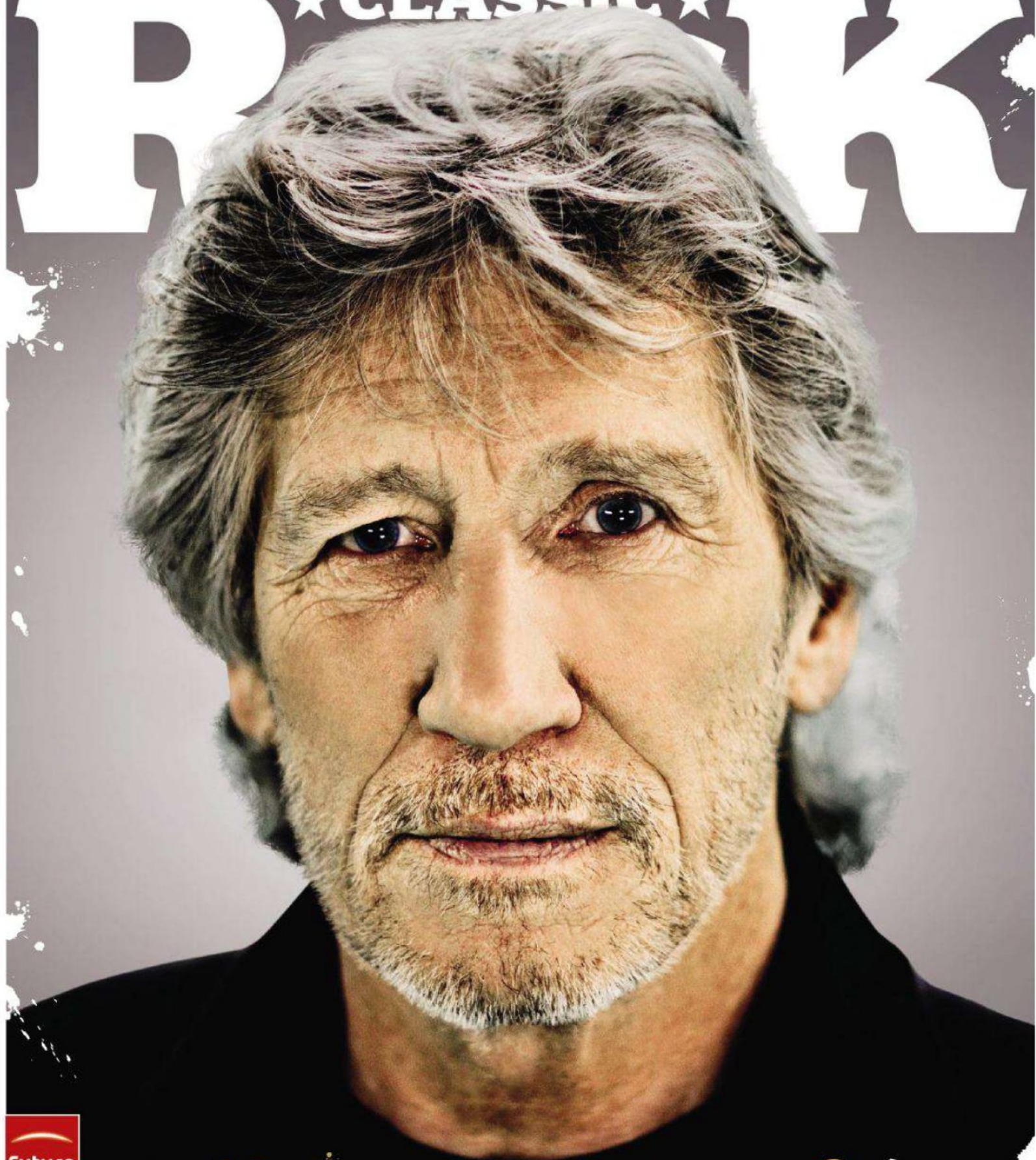


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ROGER WATERS p40

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Rainbow rising: the classic
Blackmore/Bain/Dio/
Powell line-up in 1976.



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“THE ORCHESTRA WAS GETTING ANGRY...”

World exclusive!

Ritchie Blackmore finally opens up about Rainbow's *Rising*.

Originally released 35 years ago this May, Rainbow's second album, *Rising*, was one of rock's landmark records. But while its epic scope and mystical visions have subsequently influenced countless bands, the full, crazy story of its making has never been told. Until now.

Guitarist Ritchie Blackmore has broken his long silence to talk about *Rising*. The guitarist and surviving Rainbow members Jimmy Bain and Tony Carey have taken *Classic Rock* behind the scenes in the studio and on the road 35 years ago. Cue tales of drunken tomfoolery, internal tensions, and a run-in with the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra.

“We went into the studio with a 28-piece orchestra to record *Stargazer*,” Blackmore recalls. “But the backing was too flowery, so we kept taking out parts and making it less and less complicated. The orchestra was getting angry for having to play it so many times. And there was a very fine gypsy violinist who decided to play after the orchestra had finished, but the tape spool ended. The

**“WE WENT INTO THE
STUDIO WITH A
28-PIECE ORCHESTRA
FOR STARGAZER.”**

poor guy was frantically playing and we weren't recording him. Which was very frustrating for all involved.”

Turn to p66 for the full story of Ritchie Blackmore's masterpiece.



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He was the New York Doll-turned-junkie poster boy who had it all and threw it away. Friends, lovers, bandmates and people who knew him best reveal the man behind the myth.

66 Rainbow

Just when Ritchie Blackmore's post-Purple outfit were *Rising*, and peaking as probably the greatest rock'n'roll band on the planet, the inevitable tensions began to show.

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Rebuilding The Wall: the
Greatest Show On Earth.

COVER STORY

Build 'em up, knock 'em down:
Is Roger Waters's tour the
final brick in *The Wall*?





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"He was walking death. He tried to clean up, and then he'd be back living on the street."
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If you've got something to say, fling it right this way. And we might fling a bottle of very tasty Smokehead single-malt whisky your way in return. We'll drink (responsibly) to that!



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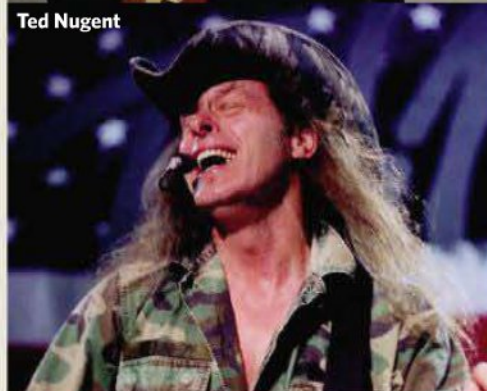
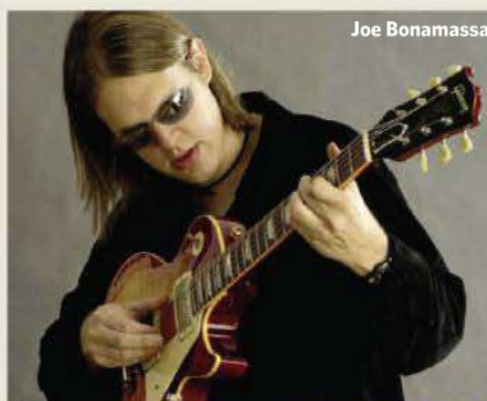
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FOO FIGHTERS

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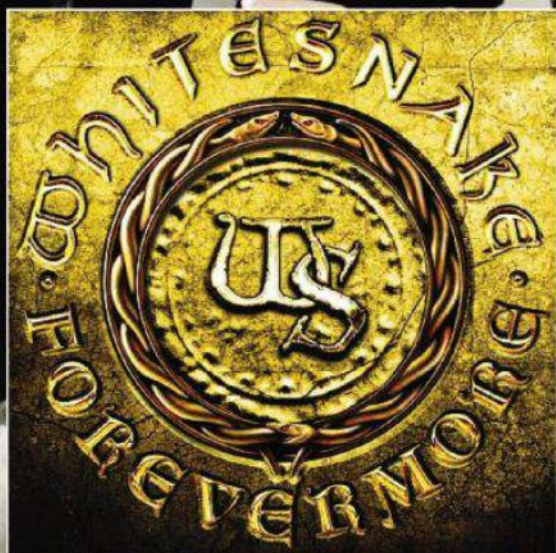


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The world of rock is full of unique characters and this month's stories celebrate three of its most complex: Roger Waters, Ritchie Blackmore and Johnny Thunders.

For our cover story, Hugh Fielder travelled to Portugal for a unique look behind the scenes of Waters's latest off-the-scale version of *The Wall* – due to hit the UK this month – while, in conversation, the former Floyd driving force proves to be both more at ease (with performing, with David Gilmour) but happily still at odds with authority. A rock icon with his integrity left intact, as stage designer Mark Fisher says: “Roger is unambiguously about alienation, discrimination, anti-war. You’d be hard put to know what the fuck Lady Gaga is about.”

Peter Makowski's story on the making of Rainbow's *Rising* (or *Rainbow Rising*, if you prefer) reveals Ritchie Blackmore's drive for hard rock perfection – the kind of ambition, dedication and ruthlessness that leads to the kind of benchmarks the guitarist has been responsible for several times in his career.

Ian Fortnam's remarkable Johnny Thunders story, meanwhile, reveals a man damaged by his upbringing, ruined by heroin, destroyed by trying to live up to his image – and harbouring a secret he took to his death...

ON THE COVER
Roger Waters by Sean Evans



Scott Rowley,
Editor In Chief



This month's contributors



HUGH FIELDER

Hugh's Pink Floyd connections go right back to his youth. His father taught Syd Barrett and Roger Waters music at the Cambridgeshire High School while Jokers Wild guitarist David Gilmour once stepped in to play with his band, the Rambling Blues, when their regular guitarist was indisposed. “He was superb,” recalls Hugh, “but he charged us more for the gig than we were getting.”



IAN FORTNAM

Classic Rock Reviews Editor Fortnam this month gives us the story he was born to write: probably the best feature yet written about the walking glam-punk junkie nightmare that was Johnny Thunders (p60). Little known Fortnam fact: on Thunders's *Live At The Lyceum* album the heckler shouting, “Show us yer cock!” is Ian. More than 25 years on, he has mellowed not a jot.



PETER MAKOWSKI

Longtime *Classic Rock* stalwart Makowski – a former *enfant terrible* for 70s *Sounds* and long-serving partner in crime to photographer Ross Halfin – also returns to his old stamping ground this month, with a piece on Rainbow's *Rising*. A former close friend of Blackmore, Pete brings personal insight and new interviews, not least with Ritchie, to tell the tale (p66).



5150



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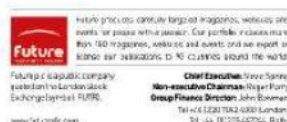
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Tel 020 7042 4000 Fax 020 7042 4329
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Printed in the UK by William Gibbons. Cover printed by Midway.
Distributed by Seymour Distribution Ltd, 2 East Poultry Avenue
London EC1A 9PT. Tel: 0207 429 4000



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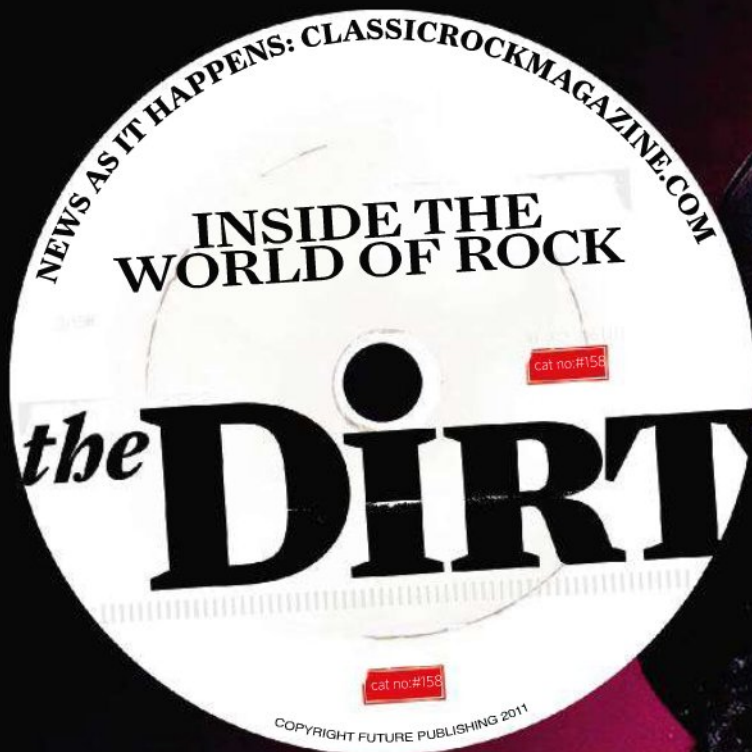
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Slash to play at High Voltage!

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FORMER GUNS N' Roses legend Slash is the latest name to be added to the bill of *Classic Rock*'s award-winning High Voltage festival at London's Victoria Park over the weekend of July 23-24.

The guitarist and his band, including singer Myles Kennedy, are Special Guests on the main stage on Saturday. They join headliners Judas Priest and Dream Theater, plus Black Country Communion (turn to page 31 for a chance to win a Joe Bonamassa signature guitar), Jethro Tull, Thunder, Queensrÿche and many more.

Slash isn't the only Guns N' Roses-related guitarist to be appearing at High Voltage. The reunited Thin Lizzy have recruited current GN'R man Richard Fortus to stand in for otherwise-indisposed guitarist Vivian Campbell for their set.

Away from the music, High Voltage will be a booze-lovers' paradise this year.

As well as the return of the Real Ale tent and a brand new beer festival featuring more than 30 beers and ciders, High Voltage will have its own specially-brewed official beer for the very first time.

Classic Rock is offering one lucky person the chance to win two VIP tickets by coming up with the best name for the official High Voltage beer. Simply log onto to www.facebook.com/HighVoltageFest, write your suggested beer name on the wall, then invite as many friends as possible to vote. The winner will receive two VIP passes and all the free official High Voltage beer you and a friend can guzzle. Cheers!

For all the latest High Voltage News, go to www.highvoltagefestival.com

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GETTY IMAGES



Slash: the ultimate in High Voltage rock'n'roll.

ROBERT MATHIEU x3



(l-r) Neal Smith, Michael Bruce & Dennis Dunaway. Right: Steve Hunter. Below right: Alice and Rob Zombie.



Raise your fist and yell!

Rejoice! Original Alice Cooper band get back together.

THE FOUR SURVIVING members of the original Alice Cooper band shared a stage for the first time since 1974 when they were inducted into the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame last month.

The ceremony, which took place at New York's swanky Waldorf Astoria hotel, saw Alice reunited with guitarist Michael Bruce, bassist Dennis Dunaway and drummer Neal Smith for rousing performances of *Under My Wheels* and *School's Out*, ably helped out by a children's choir in full Cooper make-up. Guitarist Steve Hunter stood in for Glen Buxton, who sadly passed away in 1997.

The band were inducted into the Hall Of Fame by longtime fan Rob Zombie, who described them as "glam rock before anyone thought of glam rock, punk rock before

anyone thought of punk rock". Cooper picked up the trophy while holding his albino boa constrictor, Katrina.

"I told the band before we went on, 'We're Alice Cooper – You've got to pretend that all the people out there are 16 year-old kids so get out there and give them every bit of attitude you've got,'" the singer tells *Classic Rock*. "We never broke up with bad blood – it was just a slow drifting apart. But when this thing came along, I don't know whether I could have accepted without them."

Old School: 1965-1974, a new 'super deluxe' Alice Cooper box set featuring rare tracks and housed in a wooden mock-school desk, is out on June 6. Alice's brand new album, *Welcome 2 My Nightmare*, is due out later this year.

Free EP series on the way!

CR 'steaks' a claim to bring you exciting new sounds.

YOU MAY HAVE noticed that you have not just one but two free CDs with this issue of *Classic Rock*. Well, get used to it, since we're proud to announce our new Prime Cuts EP series to introduce you to a load of fantastic new music. While we always celebrate the long-standing great and good of rock'n'roll here at *Classic Rock*, we're also committed to finding fantastic young bands. After all, if we don't support new bands, who are going to be the rock stars of the next generation?

We're kicking proceedings off with a belting six-tracker from California's Rival Sons (see our feature on page 56), who we're pretty excited about.

For the next three issues, make sure you keep your eye out for your extra CD and consider a CR Prime Cut the ultimate taster (geddit?) of new music.



SCARLET PACE

This month *The Dirt* was compiled by Claire Adams, Max Bell, Malcolm Dome, Dave Everley, Jon Hotten, Dave Ling, Peter Makowski, Rob Temple, Billy Wolf

RIP

Thank you
and good night.

Jet Harris

July 6, 1939 – March 18, 2011

As the original bassist with The Shadows, Terence Harris – nicknamed 'Jet' for his speed as a runner – performed on the ground-breaking hit *Apache* and Cliff Richard's solo No.1 hit *Living Doll*. A North Londoner, Harris received an MBE for services to music last year. He had been suffering from throat cancer. Of the 71-year-old's passing, Sir Cliff said: "Jet was exactly what The Shadows and I needed – a backbone [to] hold our sound together."

Scott Columbus

Died April 4, 2011

A salute of farewell goes to the former Manowar drummer, who has passed away at the age of 54. Columbus first joined Manowar in 1983, and the first of their albums he played was *Into Glory Ride*, released the same year. He left the band seven years later for what the group called "family reasons", although he himself later told *Classic Rock* (published just last year on www.classicrockmagazine.com) that "My son was never sick – so you can deduce from that what you may". Columbus rejoined the band in 1995 and stayed until 2008.

Ronnie Hammond

Died March 14, 2011

Ronnie Hammond was the singer with the Atlanta Rhythm Section, fronting the Georgia-based southern rockers from 1972 to 1982 and through their commercial peak, which included being invited by then President Jimmy Carter to perform at the White House. After quitting for a solo career, Hammond later reunited with the group in 1988. He was 60 years old when he died of heart failure.

Joseph 'Pinetop' Perkins

July 7, 1913 – March 21, 2011

The veteran blues pianist has died from cardiac arrest at the age of 97. A close friend of another legendary original bluesman, Robert Johnson, Perkins began as a guitarist but switched to the piano after injuring his arm in a fight with a choir girl. He won a Grammy for his 2010 album *Joined At The Hip* with Willie 'Big Eyes' Smith. BB King said of Perkins's passing: "Pinetop was one of the last great Mississippi bluesmen. He had such a distinctive voice, and he sure could play the piano."

NEWS

A lenient Texan judge has allowed **Willie Nelson** to retain his liberty by performing a song for the court. Charged with possession of marijuana, the 77-year-old played *Blue Eyes Crying In The Rain*, posted a bail of \$2,500 (approx. £1,500) and left the court a free man.

ZZ Top hope to release a follow-up to 2003's *Mescalero* album by the end of this year. Commenting on the style of the new record, guitarist Billy Gibbons says: "We still pose as interpreters of the blues."

Although the current **Kiss** line-up are working on a new album, Gene Simmons still believes the original group will work together again before the band eventually calls it a day. "There will be one more time when we play together. Sometime in the future there's going to be a last show," the bassist predicts.



Gary Moore

(pictured) left an estate worth more than £2 million following his death in February. The 58-year-old was laid to rest in a small village graveyard outside Brighton, where he had lived for many years.

Not long after completing a jail term for driving while intoxicated, **Vince Neil** is in trouble with the law again. Police were informed after the Mötley Crüe singer screamed obscenities at a former girlfriend at a gig by Hal Sparks in Las Vegas. Fifty-year-old Neil will not, however, face charges.



Gorbys 'n' Klaus:
no word yet on
a duets album.

Scorpions play Gorbachev tribute

Veteran German band rock Albert Hall gala for former Soviet leader's birthday.

ENDURING GERMAN ROCKERS the Scorpions made a rare UK appearance at London's Royal Albert Hall on March 30 as part of charity gala to celebrate the 80th birthday of former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. The band performed only one song, *Wind Of Change*, which became an unofficial anthem for Glasnost after the record's release in 1990.

The unlikely relationship between Gorbachev, who served in the Kremlin from 1988 to 1991, and the Scorps, who are currently on their farewell tour, began when the band wrote *Wind Of Change* for their *Crazy World* album. Complete with its iconic whistled refrain

and its message of post-Cold War tolerance, it topped the charts in 11 countries. That led to the aging politician requesting a personal audience with the band in the Kremlin.

"How incredible that a rock band would be almost the last official guests in the Kremlin," singer Klaus Meine told *Classic Rock* in 2005. "Gorbachev was completely blown away that a German band would record a song in Russian."

The Albert Hall charity event (with tickets costing between £35 and £100,000) also featured Bryan Ferry, Shirley Bassey, the London Symphony Orchestra and Melanie C. **DL**

Yes get the Horn

Buggles pair make shock return.

YES HAVE REUNITED with the Buggles – in a manner speaking. While preparing their first new studio album since 2001's *Magnification*, the veteran band decided to bring in Trevor Horn, along with keyboard player Geoffrey Downes (a member of progressive rock giants Yes circa the *Drama* album in 1980) to produce their new album, *Fly From Here*. Downes, who later went on to form Asia, appears on the record and will also be touring with Yes when they hit the road in July.

Horn – who was at the helm for Yes's 90125 and *Big Generator* albums, and has also produced Paul McCartney, Mike

Oldfield, Tina Turner and Seal – claims that he had only intended to work on selected tracks from the new record, which is released on Frontiers in July.

He jokes: "When I arrived in America I was taken prisoner by the band, and only allowed my freedom again in return for producing the whole album. It was an offer I couldn't refuse."

Yes's UK dates are: Cambridge Corn Exchange November 8, Sheffield City Hall 9, Birmingham Symphony Hall 11, Glasgow Clyde Auditorium 12, Manchester Apollo 13, Brighton Dome 15, Bristol Colston Hall 16, London Hammersmith Apollo 17. **DL**

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Queensrÿche
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Rival Sons **Skin**

SUNDAY

DREAM THEATER

UK FESTIVAL EXCLUSIVE

Black Country
COMMUNION

UK FESTIVAL EXCLUSIVE

THUNDER

UK FESTIVAL EXCLUSIVE

MICHAEL SCHENKER
SAINT JUDE

PROG STAGE

JOHN LEES'
BARCLAY JAMES HARVEST
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UK EXCLUSIVE

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Hold the line?

Toto's drug hell revealed in second issue of AOR.

TOTO FRONTMEN BOBBY Kimball and Joseph Williams have come clean about the drug problems that plagued the band.

Talking to *Classic Rock Presents AOR* about being sacked from Toto in 1984, original vocalist Kimball said: "Sure, I did get a little too high – I had to go to the hospital and they felt it was wrong for Toto's image. They used the substance abuse thing as the centre of the target and they came down on me because of it. It was kind of weird having a jury of murderers trying to hang me."

Williams, who sang with Toto from '86 to '89 and is now part of the re-formed line-up, added: "There were times when I just couldn't sing, which was really a direct result of doing too much cocaine."

Watch out for Toto on the cover of the second edition of *Classic Rock Presents AOR*, on sale May 6. Toto play London's Hammersmith Apollo on June 26.



The Answer return

On-the-road DVD previews album number three.

THE ANSWER ARE set to release their third, as-yet untitled album in late August. The follow-up to 2009's *Everyday Demons* was recorded in El Paso, Texas with Grammy-nominated producer Chris 'Frenchie' Smith. With the band having parted company with Albert Productions, it will be released via the quartet's new label, Spinefarm Records.

As a prelude to the album release, they release a new, fan-friendly DVD package on May 23. Called *412 Days Of Rock 'N' Roll*, it includes a 70-minute documentary that covers the band's time on the road with AC/DC, plus a headline date at the Ulster Hall in Belfast. Another 55-minute DVD disc has concert footage filmed during the AC/DC tour, and four songs from the Belfast gig. There will also be an audio disc version. Additionally, the package includes all nine of the band's promotional videos, including a re-recording of Rose Tattoo's *Rock And Roll Outlaw* which the band released as a single as part of Record Store Day.

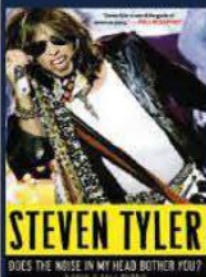
Having appeared at High Voltage in 2010, The Answer are set to participate in the summer festival season. To begin the build-up to the new album, they also play a headline date at the 100-capacity Diamond Rock Club in Ballymena on April 28. **DL**

NEWS

Deep Purple will launch a tour of North America with a symphony orchestra in June. The band, whose gig itinerary begins in Crete on May 6 and ends in Belgium on July 29, have yet to announce any UK dates.

Roger Taylor has confirmed the existence of three tracks recorded together by **Freddie Mercury** and **Michael Jackson**, and the Queen drummer is currently tidying them up for release during the coming months. The first of these is a demo version of the song *State Of Shock*, later released by the Jacksons and featuring the vocals of Mick Jagger in 1984. The friends also recorded two further tracks, entitled *Victory* and *There Must Be More To Life Than This*.

Black Sabbath guitarist **Tony Iommi**, Deep Purple singer **Ian Gillan**, ex-Purple keyboard player **Jon Lord**, former Metallica bassist **Jason Newsted**, Iron Maiden drummer **Nicko McBrain** and HIM guitarist **Mikko Lindström** have recorded two songs to finance the rebuilding of a music school in Gyumri, Armenia. *Out Of My Mind* and *Holy Water* are released in download form and on CD on May 6.



Steven Tyler's autobiography *Does The Noise In My Head Bother You?* (pictured) will finally see the light of day on May 3. It's published by HarperCollins and will set you back £18.99



Hell: with Andy Sneap (right).

WELCOME BACK Hell

It might have taken the best part of three decades, but Hell are finally ready to release their debut album.

THEY MIGHT HAVE an odd name, but Derbyshire NWOBHM-ers Hell quickly became heroes on the underground scene after forming in 1982. Not only was their music powerful and riff laden, but the live shows were always theatrical dynamite.

However, the collapse of Mausoleum Records, to whom Hell were signed, after the release of 1983's debut single *Save Us From Those Who Would Save Us* derailed the band. And after the suicide of vocalist Dave G. Halliday in 1987, Hell split. But now the band are back together and ready to release their debut album, *Human Remains*. This features original members Kev Bowers (guitar/keyboards), Tony Spearman (bass) and Tim Bowler (drums), plus Sabbath's Andy Sneap (guitar and top producer) and new vocalist Dave Bower, brother of Kev and someone who's made his name as an actor, under the stage name of Dave Beckford.

Sneap, for one, is convinced Hell are about to fulfil their destiny...

You're the man who's the driving force over this reunion. Where did the songs on the album come from?

We've gone through the tracks on the four Hell demos in the early 1980s, and have re-recorded 10 or 11. This is the first chance to hear these in the right situation. To be honest when you hear the original recordings so much seems to get lost, but I think we've captured here the essence of what this band were always about.

Originally you had your Sabbath bandmate Martin Walkyier do the vocals. Why didn't that work out?

His voice wasn't quite right for the songs. Dave Halliday had a high-pitched voice; that's not Martin's style. Kevin got his brother down to do a theatrical style voiceover for the song *Plague & Fire* and he

started to sing along on the playback – his vocals worked brilliantly. So we got him to redo the entire album. He saw Hell loads of times in the old days, so knows what we're about.

Are you surprised at how people have seemingly got into this album so fast?

Considering this started out as no more than a fun project, then yes it is a surprise. People appear to appreciate the bizarre aspects of the band, and we are also a bit progressive, which

helps in the current climate. But we're not prog in the way that Iron Maiden seem to be these days, just stringing together loads of riffs to mask the fact they don't have any musical ideas. We certainly do have.

Are you picking up younger fans?

Odd that. When we posted the video for the song *On Earth As It Is In Hell*, a lot of kids got confused by the way we looked, what with the make-up, and thought we were a joke band. I think that says a lot about the way theatrical bands are regarded these days. But slowly we're getting them on our side.

How much of a priority is this band?

Let me put it this way. Because of my commitment to Hell, I've lost out on the chance of producing the next Megadeth album. Am I disappointed? No. I'm desperate to go out and play again. I want to be a guitarist and not a producer. And I love this band such much it's my number one priority. It's true metal. I'm fed up of hearing young bands who are unexciting and uninspired. So, I'd much rather leave behind my Pro Tools production stuff and do something like this. **MD**

Human Remains is released on May 13 on Nuclear Blast.

★ HIGH HOPES

Von Hertzen Brothers

The Finnish prog stars would do lots of things to crack Britain. Rubbish TV isn't one of them.

SOME OF THE best ideas are the most obvious ones. Von Hertzen brothers Mikko (vocals/guitar), Kie (guitar/vocals) and Jonne (bass/vocals) were all members of separate groups when they performed together for the first time, in 1995, at a 50th birthday party for their father. At which time their combined potential became evident. "Among the songs we played was *Fire* by Jimi Hendrix, and there was such an energy that everyone began telling us we had to do something together," explains Kie.

When eventually the brothers did get together, as the Von Hertzen brothers, it brought them far greater rewards than anyone could have realistically expected, their landslide domination of the music scene in their native Finland extending to chart-topping albums and even that country's equivalent of a Grammy award.

It took the Brothers six years to disentangle themselves from other projects and record a debut album, but 2001's *Experience* took them to the top of the Finnish chart with an ingenious, colourful distillation of progressive and hard rock influences.

"Father always brought us gifts from his travels," Mikko recalls of the group's shared childhood influences. "Once he returned from England with a boxed set of all 16 of Queen's vinyls. We fell in love with those albums."

The likes of Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin, Yes and Rainbow can all be traced in the Von Hertzen Brothers' melodic and often intricate

sound, which *Classic Rock*'s sister title *Prog* likened to "[prog-rock supergroup] Transatlantic fronted by Tommy Shaw of Styx/Damn Yankees". Meanwhile, the band's own Facebook page dares to suggest that we should "imagine the Foo Fighters playing Pink Floyd's greatest hits after spending years in India singing to Beach Boys tunes."

Although happy to accept the 'prog' label being thrust on him, Mikko insists: "We were never too much into the whole mathematical side of that genre, the melody and the song always come first. We are a rock band, but we like making music that's a little bit larger-than-life."

The Von Hertzens have become huge stars at home, with 2008's *Love Remains The Same* going straight to No.1. Their new, aptly titled *Stars Aligned* welds some more concise material to the structure and is the group's first record to be released in the UK.

Having introduced themselves to British audiences with an acclaimed show in London in February, expect the faces of these guys to become increasingly familiar over here. For their part, the challenge of breaking a new territory will allow them a welcome distraction from fending off the unwelcome attentions of Finland's mainstream media.

"We get asked to do lots of ridiculous interviews and TV shows, but very early on we decided that we are musicians and not celebrities," Mikko clarifies. "We want to be taken seriously." And so they should. **DL**

Stars Aligned is available now via Spinefarm Records. The band play the *High Voltage* festival on July 23/24.

FOR FANS OF...

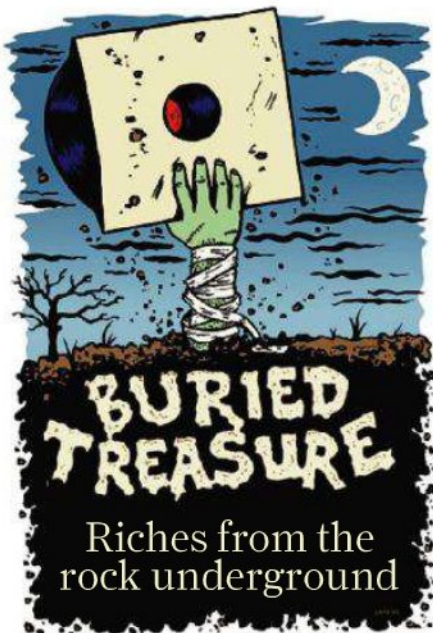


"One of the albums that inspired us the most is *Dark Side Of The Moon*," says Mikko von Hertzen. "It's such an ambitious piece of music, but it's also very approachable in a commercial sense. I'm not trying to place us on a pedestal alongside Pink Floyd, but we're definitely a band that likes to take chances."



"Our father came back from England with all of Queen's albums. We fell in love..."

Von Hertzen Brothers: big in Finland.



BURIED TREASURE

Riches from the rock underground

CATAPILLA

Catapilla, Vertigo Records, 1971
Up to £280 for a mint vinyl copy



Another album on the highly collectable Vertigo swirl label, *Catapilla* is the self-titled debut from this excellent West London jazz-rock progressive band.

While it's relatively rare, their second record, *Changes*, is one of the most sought after releases on the label, generally changing hands for in excess of a grand.

Unfortunately the more straight-laced end of the prog-rock community tends to unfairly dismiss both Catapilla albums, mainly due to the unconventional style of vocalist Anna Meek. However, it's her witch-like shrieks that are also part of the band's appeal to many others. Opener *Naked Death* is a prime example of her enigmatic charm.

Musically the album is a heady hybrid of psychedelic free-jazz, funky rhythms and killer fuzzed out wah-wah guitar.

'Psychedelic free-jazz, and killer, fuzzed out wah-wah guitar.'

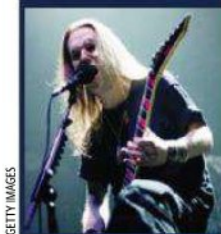
Comprising four long tracks (with *Embryonic Fusion*, taking up the whole of side two, clocking in at 24' 08") it's certainly in a world of its own. On paper it may sound like an endurance test, but it just seems to work if you let it.

Housed in a striking, gatefold sleeve and produced by then Black Sabbath manager Patrick Meehan, *Catapilla* is a head-trip of its time that certainly isn't for everyone, but the exceptional playing and its uniqueness make it more than worthy of investigation. Perhaps the aforementioned, slightly more restrained follow-up, *Changes*, is an easier entry for the fainter of heart. The problem there, of course, is finding a copy. **LD**



Steven Tyler is reportedly working on a solo project. We know this after his daughter Liv told a US TV show that she had heard the Aerosmith singer's new single, which she said was "amazing and beautiful". A new **Aerosmith** anthology, called *Tough Love: Best Of The Ballads*, is released in May.

Jon Bon Jovi believes that Apple co-founder Steve Jobs is "personally responsible for killing the music business". Mourning the decline of albums and CDs, he states: "I hate to sound like an old man but mark my words, in a generation from now people are going to say: 'What happened?'" Regardless, Bon Jovi's albums are still being sold via iTunes.



GETTY IMAGES



Former Dio members guitarist Craig Goldy, bassist Rudy Sarzo, drummer Simon Wright and keyboard player Scott Warren will pay tribute to the late band leader by appearing at this summer's **Download** billed as the **Dio Disciples**, joined by ex-Judas Priest/Iced Earth frontman Tim Owens, and Toby Jepson, formerly of Little Angels and Gun, now of Fastway. Other newly confirmed Download attractions include **Dan Reed**, **Biohazard** and **Children Of Bodom** (pictured).

Bizarrely, **Chickenfoot** are considering calling their second album, currently being recorded, *Chickenfoot IV*. It's due for release later this year.



Uriah Heep: revered by some in the extreme metal underground.



WELCOME BACK

Uriah Heep

If you want to piss 'em off, call them a nostalgia act.
If you want Christmas cards, get them a gig in China.

In a career that saw them begin as contemporaries of Black Sabbath, Deep Purple and Led Zeppelin, Uriah Heep have sold more than 30 million records. While those first three have always enjoyed greater celebrity and acclaim than the latter, in Europe Heep have, oddly, been revered for years by members of the extreme metal underground.

With the band about to release *Into The Wild*, their 23rd studio album, they continue to defy age and trends. As founding member guitarist Mick Box points out, this is not a band ready to live off their past.

This is your third studio album in about three years. Why so many records in such a short time?

It's more a case of why we stopped for so long after the *Sonic Origami* album in 1998. That's when the music industry collapsed, as the internet became ever more important. Record labels had no clue what to do. So there was no point in a band like us putting out a new album. Now things appear to have settled down.

Do you have to be careful not to just fill up an album with clichés?

Of course. When you've been around as long as us, there's a danger that you'll just rehash your past. But we're fully aware of that problem, and will always scrap any songs that repeat what we've done before.

On the new album, Mike Paxman is again the producer. Is he now effectively the sixth member of Heep?
Very much so. His enthusiasm and energy is quite incredible. He's such an inspiration to work with. This is the third album we've done with him, and it's fair to say that he knows us and we know him. But he still gets the best out of the music.

What do you hope to achieve sales-wise with a new studio album?

We're not daft enough to believe that *Into The Wild* will suddenly sell a million copies. For us the most important thing is that by making new music we avoid merely being a nostalgia act. Writing and recording these songs keeps us fresh and vital. There are too many older bands around now who are just peddling nostalgia. They come across as passionless and wasting their time.

How much of the new material will you play live?

We'll play up to seven of the new songs. But, of course, that doesn't mean we'll suddenly drop any of the classics that are currently in there.

All of which means you can expect us to be playing a very long set.

You've played in so many different countries down the years. Where is there left for you to take Heep?

In all we've played in 53 countries to date, but I'd love to play in China. I'm not sure how many bands have ever played there, but I'd relish the opportunity to go out there and see what the country's all about, and how it supports rock music.

You've influenced vast numbers of underground metal heroes. Does that still surprise you?

It never fails to surprise me that we've had so many European bands who name us as one of their biggest inspirations. For me, it's one of the biggest compliments you can get. But it's not something we can ever take for granted. When this is all over – hopefully not for a while – it'll be great to know we've got a connection to the younger generations of rockers. **MD**

Into The Wild is out now on **Frontiers**.



ALAN WESSER/REX FEATURES

MOVE ON UP?

Unlike technology, in music a new version doesn't usually mean better.

Well, it certainly looks like the iPad 2 is way better than the original. But it isn't always the case – and certainly not when it comes to bands – that a new version of something whups the previous one.

Take, for example, Colosseum (pictured), the pioneering blues-rock-jazzers who came along in the late 60s, and Colosseum II, the jazzier fusionists formed in '75 after the first version split. The latter might have offered a bigger bang (more notes stuffed into the same space) for your buck, delivered faster. But, with less of the key retro component that was the blues, it lacked a lot the original had to offer.

● RAW POWER

2 for the price of 1

The iPad 2 is faster, lighter, thinner and more gizmo-enabled than the original iPad but for the same money? We'll take it!

BY CHRISTMAS LAST year, within the first nine months of being available, Apple had sold 15 million of their then-new gizmo called the iPad – more than any other tablet computer in history. (If you haven't heard of the iPad, you're either dead or live in a cave. In which case thank you for your efforts in getting hold of *Classic Rock*.) The iPad became their most profitable consumer launch ever, and subsequently helped Apple overtake Microsoft as the world's most valuable tech company.

Now, just one year after what many Apple disciples refer to as the Jesus Tablet was unveiled, they're back with a pimped up, tweaked-to-within-an-inch-of-its-life second coming: the iPad 2.

Rather than bask in their own success while the likes of BlackBerry, Motorola and Samsung have been quietly creeping up on – and in some cases surpassing – the first-generation iPad, Apple have modified their tablet, and then some.

The iPad 2 has a faster, dual-core CPU and nine-times faster graphics, a slick new operating system, HD video recording, and cameras facing front and back. It's 33 per cent thinner, up to 15 per cent lighter, and comes in a number of colours.

But what does this mean for music fans? Well, for a start, with the highest-spec model you can store around 16,000 songs. Then, using new AirPlay technology, you can stream your music, videos and photos to your speakers or HD TV.

Wi-Fi enables you download tracks when you're out and about. You can watch music videos on the 9.7-inch, high-resolution display and you can even download the spanking new *Classic Rock* iPad app from: bit.ly/eXuYmz

But does all this extra power and smaller size mean you're shelling out more money for a product that will run out of juice in no time at all? No. In fact the iPad 2 will remain with exactly the same 10-hour battery life as the iPad, and at the same price.

From £329, www.apple.com

Rob Temple, Features Editor, T3 magazine

The iPad 2: but does it have a new improved Roby?

Sharp Dressed Man

Rock 'n' Roll accessories



[1]



Iron Fist – Midnight Mile Tee [1]
www.attitudeclothing.co.uk, £23.99
 Iron Fist clothing never disappoints when it comes to stunning, rock-inspired artwork, and this design is no exception. With a death metal take on old-school nautical style, this 100 per cent cotton tee definitely deserves a two-horns-up salute.

Schott NYC – Leather Bomber [2]

www.schott-bros.com, £290
 Schott was the brainchild of two brothers, Irving and Jack Schott, back in 1913. In 1928 they were inspired to put the first zipper on a jacket, thus creating the biker jacket – thank you, Irving and Jack! Schott's lambskin leather jackets have been favorites of some rocking stars, from James Dean and Marlon Brando to the Ramones and the Sex Pistols.

Lowlife – Cover Up Belt [3]
www.lowlife.com, £19.99

Lowlife do a huge range of belts to suit every rocker out there. *Classic Rock* especially likes this leather-covered version of the traditional studded belt – you can wear it to work, look smart and secretly be rocking.

[2]



[3]



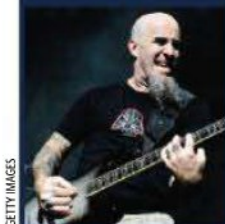
NEWS

Porcupine Tree's **Steven Wilson** and Opeth's **Mikael Åkerfeldt** have completed writing their collaborative project, which has been christened *Storm Corrosion*. Expect it in 2012.

Derek St Holmes, the rhythm guitarist/vocalist who played on many of Ted Nugent's finest albums including 1978's celebrated *Double Live Gonzo!*, has once again returned to the Loudman's band.

Phil Rudd has had a drugs charge overturned by a New Zealand court. The AC/DC drummer, 56, had been found guilty of cannabis possession, but successfully appealed on the grounds that a conviction would harm his chances of touring.

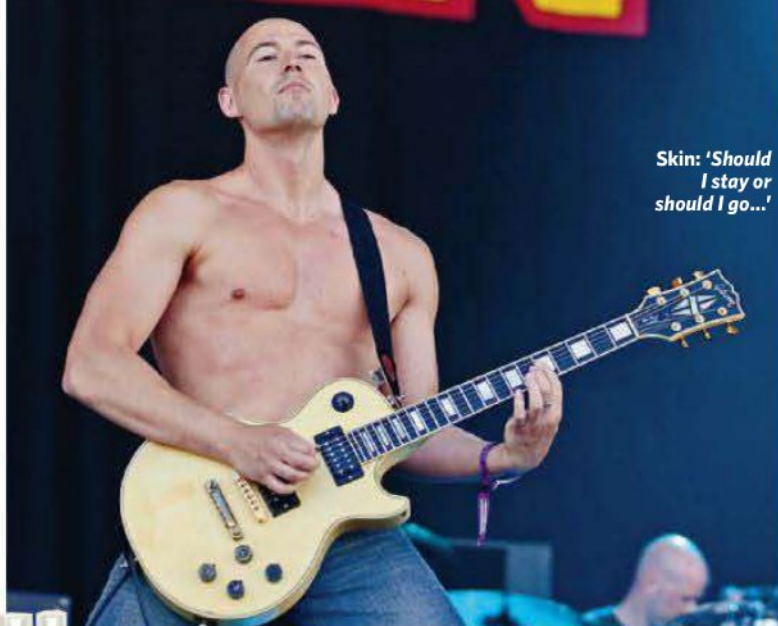
Whitesnake have hired Brian Ruedy (whose CV includes working with Bret Michaels and Brian 'Head' Welch of Korn) as their new touring keyboard player.



GETTY IMAGES

Scott Ian (pictured) of Anthrax is to take a leave of absence when his band make up the Big Four at the Sonisphere Festival in June. The guitarist and his partner, Pearl Aday, are expecting their first child. Ian's replacement will be Sepultura guitarist Andreas Kisser.

Art Garfunkel, speaking during the promotion of a 40th-anniversary edition of **Simon & Garfunkel's** *Bridge Over Troubled Water* album, said he and Paul Simon may tour together again before the end of the year.



Skin: 'Should I stay or should I go...'

BE SEEING YOU

Skin

They split in '98. They're splitting again after High Voltage. But they may be back. Make your mind up!

UK HARD ROCKERS Skin notched up six UK Top 40 singles during a first run that wound up in 1998. Having been enticed into a reunion by Download Festival supremo Andy Copping, the band played a farewell tour last December. Now they've surprised many by being confirmed for this summer's High Voltage Festival. Guitarist Myke Gray checks in.

The band self-financed their reunion album *Breaking The Silence*. Did you make your money back?

Yes. We knew we had to sell 2,000 copies, and we managed that. We did it purely out of love and for the joy of making music.

For those who might not know, why are Skin going to split again?

We'd already achieved what we wanted to. The band hadn't ended on the greatest of terms, but we're all friends again now and we'll be friends forever. I've got my brothers back and, along with reconnecting with our fans, that was the most important thing.

Last December's farewell tour didn't go like you intended it to, did it?

You can say that again. I was ill throughout, Nev [MacDonald] lost his voice after four gigs, and the snow kept lots of ticket holders at home.

So how did the band feel on stage at Nottingham Rock City during what was intended as the final gig?

There were a lot of raw emotions. It was a great gig, but we left with our tails between our legs because we hadn't performed the way we knew we could. So when Andy Copping called to say he could get us on to a bill [High Voltage] with one of my all-time favourite bands, Judas Priest, we were definitely interested.

Coming so soon after the tour, there must have been some trepidation?

Not for a second. Look, if you don't like Skin then we're not going to convert you and there's nothing we can do about that. But our fans don't want us to split up. They certainly won't hold it against us for playing another show and going out on a high the way we intended.

It must irk you when posts such as: "Why don't they be honest about it [and admit they're] just doing it for

the money" appear on the *Classic Rock* website, though?

Not at all, pot-shots like that are okay because people don't understand how the business works. It's the headliners and their Special Guests that command huge

fees, not smaller bands like us. When the bottom line is totalled up, every member of Skin will actually lose money to play at High Voltage. But we're not complaining, because being there makes us happy.

The band's statement stresses that High Voltage and the two warm-up gigs "will be our only shows this year, and probably ever", but quotes Nev as saying: "Never say never!"

If music's inside of you, it's hard to leave it there. I'm lucky that my lifestyle [working as a fitness coach and life coach] allows me certain freedoms. It's not the same for the others. For instance, one of them is a teacher. But I've told the rest of Skin that if any of them ever wants to do a show, they can count me in. I'll always be there, but I can't push the others because they've all got full and satisfied lives. **DL**

Skin play Nottingham Rock City July 21, Pontypridd Muni Arts Centre 22, London High Voltage Festival 23.

Jesse Sykes and Phil Wandscher: not playing the fame game.

|||||
"What the band all share is a love of underground music, raw excitement and guitars."

★ HIGH HOPES

Jesse Sykes & The Sweet Hereafter

Sweet psychedelia from a band with alt. country roots and drone metal friends...

EVER SINCE *Marble Son*, the trippy fourth album from Seattle-based band Jesse Sykes & The Sweet Hereafter, arrived at *Classic Rock* it has become an instant earworm. Not only does Sykes's singing draw favourable comparison to vocalists like Grace Slick and Lydia Pense, but also in guitarist Phil Wandscher (co-founder of Whiskeytown with Ryan Adams) she has the perfect foil, a musician with an attack that will have lovers of Blue Cheer and Quicksilver Messenger Service punching the air.

Often bracketed with LA's Southern Lord school of sonic chaos, JS&TSH have indeed hung out with drone metal bands (Sunn O))), Boris, Earth and Canadian psycho heavies Black Mountain, but they've constructed a sound developed in their own emotional darkroom.

Speaking to *Classic Rock*, Sykes talks of the "turbulence and heart-on-the-line connection" that is stamped on *Marble Son*, successor to the acclaimed 2007 album *Like Love Lust And The Open Halls Of The Soul*. "Marble Son was made during a weird time," she says. "I split with Phil after 10 years as a couple and then his father died. Things unfolded, and that personal evolution manifested itself on this album."

Away from songwriting, Sykes is an accomplished visual

artist who studied at Providence, Rhode Island. Her monochrome photography of the burlesque and bizarre is rated in France, where it has appeared in style magazines like *Vice*.

Raised in New York State, on Janis Joplin, Wanda Jackson and the Velvet Underground, Sykes insists that her band "are not an anachronism; we're as valid and modern as anyone, only not superficially so. What we all share is a love of underground music, raw excitement and guitars. They are on this album."

They're not mainstream, nor are they stand-offish. "We enjoyed the Altar project, collaborating with Boris and Sunn O))), but any further link is pointless and out of context. There's a lot of psych folk in what we do, yet we've been called alt.country. We aren't."

Sykes, who is blessed with a husky voice and a vocal range that seeps out of the mix like morning mist in the desert, says she "likes to delve deep. Great music isn't always born out of depression, but better than hearing about artists who got cleaned up and went into rehab. Day-to-day life can be dark, so I make sure I have a nap before I put it all down – a coupla hours, or a week-long nap. Then I get my perspective."

Jesse describes Seattle as, "a small town where bands bump along. We've shared cigarettes and girlfriends with the Fleet Foxes but I doubt we'll share their fame. I don't understand how that works. The best attitude is: do your own thing; don't have too many expectations; concentrate on creating great music. We've only just started." **MB**

Marble Son is available now on *Fargo Records*.

FOR FANS OF...



Often cast as the female Tim Hardin, or folk's answer to Billie Holiday, Karen Dalton's vocal stance has influenced Sykes. "I'm a fan of technically not-great singers, people who use any limitations to their advantage. I'm not into happy music, and Karen lived at the edge. She's recently been rediscovered, but her music is timeless."

PHOTO PASS

THE STORY BEHIND THE SHOT

Artist

Blizzard Ozz/Def Leppard

Location

Florida, 1981

Photographer

Ross Halfin

VIP

STAFF

GUEST

AFTER
SHOW

PHOTO

“Def Leppard were opening for Blizzard Of Ozz. I was travelling with Ozzy, so I just ran into Leppard. They were a happening young band then, but everyone mixed well because they were just regular people. It’s funny looking at a picture of the group now with Pete Willis [line-up below] in it.

“The shot was taken in Fort Lauderdale; the band were playing at the Sunshine Theatre. Ozzy was on great form. I’d just spent a day at Disneyland with him – we went up Space Mountain.

“The thing about doing a line-up shot is that you have to get everyone’s attention, which is why I got Ozzy to grab his crotch, which got everyone laughing. The trick of a good photo is to get everyone to look natural, and I think one of the reasons this picture works is because everybody looks like they are really having a good time. You can see it’s a warm photo in the sense that everybody has good feelings towards each other. It was the last time I saw Randy Rhoads before he died.”

“I got Ozzy to grab his crotch, which got everyone laughing.”

(Left to right: Tommy Aldridge, Steve Clark, Rick Allen, Randy Rhoads, Joe Elliott, Ozzy Osbourne, Rick Savage, Rudy Sarzo, Pete Willis.)

Def Leppard headline on Friday (June 10) bill at this year’s Download festival. Line-up and other information at www.downloadfestival.co.uk



ROSS HALFIN

While studying fine art in the 70s, Ross began shooting bands such as The Who, AC/DC and Led Zeppelin (sneaking a camera into gigs) and selling his shots to the music press. In the 80s he shot The Clash, Sex Pistols, Jam, Blondie et al, was a staff photographer for Chrysalis Records, and toured with bands like Iron Maiden, Metallica and Def Leppard. He now shoots tours for clients, and also travel photography.



Blizzard Of Ozz and
Leppard, in the days when
bands touring together
actually met each other.



Heavy Rotation

What we've been listening to this month



01 Comfortably Numb

PINK FLOYD

The transcendental highlight from *The Wall*, the 1979 album by little-known British proggers Pink Floyd. Their ex-frontman Roger Waters tours the UK next month. You may want to check him out.

02 City Of Hope

JOURNEY

Proof positive that Journey can match the glories of the Steve Perry era with new frontman Arnel Pineda. The lead track from new album *Eclipse*.

03 Goodbye My Friends

SIXX AM

Tattooed rock'n'roll and grandiose operatics come together in this unlikely union of Mötley Crüe and Muse, courtesy of Nikki Sixx's other band. You don't get this with Vince Neil.

04 Hello!

MÄRVEL

With an umlaut over the 'a' and an album called *Warhawks Of War*, Märvel are either taking the piss, Scandinavian or (the reality) both. But when you can squeeze Queen, Lizzy and Motörhead through the mincer and make a rock burger (with cheese) as fat and fine as this, who cares?

05 Stargazer

RAINBOW

Thirty five years after Rainbow's *Rising*, Ritchie Blackmore's eastern-influenced epic remains a highlight of one of rock's more illustrious careers. Raise a toast to singer Ronnie James Dio while you're at it - May 16 marks the anniversary of his death.

06 Ever Been Hurt

THE KNOCKOUTS

News that this Swedish band were recently voted 'Punk Band of the Year' at the American Independent Music Awards troubled CR's punk-savvy corner (who had never heard of them). Truth is, the Knockouts are about as punk as Michael Bublê: but on this evidence they do have a fine line in rockabilly-tinged heartbreak.

07 People Of The Deer

THE TREWS

With an opening riff that sounds like RATM's *Bombtrack*, this track is a highlight from The Trews' imminent fourth album, *Hope And Ruin*. Album sounds great, their name's still crap though.



08 All Men Play On Ten

MANOWAR

In memory of the band's recently deceased drummer, Scott Columbus, and featuring the immortal line: 'All men play on ten - never gonna turn down again.'

09 Jumpercable Blues

NORTH MISSISSIPPI ALLSTARS

Filthy dirty slide guitar? Check. Mildly lascivious lyric? Check. Fruity vocal urging 'y'all to go 'straight to Hell'? Check. Jim Dickinson's progeny demonstrate that the kickass apples fell pretty damn close to the kickass tree. Bitchin'.

10 Born To Run

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

With Jon Landau's prophetic "I saw rock 'n' roll's future and its name is Bruce Springsteen" still ringing in his ears, *Live At The Main Point*, '75 captures The Boss forcing Dylan through a Strummer filter as punk stands poised in the wings. A last chance power drive indeed.

11 She's Got Nothing On (But The Radio)

ROXETTE

The spiky-topped Swedish popstrels prove they haven't lost their deft commercial touch. From new album *Charm School*.

12 Gettin' High (On My Mystery Plane)

LORDS OF ALTAMONT

Blazing Detroit-styled garage-psych with a slack jaw and a permanent sneer served up by the kind



of delinquent LA scuzztronauts you thought were extinct.

14 She's Nothing Like Me

THE LOVE ME NOTS

The kind of smart, sexy sass that Blondie used to excel in, this is perfect pop rock sung from the point of the view of the other woman: 'She won't get dirty/Won't get on her knees/She's nothing like me/She's everything you think he needs/But I know why he's on the phone with me'. From new album *The Demon And The Devotee*.



15 Blood Red Sun

GRACIOUS!

Growling Hammond, vibes, lyrical guitar and melody lines, stop-start rhythms, musical twists and turns... They might have recorded only two albums, but even this cracking track alone from second album *This is... Gracious!* makes this great but relatively unknown 70s British prog band worth investigation.



16 Lord Knows I Know That It Ain't Right

IMPERIAL STATE ELECTRIC

Nikke 'Hellacopters' Andersson's latest group of garage rock purists deliver note perfect 70s rock bliss. From their self-titled debut.

17 Dead Or Alive

JOHNNY THUNDERS

Jerry Nolan liked to describe Thunders' uniquely swaggering six-string technique as 'the sound of dinosaurs screaming in the jungle'. This '78 single exemplifies exactly what he meant: primal NYC roar power incarnate.



18 (Don't Fear) The Reaper

BLUE OYSTER CULT



Would you believe it's 35 years since the release of BÖC's *Agents Of Fortune* album, which gave us this masterful-bit-deathly psych-pop-AOR classic? Incredible but true.

19 Sim Sala Bim

FLEET FOXES

Blissful of harmony and luxuriant of beard, Seattle's Fleet Foxes update Crosby, Stills & Nash's celestial Americana for the modern day. Nurse! The razor!



20 Mars Needs Women

ROB ZOMBIE

This classic slab of Zombie from *Hellbilly Deluxe 2* bodes well for his forthcoming Download appearance.

21 (I'm) Wasting My Time (Yet Again)

EUREKA MACHINES

With one of those monster 'woah-oh' choruses, this new song from the Eureka Machines proves that their debut album of sparkling power pop wasn't a fluke.

22 Spite Machine

VERTICAL SMILE

Youth's chops when it comes to sound manipulation, whether he be tracing a dancefloor or underpinning a Killing Joke apocalypse, are undeniable. Well, now he's fronting his very own pop combo and they're remorselessly devastating. So there.

23 I'll Never Get Out Of This World Alive

STEVE EARLE

Title track from the renaissance man's new T Bone Burnett-produced album. Hear from Mr Earle on page 88.



24 Distance

MIKE TRAMP

Tramp and his, er, Rock'N'Roll Circuz (his spelling, not ours) have delivered a decidedly country-tinged new album, *Stand Your Ground*. This stand-out track is the sort of mid-paced anthem that's plastered over US radio. Which means you'll never hear it here...

Hear more recommendations EVERY DAY by following us on mflow

★ COMPETITION

Win a signature Joe Bonamassa guitar!

To celebrate BCC's second LP and their appearance at High Voltage, we've got an **Epiphone Ltd Edition Joe Bonamassa Les Paul Goldtop Outfit** up for grabs.

ONE OF THE stars of this summer's High Voltage Festival (www.highvoltagefestival.com), Black Country Communion have begun revealing the details of their much-anticipated second album. The supergroup are calling it simply 2, and it will be released via Mascot Records on June 13. Produced by Kevin Shirley, it contains the following 12 tracks: *The Outsider*, *Man In The Middle*, *I Can See Your Spirit*, *The Battle For Hadrian's Wall*, *Save Me*, *Cold*, *Smokestack Woman*, *Faithless*, *An Ordinary Son*, *Little Secret*, *Crossfire* and *Crawl*.

To celebrate, the kind folks at Mascot and Epiphone guitars have given us a limited edition Joe Bonamassa Les Paul Goldtop Outfit model to give away to one lucky reader. Joe helped design his new signature guitar, and it includes several vintage features from the legendary Les Pauls of the 1950s including a traditional 1959 neck profile and Gibson Burstbucker pickups. Should you win, the guitar comes with a replica Lifton-style hardshell case and a certificate of authenticity personally hand signed by Joe Bonamassa, and only 1,000 of these guitars will be made.



To be in with a chance of winning this fabulous prize, all you have to do is answer the following question correctly:

Q: High Voltage takes place in which London Park?

- A. Victoria Park [TEXT VOLTAGE A TO 87474]
- B. Hyde Park [TEXT VOLTAGE B TO 87474]
- C. Regent's Park [TEXT VOLTAGE C TO 87474]

Text the word VOLTAGE followed by a space and then the letter which you think refers to the correct answer. For example, if you think High Voltage takes place in Regent's Park, send the text VOLTAGE C to 87474.

Texts will be charged at £1 each, for correct or incorrect answers.

You can also enter online at www.futurecomps.co.uk/BC

Postal entries to: *Classic Rock*, Future, 2 Balcombe Street, London NW1 6NW.

Entries can be received until midnight on April 27, 2011.



TERMS AND CONDITIONS: Text entries: text the word shown in brackets after each answer, followed by a space (very important) then the letter which you think refers to the correct answer. For example, if you think High Voltage takes place in Regent's Park, send the text VOLTAGE C to 87474. Postal entries to: *Classic Rock*, Future, 2 Balcombe Street, London NW1 6NW. Text message or postal entries can be received at any time until midnight on April 27, 2011. Texts will be charged at £1 each, for correct or incorrect answers. By sending your entry you agree to these competition rules and you confirm you are happy to receive details of future offers and promotions from Future Publishing Limited and carefully selected third parties. If you do not want to receive information relating to future offers and promotions, please include the word STOP at the end of your text message or at the end of your postal entry. The winner will be drawn at random from all correct entries received by the closing date. Only UK residents aged 16 years and over may enter this competition. No employees of Future plc or any of its group companies or the employees of any entity which has been involved with the administration of this competition or any member of their households may enter this competition. No responsibility is accepted for entries delayed or lost in the post. Proof of postage will not be accepted as proof of receipt. The prize is as stated and no cash alternative is available. Future Publishing Limited is not responsible whatsoever for any failure by the competition organisers to provide the prize on time or at all or for any loss, damage, costs, expenses, or personal injury caused by the prize. If you have any query or complaint in relation to the prize, you should contact *Classic Rock* at classicrock@futurenet.co.uk or the editor at the postal entries address above. If you are a winner of the competition you accept that Future Publishing Limited has the right (without additional payment or seeking permission) to use your name, address and likeness for the purpose of announcing the winner of the competition and for related promotional purposes. All entries must be received by the closing date. No purchase necessary. Future Publishing Limited, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.



The Nice America

How four prog-rock pioneers turned a Broadway classic into one of the most controversial protest songs of the 1960s – and, with a little help from Alf Garnett, a Top 30 hit.

Words:
Malcolm Dome

Photograph:
Gered Mankowitz

For a band who helped draw up the prog-rock blueprint, the Nice had unlikely beginnings. The four-piece formed in London in 1967 as a backing band for soul belter PP Arnold. But by the end of that year they had parted company with Arnold and released their own psychedelia-tinged debut album *The Thoughts Of Emerlist Davjack*.

If their origins as a band were unusual, then the song with which they made their name was outrageous. Released in June 1968, *America* would crystallise the burgeoning prog-rock movement, and turn the Nice into one of the most controversial bands of the day.

The song, written by Leonard Bernstein, started life in the Broadway musical *West Side Story*. In this incarnation it was a celebration of the American way of life, sung by an immigrant character.

"We had a cover in our set called *Rondo*, which was our version of Dave Brubeck's jazz classic *Blue Rondo A La Turk*," explains bassist Lee Jackson. "Keith [Emerson, keyboard player] had an extended solo during this on stage, and he'd throw in all sorts of things, including a dash of *America*."

It was one of the most shocking events of the late 60s that persuaded them to record the song in its own right. The band – completed by guitarist Davy O'List and drummer Brian Davison – were driving back from a gig on the Isle of Wight in June 1968 when they heard the news that US Senator Robert Kennedy, the brother of murdered President John F Kennedy, had been shot and killed while campaigning for the Democratic presidential nomination.

"That got me thinking," recalls Keith Emerson. "JFK had been shot, then Martin Luther King. It seemed to me that America was ruled by the gun. It's even in their constitution: the right to bear arms."

It was the era of the protest song. Against a backdrop of civil rights struggles, student unrest and the war in Vietnam, the likes of Bob Dylan and Phil Ochs were channelling the mood of the times in their lyrics. But, in a novel approach, the Nice decided to turn *America* into what Emerson calls "the first protest instrumental".

Recording at London's Olympic Studios,

they flipped the song on its head. Its Broadway tempo was replaced by an angry, powerhouse momentum, with Emerson's aggressive keyboards leading from the front. Most importantly, the song's original lyrics were stripped away. Jackson controversially added a single spoken-word line at the end to hammer home the song's bitter irony.

"I took a line from a song I'd written on the first album called *Dawn*: '*Dawn is pregnant with promises and anticipation, but is murdered by the hand of the inevitable*,'" the bassist recalls. "I changed '*Dawn*' to '*America*', and we got PP Arnold's three-year-old son to say the words [for the recording], giving them real bite."

Released as a single on June 21, 1968 *America* began picking up radio airplay thanks to a few DJs who grasped what the band were trying to do, though at six-and-a-half minutes it was too long for *Top Of The Pops*. "They wanted us to lose about 90 seconds," Jackson says. "We refused." But it was a controversial incident at the Royal Albert Hall that propelled the song into the UK Top 30 – and to notoriety.

The Nice had been booked to play an anti-apartheid concert at the prestigious London venue on July 7, part of a bizarre line-up that included Sammy Davis Jr, British jazz stars Johnny Dankworth and Cleo Laine, and the cast of TV comedy series *Till Death Us Do Part*. Also in attendance was the US Ambassador to Britain, David K E Bruce, adding political gravitas to the occasion.

The band decided to ramp up the drama by draping an American flag behind them during their set, which climaxed with *America*. "My plan was to set it on fire at the end of the set," says Emerson, "but I couldn't get the matches to light. So Warren Mitchell, who played Alf Garnett in *Till Death Us Do Part*, lent me his lighter, and up it went. Everyone went silent. We'd been going down well until that happened."

The band were quickly ushered off stage. Driving home, they found out via Radio

Luxembourg that they'd been banned for life from the Albert Hall.

But it soon became clear that the uproar over their flaming stars and stripes had a positive side, helping the single to No.21. "The next day we did a gig in Norwich and arrived to find the queue going round the block," says Jackson. "They all turned up hoping to see Keith burn the flag."

The US authorities were less impressed. On the eve of the Nice's first US tour, in 1968, Emerson and their manager, Tony Stratton Smith, were summoned to the American Embassy. "They had us swear on a stack of bibles that there would be no more flags burnt," Emerson recalls. "Actually, I did do it one more time in America, which horrified Lee."

The Americans may have been pacified, but the man who actually wrote the song was furious. Asked for his opinion on the Nice's version, Leonard Bernstein replied: "I utterly loathe what they've done. They've corrupted my work."

"It was done to highlight what a corrupt society America is: if you don't like the President, shoot him."

Nine years later, while mixing ELP's *The Works Volume One* album, Emerson was introduced to the openly gay Bernstein. "I've met composers of the music we covered and got on with them all," he says. "And then there's Bernstein. I'll leave it that he liked my leathers, if you get my drift."

More than 40 years on, *The Nice's* version of *America* remains one of the iconic musical moments of the 60s. As Emerson says, it also stands as a timeless reminder that some things never change.

"It was done to highlight what a corrupt society America was – and still is: if you don't like the President, shoot him." 🇺🇸

For more on The Nice, pick up the latest issue of Classic Rock Presents Prog, out now.



GETTY IMAGES

ROLL OVER BEETHOVEN

One of the things that Keith Emerson has loved throughout his career is reinterpreting classical pieces for a modern audience. His reworking of *America* was a similar case.

"I had a strongly classical music background," he says, "and that meant I came to rock music with a heavy influence from the great composers".

The results gave composers such as Modest Mussorgsky, above, (Emerson, Lake & Palmer tackled his *Pictures At An Exhibition*) and Aaron Copland (ELP covered *Fanfare For The Common Man*) a new vitality at a time when they were in danger of disappearing.

"What I did was to take composers of whom I was a fan and give them the chance to be heard by people who'd been told classical music had no place in the modern world. I don't take credit for keeping their genius alive, but I played a role in telling everyone that you didn't have to step all over the past in order to create new sounds."



The Nice (and friends):
unlikely to have had any
of their records bought
by Leonard Bernstein.

THE FACTS
RELEASE DATE

July 1968

HIGHEST

CHART
POSITION

UK No.21

PERSONNEL

Keith Emerson

Keyboards

Davy O'List

Guitar

Lee Jackson

Bass

Brian Davison

Drums

WRITTEN BY

Leonard

Bernstein

PRODUCER

The Nice, under

the pseudonym

Emerlist Davjack

LABEL

Immediate

Duff McKagan

The former Gunner on Loaded, Velvet Revolver, catharsis, and having “a grand old time” reuniting with Axl.

Words: **Jon Hotten** Portrait: **Ross Halfin**

Duff McKagan is sitting in a suite at a plush London club. He smiles, looking serene and healthy, and every inch the gentleman punk in a cut-down Sex Pistols T-shirt and de rigueur leather strides. “I wake up and I’m glad to be alive,” he says. “I don’t get pent up any more. I’m in on the joke, especially of my own profession.”

He has reason to be content with his lot. He’s happily married, and raising two daughters in his home town of Seattle. His creative slate is full: there is *The Taking*, the third album for his band Loaded, and its accompanying film; a spell writing songs for Jane’s Addiction, old pals from the LA club scene; a 140,000-word draft of a memoir, and the two magazine columns he writes; all to be followed with a tour with Judas Priest, and festival gigs including Download. He even managed to cram in a jam with former Guns N’ Roses team-mate Steven Adler the night before our meeting – an appearance that drew slightly less attention than his last similar outing with Axl Rose at the O2 in London. “Can’t think why that would be,” he says wryly.

Over the the past year you’ve done a lot of different things. How easy was it to find an identity for your band Loaded among all of that?

Well, Loaded is my musical focus. Jane’s was just a thing I went into to help them write a new record. Eric Avery had left, and I’ve known them since, what, ’86, when they were doing the clubs and Guns were too. If I’m writing for Jane’s Addiction, that’s a whole different side to my brain. For Loaded the inception of a lot of these songs happened on the road. We didn’t really take a break. [Producer] Terry Date came in, and he takes a holistic approach. “Hey Duff, what’s going on? You got time to give me 14 hours a day?” Ah, okay, you’re telling me to shut everything else down. So I shut everything else down. I don’t know what level this band will ever get to, but it doesn’t really matter. We have a loyal following who get our dark side and our humour.

That said, *We Win*, the lead-off track from *The Taking*, is the new anthem for Major League Baseball.

The record was so far from being out, and Major League baseball wanted to use it for the *fucking World Series*! Are you kidding me? For this band to be played on national TV... that doesn’t happen. We’re a little, scrappy indie band. We’re left-of-centre. We do things because we like how it sounds. If somebody comes into the band through *We Win* it’ll be interesting.

***The Taking* has an accompanying film. Is it a concept album?**

To call it a concept record is probably too strong. But there was a situation in which somebody on the tour bus and his wife, who we’re great friends with, became fractured in their relationship. We couldn’t and we wouldn’t ever take sides, but you witness the initial fracture and then the heartbreak and the anger. Then they got divorced, and they became better friends than they ever were, and they’re best friends now. That’s sort of where *We Win* comes in. But I didn’t write the first lyric on the record. Mike Squires brought in

Easier Lying, and that set the tone: oh, so we’re writing about that... That informed me for *She’s An Anchor*, and then *Wrecking Ball*, which is self-explanatory. It was great to be able to write a third-person account drawing from shit I’ve been through.

And the film tells that story?

No. We realised when we got it down it had a theme, but instead of making a movie on that story it’s about our drummer who gets kidnapped. It happens all in one day, like [Beatles film] *Hard Day’s Night*. The plan is to show it at the Seattle International Film Festival on June 12 and see what happens from there.

You’ve also been working on a memoir. How does that fit in?

I wrote 140,000 words for a book. It’s not really a memoir, it’s more about a specific time: a descent into addiction and desperation and terror. All of a sudden you realise, wait a minute, other people are going to be reading this. I gotta be honest here. In that honesty I really found my part in events. So many people have asked me: “How much did you drink?” “How many drugs did you take?” “How did you get sober?” And I could tell you how much drink or drugs, but it’s so much that you’d just shut off. It ends up being empty words. It’s the difference between a person at 19 who was relatively healthy and one who at 28 was okay with the idea that he was going to die in a year. The terror that you’re living in, complete and utter terror, and then the way out. And it was really emotional. My wife was like: “What’s up with you?” I didn’t want her to read it, because it was dark, but in the end it was really cathartic.

What’s happening with Velvet Revolver?

Nothing. We auditioned a couple of singers but nothing’s really struck a chord with all of us. And we’re a democratic band; you’ve gotta go to war together. I can’t speak for anybody else, but I think if it’s gonna happen it’s gonna happen when it happens.

And your brief appearance with Axl at the O2?

I got nothing to say about that any more. I wrote about it, and I thought, right, that’s the only time I’m going to talk about it.

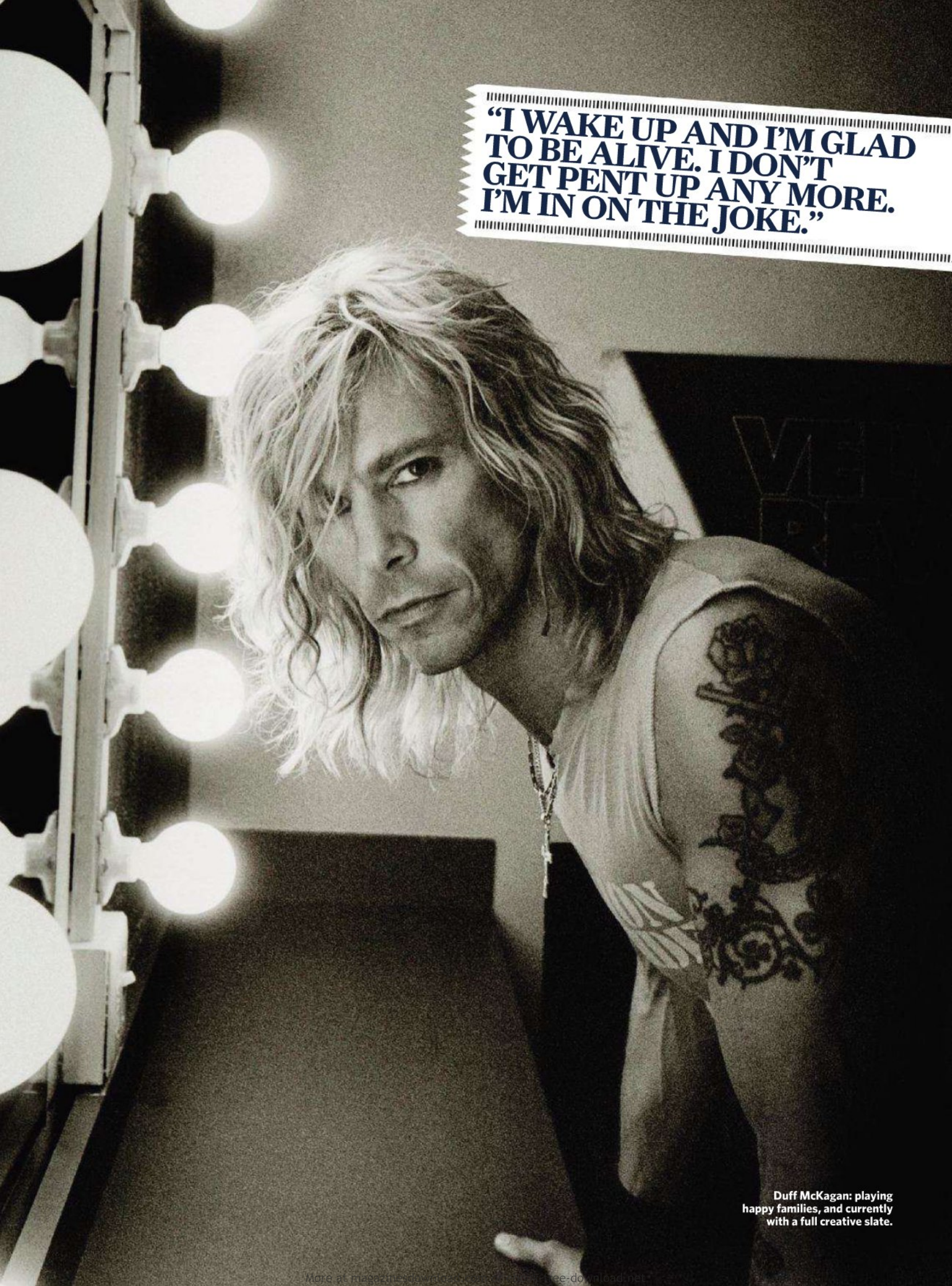
But everyone wants to know what he’s like now.

Never in a million years would I give a personal opinion on that. We have too much common history and respect. But I’m pleased that he and I ended up being in hotel rooms [in London] next to each other, because it forced us to reconnect. It just happened and...

What’s he like? Well, we had a grand old time. We went down to the gig together. I know the guys in his band, I know the crew – they were going to be surprised, that was half the thing. I was tired by that point. I was drinking Red Bull, so I was half out of my mind. Next thing I know I was playing. It was odd when I looked out in the crowd – everybody’s looking at me. I’m like, oh, I’m going to have to explain this in every interview I do now. ☺

The Taking is out now on *Armoury Records*. Duff McKagan’s *Loaded* play *Download*, June 10-12

**"I WAKE UP AND I'M GLAD
TO BE ALIVE. I DON'T
GET PENT UP ANY MORE.
I'M IN ON THE JOKE."**



Duff McKagan: playing
happy families, and currently
with a full creative slate.



~~Beat Up~~ Ever Meet Hendrix?

*When the going gets tough, bodyguard-to-the-stars **Michael Francis** is the man you'd want on, and by, your side. His CV highlights include hanging out with a coke-addled Elvis, living with Cher, saving Paul Rodgers from getting several kickings, and wrangling groupies for Bon Jovi. Just don't spill his pint.*

Words: **Dom Lawson** Portrait: **Steve Double**

He may be a quietly spoken giant of a man whose kindly smile and firm-but-not-terrifying handshake suggests a quiet confidence, but Michael 'Danny' Francis has spent the best part of 40 years saving rock stars from all manner of perilous situations. He is, without question, the bodyguard's bodyguard. The only man on the planet who has hung out with a coke-addled Elvis Presley, chaperoned Cher, saved Bad Company's Paul Rodgers from getting the kicking of a lifetime (several times), and been at Jon Bon Jovi's side all the way from playing the humble Ipswich Odeon to the high-altitude, rather more salubrious world of groupie-stuffed private jets. As his no-holds-barred 2005 autobiography, *Star Man: The Right Hand Man Of Rock 'N' Roll* – published under the name Michael Francis – indicates, in his time this 60-year-old North London grandfather has seen, and done, pretty much everything. And, if you were to shape up tricky, could probably snap you like a twig.

Today, thankfully he's just buying *Classic Rock*'s correspondent a steak sarnie in a Camden eatery and giving his peerless anecdote Rolodex a sturdy flick...

PAUL MCCARTNEY

I started working as a bodyguard when Paul McCartney offered me a job. My father was a boxing trainer, and his first ever world champion was John Conteh, and Paul used to come and watch him train. John had been on the cover of *Band On The Run*, and Paul was a good supporter of John's. One night he just asked me to work for him. McCartney was incredibly famous at that point, but he was always a fantastic bloke. I stayed at their house, with Linda and the kids, and he was one of the nicest guys you'll ever meet. Through him I was introduced to Led Zeppelin's manager, Peter Grant, and I ended up working for him for about eight years.

LED ZEPPELIN

When I met Peter Grant and started working for Led Zeppelin, suddenly it was like the Wild West. They made up the rules as they went along, because back then there were no rules. Led Zeppelin were the first band ever to throw TVs out of windows. The excess was outrageous. I remember we'd get five grand a week for expenses and you never ever had to put in any receipts. When it was spent you'd just go back and get some more money. It was an amazing time. I loved Peter Grant, and he was a very close friend until the day he died. And he was a genius. He made the decision to put

everything he had into Zeppelin, and no one was going to rip them off. He was a pussycat at heart, but when it came to his band he was like a lion. That worked very well until he succumbed to the hard drugs, like everybody else did. Then it became total mayhem and every day was a fight for survival. Just getting the band on stage was tough. Peter was scary if you weren't on his side. If you were on the team, he'd back you up 100 per cent. If not, he was a scary character. And he could back it up – he was 400 pounds and six-foot-five.

ELVIS PRESLEY

I've had some incredible experiences over the years. I'd only just started working for Peter Grant when I met Elvis Presley. Led Zeppelin were in Vegas and we spent two days with Elvis. He was just larger than life. All he ever did during the two days we were there was give people presents, like watches, robes and jewellery. With Elvis, he must have had 20 people around him all the time; everybody was saying yes. And he was doing cocaine then, so you could see the end coming. We all thought we'd probably meet him again and again, but it was never gonna happen.

We met [Elvis's manager] Colonel Tom Parker too. He was the biggest crook who ever walked. When he died he owed the casinos \$20 million. Most of Elvis's movie deals were done to pay off the Colonel's gambling debts. The rumour is that he killed a lady in Holland, and that's why he was always scared to leave America. And that didn't do Elvis much good. But that's rock'n'roll. It's all about the characters. The managers are always a lot more interesting than the rock stars.

BAD COMPANY

Paul Rodgers was a bloody nightmare – and that was how Peter Grant described him [laughs]. I'd served my apprenticeship with Led Zeppelin, but if I hadn't I wouldn't have lasted one day with Paul Rodgers. Paul was a fantastic bloke as long as he never had a drink. When he had a drink he was a handful, because he could kick anyone's arse. We went through America with Bad Company and probably ended up in a fight of some sort every night. I knew it was going to be a nightmare on the first night. The band were rehearsing in Dallas, Texas, and we finished at 10pm and then went out for something to eat and ended up in a bikers' club. Within two hours Paul was drunk and arm-wrestling the bikers. So I spread a few \$100 bills around to people so that we could leave without getting killed. That was only the first night. And it got worse. I felt sorry for the other guys in the band because they ➡



Michael Francis with
ex-employer Jon Bon Jovi:
"The hardest-working
prick in showbusiness."

EVER MEET HENDRIX?

were all gentle hippies. They've all sobered up and get along great now, thankfully.

JON BON JOVI

When I first started working for Jon he was still travelling on a tour bus, but within six months he had his own jet with his name on it.

Bon Jovi were about to get dropped by the record company, and then *Slippery When Wet* was released and that went to number one when we were doing the Ipswich Odeon. *Slippery When Wet* became the best rock'n'roll tour of all time. The drugs, the women, it was all done in proportion. We never missed a show, we never lost anyone along the way and no one really knew what we were doing. There were more groupies on that tour than on any tour in rock'n'roll history. About 75 per cent of the audience at every show – and we were doing 25,000 a night – were girls aged between 16 and 25 and they all came to the show with one thing in mind: they wanted to fuck Jon. Jon has survived because he's a prick. But he's the hardest-working prick in show business. He won't mind me saying that.

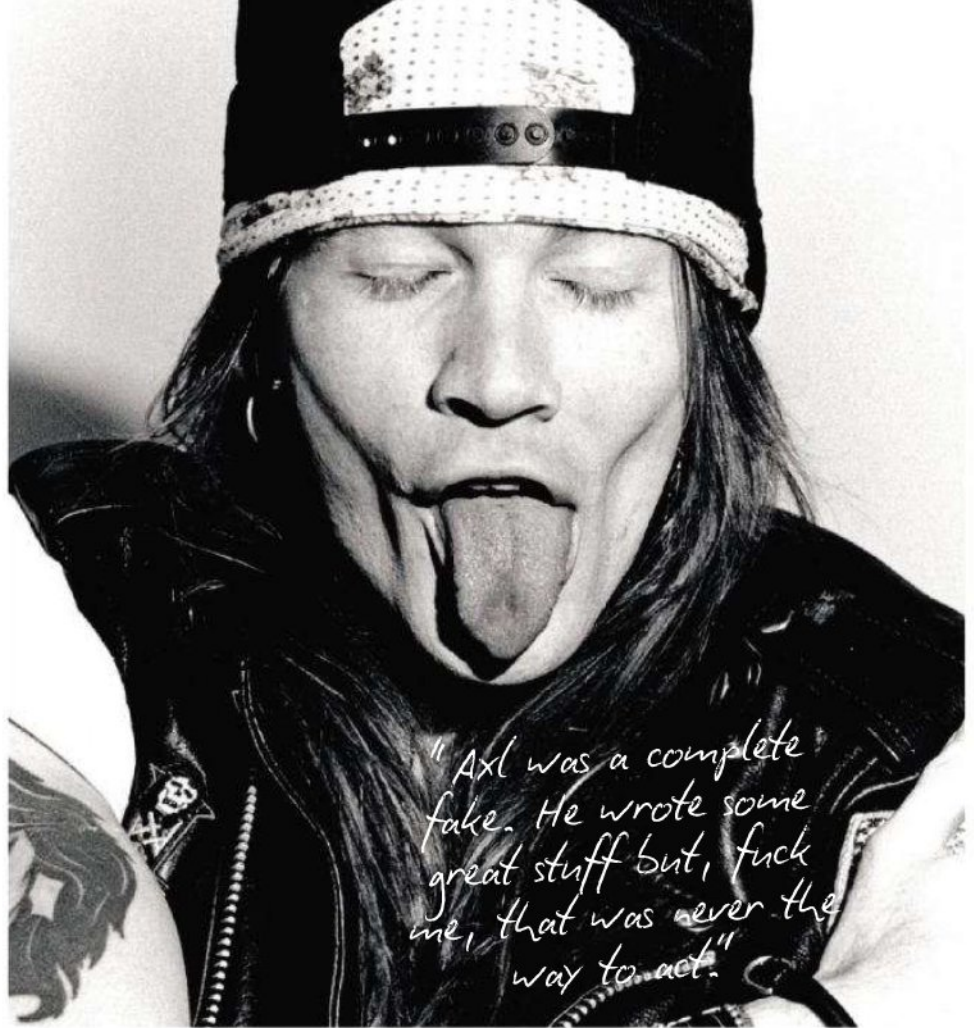
AXL ROSE

We came across Axl back in the 80s when Bon Jovi were at their biggest. Him and Jon never got on at all. They were always sparring to be number one. I just thought Axl was a complete fake. I grew up with the English school of music, with singers like Robert Plant and Roger Daltrey, real rock stars. This guy was a fake. He wrote some great stuff but, fuck me, that was never the right way to act. You build core your reputation on the things you do on stage, and I'm afraid he fell well short, especially when you compare him to Jon, who was the best frontman in the world at that point.

We managed to keep them apart by the skin of our teeth. But then we were all ready to pound Axl anyway, so it would've been no contest. Look at Jon now: one of the wealthiest men in the music industry, with the biggest touring band in the world today. So I backed a winner.

SEBASTIAN BACH

Skid Row supported Bon Jovi for eight months on their first ever tour. They were getting bigger and bigger and tensions were high. One night, Sebastian said something on stage. Me and Jon were in the dressing room, and Jon took offence to it and was waiting for Sebastian when he came off stage. They stood toe-to-toe and Jon held his ground. And, considering he was giving weight and height away, he didn't do so bad. We dragged him away and that was that. It was exciting stuff and livened the tour up a bit [laughs]. Jon went on to do the best show of his life that night. The next night we bushwhacked Skid Row on stage, held them down and gaffa-taped them to chairs, so we got our own back.



CHER

Working with Cher was the best job I've ever had. She's just a special person. And still is, in and out of music. She's probably the nicest person and most genuine person I've ever met, and the most talented too.

When I first met her it was in a famous restaurant in Chicago called Gene And Georgetti's. She was just starting to go out with Richie Sambora. They had a private room,

and they came down and Richie introduced me as Reggie Kray; me and Jon used to book ourselves into hotels as Reggie and Ronnie. And Cher said: "I'm glad you're Reggie and not Ronnie!" She'd done her homework and knew all about them. I ended up living with Cher on a beach in Malibu for three years, so we got very close. And we're still friends today.

KISS

I've been working for Kiss for 15 years now. Gene Simmons and Paul Stanley are total professionals. They're always up before everybody else and they work their asses off, even at their age. That's why they're still around and 90 per cent of the other bands from that era are not. They never have an off night. They always come out of the dressing room and give 100 per cent – and they ain't just sitting on stools and playing the guitar, like Sting. They're flying up in the air, they're breathing fire, they spit blood...

When Kiss did the reunion tour in 1996 with the original line-up, Ace and Peter were the total opposite of Gene and Paul. They were totally unprofessional and not very nice people to be around. If you could counteract that with, 'Oh, he's a great guitarist!' or 'He's a great drummer!' it wouldn't have been so bad, but you couldn't even do that. We went to see The Who during that tour and [The Who's manager] Bill Curbishley grabbed hold of me and said: "I want you to see something..." And he made me watch John Entwistle's bass solo. It was outrageous. So then we made Bill come to see Kiss and we made him watch Peter's drum solo. Bill watched him for a minute and then said: "Get me a policeman. I want him arrested for impersonating a drummer." 📢



Above left: Michael Francis with Kiss's Gene Simmons. Above: the "special" Cher.

Star Man: The Right-Hand Man of Rock 'N' Roll, by Michael Francis, is published by Simon & Schuster.



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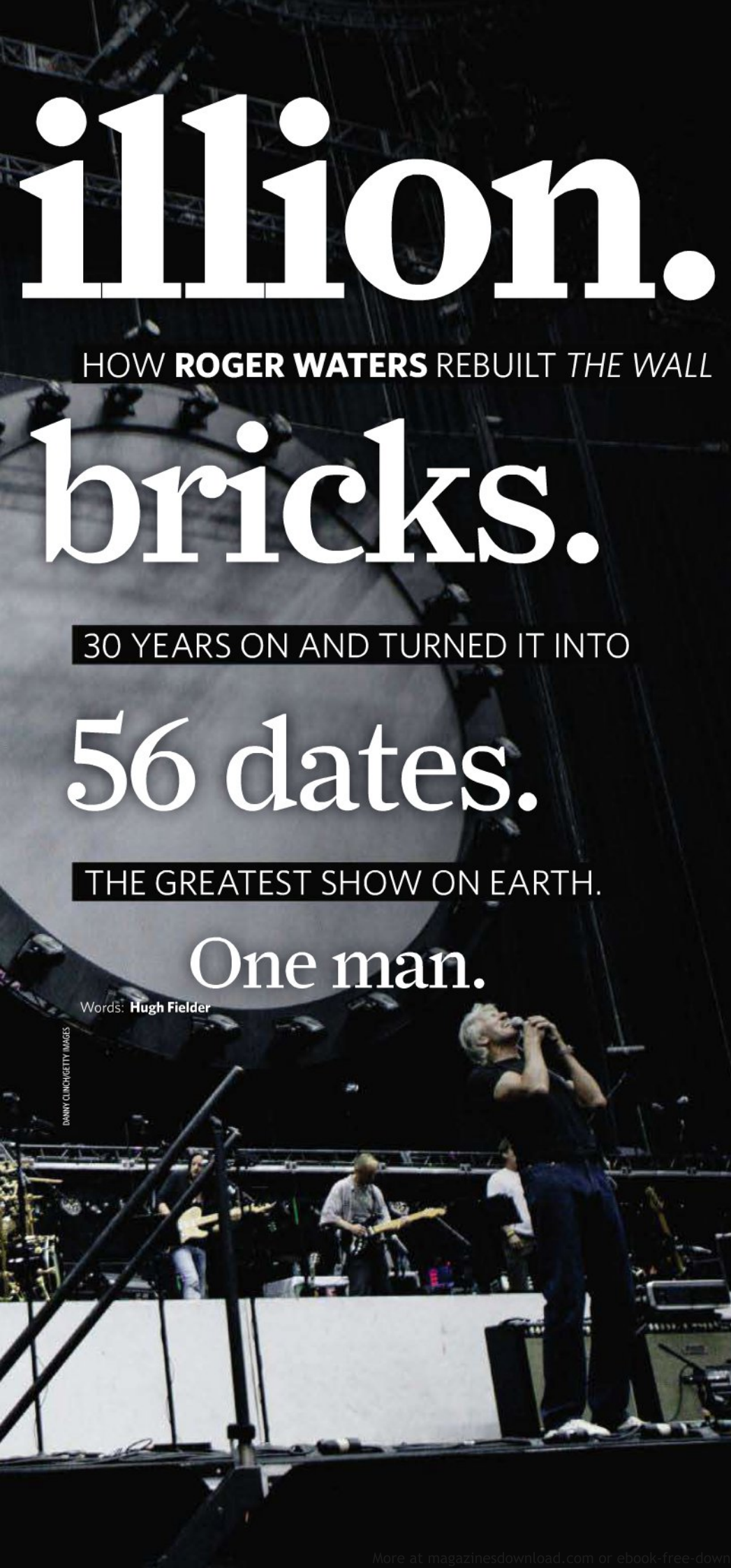
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illion.

HOW **ROGER WATERS** REBUILT *THE WALL*

bricks.

30 YEARS ON AND TURNED IT INTO

56 dates.

THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH.

One man.

Words: **Hugh Fielder**

DANNY CLINCH/GETTY IMAGES

IS THERE ANYBODY OUT THERE?

Yes. Hundreds of people, actually, milling around outside the Atlantico Pavilion in Lisbon. They're here for the second European date of the biggest and most expensively staged tour of the year: Roger Waters's revival of *The Wall*, more than three decades after its original staging.

Tonight's show is a sell-out, like most of the 50-plus dates on this leg. By the time tour finishes, around a million people will have watched an 11-metre high, 70-metre wide wall being built between them and the man they've come to see. The band on stage will continue to play a 32-year-old album behind that wall until the end of the show, when the whole edifice will come tumbling down. A similar number of people have already seen the show in North America last autumn. Now, as then, no one is likely to complain about not being able to see the band during the show.

The Wall is a legend in the annals of live rock music, partly because it was such an alien concept and partly because Pink Floyd, the band led by Waters at that time, performed the show just 29 times, in four cities – LA, New York, London and Dusseldorf – in 1980 and 1981. It would be the last time Waters and Pink Floyd played together until they reunited for Live 8 in 2005.

Pink Floyd never showed any interest in performing *The Wall* after Waters departed and guitarist David Gilmour took the helm. Waters embarked on a solo career, although he was tempted into staging a grandiose *Wall* in 1990 in Berlin with an all-star cast to celebrate the fall of another even more famous wall.

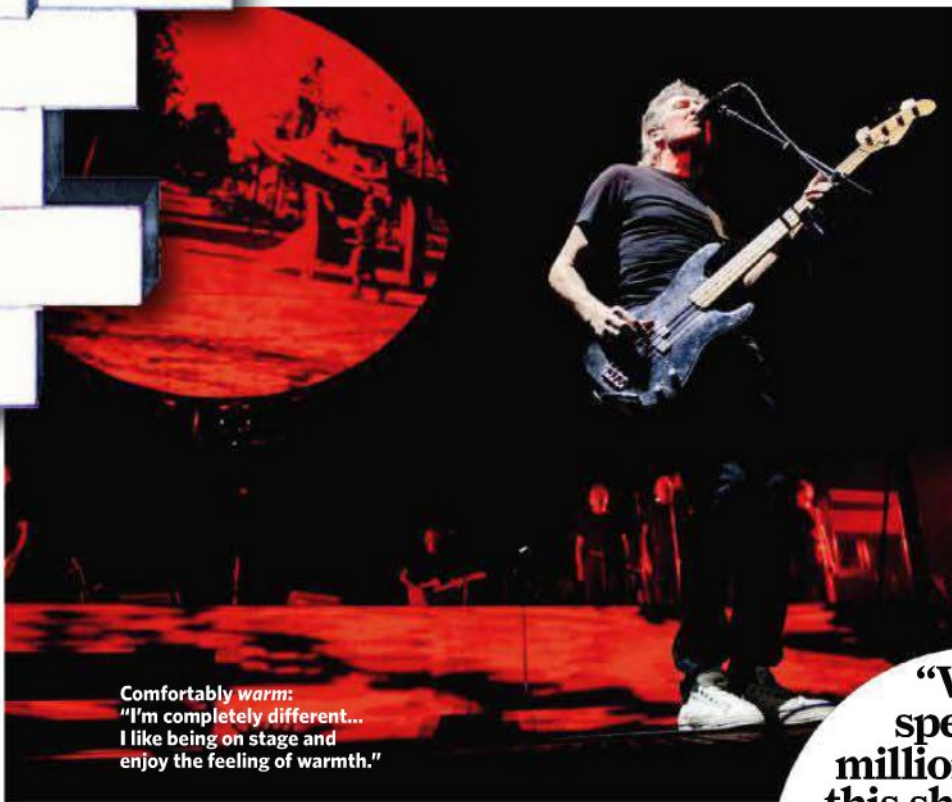
His career stalled soon afterwards, although it was revived at the turn of the millennium with the *In The Flesh* world tour and has prospered since. But there was no indication that he was planning to revisit *The Wall*. As he says: "It was incredibly difficult to stage back in 1980 and we lost a lot of money doing it."

Then in April last year Waters announced that he was taking *The Wall* on a world tour.

"Well, I did a tour a couple of years back where I did the whole of *Dark Side Of The Moon*," he explains now. "I had been reluctant to take that piece and re-do it. But it worked well. So when I'd recovered from that I thought maybe I had one more in me. My fiancé said that maybe I should do *The Wall*. I said I couldn't. But it wouldn't go away..."

Mark Fisher is mildly exasperated. As the stage designer for both the original *The Wall* tour and this 21st-century update, he's heard all the talk of this new show being the sort of thing they could only dream about 30 years ago.

"It's the same bloody wall," he says with a sigh. "Identical. It's frustrating that people think we're doing something that we could not have done in 1980. The engineering behind the building of the wall – the platforms that the men go up and down on to build the wall, the stabilising masts that go up inside the wall to stop it falling over, and the cardboard bricks themselves – are exactly what I designed back in 1980. The only things that are different are connected with how they are controlled. [In 1980] I sat behind the stage with a bank of switches and moved things up and down. Now we have a computer that does the same thing and a man that watches the computer." ➤



Comfortably warm:
"I'm completely different...
I like being on stage and
enjoy the feeling of warmth."

**"We've
spent \$15
million putting
this show on the
road. Back in 1980
we spent about
\$2 million
at most."**

Mark Fisher, stage
designer

As a young architecture student, the original *The Wall* production was Fisher's first major design for a rock show. It was the springboard for a career as a self-styled 'event architect' that has seen him become the in-house stage designer on globe-trotting stadium tours by The Rolling Stones and U2, as well as the opening and closing ceremonies at the Beijing Olympics.

So when Waters started thinking of bringing back *The Wall*, Fisher was his first call. "He told me that it would be much easier to do now than then," says Waters. "Technology had come a long way, and people spend a lot more money on tickets than they used to. He thought I could make the figures work, and maybe even come out of it with some gravy. So I thought, okay, let's do it."

Inside the empty arena the actual wall is still an imposing site – even part-built and unlit – jutting out from the upper tiers of each side and tapering down to the stage. It's not just the height, it's also the width: three-quarters the length of a football pitch. Behind and beneath the wall is a scaffolding warren jammed with motors, hydraulic pumps, lifts, platforms and

passageways. Each piece has a diagram stuck on to show exactly where it fits. And then there are the piles of 'bricks' that arrived flat-packed and are assembled and waiting to be laid. (They tried making them out of plastic, but plastic cracks. So it was back to cardboard and white paint.)

The projectors have been focused, the band have sound-checked. Now there's just an

echoing, quiet calm. Everything that needed to be checked has been checked. At what used to be known as the sound desk and is now the production control centre, a couple of guys are tapping on keyboards while rows of screens flicker on standby...

The calm is broken when the venue's doors open and groups of people run to the front of the stage and take up prime position. Unlike the American shows, the European shows are free-standing on the arena floor wherever possible. This means there's no room for the dishevelled tramp who would wander up and down the aisles at American concerts, pushing a supermarket trolley and brandishing a placard saying 'No thought control', before being ushered out by a burly security guy just before the show began.

In the centre of the floor a skeleton staff are minding the control centre. Banks of screens flicker on standby, waiting to be activated. The stage is similarly quiet; there are no roadies making last-minute equipment checks or tapping microphones. Everything that needed to be checked was done earlier. The only untoward item is a tailor's dummy placed centre stage. The PA is playing a succession of Bob Dylan songs. This is the calm before the choreographed multi-media barrage is unleashed.

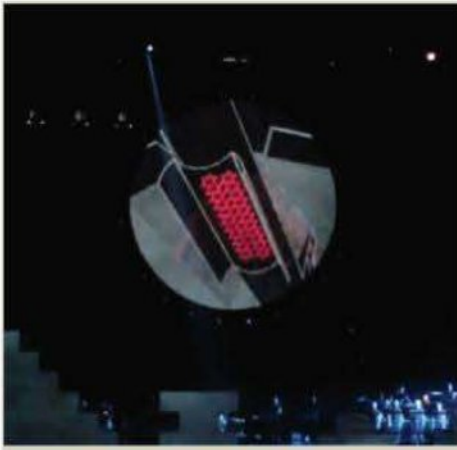
The *Wall* famously started with a gob. During the last show of Pink Floyd's *Animals* tour at Montreal's Olympic Stadium, Waters spat at a fan who was yelling drunkenly for the band to



The new inflatables:
"I was never satisfied
with the originals,"
says Gerald Scarfe

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STAR WARS

Roger Waters vs The Anti-Defamation League. Gentlemen, take your corners.

The updated version of *The Wall* production has come under fire from Jewish activists. The new animation for *Goodbye Blue Sky* depicts bombers flying overhead, dropping symbols that include a crucifix, a Star of David, a crescent, a dollar sign, a pound sign, a Shell logo and a Mercedes-Benz logo.

Soon after the US leg of the tour began, the Anti-Defamation League, an organisation set up to fight anti-Semitism, called the juxtaposition of the Star of David and the dollar sign "outrageous". They claimed that "the meaning could easily be misinterpreted as a comment about Jews and money".

Waters replied via his website that there was no hidden meaning behind the order of the symbols. "The point I am making," he said, "is that the bombardment we are subjected to by conflicting religious, political and economic ideologies only encourages us to turn against one another".

The order of the symbols was subsequently changed, and the Star of David is now followed by a Mercedes-Benz logo.

There is no word yet on whether the Iranian authorities have been able to make out the word 'Zion' in any of the graphics projected onto the wall.

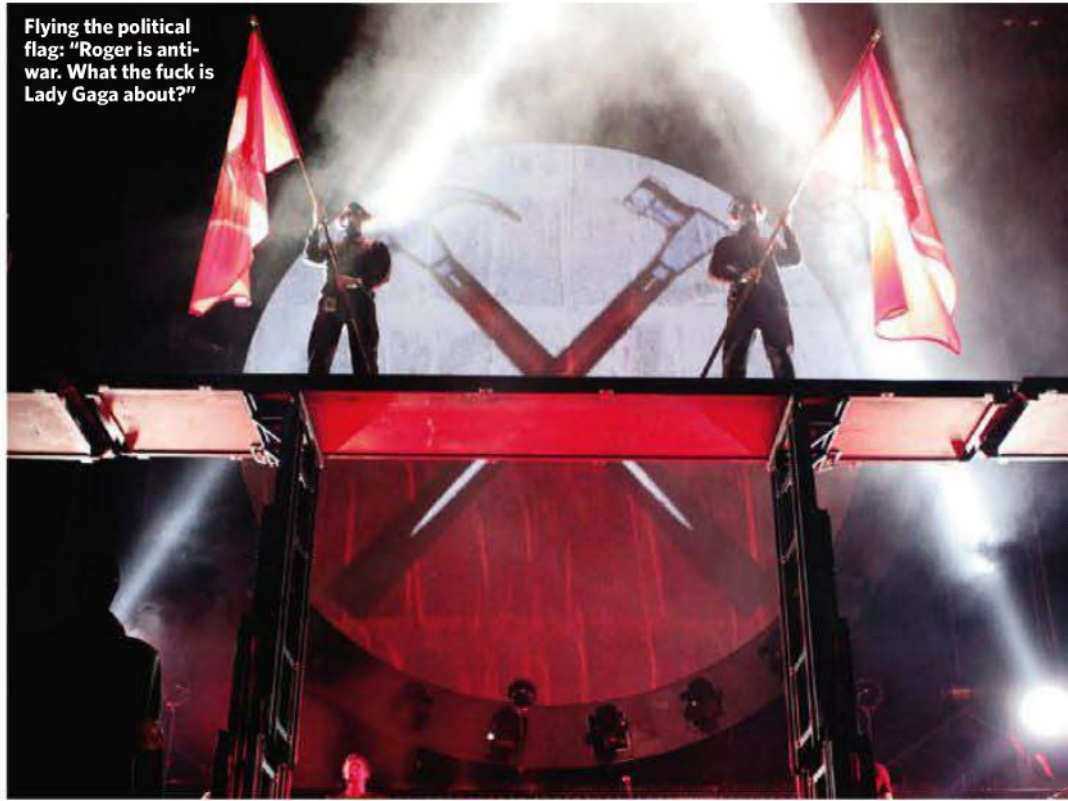
play *Careful With That Axe Eugene*. Afterwards Waters was so appalled by his behaviour that he sketched out the idea of a show with the band playing behind a wall to express his own feeling of alienation from the audience. He reminded the audience of the incident when the Wall tour reached Montreal's Bell Centre last October.

"When I wrote it, it was mainly about me, a little bit about Syd Barrett, but by and large it's about fear," he says. "It's about a frightened person. Fear makes you defensive, and when you're defensive you start building defences and that could be seen as a wall."

It has always been assumed that the original production of *The Wall*, which included a crashing Stuka dive bomber and giant inflatable puppets to reinforce Waters's bleak tale of alienation, paranoia, power and war was too complex to be toured. This is another thing that irks Mark Fisher.

"The only thing that stopped it being toured in 1980 was the cost," he says. "And it wasn't that the show was that expensive, it was that tickets were cheap. The top price ticket at Earls Court was £8. At the O2 in May people are paying £65 to £85.

Flying the political flag: "Roger is anti-war. What the fuck is Lady Gaga about?"



That completely changes the economics of putting a touring show together."

Fisher maintains that the ticket price reflects what the show is worth. "It allows you to spend a lot more on the hardware and the crew. We've spent the best part of \$15 million [£9.4 million] putting this show on the road. Back in 1980 we spent about \$2 million at most."

Tour director Andrew Zweck is another veteran of the original Wall shows. He confirms that this is the biggest show Waters has put together. "There are 24 trucks parked outside," he says backstage, with the air of someone who has spent decades keeping a close eye on the bigger picture. "There are 116 people on the road, which is more than double what we've had before. And that includes 14 carpenters who are just brick builders. The economics of it mean that we can now move the show overnight. The crew will be out of here by about three in the morning, and they'll start work again around six or seven."

While the wall itself has barely changed, other elements of the show have been greatly enhanced. The biggest advance has come with the projection. In 1980, three 35mm projectors struggled to beam Gerald Scarfe's inimitable animations onto the wall in focus and without too much overlap. Now there are 15 HD-quality projectors pointed at the wall, with a bit-mapping grid that means that as soon as a brick is positioned on the wall it immediately becomes part of the projection. It's a far cry from some of the early-80s shows that Mark Fisher remembers as "a mad race between the drug-crazed road crew and the band to see who could get to the intermission first".

As Video Content Director, Sean Evans is in charge of projections. A youthful-looking, heavily tattooed American, he grew up listening to *The Wall* ("I know it inside-out"). Evans, Waters and editor Andy Jennison spent weeks working on ideas for the projections in an editing room.

"It was like being back at art college," says Evans.

"Right from the start Roger said: 'I don't want to do this as it was. I have no interest in not making this political. We have to modernise it and we have to bring a message.'"

Waters says the new show has developed from the story of one frightened man hiding behind the wall, to a more expansive look at the way nations and ideologies are divided from each other. "We are controlled by the powers that be who tell us we need to guard against the evil ones who are over there and different from us and who we must be frightened of," he explains.

Part of the message included broadening the original album's references to encompass other wars and acts of violence since then.

"Roger put a notice on his website asking for people to send in pictures and details of family members, civilian or military, killed in wars or terrorist acts," says Evans. "We worked on it for months, and the first time I saw it with an audience even I welled up. During the intermission we put them all up on the wall. One night I saw a guy who'd obviously just seen a friend or relative on the wall, and he was just standing there sobbing."

The wider message of *The Wall* is clear from the outset when, instead of a 'surrogate' Pink Floyd taking the stage and fooling the audience (the opening gambit of the original show), the PA booms out the dialogue from Stanley Kubrick's *Spartacus* where the Romans try to coerce the slaves into revealing the rebel leader, only to be met by a growing chorus of "I am Spartacus". That's the cue for the heavy opening chords of *In The Flesh* as Waters

Flying tonight:
the Stuka crashes
into the wall.

looks pretty spectacular from wherever you are in the arena, with all the smoke billowing out and stuff. But if you're in the first five rows it feels like it's gonna hit you. I've been in the pit a couple of times with a camera and gotten brained a couple of times. Those things are heavier than they look."

Which is why, in these days of ludicrous litigation over the mildest inconvenience, a Health & Safety officer has been added to the tour payroll.

But what about the music? Waters's current band includes guitarists Snowy White, Dave Kilminster and GE Smith, drummer Graham Broad, keyboard player John Carin and, on piano and Hammond organ, Waters's son Harry.

Snowy White first played with Pink Floyd on their *Animals* tour in 1977, and he was part of the 'surrogate' band for the 1980 *Wall* shows. He has been a member of Waters's band since 1999. And he's happy to shed the non-committal *omerta* that hangs over most professional session musicians.

"This show is choreographed down to the second, because it wouldn't work otherwise,"

he explains. "The original was pretty tied down, too. People ask me if it's boring playing exactly the

same thing every night. And I thought it would be, but really it's not. There's a lot to think about while you're on stage, and you're trying to get it that little bit sweeter every night."

It was White who found Dave Kilminster, who takes on the 'poisoned chalice' of replicating David Gilmour's epic guitar solo on *Comfortably Numb*. "Roger wants it just the way

it is on record, and that's a young man's job," White says. "I'm happy to let

Dave get up on top of the wall." A large proportion of the Lisbon audience is surprisingly young ("They've been introduced to *The Wall* by their parents, who may in turn have been introduced to it by their parents," says White). It's something that makes the team behind it proud, although ultimately job satisfaction is almost as important as the cheque. Mark Fisher took particular pleasure in watching the US leg of

The Wall running neck-and-neck with Lady Gaga in terms of revenue. "Roger is unambiguously about alienation, discrimination, anti-war. The audiences have been picking up on that. You'd be hard put to know what the fuck Lady Gaga is about."

In fact Waters's tour would eventually outstrip Gaga's in terms of the money it made. "We were second only to Bon Jovi, who were playing stadiums," says Andrew Zwick. "We were offered stadiums but Roger turned them down, even though it meant we needed to play another 16 dates in America to meet the business plan. That was fine by me, too."

Another recurring theme among the technical and creative crews is Waters's continual attention to detail. Changes are still being made at the start of the European tour. Costumes have been altered, and the furniture in the hotel room that appears out of the wall in

**"If
you're in the
first five rows it
feels like the bricks
are gonna hit you.
I've been in the pit
and gotten brained
a couple of times."**

Sean Evans,
video editor

walks on and dons the long leather coat that has materialised on the tailor's dummy. The song culminates in a bombast of old technology – lights, smoke, fireworks, and the dive-bombing plane crashing in flames – that softens you up for the barrage of images to come.

Gerald Scarfe's remade inflatable puppets make their mark. The sylph-like wife now has a ghastly green allure (and a startling pudenda for those who are startled by that kind of thing), while the mother now cuts more of a beady, surveillance character as she scans the audience, which is reinforced by an equally inquisitive CCTV on the circular screen. Only the teacher has failed to move with the times. He may have a new jacket but he's decidedly old-fashioned – it's been a long time since canes were routinely swished in the classroom.

Getting Scarfe's original animations to hold up against the new animations was another time-consuming task for Sean Evans and his team. "His stuff is legendary, you can't mess with it. Fortunately Roger had the original film, so we were able to restore it from the best possible source, but

it still took a lot of work to make it look good against the other stuff we were doing. Some of it, like the flower sequence, was actually made for the circular screen, so we extended the stems across the wall so it looked as if the flowers were coming from somewhere."

Some of Scarfe's other animations, such as the marching hammers, have been re-animated to fill the entire wall with a vivid brightness that borders on intimidating. Others, including the stems of the flowers, have been rendered in 3D. The projectors also make the whole edifice sway and buckle alarmingly. There are moments when you wonder if the animated trickery will upstage the climax of the show, when the wall comes crashing down.

"We've paced the effects so it all builds up to that point," says Evans. "We thought about whether to add any effects to the wall as it falls. But actually it

Waters the
dictator: "I milk
it mercilessly,"
he says

GETTY IMAGES/22

OUT NOW

Joe Bonamassa

THE BLUES ROCK VIRTUOSO, VOCALIST, SONGWRITER
RETURNS WITH HIS STUNNING NEW ALBUM:

"DUST BOWL"

'DUST BOWL IS A TREAT AND A HALF' - CLASSIC ROCK

'NO-ONE CAN TOUCH HIM AND HE'S

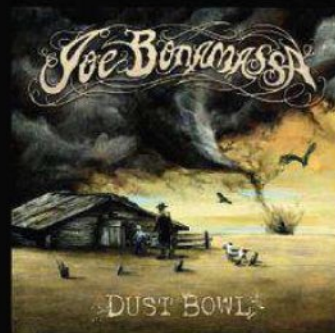
JUST MADE ANOTHER KILLER ALBUM' - TOTAL GUITAR

'NO QUESTION OF THE VIRTUOSITY HERE' - THE TIMES

OCTOBER TOUR

15TH	BLACKPOOL OPERA HOUSE
16TH	NOTTINGHAM ARENA
18TH	CARDIFF CIA
19TH	PLYMOUTH PAVILION
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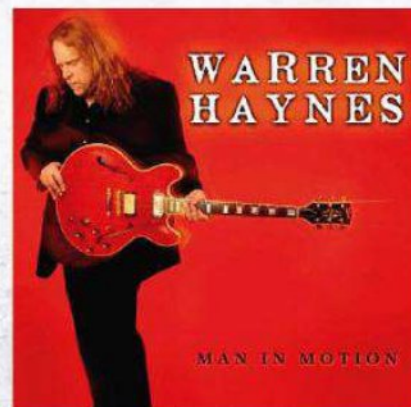
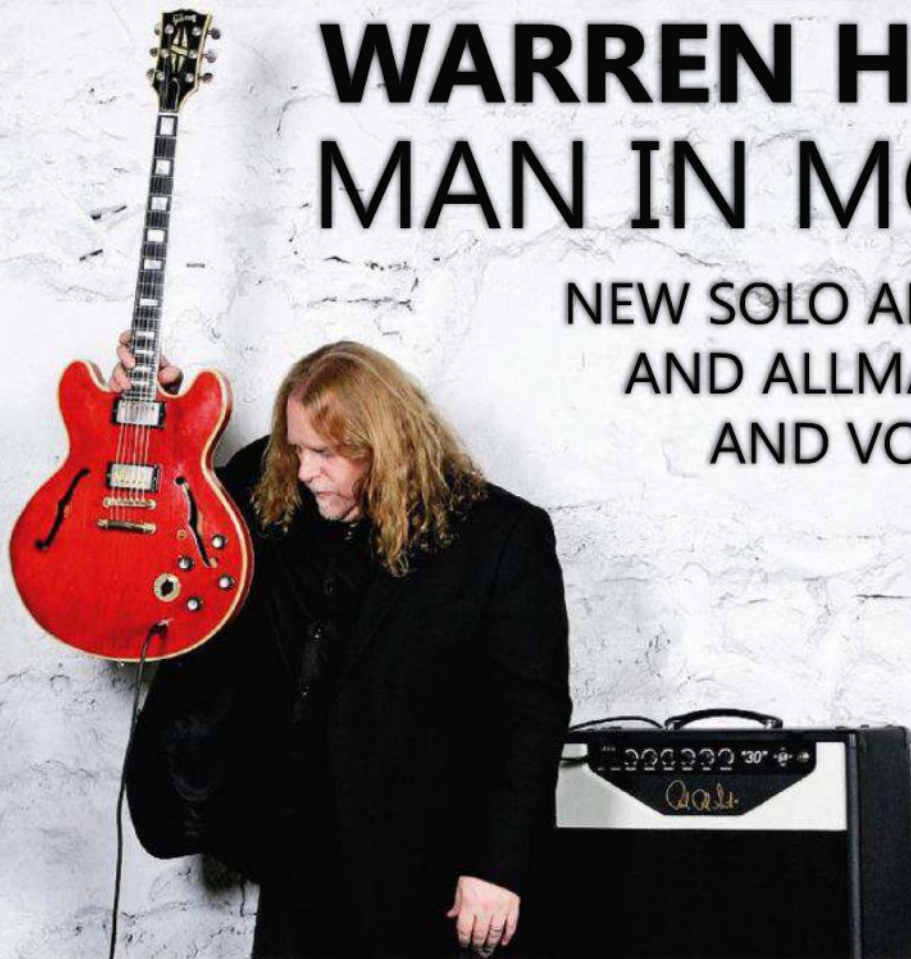
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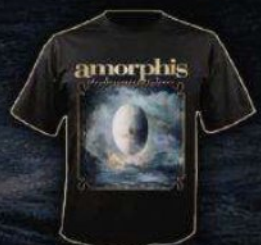
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"THE IMAGES ARE OUT OF MY HEAD, NOT ROGER'S."

Legendary artist Gerald Scarfe on *The Wall*, then and now.

GERALD SCARFE: "Roger Waters came to me with the idea of *The Wall* and played his raw tapes to me. My job, really, was to illustrate his lyrics, but the images are out of my head, not his head. For example, when it came to the judge in the trial scene, I saw him as a huge arse, which I know Roger didn't. But he has this philosophy that is wonderful for artists, which is that if you employ an artist, you don't try to change what he does."

"For the inflatable puppets, I started with a drawing that I showed to Roger, and then I made a small sculpture about 10 to 12 inches high. Finally I painted it so

that the people who were making the big one had a guide.

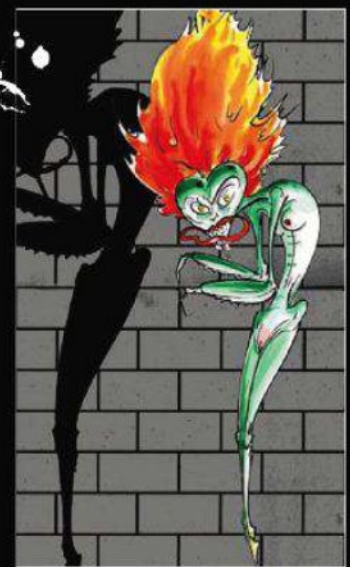
"I re-made the inflatables for the new show. I was never really satisfied with how they turned out originally. They were fairly unsophisticated, although people said they were pretty effective. They can now move around much better than before. The mother is more of a watchful figure, a kind of omnipresent force. She turns her head and rakes the audience with her searchlight eyes. The teacher is still the most popular character. There's always a huge roar when he comes on. In fact he's probably a teacher from back in my day. He's

still pretty skinny but that's because he's a mean bastard.

"I created a new animated character to illustrate *Waiting For The Worms*. He's crouching by the wall, and then he gets up and runs towards us, swiping at us as he runs. I also added some graffiti on the wall in what Roger calls my 'iconic' script.

"The new show has got tremendous oomph. Every minute of it is packed with something. Not necessarily something happening, but some sort of emotional feeling."

The Making Of 'Pink Floyd's The Wall', by Gerald Scarfe, is out now.



Scarfe's sketches for *The Wall* (clockwise from left) the new mother character, complete with notes; early drawing of the main characters; new drawings of the wife and the teacher. Below: Scarfe with Waters.



the second half of the show has been changed.

"That's Roger's trademark," says Zweck. "He's never satisfied. He wants to be involved in everything, every note, every image, the choreography. His fingerprints are all over *The Wall*."

They were all over the original show, and the album, for that matter. It's not as if Waters needed to reclaim *The Wall*, but the recognition after so long in the shadow of the band he quit must be gratifying. Mark Fisher can still remember the ignominy of Waters's *Radio KAOS* tour playing to less than 500 people at Wembley Arena in 1987, and the following year Pink Floyd packed out the stadium next door.

While the original *The Wall* album will always be associated with Pink Floyd, it's Waters who is clearly identified with the extraordinary success of the *Wall* tour. Significantly, he reasserts his authority over *Comfortably Numb* and *Run Like Hell*,

the two songs with which Pink Floyd climaxed their sets in the 80s and 90s. Indeed David Gilmour's appearance on top of the wall during *Comfortably Numb* was for many the high point of the original *Wall* production. But Waters sings the lyrics with real passion and despair and, as the guitar solo comes in, smashes his hand against the wall, which shatters, sending a collective gasp through the audience. It's yet another gob-smacking moment.

And Waters turns the largely instrumental *Run Like Hell* into a dictator's rally with waving flags, strutting feet and crossed-fist salutes. By the end of the song it's difficult to believe that Waters didn't orchestrate the Libyan uprising as a publicity stunt for the tour.

Almost as startling is Waters's crowd-friendly demeanour, smiling, even making eye contact with fans down the front whenever he removes the long leather coat that he wears for his dictator's role in

the show. It's a far cry from the remote, uncommunicative figure he cut for so long, not least in the original *Wall* shows.

"I'm completely different, and feel completely different about being on stage now than I did then," he admits. "In the last 30 years I've come round to embracing the possibilities of that connection with the audience. Now I milk it mercilessly, just because it's fun and it feels good. Whereas back then I was so fearful that when I was on stage I was the same as I was at a party – standing in a corner, not looking at anybody, smoking cigarettes and more or less saying: 'Don't come anywhere near me.' Thank goodness I've grown up a bit since then. I like being on stage and enjoy the feeling of warmth – what's not to like?"

Roger Waters's The Wall UK tour begins at London's O2 arena on May 11.

Now turn over for Classic Rock's exclusive interview with Roger Waters...

In The Flesh

All hail Roger Waters, the man who built – and then rebuilt – *The Wall*. In an exclusive interview, the bricklayer-in-chief reveals his hatred of governments, his personal training regime, and exactly what is happening with Pink Floyd.

Portraits: **Danny Clinch**

Thirty years on from the original *The Wall* tour with Pink Floyd, Roger Waters is a changed man. Floyd's 1979 album was Waters's reaction to the band's huge global success. Back then he was a distant and occasionally aloof figure.

In 2011 those barriers have dropped – the current *The Wall* shows find him making eye contact with the audience, occasionally even indulging in spontaneous banter. So warm and convivial is Waters feeling right now, there is even an open invitation for David Gilmour to test his vertigo atop the wall one more time and reprise his solo on *Comfortably Numb*. *Classic Rock* understands that Gilmour has the European tour schedule and is going to pick a show, although it's likely to be a last-minute arrangement. "Since I've worked through all kinds of personal problems I'm no longer as judgemental of myself or others as I used to be," Waters says. "I like being on stage and enjoy the feeling of warmth. What's not to like?"

You wrote *The Wall* more than 30 years ago. Do you feel it's still culturally relevant today?

When I decided to do *The Wall* again, I gave some thought as to what I could bring to it. I didn't want to go out and whine about how miserable I was when I was a young man, but you can see nations in the same way. They are subject to history in the same way an individual is, and they're subject to fears, particularly the citizens of certain nations, where fear is used as an exercise of control. The original story of 1979 could be seen as an allegory for a broader political situation that is very relevant and pertains to now.

How have you brought it up to date for 2011?

I hope that I've developed this show from just being about the story of one man who hides behind a wall because he's frightened, to being a more general piece about the way ideologies and nations are divided from one another. We're fearful of those beyond our borders and those who may seem to be different from what we are. We have three characters that are kind of graffiti on the wall: there's a Muslim girl, a Jewish kid and a Christian girl. And during the show I try to make the point that they have to be taught hatred. If you're a Jewish kid, you're not born believing that Palestinians are filthy pigs, or vice versa; if you're a Muslim kid in Iran, you're not born believing Israel should not exist and should be wiped off the earth; you're taught this stuff.

How much of your traumatic childhood led to you writing the original *The Wall* album?

Writing *The Wall* was a very important and

therapeutic process for me. Also, it was a very important part of making sense of my feelings. Not only the trauma of losing my father, but also trying to make sense of the fact that I felt alienated from other people. Music can be hugely therapeutic on all levels. Just making a noise can be a good thing.

Your father died during WWII. It's been said that it was the only 'fair' war, because it was a fight against the Nazis.

That is the only consolation in his death. There is no question that Adolf Hitler and the rest of the Nazi gang were a huge danger not just to the rest of Europe, but also to the whole world potentially and they had to be stopped. They were a real, real, danger, and I think it was absolutely necessary.

People could say the same thing about Al-Qaeda or the Taliban.

They could say it, but they would be wrong. It's a completely different situation. Take Iraq. Al-Qaeda did not exist in Iraq. Saddam Hussein, for better or for worse, ran a pretty tight ship in Iraq and there was no Al-Qaeda. Unlike Adolf Hitler, Saddam Hussein posed no threat to any of us. He may have posed a threat to the Kurds and the Iranians, but no threat to the French, English or anyone in North America. So the extraordinary amount of death and destruction that has been caused in Iraq under the leadership of George Bush and Tony Blair is meaningless beyond any disgust that I could manage to have.

Your new production of *The Wall* is ambitious, even by your standards. Are there elements of the original 1980 show in this version?

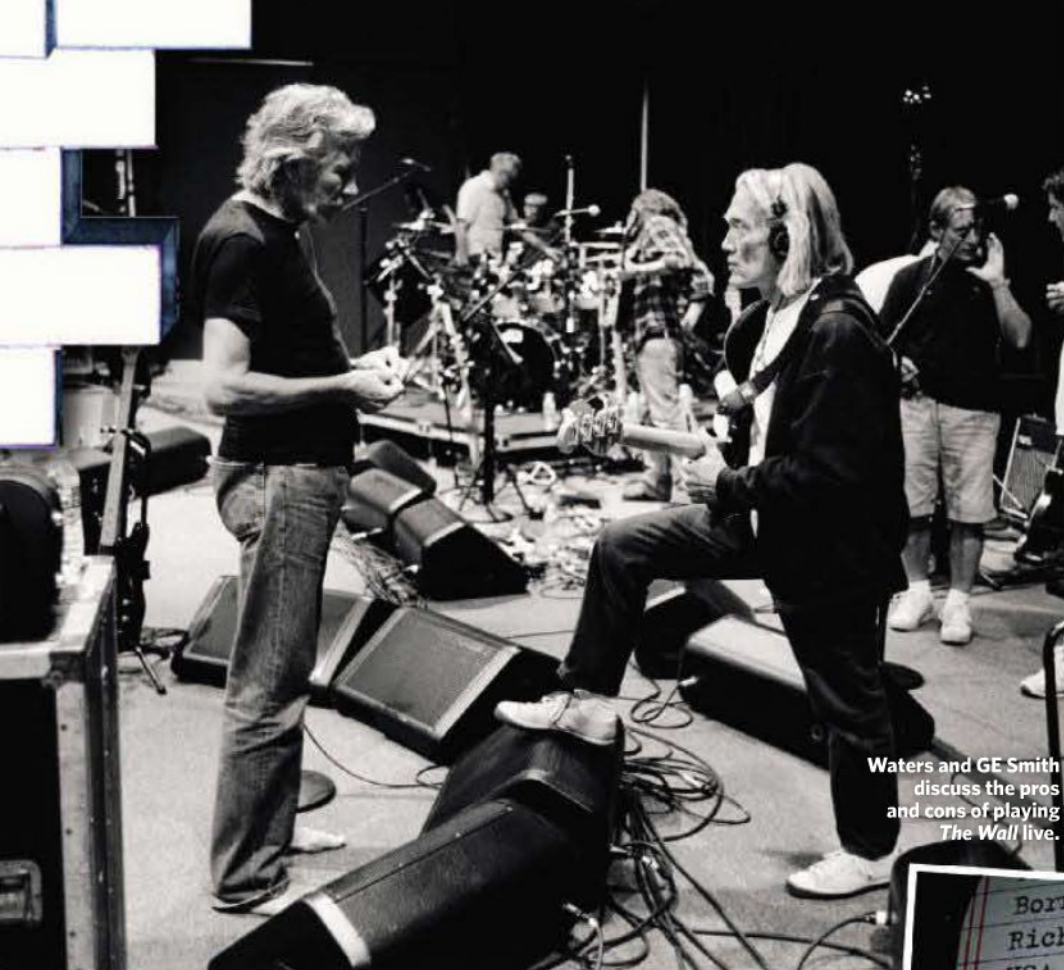
Yes there are. We're using revamped versions of the puppets that we used then, rebuilt, redesigned and used in a different way, but nevertheless... I'm working again with Gerry Scarfe and we're using some of the work that he did, both for the show back then and for the movie. Back then we had three rather old, rickety 35mm film projectors on rickety platforms stuck out in the audience. Now we can use video projection, and it means we can project across the whole 240 feet. There's a lot more words... a lot more languages. Fundamentally the music is the same and the lyrics are the same, so the thread of the narrative remains the same. Its ➤



"Hey! You! Leave those bricks alone!" Waters and the new teacher puppet.

**"I got my
people to ask
David Gilmour's
people to ask him if
he wanted to do this
tour. He got his
people to tell my
people 'No'."**





Waters and GE Smith discuss the pros and cons of playing *The Wall* live.

Is it just music from the original album, or is there extra music in there?

It's actually a kind of extended version of the record, but only that there are three solos in *Brick II* instead of one, and that there's a longer bit after *Another Brick III* before *Goodbye Cruel World*. This allows time for the guys who are actually physically building the wall to complete their task. So it's a bit longer, but essentially the same.

During the show there are projections of photographs of people who have died in conflicts – a Wall Of Remembrance. Don't you worry that anyone who has turned up to be entertained might feel uneasy?

I've never been interested in making things just to entertain people. I want them to be moved and emotionally engaged. Otherwise I might just as well be working on a game show. I requested on my website that people send me photographs and stories about loved ones who have died in wars of any kind, as an act of remembrance. We become immured to actually how desperately disruptive these violent activities are. I try not to become immune to it... I try to be shocked and horrified by it every single day of my life, and I hope that will be expressed in this new version of *The Wall*.

What are you trying to achieve with it?

To go on my wall of remembrance you don't have to be a soldier, you can be a casualty of another kind. I'm going to be showing pictures of fallen loved ones, either soldiers or civilians killed in conflicts, and I very much hope that they come from everywhere. So there's a photograph of a US marine next to a picture of a resistance fighter born in Algeria who has gone to Iraq, as he sees it as an imperial invasion and wants to fight in what he perceives to be a holy war. The whole thing is very complicated, but I think it's important that I keep banging away at this very simple notion that there

is no 'us' or 'them', it's just accidents of geography.

Can you still connect with the anger and alienation you felt back then?

There's something in the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame museum that I've started to put in my programmes: that writing *The Wall* was part of a process to make sense of the feelings of alienation that I had. We never completely lose the fear of the dark that we experience as babies, so the anguish that is a natural part of the process of being human is something that is always there with all of us. But if we work on things we can make interesting and productive relationships with other living things that we experience as joy.

Did you ever try psychotherapy?

Did I? I did very little else for about 40 years! No, but I did quite a lot. I must have done 10 years or so once a week, maybe even 15 years.

Did it help?

I've no fucking idea! It sort of feels like a luxury... Well it is, it's expensive! But you would have to say that in a perfect world everybody could once a week go and see somebody who was interested in them, what they were feeling, their life, without the burden of friendship. It's great to have friends to chat to, but maybe the confessor is not so bad an idea. But in

terms of Catholicism, there's so much bad that goes with it that the good of that one thing could never outweigh all the bugging boys and stuff.

You were a frightened young man when you wrote *The Wall*. Thirty years on we have The War On Terror, militant Islam, inequality in the world... Does all that frighten you?

No. It disturbs me. But there's a difference. I feel more capable of engaging in political discussion, political action and political thought.

Do you like life on the road?

No, not really. It's a life I can tolerate. I enjoy doing the shows, but after that you have a glass of wine and go to bed. Because I have to sing every day I can't talk much. And I hate not being able to talk, particularly when we're on an aeroplane when there is a loud noise level, so you have to speak louder. Also, when you're at a party and lots of people are talking to each other... after an hour you lose your voice. And I can't afford to do that. That's something I don't enjoy.

Do you find touring physically daunting?

I'm 67 now, so I think there will come a point where

I won't want the physical demands – I can't imagine that at aged 80 I'm going to want to do 55-date tours. At the moment, I'm pretty fit and I have no qualms about doing this one. I have started to work out in preparation, as it is physically quite demanding.

Are you very fit?

I'm getting fitter. I started going to a personal trainer. I'd never been in a gym in my life, so it was a bit of a shock. It's unbelievably painful. I'm doing some cardio and a lot of strength and flexibility training to get stronger.

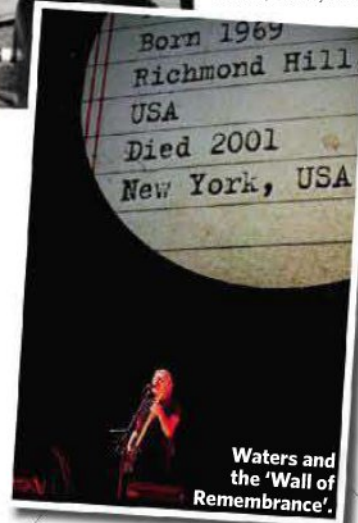
There are rumours that this might well be your last tour.

It might be, you never know. I tend to do quite big shows and I put a lot into it. Some people go out on tour until they die. Muddy Waters or BB King or some of those old blues players, they can just set up a chair and play and that's all they

need to do. I feel that my shows have to be a bit more physical. That might be harder to keep going. When I finish this tour I'll be nearly 70 years old, which is getting up there for a rock'n'roller.

Did you ask David Gilmour or Nick Mason to do this current tour with you?

Funnily enough, a guy called Hank Steinbrenner, whose father owned the New York Yankees, had an idea to put *The Wall* on in Yankee Stadium. He got in touch and said: "You ask Gilmour." I said I didn't mind asking, but that he'd say no. So I got my people to ask his people to ask him, and within about 20 minutes he got his people to speak to my people and said no. Which was totally predictable.



"I do think about Syd Barrett. He burned brightly, but not for very long, sadly."



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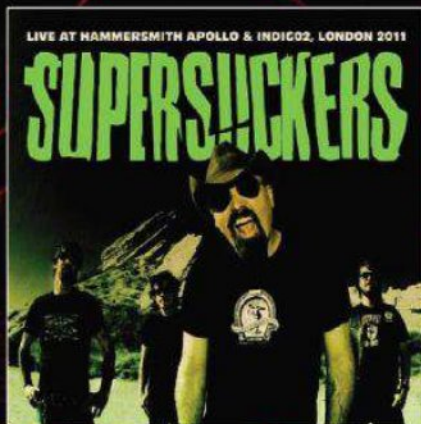


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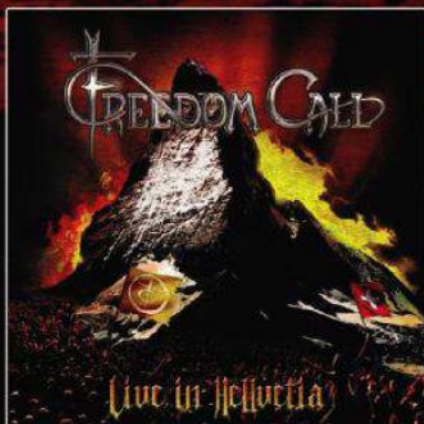


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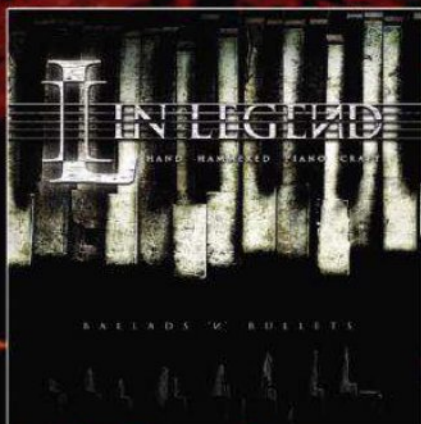


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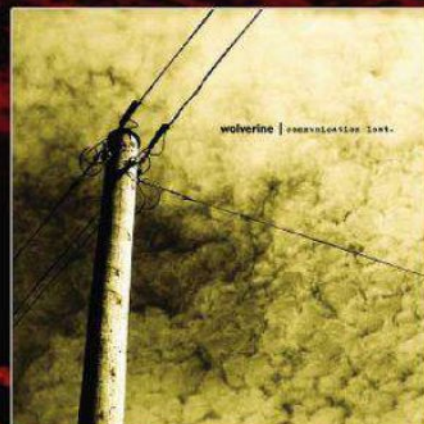


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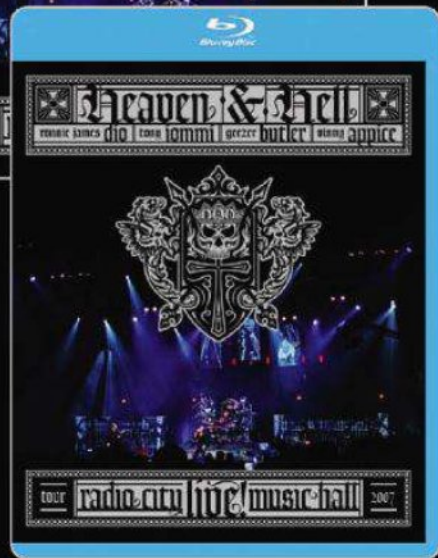
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It's all gone Pink: "I'd be happy" to do something as Pink Floyd, says Waters.



You say you got your people to call David's people. Is it really that difficult to pick up the phone and call him yourself?

I don't actually have his number any more. I could have just emailed him. It was slightly for a laugh – I just thought it was quite funny for my manager to call David's manager and have David's manager ask him, knowing what the answer would be anyway. I would have felt slightly embarrassed to ring him up and say: "Hey, Dave, do you want to come and play *The Wall* in Yankee Stadium?"

After Live 8, it seemed like Pink Floyd could have re-formed. Why didn't it happen?

David didn't want to do anything at all. Pink Floyd is David Gilmour and Nick Mason. The two of them own the name. I know that after Live 8, David definitely didn't want to do anything. And that's fine, it's okay, not a problem.

People thought you'd buried the hatchet.

We did. But that doesn't mean he would want to do a tour with me.

Are you still in contact with David and Nick today?

I was estranged for quite some time from Nick Mason after the schism in the band, but we're now very good friends again and I see him a lot. David and I were never really good friends and we're not good friends now, but we're not enemies. We have very little in common so don't see each other socially, but there is no enmity.

Do you think the three surviving members will ever tour as Pink Floyd again?

You should ask David that question. I'd be happy to do something. But I think it's extremely unlikely. I don't think David is even faintly interested in doing that.

Do you feel sad about that?

Well, it comes with lots of problems. Live 8 was okay. I called David because Geldof asked me to call him. I decided for Live 8 that if there were any problems at any point, I'd roll over. Which I did, so it was fine. I couldn't do a project or tour like that, I could only do it for a couple of days of rehearsals or a show. Also, I work with people who are very talented and have a lot of input, but at the end of the day I can say: 'No, we'll do it this way', or 'That's a great idea. We'll do that'. So there are no arguments. And I like living a life with no arguments. Problems, decisions, things to solve – I love all that, but no arguments.

Are you nostalgic about Pink Floyd?

Yes. Up until *Dark Side Of The Moon* we were very motivated and worked well as a team. After *Dark Side Of The Moon* there was a long period of fragmentation.

Do miss the feeling of actually being in a band?

No. Even early on there were lots of tensions, and I much prefer the buck stopping with me. I love contributions and conversations and always listen to what everybody has to say, but in the end I prefer to be in a situation where I can say: "That's a good idea, but we'll do it this way."

Do you still think about Syd Barrett?

I do think of him, yeah. I hadn't spoken to him for 30 years by his death. He didn't want contact with me or anybody from the band. He wanted to be left alone in Cambridge. He burned brightly, but not for very long, sadly. And I was always extremely sad that he

succumbed to the mental illness that he succumbed to. If there had been a way that he could have recovered from it, that would have been great, but as it turned out there wasn't. Illness is always sad.

Would you say that *The Wall* is your favourite album you've done with Pink Floyd?

Yes I would.

Is it because it's more personal?

Yes, and because of the way the narrative works and the shape of the thing and it's maybe the most accomplished technically and philosophically.

Your classical album *Ca Ira* aside, it's now 18 years since your last solo album. Do you have any plans for a new one?

An album? I've got so many songs, and I keep meaning to get round to organising it and making another one, but I never seem to do it. I don't know why. But I'm sure I shall eventually.

Do you still have the opinion that music can change the world?

I do. There's something about the mathematics of what we call music that affects something in our physiology and creates an emotional response that feels as if it causes a difference in one. I believe everything is connected. It's like a pebble in a pond: the change might be infinitesimal, but it is a change nevertheless and the ripples spread. I'm not expecting any new revolutions or for a new Dylan or Lennon to come along, but music changes all our lives every day. 

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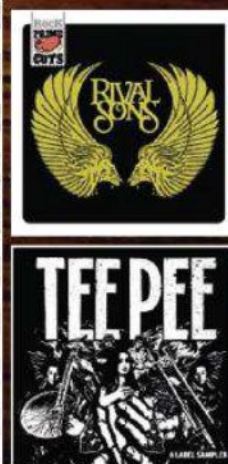
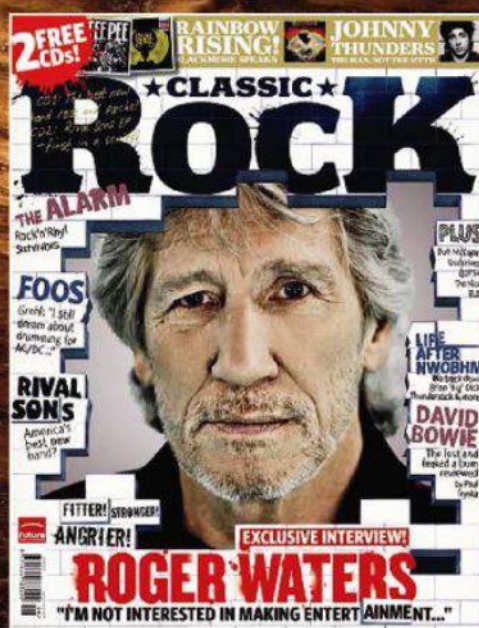
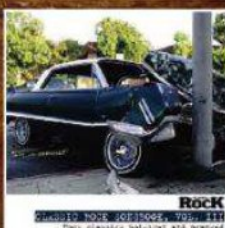
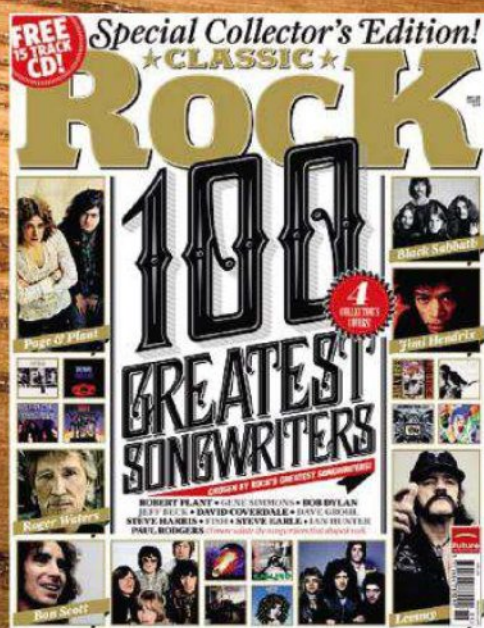
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MEET THE UNLIKELY SAVIOURS OF AMERICAN ROCK

Words:
Kevin Murphy
Pics:
Scarlet Page

Spiritually-inclined blues rockers **Rival Sons** kick off our Prime Cuts series of free EPs introducing you to some of the world's best new bands. Just don't call them retro.

Vernon is a grim, inhospitable area of East Los Angeles. Though just a few miles from the glitz and glamour of Hollywood, it feels like another planet. The industrial landscape is home to countless meatpacking plants and warehouses, but almost no people. The last census listed the city's total population at 91. Today, the grey surroundings are matched by the sky as rain coats the setting in a drab veneer. Yet this uninspiring place has spawned some of the most inspiring music to emerge from LA in a while.

In a cavernous, windowless building, Rival Sons have their rehearsal space. Freight trains rumble by the entrance to the large building used by local musicians. Behind each door, a different group. Behind most are mariachi bands. This is after all east LA. But in one small, black-walled room stacked with amps, instruments and flight cases, the four members of Rival Sons – singer Jay Buchanan, guitarist Scott Holiday, drummer Mike Miley and bassist Robin Everhart – convene. Each lives in a different part of town, which explains the unlikely rehearsal location.

The band is back in LA for a short while before heading off to Europe in the summer, where they'll be supporting Judas Priest on tour. Before that though comes the release of their album *Pressure*

And Time on Earache. A swaggering slab of roots rock'n'roll infused with the spirit and soul of the 70s, it's set to elevate Rival Sons to a higher level. It follows last year's self-released debut, *Before The Fire*, and subsequent self-titled EP – the latter which you can find on the front of this very issue of *Classic Rock*. Both cemented the group's reputation for resurrecting a style of music that flourished long before they were born. And while their single-minded devotion to authenticity has established Rival Sons as a distinctive and exciting arrival on the musical horizon, their sound has found them saddled with the retro tag. It's a charge Scott Holiday is at pains to defend.

"By no means are we trying to revive an era," he protests. "We're doing something that's true to what's today, in 2011."

"I actually appreciate all those comparisons to retro rock," adds Jay Buchanan. "There's no denying it because when I think of what rock'n'roll is, we use those basic elements. That's when rock'n'roll had a real honesty to it."

"We're drawing from the same well as the blues and soul music," adds Miley. "I get it all day – we sound like Zeppelin and Free."

And how do you feel about that kind of comparison?

"It's asking a lot of people not to do that," admits Buchanan. "It's our burden to transcend it."

While Rival Sons' music is loud and in your face, its members are anything but. Scott Holiday is a laid back, quietly spoken father of two who contrasts his passion for rock'n'roll with a deep spiritual practice. A follower of Vaishnavism and bestowed with his Sanskrit name of Nitai Chandra Das by his guru several years ago, he is a devotee of the Hindu guru Radhanath Swami, and commits part of every day to "chantings and offerings."

The guitarist embarked on his spiritual path more than a decade ago, though his awakening came early and via an unlikely source. Having

stolen a cassette copy of Rush's *2112*, he got home only to discover the tape was warped. "I remember that was my first introduction to karma," he laughs. With his spiritualism woven very tightly into his life, combining the two conflicting lifestyles must present challenging moments? "Every other breath. Making a spiritual commitment is a big one. It's really difficult to travel around and be such vagabonds and keep focused on what's real in our hearts."

This spiritual inclination is ➔

"I'm always asking people not to compare us to Led Zeppelin and Free. It's our burden to transcend all that."

Jay Buchanan

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Rival Sons:
sporting this
Spring's Edwardian
vagabond look.



"Can I get an 'Om'!":
Rival Sons (from left)
Robin Everhart, Jay
Buchanan, Mike Miley
and Scott Holiday.

"The rock'n'roll scene in Los Angeles is kind of embarrassing. The hair metal scene was like terrible graffiti on this town."

Scott Holiday

shared by both Miley and Buchanan, who consider it an important element of the band, one that provides guidance and solidarity. "Travelling, you pick up a lot of energies, a lot of dirt," explains Buchanan. "You try and stay focused and you try and keep your shit together."

The singer is a serious, sensitive, articulate individual. As a teenager, he fronted various blues outfits, though he admits that he never had any interest in joining a rock'n'roll band. Outside of Rival Sons, he has a successful parallel solo career as a singer-songwriter. The description on his MySpace page reads: "Indie/Lyrical/Minimalist" and his confessional solo songs sit at the other end of the musical spectrum to Rival Sons.

Convincing him to join was by no means a given. Holiday, Miley and Everhart had formerly been in a band named Black Summer Crush alongside singer Thomas Flowers, but with EMI stalling the release of their album, the guitarist got restless. Having discovered Jay through "serendipitous moving around the internet", he knew it was time for a change. "I wasn't ready to make a record with the singer we were working with. When I heard Jay's acoustic music on his website, I decided just knowing there's a Jay Buchanan, then I'm actually just going to move on. This is actually like a bar for what I consider myself to work with."

The task of luring Buchanan was initially given to Miley, who had played in the singer's former band, Buchanan. Prior to that, the drummer had also been responsible for bringing in bassist Everhart after performing together in a one-off jazz band at a fundraiser at soul legend Isaac Hayes' home. Knowing Buchanan, Miley also knew he wouldn't be interested. "If you check out Jay's solo music, it's beautiful. Why would he want to join?" He told Holiday to forget it. The guitarist wouldn't,

and after constant badgering, Miley finally called and got the response he'd expected: "Why would I want to join a rock band? That's what he said."

In the end he persuaded Buchanan to at least call Holiday, and as soon as the pair started on the subject of what rock'n'roll is supposed to sound like, the singer realised they were in sync. They bonded over Jeff Beck's *Truth* and the 'Beano' album by John Mayall's Bluesbreakers. But there was one other thing that sealed the deal.

"I was vegan," says Buchanan. "I was like, 'Wait a minute, a rock band; everybody's a vegetarian! What the fuck! How does this happen?'" For the singer, it was a sign the fates were conspiring.

With Buchanan on board, things happened quickly. Following their first show in November 2008 they were contacted by the Roxy, one of the legendary clubs on the Sunset Strip. By their fifth show they were packing out the House Of Blues, had management and booking deals in place and were being courted by record companies.

"Suddenly we have kick ass representation out of nowhere," Buchanan says with an air of incredulity. "Looking back, it's the story you read about. It's funny talking about it, man that's just what we did. It happened that way."

Now sharing a management company with Aerosmith and Van Halen, Rival Sons' immediate success in a town typically jaded by indifference reflects their refreshing appeal. All the ingredients are there and in Buchanan, they have a charismatic frontman who possesses a voice of strength and

beauty. Balancing his solo career with the increasing demands of Rival Sons is an issue for Buchanan, but musically he is clear about his role with each.

"We're a four-piece band and everyone has their own identity. My solo stuff is my identity and so I would never dream of imposing my identity on this band anywhere past my slice of the pie. Whereas when I'm creating my solo stuff, the entire pie is mine."

Rival Sons don't align themselves with any emerging scene in LA. Ask them they if have an affinity with any other artists, and the only two names they mention are Jack White and the Black Keys. Of their own town's recent musical past they are rather less complimentary.

"LA has mostly been a miss," proffers Holiday, the town's only Angeleno. "We have bands like the Chili Peppers and Jane's Addiction, but there isn't a whole ton of things happening in LA as far as rock'n'roll is concerned that isn't embarrassing. The hair metal scene was like terrible graffiti on this town."

Rival Sons seem determined to change that situation. Buoyed by self-belief, spiritual guidance and great songs, *Pressure And Time* is a bold statement of intent. Scott Holiday is happy to entrust their future to a higher power.

"Without being egotistical or being dicks about it, if it's good and it's real and it's genuine, which is how we feel it is, then we think the gods of rock will provide for us." ●

Visit www.earache.com/rivalsons to hear music from Rival Sons' forthcoming album *Pressure And Time* and view an exclusive video trailer.

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ALSO ALONE

He was the New York Doll-turned-junkie poster boy who had it all and threw it away. Now, 20 years after **Johnny Thunders's** death, the friends, lovers, bandmates and people who knew him best reveal the man behind the myth.

Words: **Ian Fortnam**

April 29, 1991. A leaden grey sky hangs oppressively over St. Anastasia's Roman Catholic Church on 245th St, Queens, as friends and lovers, united in grief, gather to pay their final respects to John Genzale; husband, brother, son and father. Mariann Bracken has lost the prodigal kid brother she'd introduced to the New York City melodramas of the Shangri-Las when he was just a fresh-faced altar boy. Lee Black Childers is inconsolable – the former manager of the deceased fainted when informed of his death – unable to imagine life without the man he was “totally” in love with. Susanne Blomqvist, only now realising the true depth of sacrifice her life partner made when he walked out of the home they shared with their infant daughter for the last time, absently registers the names on the cards of the numerous floral tributes piled on the back of a black El Camino: Deborah Harry, Mötley Crüe, Aerosmith – a stark reminder of Genzale's other life, the one that always seemed to get in the way of their ephemeral moments of domestic bliss.

As the service draws to a close, St. Anastasia's

reverberates to the sound of *You Can't Put Your Arms Around A Memory*. There's not a dry eye in the house.

Johnny Thunders: a Heartbreaker right to the bitter end.

On arrival at the interment, Jerry Nolan – to all intents and purposes his elder brother, father figure and unrequited other half – is handed a rose, which he gently kisses and places with due ceremony on the coffin lid: a poignant tribute, yet brief. Jerry has been drowning his sorrows with fellow New York Dolls alumnus Sylvain Sylvain, and both, in immediate need of relief, head for a nearby convenience. With nature's call duly answered, the pair return to the graveside and find it deserted. They made the gig, but missed the encore. The curse of Thunders strikes again.

Jerry looks at Syl, Syl looks at Jerry, and as Syl hurls the first fistful of soil into the grave and onto the coffin lid he yells: “JOHNNY, YOU MOTHERFUCKER!”

Johnny Thunders's story is so steeped in doomed glamour and junkie mythology that somewhere along the line the man that was John Anthony Genzale has been lost in the telling, but to know one you have to know the

other. Born in the middle-class Jackson Heights area of Queens on July 15, 1952, the boy who would be Thunders was irrevocably shaped in infancy by the departure of his father Emil Genzale. A serial womaniser of no little prowess, Genzale Sr ultimately chose swordsmanship over fatherhood, leaving little Johnny to be brought up by his mother Josephine and doting elder sister Mariann.

Haunted by rejection in his formative years, yet indulged by his matriarchal Italian upbringing, the young Genzale grew up spoiled but unsatisfied. Initially infatuated by baseball, he finally found a focus for his adolescent anger and angst in the perpetual soundtrack of Brill Building rock'n'roll drifting across the hall from his sister's Dansette; shrill, urban dramas of switchblade romance and leather-clad Lotharios, delivered by keening teenage girls teetering on the brink of hysteria.

As Genzale matured he developed musical tastes that reflected his self-image. A born dandy with a taste for the urban blues, haphazard ebony locks, and a rebellious streak the width of Broadway, it was inevitable that he should come to idolise Keith Richards. Entranced by rock'n'roll, Genzale made the leap from observer to protagonist in his mid-teens.

“Me and my cousin Janis used to go to the



JOHNNY THUNDERS

Fillmore East every Saturday," his childhood friend Gail Higgins remembers. "Johnny and his friends would be on one side of the room, and we'd be on the other, staring at each other."

The 16-year old Johnny and Janis eventually started dating. They rented an apartment on New York's First Avenue, where Johnny took up the bass. They caught shows by The Who, The Hollies and Small Faces, they drank beer with Rod Stewart backstage at the Newport Folk Festival, and Johnny was even captured on film gazing in awe at Keith from the front row of Madison Square Garden in the Rolling Stones' *Gimme Shelter*. In 1969 they travelled to London to sample the scene. But it was the sound of Detroit that particularly struck a chord with Johnny. "We would drive eight hours to see the MC5 or The Stooges," Gail attests.

It wasn't long before Johnny abandoned the bass and set about learning the guitar. "Whenever he was practising, I used to yell into the bedroom: 'Give up, Johnny,'" says Higgins.

Never one to blend into his surroundings, Johnny always stood out from the crowd: long, spiky hair, and a penchant for borrowing his girlfriend's clothes. His style was extreme.

"He had high-heeled boots, velvet jackets and pants, bowling gear," says Heartbreaker Walter Lure. "I'd see him at all the shows – mostly the British bands, as opposed to the Grateful Dead and Jefferson Airplanes – so I'd seen him around for years. Then when the Dolls started happening I said: 'Holy shit! There's that guy.'"

The New York Dolls' seismic effect on rock'n'roll has already been covered in forensic detail elsewhere. Suffice to say, in the admirably concise words of Richard Hell: "The Dolls were for New York groups what the Sex Pistols were for British groups." The Dolls' rapid ascent from Manhattan drag bars to Wembley Empire Pool (now the Arena) elevated the expectations of the newly renamed Johnny Thunders through the roof. Tragically, though, his relatively short tenure with the Dolls spoiled him in ways that were far more damaging.

On November 7, 1972, in London after supporting The Faces at Wembley, Dolls drummer Billy Murcia was accidentally drowned by party-goers trying to arouse him from a certainly survivable champagne and Mandrax haze by immersing him in a bath of cold water. It was a messy, senseless and avoidable death that left the band shell-shocked.

Gail Higgins: "Johnny was devastated. He was the closest with Billy and it really upset him. Johnny was very sensitive and loving, very needy and very insecure."

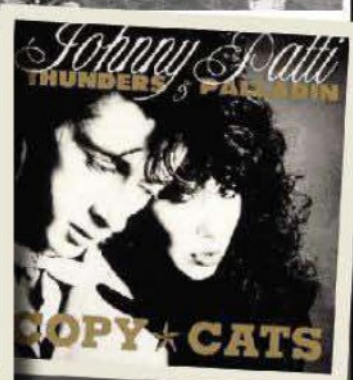
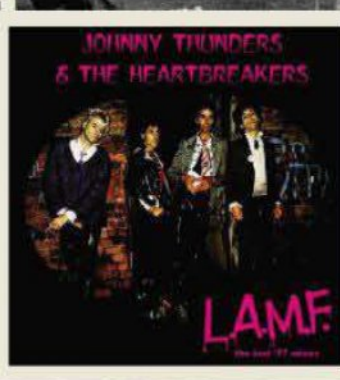
"Billy's death was the beginning of the end for the Dolls," believes Lee Black Childers, then Vice President of MainMan, the management company that looked after David Bowie. "Because then Jerry Nolan came in, and Jerry was so self-destructive. He addicted Johnny Thunders to heroin."

"Jerry was seven years older than Johnny and their relationship was more than just brothers," says Nolan's former partner, NYC punk scenester Phyllis Stein. "At times, as Jerry would tell me, he felt like Johnny's father."

"It was real father-and-son type stuff," agrees Walter Lure, "because Johnny would look to Jerry



The Heartbreakers, St Albans, 1977: (l-r) Johnny Thunders, Jerry Nolan, Billy Rath, Walter Lure



Lick it up: Thunders on stage at the Lyceum, London, March 1984. Inset below: a young Thunders with Santa.



for approval. In the Dolls, when John got out of control on drugs, the band would ask Jerry to take him into a room and give him a couple of whacks to the head, and John would calm down. I saw Jerry go up to John and say: 'Listen, you wanna get a smack in the head?'"

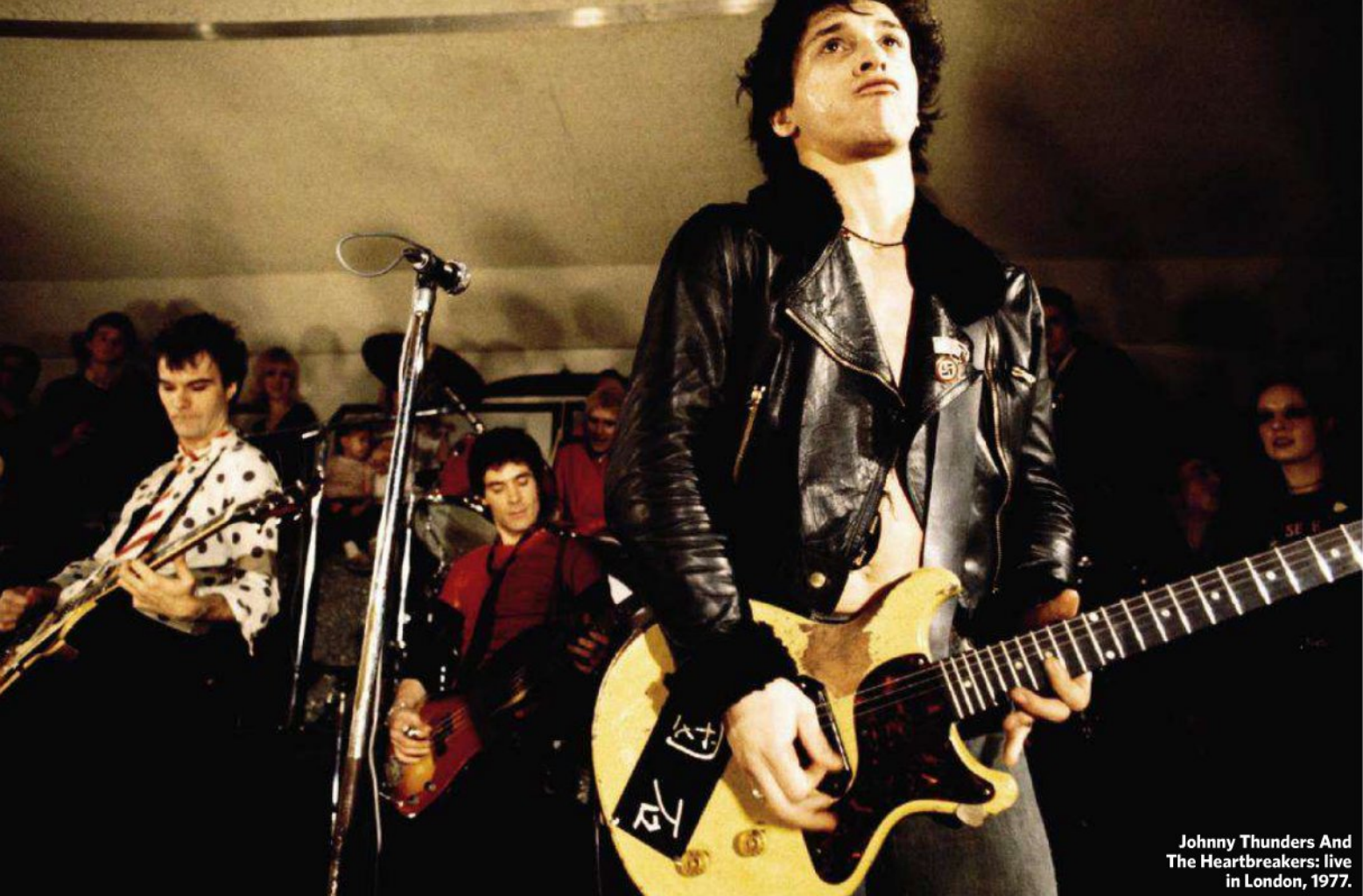
Gail Higgins: "Jerry was very, very protective of Johnny. He was the older guy. Obviously they did drugs together, but they had a love-hate relationship, they fought all the time, but they loved each other deeply."

Lee Black Childers: "Johnny and Jerry were one

of the great unrequited love affairs. They fought like lovers, broke up like lovers, reunited like lovers. Jerry would manipulate Johnny, making him crazy, then Johnny would break down in tears and Jerry would storm off, and Johnny would lay in my lap crying: 'Where's Jerry? I can't live without him, I can't work without him, I can't be without him.' That sounds like lovers to me."

It wasn't just brotherly love, fatherly discipline and a solid backbeat that Jerry Nolan brought to Thunders's emotionally charged, high-pressure lifestyle. The drummer was an evangelistic user of heroin, and Johnny a willing convert. Still distraught from Billy Murcia's death, and eager to impress the worldly Nolan, the guitarist took to heroin like a duck to water. Thunders wasn't clean

TOP: GETTY IMAGES; AGAR



Johnny Thunders And
The Heartbreakers: live
in London, 1977.

prior to Jerry's arrival – he'd been previously introduced to smack by a pair of A-list rockers still working today – but it was allegedly Jerry that recommended regular fixing to Thunders as an answer to all that ultimately ailed him.

Gail Higgins: "He started taking downers first, he didn't suddenly start taking heroin. It was a mask, he was insecure and the type of person who just cannot be happy."

"Shyness is one of the reasons why I got involved with smack," says former Heartbreakers bassist Billy Rath. "And smack helped to remove Johnny's shyness. One of the reasons he never really pursued getting himself together was because he felt that if he cleaned up and got rid of his habit he couldn't be Johnny Thunders any more."

But while heroin was helping Thunders to cope, it wasn't without its side effects. Before drugs took hold, the guitarist was quiet and meek. When he started taking heroin he became obnoxious.

Sylvain Sylvain: "When he became a junkie he turned into a fucking monster and it made him aggressive for no reason, because everything is boring until you've had a fucking fix. It rules everything and it ruins everything."

As the New York Dolls' career steadily unravelled, a junk-sick Thunders and Nolan bailed on the band in Florida in 1975, returning to New York to make their connection. As Dolls vocalist David Johansen eruditely understates it: "The problem with [heroin addiction] is that a person in that condition has to have their medicine available. So it limits one's mobility, not to mention the myriad other things it limits. So you can't travel freely, because you have to be looked after in that department."

The shattered Dolls returned to Norfolk Street, scored some Chinese rocks, and prepared to break some more hearts.

Following a false start with Television bassist Richard Hell, Thunders's new band, The Heartbreakers (now comprising their classic, fat-free Thunders/Lure/Rath/Nolan line-up) casually wowed New York City's club scene. But it soon became clear that no American record company was ever going to sign a band that featured Thunders and Nolan.

Enter Malcolm McLaren offering a UK tour slot supporting the Sex Pistols. The Heartbreakers practically bit his arm off.

The band arrived in Britain on December 1, 1976, the day the Pistols appeared on Bill Grundy's *Today* show. Consequently the majority of the tour they had flown in to play was cancelled in a blaze of tabloid headlines.

Lee Black Childers had become their manager by this point. "We were freezing," he says. "The Heartbreakers, Sex Pistols and Clash on this rickety old bus. Johnny couldn't care less, he's laughing, carrying on. He kept the spirits up on the bus. It was like the old days of vaudeville – the show must go on."

Returning to London broke, and, consequently clean, The Heartbreakers made an appearance at the Roxy club attended by all the prime movers of the nascent UK punk scene. But it was more than just a winning personality and a crack band that Thunders brought to London's punk rock party.

Glen Matlock: "Until The Heartbreakers turned

up in London I hadn't heard the word 'heroin' mentioned in our circle."

Steve Dior was a fan of the Dolls who later became Thunders's protégé. He was 17 when he saw The Heartbreakers at The Roxy. "I was standing in front of Thunders, at the front of the Roxy stage, studying him," he says. "I went to the dressing room, poked my head in, Johnny looked

at me and said: 'Are you famous or something?' And Jerry said: 'He fucking looks like you.'

"I started hanging out with them. Johnny decided to teach me to play like him. Then he found out that I was banging up speed and said: 'Come on, kid, you wanna be doing the real shit.' He took me in hand. But there was a price to pay: 'You wanna play like me? You've gotta party with me. How much money you got?' I put in about a hundred, we went up to Mayfair and that's where we did it."

Thunders's drug

problems, meanwhile, only worsened.

Lee Black Childers: "We would have a bucket behind the amp, so he could go over and throw up. But then he would go right back and put on the most amazing shows. At one point he was supposed to be on Methadone. I would measure out his ounce of Methadone and watch him drink it in front of me. But he'd keep the methadone in his cheeks and spit it into a cup, until he had a week's worth. He was using heroin, and

**"HE WAS WALKING
DEATH. HE TRIED
TO CLEAN UP, AND
THEN HE'D BE
BACK LIVING ON
THE STREET."**

– JOE PERRY, AEROSMITH

JOHNNY THUNDERS

saving the Methadone so that he could have a big weekly high as well."

It was at this point that Johnny decided to fly his soon-to-be wife Julie Jordan, John Jr (Julie's two-year-old, from a previous relationship) and their baby, Vito, to London. Having dated since The Heartbreakers' early days, the couple married on August 16, 1977.

"It was fucked up," remembers Walter Lure. "They got married in New York, and they were both throwing up in the back of the limousine because they had too much drugs. Julie was a pretty girl but she also had serious mental issues."

Gail Higgins: "That was one of his 'If I have a family, I'll be happy' moments. What can I say? She did nothing, knew nothing, didn't add anything. But because of Johnny's insecurity he wanted her to be there every minute, and that caused friction with the rest of the band."

Lee Black Childers: "Julie wanted to rule the roost but she didn't know how. I only knew the babies as toddlers. Vito was just crawling. Johnny called him The Sprog."

Phyllis Stein: "Jerry refused to attend Johnny's wedding because he felt Johnny was making a mistake"

During the chaotic summer of 1977 The Heartbreakers, with the appositely named Speedy Keen at the controls, holed up in The Who's Ramport Studio in south London to record their single shot at vinyl immortality. *L.A.M.F.* (Like A Mother Fucker) was the muffled sound of a watertight live band drowning in a sea of over-produced mud; the mix was so bad that The Heartbreakers ultimately split.

"That mix can be completely laid at the door of Jerry Nolan," says Lee Black Childers, "He went into this kind of control freak thing where he had to mix it. But everyone was stoned. Walking into the studio was like walking into a crack house. I should have gotten a gun and shot a couple of them dead."

Walter Lure: "We were told we needed to release it in time for Christmas because they needed to make some money. So they just put us in a room and said if it doesn't get released you're not gonna have a contract. Johnny, Billy and I said yeah; Jerry said no, he was leaving, and just walked out."

Nolan didn't just walk out on Thunders; he took his protégé Steve Dior with him. With Barry Jones on second guitar and the New York Dolls' Arthur Kane on bass, Nolan's band The Idols were soon the toast of New York City. The Heartbreakers soldiered on, but Thunders was devastated by what he saw as his closest friend's betrayal.

Lee Black Childers remembers the moment he quit as The Heartbreakers manager: "Johnny came up to me and just looked with those huge, dark eyes of his, put his arms around me and said: 'I know what you wanna do and it's okay, I'm okay.' He hugged me really tight. And when he hugged

you he wouldn't let go. He would just hold on and on. And then finally when he let go, that was it, that's how I left the Heartbreakers."

Now ostensibly solo, the guitarist took to playing guerrilla gigs around London with an all-star cast of eager celebrity fans, including Steve Jones, Paul Cook, Phil Lynott, Peter Perrett and Sid Vicious, some of whom shared a certain predilection. Thunders wanted to call this ramshackle revue The Junkies but, shot down in flames by his latest manager, BP Fallon, opted instead for The Living Dead.

Steve Jones: "The times that me and Cooky played with him, he just fucked off with the money. We accepted it because that's the way he was – just get a bit of cash to get a bit of dope and that's all he really cares about. Unfortunately it just got worse and worse and he got lower and lower."

The album that grew out of The Living Dead gigs turned out to be something of a classic. *So Alone*, released in 1978, was bolstered by Chrissie Hynde, Steve Marriott and Brooklyn chanteuse Patti Palladin. Conspicuous by his absence was Sid Vicious, who had by now decamped to New York City to make some live appearances, backed by The Idols. Vicious's subsequent death had a devastating effect on Johnny.

Peter Perrett: "He wrote *Sad Vacation* about Sid. He was Sid's hero, so I guess he felt a little bit guilty because Sid went down that road because he wanted to be like Johnny."

Upon returning to the US, Thunders and family set up home in Dexter, Michigan. The guitarist hooked up with his teen idol, MC5 guitarist Wayne Kramer, to form Gang War. But the project was doomed to failure.

Kramer: "Johnny was impossible to work with because he had another job that was more important.

It's the way heroin addiction works – you can't do anything until you cop. I thought I could fix it. And of course I can't fix anyone but Wayne. And I can hardly even fix Wayne by myself."

It was at this point that Julie unexpectedly left with John Jr, Vito and new-born baby Dino. Johnny would never see his children again.

By the early 80s, Thunders had hit an all-time low, haunting the New York streets, hawking licks for chump change, looking for a fix. "He was walking death," says Aerosmith's Joe Perry, who shared management with the New York Dolls in the early 70s. "Every time I ran into him he was desperately trying to get from hour to hour. You'd hear that he'd tried to clean up and then he'd be back living on the street again."

Barry Jones: "I once got an earful from his mother when he'd told her his hand was infected. So I took him to Beth Israel, and they said if he hadn't come in that night he'd have lost his hand. He'd missed, shooting Tuinal, and his hand had blown up like a crusty balloon... He told his mother he caught it in a cab door."

Enter Christopher Giercke, enigmatic German entrepreneur, producer of such films as *Cocaine Cowboys*, and latterly founder President of The Genghis Khan Polo And Riding Club, Kathmandu, who met Thunders at photographer Marcia Resnick's New York loft in the spring of 1981.

"He was bright, charming and quick-witted," says Giercke. "Especially when he had his drugs of choice, which unfortunately for him, and everyone who cared for him, involved heroin. At that point he probably consumed two grams a day."

Thunders, now reunited with Nolan, invited Giercke to watch him play at the Peppermint Lounge. But the gig was cancelled due to the fact that the band had pawned all of their instruments. "Of course, this was a rather pitiful period in his career," Giercke deadpans, "And, optimistically, I told him that I could change his predicament."

Giercke offered Thunders a place to live below his loft, naively thinking the guitarist "just had to learn to take better drugs". Thunders was unable to keep a band together, but Giercke could help find him gigs.

"He had Jerry Nolan and Walter Lure around, and they were comfortable to work as long as I handled the money," says Giercke. "Johnny had the habit of collecting advances, not sharing them with the other players, and often not turning up when required. His continuing relationship with Jerry was important for the band but disastrous for me in my attempt to get Johnny away from heroin. Johnny would enjoy good wines, smoke and cocaine, but Jerry insisted on heroin."

Thunders, it appeared, had finally found a father figure he could trust and depend on. But could he reciprocate in kind? It was doubtful that Johnny Thunders had it in him. But what of John Genzale? Could anyone reach the man behind the mask?

Susanne Blomqvist, a 20-year old Swedish hairdresser, first met Johnny Thunders in Stockholm after catching him playing a gig with Hanoi Rocks in 1983. The following night a mutual friend called her up and invited her to see Johnny play again. She accepted, and on arrival went backstage, where Thunders could manage only a somewhat bashful 'Hello'.

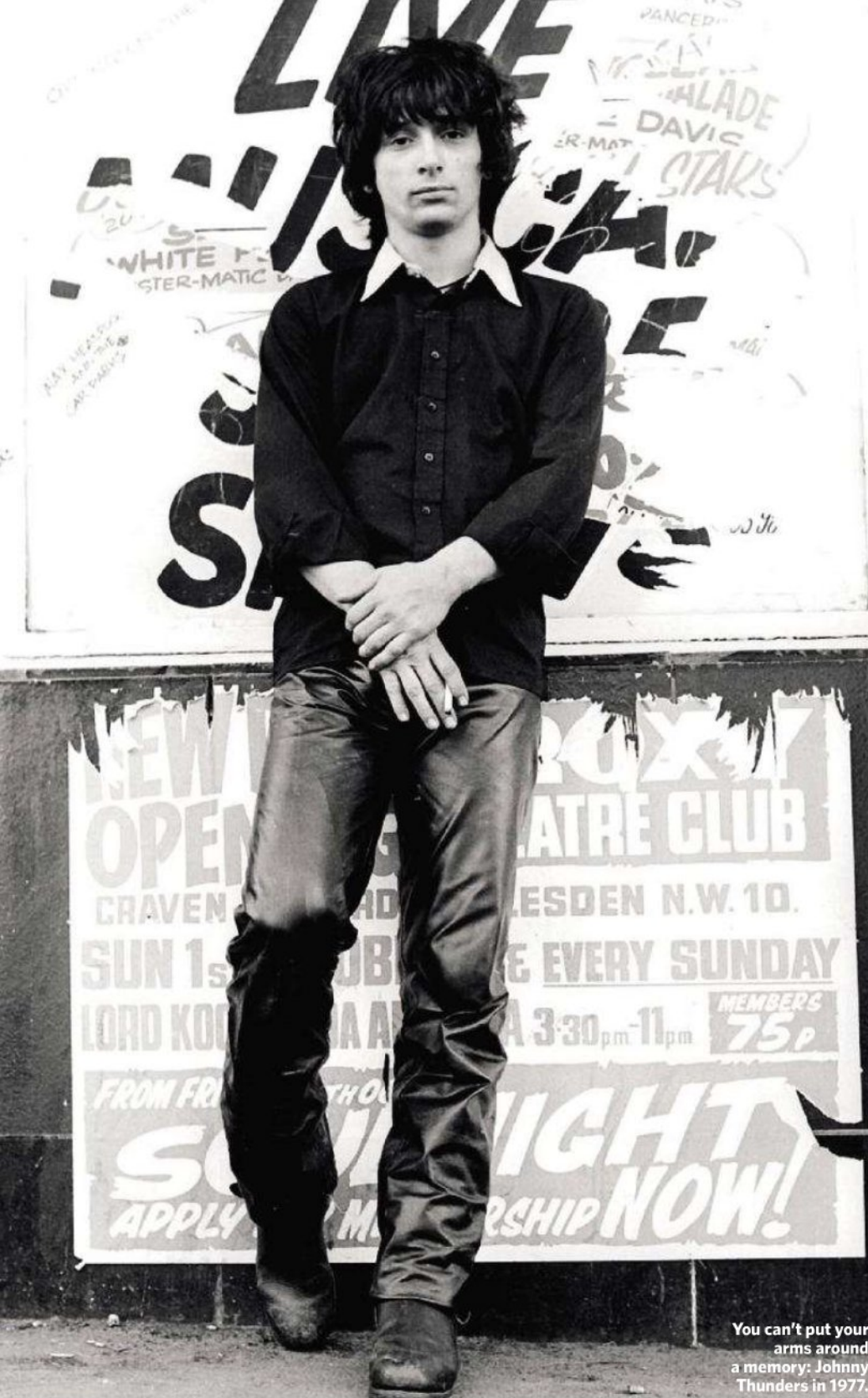
"It was really cute," says Susanne. "He was a very sweet man behind everything. I didn't fall in love with him right away, but his shyness and vulnerability really touched me."

When it was time for Thunders to take to the stage, he ordered everyone except Susanne out of the dressing room. He then refused to perform unless Giercke persuaded her to come out on to the stage in her home town and be introduced to the audience by Johnny as his 'Swedish wife'.

After nearly an hour, Susanne complied. "I was only 20, just a kid. Johnny was 30. We were two metres apart on that stage, and that's pretty much how we stayed for the next seven years. He was a true gentleman with a good heart. He was into heavy drugs, and I knew that, but he didn't want me to try anything. He protected me from that. He was also very romantic, with flowers and presents. He took me out to dinner and treated me as a princess. It was true love between us."

Christopher Giercke, realising that the strictures imposed upon recovering heroin addicts in the US (Methadone doses were administered in the street to addicts by armed police officers) were demeaning and counter-productive, had already

"JOHNNY AND JERRY NOLAN WERE ONE OF THE GREAT UNREQUITED LOVE AFFAIRS."
– LEE BLACK CHILDERS



You can't put your arms around a memory: Johnny Thunders in 1977.

relocated Johnny to Paris. But after filming the lead in director Patrick Grandperret's *Mona Et Moi* in the city, Johnny set up home with Susanne in Sweden. After 10 years as the barely breathing embodiment of heroin chic, Johnny Thunders set about rebuilding his shattered life and re-establishing contact with the inner John Genzale that he'd suppressed for so long.

Susanne Blomqvist: "He loved cooking, he was a true Italian. He loved spaghetti and tomato sauce, and making soups. He really enjoyed staying at home and reading his *Herald Tribune*. He was a very sensitive, intelligent man."

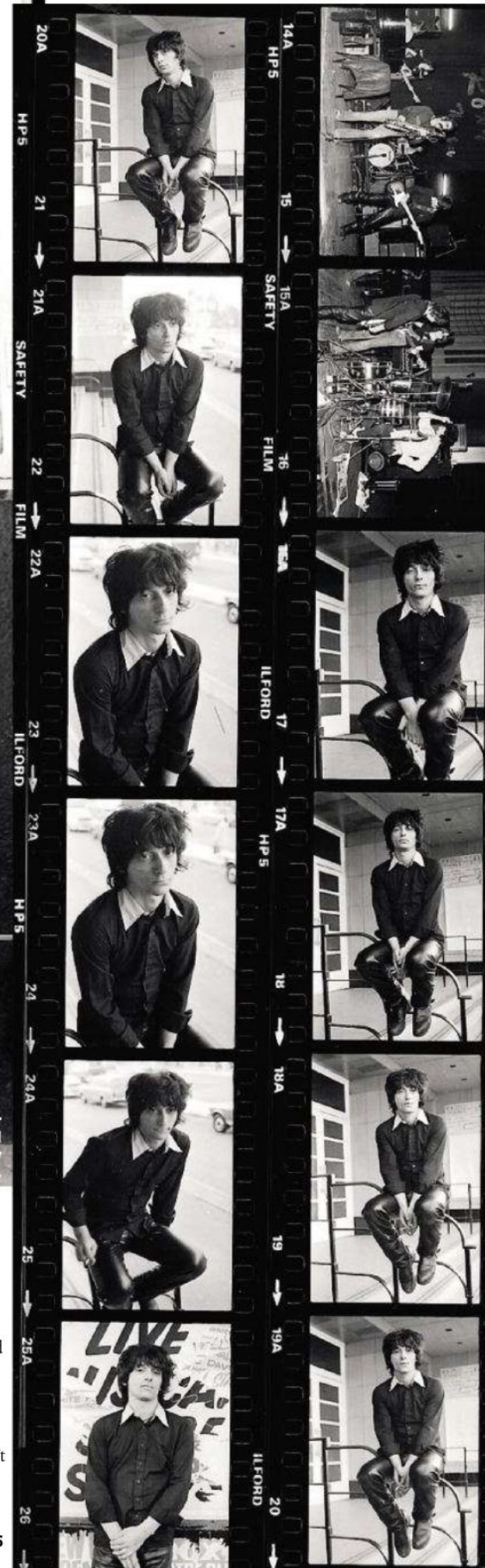
"Johnny read a lot," says Stevie Klasson, guitarist with Thunders's final touring band, the Oddballs. "Autobiographies of Noriega and Howard Hughes.

He'd always have books on politics and religion in his saddlebags. He was fascinated by a book about the Catholic church called *In God's Name* [by David A Yallop]."

"Johnny was really Catholic," says Susanne. "He didn't want me to have too-short skirts and show too much skin. I know he was praying, and many times he made the sign of the cross. We went to many different Catholic churches. He wanted our daughter raised as a true Catholic, she was baptised as a Catholic. He went to confession when he was younger, and it wouldn't have surprised me if he still did that and didn't tell anybody."

By 1986, Christopher Giercke's role was diminishing as Johnny

Continued on page 125



Tokyo, December 16, 1976

In the dark, smoke-filled basement disco of the Tokyo Hilton, the night is in full swing. The music throbs with a mid-tempo pulse, as salary men with open collars, loosened ties and uncomfortable paunches knock back the sake. Refined-looking and impeccably dressed hostesses hover in the background, circling their prey with casual yet purposeful intent.

In one corner of the room, I can just about make out the blurry outline of someone who seems out of place in this den of iniquity. Ritchie Blackmore, guitarist and driving force with Rainbow, sits almost hidden in an anonymous alcove. Dressed in his trademark black, only the whites of his eyes and a half-pint glass of imported German beer are visible. Exhausted after two shows with his band Rainbow at Tokyo's famed Budokan theatre, Blackmore relaxes with one foot on the table, displaying a custom-made boot from Kensington Market, where Freddie Mercury once worked a stall. Tapping a finger on his cheek, he aims his laser stare at the girls dancing around the DJ booth. This isn't purely carnal; Blackmore has been known to take bandmates to clubs like this, instructing them to observe which rhythms make the punters dance.

Rainbow have just completed an arduous, six-month world tour in support of their second album, *Rising*. The band – Blackmore, vocalist Ronnie James Dio, bassist Jimmy Bain, keyboard player Tony Carey and drummer Cozy Powell – are out to enjoy themselves. Blackmore, though, has other things on his mind.

"Here you go, take Jimmy out on the town," says Ritchie, handing me a wad of yen. "He's a lovely guy. Go out and have some fun."

As Bain and I head off to the bustling nightlife of the Roppongi district, Blackmore is already thinking about making changes to a band that, on the surface, seems to be perfect. Bain is set to be the

**"Everybody thinks it's
my best playing in
a long time. Then again,
what do they know?"**

– Ritchie Blackmore

first victim of his axe, and the guitarist – who by all accounts is still fond of the bassist today – wants to soften the blow.

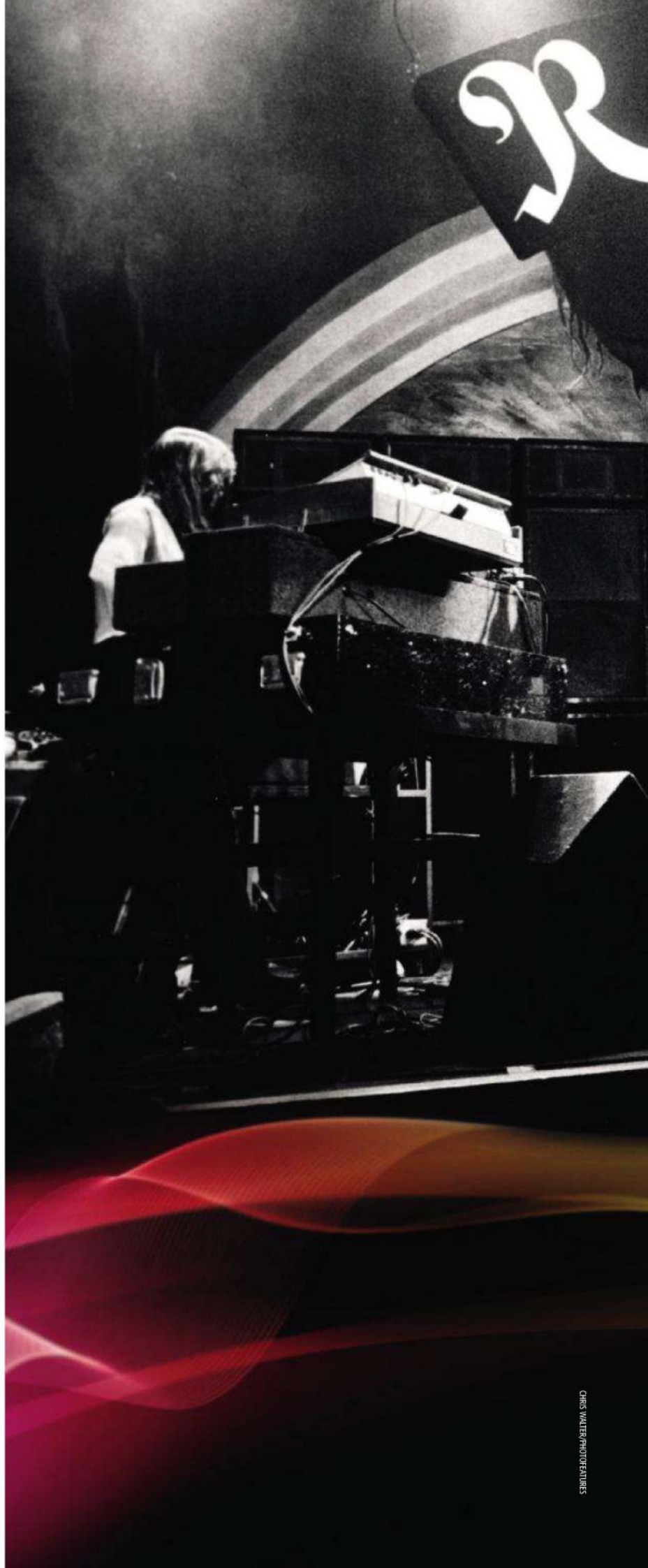
Even by the standards of the 70s, the story of Rainbow's classic second album – and its messy aftermath – is a tangle of creative genius, colourful characters and personal tensions. *Rising* captured the band at their peak. Driven by the guitarist's single-minded vision, it pioneered an epic sound whose influence can still be heard today. In the space of 18 months, Blackmore had assembled one of the greatest rock bands ever – and then dismantled it.

North West London, September 1975

It was in the early hours of the morning when the phone rang in Jimmy Bain's flat. No doubt bleary-eyed after a late-night session at his favourite haunt (the now defunct Speakeasy) the bassist stumbled blindly in the dark, cursing the gremlins who had moved the furniture, and wishing he had topped up the electricity meter. On the other end of the phone was a guitar-tech friend and fellow Scot named Fergie.

"I'm in Los Angeles working with Blackmore, man," Fergie rasped above the pre-digital transatlantic hiss. "He's looking for a new bass player, and I've put your name forward."

Blackmore had left Deep Purple following 1974's *Stormbringer* album, tired of the band's relentless recording and touring schedules, growing funk-rock influences and, ultimately, their refusal to record a cover of *Black Sheep Of The Family* by cult trio Quatermass. Blackmore realised he was losing his grip on the band he formed, and quit to put together Rainbow with members of US rockers Elf, a former Deep Purple support band fronted by



CHRIS WATERS/PHOTOFEST



THE LIGHT FANTASTIC

With their second album, *Rising*, Ritchie Blackmore's post-Purple band **Rainbow** made one of the greatest albums ever. Thirty-five years on, the guitarist and his former bandmates look back on the tensions that fuelled this landmark record – and broke the band apart.

Words: **Peter Makowski**



This year's model - Rainbow in '76: (l to r) Bain, Blackmore, Powell, Dio and Carey.

singer Ronnie James Dio. And now Blackmore was tapping up Jimmy Bain.

When Bain put the phone down, a million thoughts raced through his head. "I'm half asleep, thinking this is a bad joke," Bain recalls today, laughing, "then all of a sudden, I'm talking to Blackmore—and he was one of my idols."

Now aged 63 and living in the LA suburb of Eagle Rock, Bain these days is an amiable man, with a CV that features stints with Dio, John Cale and Ian Hunter. In 1975 he was fronting Harlot, whose drummer, Ricky Munro, had played with Blackmore in Mandrake Root in the 60s. Bain was a confirmed partier, whose lifestyle would eventually lead to drug and alcohol problems (now successfully conquered).

Harlot had a Sunday night residency at the Marquee in Wardour Street. Blackmore insisted he would fly over from Los Angeles to check them out. Sure enough, the following Sunday Bain dropped into the Ship, a pub close to the Marquee. Standing at the bar, with a pint and chatting to friends, was Blackmore.

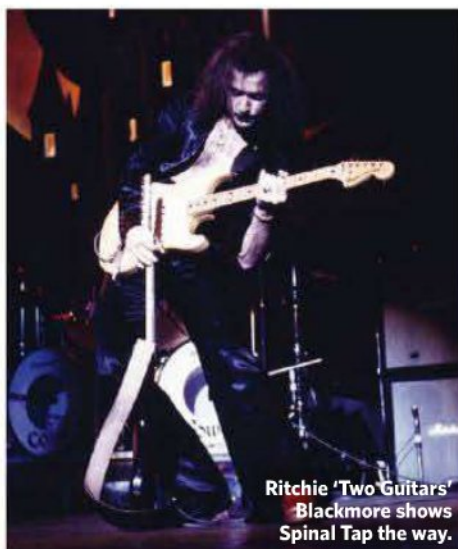
"I nearly shit myself," says Bain. "He's not only come all the way from L.A., he's got his manager and Ronnie James Dio with him. I thought: 'All I've got to do now is play a great show.'"

Not everyone in Harlot was quite so on the ball. Ricky Munro, as a former bandmate of Blackmore, assumed the presence of the guitarist meant he might be up for the Rainbow gig, and opted to seek courage in several pints of Guinness. By show time the drummer was in no fit state to perform.

"So I'm out front singing, playing bass and generally flying around the stage," recalls Bain.

"When you've spent years confronting scary characters, you learn not to take any crap."

— Ronnie James Dio



Ritchie 'Two Guitars' Blackmore shows Spinal Tap the way.

"I look round and there's puke all over the place, on the floor toms, it's all over me. And I thought: 'Oh no. This is not going well.'"

After Harlot had muddled through their set, Bain skulked off to the dressing room, smashed his bass against a wall and downed several Jack Daniel's. The door opened, and Blackmore stood in front of him. Bain steeled himself to face the music.

"Before I could apologise, Ritchie said: 'The band made you look great,'" he says now, still astounded by the verdict. Bain was in.

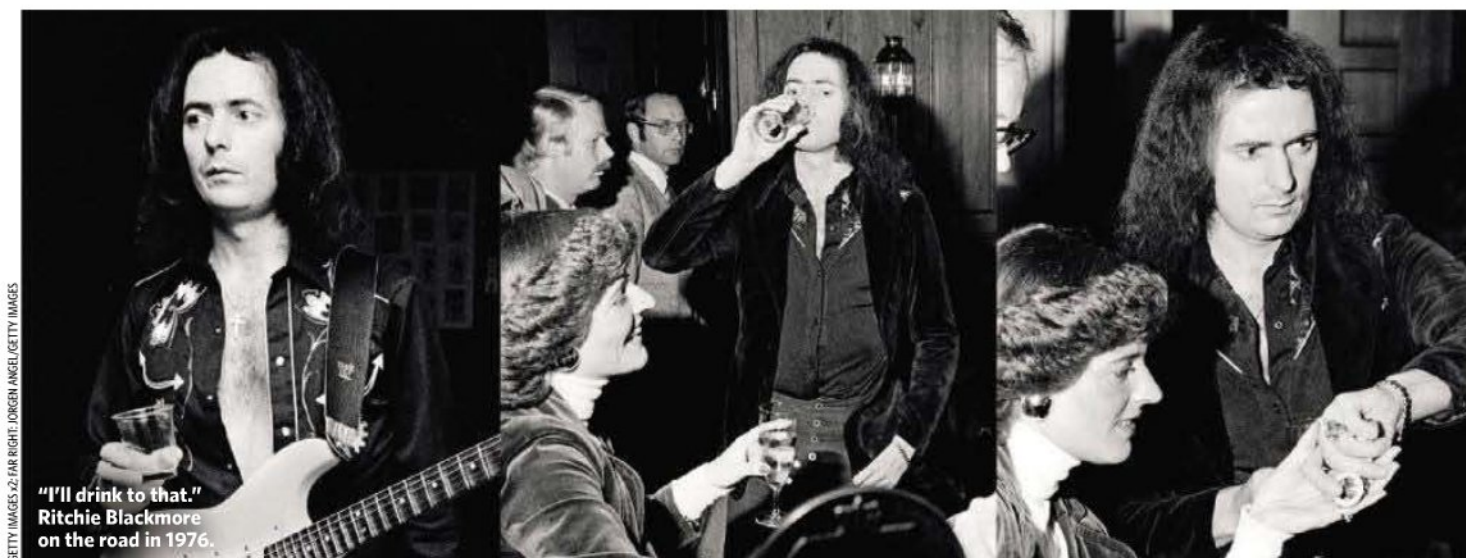
Within a fortnight the bassist had flown to LA to hook up with the rest of the band. But in a portent of what was to come, changes were afoot.

Blackmore had recorded Rainbow's self-titled 1975 debut album with the members of Elf. But, with the exception of Dio, the guitarist had no intention of retaining a group he felt had the charisma of a bar band. Bassist Craig Gruber was the first to go.

Drummer Gary Driscoll was jettisoned a few days after Bain arrived in L.A. He was soon followed by keyboard player Mickey Lee Soule.

As painful as it was to see his former bandmates jettisoned, Ronnie James Dio shared Blackmore's musical vision. "Line-up changes and more commitment to why Ritchie and I started the band together made for a different direction," the singer later explained. A calm, composed presence, Dio counterbalanced Blackmore's more emotional and occasionally volatile behaviour. "When you've spent years touring shitty, chicken-in-a-basket circuits where you have to confront some pretty scary characters to get your paltry wages, you quickly learn not to take any crap," he explained.

The trio of Blackmore, Dio and Bain began



"I'll drink to that."
Ritchie Blackmore
on the road in 1976.

auditioning drummers at Hollywood's Pirate Sound studio. The procedure gave Bain an insight into the guitarist's dark sense of humour.

"The guy would come in, set up his kit, and we'd go to the other side of the building and play pool," the bassist recalls. "When he got comfortable, Ritchie would start this really fast riff: *dat-dat-dat-dat-dat-dat...* I'd join in on bass, and the drummer would start playing along. That would be great for five minutes. After 20 minutes the guy would be falling apart. Ritchie and me would stop playing and go back to the pool table without saying a word. We did this about 14 times and nobody even came close. And then Cozy arrived."

Born in Cirencester, Cozy Powell had been playing drums since the age of 12. By 1975 his CV included a stint with Jeff Beck (one of Blackmore's favourite guitarists), as well as hit solo singles *Dance With The Devil* and, prophetically, *The Man In Black*. He arrived at the studio from the airport, carrying his trademark over-sized drumsticks.

"Ritchie goes into his *dat-dat-dat-dat-dat-dat...* routine," says Bain. "We do this for about 45 minutes and the tempo doesn't fluctuate. We finish that, and before we could say anything Cozy starts another beat on the double bass drum. We were trying to fuck him up, and he turns it around on us. He was in."

Last in place was keyboardist Tony Carey. The 22-year-old Californian was recording with his band, Blessing, at nearby SIR studios. Bain was introduced by his flatmate from London, who was working with Led Zeppelin in the studio next door. Bain convinced Carey to audition. And the keyboardist gave Blackmore a run for his money. "Tony played some Bach," says Bain. "He could trade off with Ritchie note for note. So Ritchie hated him."

Carey's youth and naivety made him a target for Blackmore. "If Ritchie didn't like someone in the band he would play terrible practical jokes on them," Cozy Powell later recalled. "And he hated keyboard players."

"I can't remember a single sentence that Ritchie ever said to me that wasn't sarcastic or condescending," Carey says today. "There's a snarkiness I've noticed from people born during the war – it's resentment, because they've seen harder times. In me he found someone who didn't give a shit. I'll play as loud as you want and look you in the eye when I'm doing it."

Despite the friction, as well as competition from former Curved Air/Roxy Music man Eddie Jobson, among others, Carey's talent won out over his youth. He was Rainbow's new keyboard player.

Munich, Germany, February 1976

Three months after Jimmy Bain joined Rainbow, the band flew to Munich's Musicland studios to begin work on what would become *Rising*. The new line-up had already been broken-in with US dates the previous November, on which they

unveiled three new songs: *Do You Close Your Eyes*, *Stargazer* and *A Light In The Black*.

"We had written *Stargazer* at rehearsals, and *Tarot Woman*, I believe," Blackmore recalls today. "The other songs we made up in the studio, as far as I remember. We chose the studios because I worked there before. I like to be in Germany when I'm recording."

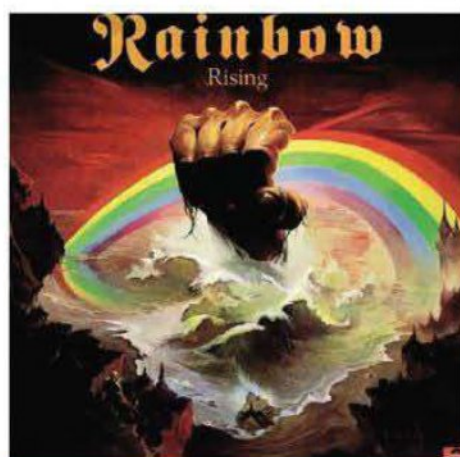
Founded by disco producer Giorgio Moroder, Musicland had already hosted Led Zeppelin and The Rolling Stones, as well as Deep Purple and a Blackmore solo session. Technically and aesthetically, though, it left a lot to be desired. "We couldn't get the drums to sound live enough, because it was an archetypal 70s studio with rugs on the wall", Carey remembers. "So we got a wrecking crew together, hacked up the stairwell and turned it into a concrete tomb. That's how Cozy got his sound."

Overseeing the sessions was Deep Purple producer Martin Birch. Having worked with Blackmore's former band during their most turbulent periods, the Zen-like Birch was a calming influence. He was also a black belt in karate, which gave him an assurance that came in useful when dealing with strong personalities.

Also on hand was Musicland's resident engineer, Reinhold Mack. Apparently the German-born Mack would alleviate tensions by arriving in the studio dressed in a storm trooper's uniform and barking out orders to the band. "I did this only once," says Mack. "Ritchie always asked me about WWII stuff – as if I would know. So me and my assistant rented the gear and stormed into the control room cussing and shouting, almost scaring Ritchie to death. Fairly good acting on my part."

Despite the underlying tensions, *Rising* is the sound of a band on fire. Recorded in the days before digital edits, the album has the intensity of a band getting it right in just a couple of takes, driven by Blackmore's intense desire to prove a point to his former Purple bandmates. And then there's the voice. "Ronnie was not only a talented singer, he was an amazing songwriter," says Carey. "Even on the throwaway songs, which would be *Run With The Wolf* and *Do You Close Your Eyes*, he was ferocious. All five-foot-two of him."

The album kicks off with the keyboard crescendo of *Tarot Woman*. "I especially like the Minimoog solo Tony does on *Tarot Woman*," says Blackmore. "It was the first solo he did for the" ➔



RAISE YOUR FIST!

A big hand for the man behind the sleeve.

"The artwork was reflective of the audiences we played to," Ritchie Blackmore says of the cover art for *Rising*. "They liked to raise their fists in the air."

The man given the job of creating a suitably grandiose sleeve for the album was Connecticut native Ken Kelly. A distant relative of pioneering fantasy painter Frank Frazetta, Kelly had previously done the artwork for Kiss's *Destroyer* and *Love Gun*.

"They knew exactly what they wanted," Kelly. "When I brought back the completed artwork, they just asked for two corrections." The additions were an owl on the top of one of the cliffs in one corner and a guard in the corner, looking out to sea.

Kelly's recent clients include Manowar and Coheed And Cambria. Visit Kenkellyart.com for more info.



A light in the black: the classic Rainbow line-up in London, November 1976.

LEFT: CHRIS WALTER/PHOTOFEST; RIGHT: REX FEATURES

song. He said he could do much better, and went back and played for about an hour, but it never compared to the first solo."

The album's centrepiece is *Stargazer*, a nine-minute epic that combines Blackmore's love of classical music with Dio's vivid, fantastical lyrics. The track is built around a cello-inspired main riff, but the highlight is Blackmore's uninhibited lead playing and searing slide work (a recent addition to his repertoire). The sweeping, Eastern scales add to the grandiosity.

"It's amazing how many guitarists use the same old lines," says Blackmore. "They never dare touch Arabic or Turkish scales."

For added grandeur, Blackmore brought in the Munich Symphony Orchestra, led by conductor Rainer Pietsch. But not everything went to plan.

"The orchestra was too flowery, and there was too much detracting from the simple melody," Blackmore says in retrospect. "We kept taking out parts, and I felt sorry for Rainer because he was so proud of this grandiose piece he had written. We got down to the bare bones, and mixed in some Mellotron to even out the orchestra not sounding cohesive or in tune."

Rising was released on May 17, 1976. Although it has a running time of just 33 minutes and 28 seconds, Blackmore obviously felt it was complete, as he held back songs, notably *Kill The King* and *Long Live Rock 'N' Roll*, for Rainbow's next album.

Looking back at *Rising*, opinions differ. Bain remains positive. "You could tell how much fun we were having," he says. "It's got that attitude."

Blackmore, though, is more circumspect: "Although I thought the overall sound of the record was very punchy, it lacked warmth and bass. It was very 'toppy'."

Europe, Australia and Japan, June-December 1976

That summer, Rainbow embarked on a world tour that took them to four continents in six months. Surprisingly, their set didn't include *Tarot Woman* and *A Light In The Black*, while *Stargazer* was rarely

included. "For some reason the tempo for *Tarot Woman* didn't translate for the stage," Blackmore explains. "Same with *Stargazer*. Which was a pity."

The tour was far from perfect. On the technical side, the vast, 40-foot wide Rainbow backdrop, powered by 3,000 light-bulbs, played havoc with the guitars and amplification. It was eventually chucked into the Atlantic at the end of the tour, to the delight of the beleaguered lighting crew.

By the time I joined the band to cover them for *Sounds* magazine, cracks were beginning to show. On the flight from Australia to Japan, Blackmore's personal assistant, Ian Broad, got into a fight with Cozy Powell's wife; Bain was 'refreshed' thanks to a prescription of Mandrax; Blackmore threw buns

at disgruntled First Class passengers' heads, and concinced confused staff that he was oblivious to events, while furtively fingering an innocent member of the group.

Bad news greeted the band when they landed: Tommy Bolin had died. Despite the fact that he had replaced Blackmore in Deep Purple, Blackmore was a fan of Bolin; Bain was a personal friend.

Against this chaotic backdrop, Rainbow had split into separate camps. Bain and Carey's up-all-night lifestyle earned them the nickname the Glimmer Twins. Blackmore kept himself sane by indulging in his usual pranks, and swigs of his beloved Johnny Walker Black Label whisky prior to shows. The more sedate Dio, meanwhile, spent a lot of time in his room. Powell kept his head down and socialised with everyone. Despite the growing divisions, the band played some of their best shows of the tour, as captured on their 1977 live album *On Stage*.

Unknown to Bain and Carey, their cards had been marked. Carey had already been fired and rehired twice. The first time was before the band's first US tour, when the band had unsuccessfully tried out Vanilla Fudge's Mark Stein and Italian hotshot Joe Vescovi in his place. "The management sent Ronnie and Colin [Hart, Rainbow's tour manager] to get me back to rehearsals," Carey says. "Ritchie didn't have the balls to do that. When I got there they had a tape of the Italian guy playing. It was garbage. So I got behind some keyboards. Ronnie looked over and grinned, then Ritchie grinned; nothing was ever said."

The second occasion was on the last date of their British tour, on September 14, 1977 at Newcastle City Hall. During the fifth number, Blackmore suddenly walked over to Carey and told him to leave. The keyboard player did just that. The band finished the show as a quartet. "I guess he changed his mind because I stayed," Carey reflects. "Fuck 'em. I knew I was good and they couldn't find anybody to outplay me."

"He was a good keyboard player," Cozy Powell later said of Carey. "But he

Continued on p126

DIO: ONE YEAR ON

Tribute band and album coming soon.



When Ronnie James Dio died last year, he left behind a huge musical legacy. The singer's wife, Wendy, is putting together a tribute album, rumoured to feature

Rob Halford, Dave Grohl, Alice Cooper and others covering songs by Rainbow, Black Sabbath, Elf and Ronnie's solo band.

Additionally, several of Ronnie's former bandmates have put together a tribute band, Dio Disciples. Bassist Rudy Sarzo, guitarist Craig Goldy, drummer Simon Wright and keyboard player Scott Warren will be joined by singers Tim 'Ripper' Owens and Toby Jepson for gigs this year, including Download. Proceeds from the tour and the album will go to the cancer charity Stand Up & Shout.

"Every day there's more money coming in," says Wendy. "Which means that we can continue to help those suffering from this hideous disease."

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“I have all these huge fucking riffs, I can scream for three hours... *LET’S GO!*”

There’s no stopping Foo Fighters mainman **Dave Grohl**. When he’s not playing with Them Crooked Vultures and hanging out with Lemmy, he’s making the heaviest album of his career...

Words: **Marcel Anders** Portrait: **Ross Halfin**

The vast suburban sprawl of Los Angeles’s San Fernando Valley makes an unlikely base of operations for one of rock’s biggest bands. But it’s here, in a tastefully appointed house located amid the burger chains, retirement homes and mom-and-pop grocery stores, that you’ll find Dave Grohl directing affairs for the globe-straddling enterprise that is the Foo Fighters.

Hardly work-shy at the best of times, 42-year-old Grohl is especially busy right now. The Foo Fighters have just released

their seventh album, *Wasting Light*, and there are videos to plan, tours to rehearse for, interviews to sit through and – as a doting father of two – kids’ meals to cook.

Recorded literally in the garage of Grohl’s house, *Wasting Light* adds muscle to the Foos’ arena-size anthems. The result is the heaviest album of their career. The frontman hit the contact book hard, enlisting former Nirvana producer Butch Vig to oversee proceedings, bringing errant Foos guitarist Pat Smear back into the fold, getting his old Nirvana colleague Krist Novoselic and former Hüsker Dü singer Bob Mould to make cameo appearances on two tracks, and even tapping up his old buddy Lemmy to play the part of a chauffeur in the knockabout video for the track *White Limo*.

Today, relaxing in the surroundings of his own home, Grohl finally seems at ease with his role as an A-list rock star. “I said in an interview: ‘We’re going to make a heavy rock record,’” he explains. “And Butch really held me to it. I would bring him songs, and he’d say: ‘Nope, not heavy enough.’”

When did you start working on the new album?

Some of these songs were written on the last Foo Fighters tour, which was three years ago. We came home and we had maybe 14 or 15 songs that we had written at soundchecks. And I thought: “Okay, we can do one of two things: we can not touch these songs until we’re ready to make another record, or we can record them right now and forget about them.” So a week later we immediately went into the studio and recorded 14 songs and just put them away. And then I went and played with Them Crooked Vultures. But while I was on the road with Vultures, I was in my hotel room every day working on Foo Fighters stuff. I had this little laptop with me, and I would take our demos, and I’d sing over them and write them and chop them up and compose them. And then I’d come home, and Taylor [Hawkins, Foos drummer] and I would work on them.

Were you tempted to make another Them Crooked Vultures album before you made a new Foo Fighters one?

The Foo Fighters have always been my priority. The bond that we have as people is even stronger than the bond we have as a band. And sometimes music isn’t enough to keep a band together for 16 years, or whatever it is. It has to be more than just music, it has to be more than just the excitement of playing, it has to be more than money and fame and all that shit. There has to be a real human connection between the people in the band. And we really have that as people. The Vultures was like going off and fucking some beautiful chick for a while, but there’s no way that I would feel the love that I have for my wife or my family with some hot fucking girl.

You recorded this album in the garage here at your house. Why didn’t you do it at your own 606 Studios in LA?

We could have. But I truly believe that the environment and the atmosphere in which you make a record should dictate and define what the album sounds like. If you’re being real, then the way you feel comes out. You can hear it. We’ve done work in big, fancy studios before, and there’s something about it that it’s just not us. 606 is a great studio, but we made two records there, and the last thing I want to do is have another experience just like the last one.

Wasting Light is the heaviest Foo Fighters album yet. How come?

As we get older there’s this urge to mellow, because it just seems age-appropriate. But then I thought, ‘Fuck that! I’m 42 now. I don’t know if I’m going to be able to make this record when I’m 46 or 49. It’s my last chance. So I’m going to go for it. We were making a record with Butch, Pat’s back in the band, I have all these huge fucking rock riffs, I can still scream for three hours – let’s go!’

The album is like a semi-Nirvana reunion: Butch Vig producing, Krist Novoselic playing bass and accordion on *I Should Have Known*...

Krist and I have always been very close. And Butch too. When we made *Nevermind*, that record has changed everybody’s lives in the most profound way. It wasn’t something anybody expected to happen. And when it did it was just crazy. When we see each other now, we hug each other because we’re excited that we’re still friends. But we also sort of do it to console each other. Because when Kurt died, it just fucking destroyed our lives. We’ve always remained close. But we’ve never been in the studio together since *Nevermind*. The three of us together sitting in front of speakers and a mixing desk, that hasn’t happened in 20 years.



Wasting light: "I'm 42.
I don't know if I'll be
able to make a record
like this when I'm 49."

ROCK'N'GROHL HE'S THE ROCK SUPERSTARS' BUDDY OF CHOICE. OFFICIAL.

JIMMY PAGE

Page and Grohl pictured at Zeppelin's 2008 reunion gig. Page and John Paul Jones joined the Foo's at Wembley the same year.



LEMMY

"Dave is one of nature's gentlemen," says the Motörhead man. "In this business, that's quite an achievement."



SLASH

The ex-GN'R guitarist, and a friend of Grohl, says: "He's one of the greatest singers, and one of the great drummers."



BRAIN MAY

The Queen guitarist has played with Grohl on stage and on record. "His voice is hard but totally in tune. Some people have it."



JAZ COLEMAN

Grohl played on Killing Joke's self-titled 2003 album. "He's fucking family," says Jaz.



On *I Should Have Known*, you sing: 'I should have known that it would end this way... I should have known, look at the shape you're in.' Are you talking about Kurt Cobain?

When I first wrote that, I was sitting in my bedroom, and I had someone else in mind when I was singing it. But then as I elaborated on it I thought, there are definitely connections. I've definitely felt that way before, especially with Kurt, where, you know, I was afraid this was going to happen. So to have Krist come down and play on that song was kind of a risky move. I explained to him, I said: "Yeah, you know, it's one of those songs that I'm sure people are going to think it's about Kurt." And he basically said: "Oh, fuck it. That's okay."

But you finally got it out.

Yeah. I listen to it now and it's exactly what I wanted to say. And it's exactly how I wanted it to sound. A lot of the album does reference the past, it has a lot to do with life and death. Being with Butch and being here in this environment made me think a lot about starting over, and rebirth, and making your way through tragedy and coming out the other side. And realising: "God, I never want to die." There definitely seems to be a theme. And then there's some girls in the middle of it somewhere, you know.

The Rosemary on *Dear Rosemary*?

Yeah, Rosemary. Bob Mould came in to play on that song. I was a huge Hüsker Dü fan. I met him for the first time last summer in Washington DC. And he's the nicest fucking guy in the world. There was this great moment where he walked in the studio with his guitar; everybody was sort of star-struck. The minute he opened his mouth on the microphone, it sounded exactly like Hüsker Dü. I grew up with The Beatles, I loved Led Zeppelin, I fucking loved the Bad Brains and punk rock, but when it comes to guitar playing and song structure, Hüsker Dü might be my biggest influence. It was an honour to have him on the record.

Foo Fighters bassist Nate Mendel has said that there are "silly songs" on the record too. Such as *White Limo*.

I don't even know the lyrics to that song. I wrote them in two minutes. The first Foo Fighters record [self-titled, 1995] was not meant to be an album, it was an experiment and for fun. I was just fucking around. Some of the lyrics weren't even real words. But then for the second record someone said to me: "Maybe you should really try to write lyrics..."

Sometimes I feel like I have a responsibility to write songs that will connect with people. I have people come up to me and say: "My brother died of cancer,

and he listened to *Best Of You* every day before he died." Nate sent me an email saying: "Dave, I don't want you to feel like you always have to write *We Are The Fucking World* every time you write a song." That made me a lot more comfortable writing, a lot more laid back. Nate's smart. He knows how the Foo Fighters really are and really should be. He's like my *consigliere* or whatever it is.

You recorded the new album old-school, on analogue tape.

I've always thought that computers were more complicated. Analogue seems so easy. And it's tangible, you can feel it. And it's just cool. What goes to tape is what goes to tape: if you're a shitty drummer, you sound like a shitty drummer; if you can't sing in key, you sound like a shitty singer. We're not the best band in the world, we're not perfect players. I like the imperfection. And that's why I wanted to do it to tape. We took the tapes to a studio in Hollywood for Alan Moulder to mix. He's a legend. He's done Nine Inch Nails, Smashing Pumpkins. He's mixing it, and I'm listening and thinking: That doesn't sound like my garage... "Alan, make it sound like my garage." And he said: "You want to make it sound like your garage? Mix it in your garage!" So we just hit stop on the machine, packed up the tapes and came right up here, and we mixed a song that night.

What was it like working at home?

Basically my routine was, I'd wake up at about 5.30 in the morning, then sit down and watch *Sesame Street* with [youngest daughter] Harper. [Eldest daughter] Violet would wake up, I'd make her some fucking pancakes and get her dressed for school. I'd take a shower. I'd come up here, clean up all the fucking beer bottles and vacuum this room, mop the fucking floor. And I'd work until six o'clock, go down and have dinner with the family, read them stories and gives them baths and put them to bed. And come back up here, work until 10 and then go to sleep. That was it.

Very domesticated. But now the album is out, you're back to being a rock star – the five-star hotels, the VIP treatment, the interviews... the 24/7 treadmill.

I know. But I like it. Honestly. I work hard at this shit. I'm a high-school dropout. I never imagined that music could really pay the rent, but I played it anyway cos I felt like I had to. It was this passion of mine from the time I was 12 or 13: get in a shitty band and go play gigs, then come home and work a shitty job, and then go back out. But in the early 90s it got really easy to start a band and get a record deal. And I started thinking: "Wow, well that guy, he could have been a lawyer, but instead he decided to start a shitty band and get on

Dave Grohl:
rock star,
father, part-
time floor
mopper.

MTV and get some pussy for about a year. And then get dropped and then become a lawyer." And it's more than just being a rocker; it's being a lifer.

Is that why you've played on so many albums over the years?

Yeah. I've never considered it work. Sometimes you're doing 15 interviews a day and you're jet-lagged and you miss your family. That's when you start feeling like: "Okay, this is kind of like a job right now." But all the rest of the time, when you're up on stage in front of a fucking massive festival and they're singing your songs, that doesn't feel like work. When you're hanging out with your buddies all day long, drinking and making a record, it's not like work. You think my wife thinks I work? [chuckles] Sometimes I tell her: "Babe, it's my job." She's like: "That's not a fucking job." I'm like: "Yeah, you're right."

Are you open to people calling you to ask if you'll play on their record?

Yeah. Sometimes I get upset they didn't call me: "Damn it, I thought they were going to call." The best story is the Michael Jackson song.

When was that?

Last year. I met Lenny Kravitz at some movie award ceremony thing. He's like: "Yo, man, give me your number, let's jam some time." So I gave him my number. And he leaves a message saying: "Dude, call me right now. I have a project." So I call him up, and he says: "Do you want to play drums on a Michael Jackson song? There's this song that me and Michael worked on in 1992, but it never came out and I want to finish it. And I'd love to have your huge drums on the chorus."

So Lenny sends over the track, and I sit down with Butch Vig and we record all this huge fucking shit. I sent it to Lenny and he's like: "Dude, this is going to be awesome." I'm like: "I'm on a Michael Jackson track!"

So a month goes by, and another, and another, and I still haven't heard anything from anyone. Finally, I hear the song online. You know what they used? One snare hit. That's it. I don't know who's playing drums on it, but it ain't me. It says: 'Featuring Dave Grohl'. And it's like: "It *does*? I can't hear me in that!" It's funny.

Do you have a secret wish-list of people you'd love to work with?

When I was a kid I learned how to play drums from listening to my favourite bands' albums – Bad Brains, Minor Threat and stuff like that. And then I'd go to see that band in a tiny club like [legendary Washington DC punk den] the 9:30 Club or something. And in the back of my mind I always had this fantasy – wow, what if the singer came out and said: "Sorry, you guys, we can't play tonight, our drummer is sick... unless there's someone that knows all of our songs." And then I would get up and [mimes playing a drum kit] *bam, bam, bam, bam*. And I feel that way with all of my favourite bands. Like, if I went to go see AC/DC and they needed a drummer that night, I would be the drummer of AC/DC for one night. Or Killing Joke. Or Motörhead. There's part of me that wants to do it with everybody, you know.

You've got a reputation as being the nicest man in rock. Can you be difficult as well?

Oh shit, yeah. I think my biggest problem is when I'm working at what I do, I expect people to work as hard at what I do as I do. If I have these 15 things that I have to do today, and you have your 15 things that you're supposed to do today, if I finish my 15 things and you don't finish your 15 things, you're in deep shit. I'm no saint, man. I could be a fucking jerk. But for the most part, my mom and dad raised me to treat people with respect and compassion. And just to be fucking polite, you know.

With that, our time is up. The busiest man in music has to prepare for the Foo Fighters' forthcoming US tour and the subsequent outdoor shows in Europe this summer. "Everything we do, we do. We make 'em here in this house," he says. "We're on our own label, we make the records the way want to make 'em. "We control our own destiny." 🗣️

"Them Crooked Vultures was like going off and fucking some beautiful chick for a while."

*Foo Fighters' new album, **Wasting Light**, is out now on RCA. They play the Isle of Wight Festival on June 11 and their own headlining shows at Milton Keynes Bowl on July 2 and 3.*

MARCHING ON

Few rock stars have had as much thrown at them as **The Alarm** frontman Mike Peters. But even the highs of US fame and the lows of a bitter split are nothing next to his ongoing battle with cancer.

Words: **Philip Wilding**



It's 1996. The M1 flickers by, measured in concrete stanchions and distant towns. In the back of a people carrier taking him to play an acoustic show in South Shields, Mike Peters feels a lump in his collar-bone. He pushes it tentatively and the small ball moves up over the bone. He presses it again and it slides downwards. He moves his hand away and it resumes its original position, an unmoving bulge in his skin.

"I thought it was my lymph glands," says Peters. "So I had a blood test. I was with the doctor, and I could see this piece of paper on the desk, and it had the word 'cancer' written all over it. He said: 'I think you've got a 50/50 chance of making it, and you might not want to tell your wife because of how bad it is.'"

The doctors diagnosed him with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. Peters says he has never been so scared in his life. But a few months later, following contact with a faith healer, the cancer went into spontaneous remission. No one knew why. Peters thought he was free of it forever.

He was back on tour in 2006 when the cancer returned. One morning after a show and a few beers, he woke up with an erection that sent a pain shooting through his torso. The pain lasted for hours.

The next time he took a drink, the same thing happened. He went back to see the same doctor, the one who had warned him that he might go into shock at the news of cancer 10 years before. This time it was doctor's turn to look ashen.

"His face turned white," says Peters. "He said my liver and spleen were enlarged, and I knew straight away that it had come back. I had leukaemia. To be dragged back in was terrible."

It's afternoon in the market town of Welshpool. In a studio a few miles down the road, Peters and the latest incarnation of The Alarm – the band he has fronted on and off since the early 80s – are recording *The Sound And The Fury*, an album of re-workings of some of the band's songs that the singer feels might have slipped through the cracks.

For a man who has stared down death twice and is still undergoing treatment for his most recent cancer, Peters looks remarkably well, with a thatch of blond hair and a few lines around that familiar grin. The exploding mullet and cowboy shirt have gone, but he still looks like that bloke who sings in The Alarm.

Literally a rock'n'roll survivor, it says much about his sense of humour that, in the early days of the 21st century, he formed a band called Dead Men Walking with Spear Of Destiny's Kirk Brandon, the Damned's Captain Sensible and Pete Dinklage of The Mighty Wah!

For many people, The Alarm blew up after they performed what proved to be their breakthrough single, *Sixty Eight Guns*, on *Top Of The Pops*. It was September 1983 and the band had flown in from America just to record the show. Musically tight from months on the road, their performance propelled the song into the Top 20. For the rest of that decade, their call-to-arms anthems and unashamed politicking earned them an avid fan-base that still travels the world to catch them – as well as the derision of the British music press. Stirring albums such as 1984's *Declaration* and the following year's *Strength* tapped into the socio-political vibe being meted out by their musical peers U2, Simple Minds and Big

Country. The Alarm's statements were bold and full of bravura; they sang of a future; they sounded hopeful, if often dismayed.

The story of The Alarm really starts seven years earlier, in 1976, in the fading Welsh seaside town of Rhyl. The 17-year-old Peters lived in a house on Edward Henry Street; future Alarm bassist

Eddie Macdonald grew up two doors down. Peters had bought an acoustic guitar as a kid, because Dylan played one and because they were cheaper than an electric. He listened to The Who and the Stones. Local entertainment was limited to the odd seafront performance by Mud, so Peters had to look further afield. He saw Sabbath at Birmingham Odeon, and drove to London to see Bowie (Peters nodded off in the car park and slept through the entire show). He saw the Sex Pistols play Chester in 1976, and the Clash on the White Riot tour the following year. The Pistols made him want to play; the Clash showed him how to dress.

"I came back from that and decided to be a punk," he says. "But I was fat, and I knew I had to lose weight to be a punk."

By early 1977, Peters and Macdonald had their own punk group, the Toilets. They mutated into a mod band, Seventeen. That same year, they were joined by guitarist Dave Sharp and drummer Nigel Twist, both from the unfortunately monikered Quasimodo. Sharp and Twist had been together in a band in their home town of Manchester. The drummer moved to Wales with his family, and the guitarist visited to play with him when he was on leave

**"I SAW A PIECE OF PAPER WITH
THE WORD 'CANCER' ON IT. THE
DOCTOR SAID: 'YOU'VE GOT
A 50/50 CHANCE OF SURVIVING.'"**

– MIKE PETERS

The Alarm in 1983:
(from left) Eddie Macdonald,
Dave Sharp, Mike Peters,
Nigel Twist.





Hair apparent: the video for 1981 single *The Stand*.

“THEY WERE SEARCHING FOR SOMETHING TO FILL THE VACUUM LEFT BY PUNK. THEY LOOKED WEST FOR INSPIRATION.”

— BILLY DUFFY

from the Merchant Navy. As Seventeen, the four-piece released a single (1980's *Don't Let Go*), and toured with the Stray Cats, before temporarily splitting and then re-forming with a new name: The Alarm.

It was in 1981 that the band went from a standing start to a sprint. In June they played their first show as The Alarm, at the Victoria Hotel in nearby Prestatyn. A few months later they recorded their debut single, *Unsafe Building*, a ringing acoustic track that built to a thrumming chorus, with Peters's plaintive and heartfelt vocal on top.

Aware that a band couldn't survive for too long in Rhyl alone, they knew they had to move their base to a bigger city. Their options were cold, post-punk Manchester, or glamorous, rock'n'roll London. They chose the latter. A friend lived south of the Thames in Battersea; by September the four of them were living on his floor, scratching around for gigs and watching their savings fade into oblivion. They were there to work, though. No one mentioned turning back.

The Alarm had one other friend in London. Louis Parker was a Welsh nightclub entrepreneur-turned-promoter (he went on to book Nirvana's first gig in the UK; he died from cancer in 2000). When Peters called him, Parker passed on the number of The Fall's manager for Peters to try to get on the bill at their next show.

"I got through," says Peters, "and this voice asked if we were anything like The Fall. I admitted we weren't, and they went: 'Great! We hate bands that sound like The Fall.' We got the gig at The Venue in south London."

A promoter from the London agency Wasted Talent turned up to the show to expressly tell them to please stop bothering her with demo tapes and phone calls. Blown away by what she saw when

The Alarm played, the promoter collared the band after their set to buy them drinks. Despite her original plans, she never once mentioned that they should leave her alone.

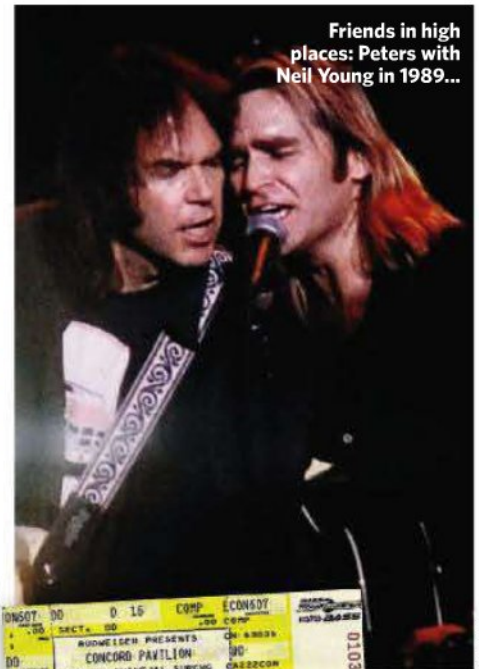
The Alarm were four gigs old when the breakthrough came. On December 19, 1981 they played a showcase at subterranean London club the Rock Garden. To The Alarm's surprise, the place was rammed; The Cure's Robert Smith was by the bar next to a string of A&R men, managers and music industry executives. Among them stood Ian Wilson, agent for the then-rising Irish rockers U2. The Alarm played with their hearts in their mouths, finished their set, staggered off stage and went back to their dressing room. While the promoter kept a string of impressed record label types outside the door, Ian Wilson told the band how much he'd like to work with them.

And he was true to his word. On December 22, their phone rang. It was Wilson.

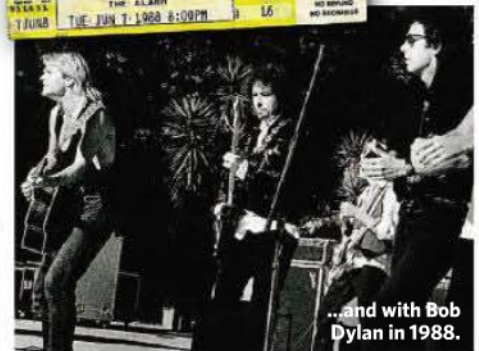
"We were packing for the trip home for Christmas," says Peters, "and Ian went: 'Want to play with U2 tonight?' We had this policy that we wouldn't support anyone any more, so I said no. Nigel, thank God, grabbed the phone, and said: 'Of course we'll play with U2, Ian!'"

That night at London's Lyceum theatre, Bono watched The Alarm's set from the side of the stage. Later he bought them drinks and told them how much he liked what they did. Unwittingly, they were making friends in high places.

After the excitement of 1981, 1982 dawdled. The Alarm spent the year having their demos rejected by one label after another. Ian Wilson, by now their manager, sent them out on the road with anyone who would have them: Boomtown Rats, The Jam, Dexy's Midnight Runners. It kept them busy.



Friends in high places: Peters with Neil Young in 1989...



...and with Bob Dylan in 1988.

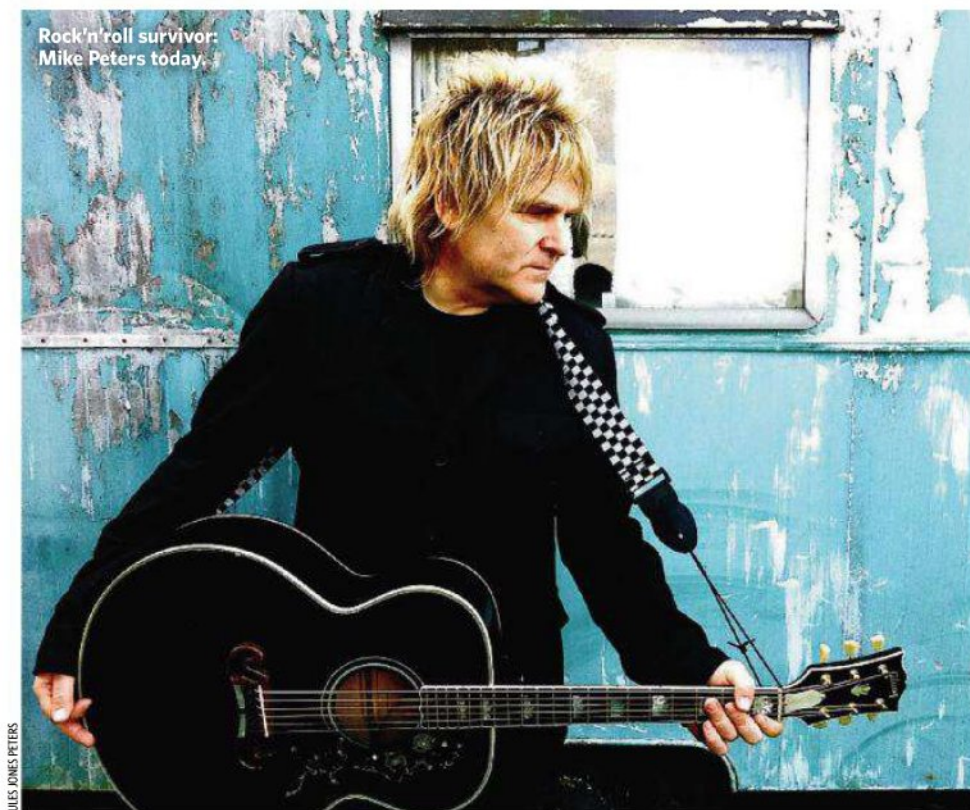
Their break came via their friends in U2. The Irish band's management were trying to convince U2 that one more American leg of their *War* tour would make them stars in the US. They'd do it, the band said, as long as they could take out someone they liked as support. Which was The Alarm's cue.

"Our first show was in San Francisco at the Civic," says Peters. "Our hire truck had a 50mph limiter on it, so we got there late. Bono and The Edge met us at the door and helped us hump our gear in. I can remember a fan going: 'That roadie looks like Bono!' They had their caps pulled down, but they were throwing our gear up on stage."

And so began The Alarm's love affair with America, albeit one-sided at first. While they triumphed on U2's *War* tour, they still had to put in weeks opening for US artists such as Pat Benatar. "It was tough playing to baseball and cowboy hats who only liked 70s rock," recalls Peters. "Punk hadn't happened in those parts of America. But Iggy was from there, the Ramones, the New York Dolls. So there was an audience. You just had to find them."

"They seemed so honest and hard working from a distance," says Billy Duffy, a post-punk peer of Peters's in Death Cult (a revamped version of the earlier Southern Death Cult), who would transform into The Cult (currently preparing to impress themselves on a new generation of fans at this year's Download festival). "Like us they were punk fans who learnt to play their instruments and were searching for something to fill that vacuum left by punk. They looked west for inspiration."

Rock'n'roll survivor:
Mike Peters today.



JULIE JONES/PETERS

Back in the UK, *Unsafe Building* and follow-up singles *Marching On* and *The Stand* hadn't worried the charts unduly. But The Alarm's stock in the US was rocketing. In September 1983 they headlined two nights at the Ritz in New York, and Bono joined them on stage. When they got back to London a few days later, girls screamed at Peters in the street and asked for his autograph. He did not, one of them told him, sound American at all.

Remarkably, while they had finally bagged a deal with IRS Records, they hadn't even recorded an album yet. But when they eventually did, their debut, *Declaration* (1984) and the following *Strength* and *Eye Of The Hurricane* would chart on both sides of the Atlantic, ultimately selling five million copies between them. When the band teamed up with MTV in April 1986 to perform one of the first shows to be broadcast live across America, at the UCLA campus in Los Angeles, more than 25,000 people turned up, a barrier collapsed, and the band almost missed the satellite hovering overhead.

That summer The Alarm were back in London to support Queen at Wembley Stadium. But what should have been a celebration was, in Peters's words, "weird". Drummer Nigel Twist had spent the night before out on the tiles with INXS frontman Michael Hutchence, and had arrived home only moments before the band were due to pick him up. Twist was forced into a shower and fed coffee; he still missed some shots during what was the biggest show band had ever played in the UK. Peters admits that he couldn't help but resent him.

And, somehow, despite their growing success, The Alarm still had no money.

"I remember going to the hole in the wall after the Wembley show, and the crew guys had more cash than us," says Peters. "You'd get home and have parents and friends going: 'You're rock stars, why are you broke?'"

When the band convened a few weeks later to start work on *Eye Of The Hurricane*, the strains were beginning to show. Sharp and Twist told Peters and

Macdonald that they wouldn't record songs the singer and bassist had written; they had to start writing together as a unit. It was a stand-off that lasted a year.

Two camps were forming: Peters and Macdonald in one, Sharp and Twist in the other. They barely talked to each other. When Sharp became smitten by Stevie Ray Vaughan after The Alarm supported the Texan guitarist, blues licks began appearing in live versions of *Sixty Eight Guns* and *Marching On*. Peters asked him to stop; the guitarist resisted.

To the outside world The Alarm were flying high. They spent the summer of 1987 supporting Bob Dylan, who invited Peters up on stage to perform *Knockin' On Heaven's Door* ("It was cheek to cheek with Dylan," Peters recalls. "Amazing."). Jack Nicholson said hello at one show in Los Angeles, and even ex-President Jimmy Carter turned up at their gig in Atlanta.

Two years later, after releasing their fourth album, *Change*, Neil Young joined them on stage in New York as they encored with a cover of Young's *Rockin' In The Free World*. The band left the stage to rapturous applause. It should have been a triumph. But as they were exiting, Peters all but collapsed from fatigue. "My sister had a brain haemorrhage a few days before that show," he says today. "She survived, but she's never recovered the power of speech or recognition. I'd been flying back and forth from America to the UK to see her and it had taken its toll physically and mentally. I think my body just gave in."

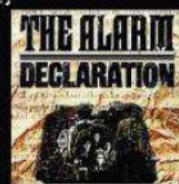
And things were about to get even worse. Instead of taking a planned break, they decided to make a new album, *Raw*. But tragedy struck when Nigel Twist's stepdad killed himself in the barn in which the band rehearsed. The drummer discovered his body. Then Peters's father died.

"Those external things, they were what broke us up," says the singer, who admits that he was already distancing himself from his bandmates.

Macdonald takes a different view. The bassist

MULLET OVER!

Three essential Alarm albums.
Hairspray not included.



DECLARATION

IRS, 1984

The crashing debut that mixed up their punk roots and their love of folk music into a fervent call to arms. You could

imagine flags flying and people rushing the barricades in every song.

The Anthem: *Marching On*, as strident as its title and a stirring live favourite.



STRENGTH

IRS, 1985

A more considered approach, a stronger dynamic, plus an assured musicality and sense of storytelling

combined with the strongest set of Alarm songs makes this arguably the greatest, most complete of their albums.

The Anthem: *Spirit Of '76*, Peters' resounding paean to his youth, his friends and his band.



IN THE POPPY FIELDS

SNAPPER, 2004

Lit up long after most people thought that the fire had gone out: two sets of songs; one radio-friendly, impassioned rock, the other, erudite, introspective and mostly acoustic; but both bursting with optimistic passion.

The Anthem: *The Drunk And The Disorderly*, Chiming, timeless glory that wouldn't sound out of place on Pete Townshend's *Empty Glass* album.

blames himself and Peters for unwittingly creating an imbalance in the band. "We always viewed it as our band, supported by Dave and Twist," he says. "We made it difficult for them to express themselves creatively."

Either way, Peters's relationship with Sharp – who had already lined up a solo tour without telling the rest of the band – was almost beyond repair. On June 30, 1991, the frontman stepped out on to the stage of Brixton Academy and announced he was leaving the band. As the show ended, he walked off stage and just drove away. The end was a relief for all of them.

"That was it for me," says Peters. "I still find it hard to talk about."

"The final curtain didn't come soon enough for me," says Macdonald, "Mike had left in spirit before we finished *Raw*. I think he'd agree with that."

After the dust settled on The Alarm's split, Peters moved back to Wales with his family. He released two solo singles, but waited until 1995 to record his first solo album, *Breathe*. He was determined to do things his own way; his first battle with cancer only emphasised that.

Peters had always stayed in touch with Ian Wilson, the band's former manager, and when, in 1996, he was diagnosed

Continued on p126

IT'S 5AM AND the sun is creeping across the vista that is New Orleans' French Quarter just weeks after Hurricane Katrina hit in late 2005. Greg Dulli is out in the streets. The silhouette of an army chopper flies low overhead. He ignores it, brings his bike to a standstill and keeps on filming. It's an hour before curfew lifts, so his camera captures an eerie, empty place: just broken buildings, and the occasional call of crows searching for carrion.

A few blocks away a Chevy Suburban with blacked-out windows rolls slowly into sight. Dulli takes this as his cue, pockets his camera and pulls away.

"I've been in New Orleans since 1997," says the singer and songwriter, sitting in his second home in the once down-at-heel Echo Park area of Los Angeles. "We were under strict curfew. It was like marshal law, soldiers everywhere. There was a siege mentality. We pretty much figured that once the power started going out at the same time every night the city was throwing the switch. They wanted you back in your house."

"A giant chunk of the [Twilight Singers] *Powder Burns* album happened during that time. I was in my recovery period in a lot of ways in my own life, and it kind of began to mirror the recovery of the city, at least in what I was writing. So I was not just writing about myself, but about a larger theme, a much bigger thing than me."

It's been five years since *Powder Burns*. On that record Dulli wrote about rebuilding his life after a debilitating cocaine addiction, as the levee rose once more and the dirty waters receded. He'd started on the road to recovery three years before that, after the sudden death of his best friend, film director Ted Demme. "I would go so far as to say that his death may have saved my life," Dulli says now. "He was here and then he was gone."

There wasn't much happening in suburban Hamilton, Ohio when Dulli grew up. His mother had him when she was just 17. As he grew up he listened to the music that a young mum in her early 20s was being turned on to: Motown and Stax. "I was enormously grateful for her influence in so many ways," he says. "I'm relatively sure that by the time I was 10 I had a record collection – a big one."

Dulli took his love of soul and Stax with him when he helped form the Afghan Whigs in 1986. Two years later they had their own Ultrasuede label and first album, *Big Top Halloween*.

Sub Pop came calling and caused minor waves when they signed the Whigs to their roster as the first band that hadn't come out of the American North West. By the time of the excellent *Congregation* the band had signed to Elektra, before moving almost seamlessly into the mainstream with 1993's *Gentlemen*, which became an album hit on college radio and MTV. With songs about misplaced lust and heightened self-destruction, the Afghan Whigs were a surprising addition to the zeitgeist.

Late last year Dulli went out on his first ever solo acoustic tour, titled *An Evening With Greg Dulli*, which gave him the chance to revisit more than 20 years of music across 30 shows. "I had moments every night when my life flashed before my eyes, I really did. I was like, 'I remember where I was when I wrote this, who I was dating...' It was very real trip through my life – like The Ghost of Christmas Past took me around to scare the shit out of me," he laughs. "I was singing songs from *Congregation* and enjoying it. That pleased me – that a song I wrote 20 years ago still moved me."

Unlike most bands the Afghan Whigs knew when to call it quits. They split amicably after their most accomplished album, 1965: a glorious, horn-drenched affair that, while underpinned by Dulli's bleak humour, had 60s Detroit pumping through its veins. "Even with all that we went through, there's a joyousness to that record that is wonderful. I took a little time at the end of the tour, and I knew that we

had taken it to its zenith; I knew it was time to walk away. And I'm really glad to have had that clarity."

While touring 1965, Dulli – depending on who you believe – either attacked or was attacked by two sometime doormen at a club in Austin, Texas. Dulli, who suffered a fractured skull, sued, but the case came to nothing once the venue closed down. He won't be drawn on it, but Dulli's abruptness polarises people.

"I'm candid and direct, and that makes people uncomfortable," says Dulli. "At 30 I began to soften my approach in a lot of ways, but if someone's being a cunt they will know immediately that they're being a cunt. I really don't suffer fools. One of my favourite quotes is by our late president Abe Lincoln: 'Better to keep quiet and be thought a fool than to open your mouth and remove all doubt.' That is my mantra."

In 1994 Dulli got the call to play the part of John Lennon – or his vocals, at least – making the music for *Backbeat*, alongside Thurston Moore and Dave Grohl. His mouth almost cost him the job. "That was really fun. We made that record in two days," he says with a cackle. "I was in New York in a hotel and I had had a wild one. My phone rang and I was like, 'What the fuck?' And this voice goes:

"This is Don Was. I'm doing the soundtrack to a movie about The Beatles, and I was wondering if you were interested in being John Lennon'. And I just went: 'Fuck off,' and hung up the phone. Then I passed back out. He called again two hours later and he's like: 'Feeling better?' And I'm like: 'Who the fuck is this?' He said: 'I told you earlier. Are you interested?' Don Was is cool."

Ted Demme's sudden death from a heart attack did two things to Dulli: saved him from his addled self, and helped him create his strongest album to date: 2003's *The Twilight Singers Play Blackberry Belle*. "I was unprepared for Ted leaving," says Dulli. "I needed to work through that. And I'm a songwriter, so that's how I chose to work through it. I think there's an over-arching

theme in *Blackberry Belle* and I sort of gave myself to it. I was also working on songs then that became the [2005 Greg Dulli solo album] *Amber Headlights* record."

"At that particular time in my life I was kind of strung out pretty much. I was at sea for a few years, but there are moments of *Amber Headlights* that I think are inspired. I can't honestly tell you if that was going to be a record or not then, because I didn't know if I was going to be alive or not. Right around the time of Ted's passing, that's when I decided that I wanted to be a songwriter again. It took his death to get me to focus."

Writing and recording the latest Twilight Singers album *Dynamite Steps* aside, Dulli has spent the better part of the past two years working with another long-standing friend, former Screaming Trees vocalist Mark Lanegan. Given each's indelibly scarred past, it's no surprise that they decided to call themselves the Gutter Twins, though you fancy they're both staring at the stars. In 2008 Dulli and Lanegan made the acclaimed *Saturnalia* album. Their teaming up was such an inspired and obvious idea it's a surprise no one had thought of it before. It was Dulli's idea and snowballed after a tour into acoustic shows. "We started doing each other's songs and it was really cool. We're some kind of kindred spirits, I guess. We're going to do another album this year."

Today, Dulli, the once infamous hedonist, is DIY-fitting sliding doors in his LA home ("I taught myself how to do it from a clip on YouTube"). It's how he gets his kicks these days. "I still drink occasionally, you know, but I don't get drunk any more. I got drunk twice last year: one was Mardi Gras, the other was my birthday. Both times I woke up with a headache. You forget what it's like. Then there's that moment and it's, 'Oh, good Lord...'"

Dynamite Steps is out now on Sub Pop.

"Better to keep quiet and be thought a fool than to open your mouth and remove all doubt. That is my mantra."

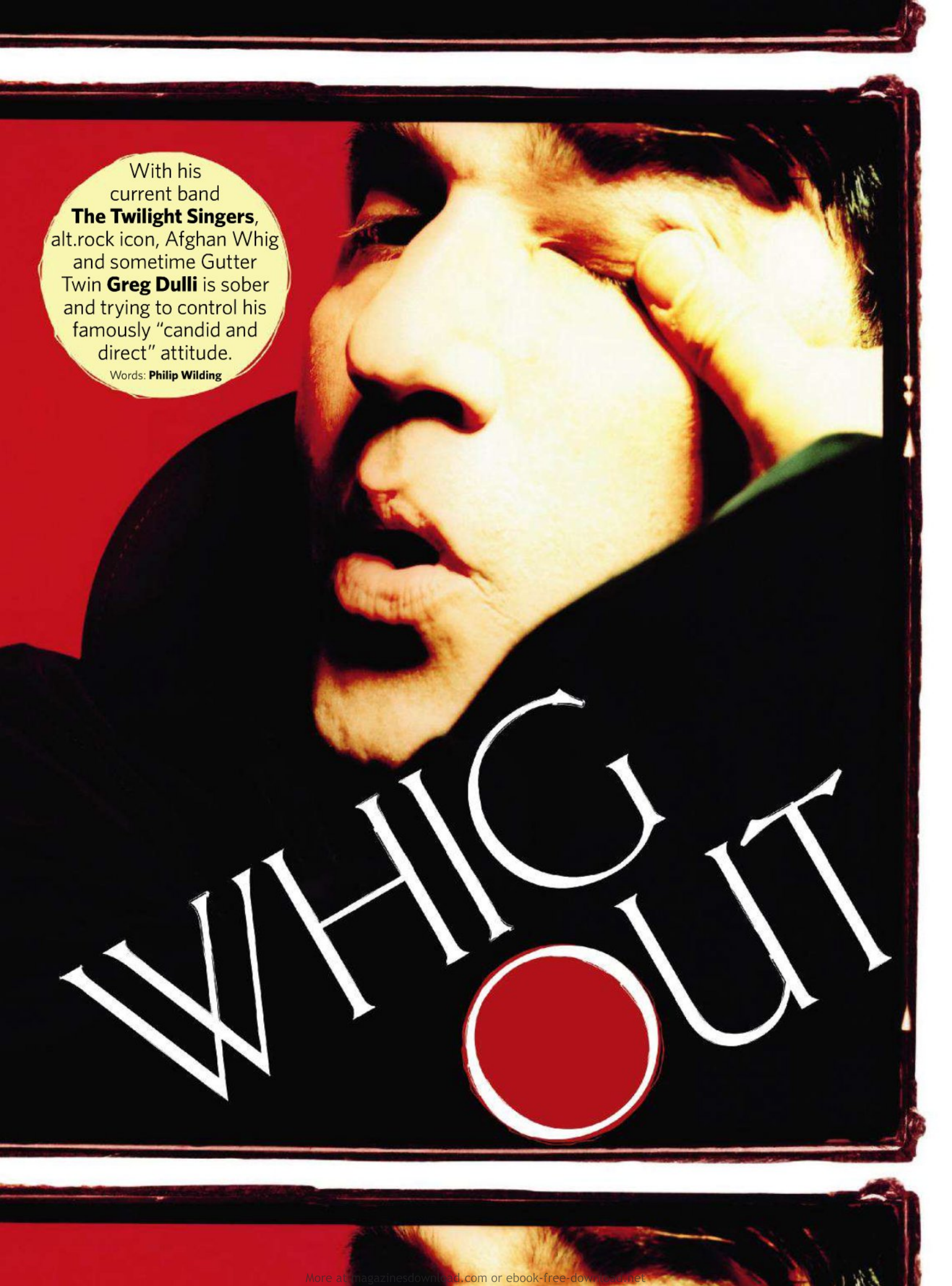
Greg Dulli
(after Abraham Lincoln)



"DULLI IS A SHAMAN, A SOUL MAN, A GENIUS!"

BY DUFF McKAGAN

"I think I first heard of Greg Dulli when Kim Warrick [The Fastbacks], or Ben Shepherd [Soundgarden] turned me on to the Afghan Whigs sometime in the early 90s. I'd heard of them of course, but had not listened to any records yet. What I found was a sort of treasure trove. An unexplored and yawning crevasse of rock'n'roll gold. Greg has become a friend over the last few years, and his band the Gutter Twins (with Mark Lanegan) is one of those groups I wish that I was in... damnit. They are just so fucking good. Dulli is a shaman. A revival preacher. A soul man. And a fuckin' genius."



With his
current band
The Twilight Singers,
alt.rock icon, Afghan Whig
and sometime Gutter
Twin **Greg Dulli** is sober
and trying to control his
famously "candid and
direct" attitude.

Words: **Philip Wilding**

WHIG OUT

Have You Seen This

Classic Rock has. He is Thunderstick, former Samson drummer-turned-nightclub owner. As a new CR-curated NWOBHM compilation hits the shelves, we track down the great lost heroes of the scene, 30 years on, to ask the burning question: **Is there really life after NWOBHM?**

Words: **Malcolm Dome, Dave Ling** and **Ian Ravendale** Portrait: **Paul Slattery**

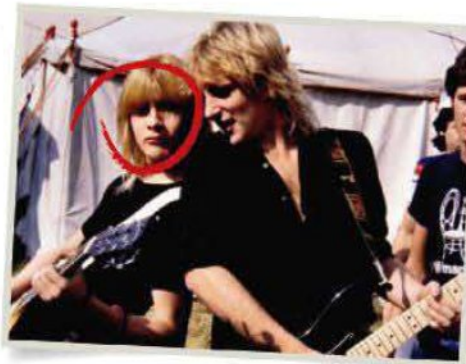
FROM DANDY TO BUDDHIST **GERRY LAFFY (GIRL)**

Featuring future Def Leppard man Phil Collen, *Girl* were NWOBHM's camp wing. Laffy was their guitarist from 1979 until they split in 1983.



GERRY LAFFY: "We were outsiders in the NWOBHM scene. Some took to us but others hated us – a lot. We were driving around in Aston Martins and taking too much marching powder, but keeping things going became such a battle that by the time we split up in 1983, I'd become the manager of film director Russell Mulcahy, where I stayed for the next 15 years.

"Being involved with such movies as *Highlander* and doing promo videos for Elton John and Duran Duran was very enjoyable. Duran's John Taylor asked me to be the Ronson to his Bowie in a solo band, and we did 10 albums together. In the 90s my brother Simon and I had a band called Sheer Greed, but nobody got our camp, Jewish humour. Nowadays my living comes from being an artist –



my style is somewhere between Warhol and Banksy. And I work with adults with learning disabilities. I teach them singing and art. It brings out the dope-smoking Buddhist hippie in me.

"The subject of a *Girl* reunion still comes up. Phil Collen and [singer] Philip Lewis still look like rock stars; why would I go on stage and pretend to be the guy I was 30 years ago? I ain't wearing a wig!"

*A DVD titled *Girl, Sheer Greed & Gerry Laffy* is available via Laffy's Facebook page.*



THE MAN IN THE MASK **THUNDERSTICK (SAMSON)**

Gimp-masked Samson drummer Barry 'Thunderstick' Purkis (above, next to, yes, moustachioed Bruce Dickinson) was one of the NWOBHM era's most memorable characters. Specialist subject: battering his kit within a cage on stage.

BARRY PURKIS: "I invented the concept of the mask because I was fed up with all the attention paid to lead singers and guitarists. But it became a double-edged sword. I found myself living the whole Thunderstick persona, even wearing the mask at soundchecks to protect my anonymity.

"With hindsight, in a business sense Samson trod in every possible pile of dog shit, but I loved being in that band. I left in 1980 because I wanted to be more showmanlike than go down the bluesy route they preferred. We needed to go further over the top; to become a contender for Alice Cooper's throne. So I put together my own, female-fronted band, Thunderstick, which aimed to do just that. The press, who just expected Samson MK II, crucified me.

"Afterwards I ran a couple of nightclubs, became a sound engineer working for Steve Marriott, Chicken Shack...

"Samson reunited for some gigs in the late 90s which I thoroughly enjoyed. I still have my own production company, and was thrilled and surprised that *Classic Rock* placed me at No.36 in a list of the 50 best drummers in rock back in 2005. That was one in the eye to all those that didn't take me seriously as a drummer."

*Thunderstick's debut album, *Beauty And The Beast*, will be re-released by Heaven & Hell Records on Halloween.*



DONKEY-TENDING BOOKIE! **BRIAN 'BIG DICK' (TYGERS OF PAN TANG)**

Proud owner of NWOBHM's ultimate nudge-nudge nickname, Dick occupied the drum stool during two stints with the Geordie bruisers.



BRIAN DICK: "The NWOBHM was a fantastic time in my life, though it's only now that I appreciate my good fortune. I didn't join a band because I loved playing drums, what

appealed to me was the camaraderie of us-against-the-world mentality. When John Sykes joined Tygers Of Pan Tang and Jon Deverill replaced Jess Cox on vocals, it was a change for the better, but the band became a little more out for themselves. We headlined Hammersmith Odeon in 1982, but it had become a bit like a house of cards. Three of us, including me got the sack, and the Tygers Of Pan Tang were without an original member.

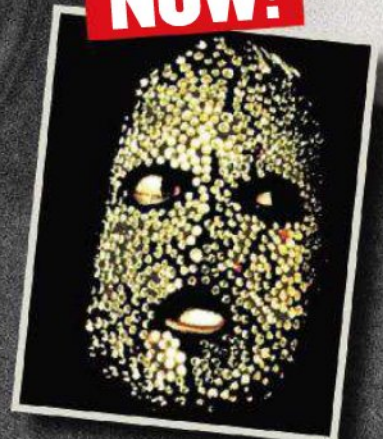
"A few years later I was part of a new line-up that flogged a dead horse with two more albums, which I regret because I should've built a life away from it all. Sergeant, my next band, was financed by AC/DC's Brian Johnson, but we were going around clubs playing to half-a-dozen people.

"So I went into cabaret work for many years. Completely boring but the money was good. After two summer seasons at Butlins I got tired of living in a caravan, so we moved from Kent to my current place on Exmoor National Park in Somerset. I'm a manager at William Hill, the bookmakers. At home we have donkeys, goats, horses and more. It's a whole other existence. I don't miss being in the Tygers, but I miss being in a band very much."

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THE BLOKE WHO ATTACKED LEMMY **PETE GILL (SAXON)**

After learning his chops with Gary Glitter, drummer Gill joined NWOBHM trailblazers Saxon. An acrimonious split with the Barnsley big teasers in 1981 was followed by an even more turbulent stint in Motörhead.



PETE GILL: "After Saxon's *Denim And Leather* album I damaged a ligament in my hand and wasn't able to rehearse for three or four weeks. I was ready to return, when the manager told me Saxon didn't want me back. It took seven years to get them to pay me my royalties.

"I joined Motörhead a couple of years later and the first two years were a whirlwind. They were great to play with and very good socially, but Lemmy used to really screw me off by constantly turning up late. We'd been booked for a guest appearance on the TV show *The Young Ones*, so we checked in to a nearby hotel for the night. We had a 9am wake-up call, but we couldn't get any answer from Lemmy's room. Fearing the worst, I asked the hotel management to break the door down. Lemmy wasn't there, there was a car waiting, and I was getting more and more wound up. Then Lemmy came in, completely out of it,



shouted something at me, and I attacked him. The others had to drag me off. In his book, Lemmy says he fired me, but he didn't.

"I started wondering: 'Do I want to do this any more? I just feel out of it.' I started to get bad arthritis in my knees and hands. In the 90s, Graham Quinn and Steve Dawson from Saxon asked me to join them in their band Son Of A Bitch. We did an album and two big festivals, but I told them I didn't want to tour. My condition got worse, and I now have to walk with two sticks.

I've got severe arthritis and wasting in my legs, and a condition called cerebellar ataxia, which is the degeneration of the part of the brain that deals with balance. I've got specialists for different conditions. It doesn't stop me from getting out, although I don't walk around in a biker jacket and cowboy boots.

"I'm completely retired from playing now. Could I have done it any better? No, I don't think I could. I'd have liked to have seen the Saxon thing through, though."

PREACHER MAN **STEVE BRIDGES (WITCHFYNDE)**

Fronted by Bridges from the mid-70s until late 1980, Witchfynde released debut album *Give 'Em Hell* on Mansfield's Rondelet Records.



STEVE RICHARDS: "We supported Def Leppard, and went professional, which I found a drag so I quit. I didn't do anything musically after that. I had a happy marriage. That

was enough for me.

"I became an Anglican lay preacher in the early 90s, leading services and preparing sermons. I'm not an easy man to convert, but I came across something that I couldn't explain any other way apart from that it was God. It was something outside of my experience, but very powerful. I didn't know it at the time, but my wife was experiencing the same thing slightly before me.

"Witchfynde got back together few years ago. Part of me wondered if I should become involved. I didn't, and I don't regret it. I drive an HGV, which is pretty boring at times but pays the bills."



DOUBLE-GLAZING SALESMAN **HARRY 'HIROSHIMA' HILL (FIST)**

South Shields band Fist sat at the rockier end of the NWOBHM spectrum. Harry Hill - not the TV gonk - was their drummer until 1982.



HARRY HILL: "After the band split, I started working in a pub in Sunderland. When the tenancy came up, the brewery suggested I apply. During a break from running pubs I became a double-glazing salesman. A friend told me you could make £800 a week - this was in 1990. I drifted into it but I've always found it a bit of a game. The big companies charge huge prices and then offer 50 per cent discounts. I don't do the hard-nosed, high-pressure stuff. We show people the right product, well-fitted and at the right price.

"The double-glazing has always gone alongside playing. Most recently I was with a cabaret trio, but I played with the [original Thin Lizzy guitarist] Eric Bell Band for a while.

"As well as having the window company, I've just taken over a bar in South Shields. But if I got the right offer from a band I'd drop everything else tomorrow. At heart I'll always be a drummer."

PROFESSIONAL PIRATE **PETE TOOMEY (BITCHES SIN)**

Lead by brothers Pete and Ian Toomey, Bitches Sin released records on Neat and Heavy Metal Records. The partnership dissolved 15 years ago when Pete went to live in New Zealand.



PETE TOOMEY: "I met my wife when she came across to renew her residency stamp. She asked me to go with her for a holiday, and we never came back. There's no heavy metal at all over

there [NZ], so I've been playing with the Rockabilly Rebels for the last four years. As well as festivals, we usually play to between 100 and 1,000 people, surrounded by hot rods. Which has to be better than playing to 16 people in a disco in Workington.

"I also write children's songs, and perform as 'Enry Hubbard, The Dirty Old Pirate, with black teeth, no shoes, and dirty face. We're more like a nautical Pogues-meet-the Stray Cats than the Wiggles. Singing about the Devil is cool when you're young, but kids love it when you sing about picking your nose while dressed as a pirate."





**THE ORIGINAL LARS ULRICH
DUNCAN SCOTT (DIAMOND HEAD)**

A key inspiration for a young Metallica, Stourbridge band Diamond Head released two classic NWOBHM albums: 1980's *Lightning To The Nations* and 1982's follow-up *Borrowed Time*. Former glass engraver Scott played drums on both of them.



DUNCAN SCOTT:

"A highlight of my time in Diamond Head was playing the Reading Festival in 1982. My drum sound no longer resembled somebody flicking a packet of crisps; we were like an earthquake that day. Where things went wrong was the recording of the third album, *Canterbury*. The fun was going out of it all, and the producer, Mike Hedges, undermined my confidence. He'd recorded the sound of somebody throwing up, and if he didn't

like your performance he'd play it to you through the headphones. Besides that, our music was changing. One day I was pretending to be Neal Peart, the next Stewart Copeland.

"Being out of the band was very demoralising, but once the dust settled I could see why they had brought in somebody else. I had a crack at the AC/DC job but, looking like an albino stick insect, my image was all wrong. But I did get to pass Cliff Williams and Angus on my way to the loo.

"After that and a one-off Diamond Head reunion on stage with Metallica in 1992, I was done with music. It wasn't hard to slip back into being a glass engraver and I landed a job at Royal Doulton. The bottom has fallen out of the glass trade, so I'm working in warehouse distribution at the moment. I've got an electronic drum kit, but these days when I play it's purely for fun."

Diamond Head play the Sonisphere Festival on July 8. With a different drummer.

COLLEGE LECTURER

RIK STAINES (DARK STAR)

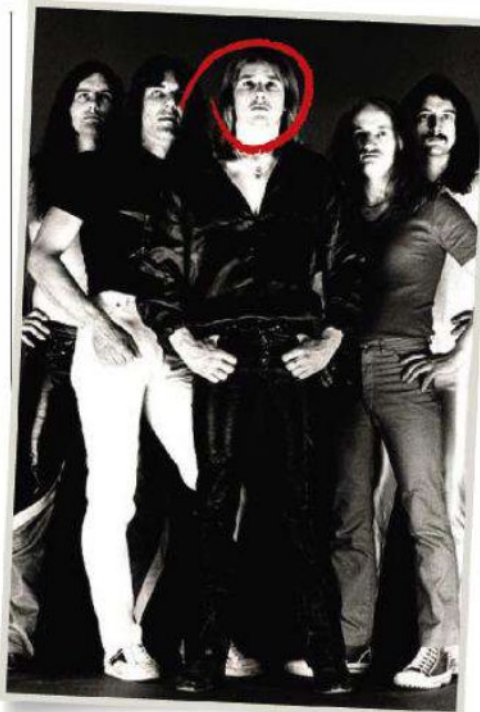
More melodic than their peers, Birmingham's Dark Star had a cult classic with 1980's *Lady Of Mars*. Rik Staines was their original vocalist.



RIK STAINES: "I thought we were a better band than our lack of success suggests. I could name a few people who held us back, but after so long what is point?"

"Once we split up, in the mid-80s, I was very lucky to stay involved with the music business. I was taken on as Magnum's tour manager, and I stayed active with them on a management level for a few more years. I left after the *Rock Art* album in 1994. I looked after Marshall Law, another Midlands band, and then got into putting on rock nights in local clubs.

"When I hit 50, I changed direction, and got a job as a music lecturer at Bournville College Of Further Education. I teach 16-19-year-olds about the music business. It's something I enjoy, and isn't as stressful as band management."



STUDIO MAGNATE

MAL PEARSON (WHITE SPIRIT)

Coming from the NWOBHM hot-bed of the North East, Hartlepool's White Spirit made full use of Mal Pearson's keyboard skills.



MAL PEARSON: "I believe we were at our best when we had Mick Tucker on guitar and Brian Howe on vocals. They replaced Janick Gers [who joined Gillan in 1981, and later Iron Maiden]

and Bruce Ruff. I gave up after interest from Atlantic Records came to nothing, and joined a PA company. At the end of the 80s I did a session for Lisa Dominique and toured Europe with the Sweet. I left when we had shows booked in Russia; nobody could tell me how we'd get paid.

"Now I run my own business, Complete Interiors. We specialise in building studios in any location. I've done well enough to have homes in Guildford and France. Do I miss playing? No. I had my time and then got on with my life."



NWOBHM DIE-HARD

BRIAN ROSS (BLITZKRIEG)

Another future Metallica fave, the cult Leicester band were led from the front by Ross.



BRIAN ROSS: "While we never had huge success in our own right, having Metallica cover our song *Blitzkrieg* gave us a career in this day and age, and also money.

For whatever reason, we've never been able to turn this into anything meaningful for the band itself, but I have always been involved in different projects, and Blitzkrieg have managed to keep going almost continuously since we re-formed in 2001. There's always been something about this band that draws me back – unfinished business. And while I can't see us getting the record sales we'd love, there's enough respect for what we've achieved to keep going for a long time yet."

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MY NAME IS EARLE

Singer. Songwriter. Guitarist. Actor. Novelist. Playwright. Activist. Grammy winner. He's a man of many talents, but it's Harry Potter that's **Steve Earle's** latest addiction.

Words: **Jaan Uhelszki** Portrait: **Ted Barron**

Steve Earle is a busy man. He's been releasing acclaimed and occasionally controversial albums since 1986's *Guitar Town*. He's overcome a drug problem, had a stint in jail, won Grammy awards, is now happily married to singer-songwriter Allison Moorer and has a one-year-old baby boy. Earle's teamed up with producer T Bone Burnett for *I'll Never Get Out Of This World Alive*, his first all new album in four years. The 11 songs on which he describes as being "about mortality in one way or the other".

Beyond his music, Earle also appears as an actor on hit US TV show *Treme* and has his debut novel published in May. Yet somehow, among all this, he found time for a chat with *Classic Rock*...

You've said that you feel your calling is as a musician, but do you think that perhaps writing is your greatest strength?

I'm not sure about that. The lyrics on this record were really hard work. My whole deal with this record was just to try to write as far past the decimal point poetically as I could. I was rewriting and re-tweaking these songs right up until I sang 'em.

If writing was laborious, how was recording?

Making this record was effortless. T Bone is really good and I didn't want to be a producer this time around. We used that band of his and we made it in five days, and it was real easy.

Is five days quick for you to record an album?

It's really quick for anybody. It was great for me because all the work went into writing the songs and T Bone did a lot of work getting this band to where they are. He's every bit what everybody says he is. Emmylou Harris said something pretty profound recently. She was talking about producers and she said if you're the smartest person in the room then you're working with the wrong people.

It seems like somebody's smiling on you – a novel, a Grammy, a new baby? Then you kick off the album with a song called *Waiting On The Sky*, as in waiting for it to fall. Do you think your good fortune could evaporate again?

I know if I don't abuse the gift I'm given, then things, good things happen and then when I do, bad things happen. It's like the joke about the guy goes to the doctor and says, 'Doctor, it hurts when I do this'. He says 'Don't do that'.

Does feeling happy seem new to you?

Yeah. But it's not that new. I've actually been sober and productive longer than I was fucked up. But I find it preferable this way.

You also sing about looking for the Holy Grail. What was the Holy Grail for you?

It was whatever. It was leaving San Antonio to go to Houston and then leaving Houston to go to Nashville. Then I left Nashville to go to Mexico in the late 70s for a couple years, then came back to Nashville and then eventually I ended up here. I finally decided that after 30 years, that I still wasn't where I was supposed to be and I came to New York.

I think I finally am where I'm supposed to be. I think I'll stick here. I think I'll probably die here. But I won't promise that. There's other cities but New York's pretty fucking hard to beat. I'm writing a play – my second play – now that the book's finished. So, the theatre is part of the reason I move here: partially to breathe the same air as Tony Kushner. I saw this new production of [Kushner's Pulitzer Prize-winning] *Angels In America*. I had to see it. I was homeless when *Angels In America* was originally staged. It was the mid-90s, the last year before I got clean and I was homeless.

Do you mark your life in terms of before you were sober and your life after?

Sure. I mean I think getting married this time's becoming one, too – the only marriage I was sober for – but I think up to really recently that has to be it. I mean it is almost like two separate lives.

Do you have the perception that your great success came late?

I don't know. I mean, I manage to make a living at this. It always blows my mind I can make any kind of living at it at all, but I feel better about what I'm doing right now. I feel like I'm having to do a lot of different things to sort of piece together a career. I write – this book's [*I'll Never Get Out Of This World Alive*] out, and then the consequence of that is I'm going to have to go do a commercial tour for the record next month and then come back and go right back out on a book tour. And then we'll start touring with the band in June.

You dropped out of school early, but did you have a clear idea where you were pointed?

Yes, absolutely, I've never wanted anything else but to be a musician, never even really got a chance to want to be an astronaut or a fireman or anything.

Despite dropping out so early, you are remarkably accomplished and learned. Would you consider yourself an autodidact?

Yeah, I guess I'm what that word means. I read way, way, way more non-fiction than I do fiction because I feel guilty about my lack of education and I feel like it's necessary.

Maybe that's what fuels your ambition, that sense of not having what others have?

Yeah. Absolutely. It's funny, when I do read fiction it's like I spend a lot of that energy re-reading Harry Potter books. That's what I do instead of take dope, I re-read Harry Potter. I'm still in mourning because the books are over. I love 'em. I'm a Harry Potter freak.

What do you get out of them?

They're about the same thing that this record is about. They're about dealing with death. I think if you got your children to read those books, they'd be a lot less scared of dying when their time comes.

You've appear so confident. Were you always so assured?

No. I just made it look like I was. Now I think I'm a little more okay with failure than I was. I do things that don't work out, but I don't let that stop me. And another thing is I don't read reviews, and that helps. If they don't like it, it hurts your feelings, and if they did, that's bad for you too.

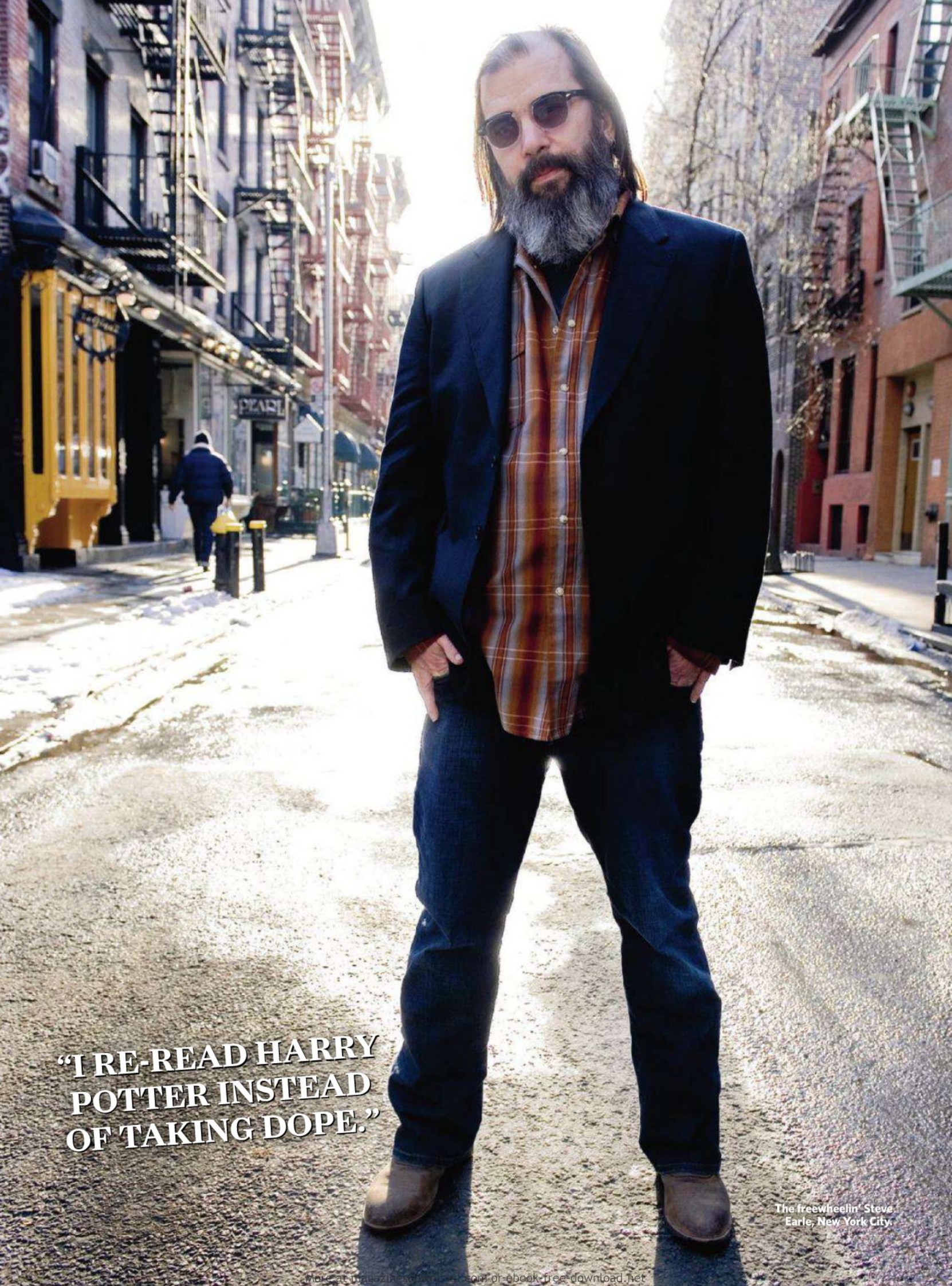
What did you learn about yourself writing the novel? And did you discipline yourself?

I worked on it every day until I had to go make a record and tour. I'd get up in the morning before the phone started ringing and I got distracted by baseball scores or anything else. I'd get as much done as possible. I'd pretty much done everything I could do by one or two in the afternoon, and then I go hang out in the guitar store.

Gregg Allman said he can't wait to make another record with T Bone. What about you?

I'd make another. But who knows whether he'll be interested in working with me again? And who knows what'll happen with the both of us? But right now, today, if somebody put a gun to my head and told me I had to go make a record, I couldn't imagine making one with anyone else.

I'll Never Get Out Of This World Alive is out now on New West.



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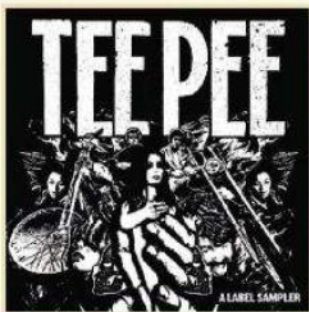
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1 ANCESTORS

Invisible White



While they've definitely got elements of Pink Floyd, King Crimson and Neurosis running through their veins, they also have a bloodline to the future. Visionary yet haunting this is the sound of a modern progressive band.

From *Invisible White*, out June 6.

2 LECHEROUS GAZE

Sold



The Oakland band say they're steeped in the Jimi Hendrix-fuelled guitar drama of 70s rock, and also have a massive Chuck Berry influence. Plus a love for the hirsute hardcore of Black Flag and the metal of Black Sabbath, fused with a pounding psychedelic haze.

From *Lecherous Gaze EP*, out now.

3 QUEST FOR FIRE

Psychic Seasons



Canada's Quest For Fire vary their approach, from something that owes a lot to the garage rock of the early 70s, right through to something that is progressive and also possesses pure psychedelic fire.

From *Lights From Paradise*, out now.

4 NIGHT HORSE

Hard To Bear



Think Sonic Youth-meets-late-60s Fleetwood Mac. To put it another way, they update classic blues rock through a grunge prism. It's alt-rock, but with a frenetic, modern balance.

From *Perdition Hymns*, out now.

5 JASON SIMON

Good Hope Road



Dead Meadow's singer/guitarist has gone solo and now incorporates influences from the likes of Bert Jansch, Townes Van Zandt and Leonard Cohen.

From *Jason Simon*, out now.

6 WEIRD OWL

Mountains On Top Of Buried Stars



A New York band immersed in what they call the inner-to-outer-space psychedelic continuum, they also definitely have a definite handle on melody, not to mention a natural connection to late-60s hippiedom and surrealism.

From *Build Your Best A Fire*, out July 26.

7 MIRROR QUEEN

From Earth Below



Previously known as Kreisor, these New Yorkers are hard rockers with a real psyche edge. They take influences from Deep Purple Captain Beyond, Blue Öyster Cult, Hawkwind and UFO, and come up with a sound that's comparable to Motorpsycho - only with more space rock about them.

From *Earth Below*, out now.

8 THE MAIN STREET GOSPEL

Getting Through



Fancy some dusty country rock mixed with grease-strained blues, all mixed with a psychedelic juice?

Then you should certainly check out this trio from Columbus, Ohio. They're steeped in the tradition of early rock music, Chicago blues and 60s garage, but have the revivalist spirit of bands like Black Rebel Motorcycle Club.

From *Love Will Have Her Revenge*, out now.

9 THE FUCKING WRATH

Blank Slate



From their beginnings in 2005, TFW mixed punk, metal, stoner and rock'n'roll. With a style now influenced by early Metallica with Discharge, Black Flag and Melvins, current EP *Terra Fire* confirms that they're growing into a riff-laden monster.

From *Terra Fire EP*, out now.

10 ELKS

Destined For The Sun



They call themselves a chug monster - and when you hear this Brooklyn four-piece you'll understand why. A mix of punk, metal, sludge, garage and booze, they owe something to the tradition of Mastodon and High On Fire yet are immersed in their own sea of sound. Space Viking attitude, mixing infinite trippiness with streetwise brutality. A full-on rampage.

From *Elks In Space*, out this summer.

11 NAAM

Icy Row



They claim to exist on a divine plane, bringing healing and self-renewal to all those with whom they have contact. Naam also claim to be in control of time and space. They're actually from Brooklyn, and have strong connections with Hawkwind and krautrock.

From *Naam*, out now.

12 THE ASSEMBLY HEAD IN SUNBURST SOUND

By The Ripping Green



They've been compared to Pink Floyd circa 1970, the Notorious Byrd Brothers album, and The Who and

Crazy Horse. It adds up to a sound that's groove-ridden yet somewhat twisted. Almost like a space rock version of early grunge.

From *When Sweet Sleep Returned*, out now.

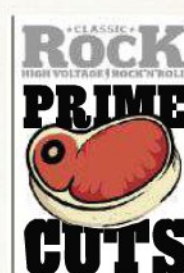
13 IMAAD WASIF

Our Skulls



Poet, prophet and free-ranging spirit, Wasif comes up with songs, ranging from out-and-out rockers to subtle balladry. It all expresses his belief that there's a cosmic force binding us together, and it's this he seeks to express in music inspired by Jim Hendrix, Led Zeppelin and Kyuss.

From *The Voidist*, out now.



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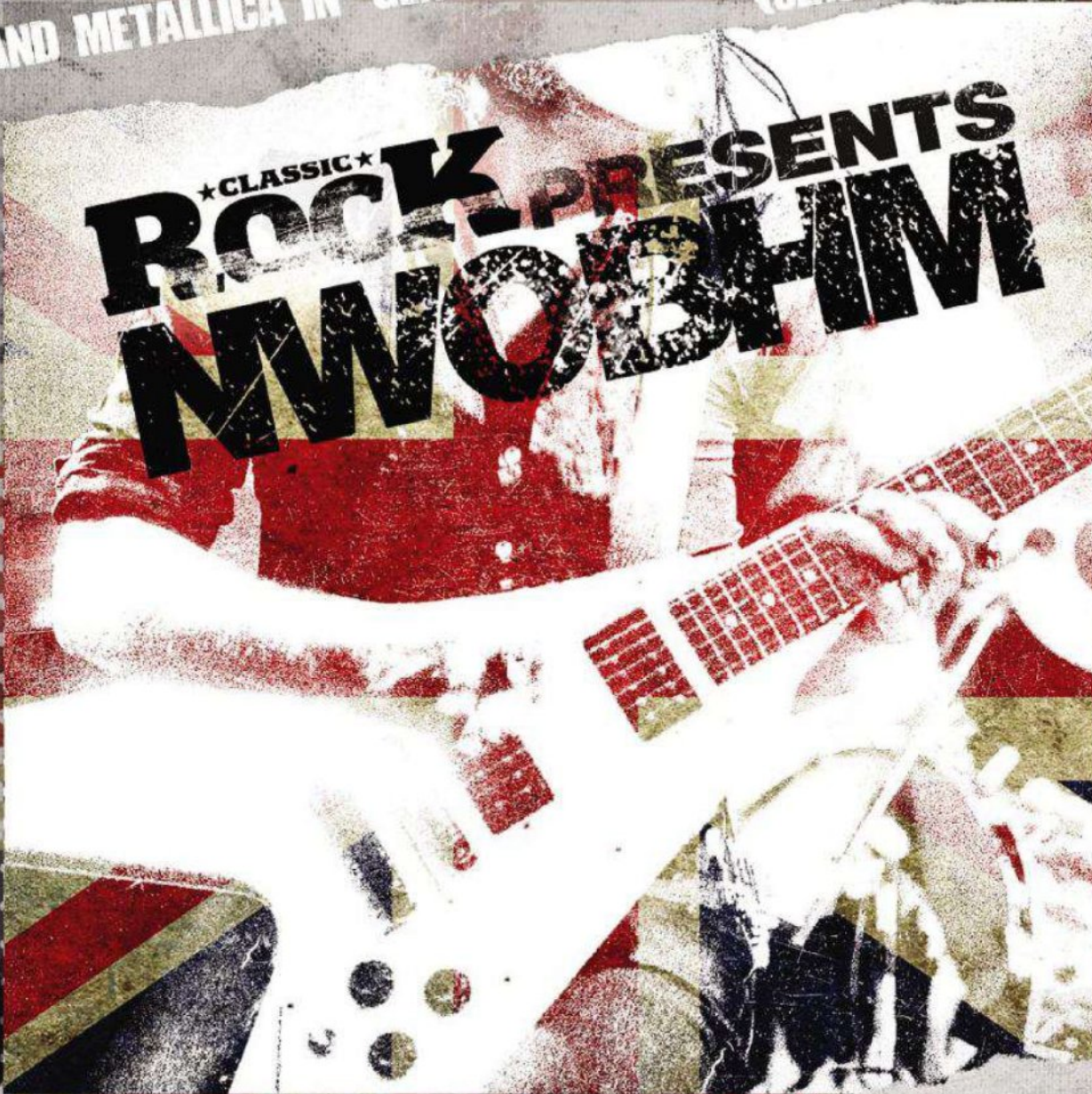
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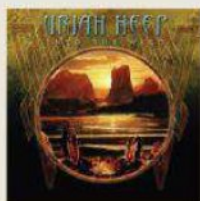
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P **94** Uriah Heep

Although it wasn't broke, were they finally tempted to fix it with studio album number 23?

Uriah Heep: new album offers their classic tropes in spades.



Uriah Heep

Into The Wild FRONTIERS

These under-appreciated British veterans aren't changing the game, but they're enjoying it regardless.

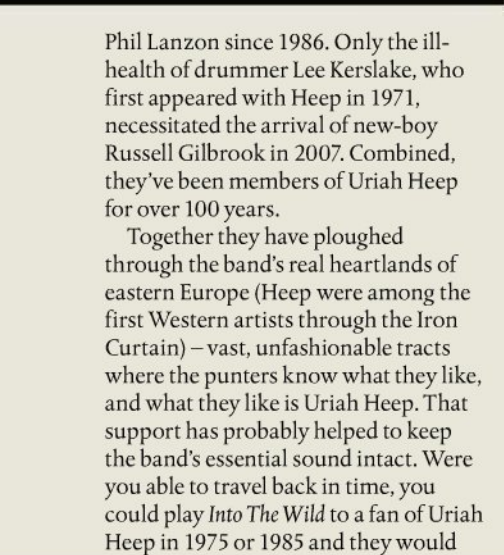
Plenty of bands that have achieved less than Uriah Heep are more highly regarded. In fact, it's hard to think of another act who've made a comparable amount of albums (*Into The Wild* is Uriah Heep's 23rd studio record, to sit alongside 12 – that's 12 – live albums and 13 compilations); sold a similar amount of records (close to 30 million); viable for 40 years and who can legitimately claim some small part in the genesis of a genre – but who have also been

so resolutely unacclaimed, so palpably ignored, as regularly unloved. They're almost magnificently irrelevant now, too, and yet they endure, with a puppyish enthusiasm for what they do.

Perhaps it's their evident lack of star quality, their stoic acceptance of blokehood, that is responsible. There's little of the glassy distance of fame between them and the world. Like most long-running acts, their back-story contains the usual comic catastrophes of

exploding drummers and double-booked Enormodomes, and these are compounded by Uriah Heep's image. They're embodied by their founding member, gnomeish axepert Mick Box, a man who looks more at home emerging from a garden shed than the Viper Room. Box is a formidable guitarist and a wonderful raconteur, a hearty fellow able to appreciate the absurdities of his calling. Most rock stars – your David Coverdales, your Vince Neils, your Jon Bon Jovis – lack such self-awareness and humour. They don't see the funny side, they preserve that distance between their lives and ours, and they're less easily dismissed as a result.

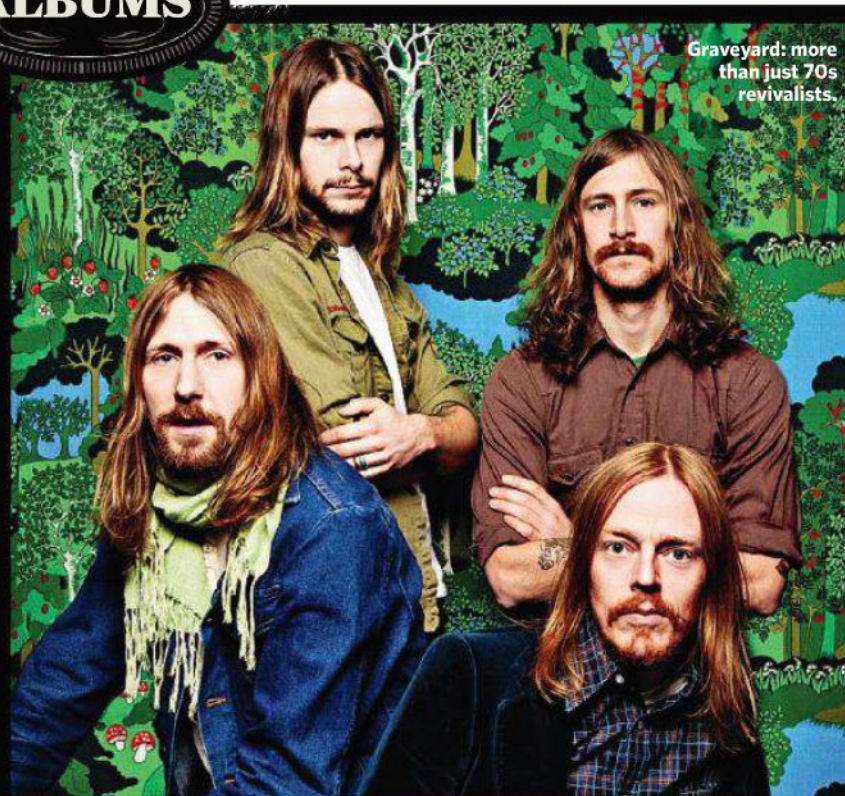
Box has been in position since 1969, bassist Trevor Bolder since 1976 (bar a temporary departure between 1981 and 1983), singer Bernie Shaw and keyboardist



Together they have ploughed through the band's real heartlands of eastern Europe (Heep were among the first Western artists through the Iron Curtain) – vast, unfashionable tracts where the punters know what they like, and what they like is Uriah Heep. That support has probably helped to keep the band's essential sound intact. Were you able to travel back in time, you could play *Into The Wild* to a fan of Uriah Heep in 1975 or 1985 and they would

Jon Hotten

Dom Lawson



Graveyard: more than just 70s revivalists.

Graveyard

Hisingen Blues NUCLEAR BLAST

Finding fresh pastures in rock's past, these Swedish groove-ghouls get the blues.



Given their gloomy moniker and stoner-punk past – most of the band originally played in dope-metal chuggernauts Norrskén – it seems fairly probable that Graveyard would offer up more of the same skrung and gazunga. And to be fair, there's plenty of that shit rolling through *Hisingen Blues*. But what makes this band unique is their wild sense of experimentation, and on this second album they explore strange new worlds well beyond the dusty tundras of shirtless riff rock.

Produced by Don Alsterberg (International Noise Conspiracy) in the band's hometown of Gothenberg, *Hisingen Blues* sounds exactly like it's supposed to: like some obscure heavy-psyche vinyl relic from 1971. Who knows how they achieved this effect – I'm sure weed had something to do with it – but the sonics are delightfully crunchy and blown-out. And the songs ain't bad, either.

There's plenty of rabble-rousing riffery for the ale-guzzling goons among us: the title track and the rattle-train opener *Aint Fit to Live Here* deliver the necessary high-flying, balls-out moments, and *Rss* is a pitch-perfect riff on beer-bellied late 70s thunderboogie, complete with furiously galloping twin guitars and gratuitous woo-woeing. If it

weren't for Joakim Nilsson's awesomely thick Swedish accent, you might think you've stumbled on a particularly berserk long-lost Foghat track.

Of course, there's only so much you can do with full-throttle rawk, so it's on the slower, darker tunes that the casual brilliance of Graveyard shines through. The epic-in-scope *No Good, Mr. Holden* is clearly the album's showstopper, a gutbucket space-blooze howler that's easily the best song Soundgarden never recorded. The wordless, whistling, organ-drenched *Longing* floats effortlessly in the ether, and the bizarre *Siren* stirs up surreal imagery ('*I was swimming through the mud/And a thousand flamingos led my way*') with everything from loner-folk to pounding prog-metal in a 6-minute orgy of chest-thumping nonsense. Best of all, perhaps, is *Uncomfortably Numb*. A straight-ahead blues ballad, on the surface, it's pretty standard bitter break-up stuff ('*I've been leaving you since the day we met*'), but it's so immediate, so blood and tear-drenched, it almost makes your ears ache with grief. Sure, Graveyard is a retro-rock band, but if they can reinvent heartbreak this effectively, who knows what crazy shit they'll do next.

Ken McIntyre

The Zombies

Breathe Out, Breathe In

RED HOUSE

The dead walk still. Fifty years ago the bespectacled, starched-collared Zombies looked like they'd come to file your tax returns. St Albans's finest beat combo had a medium-sized hit with *She's Not There* in 1964, but their follow-up singles and 1968's baroque masterpiece *Odessey And Oracle* stiffed.

Only relatively recently has their distinctive combination of harmonies, Hammond and Mellotron been fully appreciated, with founders Colin Blunstone and Rod Argent playing rapturously received comeback gigs.

The new LP proves the years haven't dulled their partnership's sparkle. *Any Other Way* aches with regret for a lost love – '*You turned and never looked around again, I knew you never would*' – and *Play It for Real* is a resigned plea to a wayward friend.

Two songs are reworked from Argent (their post-Zombies outfit), while *Let It Go* has shades of Procol Harum. It may have taken half a century, but The Zombies are at last seeing a brighter dawn.

Claudia Elliott

The Trews

Hope & Ruin BUMSTEAD

Pop rock with intelligence and depth.



Ah, so here we go with a bunch of earnest Canadians who deal in

introspective pop rock and look like overgrown students. This'll be fun, eh?

Well, you know what? It is definitely enjoyable. Entertaining even. Because The Trews aren't quite what you might expect from such a description. On this their fourth album in eight years, they've a refreshing vitality and a tendency to look at the world in a quirkily observational manner.

The songs all creep up on you, rather than being over-the-top. What they will ensure is that you'll want to go back and check them out again and again. Unlike so many others in this genre, they aren't content to come up with two or three reasonably hummable tunes, and let them carry a record overlaid with mediocrity. No, they want each song to be able to stand alone, unaided. And this approach works impressively. At times,

this album brings to mind early Bryan Adams with Rush's musical aspirations. Colin MacDonald is clearly a singer who digs deep to bring emotions to the surface and then deals with the consequences. Already big news in their native country, *Hope & Ruin* might just lift them up here as well.

Malcolm Dome

The Dogs D'Amour

In The Dynamite

Jet Saloon KING OUTLAW

Tyla celebrates his dog days.



On its initial release in 1988, The Dogs D'Amour's breakthrough

album would have been hard pushed to be more prescient. They looked like pirates who'd just captured a galleon and sang of debauchery, damnation and the devilment of love at a time when the world was in thrall to escapism and bright colours. Latterly, a woman cornered Tyla on one of his solo tours to tell him that his band had practically invented the scarf, which he couldn't quite agree with, but, she, like a lot of people at the time, had fallen hard for their charms. Here, Tyla's re-recorded most of that album and added a few songs from the era.

Charmingly, almost all have stood the test of time and as Tyla's voice has grown worldlier it's only added to the splintered lustre of songs like *I Don't Want You To Go* and the crestfallen *How Come It Never Rains*.

Philip Wilding

The Steve Miller Band

Let Your Hair Down

ROADRUNNER

Funtime blues remoulds.



Part two of an impressive double-whammy comeback that

began last year with *Bingo!* – the first new Steve Miller album since 1993's *Wide River* – *Let Your Hair Down* is a collection of cheerful covers that harkens back to the singer-guitarist's authentic blues roots.

Spotted with gemstones like Jimmy Reed's *Close Together*, Muddy Waters' *Can't Be Satisfied* and Willie Dixon's *Love The Life I Live* – to all of which Miller brings his typically easy-fit spruce – what makes the album

more delightful are less expected forays like Junior Wells' and Buddy Guy's *Snatch It Back And Hold It* (featuring Miller's long-time musical compadre, the late Norton Buffalo on harp) and Jimmy McCracklin's *The Walk*.

Available on 'standard' and 'special' editions (the later with four bonus tracks), there isn't a dull moment to be found – a credit to the enduring power of both the blues and Miller's own artistic fortitude.



Mick Wall

TV Smith

Coming In To Land

BOSS TUNEAGE

Former Adverts man comes back to earth.



Given their subsequent impact, it's worth remembering

that it was all over for The Adverts by 1980. Although *Crossing The Red Sea With The Adverts* has since been heralded as a standout release of the late 70s, the band that made it lacked the momentum to even push on into a new decade. They made *Cast Of Thousands* in 1979 and shut up shop without too much fuss. But TV Smith soldiered on. He's currently performing a Best Of The Adverts tour, (which makes you wonder how long the set might be) – but why lean so heavily on

a brief piece of history when he's still writing songs like the sublime *Us And Them* and the zealous *Man Down*? If The Libertines had ever made a third album, the furious *Deactivate Autoslave* could easily have been on it. Perhaps it's time Smith stopped playing with the past?



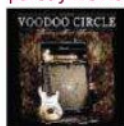
Philip Wilding

Voodoo Circle

Broken Heart Syndrome

AFM

An affectionate, effective parody... or is it?



With a cry of 'baby, baby, baby' and lyrics that beseech: 'Don't break my heart again', just about the only trick missed by *No Solution Blues*, this album's marauding opener, is a Coverdale-inspired bark of: 'Ow, ow, owwww!'

Teaming guitarist Alex Beyrod with the vocals of David Readman, *Broken Heart Syndrome* is Voodoo Circle's second album. As you'll have gathered it's something of a retro-fest, romping through territory previously conquered by Rainbow, Deep Purple, Dio and especially Whitesnake. At moments like *Devil's Daughter*, which dares to begin with the line: 'Ever since I was a drifter', things verge close to the comedic, though what Voodoo Circle lack in originality they

certainly make up for in the energy stakes, and there are some excellent songs here, including a distant cousin of *Knocking At Your Back Door* that's been cunningly re-titled as *King Of Your Dreams*.



Dave Ling

Fleet Foxes

Helplessness Blues BELLA UNION

Razor-phobic Yanks' tilt at the Great American Album.

Just two albums in and Seattle's Fleet Foxes have already made themselves comfortable somewhere between Crosby, Stills & Nash and *Basement Tapes*-era Dylan. They may name-check Nirvana and current alt-rock standard bearers Death Cab For Cutie in interviews, but *Helplessness Blues* is as wilfully out of time as Robin Pecknold's frontiersman-style facial hair. Its 12 tracks hover somewhere between heaven and earth, the sepia-toned rusticity ('*Ruffled the fur of the collie 'neath the table, ran through the door in the dark*,' Pecknold sings on *Sim Sala Bim*) elevated by the sort of cosmic harmonies that belie their youth (early 20s) and geographical location (drizzly Pacific Northwest).

It might not quite be the Important Record they fancy it to be, but it's nothing if not a step in the right direction.



Dave Everley

Stampede

A Sudden Impulse

GRIND THAT AXE

NWOBHM band prove they're more relevant now than ever.



When a band proudly proclaim that it's taken them nearly 30 years

to follow up their debut album with a new record, you have to be forgiven for wondering who'll care. But in the case of the reunited Stampede, all the proof you'll need to care is in the music – which is as it should be.

Lumped in with so many other NWOBHM wannabes in the early part of the 1980s, Stampede showed class and grace on 1983's *Hurricane Town*. Now, they've delivered a record that takes the raw potential they displayed back then and shapes it into a collection of songs that is, if anything, better than those on the first record. And also seems to fit comfortably into the modern rock scene.

Led by the soulfully blessed vocals of Reuben Archer, the band have come up with some genuinely impressive stuff, with *Homeward Bound*, *This Road* and *Shame On You* true winners. But it's the flow here that quickly gains your attention. Because the way they're pieced together is a testament to the way this band have immediately gotten into a groove, recaptured the sparkle of the past and driven on

towards what could be a very successful future.



Malcolm Dome

Tokyo Blade

Thousand Men Strong

FASTBALL

Having another stab at fame.

And so, at a remove of some 13 years, comes a new studio record from Tokyo Blade, near-miss titans of the NWOBHM now reconstituted around the core of early 80s originals guitarists Andy Boulton and John Wiggins and rhythm section Andy Wrighton and Steve Pierce, plus new shrieker Nicolaj Ruhnow.

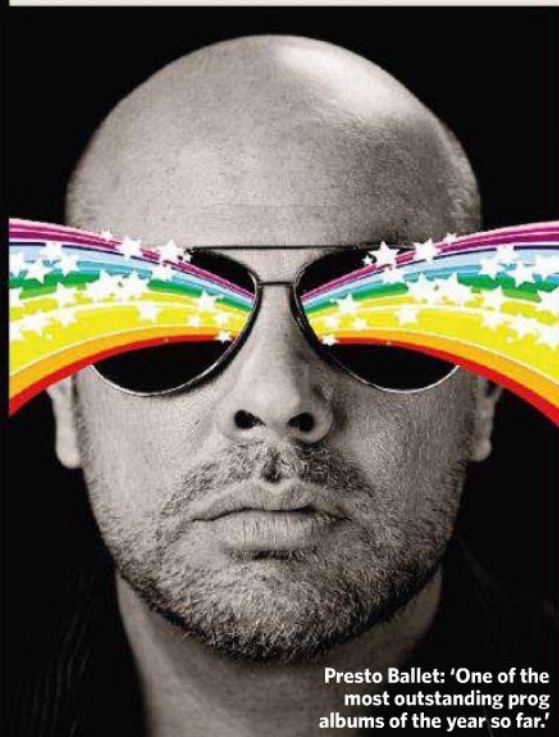
The TB story is one of record company disasters and might-have-beens. They have always been a turbulent entity – their nine previous records have featured an astonishing 24 ex-members, and Ruhnow is their eighth vocalist. Their sound is perhaps their one constant; *Thousand Men Strong* could easily have been cut in 1983.

It is both a strength and a weakness. As examples of genre, *Black Abyss*, *Forged In Hell's Fire* and *Killing Rays* are perfect, and yet what they and the other seven songs on the record lack are those moments of inspiration that separated Iron Maiden and Saxon from Tokyo Blade in the first place.



Jon Hotten

ROUND-UP: PROG



Presto Ballet: 'One of the most outstanding prog albums of the year so far.'

Presto Ballet

Invisible Places

SAOL/Body Of Work



Presto Ballet began as a simple side project for Metal Church guitarist Kurt Vanderhoof to indulge his love of 70s progressive rock – particularly the work of bands such as Yes, Kansas and Genesis.

Now, after two albums – *Peace Among The Ruins* ('05) and *The Lost Art Of Time Travel* ('08) – PB have emerged as a fully fledged band. The guy who provides the magic is new keyboardist Kerry Shacklett, a towering talent who Vanderhoof discovered via YouTube. Shacklett's playing elevates *Invisible Places* into the upper reaches of the stratosphere, with Kurt taking a backseat at times.

The contribution of vocalist Ronny Munroe shouldn't be underestimated, either. His deep, sonorous singing style is at times reminiscent of Maiden's Bruce Dickinson – which gives PB's music an interesting emotional twist.

Eschewing the use of digital instruments and wearing their 70s influences proudly on their sleeve, Presto Ballet have produced one of the most outstanding prog albums of the year so far.



Lunar Dunes

Galaxsea

4Zero



Prog, by its very nature, is challenging music. But if you occasionally tire of having your mind torn into tiny little pieces, you should check out Lunar Dunes. Mixing space rock, Krautrock and electronica, this largely improvisational album will have you lunging toward the chill cabinet with indecent haste. No surprise that LD have strong links with Transglobal Underground.



Cryptex

Good Morning, How Did You Live?

Reactive



The debut album from Germany's Cryptex can best be described as progressive folk metal – imagine Jethro Tull mixed with Tool and you wouldn't be far off the mark. Star of the show is singer Simon Moskon, who – believe it or not – sounds like he's been drafted in from 70s power-poppers Milk 'N' Cookies.



By Geoff Barton

Central Park

Reflected

Rockville



Hailing from Munich rather than Manhattan, Central Park combine Crimonesque influences with symphonic and metallic sounds to intriguing effect. The jury's still out on the operatic antics of new gal Jannine Pusch, however. Still, if you like the idea of Velvet Underground's Nico singing with Amon Düül II, this could be the band for you.



Bong

Beyond Ancient Space

Ritual Productions



This is what we want: an album made up of just a trio of tracks: two 25-minute offerings, and one that clocks in at nearly half an hour! With slow, chanting vocals and spooky spoken-word intros, this is like Hawkwind playing Sleep's back catalogue. Stonehenge druids with electric guitars, Bong's music is like a ritual sacrifice taking place in your eardrum.





Terrorvision: 'The same old "everything's brilliant" goons they ever were.'

Terrorvision

Super Deluxe TOTAL VEGAS

A cracking comeback, plus an introspective groove from Gary Wright's two bands.



Yorkshire's happiest men return, but have they still got the Wright stuff? It's ten long years since Terrorvision released an album, 2001's *Good To Go*. After a career spent creating some of Britrock's most shamelessly effervescent music – rock club favourite *Oblivion* and boozy surprise No.2 hit *Tequila* among them – they split up. And, bar a few reunion shows in the last few years, it seemed like the end of the road for the Keighley boys.

But it's hard to keep a group of men this thoroughly excited about life down, so they're back, albeit minus drummer Shutter. And if you're expecting the years in the wilderness to have beaten the sense of fun out of them, you're going to be sorely disappointed, because they're the same old "everything's brilliant" goons they ever were. Phew. The glass is not half full on *Super Deluxe*, it's fizzing over the sides and making the table sticky. Clocking in at a snappy 35 minutes, from rollicking opener *Demolition* to the near ska bounce of *Pushover* ('You told me you like rock music,' taunts Tony Wright, reclaiming the scene that made him. 'But I caught you dancing to Madonna'), the beaming Yorkshire rockabilly of *All The Girls Wanna Dance* to the beer-boy swagger and credit crunch envy of *Shiny Things*,

this is an excitable Labrador pup of a record. It's not cool, it might well wee on your carpet, but it's hard not to find it lovable all the same.

Frontman Wright's other band, Laika Dog, soundtrack the hangover to Terrorvision's balloon-waving party, with booze paranoia seeping out of its pores. Like the astronaut dog they're named after, Laika Dog have their heads up in the stars, the spacey Hawkwind groove of *Out Of Control* peppered with the odd tremulous riff that's pure U2. This is the box where Wright keeps his regrets and fears, mournfully looking back on all the mistakes he's made in life on the self-flagellating *Church Of Sin*, before wallowing in his own perceived averageness in the sad and sludgy *My Kinda Luck*. Leaving Terrorvision's boorish bounce behind, Laika Dog is more considered, looking to Led Zeppelin for inspiration, although the sprawling *Frozen Kiss* shares more with MOR types like the Eagles.

It's unlikely they'll repeat the heady *Tequila*-fuelled days of 1999, but with Terrorvision providing the Yin to Laika Dog's Yang, it sounds like life's a ball for these irrepressible men.

★★★★★ Super Deluxe
★★★★★ Laika Dog

Emma Johnston

The Strokes

Angles ROUGH TRADE

New York posh rockers stretch the seams of alt indie.

It's tough being seminal. Having kick-started 21st-century guitar music with their classic debut *Is This It* in 2001, New York's casually iconic Strokes were harangued for failing to reinvent their garage pop wheel on the follow-ups *Room On Fire* and *First Impressions Of Earth*. Then, after a four-year gap and several side-projects, they received just as much flack when their far more adventurous fourth leaked, presumably for not owning the genres they delved into.

Unfair. Where first single *Under Cover Of Darkness* and Nick Valensi's impressively disco-flecked *Taken For A Fool* – one of several results of the band's new democratic writing policy – add fresh gloss to their elated guitar blueprint without sacrificing an ounce of their gritty gusto, elsewhere they nimbly assimilate styles by the fistful. *Machu Picchu* is wrapped in Specials-esque urban reggae threads, *Two Kinds Of Happiness* is a Petty/Ocasek 80s chug, *Games* is all-out electro-pop and the glam jig of *Gratisfaction* revels in its shameless Thin Lizzy riffs. *Call Me Back* could pass as a *Selling England By The Pound* ballad, and *Metabolism* even finds them having a (not entirely unsuccessful) stab at prog metal, like a bunch of Devil-horning Beaudelairs. Yes, coming on like The Horrors droning out a krautrock cartoon theme on *You're So Right* is a stylistic folly too far, but it's testament to the fearlessness of *Angles* and the antagonistic talent still at work within New York's finest.

★★★★★
Mark Beaumont

Shadowman

Watching Over You

ESCAPE MUSIC

This disc is the proverbial game of two halves.

Though it would demean well-regarded guitarist Steve Morris (formerly of Export and Gillan, now with Heartland) and Thunder's rhythm section of bassist Chris Childs and drummer Gary 'Harry' James, to describe Shadowman as 'Steve Overland's other band', there's no doubt that that the blues-drenched crooning of FM's frontman is this album's principle selling point.

The quartet's fourth album borrows DNA from many of its protagonists' daytime

endeavours, Morris' identifiable guitar sound rendered clear and bright by a mix from Tommy Hansen (Helloween), while *Are You Ready* appropriates the earthy simplicity often mined by both FM and Thunder.

The album's first seven tracks are complete belters that set the scene for something spectacular – especially *Across The Universe*, *Renegades* and the strident yet deeply melodic *Suzanne* – though marks are deducted for the way the album tails off after *Waiting For A Miracle*, with only *Whatever It Takes* hitting the bullseye during its final five stuttering selections.

★★★★★
Dave Ling

Kris Dollimore

No Ghosts In This House

SUN PIER

A blues roots masterclass.

Dollimore's axeman-for-hire credentials have served him well over the last 25 years, initially as part of tough nut R&B merchants The Godfathers, but also in the employ of The Damned, Johnny Thunders, Adam Ant and Del Amitri. On his third solo album, he returns to his first love, fashioning a collection of mostly acoustic blues that perfectly shows off the delicacy and dexterity of his guitar playing.

The opening brace of *Where I Belong* and *Worry* drip with delta authenticity – Dollimore's taut slide moves dancing around on the former, a vocal growl owing a debt to John Hiatt, but with the more plaintive voice of Robert Plant on the latter. Elsewhere, he's in more frivolous mood on the jaunty ragtime of *West Coast Blues* and explores Latino motifs on *Dias De Los Muertos*, with the same sense of space and atmosphere as Ry Cooder.

★★★★★
Terry Staunton

Roxette

Charm School EMI

Uplifting comeback let down by stifling slickness.

The TV comedians Armstrong and Miller used to perform as Scandinavian soft-rockers Stryka, a note-perfect parody right down to their wonky use of second-language English. Always a guilty pleasure, Roxette's blustering attempt at widescreen jukebox Americana has some of the same appealing gaucheness. Who could fail warm to a band whose hits collection was titled *Don't Bore Us, Get To The Chorus*?

One one level, at least, Roxette's first new release in a

decade comes as a very pleasant surprise. After selling more than 60 million albums in the 1980s and 1990s, Fredriksson was diagnosed with a brain tumour in 2002, forcing her into semi-retirement. Happily, *Charm School* finds her duetting with guitarist Per Gessle with as much polished punch as ever.

Less impressively, these mid-Atlantic pop-rock anthems are resoundingly generic and impersonal, wavering between Bon Jovi-sized stadium-stompers like *Way Out* and cloying Scorpions-style power ballads like *No One Makes It On Her Own*. It is heartening that these veteran Swedes appear healthy, but *Charm School* is simply too frictionless and focus-grouped, leaving scant room for the comically endearing Euro-clumsiness of yesteryear. Slick, but charmless.

■■■■■■■■■■

Stephen Dalton

Sixx:A.M.

This Is Gonna Hurt

ELEVEN SEVEN MUSIC

Sleaze rock founding father indulges his arty side.

By rights, the phrases 'Mötley Crüe' and 'renaissance man' shouldn't be allowed in the same postcode, let alone the same sentence. But, as he eases into middle age, bassist Nikki Sixx seems increasingly keen to shake off the sins of the past with a range of extra-curricular

activities that include fashion designer, author, DJ, and, now, photographer. His other band's second album serves as the soundtrack to a book of the bassist's candid snapshots; the result is a confessional trawl through the darker corners of his often ill-starred life. While *Lies Of The Beautiful People* and the Muse-referencing *Goodbye My Friends* come tarted up in edgy, modern rock trappings, they beat with a traditional arena rock heart, which suggests that, for all the diversions, Sixx's true talent remains his songwriting.

■■■■■■■■■■

Dave Everley

King Kobra

King Kobra FRONTIERS

There's still plenty of venom in those old fangs.



Drawing a veil over 2001's *Hollywood Trash*, an ill-judged attempt to add

a modern spin to the band's hard rock formula, to all intents and purposes King Kobra are back after an absence of 22 years. Originals Carmine Appice, David Michael-Philips, Mick Sweda and Johnny Rod have added ex-Rough Cutt/Quiet Riot frontman Paul Shortino as replacement for Unruly Child's Mark (now Marcie) Free.

Shortino has one of the finest, huskiest, bluesy hard rock voices in the business, and although

a third of these 12 songs were preserved in mothballs since the mid-80s, the Kobra despatch them with an unexpected fire and urgency. *Rock This House* and *Tear Down The Walls* have more in common with the band's chunky debut album *Ready To Strike* and the Johnny Edwards (Foreigner)-fronted *KK III* than the radio-friendly *Thrill Of A Lifetime*, but this is worth purchasing for the excellence of Shortino's contribution alone.

■■■■■■■■■■

Dave Ling

Brian Robertson

Diamonds And Dirt SPV

Debut solo record from former Lizzy/Motörhead guitarist.

It took the re-investigation of a carrier bag full of tapes featuring dozens of old recordings for Brian Robertson to be encouraged by a friend to begin to piece together what became *Diamonds And Dirt*.

The inclusion of a new version of Thin Lizzy's *It's Only Money* plus two versions of *Running Back* from 1976's *Jailbreak* and a further three songs written during his fruitful collaboration with fellow Scotsman Frankie Miller all suggest that far from attempting to break from his past on what is – perhaps surprisingly – his debut solo release, Robertson is happy to be embracing it. Backed by members of Europe, Treat and Michael Schenker Group, song-wise *Diamonds And Dirt* is a relatively straight-forward blues-

rock affair, although Robertson's guitar playing is deft and lively throughout; his unique style still shining through after nearly forty years in the business.

■■■■■■■■■■

Ben Myers

Mastodon

Live At The Aragon REPRISE

More mammoth Mastro-magic.



Whether as a cynical contract filler or poor second to simply being

there, the live album has rarely shone through such charges over the years.

As such, metal behemoths Mastodon haven't made life easy for themselves; choosing to chronicle the mind-warping prog machinations of fourth album *Crack The Sky* in its live entirety via a CD/DVD combo. Being Mastodon, the super noodle-ry of *Quintessence* is exciting to hear, but being their most progressive set of songs, there's a lot less room for the monster truck riff tectonics and shake around that have made the Atlanta quintet such a thrilling catch live (a sludge-tastic cover of Melvins's *The Bit* and *Remission*'s neckbreaker anthem *Mother Puncher* being exceptions).

Happily though, Mastodon are way ahead of you here, supplying a 50-minute film of the visuals screened during

shows as a bonus feature, so you can immerse yourself in some prime, psychedelic eye candy while Sky's intricate sonics rip open your third ear.

■■■■■■■■■■

Catherine Yates

Twin Atlantic

Free RED BULL

The new Biffy Clyro? Wait, come back...

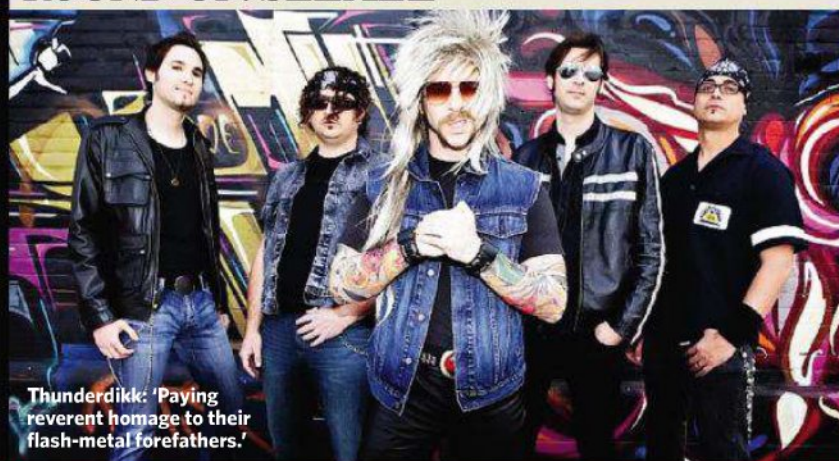
The success of Biffy Clyro has apparently sparked a resurgence in Scotland's rock scene. As well as sharing a broad geographical location and fondness for unsightly facial hair, Glasgow's Twin Atlantic serve up the same combination of roof-lifting alt-rock anthems and unrepentantly Caledonian delivery as their *X Factor*-bothering countrymen.

With Pixies/Foo Fighters producer Gil Norton rubber-stamping their credentials, their second album finds the foursome leaping between abrasive noise (*The Ghost Of Eddie*), crashing, 21st-century boogie (*Dreammember*) and sparse, string-assisted regret (*Crash Land*). Frontman Sam McCruty admirably refuses to water-down his broad brogue, though it's a pity they didn't do the same with some of their more smart-arse song titles (Yes, *I Was Drunk* and *Serious Underground Dance Vibes* among them). A minor blip on an otherwise impressive record.

■■■■■■■■■■

Dave Everley

ROUND-UP: SLEAZE



Thunderdikk: 'Paying reverent homage to their flash-metal forefathers.'

Thunderdikk

Magnum Love

Self-released



Given all the double Ks and penis references involved in Thunderdikk's debut album, you may mistake them for wig-wearing mock-rockers, à la Steel Panther and the like. Well, you would be wrong. The ugly/awesome truth is that

not everybody is in the glam-metal game for yucks – some folks actually believe in the enduring power of one-night stands, seven-day weekends, and guitars shaped like the letter 'V'.

Straight off of the gold-gilded streets of LA (naturally) and led by the leather-lunged Dikk Thunder (also naturally), Thunderdikk pay reverent homage to their flash metal forefathers, from Steeler to Skid Row, with all the squealy-guitar excess

you'd expect. Plus, every single song is a pornographic wonderland of back-alley sexual antics and free-flowing rock debauchery, from the sleazy come-ons of the fabulously titled *Bra Off Party* onto the hardcore horrors of *Hot Zombie Fuck*. If Caligula had a house band (and electricity and some manner of amplification, I suppose), it'd most certainly be Thunderdikk.

■■■■■■■■■■

Sideburn

The Demon Dance

Transubstans



Gloriously excessive Swedish dope-rock with thick, ropy riffs slathered with bursts of proggy organ, a mountain-flattening rhythm section, songs about making love to six-armed space-goddesses, and an aura of epic, bare-chested, fur-booted awesomeness. If you like your rock manly, there's about a hundred gallons of testosterone packed into this one.

■■■■■■■■■■

White Cadillac

Casualty of the City

Self-released



White Cadillac – three rock'n'roll lifers from Ohio – offer us a glimpse of what might happen if James Hetfield and Fu Manchu got together one hazy weekend to bash out some early Crüe covers, but then got so liquored up they decided to just drive around town kidnapping people instead. As their name suggests, this is a classy ride for sleazy people.

■■■■■■■■■■

By Sleazegrinder

Lester and the Landslide Ladies

Estranged in Ladyland

Tomato Ride



This record is like a really with-it teenager's bedroom circa 1979, littered with Ramones posters, AC/DC albums, a bottle or two of glue and some dirty mags. More punchy glam-punk from these bratty Italians, perfect for kicking out windows, disappointing your folks, puking on your shoes, or flunking high school.

■■■■■■■■■■

Bulletwolf

As Fast As My Home Town

Self-released



Indiana's favourite party wreckers sound like they're literally killing somebody while they play, like every guitar solo is really just the sound of some poor fucker getting his head smashed in. There's little bits of doom-rock and speed-punk here and there, but mostly this is just pure animal aggression; angry, blood-guzzling rock'n'roll for criminals and lunatics.

■■■■■■■■■■

THE HARD STUFF REISSUES



David Bowie: going forwards while looking backwards.

WIREIMAGE/GETTY IMAGES

David Bowie

Toy (officially unreleased)

Unreleased officially, but leaked on the internet last month, this lost latterday album proves to be a fascinating, if flawed, work.

For a man whose futurologist credentials are widely celebrated, David Bowie has spent a lot of his career looking back. The widespread internet leaking of *Toy*, an exploration of his own back pages, via a medium which he in turn championed then abandoned, is somehow appropriate. Inspiring, and frustrating, this lost project is a mass of contradictions. Like its maker, a man who devoted himself ruthlessly to the pursuit of fame, and has now turned his back on it, just as ruthlessly.

Started in the summer of 2000, *Toy* marked David Bowie's reunion with his greatest producer, Tony Visconti, from whom he'd been estranged for nearly two decades. The reunion produced two fine albums (*Heathen* and *Reality*), but the album that kicked off this return to form was lost in a Virgin Records reshuffle. Now, most likely emanating from a lost laptop, this fascinating artefact has been widely distributed among Bowie's internet-savvy fans.

There are so many layers of history within this collection, it's sometimes mind-boggling. The failure of David Jones's debut single, *Liza Jane*, back in 1963 was a key rite of passage; the moment when he ditched his lovable school friend 'Gorgeous' George Underwood; the moment when he was marked out as a boy who, while not spectacularly talented, boasted spectacular ambition. Thirty-eight years later, the man has lived several lifetimes, and the revisited version is swamp-spooky, gritty, beautifully produced. Yet even now it's something of a failure; he's channelling Tom Waits channelling Howlin' Wolf. Why? This question is surely why this album remains officially unreleased. Much the same applies to the new versions of *You've Got A Habit Of Leaving* and *I Dig Everything*; the originals were obviously, yet interestingly, flawed, but here on *Toy* the re-recordings are very often too perfect, too lush.

Yet, as ever with this most contradictory of rock stars, to balance these moments of dull muso competence there are moments of jaw-dropping brilliance. The most obvious is *Shadow Man*. This forgotten Ziggy-era song, with its desolate piano intro and swooping, intricate melody is beguilingly simple and spellbinding. Although briefly available

as a single bonus track, it's a jewel far too precious to be left in the vaults; the perfect example of how, while it took Bowie a lot of practice to get his aim in, he rarely missed the bullseye from then on. *Hole In The Ground* – originally recorded by friend reunited George Underwood and sounding like a dry run for Lou Reed's *Vicious* – is not in the same league, but it's a charming, quirky song even in this over-upholstered remake.

The same applies to *Silly Boy Blue* and *Let Me Sleep Beside You*, two of Bowie's very first collaborations with Tony Visconti. When Bowie first recorded the stately, wistful *Silly Boy Blue*, he was bruised by the failure of his debut album, and contemplating life as a Buddhist monk. The new version marked Bowie's live reunion with his producer, a reunion that marked another winning streak. Before *Toy*, Bowie had struggled to find a consistent direction. In its wake, he stopped trying so hard – with inspiring results.

One entirely new song stands at the crossroads between these two eras.

Uncle Floyd – later reworked as *Slip Away* on *Heathen* – was inspired by the surreal, vaudeville New Jersey local kids' TV show host of the same name.

This early version, with taped dialogue from the show, is all the more childlike and fragile – with that nagging question of what will happen to us all when we finally grow up? The sense of loss is all the more palpable when you realise that John Lennon turned David Bowie on to the show only months before Lennon was murdered. *Uncle Floyd's* show itself passed into history a couple of years before *Toy* was recorded. Listening to it now, with its maker on the cusp of a winning streak that was all too brief, you feel the loss of Bowie, too.

Toy is obviously flawed, frustratingly inconsistent, just like life itself. But while we all share a sense of loss for Bowie, whether it's due to ill-health, 'daddifying' or the glamour of a dramatic retirement, this reminder of a splendid and bounteous, four-decade career that now seems ended evokes the question asked by George Underwood, Bowie's longest-serving friend: Wasn't he brave? To do what he did?

★★★★★
Paul Trynka

Blodwyn Pig

All Said And Done SECRET

Two-CD oddity from British blues vets.

Jethro Tull could have gone one of two ways in 1968: the Fleetwood Mac blues route, or somewhere altogether stranger. Ultimately the latter prevailed, singer Ian Anderson leading them a mad-eyed hop along the proggy path of folk-rock flautistry. Which prompted guitarist/blues purist Mick Abrahams to dust off his mojo and lug it over to Blodwyn Pig.

Disc one of *All Said And Done* finds Abrahams rewiring *This Was*, the sole Tull album he played on before the split, with a bunch of new bandmates. Recorded in 2001 – much to the sacrilegious horror of Tull die-hards – it reinforces just how belligerently blues-bound Abrahams was. It's all expertly played, with Steve Dundon manfully parping on flute, and the undoubted highlights are *Beggars Farm* and the epic *Cat's Squirrel*, but it lacks any real spark or invention.

Disc two sounds equally perfunctory. Abrahams reunites his pre-Tull power trio McGregor's Engine for the title track and *Let Me Love You Baby*, with the rest made up of various Blodwyn incarnations in blues-bothering mode. You can't fault them for chops or pure energy, but it does all feel like the workmanlike output of a superior bar band. For collectors only, as they say.

★★★★★
Rob Hughes

Rolling Stones

Singles Collection 1971-2006: 45 x 45s POLYDOR

Singles. From '71-06.

Reassuringly expensive.

A timely return to inconvenience, as every post-Decca Records Stones single is presented in as close to its original form as the switch from analogue vinyl to digital disc will allow. There are 45 CDs in here, some with a running time so short that it's hardly worth your while sitting down. Then again, you'll not be doing a lot of sitting down during *Brown Sugar*, you'll be shaking your arse and contorting your gob like a gibbon in a microwave.

How much a Stones single compels you to replicate an agonised primate provides a handy gauge to its ultimate efficacy. *Tumbling Dice*? Scalded baboon. *It's Only Rock 'N' Roll (But I Like It)*? Haemorrhoidal

orang-utan. By the time you get to *Undercover (Of The Night)*, bearing in mind that by this point you'll have already slid both *Fool To Cry* and *Emotional Rescue* into your drive, your inner capering ape will be responding to significantly less stimulus. And you'll be sitting down more.

As you progress into the diminishing returns of sterile, Stones-unfriendly 80s' recording techniques and the ascent of the dance remix as standard, your compulsion to actually get up and boogie will gradually evaporate. The Stones are, and always have been, at their very best when captured in the raw and rolling, as evidenced here on the live *Let It Rock* and the jammed *Cook Cook Blues*.

★★★★★
Ian Fortnam

Paradise Lost

Draconian Times Legacy Edition

MUSIC FOR NATIONS/SONY MUSIC

PL's classic big seller gets the remastering treatment.



Is it possible to have too much of a good thing? Well, clearly not if you're one of

those involved in putting this rather tidy, if overstuffed, package together to celebrate the fan favourite that is *Paradise Lost's* 1995 album *Draconian Times*.

In historical terms, *DT* is the bridge between the band's earlier brutal, extreme metal roots, and the electronic and industrial embellishments they experimented with during the latter part of the 90s. As such it strikes an almost impeccable balance between monumental riffage and gothic gloominess; a pall of icy black despair hangs over the crunching grooves and oddly catchy melancholic melodies. The likes of *Hallowed Land*, *Forever Failure* and *Shades Of God* sound suitably immense in their remastered form, but if you really want to immerse yourself in misery then you could always go for the DVD mixed to Dolby 5.1 on disc two.

Of course, such a package isn't complete without a bunch of extra bits and pieces, and here we have a set of previously unreleased live *Draconian Times* tunes taken from a German gig circa 1995, plus a brace of demos – strictly for fans only. Wallowing in grinding darkness never sounded quite so good.

★★★★★
Essi Berelian



Frankie Miller:
still has a legacy
to live up to.

Frankie Miller

...That's Who: The Complete Chrysalis Recordings (1973-1980) EMI

Four-CD set collecting all seven albums from Glasgow's Greatest Singer's classic period.



Miller's valiant fight back from a massive brain haemorrhage in 1994 has confirmed his survivor status. This collection shows why the man whose songs have been covered by Cher, Roy Orbison and Thin Lizzy is held in such high regard by a cognoscenti fanbase.

After making his mark in a series of Glasgow 60s soul groups, Miller's recording career got off to a false start in London when he was signed fronting the subsequently unrecorded, short-lived Stoics in 1970.

Under the aegis of future Stiff Records boss Dave Robinson, and accompanied by pub rock mainstays Brinsley Schwarz, he finally made his debut with 1973's *Once In A Blue Moon*. On it, he brought sharp songwriting flair to gutsy and emotive vocal might on a par with Brit R&B mainstay Joe Cocker and Free's Paul Rodgers. The results were impressive enough to catch the ear of both Ray Charles, who recorded the album's *I Can't Stand It* (a song Miller had written aged 12) and New Orleans production legend Allen Toussaint.

High Life (included here in its released version and, for the first time, the superior original mix) fell foul of fashion but the commercial flop would

prove a career standout, Toussaint's swaggering horn charts and Big Easy funk undertow perfectly tempering Clydeside grit with Crescent City cool.

Presenting the Henry McCullough-fronted Frankie Miller Band, *The Rock's* radio-friendly production enhanced his transatlantic reputation. The songs often juggle sadness with alcohol-laced high/lows (*Drunken Nights In The City*) and an early indication of a finger near the trigger shows on *The Devil's Gun*.

While a naturally tempestuous bent may have caused instability, Miller still proved a magnet for redoubtable collaborators, with Free's Andy Frazer affording him his first chart hit with the pointed *Be Good To Yourself* from 1977's triumphant *Full House*. Buoyed further by Top Ten pop single *Darlin'*, Miller's ever-widening stylistic remit showed his interpretive sensitivity with Bob Marley and John Hiatt covers on the, by his high standards, lacklustre *Falling In Love* (1979). But the svelte country of *Easy Money* (1980) would provide a fertile base for his future.

His recovery has shown that there's still life in Miller's ravaged legend – this legacy is certainly one to live up to.

■■■■■■■■■■■
Gavin Martin

Gary Moore

Blues And Ballads EMI

Revised edition of guitar hero's solo career-spanning CD.

Prepared for release ahead of Moore's sad sudden death in February, this collection zeroes in on the cuts where he married his inimitable guitar wail to a distinctive warmth.

Although possessing formidable firepower, Moore turned his back on an assured future as a heavy metal guitar hero to pursue a far more fertile and resonant path.

The ability to map new vistas on territory opened by key influences Peter Green and Eric Clapton was signalled early on the Phil Lynott collaboration *Parisienne Walkways*. That's represented here by a stunning 1993 live version where dramatically sustained notes bid a loving adieu to his old sparring partner that's echoed on the Celtic-inflected *Johnny Boy*.

While he displayed a pragmatic paymaster-pleasing ability to deliver a consummate contemporary power ballad (*Always Gonna Love You*), Moore really excelled in a vein of deep soul blues, always stretching his vocal and guitar abilities.

Notable for the otherwise unavailable instrumental *Blue For Narada* in its original incarnation, *Blues And Ballads* rounds off a handsome farewell to a mighty talent with DVD promo clips and a session where Moore illustrates the choice licks that fired the likes of *Story Of The Blues*.

■■■■■■■■■■■
Gavin Martin

Keith Christmas

Tomorrow Never Ends: The Anthology 1974-1976

MANTICORE/ESOTERIC

Essex folkie's wildly eclectic 70s output.

Committed Bowiephiles will no doubt be familiar with Keith Christmas as veteran of the Beckenham Arts Lab folk scene and acoustic guitarist on 1969's *Space Oddity* album. The early 70s also found him issuing a trio of solo records before signing to ELP's new label, Manticore.

Tomorrow Never Ends comprises 1974's *Brighter Day* and 1976's *Stories From The Human Zoo*, alongside half a dozen extras. It's the former that really impresses here, his erudite jazz-folk musings framed by delicate arrangements and a voice that sounds like a less robust Steve Winwood or Terry Reid. Produced by Greg Lake and Pete Sinfield, there are distinct

traces of Traffic and Pentangle in its rootsy Englishness. Christmas was whisked off to LA for the follow-up, where he was joined in the studio by Booker T legends Steve Cropper and 'Duck' Dunn. Alas, the songs often seem overblown, with Christmas affecting vocal Dylanisms that never quite fit.

■■■■■■■■■■■
Rob Hughes

Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds

Reissues EMI

Dangerous and ominous.



Objectivity isn't easy for a fan of Nick Cave, for whom *Murder Ballads* is a total

favourite – it may just be the most flagrantly homicidal collection of songs ever recorded.

It's graphically and gratuitously everything that the title suggests, creating its own dark, blood-stained world of random death and noir pulp fiction, while the Bad Seeds' orchestration is as dangerous and ominous as razor-sharp shards of flying metal. *Murder Ballads* is a severe, bullet-riddled masterpiece. The album ensured Cave an exclusive place in the hall of fame – Iggy Pop, but with sinister narrative lyrics; Leonard Cohen, only 20 times more grim; or maybe Herschell Gordon Lewis reborn into a rock'n' roll world.

This isn't to say that the other CDs in this latest batch of double-disc expansions – *Let Love In*, *The Boatman's Call* and *No More Shall We Part* – are exactly shabby. *The Boatman's Call* is a literate and moving confessional on lost love, but confessionals are a common convention and can't compare with the unique overkill of *Murder Ballads*.

The four reissues are remastered for digital surround, and they come with the now obligatory bonus tracks and videos, plus a short original film by Iain Forsyth and Jane Pollard. All of this is to be expected, of course, but with Nick Cave it's the content that counts, not the trimmings – and the single, gruesome image from the lyrics to *The Curse Of Millhaven*, of a professor finding his pet terrier nailed to his front door, is worth much more than any Dolby Digital 5.1 Surround.

■■■■■■■■■■■ *Let Love...*
■■■■■■■■■■■ *Murder...*
■■■■■■■■■■■ *...Call*
■■■■■■■■■■■ *No More*

Mick Farren

The Hollies

The Clarke, Hicks & Nash Years EMI

Golden years of the Mancunian Beatles.

With a name partially inspired by a love of Buddy Holly, an ear for a good cover and, in the titular trio, more than their fair share of quality songwriters, it's easy to see how this undervalued quintet racked up a staggering 17 consecutive Top 20 hits in their mid-60s pomp.

All the hits are included on this exhaustive 158-track, six-CD compilation, charting their passage from gritty R&B Lotharios (*Little Lover*) to jangling Beat poets (*Very Last Day*) and eventually brown-bread psychedelics (the brilliant *King Midas In Reverse*). While completists will appreciate previously unreleased renditions of *Look Through Any Window* and *Carrie Anne* (taken from a 1968 show at Lewisham Odeon), it's the production line quality throughout that impresses – barring, that is, sickly paisley-pop of *Ye Olde Toffee Shoppe*. But hey, it was 1967.

Listening to their relentlessly tuneful oeuvre, crammed with syrupy harmonies, smart lyrics and inventive arrangements, you

wonder how history would have treated them had there not been a certain other bunch of Northern mop-tops operating at the other end of the M62.

★★★★★★

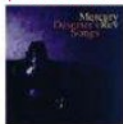
Paul Moody

Mercury Rev

Deserter's Songs

V2/CO-OPERATIVE MUSIC

Deluxe re-release of cosmic perfectionists' 1998 classic.



Expecting to split up after its completion, the members of Mercury Rev

decided to make one final album for themselves. Against all odds the resulting eclectic mix of 60s folk rock (The Band's Levon Helm and Garth Hudson guest), Disney soundtrack fantasy and lush orchestration proved a huge commercial success.

Thirteen years on and *Deserter's Songs* remains a strange, wondrous beauty – Jonathan Donahue's dreamy vocals accompanied by timpani and everything from musical saw to squalling soft metal guitar, the measured delivery like Steely Dan with space dust. This was psychedelia, folks, but not as we knew it.

Re-released as a deluxe double CD, the new packaging comes with a bonus CD of demos and early rough versions, so we can hear primitive takes of *Hudson Line*, *Tonite It Shows* and *Opus 40* as well as alternative mixes of *Holes* – here given a skittering, glitchy drum track – and *Pick Up, If You're There*. Even without the decoration, these songs are by far the most 'cosmic' recordings of the 1990s.

★★★★★★

Johnny Dee

Starcastle

Reissues ROCK CANDY

Re-experience the originals of 70s prog rock.

One of those now seemingly legendary bands that represent everything that's truly Marmite about original 70s-era progressive rock, you probably either love Starcastle with all of your wistful, poetic heart, or you've never heard of them.

It matters not. For here, on these splendid reissues of their first two cosmos-wobbling albums, is the very best of their music all over again, only with even better packaging (and the original gatefolds were pretty mind-boggling). Prepare to delight then in such authentic

prog epics as *Lady Of The Lake* and *Sunfield* from their eponymous 1976 debut, or *Fountains* and *True To The Light* from the possibly even better follow-up, *Fountains Of Light*.

Imagine Yes rebranded as Maybe – that is, colossal, conceptual prog, but played with a lighter, more melodic touch – and you have the wondrous Starcastle. With the prog scene now in better shape than it has been for 40 years, maybe their time has finally come.

★★★★★★ **Starcastle**
★★★★★★ **Fountains**

Mick Wall

Baker Gurvitz Army

Reissues ESOTERIC

Ginger nut.

According to the sleeve notes, what eventually persuaded then-superstar drummer Ginger Baker to form a band with the decidedly-less-acclaimed former The Gun (*Race With The Devil*) brothers Paul and Adrian Gurvitz was the brothers' manager agreeing to fund Baker's polo interests. While such a deal might have paid for Ginger's ponies to get a shoeing, it could also be seen as having done

exactly the same for the drummer's reputation.

On these remastered reissues, what's clearly lacking is quality – even decent – songs. This is most apparent on the trio's eponymous debut from 1974, where most of the songs seem like little more than half-formed, half-finished ideas – throwaway riffs bolted on to threadbare, easily forgettable melodies, performed with a remarkable lack of combined spark.

Follow-up *Elysian Encounter*, with former Sharks vocalist Mr. Snips brought in, is a marked improvement (though this wouldn't have been difficult) in terms of songwriting and performance, although it's offset by the new singer at times approaching Chris De Burgh's *Lady In Red* croon.

Recorded with the held of a host of additional musicians, third and final BGA album *Hearts On Fire* is a real step backwards – via shots into the dark with touches of funk and a bash at the then-emerging disco – and suffers from a glaring lack of focused direction and cohesion.

★★★★ **...Army**
★★★★ **Elysian...**
★★★★ **Hearts...**

Paul Henderson



Big Country

Fields Of Fire: The Ultimate Collection MERCURY

Triumphal, bagpipe-aping, tartan-clad rock from the band fronted by the late Stuart Adamson.

Having already impressed beyond the confines of punk with his visceral but arty guitar style in The Skids, there was always a suspicion that Stuart Adamson painted himself into a creative corner with Big Country. The distinctive 'bagpipes' tone he fashioned alongside fellow axe-slinger Bruce Watson served the band well on Celtic-tinged early singles such as *Harvest Home* and the song that gives this compilation its title, but they tended to come unstuck away from the formula.

Hence, the most enduring and appealing of the 35 tracks across these two discs are the ones that stay truer to the rousing reels of their heyday. There is, however, a pleasing soul-rock vibe to the semi-power balladry of *I'm Not Ashamed*. Less palatable are the generic bluesy workouts (*Republican Party Reptile*, *God's Great Mistake*), which when placed alongside Big Country's more celebrated material, almost sound like the product of a different band altogether.

Arguably, the turning point came with 1988's *Peace In Our Time*, represented here by the title

track and *King Of Emotion*. The group were keen to change what had been a well-received template, but seemed not to have anything specifically fleshed out to take its place.

Adamson was always a dab hand at the anthems, though, even in his punk days. On Skids singles such as *Sweet Suburbia* and *Into The Valley* he showed he knew how to construct a crowd-pleaser, so it's no surprise that even after Big Country's sales trailed off (only the first four of their albums reached the Top 10) there was always a devoted gig following to keep him in checked shirts.

Regrettably, there's only one live track here (a splendidly ramshackle charge through *Fields Of Fire*, prefaced by a snippet from The Jam's *Boy About Town*), where a few more in place of some plodding album filler might have made for a more positive portrait of the band's strengths. But let's not get too

downbeat, as there's more than enough to salute, and the sound of Kate Bush letting rip on *The Seer* still gets the feet flying and the sporran stirring.

★★★★★★
Terry Staunton



Big Country: at their best when sticking to the blueprint.

EBET ROBERTS/REDFERNS

Suzi Quatro: nobody wore a leather jump suit quite like she did.



GETTY IMAGES

Suzi Quatro

Reissues *Cherry Red*

Expanded versions of First Lady of glam's first two albums add the gold to the lead.



Over-praised by the kind of Guardian-reading pop intelligentsia that sees her short-lived but spectacular career as an early blow for feminism; horribly underrated by the sort of earnest, *Classic Rock*-reading galumph who still thinks of hit singles as an irrelevance; Suzi Quatro has long defied easy critical pigeonholing. Even in her mid-70s heyday she hardly fitted in with her designated role as Queen Of Glam; her biggest contribution to that much-maligned but game-changing period was to provide a new twist on glam's self-avowed androgyny: a girl that looked and sounded like a boy. Even her band failed to fully conform to the glam stereotype: a grizzlier bunch of greasers it would be hard to imagine trying to fit into stack-heeled shoes.

Like the Sweet and Mud before her, Quatro's real claim to fame was as a convincing cipher for the songwriting and production talents of Nicky Chinn and Mike Chapman. Thus the highlights of both these CD versions of her first two albums are the very tracks the original vinyl versions mostly lacked: i.e. big Chinnichap hits like *Can The Can*, *Devil Gate Drive*, *Daytona Demon* and *The Wild One*. Indeed it's hard to equate the still tremendously rousing –

even sexy – *Can The Can* or *Devil Gate Drive* with Quatro-penned fodder like *Glycerine Queen* or *Klondyke Kate*.

Both these expanded reissues, in fact rely on the same by-numbers formula: second-rate 'original' material written by the singer and her husband/guitarist Len Tuckey; several old-time rock'n'roll covers – *All Shook Up*, *Shakin' All Over* etc – and those brilliant glam-rock goliaths.

As testament to Quatro's legacy, neither album really works, tending to highlight the inadequacies of her music over its highlights; for that a greatest hits would do a better, more accurate job. Go to YouTube, however, and dig out some of the fantastic *Top Of The Pops* appearances – especially the one for *Devil Gate Drive* where Tuckey and keyboardist Alastair 'Haggy' McKenzie get up and do that dance on the chorus – and you will see exactly just how brilliant Miss Q was in her prime.

You might say that without her there would have been no Pretenders or Runaways. Certainly Chapman would put his Quatro experience to good use writing hits for future famously feisty females like Pat Benatar, Blondie and Lita Ford. None of them, though, wore a leather jump suit quite like Suzi.

■■■■■■■■■■ **Suzi Quatro and Quatro**
Mick Wall

John Lees

A Major Fancy

ESOTERIC RECORDINGS

Barclays man lets out his musical frustration.

Back in 1972, when things seemed unusually depressing for Barclay James Harvest, John Lees (founder member and one of the band's leading lights) decided to do a solo album – if only to get rid of a growing annoyance at the way the band appeared to be falling apart.

The fact that it took five years for this to be released just added to the anger and frustration that haunts this album. While BJH might have been known for lilting, whimsical visions, there's an edge to much of the music here. Even a very early version of *Child Of The Universe*, which would later go on to become a Barclays classic, has a clear social vehemence.

Now a second CD has been added, including a cover of The Eagles' *Best Of My Love*, which was put out as a single in 1974.

A lost classic? Not quite; but this definitely showcases a more visceral side to Lees.

■■■■■■■■■■ **Malcolm Dome**

Morrissey

Very Best Of *MAJOR MINOR*

Misery maestro gives approval to this deluxe retrospective.



Morrissey's early solo career has already been reissued and repackaged umpteen times, including two more previous collections released in just the past three years.

Spanning 1988 to 1995, this CD-plus-DVD package again plunders the singer's EMI/Parlophone years, but comes with the rare distinction of His Majesty's blessing and creative involvement. Fans might contest the inclusion of substandard duds *Sonny and Ouija Board*, *Ouija Board* over more deserving classics such as *Disappointed* or *Late Night*, *Maudlin Street*, but the pulse still quickens during the shimmering post-Smiths rebirth of *Suedehead* and the rolling, Dylanesque, cinematic melodrama of *Boxers*.

For hardcore disciples, the chief selling point here is the Siouxsie-free solo version of the brooding chanson *Interlude*, a cover of a cult 1968 Timi Yuro track, never previously released. A rare Jonathan Ross TV clip from 1990, premiering the aching desolate piano ballad

I've Changed My Plea To Guilty, is also a pleasing reminder of Morrissey's truly unmatched genius for operatically preposterous self-pity.

■■■■■■■■■■ **Stephen Dalton**

Wishbone Ash

Reissues

Prog-rock stalwarts' back pages revisited.



"The lyrics were penned on an old paper bag while driving through the USA," Ash guitarist Andy Powell recalls of the genesis of the song *In Crisis*, in the sleeve notes of its parent album, 2007's *Power Of Eternity*.

The same breezy good humour blows through all of that record, the follow-up to *Clan Destiny*. Opener *The Power* nods to the classic Ash of *Mountainside*, while *Happiness* is a funky tip of the hat in the direction of Steve Miller. The spirited twin-guitar assault of *Growing Up*, meanwhile, suggests this is a band just having fun being in the same room together.

Which brings us to *Argus: Then Again Live*, a version of their 1972 masterpiece recorded live in Washington in 2008 (at the suggestion of XM Satellite Radio) and book-ended with a number of Ash classics. If the subject matter seems more quaint than cosmic almost 40 years on (the title refers to the 100-eyed giant of Greek mythology), the slick delivery and speedy-fingered musicianship are reminders that Wishbone Ash's longevity owes more to Andy Powell's enthusiasm and the band's sheer natural ability than to the fickle finger of fate.

■■■■■■■■■■ **Both**
Paul Moody

Savatage

Reissues *EAR MUSIC*

From the raw to the sublime with the kings of Florida pomp. Stylistically poles apart, this brace of starkly contrasting reissues demonstrates just how successfully Savatage developed as a band from the early 80s to the early 90s. For aficionados, the chief selling point of debut *Sirens* and their second release *The Dungeons Are Calling* must be the fact that they're now together as a single album, just as they were conceived and recorded. Done and dusted in a mere two days, quality wise the

songs sound like buffed-up demos, the band clearly still searching for a solid identity. Streets, from 1991, on the other hand, is a completely different kettle of prog metal entirely. Subtitled *A Rock Opera*, the fact that the band spent a year in the studio creating it shows in the quality, and only consolidated their more progressive direction following *Gutter Ballet*.

Unfortunately, with grunge in the ascendant, the band's bold move didn't quite translate into the sales the album truly deserved. Shame.

■■■■■ Sirens
■■■■■ Streets

Essi Berelian

Tokyo Blade

Various LEMON

The Blade is back, and it's not for the best.

With more members than a marching band, NWOBHM also-rans Tokyo Blade struggled along with guitarist Andy Boulton holding on the way a drowning man clings to a barrel. Their fourth album, *Black Hearts & Jaded Spades* was the wide open spaces of America set somewhere in the north – they even had a power ballad called *You Are The Heart*, and torn T-shirts to match. Ain't *Misbehavin'* sounded like Boulton was keen to audition for Dokken – he's got the chops too, but the band had neglected to write any real songs. *No Remorse* was recorded with a band the hapless guitarist had foisted on him two days before they recorded and sounds like it, while *Burning Down Paradise* is a Def Leppard demo that they'd rather soon forget.

But now Boulton's back with *Thousand Men Strong*, which, he says, is the real successor to Tokyo Blade's second album – which surely means these albums shouldn't exist at all?

■■■■■ Blackh'ts
■■■■■ Ain't
■■■■■ Remorse
■■■■■ Paradise

Philip Wilding

Dick Dale

Guitar Legend: The Very Best Of SHOUT FACTORY

Near-as-damn-it definitive compilation of surf splendour.



Unlike his contemporaries The Beach Boys, Dick Dale was a genuine surf nut

who lived it like he played it. His distinctive Telecaster twang was, by his own reasoning, the

chopping sound of mighty waves on the Pacific coast. This terrific set underscores Dale's unofficial status as King of the Surf Guitar with 1961's *Shake N' Stomp* and *Let's Go Trippin'*, the latter generally acknowledged as the first waxing of a whole new craze. The irresistible staccato of *Miserlou* remains his calling card, largely thanks to *Pulp Fiction*, but what's also apparent – as on *Third Stone From The Sun* – is just what an uncommonly expressive guitarist he was. And caps aloft to the compilers for including *Pipeline*, his 1987 set-to with Stevie Ray Vaughan. Dale was certainly no singer, though he does have a bash against the two-bits-and-a-shave rhythm of *Surfing Drums*, but who needs a voice when you can riff like this?

■■■■■

Rob Hughes

Survivor

Reissues ROCK CANDY

Two more melodic rock gems for the collection.



As far as capturing the mid-80s melodic rock zeitgeist goes,

Survivor simply can't be faulted, as this latest brace of Rock Candy reissues proves.

As a follow-up to the AOR landmark that is *Vital Signs*, 1986's *When Seconds Count* was a very fine companion piece indeed. With Ron Nevison producing again, the chief songwriting duo of guitarist Frankie Sullivan and keyboardist Jim Peterik simply did what came naturally and whipped up plenty of polished choruses perfectly attuned to radio airplay. The key song of the era was without doubt anthemic hit single *Burning Heart*, written for *Rocky IV* and included here as a bonus track. However, despite the quality of the songs, WSC failed to scale the US charts convincingly, eventually running out of steam at 49.

The waning of fortunes for 1988's *Too Hot To Sleep* was even more marked, and not helped by a lack of label promotion. The album marked a shift back to a tougher sound, with Sullivan's guitar boosted in the mix, most notably on *She's A Star*, *Rhythm Of The City* and *Here Comes Desire*. It might have signalled the end of the band's classic period, but what a way to kiss the decade goodbye.

■■■■■ Seconds
■■■■■ Too Hot

Essi Berelian

URIAH HEEP

INTO THE WILD



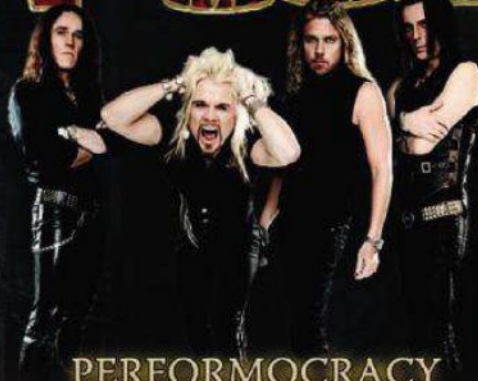
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Electric Light Orchestra:
a little sideways even for
their times.



GETTY IMAGES

Electric Light Orchestra

When Roy Wood suggested that he'd like to do something with cellos, who'd have guessed the monster that was created?

For a few lucky people – people like Jeff Lynne – dreams really do come true. As a teenager growing up in Birmingham in the early 60s, Lynne, like so many other aspiring musicians, worshipped The Beatles. But unlike so many other dreamers, Lynne not only made it as a rock star but also ended up working with the mop-tops themselves. As co-producer of two long-lost Fab Four songs, *Free As A Bird* and *Real Love*, released in the mid-90s on their *Anthology* series, Lynne made a boyhood fantasy real.

Lynne has enjoyed a lengthy, varied and hugely successful career spanning five decades. His first big break came in 1970 when he joined friend Roy Wood in The Move, rated by Paul Stanley of Kiss as one of the great British pop rock groups. But it with his next venture, the Electric Light Orchestra, in which Wood also briefly featured, that Lynne truly found his voice.

As that arch, punning name indicated, ELO fused electric rock and pop with classical influences, creating a sound that was truly unique. Their classic line-up had Lynne backed by six musicians, including a violinist and two cellists – which, in 1977, was somewhat out of step with the rising tide of punk rock.

But Lynne's grand vision extended far beyond punk's narrow parameters. In their pomp – and in ELO's case, there really is no other word for it – they sold over 50 million albums in 11 years and performed on stage beneath a giant spaceship.

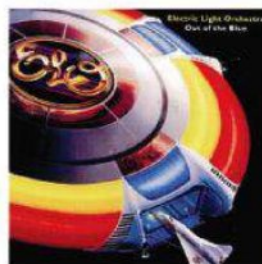
It couldn't last, of course. By 1986, with sales dwindling, Lynne disbanded ELO to work as a producer for George Harrison, Tom Petty and Roy Orbison, with whom he also starred, alongside Bob Dylan, in that most unlikely super-supergroup The Travelling Wilburys.

ELO would rise again, without Lynne, as ELO II. And in 2001 Lynne revived the name once more for *Zoom*, a solo album in all but name. But that was where the ELO story ended.

Lynne remains active. He produced four tracks on singer-songwriter Regina Spektor's 2009 album *Far*, and is currently working on a solo album proper. But the music he made with ELO is still his finest work: songs such as *Mr Blue Sky*, *Livin' Thing* and *Evil Woman*; songs that led Manic Street Preachers frontman James Dean Bradfield to proclaim: "ELO are better than The Beatles!" Even Jeff Lynne never dreamed he'd hear that.

Paul Elliott

Essential Classics

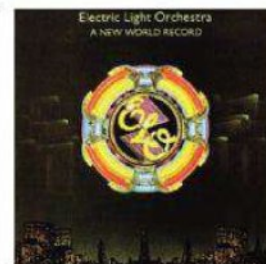


Out Of The Blue

JET, 1977

Jeff Lynne's magnum opus is one of the classic double albums, his answer to The Beatles' *White Album*, and ELO's crowning glory. Lynne wrote the whole of *Out Of The Blue*, 17 songs, in just four weeks, alone at a Swiss Alpine retreat. He later recalled: "The mountains were lit up, and I came up with *Mr Blue Sky*."

A mini-symphony in itself, *Mr Blue Sky* was the touchstone for an album on which Lynne gave full rein to his ambitions: a deluxe rock odyssey incorporating dazzling arrangements, state-of-the-art studio wizardry and, most importantly, great songwriting. Selling eight million copies in a year, it was a global smash.



A New World Record

JET, 1976

ELO's sixth album was their big international breakthrough. Hitting the top ten in every country in which it was released, *A New World Record* sold five million units worldwide.

Its title, inspired by the Montreal Olympics, which held the world's attention while the band were recording in Munich, was fitting for an album that elevated ELO to global fame.

At home, the album produced three top ten singles with *Livin' Thing*, *Telephone Line* and *Rockaria!*, the latter a prime example of Lynne's classical/rock style, complete with boogie riff, sawing strings, trilling opera singer and references to Wagner.

Superior Reputation cementing



Face The Music

JET, 1975

1975 was a strange year for ELO. *Face The Music*, their fifth album, reached the top ten in the US, but in the UK it didn't even chart.

It did, however, produce a UK hit single, albeit belatedly. *Evil Woman*, a song initially dismissed as filler by Jeff Lynne, gave ELO their first domestic top ten hit in three years, and set them up nicely for the next album, *A New World Record*.

Evil Woman remains one of ELO's best-loved songs, a genuine 70s pop classic and the highlight of an album that includes several great songs (*Strange Magic*, *Waterfall*) and one outright turkey, the daft *Down Home Town*.



On The Third Day

HARVEST, 1973

Although it bombed in the UK, ELO's third album was a minor hit in America, where "the English guys with the big fiddles" were a major concert draw.

Marc Bolan played lead guitar on this album's big rock tune, *Ma-Ma-Ma Belle*, and to Lynne's great delight, John Lennon raved about the album's hit single *Showdown*, subsequently dubbing ELO "son of Beatles".

Lynne paid his own tribute to Lennon on *Bluebird Is Dead*, and went completely overboard with a rocking take of Grieg's *In The Hall Of The Mountain King*. But *Showdown* is Lynne's favourite song on an album even he admits is "very obscure".



Eldorado

JET, 1974

Loftily subtitled *A Symphony By The Electric Light Orchestra*, the group's fourth album is described by Lynne as "one of yer actual concept albums."

The concept itself was somewhat vague. "It's about a dream world," said Lynne. But undoubtedly, *Eldorado* saw a big leap forward for ELO. Working with a full orchestra for the first time, Lynne was finally able to realise the sound that was in his impressively furry head.

The album's centrepiece, *Mister Kingdom*, is a grand orchestral take on *Across The Universe*. But best of all is *Can't Get It Out Of My Head*, one of Lynne's most beautiful songs.



Discovery

JET, 1979

By 1979 ELO were one of the biggest bands in the world, but Jeff Lynne faced a tricky dilemma: how to follow an album as brilliant and successful as *Out Of The Blue*?

Lynne's response was bold, to say the least. With disco music still flourishing, ELO got funky. Amazingly, it worked. *Discovery* was ELO's first number one and produced four UK top ten singles: *Shine A Little Love*, *The Diary Of Horace Wimp*, *Don't Bring Me Down* and *Confusion*. *Last Train To London*. Moreover, ELO's signature sound remained largely intact. *Discovery* has its critics, but it's the last great album of ELO's golden era.

Good Worth exploring

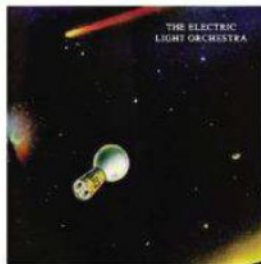


Electric Light Orchestra

HARVEST, 1972

Lynne was still a member of The Move, alongside Roy Wood and future ELO drummer Bev Bevan, when he wrote what became the very first ELO song, *10538 Overture*. With Wood playing a cheap Chinese cello, multi-tracked by Lynne, it sounded to Wood like: "a monster heavy metal orchestra".

10538 Overture soon became the new group's mission statement, the opening fanfare on a debut album described by *Melody Maker* as "a gas". Wood's leftfield sensibilities led the nascent ELO into what Lynne later called: "some really strange places", but *10538 Overture* was a top ten UK hit.

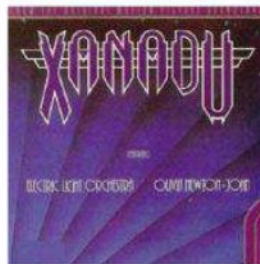


ELO II

HARVEST, 1973

After a promising start, ELO could have fallen at the second fence when Roy Wood quit during the making of this album to form Wizzard. But Lynne carried on with an expanded line-up, and the album was moderately successful, breaking the UK top 40 and yielding the band's second top ten hit, a cover of Chuck Berry's *Roll Over Beethoven*, a natural fit for ELO.

With just five tracks on its original vinyl format, *ELO II* has a heavy progressive rock influence, most evident on the King Crimson-Beatles hybrid *In Old England Town* and the 11-minute *Kuama*. But the best song was *Mama*, the first sign of Lynne's pop genius.



Xanadu (Original Motion Picture Soundtrack)

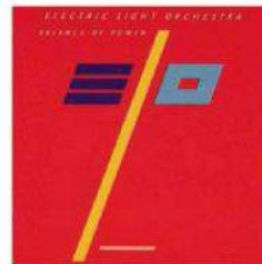
JET, 1980

On ELO's 1981 concept album *Time*, Jeff Lynne sang in a voice from a far-off age, 'Remember the good old 1980s/When things were so uncomplicated...'

What he didn't foresee was ELO's demise in the coming decade, but they began the 80s with another massive hit, albeit one that alienated many fans.

Xanadu, the soundtrack to a Hollywood musical, featured five songs by the movie's star Olivia Newton-John, four by ELO, and a camp title track performed by both together. Mercifully, ELO's songs were all strong, especially *All Over The World*. But after that, the rot really set in.

Avoid



Balance Of Power

EPIC, 1986

After 15 years of ELO, Jeff Lynne was seeking new challenges. He was recording as a solo artist and working as writer and producer for others. When he returned to ELO (now reduced to a core of three), the whiff of contractual obligation was in the air. He'd already abandoned the classic ELO sound on 1983's *Secret Messages*, and *Balance Of Power* completed a sorry decline into bland soft rock. It wasn't so much bad as plain average.

"I'm actually quite pleased with the way this one turned out," Lynne says now. But back in '86, he wasn't so happy. Shortly after this album's release, a tour aborted, ELO split up.

Essential Playlist

10538 Overture

Electric Light Orchestra

In Old England Town

ELO II

Showdown

On The Third Day

Ma-Ma-Ma Belle

On The Third Day

Evil Woman

Face The Music

Strange Magic

Face The Music

Can't Get It Out Of My Head

Eldorado

Livin' Thing

A New World Record

Telephone Line

A New World Record

Rockaria!

A New World Record

Mr Blue Sky

Out Of The Blue

Turn To Stone

Out Of The Blue

Wild West Hero

Out Of The Blue

Don't Bring Me Down

Discovery

All Over The World

Xanadu

Mama

ELO II



Syd Barrett: struck
a chord that continues
to resonate.

BOOKS

Barrett: The Definitive Visual Companion

Russell Beecher and Will Shutes ESSENTIAL WORKS

A beautiful compendium of rare Syd-flavoured materials that is almost too perfect to be useful.



That the legend of Syd Barrett should exert power more than 40 years on is reason in itself to treat both the man and his myth with all seriousness. Syd stuck a chord somewhere in the British collective consciousness that continues to resonate. He might even be a more significant figure right now than he was back in his glory days. Certainly he appears to be more celebrated now than ever before. Where once he was just the subject of rumours, sightings, the odd intrusive photograph, dubious bootlegs, and lengthy retrospectives in rock magazines, the 21st century – especially since his death in 2006 – has seen the preservation of Syd Barrett's legacy grow into a small but productive industry.

In 2001, the BBC aired the *Omnibus* documentary *Crazy Diamond* about Syd. Tom Stoppard's 2006 play *Rock & Roll* used him as a central and symbolic character.

In 2007, Nick Laird-Clowes of The Dream Academy, and Joe Boyd, the early Pink Floyd producer, staged a Barrett tribute at the Barbican Centre

where the entire Floyd, plus Damon Albarn, Chrissie Hynde, Captain Sensible, and Robyn Hitchcock, performed the best of Syd's songs. At the end of last year EMI re-released *An Introduction To Syd Barrett*, a definitive compilation CD, supervised and partially remixed by David Gilmour.

In March of this year, the Idea Generation Gallery in East London staged an exhibition of Barrett's paintings, previously unseen photography from Syd's days in the Floyd, plus letters and other ephemera. The exhibition goes hand in hand with the publication of this large format, hardcover book *Barrett: The Definitive Visual Companion* by Russell Beecher and Will Shutes, a deluxe labour of both love and great expense. Like the exhibition, it contains an extensive array of rare photographs, a comprehensive collection of his paintings, his letters and drawings, along with interviews, commentary, analysis of his work, and complete documentation. The printing, binding and full colour reproduction are sumptuous and immaculate, and the

whole presentation subscribes to the concept of the book as a work of art in itself. Plainly Barrett is an essential object for the well-heeled Syd obsessive. Some of the photographs – especially those from the Roundhouse, rehearsals at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, and a live show in Denmark – are truly outstanding, and his paintings fully answer the question as to what he did after he left Pink Floyd.

Unfortunately Barrett – by being such a luxury item – poses the question that increasingly needs to be answered as the Syd Barrett legend grows and expands. Isn't romantic legend starting to eclipse the actual value of the artists work? Is Syd – like maybe Che Guevara, James Dean, or Arthur Rimbaud – becoming a figure whose image and mythology totally outstrip his real achievements? The gorgeously reproduced paintings catalogued here are little more than standard art-school abstracts and still

lives by a painter who appears seriously depressed.

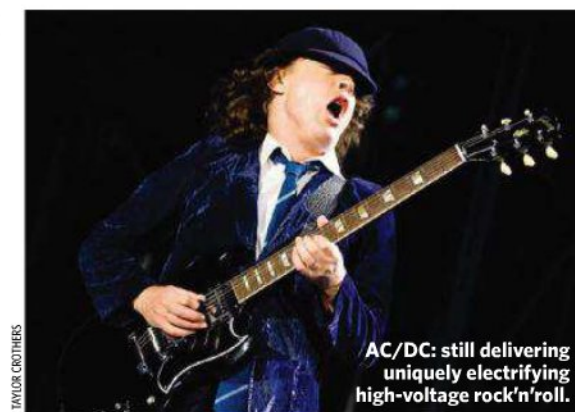
After his first magnificent flourish with the Floyd, Syd's music exhibited a noticeable loss of

energy. I don't think I'm being too harsh in saying that the same applies to the majority of his paintings. The publication of *Barrett* would represent a lavish confirmation that Syd is now being glorified in a manner that is almost Arthurian. He is the golden psychedelic boy-king, admired and desired, fashionably tortured in a poet's ruffled shirt, and with dark hair falling into already haunted eyes. His power peaks and he is sacrificed to drugs, a troubled mind, or splendid madness. He retreats into an exile of isolation. In this he is a modern-romance reprise of ancient pagan mythology. The sacrifice of the glorious young monarch is a core of legends almost as old as man, and perhaps Syd has graduated to a role in our popular culture that is more symbolic than actual. That would make *Barrett* a work of Syd Barrett iconography, which is maybe exactly what his contemporary followers are really seeking.

■■■■■■■■■■

Mick Farren

'Syd is now being glorified in a manner almost Arthurian.'



AC/DC: still delivering uniquely electrifying high-voltage rock'n'roll.

DVDS

AC/DC

Live At River Plate SONY DVD

Beelzebub's favourite band do their thing in Argentina.



Devil knows how, but, like death and taxes, it seems AC/DC will always be with us. Thirty-six years

on from debut album *High Voltage*, their basic formula remains set in stone – not so much rock these days as marble. Their gigs, meanwhile, resemble religious festivals where worship comes complete with its own set of deities, rituals and paraphernalia (in AC/DC's case, glowing plastic Devil-horns).

Or at least, that's how it looks on this new live DVD, filmed over three sold-out nights in Buenos Aires on the band's 2010 *Black Ice* tour, a jaunt taking in 28 countries and playing to five million fans. With long term video collaborator David Mallet in the directors chair, *Live At River Plate* was never likely to be a navel-gazing affair along the lines of The Stones/*Scorsese* collaboration *Shine A Light*.

Instead, in front of an audience of 66,000 screaming fans whose bug-eyed fanaticism is best summed up by one devotee who declares: "Angus is my God, AC/DC is my religion", Mallet simply lets the cameras rolls and allows the sheer spectacle do the talking.

This, then, is AC/DC live experience in excelsis, where every riff – and they're all here – is the cue for frenzy and every lyric interpreted as a pop parable (even *Dog Eat Dog's* 'Well it's dog eat dog/Eat cat too/The French eat frogs/I eat you'). While a series of oversize props (a train for *Rock'n'Roll Train*; a bell for *Hells Bells*; a blow-up doll for *Whole Lotta Rose*; cannons for *For Those About To Rock*; and so on) are employed at strategic moments, the performance itself

is breathtaking in its simplicity. In the bonus feature, a guitar tech explains that Angus eschews effect units completely, and merely turns up the volume for a solo. And, judging by the guitarist's constant jitter-bugging, the only stage aid he employs is the hot-plate beneath his feet. With a chain-smoking Phil Rudd and bassist Cliff Williams providing a granite-solid rhythm section, Brian Johnson keeps the temperature at fever pitch with the occasional rotation of the hips and utterances like: "We don't speak much Spanish but we speak rock'n'roll pretty good!"

Light relief, meanwhile (although probably not for Andrea Dworkin) comes during *War Machine* where an animation shows scantily clad nymphettes parachuting from Lancaster bombers along with a bomb carriage of electric guitars. The only insight into how these quinquagenarians generate such fervour comes during an elongated guitar intro to their ode to STDs *The Jack* where Johnson bellows: "Swear that boy's got the Devil in his fingers and the blues in his soul!", and 'DC's link to the Mississippi Delta is made explicit.

But then AC/DC are beyond analysis, a 10-legged beast from rock's whose appeal transcends colour and creed. The band appear to have given up trying to explain it, preferring to muse instead on the quality of Argentinian steak in the bonus mini-documentary. For the rest of us, *Live At River Plate* is the perfect excuse to dine once more at rock's high table. All together now: Der-ner nah Ner-ner ner ner: Angus!

■■■■■■■■■■

Paul Moody

Communication Breakdown

Send your letters to: Communication Breakdown, CLASSIC ROCK, Future, 2 Balcombe Street, London NW1 6NW or email them to us at: classicrock@futurenet.co.uk. We regret we cannot reply to phone calls. For more letters and comment, visit www.classicrockmagazine.com

THE BIT WHERE EVERYONE MOANS ABOUT LAST ISSUE STARTS HERE

When I saw this month's *Classic Rock* front cover, my heart sank. Not because I don't like Top 100s, but because I knew it would mean that this month's letters page would be full of people writing to say, 'How could you miss so-and-so?' and 'My favourite songwriter is better than your favourite songwriter' and 'Why is David Coverdale talking about Isaac Hayes when he's not even rock?' and 'I hate Top 100s' and on and on and on AND ON!

I happen to love the letters page of *Classic Rock*. I think us rockers are funnier and feistier than your average music fan, but any issue of CR with a number on the front brings out the worst in people.

...Anyway, while I'm here... How could you miss Johnny Thunders? He's much better than Steely fucking Dan! Isaac Hayes?! That's not rock! etc etc.

Do I win whiskey?

Jamie, Wells

Sadly not, Jamie, but we appreciate the sentiment. We did get a few of those letters this month - below are some of the less insulting. The answers to your questions apply to all the below: a) We didn't choose any of the Top 100, the artists did. That was kind of the point. b) It's kind of difficult for us to tell Ozzy or Gene Simmons or Brian May to choose someone else because Dougie fae Dundee thinks Brian Tatler should be mentioned. c) Isaac Hayes is not rock. Well spotted. Meantime, let the shoe-ing begin...

I eagerly await each issue of *Classic Rock*

and happily let it engross me for a good few days, nay, weeks. Unfortunately May's issue disappointed. Why? Just under 50 pages worth of another top 100/50/20 greatest, bestest, guitarist, vocalist, drummerist type section.

I feel the 100 Greatest Songwriters was a bit overlong and couldn't help thinking that it was more padding than content and my attention waned after a few pages... I firmly stand

under the banner of rock'n'roll and I will never desert your magazine, it's the best around.

I get the impression that I am not alone in knowing what's coming when we see "The Top 10/100 greatest ever" on the front cover though.

Anon, via email

...So Steve Rothery thinks Genesis were great songwriters and Tom Petty rates Bob Dylan. Thanks, I'd never have guessed, and just in case we missed it the last few thousand times, Joe Elliot pops up again talking up his old mate Ian Hunter! The whole issue was lazy and just seemed like it was thrown together as a stopgap whilst your team were busy elsewhere (presumably compiling articles for *Presents Prog/Presents AOR*). Where were the usual quality features? Where was the usual variety? All that was left was the usual news articles and the releases round up (and in fairness - a good SST buyers guide)...

Keith, Plymouth

Great mag as always but what went wrong with 100 Greatest Songwriters? How does Marc Bolan fail to get a mention yet Billy Corgan does? How does Marc Bolan fail to get a mention yet Kiss does? How does Marc Bolan fail to get a... I think you get my drift. Bolan was one of the great songwriters of the 70s. From October 1970 until June 1973 T.Rex were never out of the top ten for singles, including four No.1s and in the same period three No.1 albums and three top

10 albums. This was in a time when selling singles was still as important as selling albums and, unlike today, you had to sell more than 1,000 to get in the charts.

Bolan was a great songwriter and a massive influence then and today. Methinks someone dropped the ball here...

Liam Smith, via email

As with all '100 Best of...' lists, this one is going to be



"Where was Marc Bolan?" asks Liam Smith.

subjective. Now, I'm not going to decry any of the songwriters and/or partnerships that you've listed, and, just like everyone else, I'm going to have my favourites. In my opinion some of those listed have earned their place amongst the pantheon, some haven't. But I have to ask, by all that's Holy, how is it that Shane MacGowan doesn't appear anywhere amongst the selected? Is he not 'rock' enough for you at CR towers? Surely MacGowan's lyrics have to be some of the most

evocative found in contemporary music, of any genre.

Neil, via email

FOR GOD'S SAKE, STRAP YOURSELVES DOWN

Who on earth let Steven Wilson review Queen's remasters? What a tit! Never have I read so much bollocks. That dude needs to listen to some of his own albums! When he produces *A Night At The Opera* (7/10? Fuck off!), I'll listen to him - dickhead!

David, via email

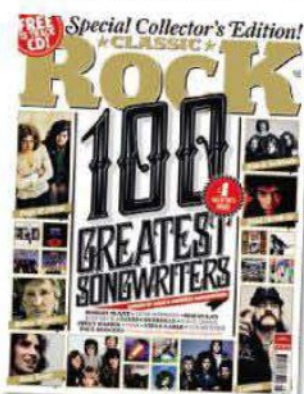
After reading Steven Wilson's review of the first five Queen rereleased albums I felt the urge to write. The review seems odd or even at a loss to explain the subject he is writing about.

He claims that there are too many end-of-the-pier British music hall songs which crop up too often across these five albums, well if you listen to these five albums those songs crop up twice on one album and once as an outro to one song on another.

His review of *A Day At The Races* is only about six lines long during which he reviews a song that isn't even on the album. He goes on to call it country and western. Just because a song features a 12 string guitar it doesn't make it country and western.

He does a similar thing with *A Night At The Opera*, reviewing that album in two lines. I really wonder if he listened to these albums before reviewing them.

A criticism he levels at these albums is that they contain a small number of good, well-produced songs such as the singles but the rest is just filler. I would strongly disagree with this view. Having already said that Queen had something special from the start, I would suggest that Steven Wilson also disagrees with his own view!



CR157: ruining this month's letters page, says Jamie of Wells.

★ Star Letter

LAST MONTH'S ISSUE on songwriters raised some interesting issues about rock music today. As Scott Rowley raised in his editorial, it's interesting that the first generation of rock songwriters acknowledged people who were among the building blocks of rock: Otis Blackwell, Davy Graham, Little Richard, Leiber and Stoller, Hank Williams and so on.

Our rock heroes are in turn praised by guys by bands I've mostly never heard of (Graveyard, Evile, the Black Spiders, Backberry Smoke?) – guys who haven't quite managed (I'm being polite, I mean "failed completely") to reach the heights of the generation before them. You would have thought that being influenced by the songwriters of Led Zeppelin, Queen, the Stones, Thin Lizzy, The Who, Deep Purple and so on would have been a crash course in writing the perfect rock song but, by comparison, the bands of the last decade or two are total underachievers.

Mr Rowley seems to disagree with the Radio 1 controller's assertion that a brilliant new rock song is hard to find. But where are the contenders for the thrones of *Boys Are Back In Town*, *We Will Rock You*, *Black Dog*, *Sweet Home Alabama* etc – those unstoppable anthems that cry out to be played on radio? And does the lack of them mean that new bands would be better off getting inspiration from even further back – from the guys who inspired Zeppelin and Sabbath, rather than the rock gods themselves? I suppose painters study the old masters, novelists read Dickens and film directors probably watch *Citizen Kane*... although Quentin Tarantino seems to have done alright on a diet of old kung fu movies and *Where Eagles Dare*...

Big Mac, Stourbridge

What are the modern rock anthems? It's a fair question Mac... and one that I'm going to avoid answering. There are a load of good bands out there – but do any of them have a *You Shook Me All Night Long*, an *All The Young Dudes* or a *Welcome To The Jungle*? What do you think: send us your contenders for the greatest songs of the past 20 years – the rock classics in waiting – and we'll print the best.

Every month, the Star Letter wins a fine bottle of Islay Single Malt Smokehead Whisky. Enjoy. And remember: Smokehead encourages responsible drinking.



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LISTING THE WONDERFUL KATE BUSH AS THE SOLE FEMALE IN YOUR GREATEST SONGWRITER ISSUE PROVES THE ONGOING SEXIST ATTITUDE OF ROCK. NOT EVEN CHRISSE HYNDE? PLEASE! SHE CAN ROCK AND WRITE THE BOLLOCKS OFF JUSTIN HAWKINS. **SANDRA, B'HAM**

NO STEEL PANTHER IN 100 GREATEST SONGWRITERS? NOW THAT'S A SHOCKER! **ANON**

JUST SPENT A STONKIN WEEKEND AT HAMMERFEST! IF YOUNG BAND THE TREATMENT AREN'T HUGE, THEN THERE AINT NO JUSTICE! **NICOLA, ANGLESEY**

HOW DID YOU MISS SPARKS FROM YOUR SONGWRITERS LIST? BET YOU'RE SORRY NOW! **ROCKY, OXFORD**

SO I'VE CHECKED 3 TIMES NOW - 100 GREATEST SONGWRITERS WITHOUT PETER HAMMILL? SURELY MY COPY HAD SOME PAGES MISSING OR YOU MEANT TO CALL IT "OH - AND HERE'S 100 OTHER GOOD SONGWRITERS"? **PAUL S. LIVERPOOL**

SO HOW COME THE 100 GREATEST SONGWRITERS DOESN'T INCLUDE WARREN ZEVON? WTF? **ANON**

CRANKING THE NEW WHITESNAKE ALBUM WHILST READING THE FANPACK WELCOME BACK COV YOU OLD DEVIL. **ANON**

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FLASH, I LOVE YOU...

Bravo on your Heavy Load interview which has established itself as my favourite feature in *Classic Rock*. So very often our musical heroes' lives can seem vastly removed from that of our own and yet, without exception, I've found every one of your interviewees to be refreshingly candid and relatable. So far I've particularly enjoyed the chats with Sammy Hagar and Jaz Coleman. Both exceptional, passionate vocalists enjoying a creative renaissance, yet how wonderfully different; the beach loving, Ferrari-riding good time guy and the shamanic composer of chaos, and yet I now feel that I know, and like, them even better.

Caesar Barton, Altrincham

...BUT WE ONLY HAVE 14 HOURS TO SAVE THE EARTH

It must break a true musician's heart that so much music today emerges from a mixture of ProTools and AutoTune and drum loops. In recent times, songs have been able to go from nothing to the listeners' ear without ever encountering an actual musical instrument.

It's easy to laugh off such songs as the musical equivalent of *Big Brother* or *Hello* magazine, but every time one of these tracks arrives, another musician must die just a little inside. And if this continues, where do we find the musicians for the next generation?

The 70s and 80s were the heyday for session men. Guitarists like Larry Carlton, Dean Parks, Steve Lukather, Jeff Baxter, Waddy Watchel, and Steve Cropper. Drummers such as Jeff Porcaro, Steve Gadd, Simon Phillips, and Gregg Bissonette. Then there are bassists Pino Palladino, Chuck Rainey, Leland Sklar, Abe Laboriel, Nathan East, and keyboard players David Paich, Greg Phillinganes, Vic Feldman, and Steve Porcaro.

But where are the next breed of sublimely talented musicians coming from, given that rather than taking the time to read music and practice an instrument, people can just pick up a laptop and some software and find their way onto the radio – probably via YouTube?

I'm all for progress, and music should never stand still. But in this age of apparent entitlement and 'fifteen minute' celebrity, who will take the time to be the best when they can earn a decent living from simply being ordinary?

Tony Forder, Peterborough

He makes no attempt to explain the impact these albums had at the time of release. For someone in the know he seems to have heard very little.

Being a musician/producer I would have thought he would have spotted the amount of work that went into all the songs using basic, by modern standards, equipment – 16-track recording on the first two albums!

Part of the problem with Queen is that they can't be pigeon-holed, and therefore any review is going to be hard work. But you have to look at the bigger picture, which in Queen's music is maybe bigger than even Steven Wilson can cope with.

They never stood still and on these five albums there is so much that other people were influenced by. It adds up to more than a few tracks held together with filler.

Ian Dugini, via email
PS: For the next batch of Queen re-releases, get the Foo Fighters to review them. At least they seem to understand what Queen were doing!

SABBATH SPLIT

While I am no photographer nor arty-farty type, I do realise that photographer types spend a great deal of time to get their composition just perfect; arranging, cropping and stuff... so why do you insist on putting an inch of the edge of larger photos over onto the next page? This totally spoils some great photos. It's not like the mag will lie flat so that you can see it properly anyway. You printed a fantastic early Black Sabbath shot a few months back that I had never seen before, but the right hand side was stuck over on the next page, obscuring and slicing Bill Ward almost in half. Now then, to make amends:

1) stop doing this – NOW – and find some other way of filling in the creases 2) if you send me the mentioned

Sabbath photo professionally mounted, framed and signed by all the band, I will forgive your indiscretions against the art of rock photography and pretend it never happened...

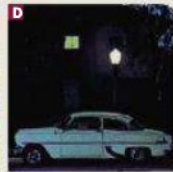
Webbie, via email

Queen: a vision "so vast that maybe Steven Wilson can't cope with it."



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. What is the title of the first album, from 1983, by Big Country?

2. Which was Bon Jovi's first UK single release? And which was their first single to chart here?

3. They played the Isle of Wight in 1970, released their debut album the same year, had a UK No.1 with the follow-up, followed that with five Top 10 albums, including a live recording on which they didn't write any of the music... Name the band.

4. Which charting band of the 80s and 90s included

the Farriss brothers Andrew, Tim and Jon?

5. What is the full title of King Crimson's 1969 debut album?

6. Name the Johnny Thunders album that features guest appearances from Phil Lynott, Steve Marriott, Chrissie Hynde, Peter Perrett, Steve Jones and Paul Cook.

7. Which 70s supergroup had members from groups including Little Women, The Herd and Spooky Tooth?

8. 'If I leave here tomorrow, would you still remember

me?/For I must be travelling on, now, cause there's too many places I've got to see.' The opening lines from which enduring classic originally released in 1976?

9. Name the first studio album Iron Maiden recorded with Blaze Bayley after Bruce Dickinson quit in the mid 90s.

10. Name the artist and their top five album of 1978 that included the tracks *Little Triggers*, *Lip Service* and *Night Rally*.

11. Which was the last Jimi Hendrix album released before his death?

12. What is the full title of Derek And The Dominos' famed studio album released in 1971?

13. What is Joan Jett's real surname?

14. Named after a Bob Dylan track, they formed in 1969, their original vocalist was Al Atkins, before they released their fist album (in '74) they went through drummers John Ellis, Alan Moore and Chris Campbell, and they're still going today. Name the British band.

15. 'Breathe, breathe in the air/Don't be afraid to care/Leave but don't leave me/Look

around and chose your own ground.' The opening lines of which classic rock album?

16. Which multi-instrumentalists bands over the years have included the drummers Aynsley Dunbar, Mick Fleetwood, Mickey Waller, Keef Hartley and Jon Hiseman?

16. Which non-member of the band wrote the Yardbirds' hits *For Your Love*, *Heart Full Of Soul* and *Evil Hearted You*, and which band was he a member of who had a string of Top 20 hit singles in the 70s?

Answers on p113



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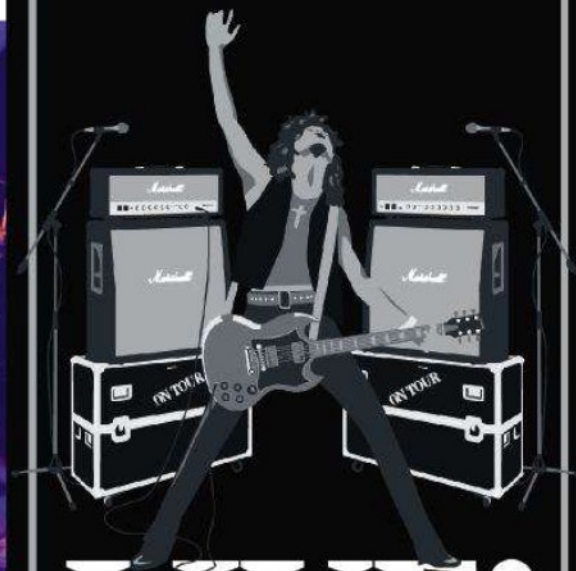
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LIVE!

THE HIGH-VOLTAGE WHAT'S ON GUIDE

EDITED BY IAN FORTNAM (REVIEWS) AND DAVE LING (TOURS)

P **123**

Hammerfest III

Just how heavy was the heaviest festival on the UK calendar?

Quiz answers from page 112: 1. *The Crossing*. 2. *Runaway* (1984); *The Hardest Part Is The Night* ('85). 3. Emerson, Lake & Palmer. 4. INXS. 5. *In The Court Of The Crimson King: An Observation By King Crimson*. 6. *So Alone* (1978). 7. Humble Pie. 8. *Free Bird* (Lynyrd Skynyrd). 9. *The X Factor*. 10. Elvis Costello's *This Year's Model*. 11. *The Band Of Gypsies* album. 12. *Layla And Other Assorted Love Songs*. 13. Larkin. 14. Judas Priest. 15. *Dark Side Of The Moon* (Pink Floyd). 16. John Mayall. 17. Graham Gouldman; 10cc.
Album sleeves: A) *On Tour With Eric Clapton* (Delaney & Bonnie & Friends). B) *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan*. C) *Hit And Run* (Girlschool). D) *Late For The Sky* (Jackson Browne). E) *All The Right Reasons* (Nickelback). F) *On Your Feet Or On Your Knees* (Blue Oyster Cult). G) *Street Lethal* (Racer X). H) *Burgers* (Hot Tuna).

P **114** **INTERVIEWS**

P **117** **TOUR DATES**

P **120** **LIVE REVIEWS**



LIVE!

Rush: the elder statesmen of bonkers prog.

"We're still fucking around on stage. We don't want to disappoint anyone on a comedic level."

Rush

Canadian prog giants play *Moving Pictures* in full, with much more on-stage madness.

Bassist/vocalist Geddy Lee checks in as veteran Canadian trio Rush return to the UK for their first tour since January 2007. These dates are a prelude to the band recording their 20th studio album, *Clockwork Angels*, which is expected to be released some time in 2012. On this tour, fans can expect to hear the band's (newly reissued) album *Moving Pictures* in its entirety, some new material and a few rarely heard old favourites.

Besides playing your 1981 album *Moving Pictures* album in full and previewing some of the songs for *Clockwork Angels*, the band will revisit some songs not performed in a while, like *Stick It Out* from *Counterparts*. With such a massive catalogue of songs, how do you decide on a set-list these days?

Well, we like *Counterparts* and we always look for reasons to go back to it. But it also depends on the other requirements of the set.

After being performed across North America, the current set has been widely bootlegged. In light of this piracy giving the game away with regards to your show, do you have plans to change anything for the European leg?

No, it will be exactly the same show. The internet be damned! [laughs] We put this show together for specific reasons and it's going to stay that way. We're assuming that most people in these cities have not seen it before, so why change something they haven't seen?

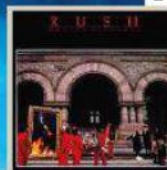
Did you enjoy picking up Rush's Living Legend award at last year's *Classic Rock Awards*?

I was proud and embarrassed at the same time, but it was a great event. At first I was a bit reluctant to be in the room with so many people that I admire, to even be considered to be in the same league as those that had pretty much taught me what I do. But it's good to be humbled by your fellow musicians.

On the band's previous tour there were giant washing machines and rotisseries on stage, and in the past you've been known to have all manner of curious happenings going on all around you. Can we expect anything similarly ludicrous this time around?

Yeah, we've gone even weirder. Not that there's anything weird about cleanliness and chicken. Those are two concepts that I can stand behind. But yeah, we're still fucking around on stage. We don't want to disappoint anyone on a comedic level. We've also combined that attitude with some of the aesthetic concept behind the forthcoming album. We were going to hold it back until the next tour, but we got too fired up and just couldn't keep it a secret any more. **DL**

The tour begins in Glasgow on May 14.



A RUSH REFRESHER

★ *Moving Pictures* has never before been performed anywhere in the UK.

★ The shows will last for three-and-a-half hours each night, with no support.

★ Rush will once again work with producer Nick Raskulinecz on *Clockwork Angels*, after his success on *Snakes & Arrows*.

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NOT METAL

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Part of a series lampooning those for whom the world is just not *metal* enough. It's funny cos it's true.



HALFORD CAFÉ

www.halford-berlin.de

In the back streets of Berlin there's a bar dedicated to all things Judas Priest - check out the massive Halford statue!



Miss Behaviour

Scandi melody makers hope to conquer the British Isles.

Swedish melodic hard rockers Miss Behaviour are set to embark on a debut UK tour alongside Houston, Crashdiet and Serpentine. Meet their guitarist, Erik Heikne.

How much are you looking forward to playing these gigs in Britain?

You have no idea. Since we hooked up with a manager a few months ago things are really starting to happen for our band.

Two of the other bands on the tour are also Swedish, so what's your scene like?

There isn't one. There are lots of melodic rock bands but it's not a popular form of music. It doesn't get airplay, it's tough to get gigs and there could never be a magazine like *Classic Rock Presents AOR*.

A song on the new album insists you are 'defenders of a dream' – namely the classic hard rock sound of the 1980s.

I still miss the passion and spirit of those bands. That's why when we started our own band we decided not to sing about darkness and misery. We want to give people a moment of joy.

You were four when bands like Bon Jovi and Europe ruled the charts. What did you make of the grunge years that followed?
I hated that kind of music. I was much more into bands like Iron Maiden. I was also a huge Yngwie Malmsteen fan.

Your keyboard player, Henrik Sproge, recently said you and singer Sebastian Roos are Malmsteen obsessives. Do you really get together to dress up as Yngwie and worship his music?

Henrik's a funny guy. That's a half-truth. We do celebrate Yngwie once a year. He's a fantastic entertainer, it's a shame his records aren't that great any more. **DL**

The tour ends in London on May 4. The second issue of Classic Rock Presents AOR goes on sale May 6.



Skindred

Ragga-metal mash-up merchants capitalise on recent triumphs.

Formed in 1998 from the ashes of Dub War, Newport-based ragga-metalheads Skindred are undertaking their biggest headline tour to date. Meet their singer, Benji Webbe.

The title track of Skindred's new album, *Union Black*, is a pastiche of the God Save The Queen. The words are hard to distinguish, though. What are they?

It's a street take on the national anthem. The message is that we're out here going through madness and riots, but God save our country. After all the woes, being beaten up and running from the police, we're still saluting the Union Jack.

It's an upbeat thing?

Of course. Our asses have been kicked but we're still here.

This album sounds a little more ragga-flavoured than before.

It still has amazing riffs but, yeah, there's an urban feel – on the dance

side of things that Skindred is known for.

You don't worry about alienating the metal fans?

No. I'm a firm believer that if it's loud and heavy and heads can be banged, people will get it. And if they don't embrace the record, they'll definitely get it live.

The reaction to your set at Sonisphere last year was astonishing. A career high point?

Mate, I'm still pinching myself. I'm waiting for my mother to wake me up and tell me to get off to school. But that's the whole thing about the

ragga thing – if it rocks, people will dig it.

When Skindred were at the indoor Ozzfest at the O2 Arena, did you get to meet Ozzy?

I've met Ozzy before, ages ago over in L.A. But I did stand behind Sharon and think: "Wow! That's Sharon Osbourne!"

In February you also supported Rob Zombie on his UK tour.

Watching him with his robots and stage props made me think that when I get a couple of quid that's the type of show I'd like to put on.

The challenge now must be to capitalise on all this.

Definitely. The great thing about the Zombie tour was that 50 per cent of those people had never heard of Skindred. I hope they'll come to our own shows. **DL**

Skindred's tour concludes in London on May 7.

"I'm a firm believer that if it's loud and heavy, people will get it."

Listen!

Unmissable ear candy for rock connoisseurs.



BIG HAIR SHOW

www.live365.com/stations/arsen1061

Hair metal expert Mark Arsen guides you through the very best of the hairspray hellions!



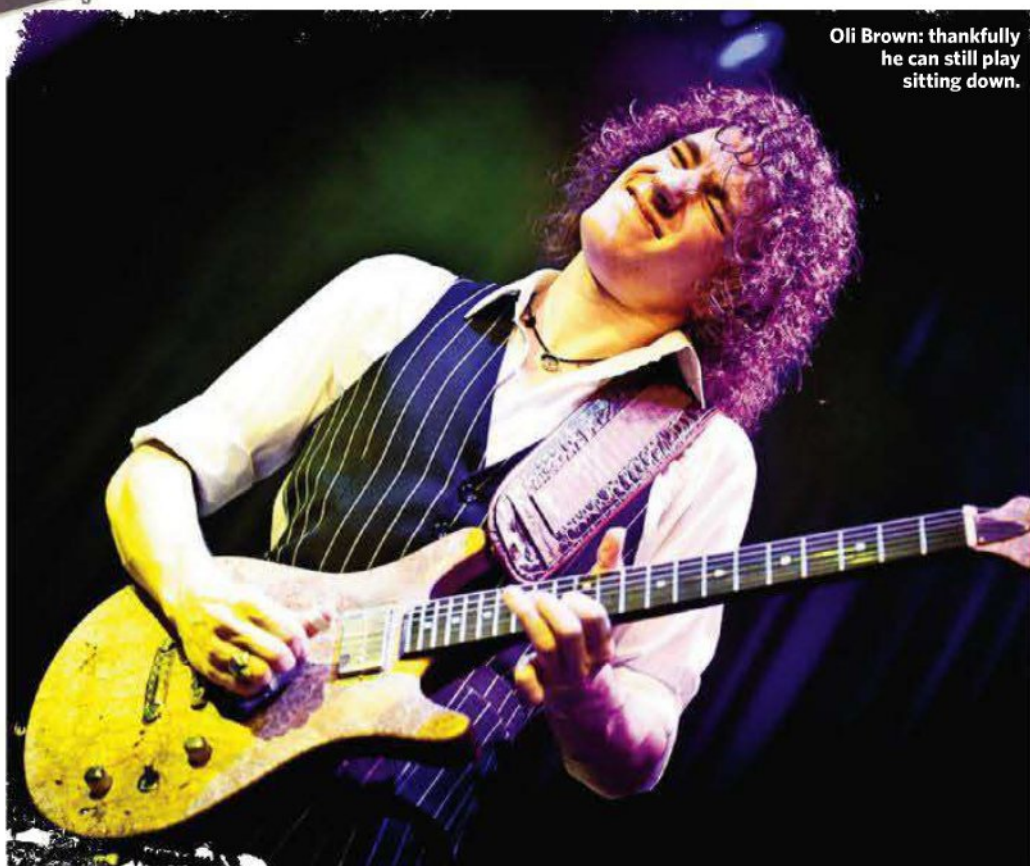
KRAUTROCK

www.krautrock-world.com

A treasury of German progressive and psychedelic sounds, with a great community, too.



LIVE!



Oli Brown: thankfully he can still play sitting down.

Oli Brown

Young bluesman defies health and safety and heads out on the road.

Not even hospitalisation after a particularly nasty fall could derail this fast rising young British blues guitar sensation from heading out on his latest tour. And even better, he clearly won't let fame go to his head.

So, you've been in the wars?
[Glumly]: I fell in the dark and landed my pelvis, fracturing it. I also cracked my lower spine.

You can admit it to us... were you in a refreshed state?
No. We'd got back from a gig and were about to start celebrating. I'd gone back to the van for the whiskey when it happened.

All the same, it's hardly the ideal preparation for a tour?
No, but I'm stubborn. As long as I can use my arms and sing, the show will go on.

At the age of 21 you already have a mantelpiece of trophies,

including Male Vocalist and Young Artist Of The Year at the 2010 British Blues Awards. Are you conscious of how fast things are moving?

A little, but I feel lucky. Although I'm in the position I am, I've still a long way to go. I'm just enjoying it. When I started this, my ambition was to play music, but also to have fun.

You've been feted by Joe Bonamassa and Walter Trout, and have accumulated incredible praise along the way. So is it sometimes hard to reconcile such things when you turn up at the smaller venues like The

"Stick me in a room and I don't mind how many people there are."

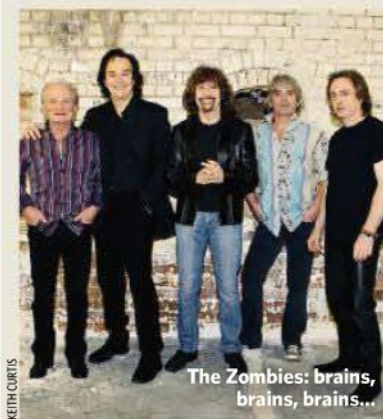
Piper in Hull, or Exeter's The Timepiece?

[Sounding shocked]: No. Not at all, man. I'm just happy to play. Stick me in a room and I don't mind how many people there are. I know that in development terms I've a long way to go. I record all of my gigs and I listen back to them, striving to develop my singing and guitar playing ability. I'm not yet at the pinnacle of my career.

Still, appearing at last year's Glastonbury must have felt like vindication of the years of roadwork you have put in.

Yeah. It was an amazing experience. I'd never been there before and couldn't believe it didn't rain. There were so many bands and the vibe was great – it was hard to take it all in. **DL**

'Brown's tour is currently ongoing, and ends at the Darvel Music Festival on May 22. For more info go to www.oliselectricblues.co.uk.



The Zombies: brains, brains, brains...

The Zombies

Fifty years and counting for the St Albans boys.

Half a century has passed since The Zombies held their debut rehearsal in the Easter of 1961. Galvanised by reuniting for the band's 40th anniversary, they have recorded a new album called *Breathe In, Breathe Out*. Keyboard player Rod Argent also believes there's more to come.

Fifty years of existence in this cutthroat business is a humongous achievement. Is that longer than Jimmy Saville, even?
It's longer than just about anybody.

The album picks up the band's signature sound with ease. The weight of expectation must have been considerable?

Strangely, no. Colin [Blunstone, vocals] and I got back together purely for half a dozen gigs, which turned into 11 years of touring, so it happened naturally. Early response to the album has been overwhelming, and although it wasn't intentional it does have a great resonance with the early stuff.

What was your first impression of Colin?

As the car pulled up outside the Blacksmith's Arms in St Albans for our very first rehearsal I said to Jim [Rodford, bass]: 'God, I hope that's not the guy we're meeting'. Colin was a real sportsman back then; he had a plaster across his nose after breaking it playing rugby and was sporting two black eyes. His face was blown up like a balloon. Luckily, he turned out to be a vocalist in a million.

How many of the new songs will you perform on this tour?

Around half a dozen. I'm just back from rehearsal and they're sounding excellent.

Is the finishing line even in sight for you?

As long as we feel well enough, and we certainly do at the moment, then we'll continue. My father, who sadly is no longer with us, played in a band till he was 83. **DL**

The tour begins in Frome on May 14.

Watch!

Rock eye candy coming into view this month



LEGO METAL
bit.ly/4huvRO

Some nut job in Slovakia has remade practically every Rammstein video in animated Lego. Genius!



HI HO TONTO
bit.ly/fOFpIQ

We bet your slightly bonkers grandad doesn't have anything this cool in his garden shed!

Tour Dates

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3 DOORS DOWN

Manchester	Academy	Jun 16
Glasgow	Academy	Jun 17
London	Chalk Farm Roundhouse	Jun 19
Birmingham	Academy	Jun 20

AIRBOURNE

London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Jul 30
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JAN AKKERMAN

Southampton	The Brook	Apr 28
Wavendon	The Stables	Apr 29
London	Shepherd's Bush Bush Hall	Apr 30
Cardiff	The Globe	May 1
Stratford-on-Avon	Cox's Yard	May 2
Runcorn	The Brindley	May 3
Birmingham	Glee Club	May 4

GREGG ALLMAN

London	Barbican Centre	Jul 1
Birmingham	Symphony Hall	Jul 2
Edinburgh	Usher Hall	Jul 6

AMPLIFIER

London	Xoyo	Jun 15
Manchester	Soundcontrol	Jun 16

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

JIMMY BARNES

Dublin	Olympia	Jun 29
Tunbridge Wells	Hop Farm Festival	Jul 1
London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Jul 2
Glasgow	Garage	Jul 5
Newcastle	Academy	Jul 6

BLACK COUNTRY COMMUNION

Llandudno	Cymru Arena	Jul 23
London	High Voltage Festival	Jul 24
Leeds	Academy	Jul 26
Newcastle	Academy	Jul 27
Glasgow	Academy	Jul 29
Manchester	Academy	Jul 30

THE BLACK CROWES

Manchester	Academy	Jul 11
London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Jul 12/13

BLACK SPIDERS

Leeds	Cockpit	May 5
Middlesbrough	Empire	May 6
Winchester	Railway	May 8
Brighton	Hydrant	May 9
Cambridge	Haymakers	May 10
Stoke-on-Trent	Sugarmill	May 11
Exeter	Cavern	May 12
Milton Keynes	WoughtonCentre	May 13
Cardiff	Ifwor Bach	May 15
Durham	Live Lounge	May 16
Wolverhampton	Little Civic	May 17
Newcastle	Academy 2	May 18
Edinburgh	Cabaret Voltaire	May 19

BLINK 182, YOU ME AT SIX, FOUR YEAR STRONG

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

BLOOD CEREMONY, GHOST

London	Highbury Garage	Apr 28
Colchester	Arts Centre	Apr 29
Birmingham	Hare & Hounds	Apr 30
Glasgow	Stereo	May 1

JOE BONAMASSA

Blackpool	Opera House	Oct 15
Nottingham	Capital FM Arena	Oct 16
Cardiff	CIA	Oct 18
Plymouth	Pavilions	Oct 19
London	Hammersmith Apollo	Oct 21/22

BON JOVI

Edinburgh	Murrayfield Stadium	Jun 22
Manchester	Old Trafford Cricket Ground	Jun 24
London	Hard Rock Calling Festival	Jun 25
Bristol	Ashton Gate	Jun 27

BRING ME THE HORIZON, ARCHITECTS, MORE

Southampton	Guildhall	Apr 27
Birmingham	Academy	Apr 28
Bristol	Academy	Apr 29
London	Brixton Academy	Apr 30

OLI BROWN

Glasgow	The Ferry	Apr 28
Kinross	The Green Hotel	Apr 29
Dumfries	Thornhill Blues Festival	Apr 30
Guisborough	R&B Club	May 1
Darlington	Arts Centre	May 20
Edinburgh	The Caves	May 21
Darvel	Music Festival	May 22

GARY BROOKER, WALTER TROUT, KING KING, ERROL LINTON, MORE

Chichester	Blues On The Farm	June 17-19
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JACK BRUCE & HIS BIG BLUES BAND, JOE BONAMASSA

London	South Bank Centre Guitar Festival	Jun 3-5
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JACK BRUCE, MICK TAYLOR, CLIMAX BLUES BAND, MORE

Rotherham	Yorkshire Blues Festival	Apr 30-May 2
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PAUL CARRACK AND THE ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

London	Royal College Of Music	Apr 26-28
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CHEAP TRICK

Castle Donington	Download Festival	Jun 11
Bristol	Academy	Jun 12
Dublin	Olympia Theatre	Jun 15

CINDERELLA

London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Jun 25
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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

COLDPLAY, U2, BB KING, MORE

Somerset	Glastonbury Festival	Jun 22-26
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CORROSION OF CONFORMITY

Manchester	Moho Live	Apr 28
Sheffield	Corporation	Apr 29

WHITESNAKE



Here's a gig for ya. Classic rock doesn't come much more classic than Coverdale and co. Here they go again...

Newcastle	City Hall	Jun 13	Manchester	Apollo	Jun 17
Glasgow	Clyde Auditorium	Jun 14	Bournemouth	BIC	Jun 19
Wolverhampton	Civic Hall	Jun 16	London	Hammersmith Apollo	Jun 20

THE CURE, BRIAN WILSON, PJ HARVEY, PRIMAL SCREAM, MORE

Isle of Wight	Bestival	Sep 8-11
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CURVED AIR, THE GROUNDHOGS, HERE & NOW, STACKRIDGE, MORE

Builth Wells	Sonic Rock Solstice Festival	Jun 17-19
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THE DAMNED THINGS

London	Camden Dingwalls	Jun 8
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DEF LEPPARD

Belfast	Odyssey Arena	Jun 7
Dublin	O2 Arena	Jun 8
Donington Park	Download Festival	Jun 10

DEF LEPPARD, AVENGED SEVENFOLD, THIN LIZZY, MORE

Donington Park	Download Festival	Jun 10-12
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DEICIDE

London	Camden Underworld	Jun 25
Plymouth	The White Rabbit	Jun 26
Liverpool	The Masque	Jun 27
Nottingham	Rescue Rooms	Jun 28

DELAIN, SERENITY

Manchester	Academy 3	Apr 29
London	Islington Academy	Apr 30
Glasgow	Cathouse	May 1
Leamington Spa	Assembly Hall	May 2

DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN, ARCHITECTS, CAPDOWN, MORE

Port Lympne	Heavy Festival	Aug 5-8
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DONOVAN

London	Royal Albert Hall	Jun 3
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DREAM THEATER

Doncaster	Dome	Jul 22
Wolverhampton	Civic Hall	Jul 23
London	High Voltage Festival	Jul 24

DRIVE-BY TRUCKERS

Leamington Spa	Assembly Hall	May 4
London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	May 5
Bristol	Anson Rooms	May 6
Dublin	Button Factory	May 7
Edinburgh	Queen's Hall	May 9
Liverpool	Academy	May 10
Leeds	Metropolitan University	May 11

Recommended

THE EAGLES, BRYAN FERRY, 10CC, LOU REED, IGGY & THE STOOGES, MORE
Paddock Wood Hop Farm Festival Jul 1/2

THE ENID

Morecambe	The Platform	May 13
Workington	Carnegie Theatre	May 14
Wavendon	The Stables	Jun 11
Peterborough	Key Theatre	Jun 16
London	High Voltage Festival	Jul 24
Cambridge	Rock Festival	Aug 7
Farnham	Maltings	Sep 15
Birmingham	Symphony Hall	Oct 15

EYEHATEGOD, CHURCH OF MISERY, MORE

Bristol	Fleece & Firkin	Jun 25
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FAIRPORT CONVENTION, MORE

Oxfordshire	Cropredy Festival	Aug 11-13
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MARIANNE FAITHFULL

London	Barbican Centre	May 24
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FIREWIND, WOLF

Southampton	Talking Heads	Sep 9
Manchester	Moho	Sep 10
Glasgow	Apollo 23	Sep 11
Reading	Sub 89	Sep 12

FISH, STEVE HARLEY, JOHN PARR, THE SPINNERS, NICK KERSHAW, MORE

Utteter	Acoustic Festival	May 20-22
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THE FLAMING LIPS

London	Alexandra Palace	Jul 1
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FOO FIGHTERS

Isle of Wight	Festival	Jun 11
Milton Keynes	Bowl	Jul 2/3

FUNERAL FOR A FRIEND, GIRLSCHOOL, THE TREATMENT, MORE

Devon Rocks	Powderham Castle	Aug 6/7
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GRINDERMAN

Dublin	Vicar St	Jun 18
Cork	The Marquee	Jun 20

Rock

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LIVE!

London Alexandra Palace Jul 24

THE GROUNDHOGS

Bristol Area 81 Apr 30
Glasgow The Ferry May 27
Durham Barnard Castle Festival May 29
London Camden Blues Kitchen Jun 2
Builth Wells Sonic Rock Solstice Jun 18
Swansea Garage Jul 9
Ludlow Assembly Rooms Jul 22

GUN, MARSEILLE, FURY UK, MORE

Manchester SOS Festival Jul 16/17

BETH HART

London Manette Street Borderline May 24

HAWKWIND

Leamington Spa Assembly Hall May 15
Southampton The Brook May 16
Falmouth Princess Pavilion Aug 12
London Shepherd's Bush Empire Dec 10

HEAVY METAL KIDS

Whitton The Winning Post May 1
Selby (Yorks) The Riverside Jun 10
Southend-on-Sea Riga Bar Jul 8
Colwyn Bay Football Club Aug 6
Bilston Robin 2 Aug 11

HOUSTON, CRASHDIET, SERPENTINE, MISS BEHAVIOUR

Grimsby Yardbirds Apr 29
Nottingham The Rig Apr 30
Glasgow ABC2 May 1
Wigan Club WNI May 2
Bristol Academy May 3
London Islington Academy May 4

GLENN HUGHES

Northampton Roadmender May 14
Cambridge Junction May 15
Birkenhead Pacific Road Arts centre May 17
Buxton Opera House May 18
Edinburgh Picture House May 20
Aberdeen Lemon Tree May 21
York Opera House May 23
Norwich Waterfront May 24
Brighton Komedia May 26
Poole Mr Kyp's May 27
Birmingham Town Hall May 29

ICED EARTH

London Shepherd's Bush Empire Nov 4
Birmingham Academy Nov 5
Bristol Academy Nov 6

IGGY & THE STOOGES

Newcastle Evolution Festival May 28/29

Recommended

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

IT BITES

Manchester Academy May 14
Birmingham Z Rock Festival May 15
Kingston The Peel May 16
Newcastle The Cluny May 18
Glasgow The Arches May 19
Whitehaven Rosehill Theatre May 20

IT BITES, LEGION, ARABIA, MORE

Z Rock 2011 Birmingham Asylum May 15

DOWNLOAD



Def Leppard, System Of A Down and Linkin Park (pictured) head up a devilishly delicious Download at Donington.

Download Festival

Castle Donington

Jun 10-12

IT'S A BEAUTIFUL DAY

Bilston Robin 2 Jun 14

JADIS

Southampton Talking Heads Jun 17
Kingston The Peel Jun 18
Birmingham Roadhouse Jun 19

JETTBLACK AND HEAVEN'S BASEMENT

Leicester Sub 91 May 5
York The Duchess May 6
Grimsby Yardbirds Club May 7
Manchester Moho Live May 8
Nottingham Rock City May 10
Newcastle Trillians Rock Bar May 11
Wolverhampton Slade Rooms May 12
Sheffield Corporation May 13
Hertfordshire The Attic May 14
Wrexham Central Station May 15
Stoke-on-Trent Sugarmill May 17
London Camden Underworld May 18
Southampton Talking Heads May 19
Margate Westroast Bar May 20
Exeter The Cavern May 22

ELTON JOHN

Cardiff CIA Jun 8/9
Glasgow SECC Jun 10
Shrewsbury Greenhous Meadow Jun 12
Douglas (IOM) Valhalla Tent Jun 16
Northamptonshire Cricket Ground Jun 25
Hove Sussex Cricket Ground Jun 26

JOURNEY, FOREIGNER, STYX

London Wembley Arena Jun 4
Birmingham NIA Jun 5
Newcastle Metro Radio Arena Jun 7
Manchester Evening News Arena Jun 8
Glasgow SECC Jun 9

JUDAS PRIEST, DREAM THEATER, BLACK COUNTRY COMMUNION, MORE

London High Voltage Festival Jul 23/24

JUDAS PRIEST, QUEENSRYËCHE

Newport Centre Jul 15
Manchester Apollo Jul 16
Doncaster The Dome Jul 17
Glasgow SECC Jul 19
Newcastle Metro Arena Jul 20
Wolverhampton Civic Hall Jul 21

London High Voltage Festival Jul 23
Bournemouth BIC Jul 24

KAMELOT

London Camden Koko Apr 28

KATATONIA

London Camden Koko May 6

BB KING

Manchester Apollo Jun 25
Edinburgh Playhouse Jun 26
London Royal Albert Hall Jun 28

KINGS OF LEON

Coventry Ricoh Arena May 30
Sunderland Stadium Of Light Jun 17
Manchester Lancashire Cricket Ground Jun 19
London O2 Arena Jun 20
London Hyde Park Jun 22/23
Edinburgh Murrayfield Stadium Jun 26

NILS LOFGREN ACOUSTIC DUO

Southampton The Brook Jun 1
London Cadogan Hall Jun 2
Bradford St George's Hall Jun 3
Cardiff St David's Hall Jun 4
High Wycombe Swan Theatre Jun 5
Bilston Robin 2 Jun 7
St Albans Arena Jun 8
Sheffield City Hall Jun 9
York Barbican Jun 10
Chatham Central Theatre Jun 11
Southend-on-Sea Cliffs Pavilion Jun 12
Liverpool Philharmonic Hall Jun 13
Northampton Derrigate Theatre Jun 15
Hastings White Rock Pavilion Jun 16
Shrewsbury Theatre Severn Jun 17
London Cadogan Hall Jun 18

SHELBY LYNNE

Edinburgh Queens Hall May 1
Salford The Lowry May 2
Bristol Thekla May 3
London Cadogan Hall May 6

MAGNUM

Nottingham Rock City Apr 27
Manchester Academy 2 Apr 28
Park & Dare Apr 29
London Shepherd's Bush Empire Apr 30
Bristol Academy May 1

RICHARD MARX, JOHN PARR

Glasgow Royal Concert Hall May 25
Birmingham Symphony Hall May 26
Liverpool Philharmonic Hall May 28
Bristol Colston Hall May 29
London Royal Albert Hall May 31

MASTERS OF REALITY

London Camden Underworld Jun 13

JOHN MELLENCAMP

Dublin Canal Theatre Jun 28
Manchester Apollo Jul 1
London Hammersmith Apollo Jul 2

METALLICA, MEGADETH, ANTHRAX, SLAYER, MORE

Knebworth Sonisphere Festival Jul 8-10

NEAL MORSE

London Camden Koko Jun 16
Manchester Academy 2 Jun 17
Glasgow The Arches Jun 18
London High Voltage Festival Jul 23

MORTIIS

Southampton Talking Heads Jun 28
Leamington Spa Assembly Hall Jun 29
Manchester Academy Jun 30
Glasgow Classic Grand Jul 1
Nottingham Rock City Jul 2
London Camden Koko Jul 3

MOTÖRHEAD, MORBID ANGEL, W.A.S.P., LAWNMOWER DETH, MORE

Walton-on-Trent Bloodstock Festival Aug 12-14

MUSE, MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE, DEFTONES, BEADY EYE, MORE

Leeds Festival Aug 26-28
Reading Festival Aug 26-28

MY DYING BRIDE

London Camden Electric Ballroom May 18
Manchester Academy 2 May 19
Wolverhampton Wulfrun Hall May 20
Dublin The Village May 21
Belfast Spring & Airbrake May 22

NIGHT RANGER

London Islington Academy Jun 23

PAPA ROACH

London Shepherd's Bush Empire Jul 16
Sheffield Academy Jul 17

PENDRAGON

Kingston The Peel May 28/29
Bilston Robin 2 May 30
Birkenhead Pacific Road Arts Centre Jun 2
Glasgow The Ferry Jun 3
Waltham-on-Dearne Montgomery Hall Jun 4

PIG IRÖN

Croydon The Scream May 12
Bristol Area 81 May 21

P.O.D.

Birmingham Institute Jun 16
London Kentish Town Forum Jun 17

PRIMUS

Manchester Academy Jul 12
London Brixton Academy Jul 13

QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE

London Chalk Farm Roundhouse May 17
Dublin Olympia May 19
Glasgow Academy May 20
Manchester Academy May 21

QUIREBOYS, TYKETTO, RECKLESS LOVE, GIRLSCHOOL, MORE

Prestatyn Hard Rock Hell Festival Dec 2-4

LOU REED

London Hammersmith Apollo Jul 4

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RIVERSIDE

London	King's Cross Scala	May 16
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PAUL RODGERS, JOE ELLOTT'S DOWN 'N' OUTZ

London	Royal Albert Hall	Apr 27
Birmingham	NIA	Apr 28

ROXETTE

London	Wembley Arena	Nov 15
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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
London	O2 Arena	May 25

MATT SCHOFIELD

London	Manette Street Borderline	May 3
Bilston	Robin 2	May 4
Manchester	Band On The Wall	May 5
York	Fibbers	May 6
Newcastle	The Cluny	May 7
Cardiff	Glee Club	May 8
Oxford	The Bullingdon	May 9

SIMPLE MINDS

Goudhurst (Kent)	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

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

SKIN

Nottingham	Rock City	Jul 21
Pontypridd	Municipal Hall	Jul 22
London	High Voltage Festival	Jul 23

SKINNY MOLLY

Southampton	The Brook	May 4
Cardiff	The Globe	May 5
Worthing	Grand Victorian Hotel	May 6
Falmouth	Princess Pavilion	May 7
Tavistock	The Wharf	May 8
Glasgow	The Ferry	May 11
Barnsley	The Birdwell	May 12
Gateshead	The Three Tuns	May 13
Derby	Flowerpot	May 14
Bury	Met Arts Centre	May 15
Chislehurst	Beaverwood Club	May 26
Exeter	Phoenix Arts Centre	May 27
Devizes	Long Street Blues Club	May 28

JOANNE SHAW TAYLOR

Bilston	Robin 2	May 17
Buxton	Opera House	May 18
Edinburgh	The Caves	May 20
Glasgow	Academy	May 21
Aberdeen	The Lemon Tree	May 22
York	Opera House	May 23
Newcastle	Academy	May 25
Nottingham	Rescue Rooms	May 26
Sheffield	Academy	May 27
Manchester	Academy	May 28
Bristol	The Tunnels	May 29
London	Islington Academy	May 31

SOCIAL DISTORTION

London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Jul 7
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HIGH VOLTAGE**STACKRIDGE**

Wavendon	The Stables	Apr 28
Lyme Regis	Woodmead Halls	Apr 30
Worcester	Huntingdon Hall	May 3
Cardiff	The Globe	May 4
Bilston	Robin 2	May 5
Liverpool	Stanley Theatre	May 7
Frome	Cheese & Grain	May 8
Farncombe	St Johns Church	May 27
Kendal	Brewery Arts Centre	May 28

STAMPEDE, PRAYING MANTIS

Kingston	The Peel	May 14
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RINGO STARR'S ALL STARRS

Hampton Court	Palace	Jun 17
Liverpool	Empire	Jun 18
Birmingham	Symphony Hall	Jun 20
Manchester	Opera House	Jun 22
Glasgow	Clyde Auditorium	Jun 23
Bournemouth	BIC	Jun 24

STATUS QUO

Suffolk	Thetford Forest	Jun 9
Shrewsbury	The Quarry	Jul 15
Northumberland	Alnwick Castle	Aug 20

STRAY

Milton Keynes	Crauford Arms	May 1
Leicester	The Musician	May 7
London	Herne Hill Half Moon	May 14
Southend-on-Sea	Riga Bar	Jun 11
Chislehurst	Beaverwood Club	Jun 23
London	Putney Half Moon	Jun 25
Leighton Buzzard	Wheatstheaf	Jul 16
Sevenoaks	Rock Plaza	Jul 22

RICHARD THOMPSON, ROBERT CRAY, PENTANGLE, MORE

Cambridge	Folk Festival	Jul 28-31
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THREE BONZOS AND A PIANO

Tavistock	The Wharf	May 13
Penzance	The Ritz	May 14
Bristol	The Thekla	May 15
Newbury	Artlington Arts Centre	May 20
Hailsham	The Pavilion	May 21
Tring	Court Theatre	Jun 10
Bury St Edmunds	The Apex	Jun 1
Salford	The Lowry	Jun 2
Newcastle-u-Lyme	New Vic Theatre	Jun 27

TIGERTAILZ, SPIT LIKE THIS

Manchester	Moho Live	May 12
Birmingham	Institute	May 13
London	Camden Underworld	May 14
Sheffield	Academy 2	May 18
Newcastle	Academy 2	May 19
Glasgow	Cathouse	May 20

TOTO

London	Hammersmith Apollo	Jun 26
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DEVIN TOWNSEND PROJECT

London	Highbury Aynsley Chapel	Nov 10, 13
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WALTER TROUT, AYNSELY LISTER, BERNIE MARSDEN, MORE

Ross-on-Wye	Linton Festival	Jun 17-19
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MARTIN TURNER'S WISHBONE ASH

Rotherham	Yorkshire Blues Festival	Apr 30
Falmouth	Pavilion	May 7
Tavistock	The Wharf	May 8
Barnsley	Birdwell Venue	May 12
Bury	The Met	May 15
Worthing	Grand Victorian Hotel	May 20
Utttoxeter	Acoustic Festival	May 21
Exeter	Phoenix Arts Centre	May 27
London	Camden Jazz Café	May 31
Ross-on-Wye	Linton Festival	Jun 17
Halifax	Square Chapel Arts Centre	Jun 18

TYKETTO

London	Camden Underworld	Nov 30
Sheffield	Corporation	Dec 1
Prestatyn	Hard Rock Hell Festival	Dec 3

VICIOUS RUMORS

London	Camden Underworld	May 24
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JOHN WAITE, JON AMOR

Lancaster	Grand Theatre	Apr 27
London	Manette Street Borderline	May 8

WALLY

Harrogate	Theatre	Jun 24/25
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WARRANT, UNRULY CHILD, JIMI JAMISON, CONEY HATCH, MORE

Nottingham	Firefest	Oct 21-23
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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

WEEZER

London	Brixton Academy	Jul 6
Punchestown	Oxygen Festival	Jul 8
Knebworth	Sonisphere Festival	Jul 9
Kinross	T In The Park Festival	Jul 10

WHITESNAKE, THE UNION

Newcastle	City Hall	Jun 13
Glasgow	Clyde Auditorium	Jun 14
Wolverhampton	Civic Hall	Jun 16
Manchester	Apollo	Jun 17
Bournemouth	BIC	Jun 19
London	Hammersmith Apollo	Jun 20

BRIAN WILSON

Manchester	Bridgewater Hall	Sep 13
Birmingham	Symphony hall	Sep 14
London	Royal Festival Hall	Sep 16-18

WITHIN TEMPTATION

Birmingham	Academy	Nov 8
Manchester	Academy	Nov 9
Glasgow	Barrowland	Nov 10
London	Brixton Academy	Nov 11

WOLFMOTHER

Liverpool	Academy	May 31
London	Kentish Town Forum	Jun 1

THE WONDER STUFF

Birmingham	Academy	Dec 15
London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Dec 16

Recommended**ZAPPA PLAYS ZAPPA**

York	Barbican	Nov 17
Gateshead	The Sage	Nov 18
Edinburgh	Picturehouse	Nov 19
Liverpool	Philharmonic Hall	Nov 21
Manchester	Bridgewater Hall	Nov 22
Cambridge	Com Exchange	Nov 23
Basingstoke	The Anvil	Nov 24
Coventry	Warwick Arts Centre	Nov 26
Leicester	De Montfort Hall	Nov 27
Oxford	New Theatre	Nov 28
London	Barbican Centre	Nov 29
Bristol	Colston Hall	Nov 30
Brighton	Dome	Dec 1

ZODIAC MINDWARP & THE LOVE REACTION

York	The Duchess	May 16
Newcastle	Academy 2	May 17
Glasgow	Academy 2	May 18
Liverpool	Academy 2	May 19
Sheffield	Academy 2	May 20
Birmingham	Academy 3	May 22
Bristol	Academy	May 23
Oxford	Academy 2	May 24
London	Islington Academy	May 25

ROB ZOMBIE

Castle Donington	Download Festival	Jun 12
Dublin	Olympia	Jun 28
Belfast	Ulster Hall	Jun 29

THE ZOMBIES

Frome	Cheese & Grain	May 14
Gateshead	The Sage	May 17
Liverpool	Stanley Theatre	May 18
Bilston	Robin 2	May 19
Leamington Spa	Assembly Hall	May 21
Market Harborough	Leisure Centre	May 21
Wavendon	The Stables	May 24
Cardiff	The Globe	May 25
Southampton	The Brook	May 26
London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	May 27



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Queens Of The Stone Age

Austin, Texas, La Zona Rosa

The desert queens retread their debut disc, and more besides.

★ Josh Homme's brush with death during knee surgery in 2010 appears to be ancient history now, for he looks in fine fettle, smoking and drinking onstage tonight. It's been three years since Queens Of The Stone Age last played the US but absence has clearly made hearts grow fonder as the 1000-strong audience warmly appreciates his laconic humour.

He has cause to be comfortable tonight, though, for the Californians are performing their entire self-titled 1998 debut in preparation for their impending world tour. Homme is the only member featured on the original recording but it's clear that Joey Castillo's sucker punch drumming and Troy Van Leeuwen's carefully measured flamboyance help increase the intensity of the "robot music for girls" tenfold. With their stoner links a variety of cigarettes are smoked in the audience and with every drink that is drunk, the atmosphere hums harder and more expectantly.

While the retelling of QOTSA's debut will leave an indelible mark on the mind of everyone here, the six-track encore – featuring tracks from all other albums bar 2000's *Rated R* – is the clincher. Closing with *Go With The Flow* gives the crowd a final burst of rapturous, lustful energy, encapsulating everything that this band is about. While there is braying for more, it's clear that nobody could leave any happier than at this moment.

Raziq Rauf

GETTY IMAGES



Rated R: 'rapturous and lustful'.

10cc

Oxford New Theatre

Precision tooled pop from an old cc.

★ With Graham Gouldman being the only original member of the group on this tour, it could be more accurately billed as 2.5cc, or even 10gg, but in the event the evening is still a success.

Gouldman begins with an acoustic set, bringing on his band one by one as he unveils 60s gems from when he was punting classy items to Wayne Fontana, the Yardbirds, Hollies and Herman's Hermits. *Pamela*, *Pamela*, *Bus Stop*, *For Your Love* and the proto-Brit Pop *No Milk Today* are perfectly presented as he revisits his back pages before returning to a 10cc greatest hits package that doesn't veer from the script.

Gouldman and co place their emphasis on craft and technique rather than soul and sweat, but that's surely the point of 10cc who were, in a way, England's answer to Steely Dan. (*And in many other ways, not* – Reviews Ed.)

I'm Mandy, Fly Me, *Good Morning Judge* and *Art For Art's Sake* are immaculately rendered, while everything about the show, from the positioning of the guitars to the brief anecdotal introductions, is just so. Evidently Gouldman likes to keep his house in order and the audience reserve their excitement for *Donna* and *I'm Not In Love*. No unpleasant surprises.

Max Bell

The Devin Townsend Project

London Islington Academy

Joyful insanity from metal's biggest brain.

★ Heavy metal artists aren't supposed to radiate so much joy, and nor are they supposed to veer so far from the template and still leave their fans in such states of wide-eyed, revelation-struck wonder by the end. But Devin Townsend is a one-off, genuine (piss)artist in whose comic/cosmic worldview you sign up for the wild, kaleidoscopic ride, no matter where it takes you. Tonight, it starts off with projections of his Ziltoid puppet proclaiming partying, coffee and his penile proclivities to a backdrop of eagerly lapped up happy house, before launching into the spiralling, expansive wonder of *Addicted!*, and ends with a gaggle of fans joining him onstage for a giddy 'world's cheesiest song', *Bend It Like Bender!* In between, Devin's ecstatically gurning face, hilarious banter, frictionless tenor and wind-tunnel howl become ceaseless barometers for the life-giving forces of absurdity.

Devin Townsend's brain is clearly a fissile reaction chamber for wonder, and the two hours onstage leave everyone feeling as though we've received enough to inspire a lifetime.

Jonathan Selzer

Peter Frampton

London Shepherd's Bush Empire

Coming alive one more time.

★ The Achilles heel of the classic rock market is how so few of its major players are able to emulate, let alone exceed, the musical heights they hit in their heyday. Peter Frampton is one of the exceptions. As he ably demonstrated before a packed adoring crowd at the Empire, not only is he a miles better guitar player these days, but he's also found a brand new groove as a singer-songwriter.

Live, though, is where he is still found at his best, and his current band – keyboardist, guitarist Rob Arthur, *Comes Alive* veteran bassist Stanley Sheldon and drummer Dan Wojciechowski – is also of the highest order. Tonight we get a set of non-stop highlights, from Frampton's pop-rock purple patch – *Show Me The Way*, *Baby I Love Your Way*, *Do You Feel Like We Do* – to his masterclass musician present, such as the beautifully understated acoustic instrumental *Suite Liberté*, the stirring *Restraint* and the movingly autobiographical *Asleep At The Wheel*.

Equally impressive is the effortless way he communicates with his audience; witty asides; true-life stories; and of course the ever-dependable talk box – albeit the modern, trimmer version.

Mick Wall

Manowar

Birmingham Academy

All hail! The lords of metal return for a rare appearance.

★ It's all too easy to mock Manowar. The band's live show – not witnessed on these shores since 1994 – is a painfully over-amplified heavy metal pantomime which, disconcertingly, they seem to take as seriously as life and death itself – possibly more so. "Wimps and posers, leave the hall!" Manowar demand during *Brothers Of Metal* and a bedemined legion waves its fists in exaggerated fury.

They arrive to a classical intro tape, followed by Orson Welles' declaration: "All hail, Manowar!", the anthem Manowar despatched at ear-splitting volume. With its exaggerated feedback and elongated, gladiatorial closing powerchord, the band might even say more about heavy metal in this one single song than others manage in full careers. They don't waste time justifying their absence, all but ignoring the audience until near the show's denouement and a promise of: "We will return".

Seven of eight newly re-recorded tracks from their debut album, *Battle Hymns*, are aired, Joey DeMaio's bass solo *William's Tale* following later along with *Metal Warriors*, *Heart Of Steel*, *Kill With Power*, *Sign Of The Hammer* and a simply glorious *Hail To England*.

Rumoured to be 56 years old, Eric Adams still has a voice to strip paint and there's enough leather onstage to give a member of PETA a coronary. It's all completely ludicrous, though of course that's the whole point. But what's more preposterous still is that a band this monumentally good has been away for so long.

Dave Ling



Manowar: death to false metal etc etc.

Peter Gabriel

London Hammersmith Apollo

Without frontiers. Save a stage barrier.

★ Creeping from the shadows to hiss and purr through a cinematic rendering of his wire-taut stalker anthem *Intruder*, this show is a bold statement of intent. At last year's O2 gigs, Gabriel performed his entire *Scratch My Back* album of orchestrated covers before delving all too briefly into his own backcat; tonight the focus is on Gabriel material, the orchestra emphasising the contrasts in his majestic canon.

So *Darkness* veers between soothing and serrated, terror and comfort; *Red Rain* is as obscene and powerful as a Tarantino set-piece; *Signal To Noise* builds from a faint throb to a crescendo of pure alien drama. The New Blood orchestra revels the challenge, recreating the earthy heartbeat of *Rhythm Of The Heat*, the Inca percussions of *San Jacinto* and the African funeral drums of *Biko* with plucked-string aplomb.

And when Gabriel's not out to shake us, he's straight-up sublime. A chest-swelling *Mercy Street*, a heartbreaking *Don't Give Up*, A jubilant *Solsbury Hill* that sees an audience rush the aisles at an orchestral gig for possibly the first time since Metallica. That time it was to strangle the conductor, this time we've embraces on our minds. Monumental.

Mark Beaumont

Holy Grail/Revoker

London, Camden Barfly

Upcoming NWOBHM revivalists.

★ 1980 is the gigantic swinging cock of heavy metal – the year it all happened: *British Steel*, *Ace Of Spades*, *Iron Maiden*, and the list goes on, casting its monumental phallic shadow over every year since right up to a Monday night here, when Pasadena's Holy Grail take the stage and, in a frenzy of denim and leather-clad bravado conjure the NWOBHM riffage of yore in a sweaty feat of historic re-enactment.

It isn't lost on the crowd either, who've packed this venue to bang heads, spill beer, and throw horns to ferocious melodies that are part and parcel of the New Wave Of Trad Metal, a musical undercurrent seeing a panoply of young bands born long after 1980 summoning the machine-gun gallop of their forefathers. Holy Grail are, undeniably, one of the best – singer James's banshee theatrics piercing the howitzer-din of riffage in a crushing set that leaves their devotees spent and dwindling by the time Welsh bruisers Revoker appear to dole out a blitzkrieg that for all its bluster has some way to go before bringing the roof down. It's a colossally heavy brew, full of promise and deafening self-belief, but tonight undeniably belongs to the old school, fresh-faced as they may be.

Alexander Milas

Stone Temple Pilots

El Paso, Speaking Rock Casino

Weiland stays sober for a stunner.

★ "This is the first summer show we've played in winter time," observes a surprisingly sober and present Scott Weiland as the recently reformed STP hit the stage a mere 10 minutes late. Warming up with a robust *Crackerman*, the pleasure of reunion is writ large on their beaming visages. Visually Joaquin Cortez meets the Thin White Duke, Weiland mesmerises the female Latinos who scream throughout the show.

Around him the band are an entertainment in themselves; Dean DeLeo delivers the guitar hero moves without irony while his brother Robert wields his bass like a lead instrument, lurching zombie-like around the stage. Drummer Eric Kretz is a revelation; hunched over his battery, he's the engine powering STP.

Naturally, the 22-song STP history lesson highlights favourites like *Vaseline*, *Big Empty*, *Plush*, *Sex Type Thing*, *Dead & Bloated*, but new additions *Between The Lines*, *Hickory Dichotomy* and *Huckleberry Crumble* (their Aerosmith moment) nestle snugly among them. Who cares that Weiland and the band travel in separate buses; they're back together where it counts – live onstage, and with a perfectly constructed, beautifully lit, impeccably performed show.

Peter Makowski

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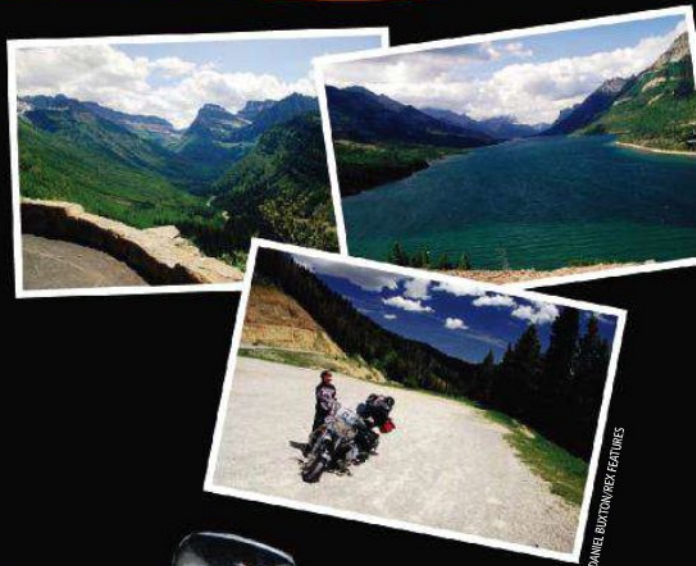
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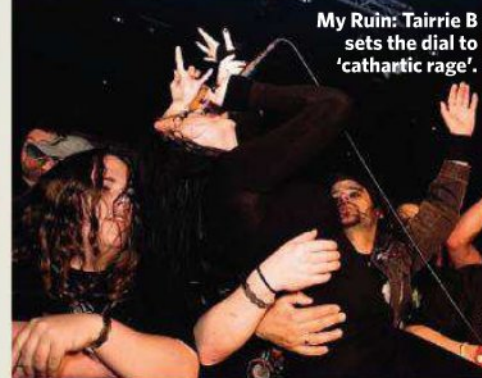


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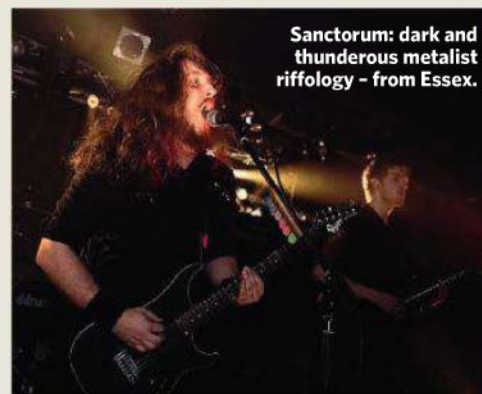
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Accept: still German after all these years.

528
 'Three stages, and more than 30 bands of varying degrees of heaviness.'



My Ruin: Tairrie B sets the dial to 'cathartic rage'.



Sanctorum: dark and thunderous metalist riffology - from Essex.



Turisas: Finns ain't what they used to be.

Hammerfest III

Prestatyn Pontin's

All the heavy metal you can shake a large, black stick at.

★ *Hi-de-Hi* was never like this. On an uncharacteristically sunny weekend in the middle of March, a 40-year-old holiday camp on the North Wales coast becomes the epicentre of all things metal in the UK when 3,000 people clad almost exclusively in black descend for a weekend of good old-fashioned noisy fun.

Welcome to Hammerfest, the annual bash thrown by the good people at *Metal Hammer*, sister magazine of *Classic Rock*. Now in its third year, the formula is

ridiculously simple: three stages, more than 30 bands of varying degrees of heaviness, plus a seemingly limitless supply of alcohol.

There's something for all tastes this year, as long as those tastes involve the words 'heavy' and 'metal'. Representing the Scandinavian wing are black metal titans *Satyricon*,

whose machine-tooled menace provides Saturday night's premier attraction on the cavernous main stage, and Swedish bruisers *Entombed*, whose gravel-gargling death'n'roll hasn't diminished two decades into their career. At the other end of the spectrum are LA rap-metal standard-bearers *My Ruin*, who draw an impressive crowd on the second stage as frontwoman Tairrie B sets the dial to 'cathartic rage'.

But it's not all about the marquee names. Glasgow's *Attica Rage* supply dancers, fire-breathers and a blizzard of sparks to augment their trad-metal anthems, while NWOBHM survivors *Blitzkrieg* roll back the years with a propulsive post-midnight set on the second stage. There are also a smattering of oddities, the oddest of which are easily Brighton duo *Oaf*, whose stripped-down set on the third stage (handily situated in the onsite pub) brilliantly consists entirely of drum, bass and unintelligible knob jokes.

There is also a small but perfectly formed classic rock delegation scattered liberally across the weekend. *The Treatment* are a gloriously old school mix of bluesy rock and flailing hair, like *Whitesnake* parachuted into the middle of a death metal

convention. Elsewhere the spectacularly OTT circus that is *Turbowolf* are simultaneously tongue-in-cheek and utterly convincing. They are, as Oscar Wilde might have said if he'd bothered turning up to Hammerfest, far too important to take seriously.

It's not a competition, but if it was then *Accept* would be in with a good shot of a place on the winner's podium. Having long since banished the diminutive ghost of Udo Dirkschneider, equally short-arsed frontman Mark Tornillo prowls the stage like a cut-price Brian Johnson, complete with flat cap and pebble-dashed throat. Behind him, the band churn out *Metal Heart* and *Fast As A Shark* with as much vigour as they did 30 years ago.

By Sunday morning it's all over and 3,000 weary, possibly hungover souls emerge blinking into the light of the real world, while the Pontin's staff prepare for *Classic Rock*'s own Hard Rock Hell shindig in December. Hi-de-hi, campers.

Dave Everley



Attica Rage: Glasgow's growliest.

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IB



Continued from page 65

gradually regained control of his life and career (having released the acoustic *Hurt Me* album and its return-to-form, all-guns-blazing follow-up *Que Sera Sera* in rapid succession). He had finally re-established contact with his mother and sister, but had still heard absolutely nothing from Julie concerning the state of health and whereabouts of their two young sons, Vito and Dino. Johnny knew the pain of an absentee father, and feared his sons would consider his enforced absence from their lives as cold rejection.

Susanne: "He missed his kids. It was hurting him so much. He didn't know where they were but he was thinking of them every day. I think he got a lot of his sorrow and anger out when playing music."

Returning to the road may have been therapeutic, but slipping back into the skin of obnoxious, junkie wastrel Thunders was becoming an increasingly painful process.

Susanne Blomqvist: "He hated going on the road. He just wanted to stay home, read his books and watch films."

Now finally weaned from heroin to Methadone, John would have to metamorphose into his stage persona by other means.

"We were on the train to the gig," Oddballs vocalist Alison Gordy remembers. "Johnny's playing cards with Stevie, and he starts becoming Johnny Thunders. He started twitching. I went over and said: 'Johnny! You're becoming him.' He said: 'Yeah.' He didn't do any drugs, but I could see a physical change coming over him. It was an interesting transformation; suddenly he was all jazzed up."

Some sections of his audience didn't want to see Thunders clean, they'd come to see the mythic smack zombie of legend.

"It was so sad sometimes when Johnny was in great shape and you could see these vultures' disappointment," says Stevie Klasson. "They'd be calling out for *Junkie Business* and throwing loaded syringes on stage. Johnny Thunders was sick and tired of being Johnny Thunders. He wanted to be an entertainer and have a great band."

Thunders, determined to give the kids exactly what they wanted, even started to fake it.

Glen Matlock: "I remember seeing him backstage at the 100 Club. We had a chat and then he said: 'We're going on now,' so I went out the front. And in the minute it took him to walk to the stage, he went from being completely compos mentis to falling over. It was like an act."

"He would absolutely do that," confirms Gail Higgins, "That little stumble as he walked on stage was a definite put-on. He knew what they wanted. At the end he'd say: 'They've come to see me die.' Which must have been sad for him."

Susanne Blomqvist: "I can remember him winking at me from the stage to say: 'I'm okay, even if I'm acting fucked-up.' Maybe I'm taking his pants off here... maybe people will be disappointed, but he really wasn't that fucked-up on stage."

Johnny was suddenly so together he was even offering wise counsel to others.

Stevie Klasson: "He was very protective, especially when it came to drugs. He didn't want me to make the same mistakes that he had done. I asked him early on for some smack and he gave me a smack in the mouth."

Peter Perrett: "In the 80s, Johnny would come around and tell me I was wasting my talent."

Johnny Thunders's transformation from burned-out casualty to rehabilitated contender appeared to culminate with the birth of Jamie Genzale in 1987, just as work was being completed on *Copy Cats*, a collaborative collection of formative covers with Patti Palladin that represented the finest, most complete body of work to bear the Thunders name since *So Alone*. As he returned to Sweden for the birth, it seemed that Johnny was finally in a position to be a real father at last; to break the cycle of parental abandonment that had dogged and defined his entire life. But, deep down, something was wrong.

Susanne Blomqvist: "When Jamie was born I could feel that he didn't want to get too close to her. He was very proud, and he took care of her, but at the same time I could see that he was scared to be a parent again... scared of hurting her. He couldn't stand the thought that we weren't going to get old together, as a family. He didn't want to repeat the same thing his father did to him."

"I never saw him as Johnny Thunders. For me he was John Genzale. And nobody else."

– Girlfriend Susanne Blomqvist

If Thunders's reticence to commit might have seemed irrational, his next move was inexplicable. Until you realise he was harbouring a dark secret. Not long after Jamie's birth, Johnny Thunders had been diagnosed with leukaemia.

Susanne Blomqvist: "We separated when Jamie was one-and-a-half years old, and he moved back to New York. I drove him out to the airport, we said goodbye, and I knew I was never going to see him again. He went to see a doctor once and they took some tests, and something changed. I said: 'Something is not okay with you.' He said: 'Oh, it was okay, it was nothing.' But then he started behaving in a way that made him unbearable to have around. He wasn't hurting me or anything like that, he just wasn't the homey guy any more – the guy who wants to cook the chicken soup, or go and rent a film... He was showing me less and less of John, and resorting to Johnny Thunders. That must have been very painful for him, because he didn't want to be Johnny Thunders, he wanted to be the father, the husband, the good friend, the best friend, but to stand the pain he had to choose that role. He knew something that I didn't know, that nobody knew: that he wouldn't live too long. That's how protective he was over me and Jamie. He was saving us. I think of him every day and I miss him every single day. He's still in my heart. I'm so grateful that we had those years together and we had beautiful Jamie. I never saw John as Johnny Thunders. For me he was John. John Genzale. And nobody else."

Thunders returned to the road with a vengeance in the last year of his life. In the spring of '91, following lucrative gigs in Japan, he ended up in New Orleans intent on fulfilling his ultimate musical ambition. "The plan was to hire Sea-Saint studios," says Stevie Klasson, "get Jerry Nolan back on the drum stool, and fly Alison Gordy down once we'd settled in. Johnny was hoping to rope Dr John and John Campbell into the equation. For years it was Johnny's big dream to record a New Orleans record."

But Thunders never got to record his New Orleans record. He was found dead in room 37 of St. Peter House, New Orleans on the afternoon of April 23, 1991. He was 38 years old. The exact circumstances of his death remain inconclusive and the subject of much conjecture. But it seems his leukaemia-weakened body went into seizure on the night of the 22nd, and his new-found companions, possibly convinced they'd either supplied him with the chemical high that had killed him or who were holding enough chemicals to make it appear that this was the case when the cops came calling, simply left him to die.

Thunders's body was taken back to New York for his funeral. The presence at the service of 13-year-old Vito Genzale – Thunders's son from his first marriage, formerly known as The Sprog – almost stopped Lee Black Childers's heart; the resemblance was so strong. Vito and his brother Dino hadn't been told who their father was. Alison

Gordy took Vito aside, sat him down and told him: "You're going to hear a lot about your father, but don't believe everything you hear, because I want you to know that he was a really funny, smart, great person."

Jerry Nolan was hit hard by Thunders's death. "I answered the phone and this guy's crying, and it's Jerry," says Steve Dior. "And I'm like: 'Oh my god, Jerry's crying.' And he doesn't cry. He's bawling his head off worrying that Johnny didn't know how much he loved him."

Nolan died following a massive stroke brought on by bacterial pneumonia and meningitis on January 14, 1992, less than a year after Thunders.

Susanne Blomqvist: "They were like an old couple who'd been married for a hundred years. It was like they couldn't live with or without one other. Jerry took a big responsibility for Johnny, and I believe that deep down Jerry missed Johnny so much that he died within the year."

When Thunders died, Nolan asked the guitarist's sister, Mariann Bracken, that if anything happened to him could he be buried next to Johnny. Today the pair occupy adjacent plots in St. Mary's Cemetery, Queens.

"You had to separate Johnny Thunders from the real Johnny, says Billy Rath. "Underneath that veneer was a loving father, a loving man and a good guy to be with. He was a very lonely person because of carrying that persona and losing everybody he held dear. That song *So Alone* fits him so well. He felt very alone."

So what became of The Sprog? Abandoned in infancy, his ultimate legacy would appear to be a similarly troubled soul to that of his father. On discovering that he was the estranged son of Johnny Thunders, Vito Genzale tried to live up to his legend. On the 17th of last month he made parole from Sing Sing Correctional Facility after serving four-and-a-half years for criminal sale of a controlled substance. ①

Rainbow



Continued from page 70

was also a little bit cocky, and if you got like that with Ritchie you were shot down in flames.”

Bain was shocked when he went to the band's office to get details of recording sessions for the next album, only to be informed that his services were no longer required.

“I heard they were talking about getting rid of me during the Australian tour,” he says now. “Maybe they thought I was drinking too much. It never affected my playing. I know it got wild and wacky in Japan, but we had been working our asses off for a year, we were winding down.”

In January 1977, a curt statement was issued to say that Carey and Bain had been dismissed. “They were not complementing the founder members’ style of playing and their musical direction,” ran the official line. Blackmore declines to say why he decided to part company with the two musicians.

Thirty-five years on, the bassist still sounds disappointed. “We could have grown together. It was a really good line-up”, he says. “We had fun when we played, and we got big crowds.”

March 2011

Asked when he last listened to *Rising*, Ritchie Blackmore replies: “I haven’t heard it in 25 years.” He continued to fly the Rainbow flag until 1984, albeit in increasingly radio-friendly forms.

“He was perturbed that he wasn’t being played on the radio,” reckons Bain, “and he decided to go a different route. He didn’t think we were going to get successful, because *Rising* was too heavy.”

After Deep Purple’s reunion in the 80s and a brief resurrection of the Rainbow name in the mid-90s, Blackmore has largely turned his back on rock in favour of his Renaissance-era project Blackmore’s Night with his wife, vocalist Candice Night. They have released 14 albums in as many years.

Ronnie James Dio left Rainbow after 1978’s

Now aged 57 and living in Germany, Tony Carey has had a successful career as a performer, arranger and producer since leaving Rainbow. Two years ago he teamed up with Blackmore’s son, Jurgen, to form Over The Rainbow, performing classic Rainbow covers. Soon after, he was diagnosed with cancer and given only a 10 per cent of survival. Remarkably, he beat the disease and is now fit and about to take Over The Rainbow out on the road again. “I’ve lost many of my organs but managed to save my Hammond,” he jokes.

After Rainbow, Jimmy Bain joined Dio in the singer’s solo band. Today he’s threatening to release a solo album, and has started writing an autobiography, called *I Fell Into Metal*. Despite past tensions he has kept in touch with Blackmore, and

says he has no bad feelings towards his former boss: “I was kind of pissed off that I didn’t get to stay longer, but I can never say anything bad about Rainbow. I was only in it for two years, but it’s done me a lot of favours.”

A recent two-disc, expanded reissue of *Rising* saw the original widely praised as one of the defining albums of the 1970s; the group who recorded it have

been hailed as one of the most under-appreciated rock bands ever. Even as far back as 1976, Ritchie Blackmore certainly agreed: “Everybody who’s heard it thinks it’s my best playing in a long time, which I suppose is a compliment,” he said. “Then again, what do they know?”

The reissued Deluxe version of Rainbow’s Rising is out now.

“We could have grown together. It was a good line-up. We had fun when we played, and we got big crowds.”

– Jimmy Bain

Long Live Rock’n’Roll, while Cozy Powell stayed until 1980. Sadly, neither are around to celebrate the 35th anniversary of *Rising* in May: Powell died in a car crash on April 5, 1998; Dio succumbed to stomach cancer on May 16, 2010.

“Rainbow was such a great influence on younger musicians,” Dio said. “I’d see these bands who would say, ‘Rainbow were the reason I started to play.’ It was a ground-breaking time.”

The Alarm



Continued from page 79

with cancer, it was Watson who suggested the idea of trying a faith healer. Peters agreed, and called a woman recommended by Watson. They talked on the phone, and the faith healer told him she was “seeing green” as they spoke. During this time they never met in person.

Peters had postponed conventional treatment to finish dates he’d already booked in the US. His doctor told him he was a fool. He was, by his own admission, terrified.

“I knew I had to focus on something or I wouldn’t get through those next few months,” he says. “I thought of Lennon wearing his army jacket, and I went down that route: go to war against the illness. I went to an army surplus store and kitted myself out in green fatigues.”

He spent six weeks playing city-to-city and wondering if he’d made the biggest mistake of his life. He flew home fearing for his life.

And then a miracle happened: blood tests showed the disease had reversed. The doctors had no idea what had happened. Neither did Peters.

“I thought the cancer was over then. I felt so lucky and so glad to be alive. It really fuelled the

whole of my life from that point on.”

Which is why he started to do things for himself. He built up a music and DVD catalogue online, and slowly turned himself into a one-man industry, playing live and releasing exclusive albums to an eager audience long forgotten by any label. He resurrected The Alarm name in 2000, eight years after he’d instituted the yearly Gathering, which brings fans from all over the world to North Wales for a weekend of all things Alarm.

In 2004 he sent one of his songs, 45 RPM, to friends in the media without saying who it was by. The response was emphatic: it was a rabble-raising, dynamic three minutes; people couldn’t help but love it. When they asked who the band was, Peters told them they were some kids called The Poppyfields.

“I’m all about going with the positives and trying things, given all that has happened.”

– Mike Peters

“We told people we managed them, made a fake video and website,” he remembers (the band miming to the song on the video were actually the young Chester punk’n’soul outfit the Wayriders). “It charted, and we went mental. It was like *Sixty Eight Guns* all over again. Then the story broke that we’d made the whole thing up. We had CBS fly in and film us for Dan Rather (the famous American

TV news anchor) in the US. It was huge. And now there’s going to be a film made about it [*Vinyl*, starring Phil Daniels]. It gave us a new lease of life.”

Sometimes, though, life is too good to be true. In 2006 Peters’s cancer returned.

“My doctors said that I’d probably had the same thing 10 years ago, as it’s a very similar disease to non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma,” he says. “What I have, chronic lymphocytic leukaemia, has only really been recognised in more recent times.”

Despite – or maybe because of – his illness, he keeps moving. After being diagnosed for the second time he founded the cancer charity Love Hope Strength Foundation. In October 2007, Peters and 38 other musicians, including Squeeze’s Glen Tilbrook, and Slim Jim Phantom of the Stray Cats, played a charity show at Mount Everest base camp

– the highest concert ever to have taken place on land. He works hard, too. As well as The Alarm and his parallel solo career, he joined the recently reactivated Big Country, replacing the late Stuart Adamson as singer. “Mike has a light that shines through him, and most folks who are lucky enough to spend time with him pick up on its positive radiations,” says Billy Duffy. “At least that’s been my experience.”

To hear it, Peters is shining still.

“I’m all about going with the positives and trying things, given all that has happened,” he says. “We are defined by the choices we make in life. It’s not an outcome; you take your chances.”

The Alarm tour the UK in May (see p127). The Sound And The Fury is out 6 June.

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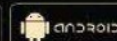
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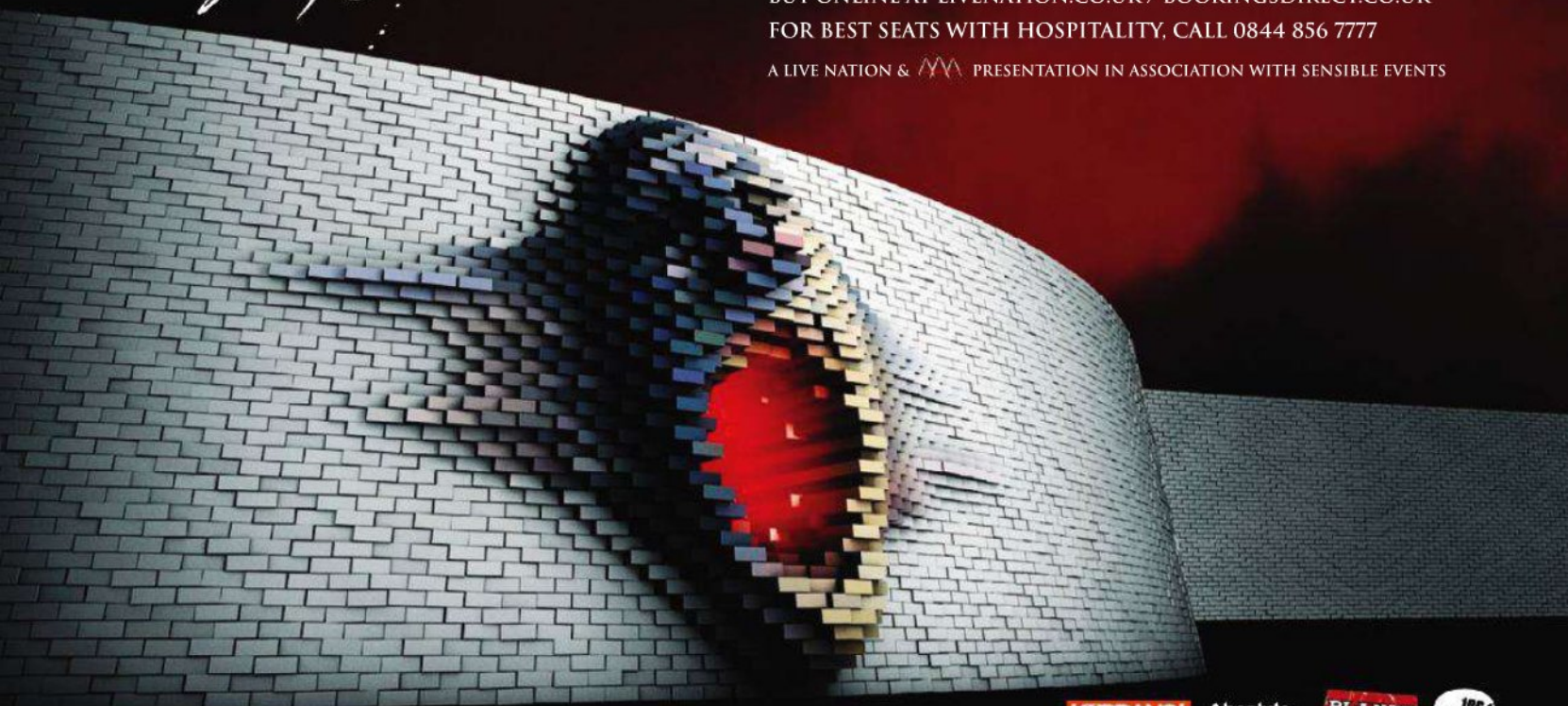
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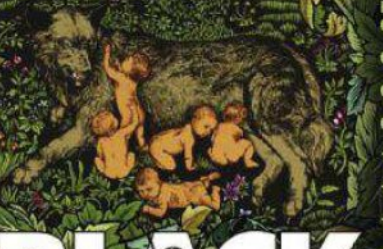
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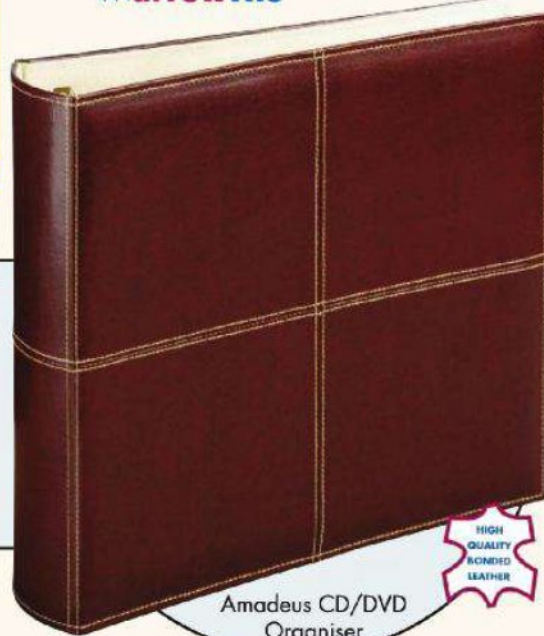
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Josh Homme on guns, God and Sarah Palin.

Interview: **Paul Elliott**

Josh Homme is one of rock's high achievers. A founding member of stoner rock pioneers Kyuss, he currently fronts both his long-time band Queens Of The Stone Age and A-list supergroup Them Crooked Vultures, in which he stars alongside Dave Grohl and John Paul Jones. He has also put together the loose Desert Sessions collective, worked as a producer, and played drums in Eagles Of Death Metal.

You're always a very busy man, Josh. What are you doing right now?

I'm in... shit, Atlanta? Queens Of The Stone Age are touring the States, playing our first record from 1998. I once saw Cheap Trick do their first three records three nights in a row and it was fucking awesome! For us it's this little moment of hovering over the camp-fire of that first record, which is kinda cool.

What do you think of your old bandmates reuniting for the Kyuss Lives tour?

It's great. They're keep the music alive, and all those shows sold out right away. Kyuss fans are so – to use a California word – gnarly.

You've described yourself as a conservative. Do you mean politically?

Sure. I'm very socially liberal, but I don't think the government knows what to do with your money better than you do. If the government were a business it would be completely bankrupt. And they always put new laws on the books but they never take any away. I wish they'd just get off my fucking lawn, basically.

Are you thinking of joining the Tea Party, like Sarah Palin?

I think I'm even worse than that. I'm a fallen libertarian. In America, the land of the free, almost every civil liberty has been taken away; people use the police for everything. If you have some disagreement with your neighbour, they call the police, a third party, to mediate. And you basically give away control to a little Judge Judy. I don't believe in that. I don't like... I guess you'd have to say The Man, for want of a better word.

What else pisses you off?

I can't stand the modern schooling system. If you learn a little bit of everything you're a Renaissance man? No. You can play *Trivial Pursuit* and that's about all.

How has fatherhood changed you?

Not at all. Pepper Keenan [of Corrosion Of Conformity and Down] said to me: "It's the rock'n'roll curse, man – you have a daughter, it's payback time." But really, it's the best thing ever. If I can teach my daughter that she doesn't have to be an object to be worth it, if I can teach her to love to learn so that she can really excel at whatever it is she loves, then I'd be happy.

What's the best advice you ever been given?

My grandpa used to say: "If you're gonna be different you're gonna get hit with rocks, so you need to learn to like rocks."

Have you ever had a drug problem?

It's never really been a problem. I've always been able to get 'em.

Before we released *Feel Good Hit Of The Summer* [from QOTSA's *Rated R* album], I sensed that I was heating up a brand to push on to my skin. But that song truly wasn't an endorsement, even though people immediately said:

"Oh yes it is!" It was manipulative and funny. I don't take myself too seriously but I take the music seriously, and that was a perfect melding of both, for me.

When you fired Nick Oliveri from Queens, was that one of the most difficult decisions you've had to make?

What happened between Nick and I had nothing to do with music. I told the truth, and it was so hard to say out loud that it spiralled me out of control for a good eight months afterwards. I didn't want to say what had happened because I felt like it would crush Nick's reputation. But instead it made me look like an egomaniac freak. Nick kinda played on that and it hurt my feelings, so I finally said what happened. And when I did I felt terrible, because that's not what you should be doing to your friend.

Do you own a gun?

Yeah. I own six guns. I have a classic Winchester repeater rifle, like the old cowboys had, I have a sawn-off shotgun, and a Berretta 9mm target pistol that's amazing.

Which would you reach for if you found an intruder on your property?

I probably wouldn't go for a gun. They say if you don't pull a gun you won't get shot. Generally, I'm from the desert and I was raised around guns – raised to respect them.

Do you believe in God?

Absolutely. But not a man with a snow-white beard. I think we have a symbiotic relationship with the entire world, and I believe God is everything you don't understand. Why are we here? To me, the answer is it doesn't

matter – you're here. I don't try to comprehend what you can't comprehend.

What is the meaning of life?

Family. I've always felt that way. There have been moments when I've fancied myself a pirate, and I was lost at sea. But I've never found, in all my pirating escapades, anything more important than the relationships with your family. 

*Queens Of The Stone Age's UK tour begins on May 17. The expanded version of their debut album is available now via **Rekords Rekords**.*



Josh Homme:
family guy.

"Drugs have never been a problem. I've always been able to get 'em."

ROSS HARTEN

Good news for CD owners

British company re-invents the HiFi

"Mr Brennan you are a genius. The JB7 is truly a wonderful thing. I have only owned mine for two days but already it feels like an old friend. I admire its simplicity of operation, its range of functions, its unobtrusive size, and the quality of sound simply delights me. It's all I could wish for. Thank you. Kind Regards."

When Martin Brennan designed the Brennan JB7 he threw out the rule book. The Brennan is a CD player with a hard disk that stores up to 5,000 CDs. 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 it out of the way in another room or retire it to the attic.

You can use the JB7 in two ways. You can use it with loudspeakers or you can play it through your existing HiFi. The Brennan gives names to tracks and albums from a database of 2.6 million CDs as you load each CD. It takes a few minutes to load a CD.

The Brennan has a unique text search facility that



Small enough to pick up with one hand, Big enough for a lifetime of music

shows a reducing number of matches as you press successive letters on the remote control. Once you get the hang of it you can find one track or album out of your entire music collection in a few seconds. So to find "Nessun Dorma" you would press letters "NES" or "DOR" and scroll through the shortlist of matches.

What's the point of owning CDs you don't play?

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 hundreds of cheap plastic boxes.

CDs are great but they are also inconvenient, inaccessible and a bit of a chore – that's why Martin Brennan designed the Brennan JB7.



Key Points

Three sizes – up to 5000 CDs

- One button plays the entire collection at random
- Text search finds tracks / albums / artists in seconds
- Browse albums

- by spinning the volume knob
- Display tracks by name as they play
- Load CDs in about four minutes
- 2.6 million album database – updated monthly
- Seven rainbow colour coded playlists
- 180 X 32 soft scrolling vacuum fluorescent display
- Segue function blends one track into the next
- One touch record from vinyl, cassette or radio
- Loads and plays MP3 from USB
- Remote control or front panel
- Volume knob pushes to use as a selector
- Delete tracks you don't like
- Clock with

- alarm
- 60 Watt power amplifier
- 4.8 X 16 X 22cm steel and aluminium construction
- Small and tough enough if you are on the move
- Used by restaurants, hotels, pubs, dentists, schools
- Sold to more than 30 Countries
- Backup music to external USB hard disk for safe keeping
- "Superb" - Gramophone
- "Best Buy" - Hi Fi choice
- Choice of colours Navy Blue or Gun Metal
- Optional matching loudspeakers
- Prices from £366.



The face behind Brennan



Martin Brennan

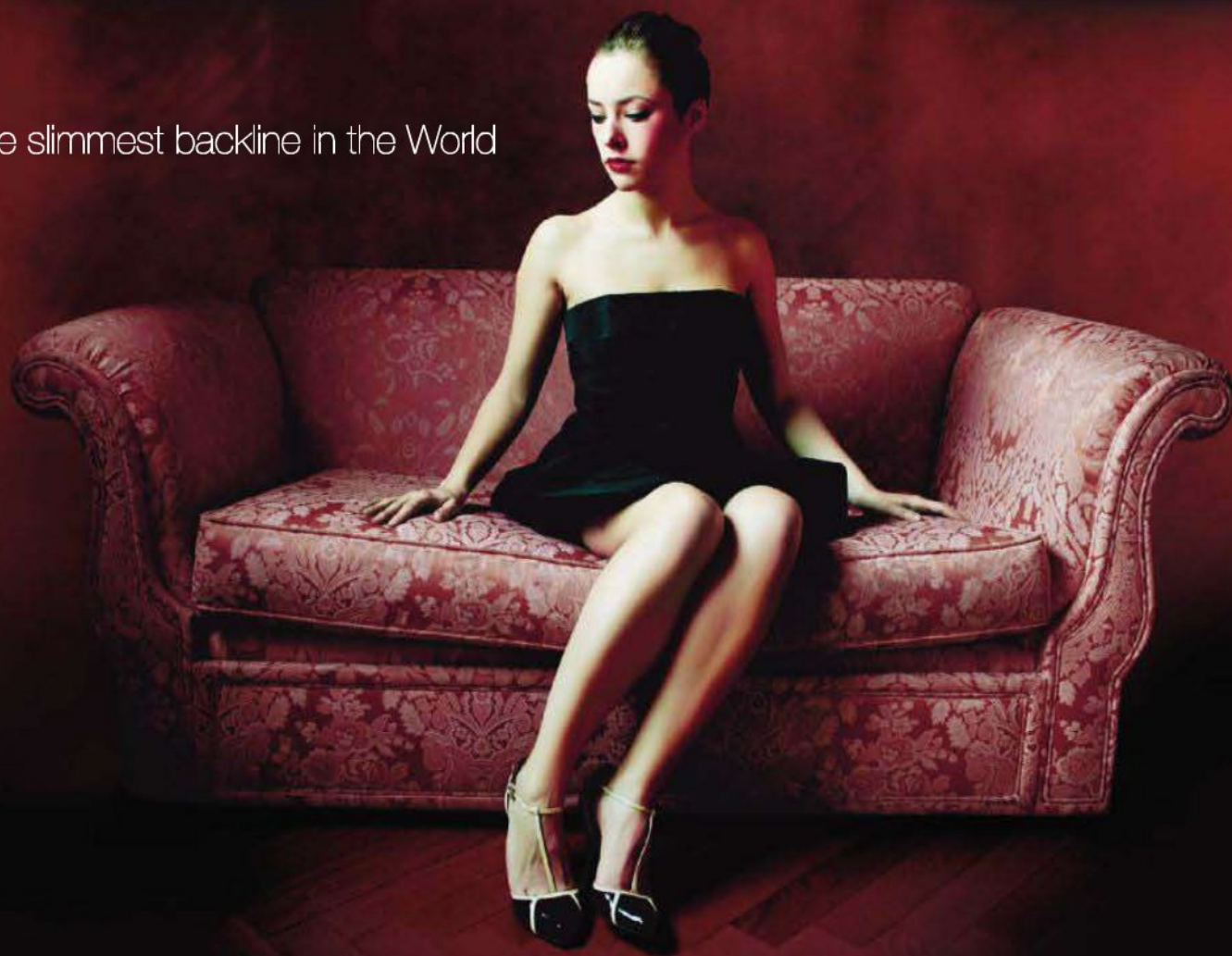
Martin is a physicist and computer engineer. He has around twenty silicon chips to his name, written over a million lines of computer code and co-designed the world's first 64 bit games computer. "I always liked the promise of CDs. It wasn't so much the quality but the quick access to a given track. After vinyl and cassette that was a real plus. My first CD player was a five CD multi changer. My second was a ten CD changer for the car. I liked the idea of quick access to more than one CD and music that didn't repeat after 40 minutes. These players were fine but a bit clunky – there were several seconds of silence between CDs and in the car I could never find the right CD.

A few years ago I had a go at loading my cassette collection onto a PC. Cassettes were obsolete but I owned around 100 and the music on them reflected an important period in my life. I recorded all of the cassettes on to the PC over a period of several weeks. The thing is I never listened to the music on the PC. Somehow using the computer to listen to music never worked out. Maybe the computer was in the wrong place but I think it lacked the immediacy of a physical play button. In the end the computer got a virus and the music files were lost – I still had the cassettes thankfully. The JB7 is really my personal ideal music player".

To get the whole story and order visit www.brennan.co.uk



The slimmest backline in the World



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A series of iconic images from celebrated rock photographer Ross Halfin adorns our SoundFrame on-wall picture speakers. At just 3.5" deep they're not 4x12s, but are as discreet as any picture frame. Utilising our most imaginative driver and cabinet technologies, SoundFrame delivers a sound and look fit for rock royalty!