

## **Interview with Jacqui Dankworth and Charlie Wood**

**May 2019**

Interview between Patricia Hunt, Bradfield Festival of Music, and Jacqui Dankworth and Charlie Wood. The interview was conducted before it was announced that Jacqui Dankworth has been awarded the MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List. Our warmest congratulations to Jacqui on this wonderful award!

**PH**

You came to play at the Bradfield Festival of Music in 2017, and we are thrilled that you are returning for a concert at the Festival on June 24<sup>th</sup> this. Are you looking forward to coming?

**JD and CW**

Very much! We remember the great welcome we got, the beautiful setting and the lovely church. We remember that the concert was so well organised and very well supported with a great audience, and we enjoyed the good vibes from beginning to end.

**PH**

I would like to ask you both about music in your early childhood. How strong were the musical influences on you as you grew up?

**JD**

I think I took it all for granted. There was just music all the time, with my Dad composing throughout the day and evening, and my Mum playing music all the time. It was really varied music across the spectrum as well, from Schonberg to jazz. Great musicians were constantly coming to the house and playing their music too. I don't think I realised how difficult music really was. As a child I joined in and it seemed to come easily to me, and it was only in adult life that I realised how difficult music is to compose, to learn and to perform. It was such a rich experience in my childhood – so much fun too – my Dad was a laugh a minute!

**CW**

Nobody else in my family has been as mad as me to become a professional musician! My siblings all played music and are very musical. My elder sister played the piano to a high standard and my brother sings and composes, but neither of them have taken it up as a profession. It's worked out well for me though, and I am really happy that music is my profession.

**PH**

How did you meet? Was that through music?

**JD and CW**

Yes! We did meet through music. We first met when Charlie was still living in the States and a mutual friend who was a drummer said - let's play some music together with a friend from the States! That went really well, and two years later Charlie contacted me to say that he was moving to the UK and suggesting that we worked together. We began working with each other and it grew into a relationship. We have been a duo ever since, always working together and growing together in and through our music.

**PH**

What are you working on at the moment?

**CW and JD**

We are working on a completely new programme, and that is the programme we will be bringing to the Bradfield Festival!! It is a Blues Programme. I love playing blues, and Jacqui loves singing the blues, and so we have built a new programme which is a journey through the blues! We will play through the journey, and also narrate it along the way.

**PH**

Fabulous! You have a fantastic following both in Sheffield and at the Festival, of people who love your music and feel inspired by it.

**JD and CW**

It's lovely to hear that! We are very touched. As a musician you spend a lot of time thinking about what an audience will enjoy hearing, and a lot of time working on your music. To hear that people love what we are already doing is wonderful for us!! We play very niche music which is not the kind of genre to be on the radio all the time, so we never tire of hearing that people appreciate our music and are inspired by it.

**PH**

What plans do you have for future work?

**JD and CW**

Charlie is working on another album, and I am planning to write a play with music. I have an idea for it that I haven't even told Charlie yet!!

**PH**

Sounds wonderful! Thank you so much, and we are really looking forward to your concert and your new programme in June!