GARETH
EVANS - JONES

Singer / Songwriter / Composer

A lifelong devotion to music runs like a golden thread through the life of a man shaped by many cultures, languages, and experiences. Born in London to Welsh parents and raised in the English countryside, he wrote his first song at just fifteen—and never stopped writing. From university stages to international classrooms, from Austria to Brazil, his path has always echoed with melody.

Singer, songwriter, and composer, he merges storytelling with soul, crafting music rooted in travel, memory, and emotion. Alongside a distinguished academic and teaching career—from Eton College to Amsterdam—he recorded numerous albums, directed musical productions, and brought communities together through song. His musical voice carries influences from across the globe: the spiritual depth of Turkey, the vibrant rhythms of Brazil, and the awe-inspiring landscapes of Yosemite.

Now based in the Netherlands, he devotes his time to writing, recording, and performing heartfelt songs that speak of love, loss, place, and possibility. Fluent in several languages and guided by wonder, he continues to weave personal experience into poetic sound.

"I write songs because I need to get them out of my head and heart, and into the world. Each song starts with a person, an incident, an event, an image or a hookline. They usually flow quite quickly from start to finish. I write them on my guitar, but I recently wrote a song for another singer, which is about being a performer on a small stage and being happy with the genuine appreciation from a small audience, that I sang to my producer, who worked out the chords on the piano. My songs are always personal, but tell a universal story."

Gareth Evans-Jones

INTERVIEW

Song Begins with a Moment

Dear Gareth, your songs feel like letters that travel far beyond you. When you write, do you imagine who might receive them?

"Sometimes, I feel like I am trying to contact the main character in the song, for example the slave, the Chocolate Girl, or myself in another life"

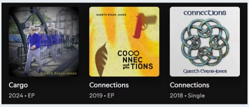
Some songs come from a single image or a fleeting incident. Do you ever hold onto an idea for years before it becomes music?

"Most of my songs are quite spontaneous. I need them recorded and released, so they are out of my head and I can enjoy performing them to an audience. However, the song "Connections" from 2019 is a circular song (you can start it anywhere), and one of the lines: "civil, disrespectful siblings' selfish rivalry" came from an experience during my time in Oman in 2013."

When Music Finds Its Audience

You have sung in halls, hidden stages, and small rooms. What happens for you when a song finally leaves your guitar and finds its audience?

"At first there is tension, as I want to play it right. Then there is release, if the performance goes well. Finally there is joy, when I look at the audience and see that they are already singing along to the chorus, when they have never heard it before. It is so heartening when members of the audience come up to me in the interval or after the concert and ask me who wrote a particular song, which they liked better than the covers I also play. I am then able to complete the cycle and point them to that song on my Spotify!".



Cargo
2024 • EP

Connections
2019 • EP

Connections
2018 • Single

Looking back to your first song in 1978 and your latest EP "Cargo" with your son on drums — which moments shaped you most as a songwriter and as a father?

"Finding out in 1978 that I could tell stories through the medium of songs, which had structure and wordplay. Seeing Yosemite National Park in 2000 and realising that I simply had to paint a picture of its beauty in words. Sensing history around me in Amsterdam every day and writing a critical song about its and our own burden.
As a Father, being at the birth of my sons was witnessing the miracle of love. Listening to my eldest sing for the Queen Elizabeth II and at the wedding of King Charles and Camilla, and now as a grown man, promoted to Director of Customer Success for a major Events company and getting married next year; seeing my youngest son graduating with a Masters in English Literature, then playing the drums on my EP "Cargo" – these were just a few of the highlights that have brought the three of us so close

together as family and friends. Above all, I am incredibly proud of them as a Father for the way they are sharing the care of their Mother".

BIG HUNGER? RESTAURA
THE WATERHO
STERDAM
JACK DANIEL'S
nord stage

Life Behind and Beyond the Stage

You have been a teacher, stage manager, and musical director. What have these behind-the-scenes roles taught you about the stage itself?

"Being front of "stage" in a classroom for 38 years as a teacher of German, French and English has taught me to use the width and depth of the stage but also that it is a place of vulnerability. As a stage manager, I learned how to make a stage three-dimensional and to animate it with light and sound. As a musical director, I learnt that a stage should not be limited to one place, but can be split into different levels across a building, for example, a church. In general, working behind the scenes has given me insight into the support that performers like myself need in order to feel comfortable on stage. This is why I make sure all my band members have everything they need before, during and after the show".

You write in the language of melodies but speak many real languages too. How do these languages weave into your lyrics and your sound?

"I love words and enjoyed my studies of Philology at university the most. Languages have given me the keys to open doors on my travels and talk to people in their own tongue, where possible. As a result, I have heard wonderful stories and experienced incredible beauty in people and places. In turn, these experiences have been woven into my songs. The sound of the call to prayer in Istanbul is mirrored by my vocal in "Boy for Girls"; there is a conversation in Dutch with a strange figure of the night in "Red Streets"; the sound of Americana features in "The Great Bear (Yosemite)"; the Turkish hand drums heard in Istanbul drive the song "Unexpected" and my language of origin, Welsh, can be heard in "Let go", a song for my own Mother."

Places that Become Songs

Yosemite, Istanbul, Dalyan — each place has left a trace in your music. What makes a place feel like a song waiting to happen?

“The majestic beauty of Yosemite is reflected in its place names, which I couldn’t wait to incorporate into a song. I find that taking photos also leads to inspiration for words and tunes. The mountains El Capitan and Half Dome are otherworldly and were crying out for a starring role in a song! When I got to Istanbul I felt a shudder in my body and knew that important things were going to happen. When I walked into the Blue Mosque, I fell to my knees in awe of the sheer amount of work that must have gone into this incredible place of worship. I knew that I had to incorporate that reaction in a song. It found its way into “How big the world is”. I grew up near Brighton by the sea and have always been fascinated by piers. The main pier in that town was always destined to be the subject of a song because of all the entertainments, the family feel and the location in the water. “Everything Under The Sun” from the EP “Molo” (“pier” in Italian) tells two stories, the first about me as a little boy being scared of all the noises, but still excited about standing in the water on a wooden platform; the second about taking my sons there as little boys and seeing their joy whilst being ripped off as their Father by the vendors and machines! In short: the initial impact, the first place you fall in love with and the first person who welcomes you – these things make a place feel like a song waiting to happen.”

The Power of Small Stages

You once said you find joy performing for small, genuine audiences. Why does that feel more real to you than fame or big stages?

“The look of enjoyment and appreciation on the faces of a small audience in an intimate venue is something with which I can connect easily and from which I can get positive energy. After the show, I like to circulate around the tables and find out where the people come from, or they come to me to ask for links to my music. I get more satisfaction from that personal connection than I do playing to an audience of 1000, as I have in London. I had two shots at fame in my life, the first when I was 18, the second in 2002 when a US producer wanted to buy my song for a famous country singer. When he told me I would not be credited for my song and would simply be selling it, I decided not to sell my soul and am always content with people listening to my songs online, on CD and soon on vinyl (to order). Instead of making personal profit from my music, I have tried to make a difference with the proceeds and raised over 200,000 pounds for various charities, including The NHS Breast Cancer Ward in Windsor, The Thames Valley Air Ambulance, MacMillan Nurses and I also “put the roof on” Casa Jimmy, in the favela of Santa Teresa in Rio de Janeiro, a day care centre, whose patron is Jimmy Page, guitarist with Led Zeppelin. The highlight of my live singing career was performing with Candy Dulfer’s band at Club Delphine in Amsterdam. Candy was saxophonist with Prince.”

A Life Written in Chords

Your life connects so many roles, countries, and people. Do you ever feel like your life itself is a song still being written?

“I think that is the perfect way to express my life. I have written a short story about a funny childhood incident, which I also use as teaching material, but I’m not sure I have the patience to write memoirs. Perhaps putting together a memoir in songs, where I briefly tell the story of each song, is an interesting way to approach a record of my life. Considering my inspiration is everyone I meet, everywhere I go and everything that happens to me, my song continues to flow in instalments.”

One Last Letter

One last letter: What would you love your music to whisper to the world long after you are gone?

"This question brings tears to my eyes...
Perhaps the title of my song from 2011...
We Must Love..."

Gareth Evans-Jones

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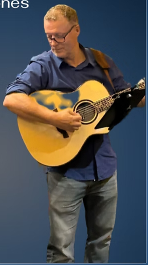

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