

## „Letzte Nightflight-Worte von Alan“

### Alan Bangs‘Moderation der letzten Nightflight-Sendung

bei DradioWissen am 15.12.2013

@ 00:00 Beginn der Sendung (ca. 23:03 Uhr)

@ 02:47-02:53: **So this - for the very last time - is Nightflight with Alan Bangs!**

@ 03:43-03:51: Es ist eine Zeitbombe, and it's your time, that it's tick-tick-ticking away

@ 11:19-16:05: There's not just a hole in the sky, *there are 5000 holes in Blackburn, Lancashire. So now they know how many holes it takes to fill the Albert Hall.* And there are many more holes in the road ahead.

Überall, wo man hinschaut, gibt es Löcher, Risse, Brüche und Frakturen.

But it's through the cracks in the system, that the light gets in.

Und egal wie sehr sich die Richter und die Türsteher und die Schrankenwärter bemühen, die Löcher zu stopfen und die Risse zu blockieren, das Licht wird immer einen Weg finden, durch die Wände zu dringen und früher oder später die Mauern ganz einstürzen zu lassen.

Aber wie dem auch sei, dies ist 187ste Ausgabe von **Nightflight** und gleichzeitig die allerletzte Sendung von mir, die Sie auf DRadio Wissen hören werden. Und ich habe heute Abend ausnahmsweise vor, länger als sonst zu reden und hauptsächlich auf Englisch.

Why English? Well, partly because Dietmar Timm said, he had no objections to me using different languages and since his retirement at the end of last year no one has suggested that this was no longer acceptable.

Partly, because it's easier for me, English after all is my first language, and partly because it no longer makes any difference anyway.

This will also be the last program from me my mother will hear. She's 85, she lives in London, and thanks to the internet she's been able to listen to nearly every one of my programs live. And after each one she's even sent me her marks "out of ten".

#### **Let's consider for a moment the things I could have done, but chose not to do:**

- I could have carried on from where I left off when I first presented **Night Flight for BFBS** and later for WDR.
- I could have played more acoustic music.
- I could have talked at length about the background or the meaning or the importance of each and every song. But that was the last thing I wanted to do. My opinion about what I play doesn't matter.

I want the music, and more specifically the program in its entirety to speak for itself.

- I could have told you about the books I've read, the films I've seen, the places I visited, the people I've met, the musicians I've interviewed - although that's something I hardly do at all anymore.
- And I've could have rambled on and on about all manner of things under the false impression, they were interesting simply because I had experienced them.
- Or I could have done what many people who work for radio stations assume is the only thing DJ's above a certain age - let's say 30 - are capable of doing: namely play oldies. God forbid!  
I'll never understand why this assumption is still so prevalent. I've always been curious to learn more and I think it doesn't take a great leap of faith to believe that this is probably true of most people. And every time I find a new piece of music that I really like, I think that there must be so much more still out there that I haven't heard yet and maybe never will.

**In a nutshell:** The things that drive me on are simple curiosity, a desire to discover things for myself and a need to hear what musicians from all over the world had created in the hope that maybe one day it will be heard by someone who can relate to it and admire it for the way in which it somehow speaks to them directly. My job has always been to try to find that music and to share it with others on the radio. I love the kick I get whenever a piece of music blows me away. And that's something that happens far more often than you might think.

- I could have turned Night Flight into yet another monothematic program: Playing songs about coffee one week, mother-in-laws the next and maybe saving death for the final program. But hey, that's been done already. And anyway: Do we really need more programs like that? Why limit your imagination and take away your own freedom with pre-set boundaries? As Oscar Wilde once said: "*Consistency is the last refuge of the unimaginative.*"

I've said it before but I think it's worth repeating: It is what it is. So, please, just let the mystery be.

So weit so gut.

But now it's time to crank up the volume, to let in the light and to listen to the music.  
Burn!

[...Musik]

@ 42:49-48:41:

Before I leave I'd like to talk about **what I'm going to miss the most?**

- I'm going to miss searching for new music.
- I'm going to miss thinking about ways to mix and mash up what I find into new combinations.

Auch wenn die Beschreibung für manche Leute etwas präventiös klingen mag, „Nightflight“ wird nicht zusammengestellt, „Nightflight“ wird durchkomponiert.

- Obviously I miss sharing the music with whoever chooses to listen.
- But **the thing I'll miss the most** is not knowing what the 200th or the 250th edition of Nightflight would have sounded like. I've never planned ahead, I've never stockpiled ideas. Each week I started from scratch, partly because there were never enough days in the week to work on more than one program at a time, but more importantly, because I wanted to surprise myself by creating something entirely fresh, using music I'd never played before and often from artists I'd never even heard of before.
- One of the things I wanted to achieve when I was given this opportunity by Dietmar Timm at the beginning of 2010 was to create a program that you could listen to more than once, in the hope that each time you listen you might hear something different depending upon where you were, what was happening around you or what mood you were in. This is one reason why I chose to speak only when absolutely necessary, because listening to me - say the same thing more than once - might have put you off listening to the program a second or even a third time.

It was very hard to know what to play in tonight's program. **I didn't wanted to do another typical Good-Bye-Program**, I've already done enough of those - thank you very much! -

And for a while I considered creating a mix using only music I'd never played before, in other words, to stick to what I've done pretty much from day one - the implication being that this wasn't the end of the line, but just another station along the way.

**But then I decided that there were certain things that I really wanted to play just because they're so powerful and because they represent what to my mind music is capable of.**

- The greatest music expresses emotions that couldn't be expressed in any other way. I'd like to thank the sound engineers who helped me polish my own rough mixes of Nightflight and obviously I'd like to thank everyone who listened and everyone who made very interesting contributions to the blog, they were always a pleasure to read -so, thank you very much for them.
- As soon as I finish a program I put it out of my mind and move on to the next one. I look forward, not back, and it's hugely disappointing and frustrating for me that the opportunity to do exactly that has once again been taken away from me. And, of course, from everyone who ever - over the years - has enjoyed listening to Nightflight.
- Der Weg ist das Ziel! Und an das, wonach wir immer gesucht haben und wofür wir so weit gereist sind, war eigentlich immer ganz nah. Schade, dass die Reise jetzt zu Ende ist. Schade auch, dass nach Dietmar Timm niemand mehr bereit war, diese Sendung zu unterstützen bzw. zu fördern.

**The story is told, that as the Titanic sank**, the orchestra on board continued to play, and one of the pieces they played was the hymn "*Nearer My God To Thee*". It's

a known fact that under water sounds can travel for vast distances, this is why whales are able to communicate with one another across hundreds of miles. And there's a theory that once a sound has been released under water, it continues forever.

Admittedly this sounds very far-fetched, but it's a comforting thought that even after the Titanic had disappeared beneath the waves, and for years afterwards, the melody of "*Nearer My God To Thee*" carried on reverberating through the oceans.

**And I'd like to imagine that somehow the music I'll no longer be able to play on air, will somehow continue to make waves - at least metaphorically - and that you somehow get to hear it, even though it will be no longer be played on the radio.** But I am realistic enough to know, that that probably isn't going to happen.

**Neil Young** famously said: "*It's better to burn out than to fade away*" and although I agree with him in principal, at the moment I see no reason why it should be necessary to do either. Nightflight in my own very humble opinion is still in the ascendancy, it still has the potential to evolve and mutate in different ways. And it's very unfortunate, again in my own very humble opinion that its evolution has to come to such a premature end.

The first piece of music I played in tonight's program - well actually, as so often, there were two pieces playing simultaneously - is a new track by **Sylvain Chavaux** called very appropriately "*The Most Beautiful Music*". Anyway I'd like to quote the lyric in full. Sylvain Chavaux sings:

*"The landscape has changed beyond recognition / and the clock can't be turned back. / The horse is bolted / and there's no way of getting it / back to the stable."* And then he adds twice in almost as an afterthought: "*Fail better*".

This of course is a reference to something **Samuel Beckett** once wrote, namely: "*Ever tried, ever failed, no matter. Try again, fail again. Fail better.*"

And in conclusion, let me just say that

**I would always chose to fail better rather that to succeed worse.**

@55:05-55:15: Es gibt definitiv viel mehr zu sehen und zu hören als das, was uns immer wieder vorgegaukelt wird.

*[„Out of the blue, into the black. You pay for this and they give you that. Once you're gone you can't come back. When you're out of the blue, and into the black“]*

@ 55:43-55:57: Das Licht verschwindet, es hat hier nichts mehr verloren. Lass uns aber hoffen, dass es bald woanders auftauchen wird, stärker und heller als je zuvor um die Dunkelheit wieder zu verdrängen.

*[„The king is gone but he's not forgotten. Is this the tale of Johnny Rotten? It's better to burn out than fade away. The king is gone but he's not forgotten“]*

@56:27-56:36: Nichts wird vergessen, nur zurückgelassen, bis es eines Tages vielleicht wieder entdeckt wird.

*[„Hey hey, my my. Rock'n'Roll can never die. There's more to the picture than meets the eye. Hey hey, my my.“ ]*

**So I am so out of here, and I sure as hell ain't coming back.**

---