

# AGES

Andy Thornton

## NOTES for Media

- 5<sup>th</sup> album by Essex-based singer-songwriter, formerly part of the 80s Glasgow scene, signed to Chrysalis Music
- Mature themes of global and racial justice, spirituality and the third age of life
- New album supported by second CD – ‘AGES Ago’ featuring previous ‘hits’
- Artist has worked in many developing countries, supporting capacity for self-reliance in post-conflict settings, training in cultural relations and citizen action
- Artist is a politically articulate campaigner
- Artist is emotionally intelligent on his own bereavement
- Artist is multi-instrumentalist arranger - album is almost completely self-made with support from British songwriter Boo Hewerdine

## OUTSTANDING SONGS

### You'll find me in the Birdsong

STYLE Gentle Folk / Nick Drake – song of a songwriter being remembered when he has gone as one of the birds in the dawn chorus.

The soul trapped in the span of time  
Dreams beyond its being  
Like a songbird may be in a cage  
But sings of all its seeing.

### When Old Souls Fall in Love

STYLE – Light Rock / Waterboys – celebrating the power of finding love in later life (or in those mature before their time!)

4. When old Souls Fall in Love...  
They kiss this world with foolishness  
Like children playing games  
Where no one wins or loses  
Just feeling for the moment  
when everything amuses  
Cold hearts feel the sun  
When old souls fall in love

### Cruel Britannia

A letter to his son about the brutality of slavery and its place in British history. Confessing the innate white superiority in the British psyche, preceding ‘black lives matter’ by a few years but totally in tune.

Britannia ruled the waves and stole the land  
Superior to each race  
Name them rightly - the high and mighty  
The British psyche  
Was made in cruel Britannia.

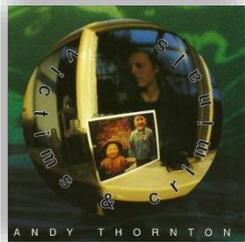
Album soon to be available on all platforms plus by mail order on physical copy.



## ABOUT the artist

In 1987 Andy Thornton's Glasgow band Big Sur had single of the week in record mirror.

Two years later he was signed to Chrysalis Music, which marked the beginning of the end of his mainstream career! Either too sensitive or too sensible for the music business, he disliked being in the sausage machine of the entertainment industry and quit trying to 'make it'.



Two years after that his first solo album met critical acclaim, including an appearance on BBC 1 playing two of the tracks live., accompanied by friends who were band members of Deacon blue.

But that was ages ago!

His new album "AGES" is his fifth and is the first in 10 years, which might explain his wry descriptor **"the greatest songwriter you never heard"**.

AGES does what he has always done: track the encounters of his life in melody, mood and lyric such that their impact reaches the listener with beauty and force.

Identifying his genre has always been tricky. The singer-songwriter crosses boundaries of folk, jazz, rock and acoustic pop. And though the musical references are wide, the lyrical references hone in on the deeply personal and revelatory.

This has always been his trademark. Thornton believes in experiencing the breadth of life, and from that letting the music flow. This new album "AGES" is the epitome of that.



Andy has had a life of intense experience. His third album, Sunflower Girl, is his record of finding life and hope again after his 29-year-old wife died of cancer leaving him with the one-year-old daughter. The most striking thing about that album, alongside the depth and beauty of the songs, was it hope that shone through.

Thornton's work life has always been a rich seam too. After Sunflower Girl, new love (and second child) he went on to become the Chief Executive of a national charity in London.

This saw him travelling the world as a specialist in democratic activism and cultural relations, meeting activists from many countries in Asia and the Middle East, Especially those in post-war situations. These encounters come out in wide screen format in the new album.



## THEY SAID

"makes an instant connection" Rock n Reel

"wonderfully mature intelligent songs" Maverick

"tender and beautiful" Room 13

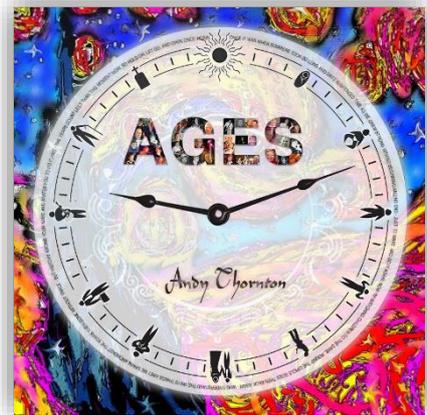
"an outstanding collection of mature pop songs" Penny Black

"deserves its place among the singer-songwriter classics." Maverick Magazine

## AGES

And at the same time 'AGES' exposes the common story of learning to come to terms with growing older:

*"I began to despair I would ever hear a mature song again! Most people's record collections and listening habits involve songs about being young and falling in love. A kind of 'stage one' life experience. I realised I was on stage three, and no one was singing about it. I was seeing the world, meeting interesting people, learning a lot about myself and about the human condition, but few people sing about that positively. Only the folk tradition really takes life that seriously. But I'm not really a folk artist and I want to live in the present for the future! I find few people putting all that together with some kind of authentic voice..."*



The resulting album is one of great breadth, depth and intimacy. It takes a hard look at the state of the world and returns with compassionate frustration with injustice that has been one of his historic trademarks. Particularly injustice perpetrated by first world countries like ours. No one is spared at times, but neither is anyone pronounced guilty. Rather, Thornton's songs are a mirror on the world and on ourselves. How we respond is our business.

A second unique aspect of this album is the great variety of arrangements in which just about every single note was played and recorded by the artist himself. After 1991 Thornton ran a music studio in Glasgow before moving the south England in 1997. He now has a small studio at the back of his house in Harlow in Essex. This is where he recorded "AGES".

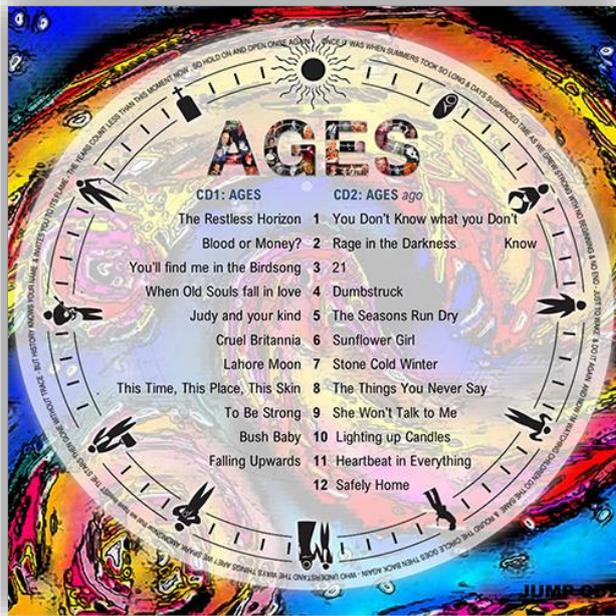
*"I was very busy with my job in London, family and kids and all the things that go with it, I made this outhouse hideaway where I could start plotting new ideas. I've always been a multi instrumentalist, I love doing big vocals so I just took to developing the arrangements the best I could. I got a little assistance from one of my heroes, songwriter Boo Hewerdine along the way but really it's a homespun affair that hopefully doesn't sound like one! I guess having the know-how kept me in control, but it's a very slow way to go about recording! When I was backing up the recordings there were more than 1 million items being saved. That means I made more than 1 million decisions along the way! I guess the title could be about how long it took to make it as well as my reflection on the many ages of life!"*

The result is a big production! It has moments where you hear the 80s pop jumping out at you (for instance the opening track 'The Restless Horizon') and moments of sparse beauty (witness 'You'll Find Me in the Birdsong': a gentle track suggesting that one day a writer's melodies linger on beyond this life, and if you wonder where to find him, listen to the dawn chorus).

Plus travelog songs such as 'Lahore Moon', written on his first visit to Lahore Pakistan, or 'This Time, This Place, This Skin' written in Sri Lanka after a week with nationals who found themselves on opposite sides of the civil war there. The song takes a sweeping look at how all of life's chances emanate from when and where you were born and the nature of the skin you drop in to.

'Cruel Britannia' brings it back home. Written at the time of the 2017 General election: Thornton's revolt against the reappearance British protectionism, reminding us that 'GB PLC' only exists because of the theft from Africa of millions of slaves at the dawning of the industrial era.

Quite how these themes squeeze themselves into a single album, you will have to hear.



And for those who are not aware of this artist, a second disc featuring 11 songs that bring the best of his previous incarnations, 'Ages Ago'. In these tracks you hear the evolution of the writer to the present day. The whole thing sums up a journey of 40 years writing and experience and what becomes a deeply rewarding double album.

[www.andythornton.me.uk/ages](http://www.andythornton.me.uk/ages)

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