



JADE WARRIOR
-KITES-

“One chord, if it’s beautiful, will last us all day.”

There, in the words of Jon Field, is an eloquently simple manifesto and statement of intent for Jade Warrior: curiously and criminally unsung pioneers whose enigmatic pictures in sound prefigured the rise of ambient and world music, anticipated the ethnological and existential experimentalism of German peers such as Popol Vuh, Cluster and Harmonia, and minted a brand of ravishingly emotive, filmic Esperanto unrivalled until the advent of Sigur Rós. It is in fact this extraordinary emotional resonance which transcends genre and sets Jade Warrior apart from any number of mood manipulators who have followed in their stead. Their fanbase may be of comparatively slender proportions; but the deathless, evangelical zeal of their followers speaks volumes.

The initial spur was the decidedly fateful meeting of two forklift truck drivers, Jon Field and Tony Duhig, at the turn of the 1960s. Field and Duhig rapidly established that their common ground extended considerably further than an ability to hoist palettes, and a musical rapport was forged from an unusually broad base of mutual

influences and aspirations. An early indicator of their ambitious, inquisitive outlook was the acquisition of a quarter track tape machine apiece, upon which the pair bounced a lattice of overdubs back and forth. Field played an old set of conga drums, while Duhig tuned his guitar to the open chord of C major – evidently because no one had told him anything to the contrary – but which nevertheless provided his playing with a distinctive lifelong signature.

Inspired by frequent visits to The Ealing Club on Ealing Broadway – London’s first regular R&B venue – to watch Alexis Korner’s seminal floating collective Blues Incorporated, Field and Duhig fetched up in an R&B band of their own in 1965 called The Second Thoughts, a pool of fledgling West London talent which included future record producer Chris Thomas, Thunderclap Newman founder John ‘Speedy’ Keen and Nirvana’s Patrick Campbell-Lyons among its number. Also active on the same Ealing-based scene at the time were The Tomcats, led by vocalist Tom Newman. When both bands fragmented – more or less simultaneously – Field and Duhig were

drafted into a revised version of The Tomcats. This line-up, featuring Field, Duhig, Newman, Alan James on bass and Chris Jackson on drums, enjoyed a significant measure of success in Spain (as Los Tomcats) and released four EPs before returning to Britain in 1966.

Noting the paisley-patterned swirls of psychedelia in the air, The Tomcats changed their name to the considerably more à la mode July, secured a management contract with Spencer Davis and recorded an eponymously-titled 1968 album for Major Minor – home to the ruddy-cheeked folk fare of The Dubliners – which nevertheless turned out to be a stone classic of untrammelled, undisciplined UK psych. July may have been touted as “the Eastern Hollies”, but their inscrutably subversive music occupied a different galaxy altogether. Evidence of Jade Warrior’s future idiosyncrasies can already be discerned in the heady ethnicity and muezzin wail of ‘The Way’ – whose swaying cyclical rhythm casually invents Can – while ‘Dandelion Seeds’, B-side of July’s debut single, ‘My Clown’, boasts a becalmed Zen interlude in the midst of hallucinatory tumult. Jade Warrior, of course, went on to perfect this concept of dramatic contrasts.

When July in turn ran their course in the latter half of 1968, Duhig spent a brief spell with Unit Four Plus Two – four long years down the road from their hit single ‘Concrete And Clay’ – where he encountered bassist/vocalist Glyn Havard. Field, meanwhile, had taken up the flute, and had begun to compose and record the music for two dance dramas at the behest of a friend. Following a musical sojourn in Iran, Duhig returned to the UK and resumed collaboration with Field. This bore fruit instantly, springing from the fertile soil of Field’s groundwork on the aforementioned dance dramas. Havard applied lyrics and vocals to parts of Field and Duhig’s recordings: and thus was born Jade Warrior.

It is widely if not universally accepted that the name Jade Warrior stems from the title applied to the second of Field’s two dance dramas. Havard has spoken of a deliberate attempt to conjure a name which reflected the inherent opposition in the band’s music, with its poles of enraptured stillness and percussive turbulence. Whatever its provenance, the name undeniably boasts an imperious, mystical allure which suits their intuitively balanced strength and ethereality down to the ground – or up to the sky.

Jade Warrior were signed to Vertigo on the strength of their striking demos, although a theory persists that management company Mother Mistro brokered a deal whereby they convinced the label to take on Jade Warrior in addition to Dudu Pukwana's Afro-rock quintet Assagai (who in fact ended up covering Jade Warrior's 'Telephone Girl'). *Jade Warrior*, released in 1971, was the first of five albums the group recorded under the label's tenure, although only three were released before they were summarily dropped in 1973. (The two 'lost' albums, *Eclipse* and *Fifth Element*, eventually achieved release in 1998.) The self-titled debut, its 1971 follow-up *Released* and '72's *Last Autumn's Dream* combine some relatively orthodox song structures – jazzy, bluesy rock outings in a Jethro Tull/If vein, such as 'Psychiatric Sergeant' and 'A Prenormal Day In Brighton' – with formative runs at the kind of imagistic instrumentals upon which Jade Warrior's reputation now resides ('Slow Ride', 'Barazinbar', 'Borne On The Solar Wind'). Added heft is intermittently provided by Tony Duhig's brother David on guitar, Dave Connors on saxophone and Allan Price on drums (like Havard and Duhig, an alumnus of Unit Four Plus Two).

Some Stateside interest and a well-received (if internally fractious) US tour supporting Dave Mason evidently couldn't persuade Vertigo to invest any faith or effort into promoting the band, and the label let them go. Salvation appeared in the avuncular shape of Chris Blackwell of Island Records, who had been alerted to Jade Warrior's abilities by Steve Winwood. Blackwell was suitably impressed, and offered the band a contract on the proviso that Field and Duhig would sign up as an instrumental duo: which necessitated a parting of the ways with Havard.

The four 1974-1978 Island albums form the core of Jade Warrior's legend. From the harmonious Oriental understatement of their Eckford/Stimpson-designed sleeves to the organic beauty of the compositions within, they exude a masterful, unhurried sense of elemental wonder: ironic in view of the impassioned arguments and studio clock-watching which allegedly accompanied their creation.

Floating World, from 1974, reveals a new-found maturity. Described by Vivien Goldman as "a feat of elegant audio ecotourism," it is humid and weightless by turns: a wholly absorbing travelogue conjuring

forth the solemn majesty of the natural world ('Mountain Of Fruit And Flowers', 'Memories Of A Distant Sea') and the transported ecstasy of Balinese tribes ('Monkey Chant', anchored in a thick swamp of 'Voodoo Chile' wah-wah guitar). *Waves*, from 1975, further refines Jade Warrior's approach, consisting of two appropriately oceanic and shifting extended pieces dedicated to 'the last whale'. Steve Winwood provides guest piano and Moog, and the album reunites Field and Duhig with their July colleague, Tom Newman, in an engineering role. (Newman was fresh from fulfilling the same duties on Mike Oldfield's stupendously successful *Tubular Bells*.)

And so to *Kites*, the album you are currently listening to. Originally released in 1976, it strikes this writer as the most successful realisation of their aims, being an expansive, enchanting and vivid depiction of blissful surrender on the one hand and a substantial evocation of the weight of historical imperatives on the other, punctuated as it proceeds with percussive thunderclaps of great portent. On the original vinyl release, side one is a suite of five pieces of music inspired by 'Plant, Earth and the Kingdom of the Air', a

drawing by the expressionist painter Paul Klee. 'Songs Of The Forest' provides an appropriately bright herald in its rapt depiction of the daily miracle of sunrise, while the twinkling bells, shimmering violins and wordless female choir of 'Wind Song' bear the listener aloft as effectively as, well, kites. Jeff Westley's electric piano and Coldridge Goode's double bass on 'Wind Borne' form a pellucid bed for glowering chordal starbursts, a flute melody of singular prettiness and a wristy acoustic guitar solo, all of these elements arranged with an airy sophistication befitting David Axelrod.

Side two, in vinyl terms, is taken up with 'Teh Ch'eng', a seven-part instrumental portrait of a Zen master in ninth century China, "a land of extreme riches and brutal poverty, of fierce warriors and wandering poets". Duhig drops a series of grandiose, reverberant thrums into the limpid ripples of 'Land Of The Warrior', demonstrating the unique nature of his chord voicings. (The closest comparison would be to John Martyn; but their styles and techniques are still a million miles apart.) 'Quietly By The River Bank' drifts past on a waving raft of gorgeous koto-toned acoustic guitar curlicues, while Joe O'Donnell's sinuous

violins track the gentle footfalls of 'Towards The Mountains'. The thought occurs to one that, all notions of analogue warmth aside, this album was made to be painstakingly remastered for a modern audio format, because the dynamic range is unparalleled: from suspended interludes of near-silence to the heart-stopping crash that shockingly concludes 'The Last Question'.

The robustly euphoric *Way Of The Sun* (1978) brought Jade Warrior's tenure with Island Records to an end. Barring the release of the Vertigo-era compilation *Reflections* in 1979, the duo completely fell off of the radar for a variety of draining personal and financial reasons until the release of *Horizen* in 1984 and *At Peace* in 1989, generally regarded (not least by Field himself) to be unrepresentative works. The tragically premature death of Tony Duhig in 1990 from a heart attack robbed him of the chance to contribute to a rejuvenated Jade Warrior, a project instigated when Field met bassist Dave Sturt and guitarist Colin Henson, establishing an instantaneous musical bond. The new line-up soldiered on despite the irreplaceable loss of Duhig, and released *Breathing The Storm* in 1992 and *Distant Echoes* the

following year – both warmly received by Jade Warrior aficionados.

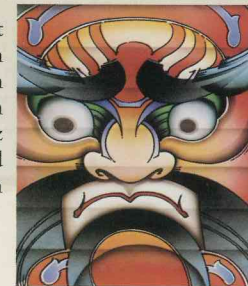
An unexpected but decidedly welcome left turn in the ongoing tale of Jade Warrior found Glyn Havard rejoining in 2005, keen to mine the untapped potential of the original line-up. Following the departure of Colin Henson, the trio of Havard, Field and Sturt – bolstered by a distinguished array of guest musicians including Field's daughter, Charlotte – recorded and released *Now* in 2008 and performed at London's Astoria2 in October the same year, which was the first stage appearance by Jade Warrior in 35 years. *Haiku*, a new instrumental album, is gestating as we speak: and it would appear, hearteningly, that there are quite a few chapters left to write in this particular story.

Marco Rossi
Dorset, April 2010

All titles composed by Tony Duhig and Jon Field
All instruments played by Tony Duhig and Jon Field except
Pete Gibson: Brass on "Songs of the Forest" and "Wind Borne"
Clodagh Simmons: Girl's Choir on "Songs of the Forest" and "Wind Song"
Debbie Hall: Violins on "Wind Song" and "The Emperor Kite"
Willie: Snare and Bass Drum on "Songs of the Forest"
Graham Morgan: Drums and Snare on
"The Emperor Kite" and "Quietly by the Riverbank"
Coldridge Goode: Bass on "Wind Borne"
Jeff Westley: Electric Piano on "Wind Borne"
Fred Frith: Violins on "Teh Ch'eng: Do You Understand This?"
Joe O'Donnell: Violins on "Arrival of Chia Shan: Discourse and Liberation"
The String Quartet on "The Emperor Kite" and "Quietly by the Riverbank"

*Special thanks are owed to Pete, Clodagh, Willie, Graham, Jeff and Fred
for their endurance, stamina and patience throughout.
For the patience and help sustained throughout the two week visit that became the nine month
epic, all our thanks are due to "fine old Tom",
without whose kindness and insight this album might not have been possible.*

Recorded at
Argonaut Studios, London
Engineer Tom Newman
Island Studios, Hammersmith, London
Engineer George Chkiantz
Produced by Tony Duhig and Jon Field
Original sleeve design by Eckford / Stimpson



These pieces of music were put together after seeing Paul Klee's drawing for "Plant, Earth and the Kingdom of the Air".

In our album "Waves" we needed bird song and the dawn chorus so found ourselves with a tape recorder in the middle of a forest before dawn. The beginning of "Kites" is our impression of the forest at this time in the morning, without a breath of wind and as the sun comes up, the forest wakes and the wind begins to blow through the trees. This whole section is viewed as though microscopic size. Enormous seed pods burst giving birth to millions of flying seeds. A seed is plucked from a flower and dances with the wind. At sunrise the seed flies up over the forest and this part ends "Son of the forest".

The choral part is the song of the wind and as the seed is taken higher, the remaining pieces describe Klee's "Kingdom of the Air".

We use the word "Kite" not only literally as with the huge, man carrying, Emporer Kite and the gentle chinese Acolian Kite (where strings are stretched across the frame to play strange music in the sky,) but more loosely to describe all things that

float on the wind.

9th century China, a land of extreme riches and brutal poverty, of fierce warriors and wandering poets, and living at neither of these extremes nor anywhere between, the enlightend Zen Master, the giant mind wrapped in a peasant robe, Teh Ch'eng, The Boat Monk.

Zen Master Teh Ch'eng The Boat Monk at Hua Ting

Master Teh Ch'eng arrived at Hua Ting in the Hsü Chou district. He sailed a small boat, adjusted himself to circumstances and passed his days in receiving visitors from the four quarters. At the time, as no one knew of his erudition, he was called the Boat Monk.

One day, he stopped by the river bank and sat idle in his boat. An official (who was passing) asked him: 'What does the Venerable Sir do?' The master held up his paddle, saying: 'Do you understand this?' The official replied: 'I do not.' The master said: 'I have been rowing and stirring the clear water, but a golden fish is rarely found.'

When Chia Shan had dismissed his followers, he packed and went straight to Hua Ting. Master Teh Ch'eng saw him and asked: 'Virtuous One! At what temple do you stay?' Chia Shan replied: 'That what is like it does not stay (and) that which stays is not like it.' Master Teh Ch'eng asked: 'If there is no likeness, what is it like?' Chia Shan replied: 'It is not the dharma (thing) before the eyes.' Master Teh Ch'eng asked: 'Where have you learned all this?' Chia Shan replied: 'Neither the ear nor the eye can reach it.' Master Teh Ch'eng said: 'A good sentence is a stake to which a donkey can be tethered for ten thousand acons.' He again asked: 'When a thousand feet of fishing line is let down, the quarry is deep in the pond. Three inches beyond the hook, why don't you speak?' Chia Shan (guessed and) was on the point of opening his mouth, when the master gave him, with the paddle, a blow that knocked him into the water. When Chia Shan was about to scramble back into the boat, the master said again: 'Speak! Speak! Before Chia Shan could open his mouth, the master hit him again. Thereupon, Chia Shan was instantaneously enlightened and nodded thrice (in approval and gratitude).

The master said: 'You can play with the silken line at the end of the rod, but so long as you do not disturb the clear water, the meaning will be different.'

Chia Shan then asked: 'What is your idea about letting down the line and throwing in the hook?'

Master Teh Ch'eng said: 'The line dangling in the green water allows all ideas of existence and non-existence to float up to the surface until both become still.'

Chia Shan said: 'Your words lead to abstruseness but follow no paths; the tip of your tongue talks but is speechless.'

The master said: 'I have been letting my line down in every part of this river and only now have I found a golden fish.'

(Upon hearing this), Chia Shan closed his ears (with his hands). Master Teh Ch'eng said: 'It is so!' and then gave him the following instruction:

'In the future, your hiding place should have no traces and where there are no traces, you should not hide. I spent thirty years at master Yo Shan's monastery and understood nothing but this. You have got it now. From now on do not stay in towns and villages, but search deep in the mountains for one or two men with mattocks at their side to coptinue (the transmission) and not allow it to be broken off.'

CD reissue researched and co-ordinated by **Mark Powell**
 24-bit digital remastering by **Paschal Byrne** at the Audio Archiving Company, London
 Additional transfer work by **Ben Wiseman**
 CD package design by **Hugh Gilmour** www.gilmourdesign.co.uk

Grateful thanks to Peter A. Matthews at Universal Tape Facility,
 Joe Black and Anna Dueweke at Universal Music UK, Hugh Gilmour, Craig Thompson at
 The Audio Archiving Company and Paul Robinson and Jon Roberts at Cherry Red Records Ltd.

Chia Shan took leave of the master but turned back repeatedly to see (him).
 Master Teh Ch'eng called out: 'Venerable Sir!' When Chia Shan turned his head the
 master held up the paddle and said: 'Do you think that I still have something else?'
 Then he upset the boat and disappeared in the

water.

This album is available digitally from www.losttunes.com
 The Jade Warrior website: www.jadewarrior.com
 For more information on all Esoteric Recordings releases please visit:
www.esotericrecordings.com

© 1976 Island Records, a division of Universal Music Operations Ltd.

This remastered reissue © 2010 Cherry Red Records Ltd. under license from Island Records,
 a division of Universal Music Operations Ltd. Esoteric Recordings is a Cherry Red label

Ch'an Master Teh Ch'eng The Boat Monk at Hua Ting. from: The Imperial Selection
 of Ch'an Sayings, extracted from: Ch'an and Zen Teaching by Lu Hsiang Yu.

Special thanks are owed to Pete, Clodagh, Willie, Graham, Jeff and Fred F. for their
 endurance, stamina and patience throughout.

For the patience and help sustained throughout the two week visit that became the
 nine month epic, all our thanks are due to "Fine Old Tom", without whose kindness
 and insight this album might not have been possible.

Composed throughout by Tony Duhig and Jon Field.

Published by Island Music (BMI).

Recorded at "Argonaut Studios", Little Venice, London by Tom Newman.
 And at "Island Studios", Hammersmith by George Chkiantz.

Design & Illustration Eckford/Stimpson