



from Garth...

Strange Weapons



Strange Weapons Tour at Sherwood Methodist Church, Nottingham - joined on this occasion by fiddler Chris Rogers

Hello again.

The **Strange Weapons** tour has just ended with a concert in Gilwern near Abergavenny in Wales - thanks to Paul and Rachel Lindoewood for organising a warm and friendly evening. **Strange Weapons** has gone on for nearly a year - actually a little shorter than the previous tour, **Something for the Soul**, which went on for eighteen months. During this tour we released the **Songs From The Fifth Gospel** double album, the **Wide Open Arms** meditational

DVD, and the **Peace At Christmas** Christmas album.

I did a warm-up before the tour in the Reformed Church of Maur near Zurich, Switzerland with long time friends Ben and Barbara Jakob, who have put on many concerts for me over the years.

My very grateful thanks to all the people who hosted gigs on the **Strange Weapons** tour - thanks for working so hard to make them worthwhile.

Against the Grain

Now we are planning the **Against the Grain** tour - I don't yet know exactly what that will include. There will be one or two new songs, and some friends from the past like *Lonesome Troubadour*. My assistant Isobel is working on the powerpoint but we may do it a little bit differently this time, as a powerpoint keeps me to a predetermined playlist and on this tour I may bring some changes to the set each evening.



During this tour a new book will be launched which is a memoir and alongside it there will be a double compilation album - these may even be called **Against the Grain** but we're not quite sure yet - we will keep you informed on that.

Isobel is looking for places to host **Against the Grain**, particularly for the spring of 2018. The tour will be starting in Dundee, Scotland in September and then we're in the Midlands for a couple of gigs - have a look [here](#) for a list of bookings so far.

I think the song *Lonesome Troubadour* or *The Last Stand of the Lonesome Troubadour* says something that will be one of the themes of the tour - the lonesome troubadour certainly sings against the grain.

By the way, *Lonesome Troubadour* was not specifically written about me - in case you were worried that this was my last stand! It is about the voices that speak up. For some they may be uncomfortable voices; sometimes they may be humorous voices, sometimes prophetic voices - in the world in which we live at the moment I can't think of a time when there has been more warfare, when our government has been selling more arms to dictatorial regimes. There are voices that are reflecting the pain of what is happening in our world. And we remember this. We also remember those voices that bring hope.

As it says on the **Against the Grain** publicity poster above, "Drawing on his extensive catalogue of songs old and new, Garth sings of hope and justice for uncertain times." In the light of these uncertain times the running order may change from evening to evening.

Lonesome Troubadour

He sings against the cold and he sings against the pain

He sings his songs for the wounded ones and he sings them again and again

It's the last stand of the Lonesome Troubadour
Last stand against the night
Last stand of the Lonesome Troubadour
Armed with his songs he fights

And he's a man who doesn't care any more, about the things they say
Each time they try to bury him, he'll only rise again
He spits at the headstone when they lay him in the grave
He's got the crazy wild laughter when they go quiet to pray

It's the last stand of the Lonesome Troubadour
Last stand against the night
Last stand of the Lonesome Troubadour
Armed with his songs he fights

And he asks all the wrong questions, and he laughs at a world that's insane
He's even seen the golden calf but he refused to look again
He bleeds on the floor when they want it kept clean
He refused to lie down - he caused such a scene

It's the last stand of the Lonesome Troubadour
Last stand against the night
Last stand of the Lonesome Troubadour
Armed with his songs he fights

And he quotes Woody Guthrie about only playing two chords,
"You're only showing off," Woody said, "if you have to play some more!"

It's the last stand of the Lonesome Troubadour
Last stand against the night
Last stand of the Lonesome Troubadour
Armed with his songs he fights

And he sings against the cold and he sings against the pain
He sings his songs for the wounded ones
And he sings them again and again and again
And he sings against the cold, he sings against the pain
He sings his songs for the wounded ones
And he sings them again and again

My book, which we hope to make available in early December, is a journey that reflects choices and influences both musical and spiritual. There are stories, and I talk about music, theology, the enjoyment, and why I made various choices. I take time to speak about various aspects of the songs and recording, there's a chapter about the Greenbelt Festival and my involvement in the early days; one about the time when I was with EMI for the album *Did He Jump or Was He Pushed* produced by Cliff Richard, then chapters about the change where I started to reflect more on issues of justice, from *Road to Freedom* to *Lonesome Troubadour*; a chapter on theology called 'Stealing Jesus Back'; one about the days at All Hallows on the Wall when I was with Christian Aid as well as Amos; a chapter on Palestine entitled 'From St Jerome to Banksy', and of course one on the Amos Trust as to why I started it. And in all of this some personal moments about family and friends. It's a mixture which hopefully paints a picture that has something important to say about the road to justice and hope.



In researching for the book we have been going through boxes of old memorabilia and photos, and we came across this nice one - a light moment during a demo with Jeremy Corbyn, Ismail Patel (Founder of Friends of Al Aqsa), and MP Diane Abbott.

Prayer

We are in the season of Trinity, which if you follow the church's calendar goes on for about twenty weeks before we start to get close to Advent. Strange therefore, Trinity is possibly the time that we talk about least - I was with a group of clergy on Trinity Sunday this year and although in the church I attend we had had a sermon

on it, I asked them how many had been in churches that had sermons on Trinity and none of them had. I think Trinity says something about community and so this is a prayer from my book Towards the Dawn.

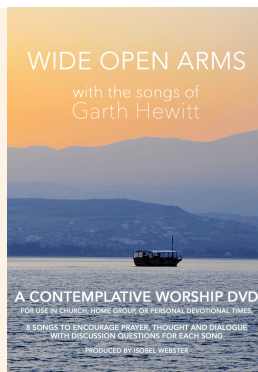
Oh holy trinity,
God of community,
Open our eyes to your ways,
Open our hearts to your love,
And open our minds to your
attitude,
Where all are invited
And all are welcomed
And where the healing hope
of the Easter gospel
Becomes a reality
Which challenges us to "do
something"
So may we make the ways of God visible in our world
Walking away from the excluding views of the past
Strengthened by the spirit of Pentecost
To live and work to bring your peace.
Amen



Garth Hewitt



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