMBER 2008*

##### *'FOLK, FELLOWS, ONE AND ALL.... HEAR YE!....HEAR YE!'*

'Twas a cold and frightful night on the cobbles of North London, only the brave retched souls ventured from the sleet and snow, wrapped in their robes, searching for a mere morsel of musical enlightenment to enrich their souls. In Chalk Farm's quirky venue 'Monkey Chews' a raven sang her maiden tales and all who listened gave praises of enjoyment'

'Raven Tales' – The Acoustic Sessions (Live dates to be released)



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*DECEMBER 2008*

*WITH THE FESTIVE SEASON UPON US IT'S TIME TO  
PLAY HARD AND ROCK ON!*

Enough of this 'resting on one's laurels and keeping it atmospheric and chilled', my tonsils need a good working out. So, if you want to see a larynx at work you should come check me out at the 'Raven' live dates. Maybe we could get to know each other, up close and personal?

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