

# REALMS OF FANTASY

## Interview: Blackmore's Night



*To many in the fantasy world [Blackmore's Night](#) needs no introduction. Blackmore's Night weaves a magical blend of renaissance folk music and classical music with the unmistakable sounds of Ritchie Blackmore's guitar virtuosity. In addition to their seven studio albums, two compilations, and two live albums, Blackmore's Night has also performed the music for *MagiQuest*, the magical live action game.*

**Warren Lapine:** We really enjoyed your show in Charlotte, how did the rest of your recent US tour go?

**Candice Night:** It was really great. After spending so much time overseas playing in castles it is always a treat to be able to play some tour dates at home. It's rare that we play the USA so it's always a special occasion for us when we do. It's a difficult market. But the fans in America have the best imaginations so they really get the fantasy escape of the music or the dressing up in costume and the different aspects of our show. And our fans are amazing and really appreciative when we come to town so it really becomes quite an event.

**WL:** I understand you have a new CD coming out soon, what can you tell me about it?

**CN:** We have 5 songs already recorded for it. We like to pick up inspiration as we travel around the world. There is such a wealth of faerie tales and myths and legends or local folklore that we learn about as we play different in countries and regions. We pick up on not only the different visuals and customs but the local music as well so we are able to infuse all these different inspirations into our music. We found the best way to approach recording is to do some songs, then go on tour and step away from those songs so that

you can revisit them and hear them with fresh ears when you go back into the studio to record the next batch. Although we have the basic ideas, arrangements and lyrical content down, we never really know what direction the CD is going to take us in until we reflect on it after we create it. We just let the music lead us where it wants us to go. We just try to channel it.

**WL:** My five-year-old daughter wanted me to tell you that her favorite song is “Fires at Midnight,” and she wants to know which of your CDs and songs are your favorites, and why?

**Ritchie Blackmore:** I have different ones at different times. I’m really pleased with how Winter Carols came out. I find I can listen to that year round.

**CN:** It is hard to choose a favorite because each one is like looking at a scrapbook of your life and photos of where you were at that moment. They are all strong songs and CDs in their own right. And my favorite changes daily. My favorite ones to do in concert are the more dramatic songs like “Fires At Midnight,” “Ghost of a Rose,” “Village Lanterne” and “Circle.” But in more reflective moments I’ll go to “Hanging Tree,” “Empty Words” or “Windmills.” But I guess its like choosing a favorite child. I really love them all equally.

**WL:** Ritchie, do you approach writing songs any differently for Blackmore’s Night than you did for Rainbow or Deep Purple?



**RB:** Yes. With Purple I would come up with a riff and a chord progression and Ian would come up with the top line. Sometimes I would have no idea what that top line would be. With Rainbow I would have a riff and some heavy chords and a vague idea of what the melody would be. With this project, I come up with a chord progression and a melody, and get Candice to sing it to see if there is potential. Then she’ll put the lyrics to it and then I might add a riff at the tail end of the whole thing integrated into the chord structure. Sometimes Candice will tell me I have played a riff or melody before somewhere else, I sometimes repeat myself. I sometimes repeat myself. I tend also to borrow heavily from medieval renaissance melodies.

**WL:** Candice, before meeting Ritchie and before the two of you formed Blackmore's Night, did you have musical aspirations?

**CN:** Music was always my great escape. I felt like people who wrote those songs that I connected with on a deep emotional level understood me, even though they were strangers, more than people who were close to me. But I thought that I would work at a radio station or a record company — just to be able to be around music. I was at a radio station for 1 1/2 yr when I met Ritchie and he swept me away from that path. I didn't think I'd be the one writing or performing the songs. Now I can't imagine not doing it.

**WL:** Candice, tell me about your role as Amora in MagiQuest. How did it come about, and was it fun?

**CN:** Actually, I began as Princess Candice and that started when the creators of MagicQuest came to see our show in Las Vegas and loved the interaction between Ritchie and myself. They saw him as a "shadow figure" and me as a "Princess of Light." They had an idea in mind to utilize cutting-edge technology with fantasy. So essentially, they take computer technology, embed it in magic wands, and created a theme park complete with wizards, dragons, faeries, unicorns and goblins. Stonehenge is in the center of the park and holds the key to your next levels of adventure. There are multiple layers of quests you can go on. In my quest, the goblins have stolen my jewels and you need to obtain the healing runes of Andover and return them to me so that my healing singing voice can be returned and I can heal the forest animals. It is really an amazing concept. The wand will remember you and what level you are at no matter how much time lapses. You can fight a dragon and the floor moves beneath you as heat blows at you from the walls when he breathes fire. It's for all ages because the little children believe in magic and believe that when they wave their wand and the doors open or crystals sing to them, it is true magic, but the teens and adults understand the concept of the game. Princess Amora, my alter ego! is a part I play at the Magiquests at Great Wolf Lodge. She is a forest warrior and has the celestial bear constellation as her spirit guide. The wolves are her friends.

**WL:** Ritchie, I'm amazed at how well your guitar riffs go with some of the exotic instruments that Blackmore's Night uses. Do you have to approach playing with something like a hurdy gurdy any differently than if you were just playing a more straight up rock song?

**RB:** Yes, I have written many ideas for melodies using the hurdy gurdy and the nickelharp. As I am not very musically adept at those instruments I come up with different angles on certain melodies compared to how I would've played it on the guitar. It encourages me to go into different areas that I wouldn't explore with the guitar.

**WL:** I understand that the two of you hunt for ghosts. What does that entail?

**RB:** It's more likely they hunt for us. It is just a hobby we both have. Paranormal.

**CN:** We have done that for many years. It would be foolish to believe that there is just this one dimension or just us existing and nothing else. So we communicate with the other worlds when we feel there is something present.

**WL:** Is there any question that you've always wished someone would ask you in an interview, but no one ever has? If so, what would be the answer?

**RB:** Why do I not have a lower back tattoo. The answer is that it is called a tramp stamp, not that I have anything against tramps. We are all tramps at heart.

**WL:** Is there anything you'd like to say to your fans?

**RB:** Thanks for having an interest in our music. We know that we are not the trend of the day type of band and it takes a bit of courage to like our music.

**CN:** And always to believe in magic...

**WL:** Thanks for the interview.

