

# ray cooper

## Ray Cooper

The new album *Even For A Shadow*

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*Even For A Shadow* is singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist Ray Cooper's fifth solo album and is released twelve years after he ended 23 years as a member of Oysterband.

Ray Cooper's strengths as a songwriter and arranger are particularly evident on the new album. The British singer-songwriter, who lives in Sweden, worked on the album for two years. The folk influences can still be heard clearly, but there are more echoes of other musical trends such as Americana than on his previous albums.

*'A journey, and a long one, over forty solo tours in the last twelve years and a lot of time to think. I get many of my song ideas when I am driving; it is also the only time I listen to music. These songs are my memories, imagined conversations and thoughts. This album is like a car journey and the kind of radio I would like to hear, but rarely find'.  
Ray Cooper*

Although Ray recorded most of the instruments himself, using piano, guitars, cello, bass, harmonica, harmonium, mandolin, percussion and kantele, he got support from John Eriksson (Peter Björn and John) on drums, Gustav Andersson on piano, Ben Paley on the fiddle, Anders Peev on the nyckelharpa and Hamburg church musicians on trumpets and trombones. He also recorded vocal duets with three different singers: Emma Härdelin (Garmarna, Triakel), Sunniva Bondesson (Baskery) and Kathryn Roberts (Equation, Kathryn Roberts and Sean Lakeman duo).

One song from the album, "Falling Like Thunder", was released in three versions as the first single in December 2023. There is now a fourth version on the album. A video for the single release was designed by the well-known English video artist and singer Marry Waterson. Ray himself says of this song: "I was brought up on delusions; delusions of progress; delusions of history; delusions of western superiority; thinly disguised racism. The ideas in this song could have been made into several songs but I had to let it all out, standing on a box in the market square shouting like a madman".

After the eight original compositions and three traditional songs newly arranged by Ray, the album ends with the well-known Jimmy Webb song "Adios".

The album was recorded in Ray's studio in Sweden. Additional overdubs were added in Devon, Hamburg and Berlin. Al Scott was at the mixing desk in Brighton.

In 2024, Ray Cooper will be touring in the UK in October and in Germany for two tours in May and September.

## Short biography

Ray Cooper started playing in bands at the age of sixteen. After studying at Art College in Brighton, he became a member of the punk band Amazorblades, moved to London and began working with other bands and genres. He was already an experienced session musician and had worked with producers such as Steve Lillywhite, Martin Rushent, Phil Chevron, Joe Jackson, Pete Bellotte, Aki Dean, and Edwin Starr when he became a member of 3 Mustaphas 3 in 1982.

He then moved repeatedly between rock, punk, pop and world music, working as a singer, bassist and cellist before joining the Oysterband and embarking on a long journey to his own roots. In 2000, Cooper moved to Sweden, but continued to work with the Oysterband, with whom he performed in 27 countries and recorded many albums. In 2012 the band won three BBC Radio 2 "Folk Awards" for Best Group, Best Album and Best Traditional Track, appeared on the Later with Jools Holland show and were declared one of the three "Icons of Folk" by FROOTS magazine. Despite the great success, Cooper decided to leave the band in 2013 and start a solo career, which he has since successfully pursued with four albums to date. Two of them were nominated for the German Record Critics' Prize.

The press about Ray Cooper's previous album Land Of Heroes:

Maverick magazine:

*'Land of Heroes proves to be an exceptional album from an awe-inspiring musician and a must in any music lovers collection'*

RnR magazine

*'...it will draw you in, like Scandi noir television, and you'll keep going back for more.'*

The Beat

*'If Leonard Cohen and Jacqueline du Pré had produced a child, they would have named him Ray Cooper.....my new favourite CD'*

Folkradio *'... this is his fourth solo album and it is a cracker'.*

Fatea *'... yet another magnificent album, which oozes class.....Land of Heroes' is veritable feast, and in it, its creator, Ray Cooper, demonstrates the work of a songsmith of exceptional originality, perspicacity and talent.'*

Fatea magazine 'Falling Like Thunder' single review December 2023

*The new single from singer songwriter and multi-instrumentalist, Ray Cooper, is quite extraordinary. Released ahead of his forthcoming album (due April 2024), 'Falling Like Thunder' is a complex mix of 'Oysterband' influenced folk rock, dance beat and a soap box rant about the moral injustice of twenty first century life. ...This is a remarkable song with a very clear message of social conscience, and whets the appetite for the full album to follow next year. SG*

Video Link for the song 'Falling Like Thunder'



Press contact:

Richard Penguin

01603 408 525

[mail@richardpenguin.co.uk](mailto:mail@richardpenguin.co.uk)

[www.raycooper.org](http://www.raycooper.org)

[www.WestparkMusic.de](http://www.WestparkMusic.de)

<https://linktr.ee/RayCooper>