

British Rock At Its Best
THE TREAT – ‘Sound Bites’
(the best of The Treat volume 1)

16 tracks, 80 minutes of music, 36 page booklet with biography and extensive, track by track, sleeve notes

The finest introduction to THE TREAT



Sound Bites (the best of The Treat volume 1)



THE TREAT

"Varied, intelligent music that stretches the boundaries and isn't afraid to wear its virtuosity on its sleeve" – R'n'R

One of the finest British rock bands, mixing new wave of classic rock, prog, psychedelia, folk rock and all points in between, with imaginative arrangements, versatility, creativity and musicianship for your listening pleasure!

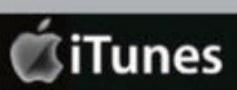
Available direct from www.thetreat.co.uk & all good record shops



Distribution by
CODE⁷
via 



amazon



1980s

ASTOUNDING SOUND
AMAZING MUSIC

JON ANDERSON

A HIPPIE WITHOUT A HOME: HOW HE SURVIVED THE 80s



★ WHITE STAR ★

★ RECORDS ★

Showcasing the best in modern progressive sounds –
a record label created by John Mitchell and Chris Hillman



KEPLER TEN

A New Kind of Sideways

The eagerly awaited second album from the prog rock trio is out now, featuring the singles, 'Falling Down' and 'Weaver'.



KYROS

Celexa Dreams

The latest album from 80's inspired up and coming young band which features 'Rumour', 'Phosphene' & more.



QUANTUM PIG

Songs Of Industry And Sunshine
The debut album from Prog Award Nominees 2019.



THE ROOM

Caught By The Machine
The melodic rockers return with their highly acclaimed third studio album.



VOICES FROM THE FUSELAGE

Odyssey: The Founder Of Dreams
The band's second album which includes 'Nine Levels' and 'Vestibule of Hell'.



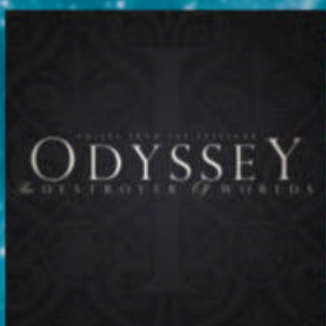
THE PARADOX TWIN

The Importance Of Mr Bedlam
The critically acclaimed debut album from Prog Award Nominees in both 2018 & 2019.



KIM SEVIOUR

Recovery Is Learning
Debut Solo album by former Touchstone Vocalist. Co-written and produced by John Mitchell.



VOICES FROM THE FUSELAGE

Odyssey: The Destroyer Of Worlds
The stunning debut album.
Prog Award Nominee 2017.



JOHN MITCHELL

The Nostalgia Factory EP
Four track EP featuring John's interpretations of classic tracks with music written by Steven Wilson, Greg Lake, Justin Hayward & Phil Collins.



KEPLER TEN

Delta - V
The acclaimed debut album.
Prog Award Nominee 2017.

All releases available from all good stores in physical, download and streaming formats
or direct from www.white-star-records.com

NOVA

Distributed by Nova via PHD

★
WHITE STAR
★ RECORDS ★

INCENDIAMUSIC
MANAGEMENT & PR

@contents

ISSUE 115 27.11.20

IF IT'S IN THERE IT'S ON HERE



FIN COSTELLO/REDFERNS/GETTY IMAGES

COVER
FEATURE

“Yes are
a far cry
from what
it would be
if I were
there
creating
Yes music.”

Jon Anderson p28

How he quit Yes and became an even bigger star!

Contents

REGULARS

BLOODY WELL WRITE pg 10

Missives, musings and tweets from Planet Prog.

THE INTRO pg 12

Prog supergroup Transatlantic return with their first new album for six years, plus the latest news from Steve Hackett, Iamthemorning, Mogwai, Sigur Rós, The Anchoress, Jane Weaver, Plini, Avandra, Steve Davis, Kavus Torabi and more...

Q&A pg 26

ELP manager Stewart Young remembers the late Greg Lake as his new *Anthology* is released.



OUTER LIMITS pg 58

They released albums produced by krautrock legend Conny Plank, the UK music press dubbed them the 'the new Genesis', they wrote three-part songs and they played real instruments. Which begs the question: how prog were Ultravox?

THE PROG INTERVIEW pg 80

For almost 40 years Ed Wynne has steered Ozric Tentacles' unique brand of space rock from a field to Stonehenge to the UK Top 20. Here he looks back on how he achieved this remarkable feat.

THE MUSICAL BOX pg 94

Porcupine Tree's 13-disc set *The Delerium Years 1991-1997* takes top billing this month and there's also reviews from Pink Floyd, Greg Lake, IQ, Airbag, Jon Anderson, Tangerine Dream, Anthony Phillips, Ring Van Möbius, Katatonia, Dream Theater, Lunatic Soul, pg. lost, Robert Reed, The Pineapple Thief, Marathon, Frost*, Jo Quail and many more...

MY PROG pg 114

Acoustic guitar phenomenon Jon Gomm loves Jack Bruce, Tesseract and, er, Madonna's *True Blue*!

FEATURES

Mark Kelly _____ Pg 38

The Marillion keyboard player finally makes his solo bow.

Pain Of Salvation _____ Pg 42

The Swedish prog rockers tackle dark themes on new album *Panther*.

Lunatic Soul _____ Pg 46

Maruisz Duda ponders the band's final days as he explores folkier sounds.

Wobbler _____ Pg 50

The Norwegian prog quintet stick resolutely to their analogue instincts with *Dwellers Of The Deep*.

Ulver _____ Pg 54

Krystoffer Rygg posits the idea that this might be the dark proggers' farewell.

Ihsahn _____ Pg 62

The former black metal icon turns to pop melodies for his latest EP, *Pharos*.

Free sampler _____ pg 65

Find out how to download your exclusive English Electric Recordings sampler.

Fates Warning _____ Pg 66

The US prog metal pioneers discuss their lucky 13th album.

Sólstafr _____ Pg 70

The Icelandic post rockers explain where they fit in with dark new album *Endless Twilight Of Codependent Love*.

Simon Collins _____ Pg 74

Sound Of Contact's singer and drummer returns with a vibrant new solo album.

Zombi _____ Pg 78

The US duo talk of their love of Goblin, horror soundtracks and new album, *2020*.

The Critics' Choice _____ Pg 86

What did the *Prog Magazine* writers decree the best releases of 2020? Find out here!

marillion

the light at the end
of the tunnel tour

NOVEMBER

SUN 14 HULL CITY HALL

MON 15 EDINBURGH USHER HALL

WED 17 CARDIFF ST DAVID'S HALL

THU 18 MANCHESTER BRIDGEWATER HALL

SAT 20 CAMBRIDGE CORN EXCHANGE

SUN 21 BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY HALL

TUE 23 LIVERPOOL PHILHARMONIC

WED 24 BATH FORUM

FRI 26 LONDON EVENTIM APOLLO HAMMERSMITH

SAT 27 LONDON EVENTIM APOLLO HAMMERSMITH

MYTICKET.CO.UK | MARILLION.COM

2021

A KILIMANJARO & KNOWMORPROMOTIONS PRESENTATION



JON ANDERSON

'SONG OF SEVEN' (REMASTERED & EXPANDED EDITION)

- SONG OF SEVEN was a UK top forty hit upon its release by Atlantic Records in November 1980 and spawned a solo tour which established Jon Anderson as a regarded artist in his own right.
- This Esoteric Recordings edition has been newly remastered from the original Atlantic Records master tapes and is expanded to include two rare US single edits previously unreleased on CD and restores the original album artwork in a digipak.
- The booklet also features a new essay with an exclusive interview with Jon Anderson.



IRON BUTTERFLY

'UNCONSCIOUS POWER – AN ANTHOLOGY 1967-1971' (7CD REMASTERED BOX SET)

- Esoteric Recordings are pleased to announce the release of UNCONSCIOUS POWER – AN ANTHOLOGY 1967 – 1971, a newly remastered 7 CD boxed set featuring all of the albums and singles recorded by the legendary American acid / progressive rock band IRON BUTTERFLY recorded for Atlantic's Atco label between 1967 and 1971 and additional recordings made at the Fillmore East in New York City in April 1968.



AL STEWART

'24 CARROTS' (3CD EXPANDED AND REMASTERED)

- Newly re-mastered & expanded 40th anniversary 3CD edition of the classic Al Stewart album
- Featuring two cds of previously unreleased material, including the demo sessions at Davlen Studios, Los Angeles in August 1979 and a previously unreleased live recording made at Hammersmith Odeon, London in December 1980
- With an illustrated booklet with a new essay and exclusive interview Al Stewart



PROCOL HARUM

'SOMETHING MAGIC' (2CD REMASTERED & EXPANDED EDITION)

- ***LIMITED EDITION POSTCARD SIGNED BY GARY BROOKER AVAILABLE WHILE STOCKS LAST***
- Esoteric Recordings is pleased to announce the release of a new re-mastered 2 CD edition of the classic album "Something Magic" by Procol Harum.
- Includes 14 bonus tracks and an additional disc featuring Procol Harum's performance for the BBC TV and Radio series Sight & Sound In Concert from March 1977.

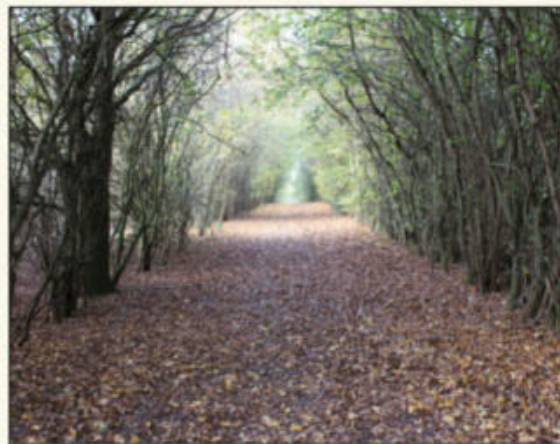


VARIOUS ARTISTS

'LIVING ON THE HILL – A DANISH UNDERGROUND TRIP 1967-1974' (3CD EDITION)

- Esoteric Recordings is pleased to announce the release of "Living on the Hill – A Danish Underground Trip 1967 – 1974",
- 3 CD clamshell boxed set celebrating the so-called "underground" rock music scene that emerged from Denmark at the tail end of the 1960s. It was an era that saw huge changes, both musical and social and was a pivotal period for creativity in rock music throughout Europe.

ANTHONY PHILLIPS



Missing Links I - IV

ANTHONY PHILLIPS

'MISSING LINKS I-IV' (5CD REMASTERED BOX SET)

- Esoteric Recordings is pleased to announce the release of "MISSING LINKS I – IV", a newly remastered 5 CD set clamshell boxed set comprising the four original "Missing Links" albums by celebrated composer and GENESIS founder member ANTHONY PHILLIPS.
- Anthony has worked with his archivist Jon Dann to prepare this new boxed set edition of this wonderful music, compiling a new additional CD 27 track CD of previously unreleased and rare archive material, "Extra Links" exclusive to this set.



RHINOCEROS

'THE ELEKTRA ALBUMS 1968-1970' (3CD REMASTERED EDITION)

- This re-mastered 3 CD set gathers together for the first time the three albums Rhinoceros recorded for Elektra Records and features an illustrated booklet with exclusive new interviews with John Finley and Danny Weiss and serves as a fine tribute to an unfairly overlooked band, who were a part of the American rock scene of the late 1960s..



"The music that was in children's TV in Sweden was really complicated. It was very jazz orientated and symphonically arranged and you had really good musicians back then who were devoting time to making music for kids. I'm really lucky to have grown up during that era."

Daniel Gildenlöv



Ed's Letter



Hello, and welcome to the new issue of *Prog*. Like the last seven issues, this is yet another edition we've completed working from home, and once again we are under lockdown here in England while many of you around the world are still feeling the effects of Covid-related restrictions. I sincerely hope everyone is holding up as well as can be expected, and thank you all for buying this issue of *Prog* Magazine.

To say it's not been the best of years would be a drastic understatement, but among other things, the news of a potential vaccine perhaps brings us some light at the end of what, for many, has been a dark year.

This issue, we begin to look back over 2020 with the writers choosing their albums of the year. Once again it becomes apparent that whatever troubles face us in this life, creativity remains as a beacon of hope. And 2020, like the years that preceded it, has brought a wonderful selection of diverse and excellent albums. You can see our choices on page 86, while on page 93 we ask you to make your own choices with the annual Readers' Poll.

Someone who always looks towards the light is cover star Jon Anderson, who tells us how he not only survived leaving Yes in 1980, but how he went on to become an even bigger star as the decade wore on. There's a strong supporting cast, too, from Greg Lake, Mark Kelly, Ozric Tentacles, Wobbler, Simon Collins, Lunatic Soul, Pain Of Salvation and more. Don't forget to check out details of how to access our excellent English Electric sampler on page 65.

I hope you enjoy this issue of *Prog*. Thank you for your continued support – I look forward to seeing the results of the Readers' Poll next issue.

Stay safe and prog on...

Jerry Ewing – Editor



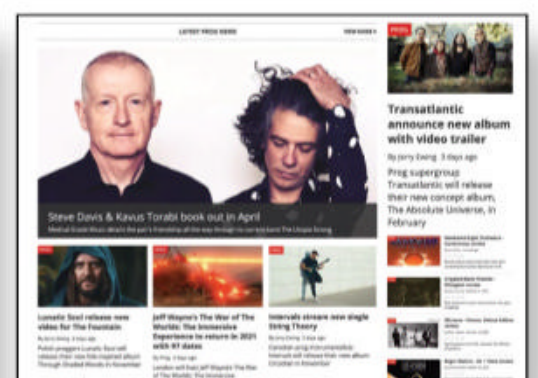
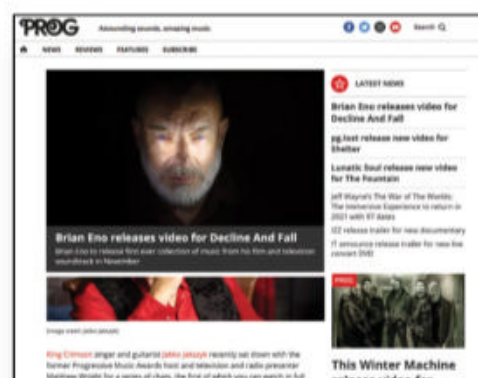
You can subscribe to *Prog* at www.magazinesdirect.com. See page 112 for further details.



FIND US ONLINE AT

progmagazine.com

Get your daily fix of prog news and features at www.progmagazine.com



DREAM THEATER

DISTANT MEMORIES • LIVE IN LONDON

In Stores 27th November 2020



Distant Memories – Live in London brings together selections from 2019's *Distance Over Time*, in concert with the full and complete performance of 1999's *Metropolis Pt. 2: Scenes from a Memory*, recorded live in London in February 2020.



Main Cover



Limited Artbook Cover

Get yours as a Limited Deluxe 3CD+2Blu-ray+2DVD 44-page Artbook, Limited Edition 4LP+3CD Boxset, Special Edition 3CD+2Blu-ray Digipak, 3CD+2DVD Multibox & as a Digital Audio Album.

Bloody Well Write

Send your letters to us at: *Prog*, Future Publishing, 1-10 Praed Mews, Paddington, London, W2 1QY, or email prog@futurenet.com. Letters may be edited for length. We regret that we cannot reply to phone calls. For more comment and prog news and views, find us on [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com/Prog) under *Prog*.

APHRODITE'S ALLURE

Many thanks for the most illuminating article on 666 by Aphrodite's Child [*Prog* 114], quite possibly my favourite prog album of all time. When friends ask, "What's it like?" I usually reply that it's equal measures prog, world music and *Monty Python*. Radcliffe and Maconie recently played *Aegean Sea* as the Early Riser on their BBC Radio 6 show and I was reminded of the day that I bought the album.

Back in July '77 I had a summer job working in a clothes shop in the centre of Glasgow. One day the manager tasked me with taking an expensive pair of denims from one branch in the Gallowgate to the other branch under Central Station. Perfect, I thought. I can nip into Graffiti Records on Queen Street and pick up that copy of 666 that I'd ordered.

As I was crossing the busy intersection at Union Street I noticed that the lights had changed but decided to leg it anyway. As bad luck would have it, one of my platform shoes became caught inside my flared corduroy strides and I went flying, the album landing flat with a loud smack on the hot tarmac. To my horror, when I looked up to my right I saw that the traffic was hurtling towards me at speed and just managed to make it to the kerb in record time.

I remember thinking at the time that, as a recently lapsed Catholic, perhaps buying an album called 666 possibly wasn't such a great idea. Well, they say that that which doesn't kill you makes you stronger. The album was unharmed and only my pride was dented that day.

Mrs Black often asks me, "Just how many formats of 666 do you need?" To which I reply, "Just all of them." If any of your readers have a spare 8-Track cartridge, I can give it a very good home.

Mighty Joe Black, Worthing

MARTYN IS KING

What a great article from Tommy Udo on John Martyn [*Prog* 113]. I was lucky enough to see John and his cracking band from the mid-70s up to his final days as he played Ireland a lot of times and finally resided here. The first time was solo in a small ballroom of a local hotel with the



Prog 114:
illuminating!



Anathema: on hiatus.

PRESS/SCARLET PAGE

echoplex. It was indeed a mesmerising gig and now 40-plus years later it's still vivid in my mind's eye along with his between-song banter, which certainly was not from the James Taylor school. I also remember well the last time he gigged in my local venue. I was in the good company of my young nephew, who had not seen John before, and he had the same keyboard player as your photo.

Whether he was prog, folk, jazz or just 'bloody' unique is thanks to his prolific output still there for us all to enjoy.

John Dundon, Limerick, Ireland

A FINE COLLECTION

The pandemic has caused all sorts of mayhem and, like most people, I have been driven to distraction by it. Cancelled gigs have really spoilt 2020 for me. I have tickets for Steve Hackett and Genesis among others and am disappointed that they won't happen this year. On

a positive note however, I have had ample opportunity to revisit my record and CD collections.

I have played all my vinyl from Aphrodite's Child to Neil Young and all my CDs from Asia to ZZ Top. My collection contains all types of music and prog is my undoubted favourite genre, I must admit to loving it. All I have left to revisit are the free CDs I have collected from *Prog*. They'll keep me occupied for a good while yet and then I guess I'll just start again.

David Ackroyd, via email

SAVING THE BEST FOR LAST

Wow, wow, wow, what an album! Fish has finished on a swan song. *Weltschmerz* has to be his best album ever. Every song is just a pure gem. Usually when I listen to his other albums I find a few songs not to my taste but this one ticks all the right boxes. I just can't

TWEET TALK

Follow us on twitter.com/progmagazineUK

MATT COHEN

@MattCohenBass

That was amazing & so very good for the soul. We just worked on what has to be one of my favourite songs. It's so dynamic, full of emotional & ever so exciting to play. I can't wait until we can all get in a room & onstage

AMOS WILLIAMS

@MrAmosWilliams

As morning songs go, for me there's nothing quite as uplifting as playing our track *Phoenix*, and jamming all over it like it's a bass solo [at a] bass player convention. What a joy.



JEFF BOGUSKI

ANNAPHOEBE

@AnnaPhoebe

Back when touring was a thing... With @trans_siberian

LETTER



The recent announcement that Anathema are taking an “indefinite hiatus” [Prog 114] will have come as a shock to those of us who love this band. A new album in the works prior to lockdown and a much-rescheduled tour celebrating *We're Here Because We're Here* appeared to indicate a period of activity once the world returned to whatever normal will be.

Somehow Anathema had passed me by until a chance discussion with a colleague in 2015 who mentioned their name and suggested they “would be right up my street”. After checking a few songs out on Spotify I purchased the live CD/DVD package of *Universal* and since then barely a day has gone by without me listening to something by them.

During the spring lockdown I took the opportunity to listen to an album in its entirety each day and for 11 consecutive days in May I played every album they

have released in order. Their journey is unique from death metal beginnings through to that night at the Prog Awards in 2017 when they swept the board. Never afraid to take risks, they have been uncompromising in their approach to whatever twists and turns they would take with their next project. Anathema have always had a distinctive core despite the many and varied musical styles they have moved through over the years.

Having attended every northern gig since 2015 I have spoken to many fans. We all feel part of “The Anathema Family” and the band seem to inspire devotion in us all that is, I am sure, the envy of many other bands.

I wish the bandmembers well in their future activities and fervently hope that at some point they will get the urge to perform and record together again. Thanks, guys, and good luck!
Steve Ellis, Pateley Bridge, North Yorkshire

This issue's star letter wins a goodie bag from The Merch Desk at www.themerchdesk.com.

stop playing it, it even brings a tear to my eye. Thank you for the review [Prog 113], I enjoyed every word you wrote about this album.

Allan Reid, via email

LOVE HANDS OVER THE RED PLANET?

I've been attempting to create a virtual Yes album from *1000 Hands* (Jon Anderson), *Love Is* (Steve Howe) and *The Red Planet* (Rick Wakeman), purely for my own enjoyment. In general, the individual styles that these master musicians have evolved are now so disparate that it is difficult to create compatible juxtapositions. However, Steve's phrasing in *Love Is A River* is remarkably similar to the opening melody phrase of Rick's *Tharsis Tholis*; Steve's title track followed by *Tharsis Tholis* sounds seamlessly like the song followed by a development variation of it. They are in different keys: Rick shifts his phrase through different keys, but the minor key phrase is similar in note values and shape to Steve's simpler major key phrase. This revelation could be grounds for litigation or reconciliation in the Yes camp. It is very likely that, a long time ago, there were rivers on Mars.

Barry Power, St Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex

TRIUMVIRAT TRIUMPHANT?

Is there any chance on an article on 70s German ELP clones Triumvirat? Their *Spartacus* album is a genuinely excellent

album comparable with *Tarkus* by ELP! The keyboard wizard and Emerson clone, Jurgen Fritz, is still alive so grab your chance. An article would be very much appreciated!

Ed Meij, The Netherlands

SINGING TO A DIFFERENT TUNE

I'd like to say how much I enjoyed the prog vs punk articles in Prog 111. I was born in 1960, and so turned 17 when punk supposedly killed off the music I loved. However, I stubbornly kept my hair long, wore flares, and ran the risk of getting my head kicked in for not following the herd. I was once openly ridiculed in Virgin Records for asking to listen to some Curved Air.

I have to say, I hated punk. The attitude of despising musicianship among the punk fraternity was alien to me, and the spitting at punk gigs appalled me. I did quite like The Stranglers, but let's face it, they were too old and too skilled to be true punk. If I hear something like *Anarchy In The UK* nowadays, to my ears it just sounds tame and rather quaint, whereas something like *Shine On You Crazy Diamond* still moves me.

A friend of mine once said, “There's only two types of music: the music you like and the music you don't.” He was a huge Rush fan, by the way, but I think he had a good point. All appreciation of music is totally subjective, and we're all in this weird and messed-up world together. Let's just enjoy what we enjoy.

Bob Hawkins, via email

CLIVE NOLAN

@operafanatica

I don't suppose anyone knows where I could get hold of a Psalmodicon? #wildlands #albumrecording

MARILLION

@MarillionOnline

We have got that Friday Feeling today. A great week in the studio working on the new album. Stay safe everyone.

CHARLIE CAWOOD

@CharlieCawood

Finished scoring a new tune today. There are plenty of work in progress scores to finish, but that makes about 15 minutes of music fully orchestrated so far. There's no hurry to finish them, so I'm happy to let them reveal themselves gradually for now.

PROG

Future PLC, 1-10 Praed Mews, Paddington, London, W2 1QY

Email prog@futurenet.com

twitter.com/ProgMagazineUK

You can also find us on facebook.com under Prog

Editorial

Editor **Jerry Ewing**

Deputy Editor **Natasha Scharf**

Art Editor **Russell Fairbrother**

Production Editor **Vanessa Thorpe**

News Editor **Martin Kiely**

Acting Reviews Editor **Dave Everley**

Associate Editor **Jo Kendall**

Content Director **Scott Rowley**

Contributors

Jeremy Allen (JA), Olivier Zoltar Badin (OZB), Joe Banks (JB), Mike Barnes (MB), Jordan Blum (JMB), Chris Cope (CC), Stephen Dalton (SD), Isere Lloyd-Davis (ILD), Malcolm Dome (MD), Daryl Easlea (DE), Briony Edwards (BE), Dave Everley (DEV), Ian Fortnam (IF), Pete Fowler (PF), Polly Glass (PG), Eleanor Goodman (EG), Rob Hughes (RH), Will Ireland (WI), Emma Johnston (EJ), Jo Kendall (JK), Hannah May Kilroy (HMK), Dom Lawson (DL), Fraser Lewry (FL), Danni Lievers (DIL), Dave Ling (DML), Alex Lynham (AL), Gary Mackenzie (GMM), Emily Macnevin (EM), Rachel Mann (RM), Rhodri Marsden (RHM), Julian Marszalek (JM), Ciulia Mascheroni (GMA), Chris McGarel (CMG), Grant Moon (GRM), Ben Myers (BM), Kris Needs (KN), Kevin Nixon (KNI), Matt Parker (MP), Alison Reijman (AR), Chris Roberts (CR), Paul Sexton (PS), Johnny Sharp (JS), Nick Shilton (NS), Sid Smith (SS), Joseph Stannard (JSS), Francesca Tyer (FT), Rick Wakeman (RW), Phil Weller (POW), David West (DW), Philip Wilding (PW), Rich Wilson (RW), Holly Wright (HW)

Cover image

Sam Williams/Magictorch, Alan John Ainsworth/Getty Images/Koh Hasebe/Getty Images/iStock

Advertising

Media packs are available on request

Commercial Director **Clare Dove**

clare.dove@futurenet.com

Account Director **Helen Hughes**

helen.hughes@futurenet.com

International Licensing and Syndication

Prog magazine is available for licensing and syndication. Contact the Licensing team to discuss partnership opportunities.

Head of Print Licensing **Rachel Shaw**

licensing@futurenet.com

Head of Print Licensing **Rachel Shaw**

licensing@futurenet.com

Subscriptions

Online orders & enquiries www.magazinesdirect.com

UK order line & enquiries **0330 333 1113**

Overseas order line & enquiries **+44 (0) 330 333 1113**

Email enquiries help@magazinesdirect.com

CRM Director **Louise Dudfield**

Circulation

Head of Newstrade **Tim Mathers**

Production

Head of Production **Mark Constance**

Production Project Manager **Clare Scott**

Advertising Production Manager **Joanne Crosby**

Digital Editions Controller **Jason Hudson**

Production Manager **Keely Miller**

Management

Chief Content Officer **Aaron Asadi**

Managing Director – Future Passions **Andrea Davies**

Managing Director – Music **Stuart Williams**

Commercial Finance Director **Dan Jotcham**

Head of Art & Design - Music **Brad Merrett**

Printed by William Gibbons & Sons Ltd

Distributed by Marketforce, 5 Churchill Place, Canary Wharf, London, E14 5HU www.marketforce.co.uk
Tel: 0203 787 9001



ISSN 2045-2260

We are committed to only using magazine paper which is derived from responsibly managed, certified forestry and chlorine-free manufacture. The paper in this magazine was sourced and produced from sustainable managed forests, conforming to strict environmental and socioeconomic standards. The manufacturing paper mill and printer hold full FSC and PEFC certification and accreditation.

All contents © 2020 Future Publishing Limited or published under licence. All rights reserved. No part of this magazine may be used, stored, transmitted or reproduced in any way without the prior written permission of the publisher. Future Publishing Limited (company number 2008885) is registered in England and Wales. Registered office: Quay House, The Ambury, Bath BA1 1UA. All information contained in this publication is for information only and is, as far as we are aware, correct at the time of going to press. Future cannot accept any responsibility for errors or inaccuracies in such information. You are advised to contact manufacturers and retailers directly with regard to the price of products/services referred to in this publication. Apps and websites mentioned in this publication are not under our control. We are not responsible for their contents or any other changes or updates to them. This magazine is fully independent and not affiliated in any way with the companies mentioned herein. If you submit material to us, you warrant that you own the material and/or have the necessary rights/permissions to supply the material and you automatically grant Future and its licensees a licence to publish your submission in whole or in part in any/all issues and/or editions of publications, in any format published worldwide and on associated websites, social media channels and associated products. Any material you submit is sent at your own risk and, although every care is taken, neither Future nor its employees, agents, subcontractors or licensees shall be liable for loss or damage. We



Future plc is a public company quoted on the London Stock Exchange (symbol: FUTR) www.futureplc.com
Chief executive **Zillah Byng-Thorne**
Non-executive chairman **Richard Huntingford**
Chief financial officer **Rachel Addison**
Tel +44 (0)1225 442 244

INTRO

IF IT'S OUT THERE, IT'S IN HERE



TRANSATLANTIC ARE EXPANDING!

Supergroup reveal why their fifth album is actually two distinct releases sharing common elements.

► **In a move** that might seem reminiscent of a scene from *Dune*, prog supergroup Transatlantic will perform the musical equivalent of folding space — or moving without moving — when they release fifth album *The Absolute Universe* on February 5 via InsideOut.

As a result of discussions over whether the follow-up to 2014's *Kaleidoscope* should be a single- or double-length title, Neal Morse, Mike Portnoy, Roine Stolt and Pete Trewavas wound up doing both.

The result is that, while *The Absolute Universe: The Breath Of Life (Abridged Version)* and *The Absolute Universe: Forevermore (Extended Version)* share many common threads, listeners will only hear all the music from the project in *The*

Ultimate Edition box set, which contains five LPs, three CDs and a Blu-ray.

"We've got two versions of this album," drummer Portnoy confirms. "A two-CD presentation, which is 90 minutes long, and a single one that's 60 minutes." He continues: "However, the single CD is not merely an edited version of the double CD. They each contain alternate versions and, even in some cases, new recordings. We wrote fresh lyrics and have different people singing on the single CD version tracks as compared to those on the double CD. Some of the song titles have

also been changed, while others might remain the same, but compositionally what you'll hear has been altered. You must appreciate that what we have done is unique."

Bassist Trewavas points out: "We did write some new music for the single CD. What's more, there are also differences in the instruments used on some of the tracks across the two records."

Development began in September 2019, when the group gathered to lay out ideas over the course of two weeks. They all returned to their home studios, as usual, to start tracking separately.



"You must appreciate that what we have done is unique."

Universal appeal: Morse, Trewavas, Portnoy and Stolt loved too much of their new music to cut it down to just one disc.



PRESS/ TOBIAS ANDERSSON

"Everything kept expanding and expanding," Stolt says. "We decided it made sense to make it a double album. Pete and Neal said it would be too long, and we should reduce it to one. But we were already recording. There were so many pieces that each of us loved and didn't want to lose. That's when we ended up in discussions over the best way forward."

Portnoy laughs that the idea of Transatlantic recording a concept album "won't shock anyone", adding: "What we have is essentially one giant composition, split into chapters. The storyline is about the struggles facing everyone in society today."

Visit www.transatlanticweb.com for more details. **MK**

This month, Intro was compiled by

Jeremy Allen
Joe Banks
Chris Cope
Jerry Ewing
Jacob Holm-Lupo
Rob Hughes
Martin Kielty
Hannah May Kilroy
Alex Lynham
Rhodri Marsden
Giulia Mascheroni
Grant Moon
Natasha Scharf
Phil Weller



STEVE HACKETT'S EXOTIC POSTCARD

Virtuoso guitarist returns with his first acoustic solo album in 12 years.



Fantasy island:
Steve Hackett.

PRESS/JO HACKETT

► **Steve Hackett** is taking listeners on a journey with his new instrumental album, *Under A Mediterranean Sky*, which is released on January 22 via InsideOut.

The inspiration for the former Genesis guitarist's first acoustic album since 2008 came from travels Hackett and his wife Jo have enjoyed in the region. It's a melting pot of far-flung influence, nodding to music from countries such as Malta, France, Egypt and Greece, and it sees Hackett whip out the nylon, steel string and 12-string guitars, as well as an Iraqi oud.

"I love making things that sound more classical – classical influences, flamenco influences, orchestral influences," he says. "Sometimes it's nice not to sing, and just pick up the axe. I love wrestling with music in all its forms."

He hopes to give listeners a musical journey at a time when travel has been restricted. "We have travelled to so many places in the Mediterranean," he explains. "The region is rich in different cultures. The album is a travelogue, it's a musical diary perhaps. I had a blast doing it."

He's joined on the record by a handful of guests, including co-writer Roger King, who provides keyboards and orchestral arrangements, Malik Mansurov from Azerbaijan and Armenian musician Arsen Petrosyan.

Also present is brother John Hackett, with Rob Townsend on flute and saxophone, while violin tracks come courtesy of Christine Townsend.

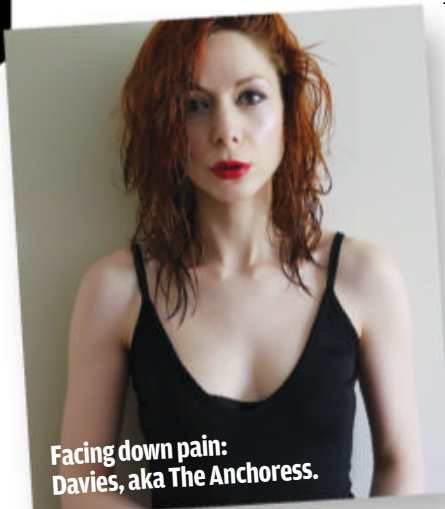
For more, visit www.hackettsongs.com. **CC**

THE ANCHORESS TAKES ON GRIEF IN THE ART OF LOSING

Catherine Anne Davies gets personal with second album.

► **Catherine Anne Davies** will release her second album under the banner of The Anchoress on March 5 via Kscope – and she warns that it's "heavier and darker than people have come to expect".

The Art Of Losing deals with the grief of loss, inspired by an unidentified personal experience of a few years ago. It features David Bowie drummer Sterling Campbell and James Dean Bradfield of the Manic Street Preachers, but other than that it had to be a solo project.



Facing down pain:
Davies, aka The Anchoress.

"This couldn't have been a collaborative effort because it delves down into some pretty personal and horrific experiences," she says. "It's not a time I'd want to return to, but the album is a literal record of having walked through the fire and emerged, somewhat changed."

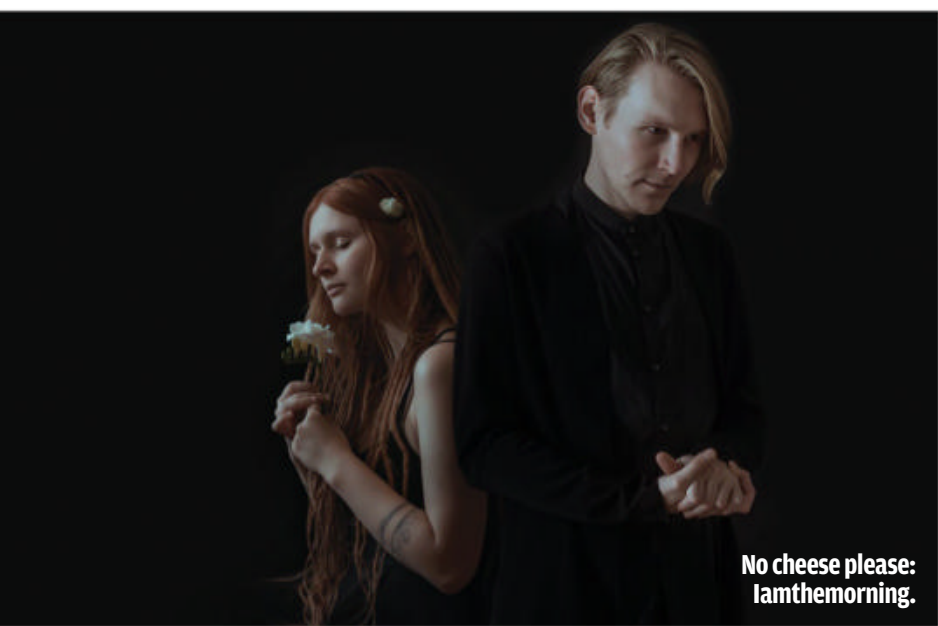
Davies adds: "There's nothing sonically 'gentle' about it – but it's not a dour affair. I hope I've created a technicolour eruption of emotions."

Find out more at www.theanchoress.co.uk. **MK**

PRESS/ISABELLA CHARLESWORTH

IAMTHEMORNING'S CHRISTMAS SONGS

Russian duo celebrate the end of 2020 with a mix of new and traditional tracks on EP.



No cheese please: Iamthemorning.

MARIE YU

Russian duo Iamthemorning will self-release a new EP, *Counting The Ghosts*, on December 4. The four-track features two brand new songs and two covers of traditional Christmas choral pieces.

"We wanted to release a Christmas-themed EP, but we didn't want it to be cheesy," explains vocalist Marjana Semkina, who is one half of the partnership alongside Gleb Kolyadin. "It's not straightforwardly festive, more of a celebratory end-of-the-year release. Because, thank God, this year is nearly over!"

Counting The Ghosts was written and recorded in isolation in October across three countries, with Kolyadin in Russia, Semkina in the UK and their sound engineer Vlad Avy – who also plays guitar on the EP – in Canada. "We're used to doing things this way," Semkina says. "When we wrote *The Bell*, we wrote remotely, sending files to each other."

Originally intending to release a full covers EP, Iamthemorning ended up writing two new pieces: the title track and *Cradle Song*.

"The music for *Counting The Ghosts* was originally written by Gleb for a theatre performance in Russia that didn't happen, and the lyrics are how I feel about 2020," Semkina says. "The line: 'One at a time I'm counting my ghosts' refers to all the losses we and others have had this year. It also references the ghosts of Christmas – how, at Christmas, everybody remembers their dead relatives."

For *Cradle Song*, she was influenced by William Blake's poem of the same name. "I've always been a huge fan," she says. "I was reading that poem and I realised how beautiful and Christmassy the feel of it was. It's not deliberately festive, but it has a nice, cosy feeling. My version is a gloomier take!"

The two cover songs are reimaginings of traditional festive songs: 12th-century hymn *Veni Veni Emmanuel*, where Semkina sings in Latin, and the more modern piece *I Wonder As I Wander*.

"Both those songs are very religious, and while I'm not religious, I appreciate that a lot of amazing things can be born out of love to something – even if it's God," Semkina says. "They're not in-your-face Christmas, but a little more obscure. I also chose them because they are challenging to sing – and I like a challenge to conquer." **HMK**

To pre-order *Counting The Ghosts*, visit www.iamthemorningband.bandcamp.com

"I chose them because they are challenging to sing - and I like a challenge to conquer."

INTRO extras

RICHARD DURRANT GETS REWILD

Ex-Sky guitarist
Richard Durrant employed field recordings for his new instrumental album, *Rewilding*, which explores the concept of letting nature have more say in how humans use land. "Rewilding is cleansing, self-balancing, nourishing and carbon-trapping," he argues. "We need to assist gently, watch intently and stand back – just like composing music!" www.richarddurrant.com

ROCK ACTION
Making a connection: Scotsmen Mogwai.

MOGWAI ARE BACK TO SHARE THE LOVE

New album features collaborations with Atticus Ross and Colin Stetson.

Scottish experimental rock outfit Mogwai have announced a new record, *As The Love Continues*, which will be released on February 19 via Rock Action Records.

The LP follows 2017's *Every Country's Son* and the band's soundtrack for Italian TV drama *ZeroZeroZero*. The TV music is a pay-what-you-feel download, with half of proceeds going to Help Musicians and NHS charities. "With *ZeroZeroZero* there were eight episodes, so almost eight hours of music," says guitarist Stuart Braithwaite. "It was like being on a conveyor belt. It's pretty intense having to make up pieces of music really quickly."

Even though *As The Love Continues* was written during the same period, the songs stayed distinct from the *ZeroZeroZero* tracks. "The way I see it is that you have to be able to not require anything else for the piece of music to work on its own," Braithwaite says. "A song for a Mogwai album has to work as a standalone rock song."

The new record finds the band reuniting with producer Dave Fridmann, and also sees contributions from Atticus Ross and Colin Stetson. The first single from the album was *Dry Fantasy*, with an accompanying video by Vaj.Power. "It was really nice to release music because I think everybody feels really isolated at the moment," Braithwaite says. "And especially with music, it's such a social thing. It's so much about human connection. It's nice to be able to share with people what we've made."

For more details visit www.mogwai.scot. **AL**

STEVE DAVIS AND KAVUS TORABI GET WRITTEN UP

Duo's book explores their friendship through prog.

Following on from their musical project The Utopia Strong and prog-centric *Interesting Alternative Show* on Phoenix FM, Steve Davis and Kavus Torabi have now written a book together.

Due out in April 2021 via Orion, *Medical Grade Music* is described as "the first work of joint autobiography to ever trace the evolution of a life-changing friendship through the discographies of Gentle Giant and Voivod."

Knifeworld and Gong man Torabi says it's "part-memoir, part-love letter to music, including tales of what we were up to before we met each other. It jumps all over history."

Snooker champ Davis, who met Torabi at a Magma gig, adds: "The brief was to write a book about loads of our favourite left-field artists – but once we got into it we realised there was a better story to be told. It's such an unlikely tale, getting together and ending up in a band. We're kindred spirits."

Find out more via www.orionbooks.co.uk. **RH**



Kindred spirits: Davis and Torabi.

PRESS

BIG BIG TRAIN EMPIRE

Live at the Hackney Empire

The stunning new Blu-ray/2 CD live release filmed and recorded at London's Hackney Empire in November 2019



"Stunning prog epics, sumptuously delivered... Beautifully shot and stylishly packaged." **Prog**



Available from 27 November 2020



"Dyble's assured, cut glass tone is impeccable and beautifully paired with Longdon's earthier soulful style... It may just take away the breaths between your breath."

Prog

"Delightful folk-prog fancies... an almost supernatural dimension of creative results... a charming story-book of epic sonics and entrancing tales... startling instrumentation."

Decibel Report

"A thing of rare, uplifting beauty."

Classic Rock 8/10



"For all the sadness of subject and circumstance, an album of uplifting beauty... David Longdon's compositions and arrangements intricately and dramatically frame and lift Judy Dyble's meditative lyrics."

RnR 5/5

"Dyble's cool, clear vocals and Longdon's richer tones combine beautifully in inspired arrangements."

Mojo 4/5

"A graceful, poignant and touching record... an album that you must listen to or you miss it at your peril."

Progradar

Dyble Longdon, 'Between A Breath And A Breath'

The long awaited collaboration between

Judy Dyble (Fairport Convention, Trader Horne) and **David Longdon** (Big Big Train)



Available Now



GREAT ODIN: SIGUR RÓS RETURN!

Icelandic band set date for their orchestral album inspired by Norse mythology.



Spun out of myth: Iceland's Sigur Rós.

EVA VERMANDEL

► **Sigur Rós** finally release their long-lost orchestral work, *Odin's Raven Magic*, on December 4. Available on the Krunk label via Warner Classics, the monumental 70-minute piece was recorded live in September 2004 at La Grande Halle De La Villette in Paris, with the choir of the Schola Cantorum of Reykjavik and L'Orchestre Des Laureats Du Conservatoire National De Paris.

The work was a collaboration between the post-rockers and Hilmar Örn Hilmarsson, a leading figure in Iceland's music scene and also a pagan high priest and expert in the country's history and mythology. He approached the band with the concept of a work based on the poem *Odin's Raven Magic* from the *Edda*, Iceland's rich medieval literary canon.

In the tale, the god Odin sends two ravens to survey the world, and the birds bring back news of "ominous signs that foretell the end of the world of both gods and men."

"It's a very visual poem," says Hilmarsson, "with images all about falling down, and a world freezing from north to south. It was an apocalyptic warning." He adds: "Today, Iceland is involved in environmental issues surrounding hydroelectric power and the destruction of the highlands. We are being warned again."

The music bringing *Odin's Raven Magic* to life is aptly complex, dramatic and portentous, with one signature sound coming from a huge, five-octave marimba made of 54 unprocessed stones.

Hilmarsson and the band are joined by vocalist Steindór Andersen — a specialist in traditional Icelandic song with whom Sigur Rós recorded 2001 EP *Rímur* — and Maria Huld Markan Sigfúsdóttir of Amiina, who played a large part in arrangements for the orchestra and choir.

The piece was commissioned for the Reykjavik Arts Festival of May 2002, but received its debut performance the month before in London, at a sold-out Barbican Centre.

"We only performed it a few times after that," says the

band's Georg Holm, "but we never really found the right time to release it. It just feels right to do it now, to let go of it."

"And I do think it's perfect timing — the world is going to hell and the poem is about how the gods know that this is the end for everyone!"

But he adds cautiously: "As I understand it, when there is an end something else begins." **GRM**

For more information on *Odin's Raven Magic*, visit www.sigurros.com.

"The world is going to hell and the poem is about how the gods know that this is the end."

INTRO extras

RAEL JONES EXPLORES DEATH

Rael Jones of Thumpermonkey has released a solo album called *Mother Echo*, which he wrote as an exploration of the death of his mum. The artwork was created by his bandmates Ben Wren and Sam Warren. "Basically Sam drew a recurring nightmare I had as a child then Ben made it look lovelier," Jones says, describing his music as "going along similar lines" to 2013's *Mandrake*. For more, see www.raeljones.com.

Psychic attack: singer and guitarist Jane Weaver.

NIC CHAPMAN



JANE WEAVER GETS JOYFUL WITH FLOCK

She aimed to write her way to happiness with "immediate, song-based" work.

► **Jane Weaver** wanted to create something different with her new album *Flock*, which arrives on March 5 via Fire Records. "I love conceptual albums and 10-minute freakouts, but I wanted to do something more immediate and song-based," she says. "My approach was a bit different — it was about creating something that's pop and has hooks and riffs, but has an oddness to it."

The artist light-heartedly describes the result as her own motivational record, explaining: "I wanted to do something joyful, unifying, that would work well live, given the chance. Like many people, I've been fed up with so many things in the past few years. I wanted to write my way out of the funk I was in and feel happy."

Weaver adds that *Flock* embraces "girl group moments, spiritual jazz and hip-hop" and that lead track *The Revolution Of Super Visions* isn't entirely representative of the material. "It's probably one of the odder songs on the record," she explains. "The idea for this song is based around toxic masculinity — the subject matter is a universal problem that effects everyone."

In the video, she's seen attending an art gallery event where all the guests but one are female, and they've set a trap for the misogynistic sole male attendee. He falls victim to a concerted psychic attack from the women.

"I sometimes despair," Weaver says, "because the solution to equality is taking too long. So fantasising about mystical ideas might be our only resolve... Who knows?!"

For more details, visit www.janeweavermusic.com. **MK**

GUITARIST PLINI CONFIRMS 'IMPULSIVE' SECOND ALBUM

Australian musician promises playfulness on new record.

► **Australian guitarist Plini** will release his second full length album, *Impulse* Voices, on November 27. Having had more time on his hands than expected to finish the record, the virtuoso promises an eclectic experience.

"I'm really excited about this album," the guitarist says. "I've put a lot of time, thought and love into these songs. It's my most diverse collection of emotions, arrangement ideas and guitar playing yet."

He adds: "I totally made the most of that extra time to go into as much detail as possible with the entire writing and recording process."

Featuring eight new songs, including lead single *I'll Tell You Someday*, Plini has revealed the record will feature elements familiar to his previous releases — but that it also broadens those horizons.

"Some parts are darker and heavier than anything before," he reports, "but some parts are way more playful too."

For full details visit www.plini.co. **POW**



Darker and heavier tunes from Plini.

CHAD DAO

FAD GADGETS

Rhodri Marsden on three of the latest must-have gizmos currently putting the prog in progress.

POPULAR

It's the most irritating portmanteau since "mumpreneur" but the Poputar redeems itself by aiming to teach the world how to play guitar, quickly and easily.

Company founder Bohan Zhang says: "Poputar aims to provide you a joyful beginning with less trouble and baldness" – and that's a sentiment I can really get behind.

The accompanying app sends signals to LEDs embedded in the neck of the instrument to show you where to put your fingers, in real time. They claim that this will allow you to become proficient in "10 days" – which is clearly far too optimistic, but that doesn't mean it's not a) clever, and b) useful.

www.poputar.com/en

KOKOON NIGHTBUDS

Back in the day, a transistor radio placed carefully under the pillow would provide insomniacs with the faint hope of drifting off to the sound of the BBC World Service. These days there are a number

of hi-tech alternatives, designed to soothe your addled mind while not disturbing anyone who might be sleeping next to you. Headphones aren't

particularly compatible with sleeping – particularly if you're on your side – but these new earbuds solve the problem effortlessly, and as a result have smashed their Kickstarter target 20 times over.

www.kokoon.io

MOOG CLARAVOX

The theremin was the world's first electronic instrument, invented by Mr Leon Theremin almost 100 years ago. Legend has it that he stumbled across the concept accidentally while developing a burglar alarm at a research centre in Saint Petersburg. Synth wizards

Moog are now celebrating this anniversary with the launch of a new model, named after theremin virtuoso Clara Rockmore. Exquisitely styled

in walnut and brass, it's the perfect Christmas gift for a geek you don't mind spending just over £1,150 on.

www.moogmusic.com



ALL AROUND THE WORLD

Our far-out trip to far-flung prog

Four's not a crowd: Avandra started life as a solo project by leader Christian Ayala.



AVANDRA

Christian Ayala explains how the Puerto Rican four-piece want to change the state of their nation with their brand of melodic prog.

When thinking about the Caribbean Islands, among the first things that might cross readers' minds are the never-ending summers, amazing beaches and Latin music. But of course there's much more to it than that. Dig deeper and you'll come across Puerto Rican prog metal band Avandra, who are one of the local acts creating new sounds.

"I've always been into music since I can remember," says the group's mastermind, Christian Ayala. "My earliest memories are of me freaking out over Michael Jackson when I was four, and then discovering The Beatles – that was life-changing! I started my first band when I was 20, then in 2011 I decided to learn how to record and create a project all by myself. Around 2014 I started writing my first songs and I thought: 'You have to release something now – what if you die tomorrow?' That was the great motivator behind Avandra."

The project evolved with the addition of Luis Javier Rivera Guilbot on guitar, Gabriel Rodríguez Martínez on bass and Adrian Arroyo Schuck on drums. They gained international attention with their second album, *Descender*,

in 2019. Their music blends technical prog metal with heaps of melody, creating a sound familiar to fans of Dream Theater, Opeth and Porcupine Tree.

"I come from metal and I absolutely love the Kevin Moore era of Dream Theater and Chroma Key, but I think I have a lot of pop sensibility and I always look for melody," Ayala says.

While Puerto Rican culture is famously rich, it seems that the country hasn't yet developed a taste for prog. "The scene here is similar to the general one of South America, where thrash metal dominates outside the mainstream," Ayala reports. "There's a percentage of doom and metalcore bands, but there are about two prog bands and they're incorporated into the

metal scene." But there are prog fans to be found, he confirms. "Quite a few people really love prog although they don't play an instrument – or if they do they do, it's just as a hobby. A lot of these people are doctors or lawyers. It's a really weird thing!" **GMA**

Avandra's latest album, *Skylighting*, is out now via Layered Reality. Visit www.avandra.bandcamp.com for more.



"I have a lot of pop sensibility and I always look for melody."

PROG IN BRIEF

Uriah Heep co-founder Ken Hensley died suddenly aged 75 on November 4, the band confirmed. Describing him as "one of the most important musicians of the past half-a-century," Mick Box added: "Ken's musical legacy will be in people's hearts for ever."

PRESS/ALEX LAKE



Cobalt Chapel (left) launch their second album, *Orange Synthetic*, on January 29. The Yorkshire duo say it's an "exploration of the epic county they call home, inspired by the humanity and folklore of the region." cobaltchapel.bandcamp.com

Gavin Harrison and Antoine Fafard release their album *Chemical Reactions* on December 11. Harrison says it's "prog, orchestral, classic string quartet" music featuring the Janacek Philharmonic Orchestra. www.antoinefafard.com



Pain of Salvation

The Perfect Element

Anniversary Mix 2020

In Stores 20th November

20th anniversary edition of Pain of Salvation's third album and progressive metal masterpiece. "The Perfect Element, Pt. I (Anniversary Mix 2020)" features 13 songs / 76 minutes completely remixed and remastered.

Available as limited 2CD Digipak and Digital Album (with a total of 8 bonus tracks) as well as in the Gatefold 2LP format on 180g vinyl with the entire remixed album as bonus CD.



FROST*

13 WINTERS

In Stores 20th November

A comprehensive journey through the dynamic, daring and exciting catalogue of Frost*.

An 8-disc artbook set featuring remastered editions of *Milliontown*, *Experiments In Mass Appeal* & *Falling Satellites*, instrumental & live versions of the latter album, the recently released *Others* EP, *The Philadelphia Experiment (Live 2009)*, as well as a disc of B-Sides & Rarities.



Riverside

LOST'N'FOUND - LIVE IN TILBURG

In Stores 11th December

A live-release from Polish progressive rockers Riverside, taken from their 2015 tour in support of the 'Love, Fear and the Time Machine' album.

13 songs, 104 minutes long, and available as a Limited 2CD+DVD Mediabook, Gatefold 3LP+2CD & as Digital Audio Album.

Get the exclusive, limited Hot Pink vinyl edition from BurningShed.com

ODESSEY & ORACLE

Baroque pop quartet embark on a treasure hunt for the perfect song.

EXPERIMENTAL ARTISTS FANNY L'Héritier and Guillaume Médioni are the songwriting partnership behind Odessey & Oracle, but all four members bring their considerable expertise. Classically trained at the same conservatoire in Lyon, they formed around 2012: L'Héritier sings and Médioni plays guitars, banjos and bass, while they both use a range of analogue synthesisers mostly dating back to the 1970s. Alice Baudoin adds harpsichord, pipe organ and baroque oboe to the mix, while Roméo Monteiro brings drums and an array of percussion.

It's not just the hardware that's extensive, the songs are also labyrinthine in their ambition, slipping down sonic corridors and going off on melodic tangents, always inflected with a gossamer light pop sensibility. Current album *Crocorama* taps into the baroque pop of the late 1960s but there's never any sense of pastiche. The music is forward thinking and always progressive with its unexpected chord progressions. Opener *Chercher Maman* (looking for mum) has the *je ne sais quoi* of French composer Jean-Claude Vannier and *Je Suis L'Endormie* (I'm sleeping) takes flight like a balloon with L'Héritier's delicate soprano picking out notes like stars in the sky.

"We listened to a lot of prog bands in the past," says Médioni, speaking via Zoom on a sofa next to L'Héritier. "I think what we really prefer is when prog bands play pop songs. That's why I like 10cc, or my favourite, Gentle Giant. I like the power and the glory of their *Octopus* album, which is caught between pop and prog with these wild instrumental flourishes."

To prog pop, add psychedelia and tropicalismo, the Brazilian music of great songwriters Caetano Veloso and Gilberto Gil. And then there's that *Zombies* album from which they took their name.

"When we met, *Odessey And Oracle* was the album that we both preferred," says Médioni. "It's a kind of a magic album, one of the best ever: the songs, the sound, the playing, the singing... it's all so good."

"It was a musical meeting point for everybody in the band so we chose that name," adds L'Héritier.

Odessey & Oracle have released three albums with the simple manifesto: to make ornate pop look easy, and with each release the pop part has increased.

2014's *Odessey & Oracle... And The Casiotone Orchestra* was written in English, though they decided to switch back to French on 2017's *Speculatio* in order to express themselves better. On *Crocorama* they've upped the ante melodically and lyrically.

Crocorama sounds as though it might be a concept album, but it's actually a concept that's been dragged across albums. L'Héritier explains: "*Crocorama* refers back to *J'ai Vu Un Croco* (I saw a crocodile) from the last album."

Despite the cute diminutive, these crocs are predators. "On *J'ai Vu Un Croco* we look at capitalism," says Médioni. "It was the first song where we personify the crocos as predatory capitalists. On *Crocorama* we made a song that reprises some of these themes. The Crocos are back! It's a more explicit critique of neoliberalism this time."

Beware the croc, monsieur! **JA**

PROG FILE



LINE-UP

Fanny L'Héritier (lead vocals, electric piano, synths), **Alice Baudoin** (electric harpsichord, synths, recorders, vocals), **Guillaume Médioni** (electric guitar, dobro, banjo, vocals), **Roméo Monteiro** (drums, percussion)

SOUNDS LIKE

A breath of French air: weightless and propelled by precision. This is music that revels in possibilities: always experimental but never unreachable

CURRENT RELEASE

Crocorama is out now on Dur Et Doux

WEBSITE

www.odesseyandoracle.bandcamp.com



"We really prefer it when prog bands play pop songs. I like the power and the glory of Gentle Giant's *Octopus*."

Odessey & Oracle, L-R: Guillaume Médioni, Alice Baudoin, Roméo Monteiro, Fanny L'Héritier.



PHOTO: SYLVIE MAURIS DEMOURTOUX



TIME FOR CHANGE

Opium Cartel's guitarist says, "Many fans don't know how bad things are at Spotify."

► **Online streaming has** been around for a while now. It's great in many ways, but most fans are probably unaware that it's bad news for the artists they love. You can't blame listeners for not knowing because the people behind these services do their best to cover up the damage.

Before I go on to attack Spotify, I must confess: I use the service myself. I look for new music, and if I like what I hear, I'll order a physical LP online. As a mixing engineer I use Spotify if a band tells me, "Give it that nocturnal crunch of the Debased Babykillers' third EP!" I'm not going to spend money on a garbage record so I hit it up on Spotify... usually to ascertain that I can ignore the band's instructions!

Spotify has become ubiquitous for that reason: it's so damn convenient. But I was never asked, as an artist: "Would you like us to spread your music around the entire planet, and in return get paid nothing?" If I had been, I would've socked them on the jaw.

Spotify weren't the first, but their tipping of the scales is far reaching. For less than the price of a physical album, subscribers can listen to a million albums a month, if they have the time. It's a steal for listeners, and a steal from the artists. The average payout per stream on Spotify is between \$0.004 and \$0.007 (that's not even one penny) so most artists get paid next to nothing even if people listen to their music every day. To make matters worse, when you listen to your favourite avant-noise record, part of your payment ends up going to a major label, because current royalty agreements state that record companies get a share of all Spotify revenue. That's a bullshit deal.

Researchers have proposed a "user-centric" model where what you pay actually goes to the artists you listen to. Studies also show that listeners are willing to pay more, if that means artists get paid more. The United Musicians and Allied Workers Union have started a campaign, Justice At Spotify, where they're demanding Spotify raise their payout to one cent (one penny) per stream.

But Spotify isn't sharing its money yet. With an estimated value of \$28 billion (£22.5bn), it's shored up rights for almost all the world's music. Users are asked to pay for it while only a symbolic trickle of that money drips into the hands of labels, distributors and artists, who are left to fight over it. Is it really fair that these businessmen make billions out of music that people like me sweat blood and tears to create?

Spotify's CEO Daniel Ek recently told musicians to make him more music to sell. "It's not enough to make albums every three to four years," he said. Turn on the conveyor belt. We'll pile on prog rock masterpieces every month while our kids go hungry.

Until Spotify changes, my advice is to use Bandcamp - 85-90 per cent of what you pay goes back to the musicians, and it's a fun, friendly way for fans and artists to interact.

JACOB HOLM-LUPO

Got an opinion on the matter that you'd like to share? Please email us at: prog@futurenet.com. Opinions expressed in this column aren't necessarily those of the magazine.



MY PROG HERO

Inspiring the wider music world...



A Yes man: Bruford's genre-hopping style captured David White (inset) from a young age.

GIUSEPPE HANKE/ROOT/REDFERNS/GETTY IMAGES

PRESS

DAVID WHITE

Lead singer with American thrash band Heathen details his lifelong passion for drumming icon **Bill Bruford**.

► **"My foundation in** music began with the drums. Through my dad, a lover of jazz music, I gravitated to jazz, but my early rock influences were guys like Ringo Starr, John Bonham, Aynsley Dunbar, Neil Peart and, of course Bill Bruford. In 1975 I started my first rock band, which became Blind Illusion and went on a progressive path - John McLaughlin, King Crimson, Yes, Jethro Tull...

"My first Yes album was *Fragile*, and in that first moment I had to know, 'Who is that guy on the drums?' I'm still blown away by Bill's work on that record. At first I almost couldn't comprehend what was happening, but it didn't matter - it was musical bliss. I soon started collecting everything Yes and everything Bruford.

"One of my favourite Yes tunes is *Heart Of The Sunrise* - it captures so many aspects of Bill's signature style, starting with a driving intro into a syncopated funky beat and then above the clouds.

"Bill's contribution to King Crimson was incredible, *Red* being my favourite. *One More Red Night* is so heavy and ominous. And later with UK - what a special

group. Exploration at its finest, and Bill's work on the debut record is flawless. I only got to see them in concert one time and it was unfortunate Bill didn't stay long enough to see the group flourish.

"He'd already left Yes once I became aware of him, and I missed the reunion tours because of my own touring schedule. But his supreme talent unquestionably drove the music, wherever he was. His stickwork was impeccable. To this day I'm captured by his rhythmical beats and odd time signatures through intertwining connections to fluidity. This to me is his signature, and all of it stands the test of time.

"He's still out there contributing to the scene and a new generation of musicians. His approach to playing was very unique, his groove feels like floating! Tasteful, masterful, guaranteed uplifting excellence with style, swagger and grace!

I consider him to be one of the greatest drummers of our time." **MK**



"I consider him to be one of the greatest drummers of our time."

Heathen's new album *Empire Of The Blind* is out now via Nuclear Blast. For more details visit the page: www.facebook.com/heathen.official.

PROG IN BRIEF

Richard Thompson (right) will publish his first memoir, *Beeswing*, on April 15. It covers the years 1967 to 1975 and is dedicated to the late Scott Timberg, who helped with its development. www.richardthompson-music.com

PRESS/DAVID KAPTEIN



Swedish prog metallers **Soen** will release their fifth album *Imperial* on January 29. Drummer Martin Lopez says: "We were able to spend 12 hours a day for many months bringing *Imperial* to the place we really wanted." www.soenmusic.com

Lost Horizons, featuring former Cocteau Twins member Simon Raymonde, will release new album *In Quiet Moments* on February 26. It includes a guest appearance by Tim Smith of Midlake fame on *Grey Tower*. facebook.com/losthorizonsband

Tesseract vocalist **Daniel Tompkins** releases solo album *Ruins* on December 11. It features guest appearances by Plini, Paul Ortiz and Matt Heafy, and it's a reworking of material from his LP *Castles* "with more aggression." www.daniel-tompkins.com



PRESS/LUCY LING

Strange Attraction:
Nottingham's
Attraktors.

ATTRAKTORS

Electronic transmissions and post-punk vibes from krautrock-inspired trio.

THE GERMAN AVANT-rock scene of the 1970s continues to be a major inspiration, with the latest band to channel the sound and spirit of krautrock being Nottingham-based Attraktors. Initially the solo project of Six By Seven keyboardist James Flower (JFlower), Attraktors became a trio with the addition of bassist John 'Jhon' Thompson and drummer Antony Hodgkinson (Antronhy), whose varied musical backgrounds include Nectarine No 9, Bivouac, Julian Cope and The Selector. The band have now released their self-titled debut album, which has been gradually pieced together over the past few years.

"Originally I was pretty obsessed with the usual suspects of Neu! and Kraftwerk," says JFlower. "But you can only regurgitate those bands once or twice before you turn into a one-trick pony. Working with the other guys, the record took a different direction. For instance, Ant, who's quite a force of nature, was interested in putting some vocal ideas down, which helped to give it a bit more structure. He had never done vocals before, but he wanted to have a go, and I really like that!"

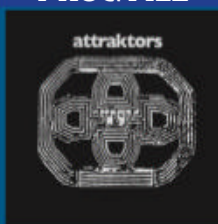
While the album is in part homage to the propulsive electronic sounds of the aforementioned bands, there's a strong post-punk influence too, particularly in Antronhy's deliberately affectless vocals and Jhon's driving basslines. There's also some intriguing percussion-based ambient pieces. It captures the exploratory excitement of krautrock while creating an energy all of its own.

"I think it's got an attitude," enthuses JFlower. "We're so used to listening to music now that's been processed into a lifeless state. But I like to use synths as a palette of sound rather than taking a more technical approach. The *Attraktors* record isn't without fault — some of it is glued together and there's a live feel underneath the bits that are sequenced. We didn't want to make a carbon copy of a cliché!

"I wanted it to be an uplifting experience to listen to," he continues, and there's definitely a sense of future-facing optimism in its grooves. JFlower believes it's one of the reasons that krautrock has become so popular in recent years: "If you listen to Can, there's a very organic feel to it, while with Harmonia, there's a beautiful linear type of quality. People have become fascinated with it because it's a way of exploring ideas where you don't need to be brilliant at guitar, you don't need to be expert at anything, it's wide open. Everybody from Primal Scream to The Horrors to Public Service Broadcasting have borrowed from the genre, it's almost a rite of passage for bands. But I hope we've steered it in another direction."

The band's other inspirations is closer to home. "We're all Hawkwind fans," says JFlower, "I also have a strange obsession with ELP, and I really like The Nice's cover of *America*. There's some astonishing stuff that's come out of the prog scene. We're all into that experimental type of attitude, so Attraktors have definitely got a bit of prog in them!" **JB**

PROG FILE



LINE-UP

JFlower (keyboards, saxophone), **Jhon** (bass), **Antronhy** (drums, percussion, vocals)

SOUNDS LIKE

Harmonia, Brian Eno and Wire jamming in the Midlands

CURRENT RELEASE

Attraktors is out now on Vivod

WEBSITE

www.facebook.com/attraktors



"I like to use synths as a palette of sound rather than taking a more technical approach."



US, THEM & YOU

What got us all
grooving this month...

Official Progressive Albums Chart

The prog top 30 albums

October 2020

Compiled by



- 1 **TAME IMPALA** The Slow Rush (FICTION)
- 2 **PINK FLOYD** The Later Years - 1987-2019 (RHINO)
- 3 **HAWKWIND LIGHT ORCHESTRA** Carnivorous (CHERRY RED)
- 4 **OZRIC TENTACLES** Space For The Earth (KSCOPE)
- 5 **DEVIN TOWNSEND** Order Of Magnitude - Empath Live - Vol 1 (INSIDEOUT)
- 6 **STEVE HACKETT** Selling England By The Pound And Spectral Mornings: Live (INSIDEOUT)
- 7 **FLAMING LIPS** American Head (BELLA UNION)
- 8 **TANGERINE DREAM** Pilots Of Purple Twilight (UMC)
- 9 **JAKKO M JAKSZYK** Secrets & Lies (INSIDEOUT)
- 10 **RICK WAKEMAN** The Red Planet (R&D MEDIA)
- 11 **THE FLOWER KINGS** Islands (INSIDEOUT)
- 12 **GREG LAKE** The Anthology: A Musical Journey (BMG)
- 13 **RUSH** Permanent Waves (MERCURY/UMC)
- 14 **TOOL** Fear Inoculum (MUSIC FOR NATIONS)
- 15 **NIGHTWISH** Human. :II: Nature. (NUCLEAR BLAST)
- 16 **ENSLAVED** Utgard (NUCLEAR BLAST)
- 17 **MASTODON** Medium Rarities (REPRISE)
- 18 **PETER GABRIEL** Flotsam And Jetsam (REAL WORLD)
- 19 **CRIPPLED BLACK PHOENIX** ELLENGÆST (SEASON OF MIST)
- 20 **BIG BIG TRAIN** Summer's Lease (BELLE ANTIQUE)
- 21 **JEFF LYNNE'S ELO** From Out Of Nowhere (RCA)
- 22 **KING CRIMSON** In The Court Of The Crimson King (PANEGRIC/DGM)
- 23 **MATT BERRY** Phantom Birds (ACID JAZZ)
- 24 **THE PINEAPPLE THIEF** Versions Of The Truth (KSCOPE)
- 25 **AYREON** Transitus (MUSIC THEORIES)
- 26 **MARILLION** Afraid Of Sunlight (RHINO)
- 27 **FISH** Weltschmerz (CHOCOLATE FROG)
- 28 **GAZPACHO** Fireworker (KSCOPE)
- 29 **FRANK ZAPPA** Hot Rats (UMC)
- 30 **PROCOL HARUM** Something Magic (ESOTERIC)

Find out more at www.officialcharts.com

WIN! SAUCERFUL OF SECRETS VINYL BOX



Back in the days of non-socially distanced gigs, Nick Mason's Saucerful Of Secrets played two shows to a sold-out crowd at London's Roundhouse. The results have been captured for posterity in the band's first release, *Nick Mason's Saucerful Of Secrets Live At The Roundhouse*. We have a vinyl box set and a signed 12-inch poster of the cover art to give away to one lucky reader.

...*Live At The Roundhouse* offers a snapshot of the project's electrifying live show and sees Mason, Gary Kemp, Guy Pratt, Lee Harris and Dom Beken reviving music rarely featured in Pink Floyd's post *Dark Side* live shows. The double vinyl package even includes some songs that were never played live by Floyd, and features new versions of *Arnold Layne* and *Interstellar Overdrive*, as well as the mellow *Atom Heart Mother* and *Green Is the Colour*.

To be in with a chance of winning this prize, visit www.bit.ly/NMSOS and answer the following question:

Arnold Layne was Pink Floyd's first single, but what was its B-side?

- a) Apples And Oranges
- b) Vegetable Man
- c) Candy And A Currant Bun

For more information on Nick Mason's Saucerful Of Secrets, visit www.thesaucerfulofsecrets.com.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS: This competition will be open from November 27, 2020-December 31, 2020. By entering the competition you agree to our competition rules (available at www.futureplc.com/competition-rules). The winner will be selected at random from all correct entries received by the closing date. No employees of Future Publishing or any of its group companies or the employees of any entity which has been involved with the administration of this competition or any member of their households may enter this competition.

Now our turn...

The Editor

Jerry Ewing



TRANSATLANTIC

**The Absolute Universe:
Forevermore**
INSIDEOUT

The Art Guy

Russell Fairbrother



GANDALF'S FIST

**The (Re)Master
And The Monkey**
NIGHTKEEPER PRODUCTIONS

The Deputy Ed

Natasha Scharf



PG.LOST

Oscillate
PELAGIC

The Musician

Mariusz Duda



GAZPACHO

Fireworker
KSCOPE

The Writer

Giulia Mascheroni



AREA

Crac!
CRAMPS

The Reader

John Mazzarelli



WOBBLER

Dwellers Of The Deep
KARISMA

IWFYLS

From *Jurassic World* to post-rock, these Russian soundtrackers are waiting for you!

FOR NEARLY A decade, I Am Waiting For You Last Summer – shortened to IWFYLS – have been slowly honing their craft. The Russia instrumentalists built their reputation across a series of indie releases, gaining fans and experience each time. They met at a This Will Destroy You concert, as guitarist and multi-instrumentalist Sasha Sokolov recalls, “We met Evgenii at a show... while we were looking at the [touring] rig of the guys.”

Bassist and multi-instrumentalist Evgenii Popov excitedly picks up, “We live in a small town, so when an American post-rock band comes to play a show it’s like New Year’s Eve!”

Key to their development is Sasha’s day job as a film composer – he’s worked on soundtracks for *Jurassic World* and *Captain America: Winter Soldier* – which has driven the band in a more cinematic direction over time. His isn’t the only hand on the tiller though, the trio are all multi-instrumentalists and songwriters with a hand in charting the course of the band. “We don’t have set roles like guitarist, bassist or drummer,” says Popov.

With their new album, they’ve finally reached the promise hinted at in their early days. *Self-Defense* is a fully realised and immersive experience, with some of the band’s best hooks yet. “We developed our sound each release,” adds Popov, “but now we want to make a post-rock record that’s something new for the genre.”

IWFYLS are prolific electronics users, always seeking to incorporate them fluently. Some of their releases have almost totally eschewed guitar-led rock, and this

hasn’t always gone down well with their fans. Popov reflects with a shrug, “When we started the band, we were playing experimental post-rock, but by a few years later we changed our sound. We made releases in different genres with different approaches. Less guitars, more electronics, more dance vibe, more ambient, some synthwave stuff, some pop songs, even house music. Our fans didn’t like it so much.”

They’ve since retained their enthusiasm for mixing and re-interpreting genres within a post-rock palette, and this is why *Self-Defense* is so successful.

Although the band’s progression has a clearly defined path, the members’ influences have changed over time, sometimes dramatically. “I was a fan of more electronic music,” producer and multi-instrumentalist Lev Nikitin offers. “Zhenya [aka Evgenii Popov] and Sasha were fans of more live rock music, and now we have changed places.”

Adds Popov with a laugh, “We all like sad music. Sad and dreamy.” While musical influences have changed, he says their writing process has a pretty clear pattern: “The best results we get when we are all in one room, just jamming.”

When asked what they love about music, Sokolov becomes animated: “Music is life for me; I can’t imagine my life without it. It makes me feel alive. When you’re stood onstage and there’s people screaming, I can’t imagine other stuff I can do which will make me as happy as the feeling of playing live and feeling all that energy from people. It’s the most exciting thing in life.” **AL**

PROG FILE



LINE-UP

Evgenii Popov (multi-instrumentalist, bass),
Sasha Sokolov (multi-instrumentalist, guitar),
Lev Nikitin (multi-instrumentalist)

SOUNDS LIKE

Classic progressive rock meets 65daysofstatic and film soundtracks

CURRENT RELEASE

Self-Defense is out now on Trou Blanc

WEBSITE

www.iwfyls.bandcamp.com



“The best results we get when we are all in one room, just jamming.”

IWFYLS, L-R:
Lev Nikitin,
Sasha Sokolov,
Evgenii Popov.



A PERFECT GIFT FOR EVERYONE ON YOUR LIST*

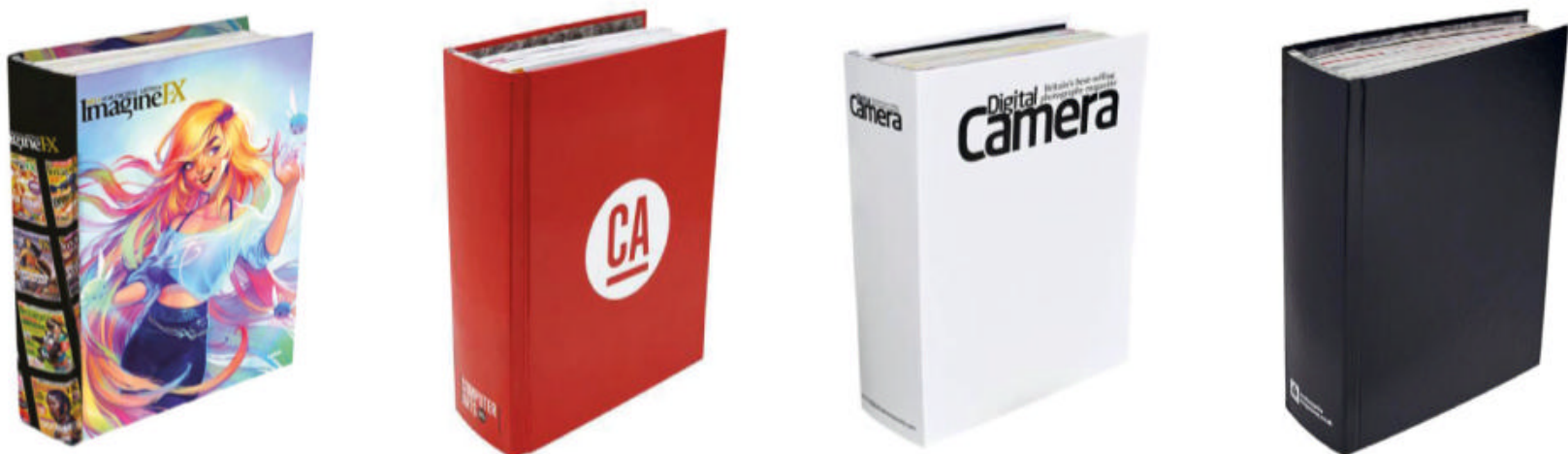
**including yourself!*



Every issue of your subscription, delivered direct to your door.
Print & digital editions available.

NEAT STORAGE

Store up to 13 issues of your magazine subscription in a coordinating slipcase or binder.



www.magazinesdirect.com

✓ No hidden costs 🚚 Shipping included in all prices 🌐 We deliver to over 100 countries 🔒 Secure online payment



DISCOVER GREAT GUIDES & SPECIALS

From photography to music and technology to gaming, there's something for everyone.



A magazine subscription is the perfect lockdown gift that keeps on delivering throughout the year. Choose from over 80 magazines and make great savings off the shop price! Plus a digital card of your choice to send to your family member or friend!



magazinesdirect.com

Official Magazine Subscription Store



STEWART YOUNG

He cut his teeth in the music industry when he was in his mid-20s, and now ELP's former manager has overseen a new anthology celebrating Greg Lake's illustrious musical career. Young reminisces over the pioneering band's heyday and his long-lasting relationship with the late musician.

Words: Grant Moon **Portrait:** Kenny Smith

In 1971 Stewart Young was working for his father's accountancy company when an up-and-coming rock trio called Emerson, Lake & Palmer asked for help to get their business affairs in order. At just 25, Young was appointed their financial advisor and subsequently became their manager, despite having precisely zero experience of the music industry. He continued to look after Greg Lake into his solo years, the two remaining good friends until Lake's death from pancreatic cancer in 2016. Young still manages artists such as Foreigner and Italian superstar Zucchero, and has overseen the making of *Greg Lake: The Anthology – A Musical Journey*. The lavishly presented two-disc, 32-track retrospective stretches back to Lake's early days in 60s psych bands The Shame and The Shy Limbs, along with highlights from his tenures with ELP and King Crimson, and his solo catalogue.

Had you heard of Emerson, Lake & Palmer before they knocked on your dad's door?

No. The first time I saw them play was Thanksgiving in 1971, their first time at Madison Square Garden. They started with *Hoedown*, these three guys making an unbelievable racket – I was blown away. When they fell out with their management my job was to find them a new manager. I interviewed Peter Grant, Bud Prager, David Geffen, but eventually the band said, "Why don't you manage us?" I told Greg I wasn't sure as I knew nothing, but he said, "Look, it's a new business, nobody really knows much, and we can help you." Ahmet Ertegun [co-founder of Atlantic, ELP's US label] set me up to speak to everyone in his company, to listen and learn.

Were ELP a handful to manage?

All artists are a handful if they're real artists. In Greg's case, everything had to be perfect. He was very into detail – he always said, "It's the little things that are important." He was obsessive like that, which made him difficult to deal with in some ways. Keith was a little more spontaneous, and Carl was always trying to push the envelope with the drums. But even when the band were

past their sell-by date they were never difficult at all. The difficulties came in the challenging things they put you through organising the shows.

Business aside, you and Greg clearly became good friends.

Great friends. I think he was an incredible, underrated artist and I wanted the anthology to cover that and to be suitably high quality. The booklet is very beautiful and we did a lot of work on the setlist. I wanted Greg's wife [Regina] to be happy. It's been a real labour of love.

In what way was he underrated?

Because the band [ELP] were in a way. Not at the time, but there was incredible talent in that band, and they covered all sorts of aspects of music, from classical covers to folk like *Lucky Man*. They were able to do many different forms of music, and were an incredible band live.

It's good to hear curios like The Shame's *Don't Go 'Way Little Girl*, but which tunes were the real must-haves?

You couldn't not have *Lucky Man*, *From The Beginning*, *I Believe In Father Christmas*. The version of *The Court Of The Crimson King* came from the concert in which Greg and Keith met [the Fillmore West, San Francisco, December 15, 1969]. King Crimson are very careful with their material but Robert [Fripp] let us use this recording, and when I realised what happened on this date and that it was part of ELP history, I was very pleased.

Did it ever bother Greg that, for all his achievements, to the mainstream audience he would always be best known for his Christmas song?

I don't think so. Greg was very spiritual but not religious, and he loved Christmas. It's not easy to write a Christmas song that isn't too sugary, and everybody likes it when people like something you've done, and he was proud about it. He was pretty stubborn that way!

What a soulful guitar solo he plays on *Oh My Father...*

I always thought he was a very nice guitar player because he played so tastefully. But, you know, sometimes these people don't realise. George Harrison was a wonderful player, but he was always a little bit negative about his own playing...

The *Great Gates Of Kiev* is a very good example of Greg's strengths as a lyricist. It's no mean feat to set words to music by Mussorgsky...

Lyrics play such an important part in Greg's music. We've done a beautiful lyric video to *Closer To Believing (Final Version, 2016)*, and I really think that's an amazing lyric. That was the last thing he recorded. Towards the end, when he was in the hospice, I got a mix of it from the engineer and I played it for him, and he liked it. I played him the final mixes for [2017 solo record] *Live In Piacenza* too. He made two or three comments, asking for minor changes, which we made, and he died four days later. Greg was a very good producer. He had that feel for what the best take was, or when a track needed something. He was really fascinated by that side of records.

What was he like as a man, Stewart?

When he called me to tell me about his diagnosis [in 2014] he said, "Don't feel sorry for me. Coming from where I came from, a prefab, to this life, I couldn't have asked for all this." Greg was one of those people who monopolised a room when they came in. He was six feet tall and had a very big personality and a wonderful smile, and he was very warm, loyal and generous. He loved a good life, enjoyed drinking a nice glass wine or two, or three. He collected books – first editions – and liked travelling, to Italy, to Paris. He didn't take fools gladly but if you fucked up – as I did several times – he would explode, then five minutes later he'd be buying you a drink.

Greg Lake: The Anthology – A Musical Journey is out now via BMG.



"Greg was a very good producer. He had that feel for what the best take was. He was fascinated by that side of records."

Greg Lake and Stewart
Young, back in the day.





All white on the night:
Jon Anderson in the 70s.

"For me, I am Yes.
It's never left me."

Eye Of The Survivor

Jon Anderson isn't the only person who wishes 2020 had panned out a little differently, so he's cranked up the time machine and jumped back to 1980 with the reissue of his second solo album. Released after his initial departure from Yes, *Song Of Seven* was the second step in a long and successful solo career that's seen the singer-songwriter collaborating with Vangelis, Mike Oldfield and his old Yes bandmate, Rick Wakeman. *Prog* catches up with Anderson to revisit the making of *Song Of Seven* and found out how he survived one of prog's most challenging decades.

Words: Sid Smith **Portrait:** Koh Hasebe/Shinko Music/Getty Images

"I've had it with your sweet-talking politicians, all you want to do is go and steal the world, try to tell us that you're here for all the people, when inside you're really out to screw us all," says Jon Anderson with some gusto. He's reciting the lyrics from *Go Screw Yourself*, a song that would be released online a few days after *Prog*'s interview. His anger at the current political situation is palpable. As he talks, his words are interspersed with rueful, heavy sighs at what he sees as the



terminal stupidity and wilful deceit of a political class lining its own pockets at the expense of people and the planet. “They’re like children playing around: ‘It’s my ball. No, it’s *my* ball.’ That’s all it is. These politicians drive me crazy because they’ve no sense of compassion or what’s really going on. It’s about time we all woke up, seriously.”

The smoke-filled skies above his California home and elsewhere that have dominated his home state following this year’s spate of forest fires only adds fuel to Anderson’s ire and exasperation. “The most important thing at this time in our world is Mother Earth and saving it for our children’s children,” he says. “There’s a bigger world out there there’s got to be taken care of rather than greedy politicians playing ‘who’s got the ball.’”

Faced with the daily doom and gloom of newspaper headlines, Anderson nevertheless remains optimistic about the possibility of a substantial shift in public opinion. At his core, he believes that good will prevail, that despite the travails and challenges, what’s best of us will survive. Anderson is nothing if

cause or movement may seem fanciful to some but to Anderson, it’s a given. “One song will come along and people will hear it and say, ‘Shit! That’s correct, these people have got to wake up and dream rather than wake up and look for money.’ John Lennon said it: ‘Make love not war, give peace a chance.’”

This isn’t the first time Anderson has invoked Lennon’s anti-war/pro-compassion message either. In 1971, the rousing chorus of *Give Peace A Chance* was discretely co-opted into the backing of *I’ve Seen All Good People* from *The Yes Album*.

Although the views expressed in *Go Screw Yourself* are explicitly unambiguous, Anderson’s form in that department hasn’t always been so crystal clear. Over the decades the precise meaning of much of his work has been famously obscure and oblique, usually resisting the usual kinds of literary and literal analysis from sceptical critics and hardcore fans alike. Nevertheless, Anderson insists that the mundane, worldly realities of current affairs have always found their way into his music, a subtle influence that has

“Me and Rick and Alan and Steve would be sitting around waiting for Chris Squire and this producer dude to come along. It was always like waiting for Christmas to come, you know?”

Yes onstage at Ahoy, Rotterdam, Netherlands, on November 24, 1977. L-R: Jon Anderson, Steve Howe, Alan White, Chris Squire and Rick Wakeman.



ROB VERHORST/REDFERNS/GETTY IMAGES

not a survivor. “I always have a very positive feeling about the development of a state of mind and the consciousness of the planet, by which I mean everybody is going to raise their consciousness after this terrible virus,” he says referencing the implacable rise of Covid-19, fully aware that as a chronic asthmatic, a condition that nearly killed him in 2008, he’s especially vulnerable. “They’re going wake up a bit and realise that looking after the planet, looking after this beautiful home of ours is what we should be doing.”

The notion that a song could help crystallise a thought into a popular

on occasion directly inspired a lyrical approach. A case in point, he argues, would be elements of *For You For Me* from *Song Of Seven*, originally released in 1980 and, now in 2020 it’s the subject of a remastered and expanded reissue. “I was actually listening to it last week just to check on what I was thinking in those days, and it’s pretty political, it’s an interesting song,” he says enthusiastically.

It’s not possible to discuss the creation of his second solo album without understanding the events surrounding the making of Yes’ final studio album of the decade, *Tormato*. The tracks *Some*

Are Born, *Hear It*, *Days* and *Everybody Loves You*, which all appear on *Song Of Seven*, were written and recorded during the *Tormato* sessions in Paris. They were also roundly rejected for inclusion on the final record, indicative of the widening rift between Steve Howe, Chris Squire and Alan White in one corner of the studio and Rick Wakeman and Anderson in the other. Looking back, Anderson sees a couple of conflicting factors at play during that time. “I think that one of the things about being in a band is that when you’re surrounded by people who just want to push you, push you, and push you to make money,” he pauses with

Yes’ *Tormato*, 1978.



WHAT IS AVAXHOME?

AVAXHOME-

the biggest Internet portal,
providing you various content:
brand new books, trending movies,
fresh magazines, hot games,
recent software, latest music releases.

Unlimited satisfaction one low price

Cheap constant access to piping hot media

Protect your downloadings from Big brother

Safer, than torrent-trackers

18 years of seamless operation and our users' satisfaction

All languages

Brand new content

One site



AVXLIVE ICU

AvaxHome - Your End Place

We have everything for all of your needs. Just open <https://avxlive.icu>



VEUGE/DALLE/CONICPIX

a degree of resentment in his voice, gathering his thoughts. “I mean, that’s okay... but there are times when creativity is suppressed by the energy to make a hit record, and that was really what was going on around that time.”

There was a distinct pressure to come up with something as commercially successful as their 1977 single *Wonderous Stories*, which was a surprise hit for Yes. While *Don’t Kill The Whale* from *Tormato* fulfilled that role, gaining access to the UK Singles Chart where it reached No.36, both songs were, in some ways, hits by accident rather than design. “When I’m under that pressure I just back off, because honestly,

Jon Anderson and Rick Wakeman in Paris, June 1977.

Song Of Seven, 1980.



I haven’t got the natural gift to write pop songs like Elton John and Bernie Taupin and people like that who just naturally do it as part of their life, you know? I’m a different sort of musician. So when all that was going on I wasn’t happy.”

At their best he says that Yes were happiest when left to make music on their own terms: “But outside influences that have been brought in over the years haven’t helped most of the time.” He’s referring to the arrival of producer Roy Thomas Baker, ushered in by Yes’ management during the preparatory sessions for *Tormato*. “I just needed somebody who was committed to work well and get in the studio in the early

morning. We started off working in Paris I think and he spent more time in the clubs with a couple of guys from the band. He liked clubbing it. So he was really one of the reasons why it all broke apart. Me and Rick and Alan and Steve would be sitting around waiting for Chris and this producer dude to come along. It was always like waiting for Christmas to come, you know?”

At the end of a lucrative tour, Anderson had had enough and quit Yes in February 1980.

As the 70s gave way to a new decade, and the politics of polarisation, personified by the elections of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan,



wrought seismic changes in society, Anderson found himself in an unusual position. He was now being described as an ex-member of Yes, his musical home since the band's formation in 1968. Included on the group's 1969 Atlantic Records debut was one of his songs, *Survival*, and some of its lyrics now seemed especially apt in describing Anderson's situation a little over 10 years later: 'The beginning of a shape of things to come/That starts the run/Life has begun/Survival.'

As Anderson found out, surviving life as a solo artist in the 1980s brought both opportunities and challenges.

"Before *Song Of Seven* I'd made an album for Virgin Records. I got on well with Richard Branson. He had a record store around the corner from the Marquee Club, so I'd pop in there every day, chatting and listening to records. He was always very sweet. After he'd started the Virgin label he talked about me working on some music and offered to give me the money to make the album. He said, 'If we don't like it, you have got to pay me back.' I said, 'Okay.'"

Anderson laughs out loud at the memory of the encounter, recalling that the finished music he presented involved one side of an album based on the life of Marc Chagall, the Russian-French artist lauded for the vivid luminosity of his painting and in particular his stained-glass windows that were installed in various European churches and cathedrals. The other side of the record was about the faerie kingdom. "I really got into the subject in the 70s, reading books about the inter-dimensional beings that surround us all," he explains. Only Jon Anderson could mention an album themed around the existence of inter-dimensional beings in such a matter-of-fact tone and not seem, well, away with the fairies. He does laugh, however, when relating Virgin's reaction to the offering.

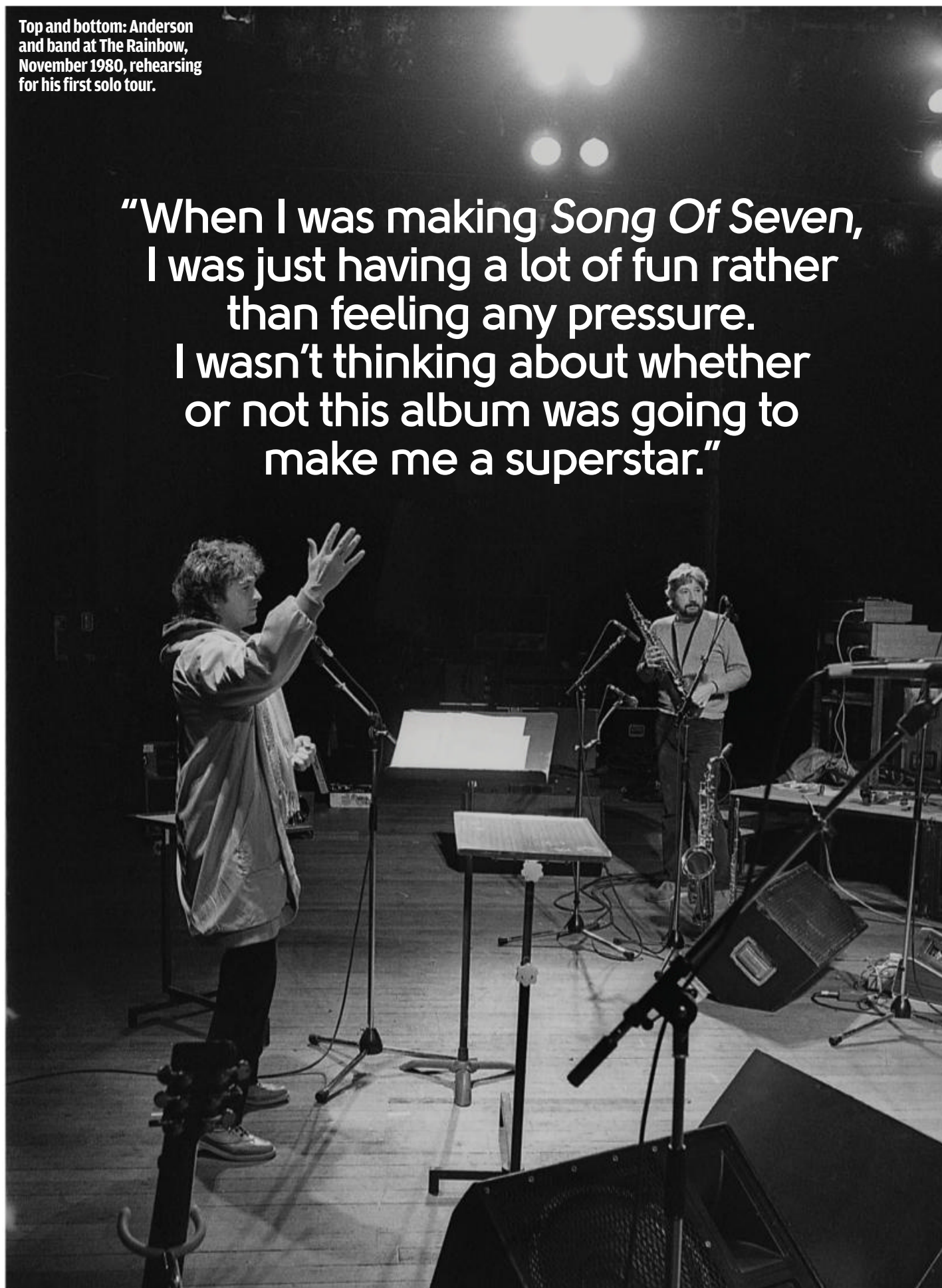
"They'd sent a couple of young guys around, 20 years old each. They looked more like punks really." Needless to say, they were less than impressed with what they heard. "One minute you think you're doing really important music and then someone says, 'You gotta give us the money back.'"

That kind of rejection might have been regarded as a humiliating setback for some musicians used to performing in front of hundreds of thousands of people. It's impossible to say how much of an impact it had on Anderson's psyche at the time considering it came quickly on the heels of his departure from the band he'd dedicated a significant portion of his adult life to. Now, so far away from the events themselves, Anderson is sanguine about it all. "Life does things like that. So I said, 'Okay, let's get on with life.'"

The vocalist is nothing if not

Top and bottom: Anderson and band at The Rainbow, November 1980, rehearsing for his first solo tour.

"When I was making *Song Of Seven*, I was just having a lot of fun rather than feeling any pressure. I wasn't thinking about whether or not this album was going to make me a superstar."



Jon Anderson: finding
strength in dreaming.





resilient; the result was a working group he dubbed The New Life Band augmented by special guests. In some respects Virgin declining what would've been his first post-Yes project acted as a kind of artistic palate cleanser and he signed a deal with his old label, Atlantic Records, clearing the decks for an earthier R&B style approach. Perhaps mindful of budgetary implications, he recorded *Song Of Seven* at his home in London just as he had done with 1976's *Olias Of Sunhillow*. However, the musical style and language couldn't have been more different. Anderson indicates he went into the session with one aim: to have as much fun as possible.

"When I was making the album, I was just having fun rather than feeling any pressure. I wasn't thinking about whether or not this album was going to make me a superstar. I just got people to come by and just have fun, people like keyboard player Ronnie Leahy and a couple of other great musicians."

One of those "great musicians" was

bassist Jack Bruce, best known for his work in Cream. "I had a friend who knew him; he came round to the house and recorded *Heart Of The Matter*. A jaunty, pop-orientated co-write with Leahy is far from the cosmic, ethereal writing with which he's associated.

The sessions also knitted together two different timelines, with Anderson reminiscing about Yes' appearance at the Royal Albert Hall as one of the support acts at Cream's legendary farewell performance in

Anderson on his first solo tour at London's Royal Albert Hall, December 1980.

"After Richard Branson started the Virgin label he offered to give me the money to make the album. He said, 'If we don't like it, you've got to pay me back.'"

1968, a mere three months after Yes' very first live show. "That was truly an amazing, *amazing* experience to watch Cream on the stage that night. It was unbelievable. These guys were the real stuff. We'd just started a band and we felt very small in comparison. We thought we'd just get onstage and sing a couple of songs. When we set up on the stage, it was so big, we set up our gear to the right and we were all like, 'Let's just get through the songs playing in front of 6,000 people.' [Laughs.] I remember saying hi to Jack at the gig at the Albert Hall and I think I bumped into him a couple of times when I was working in the bar at La Chasse club above the Marquee. He was always very nice, very sweet, saying, 'How you doing, Jon?' I was like, 'Wow, Jack Bruce, one of the great singers and bass players of all time, is speaking to me!'"

Saxophonist and bandleader Johnny Dankworth, a veteran of the UK jazz scene, also dropped by to help out. He contributes a fluid sax to the lilting *Don't Forget (Nostalgia)*. Says Anderson, "I got to meet Johnny through his wife, the singer Cleo Laine. I knew her from way, way back at some record company reception. I had to say hello. She was such a character, we got on very well."

Anderson recalls being invited to a party at the Dankworths', where he ended up dancing briefly with another guest, Princess Margaret. He guffaws at the memory. "Yes, but the funny thing is that the London scene was something that I never really connected to, you know the whole celebrity thing. I never got into that. Mostly it was just friends who knew other people and we'd get talking about music and I'd tell them that I was working on a project and invite them to come over and play."

Unlike his previous experience with Yes, this time around there was nobody from Atlantic asking for a hit. "You know, it's funny, you make records, and then the A&R guy will call you up and say, 'Well, Jon, we just listened to the album and we don't hear a single.' And then that's when I put the phone down. Actually they thought that *Some Are Born* was going to be a good one and there was another one that I felt was pretty good, *For You, For Me*. The opposite of that was *Take Your Time* which was a lovely, lovely sort of a sweet song."

If much of the album grew in a poppier, feel-good direction, the title track, *Song Of Seven* sounds like it could have easily sat within the 70s Yes setlist. It picks through a discursive melody meandering in a largely pastoral setting in which Clem Clempson's guitar breaks flourish and adds a dramatic grandeur. "Clem is such a great guy, a really special player," says Anderson. "I worked with him again on *Animation* in 1982 and he

was in the touring band then and later on when I did the demos for *Anderson Bruford Wakeman Howe*.”

The 2020 reissue of *Song Of Seven*, expanded to include the US single edits of *Some Are Born* and *Heart Of The Matter*, both previously unreleased on CD, shows an album that stands up well. “Sometimes you come back to something you did in the past and say, ‘Hey, this is pretty good,’” says Anderson with evident pride.

Originally released in November 1980, *Song Of Seven* entered the lower reaches of the Billboard charts in the US and the UK Album Chart. Although lacking the kind of momentum that a new Yes record would have garnered, it was a key step to Anderson’s development and survival as an artist. Part of that mission included the singer going out on the road with Dick Morrissey (sax and flute), Barry De Souza (drums), Morris Pert (drums and percussion), John Giblin (bass), Lee Davidson and Jo Partridge (guitars), and Ronnie Leahy and Chris Rainbow on keyboards under the collective title of The New Life Band. “It was really fantastic,” Anderson remembers. “I’ve found, over the years, that if you get the right bunch of people together in a band that’s in harmony with what you want to do, it’s like sailing in a boat; it’s so easy. I’ve only done it, maybe four or five times in my career where I get together five or six people and you can sense when they want to really engage.”

While Anderson is complimentary about the ability and skills of his colleagues there was a moment during the rehearsals for the tour that perfectly illustrates his role as a creative catalyst, taking one element, seemingly abstract and diverse, to energise or invigorate the other. As the band rehearsed for a section of the show that would essentially be a jam session without Anderson onstage, Anderson noted that although what they were playing was ostensibly good, it lacked shape. Sensing that it wasn’t really taking off, Anderson came up with a novel suggestion.

“I said to Ronnie Leahy that he could learn the three main melody lines from *Petrushka* by Stravinsky. He was like, ‘Okay, Jon’ and was really unsure but they did,” says Anderson with a laugh.

Whatever limitations he might have as an instrumentalist, there’s no denying Anderson’s remarkable ability as a conceptualist capable of seeing what needs to be done in order to take the music from the ordinary to the next level.

“The idea was, we got [sings one of the three main themes from *Petrushka*] into the bass solo. It helped them get from point A to point B: from the bass solo, then the guitar solo, then the sax solo. It worked and I remember when we did the show at the Royal Albert

MOORGLADE RISING

Anderson’s first solo record, *Olias Of Sunhallow*, is to get the star treatment... and could its long-awaited sequel finally see light of day?

The next reissue from Jon Anderson will be his celebrated and much-loved debut solo album, *Olias Of Sunhallow*, released in 1976. The new edition will be presented as a two-disc Digipak. The CD will be fully remastered from the original stereo master tapes, with a separate DVD containing a high-resolution version of the stereo remaster, and a new 5.1 upmix. It’s set for release at the end of January 2021 and the accompanying booklet will contain fully restored artwork, including the full *Olias* story and lyrics, which have sometimes been missing or poorly reproduced in previous CD reissues, as well as new sleevenotes chronicling the background and making of the album.

Esoteric Recordings’ Mark Powell has been overseeing the project and working closely with Jon Anderson. “In fact, it was Jon who originally contacted me to see if it was possible to do *Olias Of Sunhallow*,” explains Powell.

In 2018, Esoteric released a deluxe reissue of Chris Squire’s *Fish Out Of Water* with a stereo mix by Jakko Jakszyk, and Powell, who created the label in 2007, was very interested in taking up Anderson’s invitation to produce something similarly ambitious and lavish. However, Powell reveals that when it comes to exploring the archives of major labels, things don’t always go as hoped for. Having obtained the licence, he set about trying to track down the multitrack reels, only to discover they were missing. “We did a lot of research at Warner Brothers in California and in the UK but unfortunately the multitrack tapes just couldn’t be found. The good news is that the stereo masters were available. So in addition to remastering these, I suggested that we’d try a different approach. Jon was very encouraging about that.”

Had the 24-track tapes from the sessions been available, there may still have been obstacles to overcome, Powell says. “From discussions with Jon, the way it was actually recorded in the first place might have made things a bit more complicated anyway.” This was due to Jon’s practice of working at his home on domestic reel-to-reel four-track machines for the early part of the recording process.

“When he got a 24-track machine,” adds Powell, “he put some of the stuff he’d already recorded onto the 24-track machine and started the whole process again. So even if we’d found the multitrack reels we might’ve faced some limitations about what could



be done when it came to remixing them into surround sound.”

By using the latest software it’s been possible to upmix from the stereo masters and create a surround sound audio picture for the listener. The results have been encouraging, says Powell. “After putting in the stereo file, the software figures out, roughly, where things could be in the 5.1 spectrum and allows you to move some elements around and places things to some degree. You can then enhance vocals and other

“I’m working on the second part of this thing and it’s been actually driving me crazy trying to figure out how to present it properly because it can’t be the same as *Olias*. Sure, it has to have the same energy but up on the next level. It’s taking me a long time because whenever I do the spoken word of the story of *Zamran*, it sounds awkward, it doesn’t sound correct. Sometimes, I’ll sing the words of the story and the lyrics and it sounds okay for 10 minutes but then I’ll say, ‘Nah.’”

“I’m just thrilled that someone’s giving it some love and care.”

Jon Anderson

things. Ben Wiseman has done a fantastic job on the 5.1 mix considering the limitations we had.”

Although Anderson hasn’t personally been involved in the remixing and remastering, he’s thrilled that the album is being restored, says Powell. “He said, ‘Well, do what you can do on it. I’m just thrilled that someone’s giving it some love and care.’”

It’s been 44 years since *Olias Of Sunhallow* was released and there’s been talk from the Anderson camp of a follow-up album for several years. Sometimes known as *The Songs Of Zamran*, Anderson readily admits that progress on the work has been frustratingly slow.

However, a new approach to this problem has come from an unexpected source, he says. “Just last week I was watching the movie *Gladiator*, which I really like. It’s great filmmaking on so many levels. Anyway, there was this part where the actors were speaking and the music was in the background, and all of a sudden I thought, ‘That’s it! I’ve got to find some actors to narrate the story! I don’t know any but I’m hoping that over the coming months I might bump into some and get them to try it out.’”

The deluxe remastered edition of *Olias Of Sunhallow* is out via Esoteric next year. **SS**

Hall [in 1980], that was really fun. It was really good hearing a band doing Stravinsky that way.”

Whenever one speaks to Jon Anderson he’s always working on a range of new ideas and has lots of different projects on the go. Maybe he’s dusting off something he started working on a few years before or putting the finishing touches to something else that’s in the pipeline such as *Go Screw Yourself*, or maybe even a reggae-infused ukulele tune written while on holiday five years ago that he thinks might do nicely as a Christmas song this year. His enthusiasm is nothing new though as even when he was working on *Song Of Seven* he was also recording material for 1982’s *Animation*. “I was thinking about the next four or five years of my life, musically and it’s what I’m doing now. I’m working on about four albums now especially these last six months being at home. It’s good because you get on with your vision for the next five years or 10 years of your work.”

A glance at his solo discography shows him, then as much as now, keen to collaborate with a diverse range of players: Mike Oldfield, Béla Fleck, and Rick Wakeman all crop up. There was even an attempt to form a new band with Wakeman and Keith Emerson. Anderson recalls: “I was actually staying in Amsterdam at the time and I started thinking, ‘Wouldn’t it be great: me and two keyboard players?’ You see different colours, different textures.” It didn’t happen, of course. Emerson was keen but he says Wakeman prevaricated. “The energy could have been amazing. Sometimes

people just don’t see the potential.” Seeing potential is something that Anderson has always been good at. In 1973, after hearing a copy of *L’Apocalypse Des Animaux* by Vangelis and connecting with the languid soundscapes of *Creation Du Monde* in particular, Anderson was convinced the ex-Aphrodite’s Child keyboard player would be perfect to replace a departing Rick Wakeman after the *Tales From Topographic Oceans* tour. “We brought him to London but he didn’t really work in the band. He’s a one-man vehicle, you know?” Although that encounter didn’t work out the pair became firm friends and began an extremely fruitful partnership.

Their first album together, *Short Stories*, was recorded in London in February 1979, before the split with Yes. Released at the beginning of 1980, it hit No.4 in the UK Album Chart while *I Hear You Now* found itself at No.8 in the Top 40, with *Song Of Seven* bringing his first year outside of Yes to a rather satisfying conclusion. Anderson looked to be in good shape as a solo artist. The following year found Anderson in the company of Vangelis once again to record *The Friends Of Mr Cairo*, which spawned *I’ll Find My Way Home* as a single, resulting in a surprise hit requiring the duo to lip-sync in front of a studio audience, swaying from side to side. The video on YouTube shows Anderson grinning and being the effortless showman, clearly very comfortable. Vangelis, by comparison, looks rather awkward. Anderson laughs at the memory of it. “The funniest thing was Vangelis said he didn’t want to be



EBET ROBERTS/REDFERNS/GETTY IMAGES

Gold standard: Yes on July 1, 1984, L-R: Alan White, Jon Anderson, Hans Tonino (of WEA/Warner Records), Tony Kaye, Trevor Rabin and Chris Squire.

a pop star. ‘I’m a real musician, Jon.’ I said, ‘Don’t worry, Vangelis, it’ll sell more records.’” Joking aside, he says the partnership with Vangelis taught him so much about himself as an artist and how he worked. “I was learning how to be spontaneous lyrically. Watching him work taught me so much, musically speaking. I remember he was recording in Paris what was going to be *The*



ROB VERHORST/REDFERNS/GETTY IMAGES

Back in the fold: Jon Anderson onstage with Yes in 1984.



Friends Of Mr Cairo. He was actually playing a groove as I happened to walk in and I sang *State Of Independence*, the whole thing, spontaneously without thinking. The whole shape of the song in one long take.”

As someone who didn’t like being under pressure to write hits and wasn’t certain how things would work out beyond Yes, Anderson was doing okay. More than okay, in fact. When American producer Quincy Jones was given a copy of *The Friends Of Mr Cairo* he saw it as a perfect vehicle for Donna Summer. The hits, as they say, kept rolling in. From the outside, things looked good. Anderson was in control of his destiny. His third solo album *Animation* did well enough and with still more appearances on other artist’s albums and his ongoing partnership with Vangelis, it was something of a surprise to see him return to the Yes camp. “I was actually living in the south of France working on projects and very invested in creating music, but I missed the whole excitement of touring. I’d been on tour with *Animation* in America with some really good people but it just felt like hard work, the gigs not the band. It was not what I was interested in doing.”

Feeling like he was back in the 70s when Yes were slogging around the support slots, the experience gave him pause for thought. “I was thinking, ‘What am I doing this for?’”

When Chris Squire invited Anderson up to come and listen to the material



MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY IMAGES

he, Alan White, and Trevor Rabin had been working on, he was happy to do so. When, after a short time, Cinema reconvened as the new Yes, Anderson had no hesitation in signing up. “I realised I missed being in Yes when it was really looked after properly, when it was really taken care of and towards the end of the 70s, after *Tormato*, it wasn’t. It’s funny, of course, because back then, management wanted us to make more commercial

Anderson and Vangelis above, and their 1981 *The Friends Of Mr Cairo* album, below.



“I’m working on about four albums now, especially in these last six months being at home. It’s good because you get on with your vision for the next five years or 10 years of your work.”

music, and here we were with *90125*, the single most commercial album we ever made.” The rest, as they say...

With hindsight and a generous dollop of pragmatism on both sides of the fence, it was perhaps inevitable that Anderson would return to the Yes fold for 1983’s *90125*, reconvening what was a difficult on-off relationship with the band. Prior to *Tormato*, he was very much a catalyst and agent provocateur. After *90125* the balance of power had subtly shifted and would continue to do so right up until 2009 following his hospitalisation after a severe asthma attack. “They decided to move on without me, which is their choice.” His survival instincts kicked in once again and after convalescing he’s returned just as busy as he was in the 80s, with a series of collaborations and releases, including the recent *1000 Hands*, which he regards as essentially being Yes music in all but name.

Having always included material from Yes in his solo shows and more recently with Anderson, Rabin & Wakeman, he sees himself as the true custodian of the band’s progressive spirit. “For me, I am Yes. It’s never left me,” he says. Of the current incarnation of Yes, he admits to having difficulties with their new material. “I haven’t heard anything that hits me and says, ‘Oh boy, I’m so happy they’ve evolved.’ It’s really great to hear them do the classic songs and Jon Davison’s singing well and everything but it’s a far cry from what it would be if I was there creating Yes music.”

Being in Yes was always a difficult proposition: great when it works but when it doesn’t things can get really bad. Knowing all of this, would he return if the opportunity presented itself? “I’ve said before that I’d love to do it as a final hurrah for the fans and go on a very special tour. I had a dream a month or so ago that I was opening the show solo, playing my acoustic guitar, singing a couple of songs. Then, Steve brings on his band and they play a couple of songs. Then I come back and do a couple more acoustic songs solo. After that, Rick and Trevor and all the others come on and play. There’d be about 20 of us on the stage all playing *Close To The Edge*. I started to see and visualise the whole piece, both musically and visually, it was kind of amazing.”

Dreams and visualisation, and perhaps, hopes and wishes, aside, having just celebrated his 76th birthday readers might expect him to be taking things easy. Not a bit of it, he says. “I’ve been actually writing large-scale pieces of music this last three or four months, which is, in a way, the recurring theme in my life.”

And Prog can’t wait to hear them. 🎧

Song Of Seven, Remastered & Expanded Edition is out now via Esoteric.

Long-Distance

Runarou n

Marathon, L-R: Conal Kelly, Mark Kelly, Oliver Smith.

“I thought I’d follow in the footsteps of Rick Wakeman, pick a theme and do an instrumental album. I never really got past the early stages.”

nd

Marillion's Mark Kelly has taken a rather circuitous route to releasing his first solo album, *Mark Kelly's Marathon*. *Prog* finds out how the keyboardist's new project came about and learns the story behind those Wakeman-esque solos.

Words: Nick Shilton

Portraits: Pit Lad



Consider, to name but three, Genesis, Yes and Pink Floyd. For members of certain bands occupying the upper echelons of progressive rock, it was standard operating procedure to intersperse solo albums with group releases at suitable points. Despite their myriad successes over the last four decades-plus, Marillion may not sit exactly alongside the aforementioned triumvirate, but they don't fall far short.

Vocalist Steve Hogarth, guitarist Steve Rothery and bassist Pete Trewavas have all pursued extracurricular endeavours beyond Marillion, with Hogarth releasing his *Ice Cream Genius* album as far back as 1997 and Trewavas arguably having attained greatest acclaim outside Marillion through his membership of prog supergroup Transatlantic since 1999. By contrast, talk of keyboardist Mark Kelly pursuing a solo career has bubbled sporadically for over a quarter of a century but with no significant output.

"It was my own fault really," Kelly says of expectations that were raised long ago but are only now being met. "I got caught up with the idea of joining the solo album brigade and for years people would ask me about it."

Back in the last millennium, Kelly did formulate an initial solo album plan. "I thought I'd follow in the footsteps of Rick Wakeman, pick a theme and do an instrumental album." He alighted on Dante's *Inferno*, from *Divine Comedy*, as said theme before hitting a significant stumbling block.

"I never really got past the early stages; my heart wasn't in it, to be honest. I remember sending a recording to Steven Wilson in the very early days of Porcupine Tree to see if he was interested in some sort of collaboration or getting involved. I never heard back from him, so he obviously wasn't impressed! I spoke to him recently and mentioned the solo album and he said, 'Is that the same solo album you were talking about doing 25 years ago?' So he hadn't forgotten!"

In the intervening period, Kelly has made a handful of guest appearances with DeeExpus and Trewavas' Edison's Children as well as producing an album for Jump (1995's *The Myth Of Independence*) and "moonlighting for Travis for some festivals one year". But Marillion has clearly remained his core focus. "There was always something more demanding on my time than a solo album which there was no deadline for," he readily admits.

There the solo album topic rested, until Kelly's friend Guy Vickers revealed himself to be a lyricist. In 2012 Kelly recorded some jams with bassist Steve Lawson and former Fairground Attraction drummer Roy Dodds. But this ultimately proved to be another false start. "I gave the jams to Guy to see if he could come up with some lyrics, which he did. But the music wasn't really doing it for me."

With Dante's *Inferno* consigned to ancient history and the 2012 jams having led nowhere, Kelly concluded that he needed to focus on a song-based solo album. With Vickers' continuing cajoling, Kelly eventually gave his friend some more music, including some ideas originally conceived by the keyboardist under the auspices of Marillion.



“In Marillion we jam a lot and have over 1,000 ideas that have never been used. Some are short, some are longish, but there’s lots that I know that Marillion wouldn’t use. Some of those ideas were my starting point, which I gave to Guy and he started working on lyrics.”

This resulted in the writing of *Amelia* and *Twenty Fifty One*, the two longer tracks that bookend *Mark Kelly’s Marathon*, at which point Kelly recruited his now 23-year-old guitarist/bassist nephew Conal Kelly to work alongside him. The nascent band still lacked a key component however, namely a vocalist.

“A year or two went by with me looking for a singer, but not really having enough time to devote to it. Then I mentioned in a Marillion fan club interview that I was looking for someone and that a Peter Gabriel-type voice would work.” Another friend of Kelly’s promptly recommended Oliver M Smith.

“I contacted Ollie, sent him the music and lyrics for *Amelia* and didn’t hear back from him for about a month. Because he was used to working in a three-minute pop song format apparently he was looking at it thinking, ‘What the hell am I going to do with this?!’”

But when Kelly eventually received Smith’s ideas for *Amelia* he knew he’d found his singer. “He had done a load of vocal melodies with harmonies that were really good and very professional considering it was done at home.”

With a vocalist secured, Kelly could now see his solo album finally taking shape. But the small matter of actually recording it properly was still unresolved. In the summer of 2019, Kelly and his cohorts spent a couple of days in Marillion’s Buckinghamshire studio recording demos but proceeded no further. However, with coronavirus temporarily suspending work on the next Marillion studio album, lockdown presented Kelly with a window of opportunity to progress the album.

Fortuitously, drummer Henry Rogers, with whom Kelly had crossed paths during his brief stint with DeeExpus, had built a home studio shortly prior to lockdown. “So I said that everybody should just record their parts at home, send them to me and that I would put it all together and see what I could do in the next two or three months. I literally did the album on a Mac mini with one or two keyboards and everyone else worked pretty much the same way. Drums would have been probably the main hurdle around doing it at home; you can’t really record drums in a bedroom.”

The collective efforts of Kelly and his band – completed by guitarists Pete Wood and John Cordy – have yielded a supremely melodic album. Musically, perhaps unsurprisingly, it’s frequently not far removed from Hogarth-era Marillion. But it’s also a highly accessible album. Indeed for those who may have found Marillion’s last studio album, *FEAR*, heavy going and overlong, Kelly’s solo effort provides a panacea. But is *Mark Kelly’s Marathon* a solo album or not?

“The album is called *Mark Kelly’s Marathon* but the band is called Marathon. I wanted the band to have its own identity,” he states. “I haven’t got that much profile as the keyboard player in Marillion, but it’s better than none. People call these albums ‘solo albums’, but this

“With encouragement from the others, I had the attitude that I would do the odd little Wakeman-esque keyboard solo here and there, which I wouldn’t do with Marillion – I’d feel that was being a bit self-indulgent.”



Stepping up: Mark Kelly is finally releasing his solo album.



is a very creative collaboration. I wouldn't call myself the benign dictator, but I am the one that has the final say and decides the direction in which songs should go."

Not unreasonably, Kelly's own keyboards feature prominently but not overwhelmingly. "I wanted it to be a real band album rather than a keyboard album. There's quite a lot of guitar on there."

That said, Kelly does have more keyboard moments in the spotlight than is sometimes the case in Marillion. "With encouragement from the others, I had the attitude that I'd do the odd little Wakeman-esque solo here and there, which I wouldn't do with Marillion – I'd feel that was being a bit self-indulgent."

As well as selecting from the parts that his bandmates had recorded and deciding on the arrangements, Kelly set a few key rules, with album duration foremost in his mind. "It's hard to get people's attention these days to sit down to listen to a whole record. I set a limit of 45 minutes; I wanted to go back to what I grew up listening to and have an old-style vinyl album with a gatefold sleeve. So I was

this bit of music and asked if Ollie could do anything with it. We didn't have any lyrics, so he improvised some very soulful singing, which then pointed to the direction the song should take. So I then sent it to Guy to write some proper words. *Amelia* and *Twenty Fifty One* were written before the band came together. But now because of lockdown we've now got this way of working which is like pass the parcel in reverse – everybody adds a bit of wrapping to a song and it takes a different shape."

Despite being recorded exclusively at home and prior to some of the bandmembers actually having met each other in person (since rectified by a filmed session at Real World Studios in July), the album sounds very cohesive.

Kelly reveals that if recording together had been possible, his Marillion bandmates might have featured to a greater extent. "Had we been in a situation where we could have been in a studio together, I can certainly imagine asking Ian [Mosley] and Pete [Trewavas] to play on a track. It was really the fact that we

Mark Kelly in his day job at Royal Albert Hall in November 2019.



WILL IRELAND/FUTURE OWNS

really happy that the record company was willing to do the vinyl, even though I may not sell much vinyl!

"I also wanted the album to be songs, but not just a bunch of three-minute songs," he continues. "I wanted a balance between one or two longer tracks and a few short, more accessible tracks. I really like interesting chord progressions and good melodies."

Kelly credits his vocalist for much of the album's accessibility. "Ollie's vocal melodies are quite instant. I thought he might struggle with some of the quite wordy lyrics and musical changes that aren't straightforward. But he just came up with great melodies again and again."

Indeed, Smith is a revelation on the album, possessing an almost uncanny chameleonic vocal ability. For example, while on *Amelia* his voice channels Peter Gabriel at his best and by turns on *Twenty Fifty One* holds echoes of Fish, in contrast the lovely, bittersweet ballad *When I Fell* features a much more soulful vocal.

"*When I Fell* didn't happen until we were well into the album," Kelly explains. "I had

were recording at home which prevented that from happening."

Instead, further Marillion involvement is confined to Steve Rothery adding his signature guitar sound to *Puppets*, a song that originated from a Marillion jam.

While Kelly's next immediate priority is the completion of Marillion's forthcoming studio album, he anticipates recording a Marathon follow-up within the next 18 months and possibly sooner. "Everybody enjoyed making the album. Hopefully once it's out, enough people [will] want to hear a second album."

Encouraged by the success of their Real World experience in the summer, Kelly is considering taking Marathon on the road. "Originally doing Marathon gigs wasn't a burning desire for me. But once the six of us actually got together at Real World, I realised how good it sounded and now I'm certainly up for the idea. Maybe we can open for Marillion on the next tour!" 🎵

Mark Kelly's Marathon is out now via earMUSIC. See www.marathonsounds.com for more.


Roar and untamed:
Pain Of Salvation.

“I always found it weird to
fit into a world that to me
didn't really make sense.”

The Outsiders

It's been three years since they released the powerful *In The Passing Light Of Day*, and **Pain Of Salvation** are ready to push boundaries with their bold new record, *Panther*. Frontman Daniel Gildenlöw opens up about the creation of a concept album that tackles mental health issues and being an outsider.

Words: Holly Wright **Images:** Lars Ardarve



Writing music for the misunderstood is not exactly new. Emo was built on the chagrin of the disaffected youth and The Smiths' enduring *How Soon Is Now?* is still an anthem for social anxiety. But this is 2020 and Pain Of Salvation are not flannel-wearing, shoegazing

misfits hooked on teenage angst, and their frontman has a very good reason for dedicating his latest album, *Panther*, to "the outsiders".

Daniel Gildenl w was diagnosed with ADHD as an adult. By his own admission he's felt like an outsider since he was school age but getting older and having responsibilities –

in particular three children, including one with Down's Syndrome and autism – made living with the disorder unmanageable to the point that he felt no choice but to get tested.

"All of a sudden the context had changed so much that there were only dysfunctions left," he explains, candidly. "I knew I had a lot of quirks and weird things and then I think it was Ragnar [Zolberg, ex-guitarist] who said, 'Maybe you have ADHD?' I was like, 'I don't think I have ADHD', but he knew someone who had ADHD, so I did a test and I scored amazingly well on the test."

It's thought that as many as 1.5 million adults in the UK have Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder but only a small percentage are formally diagnosed. For many people with the disorder, the symptoms and effects are long-lasting and even with careful management and coping mechanisms it's still entirely possible to struggle with day-to-day living. In fact, for any child or adult who is not 'neuro-typical', feeling normal is one big upheaval.

"I always found it weird to fit into a world that to me didn't really make sense," says Gildenl w. "I would see a species that was focused on really weird stuff and doing really shitty stuff all over the world and I could not relate to that. I could not relate to the typical gender roles either and the typical things you were supposed to be interested in and how you were supposed to act in certain situations and the white lies and the bullshitting. It just made me feel weird, like I didn't belong in that structure."

Pain Of Salvation's 11th album *Panther* comes with a manifesto for anyone who's ever struggled to fit in but dig a little deeper and it reads like a roll call of very personal dysfunctions. First it namechecks the "restless" ones (while *Prog* is chatting to him, Gildenl w is pacing up and down



his living room). And then it references the “motormouths”. Longtime fans of the band will know that this frontman loves to talk.

“When I was a kid at school there was never any talk of dysfunctions, diagnosis or medications. I was just a restless kid,” he says. “I would talk too much in class and occasionally I would have to leave the classroom because I was not able to control my energies, or I would phase out and daydream. And that’s basically the personality I am today.”

Since Pain Of Salvation formed in 1991 both the band and Gildenl w, their charismatic frontman, writer, multi-instrumentalist and co-producer, have held a significant place in prog. But what makes them valuable isn’t their ability to tackle big themes with cerebral, intricate music or that they write beautiful, evocative melodies with complex arrangements. It’s not that they dare to reinvent themselves on each new record while maintaining integrity. It’s that they manage to do all of the above and tell a story that is uniquely personal and human.

The latter portion of their career has seen Pain Of Salvation become increasingly introspective, but *Panther* might just be their most personal album to date. It’s a brave and unexpected treatment of a real issue facing many children and adults today and certainly not your typical prog concept. While 2004’s *BE* tackled the lofty subject of the existence of God and humankind, and their contentious *Scarsick* in 2007 took a more metallic route indebted to nu metal sounds, their latest outing has grounded the sense of displacement in a more tangible and human concept.

Asked if *Panther* is Gildenl w’s ‘coming out’ album, he chuckles. “I have so many of those! But I see your point.” He continues: “It derives from *Full Throttle Tribe* on *In The Passing Light Of Day*, which looked at different

scenes and different issues of my life as objectively as I could. The longer I live, the more I will learn about myself and my strengths and weaknesses. I can also understand better why we are the way we are and why we act the way we act in certain situations.”

Gildenl w glides over the last few years of his life while omitting one major point. *In the Passing Light Of Day* – released in 2017 – was conceived when he contracted necrotising fasciitis, a horrific and life-threatening flesh-eating bacteria that put him in hospital for six months. So when Gildenl w talks about issues and weaknesses, he means it. Oddly enough, though, there’s a selfless edge

“A lot of people will not hear this as a guitar-based album but I’ve always tried my best not to give into fear about how the album or the songs will be received.”

to this self-reflecting frontman. While his lyrics are philosophical and self-exploratory they aren’t self-pitying. The opening line of *Accelerator*, *Panther*’s first track, is one example where a sympathetic Gildenl w sings: ‘I know what you’re thinking, I must be the problem here’ to the misunderstood cohort, like a supportive parent or an understanding teacher.

“Today I see so many kids that are brilliant and quick who get diagnosed in third grade and start to look at themselves as dysfunctional,” he observes. “So we’re treating them with more love than before but we’re defining them so much sooner.”

Like those third graders, *Panther* has already been defined as “different” by fans and critics. A continuation of *In The Passing Light Of Day*, it harks back to the early years of Pain Of Salvation

with a level of heaviness that eluded albums like *Falling Home* but it also has electronic elements that are already throwing people off the usual Pain Of Salvation scent.

“A lot of people will not hear this as a guitar-based album but I’ve always tried my best not to give into fear about how the album or the songs will be received,” he explains. “Having a Mesa Boogie Dual Rectifier sound... I grew tired of that so quickly. It was really cool for two years and then you have to move on.”

Panther might not have obvious guitars but it feels heavy and the scattergun rap-style vocals on *Restless Boy* and the jaunty rhythms on *Accelerator* make for a visceral, if not sometimes unnerving, listen. Intentional or not, these jerky and jarring off-time elements draw synergy with the obsessive-compulsive and attention-deficient dysfunctions that Gildenl w has been describing but they’re also influenced by music from the 70s, albeit via a source readers might not expect.

“When I was a kid, the music that was in children’s TV in Sweden was really complicated, but you would never think about it,” Gildenl w recalls. “It was very jazz orientated and symphonically arranged and you had really good musicians back then who were devoting time to making music for kids. I’m really lucky to have grown up during that era.”

Gildenl w might hanker for the heyday of jazz-fuelled kids’ TV but he’s also lucky to be living at a time where the distribution of his own complex sounds can be enjoyed by the internet generation.

“With any Pain Of Salvation album I just hope that people will listen to it in the first place,” he says. “After that the music will work on its own.”

**Pain Of Salvation, L-R:
Daniel Gildenl w,
Johan Hallgren,
Daniel ‘D2’ Karlsson,
L o Margarit.**

Panther is out now via InsideOut.
See www.painofsalvation.com for more.



k scope | the best of 2020



the pineapple thief
versions of the truth
"Masterfully executed mesh of sounds, moods and meditations." PROG



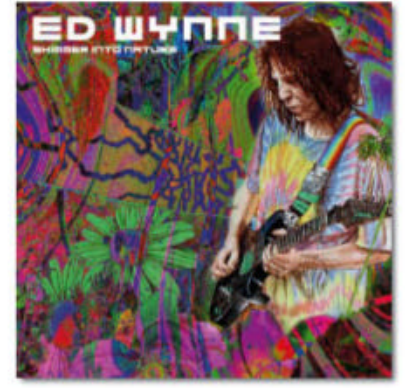
the pineapple thief
the soord sessions volume 4
First release of classic and new tracks performed and broadcast during lockdown. 4TH DECEMBER | GREEN VINYL LP



jonathan hultén
chants from another place
"Haunting, dark and atmospheric - imagine Nick Drake playing in a Swedish forest." AMERICANA UK



ozric tentacles
space for the earth
"Blissful blend of astral acid rock, kaleidoscopic ambience and nourishing righteous dub frequencies." PROG



ed wynne
shimmer into nature (expanded)
"43 minutes of high energy joyful experimentation." PROG



lunatic soul
through shaded woods
Seventh album from Mariusz Duda, vocalist, multi-instrumentalist and leader of Riverside, extending his music explorations to include dark Scandinavian and Slavic folk.



mariana semkina
(the voice of lamthemorning)
sleepwalking
"A remarkable and beautiful debut from an artist of considerable talent." RECORD COLLECTOR



jon gomm
the faintest idea
"An ethereal dreamlike quality." PROG



mansun
closed for business
25th anniversary 25 disc deluxe box set. The ultimate Mansun collection. 11TH DECEMBER



godsticks
inescapable
The new studio album from the progressive purveyors of heavy rock and alternative metal. Follows the technically astounding *Emergence* and the industrial, progressive-influenced *Faced With Rage*. "Thrilling." PROG



daniel tompkins
ruins
New interpretation of the Tesseract lead singer and songwriter's debut solo album *Castles*. Features guest appearances from Trivium's Matt Heafy, Paul Ortiz (Chimpspanner) and Plini. 11TH DECEMBER | CD + DL



tangerine dream
recurring dreams
"It seems the legacy is in safe hands." PROG



rick wakeman Madfish.
the red planet
"Ground control to Major Rick." CLASSIC ROCK



porcupine tree
in absentia special edition
4 disc 100 page hardback book. CDs with additional recordings & demos. Blu-ray with 5.1 & Lasse Holie documentary.

all available at
kscopemusic.com/store

k scope podcast

Download the monthly podcast to hear music from our releases, as well as interviews with the bands. kscopemusic.com/podcasts @kscopemusic



KATATONIA DEAD AIR

Katatonia perform an extensive and majestic set of fan favourites, voted for exclusively by the band's worldwide fanbase and captured during their 2020 lockdown session.

2CD+DVD, 2LP, DL OUT NOW

peaceville.com/store

PEACEVILLE




A full-page photograph of a man with long hair and a beard, wearing a blue hooded robe, sitting in a forest. The ground is covered in fallen leaves, and the background consists of dark, gnarled tree trunks. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and deep shadows.

See Into The Dark

Riverside leader Mariusz Duda has returned to his childhood home in Poland to find inspiration for the new **Lunatic Soul** album. He tells *Prog* why *Through Shaded Woods* follows a lighter, brighter path than its predecessors and why he's approaching the end of Lunatic Soul's life cycle.

Words: Dave Everley

Images: Tomasz Pulsakowski



All journeys must come to an end, and Mariusz Duda is approaching the conclusion of his own with Lunatic Soul. “I believe that this is the penultimate album,” says Duda of the project he launched in 2008 and has steered in parallel with his higher-profile job as frontman and driving force behind Polish heavyweights Riverside ever since. “It should be eight albums only. I’m not sure if I’ll return to Lunatic Soul after that.”

“This” is *Through Shaded Woods*, Lunatic Soul’s seventh album and the latest left turn on a path defined by left turns. Lunatic Soul were conceived as the introspective, inverse reflection of Riverside’s grand-standing modern prog, only to abruptly mutate midway through the last decade into a vehicle for their founder’s lifelong love of electronic music.

Through Shaded Woods is another metamorphosis, one that’s even more startling than the last. Its six evocative tracks make few concessions to modernity, preferring instead to draw inspiration from folk music, nature and Scandinavian and Slavic folklore. It feels centuries old and timeless simultaneously. “I wanted to create dance-in-the-forest songs,” he says, only half joking.

Duda is speaking via Skype from the spare bedroom of his home in Warsaw. Like pretty much every musician on the planet, he’s been grounded for most of 2020. But he’s used this enforced downtime constructively, releasing a series of spontaneous electronic compositions under his own name via Bandcamp.


“I really liked this dark folk, with a trance and a pulse. It was always somewhere in the shadows, even when I wasn’t writing music that sounded like it.”

Through Shaded Woods is different. This is far from spontaneous, as illustrated by the relationship between its cover – a ghostly green photograph of trees in a wood – and the music he’s made for it. Every LS album sleeve has a different colour: black (*Lunatic Soul I*), white (*LSII*), grey (*Impressions*), blue (*Walking On A Flashlight Beam*) and red (*Fractured* and its companion album *Under The Fragmented Sky*). Putting the aesthetic cart before the horse, he settled on the colour of his next album’s sleeve before he’d even written it. “I decided that now it was time for green,” he says. “Green equals ‘forest’. So I said, ‘Okay, maybe it’s time for this medieval, woodsy, foresty stuff.’”

The woods of the title are literal. Duda has lived in Warsaw since 2000, but he spent the first 25 years of his life in Węgorzewo, a small town in northeastern Poland nestled among forests and lakes (“Carefree, calm, quiet, touristy, beautiful, gorgeous,” is his Tripadvisor-worthy summary). It was in those forests that Duda would lose himself as a child and also as an adult. “To find the balance inside my head,” he explains. “I could take a deep breath there when I needed to think of something important. They were the places I could hide.”

The environment that surrounded him dovetailed with the music he listened to. As a kid, he immersed himself in Tangerine Dream and Mike Oldfield, before graduating to the otherworldly chorales of Dead Can Dance, Clannad’s celtic mysticism and Swedish folk changelings Hedningarna. “I really liked this dark folk, with a trance and a pulse,” he says. “It was always somewhere in the shadows, even when I wasn’t writing music that sounded like it.”





“I wanted to tell a simple story about hurting, because everybody hurts at some time in their life and everyone is struggling right now.”

Through Shaded Woods has that same trance-like quality, from the hypnotic rhythms and wordless vocals of *Navvie* to *Summoning Dance*'s ritualistic abandon. The title track explicitly evokes the sylvan landscapes of Duda's youth, right down to the sound of footsteps crunching on leaves that ends it.

But the arboreal imagery is metaphorical too. The shaded woods of the title refer to what the singer describes as “fighting with your own traumas and fears”, a concept that lies at the core of the album.

“I wanted to tell a simple story about hurting, because everybody hurts at some time in their life and everyone is struggling right now,” he says. “But hurting doesn't mean you should just lie on the couch and do nothing. The reward is on the other side of the room. Just get up and go there. Take those first steps.”

It's not hard to read the album's overarching theme as a mirror of Duda's own life. In recent years, he has endured the sudden and unexpected losses of both his father and Riverside bandmate Piotr Grudziński. But the themes of perseverance in the face of personal pain run deeper and stretch back further.

“The whole Lunatic Soul thing came about mostly because I'm a person who suffers, from time to time, with some sort of depression,” he says. “I have these dark moments, these days full of sorrow. Doing these albums is therapy for me. I don't need pills, I just need music. It's just a continuation of my story. The Lunatic Soul story — that's my personal background.”

When Duda talks about a story, he means it literally. A narrative thread has gradually materialised across the seven albums he's made so far under that name, albeit one that's complex and heavy with symbolism. He's unwilling to lay it out in intricate detail, but it's there for anyone who cares to delve deep.

“There's a plot,” he says. “The Lunatic Soul albums are connected with the circle of life and death. The main protagonist is dying; after he dies he's wandering somewhere in the afterlife. And then he gets the chance to return, to revive, to go back to life.”

The story follows a circular chronology, rather than a sequential one. Duda divides Lunatic Soul's albums so far into two camps: those on the

‘death’ side and those on the ‘life’ side. *Lunatic Soul I* and *II*, and the instrumental third album, *Impressions*, sit in the former category. In the latter are *Walking On A Flashlight Beam* (“The prequel — about someone who lives, before he crosses to the other side”), *Fractured* and its companion album *Under The Fragmented Sky*. There are other clues, too: the colour of the sleeves (black, white and grey = death, blue and red = life); the Lunatic Soul ‘snake’ logo is whole on ‘death’ albums’ and shattered on ‘life’ albums (“Because life is broken,” says Duda). Even the sound of each album is significant: ‘death’ albums feature organic instruments; ‘life’ albums have always been electronic.

Through Shaded Woods sits on the ‘death’ side, although it's far from bleak. “This particular album is about coming back to life,” he says. “It's the opposite to *Walking On A Flashlight Beam*. This is about crossing that line, but from death into life. For the first time in Lunatic Soul, I did something that is more bright than dark.”

What changed in his life to prompt this? “Life changed,” he replies. “Time healed the wounds. I found myself in a new place. I have a new family, no more feeling like I'm alone or depressed, I wanted to do something positive. It's like, ‘Let's do something positive, let's fight.’”

If he's sticking to his eight-albums-and-out plan, there's one more to come after *Through Shaded Woods*. Four albums on the ‘death’ side, three on the ‘life’ side. That means the final Lunatic Soul album will be...

“It will be about life chaos and something that forces the protagonist to close himself within,” he says, implicitly referencing the circle of life and death he spoke of earlier. “Musically, I will do something crazy.”

That craziness extends to considering live shows — something he's resisted so far. “The first Lunatic Soul albums are hard to play on the acoustic guitar,” says. “This, I can play from beginning to end. When I've finished the whole concept, I will definitely do that. Maybe one tour, maybe just one show.”

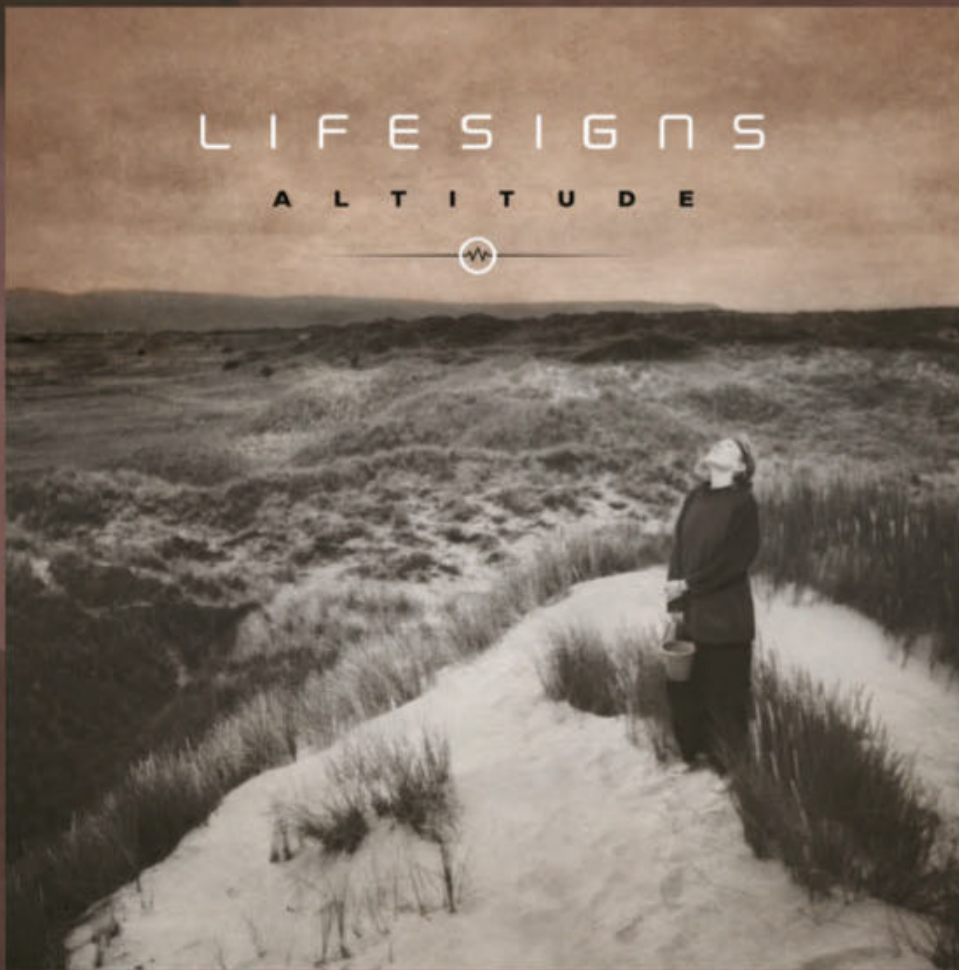
That's all in the future — a future that seems a long way off. But Mariusz Duda can wait. For now, the forests are calling. 🎧

Through Shaded Woods is out now via Kscope.
See www.lunaticsoul.com for more.

COMING SOON

THE HIGHLY ANTICIPATED 'LOCKDOWN' ALBUM FROM

LIFESIGNS



ALTITUDE

AVAILABLE ON DOUBLE VINYL, CD AND DOWNLOAD FROM WWW.LIFESIGNSMUSIC.CO.UK
THE VINYL AND CD WILL BE AVAILABLE FROM AMAZON
AND THE VINYL FROM YOUR FAVOURITE RECORD STORE. NO STREAMING.



John Young



Jon Poole



Zoltan Csörsz Jr.



Dave Bainbridge



Steve Rispin

"Widely agreed to be their third studio album"... Rex Weekly

*"It's the sort of music anyone can enjoy
and it's not even commercial!"... Emmie & Sonnie*

"I've heard some music in my time and this is some of it"... Be Wilde

www.lifesignsmusic.co.uk - www.facebook.com/signslife

“I was very inspired by all kinds of mythologies and how these stories say something that has value for all human beings, not for the specific protagonists of the story.”

Andreas Prestmo

Wobbler, rendered in shades of green.

Up From The Depths

As **Wobbler** emerge from the murky depths of the human psyche with *Dwellers Of The Deep*, the Norwegian band talk to *Prog* about not searching for perfection, why we're all both gods and monsters, and mastering the art of knowing when to stop.

Words: David West

Images: Anne-Marie Forker

“The main thing is that we want to make good songs, good music, and not really think too much about it

being progressive for the sake of it,” says Andreas Prestmo, frontman of Norway’s Wobbler. His statement shouldn’t be read as any sort of repudiation of progressive rock, though. Wobbler’s sound is firmly rooted in analogue keyboards, and their new album, *Dwellers Of The Deep*, has a wonderful, vintage prog vibe, complete with lengthy, multifaceted compositions. But with their fifth long-player, they don’t want to just bust chops. “We really have matured as songwriters,” says Prestmo. “The last couple of years, while trying out new material and jamming, it’s been very important for us to make good songs with a coherent feel and a good flow, and not just stack difficult parts and sections on top of each other just because, oh, it’s so fun going from 9/8 to 17/4.”

Adds bass player Kristian Hultgren: “This time we composed, recorded and refined during the course of three years, while with *From Silence To Somewhere* it was six years.”



Although three years is hardly throwing an album together in a rush, much of the music was born out of the band jamming. The group assembled at the home of guitarist Marius Halleland over a long weekend to develop material for *Dwellers*... but it ended up being a longer session than they had anticipated. “We actually got stuck in a blizzard so we couldn’t get back to Oslo, so it was really intense and very inspiring,” says keyboardist Lars Fredrik Frøislie. “We just played all damn night and we squeezed something out of it.”

Thematically, the album was influenced by Prestmo reading about mythology, Carl Jung and psychology to explore the unilluminated recesses within the human mind.

“It ended up like a journey into your own core. Where do these feelings come from, all the dark sides you have inside?” says Prestmo, who draws a line of continuity that runs from the new album back through 2017’s *From Silence To Somewhere* and 2011’s *Rites At Dawn*. “Those two records, even though it’s kind of the same themes deep down, are more like an outside view,” he says. “The new record is more introspective with the same themes around changes, life and its mysteries, but on a much more personal and emotional level. I was very inspired by all kinds of mythologies and how these stories say something that has value for all human beings, not for the specific protagonists of the story.”

“The title, *Dwellers Of The Deep*, is focused on something inside us that can be good, can be bad, but it can also be all things between good and bad,” says Hultgren. “At some point you should deal with it. And how you deal with it, how it expresses itself through you, that’s what I was thinking about.”

“Basically, it’s about growth, it’s about evolving,” adds Frøislie, “it’s about acceptance of the bigger picture of who we are, that we are not just one-sided. It’s like monster and god in one peculiar creation.”

It’s Frøislie who handles the engineering and mixing duties for the band, so they maintain full control of the creative process, refining their approach across their output from 2005’s debut *Hinterland* through to the present. “I think we’ve nailed the sound this time,” he says. The group embrace the analogue and aren’t interested in an ultra-processed end result, which helps to explain how they’re able to effectively channel the vibe of classic progressive rock from the pre-Pro Tools age. “We keep the warts and all,” he adds. “You can hear pops and wobbles on the Mellotron and maybe the drums play a little off but that’s part of what makes it live. On *From Silence To Somewhere* we recorded the drums with three microphones to capture the whole kit, Led Zeppelin-style. This time we used two overheads and close-mic’ed the tom-toms, but still had a very natural sound. The grand piano had this ringing when I played certain chords, which is not like a sample where that doesn’t happen. It’s what makes it live.”

It’s increasingly rare in this day and age to hear an album that hasn’t been digitally tweaked and edited until every trace of humanity has been bleached out of the music. “A lot of things you hear are so polished, everything is so accurate,” agrees Prestmo. “I don’t think any of us had the notion that music needs to be like that. It’s a living, breathing thing. What you get out of it, what it does for you, feelings, that’s the point. You’re not bothered about the pops and the cracks and whatever if it speaks to you.”

It’s still a challenge for the band to make sure they don’t get tangled up in the technicalities. “At the end of when we were mixing and mastering, we were very focused on frequencies, but you have to take a step back,” says Frøislie. “Do we get to say what we mean with this music? That’s important to take a step back and just flow with it.”

None of this is to suggest that their music is thrown together or slapdash. It’s just that Wobbler’s approach is to get the right sound at the outset, not to dial it in later on a computer. “We spend quite a lot of time before we press the record to get the sound we want out of the amplifier, or to get the correct acoustic drum

“Back in 2005, the title song from *Hinterland* was actually 12 minutes long before we started tweaking it and fiddling about and adding new parts. It ended up being 28, so we probably should have stopped.”

Kristian Hultgren

sound before we pick up the microphones,” says Hultgren. “Before we start recording, we spend a lot of time with the amplifier settings. The sound has to be good from the start.”

The band were driven by the desire to avoid another six-year gap between albums and started thinking about what would eventually become *Dwellers Of The Deep* as soon as they had finished *From Silence To Somewhere*. Some of their ideas date back further than that: the germ that became the opening track, *By The Banks*, dates back to 2011. “Basically, we knew that we had to produce something,” says Hultgren. “All of us brought something to the table. I had a couple of bass riffs that became the core of *Five Rooms*, and Marius had some bits so we pulled together what we had and then started the rather long journey of how to use them properly for a finished song.”

One of the challenges that’s perhaps more particular to progressive rock than any other genre is knowing when a track is finished. “We’re a good example of how not to do that,” laughs Hultgren. “Back in 2005, the title song from *Hinterland* was actually 12 minutes long before we started tweaking it and fiddling about and adding new parts. It ended up being 28, so we probably should have stopped. From that perspective, how do we know when it’s finished? That’s a good example, we really didn’t know when it was finished. *Hinterland*

was finished when we were so exhausted that we couldn’t do anything more with it.”

The bassist says they’ve learned from their past indulgences. “We could always make another transition, another part to a song that’s already 30 minutes long, but I think we’ve learned that it’s better to kill your babies, or to use those babies in another song, instead of trying to always add new parts. It’s all about the flow and I think we’ve been much better at establishing a flow through the song now.”

For Prestmo, it’s all about getting under the skin of a song, a process he describes as, “working with it, opening it up, and feeling the fabric of the song. Of course, we have some discussions sometimes, but I think we have developed this mindset, an aesthetic, of how we want our songs to be. We just work with them and then everyone says, ‘Should we add a little bit more?’ ‘Okay, let’s try 40 seconds more on that riff,’ and then it’s up to a vote in the rehearsal space. ‘No? Okay, we’ll stop.’”

Once the composing and recording is finished, the final evolution takes place when Wobbler take the tracks out live. Past highlights have included Night Of The Prog in Germany, Crescendo Festival on a beach in France, and Minnuendo Festival in Spain.

“There are no holds barred when we go out and do it live,” says Prestmo. “We don’t use a click track, we don’t try to emulate the sound of the record, so I think people get a really positive surprise. It’s like the record but it’s more vibrant, it’s more energetic, it’s even more flowy between sections. We’ve never really experienced a bad reception.

It sounds a little cocky but that’s the way it is.”

The players all respond to the atmosphere in the room and they’re happy to improvise when inspiration strikes. “Suddenly the drummer flips out on something and someone picks up on it, Lars starts using new sounds,” says Prestmo. “We don’t want to be a free jazz ensemble, but we open up for spontaneous creativity.”

They’re now counting the days until they can get back onstage and showcase the new material, but while *Dwellers Of The Deep* delves into the murky subconscious of the human mind, it’s not music of despair. “I don’t think Wobbler will ever be the kind of band that’s going out to be dark, morose, or worship the darkest parts, negativity, everything is so dreary,” says Hultgren. “I don’t think we have it in us. We have a light and shade, peace and despair even inside the same song.”

“There is a palette of something slightly tragic,” adds Prestmo, noting that any dark corners are just part of a bigger picture. “I think it’s alive, it’s vibrant, it’s not a morose dark film that really goes nowhere and ends in misery. Even if there is misery and horror or darkness, there’s also a fragment of something hopeful, something alive.” And that’s something every prog fan needs in 2020. 🎧

Dwellers Of The Deep is out now on Karisma. Visit www.wobblerofficial.com for more.

The spontaneously creative Wobblers,
L-R: Marius Halleland, Kristian
Hultgren, Martin Nordrum Kneppen,
Lars Fredrik Frøislie, Andreas Prestmo.





One Last Dance?

Ulver have been making strange music that defies categorisation since 1993. In this annus horribilis and three years after their synthpop influenced *The Assassination Of Julius Caesar*, Kristoffer Rygg's experimental collective have returned with an album that explore fears and mankind's fall from redemption. But could *Flowers Of Evil* be their swansong? *Prog* catches up with Rygg to find out.

Words: Isere Lloyd-Davis **Images:** Brian Cliff Olguin

And out come the
wolves: Ulver.

If singer Kristoffer Rygg is to be believed, Ulver's end could be in sight a quarter of a century after the release of their debut full-length recording, *Bergtatt — Et Eventyr I 5 Capitler*. Current album *Flowers Of Evil* might just be their farewell statement as their long-awaited scriptures, *Wolves Evolve: The Ulver Story*, finally see light of day.

"During those 25 years, we have been working very consistently," says Rygg. "We might have had times that seemed like pauses but we consistently worked since I was 20 years old. It gets to a point where maybe the repetition can seem a bit like a hindrance. You know when something dies sometimes it blossoms again, so to put this in a morbid manner, maybe it's a good time to die for a while."

Flowers Of Evil's Blakean narrative and synthpop rock rhythms are a welcomed continuation of the 2017 surrealist doom dance record *The Assassination Of Julius Caesar*, with each dancefloor-beckoning track containing a catchy chorus and dramatically bleak lyrical themes cleverly laced with wit and candour. On the album, Rygg's baritone vocals are accompanied by musicians Ole Aleksander Halstensgård, Jørn H Sværen and Tore Ylwizaker, and once again, producers Michael Rendall (The Orb) and Martin 'Youth' Glover.

"From our perspective, we tried to have a bit more faith in the basic building blocks of the music, so in a way it's a bit more direct than *The Assassination Of Julius Caesar*. The album is pretty apocalyptic, especially songs like *Machine Guns And Peacock Feathers*, which all of a sudden seem very relevant and potent in this situation," says Rygg.

Composed before the arrival of the current pandemic, *Machine Guns...* depicts a troubled modern world on the brink of a collapse and battling with its components — a seemingly all-too-relatable story. However, lyrics such as, 'Do androids dream of electric sheep?', a nod to Philip K Dick's science fiction novel that was famously adapted into the film *Blade Runner*, reveal a lighter and slightly sarcastic tone.

"It seemed like an apt reference in the dystopian scenery that we're painting in that song, but I have to add, there's an element of humour to that. Not many people pick up on it but we do in fact have a bit of humour sometimes," says Rygg.

Further evidence of Ulver's humorous side is displayed in the pages of *Wolves Evolve: The Ulver Story*. The various shared anecdotes provide an evocative and continuous discussion throughout the chapters. One particular story, stemming from around 2005, involves the

experimental filmmaker Kenneth Anger, who was a visual icon for the band at the time.

"We wrote a press release which said something like: 'Set designs by Gustave Doré and direction by Kenneth Anger'," laughs the singer. "It was just funny, and obviously not very plausible, so imagine our surprise when a pissed-off note from Anger himself fell into our post box. So then we added one word to the presentation: 'Directed by a Kenneth Anger impersonator' and sent it back. The funny thing is that his assistant then got back to us and said that he and Kenneth had listened to the album, loved it, and said, 'Thanks guys, great work!'"

Ulver's potent lyrical and visual work is a minefield of hidden cultural references that often add commentary to timeless discussions regarding modern and historical social issues and *Flowers of Evil* is no exception.

"A *Thousand Cuts* is a mixture of subversive stories," Rygg explains. "We were borrowing a few things from the film *Salò, Or The 120 Days*

Of Sodom directed by Pier Paolo Pasolini, and a thousand cuts is an ancient Chinese torture method. We were toying with it being precisely 'cut-up' and a marriage of a few different sources. But I feel I'm revealing far too much here. This is up to [the listener] to find out."

The album artwork reveals an intriguing and unsettling black and white image of a distressed woman having her hair shaved off.

"It's a still from an old silent movie, *The Passion Of Joan Of Arc* by Carl Theodor Dreyer," says Rygg. "We actually had this image in use for our unpronounceable album [2016's *ATGCLVLSSCAP*]. Back then, we took this picture out because it seemed a bit too dark, but with this new album it seemed to synergise with the title. I find it quite beautiful. Oppressive but beautiful."

Having previously explored the shocking murder of Sharon Tate by the Manson Family with the song 1969, this time Ulver focus on the Waco siege in *Apocalypse 1993*. The police and military blockade of the Branch Davidians' compound in Texas led to the death of 76 people, including children, and the song even includes an alarming soundbite from unrepentant cult leader David Koresh.

"I was watching the two-part BBC documentary [*Waco: Madman Or Messiah*] and I remembered that story was happening around the same time as the church burnings in Norway," Rygg explains. "The documentary made quite an impression on me. It's a bizarre story, about religious delusions, but also the delusions of society, America. I felt that it could be incorporated into a song."

"The album is pretty apocalyptic, especially songs like *Machine Guns And Peacock Feathers*, which all of a sudden seem very relevant and potent in this situation."

Little Boy's groovy synth intro, resonating Depeche Mode's *Music For The Masses* era, is a stark contrast to the totalitarian vision of the lyrics which depict a 'golden eagle' and 'solar symbol in the skies' and launch into the hypnotising chorus of: 'flowers of evil'. The duelling pop sounds and dark themes enhance the song's drama and overall moral significance.

As Rygg explains: "You know, a lot of it's about the horrors of humanity, which is something that keeps knocking on our door. The evil and wrongdoing that Man is capable of, which of course relates to the title of the album itself. By using that imagery, we're not siding with them, we're trying to understand history and humanity. Fascism, in its many forms, is on the rise. *Little Boy's* a warning: even though this happened 75 years ago, it could happen again."

The music video for *Russian Doll* by Marek Steven focuses on a young woman dancing against a backdrop of industrial estate buildings. Her contemporary movements seem at

odds with her black clothes and Ulver *Bergtatt*... T-shirt. The tongue-in-cheek visual highlights Ulver's self-deprecation with regards to the constant references from the media and fans to the band's early stint in the Norwegian black metal scene and their reluctance to return to it.

"It was a very simple idea and we had a bit of a laugh, to be honest, but it turned out less campy than we envisioned, more realistic or contemporary," he says. "We are an ever-shifting entity. We always did things that felt natural to us and I guess we still do. This is probably something that we took from the very early days of black metal where there was much more emphasis on originality and on being a bit contrary or anti. It's just an attitude that has followed us since those very early days."

After more than a quarter of a century, Ulver still manage to capture the same musical intensity and paradoxical light-heartedness that's

enabled them to stand out from the rest. The song *Nostalgia* is a sweet ballad about the band as individuals, referring to themselves as young 'brothers' on a journey that started 35 years ago, in Norway, 'a place where wild flowers grow/The city by the sea'.

"There's a melancholy over the fact that it's a long time ago and we've been through so many changes, good and bad. But I guess at some point we start to almost glorify childhood and adolescence in a sense. Do I feel connected to my past? Of course, but I'm also aware of and grateful for all of the things that have happened since I was a kid. There are so many images in the rear view. That's what that song *Nostalgia* is about really. It's quite a simple idea."

If there was a silver lining to be found in the cancelling and

postponing of the *Flowers Of Evil* 2020 tour due to Covid-19, it's that the pandemic has put the brakes on Ulver's usually relentless schedule.

"One positive to come from that is that we, as

a band and as a group of friends, basically spent more time together and spent time in the studio, talking, recording, playing, but without any ambition at this point," muses Rygg. "It's all up in the air right now, but this has been in our consciousness for a while. It's okay to rest on one's laurels, you know. We are not getting any younger. This might indeed be our last dance... or not."

If this really is the end for Ulver, then *Flowers Of Evil* is a beautifully sculpted epilogue following a succession of formidable masterpieces. In the words of opener *One Last Dance*: 'We have loved, we have lost/ We're ready to go one last dance/In this burning church.' 🎵

Flowers Of Evil and the biography *Wolves Evolve: The Ulver Story*, are both out now via *House Of Mythology*. For more information, visit www.facebook.com/ulverofficial.

Believe it or not, these men do enjoy the occasional laugh.





Please visit our webshop
to observe our huge

Kscope Music price campaign!

Enjoy more than 150 items of bands like
Anathema, Blackfield, Bruce Soord, Gazpacho, Godsticks,
Gong, Iamthemorning, Lunatic Soul, Mansun,
Steve Hogarth, Steven Wilson, Tesseract and many more.

WE LOVE MUSIC, BUT WE CAN SHARE...

JFK is your mail-order
for Prog, Rock & more!

Get ready for Christmas,
we do ship worldwide!



Missing live music?

Enjoy our budget campaign from
MIG Music. Loads of concerts - live at
Rockpalast for amazing prices.

Trail Of Dead, Herman Brood, Jack Bruce, Dave Stewart & The
Spiritual Cowboys, The Mission, Peter Hammill & The K Group
Richard Thompson Band, Roger McGuinn's Thunderbyrd...



BIG BIG TRAIN
Empire
2CD+BluRay#31777 • 24,99€



REED, ROBERT
Cursus 123 430
CD+DVD#31837 • 17,99€
2CD+DVD+Comic#
31905 • 24,99€



PORCUPINE TREE
The Delirium Years
13 CD Box
CD#31859 • 139,99€



MYSTERY
Caught In The
Whirlwind Of Time
BluRay+3CD#31883 • 34,99€
BluRay#31937 • 21,99€



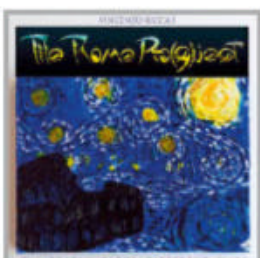
TERAMAZE
I Wonder
Australian Prog Metal Import
CD#31840 • 16,99€



GRYPHON
Get Out Of My
Father's Car
CD#31923 • 16,99€



PINEAPPLE THIEF
Soord Sessions Vol. 4
Ltd. LP green vinyl
LP#31938 • 21,99€



ROME PRO(G)ECT
IV: Beaten Paths
Different Ways
CD#32031 • 16,99€



RUNRIG
One Legend, Two
Concerts
Ltd X-Mas Box
Box#31968 • 62,99€



MANSUN
Closed For Business
Deluxe Box
24CD+DVD+ Book
Box#32016 • 179,99€



SOLSTICE
Sia
CD#32030 • 16,99€



RAIN
Singularity
CD#32029 • 15,99€



FOCUS
50 Years Anthology
1970-1976
9CD+2DVD Box
Box#31772 • 39,99€



MILLENIUM
The Sin
CD#31939 • 15,99€



FINDLAY, HEATHER
Live White Horses
2CD#31836 • 17,99€



HILLAGE, STEVE
Live Rockpalast 1977
DVD+CD#31908 • 16,99€



SAMURAI OF PROG
Beyond The Wardrobe
CD#31891 • 15,99€



BARDENS, PETER
The Answer
LP#31819 • 24,99€



KEPLER TEN
A New Kind
Of Diseways
CD#31756 • 15,99€



MORSE, NEAL
Jesus Christ The Exor-
cist (Live Morsefest)
2CD+DVD#31824 • 19,99€
BluRay#31825 • 19,99€



V/A • KRAUT!
Teil 4: 1968 - 1979
+ 100 page booklet
2CD-Digi#31950 • 22,99€



KALUGIN, ANTONY
Marshmallow
Moondust
CD#31779 • 15,99€



TANGERINE DREAM
Pilots Of Purple
Twilight: 1980 - 1983
10CD#31650 • 99,99€



PINK FLOYD
Delicate Sound
Of Thunder
Deluxe 2CD+DVD+Blu-Ray
Box#31735 • 49,99€



ARENA
From The Beginning...
Deluxe Hardcoverbook
(180 pages) + 2CD live
Book#31649 • 88,99€



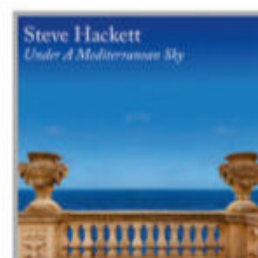
MAGMA
Mythes et legends:
Epok 5
Special price!!!
DVD#32015 • 7,99€



NICK MASON
See Emily Play /
Vegetable Man
Ltd. RSD 12"
LP#31253 • 14,99€



UNITOPIA
The Garden
Ltd. 3LP green vinyl
300 copies only
3LP#31936 • 54,99€



HACKETT, STEVE
Under A
Mediterranean Sky
out: Jan. 22nd, 2021
CD Digi#31976 • 15,99€



TRANSATLANTIC
The Absolute Universe
out Feb. 5th, 2021
Deluxe clear 5LP+3CD+
Blu-ray Box #31969 • 82,99€

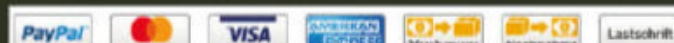
BANDS, MANagements, LABELS & DISTRIBUTORS!
We need your product and can help to establish your
music in Germany and throughout Europe.
Please contact Clemens at: info@justforkicks.de



Just For Kicks Music

Forsthoof Juliana • D-25524 Heiligenstedten • Germany

phone: (0) +4821 - 40 3000 • info@justforkicks.de • Webshop: www.justforkicks.de





Ultravox

They were the synthpop pioneers who worked with krautrock producer extraordinaire Conny Plank, had a massive hit with a catchy little tune called *Vienna*, and their singer Midge Ure almost ended up producing Rush. They might mean nothing to you, but we have to ask: **How prog are Ultravox?** **Words:** Chris Roberts

Midge Ure can't pretend he's a massive prog fan, but he does have a good prog-related story. "I was once asked to go and meet Rush, with a view to producing them. They were big Ultravox fans. So I flew over to Toronto, and we had a lovely dinner. Then we got round to talking about their album. They asked what my take on it would be, if I were producing. And I said, 'I would simplify it.'" He laughs heartily. "Suffice to say I was on the plane home the next day! It was fine, though; I had to be honest. They were brilliant players, and we'd have made a great record together..."

What might have been. While Ure recalls his big brother playing Yes' *Roundabout* a lot in the house growing up, he muses, "Too many notes, as they said to Mozart in the movie. Though it's not too many notes at all; it's just a skill I do not have. I simply couldn't do what the prog rock guys do. I asked my friend who played drums in a prog band once what it was like, and he said, 'You count to 19 and a half, then hit a cymbal.' Tell you what, though," he adds, "Billy gets very into textures and augmented ninths and integration of classical structures..."

He does, too. Billy Currie and Midge Ure are here to talk about the 40th anniversary deluxe edition of the *Vienna* album, the band's commercial breakthrough, usually referred to as a "synthpop classic". It's rather more than that narrow definition implies. While it did contribute to breaking the charts' barriers against synthesisers, and *that* single became a watershed, it was a profoundly original and forward-thinking record in its own right. From the seven-minute instrumental opener *Astradyne* to the prescient electro of *Mr X*, the band were fusing sounds and styles in groundbreaking ways.



The new deluxe box set of *Vienna*.

Alongside the underrated multi-tasking of Chris Cross and Warren Cann, Ure and Currie broadened the vocabulary and palette of rock.

Ultravox had already done something of a Lazarus act. When Island dropped them in '78 and John Foxx and Robin Simon left, despite the brilliance of the first three albums, they were finding the dawn of the 80s daunting. Currie (violin, viola, keyboards) was playing with Tubeway Army. Ure, nothing if not versatile, had endured, rather than enjoyed, a pop chart topper with Slik, gone on to minor success with Rich Kids, and filled in on guitar on tour for Thin Lizzy. The pair were now collaborating on studio project Visage, a New Romantic concept fronted by Blitz Kid Steve Strange.

"We worked well together in Visage," says Currie. "That's why I asked Midge to join Ultravox. This line-up integrated more, pooled our ideas. In retrospect we found our own sound; other 'electronic' bands weren't using

'real' instruments alongside synths. At the time I wondered why not. We were so pleased to still be carrying on as a band that we pulled out all the stops, and it was great."

Chrysalis snapped up the revitalised group, but what's half-forgotten now is that *Vienna* itself was only the third single — after *Sleepwalk* and *Passing Strangers* — from the 1980 album. And it wasn't until that came out in January 1981, infamously kept at No.2 by John Lennon's *Woman* for one week and Joe Dolce's *Shaddap You Face* for three, that album sales soared. "It was gratifying, yes," says Currie, "but it's such a strange thing. It's a miracle it was a success at all! When the label suggested releasing *Vienna*, I got protective, thinking of it as a great album track, and was saying no... I didn't want it getting slagged off! Then it goes out of your control, selling 30,000 a day: it's an odd feeling. Anyway it seems to have stayed in people's minds, 40 years on, and of course that's nice to know."

Back then, Ure was less fazed about replacing Foxx than he was excited about joining a band he thought were "way ahead of the curve. They made the kind of sounds I'd tried to pursue with Rich Kids, but my buying a synthesiser in '78 had basically broken that band in two. So Rusty Egan and I put together Visage, and got in one of our favourite musicians — Billy. We'd been playing [third Ultravox album] *Systems Of Romance* in clubs like the Blitz, and through big speakers that stuff sounded fantastic. I loved what they were doing with technology. And in Ultravox, I was the newbie. Their nucleus was there. I didn't come in to upset the apple cart, but just by being there I changed the dynamic. So it carried along a line, but there was a marked difference now."



Midge Ure Quartet-era promo from 1982.

Visions in black: Chris Cross, Warren Cann, Midge Ure and Billy Currie strike a pose in a London studio in 1984.

“ I asked my friend who played drums in a prog band once what it was like, and he said, ‘You count to 19 and a half, then hit a cymbal.’ ”
Midge Ure

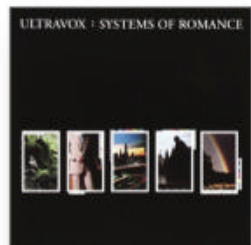




In *New Europeans* he sings the immortal line: ‘His modern world revolves around the synthesiser’s song.’ At the time, synths were regarded by some punk rock diehards as the spawn of Satan. It seems laughable now, but late adopters feared synths would destroy us all.

“Oh yes, very much so,” chuckles Ure. “And I remember the early Queen albums had ‘no synthesisers’ on them! It was viewed as a joke instrument, only used for funny effects. And only the German krautrock bands – Can, Kraftwerk, Neu! – were using them in a serious, interesting way...”

“The spacey stuff in the 60s, and even with Pink Floyd in the early 70s, had been the organ,” suggests Currie. “When I first got my hands on a synth, that to me was the future!”



Systems Of Romance (1978), the pre-Midge Ultravox album that Conny Plank produced.

Suits you! Vienna album cover promo.



ADAM GASSON/FUTURE MUSIC FUTURE OWNS



PRESS

Its atmospheres were cold and icy. It was mind-boggling!”

Producer Conny Plank had serious form in this field. Ure reveals, “When I joined, the guys had already done *Systems Of Romance* with Conny. And they were going, ‘Hmm, so who shall we get to produce this one?’ And I was quietly sitting in the corner going, ‘Er, I’d love to work with Conny Plank!’ I was so into learning about production – that’s why I’d put Visage together – and there’s no better way of doing that than being in the room with someone like Conny and learning by osmosis.

“In Britain we rarely heard European music, apart from slabs of Eurovision bubblegum, until [Kraftwerk’s] *Autobahn* made the charts. And then we started to unravel all these threads. That mixed in with Billy’s classical training – he was pumping a lot of

European elements into his chord structures. We had one foot in the future, one in the past, and were trying to make something timeless.”

“And we’d been touring around Europe a lot,” adds Billy. “We were

“Conny [Plank] opened our minds even more. He’d introduce us to people. Holger Czukay dropped by the studio. And I can still remember Conny playing us Neu! for the first time. I was even checking out Stockhausen. Billy Currie

aware of Kraftwerk, we’d picked up on the *feel* of Europe. Conny opened our minds even more. He’d introduce us to people. Holger Czukay dropped by the studio. And I can still remember Conny playing us Neu! for the first time. I was even checking out Stockhausen. I was into Bartok and Schoenberg. *Vienna* itself, though, for me, comes from the late 19th century... I still can’t explain why. The decadence, the haunting sophistication of it.”

The success of *Vienna* was a major factor in synthesisers becoming a regular part of pop music’s fabric. Yet it was that unique blend of what used to be called “authentic” and “artificial” sounds that fleshed out the grandeur of its architecture. As Ure points out, “If you listen to it closely there’s guitar all over it! Because I’m a guitarist first and foremost. And that’s kind of what makes it work – the looseness. Machines didn’t integrate then, didn’t talk to each other. It wasn’t all locked in and absolutely synchronised like it is now. It was played by humans, who are... fluid. So everything was a little off, a little sloppy. That’s what a good band does.



Billie Currie and Midge Ure catch up at Ure's home studio.



GALUSCHKA/ULLSTEIN BILD VIA GETTY IMAGES

The perfect quartet? Ultravox in 1984.

“Y’know, everyone says *Vienna* was an electronic track. And yes, it has electronic drums and a synthesised bass, but it’s mainly piano, violin and viola. Everyone seems to overlook that. Those strange combinations, interactions, made Ultravox what it was.

“Don’t forget everything that was against the band – dropped by the label, in debt – but despite all that we got into this incredibly creative little bubble. I was turning my back on some of my previous stuff; I wanted to be in a band that created interesting stuff I could get my teeth into, and might last. Nobody was more stunned than us when it reached a commercial market. It was beyond anything we’d ever dreamed that something as bizarre as *Vienna* would do what it did!”

Is it true that as the instrumental of *Vienna* played in the studio and he was

striving to write the lyrics, he said to Plank, “This means nothing to me”?

“That is a Disney-ism!” laughs Ure. “I don’t remember that at all! Hey, maybe it did happen, but... no, it didn’t. That was, in fact, the first line that came to me, along with ‘*Oh Vienna*’, then we spent four days in the rehearsal studio crafting it.”

“And for me,” adds Currie, “the second side has a trippy vibe. We wanted an old-school feel, segueing between the tracks. It was a worked-out album, y’know? We were moving forward with a slight nod to the past. I’ve got some lovely memories of it.”

Currie’s latest solo album, *The Brushwork Oblast*, came out in March. Where does *Vienna* stand, for him, among all the music he’s made?

“It’s probably way up there. I helped [remixer] Steven Wilson on this box

set and I’m proud of it. Though I think I peaked on the *Quartet* album.”

“I think anything so transformational in your life as that has to be considered major,” reflects Ure, whose varied career, from Band Aid to solo success, has been illustrious by any standards. “It happens to you; you have no control over it. It’s a double-edged sword. It elevated the band to big venues, gave us fresh tools – all great. But then everyone expects *Vienna 2* or *Vienna 3*. Which we refused to do. I think the follow-up, again with Conny, *Rage In Eden*, is a more interesting album. *Vienna* is a highlight but it’s nowhere near the best song I’ve written, or best piece of music I’ve played. My favourites are usually the ones that got away...”



From top: *Vienna*’s follow-up *Rage In Eden* (’81) and *Quartet* (’82).

40th anniversary box of Vienna is out now via Chrysalis. See www.ultravox.org.uk.



YOUR SHOUT!

They danced with tears in their eyes and reaped the wild wind but how prog were Ultravox? It’s over to you!

“Prog enough for me. To me, many of the more electronic bands of this era are more progressive in the true meaning of the word, exploring new sounds, new instruments.”

Andreas Nilsen

“Definitely in the Venn diagram of prog and electronic pop/rock. *Astradyne* and *Western Promise* from the *Vienna* album are great bits of music, regardless of genre!”

Kevin Gover

“At the time, they didn’t seem prog, but at the time Rush were considered ‘thinking man’s heavy metal’ instead of prog. If there’s room for Kraftwerk and XTC under the prog umbrella, then there’s plenty of room for Ultravox.”

Randy Panucci

“Definite proggy influences in melody and composition. Probably coming from Billy Currie and, to a lesser extent, Midge Ure. Billy has worked with Steve Howe on his own solo stuff and guested on Steve’s *Turbulence* album. Also, Billy was in some art rock bands early on and he’s well into his classical music.”

Eddie Killen

“I bought the *Vienna* album expecting it to be a polished, classy pop record. Turned out to be polished, classy prog. Excellent album.”

Brian Tuna

“Great band but if it’s 4/4 it ain’t prog!”

Music Maestro

“Totally agree. Apart from the title track, which is pop, the *Vienna* album is pure prog. I started to write you a letter about it when the deluxe was reissued.”

Keith Tracy

“If *Vienna* were by, say Curved Air, it’d be hailed as a prog masterpiece. Chart band? Nah, begrudgingly...”

Phil Gorner

“Definitely – if we say the best 70s art rock (Roxy Music, Bowie etc) was prog then John Foxx-era Ultravox definitely was. I’m not a fan of the Midge era but again if you think best prog pop (Kate Bush, ELO) was prog then much of Midge-era Ultravox was.”

William Higham

“Not a band that would interest me in the least, I’m afraid.”

Jon White

“The first band that really turned me on, back in my much younger days. The path wasn’t that far from the classical piano flourishes and symphonic synths of, for instance, *Quartet* to *Genesis*.”

Jacob Holm-Lupo

“When a band member steps out from behind the keyboards to play a violin solo, then they are prog or prog-influenced without question.”

Ian Pope

“Great electronic rock band. One of my faves of all time. Not prog.”

Mark Hagan

“Certainly tracks on the album *Vienna* could be classed as prog. *Vienna* itself and *Astradyne*, if done by a ‘prog’ band, would be hailed as masterpieces.”

Dave Dix


Lighting The Dark

Eschewing his black metal heritage for a lighter and sonically richer sound, Norwegian prog metal maestro **Ihsahn** talks to *Prog* about turning to pop music for his explorative new EP, *Pharos*.

Words: Phil Weller

Images: Bjørn Tore Moen

Ihsahn: his boat's
not leaving yet.



“For me, the *Telemark* and *Pharos* EPs represent the two extremes of what I try to do as part of my wider sound in their purest forms.”

In a year where even the best-laid plans have been left in tatters, Ihsahn’s double helping of five-track EPs has felt like a godsend. The two complementary releases — starting with the nostalgic black metal affair of February’s *Telemark* and concluding with the contemporary, progressively propelled *Pharos* in September — have helped break up a year amass with reasons not to be cheerful. Yet, even as the Norwegian multi-instrumentalist’s own carefully crafted plans are dashed by the pandemic, the unforeseen climate provides a rather fitting setting for this diverse new material. With the doors to venues shut, music fans are now looking to our record collections for entertainment and escapism, and releasing 10 songs across eight months has given us both of those twofold.

“It’s all a matter of consequence,” a studious Ihsahn tells *Prog*. “Especially during the context of this pandemic, it’s worked quite well to keep the interest spread out. Originally, the whole idea behind them was very much linked to the live format. I was meant to be premiering the *Telemark* show

over Easter; we had new backdrops and a set built around the concept of that EP. I was going to be playing the most extreme songs in my catalogue. Then, after the release of *Pharos*, I was going to tour a setlist containing my mellower and more progressive material. They were going to be two very separate live shows as part of a much bigger picture. Now they are just two EPs.”

With each EP isolating and exploring in vivid detail the polar opposites of Ihsahn’s complex musical spectrum, both releases have provided a stark insight into who he is. As a musician who first came to public attention in the Scandinavian black metal scene, he’s since evolved into one of the smartest multi-dimensional songwriters in today’s progressive scene and, on *Pharos* especially, he really shines. Here, Ihsahn sounds singularly focused on looking forward, and although he’s proud of his musical heritage, he’s clearly desperate to delve further into the unknown.

“For me, the *Telemark* and *Pharos* EPs represent the two extremes of what I try to do as part of my wider sound in their purest forms. *Telemark* was about

going back to my roots and focusing on the black metal extreme of what I do and on my homeland. With *Pharos*, I felt it had to be the counterpart to that. It needed to be conceptually the exact opposite, both musically and geographically. So there’s an element of travel and adventure to it. I wanted something that was a bit more unusual, something that stepped away from what people have come to know me for, with only clean vocals and much more open arrangements and it was a challenge I found very exciting.”

Pharos, which, like its predecessor, comprises three original songs and two covers, still sounds like Ihsahn. Yet, there’s a freshness that cuts through it and deep into the listener’s bones like an icy winter breeze. Although sonically different in its ideology and defiance in stepping away from previous releases, there’s a similarity between Ihsahn’s development and that of Steven Wilson’s. The young musician who crafted Porcupine Tree’s *Anesthetize* is in stark contrast to the man who wrote the song *Permanating*. That musical diversity and that intrinsic desire for creation over



repetition should be celebrated, especially when it's pulled off with as much aplomb as Ihsahn on *Pharos*.

"I would say it's of a much more questioning perspective," Ihsahn continues, pensively. "It is about having adventurousness. Take the cover, for example, which has [Egypt's] Lighthouse of Alexandria on it. It opens itself to a more philosophical perspective around the idea of having certain goals in life and a purpose, represented by this beacon. It's about striving for those goals towards the beacon, but it also represents the idea that you can be a beacon for someone else, too. It also interests me that, like with a lighthouse, you have the power to turn your light off and be in control of who you do and do not invite to your shore. As a personal metaphor, it's about choices and exposing yourselves to a larger world, for better or for worse."

Such exposure, plunging into alien depths, expands onto the choice of cover songs on *Pharos*. When they were announced, Portishead's *Roads* and A-ha's *Manhattan Skyline* may have raised some eyebrows, but the reality makes perfect sense. Ihsahn's personality punctuates two already extremely characterful songs.

"I wanted to do two covers that influenced the writing of the original songs, so I picked the extremes of what I love about pop music. I love the electronic and loopy elements of Portishead, where the music is so fragile and has so few elements. It's whispery and soft and there's an extreme tension to that song. I don't think there's another band that has mastered that sound quite as well.

"And on the other hand, that extreme fragility and tension of music is contrasted with A-ha. You know, I had A-ha posters on my bedroom wall when I was very young, before I got into Twisted Sister and Iron Maiden. I've always admired them. They were pioneers. They were the first Norwegian band to make a mark on the international scene and their musical craftsmanship, not just on that song but in general, is very intelligent. They write quite unusual songs that still have really grand, top-of-the-mountain choruses. Both of those songs were very educational to me. I love the way they feel and the way they grow. I spent a lot of time looking at those songs to learn how they created those feelings and try to learn for myself."

The A-ha cover also welcomes the return of his brother-in-law and Leprous frontman, Einar Solberg.

The emperor's hound:
Ihsahn and best friend.

"I was never going to try and sing that song myself," says Ihsahn with a laugh. "The only vocalist I know who could do that song well is Einar. We've been collaborating with each other for so long now and having him cover and work on the song was a really nice experience. It didn't take him long either, which tells you just how talented he is.

"I've been so fortunate to do this for such a long time," he adds, "but one challenge I've always had is keeping myself enthusiastic. If I've learnt anything from all these years writing it's that if I'm not excited by something, I can't write music that expects excitement from the listener. So I've found it beneficial to have these greater conceptual ideas to challenge myself and keep the songwriting process exciting. I put myself in situations where I'm just as hyped about the music as I want the listener to be and with *Pharos* that has certainly been the case. To challenge myself and step out of my comfort zone like this has been extremely rewarding.

"Sometimes people seem to think I go in different directions to provoke the fans but that really isn't the case. It's for purely selfish and sadistic reasons. I've never been worried about what people might think about my music. You do your best and that can be hit and miss. Your reputation can go up and down with each release like the stock market. But, whatever I do, I just have to trust what I'm doing and try to make it the absolute best it can be."

Ihsahn's 2020 EPs plug the gap until his next studio album, which he's already begun writing. "I'm very excited about it," he says. "There are no humble plans for it, let's put it that way. Like with everything else I do, I'll be going for gold, because why not?"

If the pop-laced ambition of *Pharos* is a precursor, Ihsahn's future will be fascinating to watch unfold. 🎧

Pharos is out now via Candlelight.
See www.ihahn.com for more.

"I had A-ha posters on my bedroom wall when I was very young, before I got into Twisted Sister and Iron Maiden. I've always admired them. They were pioneers."

PROG PRESENTS...



SAMPLER

Full Steam Ahead!

English Electric Recordings has served for many years as Big Big Train's own label and is now developing its roster beyond the band itself. In 2020 the label expanded to release two highly acclaimed albums: *Between A Breath And A Breath* by Dyble Longdon, a collaboration between Big Big Train vocalist David Longdon and the late Judy Dyble, and *Invisible*, a solo album from Big Big Train drummer Nick D'Virgilio. Most recently the label has released *Empire*, a Blu-ray/two-CD set commemorating the final show of Big Big Train's debut UK tour in November 2019 at the Hackney Empire in London.

English Electric Recordings has exciting plans for the next few years. These include a series of regular Big Big Train releases, including a reissue of the band's 2009 breakthrough album, *The Underfall Yard*, which has been fully remixed and will feature bonus material, as well as a new BBT studio album, both due in 2021. The company will also release further albums by members of BBT and intends to very selectively release music by artists not affiliated to the band.



The label prioritises quality over quantity; it doesn't aim to release numerous albums annually. Instead, its mission is to focus on a handful of releases, each of which is lovingly created and beautifully packaged. English Electric Recordings' official store is Burning Shed and partners with Plane Groovy for vinyl and RSK for distribution.



HOW TO DOWNLOAD YOUR FREE SAMPLER

1. Visit www.bit.ly/English_Electric
Type it straight into your browser - do not type the url into a search browser.
2. Click 'buy digital album' and enter 0.
3. Enter your email address and country, then download the album to your computer.
4. Enjoy your new music.

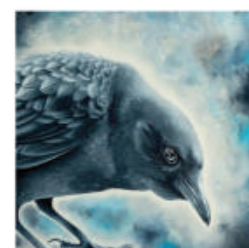
Find out more about English Electric Recordings by visiting www.englishelectric.co

What's on your free English Electric Recordings digital sampler?

Download the nine-track label sampler from www.bit.ly/English_Electric



1. Big Big Train
Snowfalls
Taken from *Snowfalls* (single)



2. Big Big Train
The Transit Of Venus Across The Sun
Taken from *Folklore*



3. Dyble Longdon
Obedience
Taken from *Between A Breath And A Breath*



4. Nick D'Virgilio
Turn Your Life Around
Taken from *Invisible*



5. Big Big Train
The Ivy Gate
Taken from *Grimspound*



6. Big Big Train
Swan Hunter
Taken from *English Electric Part Two*



7. Nick D'Virgilio
I Know the Way
Taken from *Invisible*



8. Big Big Train
The Second Brightest Star
Taken from *The Second Brightest Star*



9. Dyble Longdon
Heartwashing
Taken from *Between A Breath And A Breath*

**"We went on tour, thrashed about like
idiots and had the time of our lives,
but few people really got it."**

The **13th** warriors



In a different light:
Fates Warning.

Over the last four decades, **Fates Warning** have faced many challenges, but their 13th album, *Long Day Good Night*, could be one of their biggest so far. Vocalist Ray Alder details the creation of the band's latest record and comes clean about *those* departure rumours.

Words: Dave Ling **Images:** Stephanie Cabral

In the summer of 2019, having returned to their respective homes following a tour with fellow US progressive metallers Queensrÿche, Fates Warning began mapping out plans for a 13th studio album. Over the coming months, guitarist Jim Matheos and vocalist Ray Alder collaborated on its material, although gradually the band began to sense a gigantic problem: Covid-19 was heading their way.

Alder had moved to Spain some years previously. On the day that *Prog* speaks to him he bemoans the fact that his adopted homeland is going into quarantine for a second time. Earlier this year, with mixer Joe Barresi (Tool/Coheed And Cambria) booked for a very specific window of time and the band having been set a cast iron completion date, the pandemic's original wave meant Alder was forced to take an extreme course of action.

"My vocals had to be finished by mid-May but here in Spain you weren't allowed to leave your house or drive with more than two people in a car," he explains. "Music studios couldn't open, but I looked around and found the owner of one who had been tested and wasn't sick, neither was I; I hadn't left home in three months. One thing that was allowed was moving house."

Alder knew he wasn't sticking to the letter of the law but felt he had no alternative.

"My wife came up with the brilliant idea of me moving into the studio – for two weeks!" he says with a hearty laugh, still scarcely able to believe his actions. "I loaded a truck with a bed and other household items, but as we drove to the studio I was shitting my pants. If the cops had pulled us over I'd have been busted."

For the following fortnight Alder lived in the vocal booth and ate microwave meals at night, recording a track per day and sending the results to Barresi in the US. And thus *Long Day Good Night* was born.

For readers jumping in on the Fates Warning story, a mini history lesson might be of help. Alder joined the Connecticut-based band in 1987 after three albums, replacing co-founder John Arch who was forced out for financial reasons: refusing to give up his day job.

"John wasn't able to tour, so they had to find somebody that would," Alder laughs. "That was me, and more than 30 years later I'm still here."

From the following year's *No Exit* onwards, Fates Warning became more progressively influenced, although as anyone ancient enough to recall the formative days of the prog metal scene will testify, there existed a basic refusal to accept the fusion of the two seemingly contrasting styles.

"We went on tour, thrashed about like idiots and had the time of our lives, but few people really got it," Alder agrees. "I remember being afraid that people wouldn't dig the next album [*Perfect Symmetry*, 1989] because it was a complete turnaround. But, like I said, we're still here and our fanbase continues to grow."



"It feels odd when people call me the new singer. I'm not - I'm the *other* singer. It's a pretty funny situation."

As readers might have guessed, Alder had made his entrance to the progressive world via the heavy metal route. "I began with Judas Priest and Iron Maiden, also Journey was another big one," he reminisces, "but at 12 years old the Rush album *2112* was my gateway to Jethro Tull, Yes and Camel and it remains in my Top 10 of all time. Hearing [Fates Warning's] *Awaken The Guardian* [1986] on the radio was another watershed moment. I was completely floored and realised that music didn't have to be in 4/4 time to make sense."

Alder recently turned 53, but unlike so many contemporaries his voice still sounds great. In an interview for the band's previous album, *Theories Of Flight*, Matheos commented that the singer had experienced "a rough patch during the early 2000s." Is he doing anything differently now?

"The top end of my range did start to go away, but I saw a doctor in Los Angeles who told me to stop drinking and smoking, and even to sleep in a certain way - that was never going to fly," he says with a laugh. "The problem was that I destroyed my voice by never rehearsing, going from zero to 100mph. So for the past few years I've sung for a few hours almost every day and now it's back in shape again."

Long Day Good Night is a mellow, tuneful and largely sedate record that stands apart from the rest of the Fates Warning catalogue. Some electronic supplementation is added to tracks such as *Now Comes The Rain*, but it isn't overly intrusive.

"I can't put myself in Jim's mind but this time I think he wanted to run the gamut [of styles]," Alder suggests. "When he started sending me music he would say, 'I have this song, I don't know whether it's going to work [for us]'. But each time

we decided to go with it. It has everything from heavy to epic to mellow and electronic. I don't think we intended there to be 13 songs on the record, but we kept on adding more and more."

Prog points out that 72 minutes and 22 seconds was the length of a double album in the days of vinyl.

"Yeah, and later we realised that those numbers add up to 13 - that's hilarious." [The band's 13th album also has 13 songs].

The tempos of those songs remain fairly steady throughout, though their sense of scale is impressive. Does Alder think of *Long Day Good Night* as a 'progressive' album?

"Well, that wasn't the goal," he responds after several moments of contemplation. "Making a progressive rock album wasn't what we set out to do, though *The Longest Shadow Of The Day* is meant to be its progressive party piece."

Clocking in at more than 11 minutes, closer *The Longest Shadow Of The Day* is a gargantuan song, with words presumably inspired by the decay of the environment and/or the world's current spirit of political endangerment. Regrettably, Alder cannot add insight.

"You'd have to ask Jim; those were his lyrics," he chuckles. "I've stopped asking him what each song is about, and most of the time he wouldn't explain anyway. Neither of us really likes to tell anybody what our songs mean."

"But we had one of those epic songs on each of the past three albums," he continues, "and we didn't think that we would play them live, though on the last tour we actually did."

Another defining moment, the rustic *Under The Sun*, features a full string section for the first time. Meanwhile, the involvement of Gavin Harrison, The Pineapple Thief/ex-Porcupine Tree man who plays drums on *When Snow Falls* and *Under The Sun*, was another symptom of the album's quarantine-affected birth.


"Bobby [Jarzombek, drummer] was set to be away on a three-month tour with Sebastian Bach which got cancelled," Alder explains. "But even then we needed help in the mad scramble to finish the album. Gavin's drumming on those tracks is really cool."

Alder bursts into a spontaneous chorus of *Kayleigh* when Prog notes that Fates Warning are in a similar boat to Marillion, preferred with Fish on vocals by some listeners and others the longer-serving Hogarth.

"You're absolutely right, man," he observes cheerfully. "It feels odd when people call me the new singer. I'm not - I'm the *other* singer. It's a pretty funny situation."

When Jim and John worked together again as Arch/Matheos in 2011, did that let some air out of the bubble?

"I don't know," he ponders. "That album [*Sympathetic Resonance*] was originally going to be a Fates Warning album, but I wasn't feeling it. When Jim suggested making it with John,

I had worried about that causing some weirdness among the fans. You know, 'Is Ray leaving?' But it didn't happen and I think the Arch/Matheos album was pretty cool. I'm sure people know that I'm not going anywhere." 

Long Day Good Night is out now via Metal Blade. See www.fateswarning.com for more.

Fates Warning,
L-R: Mike Abdow, Joey Vera, Ray Alder (seated), Bobby Jarzombek, Jim Matheos.

asiahiro

e·a·r MUSIC
proudly presents

ELLEFSON

The eponymous solo band project
of Grammy-winning **MEGADETH**
bassist and co-founder **DAVID ELLEFSON**.

New interpretations of the greatest
hard rock and metal songs by
QUEEN, KISS, AC/DC and many more.

Featuring: Charlie Benante (**ANTHRAX**),
Eddie Ojeda (**TWISTED SISTER**), Dave Lombardo (**SLAYER**),
Dirk Verbeuren (**MEGADETH**), Doro Pesch, Frank Hannon
and Troy Locketta (**TESLA**) ...

2CD DIGIPAK | DIGITAL

OUT **NOV 20TH**



日本からのノベルティ!

The brand new
metal powerhouse by
Frédéric Leclercq
(Kreator, Sinsaenum, ex Dragonforce)

and **SAKI**
(Mary's Blood, Nemophila)

CD DIGIPAK | DIGITAL

OUT **NOV 27TH**

mark Kelly's marathon

The brand new
progressive rock project
by **MARILLION's**
keyboard player
MARK KELLY

CD DIGIPAK | NUMBERED AND LTD. CD+DVD DIGIPAK
LTD. LP (GATEFOLD) | DIGITAL

OUT **NOV 27TH**



burningshed.com
season's greetings. stay safe.



MIDNIGHT, LOW NIGHT

From alcoholism and abuse to symbols of national identity, atmospheric Icelanders **Sólstafir** are baring their souls like never before on *Endless Twilight Of Codependent Love*. Prog caught up with frontman Aðalbjörn 'Addi' Tryggvason to find out more.

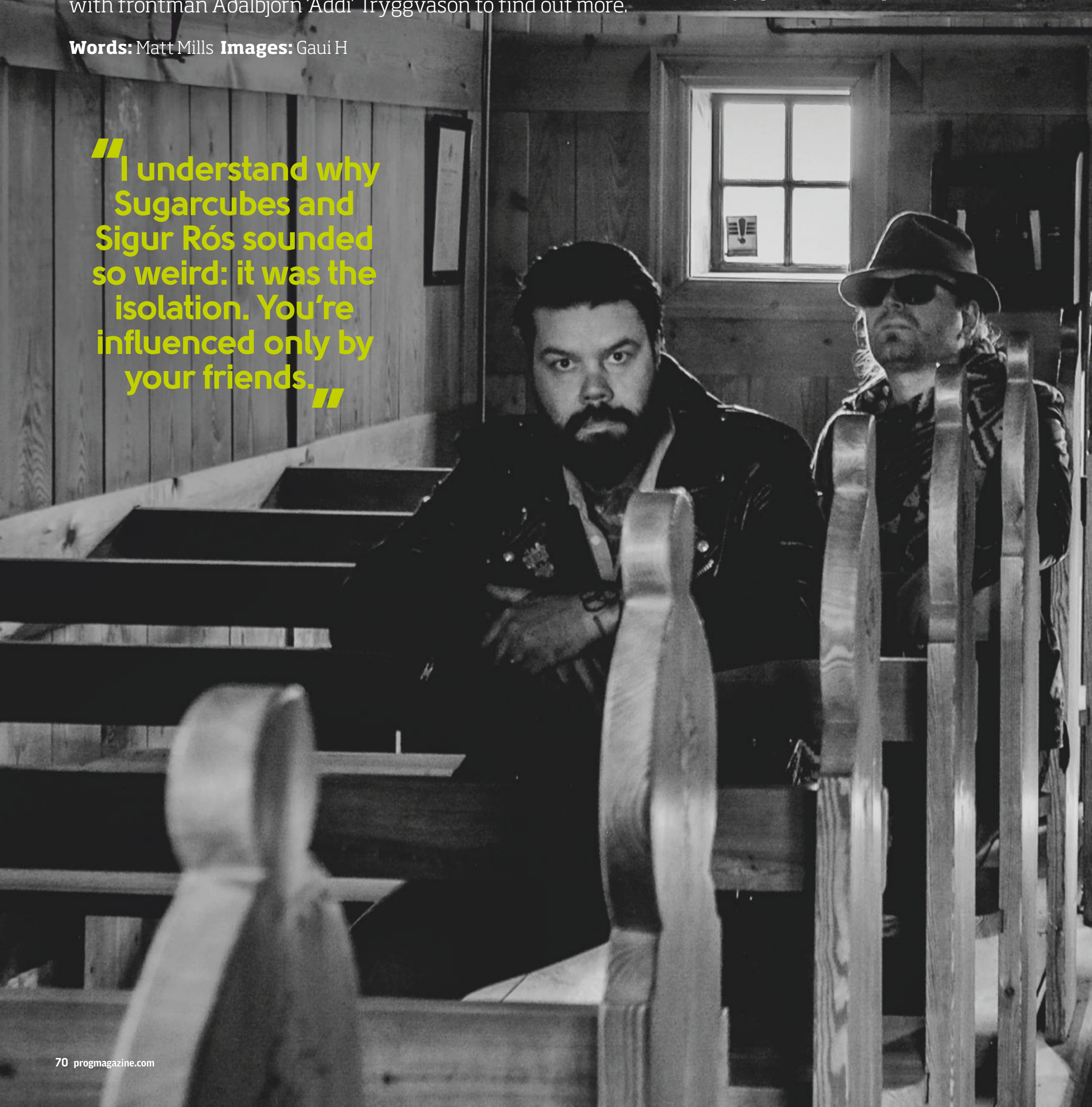
Words: Matt Mills **Images:** Gaui H

"I understand why Sugarcubes and Sigur Rós sounded so weird: it was the isolation. You're influenced only by your friends."

Isolation. It's an emotion we've all become too familiar with in 2020, much more than we'd have ever liked. Thanks to lockdowns, curfews and social distancing, life has taken on an alien feeling that's brought about the need for many adjustments.

For Sólstafir, however, isolation is the standard. For 25 years, the quartet have been creating dynamic post-metal from the beating heart of Iceland — a small island country in the North Atlantic, more than 700 miles away from neighbouring Greenland.

"It's like creative inbreeding," frontman Aðalbjörn 'Addi' Tryggvason says of sustaining a group in such a remote part of the world.



“The Sugarcubes were the first band to properly set foot outside of Iceland. They were a weird-ass band that came from an indie band and a punk band. Then you had Sigur Rós, another really weird band. No one came to see them, they were just in it for themselves. They played empty shows in Iceland, but people saw them internationally. I understand why Sugarcubes and Sigur Rós sounded so weird: it was the isolation. You’re influenced only by your friends.”

Thanks to their homeland being such a unique echo chamber of inspiration, Sólstafir are a progressive band like no other. They began life in the

mid-90s as extreme metal outlaws but, since then, have evolved into a truly signature collective of experimentalists. Their latest album, *Endless Twilight Of Codependent Love*, is an hour-long melting pot self-described as “sounding like Mogwai, Fields Of The Nephilim, Neil Young and Darkthrone” at the same time.

“We’re not progressive like Emerson, Lake & Palmer or Yes,” says Tryggvason. “We have never been about weird time signatures or God-knows-what chord progressions or scales. We’ve always been about creating something completely different. It’s progressive in

a completely different hemisphere. We can create a Darkthrone-sounding song out of Duran Duran influences. Or we can listen to Mogwai and make a Fields Of The Nephilim song, or a Neil Young song, out of it.”

Endless Twilight... rewards listeners with wide, eclectic palates. Opening song *Akkeri* is a 10-minute hard rocker — featuring flashy guitar leads, Blue Öyster Cult-ish cowbells and an energetic groove — while bonus track *Hrollkalda Þoka Einmanaleikans* is defined by soft Hammond organs. *Dionysus* is a concise barrage of screaming metal, while *Til Moldar* is a new wave ballad and *Or* carries strong jazz and lounge inclinations.



Twilight tales: Sólstafir are creating something different on their latest.

For any other act, *Endless Twilight...*'s diversity would be an intense, even scary move, risking alienating large portions of their fanbase. In the case of Sólstafir though, it's just part and parcel of their appeal.

In 2002, the Icelanders debuted with the black metal and hardcore punk leaning *Í Blóði Og Anda*, before adding post-metal to their canon on the subsequent *Masterpiece Of Bitterness* three years later. Thereafter, folk, hard rock, prog and post-rock all gradually became absorbed through opuses like *Svartir Sandar* and *Ótta*, setting the stage for this eclectic giant of a release.

"Our growth, it's almost like spirituality. When do you reach the end of a spiritual journey?" Tryggvason asks.

The singer recalls that, starting out in the extreme metal underground of such a small country was a big challenge. They could only find minimal support. "There were no black metal bands, concerts, labels or fans in Iceland. That's what's kept us alive; we've never been the flavour of the week, not even the decade. It's physics — if you're fast going up, you'll be fast going down. We've always gone up at a slow, steady pace."

Instead, it's been a gradual, two-and-a-half-decade-long crawl for Tryggvason and his bandmates. However, despite initially emerging in a time and place where esoteric, heavy music had no true community of its own, Sólstafir are now one of Iceland's prime aural exports. In 2019, the four-piece were a key component in a major cultural exchange with the US and they played a four-day festival called Taste Of Iceland in New York. Joining them over the multifaceted long weekend were shoegaze trio Kælan Mikla, as well as authors and chefs.

"Iceland sort of has its own manager who's in charge of exporting everything: yoghurt, vodka, poetry and music," explains Tryggvason. "Then we were picked by a woman in the Ministry Of Culture in New York. I don't know why she picked

us: old farts in a 25-year-old metal band. Maybe she has good music taste!"

Iceland made Sólstafir their representatives for the US market and *Endless Twilight Of Codependent Love* returns the favour with its picturesque album art. Despite Tryggvason stating that his band have never stood for any form of "nationalist crap", the front cover is a piece called *The Lady Of The Mountain*. It's a watercolour painting created in 1864 by German illustrator Johann Baptist Zwecker, depicting the eponymous character who's long been the female incarnation of Iceland.

"The painting is actually a personification of female power, symbolising Iceland," he explains. "You have symbols like the seagull, the raven, the mountains, the literature and the folkish clothing — it's all very Icelandic."

The imagery and complex musicality of *Endless Twilight...* both draw from Sólstafir's immediate surroundings, where they use the serenity and quietness of Iceland to create unique, head-turning beauty. However, lyrically — like much of their recent material — they draw from the internal. These nine songs, and two bonus tracks, are all tied together in their tackling of the theme of 'darkness', in relation to challenging topics such as mental health and alcoholism.



Zwecker's *The Lady Of The Mountain* graces the cover of Sólstafir's latest.

"I quit drinking in 2013," explains Tryggvason. "You can't be the guy talking about how depressed you are all the time and still be sat alone drinking. It doesn't add up. If you want to escape darkness and anxiety, you have to let go of the booze and the drugs. That's not gonna help you — that's a fertiliser."

The album title itself is an allusion to alcohol and trauma, with the *Endless Twilight Of Codependent Love* being an abusive relationship that, for whatever reason, refuses to end. It's an idea that's always been very close to home for Tryggvason and his cohorts.

He elaborates: "Imagine this: if you grow up with an alcoholic father, for instance. You come home and your dad is drunk most of the time. It makes you start to wonder if there's gonna be food on the table tonight. Is mummy gonna be crying again tonight? Should I make myself invisible? Otherwise, I'll get beaten up tonight. Should I stop daddy from beating up mummy? That's the endless twilight of a toxic relationship, and it would fuck a kid up. Two members of the band grew up with this."

Endless Twilight Of Codependent Love is Sólstafir at their most creative and open. It's an all-encompassing apex of styles and themes that's exhaustingly introspective and yet the frontman remains raring to craft new music.

"We're never trying to antagonise people [with our eclecticism]," he says. "We're pretty far away from being a metal band now, but we don't care. There's a damn blues track on the new album! Why would we care if some guy who likes [grindcore band] Anal Cunt doesn't like a song on our album?"

He adds with a huge grin, "I'm so excited to be doing the next album, already! I'll hate writing it because there will be loads of arguments and people trying to make the best songs, but I love recording. Where can we go from here?" he ponders, "I'm sure we'll find something cool." 📍

Endless Twilight Of Codependent Love is out now via Season Of Mist. For more information, visit www.solstafir.net.

The self-isolating Sólstafir, L-R: Sæþór Marius Sæþórsson, Hallgrímur Jón Hallgrímsson, Svavar Austmann, Aðalbjörn Tryggvason.

"It's progressive in a completely different hemisphere. We can create a Darkthrone-sounding song out of Duran Duran influences. Or we can listen to Mogwai and make a Fields Of The Nephilim song, or a Neil Young song, out of it."

NEW RELEASES FROM APOLLON RECORDS



WUDEWUSE
Northern Gothic



TAMMATOYS
Conflicts



RING VAN MÖBIUS
The 3rd Majesty



PYMLICO
On This Day



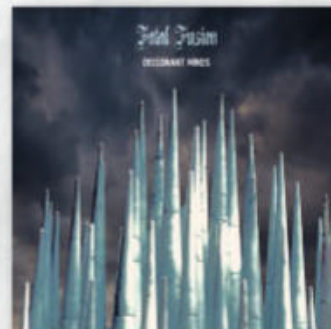
YOBREPUS
Mycelium Days



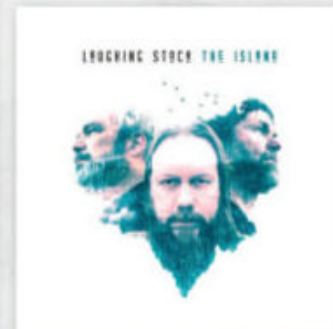
MATTERHORN
Outside



PING
The Zig Zag
Manoeuvre



FATAL FUSION
Dissonant Minds



**THE LAUGHING
STOCK**
Islands

DISTRIBUTED BY:



Visit our website/store:
apollonrecords.no

Apollon
RECORDS

LAYOUT/DESIGN: WWW.COVERPART.NO

MORE NEW HOUSE OF WATTS RELEASES



Lazertüth

Galaxies - LP

Always on the cusp of explosion, these spaced-out studio improvs define the universe the Lazertüth inhabits



Lazertüth

Leon - LP

The 4th chapter of the Lazertüth saga finds the titular beast teaming up with a new galactic warrior: prog ensues



Motorhome

Scribble Cheeks/Amodeo - 7"

Anthemic and enigmatic, these flip-side storms of distortion and propulsion churn and burn



Lazertüth

Serpentor - LP

An epic slab of dirty space prog. Heavy, heady, and out of this world

House of Watts

www.houseofwatts.com


Modality Megacycles

INCORPORATING ELEMENTS OF EARLY SYNTHESIZER MUSIC, CINEMATIC COMPOSITION, GLOBAL RHYTHMS, AND PSYCHEDELIA INTO THEIR IMMERSIVE SOUNDSCAPES, THIS MONTANA AND VIRGINIA BASED COLLECTIVE PRESENTS 5 NEW SNAPSHOTS OF IMAGINARY PLACES, ETHNOGRAPHIC FORGERIES, DRONE ROCK, AND DIGITAL DUB

AVAILABLE ON ALL STREAMING SERVICES

LIMITED EDITION VINYL 10/10/2020

MODALITY.BANDCAMP.COM

A full-page photograph of Simon Collins, a man with long, wavy brown hair and a beard, wearing a light-colored short-sleeved shirt. He is leaning over a dark metal railing with a diamond-plate pattern. His right arm is extended down, and his left arm is resting on the railing. A tattoo is visible on his left forearm. The background is dark and out of focus.

His former band Sound Of Contact were tipped for great things, but, following a tumultuous few years, vocalist and drummer **Simon Collins** has decided to go it alone. At least for now. He tells *Prog* what really happened with SOC and how he found himself on his fourth solo album, *Becoming Human*.

Words: Polly Glass

Portrait: Andy Wright

Turning It On Again

Take a look at him now:
Simon Collins returns
against all odds.

**“I’m still loyal to Genesis.
When I get behind a kit I’ll put
on *Seconds Out* and play
the entire album.”**

One of the first things *Prog* notices about Simon Collins is the large crop circle tattooed on his arm. He also has a quote from his hero, Carl Sagan (“We are a way for the cosmos to know itself”) and the logo of his old band, Sound Of Contact, but the crop circle is the most striking.

“I got that from the book *Planetary Intelligence* [by Simeon Hein],” he says, in slightly shy but friendly Canadian tones. “It’s all about decoding crop circles. The one I’ve got on my arm apparently means ‘creation’... could be something completely different, but it looks cool anyway.”

At 44, Phil Collins’ eldest son has experienced his share of Earth-based highs and lows. One could argue that, on some level, this explains his interest in the intangible reaches and nuances of the cosmos.

Not that he struggles for inspiration from this planet. For the last two years


growth. I kinda wanted to... to really let things develop organically.”

Speaking over the phone, Collins sounds like a man who’s “done some healing”. He uses words like “spiritual” when discussing his music and life path, but with an unfussy sincerity that stops you rolling your eyes. He’s softly spoken but engaging and relieved to have finally released his fourth solo album, after several months of Covid-19-induced delays.

The record, *Becoming Human*, is a testament to Collins’ work and life to date. Fans of his dad will revel in the powerful drums and emotive vocals, but it’s the sort of multilayered yet song-focused approach that nods as much to latter-day Steven Wilson and Anathema as anyone else. Co-produced and generally masterminded with Howard Jones collaborator Robbie Bronnimann (and featuring co-writes with ex-SOC members Dave Kerzner and Kelly Nordstrom), it has a strong electronica undercurrent, which propels an absorbing cocktail of spacey textures, commanding beats, expansive Floydian touches and emotional weight.

“I think it’s cool to mix the synthetic with the organic. I’m drawing from influences that go back as far as 20 years, when I used to DJ, but I also love progressive rock, progressive music... I wanted to cross-pollinate the two and see what happened.”

It’s possible to view Simon Collins in a number of lights. Previously he was the guy who co-founded Sound Of Contact with Dave Kerzner (of In Continuum and Mantra Vega), Kelly Nordstrom and Matt Dorsey. Together they made one brilliant album – 2013’s *Dimensionaut* – and won *Prog*’s own Limelight Award, before falling apart in a fragmented, messy manner that was never really explained.

But there are other ‘versions’ of him. The astronomy aficionado who likes a good conspiracy theory (there’s a song on the new record about Agenda 21); the music nerd who listens to underground hip-hop and classic prog; the psy-trance fan and former rave DJ who began his solo career (in 2000) by mixing electronic tones with pop melodies; the troubled soul who attracted tabloid attention in 2014 when he was arrested on suspicion of selling Class-A drugs (more on that to come). There followed a brief Sound Of Contact reunion in 2017, but then everything went quiet. Until now. 

Collins has lived in a rural pocket of Ireland, enjoying “a simple life”, spending time with his dogs (a Jack Russell and a dachshund, named Winston and Elmo) and writing songs. “I’m kind of in Middle Earth out here,” he says. “It’s giving me time and space to be creative, work in the studio.”

Six years ago Collins stepped away from music. Sound Of Contact had fallen apart and old demons had resurfaced, along with a generous helping of life angst, bringing with it the sort of personal and public turmoil he never wanted. Not to mention a disarming dose of writer’s block. It was time to regroup.

“I did a lot of travelling in the UK and Europe, and I was on my own spiritual path to be honest,” he tells us. “I did some healing and some personal

**“When Sound
Of Contact
came to an end
I felt defeated.
I was maybe
grieving, in
a way.”**

Becoming human... with
a nice cup of coffee!





Either way it's the 'son of Phil Collins' label that, for better or worse, he'll always carry. Not that it seems to bother him. He speaks proudly and warmly of his father, and of the influence Genesis had on his own life. His own music is unabashedly progressive. On YouTube you can find footage of him singing *Apocalypse In 9/8* with Steve Hackett at 2014's Cruise To The Edge. "I'm still completely loyal to Genesis," he chuckles with genuine affection. "I still love listening to a bit of Genesis. When I get behind a kit and play for a couple of hours I'll put on *Seconds Out* and play the entire album."

Whatever the style, he says, music is what gets him up in the morning. "It's what makes me excited and enthusiastic about life. It's saved me so many times."

When Sound Of Contact came together, Collins seemed to have found his dream band. The likes of *Möbius Slip*, which emerged from a 3am jam, reflected the chemistry at work. Understandably, the group's demise in 2014 was hard to take.

"We all put everything we had into that band," Collins says. "It was a labour of love, and it was something I'd wanted to do for a long time. So when that came to an end I felt defeated. I was... maybe grieving in a way."

So what happened there?

"Well there's a few aspects that come into play," he says. "Geography played a massive role in presenting issues being together as a band, living [in different places] around the planet brought visa issues, logistical problems, and a roadblock to rehearsing and recording another album. Things became quite complicated. Being together proved difficult. Tensions around that created some politics."

Other things happened that, to varying degrees, have fed into *Becoming Human*. Collins went through a divorce. The marriage lasted "only a couple of years" and had begun to unravel as *Dimensionaut* was being made. One song on *Becoming Human*, *No Love*, is

about the decline of his marriage. "For me it's easier to sing and write about the things that it's not as comfortable talking about in life." He stops for a moment, then continues: "So yeah, I wrote about my addiction. I was like, 'Yeah, that's part of who I am, and my past and...' something that I'm battling with through my life, and it's made me a stronger person."

Substance abuse hasn't featured in Collins' life for years now, although its scars resonate in *Becoming Human*'s most intimate moments (eg *This Is The Time*, where he sings 'too sick to know that I am sick/the interventions didn't even make me think'). The worst point, he says, was probably in his mid-30s. He spent multiple stints in rehab, the last of them in 2011 for six months.

He relapsed once, during Sound Of Contact's tenure, which "put a strain on things" — and, in a twist of horrible luck, led to his arrest in 2014.

"I mean it was obviously stressful at the time," he says when *Prog* brings it up, "but I really didn't have anything to worry about because they had the wrong person. After it was over I was like, 'Let's forget about that.' I wasn't charged. I've never dealt drugs, I'm not a criminal. I just got involved with the wrong people at the time and the police mistook me for someone else who was dealing Class-A drugs."

Was it difficult to write about this? "No, I don't think so. Sometimes it can be kind of... not 'shocking' but surprising, what comes out when it's the truth and it's coming from a subconscious place. I'm like, 'Wow, was it really that bad?' And..." He finishes quietly: "Yeah, at one point it really was."

It's not all introspection. Bleak moments are counteracted by soaring catharsis, and for all its confessional heaviness *Becoming Human* is not a depressing record.

"Oh thank you, I'm so glad you said that!" he exhales, sounding relieved. "I really pride myself on not making depressing music. I'd like to think I'm a pretty positive person. I don't like to get bogged down with things for too long... If something's taking more of a negative turn [in a song] I like to show the other side. There's no point in writing a song that's like: 'I hate myself and want to die.' I mean, okay, what does that do for the person listening?"

To understand Simon Collins today, it helps to go back to his formative years. Born in 1976 in London, but raised largely in Vancouver by his mother Andrea Bertorelli (the first of Collins Snr's three wives), he grew up immersed in prog rock, alongside the post-punk and grunge of the day. His father took him on tour with Genesis, while his stepfather — who sold gear to the likes of Bryan Adams — brought

equipment home and taught him the basics of recording and engineering.

In high school he played drums for four hours every day, earning the nickname 'Elastoblasto' because his blistered hands were constantly covered in Band-Aids.

"Ha! Where did you find that out?!" he laughs at the mention of it. "But yeah, that's true. I was also playing in death metal bands, any band I could get into. I was in, like, four or five bands at once at one point, and loved it. I was just an animal behind the kit."

He concedes that being the son of a household name had its downsides. "I had a tough time in school. I didn't really feel like I fitted in with any clique. Not that I *wanted* to, but when you're a kid you do feel like you want to fit in, and I just didn't. Everyone knew who my dad was, and it's like... you get superstar treatment from someone you don't even know, or you get the cold shoulder because they're jealous that you're who you are. It's like, 'Oh you've got money', and I'm like, 'No, my dad has money, different story.'"


By 14, Collins was writing his own songs. One that he wrote at 15 — the tender, piano-based *I Will Be Waiting* — appears on *Becoming Human*. In his 20s he DJ-ed on Vancouver's rave scene, landing a deal with Warner in the process, from which his musical career grew. He also set up his own small label, Lightyears.

Perhaps it's from seeing what fame did to his father's life, but he's happy with his own comparatively quiet-but-respected profile.

"I don't gauge my success by how many records I've sold compared to my father," he reasons. "I've never put that pressure on myself. I gauge my success by how happy I am when I wake up in the morning, and I consider myself successful when I've made the record I wanted to make."

These days he's in a good place. He's working on his next solo album and he and Kelly Nordstrom (who plays on *Becoming Human*) have formed a new "modern progressive rock" duo, whose "thought-provoking" debut album (also co-produced with Robbie Bronnimann) is due for completion in early 2021.

Whatever else the future holds, through a mix of human experience, relationships with others and gazing towards the stars Simon Collins seems to have found, arguably, the most elusive thing any of us strive for: a good relationship with himself.

"And not just being 'okay' with who you are, but being *happy* with who you are, and not having to make excuses for who you are," he nods. "That's liberating. That's powerful." 

Becoming Human is out now via Frontiers. Visit www.simoncollins.com for more.

“Original Music:
The Goblins with
Dario Argento.”
Those words,
superimposed over
images of shuffling undead consumers in an
abandoned shopping mall, had a profound
effect on composer and multi-instrumentalist
Steve Moore.

“I had seen *Dawn Of The Dead* so many
times,” he recounts, “and at one point I was
watching the credits and saw ‘Music by The
Goblins’ and I thought, ‘Shit! I need to look
these guys up.’ This was early- or mid-90s.”

Inspired by George A Romero’s seminal
1978 zombie apocalypse movie, Moore teamed
up with drummer Anthony Paterra to breathe
life into an instrumental project called simply
Zombi. New album 2020 marks 20 years since
the duo’s formation.

“We named our band after the Italian cut of
Dawn Of The Dead,” Moore explains, “so that
was a huge touchstone for us as musicians
coming together.

“When we first were doing this there
weren’t too many bands around who were
trying to channel that sound from horror films
— the Goblin or John Carpenter scores — and
we definitely, as two musicians, bonded over
that stuff.”

In 2013 the duo toured North America in
support of Goblin’s current line-up, an
experience that was to have a profound effect
on them both. “Touring with them for me was
really special, just to see real prog masters,”
enthuses Paterra. “There’s no one currently
who’s 20 or 30 years old that even understands
how to play that way. They’re coming out of
a whole different era of songwriting and
performance. These guys are in their late
50s, early 60s and they’re playing circles
around us. To watch them every night was
invaluable, like taking an advanced masters
course at college. All you ask for, as a musician,
is to keep learning and to watch those guys
play every night was fantastic.”



The

Steve Moore and Anthony Paterra bring the Goblin-inspired
Zombi back to life with their first studio album in five years.
Prog catches up with the duo on their 20th anniversary to chat
about their passion for horror movie soundtracks... and Rush.

Words: Chris McGarel **Image:** Matt Dayak

Reanimators

Zombi hunters: Steve Moore
and Anthony Paterra.



The experience shaped Zombi's 2015 album, forcing a shift away from the intricately arranged synth parts into a more bass- and drum-driven two-headed beast. "*Shape Shift* was meant to be played live," Moore reflects. "The whole vibe of that record was us doing what we can as a two-piece live."

Five years on, Zombi's sixth full-length homage to cinematic horror continues that heavier approach. 2020 is a fitting soundtrack to our contagion-blasted times. The album came out over the summer but recording had wrapped before quarantine restrictions were imposed in their native US.

"It's just coincidental that we decided to name our album 2020 and this is going to

go down as quite possibly one of the most strange, difficult, terrible years we've experienced in a while," says Paterra.

Moore adds "At the same time we realised that we're coming up to 20 years as a band so there's some band personal importance."

Opening cut *Breakthrough & Conquer* pounces from the speakers like a horror movie jump scare. Their Goblin and John Carpenter worship is still very much intact, but perhaps the impending anniversary has forced the two musicians to reflect on their beginnings and to bring those initial influences full circle.

"When we were starting out we were both huge Rush fans," says Moore. "Huge Van

Halen fans, too, and Eddie Van Halen's synthesisers were equally an influence, that and Rush, *Moving Pictures* era. That was the stuff that we were into so that's what you might be able to hear in some of that music."

Paterra picks up, "It all started in that world of taking the minimal structures of Carpenter and the live element of Goblin. I'm such a Neil Peart fan that you throw some of that into that world, all these things came together.

"Then we started listening to krautrock, Klaus Schulze, Tangerine Dream and all that kind of stuff. Every little thing that we were listening to seeps in and finds its way into this band. That informs everything we make so right now we've made a pretty heavy record and that's just one area we hadn't really gone into so it's nice to explore that world."

"I came of age during a very special time for metal," Moore reveals. "[From] '88 through '91: all the Big 4 [of thrash] albums. That was my golden age of metal but I do keep up with some more recent records."

Steve Moore contributed his spectral synthesiser sounds to Grammy-winning Swedish metallers Ghost's most recent album, *Prequelle*. Ghost and Zombi toured the States and Europe together in 2016 and 2017, a time that helped to shape the band's sound, just as the Goblin tour had previously.

"I'm a big fan of Tobias' [Forge] guitar and bass playing," says Moore. "I think he's a phenomenal musician. Just being on tour with them, seeing such a massive production probably influenced us in some way to want to make something on a larger scale."

Zombi's 20th anniversary album and tour cycle was being planned when disaster struck in the form of Covid-19, so that's now on hold. As with the previous album this new material was written with live performance in mind but also with a change to the band's format.

"Our plans were to expand the line-up," says Moore. "We were going to add a guitarist and have a keyboardist come so that I could just play bass guitar, which is really what I want to be doing. It would've been so great."

The pair are certain the Zombi will be reanimated for live duties, maybe in 2021. "These people are still available so it'll happen," asserts Paterra.

"This is not the end," Moore adds. "We're charging forward into the strange world we live in now." 📞

2020 is out now via Relapse. For more, see www.facebook.com/ZombiBand.

"Touring with Goblin for me was really special, just to see real prog masters. There's no one currently who's 20 or 30 years old that even understands how to play that way."

Anthony Paterra

THE PROG INTERVIEW

ED WYNNE

Every month, we get inside the minds of some of the biggest names in music. This issue, it's **Ozric Tentacles** co-founder Ed Wynne. Inspired to pick up the guitar by family friend and Beatles member George Harrison, the young musician's trippy soundscapes ended up playing a key role in the 80s psychedelic revival. With Ozrics, he's since released 15 studio albums, the most recent being *Space For The Earth*, and he was also part of offshoot project Nodens Ictus. He's collaborated with Amon Düül UK and Eat Static and, last year, issued his first ever solo record, *Shimmer Into Nature*. *Prog* catches up with Wynne to reminisce about playing at Stonehenge, opening for Gong and why he decided it was time to make another Ozrics album.

Words: Chris McGarel

Formed in 1983 and taking their name from an imaginary breakfast cereal, Ozric Tentacles improbably carried their psychedelic jams from a makeshift campsite at Stonehenge to the UK's Top 20. Devotees can thank their lucky charms in 2020 for what's proving to be a bumper year in *Erpland*.

After 2019's exploratory excursion into a solo career with *Shimmer Into Nature* and live shows under his own moniker, Ed Wynne has resurrected the legendary band with *Space For The Earth*, the first new Ozrics material in half a decade.

A selection of their starred catalogue has been remastered by the man himself for Kscope and, with another side-project waiting in the wings, *Prog* spoke to the founder and only remaining original member to see what makes him snap, crackle and pop.

Can you remember the first Ozric Tentacles gig?

The first Ozric gig was at

Stonehenge Free Festival many, many years ago in 1983. I had just left school. I bumped into a load of people and they said, "We're going to this festival. We're gonna hire a generator. Bring your amp and guitar and we'll see what happens." So we went down there and set our camp up, made a little fire, got the generator on and chugging away. After half an hour I looked

up and there were 100 people there. Half an hour later there were 500. I suddenly thought, "Blimey, we've got a gig going on here." Someone came up to me and said, "What's the name of the band?" And I just said, "Well, Ozric Tentacles is what it's called today. I don't know what it's gonna be called tomorrow."

Were these freeform jams?

We didn't really have any tunes at that point; we were very used to jamming. It's kind of where the whole thing came from: freeform, just for the enjoyment of the moment.

I remember Joie [Hinton] set up his keyboards and said, "What do you want me to do?" I just said, "Make some swishing noises."

So off he went and it was brilliant. All those synthesised textures we were

hearing in our minds were suddenly right there.

After that you started writing tracks and making cassettes. You became a little cottage industry, didn't you?

Yeah. It was literally a question of getting enough tunes together and buying a pack of 20 cassettes



New album, *Space For The Earth*.



Wynne in the studio in the mid-80s.

“

I've never thought to end Ozric Tentacles except perhaps after *Technicians Of The Sacred*, where I really needed to get out.

”

and copying one by one, photocopying the covers and folding them up and putting them in a box. They were £2.50 each.

The first gig I went to with those, I crouched down at the end of the stage after the gig and said, "Anybody want a tape?" And they went within a few seconds. Every week became taken up with copying and making cassettes for the gig at the weekend.

To what extent are Ozric Tentacles a band rather than Ed Wynne and friends?

I'm kind of at the controls, I'm the filter it all goes through. It always has been a little bit like that throughout the whole history of the band. It was me sitting in my little home studio, a little bit like what I do every day anyway, but then there's a floating body of people who came and went. We were all involved in it but it wasn't like a solid line-up of a band. Whoever happened to be there at the time got on the track.

Some of those musicians have guested on *Space For The*

Ed Wynne, technician
of the sacred.



Earth. How did that come about?

I've got their phone number so I just give them a ring. It was nice. I wish there could've been more involvement with those guys. John [Egan]'s on one track, Joie's on one track. If I'd been able to have them here in my studio there would've been more of a general band feeling. In a way these old members have *their* track. The one with John Egan is lovely actually. It turned out to be very different to what I expected. He gave it a certain celtic flavour. John's from Ireland so he definitely has that in his blood. He was almost apologetic. I gave him the track and he phoned me up and said, "It's coming out a little celtic here. Is that okay?"

Last year you made a solo album that was very well received. What made you want to do Ozrics again?

The solo album was something I'd been wanting to do for a long time. Not that it turned out that much different to Ozrics really but I enjoyed doing my own album with my own ideas. I don't have to see what everybody thinks. It was good for that but then I just suddenly felt I wanted to get back and do another Ozrics album.

How did the new one come about?

The idea before the Covid



Ed's solo album, *Shimmer Into Nature*, from 2019.

I was getting involved with other people from earlier versions of the band.

Your first ever solo gigs were opening for Gong. Gong have been such a huge influence on you so how was it?

It was really nice. I was nervous, I hadn't met any of that particular incarnation of Gong before. I'd seen various weird photos of them so you always imagine they're really weird people. Instantly after I said hello it was absolutely fine. These are lovely people. Of course they are 'cos it's Gong! They have this lovely

Feng Shui with guitars? Wynne in New York, 1993.



Ozric Tentacles in Somerset, 1991.

MARTYN GOODACRE/GETTY IMAGES

And I went, "Of course it is. I live in Scotland, you're from Ireland. Why not?" It's nice to have that feeling. I've not had so much of that on Ozric albums before.

World music in general has always been integral to your sound. Is there any particular culture's music you feel more drawn to?

I go through phases. When I was younger I used to love Indian music then I heard a bit too much of that so now it's there for when I need it. I like to add a little piece of this and that, we used to call it 'ethnological forgery', pretending we were these people playing amazing ethnic music when in fact it's just synthesisers or whatever.

lockdown was that we would get together and do a proper album with loads of us in the studio jumping about, enthusing mutually and all that but then this lockdown happened so therefore it came out as a slightly different thing. It was still good but I do miss being able to sit in the studio with somebody and say, "Is this a good idea or not? What do you think I should do here?" So I was kind of back to my own devices really.

The idea with an Ozric album was to get back into the band mentality a little bit then suddenly with lockdown you're not allowed to see anybody, you have to sit and do it on your own. It was almost like I was doing another solo album but as much as I could

philosophy about them. I felt very safe from the moment we started talking. Mutual respect and a really good feeling. Every morning we'd stumble into the venue and we're all very happy to see each other, full of good energy. I've never experienced anything like it.

You're remastering a lot of the back catalogue. Was it a weird feeling revisiting those albums?

Extraordinary. It wasn't what I expected. I expected to be thinking, "I'll go anywhere that needs tarding up and I'll EQ or top it or whatever" but when I put it on and started listening it was like opening a photograph album. Each song was a moment in time, a week's worth of time. I'd put

KARIEAN LEVINE/GETTY IMAGES



“
Joie [Hinton] set up his keyboards and said ‘What do you want me to do?’ I just said ‘Make some swishing noises.’ So off he went and it was brilliant.
”

them on and suddenly I could remember the situation of sitting in the studio, what was on the walls and what was going on at the time, who was around. It's really like a little diary for me, these tunes. It's extraordinary. I hear a little blip in the corner of the music and I remember, "Oh yeah, that was when someone came and switched the light on at the wrong moment."

What has the feedback been like?

People seem to like them. I'm really happy about that. It's my first foray into the remastering world and people really do seem to have noticed that I've done something because often I imagine people remastering doesn't make that much difference. I'm happy people notice. I spend a couple or three days on each one to get it right.

Which came first: the idea for the reissues or the decision to make a new Ozrics album?

The new Ozrics album was originally the thing. Last year I was thinking about making another solo album and then Tony [Harris] from Kscope said, "Why not make an Ozric album?" And I thought, "You're right, why not?" People do seem to want the stuff I do to be called Ozric

Tentacles. They like to have an attachment to it. It's been quite a nice thing to see the reaction of people. It's gratifying to me and I don't mind being called Ozric Tentacles even though it's a bit of a silly name.

As you revisited them did you find you had a personal favourite?

Looking through the entire catalogue I would say the ones

I enjoyed the individual thing of doing my own album with my own ideas. I don't have to see what everybody thinks."

Onstage around '86.



that stand out for me are *Sliding Gliding Worlds* [1993] and I also really like *Pungent Effulgent* [1989] because that was our first excursion into the real world of finally people taking us seriously. Slightly. For me they all have their amazing stories. It's more to do with the feeling of the time and what was going on rather than the actual music.

Is there anything you would change about those albums?

When I listen back to some of them I often find they're way too quick, the tempo is too fast, especially *Paper Monkeys* [2011], which was good fun at the time but listening back to it it's cruising along. We try to play it live and it's really exhausting stuff. Sometimes in the studio I tend to speed things up to keep the excitement going for my own personal interest so I've got to remember other people are hearing it for the first time.

Lost In The Sky from Paper Monkeys became a live favourite, didn't it?

Live it always freaked me out because the bassline when it came in was so strong. I was really happy with the chords at the beginning of that one. That was written underground in a house in America that I lived in. I was in a basement with a huge fish pond in the corner of the room so the whole thing was this slightly damp atmosphere and slightly fishy-smelling studio so *Lost In The Sky* was me trying to escape that.

Where do the bizarre song titles come from?

Titles have always been a problem for me. That's probably why they're so weird. I use Cubase to write and if you come up with a new little ditty and want to save it the first thing it asks you for is a name so before the track's written

you have to come up with something. Often these become the title.

The last album, *Technicians Of The Sacred* was a double album. *Space For The Earth* is half its length. Was that a conscious reaction or just how it fell out into Cubase?

The thing with double albums is it's like making two albums. It's twice the work. Incredibly hard. I forgot that I felt that with *Erpland* [1990] and then three-quarters of the way through *Technicians Of The Sacred*

I suddenly thought: "I've got this huge pile of music to do." It's a lot of work to make a double album consistently make sense all the way through. It was nice to make a little album again, explore a little deeper and not scrimp over the details. Again, a good aspect of the lockdown was that I had time to explore and nobody's hassling me about anything else so I was just completely in that world.



Sliding Gliding Worlds (1988, top), *Pungent Effulgent* (1989, below).

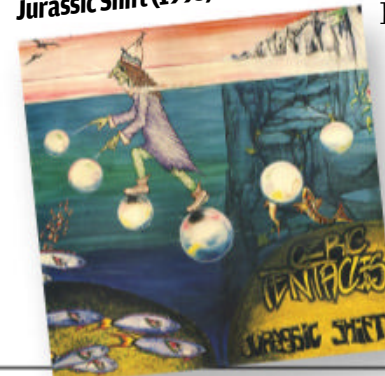
Jurassic Shift was nearly a UK Top 10 album in 1993, peaking at 11. What was that time like?

It felt great! It was a really good feeling. Very exciting. For instance I'd be with our bass player Zia [Geelani] at some party and these young kids started putting on *Jurassic Shift*. Zia said, "Look at these kids. They don't know we're here and they don't know what this is but look they're all jumping about to it and loving it." It was really nice that it was that available.

Jurassic Shift caused a stir because of its hemp packaging. Who came up with that idea?

It was through a friend of mine called Pete Messenger. He told me he was making hemp-based products and I said, "We've got an album coming up. What would it take to

Jurassic Shift (1993).



make everything out of hemp?” He got back to us a couple of weeks later and said he’s found out how to import a load of hemp from Europe. He arranged this whole truckload of marijuana on behalf of Ozric Tentacles to be imported into the country. He found a mill that used to make hemp paper but they didn’t have the same blade to cut the stuff up with so he ordered a new blade to be manufactured and installed into this old hemp factory, got the machines chugging away again

was Dovetail Records at the time] and tried to jump onto a major label. For some reason we didn’t do that. I don’t know if that was a good or a bad thing. Maybe it’s a good thing because we kept our individuality and slight humility. Maybe if it’d gone ballistic we wouldn’t still be doing it now. Who knows? Things fall into my lap and I just have to take them on board. The way the world seems to swerve, I try not to resist too much. Keeps me slightly sane.

In 1994, Joie Hinton and drummer Merv Pepler left to concentrate on Eat Static. Was there ever a point when you thought the band can’t continue?

When Joie and Merv left the band it wasn’t possible for us to split up because we had an American tour two weeks after that. It wasn’t a question of whether that was the end of the band. It’s like, “Oh my God, we’ve got to find a bloody keyboardist.” Luckily enough we found a perfect replacement so we got away with

What are your plans for that?

Gracerooms is this one guy Gre Vanderloo, whose music I noticed about 10 years ago: he’s got that very nice, very familiar, very pleasant, slightly Ozric-y thing without doing any rip-offs. He’s got the mental state and the feeling and happiness involved with it. He’s very easy to work with, one of the easiest people I’ve ever known to work with. He instantly comes up with the perfect thing and knows exactly what’s required. So I thought,



PRESS/ANDREW PERRY

Wynne runs through Humboldt Currant in his studio.

and managed to make this lovely paper and brought a sample round. We had a look at printing on it and it was perfect and there you go. We had our hemp thing. Because of that the Hash Marihuana & Hemp Museum in Amsterdam have a copy of our CD on the wall [with a plaque stating], “Here’s the first CD made with hemp paper.” Great! We’re in a museum!

Did chart success present new opportunities to the band?

What a lot of bands at that point would’ve done would be to say, “Okay, we’ve got to this point with our own record label” [which

You played in front of thousands at that time at Reading and Glastonbury. How was that?


We played the NME stage one year [Glastonbury, 1993]. That was incredible. Ridiculously huge. A sea of people to the horizon. Glastonbury was crazy because I got there half an hour before the gig and I was at the wrong side of the backstage area so I had to worm my way to the front, rattle on the fence and shout, “Let me in! I’ve got a gig.” They’re like, “Yeah, yeah, mate. Sure.” Thankfully I saw somebody I knew and got onstage in time. It was looking dodgy for a second.

that. I’ve never thought to end Ozric Tentacles, except perhaps after *Technicians Of The Sacred*, where I really needed to get out. It could’ve gone either way at that point so I did a solo album as a thing to say, “Look I can do this with or without a band.” With the Covid situation again I was wondering what’s gonna come at the end of this. We’re all still wondering a bit about that but I think Ozric Tentacles has become my identity and it’s probably a little late to try and alter that too much at this point.

You’ve formed a side-project with Gracerooms called Vita Voom.

“Let’s try and make some tunes.” We just started doing that for the sheer fun of it and suddenly found out we’ve got eight or nine fairly decent tunes. It’s nice to know that there’s a potentially really nice-sounding album there ready to go.

How have you managed to stay so prolific for nearly 40 years?

Pretty much all I do is make music or gig music. I’ve nothing else to do so I’m working on a conveyer belt of spacey tunes. 

Space For The Earth is out now via Kscope. Visit www.ozrics.com for more.

PROG

CRITICS' CHOICE 2020

So here we are once more! It's that time of year to take stock and make the call for what's progged our world. 2020 might not be a year many of us want to remember for obvious reasons, but the music still continued, and for that I think we're all extremely thankful. This is what *Prog Magazine's* writers thought were the best releases of the year...



"I feel highly honoured and privileged to be given this weighty accolade from fellow professionals and journalists I have worked with and respected throughout my many years in the music business, and in particular from a magazine I hold in great and fond regard. It's been sad in some ways to say goodbye with the *Weltschmerz* album to an industry that has given me so much on so many levels but I'm glad and proud that I achieved what I set out to do, which was to end my career with what I wanted to be one of my finest ever albums. It's been a 'lang sair fecht' to deliver this project in such difficult times and circumstances for everyone concerned. On behalf of everyone involved in its creation and in particular my main co-writer and producers Steve Vantsis and Calum Malcolm and my longtime artist Mark Wilkinson, I want to offer a sincere huge thanks to everyone at *Prog Magazine* for giving *Weltschmerz* the recognition I'd always hoped it would get and for putting a huge grin on this big Scottish face. Take care, stay alive."

Fish



1 **FISH** WELTSCHMERZ (CHOCOLATE FROG)

WE SAID: "Maybe it's a deliberate closing of the circle. It's a hell of a way to finish an album. And a career."

- Dave Everley, *Prog* 113



2 **DYBLE LONGDON** BETWEEN A BREATH AND A BREATH (ENGLISH ELECTRIC)

WE SAID: "If you're already on board with BBT and Dyble's albums, this is for you."

- Jo Kendall, *Prog* 113



3 **HEDVIG MOLLESTAD** EKHIDNA (RUNE GRAMMOFON)

WE SAID: "Taken in its fearless entirety, this is easily her most mindblowing music to date."

- Dom Lawson, *Prog* 110



4 **MOTORPSYCHO** THE ALL IS ONE

(RUNE GRAMMOFON/STICKMAN)

WE SAID: "An album of real scope and diversity, spanning the decades of styles and sounds."

- David West, *Prog* 113

PROG/FISH/KAI R. JOACHIM



5 ENSLAVED
UTGARD (NUCLEAR BLAST)
WE SAID: “At every musical turn on *Utgard Enslaved* strike gold. A masterful work from start to finish.”

– Jerry Ewing, *Prog* 113



6 RICK WAKEMAN & THE ENGLISH ROCK ENSEMBLE
THE RED PLANET (R&D MULTIMEDIA)
WE SAID: “Wakeman going large. Doing what he does best.”

– Chris Roberts, *Prog* 112



7 KATATONIA
CITY BURIALS (PEACEVILLE)
WE SAID: “Katatonia’s brand of melodramatic melancholia will always sound more affecting and authentic.”

– Johnny Sharp, *Prog* 108



8 HAKEN
VIRUS (INSIDEOUT)
WE SAID: “Rich and vivid in idea and execution, suffused with melody and filled with light and shade, all consuming.”

– Philip Wilding, *Prog* 110



9 ULVER
FLOWERS OF EVIL (HOUSE OF MYTHOLOGY)
WE SAID: “This is a compact, undiluted hit of Northern European electro-noir.”

– Joe Banks, *Prog* 111



10 MARIANA SEMKINA
SLEEPWALKING (KSCOPE)
WE SAID: “*Sleepwalking* leads us down some ghostly corridors to a new way of looking at the light.”

– Chris Roberts, *Prog* 106



11 THE OCEAN
PHANEROZOIC II: MESOZOIC/CENOZOIC (METAL BLADE)
WE SAID: “Four albums in, it feels like they’ve assumed their final form.”

– Eleanor Goodman, *Prog* 112



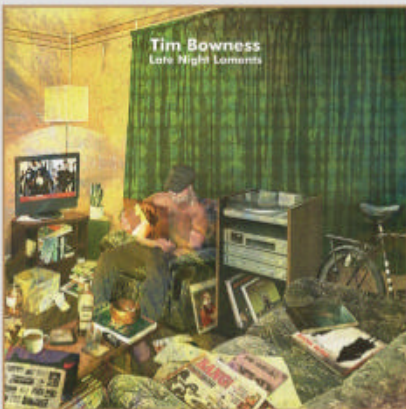
12 THE PINEAPPLE THIEF
VERSIONS OF THE TRUTH (KSCOPE)
WE SAID: “The devil, rather, is in the detail, and Soord and co do detail extremely well.”

– Polly Glass, *Prog* 112



13 JACK HUES
PRIMITIF (DAWN CHORUS)
WE SAID: “It sounds great, defies genres, explores emotional depths, and makes the most of his musical identity.”

– Grant Moon, *Prog* 108



14 TIM BOWNESS
LATE NIGHT LAMENTS (INSIDEOUT)
WE SAID: “Happily Bowness acquits himself on this perilous journey with an accomplished grace.”

– Sid Smith, *Prog* 112



15 THE OCEAN
PHANEROZOIC II: MESOZOIC/CENOZOIC (METAL BLADE)
WE SAID: “An exploratory crew, this album is by far and away their most diverse.”

– Dom Lawson, *Prog* 113



16 THE FLAMING LIPS
AMERICAN HEAD (BELLA UNION)
WE SAID: “Full of arch surrealism and madcap schemes: they’ve rediscovered their big tuneful heart.”

– Johnny Sharp, *Prog* 112



17 ANNA VON HAUSSWOLFF
ALL THOUGHTS FLY (SOUTHERN LORD)
WE SAID: “Here she is all about mood and nuance. So beautifully measured.”

– Ron Hughes, *Prog* 113



18 PANTHER (INSIDEOUT)
WE SAID: “It’s an elusive beast that rewards the listener the more familiar they become with the shapes in the dark.”

– Gary Mackenzie, *Prog* 112



19 WOBLER
DWELLERS OF THE DEEP (KARISMA)
WE SAID: “A sense of unstoppable momentum that continues to set them apart from their peers.”

– Dom Lawson, *Prog* 114



20 LOUISE PATRICIA CRANE
DEEP BLUE (PECULIAR DOLL)
WE SAID: “The new queen of psychedelic prog has arrived.”

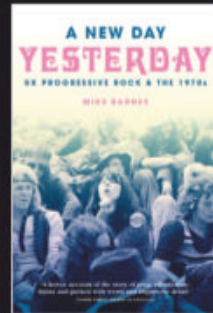
– Dom Lawson, *Prog* 109

REISSUES



- 1. RUSH**
PERMANENT WAVES (UMC/MERCURY)
- 2. MARILLION**
SCRIPT FOR A JESTER'S TEAR (PARLOPHONE)
- 3. KING CRIMSON**
THE COMPLETE 1969 RECORDINGS (DGM)
- 4. TEARS FOR FEARS**
THE SEEDS OF LOVE (UMC/MERCURY)
- 5. ULTRAVOX**
VIENNA (CHRYSALIS)
- 6. PORCUPINE TREE**
IN ABSENTIA (KSCOPE)
- 7. HAWKWIND**
ROADHAWKS (ATOMHENG)
- 8. GENTLE GIANT**
VINYL REISSUES (ALUCARD)
- 9. BE-BOP DELUXE**
AXE VICTIM (ESOTERIC)
- 10. FRANK ZAPPA**
THE MOTHERS 1970 (UMC)

BOOKS



- 1. A NEW DAY YESTERDAY**
MIKE BARNES (OMNIBUS)
- 2. HAWKWIND: DAYS OF THE UNDERGROUND**
JOE BANKS (STRANGE ATTRACTOR)
- 3. A GENESIS IN MY BED**
STEVE HACKETT (WYMERUK)
- 4. GENESIS 1967-1975: THE PETER GABRIEL YEARS**
MARIO GIAMMETTI (KINGMAKER)
- 5. ALL MY YESTERDAYS**
STEVE HOWE (OMNIBUS)
- 6. TANGERINE DREAM: FORCE MAJEURE THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY**
EDGAR FROESE (ASTRAL HORIZON)
- 7. 10CC: THE WORST BAND IN THE WORLD**
LIAM NEWTON (ROCKET 88)
- 8. THE STRAWBERRY BRICKS GUIDE TO PROGRESSIVE ROCK**
CHARLES SNIDER (STRAWBERRY BRICKS)
- 9. SMALL HOURS: THE LONG NIGHT OF JOHN MARTYN**
GRAEME THOMSON (OMNIBUS)
- 10. VAN DER GRAAF GENERATOR - PAWN HEARTS: HISTORY IMAGES WORDS**
PAOLO CARNELLI (KINDLE)



LOUISE PATRICIA CRANE
 “My personal favourite album is Jakko Jakszyk’s solo album *Secrets & Lies*. Several of the songs touch on a strong King Crimson sound. Overall though, it’s a very emotive record with excellent, heartfelt songwriting.”



IAN ANDERSON
 “It has to be Jon Anderson’s *1000 Hands*. It took ages to finish due to all the guests. Seems like three years ago when I recorded *Activate*. Jon is in exceptional form, sounding absolutely at his best with clear diction and spot-on phrasing and intonation.”



AMY BIRKS
 “For me, it’s Lazuli’s *Le Fantastique Envol De Dieter Böhm*. It has that classic Lazuli sound, full of incredible hooks and layers that gradually reveal with each listen. It’s uplifting, captivating and truly shines a light on the musicianship and the quality of the writing.”



LYNSEY WARD (EXPLORING BIRDSONG)
 “It’s safe to say that I have been hyped for a new Caligula’s Horse record ever since 2017’s *In Contact*. The amount of care and attention to detail that went into crafting *Rise Radiant* is obvious in the immense musicianship of its players, and also in the way you can sit down with it multiple times and still find something new to latch onto.”

CRITICS’ LISTS 2020

JERRY EWING (Editor)



- 1. ENSLAVED** *Utgard* (NUCLEAR BLAST)
- 2. RICK WAKEMAN & THE ENGLISH ROCK ENSEMBLE** *The Red Planet* (R&D MULTIMEDIA)
- 3. GREEN CARNATION** *Leaves Of Yesteryear* (SEASON OF MIST)
- 4. FISH** *Weltschmerz* (CHOCOLATE FROG)
- 5. COLDBONES** *The Cataclysm* (DUNK!)
- 6. KATATONIA** *City Burials* (PEACEVILLE)
- 7. MARIANA SEMKINA** *Sleepwalking* (KSCOPE)
- 8. PG.LOST** *Oscillate* (PELAGIC)
- 9. CALIGULA’S HORSE** *Rise Radiant* (INSIDEOUT)
- 10. RING VAN MÖBIUS** *The 3rd Majesty* (APOLLON)
- 11. DYBLE LONGDON** *Between A Breath And A Breath* (ENGLISH ELECTRIC)
- 12. HEDVIG MOLLESTAD** *Ekhidna* (RUNE GRAMMOFON)
- 13. MOTORPSYCHO** *The All Is One* (STICKMAN/RUNE GRAMMOFON)
- 14. GAZPACHO** *Fireworker* (KSCOPE)
- 15. JACK HUES** *Primitif* (DAWN CHORUS)
- 16. SANGUINE HUM** *A Trace Of Memory* (BAD ELEPHANT MUSIC)
- 17. MARTIN GRECH** *Hush Mortal Core* (MARTIN GRECH MUSIC)
- 18. CHIMPAN A** *The Empathy Machine* (TIGERMOTH)
- 19. LUNATIC SOUL** *Through Shaded Woods* (KSCOPE)
- 20. MS AMY BIRKS** *All That I Am & All That I Was* (MAB)

NATASHA SCHARF (Deputy Editor)



- 1. FISH** *Weltschmerz* (CHOCOLATE FROG)
- 2. PAIN OF SALVATION** *Panther* (INSIDEOUT)
- 3. LUNATIC SOUL** *Through Shaded Woods* (KSCOPE)
- 4. ENSLAVED** *Utgard* (NUCLEAR BLAST)
- 5. KATATONIA** *City Burials* (PEACEVILLE)
- 6. MARIANA SEMKINA** *Sleepwalking* (KSCOPE)
- 7. HAKEN** *Virus* (INSIDEOUT)
- 8. DYBLE LONGDON** *Between A Breath And A Breath* (ENGLISH ELECTRIC)
- 9. ULVER** *Flowers Of Evil* (HOUSE OF MYTHOLOGY)
- 10. AA WILLIAMS** *Forever Blue* (BELLA UNION)
- 11. THE PINEAPPLE THIEF** *Versions Of The Truth* (KSCOPE)
- 12. NIGHTWISH** *Human. :II: Nature.* (NUCLEAR BLAST)
- 13. GODSTICKS** *Inescapable* (KSCOPE)
- 14. GREEN CARNATION** *Leaves Of Yesteryear* (SEASON OF MIST)
- 15. PG.LOST** *Oscillate* (PELAGIC)
- 16. CALIGULA’S HORSE** *Rise Radiant* (INSIDEOUT)
- 17. OCEANS OF SLUMBER** *Oceans Of Slumber* (CENTURY MEDIA)
- 18. ANNA VON HAUSSWOLFF** *All Thoughts Fly* (SOUTHERN LORD)
- 19. JONATHAN HULTÉN** *Chants From Another Place* (KSCOPE)
- 20. ELEPHANT** *Tree Habits* (HOLY ROAR)

RUSSELL FAIRBROTHER (Art Editor)



- 1. FISH** *Weltschmerz* (CHOCOLATE FROG)
- 2. HEDVIG MOLLESTAD** *Ekhidna* (RUNE GRAMMOFON)
- 3. CHEER-ACCIDENT** *Chicago XX* (CUNEIFORM)
- 4. JULIA MARCELL** *Skull Echo* (LONG BRANCH)
- 5. DYBLE LONGDON** *Between A Breath And A Breath* (ENGLISH ELECTRIC)
- 6. HAKEN** *Virus* (INSIDEOUT)
- 7. WORLDSERVICE PROJECT** *Hiding In Plain Sight* (RARENOISE)
- 8. ANNA VON HAUSSWOLFF** *All Thoughts Fly* (SOUTHERN LORD)
- 9. THREE COLOURS DARK** *The Science Of Goodbye* (FIREFLY MUSIC)
- 10. OCEANS OF SLUMBER** *Oceans Of Slumber* (CENTURY MEDIA)
- 11. RICK WAKEMAN & THE ENGLISH ROCK ENSEMBLE** *The Red Planet* (R&D MULTIMEDIA)
- 12. RÍCINN** *Nereid* (BLOOD MUSIC)
- 13. THE END** *Allt Är Intet* (RARENOISE)
- 14. MYRKUR** *Folkesange* (RELAPSE)
- 15. WAX MACHINE** *Earthsong Of Silence* (BEYOND BEYOND IS BEYOND)
- 16. JOHN HOLDEN** *Rise And Fall* (SELF-RELEASE)
- 17. KAVUS TORABI** *Hip To The Jag* (BELIEVERS ROAST)
- 18. COLIN BASS & DANIEL BIRO** *Still* (SARGASSO)
- 19. PAIN OF SALVATION** *Panther* (INSIDEOUT)
- 20. THE TANGENT** *Auto Reconnaissance* (INSIDEOUT)

JO KENDALL (Associate Editor)



- 1. DYBLE LONGDON** *Between A Breath And A Breath* (ENGLISH ELECTRIC)
- 2. MOTORPSYCHO** *The All Is One* (STICKMAN/RUNE GRAMMOFON)
- 3. ENSLAVED** *Utgard* (NUCLEAR BLAST)
- 4. MARIANA SEMKINA** *Sleepwalking* (KSCOPE)
- 5. ELDER** *Omens* (STICKMAN)
- 6. PG.LOST** *Oscillate* (PELAGIC)
- 7. KAVUS TORABI** *Hip To The Jag* (BELIEVERS ROAST)
- 8. HEDVIG MOLLESTAD** *Ekhidna* (RUNE GRAMMOFON)
- 9. ANNIE BARBAZZA** *Vive* (DARK COMPANION)
- 10. OCEANS OF SLUMBER** *Oceans Of Slumber* (CENTURY MEDIA)
- 11. JACK HUES** *Primitif* (DAWN CHORUS)
- 12. MS AMY BIRKS** *All That I Am & All That I Was* (MAB)
- 13. THAT JOE PAYNE** *By Name. By Nature* (TJP)
- 14. CALEB LANDRY JONES** *The Mother Stone* (SACRED BONES)
- 15. ELEPHANT TREE** *Habits* (HOLY ROAR)
- 16. LOUISE PATRICIA CRANE** *Deep Blue* (PECULIAR DOLL)
- 17. ZOPP** *Zopp* (BAD ELEPHANT MUSIC)
- 18. JAKKO JAKSZYK** *Secrets & Lies* (INSIDEOUT)
- 19. ODESSEY & ORACLE** *Crocorama* (DUR ET DOUX)
- 20. THE LAST DINOSAUR** *Wholeness* (PHASES)

MARTIN KIELTY (News Editor)



- 1. THE PINEAPPLE THIEF** *Versions Of The Truth* (KSCOPE)
- 2. THAT JOE PAYNE** *By Name. By Nature* (TJP)
- 3. FISH** *Weltschmerz* (CHOCOLATE FROG)
- 4. TIM BOWNESS** *Late Night Laments* (INSIDEOUT)
- 5. STEVE HOWE** *Love Is* (BMG)
- 6. MAGENTA** *Masters Of Illusion* (TIGERMOTH)
- 7. THE TANGENT** *Auto Reconnaissance* (INSIDEOUT)
- 8. DYBLE LONGDON** *Between A Breath And A Breath* (ENGLISH ELECTRIC)
- 9. JAKKO M JAKSZYK** *Secrets & Lies* (INSIDEOUT)
- 10. GLASS HAMMER** *Dreaming City* (SOUND RESOURCES)
- 11. MARATHON** *Mark Kelly’s Marathon* (EARMUSIC)
- 12. KAVUS TORABI** *Hip To The Jag* (BELIEVERS ROAST)
- 13. LONELY ROBOT** *Feelings Are Good* (INSIDEOUT)
- 14. TOUNDRA** *Das Cabinet Des Dr Caligari* (INSIDEOUT)
- 15. AYREON** *Transitus* (MUSIC THEORIES)
- 16. BLACKFIELD** *For The Music* (PARLOPHONE)
- 17. THE FLOWER KINGS** *Islands* (INSIDEOUT)
- 18. ABEL GANZ** *The Life Of The Honey Bee And Other Moments Of Clarity* (ABEL RECORDS)
- 19. ANNA VON HAUSSWOLFF** *All Thoughts Fly* (SOUTHERN LORD)
- 20. HAKEN** *Virus* (INSIDEOUT)

DAVE EVERLEY (Reviews Editor)



- 1. **FISH** Weltschmerz (CHOCOLATE FROG)
- 2. **SÓLSTAFIR** Endless Twilight Of Codependent Love (SEASON OF MIST)
- 3. **LUNATIC SOUL** Through Shaded Woods (KSCOPE)
- 4. **CRIPPLED BLACK PHOENIX** Ellengæst (SEASON OF MIST)
- 5. **TIM BOWNESS** Late Night Laments (INSIDEOUT)
- 6. **JONATHAN HULTÉN** Chants From Another Place (KSCOPE)
- 7. **MARTIN GRECH** Hush Mortal Core (MARTIN GRECH MUSIC)
- 8. **THE LICKERISH QUARTET** Threesome Vol.1 (LABEL LOGIC)
- 9. **TAME IMPALA** The Slow Rush (FICTION)
- 10. **KATATONIA** City Burials (PEACEVILLE)
- 11. **AA WILLIAMS** Forever Blue (BELLA UNION)
- 12. **THAT JOE PAYNE** By Name. By Nature (TJP)
- 13. **ZOMBI** 2020 (RELAPSE)
- 14. **IHSAHN** Pharos (CANDLELIGHT)
- 15. **THE PINEAPPLE THIEF** Versions Of The Truth (KSCOPE)
- 16. **OCEANS OF SLUMBER** Oceans Of Slumber (CENTURY MEDIA)
- 17. **ULVER** Flowers Of Evil (HOUSE OF MYTHOLOGY)
- 18. **ENSLAVED** Utgard (NUCLEAR BLAST)
- 19. **PG.LOST** Oscillate (PELAGIC)
- 20. **MYRKUR** Folkesange (RELAPSE)

JEREMY ALLEN (Writer)



- 1. **EINSTÜRZENDE NEUBAUTEN** Alles in Allem (POTOMAK)
- 2. **SPARKS** A Steady Drip, Drip, Drip (BMG)
- 3. **THE ORB** Abolition Of The Royal Familia (COOKING VINYL)
- 4. **KELEKETLA!** Keleketla! (NINJA TUNE)
- 5. **NICOLAS GODIN** Concrete And Glass (BECAUSE)
- 6. **SUFJAN STEVENS** The Ascension (ASTHMATIC KITTY)
- 7. **KATE NV** Room For The Moon (RVNG)
- 8. **ERLAND COOPER** Hether Blether (PHASES)
- 9. **MARK LANEGAN** Straight Songs Of Sorrow (HEAVENLY)
- 10. **ROEDELIOUS** Selbstporträt Wahre Liebe (BUREAU B)
- 11. **FLAMING LIPS** American Head (BELLA UNION)
- 12. **ROGER ENO AND BRIAN ENO** Mixing Colours (DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON)
- 13. **NICK MASON’S SAUCERFUL OF SECRETS** Live At The Roundhouse (SONY)
- 14. **TRICKY** Fall To Pieces (LIBERATOR MUSIC)
- 15. **ANDY BELL** The View From Halfway Down (SONIC CATHEDRAL)
- 16. **ODESSEY & ORACLE** Crocorama (DUR ET DOUX)
- 17. **KELLY LEE OWENS** Inner Song (SMALLTOWN SUPERSOUND)
- 18. **LAFAWNDAH** The Fifth Season (IK7)
- 19. **IRMIN SCHMIDT** Nocturne (MUTE/SPOON)
- 20. **CATHERINE ANNE DAVIES AND BERNARD BUTLER** In Memory of My Feelings (NEEDLE MYTHOLOGY)

JOE BANKS (Writer)



- 1. **SLIFT** Ummon (STOLEN BODY)
- 2. **JORJA CHALMERS** Human Again (ITALIANS DO IT BETTER)
- 3. **ATTRAKTORS** Attraktors (VIVOD)
- 4. **KAIRON; IRSE!** Polysomn (SVART)
- 5. **MOTORPSYCHO** The All Is One (STICKMAN/RUNE GRAMMOFON)
- 6. **STIAN WESTERHUS** Redundance (HOUSE OF MYTHOLOGY)
- 7. **FIELD MUSIC** Making A New World (MEMPHIS INDUSTRIES)
- 8. **BELBURY POLY** The Gone Away (GHOST BOX)
- 9. **HEDVIG MOLLESTAD** Ekhidna (RUNE GRAMMOFON)
- 10. **RUSTIN MAN** Clockdust (DOMINO)
- 11. **ZOMBI** 2020 (RELAPSE)
- 12. **JG THIRLWELL & SIMON STEENSLAND** Oscillospira (IPECAC)
- 13. **KATIE GATELY** Loom (HOUNDSTOOTH)
- 14. **ULVER** Flowers Of Evil (HOUSE OF MYTHOLOGY)
- 15. **MODERN NATURE** Annual (BELLA UNION)
- 16. **KAVUS TORABI** Hip To The Jag (BELIEVERS ROAST)
- 17. **GÖSTA BERLINGS SAGA** Konkret Musik (INSIDEOUT)
- 18. **HAWKWIND LIGHT ORCHESTRA** Carnivorous (CHERRY RED)
- 19. **OZRIC TENTACLES** Space For The Earth (KSCOPE)
- 20. **ROEDELIOUS** Selbstporträt Wahre Liebe (BUREAU B)

MIKE BARNES (Writer)



- 1. **DYBLE LONGDON** Between A Breath And A Breath (ENGLISH ELECTRIC)
- 2. **MOTORPSYCHO** The All Is One (STICKMAN/RUNE GRAMMOFON)
- 3. **HEDVIG MOLLESTAD** Ekhidna (RUNE GRAMMOFON)
- 4. **JACK HUES** Primitif (DAWN CHORUS)
- 5. **JAKKO M JAKSZYK** Secrets & Lies (INSIDEOUT)
- 6. **ZOPP** Zopp (BAD ELEPHANT MUSIC)
- 7. **KAVUS TORABI** Hip To The Jag (BELIEVERS ROAST)
- 8. **WIRE** 10:20 (PINK FLAG)
- 9. **LOUISE PATRICIA CRANE** Deep Blue (PECULIAR DOLL)
- 10. **JON ANDERSON** 1000 Hands (BLUE ÉLAN)
- 11. **TIM BOWNESS/PETER CHILVERS** Modern Ruins (BURNING SHED)
- 12. **RAIN** Singularity (GEP)
- 13. **NICK D’VIRGILIO** Invisible (ENGLISH ELECTRIC)
- 14. **THE ORB** Abolition Of The Royal Familia (COOKING VINYL)
- 15. **MS AMY BIRKS** All That I Am & All That I Was (MAB)
- 16. **THE FLAMING LIPS** American Head (BELLA UNION)
- 17. **NEKTAR** The Other Side (ESOTERIC)
- 18. **THAT JOE PAYNE** By Name. By Nature (TJP)
- 19. **TIGER MOTH TALES** A Visit To Zoetermeer (WHITE KNIGHT)
- 20. **BRIAN ENO** Rams (UMC)

CHRIS COPE (Writer)



- 1. **GÖSTA BERLINGS SAGA** Konkret Musik (INSIDEOUT)
- 2. **HAKEN** Virus (INSIDEOUT)
- 3. **JOHN PETRUCCI** Terminal Velocity (SOUND MIND MUSIC)
- 4. **FIELD MUSIC** Making A New World (MEMPHIS INDUSTRIES)
- 5. **THEM MOOSE RUSH** Dancing Maze (DOSTAVA ZVUKA)
- 6. **PANZERBALLETT** Planet Z (GENTLE ART OF MUSIC)
- 7. **THE PINEAPPLE THIEF** Versions Of The Truth (KSCOPE)
- 8. **INTRONAUT** Fluid Existential Inversions (METAL BLADE)
- 9. **PROTEST THE HERO** Palimpsest (SPINEFARM)
- 10. **NOVENA** Eleventh Hour (FRONTIERS)
- 11. **KYROS** Celexa Dreams (WHITE STAR)
- 12. **STÖMB** From Nihil (SELF-RELEASED)
- 13. **PAIN OF SALVATION** Panther (INSIDEOUT)
- 14. **KATATONIA** City Burials (PEACEVILLE)
- 15. **WOBBLER** Dwellers Of The Deep (KARISMA)
- 16. **THE HIRSCH EFFEKT** Kollaps (LONG BRANCH)
- 17. **THE LEMON TWIGS** Songs For The General Public (4AD)
- 18. **COLIN EDWIN** Infinite Regress (HARD WORLD)
- 19. **THE OCEAN** Phanerozoic II: Mesozoic/Cenozoic (METAL BLADE)
- 20. **KAVUS TORABI** Hip To The Jag (BELIEVERS ROAST)

ISERE LLOYD-DAVIES (Writer)



- 1. **ULVER** Flowers of Evil (HOUSE OF MYTHOLOGY)
- 2. **ENSLAVED** Utgard (NUCLEAR BLAST)
- 3. **ANNA VON HAUSSWOLFF** All Thoughts Fly (SOUTHERN LORD)
- 4. **EIVOR** Segl (SELF-RELEASED)
- 5. **MOLASSESS** Through The Hollow (SEASON OF MIST)
- 6. **LOUISE PATRICIA CRANE** Deep Blue (PECULIAR DOLL)
- 7. **MARIANA SEMKINA** Sleepwalking (KSCOPE)
- 8. **IHSAHN** Pharos (CANDLELIGHT)
- 9. **MYRKUR** Folksange (RELAPSE)
- 10. **OCEANS OF SLUMBER** Oceans Of Slumber (CENTURY MEDIA)
- 11. **KATATONIA** City Burials (PEACEVILLE)
- 12. **MS AMY BIRKS** All The I Am And All That I Was (MAB)
- 13. **HEXVESSEL** Kindred (SVART)
- 14. **PAIN OF SALVATION** Panther (INSIDEOUT)
- 15. **BRIAN ENO** Rams (UMC)
- 16. **SÓLSTAFIR** Endless Twilight Of Codependent Love (SEASON OF MIST)
- 17. **SANGUINE HUM** A Trace of Memory (BAD ELEPHANT MUSIC)
- 18. **RICK WAKEMAN & THE ENGLISH ROCK ENSEMBLE** The Red Planet (R&D MULTIMEDIA)
- 19. **NOVENA** Eleventh Hour (FRONTIER)
- 20. **PROTEST THE HERO** Palimpsest (SPINEFARM)



PRESS/SOPHOCLES

DAVID LONGDON (BIG BIG TRAIN)
“I’ve really enjoyed Weltschmerz, the final album from Fish. A fitting swan song from a proven past master. He goes all out on the production and has delivered an impressive, impassioned cri de coeur that is likely to reveal more layers of intricacy as time goes by.”



JAN HOFFMAN (LONG DISTANCE CALLING)
“The Ocean album Phanerozoic II: Mesozoic / Cenozoic. Of course, one can argue if this is a real prog record, but for me it is. This is a creative mix of heaviness and atmosphere, and being creative makes it prog.”



PRESS/MARK BERRY

JOHN BOEGEHOOLD (PATTERN-SEEKING ANIMALS)
“I didn’t have to think twice about this. My prog album of 2020 is Love Over Fear by Pendragon. High-quality, dynamic material from start to finish with no filler. The songs and the way they’re arranged work together as a whole to give the album a really cool emotional vibe.”



GEOFF DOWNES (YES)
“I have to opt for Dyble Longdon’s Between A Breath And A Breath. It is a triumphant collaboration, both parties blending perfectly in sensitive and delicate musicality.”

PRESS/WILL IRELAND



**ROSS JENNINGS
(HAKEN)**

“The one album that resonated most with me is Caligula’s Horse’s *Rise Radiant*. This is their best-crafted and most accessible record to date, with enough metallic punch, progressive tendencies and a softer side all in good equal measures.”

PRESS/ROY BJORGE



**IVER SANDØY
(ENSLAVED)**

“For me, it’s our fellow Bergeners, Shaman Elephant and *Wide Wake But Still Asleep*. In *Enslaved* we balance our prog rock with metal, Shaman Elephant do it with jazz and a love for our fellow Norwegians Motorpsycho.”

PRESS/JERRY LOFARO



**JORDAN RUDESS
(DREAM THEATER)**

“My choice is *The Absence of Presence* from Kansas. I love the fact this classic prog rock band can still deliver the goods. To me, it is as good as anything they’ve ever done. Great melodies, solid orchestration, awesome vocals, and my buddy Tom Brislin doing a fantastic job on the keyboards.”

PRESS/JASON PARNELL-BROOKES



**RACHEL COHEN
(THREE COLOURS DARK)**

“My choice is *The Empathy Machine* by Chimpan A. I love Steve Balsamo’s voice (proper weak-at-the-knees stuff), and I could happily listen to him sing the phone book. Musically speaking, the album’s soundscapes challenge and subvert several genres in a hugely captivating and seductive way, and I enjoyed its hypnotic energy.”

MALCOLM DOME (Writer)



1. **FISH** Weltschmerz (*CHOCOLATE FROG*)
2. **RICK WAKEMAN & THE ENGLISH ROCK ENSEMBLE**
The Red Planet (*R&D MULTIMEDIA*)
3. **PENDRAGON** Love Over Fear (*TOFF*)
4. **DENNIS DEYOUNG** 26 East, Vol.1 (*FRONTIERS*)
5. **JOHN PETRUCCI** Terminal Velocity (*SOUND MIND MUSIC*)
6. **KANSAS** The Absence Of Presence (*INSIDEOUT*)
7. **DYBLE LONGDON** Between A Breath And A Breath (*ENGLISH ELECTRIC*)
8. **ENSLAVED** Utgard (*NUCLEAR BLAST*)
9. **MAGENTA** Masters Of Illusion (*TIGERMOTH*)
10. **DORIS BRENDEL & LEE DUNHAM** Mass Hysteria (*SKYROCKET*)
11. **DEREK SHERINIAN** The Phoenix (*INSIDEOUT*)
12. **OCEANS OF SLUMBER** Oceans Of Slumber (*CENTURY MEDIA*)
13. **MS AMY BIRKS** All That I Am & All That I Was (*MAB*)
14. **ULVER** Flowers Of Evil (*HOUSE OF MYTHOLOGY*)
15. **LONELY ROBOT** Feelings Are Good (*INSIDEOUT*)
16. **WIRE** 10:20 (*PINK FLAG*)
17. **JAKKO JAKSZYK** Secrets & Lies (*INSIDEOUT*)
18. **ROBERT REED** Cursus 123 430 (*TIGERMOTH*)
19. **OBSIDIAN KINGDOM** Meat Machine (*SEASON OF MIST*)
20. **INTERVALS** Circadian (*SHEET HAPPENS*)

DARYL EASLEA (Writer)



1. **JACK HUES** Primitif (*DAWN CHORUS*)
2. **CATHERINE ANNE DAVIS & BERNARD BUTLER**
In Memory Of My Feelings (*NEEDLE MYTHOLOGY*)
3. **TIM BOWNESS** Late Night Laments (*INSIDEOUT*)
4. **DYBLE LONGDON** Between A Breath And A Breath (*ENGLISH ELECTRIC*)
5. **THE ORB** Abolition Of The Royal Familia (*COOKING VINYL*)
6. **STEVE HOWE** Love Is (*BMG*)
7. **MATT BERRY** Phantom Birds (*ACID JAZZ*)
8. **JON ANDERSON** 1000 Hands (*BLUE ÉLAN*)
9. **ROGER ENO AND BRIAN ENO** Mixing Colours (*DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON*)
10. **YELLO** Point (*POLYDOR*)
11. **SPARKS** A Steady Drip, Drip, Drip (*BMG*)
12. **WIRE** 10:20 (*PINK FLAG*)
13. **TAME IMPALA** The Slow Rush (*FICTION*)
14. **RICK WAKEMAN & THE ENGLISH ROCK ENSEMBLE**
The Red Planet (*R&D MULTIMEDIA*)
15. **JAKKO M JAKSZYK** Secrets & Lies (*INSIDEOUT*)
16. **THE BARDIC DEPTHS** The Bardic Depths (*GRAVITY DREAM*)
17. **THE FLAMING LIPS** American Head (*BELLA UNION*)
18. **MANDALA** The Echoes Of Your Mind (*AUTUMN SONGS*)
19. **CRIPPLED BLACK PHOENIX** Ellengæst (*SEASON OF MIST*)
20. **HATS OFF GENTLEMEN IT’S ADEQUATE**
Nostalgia For Infinity (*SELF-RELEASED*)

ROB HUGHES (Writer)



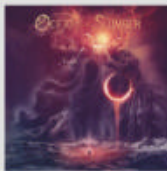
1. **JG THIRLWELL & SIMON STEENSLAND** Oscillospira (*IPECAC*)
2. **ROSE CITY BAND** Summerlong (*THRILL JOCKEY*)
3. **HEDVIG MOLLESTAD** Ekhidna (*RUNE GRAMMOFON*)
4. **THE FLAMING LIPS** American Head (*BELLA UNION*)
5. **BANANAGUN** The True Story Of Banangun (*FULL TIME HOBBY*)
6. **HAKEN** Virus (*INSIDEOUT*)
7. **LOUISE PATRICIA CRANE** Deep Blue (*PECULIAR DOLL*)
8. **GAZPACHO** Fireworker (*KSCOPE*)
9. **MYRKUR** Folkesange (*RELAPSE*)
10. **ANNA VON HAUSSWOLFF** All Thoughts Fly (*SOUTHERN LORD*)
11. **KAVUS TORABI** Hip To The Jag (*BELIEVERS ROAST*)
12. **IRMIN SCHMIDT** Nocturne (*MUTE/SPOON*)
13. **WIRE** 10:20 (*PINK FLAG*)
14. **KHRUANGBIN** Mordechai (*DEAD OCEANS*)
15. **SPARKS** A Steady Drip, Drip, Drip (*BMG*)
16. **MODERN STUDIES** The Weight Of The Sun (*FIRE*)
17. **THE ORB** Abolition Of The Royal Familia (*COOKING VINYL*)
18. **THE ONCE AND FUTURE BAND** Deleted Scenes (*CASTLE FACE*)
19. **MOTORPSYCHO** The All Is One (*STICKMAN/RUNE GRAMMOFON*)
20. **BRIGID DAWSON & THE MOTHERS NETWORK**
Ballet Of Apes (*CASTLE FACE*)

DOM LAWSON (Writer)



1. **JG THIRLWELL & SIMON STEENSLAND** Oscillospira (*IPECAC*)
2. **CRIPPLED BLACK PHOENIX** Ellengæst (*SEASON OF MIST*)
3. **HEDVIG MOLLESTAD** Ekhidna (*RUNE GRAMMOFON*)
4. **MOTORPSYCHO** The All Is One (*STICKMAN/RUNE GRAMMOFON*)
5. **RIKARD SJÖBLOM’S GUNGLY** Alone Together (*INSIDEOUT*)
6. **KAVUS TORABI** Hip To The Jag (*BELIEVERS ROAST*)
7. **FISH** Weltschmerz (*CHOCOLATE FROG*)
8. **OCEANS OF SLUMBER** Oceans Of Slumber (*CENTURY MEDIA*)
9. **KATATONIA** City Burials (*PEACEVILLE*)
10. **LOUISE PATRICIA CRANE** Forever Blue (*PECULIAR DOLL*)
11. **ENSLAVED** Utgard (*NUCLEAR BLAST*)
12. **WOBBLER** Dwellers Of The Deep (*KARISMA*)
13. **ORANSSI PAZUZU** Mestarin Kynsi (*NUCLEAR BLAST*)
14. **AKSAK MABOUL** Figures (*CRAMMED DISCS*)
15. **PSYCHOTIC WALTZ** The God-Shaped Void (*INSIDEOUT*)
16. **RING VAN MÖBIUS** The 3rd Majesty (*APOLLON*)
17. **JONATHAN HULTÉN** Chants From Another Place (*KSCOPE*)
18. **GLASS HAMMER** Dreaming City (*SOUND RESOURCES*)
19. **THE OCEAN** Phanerozoic II: Mesozoic/Cenozoic (*METAL BLADE*)
20. **GÖSTA BERLINGS SAGA** Konkret Musik (*INSIDEOUT*)

DANNII LIEVERS (Writer)



1. **OCEANS OF SLUMBER** Oceans Of Slumber (*CENTURY MEDIA*)
2. **NIGHTWISH** Human. :II: Nature. (*NUCLEAR BLAST*)
3. **AA WILLIAMS** Forever Blue (*BELLA UNION*)
4. **IHSAHN** Pharos (*CANDLELIGHT*)
5. **ULVER** Flowers Of Evil (*HOUSE OF MYTHOLOGY*)
6. **THE OCEAN** Phanerozoic II: Mesozoic/Cenozoic (*METAL BLADE*)
7. **HAKEN** Virus (*INSIDEOUT*)
8. **CALIGULA’S HORSE** Rise Radiant (*INSIDEOUT*)
9. **DANIEL TOMPKINS** Ruins (*KSCOPE*)
10. **TAME IMPALA** The Slow Rush (*FICTION*)
11. **AND YOU WILL KNOW US BY THE TRAIL OF DEAD**
X: The Godless Void And Other Stories (*INSIDEOUT*)
12. **MYRKUR** Folkesange (*RELAPSE*)
13. **ELDER** Omens (*STICKMAN*)
14. **HEXVESSEL** Kindred (*SVART*)
15. **SÓLSTAFIR** Endless Twilight Of Codependent Love (*SEASON OF MIST*)
16. **KATATONIA** City Burials (*PEACEVILLE*)
17. **MINT FIELD** Sentimiento Mundial (*FELTE*)
18. **CRIPPLED BLACK PHOENIX** Ellengæst (*SEASON OF MIST*)
19. **ENSLAVED** Utgard (*NUCLEAR BLAST*)
20. **OBSIDIAN KINGDOM** Meat Machine (*SEASON OF MIST*)

DAVE LING (Writer)



1. **KANSAS** The Absence Of Presence (*INSIDEOUT*)
2. **FISH** Weltschmerz (*CHOCOLATE FROG*)
3. **SONS OF APOLLO** MMXX (*INSIDEOUT*)
4. **NEKTAR** The Other Side (*ESOTERIC*)
5. **DENNIS DEYOUNG** 26 East: Vol.1 (*FRONTIERS*)
6. **FISH ON FRIDAY** Black Rain (*ESOTERIC*)
7. **NIGHTWISH** Human. :II: Nature. (*NUCLEAR BLAST*)
8. **DYBLE LONGDON** Between A Breath And A Breath (*ENGLISH ELECTRIC*)
9. **LONELY ROBOT** Feelings Are Good (*INSIDEOUT*)
10. **THE LICKERISH QUARTET** Threesome Vol.1 (*LABEL LOGIC*)
11. **THE DOWLING POOLE** See You See Me (*369*)
12. **DUKES OF THE ORIENT** Freak Show (*FRONTIERS*)
13. **MARATHON** Mark Kelly’s Marathon (*EARMUSIC*)
14. **JAKKO M JAKSZYK** Secrets & Lies (*INSIDEOUT*)
15. **THE TANGENT** Auto Reconnaissance (*INSIDEOUT*)
16. **AYREON** Transitus (*MASCOT*)
17. **HAKEN** Virus (*INSIDEOUT*)
18. **NICK D’VIRGILIO** Invisible (*ENGLISH ELECTRIC*)
19. **LOUISE PATRICIA CRANE** Deep Blue (*PECULIAR DOLL*)
20. **FATES WARNING** Long Day Good Night (*METAL BLADE*)

CHRIS McGAREL (Writer)



- 1. **OZRIC TENTACLES** Space For The Earth (KSCOPE)
- 2. **GAZPACHO** Fireworker (KSCOPE)
- 3. **PURE REASON REVOLUTION** Eupnea (INSIDEOUT)
- 4. **THE OCEAN** Phanerozoic II: Mesozoic/Cenozoic (METAL BLADE)
- 5. **MOTORPSYCHO** The All Is One (STICKMAN/RUNE GRAMMOFON)
- 6. **ELDER** Omens (STICKMAN)
- 7. **MARIANA SEMKINA** Sleepwalking (KSCOPE)
- 8. **TOUNDRA** Das Cabinet Des Dr Caligari (INSIDEOUT)
- 9. **WOBBLER** Dwellers Of The Deep (KARISMA)
- 10. **FISH** Weltschmerz (CHOCOLATE FROG)
- 11. **ZOMBI** 2020 (RELAPSE)
- 12. **THY CATAFALQUE** Naïv (SEASON OF MIST)
- 13. **KAVUS TORABI** Hip To The Jag (BELIEVERS ROAST)
- 14. **HAKEN** Virus (INSIDEOUT)
- 15. **FIELD MUSIC** Making A New World (MEMPHIS INDUSTRIES)
- 16. **RICK WAKEMAN & THE ENGLISH ROCK ENSEMBLE** The Red Planet (R&D MULTIMEDIA)
- 17. **JG THIRLWELL & SIMON STEENSLAND** Oscillospira (IPECAC)
- 18. **ENSLAVED** Utgard (NUCLEAR BLAST)
- 19. **KATATONIA** City Burials (PEACEVILLE)
- 20. **TANGERINE DREAM** Recurring Dreams (KSCOPE)

JULIAN MARSZALEK (Writer)



- 1. **ANNA VON HAUSSWOLFF** All Thoughts Fly (SOUTHERN LORD)
- 2. **ROGER ENO AND BRIAN ENO** Mixing Colours (DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON)
- 3. **THE ORB** Abolition Of The Royal Familia (COOKING VINYL)
- 4. **HAWKWIND LIGHT ORCHESTRA** Carnivorus (CHERRY RED)
- 5. **OZRIC TENTACLES** Space For The Earth (KSCOPE)
- 6. **PURE REASON REVOLUTION** Eupnea (INSIDEOUT)
- 7. **THE FLAMING LIPS** American Head (BELLA UNION)
- 8. **GOLDRAY** Feel The Change (AKASHIK)
- 9. **FLEET FOXES** Shore (ANTI)
- 10. **WIRE** 10.20 (PINK FLAG)
- 11. **IRMIN SCHMIDT** Nocturne (MUTE/SPOON)
- 12. **ALEX HENRY FOSTER** Windows In The Sky (HOPEFUL TRAGEDY)
- 13. **CRIPPLED BLACK PHOENIX** Ellengæst (SEASON OF MIST)
- 14. **MYRKUR** Folkesange (RELAPSE)
- 15. **THE PINEAPPLE THIEF** Versions Of The Truth (KSCOPE)
- 16. **ENSLAVED** Utgard (NUCLEAR BLAST)
- 17. **ARABS IN ASPIC** Madness And Magic (KARISMA)
- 18. **MS AMY BIRKS** All That I Am & All That I Was (MAB)
- 19. **HATS OFF GENTLEMEN IT’S ADEQUATE** Nostalgia For Infinity (SELF-RELEASED)
- 20. **LOUISE PATRICIA CRANE** Deep Blue (PECULIAR DOLL)

MATT MILLS (Writer)



- 1. **ENSLAVED** Utgard (NUCLEAR BLAST)
- 2. **SHINER** Schadenfreude (TWO BLACK EYES)
- 3. **CALIGULA’S HORSE** Rise Radiant (INSIDEOUT)
- 4. **AA WILLIAMS** Forever Blue (BELLA UNION)
- 5. **THE OCEAN** Phanerozoic II: Mesozoic/Cenozoic (METAL BLADE)
- 6. **ULVER** Flowers Of Evil (HOUSE OF MYTHOLOGY)
- 7. **PAIN OF SALVATION** Panther (INSIDEOUT)
- 8. **IHSAHN** Pharos (CANDLELIGHT)
- 9. **PROTEST THE HERO** Palimpsest (SPINEFARM)
- 10. **CASPIAN** On Circles (TRIPLE CROWN)
- 11. **COLDBONES** The Cataclysm (DUNK!)
- 12. **ALEAH** Aleah (SVART)
- 13. **ELDER** Omens (STICKMAN)
- 14. **THY CATAFALQUE** Naïv (SEASON OF MIST)
- 15. **THE HIRSCH EFFEKT** Kollaps (LONG BRANCH)
- 16. **GREEN CARNATION** Leaves Of Yesteryear (SEASON OF MIST)
- 17. **TOUNDRA** Das Cabinet Des Dr Caligari (INSIDEOUT)
- 18. **INTRONAUT** Fluid Existential Inversions (METAL BLADE)
- 19. **SLEEPMAKESWAVES** These Are Not Your Dreams (BIRD’S ROBE)
- 20. **SÓLSTAFIR** Endless Twilight Of Codependent Love (SEASON OF MIST)

GRANT MOON (Writer)



- 1. **FISH** Weltschmerz (CHOCOLATE FROG)
- 2. **DYBLE LONGDON** Between A Breath And A Breath (ENGLISH ELECTRIC)
- 3. **MOTORPSYCHO** The All Is One (STICKMAN/RUNE GRAMMOFON)
- 4. **THE LICKERISH QUARTET** Threesome Vol.1 (LABEL LOGIC)
- 5. **KOYO** You Said It (88 WATT)
- 6. **TAME IMPALA** The Slow Rush (FICTION)
- 7. **RICHARD WILEMAN** Arcana (BELIEVERS ROAST)
- 8. **WOBBLER** Dwellers Of The Deep (KARISMA)
- 9. **HAWKSMOOR** Methods Of Dreaming (SPUN OUT OF CONTROL)
- 10. **JONATHAN WILSON** Dixie Blur (BELLA UNION)
- 11. **RAINBOW FACE** Stars’ Blood (SELF-RELEASE)
- 12. **HAKEN** Virus (INSIDEOUT)
- 13. **GAZPACHO** Fireworker (KSCOPE)
- 14. **GODSTICKS** Inescapable (KSCOPE)
- 15. **KOJ** Home (LONG BRANCH)
- 16. **MYRKUR** Folkesange (RELAPSE)
- 17. **ROBERT REED** Cursus 123 430 (TIGERMOTH)
- 18. **PYRAMID THEOREM** Beyond The Exosphere (SELF-RELEASE)
- 19. **LAUGHING STOCK** The Island (APOLLON)
- 20. **ARABS IN ASPIC** Madness And Magic (KARISMA)

ALISON REIJMAN (Writer)



- 1. **FISH** Weltschmerz (CHOCOLATE FROG)
- 2. **LAZULI** Le Fantastique Envol Du Dieter Böhm (L’ABELLE RÔDE)
- 3. **LONELY ROBOT** Feelings Are Good (INSIDEOUT)
- 4. **THE TANGENT** Auto Reconnaissance (INSIDEOUT)
- 5. **MS AMY BIRKS** All That I Am & All That I Was (MAB)
- 6. **SOLSTICE** Sia (GEP)
- 7. **PENDRAGON** Love Over Fear (TOFF)
- 8. **PAIN OF SALVATION** Panther (INSIDEOUT)
- 9. **ZIO** Flower Torania (POSH AND ROCK)
- 10. **MAGENTA** Masters of Illusion (TIGERMOTH)
- 11. **DYBLE LONGDON** Between A Breath And A Breath (ENGLISH ELECTRIC)
- 12. **THE BACKSTAGE** Isolation (REINGOLD RECORDS)
- 13. **RICK WAKEMAN & THE ENGLISH ROCK ENSEMBLE** The Red Planet (R&D MULTIMEDIA)
- 14. **THAT JOE PAYNE** By Name. By Nature (TJP)
- 15. **ROBERT REED** Cursus 123 430 (TIGERMOTH)
- 16. **THE OCEAN** Phanerozoic II: Mesozoic/Cenozoic (METAL BLADE)
- 17. **AYREON** Transitus (MASCOT)
- 18. **THE FLAMING LIPS** American Head (BELLA UNION)
- 19. **JOHN HOLDEN** Rise and Fall (SELF-RELEASE)
- 20. **IO EARTH** Aura (SELF-RELEASE)

CHRIS ROBERTS (Writer)



- 1. **KEVIN GODLEY** Muscle Memory (STATE51)
- 2. **LANTERNS ON THE LAKE** Spook The Herd (BELLA UNION)
- 3. **THROWING MUSES** Sun Racket (FIRE)
- 4. **THE WATERBOYS** Good Luck, Seeker (COOKING VINYL)
- 5. **JOHN FOXX & THE MATHS** Howl (METAMATIC)
- 6. **RICK WAKEMAN & THE ENGLISH ROCK ENSEMBLE** The Red Planet (R&D MULTIMEDIA)
- 7. **FISH** Weltschmerz (CHOCOLATE FROG)
- 8. **CALEB LANDRY JONES** The Mother Stone (SACRED BONES)
- 9. **MODERN STUDIES** The Weight Of The Sun (FIRE)
- 10. **CATHERINE ANNE DAVIES & BERNARD BUTLER** In Memory Of My Feelings (NEEDLE MYTHOLOGY)
- 11. **JACK HUES** Primitif (DAWN CHORUS)
- 12. **NEKTAR** The Other Side (ESOTERIC)
- 13. **WIRE** 10.30 (PINK FLAG)
- 14. **TIM BOWNESS** Late Night Laments (INSIDEOUT)
- 15. **STEVE HOWE** Love Is (BMG)
- 16. **A CERTAIN RATIO** ACR Loco (MUTE)
- 17. **MS AMY BIRKS** All That I Am & All That I Was (MAB)
- 18. **MARIANA SEMKINA** Sleepwalking (KSCOPE)
- 19. **GRAHAM GOULDMAN** Modesty Forbids (LOJINX)
- 20. **SOUNDWALK COLLECTIVE WITH PATTI SMITH** Peradam (BELLA UNION)



PRESS/JACK VENABLES

JIM GREY (CALIGULA’S HORSE)
“I’m so grateful to Haken for *Virus* and to Pain Of Salvation for *Panther!* POS defy expectations and reinvent themselves time and time again, and are absolute trailblazers to this day. Haken’s *Virus* excited me about prog music again and got me off my depressed keister and back into the game.”



PRESS/CARVING A GIANT

ASHLEY DOODKORTE (VOYAGER)
“Katatonia are at their best when they’re doing their very rich, dark, moody thing, as they do on *City Burials*. However, those little stabs of crushing heaviness that hark back to their early sound add a little bit of spice that keep me coming back for seconds (and thirds).”



JEM GODFREY (FROST*)
“*Feelings Are Good* by Lonely Robot. It sounds like the work of a man freed from the spacesuit and allowed to think a little wider. Lyrically, this is a lot darker and less wistful than the previous three. Very refreshing.”



PRESS/PETTER SANDELL

KJETIL NORDHUS (GREEN CARNATION)
“Motorpsycho’s *The All Is One* is an album that is bubbling with creativity and skill. This kept me nailed to my sofa through every second of the album’s lavishing 84 minutes the very first time I heard it.”

PRESS/PIT LAD



MARK KELLY (MARILLION)
“Arabs In Aspic do a fine job of capturing the mood of the late 60s/early 70s with their melodic prog on *Madness And Magic*. It has fine instrumentation and harmony vocals, but avoids the show-off excesses of some modern prog.”

PRESS/EGGOR KREE



MARJANA SEMKINA (IAMTHE MORNING)
“Each Lunatic Soul album is very special to me, and *Through Shaded Woods* exceeded all expectations. Mariusz Duda is a truly wonderful artist who keeps expanding his horizons. Here, he demonstrates yet again what a force he is when he locks himself in the studio.”

PRESS/TIM BOODY



ANNA PHOEBE (AVA)
“I love everything about *Traveller*, which is a collaboration between TJ Allen and Charlotte Hatherley. I love the whole concept behind it, about a heartbroken alien. I love the production, which combines retro synths and industrial pulsating beats with the dark ethereal doom-pop vocals. It's the perfect soundtrack to 2020.”

KEVIN NIXON/FUTURE OWNS



JO QUAIL
“Multi-instrumentalist Kate Arnold's music is outside of classification, featuring sweeping yet intimate vocals, carefully crafted harmonies, textures and timbres, and oh so much more! *Rota Fortunae I* is a work of utter craftsmanship, and also pure artistic beauty.”

PAUL SEXTON (Writer)



- 1. FAIRPORT CONVENTION** Shuffle & Go (*MATTY GROOVES*)
- 2. FLEET FOXES** Shore (*ANTI-*)
- 3. DYBLE LONGDON** Between A Breath And A Breath (*ENGLISH ELECTRIC*)
- 4. NED ROBERTS** Dream Sweetheart (*AVELINE*)
- 5. PAVEY ARK** Close Your Eyes and Think of Nothing (*PAVEY ARK*)
- 6. MR ALEC BOWMAN** I Used To Be Sad & Then I Forgot (*1499386 RECORDS DK2*)
- 7. STEVE HOWE** Love Is (*BMG*)
- 8. ARBOURETUM** Let It All In (*THRILL JOCKEY*)
- 9. CHIMPAN A** The Empathy Machine (*TIGERMOTH*)
- 10. NICK MASON'S SAUCERFUL OF SECRETS** Live At The Roundhouse (*SONY*)
- 11. JAKKO M JAKSZYK** Secrets & Lies (*INSIDEOUT*)
- 12. JACQUI MCSHEE & KEVIN DEMPSEY** From There To Here (*MCDEM*)
- 13. JACK SHARP** Good Times Older (*FROM HERE*)
- 14. RICK WAKEMAN & THE ENGLISH ROCK ENSEMBLE** The Red Planet (*R&D MULTIMEDIA*)
- 15. TAME IMPALA** The Slow Rush (*FICTION*)
- 16. MATT BERRY** Phantom Birds (*ACID JAZZ*)
- 17. TIM BOWNESS** Late Night Laments (*INSIDEOUT*)
- 18. HARROW FAIR** Sins We Made (*ROARING GIRL*)
- 19. COLIN BASS & DANIEL BIRO** Still (*SARGASSO*)
- 20. SOFT MACHINE** Live At The Baked Potato (*DYAD*)

JOHNNY SHARP (Writer)



- 1. FISH** Weltschmerz (*CHOCOLATE FROG*)
- 2. THE FLAMING LIPS** American Head (*BELLA UNION*)
- 3. JACK HUES** Primitif (*DAWN CHORUS*)
- 4. LUNATIC SOUL** Shaded Woods (*KSCOPE*)
- 5. POST ANIMAL FORWARD MOTION** Godyssey (*POLYVINYL RECORD CO*)
- 6. KINGNOMAD** Sagan Om Rymden (*RIPPLE*)
- 7. LONELY ROBOT** Feelings Are Good (*INSIDEOUT*)
- 8. TAME IMPALA** The Slow Rush (*FICTION*)
- 9. POLYMOON** Caterpillars Of Creation (*SVART*)
- 10. TIM BOWNESS** Late Night Laments (*INSIDEOUT*)
- 11. THE PINEAPPLE THIEF** The Soord Sessions Vol.4 (*KSCOPE*)
- 12. PENDRAGON** Love And Fear (*TOFF*)
- 13. THE PINEAPPLE THIEF** Versions Of The Truth (*KSCOPE*)
- 14. AIRBAG** A Day At The Beach (*KARISMA*)
- 15. KOYO** You Said It (*WATT 88*)
- 16. PURE REASON REVOLUTION** Eupnea (*INSIDEOUT*)
- 17. GODSTICKS** Inescapable (*KSCOPE*)
- 18. ANUBIS** Homeless (*SELF-RELEASE*)
- 19. MOTORPSYCHO** The All Is One (*STICKMAN/RUNE GRAMMOFON*)
- 20. ANNA VON HAUSSWOLFF** All Thoughts Fly (*SOUTHERN LORD*)

NICK SHILTON (Writer)



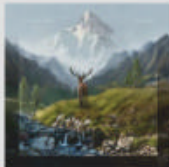
- 1. LONELY ROBOT** Feelings Are Good (*INSIDEOUT*)
- 2. MARATHON** Mark Kelly's Marathon (*EARMUSIC*)
- 3. KANSAS** The Absence Of Presence (*INSIDEOUT*)
- 4. RICK WAKEMAN & THE ENGLISH ROCK ENSEMBLE** The Red Planet (*R&D MULTIMEDIA*)
- 5. MAGENTA** Masters Of Illusion (*TIGERMOTH*)
- 6. THE LICKERISH QUARTET** Threesome Vol.1 (*LABEL LOGIC*)
- 7. TIM BOWNESS** Late Night Laments (*INSIDEOUT*)
- 8. DENNIS DEYOUNG** 26 East: Vol.1 (*FRONTIERS*)
- 9. WOBBLER** Dwellers Of The Deep (*KARISMA*)
- 10. FISH** Weltschmerz (*CHOCOLATE FROG*)
- 11. THE TANGENT** Auto Reconnaissance (*INSIDEOUT*)
- 12. DARWIN** DarWin 2 (*ORIGIN OF SPECIES*)
- 13. JAKKO M JAKSZYK** Secrets & Lies (*INSIDEOUT*)
- 14. SANGUINE HUM** A Trace Of Memory (*BAD ELEPHANT MUSIC*)
- 15. SOLSTICE** Sia (*GEP*)
- 16. THE FLOWER KINGS** Islands (*INSIDEOUT*)
- 17. GAZPACHO** Fireworker (*KSCOPE*)
- 18. CHIMPAN A** The Empathy Machine (*TIGERMOTH*)
- 19. JONATHAN HULTÉN** Chants From Another Place (*KSCOPE*)
- 20. THAT JOE PAYNE** By Name. By Nature (*TJP*)

SID SMITH (Writer)



- 1. TERJE RYPDAL** Conspiracy (*ECM*)
- 2. SONAR WITH DAVID TORN** Tranceportation Vol.1 & 2 (*RARENOISE*)
- 3. HEDVIG MOLLESTAD** Ekhidna (*RUNE GRAMMOFON*)
- 4. THUMBSCREW** The Anthony Braxton Project (*CUNEIFORM*)
- 5. RYMDEN** Space Sailors (*JAZZLAND*)
- 6. IRMIN SCHMIDT** Nocturne (*MUTE/SPOON*)
- 7. LUMEN DRONES** Umbra (*HUBRO*)
- 8. THE NECKS** Three (*NORTHERN SPY*)
- 9. GURANFOE** Sum of Erda (*APOLLON*)
- 10. KAVUS TORABI** Hip To The Jag (*BELIEVERS ROAST*)
- 11. SANGUINE HUM** A Trace Of Memory (*BAD ELEPHANT MUSIC*)
- 12. CHEER-ACCIDENT** Chicago XX (*CUNEIFORM*)
- 13. DAS RAD** Adios Al Futuro (*DISCUS*)
- 14. SAMUEL HÄLLKVIST** Epik, Didaktik, Pastoral (*BOOGIEPOST*)
- 15. BLAER** Yellow (*RONIN RHYTHM*)
- 16. NOISE IN YOUR EYE** Noise In Your Eye (*NIYE*)
- 17. KIT DOWNES** Dreamlife Of Debris (*ECM*)
- 18. SIX ORGANS OF ADMITTANCE** Companion Rises (*DRAG CITY*)
- 19. JULIA HÜLSMANN QUARTET** Not Far From Here (*ECM*)
- 20. MILES DAVIS** The Lost Quintet (*SLEEPY NIGHT*)

PHIL WELLER (Writer)



- 1. CALIGULA'S HORSE** Rise Radiant (*INSIDEOUT*)
- 2. THE OCEAN** Phanerozoic II: Mesozoic/Cenozoic (*METAL BLADE*)
- 3. THE PINEAPPLE THIEF** Versions Of The Truth (*KSCOPE*)
- 4. WHITE STONES** Kuarahy (*NUCLEAR BLAST*)
- 5. INTRONAUT** Fluid Existential Inversions (*METAL BLADE*)
- 6. KATATONIA** City Burials (*PEACEVILLE*)
- 7. ILSAHN** Pharos (*CANDLELIGHT*)
- 8. PROTEST THE HERO** Palimpsest (*SPINEFARM*)
- 9. PURE REASON REVOLUTION** Eupnea (*INSIDEOUT*)
- 10. HAKEN** Virus (*INSIDEOUT*)
- 11. ANNIE BARBAZZA** Vïve (*DARK COMPANION*)
- 12. LUNATIC SOUL** Through Shaded Woods (*KSCOPE*)
- 13. COLDBONES** The Cataclysm (*DUNK!*)
- 14. GODSTICKS** Inescapable (*KSCOPE*)
- 15. DOØL** Summerland (*PROPHECY*)
- 16. GOLDEN CAVES** Dysergy (*SUBURBAN*)
- 17. JOHN PETRUCCI** Terminal Velocity (*SOUND MIND MUSIC*)
- 18. ENSLAVED** Utgard (*NUCLEAR BLAST*)
- 19. AA WILLIAMS** Forever Blue (*BELLA UNION*)
- 20. ELDER** Omens (*STICKMAN*)

DAVID WEST (Writer)



- 1. GOLDRAY** Feel The Change (*AKASHIC*)
- 2. DEREK SHERINIAN** The Phoenix (*INSIDEOUT*)
- 3. HEDVIG MOLLESTAD** Ekhidna (*RUNE GRAMMOFON*)
- 4. LYKANTROPI** Tales To Be Told (*DESPOTZ*)
- 5. MYRKUR** Folkesange (*RELAPSE*)
- 6. THE FLOWER KINGS** Islands (*INSIDEOUT*)
- 7. LESOIR** Mosaic (*GLASSVILLE*)
- 8. SIRKIS/BIALAS IQ** Our New Earth (*MOONJUNE*)
- 9. WOBBLER** Dwellers Of The Deep (*KARISMA*)
- 10. RING VAN MÖBIUS** The 3rd Majesty (*APOLLON*)
- 11. MARIANA SEMKINA** Sleepwalking (*KSCOPE*)
- 12. CALIGULA'S HORSE** Rise Radiant (*INSIDEOUT*)
- 13. THE OCEAN** Phanerozoic II: Mesozoic | Cenozoic (*METAL BLADE*)
- 14. NIGHTWISH** Human. :II: Nature. (*NUCLEAR BLAST*)
- 15. MOTORPSYCHO** The All Is One (*STICKMAN/RUNE GRAMMOFON*)
- 16. PROFESSOR TIP TOP** Tomorrow Is Delayed (*APOLLON*)
- 17. SCARDUST** Strangers (*M-THEORY AUDIO*)
- 18. DÖDA HAVET** Tid Och Rum (*GAPHALS*)
- 19. KANSAS** The Absence Of Presence (*INSIDEOUT*)
- 20. LOUISE PATRICIA CRANE** Deep Blue (*PECULIAR DOLL*)

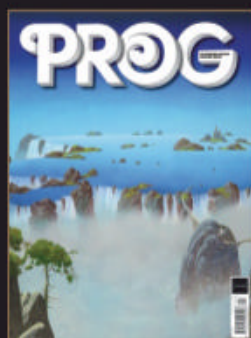
Vote in the PROG READERS' POLL

For many reasons, 2020 is unlikely to be a year many people are going to want to remember. But despite the pandemic and whatever other hardships life has thrown at us over the last 12 months, there's still been some great art made in 2020, and it wouldn't be right for that to be ignored.

It's time for you to decide who progged your world in 2020. You can see what the *Prog* Magazine writers thought were the best releases of the year on page 86. Now it's your turn. Let's rightly celebrate some great prog talent.

Please email your choices to prog@futurenet.com with the subject line 'Readers' Poll 2020' and use the form on this page as a guide.

Alternatively, you can fill in the form on the right and post it to us by December 7, 2020. The address to send it to is: Prog, Future Publishing, 1-10 Praed Mews, London, W2 1QY.



CATEGORIES

BEST BAND

Last year's winner: Big Big Train

ALBUM OF THE YEAR

Last year's winner: Opeth, *In Cauda Venenum*

FEMALE VOCALIST

Last year's winner: Marjana Semkina

MALE VOCALIST

Last year's winner: David Longdon (Big Big Train)

GUITARIST

Last year's winner: John Petrucci

BASSIST

Last year's winner: Nick Beggs

KEYBOARD PLAYER

Last year's winner: Gleb Kolyadin (Iamthemorning)

DRUMMER

Last year's winner: Gavin Harrison (King Crimson, The Pineapple Thief)

REISSUE OF THE YEAR

Last year's winner: Marillion, *Afraid Of Sunlight Deluxe Edition*

EVENT OF THE YEAR

Last year's winner: Marillion Weekends

DISAPPOINTMENT OF THE YEAR

Last year's winner: Effect of Brexit on touring musicians

BEST UNSIGNED BAND

Last year's winner: A Formal Horse

PROG PERSON OF THE YEAR

Last year's winner: Steve Hackett

PROG'S UNSUNG HERO

Last year's winner: Nellie Pitts (The Merch Desk)

New spins...

PORCUPINE TREE

Old meets new on two updated releases that celebrate both the early years of Steven Wilson's former band as well as their final recordings.

Words: Jerry Ewing **Illustration:** Russell Fairbrother

I was fortunate enough to be made aware of Porcupine Tree back in the early 90s, when Delerium label head Richard Allen contacted me when I was Deputy Editor of *Metal Hammer*. The band had already released their first two albums, *On The Sunday Of Life...* (1992) and *Up The Downstair* (1993) and were about to evolve their early psychedelic sound into the realms of space rock, krautrock and eventually the bold progressive rock that saw them cracking the UK Top 30 in the ensuing 13 years. It was an interesting time for music with grunge and nu metal sweeping away old perceptions, for better or worse, but Steven Wilson (for Porcupine Tree were really just him at this embryonic stage) offered a fascinating new take on more those established sounds.

The Delerium Years 1991-1997 covers this exact era featuring the four studio albums the band made – as well as the aforementioned, there's 1995's *The Sky Moves Sideways* and 1996's *Signify*, the 1997 live album *Coma Divine* and six extra discs of one-off tracks, demos and other sonic experiments. Unique to this box set is *The Sound Of No One Listening*, which collates stray single and compilation tracks, including two demo versions of the song *Disappear* that were previously only available on a bonus 7-inch with the first vinyl edition of *Coma Divine*.

What this 13-disc box set does do is highlight a couple of pertinent current issues. First up, as many online observers pointed out, this set has been previously available – their point clearly being that this is just a cynical money-grabbing exercise. Yes, it was released back in 2016, but it was limited to vinyl versions of the four studio albums and *Coma Divine*, plus a single vinyl album of some bonus tracks, so this new set delivers far more in terms of bang for your buck. The box set's almost worth it for the sumptuous hardback book alone.

Secondly, Wilson's sheer success, along with his refusal to just recreate the sound of a

The Delerium Years 1991-1997/ Pure Narcotic

TRANSMISSION



Wilson has never stayed still creatively.

couple of his solo albums, namely *Grace For Drowning* and *The Raven That Refused To Sing*, to appease a certain section of his audience means he seems to be fair game for a vocally petulant group of online commentators.

If anything, *The Delerium Years 1991-1997* merely highlights the fact that Wilson has never stayed still creatively. That is writ large over not just the studio albums here, but also the wealth of additional material, be it krautrock explorations (Wilson was covering Neu!'s *Hallogallo* long before the genre was reclaimed by hipsters), or toying with the electronica of the day – the title track of *Up The Downstair* throbs away like The Orb jamming with Pink Floyd.

It's also worth bearing in mind that both *On The Sunday Of Life...* and *Up The Downstair* are effectively solo albums, Wilson's main

band at the time being No-Man and Porcupine Tree merely a fun affectation. Listening back, it's not difficult to see why they swiftly became a priority, the enterprising psychedelia of the debut (one can only wonder what Wilson now makes of the quirky vocal of *Lynton Samuel Dawson*) giving way to grander musical themes on *Up The Downstair*.

The full hour-plus of *Voyage 34* (probably the release that really grabbed this listener's attention back in the day) is an inviting blend of trance, prog and psych, and again acts as a precursor to later musical adventures. So, too, does the 40-minute *Moonloop* (on the *Transmission IV* disc), despite being rooted in the popular ambient soundscapes of the time.

Of course, by this time the 'project' had developed into a band, with Colin Edwin, Richard Barbieri and drummer Chris Maitland brought in during the making of 1995's *The Sky Moves Sideways*, and the pointers to the later band's sound can be heard. They're even more magnified on 1996's *Signify*, which opened the door to the infinitely heavier sound the band would develop throughout the remainder of their tenure.

A separate release is *Pure Narcotic*, a blue vinyl featuring the final recordings Porcupine Tree ever made. It was intended to be added on to 2012's *Octane Twisted* live album, but recording issues meant the five-song acoustic set from the October 2010 Royal Albert Hall show suffered too many technical issues. Now cleaned up, it acts as a footnote had circumstances not forced the band's withdrawal. There seems a certain weariness to Wilson's vocals that suggests he already knew the game was up and was thinking elsewhere, although *Stupid Dream*'s wonderful *Pure Narcotic* does seem to hint at ideas that would evolve on *The Raven*.

So, the early days and the final days of one of modern progressive music's most important bands, and clear evidence for just how far-reaching Wilson's musical ideas were even back then.



KATATONIA

Dead Air PEACEVILLE

Stockholm's prog metal masters in magnificent lockdown mode.



While many of us are at the point where the very phrase “lockdown session” causes involuntary eyeball twitching, Katatonia have once again conspired to make everything okay. *Dead Air* comprises the band's streamed live show from Studio Grondahl in their native Stockholm back in May, and it's as dazzling a silver lining as you could hope for.

Works brilliantly as a live album despite the lack of crowd.

Denied the opportunity to tour in support of new album *City Burials*, the Swedes delivered a career-spanning, 20-song set, taking in everything from breakthrough gems like *Teargas* and *Ghost Of The Sun* through to new songs *Winter Of Our Passing*, *Lacquer* and *Behind The Blood*. It all works brilliantly as a legitimate live album, despite the lack of crowd response or any authentic gig ambience, and that's because this band are on absolutely blistering form right now. You can almost smell their frustration at not being able to do this in front of a real audience, and yet every last song is delivered with flair and intensity, as if the uproarious energy of *City Burials*' heavier moments has seeped into the entire Katatonia catalogue.

Highlights are legion: opener *Lethean* is a gloriously understated epic, and a master class in melancholy and wild dynamics; *Forsaker* is a churning, brutal howl of anguish; *In The White* is the Swedes in swirling, prog waltz mode. While hammering home the ludicrous number of great songs that they have written over the last decade or so, *Dead Air* also showcases how unfailingly polite frontman Jonas Renkse is. “Thank you,” he says, at the end of several songs, into the (oh yes) dead air of the studio. He also apologises for some unexpected “interlude”, quietly noting that “I think we're back on track now...”. Later, he lets out an excited “woo!” Okay, so it's hardly the most raucous of between song banter, but it's incredibly endearing and gently magnifies the intimacy of the whole meandering enterprise.

Renkse is in fine voice throughout, too: a troubled but reassuring presence, he sings the fragile likes of *Lacquer* and the always spellbinding *Evidence* with delirious conviction, audibly lost in each meticulously crafted moment. Meanwhile, his bandmates' musical backdrop sounds as close to immaculate as one could reasonably expect in such circumstances. Subsequently mixed and mastered by revered studio guru David Castillo, *Dead Air* strikes the perfect balance between sparkling clarity and the warm, overdriven rush of live performance. Unfortunately, it's also likely to make discerning listeners even more desperate to see Katatonia in the flesh again. Until then, this is sublime.

DOM LAWSON

AMERICAN TEARS

Free Angel Express DEKO ENTERTAINMENT

Veteran keyman Mark Mangold proves he's lost none of his Touch.

Before hitting the scene with 80s melodic rockers Touch, keyboardist/songwriter Mark Mangold released some quality melodic rock with New York rock trio American Tears. The latter's output showcased intelligent, AOR-leaning rock freighted with melodious piano and burbling Hammond organs and synths.

Mangold revived the Tears in 2018 and, to his eternal credit, he hasn't tried to ‘modern up’ their sound, and is wisely sticking to his trusty musical guns. On *Free Angel Express* he plays keys and sings on a set of tuneful, synth-heavy tunes whose titles tell their



tale. Some are charging rockers: *Sledgehammered* (‘Hot blood, cold sweat/I've been wounded but I ain't dead yet'), the knotty *Not For Nothing*; others are mid-tempo anthems about keepin' on believing: *Glass*, *Roll The Stone*, *Woke*. And prog-friendly instrumentals

abound: the Moog-bathed *Set It On Fire*; 10-minute 70s fest *Free Angel Express/Resist/Outta Here*, an expert rendering of *Blue Rondo*, and fuzzy fusion of *Tusk* (*Blood On The Ivory*).

It's proudly old-fashioned stuff that attests to Mangold's enduring talent – if you're a fan of classic keyboard rock it's sure to tickle your ivories. **GRM**

AVANDRA

Skylighting LAYERED REALITY

Radiant prog metal from rising Puerto Rican quartet.

Guitarist/vocalist Christian Ayala's project, Avandra have a knack for mixing sophisticated aggression and atmospheric surfaces that was clear on 2017's *Tymora* and 2019's *Descender*. *Skylighting* upholds that balance with even more cohesion and poignancy. Opener *Celestial Wreaths* and the penultimate track *Afferent Realms* effectively juxtapose hypnotic guitar riffs and vivacious percussion with divine harmonies and touching lyricism. It's precisely this fusion of light and dark elements that carries the whole sequence. Elsewhere, *Life Is Not*



A Circle, But A Sphere channels soaring emotions and djent gymnastics, while *Noetic Probes* evokes Haken's soothing textures and catchy melodies. The most moving passage, however, is *New Origins* since its prophetic narration, distressing

strings, and wavering synths yield such an inspiring final statement. One could argue that too much of *Skylighting* sounds alike – so a few tracks aren't as distinctive or vital as others – but such a criticism is made almost entirely null because it all flows so well, creating a journey that's greater than the sum of its parts. **JMB**

ALBERT BOUCHARD

Re-Imaginos ROCKHEART RECORDS/DEKO ENTERTAINMENT

Blue Öyster Cult's head-spinning 1988 album the way it was meant to be.

Album *Imaginos* was supposed to be a solo album by former drummer Albert Bouchard before being co-opted by his ex-band. Now, more than 30 years later, he has eventually got round to releasing his own version.

There are big differences between the two. BÖC's was a patchwork affair with little cohesion. What it did have was a darkness that suited the convoluted concept of an alien conspiracy theory, based around poetry and other writings by the band's manager/producer Sandy Pearlman. Bouchard's interpretation has more



sophistication and conviction. *I Am The One You Warned Me Of* and *Del Rio Song* have both a welcome lightness of touch and an underlying uneasiness, while his reimagining of the 'Cult's 1974 classic *Astronomy* has an epic sensibility.

What lets *Re-Imaginos* down a little are Bouchard's vocals: he's a decent singer, but lacks the flair of Eric Bloom. Still, his passion overcomes this impediment and, backed by an array of talented instrumentalists, he has finally brought his vision to life the way he originally envisaged it. It's been worth the wait. **MD**

COMBINATOR

Eargoggle Fodder SELF-RELEASED

Teflon-thumbed Washingtonian's bass-centric adventures.

Anyone who hates the sound of slap bass should give Sean Fairchild – aka Combinator – a wide berth. Those who can endlessly listen to Les Claypool, Mark King or Larry Graham, however, will appreciate this Seattle maestro, whose basslines bobble like a rubber duck in a Jacuzzi and provide unlikely key flavour in some pretty startling musical stews.

Fairchild's hyperactive approach is reflected in his prolific release schedule: this is his third album of 2020. As ever, it uses his thumb as the jumping off point for some furiously urgent multi-layered grooves that take in jazz-rock



scales, metal shredding and itchy electronic beats. There's also some more traditional songcraft at work here too, as *Can't Pretend To Know* weaves his labyrinthine arrangements into a platform for an infectious, Latin-tinged love song. The

swoonsome soul of *O Discordia* is emoted over a chaotic melange of bleepy electronica, punky noise and Fairchild's four-stringed gymnastics, but he's just as adept at subverting emo-ish rock anthems such as *Unemployable Elite* with curiously bubbling undercurrents, or turning Led Zep's *No Quarter* into a semi-ambient electronic reverie. **JS**

DREAM THEATER

Distant Memories: Live In London INSIDEOUT

Prog metal icons keep to the script in fun but inessential live release.

Dream Theater have already notched up eight live albums – do they really need another one? Recorded at London's Hammersmith Apollo in February 2020, this one finds the prog metal godfathers showcasing tracks from 2018's *Distance Over Time*, while at the same time celebrating 20 years of their concept opus *Scenes From A Memory*.

A full rendition of the latter is the jewel in the crown here; its opening twin attack of *Overture 1928* and *Strange Deja Vu* is a joyous slap across the face, while the flit between the stomping *Home* into the wacky *Dance*



Of Eternity is breathless but brilliant. Outside of *Scenes* the setlist isn't the most rewarding for diehards – *A Nightmare To Remember* is the standout – but the instrumental wizardry is spot on. Some of the highs belted out by vocalist James LaBrie are a sticking point, though, often getting lost in the ether.

Unlike some of their earlier live albums, extracurricular solos, jams or eccentric add-ons are kept to a minimum here, so come closing time you're left pondering if it's really worth the effort. But then these are bloody good tunes played by a bloody good band, so who's to complain? **CC**

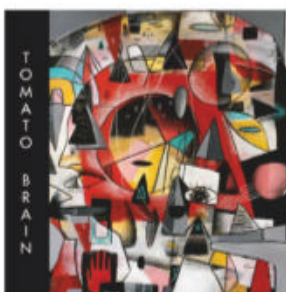
THE GOLDEN AGE OF STEAM

Tomato Brain LIMITED NOISE

Abstract electronica meets radical jazz courtesy of James Allsop's collective.

The name might suggest a gentle diversion into the realms of nostalgia, but that's far from the case on the third album from this avant-garde ensemble led by saxophonist and composer James Allsopp.

The title is based on an eccentric ditty from absurdist Scots poet Ivor Cutler, but there's nothing cosy about the sound here, which conjures visions of an exploratory jazz group improvising in an abandoned Radiophonic Workshop. In fact, that's not far wide of the mark, with *Loftopus*, a six-part, 31-minute tone poem, recorded live in a single take. It begins with blippy



electronica and disembodied voices, like something approaching from inner space, before a wave of sax breaks against the digital ether, producing slow, elegant lines that hang in the air. Some fairyland electric piano tiptoes in, while the

synths mutter and plot among themselves. The song eventually builds to a parping, skirling climax against celestial organ, bringing a righteous Soft Machine meets Sun Ra vibe, before descending back into the void again. After that, the strange choral swell of the title track is a much needed comedown balm. **JB**

MARATHON

Mark Kelly's Marathon EARMUSIC

Marillion keyman takes the solo plunge at last.



Although the biography that accompanies *Mark Kelly's Marathon* claims that Mark Kelly has plotted this debut step away from the Marillion mothership “for over 30 years”, it's misleading. Keyboardist Kelly toyed with a solo album inspired by Dante's *Inferno* during the mid-1990s, even approaching an aspiring young musician called Steven Wilson with a view to collaborating together, but when he didn't receive a reply the idea fizzled out.

Kelly has chosen to dabble in uncertainty, and it pays off.

That project and *Marathon*, which Kelly set in motion less than a decade ago, are completely unrelated. Apart from a guest spot by Marillion colleague Steve Rothery, who appears on a solitary track, and DeeExpus bandmate Henry Rogers on drums, it sees him joined largely by a group of novices. How nice to report that each excels in their field.

A barrister and Marillion fan by day, Guy Vickers transforms into a gifted lyricist after sundown, Oliver M Smith is a virtually unknown singer more inspired by Eddie Vedder than Peter Hammill, while one of its two guitarists, John Cordy, was a YouTube recommendation from Rothery. Throw in Mark's nephew Conal Kelly on bass, who freely admits that prog isn't his natural habitat, and band leader Kelly has chosen to dabble in uncertainty. It pays off.

There's apparently a convoluted hypothesis behind the album about Man (and Woman) striving for the ability to fly, attempting to interact with “whatever might be out there” and a resulting breakdown in communication, but *Marathon* doesn't labour under the weight of a concept album – it's a thought-inspiring yet slickly despatched pop rock record.

Things begin with a three-part song suite called *Amelia*, John Cordy using its second section, the deliciously sedate *Whistling At The Sea*, to lay down an early marker with a superb guitar solo. Next up we have the slower still *When I Fell* which drops down to a whisper, allowing Ollie Smith to stake a claim of his own. What beautiful tone this man's voice has. In the days when picking the right single mattered for a rock album, the hook laden *This Time* would surely have been selected for cherished 45rpm status.

However, *Puppets* – founded upon a heroic, mouth-watering performance from Steve Rothery – is where things really peak, although that observation isn't meant to diminish *2051*, a sci-fi-themed swansong broken down into four suites. One of these, *Trail Of Tears*, sees Kelly delve into his box of prog rock keyboard tricks to end things with a familiar-sounding flourish.

As a wise man once noted: life is not a sprint, it's a Marathon. And Kelly's own debut outing deserves a medal.

DAVE LING

LUNATIC SOUL

Through Shaded Woods KSCOPE

Mariusz Duda heads deep into the forest on seventh LS album.



When is a side project no longer on the sidelines? Mariusz Duda has now turned out as many albums with Lunatic Soul as he has in his day job of nearly 20 years, as frontman, bassist (and lately, guitarist too) of Polish proggers Riverside. This year he also made a solo electronica album with the none-more-2020 title of *Lockdown Spaces*, so maybe his artistic horizons are expanding still further from their Riverside roots.

While it's not short on gloomy atmospherics, it's accessible.

Either way, *Through Shaded Woods* suggests his output hasn't suffered in the least from him spreading his resources too thin. Despite playing all the instruments on this album, this is one of the most richly evocative, melodically powerful records he's made under any name.

Publicity shots of Duda in a hooded druid's robe hint at the kind of folk-imbued, pagan flavoured vibes that dominate here. "I always wanted to make an album steeped in nature and woodlands," he says. At the same time, he's admitted the influence of "dark Scandinavian and Slavic folk".

But while *Through Shaded Woods* isn't short on gloomy atmospherics, it's instantly accessible – even danceable. Opener *Navvie* reels us in through an infectious acoustic hook and rustic celtic percussion before hypnotic, breathy incantations suggest some sort of medieval rave tune. "I wanted the album to include such ritualistic primal dances," Duda has said. Then a more wistful, dream pop vocal, laced with ghostly female harmonies, breathes fresher melodic air into proceedings.

Eight-minute second track *The Passage* employs more conventional songcraft at first, seducing us with a beautifully mournful lost soul's lament, geared around another addictive acoustic motif, before latterly, chugging metallic textures, distant cries and agitated breaths throw up a very real sense of foreboding.

Another nimbly finger-picked riff draws the listener into the gently yearning strains of *Oblivion* wherein Duda's pleading vocal is redolent of Brendan Perry of Dead Can Dance, an avowed influence on this album. '*Silently falling into your breath/Let me pretend I am born again,*' sings Duda, reflecting a distinct sense of escapism repeatedly evoked by this record. At other times, it sounds more like a heartbreak album: *The Fountain* employs an irresistible combination of piano and acoustic picking to beg us (or a significant other) to 'wash away the darkness in my soul'.

Through Shaded Woods is never less than captivating. Whether wandering through an ancient forest or adrift on the waves of disillusionment, this is the perfect soundtrack.

JOHNNY SHARP

GRUMBLEWOOD

Stories Of Strangers GRAVITY DREAM

Engaging Kiwi folk-rock for fans of bygone sounds.

The debut album from New Zealand quartet, Grumblewood deliberately seeks to evoke the feel and sensibilities of the electric folk-prog movement of the early 70s: Jethro Tull, Renaissance, Fairport Convention, and, later, The Waterboys' "Irish" period.

While the shifting time signatures of *Fives And Nines* and the eight-minute The Band-meets-Christy Moore stylings of *The Minstrel* overlay some twists atop traditional tropes, this band also have an affection and respect for folk history, as their interpretation of *The Sheriff's Ride* (aka *The Wraggle Taggle Gypsy*) demonstrates. Alongside liberal



applications of flute, banjo, mandolin and harpsichord, Gav Bromfield's rich vocals fulfil the all-important folk storyteller role.

Many bands would have striven for a more precise and controlled product, but Grumblewood eschew such modernity with a real

dedication to the analogue world, with everything recorded, mixed and mastered to tape. The result is a warm, organic sound which captures the intimacy of a band performing live – alongside the occasional faint hums and buzzes even the size and ambience of the studio space seem tangible at times. A slot at Cropredy surely awaits. **GMM**

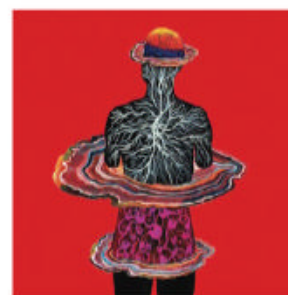
INTERVALS

Circadian SHEET HAPPENS

Instrumental tour de force from Canadian prog metallers.

Intervals are all about one man, namely guitarist Aaron Marshall. So, it's no surprise that on their fourth album, his playing dominates. But this is far from an exercise in fretboard indulgence. Marshall uses his undoubted talents to bring out so many different dimensions. In the process, *Circadian* stands as a masterful piece of music.

Designed to be listened to in one session, the album is a solitary composition sub-divided into sections. Marshall has cleverly constructed the flow so it feels like you're taken on a journey. There are moments which



will bring to mind the efforts of Protest The Hero or Animals As Leaders. But ultimately, *Circadian* defies such connections.

His own performance crosses the spectrum from the complex and intricate to more obviously melodic and delicate passages. All

those elements are fused neatly on *5HTP*, the opening track, which entices listeners with a simple tunefulness that gradually develops into an exhaustively intense guitar workout. *Lock & Key* takes it further, with jazz stylings as Marshall is joined in a guitar duel by Joshua De La Victoria. This is an album that gives tireless pleasure. **MD**

JASMENO

Jasmeno LYNX MUSIC

Synth-loving Polish songwriter puts a formidable band together.

These pages regularly feature multi-instrumentalists single-handedly constructing grand musical designs, but other approaches are available to bring one individual's creative ideas to life. Jasmeno's keyboard player/songwriter/graphic designer Slavomir Maria Nietupski feels that the key to great leadership of a musical project is delegation.

While the synthrock soundscapes and enigmatic artwork of Jasmeno's debut album spring from his own hand, an array of hired hands add splashes of extra colour. There are echoes of Phil Oakey's portentous singing style in



Andrea Boccarusso's vocals, which enhances the early 80s synthpop feel of *Precarious And Tough*. Other textures emerge intermittently too. The floaty atmospherics of *Temptation In Vain* are punctuated by trumpet and harp, a doomy choir backs

Reptile, and a spoken word section from radio presenter Beata Szewczyk in *Life Expired* muses on how "great spirits have always encountered violent opposition from mediocre minds."

It's unlikely Jasmeno's debut is going to provoke quite such vehement revulsion. But it may well find a few fans keen to hear more. **JS**

RAEL JONES

Mother Echo RAEIJONES.COM

Thumpermonkey guitarist's tender chamber ensemble tribute.

Thumpermonkey have drawn praise from some prog fans and completely baffled others in equal measure with their metallic Peter Hammill/Shudder To Think style for the last 15 years. But their guitarist-keyboardist, Rael Jones, is more than just a squalling Strat. He's composed TV and film scores for shows such as *Harlots* and *The Salisbury Poisonings*, and his solo work makes use of these cinematic touches, with not a shred of feedback in earshot.

A follow-up to Jones' stunning 2013 debut *Mandrake*, *Mother Echo* is a tribute to his late mother composed in the months following her death and



relating to a nightmare Jones had as a child after she was involved in a car crash. The way the piano and string quartet move through this journey is at turns optimistic, tense, dark and heartbroken. Classical documenters-of-life Vaughan Williams and

Britten are recalled, as is Ludovico Einaudi in temperance and texture.

It's Jones' keyboard melodies and arrangements that startle and impress; the wonder of childhood in *Know To Know More* and *Valley Of Desolation* the most poignant hymn (this writer was moved to tears). A most cathartic listen. **JK**

JUMP

Breaking Point F2 MUSIC

Eclectic High Wycombe six-piece keep fighting the good fight.

Since founding Jump in 1990, John Dexter-Jones has never shied away from addressing current events. And there have been few periods in recent history when there's been more material to fuel the ire of such a polemically inclined writer.

The title of Jump's 14th album references a commonly heard phrase from the Brexit debates of recent years and asks how we have become so selfish as a society, while elsewhere on here they touch on interlinked themes of self-interested leaders, futile wars and the enduring hope of change. Like the best political pop, though, it piques the



interest with music first and words second: the sweet tangle of a guitar motif and slithering bassline that underpin the title track is typical of the inviting tunes Jump specialise in. While the songs often echo 80s AOR stylings, *The Widow's* reggae-tinged percussion

recalls The Police; flute and fiddle enhance *The King* and the ghost of Dire Straits occasionally rears its head.

But every time the sounds threaten to get a little too anodyne, the passionate edge of Jones' lyrics cut through: 'There's no room at the lost and found... you can't pay your dues, you got the wrong face.' **JS**

KARDA ETRA

Idols In The Flesh NO IMAGE

More creepy cinematic atmospheres from Richard Wileman.

Only an issue ago we sang the praises of *Arcana*, the oddball goth-folk solo record from Karda Etra's Richard Wileman. He's back already, albeit with an album that could only come under the Karda Etra banner.

Wileman describes *Idols In The Flesh* as an "immersive ambient album" that involves "audio manipulation of acoustic and electronic instruments", and it's his proven ear for both these elements that makes this such a pleasurable creepy experience. Four of the six tracks here bear the title *Idols In The Flesh*, naturally labelled *Part 1* to *4*. The first is six eerie minutes



of dissonant arpeggios over washes of ominous, reverb-drenched strings. The second is brighter, brandishing piano, atonal classical guitar and church organ. The third blends these two approaches in a chilling sprawl of cinematic orchestra and

echoing drones while the fourth takes a similar tack but Amy Ward's indistinct vocalisations make it particularly haunting. Completing Wileman's latest fantasia, *The Unhappy Breed* is another wonky piano-led piece, and *Church Of Flesh* could be Brian Eno soundtracking the next Blumhouse horror movie. In a good way. **GRM**

PG.LOST

Oscillate PELAGIC

Instrumental post-rockers step from darkness into the light.



Like any genre worth its salt, post-rock exists on a spectrum. At one end is the kind of intense, gnarled noise that evokes a journey into the heart of darkness. At the other is a vast, billowing wall of sound that could have been constructed to soundtrack an expensive David Attenborough documentary full of newborn penguins frolicking on ice floes and panoramic helicopter shots of bleakly beautiful mountains in the breaking dawn.



There's a sense of urgent optimism running through it.



In the four years since their last album, 2016's *Versus*, Swedish instrumentalists pg.lost have shifted from the former to the latter. *Versus* was the work of a band focused inwards on themselves. Waves of euphoria were there but they were born of desperation rather than joy.

Oscillate is the pg.lost's Attenborough moment, an album that constantly builds and builds, forever reaching upwards before exploding in a sunburst of noise. The four-piece – featuring current and former members of Cult Of Luna and Ghost – have pitched it as the musical equivalent of breaking free of rock fall in a dark underground cavern and crawling towards salvation. It certainly begins that way. The opening title track kicks off with a dank, doomy ambience, crackles of indistinct noise giving way to wordless voices and guitars and synths that wrap around each other. So far, so claustrophobic. Then, almost inevitably, there's a break and the light floods in on a barrage of drums.

In truth, it's easiest to take the 'underground tunnel' narrative on faith – post-rock demands the listener creates their own stories to go along with the music. But there's certainly a sense of urgent optimism that runs through *Oscillate's* eight tracks. It's there in the restless pulse of *E22*, where indistinct voices merge with subtle electronics so that it's hard to tell with the human ends and the software begins. It's certainly there in the way that *Shelter's* brooding heartbeat throb gives way to an endorphin rush of percussive noise.

If the conceptual themes are vague, the influences aren't. The build-and-release dynamics of Mogwai and Sigur Rós are a given, but the ghost of *Tubular Bells* chimes through the title track, *Waves* suggests pg.lost have been listening to vintage Gary Numan, and *Mindtrip* evokes Neu! at their most fluid although the Germans never harshened their own mellow with an eruption of breezeblock guitars. Throughout, pg.lost embrace their influences, rather than use them as a crutch.

Post-rock sometimes feels like a list of clichés to be ticked off: 'cinematic', 'escalating', 'widescreen', 'dramatic.' *Oscillate* covers all those bases, but it brings something else too: humanity and heart. David Attenborough would be proud.

DAVE EVERLEY

Music Week

Inside the business of music. Established 1959

Subscribe from just **£9 a month for six months**



6 GREAT REASONS TO SUBSCRIBE:

- 1 Delivered every Monday to help you set your agenda for the week ahead
- 2 Access a wealth of news, new music coverage, thought-leadership and chart information in subscriber-only content
- 3 Read insightful opinion, analysis and first-looks at exciting new artists
- 4 Stay ahead of the game with our daily Morning Briefing newsletter
- 5 Bag the Music Week Directory worth £50 – absolutely FREE
- 6 Pay from just **£9 a month for 6 months** – that's practically **40%** off the normal cost of a subscription

DELIVERED STRAIGHT TO YOUR DOOR OR ON THE GO EVERY WEEK FOR SIX MONTHS



SUBSCRIBE NOW

Online: bit.ly/MW6MONTHS

NB: This offer is only for new subscribers to Music Week. This is not for existing subscribers to Music Week.

LYKANTROPI

Tales To Be Told DESPOTZ RECORDS

Siren songs from the Swedish woods.

On their gorgeous third album, Sweden's Lykantropi conjure up memories of vintage San Francisco rock in the late 60s and early 70s interwoven with rich seams of psychedelia and folk. The long-haired six-piece hail from rural Värmland and that brings an unhurried, pastoral ease to their music, married to a lyrical romanticism that's flavoured with an occult twist on tracks such as *Spell On Me*, with its warnings about the seductive lure of evil.

It's all deeply groovy, with songs that drip with intoxicating harmonies as entrancing as any Odyssean siren.



Frontwoman My Shaolin has the dreamlike delivery of Coven's Jinx Dawson, with guitarist Martin Östlund playing her vocal foil. She sings with wistful longing on *Kom Ta Mig Ut* - 'come take me out'.

This feels like Lykantropi's most personal work to date;

Axis Of Margaret was inspired by bassist Tomas Eriksson's experience of losing his mother, but it's not a gloomy listen. The album closes with *Världen Går Vidare*, which means 'the world goes on', ending with the promise of renewal and rebirth, reaching out of the darkness of winter towards the warmth and light of spring. **DW**

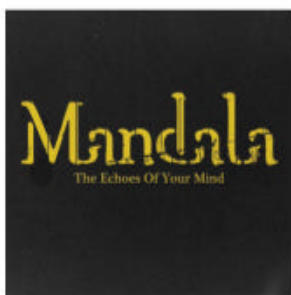
MANDALA

The Echoes Of Your Mind AUTUMN SONGS

Powerful statement from Rhys Marsh's thoughtful power trio.

Rhys Marsh's original band, Mandala, return with *The Echoes Of Your Mind*, the belated follow-up to 2015's *Midnight Twilight*. Mandala captures the multi-instrumentalist at his heaviest, running riot across the album's seven tracks with often raw Middle Eastern-inspired psychedelia.

Recorded in central Norway in high summer, it sounds not unlike the permanent light in which it was captured: vaguely unsettling, mildly psychedelic. Taking the power trio format (Will Spurling is on drums and Markus Wisth Edvardsen is on bass), and over-dubbing vocals and



'psychedelic elements', *The Echoes Of Your Mind*, is an affecting balance of sustain and attack.

On the day recording began, lightning hit the studio, and that electricity can be heard throughout. The heavy weather is directly referred to on the

acoustic *Blood Is Water*, with its darbuka, doumbek, harmonium and sax. *Alive On The Edge* shifts from mellow, bass-led theme to hypnotic raga and back, and *Beneath The Captive Sun* is 10 minutes of tension that builds like a thunderstorm. *The Echoes Of Your Mind* is the sound of three people thoroughly enjoying themselves. **DE**

METHODICA

Clockworks METHODICAOFFICIAL.COM

The time is right for these five gentlemen of Verona.

Melodic, intricate and grandiose, *Clockworks* is the third full-length album from Verona prog metallers Methodica. On paper their sound appears pretty boilerplate: Marco Ciscato's chugging, downtuned guitar riffs; Marco Piccoli's forceful, nuanced drumming; fiddly, widdly moments abound. But two factors set them above the hordes of Fates Warning/Dream Theater clones. Singer Max Piubelli is a compelling presence, his versatile voice hitting metallic and operatic notes as he sells opener *A Trick*, the multi-textured 1994 and growling post-grunge work *Cold Sun*.



Then there's keyboardist Marco Baschera's imaginative sound palette. His post-industrial squeals and clanks and cosmic frequencies add another dimension to the thunder of *The Door To You*, *Shooting Stars* and *Before The Wrath*.

It makes for an anthemic, engrossing album that might appeal to fans of latter-day IQ as much as those of Queensrÿche, whose singer Todd La Torre joins Piubelli on the ominous *A Dystopian Tale*. His cameo will earn the band cachet among the prog metal heartland, but on this showing, they really don't need it. **GRM**

JAZZ PROG

Sid Smith rounds up the best releases from prog's jazzier reaches.

Major Surgery's Rare Live Performances 1978 (Lost In Music) represents a new chapter in an otherwise forgotten and overlooked outfit active in the 70s.

Led by saxophonist Don Weller, these previously unreleased live sessions bristle with elements of Soft Machine and Nucleus, wherein smartly crafted tunes are delivered with razor precision, offset with Weller's customary passion. Pete Jacobson's keyboards spar with Jimmy Roche's biting lead guitar, expanding the band's tonal range as Bruce Colcutt's bass and Tony Marsh's drumming mine a funkish undertow. A welcome and essential addition to our understanding of UK jazz-rock in that era.

As the title cunningly suggests, **Harry Beckett's Joy Unlimited** (Cadillac) accentuates the positive with good vibes abounding in this handsome reissue from 1975. Beckett's mellifluous trumpet and flugelhorn daub the stratosphere with gorgeous streaks of vibrant colour against the busy

interactions of Isotope's Nigel Morris (drums) and Brian Miller's Rhodes piano. The criminally underrated bassist, Daryl Runswick is frequently astounding, nipping, and tucking around Ray Russell's surging guitar. An occasional Caribbean lilt infuses a sunny, relaxed atmosphere, taking this out of the portentous ambit

preferred by other British jazz-rock exponents.

Fans of the kind of musical telepathy demonstrated by the King Crimson fractals *Projekts 1, 3, and 4* in the 90s will find much to enjoy in the latest collective improvisations of **Reuter Motzer Grohowski's Shapeshifters** (Moonjune).

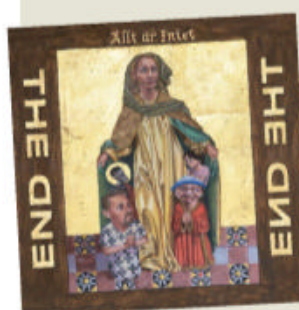
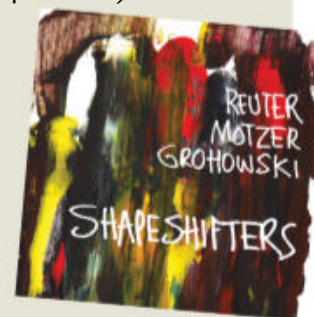
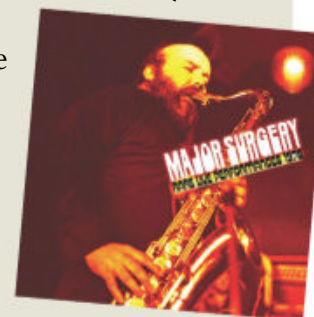
A collaboration between touch guitarist Markus Reuter, guitarist Tim Motzer, and Brand X drummer, Kenny Grohowski, their rapid-fire, intensive jousting and inquisitive, discursive solos cover a lot of sonic ground across four pieces that never fail to deliver bold results.

At the freer end of the musical spectrum, incendiary blowing is very much to the fore on **The End's Allt Ar Intet** (RareNoise), the second album by this Scandinavian

collaboration. The unbridled saxes of Mats Gustaffson and Kjetil Møster create a structured maelstrom that's visceral, dense and exhilarating. The means by which Sofia Jernberg's vocals accelerate between tender, melodic points and primal screaming with disconcerting ease is a remarkable feature. More rock than jazz, super-

tight hypnotic rhythms pummel and entrance in equal measure, deftly providing an anchor point in what is a turbulent, bracing but undeniably rewarding experience.

Chick Corea Plays (Concord Jazz) is a solo piano over two live CDs with Chick chatting between numbers, performing some genuinely dazzling improvs, and engaging renditions of pieces by Mozart, Monk and other influences. While clearly having lots of fun illustrating a six-decade career, things occasionally get a little schmaltzy. However, a bravura reading of highlights from his 1984 recording, *Children's Songs*, reminds us of the poetic, harmonic beauty informing all his best works.

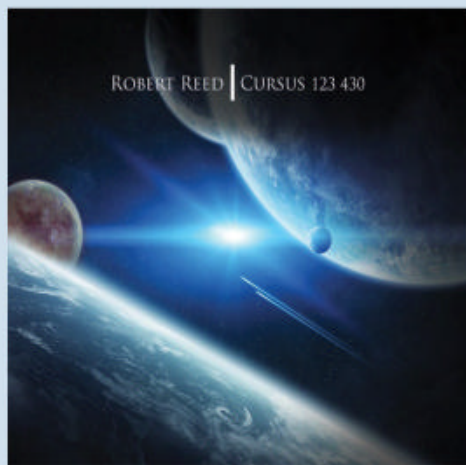




ROBERT REED

Cursus 123 430 TIGERMOTH

Homage expert channels the legends of electronica.



Taking sanctuary from his ongoing *Sanctuary* series (and a quick diversion from his band Magenta) to refresh his palette, Robert Reed goes full electronica here, drawing blatantly from Jean-Michel Jarre, John Carpenter and Tangerine Dream. *Cursus 123 430* is an unapologetic concept album, with spoken interludes provided by Les Penning, his frequent collaborator, who played with Mike Oldfield many moons ago (notably on *Ommadawn*). This, however, is Reed's



Reed is space travelling on the shoulders of giants.



least Oldfield-esque album yet. Those who moan at him for copyism can now moan at him for copying different people, while those who enjoy interesting journeys through time-honoured tropes can relish the trip and the shimmering, twinkling, scenery.

Analogue synths dominate, which results in both purity and limitations. Reed has evidently packed his trunk full of ideas born of influences and had a ball echoing the bubbling, beeping, swirl and bombast of the titans of vintage electronic music. He's tapped into their use of repetition and refrain, striving to reach a kind of transcendence. There are sequences which bring to mind Tangerine Dream's deployment of *Love On A Real Train* from the *Risky Business* soundtrack, OMD's *Dazzle Ships*, Air's floating reveries on *Moon Safari* and Jarre in general. (There's a whole lotta Jarre here). Occasionally sounds nod to the backdrops of 80s soul music, although they're utilised in a different way, and Elliot Goldenthal's score for Michael Mann's *Heat* also raises its hand.

Before this becomes just a list of reference points, can this writer find any originality in Reed's album? Its sci-fi ambience is enhanced by Penning's punctuation (even if they're too frequent), and it does attain the cool blue-grey sheen of a *Star Trek* franchise reboot's colour bed. *Stoneborn Watchers* picks up the pace perkily, and *The Man Of Sight And Feathers* juggles mystery and momentum. *Stalemate* seduces the listener, while the epic three-section finale *Erthsheelde*, though not without longeurs, is a resonant ride.

In truth, there's nothing here for a far superior interstellar creation like Rick Wakeman's *The Red Planet* to worry about: it's the likeable work of an enthusiast rather than the inspired imaginings of a master. The listener really needs to see the accompanying graphic novel to fully grasp the story of *Cursus*, which climaxes with Penning's dulcet tones speaking of 'watching the sun grow dark' and 'a hawk descending from the troubled sky'. Ultimately the question is whether *Cursus 123* takes us higher than *Pennsylvania 6-500*. In flashes, it does. It's space travelling on the shoulders of giants, but its love for those giants is genuine and warm.

CHRIS ROBERTS

MR BUNGLE

The Raging Wrath Of The Easter Bunny Demo IPECAC

More straight ahead than you'd expect from Mike Patton's reunited original band.

It's typical of Mr Bungle to never quite do what's expected. Their three studio albums, all released in the 1990s, were barmy and twisted so it's not unreasonable to anticipate something similar with this, their first album since 1999. But what they've done is considerably more linear: they've recreated their 1986 thrash metal demo *The Raging Wrath Of The Easter Bunny*.

The result is a band revisiting their very early days, as they immerse themselves in the chaotic atmosphere of the original, albeit with more musical cultivation. The core trio of Faith No More vocalist Mike Patton, guitarist



Trey Spruance and bassist Trevor Dunn have been joined for this venture by Anthrax guitarist Scott Ian and Slayer drummer Dave Lombardo. Given the latter pair's metal credentials, it's clear Mr Bungle wanted to return to their roots for this re-recording.

Much of what has resulted comes from three people rekindling the spirit of their youth with a vengeance. Most tracks are manic, but there are moments when Patton's eccentricities shine through, as on the sinister *Methematics*, and Neil Peart fans will appreciate some of Lombardo's deft, complex touches. **MD**

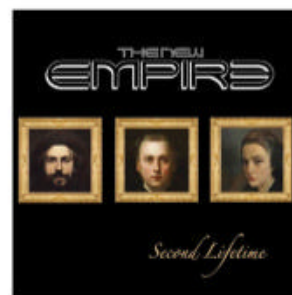
THE NEW EMPIRE

Second Life CHERRY RED

Peter Banks' old bandmates revisit the past and look to the future.

The New Empire are part tribute to and part reboot of Empire, the band founded by original Yes guitarist Peter Banks in 1973 and who recorded three albums during the 70s, none of which were released until the 90s.

This incarnation was put together by drummer Mark Murdock (who appeared in the final Empire lineup) plus singer Marisol Koss and multi-instrumentalist Fernando Perdomo. With the help of guest musicians - including Dave Kerzner - they aim to update some of the late Banks' songs and bring new ones to the party. The result is a success. Versions of *Out Of*



Our Hands and Sky At Night (both from Empire's *Mark I* album) are faithful to the originals, yet warmer; the same can be said for their take on *Looking Around*, from Yes' 1969 debut LP. New songs *Lost In Time* and *Life After Life* pack

a nostalgic punch, with the luscious harmonies of the former and the trippy synths of the latter standing out, whereas *Slow Burn Rising* is gentler and jazzier.

At over 70 minutes in length, it's a lot to take at once. Still, it's hard to complain about having too much of a good thing, especially given the care and respect that has gone into it. **JMB**

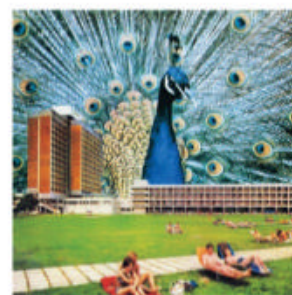
ODESSEY AND ORACLE

Crocorama DUR ET DOUX

Transport yourself with retro sounds and child-like good cheer.

The third album from Lyon's Odyssey & Oracle continues their explorations of gorgeous, dreamy psychedelic pop, with vintage analogue keyboards, woodwind and clever arrangements, topped off with Fanny L'Héritier's captivating and sometimes otherworldly vocals.

The album occasionally encompasses musical themes that wouldn't be out of place on a 70s art house film soundtrack - *Mascara* throws a bit of cheeky folk-funk into proceedings. Elsewhere, the title track is built around a nursery rhyme-like earworm refrain and *Mélie #1* sees L'Héritier creating



a vocal soundscape against the backdrop of sparse pipe organ and acoustic guitar. In *Les Enfants*, L'Héritier duets with guitarist/bassist Guillaume Médioni, though its bittersweet melancholy changes gear quite surprisingly and slowly builds to a brass section

flourish. *Les Poupées Mécaniques* gets a bit spacey with delay on the guitar and subtle old-school synth strains, which also populate the part-spoken word track *Antoine Rouge*.

There's a charming optimism to Odyssey & Oracle, and *Crocorama* provides some much needed whimsical nourishment for the soul. **GMM**

OUR OCEANS

While Time Disappears LONG BRANCH

Dutch prog power trio return after a five-year hiatus.

Our Oceans began in 2015 as side project by members of the now defunct Exivious. Where the latter played a complex mix of metal, prog and fusion that could feel quite cool and mathematical, Our Oceans take a more volatile approach, their mood swings mirrored by impassioned vocals from Tymon Kruidenier.

The opening *Unravel* veers from subtle picking to monstrous metal chords and flamboyant soloing by Kruidenier, and towards the end he belts out some spectacular high notes, sounding uncannily like Jeff Buckley. The band's edgily unorthodox song



structures are compounded by Kruidenier's visceral imagery, although *Passing By*, a lament for lost love, is tenderly sung. On *Your Take*, drummer Yuma van Eekelen and bassist Robin Zielhorst lock into a syncopated rhythm pattern, the latter adding vocal harmonies that drift across a backdrop of slow-moving chords.

The emotional bloodletting peaks on *You Take*, which starts like a ballad until Kruidenier mutters: '*Is this his sweat that I taste on your lips?*' before unleashing a baleful howl. It's over-the-top and somewhat overwrought but exciting, nonetheless. **MB**

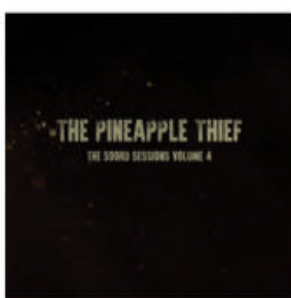
THE PINEAPPLE THIEF

The Soord Sessions Volume 4 KSCOPE

Lockdown studio sessions come offline to offer enticing new perspectives.

In recent years, British art rock mainstays The Pineapple Thief have been a cause célèbre for muso observers, given their work with celebrated percussionist Gavin Harrison. But any suggestion that this makes their finished product a style-over-substance affair can be quickly disproven by a record like this.

Here we have eight stripped down acoustic readings of TPT songs that frontman and principal songwriter Bruce Soord has been streaming online during the ongoing gig vacuum. Taken from the fourth of those sets, this album not only shows the strength of



songcraft underpinning his band's stirring soundscapes, but draws out different qualities within them.

The dramatic silences punctuating *Versions Of The Truth* lend it a stark sense of isolated disillusionment. *In Exile* gains extra atmosphere

as a bare-bones reading but then Soord loops his acoustic line and lets rip with a coruscating electric solo over it. *Bond*, the closing track from *Magnolia*, resembles a campfire lament for its first half before Soord uses the acoustic loop trick again to swoop and skydive past with wah-wah-warped guitar improvisation. **JS**

PUSCIFER

Existential Reckoning ALCHEMY RECORDINGS/PUSCIFER ENTERTAINMENT/BMG

Maynard James Keenan's other other band offer a state of the world address.

Fairlight synthesiser and spacey, sci-fi sounds augment Puscifer's fourth record. *Bread And Circus* opens proceedings with squalls and glitches, before Maynard James Keenan's voice floats over the top, straight in with the themes of this album: '*Here we are, with our existential reckoning*'.

What follows is a document for our times, which was mostly put together in 2019 but feels exceptionally 2020. There are songs about corrupt leaders, digital disinformation and polarised opinions. The introduction of retro-futuristic sounds with lyrics about our uncertain present conjures an



experience that's part quiet contemplation and part vicious condemnation. In *Fake Affront*, Keenan snarls: '*Sanctimonious phony little shit, you can drop the fake affront*'. Vocalist and songwriter Carina Round provides a more visceral response,

she wraps around Maynard's lyrics with real emotion, whether augmenting frustration or hope.

While living through these strange times, you'd be forgiven for wanting to distract yourself from them. But this is such an immersive album that you'd be doing yourself a great disservice by ignoring it. **EG**



PROGRESSIVE FOLK

Paul Sexton enjoys celtic songcraft, mysticism and some music for puppets.

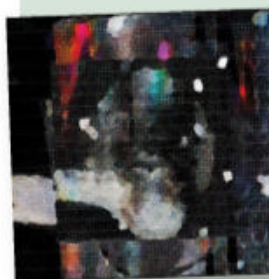
A 2020 highlight (yes, there were some) was the belated discovery of the expansive talents of wildly imaginative, prolific northerner Paul Mosley. With many albums under his belt, he's also written more than 20 puppet show scores, from the take-the-family kind to the darkly avant-garde. The self-released *Music For Puppets*, credited to **Paul Mosley And The Red Meat Orchestra** and best purchased via his Bandcamp page, is typically multi-layered, from the wonky fairground intro of *Ice Cream And Whiskey* to the gorgeous jazz-pop of *Cool Kids*, the Kurt Weill-esque *Tightrope* and gloriously disturbing *Zombie Donkeys*.

As he says, *Superheroes* has assumed new meaning for these times, and deserves a sync on the next visual tribute to key workers (He sings, '*underdogs against the odds, you are superheroes*'). The record is, by Paul's description, "beautiful, banging, bonkers," and by mine, magical from start to finish.

One of its guest singers is kindred spirit, fellow Bandcamp denizen and Welsh songwriter **Jack Harris**. This columnist had the pleasure of introducing Harris and Mosley in a marvellous, safely-distanced double bill in October at south London's Sound Lounge. Jack's desert dry stage wit was the bonus accompaniment to his beautifully expressed acoustic compositions, of which the *Six Songs* EP, also self-released, is the recent memento. Recorded as live, it speaks evocatively of

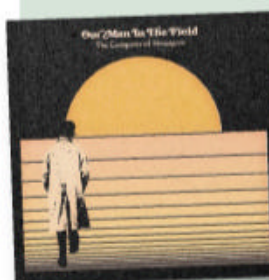
bells peeling, steeples peering and, on the closing *What Am I Gonna Do About You?*, '*chimneys silent as watchmen*'.

"Psych-folk mystic" **Simon Finn** dates to the bedsit folk of 1967, when he debuted by opening for Al Stewart at the Marquee. In 1970, he delivered the genre staple *Pass The Distance*, and after various releases for labels such as Durtro, Jnana and Captain Trip, ventures back with the off-kilter acoustics and haunted vocals of the *Be Here Then* EP (10 to 1), ahead of a full length album.

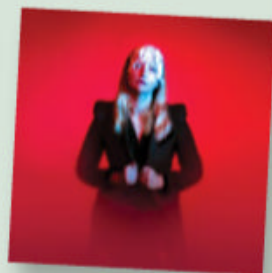


Tom Moore and **Archie Moss** come humming into earshot with the DIY *Spectres* (duomooremoss.bandcamp.com). It aims to reset the boundaries of British instrumental folk, with accordions and violins given the run of the playground, to sometimes plaintive, sometimes jaunty effect.

Scottish singer-harpist and Radio 2 Folk Awards honoree **Rachel Newton** has women central to the narrative of *To The Awe* (Shadowside). It places roots lore in contemporary settings both sharp edged and delicate, at once appealing to traditionalists and adventurers. Try not tapping a foot to *Chaidil Mi A – Raoir Air An Airigh*, which would be at home in both folk and dance clubs.



A final, extremely honourable mention goes to **Our Man In The Field's** *The Company of Strangers* (Rootsy Music). It's a vehicle for frontman Alex Ellis' subtle song textures and the flavoursome accompaniment of pedal steel, upright bass and more, with echoes running from Roy Harper to Ray Lamontagne.





RING VAN MÖBIUS

The 3rd Majesty APOLLON

Analogue acolytes hail the majestic Hammond.



In a time before the dawn of the synthesiser, there was a glorious age when the Hammond B3 organ ruled the musical landscape. For everyone from bluesmen such as Graham Bond to jazz cats like Larry Young and Jimmy Smith, and rockers like Keith Emerson and Rod Argent, this instantly recognisable instrument was king.

Norway's Ring Van Möbius are a thrilling throwback to that era and their second album is a wonderful reminder of

A wonderful reminder of the worlds within the Hammond B3.

the colours, textures and worlds contained within the Hammond B3 — alongside a dash of its main rival the Fender Rhodes. Like the thunder god who shares his name, vocalist and keyboard player Thor Erik Helgesen can summon storms at his command when he digs in, and he's matched in agility and imagination by his bandmates Håvard Rasmussen on bass and Dag Olav Husås on the drums.

While the trio don't push the boat out as far as their countrymen and fellow Hammond enthusiasts Elephant9, they're not afraid to let their freak flags fly. The album opens with *The Seven Movements Of The Third Majesty*, a 20-minute statement of gloriously exuberant prog that recalls ELP at their most expansive. There are enough shifts in mood, tempo and tone to fill an album, and that's just the first of four compositions.

Illuminati opens with a bluesy jazz vibe, before they switch it up with a quick jolt of chamber music, then it's back to a mellow groove for Helgesen to solo over. On *Distant Sphere*, the trio are joined by a string quartet and they're off for a drive around the houses, with stops at Broadway style musical theatre, psychedelic jazz, and then space rock.

Helgesen coaxes dark, menacing surges of sound from his organ, and there's skilful comping from Husås, whose style is a welcome reminder that many of the early prog drummers, like Bill Bruford, Robert Wyatt and John Marshall, were as well versed in the vernacular of jazz drumming as they were in rock. There's a lot of top kit playing from Husås, rather than a more modern prog metal approach of endless double kick drum workouts.

The album was recorded using strictly analogue equipment onto 16-track tape and it has that unmistakable warmth and fullness of tone of the pre-digital age. The danger for bands like Ring Van Möbius is that they might be dismissed as a nostalgia act, trading on tropes from a rose-tinted past. While they're clearly and unashamedly tapping into a vintage vibe, their energy and inventiveness make the whole package very hard to resist. And why would anyone want to miss out on such fun?

DAVID WEST

RAIN

Singularity GEP

Debut album by new band with a fine prog pedigree.

Rain's drummer Andy Edwards and bassist John Howitt played together in IQ and Frost*, and fans' satisfaction with their new band's excellent debut is pretty much guaranteed. Importantly, though, Rain have already developed an original voice with a less agitated and intense approach than Frost*. The songs are lengthy and intricately structured with strong melodies — near pop at times.

The duo are joined by singer/guitarist/keyboard player Rob Groucutt and mononymous guitarist/vocalist Mirron (of the band Hey Jester). There's a potent chemistry, with the musicians



all serving songs which at times demand they let rip. On *Dandelion*, Mirron launches off into the stratosphere over a funky, twitchy rhythm and elsewhere he punctuates his playing with dazzling acoustic forays.

They peak on *Magician* — whose titular character is 'incapable of being anything but enigmatic' — which culminates in a mosaic of cross rhythms and vocal incantations. On the title track, instrumental fireworks are dispensed with and the musicians play with space and texture around Groucutt's vocals, bringing the album to its own enigmatic conclusion. **MB**

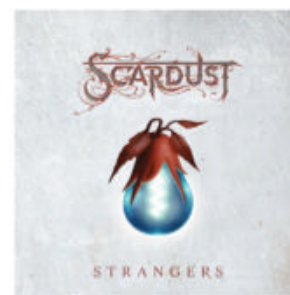
SCARDUST

Strangers M-THEORY AUDIO

No sophomore slump for symphonic prog prospects.

With their second album, Israel's Scardust have become serious contenders in the symphonic prog metal world. Frontwoman Noa Gruman has the requisite vocal range and projection, hitting stratospherically high notes in *Break The Ice*, although she can mix rock grit with the musical theatre chop. She's at home belting out the big, dramatic moments in *Stranger*, while *Over* sees her throw in incongruous death metal growls (not where she's strongest, in truth).

The arrangements are impressively rich and layered, with the Hellscore Choir beefing up the backing vocals.



Concrete Cages brings in folk metal thanks to guest hurdy-gurdy from the appropriately named Patty Gurdy, while Scardust prove they can get mellow and groovy on the standout *Under*. The band members all have their moments to shine, drummer Yoav

Weinberg is fleet of foot, bassist Yanai Avnet can let rip with thunderous basslines worthy of John Entwistle, while guitarist Yadin Moyal and keys player Itai Portugali seem to thrive on swapping fiery solos. The symphonic metal titans of Scandinavia are going to need to raise their game to keep pace with this lot. **DW**

SOHO REZANEJAD

Perform And Surrender SILICONE

Freeform art rock from a true eccentric

Danish-Iranian polymath Soho Rezanejad is an extraordinary vocalist, with a tone and versatility that go some way beyond otherworldly and into some alien realm of expression.

Palpably unique from start to finish, *Perform And Surrender* paints a picture of a thrillingly idiosyncratic artist at work. On amorphous, drifting pieces such as the 12-minute *Surrender*, she weaves her poetic murmurings around undulating drones, nimbly bridging the divide between the abstract avant-garde and the yearning intimacy of stripped down torch songs. Bursts of distorted spoken word provide jarring



contrast with the album's mellifluous core, suggesting a spiritual debt to Laurie Anderson, while the blissful simplicity of acoustic hymn *Half The Shore* sounds like an out-take from the first This Mortal Coil album. The drone returns for *Hera*, three minutes of meditative

peace and (dis)quiet, teeing up elegant closer *Sleepless Solitude*.

Taken in its entirety, *Perform And Surrender* feels like a side-step away from the natural musical order of things: part ambient exploration, part elegiac confessional, it packs a huge amount of emotional weight for something so richly oblique. **DL**

SOUL SECRET

Blue Light Cage LAYERED REALITY

Lush and multifaceted prog metal concept piece from well-kept Italian secret.

Melodic progressive metal is a heavily populated corner of the prog world, which is one possible explanation for the fact that Italian proggers Soul Secret have remained under the radar for many.

Built around a concept prompted by keyboardist Luca Di Gennaro's observation that "people think they actively take part in life, but actually they are just watching others doing things", their fifth album questions how we relate to the "blue light cage" of our computers and TV screens. While vocalist Lino Di Pietrantonio does sound remarkably like James LaBrie at times and *The*



Ghost Syndicate features a guest appearance from Derek Sherinian, the levels of invention here make any resemblance fleeting, as the twists and turns of *Jump Right In*, the beautiful sax-soaked title track and the multipart extravaganza *Breathe And Recover* show.

Di Gennaro's keyboards are central, and he utilises clever programming and sometimes unexpected voices to great effect – check out the Haken-esque *The President's Speech*, which demonstrates the band's sense of humour. This is a mature, varied and involving outing for a band that no self-respecting prog metal fan should ignore. **GMM**

VOIVOD

Lost Machine Live CENTURY MEDIA

Prog metal masters in prime form.

Voivod have long since carved out their own niche in the progressive world. And, as this live album proves, their energy, power and grace onstage remains undimmed.

Recorded in Quebec City during the tour for 2018's *The Wake*, *Lost Machine Live* spans the Canadians' career to date. Opening with the title track of 2016's *Post Society* EP, and continuing into 1988's *Psychic Vacuum*, they hit their stride quickly. Snake's vocals are sparse and effective, while Chewy's surging guitar shows how much he has settled into the role once taken by late six-stringer Denis 'Piggy' D'Amour.



The set inevitably features selections from *The Wake*, with *The End Of Dormancy* and *Iconspiracy* benefitting from the live setting. A fan fave for many years, Voivod's cover of Pink Floyd's *Astronomy Domine* is a highlight, but *Into My Hypercube* (from '89's *Nothingface*) proves equally worthy. And they go back to 1984's debut *War And Pain* album for closer *Voivod*, dedicated to Piggy.

Don't be put off by the fact that the song intros are in French – it is Quebec – because this doesn't detract at all from the riotous enjoyment to be had. Voivod are captured splendidly. **MD**

YOBREPUS

Mycelium Days APOLLON

Oslo-based studio project switches moods in style on second album.

Mats Jorgen Sivertsen began making music under the name Yobrepus ('Superboy' backwards) in 2006, but this is only their second album, following on from 2017's *Blakc Mould* (sic). That debut sounded like the work of a band in search of a signature sound, dabbling in everything from Radiohead-inspired sadcore to trip-hop and quirky indie-folk. *Mycelium Days* is similarly diverse in sound, but makes pronounced steps towards prog.

This shift is most obvious on the 22-minute title track. *Supper's Ready* it isn't, but it is nonetheless an alluring slow-burning epic that cycles through



an ambient electronic opening, meditative torch song, sludgy theremin-assisted grunge and, finally, soundtrack-y meanderings. 'Who's the whore?' Silvertsen hisses at one point, seemingly at himself. *What If...* is in a similarly despairing, self-lacerating

mood but with slow-building, echo-swathed art rock as the backdrop, before *Down* channels righteous acoustic folk and *Wangari* features a funeral-meets-fairground organ. Another softly emotive piano meditation closes proceedings on *Piao*, suggesting that late night laments are Sivertsen's strongest suit. **JS**

AND LAST BUT NOT LEAST

Grant Moon has a rummage down the back of the *Prog* sofa for the ones that nearly got away...



Some promising debuts for your consideration this month. **Project Trident** are an instrumental rock band from Kolkata, and *The Return Of RA* (projecttridentindia.bandcamp.com) is a highly listenable concept piece drawing on ancient Indian myth. The music's atmospheric and melody centric with some very tasty playing from guitarist/songwriter Sukhendu Chakraborty, and their story's a doozy. RA is a poor child who trains a warrior clan of kids to fight an evil military/corporate elite and avenge his murdered parents. A Bollywood blockbuster might illuminate that tale better, but this album would make a great soundtrack.

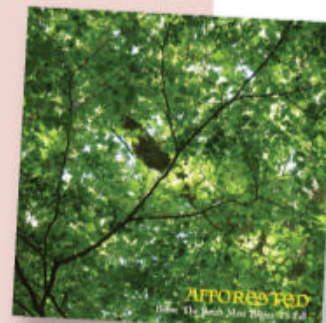


Scottish musician, writer and producer Raymond Weir comes to prog with the alias **Analogue Hashtag**, whose debut offering *One Of Our Agents Is Missing* (Analogue Hashtag) was

influenced by famous retro TV themes including *Randall And Hopkirk (Deceased)* and *The Saint*. Song titles such as *Your Mission, Should You Decide To Accept It* and *Designation: Classified* are illustrative of the territory. Weir's Cold War espionage story is pure Len Deighton and although his sample library is a little outdated he's an imaginative composer – plenty of clever nods to John Barry and Lalo Schifrin.



Afforested were formed back in 2007 by Kent-based brothers Alex and Jonathan Betts, and over two LPs and an EP they've worn their love for Jethro Tull, Steeleye Span and Gryphon on their sleeve. Their first album proper, *Before The Beech Mast Begins To Fall* (Afforested Recordings) mixes the instrumental sounds of classic British metal, folk and prog in fine style. Iron Maiden riffs, buzzing analogue synths, tin whistles and mandolins coalesce on this highly singular and lovingly rendered proggy work, clearly a passion project for the Brothers Betts.



To Portland, Oregon for more genre mashing by superb newcomers **Rainbow Face**. Prog, post-punk, noise-rock and math-rock collide on their striking debut, *Stars' Blood* (rainbowface.bandcamp.com), as these hip young dudes imbue old forms with keen new energy. For a taster, seek out the furious *Purgatory*, urgent 11/8 ballad *Lord Give Me Strength* and awe-inspiring 12-minute opus *Waves*.



Just a little longer in the tooth, Greek rockers **Black Fate** return with their fourth full-length album *Ithaca* (Rockshot). With powerhouse vocals from Vasilis Georgiou, this slab of grandiose, dramatic melodic metal has proggy dimensions, and will tick a lot of



boxes for fans of Dream Theater, Fates Warning, Kamelot and the like.

But if you're more in the Yes/Transatlantic camp then check out *Figureheads* (Generation Prog), the second slice of pure prog from **Theo**. Michigan jazz keyboardist/singer Jim Alfredson, surrounds himself with a coterie of other top players, including former Haken guitarist Tom MacLean, for four long, detailed tracks that explore acres of musical ideas and themes. With subtly political lyrics and a the acute, jazzier's sense of dynamics, this is brilliant stuff.



JON ANDERSON

**Song Of Seven:
Remastered And Expanded** ESOTERIC

Yes man's second solo album remains infectiously joyful.



The happy children's voices at the beginning of the title track capture the spirit of Prog cover star, Jon Anderson as well as anything else on his second solo album. Few artists express innocence and joy as consistently as he does, and this 1980 work swims in those qualities like dolphins in water. While that title song, the finale, is 11 minutes-plus, much of *Song Of Seven* consists of uncharacteristically short,

Anderson locates an easy blend of lofty and leisurely.

compact numbers. Not all of them hit the spot – Anderson tries a couple of R&B or celtic folk angles which belly-flop somewhat – but those which do are so rich with his inner ecstasies that they practically bounce, as if on springs. Whatever it is that allows Anderson to untiringly see the beauty in everything, we could all benefit from a helping of it.

Much of this album was recorded at his home studio, but he pulled in an impressive ensemble, named The New Life Band, including Jack Bruce on bass, Clem Clempson on guitar, John Giblin on fretless bass and Johnny Dankworth and Dick Morrissey on saxes. While Anderson's credited as producer, he's been quick to praise the contributors, who weren't the kind to need a blackboard to know how to elevate a song. Some of these numbers were rebuilds of demos not used on Yes' *Tormato* album. Readers might think a track considered not good enough for *Tormato* wasn't exactly laden with promise, but Anderson and his new pals, in the main, made them sing and shine.

Although he'd swerved away from Virgin Records' strange idea to make him a pop star (hey, they managed it with Phil Collins), Anderson nonetheless gave Atlantic an accessible, on-and-off "poppy" record. *For You For Me* and *Some Are Born* are a cheerful, vibrant welcoming committee. *Heart Of The Matter* plods a tad, but *Everybody Loves You* has swing and pizzazz underpinning Jon's astral projections. He's relatively more in touch with reality than he is conventionally, but apart from one or two slumps the album still lifts its feet and sees walking on comets as a perfectly reasonable mode in which to start the day. It's less ambitious than his solo debut *Olias Of Sunhallow*, of course, but as projects recorded while Yes tripped over themselves trying to find a path without you go, it locates an easy blend of lofty and leisurely.

Soon after the release of this album, Anderson was to enjoy genuine chart success with Vangelis and arc into *Animation* before owning the microphone for Yes again. However, by then *Song Of Seven* had gently made its mark with its upbeat exultations. Put simply, it embraces, as he sings, 'the strength of dreaming.'

CHRIS ROBERTS

AIRBAG

All Rights Removed/The Greatest Show On Earth KARISMA

Norwegian proggers give their early works a vinyl revamp.

As fans reel from the dazzling career peak of this year's *A Day At The Beach*, these lavish vinyl reissues of Airbag's second and third albums reinforce how captivating the band's music has been since (nearly) the beginning.

Two years on from 2009 debut *Identity*, *All Rights Removed* consolidated the Norwegians' reputation as grand Floydian (melo)dramatists. That debt is vast and unapologetic during the wonderfully overwrought title track and sprawling *Homesick*, but Airbag were never less than contemporary and already eager to subvert familiar formulae on occasion.

By the time of 2013's *The Greatest Show On Earth*, Airbag had clicked into a higher gear, balancing out the moments of reverb-drenched bliss with plenty of muscular riffs and dashes of experimentation. The arrangements were more cheerfully sumptuous, the crescendos were more stirring, with big, heavy metal guitar tones underpinning the stately drift of the melodies. *Silence Grows* remains a soulful gem; *Call Me*



Back is a crestfallen colossus with a sense of windswept yearning. In contrast, the title track is a fiery, affair, sung with understated brilliance by frontman Asle Tostrup as the emotional crescendos pile up.

It was the album's 16-minute, two-part finale *Surveillance* that provided the most compelling evidence that Airbag were steadily constructing a musical world of their own. Although still rooted in the wide-eyed and widescreen, its undercurrents of paranoia and textural eccentricity presaged the more troubled and intense path the band took on 2016's *Disconnected*, albeit still with plenty of melodic, Gilmour-worshipping lead breaks. The song's stormy second half is particularly thrilling, as Airbag doffed their caps to a more modern strain of prog, with soupy ambience, juddering riffs and eerie, gothic keys.

These both are two fine albums, each now sounding bigger and better than ever, from one of modern prog's most consistent bands. Long may their evolution continue. **DL**

FROST*

13 Winters INSIDEOUT

Wrap up warm and bask in the glow of the Frost* back catalogue.

Arriving in 2006, Frost*'s astonishingly accomplished debut album *Milliontown* set a high bar for any newbies contemplating a future in the prog world. It was music clearly influenced by the past but written, performed and produced with a contemporary sensibility, real flair and great invention.

With a brand new album promised for 2021, Frost* mainman Jem Godfrey has decided to remind everyone of the body of work that he and his collaborators have created over the years. Hence *13 Winters* – an eight-disc collection of every studio album the band has released, plus 2020's *Others* and the brilliant live album, *The Philadelphia Experiment*. If that wasn't riches enough, "new" material appears in the form of instrumental versions of the *Falling Satellites* tracks, a live recording of *Falling Satellites* from their Dingwalls gig in 2017, and a disc including demos and the glorious epic *The Dividing Line*. While it's true that most of this has been available as



standalone releases, Godfrey has sweetened the deal by undertaking complete remixes and remasters of the three studio albums, and there's a very extensive 70-page booklet with a career retrospective interview with Godfrey and complete lyrics, personnel and

production details on everything. The live tracks from the *Falling Satellites* tour remind us of the calibre of musicians Godfrey has worked with over the years – Craig Blundell's work behind the kit is astounding – and there are some departures in sounds and arrangements from the studio versions that will be of interest, notably in the tracks *Towerblock*, *Signs* and *Nice Day For It*. The remixes put some fresh twists on the original studio albums, and anything that includes a full, official version of *The Dividing Line* has to be worth considering surely?

For those not familiar with Frost*, *13 Winters* is a comprehensive means of discovering what the fuss has been about. It's an impressive monument to a monumental British prog band. **GMM**

IQ

Frequency GEP

Neo-prog veterans in resplendent 21st century form.

There's a sound reason why IQ have decided to reissue *Frequency*, despite the fact it was only released in 2009. The album has been unavailable for a while, so copies exchange hands for hefty sums. Now they've got ownership of the recordings back, the band have elected to make it more readily affordable.

In some ways, *Frequency* marked the end of an era for IQ. It was bassist John Jowitt's final album with them, plus the only time keyboard player Mark Westworth and drummer Andy Edwards featured on a record. It followed five years after 2004's *Dark Matter*, but while the former was inconsistent, this one bristled with vibrancy and colour.

Listening to it now, it's clear IQ were in a wonderful place musically. Every track ebbs and flows with dramatic purpose. The quintet aren't afraid to allow the music to breathe, soar and swoop. The result is clearly something approaching an artistic apogee.

Nothing sums this up better than *The Province Of The King*, which may be 14



minutes long but never drags for a second. Peter Nicholls' voice is nicely juxtaposed between Westworth's keyboard embrace and the guitar elegance of Michael Holmes, who also does a splendid job as the album's producer. Their performances make this composition feel like

a symphony more than anything else.

Elsewhere, the title track is sumptuous, combining grandiose gestures and more intimate passages. *Life Support* is another equally effective example of the band's skills. At just over six minutes in length, it's the second shortest song; only the acutely melodic *One Fatal Mistake* (a touch under five minutes long) is briefer. And *Closer* is a majestically rural finale.

The CD version of the reissue includes a previously unreleased bonus, namely a live version of *The Province Of The King*, from a 2009 show at De Boederij, Holland. There's also a double LP edition, available on red or blue splatter vinyl. Whatever the format, *Frequency* stands among the high spots of IQ's four-decade career. **MD**

PINK FLOYD

Delicate Sound Of Thunder (2019 Remix) PINK FLOYD RECORDS

The Floyd's 1988 live album loosens up with added tracks.

Gilmour and Mason had won the rights to the name, but could they, with Wright reinstalled, win the audience? The 1988 version of Floyd – despite being the era of their very worst choices regarding hair, shirts and dad jeans – did just that, in big

numbers. Their hugely successful tour, promoting the patchy *A Momentary Lapse Of Reason* ("Facile," snarked Waters), then yielded this live album, their first full one, recorded over five nights at Nassau Coliseum on Long Island, New York. Famously, it was also the first album played in space, by Soviet cosmonauts.

Now lifted from *The Later Years* box set, it adds to the original running order, which basically went: the new stuff, which the band like; then the old stuff, which the crowd like and have patiently awaited. *Signs Of Life* and *One Slip* are dreary, but *Welcome To The Machine* has atmospheric grit to it, and it's hard to comprehend why *The Great Gig In The Sky* was omitted from the original. Also, why on earth would you



make the version of *Money* shorter?

At the risk of starting fights, Gilmour's solo on *Comfortably Numb* here is the best he ever did. *On The Run* also kicks with a shot of energy, which was a quality this incarnation of Floyd lacked, overall. It's not that Floyd shouldn't be

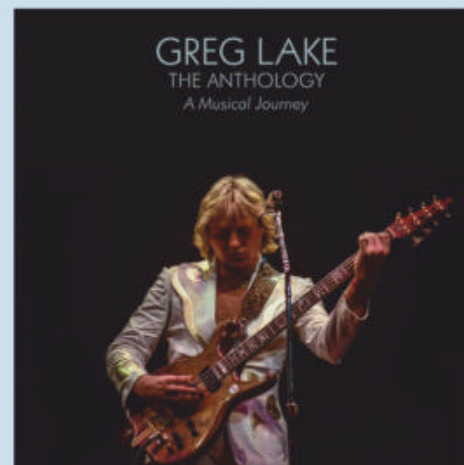
earnest and wilfully portentous, but their late 80s mood came across as rather weary and disengaged, and therefore wearying and hard to engage with. The listener can almost hear their own attention, preoccupied with legal and financial feuds with Waters, wandering now and again.

That said, as this coasts through *Shine On You Crazy Diamond*, or *Time*, or *Us And Them*, there is actual, bona fide, alchemical greatness in the room, and all the bad haircuts and dad jeans on the planet can't dilute that. It probably sounded pretty amazing to those cosmonauts too. Polished for this release – the accompanying Grammy nominated concert film was also recently screened at cinemas – it's more thunder than blunder. **CR**

GREG LAKE

The Anthology - A Musical Journey BMG

Career spanning double CD set with 60-page book.



The *Anthology – A Musical Journey* is a prosaic title for a storied collection. Its 33 songs plot the extraordinary career path of one of prog's premier singers and songwriters. The story begins in Dorset in the 60s with Greg Lake's confident baritone voice already standing out on singles by The Shame and The Shy Limbs. Robert Fripp went to the same guitar teacher as Lake in Bournemouth and invited him to join King Crimson, which necessitated



**This is a place where
all Lake's songs can
find a home together.**



switching from lead guitar to bass. The two recorded versions of that group's gentle, hymnal *Peace A Beginning* bookend this collection, which also includes a majestic live performance of *The Court Of The Crimson King* at The Fillmore West on December 15, 1969, the day before Lake discussed joining forces with Keith Emerson. Another song from this period, *21st Century Schizoid Man* is represented in a rocking 1981 live version by Lake's own band, with Gary Moore flamboyant on guitar.

Take A Pebble is one of Lake's best songs, with Emerson, Lake & Palmer's three way interaction both subtle and dazzling, and his rhythmically fluid bass playing showing a lead guitarist's melodic touch. He has been described as the soul of ELP, although the trio's considerable instrumental firepower was largely demonstrated around his songs, which often stood out as light relief. This stylistic balance was crucial to the group's early success but was upset on the solo showcases of *Works Volume I*, where a full side of Lake's ballads put him both in the spotlight as a writer and separated this strand of his creativity further from the group's collective identity. But one of the main reasons this anthology works so well is that it's a place where all of Lake's songs can find a home together. For example, the impassioned *For You* sounds so much better taken out of the context of the sub-standard *Love Beach*, as does *Touch And Go* when separated from 1986's *Emerson Lake & Powell*.

Lake was lyrically direct and could, at times, come across as rather hammy, as on *The Only Way (Hymn)* from *Tarkus*, with its clunky critiques of organised religion. But this strategy also gave us the disarmingly emotional *Oh My Father*, an outtake from that album. A later highlight is the witty survey of love as the great leveller on *Slave To Love* from his 1983 solo album *Manoeuvres*. And *I Believe In Father Christmas* remains the best Christmas song ever written.

Lake's studio output dried up in the years before his death in December 2016, but all these vocal performances – right up to a 2012 live rendition of the King Crimson song *I Talk To The Wind* – are compelling, and delivered with feeling.

MIKE BARNES

ROGER DEAN

PATHWAYS EXHIBITION 2020

1st November - 31st December 2020

New Original Paintings • Rare Sketches • Watercolours • Logos
Iconic Album Artwork • Concept Drawings • Virtual Events

In association with...

PROG

Explore the Pathways Exhibition with our first ever
Virtual Reality Tour using the following QR code
or by visiting gallery.tradingboundaries.com/tour



Trading Boundaries, Sheffield Green, East Sussex, TN22 3RB

TRADINGBOUNDARIESFINEART.COM | ROGERDEAN.COM



JO QUAIL

Five Incantations ADDERSTONE

UK prog's cello champion puts the past on plastic.

With a ability to wring the most extraordinary, otherworldly sounds from her instrument, cellist Jo Quail deserves her reputation as a modern prog maverick. Whether collaborating with Mono and Emma Ruth Rundle or blowing minds with 2018's mesmerising full-length, *Exsolve*, she operates in a field of one.

As far back as 2016's *Five Incantations* - remastered and reissued here with one previously unheard bonus track - Quail was blurring the lines between the experimental avant-garde, somnambulant post-rock and prog's drama. Opening sprawl *White Salt Stag* is a sinister, percussive affair, underpinned by a fidgeting staccato pulse but beautifully restrained, like some malevolent, parallel dimension Penguin Café Orchestra.

In enchanting contrast, *The Breathing Hand* is a stripped-down, mellifluous fever dream, interwoven melodies expanding and contracting in a fog of reverb. The hypnotic *Salamander* is next: eight minutes of



slow-build dissonance and keening hooks, that begins aboard a clicking, ominous metronome before disintegrating into amorphous drones and whistling feedback. Austere but untamed, *Between Two Waves* suggests a new, darker form of chamber music, while the closing *Gold* is

simply astonishing: a skewed exercise in ebb, flow and red-eyed repetition, it leaves traces of magic in the air long after the final chords and echoing thumps have dissolved to silence.

For those sensible enough to covet this re-release on vinyl, that bonus track is, for once, a genuine treat. A live version of *The Breathing Hand*, recorded with the choir of Polish ensemble Capella Gedanensis and their cellist Alicja Lach-Owsiany, it's almost unbearably moving, and somehow manages to make the original version sound a little sterile and-restrained. Which, of course, it isn't in the slightest.

Rightly reborn on vinyl, *Five Incantations* remains a singular statement and the musical equivalent of a long, hot bath for the soul. **DL**

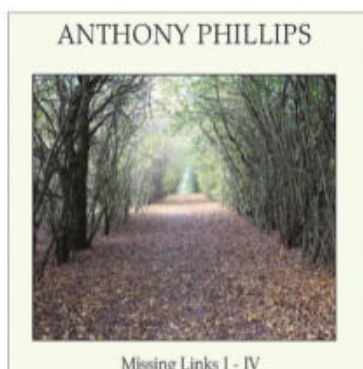
ANTHONY PHILLIPS

Missing Links I-IV CHERRY RED

Vic Stench's astonishing ambience. Captured.

Of the Charterhouse Four that comprised the original Genesis line-up - Tony Banks, Peter Gabriel, Mike Rutherford and Anthony Phillips - it's Phillips' lot that seems to be the most enjoyable as the years pass. There's certainly little question about just how prolific the guitarist has been, and as the only one of the four not to have had a No.1 single in the US, Phillips has been truly unencumbered by expectation, with a lucrative parallel career creating music for adverts and soundtracks - not to mention some residual royalties from *The Knife* - enabling his cottage industry to continue.

Missing Links began life as a cassette series in 1989, to gather up Phillips' TV and soundtrack work. The popularity of the first release led to three more albums of this facet of his work; and here, in this beautifully produced clamshell set, the four collections are gathered with an extra disc of 27 further unreleased tracks. Each of the original albums (*Finger Painting*, *The Sky Road*, *Time & Tide* and



Pathways & Promenades) all evoke windswept plains, circling leaves, well-wrapped scarves and rising smoke from bonfires on the heath. Even on the recordings he made in the late 80s, Phillips manages to imbue enough sincerity in his material to easily

overcome the standard synthesised noises du jour.

If readers have ever wondered who provided that keening, yearning music under a slow-motion bat flying across some fabulous wilderness on the telly, it's probably Anthony Phillips. *Tropical Moon Over Dorking Suite* has all the grandeur of Genesis with none of the stadium pretentiousness; *Sky Dawn* from *Missing Links IV* is absolutely beautiful - just Phillips and the defining sound of his 12-string guitar, which went on to inform his old group long after he left.

With annotations by noted Phillips expert Jon Dann, *Missing Links I-IV* is another release which serves the much-loved multi-instrumentalist very well indeed. **DE**

TANGERINE DREAM

Pilots Of Purple Twilight - The Virgin Recordings 1980-1983 VIRGIN/UMC

Electronic pioneers' early 80s era gets the box set it deserves.



Tangerine Dream might always be best known for the run of mind-blowing albums they recorded in the 1970s, but as amply demonstrated on this sumptuous box set - which includes remasters of *Tangram*, *Thief*, *Exit*, *White Eagle*, *Logos - Live* and *Hyperborea*, plus discs of rare and unreleased material and a hardback book - they remained one of the world's most innovative bands well into the 1980s.



This music still pushes the boundaries of technology.



While in many ways tonally distinct from their earlier material, the music the Tangs made during this period still pushes the boundaries of technology, particularly in the areas of sequencing and sampling, but also introduces an enhanced melodicism thanks to the addition of classically trained pianist Johannes Schmoelling.

Tangram bridges the decades, its dense, criss-crossed arpeggios and synthesised woodwind offset by Edgar Froese still occasionally letting rip on guitar. It's easy to hear why the band became in-demand soundtrack composers, their brooding electronic vistas instantly giving any film a steely, modernist edge. That's certainly the case on the music they produced for Michael Mann's *Thief*, yet the looser, even bluesy vibe of *Beach Theme* and the gothic swagger of *Dr Destructo* belies their image as cosmic overlords surrounded by banks of frightening machinery.

Exit was one of their most successful 80s albums, although its once cutting edge sounds feel a bit dated. Nevertheless, the title track was used in *Stranger Things*, which based its entire musical aesthetic on TD, and the four-to-the-floor synthedelia of *Network 23* was a favourite of Orbital. However, the underrated gem from this era is 1982's *White Eagle*. The sleek, utopian propulsion of the side-long *Mojave Plan* is a precursor of the house and techno scenes that followed, *Midnight In Tulsa* is moody European synthpop, and the shimmering, geometric title track is one of the most beautiful pieces of electronic music. Following a tour of Japan, *Hyperborea* saw TD incorporating more abstract, Eastern melodies and rhythms, particularly on *No Man's Land*.

But it's the extras that hardcore fans will lap up. There's the complete 1982 London Dominion concert, from which *Logos - Live* was derived, a great example of their ability to arrange long-form compositions for real time audiences. More intriguing still are two unreleased soundtracks: *The Soldier* is all stark military drums, deep drones and nervy arpeggios, while *The Keep* is an electro-classical curate's egg, entirely befitting Michael Mann's nutzoid supernatural drama.

JOE BANKS



THE LIGHT IN THE OCEAN

THE PSEUDO-
SCIENTIFIC STUDY
OF OCEANIC NEO-
CRYPTID ZOOLOGY

Download/Purchase at
TheLightInTheOcean.com

".....their excellent second LP is packed with hefty, intelligent modern music...elegant arpeggios... moody atmospheres, and extra points for the nutso 10 minute prog vaudeville Hamilton Bog Boys..."
—*Prog Magazine* 113

"...the duo offers a particularly rich music melodically and harmonically, dotted with beautiful vocal passages...superbly crafted melodies...true sense of harmony and rhythm, all complemented by a very beautiful production.."
—*progcritique.com*

"...a beautiful combination of everything you can do with music. It is complicated but not unattainable... I am so happy that this exists."
—*wheelchairhero.com*



Open your window and listen to the fantastic debut album from PLUS 33!
Influenced by progressive rock from the 70s, jazz and classical music.



11 weeks in a row top of the chart at "Music in Belgium"

"Very talented musicians are behind this well crafted music, where everything sounds simple and beautiful - What a joy, to find a progressive music of such quality!"

PROG CENSOR

"The secret of harmony."
Big Bang Magazine

"Fine contemplative, fusion-style progressive music album. There's a lot of sophistication on display, tastefulness, chances to look within, and to open any window you may wish to explore."

www.progressiverockfantastic.wordpress.com

"A real talent for composition, ambitious and intelligent arrangement...
Highly recommended!"

Rock Highlands Magazine



Album distributed by Cosmos Music
Distribution: www.cosmosmusic.fr

DELIA DERBYSHIRE

The Myths & The Legendary Tapes ANTI-WORLDS

A splice of psyche-Delia.

This engaging 98-minute docu-drama was written, directed, and stars Caroline Catz, who plays pioneering electronic musician Delia

Derbyshire in a series of affectionate dramatisations interwoven with commentary from some of those who knew and worked with the composer alongside vintage interview footage.

Being an innovative woman in the early 1960s in an almost exclusively male domain resulted not only in her work being undervalued but perniciously ate away at her sense of self-worth. Yet we see her being a pivotal force beyond the lab-coated BBC's Radiophonic



Workshop, first in Unit Delta Plus with Brian Hodgson and Peter Zinovief, both of whom provide cogent observations on their time with Derbyshire,

and later, as a member of White Noise with Hodgson and David Vorhaus.

Leaving the BBC behind in the early 70s, along with her distaste for the increasing dominance of synthesisers in electronic expression, her creativity faded away as she was increasingly subsumed by the alcoholism that would eventually kill her in 2001, aged 64. Filled with her extraordinary presence, this is a thoughtful, tender elegy to a visionary talent. **SS**

OPETH

Book Of Opeth ROCKET 88

Swedes' visual biography gets an updated reprint.

First published in 2016 as a £40 hardback and wallet-emptying £250 special edition, *The Book Of Opeth* was a lavish, photo-heavy account of the Swedes' unlikely journey from death metal malcontents into the planet's foremost purveyors of modern-vintage metal tinged prog.

This new paperback reprint allows anyone who missed out on the original to fill the gap between Mike Oldfield and Ozric Tentacles on their bookshelves at a more austerity friendly cost, while also bringing the story up to date with a section on 2019's *In Cauda Venenum*. The latter means more unseen photographs and insight into



the making of the album (including the revelation that guitarist Fredrik Åkesson had a small heart infarction during recording and had to have stents inserted).

Criticisms of the original book revolved around the fact that Opeth were hardly Mötley Crüe and this wasn't *The Dirt*, which missed the point. You

wouldn't go to hair metal's premier bozos for complex cerebral prog epics, so why should you come to Mikael Åkerfeldt for tales of rock'n'roll excess? Instead, *The Book Of Opeth* lays out the fact that few other bands have created a musical universe that's as unique and brilliant as they have. **DEV**

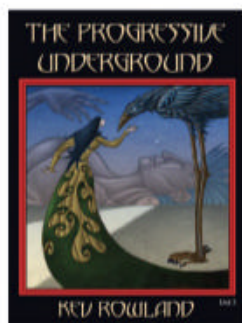
KEV ROWLAND

The Progressive Underground Vol 3 GONZO MULTIMEDIA

Warm and honest take on prog's wilderness years.

The third compilation of Kev Rowland's reviews from his *Feedback* fanzine is warm, honest and engaging. It is also, like the best underground writing, unvarnished and unencumbered by any expectations of PR; the reviews in *The Progressive Underground Vol 3* are clearly done for no other reason than the love of the genre.

The period Rowland covers here - 1991-2006 - are the years when progressive rock was truly out on a limb, unloved, and interred to its niche. Even those who had adored the genre until 1976 had distanced



themselves. Taking his reviews from T to Z, we learn the difference between the many Transatlantic albums, and also what the best Tristan Park recording is.

Alongside some great interviews (Manfred Mann and Richard Sinclair are but two), the live reviews are the best: Steve Hackett at

Whitchurch Parish Hall on May 20, 1993 on a tour warm-up, and Rowland's warming to ReGenesis in August 1999 are absolute highlights. This is a great book for those who would like to understand the missing years between *Misplaced Childhood* and *Fear Of A Blank Planet*. **DE**

BIG BIG TRAIN

Empire ENGLISH ELECTRIC

A sumptuous document of a band in imperious live form.



Beautifully shot and stylishly packaged, this must-see Blu-ray captures Big Big Train's performance at London's Hackney Empire back in November 2019, the last night of their well-received UK Grand Tour. "I'm glad we chose to record this show," writes singer David Longdon in the liners. "It was an important moment in Big Big Train history." Concerts have been a rare part of that history, but when they've happened - from Kings Place to the Night Of

Big Big Train can hold their own live with the very best of them.

The Prog Festival in Germany - the sense of event has been palpable, and so it is here.

In this beautiful theatre, Big Big Train are 13 members strong (including Cosmograf's Robin Armstrong and Dave Desmond's essential brass ensemble) and perform music from their latter day catalogue in highly accomplished style. Stunning prog epics like *Voyager*, *Winkie* and *Theodora In Green And Gold* are sumptuously delivered to a highly receptive crowd, with the four-part vocal arrangements really coming to the fore. Given the quality of the material, the pedigree of the players and the crystal sound mix from trusted engineer Rob Aubrey, the richness of the musical information coming off the stage is often overwhelming.

Opener *Alive* is them at their most accessible, a hooky song crafted for the stage by Longdon, who is such a singular, engaging presence. With slightly gawky, warmly knowing theatricality, he dons pilot's goggles in *Brave Captain* (a performance that leaves him in a heap on the stage floor), wears his Green Man mask in *Wassail*. He sips from his big Union Jack mug then quietly expounds on Da Vinci in the pre-amble to the beautiful *The Florentine*.

Watching Nick D'Virgilio playing drums is like watching Roger Federer play tennis: he's simply sublime, born to do it. Greg Spawton - stoic and focused on bass here - has said that Big Big Train is a band of frontmen, with Longdon and D'Virgilio joined by Rikard Sjöblom, who plays some incredible, gutsy guitar and synth, with a perma-smile on his face. Stage left, Dave Gregory weaves his own consummate spell, enriching the likes of goosebump inducing closer, *East Coast Racer*.

Sadly Gregory, uber-talented keyboardist Danny Manners and Rachel Hall (whose soaring violin and sweet vocals add so much texture to the band's sound) have all since left the ranks. There's a tinge of nostalgia then, even sadness, in seeing this chapter in the band's history come to a close. The next is yet to be written, but let *Empire* show that by 2019 Big Big Train could hold their own with the very best of them. They'll always have Hackney...

GRANT MOON

The perfect gift for just £44.99*

PLUS

FREE MARSHALL MODE EARPHONES

**WORTH
£49.99**



- The Mode headphones come equipped with microphone and remote for use with your mobile phone.
- Combined with excellent audio, a tangle-

resistant cord and unique styling that embodies the Marshall legacy.

- With unique in-ear design that anchors to your ear, Mode comes with four different-size

sleeves, enabling you to find the perfect fit.

- Mode offers huge sound in a small package. Customised drivers deliver high-output sound at minimal distortion.



Your special Christmas offer

- FREE Marshall earphones worth £49.99
- Enjoy 12 months of Prog for just £44.99 – that's just £4.09 per issue!
- Receive every issue delivered direct to your door
- FREE CD with every print issue
- A thoughtful gift that keeps delivering throughout the year



Upgrade to include digital for only £10

- Instant access any time, anywhere
- Never miss an issue of PROG
- Available on IOS and Android

Order the gift that keeps on delivering

www.magazinesdirect.com/prgxmas

OR CALL 0330 333 1113 AND QUOTE BCS2

*Terms and conditions: Offer closes January 31, 2021. Offer open to new subscribers only. Direct Debit offer is available to UK subscribers only. £44.99 payable by annual Direct Debit or credit card plus free gift worth £49.99. Orders purchased as a gift before December 21, 2020 will start with the first issue published in January. All gift orders purchased after this date will begin with the first available issue. If you would like your gift subscription to start with an earlier issue please contact customer services. Orders purchased for yourself will start with the next available issue – please allow up to 6 weeks for delivery (up to 8 weeks overseas). Your gift will be delivered separately within 60 days after your first payment has cleared. Gifts only available to subscribers on the UK mainland. In the unlikely event that we run out of this gift, we promise to offer you an alternative gift of the same value. Payment is non-refundable after the 14-day cancellation period unless exceptional circumstances apply. For full terms and conditions, visit www.magazinesdirect.com/terms. For enquiries please call: +44 (0) 330 333 1113. Lines are open Monday- Friday 9am- 5pm UK Time or email: help@magazinesdirect.com. Calls to 0330 numbers will be charged at no more than a national landline call, and may be included in your phone provider's call bundle.

Where's home?

Saltaire, near the Yorkshire Dales. It's like this hipster enclave full of musicians from Leeds, where I cut my teeth gigging.

Earliest prog memory?

My dad's record collection was vast, and when I was six years old I really loved Jeff Beck's 70s and early-80s albums, like *There & Back*, when he was becoming a fusion guy.

First prog album?

It was Joe Satriani's first album, *Not Of This Earth*, when I was nine. For me, he's definitely a progressive artist.

And the last?

Tesseract's *Sonder*. When it came out it got this crushingly bad

review in the *NME* which made me *really* want to listen to it – and it sounds amazing!

First prog gig?

The Jack Bruce Blues Band at

a blues festival in Colne, Lancashire, about 1991. Dick Heckstall-Smith was in the band playing saxophones, sometimes two at once! It was this incredible blues-jazz-crossover thing. I was only 13 and it was my first real 'muso' experience.

And the latest?

Thomas Leeb. He's a solo fingerstyle guitarist like me, and probably the most progressive of all of us. That was last summer at a guitar camp, on the side of a mountain in Austria!

Newest prog discovery?

The Punch Brothers. They're a bluegrass band who play 10-minute tunes segueing between baroque, jazz and blues. Their musicianship is off the scale, and they're not gimmicky – what they do is art.

Guilty musical pleasure?

I've been listening to Madonna's [1986 album] *True Blue*. It's a very reassuring listen in the middle of



Jon Gomm

The great and good of progressive music give us a glimpse into their prog worlds. **As told to Grant Moon**

a pandemic, and *Live To Tell* is a great power ballad – brilliant key changes, and I love the reverb...

What would your specialist subject be on Mastermind?

It would definitely have to be the *Buffy The Vampire Slayer* universe!

Favourite prog venue?

I've played Download and in incredible halls in China, but my heart lies in The Cricketers Arms in Keighley, West Yorkshire.



You can get a pie, mushy peas and a pint of crystalline real ale, and play to a packed house of 40 people.

Who's your prog hero?

Michael Hedges reinvented steel-string acoustic guitar, took it somewhere else entirely. All of us 'new breed' of modern fingerstyle

I saw the cover of ...*Topographic Oceans* and was instantly fascinated.

guitarists once put on [seminal Hedges album] *Aerial Boundaries*, and had our life changed.

Have you ever had a prog date?

I know it's cheating but my wife has a degree in jazz! We recently went to see Béla Fleck and the Flecktones, and it was as proggy and muso-y as you could possibly get – they're a musical genre unto themselves.



Who do you call in the prog community for a good night out?

Matt Stevens of The Fierce And The Dead, and fusion guitarist Tom Quayle. Both phenomenal players, and both good friends.

Recommend us a good read!

Eleanor Rigby by Douglas Coupland. His prose is beautiful, they read like lyrics.



Which prog muso would you most like to work with?

Joni Mitchell. To me she's a goddess of musicality and progressive vision.

Which proggy album gets you in a good mood?

I don't like to be happy! But I can really cocoon myself in Jeff Buckley's *Grace*. Each song is a little world in itself, it's like a little voyage.

Your favourite prog album cover?

Tales From Topographic Oceans by Yes. I saw it in my dad's collection when I was a kid and was instantly fascinated. I even bought the T-shirt!

What are you up to at the moment?

My new album, *The Faintest Idea*, is out now. It's the first album I've done that I actually love. I did have a UK tour planned but, well, you know...! I'm looking into doing regular online gigs with special guests, that's the dream. But it's so tough at the moment.

For more, visit www.jongomm.com.

New releases from

GIANT ELECTRIC PEA



IQ's classic album 'Frequency' available again on CD featuring exclusive bonus track 'The Province' recorded live in 2009



Double 12" vinyl edition with gatefold sleeve & four page lyric sheet on marble effect vinyl with bonus track 'Already Gone'



'Singularity' by Rain, double 12" vinyl edition with gatefold sleeve on purple 'splatter effect' vinyl



'Singularity' by Rain, the stunning debut CD featuring John Jowitt & Andy Edwards (ex IQ)



'Sia' the beautiful new CD by Solstice
'An album of lush, refreshing and emotionally nourishing compositions' - **PROG** magazine



'Sia' by Solstice, double 12" vinyl edition with gatefold sleeve & lyric sheet on yellow vinyl



www.gep.co.uk/store