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(at the end of the article will you find some remarks made by Mickey)

## **Mickey Jupp: "I am the most normal musician in the world"**

"The best British rocker of all times" ex-Beatle John Lennon called him once. Other famous pop gods like Nick Lowe, Gary Brooker, Dave Edmunds and Elkie Brooks used his songs to achieve great triumphs. But the man himself doesn't have success, in spite of a few brilliant albums. Who is this man, who hates fame and fortune and only enjoys being on stage? "Muziek Express" interviewed the one and only Mickey Jupp for whom the pop business may go to blazes.

One can't make him more angry than by mentioning the current state of affairs in British pop music. He qualifies every development as "bullshit and imitation". Now and then he even feels oppressed as an Englishman to live in a "ruined and spoiled England". According to him they're making "pop music without a heart" nowadays.

"It's all about effect. Because imagine that it would *not* be different, *not* new, *not* deviant, *not* out-of-the-way, *not* God-knows-what ..."

"Someday it may give heart problems" he says with a peony red face.

That face belongs to Mickey Jupp, one of the few pure British rockers of the island of Margaret Thatcher. Mickey apologizes for the fact that he "let himself go" for a moment. "This always leads into an endless discussion, but I'm just having trouble with the integrity of musicians. It simply doesn't exist. Even people who I liked before are wrapped up by the business. The hunt for money has become so important for them that they let go their former integrity. Nick Lowe and Dave Edmunds, for instance, recorded songs of mine and added an extra verse. Of course it didn't fit in the song, but this way they could have a share of the copy rights. These are ways of acting with something fishy about it". Mickey Jupp seems bitter and disappointed. Maybe he is, in a way, when you're talking with him, but not when you see him play. On stage, in top condition, he plays away everything and he is cheerfulness and merriment itself, a rocker in heart and soul, who can entertain the audience. An audience that, in spite of this, still underestimates the inexpressible talent of Jupp.

That's been proved by the reactions to both his solo albums "Juppanese" (Stiff, 1978) and "Long Distance Romancer" (Chrysalis, 1979). Two albums of which especially the latest should have reached a much larger public. Should ..., because it didn't happen.

Jupp's philosophy about that: "I'm not busy merchandising. Records I do make now and then to fill a certain need. I'm not asking for it, that's a misunderstanding. I see it this way: because it's impossible to be everywhere at the same time, the public might like to fill that gap by playing a record with my songs. Well, this is just one opinion, of course ..."

Jupp is a strange bird. Although many people who "made it" nowadays make much of him, he still misses the boat himself.

When you look at the background of his career this is understandable. In the English rock 'n' roll scene of the sixties Jupp's an example for many musicians. His songs are very inspiring for the work of a number of them. Jupp draws his sword fast and plays in groups like The Black Diamonds and The Orioles. In '68 he establishes his own formation "Legend", which keeps playing until 1972. With Legend Jupp makes three albums that are hardly sold. Mickey has given up his trust in a career in pop music and after the breaking up of Legend puts his guitar away. The English press emphasizes this with the significant message "Mickey Jupp

stops”.

But Mickey Jupp stops only as far as it concerns live shows and album recordings. “I just had more than enough of it. Legend was a good band but it didn’t work. So then I started working in a record shop. It was quite ironic to see how well my former colleagues were doing. I had to sell their records, but of course I did hear an amazing lot of music in that period. And besides the composing of songs carried on as usual. It never stops because it is a hobby, like someone else likes gardening. That doesn’t mean that I’m very productive. I write about one song a week, sometimes two. Yes, in ’75 we did a small reunion with Legend, extended to a ten men band. I never had the intention to carry on with those ten people. How can you ever keep ten people together”?

Jupp’s in hiding, that’s what the media say, but still there are rumours going on about him. At the request of many he ascends the stage again and signs a recording contract with Stiff Records. Jupp’s cool comment: “It was about time again”.

After a compilation LP, issued by Stiff, called “The Legend of Mickey Jupp” Jupp returns to the studio and records the LP “Juppanese”. A strange transaction. Side one has Gary Brooker (ex Procol Harum) as producer, side two is directed by Nick Lowe. “Gary would produce the whole album but at some point Stiff’s boss Dave Robinson started interfering. He didn’t like it. Dave wanted us to start all over again and offered the services of Nick Lowe and Rockpile. I thought it to be the chance of a lifetime and didn’t think of Gary. Looking back that was terrible. Terrible also because I let myself being wrapped by the status of Lowe and company. Musically spoken the cooperation didn’t hit off at all. So then we made those two different album sides. A schizophrenic entity, and I think the Gary Brooker side is much better.

#### **“Those Americans don’t have any taste ...”**

“Long Distance Romancer” the next LP is totally different from “Juppanese”. Less straightforward rock songs but also ballads and a flirt with reggae. The rocker who adapted to the market? Jupp: “That’s a bold statement. They’re just a number of songs together. There’s no question of a concept. They don’t even date from one particular period. It’s just a bunch of Mickey Jupp’s”. Jupp is pretty nonchalant about it, just like about his career. He tells about people who think he’s a promise for the future. They want to launch him in America. Jupp doesn’t assist in making that a success. “It all leaves me cold. Those Americans don’t have any taste. Suppose they like me over there. Then I’ll start getting doubts about myself. I don’t need it. I haven’t given up hope, though. There’s never been a question of hope, only of having fun with what I’m doing. That’s why I’m doing what I’m doing. Later it may be something completely different”.

Mickey mentions several wrong quotations and fabrications in the *Muziek Express* article by the interviewer.

*Quote from Mickey:*

"The main thing that is wrong is where he says that Nick Lowe and Dave Edmunds took a song of mine and put one of their own verses in. It wasn't Nick/Dave - it was in fact Jerry Lieber and Mike Stoller (no less!) who were producing an album for Elkie Brooks. The song was called 'He could have been an army'. Mind you - I've been misquoted by many people before. They seem to make things up because I never have much to say about things myself.

*End of quote.*