



## **THE LONESOME VOYAGER**

Songs and stories from the Best Years of Our Lives

**STATE THEATRE – SYDNEY - SATURDAY AUGUST 15**

Bookings: [www.ticketmaster.com.au](http://www.ticketmaster.com.au) PHONE 136 100

Tickets on Sale at 10.00am Thursday April 30

On August 15<sup>th</sup> 2015, Richard Clapton makes a welcome return to Sydney's State Theatre to continue the tradition of his annual concert in this special venue.

This unique show will be performed in two parts. The first part of the show will be Richard and the masterful Danny Spencer on guitar, performing an acoustic repertoire and insights into Richard's life and songwriting. Danny and Richard have been musical partners for well over a decade and Danny has become a well established part of Richard's musical DNA. After interval, Richard returns to the stage with his full band and an exciting creative sound and lighting production.

After more than 40 years of treading the boards on the Australian rock scene, this year Richard will bring together a very different style of show for the State Theatre.

With the fantastic response to Richard's recent memoirs, "The Best Years of Our Lives" in 2015, it occurred to him that audiences might just would appreciate a hybrid show featuring not just the music, but all the often crazy and often emotional stories behind the music.

The book covers the halcyon years from the late Sixties in London to the Seventies and Eighties on the Oz rock scene. The musical journey onstage will cover those days of "The Golden Age" the likes of which we will never see again, accompanied by storytelling from one of the true survivors of those times.

This is so much more than mere nostalgia or a trip down memory lane – this is a reliving of those times whether you are old enough to remember, or young enough to just want to know what it was like.

[www.richardclapton.com](http://www.richardclapton.com)

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## Richard Clapton Biography

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Richard Clapton is one of Australia's foremost singer/songwriters.

Clapton paved the way for three generations of songwriters to write about the experience of being Australian.

When he began his recording career in 1974, Australia was still in vice-like grip of the cultural cringe. He plunged into the deep water and in his wake followed the Skyhooks and Paul Kelly, Cold Chisel, INXS, Midnight Oil and hundreds of others.

Clapton's songs are still omnipresent on the radio. His records chart the political landscape of the nation and the turbulent lives of two generations.

Clapton grew up in Sydney in the 1960s. He hopped a plane for London and then later to Germany where he wrote a first album, *Prussian Blue* (1973). It was the first major "singer-songwriter" album in Australia.

In 1975, Clapton had the critics on side, but Festival Records insisted on a hit single. However, it was the song they picked as a b-side called "Girls On the Avenue" that reached #1 on the national charts and put Clapton at the top of his class. Like Americans Jackson Browne and Bruce Springsteen, Richard Clapton developed a sound based on melodic rock while his lyrics were poetic musings on his state of mind or the state of the nation.

By 1975, Clapton had set the themes he was to explore for the coming three decades. There were frequent escapes to his spiritual second home in Berlin to recharge and get a fresh perspective on Australia; there was Clapton's love/hate relationship with the pop music culture; his often-tormented sense of growing up and his eye for the political landscape and how it affected Australians.

Clapton mastered that most difficult of showbusiness acts – the highwire that requires the balance of radio-friendly tunes and candid, from-the-heart lyrics.

These two came together on the *Goodbye Tiger* album; at that time Clapton's most successful to date. The record was a new highpoint and there was significant international interest in Richard as a recording artist. A period living overseas in Los Angeles brought forth the sophisticated *Hearts on the Nightline*. Then back in Australia in 1980 he released the searing *Dark Spaces*, an indictment on the meanness and mendacity that would blow through the 1980s.

Ten years after his first release, Richard Clapton was a tribal elder to whom younger artists like Jimmy Barnes, INXS and Cold Chisel turned as a mentor.

INXS asked Clapton to produce their second album, *Underneath the Colours*, and they became firm friends. They, and Cold Chisel, returned the favour on Clapton's *The Great Escape* album. INXS drummer Jon Farriss produced *The Glory Road* album, and few records capture the roller coaster ride of the late 1980s as well as *Glory Road*.

These albums brought Clapton's melodic gifts and his love of electric rock & roll into lockstep. There were always the words though. No one better documented the 1980s than Richard. Richard frequently went to the edge — emotionally, politically, financially — and sent back his incisive postcards.

In the 1990s Richard continued to write and record and tour. His 1990s songs reflect a hard-won maturity. Indeed, Richard counts 2003's *Diamond Mine* as amongst his best albums – and the critics unanimously agreed.

In 2005 he set about making the first acoustic album of his career. Clapton stripped back some of his favourite songs – reimagining them in a different environment. The result is his 17<sup>th</sup> album – *REWired*. This project was never intended to be a greatest hits record – and indeed many of his greatest hits aren't here. It's an experiment in hearing Richard Clapton in a new way.

Richard Clapton is now in his 40<sup>th</sup> year, since his first album, "Prussian Blue" in 1974 but shows no signs of slowing down. He has released over 20 albums which have cumulatively sold over one million copies. He is the only rock artist to have received an Australia Council arts grant from the government which enabled him to travel around the world and write the songs for "Goodbye Tiger".

In 1999 he was inducted into the ARIA Hall of Fame.

In 2008, he played his first sold out concert at Sydney's iconic State Theatre, and on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2013 will play his 7<sup>th</sup> concert in 6 years (selling out two full houses in 2009). This year he will play an eclectic selection from his 150 song catalogue and a generous serving of his classic hits.

"*Harlequin Nights*" is his first album in 6 years and has been written and recorded over 4 years. After almost 40 years of honing his craft, this is arguably Clapton's finest album and shows that Richard is now at the peak of his powers. The album features eleven brand new tracks. Some of the songs are simply "classic Clapton", but there is also an ample serving of less predictable and innovative material – the combination that has made his albums famous.

"*Harlequin Nights* is in some ways a bookend to *Goodbye Tiger*," he said. "*Goodbye Tiger* was a collection of songs written by a young man in his twenties in 1977 about the experiences of the world we lived in back in those days. This new album is a collection of songs written by the same songwriter some 35 years later about the world we live in today. There is a noticeable seismic shift between the two albums but this simply documents how much our lives have changed in all this time."

During the album's long gestation, Clapton has endured a marriage breakdown, taking him on a personal journey which influenced his continuing musical evolution, culminating with a new relationship with his home studio and a songwriting partnership with guitarist Danny Spencer.

"Richard Clapton has never been rich. He has never had the pleasure of passing through life in a luxurious rock star bubble. In a career that now spans almost 40 years he has battled everything from bad

managers and capricious record companies to debt, taxes, personal tragedy and a thousand room service dinners. The fact that he's come through it all with his sanity intact - and his abilities at the peak of his powers - surprises all who know and love him.

But survive he has, with a tale to tell.

*“Every nation with a great tradition in rock whose longevity places them in a special, sparsely populated strata of the entertainment world. They are the tribal elders of popular music, you might say. If America has Jackson Browne and Bruce Springsteen, and the U.K. has Van Morrison and Paul McCartney, then we are proud to confer similar prestige on Richard Clapton. Songs like “Deep Water” and “Capricorn Dancer” are touchstones on the Aussie rock landscape, without which we wouldn’t really know who we are or where we’re going.”*