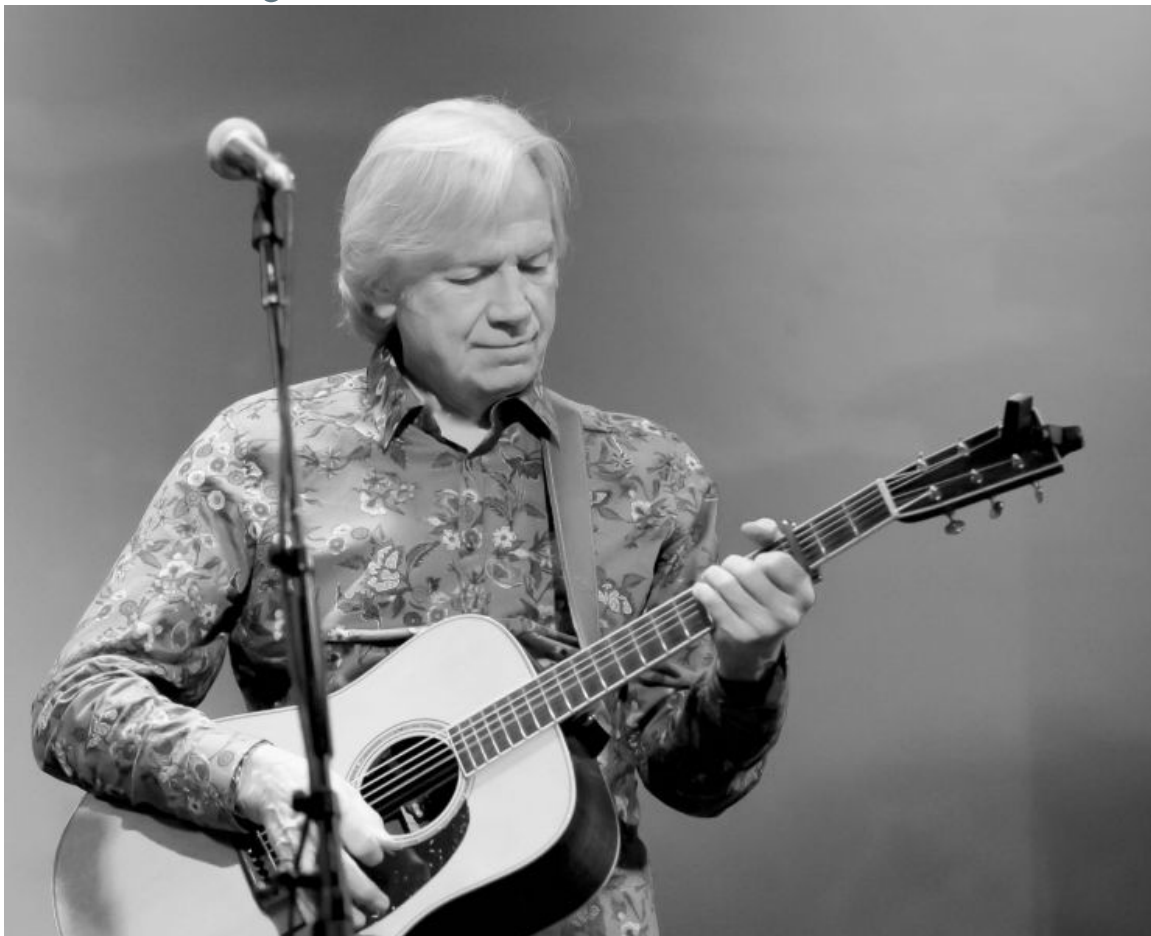




August 17, 2015

‘Watching And Waiting’: Justin Hayward talks new tour, music and The Moody Blues



In a musical career that spans more than 50 years, [Justin Hayward](#) has contributed some of music’s most beloved and successful songs. His smooth vocals and tasteful guitar playing with The Moody Blues

and as a solo artist can be heard on such hits as “Nights in White Satin”, “Tuesday Afternoon”, “Question,” "Forever Autumn" and “I Know You’re Out There Somewhere”.

Hayward is about to embark on a new, intimate solo tour that will take him all across the U.S. Dubbed "The Watching and Waiting Tour", it's a show that will also feature the talents of guitarist Mike Dawes and vocalist Julie Ragins.

Coinciding with the new tour, Hayward has also recently released an inspired new version and music video for the classic Moody Blues song, “The Story In Your Eyes.”

AXS recently spoke with Justin Hayward about his upcoming Watching and Waiting Tour stop at the [Musikfest Café](#) in Bethlehem, PA on August 26, his music and career.

AXS/Examiner: What can fans expect from your Bethlehem performance?

Justin Hayward: I do quite a lot of Moodies material as well as things we've never done on stage before. Things that really work well in this format with me, Mike Dawes and Julie Ragins. Deeper album cuts that the fans have never heard on stage. Of course, we'll also do songs from my album, *Spirits of The Western Sky*. The album has been very well received, particularly the video we shot for it called *Spirits... Live*. It's a great show and we love doing it. It's a privilege for me to play with these two great musicians.

AXS: What do you enjoy most about these intimate shows?

JH: I get to bring my acoustic guitars from home and get to play the guitars I wrote the songs on. I can hear every nuance of the sound and it has the original flavor of the record. I also like to share the stories behind the songs.

AXS: Next year marks the 50th anniversary of your time with the Moodies. When you look back at it now what thoughts come to mind?

First of all, I think of how lucky I was. At the time, I don't think any of us knew what was going to happen. I think in the back of our minds we all believed that everything would be OK for a couple of months and that we'd avoid having to do any kind of proper work. It continued like that for a few years. In fact, it's still kind of like that today with the Moodies. It's not about making any long-term plans. But when I look back to that time I realize how hungry we were. Everyone had nothing to lose and no possessions to try to keep. It really was a magical time.

AXS: What was so special about those early years?

It was an interesting time in the Sixties because we were one of the few groups to go to America without insisting on being stars and headlining. The promoters really liked us for that. It also meant that we would play with at least two other acts, so we got to know all of these wonderful musicians. It was great to be in their company. I remember we worked a bit with Jefferson Airplane and did a short tour with Poco, who were straight out of Buffalo Springfield. We learned a lot from them. Then the Seventies came along and it started to become more about one band with an opening act. I look back now and am amazed at just how many bands we played with and were lucky enough to witness.

AXS: I'd like to ask you about a few of songs from your career and get your thoughts on them:

"Tuesday Afternoon" (From from the album, *Days of Future Passed*)

It came out of a stage show that we were writing about. In the writing, I claimed the afternoon and said to the other guys that I already had a title. So I went down to where my parents lived, sat in

the field and wrote the song. It was a song that I don't think any of us took seriously at the time, but it's since become a best loved song in the Moodies repertoire and my own catalog as well, which is very rewarding.

AXS: "Question" (From the album, *A Question of Balance*)

That song was actually written under pressure. I remember not have anything at 1 a.m. prior to the session we had at 10 the next morning. So I decided to put two songs together that I thought worked really well. I remember we only had three hours to do the session and we were consciously trying to get back to a live feel. Our prior album - *To Our Children's Children's Children*, we couldn't play on stage. So "Question" was the first thing that we did and we decided to rehearse it up and do it live in that one session.

AXS: "I Know You're Out There Somewhere" (From the album, *Sur la Mer*)

That's my favorite song from the '80s and it coincides with the happiest time I ever had. I remember we had just come off a big hit - "Your Wildest Dreams." The story and theme of the [song](#) is a common sentiment that resonates with so many people. It's a wonderful thing to share.

AXS: "One Day, Someday" (From the album, *Spirits of the Western Sky*)

That was the last track that we recorded for the album. At the time, there was a lot of stuff going on in my head and a few relationships that were breaking down. I had lost some people around me and was trying to sort a lot of things out. It's a troubled kind of lyric but a great record.

AXS: Are there any other projects you're currently working on?

I just recently released a string quartet version and music video of “[The Story In Your Eyes](#).” It’s been a very successful project. I had originally thought about putting it on my *Spirits* album but it wasn’t quite in the context of it so I decided to leave it out. Later on, I was talking with one of the arrangers in Genoa, Italy and we decided to do it again and recorded the new version in this beautiful chateau. We spent the morning filming the video for it with the people I recorded it with and we all had a great time.

I’ve also recently begun putting together some demos and recording guitars, keyboards and voice and seeing how those develop. I’ll be working more on that when I get back through November and December. Then I’m back with the Moodies next year starting with The Moody Blues Cruise and then on we go again!

AXS: What are you looking forward to the most about this new U.S. Tour?

I’m looking forward to being back in the little musician's group bubble that we all live in when we’re out on the road. It’s not the real world, but it’s a safe little place to be.

Justin Hayward will perform at the Musikfest Café in Bethlehem, PA on Wednesday, August 26. Showtime is 8:00 p.m.