

Donovan to perform Sunday at FAIRfest 2016

Sixties icon, rock hall-of-famer to perform two concerts

By **BOB SAAR**
for *The Hawk Eye*

First there is a rock star, then there is no rock star, then there is.

Too few pop music icons remain from the Sixties: too many of them killed themselves with drugs and self-delusion, or were murdered, or died in airplane crashes or simply burned out.

Not so Donovan, who, as a runaway teen, found his first guitar in a trash can.

Call him the sunshine superman, call him the hurdy-gurdy man, label him as being mellow yellow: Donovan is a true icon of the Sixties.

He was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in

2012 and the Songwriters Hall of Fame in 2014.

Lucky for us in southeast Iowa, Donovan is crowning this year's FAIRfest. That's the weekend bash in Fairfield, home of the Maharishi University of Management and better known to artistic types around the world as the nexus of Transcendental Meditation.

When Scottish-born Donovan came on the music scene in the early Sixties, he was marketed as the British version of emerging social songwriter Bob Dylan, and with good reason: "Catch the Wind" was as good as anything Dylan had penned at that point.

Donovan gained his own fame, and after embracing Eastern mysticism with his friend, Beatle George Harrison, the two helped the world discover Transcendental Meditation.

Thus we have MUM in Fairfield today, and ultimately, FAIRfest, and the circle comes

around.

Donovan taught John Lennon how to fingerpick; guitar heroes Jeff Beck and Jimmy Page are on Donovan's recordings. 'Nuff said.

With 1967's "Wear Your Love Like Heaven," he introduced many of the world's wannabe guitar heroes to the major-7th chord, a standard in today's pop writing.

Interesting that Dylan is, like Donovan, one of the few remaining working survivors of the Sixties other than Paul McCartney.

Musically, Donovan is no simpering, whiny coffeehouse flunky — he's funky, hip and was "with it" long before being funky, hip and with it were a part of our language. From the spooky groove of "Season of the Witch" to the pop beat of "Sunshine Superman" to the bizarrely relentless "Hurdy Gurdy Man," Donovan blends folk, blues, classical, African, Caribbean and — yes — funk.

And he tells great stories in between his songs.

Lyrical, Donovan is pristine and one simple example comes from "There Is a Mountain."

"Caterpillar sheds his skin to find a butterfly within. First there is a mountain, then there is no mountain, then there is."

Dig it, baby.

FAIRfest runs Friday through Sunday. Passes are \$39 in advance and \$50 at the gate.

Donovan will perform two concerts on Sunday; the first show is in the Sondheim Center for the Performing Arts at 8 p.m. and is a special fundraiser for Maharishi University's Global Scholarship Fund.

Tickets for this show are extra in addition to a FAIRfest pass. Donovan will join Bonnie Paine and friends on the main stage at 9:30 p.m. for a general admission concert.

Visit FAIRfestiowa.com for complete details.