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Ricky Warwick and Scott Gorham, LA, December 10, 2010.

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DENIS O'REGAN

THE BEST THIN LIZZY LINE-UP SINCE LYNOTT?

Remodelled band – now with more Irish in 'em – debut in LA.

The 2011 version of Thin Lizzy convened at Mates Studios in North Hollywood last month for a showcase set before heading back to Europe on tour. If the new line-up – Ricky Warwick (guitar vocals), Scott Gorham (lead guitar), Vivian Campbell (lead guitar) Darren Wharton (keyboards/vocals) and Marco Mendoza (bass) – made you wonder in which direction the band were heading, the answer is staying faithful to the legacy and pulling out some tasty surprises. Ricky's vocal range is close to Lynott's while Vivian Campbell is faithful to Robbo's original licks and works wonderfully with Scott Gorham. The majority of their song selections comes from the fertile 1974-1978 period, including a few numbers that haven't been performed in years. The best Thin Lizzy line-up since they re-formed? Yup. And with Ricky and Vivian in the band now there's a bit more Irish in 'em too.

Setlist: Are You Ready, Waiting For An Alibi, Jailbreak, Do Anything You Want To Do, Don't Believe A Word, Southbound, Dancing In The Moonlight, Massacre, Angel Of Death, Still In Love With You, The Boys Are Back In Town, Whisky In The Jar, Wild One, Bad Reputation, Sha La La Lee, Emerald, Rosalie/Cowboy Song.

'RICKY'S VOCALS ARE CLOSE TO LYNOTT'S AND VIV'S LICKS ARE FAITHFUL TO ROBBO.'

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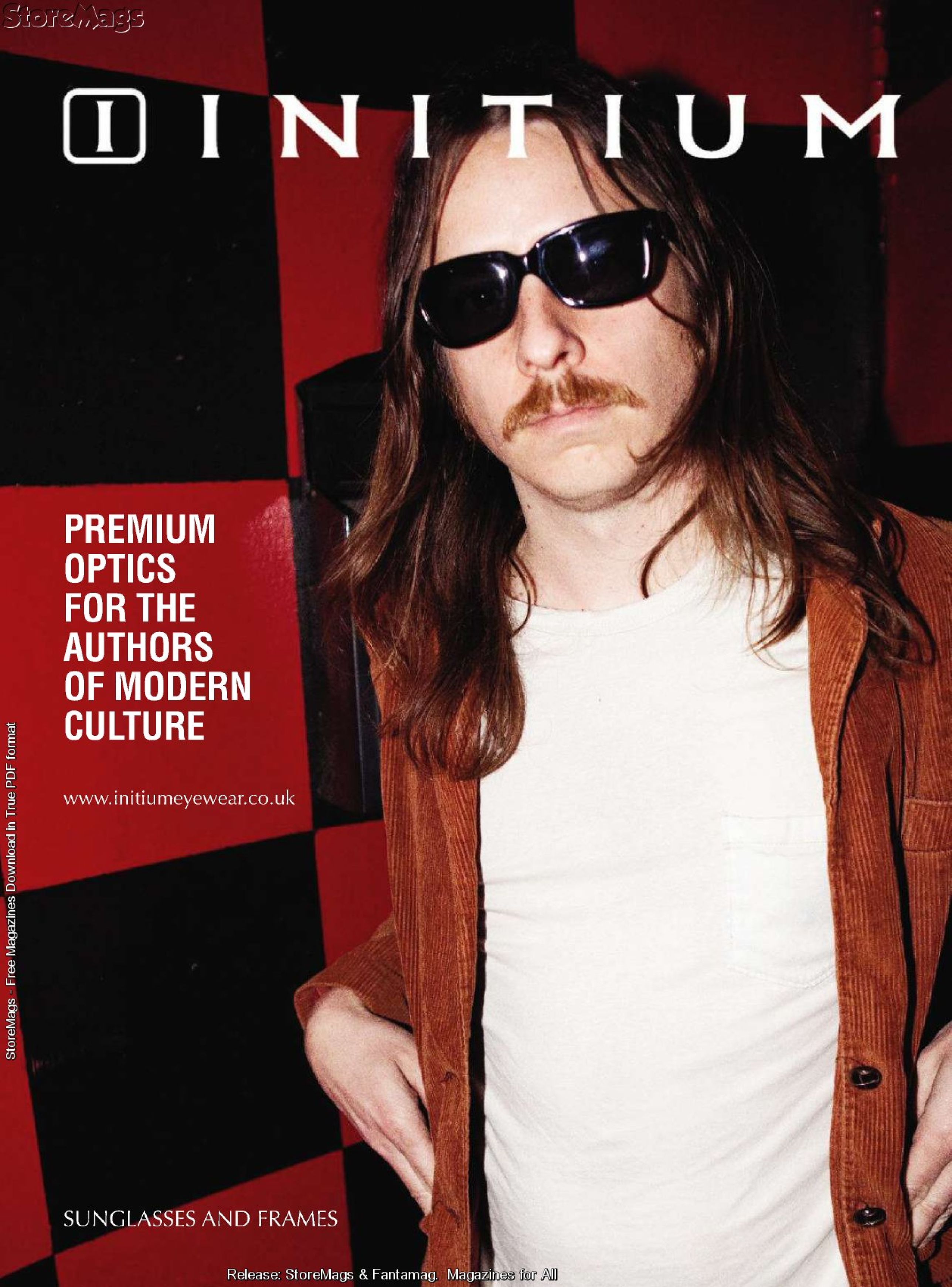

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Phil Lynott: died January 4, 1986

ROSS HALFIN

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Kyuss, Los Angeles, December 2010.

NEIL ZLOZOWER

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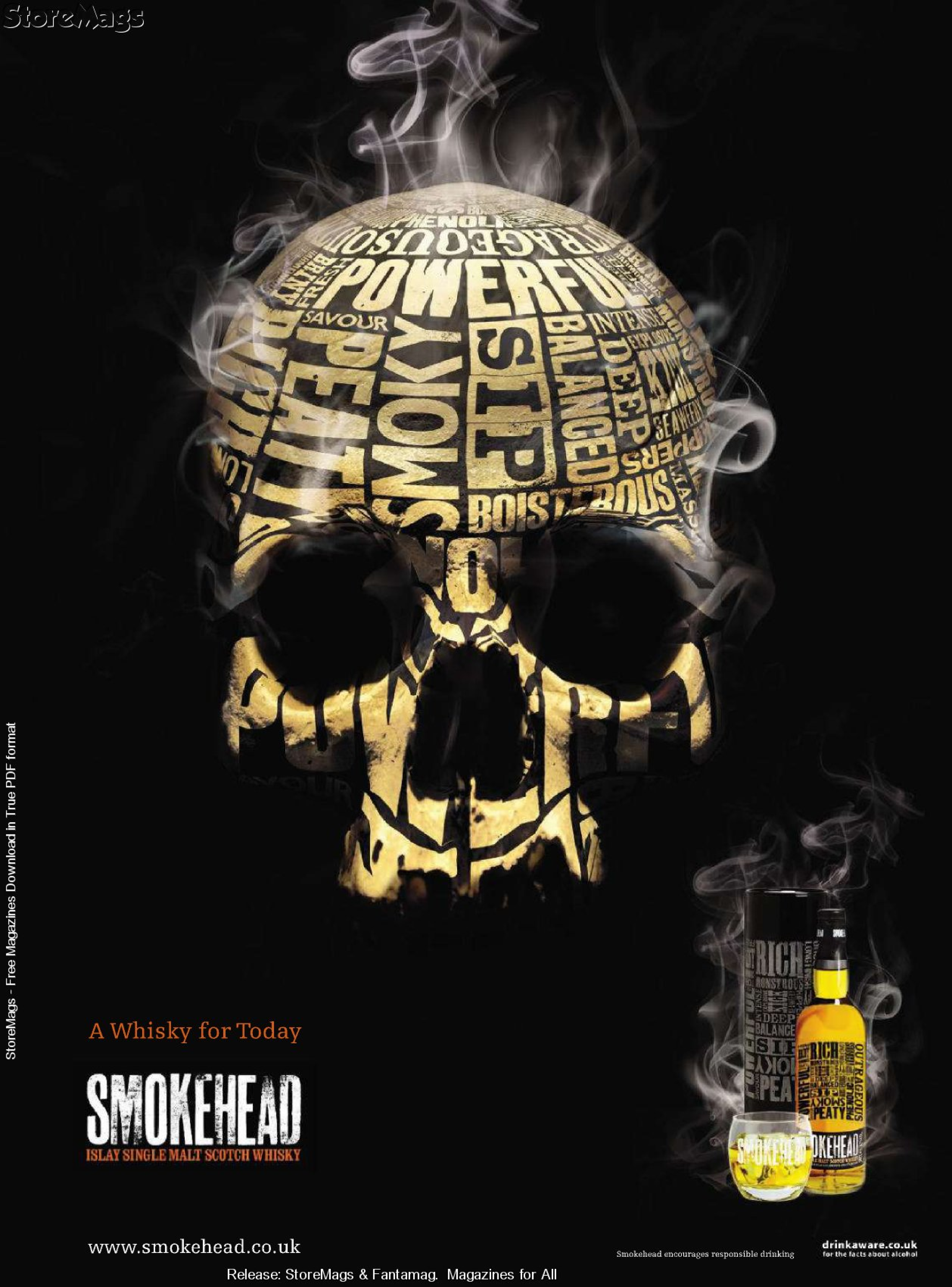

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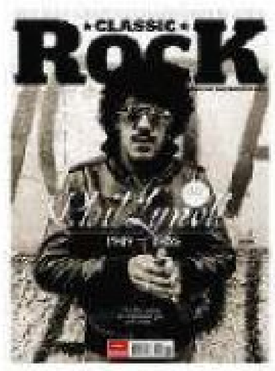
Twenty-five years ago this month, the newspapers were full of stories about the death of TV star Leslie Crowther's son-in-law. To those in the know, Phil Lynott was one of the great songwriters and performers of his generation, but to the mainstream tabloids he was a minor star, better known for marrying Crowther's daughter Caroline than for his music.

Our feature on Phil Lynott's final year illustrates how far he'd fallen from grace. Record companies refused to work with him. Management tried to place him with the perfect songwriting partners. Old pals like Huey Lewis volunteered to help. Lynott himself tried soul music, pop, metal, punk – anything – in the vain hope that something might provide him with a new direction and give him that elusive hit.

Today he would have been carted off to rehab, his career rebirth carefully plotted: an album featuring all-star collaborations, a triumphant spot on a reality TV show, a Lizzy reunion tour, an autobiography chronicling his unbelievable fall and rise, a *Classic Rock* front cover...

But 1985 was a different time. This wasn't a well-worn story. The road back wasn't as well-travelled. And in the words of Scott Gorham, "To ask for help meant you were weak..."

ON THE COVER
Phil Lynott by Ross Halfin



Scott

Scott Rowley,
Editor In Chief

This month's contributors

HARRY DOHERTY
A writer for *Melody Maker*, editor of *Metal Hammer*, founder of video magazine, *Hard'n'Heavy*, Harry Doherty interviewed, toured and drank with Thin Lizzy many times. This month he looks back over Lynott's last year (p40). Harry is featured in BBC4's Lizzy documentary (Jan. 21, 9pm) and is currently working on the official 40th-anniversary Queen book due next November.

DAVE LING
Classic Rock's News/Live Editor deserves special mention this month after a frantic few weeks which saw him interview every member of Motörhead for our 'Headpack', cover the *CR* Awards, do all his normal mag stuff *and* deliver a feature on his much-beloved, and much underrated, Stray (p62). Here he's pictured with AC/DC. Doesn't Angus look different out of uniform?

LEE MARLOW
Lee Marlow learned to play bass by stumbling along to Iron Maiden's first three albums, so it was a privilege, he says, to interview Clive Burr for *Classic Rock* (p52). After an unsuccessful musical career as a poor man's Steve Harris, Lee now works as a journalist in Leicester, where his friends tease him about his imaginary love of Dokken. "I bloody hate Dokken," he says.

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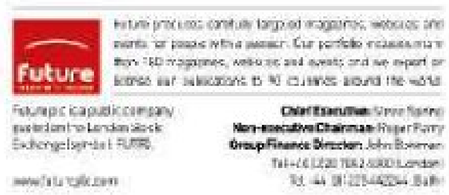

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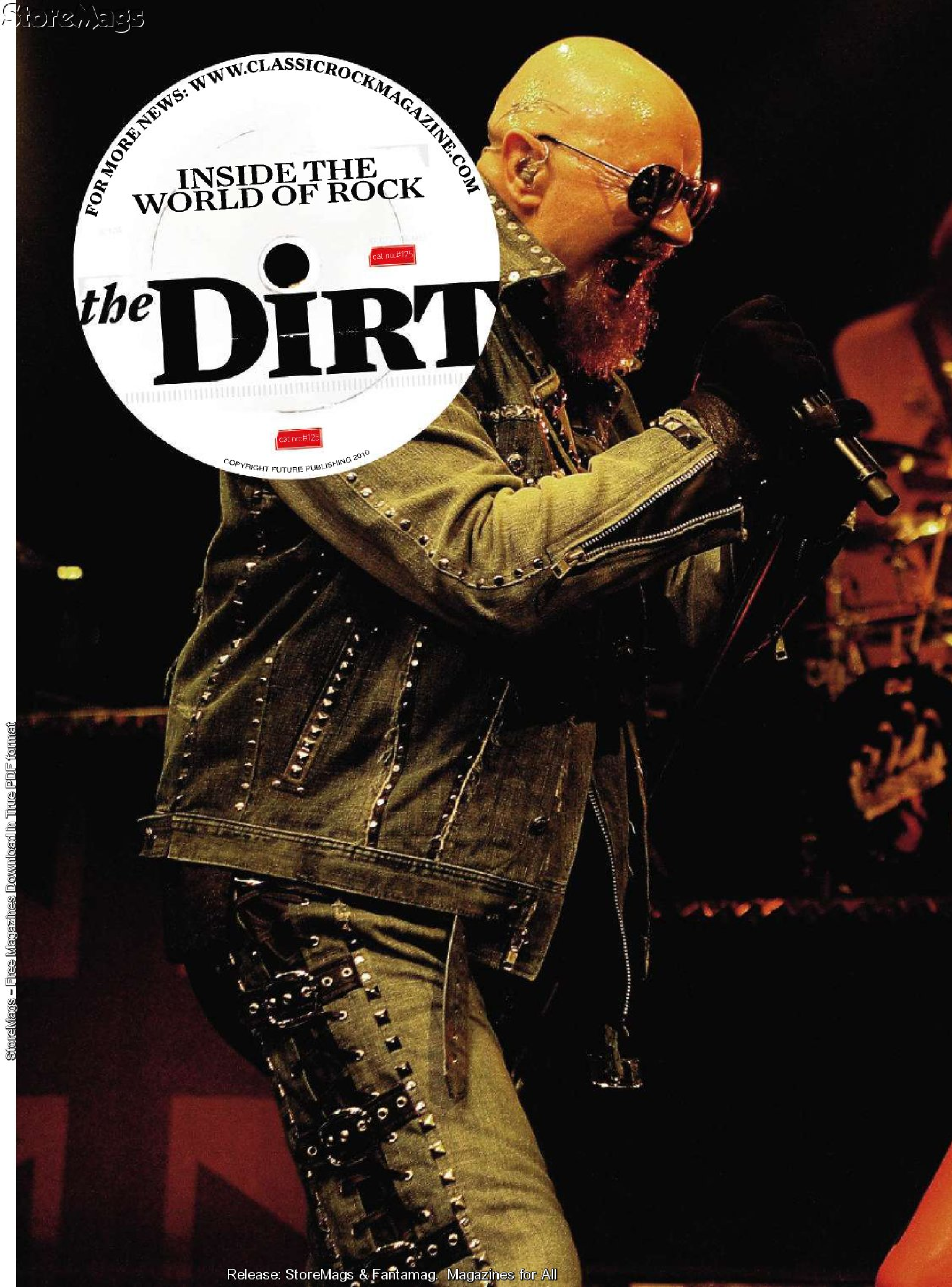

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"Scream for me one last time!" Judas Priest pull the plug on a 40-year career.

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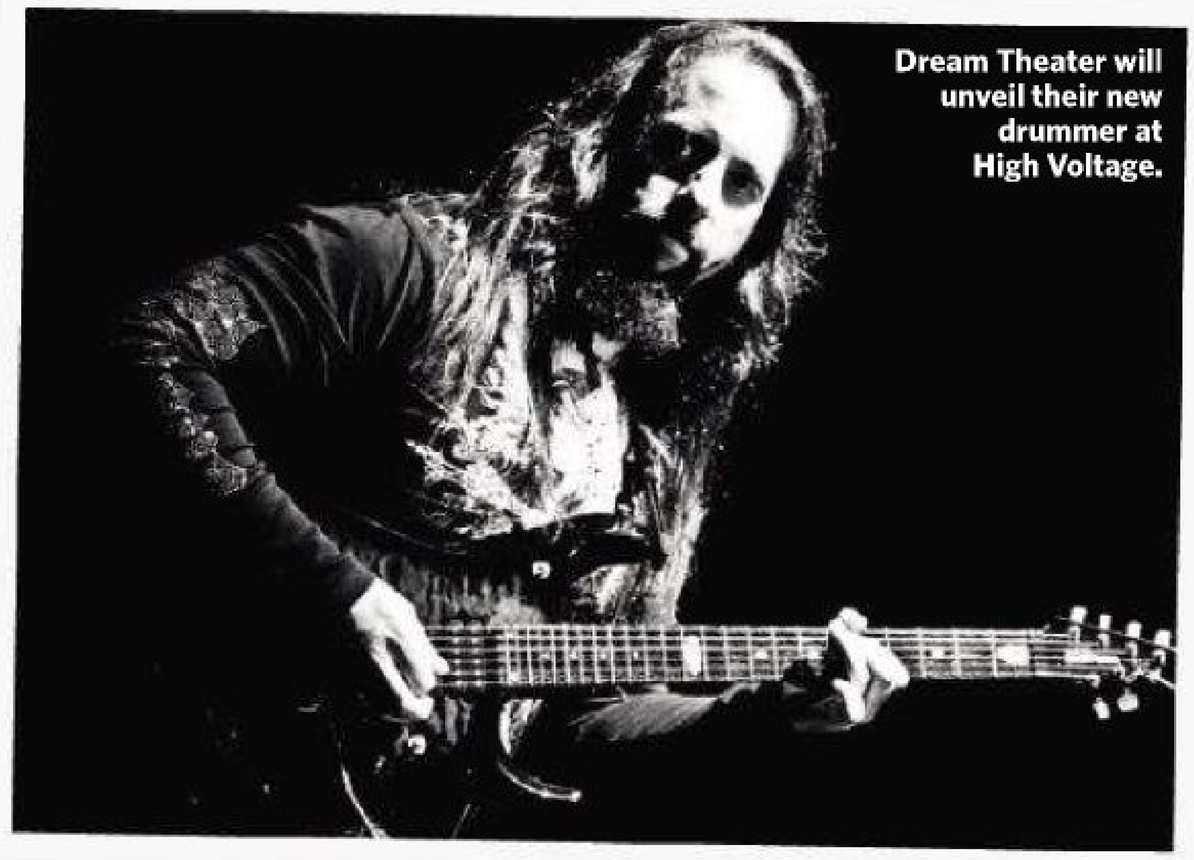

Dream Theater will unveil their new drummer at High Voltage.

Priest's UK farewell at High Voltage

...while co-headliners Dream Theater start a new beginning at *Classic Rock*'s London festival in July.

Judas Priest and Dream Theater have been confirmed as the headliners of the second annual Classic Rock High Voltage Festival this summer, which will again take place at Victoria Park in East London, over the weekend of July 23-24.

For Saturday night bill-toppers Judas Priest it forms part of a farewell global excursion called the Epitaph tour that will wind up the British band's inspirational four-decade career.

"We are going to be All Guns Blazing for our performance at High Voltage 2011," the band tell *Classic Rock*. "We know that our hard-core fans will be coming to celebrate the metal of the Priest as we make this special one-off UK festival show part of the worldwide farewell tour. So get your metal heads ready for loud blasts from the past to the present with your Judas Priest."

For Sunday headliners Dream Theater it will be the band's first performance in the UK since the shock split with drummer/co-founder Mike Portnoy. The US/Canadian band are set to introduce their new drummer at High Voltage.

"We do have a guy," guitarist John Petrucci told *Classic Rock* as this issue went to press, adding: "We're excited about our choice but we're not ready to make an announcement just yet."

The speed with which confirmation of DT as co-headliners was announced confirms their disapproval of Portnoy's assertion that the group needed to take time off and recharge their batteries.

"That's right," agrees Petrucci. "I started this band with Mike and John [Myung, bass] more than twenty-five years ago and it has steadily gained momentum. We had no intentions disassembling our empire, or even slowing it down. If anything, especially coming off a US tour with Iron Maiden, we felt completely the opposite."

Last summer's inaugural High Voltage was headlined by Emerson Lake & Palmer, making their first live appearance in 15 years, and ZZ Top, along with other unique festival attractions. The event was a huge success, claiming the Best Festival Award (15,000 to 39,999 capacity) in the first ever Live UK Music Business Awards.

The 2011 show once again offers three stages of live entertainment and various attractions, and there will also be a larger bar and eating area called Ace Cafe London & Rockers.

Tickets are priced at £99 (for weekend tickets) and £56.50 (for day tickets), which are subject to booking fee. VIP tickets will be available at £105 for the day and £199 for the weekend, subject to booking fee. There will also be various VIP and hotel packages available, at different prices.

Tickets are available now from www.highvoltagefestival.com, or from Ticketmaster on 0844 847 1708 and HMV on 08448222602.

Regular updates to the bill and more details on the festival will be posted at www.highvoltagefestival.com **DL**

This month The Dirt was compiled by Claire Adams, Harry Doherty, Malcolm Dome, Lee Dorrian, Jerry Ewing, Dave Ling, Rob Temple, Philip Wilding

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RIP

Thank you and good night.

Peter 'Sleazy' Christopherson

February 27, 1955 – November 25, 2010

In addition to membership of the influential and outrageous Throbbing Gristle, Peter 'Sleazy' Christopherson was a video director, designer, photographer and former member of Hipgnosis, the design agency responsible for some of rock's most ironic artwork. Aged 55, he died in his sleep at home in Bangkok, Thailand.

Armando Acosta

Died November 25, 2010

Armando Acosta had three spells as drummer of doom-metal underground band St Vitus, performing his final show with them in Stuttgart on April 29, 2009. Armando was an original member, having joined the Californian group in 1979 when they were still known as Tyrant. He had been suffering from various unspecified health issues, and was 58 at the time of his demise.

Gary 'Coffi' Hall

October 6, 1946 – December 4, 2010

Born in Toronto, Canada, Gary 'Coffi' Hall was a self-taught drummer best known for his work with Neil Merryweather's heavy rock bands Merryweather, Mama Lion and Heavy Cruiser in the late 60s/early 70s. Having earned his nickname due to the amount of coffee he would consume, Hall reached 64 years of age before suffering an aneurism.

James 'Jimy' Rogers

Died December 4

Farewell to a singer who belted out soulful music as lead vocalist of The Mauds. James 'Jimy' Rogers scored two hits with the Chicago-based band (a cover of Sam & Dave's *Hold On* and *Soul Drippin'* – the latter backed by the horn section of the Chicago Transit Authority, soon to be renamed Chicago) prior to a 1971 split. Rogers revived the group in 2000, before losing a battle with cancer aged 63.

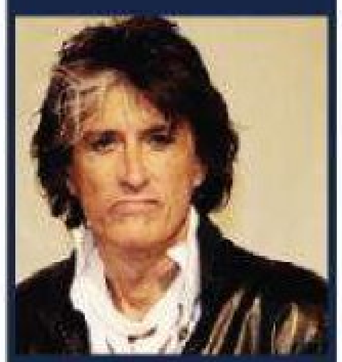
Dave Machander

Died November 2010

Annihilator's Jeff Waters has paid tribute to the drummer who played with the Canadian band during a European tour in 1996. "Dave was a biochemist, if I have my info right," says the guitarist/vocalist. "He was very smart guy and seemed to be a very nice guy, too. Send a thought out to him and his family."

NEWS

Axl Rose is suing Activision, the makers of the computer game *Guitar Hero*, for $20 million. The Guns singer claims he had an agreement with Activision that they wouldn't feature either Slash or Velvet Revolver in the game. Rose is said to be angry that Slash, or at least a drawing of him, is on the cover and that there's also one track titled *Guitar Battle Vs. Slash*.

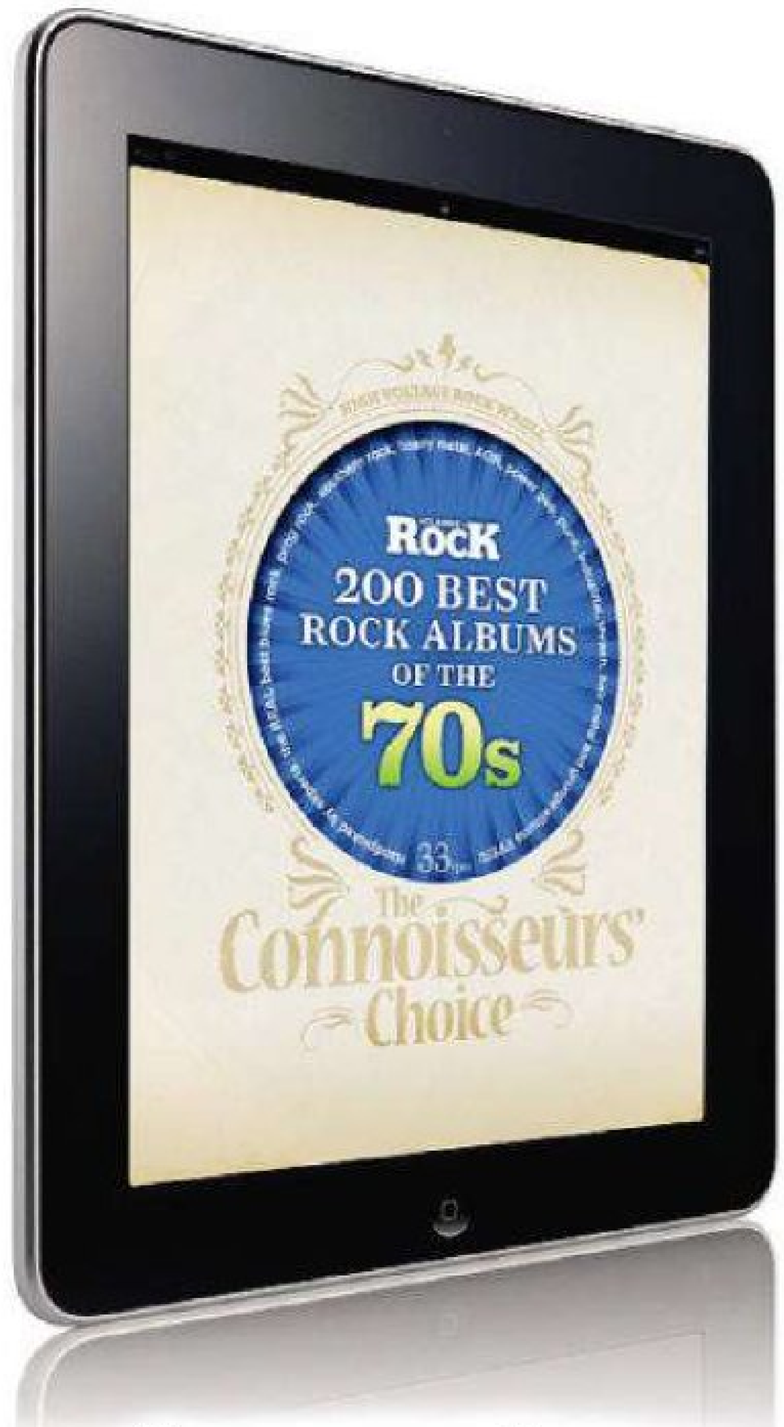


Aerosmith guitarist Joe Perry (pictured) is to make a guest appearance during Paul Rodgers' gig at London's Royal Albert Hall on April 27.

AC/DC drummer Phil Rudd claims to have been victimised by authorities in his home of Tauranga, New Zealand, after a conviction for possessing 27 grams of cannabis. The 56-year-old has not spoken to the other band members about the charges and is said to be unsure if AC/DC will tour again.

Queen's 40th anniversary year begins with a major exhibition called *Stormtroopers In Stilettos: Queen, The Early Years*. Including stage costumes, still photos and vintage footage, the display runs February 25 -March 12. Admission to the Old Truman Brewery on East London's Brick Lane is free, 11am- 8pm.

Nazareth release a new studio album called *Big Dogz* via Edel Records in February. It'll include the songs *Big Dog's Gonna Howl*, *When Jesus Comes To Save The World Again*, *Radio* and *The Toast*.



Classic Rock launches iPad app

Introducing our interactive guide to 70s rock.

We all know that the iPad rocks – but up until now there's been precious little actual rock *content* for Apple's genius device.

That's all changed with the launch of *Classic Rock*'s amazing new iPad app: *The 200 Best Rock Albums Of The 1970s*.

Subtitled *The Connoisseurs' Choice*, the *Classic Rock* app is both in-depth and user-friendly, providing the iPad user with a unique insight into what was arguably rock's most memorable 10-year stretch.

From Deep Purple's *In Rock* to The Clash's *London Calling*, from Rush's self-titled debut to Kiss' *Destroyer*, from Alice Cooper's *Killer* to Iggy And The Stooges' *Raw Power*, the 70s was when rock was at its most groundbreaking and creative. It truly was an era like no other.

Download our app and check out the foreword by none of than the Prince Of Darkness himself, Ozzy Osbourne.

Delve a little deeper and the decade comes to full digital life with stunning graphics and interactive information about the 70s' greatest album releases. As the name of the app implies, there are 200 reviews (over 16,000 words!) and loads of bonus features. You can listen to audio samples and download music, all at the flick of a fingertip. The app will be updated regularly and users will be informed of upgrades as and when they happen.

The 200 Best Rock Albums Of The 1970s costs just £1.19 ($1.99) right now from Apple's App Store.

PHILIP SOWELS/MAC FORMAT/PERRY: GETTY IMAGES

Appy days: a taster of *Classic Rock*'s hot new iPad app.

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Ronnie James Dio

A Photographic Memoir by PG Brunelli

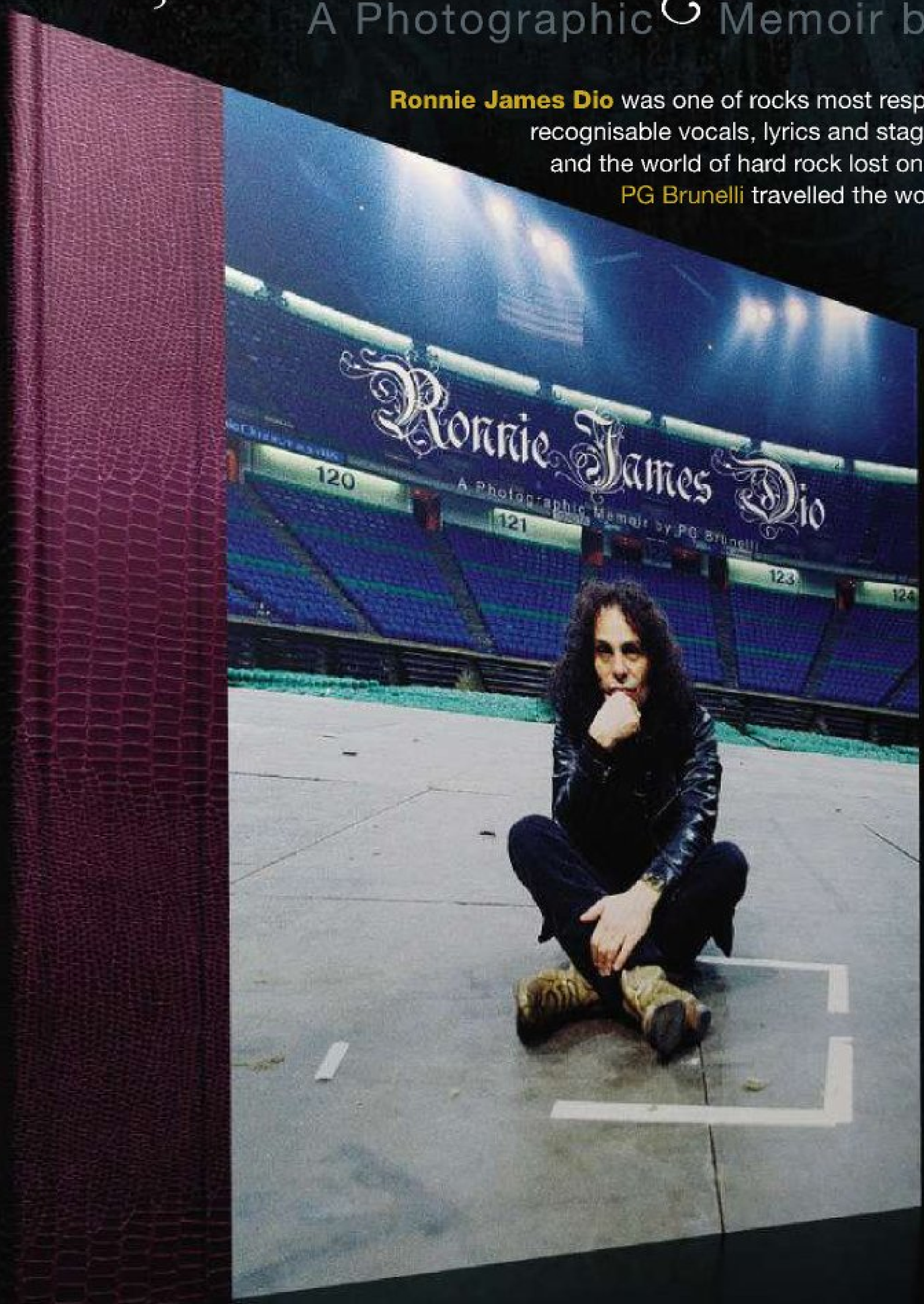

Image shown: Hardkase Edition

Ronnie James Dio was one of rocks most respected and talented frontmen, renowned for his instantly recognisable vocals, lyrics and stagecraft. On May 16th 2010 Ronnie succumbed to cancer and the world of hard rock lost one of its greatest talents. Renowned music photographer PG Brunelli travelled the world with Ronnie from 1983, photographing him onstage, backstage, at home and in the recording studio.

This special, large format hardback book takes the best of PG's photography and weaves a memoir of Ronnie's life starting onstage at Donington Monsters of Rock in 1983.

Together with unique written contributions from Bruce Dickinson, Rob Halford, Doug Aldrich, Bernie Marsden, Doro Pesch, Glenn Hughes and many of his peers, colleagues and fellow professionals, this photographic memoir has been compiled with the knowledge and approval of Ronnies wife, Wendy.

Available in two limited edition versions, starting at just £40 (plus p+p) **Ronnie James Dio - A Photographic Memoir** is released at the end of November 2010. To secure your standard or **HARDKASE** version early ordering is essential. £10 from the sale of the standard version and £30 from the sale of the **HARDKASE** edition will be donated to the **Stand Up and Shout Cancer fund.**

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Steven Wilson holds court

New issue of *Prog* focuses on Porcupine Tree mainman.

"Every single King Crimson record that came out was a battle," Porcupine Tree's Steven Wilson reveals in the new issue of *Classic Rock Presents Prog*.

Wilson, along with Crimson's Robert Fripp, graces the front cover of the mag and is featured in-depth inside. A lengthy interview takes in Steven's entire career, from his early Porcupine Tree days right up to his plans for 2011 and his work with Fripp in remixing Crimson's legendary back catalogue.

We also weigh in with an exclusive look at the most recent meeting of Crimson alumni to hear the fruits of Wilson's remix work, and look at what the future holds for the prog veterans.

There are also exclusive interviews with Tangerine Dream, John Martyn bassist Danny Thompson, Pallas, …And You Will Know Us By The Trail Of Dead, Barclay James Harvest, Geoff Downes, Big Big Train and the results of the 2010 Readers' Poll.

Plus all the latest prog news and reviews, including exclusive details about the Prog stage at this year's High Voltage festival, which takes place July 23 and 24.

The new issue of *Classic Rock Presents Prog* is on sale on January 26. **JE**

Bon Jovi call time out

The band are ready to take break after their summer visit.

Bon Jovi are to go on hiatus once this summer's bout of touring comes to a close.

"It's time to take a break," said Jon Bon Jovi. "But I'm not retiring – for an old man who has no surgery, still has all his own hair and wears a 30-inch waist, I'm doing okay."

Bon Jovi return to the UK in June with shows in Edinburgh (22), Manchester (24), London's Hyde Park (25) and Bristol (27). They also play Dublin on 29 and 30.

Following a previous triumph in 2008, the New Jersey group have once again been named *Billboard*'s top-grossing touring act, equalling records held by The Grateful Dead (who won in 1991 and 1993) and The Rolling Stones (1998 and 1999).

In further news, drummer Tico Torres has suggested that Bon Jovi could sign with an independent record company. "We are still on a major label, but we can see the writing on the wall," he said.

Torres believes the old major label system no longer works in the current industry climate.

NEWS

The Down 'N' Outz, who support Paul Rodgers in April, have parted company with bassist Ronnie Garrity. "We will announce a replacement shortly," says singer Joe Elliott, "but all I can say now is that it won't be [Def Leppard band-mate] Rick Savage."

Debbie Harry (pictured) has described escaping the clutches of Ted Bundy during the 1970s, after accepting a lift in the serial killer's vehicle. "I don't know how I did it, but I got out," relates the Blondie singer. "He tried to stop me by spinning the car but it sort of helped me fling myself out. Afterwards I saw him on the news – Ted Bundy."

David Gilmour's stepson has spoken of his "shame" after being arrested for climbing London's Cenotaph during the recent protests over university tuition fees. "I got caught up in the spirit of the moment," said 21-year-old Charlie Gilmour, a history student at Cambridge University.

Opeth start work on their 10th studio album on January 31. The Swedes will collaborate with engineer Jens Bogren, with Steven Wilson of Porcupine Tree overseeing the mix.

Iron Maiden guitarist **Adrian Smith** is involved in two outside projects. Smith has been writing songs with INXS frontman JD Fortune and is also a part of a new band called The Primal Rock Rebellion, completed by members of Sikth, Murder One and Vacant Star.

Here is The News: Huey's back!

DEBBIE HARRY/GETTY

WELCOME BACK

Huey Lewis And The News

The *Hip To Be Square* chart-botherers return with their first album in almost a decade.

It's been nine years since Huey Lewis And The News released a record. When *Plan B* – what they considered to be their finest album – failed to register in the charts, they decided it was time to call a halt to the recording process. It was a tough call for Huey and co, coming after they had sold bucketloads with three successive albums – *Picture This*, *Sports* and *Fore!* But now they've been enticed back into the studio with *Soulsville*, an album of affectionate covers of (mostly) not-so-famous soul tracks. We caught up with Huey in London.

The new album sounds like a labour of love…

It certainly was. That's the only reason we did it. Who knows how you sell records these days, even if you're hot, never mind old farts like us. It's been nine years since we released the last record… a long time if you're a young kid, but not at my age.

> **"We're old farts… who knows how you sell records these days?"**

How did you end up going from something like Clover, your former band, to this?

When we were over here with Clover the punk thing hit. It was a case of wrong place, wrong time for Clover. Our managers – Dave Robinson and Jake Riviera – thought: "Oh shit, what are we going to do now?" Clover was basically vintage pub rock and they thought because there was a lull, pub rock would be the next big thing! The day we landed, we saw The Clash's first gig at the Roundhouse, Strummer out there, gobbing everywhere. I thought: "Jesus Christ, are we in the wrong place!" When Clover broke up, I decided to go back to Marin County, California, just find my favourite musicians, play in a club and do that for the hell of it. Well, I did… and it worked! The guys I picked were all R&B-based guys. I was a black music snob – soul, R&B, blues…

How did Mutt Lange get involved?

The first album [*Huey Lewis And The News*] didn't do anything and the record company wanted us to use different producers. I realised we could do it ourselves and convinced the label. Mutt had produced Clover; I asked him if he had any songs and he sent me *We Both Believe In Love*. I redid the lyrics and retitled it *Do You Believe In Love*. That was our first hit on *Picture This* back in the early 80s.

Didn't you find it strange when you took a break from recording albums nine years ago?

No, because we play at least 75 shows every year, and have done for 32 years in a row. We work all the time: corporate gigs, private stuff and the usual, but not as hard as before.

Why do a covers album?

It was our manager Bobby Brown's idea – "You guys oughta cut a Stax record." I thought it'd be a lot of fun. We didn't pick the obvious soul classics, we wanted songs that people could connect with but also ones that they wouldn't have heard.

You've put the album out on your own label. What happens if it goes belly-up sales-wise again?

I'm not worried in the slightest about that. We could get our money back selling them at the gigs. **HD**

Soulsville is out now on the W.O.W. label.

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★ HIGH HOPES

Million $ Reload

The band with the "best debut since *Appetite*..." playing a free-entry tour? What's going on?

SINCE FORMING IN Belfast five years ago, Million $ Reload have shared stages with the likes of Alice Cooper, Black Label Society, The Wildhearts, Thin Lizzy, Terrorvision, Adler's Appetite and Gilby Clarke, played at both the Download and Bloodstock festivals in 2009, and released an album, *Anthems Of A Degeneration*, that one critic called "the best debut since *Appetite For Destruction*".

However, much to the group's chagrin, one thing still towers above their achievements so far: in the summer of '09, their singer, Phil Conalane, made global headlines by being touted as the new singer for Velvet Revolver.

"It was complete horseshit," Conalane snorts derisively. "We knew nothing about the story till it appeared on the *Classic Rock* website. Why would Velvet Revolver be interested in a singer from a band that few people had heard of?"

Only a curmudgeon would have begrudged the group the milking of a few column inches from the situation, though nobody foresaw how out-of-control things would spin. "We were incredibly naive," the singer sighs. "With no manager at the time, our label [Lime Records] told us: 'Don't deny it, just let it run.' But by letting that happen we did ourselves severe damage."

Now, 18 months later, with a brand new record deal in place and a revised edition of *Anthems Of A Degeneration* having just hit the racks, Conalane addresses the prickly subject once again, albeit briefly, in the hope of finally drawing a line in the sand and moving on. "Anytime anything is written about us the Velvet Revolver thing is always mentioned," he rues. "It's caused us nothing but grief."

Anthems Of A Degeneration has been hard to find since distributors Pinnacle went bankrupt, so M$R happily hooked up with *Classic Rock*'s own Powerage label, who have remastered the original, added new artwork and made it sleeker still by removing two tracks.

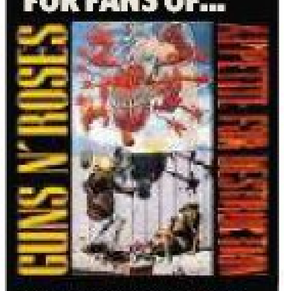
"The album was recorded on a shoestring budget, but it now sounds exactly how we wanted it to," Conalane enthuses. "Fifteen songs was a lot of music for an unknown band," he says of the trimming down. "It's much easier to digest in its current form."

Timing-wise, the quintet's temporary profile dip might even work in their favour. Sounding like Guns N' Roses jamming with AC/DC and Aerosmith in Buckcherry's garage is more acceptable now than ever before. Making up for lost time, the band hope to record a second album in the summer of 2011. Before that they will partake in the Power Supply tour, a four-band package jaunt around the UK along with Powerage labelmates New Device, Lethargy and Tthe Treatment. With 11 stops around the country currently scheduled, the trek is ground-breaking in that admission is completely free.

"There is less and less opportunity for smaller bands to get on to big tours, so this is Heaven-sent," Conalane reflects. "The added bonus is that the fans get to see four great bands in one night entirely free. Recession-proof rock'n'roll. You can't beat it!" **DL**

The Power Supply tour begins in Margate on February 22. The revised edition of Anthems Of A Degeneration is available now.

FOR FANS OF...



"Our sound is derived from GNR's *Appetite For Destruction*, *Toys In The Attic* by Aerosmith and AC/DC's *Powerage*," says Phil Conalane. "Tesla are another band that affected me personally. Their singer, Jeff Keith, along with Tom Keifer from Cinderella, was a big vocal influence."

Million $ Reload: remastered, re-energised, "recession-proof".

"Our sound is derived from *Appetite For Destruction*, *Toys In The Attic* and *Powerage*."

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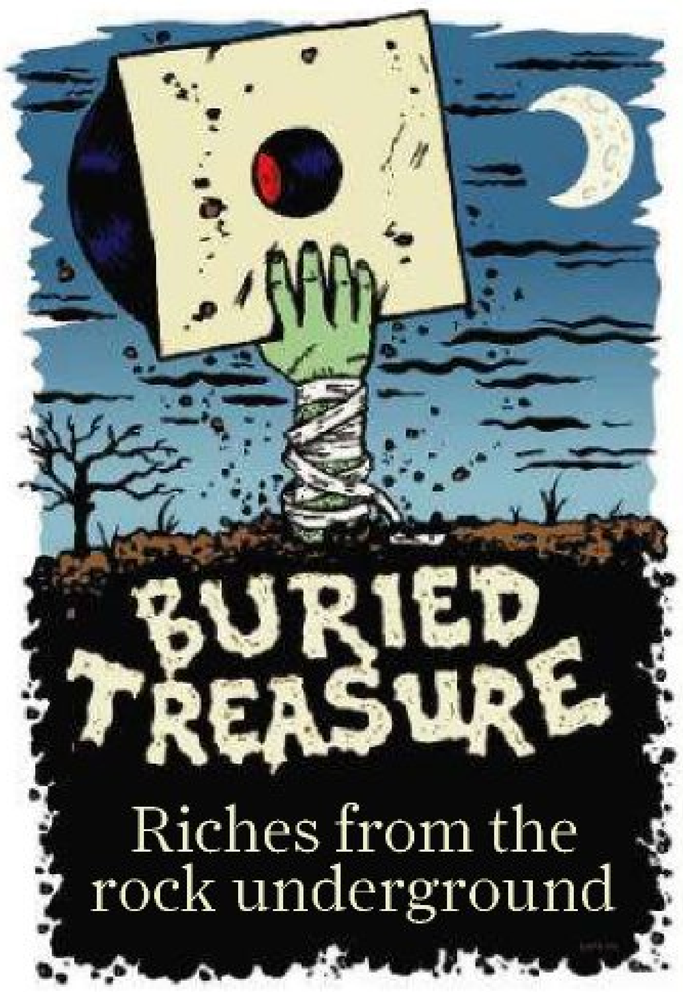

ATTILA

Atilla, Epic USA, 1970. £45 for a mint vinyl copy

If ever there was a heavy band that wasn't supposed to work, surely that band was Attila. Who could imagine that mainstream recording artist Billy Joel had a past deep-rooted in brain-frying proto-metal and acid rock? One listen to this Hammond organ-led monster from 1970 will have you spitting in your corn flakes.

A Long Island-based duo comprising Joel and keyboardist/vocalist/drummer John Small, Attila were about as unconventional as you could get for a hard rock band. The thing that set them apart from other seriously heavy US bands of the period is that they didn't use electric guitar or bass. Joel rigged his Hammond organ through Marshall stacks and a wah-wah pedal to create one unholy racket. His licks on the marvellous *Wonder Woman* come across like Jon Lord on a lethal dose of cheap speed with a rocket up his rear. The Hammond workouts, despite being mostly vicious and gnarly, give the album a progressive feel that was generally absent in US rock at the time.

'It has a progressive feel that was generally absent in US rock."

Other highlights *Rollin' Home* and *Revenge Is Sweet* have a charm that is as cool as it is absurd. Joel's often obsessive lyrics and over-the-top delivery prevent the album from being taken too seriously but it's a hell of a lot of fun.

Apparently the album – not aided by the hideous sleeve (in recent years, vegetarian Joel has expressed his disdain for what it depicts) was an commercial disaster. Its failure had a devastating effect on Joel, leading to an attempted suicide – by drinking furniture polish. **LD**

NEWS

Iron Maiden, Soundgarden, Robert Plant, Pearl Jam, Jeff Beck, Muse, Eric Clapton, Steven Wilson of Porcupine Tree and **Ozzy Osbourne** are among the nominees for the 53rd annual Grammy Awards, which take place on February 13.

The **New York Dolls** have completed the recording of a new studio album in Newcastle with producer Jason Hill. Titled *Dancing Backward In High Heels*, it will be available via 429 Records on March 15. It includes the songs *I'm So Fabulous, I Sold My Heart To The Junkman* and *Fool For You Baby*.

King Diamond has undergone triple-bypass heart surgery. The 54-year-old Mercyful Fate/King Diamond band frontman was rushed to hospital on November 29, where it was discovered that he'd suffered multiple heart attacks.

Geezer Butler (pictured) believes that there will be no **Black Sabbath** reunion until 2012. The bassist, who picked up the Metal Guru award at the Classic Rock Roll Of Honour in December, says: "Ozzy's on tour with his own band for the [rest of the] year."

Forty years after his death, **Jim Morrison** has been given a posthumous pardon for an indecent exposure conviction that dates back to 1969. It was claimed that the late Doors frontman exposed himself to the audience during a gig in Miami, something he always denied.

Gilbert, Martin, Torpey and Sheehan: Big again, and hoping to be big again.

WELCOME BACK

Mr. Big

After the 2002 split and some harsh words in the interim, can it really be shiny happy families again?

THE GROUPING OF former Talas/David Lee Roth bassist Billy Sheehan, Racer X guitarist Paul Gilbert, John Parr/Knack drummer Pat Torpey and respected singer Eric Martin as Mr. Big proved quite a success in the early 90s with the albums *Mr. Big* and *Lean Into It*, the latter spawning the massive hit *To Be With You*. Then grunge came along and sidelined almost all the melodic rock acts. Mr. Big persevered until 2002, although with Richie Kotzen (formerly of Poison) replacing Gilbert in 1997.

Talking to *Classic Rock* in 2007, Sheehan famously said of Eric Martin: "There's a lot of people who like Eric. I guess I'm not one of them."

Now the reunited original line-up have a new a new studio album, *What If…*

"The audience we'd established all over the world never went away."

Classic Rock spoke to the bassist as we attempted to find out if tensions still ran high, or whether hatchets once raised had been buried, and previous points of friction smoothed over.

So, your first new studio album in a decade. How did it all go?
Pretty good, really. We kind of tested the water by hanging out a lot on tour. We spent a lot of time hanging out. For me it was very important that we could get along in those situations. So getting into the studio was pretty cool. There really wasn't much pressure. The bad pressure was low and the good pressure was high.

What was that fist reunion set of gigs, in Japan, like?
It was good. I think there's this thing where you don't realise it at the time, but you do a few years down the line, that when you've been involved in something and you realise that it's had an impact on people's lives… that's quite an emotional thing. An incredible thing. I consider myself to be pretty lucky to be in a position where I can play music with people that I enjoy doing it with. Being up there and seeing what we created with Mr. Big was a beautiful thing. It was lovely being up there, and we were humbled.

When grunge arrived a lot of your contemporaries changed tack musically, not to mention their look. Mr. Big just carried on, didn't they?
We figured it would be way too obvious if we were to change how we dressed and who we were and what we played. It just wasn't something that we wanted to do. You meet bands these days and they're kind of like: "What were we thinking?"

What was it like, though, being a successful band, to be swept away by that sea of change?
We just went full-speed ahead. We were fortunate enough to have established an audience all over the world. And, to be honest, they never really went away. It's worth realising that when Pearl Jam and Nirvana and the like came along, all these people who were buying their records were the same people who had been buying Def Leppard records – and they still had them at home. Plus it was a good thing to shake things up, because some of it had become stale. It's good to be kept on your toes.

So, happy families again?
Undoubtedly. We've learned to take a step back and not always try to force our own opinions on each other. It made for a much more harmonious experience. Now we're looking forward to getting back out on stage again. **JE**

Mr. Big's new album What If... is available now via Cargo Records..

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The technology within these open-backed headphones includes S-Logic Plus, described as a natural surround-sound system. The sound you get with the majority of headphones is direct and even on both left and right sides, but S-Logic pushes the sound around your head, making it appear as if you're listening to a speaker set-up metres away at any volume.

To add to the luxury, each set comes with its own case and zebrano wood stand so they look as grandiose as you'd expect for this kind of money. Zebrano is not what you'd call an easily renewable type of timber but seeing as the Ultrasone Edition 10 are limited-edition it seems allowable.

With all the fancy metal and wood crammed into these headphones you might think they're rather weighty, but they are in fact extremely lightweight, at only 282g, and they're amazingly comfortable to wear even after hours of continuous use.

Only 2,010 individually numbered Edition 10s are being produced by Ultrasone, so if you're in for some of these, get a pair over your ears quick-smart to stop the money you've obviously got coming out of them.

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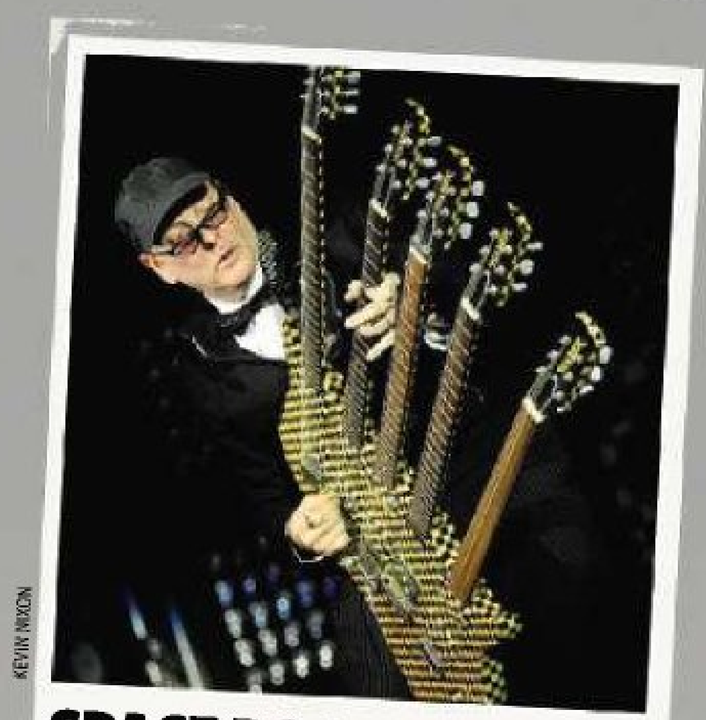
Rob Temple, Features Editor, T3 magazine



KEVIN NIXON

SPACE ROCK

The world's most expensive guitar picks are truly out of this world.

With more dollars than brain cells, certain members of the rock fraternity are second only to sports superstars when it comes to money-no-object purchases.

Cheap Trick guitarist Rick Nielsen (pictured) arguably started the trend of flicking dozens of picks into the audience at every gig, but you probably won't see even the richest guitarist on the planet flicking out even one of the world's most expensive picks. Available from Aussie company Starpics and made from pieces of four-billion-year-old Gibeon meteorite (that's *real* space rock!), these little pluckers will pick your pocket to the tune of 5,000 AUD (about £3,000) apiece.

Ultrasone Edition 10: the sound of money.

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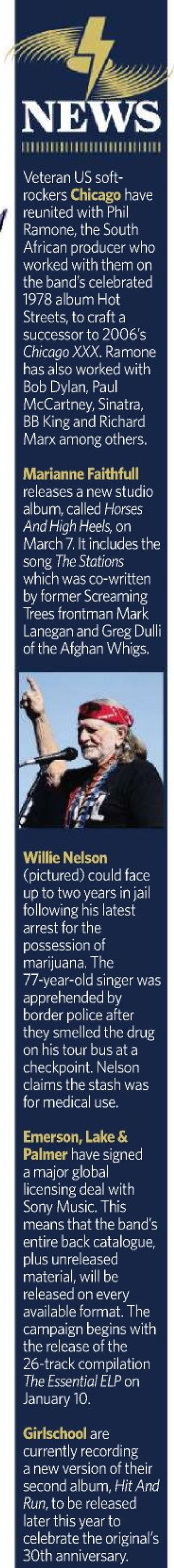

NEWS

Veteran US soft-rockers **Chicago** have reunited with Phil Ramone, the South African producer who worked with them on the band's celebrated 1978 album Hot Streets, to craft a successor to 2006's *Chicago XXX*. Ramone has also worked with Bob Dylan, Paul McCartney, Sinatra, BB King and Richard Marx among others.

Marianne Faithfull releases a new studio album, called *Horses And High Heels*, on March 7. It includes the song *The Stations* which was co-written by former Screaming Trees frontman Mark Lanegan and Greg Dulli of the Afghan Whigs.

Willie Nelson (pictured) could face up to two years in jail following his latest arrest for the possession of marijuana. The 77-year-old singer was apprehended by border police after they smelled the drug on his tour bus at a checkpoint. Nelson claims the stash was for medical use.

Emerson, Lake & Palmer have signed a major global licensing deal with Sony Music. This means that the band's entire back catalogue, plus unreleased material, will be released on every available format. The campaign begins with the release of the 26-track compilation *The Essential ELP* on January 10.

Girlschool are currently recording a new version of their second album, *Hit And Run*, to be released later this year to celebrate the original's 30th anniversary.

Kory Clarke: saving the more abstract stuff for his new solo album.

GETTY

WELCOME BACK

Warrior Soul

Frontman Kory Clarke still rails against... everything, and still loves the smell of vinyl in the morning

WITH THEIR FIRST three albums – *Last Decade Dead Century, Drugs, God And The New Republic* and *Salutations From The Ghetto Nation* – Warrior Soul set a public fed on hair metal and songs about cars and girls on its ear with their dogmatic railing against government, social inequality and Bush Senior. Singer Kory Clarke wasn't backwards in coming forwards with his opinions, either, having public spats with Queensÿrche, Glenn Danzig and Sebastian Bach, among others. With all those three albums now available on vinyl, Clarke talks about their enduring musical legacy and how some things never change.

Why do you think those first three albums have endured?
The same way I think all the Warrior Soul albums have endured, I tried to write them for the long haul; the words and music will always be forward-thinking and the concepts modern and rebellious in their stance against hypocrisy and tyranny.

It's like picking your favourite child, but which songs still stand up for you?
I love all the tracks on the first record. Things like *Blown Away In The USA* totally spells out what is going on in the American economy now, twenty years later. *Salutations*... might be the best of the three.

You're a man of a certain age; do you miss the feel and smell of vinyl?
I only buy vinyl albums and forty-fives. I love playing records. I'm looking forward to seeing – and smelling – them. They're coming out on white vinyl – who doesn't love that?

You're predominantly known for your political stance on those early records, but you also sang about love, drugs and crime. Why do you think that gets overlooked?
I think the people in the music biz and press that wanted me to fail put a lot of bullshit out to discredit my outspoken stance. I cared a lot about what happened to the regular people, not the fashion creeps, or the LA boneheads scrambling to pack the most heroin and tattoos their arms could hold. I actually wanted to speak about the people on this planet being cheated, tortured and killed for corporate greed and short-term profits on Wall Street. They thought I was a liar and an idiot. They were wrong.

> **"I wanted to stand out from the *Slippery When Wet* crowd."**

All of those first three albums had very literary-sounding titles, like collections of short stories.
I wanted to stand out from the *Slippery When Wet* crowd. I should have moved to Seattle and bought shares in fucking Starbucks, made my fortune there.

Do you regret any of the outspoken comments you made back then?
Like "Fuck Bush!" No, not at all! I still believe all that I wrote and said. I'm just not wearing it on my sleeve any more.

Bush has gone. How has Obama been for you?
Same shit, different puppet.

As well as working with Warrior Soul on a new album, you also have a second solo record coming out.
Opium Hotel 2. It has all the more artistic, progressive and abstract writing and production I'm not putting on the new Warrior Soul records. I love it. **PW**

Kory Clarke will release Opium Hotel 2 in the spring.

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"I started out wanting to be like Captain Beefheart with English vocals."

Wolf People: enjoying the "chance to act like idiots".

★ HIGH HOPES

Wolf People

SIMON FERNANDEZ

They've just released their debut album and already they've all got an addiction – to food.

THE NAME MIGHT sound like a 1950s horror movie, but Wolf People have more to do with heavy psychedelia than with hairy lycanthropes.

"Well, that is one side to our music," agrees guitarist/vocalist Jack Sharp, "but we are a band who are impossible to pin down. There are so many influences. Part of that comes from the fact that three of us in the band are avid record collectors, and we're also permanently on the hunt for interesting music to sample, so we keep a very open mind about music. I started out wanting to be like Captain Beefheart with English vocals."

Sharp himself admits that at one point he fell out of love with rock music and gave up being in a band and playing guitar. "I moved out of London to Bedford and started making records in my bedroom, but it was hip-hop with samples. Then I started to drift back into liking rock, and that's where this project started."

At first the band was all about Sharp on his own, but then he began to think of getting a line-up together. "It was hard working with other people, because I hadn't been in a band for five years. So I had to learn again how to interact with others."

Joining him were guitarist Jack Hollicks, bassist Dan Davies and drummer Tom Watts, the foursome playing their first gig at the end of 2006.

"We quickly got a single out [*October Fire/Black Water*], and the gig was a launch party for that. Our second live experience was on BBC6 Music's *Freak Zone*. To be honest, we were shitting ourselves."

Many of the band's early recordings, mostly Sharp solo stuff, were released earlier this year on the *Tidings* compilation. They've also just put out their debut album, *Steeple*, mostly recorded in a chicken barn in Wales. "It's been converted into a proper studio [called Mynci]. We were looking for a remote spot to rehearse, and called up the owner, not realising it was actually a studio. It's in the grounds of a 17th-century mansion. That's long-gone, but all the outhouses are standing. We were there for two weeks. It took us six days to record the album, and the rest of the time we got some mates down and partied."

What might surprise many is that the band are not really into booze or drugs. Their addiction is food.

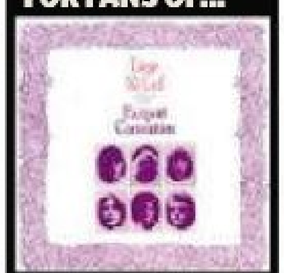
"We all came back from the studio about two stone overweight. Every night, we'd cook for each other. We're real foodies. So watch out for our cookbook."

Because most of the four have proper jobs, Wolf People has become something of an escape from reality for them.

"We all lead sensible lives. So when we get the chance to go out on tour we grab the chance to act like idiots. If you could be a fly on the wall when the four of us get together you'd be amazed at the daft conversations we have." **MD**

The album Steeple is available now on Jagjaguwar.

FOR FANS OF...



"We're always evolving," Sharp admits. "Right now, if anyone asks for reference points I'd mention Queen, Black Sabbath and Fairport Convention. It's heavy, but with folk-rock leanings, and there's also the psychedelia. But that'll probably change soon."

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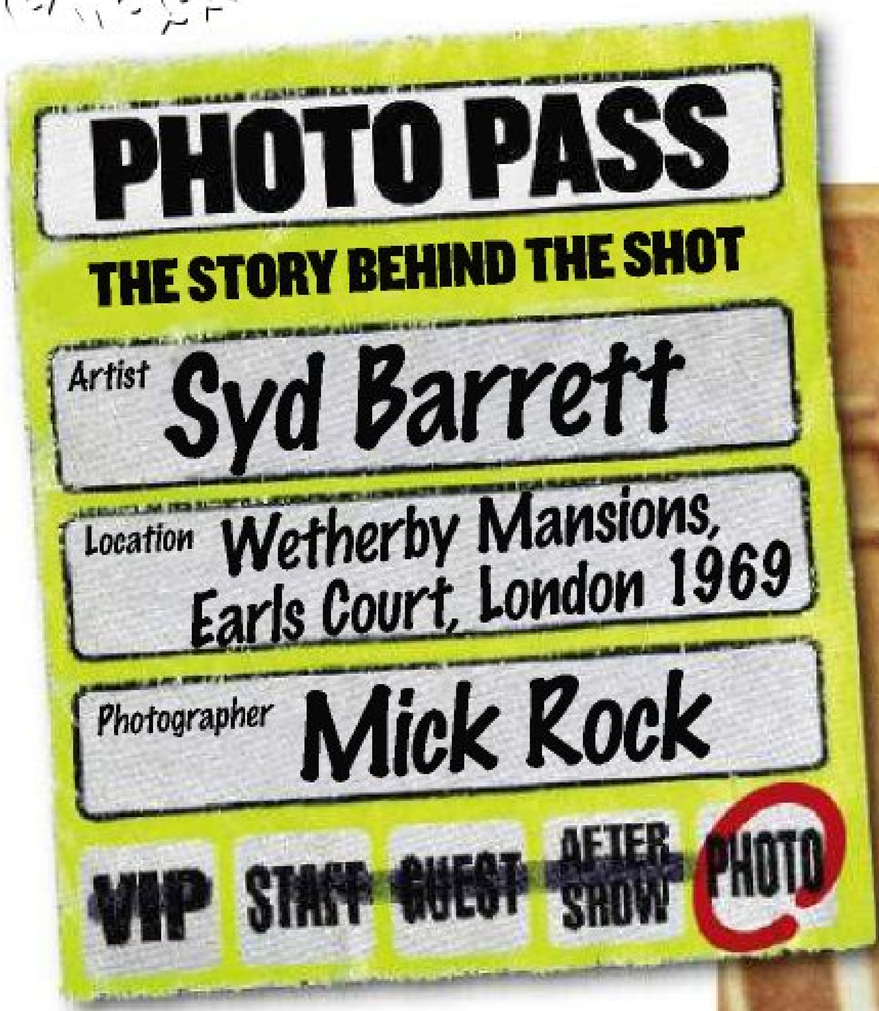

"I took a number of different set-ups for the sessions from which came the cover for [Syd Barrett's] *The Madcap Laughs*. There were pictures we took outside in the street as well as the ones which ended up on the cover, which had a different, more orange feel to them than this.

"Syd had just woken up when I took these shots. You can see that he's still in his pants. He'd stripped the room of his flat pretty bare, and painted the floor alternating colours. But he hadn't bothered to clean up, just painted over everything. In some shots you can see he just painted around the mattress on the floor.

"He did have a very good record player for the time. And a reel-to-reel tape player, and his guitar. But that's what people were like back then. Young, hippie rebels, acid heads. They didn't really do lavish!

"He was always friendly with me. The week before these pictures we'd done an acid trip together. He wasn't the dark, brooding casualty some stories made him out to be. He was a very sweet guy. He'd come round, listen to music.

"Many years later he co-signed some copies of *Psychedelic Renegades* [Rock's book of Syd Barrett photos]. I asked his nephew, who I met later, and he told me he'd once asked Syd why he'd signed them after all that time. And Syd had said, 'Because Mick's my friend'".

"Syd had just woken up when I took this. He's still in his pants."

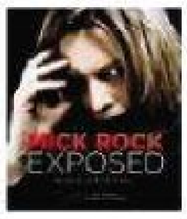

Photo copyright © Mick Rock 1969, 2010

MICK ROCK
Mick Rock began his photography career in the late 60s, and turned shooting bands into an art form. He is responsible for some of rock'n'roll's most iconic images – including the covers of Lou Reed's *Transformer*, Queen's *Queen II* and the Stooges' *Raw Power*. Mick's work (including this Syd Barrett shot) is collected in his new book *Mick Rock Exposed – The Faces of Rock 'N' Roll*, published by Chronicle Books, £24.95.

MICK ROCK PORTRAIT: NATHALIE ROCK 2010

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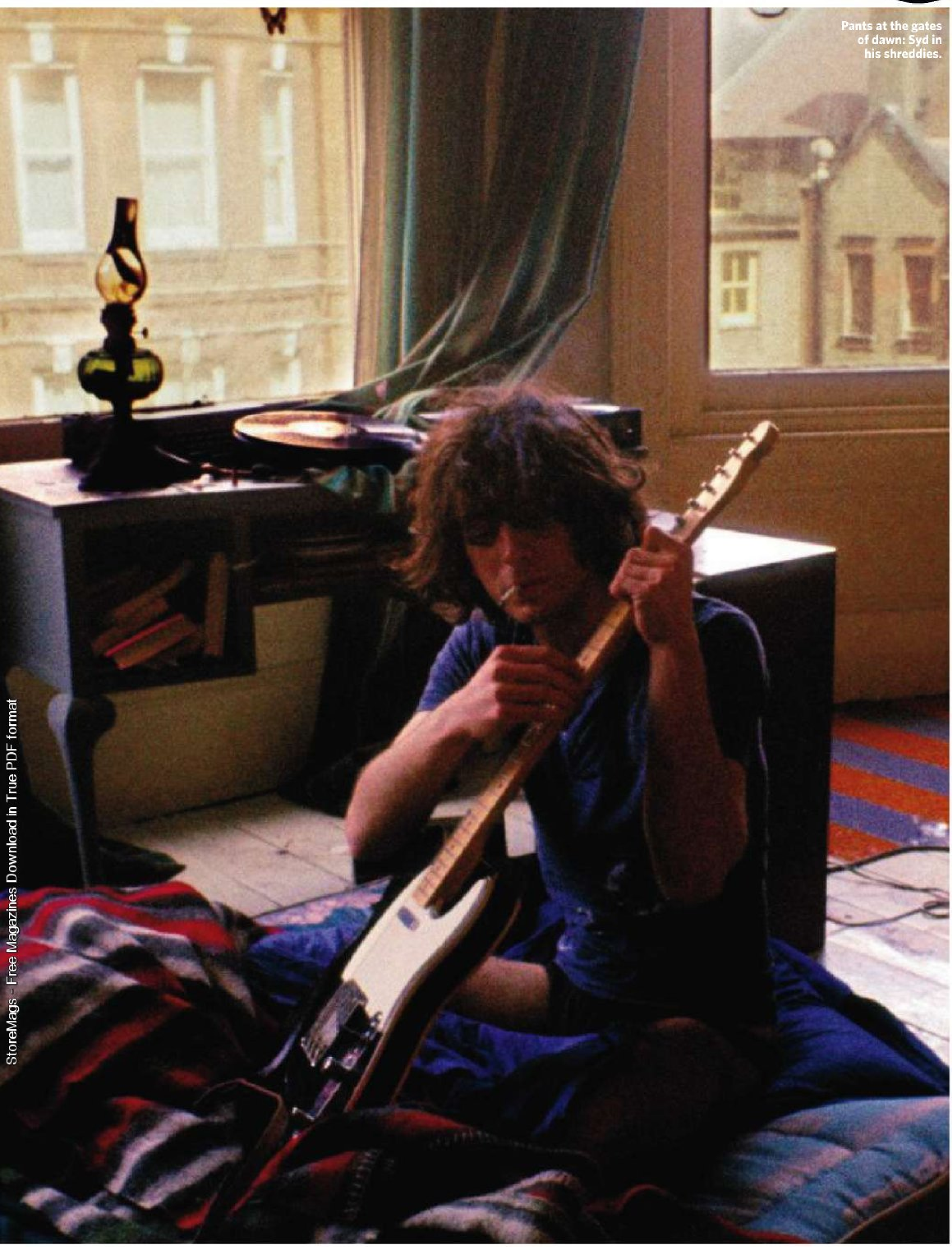

Pants at the gates of dawn: Syd in his shreddies.

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Heavy Rotation

What we've been listening to this month

01 Born To Lose
MOTÖRHEAD
Thunderous opening track of the new skull-crunching album from Motörhead, but we could easily have gone for banker-baiting single *Get Back In Line* or Lemmy's personal favourite *Devils In My Head*. The Devil's in Motörhead again, that's fer sure.

02 Baker's Song
BURNING TREE
Finally, Burning Tree's only album gets a decent CD transfer thanks to Rock Candy. The epic *Baker's Song*, full of sweeping acoustic guitar, sublime harmonies and fantastic bluesy licks, has never sounded better.

03 Vampire Money
MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE
The most slack-jawed slice of delinquent-propelled, remedial-glam vacuity this month. Thank God the future's back in unsafe hands.

04 Pay My Dues
BUFFALO
Red-raw psychedelic blues from *Dead Forever...*, the 1972 debut album from 'Australia's greatest-ever rock band' (address all complaints about that comment to Mr G. Barton).

05 I Can't Be Satisfied
GREGG ALLMAN
With his first album in 14 years, Gregg Allman (along with producer de jour T Bone Burnett) successfully reinterprets the Muddy Waters classic.

06 Little Darling
THIN LIZZY
Gary Moore's first work with Lizzy was this brass-augmented slice of menace that signalled the birth of a new kinda Lizzy. Collected on the Deluxe Edition of *Vagabonds Of The Western World*, it's one of many reminders that Lizzy didn't start out with Gorham and Robertson.

07 Transition
LUNATIC SOUL
Mariusz Duda, Poland's answer to Steven Wilson, comes up trumps on this 11-minute track which is as epic as it is enigmatic. From new album *Lunatic Soul II*.

Stray: swaggering.

08 Smash
WIRE
As honed-to-the-bone as in their *Pink Flag* glory days but with a lush, contemporary sheen that serves to accentuate their perpetual otherness, the precised-prog art-punkers return in gloriously minimalist style.

09 Our Song
STRAY
Swaggering country rock from 1972's *Saturday Morning Pictures* album, dug out of the *Classic Rock* cellar in view of Dave Ling's feature on one of the UK's great lost rock bands (see p62).

10 Please Hold On While The Train Is Moving
OLD 97'S
Alt.country rockers they may be, but this song (from their eighth studio album, *The Grand Theatre, Volume One*), is full-on, Stonesy swagger with a touch of the Strokes thrown in and an almost T-Rexian breakdown in the middle. Unexpected but quite brilliant.

11 Monster
PALLAS
The veteran Scottish neo-proggers return with a sequel to 1984's Eddy Offord-produced *The Sentinel*. On the evidence of this sleek but hard-hitting track, *XXV* (released January 24), should be rather special.

12 Cry For The Nations
MICHAEL SCHENKER GROUP
Mad Mickey has confounded his doubters, beaten the bottle and is back on top form. From *The 30th Anniversary Concert Live In Tokyo*.

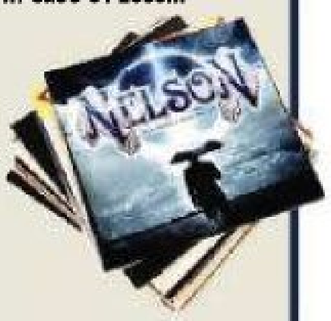
13 The Search Is Over
SURVIVOR
The mega-ballad that reduced its hard-man producer, Ron Nevison, to a blubbering wreck in the studio control room of the Record Plant during the 1980s. Lifted from the newly remastered *Vital Signs* on Rock Candy Records.

14 The Chase
PETE YORN
After a couple of lacklustre releases the singer-songwriter returns to form on his new, self-titled album. *The Chase* almost out-Tom Pettys Tom Petty.

15 Undertow
MR BIG
A mid-paced but thoroughly addictive anthem that introduces *What If...*, the first album to feature all four original members of Mr. Big (US variety) in 14 years.

16 The Very Last Number
AREKNAMÉS
If you ever wondered what Van der Graaf Generator would sound like if they were Italian, here's your answer. The bleak and mesmerising standout from new album *In Case Of Loss...*

17 The Beginning Of The End
THE TWILIGHT SINGERS
Former Afghan Whig – and sometime Gutter Twin with Mark Lanegan – returns with another bruised album of romantic alt.rock.



18 To Get Back To You
NELSON
Twenty years after the Timotei Twins topped the US singles chart with *(Can't Live Without Your) Love And Affection*, this dreamy ballad, which features Steve Lukather on guitar, bodes supremely well for a forthcoming album called *Lightning Strikes Twice*.

19 Blackout
ANNA CALVI
An immense, reverb-drenched, gothic production job laced with lashings of panoramic, post-Siouxsie drama from The Voice Of 2011. Makes The Associates sound under-wrought.

Smoke Fairies: ghostly.

20 Strange Moon Rising
SMOKE FAIRIES
Surely the sound in Robert Plant's head, *Strange Moon Rising* wraps sultry slide guitar around ghostly female voices to make a folk-blues phantasmagoria. Hear it on this month's free CD.

21 Fat Billy Shouts Mine
BIG BIG TRAIN
Marillionesque tale of the life and death of veteran Sheffield United/ England goalkeeper William 'Fatty' Foulke. The era is evoked brilliantly (jumpers, goalposts, etc). From BBT's new *Far Skies Deep Time* EP.

22 Angle Park
BIG COUNTRY
A new book about Stuart Adamson, and the news that Big Country will play with Mike Peters as frontman, sent us back to their back catalogue and this rarely heard gem, a bonus track on the reissue of *The Crossing*.

23 Gunman
THEM CROOKED VULTURES
A year after its release we're still finding gems on TCV's debut album. This is the *Rhubard And Custard* theme tune played by Led Zeppelin and sung by David Bowie.

24 Car Mechanic's Blues
BLOOD ON THE SADDLE
With Imelda May dragging the upright bass back into fashion, what better time to rediscover the lightning-paced fretboard ferocity of the greatest cow-punk band of all time.

Hear more recommendations EVERY DAY by following us on mflow

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ON TOUR

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5 FEBRUARY 11	THE PEEL	KINGSTON

ON TOUR

STEVE LUKATHER

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL TOUR 2011

17 MARCH 11	ASSEMBLY HALL	LEAMINGTON SPA
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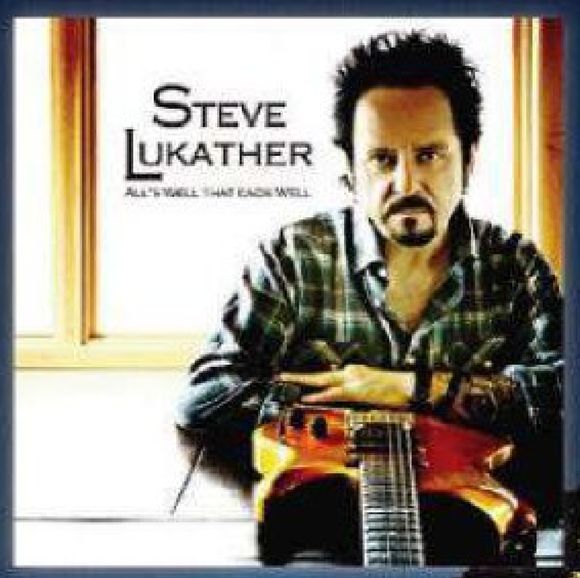

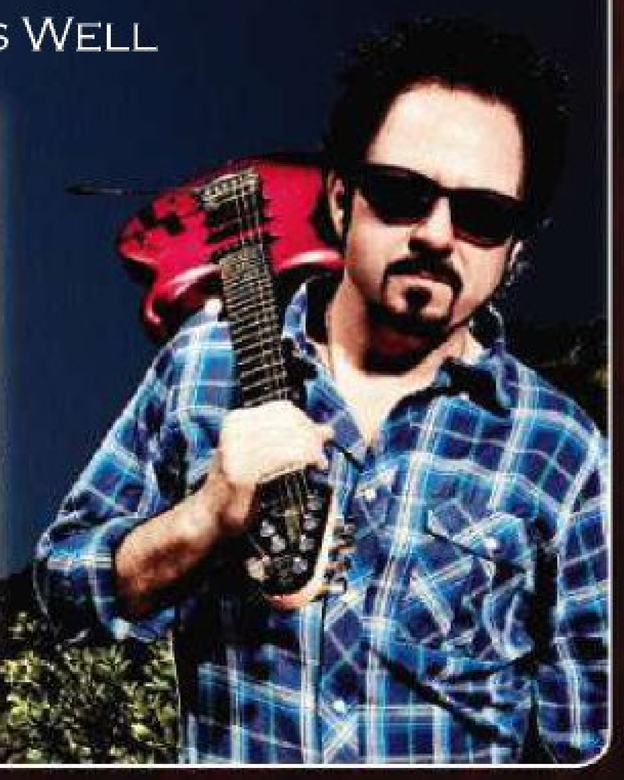

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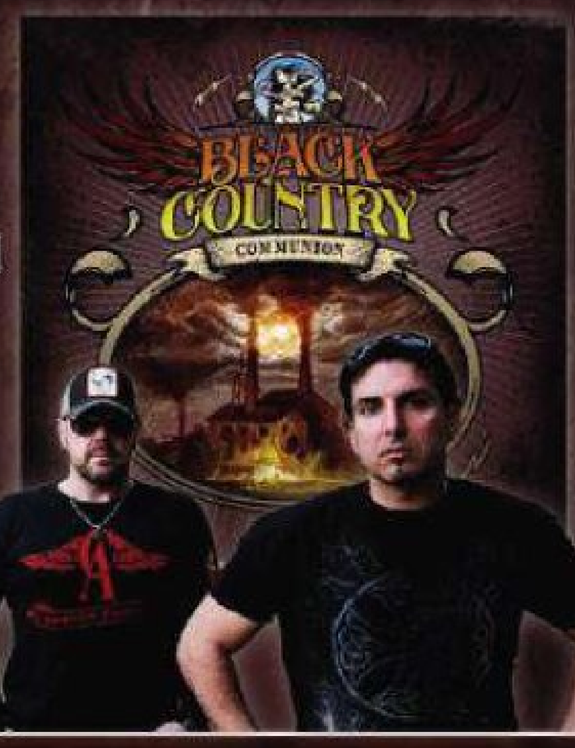

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Tom Petty And The Heartbreakers

Refugee

The music demo was a late-night idea, the lyrics took 10 minutes. After more than 100 takes the drum track was still going nowhere, until a star session player dropped by and shook things up.

Words:
Jaan Uhelszki
Portrait:
Tony Mottram/ Retna

Sandwiched between punk, the first moans of goth and the flagging first wave of New Wave, Tom Petty And The Heartbreakers' track *Refugee* took a defiant step in reasserting the dominance of guitar rock at the butt end of the 70s. Not only did this prickly anthem propel the band into the US *Billboard* chart and help make them a household name, with the anxious minor key menace of Mike Campbell's opening guitar shot it also helped banish the lingering malaise of a world afflicted with disco fever.

It was a dark, dangerous sound that came to the guitarist late one afternoon while he sat listening to John Mayall's version of *Oh Pretty Woman* which featured a very young pre-Rolling Stones Mick Taylor on guitar. It was Taylor's playing that was the real inspiration for *Refugee*.

"I love that album [*Crusade*, 1967]," Campbell says today. "I'd just put it on and practise guitar along with it. I love the way Mick Taylor plays, and maybe some of it's rubbed off.

"I had a Gibson guitar that I wanted to try, and I wanted to come up with some chords that I liked that I could play some lead over," Campbell explains. He recorded a few other guitar ideas on a four-track tape recorder, and eventually, without having given it a title, gave a cassette of it to Petty to listen to.

By 1979 the two friends hadn't written much together, but then-producer Denny Cordell suggested it might be a good idea. Campbell and Petty wrote a single song together on TP&TH's debut album, and two on the second. But something shifted when Campbell bought the four-track.

"That's where Mike's talents really took off," Petty remembers. "He was always fiddling around with these tapes he was making at home. On *Damn The Torpedoes* was when he came in with those incredible songs: *Refugee* and *Here Comes My Girl*. That was when it really blossomed."

So had Petty. It took him just 10 minutes to come up with the words to add to the untitled music on the cassette that Campbell had given him. But that's the last thing that would be easy about *Refugee*.

"All I remember is giving him a cassette, telling him: 'Here's some demos'," Campbell smiles. "I didn't think much about it. Then the next rehearsal we had he said: 'I worked on your tape and I got some words to this song.' I said: 'Oh, really?' He played it to me, and I was just blown away. The band tried to learn it, and that was a whole other movie. Trying to capture that demo with the band live took a while."

The Heartbreakers had managed to persuade wunderkind producer Jimmy Iovine – the engineer on Bruce Springsteen's *Born To Run*, producer of Patti Smith's *Easter* – to work with them.

"We were still pretty green in the studio, and we were getting used to Jimmy Iovine and [engineer] Shelly Yakus who were both very meticulous with the drum sounds," Campbell remembers. "The first day it'd be like: 'Move the snare drum over there.' 'Try a different snare drum.' 'Let's try a different microphone.' This went on for days, just trying to get the snare to sound right.

They had almost recorded the entire album, yet they still couldn't get *Refugee* right. The studio was a tense place, and the scapegoat was drummer Stan Lynch. At one point he was temporarily dismissed because of his constant bickering with Iovine over the drum sounds.

"We were so hard on Stanley. He worked really hard to get this drum sound. [The demo] had a swing to it that Stan didn't quite understand. None of us did really, but it just seemed to work," recalls Campbell.

It took the over 100 takes to get it right.

"We all blamed each other. But we never doubted the song. So we just kept at it until, finally, one day we played it and said: 'Oh, that's it.'"

But still they couldn't let it go. "Jimmy was pushing real hard," says Campbell. "Bless his heart. Jimmy was on a mission. We were on a mission too, but Jimmy was just driven. He wanted to make the best record ever made, and he wanted to be the guy to do it. He wanted to prove to himself and the world that Jimmy Iovine made this happen. And he did. I mean, there's nothing that we would have accepted that wasn't great either, but he was pushing, and sometimes his pushing kind of worked against us because it would implode some of the players. But I wouldn't give him more weight than Tom in terms of pushing for the final version. Even when we had the take, we didn't think we had it. We were still thinking: 'Oh, this is still not good enough. We want to cut it again.'"

And they might of continued trying to improve on it, had they not had to finally turn the finished album in to the label.

"Jimmy and Tom took it to New York. They said: 'Maybe if we mix it in New York it'll sound better than it does here.' Even when it was out we were thinking: 'Oh, we should have cut it again.' It never ended."

More than three decades later, they still remain haunted by the song, with which they always end their set.

"There were a couple of times where Tom was having issues with his voice. It's a hard song to sing because it's at the top of his range, and there were times when he would go: 'I can't hit those notes tonight, guys. We're going to have to leave it off the list.' A couple of tours ago we tried to lower the key to make it easier for him, but it changed the whole timbre of the music. We struggled along with that for a while. Then the last tour we said: 'We either do it in the right key or we don't do it at all. But people want to hear it, so we do what we can.

"Everything we've ever done we compare to *Refugee* or *American Girl*. It's an albatross," Campbell laughs. "But it's a good problem to have."

"We all blamed each other. But we never doubted the song. Finally, one day we played it and said: 'Oh, that's it.'"

Damn The Torpedoes Deluxe Edition is out now via Commercial Marketing.

THE UNCREDITED KELTNER CONNECTION

Part of the breakthrough in finally nailing the drum track of *Refugee* came from star session drummer Jim Keltner. Having stopped by one day, he suggested they add a samba shaker to the track.

"I wasn't there that day," says Campbell. "But Jim used to come around the studio a lot, just listen or suggest things, and support us. And one day and he said: 'You know what this song really needs? It needs a shaker.' And he was right. It helped the drums swing, closer to what the song was trying to do. It sounded a little stiff without it. He played it on the recording, because I don't think Stan was there. I'm not sure whether he got credit or not."

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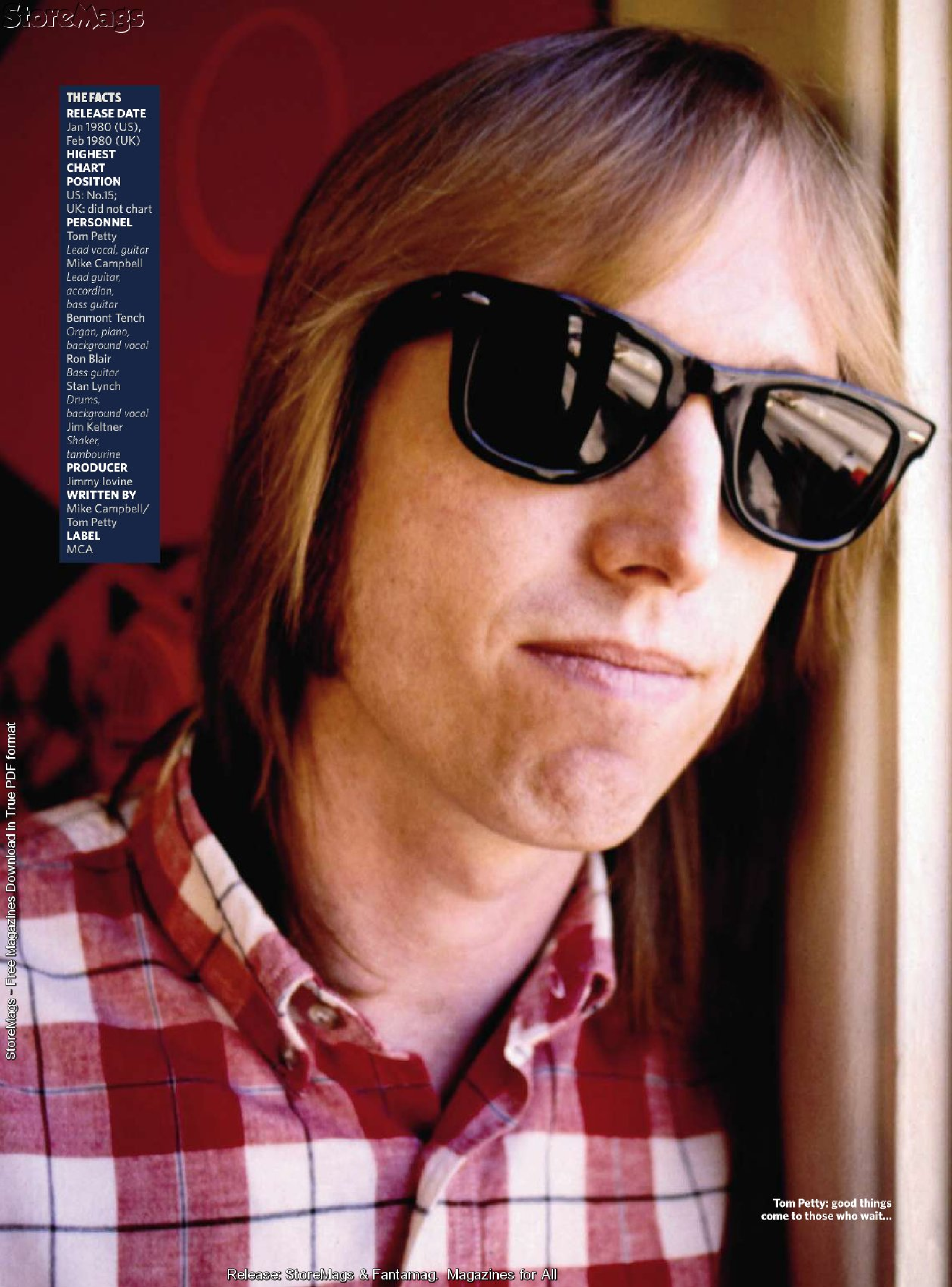

THE FACTS
RELEASE DATE
Jan 1980 (US), Feb 1980 (UK)
HIGHEST CHART POSITION
US: No.15; UK: did not chart
PERSONNEL
Tom Petty
Lead vocal, guitar
Mike Campbell
Lead guitar, accordion, bass guitar
Benmont Tench
Organ, piano, background vocal
Ron Blair
Bass guitar
Stan Lynch
Drums, background vocal
Jim Keltner
Shaker, tambourine
PRODUCER
Jimmy Iovine
WRITTEN BY
Mike Campbell/ Tom Petty
LABEL
MCA

Tom Petty: good things come to those who wait...

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Keith Richards

Keith Richards on life, death, setting an example for his kids, and his friendship with Paul McCartney.

Words: **Martin Scholz**

For the past few months, Keith Richards has been popping up everywhere: on TV, in newspapers and magazines, on the top of best-seller lists with his autobiography, *Life*, and probably among your Xmas presents. The busy schedule is nothing new for Keith, who has always managed to pack a lot in. As he says in his book: "For many years I slept, on average, twice a week. This means that I have been conscious for at least three lifetimes."

This writer first interviewed Keith Richards in 1988, when he was 44 and I was 25. "That's an eternity ago," he says, laughing at a couple of photos taken during the interview. "Look at my shoulder pads and your mullet!"

Last year Paul McCartney said that at 67 he can still sing his lungs out because he doesn't question himself. Is that also your philosophy? To just go for it and make music without a safety net?
I couldn't put it any better than Paul. I've never questioned myself. And even today I never ask myself whether I'm too old or whether I should still expect so much of my body. That doesn't get you anywhere. You just keep doing it.

It's interesting you bring up Paul, of all people, in connection with transience. I mean, he and Ringo are the last two living Beatles. I knew John well, also George and Ringo, but over all the decades Paul and I never really came together, never sat down and talked. We've only made up for that recently. It's strange that it's taken so many years. And it was really more by accident that it happened at all. For a while Paul was visiting me every day at my house on Parrot Cay [an island in the West Indies], where he also lives part of the time. We talked about songwriting, life, death… and what distinguished The Beatles from the Stones.

And what was that?
Everyone in The Beatles could sing. We were more of a music band. We only had one frontman.

On McCartney's last album he has a song about how he imagines his own funeral. Do you think about things like that?
No, I haven't thought about my own funeral. I can understand why Paul would want to deal with such things but we're very different in this respect. I find it difficult to tax my brain about the future. It wasn't so long ago that I had a pretty concrete experience of death, when I fell out of a tree in 2006 and injured my head.

You actually cracked your skull, which you didn't realise at first, and then later had two strokes in your sleep as a result.
Yeah, it was a drastic situation. They had to surgically remove a blood clot from beneath the cranium. A lot of people around me thought I was going to die.

Were you scared?
What scared me was a letter from Tony Blair, who apart from his best wishes also wrote that I had always been his hero. The British head of state taking me, of all people, as a role model? That I found really scary.

Are you afraid of death?
There'll be a great nothingness or… it will be the beginning of a whole new trip [laughs]. I only know one thing: if I meet the Devil, then God help him.

You now have four grown-up children. At some time most children rebel against their parents. How did yours rebel?
I don't think they ever had any reason to rebel against me. I never made any strict rules about coping with life or dealing with everyday existence. We were nomads, constantly moving around. I've always made sure my children felt safe, but I didn't have any rules. Who am I to make rules for my kids? I've been fighting against regimentation my whole life.

Have you warned your children about drugs?
We've spoken about it but I've never tried to lecture them. I've always looked at myself and my body as a kind of private property that I could experiment with, in the sense of "Oh, let's take this stuff and see what it does to me".

In your book you've written extensively about Mick Jagger, but the press has focused almost exclusively on the conflicts. Does that annoy you?
Affection doesn't make for good headlines. Of course I knew that beforehand. I really don't care. Mick and I are like brothers, not friends. And if two brothers are locked up in the same room for too long then sparks are going to fly. We often fought during the time when he had lead-singer syndrome and thought he was the greatest. I couldn't and didn't want to leave all that out of the book, because otherwise it wouldn't have been honest. Sure, there was often trouble, but in the end we always managed to come together again. The wounds heal quickly. The really heavy conflicts happened nearly thirty years ago.

In one passage you make fun of the giant inflatable penis that Mick Jagger played with on stage, while you reveal that his own penis is tiny. Did you think twice before telling this to the rest of the world?
Okay, there I've opened up some old wounds. That's also part of my story. Otherwise I wouldn't have been able to tell it honestly. I also know that I drove Mick crazy with my behaviour for years. Of course every one of those sorts of details now stands out. That's why I gave Mick the book to read beforehand. He knew what was coming. He was prepared.

There wasn't an argument as a result?
We're looking forward to going on tour together next June. Does that answer your question?

Keith Richards' book Life is available now, published by Orion.

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Keith Richards: won't have much sympathy if he meets the Devil.

"TONY BLAIR TAKING ME, OF ALL PEOPLE, AS A ROLE MODEL? THAT I FOUND REALLY SCARY."

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Ever Meet Hendrix?

He rubbed **Lennon** *up the wrong way, thought he'd killed his brother* **Ray**, *was in awe of* **Chuck Berry** *but thought* **Jerry Lee Lewis** *was "a complete arsehole", and would have loved a three-in-a-bed romp with* **Brian Jones** *and their shared girlfriend Zouzou. He is former Kinks guitarist* **Dave Davies**, *and these are some of his stories.*

Words: **Rob Hughes**

Ray Davies may have been the creative genius in the Kinks, but brother Dave was responsible for defining their 60s sound. The lead guitarist has a valid claim for having invented heavy metal via the roaring riffs of the Kinks' monster hits *You Really Got Me* and *All Day And All Of The Night*. It's a style that proved inspirational for everyone from Van Halen to Green Day, Mott The Hoople to Metallica.

When the Kinks disbanded in 1996, Dave Davies set about firming up his solo career. *Fractured Mindz*, in 2007, was his first studio album since suffering a serious stroke in 2004. His new DVD, *Mystikal Journey*, documents his life-long interest in spirituality. Now 63, he is articulate and outspoken, although somewhat less frantic than in his pill-popping 60s pomp. "I was pretty manic and driven back then," he says. "Music was like a big green light going on in my head."

THE WHO

There was a wild, cliquey little gang of us in the 60s – me, Townshend, Long John Baldry, Eric Burdon and Jeff Beck – and we used to hang out at the Scotch of St James. Me and Townshend used to spend a lot of time smoking joints in the back of tour vans. The Kinks always used to look forward to playing on *Ready Steady Go!* because we'd always score drugs off Keith Moon. He'd be supplying us with uppers, downers and a bit of reefer.

The last time I saw Keith was about two weeks before he died. I was staying in the Hyatt House hotel in LA. He just looked different. He was in the bar on his own and looked sad and old. I was on my way out with a girl I'd met, and he said: "Oh, stay and have a beer with me." It was said in the same way as my dad might say it: 'Come and have a beer, son'. It was very odd. Maybe he was very lonely in the end.

JEFF BECK

There was a lot of mutual admiration between the Kinks and the Yardbirds. When Eric Clapton left and Jeff Beck came in, he got wrapped up in the glamour of it all and we got to be good mates. I think he was actually trying to copy me. You know: "If Dave can do that, so can I". We used to go drinking a lot and end up doing silly, childish, drunken things. One night we went down the entire road by walking over all the parked cars on the pavement. When we were drunk, we'd think: "Ah, that's a good idea". [Laughing] Usually we'd get home at four in the morning and not remember a thing. Our main place was the Cromwellian club. Everyone you could think of would be there. We were all big drinkers. It was a very drink-and-drugs culture. Jeff was always a wild character. He had the potential to be really insane, I think. He was born to be Jeff Beck; he could never have been a conventional pop star.

JIMI HENDRIX

In real life, Hendrix was nothing like the wild guy that he portrayed on stage. He was a quiet, introverted guy, like Ray was. He was explosive on stage, but very softly spoken off it. I'd see him from time to time at the Scotch of St James or at parties. We used to exchange the odd word to each other, but it was never like we were close. I remember once sitting next to him on a plane bound for Stockholm. After a while we got talking a little and he suddenly said to me: "Y'know, that guitar riff you did on *You Really Got Me* was a real landmark." You can imagine how I felt. To be endorsed by Hendrix was really something. It was a great compliment.

JOHN LENNON

The only thing me and [late Kinks bassist] Pete Quaife ever argued about was The Beatles. I never liked them but Pete thought the sun shone out of their arses. I used to say: "C'mon, Pete, we can do this stuff better than them!" The Kinks opened for The Beatles at Liverpool Empire, and we were dying to see the guitars they used. We knew they were Rickenbackers. I was going to go up there and play one, but John Lennon wouldn't let us touch anything. "Don't you dare touch those!" He was a paranoid guy, but funny. They were so protective of everything, with their posh suits and Beatle haircuts. John used to hang out at the Scotch of St James. I think he liked me, mostly because he knew I didn't give a shit. My attitude wasn't down to inner resentment, like his was. A lot of his discontent was born from deep-rooted experience and resentment. But, unlike John, I'd had a great childhood. We were once both drunk, sitting at the table in the Scotch of St James. I'd had a few pills as well and he couldn't stop me talking. As I was leaving, John said to me: "You're one of the most obnoxious people I've ever met!" I took that as a great compliment.

LED ZEPPELIN

Jimmy Page was a protégé of Big Jim Sullivan's in the early 60s. They played on a lot of sessions together. In those days people formed bands and not everybody could actually play, so the record company or producer would bring Jimmy in to play guitar in the studio. It happened a lot back then. Jimmy was always very quiet and unassuming, kept himself to himself. He'd be behind the glass at the early Kinks sessions, after [producer] Shel Talmy had called him ➔

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Dave Davies: Kink, 60s follower of fashion, arguably the inventor of heavy metal.

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EVER MEET HENDRIX?

in, in case he was needed. But he was never on those records. Some people still think otherwise, but he never played on *You Really Got Me* or *All Day And All Of The Night*. That's me on there. Later on, I'd bump into Led Zeppelin at the Hyatt House in LA. I saw them play in Hollywood, sometime around 1971 when they'd really made it big over there. John Bonham came up to me afterwards and said: "You know what? We just give 'em *You Really Got Me* all night. That's what we do."

BRIAN JONES

I'm not putting down anyone else in the Stones, but Brian was the true artist in that band. Sometimes he was into the whole rock'n'roll thing, but other times he just wouldn't play the game. Someone might ask him something, and he'd just drift off or choose to look at a tree or a cloud. A lot of their early creativity was down to him. There'd be this great build-up to a Stones show, with people expecting lots of volume and noise. Then Brian would come on and play the guitar with a feather.

Every time the Kinks toured Paris, I'd meet up with a girlfriend there called Zouzou [actress and model Daniele Ciarlet] and we'd hang out, smoke weed and end up in bed together. We used to have a great time. Then one day at the Scotch of St James, Brian and I got talking and I told him about this girl in Paris and how great she was. He looked shocked: "What? You mean Zouzou?" It turned out that he was seeing her too. So unbeknown to both of us, we were involved in a strange kind of menage a trois. It was a fantastic idea, actually, and I would have liked a menage a trois with Brian and Zouzou, but it never happened.

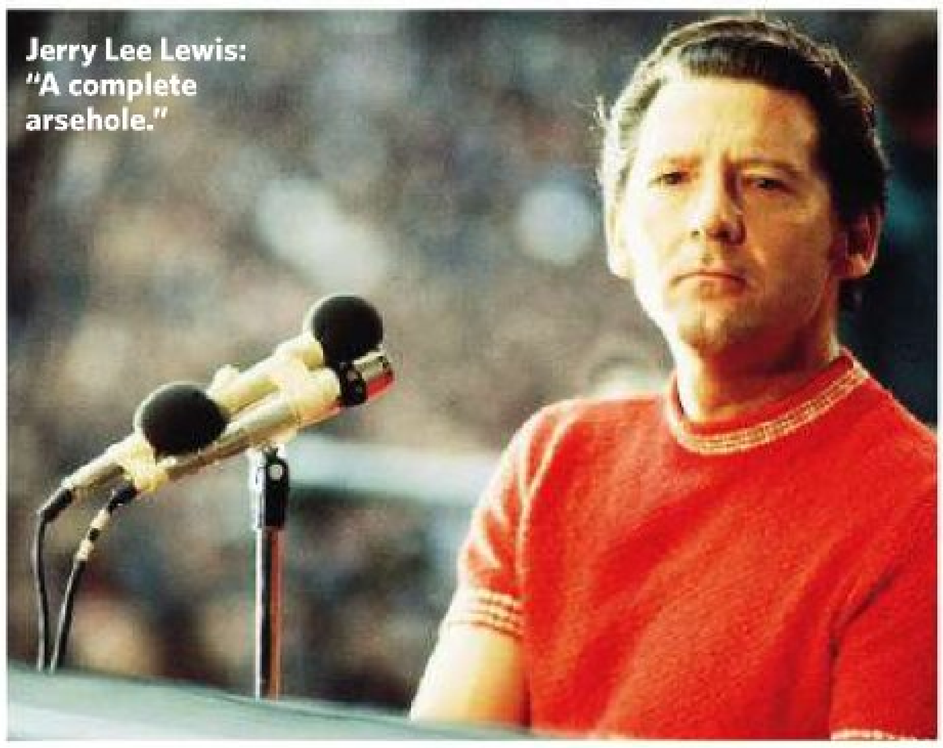
RAY DAVIES

We've always had a strange relationship, and just don't communicate these days. Yes, he's a genius songwriter, but there's other stuff you have to be accountable for as well. And Ray's just not a nice person. He's a sly, manipulative, nasty person. He's treated me like a piece of shit over the years. As kids, I'd be outgoing and carefree and very open, while Ray would be introverted, troubled and sneaky. He was never happy unless he was taking something from me. You can kind of live with that as children, but once you're adults it becomes a real issue.

When we were about twelve, our brother-in-law bought us each a pair of boxing gloves. One day we were sparring in the old front room. I was quite a useful southpaw, and started leading and jabbing at Ray with my left. Then I suddenly caught him with a right-handed uppercut. He went flying and ended up smacking his head against the side of the piano. He wasn't moving at all, and I was going: "Jesus! I've fucking killed him!" So I took my gloves off and moved in closer. He still wasn't responding, so I leaned into his chest to hear if he was breathing or not. And just as I did that he punched me right in the face with a big right-hander. Take from that what you will, but that just about sums up our relationship.

CHUCK BERRY

I probably would never have picked up a guitar if it hadn't been for Eddie Cochran, but Chuck Berry was the key to everything that



Jerry Lee Lewis: "A complete arsehole."

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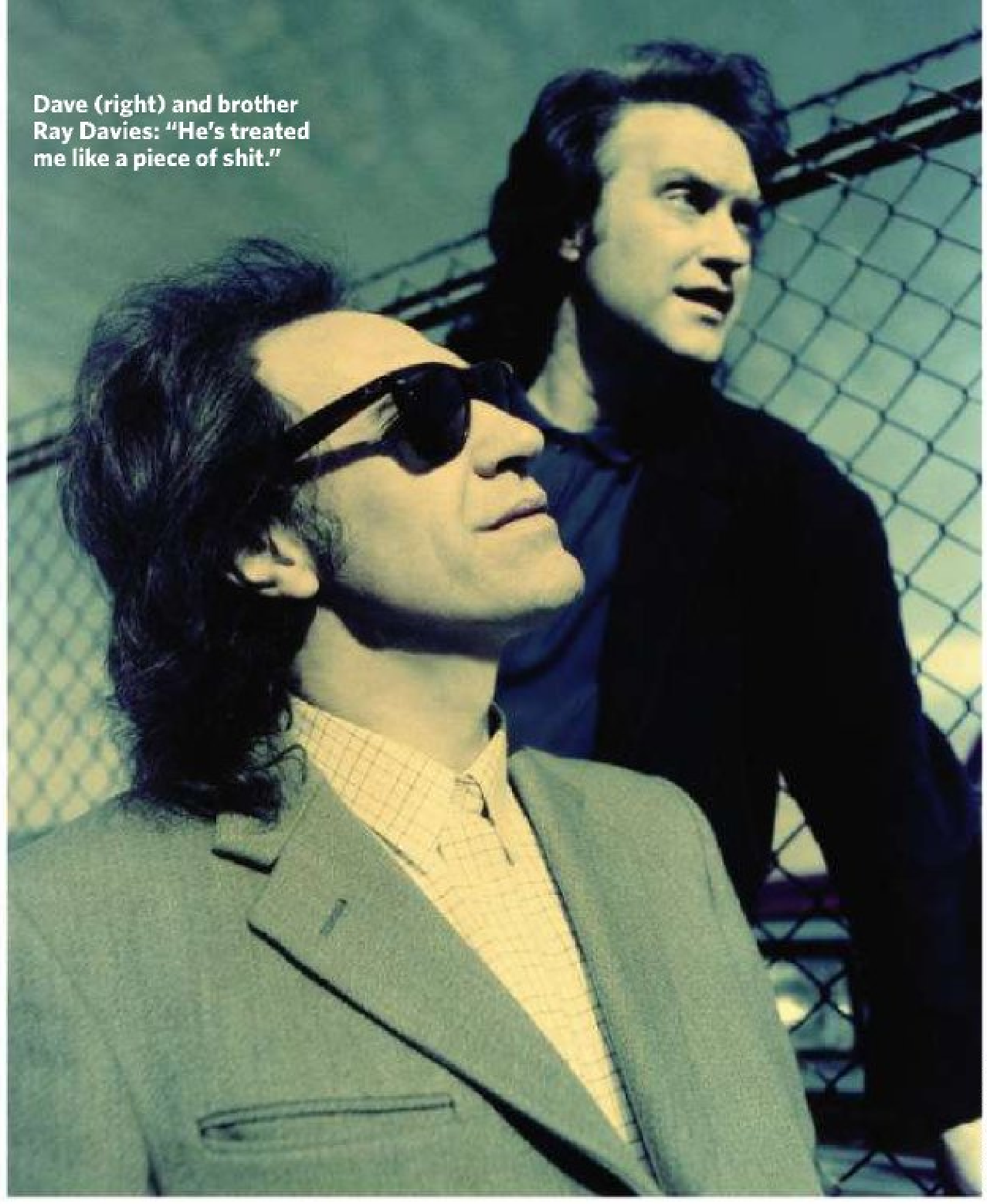
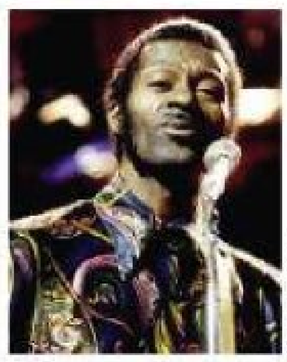


Dave (right) and brother Ray Davies: "He's treated me like a piece of shit."

AARON RAPOPORT/CORBIS

"John Lennon said to me: 'You're one of the most obnoxious people I've ever met!' I took that as a great compliment."



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Brian Jones (top): "I would have liked a menage a trois with Brian and Zouzou." Chuck Berry (bottom): "I was completely in awe of him."

happened in the 60s. His lyrics were on a par with Dylan and my brother. I eventually met him at an airport in Atlanta. [Long pause] Shit, I'm getting emotional here. He had these great shoes – white and brown brogues, but kind of 50s style. I looked at him and was speechless. Then he started swearing at some flight attendant who'd put him in the wrong seat. I was thinking, "Wow, I wish I could swear like that!" I was just completely in awe of him, while I think he just thought I was some cocky kid. He ended up saying things like: "Sure, yeah, how you doin'?" and "Oh, you're in a band called the Kinks?" Humouring me, I suppose. He was looking over his shoulder and waiting for the flight to be called and the lights to go up. He had incredible presence.

JERRY LEE LEWIS

I never got to play with Chuck Berry, but I did get to play with Jerry Lee Lewis. That was a big mistake. He'd been another big hero as a kid. It was at an all-star tribute gig for him. I saw Brian May there, and teased him with the *You Really Got Me* riff, and all of sudden, from being the super-cool Brian May he turned into a little punk Brian May: [in a falsetto voice] "Oh, great to meet you, man!" Anyway, me and Brian were plugged into the same amp, and James Burton was in the back-up band. But when we got going I soon realised that Jerry Lee Lewis was an arsehole. A complete arsehole. I quickly decided to just get on with it and get through it. He had a terrible personality. He didn't treat people well at all. Maybe he was like that because he was surrounded by arseholes himself. You know, he could win all the accolades he wants, but on his deathbed he'll have to look at himself. When I had my stroke I came very close to death myself, so I know how that feels.

Dave Davies's DVD/CD release Mystikal Journey is available now now through Cargo Records.

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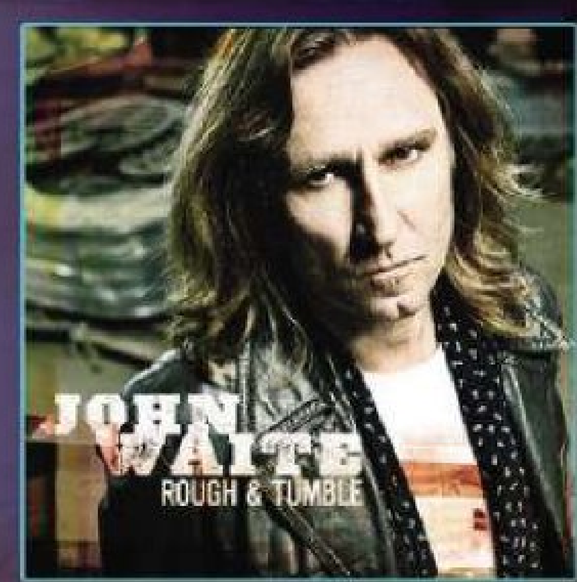

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Waiting for an alibi

The final year of **Phil Lynott**'s life saw him try to get his career back on track, aided by friends old and new. *Classic Rock* looks at 365 days of missed opportunites, lost passports and crazy deals.

Words: **Harry Doherty**

When the call came that Phil Lynott had died, Thin Lizzy fans everywhere went into shock, devastated at the news. 'Phil Lynott' and 'dead' were words that one could not possibly imagine being put together. The writing had been on the wall for some years, but no-one – not fans, friends, band, management, record companies – could believe that he had actually succumbed to the inevitable.

It was common knowledge that Phil's post-Thin Lizzy career had gone off the rails and that his dependence on drugs – loads of them – was not helping. His band Grand Slam had ground to a stuttering halt before breaking up, his marriage was in trouble and his personal life was being openly examined, many times in the courts. This all contributed to putting him in a very bad place, although news of a solo deal brought some hope.

Phil, though, was not one to help himself.

The rot had set in some time before, when partying took almost as much precedence as recording during the *Black Rose* sessions in Paris, eventually forcing Gary Moore to jump ship during an American tour. The warning signs were not heeded. The much straighter, but experienced, Snowy White started by taking Lynott and Scott Gorham's drug-taking in his stride before push came to shove during preparations for a new studio album in Dublin.

On a work level, White was despairing of working with Lynott: "I didn't know him as a person at all. After the first six or seven months, it got to the stage where I couldn't be bothered any more because I just couldn't get through. He never opened up. I could never talk to him as a friend. He was always trying to prove something. We all know how difficult it was to deal with Phil. One minute he'd say one thing, and the next day he'd prefer not to remember it. You couldn't win with him. We'd make plans to do this that and the other, and then it would all be changed.

"I found myself just drifting further and further away from him and the band. It was my fault as well because I wasn't a strong character in that set-up.

"I would stay in the studio as long as I could stay awake. I used to be up about eight in the morning, get to the studio at one and Phil and Scott might turn up at seven and work all night because they had things to keep them awake. Come midnight I was starting to sleep."

During Snowy's era, Phil's attention was spread between recording both band and solo albums, and that irked White too: "I didn't know what I was playing on. We didn't know what was going where, which pissed me off a bit because if I played on Phil's solo stuff, I would have wanted session fees… It's my business and job."

The frustration was palpable as he talked about the relationship not long after Phil died: "I don't know enough about drugs," he said. "I didn't know what was going on… Obviously there were a lot of drugs around, but I don't do them so I couldn't tell if moods were drug induced or natural. That made me an outsider, I suppose. If you join a band like that, either you jump in and do everything or you stay outside and be the odd one out, and I have always been very happy being the odd one out in situations like that. I would never get pissed or take drugs just to be one of the boys. I didn't feel involved when we went out.

"But I was still hoping it was going to change. There were often times when things looked as if they were going to change – in some of Phil's more sensible moments. Where he would see that this could crumble around his ears – partly because of how difficult he was to be with – which it did.

"By the end, I was keeping well out of it. On tour by then, I used to come back to the hotel, have something to eat, go to bed, then get up the next morning and have a look around whatever town we were staying in. I'd pass the boys coming in from a night out. They'd sleep all day and we'd meet at the gig. We didn't talk much, there was nothing to talk about."

White stuck at it for a while – *Chinatown* and *Renegade* were both solid albums in the Lizzy canon, and while White may not have shaken his booty on stage, he was a complete blues rock player in the studio, an ideal foil for Gorham. But then it all became too much as he prepared in Dublin for his third album with Thin Lizzy.

Even before getting on the plane for Ireland, White was already doubting his future and had an inkling that maybe Phil and Scott were thinking the same. He also let manager Chris Morrison know that he was going there to work, not to wait on his colleagues to shake off the previous night's drink/drug hangover. Morrison promised to talk to Lynott and Gorham.

For two days, all was fine, then what had become the usual kicked back in. Phil couldn't make it because he was "sick", Gorham turned up late. While the rest of the band retired to the pub, White worked on some material that Phil promptly wiped the next day. Back in London, White considered his options and decided enough was enough.

"I was lying in my bed and I thought, 'I am not going into that studio to sit around until somebody out of their brains wanders in at seven o'clock at night and wants to work all night'." So he didn't.

John Sykes would have seen the same things happen when he joined for the *Thunder And Lightning* album and tour, but was young and ➔

"I sat down on the stairs of my basement and just cried. It killed me that he wasn't going to be there any more."

– Scott Gorham on receiving news of Phil Lynott's death

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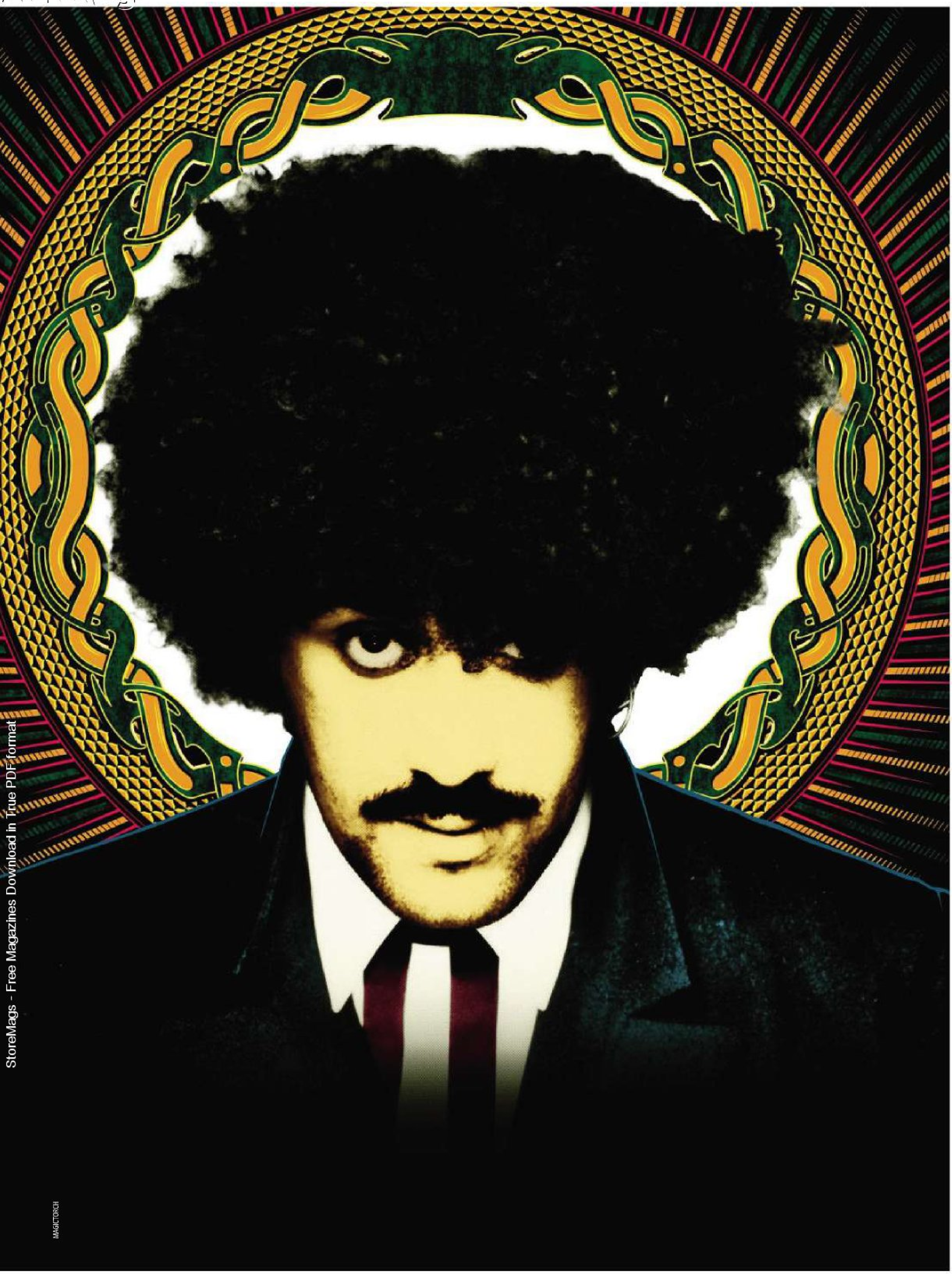

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impressionable enough to let it wash over him. But by then even Scott Gorham had had enough.

"John came into this band thinking, 'This is going to be great, I'm a star now' but, unbeknownst to him, we knew that that album and one more tour was it," Gorham remembers. "So I felt sort of sorry for him. It was Phil's idea not to tell him. He was afraid that if John was told he would quit the band. Kind of shitty, but there you go. In the long run, it didn't really hurt John at all. It helped his career."

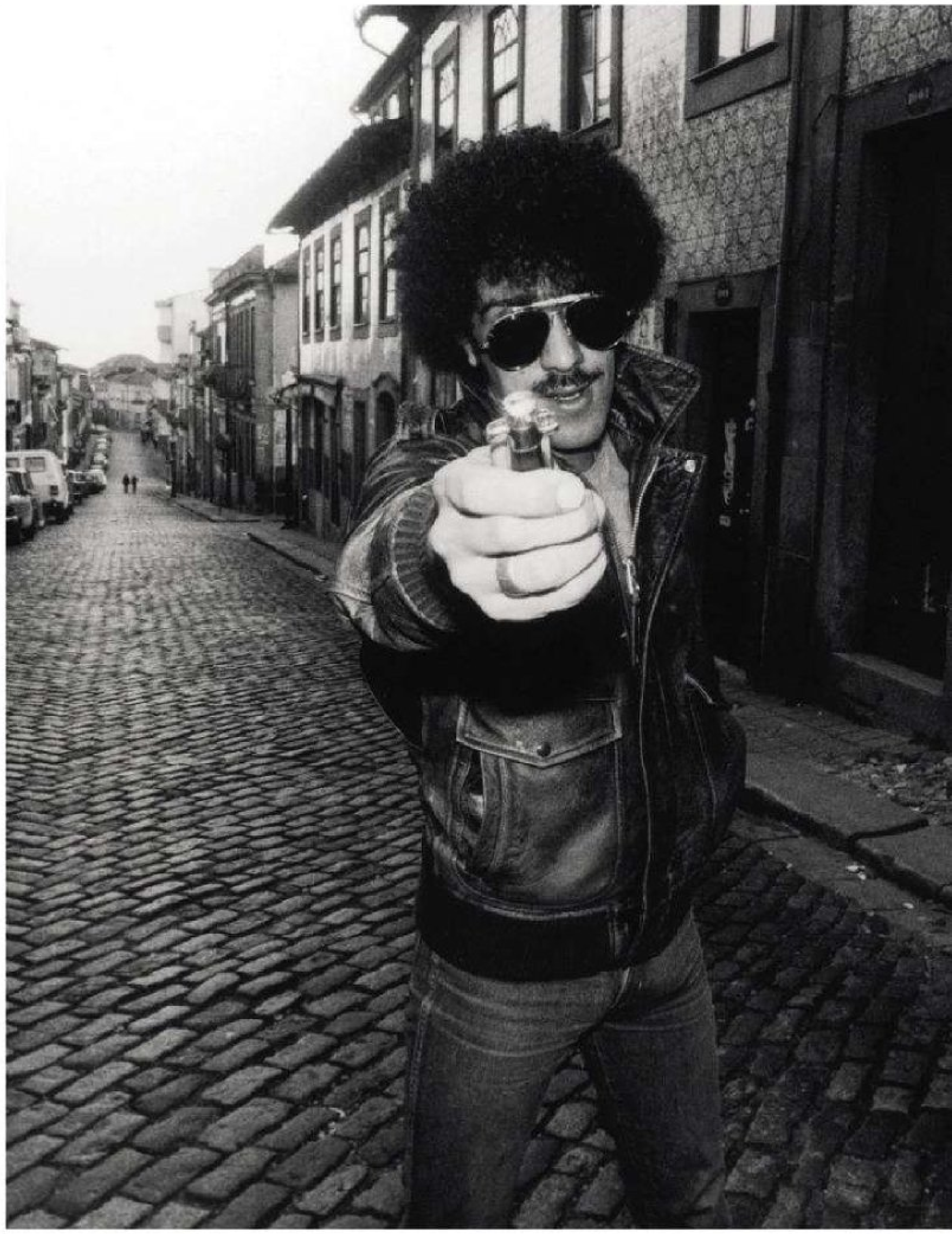
For all of the plaudits poured on *Thunder And Lightning* at the time of its release and since, the main men in Lizzy weren't that enamoured with the album. "We weren't pleased with the songs and there would be arguments," says Gorham. "The drugs were flying. Always… Some people wouldn't work until they were stoned – me for one, Phil for the other. People were nodding out on the console. This metal sound full blast coming out of the monitors and you're nodding off. Taking drugs drains your whole being. You'd rather be doing drugs than recording. And I had had enough of it."

A lengthy (farewell) tour to support the album and that was that. *Life* was an apt title for the live album that followed, for the disbandment of his beloved Thin Lizzy would tear its founder apart, especially as the decision was pretty much forced on him by the ever dependable mate and co-founder Brian Downey, and principally by his partying buddy and fellow band frontman Gorham. Lynott would spend the rest of his life trying to resurrect Lizzy, if not in name then in sound. Tragically, it turned out that his efforts continued to be narcotic-assisted.

To those around him, it was obvious that Phil was not in good shape. I had witnessed it at close quarters. Once I had called him at his home in Kew and he fell asleep on the phone. Where was the man who when I called him at his West Hampstead flat in the early days couldn't speak because he was "busy", a euphemism for engaging in intimate female company? Another time, I experienced Phil's deteriorating state personally when I was asked by his record company to do an electronic press kit (*ie* a recording) which couldn't be used because his voice was shot due to drugs. Of course, like everyone else, I thought Phil was invincible and would come through this.

While Scott Gorham was getting used to the idea of giving up heroin and taking a break from all things associated with his use (for example, not hanging out with other users), Phil barely paused for thought after the final Lizzy gig at Nuremburg's Monsters Of Rock in September, 1984.

"I came to the conclusion that I gotta stop taking this shit," says Gorham. "It took me over a year after leaving the band to get it through my thick-ass fucking skull that this shit was going to kill me or ruin my career, which was on the way anyway. I had been to the Priory two or three times and failed miserably, tried it on my own and failed miserably tons of times."



Fight or fall: switchblade anti-hero Lynott on the mean streets.

Eventually, his wife Christine found him treatment in California with Dr Meg Patterson, who had previously helped ween Eric Clapton and Jimmy Page off smack with her NeuroElectric Therapy treatment. She placed two electrodes behind the patient's ears and connected them to a Sony Walkman-like black box that is worn continually night and day. The box sends out a weak electric current which, according to Patterson, stimulates production of several neurochemicals including pain-reducing endorphins. The release of endorphins, normally interrupted by consumption of heroin and cocaine, eliminates the classic traumatic symptoms of withdrawal: anxiety, runny nose, stomach cramps. It's a short-term treatment which requires immense will from the patient to then stay away from the drugs. Gorham was determined to do it.

"The treatment only takes ten days," says Gorham, "but the mental part takes a couple of years to get over the addiction. I went to Los Angeles and stayed over there for about six months

"It took me over a year to get it through my thick-ass fucking skull that this shit was going to kill me or ruin my career. I had failed tons of times." – Scott Gorham on kicking heroin

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straightening out my head, staying out of the way, just trying to play a little guitar and do a little recording. I was determined not to play any Thin Lizzy at all… and I didn't. I wanted to try something different."

ROSS HALFIN

Meanwhile, Lynott was already plotting the next phase of his career with a three-week tour of folk parks in Scandinavia. All he needed was a band! Brian Downey and John Sykes were in, as was Magnum keyboard player Mark Stanway, who had been introduced to Phil by Skyes after a gig on the T&L tour, hooking up again at the final Reading festival appearance.

"I ended up going back to stay a couple of nights at his house in Kew with him and John and I ended up staying a couple of nights and that basically became two years," says Stanway.

The second guitarist on the tour was Doish Nagel, from Dublin blues-rock band, the Bogey Boys. It all seemed to have echoes of Thin Lizzy – two guitars and all. After one rehearsal, Lynott's solo tour of Sweden took flight, the set consisting mostly of solo album material, with four Lizzy tracks. "I don't think he would have got away with not playing them," Stanway laughs. One of the Lizzy songs played was *Sarah*, which had never been played live by the band.

As the tour progressed, Lynott was seeing the potential for a new band. Stanway: "After about seven or eight gigs, Phil was so happy with the way it went that he said, 'We gotta keep this together'."

Ensconced back in the UK, rehearsals and the writing of new material started with a band that was now called Grand Slam. Then Lynott's confidence was shaken again twice in quick succession. First, John Sykes was offered a gig in Whitesnake by David Coverdale, who was impressed by him when Lizzy and Whitesnake played together at that final German tour gig. "John saw an opportunity," Stanway added. And probably an escape from the madness that was becoming life with Phil Lynott.

Then Brian Downey announced that he was calling it a day. He'd grown tired of the shenanigans in Lizzy's latter days, was said to have issues in his personal life and could see no improvement as a member of Grand Slam. One quote had him saying that he wasn't "interested in playing in a second-rate Thin Lizzy".

Mark Stanway: "I think Phil was still on a bit of a low [from] when Thin Lizzy had finished. Close to the time we did the Swedish tour, he'd been to Africa for a holiday and, I know this sounds weird, but he came back with a great tan! He looked so healthy. He was the heaviest I'd seen him but it was a healthy heavy if you know what I mean. He looked full of life. In those initial times he was in a good state but he was easily depressed. The man wanted to get out and perform."

Replacements were sought and finally found for Sykes and Downey. Irish drummer Robbie Brennan was known to Lynott, and Stanway reminded him of a young guitarist called Laurence Archer, who had been an erstwhile member of the Brian Robertson-Jimmy Bain band, Wild Horses.

Phil always had an eye for good young and good-looking guitarists, and Archer ticked all the boxes. Archer had met him a few years previously through the Wild Horses connection when Phil jammed with the band at the Marquee Club. He then invited the guitarist to a Lizzy recording session in Maida Vale where Archer got the impression that he was being auditioned, though Snowy White was still in the band. When Snowy left Lizzy, says Archer, he was "sort of approached about doing the Lizzy gig but at the time I thought Wild Horses were going to be the biggest thing since sliced bread so I stayed with that. That's when John got the gig."

Archer adds: "He was still an idol to me. I grew up with him and Thin Lizzy. When I was 17 I said to my father, 'That's who I want to play with'."

When Sykes moved on to Whitesnake, Archer was called upon again and filled in on the plans for Grand Slam in the rock'n'roll surroundings of Stringfellows in Leicester Square, then a favoured hang-out for a certain kind of ➔

"HE'D DRINK YOU UNDER THE TABLE!"

Guitarist Eric Bell on the first and last times he met Lynott. By **Philip Wilding**

Eric Bell: "The first time I met Phil was the first time I took acid. I saw him and Brian Downey playing in Dublin and I went backstage as I was trying to find musicians for my new band. We were talking and the acid was kicking in and I was giggling at everything, Philip told me later they actually thought I had mental problems. I was leaving when Philip suggested the three of us form a band, he said there were two conditions to doing it: 'I want to play bass and I want my own songs in the set.' So I said as long as I could hear them and he came up to my flat a week later with an acoustic and just started singing and he blew me away, amazing. You could see Phil's potential right away, absolutely.

"Philip certainly had a charm; he had a lot going for him. Very tall, very good looking and he dressed to kill, really did. He had all that in place before he was ever famous, he loved clothes, everyone in town knew him, it's a small place, but he really stood out.

"He couldn't get enough of partying; he lived for it. That was Philip, he'd drink you under the table, smoke you under the table; he was one of those guys. When the band started, we got a house together and we had parties every night, the local neighbours got a petition together to get us evicted and seventy people signed it! This was in Clontarf on Castle Avenue; the opening track on the first album, *The Friendly Ranger At Clontarf Castle*, that castle was actually at the top of our road.

"We were living in London when *Whisky In The Jar* blew up; it was No. 1 for months in Ireland, we couldn't believe it. So we were catapulted to playing for maybe a thousand people from two hundred the week before. But we couldn't seem to follow it and things started changing, Philip realised that getting a hit wasn't as easy as it had seemed. He was hungry for fame and fortune, so we started concentrating more on how we looked and the show. Once upon a time, Philip was content with having a good three-piece band, but by then the only thing on his mind was getting another hit.

"The last time I saw him was six months before he passed away. I was living in Shepherd's Bush and I was walking past the 7/11 and I saw this huge afro and did a double take. I walked in and said hello and we were hugging, but after a few minutes I noticed he was yellow around the eyes and bloated, he was heavily into the heroin and the booze then. We spoke for about five minutes, he had this big limo outside with a driver but he was walking around with this wire basket with detergent and stuff in it, bizarre. We said, we'll both keep in touch, but of course, we didn't."

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rock star. "Basically, Phil said that he wanted to do something new with two guitarists, fresh with new blood, write new songs, sell it as a whole new band and not as a solo project. He wanted a band but he wanted it to be new, fresh and nothing to do with Lizzy," says Archer.

The new band recorded at Phil's home studio in Kew before heading for Dublin and rehearsals in the community centre in Howth, a suburb of Dublin near Lynott's home there. New material written by Lynott, Archer and Stanway was emerging, including *Military Man* and *Sisters Of Mercy*, before Lynott showed the band how things were done in Ireland when it came to playing live – the showband circuit that was often used by Lizzy to sharpen up before tours and replenish the bank account! "We must have played in every county in Ireland," Stanway laughs.

Back in London, Grand Slam's management of Chris Morrison and tour manager John Salter set about finding a record deal for their new charges. Though Morrison was the figurehead, it was Salter who looked after the day-to-day business of Phil and Grand Slam: "Chris had his empire [Nineteen Management with Simon Fuller] and he didn't have time and he and Phil didn't see eye to eye," says Salter. "So I came back to manage Grand Slam."

The original aim had been to go to America, find a house and work from there but… "Phil kept getting busted so I couldn't get visas!"

What could be the problem though – a new band coming off the back of a legendary band with a proven chart past? But it wasn't to be so easy, and the reasons soon became apparent.

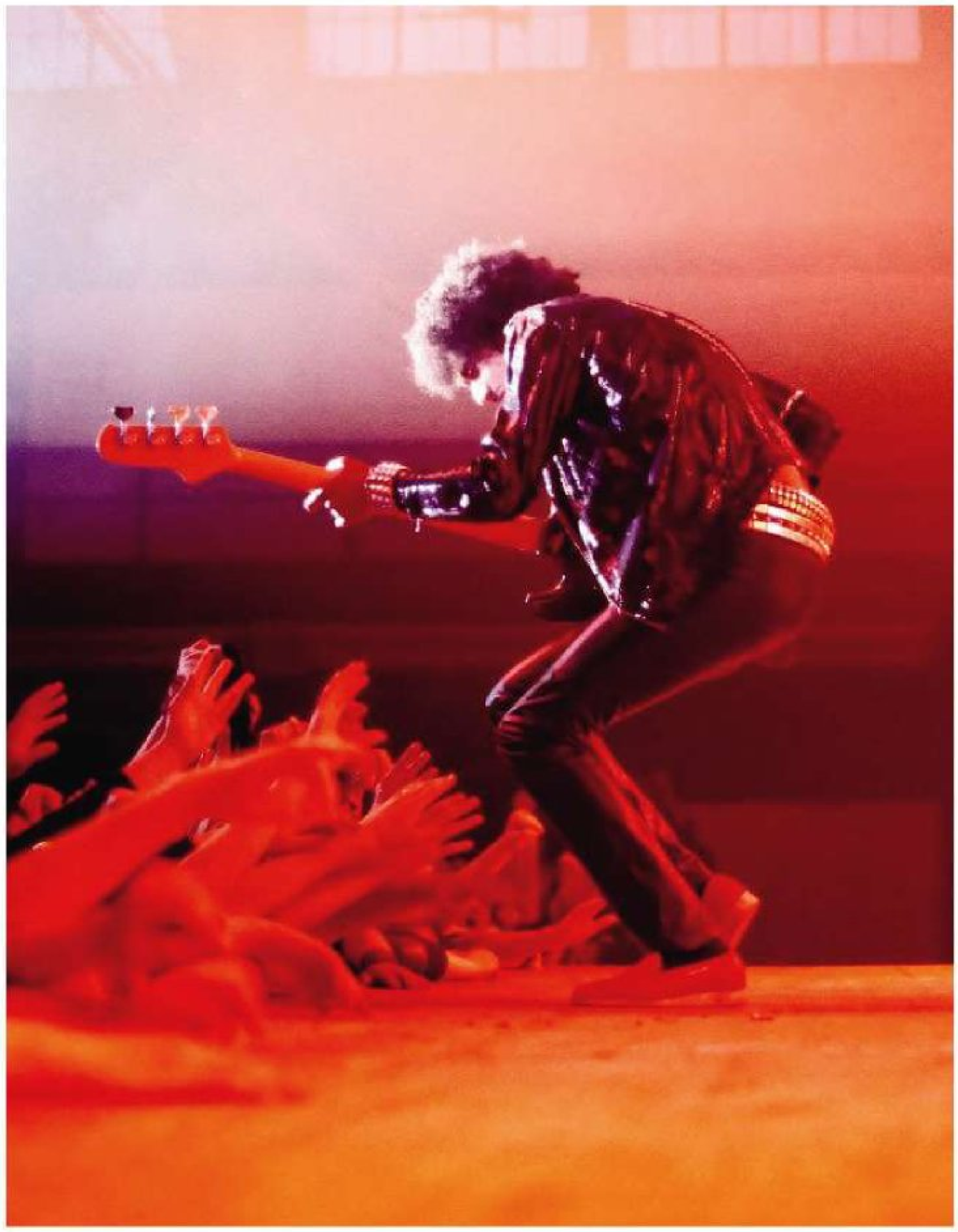
Stanway: "We went into the studio to record these tracks to a decent level and quality and they hawked them about. Polydor had them and Phonogram and EMI – all the majors were given the opportunity, and whilst negotiations did go on, nothing was finalised and nobody actually picked up or came up with a sufficiently good deal for us to sign.

"I think it was because of Phil's reputation, because he was a bit of a wild man. And of course he did have bad days on the trot. There were a bunch of hangers-on that used to come round to the house and give him whatever he wanted."

Laurence Archer remembered coming back from the Irish rehearsals and dropping Phil off in Kew. While Archer headed home to Teddington, Phil and his trusty personal roadie Big Charlie (McLennan) freshened up and went to a party in the West End. Unfortunately, the drug squad swooped and while Phil wasn't charged, the press got word that he was there.

"After that, we'd get followed by police on tour which became a bit of a thing," Archer remembers with a tinge of sadness. "There was an entourage and reputation that went with Phil. But the band was playing really well. The gigs were really good, everything was going very well. We loved it. Phil was like a father to me at times, and it almost became like a reverse role as we went on, with me looking after him. At the time I was very, very straight. Into fitness, biking and all that. Didn't touch drugs, didn't smoke, didn't drink very much.

"I found it all a bit overwhelming. I was only 20 years-old and suddenly being put into this position where I'm not only playing with somebody who is an idol as such but also being part of his personal life and family life, living in his house, spending 24 hours a day writing and working. But I loved it, it was a massive experience for me."



A consummate showman, Phil Lynott hid his drug use incredibly well.

Stanway was aware of the heavy drug use, and particularly Lynott's growing dependence on heroin. "Heroin was a bit of a swear word as far as I was concerned. Don't get me wrong, I'm no angel but that stuff is just a one-way ticket. But he never did it in front of me because I would say I would tell his mother if he did. That was the one big thing that would get to him. She said to me, 'Mark, you tell me if you ever see him do it'. 'The gear' as she called it. So he wouldn't let me see him do it. But Phil was fantastic at disguising his use, though there were some giveaways, like throwing up before he went on stage."

Archer would notice Lynott's mood swings. "He blew a bit hot and cold, to be honest. He'd be difficult, you know. Some days he'd be easy and some days he'd be difficult and when he was he would come and apologise afterwards."

Mood swings related to drugs? "I would say so, yes! I mean, there were occasions where Phil sat down with me and told me that he really wanted to knock it on the head, doing drugs and stuff. He was trying very hard to clean up his act for some periods of time and management tried to keep anybody with drug connections away from him and the tour entourage but it was very difficult."

And he wasn't helping himself obviously.

"He wasn't helping himself at all. It was on a plate for him. People would be turning up at the door and there were various people in the entourage that were still doing all that, so it was quite difficult for him to get out of that routine."

While Phil tried to balance a life between music and drugs, his management was struggling to find a deal for Grand Slam.

"Phil was really down at the end of at the end of Thin Lizzy, it seemed like the end of everything for him," says John Salter. "Thin Lizzy was just his whole life. He lived it 150 per cent. For someone to turn round and say, 'This is your last show', he did find it very difficult. And when John [Sykes] left and took the offer from Whitesnake, that brought him down too. So when a deal wasn't immediately

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Back in town again.

OPPOSITE: ROSS HALFIN; THIS PAGE: DENIS O'REGAN

"Phil was really down at the end of Thin Lizzy. The band was his whole life. He lived it 150 per cent." – Manager John Salter

forthcoming for his next project, he wasn't happy."

Salter had taken over the mantle of former manager Chris O'Donnell in running the day-to-day affairs of both the band and Lynott. "When he asked me to come back, he was pushing me all the time. He'd had his layoff and wanted to work again.

"But we were turned down by just about every record company there was… I think his reputation preceded him. CBS knocked them back. Said it was a bit old, weren't convinced. We were looking for a proper albums deal – £100k plus. There was a long period without a deal, a year and a half. He realised there was something wrong, and he didn't think it was the material. He started blaming the band."

But Grand Slam continued to rehearse, record and gig, as Laurence Archer put it: "Musically, the band had some potential. We did a load of tracks, some that were never recorded to their potential, some that we played live but never recorded, some we recorded and never played live. I would say there are probably 48 track mixes around somewhere that we got close to mastering."

"We remained optimistic because the band got better and better," says Stanmore. "And the audiences were loving what we were doing and we were getting booked back and the gigs were getting bigger. What started off as Marquee-sized gigs ended up as theatre gigs. Maybe the record companies may have thought, 'This isn't Thin Lizzy – and that's what we want'. To me it wasn't that different – there may have been a bit more keyboards. Record companies at that time didn't have a clue what to do, but I'm sure we would have sold records. We sold lots of t-shirts!"

It was becoming more obvious to all concerned that Grand Slam was not going to be a creative or financially viable entity. Gigging was bringing in some money, but management had put in substantial sums that they were rapidly realising that they, and in particular Morrison, would not see a return on.

So Grand Slam went out with a fizzle rather than a bang. Mark Stanway's options with Magnum were opening again. "Magnum asked me to do a tour because a new album was coming out on FM/Revolver," he explains. "And then because of that we were offered a major deal with Polydor. I had to make a decision at that point. Phil let me go on tour with Magnum because we weren't doing anything as Grand Slam. That was around ➔

REMIXING LIZZY

Scott Gorham and Joe Elliott on the new reissues and remixes. By **Dave Ling**

The influence of über Thin Lizzy fan Joe Elliott looms large above the group's latest bout of activity. Not only is Elliott responsible for proposing his Def Leppard bandmate Vivian Campbell as the latest foil for guitarist Scott Gorham, also playing a role in Ricky Warwick of The Almighty's appointment as Lizzy's new frontman, but Elliott also fulfilled a lifelong dream by remixing key tracks on the new expanded, deluxe editions of the group's classic *Jailbreak, Johnny The Fox* and *Live And Dangerous* albums.

"Joe and I have been discussing doing this since the subject came up at the *Classic Rock* Awards three years ago," reveals Gorham, Lizzy's guitarist from 1974 to 1983 and a fulcrum of the post-Lynott line-up. "We were talking about the production of the band's albums; I told Joe that I don't listen to them any more because the sound isn't up to scratch by modern standards. I don't even like being in the room when they're played. I'd always wanted to take the old multi-tracks and remix them."

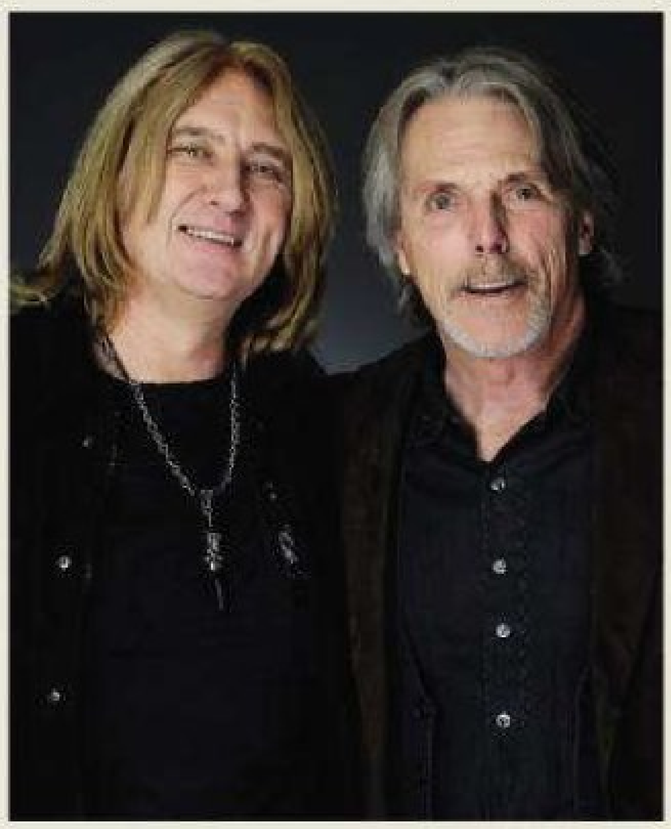
Gorham's discontent extended to stripping certain songs back to Phil Lynott's vocal and bass parts, and rebuilding them from the ground up.

"Thin Lizzy fans already own the original versions in different formats, so where's the harm in seeing how they sound with the benefit of this millennium's technology?" reasons Gorham.

"In tearing those songs apart, I heard new drum licks from Brian Downey," says Gorham. "They were so buried [in the original mix] that I didn't know they existed."

"We wanted to make the songs sound like they were recorded in 2010, for release in 2011," explains Elliott. "We're not hiding the fact that they have new guitars on them, but we've kept all of the bits you want to hear and cleaned them up. We haven't taken them to Ibiza or anything. We threaded the original recordings through new gear so you can actually hear them."

The new editions of Jailbreak, Johnny The Fox and Live And Dangerous are available through Universal Music on January 24.



JOE ELLIOTT/SCOTT GORHAM: MICK HUTSON

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Grand Slam: after the band dissolved, guitarist Laurence Archer (above) stuck by Lynott.

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about spring of '84 and that summer we [Magnum] did Donington. At that point we were offered a major deal with Polygram International. I had to make a decision and Grand Slam had nothing in the pipeline, nothing pending… so I said, 'I'm going to stick with this because I've got an opportunity'. Phil tried to talk me out of it but understood that I had three kids and a family to support. He accepted it…

"I don't want it to sound like I was deserting him. You have to make sensible decisions in your life. I think I would have gone broke very quickly if I had sat around waiting for him to get his act together or waiting for a record company to pick us up."

And, of course, the word was filtering through to Phil that he might stand a better chance as a solo artist. Laurence Archer, however, stayed the course as his creative partner.

"We thought there was something in the background as to why he couldn't get a deal," Salter remembered. "We said that his reputation was one of the problems. But he said he didn't have a problem and for a long time I was convinced.

However, a series of drug busts for Lynott weren't helping his cause, and he was worried that a drug conviction would harm entry into the USA.

There was one bust at the Kew house where the police arrived at seven o'clock in the morning claiming to be from the gas board. Lynott was charged with being in possession of a cannabis plant. Salter says that one of the road crew gave him a cannabis plant as a joke. They also found some cocaine – "Not very much!"

On another occasion, roadie Big Charlie took the rap. Stopped in a cab late at night small amounts of cocaine and heroin were found in Phil's jacket. Charlie claimed that he had borrowed the jacket and the stash was his. Phil got off with a fine but it was a close thing: "Prior to the hearing the barrister had told him you'd better be prepared to go away for a month," Salter recalls. "When we got to the court, she said, 'This could be six months, you're in it this time.' He was terrified when he stood in that box. He pleaded guilty and he came out of that court and said, 'That's it – I'm going clean'."

The judge decided to give him one more chance. "If you come before me again, you are going away," he said. In his favour was his charity work, the fact he had a career going for him. "He gave him another chance but put it on the record if he came to court again, next time he would go down," Salter recalled.

Shortly afterwards in Ireland, Phil was charged with being in possession of cannabis, heroin and methadone. The charges were dropped – he was adamant that they had found scrapings, at least that's what he told Salter, who was becoming increasingly frustrated at pulling his charge out of the shit while trying to get his career on track.

Part of Salter and Morrison's plan was to give Lynott's career a lift by using influential friends, in the shape of Huey Lewis. Lewis was an old friend from way back on the Johnny The Fox tour in 1976 when his band Clover supported Lizzy. An American R&B group paired with a hard rock band in front of some of the most diehard fans known to man – Clover never stood a chance. But Huey, who went on to find outstanding success of his own in the States alongside his own band, the News, understood this.

"We got booed off some of the best theatres in Britain!" he laughs today. But he got on particularly well with Lizzy, joining them on stage for *Baby Drives Me Crazy* (which appeared on the *Live And Dangerous* album): "Philip would watch every show and he was so encouraging and would offer advice. And he was the one that encouraged me and said, 'You should sing more songs'. We developed a wonderful friendship. I mean, he dressed me out of his closet. He gave me his old stage clothes."

Lewis also worked on material for the solo albums, *Solo In Soho* and *The Philip Lynott Album*. "He was wonderful, man. I think about him often. Thin Lizzy were the best hard rock band I've ever seen."

So when the call came to help Lynott out by writing, recording and producing – at a time when Huey Lewis And The News were big news indeed, he had no hesitation in saying "come across".

Back in England, Lynott and Archer were working out the songs that they planned to record, including an Archer song called *Can't Get Away* and a Huey Lewis track, *Still Alive*, plus some Grand Slam tracks.

As Lynott, Archer and Salter got their bags together to travel to San Francisco to start recording, another problem surfaced – Phil couldn't find his passport. It particularly irked Salter: "He lost his passport five times in three years, so the Irish Embassy turned round and said, 'No more'. This actually happened as we were about to go and work with Huey."

Archer set off on his own to start recording backing tracks with Huey and his band, who had a designated slot in their busy schedule. "Plans were thwarted right from the start," recalls an exasperated Archer.

Salter wasn't giving up, though: "Eventually, the Irish Embassy issued a passport for a month. Then we had to go and get a new visa, at the American Embassy. I was waiting for him, going slightly insane, when somebody at the US embassy recognised him and said, 'Hey, this guy has drug convictions…' and no declaration had been made about these. That was it – no visa. Three or four days in, Huey Lewis And The News are waiting. Huey understood Phil so we started work anyway. The News came in and did the backings with Laurence Archer. Then Phil finds his old passport, with a visa in it, so we got him down to the airport and got him in. He was eight days late getting there.

"When the embassy found out what we had done, they went crazy and withdrew the passports again. After that they agreed to give him a monthly passport as long as it was in my possession. Every month, I had to go and renew it, and after six months, they gave in. Then we had to get a visa lawyer, and very expensively we got one.

"At one stage, while we were waiting for the ➔

"The barrister told Phil he might get six months. But the judge put it on record that if Phil came to court again, the next time he would go down." – Manager John Salter

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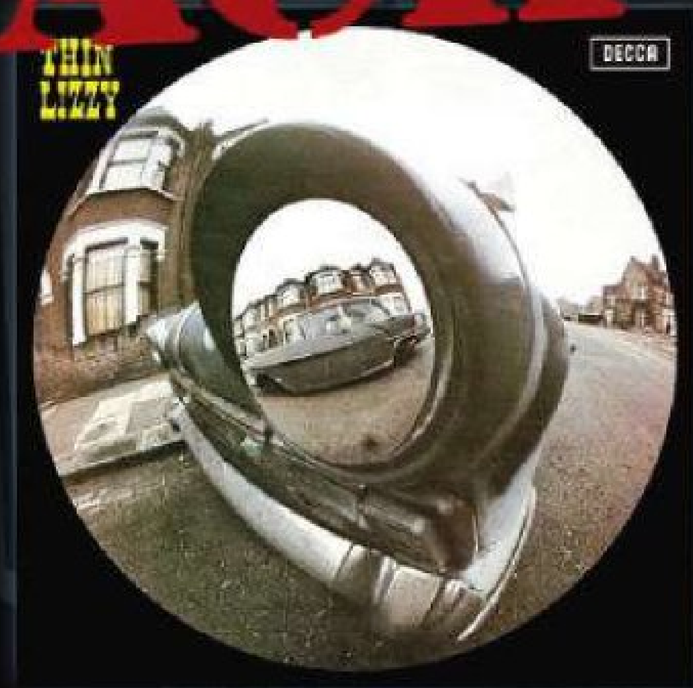

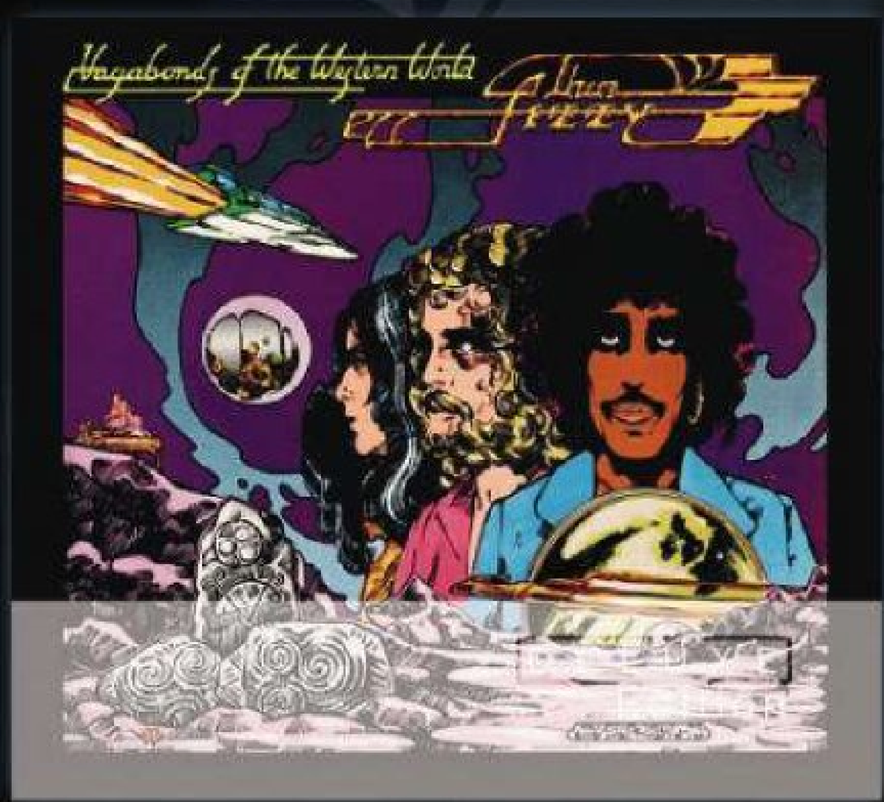

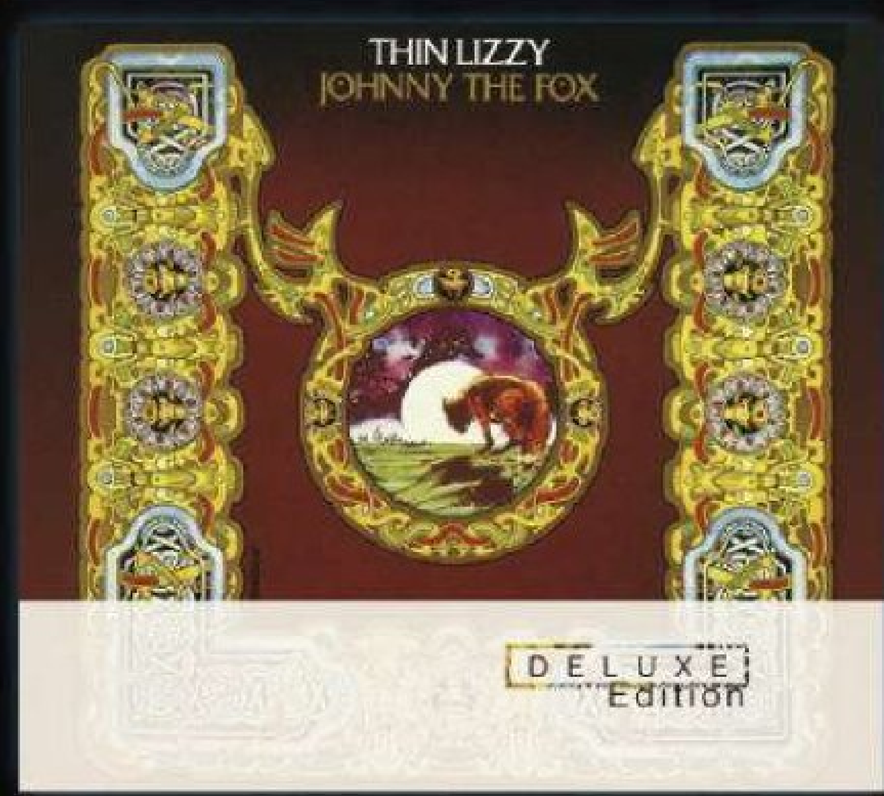

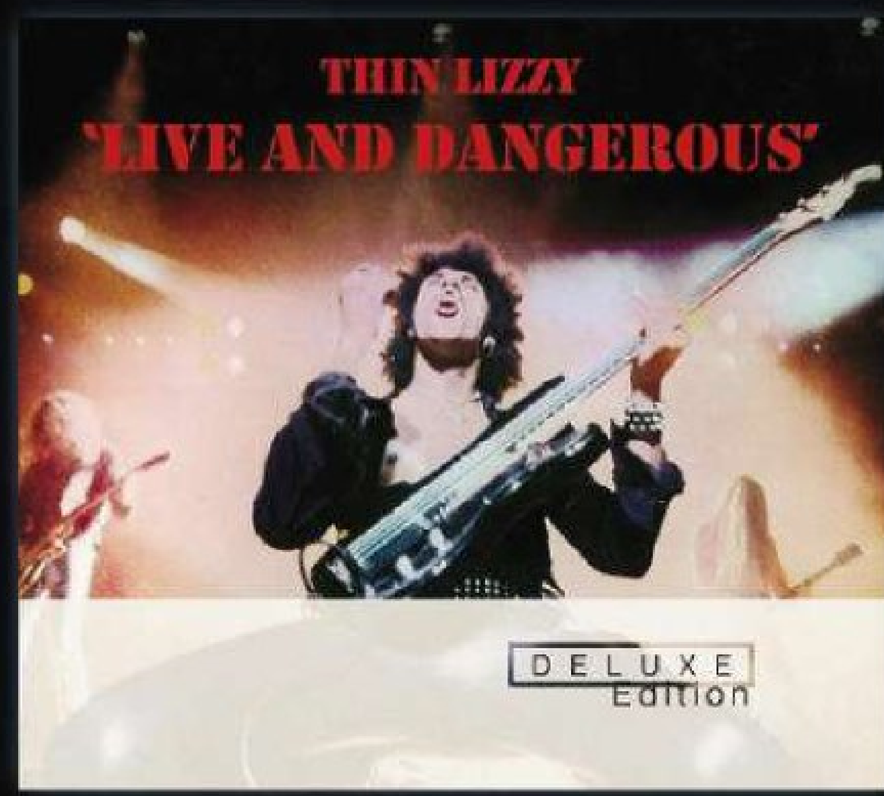

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Out in the fields: Phil negotiated a poor deal with the record co. himself, making little from the hit single.

passport, he got arrested again! As usual, Phil was pushing his luck."

Lewis remembers the sessions: "We almost had 'em done. I had arranged them so that he was singing back up in his range. For about three or four years, he hadn't sung in *The Boys Are Back In Town* or *Jailbreak* range. He was singing way down low on his solo stuff. We cut the tracks, and then we did a vocal on *Still Alive* and *Can't Get Away* – Archer's song. They were great. He struggled with the vocals because he couldn't get up there but it was almost perfect. It wasn't easy but I worked him pretty hard. We almost got it done when he had to leave."

As Lewis recalls it, Lynott was in good shape: "He was okay. He was clean. He was good. I insisted on that. He needed to be clean or I wasn't going to work with him."

That's not how Archer remembers Phil in the States: "Even in the in the small amount of time I had been in the States and not seen Phil, he was in a pretty bad state when he arrived. He wasn't very well – smoking, wheezing, coughing and had put on a lot of weight."

Unfortunately, not as much work was finished in San Francisco as hoped for – unsurprising in the circumstances. Some backing tracks were recorded with no vocals, but generally, everyone was happy with the two tracks practically mastered – *Still Alive* and *Can't Get Away*, and Salter had renewed confidence that he could seal a deal on those. Unfortunately, unbeknownst to Archer, he would not be part of it. But by then he too was tiring of Phil's drug-addled ways.

Archer spoke with Morrison. "I knew there was potential in my writing and we came back and I said to Chris, 'This is all very well but I don't know where it's going. I want an outlet to do some writing and start something else; Phil is not in a good way and we don't know where it's going to go'. From what I understand since it was not discussed with me, to my mind there was a bit of skulduggery – basically what happened, I believe, is that Chris Morrison got a deal on those tapes for Phil as a solo artist.

"I saw Phil and talked to him about it," continues Archer. "Phil wanted the deal, he wanted to release records. From having a situation where no one would touch him with a barge pole because of the drugs thing, he had this possibility to do this recording. At the time, being where I was and being young, I thought I was being shafted because I wasn't being kept in the picture as to what was going on."

A deal was struck with Polydor, according to Salter – two albums firm with a £50k advance for the first one, increasing on the second and options for three more. Tom Dowd (Eric Clapton, Lynyrd Skynyrd, Rod Stewart *et al*) was pencilled in to produce, but he was impressed with only three songs and wanted to bring in outside writers: "Which didn't go down well," Salter says. "Phil's career wasn't in tatters. If it was down to the stuff, it was beyond him."

An album was scheduled to record in March, followed by a tour. First came a single, *Nineteen*, produced by Paul Hardcastle. A typically raucous rocker, it failed to set the world alight. Lynott, though, was following two trains of irrational thought – one to let his management do their thing; the other to do his own. Which is how he ended up recording *Out In The Fields* with Gary Moore. Lynott was notorious for getting his management office to deliver petty cash daily for his own (probably drug-purchasing) reasons. But seeing an opportunity, he decided that he personally would negotiate a deal with Ten Records when he worked with Gary Moore on *Out In The Fields*. The Grand Slam song, *Military Man*, was on the flip side. He was paid £5,000 for three tracks (in cash apparently).

Morrison was livid: "The reason he didn't tell me was that he thought I would take it against the 80 grand he owed my company and he should have known better. I got hold of the Ten contract afterwards and tried to renegotiate, saying 'this guy wasn't advised' etc but we had to swallow it and *Out In The Fields* came out. It was an atrocious deal. He came in and asked if I could get him out of it. As usual, he was contrite. He was brilliant at working any emotion."

With 1985 winding to an end, it looked at last as if things were looking up for Phil's future career, but the partying would not stop, and he seemed the least likely to call it a day. To those around him, this was just what Phil did and he had an aura of indestructibility about him. Undoubtedly, he believed it himself, although those closest to him – his wife and former members of Thin Lizzy – couldn't stand the baggage he brought with the drug abuse.

Mark Stanway saw Phil shortly after the Grand Slam split and saw little difference in his lifestyle choice: "There were rumours of Lizzy reforming. I've never heard quite so many guitarists saying that Phil had asked them to join the reformed Thin Lizzy. I think that Thin Lizzy probably would have reformed. I don't know who the other guitarist would have been, probably Brian Robertson. Brian used to come over to the house and we would jam together with Phil. There would always be a lot of Jack Daniel's and other stuff involved. Jimmy Bain would be around and *Filthy Animal* from Motörhead, partying and jamming. *Lots* of partying," he emphasises. Sounds like the rock'n'roll version of *The Wild Bunch*.

As Christmas approached, Phil and entourage would take in the usual round of record company parties, always looking and playing the part. It was at one of these that he bumped into rock journalist Dante Bonutto, writer for *Kerrang!* and presenter of the *Music Box Power Hour* on satellite TV. The *modus operandi* of getting rock stars on the show was to bump into them and issue a hasty invitation. So it was with Phil. Bonutto was a huge fan of Thin Lizzy and particularly Phil and had never interviewed him before.

Apart from Phil's partying reputation, though, Bonutto had no idea of the physical condition of the star he would interview that evening.

"I remember wondering at the time why Phil couldn't get a record deal with Grand Slam," says Bonutto. "He was struggling. He wasn't getting ▸▸

"He's looking at me and I'm the picture of health at this point. And he's saying things like, 'I'm going to get off the gear, I'm going to get healthy again'." – Scott Gorham on the last time he saw Phil

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Lynott, the icon: but by 1985 his reputation as one of rock's greatest performers was no longer enough.

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LYNOTT'S STOLEN SONGS

The secret cabal of collectors trading in Lynott bootlegs – and how they could hold the key for new Lizzy material. By **Alan Byrne**

Some time after Phil Lynott's death, home studio recordings were taken from his home in Richmond and over the last 25 years have been held and traded by a secretive group of collectors and fans. Collectors have paid out sums of up to £1000 for these recordings as they attempt to paint their own picture of what Lynott was working on when he died.

The trading network is stronger than ever today, with songs being traded by email and a vast collection of unreleased material has been amassed. Many of these songs relate to unfinished projects attempted by Phil in 1985. One collector in trading circles – who goes by the name Phil O – told us: "We were basically tracking down pieces that were not included on *The Man And His Music* series [a seven CD Japanese bootleg from 1994 that collected unreleased Lizzy and solo Lynott material]. Eventually we began trading on a wider scale, with anything 'new' that was discovered being shared out to all the others within this trading circle. Aside of that what we have discovered and compiled is discs of [Radio] sessions, with better audio quality or missing recordings being added to produce as definitive a collection as possible of this material."

The former members of Thin Lizzy are aware of the songs – "Copies have been requested and provided to ex-members of the band," says Phil O – raising the possibility that any future Thin Lizzy album could have new Lynott songs on it.

In Phil's last year he worked with artists as diverse as Junior Giscombe (of *Mama Used To Say* fame), Gus Isidore (guitarist for Seal, Peter Gabriel and more), guitarist Steve Johnson and Colbert Hamilton (aka "the UK's original Black Elvis"). An album was planned with Junior including the buoyant track *The Lady Loves To Dance*. Junior: "The album would be duets that Phil and myself wrote but after he died nothing really happened, the angle we were taking was ahead of its time". *The Lady Loves To Dance* was one of the many tracks taken from Phil's house.

The bootleg series *The Man And His Music* combined unreleased live material with alternative takes of already published songs, as well as unreleased material like the three songs recorded with Huey Lewis & The News.

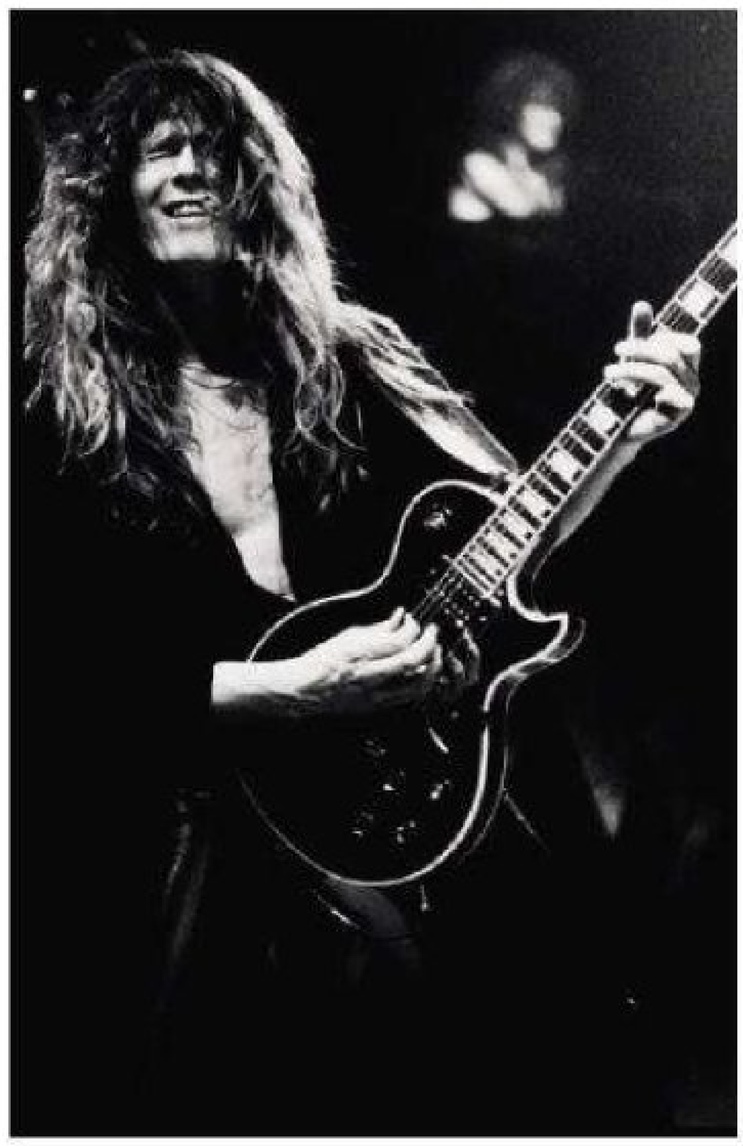
When the official Thin Lizzy box *Vagabonds, Kings, Warriors, Angels* was released, fans were disappointed that it contained only previously released material. Guitarist Robin George also worked with Phil late in '85: "With those missing tapes of our time spent working together, I could definitely make songs," he says. "Damn good songs – if I had access to the tapes."

the response that you would have thought that someone of his reputation would have got. It was very surprising… because if Phil had survived that period, he would be one of the biggest stars in rock now making records with Bono and Bon Jovi."

He was shocked at Lynott's demeanour: "Well, he didn't look well, a little bit yellow and was a little bit down. Not like the person I had seen hanging out before – the Party Man and great guy. It was just the time he was in… There wasn't the vehicle for someone like him to appear in, like *Classic Rock* or a radio station to embrace someone like him."

Bonutto, a fan of Grand Slam, quizzed Lynott about the failure to get a deal. He couldn't explain it, though he pointedly noted that "the minute I went solo, people started to offer me deals. Maybe Grand Slam suffered the backlash from Thin Lizzy fans – a band that could potentially be good, against a band that had been around for 12 years with a string of hits. I just don't think Grand Slam won in comparison."

The possibility of a Thin Lizzy reunion was mooted by Bonutto, and while not dismissing it totally, Lynott's priority, he said, was to establish his solo career first "before I start to live off past glories". He did talk enthusiastically about his forthcoming album. He looked forward to getting special guests to suit individual tracks – Brian Downey, John Sykes and Gary Moore were mentioned. There would be various producers – Tom Dowd and Peter Collins among them.



ROSS HALFIN

John Sykes: left Lizzy for Whitesnake. Lynott planned on having him guest on his solo album.

"In general, it should be more balanced by my other solo albums," he added, "because with them, I was also in Thin Lizzy who took all the heavy stuff and I got all the fish that John West rejected! My solo albums were much softer whereas this time there will be a better balance with more up front hard stuff and ballads."

It was to be the last interview with Lynott and Bonutto remembers it with a tinge of regret: "It was difficult for him to answer some of the questions because he wasn't the guy in Thin Lizzy anymore and he missed that. How do you replace being the frontman in a band like Thin Lizzy? It was a little bit strange and a bit sad.

"I felt that he had no answers to why his situation had arisen, no more than I did. Looking back it was just the wrong moment… Things would have sorted themselves out in the long run. It was a really weird period in his life when he didn't seem sure of what he was going to do."

Throughout the interview, Lynott's voice was wheezy and he looked unwell. "Whether he was fit or not fit, I was just thrilled to meet him and I thought he would come through because you always expect people like him to, but everyone is fallible. When you take that warmth of the spotlight away, it must have been quite difficult because he was such a high profile person. He would have had a fantastic career had he survived though, I'm sure of that."

Just before that interview, Scott Gorham had decided it was time to seek out his old Thin Lizzy buddy again.

"I did some recording in LA," he remembers. "It had been probably just over a year since I'd seen Phil. I really wanted him to listen to these recordings that I had done and more than that I really wanted to see Phil again. I felt it was time to reconnect and felt I was safe enough to be around people who took drugs.

"That was a main consideration. It's the first thing you have to do once you decide that you're done with the drugs, you have to walk away from all of these people that you were taking drugs with or else you're just going to fall right back into it. The temptation is too great, but I felt strong enough at this time mentally that I could go over and see my old buddy and just have a chat with him and see how he was doing and all that."

Phil was overjoyed to hear from him, and a meeting at the house in Kew was hastily arranged. Gorham was taken aback by what he saw that morning: "Knocked at the door, opened it and there he was in his robe and pyjama bottoms and I looked at him and I was absolutely shocked at what was standing in front of me. He was totally puffy, his eyes were all fucked up, skin tone was not good at all, and he was wheezing away with his asthma like you wouldn't believe. With Phil, that was a sure tell-tale sign that he had been hitting the smack pretty heavily. Whenever he did the smack, he would get these asthma attacks, so consequently he was sucking on those inhalers all the time."

Gorham was still pleased to see him and stayed for three hours chewing the cud. "I put aside how bad he looked. I came in and we gave each other big hugs and we started chatting away there a mile a minute about what we had been doing. I put the recordings on and he really genuinely seemed to like what he was listening to. Then he'd pull out the guitar and say 'I got this fookin' song I wanna play you'. You could tell it wasn't finished at all so nothing had progressed from the old days! And that's when he started to talk about getting together again and start writing and getting the band back. Outwardly I'm going, 'That's a great idea', but inwardly I'm looking at Phil thinking, 'There's no way in hell that he's ready to be on the road at all'. And I couldn't step into that situation and he knows that he **Continued on page 115** ➔

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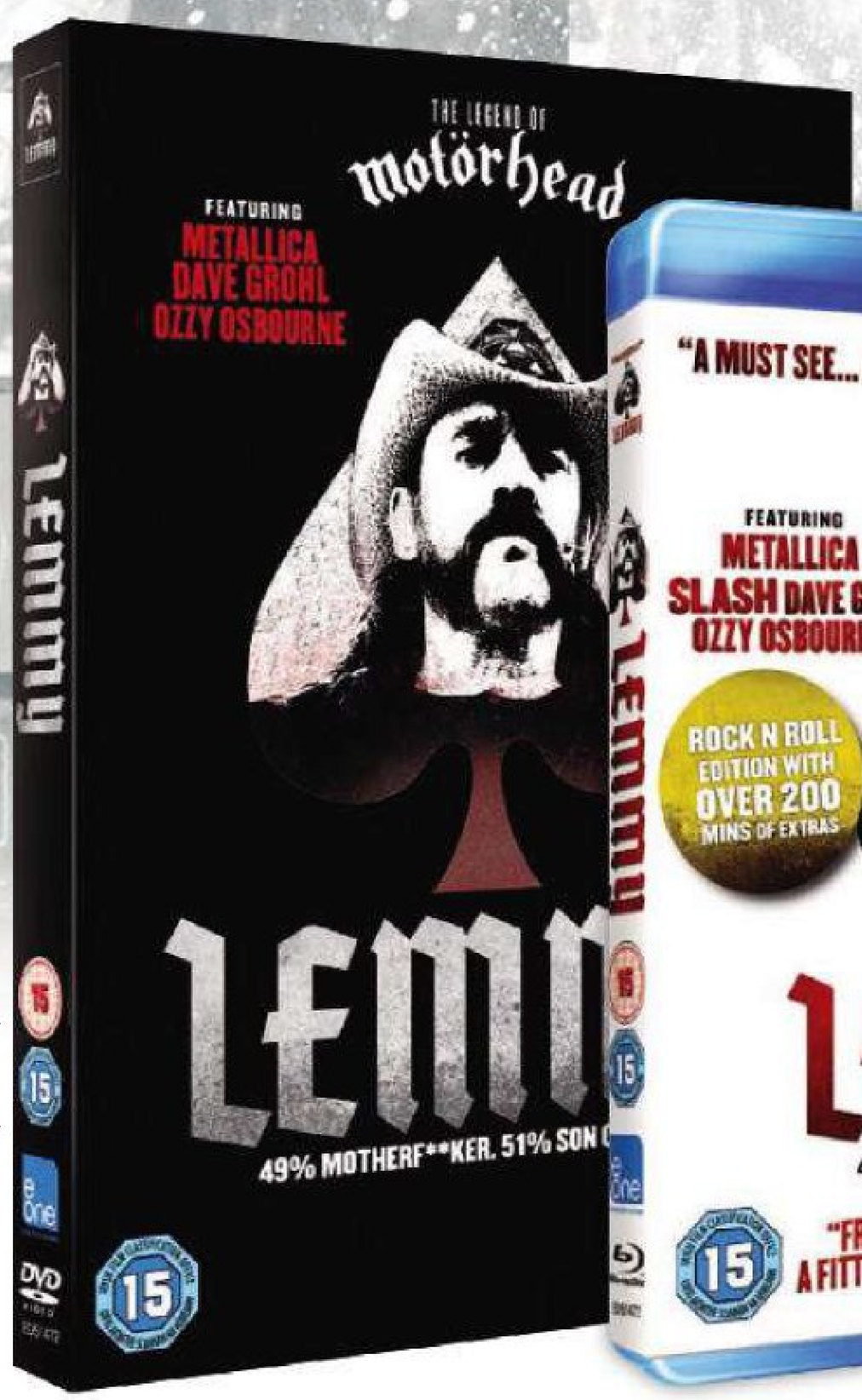

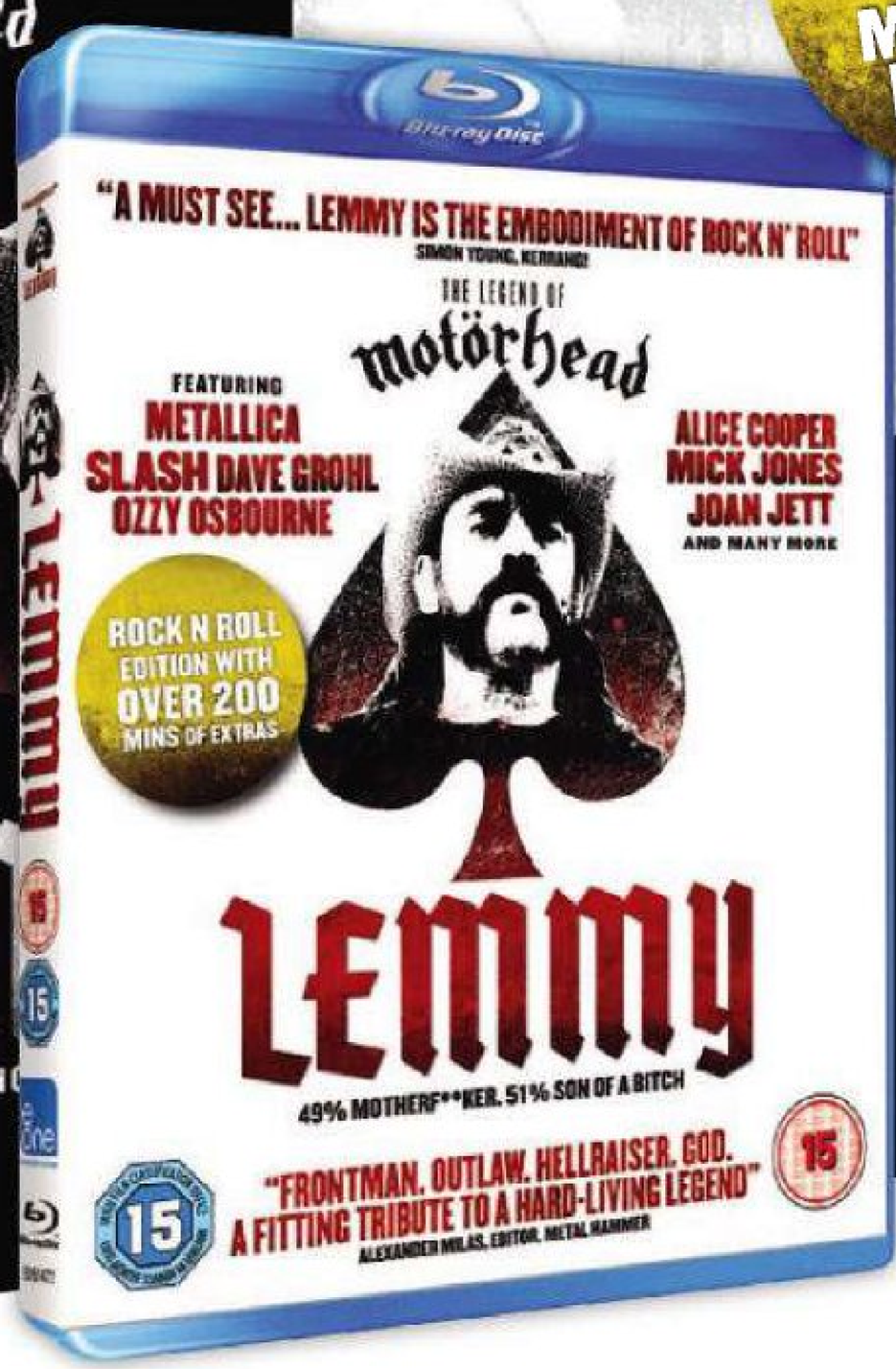

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When drummer Clive Burr was ousted from Iron Maiden in 1982 he thought things couldn't get much worse. Then he was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis and his life turned upside-down...

Words: **Lee Marlow** Photographs: **Ross Halfin**

IT STARTED FIRST of all in his hands. Of all the places, his hands – the tools of his trade. It was just a tingling sensation to begin with, nothing too much or too worrying; inconvenient rather than painful. But it wouldn't go away. And, rather than get better, it got steadily, worryingly, worse.

Clive Burr's guess about the tingling in his hands was simple: it was the drumming. Must be all the drumming he'd been doing for years that was to blame.

'Hit 'em Hard', he used to have emblazoned on his custom-made drum sticks. "And I always did," he says. "So I carried on. I shoved it to the back of my mind, tried not to think about it."

That was the end of the 80s, he thinks, 1988 or maybe '89. A long time after he'd left Iron Maiden. He'd occupied half-a-dozen bands' drum stools since Maiden.

By 1994, though, it was so bad that he couldn't carry on ignoring it. "I kept dropping things," he says. "I couldn't grip properly. I could barely keep hold of my sticks." When he could no longer twirl his sticks between his fingers – the kind of showboating little trick he was able to do with his eyes closed only a couple of years before – it was time to see a doctor.

The diagnosis took months. There were tests and examinations, more tests, until eventually it culminated in a consultant's office, a stoney-faced man, a chair and some very bad news.

It was about as bad as it gets. The tests revealed multiple sclerosis, and a particularly virulent, aggressive strain of the condition at that, called primary progressive MS. Clive Burr's life was about to change forever.

Today, the man who provided the frantic but always distinctive and highly original rhythmic backbone that ran through Iron Maiden's first three albums is in a wheelchair. Sometimes, just getting out of bed to face another new day is a struggle. "I do get tired," he says. "I can't always do what I want to do."

His drums are in the garage at his specially adapted house in Wanstead, east London, which he shares with his partner Mimi, a former Sunday-school teacher who also has MS.

"Meeeeeeeemes," he shouts, repeatedly, throughout our interview. "Where's me Rosie?" [Rosie Lee = tea] "I only get the drums out when my nephews come round now," he says. "They seem to like it." For Clive, now 53 years of age, that's as far it goes these days.

In another lock-up is a pile of damaged Paiste cymbals, broken at various gigs on the Beast On The Road tour back in 1982: a poignant reminder, if it were needed, of the powerhouse drummer he once was. His drumming days are now over.

On the rare occasion the MS does drag him down, he reaches for the DVD player and watches an old Maiden concert.

"I like that," he laughs. "I'll sit there with Meemes, with me feet up, and I'm right back there. I'm smiling all the way through it. We were a good band, you know."

Before we get to how he started with Iron ➔

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Clive Burr at home in London, December, 2010.

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Hunk Of The Month Clive (bottom right and inset) with Maiden in the 80s.

"Sacking someone after they've just lost their father is not the best time to do it." – *Clive Burr*

Maiden, and just how good they were with Clive powering them along, it's perhaps more pertinent to address how it finished. This is something that has gnawed away at Clive for the best part of 30 years. Much has been written about his split from Maiden, during an exhaustive US tour in the summer of 1982. And most of it, he says dismissively, is hogwash.

"I've heard the stories – that it was because of drugs or too much drink," he says. "It wasn't anything like that."

The truth, as it often is in cases of heavy metal musical chairs, is a bit murkier, a bit more acrimonious. It started with a phone call. He doesn't recall where he was when he got the call, he just remembers that he had to get home to London. His dad, Ronald, had died unexpectedly of a heart attack. He was just 57 years old.

A US road map dotted with gigs lay in front of Maiden, but at that moment it didn't matter, he says. "I had to get home."

Everyone seemed fine with that, he remembers. Go home, they said. Be with your family. Clive flew back to London on Concorde.

Maiden brought in former Trust drummer Nicko McBrain as a replacement so the tour could continue, the show could go on. Clive and Nicko were mates. No worries. Everything was cool.

"I knew Nicko," Clive says. Nice bloke. Good drummer. At a number of earlier shows, Nicko had dressed up as Eddie to terrorise the crowd. "He loved the band, he loved being part of it all. And the rest of the band liked him." Clive was about to find out just how much.

So Clive flew home, went to his father's funeral, spent some time with his family, and two weeks later flew back to the States to join up with Maiden, who were criss-crossing America supporting Rainbow, Scorpions, .38 Special and Judas Priest.

"I got back and I could tell something wasn't right," Clive recalls.

There was a meeting. The atmosphere was tense. There was change in the air, and Clive, still numb from the loss of his dad, could smell it.

"We think it's time for a break," they told Clive. And that was that. After the best part of four years, three albums – not just any old albums, either, but the three albums that many Iron Maiden fan will tell you remain the band's best work – and suddenly the dream was over, just as it was all coming true.

Everybody knows what happened next for Maiden.

What happened next for Clive Burr was a case of dusting himself down and starting all over again. He was grieving for his dad. Now he was also grieving for his band and the job he'd dreamt of since he first saw Ian Paice playing *Highway Star* with Deep Purple.

Back home in the UK the rumours were rife: it was the drugs that were to blame for his dismissal; it was the drink; that Clive liked the beer, sex and rock'n'roll just a little bit more than the others; that sometimes he had to play shows with a bucket by the side of his drum stool for when those hangovers became just a little bit too much… The rock'n'roll high jinks were getting in the way of the band, everyone agreed. Everyone except Clive.

Thirty years on, he says it still smarts to hear it. He was never a big drinker. Sure, he'd have a brandy and Coke – a Courvoisier and Coke, "my roadie used to get it for me before we went on," he laughs – but nothing too debauched. No more or less than anyone else in the band.

"We were like schoolkids in America," he says. "We'd never been there before and it opened our eyes. There was a lot of parties, and girls were throwing themselves at us. We'd never experienced anything like it."

Clive – the lad who had been voted teen

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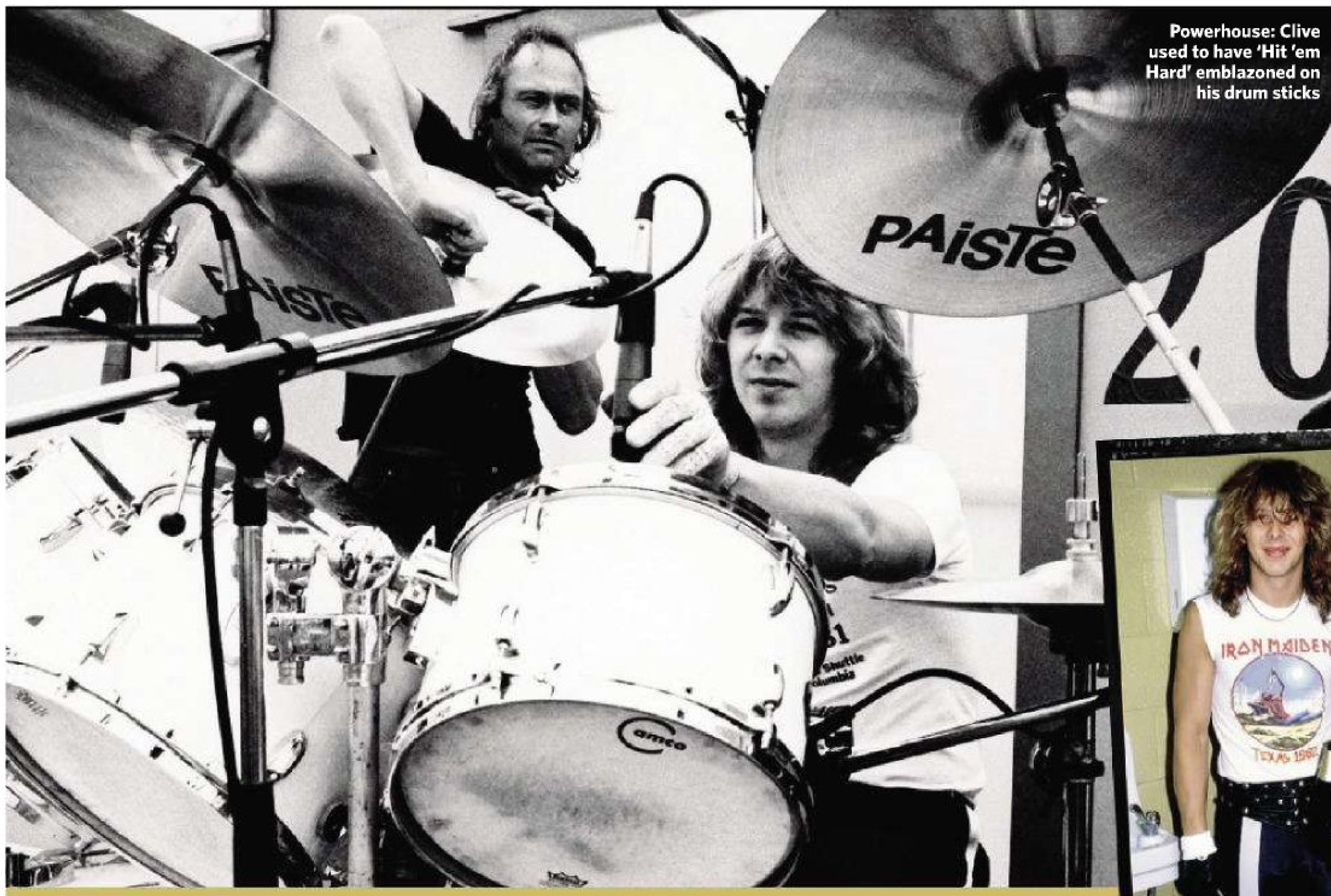

Powerhouse: Clive used to have 'Hit 'em Hard' emblazoned on his drum sticks

magazine *Oh Boy*'s Hunk Of The Month in July 1980 – lapped it up. "Of course I did. We all did."

And then it was gone.

Clive flew back to London again, then on to Germany with his mum, and laid low.

"I was too upset to feel angry about it," he says. "There was a grieving period – I grieved for my dad and I grieved for my band – and then I brushed myself down and got on with it."

Just like that?

"Pretty much, yeah. There was no real bitterness. Life's too short.

"It's good to set the record straight, to tell my side of the story," he says, "because it's not widely known. I think if you're going to sack someone, sacking them after they've just lost their father is not the best time to do it… I guess they had their reasons. So that was that."

After Maiden, Clive played with a number of bands in fairly quick succession: Graham Bonnet's Alcatrazz (that lasted a week), Trust (Nicko's old band), Stratus, so-called NWOBHM supergroup Gogmagog, Elxir, Dee Snider's Desperados. None of them would come close to matching what he achieved with Maiden. And yet for Clive it didn't matter.

"I just wanted to play. When I came home from Germany after Maiden, I used to put my hair in a hat, put some dark glasses on and play with anyone who'd have me, in the pubs around London," he laughs. "I just wanted to drum."

It was what he was like as a kid. The Burrs lived in a council flat in Manor Park, the heart of London's East End. While at school Clive built himself a makeshift drum kit. "Everything we had around the house, he was hitting it with sticks," his mum Klara remembers.

When he discovered Ian Paice and Deep Purple, his obsession seemed to take on a new dimension. Klara's family bought Clive his first drum kit when he was 15. It was both a blessing and a curse. "It was okay for them, they didn't have to hear it," says Klara. "I used to go out of the flat afraid to look the neighbours in the eye because of the noise he used to make."

Even to Klara's untrained ears, she could tell he was good. Really good. He never had a formal lesson, he learned by watching other drummers and practising constantly.

Clive joined Maiden from Samson in 1979, replacing Doug Sampson, just as Maiden were about to sign to the giant EMI Records. It was a huge step up in class, he remembers, from Samson's more traditional blues-based rock. Maiden rehearsals were serious, and they had to be. The songs were faster and trickier, with lots of time changes. Playing drums with this band was no job for a novice.

More – and better – gigs started to come along, and so did interest in the band from record companies. As EMI wooed Maiden, Clive jacked in his day job as a runner in the City.

The band's success was nearly all down to bass player Steve Harris, Clive says. "Steve was the leader, definitely. He wrote the songs, he booked the gigs, he sorted out rehearsals. He was very single-minded. He knew where he wanted it all to go. And we all followed."

The rhythm section on those first three albums was as tight as the band's spandex.

"It wasn't always like that, though," Clive remembers. "Steve used to say I played the songs too fast, he was always telling me to slow down. My abiding memory of recording *The Number Of The Beast* album is Steve telling me to slow down."

There were odd spats, he says, but nothing major, nothing serious. "We got on well, and there was a lot of camaraderie." Even after the split, Clive would meet up with Maiden guitarist Adrian Smith and go fishing.

When the band found out about Clive's multiple sclerosis they stepped in and helped they best way they knew how – by playing for him. Their help has transformed his life.

"They bought me a vehicle…" He pauses. "Meeeeeeeemes, what car is it again?" he shouts. "We call it the Clivemobile. It's a Volkswagen Caddy with blacked-out windows. It's like an American gangster's car. They've put concerts on to raise money, not just for me but for other people with MS. They put a stair-lift in our house. Sometimes I'll go up and down the stairs, looking at the gold and platinum records on the stairwell. Ha ha."

Better than that, and what he appreciates most of all, Mimi says when Clive is out of earshot, is that they involve him. "They say if ever you need anything, just ring, just call," she says. "Whenever they play in London, Clive knows that he's only got to pick up the phone and he's got two of the best tickets in the house. It might not sound like much, but it is to Clive. Finally, to him, it's like his achievements – who he is and what he did – are being recognised."

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IT CAME FROM OUT

Torn apart by the corporate machine, **Kyuss** went up in smoke in 1995, having seeded the stoner rock movement they should have led. Now they're back. Words: **Ken McIntyre** Photographs: **Neil Zlozower**

Average rock goons had it good in the 70s. AC/DC were huge and they looked like everybody's drunken uncles. Bachman-Turner Overdrive could've worked with you down on the docks. Blue Öyster Cult were just fuzzy nerds with stun-gun guitars. You could let it all hang out, roll some dope and freak freely. But then the 80s kicked in and suddenly it was all boys in make-up setting their legs on fire. Who can compete with that? Suddenly slob-rock was dead. All the dope smokers got jobs and gave up their pinball dreams.

Then came Kyuss. They blew in from the California desert, dusty and red-eyed, at the tail-end of the 80s. They were fortified by punk, like the kids in Seattle, and got turned on to ZZ Top, Black Sabbath and mid-70s funk by their big brothers and sisters. Despite their almost instant reputation as in-the-know proto-metal revivalists, Kyuss were not the cool kids. They didn't care about clothes or scoring chicks or throwing parties on yachts, they just liked to smoke a little weed and play loud, groovy rock music. And stringy-haired slackers everywhere rejoiced anew.

Kyuss's frontman John Garcia joined the band in 1989 while he was still in high school in the tiny community of Palm Desert, California, back when the band called themselves Katzenjammer (German for 'hangover') and practised in drummer Brant Bjork's bedroom. "I played football with Nick Oliveri and Brant Bjork and Chris Cockrell, the original bass player. Nick kept bugging me to see his band, Katzenjammer, play. This is when they still jammed in Brant's room. So one day me and my buddy went up there, and that was it for me. I wanted a piece of it."

After a quick Dungeons & Dragons-related name change and the addition of guitarist Josh

Kyuss: old wounds healed, new horizons shared.

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OF THE DESERT...

Homme, the newly christened Kyuss began playing a now legendary series of 'generator shows' – outdoor gigs in the desert, away from parents, teachers and cops. While these shows were in actual fact strictly locals-only events, over the subsequent decades they've grown into mythical, Woodstock-like events that were seemingly attended by thousands, if not millions.

"Yeah it's funny, there really weren't that many people out there," Brant Bjork recalls, "but it seems there's quite a few more claiming that now. It was really just desert locals. It's rare to bump into someone who actually saw us in those days. Ironically, one of the few people I've run into who actually saw Kyuss in the desert was Tony Alva, the skateboarder."

Regardless of the mundane reality of those early outdoor shows, they ultimately forged the Kyuss legend. Under a merciless, blazing sun, the band fused punk, metal, funk and classic rock into one big, groovy ball of psychedelic rock.

"I would humbly say that when Kyuss was around I never ran into another band that was like it," says Bjork. "We were not punk and not metal, we were somewhere in the middle. The same could be said for Monster Magnet. And there was another band from up north that we were aware of a little later on, which was Sleep. Those were the only bands who were doing something that we considered interesting and cool. There were other bands that we liked, of course – Soundgarden, St Vitus, Melvins, things like this – but it wasn't quite what we were into."

The sound that emerged from Kyuss would eventually be labelled and lauded as 'desert rock', but at the time it sounded like it was from outer space. More primal than grunge, groovier than metal, way too stoned for punk, Kyuss was simply, singularly Kyuss.

Eventually people outside of their tiny circle took notice. The band outgrew their home-town roots and started playing in LA. Which, it turns out, was just fine with Bjork.

"Back then we were pretty bitter about playing in the desert, because we were growing up in southern California but we weren't at the beach. I know everybody thinks the desert is cool and hip now, but back in the day it sucked. It was horrible. It was hot and boring and there was nothing to do. It was a wasteland."

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By the mid-1990s Kyuss had built up a considerable head of steam. After a couple of studio mis-steps they had released their finest album, 1992's *Blues For The Red Sun*, a masterpiece of moody acid-rock that established the template of coming stoner-rock tsunami. They toured with Metallica, received rave reviews in the rock press, and landed, through luck and circumstance, on a major label. For many bands it would be the start of a long and starry career. For Kyuss it was the beginning of the end.

The recording of the follow-up to *Blues For The Red Sun*, *Welcome To Sky Valley*, dragged on for two years, the victim of label meddling and in-fighting. By the time it was finished, founding member Brant Bjork was taking his leave. "There was just a lot of politics involved at that point," he says, "and the band had started to disintegrate from all the business and politics and the all the stuff that's just not fun to take responsibility for when you're that young."

For Kyuss, their grand rock adventure had suddenly turned into a corporate gig.

"It was. And I was nineteen at the time, and that's too young to wrap your head around that kind of scene. I bowed out."

Meanwhile, Elektra Records were frantically trying to figure out how to market a band that simply had no peers.

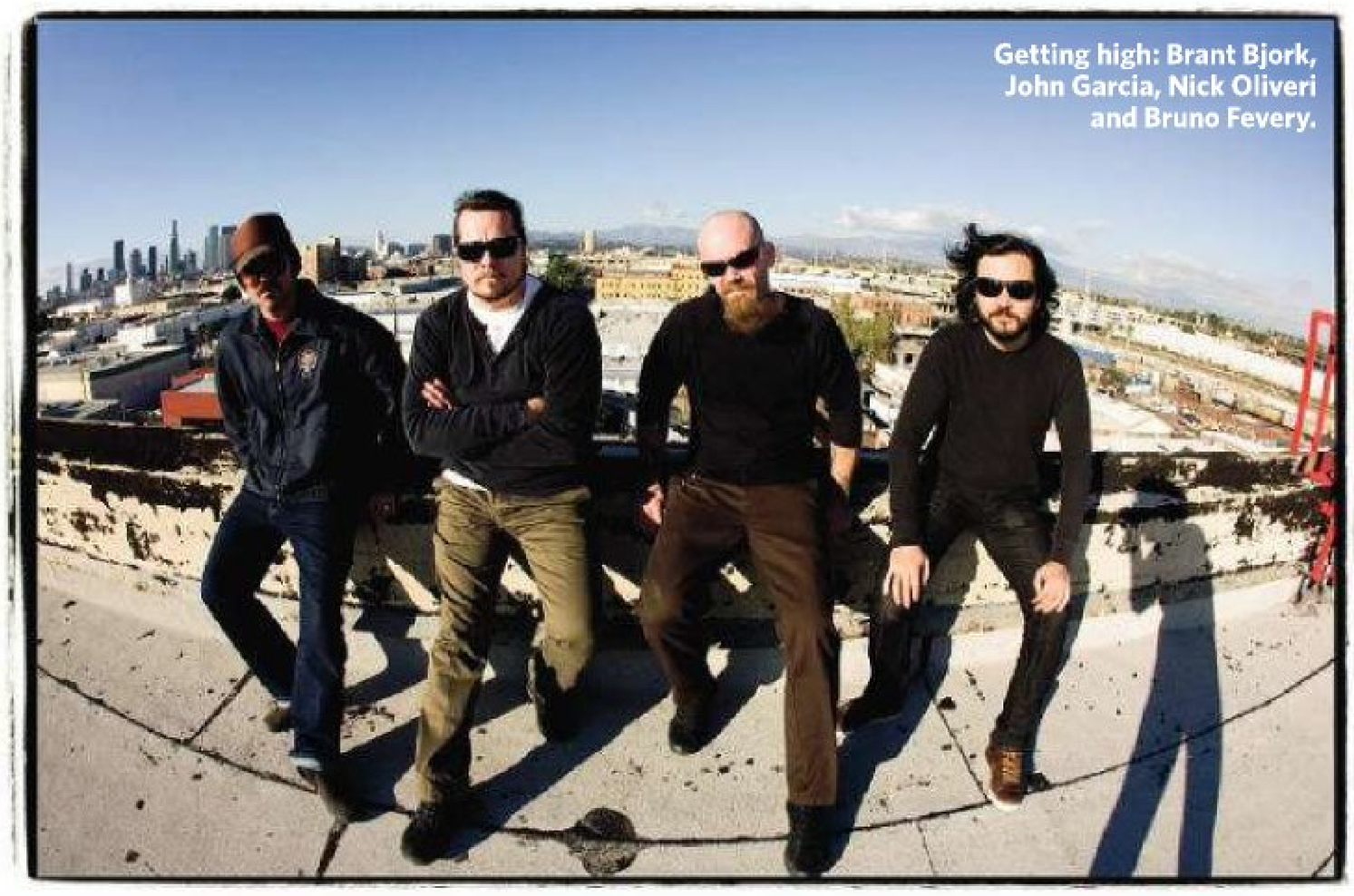
"Yeah, that was a big deal," Garcia says. "Elektra flew us out to New York, and we sat in a huge conference room and everybody ran around the table introducing themselves. We had a huge team of people. Back then the music business was a lot different than it is now. Anyway, I don't think they knew what do with us. We got a little bit of airplay on MTV, but I don't think they got it. They just didn't know where to push Kyuss."

The band limped along for another couple years, their last album, *...And The Circus Leaves Town*, being released in 1995. In a classic case of life imitating art, that's exactly what this particular rock'n'roll circus did. Fatigue and frustration had set in, and within a few months of the album's release the band was over.

"There were a lot of things that broke Kyuss up," Garcia offers, "but I tell you, when Josh and I sat down at this bar in Palm Desert called the Red Barn, within five minutes of the conversation Josh and I had split up the band and we were already toasting to the good times we had. We were already reminiscing before we even let the cat out of the bag. It was just time."

A funny thing happened on the way to oblivion, however. Immediately after Kyuss imploded, a vast – and still-growing – movement, dubbed 'stoner rock' for obvious reasons, exploded in their wake. Hundreds of bands formed seemingly overnight, many of them by ex-members of Kyuss themselves. Brant Bjork joined perpetual boogie van-sters Fu Manchu and later embarked on a solo career. John Garcia formed post-grunge contenders Unida, Josh Homme formed Queens Of The Stone Age, into which he brought another former Kyuss player, bassist Nick Oliveri.

Oliveri played with Kyuss in their desert-bound salad days. Clearly the biggest workaholic in the group, he has since already amassed an exhaustive resumé that includes stints in The Dwarves, Eagles Of Death Metal, River City Rapists and the Moistboyz, as well as recording and touring with his own band, Mondo Generator. However, he's probably best-known for getting fired from Queens Of The Stone Age, just as they began penetrating the mainstream with their 2002 album *Songs For The Deaf*. The official word on why is the expected, much-cited "creative differences".



Getting high: Brant Bjork, John Garcia, Nick Oliveri and Bruno Fevery.

"THERE'S A LOT OF FREEDOM TO IT NOW. IT'S NOT RUN BY A LABEL, IT'S NOT RUN BY A CORPORATE MACHINE... IT'S JUST FAMILY."
– BRANT BJORK

"Everybody loves controversy," says Oliveri. "People don't want to hear about it when everybody's getting along, they want to hear about things going bad. There's always up and downs in bands, but there's been a lot more ups than downs, if you ask me. I just saw Josh in the studio when I was recorded the last Mondo Generator record. Everything's cool with me and Josh."

But does Oliveri look back fondly on his time spent with Queens?"Absolutely. I'll be honest, there was a time when I was bitter. But it'll be eight years in February – like, February 15th. But who's counting?" he laughs. "The important thing to know in all this is that everybody's still good friends."

Apart from Josh Homme (currently flying with John Paul Jones and Dave Grohl in Them Crooked Vultures), who is still vehemently against revisiting his Kyuss days, all of the principal players have at various times toured playing the music of their former band. And so it was last year at the Hellfest in Clisson, France.

"We were playing a festival during the day," explains Oliveri. "Brant was with Bros, I was with Mondo Generator, and John was playing Kyuss songs at night. Brant and I got on stage and played three songs with him and it was just a blast."

Such a blast, in fact, that they were soon talking about a full-fledged reunion. Garcia is planning on releasing his first solo album, *Garcia VS. Garcia*, in the autumn of 2011, and thought a Kyuss reunion tour would be the best way to promote it.

"When Brant and Nick got up to play with me at that festival in France it was a feeling I haven't experienced in years. It made perfect sense to ask them to do this," says Garcia.

And his former bandmates were happy to oblige.

"I think we would have jumped at the chance five years earlier if it had presented itself," says Bjork. "Sure, the band dissolved, but that had nothing to do with art or music and those have been the same reasons we haven't done this before. It's always about politics and business. This is the first opportunity that presented itself to get back together and celebrate for the love of the music and the songs and to go out there and take responsibility for the legacy. It's cool, there's a lot of freedom to it now. It's not run by a label, it's not run by a corporate machine, it's not run by a management team, it's just family."

The reunited band, dubbing themselves Kyuss Lives, plan on touring Europe and Australia in spring 2011, with a possible US tour to follow soon after. Josh Homme's vacant spot will be filled by Garcia sideman Bruno Fevery.

"Yeah, he'll be doing Josh's parts," reports Garcia. "Will he play like Josh? Yes, you'll recognise the parts, but he's got his own style, he's going to put his own stamp on it. He's very good and we're very lucky to have him."

Naturally, given this dramatic turn of events, the Kyuss faithful are hoping the band will eventually record again as well.

"Right now we have no plans to write or record again," says Garcia. "We're all busy with our own stuff now, but would I like to, sometime in the future? I'd love to. I'd be stupid not to want to do that. But there's no plans for it at the moment."

Bjork thinks the reunion might eventually develop into an annual event. A stoner rock retirement plan, if you will. "It would be fitting," he laughs. "I started my career with Kyuss. It would be fitting to leave it with Kyuss."

So toke up, teenage losers of all ages. Your gods of slack are coming back to town.

Kyuss Lives tour the UK in March/April.

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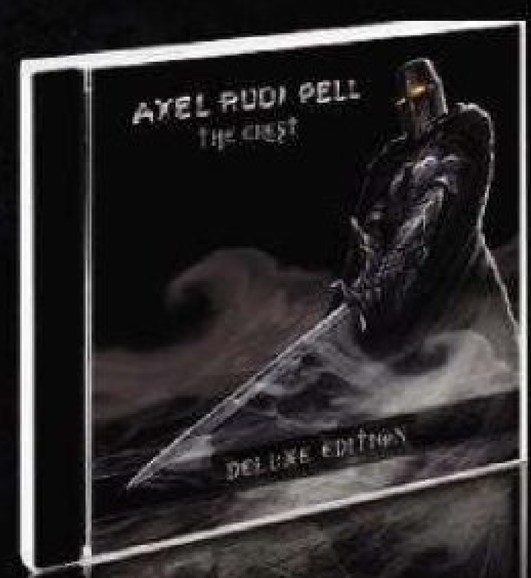

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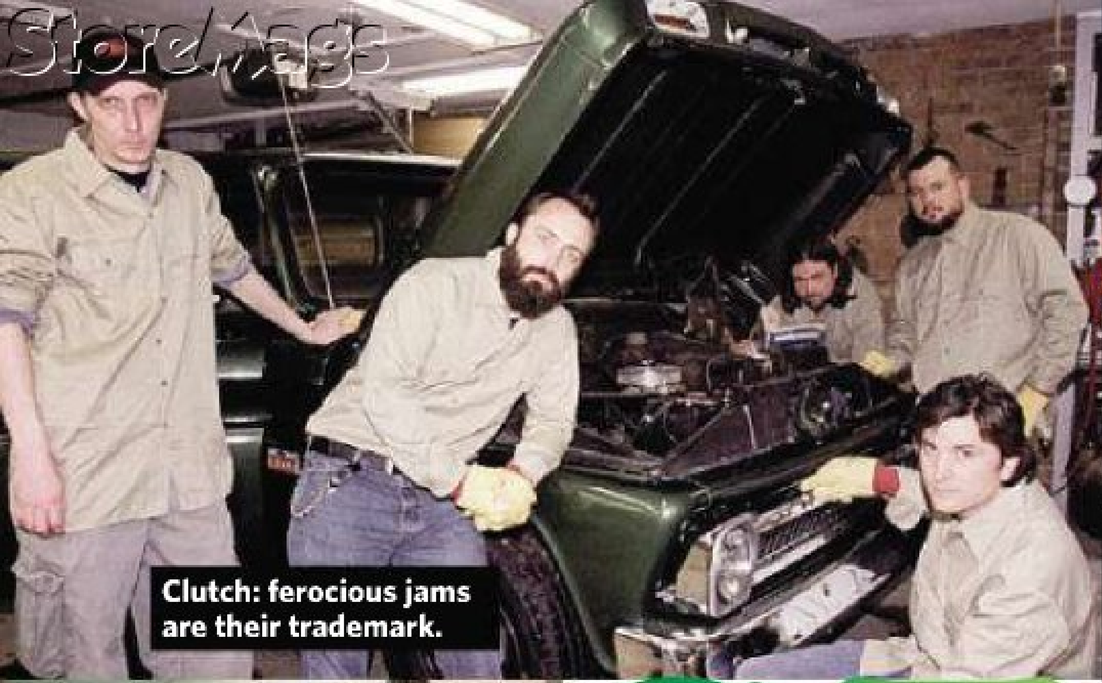
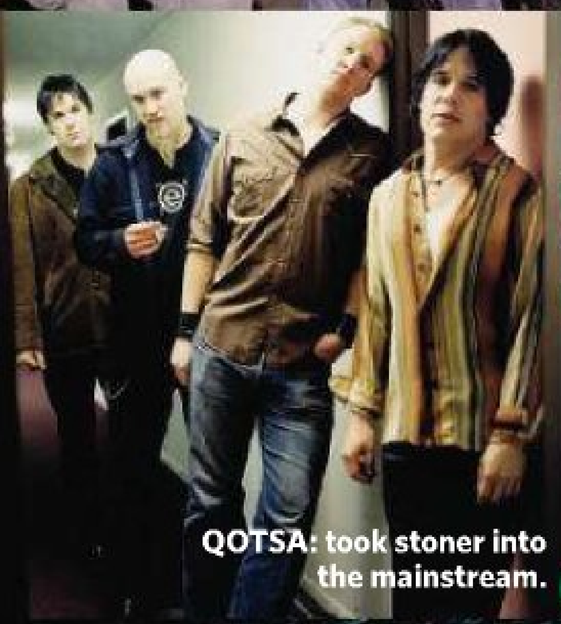

Clutch: ferocious jams are their trademark.

Kyuss: the stoner scene's household name.


QOTSA: took stoner into the mainstream.

STONE FREE

Monster Magnet: putting the 'psyche' into stoner.

Down: stoner with a southern groove

Fu Manchu: the 'Beach Boys of stoner'.

Breaking free from the summer of love was always going to be difficult – unless you had a sledgehammer made of riffs and a mind free of restrictions. We investigate the stoner rock scene that Kyuss made famous. Much like the 60s, if you remember it you weren't really there...

Words: **Josh Harper**

From its birth in the post-psychedelic dystopia of late 60s Birmingham to the sun-baked California deserts and beaches, stoner rock is a scene with many stories to tell.

It begins, as do many tales of heavy music, with Black Sabbath – where the isolation and bleak social surroundings of the Midlands forced the disheartened youth into the arms of a experimental scene rife with musical abandon and liberal drug use. The flower power generation never made it far as Aston but a bastardised translation of their free-thinking ethos did. And so, to match the daily drudgery of life in Birmingham, the music they created echoed with vastly down-tuned guitars and slow, repetitive riffing. Sabbath weren't alone, as over the Atlantic, Blue Cheer had already been scaring hippies with their feedback marathons and nightmarish covers of Eddie Cochran hits.

The tides were turning and the optimistic, free-love generations were gradually being overshadowed by this new wave of dense music that we'd later know and love as 'heavy metal'.

Just as the musical youth at that time needed a saviour, it would be another 20 years until that cry would be heard again. This time, as a backlash to what the late 70s and early 80s had transformed heavy metal and hard rock into. Just ask Master Of Reality Chris Goss, longtime Kyuss collaborator and godfather of the so-called 'desert scene'. "In the 80s, things went awry with heavy music," he says. "Metal in the 80s was very staccato and very anal retentive. It didn't swing or flow like when Sabbath was rolling along like a thunderstorm moving in. It became a joke; almost like championship wrestling with loads of fake blood – which you can probably blame Kiss for. I lost faith in a lot of it. I wasn't intrigued by it and I had to go to other sources to find that kind of intelligence and movement I was looking for."

It was lucky for Goss then that at the time his wife Cynthia, who was working at BMI, was handed a tape from a new band called Sons Of Kyuss. Impressed by what they had heard, they made a bee-line to the band's debut show.

"It was at a bar called The Gaslight, down a back alley in Hollywood, where Kyuss played their first show. There were five to 10 people there and I was blown out the door by it. At the time in 1990 they were tuned down lower than anyone, even lower than Black Sabbath. The strings were so loose and tuned down so low, they were flapping out of tune in a great way which created this bulldozer of a soundwave."

Heavy music was redefined again.

"They were isolated in the same way that

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Sabbath were in Birmingham, the desert was its own enclave," says Goss. "But you come to find that Sabbath wasn't really their muse, it was the desert itself. There's something gritty and wide open about Kyuss, isolation creates its own story."

Kyuss's two milestone albums in *Blues For The Red Sun* and *Welcome To Sky Valley* set the template for the stoner sound, but musically, it's indebted to more bands than just Ozzy and co's epic sludge. Upon Kyuss's split, each member would take what they had started and forge out in completely different directions. California fuzz commanders Fu Manchu (which featured drummer Brant Bjork) would embrace beach and skate culture, combining the brightly coloured Americana of The Beach Boys with the gritty distortion of Deep Purple. *Regal Begal* from their album *In Search Of…* is all the proof you need – it has become as synonymous to stoner rock as anything from Bjork's former band.

Vocalist John Garcia formed the closest incarnations to the Kyuss formula in his bands Slo Burn and Unida. Both bands would revolve heavily around Garcia's Danzig-esque powerhouse vocals, intertwining them with the kind of sludgey groove reminiscent of St. Vitus or Down's early work. Guitarist Josh Homme spent a short stint on tour with the Screaming Trees but soon after laid the foundations for his band Gamma Ray. After some legal threats from a certain German power metal group however, he changed the band's name to Queens Of The Stone Age. These initial recording line-ups included members of Soundgarden, Screaming Trees and Monster Magnet, adding a grungy element to the classic rock nature of their music.

Despite seeming evidence to the contrary, it wasn't just Kyuss alumni holding the monopoly on this burgeoning scene. Monster Magnet, under the psychedelic stewardship of Dave Wyndorf took it into space, creating giant Hawkwind-esque future grooves. "I guess it has something to do with everyone being into weed," chuckled Wyndorf when asked to try to define the stoner sound. "But musically there's so much variety. Are we the same as Kyuss? Are they like Fu Manchu? Probably not. I always thought someone in Holland invented the term anyway."

The scene went supernova and no matter in which direction its particles flew, all the bands would orbit the same ideals of riff-worship, volume and pure mental escapism. Maryland freestylers Clutch would later get tarred with the stoner brush as their numerous excursions into the musical cosmos with their rich blend of funk, hardcore punk and southern boogie earned them kudos within the stoner fraternity.

"I guess it has something to do with everyone being into weed."

– Dave Wyndorf, Monster Magnet

Their ferocious live jam marathons and existential lyrics made them easy targets for the category but also showed how far the scene was expanding, not just in influence but in style.

But the stoner scene is not limited to the US. Latterly, the UK would get involved. Without the arid deserts and expansive beaches for inspiration, how would Britain adapt to the return of the reformed monster it birthed so many years before? Well the UK did what it did best and dragged it kicking and screaming back into the misanthropy from which it was created.

"None of us over here could write honest songs about drag racing beach buggies along a Californian highway like Fu Manchu do," explains Orange Goblin frontman Ben Ward. "And no American band could honestly capture the misery, despair and pure fucking hatred of Little Britain like Electric Wizard or Iron Monkey do! I think this is why UK bands were so averse to being labeled 'stoner' or 'desert-rock'. To us it has always just been metal or doom. There was a time in the late 90s when bands from places like northern Norway were proclaiming to be desert rock, despite living in 24-hour darkness! It all got a bit silly."

The global attraction of this music was becoming increasingly apparent as scenes began to burgeon from unlikely sources; the Netherlands and Scandinavia being the most prolific with bands like Dozer, El Caco and Spiritual Beggars making waves. And while the bands of the cold north lacked the beaches, they had the grim desolation of metal's forefathers to look to, as is often apparent in a lot of Scandinavian bands' tendency to stay closer to hard rock influences such as Purple, Atomic Rooster and Zeppelin.

Globally, the metal and rock scenes were caught between the decline of grunge and the beginnings of nu metal and the followers of stoner/desert once again found themselves shunned out of the spotlight and back into the shadows. And they couldn't be happier. "There are so many variations on the Sabbath influence and that is what keeps it exciting and evolving," says Ward. "Some bands are now pushing the limits of how heavy or how slow music can get. There is only so far you can downtune and bands like SunnO))) and Yob have taken that to extremes. Other bands are regressing with recording techniques, trying to return to the analogue age to record how Sabbath and Blue Cheer did it. Whatever happens, it's never gonna rise out of the underground and become mainstream and do you know what, I like that because I feel that this is our music and we like to be outsiders."

KYUSS: NEIL ZLOZOWER

Where there's smoke there's fire Five classic stoner albums

Blue Cheer
Vincebus Eruptum

PHILIPS, 1968

Once described by DJ Dick Clark as "giving rock'n'roll a bad name", Blue Cheer made no apologies for their bastardisation of rock'n'roll. *Vincebus Eruptum* was the first and best, with only Sabbath matching them for grit. BC had the vision to dive headlong into a darker place. The doors were open for the Sabs to charge through.

Must hear: *Doctor Please*

Leaf Hound
Growers Of Mushroom

DECCA, 1971

Cited as one of the founding fathers of the stoner scene, UK band Leaf Hound exploded with the kind of British classic rock that Purple and Zep hypnotised the world with. *Growers Of Mushroom* was a heady mix of proto metal, jazz and Sabbath style riffing that ensured their place in the stoner hall of fame.

Must hear: *Freelance Fiend*

Kyuss
Blues For The Red Sun

DALI, 1992

Still seen as one of the first great albums of the desert/stoner scene, it opened doors and minds for a whole new generation of disenfranchised rock fans. A dusty mix of Zeppelin rhythms, smothered with looping distortion and black humour, it truly was the template for things to come.

Must hear: *Thumb*

Sleep
Sleep's Holy Mountain

EARACHE, 1993

Heavily influenced by the Sabs' *Master Of Reality* and *Vol.4*, Sleep were always the darker, gruffer side of stoner. Focusing solely on the primal power of the riff and keeping things a hair's breadth from distorted chaos, they were always the purist's champions. Still, they managed to keep the classic rock groove throughout.

Must hear: *Dragonaut*

Fu Manchu
The Action Is Go

MAMMOTH, 1997

A predilection for fast cars, surfing and girls branded these fuzz-happy roadsters as The Beach Boys of stoner. *TAIG* truly goes against the heavy grain with all aspects of doom and gloom replaced with optimistic speed-rock and distortion. It swerves like a drunken joyrider on a straight desert road.

Must hear: *Urethane*

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NICE GUYS FINISH LAST

Managed by gangsters and plagued by poor record deals, bad luck cursed the career of **Stray**, once peers to the likes of Judas Priest and UFO.

Words: **Dave Ling**

It's 1966 and England are about to win the World Cup, The Who will score the joint biggest hit single of their career (*I'm A Boy* peaking at No.2), the Stones go one better with *Paint It Black*, before Jimi Hendrix and *Hey Joe* arrive like a flaming meteorite. In such a glorious year for rock'n'roll, it's perfectly excusable that the formation of Stray passed as something of a footnote.

More than 40 years later, guitarist Del Bromham's living-room wall isn't plastered with gold and platinum discs, though he has achieved something equally difficult. Pointedly lacking record label support, his band accumulated some colourful rock'n'roll anecdotes while colluding with murky gangland figures to record several of the most underrated albums of the 1970s. And, continuing to defy the vagaries of the music business, the band still exists today.

"I've been a member of this band for most of my adult life," Bromham muses. "I often meet people who tell me that Del Bromham and Stray are one and the same entity. Maybe they're right."

In keeping with their sound's unpretentious rough and readiness, Stray's other co-founders – vocalist Steve Gadd, bassist Gary Giles and drummer Steve Crutchley (later replaced by Richard Cole) – came from working-class backgrounds, having met at various schools in London's Shepherd's Bush. All four had been weaned on the pop-rock of The Small Faces, but before too long they were turned on to Led Zeppelin's stadium-friendly electrified blues and the writing style of The Who's Pete Townshend.

Gadd and Giles were just 17 when Stray started playing prestigious shows at London's Roundhouse, opening for the likes of Deep Purple and Spooky Tooth.

"In a very short space of time we went to those places from playing pop tunes and Tamla Motown stuff in working men's clubs," recalls Bromham, "but things began to accelerate as we heavied things up."

Within a year the youngsters had signed to Transatlantic Records, a UK label that specialised in the folk-rock of Pentangle, Ralph McTell and The Dubliners. Issued in 1970 and featuring the nine-minute *All In Your Mind* – later covered by Iron Maiden – Stray's self-titled debut was a commendable enough effort but, with hindsight, the ill-fitting liaison between group and label was doomed from the start.

"Going with them [Transatlantic] was the wrong decision. Transatlantic wanted to move into the prog market, and the press, who never really looked at us favourably, thought that we were too young to be any good," Bromham reflects on the album's failure to chart.

As the 1970s wound on, the likes of UFO, Judas Priest and Motörhead would all open for Stray, who put on a high-volume, visually enhanced show that included a dustbin that exploded (yes, really) during *All In Your Mind*. However, signed to a label with little money or inclination to promote them, the band struggled to raise their profile.

Although recorded in just 30 hours, 1971's *Suicide* album was a step in the right direction. As well as introducing *Jericho*, which the band still performs live today, the album is said to feature the very same Mellotron that The Beatles used on *Strawberry Fields Forever*.

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STEVE BOTTRILL

Stray: the best 70s rock band who never made it big?

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But by *Saturday Morning Pictures* in 1972, Stray's belief in their support mechanism was wavering. Besides hiring Martin Birch to co-produce, this time Transatlantic did get around to releasing a single, *Our Song*, also staging a title-inspired 9.30am matinee show at London's Rainbow Theatre. When *SMP* failed to chart an intended spot at 1971's Reading Festival was cancelled, so the band headed to a small seaside town in Essex to join T. Rex, Rod Stewart and Status Quo at the now semi-legendary Weely Festival instead. This lead to an embarrassing situation when the pyro that went off during *All In Your Mind* was mistaken for distress flares in nearby Clacton-On-Sea, causing lifeboats to scramble. "We apologised and sent them a donation," Bromham grimaces.

Things threatened to take a turn for the better when Stray were signed for management by a shady individual called Wilf Pine. The first Brit to be accepted into America's wave of organised crime, Pine had been one of Don Arden's heavies during the previous decade. A close personal friend of London gangsters the Kray Twins, his gangland exploits were later detailed in John Pearson's book *One Of The Family: The Englishman And The Mafia*.

Pine had become accepted as a trusted friend of the influential godfather Joe Pagano, and with the help of business partner Patrick Meehan had begun to make waves in the music business, accumulating a management and promotion roster included Black Sabbath, Yes, The Groundhogs, Gentle Giant and The Edgar Broughton Band.

"Wilf turned up like a cliché, with a white suit, a big cigar and a Mercedes car, insisting he could take us further," Bromham recalls. "But it wasn't to be. Years later, after re-establishing friendship with Peter Amott and Ivan Mant [the group's original managers], I learned they'd been on the brink of signing us to Island Records, who were very much the label of the time. Had we become part of that stable, history might have been very different."

After the disappointment of the previous year, for Stray's appearance at 1972's Reading Festival, Bromham decided to cause a splash by making a suit covered entirely in mirrors. "All was good until I tried to walk in it," he giggles. "I was like the Tin Man from *The Wizard Of Oz*, because I couldn't bend my knees. Three roadies had to lift me onto the stage.

"We were going on after Status Quo and before Wizzard – our set was during the daytime – but even so, I'm told that it looked amazing. This was a year or so before [Slade singer] Noddy Holder had the idea for his famous reflective top-hat."

Stray's fourth album was to be their final realistic shot at the big time. Musicians from the London Symphony Orchestra contributed brass and strings to 1973's *Mudanzas*, which was recorded in subterfuge with Pine as producer whilst an escape from Transatlantic was plotted.

Thirty-eight years afterwards, *Mudanzas* remains a superb album that some fans still cite as their favourite. If their business worries were getting them down – surprisingly, it surfaced via Transatlantic after the label described the secret session as "fantastic" – they were not affecting anybody's confidence, nor a desire to keep on pushing the envelope. Indeed, the sleeve notes penned by Tony McPhee of The Groundhogs, who called the album "still Stray music, but with changes" seemed a excellent summation.

"Did we go too far with *Mudanzas*?" Bromham muses. "I don't think so, but the band did perhaps get a little swamped by the orchestral elements. Having said that, I'm often told that Oasis later nicked what we were trying to do."

Although *Mudanzas* once again fell short of the chart, sheer roadwork brought the group their one and only gold disc in the UK. Struggling on with Transatlantic, in an increasingly desperate move Wilf Pine suggested recording Cliff Richard's 1958 hit *Move It* as the title track of their next album.

"We went, 'Wha-a-at?!' But Wilf was insistent," Bromham marvels. Stray had flown to Connecticut to record *Move It* at night – in the same studio where Donovan was also recording, as he worked during daylight hours. Critically speaking, the band were starting to gain the grudging respect of reviewers, though with sales still failing to materialise they were also conscious of Pine putting them "on the backburner", in Del's words, as other business interests filled his time.

More damaging still, tension with Steve Gadd, who was starting to make loud noises about wanting to write more, was about to explode.

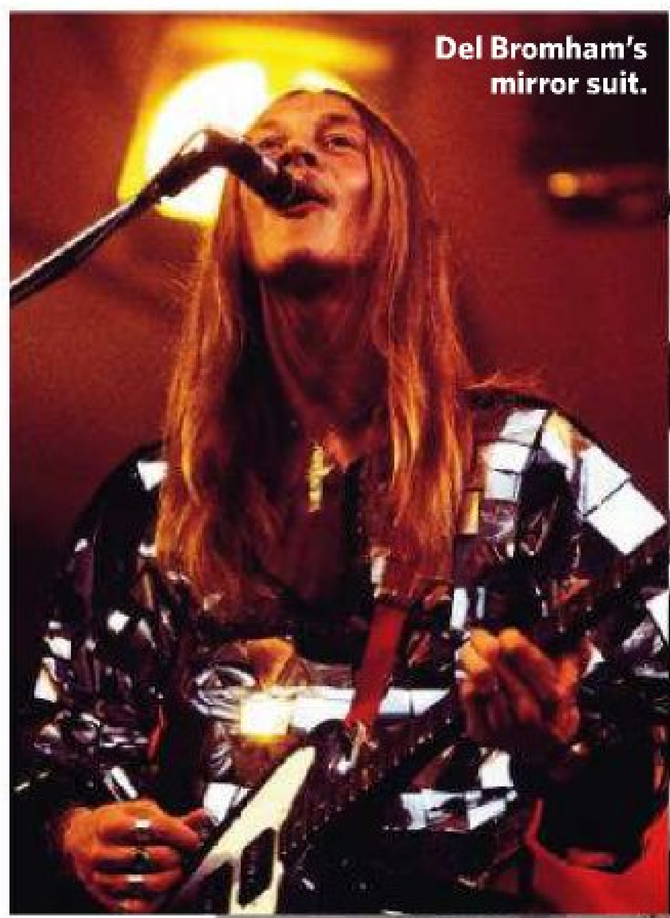
"How can I put this?" Bromham sighs. "Steve was a great frontman – a cross between Mick Jagger and Paul Rodgers – and we'd been a tight-knit group, until he found new friends – new lady friends. For a while there was a bit of a John and Yoko thing going on."

The singer's departure almost ended in fisticuffs with Richie Cole in particular, but in later, wiser years, following a long period of estrangement, Gadd would confess to Bromham: "I couldn't have lived with what I was like back then."

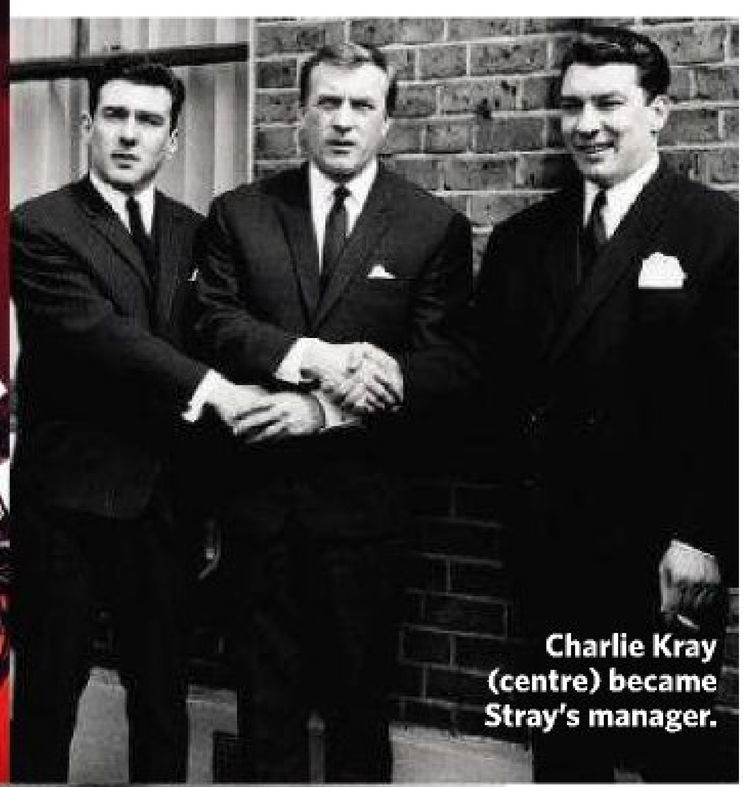
Assuming the role of lead vocalist was something that filled Bromham with an icy dread. A naturally shy person, at one of the band's earliest gigs in Dunstable a stagehand's broom handle was actually used to prod him from the wings into the audience's view. With Bromham also assuming the extra responsibility of playing keyboards onstage and in the studio, Stray added second guitarist Pete Dyer for their next album in 1975.

Although its contents had been largely intended as a Bromham solo album, *Stand Up And Be Counted* was another well-honed smorgasbord of hard and soft rock, offering quality tunes such as *For The People* and *Precious Love*, though once again the band failed to settle into a particular niche. Tellingly, the quirky though aptly titled *Waiting For The Big Break* included the couplet: *'Maybe we'll never get out of our record contract/And all disappear down the hole in the middle.'*

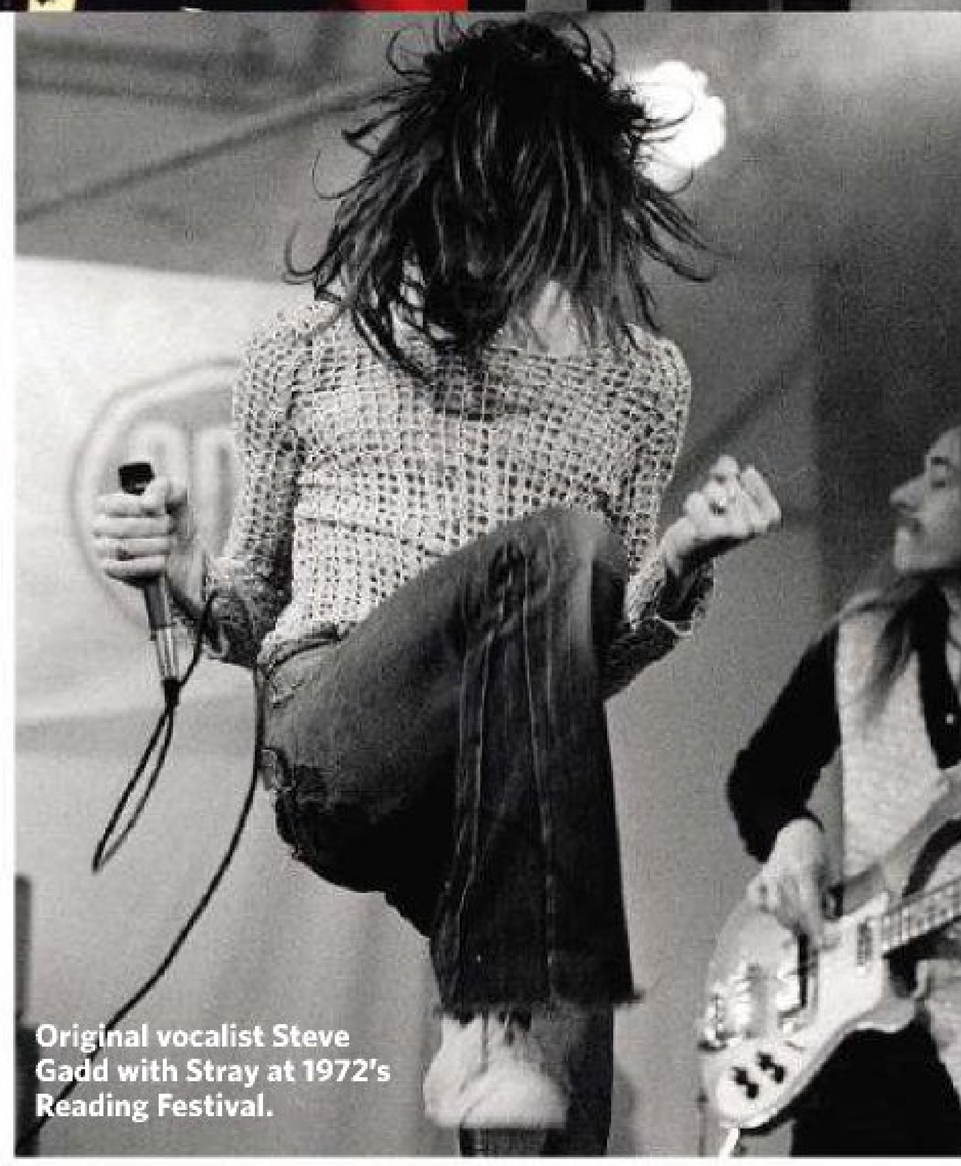
By now Wilf Pine had prised them away from Transatlantic, but the same old issues of label ➔



Del Bromham's mirror suit.



Charlie Kray (centre) became Stray's manager.



Original vocalist Steve Gadd with Stray at 1972's Reading Festival.

"PYRO WENT OFF DURING A CLACTON GIG AND WAS MISTAKEN FOR A DISTRESS FLARE" DEL BROMHAM

KRAYS: GETTY IMAGES; STRAY LIVE: ROBERT ELLIS/REPPOTO

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disinterest and a dearth of chart action returned after the band signed to Pye Records' prog offshoot, Dawn.

During a trip to America opening for Spirit and Canned Heat, Stray were shocked to see the familiar face of Ozzy Osbourne in the crowd at the Starwood in Los Angeles (they had originally supported Black Sabbath at London's Alexandra Palace back in 1973).

"Ozzy came backstage and insisted that he wanted to produce our band," laughs Bromham. Things became more surreal still when cops stopped the band's car after Ozzy requested a lift to his hotel, also on Sunset Strip.

"Our driver jumped a red light and suddenly there were all these sirens," Bromham remembers. "Sat between myself and Gary [Giles], Ozzy started wriggling about. In the same car the following day, much to our astonishment, we found this elk horn full of dubious-looking white powder hidden down the back of the seat. I'm not saying that Ozzy left it there, but make up your own mind."

Back at home, Pye Records pulled the plug on the Dawn imprint, casting Stray as labelmates with such un-rock acts as the Brotherhood Of Man, Frankie Vaughan and Carl *'Kung Fu Fighting'* Douglas on their main roster.

Eschewing orchestras and *outré* distractions, the band tapped into the Stateside vibe, stripping things down for 1976's *Houdini* album. With American radio in mind, *Feel Like I've Been Here Before* and the album's heavy-duty title song, the group sounded a lot more confident than in recent years.

The release of Stray's *Houdini* happened to coincide with the debut UK dates from US glam-rock titans Kiss. Strange to say it now but, still uncertain of the headliners' pulling power, promoter John Curd booked Stray to ensure that bums would occupy at least a few seats. Stray themselves knew very little about Kiss until the tour's first night at the Birmingham Odeon.

"Just as we were walking onstage they bounded down this staircase in full make-up, looking like they'd come straight out of a Captain Marvel comic, and shouted: 'Good luck, guys'. It was the weirdest thing ever," reminisces Bromham.

With punk rock a dominating musical force, 1976 was a tough year for Stray. Captain Sensible sometimes turned up at the band's shows, and on one notable occasion The Damned and Stray actually shared a stage in St Albans. And despite their average age of just 25, Stray's expansive discography seemed to tar them with the 'rock dinosaur' brush.

"Many of the punk bands were the same age as us," says Bromham, "and of course The Stranglers were even older. So, I think, were The Clash. *[Actually Joe Strummer, their oldest member, was born a year after Bromham – Ed.]* But we found ourselves firmly on the outside of what was going on, and before we knew it the gigs dried up."

Having parted with Wilf Pine and seeking a quick fix, Stray's underworld links were to escalate with the engagement of none other than Charlie Kray as their next manager. The elder sibling of infamous gangster duo Ronnie and Reggie, Kray had been a showbiz agent during the 60s, but fresh out of jail for having helped to dispose of the body of Jack 'The Hat' McVitie, association with Charlie guaranteed the band instant notoriety.

"It was all a publicity stunt, and we made all of the daily papers but it backfired on us big-style," rues Bromham now, unsurprisingly. The initial plan had been for Arden himself to take them on, but following a chance meeting at Arden's office in Wimbledon, the unlikely deal was struck.

"Like me, Charlie had come to see Don, but Charlie doesn't wait for anyone and after an hour he realised we both were being given the runaround," Bromham remembers. "So we chatted as I drove him to his mum's place in Bethnal Green."

The deal done, it didn't take long for things to change. "On the first night of our tour, in Scarborough, the club's manager came into the dressing room and asked: 'Are we expecting trouble?' Plain-clothes police had turned up. Other bands were terrified of us. It all got out of hand. For a while there was even a stupid rumour that we beat up our support bands."

Stray would release one further album, the underrated *Hearts Of Fire*, and open for Rush on the latter's mid-1976 UK tour – moustachioed drummer Neal Peart had become a fan of the group while living in London's Hammersmith – but in late 1977, submerged in writs, debts and perceived artistic baggage, they played their final gig at Nottingham's Boat Club.

There were several reunions during the 1980s, including a stint without Bromham, who had formed a short-lived band with former Heavy Metal Kids frontman Gary Holton. Bromham returned a year later and Stray were briefly rejoined in '84 by Gadd, splitting again afterwards.

Stray's stock rose immeasurably in 1990 when Del received a phone call from Steve Harris. Iron Maiden's bassist wanted to know whether it was okay for his own band to cover *All In Your Mind* as the B-side to their *Holy Smoke* single.

"When Steve called out of the blue I thought it was a wind-up," the guitarist beams. "We met up for a drink and ended up becoming good friends."

Maiden later invited Stray to tour Europe with them in 2003 (see left), and Steve's daughter Lauren went on to cover the *Mudanzas* choice *Come On Over* on her debut album.

For the past decade, Del Bromham has patiently rebuilt the name of his band. "Some artists from my era still think that it's 1972, that they can just walk back into a venue and it will be full," he comments. "I'm here to tell them that's not the case."

Stray's catalogue remains a mine of unknown (if occasionally flawed) treasures, but the remastering of their first eight albums by Castle Music in 2007 was a welcome profile boost. Bromham's current line-up, completed by bassist Stuart Uren and former Humble Pie drummer Karl Randall, has been together for four years and was recently hailed as "the best yet" by Steve Harris after he saw a show at the Royal Standard in London.

The trio got to work with Grammy-nominated producer Chris Tsangarides on their latest album, *Valhalla*, the release party for which saw a spontaneous reunion with Pete Dyer and Steve Gadd, with Gary Giles watching from the bar.

Ultimately Stray's diversity has turned out both a blessing and a curse. "People get confused by seeing this loud, hard rock band on stage, but when they got our albums home they often featured acoustic songs," Bromham points out. "As a fan of The Beatles, that's something I hold my hands up to."

Bromham, now 59 years old, retains the energy and drive of a man half his age – but he has no plans to stop just yet.

"I'm the last remaining member of the original band, and the reason I'm still doing this is very simple: I've never wanted to do anything else," he declares proudly. "I'd play in someone's front room for nothing as long as there are people that still want to hear the songs."

The brand new Stray album Valhalla is out now on Angel Air.

'ARRY'S 'ERO!

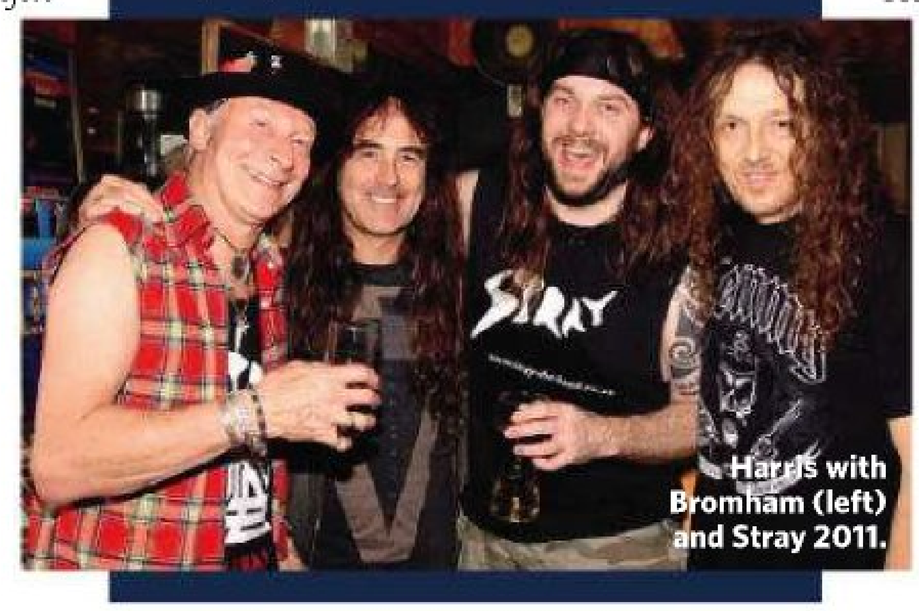
Maiden mainman is Stray superfan.

In 1971 a schoolboy called Steve Harris discovered an album called *Suicide* by Stray. What he liked about Stray back then is what he still cites as their biggest asset. "They've always been about great songs," he enthuses. "*Saturday Morning Pictures* [also 1971] and *Mudanzas* [1973] still stand up really well."

Over the next few years, Harris followed his heroes all over London. "They sometimes played at my local, the Red Lion in Leytonstone, but I saw them many, many times," he relates. "I even travelled to The Fox in Croydon, which from the East End felt like the other end of the earth."

When Harris formed Iron Maiden and became a musician himself, he was impressed to learn that producer Martin Birch's résumé included the aforementioned *Saturday Morning Pictures*. "I'd played it so many times but never put two and two together," smiles the bassist.

Maiden covered *All In Your Mind* in 1990, later offering Stray a welcome opportunity to tour Europe as their support act. "It meant a lot to have them on the road with us," enthuses Harris. "Del's had lots of turmoil down the years, but he's still out there enjoying himself and playing great music. In many ways, that's a lesson to us all."



Harris with Bromham (left) and Stray 2011.

"CHARLIE KRAY WAS OUR MANAGER BUT IT WAS JUST A PUBLICITY STUNT." DEL BROMHAM

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Metallica – the early years

The spoilt brat, the introvert, the big-mouth and 'the strangest-looking dude': Metallica – the early years

Words: **Mick Wall** Photographs: **Bill Hale**

The story so far: realising he is not going to emulate his father and have a successful career as a player on the international tennis circuit, Lars Ulrich, an 18-year-old spoiled brat from Copenhagen, latterly of Newport Beach, southern California, spends his days reading imported copies of UK music weekly *Sounds* and collecting obscure New Wave Of British Heavy Metal records. In the summer of 1981 he flies to England where he hooks up with NWOBHM stalwarts Diamond Head, a band so insignificant in the bigger picture that they view the arrival on their doorstep of their one and only American fan as such a novelty that guitarist Brian Tatler invites him to stay at his parents' house.

When Lars finally returns to the US some weeks later, he does so intent on forming his own NWOBHM-style band. Barely able to play the drums, and with only a small circle of equally nerdish friends to count on in the local tape-trading scene, in desperation Lars places an ad in local free-sheet *The Recycler*, appealing for any like-minded musos to get in touch. He gets exactly one response.

They say opposites attract. That was not the case when Lars Ulrich met James Hetfield in 1981. The only thing James appeared to have in common with Lars was their age.

Where Lars was small and doll-like, pretty-boy Euro-trash who ate with his mouth open and would go days without showering, James was tall and rangy, a full-blooded young American of Irish-German descent who brushed his teeth twice a day and wore clean underwear. Where Lars never shut up, James never used two words where none would do. Where Lars came from a background of money and travel, of music and art, of multilingual, open-door, hippy liberalism, James came from a plain-folks working-class family with strict fundamentalist religious beliefs, latterly an absentee father and, most recently and painfully, a deceased mother. Where Lars would push his way through any door, James stayed in the shadows, couldn't even bring himself to meet anyone in the eye.

A loner at high school, like Lars it was music that would finally bring James Hetfield into contact with other similarly obsessed classroom loners like Ron McGovney. "There was the cheerleaders, the jocks, the marching-band people," Ron recalls. James had discovered rock via his two older half-brothers. "I was always looking for something other people didn't always dig. When I was into Black Sabbath, all my friends would go: 'Oh, my mom won't let me have that album.' So I had to go out and get it." Now he looked to form his own band. Encouraged by James, who'd used early piano lessons as a springboard to playing guitar, Ron started having lessons. "I knew nothing about bass." He just wanted to learn how to play *Stairway To Heaven*. James would be the UFO guy, tackling hard-line anthems like *Doctor, Doctor* and *Lights Out*.

Various high school bands ensued. "My parents had a main house with three rental houses in the back," McGovney recalls. "They let James and me live in the middle house rent-free. We converted the garage into our rehearsal studio." Having left high school, they both had jobs now too, using their money to fund their latest group, Phantom Lord.

"I worked at my parents' truck repair shop during the day," recalls Ron. James had a job in "a sticker factory" called Santa Fe Springs. They used their first month's salaries to insulate the garage against noise, putting up dry wall, painting the rafters black and the ceiling silver.

In the final entry in his high school yearbook, under 'plans', Hetfield had written: 'Play music. Get rich.' As with most young bands, however, Phantom Lord splintered before it had even played a gig. They carried on under a series of different guises, the one most surprising being Leather Charm, a glam band featuring James as a pouting glam singer, even dropping guitar to concentrate on becoming a full-on frontman. Once again, however, the new band quickly fell apart. Then they saw the ad in *The Recycler*: 'Drummer looking for other metal musicians to jam with. Tygers Of Pan Tang, Diamond Head and Iron Maiden.' A meet was arranged but James thought the kid who had placed the ad "weird" and "smelled funny". He couldn't even really play drums. "We ate McDonald's, he ate herring," was how James summarised it 20 years later. "His father was famous. A rich, only child, spoiled – that's why he's got his mouth. Knows what he wants [and] gotten it his whole life."

Lars, though, sensed they might have more in common. "Even though we came from two different worlds we were both loners. And in each other we found something that just connected with something deeper." The first time James went to Lars' parents' house he was deeply impressed. "I was searching for people that I could identify with," said James. "There's a part of me that craves family and another part of me that just can't stand people." Unlike his own family home, where outsiders were rare, all were welcome here, differences celebrated, individualism prized. In Lars's bedroom there was a whole wall of records by groups James had never even heard of. He brought his tape-recorder, and filled cassettes with tracks by Venom, Motörhead, Saxon, Samson… ➔

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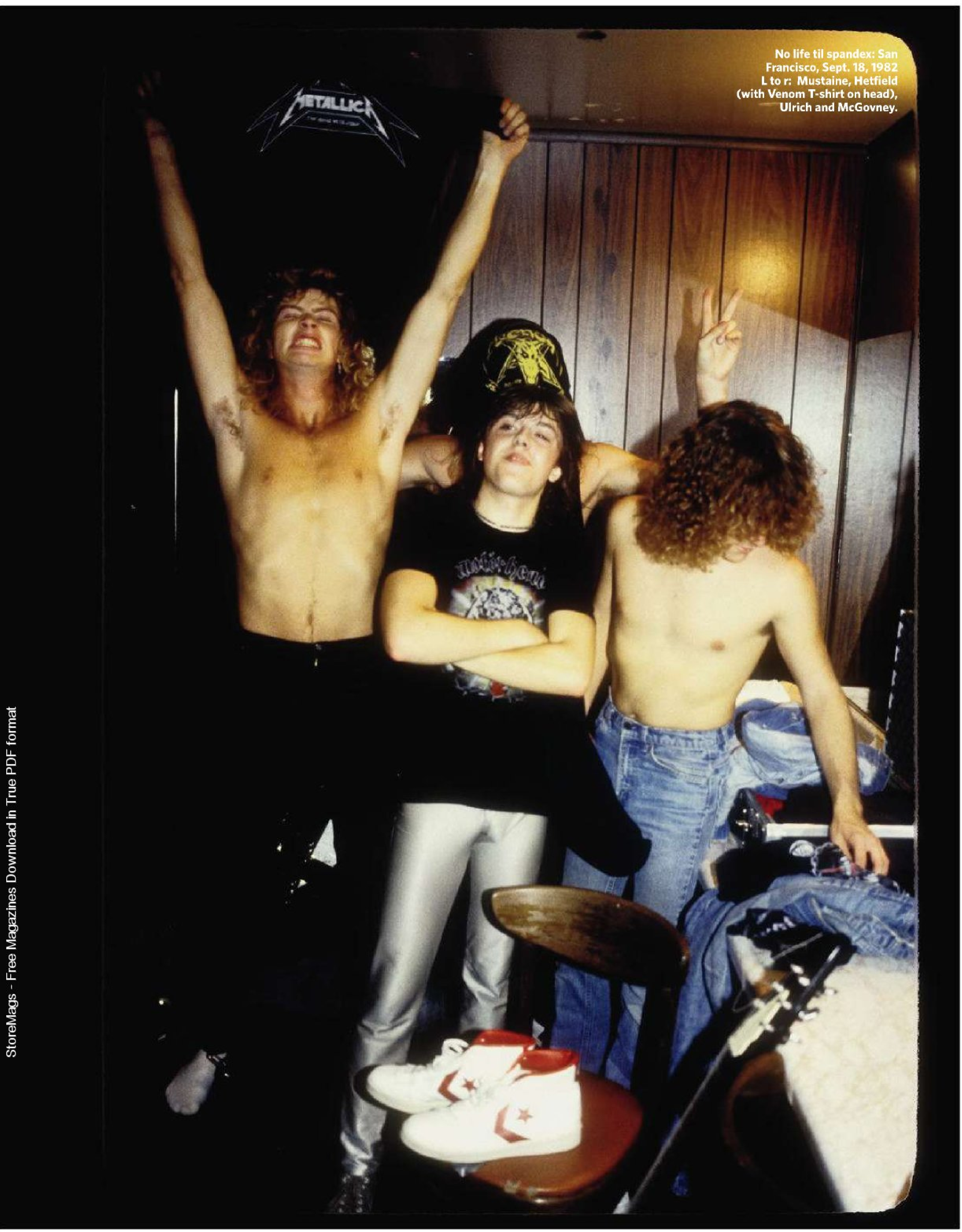

No life til spandex: San Francisco, Sept. 18, 1982 L to r: Mustaine, Hetfield (with Venom T-shirt on head), Ulrich and McGovney.

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"I bombarded James with all this new British stuff," Lars said, "and soon he was sold on getting something together that would stand out in the ocean of mediocrity."

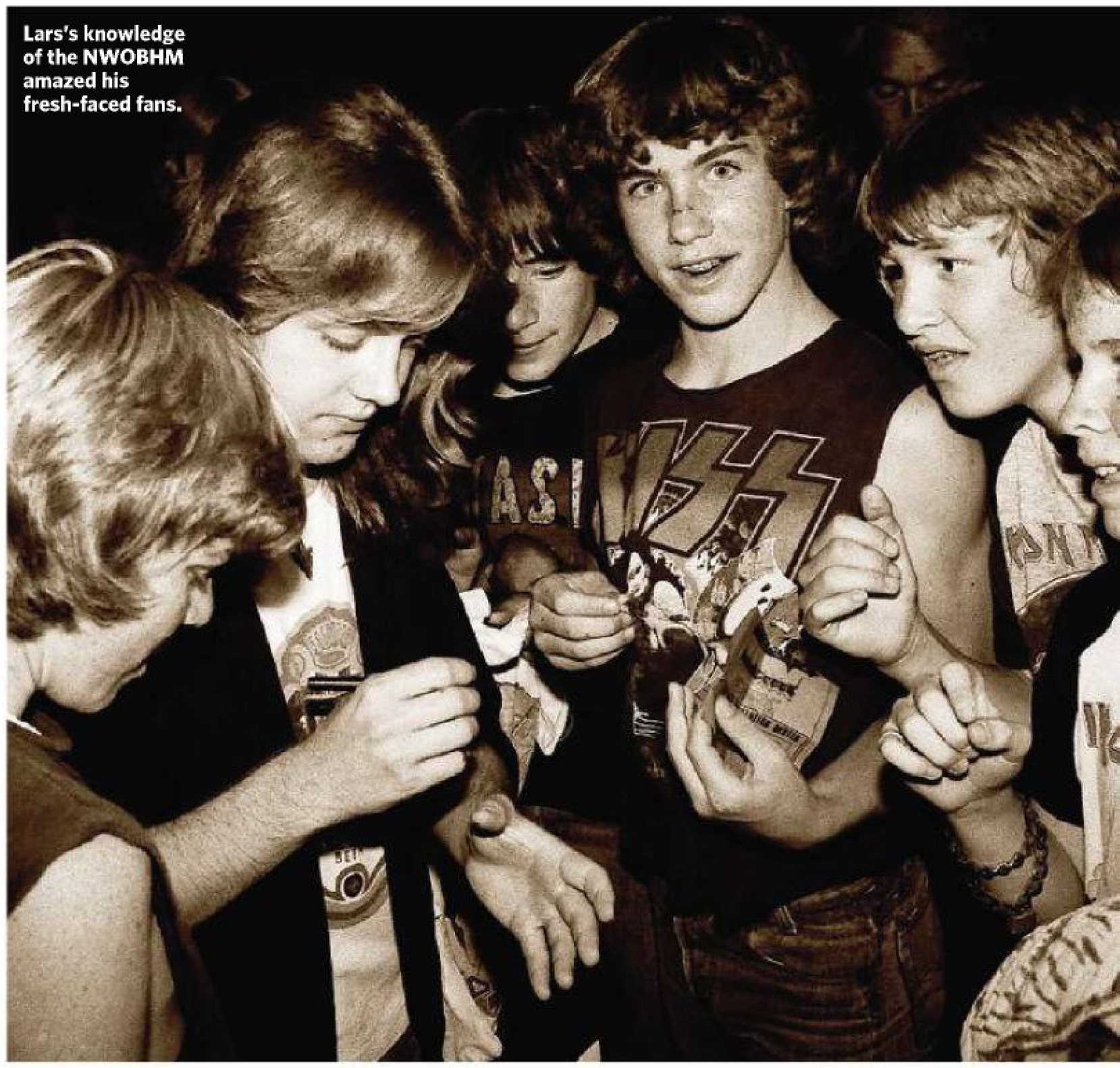
Brian Slagel had been part of the same small NWOBHM coterie as Lars and other pals like Bob Nalbandian, Patrick Scott and John Kornarens. But since he'd been working in a record store and running his own fanzine, *The New Metal Revue*, he'd seen less of the guys. It wasn't until he was putting together a compilation album – inspired by the *Metal For Muthas* NWOBHM compilation in the UK – that he came into contact with Lars again. Tentatively titled *The New Heavy Metal Revue Presents… Metal Massacre*, it would comprise "all these local LA bands nobody else cared about". When Lars heard about it, "[he] called me up and said: 'Hey, if I put together a band can I be on your compilation album?' I said: 'Sure, why not?'"

The only problem, says Slagel, was that "Metallica didn't exist, at that point". But Lars decided they didn't need a band, they just needed a demo-tape. Slagel heard no more until the day he and John Kornarens were at Bijou Studios, mastering the disc. At around three that afternoon, the door burst open and there stood their crazy little pal with the funny accent – holding a cassette of *Hit The Lights*. Brian laughs. "They recorded the song on this little cassette recorder that had like four channels. It wasn't really something you could put out. They did it basically the night before, just him and James [and] Lloyd Grant, James's guitar teacher, doing the lead." It had to be transferred to reel-to-reel tape, for which the studio charged $50. Slagel recalls: "Lars doesn't have $50, *I* don't have $50. Luckily John loaned us the 50 bucks so we could get the thing mastered and finished."

Although it would be months before initial pressings of *Metal Massacre* became available, now they had a tape to play people, Lars and James became determined to make Metallica a flesh-and-bones reality. First to join was McGovney. "My musical contribution was very limited," he recalls. "I played what James wanted me to play. I would just copy what he did." From the word go, Metallica was always "James and Lars' band".

James had yet to settle on his long-term role, vacillating between straightforward frontman like Steven Tyler, and being off to one side, head down, playing rhythm. Meanwhile, after another ad in *The Recycler*, they finally found a lead guitarist. His name was Dave Mustaine. Lars recalled: "I got a call from this guy and he was just so OTT: 'I got all this equipment; my own photographer, my own this, my own that.' He didn't have a clue what we were talking about musically, but he had enthusiasm. Everyone else in Hollywood was doing imitations." Dave Mustaine had no desire to imitate anybody. He was already his own biggest hero.

The classic product of an American broken home, Mustaine had grown up across several different locations in Southern California, his mother forced to keep moving to escape the abusive attentions of her only son's alcoholic father. By 1982 Dave was living alone in a dishevelled apartment in Huntington Beach, from which he sold weed. A tall, good-looking guy with a lot of reddish-blond hair and a lot more attitude, some said he was an asshole. Actually, most said he was an asshole. But if the contrived profanities and vulgar machismo were doomed to overshadow much of the brilliant music he would make



Lars's knowledge of the NWOBHM amazed his fresh-faced fans.

Proto-Metallica often 'played like shit', according to Lars.

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Only here for the beer: no wonder the band would soon be dubbed 'Alcoholica'.

"He didn't have a clue what we doing musically, but he had enthusiasm."

– Lars Ulrich on recruiting Dave Mustaine

throughout his rarely dull career, Mustaine was also responsible for helping shape the early Metallica direction.

"'I think that James and I are very much the same man," Mustaine later reflected. "I think that we grabbed an angel, split him in half, and both of us are possessing that power." James soon began to see Dave less as a brother, though, and more of an evil twin. Whatever else he brought to the mix, though, "Pretty quickly [after Dave joined] things began to happen," said Lars.

With the four-man line-up established, the band played their first gigs, beginning with a shaky set at Radio City, in Anaheim, on March 14, 1982, where the set comprised a handful of Diamond Head covers posing as originals, interspersed with *Hit The Lights* and *Jump In The Fire*, a new Mustaine number, plus some obscure NWOBHM nuggets. More memorable were two sets opening for authentic NWOBHM royalty Saxon at the Whisky A Go Go a few weeks later. Slagel remembers James, still without a guitar to hide behind and wearing tight, leopard-print pants, being "so shy… you could tell he was a little intimidated". In his gig diary, Lars smugly noted: 'Dave and me played great. Ron and James so-so. Had a good time but never met Saxon.'

Three weeks after the release of *Metal Massacre*, in June 1982, Metallica went into the eight-track Chateau East studio to record what they hoped would be their first stand-alone release. But after hearing the seven-tracks High Velocity label owner Kenny Kane refused to release them (he'd assumed they were a punk band). Ever resourceful, Lars suggested they simply distribute the tracks themselves as a 'limited-edition' cassette titled *No Life Til Leather* (inspired by Motörhead's live *No Sleep Till Hammersmith* album, No.1 in the UK the summer before).

With its makeshift sleeve with liner notes by Lars, *No Life*… would burn a hole in the tape-trading scene. Its seven tracks – *Mechanix*, *Phantom Lord*, *Jump In The Fire* and *Metal Militia*, all credited to Hetfield, Ulrich and Mustaine, but which Mustaine later claimed he'd written the bulk of; *Motorbreath*, a leftover from Hetfield's days with Phantom Lord; *Seek And Destroy*, by James and Lars, 'inspired' by Diamond Head's *Dead Reckoning*; plus a new version of *Hit The Lights* featuring Mustaine and McGovney (though they cannily kept the original Lloyd Grant solo) – did everything an official EP might have, except garner reviews in the mainstream rock press. It made up for that by the sheer force of its word-of-mouth following.

Patrick Scott was enlisted to send out copies. "I had these pen pals like Metal Mike from *Aardshok*, and Bernard Doe [at *Metal Forces*], and they were just going nuts over Metallica… it was a fun time, running to the mailbox every day. Lars just kept giving me stuff to send out. He knew what he was doing." Though band operations still centred on Ron's parents' bungalow, it was the start of Lars taking over the band's profile and promotion. As he later boasted, conveniently omitting the role played by Scott and others: "I was the one who went out and bought all the tapes. I was the one who sat down and copied them. I was the one who sent them out to people. That's where it started. Somebody had to do it."

Musically, Metallica's influences were obvious to anyone acquainted with the NWOBHM scene. Yet at rehearsals, they would mix their Motörhead and Angel Witch records with The Ramones, Discharge, The Anti-Nowhere League, "and no one flinched," said James. "It all belonged together. It was aggressive, it had guitars. It felt good." Patrick Scott recalls introducing them to Accept's *Restless And Wild* album and the track *Fast As A Shark*. "They were bummed: 'Somebody beat us to it!'" It was ➔

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also Patrick that first played them Mercyful Fate. "James would play *Curse Of The Pharaohs* to get his guitar tone down. Mercyful Fate were a big influence: to be progressive with time-changes. They didn't want chord progressions, they wanted riffs. Ten riffs in one song…"

The arrival of Metallica and 'thrash metal' – the brush they quickly got tarred with – was a watershed moment. The end of heavy metal as it had become post-punk – either lugubrious rhythms dredged from a river setting the scene for jiggery-pokery lyrics about Satan and his followers, or self-conscious anthems full of whinnying guitars and blow-dried vocals – and the beginning of something new. Metallica were closest to Motörhead in terms of stripping rock back to its most vital components. But there was a comic aspect to Lemmy and his man-boys, a glint of the gold tooth that Metallica did not share.

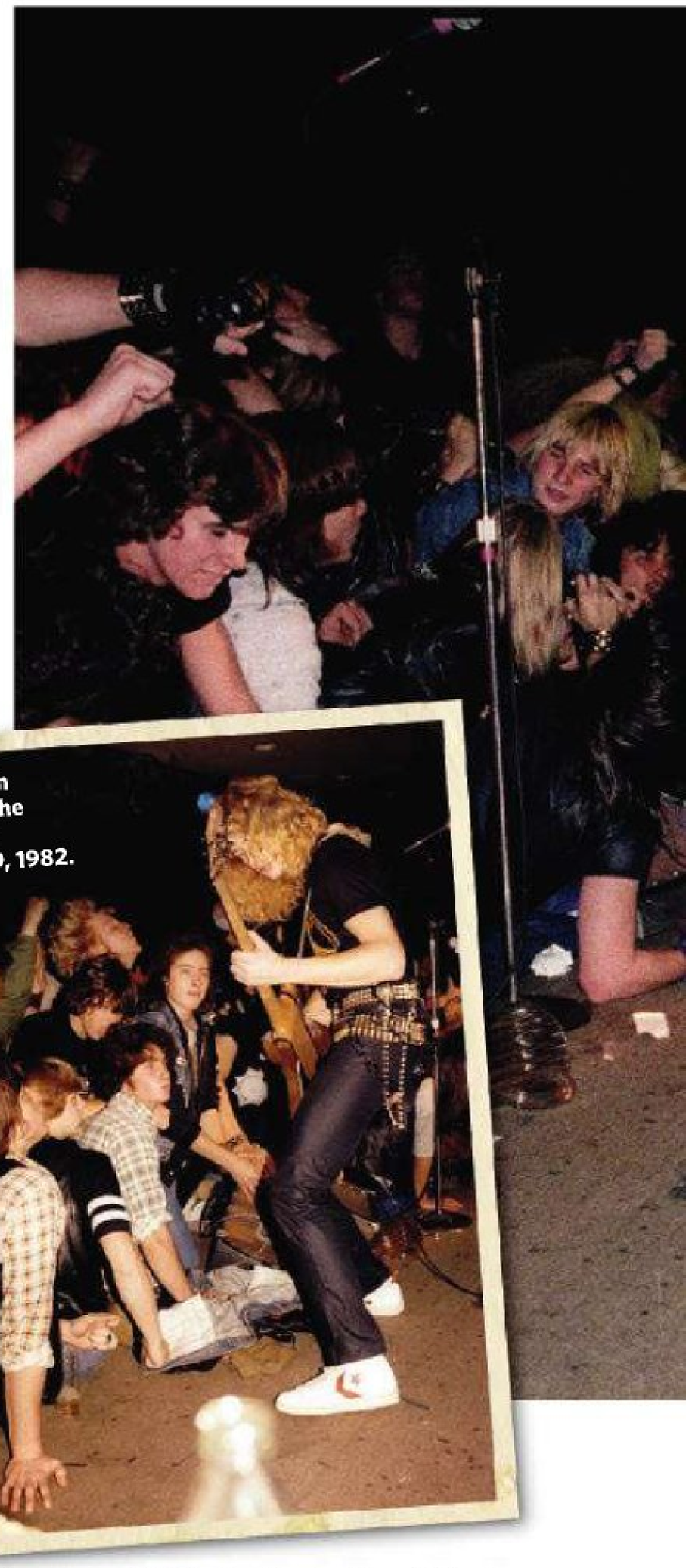
Metallica were far more earnest, dressed head-to-foot in black, building their songs into musical movements before they could barely play their instruments. In time, thrash would become something to do with skateboarders and classic Marvel comic books, something to do with smoking pot and taking speed, with hellacious beer drinking, tattoos, piercings and dirty white sneakers. But originally it had nothing to do with any of that. It was simply about the obsession of a failed teenage tennis protégé with the early-80s new wave of British metal, and the fact that Metallica was quintessentially American. Ten years earlier Lars would have been just as happy drumming in a Deep Purple-style band. Ten years later he'd have been in his element in a Soundgarden or an Alice In Chains. It just so happened that in 1982, when he formed his first – and last – band, the music they set out to play was still so unheard of, so unlikely, he ended up inventing a whole new genre on his own.

Not that anyone in LA – where Mötley Crüe and Ratt were about to become the biggest names on the scene – had cottoned on to any of that yet. 'Played like shit!' Lars would note in his gig diary after another half-empty show at Radio City in June. At the Troubadour in July they went on so late everybody had gone home. While a show at the Whisky in August, where they 'started at 9.15 with no one around' was commemorated with one word in block caps: 'SHIT!'

Then in September 1982 Brian Slagel put on a dedicated *Metal Massacre* show in San Francisco, at a small club called the Stone. Nearly 200 people showed up and Metallica were the hit of the night. As Lars observed in his diary, it was Metallica's 'first real great gig. Real bangers, real fans, real encores.' *No Life…* had been big on the underground scene in SF; they were amazed to hear the audience actually singing some of the lyrics to the songs. Afterwards, some even asked for autographs! "It was a trip," says McGovney, "we couldn't believe it."

The band booked a follow-up show in San Francisco, at the Old Waldorf, for October. It was only a Monday night – the deadest night of the week – but they played it like a Saturday. They didn't even bother with the safety net of the Diamond Head covers this time, just went out and blasted through the *No Life…* demo plus new number, *No Remorse*. Again, "the people went nuts," Ron recalled. Among them, Gary Holt, guitarist in local San Francisco band Exodus, who would open for Metallica at a November show at the Old Waldorf – later immortalised on the live *Metal Up Your Ass* demo. He recalls: "They were great but really sloppy. Lars could barely play his drums and they were really drunk on stage. But they had this raw punk energy."

The only fly in the ointment was Mustaine. Ron, in particular, found the grating, confrontational Mustaine hard to handle. Ron was the one who borrowed his father's 1969 Ford Ranger so they could get to San Francisco; Dave was the one that dealt pot, stole beer and did all the talking on stage, acting like he was the leader of the band, not the newbie. That also made Ron "pissed as shit". There had already been several flashpoints between the two. Like the day Mustaine turned up with "his two pitbull puppies". Ron was aghast to discover the dogs "jumping all over my car" – a reconfigured 1972 Pontiac LeMans. Ron recalls James yelling: "Hey Dave! Get those fuckin' dogs off of Ron's car!" Dave yelled back: "What the fuck did you say? Don't you talk that way about my dogs!" A nasty brawl ensued. Ron recalls seeing Dave "punch James right across the mouth, so I jumped on Dave's back and he flipped me over on to the coffee table". James got to his feet and told Dave: "You're out of the fuckin' band!" The next day he was back, though. James and Lars, cowed at the prospect of having to find another guitar player, let him back in. Sooner or later, however, something would have to give. The surprise was that it would be Ron, not Dave, who was first out the door.



Mustaine with Metallica at the Old Waldorf, November 29, 1982.

According to Slagel, McGovney's real difficulties revolved around his stunted abilities on bass. "Ron, as great a guy as he was, wasn't progressing as much as they were. So Lars came to me and said: 'Hey, we're thinking about looking for a bass player. Is there anybody you think that would be good for us?'" Brian immediately thought of Joey Vera, the Armored Saint bassist. But Joey was committed to his own band, who were about to sign to Chrysalis. Slagel came up with another idea. "I told Lars: 'Look, there's this band called Trauma…'"

Trauma, from San Francisco, had a track on *Metal Massacre II*. "The band was pretty good," Slagel recalls, "but the bass player was *phenomenal*." When Trauma played in LA a couple of weeks later, Lars and James went with Slagel to the show. "Lars came up to me after and said: '*That* is going to be our bass player!' And when Lars says those sorts of things he seems to make them happen."

Trauma's bass player, Cliff Burton, was "the strangest-looking dude" Lars had ever seen, taking to the stage in bell-bottom jeans, his hair hippy-long, a little bum-fluff tash tickling his nose. But he really knew how to play the bass, eschewing plectrums for finger-picking, taking from obvious influences like Black Sabbath's Geezer Butler, Rush's Geddy Lee and Thin Lizzy's Phil Lynott, but also less obvious teachers like American jazz players Stanley Clark and Jaco Pastorius. Ever practical, Lars "started going to work on him immediately".

It wasn't just his playing that meant Ron's days were now numbered. When he suggested they get a manager to help shoulder the financial burden, the others just laughed, told him to lighten up. "Dave, at the time, was an asshole, and Lars only cared about himself. But what really hurt me was James, because he was my friend and he was siding with them and I suddenly became the outcast in the band." Speaking now, he admits:

"I suppose they all became tired of me and when they saw Cliff perform I guess they decided that he was the one. I saw the writing on the wall when we played San Francisco in November 1982 and Cliff was there hanging out with the guys while I was loading equipment. When we got back to LA I quit. It was probably a relief to the rest of the guys as well."

That final show with Ron on bass had been at the Mabuhay Gardens, on November 30. A bitter-sweet occasion as it was also one of the best Ron had done with them. "We had to get liquored-up to get on stage so obviously we could have been better [but] people who saw us in San Francisco say the line-up with Dave and me in the band was fantastic." The set list that night also contained one of the first truly authentic new songs the band had

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Meanwhile, Cliff Burton was waiting in the wings...

"His father was famous. A rich, spoiled only child – that's why he's got his mouth."

– James Hetfield's first impressions of Lars Ulrich

worked up as a four-piece: *Whiplash* – punk-fast but with added bones stuck in the throat of the melody.

The drive back to LA though was hellish. "James, Lars and Dave were smashed out of their minds. They would constantly bang on the window for me to pull over so they could take a piss. All of a sudden I look over and see Lars lying in the middle of Interstate 5 on the double yellow line. I just said: 'Fuck this shit!'" When Ron discovered the next day that Dave had contemptuously poured beer on to the pickups of his Washburn bass, growling "I fuckin' hate Ron", it was the final straw. "I confronted the band and said 'Get the fuck out of my house!' I turned to James and said: 'I'm sorry, James, but you have to go too.' And they were gone within the next couple of days. They packed all their gear and moved to San Francisco." These days, he claims to be sanguine about the situation. But at the time he felt "double-crossed".

Burton laid down one condition to his joining Metallica: they would have to come to him. Cliff told them: "I like it up here. So they said: 'Yeah, well, we were thinking about doing that anyway.'" As Slagel says: "It was a very big deal." Not for Lars, "cos he was used to moving around anyway". But for James, "a guy that grew up in LA, and for that matter Mustaine, it really was day and night". As Lars would tell me, "Up in San Francisco… the Bay Area… we felt like we belonged there."

On their way they stopped off at Patrick Scott's house. "They came over to tell me goodbye," he says. It was a poignant moment for the school friends. Patrick knew he "probably wasn't going to see Lars again anytime soon. They said goodbye and hung out for a while and then they left." When they drove off, Patrick realised that "James had left his high school letterman jacket at my house. I called him and he said: 'Just throw it away; I don't really want it anymore.' But I still have it actually."

It was the week between Christmas and New Year 1982. The three had arranged to stay temporarily at the East Bay house of SF scene-maker Mark Whitaker. It was here, on December 28, where Metallica held their first all-night jam session with Cliff Burton. The four of them saw in 1983 by sitting round getting wasted on beer and pot and talking up their plans for the future. That was when Burton gave them his philosophy in typically Cliff-like shorthand. "When I started [playing music], I decided to devote my life to it and not get sidetracked by all the other bullshit life has to offer." Wise words the rest of Metallica would do their utmost to try and live by – even after Cliff had left them.

Enter Night: The Biography Of Metallica by Mick Wall is published by Orion, priced £20.

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The World is not enough

They've been going 35 years. Lemmy is 65. They're on their 20th album. And they've got a great movie and a killer album out. Is this *finally* **Motörhead**'s moment?

WORDS: **DOM LAWSON** & **DAVE LING** PORTRAITS: **MICK HUTSON**

Impervious to just about everything that rock'n'roll – or indeed life itself – has thrown at them over the past 35 years, Motörhead have long been the personification of heavy music's feral spirit; an immovable barrier between untamed celebration and the looming spectre of the mundane. But while it is has become commonplace for Lemmy Kilmister and his trusty sidemen to be praised for what they represent, the fact that the band have spent most of the 21st century re-establishing themselves as a major creative force in the rock world has been overlooked.

Fortunately, events occasionally conspire to shine a light on the bleeding obvious. And so as Motörhead celebrate their 35th anniversary and their leader's 65th birthday (on Christmas Eve 2010), they are also unveiling their 20th studio album, *The World Is Yours*. As ferocious and uncompromising as ever, the new record is simply one of the best they have recorded in a long time, and if there is any justice in the world – Lemmy would probably scoff at the very idea, but bear with us on this one – then Motörhead should enter their 36th year of active service with the wind of success in their sails.

"I try not to hold myself up to those things, because I've been disappointed so many times," Lemmy states, dismissing with his customary snarl the notion that expectations regarding Motörhead are at an all-time high. "I'm just grateful that we are still going, and that we have seemed to attain a level in America that will allow us to tour there on our own [as headliners], you know, as opposed to tagging along with other bands. And of course I'm really pleased that we have made a comeback in England, because for a while there things didn't too look good. I just want to get to some other places before I have to give it up. I'd like to get to China and Africa and India because we've never played any of those places."

Bolstered by the ongoing, loyal presence of guitarist Phil Campbell (a Motörhead veteran of 26 years) and drummer Mikkey Dee (still the band's 'new boy' with a mere 18 years under his belt), Lemmy has steered his band deftly through the last decade, overseeing an undeniable return to top form that has breathed new life into the Motörhead phenomenon. Ever since 2004's *Inferno* album, for recording the band have chosen to work with young American producer Cameron Webb, and it is this partnership that seems to have facilitated this latest artistic purple patch. *Kiss Of Death* (2006) and *Motörizer* (2008) were both stuffed to the gills with quintessential Motörhead moments.

The new *The World Is Yours* is, in the best possible way, more of the same. From the lurching aggression of opener *Born To Lose* (the flip-side, we can only assume, of *Live To Win* from 1980's *Ace Of Spades* album) to the priapic, snot-flecked shuffle of the closing *Bye Bye Bitch Bye Bye*, it's an album that crackles with intensity and belief, making the efforts of many much younger bands sound flat and flimsy by comparison. Clearly, Webb's gift has been to enable Motörhead to be themselves, only more so.

"We keep working with him because he's excellent, it's as simple as that," Lemmy says of Webb. "As producers go he's top of the scale. He's worked with a lot of bands that don't sound anything like us at all, so he's versatile. He can produce anything, and he's great with [music production software] ProTools, which saves so much time in the studio. In the past [if there was a mistake] you used to have to re-record the whole track. Now you don't, of course."

One great benefits of Motörhead's recent resurgence has been that, at last, they have – creatively, at least – demonstrably surpassed the achievements of the supposed glory days of the Lemmy/Eddie Clarke/Phil Taylor line-up that recorded seminal albums like *Overkill*, *Bomber* and *Ace Of Spades*. Considering that the usual running gag about the band is that there's no such thing as a bad Motörhead album because they're basically all the same, it's the depth and diversity of the recent material that has really taken the fans and the critics by surprise.

"You'd think all of the riffs have been used now. But that's not true, they haven't," Lemmy smiles. "Having Mikkey in the band is useful. If you write with the drummer, that makes things a lot broader. A riff on its own isn't much use to most drummers but Mikkey's so great, he's got real legs, that he brings a song to life. Those two [Phil and Mikkey] usually put down a riff, though occasionally I'll provide the riff. Sometimes we'll play around with it together until it's ready, but mostly it's down to those two. Then I come in and mess it up for them. They get all outraged and say: 'It's our song. How could you?!' The problem is that they don't think like a vocalist, you see."

"The chemistry between us has never been better," adds Mikkey Dee. "I can tell you that we used to be very hot-headed as a band, there were a lot of fights and shit. Each of us has strong opinions. But that's kinda faded away because we know one another so well. We know who's going to take care of what, and the whole element of competition is gone. Everyone knows their place, as well as what will push somebody's buttons. Sure, there's the odd fight here and there but it's not even close to the way things were ten or fifteen years ago."

Recorded primarily at Foo Fighters frontman Dave Grohl's Studio 606 in the northern suburbs of Los Angeles, *The World Is Yours* sounds like a million dollars, despite clearly having cost a fraction of that to record. And despite the friendliness of their surroundings and the fact that this was the fourth time Motörhead have recorded with producer Cameron Webb, not everything ran smoothly and went according to plan during the sessions for the new record. For guitarist Phil Campbell in particular, the album's birth was an emotionally draining process, due to the death of his father who had fallen ill as the new songs were being pieced together. ➔

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Lemmy: "rocks harder than he has ever done" these days, says Mikkey Dee.

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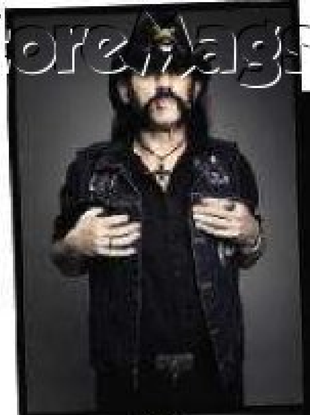

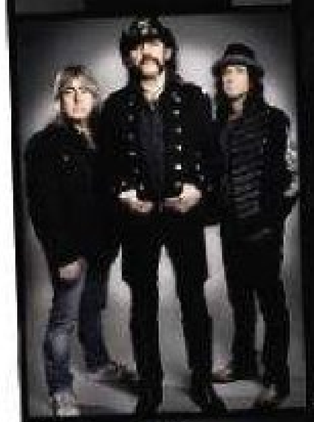

"More drums!" Lemmy, Mikkey Dee and Cameron Webb at the 'Head desk.

PEP BONET

"I was in LA as the songs were being written and then my dad got ill, so I came home," Campbell recalls. "All my guitar parts were done in Cardiff, the rest being done in LA. I'd go and see my dad in the morning, and found I was able to concentrate on the guitar playing afterwards. Not having Lem there to ask: 'What would you like me to do with this part?' I just had to use my intuition and my knowledge of the way the band works, but Lemmy was really happy with it all."

"We always do our parts separately, see," adds Lemmy. "We put the drums down and then we do the guitars, then the bass and finally the vocals. Sometimes when we record, Phil goes in during the afternoon and I'm there in the evening. So it was the same set of circumstances as usual, only with more distance thrown in. We sent things to one another via the internet, which really helped."

Somehow the notion that Motörhead are exchanging compressed music files via the internet doesn't quite fit with their status as guardians of the ancient spirit of rock'n'roll, but for all his refusal to play the usual music industry games – or even to own a computer, as recent Lemmythology would have it – Lemmy Kilmister is not daft enough to think that the oncoming tide of technological innovation is something that he or his band should ignore. By linking up with *Classic Rock* for our recent Motörhead special – whereby *The World Is Yours* was released early, packaged with our Motörhead-dedicated magazine in a custom-made 'fan pack' – the band have tacitly admitted that they need to move with the times. Even so, Lemmy remains unconvinced that surrendering to the profit-destroying, online free-for-all is the right way for anyone to be doing things.

"The thing that people have to understand about downloading your favourite band's music for free is that if you keep on doing it, in six months your favourite band will have to stop playing," he sighs. "They won't be able to afford to keep going. That, and fees for touring, are the only ways we get paid these days. And from the touring profits we also have to pay hire of the hall and PA, and a support band. So if you want to kill your favourite band, go ahead and illegally download their music."

"Over the last decade this band has gotten stronger, and the last five years have been incredible."
– Mikkey Dee

Of course, one suspects that Lemmy is not including his own band in this cautionary foretelling. Having survived for this long and with both their integrity and artistic faculties intact, Motörhead seem to be living proof that rock'n'roll will endure, whether people are helping themselves to illicit digital music files or not.

"Rock'n'roll will always have a future," Lemmy offers. "People will always want to hear it and musicians will want to play it. Even some scabby sixteen-year-old from a secondary modern somewhere, he'll want to get fucked just as much as everybody else. There's no instrument in the world that's better to pose with than an electric guitar. You cannot pose with a tuba. Neither can you pose with a mandolin, I'm sorry, it just isn't that masculine!"

As everyone will soon become aware of, when the recently filmed *Lemmy: 49% Motherfucker 51% Son Of A Bitch* rockumentary hits screens both big and small, one of rock's most dogged survivors has still got plenty of fight and fury in the tank, not to mention the support and admiration of generations of fellow musicians urging him to continue to defy the odds by keeping the Motör' running and taking the band ever further into the future. Certainly *The World Is Yours* is an indication that Motörhead still have plenty left to offer. And if Lemmy's bandmates are to be believed, a few more albums and even a few more anniversaries seem as inevitable as the howling ringing in the ears that follows being at a Motörhead gig.

"Lemmy can still kick up the dust like the rest of us," laughs Phil Campbell. "He'll never change. He's not afraid to say what he wants to say and fucking annoy people if that's what happens. Half of the time, he's been there and done it all. There's not much stuff he hasn't experienced, so there's not much left to excite him. But he hasn't lost his edge."

"In the year 2000 I'd have been a lot more worried about Lemmy's future than I am today," Mikkey Dee says thoughtfully. "As quite a few people will know, Lem has been quite ill [he has been diagnosed as diabetic], but he's doing fantastic now. Over the last decade this band has only gotten stronger, and these last five years have been incredible. Lemmy has become stronger, too. The guy goes up there and rocks harder than he has ever done."

The World Is Yours is available as part of Classic Rock Presents Motörhead, from myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/music

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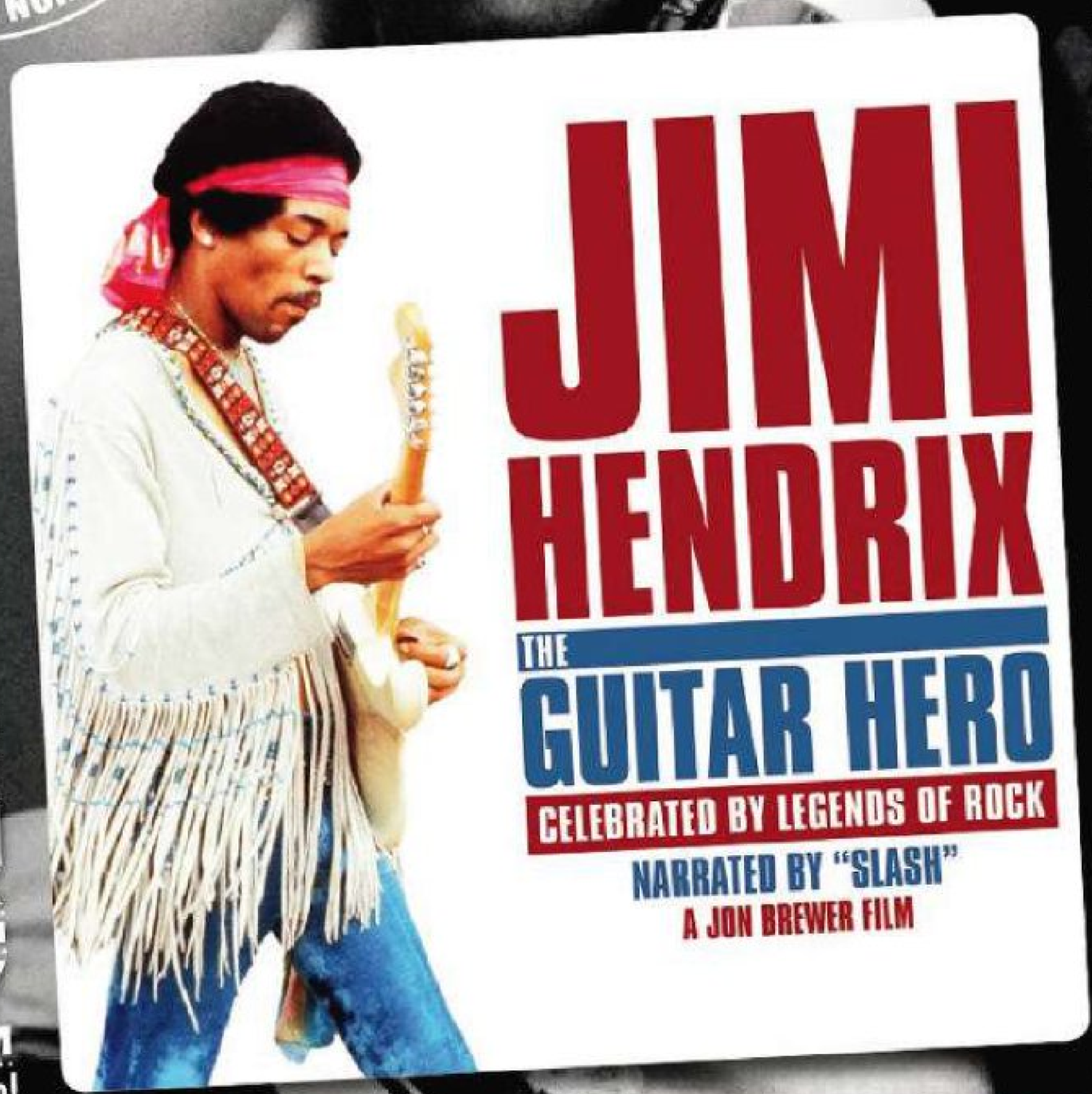

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NO SPEED LIMIT

From their earliest incarnations as "dumb-ass bands seeing what we could do", **Drive-By Truckers** have shifted up through the gears, put a modern spin on southern rock and evolved into something very special.

Words: **Rob Hughes**

Used To Be A Cop is one of several unsettling songs on *Go-Go Boots*, the upcoming album by prolific Georgia-based rockers Drive-By Truckers. It tells the tale of a corrupt lawman for whom there are no happy endings. His wife leaves him, the force takes his badge and what friends he once had are long gone.

It's a brilliant piece of narrative hewn from classic southern tradition by the Truckers' chief songwriter, Patterson Hood. "That's actually a true story, and that guy wasn't redeemed," says Hood, sucking on a beer in a Manchester bar on a nippy winter's afternoon. "He was a piece of shit when that story takes place and he's still a piece of shit. He's a scary guy. It's real nerve-racking putting songs on records about real people in my home town who live close to people I know. We've done that a lot with the Truckers. And it's weird going home sometimes, because I'll run into a character from one of our songs."

Full of what Hood calls "spooky, dark, R&B-type songs", *Go-Go Boots* isn't exactly your typical Drive-By Truckers record. Since they were founded by Hood and long-time buddy Mike Cooley in 1996, the six-piece have forged a reputation as guitar monsters, peppering their attack with countrified accents and swamp rock. The music alone is impressive enough, but what really sets them apart are the lyrics. Cooley and Hood, both natives of The Shoals region of Northern Alabama, offer an alternative to the lazy – yet still surprisingly common – notion of the American south as a seat of redneck bigotry. Theirs is instead a rich, complex world full of cultural contradictions; vivid story songs ripped from folklore, history and first-hand experience. A place where the good, the bad and the badder co-exist in constant flux. Across 11 albums they've pretty much redefined the parameters of southern rock.

Their breakthrough record was 2001's *Southern Rock Opera*, a sprawling concept album of sorts in which Hood's fascination with the region's 70s standard bearers – specifically Lynyrd Skynyrd – was filtered through a wider cultural sweep.

"In its own way that album is as autobiographical as it could be," he explains. "Down in Alabama, if you grow up with any kind of liberal or progressive upbringing you grow up embarrassed about a lot of what we're known for. I remember Dad being really embarrassed about [segregationist Alabama governor] George Wallace on the TV all the time. But people think that's all who we are."

Hood's father happens to be David Hood, bassist and founder of the legendary Muscle Shoals Rhythm Section. In the 60s and 70s he was part of the studio band that backed Wilson Pickett, Aretha Franklin and The Staple Singers. "I was raised in a home where the worst profanity I could possibly have used was a racial one. My Dad's never whipped me, but he probably would have done over that. He took a lot of pride in the fact that we were the opposition to the racial hatred that was going on around us in the south. Most of the townspeople had no idea that there were black and white musicians playing together in Muscle Shoals. It wasn't in the press and it wasn't talked about. And I learned real early on not to tell people at school about it, because the kids just wouldn't have understood. Their Dads all worked blue-collar jobs and it wouldn't have been wise for me to start talking about what my Dad did for a living."

From their earliest incarnations as Adam's House Cat and then Horsepussy – "dumb-ass bands seeing what we could do" – DBT have evolved into something very special. Their current line-up of guitarists Hood and Cooley, Shonna Tucker (bass), John Neff (guitar; pedal steel), Jay Gonzalez (keyboards) and Brad Morgan (drums) is their most powerful yet. It's also their most expansive, boasting three killer songwriters in Hood, Cooley and Tucker, alongside three distinct vocalists. Yet they very nearly didn't make it this far. The year 2007 found the band in crisis, with relations between guitarist/songwriter Jason Isbell – who'd joined six years earlier – at snapping point. It didn't help that relations between Isbell and then-wife Tucker were similarly strained.

"It was a very bad time for the band," admits Hood. "The whole Jason and Shonna thing was going wrong and so was the whole Jason and us thing. We'd outgrown each other and were pushing in different directions. When it was working it was good, but when it wasn't it was shit."

It was a split that had been looming for quite some time and one that brought about a period of deep soul-searching for Hood: "We came very close to quitting for good. I spent about two years thinking that this might all be over. And it was pretty terrifying because by that time I was in my 40s and this was the only thing I'd ever done in my life that I'd had any success at. I lived in complete poverty all through my 20s, then by the time I got into my 30s, around the second divorce, you start asking questions when you look in the mirror about what you're doing. It's time to have this whole thing validated on some level. Then the Truckers thing took off and I wasn't ready for it to be over. I'd put all I had into this band."

Isbell left to form his own group, The 400 Unit. His departure also coincided with Tucker's emergence as a songwriter in her own right. Her plaintive contributions to 2008's *Brighter Than Creation's Dark* provided an extra dimension.

And so to *Go-Go Boots*. Hood and Cooley may have discovered classic rock and punk as teenagers, but the new record brings them both full circle to the music they were raised on. "All of us grew up loving that Muscle Shoals music," says Hood. "I'd come home from school and go through my dad's records when I was supposed to be doing my homework. But when punk rock happened, he didn't understand why I listened to that stuff. But he gets it now. And I'm now in a band that he can relate to. He never encouraged me to be a musician; he wanted me to be a pharmacist. And I actually worked in a pharmacy for a few years. He thought I was gonna fall in love with it and make it my career, but there was never anything else I wanted to do but be in a band and play music."

Go-Go Boots might be more R&B, but it's hardly standard stuff. Those unsettling narratives and murder ballads are perhaps more potent than ever, a further chill factor provided by the fact that they're all mostly true. *Ray's Automatic Weapon*, for instance, was inspired by a buddy of Hood's who "told me a story about something that had happened to a friend of his, involving a couple of Vietnam vets and a gun. It was kinda creepy". Both the title track and *The Fireplace Poker* tell the tale of

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ON THE CD

"All of us grew up loving that Muscle Shoals music. I'd come home from school and go through my dad's records when I was supposed to be doing my homework."
– Patterson Hood

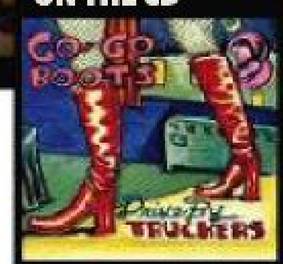
Nice carpet, shame about the wallpaper: DBT keep on truckin'.

a grisly murder and an unfaithful priest in Hood's hometown, but from different perspectives.

"Anytime you have a social structure based around religion or a certain kind of closed-mindedness, you're asking for trouble," he reasons. "Nothing builds up pressure like not having a release for it. Alcoholics in a dry town, like the one I grew up in, behave in a different way to alcoholics who live where you can buy spirits by the bottle. It's binge drinking. And it makes sense that the sexual aspect should be that way too. When everything's pent up, nothing makes you hornier than not being allowed to fuck. So that preacher in *Go-Go Boots* and *The Fireplace Poker* wasn't allowed to get divorced; he had to find another way of dealing with his problem. It's that aspect that makes me want to write about it. These are recurring themes in our catalogue. They executed one of the guys involved in the murder this past summer. The other one's on Death Row in Alabama."

Does this candid appropriation of the truth ever land the Truckers in trouble back home? "We actually played at home a couple of years ago and sold out both nights. People were all pretty nice, but at the same time I know people have said things to my Mom when she's in church. We come down pretty hard on certain things and it's a pretty conservative town. That's another recurring theme of ours and there are songs on *Go-Go Boots* that are set in that same church."

ON THE CD



Mercy Buckets is taken from Drive-By Truckers' forthcoming album *Go-Go Boots*. Available on February 14 through Play It Again Sam.

There are also tender, warts-an'-all meditations on Hood's own family, such as the heartfelt *The Thanksgiving Filter*: "The first time I played it for my wife, she bawled her eyes out. It was a little close to home and I've gotta live at home. Some songs are almost too painful to write, but it's my job.

"I don't want to hurt people with what I do, but sometimes it's gonna happen. I certainly don't want to prevent myself from writing it, because if I don't it's just rolling around in my head. That's my outlet for all that shit. And telling stories is a huge part of what I do."

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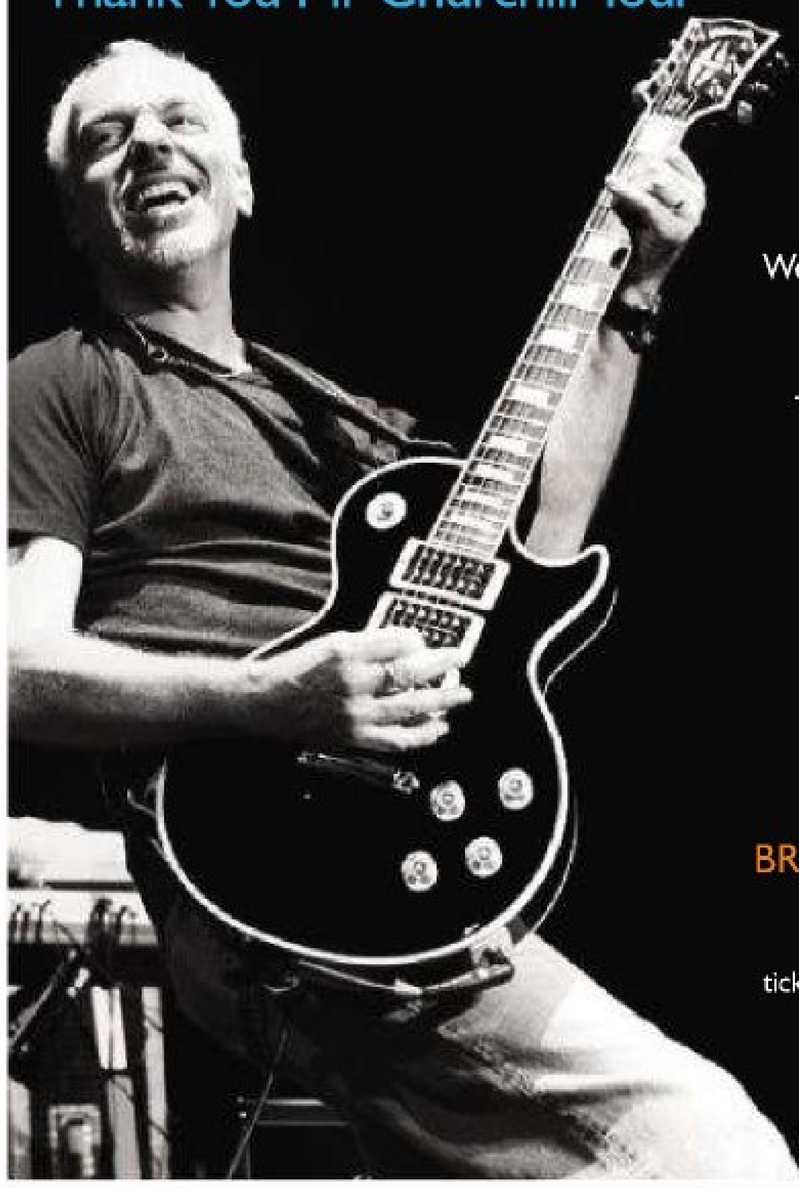

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MCR look nervous in anticipation of the *CR* review.

My Chemical Romance

Danger Days: The True Lives Of The Fabulous Killjoys *REPRISE*

Emo-goth world beaters bite nails, mature.

There's good reason to consider My Chemical Romance the most suspicious band in modern rock. They display all the outward signs of the preening pop puppets – the impeccable styling, the corporate sheen, the teen-friendly pop-chant choruses. They shift shape freely as their demographic ages with them: from emo anti-heroes in 2004 (*Three Cheers For Sweet Revenge*) to quasi-goth monochrome miserablists in 2006 (*The Black Parade*) to the post-apocalyptic skater punks we find striking heroic poses in deserts in the artwork of this fourth studio album. Gerard Way sings about taking drugs and swears like Frankie Boyle on a song entitled – with tongue barely touching cheek – *Na Na Na (Na Na Na Na Na Na Na Na Na)*. On paper, MCR are tantamount to a 'dangerous' McFly.

But then, on paper, The Beatles were pop puppets for wearing Epstein's suits in 1962. On paper, Bowie was a chart-chasing chancer for his futuro-sexual shape shifting throughout the glam years. And on record MCR are, in fact, a 2.0 update of the core rock tenets we hold dear. Their pop metal periods revive the outré gloss of prime period Jovi while, alongside recent double sets from Green Day, their two concept records – the cancer-stricken Patient that inhabited *The Black Parade* and this album's framework of radio DJ Dr Death Defying broadcasting to a 2019 rebel gang *The Fabulous Killjoys* roaming a dstopian world where art is illegal, a conceit almost comically similar to the plot of *We Will Rock You* – can lay claim to reinventing the 70s rock opera for the cyberspace generation. In essence, MCR are hi-def traditionalists.

And *Danger Days* sees them impressively expand their palate. On initial listens the record seems blown-out like a rusted speaker, as if producer Rob Cavallo has tried to counteract the dour pacing of *The Black Parade* by fuzzing up Ray Toro's guitar into a virtual buzz-saw. But once the robotic Ramones sizzle clears, new horizons open up: the glam disco of *Planetary (GO!)*, the Motor City punk of *Party Poison* and the shameless manband AOR of *Bulletproof Heart* and *Sing*. It only takes a dazed spin through Pendulum-tinged anthem *The Only Hope For Me Is You* or the ballad *S/C/A/R/E/C/R/O/W* to realise that MCR are taking commercial rock deep off-road. "Slaughtermatic sounds," as DJ Death Defying accurately describes it, "louder than God's revolver and twice as shiny."

Mark Beaumont

VOid

Zero *RAVEN BLACK MUSIC*

New age melodic heroes.

Let's get the negative out of the way first. The production is just a touch on the shabby side. The Welsh band deserve something far more expansive – and probably expensive – to do justice to these songs. Someone, say, like Jeff Lynne?

But this apart, *Zero* is an impressive, irrepressible second album from VOid. They've a lineage taking in Def Leppard, FM and Skin, but also a modern bite. Which means it'll appeal to old school AOR fans and also those enamoured of Bullet For My Valentine.

Best songs here are the anthemic title song, the rousing yet mid-paced *California's Burning* and power ballad *Wake Me*. But the album flows so well, it's hard to find anything that dips below an acceptable standard.

Back in the mid-1980s VOid would have stood out as being the real deal. Now, they're capable of taking advantage of the revival of the melodic rock genre.

Malcolm Dome

Ministry & Co-conspirators

Undercover *FASTWORLD*

Greatest hits and covers mangled and milked for all they're worth.

Like 2008's *Cover Up* – and what happened to that being Ministry's final album? – this is a collection of industrial classics retooled by Al Jourgensen and associates. Some are a hoot, like their slaying of *Iron Man, Paranoid* and *Purple Haze*. Some are unnecessary like *Sharp Dressed Man* and *Paint It Black* (not as good as the other Stones cover *Under My Thumb* on *Cover Up*). And by rerecording *Jesus Built My Hotrod, Stigmata* and *NOW*, Al gets to snatch back the copyright from the Man. It's like a return to the golden age of the early 90s, when some Ministry-related product was released every 10 minutes, ranging from bad taste covers to works of heart mulching genius. You know what you're getting with Ministry: proper fucking machine noise disco. Long may comrade Jourgensen flog this dead horse.

Tommy Udo

Lyraka

Lyraka *YESTERROCK*

Codpiece not included.

Written as a soundtrack to a yet to be released animated movie about Neires a 'metalhead' who finds an 'enchanted guitar' and goes in search of a mermaid (King Arthur meets *Splash*?) Lyraka is the brainchild of Blackmore obsessed guitarist Andy Di Gelsomnia and his BBW body building 'gothic mermaid' model muse Jasmine Lyraka. Amusingly dubbed as a – wait for it music lovers – Wagnerian Opera Metal, the whole concept screams Box Office disaster but somehow it works. Gelsomnia, a more than competent guitarist and songwriter has managed to pull in an impressive cast of performers including Graham Bonnet who is on fiery form, and Benedictum's frighteningly gravel-throated Veronica Freeman. At its best this sounds like a tasty hybrid of Dio circa Rainbow, Iron Maiden, and early Metallica with a touch of Manowar testosterone rock. This is a labour of love by a couple that obviously spend far too much time reading cheap fantasy novels and playing World of Warcraft. Can't wait for part two.

Peter Makowski

Tank

War Machine *METAL MIND*

Imagine Motörhead... without Lemmy.

On paper at least things didn't bode well for Tank's return from an eight-year layoff. With gravel-voiced bassist Algy Ward seemingly retired, the UK band's current line-up includes no original members. The introductions of former Rainbow/Yngwie mouthpiece Doogie White, with ex-Atom Seed/Bruce Dickinson bassist Chris Dale taking up the slack, both appeared ill-fitting appointments. Certainly, the notion of White roaring the band's infamous battle cry of *"Wakey wakey!"* seems almost laughable.

And yet, *War Machine* is a powerful, convincing, classic-sounding heavy metal record. Stripped of the punkoid hooligan rawness that was such a foundation of Tank's earliest releases, White's heroic and

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deeply melodic vocals are the epicentre of the album's appeal, sounding their most Dio-esque on *Feast Of The Devil*. The weighty yet super-precise guitar lines of Cliff Evans and Mick Tucker, members of Tank since the mid-80s, represent another reason to investigate this surprisingly fine comeback disc.

Dave Ling

Rocket City Riot

Pop Killer TWENTY STONE BLATT

Continuing the good work of the punk masters.

With a cover of the Ramones' *Now I Wanna Be A Good Boy* and the Dead Boys' *What Love Is* included, RCR are trying to tell us something. And to be honest it's nothing that isn't really quite obvious from pretty much all the other tunes – RCR are all about shit-kicking punk'n'roll, nothing too subtle, just guitars turned way up loud and drumming intended to rattle your molars clean outta your mouth.

That said, they are damned good at what they do. Despite the primal template, the hookability factor is pretty high with plenty of memorable choruses flying at you like so much white-hot sonic shrapnel. Good fun and an A for attitude.

Essi Berelian

Ross The Boss

Hailstorm AFM RECORDS

Ex-Manowar guitarist, still a king of metal!

There are few rock'n'roll tales as strange as that of Tim 'Ripper' Owens, the kid who fulfilled his ultimate fantasy when he graduated from singer in a Judas Priest tribute band to singer in Judas Priest.

But in 2008, Ross 'The Boss' Funicello, a founding member of Manowar, did something even more bizarre. He got a Manowar tribute band to join him!

Recruiting three German musicians who'd been moonlighting as covers act Men Of War (vocalist Patrick Fuchs, bassist Carsten Kettering and drummer Matthias Mayer), Funicello created what is essentially a second Manowar. With characteristic modesty, he named the project Ross The Boss and the debut album New Metal Leader.

Similarly, this second album bears a sticker proclaiming it 'a masterpiece of true heavy metal'. And while it's no match for Manowar's early classics – certainly, Fuchs is no Eric Adams – *Hailstorm* has moments of pure gonzoid genius.

Burn Alive has a headbanging riff to rival Judas Priest's *Living After Midnight*, *Great Gods Glorious* is a galloping instrumental reminiscent of peak-era MSG, and *Empire's Anthem* is a successor to Manowar's *Battle Hymns*.

Having put the 'woargh!' in Manowar, Ross is still The Boss.

Paul Elliott

The Bresslaws

Find My Way Home

TWENTY STONE BLATT

Scooter-riding pub rock quintet.

Perhaps best known for having a real-life vicar as their lead singer, The Bresslaws are not your typical 21st century mod band. Based in the Medway – that area of the north Kent coast across the Thames Estuary from the bright lights and mud of Canvey Island – they deliver high-energy pub-rock that stands comparison with Canvey's most famous sons, Dr Feelgood.

The chief difference, though, is The Bresslaws' fifth member organist Rene Petrovic. The solos on *Facing My Confusion* and *The Truth Of It* lend the tracks an impressive Small Faces feel.

Elsewhere, a touch of psychedelia in *Hazy Days* offers a change of pace, and there are worthy covers of *(I'm Not Your) Stepping Stone* – more Johnny Thunders than The Monkees – and also their local hero Billy Childish's *Lie Detector*. It won't change the world, but it'll make some Saturday-night-ins a lot more lively.

Neil Jeffries

Citizen Charlie

Up Yours ROCKSFCTOR

Norse one my son: gritty second album from Norwegian rockers.

Citizen Charlie's self-financed 2008 debut was a fireball of retro-rock intent, singer Charlie Forseberg's glass-paper rasp drawing comparisons to Courtney Love. As the title suggests, Forseberg seems unlikely to be deterred from her self-proclaimed mission to "match the achievements of Led Zeppelin and AC/DC or die trying" and the spiky riff-rock of the title track and *Watch You Die* add a death metal nihilism to the band's full-blooded Runaways riffs. *'I'm lean, still mean,'* she scowls on the Glitter Band stomp of *Don't Tell Me*, and her brattish persona seeps through second of the eleven tracks.It's when Forseberg moves into rock ballad territory on *Out Of This World*, however, that you get a glimpse of where her future might lie; less a Scandanivian Joan Jett, more a nordic Pat Benatar.

Paul Moody

Texas Hippie Coalition

Rollin CARVED

Southern discomfort. Most definitely from the south.

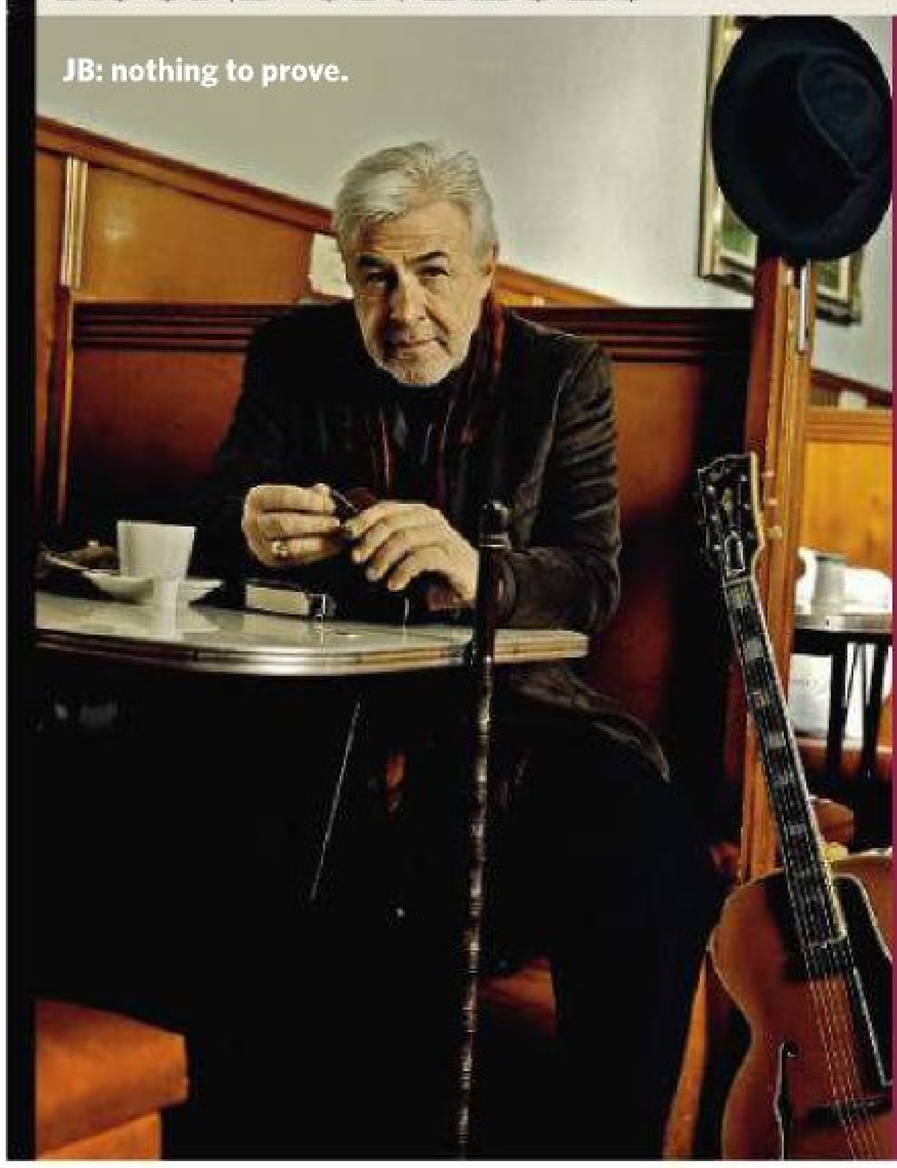
Texas Hippie Coalition couldn't sound more like they're from America's southern states if they marinated themselves in barbecue sauce, dressed up as over-sized grits, ran over Boss Hog in the General Lee and held a rally for the National Rifle Association. From the minute opener *Intervention* comes flying out of the traps, all sozzled Pantera beats and throaty vocals from frontman Big Daddy Ritch – a man who sounds like he'd leap into the middle of a wrestling match just for the honour of ripping a man's head from his shoulders – it's clear that this is testosterone-drenched man-rock that has nothing approaching a feminine side. Tender ballads are, it's safe to say, few and far between.

Everything you need to know about this band is evident in the title track, a swaggering slab of rock dedicated to weed-smoking, womanising, hard drinking life on the edges of society, almost certainly perched atop a bloody massive motorbike. And it's their unreconstructed caveman stance that makes their charm, their filthy metal offering vicarious thrills to the rest of us. If you're biding time until Helmet or Clutch come back with something new, *Rollin* may not alleviate your cravings, but it will at least take your mind off them for a little while.

Emma Johnston

ROUND-UP: BLUES

By Henry Yates

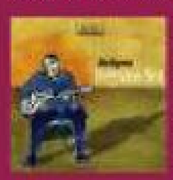


JB: nothing to prove.

Jim Byrnes

Everywhere West

Black Hen Music



There has been a worrying trend in the blues column of late. Too many knife-edge, cheekbones on unblemished faces (stand up, Oli Brown). Too many pert twenty-something bodies and tumbling blonde hair (that's you, Joanne Shaw Taylor). But just when you thought the warhorses were being run out of their own genre – and before we're burned by the same 'age row' as *Strictly Come Dancing* – here comes 62-year-old Jim Byrnes with an album that represents an admonitory rap of the knuckles to the foetuses. And his latest long player *Everywhere West* is patently the work of an elder statesman with the mortgage paid off and nothing to prove, and while in lesser hands that might spell creative torpor, the Missouri veteran (and an occasional actor, it transpires) has enormous fun with country-tinged fare like *No Mail Blues*, tweaks the nose of Broadway with *From Four Until Late*, and gives a musical shoulder-massage with *Walk On*. No denying it: this old dog still knows some new tricks.

Stevie Cochran

The Next Stage

Blues Boulevard

A curious choice of title, given that for Stevie Cochran, evolution is apparently something for monkeys, not musicians. The bandleader is ploughing the same furrow as ever, touting power-blues that's so saloon-bar-friendly you can practically taste the Bud and peanuts. But his touch and phrasing are so sweet it's a pleasure just to hear him tread water.

Jay Jesse Johnson

Play That Damn Guitar

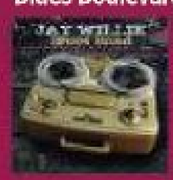
Grooveyard

When you christen an album *Play That Damn Guitar*, there is a certain pressure to prove that you're not a sausage-fingered Fender-fumbler. Indiana gunslinger Johnson passes that test – he's an gloriously fluid axeman, just a few bpm shy of being termed a 'shredder' – and for a time, the fretboard pyrotechnics cover the fact that voice and songs are merely solid.

Jay Willie Blues Band

The Reel Deal

Blues Boulevard

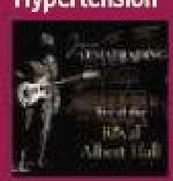


Measuring Jay Willie by his recorded output feels unfair: this is plainly a band whose raison d'être is the road, and who are less likely to push the envelope in the studio than a striking postman. Watertight grooves, neat-and-tidy riffs, serviceable vocals but it's unlikely you'll find much to blow your mind.

Joan Armatrading

Live At The Royal Albert Hall

Hypertension



Don't expect any KISS-style fluffing of Ms Armatrading's 2010 set at the Albert: this is no more or less than a tape recorder stuck on Row A, capturing every string squeak and floorboard creek. She still has the pipes to do the business – although two CDs and one DVD is perhaps an awful lot of Joan for casual fans.

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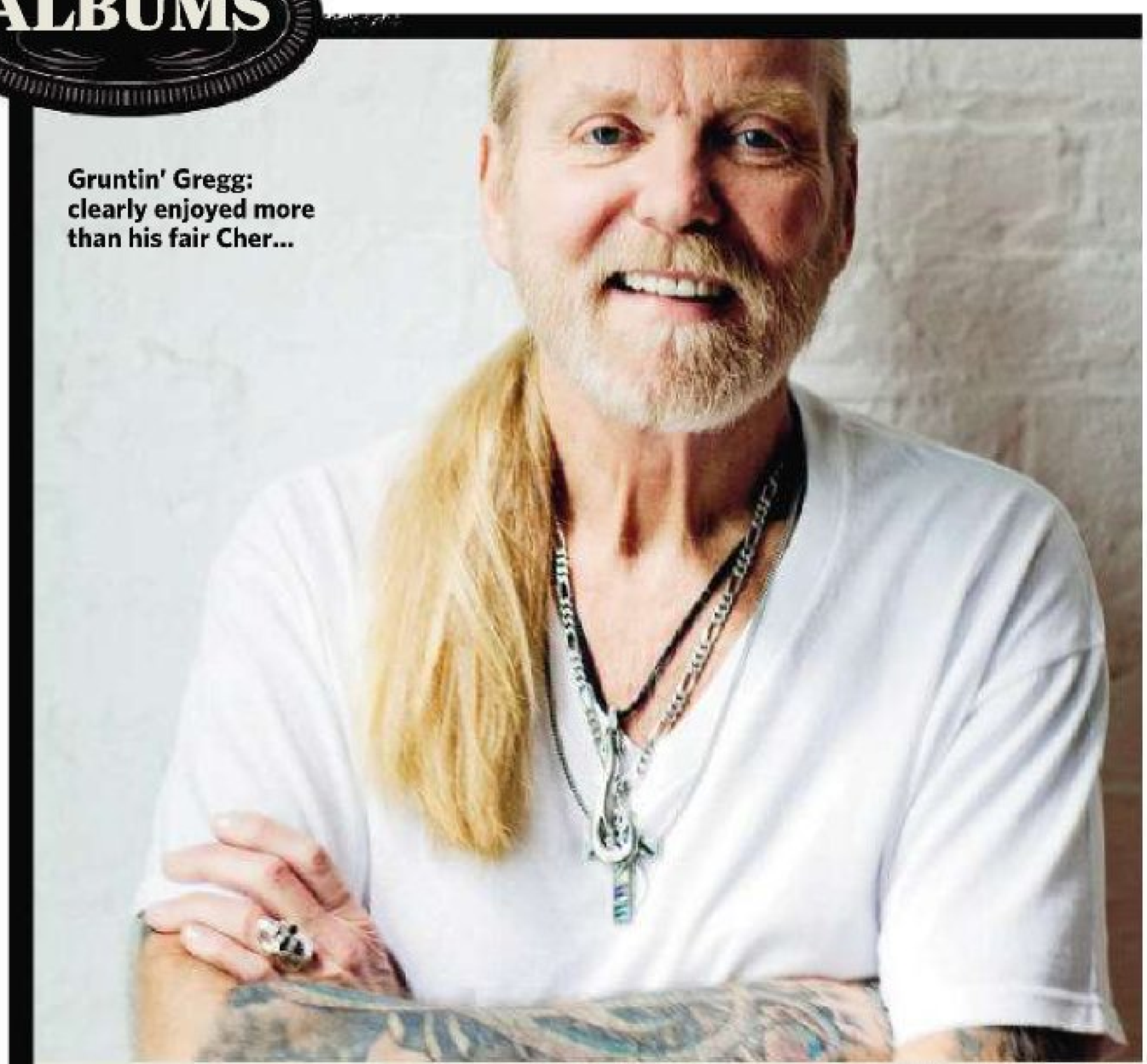


Gruntin' Gregg: clearly enjoyed more than his fair Cher...

Gregg Allman

Low Country Blues ROUNDER/DECCA

T Bone Burnett works his magic on the first album in 14 years from southern-rock royalty.

Lord knows it's a crowded field, but few rock stars deserve the epithet Grizzled Old Survivor more than Gregg Allman. You name it, he's probaby done it. This is a man who, lest we forget, once hoovered up drugs like he did wives (six marriages to date, including a high-profile one to Cher), became seriously addicted to heroin, and knocked back the booze in a manner that would make Georgie Best look like a member of the Temperance Society. It's a lifestyle that's inevitably caught up with him of late, having been diagnosed with chronic hepatitis C a few years back. Indeed *Low Country Blues* – Allman's first sol.o record since 1997's *Searching For Simplicity* – almost became a casualty itself when it was delayed due to the small matter of him requiring a liver transplant in June 2010. Mercifully, both Allman and album emerged intact.

A fine piece of work it is too, as it turns out. The record was produced by T Bone Burnett – go-to guy for all things rootsy-tootin' these days, it seems, from Plant & Krauss to Elton & Leon – and is expertly fleshed out by Dr. John on piano, ace guitarist Doyle Bramhall II and a crack rhythm section of Dennis Crouch and Jay Bellerose. Also worthy of mention is a great brass section, led by veteran trumpeter Darrell Leonard, who used to play alongside Allman's late brother Duane at the dawn of the 70s.

In the modern tradition of reinterpreting some old standards and ferreting out some lesser-known ones, it's an album that earns its corn through deft ensemble playing and Allman's wonderfully intuitive vocals. It's easy to forget – 40 years have gone by since the Allman Brothers' stupefying live album *At Fillmore East*, a record that pretty much invented what we understand to be 'southern rock' – just what a terrific singer he is. Duane and fellow guitarist Dicky Betts may have been their jam-heavy focal point, but it was Gregg who gave the band its swampy southern voice and humid country accents. It's something he brings to bear here on a telling version of Skip James's *Devil Got My Woman*, which is all the more powerful for its sensitive restraint. And it takes both skill and instinct to transform Muddy Waters's *I Can't Be Satisfied* from an out-and-out blues song into a light-but-loose soul-stirrer. Yes, a tiny handful of these tunes sound like perfunctory 12-bar retreads, but for the most part this album is a hugely enjoyable and invigorating return.

Rob Hughes

Amplifier

The Octopus AMPLIFIERTHEBAND.COM

Set the controls...

With something of a chequered history with record labels, it was starting to look like one of the UK's best-kept secrets in matters of expansive rock brilliance were destined to remain a secret. However, 2011 may bring something of a redress for Amplifier.

The Octopus might be only their third album in 10 years but it it does a good job of making up for lost time.

If 2004's self-titled debut was an unholy three-way pile-up between Soundgarden's *Superunknown*, The Verve's *A Storm In Heaven* and Radiohead's *Kid A*, then this two-disc monolith is a multi-faceted journey into untold music dimensions.

The infectious pop sensibility has been sidelined for something altogether more intense and overpowering – try the galvanised anthemry of *The Wave*, or the prog-olific might of *Minion's Song*. The grating riff weight is present as ever – and still sounds like more than the sum of the three people producing it – but this time it's welded to a cosmic quagmire of sonic maximalism.

That they drop in some sci-fi occultism (*Trading Dark Matter On The Stock Exchange*), fire a payload into the heart of the Sun (*Interstellar*) and fall into a hallucinogenic haze (*Bloodtest*) along the way should make this album the first essential purchase of the year.

Catherine Yates

Old 97's

The Grand Theatre NEW WEST

Solid sawdust floor-fillers, with a little light sacrilege.

Dylan purists, look away now. On their eighth album kick-ass Dallas country rockers Old 97's have 're-imagined' Dylan's epic *Desolation Row* as a sprightly saloon canter, giving it fresh lyrics and a new title, *Champaign, Illinois*. Only the original's melody remains the same and, let's be honest, it wasn't that original to start with.

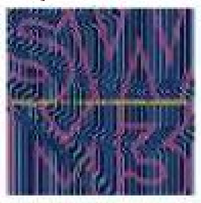
Old 97's have always dealt in the reassuringly familiar, though, taking the redneck rush of, say, Jason & The Scorchers, and giving it a Clash-like stomp. It's best heard here on the opening title track (shades of *London Calling*) and *Every Night Is Friday Night (Without You)*, although there's a purer, more traditional chick-a-boom country vibe to Rhett Miller's *Let The Whiskey Take The Reins* and Murray Hammond's *You Were Born To Be In Battle*, while the latter's *You Smoke Too Much* makes a surprising detour from the norm by daring to dabble in mid-tempo Motownisms.

Terry Staunton

Steve Wynn & The Miracle 3

Northern Agression BLUE ROSE

Three decades on, Dream Syndicate veteran still in explosive form.



On his first record with The Miracle 3 in five years, Wynn fine-tunes many of the characteristics that have marked his prolific career, while maintaining the combustibility of the band's previous output.

Opener *Resolution*, coming in on a wave of Stooges menace, summons up a (magic) mushroom cloud of feedback squall, detuned guitars and warring drums before veering off into the stratosphere to leave a glorious trail of psych-rock destruction in its wake. With guitarist Jason Victor on blistering form throughout, elemental humdingers such as *Cloud Splitter* maintain the hallucinatory glow.

Wynn's range of character is put to good use on the unnerving *Consider The Source*. *The Death Of Donny B* could be cold-hearted reportage straight from the Lou Reed Handbook but it's actually a cover from a 60s anti-drug propaganda film.

All the better for being played 'straight', of course.

Gavin Martin

The New Czars

Doomsday Revolution SAMSON

It rocks and it's big, but after a while it's too clever.

The New Czars are a trio comprising guitarist Greg Hampton (Alice Cooper's co-writer/producer on *Along Came A Spider*), drummer David 'Chilli' Moreno and bassist Paul Ill.

On this album Hampton wears his heart on his sleeve and pays homage to some of his musical heroes. He's a big fan of Todd Rundgren, clearly, and this shows on the Utopia-like title track and *So Sure*, which has piano in the background. Shades

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of Tommy Bolin, too (Hampton is putting together a Bolin tribute album), on *Had 2 Do It*, *Time Stops* and *Only Dreaming*. But for the most part this record plays like a heavier version of latter-day King Crimson (KC guitarist Adrian Belew guests on nine of its 16 tracks), meaning it's not short of squeaky solos or avant-garde tendencies.

All very clever... but Hampton's voice isn't strong enough to carry so much in-your-face musicianship, which becomes more showy than entertaining long before the full 67 minutes elapse.

Neil Jeffries

Bloodlights

Simple Pleasures SILVERSONIC

Those clever Scandinavians do it again.

With a pedigree that ought to give a few clues as to what to expect – chief songwriter Captain Poon was a member of Gluecifer until 2005 – these Norwegians take absolutely no prisoners with *Simple Pleasures*. There is an intensity and passion on show that can come only from years on the road and genuinely loving what you're doing.

From the aptly named opener *Blasted* to pounding closer *Wipe It Off*, Poon and his buddies slash-and-burn their way through the classic rock songbook, borrowing liberally from the esteemed likes of Judas Priest, AC/DC and Motörhead, among others – in the case of *Off The Track* you half expect Lemmy to pop up on vocals. As with Gluecifer, the influences are turbo-charged with a healthy dose of punk rocket fuel, providing an altogether perfect way to blast away the winter blues.

Essi Berelian

Bleu

Four JOJINX

Power-pop investment.

William McCauley III probably earns a tidy living writing songs for movies, but he can't stop scratching the itch that is his alter ego, Bleu, despite rough treatment from a major label that almost buried his power-pop credentials.This time he's raised $40,000 from Bleu fans to make the record himself.

The infectious opener *Singin' In Tongues* is a guaranteed festival crowd pleaser, while the quirky, up-close-and-personal *I'm In Love With My Lover* is a potentially huge hit (a la Extreme's *More Than Words*) that could bring Bleu festival status.

The record may lack cohesion but every track is a perfectly formed vignette. *B.O.S.T.O.N.* is a home-town homage that should earn a permanent place on local-radio playlists, *How Blue* is a sumptuous, string-laden ballad, and the epic *You Catch More Flies With Honey Than Vinegar* is a slimmed-down, six-minute epic.

The band's investors will enjoy it.

Hugh Fielder

Magnum

The Visitation SPV/STEAMHAMMER

What a let-down.

Anyone who got a copy of the recent Magnum career-spanning anthology *The Gathering* will know that this band have recorded for some quite brilliant songs and albums over the years. Unfortunately *The Visitation* isn't among them.

While there's nothing really dreadful here, there's also nothing that really stands out. The tracks have the superficial hallmarks of Magnum's illustrious past – decent tunes, interesting lyrics – but the performances are so lacklustre. Every one starts promisingly but doesn't hold the attention for long. It's as if the band are going through the motions, and aren't quite sure why they're in the studio. The only track that makes you want to stick it out is *Eyes Like Fire*, when at least the band sound like they mean it on a semi-ballad that soars.

Singer Bob Catley sounds as if he's straining at times, and Tony Clarkin's guitar parts just meander. And for a man who is capable of stunning solos and riffs that's quite sad.

In all honesty, Magnum haven't made a strong studio album since they reunited eight years ago. Fans should stick to the glories on *The Gathering* and avoid disappointment.

Malcolm Dome

Wire

Red Barked Tree PINK FLAG

Nostalgia be damned on Wire's glorious twelfth.

Even among fans of the artier end of punk there's a tendency to think of Wire in terms of three albums recorded in the late 1970s. Which is odd considering that this is their twelfth in a very long career.

After re-forming in 2003, the group (now slimmed down to three members) has been on particularly good form, and *Red Barked Tree* makes a good companion piece to *Send* and *Object 47*. In loose terms, it shows Wire at their most accessible with pristine, clipped and metronomic pop-punk and new wave tracks such as the openers *Please Take* and *Now Was*, although the former acts as a sweetener for a bitter-pill lyric offered towards a former friend or business associate. They revisit their proto-shoe-gaze roots on *Adapt* but it isn't long before they get stuck into the kraut/space-rock drive of *Two Minutes* and the sheet-metal attack of *Moreover*. Yet another post-80s success for Wire.

John Doran

Wanda Jackson

The Party Ain't Over

THIRD MAN/NONESUCH

Oh yes it is.

Wanda Jackson was the high-heeled princess of 1950s rockabilly. Her single *Fujiyama Mama* was hit in Japan, she worked with sidemen like Buck Owens and Merrill Moore, recorded in the Nashville studio where Gene Vincent cut *Be-Bop-A-Lula*, and ultimately made the Rock And Roll Hall of Fame. And if this wasn't enough, she dated Elvis Presley after her cover of his *Let's Have A Party* was an international smash. Later she would embrace more mainstream country and even born-again gospel.

At the age of 73, to record a direly over-produced and over-orchestrated collection of rock and country classics that range from Eddie Cochran's *Nervous Breakdown* to Hank Williams's *Blue Yodel #6* is just too much of an ask, even for a rockin' granny with her track record.

Mick Farren

ROUND-UP: SLEAZE

By Sleazegrinder

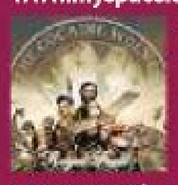
Cocaine Wolves: run with the gak.

Cocaine Wolves

Royal Feast

Balls City

www.myspace.com/thecocainewolves



You would think, given their aggressive moniker, that these wolves on drugs would basically sound like someone getting murdered in their bathtub with a chainsaw. And they do, mostly. Cocaine Wolves' feral knife-rock rears its toothy head on full-on berserko tracks like opener *Live Right, Live Tight* and the chest-thumping *Ladies' Night*. However, they're equally adept at strapping on spiked codpieces and bullet-belts and bashing out impressively over-the-top NWOBHM-y thunder-chug, as evidenced by the amazingly macho-metallic *Dingeaux's Montreaux*.

Basically, if there existed some alt.world where 1983-era Metallica were from Muncie, and instead of becoming extremely rich and famous and selling millions of records they just stayed in Indiana and worked as pizza delivery men for the next 25 years, *Royal Feast* is the album they would make. It's too bad that didn't happen, because this record is way better than *Death Magnetic*.

Demons

Scarcity Rock

Alaska

www.myspace.com/demonssthlm

Demons emerged from the denim-clad clusterfuck that was the 00's Scandinavian action-rock explosion. While their twin-guitar battering fell neatly in line with world-champion rawkists like Hellacopters and Turbonegro, Demons always were more sinister than their hedonist compatriots. On this psyched-out epic, they take it all the way, balancing their tasty greaser-rock with a pitch-black world view.

The Hot Rails

Single Entendre

Self-released

www.thehotrails.com

I really wish this record had some scratch-'n'-sniff capabilities, because I'm sure this is exactly what Hot Rails' home town, Cleveland, smells like. It's a staggering, belching, belligerent joyride through late-70s garbage metal and post-Guns sleaze rock, every song an ode to overindulgence and underachievement, every riff calculated to dampen panties and/or hail Satan.

Thunder Driver

Atomic Rock

Retrospect

www.myspace.com/thunderdriver

Zion, Illinois isn't exactly the deep south, but you wouldn't know that after hearing this record from what I can only imagine are Zion's finest sons. Thunder Driver's unflagging allegiance to whisky, pussy and southern-fried speed-rock make 'em sound like Nashville Pussy, only with an Angelwitch back-patch and a fistful of benzos. Play this loud enough and it'll probably impregnate your girlfriend.

Torpedohead

Let's Go For a Ride

Self-released

www.myspace.com/torpedoheadrocks

Germany's preeminent glam-slam revivalists return with punchy five-song EP that re-imagines AC/DC as snotty, mascara-abusing Hollywood punks. From the catchy glitter-metal of *Black Rain* to rugged closer *Paintrain*, *Let's Go For A Ride* offers up gooey pop-hooks and black eyes in equal measure. It's like a party tape for people who plan on burning the house down as soon as the party is over.

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Phil Lynott: poet, charmer, writer of classic songs. Inset: the Famous Four line-up.

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Thin Lizzy

Reissues UMC

Two Lizzy studio classics get expanded, and one of the greatest ever live albums, now with DVD content, just got even greater.

There wasn't a better rock'n'roll band in 1976 than Thin Lizzy. They had the tunes, the strut, the gang mentality, and a very real sense of joy in their music. They featured in the UK charts and were making an impression in America. And in keeping with the business model of the time, they record an album every year, between the tours, the fighting and the philandering.

Many of the established rock bands of the day had upped sticks and gone to the US to avoid the UK taxes. But Lizzy were a scrounge band and streetwise with it. At the heart of the enterprise was Phil Lynott, otherwise known as Phil Line-'Em-Up. He was a full-on band leader, charmer, sometime poet and secretly insecure. He had briefly tasted success in 1973 with Lizzy's amped-up traditional ballad *Whisky In The Jar*. There had been lean years after that, and founder guitarist Eric Bell left, disillusioned with the business.

Lizzy persevered, and by 1976 they had entered their Famous Four era. Lynott was accompanied by old school pal drummer Brian Downey, plus the guitar power of Scott Gorham and Brian Robertson. This pair had bedded in with two decent Lizzy albums: *Nightlife* and *Fighting*. Gorham was from Glendale, California and played with a more relaxed vibe. By contrast, Robbo was a Glaswegian brawler who mined the blues with fierce intent. Together in tandem they were unbeatable.

On the *Jailbreak* album Lynott's best attributes were coming on strong. His imagination had been nourished by Western movies, by Gaelic mythology and by Marvel comics. All of this was reflected in *The Boys Are Back In Town*, a song that came to define that sweltering British summer. Elsewhere, punk rock was starting to fester, but it was *The Boys*… and not *Anarchy In The UK* that topped the *NME* poll at the end of the year.

Jailbreak's Jim Fitzpatrick artwork and the title track suggested a concept album, but instead Phil was writing about the chieftain, the lover and the cowboy, lonesome on the trail. Some critics felt there was a debt to Springsteen, but in fact they were both indebted to Van Morrison and his Celtic soul.

This new Deluxe Edition of the album features live BBC tracks from early '76, when the band were tuning up the new songs and clearly enthused by their new power. *Blues Boy* and *Derby Blues*, two bonus tracks, are known to the Lizzy intimates, and now they are legitimately out there, more evidence of that creative fuel.

The band's rise was halted by a messy interlude in a London club that left Robbo with a damaged hand. Meanwhile, Lynott had contracted hepatitis. He used his time in hospital to write Lizzy's next album, *Johnny The Fox*.

Again, this was an exercise in tight, rousing tunes, with the chiming Les Paul guitars and Phil's patented blarney. *Don't Believe A Word* started life as a slow blues, but the faster version was the definitive one. Phil had spent much of his youth at his mother's boarding house in Manchester where he'd met some shady figures. They make their appearance on several tracks, notably *Johnny The Fox Meets Jimmy The Weed*, which Phil relates in his best Hendrix drawl. The bonus tracks for this reissue are less revealing, but the sound of Lynott barking out instructions to the band on a take of *Massacre* reveal the band leader's demanding method.

'Lizzy were reliably wonderful during this '76 to '78 period.'

In 1978 Thin Lizzy released *Live And Dangerous*, a double album that still holds its own as a perfect tour document. It reached No.2 in the UK chart (cruelly thwarted by the *Grease* soundtrack), and has been studied by U2 and countless others as a masterclass in gig dynamics. At the time of release, sceptics reckoned that Lizzy and producer Tony Visconti had doctored the live tapes in the studio afterwards. However, throughout this reissue programme (lovingly tended by Scott Gorham and Joe Elliot, and featuring a DVD concert on *Live And Dangerous*), the proof is that Thin Lizzy were reliably wonderful from during this '76 to '78 period. Remember them thus.

Jailbreak
Johnny The Fox
Live And Dangerous

Stuart Bailie

Helloween

Keeper of the Seven Keys Parts 1 & 2

UNIVERSAL/SANCTUARY

The Pumpkinmen's breakthrough and follow-up.

Initially a not particularly outstanding cog in the German thrash scene of the mid-1980s, Helloween really came into their own when guitarist Kai Hansen realised he couldn't play properly and sing at the same time. When they put Michael Kiske at the mic instead, Helloween went from competent members of the Teutonic thrash pack into the undisputed lead – well, at least for much of 1987 and '88.

Showcasing the band firing on all cylinders creatively, this double package does take some beating. Part 1 bristles with classics – *I'm Alive* and *Future World*, to name but two – while follow-up Part 2 boasts the likes of *Eagle Fly Free* and *I Want Out*. By now well beyond the basic aggression of thrash, and forging ahead in a power-metal style, the band must have had at least an inkling of just how influential this double whammy would become.

Still thrilling stuff even after all these years.

Essi Berelian

The Fall

This Nation's Saving Grace – Omnibus Edition

BEGGARS BANQUET

Three-disc box set revisits post-punk icons in their prime.

It's difficult to imagine a band less suited tempera-mentally to the canonical, deluxe-box-set treatment than Mark E Smith's perennially chippy Manc-rock outsiders The Fall. And yet their ninth studio album, released in 1985, unquestionably found the group on fiercely inventive form.

Smith's American wife Brix was a relatively new addition to the line-up, lending their abrasive sound an incongruous dash of poppy California sunshine. John Leckie's crisp production also gave the record extra space and muscle, counteracting Smith's default fondness for muddy dirges.

The stylistic range still impresses: dystopian prog-punk screeds; prowling, rhythmic juggernauts; language-mangling, Kafkaesque diatribes; skewed homages to *A Clockwork Orange* and krautrock legends Can. Smith's withering wit informs the self-mocking, glam-rocking clatter of *My New House* and the scorching *Spoilt Victorian Child*, and he also musters a rare moment of becalmed beauty on the woozy dream-ballad *Paintwork*.

The alternate mixes, rough demos and radio session tracks included on the two extra discs in this Omnibus Edition contain little to challenge the versions on the album itself. The inclusion of classic Fall singles *Couldn't Get Ahead* and *Cruiser's Creek*, along with their B-sides, confirms this period as a rich and fertile chapter for Britain's grouchiest alt-rock icon.

Stephen Dalton

Black Sabbath

Dehumanizer EMI

Sabs show their 90s mettle.

At the time of its original release, in 1992, *Dehumanizer* was widely regarded as something of a disappointment. The reunion of Tony Iommi, Geezer Butler, Vinnie Appice and Ronnie James Dio had raised expectations to impossible heights. Now, however, two decades on, the album actually starts to make a lot more sense.

With *Dehumanizer* Sabbath set out, with producer Reinhold Mack, to make a contemporary record, not something that was effectively a rehash of Sabbath's glories of the early 1980s. And, listening to *Computer God*, *TV Crimes*, *I* and *Time Machine*, it's clear, with the benefit of hindsight that they achieved their goal.

The production is slicker than would have been the case with Martin Birch (who produced *Heaven & Hell* and *Mob Rules*), and not as heavy as one might have expected. But the band play with tremendous thrust and purpose, while singer Dio is in imperious form.

There's still the problem that the album lacks a little of the old Sabbath warmth, but this new edition of *Dehumanizer*, with a bonus CD (including five impressive live tracks) is worth having in your collection.

Where does it stand in Black Sabbath's catalogue? It's certainly their best album of the 90s. Having said that, it doesn't have much competition there.

Malcolm Dome

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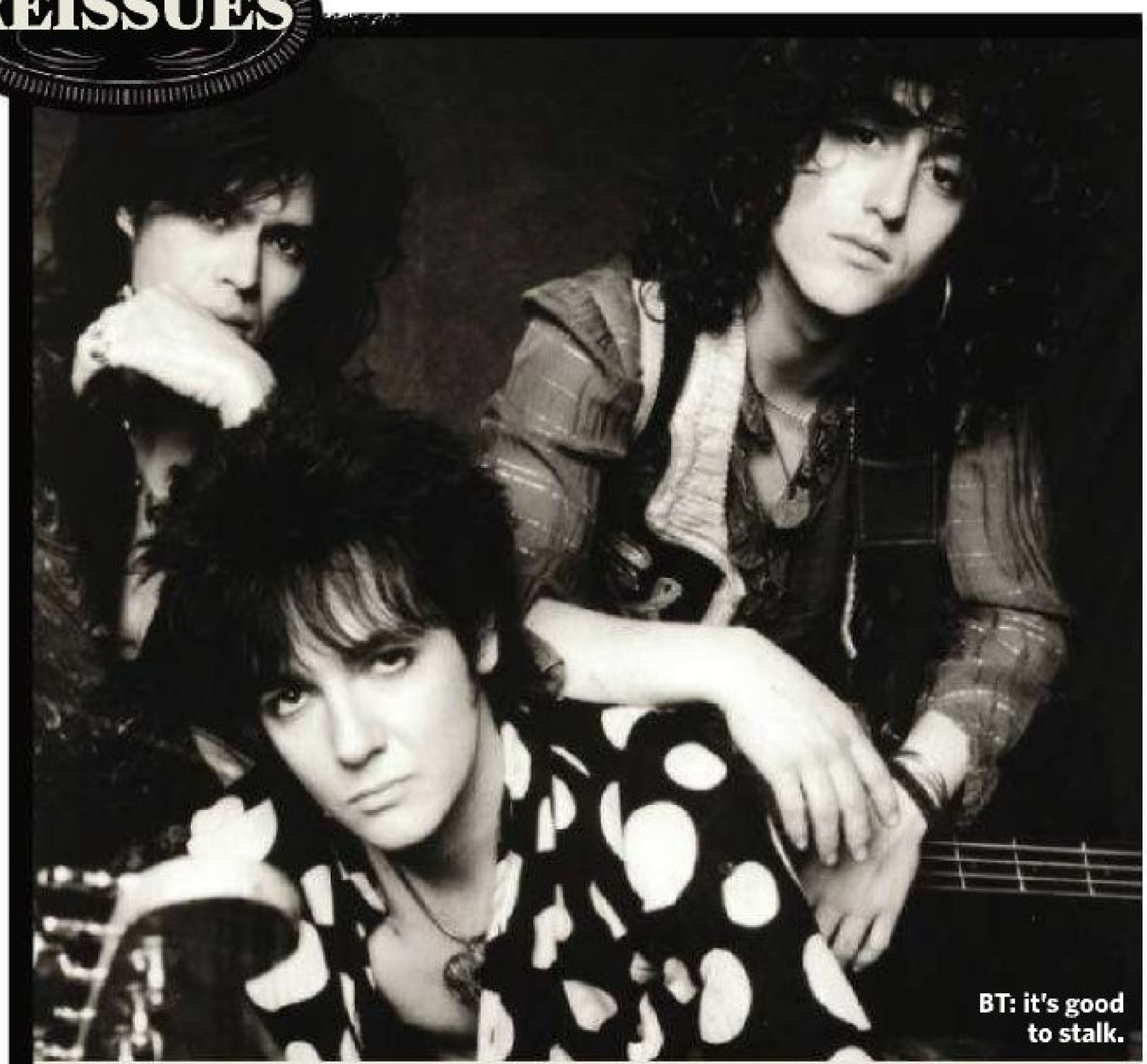

BT: it's good to stalk.

Burning Tree

Burning Tree ROCK CANDY

Trgically overlooked power trio buffed-up for well-deserved re-evaluation.

My original copy of Burning Tree still has on its cover the sticker that sealed its unwarranted doom: 'Buy 3 Get 1 Free Offer' it says. 'Epic Rock'. The second part of this epithet was not a description of Burning Tree's music (although for a power trio in the classic tradition, they had their moments) but a reference to the major label who had signed them, along with eight other bands, and who thought it would be a swell idea to release each of their records on the same day, offering anyone purchasing three a fourth free. The deficiencies in this cunning plan are so apparent that it's hard not to see a more cynical aim: the rapid disposal of a surfeit of signings. Whatever, the outcome was that this gem of a record slipped away.

Burning Tree is something of an anachronism. Released as hair metal reached its tipping point, it was musicianly and artful. What might have been a pastiche of the power trios of two decades before – Cream and the Jimi Hendrix Experience are its most apparent influences – instead became a thrilling update, a dispatch from a future in which an almost perfect, shimmering pop sensibility had been added to the wiggy blues riffing traditionally beloved of skilled musos.

It's not immediately apparent. The record's eponymous opening song is little more than a rough, throat-clearing exercise for what's to come. The first shafts of irresistible melody come on *Wigs Blues And High Heeled Shoes*, a stellar piece of retro psychedelia, and with the restless *Mistreated Lover*, where the deep hook of the chorus is followed by a languorous, woozy solo from the guitar of Marc Ford. His vocal partnership with drummer Doni Gray and bassist Mark Dutton reaches its sublime high on *Crush*, a song about being in a band that balances the stoner's wit of its lyric with a singalong outro that is immediate and unforgettable.

Even *Crush*, though, is topped by *Burning Tree*'s standout moment, *Baker's Song*, a murder ballad about a baker's wife, a river bank and a loaded gun that remains one of the best songs of its era.

Rock Candy's reissue is typically well done, and they can sell it without recourse to gimmicks this time. The fact that Ford went on to play with the Black Crowes and Dutton with Izzy Stradlin' simply confirms their talent, and as Burning Tree shows, neither made a better record with their future employers.

Jon Hotten

The Flying Burrito Bros

Flying Again/Airborne T.BIRD

Two awfully average albums bolted together as one awesomely average CD.

If you're really interested in finding out why the original Flying Burritos were such a major influence behind every subsequent country rock star from Steve Earle to the Jayhawks, you really need *The Gilded Palace Of Sin*, the 1969 debut that featured both founders, singer-guitarists Gram Parsons and Chris Hillman. These two albums were recorded long after both those gents had gone and the group, notorious for its 'fluctuating' line-up, had folded. Indeed, it was only after Parsons death in 1973 from a drugs overdose that the powers-that-be commissioned the other co-founders 'Sneaky' Pete Leinow and Chris Ethridge to reactive the group. The result was these two good-not-great cash-in collections. A ragbag of scratchy originals in-the-style-of, and cover versions, had they called the band anything other than The Flying Burritos Bros nobody would have cared then, much less today.

Mick Wall

Randy California

Kapt Kopter And The (Fabulous) Twirly Birds FSOTFRIC

Spirit Man's transitional 1972 album reissued.

California had just turned 21 and was still reeling from the death of his pal and sometime musical partner Jimi Hendrix when he came to record this album, in the interim between leaving Spirit and then re-claiming the band's name.

With The Experience bassist Noel Redding (disguised for contractual reasons as Clit McTorius) underlining the Hendrix connection Jimi's spirit was unmistakably abroad. Unlike many musicians seeking to reclaim the James Marshall legacy however California possessed a sensibility as individual, densely layered and unbounded as Hendrix's own.

Self produced, Kapt K's raw in the moment feel accentuates the musical momentum and prevailing sense of creative urgency. The Beatles *Rain* and Paul Simon's *Mother And Child Reunion* are among four covers reinvented from the inside out, a process extended further on free form originals such as *Devil* and the chaotically transcendent *Things Yet To Come*.

Proof that, 13 year after his death, Randy remains several light years ahead of the pack.

Gavin Martin

Climax Chicago Blues Band

A Lot Of Bottle RFPFRTQIRF

First and third albums from The Potteries' leading contribution to the 60s blues revival.

Colin Cooper had already established a formidable reputation in his native Stafford when he formed Climax Chicago Blues Band in 1968. Recorded in just two days the following year , by future Roxy and Sex Pistols producer Chris Thomas, the eponymous debut showcased a band where technical ability was complemented by well-gauged arrangements, the epic eight-minute original *And Lonely* a stirring showcase for guitarist Peter Haycock's anguished fretwork. Missing there, and on their competent and anonymous covers, the rough edge of their leading contemporary counterparts but CCBB's commitment was matched by adaptability.

On the suitably titled *A Lot Of Bottle* (1970), amp-heavy rock supplanted rootsy inclinations insuring a sustainable future as a live draw – before their belated commercial breakthrough with Top 10 single *Couldn't Get It Right* in 1976.

Gavin Martin

Dub War

The Dub, The War & The Ugly FARACHF

Benji Webbe's pre-Skindred life revisited.

There seems to be a certain amount of bitterness about how Newport's Dub War came to an end. In the sleevenotes to this Best Of compilation, frontman Benji Webbe talks about how he didn't even realise the rest of the band were quitting until he was told by third parties at 1998's Dynamo Festival. And yet, conversely, it's the band's honesty and openness that makes Dub War special. Smashing together reggae, dub, metal and punk (perfected in the never less than brilliant band that followed them), Dub War were an idealistic bunch, looking at the inner city degradation around them and purging their thoughts on violence,

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intolerance, and, in the particularly stark and simpilistic *Crack*, drug addiction. They offered a scream from provincial Britain that only, really, the Manic Street Preachers were otherwise expressing at the time, and the bonus documentary DVD rounds off the whole story. Webbe went onto greater things with Skindred, but Dub War document a specific period of British life magnificently.

Emma Johnson

Hawkwind

Space Bandits

CHERRY RED

Lost in space.

After the consistently innovative and influential releases of the 1970s and early 80s, Hawkwind went through a spell when they seemed caught between trying to be technologically contemporary while remaining true to their own heritage.

Eventually, they found the right balance, but Space Bandits belongs to the era when the band were struggling for artistic inspiration. Not that it's a disaster by any means, more a case of being unable to maintain a decent level of consistency.

So, while *Images* and *Black Elk Speaks* point the way to the future, many of the other tracks quickly wilt and melt away. And vocalist Bridget Wishart is clearly uncomfortable – no shock that she quickly departed.

Not one of Hawkwind's more auspicious albums.

Malcolm Dome

Here & Now

Give And Take ESOTERIC

A timely reissue, what with the revolution happening again.

Although largely forgotten, Here & Now were in their way an incorruptible 'people's band' as important as Hawkwind or Crass. Formed in the Ladbroke Grove squat scene in the early 70s, they seemed a little at odds with the punk bands that they ended up sharing bills and rubbing shoulders with around 1977. Here & Now favoured the longform cosmic jam as opposed to the three chord three minute classics. Yet this ferociously idealistic band – they played all their gigs free, relying on donations, and had done so for years – were an inspiration to younger anarcho-punk bands who wanted to be more than music industry drones. It was a two way street: on their debut album (though they had previously recorded as Planet Gong with Daevid Allen) we hear less of the space freak outs that comprised their live set and more short sharp acid punk anthems like *What You See Is What You Are* and *70s Youth*. It's an OK album: they were a band best appreciated live, something captured on 1978's *What You See Is What You Are*, their split release with Alternative TV.

Tommy Udo

Million $ Reload

Anthems Of A Degeneration POWERAGE

2008 'Lost' debut remixed and remastered.

A more appropriate label for this raucous and rejuvenated first album it would be hard to imagine, given that the first thing to hit you squarely between the ears is just how Phil Conalane's vocals are redolent of a certain Bon Scott. At full tilt there's a chest-beating, swaggering similarity that's really kinda spooky. Add to this boundless energy and an innate knack for big fat hooks and you have a fistful of rough and ready tunes that transcend their classically rocking influences to quite simply knock you flat on your arse with the quality on display. The likes of *Tattoos & Dirty Girls*, *Goodnight New York*, *Freeloader*, and *Fire Your Guns* (much better than the AC/DC tune of the same name) all demand instant replays, though really there isn't a duff track on here. Debuts this perfectly formed don't come around very often and to think that the world almost never got to hear this because the original distribution company went to the wall a couple of years ago. A killer effort – more please, chaps.

Essi Berelian

Ashton, Gardner & Dyke

The Best Of REPERTOIRE

Press 'Shuffle'.

Apparently it's unfair to tag Ashtron Gardner & Dyke 'One-hit wonders' because there was so much more to them than the soul-drenched dancefloor shouter *Resurrection Shuffle* that spent three months in the charts in 1971. True but nothing else they did troubled the chart compilers.

The fall-back position is "Too good for the charts" but the follow-up to the irresistible *Resurrection Shuffle* was an inferior replica. Not good enough for the charts, actually.

Singer and songwriter Tony Ashton claimed they were blighted by their hit. Certainly his soul songs, many of which would not have disgraced the Stax label, never got enough credit. But maybe they should have paid more attention to their career. They were a musicians' band, however, with mates like George Harrison and Eric Clapton who both show up on *I'm Your Spiritual Breadman*, so maybe they didn't feel they needed to bother.

This 20-track collection from their four albums, including a soundtrack they made with Deep Purple's Jon Lord, is not in chronological order so it's hard to get much perspective on the band, especially as the songs themselves give you no clue. And it's telling that none of the songs were covered by their musician friends.

Hugh Fielder

Mountain

Crossroader: An Anthology 1969-1974

ESOTERIC RECORDINGS

Big ol' log jam out of the Bronx and Brooklyn.

Mountain's star was in the ascendancy when they played the Woodstock festival at Jimi Hendrix's behest and released a debut album, *Climbing!*, which was essential underarm furniture for the hippy heads of 1970.

This double CD warrants better than a mere mention in dispatches. New Yorkers Felix Pappalardi and the bulky Leslie West emerged from hard rock and garage band roots to concoct a proto metal sound on the quick-fire *Mississippi Queen* and the infectious *Boys In The Band* that was all about slick riffing from West and the Cream-like rhythm section of Pappalardi and Corky Laing, mates of Jack Bruce from his *Songs For A Tailor* album days.

That formula, allied to some decent songwriting and production from the main men, served them just as well on *Nantucket Sleighride*, the title track of which may have been the first rock track to be used as TV theme music in the UK, on *Weekend World*.

Increasingly moving towards a tough blues base at West's insistence – since Felix was developing a monstrous drug habit and rarely showed up to rehearsal – Mountain's third album, the studio and live package *Flowers Of Evil*, almost lived up to its promising title. Again the guitars rippled and the gears crunched convincingly, providing a stock of material for the emergent shed tours that kept the band ticking while album sales dipped.

The second CD showcases their stage sets in America and Japan. By now the soloing was paramount and occasionally excessive, although West's work on *Dream Sequence* retains a fruity kick. Die-hard fans may prefer *Long Red*, a rock and bling cut that has been sampled by Jay-Z, and the arena version of *Crossroader*, where big Les pulls out the kind of pyrotechnics on his Plexiglas guitar that wouldn't disgrace Frank Zappa.

Sadly, internal issues caused by heroin addiction blighted the band. Pappalardi was shot dead by his girlfriend. The music scene left the Mountain men behind. Even so at least half of this anthology stands up today and West is somewhere on the road, ripping out Jack Bruce's *Theme From An Imaginary Western*, that Mountain covered.

Max Bell

Mountain: the summit.

MICHAEL PUTLAND/RETNA

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Travellin' band (l to r): Tom Fogerty, Doug Clifford, John Fogerty and Stu Cook), Heathrow, April 1970.

MICHAEL PUTLAND/GETTY IMAGES

John Fogerty

With Creedence he turned the Hippie generation on to classic roots and Americana. Solo he went rockin' all over the world...

John Fogerty is a true American icon. As leader of Creedence Clearwater Revival in the late 60s and early 70s, he wrote and sang some of the all-time classic rock'n'roll songs: *Proud Mary*, *Bad Moon Rising*, *Travelin' Band* and *Have You Ever Seen The Rain* to name but a few, songs that Kurt Cobain and Krist Novoselic played in a Creedence covers band before they formed Nirvana.

But if there was one moment in time when the power of Fogerty's songwriting was felt all around the world, it was on July 13, 1985, at precisely 12.02pm, when the mighty Status Quo kicked off Live Aid with a song Fogerty had written ten years earlier, one perfectly suited to this global music event: *Rockin' All Over The World*.

In truth, Fogerty's career didn't get off to the best of starts. In the mid 60s, the band he'd formed with elder brother Tom in El Cerrito, California was working under a name that today beggars belief: The Golliwogs. At a time when new social values were emerging, not least the civil rights movement, The Golliwogs were doomed to failure. But when, in 1967, the band was renamed Creedence Clearwater Revival, everything changed.

As important as the new name was a shift in the group's hierarchy that saw original frontman Tom cede power to John. "I could sing," Tom would later state,"but John had a sound." That sound would become one of the most powerful in American music.

Backed by Tom on rhythm guitar, bassist Stu Cook and drummer Doug Clifford, John Fogerty blossomed as a singer, guitarist and songwriter of rare distinction. His sound was timeless, relevant to the new rock audience yet steeped in age-old Americana. Blending blues, folk, soul, country, rock 'n' roll and psychedelia, the music had a rootsy, backwoods aura that led rock critics of the day to brand it 'swamp rock'.

Between 1968 and 1972, Creedence released seven albums and scored 12 top ten hits in the US and UK. But they split in '72, and after Tom Fogerty's death in 1990 there would be no reunion.

In stark contrast to CCR's prolific output, John Fogerty has released just nine solo albums in nearly 40 years. But with 2009's *The Blue Ridge Rangers Rides Again* coming just two years after its predecessor *Revival*, it seems that Fogerty, now 65, is making up for lost time.

Paul Elliott

Essential Classics

Creedence Clearwater Revival

Cosmo's Factory *FANTASY, 1970*

1970 delivered Creedence Clearwater Revival's biggest seller: *Cosmo's Factory* topped the charts in the US and UK, and remains John Fogerty's masterpiece. Foremost, it features two blistering songs now immortalised as rock 'n' roll standards, raucous road anthem *Travelin' Band*, and *Up Around The Bend*, another joyous rocker later covered by Hanoi Rocks. But it's the darker stuff that gives the album its real weight: the eerie *Run Through The Jungle*, the melancholy *Who'll Stop The Rain*, and an 11-minute stoner-jam version of Motown favourite *I Heard It Through The Grapevine*.

Creedence Clearwater Revival

Green River *FANTASY, 1969*

On Creedence's first US Number One album, John Fogerty truly came of age. *Green River* was tighter and punchier than their first two LPs, playing Fogerty's sinister edge to the fore on the album's biggest hit: *Bad Moon Rising* might've been a jaunty rock'n'roll tune, but with its terrifying visions of impending apocalypse, it's pretty spooky for a UK chart-topper.

Fogerty got heavy on *Green River*, from the urban paranoia of *Commotion* to the cursed blues of *Tombstone Shadow*. And on *Wrote A Song For Everyone*, he emerged as a powerful social commentator.

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Superior Reputation cementing

Creedence Clearwater Revival

Bayou Country *FANTASY, 1969*

The second Creedence album was their breakthrough, reaching Number Seven in the US charts. It was on *Bayou Country* that the Creedence sound took shape; Fogerty was Californian by birth, but as this album's title implied, his sound and imagery drew heavily upon the South: *Proud Mary*, a transatlantic Top Ten hit, was an elegy for the Old South and its mighty riverboats, while the dark swamp-rock of *Born On The Bayou* evoked ancient Southern mystique. As southern gent Nathan Followill [Kings Of Leon] says, "Creedence made the South cool."

Creedence Clearwater Revival

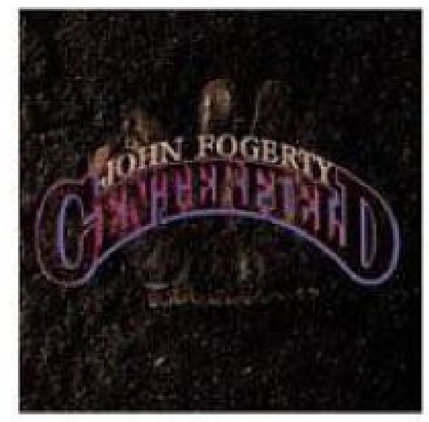
Willy And The Poor Boys *FANTASY, 1969*

The last of the band's three great albums of '69 arrived just three months after *Green River*, boasting a looser, more upbeat vibe. Fogerty still had axes to grind, warning of social unrest on *Effigy*, and delivering one of the great protest songs with the searing *Fortunate Son*. But overall, he applied a lighter touch on *Willy And The Poor Boys*, evident in the busker shuffle of *Down On The Corner*, a country version of blues legend Leadbelly's *Cotton Fields*, and traditional jailbird ballad *The Midnight Special*, sung gospel-style.

Creedence Clearwater Revival

Pendulum *FANTASY, 1970*

The sixth Creedence album was their last with Tom Fogerty, and the last great work of the band's all too brief career. *Pendulum* features two of John Fogerty's best-loved songs, the rattling *Hey Tonight* and the beautiful *Have You Ever Seen The Rain?*, alongside uniformly fine songs from raging opener *Pagan Baby* and Stax homage *Chameleon*, to the more reflective *Sailor's Lament* and *It's Just A Thought*. But the band would never be this good again. And for John Fogerty, it would be all of 13 years before he made another record worthy of his name.



John Fogerty

Centerfield *WARNER BROS, 1985*

Fogerty didn't have a hit with his most famous solo song: it was Status Quo who transformed *Rockin' All Over The World* into a rock anthem, while Fogerty's version debuted on his 1975 self-titled album, which remains out-of-print. His biggest solo success came with *Centerfield*, topping the US chart, and featuring two acidic songs, *Mr. Greed* and *Zanz Kant Danz*, aimed at Fogerty's nemesis, Fantasy Records boss Saul Zaentz. Zaentz later took Fogerty to court over the album, accusing Fogerty of plagiarising his own CCR material (which Zaentz then owned) but the Supreme Court found in the songwriter's favour.

Essential Playlist

Susie Q
Creedence Clearwater Revival

Proud Mary
Bayou Country

Born On The Bayou
Bayou Country

Green River
Green River

Wrote A Song For Everyone
Green River

Bad Moon Rising
Green River

Down On The Corner
Willy And The Poor Boys

Fortunate Son
Willy And The Poor Boys

The Midnight Special
Willy And The Poor Boys

Travelin' Band
Cosmo's Factory

Up Around The Bend
Cosmo's Factory

Run Through The Jungle
Cosmo's Factory

Rockin' All Over The World
John Fogerty

The Old Man Down The Road
Centerfield

Good Worth exploring

Creedence Clearwater Revival

FANTASY, 1968

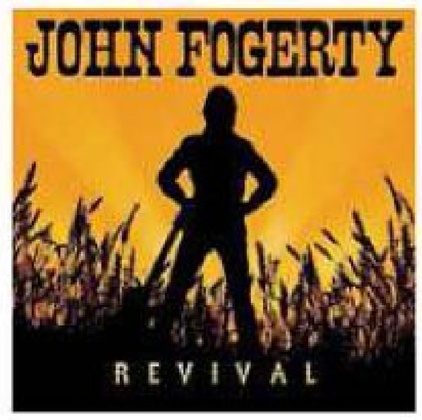
On the group's debut album, John Fogerty was still learning his craft. Tellingly, the two songs that made the greatest impact were covers, Fogerty playing the bogeyman on Screamin' Jay Hawkins' voodoo blues *I Put A Spell On You*, and turning *Susie Q* – a rockabilly hit by Louisiana guitarist Dale Hawkins – into a moody, eight-minute slow-burner, later edited to reach Number 11 in the US singles chart. By contrast, Fogerty's own songs were a little prosaic, aside from the gritty *Porterville*. But in the following year, with the band's second album *Bayou Country*, he truly found his voice.

John Fogerty

The Blue Ridge Rangers

FANTASY, 1973

After Creedence's messy demise, Fogerty made a clean break from his past with a solo debut that defied all logic. Not only was *The Blue Ridge Rangers* a country album – a bold move in an era when country music was widely considered passé – it was comprised solely of old standards, one of the foremost songwriters of his generation relaunching his career with an album on which he hadn't written a note. His feel for country music shone through, however, especially on the tearjerker *She Thinks I Still Care*. Twenty-six years later, Fogerty recorded a follow-up *The Blue Ridge Rangers Rides Again*.



John Fogerty

Revival *FANTASY, 2007*

Fogerty's best album in recent years was a throwback to his glory days. His first original work since returning to Creedence's former label Fantasy, *Revival* had a title and a sound loaded with nostalgia. It even had a twanging boogie tune named *Creedence Song*. Fogerty played it safe on Revival, although there were a couple of surprises. *Longshot* rocked like AC/DC, and *I Can't Take It No More* was, of all things, a punk rock rant: proof that the old rocker still had fire in his belly. But more importantly, *Revival* proved Fogerty was still a great songwriter. And it was on the mellow songs, *Gunslinger* and *Broken Down Cowboy*, that he really nailed it.

Avoid

Creedence Clearwater Revival

Mardi Gras *FANTASY, 1972*

Rock critic Jon Landau, who later ended up managing "rock'n'roll's future" Bruce Springsteen, wasn't always right; in the pages of *Rolling Stone*, he hammered masterpieces like Dylan's *Blood On The Tracks* and the Stones' *Sticky Fingers*. But his attack on Creedence's seventh album was fully justified. Tom Fogerty's exit having reduced the group to a trio, the band sleepwalked through *Mardi Gras*, only rousing themselves for the rowdy final track, *Sweet Hitch-Hiker*. Landau called it "the worst album I have ever heard from a major rock band." For such a great band, it was a desperately sad end.

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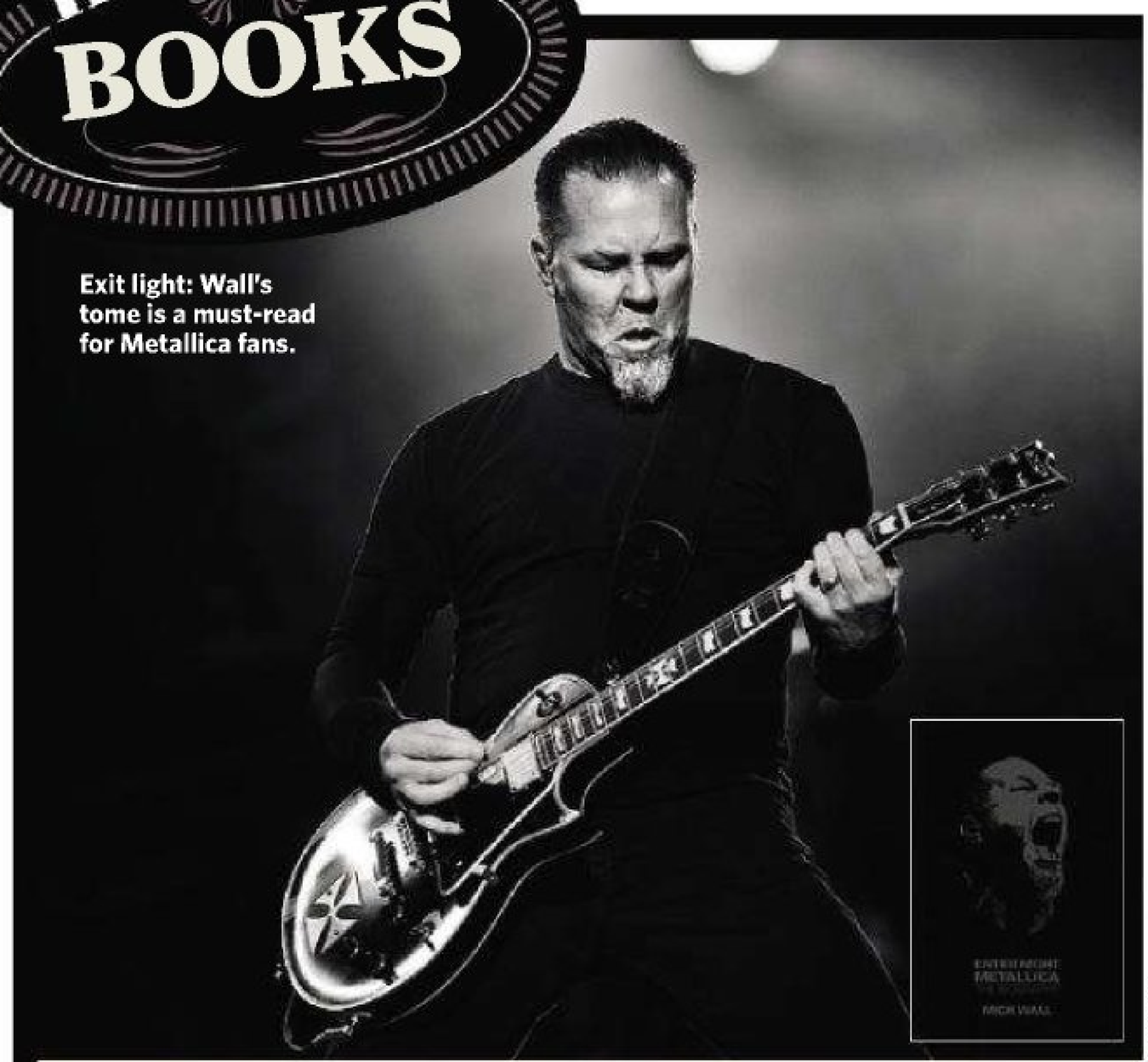
THE HARD STUFF BOOKS



Exit light: Wall's tome is a must-read for Metallica fans.

KEVIN NIXON

Enter Night: Metallica The Biography

Mick Wall ORION

The definitive and most authoritative biography to date of heavy metal's biggest band.

At this point in time, nearly three decades since Metallica first formed in the Los Angeles suburbs and embarked on the most remarkable of heavy-metal career paths, it is hard to imagine that anyone has anything much left to say about them or any stories to tell that haven't been wheeled out and crudely floodlit in the mainstream media countless times before. It takes a writer of Mick Wall's pedigree and calibre, not to mention a relationship with the band themselves that plainly side-steps the usual cheerful disinterest with which artists as successful as this generally regard the press, to present the whole wild, wonderful and emotionally draining tale all over again and make it as consistently fascinating and momentous as *Enter Night*. Realistically, everyone knows the major milestones along this road: the turbulent early days with (and then without) Dave Mustaine; the tragic death of Cliff Burton just as the band were about to become righteously huge; the astonishing leap from huge to stupidly huge that occurred upon the release of that black-clad self-titled album in 1991; the creative and personal decline that Metallica underwent during the 90s, culminating with James Hetfield's phoenix-like re-emergence from the ashes and a partial return to form on 2008's patchy but respectable *Death Magnetic*. What people, and that includes many of the band's most devoted fans, probably don't already know is the finer details of those events, the real impact that each had on Hetfield, Lars Ulrich, Kirk Hammett and anyone else caught in the band's potent tailwinds, and it's on that more profound and insightful level, with vast amounts of compassion and respectful dexterity, that Wall really excels, getting to the heart of the ups and downs and to the eye of every storm. The bus crash and Burton's cruel demise forms a distinctly sombre centrepiece, the author's snappy but calm prose making the whole thing seem more like a harrowing, real life catastrophe, rather than merely another sad but well-thumbed rock'n'roll chapter. Wall even has the audacity – and, it has to be said, good sense – to be utterly frank about the quality of Metallica's music since the early 90s, giving balanced but astute verdicts on both *St. Anger* and *Death Magnetic*. Until they return, this is the definitive account of heavy metal's biggest band of all.

Dom Lawson

John Lennon: Life, Times & Assassination

Phil Strongman BLUECOAT

It's been a hard day's Manchurian Candidate.

Killing John Lennon allowed the Reagan-Bush administration to more easily pursue a new nuclear arms race, as well as murderous policies in Central America and Afghanistan. That's a direct quote from the text, by the way, for while the author pretty much skims over the life and the times, it's the assassination which most enthuses him. Of course, we all enjoy a good conspiracy theory, but Strongman's rabid and ramshackle prose finds him perilously close to crossing the line from level-headed investigative journalist to sandwich-board nutter.

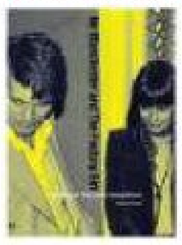
He's seriously got the bit between his teeth, drawing parallels between Lennon's death and the shootings of the Kennedys and Martin Luther King, throwing in a baffling few pages about how Jimi Hendrix was probably murdered as well. It's all too scattergun, as if Strongman's Googled a handful of key words and shovelled every single search result into one big contradictory pot. He's keen on the phrase "it's a known fact", yet reluctant to attribute or corroborate these "facts". In their place is a string of suppositions and suggestions of shadowy brainwashing; Mark Chapman might have been a CIA-trained trigger man – or maybe it was the anti-Castro doorman at the Dakota building who really fired the shots...? In truth, there's the kernel of a good book here, if it wasn't so kneejerk and nonsensical.

Terry Staunton

Mr Manchester And The Factory Girl

Lindsay Reade PLEXUS

Life on the Factory floor by the former Mrs Tony Wilson.



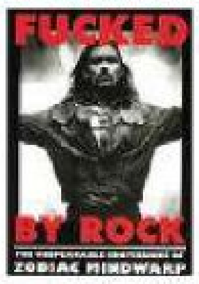
The first time Lindsay Reade set eyes on Tony Wilson, she knew they were destined to meet. It didn't matter that Reade was sitting in a teaching colleague's house, having tea in front of the telly as the energetic Granada TV reporter popped up onscreen doing his weekly *Dangerman* challenge – the recognition that Reade felt was so overwhelming that when the couple encountered each other by chance just weeks later at a local house party, fate dealt a wild pocket pair. And here's where Reade's heartfelt memoir begins: two souls from disparate worlds united in the superficial 70s glamour of sex, drugs and rock'n'roll, with Wilson to become the godfather of contemporary Manchester arts while Reade tries to find her place in his world and in the fluid cultural landscape they were helping to shape, but also so deeply connected that 20 years on from their messy marital split, the two become irrevocably entwined again, as close confidantes and platonic bedfellows until Wilson's premature death in 2007. Reade is candid and funny, delivering elaborate back-history and qualified anecdotes on all the usual suspects and Factory situations while also putting forward her own misrepresentation (don't believe the salacious *24 Hour Party People* hype, kids) and sidelining in the Manc music scene 'boys' club' of the 70s and 80s. No cheap kiss-and-tell, and illustrated uniquely by personal photographs, *Mr Manchester* is, above all, about the love story that never ended.

Jo Kendall

Fucked By Rock: The Unspeakable Confessions Of Zodiac Mindwarp

Mark Manning CHERRY RED

Zodiac Mindwarp's autobiography, reissued. Not for the faint-hearted.



Those familiar with Manning's idiosyncratic prose style from the *Bad Wisdom* trilogy (co-written with the KLF's Bill Drummond) will find much to savour in *Fucked By Rock*, in which a decade of touring with Zodiac Mindwarp and The Love Reaction is re-imagined as a debauched cross between The Marquis De Sade's *120 Days Of Sodom* and the Nazi's Operation Barbarossa.

If the endless tales of group masturbation and, erm, groupie slaughter are by turns gross and deeply unsavoury, Manning's cartoonish eye for detail means they are also hysterically funny, a brilliant (if bloody) parody of every sleazy rock star autobiography which never quite

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lived up to expectations.

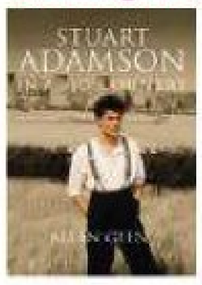
Better still is an additional memoir of this teenage years entitled *I Have The Greatest Respect For You, George* in which Manning is revealed as a tender soul, dreaming of the dark side. "I've never been to sea or been to prison, never even owned a moped let alone a big Harley Davidson" he confesses. At last, a yin to Zodiac's crazed, blood spattered yang.

Paul Moody

Stuart Adamson: In A Big Country

Allan Glen POLYGON

Basic biog on the late frontman.



With no new interviews with any members of the Skids or Big Country and only very few of the many people Adamson worked with before his suicide in an Hawaii hotel room in 2001, Allan Glen's book adds very little insight to the man or his music. It's a sad story: Adamson detested the music industry, at one point leaving the Skids before their debut album was even released (he wrote an angry letter to *Record Mirror* contrasting the times he spent "jumping about the bedroom with a brush pretending to be Pete Townshend" with the reality: "the free meals and handouts of high-powered business executives"). The huge initial success of Big Country, and their inability to follow it up, meant that he had to deal with industry bullshit the rest of his life. The book dwells heavily on the business of Big Country – some decent appraisal and enthusiasm for the music might have been more fitting.

Scott Rowley

Guitar Player Presents Clapton, Beck, Page

Edited by Michael Molenda BACKBEAT

Yardbirds' back pages.

Founded in 1967, the California-based *Guitar Player* magazine is the longest-running of its publishing category. Not surprisingly, it's amassed a formidable archive in its forty-plus-year history and here editor Molenda assembles all of the highpoints in *GP*'s coverage of the three Thames Delta-native guitarists who, between 1963 and 1968, spanked the plank for The Yardbirds, who contributed enormously to the development of UK R&B, mid-60s British beat, psychedelia, hard rock and metal before mutating, under Jimmy Page's leadership, into Led Zep.

Curiously, Page is the most sketchily represented here – GP only collared him once, though in a more than substantial interview, at the height of Zeppelin's pomp in 1977, though it was – but both Eric Clapton and Jeff Beck submitted to the third degree many times between the late '60s (Beck's first interrogation was in 1968; Clapton's in 1970) and the more-or-less present day.

Apart from all the usual stuff you'd expect about guitars, amps, pedals and strings, here are heaping handfuls of observations about music, musicians and changing tastes and philosophies. Beck emerges from his decades of chat as sardonic, truculent, relentlessly forward-looking and occasionally surprisingly insecure, whilst Clapton seems increasingly nostalgic as the years pass by, harking back to his earliest days as a player. Illuminating, to say the least.

Charles Shaar Murray

Stevie Ray Vaughan: Day By Day, Night After Night

Craig Hopkins BACKBEAT

'Woke up this mornin'...'

The internet is full of minutae-packed fan blogs of everyone from Dylan to Dappy out of N-Dubz, but rarely do such intensive trivia trawls make it into print. In an obvious labour of love, the author has gone out of his way to shadow just about every waking hour of the Texan guitarist's life, up to 1982, and it's an engrossing read. Hopkins' attention to detail runs to the precise date of line-up changes in Vaughan's teenage bands, and in addition to cataloguing every live show and variations in set-lists, the author even makes mention of gigs where Stevie Ray was merely a punter in the audience! Yes, it's an anorak's wet dream, but Hopkins also uses the diary format as a jumping off point for smart and informed critical analyses of a hugely respected musician who did as much as anyone to fly the flag for blues traditions in the late 20th century.

Terry Staunton

2 Years On The Road With AC/DC

Matteo Abruzzo ACDCPHOTOBOOK.COM

Black Ice World Tour 2008-10.

A limited-edition collection of photos obtained by a group of four friends and AC/DC fanatics, this is the kind of book no professional photographer would come up with – and all the more fun for it. The quality of the pictures is variable and the anecdotes are strictly on a gosh-wow level, but the whole is moving in a way that, for example, the brilliant recent Phil Sutcliffe bumper collection is not. Whether sharing a beer at the grave of Bon Scott with other fans, or hanging out while Brian Johnson treats them to a belly-wobbling story of his past, you really can feel the love that's gone into this, For fans by fans.

Mick Wall

Shindig!

Annual Number Three VOLCANO

This year's compendium of the bible for retro obscurity hipsters.

Wearers of pointy boots and bowl haircuts will already be acquainted with *Shindig!*, the bi-monthly magazine that covers psych, garage, folk and prog rock.

This lavishly illustrated hardback is its third annual and sets out to showcase previously published interviews.

Fans of Tthe Beatles, Stones, Beach Boys or Bob Dylan might be miffed to hear that *Shindig!* prides itself on avoiding mainstream heroes in favour of unsung artistes. So there are lengthy articles on the likes of Aussie psych-popsters Procession and songwriter/producer David Daltrey (whose claim to obscurity is being Roger's cousin).

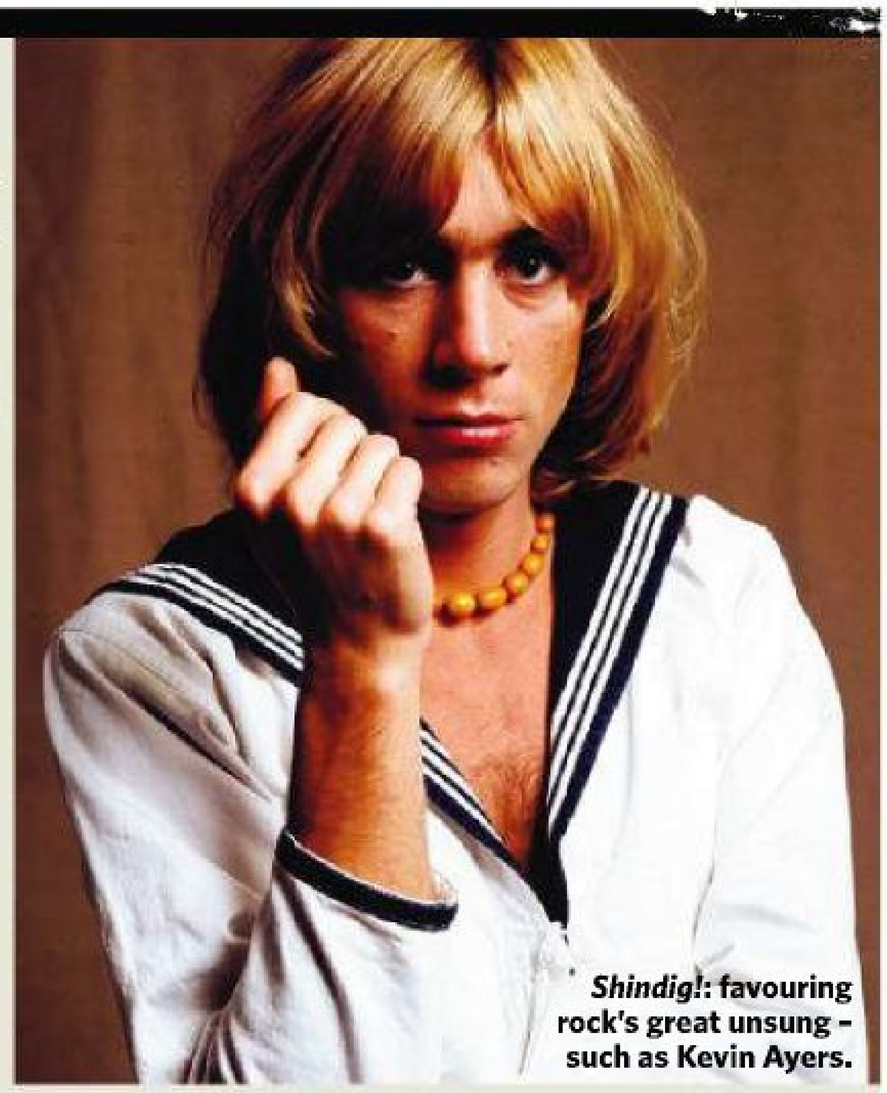
If they write about anyone you might have heard of there's a tight focus on a less explored corner of their careers, such as Alice Cooper's early garage bands. There's plenty of less familiar photographs, which in the wrong hands might fall under the heading of blackmail material (such as the Pretty Things' Dick Taylor in red bell bottoms and a full Afro, sporting the 'unemployed Spanish waiter look' circa 1967).

Eye-watering colours and designs give it the feel of a vintage pop annual, but much of the writing is too plodding to inspire anyone to discover more about the music. Unless you're a devout fan, are you really going to devote precious time to ploughing through long-winded histories? The in-depth coverage goes against the modern grain of 140-character tweets etc and, in some cases, you want to salute them, but have they not heard the phrase 'leave them wanting more'?

The highlight is Kris Needs's tribute to The Flamin' Groovies, the group that changed his life, purely because his enthusiasm is expressed in way that makes you want to rush off and listen to all their records.

Shindig! magazine certainly does a fine job of covering newer bands on the scene but that's not reflected here. It leans too much towards the male, pale and stale (The Strawbs and Scaffold) and there's no female representation, unless you count a glimpse of Patti Boyd's stocking.

Claudia Elliott



***Shindig!*: favouring rock's great unsung – such as Kevin Ayers.**

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Lemmy

Produced and directed by Greg Oliver and Wes Orshoski ENTERTAINMENT ONE

Star-studded documentary paints a portrait of possibly the most authentic rock'n'roller still standing.

There is only one Lemmy. If there is indeed a God, then he, she or it undoubtedly planned it this way on the wholly sensible principle that this world would not be big enough for two such behemoths. In the intensely tribalised punk era, Motörhead were just about the only band – with the possible exception of Thin Lizzy – in whose front rows at gigs punks, hard rockers and metalheads would happily thrash side-by-side, and the inspiration of their white-hot fusion of metal weight and punk speed has birthed several successive generations of bands – with no visible end in sight.

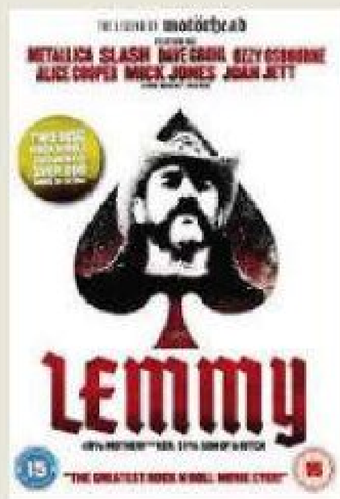
Like many other great and distinctive singers – Louis Armstrong, Howlin' Wolf, Bob Dylan, Johnny Rotten and Joe Strummer, to name but five – Lemmy has pioneered a vocal style so radical that many have found it difficult to accept as 'singing' at all. Ditto his bass playing: rather than pick and pluck a melodic part, as just about every other bassist who's ever lived would do, Lemmy hammers, strums and riffs on the bass as if he was dealing with the bottom four strings of a guitar.

In this loving documentary history/profile, we see the inimitably and immaculately grizzled immortal at home in his cluttered treasure-house of a (rent-controlled!) Hollywood apartment full of rock memorabilia and World War II artefacts; socialising; recording a Chuck Berry cover with Dave Grohl; playing his beloved fruit machines in Las Vegas; buying Beatles reissues in LA; dressing up in full German military gear to fire missiles from a tank (yep, I double-took at *that* one, too); jamming with The Damned in Wolverhampton; and finally arriving in Moscow to rock a bunch of young Russians to within an inch of their lives.

The great man's own reminiscences are illuminated and fleshed out by a gaggle of stellar interviewees, including the Usual Suspects you might expect – Slash and Duff, Scott Ian, Dave Grohl, Henry Rollins, all of Metallica, Steve Vai, Ozzy, Alice Cooper, Joan Jett, Lemmy's own guitarist son Paul Inder, old Hawkwind colleagues Dave Brock, Nik Turner and Stacia – and also a few you might not, like Jarvis Cocker, Hooky from New Order, Dave Vanian and Captain Sensible, Mick Jones, Tony James, actor Billy Bob Thornton and Ice-T.

'A heart-warming, life-affirming thing of beauty.'

We also hear from his two current Motörhead henchmen, guitarist Phil Campbell and drummer Mikkey Dee, but not from most of the many previous incumbents. Drummers 'Philthy' Animal Taylor, Pete Gill and Lucas Fox remain unheard from, as do guitarists Wurzel, Brian Robertson and Larry Wallis, a few of whom are occasionally glimpsed in old photos and vintage clippage… but then this is a film about



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Lemmy: always stuck to his guns.

Lemmy, not one about Motörhead, insofar as the distinction exists at all. 'Fast' Eddie Clarke, guitarist with what many still consider to be the band's definitive line-up, the one which gave us *Ace Of Spades, Bomber, Overkill, No Sleep* et al, is the only exception. None of them steal Lemmy's show, though. That gravelly slur doesn't mask for a nanosecond the fact that, despite decades of epic consumption of this, that and especially the other, he's still sharp as a well-honed switchblade.

Having known the Lemster since olden Ladbroke Grove Hawkwind days, borne witness to the very first line-up of Motörhead – with Larry Wallis on guitar and Lucas Fox on drums – performing an epically shambolic set opening for Blue Öyster Cult at Hammersmith Odeon back in 1975, and spending much of the second half of the 1970s having exactly the same drunken conversation with Lemmy at Dingwalls seemingly every other week, it's been continually surprising and continually pleasurable to see him emerge as the one bona-fide success of his old posse.

He's old enough to remember when there was no rock'n'roll, and when it first arrived, you could make a damn good case – and Dave Grohl does just that: 'Fuck Keith Richards!' – for Lemmy being the most authentic rock'n'roller still standing. Visibly zeroing in on pensionable age beneath that flowing dyed hair and beard, he's a stubborn, eccentric old man who's stuck to his guns – literally, you might say – and made it work beyond his or anybody else's wildest dreams. Lemmy will never apologise, but he does occasionally explain. He is, after all, a reasonable man, and this documentary is a heart-warming, life-affirming thing of beauty.

Charles Shaar Murray

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ROCK CANDY

BURNING TREE 'S/T'

ALTHOUGH LOS Angeles was at the epicentre of the 'big hair' hard rock explosion during the 1980s, deeper in the undergrowth lurked a retro centric three piece power trio by the name of Burning Tree. Taking their cue from late sixties Blues boomers such as Cream, Mountain and the Jimi Hendrix Experience they cooked up a musical soup by showboating a number of golden elements, including hard rock, psych, soul and blues. The power trio approach was, for the era, something of an exception, and focused the spotlight not on outrageous antics but squarely on the music. Marc Ford's guitar work was pivotal to the band's sound; a sinewy stylist with a carefully executed sound. No wonder the Black Crowes snapped him up immediately after Burning Tree's demise.

CIRCUS OF POWER 'VICES'

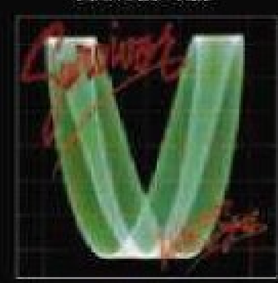
DURING THE late 1980s New York played host to a number of crucial hard rock contenders, including the Throbs, Smashed Gladys, Raging Slab and, of course, Circus Of Power. The latter's debut album, although failing to set the charts on fire, had blown the proverbial roof off with its brazen mix of low-slung guitar worship and a surly attitude to rival the best of West Coast rivals. Produced, like the debut album, by Daniel Rey and titled 'Vices' (for obvious reasons), Circus Of Power's sophomore release is finely hewn from a similar block of tough granite. Big riffs peppered with throat ripping vocals atop huge blasts of guitar are the order of the day, all expertly inserted into some of the most combustible songs the band ever penned.

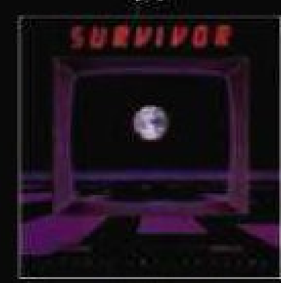
GREG LAKE 'S/T'

GREG LAKE 'MANOEUVRES'

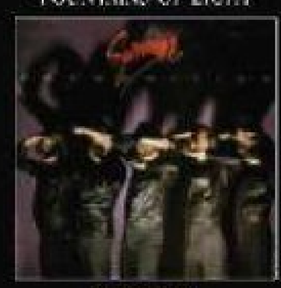
STARCASTLE 'S/T'

STARCASTLE 'FOUNTAINS OF LIGHT'

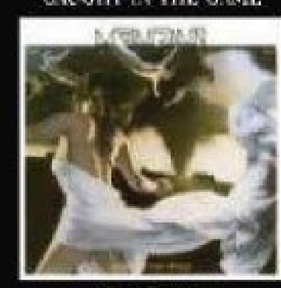

SURVIVOR 'VITAL SIGNS'



SURVIVOR 'CAUGHT IN THE GAME'


SURVIVOR 'PREMONITION'

SURVIVOR 'S/T'


MELIDIAN 'LOST IN THE WILD'

HEAVEN'S EDGE 'S/T'

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AOR SAFE IN CR

After last month's letter worrying that your recently launched AOR magazine [*Classic Rock Presents AOR*] will mean that there's less coverage of the genre in *Classic Rock*, can I just say… let's hope not.

Anon

HAVING A POP

AOR is pop music masquerading as rock. My wife had Radio 2 on the other day and they played Westlife's *Smile* – it's an epic power ballad that sounds just like half of the music that calls itself AOR: wimpy, overblown, *girls' music*! Which is unsurprising, as it was written by John Shanks, who also writes for Bon Jovi, Santana, Sheryl Crow… and Kelly Clarkson and Take That!

AOR was always just watered-down rock music for housewives and big girls' blouses. It shouldn't be *in Classic Rock* in the first place!

Here's to the Campaign For Real Rock.

Paul Donante, Chippenham

BIG BOTTOM (END)

Thanks for the interview with John Paul Jones. As a bass player, I have always been in awe of his playing, and frustrated that almost every aspect of Zep has been analysed to death, but little has been written about or asked of this pivotal figure. There were two people in Zeppelin's rhythm section, and while John Bonham's drumming was startling and unique, it has cast a shadow over JPJ's contribution for too long. Any fans of Them Crooked Vultures should check out Jones's solo albums: instrumentals like *Snake Eyes, Tidal* or *B.Fingers* could easily be demos for album No.2.

Simon Mackendrick, York

(NOT) JUST THE TICKET

Can somebody please explain to me (and the countless other thousands who are complaining on the message boards) just exactly how a company like Ticketmaster is allowed to get away with receiving an allocation of tickets to a gig, yet instead of putting them all on sale it moves a quantity into it's Get Me In subsidiary for 'sold out' tickets, which then puts them up for sale at inflated prices? Surely this is just ticket touting by just another name. We should all boycott companies like this, as they are just ripping off the fans. Do they get a say in when tickets are allowed to go on sale as well, to help them with profits, as a lot of people aren't able to buy off of websites on weekdays?

Adrian Taylor, Torquay

Another tour, another whinge about ticket prices – nice to see Rush touring again, not so nice to see the rip-off price the tickets are been sold for. At a venue near me we have £45 to £75 with most seats at £55 – and, believe me, you would not want the ones at £45. At the same venue you can see Iron Maiden for about £37 and the Journey/Styx/Foreigner tour for about £40. I am sure both those tours at those prices will be highly profitable for all concerned, and the Rush tour will cost no more (and maybe less) to stage. The only reason for the inflated ticket price is sheer greed on the part of Rush – your're not telling me that this band does not have complete control of the price.

I used to have – the perhaps delusional – belief that bands like Rush give a damn about there fans. Apparently not, though clearly Iron Maiden, Journey, Styx and Foreigner still do!

Ah well, the saddest part is that I will still probably buy a ticket. More fool me, I guess.

Bill Kirtley, Tyne and Wear

John Paul Jones: overlooked for too long.

DEATH CULT

Is it just me or is the constant obsession with rock stars' ages and health getting to be a total bore? I mention it because I've just endured weeks of interviews with Keith Richards selling his bloody book, complete with a million questions about when he'll retire and his brush with death… And now Lemmy's all over the papers and it's the same bloody thing!

CR153: a classic, obviously.

Note to newspaper editors and magazine writers: you don't ask every film star or politician when they're gonna quit or how they feel about death – stop asking rock stars! It's depressing!

Luke Chesterton, Hull

YOU REALLY TURN ME ON!

Thanks for this year's Albums Of 2010 rundown in your Awards issue. I always thought for a music magazine to only do two pages on the year's greatest releases was a bit of a cop-out. Nice to see you take it seriously, even if it will end up costing me a small fortune (just bought Gaslight Anthem, Anathema and Alter Bridge from Amazon…). Keep turning us old rock fans on to new music – I don't come across this stuff anywhere else.

T Murray, via email

I LOVE JAZZ MAGS

I've been reading *Classic Rock* for a many years now (yes, I know everyone probably says that), and one of the (many) things about the magazine in recent years that I have enjoyed is your coverage of bands/artists that a few years ago probably wouldn't have got a look in. However, I don't think you have given anything like as much coverage as is due to bands and artists that fall into the category of jazz rock. Okay, so some of it is way up its own arse, with tuneless (to these ears) solos that go on for longer than some whole albums, but there's also a lot of great jazz rock music too. So let's have the occasional feature (I'm not asking for 10-page jobs, just something) on people like Chick Corea, Stanley Clarke, latter-period Gong, Mahavishnu Orchestra and others, without it being part of some kind of jazz-rock roundup. Then I won't have to kill you. Cheers.

Martin Robson, Ipswich

"What most readers really want is a review talking about the music on the album itself."

SORRY BUT WE HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU'RE ON ABOUT

In *Classic Rock* issue 153 on p.59, how come Rick Wakeman's hair is ginger but his beard is grey? And how come Ronnie Wood and Lemmy etc all have jet black hair? I went grey in my early 30s and my dad went bald at the age of 21. Surely they don't dye their hair do they?

Big Hugh, Stevenston

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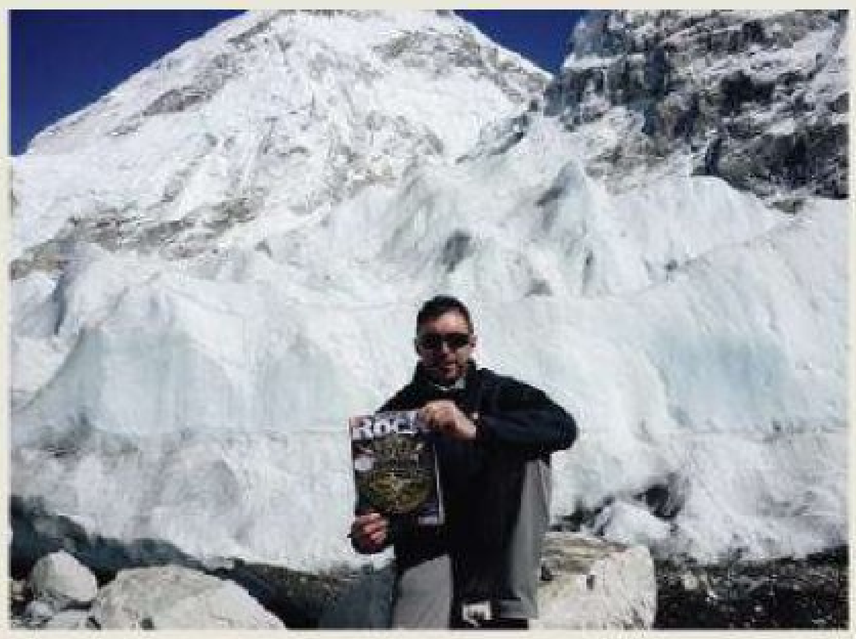
★ Star Letter

THOUGHT THE STAFF and dedicated readers of *Classic Rock* magazine (which is awesome) would appreciate the fact that as we enter 2011 the magazine can say it has scaled an all-time high – in that I took the magazine with me and read it at Mount Everest! Yes, that's me with the real Everest in the background. Now apart from being at the summit itself you can't get much higher than that.

It was great to read the 150 Greatest Debut Albums feature at such a prestigious site. While some bands may have a mountain to climb, I can safely say that for many I helped climb the mountain for them.

Keep up the great work, *Classic Rock*. Just as Everest is truly majestic to see, so too is your magazine and the music it recognises.

Mathew Evans, Carmarthen



Thanks for the photo. Good to see that *Classic Rock* is read in high places. But how do we know that's actually Everest behind you, and not a hump in Wales or the Lake District or somewhere? Wherever it is, it looks cold. A few nips of the bottle of Smokehead you've just won should help on that score. Cheers.

Every month, the Star Letter wins a fine bottle of Islay Single Malt Smokehead Whisky. Enjoy. And remember: Smokehead encourages Responsible Drinking.

PS. I have a pair of curtains which bear an almost uncanny resemblance to the jacket worn by Luke Morley on p.35

MONROE TAKES 'HEAD

Selecting the wrong support act when you're a successful band is a time-honoured way of contribuing to the list of classic blunders. Perhaps Black Sabbath inviting Van Halen to open for them in 1978 is the most famous. You can now add Motörhead to the list.

Motörhead's recent UK tour had Michael Monroe's new band supporting. I saw the gig at Cambridge Corn Exchange, and I have not seen a band like this since, well, probably since Hanoi Rocks first burst on to the scene. They absolutely destroyed Motörhead. To my shame, before that night I'd never heard of Steve Conte, the New York Dolls guitarist now playing with Michael. He and Ginger Wildheart make for one of the best guitar duos I've ever had the pleasure to witness, and Sami Yaffi and Karl Rockfist were an awesome rhythm section. The band was tight but loose, looked amazing and simply tore the place up. If they stick together, this band should be the biggest band in the world in a couple of years. Of course, the last band I said that about was Hanoi Rocks, and I was wrong there. But that shouldn't stop you from going to see them as soon as possible. They are the perfect reminder of what rock'n'roll should be all about.

Rhys Williams

Mike Monroe: 'destroyed Motörhead'?

MONROE: AMI BARWELL; JPJ: MICK HUTSON

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

For what it's worth, I think the Rock Recipes calendar is cool and have stuck it on my kitchen wall. Can't imaging ever wanting to make the rook pie (makes me heave just thinking about it), but I hope to try most of the others when their month comes around.

What next year? Rock'n'roll stars' favourite cocktails? I'd certainly get some use out of that.

Jack, Stevenage

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GREAT RUSH ARTICLE IN ISH 153, MADE ME HOKE OUT ME OLD *EXIT STAGE LEFT* VIDEO. YOU CAN EXPLAIN TO THE KIDS WHAT A VIDEO WAS. LOVED THE CD TOO. WISH I HAD SOMETHING TO PLAY IT ON. **WILLIE YOUNG, CO. DOWN**

WHY DONTCHA DO A REAL ROCK FAMILY TREE OF DEEP PURPLE? THAT'S ENOUGH FOR A WHOLE MAG. **HARRY, BILLERICAY**

SAW FURYON IN BRIGHTON LAST NIGHT - TOTALLY AWESOME, THESE GUYS REALLY NAIL IT LIVE. HIGH TIME FOR A FEATURE ON THIS BAND *CLASSIC ROCK*! **ALAN, HOVE**

ABOUT TIME MICHAEL SCHENKER GOT AN AWARD COS HE JUST SEEMS TO GET BAD PRESS. AND I WISH GARY BARDEN GOT SOME RESPECT. **ANDY, HUDDERSFIELD**

HI. LOVE THE MAG. GIVE 10 HOURS DEAD A MENTION PLS WE'RE A NEW ROCK BAND JUST STARTIN OUT. CHECK US ON FACEBOOK. **TREV IN STROUD**

ANY CHANCE OF A W.A.S.P. BUYERS GUIDE SOMETIME? I'M HAPPY TO WRITE ONE FOR YOU. **DEANO, FLEET**

I'M 50, AND MY SON OF 22 STEALS ALL MY ALBUMS. I GOT HIM INTO BIG BIG TRAIN AND PINK FLOYD, ANATHEMA AND LED ZEP, AND MORE. AT LEAST HE NEVER PLAYS X FACTOR OR HIP HOP? **DAVID G**

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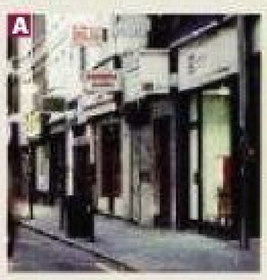
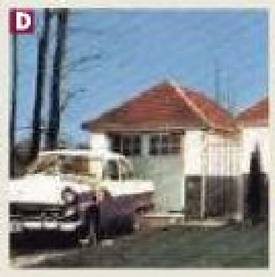
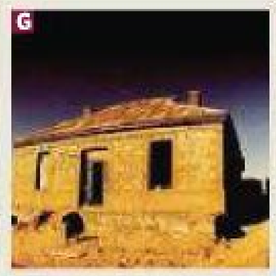
THE HARD STUFF QUIZ

Think you know your rock – not to mention your roll? See how many of these questions you can answer, and how many album sleeves you can identify from the details pictured.







1. Which classic track and UK Top 10 from 1987 opens with the lines: '*I should have known better than to let you go alone/It's times like these I can't make it on my own/ Wasted days, and sleepless nights, an' I can't wait to see you again*'?

2. Who are drummer Micael Kiriakos Delaoglou and guitarist Michael Burston – one a current and one a former member of the same now veteran band – better known as?

3. What do Rush, Van Halen and Whitesnake have in common in terms of albums?

4. Name the guitarist and drummer in the (original) line-up of the Red Hot Chili Peppers that recorded the 1987 album *The Uplift Mofo Party Plan*.

5. What was the first single released by the Stranglers?

6. Which Classic Rock award have Jeff Beck, Queen, Metallica and Black Sabbath each picked up in previous years?

7. '*Beyond the palace hemi-powered drones scream down the boulevard/ The girls comb their hair in rearview mirrors and the boys try to look so hard/ The amusement park rises bold and stark, kids are huddled on the beach in a mist/I wanna die with you Wendy on the streets tonight in an everlasting kiss.*' Lines from which gold-plated rock classic song released in 1975?

8. Which band's first album, in 1992, was recorded by the line-up of Adam Jones (guitar), Paul D'Amour (bass), Danny Carey (drums), and a singer whose name would be the giveaway?

9. How many studio albums have Iron Maiden released since Bruce Dickinson and Adrian Smith rejoined the band in 1999?

10. Which one-time Yardbirds guitarist's former bands were the Roosters and Casey Jones And The Engineers?

11. Which band's 90s albums include *The Principle Of Evil Made Flesh*, *Vempire – Or Dark Faerytales In Phallustein* and *Dusk...And Her Embrace*?

12. '*There's nothing in the street looks any different to me/And the slogans are replaced by-the-bye/And the parting on the left is now the parting on the right/ And the beards have all grown longer overnight.*' Which 1971 hit are those lines taken from?

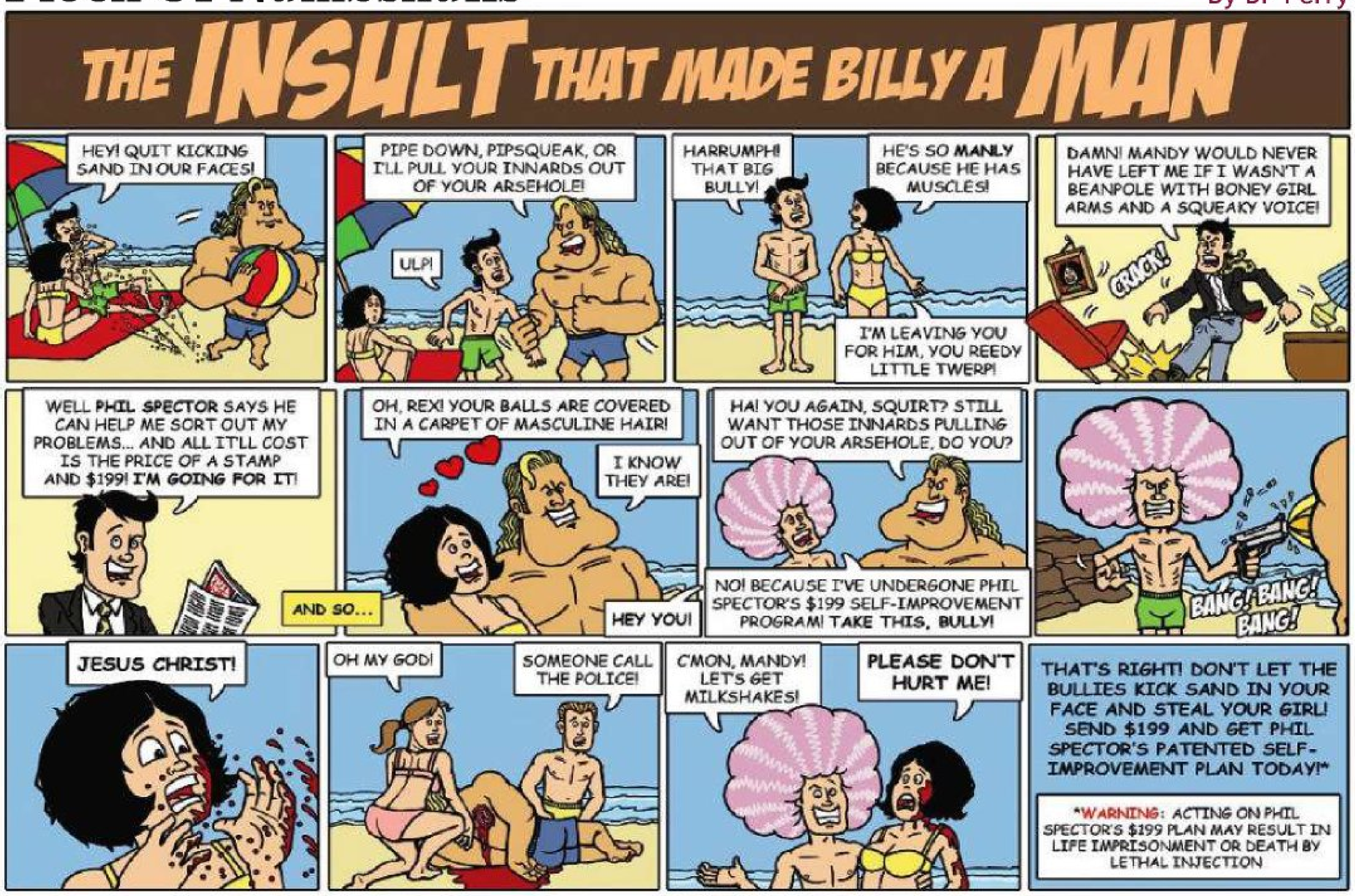
13. Which Rolling Stones song does Johnny Winter cover on his 1971 album *Johnny Winter And Live*?

14. Who worked as producer on all of the following albums: The Cult's *Sonic Temple*, Mötley Crüe's *Dr. Feelgood*, *Bitter Sweet & Twisted* by the Quireboys and *Load* by Metallica?

Answers on page 105

Flock Of Numbskulls

By BP Perry



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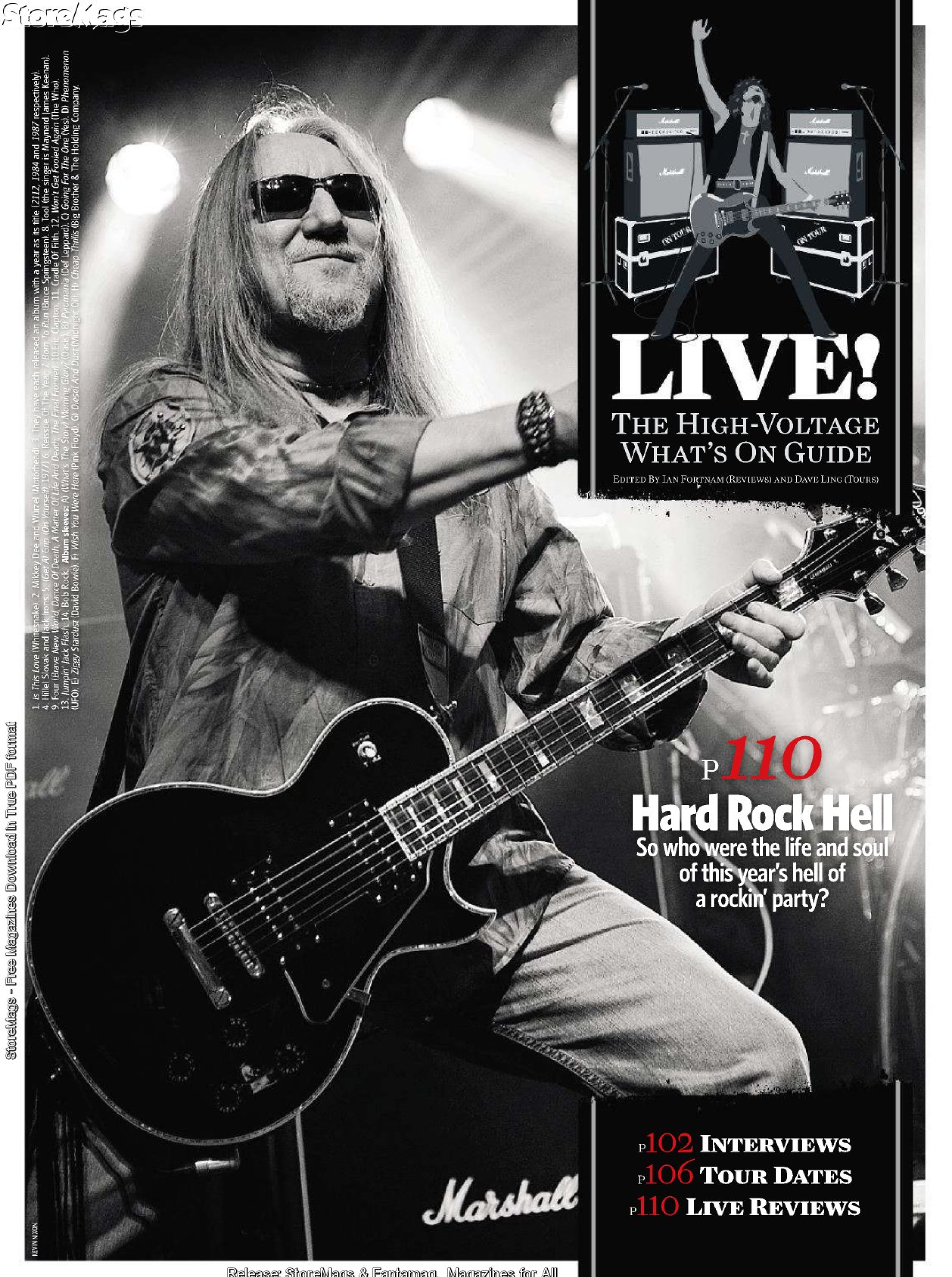

LIVE!

The High-Voltage What's On Guide

Edited By Ian Fortnam (Reviews) and Dave Ling (Tours)

1. *Is This Love* (Whitesnake). 2. Mikkey Dee and Würzel (Motörhead). 3. They have each released an album with a year as its title (*2112*, *1984* and *1987* respectively). 4. Hillel Slovak and Jack Irons. 5. *(Get A) Grip (On Yourself)*. 1977 6. Reissue Of The Year. 7. *Born To Run* (Bruce Springsteen). 8. Tool (the singer is Maynard James Keenan). 9. Four (*Brave New World*, *Dance Of Death*, *A Matter Of Life And Death*, *The Final Frontier*). 10 Eric Clapton. 11. Cradle Of Filth. 12. *Won't Get Fooled Again* (The Who). 13. *Jumpin' Jack Flash*. 14. Bob Rock. **Album sleeves:** A) *What's The Story! Morning Glory?* (Oasis). B) *Pyromania* (Def Leppard). C) *Going For The One* (Yes). D) *Phenomenon* (UFO). E) *Ziggy Stardust* (David Bowie). F) *Wish You Were Here* (Pink Floyd). G) *Diesel And Dust* (Midnight Oil). H) *Cheap Thrills* (Big Brother & The Holding Company.

P110

Hard Rock Hell

So who were the life and soul of this year's hell of a rockin' party?

P102 Interviews
P106 Tour Dates
P110 Live Reviews

KEVIN NIXON

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Taking Dawn: smaller venues for their own shows will "suit us just fine".

"For Slash to take us out on tour with him, that was incredible."

Taking Dawn

After dates with Kiss and Airbourne in 2010, they return for their own UK shows.

Among *Classic Rock*'s Ones To Watch in 2010, Las Vegas rockers Taking Dawn didn't let themselves – or us – down. We called guitarist/frontman Chris Babbitt and found him bleary-eyed and 'chilled', but enthusiastic about the band's imminent return to the UK.

Where have we found you?
On a tour bus parked in the snow. I'd just got to sleep as you called. It's below zero here in North Dakota. I can't even feel my toes.

Well, 2010 was a good year for Taking Dawn. You supported Airbourne and Kiss in the UK and opened the main stage at Download.
We really couldn't have asked for any better.

Any good tales from supporting Kiss? Did they catch your show?
Gene [Simmons] told us we shouldn't have covered [Fleetwood Mac's] *The Chain* because it made us look cheap. This came from a man whose own show includes three cover versions. It was difficult to tell whether he was busting my balls or giving genuine advice.

In America you also bagged dates playing with Murderdolls and Slash.
The Slash shows in particular were phenomenal. That was a touching thing for us. For Slash to give a shit about your band, not only to tell you so but to take you out on tour with him, that was incredible.

Why are you returning to the UK so soon?
We were asked to play a special event in Glasgow for Rock Radio, and it made sense to add more shows while we're there. The dates of our own will be the first time we've headlined in Britain. The venues are quite small, but at the point we're at they'll suit us just fine.

When is the band planning to begin work on their second album?
We're already demoing some ideas now at the house that the band share. We're very excited by what's coming through – at this stage it rocks a little harder than the debut [*Time To Burn*].

For anyone who's thinking of buying a ticket to see the band, what can you tell them about the show?
We're your favourite nightmare. Unlike so many other bands, we don't like playing to click-tracks. What you hear is real, I can guarantee you that. **DL**

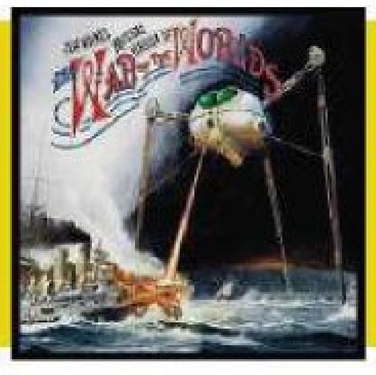
Taking Dawn's headline dates end in Glasgow on February 7.

DAWN PATROL
★ Taking Dawn, The Union and more play at Rock Radio's fourth anniversary party on January 28.
★ Taking Dawn are sworn to bring classic hard rock into the modern era.
★ "We love big vocals, even bigger guitar solos, and lots of harmonies," they say.

Listen!
This month's unmissable radio shows & webcasts

Classic Rock Podcast

NEW CR PODCAST
classicrockmagazine.com/podcast
Yes, they're back, with... oh, loads of rock-related stuff on the agenda. Expect more 'casts in 2011.



SPIRIT OF PHIL
tinyurl.com/23x7744
Some of Phil Lynott's best work outside Thin Lizzy: perfect casting as a deranged holy man during an alien invasion.

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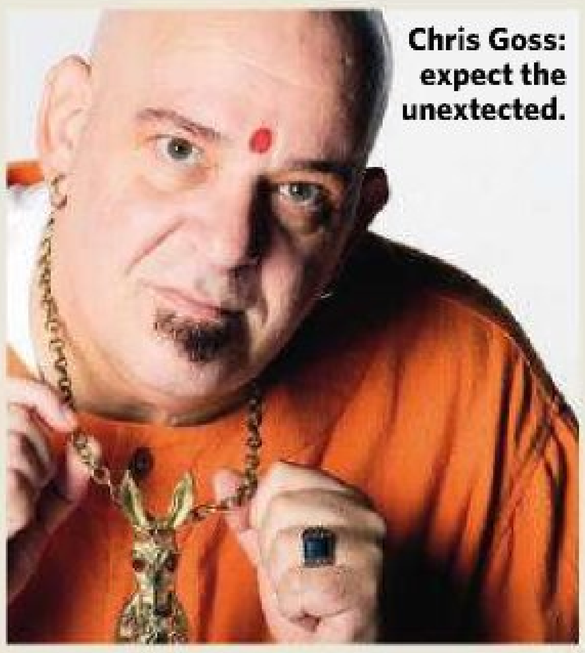


Chris Goss: expect the unextected.

KEVIN NIXON

Masters Of Reality

January dates with The Cult.

Chris Goss, Godfather of stoner rock, on who he's like to collaborate with, the resurrection of Kyuss, and working with The Cult in the studio and on the road.

You've known The Cult for a long time. Are the *Capsule* projects your first time working with them?
We've been friends for nearly twenty years now, but working together is something we've always talked about doing. It finally came true about a year ago.

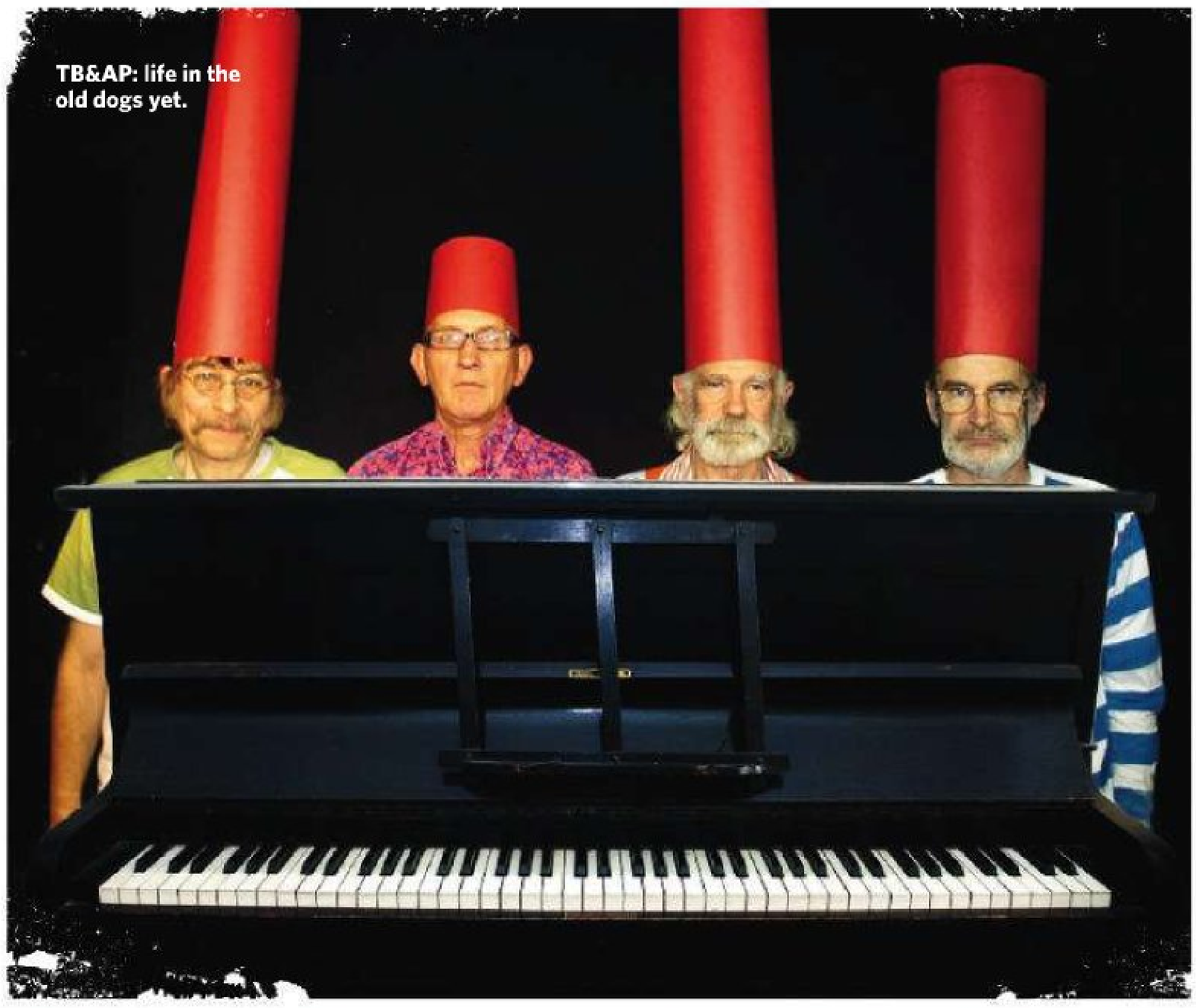
Should we expect something a little different musically from The Cult with you on board?
Ian [Astbury] can shatter glass with his voice, so Billy [Duffy, guitarist] wants to match that with his hard, heavy rock'n'roll. Ian is also in love with electronic music, so it's all going to be a balancing act to sew these two different intentions together.

What does the future hold in store for Masters Of Reality?
I just wanna play wild music and always throw a curveball. When people always know what to expect, it's over.

You're on a lot of people's hit-lists as someone they'd like to collaborate with. Who do you have in your own sights?
I'm a huge fan of the voice of Jon Anderson [Yes]. The guy has always remained true to himself. John Paul Jones would be great to work with, and I'd love to do a track or two on the next Crooked Vultures album.

Any plans to get involved with the Kyuss Lives! project?
If it's fucking rocking, then God bless 'em, that's all I can say. To see John [Garcia] sing those songs again will be quite an experience to anyone who missed them first time around. **JI**

Masters Of Reality's dates with The Cult begin in Leeds on January 18.



TB&AP: life in the old dogs yet.

Three Bonzos And A Piano

Former Bonzo Dogs still barking up the right tree.

Multi-instrumentalist Roger Ruskin Spear reveals why he and two other former members of the Bonzo Dog Doo-Dah Band – saxophonist Rodney Slater, and Sam Spoons on electric spoons – are maintaining the legacy of a unique British band as Three Bonzos & A Piano.

What are you up to today?
I'm at the recycling tip, on the lookout for stage props.

Sounds like you work within a strict budget.
We're old people, so we like to travel [to the gigs] ourselves. Five lots of petrol up to Morecambe can be quite expensive.

Three Bonzos And A Piano (completed by pianist Dave Glasson and guitarist Andy Roberts) was born after the cancellation of a Bonzos reunion tour in 2008.
That's right. The reunion tours were great fun and, amazingly, lots of people came to them. The trouble is that those big shows were expensive to stage, and also people have other commitments.

Neil Innes isn't involved.
Neil had a pretty low opinion of our musical abilities. At a meeting he said: "I've got my reputation to think of." But we wanted to risk it, and there seems to be an appetite for this old rubbish. And we're into our second year.

The Bonzo Dog Doo-Dah Band are over for good, then?
I think so, though 'Legs' Larry Smith [drums] and Vernon [Dudley Bohay-Nowell, bass] often join us on stage.

> **"There seems to be an appetite for this old rubbish."**

The new album, *Hair Of The Dog*, is extremely entertaining.
Considering it was recorded in Dave Glasson's front bedroom it sounds good, doesn't it?

With titles such as *The Follicle Song* and *Taken Short*, is the band ridiculing itself.
Absolutely. Our earliest songs were about teenagers dealing with the 1960s, now we're decrepit old people dealing with the noughties.

Nevertheless, the song *Old Geezer Rock* predicts you will be *'awkward old buggers'* and *'live to a hundred and eight'*.
We're not going to sell a million CDs to teenagers, but we've a couple more years left in us at least. **DL**

The band's perpetual touring continues at Wavendon on January 30.

Click!

Quality online destinations to visit this month.

KRAUTROCK
www.krautrock.com
Good first stop on the autobahn to exploring the world of Can, Kraftwerk and the rest. Warning: does not contain humour.

BEAT CLUB
tinyurl.com/38dlsqo
YouTube channel dedicated to all things of a rock flavour from the German programme of the same name.

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Wire: hardcore and extreme, or weirdo pop band?

Wire

The "too clever" post-punk heroes return with a 2011 album and tour.

With UK live dates in February and also a terrific new album, *Red Barked Tree*, due in early *2011*, chief songwriter, guitarist and vocalist Colin Newman explains the emphatic return of the band who first came along in 1976.

The dates you've got coming up constitute a pretty extensive tour by Wire's standards.
It goes back to 2004, when Bruce [Gilbert] left. The band virtually didn't exist. It was a very difficult time. But there's a will that Wire is really worth doing. So for the first time ever we sat down and decided what to do. We wanted to make another album – which was *Object 47* [2008] – and play live. Because playing live had been the one thing that, over the previous few years, had risen up and made us think: "We've got pretty good at this." We were probably good in the 1970s but we always felt we were iffy. In the past I was miserable on the road for most of the time. Touring in the 70s was endless, and everybody else got paid apart from us.

Wire have aged very well though. *Red Barked Tree* sounds highly adventurous.
Wire is claimed by various schools, all of which are quite antagonistic towards each other. There are people who think we're kind of hardcore and extreme – a band that hates anything that smacks of a tune – and there are those who think Wire are an out-and-out pop group with weirdo rock tendencies. I'm a dyed-in-the-wool minimalist. Although I understand a bit of the technical side, my approach is quite musical. And the way I mix is that I listen to a piece of music, and every time something annoys me I figure out what it is and how I can change it or get rid of it. It's very important to me that a Wire album stands repeated listens. It's a record for God's sake, not a one-off thing.

"This may be when people start to say: 'They're really quite good!'"

How did the new album evolve?
For the first time since the seventies most of the songs were written on acoustic guitar. Robert's [Grey] initial reaction was that they reminded him of the seventies. And Graham [Lewis] said: "I hate acoustic guitar." It made for a record that has a very distinctive character. It may well hold up in a few years' time. Wire goes through strange periods. We're seen as too clever by half, too hard to pin down. But this may well be the time when people start to notice us and say: 'Y'know, they're really quite good!' **RH**

The tour begins in Brighton on Feb 1.

Firewind: Ozzy-approved.

Firewind

Trad metal is alive and well.

Ozzy Osbourne's Greek-born guitarist Gus G sets the scene for a one-off UK date by his own band.

***Classic Rock* once called Firewind "a cross between Dio, *Powerslave*-era Iron Maiden and Helloween". Is that a fair description?**
It's flattering. Those are all great artists, and although there are many others they all influenced our sound. If you're saying that we come from the traditional school of heavy metal, that's totally true.

Firewind are named after an album by former Scorpions guitarist Uli Jon Roth's band Electric Sun, aren't they?
True. We don't sound anything like Electric Sun, but Uli Jon Roth's playing inspired me back then and does so to this day.

How did you find out about Ozzy's interest in you?
I heard via an email. It might have had something to do with when I played [with Arch Enemy] on the Ozzfest in 2005. Ozzy was looking for a guitarist, and I sent a Firewind CD to the office, inviting them to check me out. Zakk [Wylde] returned to the band and I didn't hear anything back, but it might have played a part.

What does Ozzy think of Firewind's new album, *Days Of Defiance*?
[Laughing] You know what? It might sound rude but I haven't given him a copy yet.

How much freedom does Ozzy allow you in the way his songs are played?
He always tells me to be myself, not to copy Randy, Zakk and the rest. He knows that although I throw in a few licks of my own I won't change things around too much.

Firewind's gig at London's Garage is a one-off UK show. Will there be a full tour to follow later in the year?
Of course. And it would be great to also get one of the big summer festivals. **DL**

Firewind play London Garage on Jan 7.

Watch!

Rock eye candy coming into view this month

THIN LIZZY DOC

BBC4, Jan 24, 2011

The BBC's new Thin Lizzy documentary is confirmed for Friday, January 21 on BBC4 at 9pm.

HIGH VOLTAGE

http://tinyurl.com/2bu5xah

Clips from our first festival last summer. If you like what you see, get tickets for this summer's HV2.

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CLASSIC ROCK MAGAZINE IN ASSOCIATION WITH PLASTIC HEAD MUSIC AND TKO BOOKING AGENCY PRESENTS...

We're cranking up the volume and taking Powerage to the people...

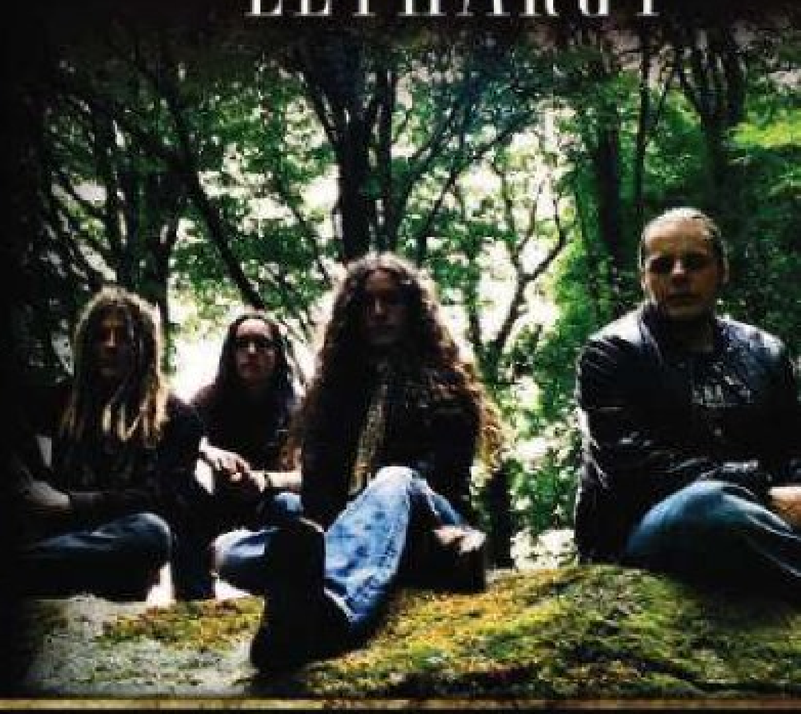
NEW DEVICE

AND THE BEST NEWS IS IT'S FREE!

That's right, eleven shows featuring four of our finest bands coming to a town near you in February. All you have to do to be in on the action is mark your calendar and get to the venue early to secure entry which is strictly on a first come first served basis.

You'll be able to witness firsthand the power of the UK's finest up and coming acts with performances by London based rockers New Device, acclaimed Welsh riff meisters Lethargy, low slung Irish gladiators Million $ Reload and stupendous young upstarts The Treatment, our latest signing.

LETHARGY



THE POWERAGE TOUR 2011

MILLION $ RELOAD

TUE	22	FEB	MARGATE, WESTCOAST BAR
WED	23	FEB	GRIMSBY, YARDBIRDS
THU	24	FEB	LONDON, UNDERWORLD
FRI	25	FEB	POOLE, CHORDS
SAT	26	FEB	MANCHESTER, MOHO*
MON	28	FEB	SHEFFIELD, CORPORATION FRONT ROOM
TUE	01	MAR	NEWCASTLE, THE OTHER ROOMS
WED	02	MAR	GLASGOW, IVORY BLACKS
THU	03	MAR	WREXHAM, CENTRAL STATION
FRI	04	MAR	NUNEATON, QUEENS HALL
SAT	05	MAR	NOTTINGHAM, ROCK CITY BASEMENT*

All doors open at 7pm except Manchester* which is a 6pm start and Nottingham* at 8pm. Please note that the Glasgow show is an 18+ event.

TURN ON, TUNE IN AND ROCK HARD

THE TREATMENT

OUT NOW

NEW DEVICE
TAKIN' OVER

LETHARGY
PURIFICATION

MILLION $
RELOAD
ANTHEMS OF A
DEGENERATION

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POWERAGE CLASSIC ROCK

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Store/Mags

LIVE! Tour Dates

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ACCEPT

London	Highbury Garage	Mar 17
Prestatyn	Hammerfest	Mar 18
Dublin	The Village	Mar 19
Belfast	Spring & Airbrake	Mar 20
Sheffield	Corporation	Mar 22

ACCEPT, BIOHAZARD, ONSLAUGHT, MORE

Prestatyn	Hammerfest	Mar 17-19

ADLER'S APPETITE

London	Camden Underworld	Feb 22
Ipswich	Regent	Feb 23
Grimsby	Yardbirds	Feb 24
Sutton-in-Ashfield	The Diamond	Feb 25
York	The Duchess	Feb 26
Bilston	Robin 2	Feb 27

ANATHEMA

Durham	Live Lounge	Feb 9
Glasgow	Cathouse	Feb 10
Sheffield	Academy	Feb 11
Nottingham	Rescue Rooms	Feb 12
Leamington Spa	Assembly Hall	Feb 14
Manchester	Academy 3	Feb 15
Wolverhampton	Slade Rooms	Feb 16
London	King's Cross Scala	Feb 17

IAN ANDERSON UNPLUGGED

Shrewsbury	Theatre Severn	Sep 3
Gloucester	Guildhall	Sep 4
Northampton	The Deco	Sep 5
Bristol	St George's	Sep 6
Exeter	Corn Exchange	Sep 7
Hayes	Beck Theatre	Sep 9
London	Highbury Union Chapel	Sep 10
Camberley	Camberley Theatre	Sep 11
Buxton	Opera House	Sep 18
Gateshead	The Sage	Sep 19
York	Opera House	Sep 20
Grimsby	Central Hall	Sep 21
Burnley	Mechanics	Sep 22

ANGELS & AIRWAVES

Glasgow	ABC	Feb 1
Manchester	Academy	Feb 2
Birmingham	Academy	Feb 3
London	Kentish Town Forum	Feb 4

ANGRA

London	Islington Academy	Feb 26

THE ANIMALS & FRIENDS

Kingston	Kingsmeadow Stadium	Mar 26

AVENGED SEVENFOLD, SYSTEM OF A DOWN, MORE

Donington Park	Download Festival	Jun 10-12

BIG COUNTRY

Newcastle	Academy	Jan 5
London	Islington Academy	Jan 6
Birmingham	Academy	Jan 7
Liverpool	Academy	Jan 8
Portsmouth	Pyramid Centre	Apr 8
Manchester	Academy 2	Apr 9
Oxford	Academy	Apr 10
Cambridge	Junction	Apr 11
Norwich	Waterfront	Apr 12
Bristol	Academy	Apr 14
London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Apr 15
Leeds	Academy	Apr 16
Sheffield	Academy 2	Apr 17
Dublin	The Academy	Apr 19
Belfast	Spring & Airbrake	Apr 20

BLACKFIELD

Leamington Spa	Assembly Hall	Apr 6
Manchester	Academy 2	Apr 7
London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Apr 8

BLACK LABEL SOCIETY, GODSIZED

Birmingham	Academy	Feb 14
Newcastle	Academy	Feb 15
Glasgow	Academy	Feb 16
Cambridge	Corn Exchange	Feb 18
Southampton	Guildhall	Feb 19
London	Hammersmith Apollo	Feb 21
Manchester	Apollo	Feb 22
Bristol	Colston Hall	Feb 23

BLINK 182, YOU ME AT SIX

Birmingham	NIA Arena	Jul 1
Liverpool	Echo Arena	Jul 4
Sheffield	Motorpoint Arena	Jul 7
Manchester	MEN Arena	Jul 8
Newcastle	Arena	Jul 12
Nottingham	Arena	Jul 13
Birmingham	LG Arena	Jul 15
Cardiff	CIA	Jul 16
London	O2 Arena	Jul 18/19

COLIN BLUNSTONE BAND

Cardiff	The Globe	Feb 3
Wavendon	The Stables	Feb 8
Southampton	The Brook	Feb 9
Bilston	Robin 2	Feb 10
Glasgow	The Ferry	Feb 11
Kinross	Green Hotel	Feb 12
Liverpool	Stanley Theatre	Feb 13
Chislehurst	Beaverwood Club	Feb 17
Sutton	Boom Boom Club	Feb 18
Deal	Astor Theatre	Feb 19

BON JOVI

Edinburgh	Murrayfield	Jun 22
Manchester	Old Trafford Cricket Ground	Jun 24
Hyde Park Calling	London	Jun 25

GARY BROOKER, WALTER TROUT, MORE

Blues On The Farm festival	Chichester	June 17-19

CHILDREN OF BODOM, AMON AMARTH

Norwich	UEA	Apr 1
Manchester	Academy	Apr 2
Glasgow	Vicar Street	Apr 3
Dublin	Vicar Street	Apr 5
Nottingham	Rock City	Apr 7
Birmingham	Academy	Apr 8
London	Kentish Town Forum	Apr 9

ERIC CLAPTON

Dublin	O2 Arena	May 9
Belfast	Odyssey Arena	May 10
Glasgow	SECC	May 12
Cardiff	CIA	May 14/15
London	Royal Albert Hall	May 17/18, 23/24

ERIC CLAPTON & STEVE WINWOOD

London	Wembley Arena	May 20/21
London	Royal Albert Hall	May 26/27, 29/30

HUGH CORNWELL

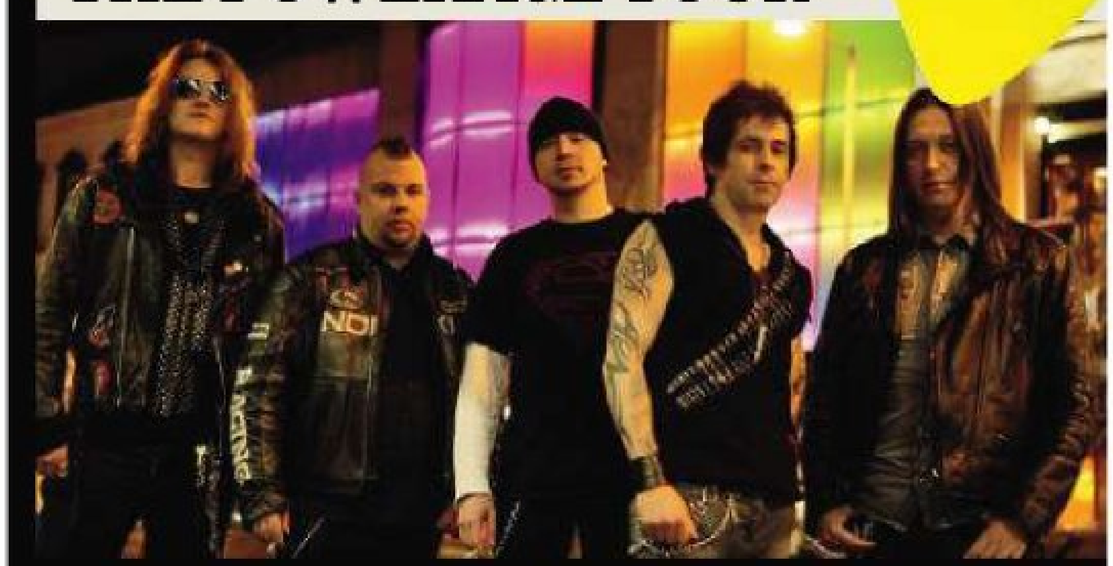
Portsmouth	South Parade Pier	Apr 6
Gateshead	The Sage	Apr 7
Manchester	Academy	Apr 8
Glasgow	Academy	Apr 9
Sheffield	Academy	Apr 10
Clitheroe	The Grand	Apr 12
Leamington	Assembly	Apr 13
Bath	Komedia	Apr 14
Wolverhampton	Slade Rooms	Apr 15
London	Islington Academy	Apr 16
Brighton	Komedia	Apr 17

CROWBAR

Colchester	Arts Centre	Jan 13
Oxford	Academy	Jan 14
Bristol	Academy	Jan 15
Leeds	Cockpit	Jan 16
Newcastle	Academy 2	Jan 17
Glasgow	King Tut's Wah Wah Hut	Jan 18
Manchester	Academy 3	Jan 19
London	Camden Underworld	Jan 20

THE POWERAGE TOUR

Classic Rock Recommends



Skint after Christmas? How does New Device, Lethargy, Million $ Reload and The Treatment for FREE sound?

Margate	Wescoast Bar	Feb 22
Grimsby	Yardbirds Club	Feb 23
London	Camden Underworld	Feb 24
Poole	Chords	Feb 25
Manchester	Moho Live	Feb 26
Sheffield	Corporation Front Room	Feb 28
Newcastle	The Other Rooms	Mar 1
Glasgow	Ivory Blacks	Mar 2
Wrexham	Central Station	Mar 3
Nuneaton	Queens Hall	Mar 4
Nottingham	Rock City Basement	Mar 5

Birmingham	Academy 2	Jan 21

THE CULT, MASTERS OF REALITY

Leeds	Academy	Jan 18
Bristol	Academy	Jan 19
London	Hammersmith Apollo	Jan 21
Cambridge	Corn Exchange	Jan 22
Bournemouth	Academy	Jan 23
Nottingham	Rock City	Jan 25
Wolverhampton	Civic Hall	Jan 26
Newcastle	Academy	Jan 27
Glasgow	Academy	Jan 29
Manchester	Academy	Jan 30

THE CURE, BRIAN WILSON, MORE

Bestival	Isle of Wight	Sep 8-11

DELAIN, SERENITY

Manchester	Academy 3	Apr 29
London	Islington Academy	Apr 30
Glasgow	Cathouse	May 1
Leamington Spa	Assembly Hall	May 2

DINOSAUR PILE-UP

Bedford	Esquires	Feb 17
Bournemouth	Champions	Feb 18
Brighton	Audio	Feb 19
Tunbridge Wells	Forum	Feb 20
Cambridge	Haymakers	Feb 22
Birmingham	Academy 3	Feb 23
London	Highbury Garage	Feb 24
Bristol	Academy 2	Feb 25
Glasgow	King Tut's Wah Wah Hut	Feb 27
Newcastle	Academy 2	Feb 28
Leeds	Cockpit 2	Mar 2
Manchester	Roadhouse	Mar 3
York	Duchess	Mar 4
Southampton	Joiner's Arms	Mar 5

ENSLAVED

London	Camden Underworld	Apr 22

EPICA

Bilston	Robin 2	Mar 10
Nottingham	Rescue Rooms	Mar 11
Sheffield	Corporation	Mar 12
Manchester	Moho Live	Mar 13
London	King's Cross Scala	Mar 15

EUROPE, VOODOO JOHNSON

Glasgow	Academy	Feb 17
Birmingham	Academy	Feb 18
London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Feb 19
Oxford	Academy	Feb 21
Bournemouth	Academy	Feb 22
Bristol	Academy	Feb 23
Manchester	Academy 2	Feb 25
Leeds	Academy	Feb 26
Newcastle	Academy	Feb 27

EVILE

Manchester	Academy 3	Feb 9
Newcastle	Academy	Feb 10
Glasgow	Cathouse	Feb 11
Nottingham	Rescue Rooms	Feb 12
London	Camden Underworld	Feb 13

FAIRPORT CONVENTION, HAYSEED DIXIE, MORE

Acoustic Festival	Uttoxeter Racecourse	May 20-22

FEEDER

Belfast	Spring & Airbrake	Feb 4
Dublin	Academy	Feb 5
Liverpool	Academy	Feb 7
Leeds	Academy	Feb 8
Dundee	Fat Sam's	Feb 10
Middlesbrough	Empire	Feb 11
Manchester	Academy	Feb 13
Nottingham	Rock City	Feb 14
Cambridge	Junction	Feb 16
Leamington Spa	Assembly Hall	Feb 17
Portsmouth	Pyramid Centre	Feb 19
London	Chalk Farm Roundhouse	Feb 20

FIREWIND

London	Highbury Garage	Jan 7

THE FLAMING LIPS

London	Alexandra Palace	Jul 1

Recommended

FOO FIGHTERS

Isle of Wight Festival		Jun 11
Milton Keynes	Bowl	Jul 2/3

TO BE RETAINED ISSUED SUBJECT TO THE CONDITIONS ON BACK

PETER FRAMPTON

Leamington Spa	Assembly Hall	Mar 1
Glasgow	ABC	Mar 2
Manchester	Academy 2	Mar 3
London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Mar 5
Bristol	Academy	Mar 6

FUNERAL FOR A FRIEND, RISE TO REMAIN

Aberystwyth	Arts Centre	Mar 16
Buckley	The Tivoli	Mar 17

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Storekeeper

Penrith	Eden Arts Centre	Mar 18
Edinburgh	Bongo Club	Mar 19
Glasgow	King Tut's Wah Wah Hut	Mar 20
Bury St Edmunds	The Apex	Mar 22
Birmingham	Academy 2	Mar 23
Manchester	Academy 3	Mar 24
London	Highbury Garage	Mar 25
Liverpool	Academy	Mar 27
Stoke-on-Trent	The Sugarmill	Mar 28
Wakefield	Black Flag	Mar 29
Durham	Live Lounge	Mar 30
Poole	Chords	Apr 1
Saltash	Livewire	Apr 2
High Wycombe	Academy Of Music & Art	Apr 3
Wrexham	Central Station	Apr 4

GOOD CHARLOTTE

Dublin	Academy	Feb 4
Southampton	Guildhall	Feb 6
Norwich	UEA	Feb 7
Bristol	Academy	Feb 8
Cardiff	University	Feb 10
Leeds	Academy	Feb 11
Newcastle	Academy	Feb 12
Glasgow	Academy	Feb 14
Manchester	Academy	Feb 15
Birmingham	Academy	Feb 17
London	Chalk Farm Roundhouse	Feb 18

THE GRACIOUS FEW

London	Camden Barfly	Jan 27

ROGER HODGSON

London	Royal Albert Hall	May 25
Gateshead	The Sage	May 27
Glasgow	Pavilion	May 28
Liverpool	Philharmonic Hall	May 29

Recommended

IGGY & THE STOOGES

Evolution Festival	Newcastle	May 28/29

TO BE RETAINED — ISSUED SUBJECT TO THE CONDITIONS ON BACK

IMMORTAL, MORBID ANGEL, TRIPTYKON, MORE

Bloodstock Festival	Derbyshire	Aug 12-14

IRON MAIDEN

Glasgow	SECC	Jul 20
Aberdeen	AECC	Jul 21
Newcastle	Metro Radio Arena	Jul 23
Sheffield	Motorpoint Arena	Jul 24
Nottingham	Trent FM Arena	Jul 27
Manchester	MEN Arena	Jul 28
Birmingham	NIA	Jul 31
Cardiff	CIA Arena	Aug 1
Belfast	Odyssey Arena	Aug 3
London	O2 Arena	Aug 5/6

ELTON JOHN

London	Total Opera House	Jan 28
Cardiff	CIA	Jun 8/9
Glasgow	SECC	Jun 10
Shrewsbury	Greenhous Meadow	Jun 12
Douglas (IoM)	Valhalla Tent	Jun 16
Northamptonshire	Country Cricket Ground	Jun 25
Hove	Sussex Cricket Ground	Jun 26

THE JIM JONES REVUE

Nottingham	Rescue Rooms	Mar 27
Edinburgh	Bongo Club	Mar 28
Glasgow	King Tut's Wah Wah Club	Mar 29
Newcastle	Academy 2	Mar 30
Leeds	Cockpit	Mar 31
Sheffield	Plug	Apr 2
Birmingham	Academy 2	Apr 3
Bristol	Thekla	Apr 12
Brighton	Concorde 2	Apr 13
London	Camden Koko	Apr 14
Norwich	Waterfront	Apr 16
Manchester	Club Academy	Apr 17

JOURNEY, FOREIGNER, STYX

London	Wembley Arena	Jun 4

HAMMERFEST III

Accept, Biohazard and Satyricon (above) head up a weekend with more metal than a battalion of tanks.

Hammerfest III	Prestatyn Pontin's Holiday Village	Mar 18-20

Birmingham	NIA	Jun 5
Newcastle	Metro Radio Arena	Jun 7
Manchester	Evening News Arena	Jun 8
Glasgow	SECC	Jun 9

KAMELOT

London	Camden Koko	Apr 28

KYUSS LIVES

Nottingham	Rock City	Mar 31
Wolverhampton	Wulfrun Hall	Apr 1
London	Kentish Town Forum	Apr 2/3
Glasgow	ABC	Apr 4
Manchester	Academy	Apr 5
Bristol	Academy	Apr 6

THE LEVELLERS

Dublin	Academy	Mar 3
Liverpool	Academy	Mar 4
Cambridge	Corn Exchange	Mar 5
Lincoln	Engine Shed	Mar 6
Bournemouth	Academy	Mar 8
Bristol	Academy	Mar 9
Leeds	Academy	Mar 10
Glasgow	Barrowland	Mar 11
Nottingham	Rock City	Mar 12
Newcastle	Academy	Mar 13
Southampton	Guildhall	Mar 15
Norwich	UEA	Mar 16
Birmingham	Academy	Mar17
Manchester	Academy	Mar 18
London	Brixton Academy	Mar 19

LIFEHOUSE

Dublin	Academy	Feb 20
Glasgow	ABC	Feb 21
Manchester	Academy	Feb 22
Birmingham	Institute	Feb 23
London	Chalk Farm Roundhouse	Feb 25

LITTLE CAESAR

London	Camden Underworld	Jan 30

STEVE LUKATHER

Leamington Spa	Assembly Hall	Mar 17
Manchester	Academy	Mar 18
Holmfirth	Picturedrome	Mar 19

MAGNUM

Glasgow	The Garage	Apr 13
Newcastle	Academy	Apr 14
Liverpool	Stanley Theatre	Apr 16
Leamington	Assembly Spa Hall	Apr 17
Norwich	Waterfront	Apr 19
Sheffield	Corporation	Apr 20
Holmfirth	Picturedome	Apr 22
Wolverhampton	Wulfrun Hall	Apr 23
Southampton	The Brook	Apr 24
Nottingham	Rock City	Apr 27
Manchester	Academy 2	Apr 28
Treorchi	Park & Dare	Apr 29
London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Apr 30
Bristol	Academy	May 1

MARSEILLE

Southampton	Joiners Arms	Jan 29

RICHARD MARX

London	Royal Albert Hall	May 31

Recommended

IMELDA MAY

Dublin	Vicar Street	Jan 31/Feb 1
Birmingham	Institute	Feb 8
Norwich	Waterfront	Feb 9
Newcastle	Academy	Feb 11
Leeds	Academy	Feb 12
Edinburgh	Liquid Rooms	Feb 13
Glasgow	ABC	Feb 15
Bristol	Colston Hall	Feb 17
Southampton	Guildhall	Feb 18
Nottingham	Rock City	Feb 19

TO BE RETAINED — ISSUED SUBJECT TO THE CONDITIONS ON BACK

MIKE + THE MECHANICS

Hull	City Hall	Apr 27
Doncaster	Dome	Apr 28
Bradford	St George's Hall	Apr 30
York	Opera House	May 1
Oxford	New Theatre	May 3
Nottingham	Royal Concert Hall	May 5
Bournemouth	BICC	May 8
London	Royal Albert Hall	May 9
Portsmouth	Guildhall	May 11
Brighton	Centre	May 12
Bristol	Colston Hall	May 13
Plymouth	Pavilion	May 15
Cardiff	CIA	May 17
Ipswich	Regent Theatre	May 18
Manchester	Apollo	May 20
Blackpool	Opera House	May 21
Liverpool	Empire	May 22
Edinburgh	Playhouse	May 24
Glasgow	Clyde Auditorium	May 25
Gateshead	Sage	May 26
Sheffield	City Hall	May 28
Birmingham	Symphony Hall	May 29

LARRY MILLER

Swindon	Arts Centre	Jan 21
Newbury	Corn Exchange	Jan 27
Wavendon	Stables	Jan 28
Skegness	Blues/Rock Festival	Jan 29
Pontedawe	Arts Centre	Feb 3
Grimsby	Yardbirds Club	Feb 11
Derby	The Flowerpot	Feb 12
Andover	Lights	Feb 25
Frome	Cheese & Grain	Feb 26
Poole	Mr Kyp's	Feb 27

MOGWAI

Stirling	Tolbooth	Jan 26
Paisley	Town Hall	Jan 27
Perth	Perth Theatre	Jan 28
Aberdeen	Lemon Tree	Jan 29
Glasgow	Grand Ole Opry	Jan 30
Belfast	Mandela Hall	Feb 13
Galway	Live Lounge	Feb 14
Dublin	Olympia	Feb 15
Bournemouth	Academy	Feb 17
Cardiff	University	Feb 18
Bristol	Academy	Feb 19
Leeds	Academy	Feb 20
Edinburgh	Picturehouse	Feb 21
Oxford	The Regal	Feb 23
Birmingham	Institute	Feb 24
London	Brixton Academy	Feb 25
Manchester	Academy	Feb 26
Gateshead	The Sage	Feb 27

MICHAEL MONROE

Brighton	Concorde 2	Apr 4
Bristol	Academy 2	Apr 5
Exeter	Phoenix	Apr 6
Portsmouth	Wedgewood Rooms	Apr 7
London	Islington Academy	Apr 8
Leeds	TJ's	Apr 9
Norwich	Waterfront	Apr 11
Newcastle	Academy 2	Apr 12
Sheffield	Corporation	Apr 13
Manchester	Academy 3	Apr 14
Glasgow	Garage	Apr 15
Nottingham	Rock City	Apr 16
Birmingham	Institute	Apr 17

MURDERDOLLS, BLACK VEIL BRIDES, THE DEFILED

Portsmouth	Pyramid Centre	Feb 2
Norwich	Waterfront	Feb 3
Bristol	Academy	Feb 4
Sheffield	Corporation	Feb 5
Wolverhampton	Wulfrun Hall	Feb 7
Middlesbrough	Empire	Feb 8
Glasgow	ABC	Feb 10
Manchester	Academy 2	Feb 11
London	Kentish Town Forum	Feb 12
Nottingham	Rock City	Feb 13
Exeter	Lemon Grove	Feb 14

MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE

London	Wembley Arena	Feb 12
Birmingham	LG Arena	Feb 13
Glasgow	SECC	Feb 15
Manchester	MEN Arena	Feb 18
Nottingham	Trent FM Arena	Feb 19
Cardiff	CIA	Feb 21
Newcastle	Metro Radio Arena	Feb 22

MY RUIN

Bristol	Thekla	Mar 9
Winchester	Railway Inn	Mar 10
London	Camden Underworld	Mar 11
Reading	Sub 89	Mar 12
Wolverhampton	Slade Rooms	Mar 13
Peterborough	Club Revolution	Mar 14
Glasgow	Classic Grand	Mar 15

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Stoneleaf

Leeds	Cockpit	Mar 16
Nottingham	Rock City	Mar 17

POWERAGE TOUR: NEW DEVICE, LETHARGY, MILLION $ RELOAD, THE TREATMENT

Margate	Wescoast Bar	Feb 22
Grimsby	Yardbirds Club	Feb 23
London	Camden Underworld	Feb 24
Poole	Chords	Feb 25
Manchester	Moho Live	Feb 26
Sheffield	Corporation Front Room	Feb 28
Newcastle	The Other Rooms	Mar 1
Glasgow	Ivory Blacks	Mar 2
Wrexham	Central Station	Mar 3
Nuneaton	Queens Hall	Mar 4
Nottingham	Rock City Basement	Mar 5

NILE

Cardiff	Millennium Music Hall	Feb 8
Liverpool	The Masque	Feb 9
Derby	Redemption	Feb 10
Dublin	Button Factory	Feb 11
Belfast	Spring And Airbrake	Feb 12
London	Islington Academy	Feb 13

PALLAS

Aberdeen	The Tunnels	Feb 4
Kingston	The Peel	Feb 5
Wath-upon-Dearne	Montgomery Hall	Mar 5

PARADISE LOST

London	Kentish Town Forum	Apr 1

THE PINEAPPLE THIEF

London	Camden Underworld	Mar 19
Bilston	Robin 2	Mar 20

THE PRETTY THINGS

Bilston	Robin 2	Mar 12

JOE PUG

Dublin	Whelan's	Jan 27
Celtic Connections Festival	Glasgow	Jan 28/29
London	Upstairs At The Garage	Jan 31

Recommended

PAUL RODGERS, JOE ELLOTT'S DOWN 'N' OUTZ

Blackpool	Opera House	Apr 15
Sheffield	City Hall	Apr 16
Newcastle	City Hall	Apr 18
Glasgow	Clyde Auditorium	Apr 9
Manchester	Apollo	Apr 21
Nottingham	Royal Concert Hall	Apr 22
Bournemouth	BIC	Apr 24
Southend-on-Sea	Cliffs Pavilion	Apr 25
London	Royal Albert Hall	Apr 27
Birmingham	NIA	Apr 28

TO BE RETAINED ISSUED SUBJECT TO THE CONDITIONS ON BACK

FRANCIS ROSSI

Birmingham	Town Hall	Feb 1
Salford	The Lowry	Feb 2
Glasgow	ABC	Feb 3
Oxford	Academy	Feb 5
Brighton	Corn Exchange	Feb 6
Norwich	Waterfront	Feb 7
London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Feb 8

ROXY MUSIC

Newcastle	Metro Radio Arena	Jan 25
Glasgow	SECC	Jan 27/29
Manchester	MEN Arena	Jan 30
Birmingham	LG Arena	Jan 31
Nottingham	Trent FM Arena	Feb 2
London	O2 Arena	Feb 7

RUSH

Dublin	O2 Arena	May 12
Glasgow	SECC	May 14
Sheffield	Motorpoint Arena	May 16
Manchester	MEN Arena	May 19
Newcastle	Metro Radio Arena	May 21
Birmingham	LG Arena	May 22

RUSH

If prog's your bag, it doesn't come more impressive than from *Classic Rock*'s Living Legend Award 2010 winners.

Dublin	O2 Arena	May 12	Newcastle	Metro Radio Arena	May 21
Glasgow	SECC	May 14	Birmingham	LG Arena	May 22
Sheffield	Motorpoint Arena	May 16	London	O2 Arena	May 25
Manchester	MEN Arena	May 19			
London	O2 Arena	May 25			

SAXON, WOLFSBANE, FURY UK

Leamington Spa	Assembly Hall	Apr 9
Nottingham	Rock City	Apr 10
Whitehaven	Civic Hall	Apr 11
Manchester	Academy 2	Apr 13
Glasgow	ABC	Apr 14
Newcastle	Academy	Apr 15
Leeds	Academy	Apr 17
Wolverhampton	Wulfrun Hall	Apr 18
Bristol	Academy	Apr 19
Falmouth	Princess Pavilion	Apr 21
Bournemouth	Academy	Apr 22
London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Apr 23

SIMPLE MINDS

Goudhurst	Bedgebury Pinetum & Forest	Jun 10
Suffolk	Thetford Forest	Jun 11
Tetbury	Westonbirt Arboretum	Jun 17
Sherwood Pines	Forest Park	Jun 18
Pickering	Dalby Forest	Jun 24
Rugeley	Cannock Chase Forest	Jun 25
Cheshire	Delamere Forest	Jul 3

SKINDRED

Brighton	Concorde 2	Apr 26
Portsmouth	Pyramid Centre	Apr 27
Norwich	Waterfront	Apr 29
Wolverhampton	Wulfrun Hall	Apr 29
Nottingham	Rock City	Apr 30
Exeter	Lemon Grove	May 2
Cardiff	University Solus	May 3
Poole	Chords	May 4
Liverpool	Academy	May 5
Sheffield	Corporation	May 6
London	Kentish Town Forum	May 7

SLIPKNOT, MORE

Sonisphere Festival	Knebworth	Jul 8-10

STRANGLERS

Newcastle	Academy	Mar 4
Glasgow	Academy	Mar 5
Edinburgh	Picturehouse	Mar 6
Liverpool	Academy	Mar 8
Nottingham	Rock City	Mar 9
London	Hammersmith Apollo	Mar 11
Leeds	Academy	Mar 12
Leicester	Academy	Mar 13
Oxford	The Regal	Mar 15
Cambridge	Corn Exchange	Mar 17
Brighton	Dome	Mar 18
Birmingham	Academy	Mar 19
Norwich	UEA	Mar 21
Portsmouth	Pyramid Centre	Mar 22
Bristol	Academy	Mar 24
Sheffield	Academy	Mar 25
Manchester	Academy	Mar 26

SYMPHONY X

London	King's Cross Scala	Mar 22
Bilston	Robin 2	Mar 23
Sheffield	Corporation	Mar 24

TAKING DAWN

Glasgow	Garage	Jan 28
Leeds	Cockpit	Jan 30
London	Camden Barfly	Jan 31
Wolverhampton	Slade Rooms	Feb 1
Colchester	Arts Centre	Feb 2
Portsmouth	Wedgewood Rooms	Feb 3
Newcastle	Academy	Feb 4
Oxford	Academy	Feb 5
Liverpool	Academy 2	Feb 6
Glasgow	King Tut's Wah Wah Hut	Feb 7

TERRORVISION

Newcastle	Riverside	Feb 24
Leeds	Cockpit	Feb 25
Norwich	Waterfront	Feb 26
Nottingham	Rock City	Feb 27
London	Electric Ballroom	Mar 3
Southampton	The Brook	Mar 4
Manchester	Academy 2	Mar 5
Glasgow	Garage	Mar 6

THIN LIZZY, SUPERSUCKERS

Aberdeen	Music Hall	Jan 6
Glasgow	Academy	Jan 7
Newcastle	City Hall	Jan 8
Leeds	Academy	Jan 10
Llandudno	Theatre	Jan 11
Leicester	De Montfort Hall	Jan 12
Wolverhampton	Civic Hall	Jan 14
Manchester	Apollo	Jan 15
Bristol	Colston Hall	Jan 16
Southampton	Guildhall	Jan 18
Ipswich	Regent	Jan 19
Cambridge	Corn Exchange	Jan 21
London	Hammersmith Apollo	Jan 22
London	Indig02	Jan 23
Belfast	Waterfront Hall	Feb 16
Dublin	Olympia Theatre	Feb 17

THREE BONZOS AND A PIANO

Wavendon	The Stables	Jan 30
Ruislip	The Tropic	Feb 4
Southampton	Talking Heads	Feb 12
Coventry	Warwick Arts Centre	Feb 13
Bury	The Met	Mar 4
Warrington	The Pyramid	Mar 5
Norwich	Maddermarket Theatre	Apr 2
Tavistock	The Wharf	May 13
Penzance	The Ritz	May 14
Bristol	The Thekla	May 15
Newbury	Artlington Arts Centre	May 20
Tring	Court Theatre	Jun 10
Sheffield	Boardwalk	Jun 25
Salford	The Lowry	Jun 26

TOTO

London	Hammersmith Apollo	Jun 26

DEVIN TOWNSEND PROJECT

Southampton	Cube	Mar 3
Bristol	Fleece & Firkin	Mar 4
Nottingham	Rock City	Mar 5
Manchester	Academy 3	Mar 6
Glasgow	Garage	Mar 7
London	Islington Academy	Mar 26

MARTIN TURNER'S WISHBONE ASH

Swindon	Arts Centre	Feb 7
Letchworth	Plinston Hall	Mar 5
Kinross	The Green Hotel	Mar 9
Liverpool	Stanley Theatre	Mar 11
Sutton	Boom Boom Club	Mar 12
Sale	Trafford Waterside Arts Centre	Mar 16
Cardiff	The Globe	Mar 17
Bilston	Robin 2	Mar 25
Andover	The Lights	Mar 26
Worcester	Huntingdon Halls	Apr 9

VAN DER GRAAF GENERATOR

Leamington Spa	Assembly Hall	Mar 24
Glasgow	ABC	Mar 25
Manchester	Academy 3	Mar 26
London	Barbican Centre	Mar 27
Cambridge	Junction	Mar 28

WARRIOR SOUL

Birmingham	Academy 3	Mar 26
London	IslingtonAcademy	Mar 27
Dublin	Crawdaddy	Mar 28

THE WATERBOYS

Glasgow	Royal Concert Hall	Jan 30
Liverpool	Philharmonic Hall	Feb 1
Coventry	Warwick Arts Centre	Feb 2
London	Barbican Centre	Feb 3/4

ROGER WATERS

London	O2 Arena	May 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18
Manchester	MEN Arena	May 20/21, Jun 28
Dublin	O2 Arena	May 23/24
Birmingham	NIA	Jun 27

BRIAN WILSON

Manchester	Bridgwater Hall	Sep 13
Birmingham	Symphony hall	Sep 14
London	Royal Festival Hall	Sep 16, 17, 18

WIRE

Brighton	Komedia	Feb 1
London	King's Cross Scala	Feb 2
Nottingham	Rescue Rooms	Feb 3
Manchester	Deaf Institute	Feb 4
Dublin	Academy 2	Feb 5
Belfast	Sopring & Airbrake	Feb 6
Edinburgh	Cabaret Voltaire	Feb 8
Glasgow	King Tut's Wah Wah Hut	Feb 9
Bristol	Fleece & Firkin	Feb 10

WISHBONE ASH

London	Islington Academy	Mar 31

WITHIN TEMPTATION

Birmingham	Academy	Nov 8
Manchester	Academy	Nov 9
Glasgow	Barrowland	Nov 10
London	Brixton Academy	Nov 11

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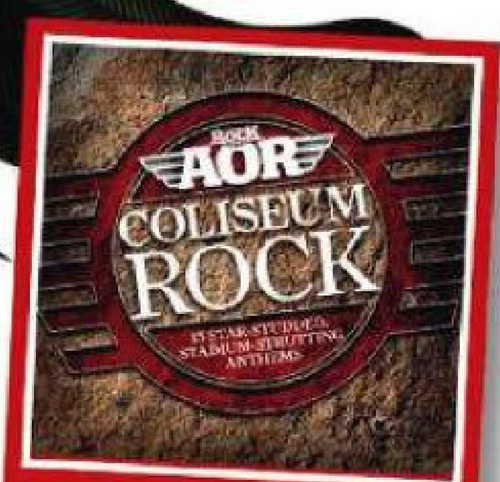

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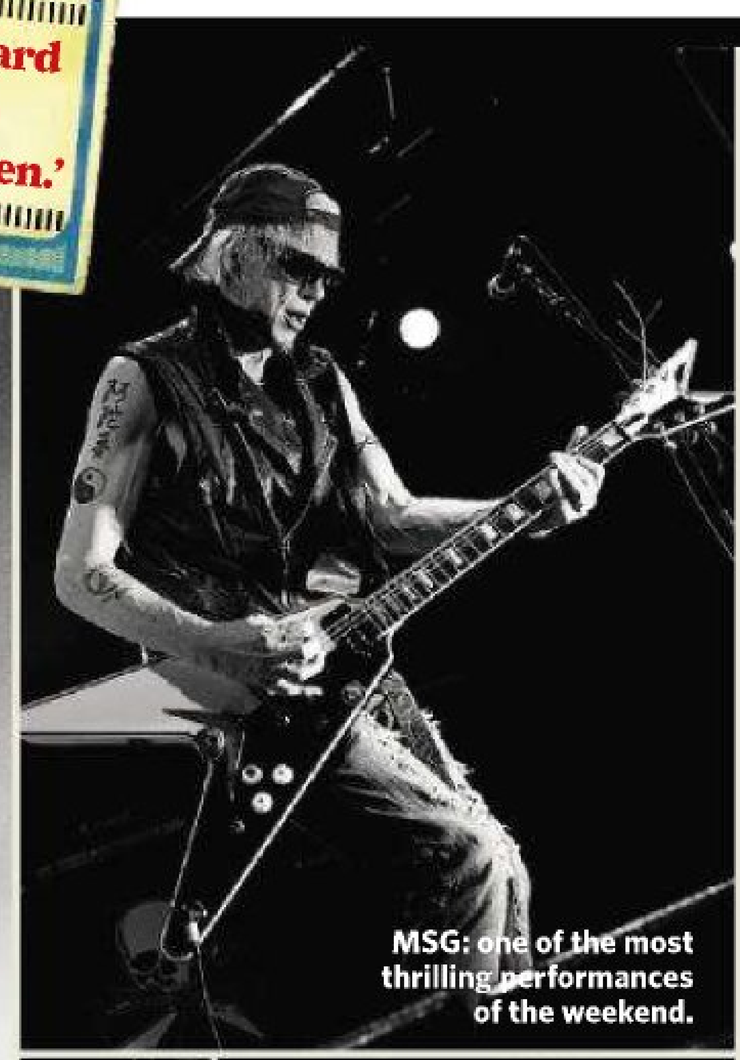
LIVE!

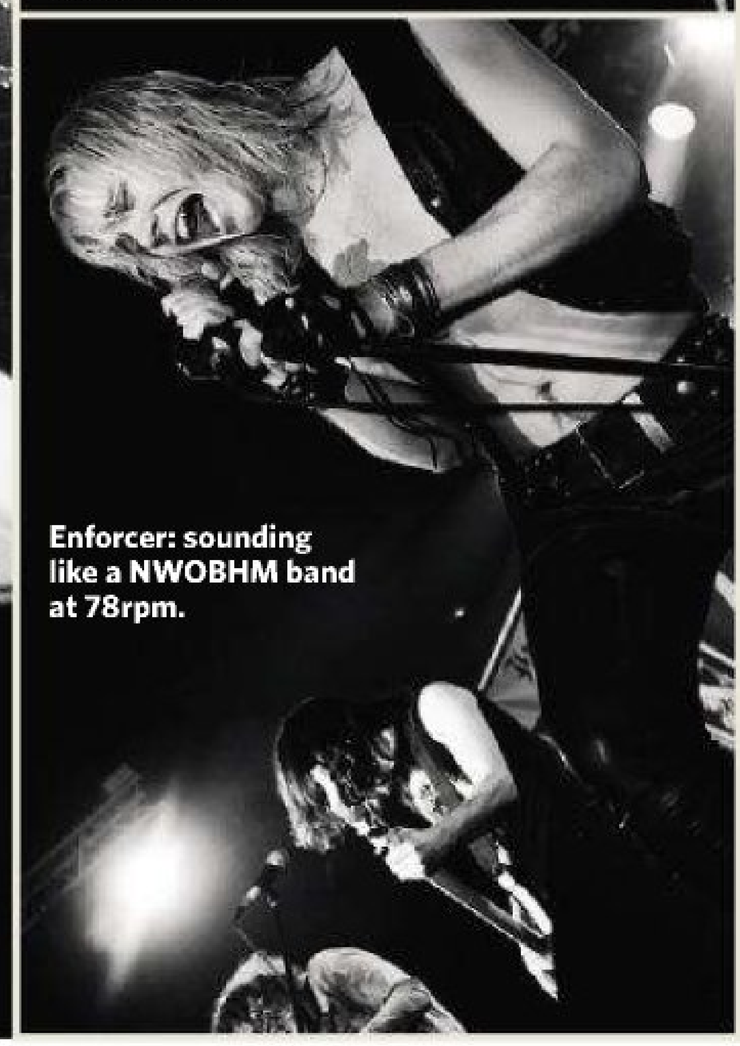
Airbourne: a thudding, gutsy, good-time vibe.

'Saxon turned Hard Rock Hell into heavy-metal Heaven.'



MSG: one of the most thrilling performances of the weekend.

UFO: taking off and flying in style.



Enforcer: sounding like a NWOBHM band at 78rpm.

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Stored/Kaff

Tigertailz: their brief burst of success remains a mystery.

Kobra And The Lotus: bring 'em back soon!

Uriah Heep: a heap of top tunes.

KEVIN NIXON

Hard Rock Hell IV

Prestatyn

At the fourth annual winter rock-out, the old dogs have most of the best tricks.

THURSDAY

★ Judging by the Niagara-like flow of beery effluvium in the piss troughs, this year's Hard Rock Hell is well underway by the Thursday night, and the pirate-themed pre-party has brought out scallywags and wenches in force.

The words 'glam' and 'Wales' have never sat together comfortably, so **Tigertailz**' brief burst of slight success in the 90s seems all the more remarkable. Attempting to relive their moment in the sun is probably unwise, but by the time *Love Bomb Baby* booms out everyone's too pissed to complain.

Gentlemens Pistols, those ass-shaking rockers supercharged by Bill Steer's mighty fret-play, simply shit hooks and good tunes. *Heavy Petting, The Lady* – they're latter-day classics, and it's the perfect kick-off to the weekend's headache-inducing festivities.

FRIDAY

★ Although NWOBHM survivors **Diamond Head** don't deliver the most glittering set they've ever turned in, there's enough adamantine riffage in the likes of *Sucking My Love* and immortal anthem *Am I Evil?* to elevate a workmanlike performance to a level above the mundane.

If Diamond Head's career is an object lesson in snatching failure from the jaws of success, spare a thought for **Jaguar**, **Elixir** and the recently re-formed **Battleaxe**, a trio of NWOBHM also-rans defying history and having the time of their lives on the third (i.e. pub) stage. Dutch, Belgians and (inevitably) Greeks have travelled here specially to see what could easily be an afternoon down the Broadway Hotel in Morecambe or the Coach And Horses in West Bromwich circa 1980 were in not for the thinning thatches and expanding waistlines of the assembled time travellers.

They're a tough audience – when you're old enough to have seen some of rock's greatest acts you tend to be – and some seem bemused, even irritated by **Enforcer**'s almost insane ebullience, until it suddenly dawns on the majority that the Swedes do, after all, sound like a NWOBHM band at 78rpm, and everything's actually okay.

Kobra And The Lotus are a fire-breathing, female-fronted heavy metal bombshell. Classic, Priest-loving riffs. Powerhouse drummer. Singer who can belt the Halfordian high-notes. Sound issues and an unfortunate overlap with UFO on the main stage muffle their sterling efforts somewhat, but these Canadian headbangers can't return soon enough for us.

UFO and **Uriah Heep** pretty much sum up the spirit of Hard Rock Hell. As much as the next generation, epitomised by Airbourne, take centre stage, the wily old tricksters on the bill are afforded the kind of reception they rarely receive elsewhere. It's like the 90s – and most of the 80s, for that matter – never even happened. UFO, whether belting out rollicking numbers such as *Only You Can Rock Me* or dimming the lights for a heartfelt rendition of *Love To Love*, take off and fly in style. Heep's set is similarly diverse and a reminder of just how many top tunes they've got in that 'eavy arsenal. Despite the high quality of their recent studio output, it's the Byron years that conjure the most powerful magic, and, as usual, the band peak on the gorgeous *July Morning* which is a truly stunning set-piece.

Airbourne are popular across the board, it seems, with all ages getting behind the Aussies' headlong, booze-fuelled charge to rock glory. AC/DC probably won't be with us much longer, is it time to forget the unfavourable comparisons and just embrace Airbourne's thudding, gutsy, good-time vibe? Their raucous tales of hard rockin', hard drinkin' and having nothing left to lose aren't about to win a Pulitzer Prize any time soon, but it's difficult to give a shit about that when they're bashing your brains out with such gleeful abandon. Frontman Joel O'Keeffe pulls his usual stunt, performing a death-defying climb to the top of the lighting rig and, somehow, back again. Oh how we'd love to see Phil Mogg or Mick Box try that one.

In many people's eyes **Skid Row** may be just karaoke without Sebasiatan Bach, but you can't argue with their renditions of *Youth Gone Wild* and *18 And Life*. On the other hand, their extended guitar jam mid-*Monkey Business* is like watching a morbidly obese, middle-aged version of that chick who once stole your heart taking a runny dump.

SATURDAY

★ For Iron Maiden fans, the urge to see former frontman **Paul DiAnno** is irrepressible. One of the first acts to hit the main stage today, his set is a passable affair, *Prowler* and *Wrathchild* being curious highlights rather than climaxes, and proves that Bruce Dickinson is still right where he should be, because nothing else DiAnno plays comes close.

It clears a path for **Helloween** to scoop the trophy. Andi Deris's operatic, horn-conjuring delivery turns tunes like *Are You Metal*, power metal masterpiece *I'm Alive* and set-closer *Dr. Stein* into gospel revery. Its turns out to be one of the best performances of the weekend, and the German power metal overlords have far more pillaging in them yet.

Enuff Z'Nuff's worries that there wouldn't be much of an audience turning out for their early-afternoon second-stage set prove to be unnecessary, and their finely crafted songs, including fan-favourites *Fly High Michelle* and *New Thing*, along with a groovily weighty cover of The Beatles' *Come Together*, brought warm applause from the audience, most of whom were in desperate need of a good tune, having previously endured **Pretty Boy Floyd**'s dismal performance, the only key singer Steve 'Sex' Summers carrying being the one to his front door.

Stratovarius are almost too polished for the confines of the second stage. Their progressive-tinged power-metal gusto gets a hearty response, but it's likely that most of the audience are passing the time before the Michael Schenker Group take to the main stage next door.

MSG deliver one of the most thrilling performances of the weekend. Bending his headstock for some wicked whammy effects, and with no apparent limit to the amount of virtuoso soloing he can pack into a song, this is heady stuff indeed for the metal-loving aficionados who have packed the room to worship the Scorpions founder.

"We bought a four-by-four to be with you tonight," Biff Byford chuckles as **Saxon** take the stage in a blaze of lights and to a sea of raised fists, fresh from an epic journey through the snow from their Leeds studio. And it's a good thing they made it, as their set is a riotous celebration. It's the 30th anniversary year of *Wheels Of Steel*, and the northern hell-raisers are as regal and polished as they've ever been. Opener *Heavy Metal Thunder* immediately has those rammed into the main-stage area at a fever pitch. Predictably, classics like *Princess Of The Night, Motorcycle Man* and *747* are riotous singalongs, and newer material such as encore opener *Battalions Of Steel* dovetail perfectly with the inevitable, orgasmically joyous *Wheels Of Steel* and *Denim And Leather*. Tonight, Saxon have brought us all together and turned Hard Rock Hell into heavy-metal Heaven.

Alexander Milas, Greg Moffitt and Paul Henderson

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Motörhead / Michael Monroe Band

Leeds O2 Academy

Murder taints a great gig as rock fan murders rock fan.

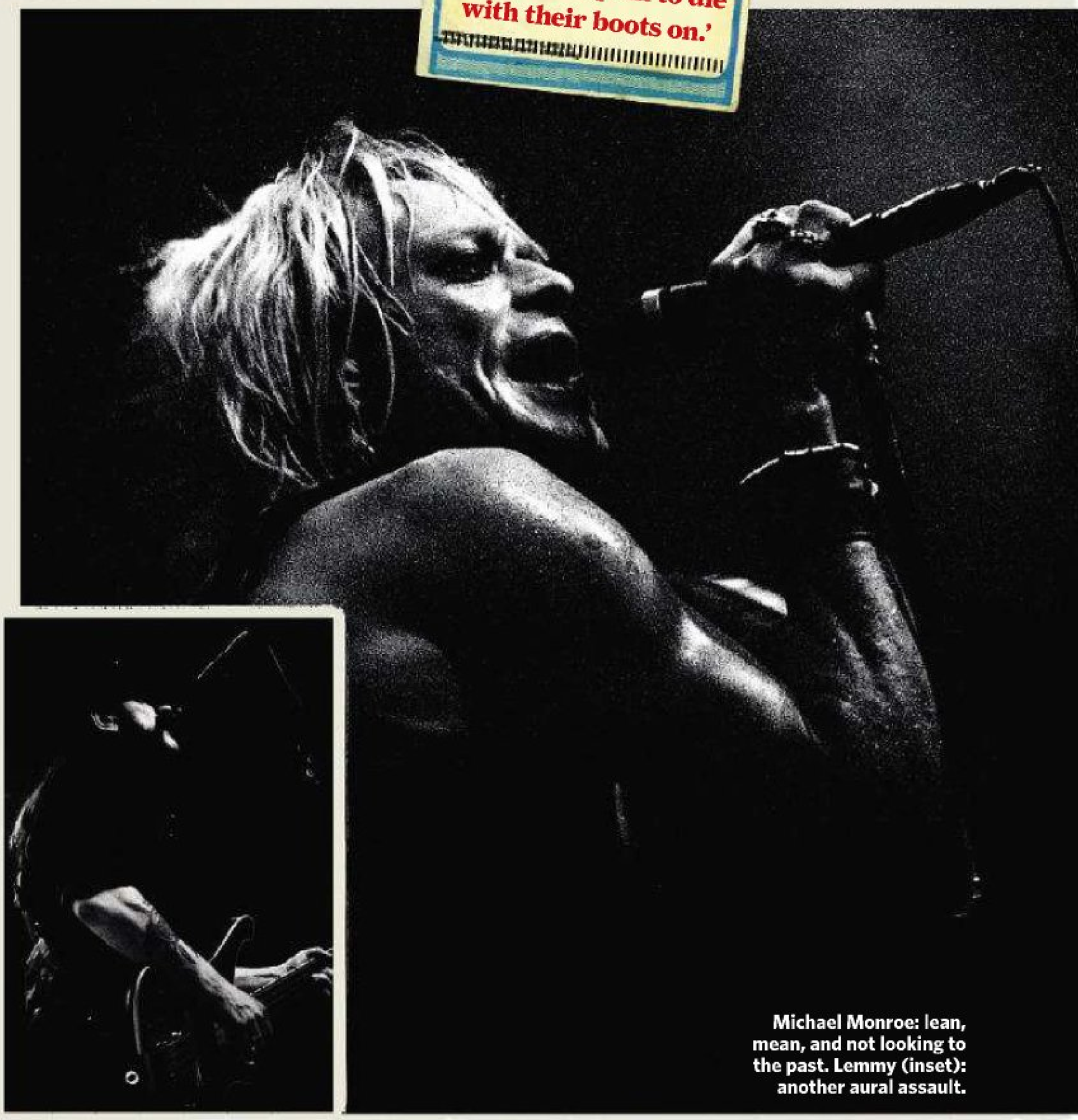
★ It's a gig that will be remembered for anything but the music. Somewhere inside the O2 Academy the cosy idea that rock fans are all brothers, and it's Us Vs The World, is destroyed tonight. The details are sketchy, but it seems that someone set fire to the hair of a friend of a Mr Andrew Crawford. Pissed off – at the very least – the friend leaves. Crawford and his cousin bump into the people allegedly responsible after the gig and he is beaten so severely he dies in the early hours of the following morning. (Police have since arrested and bailed two men in their 20s and are still appealling for witnesses.)

Inside the gig, of course, the bands are unaware of any drama. A lean, mean-looking Michael Monroe – with a band featuring Hanoi Rocks' Sami Yaffa, fellow New York Doll Steve Conte and The Wildhearts' Ginger – kicks out the jams like his life depended on it. Their imminent album promises to be a belter.

Opening with a rousing, valedictory *We Are Motörhead*, Lemmy and co. launch yet another aural assault; in its deafening grip it could be 1981 all over again. Although the set-list – *Over The Top, I Got Mine, Killed By Death* all included – has a nostalgic edge, it's clear that Motörhead have no plans on slowing down.

What the very anti-violence Lemmy must make of tonight's events is a story for another day.

Tom Poak



'It's clear that Motörhead plan to die with their boots on.'

Michael Monroe: lean, mean, and not looking to the past. Lemmy (inset): another aural assault.

AMI BARWELL

Save The 100 Club

London 100 Club

Current and former Stones and a young blueser aid efforts to save a legend.

★ Three generations of Rolling Stones have done their best to prevent the legendary 100 Club from closing. Dick Taylor (the Stones' original bassist forming the Pretty Things), Mick Taylor (guitarist from 1969-1974) and his replacement Ronnie Wood had never played together before. They were brought together by Stephen Dale Petit who had turned his 100 Club gig into a fundraiser.

After Petit's own set that revealed his encyclopedic knowledge of guitar tones as he ran through instrumentals from his *Guitarama* album and spiky blues from his latest record *The Crave*, he brought on the diminutive Dick Taylor and Mick Taylor, the latter playing deft fills on *It's All Good* and *You Shook Me*.

The arrival on stage of Wood injected some star quality immediately, and he rocked through rough-but-ready versions of *Fancy Pants* and *Spoonful*, while Petit delivered rousing versions of *Steppin' Out* and *Shakin' All Over*. The unsung hero of the evening was 80-year-old jazz trombonist Chris Barber, whose blues solos were a revelation to punters and band members alike.

Hugh Fielder

Meat Loaf / Imelda May

Wembley Arena

Rock's Big Bad Wolf and a rockabilly fox cure the Arena's heating problems.

★ It feels like panto season is in full swing with tonight's double bill featuring Imelda May, looking like a promiscuous Snow White, and the Big Bad Wolf of rock'n'roll himself, Meat Loaf.

A cold Wembley Arena gets warm and sweaty very quickly thanks to Ms May and her band of rockabilly troubadours who play a 30-minute set that includes a ferocious *Train Kept A Rollin'* and keeps up a breathtaking pace throughout. Judging by the enthusiastic audience reaction at the end, 2011 could be *Classic Rock* award winner Imelda's year.

Kicking off with *Rocky Horror Show* gem *Hot Patootie (Bless My Soul)* and, with the exception of a three-song suite from new album *Hang Cool Teddy Bear*, it's a non-stop hit-list, including a surprisingly early *Bat*...

"When I left the dressing room I felt like Bon Jovi – and I'm talking about a *young* Bon Jovi," Meat Loaf jokes, obviously elated by the reaction. "Now I feel sixty-three!"

"You're not sixty-three, you're *sexty*-three," responds a backing singer. Boom-boom!

Yup, it's panto season alright.

Peter Makowski

Suede

London O2 Arena

The 'greatest pop group of the 90s' display mettle as well as high cheekbones.

★ With their glam sensibilities and fine bones, Suede are all too often mistaken for fey milksops. In actuality they're as lean and mean an example of a post-punk pop-rock assault force as you're likely to encounter in this drab century. As crescendo machine Richard Oakes cranks up the passion to perpetual fever pitch, Brett Anderson (physically and vocally in the form of his life) thrives on the adulation that greets his every grandstanding gesture. On tonight's evidence there's no more committed frontman currently working a rock audience, and certainly not one equipped with quite so many titanic hooks to reel 'em in with.

It takes a brace of songs before the desk gets the sound into sharp focus, but from *Trash* onwards, Suede are on fire. Anderson's rabble-rousing is constant; the band's pounding passionate commitment total. Rather than the final throes of an after-the-fact reunion, tonight's display could be mistaken for an iconoclastic punk age catalyst, such is Anderson's blazing commitment. As *To The Birds* sends a rare encore soaring, there's not a soul in attendance eager to bid a second farewell to the greatest pop group of the 90s.

Ian Fortnam

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Thin Lizzy

Continued from page 50

couldn't do it at that point. He's looking at me and I'm this picture of health. I'm glowing at this point. And I'm watching him look at me thinking, 'Fucking hell, man, this guy is fucking healthy'. And he's saying things like, 'I'm going to get off the gear, I'm going to get healthy again. I'm going to get back in shape' and I'm saying 'that's exactly what you need to do' because we both know what it takes to get out on the road. You just can't be out there and sustain any sort of level at all when you're that fucked up. He knew it and he knew that I knew it and that's why he was saying those things. But it seemed like he really, really meant it because when he saw how healthy I was, he wanted to be that way too – but [at the same time] he knows he's trapped.

"A lot of our time was spent sitting around talking about old times, old stories, the shit that we did, how we could have and should have improved things, the way that things got recorded in a hurry. Saying 'if we were to do it again, we would do it a little bit differently', those kind of things, friends talking…"

The issue of Lizzy reuniting was talked about, with both agreeing it would be a good idea at some stage in the future. "It was just the health issue at this point, which was a pretty big hurdle. But I didn't see that it was insurmountable… At least I didn't think so at the time. I figured that Phil was that kind of guy, if he really wanted it really bad he was going to go out and get it. He knew how I felt – that we had to be on top form to go out and do this. I was in a positive mood when I left that day.

"But it was really tough for people like him to ask for help because that meant you were weak, especially back in the 80s. He pretty much knew that he couldn't do it himself. It was not going to happen. I couldn't see him actually doing it, although I believed that he really wanted to be well. I didn't see how he was going to do it because of the kind of person he was. He wasn't going to get into seeking help. He was the kind of guy who would never say he was sorry about anything or the kind of guy who would ask anybody for help. So he was really stuck. I just know for me I was fucking desperate and I so badly wanted to come off drugs that I had no problem asking for help."

A few weeks later, that lack of ability to ask for help rebounded on Phil Lynott. On Christmas Day, 1985, Lynott was found collapsed in his bathroom, having fallen getting out of the bath. His wife, Caroline, was called. She drove 100 miles from Bath where she was spending Christmas with their children, Sarah and Cathleen. Assuming that Phil's condition was drug-related, she drove him first to a specialist drugs clinic in Wiltshire, where doctors recommended that he should be admitted to the intensive care unit at Salisbury Infirmary as he was suffering from a medical condition, septicaemia. The infection took hold and he tragically died on January 4, 1986 from heart failure and pneumonia, and the inherent drug problems, after an 11-day fight for his life.

Everyone was shocked at the news. I knew that Jimmy Bain had been due to spend Christmas at Phil's home and now back in Los Angeles, I phoned him with the news. There was a stunned silence as Bain took the news on board. He said little else.

Scott Gorham remembers: "My wife Christine took a call and she went 'Oh my god! No!' And I thought, 'Holy crap, Phil is dead'. I sat down on the stairs of my basement and just cried. It killed me that he wasn't going to be there any more."

"I don't know if shock is the right word, because I had seen him in some states," says Mark Stanway. "With Laurence at the house we'd have to carry him and put him to bed."

Dante Bonutto puts it all in a reasonable perspective: "I was very shocked to hear of his death. You never want to do the last interview with anybody, but I can't be the only person who thinks that it could have been avoided. Perhaps if I had known him better, someone could have had their arm round the guy and said 'What's going on?' The guy needed some help clearly, instead of doing TV shows. I don't know the ins and outs, but I just wonder why there wasn't somebody around to help – or maybe he didn't want that. I feel that it had to be an avoidable situation."

The Thin Lizzy and Phil Lynott legacy is now more powerful than ever. There's a BBC4 documentary in the can, remasters of the albums along with some remixes, and a family trust to look after the heritage after years of it being totally abused with all sorts of dodgy compilation albums available from fly-by-night record labels.

"Most people who knew Phil dream about him. *That's* having an impact."

– Scott Gorham

And, of course, there are the controversial tours that cause so much ire on Thin Lizzy fan sites. As Gorham says: "I sort of have to justify it every time. There are still that hardcore out there who are never going to get it and don't want to get it, and that's okay with me. You have to understand where they are coming from too. In one way, it's kinda cool because that small fraction is such a hardcore base that you have to dig that. You can't hate 'em for it."

But against all adversity, the tours have worked and fill theatres across the land. The next Lizzy tour is this month (January) with the most interesting line-up of all – Gorham joined by Lizzy members Brian Downey and Darren Wharton, Def Leppard's Vivian Campbell on guitar, Ricky Warwick, from the Almighty on vocals and Marco Mendoza, formerly of Whitesnake, on bass.

"Brian Downey came up with the idea of getting together again," the Lizzy guitarist adds. "Then Joe Elliott suggested both Ricky and Vivian. I played on Ricky's first solo album and I loved the way he was writing and singing. His voice has the same timbre as Phil. He's not going to do what John did and try and copy Phil's voice. Then he said that Leppard were taking a year off and Viv would love to play with us. I first saw him when Sweet Savage used to support us quite a bit in Ireland. I remember seeing him being a killer 17-year-old guitar player. As soon as Joe mentioned his name, I thought 'why didn't Viv ever get the call from me and Phil when the right hand side became available?' So now I had to give him the call. He knows every fucking song. He's much more in the melodic playing side, like Robbo."

Scott Gorham is at the forefront at all levels in the protection of the Lizzy legacy/brand now: "There's one thing I learned when the band first broke up – I was convinced that four years down the road people would not be playing Thin Lizzy songs, the name would fade out, but that never happened, so I don't think it really takes us to keep the name Thin Lizzy alive.

"Everybody seemed to have a slice of Thin Lizzy. I guess we had no quality control over our stuff. Nobody was heading up the security side, not thinking that anybody was out to hurt us. We found out different. It took us a while to come to terms with that and protect it. For a long time, we did nothing. No one had the heart to remix or remaster. It took a few years to get into that.

"Besides that, I thought, 'This is stuff that we had all worked on together'. A few years ago, I was out with a friend of mine and he introduced me to a younger friend of his, and said, 'This is Scott Gorham from Thin Lizzy' and the guy went 'Who?' 'You know: *Jailbreak, Boys Are Back*…' and he'd never heard of it. And I have to admit that killed me – that kinda pissed me off that this guy had no idea who Phil Lynott was or anybody. It kinda made me angry that there was no [virtual] billboard out there with Thin Lizzy on it. And it didn't happen once, it happened a fair few times to the point where it kickstarted me into doing something because I didn't want the band's name or Phil's name to be forgotten. Brian Downey was of the same ilk. So we looked at the catalogue and started remastering and taking control of it all. This is something near and dear to my heart to the point where it has taken over my life."

So 25 years after his death, Phil Lynott's heritage is very much alive. Many of those who worked with and/or were close to Phil still have vivid dreams about him. It's a psychological phenomenon of sorts. My own dream has Phil coming back as a zombie who can't play or sing. Within a few months, he's back on the road again as if he's never been away.

I mention this to Scott Gorham. "Yeah, I did too. Most people who knew Phil dreamt about him. Even people who had only had a casual acquaintance. That's called having a big impact. My dream is that I get out of the car after being dropped off at this warehouse. I walk in and there's Phil sitting at a studio console, and I say Phil, for fuck's sake, where have you been, man?' And he says, 'Ah for fook's sake, I've been living with the cleaning lady. I just needed a break'."

Gorham cracks up at this. "Phil always would have the last word!"

Thin Lizzy's UK tour starts January 6 in Aberdeen. See www.livenation.co.uk for info. Deluxe Expanded reissues of Jailbreak, Johnny The Fox and Live And Dangerous, including previously unreleased material, are out Jan 24.

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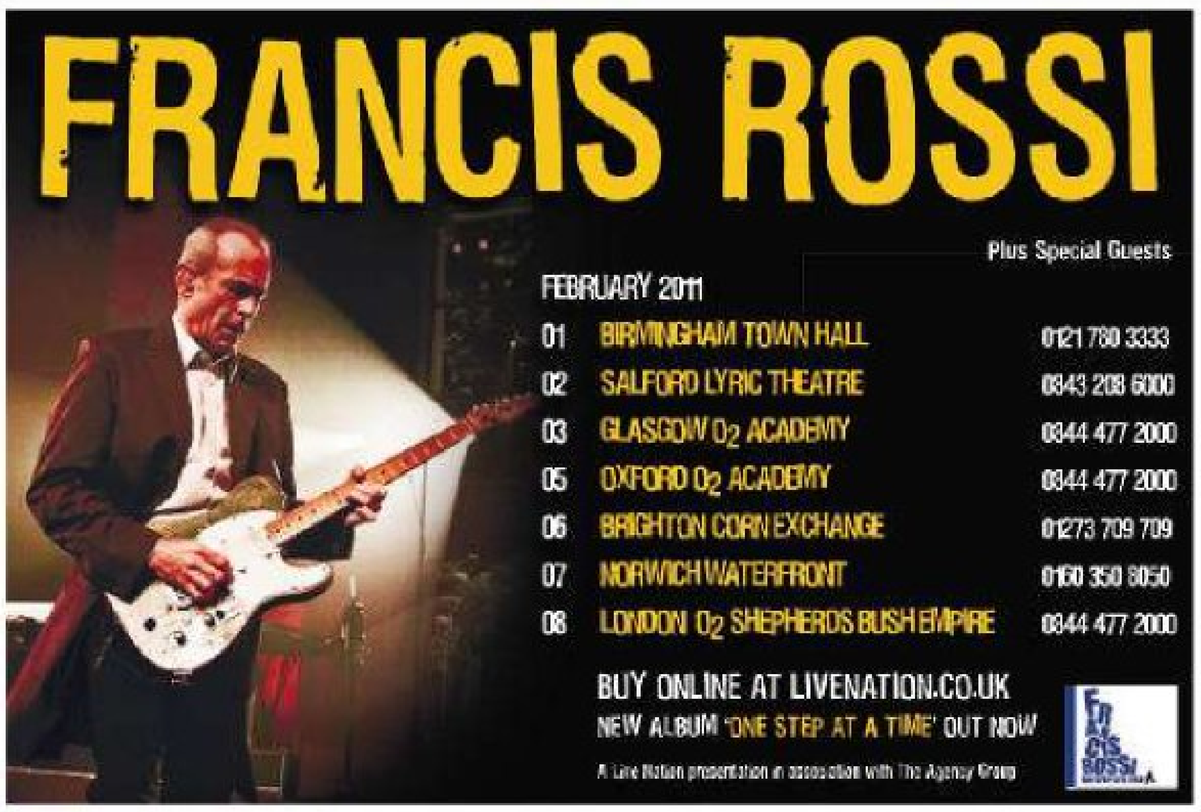

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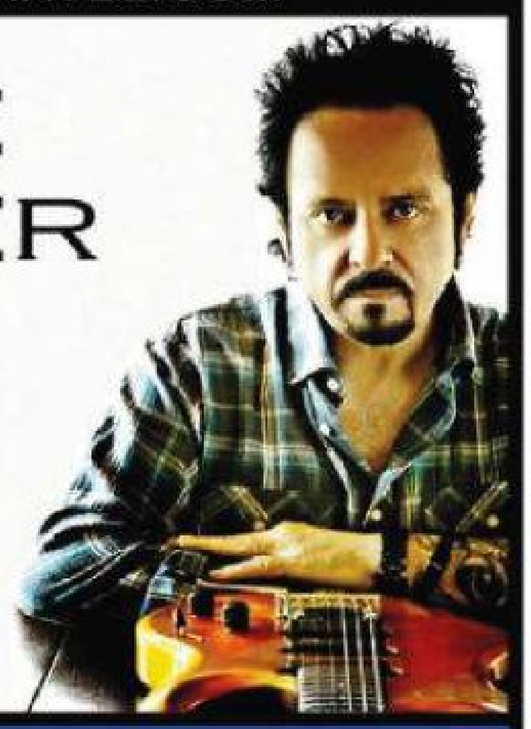

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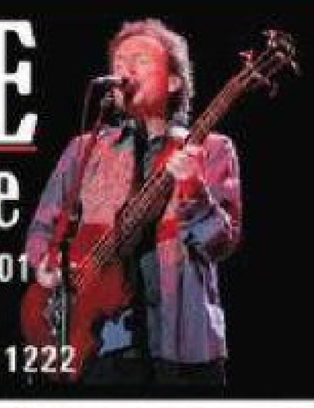

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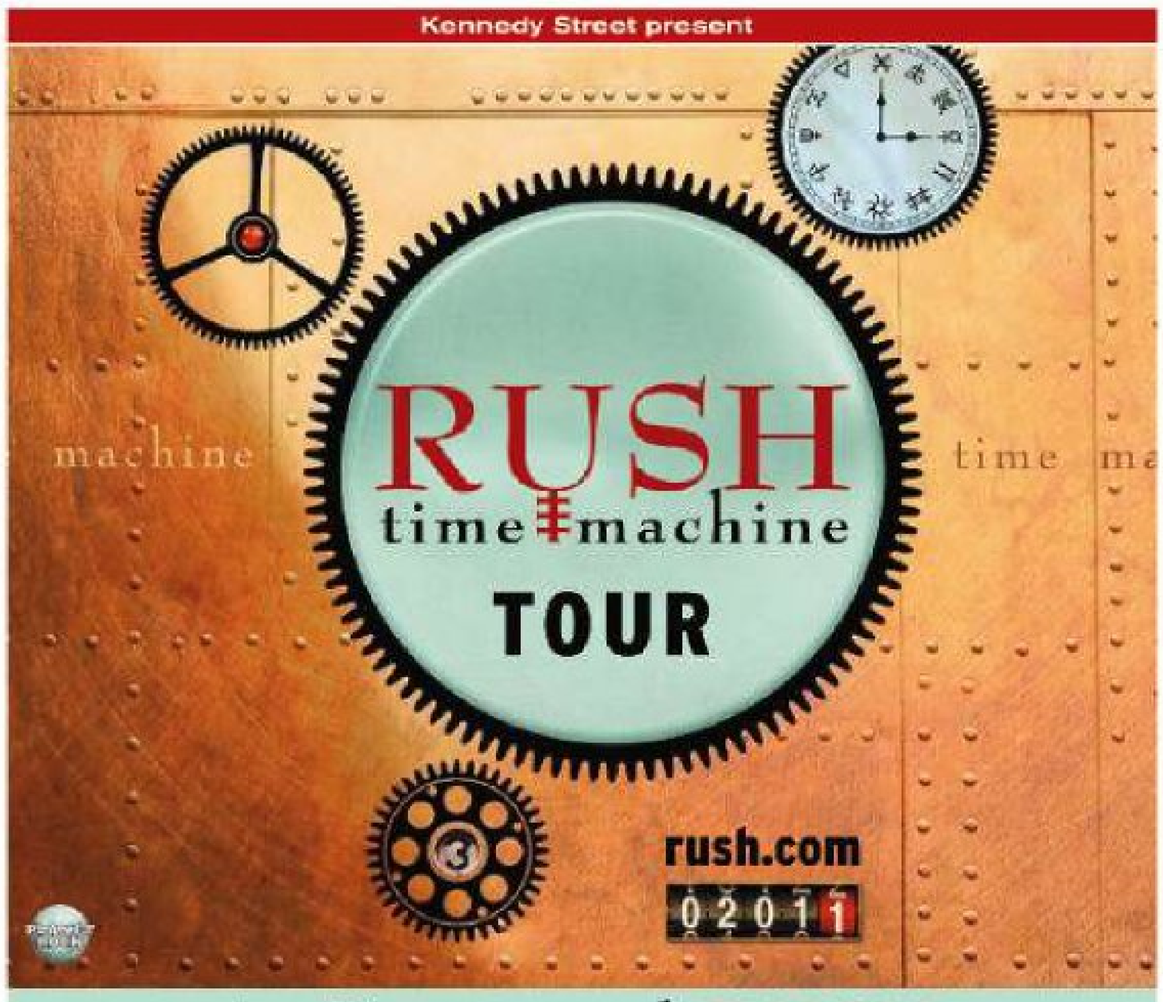

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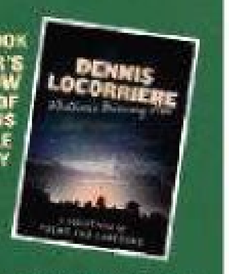

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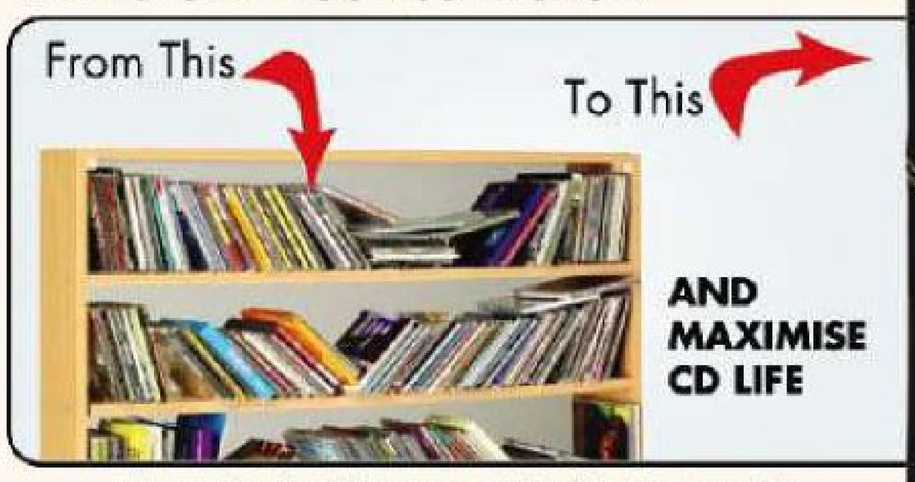

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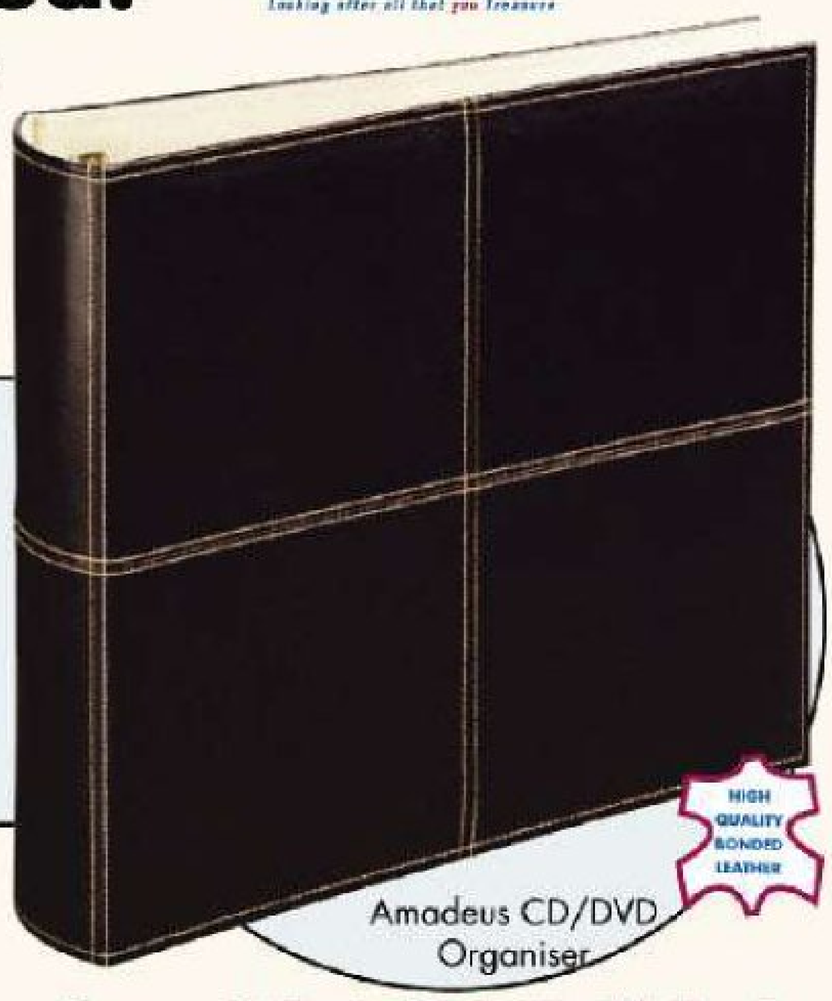

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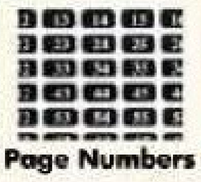
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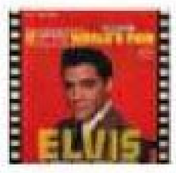

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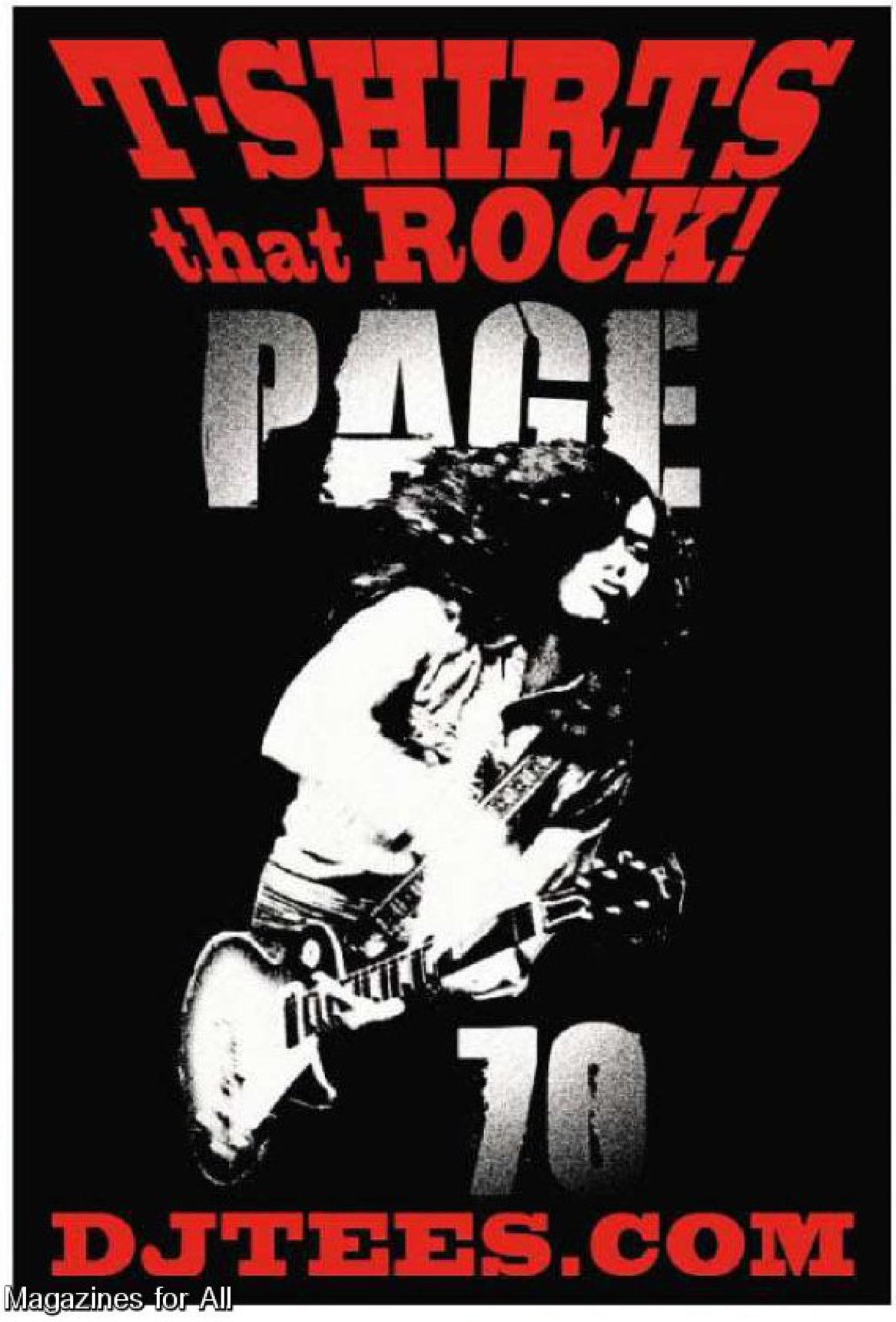

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Heavy Load

Heavy questions for heavy rockers

Kid Rock on God, drugs and hard work.

Interview: **Jerry Ewing**

He makes southern rock. He mixes it with hip-hop. He's got money like Fort Knox. And apparently he'll forever be the Kid Rock.

Kid Rock was the sound of summer two years ago with *All Summer Long*, his irrepressible mashing together of Lynyrd Skynyrd's *Sweet Home Alabama* and Warren Zevon's *Werewolves Of London*. And now he's back with *Born Free*, a new album full of country rock tunes and featuring collaborations with famous pals such as Bob Seger, Sheryl Crow, Martina McBride, Mary J. Blige, Zac Brown and rapper T.I.

As always, when *Classic Rock* meets the man his parents know as Robert James Richie, he has a damn fine-looking stogie between his fingers and is raring to go.

How did you get the name Kid Rock?
I was this little white kid and I used to DJ down the east side of Detroit. No one knew my name was Bobby, I was just known as this little white kid that rocked the turntables."

Do you believe in God?
Oh yes I do.

What's the biggest misconception about you?
There's enough information out there to make me into anything you want to. If you want to make me this drug-breathing, up-all-night, crazy rock'n'roll, punch-you-in-the-face dude, then I'm that. Or if you want to make me out to be a single father who raised his child and is very close to his family and friends, then I'm that too. Whatever you want me to be, I'm happy to be it.

What's your greatest regret?
None. I really don't have any regrets.

What was your biggest waste of money?
Hmmm, let me see… What the fuck was her name? Ha ha ha!

What are the best and worst drugs you've taken?
I never really had a problem with drugs, I think I've enjoyed it all. The best? [at this point Rock's assistant interjects nervously, explaining that we really don't have to discuss drugs]. You know, I reckon music is the best drug for me. [Whispering] As long as it goes down with a shot of whisky and a line of cocaine. Ha ha ha!

What's the secret of success?
Hard work. Not being scared to put myself out there, and knowing that maybe I'm not the best but striving to be the best. Being honest with myself. Taking my chances and working hard at them. Honesty. Looking in the mirror and asking myself: "Are you good enough?" and knowing the right answer.

Kid Rock: gonna rock right to the grave.

"Music is the best drug… [whispers] as long as it goes down with a shot of whisky and a line of coke."

What can you do that no one else can?
Shit, man, where should I start?! Um, play harmonica and scratch [DJ] at the same time. That ought to do it.

What is the meaning of life?
Happiness. Family and friends. At the end of the day, when I check out, having people say: "Oh, I knew him. He was a pretty good guy."

What were you like at school?
A hellion. I didn't want to be there. I liked the interaction and stuff but I didn't like the schoolwork. I was more into music. I used to stick up for the kids with special needs who had people picking on them.

Where do you stand politically?
Right in the middle. Fuck the right and fuck the left.

What in your life are you most proud of?
My son. He's been asking me to help him with his college application forms and I'm like: "Yeah, I'll be home by midnight." It definitely skips a generation.

What has been the lowest point of your career so far?
Hmmm… Just the few times in my career when I got dropped by a label. I picked myself up and dusted myself off. And I believed in it and kept working at it. Times when even your family are looking at you and saying: "Oh, poor Bobby." You just have to take it on the chin and keep at it.

And what has been the high point of your career so far?
[Long pause] Just waking up every day is a high point. Every day. I don't mean for that to sound arrogant. But what a lot of people don't realise is that I've risked everything I've ever had just to be here. I gave up everything to devote every single ounce of energy to music. I've seen other people do that too and it hasn't worked out for them like it has for me. They're still working as struggling musicians. I thank God it didn't turn out like that for me. Yes, I can ring up and get the best table in the restaurant, but I took a big risk to be in that position.

What will be written on your tombstone?
I think for my tombstone I'm going to get a bronze statue made of myself sitting in a rocking chair, holding a glass of whisky and a big cigar. And when you hit the button it'll start moving. And when my grandkids push it and say: "Grandpa, what are you doing?" I'll say: "Still rocking."

Kid Rock's latest album, Born Free, is available now on Atlantic Records.

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How many CDs do you own but never play?

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What's the point in owning hundreds of CDs worth thousands of pounds if you never listen to them? The problem with CDs is that it's quicker to make a cup of coffee than dip into a CD. Try timing how long it takes to pick a CD, load it in the CD player, play a snippet from a track or two, eject it and put it back where it came from. Then there is the problem of finding music. The print on a CD spine is tiny. What if the track is on a compilation CD? What if the CD is in the car? Then there is the clutter. You need to keep your CDs near the player or you won't play them. So you are forced to share your living space with literally hundreds of cheap plastic boxes.

CDs are a great way to listen to music but they are also inconvenient, inaccessible and a bit of a chore.

The Brennan JB7 is a CD player with a hard disk that stores up to 5,000 CDs - and that's not all

It saves space and clutter and delivers near immediate access to an entire music collection. JB7 owners rediscover then fall in love with their music again simply because the Brennan makes it so accessible.

The Brennan also records from vinyl and cassette so you can enjoy your entire music collection but keep the originals in another room or retire them to the attic.

Small enough to pick up with one hand yet big enough for a lifetime of music, the Brennan JB7 is one man's brilliant idea for everyone's forgotten music. Starting at just £359* it's only available direct from Brennan at www.brennan.co.uk.

Key features

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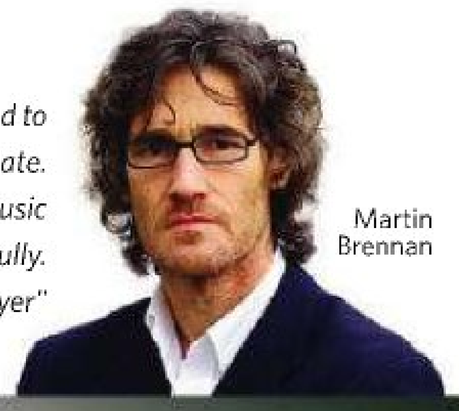
The face behind Brennan

Martin is a physicist, computer engineer and silicon chip designer. He co-designed the world's first 64-bit games computer.

"I always liked the promise of CDs. It wasn't so much the quality but the quick access to a given track. After vinyl and cassette that was a real plus. My first CD player was a five CD multi-changer. I liked the idea of quick access to more than one CD and music that didn't repeat after 40 minutes. A few years ago I had a go at loading my music onto a computer - but I never listened to it – I needed something simpler, more immediate. In the end the computer got a virus and the music files were lost - I still had the originals thankfully. The JB7 is really my personal ideal music player"



Martin Brennan

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