

DEEP in conversation

As this most legendary of rock bands returns to the fray with new album 'Whoosh!', Dave Ling speaks to frontman **Ian Gillan** and drummer **Ian Paice** about more than 50 years of **Deep Purple**, avoiding becoming human jukeboxes, and whether they're sick and tired of 'Smoke On The Water'. And of course we couldn't resist bringing up Ritchie Blackmore!



Photo: Getty Images/Ron Howard/Redferns

HALF A CENTURY AGO – on 5 June 1970 – Deep Purple released their fourth studio album. The aptly titled 'In Rock' introduced the group's Mk II line-up, the former Episode Six pair of singer Ian Gillan and bassist Roger Glover joining existing members guitarist Ritchie Blackmore, keyboard player Jon Lord, and drummer Ian Paice. The shake-up would establish Purple as one of the most creative and popular acts of the 1970s and beyond.

Following a series of personnel changes and an ignominious dissolution circa the 'Come Taste The Band' album in '76, the Mk II line-up returned eight years later and in one form or another Deep Purple have remained active ever since. With Blackmore quitting for a final time in 1993 and Lord opting to retire in 2002 (he sadly died a decade later), their current incarnation of Gillan, Glover,

Paice, former Dixie Dregs/Kansas guitarist Steve Morse, and the much-travelled keyboardist Don Airey has proven to be extremely durable. It feels odd that Morse has been a member of Deep Purple for far longer than The Man In Black.

Since teaming up with producer Bob Ezrin of Pink Floyd, Alice Cooper, Lou Reed, and Kiss fame back in 2013, Purple have made the best music of the latter half of their career. 'Whoosh!', a third collaboration between the group and their über-producer was due in June. But thanks to "the dreaded lurgy", as Gillan calls the Coronavirus, its release date was moved back to 7 August. In separate phone conversations *Rock Candy Mag* quizzed Gillan and Glover about the band's past, present, and future. Here's what they had to say...