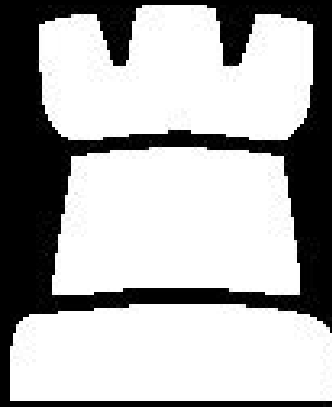


AN INTERVIEW WITH

# Candice Night

By Ariel Monserrat



(NOTE: Right before the last Green Egg issue went to press, I received an email from a gentleman who said he was the agent for Candice Night and her Renaissance musical group, Blackmore's Night. He told me that Candice had found our website and wanted to be interviewed by our magazine, as her views on life were very much in accordance with Green Egg. For those who don't know, Blackmore's Night was formed by both Candice and her partner, Richie Blackmore, one of the founders of the rock band, Deep Purple. I was both surprised and honored. The agent wanted to send me a DVD and CD of one of their recent concerts in Paris, France. He also sent along a CD of their Winter music, just released. Little did I know that I was about to hear a band that completely knocked my socks off. Candice and Richie travel the globe, looking for old pieces of Renaissance music. But, they like to put their own spin on it. You can imagine the phenomenal guitar-playing of Richie Blackmore, but the real surprise is Candice Night. Her voice is like liquid crystal and she is as beautiful and lovely as her voice. With her waist-length blonde hair, her beautiful dancing and her wondrous voice, she was quite a site to behold on the DVD and it made me really wish I could have been at that concert. Here, then, is her interview. – A.M).

### How did you find Green Egg?

CN: Oh, I've been a fan of your magazine for quite some time. I used to pick it up at Borders or at some of the independent New Age shops across the USA when I was on tour. I was originally drawn in by the cover art, and then intrigued by the topics from the mystical to the magic of the earth that your magazine covers.

### Why did you decide to contact us?

CN: I thought that we are coming from the same place. That although your medium is print-oriented and mine is musical, we have a similar message and I believe that the people listening to my music will find a home in your pages as well as your readers being able to find comfort in the melodies and lyrics that we create.

### Do you identify as a Pagan?

CN- I am heavily influenced by nature. I believe that all miracles and magic present themselves to us daily whether through the form of a sunset, a flower blooming, a firefly, there are thousands of examples. And yet people are so caught up in survival mode that they never take the time to see these amazing miracles before them each day. I am in awe of the earth and the universe and not a day goes by that I don't feel blessed to experience what she is offering me at that moment. It could be the feeling of the wind through my hair or snowflakes on my cheeks. The pure and simple magic of the earth leaves me breathless. I have a tendency not to use titles on myself, my beliefs or anything else that I do because I have learned that titles and categories place you in a box. Boxes have walls, and I don't think that music or beliefs should be placed in something so confining. I think that those forums should grow with you as you grow as a spiritual person. I feel as if I am learning more every day and am consciously staying "open" to all experiences in my life in order to stay on that journey.

### Do you practice Magick/Witchcraft?

CN- I find that there are certain techniques or things that we do readily today that no one associates with the "olde ways" and yet their beginnings come from those roots many years ago. Visualization techniques, color therapy, herbalism, aromatherapy, your closest animal friend being a "familiar"- the list goes on. We incorporate these things into everyday life sometimes renaming them "new age" when in truth they are from the "old age". Affirmations work for everyone, don't they? And I do believe that we should not harm anyone. It's hard for some to understand the power that lies within themselves and that you shouldn't use it for wrong- so if it takes coming back on someone 3 fold to deter them from doing so- that makes sense to me. I think that people need to understand that the words magick and witchcraft are not what you see in Hollywood movies. I think Hollywood has done a lot of damage to the truth of

the lifestyle. But then again, with the persecution of witches and those who are brave enough to believe differently- history has done the most amount of damage. Hollywood just fans the flames occasionally.

### **What drew you to it?**

CN- I've always been one to brave my own path. My mother read tarot cards and my father was very into astrology while I was growing up so to believe in other sources was the most natural thing in the world to me. My sister would talk to ghosts when she was younger and I have had many experiences in that realm that couldn't be explained away by the physical world. It was only when I started going to school and others thought I was "weird" for believing in alternate ways that I started realizing that my thoughts were different. Not wrong or right but different. I believe everyone has to find their own path and what is right for them. I believe we have a lot to learn and we will come back many times in order to figure out our paths. And I don't believe that what you see is all that exists. My thoughts to me have always been natural. I believe that intuition is the strongest power that we have. My intuition leads my search and my journey. It is a very natural way of learning about your world and your place within it.

### **How does your music reflect Pagan ideals?**

CN- There are many parallels, the lyrical content is always inspired by nature, by myths and faerie tales, by legends that still have a strong connection to us today. Specifically in songs like Fires at Midnight which is about the wonder and mystery of nature and our place with it. That was taken from the music of a Spanish 12th century song. World of Stone shows that those who feel and think the way we do are never alone in this world or on this path. Musically that was inspired by a traditional German melody. Hanging Tree was inspired by an old gnarled dead tree that in its starkness was beautiful, but her story was a sad one. I wrote it from the perspective of the tree who was used by the evils of humankind to hang people and what her feelings on that was. It has a happy ending, but the story is based in truth and always brings a tear to my eye when I think about it. Clock Ticks On is about the changing of seasons. The melody for that song came from renaissance composer Tielman Susato from the 1500s. Ritchie usually is in charge of the music and then I write all the lyrics. Our newest CD which isn't released yet but will be in spring 08 has a song called Circle which is perfect for this subject, but I don't want to give too much away since it has yet to be released. There are so many songs I'd take up too much space telling you the meaning behind them all!

### **Is your partner, Richie Blackmore, a Pagan?**

CN: He defines himself as a "spiritualist" but I think that many of these terms are defined in similar ways.

### **Can you give us a definition of Renaissance music?**

CN: By definition Renaissance music is music that is from the time period of approximately 14th-16th centuries. It can vary from lute music to bombastic double reed woodwind arrangements, but the wonderful thing about music from that time period is that it was not being played for the artists to be on MTV nor for fame or fortune. It was written out of honesty and purity. If you look out your window and have instrumental renaissance music on, your outlook of the world changes. It's like a soundtrack to nature.

### **What first attracted you to Renaissance music?**

CN- I had never heard of Renaissance music before I met Ritchie. I had gone to Renaissance faires and loved the idea that you could go to a place where the people wearing jeans and baseball hats were the ones stared at for being outcasts and the ones dressed in different garb were the ones on the inner circle. I loved the individuality that those faires promote. If you feel you want to be a king or a queen or a jester or a knight or a peasant- you can wear it on your sleeve. We incorporate that same mindset in our shows. We encourage the audience to break the mold of what some fashion corporation tells you you should be wearing because it's "in". We want people to wear their personality on their sleeve and be proud of it. Not look like everyone else who is trying to be "in" by wearing the same thing everyone else is told to wear. We like independent thinkers, those who brave their own path. Anyway, when I first met Ritchie in 1989 he would step right off stage and put on purist renaissance music. He still only listens to that style of music, though my CD collection varies. One of my favorite memories is at the beginning of our relationship when I came to visit him in his Tudor home in Connecticut, complete with minstrels' gallery! The fire was blazing in the fireplace, lights were dim, and it was the beginning of our life together- and renaissance music was playing in the background. So for me a lot of those songs still bring me back to that moment.

### **What was your inspiration for "World of Stone"?**

CN- That one musically is based on a traditional German folk song called "All Voll" which means All Full. It was explained to me that the meaning was two fold, it could mean you were full of emotion because you were having a wonderful time- so therefore your heart was all full, but also in those days a lot of songs were based on religion, drinking and fighting. So the second meaning was that they were "full of drink". When it came time to write the lyrics, I had just finished watching the Messenger- the movie about Joan of Arc. And somehow the lyric line began to take me through what she had gone through, being advised by voices, being looked upon as a savior who led

them into battle and a madwoman who was murdered at the end because she was different. But it also led me on an introspective reflection on my life at that moment. I was, and still am, very involved in my area with preserving open space and trying to end cruel and inhumane practices that some horrific humans put animals through. I found that the more politicians and people who were higher up decision makers that I spoke to, the less compassion, emotion and heart they had. It reminded me how hard people get when they climb that corporate or political ladder, till they get to the top and they don't feel anything anymore so their judgment is impeded. It seemed to me that they became as hard as the concrete grey buildings they hid in. And as this world is being more and more built on, and the decision makers become harder inside – we find ourselves living in a world of stone. Yet, the more people I heard from through email, or letters who are fans of our music and who are "different" feel incredibly alone. So this was my battle cry to them that we are not alone though we may feel it sometimes, there are many more out there who still think and feel just like we do and if we all bond together we can make a difference in this sometimes all too cold world.

#### **What inspired Home Again?**

CN- When you're in a band you spend most of your time traveling. I found myself really looking forward to the places we were scheduled to go, but when you are away from home for a month or so you start to feel empty. And returning home to your sanctuary after being away is one of the greatest feelings you can have. So Home Again was inspired by that concept. Musically we wanted to have that "those were the days" type of feel and Ritchie found this great old Spanish song that he used as the bridge from the old tune to our new original song.

#### **On the DVD you play a song written by Henry VIII – how did you find it?**

CN- Ritchie was first turned onto Renaissance music in 1971 while watching the BBC special King Henry the VIII and His Wives. The musical score was arranged and performed by David Munrow and the Early Music Consort of London. As soon as Ritchie heard that score he was hooked on Renaissance melodies. Though he doesn't like lute music! (Funny for a guitarist, huh?) He loves the woodwinds, the ones I play. We often say the songs from the Renaissance that were played on the woodwinds were the rock music of their day because the riffs are so prominent. You could play it on a shawm or an electric guitar and it would work either way.

#### **How do you find the other Renaissance songs you play?**

CN- Ritchie has been collecting them for years. Many of the bands he listens to are strictly purist so you'll find the same songs being played in a similar manner by many bands internationally trying to duplicate

exactly what it sounded like back then. Although we listen to that music, that's not what we do. We take those melodies and add new instrumentation, new lyrics, new arrangements and breathe a new life into the original song. Purist bands would say its blasphemy but, as I said before, we're always braving our own path no matter what anyone says. Music has to reflect you and everything you do in creating it, is for the sake of the song. There are many purist bands that are amazing out there, we love listening to them- but playing that style- it's just not what we do.

#### **Where do you get your instruments? Do you make them, scour antique music stores...?**

CN- I find them all around the world in old music shops. I found some great ones in Prague, and my cornamuse is from New Hope, PA. The Marshall shawm I ordered on-line, and he actually died right before he finished it so his wife finished it for me. I think that's why it's my favorite; because a great shawm player's spirit still resides around it. Some others I have gotten through the E-M-S online which is an early music shop based in England. That same shop I went into last time I was in the UK and got my Crumhorn.

#### **What is the horn-like instrument that you play in your DVD "Paris Moon"?**

CN- That would be either the Marshall Shawm or the medieval shawm.

#### **Can you tell us about some of the instruments you play? Their historical background, etc.**

CN- I play a number of renaissance woodwind instruments. The shawms, both my Marshall one and medieval one, rauchepfifes, bombardas, cornamuses. These are double reed woodwinds that were usually used to announce the queen or make a lot of noise going into war. The cornamuse is a more soft muted sound in comparison to the other two. The crumhorn, is a double reed but the body of the instrument bends like a "U" shape. Also, the gems horn which is a cow's horn, the bagpipe chanters- the fingering pipe for a bagpipe; and pennywhistles and recorders of course. I also play the hurdy gurdy. That is a stringed instrument with pegs and a wheel.

#### **When you travel in search of "new" Renaissance music inspiration, how do you come upon these old songs? Through playing with other musicians, written songs/music, or...?**

CN- We have made a great deal of friends in the renaissance and medieval music world so we just steal songs from them! There are bands that we have been inspired by for years, like Des Geyers from Germany, or new ones like Gothian from Czech, or even when we get to places and fans make us compilations of traditional songs from their region- that's how we got the musical idea for 25 Years. It was on a compiled CD of Balkan Shepherd music that we got when we

played the Ukraine. You probably wouldn't recognize the song we made it into if you heard it- but the spirit of the song is there.

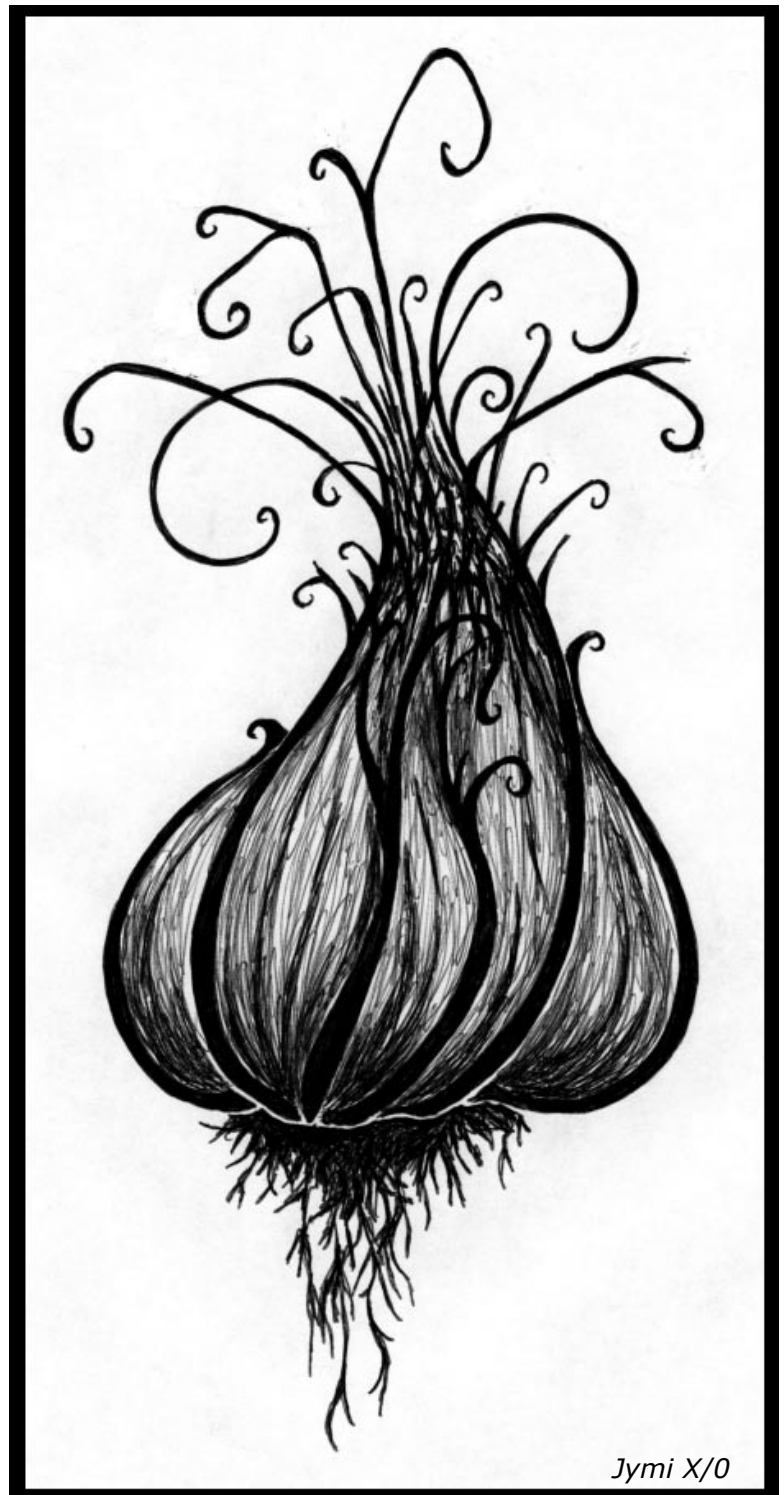
**Any plans for your music for the future that you'd like to share with us?**

CN- Yes, we have a new CD that is coming out late spring. We're actually in the studio now finishing up some of the tracks. My character in the fantasy-based theme parks Magiquest has expanded from Princess Candice to including Princess Amora (which is also me!) so I will be seen in all the Magiquest parks that are opening internationally including their latest ones in Japan and throughout the Great Wolf Lodges in the US. Also, I will be in a movie called "The House of Eternity" which will be released in October in the US. The subject matter is fascinating. Without giving too much away it is about an innocent girl who gets caught up in the superstition of the day in the 1700's. My role is a woman named Emily who lived not long after the hysteria of the Salem witch trials, and one morning, an incident occurs that causes judging eyes to look her way. It's a horror film, but the villain may wind up stealing your heart when you realize why he does what he does and how it's all in the name of love. You can see more at [www.houseofeternity.com](http://www.houseofeternity.com)

**Do you ever do concerts in the U.S.? If so, where can I get a schedule of where and when?**

CN- Yes of course, we just played the east coast in October. I'm sure we will be back- we had such a great time and a great reception here. But for up to the minute news flashes on where we'll be you can check [www.blackmoresnight.com](http://www.blackmoresnight.com) or my website at [www.candicenight.com](http://www.candicenight.com)

*For more information about Blackmore's Night and their music, please see the Muse Reviews column. Their music is reviewed there.*



*Jymi X/O*

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DVD/CD Review:

# BLACKMORE'S NIGHT

"Paris Moon"

– Candice Night (as lead vocalist)  
with Richie Blackmore

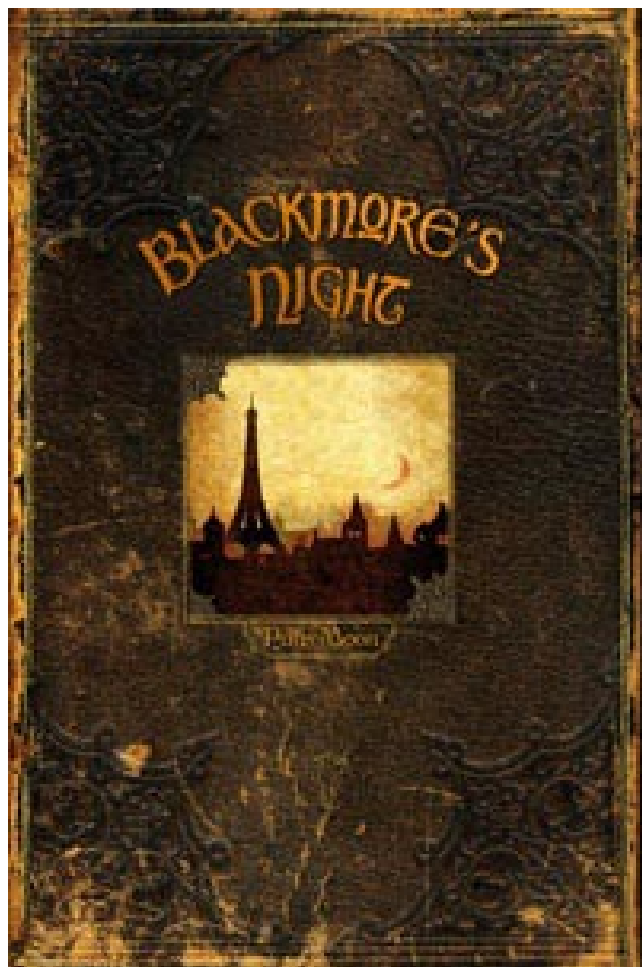
"Winter Carols"

STEAMHAMMER/SPV

# MUSE REVIEWS

Quite simply, Candice Night's voice is as beautiful as she is. Her crystalline voice shines like a beacon in this new CD/DVD of the band "Blackmore's Night", formed by the cofounder of the old band, Deep Purple. Blackmore has been called one of the top ten guitarists in the world. After Deep Purple, Blackmore and his partner, the lovely Candice Night, formed a new group, Blackmore's Night, which produces Renaissance songs that are reworked by the group. Candice Night is the female vocalist for the group and she is obviously worthy of the title, from the first moment she begins to sing. Ms. Night is also the lyricist for the group, and if you read her interview in this issue, you will get a sampling of the poetic wording she uses. She truly has a way with words.

The DVD is spellbinding; in fact, I think I forgot to breathe during the first 45 minutes of the video, I was so amazed. It has power and energy and the songs are absolutely beautiful. The DVD is filmed in Paris at the lovely Olympia Paris. The sound quality is also excellent and the photography is awesome.



If you like Renaissance music, you'll love this new DVD. It comes in a very nice fold-up box, with a program which lists the words to all the songs; and it has not only the DVD of their concert, but also a CD with 9 of their songs, if you want to just listen to the music. But beware, don't put this music on if you're going to clean house or wash the dog while listening— you won't be able to refrain from putting your work down and dancing and singing to it!

Blackmore's Night has also released a CD entitled "Winter Carols", songs for the wintertime and for Yule. Though I didn't think it was quite as good as Paris Moon, it was still quite beautiful and made for fine Yule season listening.

--Ariel Monserrat