

About Ronny van Dyke

Where do I come from, where do I go?

I was born as Tom Hartmann on March 1st in 1956 in Duisburg, a working class town in Germany. My father was a sculptor and a scene painter and he taught me how to play my first chords on the acoustic guitar. My mother was a hobby artist and a secretary. Both passed away a few years ago. Today I live in Nuremberg, Germany and work as a singer, songwriter, author, producer and model.

Where does the name Ronny van Dyke come from? This is a funny little story. I was sitting in a bar together with a friend of mine and we were talking about songwriting. What would be the best place to write a new song. We agreed that this had to be a lonesome place and my friend came up with the idea to go to Northern Germany, close to a dyke. On the one hand you would have the sea on the other hand a lonely flat area with some cows and sheep on it. The first name of my friend is Ronald and so the idea for Ronny van Dyke was born.

Ronny van Dyke and Rock`n`Roll- this is a long and eventful story as a singer and songwriter in various projects. My first gig was in a small town near Fürth, Germany in the year 1974. It was a psychedelic Rock band named PSI and my job was to write the song lyrics, to sing and play the guitar. Times were changing- as well as projects and bands. Later on in the 80s I came up with a band called „Tom Hartmann Band“. This one was a „neue Deutsche Welle“ Punk Rock Band with German lyrics. The band was founded and 6 weeks later we were invited to participate at a band contest. We won 2nd place and the final show was broadcasted by Bayern3, an German Radio Station.

Some years later in the 90s I founded a band called „Wham Bam thank You Mam“ also a wild punk rock band but in this case with english lyrics. The band created monthly comic stories published by a professional and well know comic publisher „U-Comix“. I developed the stories and the comic artist was an old friend of mine the bass player Gerry Foth. The biggest thing ever was to have a live concert on top of the „Bahnhofshochhaus“ the only sky scraper in Fürth near the Railwaystation. We did it a little like the Beatles but without smashing a Steinway down to the street. The concert was filmed and the pictures were taken out of a helicopter- just like a very, very famous rock band with a major company deal in the back. But this was not the case- ok the video ran a few times on MTV, we sold about 3000 Records and we played for a few thousand people at festivals for some years but this was it so far.

Because I was out of money I started projects to earn GEMA royalties. I wrote German lyrics for existing songs and recorded a few of them, sold them successfully. Later on I was on tour as a singer with a project called „Rock contra Klassik“ together with a classic quartet, invited by a famous German composer. This enabled me to deliver songs as background music for a German soap called „Marienhof“. From the financial aspect this was the most successful time. I earned a lot of GEMA royalties and this enabled me to buy a Mustang 68 from Beverly Hills, LA, California. As ever- money came in and I felt myself obligated to blow it.

This was marrying below my class to be born as Ronny van Dyke in a Mustang and start the last and best level of my career. From the first day on I was a real Rock star. I founded the band „Trash Pop Pilots“ in 2008 and in this year we uploaded some live videos to youtube. In October 2008 the video for the song „RingDingaDing“ hit the roof with more than 100.000 views, it was number 3 at OurStage one of the most popular newcomer portals in the US. And so the story goes on. 2010 the „Trash Pop Pilots“ were support for „The Hooters“, we had a lot of good shows in big locations as the Kulturforum, Fürth with a great audience. In 2014 we published our first album „Rockers n Lovers“ the regional German press wrote some very warm and gentle articles about us, we got airplay at Bayern 3 and were Newcomer of the week with the song „please, please love!“. On ReverbNation, one of the most important newcomer portals worldwide the song „Sleeping Bird“ of the album was number 1 in Germany.

Just right now in 2015/16 I'm celebrating 42 years on stage and it feels like starting my career as a greenhorn yesterday. At this time I have a band every singer and songwriter would dream of. Some really good friends, all together as one with the only important intension that a musician ever should have: Rock n Roll as a life philosophy. Simple, loud, sweaty and noisy but seriously deep from the heart