

things it became more of a tone concept and a little more subtle on the volume."

*So who was your main influence, musically, he continues,*

"Well I have to say it was Bert Jansch who changed my direction in music. Looking back, and it still applies today, his material is very sophisticated almost akin to classical really, and it taught me the potential of the acoustic guitar as a self sufficient instrument.

I used his music as a bench mark to excellence, perfection and technical ability, there's so much depth, soul and emotion in that guy's playing. I still look for that in an album, I call it the tingle-factor.

He put me on the solo path, which suited me fine, as I've always been a bit of a loner, especially within a band. The solo world can be quite solitary, but any creative musician has to spend time on their own, before they can become confident enough to perform and you're not answerable to anyone else, you make up your own rules.

Saying that, I love working with Raymond Burley, we've toured extensively together. I'm actually producing his new album, set for late summer release, which features him playing all my tunes on classical guitar. That to me, proves if you have the ability to write a good tune, it'll work in any format, and that the fact that another artist who I admire, recognises my writing, and wants to record my songs, it doesn't really get any better than that."

*Whilst hammer-ons and pull-offs create the lightning riffs that are the Giltrap trademark, noticeable power chords dominate a large part of his writing structure.*

"On a lot of my albums you can hear my rock background, where the inventive chord genius of Townsend, one of my all time heroes, plays a big part. I was recently watching the latest Who concerts on TV. I mean, that guy is still so exciting, the intensity and energy when he plays, some of those songs are 40 years old now, and still stand the test of time.

It was a natural progression, taking the acoustic road with a creative rock vibe. I suppose it came out of my teenage mod period, you know how it goes, typical working class London kid, I was that Mod growing up in southeast London who used to live for Ready Steady Go on a Friday night, and wanted to afford the latest fashion, but never could. The whole movement was the music and the fact it made me more attracted to girls, oh and scooters," he laughs.

*Gordon has a unique playing style, as he explains,*

"Although I sound like a multi fingerpicker, initially I'm a plectrum guitarist, if you listen to my albums you'll hear there's a hell of a lot going on. My style evolved from my early days as a rock player using a pick for the heavy stuff, but when I changed directions, it was

obvious I needed extra fingers for the harmonics as well as the heavy pick approach.

So I use the plectrum and little finger, it is rather odd, but this allows me to switch from delicate finger picking to power chords instantly with the pick, for an attack you just don't get if you are predominantly an acoustic finger style player.

It's another one of my cack-handed approaches that I've developed purely out of ignorance," he admits..

"It's certainly odd, Hank Marvin calls me a freak, the way I play. I met up with him at the Samoos festival a few weeks ago. It's one of those events where hundreds of players want to play and sound like Django Reinhardt. We sat on the balcony of our hotel just playing some beautiful tunes, Hank's such a good player within other styles of music.

I tried to get hold of a Maccaferri acoustic in the early seventies, as used by Django Reinhardt and asked a close friend called John Pearce who had a TV show called Hold Down A Chord, explaining I had to sound like Django. He said why, you have your own sound, stick with it.

That was the best piece of advice anybody has ever given me, and I hail that to all musicians out there, try and voice your own sound, it's still possible even in this techno age."

Being the only member in the band, has its advantages, apart from being first in the queue for the bathroom, it can be a bonus when writing, he continues,

"Well, yes, that's true. I've always got ideas and riffs buzzing around in my head, it just goes with constantly having a guitar at hand.

I suppose for me, it's almost become a simple process, but as there are no vocals involved, capturing the mood within the melody can be quite challenging. Before I go into the studio I get the song format down at home straight into an Alesis 24 track hard disc recorder via a Mackie mixer.

I can spend months working on a song, in which case there is a danger it can be too well crafted and devoid of any emotion, ironically tunes that piece together quickly usually turn out to be my best work.

Of course, it helps to have my own style of playing, but the more I watch some of these absolutely amazing players, who are technically phenomenal, I realise I'm really a composer who writes for the guitar, which also does take a degree of skill to play the pieces I write.

I get a lot of satisfaction writing library music which is used within advertising and TV themes. The library I am with are my publishers, so if I think the material is strong enough, I can release it as a commercial album. I was watching a program a while ago about the making of the Poirot detective series, and low

and behold my tune with a French jazzy feel to it called Deco Echo, wafts from the telly. I have this ability to be able to write in a certain style even if I have no desire to play that kind of music, so it's a fun thing.

I've written a lot of material in normal tuning, and only four significant pieces in the popular DADGAD set up. Open C tuning, that's a sweet one, CGCGCD, easy on the fingers also. I'm quite excited about these new Heritage strings from Malcolm Newton. He's produced these low tension sets, they're so easy to play, a set of 11's feel like 10's but without any loss of tone or volume.

I'm now taking six guitars on tour to accommodate for the tunings as the show is two hours long, so they all get used. One of which is solid bodied Farida Telecaster, hooked up to a Boss Loop Station to build tracks up, it all fits the mood of this song I wrote in '82 called The Dodo's Dream.

This all runs through my Award Session Gordon Giltrap signature pre-amp, and Boss ME50 effects processor, which is great for me as a solo performer, especially the low bass, high octave, and chorus pre-sets."

*Whilst the digi- techno world is a bonus, the sound of the wood, is as close to Gordon's heart as it's ever been, and remains true to some of the world's finest acoustic guitar makers, that happen to be British.*

"Yes that's correct, and I'm proud to say I'm using four British made guitars on stage. The Fyde acoustic, happens to be the Gordon Giltrap signature model. I worked with Roger Bucknell at Fyde on this one for quite some time, we swapped ideas until we felt we had the perfect model to suit my style. He had a hard



time with the rosewood back and sides as he gets a violent reaction using this