

## **Telephone Interview for Platenblad. Netherlands 2005**

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**Q) In your beautiful song ' Meaning to life' (2001 More than a song) you sing:**

**"I've got to find myself a home/a place completely of my own/no uninvited guests or intervention/a place where inner peace will come/away from all that city humdrum...."**

**Do you feel at home in Holland and Limburg?**

**A) I feel very comfortable living in Horst. I much prefer the small town vibe to the city. It's more peaceful and contemplative and less aggressive.**

**Q) From the USA to Europe again, was that what you needed?**

**A) Before I made the move back to Europe, I lived with the idea for several years. It's always difficult to move to another continent and after 30 years one can get quite rooted. But I was beginning to feel increasingly uncomfortable with the USA, particularly the political climate. The USA is a warring nation and now with Bush in there, it's really come to the fore. Also, I felt that my career had just about run its course over there.**

**Q) Since when did you settle in Limburg ? Do you want to have the Dutch nationality?**

**A) I moved to Horst in 2002. I have no desire to be Dutch. I'm quite content being British.**

**Q) In 1970,you were 24 and you had a U.K. number one hit with 'Woodstock' .What effect did that have on you?**

**A) It made me realise that it's the music that's important and everything else is a hinderance, a side show.**

**The one good thing to come from having hits, is that they prolonged ones career. Without them, I doubt I could have come this far.**

**Q) Have you ever spoken to Joni Mitchell about the Woodstock cover? If so, what was her opinion?**

**A) No, I've never opened that can of worms.**

**Q) In the biography of Lewis Shiner and Jaap van Moppes ,about you: ".....his occasional reluctance to go with something that would get us in the pop charts.... " And ..."music and the muse are more important....."**

**Do you agree with these opinions of others?**

**A) Absolutely. My love of music got me involved in the beginning and I've always felt that pledge of allegiance. I believe the direction you take and the moves you make are determined by what your priorities are.**

**Q) You have your own great songs on each of your albums .Can you tell me about your songwriting and the standards you build in to have 'more than a song'?**

**A) I'm not sure I understand this question! Singing comes easily to me, so my ambition has always been to write as well as I can. As the years have progressed, I've become much more critical of my songwriting and therefore work harder to make them special. I consider myself a lyricist first and foremost and as far as I'm concerned, they are never done. Just because a song is recorded, that doesn't necessarily mean it's finished. It's like painting the Forth bridge, my songs are constantly under repair.**

**Q) The biography again: "singing the living daylights out of every lyric that came his way"  
What does singing mean to you?**

**A) Singing is a form of expression and songwriting is a form of therapy. Therefore, by singing with ones heart and soul, it clears out the system.**

**Q) Which male or female singers are among your favourites?**

**A) Many. Over the years, too many to name. Right now!! Kurt Elling and Lizz Wright**

**Q) And what does playing the guitar mean to you? You sometimes sold your guitars..!**

**A) For me a guitar is a tool. I play the best I can get my hands on and strive to have the best possible sound come from it. But in the end, it's just a tool and tools are replaceable. I try to have a non-attachment attitude to possessions.**

**Q) "One of Matthews' most impressive characteristics is his enthusiasm for other artists"**

**Can you give some examples?**

**A) I love honestly created music, interpreted well. There are many artists with this gift.**

**I have over 1,000 Cds I listen to and they all touch me in some way or another.**

**Q) In these more than 40 years you are a musician, you worked with so many:**

**Richard Thompson. Sandy Denny, Andy Roberts, Michael Nesmith, Bryn Haworth,**

**Elliot Murphy, Ad and Eliza....**

**Are ' musical friends' friends forever?**

**A) I think so. It's not just the music that draws me to a person and I'm sure vice versa. There's a certain vibe I feel, a gut reaction that's undeniable. I like to feel I've made some lasting connections with everyone I've worked with. It doesn't necessarily mean that I'll go back again, but the doors are always open.**

**Q) "from the mid-70 on into the'80s, Matthews dabbled in a number of different styles"**

**Which style after all fitted the best to you ?**

**A) I believe everything I've ever "dabbled" in has fitted me at the time. Life as a creative musician can be quite short, or never ending, there are no guarantees of employment, or longevity. So I've always approached it with an exploratory attitude. It's like a bowl of candy, try as much as you can while it's there.**

**Q) When you look back now on your career, what do you think?**

**A) Considering my meagre talents, I think I've been a very fortunate, extremely blessed individual . In that I have been allowed to experience this adventure for more than 35 years.**

**Q) How do you look back on the sixties and seventies as a period with all that music.And you were in it !**

**A) 60's, 70's, 80's 90's, who cares! I see it as a life in music.**

**Q) Beatles or Stones?**

**A) Man U, or Arsenal**

**Q) The sunny side of being a musician...**

**A) Coming home. Cheques that don't bounce and spreading joy.**

**Q) A lack of exposure, airplay was that a shady-side ?**

**A) There is no down side to a life in music. It's a privileged existence.**

**Q) To make a CD seems easier than it was with the LP's. There are a lot of small labels now. We have the internet for the musician and his website with news, tours and sales. What do you think of that?**

**A) I think it's a jungle out there and you'd better watch where you step.**

**Q) You wrote you have a break this winter. Wouldn't it be a 'perfect pitch' to have you teaching singing, songwriting on a Dutch art/pop-academy someday?**

**Or .....**

**A) I don't have what it would take to be a teacher. I lack the theoretical knowledge and the patience. It takes a special kind of temperament to instruct others and I am not that beast. I'm happy to give advice when asked, but expect for it to be taken with careful consideration of the source.**