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Stuart Cable (right) with Kelly Jones and Richard Jones in Stereophonics in 2000.



STUART CABLE

1970-2010

**Stereophonics
drummer dies,
aged 40.**

As *Classic Rock* went to press on Monday 7 June, news came in of the death of former Stereophonics drummer Stuart Cable. The cause of death was unknown at press time.

The three original members of the Welsh band (pictured in 2002, left to right: Kelly Jones, Richard Jones and Cable) grew up in the same village, Cwmaman, and were the first band signed to V2 records. Stuart was in the band for their first four albums – three of which went to no.1 in the UK – before being sacked in 2003 due to “commitment issues”, which many felt was a comment on his use of drugs and alcohol, as well as side-ventures like TV presenting. While acknowledging his problems, Cable himself later claimed that any lack of commitment had merely been due to the birth of his first child. At the time of his death, he was a presenter on BBC Radio Wales and his new band, Killing For Company, were preparing to play at the Download festival.

In a new book by Welsh rock DJ Jeff Collins (*Stuart Cable*, University of Wales Press), The Cult’s Billy Duffy pays tribute to the drummer: “I thought Stuart was a lion of a man... I thought he was a stand-up and reliable guy – the kind you’d want in the trenches with you.

“And I loved the Stereophonics. They were unashamed to rock... [The Cult] came up at a time when everyone was

**“STUART WAS A LION
OF A MAN. A STAND-
UP AND RELIABLE
GUY” – BILLY DUFFY**

afraid to be a rock band because of punk... In the same way, the Stereophonics came up in that post-grunge ‘you-can’t-rock’ era. But they made it also. It was a dream band from a village in Wales. It’s very poetic.”

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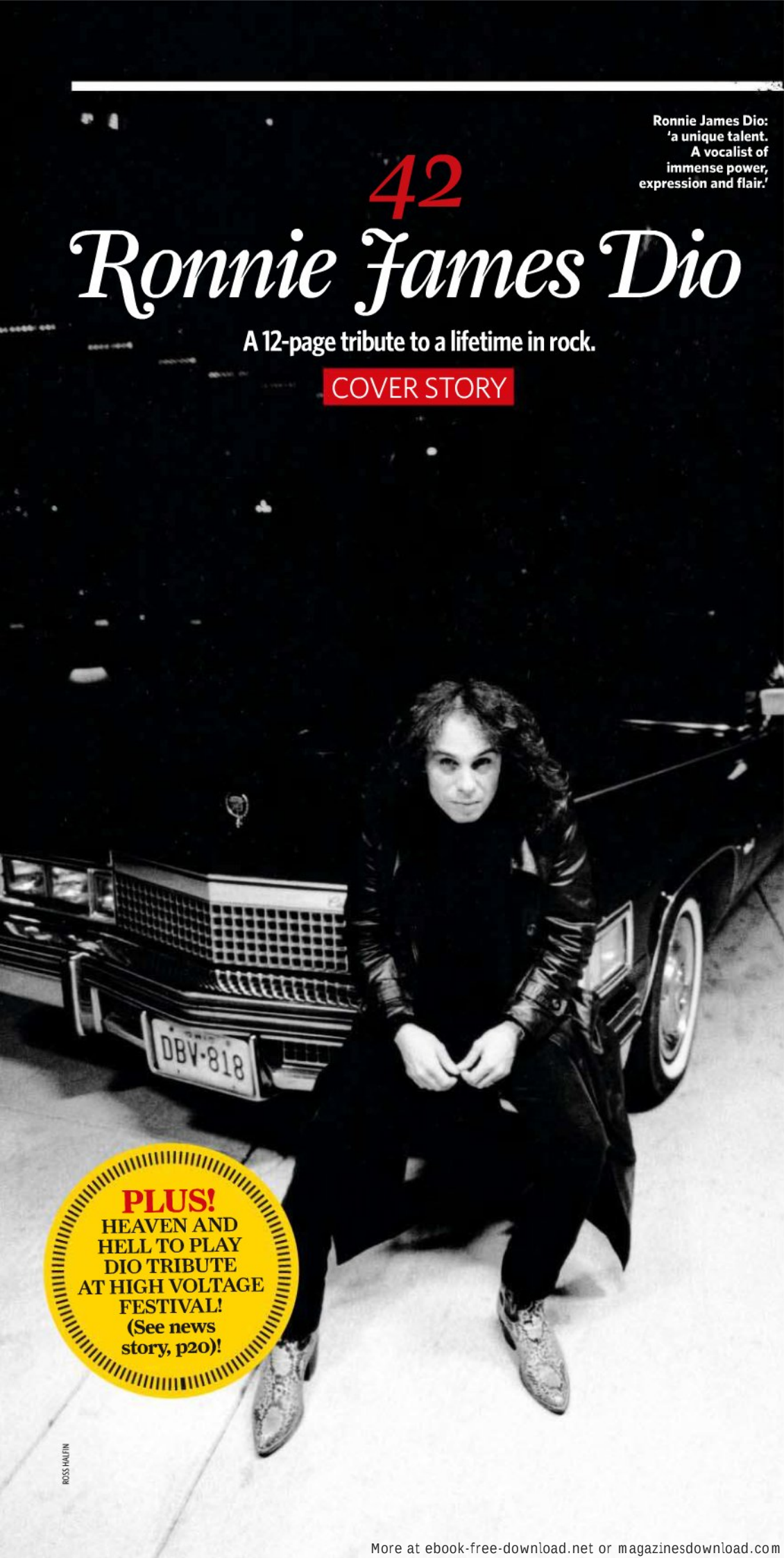


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Ronnie James Dio:
'a unique talent.
A vocalist of
immense power,
expression and flair.'

42 Ronnie James Dio

A 12-page tribute to a lifetime in rock.

COVER STORY

PLUS!
HEAVEN AND
HELL TO PLAY
DIO TRIBUTE
AT HIGH VOLTAGE
FESTIVAL!
(See news
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2010, photographed
for *Classic Rock*.

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Paul Weller

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News

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NEW!



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NEW FEATURE THEN AND NOW

Where we compare gigs of the past with performances of the present. You've already missed Kiss, Bad Co and Skynyrd. Now check out our latest before'n'after features: German metallers Accept in '84 versus their recent gig at Islington's O2 Academy; and thrash legends Slayer in '88 weighed against their show at Kentish Town Forum earlier this month.



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I only met Ronnie James Dio twice. Once at our sister magazine *Metal Hammer's* Golden Gods Awards in 2007 and then the Classic Rock Roll Of Honour the same year. Heaven And Hell were picking up the comeback award at the Golden Gods and I was given the job of looking after them (making sure they had drinks, getting them from A-B at the right time). It was a hot summer Monday and Camden's Koko was themed in honour of the band. Outside, angels and demons harangued passers-by from the roof and inside the venue was split into two: heaven (the VIP balconies, with bars decked out in white) and hell (downstairs, a scrum of sweaty metalheads). The big problem? Heat rises. And as the pits of hell warmed up, so heaven became a little more... Hellish.

Heaven And Hell bore it manfully (an enormous entourage of beautiful women – the band's wives and daughters – helped), and Ronnie better than most. I didn't tell him I was the Editor of *Classic Rock*, and I don't think he would have cared anyway. To him I was just some guy helping them out, but he still chatted, laughed and joked, remembered my name, and kept his cool throughout it all. I didn't know him, but that small experience spoke volumes: the guy was a class act.

The best story I heard about Dio was told by his longtime assistant Willie Fyfe, at his memorial. In hospital, claimed Fyfe, Dio called over a nurse. "Excuse me, dear," he said. "Can you tell me, are my testicles black?" Puzzled, the nurse lifted the sheets and, holding his old fella in one hand, gave Ronnie's balls a careful but thorough inspection. Satisfied, she looked up. "No, Mr Dio, they seem absolutely fine," she said. And Ronnie, with a twinkle in his eye, said: "Sorry, dear, but I said: 'Are my test results back?'" Somewhere those eyes are still twinkling.

ON THE COVER
Black Sabbath
by Ross Halfin



SUBS COVER
Ronnie James Dio
by Brian Rasic



Scott Rowley,
Editor In Chief





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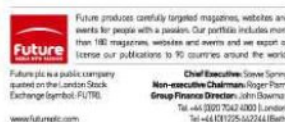
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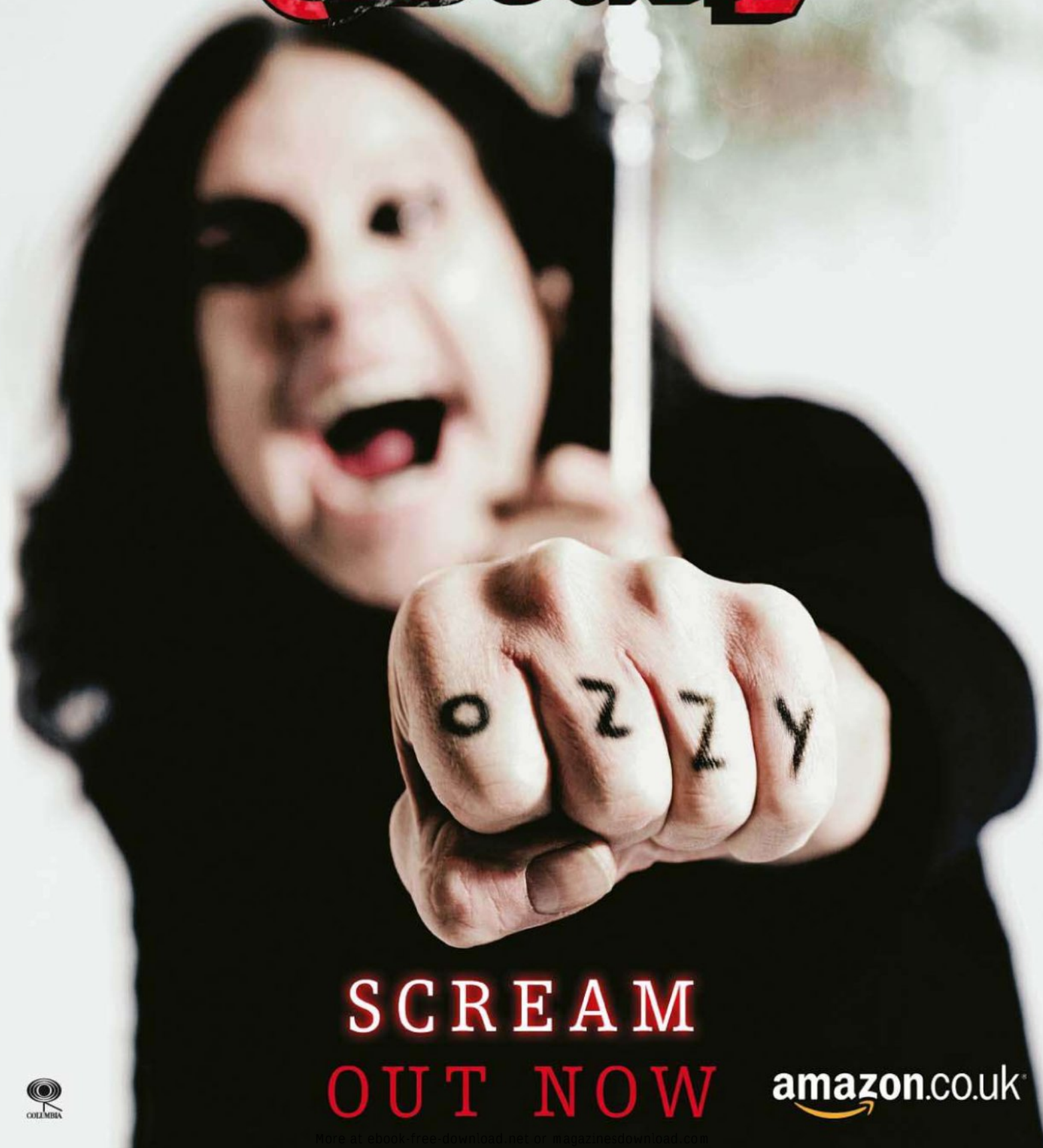
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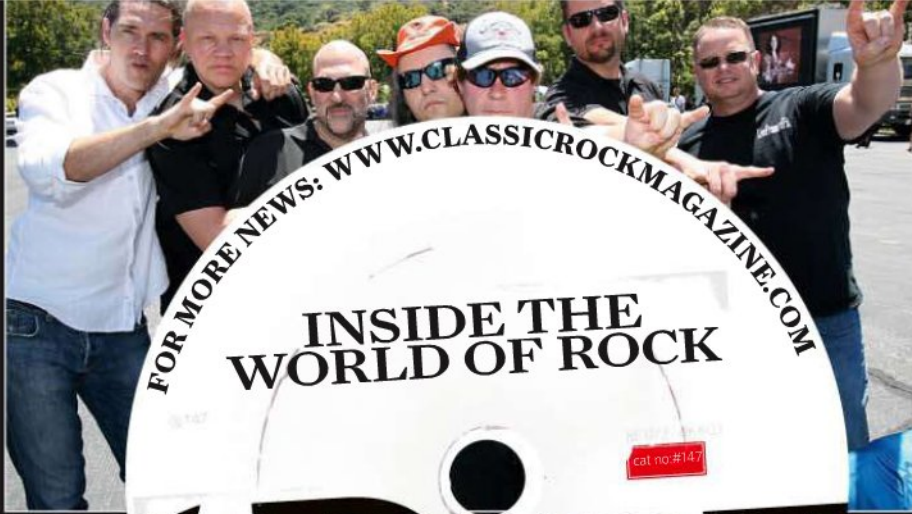


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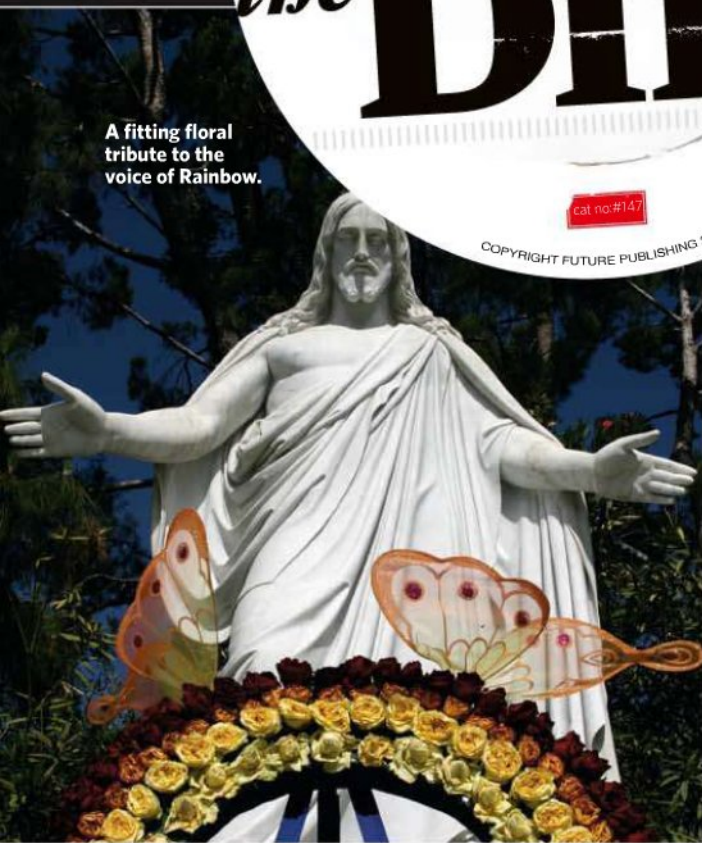
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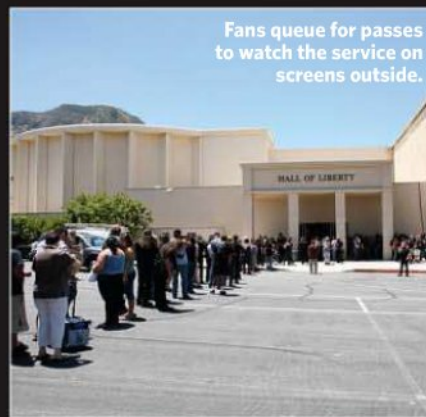
Good-natured
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the WBC.



A fitting floral
tribute to the
voice of Rainbow.



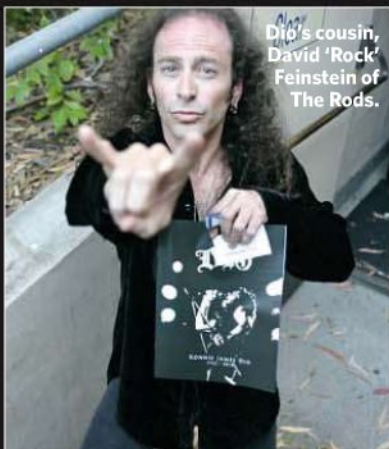
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Fans queue for passes
to watch the service on
screens outside.



Ronnie James Dio
July 10, 1942 - May 16, 2010



Dio's cousin,
David 'Rock'
Feinstein of
The Rods.



Anthrax's Joey
Belladonna offers
his condolences.

Glenn Hughes: the Voice
Of Rock pays tribute to
the Voice Of Metal.



This month The Dirt was compiled by Claire Adams, Geoff Barton, Malcolm Dome, Lee Dorrian, Paul Elliott, Jerry Ewing, Dave Ling, Ken McIntyre, Will Simpson, Mick Taylor, Henry Yates.

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MARK WEISS FROM ROCKSHE.COM. ADDITIONAL REPORTING BY DOCK ELLIS & DAVID LING

“I still can’t believe he’s gone.”

So says Tony Iommi. Who, along with Geezer Butler, Glenn Hughes and thousands of friends and fans, gathered in Los Angeles to remember Ronnie James Dio.

Portraits: **Mark Weiss**

ON MAY 30, 2010, Ronnie James Dio was laid to rest following a public service at Forest Lawn Memorial Park in Los Angeles attended by family and friends, fellow musicians and 1200 fans. The former Rainbow, Black Sabbath, Dio and Heaven & Hell singer lost his battle with stomach cancer on May 16.

Hundreds more gathered where large screens telecast the ceremony. Major news outlets reported the event, particularly detailing a protest by the infamous hate group Westboro Baptist Church (despite the fact that only two apparent members turned up and were outnumbered by good-natured Dio fans picketing them).

Black Sabbath and Heaven And Hell guitarist Tony Iommi spoke to *Classic Rock* after the funeral to pay tribute to his friend and bandmate. “I will remember Ronnie in so many different ways,” Iommi said. “He was such a strong character, a very determined person, and so great to work with. And above all, he was a terrific singer. You can’t replace him. He was absolutely unique.”

Iommi also admitted that he is still struggling to come to terms with the loss. “It’s very hard to accept. I wasn’t able to say my goodbyes to him. It all happened so quickly.”

Dio was diagnosed with stomach cancer in November 2009, and at first he responded well to chemotherapy. It was only on May 4, 2010 that Heaven And Hell’s summer tour dates were cancelled due to Ronnie’s worsening health.

As Iommi explained: “We were told that Ronnie had been given the all-clear, and we’d been gearing up to start touring. We even thought of taking another singer with us on the tour as well as Ronnie. If Ronnie felt like he needed a rest, we’d have someone to take over. Then we heard that he needed more chemo because it had gone to his liver. It was worse than we thought. It was a shock for everybody. We cancelled the tour, there was no alternative.”

After the cancellation was announced, Iommi remained at home in England. “Ronnie told me, ‘I’m having this chemo, it’s knocked me about but I think it’s working.’ That’s Ronnie. He’d fight to the end, and he did. But sadly, that was the last I heard from him.”

Iommi knew that Ronnie’s condition had deteriorated when Geezer Butler, Sabbath and Heaven And Hell bassist, called him from LA after meeting Ronnie and his wife Wendy for lunch on May 12. “Geezer said he was sitting next to Ronnie and Ronnie was... well, Geezer said, ‘You won’t believe it, he looks really ill, he’s just not with it.’ They probably had him on morphine by then. He was in serious pain, and all the painkillers they were giving him weren’t working. When Ronnie went into hospital, Geezer was there by his side. Ronnie couldn’t talk at one point, so he was communicating with his eyes. That’s what Geezer told me. And once he was in hospital it all happened very quickly. Geezer emailed me in the last moments, saying Ronnie didn’t have long to live.”

Geezer Butler posted a diary of his last hours with Ronnie on his website. “May 14... we took it in turns to hold Ronnie’s hand, and whisper our thoughts to him. Wendy wouldn’t leave his side—she stayed curled up on his bed the whole night. May 15... There was no mistaking Ronnie’s room. There were around 25 to 30 friends outside. We knew the end was imminent. We all wanted to say our goodbyes. It was a day filled with tears and reflection. In the evening, the chaplain came, and we all gathered around Ronnie’s bed and prayed. Ronnie wasn’t going easily. At 11pm, most of us left, leaving Wendy her privacy to say her last farewell. The devastation

was palpable. May 16... As we were preparing to leave for the hospital, Wendy broke the sad news. Ronnie had just passed away.”

Dio was commemorated in three separate services. Said Iommi: “There was a private service, and the day after that was the church service, and the day after that was for the public, so they could say their goodbyes, with people playing and talking about him.”

Joining Iommi, Butler and Heaven & Hell drummer Vinny Appice were Rob Halford, Geoff Tate, Glenn Hughes, Joey Belladonna and David Feinstein, Dio’s cousin and former Elf bandmate, who said of Ronnie: “He touched all of us with his music and his message and his magic.”

Glenn Hughes was among those who performed at the ceremony. “When Wendy asked me to sing at the memorial service, she knew I’d have done anything for Ronnie. Of course I’d do it. It would be an honour,” he told *Classic Rock*. “In singing *Coast To Coast*, a Trapeze song that Ronnie loved, and his own *Catch The Rainbow*, I just wanted to be of service. Ronnie and I loved each other’s voices, everybody knows that. He had the greatest voice in metal, and beyond the limits of that genre. There will never be another guy like Ronnie James Dio. He will be sorely missed.”

“There were a couple of guys who were Ronnie’s best friends from school,” Iommi said, “and they talked about the good things about Ronnie, the good times they had, some really lovely things. I just found it so, so difficult to handle without breaking up.”

Following the last service, a reception was held at the famous

Rainbow Bar & Grill on Sunset Boulevard, the place where Iommi recalls meeting Ronnie for the very first time back in the 70s.

“That was really great,” Iommi said, “because that’s where we met. And I saw people there I hadn’t seen for years. It’s a shame it has to be under these circumstances that

you meet those people again. It’s always the way.”

There is some small comfort, he said, in knowing how much Ronnie enjoyed his last three years with Heaven And Hell. “He really enjoyed us being back together. We had the greatest respect for each other and he loved being with this line-up, he really did. He wanted to do more and more. I thought we’d have done another album—it was in our minds. But of course that’s all gone now... but we had some wonderful times.”

Heaven And Hell were due to play *Classic Rock*’s High Voltage festival in July, and it’s only fitting that Ronnie James Dio will be paid tribute to in style there. Asked how he should be remembered, Iommi stated: “The people that know him through his music are going to remember him by his music, and he did great stuff from day one. But he did a lot of other stuff, a lot of charities, things that people really don’t know about. I remember one incident when we’d just finished the last tour, we were all at the airport in LA, and Ronnie had a call saying there’s a guy about to jump off a water tower and he wants Ronnie to be there otherwise he’s going to jump. And Ronnie says, ‘I can’t believe it—why me?! I just wanna go home!’ But he went, and he was there for hours. He talked the guy down. That’s the sort of thing that Ronnie did.”

“A lot of people at the funeral service were talking about how kind Ronnie was, how he’d always give people his time. He could have his bad moments, but the real Ronnie was very kind. All the fans, it was like he’d known them for years, he’d talk to them like they were old friends even if he’d just met them. I really can’t say enough about him. I still can’t believe he’s gone.” **PE**

“We took it in turns to hold Ronnie’s hand, and whisper our thoughts to him.”

— Geezer Butler

BREAKING NEWS: Heaven And Hell to play tribute to Dio at High Voltage! See over.

RIP

Thank you
and good night.

Paul Gray

April 8, 1972 – May 24, 2010

The world of heavy metal was astonished by the sudden death of Slipknot's Paul Gray, number two in the band's numerical line-up and a founding member. The bassist of the Grammy-winning, masked band from Iowa was found dead in a room at the Towneplace Suites Hotel in the suburb of Urbandale, Iowa. He was 38 years old. At press time the cause of death was still unknown. Percussionist Shawn 'The Clown' Crahan described Gray as "the essence of the band Slipknot", adding: "None of us would be on the paths we're on right now or have the sorts of lives we have without him."

Bo Hansson

April 10, 1943 – April 24, 2010

Progressive rock has lost an extremely gifted yet relatively unrecognised talent. Keyboard player Bo Hansson released four instrumental albums for the Charisma Records label during the 70s. His '72 debut, *Music Inspired By Lord Of The Rings*, reached the UK Top 20 and was re-released on CD in 1988. Hansson, who made only sporadic live appearances in later years, was found dead in his living room. He was 67.

Stella Nova

May 6, 1960 – May 24, 2010

Best known as the guitarist of the Rich Kids, during which time he went by the name Steve New, Stella Nova has lost his battle with cancer. The Londoner once auditioned to become a second guitarist for the Sex Pistols, and eventually joined Glen Matlock, Midge Ure and Rusty Egan in the Rich Kids. Back in January this year the latter group reunited to raise money for Nova's medical treatment. He was 50 years old at the time of his passing.

Debbie Abono

Died May 16, 2010

The Bay Area thrash metal scene mourns the loss of Debbie Abono, a remarkable woman who helped to plot the rise of many local acts. Abono was already in her mid-50s when she began managing Possessed, but her passion for the music was obvious. She went on to represent Exodus, Forbidden, Vio-Lence, Skinlab and more. The members of Forbidden issued a statement describing the 80-year-old as: "Our first manager, mentor and mother to us all."

NEWS

Carlos Santana is working on a covers album which will feature contributions from Scott Weiland, Joe Cocker and Matchbox Twenty's Rob Thomas, among others. Santana is said to have tried his hand at Cream's *Sunshine Of Your Love*, The Beatles' *While My Guitar Gently Weeps*, the Hendrix classic *Little Wing* and... Purple's *Smoke On The Water*.

Buckcherry are finishing up a new album, *All Night Long*, for release via Eleven Seven Music on August 2. It's being produced by Marti Frederiksen (Aerosmith, Def Leppard) with the band's guitarist/songwriter Keith Nelson.



Eurovision-winning Finnish hard rock monsters **Lordi** (pictured) release their fifth album on September 14. Titled *Babez For Breakfast*, it's preceded by a single, *This Is Heavy Metal*.

EMI release new anthologies from **Robin Trower**, **The Groundhogs** and **Ten Years After** on July 26. *A Tale Untold: The Chrysalis Years (1973-1976)*, *Thank Christ For The Groundhogs: The Liberty Years (1968-1972)* and *Think About The Times: The Chrysalis Years (1969-1972)* each brings together remastered versions of tracks from the respective artists.

Grind That Axe Records, a sister company to reissue label Rock Candy, releases new albums from **Enuff Z'Nuff** and **Little Caesar**, titled *Dissonance and Redemption* respectively, on July 19.



Heaven And Hell: will pay tribute to RJD this summer.

Heaven And Hell to play High Voltage!

Iommi, Butler and Appice to pay tribute to Dio....

As **CLASSIC ROCK** went to press, we heard the news that Heaven And Hell would reunite to play a special set in their original slot at our High Voltage Festival, which takes place at Victoria Park in London on July 24/25.

Heaven And Hell were initially forced to cancel due to Ronnie James Dio's illness. However, following Dio's untimely death, Tony Iommi, Geezer Butler and Vinny Appice wanted to honour their bandmate. Commenting after RJD's funeral, Iommi said: "When we get back to England we can absorb it more. Once we get time to really think about things, we'll decide on what we're going to do."

What they have decided to do is play at High Voltage, billed as Heaven And Hell: A Tribute To Ronnie James Dio. The trio will play with guest vocalists (stay tuned to classicrockmagazine.com for more info on the singers), and

donate their proceeds to Ronnie's Stand Up And Shout charity.

In other HV news, due to phenomenal fan demand, Opeth have been moved from the Prog Stage on Saturday to the following day's Metal Hammer Stage. Those who specifically bought tickets for Opeth on Saturday can exchange them for Sunday tickets from the point of purchase.

As you'll have noticed, a free booklet that accompanies this issue outlines the festival and its attractions. The latest additions to the bill include Ian Hunter, who joins Joe Elliott's Down 'N' Outz (see p.70) for their exclusive set on Sunday, and Bigelf, the highly acclaimed US quartet signed to *Classic Rock's* Powerage label, who play on the Prog Stage on Saturday.

For details go to www.highvoltagefestival.com/vip-packages/packages. Or call: 0871 230 5582. **DL**

Waters to tour The Wall

London, Manchester and Dublin shows in May 2011.

ROGER WATERS HAS announced the UK dates of his *The Wall* tour, which will see him take a new, extravagant stage show around the world, arriving in the UK in May 2011 (see dates on p106).

Waters has intimated that these might very well be his last shows. "I can't see myself doing this when I'm 80," he told *Classic Rock*. "Although that's only 14 years away, I'm 66 years old now and this is a big undertaking. I wouldn't say this is my farewell tour, but I do have to wonder what else I might do."

For those fans who still hanker for some kind of Pink Floyd reunion, Waters has disappointing, if expected, news, although it is notable that since Floyd played Live 8 his stance on his former bandmates has changed.

"Well, Rick [Wright] is no longer with us. But I was asked to ask David [Gilmour], and I did," Waters says. "And he said no. And there's no reason why he wouldn't. But if they wanted to do something at some point, then I'm open to suggestions." **JE**

BON JOVI

THE SPECIAL EDITIONS



ALL 11 STUDIO ALBUMS RE-RELEASED
WITH BONUS TRACKS, REPLICA TOUR LAMINATES
AND EXCLUSIVE ACCESS TO THE BON JOVI VAULTS



OUT NOW

Rory tribute unveiled

Statue to commemorate Irish guitar great Gallagher.

TO COMMEMORATE THE 15th anniversary of the passing of much-loved blues guitarist Rory Gallagher, a statue was recently unveiled in his birthplace of Ballyshannon, County Donegal, Ireland. The specially commissioned figure was sculpted in bronze by the renowned David Annand. It was unveiled jointly by the Mayors of Donegal and Cork City. Rory's brother/manager Donal and other family members also joined in the ninth annual Rory Gallagher Festival which ran for five days, featuring open-air concerts, workshops, street busking, photo exhibitions and tribute acts.

Gallagher was just 49 years old when he died on June 14, 1995, from complications following liver transplant surgery.



Rush's moving pictures

Exclusive interview in *Prog*.

ENDURING CANADIAN PROG trio Rush celebrate their brand new film, *Beyond The Lighted Stage*, with an exclusive interview in the latest issue of *Classic Rock Presents Prog*. Cover stars Geddy Lee and Alex Lifeson discuss the making of the film, and give us a sneak previews of their forthcoming US tour plans and their hotly anticipated new album.

Elsewhere we forward to this year's High Voltage festival with interviews with every prog band on the bill. We go on the road with Transatlantic, talk 20 years of Opeth, chat to Dweezil Zappa about his dad Frank, celebrate the 25th anniversary of Marillion's smash hit *Misplaced Childhood* album, and conclude our ELP coverage with an exclusive interview with Carl Palmer and one of the band's most famous fans. And as a special treat for ELP fans, we've got an ELP Tribute CD with exclusive cover versions of some of the band's best-known songs recorded by Magenta, Frost*, Headspace, Pallas, Panic Room and more!

The latest issue of *Classic Rock Presents Prog* goes on sale on Wednesday, July 7. **JE**



Bret Michaels has been readmitted to hospital and diagnosed with a hole in the heart. The Poison vocalist had previously made a miraculous recovery from a brain haemorrhage to win the third season of *America's Celebrity Apprentice*.

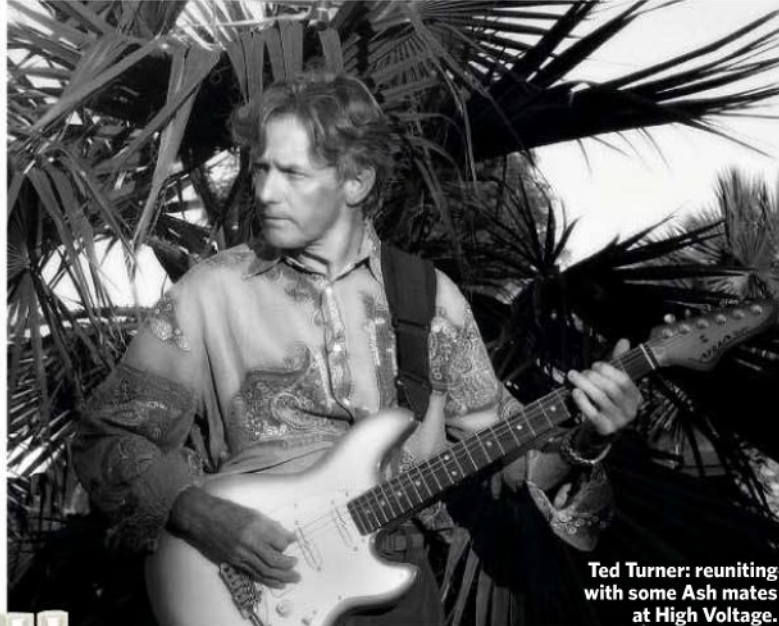
Band Of Joy issue a self-titled album on September 13. Robert Plant and company recorded 24 songs in 15 days for the project, a dozen of which are set to make its final running order.

Living Loud, a project featuring Deep Purple guitarist Steve Morse and keyboard player Don Airey, singer Jimmy Barnes and the ex-Uriah Heep rhythm section of bassist Bob Dailey and drummer Lee Kerslake, have begun writing material for a follow-up to 2004's self-titled debut album.



The legal battle between **Ozzy Osbourne** (pictured) and **Tony Iommi** over ownership of the name Black Sabbath has been settled, according to Ozzy. Exact terms of the agreement are yet to be revealed. Asked about the renewed possibility of the original Sabbath line-up reuniting, the singer said simply: "I'll never say never."

The Omar Rodriguez-Lopez Quartet, featuring The Mars Volta guitarist Omar Rodriguez-Lopez and former Chili Peppers guitarist John Frusciante, have a new downloadable album called *Sepulcros De Miel*. You pay what you like for its eight tracks and all proceeds go to charity.



WELCOME BACK Ted Turner

The twin guitars in *Hotel California*, *The Boys Are Back In Town*...? Ted's idea. Then he retired to the jungle.

GUITARIST TED TURNER played on Wishbone Ash's first four studio albums and, along with Andy Powell, formulated Ash's influential twin-guitar sound. After quitting in 1974 he returned for a second spell with the group from '87 to '94.

In addition to readying his debut solo album, *Eclectic Value*, Ted Turner (no relation) will be playing with Martin Turner's Wishbone Ash at this summer's High Voltage festival on Sunday, July 25.

Why did you leave Wishbone Ash, in 1974, just as the band seemed about to become huge? Musical differences, mainly. But also we were still young men and the touring schedule was ruthless. I needed to do something different.

Going off to Peru, buying a donkey and setting out to find the Lost City Of Mu was pretty extreme. [Laughing] Yeah. I got the donkey, but I never found the place. The whole point was going in the exact opposite direction from rock'n'roll.

How do you look back on returning to Wishbone Ash in the late 80s? It was a great period for the band. The chemistry between the four original members was still there. Everybody returned as far more mature individuals. And I thought that *Here To Hear* [1989] was a very strong album.

Although you carried on playing music after leaving for the second time, apart for a few guest spots your profile dropped off the map. There's quite a backlog of songs, and *Eclectic Value* is just the first sign of my return. There's an instrumental album to follow and probably at least two more studio albums.

You're working with Pledge Music, enabling fans to help finance your project by paying in advance. The business has changed completely. I love the fact that you can put something down on the computer and within seconds it's out there for the entire world.

You produced and also played all the instruments on *Eclectic Value*. I did everything – a lot of it on my laptop. I feel like I've dropped my pants [laughs]. I'm completely naked.

"I got the donkey, but I never found the Lost City Of Mu."

Do you hear a lot of Ash's twin-guitar sound in contemporary rock? Not especially, but it's certainly present in songs like *Hotel California* [The Eagles], *Reeling In The Years* [Steely Dan] and *The Boys Are Back In Town* [Thin Lizzy]. It's a shame that Wishbone's part in musical history sometimes goes unrecognised.

You're joining Martin Turner's Wishbone Ash on stage at High Voltage. In what capacity? His band are doing the *Argus* album in its entirety, and I'll come on at the end and play one or two songs.

The feud between Martin and Andy Powell is getting out of hand. That really is a private matter. But I will say this: Andy believes he alone is Wishbone Ash, that he controls the legacy of the band and claims the name for himself. Paul McCartney does not claim to be The Beatles! Steve [Upton, original drummer], Martin and myself have no interest in threatening Andy's livelihood. What we ask is that what he sells is accurately advertised. **DL**

Ted Turner appears with Martin Turner's Wishbone Ash at High Voltage on July 25.

The Virginmarys:
not virgins
(probably) and no
one called Mary
(definitely).

“Ideally we’d love to go out on
the road with Queens Of The
Stone Age or AC/DC.”

★ HIGH HOPES

The Virginmarys

They’ve only just released their debut album and already they’re expecting the “backlash”.

YOU MIGHT RECALL that in issue 141 The Virginmarys were tipped as a band to watch in 2010. Now things are clearly stepping up a gear or two.

“It’s taken us a while, but we’ve finally got our debut album, *Cast The First Stone*, ready,” laughs vocalist Ally Dickaty. “Now the test is to get it out there and see what people make of it.”

The band – also including bassist Matthew Rose and drummer Danny Dolan – worked with the interesting production combination of Gun vocalist Toby Jepson and studio veteran Mike Fraser (AC/DC, Aerosmith), the former actually producing the album and the latter mixing the songs.

“Toby was great, and to have his experience available was really important,” Dickaty says. “Being a musician himself, he could come up with suggestions for the way we did certain things. It wasn’t just a case of him sitting behind a mixing desk and twiddling knobs.”

Dickaty doesn’t think the Gun and Former Little Angels singer went as far as appearing on the record, but... “Actually, I’m not too sure. He could have sneaked himself in there somewhere. Ha!”

While the Macclesfield band wait for their album to be released (on May 24, through their own label, Virginmarys Recording, via Townsend Records), they’ve been busy touring the UK. Inevitably,

they opened for Gun, and the trio also played dates with Sweden’s Madina Lake and, most intriguing of all, New Model Army.

“Yeah, that was an interesting one. Apparently it was their guitarist, Marshall Gill, who recommended the band for the tour. He saw us play somewhere and was quite impressed. It was odd at first, because our style [21st-century blues rock with hints of metal] isn’t immediately the sort of thing that would go down well with NMA fans, but by the end of the tour we’d won them over. In fact a few have been following us around.”

The Virginmarys didn’t, however, pick up any sartorial hints from New Model Army mainman Justin Sullivan. “No, we didn’t get into wearing clogs,” Dickaty confirms. “Not our thing.”

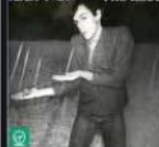
Right now The Virginmarys are readying themselves for a big push playing live. Whether that turns out to be on their own tour or opening for a major name remains to be confirmed.

“Ideally we’d love to go out on the road with Queens Of The Stone Age or AC/DC, but the chances of that happening aren’t great. So it’s a case of waiting to see what’s out there.”

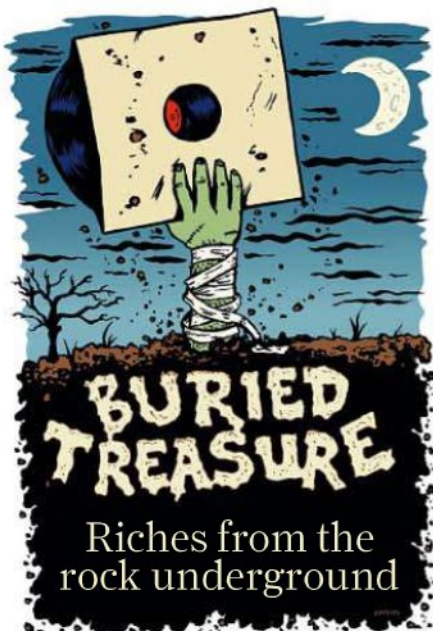
Dickaty is also steeling himself for the possibility that the band’s name might draw wrath from religious types as their profile climbs. “So far nobody’s objected,” he says. “But the more we get recognised, the greater the risk of a backlash, I suppose. But if it happens, we’ll claim it comes from a bloody Mary without the vodka. No way are we changing it now.” **MD**

Cast The First Stone is out now on Virginmarys Recordings.

FOR FANS OF...



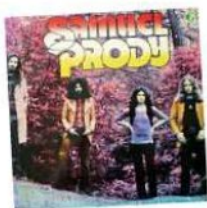
The Virginmarys have also recorded an Iggy Pop cover for a tribute record. “We’ve done *China Girl* for *The Day Of The Idiot*, which has various bands doing songs from Iggy’s *The Idiot* album. “We’re alongside others like Reverend & The Makers, I Am Kloot and The Whips. Although we’re not huge Iggy fans, it was cool to be asked to do it.”



Riches from the rock underground

SAMUEL PRODY

Samuel Prody, Global Records 1973
£425 for a mint vinyl copy



Recorded by one of a number of UK hard rock bands whose albums were released only in Germany, *Samuel Prody* is an in-demand record.

And while not an absolute classic, it does have some cool moments.

It starts off somewhat unexpectedly with an harmonious rendition of Lionel Bart's *Who Will Buy* from the *Oliver* soundtrack, but then the latter half of the song explodes into a frenzied wah-wah freakout, giving a better indication of what's to follow. *Woman* contains some nice Leslie-effected guitar and a phased drum break, and comes across like a less-crafted, more psychedelic version of something from the first Led Zep album.

Other highlights are the pile-driving *She's Mine*, and *Time is All Mine* featuring a harmonised chorus, a great lead riff and a psyched-out, dreamy passage.

'While not an absolute classic, it does have some cool moments.'

There's some great playing on this record, especially from guitarist Derek Smallcombe, and some decent riffs. The sounds are cool, but overall it's just a little lacklustre, largely due to an undynamic production and lack of memorable songs. Vocalist Tony Savva has decent enough vocals that range from mellow to all-out screaming, but they're not outstanding.

Eight-minute-plus closer *Hallucination* starts off great with another killer wah-wah riff tripping out over a military drum beat, but the spiritual chanting over tribal percussion may be a bit too hippyish for the average hard rocker to stomach.

But overall it's good and will certainly be of interest to fans of the era. **LD**



Rush's 20th studio album is to be called *Clockwork Angels*. A single, *Caravan*, backed with *BU2B* (short for Brought Up To Believe), has already been released to US radio. The Nick Raskulinecz-produced album isn't expected until next year.

The publication of *Does The Noise In My Head Bother You?*, the autobiography of Aerosmith singer **Steven Tyler**, has been delayed until November.

Mick Hucknall will step into Rod Stewart's old shoes to front **The Faces'** reunion tour. The Simply Red singer joins original Faces members guitarist Ronnie Wood, keyboard player Ian McLagan and drummer Kenney Jones, with former Sex Pistols bassist Glen Matlock (pictured) replacing the late Ronnie Lane.



The new band featuring bassist/vocalist Glenn Hughes, guitarist Joe Bonamassa, keyboard player Derek Sherinian and drummer Jason Bonham will be called **Black Country Communion**. Their Kevin Shirley-produced album is due out later in the year.

Former **Caravan** keyboard player and founder member Dave Sinclair is currently readying three solo albums for release, the first of which is *Treasure Chest*, through Burning Shed, 65 minutes of previously unreleased home recordings made over the past 20 years. More details at www.dave-sinclair.co.uk



Nonpoint: chin up, lads.

WELCOME BACK Nonpoint

When the nu-metal tide turned, many bands sunk. One that survived is riding back in on a new wave.

NONPOINT ARE SURVIVORS. The Florida band could have been swept away when the tide turned against nu metal, the genre that had given them a brief glimpse of success. But they continue to deliver interesting, challenging music.

Nonpoint began in 1997, and between 1998 (debut *Separate Yourself*) and 2007 (*Vengeance*) the band released seven albums. They toured constantly in the US but made only one brief visit to the UK, playing Ozzfest in 2002.

Now they've been revitalised with a new guitarist (Zack Broderick), a new album (*Miracle*) and new label (Powerage). And, after an absence of eight years, they return to the UK to play at the Download festival on June 13. Vocalist Elias Soriano believes the best of Nonpoint is yet to come.

The Mudvayne/Hellyeah pair of Chad Gray and Greg Tribbett produced *Miracle*. What was it like to have musicians in that role?

Really great. What they helped us to do was to focus on things. They impressed on us that every word, each note must have a meaning. In the past we've been guilty of dancing around. I feel they made this band sharper.

There's a cover of Pantera's 5 Minutes Alone on the album. Is that the same version you recorded for the Metal Hammer Tribute To Dimebag Darrell CD at the end of last year?

It is. We didn't plan to put it on our album. However, we were one song short, so we talked it over and decided to put this on. It's such an amazing song.

***Miracle* is your first with Zack. What difference did he make?**

Zack's got real talent, which is why he's in

the band in the first place. What he brought in was obviously his own slant on things. We are a band where everyone's equal, nobody dictates what should happen. So we let Zack fly. Occasionally he had to be reined in a little, and reminded what we were trying to do, but generally he understood what Nonpoint fans expect from us.

Is it an advantage to not have the weight of expectation that comes from having previously had a huge album?

It's not an advantage, trust me. It means is we have to work so hard to maintain our little corner of the market. And There's always expectation and business demand to deal with.

"Though I say it myself, our live show has become legendary."

You're playing Download this year, but what kept the band away from the UK for eight years?

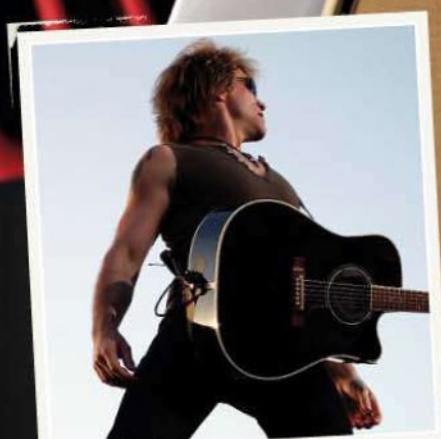
Let me put it this way. We've just changed our management and label, and suddenly we're on the bill for the Download festival, and playing King's College in London [June 15] with Hellyeah. That says it all, right? We've been desperate to get back, but were always blocked by others. Now, you'll be seeing a lot of us, I promise. Even though I say so myself, our live show has become legendary in America.

So many bands now revamp and reissue their back catalogue. Any plans to do something similar?

We've got the rights back to our first three albums, but haven't yet thought about what we wanna do – if anything – with them. However, we did do an acoustic EP late last year called *Cut The Chord* that had five of our early songs, and we might do another one. **MD**

Miracle is out now on Powerage Records.

The limited-edition Takamine LTD 2010 Miyabi: part guitar, part kimono.



CHOICE OF CHAMPS

What do The Beatles and Bon Jovi have in common? You guessed it...

Guitar players from the rock world who endorse Takamine are few and far between, with only Glenn Frey and John Jorgensen residing anywhere near our neck of the woods. However, the roster of more casual users is far more extensive. Jon Bon Jovi (pictured), for example, can often be seen hidden behind his 'none more black' Takamine EF341SC acoustic with which he supplements Richie Sambora's electric noodlings. Two custom Takamines were given to Paul McCartney in the 90s, one of which was auctioned off for charity; he kept the other.

● RAW POWER

Rock'n'robe

Just when it looked there were guitars made out of every material possible, here comes one that uses bits of women's clothing.

AS A GENERAL rule of thumb, when it comes to acoustic instruments for studio recording, guitarists will use only the very best instruments they can lay their hands on to obtain the best recorded tone possible.

However, when the record is done and it comes to recreating the sumptuous sounds live on stage, the opposite is often true: no guitarist in their right mind would take, say, a pre-war Martin D-45 (an acoustic guitar probably worth tens of thousands now) on the road. Not to mention the technicalities of mic'ing it up so that its full sound came through.

Which is where Takamine – a Japanese company that was at the forefront of the electro-acoustic guitar revolution that began in 1978 – come in.

Takamine electro-acoustic guitars (acoustics that you can plug in – and turn up to 11, should you so wish) have a preamp and pickup system, so you don't need to have a microphone stuck in front of it.

Each year Takamine produce a beautifully crafted Limited Edition model. The one pictured here, the LTD 2010 Miyabi, features pieces of kimono silk artistically embedded into clear resin coating to give this guitar a suitably classy edge and finish. And so it should, given the £2,499 price tag.

By the way, the name is pronounced 'takka-meeny', not 'takka-myne'. We just thought you'd like to know.

Mick Taylor, Editor, Guitarist magazine

WALTER TROUT

WALTER TROUT



OUT JULY 5

Trout's 19th solo album **COMMON GROUND** was produced by John Porter (The Smiths, B.B. King, Buddy Guy), and straddles the worlds of Rock and Blues.

His vocal intonation and affinity for timeless riffs deliver a collection of tracks that are destined to be instant classics.

WALTER TROUT ON TOUR:

06.10 Liquid Rooms, Edinburgh
07.10 Lemon Tree, Aberdeen
08.10 The Ferry, Glasgow
09.10 Newcastle Academy, Newcastle
15.10 Shepherds Bush Empire, London
16.10 Wilbarston Hall, Wilbarston
17.10 Assembly Halls, Leamington Spa
18.10 The Stables, Wavenden
19.10 Sub 89, Reading
20.10 The Brook, Southampton

21.10 The Globe, Cardiff
22.10 Stag Theatre, Sevenoaks
23.10 Cheese & Grain, Frome
24.10 Phoenix Arts Centre, Exeter
25.10 Assembly Rooms, Derby
26.10 Brewery Arts Centre, Kendall
27.10 Robin 2, Wolverhampton
28.10 Opera House, Buxton
29.10 Parr Hall, Warrington
30.10 Picturedrome, Holmfirth
31.10 Mick Jagger Centre, Dartford

BRAND NEW STUDIO ALBUM "COMMON GROUND" PRODUCED BY JOHN PORTER

OUT JULY 5

JOHN NORUM PLAY YARD BLUES



BRAND NEW BLUES
INFLUENCED SOLO ALBUM
FROM EUROPE'S GUITARIST

OUT JULY 5

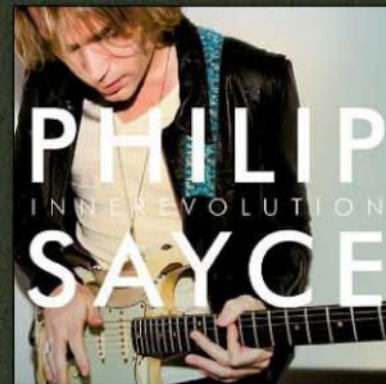
JOHN5 INNEREVOLUTION



NEW INSTRUMENTAL ALBUM
BY GUITAR MASTER JOHN 5
(ZOMBIE/EX-MARILYN MANSON)

OUT NOW

PHILIP SAYCE INNEREVOLUTION



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“Wildhearts was too heavy and fractured for me. Do I miss anything? The drugs.”

Willie Dowling:
the words
'unfulfilled
potential' are
never far away.



WELCOME BACK

Jackdaw4

Willie Dowling talks about his roller-coaster career – and his Iggy-baiting new album.

WILLIE DOWLING HAS been around the block. “Yeah, I’ve had a few bands,” hoots the journeyman songwriter, coquettishly. “But I’m not easy, I just want you to know that. One of the problems with being bipolar [a manic depressive disorder] is that I’m never quite fulfilled. It’s tragic. It makes me a sad, Woody Allen-type character; whatever the fuck I’m doing, I assume there’s something better. But it keeps the fires burning. Playing one type of music would wear thin pretty damn quickly, I’m interested in doing something new. Always have been. Maybe that’s been to my detriment.”

Should Dowling have a higher profile? His talent for melody has kept him afloat for two decades, and is much in evidence on *The Eternal Struggle For Justice*, the latest album by Jackdaw4. Still, he’s passed up a few meal tickets.

Take *The Wildhearts*. Following early stints in *The Grip* and *Cat People*, Dowling joined Ginger and co. on keyboards for 1993’s *Earth Vs The Wildhearts*, only to jump ship when the band’s chemistry grew poisonous. “A particularly fraught time,” he shudders. “Too heavy and fractured for me. Do I miss anything? The drugs.”

Honeycrack, the band he formed and fronted with ousted *Wildhearts* guitarist CJ, looked like his golden ticket, with the 1996 album *Prozaic* spawning a volley of high-charting singles. Behind the scenes, though, Dowling was in moral crisis. “Our record plugger hired a box at Chelsea, took down the Radio 1 producers, wined and dined them – and a bit more besides – and the next week my record was A-listed. I found it thoroughly depressing. It had nothing to do with my record being good. So you’re forced into thinking: ‘What the fuck is the point?’”

By the late 90s, says Dowling, Honeycrack “weren’t long for this world. But

I’d met a comedy partnership called Armstrong and Miller, and persuaded them I could be their Neil Innes. Every comedian has their musical hanger-on, and I fancied that role. I ended up doing their music for four series, and meeting the rest of the comedy world.”

So began Dowling’s dual life, pinballing between TV work and the fizzing pop-rock delicacies of Jackdaw4. To be clear, there’s nothing on *The Eternal Struggle For Justice* to suggest this man was in *The Wildhearts*. “It’s not strictly a ‘rock’ album,” he agrees. “I don’t know what you’d call it. I like eclecticism. It’s just about songs, and how that song is best realised, whether that’s with a steaming, AC/DC beat or something funky tickling away. If you’re truly going to reflect life, it isn’t one-dimensional. It isn’t all ‘party’, or ‘anger’, or ‘hatred’, and it isn’t all ‘love’.

“In fact you’d be hard-pressed to find a song that mentions the word ‘love,’” he adds. “It tends to be external observations. There’s a song called *We Sold It All* which was started by seeing Ringo Starr and Iggy Pop trying to sell me insurance in one advert break. It struck me as bizarre: Ringo can’t need the money, and what the fuck is Iggy – the archetypal anti-establishment figure – doing selling insurance? And the final advert was John Lydon selling butter. I dare say with a sense of irony, but it struck me that this is the natural progression of capitalism, that everything is reduced to a pound sign.”

Yet Dowling has maintained his integrity better than most. “The joy of touring, the other trappings of success – and I’m struggling not to use the word ‘drugs’ here – eventually they let you down and you go home empty and bleak. The thing that never fails is that I can be working on a song and 48 hours will pass and I won’t even know it. The intrinsic value of songwriting has never failed me.” **HY**

The Eternal Struggle For Justice is out now on *Too Many Robots*. Free song downloads are available from www.jackdaw4.com

Sharp Dressed Man

Rock 'n' Roll accessories



Macbeth 'Mathew Mike Dirnt' Studio Project trainers, £55 [1]
www.macbethshop.com

Macbeth footwear have teamed up with a bunch of rock stars to produce their limited edition Studio Project range. This one is a collaboration with Green Day bassist Mike Dirnt. Not only does it look good, but this shoe is part of Macbeth's vegan range, with a canvas and synthetic upper and a rubber sole. So you can wear them whilst eating your hamburger with a clear conscience.

LTD skull & crossbones watch, £65 [2]
www.ltdwatch.com

Usually we're not fans of sparkly "bling" but this watch is serious rock'n'roll chronometry. With a spiffy crystal skull detail, it's lightweight and water-resistant up to 30m – so you can do the washing-up whilst wearing it. A pretty smart limited-edition collector's piece.

Disturbia 'Jesus Lizard' T-shirt, £20 [3]
www.disturbiaclotthing.co.uk

A reptile in priest's clothing; can of branded pop; a fist full of dollars... What the designers at Disturbia possibly be suggesting with this Pop Goes The Culture tagged tee? Check out their website for other designs – all are tailored cotton.



NEWS

Alice Cooper has hired Bob Ezrin, producer of *Billion Dollar Babies*, *Welcome To My Nightmare* and *School's Out* albums, to oversee a new studio record. Cooper recently said the album, expected to be titled *The Night Shift*, will be a conceptual piece about a mysterious radio DJ.

Liam Gallagher's new band is to be called Beady Eye, and will include fellow former Oasis members Gem Archer on guitar, bassist Andy Bell and drummer Chris Sharrock.

Accept's new album, *Blood Of The Nations*, is released via Nuclear Blast on August 20. It features former TT Quick singer Mark Tomillo in place of Udo Dirkschneider who declined to join the German band's reunion.

The reunited **Mr Big** will record a new studio album in September and follow that with a world tour starting in 2011.



The as-yet unnamed, long-rumoured collaboration between Porcupine Tree's **Steven Wilson** (pictured) **Mikael Åkerfeldt** from Opeth and Dream Theater's **Mike Portnoy** took its first tentative steps recently when the latter pair wrote together. "It's very arty, very ambitious. It's going to be epic," predicts Wilson.

Toronto Calling, an exhibition of music-themed photographs from 1979-1982, forms part of the Canada Day celebrations taking place in London's Trafalgar Square on July 1.



Y&T: it stands for Yesterday & Today. Quite a lot of people know that.



WELCOME BACK

Y&T

They "showed Mötley Crüe how to party" in the 80s, survived the "awful" 90s and are still here? Neat trick.

Y&T PIONEERED A melodic, metal-tinged hard rock sound that provided the blueprint for the 80s flash metal hordes. Formed by proto-speed metal shredder Dave Meniketti in 1974 as Yesterday And Today, the band spent the 70s developing their sound before hitting their stride with 1981's *Earthshaker* and hitting their peak with 1983's *Meanstreak*, a masterpiece of melodic metal anchored by the hard-charging power-ballad *Forever*. Their smash hit *Summertime Girls* in 1985 was an uncharacteristically, fluffy piece of singalong pop metal.

After years in the Where Are They Now? bins, Y&T have returned with a new album, the true-to-form *Facemelter*, and a renewed lust for life. *Classic Rock* caught up with frontman Dave Meniketti to talk all things yesterday and tomorrow.

"We were more into being musicians than being fuck-ups."

Casual rock fans generally remember Y&T from the *Summertime Girls* video. How do you feel about it these days? It's a love and hate thing, really. I love that it got us so much airplay and as much video play and that it was such a popular song. The hate part is when somebody puts Y&T and that song together first thing in their mind, when we have a hundred-and-something songs that don't sound anything like that.

Y&T are not known for their antics. Are there any crazy tour stories we don't know about? We were on tour with Mötley Crüe during *Theatre Of Pain*, and there was one point when Mötley's management told the band to stay away from us because things were getting too crazy. It wasn't me, really, but a couple of our guys were really showing Mötley how to party, and night after night, they were trying to outdo each other. They were putting out cigarettes

on each other's chests, just absolutely crazy shit. But we were never really tricksters, to be honest. We were more into being musicians than being fuck-ups.

Were the songs on new album *Facemelter* written over the past 13 years or are they more recent? Everything except *Gonna Go Blind*, which was written in the 90s but never recorded, was written over the past 14 months.

Was it a conscious decision to wait so long to go for it again?

It was a conscious choice. From 1997 to 2001 the band wasn't doing much. We weren't broken up per se; we were still playing a few shows here and there, but that's really it. It wasn't until 2003 that we really decided to go for it again. We just felt like we need to do something new and creative. What drove us was the need to feel alive, to feel like we were really in this for real.

And the album is called *Facemelter*! 'Facemelter' has followed us since the 70s. When we first started, we played this show at Santa Monica Civic. This guy came back stage and said: "You guys melted my face!" Ever since then, the term 'Facemelter' has been synonymous with Y&T.

Y&T have survived every musical trend for the past 40 years. What was the lowest point for rock music? Oh, the 90s, without question. It was awful. If you were a band that played in the 80s... holy shit, man, you were like dirt. That's the way people were treating us, like: "Ugh, you guys are an 80s band?" I'd say: 'No, actually we're a 70s band, but whatever.' **KM**

Facemelter is out now on Frontiers.

★ HIGH HOPES

Lissie

Meet the Band Of Horses-backed Midwestern songstress with one or two *Rumours* to live up to.

MEET LISSIE MAURUS, a sultry voiced, West Coast-based singer who, apparently, is the latest new Stevie Nicks. "Yeah, people have said that a lot," she says, rolling her eyes about comparisons with the Fleetwood Mac singer. "I think it's a huge compliment, being compared to her. I'm sure that's what the record company have put in my bio," she smiles.

In truth, young Lissie has more strings to her bow than just airbrushed, 70s-style AOR. Her upcoming debut album, *Catching A Tiger*, draws on country, beardy Americana and, in her own words, "freeway rock". And whatever style she turns to she sounds remarkably assured, with songwriting chops many twice her age would trade their septums for.

For this girl from Illinois it's the fulfilment of a long-held dream. Lissie was a rebellious teenager (she was kicked out of high school for spitting at a teacher) who had her heart set on music from an early age. She hadn't yet graduated from college when she decided to leave the Midwest and throw herself into the cauldron of Los Angeles. "The first time I went to LA I was kinda overwhelmed. I didn't even know how to hook up a telephone line. All of a sudden I was living all alone in this big city and had to maintain bills and drive in huge six-lane freeways. It was daunting."

She got a break when she chanced upon Band Of Horses bassist Bill Reynolds at a party. "He was playing a few instrumental tracks that he had been working on. I think we had had a few glasses of wine and I was like [slurring], 'I wanna sing on that track!' So he gave me a mic, and I started improvising over these songs and he was like: 'Wow. That's really good. I can use this stuff.' Reynolds ended up producing her 2009 EP *Why You Runnin'*, songs from which would form the backbone of her album.

It hasn't all been that easy. Simply being a young blonde girl in the music industry brings with it a whole heap of preconceptions.

"Oh yes," she says. "I think that just cos of how I look, some people assume that I must not really have any deep thoughts and feelings. But I don't think I care enough to really notice if it's going on or not."

"I think being on a major label there's always going to be image stuff. But I'm just going to be myself. When people see me perform live they know that it's coming from my gut."

One wonders if under her wholesome exterior Lissie has a secret penchant for wild rock'n'roll behaviour? "Not as much as I'd like!" she snorts.

"My band are always looking for health food stores and doing yoga, and I'm looking for cheeseburgers."

"I have my moments, though. Maybe once I establish myself and my schedule is not quite as crazy, maybe I'll indulge in more late-night partying. At the moment I always end up getting in bed by two. But this is *Classic Rock*, isn't it? You shouldn't say that! You should make it sound like I'm really fun."

So, Lissie: she's really fun, the new, cheeseburger-lovin' queen of (big) Mac rock. **WS**

Catching A Tiger is out now on Columbia.
See www.lissie.com for more info and tour dates.

FOR FANS OF...



"Since people have started comparing me to [Stevie Nicks] I've been listening to a lot more Fleetwood Mac," says Lissie. "They weren't a band I was listening to when I was developing my songwriting or my voice - hopefully I sound like no one but myself - but I've really got into them, especially *Rumours*. Fleetwood Mac are awesome. I love Mick Fleetwood's drumming and Lindsay Buckingham's guitar. They're really cool."



Lissie Maurus: the latest 'new Stevie Nicks'.

"Because of the way I look, people assume I have no depth. But when they see me live they know it's from the gut."

PHOTO PASS

THE STORY BEHIND THE SHOT

Band **Metallica**

Location **New York, 2003**

By **Mick Hutson**

VIP ~~STAFF~~ ~~GUEST~~ ~~AFTER SHOW~~ ~~PHOTO~~

“This photo was taken on April 1, 2003 in New York. I wanted to try to get them out on the streets. But this

is Metallica. In New York. And, quite understandably, they were reluctant to go out in public. However, I had a plan.

“Outside were parked four black limos. I asked two of the drivers if they’d each be prepared to drive to opposite ends of the street, turn in and effectively block it off. Eventually they agreed. So, for a short time, I had a whole New York street to myself. Which is how I could get the band walking down the middle of it.

“I walked backwards, shooting as I went, with the band walking towards me. But I didn’t realise what was going on behind me – the reason the guys were so amused and why Lars was pointing. At one end of the street was a very angry cab driver who, unable to get through, was swearing and making all sorts of threats against me. The band found all of this hilarious, especially as I hadn’t a clue what was going on. Although the street was only closed off for a couple of minutes, I probably caused even more annoyance because I made the band walk up and down the street twice.

“A very angry cab driver was making all sorts of threats.”

“Metallica got so into doing this that we ended up going around New York to carry on the shoot. However, I didn’t manage to block off any other streets!”

Mick’s photos will be on show as part of the Six Shooters exhibition, showing at Proud Camden from July 22 to Sept 12, 2010. More info at www.proud.co.uk



MICK HUTSON

Convinced of his calling following a first job where he trawled Hamburg in search of booze with Ziggy Stardust guitarist Mick Ronson, Mick has been in constant demand, shooting countless iconic shots of everyone from Paul McCartney to U2. You can be in with a chance to win an exclusive Mick Hutson print by going to www.classicrockmagazine.com now!



"It's behind you!" Metallica spot trouble brewing from an irate New York cabbie.



CLASSIC ROCK JUKEBOX

< **HEAVY ROTATION** >

WHAT WE'VE BEEN LISTENING TO THIS MONTH

01 BU2B

RUSH See right.

02 Life Won't Wait

OZZY OSBOURNE

Acoustic guitars and a fretless bass add a welcome maturity – and then a riff that cuts so deep it could scalp reduces you to a quivering teenage fanboy again. Class.

03 Odd One

SICK PUPPIES

There's shades of 3 Doors Down and Vertical Horizon in this great anthem from the Antipodean trio. Taken from their latest album *Tri-Polar*, available for download now.

04 Been To Heaven – Been To Hell

MOLLY HATCHET

The Hatchet are back to claim Skynyrd's crown. Storming, soaring lead track from new album *Justice*.

05 Jet Airliner

THE STEVE MILLER BAND

Miller's 1977 rip-roarer (a cover of a Paul Pena track) has been resurrected for the soundtrack of new movie *Greenberg*. And, boy, does it show-up the material on his new album (review p84). Turns out that even *he* don't make 'em like this anymore.

06 Tiny Light

GRACE POTTER & THE NOCTURALS See right.

07 Angel Of Death

ANGEL WITCH

This ton-of-bricks riffola renders Angel Witch's role as perennial bridesmaids of the NWOBHM completely laughable.

08 All Night Long

PEARL See below right.

09 Paper Sun

TRAFFIC

By jingo, you can almost taste the 60s while listening to this sun-dappled, era-defining Traffic single from the new Steve Winwood compilation. And boy, can that boy sing. Very groovy, baby.

10 In Excelsis

KILLING JOKE

Youth's return to the KJ fold only serves to intensify the band's trademark seismic maelstrom. Fancy an unforgiving descent into the sonic abyss? Look no further.

11 Yoso

YOSO

Luxuriant, radio-friendly prog from a group featuring ex-Toto singer Bobby Kimball and former Yes members Tony Kaye and Billy Sherwood.

12 Candy

TOM PETTY & THE HEARTBREAKERS

A jaunty little number from Tom Petty and his Heartbreakers. Taken from their latest album, *Mojo*.

12 Vapourise

CHROME HOOF

Typical musical schizophrenia from new album *Crush Depth* by the neo-prog experimental metal-(deep breath...)–funk-psyche orchestra (pew!).

01
RUSH
BU2B (Brought Up To Believe)

The celebrated Canadians crank up the heaviosity (while remaining determinedly 'arty') on the 'A-side' of their brand new digital single.

06
GRACE POTTER & THE NOCTURNALS
Tiny Light

Impossibly sexy and unfeasibly talented. If this debut UK single isn't blaring on your drivetime show, switch stations.

08
PEARL
Worth Defending

Catchy rocker from the punchy debut album from Meat Loaf's big-voiced daughter. Belt-it-out female rockers are in short supply these days.

13 Life Of A Dog

NAZARETH

Classic gruff'n'ready Naz. A long-lost bonus song from their reissued *Expect No Mercy* album.

14 Ghosts Of Princes In Towers

RICH KIDS

Having missed out on a Sex Pistols second guitarist gig purely by reasons of youth, Steve New (RIP) was 17 when Glen Matlock recruited him into the Rich Kids. This '78 debut album title track showcases a prodigious talent.

15 Steppin' Out

JOHN MAYALL & THE BLUESBREAKERS

The Beano Album stand-out appears on the new John Mayall four-CD set *So Many Roads: An Anthology 1964-74*, giving you all the excuse you need to let it assault your eardrums one more time.

16 Callout

FEEDER

Re-energised by a recent back-to-roots club tour (under the name of Renegades), Feeder have got their mojo back at last. This is their best song in years.

17 Shouting And Pointing

JOE ELLIOTT'S DOWN 'N' OUTZ

Joe Elliott + The Quireboys – Spike + beer and ciggies + lots of old records = one helluva party. On your free CD.

18 She Likes Hair Bands

BUTCH WALKER & THE BLACK WIDOWS

One of modern rock's most interesting songwriters returns with another collection of anthems typified by this smart and sexy modern love song.

19 Back To The Bullet

SARAYA

Long-lost late 80s AOR finally gets a welcome reissue. This is a fine track, and if you listen you'll notice it shares a melody with Stevie Wonder's *Signed Sealed Delivered...*

20 Born To Be King

MASTERPLAN

Marking the return of David Coverdale impersonator Jørn Lande, Masterplan's brand of symphonic power-metal is both regal and powerful.

21 Plastic Fantastic Lover

THE MARSHMALLOW STAIRCASE

Fuzzy, hazy musical mayhem at its finest. Jefferson Airplane cover from new album *A Phase We're Going Through* on the estimable Fruits de Mer label.

22 Down On Our Own Shield

JAKUB DYLAN

Beautifully brooding ballad (with haunting backing vox from Neko Case) from Zimmerman Jr. You'll find it on his new solo record *Women + Country*.

23 Bury! Pts. 2+4

THE FALL

MES's righteous preaching and The Fall's idiosyncratic melodies show a band back at the top of their game on this slab of rock machinism on the superior single version, remixed from current album *Your Future Our Clutter*.

ANDREW MACISAAC

Hear more recommendations EVERY DAY at mflow.com/classicrock

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TOM MAXWELL (NOTHINGFACE) • BOB ZILLA (DAMAGEPLAN)**

HELLYEAH

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KILLING JOKE 'In Excelsis'

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Includes 'Ghost Of Ladbrooke Grove',
'Endgame', the title track + more...

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15th - Picture House, Edinburgh
16th - Hammersmith Apollo, London

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www.myspace.com/killingjokeofficial

Buckcherry

Crazy Bitch

Inspired by the type of girls that “are great in bed but a nightmare everywhere else”, the song ended up bringing the band major problems – but not from where they’d been expecting it.

Words:
Malcolm Dome
Photo:
Annamaria Disanto/
Idols

If you believe the myth and legend, then you’ll think *Crazy Bitch* was inspired by the infamous Paris Hilton sex tape. We don’t. Because, says Buckcherry guitarist Keith Nelson, it really has nothing to do with La Hilton.

“I don’t even know how her name got attached it in the first place,” he sighs, obviously having heard and dismissed the rumour before. “The song was written at a time when a lot of these things seemed to be happening – you know, sex tapes involving famous people being leaked, and sold on the internet. But it’s got more to do with our ex-girlfriends.

“It was inspired by the type of girls that every rock’n’roller knows only too well. These girls are great in bed, but a nightmare everywhere else. The older you get, the longer that list becomes.”

The song was actually written in 2002, four years before it appeared on Buckcherry’s 15 album.

“What happened was that Josh [Todd, vocals] phoned me one day and sang these lyrics. Actually he was hoping I’d be out and that he would get my voicemail. I guess Josh was hoping to shock me by leaving this singing message.

“Anyway, I went away and came up with this funky riff, and the next day we met and had the song finished. Like a lot of the best stuff it was done very quickly.”

At the time the song was written, the band appeared to be falling apart. Three members had quit following the release of their 2001 album *Time Bomb*, and Buckcherry were also without a label – which worked to their advantage.

“We were down to being a duo for a while,” Nelson recalls. “that meant we just got on with writing songs. And because there was no label breathing down our necks, we had nobody ‘suggesting’ what we should do.”

The band demoed the track, and then thought nothing more of it. Until they went into the studio to record 15.

“We decided to do *Crazy Bitch*, just so we had it done properly. We weren’t even sure it would go on the album. But eventually it did, and it’s become one of our most popular songs. I guess it’s up there with

Lit Up [from 1999’s self-titled debut album] as a genuine Buckcherry anthem – sex and drugs. Works every time.”

One thing Nelson is delighted about is the way girls have taken to the song.

“It was never meant to be misogynistic, but that was the way a lot of people saw it when the album came out. But since then I’ve heard that so many women love it, and know all the lyrics. You’d be amazed how many girls have *Crazy Bitch* up as their MySpace theme.

“Something like that is really gratifying, because it means that females are in on the joke as well. So anyone out there who still thinks we’re sexist? Talk to the girls who go around calling themselves The Crazy Bitch. They understand, even if you don’t.”

Unfortunately, the band did run into serious problems when they shot the video for the song, eventually ending up with a law suit against them.

Here’s Nelson’s explanation of what happened. “At the time, we didn’t have any money. So we decided that the only way to do this video would be to call in some favours and use desperate actresses.

So we put up an ad on our MySpace page [www.myspace.com/buckcherry] asking for girls to show up. We stressed that you had to be over 18 and have ID to prove it. We also told them that they could use the video as part of their show reel.

“We went to Key Club in Los Angeles and did it up like a strip club. The video was shot [two versions – the explicit and also the ‘clean’], and that was the end of it. Until the song started to get noticed and the video got airplay.”

At this point a girl – known as Jane Doe for legal reasons – came out of the proverbial woodwork and claimed that she’d been just 16 years old when she appeared in the video. Which meant scenes of her kissing another girl and drinking alcohol, plus other suggestively lewd acts, were definitely unlawful. Litigation duly followed.

“It was ridiculous,” says Nelson. “We did

everything we could to ensure that only girls above the legal age got in for the video. And this one admitted she’d falsified her birth certificate and ID, then sued Buckcherry, claiming we forced her to behave in this fashion!”

Everything has now been settled, but Nelson still feels aggrieved: “It just seems that when a band start to get somewhere through their own hard work, as we had, there’s always somebody ready to try and take a slice of the cake. In a way, though, she is the sort of crazy bitch the song was about, so perhaps we should have expected something like this.”

As a single, *Crazy Bitch* failed to even tickle the UK chart. In the US it only managed No.59, but it gave the band their first Top 100 single, and started the ball rolling for the million-selling 15. Moreover, *Crazy Bitch* was nominated for Grammy in

“I’ve heard that so many women love *Crazy Bitch*. You’d be amazed how many girls have it as their MySpace theme.”

the Best Hard Rock Performance category in 2007 (won by Wolfmother for *Woman*).

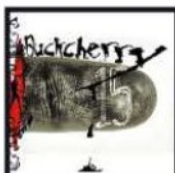
“It amazes me how something so simple and easy to write has become so important to our fans,” Nelson laughs. “Still, I suppose it proves that sex sells.”

As for all the ‘fuck’s spread liberally throughout the track, Nelson reckons it’s part of the song’s enduring charm.

“If we’d have been on a label at the time, then I suppose the A&R people would have freaked out and told us: ‘You can’t use such language.’ But we were on our own. The radio edit is irritating, but it got the song noticed, and people always want to hear the real version anyway.

“I guess that song will be our epitaph, and long outlive us. Can’t think of a better calling card to leave behind.”

Buckcherry’s album All Night Long is due out on August 3 via Eleven Seven.



SCREEN BITCH

Crazy Bitch started a trend that continues to this day: fans putting up their own videos on YouTube.

“A guy did this great video with him dancing with a mop. We saw it and loved what he’d done, and encouraged others to get involved. There has been some really interesting and creative stuff done.”

One result was that two female fans from St. Louis inspired the video for *Next 2 U*.

“We saw what they’d posted, liked it, and based our official video on their ideas, with due credit given.”

Buckcherry: *Crazy Bitch*
"proves that sex sells".



THE FACTS
RELEASE DATE

April 2006

HIGHEST

CHART

POSITION

Did not chart in
UK; No.59 in US

PERSONNEL

Josh Todd

Vocals

Keith Nelson

Lead guitar,

backing vocals

Stevie D

Rhythm guitar

Jimmy Ashhurst

Bass

Xavier Muriel

Drums

PRODUCERS

Mike Plotnikoff,

Paul DeCarli,

Keith Nelson

LABEL

Eleven Seven
Music/Atlantic

Ozzy Osbourne

The metal legend on why he can't stop working, why Zakk Wylde had to go, TV stardom and being crap at parking.

Words: **Geoff Barton** Portrait: **Ross Halfin**

Ozzy Osbourne is determined to put the stumbling spectre of *The Osbournes* behind him with his latest release, *Scream*. Having been treated to a preview – an Ozzy representative paying *Classic Rock* a visit and playing us the album on the office stereo, no less – it sounds like a monstrous return to form for the nefarious Black Sabbath founder. *Scream* also marks the recording debut of Ozzy's new guitarist, Gus G. The Greek six-stringer, who was in a band called Firewind, and replaces the Prince Of Fucking Darkness's longstanding sidekick Zakk Wylde.

***Scream* gets a firm thumbs-up from us. But what would you say to someone who, these days, might think of you more in an Osbournes sense than a Sabbath sense?**

Contrary to what people might think I never left my roots. *The Osbournes* was just like an experiment that got crazy and wild. With the new album, I'm not 'back' 'cos I've never gone away. I do appreciate that there are people out there who only know me from the television. But you know what? I hate working in television. And you know why people can't understand what I'm saying? Because I'm fucking panicking. I'm saying the first thing that comes into my head.

What can you say to persuade people to forget their prejudices and give *Scream* a listen?

If you hear it and you like it, that's great. If you don't like it, that's fine too. Just give it a chance. Personally I'm proud of it. I'm not singing about boy-meets-girl or some fucking slurpy shit, it's hard-core. It's a well-planned-out album. I worked on it for eighteen months. Not continually, but it's taken that long. [Producer] Kevin [Churko] is the one who's spent all the time on it. He's fucking nuts, he is.

Nuts in what way?

Kevin lived in The Bunker [Ozzy's Los Angeles home studio] for a year and a half. He comes from the Mutt Lange camp. He's a very patient man. He'd ask me: "What do you think of this cymbal sound? Do you prefer it to go 'swish-swish', 'ker-chink', or 'clang'?" I'd go: "I don't care. It's a cymbal."

When I stopped drinking, I thought: "How am I going to write songs?" But Kevin was great; he helped me a lot, he made it so easy for me. I thought I'd lost the spark, so I was tempted to have a beer on more than one occasion, just to get the creative juices going. But I really don't want to do that any more.

You've got a new guitarist, Gus G, who has replaced Zakk Wylde. Why the change of six-stringers?

I don't want anyone to think I've fallen out with Zakk, that I've fired him and he hates me. It's not true. I'm not putting him down at all. I love his stuff. But I've been putting off the inevitable. I've been thinking about trying to find a permanent replacement for two or three years. I suppose it came to a head on the last tour, when Zakk was opening the show with his band [Black Label Society] and fucking closing it with my band. I was beginning to sound more like Black Label than Ozzy, and that's not right.

***Scream* was originally called *Soul Sucka* but you changed the title due to adverse fan reaction. What's the story behind that?**

It's a fucking computer world now. But I'm glad it is, because otherwise I would never have known how much people disliked the title. I thought *Soul Sucka* was a great name. But then someone told me my website had gone nuts with complaints about it. Apparently people were saying they're not going to buy the record because it's a crap name – and, what's more, it's associated with hip-hop.

What inspires you, as an artist, to record new material? Because you could easily rest on your laurels.

I remember the time when my father was offered voluntary redundancy: a big, fat, juicy cheque. I asked him: "What are you going to do?" He said: "I'm just going to quit and do some gardening." So he got made redundant, did the garden, and fucking died. I can see myself going the same way if I retired. I've got to work; I'd go crazy if I didn't. You just can't go [claps hands] and stop. Most of my time is spent watching DVDs in hotel rooms, so the best part is the gig. If I can't do a gig or make an album, I'm fucking pissed off.

Has Ronnie James Dio's illness affected you? [NB: This interview happened in the week preceding Ronnie's death.]

I did send him a get-well message when I heard he was sick. I bumped into [Heaven And Hell drummer] Vinny Appice at an awards ceremony a while back and I said: "If there's anything I can do to help Ronnie out, please let me know." Sharon had cancer a few years ago, and it's fucking miserable to watch somebody going downhill.

You're playing some UK dates this summer, Ozzfest is returning, and we understand you've got some serious touring coming up later in the year. How will you hold up, physically?

I'm feeling fit. I'm raring to go. And I'm going to countries I've never been to before: Turkey. Istanbul, places like that. I've got to work hard because there's a lot more tours going out now. But if it doesn't work out, I can't complain. I've had a load of musical success.

Last time we spoke, for the launch of your *I Am Ozzy* autobiography, you'd just passed your driving test.

I wanted to get an Aston Martin. But eventually I settled on an Audi R8. It was five seconds of flash. I was driving along in it with Sharon and suddenly I had this moment of clarity. I thought: "Fucking hell, I'm 61. What do I need a sports car for?" So I got a Range Rover. Don't tell anyone, but I can't park. And I don't know any of the road signs.

There's an Ozzy movie in the pipeline. Who would play you?

A lot of people have been suggesting Johnny Depp. If it was down to me I'd prefer a young, unknown guy from Birmingham.

How about Jasper Carrot?

No. No. Fucking Jasper Carrot? Tell that to my wife and she'll punch you in the fucking mouth. **●**

Scream is out now on Epic Records.

Ozzy Osbourne: Prince Of Darkness, Highway Code dunc, inventor of the Rat Toupé.



"I THOUGHT: 'FUCKING HELL, I'M 61. WHAT DO I NEED A SPORTS CAR FOR?' SO I GOT A RANGE ROVER."

Key personnel:
Patrick Carney (left)
and Dan Auerbach.





They don't look like much, but these two guys are actually a band. They're called **The Black Keys**. And they've made one of this year's greatest rock albums

Words: **Philip Wilding**

There's a cinder-block building out near the highway on the outskirts of Alabama where history's been made. Muscle Shoals Sound Studios looks like it might have fallen out of the sky. But Wilson Pickett and Aretha Franklin helped broker their respective legends there. It's where The Stones recorded *Brown Sugar* and *Wild Horses*. Inside there Bob Seger sang about *Mainstreet* as traffic rolled past outside. Although, as The Black Keys' drummer Patrick Carney concedes, Muscle Shoals Sound hasn't always been a byword for brilliance.

"Nothing really that good has been recorded there in, like, the past fifteen years," Carney says with some certainty. "Plus a lot of really shitty records were done there, like Paul Simon records, which I fucking hate. But then people like the Staple Singers recorded there too."

"We didn't actually use any of their equipment except for an old organ they had in there," says Black Keys singer/guitarist Dan Auerbach, who is also quick to demystify the studio's legend: "It's cool to know who's been in there, but for Pat and I it was about needing to get away from home and be isolated with the music."

Home is Akron, Ohio, the city that gave the world Goodyear tyres and the band Devo. The Black Keys' third album was called *Rubber Factory*. Its cover – warehouses, factories, piles of tyres – gave a nod to the town's industrial past.

Since the band's last album, 2008's acclaimed *Attack & Release*, Dan has become a dad, Pat got a divorce, and they both admit

wearily that getting out of town to make their sixth album was probably the only way it was going to get done.

The result is *Brothers*. Its 15 songs were recorded in less than three weeks: "Ten days in Muscle Shoals, five days at my studio in Akron and two days in Brooklyn," says Dan, adding it all up. It might not be the way Def Leppard get things done, but it works for The Black Keys. And they came in under budget, too.

With a tone best described as begrudging, even The Black Keys can see the worth of their latest record. Their fundamental, hard-driven blues rock has evolved into a wash of new colours that includes east-coast soul, plaintive storytelling, and a haunting, detached feel that is sometimes uplifting, but mostly crestfallen, even spooky. At moments they sound like The Doors at their eerie, wooziest best; at the end the album, on the lilting *These Days*, they sound like a strung-out Rolling Stones. A harpsichord trills a ghostly refrain through *Too Afraid To Love You*; on a thrillingly downbeat cover of Jerry Butler's *Never Gonna Give You Up* a de-tuned, fuzzed bass sounds like a sombre trombone.

The first single from the album, the swinging *Tighten Up*, was written and recorded in two afternoons, although the band sat on it for weeks because they weren't sure it was quite good enough.

"As idiotic as it sounds," says Pat, not sounding idiotic at all, "we maybe wanted something that might appeal to getting played on the radio so we could sort of suck people into the record. We made *Tighten Up* in December, and had it mixed by December 10. We instantly dismissed it, and we weren't going to include it, and sat on it for, like, six weeks. But after playing it for some people, ➡

THE BLACK KEYS

we kept getting told that we were crazy for not putting it on there." You can almost hear him shrug as he says it.

For Dan, *Brothers* is the album The Black Keys always wanted to make as a band, but previously they had been hampered by inexperience as well as plain old technical inability.

"I think this sort of finally mixes everything we've always loved about music," Dan says of *Brothers* with some enthusiasm. "It's something that we've never been able to get all together before now. We weren't fully formed when we started out; we were brand new, just little babies. I think we're just starting to hit our stride."

For Pat it was about making a record "with very little guitar but that still sounds us. Which, for us, is an eye-opening thing. Doing this record has made us both excited about what we can accomplish next."

And it wasn't just the mechanics of making an album that needed to be overcome, as Dan readily admits: "It was the emotional stuff too. Pat went through a divorce. That fucked him up. That's why we wanted to get out of town and record. We really wanted to get away from reality for a bit. Plus we've grown up. You get to a certain age and realise that it's truly up to you, and you're making something that will outlive you, so you might as well do it the way you want to and say something."

"That's the good thing about getting older – you accept who you are, you accept your flaws. And with playing music it's the same. It felt like Pat and I became brothers, hence the album title. And we've been together so long, there's a lot of love there. We just went

"I'd be the kid who'd buy a Pavement record and a Booker T record too. That seemed pretty normal to me." – Pat Carney

to work hard like we always do, twelve or thirteen hour days non-stop, just focused on the ultimate goal: to make a real piece of art that we were proud of."

"And as Dan says, he and I have been through a lot of stuff. But I think it's really hard to make interesting art when you're really, really happy. Especially if you're financially set and in a good spot too. Why would you ever want to make a rock'n'roll record and get on a bus and go on tour for, like, six months and leave everyone that you care about behind?"

Kicking around as kids in Akron, Dan listened to hip-hop with his friends and played blues guitar at home; Pat's dad played him Sam Cooke and Otis Redding and bought him his first guitar.

"When I first started appreciating music and knew what I was doing, it was going out and getting stuff like Led Zeppelin, the Pistols, Sonic Youth," says Pat. "But I'd be that kid who would go to the record store and buy a Pavement record and a Booker T record too. That seemed pretty normal to me."

"My mom's family all played bluegrass and blues music, so they taught me how to play guitar," says Dan. "My mom was a piano teacher for a while, and she would play Scott Joplin on the piano. My dad had the record collection – Captain Beefheart, Allman Brothers, Louis Jordan, Cab Calloway, all that stuff. That was going all the time when I was a kid."

"The first thing I actually bought on my own was the Geto Boys cassette single *Mind Playing Tricks On Me*. It was just really popular in middle school. I went through a bunch of phases, but what ultimately ended up happening was that I would listen to music when I was with my friends, mostly hip-hop, and then when I went home I would play guitar by myself and try to figure out stuff like the Kinks and Robert Johnson. At home I still listen to the Impressions and the Wu-Tang Clan. I figured it was like that for everyone, but it's clearly not."

The Black Keys give a nod to the Impressions on *Brothers* with a cover of singer Jerry Butler's *Never Gonna Give You Up*. The mere mention of Butler unites the pair in a fleeting bout of effusiveness.



The Black Keys: not your regular rock band, not your regular rock album.



"That's my favourite Jerry Butler song," Dan says. "We like to do covers, and Pat said as long as we do a Jerry Butler tune it has to be that. We've always had a lot of love for Jerry Butler. Typically, we didn't want to do it completely normal so we slowed it way down and made it kind of wobbly and other-worldly."

"When we first started touring, my dad's friend sent me the CD of that song and we listened to it again and again," Pat recalls. "It reminds me of that time. I think we always knew we'd cover it. But, to be honest, it's not like what can we bring much to it, as much as being able to show it to people who have never heard it. You know: 'Listen to Jerry Butler, people.'"

It's difficult to pick highlights of a truly affecting album, but the creeping tale of heartache and violent revenge that is the sparse *Ten Cent Pistol* is the kind of song that demands your attention. It's a classic case of great American songwriting/storytelling, but Dan is quick to dismiss the idea that it's mere fiction.

"My uncle is a photographer and he lives in Florida, and over the course of a year he did a recurring shoot of immigrant workers in that part of the US," says Dan. "And there was this old Dominican lady, and my uncle got to shooting her a bunch, and she would tell him stories. One of them was that she'd spent time in prison because she'd used a ten-cent pistol on her ex- and his lover."

"So of course my uncle was like: 'What's a ten-cent pistol?' And she explained that you have this chemical called potash, and you mix it up with charcoal from a furnace and put it in a cup. And she busted in on her guy with a girl he was fucking and threw the ten-cent pistol on them and it pretty much exploded and maimed them. She could have killed them, I guess."

"So, she was sent to prison, and now she's an old lady migrant worker picking potatoes and being photographed by my uncle."

"I'd never heard of a ten-cent pistol up until then. Neither had he until she told him the story." He pauses, before adding dryly:

"Sometimes, songs, they're a gift." 🎧

Brothers is out now through *V2/Cooperative Music*.



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RONNIE JAMES DIO

1942 - 2010

Words: **Paul Elliott** Portrait: **Travis Shinn**

With the death of Ronnie James Dio on May 16, 2010, rock music lost an iconic figure. The man whose mighty voice lit up the music of Rainbow, Black Sabbath, Dio and Heaven And Hell was truly a unique talent: a vocalist of immense power, expression and innate melodic flair, an elegant lyricist, and a storyteller of rich imagination. There is magic in the words and voice of Ronnie James Dio.

Music was central to his life from an early age. Although he never received any formal vocal training, as a child he mastered French horn and trumpet, to which he later attributed the breathing control pivotal to his singing power. He played bass guitar in his first professional group, The Vegas Kings, a rockabilly outfit formed in 1957 and based in New York State. But it didn't take him long to answer his true calling. By the end of 1958, he was lead singer of a new-look band, Ronnie & The Red Caps, later renamed Ronnie Dio & The Prophets after Ronnie had adopted a stage name appropriated from mobster Johnny Dio.

Success did not come quickly. As the rock era dawned in the 60s, Dio toiled in obscurity as leader of the Electric Elves, subsequently shortened to Elf. But in the early 70s came the break that he had longed for, when Deep Purple's Roger Glover and Ian Paice saw potential in Elf and elected to produce the band's self-titled debut album. And from there, a strong connection was formed between the two bands – a connection that led Dio to the man who would transform his career and change his life.

Ritchie Blackmore, Deep Purple's moody guitar hero, took a shine to Elf – and especially their singer – when the two bands toured together between 1972 and 1974. And when Blackmore chose to

make a solo record, having openly voiced his displeasure over Purple's funk-influenced albums *Burn* and *Stormbringer*, he enlisted Dio and the other members of Elf, minus guitarist Steve Edwards. That album, titled *Ritchie Blackmore's Rainbow*, was released in 1975 shortly after the guitarist quit Deep Purple. And it was immediately apparent that Blackmore had found the perfect foil in Dio, a singer whose voice and imagery were ideally suited to Blackmore's baroque taste.

Ritchie Blackmore's Rainbow was the album on which Ronnie James Dio came of age. After all the lean years before and with Elf, this was Ronnie's golden opportunity, and he responded with a performance of complete authority. The album's opening track, *Man On The Silver Mountain*, set the template for so much to come: an epic, mystical tale rendered in a voice that soared and thundered. And Dio proved equally adept on the album's gentler songs, the poetic *Catch The Rainbow*, and *The Temple Of The King*, perhaps the most beautiful and elegiac song he ever recorded.

What followed was one of rock's all-time classic albums, establishing this new band – now simply named Rainbow – as a major force, and confirming Dio as a singer of unrivalled power. Released in June 1976, *Rainbow Rising* is the model of what aficionados like to call 'castle rock': heroic, fantasy-themed, progressive heavy metal built to a monolithic scale, and most potently illustrated by *Stargazer*, the album's vast quasi-symphonic centrepiece. *Classic Rock's* Geoff Barton, then writing for *Sounds*, summed up *Rising* perfectly, describing it as 'thermonuclear rock'n'roll'.

How to top that? Ronnie almost did on Rainbow's third studio album *Long Live Rock 'N' Roll* with the track *Gates Of Babylon*, another *Stargazer*-sized set-piece. But that record, best known for its anthemic title track, was to be Dio's swansong for Rainbow, Blackmore replacing him with dapper Englishman Graham Bonnet as he pursued a more radio-friendly direction. It was hard on Ronnie, being out of ➤

'RONNIE JAMES DIO WAS A UNIQUE TALENT: A VOCALIST OF IMMENSE POWER, EXPRESSION AND FLAIR.'



a job after just four years with Rainbow. But within a year he would be courted by another world-famous rock band – and this would present him with the greatest challenge of his career.

When announced as the new singer in Black Sabbath – succeeding the much-loved Ozzy Osbourne – Dio faced hostility from the media and from hardcore Sabbath fans. To further complicate the issue, Dio was an American joining a quintessentially British band. But Dio's debut with Sabbath, 1980's *Heaven And Hell*, silenced his critics. In *Sounds*, Peter Makowski stated: 'Ronnie James Dio has injected a whole new energy into the group... Just sit back, turn it up and feel your brain implode.'

Simply put, Dio made Black Sabbath great again. His gift for melody, and his poetic sensibility, brought a lyrical quality to Sabbath's music and inspired Tony Iommi in particular, whose lead guitar work on the album's phenomenal title track is the best he has ever played. And crucially, Dio could also handle the really heavy stuff, as he proved emphatically on *Neon Knights*, arguably the heaviest of all Sabs songs. Nobody has ever sung a heavy metal song better than Ronnie did with *Neon Knights*.

He would make another great album with Sabbath, *Mob Rules*, released in 1981. But as so often happens, a combination of heavy touring and personality clashes led to a split in 1982 amid rumours that the rival parties had been tampering with the mix of the live-in-concert album *Live Evil*. Many years later, Ronnie would dismiss these stories as "bullshit", but on the cover of *Live Evil* there was a small detail that spoke volumes of the animosity between Sabbath and Dio: the singer was billed not as Ronnie James Dio but as plain Ronnie Dio. It was a cheap shot to which Ronnie reacted by forming a new band under his own name, a band whose first album would blow Sabbath out of the water.

Holy Diver, released in June 1983, is one of the great heavy metal debuts. The band Ronnie put together featured two familiar faces – former Rainbow colleague Jimmy Bain on bass, and fellow Sabbath fugitive Vinny Appice on drums – plus a relatively unknown and inexperienced guitarist in 19 year-old Vivian Campbell, previously of Irish band Sweet Savage. But they made a tight unit: Bain and Appice rock solid, Campbell flashy and fiery. And with Ronnie now undisputed group leader for the first time since Elf, *Holy Diver* was the album on which his singular artistic vision was finally realised. It's a record packed with classic songs, not just Dio classics but genre-defining heavy metal classics: *Stand Up And Shout*, *Holy Diver*, *Rainbow In The Dark*, *Don't Talk To Strangers*. By comparison, Sabbath's *Born Again*, featuring Dio's surprise replacement Ian Gillan, was widely regarded as a joke, even before Spinal Tap lampooned the Sabs' Stonehenge stage set.

Throughout the 80s, Dio – the man and the band – maintained a large and loyal following. Band members came and went, beginning with Vivian Campbell, who went on to Whitesnake and then Def Leppard. In '86 Ronnie organised Hear 'N Aid, heavy metal's answer to Band Aid, a charity project for African famine relief that produced a hit single, *Stars*, written by Ronnie and sung by a hairy ensemble cast featuring members of Mötley Crüe, Iron Maiden and Judas Priest. And if no subsequent Dio album ever matched *Holy Diver*, Ronnie continued to deliver great songs (*We Rock*, *The Last In Line*, *Sacred Heart*, *Rock 'N' Roll Children*) and spectacular live shows. (Nobody who saw Ronnie battling Dean The Dragon on stage could ever forget the experience!)

Then, in the early 90s, came an astonishing volte-face. Ronnie rejoined Black Sabbath. It didn't last. They made a half-decent album, *Dehumanizer*, but when Sabbath were invited to support Ozzy on what was billed as the Double-O's farewell tour, Ronnie pulled out and Rob Halford of Judas Priest acted as stand-in.

Ronnie re-launched Dio in 1994, and in the next 10 years the band recorded five albums with varying line-ups. But for Ronnie, Black Sabbath was unfinished business, and in 2007 he reunited with Iommi, Appice and bassist Geezer Butler as Heaven And Hell. This would prove to be Ronnie James Dio's last hurrah.

Initially, Ronnie had intended to reform Dio after *Heaven And Hell*'s world tour, but such was the success of that tour, and so strong was the vibe in the band after recording three new tracks for the Black Sabbath compilation *The Dio Years*, it was decided that Heaven And Hell would record a brand new album. That album, *The Devil You Know*, was released to widespread acclaim in 2009. It would be the last of Ronnie's recordings released in his lifetime.

The death of Ronnie James Dio has had a profound effect both on those who knew him and those who simply loved his music. For this writer, there are many memories to cherish. Ronnie was the first rock star I interviewed as a professional journalist, back in 1985, when he was promoting Dio's *Sacred Heart* album. It was a huge thrill for me to meet

him. Since 1980 – when I unwrapped a Christmas present from my brother, a cassette of *Heaven And Hell* – I have been a Ronnie James Dio fan.

I first saw Ronnie on stage with Dio at the Hammersmith Odeon in 1984, on *The Last In Line* tour. And across the years I've seen Ronnie play so many great shows: at Birmingham NEC with that bloody dragon, at London's Astoria performing the whole of *Holy Diver*, and the last time, at Brighton Centre with *Heaven And Hell*.

My last interview with Ronnie was just a couple of years ago, when he was in London with *Heaven And Hell*. What I remember most of all was the warmth of the rapport between him and Tony, Geezer and Vinny. I asked Ronnie about a phrase he used many times in his lyrics, a phrase that had become akin to a trademark: 'Look out!' He'd used it in *Holy Diver*, in *Rainbow In The Dark*, and a record-breaking five times in Sabbath's *Children Of The Sea*.

He smiled. "It's funny. Whenever I play in Phoenix, this one guy is always there, and

every time I'm going to sing it he holds up sign that says 'Look Out!' I take it as a compliment!"

He was right: it is a compliment. When I had a leaving party after 10 years working for *Kerrang!*, the invitations featured a photo of Ronnie with a stuffed eagle and the headline: Look Out! It was a tribute to the man who, for me, best epitomises the spirit of heavy metal.

In a 2009 issue of *Classic Rock*, I stated: 'Of all the legendary heavy metal singers, Ronnie James Dio is the greatest.' And there are many, all over the world, who share that opinion. I recall a drunken night with friends in Brighton when the conversation inevitably turned to

heavy metal, and, specifically, singers – at which point one friend, Andy Hunns, threatened to walk out of the pub unless we all agreed that Ronnie James Dio is the No.1 metal singer of all time. We agreed, Andy stayed. Rob Halford was voted No.2.

Ronnie James Dio sang so many great songs: *Man On The Silver Mountain*, *Sixteenth Century Greensleeves*, *The Temple Of The King*, *Stargazer*, *Tarot Woman*, *Starstruck*, *Kill The King*, *Long Live Rock 'N' Roll*, *Neon Knights*, *Children Of The Sea*, *Heaven And Hell*, *Die Young*, *Stand Up And Shout*, *Holy Diver*, *Rainbow In The Dark*, *The Last In Line*, *We Rock*. But if there is one song, above all others, with a lyric that best captures the essence of Ronnie James Dio, it is *Sacred Heart*: 'Whenever we

dream, that's when we fly.'

He dared to dream, and he flew high.

Rest in peace, Ronnie.

Turn the page for *Classic Rock* writers' tributes to RJD.



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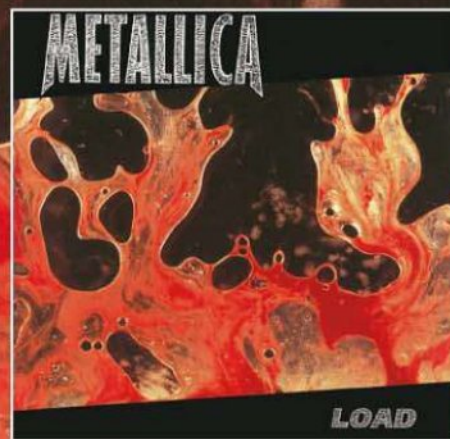
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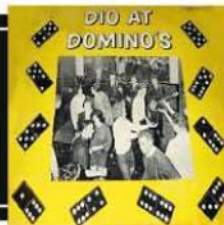


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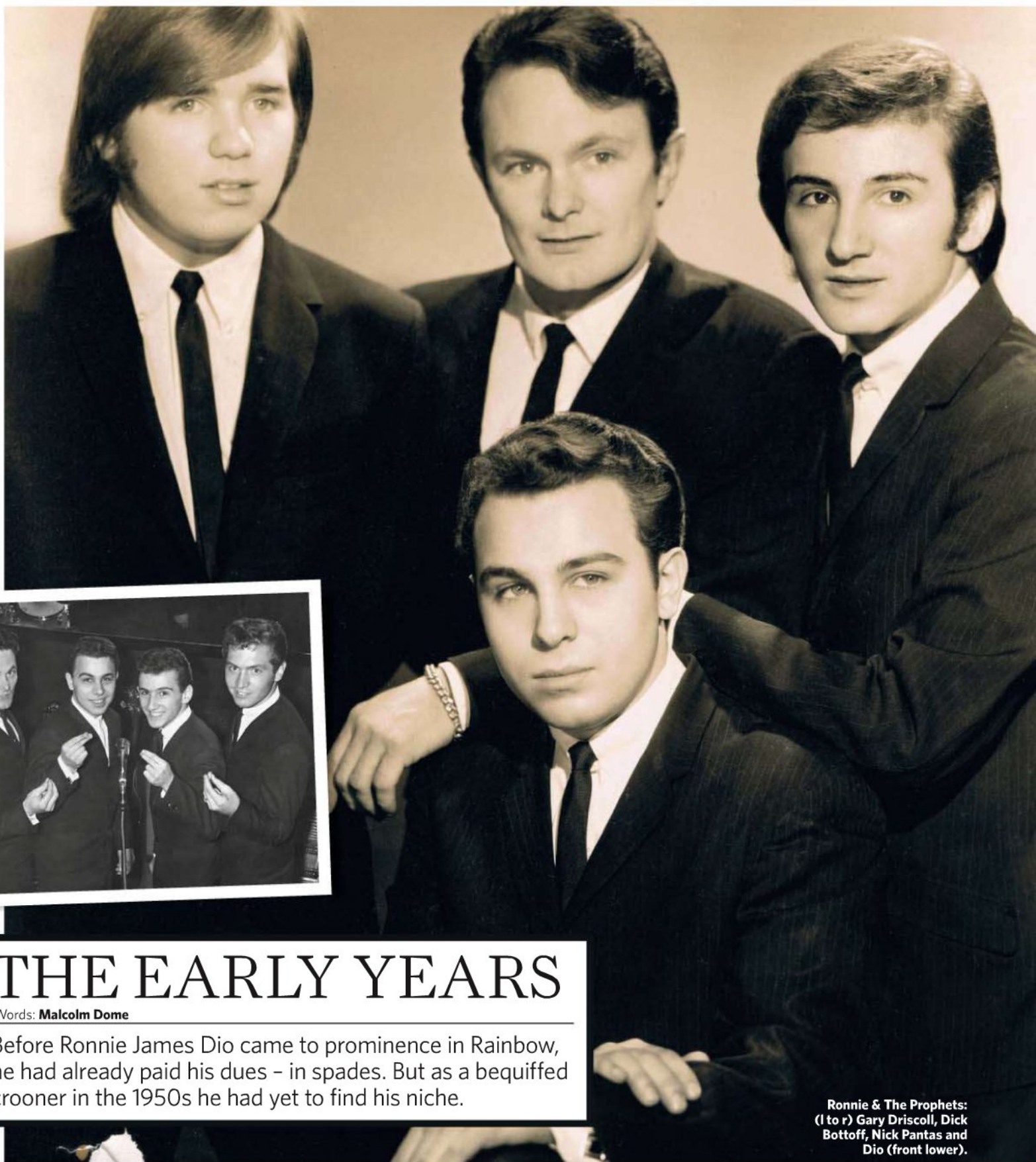
THE 14 SONGS THAT DEFINED RONNIE JAMES DIO



DON'T TAKE YOUR LOVE FROM ME

DIO AT DOMINO'S, 1963

An early example of the man's awesome range and depth. This comes from the only Ronnie & The Prophets album, recorded live at a restaurant! While not particularly hard rock, Dio's voice is clearly showing the potential later realised.



THE EARLY YEARS

Words: **Malcolm Dome**

Before Ronnie James Dio came to prominence in Rainbow, he had already paid his dues – in spades. But as a bequipped crooner in the 1950s he had yet to find his niche.

Ronnie & The Prophets:
(l to r) Gary Driscoll, Dick
Bottoff, Nick Pantas and
Dio (front lower).



GAMBLER GAMBLER

ELF, 1972

From the debut Elf album, featuring the line-up that would effectively become the first incarnation of Rainbow. Dio had just discovered the full power of Deep Purple; you can hear him finally slotting into the niche that would define his career.

By the time Ronnie James was fronting Elf in the early 1970s he'd already had a lengthy career, as he searched for the right musical direction.

"We tried everything with Ronnie," recalls Jim Pantas, who managed Dio from 1958 until '72. "But nothing worked till he found a niche with heavy rock."

In 1958 Pantas had become involved with the band known as Ronnie & The Red Caps. They'd started the previous year as The Vegas Kings, before briefly becoming Ronnie & The Rumlbers, with Dio on vocals and bass.

"In June 1958 I was sent to hospital with an overactive thyroid," Pantas explains. "My brother Nick was 16 at the time, a year younger than me, and the guitarist in this band. He asked me to manage them. When I asked what a manager did he replied: 'If I fucking knew, then I wouldn't be asking you!'"

For the next three years or so, everyone was learning on the job. The Redcaps recorded two singles – first *Lover* and then a Bobby Rydell cover called *An Angel Is Missing*. But their big break came in 1960, when the band were offered a residency at the Airport Lounge club.

"That was up at a resort called Lake George. We auditioned for five clubs around there, and were offered 50 straight nights at this one. It made the band the best and tightest covers act in the New York area. And Ronnie was just so good. You gotta remember there were successful artists around like Dion,

"THE PROPHETS OPENED FOR THE STONES AT CARNEGIE HALL. THEY WERE ON THE BILL TO HELP SELL TICKETS!"

Freddy Cannon and Bobby Comstock who sounded great in the studio. But they couldn't repeat this on stage. Ronnie did live what they couldn't."

Graduating as president of his high school in 1960, Dio continued to work towards success with The Redcaps, who changed their name to Ronnie Dio & The Prophets in 1962. The same year, the vocalist got married to his first wife Loretta, and he refused to do a tour of Sweden.

"He was committed to the wedding ring, and making his marriage a success," says Pantas. "So while the rest of the guys went over there, he did a Dick Clark package tour of America playing trumpet for Comstock and Gene Pitney."

However, the Prophets returned from Europe raving about a young band called The Beatles, who were to transform pop music.

"From then on, the boys were heavily into the British sound. The band supported The Searchers, and also opened for The Rolling Stones at Carnegie Hall – the band's first US show. They were on the bill to help sell tickets!"

However, still success eluded the young Dio. He played trumpet on the 1963 hit *My Boyfriend's Back* by The Angels, and even recorded a song called *The Way Of Love* with a 70-piece orchestra; the song would be a huge hit for Cher in '71.

"Ronnie got such prestigious slots as opening for Sammy Davis Jr in 1966. But however we tried to position him, it didn't come off."

In 1968 Ronnie Dio & The Prophets fell apart after a road accident killed Nick Pantas and put Dio, his guitar-playing cousin David 'Rock' Feinstein and keyboard player Doug Thaler (future manager of Mötley Crüe) in hospital. Within a year, Dio and Feinstein had got together The Electric Elves, who became Elf – and history was about to unfold.

"By '72, Ronnie had become fascinated with Deep Purple. And that's when we parted," explains Pantas. "That wasn't a music I understood, or wanted to understand. But I look back on those early years and recall how dedicated he and the boys were to their music. They didn't take drugs, hardly ever drank, but were so into their playing and focused on doing what it took to be successful."

How does Pantas sum up Dio's influence?

"Nobody else inspired so many vocalists and musicians to go back into the basement or garage and keep on practising. Because his standards were always so high."



Dio: 'knocked out' to be in Rainbow.

RAINBOW RISES

Words: Geoff Barton

"I shall do interviews initially, to get the band on its feet... but as soon as I've done that I shall revert to the mean, moody bastard I used to be."

The corners of Ritchie Blackmore's lips curl up slowly and he smirks as he enjoys his own peculiar brand of dark humour. But it lasts for only an instant. Soon enough, his face takes on a sullen, morose aspect again and his mouth droops down.

Sitting next to Blackmore is Ronnie James Dio, singer with the new band, Rainbow. Dio also smiles, but wistfully. Perhaps in awe of his new employer, the notorious Man In Black, he doesn't say a lot.

It's July 1975. Blackmore is slumped on a couch in the lobby of London's Swiss Cottage Holiday Inn. Dio is perched upright on a chair next to his leader, looking bright-eyed and bushy-tailed but ever so slightly shy. A long way from the commanding, golden-tonsilled, flared-sleeved, Maloik-gesturing Metal Leviathan he would become.

Blackmore is talking about his post-Deep Purple album, *Ritchie Blackmore's Rainbow*, which is due for release the following month; on August 10, to be precise. Turns out it all began with an ancient Quatermass song called *Black Sheep Of The Family*.

"Yeah, it started with that song," Blackmore confirms. "I wanted to do the number with Purple, so I said to them: 'Hey, look, this is a great song, let's do it on an album.' But they weren't too keen because it wasn't an original track; it hadn't been written by one of the band. But I really wanted to get it put down in one way or another, so I went into the studio with some session people and asked Ronnie to sing."

"I was just knocked out," chirps Dio.

Blackmore glowers with Evil Eyes. It's his band, his interview. Dio dutifully keeps his trap shut from here on in.

Fast-forward to January 1976. It's been a matter of the merest months, but even now the original Rainbow publicity shots are stacked in useless piles; already your just slightly scratched, only marginally over-played copy of Rainbow's debut is outdated.

Gary Driscoll, you see, has made way for Cozy Powell. Craig Gruber's place has gone to Jimmy Bain. And for Mickey Lee Soule, now read Tony Carey. Once again, Blackmore has moved on. He's kicked out most of Elf – the band that became Rainbow – to further his own ends. Tellingly, only Dio has survived the cull.

I'm ensconced in Munich's snowbound Arabella hotel, ➡



Elf: the band Dio left behind.

'AND THEN, OF COURSE, THERE WAS *THE VOICE*. A THROAT BORN OF THUNDER. WE SHALL NEVER HEAR ITS LIKE AGAIN.'

conveniently sited above Musicland studios, which is fast becoming a veritable European recording Mecca. Rainbow are in Germany rehearsing, preparing to lay down their second album, *Rising*, in a few days' time.

I meet up with Blackmore and Dio again in the former's hotel suite. Medieval music of Ritchie's own choosing, full of lute, harpsichord and suchlike, is filtering through modest speakers as we talk about the past, present and future.

As soon as the interview commences it becomes apparent that Dio is more his own man. He has plainly learned from The Master.

I ask Ronnie if he feels saddened about Blackmore's dismantling of Elf to form Rainbow Mk II.

"We dearly wanted to rise with Rainbow together," says Dio, using the kind of bombastic language that would become his trademark. "It was only when I saw myself progressing and the rest of them standing still, then gradually falling by the wayside, that I realised Elf had finished. It was a problem. It was sad. It was like cutting off a part of myself as opposed to just breaking up a band.

"But the joy of it was knowing that everything was going to be better for me. You have to think of yourself at some point. That offset the sadness a lot."

Sympathetic yet steely. Humble yet stubborn. Quietly spoken yet assertive. In six short months Dio has emerged from his shell. The pertinacious glint in his eyes hints of golden years ahead.

The following year, 1977, I'm in Germany again, on tour with Rainbow. My abiding memory of Dio is seeing him own the stage at Berlin's Deutschlandhalle. More than most strutting, chest-beating vocalists, Dio came across very much as a genuine human being. He had a bona-fide affinity with the audience and really didn't pay much attention to the 'traditional' role of the heavy rock frontman at all.

Dio spent much of the time standing stock-still in front of his mic stand, fingers caressing the microphone ever so gently, ever so slightly sensually. Sure, he twirled the stand around every now and again, and gave a few token peace-sign salutes – the Maloik not quite perfected yet. But the overall mood was an honest, unaffected one. As, indeed, it ever was. And then, of course, there was *The Voice*. A throat born of thunder. We shall never hear its like again. Dio may be dead but his hearty, heartfelt exhortation – '*Long live rock'n'roll roll!*' – echoes still.



TEMPLE OF THE KING

RITCHIE BLACKMORE'S RAINBOW, 1975

Just to prove that not everything Dio did in Rainbow was hugely overblown, this was a much more sedate, almost balladic song, with Dio proving his ability to croon in a medieval manner. This totally suited the song's timbre.

Picture this: Kyoto Kaikan Hall, Japan, December 12, 1976.

Rainbow are in a pretty triumphant mood tonight. Touring their ecstatically reviewed second album, *Rainbow Rising*, they've just been received with hysteria by the normally sedate Japanese fans who have long adopted Ritchie Blackmore as their personal guitar god.

What's more, after two nights of recording for a live double album, the pressure was off, which is usually when the band are at their best. Or silliest.

It all started when Tony Carey went into his keyboard solo during the epic *Stargazer*. Blackmore, Jimmy Bain (bass) and Cozy Powell (drums) just pulled up chairs and sat there on stage reading newspapers. Then when they all got back and the number started to bubble into motion Ronnie James Dio walked on wearing a gorilla mask, reducing the whole band to fits of hysterical laughter.

That was Dio to me. A man who, behind the portentous *Dungeons & Dragons* lyrics and Devil's-horn-totin' persona, was really a fun-loving merry prankster.

I first met him 36 years ago when his band Elf were supporting Deep Purple. After years of struggle – check out his 60s Frankie Valli wannabe turn with Ronnie & The Prophets on YouTube – Dio had finally struck gold when his cocky, swaggering, good-time band Elf signed to Deep Purple's label, Purple Records.

Blackmore, who always checked out his support acts (ask Def Leppard, Girlschool, AC/DC, to name a few) was immediately impressed by Dio's vocal power and command of the audience. Dio was, without a doubt, the catalyst that convinced Blackmore to leave Purple and form Rainbow.

In March 1974 I had the thrill of watching Rainbow as they recorded their first album, at Musicland studios in Munich, while the rest of Purple, who had no clue what was going on, lodged in the hotel above.

Loyally, Dio insisted that all the members of Elf were featured on the album. I was also given the hefty responsibility of taking the original album artwork by David Willardson back from Germany to the band's office in London.

Originally Ronald James Padovana, Ronnie took the surname of Mafia mobster Johnny Dio. It was a move that almost ended his showbiz career – and indeed his life.

"Elf were playing a rough old New Jersey bar when the manager came up to me," he told me on that trip to Japan. "He said: 'Are you related to Johnny Dio?' I said: 'Sure, he's my uncle.' The guy said: 'Wow, that's great. Johnny's a good friend of mine. I'll give him a call and tell him you're here!' I thought: 'Holy shit! What do I do now?'"

'BEHIND THE PORTENTOUS *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS* LYRICS DIO WAS REALLY A FUN-LOVING MERRY PRANKSTER.'

"The guy comes back and says: 'Johnny and his pals are gonna come down and watch the show tonight.'"

"Before the show I was in the toilet, panicking, almost crying. I put my hands together and prayed: 'God, if you're out there, you've got to get me out of this shit.' When I played the show it was pretty evident who Johnny's pals were, but I didn't know what my 'uncle' looked like. I just waved at a few goons. I was convinced this was my last night on earth.

"After the show, we were preparing for a quick getaway when the manager comes up and says: 'Johnny says he's sorry he couldn't make it tonight, but he sends his love. The guys loved you and wanna buy you a drink.'"

"Un-fucking-believable."



STARGAZER

RISING, 1976

The definition of epic metal, it really is Dio-era Rainbow in their pomp. A soaring song of mystery and magic, some quite astonishing musical prowess and, above all else, a titanic vocal performance. This track is operatic in its grandeur.



LADY OF THE LAKE

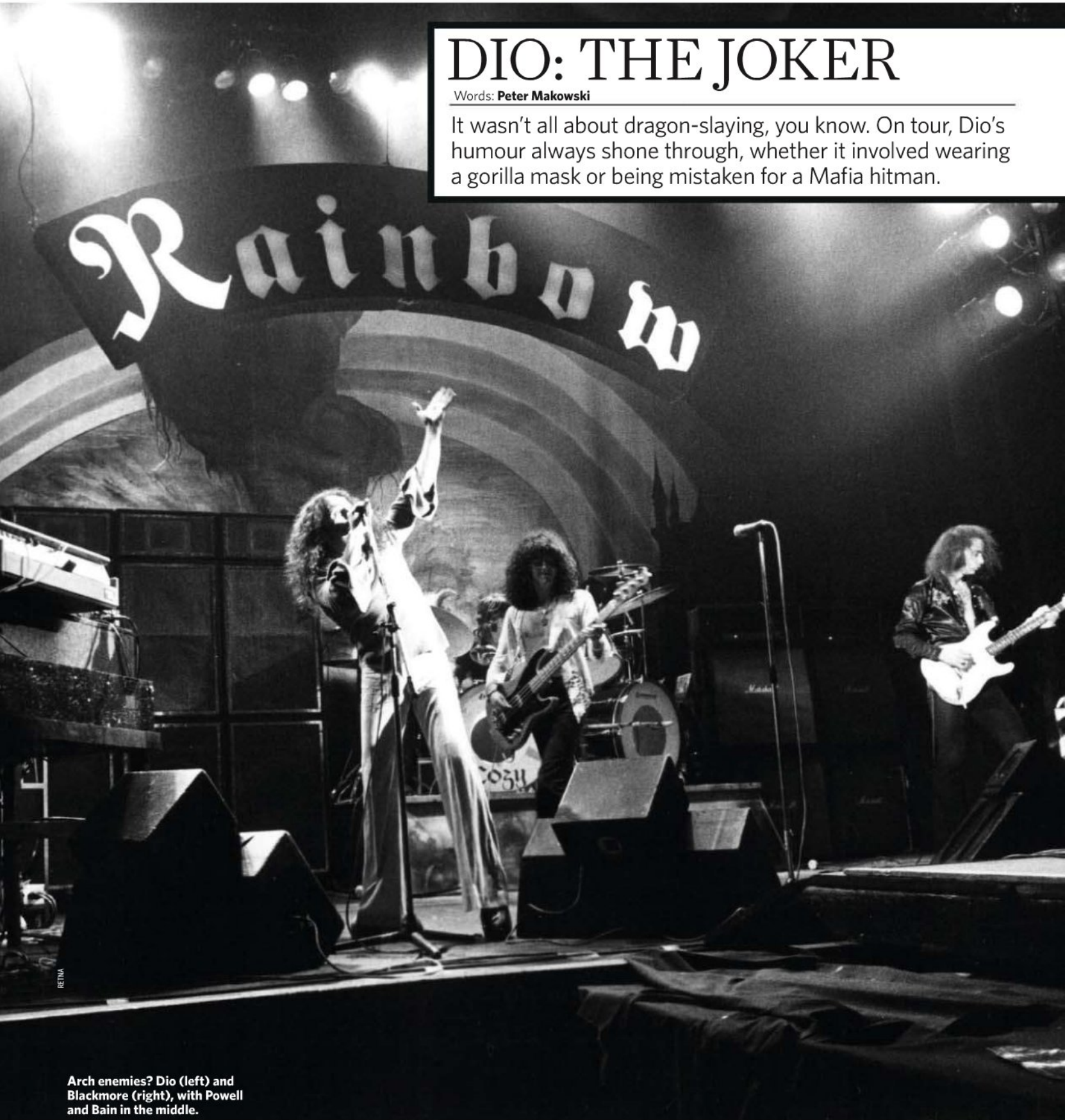
LONG LIVE ROCK 'N' ROLL, 1978

While many believe that Ritchie Blackmore and Ronnie Dio fell out because the former wanted Rainbow to take a more commercial direction, this song showcases Ronnie's capacity for dealing with something bordering on pop, albeit with rock sensibilities intact.

DIO: THE JOKER

Words: **Peter Makowski**

It wasn't all about dragon-slaying, you know. On tour, Dio's humour always shone through, whether it involved wearing a gorilla mask or being mistaken for a Mafia hitman.

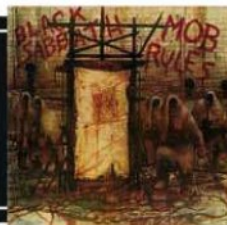


Arch enemies? Dio (left) and Blackmore (right), with Powell and Bain in the middle.



HEAVEN AND HELL HEAVEN AND HELL, 1980

As with so many albums involving Ronnie Dio, there are so many choices from *Heaven And Hell*. But the title track is the one that underlines what Dio brought to Sabbath. It has a majesty, with the vocals augmenting some inspired musicianship.



VOODOO MOB RULES, 1981

If the *Heaven And Hell* album allowed Sabbath to break into a symphonic area, then *Mob Rules* was a heavier album. And nothing is better than this driving song, enhanced by Dio's ability to let rip while having total control.



WHEN DIO MET SABBATH

Words: **Mick Wall**

Ronnie was at a loose end following his departure from Rainbow. But a chance meeting with Tony Iommi put Dio's career – and Sabbath's – back on track.

"Ozzy? He went thataway. Or was it thataway?"

ROSS HALEN



HOLY DIVER

HOLY DIVER, 1983

The haunting, atmospheric build-up sets the mood, before the song opens up and allows Ronnie Dio to take flight, showing that there still is nobody better in writing almost mythic lyrics with a pointed message, and bringing these to life.

Thirty years on, Ronnie James Dio's first album with Black Sabbath, *Heaven And Hell*, is rightly regarded as a classic of the heavy metal genre. The only Sabbath album held in the same high regard as the band's classic Ozzy-era releases, for many it actually surpasses anything from their 70s heyday. Indeed, so monumental was the impression it made that when the Dio-led line-up of the band reconvened in 2007 but were prevented from

using the Black Sabbath moniker they simply renamed themselves after their most famous creation – knowing everyone would understand why.

And yet there was nothing so cut and dried about it when the album was released in the spring of 1980. As the band's UK publicist it was my job to try and ensure there was a suitable fanfare for the album and, by inference, the new Dio-led line-up, in the music press. This was a decidedly uphill task. Only *Record Mirror* deemed Sabbath's replacement of Ozzy worthy of putting on their front cover and even that story got me into trouble with Dio, who took umbrage at the writer's suggestion that the singer may – how to put this? – have a rather well-endowed ego.

Well, Ronnie certainly had that, despite his protestations to the contrary. ("This guy calls me an ego-maniac! Do you think I'm an ego-maniac? Well, do you?" Um...) What I was slowly discovering, though,

'DIO HAD AN INSECURITY ABOUT HIS PLACE IN THE GRAND SCHEME OF THINGS. WHAT HIS LEGACY WOULD BE.'

was that his larger-than-life personality and ability to talk both front and hind legs off a donkey concealed a deep-seated insecurity about... not his talent (his mirror-mirror on the wall never had any doubts whatsoever about who was the fairest rock singer of all) but his place in the grand scheme of things. The way he was perceived. What his legacy would be.

It didn't matter that he'd sung and co-written all the songs on *Rainbow Rising*, the 1976 album that set the benchmark by which all heavy metal albums would be judged throughout the rest of the 1970s. It was always Ritchie Blackmore who got the acclaim. Sacked two years later to allow Blackmore to take the band in a more conventional commercial direction, it was "a terrible injustice" Dio would carry with him for the rest of his days. "It was always called Ritchie Blackmore's Rainbow," he once railed at me. "It should have been called Ritchie Blackmore and Ronnie James Dio's Rainbow. That was what we agreed..."

Joining Black Sabbath was about more than finding a new gig, it was about personal redemption. "It was fate too," he told me, "it must have been because we connected so instantly."

In fact, Dio had been planning a modest solo album when he ran into Sabbath guitarist Tony Iommi at the Rainbow club in LA one night in 1979. With Ozzy foundering in a drug and alcohol fug, Iommi had been on the lookout for a replacement.

Going back to the studio to jam later that night, Ronnie recalled, "Tony had this great riff but nothing to go with it. I said, 'Gimme a minute...'" That minute turned into one of Sabbath and Dio's finest hours. The riff and Dio's hastily scribbled words to it became *Neon Knights* – which later became the opening track on *Heaven And Hell*.

There would be one further Dio-Sabbath album in 1981, *Mob Rules*, and a posthumously released live double, *Live Evil*, in '82, but by then Ronnie had flounced off to form his own outfit, Dio.

But time heals old wounds and years later Dio would patch up his differences with Messrs Iommi, Butler and Appice to form Heaven And Hell the band.

Ultimately, said Ronnie of his initial foray into the realms of Sabbath: "They were different times. Everybody's much happier now."

RJD, we salute you.



GETTY IMAGES

HOW THE 'MALOIK' CAME ABOUT

Words: **Mick Wall**

"Iwanna ask you something," said Ronnie. "What do you think of this?"

He held up his right hand, making the shape that now, 30 years later, the world knows as the devil-horn-salute. I stared in puzzlement. I had never seen anyone do that before.

He held up the other hand and did it again, this time with both arms held aloft, as though addressing a crowd. He stood up and strode purposefully around the room, arms held high, making the signs, as though sending out a message of the highest importance. Which, of course, he was – or soon would be, when he made his first appearance on stage as Sabbath's new singer.

It was February 1980 and we were in Paris, at Studio Ferber, where he and the band were finishing the *Heaven And Hell* album. As Sabbath's PR I had flown out to discuss the forthcoming press campaign for the album and subsequent British tour. Replacing Ozzy would not be easy. Yet when I got there I found them brimming with confidence.

Then one afternoon, idling over coffee at the studio, Ronnie told me about "the only thing worrying me now" – this business of how to, as he put it, "connect with Ozzy's audience".

"I know they're gonna miss him," he confided. "So I've been trying to think of something that says, 'Look, I'm not here to try and be like Ozzy, but I am respectful of what he did with the band'. And I thought of this..."

He did the devil-horn thing again, both hands held high.

"What is that?" I asked.

"Something my Sicilian grandmother used to do, to ward off the evil eye. I figure the peace sign thing belongs to Ozzy. I can't do that. Maybe I can do this instead."

At last, the penny dropped. Ozzy was known for flashing 'V' peace signs during Sabbath's shows. This would be Dio's highly personalised version of the same thing. Sure enough, by the end of the first date of the tour, the whole crowd was doing them back at him. Within a few years the so-called 'Maloik' became a common sight at all metal gigs; a cultural signifier of something specific to that experience: brotherhood and rebellion, all wrapped up in one beautifully executed piece of physical graffiti.

The next time you see it, think of Ronnie James Dio.



WE ROCK THE LAST IN LINE, 1984

The title says it all. With horns flashing and raised fists, Dio the band bond with the audience on this racing anthem. Ronnie puts the colour and vitality into what is at heart a very simple song.



ROCK'N'ROLL CHILDREN SACRED HEART, 1985

Only Dio can possibly imbue these lyrics with the sort of sincerity and artistry that makes them a work of literature. You can hear him feeling, living, breathing every word, inviting you into the song. This is a performance of pure vocal theatre.

THE SPORTS FAN

Words: **Jon Hotten**

The first concert I ever saw was Black Sabbath at the Hammersmith Odeon in 1980. Consequently, I was practically shaking the first time I met Dio (due to that gig and a youthful obsession with the *Rainbow On Stage* album). I thought of that day when I heard the news he'd died, and of the other times our paths crossed over the years, but one occasion in particular loomed up.

From memory, it was a gig at the Long Beach Arena, a triple-header featuring Dio, Anthrax and Helloween. It must have been around 1989, *Dream Evil* time for Dio, and just when hair metal was reaching its peak. It was impacting on all of the more traditional bands, and Long Beach was only half sold. When we got there, the road crew had assembled the stage in the middle of the arena and



Ronnie Flames Dio.

blocked off the remainder with large black curtains. The result was a huge area of bare concrete behind the stage, where some of the crew had built a five-a-side football pitch. While the bands drifted in to soundcheck, a revolving cast joined in and left the match. Various members of Anthrax and Helloween arrived and started playing. Then Ronnie appeared by the sidelines. He wasn't really dressed for football – as I recall he had cowboy boots on – but he got a few decent hoofs in.

After a while, he drifted off and was standing

behind one of the goals talking to our photographer Ray Palmer [now sadly also no longer with us]. Ray had known Ronnie for years.

Dio beckoned me over. We must have talked for half an hour or so, and I realised, probably for the first time, that you could speak to these rock star guys as normal people. We talked about all sorts of sports – he was a big fan of American football, and so, he said, was his son. He talked about Ritchie Blackmore, and how much Ritchie loved football. I told Ronnie about a match I'd played in against Ritchie – it was raining, and Blackmore had his driver pull up right by the touchline, get out and hold an umbrella over him while he tied his boots up. He was a decent player though, good on the dribble. Ronnie laughed and said that sounded like him. After a while, the game broke up. We watched the gig from the very side of the stage. Dio's voice was as huge as ever, and he really didn't seem to care that the show wasn't sold out. He still gave it the works.

I remember it clearly, and yet the memory is a strange thing. When I tried to check the details of the show today, I saw that Dio did play Long Beach in 1989, but the support acts were Savatage and Megadeth. Anthrax and Helloween toured together too, but I couldn't find a listing of them playing with Dio. That day stands out amongst many, though, because it was the day a hero showed a human side – a lesson well delivered and learned.



RJD AT HOME

Words: **Mick Wall**

It's 1989 and a visit *chez* Dio confirms what we suspected all along. Yes, he lives in a castle.

Like all rock's most colourful characters, Ronnie James Dio was full of contradictions. The little guy with the enormous voice; the Italian-American with the Anglo-Saxon love of beer and curry; the friendly on stage meeter-and-greeter who off stage bawled you out for the slightest transgression; Dio, as one fellow tour traveller put it, "was an interesting bunch of people".

Although generous with fans, staying behind to sign autographs and chat sometimes for hours, Ronnie was actually a very private person who, once home, liked to pull up the drawbridge, bolt the door, and escape to solitude. Garrulous and giving, he had a memory like an elephant and never forgot a thing, good or bad. Example: after being on the receiving end of his temper on more than one occasion when I was Black Sabbath's PR, when we met up again a few years later, on a Dio tour, he welcomed me like a long-lost brother. Prickly as a cactus on the outside, on the inside he could be as sensitive as a newborn foal. He hated people making jokes about his size – five foot four in his heels, if that – and once got his wife and manager Wendy to send a fax to the mag I was working for asking us to refrain from calling him as 'the diminutive Dio'. This, of course, only led to us almost enforcing a rule that we only ever referred to him as 'the diminutive' or similar.

The most revealing glimpse I ever got into the Dio psyche though was during a visit to his LA home, in 1989, to film a segment for a video-magazine. Years before reality TV, it was meant to show him in informal mood. Well, it certainly



STARS

HEAR 'N AID, 1986

It was Ronnie who got together a stellar cast of peers for this charity single, aimed at raising funds for the fight against famine in Ethiopia. In essence, this could have been a Dio song, and it's the man himself who outclasses everyone who took part.



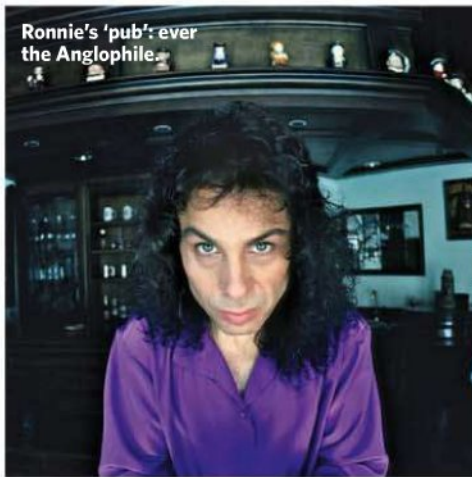
ALL THE FOOLS SAILED AWAY

DREAM EVIL, 1987

It says much for Ronnie that whenever a song is mentioned on which he appears, the first thing you think of are the vocals. So often, it was he who raised the track to the heights. This is a fine example. Try to imagine it without his voice at its heart. Impossible, isn't it?



A king in his castle (complete with throne).



Ronnie's 'pub': ever the Anglophile.

Early cohorts: RJD with Vinny Appice, Jimmy Bain and Vivian Campbell.



GETTY IMAGES

THE SOLO YEARS

Words: Dave Ling

My first encounter with Ronnie James Dio was in the spring of 1987. He and the rest of the band Dio – bassist Jimmy Bain, drummer Vinny Appice, keyboard player Claude Schnell and recent addition, guitarist Craig Goldy – were closeted away at Sound City Studios in the city's valley, laying down ideas for the album that would become *Dream Evil*.

This was my first visit to LA and I was in awe of both the city and my interview subject. That Ronnie and company would welcome a writer and photographer into their world at such an early stage in the album's development was unusual, but they couldn't have been more cordial.

During the afternoon we spent with Ronnie, David Coverdale dropped by and snuck off into a quiet corner for a discreet word. He sought a lowdown on Craig Goldy's predecessor, Vivian Campbell, with a view to allowing him to join Whitesnake. Whatever Ronnie said must have been complimentary, as Viv got the job – kinda ironic when one considers the way things turned out between the two men.

Dio (the band) ran through their four semi-finished tracks before gathering around Appice's kit for an impromptu photo session.

Ronnie was, of course, supremely confident in his own ability. When asked whether he would once again act as Dio's producer, he replied: "Yes. I get the best out of me. I'm the only one who does that because I don't like being told what to do. I am the singer and unless we get another singer in this band, I'm gonna have to do it my way."

Having been bossed around in Rainbow, Dio tried to treat his colleagues fairly. "I expect big things from people in this band," he told me. "With Jimmy, Vinny and Claude, I demand the moon and they give me more than that – they give me the sun. So when Craig comes in I can't treat him like a baby. I'm too harsh on people, but he can take it."

There would be many future encounters, but that studio visit will always be a treasured memory. Our chat took place on the facility's roof, and as I moved to switch on the tape recorder Ronnie had said, "Wait a moment," returning with a tour jacket borrowed from a roadie. "It can get chilly as the sun goes down – you don't want to catch a cold," he explained.

A tiny gesture, but one that spoke volumes of the man I knew.

MARK WEISS X3 did that though not quite as we had envisaged.

It was a beautiful house, set high in the hills, fashioned as some sort of Hollywood castle. No drawbridge (that I recall) but lots of stained-glass windows, as if in a church, and fitted out with suits of armour, baroque candlesticks and a medieval bible perched on a lectern and opened at a certain page, as though ready for Ronnie to read a sermon from it. Then there was an ornate chair, not a throne exactly but, well... okay, yeah, a throne. Or if it was an armchair it looked like one sat in by the King of Spain. Ronnie showed us these things extremely proudly. It was clear he had put a lot of thought into them. Given his catalogue of songs about dungeons and dragons, kings and queens, it seemed fitting, perhaps, that he himself appeared comfortable living in such surrounds.

He showed us "the children's playroom". It looked like something out of Peter Pan; a large Victorian-style room with lots of Victorian-era toys scattered all about: colourful wooden building blocks, an antique-looking wooden rocking horse, ancient teddy bears and china dolls – the scene, mid-play, as if the children had been called away suddenly for their tea. It was quaint – and somewhat eerie.

We ended up sitting at the English-style pub bar he had recently installed, replete with pool-table and strong English ale on tap, the wall behind the bar adorned with all his gold and platinum records from Rainbow, Sabbath and Dio – and I reflected for a moment on the strangeness of the scene, and the man who presided over it. Ronnie James Dio. The one and only...



BIBLE BLACK

THE DEVIL YOU KNOW, 2009

When Heaven And Hell came tearing out of the traps, many wondered if they would be able to cut it in the studio on a new album. We needn't have worried; they produced a slab of cutting-edge metal. And Dio's vocals (particularly on this track) were peerless.



ELEKTRA

MAGICA II, 2009

The last studio recording to feature Ronnie James Dio, this was recorded just before he was diagnosed with cancer. But everything that made Dio untouchable is still very much in place. It proves that he was still the best metal singer around.

Heaven And Hell: united by a love of curry and heavy metal.



ROSS HARRIS/INFERNO NETWORK P.C.

THE RETURN TO HEAVEN AND HELL

Words: Peter Makowski

Dio's Sabbath story wasn't over when he left after 1992's *Dehumanizer*. He would return for one final hurrah...



H&H receive their CR comeback award.

A

fter parting company with Rainbow, Ronnie James Dio joined Black Sabbath, an on-and-off union which lasted through to their final incarnation as Heaven And Hell. With basic bonds forged by a shared love of curry and a dedication to heavy metal in its purest form, Dio's awareness of his responsibilities ensured that he replaced Ozzy Osbourne with a panache no one else could have matched.

Apart from cuisine, the key element that guaranteed the success of Sabbath Mk II (as Ozzy would refer to them) was the chemistry between Dio and guitarist Tony Iommi. "Both Tony and myself have had to deal with, how shall I put it, larger than life characters," said Dio of the union. "We knew exactly what we did and didn't want from this experience."

This was hardly surprising, since Ronnie was one of the few people who wasn't intimidated by former bandmate Ritchie Blackmore – and Ritchie respected that. (If you listen to Blackmore's *Night* you can hear Dio's influence woven into the imagery and atmosphere of tracks like *Way To Mandalay* and *Locked Within The Crystal Ball*.) Also the fact that Geezer Butler stepped aside as chief lyricist says a lot about the respect and status Dio had in the band.

Having witnessed the mixing of the *Heaven And Hell* album and seen the band tour *Mob Rules* in the States a couple of years later, in 1981 – and also having been close to Dio prior to his split with Ritchie, and Iommi during his meltdown with Ozzy – the difference in atmosphere was palpable. The

"I LOVED THE WAY WE WROTE, AND WHAT A HAPPY TIME WE HAD MAKING THIS DOOMY-SOUNDING ALBUM."

camaraderie and unity in *Heaven And Hell*-era Sabbath seemed to be fuelled by a sense of purpose. Both Dio and Iommi and co had a point to prove.

Although the group's history has been far from smooth with splits and writs littering their legacy, it still felt inevitable that they would reunite – and in 2006 that's exactly what happened. It was a re-formation that would garner them a gong at the *Classic Rock Roll Of Honour For Comeback Of The Year* in '07. "It's about time we got a fucking award," said Ronnie, glowing with pride.

In our final conversation – on the phone, last summer – Dio was ecstatic about Heaven And Hell's last album, *The Devil You Know*.

"I don't normally revisit things that I've done, but this has some great ideas on it," he declared. "I loved the way we wrote, how comfortable it was and what a happy time we had making this a doomy-sounding album."

Positive to the end, Dio's courageous battle with cancer is inspiration in itself, never mind the musical legacy he has left. To quote Tenacious D from the light-hearted but equally poignant tribute Dio: *'Dio has rocked for a long, long time/Now it's time for him to pass the torch.'*

Being the humble Anglophile that he was, Ronnie would probably just like to be remembered as being a good bloke – which he definitely was. **1**

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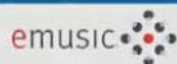
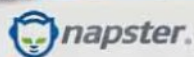
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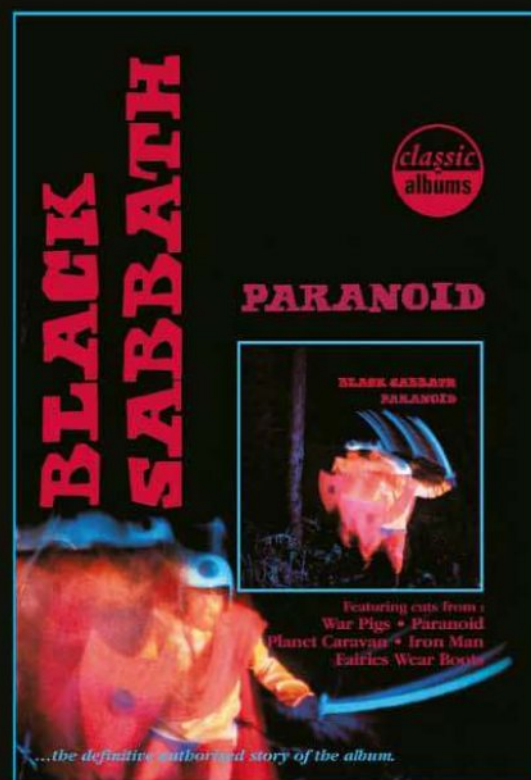


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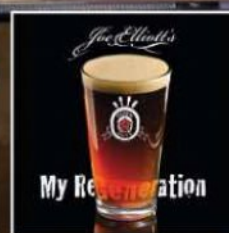
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THIS IS THE MODERN WORLD...

...so why did our glowing review of **Paul Weller's** new album spark abuse from a pocket of *Classic Rock* readers still obsessed with the old mod/rocker divide? We met the Modfather and asked if it's time to wave the white flag. Words: **Henry Yates** Photos: **Ross Halfin**

So there's a letters page in *Classic Rock*, we're telling Paul Weller, and a text hotline for readers to fire miniature rants direct to the editor. The Modfather nods, eyes narrowing, sensing an ambush.

Anyway... after we gave your latest album, *Wake Up The Nation*, a 9/10 review, an abusive text came through the wire.

Weller snorts: "What, like, 'how dare you?'"

Worse than that, actually. It read: 'Fuck off and die, you mod bastards'.

Weller flicks into confrontation mode. His arctic blue eyes flash danger. The angry young man of yore stirs within, prodding its 52-year-old host to take action, hunt down the Lincolnshire texter who pointedly signed off as 'A Real Rocker'. But it passes. Weller has not been in a fight for four years, and is not about to fall off the wagon over this.

"It's just fucking sad, innit?" he mutters of the offending text. "It's all mods and rockers, always the same thing."

Weller doesn't mind stirring things, though. In April, his album went up against AC/DC's *Iron Man 2* soundtrack (he was pipped, apparently by

just 4,000 units), and at a recent gig, he likened the chart battle to a clash between the two tribes.

"Yeah, but I was only taking the piss," Weller counters. "I think people are more broad-minded now. In the 70s, me included, we were so blinkered, ill-educated. Now, we're more accepting of other cultures, less racist, less xenophobic. I think we're ready to fly as a race. People listen to a vast array of music. Apart from that fucking twat who's written into your magazine. He can fuck off, anyway. Cunt."

To a post-millennial teenager, the concept of warring musical tribes must seem absurd. Music has become diffused. Visit a MySpace page, rip a track, assemble a playlist, shuffle it on your iPod... eclecticism rules. Sure, there are tragic, isolated cases where emo fans are set upon by provincial yobs, but the aggressors tend to be musically stunted, their hatred sparked by the victim's kohl eyeliner, not their allegiance to My Chemical Romance. People still have musical tastes, but nothing they'd defend in a running battle with a Stanley knife.

How times change. As we know, the subcultures of mod and rocker emerged in the early-60s, with flare-ups reported beneath

headlines that made the modern *Daily Mail* look understated. Spin forward to the mod revival of the late-70s, and thousands of young suburban males faced a similar lifestyle choice that dictated everything from popularity at school to the chances of getting their teeth kicked in. Growing up in Woking, Weller recalls the decision as "black-and-white".

Mod or rocker. Pick a side.

"It was fucking murder in the late-70s," he says. "There were tribes of people roaming the streets, slaughtering each other at gigs every night. When I was at school, you were either a skinhead and into Motown and reggae, or you were a hairy or a hippie, and you carried round Pink Floyd or Uriah Heep records. There wasn't anything in between. Tribalism just doesn't exist in the same way now."

Weller's aesthetic was undiluted mod. It still is. Today, he is not suited (two are on order) but impressively booted, with brown brogues – that would pass muster with a drill sergeant – gleaming beneath the table. A chunky digital watch is his one overt concession to modernity. "Bands are right scruffy little fuckers these days," he sniffs. "I am clothes-obsessed, and I make no excuses for that. I come from that time



PAUL WELLER

when you loved the way bands looked; the hair, clothes, attitude, what they said in interviews, the whole trip. It's missing now, for me."

But musically – and this is the important bit – Weller is and was harder to pin down. On one hand, he tells us that "Led Zeppelin passed me by... I wouldn't listen to bands with beards and long hair", then moves the conversation on to Otis Redding. Drill deeper, though, and it's clear the Modfather was constantly nipping over the battlelines and returning with rock's quirkier bits smuggled in his pinstripe pockets. "I loved everything about The Small Faces," he says. "They were probably 20 years old, but songs like *Here Come The Nice* and *Tin Soldier*... fucking amazing. I liked the humour and the in-jokes. Their influences were great, but it was fed through a filter of cockney kids giving it something else."

The more you shake Weller, the more rock influences fall out. He admired the bluesy hard rock of Humble Pie, covered cuts from Dr Feelgood's *Down By The Jetty* in a proto-Jam line-up, and agrees when we suggest the influence of Traffic's British psychedelia on his 90s solo work ("I like anything classic"). His eyes light up at mention of The Who: "Definitely. I loved the *My Generation* album, and that run of singles in the mid-60s was great – *Substitute*, *Pictures of Lily*..."

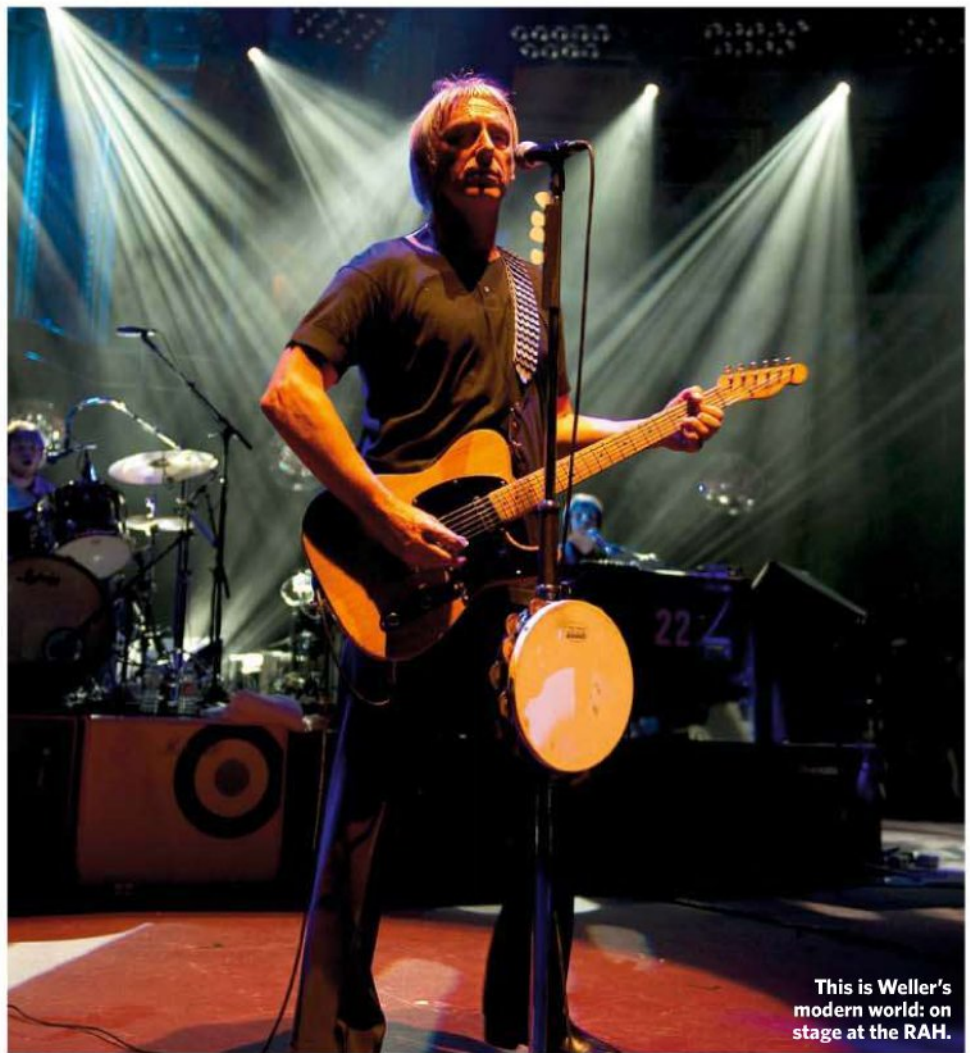
Throw in his enthusiasm for Bowie's *Berlin* period, his commutes to watch the Sex Pistols in London circa 1976 and the soundtrack to his drive here today ("I had *Raw Power* and *Metal Machine Music* in the car"), and his record collection is not so different to your own. And if he doesn't have any AC/DC, that is, perhaps, understandable. "I was a little bit pissed off," he concedes. "But I got over it."

Famous in five decades, it's a revelation to learn that Weller still remembers the sensation of anonymity. "Yeah, it was rubbish," he grins. "I used to walk around Woking dejectedly: 'I want to be famous, I want to be in a successful band'. I think there's a bit of that in every musician."

Thankfully, the state would soon pass. Weller was just 19 when The Jam's debut album, *In The City*, reached No.20 in June 1977, catapulting himself, bassist Bruce Foxton and drummer Rick Buckler into the media's punk pigeonhole. Some will argue they didn't belong there: the trio played in suits, with Rickenbackers, and actually rather liked the old guard of the 60s (a mid-period hit was a cover of The Kinks' *David Watts*). "We played the clubs and pubs, but we weren't part of the London clique," adds Weller. "We weren't 'art school' or 'with it'; just three kids off a Woking council estate. That was the cultural difference."

For all that, early material like *News Of The World*, *This Is The Modern World* and *In The City* ticked all punk's boxes: hard, lean, sparse blasts of three-chord guitar that not even the most hair-splitting pedant would identify as anything but rock'n'roll. The Pistols certainly didn't consider it 'too mod': they lifted the riff from debut single *In The City* for their own *Holidays In The Sun*.

Weller's words were similarly white-hot, with barbed lyrics skewering targets from politicians to public schools. "Some are bang-on, some are naïve and badly written," he reflects, "but I stand by all of them, because I meant them at the time. I was looking through some lyrics last night – because we're putting out a book – and some of them don't work on the page, but some are pretty fucking clever, if I do say so myself. Things like *Private Hell*



This is Weller's modern world: on stage at the RAH.

and *Eton Rifles*... I was only young at the time, and I think they're quite sophisticated ideas."

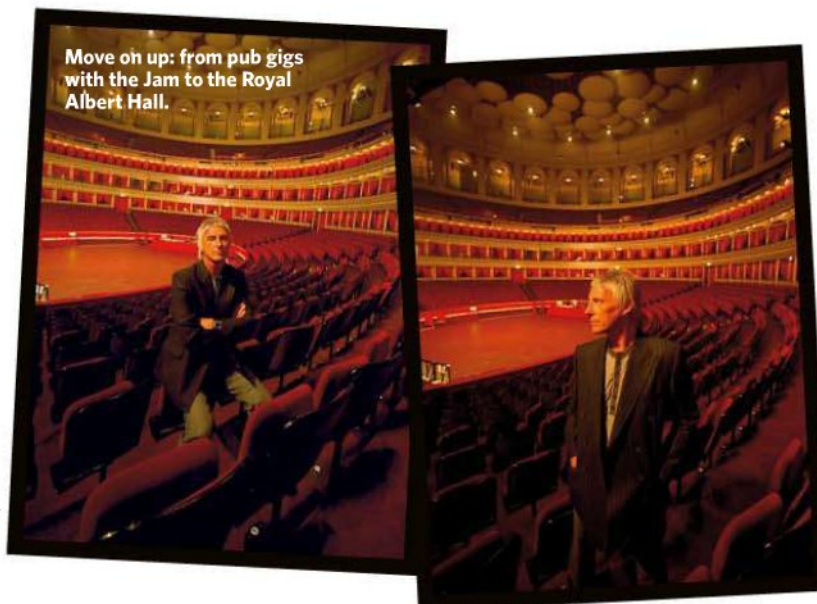
Many agreed, earning Weller the caricature that follows him to this day: the geezer with the poet's soul. "It's a simplistic way of putting it, but not entirely inaccurate," he says. "The Jam audience was geezers. It was that whole football thing, where we were as much their team as Chelsea or Arsenal. There was that full-on energy and a certain violence to the music, but also a softer side. For every *Going Underground*, there was always an *English Rose*; it wasn't flat-out aggression. My own background was that whole tough, working-class thing, where you're not meant to talk about your feelings. I think maybe we made it okay to feel those things, even if you can't say them. Later, The Style Council opened it up to more women, probably because there were more love songs."

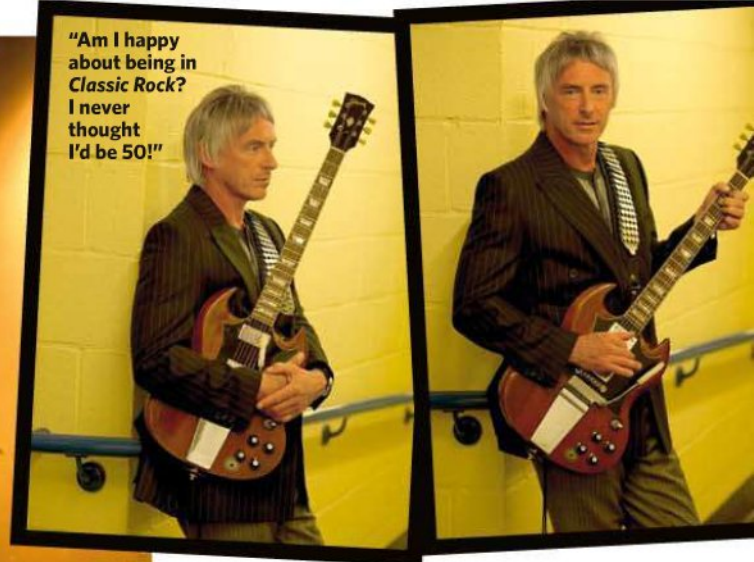
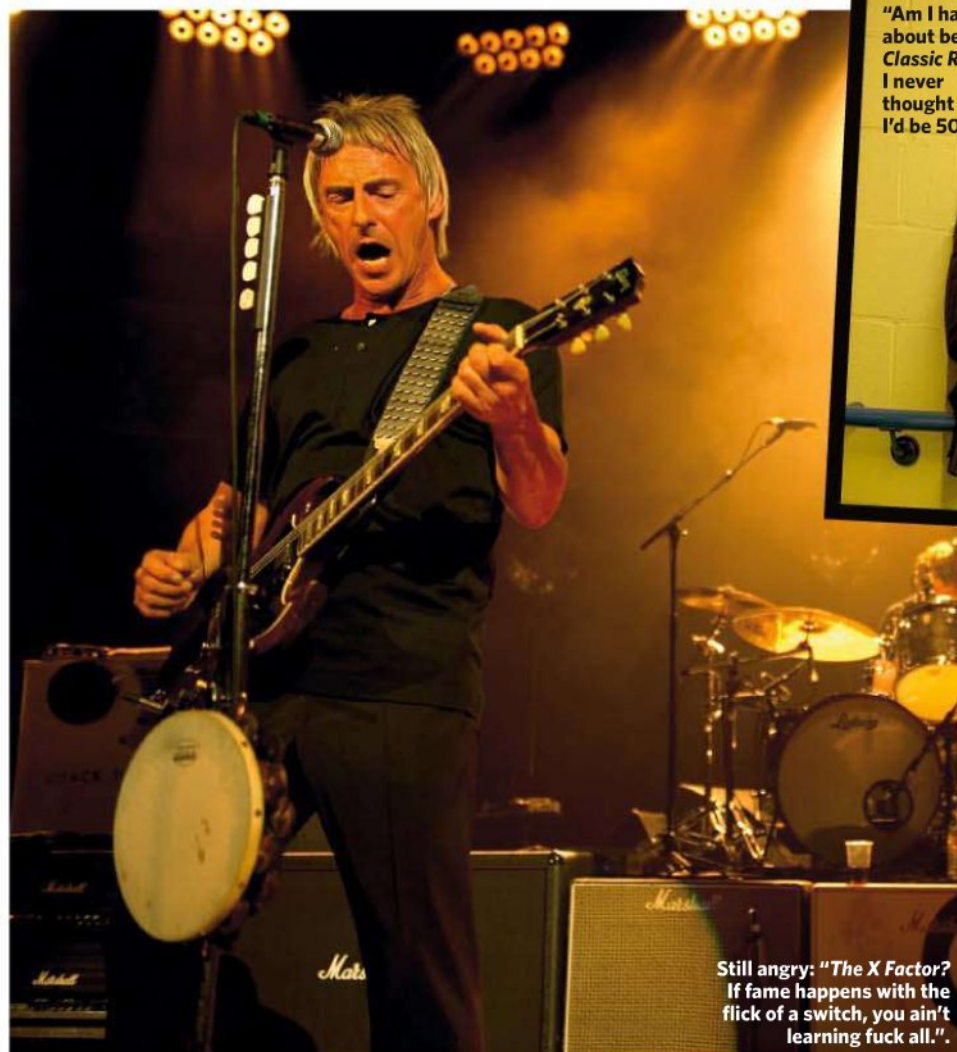
Ah yes – The Style Council. We should have seen it coming. As early as 1981, Weller was working brass parts into Jam singles like *Absolute Beginners*, and dabbling with the avant-garde on spoken-word curios like *Pop Art Poem*. When the trio split in 1982, there was the palpable sense of a leash being unclipped. Most likely, the rockers who hate the Modfather are fuelled by his six-year run with keyboard player Mick Talbot, wherein

Weller dressed like a Frenchman, flirted with pop, jazz and techno-soul, made music videos that verged on the homoerotic (seriously, watch *Long Hot Summer* on YouTube) and buried some genuinely brilliant hooks beneath horribly dated 80s production.

Needless to say, he's no regrets: "There was a whole media lie that nobody ever liked The Style Council. It's like, fuck off, we were massive from '83 to '85."

It's a doomed argument in *Classic Rock*, but the Council's undisputed legacy is the lyrics: you can hardly imagine today's bands writing polemic-charged hits like *Money Go Round* or *Walls Come Tumbling Down*. "But that time was so extreme," Weller reflects. "With Thatcherism, there wasn't a fence to sit on, man. Politics is so bland now."





Still angry: "The X Factor? If fame happens with the flick of a switch, you ain't learning fuck all."

"I was a little bit pissed off [that AC/DC outsold my album] but I got over it."

Weller on the old rivalries being revived.

These politicians, they all went to the same universities, all from the same class. The prospect of a Tory government doesn't fill me with dread; I don't think we'll notice any fucking difference. Apart from someone brilliant like Nelson Mandela, how many politicians ever inspired anyone? But a band does. The Beatles inspired more people than any fucking crummy politician."

It is a recurring frustration for the music journalist that a slice of any interview must be given over to let the subject wearily plug their shit new project. Today, this isn't a problem. Weller has just released his solo masterpiece in *Wake Up The Nation*, on the heels of his second-best one, *22 Dreams*. We want to discuss it, at the expense of his often-brilliant but over-analysed early solo career.

If you don't like anything on *Wake Up The Nation*, you probably don't like music. As Ed Mitchell noted in that review, Weller's tenth is a "one-man White Album", where white-noise psychedelia like *7&3 Is The Striker's Name* dovetails with the tribal punk of *Fast Car/Slow Traffic* (with Foxton on bass) and the Townshend clatter of *Two Fat Ladies*. It's no surprise to learn Weller was listening to Bowie throughout. "My roadie is a massive Bowie fan, so travelling to the studio each day, he'd play it constantly, sort of brainwash me. But I've always loved *Low*. I bought it in '77 and I've been playing that an awful lot recently."

Most ambitious is *Trees*, a schizo cut 'n' shut that follows a woman from youth, through motherhood,

to death, all sung in character and backed by woozy swing, electronica and garage rock.

"Just before me dad [John Weller, his manager since The Jam] passed away last year, he was in a rest home-type place," explains Weller.

"I'd visit him, and see all these other old people, maybe in their 90s. Some of them looked like fossils, little fossilised trees, removed from what you recognise as a human being. Outside their rooms, they had photo montages of them as young people – put there because a lot of them are losing their minds – so I'd look at these pictures of a young, beautiful woman, then see this old fossilised lady, and try to imagine their lives 50 years ago. But I was trying to make it positive. I felt these people were waiting to be uprooted and replanted, back into the world."

Like *Trees*, an interview with Weller has light and shade. Frequently, he lives up to the Noel Gallagher quote comparing him to Victor Meldrew with a suntan. "I don't blame kids for going on *The X Factor*," he storms. "It's a symptom of our times, which is created by my age group and the media. They're not kids: they're old cunts. The people who influenced me growing up were all fucking good at what they did. Now, you get your boat-race on telly and you're famous. What sort of message is that? That it's easily attainable? If it's the flick of a switch, you ain't learning fuck-all, mate. You don't see the journey. There is no journey."

But this is more than a mini-episode of *Grumpy*

Old Men. Weller doesn't just spot problems, he sees solutions. While most rockers carp about Simon Cowell's TV shows from the sidelines, Weller actively seeks an alternative; at a recent gig watched by this writer, he invited two young vocalists to guest on his songs.

"It's much harder for bands to develop now," he says. "You get one single, and if you don't get airplay, it's fucking scuppered. But things take time to get great, don't they? You ever heard those Beatles demos that Decca turned down? They were fucking dreadful..."

He still devours new music ("I'll buy ten records in a week and put six in the bin, but the other four might add something to my world") and has faith that the Next Big Thing is out there. "I don't know about a band filling Knebworth, and I couldn't care less – Robbie Williams filled Knebworth, didn't he? I'm just waiting for the next wave of kids doing it and saying it, and fucking smashing down all the other shit. Someone speaking for their generation. Every generation deserves that."

Personally and creatively, Weller is in the form of his life. It's a turn-up for the man who once claimed his best material came from anger and sorrow. "I don't remember saying that," he frowns. "Maybe I did. I was talking to my girlfriend about this last night – how many songs do you hear about someone being left by their boyfriend or girlfriend? It's just the lowest common denominator. Wouldn't it be great to write a song that said 'you left me, and I'm so glad I'm never going to see you again, you cunt'. That sort of thing. But more poetic."

Maybe it's one for the next album, for which he has "grand ambitions". By then, we hope hatchets will be buried and bridges built. Weller is not a Trojan horse in this magazine. He takes influences that you share, adds some you'd probably like, voices opinions you're not eloquent enough to say yourself, and hits the volume. It's rock with soul. It's rock that swings. It's rock that rolls. And if Weller jokes dryly about his inclusion in *Classic Rock*, that's only because it brings his advancing years into sharp focus. "I never thought I'd be fucking 50," he sighs.

Weller stands and extends a hand that feels like an olive branch. "I don't mind being in *Classic Rock*," he grins, and the feeling is entirely mutual. The Modfather should be welcome to drop by these pages any time he likes. Disagree? Send your abuse to the usual address... ❶

New double A-side single *Find The Torch, Burn The Plans/Aim High* is released on June 14 on Island Records.

Don't stop BELIEVIN'...

The return of AOR

Melodic rock, AOR, corporate rock... whatever you want to call it, with acts like Foreigner and FM on Radio 2, Journey's *Don't Stop Believin'* the biggest-selling download of all time, and a wave of reunions and new artists, the genre that seemed terminally out of fashion is back. *Classic Rock* talks to the bands and the people behind the new generation of soft rock.

Words: **Dave Ling**

It's a Wednesday night at the 500-capacity Underworld club in London's Camden, but a mere 100-odd souls mill at the bar as Melodica, featuring former Danger Danger/Bone Machine frontman Ted Poley, perform. Two thin lines of diehards separate the stage from a virtually deserted dance floor. Get close enough – you don't exactly require a Sherpa – and a sheet of A4 paper is Gaffa-taped to the bass drum. It reads: 'Please help us, Def Leppard.' Welcome to the UK melodic rock scene, circa 2002...

With those words *Classic Rock* issue 38 began a post-mortem of melodic rock from a British perspective. Almost a decade later, with the strains of Journey's *Don't Stop Believin'* known in just about every household around the nation, Bon Jovi playing a whopping 12-date residency at the O2 Arena, Foreigner and FM having become Radio 2 favourites, and the likes of Cinderella, Y&T and Tyketto having been embraced by the Download Festival – not to mention a spate of reunions from such home-grown favourites as Skin, Airrace, Romeo's Daughter and the aforementioned FM – you could be forgiven for thinking that this much-derided genre is undergoing a renaissance.

A shark-infested divide still separates the haves and the have-nots, of course, but Firefest, an indoor all-day run by a devoted group of fans that's now into its seventh year, has played a crucial role in preserving the scene's grassroots.

Having recruited a new singer, Arnel Pineda, from a melodic rock tribute band, the past few years have been especially kind to Journey, who last year played alongside Def Leppard and Whitesnake at Download and have seen *Don't Stop Believin'* embraced by a whole new generation. Incredibly, the band owe some of this to the fact that it was re-recorded as part of a US TV

programme called *Glee*. Back in January, the original and *Glee*'s cover version of the power ballad from Journey's 1981's album *Escape* were both in the UK's Top 10. Until that point, to all but the band's original fans, *Don't Stop Believin'* was known for having been sung by *X Factor* winner Joe McElderry and, two years earlier featuring in the closing scene of the final episode of *The Sopranos*.

Having spent time in London as his band and *Glee* battled it out, Journey guitarist Neal Schon is convinced that things have changed for the better for his own band and the entire genre.

"It's brilliant for us and bands like us," he says, speaking from the studio as Journey record a follow-up to 2008's *Revelation*. "If people think it's

of the possibilities now that *Glee* have turned their attention to the REO Speedwagon track *Can't Fight This Feeling*.

"If *Glee* is helping people to connect the dots, that can only be a good thing," Jones theorises. "Foreigner's songs are used all the time on *American Idol* but the exposure is useful – there are no record stores in the US any more. This is a revolution: we're taking the music business back."

In such a vastly different climate, endorsement from *Glee* is priceless. "If they wanted to cover a Foreigner song I'd definitely smile," admits Jones.

Only given the show's pre-pubescent viewers, something other than *Feels Like The First Time*?

"Yes," he deadpans, "that one could be misconstrued."

If we are to reevaluate the music in question, maybe it's a good time to find something else to call it other than AOR, a dated acronym for Album – or Adult – Oriented Rock.

Mick Jones, for one, cringes when people term Foreigner an AOR group. "We've even been called corporate rock, which is crap," he sighs. "Foreigner are just a rock band, pure and simple. We rock hard but we're also very melodic."

Fortunately, Jeff Smith, Radio 2's Head Of Music and one of the men responsible for adding both Foreigner's *Fool For You Anyway* and FM's *Hollow* to the station's playlist, is not easily swayed by gratuitous terminology. Although FM were serious enough about their self-financed reunion album, *Metropolis*, to employ a radio plugger in a bid to secure airplay for its single, Smith had already identified the potential of *Hollow* even before being approached.

"Somebody – it might have been the band – sent me FM's album and its quality blew me away," he explains. "I thought that *Hollow* was perfect for Radio 2's current multi-generational listenership, the average age of which is 50 years old.

"Radio 2's niche has always been timeless, ➔

**"RADIO 2 IS ABOUT
TIMELESS, MELODIC
MUSIC. FOREIGNER AND
FM FIT INTO THAT."**

– JEFF SMITH, RADIO 2'S MUSIC HEAD

a *Glee* song and not one of ours, I don't mind. Those are all brand new fans – I'm happy they like the song, period."

Objection would be churlish now that *Don't Stop Believin'* has been legally downloaded more than an incredible three million times. "That's mind-boggling," marvels Schon. "It's the most downloaded song of all time – bigger than Led Zeppelin or The Beatles. Crazy."

Asked whether this fact might exert a lasting influence upon the genre's credibility, Schon replies: "I'd like to think so. It makes the [fact that that Journey are not in the] Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame look pretty idiotic."

Journey's rivals would love a slice of this particular American pie. An industry veteran like Foreigner guitarist Mick Jones, for instance, knows

AOR through the ages
(clockwise from top):
Journey, Styx, REO
Speedwagon, Foreigner
and FM.



Journey

FOREIGNER



Styx



melodic music," he elaborates. "It's no big deal for Chris Evans to play *Gimme All Your Lovin'* straight out of the eight o'clock news. As crossover pop songs go, FM and Foreigner fit right into that."

Consequently, both *Hollow* and Foreigner's *Fool For You Anyway* were played up to 10 times a week – an enormous deal considering that the muscle of CBS records had been unable to secure airtime for FM's *Frozen Heart* single, despite two attempts, during the band's original tenure.

"*Bad Luck* [a Desmond Child co-write from 1989's *Tough It Out*] got a couple of spins at two in the morning, but it's a great feeling to have Ken Bruce or whoever on in the morning while you're making breakfast for your kids and hear your new single," enthuses FM singer Steve Overland.

Skin, another UK group once signed to a major label, reunited last year for the Download festival at the request of its organiser Andy Copping. The comeback went so well they opted to continue but, despite a run of six Top 40 singles that included *Look But Don't Touch*, *House Of Love* and *Tower Of Strength*, Skin are following FM's example by using the self-financed route.

"Footing the bill for an album is our way of thanking the fans that kept our music alive after we split up," reveals Skin guitarist Myke Gray. "As individuals our careers and families have become priorities, but we owe it to the fans to play some shows and make one last album. Okay, we'll need to sell 2,000 copies to break even, but it's worth it."

One thing cited by all of the reunited British bands that we spoke to is that they enjoy playing music more than ever with the monkey of constant career pressure removed from their backs.

After an ultimately ill-fated spell guiding the band Roadstar (now known as Heaven's Basement) to an opening spot at the Monsters Of Rock festival

in 2003, guitarist Laurie Mansworth is relishing being a performer again after his group Airrace reconvened to celebrate the 25th anniversary of their one and only album, *Shaft Of Light*. Although Jason Bonham upped and left after a handful of shows, Airrace played at last year's Firefest and have supported Tesla, Thunder and Winger. They are currently recording a second album.

audiences," agrees Steve Overland. "Manufactured music is all well and good but standing up and playing a song you wrote in your living room, before an audience that knows the words better than you, is the best feeling in the world. As long as people want to listen to FM, we'll keep doing it."

As frequent visitors to www.melodicrock.com will know, a host of younger acts are queuing up to succeed the old guard.

Foremost among them are H.E.A.T., a young Swedish six-piece. Just like Joey Tempest and company, H.E.A.T. hail from the Stockholm suburb of Upplands Väsby and their strong visual image affords them a sizeable female following. Conversely, as the only act to have played at three successive Firefests they also have their fair share of jealous haters.

"This genre almost died not long ago, but thankfully I was only six years old at the time," smiles bassist Jimmy Jay, making light of the fact that H.E.A.T.'s average age is 24. "Had we wanted to make money there are more fashionable genres that we could have played, but melodic rock is in our blood."

As confirmed by the reviews of H.E.A.T.'s second album, *Freedom Rock*, the band's music would appeal to many of the thousands of fans attending Bon Jovi's O2 residency. The problem they face has less to do with wooing that audience, and more with letting them know they even exist. Jay, who says that H.E.A.T. "will do anything it takes" to achieve their goals, admits the subject causes him to lose sleep at night. "Bon Jovi are immensely popular, but back in the

80s they had pop fans as well as rock ones. That sort of hype is pretty hard to replicate."

Though undoubtedly tough, the situation is not impossible. Last year Chris Daughtry, the former *American Idol* contestant who went on to notch twenty No.1 hits around the world, received girly screams and a rapturous reception on a support

The 'Wagon still rolls: REO today.



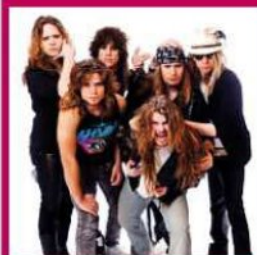
The 21st century incarnations of Foreigner (above) and Journey.



"Receiving such an incredible reaction at Firefest was very emotional," relates Mansworth. "People from all over the world were in that audience, some even holding aloft their original vinyl copies of *Shaft of Light*. It made me realise how much I'd missed playing live."

"We are doing this purely for the buzz from the

FIVE NEW MELODIC ROCK BANDS YOU MUST HEAR



H.E.A.T.

At their Firefest debut in 2008 the Swedes covered songs by Europe, Bon Jovi, Journey and Whitesnake. No surprise, then, that they sound like a mutation of all four bands.

TRY DOWNLOADING:
We're Gonna Make It (2010)



EDEN'S CURSE

Multinational group Eden's Curse combine all the best elements of melodic rock and heavy metal at its most tuneful. The band's studio album, *Trinity*, has just been completed.

TRY DOWNLOADING:
Masquerade Ball (2008)



WORK OF ART

Bearing a striking and distinctly flattering similarity to Toto, Journey and Giant, Stockholm's Work Of Art received rave reviews for *Artwork*, their debut album. Quite rightly so.

TRY DOWNLOADING:
Why Do I? (2008)



ECLIPSE

Yet another excellent bunch of Scandos, Eclipse fuse classic melodic rock elements with a mildly contemporary edge. Their debut album, *Are You Ready To Rock*, is highly recommended.

TRY DOWNLOADING:
Breaking My Heart Again (2008)



W.E.T.

Pooling members of Work Of Art, Eclipse and Talisman – hence the abbreviated name – last year's self-titled *W.E.T.* is one of the best debut albums of pure AOR in living memory.

TRY DOWNLOADING:
If I Fall (2009)

"BOTH FOREIGNER AND JOURNEY ARE AMONG THE TOP 10 BANDS PLAYED ON AMERICAN RADIO."

— FOREIGNER'S MICK JONES

tour with Nickelback after *What About Now* reached No.11 in the UK's singles chart. What had helped it get there was, inevitably, a crucial plug on *Britain's Got Talent*. It seems that British music fans are open to embracing melodic rock on the condition that it carries a reality TV endorsement. Makes you kinda sick, huh?

Steve Overland makes a relevant point. "Younger rock fans don't have loyalties towards artists the way our generation did," he says. "They download songs without any idea of who recorded them. My middle son said: 'Dad, I've heard this brilliant song, I don't know who the band is but it's called *The Boys Are Back In Town*.' Because the Top 40 is no longer rammed down anyone's throat, they're free to make up their own minds."

Having established melodic rock's relative saleability and safety in the hands with a younger generation, how does the genre push on and guarantee its future? Steve Strange, a booking agent with the company X Ray Touring (which represents both Foreigner and FM) is an unashamed genre disciple of many years standing. Strange is convinced that the answer lies with the musicians themselves.

"In this day and age, bands that want to earn a living by playing in the UK must be realistic," he maintains. "Share a bus. Forget how many records you've sold in America or Japan. Just make an effort, for Christ's sake. The audiences are still out there."

"At the end of Winger's last UK tour [in March 2010], Kip said: 'That's the best European run we've ever done, bar none.' It took us six months of planning, booking the dates and building awareness, but we filled rooms everywhere."

With major labels long since having turned their back on the music, as unlikely as it may seem, these days a single Italian-based independent company called Frontiers Records holds the signatures of Journey, Survivor, Toto, Styx, Winger, Y&T, Tesla, Nelson, Giant, Great White, Extreme, Mr Big, Night Ranger—even Whitesnake. Although these bands may not sell records in anywhere the quantities that they once did, a veritable flood of new records is released each year.

Almost a decade after *Classic Rock's* first investigation, melodic rock no longer requires assistance from Def Leppard (who themselves are out of contract with Universal Records) and is able to stand on its own two feet again—however drunkenly. We may quibble with regard to an accurate

description, and it is extremely unlikely to return in all its big-haired glory, but it's still out there and won't be going away any time soon.

"Both Foreigner and Journey are among the top 10 bands played on American radio, and that's a very exclusive club," concludes Mick Jones. "There's a whole new audience out there. Kids aged 10 years and upwards come to our shows having heard songs like *Cold As Ice* played by their parents. They have become timeless."



Melodic memories: *Classic Rock's* AOR round-up in issue 38.



Tesla: one of the many melodic rock bands signed to Italy's Frontiers label.

FIVE REUNITED MELODIC ROCK BANDS

They rode the crest of the AOR wave back in the 70s and now they're back for another slice of the pie.



FM

Original members Steve Overland, Merv Goldsworthy and Pete Jupp reconvened after a 12-year absence

to play the Firefest in 2007, alongside keyboard player Jem Davis and guitarist Jim Kirkpatrick.

TRY DOWNLOADING: *Hollow* (2010)



SKIN

An 11-year gap separated Skin's break-up in 1998 and a return to the stage at the 2009 Download Festival.

Not only do all four co-founders remain of the band, so does the unofficial fifth member, keyman Colin McLeod.

TRY DOWNLOADING: *Stronger* (2010)



ROMEO'S DAUGHTER

Back in the 80s Romeo's Daughter were managed by Olga Lange, then the wife of famed

record producer Robert John 'Mutt' Lange. Another band persuaded to reunite by Firefest, the original touring line-up of RD, fronted by Leigh Matty, played at last year's event. New recordings and touring activities have been promised.

TRY DOWNLOADING: *Heaven In The Back Seat* (1988)



AIRRACE

Tempted back into life when the UK's Rock Candy records reissued their Beau Hill-produced debut *Shaft Of Light*,

Airrace have survived the departure of Jason Bonham to cement their place in the UK melodic rock scene.

TRY DOWNLOADING: *Promise To Call* (1984)



STRANGEWAYS

In business again thanks to a place at this year's Firefest, the Scottish-US alliance produced two of the finest

melodic rock albums ever in *Native Sons* and *Walk In The Fire* (1987 and '89) and are now, apparently, back in the studio.

TRY DOWNLOADING: *Dance With Somebody* (1987)

4 go mad in Berkshire

In the spring of 1967, the newly formed **Traffic** initiated the cliché of 'getting it together in the country' when they retreated to a haunted cottage to write their debut album, *Mr. Fantasy*. Cue in-fighting, lashings of ginger beer and incredibly strong acid...

Words: **Max Bell** Photos: **Barrie Wentzell**



“The best gigs Traffic ever played were to absolutely nobody at all, apart from a few cows and sheep and the odd mate.”

Steve Winwood is sitting in a room at the Covent Garden Hotel sipping decaf, eating biscuits and reminiscing about that most English of albums, Traffic’s 1967 debut *Mr. Fantasy* – the one that started the trend for ‘getting it together in the country’, man.

As a statement in the music press, announcing the band’s formation explained: “We’re past the blowing stage and ready to work.” Far out.

In April that year, Traffic – Winwood, Jim Capaldi, Dave Mason and Chris Wood, four friends from the Midlands – became the first white rock act to sign to Chris Blackwell’s Island Records. Previously the precocious singer and keyboard player in the Spencer Davis Group, Winwood was already a chart star. “He was Ray Charles on helium,” according to Blackwell.

But the SDG’s attempts to recreate Tamla Motown star Junior Walker were frustrating Winwood. “I’d been obsessed with copying R&B, but we were regurgitating Atlantic sounds,” he says. “Since no one had really heard of Buddy Guy or John Lee Hooker we got away with it on the underground scene, but I realised I was never going to sound like those blokes really and I may as well be myself.”

After the Spencer Davis Group remixed their *Gimme Some Lovin’* with Mason and Capaldi singing on the chorus, Winwood put away his Ray Charles act on follow-up *I’m A Man*, quit the group, and Traffic were born.

“I was a pop star so I became Traffic’s MD [musical director] and leader,

“The best gigs Traffic ever played were to a few cows and sheep.”

– Steve Winwood

which eventually made Dave Mason very angry,” Winwood explains. “The first thing we did was the theme song for the film *Here We Go Round The Mulberry Bush* which we were supposed to be in. Then Blackwell suggested we move out of London to the Berkshire Downs, where his friend had just the place for us.”

The four youths were given the keys to Sheepcote Farm, a cottage in the parish of Aston Tirrold. It was a desolate, two-storey house at the end of a long mud track on the Berkshire estate of Sir William Pigott-Brown, a 26 year-old part time jockey, full-time stud owner and leading member of the Swinging 60s aristocratic elite. “There was no running water, there was a well, and no electricity,” says Winwood. “Blackwell took the gamekeeper’s cottage down the lane so he could make sure we rehearsed and wrote material. It was a place where we could make as much row as we liked – and we certainly did.”

In those days there were two sorts of LSD in Britain: pounds, shillings and pence (lsd) and the lysergic acid variety: Traffic had plenty of both. Winwood describes their lifestyle as “like four students living on top of one another, surrounded by filthy crockery and unmade beds.”

Traffic’s first stab at success was the sitar-strung *Paper Sun*, a psychedelic would-be classic of the early Summer of Love. To earn pin money they also knocked off a jingle for an ersatz orange juice drink called Zing!

“We didn’t have many run-ins with the locals,” Winwood recalls. “There was a gamekeeper called Dave Dick who walked round with a shotgun and didn’t like us at all. ‘You’re disturbing my pheasant and partridge with your ruddy racket!’ Pigott-Brown loved having a rock group on his spread. We used to go up to the big house and be the talking point among all the Sybillas and Ruperts. It was far more decadent there than in our place.”

Indeed there were dark tales in the village of orgies ‘up at the stud’, but Traffic didn’t even have girlfriends in tow. “Girls wouldn’t come to Sheepcote, if they had any sense,” Winwood laughs. “Cos if they did they had to do the washing and cleaning and it was an awful pigsty.”

Drug taking was par for the course, and Traffic’s mates Albert and



Traffic al fresco: “We built a concrete stage outside so we could play in the sunshine.” Inset: the cottage today.



"Keep up, Stevie!"
Winwood and *Classic*
Rock writer Chris
Welch jam at the
cottage in 1967.



Four for Mr. Fantasy
(bottom) soon became
a Mason-less three by
Heaven Is In Your Mind.

Twitch were sent off to London for supplies. Although Winwood says the band only took acid a few times, Jim Capaldi remembered life at the cottage as "very strange. The house had a powerful presence. You'd wake up and hear the sound of footsteps going in one direction. Friends would run out into the night totally spooked. Apparently a local boy had hanged himself in the well and his spirit haunted the place."

Dave Mason, now living in California, doesn't recall ever seeing the ectoplasm: "The only ghost I saw was my own face in the mirror the morning after the night before. I loved it there for a while. We were country boys anyway, and we lived like gypsies. We didn't give a damn, just looned around. When you're 19 pretty much everything is idyllic. By June we'd put in electricity and water, and built a concrete stage outside so we could play

in the sunshine and enjoy the psychedelics."

Mason was busy. He wrote Traffic's biggest hit, *Hole In My Shoe*, after a druggy dream. "It was the first thing I ever wrote on my own. It was just a beautiful fantasy tune that got to number two in England. I liked it. Okay, it wasn't the greatest song, and the others didn't care for it much. There was already tension because Jim and Steve were working together, whereas I preferred to do it alone. But so what? We were supposed to be under the same banner. At the time, it wasn't meant to be the single, but they all said they liked it and Stevie thought my voice was suited to the song.

"Eventually it just fell apart and there was no place for me any more. I was majorly ostracised. It was a shame, because I'd known Steve quite a while. I'd even been a roadie for Spencer Davis."

It became apparent during rehearsals for the *Mr. Fantasy* album that cracks were appearing in the rural idyll. At the time, Winwood praised *Hole In My Shoe*. "It's much better than *Paper Sun*," he said, "more immediate. You can





Winwood and Capaldi go wild in the country.



"Like, don't look at the sitar and maybe it'll go away..."

catch it at once."

Or maybe he was being diplomatic. He now says the song "started the long falling out with Dave. The original idea was we would write together simultaneously. Whereas we made contributions to each other's songs, he didn't. He came out with that horribly commercial record of *Hole In My Shoe*, which was not and never was what Traffic wanted to be. To be fair to Dave, he was a very good writer, but he wasn't on our wavelength. The record company loved it though, because it brought in revenue. That caused a major rift. We didn't think it represented Traffic. It was too glib and twee."

Capaldi later claimed: "Dave wanted us to jump into his psychedelic swimming pool but we didn't want that. I suppose we took the piss. We could be quite abrasive. But our playing on the stage was great."

Winwood agrees: "Those were the best times – the four of us playing live [outside the cottage]. The Hammond organ sounded amazing and the drums were perfect. We rigged up a generator, and had a light show borrowed from Zoot Money's Dantalion's Chariot, with oil slides. I've got the tapes somewhere. I should dig them out."

"Anyway, that's how the album was done. Jim and I used songs like *Dear Mr. Fantasy* as a vehicle for jamming. Jim would jot down lines of lyrics on scraps of paper and old fag packets. He never had a notebook. Chris Wood, who was the most technically minded, was in charge of the reel-to-reel stereo tape machine – cassettes hadn't been invented – and we'd busk along until we felt the urge to sing. Then we'd listen to it all back at night over smokes and decide whether it was good or rubbish. That's how it happened."

Mixing together a pleasingly English ragbag of psychedelia, blues, folk and classical, Traffic's sound evolved by accident, although Chris Wood was a major influence on the group philosophy. It was

Continued on page 112

"Dave was a very good writer, but he wasn't on our wavelength."

– Steve Winwood

AS IF THE REGROUPING

of Mott The Hoople after a 35-year absence wasn't historic enough, the decision of Ian Hunter, Mick Ralphs and company to commemorate Mott's 40th anniversary by playing some shows has ended up throwing an additional curveball.

The surprise caused by the reunion resulted in a call to Joe Elliott, the Mott-mad Def Leppard frontman who for two decades has effectively acted as an unpaid publicist for all things Hoople-related, guesting on stage with various former members and espousing the band's virtues to anyone who will listen.

"Mick Brown, who works for the band, rang and asked whether I'd like to be involved in the show," explains Elliott, who had already sent an email to everyone associated with his own group, stating: 'Don't even dream of booking anything for Leppard during the Mott tour.' Joe's assumption was that he would make the usual cameo during Mott's set. Brown, though, suggested Elliott should form a band and open the show on the last of Mott's four night stint at Hammersmith Apollo.

The singer agreed. He then decided that, fittingly, they would play a set comprising songs from Ian Hunter's solo career, from Mott (the band formed in 1975 after Hunter and guitarist Mick Ronson left Mott The Hoople) and from British Lions (Mott with Medicine Head's John Fiddler on vocals instead of Nigel Benjamin). "If I was in the crowd at a Mott The Hoople gig, that's what I'd want to hear," Elliott reasons.

With the material sorted, there was now just the small matter of Elliott putting together a band. But with the rest of Def Leppard (obvious choices) scattered around the globe, who would join him?

Paul Guerin, a guitarist with The Quireboys, was shopping in Primark on Oxford Street when Elliott rang to ask whether he would consider putting together some musicians for the show.

"I said: 'I've already got a band – The Quireboys will do it,'" laughs the affable Geordie, who needed very little persuading to become the project's musical director.

While Leppard toured the US last summer with Poison and Cheap Trick, and The Quireboys played festivals in Europe, a flurry of emails, MP3 files and phone conversations flew back and forth between Elliott, Guerin and others in the loop.

Pressurised to come up with a name, Elliott happened to be reading the latest instalment of fallen snooker ace Alex 'Hurricane' Higgins's riches-to-rags tale in a newspaper. "That was it," the singer exclaims with a laugh. "We became the Down 'N' Outz."

"After Joe's call I went back to these songs, some of which I hadn't heard for years," Guerin comments. "Their importance came flooding

back. They influenced everybody from Kiss to Bad Company. And the quirky way that people like [Hoople guitarist] Ariel Bender used to write, it was almost like learning a whole new language."

"Paul's exact description was that the songs were 'mental'," Elliott recalls. "I completely understood that; there are no standard chords or arrangements, and the lyrics are as far from banal as you can get. They're eccentric and intrinsically British-sounding."

And so on October 6, 2009, after just four proper, face-to-face rehearsals, for their (supposed) one-off appearance opening for Mott The Hoople, Elliott and Guerin were joined on stage at Hammersmith by Quireboys members Guy Griffin (guitar), Keith Weir (keyboards) and Phil Martini (drums), along with bass player Ronnie Garritty, a Scotsman spotted playing in the band Raw Glory. Quireboys frontman Spike also joined the Down 'N' Outz on stage to sing *Career*. And the band's set was received with genuine, perhaps unexpected enthusiasm by those who arrived in time to catch it.

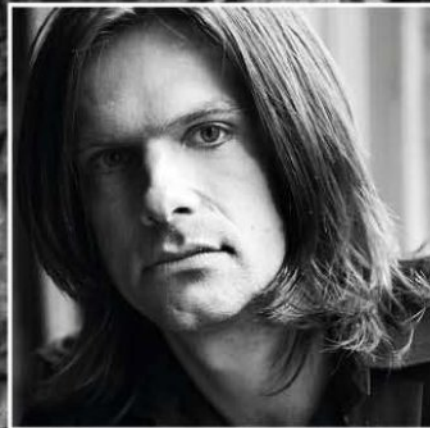
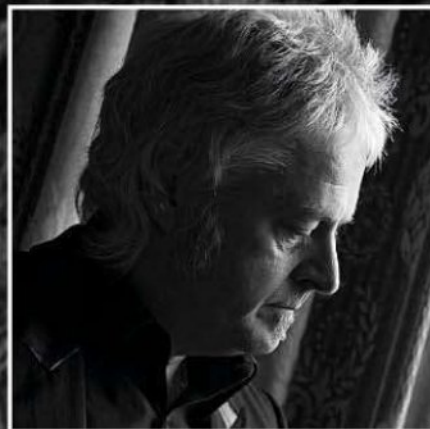
"At the start there was hardly anybody in the hall," Elliott sighs, "so I bellowed down the mic: 'If you're in the bar get your asses in here, you lazy fucks!' And by halfway through the place was full and really into what we were doing. But afterwards we looked at each other and realised it felt like having half a wank; we'd done all this work for one gig and, frankly, we deserved better."

The original idea had been to play the London gig, go their separate ways and release a DVD of the show. But soon after the show there was a change of plan. The Down 'N' Outz existence as a for-one-night-only project turned in something more tangible. *Classic Rock* soon broke the news that the group were recording a studio CD of songs they had played live supporting Mott.

"The plan is still to release the concert DVD, which will be called *Live From Hammersmith Odeon* – and not the fucking Labbatt's Apollo – later this year," clarifies Elliott, clearly fond of the resonance of the venue's former name, "but the [studio] album will come first."

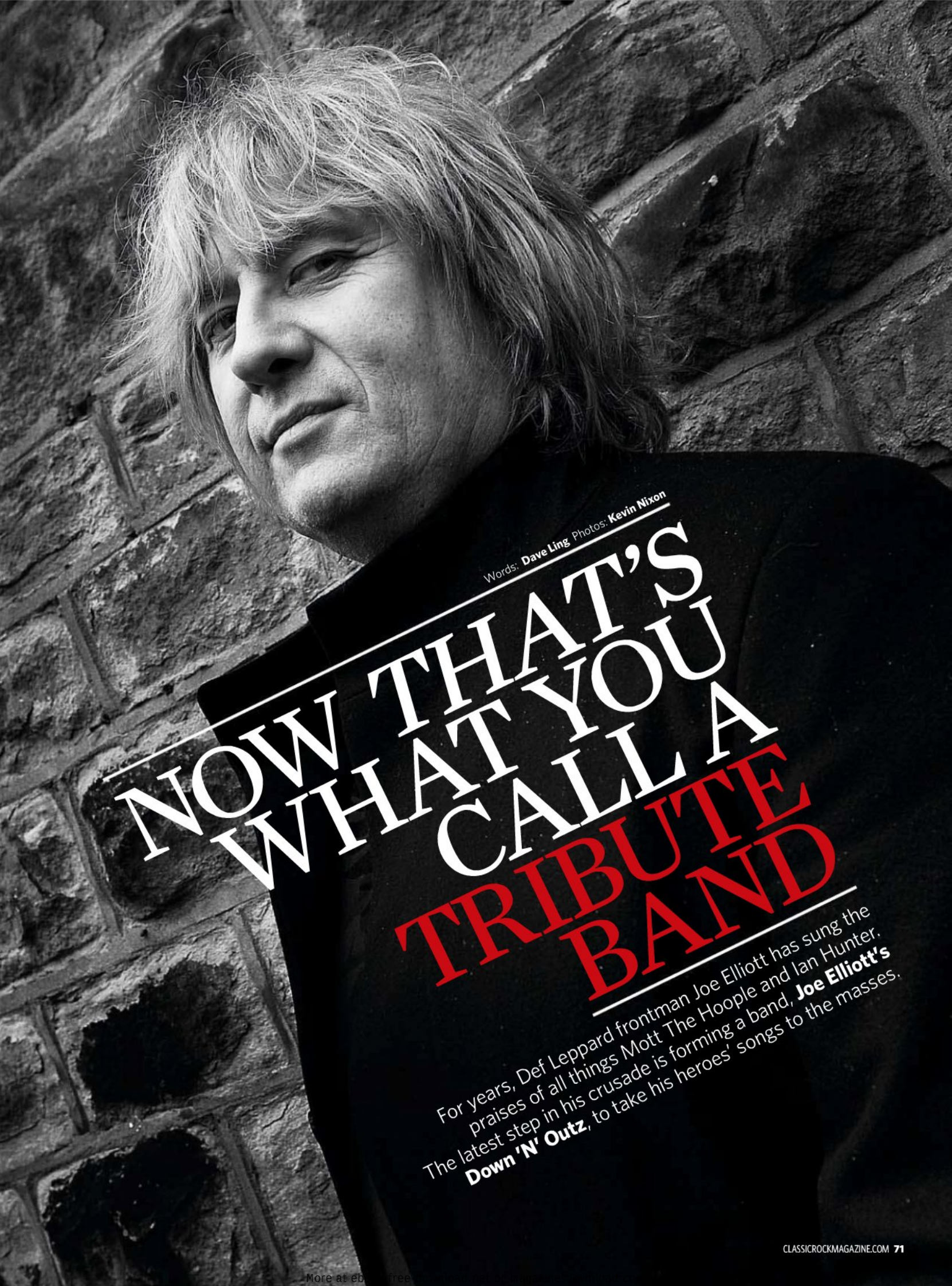
Not only first, but right here, right now – a special edition free with this issue of *Classic Rock*, and titled *My ReGeneration*. The songs on this month's free cover disc were recorded in the same, seemingly disconnected way that the Down 'N' Outz prepared for the live show, with the backing tracks done by the group in Bedford, and Elliott adding lead vocals and rhythm guitar at his home studio in Dublin.

With the help of co-producer Ronan McHugh, a veteran of 10 years' worth of Leppard releases, it's apparent that Elliott has learned a thing or two from legendary producer Robert John 'Mutt' ➤➤



"AFTER THE FIRST SHOW, IT FELT LIKE HAVING HALF A WANK; WE'D DONE ALL THIS WORK FOR ONE GIG AND, FRANKLY, WE DESERVED BETTER."

– Joe Elliott

A black and white photograph of Joe Elliott, the lead singer of Def Leppard. He is shown from the chest up, looking slightly to his left with a faint smile. He has long, wavy, light-colored hair. He is wearing a dark, high-collared jacket. The background is a rough, textured stone wall. The text of the article is overlaid on the lower right portion of the image.

Words: **Dave Ling** Photos: **Kevin Nixon**

NOW THAT'S WHAT YOU CALL A TRIBUTE BAND

For years, Def Leppard frontman Joe Elliott has sung the praises of all things Mott The Hoople and Ian Hunter. The latest step in his crusade is forming a band, **Joe Elliott's Down 'N' Outz**, to take his heroes' songs to the masses.



Joe Elliott's Down 'N' Outz: (l to r) Phil Martini, Keith Weir, Paul Guerin, Guy Griffin, Ronnie Garritty and Joe Elliott.

Lange. My ReGeneration (the full-length version of which is released via Mailboat Records on July 13 and includes three tracks not featured on the *Classic Rock* edition) sounds amazing.

"I used to hover over Mutt's shoulder, and although he wouldn't always explain what he was doing I picked up on a lot of his tricks," Elliott says. "I wanted this to sound like a record from the 1970s but with a 2010 production."

"Mostly we've stuck to the original blueprint of the songs," Guy Griffin adds. "If you're a real fan you'll spot the tweaks. The goal, though, was to give them a little 21st-century injection of Botox."

With Leppard's *Saturday Night* (High 'N' Dry) being reminiscent of the riff to Mott's *By Tonight*, there's a real sense of the wheel turning full circle.

"I can hear that, absolutely," Elliott nods. "And I'm proud of it. The Stones even ripped off [Mott's] *By Tonight* for *Start Me Up*, which I hadn't actually realised till you raised the subject."

Thus far, reaction to the Down 'N' Outz from the writers of the songs they've covered has been extremely positive.

"Overend Watts nearly cried when he heard us at Hammersmith," beams Elliott, adding with a laugh: "I'm told that Ian Hunter said: 'Get 'em off, they're going down too well.' [John] Fiddler loves our version of *One More Chance To Run*. He said: 'You guys sound like you're having fun, unlike us [British Lions] when we recorded it'. And Morgan Fisher has been very supportive, sending emails to all my questions about the arrangements."

Given the cult fanaticism surrounding Mott The Hoople and its extended family, Elliott knows that in revising these apparently almost sacrosanct songs he may well have prodded a hornet's nest. But, with the knockers poised, he insists his reasons for doing so are entirely altruistic.

"Someone will probably review this album and write: *Shouting And Pointless*," he shrugs. "It'll

probably be some twat from *Mojo* or whatever. But I didn't do it for them, I did it for me. I don't want a million people to love me. I've been that guy, I did it years ago. And when Leppard go out again next year I'll be that guy again."

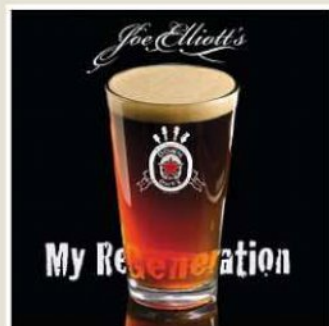
Elliott's ultimate goal with this project is to popularise a set of songs he feels deserve exposure.

"They should've been hits," he states loudly and sincerely, almost banging the table to make his point. "Everyone should know *England Rocks*. People should know *Shouting And Pointing* as well as they do *Kashmir*. So this is a great opportunity to springboard some of these classics."

"Eric Clapton did an album of Robert Johnson songs," he continues. "I'm hoping that this one will make an even bigger splash. It's about the wonderfulness of being British, and not football, but there's no reason why *England Rocks* [the first single from *ReGeneration*, which has a video featuring Hunter, Brian May, and Gene and Paul

Now where have I heard that before...

Frontman Joe Elliott's track-by-track guide to this month's free CD: Joe Elliott's Down 'N' Outz' *My ReGeneration*.



GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY

Originally recorded by Ian Hunter on *Overnight Angels* (1977)

"This one also opened our live show [at Hammersmith]. We also wanted something equally stirring to begin the album, and *Golden Opportunity* was the first track on *Overnight Angels* so it made sense to use it here. It's strange, I know that Ian doesn't like that album because he thinks it's too bombastic, but to me it's brilliant."

STORM

Originally recorded by Mott on *Shouting And Pointing* (1976)

"Another balls-to-the wall rocker, but it's not heavy metal. It's a song you could almost hear Little Richard playing. In a lyrical sense, I suspect that Wattsy [Mott The Hoople/Mott bassist Overend Watts] was a really angry

man at the time. I believe he's since mellowed quite a lot. But there are definitely some issues to address here."

OVERNIGHT ANGELS

Originally recorded by Ian Hunter on *Overnight Angels*

"This one has been latched on to by almost all of the few people that have heard the [Down 'N' Outz] album so far. It has all the elements of a great pop-rock song."

CAREER (NO SUCH THING AS ROCK 'N' ROLL)

Originally recorded by Mott on *Shouting And Pointing*

"Other than [David Bowie's] *Life On Mars*, this is my all-time favourite slow, piano-based song. Though I liked his voice, people sometimes rag on Nigel [Benjamin]. But this is one of his better

performances, maybe because he co-wrote it."

ENGLAND ROCKS

Originally recorded by Ian Hunter on *Overnight Angels*

"When this one [Hunter's original] didn't even reach the lower end of the singles chart, and songs by the Pistols and The Clash did, I genuinely couldn't get my head around that. It made me really, really angry. To me, living in Sheffield, it was the perfect summation of the summer of '77, even more so than *God Save The Queen*."

SHOUTING AND POINTING

Originally recorded by Mott on *Shouting And Pointing*

"The first time I heard it I was in Weston Park in Sheffield with some mates, listening to the radio. I still remember



Paul Guerin: "It was almost like learning a whole new language."

"I'D LIKE THE DOWN 'N' OUTZ TO BE A REALLY COOL ROCK VERSION OF THE TRAVELING WILBURYS."

– Joe Elliott

from Kiss in full make-up] couldn't become England's unofficial World Cup song. I can already imagine hearing it on Sky Sports, with Rooney sliding on his knees after scoring."

If that did happen – even if it doesn't, quite possibly – the Down 'N' Outz are having so much fun that, despite Elliott's insistence during the run-up to the Hammersmith gig that they would be a 'now you see it, now you don't' band ("This is a one-off performance," he told the *Classic Rock* website), it turns out that they may well have more life in them yet. That this interview takes place in Elliott's home city Sheffield before the group play at a benefit concert for late Radio Hallam DJ Dave Kilner suggests that something is stirring.



"We're cheating on our other bands: but not like an affair – it's more like cottaging."

"Don't you just love putting your foot in your mouth? And now I'm going to do it again," he proclaims theatrically. "I see the Down 'N' Outz recording a minimum of four albums. Look at the *ReGeneration* sleeve and you'll see there's a subtle 'volume one' reference. Volume two will be Mott The Hoople songs, but the lesser-known ones like *Thunderbuck Ram*, *Violence*, *Crash Street Kidds* and *Rock 'N' Roll Queen*. For the third album I'd like to do other songs from the same period but totally different bands; maybe *Blind Alley* by Fanny and *Wall Street Shuffle* or *Silly Love* by 10cc, even something from *Band On The Run* [by Wings]. I've got a list. The fourth album, which would come out in four years' time, would feature original material. None of this may come to pass, of course, but I'd like us to be a really cool rock version of the Traveling Wilburys."

Elliott insists that the associates of all concerned have been notified, and that "neither of our bands are splitting up. The Quireboys are cheating on Spike, and I'm cheating on four guys [in Leppard],

though our partners all know about it," he smiles. "But doesn't feel like an affair, more like cottaging."

The bedroom activities of the Down 'N' Outz are further exposed for the benefit of voyeurs when the band appear on the Main Stage at the High Voltage Festival in July, and at the end will return to the stage joined by Ian Hunter for a full-blown, stand-alone, one-off performance.

"Staying on and doing an extra forty-five minutes – an Ian Hunter set with Ian Hunter, if you will – is going to be incredible fun," Elliott says contentedly. "I've no idea what Ian has in mind to play, but we'll do whatever he wants."

"The one thing I want people to know is that the Down 'N' Outz are a band," he sums up. "We may be a part-time one, but we are not a joke or some tragic money-making attempt. If only three thousand people get it and people enjoy what we're doing, we'll come back and do more." 📢

Down 'N' Outz play High Voltage Festival in London on 25 July.

our jaws dropping at the enormous, pounding piano intro. It was so good that I nearly came in my pants. As one, we all stood up, shot into town and bought the album."

BY TONIGHT

Originally recorded by Mott on *Drive On* (1975)

"Side one, track one of Mott's comeback without Ian Hunter and Mick Ronson. It made me want to tap my feet and work out the chords, and it had a great vocal by Nigel [Benjamin]."

APOLOGIES

Originally recorded by Mott on *Drive On*

(Not on the *Classic Rock* edition)

"Sav [Def Leppard bassist Rick Savage] and I always sit at the back of the tour bus and play this one together. It's

a phenomenal little 55-second song. I love the way it ends with him [Nigel Benjamin] sighing and closing the door. Ours does exactly the same, of course."

WHO DO YOU LOVE

Originally recorded by Ian Hunter on *Ian Hunter* (1975)

"Def Leppard have already covered this one, but I prefer this version because Leppard's was banged down in just a day – one of those 'We need four bonus tracks for a single' scenarios. Thankfully the Down 'N' Outz lads had the luxury of a bit more time."

ONE MORE CHANCE TO RUN

Originally recorded by British Lions on *British Lions* (1977)

"There had to be a British Lions song on the album. Despite being thrown by hearing John Fiddler's voice for the first

time, even though I'd bought all the Medicine Head records, this is one I've always loved."

3,000 MILES FROM HERE

Originally recorded by Ian Hunter on *Ian Hunter*

(Not on the *Classic Rock* edition)

Like *Apologies*, this is one I did alone. My mum had taught me to play it acoustically many, many years ago. The guys in the band thought that *Apologies* and *3,000 Words* sounded great when they heard them, but they took me an hour to complete.

GOOD TIMES

Originally recorded by the Easybeats in 1968, it was covered by Mott on *Shouting And Pointing*

"It's funny, the Easybeats' version is so of its time. I didn't hear it until after

Mott's. It's such a get-up-and-go song. It gets you out of your seat and rushing towards the stage. It brought us an encore at Hammersmith, which was very pleasing. It's what this whole project has been about."

THE FLIPSIDE OF THE SHAMELESS WHELK

(Not on the *Classic Rock* edition)

"This is a reprise of various things that have gone before – basically an end-of-album freak-out in the vein of *The Wheel Of The Quivering Meat Conception*, from [Mott The Hoople's] *Brain Capers*. The brilliantly ludicrous title was suggested by [co-producer] Ronan McHugh. I love the fact that Ian will wonder what the fuck is going on when he receives a royalty payment for his writing credit on a song called *The Flipside Of The Shameless Whelk*."



First published in
Melody Maker,
2 November 1991

Rock's Backpages

Nirvana: Station To Devastation

*At the dawn of grunge in 1991, **Everett True** joined 'the only band who know what rock'n'roll is all about' on a US tour to witness the carnage unfolding.*



EVERETT TRUE

A renowned *Melody Maker* journo during the grunge era, ET was dispatched to Seattle in 1989 where he befriended the scene's bands. Earlier in the same year as this feature was published, he introduced Kurt to Courtney Love at a Butthole Surfers/L7 gig. He also famously pushed Kurt in a wheelchair on stage for Nirvana's headline spot at Reading 1992.

SONIC YOUTH

Often wrongly lumped together with the grunge scene because of Cobain et al's vociferous approval (and because the band scored their biggest commercial successes with *Goo* (1990) and *Dirty* (1992) at the height of grunge after signing to Geffen when major labels clamoured to cash in on anything remotely alternative in the early 90s), Sonic Youth formed in 1981 and took their avant-garde cues from Stooges and Velvet Underground experimentalism. They originally signed to SST - Black Flag's label - and became a mainstay of the fertile US hardcore scene. Still a going concern, they released *The Eternal* last year on current label Matador.



IT ENDS WITH a knock on my door at eight in the morning. Two obscenely aggressive security men storm into my hotel room, wanting to know if I'm hiding a phone anywhere. Seems one went missing the previous night after Kurt from Nirvana took exception to a painting hanging in Chris' room and threw it out the window. Shelves, tables, sheets, glasses, mirrors followed - and then, a quick trip to Kurt's room for more of the same. The televisions stayed, however (have you ever tried lifting one of those fuckers?). All of this culminated in a rather prompt departure from Washington DC the next morning, before the journalist even manages to rise.

My clothes are covered in vomit, someone's using the back of my head as a pinball machine, there's a barbecue happening at the end of my bed and the cats in the back alley are so fat and complacent you can use them as footballs. Just another day on the road with Nirvana.

Two days earlier, Monty, Nirvana's long-suffering tour manager, was picked up for questioning in Pittsburgh at two in the morning (just after *David Letterman*). The show earlier that night had ended with some harsh words spoken between band and club and later someone attempted to set the place alight - piling up cushions, seat covers and carpets in the dressing room downstairs and dowsing them in petrol - and The Man figured Nirvana might know something about it.

"That was a classic case of coked-out Pittsburgh mafioso promotion," Kurt assures me later. "That club was the type of place that would have John Cafferty And The Beaver Brown Band, Huey Lewis And The News and all those other professional bar bands. What's rock'n'roll to them?"

Nirvana had nothing to do with it: not this time. Kurt had merely smashed some bottles in the toilet and thrown a couple of things around. But, fair dos, Nirvana have certainly been responsible for their fair share of trouble in the past.

"When we were in Europe," says Kurt Cobain, Nirvana's charismatic and perpetually tired singer, backstage of DC's infamous 9:30 Club, "we nearly set the tour van alight." Around us, various members of the Nirvana entourage, including drummer Dave Grohl and his cool mom, chow down on the 9:30's infamous "pizza rider".

"You see, no one knows it, but those **Sonic Youth** kids, they're wild," he continues, gleefully. "They were instigating violence and terrorism throughout the entire European festival tour. Their (and Nirvana's) manager, also. He antagonises people and leaves us to take the rap, beating us up, tearing our pants, conking Chris (Novoselic, bassist) over the head with a bottle, turning beetroot red when he's drunk. He's wild."

Kurt is one of those people for whom the words "butter", "melt" and "mouth" were invented. He looks angelic. Yet last time I saw him, backstage at Reading, he had one arm in a sling after leaping backwards into Dave's drum kit, and the previous

time, his manager was sent a bill for God knows how much, after the band completely destroyed an LA apartment.

Yes, Nirvana like to wreck stuff: Chris usually finishes a set by throwing his bass 20 feet into the air (and occasionally catching it). In Pittsburgh, Kurt rammed his guitar straight into the snare drum out of sheer frustration; in DC, he ran off the stage 10 minutes before the end to take a breather, it was so damn hot, before rushing back on to destroy the drums. New York's Marquee was blessed with an encore that was just bass, drums and Kurt screaming melodically from somewhere within the audience, he'd fucked his guitars up so bad - and it still sounded as if there were six guitars playing.

Nirvana have a \$750 equipment allowance per week. And Kurt hates cheap guitars! They live the classic rock'n'roll lifestyle (rampant vandalism) because it's the only lifestyle they know. And because it's fun. And, along the way, they're responsible for some of the most invigorating rock music of the 90s.

One listen to their new album, *Nevermind*, confirms this. I'm up to about 230 and still of the opinion there's no better record this year. That's what honesty does for you. Songs like the terribly open *In Bloom*, *Drain You* and mind-numbingly fine single *Teen Spirit* (something to do with a girl sitting alone in a room, or is that the aching lament *Come As You Are*? Fuck knows, fuck cares) are my life. No exaggeration.

All I have to do is hear the opening strummed acoustic chords to *Polly* (a disquieting tale of rape) or the all-out melodic, self-centred attack of *On A Plain* and my mind flips. One note from Kurt's tortuously twisted, magically melodious scream on *Stay Away* and my heart beats at my chest and makes a try for the heavens. Works every time.

"The rumours of us destroying the club and burning out the van were a bit exaggerated."

Meanwhile back in the real world...

"Yeah, I lit the curtains in our tour van on fire while we were doing an interview," Kurt says. "This was a few hours after some other destruction. This representative from MCA gave us a gift, a wastepaper basket full of candy and magazines, with a little note welcoming us to Germany."

"The gift had been in the dressing room for two hours, while we'd been doing our set and eating our dinner. During this time, Kim Gordon [Sonic Youth] had written 'Fuck you' underneath the woman's signature on the note. So we saw this and thought, 'Gee, that's kinda peculiar, but we can make good use of the sweets'."

Nirvana: in desperate
need of an iron.



RIDE & THE SHOEGAZING SCENE

Oxford's Ride were an alternative rock band that were pigeon-holed by the music press as part of the 'shoegazing scene', alongside My Bloody Valentine, Pale Saints, Slowdive and Chapterhouse. An alt. rock movement of the late 80s/early 90s, the 'shoegazing' bands had precursors in space rock and psychedelia, as well as krautrock and the more experimental side of the Velvet Underground (*Sister Ray*, for example).

Favouring a detached (read 'stoned') demeanour, antipathy to rock'n'roll performance clichés, and frequently burying any lyrical meaning beneath a wall of sound (created by the extravagant use of effects pedals, hence why the bands were frequently looking downwards), 'shoegazing' looked pathetic in the face of the monstrous rock of Nirvana, Pearl Jam, Soundgarden *et al.*

Weirdly these days it's undergoing a slight revival: acclaimed by dance DJs like Rob Da Bank (who compiled a shoegazing collection for the *Sci-Fi Lo-Fi* series) and among stoner rock bands who have much in common with the genre's musical and lyrical world view. See bands like Quest For Fire and Assemble Head in Sunburst Sound (both signed to Tee Pee) for evidence. My Bloody Valentine man Kevin Shields, meanwhile, has been acclaimed as a kind of alt-rock Brian Wilson, collaborating with Primal Scream and Paul Weller.

Whether Ride fitted the 'shoegazing' tag is a moot point, but they always were a band out of time: first grunge then Britpop queered the pitch for them. Guitarist Andy Bell left in 1996 to form the much more rock Hurricane No.1, before joining Oasis on bass. He's currently a member of Liam Gallagher's forthcoming new band, Beady Eye.



Come as you are (l to r):
Kurt Cobain, Krist (Chris)
Novoselic, Dave Grohl.

MARTIN GODDARD/RETNA

Kurt is a complete candy freak. (Does anyone else buy those little wax bottles you drink about 1cc of pop out of?)

"So we met the rep, thanked her and Chris proceeded to get drunker and drunker," he continues. "He shot off a fire extinguisher, ripped up the magazines and threw the candy all over place and destroyed the whole room, Sonic Youth's dressing room, too. Classic rock'n'roll angst."

So the band went outside, the MCA woman came back, saw the note, assumed Nirvana had written it and threw a fit, threatening to drop them from the label.

"By this time," Kurt goes on. "We'd been doing interviews in the van for about an hour and I lit the curtains on fire, and we opened the door and this bellow of smoke came into her face. She thought we'd set the van on fire. The rumours were a bit exaggerated when they finally got back to MCA to the extent that we'd assaulted the woman and destroyed the club and completely burned out our van."

Rock'n'roll, eh kids? There ain't nothing like the real thing.

The left-handed singer/guitarist then tells me about another time in Belgium where they swapped round all the name-tags in the chic cafeteria tent, so the party of 12 Ramones and friends ended up sitting at a table for four and Shane MacGowan was left on his own.

"He was being spoon-fed Gerbers baby-food, because he couldn't chew," comments Chris maliciously. "So we gave him a plate of apples!"

Everyone giggles.

"There were about 30 of us sitting in a party with Sonic Youth," the singer adds. "Someone throws a carrot-stick and someone throws a grape. Then someone else throws back some dressing and it turns into a huge food fight. We completely wrecked the food tent, but it was a lot of fun and if there had been televisions there, we would have wrecked them too."

"We snuck into Ride's trailer and stole their champagne," he continues. "This guy who was with us peed in their champagne bucket. We stole all their flowers and candy too."

Isn't this all rather rock'n'roll? Isn't this all opposed to what Nirvana are about? I thought you were meant to "hate the average American macho male" (not my quotes). I thought you'd abhor such boorish behaviour as the province of prats like Axl Rose and his ilk.

"Well, no one does this stuff anymore," Kurt says. "They're too scared. But that isn't our point. We only do it cos we're

bored and we want to have fun. And we do – real sincere fun!"

"I think the alcohol has a lot to do with it, too," Dave adds.

But doesn't this sort of behaviour just lead meek Limey journalists like myself to assume you're just a bunch of redneck no-good delinquents?

"We're not boasting about it," Kurt retorts. "You asked us."

I asked you? Me?

"Yes, you did. You started the whole fucking thing!"

"Sammy Hagar, Van Halen and Warrant? They're not even worth slagging."

"But at the same time, who fucking cares?" Dave asks. Dave woke up this morning on his mom's couch to the strains of *Teen Spirit*. It was being used as background music for an advertisement for antique cars. He thought that was kinda cool. "It's all entertainment," he adds. "The people who'd call us stupid rednecks, whatever, are the people who give us that champagne to pee in, are the people who put on those shows."

"Champagne," Chris says disgustedly. "Like if there was a fifth of whiskey there, I'm going to drink champagne!"

"Ride should have had that fucking champagne," Dave sneers. "Make them stop staring at their fucking feet the whole time, goddamn it!"

So how much do Nirvana love rock'n'roll? Let's find out.

"Rock'n'roll?" asks Dave perplexed.

Yeah!

"When they asked Jesus how much he loved the world, they nailed his hands to the cross – 'This much!'" Chris comments.

C'mon guys. Let's talk about rock'n'roll, for fuck's sake – Sammy Hagar, Van Halen, Warrant or whatever their damn names are!

"They're not even worth slagging," Kurt replies, aware that I'm trying to wind him up. "Let's just say I don't want to be associated with 99 per cent of rock'n'roll bands."

"The Youth, the 'Honey, The Breeders, the Cross, the



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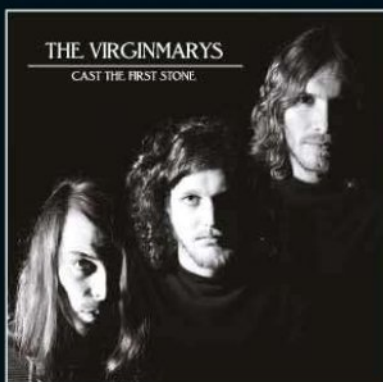
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Knife, the Nails, Fugazi – they're the bands we like," explains Chris ("the Knife": one Shonen Knife, the three-headed pure punk pop goddesses from Japan).

Do you provide an alternative to heavy metal?

"Oh, we've been called an alternative band before," Kurt sneers. "But we eat meat so I think we're disqualified: chili dogs, corn dogs, Jimmy Dean Sausage Breakfast."

"When I first joined this band," Dave comments, "I was living on Kurt's couch and there was an AM/PM convenience store right down the street where you could get three corn dogs for 99 cents. I lived on them for a year."

"It kept him regular too," Kurt adds. "I knew when to avoid the bathroom, nine in the morning and 12 at night. He had to walk through my bedroom to get to the bathroom."

"That's right," Chris agrees. "I actually took a shit in your backyard once, because I didn't want to stink up your whole house. It was really pleasant: warm and wet. Sweet!"

So ask Kurt if he thinks he's developing a rock star complex. It seems like an appropriate question.

"We talked about that," he replies evasively. "I can't remember what I said."

Yeah. You were saying sometimes you can't work out what the matter is.

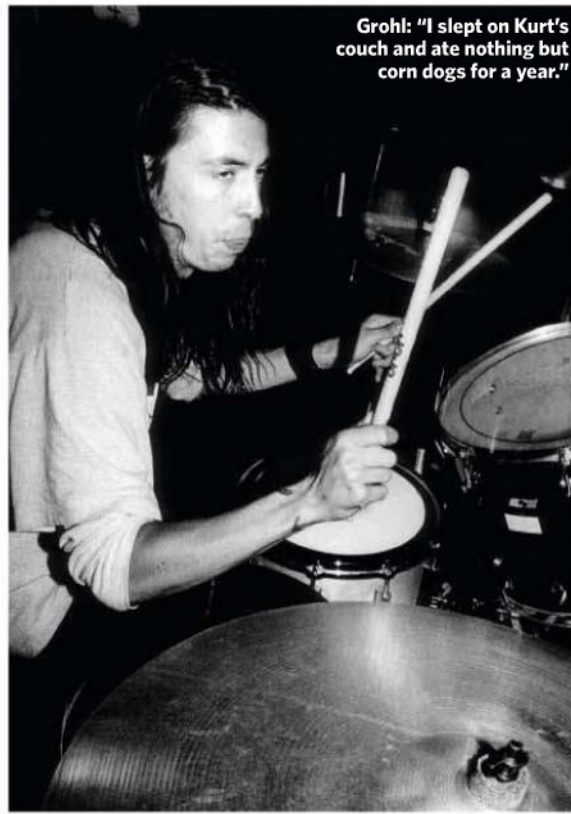
"What did I say? Can you remember?" he asks pitifully, sounding like Courtney Love momentarily.

It's something to do with wanting to weed out certain elements of your audience.

"That's true," Kurt confirms. "The people who scream *Naked Of Creed* throughout the entire show, even after we've played it, and who talk really loud during songs like *Polly*. Like, last night, that exact type of people were the ones yelling, 'Sell out' after we played because we didn't do an encore, because we didn't sign autographs. But what could be more rock'n'roll than that?"

We also had a conversation a few days earlier, in that weird street in Philadelphia where every other building was a witchcraft store, where you said how little making music means to you anymore.

"That's partly true," Kurt replies. "That's because if we ever had any conscious goals, we're already gone past them. We now have guaranteed distribution, we've gone up to a pretty high



Grohl: "I slept on Kurt's couch and ate nothing but corn dogs for a year."

level on the underground circuit and that's all we ever wanted.

"We're not going to be proud of the fact that there are a bunch of *Guns N' Roses* kids who are into our music. We don't feel comfortable progressing, playing larger venues."

You mentioned how people in Olympia ostracise you, for not being "pure" enough, now that you've signed to a major label. We spoke about the bullshit this industry gives up and you even had an inspired rant against "rockers" like Hagar and Halen in the van between NYC and Pittsburgh when there was nothing else to do but scarf junk food and flip through copies of *Sassy*.

Hell, you even told me something of your past in Olympia or wherever it was you grew up, how you would get bored out your skull and go round and break into people's homes, trash them, not steal anything, just trash them, graffiti the walls, break up the furniture, smash the adornments – anything for a thrill, the buzz. Sounded pure Jimmy Dean to me. You mentioned the buzz you get from the after-effects of your trouble-making, the exhilaration of being confronted by a truck-load of angry officials.

As I watch him fall asleep at a moment's notice, I wonder, how can this cherub-faced misfit, this sulky boy be responsible for such brutal, poignantly touching music?

"I'm disgusted with having to deal with the commercial side of our band at the moment and as a reaction, I'm becoming more uptight and complaining more. And it feels like I'm adapting a rock star attitude," Kurt says. "But I still feel guilty about it, because I'm bumming people's days."

So we're talking your classic white middle-class liberal guilt complex here, right?

"What?" Dave asks affronted. "The only guilt that I have is that I'm bumming other people's fun," Kurt explains. "I'm not pleasant to be around in those situations and I'm concerned that my bandmates might be having a bad time."

Why are you doing this right now?

"Because I'm under contract," the singer responds. "Because I'm in fear of having to go to court if I were to leave the band." What would you be doing if you weren't doing this?

"I'd be a street musician, definitely. That's my goal in life." ❶

For more from Everett True, visit www.rockbackpages.com

NIRVANA vs GUNS N' ROSES

When one decade has two iconic bands, there's almost bound to be friction – and so there was between Nirvana and Guns N' Roses, with Cobain's band cast as the anti-GN'R. Trouble flared at the MTV Video Music Awards in 1992 when Axl and girlfriend, model Stephanie Seymour, walked past Kurt, Courtney and their new baby, Frances.

Love sarcastically asked Axl to be their baby's godfather, at which point Axl rounded on Kurt, shouting, "You shut your bitch up, or I'm taking you down to the pavement!" According to Charles R. Cross's *Heavier Than Heaven* biog, Kurt then said in a robot voice: "Okay bitch – shut up." Seymour tried levelling the situation by asking Courtney, sarcastically, "Are you a model?" Love responded: "No. Are you a brain surgeon?"

In his blog for the *Seattle Weekly*, in February of this year, Duff McKagan apologised to Nirvana's Krist Novoselic for his part in the friction: "At the MTV Awards... I perceived a slander toward my band from the Nirvana camp. In my drunken haze and drug-induced mania, I heard what I wanted to hear, and I went after Krist Novoselic backstage. I had no control of myself then. And Krist, I am sorry for that day." (In his column for the same paper, Novoselic graciously accepted Duff's apology.)

Weirdly, Duff was one of the last people to see Cobain alive. "I was on the same plane as Kurt on that flight up from Los Angeles a couple of days before his death," he wrote. "The thought crossed my mind to invite him over to my house... I had a real sense that he was lonely and alone [and] I felt the same way..." In the crush coming off the plane, he missed the moment. "I received a call from my manager two days later that Kurt had died."



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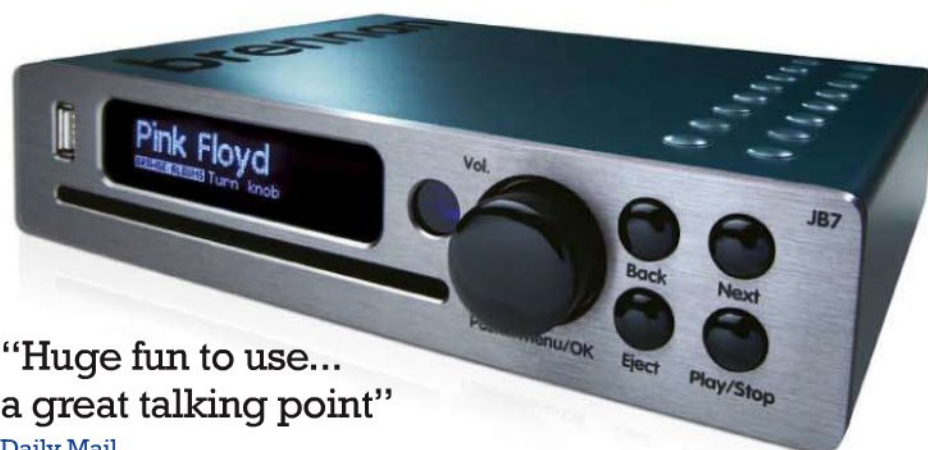
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shows a reducing number of matches as you press successive letters on the remote control. Once you get the hang of it you can find one track or album out of your entire music collection in a few seconds. So to

What's the point owning CDs you don't Play?

find "Nessun Dorma" you would press letters "NES" or "DOR" and scroll through the shortlist of matches. 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.

The face behind 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".



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CLASSIC ROCK RATINGS

■■■■■■■■■■	A CLASSIC
■■■■■■■■■	EXCELLENT
■■■■■■■■	VERY GOOD
■■■■■■■	GOOD
■■■■■■	ABOVE AVERAGE
■■■■■	AVERAGE
■■■■	BELOW PAR
■■■	A DISAPPOINTMENT
■■	POOR
■	VERY POOR

THE HARD STUFF

The Ultimate
ROCK REVIEWS
Section

16 PAGES

100% ROCK

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P82

Ozzy Osbourne

At a time when he really needed to come up with the goods, has the Prince Of Darkness delivered?

THE HARD STUFF ALBUMS

Ozzy Osbourne: an album that reminds you he's a musician, not just a celebrity.

Hard Facts

- ★ Gus G enrolled in the renowned Berklee College of Music (birthplace of Dream Theater) but left after just a few weeks.
- ★ *Scream* was originally titled *Soul Sucka* but was changed after a universally negative reception by Ozzy fans.
- ★ Gus G has also played with Mystic Prophecy, Nightrage, Arch Enemy, and Dream Evil as well as his own band Firewind
- ★ Ozzy Osbourne's first performance with Gus G was at Blizzcon, the annual gathering of World Of Warcraft.
- ★ The world debut of *Let Me Hear You Scream* was on an episode of *CSI: New York* in April.



Ozzy Osbourne

Scream COLUMBIA

The Oz Man returns with a new guitarist and a new lease of life. Oh, and a cracking new album.

These are strange days for the Prince of fucking Darkness. From legal disputes with the other three original members of Black Sabbath over ownership of the name, to him appearing on TV adverts for *World Of Warcraft*, John Michael Osbourne's career has been anchored only by the certainty that, inevitably, there would be another Ozzy record to follow 2006's lacklustre and critically overlooked *Black Rain*. Blame the intensely distracting formation of *Heaven And Hell*; point the finger at a series of albums of which none has reached truly lofty heights since 1991's *No More Tears*; not forgetting that *The Osbournes* has added to the Double-O's celebrity and detracted from his magnetism as a musician in equal measure.

News of Ozzy Osbourne's upcoming tenth album seemed more like, oh, another release. But complacency was swiftly replaced by sweaty climax when the news emerged dramatically that his ever-faithful co-frontman Zakk Wylde would not be appearing on the record, and that a partnership that began with 1988's thunderous *No Rest For The Wicked* had come to an end. Was it that the long-time heir to the god-like Randy Rhoads's crown by way of Jake E Lee had fallen out with heavy metal's spiritual forefather? It was soon revealed that not even Zakk was sure whether he'd been fired. "Man up and give me a call," he exclaimed in a radio interview.

In what could only be described as an awkward shuffling of the feet, Ozzy revealed he had indeed found another guitarist, and subsequent interviews with the singer provoked a fear that Zakk's trademark squeals and god-like solos had brought too much Black Label to the Osbourne mix.

But who would now sit at Ozzy's right hand and continue the post-Sabbath travails that began with 1980's landmark *Blizzard Of Ozz*? Speculation that Marilyn Manson sidekick/solo virtuoso John 5 would occupy that position were soon dispelled by a milestone interview with *Classic Rock*. "I haven't fallen out with Zakk, but Zakk's got his own band," Ozzy explained. "I felt like my stuff was beginning to sound like Black Label Society. I just felt like I wanted a change, you know? I've got a guy from Greece coming in."

"Fair enough," said the metal world. "Hang on... did Ozzy just say Greece?"

Yes he did. Enter Kostas Karamitroudis, aka Gus G, long-time fret-master for Greek power overlords Firewind and possibly the unlikeliest of candidates. For many, the only possible response to this tantalising news were the letters WTF. Nightmarish visions of warp-speed solos and Dragonforce-meets-*Diary Of A Madman* antics danced in many a juror's head. Because, really, Ozzy records have always been defined by the guitarists playing on them. What we now know is that they were wrong – very wrong.

The case for Ozzy's defence begins with a blazing statement of intent – a six-minute belter that with a kicks off blazing, Moorish-inflected frenzy that transforms into a doomatic riff and Ozzy making Kid Rock-esque pronouncements like: 'I'm a dealer, I'm

a rock star' before the mid-tempo swagger returns to a feverish solo by Gus G and a most un-power-metal sexiness that no one saw coming. It's these serpentine

transformations – labyrinthine journeys through myriad styles and what sometimes seems like simply showing off – that makes *Scream* such a juicy listen.

The more obvious tracks, like *Let Me Hear You Scream* – a rollicking radio rocker superpowered by an infectious chorus – are the true cornerstones of this album: *Time* is a gorgeously rendered ballad soaked with tears and melancholy, *Soul Sucker* a lumbering, iron-clad hate letter dripping with lyrical venom and the POFD's trademark snarl. But it's the less obvious entries – *I Want It More*, with its thoroughly badass riffing, the vocal/guitar call-and-response of *Crucify* – that soon become the real rewards of repeated listens. And it's the colossal *Diggin' Me Down*, with an acoustic intro that soon becomes cinematic in scope and crushing in heaviness, that works as a declaration Gus G's astute musicianship and mastery of his craft; an homage to Zakk Wylde's pinch harmonics, while showcasing a style and shredding flare that's all its own.

Sizzling with energy and renewed vitality, this is a record that long-time Ozzy fans can wear on their shirts. This is Ozzy as you've never heard him before. And it's about fucking time.

Alexander Milas

'An album sizzling with energy and renewed vitality.'

Lynyrd Skynyrd

Live From Freedom Hall

ROADRUNNER

South rises again – just about.

This CD/DVD package has all of Skynyrd's ghastly tragedy intact, being the

last recorded performance to feature original keyboardist Billy Powell and bassist Ean Evans before they joined fellow Skyns in the sky.

The world's unluckiest band were in fine form in Louisville, Kentucky in June 2007, and this belated release features all their classics, including a spirited take on JJ Cale's *Call Me The Breeze*, and signature piece *Sweet Home Alabama* rescued from Kid Rock's foolish clutches by Johnny Van Zant's vocal rasp and the comforting guitars of Gary Rossington and relative new boy Mark Matejka.

For redneck authenticity the DVD wins out here. A triumph for will over adversity – normal for these good ol' boys.

Max Bell

Vanden Plas

The Seraphic Clockwork

FRONTIERS

A harmonious take on prog-metal themes.



As well as being among the most enduring acts in progressive

metal, Vanden Plas are one of the genre's most melodic-sounding exponents (hence the fact that they're signed to Frontiers Records, the home of all things pink 'n' fluffy).

Returning with gusto to their day jobs after four years spent employed by the German stage versions of the musicals *Hair* and *Jesus Christ Superstar*, the five-piece band have excelled themselves with *The Seraphic Clockwork*, a lavish concept piece that welds battering riffs to extravagant, classical-fuelled keyboard outbursts and the accessible vocals of the regrettably named Andy Kuntz to form a weighty yet tuneful whole. The album's lofty lyrical theme – "a journey in place and time from 16th-century Rome to Jerusalem in the year 33AD" – gives the band plenty to sink their teeth into, and seldom are they better than during the closing, 13-minute *On My Way To Jerusalem*.

Dave Ling

Dirty Sweet

American Spiritual ACETATE

Rootsy raunch from California.



Bands like Dirty Sweet are kind of rare; not for them the relatively simple

route of aping their heroes, even if, in their case, they include the likes of the Stones and Free. Dirty Sweet take pointers from the classics and cunningly ally them to strong songcraft to create tunes of real resonance and richness.

The results sparkle with the kind of invention and confidence you'd expect from bands way beyond their second album. In terms of spirit and soul The Black Crowes are perhaps the closest comparison, Dirty Sweet also being unafraid to tap into country or gospel to add extra depth to their bluesy swagger.

Dirty Sweet are frighteningly good already on the second album. Album number three could be a stone-cold classic.

Essi Berelian

Molly Hatchet

Justice SPV/STEAMHAMMER

The south rises (part 1,056).



Molly Hatchet's first new studio album in five years features the familiar axe-

wielding barbarian on the cover and a brand of rapacious boogie that's remained relatively unchanged since their 1979 debut. What's even more comforting is that guitarist Bobby Ingram's voluminous hairstyle is still a mix of Davy Crockett and Krystle Carrington (*Dynasty*). But look a little closer and you'll see MH have moved on. Just a tad.

Compared with the band's early offerings, the production is as crystal clear as a vat of moonshine. There's some fab pumped-up keyboard-playing too, notably on *Deep Water* which mixes AOR thematics and southern grit to great effect. And whether you like it or not, vocalist Phil McCormack delivers a performance of pure redneck passion; you can feel his ample frame bustin' with joy when he sings: 'Got that American pride/ With that southern style/Born and bred something deep inside.' If you enjoyed Skynyrd's comeback *God & Guns*, you simply must buy *Justice*. Because, baby, it's even better.

Geoff Barton



Some people call him **The Space Cowboy**, some the **gangster of love**. We call him a **grumpy sod**.

The Steve Miller Band

Bingo! ROADRUNNER/LOUD & PROUD

Underwhelming return of 70s chart-topping rock titan. Blame it in on the blues.



Steve Miller isn't someone you'd readily define as a grouchy old sod. Yet there he was in last month's *Classic Rock*, grumping about "stupid" audiences who only want the hits, bemoaning the rotten state of venues on his last UK tour and blaming his lack of new songs on the dwindling attention span of your average punter. Granted, there may be variable chunks of truth in all the above, but it doesn't quite justify why Miller's first new album in nearly 20 years is a bunch of old blues covers.

The publicity blurb says that this is the record he's always wanted to make. Miller, after all, is soaked to the bones in blues, having learned chords as a child from Les Paul (a friend of his father's), studied alongside T-Bone Walker and shared a Chicago stage with Muddy Waters. He calls *Bingo!* his party record, revisiting songs he used to play at fraternity gigs in college, long before the Steve Miller Band took hold on American-FM radio with *Rock'n Me*, *The Joker* and all those monster hits that ate the 70s. There's something cyclical in his choice of co-producer too: Andy Johns, younger brother of Glyn, with whom Miller recorded his first album in 1968.

It all starts smartly enough. *Hey Yeah*, one of three Jimmie Vaughan covers

here, is given a lively brush-up – a combination of dirty groove, hand-claps and a pinwheeling solo suggesting that Miller is funneling fresh life into the blues game. But *Don't Cha Know*, another Vaughan tune, and BB King's *Rock Me Baby* prove that the 12-bar format can be unusually restrictive, Miller content to rumble forth like an albeit superior bar band. Even guest Joe Satriani can't quite save the latter. Despite the inclusion of master vocalist and ex-Checkmate Sonny Charles, *Tramp* is no high roller either, serving merely to redirect you to the classic soul version by Otis and Carla. It's fairly tepid stuff for a man who made his reputation by tripping spaceward with the blues, giving it thrilling new dimension rather than grounding its scope. Vaughan's *Sweet Soul Vibe* and Earl King's *Come On* are more like it, both fluid and expressive, Miller extemporising on a theme rather than merely admiring it. But he just doesn't do it enough. I'm all for grumpy old rockers who deliver – take a bow, Lou Reed – but Miller is in danger of becoming merely a spent sourpuss. Volume Two is promised next year. Let's hope he livens up.

Rob Hughes

The Pineapple Thief

Someone Here
Is Missing KSCOPE

Brit rock's strange fruits step up.



From its Storm Thorgerson artwork to the blaring clarity of main man Bruce

Soord's crisp production job, *Someone Here Is Missing* is every inch the consummate modern progressive indie rock album. Fans of Porcupine Tree and Radiohead that have yet to discover Soord and his band are advised to get up to date quickly, because this is also the moment when The Pineapple Thief outgrow all such comparisons and start to punch at the same weight as their more commercially successful forebears. Songs like the pulsating *Wake Up The Dead*, which comes replete with brooding Nine Inch Nails-style electronics, and the lilting menace of the title track, tap into a very British sense of disenchantment and pathos that can be traced back to Pink Floyd, but in contrast to their peers, Soord and co seem content with the limitations of a four-piece guitar band and do most of their experimenting within that seemingly restrictive framework. The results, from the skittering electro-psych of *Nothing At Best* to the oddly moving *So We Row*, are extremely classy and frequently mesmerising.

Dom Lawson

Godsmack

The Oracle UNIVERSAL REPUBLIC

Low risk = high returns for Boston metallers.



This year Godsmack can celebrate not only 15 years of existence, but

also as many millions in albums sales in such a timeframe. The Boston crew's meat-and-potatoes appropriation of Alice In Chains' downhearted dirges has tended to favour big-sound stoicism over any musical innovation, and yet in their homeland, their records routinely shift over 200,000 copies in the first week of release. Fifth album *The Oracle* looks unlikely to alter such an arrangement. From the Disturbed-style megaton chug of opener *Cryin Like A Bitch*, Sully Erna and co let rip with a Hetfield holler here, a Staley groan there, and crushing banks

of riffs on all sides. Yet despite those blue chip influences, it's a curiously un-engaging experience; the morose *Love-Hate-Sex-Pain* brings a persuasive, dissonant edge to proceedings, but elsewhere it seems as if their *Oracle* is suffering a case of déjà vu.

Catherine Yates

Kula Shaker

Pilgrim's Progress STRANGEFOLK

Pleasingly mixed bag of melancholia.



Two years of solid touring on the back of their 2007 reunion album

Strange Folk (now the name of their own label) clearly served Kula Shaker well, as they've never sounded so energised or engaged. There was always a question mark over the slapdash mysticism of their early records, but the breadth of styles attempted here, and the vitality with which they're executed, is truly impressive.

Crispian Mills and friends rattle through the folk rock of *All Dressed Up* with gusto, there's a tenderness to the reflective balladry of *Cavalry*, while *Peter Pan RIP* recalls the labyrinthine baroque psychedelia of Procol Harum, or even latterday XTC. Best of all is the space-age garage blues of *Barbara Ella*, quite possibly the sleaziest love song you'll hear all year.

Recorded for the most part in the band's own studio, built in a small Belgian town most famous for its medieval brewery, *Pilgrim's Progress* is a heady cocktail of varying rock recipes expertly blended together with a dash of melancholy to make something genuinely intoxicating.

Terry Staunton

Pernice Brothers

Goodbye, Killer ONE LITTLE INDIAN

Seventh band album from country loving Smiths fan Joe Pernice.



Having made his name among the burgeoning alt-country scene of the

late 90s with Scud Mountain Boys, singer/songwriter Joe Pernice did an about turn on the first Pernice Brothers album in 1998. *Overcome By Happiness* was an orchestral pop masterpiece but 12 years on little of that lush sound remains. Not that it would have been possible

the way *Goodbye, Killer* was recorded – in snatched sessions with his latest temporary bandmates over the course of the past two years when his main concern was writing a novel. Despite this, the album is full of charm and no little wonder – rock'n'rollers *The Great Depression*, *F***ing And Flowers* and *The Loving Kind* recall the melodic heights of Big Star, while the wonderful *Jacqueline Susann* matches the intelligent wordplay and accessibility of *East Side Story-era Squeeze*. The album's highlight though is the laid-back country showtune *We Love The Stage* – a sweet homage to the travails and indignities of being a jobbing indie-rocker including smart arses in the audience shouting "Free Bird" and opening for a "Welsh singer" who was big in the 80s. Answers on a postcard.



Johnny Dee

Envy Of The State

Soundtrack For Your Life

RED LABEL

Tepid debut from the great white hope.



Envy Of The State spent last year off fighting off American record labels with a shitty stick, but the fuss is rarely justified by this grandly-titled debut album from the

Midlands quartet. It's sobering to think of a life so chillingly mediocre that this band could soundtrack it. Cleaning out the toaster's crumb tray? Try the lightweight teen-rock of *Take Over The Radio*. Power-hosing the greenhouse? That'll go nicely with the punk-lite of *Devil In My Eyes*. School run? They'll love training-bra mini-mosher anthems like *Rags To Riches*. OK, it's true: you'll catch yourself humming along to some hooks, the musicianship is solid, and their pin-up potential is beyond question, suggesting they could poach the market of their closest musical reference point, Lostprophets. But for veteran fans who have drunk from rock's source, this is thin stuff.



Henry Yates

James Williamson With The Careless Hearts

James Williamson With The Careless Hearts

EASY ACTION/STRAIGHT

Raw Power co-author guitarist's first live album in 35 years.

Having become something big in Sony's Technology dept since leaving the music business in 1980, Williamson is obviously no fool. To prepare for his recent, triumphant return to the live stage with Iggy he wasn't about to leave anything to chance. A meeting and subsequent

friendship with Stooges fanatic and guitar tech Derek See saw the latter entrusted with the dream job of preparing the way for Williamson's comeback in the cloistered confines of San Jose's Blank Club. With Steve Mackay on sax and Paul Kimball in the Iggy role highlights from the Iggy/Williamson songbook are attacked with lusty intent. This ragged edged live recording captures the feel and frenetic atmosphere of the evening, if not the finer musical details. Expect the latter to come in the inevitable official live recording of the *Raw Power* comeback tour, but hardcore fans won't want to be without this either.



Gavin Martin

Feeder

Renegades BIG TRUTH

Seventh album attempts to realign delicate rock/pop axis.



Forever destined as a band most likely to be spotted midway through a festival line-up, Feeder have long occupied a decidedly uncool midpoint between success and credibility. At fault perhaps is their short dalliance with the Top 40 and daytime radio play that peaked around their 2001 hit *Buck Rogers*.

The suicide of drummer Jon Lee in 2002 altered perceptions and led to the epic *Comfort In*

Sound – to date their best album and by far Grant Nicholas's finest period as lyricist and singer, painful as the time may have been.

Since, Feeder's career has been solid if unspectacular. Being a heavy rock band with a pop sensibility is a tough path; few have succeeded like them.

Raw, with boundless energy, *Renegades* sounds like the result of a band listening to lots of Sonic Youth, Foo Fighters and Dinosaur Jr. Much heavier than 2008's *Silent Cry* the melodies are still there but take more of a backseat – that said *Call Out*, the opening *White Lines* and title track *Renegades* could comfortably sit in the company of Lostprophets and Biffy Clyro, the UK's current leading purveyors of hardcore pop.

More pleasing for those who will be searching for Feeder's darker core are *Sentimental* – a Pixies-esque rocker with the occasional splutter of crawling bass – and the fabulously gnarly *Home* which buzzes along like a runaway train.

While you can forgive a generic sound if it's pulled off with style, the struggles is with the lyrics which on *Barking Dogs*, *City In A Rut* and *Down By The River* are banal bordering on the embarrassing – but then they probably said the same about *Louie Louie*.



Johnny Dee

Nigel Of Bermondsey

London Dreamtime

PURE MINT

Second LP from the New Sage of Southwark.



Nigel Hoyle used to play bass in post-Britpop no-hopers Gay Dad, but the less said about that the better. In fact, as borne out by his solo records, he was clearly destined for brighter things such as the bizarrely-monikered NOB. The Bermondsey in which Nige inhabits is both real and imagined, Hoyle transposing his fears and obsessions onto a gothic micro-manoir of shape-shifting rats and murderous street urchins. The music is anything but dank though.

Hoyle's voice occupies a spot between Russ Mael and Wayne Coyne, adding further uplift to wonky, dream-pop songs that often recall lost 80s psychedelic Nick Nicely or Sparks themselves. It's *A Killing Thing* and the effervescent *Coffee* prove that he can knock out a great tune, albeit a sideways one. And Clint Boon himself has given his blessing to the cover of the *Inspirals*! *This Is How It Feels*, in which Hoyle peels away the polish to reveal a naked suburban drama.



Rob Hughes

ROUND-UP: MELODIC ROCK

Terra Nova: they like to take their time.



Terra Nova

Come Alive

Frontiers



Liking to take things slow, Terra Nova's Hendrix brothers – Fred on lead vocals and guitar and keyboard player Ron – have been tinkering away at these songs since

2008. Their fifth original release arrives in the racks a full half-decade after Frontiers persuaded the group to reunite for the *Escape* album. With the aptly-titled *Come Alive*, this leisurely approach has paid handsome dividends.

Having purposely tapped back into the spirit of their records from the 1990s, the album begins with a rampant, luxuriant title track; its

dancing keys and super-slick vocals wrapped around a hook-line to die for. *Here Comes The Night* is another terrific song, and Fred pours out his heart during the ballad *Those Eyes*. Things end on a high note with *The Final Note*. Although it contains filler, Terra Nova have delivered what we expected of them.



Jane Bogaert Fifth Dimension

Yesterrock



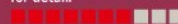
Characterised by the strident modern-pop slickness of *Fifth Dimension* and *Superman Cape*, this appealingly Shania Twain-esque solo album from a former Miss Switzerland showcases Bogaert's warm, emotive voice. Her bankability is enhanced by engaging duets with Jeff Scott Soto and Joe Lynn Turner.



Moritz Undivided

Harmony Factory

A scarcely believable 23 years in the making, *Undivided* is the full-length debut from reunited London-based pure-AOR six-piece Moritz. Its arena-friendly catchiness drenched in Andy Stewart's luxuriant keys, *Power Of The Music*, *Should've Been Gone* and *Can't Stop The Angels* have been modelled upon the Survivor, Night Ranger, Foreigner and Touch blueprint, with an impressive eye for detail.



Wild Side Speed Devil

Escape Music



Don't confuse these five Norwegians with Wildside, the early 90s Andy Johns-produced hair-rockers. Featuring the nasal, Vince Neil-esque lead vocals of Joachim Berntsen, Wild Side are a significantly louder, sturdier proposition but at its most accessible – *Mine Tonight* and *Love For You*, for instance – this offers both hummability and finesse.

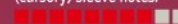


Kidd Glove Kidd Glove

Yesterrock



A vehicle for the 22-year-old Paul Sabu, Kidd Glove's self-titled debut surfaced originally via the Motown offshoot of Morocco Records back in 1984. Tracks such as *Good Clean Fun* and *Street Angel* helped turn the album into a cult favourite. This edition adds four bonus tracks, a video and (cursorly) sleeve notes.



By Dave Ling

Anathema: perfectly in tune with the mood of the age.



Anathema

We're Here Because We're Here SCOPE

Post-millennial Pink Floyd return with a 'flawless' album of mesmerising rock songs.



It's been a long, strange and turbulent journey that Anathema have been on for the past 20 years. Originally formed as a bright-eyed but distinctly morose addition to the burgeoning UK deathly doom metal scene that began in the north of England at the dawn of the 90s, the Liverpoolians evolved at a remarkable rate, swiftly outgrowing the gruff growling and myopic thump of their first recordings and maturing into something akin to a post-millennial Pink Floyd. Critically lauded but never quite achieving the kind of success that albums like *Judgement* and *A Fine Day To Exit* seemed to warrant, Anathema have had to wait for the rest of the world to come round to their way of thinking. But now that the notion of languorous and emotionally charged progressive rock is generally greeted with cheers instead of boos, *We're Here Because We're Here* could hardly be more in tune with the mood of the age.

Inspired in part by guitarist and chief songwriter Danny Cavanagh's refreshed world-view – he quit booze in 2005 and never looked back – this is a noticeably brighter, gentler and less melancholic record than anything the band have produced before. From the fizzing crescendos and overlapping melodies of the opening *Thin Air* onwards, it is

immediately apparent that Anathema have grown considerably since 2003's *A Natural Disaster* and have fully embraced their status as a bold, expansive rock band, setting aside needless experimentation in favour of grand gestures and startling poignancy.

Ultimately these are simple but mesmerising rock songs, still blessed with the occasional admiring Floyd-ism but utterly distinctive in both feel and execution. Exquisite piano-led ballad *Dreaming Light* is almost unbearably sweet and warm, and yet Anathema never resort to mawkish sentiment, preferring to let elegant harmonies and a robust rhythmic pulse carry the listener tenderly towards a state of joyous acquiescence. Thanks to the mixing skills of Steven Wilson, this is also a sonically vast and scintillating record that seems custom-made to elicit goosebumps. From the gorgeous, twinkling *Everything* to the brisk clatter of *Get Off, Get Out*, every song fills the air with the near-chewable sense of wonderment that seems so integral to Cavanagh and his band's reborn artistry.

A flawless, life-affirming comeback, then, and a gold-plated contender for album of the year.

Dom Lawson

Grand Magus

Hammer Of The North

ROADRUNNER

Swedish red-blooded metal. It's a rare album that cuts so close to the marrow of heavy metal's essence – the crushing but majestic riffs, the exuberant lyrical celebration of mythical, heroic deeds. Stockholm's Grand Magus (newly signed to Roadrunner following a lengthy tenure in Rise Above Records' lofty stable) have crafted a goblet-hoisting follow-up to 2008's landmark *Iron Will* that's as jubilant as it is timeless. From frontman JB's commanding howl, to pounding, mid-tempo war drums that supercharge these doom-inflected anthems with an almost militaristic bravado, *Hammer Of The North* is an incursion into Manowar territory that's more Middle Earth than macho.

Flag-waving pageantry abounds in the righteous indignation of *I, The Jury*, the swaying menace of *Black Sails*, the melancholic but defiant swagger of *Mountains Be My Throne*. If metal had an army, then these are the tales they'd sing over mead and camp-fires and marches through dales. As it stands, this is the soundtrack to dreams of times of yore that never were.

Alexander Milas

Carole King And James Taylor

Live At The Troubadour

HEAR MUSIC

Pop's golden partnership reunited and as mellow as ever. Carole King and James Taylor have spent the past 30 years writing songs of such pop perfection, that to be cynical about their sentimentality is akin to punching *Sesame Street*'s Ernie in the throat. The emotion and melodic simplicity of these songs that have soundtracked a million family Sunday lunches – the pained longing of *So Far Away*, the end-of-relationship sadness of *It's Too Late*, the romantic fear of *Will You Love Me Tomorrow*, the gentle supportiveness of *You've Got A Friend* – are so genuine and so moving that if you catch them when you're having an off day, a rapid decent into a puddle of snot and tears is inevitable.

This intimate CD/DVD of the pair's reunion tour highlights just how timeless the music is. The pair are older, and in his case much balder, but as soon as they begin to pick out the

familiar tunes it's clear how rich and affecting their voices remain, as warm and reassuring as a comfort blanket.

Emma Johnston

Various Artists

New World Man (A Tribute To Rush) MAGNA CARTA

Rush admirers line up to roll the bones.

This is the third in a series of Rush tribute albums drawing together a veritable Who's Who of esoteric proggers and rockers including members of The Mars Volta, Coheed And Cambria, Sepultura, Dillinger Escape Plan and Korn, among others. As with most of these kind of things it's a bit of a hit-and-miss hotch-potch. Such is Rush's consummate musicianship and the idiosyncratic nature of their material, the songs are difficult to either interpret or mimic.

The most successful covers here capably tread the middle ground: Kip Winger's take on *Limelight* audaciously adds a whole new riff, while best muso joke goes to (Dream Theater drummer) Mike Portnoy, who slips YYY's morse-code time signature into a spritely version of *The Trees*. Elsewhere Sebastian Bach has a valiant, if histrionic, run at *Jacob's Ladder*, and a jazzy, instrumental Tom Sawyer and a shred-happy Fly By Night are startlingly incongruous and only serve to drag down the album overall.

Tim Batcup

Alabama 3

Revolver Soul JAMM

Genreblending Coldharbour exiles return.

If you haven't already done so, it's long-gone time to wave buh-bye to the notion of Alabama 3 as either a one-joke band – funny names, funny hats, country songs to techno beats – or just 'those geezers who did the *Sopranos* theme'. On *Revolver Soul*, they're playing a deeper, darker, harder game than ever before. Traces of country are few and far between in what is, for all practical purposes, a hard rock album, though a highly idiosyncratic one.

Doom aficionados will find the sonic landscape comfortable, though filled with unfamiliar objects drawn from reggae, rockabilly, funk, drum 'n' bass and, yes, techno, not to mention cameo appearances from Shane MacGowan, Razorlight's Johnny Borrell and Brixton MC Tenor Fly. Its centrepiece is *Vietnamistan*,

which hauls the old Country Joe & The Fish anti-war anthem *Feel-Like-I'm-Fixin'-To-Die Rag* into our own uncertain present, but *Keep Your Powder Dry*, *All God's Children* and *Come You Believers* cut similar mustard, as well as demonstrating what formidable vocalists the band's principals – Larry Love and The Very Reverend Dr D Wayne Love – have become. *Revolver Soul* is dread – in both the 'reggae' and the literal sense of the word.



Charles Shaar Murray

Devo

Something For Everybody

WARNER BROTHERS

One-time cult post-punkers sink to hipster pop.



It is perhaps unsurprising that this, Devo's first new studio album in more

than 20 years, has a patently sarcastic statement as its title. But given that everything these stalwarts of the US post-punk scene satirised – jock culture, mass TV entertainment, corporate invasiveness – are more part of everyday life than they used to be, Devo now somehow seem a lot less relevant than they should.

The album opens with *Fresh*, a sparkling, almost painfully over-compressed pop song. Electronic drums snap like breaking branches, tinny and clean guitars

sound like wasps. *What We Do* is altogether better; and (naturally) while they are insisting that they haven't changed, you notice a frighteningly accurate stab at the kind of neo-electro or new rave that Justice and SMD peddle is going on. Importantly, the songwriting is more in keeping with early-80s underground figures such as Shriekback or arch German synth pop stars Yello. Ultimately, however, this is a patchy and sometimes outright irritating slab of hipster pop, like a charmless Pet Shop Boys who hang around in Shoreditch too much. Devo have unfortunately de-evolved themselves.



John Doran

Pretty Maids

Pandemonium FRONTIERS

Still some life left in the old Danes.

After nearly 30 years and a dozen albums, you might wonder whether Danish hard rockers Pretty Maids can still sizzle. Well, there's still enough quality on *Pandemonium* to offset moments when it all gets clogged up on mediocrity.

With founder members Ronnie Atkins (vocals) and Ken Hammer (keyboards) still on board, they have delivered songs like *Beautiful Madness* and *It Comes At Night* which are as good as anything the Maids have done since the late 80s.

Worryingly, though, there's

also the insipidly cheesy *Old Enough To Know* and enough other fillers to make you wonder whether the band are fighting a vain battle against the slippery slope. But for the moment they're coming out on top – just.



Malcolm Dome

Vince Neil

Tattoos & Tequila FRONTIERS

Gene Simmons without the charm.



Tattoos & Tequila, eh? Wonder what that's about then. No need

to look further than the cover – which features Neil's tattooed arm extending towards a glass of tequila – to understand that it's a title to be taken literally.

Not much has changed in Vince Land, and it would be easy to take another swipe at this child-man's reductive worldview, but then who would have the last laugh?

Closer study of *Tattoos & Tequila* reveals that it shares a title with Neil's forthcoming book, ties in nicely with his own-brand tequila, and sits well with the two tattoo parlours he owns (not to mention a nightclub and a boutique airline). All of which suggests he knows exactly how to exploit his limited talent.

There are only a couple of original songs on this collection of wham-bam cover versions; he

adds no more than squawks to Sweet's AC/DC and Scorpions' *Another Piece Of Meat*, and the entire thing sounds like it's taken him about 20 minutes to finish. Yet it is another arm of the Vince Neil mini-industry, where he dominates a market aspirational enough to keep the man in ink, drink and airlines.



Jon Hotten

Pearl

Little Immaculate

White Fox POWERAGE

First taste of a slice of Loaf.

Being the offspring of someone famous is always a double-edged sword. As well as opening doors, it's also an invitation to sneering claims of nepotism. Singer Pearl Aday, Meat Loaf's daughter, doesn't really need the former and doesn't deserve the latter.

On this, her debut album, she hasn't gone for the easy option; most of the songs here are vocally demanding rather than being easy vehicles to pose and cruise along in. She isn't even afraid to cover *Nutbush City Limits*, knowing she was always going to come off second-best to Tina Turner (as anyone who visits *Nutbush...* would). And she makes a damn good fist of it.

With a husky, gutsy, raunchy voice that at times brings to mind someone like Sass Jordan, Pearl bulldozes through mostly hard rockers with real confidence and panache, and

when the lightbulb dims on occasion it's more down to the workmanlike material than to any vocal shortcomings.

Little Immaculate White Fox nor the impressive Pearl herself are the finished article, but the potential is there to see.



Paul Henderson

The Adjusters

Reckless Relations

ZODIAC KILLERS

Great band in the making.



The Adjusters are a young band from Wigan with a bunch of

impeccable influences that include Johnny Thunders, his old muckers the New York Dolls, Eddie And The Hot Rods and, to these ears, the Sex Pistols and Hanoi Rocks.

Album opener *Drinkin' Red Wine* 'Thunders' along in cracking style, *Can't See* is a thrill ride. The rest of the album, performed in the same balls-out style, is more entertaining than memorable.

Reckless Relations is a strong record that will increase the band's fanbase. While the songwriting isn't quite up to the standard of their influences yet, it does feel that The Adjusters are on the verge of producing something great.



Ed Mitchell

ROUND-UP: PROG



Permanent Clear Light: Finland's answer to The Banana Splits.

Various Artists

A Phase We're Going Through

Fruits de Mer



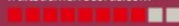
As the title implies, *A Phase We're Going Through* is dedicated to the long-lost art of 'phasing'. Also known as 'phase shifting' or 'flanging', this trick was the darling of drug-fuelled bands and their similarly stoned studio engineers in the

60s. A prime example would be The Small Faces' *Itchycoo Park* with its sweeping FX which sound like a plane coming into land.

Here we have 11 bands from the UK, USA and Finland interpreting songs from the likes of Jefferson Airplane (*Plastic Fantastic Lover*) and Jimi Hendrix (*Little Wing*), and lavishing them with all manner of sonic freakishness. Pick of the bunch is Permanent Clear Light's rendition of The Who's *In The City*, which sounds like The Beach Boys playing *Silver Machine*.

Of the more bizarre covers, Sidewalk Society's version of The Bee Gees' *Red Chair, Fade Away* apes prime-time Barret-era Floyd, while The Luck Of Eden Hall do The Monkees' *Love Is Only Sleeping* in the manner of The Banana Splits.

If you like the sound of this you better hurry: *A Phase...* is limited to 500 copies, each on multicoloured vinyl in a suitably psyched-out sleeve. Order now from www.fruitsdemerrecords.com



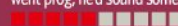
Ken Hensley

Proud Words On A Dusty Shelf

Esoteric

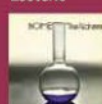


Originally released in 1973, this has Hensley (then keyboardist in Uriah Heep) writing all the songs and playing all the instruments bar bass and drums. The reissue begins strongly with the very Heep-like *When Evening Comes* before dissolving into cloying sentimentality. If Billy Joel went prog, he'd sound something like this.



Home The Alchemist

Esoteric



The Alchemist is a 1973 concept album which tells the tale of two boys living in Cornwall circa 1900, and their fateful encounter with a wizard. Musically, Home are reminiscent of a heaved-up Caravan, the guitar playing of a pre-Wishbone Ash Laurie Wisefield adding an agreeable edge to proceedings. The band also featured bassist Cliff Williams, later of AC/DC.



By Geoff Barton

Myrath

Desert Call

XIII Bis



People who say there's nothing new in music should hear this, sharpish. From Tunisia, Myrath offer a mix of melodic Arabian tunes and prog-power metal. *Desert Call* features a raft of unusual local instruments (darbuka, dof, mezoud, to name but three) and the opening track, *Forever And A Day*, is even sung in Arabic. *Assalamu alaikum*, my fine fellows.

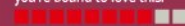


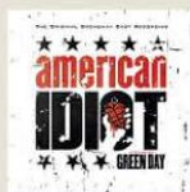
Pictorial Wand Face Of Our Fathers

www.pictorialwand.com



Pictorial Wand is a Norwegian rock-opera project founded in 2006 by multi-instrumentalist Mattis Sorum (no relation to the GN'R/Velvet Revolver drummer). A highly accomplished offering, this mixes Queensryche pomp and Tull-like folk to frankly spectacular effect. If you enjoy the work of Dutch masters Ayreon, you're bound to love this.





American Idiot – The Original Broadway Cast Recording

REPRISE

Billie Joe and co. go commercial. Real punks look away now.



What would Joe Strummer have said? Or Joey Ramone. Or Sid Vicious, for that matter? A punk musical on Broadway – mainstream validation, or just a final desperate plunge into terminal absurdity? That Green Day and their hit album *American Idiot* should make it to Manhattan's Great White Way, where shows like *Cats*, *Camelot* and *My Fair Lady* once pulled in the crowds, either indicates how, after more than three decades, punk rock has been clasped to the heart of commercial show business, or that it is now so de-fanged and diluted that it no longer poses any sort of threat to the tourists of Middle America who buy the bulk of the overpriced tickets. Or maybe both of those are equally true.

To be wholly fair to Billie Joe Armstrong, Mike Dirnt and Tré Cool, Green Day are not the first rockers to be given the Broadway treatment. From Elvis Presley, through Buddy Holly and the Four Seasons, to Queen and Culture Club, a small but significant number of rock legends have had their catalogues turned into all-singing, all-dancing, big-stage spectacles for all the family. (And that's not

even mentioning *Tommy* and The Who.) As I write this, *Rock Of Ages* – a shag-haircut love story set in the 1980s to the stadium rock of Journey, Styx, REO Speedwagon, Twisted Sister, Asia, Whitesnake and Pat Benatar – is packing in the punters. None of the above, however (with the possible exception of Pete

'The songs have far too much icing and not enough cake.'

Townshend and Queen), participated quite as willingly in the conversion process as Green Day.

But Green Day have always posed something of a problem. Since their 1994 breakout album *Dookie* they have been simultaneously hailed as a force in second-generation, MTV-friendly pop-punk, and castigated as a deliberately watered-down, calculatedly commercial 'punk experience'

that abandoned the original lean-mean fury for something more melodic and acceptable. No less than John Lydon dismissed them in one interview as "a wank outfit", and in another as "fake mockneys" for the faint faux-Anglo accent in some of their vocals. Taking a supposedly punk musical to Broadway is unlikely to do anything to settle the argument. Especially as Broadway may not be the place for even a totally tame punk.

A Broadway theatre is far from ideal for staging any rock show, and, for something that is – by definition – so minimal and anarchic as punk it's unfriendly territory. A Broadway theatre demands to be filled, not only with an audience, but also with singers, dancers, music, lights, and the special effects now required of a Broadway spectacle, with every factor choreographed and co-ordinated. The temptation is to pile on the layers like the show is some exotic deli sandwich.

Even on this two-CD studio recording, where some measure of control was still possible, the layers overwhelm and clog the flow of the music. Overload is particularly



Green Day say 'cheese' with the cast (left), and take a bow after the opening Broadway performance of *American Idiot*.

Yoso

Elements FRONTIERS

A tasteful melodic-prog alliance.

A liaison of former Yes alumni Tony Kaye and Billy Sherwood with ex-Toto singer Bobby Kimball begs the question: are Yoso an AOR group, or something more progressively inclined? The answer is: a little of both. Which isn't too surprising, since bassist Sherwood cut his teeth with World Trade, whose sound was a hybrid of the two styles. Indeed at a push *Elements* can be likened to Yes during their unit-shifting crossover period with the 90125 album.

After the title track shows the compatibility of the two styles, songs like *Path To Your Heart*, *Where You'll Stay* and *Searchin' For The Truth* tug the album in a Toto-esque direction, only for the pomp-rock *The New Revolution* and *To Seek The Truth* to wrest it back. Things peter out marginally towards the end, but by then the battle is already won.

However you slice it, *Elements* is an easy-listening delight.

★★★★★

Dave Ling

Lostboy! AKA Jim Kerr

Lostboy! AKA Jim Kerr

EARMUSIC

Simple Minds singer rediscovers his youth.

The most remarkable thing about this Jim Kerr solo album is that it has taken him so long to get around to it. After 32 years as the lead singer with Simple Minds – a period that included plenty of long spells of inactivity, when fans were desperate for new material – his timing isn't great, but it's endearing how reluctant he is to get in the way of his main band's commitments.

The least remarkable thing about the album is that it sounds almost exactly like Simple Minds, except not as good. It's a little less bombastic and more electro-tinged, but on the fabulously moody *Shadowland*, *Bulletproof Heart* and *Lostboy!* the album (which Kerr claims is him reconnecting with the energy of his youth) comes close to matching last year's *Graffiti Soul*. As well-written, melodic and driven as it is, though, it does seem a little pointless. Unless you'd like to know what Kerr would have sounded like all these years without Charlie Burchill's guitar atmospherics.

★★★★★

Johnny Dee

Trace

Under Cover CRASH

Mike Oldfield classic given a synthetic makeover.

Ommadawn? Ommagad. Putting the admittedly shaky concept here – re-imagining *Tubular Bells Part 1* through wholly synthesised sounds and disparate musical genres, surely thus negating the whole raison d'être and genius of the original – to one side for a moment, things start rather well with the familiar eerie piano figure updated to crisp William Orbit-esque shimmers and chimes. Such optimism lasts precisely one minute and 26 seconds, at which point an unwelcome car-crash of looping break beats and squelching slap bass rudely elbows any subtlety aside. Incredibly, things get steadily worse, with samples exhuming Art Of Noise cast-offs, meditative new-age muzak, cod-funk, and Vivian Stanshall's iconic instrument roll-call usurped by a hammy station announcer. Oh dear.

★★★★★

Tim Batcup

Steve Marriott

Lend Us A Quid WAPPING WHARF

Lost post-Humble Pie sessions and a 1983 live set from the former ace face.



With his posthumous elevation to rock idol, it's easy to forget

that Steve Marriott spent much of his final years as a sad figure peddling pale reflections of past glories. These 1975 home recordings on *Lend Us A Quid*, made with a bunch of celebrated session men including Boz Borrell and future Dylan drummer Ian Wallace, could be where the rot set in.

Although never intended for public consumption, listless invocations to "have another line", overcooked covers (a lumbering version of The Beatles' *Rain* is truly dire) and uneventful originals point to the recreational black hole that was beginning to scupper rather than fuel Marriott's once fecund creative process.

Though in an obvious state of disrepair, the live tracks from 1983 show he could still raise the stakes and deliver flashes of his once soaring talent. But overall this is a dispiriting set documenting a mighty talent squandered.

★★★★★

Gavin Martin

noticeable on the vocals where massed voices are used, and many of those voices sound straight out of conventional musical theatre. The girl singers especially – Mary Faber, Rebecca Naomi Jones, Christina Sajous – sell their songs in a style that's as much Rodgers & Hammerstein as it is rock'n'roll. What might have been workable, straight-ahead punk songs, like *Know Your Enemy* and *Give Me Novacaine* become, with their massed choruses, totally overblown, with far too much icing and not enough basic cake.

As the show moves to its climax, the needs of theatre completely take over *Wake Me Up When September Comes* and the multi-part finale *Homecoming*. Crescendos are the obvious answer, and they come in the form of predictable *Sgt Pepper*-isms that may have worked in 1967 but now sound punk-pompous. Icing buries the cake. Even at this point, much might have been salvaged if the lyrics had more narrative punch. Billie Joe Armstrong is promoted as a powerful songwriter, but *American Idiot* is little more than strings of

predictable and nebulous clichés: society sucks, life is rotten, booze and drugs are a dead end, suicide might be an option if all can't be redeemed by love. *When It's Time* is an attempt at show-stopping aria, but it falls short, lacking both calculated, Cole Porter finesse or raw punk emotion.

American Idiot is basically a failure, but in failing it gives its Broadway producers exactly what they want. They can hype the show as an edgy punk musical, and words like 'brutal' and 'honest' can be bandied about. I don't doubt there's a mass of on-stage energy, but ultimately *American Idiot* is safe and contained; exactly what will make mom, dad and the teenage kids believe they're seeing something a little daring on their trip to the Big Apple, but allow them to emerge with no lasting damage to their psyche and no changes to their mind-set. The ultimate irony is that the show will probably play and play. But commercial has never necessarily meant good.

★★★★★

Mick Farren



Winwood (far left) belts it out with the Spencer Davis Group in the 60s.



Steve Winwood

Revolutions: The Very Best Of ISLAND/UNIVERSAL

Artist-compiled collection spanning almost 50 years profiles a genuinely massive talent.

It's virtually impossible to avoid the word 'prodigy' when discussing the impact of Steve Winwood's arrival in the early 60s as frontman of The Spencer Davis Group. A white soul singer whose ghetto-cello voice made him easily the peer of The Animals' Eric Burdon or Small Faces' Steve Marriott; a blues guitar-slinger rated in the same league as Eric Clapton; a jazz-trained keyboard whiz outclassing Alan Price and comparable with Brian Auger or Manfred Mann... plus he scored his first No.1 single when he was only 16. And, with curly hair, and eyes as soulful as his voice, he was also very, very pretty. More to the point, he was very, very shy and self-effacing. An undemonstrative performer given neither to extravagant shape-throwing on stage or major rock'n'roll 'behaviour' in his leisure time, and so much more comfortable in band situations that it wasn't until 15 years into his career that he finally released his first solo album. That career has now lasted so long that if this compilation had been delayed another four years it would be marking a full – wait for it – 50 years of music making.

Said collection comes in two versions: a single disc of highlights, and a full-on, four-CD set, both personally compiled by the artist (oddly, his 1988 retro-soul hit *Roll With It* is included on the little 'un but omitted from the big box). In a sense, maybe a two-CD package would provide the happy medium, as the single-disc version gives us too little (so many riches left in the back room) and the family-size set too much: later incarnations of Traffic delivered an awful lot of jazz-lite longeurs, and some of his solo work... Still, let's begin at the beginning.

The Spencer Davis Group was originally formed in Birmingham as a team-up between folk/blues guitarist Spencer Davis and his drummer pal Pete York, and the Winwood brothers – Steve and bassist Muff – as The Rhythm & Blues Quartet. They renamed themselves because they thought Davis's name sounded coolest.

Sponsored by Island founder Chris Blackwell, they hit major paydirt in 1965 with their fifth single, *Keep On Running* – essentially a punchy white-soul record with slashing fuzz-guitar chords standing in for blaring,

Memphis Horns-style brass – and moved into even higher gear when Steve took delivery of the Hammond organ which powered their classic last two hits, *Gimme Some Lovin'* and *I'm A Man*. Winwood felt constricted by the SDG's R&B format, though, and alienated from his bandmates by virtue of his youth: Muff and York were both five years his senior, and Davis almost 10.

By the onset of the Summer Of Love, he'd quit the SDG to form a new band with fellow Brummies closer to his own age: Jim Capaldi (hittables), Chris Wood (blowables) and Dave Mason (pluckables). They called themselves Traffic. And never has such an urban name been applied to such a pastoral-sounding group. It was Traffic, after all, who originated the cliché of 'getting it together in a cottage in the country', and their wispy, mysterious sound – the exact opposite of 'heavy' – was archetypal '67: a gauzy, hallucinogenic blend of jazz, folk and psychedelic exotica, exemplified by their debut hit *Paper Sun*, and its sequel *Hole In My Shoe* written and sung by Mason.

After Traffic folded in 1969, Winwood



Traffic lights: (clockwise from bottom left) Steve Winwood, Chris Wood, Jim Capaldi and Dave Mason.



The post-Traffic country boy.



Winwood is a musician with 'Titanic gifts'.

Badlands

Reissues ROCK CANDY

Dreams of what might have been.

When Badlands first appeared in 1988 they were touted as a supergroup of sorts, hoping to cash in on the hair-metal boom of the 80s. The band pitched together ex-Ozzy guitarist Jake E Lee, (ironically) one-time Sabbath singer Ray Gillen, bassist Greg Chaisson and drummer Eric Singer (now with Kiss).

Instead of the expected explosion of stadium rock, Badlands' self-titled 1989 debut was a rough-hewn, bluesy ride through 70s rock territory. It appealed then, and tracks like *High Wire* and *Dreams In The Dark* remain effective to this day. Sadly, as sales didn't meet expectations, egos clashed.

Voodoo Highway, released in 1991, was another good record in a similar vein, but not good enough to patch up the rapidly disintegrating band. By the time Gillen succumbed to HIV in 1993 it was all over for them.

■■■■■■■■■■ Badlands
■■■■■■■■■■ Voodoo

Jerry Ewing

Nazareth

Expect No Mercy/No Mean City SALVO

More scraps from the Scottish scrappers.

The hits had dried up by the time Nazareth made *Expect No Mercy* in 1977. The album-tour-album cycle had taken its toll, and punk was rearing its head. But record label A&M still wanted their pound of flesh. So Nazareth trooped wearily into the studio and came up with... a country record. A&M weren't pleased, and asked them to start again.

This expanded reissue of *Expect No Mercy* brackets that abandoned album with the release that finally made it into the shops. The big surprise is that the scrapped one is a cracker – and not really countrified at all.

Of the abandoned songs, the highlights are *Greens*, a quick-fire, ZZ stomper, and *Life Of A Dog*, which is classic gruff 'n' ready Naz. Before-and-after versions of Crazy Horse's *Gone Dead Train* are included, and it's interesting to hear how the band tweaked their approach to appease their label.

For 1979's *No Mean City*, Sensational Alex Harvey Band guitarist Zal Cleminson joined, teaming up with Manny Charlton to forge a twin-axe attack. The result, however, is

surprisingly muted. The weak songwriting doesn't help much either; *Simple Solution*, for example, is an unimaginative retrain of *Hair Of The Dog*.

■■■■■■■■■■ No Mercy
■■■■■■■■■■ No Mean

Geoff Barton

Uriah Heep

On The Rebound – A Very 'Eavy 40th Anniversary Collection SANCTUARY/UNIVERSAL

Heard it all before.



If you're new to Uriah Heep this is compilation is a more than decent

introduction to the veteran band: two CDs stuffed with some of their classics. For Heep fans, however, this collection is pointless. With the exception of *You Are The Only One*, everything here is available elsewhere. And there are enough Heep compilations anyway.

If the idea behind it is to showcase the band's heavier side – as is suggested in the title – then what are the likes of *Lady In Black* doing here?

No disrespect to the band, who have a considerable legacy of wonderful music, and their celebration of reaching the grand old age of 40, but this really doesn't do the job. Get the box set *Chapter & Verse*, released five years ago, instead. That does the celebration job admirably.

■■■■■■■■■■
Malcolm Dome

Saraya

Saraya BAD REPUTATION

New Jersey melody merchants get overhauled.

It's a sad fact that many late 80s melodic rock albums just don't seem to hold up 20 years on – and invariably it's the production rather than the songs that let them down. All of which makes it very pleasant to report that the remastered re-release of Saraya's debut sounds fantastic. The guitars are huge, the choruses massive and Sandi Saraya's vocals rival Benatar's. From the acoustic riff that opens *Love Has Taken Its Toll* to the Jovi-like *One Night Away* it's accomplished radio-friendly stuff, even if the cloying ballad *St Christopher's Medal* still sounds as gruesome as it ever did.

With four bonus tracks – two taken from their second release, a b-side and their contribution to the *Shocker* soundtrack – this is an album worth revisiting

■■■■■■■■■■
Siân Llewellyn

teamed up with Eric Clapton for the ill-fated Blind Faith.

And that's just Disc One.

The second disc is dedicated to Traffic Phase II: a bigger, jazzier jam band heavy on Latinate percussion, lengthy guitar, sax, flute and organ solos, and Capaldi's introspective lyrics. The music is variable in the extreme: the self-consciously 'rawk' guitars on *Shoot Out At The Fantasy Factory* are just plain wrong, but Winwood's guitar solo on *Mozambique* is lean and dazzling, nodding towards early Clapton but evoking both Carlos Santana's Latin grace and Albert Collins's mean, stinging snap.

Winwood's solo work is showcased on the third disc. Applying his formidable multi-instrumentalist skills (bass and drums as well as keyboards and guitar) to songs like *Arc Of A Diver* and *Vacant Chair*, his singing is as gorgeous as ever

'Much of *Revolutions* is more impressive than enjoyable.'

and his melodies sublime, but those 80s-style synth textures are unbearably cheesy even in the hands of a master musician

with a decent budget; even a song as lovely as *Valerie* suffers. Fortunately there are anthemic pop-soul gems like *Higher Love* and *Back In The High Life Again* to compensate and a blazing *Dirty City* (a collaboration with his old mate Clapton) on which to ride out. Disc 4, by the way, scoops up selections from each of the previous phases.

Verdict? A true polymath and a massive talent, possibly too introverted for his own ultimate artistic good. Much of *Revolutions* is more impressive than enjoyable, but others have built major careers on a fraction of Steve Winwood's titanic gifts.

■■■■■■■■■■
Charles Shaar Murray

Mike Oldfield interrupts some gardening on a damp lawn for a quick photo.



Mike Oldfield

Reissues MERCURY

Arguably stronger follow-ups to the celebrated calling card.



It may sound sacrilegious to younger punters raised on 6 Music, Xfm or latter-day John Peel, but there's a strong argument for Mike Oldfield as the UK's first indie superstar. Before the trains, planes, condoms and self-aggrandising ubiquity of its founder, Virgin was a humble student-run record shop that branched into manufacturing and scored the surprise hit of 1973.

Has there been another self-sufficient label anywhere in the world that can boast a multi-million-seller with its first long-playing release? *Tubular Bells* was a sensation, an off-the-wall progressive suite launched on a marketplace in thrall to Slade and T.Rex, or the gusset-soaking efforts of Donny Osmond and David Cassidy. True, the likes of Bowie, Floyd and ELP ruled the albums charts, but they had strong public profiles, whereas Oldfield was a taciturn bearded who revelled in anonymity.

It didn't hit the top spot on its initial release, thwarted by the soundtrack to the David Essex movie *That'll Be The Day*. It only reached Number One a year later, and the album it replaced at the head of the heap was Oldfield's follow-up, *Hergest Ridge* – perhaps a more rounded and accessible piece. It's populist pastoral prog, where Vaughan Williams collides with Van der Graaf Generator.

Named after the rural Welsh border outpost to which Oldfield retreated after the phenomenom of his debut, *Hergest Ridge* is a love poem to a simpler way of life, where the presence of every swaying tree and babbling brook is translated into delicate synth passages, subtle woodwind figures and soundscapes both unobtrusive and ominous. Without recourse to words, it is a curiously interpretive portrait of Englishness.

As imaginative and atmospheric as it may be, it can be seen in hindsight as merely laying the ground for *Ommadawn*, a spellbinding non-verbal paean to rustic simplicity that Oldfield still regards as his most fulfilling and complete piece.

Taken as a whole, these two albums and their iconic predecessor represent a remarkable body of work; instrumental daring and drama paralleled only by such American heavyweights as George Gershwin (*Rhapsody In Blue* is, at least, a spiritual cousin) or Aaron Copland. It's easy to mock Oldfield for his perceived self-importance, but listen again to these albums and realise just how innovative and inspired he was.

■■■■■■■■■■ *Hergest Ridge*
■■■■■■■■■■ *Ommadawn*

Terry Staunton

P.F.M.

Reissues ESOTERIC

Wibbly Mediterranean prog from the 70s, with extras. Premiata Forneria Marconi achieved a degree of UK fame in 1973, when John Peel's *Top Gear* championed their bubblingly berserk *Celebration*. By then they had graduated from the Italian beat scene of the 60s into a bunch of hairy prog hounds with distinct traces of King Crimson and Yes. They were impressive enough to land a deal with ELP's Manticore label that year, who promptly brought in lyricist Pete Sinfield for their first English-speaking LP, *Photos Of Ghosts*. At times it feels like a vestige of the hippy age, its pastoral sweep often mapped out by synths and woodwinds, wed to time signatures that bowed for no one. By 1974's *The World Became The World*, they were opening for Santana and ZZ Top in the US, their sound now a little jazzier. But *Chocolate Kings*, released two years later, was their finest hour. Here they drafted in singer Bernardo Lanzetti – his voice not unlike Peter Gabriel's – for a concept piece about American greed, at its most bitter on the monolithic keyboard riffs of the title track and the strangely menacing *Harlequin*. *Jetlag* (1977) was more impenetrable, an arch jazz-fusion album that frequently over-reaches itself. It proved to be their last dalliance with an international audience.

■■■■■■■■■■

Photos of Ghosts

■■■■■■■■■■

The World Became The World

■■■■■■■■■■

Chocolate Kings

■■■■■■■■■■ *Jetlag*

Rob Hughes

Gun

Reissues GRAPEFRUIT

What a load of blanks.

Not to be confused with the Word Up-covering Scots rockers, this Gun, featuring brothers Adrian and Paul Curtis, are best known for their late-60s guitarathon hit *Race With The Devil*. And had Ginger Baker not been a silly old goat and put the Gurvitz brothers (their real surname) in uniform for his post-Cream band the Baker Gurvitz Army, that's all they would have been known for.

While *Gun* is not without moments of at least mediocrity, there's little among the overblown, overwrought rattles through derivative, mostly shapeless songs to be actually complimentary about. Bluesier

second album *Gunsight* is definitely an improvement, with the pop-psychedelia-tinged *Lady Pink Part Two* and the rootsy, slide guitar-driven pair *Drown Yourself In The River* and *Hobo* pointing the way the brothers should have gone, but it's still an album severely lacking direction.

■■■■■■■■■■ *Gun*
■■■■■■■■■■

Gunslingers

Paul Henderson

Judas Priest

Reissues BACK ON BLACK

Well, at least they smell better.



These are not just reissues, these are Back On Black reissues. Which

means they're not only on vinyl rather than CD, they're actually better than the 12-inch plastic originals. Take Priest's iconic 1979 live album *Unleashed In The East*, for example. The original, if memory serves, was a single record in a single sleeve. Under the aegis of BOB, however, the format has been turbo-charged (pun intended) as follows: a pair of clear-vinyl discs as thick as your forefinger; a gatefold with photos so eye-bogglingly large you can almost see the combination on Rob Halford's handcuffs; plus a slew of bonus tracks. And as the grooves on the records are deeper and less densely packed, the sound is, naturally, immense!

Besides *Unleashed...*, *Sin After Sin*, *Stained Class*, *Killing Machine*, *British Steel* and *Point Of Entry* have been given the same treatment. It's all so unutterably magnificent, one cannot help but revisit old habits and 'sniff' the vinyl lovingly. Interestingly, it's a sweeter and less pungent bouquet than before; almost toffee-like in fact. [Give it a rest for God's sake – Ed.]

As for the music... well, you know full well what to expect. You're not going to fork out £15 apiece on the off-chance, are you? That said, we were surprised how dated *Sin After Sin* sounds, and how excellent *Point Of Entry* is – which kinda runs against perceived Priest wisdom.

■■■■■■■■■■

Geoff Barton

The Doors

When You're Strange
Original Soundtrack RHINO

Words and music from the rock doc.

"Cinema; air of alchemy, last of an erotic science." So wrote Jim Morrison in one of his enigmatic

poems, read by Johnny Depp at the start of this album. It's a suitably artsy beginning for a collection celebrating one of the most mythologised bands of all time, who haven't been particularly well-served on the silver screen.

When *You're Strange* will find greater favour with fans than Oliver Stone's lacklustre biopic, not least because it focuses on the group's creative output, rather than the drugs and demons to which Stone gave equal billing. Hence, the soundtrack cherry-picks the best-loved music, both in previously available album recordings and less familiar live renditions from TV performances – a version of *When The Music's Over* from Danish television is especially atmospheric.

Punctuating the songs with further readings by Depp, plus snippets of interviews from all four members, gives the impression of telling the group's story, albeit not in any straightforward linear fashion, without recourse to over-analysis. But although this additional material prevents the album from being classified as just another compilation, it's

presumably what devotees will snap up – with moving pictures – when the movie arrives on DVD.

■■■■■■■■■■

Terry Staunton

The Teardrop Explodes

Kilimanjaro UNIVERSAL

Young Merseyside circa 1980.



Not that you'd know it from recent nostalgia but Liverpool played just as

important a part in shaping post-punk Britain as London, Manchester or Sheffield. Of all the bands to emerge from the Zoo Records/Eric's Nightclub scene, it was The Teardrop Explodes who made the first expeditions into the mainstream. Led by the charismatic, foppish and willfully pretentious Julian Cope, the band scored a big 1981 hit with the celebratory *Reward* which led to the repackaging of their debut album.

Now given the triple CD, deluxe-edition treatment, *Kilimanjaro* more than stands the test of time – despite the fact that trumpets have seldom played such a major role in rock music ever since. Key are Cope's excellent songwriting and

humour. On *Brave Boys Keep Their Promises*, *Thief Of Bagdad* and the wonderful *Treason* he brilliantly conjures a comic book world where adventure and psychedelia collide. The extra discs contain the band's early Peel sessions and a collection of b-sides, among them a French version of *Treason* and the wonderfully titled *Kirby Workers Dream Fades*. Bless their tiny cotton socks.

■■■■■■■■■■

Johnny Dee

Wishbone Ash

Sometime World – An MCA Travelogue UNIVERSAL

11 years under an Ash cloud.

Despite that clunking title, fans of the Torquay twin guitar sound – typified by Andy Powell and Ted Turner – will enjoy this chronologically accurate trawl through the original quartet's studio albums, plus a stirring proggy version of *The King Will Come*, live at Fairfield Halls, 1973.

Although they've endured another 30 years, spawning AshCon and AshFest, the revolving line-ups don't match the period that included the debut, *Argus*, *Wishbone Four* and Laurie Wisefield-era Wishbone.

Given their penchant for close

harmonies and a wistful Devonian folk charm, the group managed to steer clear of fashion and fad and simply ignored the punk explosion by releasing *New England* in 1976 and then bugging off to America.

The characteristic Ash sound of *Blowin' Free* and *Throw Down The Sword* were crowd pleasers when people ponged of patchouli, but Wishbone did re-jig their sound a smidgen with *Mother Of Pearl* and *Lorelei*, adding mandolin and slide to achieve a rootsier appeal that enabled them to survive on the US shed circuit.

This two-CD set doesn't include anything that could be classified as rare, apart from the odd single mix, but it was apparently 'curated' by all concerned, which suggests agreement between Turner and Powell. In the meantime, Martin Turner's Wishbone Ash play the High Voltage festival in late July.

■■■■■■■■■■

Max Bell

a.c. acoustics

Understanding Music FIRE

Peel faves remind us why the great DJ loved them.

Life, as any teenager will point

out, is so unfair. This, in part, goes some way to explaining the utter commercial failure of a.c. acoustics. Active throughout the 90s, they offered a blissful, confessional, aching pretty alternative to the Britpop knees-up raging around them. But despite high profile, highly vocal fans like John Peel and Placebo's Brian Molko, they've languished in history's also-ran category since their split in 2003.

Understanding Music was their last album, and their best. The lush introspection of *Chinese Summer* shares a mournful beauty with Aereogramme – another Glaswegian band who never quite enjoyed the success they richly deserved – while *Crush* displays their abrasive side, an angular chunk of indie rock that sounds more Boston than Ayrshire.

This re-release is unlikely to see a.c. acoustics rise, phoenix-like, from the flames of obscurity. It's too subtle, and to be painfully blunt, few have noticed they've been away, and fewer still have indicated that they've missed them. But it's proof that at the very least they deserve a bit of retrospective respect.

■■■■■■■■■■

Emma Johnston



Bon Jovi

Reissues MERCURY

Brand Jovi market some back-catalogue product to exploit their month as London's house band.

It's appropriate that these 11 special-edition reissues of Bon Jovi's studio albums focus, for their specialness, on the addition of 'era-specific' live material to the original recordings, because it's the 2600 gigs, rather than the 11 albums, that have kept the band's heart beating.

Much like Gene Simmons, Jon Bon Jovi is on occasion glib about his reasons for continuing the band. When *The Times* asked him recently whether he ever got fed up singing *Livin' On A Prayer* he replied, "Not when I see the jet with my name on it".

Yet when you've made more money than you can ever spend [his records have sold around 120 million copies to go with those gig receipts] something else must drive you. There is as much life-force behind the extended *Who Says You Can't Go Home*, from 2005's *Have A Nice Day* as there is behind the exuberant take on *Runaway*, from 1984's *Bon Jovi* more than two decades and several hundred mill earlier.

It's the gang mentality, the love of road life,

that has held Bon Jovi together. They see the live arena as a place where songs can continue to evolve. *Blood On Blood*, from 1988's *New Jersey* (perhaps their best and most consistent album) runs to 12 minutes, as does *In And Out Of Love*, from 1985's *7800 Fahrenheit*; *Keep The Faith*, from 1992's album of the same name goes for almost eight.

Perhaps Jon would be less spiky about the enormous mountains of cash if he'd acquired a little more critical acceptance. In truth, his subject matter has varied little from Tommy and Gina in *Livin' On A Prayer* on 1986's breakthrough *Slippery When Wet* to the kids of *Broken Promiseland* from last year's *The Circle*. In that, he's a bit like the blockbuster author who craves literary acceptance, but the wantonly ambitious kid influenced by Bruce Springsteen and Aerosmith who set out 25 years ago would surely have settled for inventing chart-friendly



BJ: filthy rich.

pop metal and achievement on the band's current global scale.

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Have A Nice Day/Bon Jovi/7800 Fahrenheit

■■■■■■■■■■

New Jersey

■■■■■■■■■■

Keep The Faith/Slippery When Wet/The Circle

Jon Hotten



Supertramp:
Logical, captain.

JOHN BRONKH/REX FEATURES

Supertramp

The punk explosion was expected to kill them. Instead they thrived and enjoyed huge singles and albums success worldwide.

In 1979 AD, the geeks inherited the Earth. It was the year in which The Clash released *London Calling*, widely acclaimed as one of the most influential rock albums of all time. But it was another English rock group – one that was the very antithesis of The Clash's last-gang-in-town cool – that dominated the charts on both sides of the Atlantic.

Supertramp were one of the geekiest band of that time – or any other. Four of the five band members had beards; their co-leader Roger Hodgson sang at chipmunk frequency; their scholarly soft rock was lovingly crafted in complete denial of the punk explosion of two years earlier. But in commercial terms Supertramp murdered The Clash, their 1979 album *Breakfast In America* selling four million copies in the USA to *London Calling's* two million.

Breakfast In America was the pinnacle of Supertramp's career. But it was no overnight success.

Supertramp formed in London in 1969 after Hodgson answered an ad in *Melody Maker* by vocalist/keyboard player Rick Davies (it promised: 'Genuine opportunity!'). They took their name from WH Davies's vagabond journal *The*

Autobiography Of A Super-Tramp, they were bankrolled by Dutch millionaire Stanley Miesegaes and they were one of the first acts signed to the A&M label. But when their first two albums tanked, Miesegaes pulled the plug and Supertramp were reduced to just Hodgson and Davies.

Nevertheless, the pair vowed to carry on, and with a new line-up (including bassist Dougie Thomson, saxophonist John Helliwell and American drummer Bob Siebenberg, aka Bob C Benberg) they recorded a third album, *Crime Of The Century*. It reached No.4 in the UK in 1974 and established Supertramp as one of Britain's leading progressive rock groups.

In the late 70s the band relocated to the US. The move paid off handsomely when the FM radio-friendly *Breakfast In America* topped the chart there for six weeks. But in the wake of that success the relationship between Hodgson and Davies broke down, and after one more album, prophetically titled *Famous Last Words*, Hodgson quit.

Since then, Davies has recorded four studio albums with various line-ups of Supertramp, and Hodgson has worked as a solo artist, but neither men has matched what they once achieved together.

Paul Elliott

Essential Classics



Breakfast In America

A&M, 1979

A perfect pop rock album, *Breakfast...* has it all: great songs, exquisite production and arrangements, wondrous harmony vocals, thought-provoking lyrics, and an iconic cover which epitomised Supertramp's eccentricity.

Meticulously recorded over eight months in LA, the album has darkness beneath its surface gloss. *Goodbye Stranger* was perhaps the most cynical song ever written about love, *The Logical Song* an existential crisis set to the most beautiful melody. And the tongue-in-cheek title track, written by a teenaged Hodgson, was a peculiarly English take on the American Dream.



Crime Of The Century

A&M, 1974

The album that saved Supertramp's career was recorded by a band in turmoil, abandoned by their rich patron, all but forgotten by their record company, and with a new line-up. But Hodgson remembers the making of it as "a magical period".

With *Crime...* Supertramp defined their signature sound and created a progressive rock masterpiece. Each track was a classic in its own right, and with Hodgson and Davies in deeply philosophical mood, the album had an intellectual weight to match the best of Pink Floyd. Moreover, it had one shining pop song, *Dreamer*, that gave the band their first Top 20 hit.

Superior Reputation cementing



Even In The Quietest Moments...

A&M, 1977

The first Supertramp album to go gold in the US, *Even In The Quietest Moments...* put the band back on track after a slight wobble with *Crisis? What Crisis?*

It was recorded at Caribou Ranch Studio set in the Rocky Mountains: the perfect backdrop for that famous cover shot of a snow-laden grand piano.

Give A Little Bit was the key to this album's success, hitting the US top 20 and preparing the way for *Breakfast In America* to follow. But Supertramp remained a progressive rock band at heart, as evidenced by the 11-minute, quasi-religious *Fool's Overture*.



Crisis? What Crisis?

A&M, 1975

Crisis? What Crisis? was nowhere near as popular as predecessor *Crime Of The Century*, but it was still a strong album (and it made the UK Top 20).

Newly based in America, the band recorded in LA. And it showed. In contrast to the heavy atmosphere of *Crime...*, this album had a lighter, more relaxed feel typified by the funky rock of *Another Man's Woman* and the playful pop of *Lady*.

There are fine songs throughout, notably *Sister Moonshine* and *A Soapbox Opera*. But with no hit single on it, this remains the most overlooked album of Supertramp's golden era.



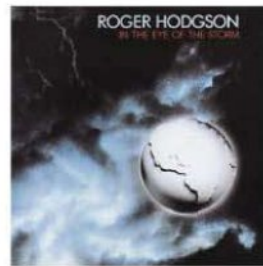
Famous Last Words

A&M, 1982

After the huge success of *Breakfast In America*, and a punishing world tour, Supertramp were burned out and Hodgson and Davies had grown apart.

Hodgson was the one who walked, leaving Davies to preside over Supertramp's slow demise. And the bitterness still lingers: Hodgson recently dismissed the *Famous Last Words* album as "limp and average".

Not so. Certainly it was no *Breakfast In America*, and it sold just 500,000 in the US, but there were flashes of the old brilliance in *Crazy*, *Know Who You Are*, and especially *It's Raining Again*, the last great Supertramp single.



Roger Hodgson In The Eye Of The Storm

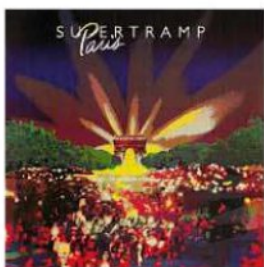
A&M, 1984

After the split it was Hodgson who made the better record. And he recorded this solo debut almost entirely alone.

Evidently, he relished his newfound independence. He sounded almost bullish on *Had A Dream* (*Sleeping With The Enemy*), and exultant on *Give Me Love, Give Me Life*.

Melodic yet adventurous, the album was a masterful blend of pop and progressive rock, peaking with the Floyd-esque *Only Because Of You*. But sales were disappointing: in the UK it peaked at No.70. Hodgson had better songs, but Rick Davies had that all-important brand name.

Good Worth exploring



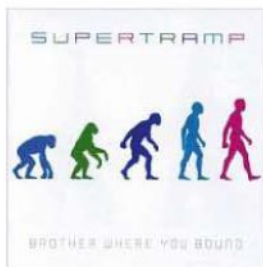
Paris

A&M, 1980

There was a triumphal air to this double live album recorded in the French capital in 1979 during the *Breakfast In America* tour.

As manager David Margerison said in the sleeve notes: "Ah, Paris! The first time we were here, at the tiny Bataclan Theatre, only eight people paid to get in..." This time 8,000 roared their approval as Supertramp confirmed their big-league status with a consummate performance.

Hodgson and Davies might have been kidding themselves when they proclaimed these live tracks better than the original studio versions: Hodgson strains to hit the highest notes, but *Paris* is a fine, richly atmospheric live album by a band at its peak.

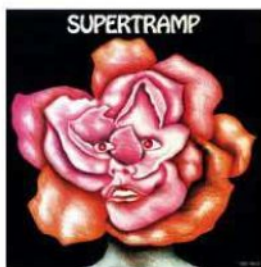


Brother Where You Bound

A&M, 1985

With Hodgson gone, Supertramp continued with the rest of the line-up that had been together since *Crime Of The Century*. But Davies was running the show, writing all the music and lyrics on an album that proved the band could still function without the guy who's written all the hits.

Brother Where You Bound was only moderately successful. But, more importantly, for Davies in particular, it was identifiably a Supertramp album. The title track was 16 minutes of complex, paranoid prog rock, a throwback to *Crime...*, featuring guest guitarists David Gilmour and Scott Gorham. But without Hodgson there was no hit single.



Supertramp

A&M, 1970

Any list of the worst album covers of all time will probably include Supertramp's second, *Indelibly Stamped*, featuring the naked torso of "England's most tattooed woman", Rusty Skuse. The cover of the band's debut album (a dire, hippie vision of Man as flower) wasn't much better. Both albums flopped, but they retain a quaint period charm with a blend of groovy, faintly psychedelic rock and Simon & Garfunkel-style pop.

The debut album is marginally the stronger of the two, with a handful of finely crafted songs in *Surely*, *Words Unspoken* and *Shadow Song*. But it would be four long years until Supertramp really found their voice with *Crime...*

Avoid



Free As A Bird

A&M, 1987

Supertramp never made a classic album without Roger Hodgson, and with *Free As A Bird* the band reached its nadir.

Assisted by Crowded House guitarist/vocalist Mark Hart, Rick Davies steered Supertramp into the very middle of the road on an album of bland, 80s adult rock.

In a truly bizarre turn of events, one of the tracks, *I'm Beggin' You*, hit No.1 in the US dance chart. But the album still bombed.

Six years later Davies and Hodgson attempted reconciliation, but they couldn't make it work. And although Davies would continue using the Supertramp name, he was fooling no one. Without Hodgson it just ain't Supertramp.

Essential Playlist

Dreamer

Crime Of The Century

Hide In Your Shell

Crime Of The Century

School

Crime Of The Century

Asylum

Crime Of The Century

Sister Moonshine

Crisis? What Crisis?

Lady

Crisis? What Crisis?

Give A Little Bit

Even In The Quietest Moments...

Fool's Overture

Even In The Quietest Moments...

Even In The Quietest Moments...

Even In The Quietest Moments...

The Logical Song

Breakfast In America

Breakfast In America

Breakfast In America

Goodbye Stranger

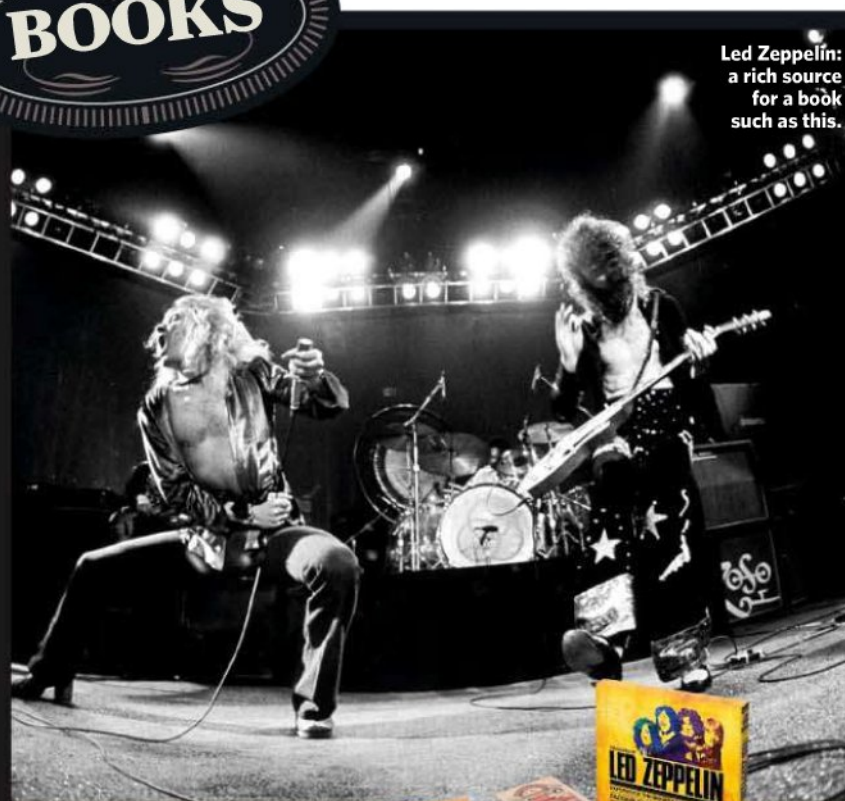
Breakfast In America

Take The Long Way Home

Breakfast In America

It's Raining Again

Famous Last Words



Led Zeppelin: a rich source for a book such as this.

Treasures Of Led Zeppelin

Chris Welch CARLTON

Same story, more interactive approach.

Alavish 'book in a box' package with concert ticket and other memorabilia facsimiles inserted for aficionados of the most collectible band in rock history apart from The Beatles, *Treasures Of Led Zeppelin* is an artifact-centred book that many will want to add to their already extensive Led Zep library.

Zep seem to have always had an advanced awareness of their own posterity, right from the moment Jimmy Page put The New Yardbirds together. Factor in the mysterious symbols that appeared later, mystique-creating album sleeves and the barrier-breaking live spectaculars that hallmarked their career, and you have the rich source material for this book.

With the obvious sourness that exists between Plant and Page after the band's 2007 reunion, the chance of any official book of this kind – let alone an in-their-own-words-style history – coming any time soon is slim, to say the least. This book, with loads of gig posters, ticket stubs, invitations, backstage passes and even tour brochures to accompany the text, colourfully laid out with career-spanning photos, goes some way to making up for that.

As with such collector-aimed tomes as *The Bob Dylan Scrapbook* and the

official book of The Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame, items such as posters to advertise the celebrated five-night run at Earls Court (the original poster advertises only three) do much to bring the era to life. The author's workmanlike text, favouring a year-by-year, album-by-album and member-by-member approach, goes some way to helping, although unfortunately Welch, a veteran of many Zeppelin interviews and live shows during the group's lifetime, chooses, oddly, not to draw on personal reminiscences. Nonetheless his facts-and-figures approach yields some surprising and illuminating detail. Such as: it was on a session for PJ Proby (Plant playing tambourine) that Page and Plant first recorded together.

It's difficult to imagine any rock/Zeppelin fan or student of rock history not getting a thrill out of examining the collected artworks included here while handling a Japanese poster for *The Song Remains The Same* or a backstage pass for the 1971 Electric Magic extravaganza at Wembley Pool (now Arena). Back then fans were treated to two five-hour shows and still grumbled at the outrageous 75p ticket price! Those were the days indeed.

★★★★★
Gavin Martin

Out Of Our Heads: Rock 'N' Roll Before The Drugs Wore Off

George Case BACKBEAT

Everybody must get stoned.

Taking as his year zero the moment in 1964 when Bob Dylan introduced The Beatles to the benefits of marijuana in a New York hotel room, George Case attempts a potted history of rock's inseparable relationship with drugs, from peacenik mind expansion through moneyed indulgence to eventual addiction and decline.

Part of the problem is that drug use and music don't really fit this convenient narrative, with many early jazz pioneers no strangers to class As, not to mention the excesses of Mötley Crüe et al later in the 80s and 90s, all of which is skimmed over in just a few pages. Case is excellent on social and historical context but his flat prose too often leaves only the quotes to tickle the reader's interest. Ultimately it's stuck uneasily between the serious and colloquial, but an enjoyable enough (if familiar) trawl through the heady days of 60s and 70s enlightenment and debauchery.

★★★★★
Tim Batcup

Sober Living For The Revolution: Hardcore Punk, Straight Edge And Radical Politics

Gabriel Kuhn PM PRESS

SXe: what political punk rock did next.

If rock'n'roll is your business – and business has tended to be pretty good for the past 40 years or so – there's little chance you will have examined punk rock in all its angry, mutating glory. But if you're curious about the post-Pistols scene that drop-kicked punk into hardcore, straight edge and the oft-perceived po-faced social activism behind them, this book is for you.

It's not a promising start; the preface reads like an Open University textbook. But as soon as the progenitors of the new noise get their say the study comes into its own. Through the manifestos of Minor Threat's Ian Mackaye – patron saint of straight – Refused's Denis Lyxzen and even Fall Out Boy's Andy Hurley, the layers surrounding the movement and its faithful start to unfurl. It's still confusing, filled with socialist, anarchist, puritan, feminist,

vegan and radical queer ethics (sometimes all at once), and it won't be turning, say, Tommy Lee's head any time soon, but Kuhn's quest to probe every niche to define the puzzling whole is a brave try. Less 'get pissed, destroy', more 'use your brain, change the world'. And it's for all ages, too.

★★★★★
Jo Kendall

Fab Four FAQ 2.0: The Beatles' Solo Years 1970-1980

Robert Rodriguez BACKBEAT

They just won't go away.

Not so much Frequently Asked Questions as an accompaniment to similar works by Mark Lewisohn and Keith Badman (among others), with Rodriguez offering some personal insight into Beatle-ology, using historical evidence, decent research and contemporary anecdotal accounts.

There's a fair summary of John Lennon's 1972 TV appearances, his 'lost weekend' of 1974, a fond take on Eric Clapton's post-wedding bash in 1979, featuring three pissed ex-Fabs on stage in Surrey, and less compelling glances at the major players' increasingly pointless careers after the early 70s splurge, with random story-behind-the-song snippets. Feeling more like a fat fanzine than a definitive tome, it's the kind of book that sucks you in unawares.

One for nostalgists who don't mind losing the odd hour of their life.

★★★★★
Max Bell

I Did It Otway

John Otway KLG PRESS

Where it all went wrong, take two.

When Otway found himself in the Top 10 with *Bunsen Burner* in 2002, a full quarter-century after his only other chart success, *Really Free*, it tainted the one-hit-wonder/lovable failure schtick he had so carefully nurtured. Undeterred, Aylesbury's favourite under-achiever continues to come up with schemes destined to fall flat.

This second autobiography, written (like the first volume 20 years ago) in the third person, is a case in point. Renowned publishers Omnibus were unwilling to get involved again, so the new book is self-published by Otway's girlfriend, and recounts in detail the singer's ongoing plans to charter

a jumbo jet and take fans with him on a world tour – just as soon as he gets enough to sign up for the jaunt. In lumpen prose and with little flair for a well-constructed anecdote, he seems to relish his dreams being shattered, but the misfiring aims at stardom and shoulder-shrugging attitude quickly becomes tiresome.

■■■■■
Terry Staunton

Guitar World Presents: Metallica

BACKBEAT

Metallica in their own words. Straight from the gobs of the four horsemen: Metallica tell their story via a series of interviews taken from the pages of US magazine *Guitar World*. Highlights include Monster's Brawl, a behind-the-scenes look at the making of their movie *Some Kind Of Monster* originally printed in June 2004 – an experience more enjoyable for the reader than for anyone in Metallica. Equally riveting is *Metal Reflectors*, in which Kirk Hammett and James Hetfield discuss the band's finest moments from 1983 debut *Kill 'Em All* to 1999's *S&M*. There's also an entertaining 'class reunion' between Kirk and his former teacher Joe Satriani.

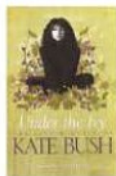
All Metallica fans will find this book a cracking read; for guitar-toting ones it's essential.

■■■■■
Ed Mitchell

Under The Ivy: The Life & Music Of Kate Bush

Graeme Thomson OMNIBUS

Digging to the roots of the reclusive and private singer.



At the heart of Graeme Thomson's biography, and of Kate Bush's life as an artist are two

questions: 'Where did she come from?' and 'Where did she go?'

In his thoughtful and rewarding book Thomson responds to the first one more successfully than the second, and that's because the answer to the latter is perhaps more prosaic than he or any of us would like it to be. He is excellent on Bush's ethereal early life as he drives at the mysteries of her creativity: what strange and deep forces allow a 13-year-old girl to write *The Man With The Child In His Eyes*? The book yearns for Bush's

withdrawal from fame to be as complex, yet in truth it's that she doesn't like the stress of live performance and wants to raise her son in the same kind of peace that she grew up in. It's her artistry that brings real intrigue, and Thomson does that justice with some fine writing: 'She connects with a harder, more mythical England, a deep green dream of a country that has never really existed'.

■■■■■
Jon Hotten

Joan Jett

Todd Oldham AMMO

Larkin about with Joan.



While there are probably far more taxing recreations available to

modern man than leisurely leafing through page after page of Joan Jett photos, after the first 50 or so pages you've kind of got it. Joan Jett is an uncommonly handsome woman who fills out a leather jumpsuit way more satisfactorily than your average guitarist. And you know what? She loves rock'n'roll.

Which is fearfully convenient, as she's clearly not trained for anything else. For while other 16-year-old girls were raising words-per-minute rates in copy-typing class our Joan was raising punter heart-rates at Budokan. Interestingly, feminist icon Joan's career was manufactured bubblegum-style from the age of 14 by Runaways' Prometheus Kim Fowley (selling his bargain-basement glam creations as meat-market jailbait to a pre-punk zeitgeist), while her subsequent solo career has been cannily stage-managed – more conservatively than controversially – by Kenny Laguna. Reading this book, a word-light, PR-heavy vehicle for those priceless pics, you cannot help but feel that Joan (still naively in thrall to an unchanging, clichéd vision of all-American, Fonzie-ified jukebox rock'n'roll as served up by Chinnichap-era Suzi Quatro) has never fulfilled her true potential. She's good, yeah, but she could so easily have been brilliant. If only she'd been encouraged to take a few risks with her career, instead of prodded prematurely onto the nostalgia market to milk those same old *Crimson And Clover* cash cows until the world finally lost interest.

Great pictures though.

■■■■■
Ian Fortnam

VANDEN PLAS

the seraphic Clockwork



The German Prog-Metal experts are back with their finest concept album ever!
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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

Our website and inboxes were filled with your tributes to Ronnie James Dio this month, so we make no apologies for giving over the letters page to share those memories and tributes.

RIP RONNIE

I first met Ronnie back in 1987 on the Dream Evil tour. My girlfriend at the time was producing fantasy artwork and Ronnie and Wendy had expressed an interest in seeing it. We met them both after the show at the NEC in Birmingham and Ronnie asked if he could do anything for me. As an up-and-coming photographer I asked for a photo pass for one of his shows. He obliged without hesitation and personally arranged the first pass that I ever had for a major artist. I will remember him for his incredible vocal talent but probably more so for his kindness and for going beyond the call of duty to help me!

Richard Franklin (photographer)

I grew up with Rainbow. *Long Live Rock 'N' Roll* was the first album I ever bought. I still have it, and will be playing it today, FULL BLAST! RIP RONNIE. Rock on.

Steve Mohacsy, Cape Town

Dio: Thank you for being a friend throughout my life. You've been a friend with your music since I was a little kid. Some days ago, I was listening to *Don't Talk To Strangers* in the car with my little girl (six years old), driving her to school.

That's the impact of your music in people's lives. RIP.

'Painkiller', via classicrockmagazine.com

So sad to hear about RJD, I met him at Gods of Metal in Italy in '07 and we had a few drinks together. I was picking up the Glyder merch backstage and he was having a glass of wine, and he invited me and my wife Linda into his dressing room. We stayed for about an hour and had a great chat. He was such a gentleman and then I got the honour of opening for Dio in Stockholm in '08. He was so nice to us and on both occasions kept giving me beer

and apologising for not having any Guinness. He was so sharp and remembered me from Italy. They say never meet your heroes and I met mine and I wasn't disappointed; as I say, he was a true gentleman.

His music brought me so much over the years since I was a teenager listening to *Mob Rules*, *Heaven And Hell* and *Dehumanizer* and the Dio solo stuff. RIP Ronnie.

Bat Kinane, Glyder

So sad. Another legend bites the dust. Have seen Ronnie many times over the last 26 years, every show awesome, pure entertainment. He really was part of the crowd and really connected. There aren't too many performers like that. RIP.

Mark D, via classicrockmagazine.com

The four albums Ronnie released with Rainbow were, in my opinion, the best of his career. I always liked the fact that more than perhaps anyone else who worked with him, he seemed to take Blackmore's foibles with terrific good humour and grace. Long live rock'n'roll.

Gerry, via classicrockmagazine.com

A very sad day – another of my heroes passes into the halls of Valhalla. "They say that life's a carousel, spinning fast, you've got to ride it well..."

Steve Hyett, via classicrockmagazine.com

The great man was the reason I wanted to play in a hard rock/metal band. I wish I could have sang like him but Rainbow/Dio albums helped me improve my bass playing. I sat learning nearly

every song and up to only last year was still playing *Starstruck* in a cover band. Dio, you will never be forgotten. R.I.P.

Kev Wynn, Tysondog

For me, Ronnie is right up there with the greats: Ian Gillan, Robert Plant, Paul Rodgers. He earned



**Ronnie James Dio,
July 10, 1942 –
May 16, 2010.**

his place there with tremendous albums and wonderful live shows. The best tribute I can give is that when Ronnie told his fans he loved them, you actually knew he meant it, and was not just traipsing out a bland line. Wherever Ronnie has ended up, I believe he has earned a rest, and he will always live on in our memories. May your god bless you, Ronnie.

Derek, via classicrockmagazine.com

I may sing in a choir, but I always wanted to sing like Ronnie.

Matt McCabe, via classicrockmagazine.com

I remember listening to the Friday Rock Show as a 15 year-old and hearing *Stargazer* for the first time. From that moment to now I have loved the voice of RJD. Saw him on the Last In Line tour at Hammy Odeon and Heaven And Hell a couple of years ago at the NEC. Was looking forward to their appearance in Portugal this summer but it's not to be. Will be thinking of you, Ronnie... The rainbow has risen.

Andyp65, via classicrockmagazine.com

To paraphrase the great man: The magic that we feel will last a lifetime. RIP.

Yehia Tawfik, via classicrockmagazine.com

'The best tribute I can give is that when Dio told his fans he loved them, you knew he meant it.'

As a lifelong fan of Rainbow and Ronnie, I always clung to the hope that Rainbow would re-form one day to do a tribute tour. However, rock music has now lost one of the true legends and I am in mourning.

Ronnie had a fantastic stage presence and a voice made for singing good gutsy rock lyrics. Rest in peace – your lyrics and memories will live on forever.

Paul Duncan, via classicrockmagazine.com

Saw the great man many times, always put on an amazing show and is one of the greatest rock voices of all time, still can't believe he's gone.

I suppose this is something we're gonna have to get used to: our 60s and 70s heroes aren't gonna live forever, unfortunately.

The greatest honour I can bestow is that Ronnie is probably the only singer to ever release three of the greatest rock albums of all time, all with different bands – can't think of any others, can you?

If you'd never produced anything other

RJD: 'I'll remember him for his vocal talent and his kindness.'



★ Star Letter

THE VOICE OF METAL is no more...

It is with a sense of deep anguish that I write on the unfortunate demise of Ronnie James Dio, who to me, was the Hendrix of vocals. As a friend used to remark: he can wail, he can whisper, he can sob, he can cry – and he did all of this through Rainbow, Black Sabbath and Dio.

From Ritchie Blackmore's Rainbow to *The Last In Line*, for nearly 10 years, the voice of metal was unmistakably Dio – mighty and powerful, soaring and towering, he rendered songs that were magical and mythical, layered with themes and content that came from his heart. He was also capable of delivering the most tender of ballads – *Rainbow Eyes*.

Some of the songs that come to mind – *Catch The Rainbow*, *Temple Of The King*, *Tarot Woman*, *Stargazer*, *Long Live Rock 'N' Roll*, *Gates Of Babylon*, *Rainbow Eyes*, *Children Of The Sea*, *Heaven And Hell*, *Lonely Is The Word*, *Sign Of The Southern Cross*, *Falling Off The Edge Of The World*, *Over And Over*, *Holy Diver*, *Don't Talk To Strangers*, *Rainbow In The Dark*, *We Rock*, *Last In Line*, *Egypt (The Chains Are On)*...

Ronnie was a unique stylist with a gifted voice who enthralled legions of fans across the planet. The cruel cancer consumed Ronnie but his legacy of work will live on forevermore.

Ranjit Roy, via classicrockmagazine.com

There were so many great letters about Dio this month, but Ranjit summed it up for us. Get in touch to claim your prize.

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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THE WORLD OF ROCK HAS TRULY LOST AN AMBASSADOR IN RONNIE JAMES DIO. HOPE HE IS LOOKING DOWN NOW WITH RAINBOW EYES AND SEEING JUST HOW MUCH HE WAS LOVED. RIP RJD. **SIMMO, YORKSHIRE**

RONNIE JAMES DIO RIP. A HUGE CHUNK OF MY YOUTH HAS GONE. **ROB W**

DO HOPE YOU WILL HAVE A SPECIAL ON RONNIE JAMES DIO. THE MAN WAS THE BEST AND DESERVES A ONE-OFF EDITION. GO ON PUSH THE BOAT OUT FOR THE STARGAZER. **DAVE, SUSSEX**

THE WORLD IS NOW A DARKER PLACE. RJD RIP YOUR LEGACY WILL LIVE ON. LONG LIVE ROCK AND ROLL. **RON, EDINBURGH**

I LOST MY WIFE TO CANCER LAST YEAR SO I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT DIO'S FAMILY ARE GOING THRU AND THEY HAVE MY DEEPEST CONDOLENCES. THE BRITISH MEDIA SHOULD HANG THEIR COLLECTIVE HEADS IN SHAME FROM THE LACK OF COVERAGE OF THE PASSING OF ONE OF THE BIGGEST NAMES IN ROCK. THANK GOD FOR CLASSIC ROCK MAG. **CAPT. ROCK, NOTTS**

GOD BLESS RONNIE JAMES DIO, YOU CAUGHT THE RAINBOW, SLEW THE DRAGON AND HELD OUR SACRED HEARTS. RIP KING OF ROCK AND ROLL. **CLIFF, COUNTY DURHAM**

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them). I can remember hearing a track taken from the Elf LP *Carolina County Ball*. I didn't rate the band much but took note of the singer. Then I saw them supporting Purple and thought to myself that the singer was destined for bigger things...

One of my dream bands would be Paul Kossoff on guitar, John Bonham on drums, John Entwistle on bass and Ronnie on vocals. I've got it now.

Big Ox, via classicrockmagazine.com

I was saddened to learn of the death of the great Ronnie James Dio. Unfortunately I never got to see the great man live in any of his incarnations, be it Rainbow, Sabbath or his own mighty band that bore his name. Having said that, his music moved me greatly and what a talent to have... My personal favourite of his was the *Dream Evil* album of 1987, but really how could you pick just one? Also his influence on all those who came in his wake, a veritable who's-who of metal.

As the man himself would say "Look out!" RIP Ronnie and thanks for the memories.

John Keogh, Glasgow

Ronnie James Dio was my hero and always will be. He will be sadly missed but never forgotten. He shall live on through his music. He is our rock and roll angel now. Rock in peace Dio, and long live rock'n'roll.

Hayden Borgars, via email

Dio's death is a stunning and enormous loss for the rock and roll world.

Heralded as one of the greatest voices in rock, Dio fronted not one or two but three of the of the linchpins of 70s rock and 80s metal. With his eponymous band emerging in the early 80s after his exit from Sabbath, Dio carved his face in the Mt Rushmore of metal for all time... *Holy Diver* remains a pristine example of hoodlum-school parking lot-outsider-metal. Only Ozzy's solo rivalled it in its extreme nature for the times – and in direct competition with each other. Ozzy brought out Randy Rhoads and Dio countered with Vivian Campbell. Ozzy bites the head off a bat; Dio slays a dragon on stage. And while Ozzy continued on with enormous commercial success – sacrificing personal integrity and ultimately becoming a parody of his former self – Dio remained true to his art and craft. Happy to play for anyone who would listen with varying levels of success over the years, his appeal never waned.

Indeed my first big date with my now wife was Dio, Deep Purple and the Scorpions. Recently his work with the reformed Dio-era Sabbath – *Heaven And Hell* – yielded a killer new record and subsequent tours, reminding the rock family the world over who the true heavyweights of metal are. He will be missed by many and we have lost a great voice and carrier of the flame.

Charles Owens, via email

than *Rainbow Rising*, *Heaven And Hell* and *Holy Diver*, you'd've still been classed as a genius, but add those all-time classics to the list and you have a body of work that may be unsurpassed in the heavy rock/metal world. *Long Live Rock 'N' Roll*, *Rainbow On Stage*, *The Last In Line*, *Mob Rules*... See what I mean, total genius.

RIP, Ronnie, I'm gonna annoy the piss outta my neighbours now: *Gates Of Babylon*, here I come!

Lee, via classicrockmagazine.com

I had the enormous privilege to see Ronnie over 20 times since 1987 and met him backstage on many occasions. He was the nicest, most amiable fellow every single time I met him. Nothing was too much trouble: photographs, record signings, whatever. It got to the stage that he even remembered my name after a few meetings. Needless to say, I'm crushed and devastated at this loss.

When he believed, we believed. When he said he was "going to kick the hell out of cancer", we wanted to do it for him.

The world is an emptier place today and so is my heart, as well as the hearts of the rest of his fans and especially his family, to whom I send my thoughts, prayers and more love than you can imagine.

Ronnie's next gig will be at the Big Arena, and I betcha he'll have the audience eating out of his

hand at the end of it. Rest in peace, ol' mate. **Marty, via classicrockmagazine.com**

I still remember seeing *Rainbow In The Dark* for the first time on MTV. It was amazing to hear Dio sing and that voice was not only a trademark, but it will forever stand the test of time. I remember wanting to be a performer like Ronnie, even though I never made it, and never really had the pipes. My little garage band tried very hard to be like him. The first time we played *Rainbow In The Dark* it was horrendous but, man, we had fun playing it. Thanks Ronnie for all the music and memories! RIP. You will be sorely missed.

job21, via classicrockmagazine.com

Whilst others applaud him for his vocals and being a gentleman (both deserved of course), I respect Dio for another reason. He is the *only* rock artist I ever saw who, after an experimental move to grungy waters, openly apologised to fans and

admitted he made a mistake – rather than just sheepishly doing a volte-face when the penny dropped. (BTW, why do bands still think a 'newer' metal sound will get them more fans than their 'classic metal' sound did? There isn't one who's proved it yet!)

David Watson, Leeds

I go back to those early days when Elf supported Deep Purple (and it was Coverdale and Hughes's first tour with

RJD: 'Carved his face in the Mt Rushmore of metal.'



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. Who headlined the 1985 Knebworth festival that also had Scorpions, UFO and Meat Loaf on the bill?

2. 'I get the same old dreams, same time every night, fall to the ground and I wake up/ So I get out of bed, put on my shoes, and in my head thoughts fly back to the break-up.' Name this UK Top 10 classic from 1979.

3. Whose 'comeback' was kick-started with a concert at London's Rainbow Theatre in 1973 (later released as an album) with a band that included Steve Winwood, Ronnie Wood and Pete Townshend?

4. Which band recorded the albums *Axe Victim*, *Futurama* and *Sunburst Finish*?

5. Which celebrated British guitarist played on the albums *In A Silent Way* and the jazz-rock milestone *Bitches Brew* by jazz legend Miles Davis?

6. Name any one member of the Kraftwerk line-up that recorded the group's landmark album *Autobahn* in 1974.

7. Which track that includes one of Jimmy Page's favourite guitar solos begins with the verse:

'Your everlasting summer, you can see it fading fast/ So you grab a piece of something that you think is gonna last/ Well you wouldn't even know a diamond if you held it in your hand/ The things you think are precious I can't understand'

8. What was the title of the Police's first single?

8. Whose 1988 album was *Open Up And Say... Aah!*

10. Bassists Jorge Casas and Ricky Phillips, drummer Denny Carmassi and keyboard player Lester Mendel were the backing

band for which high-profile duo's Top 5 album of '93?

11. Which Liverpool-born vocalist/guitarist recorded his Mercury Prize-shortlisted album *Head Like A Rock* in 1994 using Neil Young's one-time backing band Crazy Horse?

12. What is the full title of the Derek And The Dominos album usually referred to as just *Layla*?

13. Which classic 60s song begins with: 'I know you've deceived me, now here's a surprise/ I know that you have cos there's magic in my eyes'?

14. Which British band's huge-in-America debut album, released in 1995, was *Sixteen Stone*?

15. How many albums were recorded by the original line-up of King Crimson that recorded their debut *In The Court Of The Crimson King*?

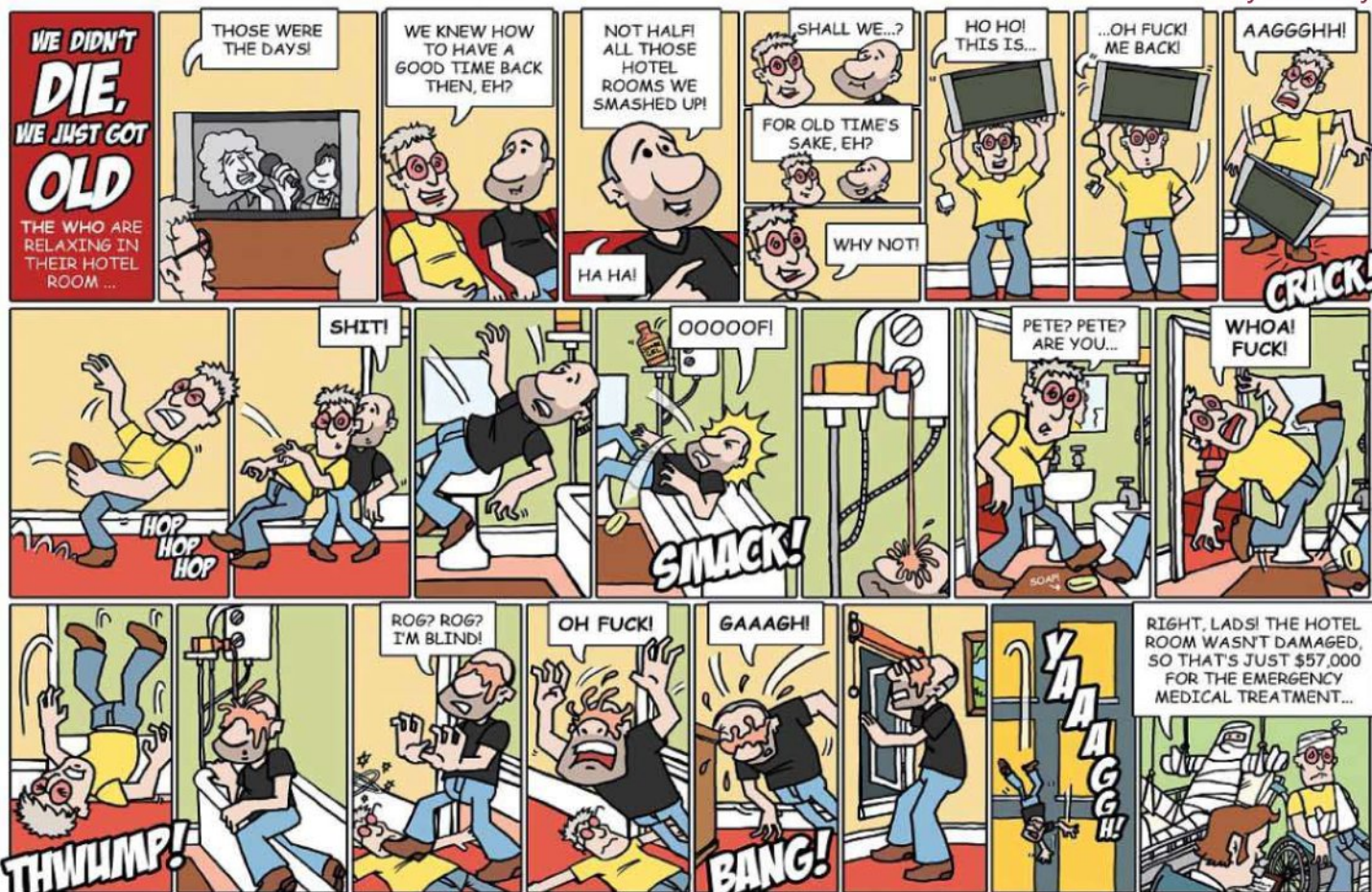
16. Which two former members of Frank Zappa's band were together in the band UK, along with bassist John Wetton?

17. Who replaced Andy Fraser in Free in 1972?

Answers on page 101

Flock Of Numbskulls

By BP Perry



Our answers from page 100: 1. Deep Purple, 2. Since You've Been Gone (Rainbow), 3. Eric Clapton, 4. Be-Bop Deluxe, 5. John McLaughlin, 6. Ralph Hutter, Florian Schneider, Klaus Dederer, Wolfgang Flür, 7. Reelin' In The Years (Steely Dan), 8. Fall Out, 9. Poison, 10. Coverdale, Page, 11. Ian McEwan, 12. Layla And Other Assorted Love Songs, 13. I Can See For Miles (The Who), 14. Bush, 15. Just the One, 16. Terry Bozzio (Drums) and Eddie (Boson Keyboards/Violin), 17. Tetsu Yamauchi, 18. Bum Steers, 19. Blonde On Blonde (Bob Dylan), 20. Blind Melon (Blind Melon), 21. When Dream And Day Unite (Dream Theater), 22. Savage Amusement (Scorpions), 23. El Freak Out! (The Mothers Of Invention), 24. Greatest Hits (Steve Miller Band), 25. Loaded (The Velvet Underground), 26. Indelibly Stamped (Supertamp).

ANGELA LIBRANO/OLIVE PIX



LIVE!

THE HIGH-VOLTAGE
WHAT'S ON GUIDE

BY IAN FORTNAM (REVIEWS) AND DAVE LING (TOURS)

P **108**

Pavement

Was their London show
a walk on the wild side?

P **102** INTERVIEWS

P **105** TOUR DATES

P **108** LIVE REVIEWS



LIVE!

Little Steven:
big on US radio.



ROB MCKIN/GETTY IMAGES

|||||

"I'm very much a 60s guy. I'm not nostalgic about it, I never left it."

Little Steven

The veteran guitarist will be on stage at Hard Rock Calling, but probably not with a guitar.

Besides his roles as Bruce Springsteen's guitarist and Silvio from *The Sopranos*, Steven Van Zandt is a major US radio personality. His syndicated programme *Little Steven's Underground Garage* is heard on more than 200 US stations and also in international markets. Here he discusses curating his own stage at London's Hard Rock Calling festival.

Your radio show has become very popular. After eight years, yes it has. We're just about to do a deal with China. It would be my dream for the BBC to take us on.

In 1984 you described rock'n'roll as "the most effective art form of our time". Do you still feel that way?

Thanks to twittering and video games, we don't seem to be quite as obsessed with it as we once were. People share the music instead of buying

it. But you have to ask yourself: so what replaced it? And I'm not sure anything has.

You've always been a political animal. Is Obama's presidency shaping up?

No. I'm bitterly disappointed. Electing a black president in my country was a huge, huge thing, but it took an economic holocaust to get him into the White House. He's the smartest guy in the room, but he's not street-smart.

Are there any parallels between yourself and your screen character Silvio?

[Laughing] Not really. The only commonality is that, like Silvio, I'm very much a 60s guy. I'm not nostalgic about it, I never left it.

Having signed The Breakers and produced The Cocktail Slippers' new album, there are personal connections with two of the acts

so far announced for your stage at Hard Rock Calling.

There will be up to eight traditional rock'n'roll bands on that stage, also including the Chesterfield Kings, each playing five songs or so. I'm very proud of them all.

Will you be introducing the groups? Perhaps even make guest appearances?

I'll be presenting my bands to the crowd. But jamming? No, not unless Paul [McCartney, who headlines the main stage] asks me [laughs]. **DL**

Hard Rock Calling takes place in London's Hyde Park on June 25-27.



STEVIE STATS

★ Van Zandt hopes to arrange a London club show for the bands on his stage for Monday June 28. Check www.classicrockmagazine.com for details.

★ His next project, with David Chase, creator of *The Sopranos*, is "a rock'n'roll movie" about the British Invasion of the 60s.

★ A DVD of Steven's appearance alongside Springsteen at last year's festival has just been released.

Watch!

This month's unmissable TV, film and web stuff



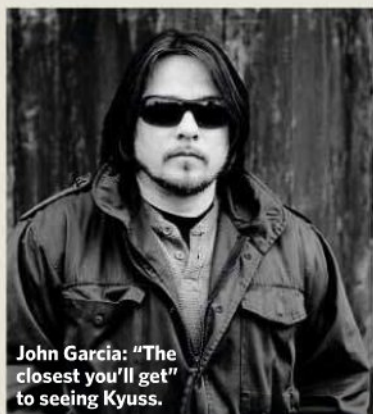
SPEED MACHINE

In the first of a new series of *Time Warp* (Discovery Channel, Monday, July 26, 10pm), see Metallica like you've never seen them before.



GLASTONBURY

Always worth a look, and this year there's some rock down on the farm. Schedules for TV coverage at www.bbc.co.uk/glastonbury/2010/



John Garcia: "The closest you'll get" to seeing Kyuss.

Garcia Plays Kyuss

Doing what the name says.

As co-founder of Kyuss, the hugely influential Desert Rockers from which came part of Queens Of The Stone Age, Them Crooked Vultures, Fu Manchu and many more, vocalist John Garcia explains his decision to revive the group's legacy as Garcia Plays Kyuss.

Why are you paying homage to Kyuss in this way?

Well, I'm excited about bringing these songs back to life as a conduit for my solo project, Garcia Vs Garcia. Not only will you hear Kyuss songs, but also we will do material by [his other post-Kyuss acts] Slo Burn and Unida, and possibly some Garcia Vs Garcia pieces.

So it's not a prelude for a Kyuss reunion?

No. I don't see that happening any time soon. But if you didn't see the band back in the day this is the closest you'll get.

Have you had any feedback from Josh Homme, Nick Oliveri or any of the other former Kyuss members?

I'm hopeful that Nick will be jamming with us in France. Scott Reeder [bass] is okay with me doing this; we're trying to get him over for the London gig.

Having requested input from the fans, is the set-list already determined?

It will change on a nightly basis, depending upon who is on stage. They are fully confirmed, but I really cannot name them.

What can you reveal about Garcia Vs Garcia and its participants?

My wish is that it will include players from all over the world. Ed Mundell [Monster Magnet guitarist] and Trinidad Leal [drummer of Dixie Witch] among the names I hope to persuade to appear. Also Scott Reeder, Nick Oliveri and more. **DL**

Garcia Plays Kyuss play London's Electric Ballroom on July 6.



Jesse Malin (second right) with St Marks Social.

Jesse Malin

The former solo artist returns to the UK with his new band.

After three well-received solo albums and a period of career confusion, New Yorker Jesse Malin introduces his new band the St Marks Social with a lengthy string of dates.

Is it true that you almost gave up making music?

Well, I went through a drought. I was lost a while, but the spurts started to come again and before I knew it I had twenty-three songs.

It's hard to believe that you made a record this important to your career after meeting a producer in a bar then cutting the basic tracks in just three days.

Ted Hutt likes to make records that way. He helped me immensely with the process of editing the material.

What does the new album, *Love It To Life*, tell us about Jesse Malin that we didn't already know?

I don't like to candy-coat the horrible things in the world.

I confront the darker side of life and turn it into something positive. A great show or record can free you from a bad job or a broken heart or a war. I got the title when Joe Strummer wrote those words for me [in an autograph] on a concert ticket.

The St Marks Social are a floating collective of musician friends including Ryan Adams, Mandy Moore, Brian Fallon and former D Generation bandmates Howie Pyro and Danny Sage.

Ryan has contributed his wild genius to a few of my records. The band offers a real mixed bag of talent from under one umbrella.

"The band will be whoever gets past the sniffer dogs."

Who will you have in your band on this tour?

The line-up is being finalised with immigration – it'll be whoever gets past the sniffer dogs. But this record's songs require an extremely capable rhythm section. My past songs were written for a troubadour-punk with an acoustic guitar. Now there's more going on.

Fourteen dates around the UK and Ireland is a real tour.

It sure beats going to Oxford Circus, buying some shoes and then coming home.

You have a fruitful relationship with Ian Hunter, having recorded and toured together. What's he like away from the spotlight?

Inspiring. He's proof that rock'n'roll can be ageless and timeless if you look after yourself. **DL**

Jesse Malin's UK dates end in Norwich on July 10.

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Quality online destinations to visit this month



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Tour Dates

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BRYAN ADAMS

Bradford	St George's Hall	Oct 13
Stoke-on-Trent	Victoria Hall	Oct 14
Birmingham	Alexandra Theatre	Oct 15
Ipswich	Regent	Oct 16
Salford	The Lowry	Oct 17
Gateshead	The Sage	Oct 18
Glasgow	Royal Concert Hall	Oct 19

ALTER BRIDGE

Glasgow	Academy	Oct 16
Newcastle	Academy	Oct 17
Manchester	Academy	Oct 19
Nottingham	Rock City	Oct 20
London	Hammersmith Apollo	Oct 22
Southampton	Guildhall	Oct 23
Birmingham	Academy	Oct 25
Bristol	Colston Hall	Oct 26

AMORPHIS

London	Islington Academy	Nov 11
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ANGEL WITCH, RAMESESSES, GHOST AND MORE

Live Evil Festival	London Underworld	Oct 23/24
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ANVIL

Sheffield	Academy	Jul 7
Bristol	Academy	Jul 8

ARCH ENEMY

Manchester	Academy 2	Nov 23
Glasgow	Garage	Nov 24
Wolverhampton	Wulfrun Hall	Nov 25
London	Kentish Town Forum	Nov 27

BACHMAN & TURNER

High Voltage Festival	London Victoria Park	Jul 25
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BAD RELIGION

Birmingham	Academy	Aug 6
Bristol	Academy	Aug 7
London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Aug 23
Manchester	Academy 2	Aug 24

BAND OF SKULLS

Glastonbury	Festival	Jun 26
Blissfields Festival	Alresford (Hants)	Jul 3
Wakesock Festival	Abersoch	Jul 4
Reading	Festival	Aug 27
Leeds	Festival	Aug 29
London	Kentish Town Forum	Oct 7

JEFF BECK

Bournemouth	BIC	Oct 15
Brighton	Centre	Oct 16
Birmingham	Symphony Hall	Oct 17
Glasgow	Clyde Auditorium	Oct 20
Manchester	Apollo	Oct 21
Sheffield	City Hall	Oct 22
Bristol	Colston Hall	Oct 24
Cardiff	St David's Hall	Oct 25
London	Royal Albert Hall	Oct 26

ADRIAN BELEW

London	Islington Academy	Oct 24
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BIFFY CLYRO

Aberdeen	AECC	Nov 25
Glasgow	SECC	Nov 26/27
Hull	Arena	Nov 29
Nottingham	Arena	Nov 30
Plymouth	Pavilions	Dec 1
Manchester	Central	Dec 3
London	Wembley Arena	Dec 4

BLACK BONZO

London	Kilburn The Luminaire	Jul 23
Rotherham	Wesley Centre	Jul 24

BLACK REBEL MOTORCYCLE CLUB

Nottingham	Rock City	Dec 3
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Manchester	Academy	Dec 5
Glasgow	Academy	Dec 6
Birmingham	Academy	Dec 7
Norwich	UEA	Dec 9
Bristol	Academy	Dec 10
London	Brixton Academy	Dec 11

BLIND GUARDIAN AND STEELWING

London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Sep 26
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BLONDIE AND LITTLE FISH

Belfast	Nugent Hall	Jun 23
Cork	Big Top	Jun 24
London	Kenwood House	Jun 26
Wolverhampton	Civic Hall	Jun 28
Southend-on-Sea	Cliffs Pavilion	Jun 29
London	IndigO2	Jun 30

JOE BONAMASSA

Folkestone	Leas Cliff Hall	Oct 9
Cambridge	Corn Exchange	Oct 10
Bridlington	Spa	Oct 11
Ipswich	Regent	Oct 13
Bristol	Colston Hall	Oct 14
Manchester	Apollo	Oct 15
Newcastle	City Hall	Oct 17
Glasgow	Concert Hall	Oct 18
Leicester	De Montfort Hall	Oct 19

JACKSON BROWNE WITH DAVID LINDLEY

London	Royal Albert Hall	Jun 29
Nottingham	Royal Centre	Jul 1
Liverpool	Echo Arena	Jul 2

JACKSON BROWNE, BUDDY GUY, THE BLOCKHEADS AND MORE

Cornbury Festival	Oxfordshire	Jul 3-4
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BULLET FOR MY VALENTINE

Birmingham	NIA	Dec 6
Manchester	MEN Arena	Dec 8
Glasgow	SECC	Dec 9
Cardiff	CIA	Dec 11
London	Wembley Arena	Dec 12

CHEAP TRICK

Glasgow	ABC	Nov 7
Wolverhampton	Wulfrun Hall	Nov 8
Manchester	Academy 2	Nov 11
London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Nov 12

CHIMAIRA

Bristol	Academy 2	Sep 30
Belfast	Stiff Kitten	Oct 2
Dublin	Academy 2	Oct 3
Colchester	Arts Centre	Oct 5
Norwich	Waterfront	Oct 6
Portsmouth	Wedgewood Rooms	Oct 7
Stoke-on-Trent	Sugarhill	Oct 8
Leeds	Cockpit	Oct 9
Manchester	Academy 3	Oct 10
Aberdeen	Warehouse	Oct 12
Glasgow	King Tut's Wah Wah Hut	Oct 13
Liverpool	Academy 2	Oct 14
London	Manette Street Borderline	Oct 15
Oxford	Academy 2	Oct 17

COHEED AND CAMBRIA

Newcastle	Academy	Jun 23
London	Kentish Town Forum	Jun 24

CROSBY, STILLS & NASH

Dublin	O2 Arena	Jul 1
London	Royal Albert Hall	Jul 3/4
Glasgow	SECC	Jul 6
Liverpool	Echo Arena	Jul 7

DARK TRANQUILLITY AND INSOMNIUM

London	Camden Underworld	Sep 28
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JOE BONAMASSA



Many people say the blues is in good hands with Joe. Catch one of his shows in October and see why.

Folkestone	Leas Cliff Hall	Oct 9	Manchester	Apollo	Oct 15
Cambridge	Corn Exchange	Oct 10	Newcastle	City Hall	Oct 17
Bridlington	Spa	Oct 11	Glasgow	Concert Hall	Oct 18
Ipswich	Regent	Oct 13	Leicester	De Montfort Hall	Oct 19
Bristol	Colston Hall	Oct 14			

DIAMOND HEAD

Cork	An Cruiscin Lan	Nov 18
Dublin	Fibber McGee's Rock Bar	Nov 19
Belfast	Spring & Airbrake	Nov 20
Dundalk	The Spirit Store	Nov 21
Hard Rock Hell	Prestatyn	Dec 3
Northampton	Athletic Club	Dec 4

DR JOHN

Glastonbury	Festival	Jun 27
Wavendon	The Stables	Jun 28
Cornbury Festival	Oxfordshire	Jul 3
London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Jul 4
Manchester	Royal College Of Northern Music	Jul 6
Tunbridge Wells	Assembly Hall	Jul 7

BOB DYLAN, VAN MORRISON, RAY DAVIES AND MORE

Hop Farm Festival	Paddock Wood	Jul 2/3
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Recommended DRIVE-BY TRUCKERS

Manchester	University	Nov 12
Birmingham	Academy	Nov 13
London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Nov 14
Brighton	Concorde 2	Nov 15

EARTHTONE9 AND MORE

Damnation Festival	Leeds University	Nov 6
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ECHO & THE BUNNYMEN

Birmingham	Academy	Dec 4
Glasgow	Academy	Dec 8
London	Brixton Academy	Dec 9
Liverpool	Olympia	Dec 11

EELS

V Festival	Stafford	Aug 21
V Festival	Chelmsford	Aug 22
Glasgow	Academy	Aug 24
Birmingham	Academy	Aug 26
London	Brixton Academy	Sep 1
County Laois	Electric Picnic	Sep 3
Manchester	Academy	Sep 4

EMERSON LAKE & PALMER, ZZ TOP, FOREIGNER AND MORE

High Voltage Festival	London Victoria Park	Jul 24/25
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THE ENID

Cambridge	Rock Festival	Aug 8
Maidstone	Hazlitt Theatre	Sep 24

MELISSA ETHERIDGE

Hard Rock Calling	London Hyde Park	Jun 26
London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	June 29

EVERY TIME I DIE, TERROR AND ALL SHALL PERISH

Colchester	Arts Centre	Sep 21
Plymouth	White Rabbit	Sep 22
Manchester	Moho Live	Sep 23
Sheffield	Corporation	Sep 24
London	Islington Academy	Sep 25

THE FABULOUS THUNDERBIRDS

Wavendon	The Stables	Jul 12
Cardiff	The Globe	Jul 13
London	Camden Dingwalls	Jul 14

FAIRPORT CONVENTION, LITTLE FEAT, RICK WAKEMAN AND MORE

Cropredy Festival	Banbury	Aug 12-14
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FEEDER

Wakesock Festival	Abersoch	Jul 3
Big Weekend	Cardiff	Aug 1
Belladrum Festival	Inverness	Aug 6
Belfast	Mandela Hall	Aug 18
Dublin	Academy	Aug 19
V Festival	Chelmsford	Aug 21
V Festival	Staffordshire	Aug 22
Leeds	Metropolitan University	Oct 21
Glasgow	ABC	Oct 22
Manchester	Academy 2	Oct 24
Wolverhampton	Wulfrun Hall	Oct 25
Bristol	Academy	Oct 27
London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Oct 28
Oxford	Academy	Oct 30
Southampton	University	Oct 31

FEAR FACTORY

Sheffield	Corporation	Aug 4
Bloodstock Festival	Derby	Aug 14

FM

Cardiff	Millennium Plaza	Jul 8
London	Islington Academy	Jul 9

FOCUS

High Voltage Festival	London Victoria Park	Jul 24
Tavistock	The Wharf	Oct 1
Falmouth	Princess Pavilion	Oct 2

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BILBAO BBK LIVE If you only go to one festival across the Channel this summer, make sure it's this one in Spain (www.bilbaobbklive.com) featuring Rammstein, Alice In Chains, Slayer, Manics and more.



THE QUIREBOYS Whether the sun's shining or it's pissing down, end the day with a smile on your face by grabbing a few beers and catching the 'Boys' infectious good-time vibes.



HIGH VOLTAGE FESTIVAL It's got headliners ZZ Top and ELP. It's got the Classic Rock Stage, the Prog Stage and the Metal Hammer Stage. There'll be beer on sale. What's left to say?





LIVE!

Poole	Mr Kyp's	Oct 3
Bilston	Robin 2	Oct 4
Bristol	The Tunnels	Oct 5
Newcastle	The Cluny	Oct 6
Manchester	Academy 3	Oct 7
Holmfirth	Picturedrome	Oct 8
Glasgow	The Ferry	Oct 9
Liverpool	Baby Blue	Oct 10
Stratford-On-Avon	Cox's Yard	Oct 11
Wavendon	The Stables	Oct 12
Cardiff	The Globe	Oct 13
Chislehurst	Beaverwood Club	Oct 14
Southampton	The Brook	Oct 15
Bury St Edmunds	The Apex	Oct 16
Letchworth	Plinston Hall	Oct 17

FREAK KITCHEN

Manchester	Moho Live	Nov 8
Glasgow	Cathouse	Nov 10
London	Camden Underworld	Nov 12

FRONT LINE ASSEMBLY

Sheffield	Corporation	Jul 18
Glasgow	Classic Grand	Jul 19
London	Islington Academy	Jul 20

FROST* AND JON JOWITT'S ARK

London	Islington Academy	Dec 3
Manchester	Academy	Dec 4
Bilston	Robin 2	Dec 5

FUNERAL FOR A FRIEND

Cardiff	University	Jul 22
London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Jul 23

GALLOWES, KNUCKLEDUST AND MORE

Ghostfest	Leeds University	Jun 26/27
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JOHN GARCIA PLAYS KYUSS

London	Camden Electric Ballroom	Jul 6
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THE GASLIGHT ANTHEM

Glasgow	ABC	Jun 23
Manchester	Academy 1	Jun 24
London	Brixton Academy	Jun 26
Oxford	Academy	Jun 29

THE GODFATHERS

Rebellion Festival	Blackpool	Aug 7
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GONG AND NIK TURNER'S SPACE RITUAL

Glasgow	ABC	Sep 9
Manchester	Academy	Sep 10
London	Kentish Town Forum	Sep 11
Birmingham	Institute	Sep 20

GRINDERMAN

September	Nottingham	Rock City Sep 25
Leeds	Metropolitan University	Sep 27
Glasgow	Barrowland	Sep 28
Manchester	Academy	Sep 29
London	Hammersmith Apollo	Oct 1

Recommended

GUNS N' ROSES, BLINK 182, QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE AND MORE

Reading	Festival	Aug 27-29
Leeds	Festival	Aug 27-29

BUDDY GUY

Manchester	Bridgewater Hall	Jul 4
London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Jul 5

STEVE HACKETT & HIS ELECTRIC BAND

Manchester	Academy	Nov 19
Pontadawe	Arts Centre	Nov 20
Brighton	Komedia	Nov 23
Bath	Komedia	Nov 25
Holmfirth	Picturedrome	Nov 26
Birkenhead	Pacific Road Arts Centre	Nov 27
Gateshead	The Sage	Nov 28
Bilston	Robin 2	Nov 29
London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Nov 30

ROGER WATERS



The former Pink Floyd man takes a production of his *The Wall* on the road one last time. Miss it and weep.

London	O2 Arena	May 11, 12, 14, 15, 17	Dublin	O2 Arena	May 23
Manchester	MEN Arena	May 20/21			



Cambridge	Junction	Dec 2
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HAZE

Kingston	The Peel	Sep 18
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GLENN HUGHES

Manchester	Academy	Sep 23
Holmfirth	Picturedrome	Sep 24
Glasgow	ABC	Sep 25
Gateshead	The Sage	Sep 27
Bilston	Robin 2	Sep 28
Nottingham	Rescue Rooms	Sep 29
Falmouth	Pavilion	Oct 1
Exeter	Phoenix	Oct 2
London	Islington Academy	Oct 5

GLENN HUGHES, MAGNUM, MARTIN TURNER'S WISHBONE ASH AND MORE

Rock & Blues Show	Pentrich	Jul 29-Aug 1
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IHSAHN

London	Camden Electric Ballroom	Aug 19
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IRON MAIDEN

Dublin	O2 Arena	Jun 30
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IRON MAIDEN, RAMMSTEIN, ALICE COOPER AND MORE

Sonisphere Festival	Knebworth	Jul 31/Aug 1
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JAMESON RAID

Bilston	Robin 2	Jul 18
Birmingham	Academy	Jul 23

WILKO JOHNSON & BAND AND MARK RADCLIFFE & THE BIG FIGURES

Pontadawe	Arts Centre	Nov 3
Islington	Academy	Nov 4
Exeter	Phoenix	Nov 5
Penzance	Acorn	Nov 6
Brighton	Komedia	Nov 10
Birkenhead	Pacific Road Arts Centre	Nov 11
Bilston	Robin 2	Nov 12
Holmfirth	Picturedrome	Nov 13
Glasgow	ABC 2	Nov 19
Manchester	Academy	Nov 20
Gateshead	The Sage	Nov 21

KILLING JOKE

Edinburgh	Picturehouse	Oct 15
London	Hammersmith Apollo	Oct 16

KINGS OF LEON

London	Hyde Park	Jun 30
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KINGS OF LEON, STEREOHONICS, KASABIAN AND MORE

V Festival	Chelmsford Hylands Park	Aug 21/22
V Festival	Staffordshire Weston Park	Aug 21/22

KIUAS, METSATÖLL AND CELESTY

Wrexham	Central Station	Oct 20
Sheffield	Corporation	Oct 22
Glasgow	Ivory Blacks	Oct 23
Nottingham	Basement	Oct 24
London	Camden Underworld	Oct 26

ED KOWALCZYK

London	Camden Koko	Aug 26
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JOHN LEES' BARCLAY JAMES HARVEST

London	Islington Academy	Nov 26
Manchester	Academy	Nov 27
York	Opera House	Nov 28

LIFEHOUSE

London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Oct 4
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JESSE MALIN AND THE ST MARKS SOCIAL

Bristol	Thekla	Jun 23
Birmingham	Academy 3	Jun 25
Nottingham	Rescue Rooms	Jun 28
Newcastle	Academy 2	Jun 29
Edinburgh	Cabaret Voltaire	Jun 30
Glasgow	Oran Mor	Jul 1
Belfast	Auntie Annie's	Jul 3
Dublin	Academy 2	Jul 4
Liverpool	Academy 2	Jul 5
Cardiff	Club Ifor Bach	Jul 6
Manchester	Ruby Lounge	Jul 7
London	Islington Academy	Jul 8
Northampton	Roadmender	Jul 9
Norwich	Arts Centre	Jul 10

MANIC STREET PREACHERS

Glasgow	Academy	Sep 29
Aberdeen	Music Hall	Sep 30
Edinburgh	Corn Exchange	Oct 2
Carlisle	Sands Centre	Oct 3
Hull	City Hall	Oct 5
Sheffield	Academy	Oct 6
Liverpool	University	Oct 8
Blackburn	King George's Hall	Oct 9
Leeds	Academy	Oct 11

Derby	Assembly Rooms	Oct 12
Manchester	Apollo	Oct 14
Lincoln	Engine Shed	Oct 16
Norwich	UEA	Oct 17
Southampton	Guildhall	Oct 19
Southend-on-Sea	Cliffs Pavilion	Oct 20
Bournemouth	Academy	Oct 22
Newport	Centre	Oct 23
Bristol	Colston Hall	Oct 25
Birmingham	Academy	Oct 26
London	Brixton Academy	Oct 28
Leicester	De Montfort Hall	Oct 31
Cambridge	Corn Exchange	Nov 1

GUY MANNING

Kingston	The Peel	Oct 23
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RAY MANZAREK & ROBBY KRIEGER OF THE DOORS

London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Jul 16
Wolverhampton	Civic Hall	Jul 18

MARSEILLE

New Brighton	Floral Pavilion	Jul 25
Sutton in Ashfield	The Diamond	Sep 24
Hanley	Victoria Hall	Oct 31

RICHARD MARX

London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Nov 18
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STEVE MILLER BAND

London	Royal Albert Hall	Oct 7
Manchester	Apollo	Oct 8

THE MOODY BLUES

Brighton	Centre	Sep 7
Plymouth	Pavilions	Sep 8
Cardiff	St David's Hall	Sep 10
Birmingham	LG Arena	Sep 11
Sheffield	City Hall	Sep 12
Manchester	Apollo	Sep 14
Newcastle	City Hall	Sep 15
Liverpool	Philharmonic	Sep 16
Nottingham	Royal Concert Hall	Sep 18
Ipswich	Regent	Sep 19
Oxford	New Theatre	Sep 20
Bristol	Hippodrome	Sep 22
Bournemouth	BIC	Sep 23
London	O2 Arena	Sep 24

MOSTLY AUTUMN

Cambridge	Rock Festival	Aug 8
York	Opera House	Dec 4

MOTÖRHEAD

Aberdeen	Music Hall	Nov 8
Glasgow	Academy	Nov 9
Newcastle	City Hall	Nov 10
Blackburn	King George's Hall	Nov 12
Llandudno	Arena	Nov 13
Derby	Assembly Rooms	Nov 15
Manchester	Apollo	Nov 16
Leicester	De Montfort Hall	Nov 18
Bristol	Colston Hall	Nov 19
Southampton	Guildhall	Nov 21
Cambridge	Corn Exchange	Nov 22
Wolverhampton	Civic Hall	Nov 24
Leeds	Academy	Nov 25
London	Brixton Academy	Nov 27
Brighton	Centre	Nov 28

NELSON, LYNCH MOB, STRANGEWAYS AND MORE

Firefest	Nottingham Rock City	Oct 30/31
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NEUROSIS, GODSPEED YOU! BLACK EMPEROR AND MORE

Nightmare Before Christmas	Minehead	Dec 3-5
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NEW MODEL ARMY

London	Kentish Town Forum	Dec 3/4
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OCEAN COLOUR SCENE

Manchester	Apollo	Oct 9
London	Royal Albert Hall	Oct 10

ORPHANED LAND

London	Camden Underworld	Jun 27
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PARAMORE

Liverpool	Echo Arena	Nov 10
Sheffield	Arena	Nov 11
London	O2 Arena	Nov 13
Birmingham	LG Arena	Nov 16
Newcastle	Metro Radio Arena	Nov 18
Aberdeen	AEC	Nov 20

PARKWAY DRIVE, COMEBACK KID AND MORE

Birmingham	Academy	Oct 31
Newcastle	Academy	Nov 1
Glasgow	ABC	Nov 2
London	Kentish Town Forum	Nov 3
Portsmouth	Pyramid Centre	Nov 4
Manchester	Academy	Nov 5

PEARL JAM

Dublin	O2 Arena	Jun 22
Belfast	Odyssey Arena	Jun 23

PEARL JAM, PAUL McCARTNEY, CROSBY, STILLS & NASH AND MORE

Hard Rock Calling	London Hyde Park	Jun 25-27
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PENDRAGON

High Voltage Festival	London Victoria Park	Jul 24
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POINT BLANK, SIMON MCBRIDE AND MORE

Blues On The Farm Festival	Chichester	Jun 17-20
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PORCUPINE TREE

London	Royal Albert Hall	Oct 14
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PRIMAL SCREAM

London	Olympia	Nov 27
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THE PRODIGY

Milton Keynes	Bowl	Jul 24
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THE PSYCHEDELIC FURS

Frome	Cheese & Grain	Oct 24
Manchester	The Ritz	Oct 26
Birmingham	Institute	Oct 27
London	Kentish Town Forum	Oct 28
Glasgow	ABC	Oct 29

PUBLIC IMAGE LTD

London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Jul 19
Bristol	Academy	Jul 20
Oxford	Academy	Jul 21
Leeds	Academy	Jul 23
Liverpool	Academy	Jul 24
Glasgow	ABC	Jul 26

QUINTESSENCE

Glastonbury	Festival	Jun 27
Leeds	TJ's Woodhouse	Jul 23

THE QUIREBOYS

Bristol	Academy	Jul 29
Oxford	Academy	Jul 30
Liverpool	Academy	July 31

THE REASONING

Kingston	The Peel	Jul 23
High Voltage Festival	London Victoria Park	Jul 25

REEF

Glastonbury	Festival	Jun 26
Cornbury Festival	Oxford	Jul 4
Music Live Festival	Bingley	Sep 4
Lemonfest	Newton Abbot	Sep 18
Truro	Hall For Cornwall	Nov 26
Portsmouth	Pyramid Centre	Nov 27
London	Kentish Town Forum	Dec 2
Wolverhampton	Wulfrun Hall	Dec 3
Nottingham	Rock City	Dec 4

ROXY MUSIC, THE PRODIGY AND MORE

Bestival	Isle of Wight	Sep 9-12
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SABATON AND ALESTORM

Manchester	Academy 2	Oct 11
Glasgow	Garage	Oct 12
London	Camden Electric Ballroom	Oct 14
Wolverhampton	Slade Rooms	Oct 15
Sheffield	Corporation	Oct 16

SLASH

New songs, old songs, bluesy rockers and Guns songs...
Slash's shows should be crackers; Axl just *is* crackers.

Glastonbury	Festival	Jun 27	Edinburgh	Picturehouse	Jul 1
Dublin	Vicar Street	Jun 29	Manchester	Academy	Jul 3
Belfast	Mandela Hall	Jun 30	Wireless Festival	London Hyde Park	Jul 4

Brighton	Concorde 2	Oct 17
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SABBAT

Bristol	Bierkeller	Aug 16
Leeds	Joseph's Well	Aug 17
Glasgow	Ivory Blacks	Aug 18
Nottingham	Rock City	Aug 20
London	Camden Underworld	Aug 21
Wrexham	Central Station	Aug 22

SANTANA

London	O2 Arena	Oct 1
Manchester	MEN Arena	Oct 2
Newcastle	Metro Radio Arena	Oct 3

JOE SATRIANI

Manchester	Apollo	Oct 17
Bristol	Colston Hall	Oct 18
London	Hammersmith Apollo	Oct 19
Newcastle	City Hall	Oct 21
Glasgow	Clyde Auditorium	Oct 22
Birmingham	Symphony Hall	Oct 23

SEPULTURA

Bristol	Bierkeller	Jul 14
Sheffield	Corporation	Jul 15
Cardiff	Millennium Music Hall	Jul 16
Wolverhampton	Wulfrun Hall	Jul 17
Dublin	Academy	Jul 18
Reading	Sub 89	Jul 20
Norwich	Waterfront	Jul 21
London	King's Cross Scala	Jul 22

SEPULTURA, NAPALM DEATH, GLASSJAW AND MORE

Heavy Music Festival	Kent	August 6-8
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SLASH

Glastonbury	Festival	Jun 27
Dublin	Vicar Street	Jun 29
Belfast	Mandela Hall	Jun 30
Edinburgh	Picturehouse	Jul 1
Manchester	Academy	Jul 3
Wireless Festival	London Hyde Park	Jul 4

PATTI SMITH

London Hyde Park	Serpentine Sessions	Jun 29
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SOLSTICE

Weyfest	Farnham	Sep 5
Kingston	The Peel	Sep 11
Stantonbury	Campus Theatre	Sep 14

Swindon	Riffs Bar	Sep 17
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STATUS QUO, HAWKWIND AND MORE

Guilfest	Guildford	Jul 16-18
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SUPERTRAMP

London	O2 Arena	Oct 6
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SWANS

Cork	Cyprus Avenue	Oct 21
Dublin	Button Factory	Oct 22
Birmingham	Supersonic Festival	Oct 24
Glasgow	Arches	Oct 25
Brighton	Concorde 2	Oct 27
London	Camden Koko	Oct 28
Leeds	University Stylus	Oct 29
Manchester	Academy	Oct 30

TERRORVISION

Holmfirth	Picturedrome	Jul 16
Bristol	Fleece & Firkin	Jul 17
Cardiff	Millennium Music Hall	Jul 18
Bolton	Soundhouse	Jul 23
Splendour Festival	Nottingham	Jul 24
Bilston	Robin 2	Jul 25
Sonisphere	Knebworth	Jul 30

THERION

London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Oct 31
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TIGERTAILZ

Newcastle	Legends	Jul 2
Wolverhampton	Slade Rooms	Jul 3
Cardiff	Millennium Music Hall	Sep 30
Hard Rock Hell	Prestatyn	Dec 2

TOUCHSTONE AND TINYFISH

Kingston	The Peel	Dec 11
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TOUCHSTONE

Kingston	The Peel	Dec 11
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ROBIN TROWER

Cardiff	The Globe	Sep 8
Bilston	Robin 2	Sep 9
Birkenhead	Pacific Arts Centre	Sep 10
Glasgow	Academy	Sep 11
Holmfirth	Picturedrome	Sep 12
Norwich	Waterfront	Sep 15
Newcastle	Academy	Sep 16
London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Sep 18
Bath	Komedia	Sep 22

Cornwall	St Ives Festival	Sep 23
Barnstaple	Queen's Hall	Sep 24
Sevenoaks	Stag Theatre	Sep 25
Brighton	Komedia	Sep 26

FRANK TURNER

London	Brixton Academy	Dec 12
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TWELFTH NIGHT

Kingston	The Peel	Aug 14
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TWISTED SISTER, CANNIBAL CORPSE,**ROSS THE BOSS AND MORE**

Bloodstock Festival	Derby Catton Hall	Aug 13-15
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JUDIE TZUKE

London	Islington Union Chapel	Oct 7
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MUSE, SLASH AND MORE

Glastonbury	Festival	Jun 25-27
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Recommended**UFO, URIAH HEPP, SKID ROW, MICHAEL SCHENKER GROUP AND MORE**

Hard Rock Hell	Prestatyn	Dec 3-5
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JIMMIE VAUGHAN & THE TILT-A-WHIRL BAND

Festival Of Speed	Goodwood	Jul 2
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DANNY VAUGHN

Belfast	Rosetta Bar	Dec 3
London	Camden Underworld	Dec 4
Sheffield	Corporation	Dec 5
Dudley	JBs	Dec 10
Newcastle	The Cluny	Dec 11
Glasgow	ABC2	Dec 12

ROGER WATERS

London	O2 Arena	May 11, 12, 14, 15, 17
Manchester	MEN Arena	May 20/21
Dublin	O2 Arena	May 23

WIG WAM, PAUL LAINE, VON GROOVE AND MORE

Z Rock Festival	Dudley JB's	Oct 2
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WILCO

Belfast	Open House Festival	Sep 10
Dorset	End Of The Road Festival	Sep 12
London	Royal Festival Hall	Sep 14
Newcastle	Academy	Sep 15
Glasgow	Barrowland	Sep 16

Y&T

Belfast	Spring & Airbrake	Sep 27
Dublin	The Village	Sep 28
Cardiff Millennium	Music Hall	Sep 30
Manchester	Academy	Oct 1
Leeds	Rio's	Oct 2
Glasgow	Academy	Oct 7
Newcastle	Academy	Oct 8
Nottingham	Rock City	Oct 9
Ipswich	Corn Exchange	Oct 12
Southampton	The Brook	Oct 14
Birmingham	Academy	Oct 15
London	Islington Academy	Oct 16

THOM YORKE, MASSIVE ATTACK AND MORE

Herefordshire	Big Chill Festival	Aug 5-8
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YOU ME AT SIX

Leeds	Festival	Aug 28
Reading	Festival	Aug 29
Edinburgh	Corn Exchange	Dec 4/5
Wolverhampton	Civic Hall	Dec 6/7
Bournemouth	BIC	Dec 9
Doncaster	Dome	Dec 10
Manchester	Apollo	Dec 12/13
London	Hammersmith Apollo	Dec 15/16



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LIVE!

Hole

London Brixton Academy

Replaying Hole's glory days.

★ Say what you like about Courtney Love, but at least you know there'll never be a dull moment when she's performing. The woman is a human tornado. Drama is her oxygen. She invites it into her house as willingly as Sookie Stackhouse with a whole platoon of vampires. So Brixton Academy is primed for mayhem when she careers into town.

Support band Little Fish have a lovable eccentricity of their own, frontwoman Julia's wonderful, theatrical vocals suggesting a kinship with Patti Smith and Siouxsie Sioux.

But this was always going to be the Love show – this is Hole only in the sense that Axl Rose is Guns N' Roses these days. Courtney is in a playful, if needy mood, demanding for the house lights to be raised because "I need to know you love me and I can't even see you".

Despite the fact that by the end of the show she's stripped to her underwear, pulled out a hair extension and invited a punter from the crowd to sing *Doll Parts* with her, the show unfolds into a relatively focused affair, her lioness's rasp of a voice propelling brilliant old favourites like *Violet* and *Asking For It*, while rollicking covers of *Sympathy For The Devil* and Nine Inch Nails' pervtastic *Closer* suggest a knowing wink at her own reputation. While tonight may lack the irreplaceable chemistry of the 90s line-up, Hole 2010 offer an exuberant replay of the grunge glory days.

Emma Johnston



Courtney Love: in a playful, if needy mood.

C. BRADONIGIS STEWART/GETTY IMAGES

Dead Confederate

London Camden Barfly

Southern space-rock magnificence.

★ Now this might not be the full reason behind the choice of name, but it's certainly something of a compelling coincidence that, were you to flashback to 1860s America, you could happily cast four fifths of their bearded number as ghosts of a civil war battlefield. That singer/guitarist Hardy Morris – whose angular features and unkempt hair put him close to an Edward Furlong in his prime – is such a noticeable odd man out is a point of entertainment in itself.

Still, if it's the most obvious of the anomalies presented by this quintet tonight, it's the least interesting by a long stretch. Far more engrossing is the fact that DC can turn their country-tinged alt-rock, so haunting on 2008's *Wrecking Ball*, into an airwaves-saturating beast of elemental fury far greater than the sum of its parts. Or the fact that they're masters at mixing small-town sincerity and backroom-bar rawness with a sense of epic ambition with a much greater reach. As *Heavy Petting* and *Wrecking Ball* explode into white-hot psych wipeouts, you can see why DC were already underground conquerors before they even had a record out. With their second imminent, don't be surprised to see them take over.

Catherine Yates

Francis Rossi

London Her Majesty's Theatre

A nervous showing, despite his status.

★ Francis Rossi is not so much a reluctant solo artist, more an exceedingly nervous one. Reportedly, on the opening night of this, his first tour away from Status Quo, Rossi – who has played gigs of all shapes and sizes since the Samuel Jones Sports Club in 1963 – almost had to be forced on stage.

During this concluding date Francis chunters away about the pressure of playing for a London crowd's guest list, apologising in advance for any screw-ups. There's no need. Backed by a well-drilled five-piece band that includes his son Nick and Quo bassist John Edwards' son Freddie on guitars, he defies the ostentatious surroundings of Her Majesty's to put on a convincing rock'n'roll show.

It helps that Rossi's second solo album, *One Step At A Time*, is not the slice of lame country & western dreaded by so many. After beginning with a honky-tonk version of Quo's perennial *Caroline*, followed by *Claudia*, another gem from *Hello!*, the next 90 minutes dovetail the new, the old and the inevitable – yes, regrettably, they do play *Marguerita Time* – although surprise inclusions such as *Can't Give You More* – soothe away any sickly *Marguerita*... aftertaste.

Dave Ling

Slayer

London The Forum

One of the Big Four become the Big One.

★ Leather-clad generations of metalheads are welcoming the most blackened of thrashists back to the fold in time-honoured tradition: "Slayer! Slayer! Slayer!..." With the Big Four shows just two weeks away, this first of two nights should be special.

Opening salvo *World Painted Blood* is a leisurely affair played at polite volume when ears should be bleeding, and even *South Of Heaven* comes across as sluggish. *Angel Of Death* couldn't fail to inspire and meet with mass approval, but even that doesn't slay.

By the second night it's anyone's guess whether Kerry King and company are faltering. But it's just after *World Painted Blood*, when a mosher at the front goes down, Tom stops the show and a space is cleared, that the fraternity and community of metalheads shines through. It takes a nail-biting 25 minutes for ambulances to arrive, and the unfortunate headbanger is carried off on a stretcher like a fallen hero to thunderous applause. It primes the crowd for an abbreviated set of greatest hits: a colossal *Blood Red*, the blitzkrieg attack of *War Ensemble*...

Tonight Slayer are an oiled killing machine. If you're in Megadeth, Metallica, or Anthrax, then be afraid.

Alexander Milas

Taylor Hawkins & The Coattail Riders

London The Scala

Foo Fighter branches out.

★ So, how many people have come along tonight to discover who the well-connected Hawkins would have guesting? Probably quite a few in the packed venue. Yet while there are enough big names to impress – apart from the hoped-for Dave Grohl – what tonight's show proves above all else is that the band are far more than a vanity vehicle for the Foo Fighters drummer.

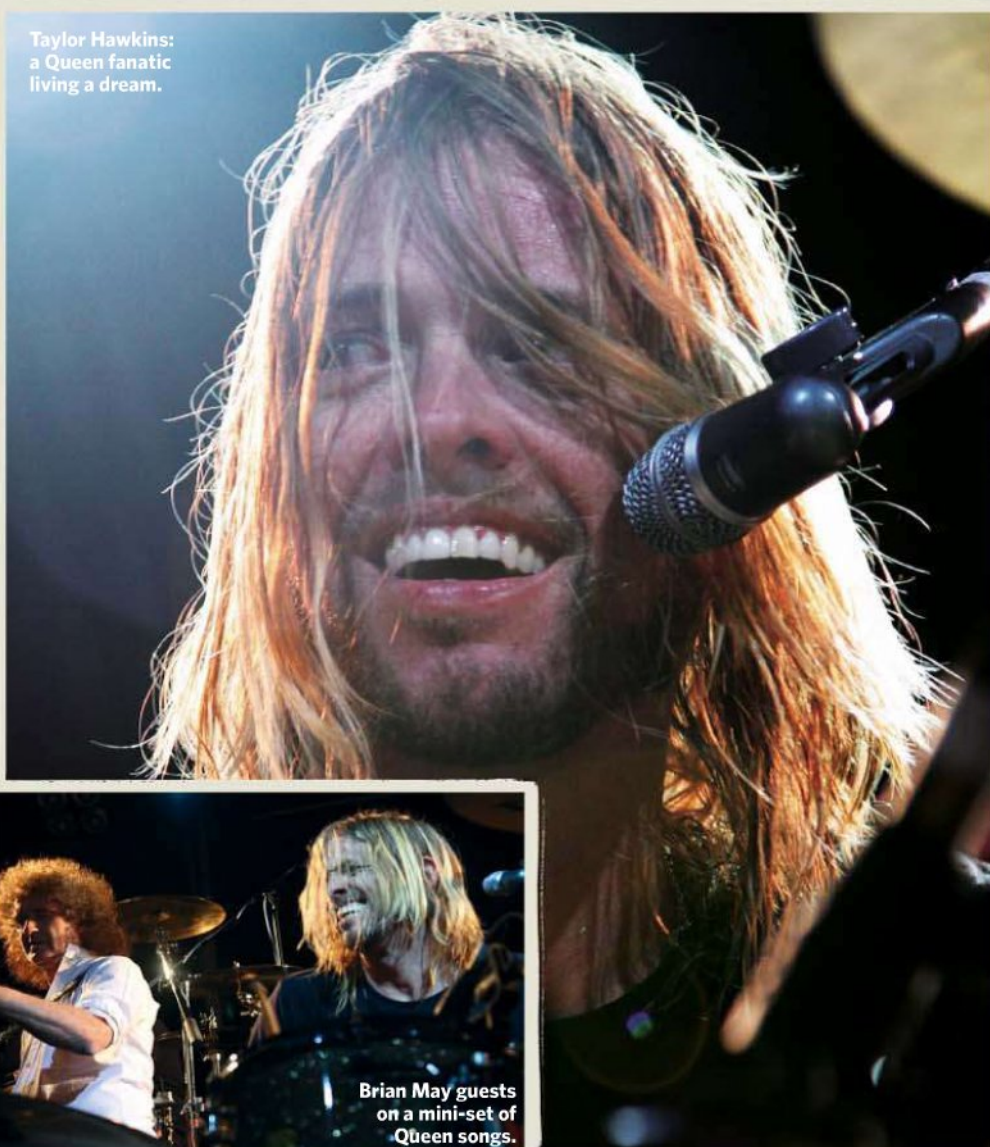
Drawing predominantly on current album *Red Light Fever*, they explode with a delightful poise somewhere between the pop-rockist plunder of the Foos, the lush melodies of Queen and the quirkiness of The Cars. Moreover, sitting behind his comparatively small kit, Hawkins looks comfortable handling the spotlight and vocals.

The first guest on stage is Yes bassist Chris Squire for *Cold Day In The Sun*. But the real fun gets underway when Queen pair Brian May and Roger Taylor (plus the latter's son Rufus) come on for *In Your Shoes*. This leads into a mini-Queen set (without Rufus) featuring *I'm In Love With My Car*, *Sleeping On The Sidewalk*, and *Long Away* which even Queen never performed live – as the Coattail Riders' leader proudly points out to an astonished May – and *Tenement Funster*.

For Queen fanatic Hawkins it's a dream come true. But it says a lot for his band that it's a highlight which doesn't overshadow the overall experience.

Malcolm Dome

Taylor Hawkins: a Queen fanatic living a dream.



Brian May guests on a mini-set of Queen songs.

Enforcer / Cauldron

Leeds The Well

Smokin' old-school metal from Sweden.

★ Cauldron's dedication to the revival of classic metal is total. With band members sporting a selection of vintage T-shirts (bought on eBay, presumably), and in frontman Jason Decay's case the sort of layered Barnet that would have seemed retro in 1990, they sound like they look – rockin'.

Sweden's Enforcer are one of the bands of the current new wave of old-school metal. With a killer collection of future cult anthems to draw on, it's a shame they only play for a paltry 25 minutes. While they're pounding it out, however, they're totally committed. The sartorial confusion among them is almost as endearing as their music; they've nailed the 80s any way you slice it. Frontman Olof Wikstrand's look is both bitchin' and historically correct, guitarist Adam Zaars's is a meaner, moodier ensemble. Bassist Tobias Lindkvist makes up for his repulsive vest with the mania of his performance. Sparking up a fag on stage looks as casually cool as it ever did, but these days we live in a Brave New World of rules and regulations, so after barely a puff it's plucked from Lindkvist's gob by helpful staff. There's probably a metaphor in there somewhere.

Greg Moffitt

Pavement

London Brixton Academy

A tale of two personalities.

★ While not exactly Whitesnake, Pavement are much more of a *Classic Rock* band than would at first seem probable. They are certainly powered by the same rifts as many of rock's famous tattooed millionaires of a certain vintage. In fact it was the ever widening gaps between the increasingly 70s FM rock-influenced Stephen Malkmus and the rest of the band that split them originally in 1999. Differences have finally been put aside for these much anticipated comeback gigs, however, thanks to largely ignored solo projects and debt.

At one end of the scale is Malkmus, who never warms beyond tepid even when roaring the lyrics to *Stereo*. At the other end is percussionist Bob Nastanovich, who bounds around like a man presented with a bag of crystal meth as his coming-out-of-jail present. The high point of the evening for the sold-out Academy bar one person is an mass singalong to *Cut Your Hair*. (That one person being *Classic Rock*'s friend from Hull who, overcome with 'emotion', gets lost on the way back from the bar and ends up accidentally walking out on stage with a tray full of lagers during *Range Life*.)

John Doran

Wishbone Ash / Mostly Autumn / Panic Room

London Shepherd's Bush Empire

It's Ash, captain, but not as we want it.

★ With members taken from Karnataka, Mostly Autumn and Fish's band, Panic Room are less prog-orientated than one might expect. Fronted by the belting-voiced Anne-Marie Helder, the group's songs are marvellously immediate, especially the excellent set-closer *Satellite*.

Special Guests Mostly Autumn receive a rapt reception, and Olivia Sparnenn displays a crystalline, voice to back up her tall, blonde, waifish and leggy visual allure.

Twelve months ago this venue was rammed full as Wishbone Ash, through various incarnations, racked up 40 years in the business. This evening's respectable but far from sold-out attendance perhaps confirms that, with two separate bands using the Wishbone Ash name – tonight is guitarist/vocalist Andy Powell's version – we are perhaps being oversaturated.

The band know that the audience wants to hear the golden oldies, and sparkling *Persephone*, *Lady Jay* and the epic set-closer *Phoenix* are the highlights of an impressive display, though new song *Reason To Believe* shows that they don't live on their past alone.

Dave Ling



LIVE!

Rod Stewart

London O2 Arena

Ol' gravel throat still wows a crowd and proves he could still front The Faces.

★ We Faces fans are living through difficult times. With news still clanging in our ears of Ronnie Wood, Ian McLagan, and Kenney Jones' controversial decision to recruit both Glen Matlock (the best man for the job, granted) and Mick Hucknall (an accomplished balladeer, sure, but a rocker?) into the band's partially reformed line-up, Rod Stewart is back in arenas with yet another collection of airbrushed covers to plug.

Speculation has been rife that the primary reason for Rod's reticence to reconvene with his old Faces sparring partners is that he's simply no longer physically equipped with the requisite rock voice to tear through the band's singularly rambunctious back catalogue.

Ten years ago, Rod underwent successful surgery for thyroid cancer, and as a direct consequence had to seriously adjust his singing style. Four gently crooned volumes of *The Great American Songbook* later, during the course of which Rod clearly concentrated on perfecting his already masterful phrasing, it seemed that the former gravel-voiced belter had simply resigned his commission as a rock singer. Facing the inevitable, Stewart's future seemed to lie in accentuating that other string to his vocal bow, his soulful, velvet-smooth Sam Cooke side.

Rod, it seemed, would never rejoin The Faces. He simply didn't do that any more. In light of the fact that the Rod and Ron factions had even got together for tentative (if ultimately abandoned) rehearsals in 2008 many speculated that he actually *couldn't* do it.

So we're here to examine the evidence. The O2 is packed with Rod's Tartan Army, the vast majority of this peroxide hardcore are here for Rod's more mainstream solo material, and you can bet your bottom dollar that scant few of them would swap a moment with *Do Ya Think I'm Sexy* for all the *Pool Hall Richards* in the world. Rod fronts a meticulously drilled 13-piece band, the show – appropriate to his latest *Soulbook* album – is presented in the manner of a 60s soul revue as Motown and Stax classics pepper a generous 140-minute set. We're having a fine time, but it's all a bit... well, it's not The Faces. And to be frank, we're positively aching for 1971. We want to exercise our inner lad. The fondue set are happy, but behind the grin we're ever so slightly gritting our teeth.

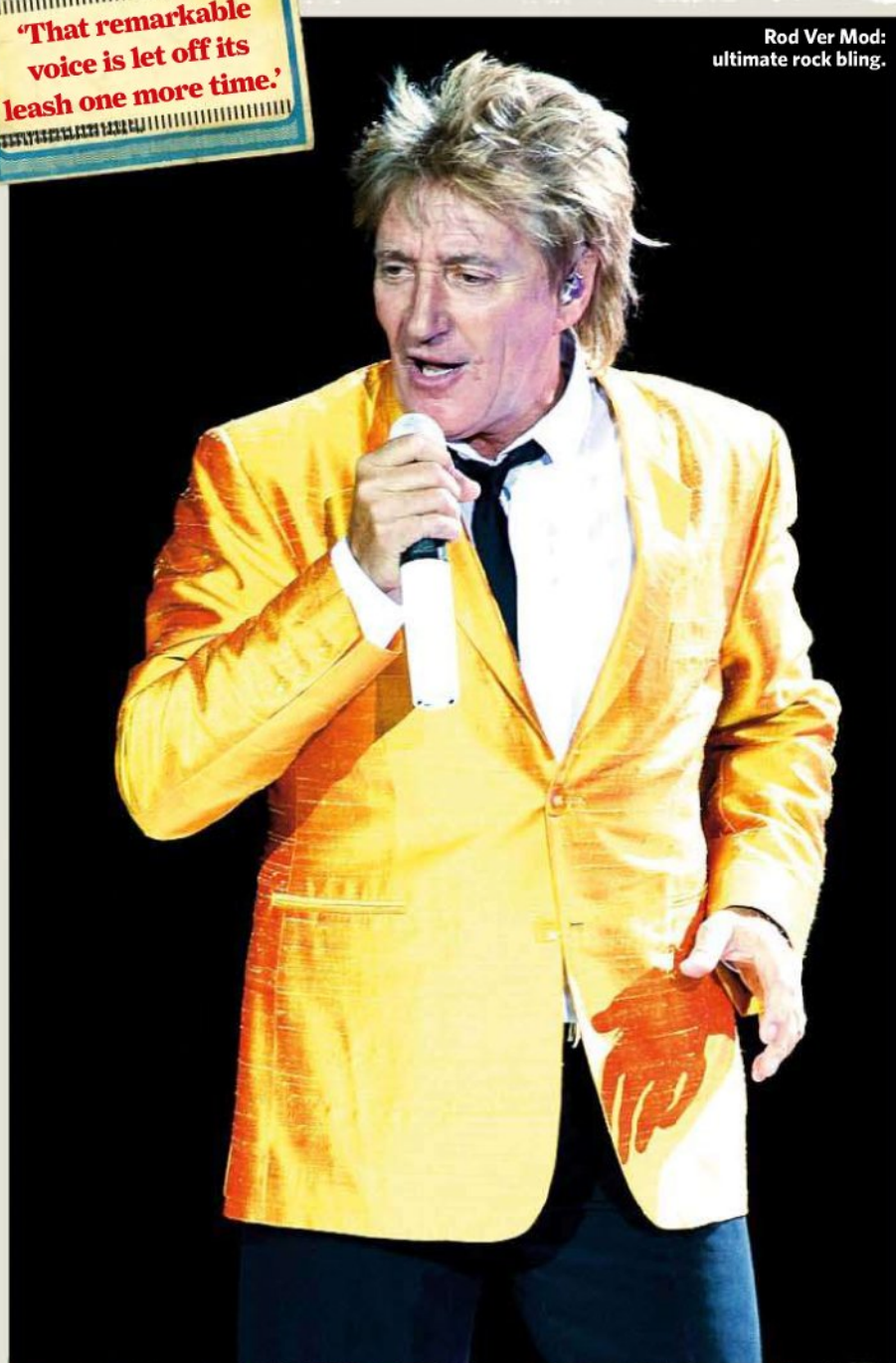
And then he does *You Wear It Well*, and we're beaming. *Sweet Little Rock 'N' Roller* and Rod's beaming back. And then comes *Stay With Me*, the proof of the pudding. We saw Mick Hucknall do this with The Faces at the Royal Albert Hall last October and while he wasn't bad, he didn't sing it anything like this. Rod knows the pressure's on and as a consequence lets that remarkable voice of his, rested up for a decade, back off its leash one more time, and it's a punch-the-air moment: the vocal equivalent of a spectacular wrong-footed extra time cup winner in the dying moments at Celtic Park. It's perfectly clear from here on in that there should only ever be one man twirling a microphone stand in front of The Faces, and that man is Rod Stewart.

Footballers are booted crowd-wards during *Hot Legs*, before Rod casually repossesses *Handbags And Gladbags*. *Sailing's* community singing threatens to undermine the very geological topology of the Greenwich Peninsula and all that's missing from *Maggie May* is Ronnie, Mac and Kenney themselves. At the ripe old age of 65, Rod's got plenty of soulful crooning years left in front of him; but those rock'n'roll pipes have a far shorter shelf life, so while he still *can* front The Faces, he really, really should.

Ian Fortnam

'That remarkable voice is let off its leash one more time.'

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Traffic



Continued from page 69

Wood who insisted the others join him on bird-watching and star-gazing trips, and Wood who organised Traffic days out to walk the Rollright Stones and frolic on the White Horse at Uffington. A keen lover of the outdoors and the arcane, the thoughtful Wood also came up with the Traffic logo – the Celtic fiery cross that kept many a hippy occupied of an evening.

One day in May Traffic returned to London for a photo shoot with an American woman called Linda (Linder) Eastman. One story has it that while they were in town goofing around for her lens, Paul McCartney turned up clutching a copy of the newly finished *Sgt. Peppers Lonely Heart Club* band for all to marvel at. Paul left the album with Traffic and departed with the photographer.

Back at Sheepcote, what would become the *Mr. Fantasy* album was simmering along. Songs about their rustic environment included *Berkshire Poppies*, and Mason's *House For Everyone* that began 'My bed is made of candyfloss, the house is made of cheese' and referred to Aston Tirrold as 'The village is a pop-up book, the people wooden trees.'

Man, that was some strong acid.

One day in July a gang of Teddy boys from Didcot decided to pay the long-haired freaks a visit but were seen off by gamekeeper Dick and a couple of Pigott-Brown's tastier stewards. More welcome visitors were Steve's pop star pals, such as Eric Clapton, Pete Townshend the Small Faces and Eric Burdon. "I don't think many of them stayed the night," says Winwood. "There wasn't much to eat. We seemed to live on a diet of jam sandwiches, Weetabix and muesli and whatever we could scrounge from the big house if we had the munchies."

Being Midlands boys, Traffic certainly liked the old weed. Winwood now sees that as "one of my downfalls. I smoked far too much dope and wasted a lot of my life, but during that period I wasn't excessive. I was totally into the cottage-industry aspect of the adventure. Sometimes we'd go to the local pubs in Aston and sup a few pints. Chris liked chatting to the locals; I was pretty shy and antisocial. I remember once going to the Boot when we all had heavy colds and an old crone made us a concoction of onions and honey. 'Git that down yer.' It was a real witches' brew."

In August '67 Traffic were ready to pack up their tape reels and head off in their jeep to Olympic Studios in Barnes, south London, to start recording the album with 25-year-old producer Jimmy Miller from Brooklyn.

"Jimmy spent a few weeks at the cottage," says Winwood. "He'd already produced Spencer Davis and we all loved him. He was very important to Traffic, a very talented ideas man. He'd recorded in America where the technology was ahead of Britain. He also had quite different musical tastes to us. He'd been a cabaret crooner in a trio in

upstate New York singing Frank Sinatra songs in supper clubs, so we took the mickey out of him. We'd stop our songs and break into old standards just to get him going. But he had a wonderful way of creating enthusiasm for work. He was clever enough to see beyond our naiveté. In the cottage we'd play him a tune and he'd stand there twirling the ends of his moustache, and then suddenly crystallise an arrangement. The art of the producer is very complex but Jimmy had it nailed."

Engineer Eddie Kramer worked alongside Miller before the two men went off to produce Jimi Hendrix and The Rolling Stones respectively. "Jimmy was a vibes merchant," Kramer recalled. "On *Dear Mr. Fantasy* he got annoyed at the awful, draggy tempo, so he jumped on the drum riser rattling a pair of maracas and made them change up to double speed. That made the song. His thing was: 'How can I make you hear this song properly, hear it the way I'm feeling it?'"

During the early weeks of recording at Olympia Mick Jagger dropped by to hear Traffic and was so impressed that he took Miller aside and signed him up to work on the Stones' next album, which became *Beggars Banquet*. "Jimmy took our percussive piano sound with him," says Winwood. "You can hear it in Nicky Hopkins's playing with the Stones. That came from us. But we didn't mind at the time. It felt like we part of the same surge."

After recording, Traffic often joined in the all-night parties at rock-star hang-outs like the Scotch of St James and Bag O'Nails. At Blazes, Mason befriended Jimi Hendrix, who would soon get him to play bass on *All Along The Watchtower*. Fellow

"I smoked far too much dope and wasted a lot of my life."

– Steve Winwood

musicians were intrigued by the young upstarts from Evesham and Brum, and a typical night found them in the company of heavyweights like McCartney and Brian Jones.

After a brief tour of Sweden to break them in, Traffic were anxious to unveil in England. Paul McCartney suggested they play at the Saville Theatre on Shaftesbury Avenue, which had been run by the recently deceased Beatles manager Brian Epstein and was still under his company NEMS' management. It was announced that Traffic would play on Sunday 24th September on a bill with Wynder K Frogg, Nirvana and Smoke. In the spirit of the times, Chris Wood built a ridiculous quadraphonic PA, which didn't function properly, while the band manoeuvred around a stage littered with the props from the production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* which was on in the week. To make himself feel at home, Mason went to Hamley's toy shop and bought a selection of dolls' heads he painted red and green (Traffic colours) to decorate the amps.

The audience was a mixture of recent Winwood fans and pop gentry: Brian Jones, Zoot Money, John Mayall, the Herd, Keith West, the Hollies. In the stalls an exceedingly drunk Noel Redding shouted friendly abuse. Island Records boss Chris Blackwell looked on in admiration as Chris Wood dedicated *Dear Mr. Fantasy* to Frank Zappa and

Capaldi made a bizarre reference to England's World Cup-winning squad member Nobby Stiles.

"The London debut wasn't entirely successful," says Winwood today. "The PA didn't work too well and we didn't really have an audience – how could we? There was no album out yet. We were on the eccentric periphery. I drew a crowd because of my past, but most people came out of curiosity. We played the entire album. But I refused to do any Spencer Davis crowd-pleasers, which didn't go down too well. That was a big no-no for me."

Traffic's direction was moving fast now. They divided their time between the cottage and their London flats – Winwood's in Westbourne Grove, Wood, Capaldi and Miller partying hard on the Cromwell Road, and Mason in Soho with his collection of robots.

"I was ready to leave at that point," says Mason. The first album didn't come out until December and we were working on the second record. The songwriting was becoming like a pitching contest and I knew I was losing out. It was a real shame because it started out so idealistic, no cares and no worries."

Capaldi would recall Mason's increasing dissatisfaction at the mood in the camp. "He knew we hated *Hole In My Shoe*, so one day he came in and said: 'Well, what do you want, then? If you want groove I'll give you fucking groove.'"

Mason then played the others his new songs *Feelin' Alright*, *You Can All Join In* and *Cryin' To Be Heard*, all of which were all blatant messages of his annoyance. "We were impressed, though," said Capaldi. "They were great songs."

In late October Traffic played at Newcastle City Hall on a bill with The Who, Marmalade and the Tremeloes. Mason quit the group shortly afterwards.

"The pressure got to me. I didn't deal with our instant success at all well. I'd made the decision ages before but I did return to complete the second Traffic album. It didn't have the same bare-bones excitement, but the songs were more mature even if it felt a bit like business rather than pleasure. Still, that era kicked everything off for me, so I regard it in a positive way. There were problems, for sure. But, hey, life has to move on."

The year 1967 ended with the release of the *Mr. Fantasy* album and the belated *Here We Go Round The Mulberry Bush* single both making the UK Top 10. In the US the album was released under the title *Heaven Is In Your Mind* and with a different cover – Traffic as a trio without Mason, which was harsh to say the least.

"Well, we were very young," says Winwood. "Certain things were regrettable. Still, it was a great time and a wonderful place to be when the sun was shining," he says of the cottage. "Not so great when you had to build a fire on a foggy morning and trudge through the chalky mud. A few months later our lease ran out and we were evicted. We'd only been paying one pound a year! Pigott-Brown had to sell up and went to South Africa. So we all moved back to London."

Today the cottage at Sheepcote Farm is still there, although now it's in Oxfordshire. If you listen carefully on a summer's afternoon you can hear the sound of *Berkshire Poppies* drifting across the fields of barley. It's a quiet and beautiful place. There is no other traffic noise at all. 🍷



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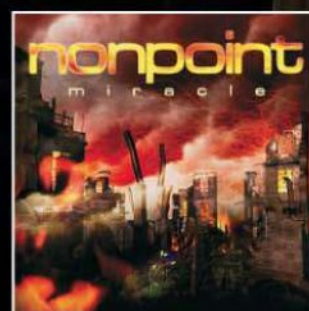


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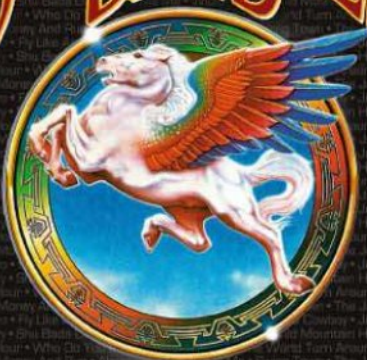
NOVEMBER

- | | | |
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| SAT 13 | LLANDUDNO ARENA | 01492 872 000 |
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| TUE 19 | MANCHESTER ACADEMY | 0161 832 1111 |
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| SAT 23 | SOUTHAMPTON GUILDHALL | 023 8063 2601 |
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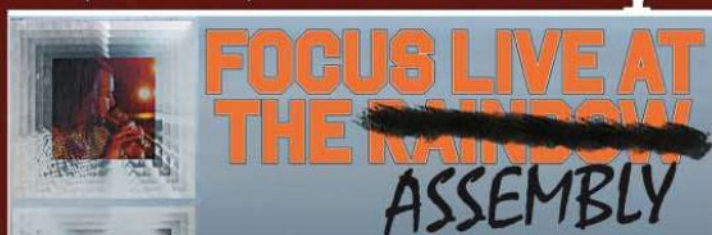
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ALLIES
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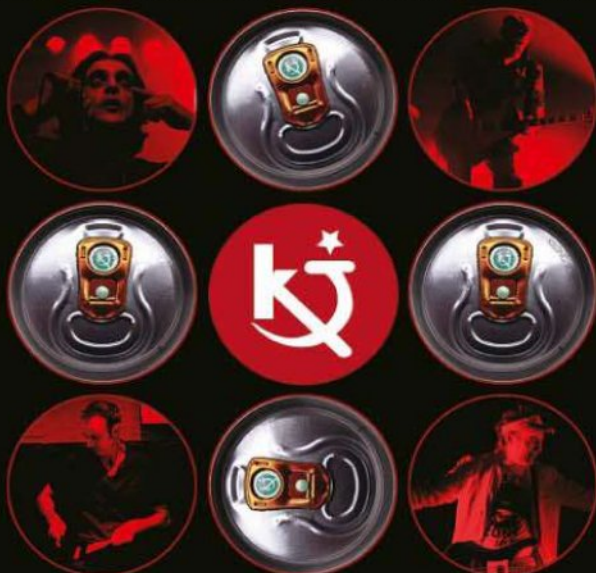


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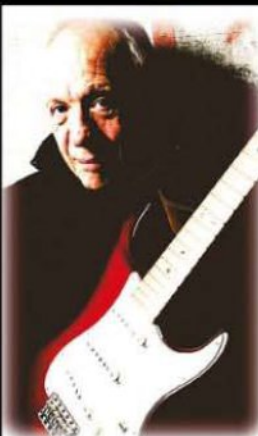
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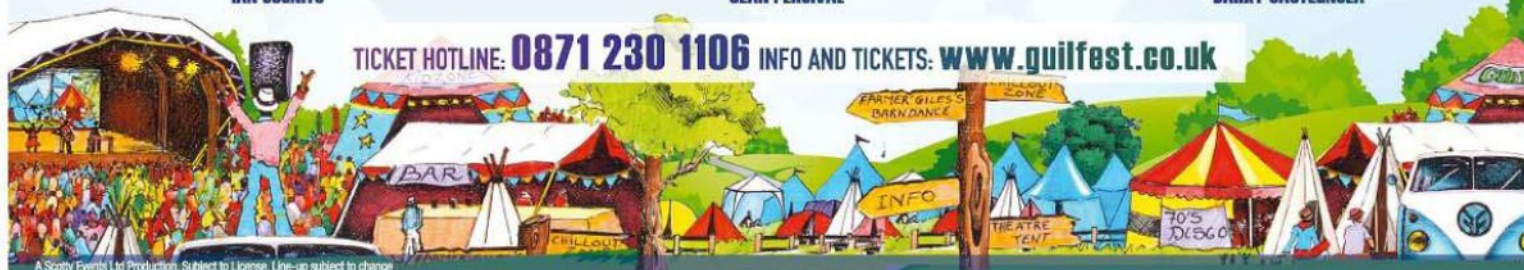
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Heavy Load

Heavy questions for heavy rockers

Rob Halford on life, death and sexuality.

Interview: Dave Ling

For many, Rob Halford's high-pitched shriek is one of the defining sounds of heavy metal of a certain vintage and his leather-'n'-studs image is iconic. No matter what else he has done or achieved in his career, he will always be best-known as the frontman for Judas Priest in the 70s and 80s, with whom he recorded such undisputed classic metal albums as *British Steel*, *Screaming For Vengeance* and the live *Unleashed In The East*.

Fans will also remember – and admire – him as someone brave enough to 'come out' as being homosexual in a heavy metal world that is still notoriously intolerant of men whose sexuality is anything other than as straight as a guitar neck.

After quitting Priest in 1991 and going on to explore other avenues of music with, for example, Fight, Two and his own band Halford, he's now happy to be back with the Brummie metal legends with whom he has enjoyed so much success.

This year Judas Priest finally won a Grammy. Some think awards are superficial. Are they important to you? Appreciation, whether from peers or the fans, is not to be sniffed at. Working as we do, in a style of music like metal, winning a Grammy is a really cool moment. It's the equivalent of winning an Oscar. Some people attend the Brits just to get pissed, which is insulting. You should treat such events with respect.

Twelve years after 'coming out' on MTV, how has your life changed? I'm far more relaxed. With all of that ammunition taken away, I don't need to keep looking over my shoulder. I'm much stronger as a person. I know for a fact that there are gay readers of your magazine. But the sense of acceptance has been overwhelming.

Priest guitarist KK Downing once said he knew of your homosexuality "since about 1971". How difficult was it to keep it a secret? [Laughs] In the band everybody knew. So did my family and friends. But back then it couldn't be addressed openly. Throughout the 70s and 80s I knew that going public would have been the wrong thing to do. Thankfully that's all water under the bridge.

Do you believe there is a God or some kind of higher power? The longer you live, the more those theories make sense. Look at the outpouring of love from the world after what just happened in Haiti, or following the twin towers. There must more than a human connection. You can either hug a tree or read the Bible. But if you've got that capacity to be open-minded it's a wonderful thing.

Do you believe in reincarnation?

Yeah. I'm coming back as a rat in a sewer. That would be very heavy metal, wouldn't it?

Was it a dark time for you during the 1990s when you experimented with the bands Fight and Two, but couldn't get them off the ground?

Not really. As a musician, some of what you do is going to be accepted and some rejected, but that doesn't make [the comparative failures] any less valid. I look back at those times with affection and I'm glad I went through them.



Rob Halford: rich, but still Labour.

What's the best piece of advice you've ever received?

That's a very profound question. I've always been a receptive listener, but I've preferred to go through these past 58 years making my own mistakes and trying to learn from them.

As a working-class boy from Walsall who now lives in Arizona and also has houses in San Diego and Amsterdam, where do you stand politically?

Liberalism's okay, but you need to maintain some kind of order. Some successful people in rock'n'roll say: "My heart is Labour but my money's Tory." That's bullshit. I wish we could just abolish all these labels and allow common sense to prevail. I hate the class system, but I guess I'll always be Labour.

In a *Classic Rock*'s interview with KK Downing in 2001 he said: "Everybody in this band categorically believes that Rob Halford should never sing with us again. He doesn't deserve it."

[Chuckles] That's emotion, isn't it? It's passion, and that's a wonderful thing. It was a very defining statement, it said so much about how KK was feeling. How all of us were feeling, I suppose. That's what I love about everybody in this band – what you see is what you get.

What is the meaning of life?

I believe that materialism – flash cars, big houses – is a complete waste of time. If you're looking for a serious answer, I'm not fucking Yoda, that's for sure. But it's important to find something that makes you content. As much as I love my down time, I feel the most complete in terms of why I'm here when I've

a microphone in front of my face and I'm screaming into it. That's what I was supposed to be here for.

What will be written on your tombstone?

Here Lies The Metal God. No, actually, to be truthful I'm still undecided. I'll either be cremated – the fire thing is very heavy metal – or will have one of those eco-friendly funerals: being buried in a cardboard box, decomposing and all your bits going back into the earth would be great. 🐭

FURYON



The true birthplace of **heavy metal**, the UK may often be overshadowed by goings-on on the other side of the Atlantic, but every now and then we produce a band with authentic world-conquering potential. One listen to their phenomenal debut album **Gravitas** will surely convince you that Brighton's **Furyon** are the latest and arguably greatest British metal band of the modern era.

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