

[00:00:00]

Transition: Gentle, trilling music with a steady drumbeat plays under the dialogue.

Promo: *Bullseye with Jesse Thorn* is a production of MaximumFun.org and is distributed by NPR.

Music: “Huddle Formation” from the album *Thunder, Lightning, Strike* by The Go! Team—a fast, upbeat, peppy song. Music plays as Jesse speaks, then fades out.

Jesse Thorn: It's *Bullseye*. I'm Jesse Thorn. So, in the early '60s, a lot of English musical acts, pop music acts, sounded like this.

Music: “Route 66” from the album *The Rolling Stones* by The Rolling Stones.

Well, if you ever plan to motor west

Just take my way...

(Music fades out.)

Jesse Thorn: That is, of course, The Rolling Stones. First song on their first album. It is great. I'm not suggesting otherwise. But on that track—and I don't think The Rolling Stones would disagree with me here—they are basically doing their best to sound like Chuck Berry or Little Richard or Bo Diddley or any of a number of other Black American rock and rollers. The Rolling Stones, of course, had many compatriots riding that wave and, you know, so on and so forth. The British invasion changed music forever, et cetera.

A few years after that, a new generation of British musicians decided to take a different approach. They borrowed the musical vocabulary of those trendy rock bands—the guitars, bass, drums, the catchy hooks, the cool outfits—and then they applied that vocabulary to something very, very old: traditional English folk songs. The result was both catchy and haunting.

Music: “Matty Groves” from the album *Liege & Lief* by Fairport Convention.

A holiday, a holiday

And the first one of the year

(Music fades out.)

Jesse Thorn: One of the most prominent bands from this scene was Fairport Convention. That's the band you just heard or have been hearing. Their albums, *Unhalfbricking* and *Liege & Leaf*, defined British folk rock and brought in fans from all over the world. They featured Sandy Denny on vocals. She'd just joined the band a few months beforehand. And on guitar,

my guest Richard Thompson. Denny and Thompson left Fairport Convention at the turn of the decade. Denny performed regularly until her death in 1978. Thompson began his post Fairport career as a duo with his then wife, Linda. Then, after the couple split, as a solo artist. Thompson has recorded over two dozen albums. His latest is called *Ship to Shore*. He was nice enough to bring his acoustic guitar to the studio to perform some songs for us. He's also accompanied by his wife, Zara Phillips. A warning before we get into the interview—the first song, “The Old Pack Mule”, it's called, includes some graphic descriptions of violence against animals. If that's something you're sensitive to, we thought you might want to know. The song's about four minutes long. Anyway, let's get into it. My interview with folk legend Richard Thompson.

Transition: Thumpy synth with a syncopated beat.

Jesse Thorn: Richard Thompson, welcome to *Bullseye*. I'm so happy to have you on the show. It's a real honor.

Richard Thompson: Thank you. It's great to be here. Thanks for having me.

Jesse Thorn: And you have a guitar with you. And we figured we would start with a song. Is this one just you, or is your wife Zara going to be joining you?

Richard Thompson: She's gonna join me. She's sitting over there, so we might as well keep her busy if possible.

(Zara laughs.)

Yeah. Hello, Zara. How are you?

Zara Phillips: I'm fine.

Jesse Thorn: Richard Thompson's wife, Zara Phillips, joining him here on the program. What song would you like to sing, Richard?

Richard Thompson: Yeah, sure. We're gonna sing something called “The Old Pack Mule”.

Music: “The Old Pack Mule” performed live by Richard Thompson and Zara Phillips.

Oh, the old pack mule, he's breathed his dying breath

Poor old mule, they worked his arse to death

His body's still warm, now his soul's gone up above

So, sharpen up your knives, boys

How shall we carve him up?

And who wants his hooves?

We'll melt them down for glue

We'll suck the marrow from his bones and skin the bugger too

And who wants his tongue, that made a bloody row?

He screeched, and he honked, but death has dumbbed him now

Oh, it's hard times and hungry times

There's nothing left to eat

I'd stab my neighbor in the back for a little bit of meat

It's hard times and hungry times

Oh, wouldn't it be kind

To save a little something nice for them that's left behind?

[00:05:00]

Who wants his liver?

There's rich pickings there

We'll chop it up and carve it up

And each shall have a share

And who wants his brain? That silly poor old dunce

They say he hardly used it; he might have used it once

Oh, it's hard times and hungry times

There's nothing left to eat

I'd stab my neighbor in the back for a little bit of meat

It's hard times and hungry times

Oh, wouldn't it be kind

To save a little something nice for them that's left behind?

Oh, the old pack mule, he's breathed his dying breath

Poor old Mule, they worked his arse to death

His body's still warm, though his soul's gone up above

So, sharpen up your knives, boys

How shall we carve him up?

(Song ends.)

Jesse Thorn: That was fantastic, thank you so much.

Richard Thompson: Thank you! My pleasure.

Jesse Thorn: When I was in high school, I was in a production of *Mother Courage and Her Children*. That has a little bit of a “Ballad of Mother Courage” vibe to it.

Richard Thompson: Yeah, I think—well, it's the same tempo as a song that I used to play in a show called *A Thousand Years of Popular Music*, which is “So ben mi ch’ha bon tempo”, which is from Italian 16th century. So, it's a similar kind of rhythm. And I did look up the dance steps the other day, to “So ben mi ch’ha”, and it's a tricky dance. I tell you, tricky and slightly frivolous. Not that dancing should not be frivolous.

Jesse Thorn: *(Laughs.)* I mean, it's hard to miss the idea that as you get along in your career, you might be thinking about what happens to an old pack mule.

Richard Thompson: This is true, this is true. Yes, I'm not sure I wrote it with those analogies in mind, but there you go. People may draw inference wherever they will.

Jesse Thorn: I was gonna say, were you thinking about eating or being eaten?

Richard Thompson: (*Chuckling.*) Being eaten. Yeah, probably more being eaten than the other process, yeah.

Jesse Thorn: When you're writing a song like that, are you thinking about its precedents? Like, are you thinking about the 17th century? Or is that a parallel that you draw afterwards?

Richard Thompson: Well, I'm thinking about, you know, the British tradition of music—which is my main wellspring, I suppose. My grounding, you know, my foundation for everything, really. And if you grow up in that tradition, then—you know, songs about eating packed meals, you know, become sort of everyday stuff really, everyday fare. There's endless murders and, you know, accidents down mineshafts and, you know, industrial disputes and downright murders and battles and god knows what in that tradition. It's a lot heavier than popular music, let's face it, you know.

Jesse Thorn: And I think growing up after the Second World War in England, wanting a piece of meat is not a foreign idea. You know what I mean?

Richard Thompson: No, I think wanting a piece of meat—yes, absolutely, but as kids we were more interested in sweets, which were rationed until some—I think it's like 1955 or something before sweets came off rationing. So, we were far more interested in that.

Jesse Thorn: What did you receive from your parents about the war?

Richard Thompson: About the war? Uh, they really like to not talk about it much. My father didn't talk about it hardly at all unless he'd been drinking a bit, in which case things would slip out. My mother loved the war. She thought it was fantastic. She said everyone was so nice during the war. Her and her cousin just had a great time. You know that they were air raid wardens.

[00:10:00]

They just thought it was fantastic. You know, my father was in the army. He was in the police at the beginning of the war, in the blitz. One of the first things he had to do was to pull the bodies out of an air raid shelter that had a direct hit. So, that was a kind of a dark beginning. He then went into the army, was a rifle instructor. And then he was—because of his police experience, they put him into something called the SA—that would be the Special Intelligence Bureau or something.

Jesse Thorn: Speaking of your father, one of the songs that you chose to perform today is a song that has to do with your experience of your father. It's a song called “Genesis Hall” that was released in 1969 on a Fairport Convention record. And you know, you didn't write many or most of the songs for the band in those days. So, what led you to write this one?

Richard Thompson: If I could remember, I would tell you. Let me think. (*Chuckles.*) It was a while ago. Well, it was like a protest song, I suppose. You know, which was fashionable at

the time. So, I thought, well, what's my equivalent of a protest song? And I'm thinking—there was this disused hotel in London. And people moved into it. You know, hippies moved into it and squatted it and weren't really doing anybody any harm. And one day the police came along and rather brutally threw everybody out. And the hotel was called “Genesis Hall”. And I thought, well, you know, my dad's in the police, and I can't believe he would do anything like that. You know, I could have been wrong about that, but I don't think he would have been so nasty about it. And so, the first line of the song is that, you know, “My father rides with his sheriffs.” So, I'm kind of taking a bit of that British traditional language to describe a contemporary event.

Jesse Thorn: Well, let's hear you play it. This is my guest, Richard Thompson, performing “Genesis Hall”.

Music: “Genesis Hall” performed live by Richard Thompson.

Oh, my father, he rides with your sheriffs

And I know he would never mean harm

But to see both sides of a quarrel

Is to judge without hate or alarm

Oh, oh, helpless and slow

And you don't have anywhere to go

Oh, you take away homes from the homeless

And leave them to die in the cold

The gypsy who begged for your favors

He will laugh in your face when you're old

Oh, oh, helpless and slow

And you don't have anywhere to go

*Well, one man he drinks up his whisky
And another man, he drinks up his wine
And they'll drink 'til their eyes are red with hate
For those of a different kind*

*Oh, when the rivers run thicker than trouble
I'll be there at your side in the flood
It was all I could do to keep myself
From taking revenge on your blood*

*Oh, oh, helpless and slow
And you don't have anywhere to go
Oh, oh, helpless and slow
And you don't have anywhere to go*

(Song ends.)

Jesse Thorn: It's a beautiful song. Thank you.

Richard Thompson: Thank you!

[00:15:00]

Jesse Thorn: More with Richard Thompson. Still to come. Stay with us. It's *Bullseye* from MaximumFun.org and NPR.

Transition: Thumpy synth with light vocalizations.

Jesse Thorn: Welcome back to *Bullseye*. I'm Jesse Thorn. My guest is Richard Thompson. He was a founding member of the British folk rock group Fairport Convention. He's also a solo artist with over 20 albums under his own name. His latest is *Ship to Shore*. Let's get back into the rest of our conversation.

Your father was Scottish. You grew up in England. What did it mean to you that your dad was a Scot?

Richard Thompson: I think, like a lot of exiles, he was kind of an extra Scottish, if you know what I mean. He was a sort of extremely keen to preserve his heritage. So, you know, the bookshelves were lined with Robert Burns and Walter Scott and books of actually border ballads, stuff like that as well. And he always celebrated Burns supper, Burns night. And New Year's Eve was a big deal. You know, we'd have dancing, sort of Jimmy Shand's records on New Year's Eve. Yeah, so, you know, kind of extra Scottish.

Jesse Thorn: Did you think it was cool, or were you embarrassed by it?

Richard Thompson: (*Chuckles.*) Probably neither. I mean, it didn't seem exceptional, not really. When I was at school, though, there was a kind of clique. I think there were three or four of us who had Scottish parentage, and we kind of hung out together.

Jesse Thorn: Did you talk about Scottish stuff together?

Richard Thompson: What, with my friends, you mean?

Jesse Thorn: Or was it a mutual defense society?

Richard Thompson: (*Chuckles.*) Yeah, it was kind of—I think it was mutual interest. We discussed our summer holidays, usually in Scotland, with our parents and whereabouts we went, you know. Oh, you went to Isle of Skye? Well, that's nice. You know, I went to Inverness, blah, blah, blah.

Jesse Thorn: Where did you go when you were on summer holiday?

Richard Thompson: On holidays? We went to the borders, the Scottish borders, to visit my grandparents, first of all, who lived in Dumfries—which is a sleepy little town close to the border. And then we'd go down to a chalet that we had by the seaside, a place called Southernness. And that was great fun. That was wonderful. But being in Dumfries was fun, especially when my sister still came with us. My big sister was five years older than me, but for a while we'd all do the trip together. But she was getting into rock and roll and in Dumfries they had jukeboxes. And that was my first real exposure to people like Buddy Holly, you know. It would get cranked up loud. You'd actually hear it loud—Buddy Holly, Elvis, Gene Vincent, Jerry Lee, you know, the good boys and the bad boys of rock and roll.

Jesse Thorn: Sometimes when I see like a video of particularly—I mean leaving aside Elvis,

particularly Little Richard and Jerry Lee Lewis, I just think, how could this have felt real to people? Like, if you're 14 years old and you see that on the television, to see somebody go that wild on stage was not something that, you know, even the blues precedents were doing on—certainly not on television, you know what I mean?

Richard Thompson: Yeah. I suppose that was, you know, a good example of the musical watershed that you had at that point. You know, JerryLee setting the piano on fire and stuff, it was just really anarchic, revolutionary—I suppose, in a way. And there's a kind of genius to those guys. I mean, Little Richard—I mean, extraordinary singer. JerryLee, just an amazing singer and pianist, who pulled a lot of roots together—you know, Black roots, White roots. I think there's a kind of real genius to some of those people. Eddie Cochran as well. I mean, just extraordinary people.

Jesse Thorn: It must have been interesting for you that it was so distinctly coming from somewhere else, right? That it was an—there was such an import.

Richard Thompson: Yes. All the good stuff, you know, initially certainly came from the States. And I think there was a lot of envy in Britain at just how wealthy America seemed to be at the end of World War II. Some statistics says that America was exactly twice as wealthy at the end of World War II as it was at the beginning of World War II. So, it did quite well financially out of the war, and we envied what we perceived of the lifestyle of the middle class in America, which seemed to be doing pretty well. And the music seemed to reflect that. You know, the music of something like the Everly Brothers. It just seemed such an ideal world somehow. Well, we didn't really understand, you know, that when they talked about school—

[00:20:00]

You know, all those Chuck Berry songs about school—I mean, British school was nothing like that. It was just completely different. (*Chuckles.*) And it wasn't really until we got homegrown versions—you know, Cliff Richard and the Shadows or something. And then the Beatles, you know, by '62 or '63, the Beatles were being something else. And then you had this whole other thing in Britain, especially in London. You had, you know, Swinging London. You had, you know, the fashion, the music, some of the movies as well. It became, you know, this capital of teenage culture.

Jesse Thorn: The Rolling Stones and the Beatles were, you know, a few years older than you. Enough that there was separation, right? You were looking up at them.

Richard Thompson: Yeah. It was—I think in popular music, rock, whatever you want to call it, there's about a generation every five years. And I was a generation younger, at least five years younger than The Stones, Beatles, et cetera.

Jesse Thorn: They were sort of coming to their forms of music by, you know, passing their own recreations of this American music through their own experiences. Is that what you aspired to do? Like, did you aspire to be either, you know, playing “Twist and Shout”, or “You Never Can Tell”, or playing—whatever, a Muddy Water song or something—the way that some of the folks who were a couple of years older than you were?

Richard Thompson: Well, I did all that. You know, I looked up to these people. I used to go and see these people live. And you know, when I was probably 14, certainly by the time of 15, you know, I was in bands. We were playing all that stuff. We were playing the blues, we were playing R&B. And that was just fun stuff to play, fun repertoire. You know, to play Bo Diddley, to play Chuck Berry. You know, all the stuff that The Stones were playing when they started out. But by the time I was 17, I was thinking, “Well, this is a crowded field.” You know, the field of UK blues impersonators, whatever you want to call them. You know, people impersonating the Buddy Guy, Otis Rush. I thought, “Well, you know, I'm going to be different.”

And at that point, you know, Fairport—my old band—started to get into the British tradition, and we started to do a few traditional songs. And we thought, well, this is probably our future, is to kind of blend, you know, rock music with something indigenous, with English, Irish, Scottish music.

Jesse Thorn: Were you writing your own songs?

Richard Thompson: I think by the time I was 18, I was writing my own songs, yeah.

Jesse Thorn: Why was that? Why write your own songs and not play the songs that were being played in a folk club?

Richard Thompson: Uuh, why do I write songs now? I don't know. It's just a drive to be creative, I think. I started off cowriting with some friends, and that was fun. And I thought, well, maybe I could do this on my own. Wouldn't that be nice? And so, I started to write on my own, and I just kept going.

Jesse Thorn: You sang in Fairport Convention, but you weren't by any means the singer. You were pretty low on the call sheet, lead vocals wise. How did you feel about your singing at the time?

Richard Thompson: I wish someone had taken us, you know, in 1967, when we were 18—17/18 years old, and said, “Okay, you're all going for singing lessons. You've got this great singer. You know, Sandy's a great singer. The rest of you need to catch up.” That would have been great. So, being in Sandy's shadow is fine. You know, I learnt a lot. And I could sing harmony to Sandy, because she was always in tune, so that was easy. But I think, you know, confidence came slowly. It took me a long time to get confident as a singer.

Jesse Thorn: What was it like when Sandy Denny showed up to the audition to sing in the band?

Richard Thompson: (*Chuckles.*) That was extraordinary. Auditions are hell. I mean, they're absolutely awful things to have to go through. And I think Sandy was about number three on the call sheet. So, we'd had a couple of people that we rejected very quickly. And Sandy came in, and she had confidence about her. You know, she wasn't meek, and I think she was challenging, and she wanted to see if we were good enough for her, as well as us seeing if she was good enough for us. And yeah, she was fantastic. I'm not sure I'd seen her before that.

She was playing in folk clubs. I don't think any of us had actually seen her in person, but we learned a lot off Sandy.

Jesse Thorn: The amount that was going on in the world between that time that we just talked about, 1967, and the time of your first solo album in 1971 was so monumental.

[00:25:00]

But I don't know that there are many others in music, even who went through that time, who experienced as much tumult and pain and disjuncture as you and your bandmates did during that time. So, you made—in 1969, released three different records.

Richard Thompson: Yeah, I'm not sure how we managed to do that. That was a miracle, really.

(They laugh.)

Jesse Thorn: I can't even believe it's real!

Richard Thompson: Extraordinary, yeah. Well, you know, we just used to record all the time. So, if we had a day off, we'd go in the studio, do a track. Sometimes late at night after a show, we'd drive back, go to the studio, you know, play 'til sort of 5AM, do a couple of songs. And then when we had enough songs, we'd say, "Okay, well, let's put those out. You know, let's release those." Yeah, so—yeah, it was an ongoing process.

Jesse Thorn: You also, in that same year, had a van crash while on tour that killed a member of the band and your girlfriend at the time.

(Richard confirms.)

After that happened, how did those of you who were alive talk about what you would do next?

Richard Thompson: We had a meeting. When we all got out of hospital, we had a meeting, and we decided that we didn't want to go back to our old repertoire—the repertoire that we did with our drummer, Martin. And so, we said, "Well, maybe this is a good time to change the band up a little bit. We're going to have to bring in another drummer. Why don't we bring in Dave Swarbrick on fiddle? Let's do that project album that we talked about, you know, that we've been discussing, where we just do a whole album of British traditional music played by a rock band." I think what we didn't really know, we didn't understand, was the trauma that we'd gone through. I think we kind of brushed it off or pretended it didn't happen.

And I think in those days there wasn't somewhere you went. There wasn't counselling for that kind of thing, so it was post war British stiff upper lip, and you just got on with it.

Jesse Thorn: Would you like to sing another song for us?

Richard Thompson: Sure! Yeah, it's a song off the new record that's called "Singapore Sadie".

Music: "Singapore Sadie" performed live by Richard Thompson and Zara Phillips.

Oh, Singapore Sadie, she's three times the lady

Of anyone that you can name

That's why the tongues wag in the gob

Of each hag deficient in beauty or brain

Now, she doesn't even no lies and excuses

She circles the wagons with whoever she chooses

'Cause her love is a mystical thing

I swear I hear choirs celestial sing

Her love doesn't come every day

It comes like a bolt from the blue

Burning and blinding and true

Oh, Singapore Sadie, she leaves them all standing

The envious howl and they sigh

The talismans hang from her wrists and her ankles

To ward of the mischievous eye

Now some girls just lay it all there on the table

She keeps you guessing like Monroe or Grable

'Cause her love is a mystical thing

I swear I hear choirs celestial sing

Her love doesn't come every day

It comes like a bolt from the blue

Burning and blinding and true

Oh Singapore Sadie, she channels the dead

Like they're standing right there in the room

She can be forgiving, at times, to the living

So, please number me in that crew

No, she don't dignify one-eyed jigs or beginners

She don't hang around with no rock and no swimmers

'Cause her love is a mystical thing

I swear I hear choirs celestial sing

[00:30:00]

Her love doesn't come every day

It comes like a bolt from the blue

Her love is a mystical thing

I swear I hear choirs celestial sing

Her love doesn't come every day

It comes like a bolt from the blue

Burning and blinding and true

Burning and blinding and true

Burning and blinding and true

Jesse Thorn: Thank you. My guest, Richard Thompson, singing “Singapore Sadie” from his new record, *Ship to Shore*.

You're playing an acoustic guitar today, and it is of course the case, since you're—you know, it's you and your voice and your wife, Zara's, voice on backup. It makes sense to be playing an acoustic guitar there in that studio. Do you usually tour playing acoustic?

Richard Thompson: I do one or the other. I probably do more acoustic touring than I do electric touring, because it pays the rent better, really. You know, bands are expensive. It's expensive to go out on the road with a band. You know, you gotta hire a bus, you got hotels, you got all kinds of expenses. Oh, wages. I forgot about wages, yeah. You know, that's like \$15 a week for everybody. That's a lot of money. Yeah, so—plus I love it. You know, I love playing solo. And I do a lot more with Zara now as well, when she's available, but yeah, I love it. I love both. If I've got a band, you know, I can play more electric guitar. I can be more of a soloist, more expressive in that way. And it'll sound more like some of the records if I've got the band as well. So, it's great to do both, because I don't get sick of one or the other as well. I can, you know—if I'm fed up with playing acoustic, I can take the band out. It's great.

Jesse Thorn: We'll finish up with Richard Thompson in just a minute. Still to come, I will ask him to perform a cover of a very fun and extraordinarily frivolous early 2000s pop song. And Richard Thompson will oblige me in that request. If you want to hear it, stick around after the break. It's *Bullseye* from MaximumFun.org and NPR.

Promo:

Music: “Medicines” from the album *Exhilarating News* by The Taxpayers.

Justin McElroy: Hey, Sydnee. You're a physician and the co-host of *Sawbones: A Marital Tour of Misguided Medicine*, right?

Sydnee McElroy: That's true, Justin.

Justin: Is it true that our medical history podcast is just as good as a visit to your primary care physician?

Sydnee: No, Justin. That is absolutely not true. Uh, however, our podcast is funny and interesting and a great way to learn about the medical misdeeds of the past, as well as some current, not-so-legit healthcare fads.

Justin: So, you're saying that by listening to our podcast, people will feel better?

Sydnee: Sure.

Justin: And isn't that the same reason that you go to the doctor?

Sydnee: Well, uh, you could say that, but—

Justin: And our podcast is free?

Sydnee: Yes, it is free.

Justin: You heard it here first, folks. *Sawbones: A Marital Tour of Misguided Medicine*, right here on Maximum Fun: just as good as going to the doctor.

Sydnee: No, no, no. Still not just as good as going to the doctor, but pretty good.

Justin: (*Softly.*) It's up there.

(*Music ends.*)

Transition: Thumpy synth with a syncopated beat.

Jesse Thorn: This is *Bullseye*. I'm Jesse Thorn. My guest is singer songwriter Richard Thompson.

Sometimes when you're playing acoustic guitar—and I'm not a real musician by any means—but sometimes when you're playing acoustic guitar, it feels to me—it sounds like you are doing the work of multiple instruments with your guitar, that you have a very distinctive way of filling and enriching the sound beyond that kind of lead guitar melody or even beyond that rhythm guitar, you know, chord playing that we might expect.

Richard Thompson: Well, it's the same money, unfortunately.

(*Jesse laughs.*)

I only get paid for being one person. Yeah. When I first started really playing solo, probably in the mid to late '70s, I was aware that I wanted to make a bigger sound. You know, that just going strum, strum, strum in a normal tuning wasn't really enough. And so, I started to explore alternative tunings, and I started to explore other ways of fingerpicking. I use a kind of hybrid picking where I use a flat pick and fingers as well, which gives me other possibilities. So, you know, I wanted to be original. I wanted to come out from under the shadow of some of my heroes like, you know, Bert Jansch and Martin Carthy as an acoustic guitar player.

And I treat it as a different instrument as well from an electric guitar, really, pretty much. And there's not many guitar players who do that. So, I'm quite proud of that in many ways. A lot of really good electric guitar players, when they play acoustic, go strum, strum, strum. And I think I'd be bored of that.

Jesse Thorn: You can say no to this, because it's a dumb idea.

[00:35:00]

But I sure did watch a great video of you playing “Oops, I Did It Again”. I don't know if you know the lyrics off the top of your head.

(Richard laughs.)

But if you'd be willing to perform it for me as an indulgence, I would be grateful.

Richard Thompson: Gosh, well, let me see what we can come up with here. I think so.

Music: “Oops, I Did it Again” by Britney Spears, covered live by Richard Thompson.

I think I did it again

I made you believe we're more than just friends

It might seem like a crush, but that doesn't mean that I'm serious

But to lose all my senses is just so typically me

Ooh, baby, baby

Oops, I did it again

I played with your heart

Got lost in the game

Ooh, baby, baby

Oops, you think I'm in love

I'm sent from above

I'm not that innocent

You see, my problem is this

I'm dreaming away, wishing that heroes truly exist

I cry watching the days

You see, I'm a fool in so many ways

But to lose all my senses, it's just so typically me

Ooh, baby, baby

Oops, I did it again

I played with your heart

Got lost in the game

Ooh, baby, baby

Oops, you think I'm in love

I'm sent from above

No, I'm not that innocent.

Richard: All together now! (*Chuckling.*)

I did it again

I played with your heart

Got lost in the game

Oh, baby, baby,

Oh, you think I'm in love

I'm sent from above

I'm not that innocent

Richard Thompson: Or something? Yeah.

Zara Phillips: (*Inaudible*) know the words.

Jesse Thorn: Yeah, exactly that. That was great.

Richard Thompson: Zara doesn't know the words. I can't believe you don't know the words to that one. Crikey!

Jesse Thorn: You're a hero for doing that, being put on the spot. I sure appreciate it.

Richard Thompson: I certainly am. I certainly am.

(They laugh.)

I agree.

Jesse Thorn: Well, Richard, I sure am grateful for all your time and for you bringing the guitar, and to Zara, for coming to perform for us as well. Thank you so much.

(They thank him.)

Richard Thompson. His new album, *Ship to Shore*, just came out. Go pick it up at your local record shop.

Transition: Peppy synth with a steady beat.

Jesse Thorn: That's the end of another episode of *Bullseye*. *Bullseye* is created from the homes of me and the staff of Maximum Fun, in and around greater Los Angeles, California. Here in my home office in my backyard—well, I have this lamp that looks like bulrushes. The bulbs are the—you know, the seedy part of the bulrush, and I had to buy new bulbs. My mom had had the same bulbs in that lamp since she moved to San Francisco from Washington, DC, in like 1979. So, RIP to those bulbs. Legendary light givers.

Our show is produced by speaking into microphones. Our senior producer is Kevin Ferguson. Our producers are Jesus Ambrosio and Richard Robey. Our production fellow at Maximum Fun is Daniel Huecias. We get booking help from Mara Davis. Thanks this week to Jeff Cook at 2nd Story Sound in New York City for hosting Richard Thompson for his interview and live performance. A little bit more than we usually ask of remote studios. Very grateful for that help. Our interstitial music is by DJW, also known as Dan Wally. Our theme song is “Huddle Formation”, written and recorded by The Go! Team. Thanks to them. Thanks to their label, Memphis Industries.

Bullseye is on Instagram. We have pictures from behind the scenes and videos and more. Find us there, [@BullseyeWithJesseThorn](#). You can also find me on Instagram, [@JesseThornVeryFamous](#). I think that's about it. Just remember, all great radio hosts have a signature signoff.

Promo: *Bullseye with Jesse Thorn* is a production of [MaximumFun.org](#) and is distributed by NPR.

(Music fades out.)