

ROCK CANDY

April - May
2018

FOR THOSE WHO WERE
RAISED ON ROCK

HEART

NANCY ON THE
HIGH HAIR YEARS

LED ZEP

'CODA'
DECODED

BLACK OAK

ARKANSAS

RESPECT
IS DUE!

STEVE VAI

"MUSIC ISN'T A
COMPETITION"

HEAR 'N AID

THE INSIDE
STORY

DEF LEPPARD

FIGHTING
WITH KROKUS

BÖC

WHEN
AXES COLLIDE

WISHBONE

ASH

THE
AMERICAN
ADVENTURE

SLAYER

'REIGN IN
BLOOD'
REVISITED

QUIET

RIOT

ON TOP
OF THE
WORLD

FASTWAY

EDDIE
CLARKE'S
OTHER BAND

VINNY

APPICE

"I DIDN'T
EVEN DRINK
MUCH!"

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ROCK CANDY

WELCOME

CELEBRATING THE MAJESTY OF Aerosmith in this issue brought back some great memories of seeing the band live on their first ever UK tour back in October 1976. Four dates had been announced in London, Birmingham, Glasgow and Liverpool, and I'd scored a ticket to see the band play at the capital's Hammersmith Odeon venue on 17 October, supported by prog rock band Phoenix, a spin off from Argent. Although the venue was busy, the show wasn't a sell out. That was no surprise, though, as hardly anyone in the UK had heard of the band, despite their enormodome status in the US. The UK release of 'Rocks' that year had certainly blown *my* mind, though. Most of the reviews in the music weeklies had been pretty dismissive, but highbrow critics always dismissed hard rock. At grass roots level we knew better, and a UK Aerosmith performance – like Kiss earlier in the year at the same venue – was hugely anticipated by those in know.

IN A surprise move, the band's UK label CBS adopted a proactive stance, taking out full page adverts in the music papers and even pressing up a neat, four-track, promo-only picture sleeve single, leaving a copy on every seat in the Odeon. I still have mine to this day. When the band came on stage that night they looked amazing. Steven Tyler was wearing an incredible red and black leopard-print cat suit, with multi-coloured scarves wrapped around his mic stand. Joe Perry brandished his patented sneer and gloriously tousled black hair. They made most of our homegrown rock stars look positively pedestrian. I don't remember the entire set list, but the tracks from 'Rocks' stood out. 'Lick And A Promise', 'Last Child', 'Sick As A Dog' and 'Rats In The Cellar' couldn't have been more mind-altering.

AFTER THE show I went around to the backstage door in the hope of saying hello to the band. Suddenly Tyler appeared in the dark alley. He was carrying a bottle of Jack Daniels and had to walk right past me. I think I mumbled something like 'Great gig Steve', to which he replied 'Thanks man, have this', promptly handing me the bottle before stepping back inside the venue. Like the free single, I still have that half-full bottle to this very day!

WE ARE honoured to have insight into the band's history in this issue, provided by a classic and revealing 1976 interview in the States with Tyler, together with a brand new interview with 'Nite Bob', the group's legendary soundman who lived it all with them during this glorious period. Read on and be amazed!

Derek Oliver – Master Of Mayhem
derekoliver@rockcandymag.com



E-mail:
editorial@rockcandymag.com
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www.rockcandymag.com

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THIS ISSUE'S BIG QUESTION - WHO HAD THE BEST HAIR IN ROCK?

THE TEAM
Owner and Publisher: Derek Oliver

Santana and Journey guitarist Neal Schon totally owned the Afro style during the early '70s. It looked like a giant personal airship had landed on his head.

Editor: Howard Johnson
Angel keyboardist Gregg Giuffria with his immensely long, two-tone curtains!

Editor at Large: Malcolm Dome
Boston drummer Sib Hashian (RIP). Ludicrous, lush and determinedly '70s, nobody was more follicly frolicsome.

Art Director: Andy Hunns
Angel guitarist Punky Meadows. None more bouffant.

Production: Louise Johnson
Sib Hashian looked like a giant teddy bear, which has its merits. But for sheer rock goddery, it has to be Robert Plant!

Creative Direction: Julia Melanie Goode

Sib Hashian, because his Afro was big enough to have its own gravitational field.

Web Guy: Ross Sampson

The Who's Roger Daltrey had the best curls in rock, closely followed by GN'R guitarist Slash!

Social Media Guru: Michael Brandvold

Def Leppard frontman Joe Elliot. He did the mullet better than anyone else in the '80s and inspired me to grow one.

CONTRIBUTORS

Jerry Ewing

Def Leppard bassist Rick Savage circa 1987. Top 'do'!

Giles Hamilton

MC5 frontman Rob Tyner (RIP), whose 'white panther' locks seemed to have their own dance moves.

Jon Hotten

For sheer consistency of style and the fact that it may or may not be a wig, Mötley Crüe guitarist Mick Mars.

Alison Joy

Crüe drummer Tommy Lee. His heyday hairdo was big, black

and primped. No danger of T-bone getting the droop!

Dave Ling

Neal Schon in 'walking tumbleweed' mode. His hair had its own zip code.

John Nicholson

Always loved Randy Rhoads's effort. So what if it was a direct copy of Mick Ronson's barnet?!

Dave Reynolds

Rod Stewart. A true rock star hairdo of the '70s. Often copied, never truly beaten.

Xavier Russell

The Tubes frontman Fee Waybill performing as ageing glam rocker Quay Lewd. That was one amazing barnet!

PHOTOGRAPHY

Avalon Photoshot Collection

Getty Images

IconicPix

Rich Galbraith

Julia Goode

Tony Mottram

Ron Sobol

Mark Weiss -

www.weissguygallery.com

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

I could go on all day about the genius of Aerosmith in all their '70s glory. Quite often I do. But Derek the boss has already waxed lyrical about the Boston legends in his Welcome piece for this issue of *Rock Candy Mag*. Suffice to say, then, that I know you'll absolutely love our classic 1976 Steven Tyler interview and a fascinating piece with the band's '70s soundman 'Nite Bob' Czaykowski. Elsewhere in *Rock Candy Issue 7* we've put absolutely everything into cramming our mag full of prime cuts of '70s and '80s rock. We've pulled together exclusive interviews with so many of rock's greats - including Steve Vai, Wishbone Ash, Nancy Wilson of Heart, Black Oak leader Jim Dandy, and drumming legend Vinny Appice - that we know you're going to spend many a pleasurable hour reading words of wisdom from all of these legends. What a privilege it is to talk to these amazing musicians. And they call this working! As you most likely know by now, *Rock Candy Mag* is available in stores worldwide or directly from our website at www.rockcandymag.com, so you can choose the best way for you to get hold of it. Please let us know what you think of our magazine.

A word in passing for our sister re-issues label, Rock Candy Records. We've really gone all out with an awesome re-issue of the criminally underrated LA band Legs Diamond and their astounding debut album from 1977. With a massive 12 bonus tracks included, believe me when I say this is a must-have for any classic hard rock fan. For more details visit www.rockcandyrecords.com.

Right, I'm off to strut my stuff to 'Satin Peacock'. In the meantime, enjoy the issue!

Howard Johnson - Editor
Email me at hojo@rockcandymag.com



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Stuart tells all about working cheek by jowl with the Led Zep leader on the album the band released following the death of drummer John Bonham.

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Eight page special! Black Oak provided the soundtrack to many American rock fans' lives growing up in the '70s. *Rock Candy* talks to Jim Dandy, the band leader who made it hip to be hillbilly.

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In the wake of Motörhead legend 'Fast' Eddie Clarke's untimely death, Howard Johnson looks back at the life and times of Fastway, the guitarist's much-underrated 'other band'.

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Saddle up with us and ride into 14 pages dedicated Aerosmith in all their '70s splendour!

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Rock Candy hooks up with Aerosmith soundman and confidant Nite Bob for a fascinating exclusive interview about what it was really like at the heart of the band in their '70s heyday.

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The group's 'Argus' period is well-documented, of course, but we at *Rock Candy* wanted to go deeper into Ash's 1976 'New England' album, a brilliant yet often overlooked piece of work. Dave Ling talks to Martin Turner, Andy Powell and Laurie Wisefield to bring you a fascinating tale...

74 RAPID FIRE RECALL – STEVE VAI

The guitar genius discusses Zappa, David Lee Roth, Whitesnake, and much, much more in our regular quick-fire feature...

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86 REAPPRAISED – SLAYER'S 'REIGN IN BLOOD'

Thrash shook up the world of metal like nothing before, and Slayer's 'Reign In Blood' was acknowledged as the most extreme form of the genre when it first appeared back in 1986. So how has it stood up to the test of time? Xavier Russell finds out...

88 STRIKTLY FOR KONNOISSEURS

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Rock Candy Records yet again delivers the goods, bringing you mighty re-mastered reissues of the seminal first Legs Diamond album (complete with 12 bonus tracks) and the second release from Liverpool rockers Nutz. Are we good to you or what?

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The 'old school'-oriented product that caught our eye this issue includes Toto guitarist Steve Lukather's autobiography, a DVD focusing on the rise of thrash in LA, three Saxon reissues, and a bumper Fist CD.

94 THE INSIDE TRACK – LITTLE CAESAR VOCALIST RON YOUNG ON BAD COMPANY

He may have blown his lines when he finally met his idol Paul Rodgers, but Ron Young still knows his Bad Co. inside out. Here are his tips on how to get the very best out of the band.

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We need your support to keep the music we all love alive!



ROCK CANDY WRITER PLAYLISTS

THERE'S GREAT ROCK MUSIC ALL OVER YOUTUBE, THE PROBLEM IS FINDING IT. SO LET US TAKE THE PAIN OUT OF SEARCHING WITH OUR EASY-TO-ACCESS PLAYLISTS.

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FIVE TUNES WITH A HEART CONNECTION Chosen by Jerry Ewing

Montrose - 'Bad Motor Scooter' (Montrose - Bad Motor Scooter (Old Grey Whistle Test))

A fledgling Montrose perform the incendiary 'Bad Motor Scooter' on a 1974 edition of UK TV show *The Old Grey Whistle Test*. Their raw power is obvious, though it's interesting how guitarist Ronnie Montrose hogs the space in front of soon-to-be Heart drummer Denny Carmassi's kit, where you'd expect to see frontman Sammy Hagar. Wonder why it didn't last?!

Spirit - 'I Got A Line On You' (Spirit - I Got A Line On You (1984) Original Video)

Originally recorded on their second album, 1968's 'The Family That Plays Together', this version is taken from Spirit's 1984 reunion album, 'The Thirteenth Dream', and is considerably heavier than the original. Featuring Mark Andes on bass, also a member of Heart at the time, the video remind us what an underrated talent Randy California and his band really were.

Alias - 'More Than Words Can Say' (Alias - More Than Words Can Say)

Soft lighting. An empty white warehouse. A man standing staring wistfully out of the window. It can only be a '90s power ballad. Yes, it's Canadian AOR band Alias with a track from their eponymous 1990 debut. This is great melodic rock and is something Alias and former Heart members Roger Fisher (guitar), Steve Fossen (bass) and Mike Derosier (drums) should be proud of. Sadly, though, things didn't last. Why? Because grunge was just around the corner...

Alice In Chains - 'Grind' (Alice In Chains - Grind)

Did I say grunge? Here's the opening track from Seattle residents Alice In Chains's third studio album, 1995's 'Alice In Chains' with a strange old man and a three-legged dog involved. The band address the tumult of rumours surrounding the health of singer Layne Staley here. Sadly Layne would die in 2002, and 'Alice In Chains' would be the band's last studio album to feature him. Bassist Mike Inez however, would go on to play bass on Heart's 2004 release, 'Jupiters Darling'.

Bad Company - 'Bad Company' (Bad Company - Bad Company ReWIND)

The legendary Bad Company, complete with Heart guitarist Howard Leese in the ranks, perform their signature title track live in 2016, not long before guitarist Mick Ralphs sadly suffered a debilitating stroke. Have to say, the band are really firing on all cylinders here. The fact that this is one of hard rock's most legendary tracks helps, of course!



FIVE AWESOME SCI-FI ROCK CLASSICS Chosen by Mick Wall

Black Sabbath - 'Neon Knights' (Black Sabbath-Neon Knights Video Oficial)

Sabbath always 'dabbled' with sci-fi themes during the Ozzy-era, but once former Rainbow vocalist Ronnie James Dio joined them in his Young Merlin outfit for 1980's 'Heaven And Hell' album they entered a new era of lyrical mysticism and future legend fantasy. Dio crowing of "dragons and kings... bloodied angels [and] phantom figures" means little without Tony Iommi's crunching riffs, of course, but this track features one of his best.

Queen - 'Flash' (Queen Flash - Official Video)

Perhaps the greatest sci-fi rock anthem of them all, this condenses an entire 111-minute movie into just two verses and one repeated refrain - "Flash! A-ah!" The snippets of dialogue from the movie are tremendously daft and this promo video seamlessly meshes the band grooving in the studio with film clips that whizz along in the background.

Hawkwind - 'Sonic Attack' (Hawkwind Brian Blessed - Sonic Attack Official Video)

On stage, where this Hawkwind song became a major highlight, Robert Calvert would chant its narrative-lyrics over the warning-siren backdrop of back-feeding guitars and synths. This version from 2014, however, features Brian Blessed in the role, as Calvert sadly died in 1988. Blessed brought that great booming theatrical voice of his to complement an extraordinary planet-hopping video.

Iron Maiden - 'Seventh Son Of A Seventh Son' (Iron Maiden - Seventh Son of a Seventh Son Live at the NEC 1988)

With the power to heal and second sight, the seventh son of the seventh son was more than just another sci-fi hero. When they made this the title track of their 1988 album, Iron Maiden were capable of delivering all the musical grandeur such a subject demanded. The real reason for watching this clip, though, is that it captures the splendour of Maiden's classic line-up in full flow.

Def Leppard - 'Rocket' (Def Leppard - Rocket Music Video)

This video for the 'Hysteria'-era classic is quite something - and not just because of Joe Elliott's unbelievable mullet! Leppard implore us to take a rocket with them back to the golden age of '60s and '70s rock where we get to meet Jack Flash, Jean Genie, and the Killer Queen among others. An interesting concept for a video and a song that's better than you remember.



FIVE GREAT SONGS FROM UNDERRATED LINE-UPS OF CLASSIC BANDS Chosen by Malcolm Dome

Deep Purple - 'King Of Dreams' (Deep Purple - King Of Dreams (1990))

Rainbow revisited? It seemed so when guitarist Ritchie Blackmore brought in vocalist Joe Lynn Turner to replace Ian Gillan in Deep Purple. But while the 1990 'Slaves And Masters' album did take the Purps into commercial territory, people forget that it was stuffed with excellent songs. 'Kings Of Dreams' is perhaps the best of the lot, as this promo video shows, despite Turner's extraordinary hair!

Iron Maiden - 'Futurereal' (Iron Maiden Futurereal (official video))

A lot of people thought Maiden's decision to replace vocalist Bruce Dickinson with Wolfsbane's Blaze Bayley was inexplicable. Nevertheless, there were moments when the altered line-up really delivered the goods. This song from 1998 provides the proof. It suited Bayley well and on this official video, featuring the band in full flow live, the singer both looks and sounds like he truly belongs. 'Futurereal' could have been something for this

version of Maiden to build on. Sadly, it wasn't to be...

Van Halen - 'Without You' (Van Halen Without You (1998) (Music Video) WIDESCREEN 720p)

Was the Van Halen era with former Extreme vocalist Gary Cherone between 1996 and 1999 utter tripe? No. It wasn't awful, and 'Without You' proves the point rather well, I think. The video is shot in some frozen wasteland and Eddie Van Halen wears a tremendously silly hat. But we'll let him off that sartorial *faux pas*. His masterful guitar wailing dovetails neatly into Cherone's confident vocal. This Van Halen needed time to gel, and I reckon a second album could have been great. It never happened, so sadly we'll never know.

Black Sabbath - 'Headless Cross' (BLACK SABBATH Headless Cross Official Video HD)

Sabbath vocalist Tony Martin said Ozzy could never sing anything from his time in Sabbath in the '80s and '90s. Most Sabs fans couldn't understand why Ozzy would want to sing any of those songs. That doesn't mean, though, that Martin's time with the band was worthless. 1989's 'Headless Cross' is actually a great record. The title track is prime Sabbath, filled as it is with ominous riffage and combative rhythms. And the video features spooky monks, which in our book is always a good thing!

Uriah Heep - 'Think It Over' ("URIAH HECP" - "THINK IT OVER" Arthur von barbarian)

This isn't the version from 1982's 'Abominog' featuring vocalist Pete Goalby and keyboardist John Sinclair. Rather, this is 'live for TV' with John Sloman on vocals and Canadian Gregg Dechert on keys. The song was originally released as a single in 1980, but sank without trace. For me, though, the Sloman/Dechert recording has way more fire about it than the 'Abominog' version. This incarnation of Heep soon disintegrated and that's a shame, because as this video for 'Think It Over' demonstrates, it could have been the start of something special.

No Hot Ashes

"Their take on traditional hard rock themes is colourful and warm. 8 out of 10." *Classic Rock*

"Classy, widescreen debut from reunited Northern Irish melodic rockers. The sheer joy evident in its 10 tracks is intoxicating *****"

Planet Rock Magazine

"'NHA' is worth the wait. And then some." *Hard Rock Hell Magazine*

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When art and volume collided, what we got was the unmistakable Blue Öyster Cult...

BLUE ÖYSTER CULT WERE always the thinking man's metal band. For sure they were heavy. After all, the group's self-styled guru and manager, Sandy Pearlman, handpicked the musicians for Soft White Underbelly in 1967 specifically to be America's answer to Black Sabbath. But Pearlman also wanted the band to perform his lyrics – lyrics that were based on *poems* he'd been writing. The band's arty pretensions and roots in the psychedelic scene of the late '60s set them apart from other more straightforward groups, and attracted more artistic critical interest in amongst those who were primarily attracted to the crunch.

HAILING FROM Stony Brook in Long Island, Soft White Underbelly became Blue Öyster Cult in 1971 and were signed to Columbia by music business doyen Clive Davis that same year. Their debut, 'Blue Öyster Cult', was released in January 1972, with the vinyl housed in a beautiful black and white sleeve designed by artist Bill Gawlick. Featuring songs that would soon become band staples such as 'Cities On Flame With Rock And Roll' and 'Then Came The Last Days Of May', the album again showed that BÖC was something out of the ordinary. Follow-up release, 1973's 'Tyranny And Mutation', marked the start of a number of collaborations with arty musician, songwriter and poet Patti Smith with one co-written number titled 'Baby Ice Dog'. Once again BÖC proved that they were always looking outside of the rock field for a point of difference.

OF COURSE it was '(Don't Fear) The Reaper', written by guitarist and vocalist Donald 'Buck Dharma' Roeser and taken from 1976's 'Agents Of Fortune' album, that established the band as true giants. The song – which Roeser insists was *not* a tune praising suicide – is rightly hailed as a rock classic. The album went platinum and Roeser, guitarist and vocalist Eric Bloom, keyboardist Allen Lanier, bassist Joe Bouchard and his drumming brother Albert became part of rock's aristocracy.

IN THEIR heyday, Blue Öyster Cult live performances were hailed as unmissable. 1975's 'On Your Feet Or On Your Knees' double live LP was in the vinyl collection of anyone professing to know their rock at the time, and the energy that burned off the stage whenever the band performed was second to none. Buck Dharma and Eric Bloom loved nothing more than doing both musical and physical battle, as this wonderful 1970s image shows – always looking to make their axes scream out in pain. We as fans never hurt so good! 🗡️

HOWARD JOHNSON

DATELINE: 1975



Eric Bloom (left) and Donald 'Buck Dharma' Roeser indulge in some major guitar alchemy...



Photo: Getty Images/Richard McCaffrey/Michael Ochs Archives

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER

ROCK CANDY'S DAVE LING LEAFS THROUGH THE BACK PAGES OF THE UK ROCK PRESS TO BRING THE BIG NEWS ITEMS OF THE DAY BACK TO LIFE AND ANALYSE HOW THOSE STORIES REALLY PLAYED OUT...



Def Leppard stay calm in the face of Swiss provocation

IT'S HANDBAGS AT DAWN AS LEPPARD TAKE ON KROKUS!

DATELINE: 1-14 DECEMBER 1983
MAGAZINE: KERRANG!

SITTING ALONGSIDE THE BAND'S mums and dads, *Kerrang!* writer Dante Bonutto flew from London to California to experience the hullabaloo surrounding top English rock export Def Leppard's hugely successful 'Pyromania' tour. But besides witnessing an excellent gig at the LA Forum, he also found himself ringside in a dispute between the headliners and their precocious Swiss support act Krokus - a dust-up that allegedly boiled over into a physical altercation between the respective managers of the two groups.

Bonutto was moved to predict that the spat would rate "high on the list of topics to be discussed/distorted" in future years "on long, lig-less nights when music biz folk huddle round a blaze, warming brandy and swapping tales of wonderment and woe."

And why wouldn't it? The thought of two famous acts washing their dirty laundry in public and their managers getting in on the act isn't something you read about every day of the week. This unseemly kerfuffle didn't entirely deflect attention away from the importance of Leppard's overseas triumph, though. And Bonutto's *Kerrang!* story pointed out three pertinent facts that also offered a stark reminder of how much work was

still required to repeat the success on English soil.

Firstly, Leppard had shifted five times as many copies of 'Pyromania' in Seattle alone than they had throughout the UK. Secondly, the weekly total UK sales of all three of their existing albums fell short of the figure for 'Pyromania' Stateside. And finally Leppard had become the first band to sell out two shows of 12,000 people per night - in Omaha, Nebraska.

Somewhat unnecessarily, the story saw vocalist Joe Elliott boast: "There are certain places in the States where I could shit onstage and they'd clap." Oh well... At the Forum Leppard were joined by Brian May for a cover of Creedence Clearwater Revival's 'Travelin' Band', and dressing room guest stars included Nancy Wilson from Heart and a certain 'Diamond' David Lee Roth. Having kicked off the tour at London's pint-sized Marquee Club back in January, the Leps were set to return for three theatre gigs, including London's Hammersmith Odeon. They were making progress at home, but only gradually.

BUT WHAT about that dust-up with Krokus? It had all begun when the support band disobeyed an order that climbing the headliners' scaffolding or ascending the

1983

steps to the PA was forbidden. On their first night on the tour, vocalist Marc Storace did both. Twenty-four hours later Joe Elliott watched Krokus's set and was stunned to hear Storace repeating everything Leppard's singer had said the night before – making it seem like Elliott was mimicking his opening act.

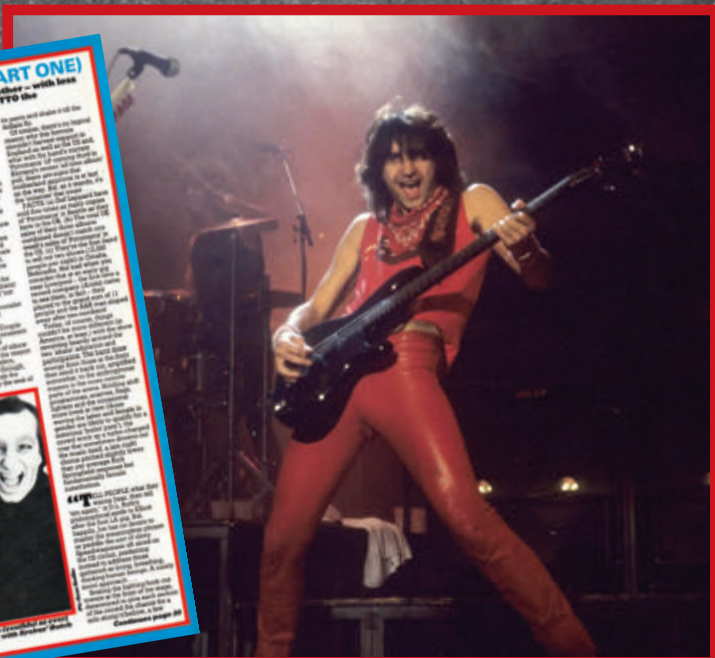
Then came an article in American rock mag *Circus* where Krokus manager Butch Stone claimed his band were blowing Leppard offstage every night, before then laying into Leppard manager Peter Mensch. "Stone is 20 years older than Peter and he's jealous as hell of him," Elliott told Bonutto. "He's the eternal supporting manager, and a rip-off merchant." Elliott added that at one point Rick Allen had Stone "up against a wall – and I was a close second. And as for the claim that Krokus were too hot for us... that's bullshit!"

IN A separate story in the same issue Malcolm Dome invited Storace and Stone to respond to Leppard's claims. The way that Stone told it, Mensch saw red after the *Circus* story. "He just pointed at me and said, 'You're a dead man'," Stone told *Kerrang!* "Where I come from you greet such a threat either by cowering in the corner or slugging the guy. I floored him."

When Leppard band members and crew arrived at the scene Joe Elliott "started giving me verbal abuse without being fully aware of why I'd punched Mensch, and Rick Allen, the little weasel, hid behind a crew guy and bravely grabbed me by the shoulder."

Stone had no issue with Mensch's management partner Cliff Burnstein, but believed the former had enjoyed an easy ride in the management game "under the protective wing of the Leber-Krebs organisation." His success wouldn't last for long, he believed. "I've been around for longer than he has," Butch boasted, "and I'll still be here long after he's forgotten."

Storace admitted breaking Leppard's stage rules, but justified doing so by saying it was unfair that Krokus were banned from using pyros or dry ice. "I've got a rebellious nature which comes out when I'm treated like that." Nobody was safe from Storace's ire, not even Uriah Heep, who took Krokus's place on the tour. Although it was reported that the Swiss band were kicked off the dates prematurely, Leppard claim the booking was only for a month. Resurgent with their 'Head First' album, Mick Box and company were nevertheless dismissed by Storace as "old and finished compared to us." Somebody definitely got out of bed on the wrong side that morning.



Krokus bassist Mark Kohler. No sign of their punchy manager, though

ROCK CANDY SAYS...

EVEN BACK IN THE day this pairing was something of a mismatch, but 35 years later no boxing authority in its right mind would allow Krokus to get back into the ring with Def Leppard. At the time of the bust-up 'Pyromania' sold six million copies and has now shifted more than 10 million in the United States alone, making it certified diamond (that's 10 x platinum!) Its successor 'Hysteria', meanwhile, is one of the biggest-selling albums of all time, also certified diamond, taking root in the US charts for three years and notching over 25 million sales worldwide.

1983 WAS one of Krokus's best years. They collected a gold disc for their seventh album, 'Headhunter', then repeated the feat with 'The Blitz' the following year. The band's brief groundswell in America soon subsided, though. Leppard still headline or co-headline at arena level on both sides of the Atlantic, but their rivals' most recent visit to the UK was as part of the Hard Rock Hell Festival bill in Wales. It's fairly clear which group has survived best...

SO WHAT about their respective managers? Well, Butch Stone has been in the business since 1969, representing Black Oak Arkansas, discovering Jimi Jamison and helping to launch Cheap Trick, so he certainly had a head start on Peter Mensch. But now in 2018 Stone is best known as a concert promoter in the Arkansas area.

Still in partnership with Burnstein, Mensch, by contrast, remains among the most successful names in music management. Their Q-Prime organisation parted company with Leppard in 2005, but has handled the likes of Metallica, Jimmy Page, The Red Hot Chili Peppers, Muse, The Black Keys and many more, while also working with the Rolling Stones and Madonna.

"I'll still be here long after Mensch is forgotten" Really? We suspect Butch Stone might just regret saying that...



The Quiet Riot line-up that made it to Number One with 'Metal Health'. L-R: Rudy Sarzo (bass), Carlos Cavazo (guitar), Kevin DuBrow (vocals), Frankie Banali (drums)

QUIET RIOT IMPROVE METAL'S WEALTH

DATELINE: 12 NOVEMBER 1983

MAGAZINE: SOUNDS

IN NOVEMBER OF 1983 LA outfit Quiet Riot became arguably the first ever heavy metal band to top America's *Billboard* album chart when 'Metal Health', released way back in March of that year, made it to Number One. This was due in no small part to the Top Five success of 'Cum On Feel The Noize', a souped-up cover of English band Slade's glam-tastic smash hit from 1973.

THE ALBUM'S rise to prominence was slow but steady, and *Sounds* magazine dispatched writer Garry Bushell to New York to file a report as the quartet supported Iron Maiden. 'Metal Health' was outselling the headliners' 'Piece Of Mind' and Quiet Riot had already supported ZZ Top and Loverboy, with further dates as guests of Black Sabbath on the horizon. It hadn't harmed their cause, either, that they'd appeared at the now-legendary US Festival, playing to 375,000 fans. Sure enough, just as *Sounds* filed their story, 'Metal Health' bounced 'Synchronicity' by the Police from that all-important top spot.

"Like Oldham Athletic, Quiet Riot are a contradiction in terms," Bushell wrote. "There's nothing in the least bit quiet about them. They're loud and lairy, delightfully dumb, and their songs consistently flaunt rough-arsed melodies and savagely contagious chorus refrains."

LET'S NOT forget, however, that 'Cum On Feel The Noize' – the single that had lit the touch paper for the band's success – was not a Quiet Riot song. Bushell wrote that

on the first occasion he'd seen the band live, months earlier at the Cow Palace in San Francisco, "I had to look twice to make sure that [lead singer Kevin DuBrow] wasn't Noddy Holder stomping on the stage."

So he considered it "sacrilegious nonsense" that face to face in New York, DuBrow would have the gall to declare: "I never listened to Noddy Holder. I always used to think he was a poor man's Steve Marriott. So maybe that's what I am too."

Pushed further, the singer, who eventually became infamous for his brash, ego-ridden statements, added with a completely straight face that he'd seen Slade in concert, opening for Humble Pie. "Noddy definitely had something, but I wasn't sure about the band," Kevin insisted in the interview.

Quiet Riot's denial of the group's debt to Slade was laughable, and one can only wonder what Holder made of the band as he collected the royalties.

DUBROW HAD been a member of Quiet Riot – originally alongside guitarist Randy Rhoads – since the mid-1970s. Released in Japan only, the band's first two albums were, according to the singer, "rubbish", and they broke up when Rhoads opted to join Ozzy Osbourne and became a household name in the world of rock. Quiet Riot were, however, reborn in the summer of '82. Randy had sadly died in a plane crash in March of the same year.

DuBrow was now an A-Lister in his own right. Bushell wrote in the piece about a party thrown in Quiet Riot's

honour at the “posh Parker Meridien Hotel” – one of those soirees “where people think you’re weird if you go to the toilet to urinate.”

A debut visit to the UK with Judas Priest was looming, and DuBrow couldn’t have been more excited. “Everything we do in our music comes from England,” he said. “It’ll cost us thousands of bucks [to go there] but it’s worth it.”

THERE WAS no doubt that DuBrow had grafted hard to achieve his success, but you can’t help wondering whether he should have been just a little bit more respectful about those people who’d helped to put him on his pedestal.

“All my dreams are coming true now, and three times as fast as I ever thought they would. Where do I go from here?” the singer mused.

“When it’s over, it’s time to quit,” he continued. “All my fave bands got messed up – I’d rather quit before I get messed up. It’s a big mistake to lose the hunger and start taking the audience for granted. The Who always delivered with Moon – they should have stopped when he died. It’s hard to know when the time’s right to stop, but I think I’ll know.”

ROCK CANDY SAYS...

THOUGH KEVIN DUBROW DIED of an accidental cocaine overdose in 2007 and was still a member of the band at the time, Quiet Riot were a textbook example of a group that really didn’t know when it was time to quit.

‘Metal Health’ sold a hugely impressive six million copies in the US, but after such a mega-selling album its creators struggled to rid themselves of the derogatory ‘one hit wonders’ tag. Featuring another Slade cover in ‘Mama Weer All Crazee Now’, 1984’s follow-up to ‘Metal Health’ – titled ‘Condition Critical’ – only went platinum, marking a huge reduction in sales, even if it was still a massive number of units. DuBrow became perhaps more famous for his outlandish comments and jibes about other metal bands than for his singing and after he once joked or suggested that Ozzy Osbourne sang “like a frog” Mötley Crüe’s



Nikki Sixx dismissed Quiet Riot as no more than a bar band made good.

When ‘QR III’ – rather confusingly their *fifth* album – failed to stop the rot, DuBrow left the band. Paul Shortino of Rough Cutt replaced him for 1988’s ‘QR’ release and DuBrow wouldn’t sing with the group again until the early 1990s, by which time Quiet Riot were a club band. They split in 2003, only to reform just over a year later.

WHEN HIS body was discovered in his Las Vegas apartment, Kevin DuBrow was just 52 years old. He’d already been dead for six days. The tragic news caused many to reassess Quiet Riot’s importance to the rock and metal scene and its rebirth during the 1980s.

Three years after the singer’s death, the band’s ‘Metal Health’-era drummer Frankie Banali put Quiet Riot back together again, claiming that he had the blessing of the DuBrow family. A rockumentary movie telling the group’s convoluted story, *Well Now You’re Here, There’s No Way Back*, was released in 2014, and a line-up featuring Banali and Chuck Wright, who played selected bass parts and sang backing vocals on ‘Metal Health’, continues to the present day.

DuBrow had the last laugh on all those who told him that he and Quiet Riot would never make the grade. But what a price he had to pay...



Aldo Nova gives it some guitar histrionics back in 1983



ALDO NOVA: "THE CRITICS ARE GONNA KILL ME!"

DATELINE: 17-30 NOVEMBER 1983

MAGAZINE: KERRANG!

ALDO NOVA WAS ON a high. Eighteen months had passed since the Canadian singer and musician introduced himself to the world with a massively successful eponymous debut that reached multi-platinum status, spawning two hit singles in 'Fantasy' and 'Foolin' Yourself'. Aldo had co-penned the song 'Take Me Away' with Eric Bloom for Blue Öyster Cult's 'The Revölation By Night' album. Now with his first British shows on the horizon, as special guest of BÖC, the question was whether Nova could do it all over again.

THE EARLY signs had looked good. Critiquing new album 'Subject... Aldo Nova' in the pages of *Kerrang!*, Xavier Russell had noted that "the Nov has tried to be more adventurous" second time around, declaring the album "a must for AOR fanatics."

However, it fell to *Rock Candy* editor Howard Johnson to conduct *Kerrang!*'s interview, and HoJo couldn't decide whether or not 'Subject...' – half of which was conceptually based – was his cup of tea. "The album doesn't hang together as strongly as it should," he said. Nova responded that it would have been simple to make a carbon copy of the debut, but he preferred to put six months into fine-tuning its contents, scrapping the original plan to make a full-blown concept piece.

"It's set in a post-nuclear war world and the main character, the subject, is a kind of monk-like figure," Nova explained. "It's basically a musical portrayal of his experiences around this world, from New York to Africa, because he's one of the very few who remain [alive]." Aldo emitted a wry laugh. "It's very political. The critics are gonna kill me."

AWARE THAT his record could be viewed as pretentious, during the recording stages Nova trimmed back the interlinked parts. Among the tunes added was a version of 'Hey Operator', originally recorded by his Canuck countrymen Coney Hatch. "The radio programmers wouldn't have been able to handle the continuity thing," Aldo suspected. However, 'Subject...' saw the guitarist rocking out in more convincing fashion than ever. "I can't even listen to the first album now," Nova admitted, revealing that work on a third record had already begun. "On this LP I've managed to get the heaviness and sophistication that I've always craved," he claimed.

Indeed, HoJo was happy to admit: "The more 'Subject...' grows on you, the more you accept the album as a first-rate piece of rock. It's certainly top heavy with Aldo's axe, and that can be nothing but a good sign. My digit seems to be gradually motioning upwards."

ROCK CANDY SAYS...

THOSE UK SHOWS WITH BÖC went well, but in a broader sense the record-buying public shared Johnson's uncertainty over 'Subject...'. It provided two singles in 'Monkey On Your Back' and 'Always Be Mine', but although the latter was a minor hit in his homeland, neither song made the American charts. Sales of half a million copies Stateside were respectable enough, though Nova's label, Portrait Records, demanded he write in a more commercial manner for 1985's 'Twitch'. It was all too much for Aldo, who tried – unsuccessfully – to get out of his recording contract. When the label said no, Nova decided to wait things out until the deal ran out in 1991. In the meantime he began producing other artists, including Celine Dion, with whom he won a Grammy in '96.

ALDO HAD become friends with Jon Bon Jovi when they met at the Power Station Studios in New York, and Nova had sung backing vocals and played on 'Runaway' – a song from Bon Jovi's first album, issued in '84. When the Portrait contract expired, Jon Bon Jovi signed Nova to his Jambco imprint for the 1991 back-to-basics set 'Blood On The Bricks', helping to write many of its best songs. This was payback for Nova having contributed to JBJ's solo debut 'Blaze Of Glory' in 1990.

MANY YEARS afterwards Nova would admit that the concept behind 'Subject...' was inspired by "too many B-movies, drugs and booze," also acknowledging that he'd covered 'Hey Operator' in the hope of getting to produce Coney Hatch. "It didn't work, to say the least," he laughed.

ALDO'S MOST recent solo outing was 'Nova's Dream', a mainly instrumental album released way back in 1997. He continues to work as a producer, as well as a writer for other artists, including *American Idol* star Clay Aitken and the Chilean rock group La Ley.

"People didn't get 'Subject...' back then," commented Nova three years ago. "It was super-advanced; maybe too advanced."



SNIPPETS – SHORT, SHARP SHOCKS FROM NOV-DEC 1983

OSZY SPENDS £50,000 ON THE 'BARK AT THE MOON' SLEEVE

DATELINE: 3-16 NOVEMBER 1983

MAGAZINE: KERRANG!

Through gritted teeth Ozzy Osbourne revealed that this was the full cost of the striking image of himself as a werewolf that graced his third solo album. The 50 grand figure included the services of make-up maestro Greg Cannom, a wig made of real hair worth £2000 and the services of photographer Fin Costello. The teeth were free, though!

DIO AND WAYSTED ROCK HARD IN MANCHESTER

DATELINE: 1-14 DECEMBER 1983

MAGAZINE: KERRANG!

Howard Johnson was blown away by support act Waysted's first-ever live display on the opening night of a British tour to promote Dio's debut, 'Holy Diver'. "This was in every way a stunning performance," he also reported of the headliners, "highlighting that Ronnie has more of a claim to the songs featuring his vocals than either Messrs Iommi or Blackmore."

STARS REVEAL THEIR NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS FOR 1984

DATELINE: 29 DECEMBER 1983-11 JANUARY 1984

MAGAZINE: KERRANG!

"I'm gonna try to give up cursing," promised Dee Snider of Twisted 'Fucking' Sister. "But I don't think that stands a chance of happening." Elsewhere, Michael Schenker swore "to keep myself under control and not to drink alcohol." Ahem!

SLADE FEEL THE NOIZE

DATELINE: 29 DECEMBER 1983-11 JANUARY 1984

MAGAZINE: KERRANG!

Slade had been reactivated with 'The Amazing Kamikaze Syndrome' and Noddy Holder was thrilled by Quiet Riot's success with 'Cum On Feel The Noize'. "It's stood the test of time rather well," he said. Unbelievably, Noddy admitted that his own band didn't even have a US record deal at the time.



Girlschool 1983 vintage. L-R: Denise Dufort (drums), Kelly Johnson (guitar), Kim McAuliffe (guitar and vocals), Gil Weston (bass)

GIRLSCHOOL PLAY DIRTY

DATELINE: 19 NOVEMBER 1983

MAGAZINE: SOUNDS

TYING IN WITH A supposed sporting theme of their fourth album, 'Play Dirty', *Sounds* teamed Girlschool up with the members of a west London rugby club for a bawdy interview and photo session. Given that the band had made a sensible, commercial record intended to reverse a career slump, it seems unfathomable why they might have agreed to the magazine's bizarre plan. But they did, and it has to be said, the results were anything but boring.

The whole escapade felt like something out of *St. Trinian's* from the moment bassist Gil Weston piled into the back of a car with writer Garry Bushell and announced, "I've spent so much time in the toilet lately, if it's not cystitis it's thrush." Weston and drummer Denise Dufort's dislike of one another – "Look at this photo of Denise, she looks like a horse" – only added fuel to the fire, resulting in the pair being separated by band manager Doug Smith. "And to think we got rid of Enid [Williams] because she didn't get on with Denise," sighed guitarist and singer Kim McAuliffe.

Everybody piled into the changing rooms as Tony Mottram's camera shutter clicked. "Whose hand was that?" Dufort squawked indignantly. "I tried to pee in the bath," Weston giggled. "I always pee in the bath."

NONETHELESS, THE *Sounds* story captured a big era of change for the girls, the sophistication of 'Play Dirty' making a bold pitch for the American market. A week earlier in the same publication Geoff Barton had lavished praise on the album, noting both the group's downward trajectory ("Something had to be done to stop the rot, or 'School wouldn't only be out for the summer, but the other three seasons as well") and the album's obvious similarity to the release of the year – Def Leppard's

'Pyromania'. McAuliffe didn't deny the latter claim. "We saw them at Hammersmith and they were brilliant," she said. "We decided that was the direction we wanted to go in.

"We listened to Foreigner as well. I've always said I liked Foreigner," added Kim before realising she was giving a little too much away. "We also have a bit of Girlschool in there."

"Yeah, but you can only calculate so far," added guitarist Kelly Johnson, annoyed slightly by the Machiavellian implications of McAuliffe's comment.

IT SEEMED both logical and timely to discuss how 'Play Dirty' came to be produced by the Slade duo of Noddy Holder and Jim Lea, who also supplied the tracks 'High And Dry' and 'Burning In The Heat'. Spencer Proffer of Quiet Riot fame had been keen to handle the production duties at his California base, but he was turned down on patriotic grounds.

"They were brilliant, lovely blokes," Dufort said of Holder and Lea. "They really get down to it."

Er... what?

"Oi! None of that!" McAuliffe guffawed.

THOUGH KIM tried to steer the conversation elsewhere,



all was clearly not good between the band and their record label, Bronze. Denise felt the label had omitted the album's best track, a slice of in-your-face reverse sexism called 'I Like It Like That' that only appeared on the cassette edition.

Though Girlschool were uncertain whether their fans would accept 'Play Dirty', Weston insisted: "We'll play the UK next March whether they're interested or not."

THE FINAL words went to Johnson, who believed that 'Play Dirty' might legitimise Girlschool and their music. "It gives us a chance, but I do think the last album ['Screaming Blue Murder'] was a mistake," she admitted. "We should have been more adventurous then and not now."



The girls rock out!

ROCK CANDY SAYS...

CONTEMPORARY WISDOM ISN'T PARTICULARLY

kind to 'Play Dirty', though it stands up extremely well in the Girlschool catalogue all these years later. Perhaps they went overboard with the keyboards and those Holder-Lea sonics are a little too pristine. But the quality of the songwriting is undeniable, and the band's remake of Marc Bolan's '20th Century Boy' rates among the best covers of the glam titan's tunes.

As Barton pointed out, 'Play Dirty' was an album Girlschool *had* to make. Johnson may also have had a point, though. They should have done it earlier.

Girlschool were working with their heroes Noddy Holder and Jim Lea, and it's easy to defer to experience. But the band's fans decided 'Play Dirty' was a step too far. Lord only knows what they made of its America-only successor, 'Running Wild', which saw the band add a new lead singer, Jackie Bodimead.

IN THE UK 'Play Dirty' fell short of the Top 40 for the first time in Girlschool's career. It took off at radio level in the States, but Kim believes the album was killed by record company politics. "It was being added to dozens of radio stations, but Bronze got into a big argument with the American company and we were left sitting around in New York for two weeks while it was sorted out," she told me in a 2002 interview.

Girlschool then had to watch as Quiet Riot's Spencer Proffer-produced 'Metal Health' topped the *Billboard* chart – thanks largely to a cover of Slade's 'Cum On Feel The Noize'. Johnson (who sadly died of spinal cancer in 2007) would then quit the band. Girlschool have gamely battled on, though, and continue to chalk up the miles in 2018, justifiably proud of their legacy, though not without the occasional backwards glance.

"Thinking back," mused Kim in the aforementioned interview. "We probably should've gone to LA [to work with Proffer] and done the heavy metal thing."

SNIPPETS – SHORT, SHARP SWOOPS FROM NOV-DEC 1983

HEAVY PETTIN RELEASE 'LETTIN LOOSE'

DATELINE: 3-16 NOVEMBER 1983

MAGAZINE: KERRANG!

The Scottish answer to Def Leppard offered up their highly anticipated first album, produced by Queen guitarist Brian May. "We were a bit wary," singer Hamie told Neil Jeffries. "We didnae want to sound like Queen, but it's turned out really good – especially for a debut."

WOMESICK MICKY MOODY QUILTS WHITESNAKE

DATELINE: 3-16 NOVEMBER 1983

MAGAZINE: KERRANG!

Confirming what was described as an "amicable" split, long-serving guitarist Moody had recently got married and was finding "the pressures of prolonged touring away from home and family increasingly more difficult." His replacement in Whitesnake? Former Tygers Of Pan Tang and Thin Lizzy man John Sykes.

'SHOUT AT THE DEVIL' DISMISSED AS "SOMETHING OF A DISAPPOINTMENT"

DATELINE: 15-28 DECEMBER 1983

MAGAZINE: KERRANG!

In a three-page cover story, Dante Bonutto admitted being underwhelmed by Mötley Crüe's second album – notably its vocal-heavy, glossy production. "Why Tom Werman and not Eddie Kramer?" he complained, going on to praise only 'Looks That Kill', 'Red Hot' and 'Danger', as well as the band's updated image; a "futuristic, clothes-as-weapons" look.

PERSON OF INTEREST

ROCK CANDY SALUTES THE ROCK STARS WHO DID THINGS DIFFERENTLY...



FRANK

MARINO

FRANK MARINO CERTAINLY DID do things differently, but most likely not for the reasons you might at first think.

Most people who believe they know about the Canadian guitar player recount a tale of how, early on in his career, the now 63 year old claimed to be a reincarnation of Jimi Hendrix. There's only one problem, though. It isn't true.

"The story goes," explains Frank on his own website, "that I took an overdose and woke up from a coma in the hospital and somehow became the spirit of Hendrix. Later on the story changed into a version that said I was in a car accident, died and came back as Jimi Hendrix, but in my body. People never asked me for the truth and when I told them, they wouldn't listen."

But the real story as to how Francesco Antonio Marino of Montreal first took up the guitar is, in our view, way more bizarre. Frank actually started to play the instrument while recuperating in hospital from a bad acid trip. Back in 1968, when Frank was just 13 years old, the youngster spent a summer expanding his mind with LSD. After three bad trips within the space of a month Frank was admitted to hospital.

"In the hospital I needed a catharsis of some kind," he told *Kaos2000* magazine back in 1999. "Some way to keep my mind off of what was going on with me, because the trip was a terrifying experience. One of the things I started doing was playing guitar."

After finally being released from hospital, Frank says it took him a year before he felt emotionally stable enough to leave his mother's house. And all he did during this period was "play and play and play and play."

For the next seven years Frank described himself as "pretty fucked up." This seems fairly accurate. He started playing in bands, but at first didn't want to record anything for fear of 'selling out'. The various loose aggregations of musicians eventually coagulated around the name Mahogany Rush. Why? Because Frank had previously described his horrendous experience with acid as "becoming kind of a tree." They were "the words I would use to describe what was happening to me to the doctors. I'd say, 'I'm having a Mahogany rush.'"

MARINO MAINLY played covers by acts such as The Doors, Hendrix, Pink Floyd and Cream, but slowly started to add original material to the repertoire. Just a month before his 18th birthday, on 31 October 1972, Mahogany Rush – featuring Marino on guitar, keyboards and vocals, Phil Bech on piano, Johnny McDiarmid on organ, Paul Harwood on bass, and Jimmy Ayoub on drums – released their first album, 'Maxoom', for the Nine Records/20th

Century Records label. Marino is credited as producer.

By the time second album, 'Child Of The Novelty', appeared in 1974 the band had shed both keyboardists. The power trio of Marino, Harwood, and Ayoub would then go on to record 1975's 'Strange Universe', before signing to Columbia for 1976's 'Mahogany Rush IV'. But Frank and the music industry never really got along.

"Signed," he once said. "That always gets me. What does that mean? The whole 'signed' thing is so stupid, because it's almost celebrating going to jail."



Frank Marino & Mahogany Rush. L-R: Paul Harwood (bass), Jimmy Ayoub (drums), Frank Marino (guitar and vocals)

FRANK MARINO & Mahogany Rush, as the band would be called for 1977's 'World Anthem', would go on to record a further three albums for Columbia in what many consider to be Marino's most creative period. By the time 1980's 'What's Next' was released, Frank's brother Vince had joined the band on rhythm guitar. But while that album pierced the US *Billboard* 100, Frank remained a cult artist. Not even a 1978 appearance in front of 350,000 fans at the California Jam II Festival alongside Aerosmith and Ted Nugent could force a major breakthrough. His experience of such a big-time event perhaps explains why Marino never scaled major commercial heights.

"It was the worst experience of my life," he recalled of Cal Jam II. "Because it was so fake! People were walking around crowing about the fact that this was the

biggest crowd ever. Like that fucking means anything!"

1982'S 'JUGGERNAUT' saw drummer Jimmy Ayoub replaced by Timm Biery, but the line-up change did nothing to alter the band's commercial fortunes and it turned out to be their last recording for Columbia.

"To this day I don't give a shit about commerciality," said Frank. "I don't give a shit about money. I used to tell people: 'Business has no business in the music business.' That's how I really, really was. And I'm still that way."

There have been only a handful of solo albums since that Columbia period, together with sporadic touring. Importantly, Frank's been drug-free for well over 30 years. Four of Marino's albums ('Frank Marino & Mahogany Rush Live', 'What's Next', 'The Power of Rock And Roll' and 'Juggernaut') have been lovingly reissued by Rock Candy Records and Frank has talked of a DVD project in the pipeline. His official Facebook page says there are some six hours of material he's working on. Will this latest project from a reluctant rock star ever see the light of day? Who knows? But you should do yourself a favour and check out Frank Marino's body of recorded work. Rock music doesn't come much purer or more powerful. 🤘

Triumph's Rik Emmett (left) and Mike Levine performing live in Chicago, 29 December 1984



TRIUMPH - 'THUNDER SEVEN'

DATELINE: 19 NOVEMBER 1984

Illustrator and designer **Dean Motter** reveals the secrets behind **Triumph's** iconic 1984 sleeve for their seventh album...

"THUNDER SEVEN' WAS THE second album cover I did for Triumph. I'd done the art direction on Loverboy's 1980 debut record that sold a million copies in Canada alone, and so my studio was getting a lot of commissions in the early '80s and was quite high profile at the time, I guess. It was a lucrative period for the album cover business. I got a four-figure Canadian dollar fee for putting the 'Thunder Seven' artwork together, which was great. Back then, I had three assistants and a business manager and was one of the busiest album cover designers around. I was nominated for a Juno [Canada's equivalent of the Grammys] six times and won two. One was for 'Seamless' by The Nylons and the other for Anvil's 'Metal On Metal'.

"I WAS friendly with Triumph and their management and everyone was very happy with the work I'd done on [1982's] 'Never Surrender'. We were all very much on the same page, both artistically and socially.

"At the time the band were completing 'Thunder Seven' [Swiss painter] H. R. Giger was very popular. He'd done things like ELP's 'Brain Salad Surgery' and Debbie Harry's 'KooKoo', so the band were really keen for him to produce the sleeve for 'Thunder Seven'. Triumph's label, MCA, asked Giger if he was interested, but for whatever reason he passed. I said, 'Look, I can ape Giger.' I really wanted to have a go and do my own version of his style.

"IT TOOK me about six weeks to pull the artwork together from blank page to fully completed. Initially I drew the piece in pen and ink, but the final artwork was created mainly in watercolours with some acrylic. I was thinking a lot about James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*

novel at the time, and about his 'thunders' [ten invented 100-letter multi-syllabic words in the novel that sound like thunderclaps and represent the reverberations of important changes in human history]. That seemed to fit in with the themes the band were writing about, such as the passing of time and how technology affects humans. I really put a lot into the work.

"THE BAND didn't really know what they were after, apart from wanting their logo prominent, and wanting the cover to be really striking. MCA were interested in having an input too, but they were handcuffed to a degree because the band had already made sure they had strict artistic control over their records. Triumph were calling the shots. I think I gave them 'striking', though.

"When I showed them the first pass they thought it was a little too grizzly and the label wasn't happy about the artwork either. I think everyone thought it was a bit too depressing. Maybe it was too dark and grey, so I went away and rendered the image of the skeleton man in chrome to make it more metallic and that worked well. It really made the image stand out.

"THE '80S was my favourite era for design. Record companies had a decent budget, I had a lot of freedom and the work had some artistic integrity to it. Record companies were happy to pay, because they understood that a cover was a big part of the marketing of an album. They wanted records to look good. Later, they changed their thinking and cut budgets drastically. I don't think I could even make a living doing sleeve design today the way we once did."

"The orange border was a record company decision after I'd submitted the artwork. I thought it was unnecessary and I hate that salmon colour. It's not the worst colour they could've picked, but it's not the best either. I think the idea of adding colour was to make the album stand out in the racks. They were afraid it would be too grey and get overlooked when it was in the stores. I don't think they were right, but I suppose I could see their point."

"I was a big fan of James Joyce and when Triumph told me the title of the record I asked them if they were familiar with *Finnegans Wake* and what the 'thunders' were in that book. But they hadn't heard of it. While they didn't really know which way to go with the cover, they always wanted strong imagery and I guess that's what I gave them."



"Originally there was only one head, but it was put to me that Triumph was a trio and if there was only one, everyone would think it was Rik, who was sort of at the forefront of things, and the rest of the band wouldn't have that. So it became three."

"I was looking for the right kind of icon. Leonardo Da Vinci's famous *Vitruvian Man* drawing [from around 1490] was more or less the idea, but I was apeing H.R. Giger in style. I just couldn't do another haircut band-style cover and 'Thunder Seven' was intentionally anything but that."

"There were a lot of different ideas on the record about time and mechanisation and how it might affect mankind and so on, so it does look like the workings of a watch for that reason. All that background stuff is just me doing Giger."

"I used an acrylic paint airbrush for the highlighting effects. Air brushing back then was a one shot deal. Maybe I overdid it, here and there, but there was no Photoshop in those days. You couldn't undo. You either had to get it right or you had to start again."

"I suggested to the band that we put a secret message in here, so we sat around and thought about it, but no-one could agree on what the message should be. So in the end I made it look like there's a secret message and that if you just stare hard enough you'll be able to decipher it. These symbols around the edge of the circle look so specific that they must mean something, right? Some are genuine hieroglyphics or runes, some I invented, but they don't mean anything. There's no message. It means whatever you want it to mean."

TRIUMPH - 'THUNDER SEVEN'

Released: 10 November 1984 (USA),
19 November 1984 (UK) Album length: 40:51

- 1. *Spellbound* (5:11)
- 2. *Rock Out, Roll On* (5:18)
- 3. *Cool Down* (4:51)
- 4. *Follow Your Heart* (3:27)
- 5. *Time Goes By* (6:02)
- 6. *Midsummer's Daydream* (1:41)
- 7. *Time Canon* (1:31)
- 8. *Killing Time* (4:14)
- 9. *Stranger In A Strange Land* (5:15)
- 10. *Little Boy Blues* (3:43)

LINE UP:
Rik Emmett - vocals, guitars, bass guitar, music sequencer, synthesizer, clavinet, bass pedals
Gil Moore - drums, percussion, vocals
Michael Levine - bass guitar, keyboards, synthesizers, organ, clavinet, bass pedals

All tracks written by Gil Moore, Mike Levine and Rik Emmett, except 'Midsummer's Daydream' (Emmett).
 Eddie Kramer - producer and mixer. Ed Stone - engineer. Noel Golden - assistant engineer. Hugh Cooper - mixing. Yoshiro Kuzumaki - mastering.
 Recorded at Metalworks Studios, Toronto, Ontario, Canada and Producers Workshop, Los Angeles, USA.

WHICH CLASSIC SLEEVES WOULD YOU LIKE US TO DISSECT?
 EMAIL: EDITORIAL@ROCKCANDYMAG.COM

N E L

Alison Joy heads back to 1990 to recall the time when **Nelson** - or 'The Timotei Twins' as she memorably named them - showed her that there was a real buzz about the band!



The Timotei Twins, aka Gunnar (left) and Matthew Nelson. Sex toy just out of shot

EVER HAD A BIZARRE ENCOUNTER WITH A ROCK STAR? LET US KNOW AND IF YOUR STORY'S MAD ENOUGH, WE'LL INTERVIEW YOU ABOUT IT.

EMAIL: EDITORIAL@ROCKCANDYMAG.COM

S O N

IN MY ROLE AS Reviews Editor for *Kerrang!* in the late-'80s/early '90s, I thought I'd seen everything the world of rock music had to throw at me. Not so. Editor Geoff Barton sidled over to my desk one day back in 1990, plonked a CD down and said, "Write about this, and don't make it too serious." I'm paraphrasing, but you get my drift.

The CD was 'After The Rain' by Nelson, and a glance at the cover had me sitting up just that little bit straighter. Two faces framed by incredible long blond hair were looking back at me, and the accompanying blurb told me they belonged to Matthew and Gunnar Nelson, twin sons of one-time teen idol Ricky Nelson, who'd died in a plane crash five years previously. The CD went straight into the 'Death Deck' and out

came song after song of sparkling AOR that had the wimp-rock lovers among us drooling. I lapped it all up, wrote my piece and nicknamed the boys 'The Timotei Twins' after the famous blonde-haired girl in the Timotei shampoo adverts that were all the rage at the time. I can't remember exactly what I wrote, but I'd like to think it was mildly amusing rather than downright offensive. The piece was published and I thought that was that. Again, not so.

WHILE I was minding my own business in London, Nelson's album was busy going double platinum in the States and coughing up a number one *Billboard* hit in September 1990 with the mouthful of a title that was '(Can't Live Without Your) Love And Affection'. Then came news that Nelson were not only heading over to the UK for a promotional tour, but they were also (be still my beating heart!) coming into the *Kerrang!* office to review the singles. Quite a few of us - well, me and Geoff - were rather excited.

THE BIG day was ridiculous all round. First of all, the twins and their press officer somehow lost each other en route, which resulted in the press guy arriving at the *Kerrang!* offices by limo, while Matt and Gunnar brought up the rear in a regular taxi cab. This didn't seem to faze the boys, though. They swept majestically into the office in a swirl of blond hair, wearing huge smiles and carrying acoustic guitars.

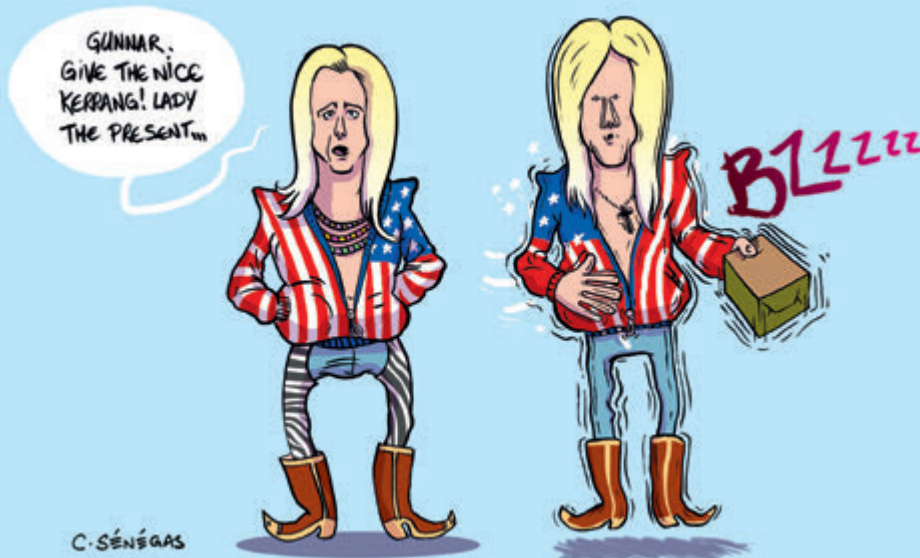
After the introductions were done, one of them (I seem to remember it was Gunnar) said he had a present for me. He handed me a wrapped parcel and stood back with the smuggest of grins on his face. I knew that whatever the joke was, it was definitely going to be on me, so I unwrapped the package to find...

a huge vibrator and a bottle of Timotei! Sitting alongside the buzzy bundle was a handwritten note. It's a while back now, so I can't recall the exact wording, apart from one unforgettable line that said, "Don't chip your teeth."

My face went 50 shades of red. I had to hand it to the Nelson boys - they'd dished up their revenge superbly. Matthew and Gunnar then

strapped on their guitars - I certainly wasn't about to strap anything on myself! - and delivered a note-perfect song for us before disappearing off in a flurry of their own magnificence. The *K!* office had never seen anything like it.

MATTHEW, GUNNAR and I parted as friends and I finally had the pleasure of meeting up with the boys again a full 20 years later when they headlined Firefest at Nottingham Rock City back in 2010. Thankfully, the only buzz in the air that night was the one around the excellent set they played. But it certainly brought back some memories of all that funny sex toy mayhem from my days at *Kerrang!* 🤘



HOW DID IT HAPPEN THAT THE MUCH-TOUTED SCOTTISH ROCKERS ENDED UP LOOKING TO REPRESENT THE UK IN A SUPER-NAFF TV MUSIC COMPETITION?

HEAVY PETTIN TRY TO ENTER EUROVISION

DATELINE: 10 APRIL 1987

NO SELF-RESPECTING '80s rock band would *volunteer* to take part in the continental kerfuffle that is the Eurovision Song Contest. So how in the name of deep-fried Mars Bars with a whisky chaser did Heavy Pettin – one of the most-likely-to-succeed bands of the era – end up attempting to become Britain's entry in 1987?

BACK IN 1983, the Glaswegian quintet – vocalist Steve 'Hamie' Hayman, guitarists Gordon Bonnar and Punky Mendoza, bassist Brian Waugh and drummer Gary Moat – were living the dream. They'd signed a major deal with Polydor and had released a debut album, 'Lettin Loose', that was produced by Brian May and Queen's co-producer/engineer, Mack. It was stuffed with cracking songs, a fizzing blend of powerful British rock and more radio-friendly American influences, and was bolstered by an easy-on-the-eye image and an enviable selection of arena-size support tours to shake their thang at.

1985's follow-up, 'Rock Ain't Dead', got a massive thumbs-up in *Kerrang!* from our own HoJo and life looked peachy. After the 'RAD' tour was complete, HP holed up in London's Maison Rouge studios to work on album number three. But the pressure was on from Polydor as, according to Hamie, "The third album had to be the one where we broke and start shifting millions of units." Writing and recording took longer than planned, though, and the band struggled to find the right producer. One evening, Pettin's manager, Brian Lane, turned up at the studio with Polydor managing director Richard Ogden.

"I think it was Richard who said there was a big push to make the Eurovision Song Contest a legitimate thing, and I just thought he was telling us a story," recalls Hamie. "Then he said, 'We want to put you guys in it.'"

Completely stunned, Hamie had to ask Ogden to repeat what he'd just said. "He said, 'You're gonna write a song, record it and we're gonna enter you guys'. I was like, 'No you're fucking not!'"

AT THE time, Heavy Pettin wanted to leave Polydor and, according to Hamie, the label knew it.

"I don't remember them saying it, but the underlying threat was that if you don't do Eurovision we're just gonna put you on the shelf. Part of the deal was that if we did it, Polydor would let us go and we wouldn't owe any money. Basically, we were screwed. We could either split up or agree to do it – but we knew we'd be finished in Britain."

HP found themselves having to write and record a Euro-ditty titled 'Romeo' and then perform it on *A Song For Europe*, the TV programme where Britain's entry for Eurovision was chosen. They weren't allowed to discuss the deal they'd done, so during the promotional push for the show Hamie had to whip out his best acting skills and sound suitably enthusiastic when being interviewed.

HEAVY PETTIN stood out like a sore thumb among the other contestants. 'Romeo' came nowhere near getting through to the Contest itself, finishing sixth out of 10 entries, but the damage to the band's career was done. The lads themselves knew they were "totally fucked" in Britain and about a year later they called it a day.

"We were more embarrassed about it than anything, because that's not the way we started out," says Hamie. "But if we hadn't done it we'd have been in a hell of a lot of debt. We'd sit there and go, 'How the hell did this happen?'. We were supposed to be the next big thing!"

"IT WAS LIFE-CHANGING!"



SKID ROW GUITARIST SNAKE SABO ON THE UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCE OF WATCHING KISS AT MADISON SQUARE GARDEN IN NEW YORK...

Kiss frontman Paul Stanley impressing the hell out of a 13-year-old Snake back in 1977



"AT THE AGE OF 13 I headed from my home in New Jersey to Manhattan for my first ever gig, Kiss at The Garden on the 'Love Gun'/'Alive II' tour. I was already a huge fan of the band. I knew all the albums back to front and my bedroom walls were plastered with Kiss posters. But I had no idea how much that one night would change my life.

"I WENT up on the train that took you right underneath The Garden with my friend Jon Bon Jovi - sorry for name-dropping - and we were both drinking Mad Dog 20/20, even at such a young age! We weren't connected by music. We were just buddies. But Jon was already playing guitar and starting little bands up, so was well on his way. I was sports mad at that time, though - a little jock. I played baseball and basketball and that's what I wanted to do with my life, something sporty. But after the Kiss show all bets were off. Right there and then I knew I had to do music.

"THE BAND opened the show with 'I Stole Your Love' and the guys came down these giant hydraulic walkways like gods! I'd never seen or felt anything like it and I simply couldn't believe my eyes. Witnessing 18,000 people on their feet screaming for two hours was incredible. The lights, the fire, the explosions and the volume were undeniable and the whole thing completely changed the trajectory of my life in an instant.

guitar I owned was a Paul Stanley signature guitar, the Ibanez Iceman.

"NOBODY GOES to a concert thinking their life will change because of it. You go because you want to be entertained and to have a good time. But this Kiss concert set me on a totally different path, which made it both a life changing and a once-in-a-lifetime experience. I still remember the feeling I had of 'Holy shit, what the hell's happening here?' It was like the greatest acid trip in the world, because it's lasted until now and it's still going, I guess. And what's really weird is that [Skid Row bassist] Rachel Bolan had exactly the same revelatory experience 100 miles away in Philadelphia within a few days of mine! It's crazy!

"I REMEMBER more about that Kiss show than any other gig of the hundreds and hundreds I've seen in my lifetime. For me, Kiss set the bar, and as a performer that's always my reference point. I really hope that maybe at some point in my career I had that same effect on another kid, because for me the whole experience was just so profound." 🤘

YOU KNOW IT. WE KNOW IT. THE LOGOS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE VINYL WERE IMPORTANT!

With special thanks to Rock Candy's John Nicholson for raiding his own impressive vinyl stash.



polydor

YNGWIE J. MALMSTEEN'S
RISING FORCE

ODYSSEY

MADE IN ENGLAND POLD 5224 STEREO 33



HOUSES OF THE HOLY

STEREO

TWO

Made in UK

K 50014
K 50014 B

- 1. DANCING DAYS (Page/Plant) 3.40
- 2. D'YER MAK'ER (Bonham/Jones/Page/Plant) 4.18
- 3. NO QUARTER (Jones/Page/Plant) 6.52
- 4. THE OCEAN (Bonham/Jones/Page/Plant) 4.16

LED ZEPPELIN

Produced by Jimmy Page
Engineered by Eddie Kramer, George Chkiantz and Keith Harwood
Superhype Publishing/Warner Bros. Music (1-4)

© 1973

CAPRICORN RECORDS

EAT A PEACH

in UK
RPM
SIDE THREE

2476-102

© 1972 Capricorn Records Inc.
Record 2 of a 2 Record Set
(SET NO. 2659 034)
2476-102 A

STEREO

- 1. ONE WAY OUT (Marshall Sehorn/Willie Sonny Boy Williamson/Joe Willie (Elmore) James)
- 2. TROUBLE NO MORE (McKinley Morganfield)
- 3. STAND BACK (Gregg Allman)
- 4. BLUE SKY (Dickie Betts)
- 5. LITTLE MARTHA (Duane Allman)

THE ALLMAN BROTHERS BAND

Produced by Tom Dowd by special arrangement with Phil Walden & Assoc., Inc.

CLEAR AIR
TURBULENCE

- 1. OVER THE HILL (7.19)
- 2. GOODHAND LIZA (5.24)
- 3. ANGEL MANCHENIO (5.17)

All songs composed by Gillan, Fenwick, Gustafson, Nauseef & Towns

Published by Clear Air Music Ltd

ILPS 9500-

© & © 1977 Island Records Ltd

IAN GILLAN
BAND

BRONZE



URIAH HEEP

THE MAGICIAN'S BIRTHDAY

- 1. SUNRISE (Hensley) (4.04)
- 2. SPIDER WOMAN (Box/Byron/Ketslake/Thain) (2.33)
- 3. BLIND EYE (Hensley) (3.33)
- 4. ECHOES IN THE DARK (Hensley) (4.48)
- 5. RAIN (Hensley) (3.59)

Published by: Sydney Bron Music Co. Ltd.

Produced by: Gerry Bron

Manufactured and distributed by Island Records Ltd

ARTISTS RECORDS®

READY AN' WILLING

- 1. LOVING (Coverdale/Marsden/Moody) (4.06) Seabreeze Music Ltd./Whitesnake
- 2. SWEET (Coverdale/Lord/Moody/Murray/Paice) (3.44) Seabreeze Music Ltd./Whitesnake
- 3. CARRY ON (Coverdale/Moody/Murray/Paice) (3.44) Seabreeze Music Ltd./Whitesnake
- 4. CARRY ON (Coverdale/Moody/Murray/Paice) (3.44) Seabreeze Music Ltd./Whitesnake
- 5. BLIND (Coverdale) (5.08) S. P. Music

WHITESNAKE

Produced by Martin 'Basher' Birch
© 1980 Original sound recordings made by Sunburst Records Ltd

STEREO

BURN
DEEP PURPLE
 Produced by Deep Purple

33 1/3
 (TPS.3505 A)
 © 1974
 Purple
 Records Ltd.

STEREO
 TPS 3505

1. BURN (Blackmore—Lord—Paice—Coverdale)
 2. MIGHT JUST TAKE YOUR LIFE
 (Blackmore—Lord—Paice—Coverdale)

BE-BOP DELUXE
 EMI
HARVEST
 SIDE 1
 © 1975
 EMI Records Ltd.

FUTURAMA
 1. LOVE WITH THE MADMAN
 2. SISTER SEAGULL
 3. ...
 4. ...

STRANGERS IN THE NIGHT
 1. NATURAL THING (Schenker, Mogg, Way)*** 7:05
 2. OUT IN THE STREET (Way, Mogg)** 9:34
 3. ONLY YOU CAN ROCK ME (Schenker, Mogg, Way)* 3:58
 4. DOCTOR DOCTOR (Schenker, Mogg)*** 4:30

Published by *T.H.T.H. Music Ltd./
 Chrysalis Music Corp. (ASCAP)
 **Intersong Music Inc. (ASCAP)
 Intersong Music Inc. (ASCAP)/R.G.S. (BMI)
 by Ron Nevison for Gadget Productions Inc.

CH2 1209
 (CH2-1209-AS)
 © 1979 Chrysalis
 Records

OSZY OSBOURNE
BLIZZARD OF OZZ
 1. I DON'T KNOW (5.14) (Osbourne / Daisley / Rhoads)
 2. CRAZY TRAIN (4.52) (Osbourne / Daisley / Rhoads)
 3. GOODBYE TO ROMANCE (5.35) (Osbourne / Daisley / Rhoads)
 4. DEE (0.50) (Rhoads)
 5. SUICIDE SOLUTION (4.17) (Osbourne / Daisley / Rhoads)

Produced by Osbourne, Daisley, Kerslake & Rhoads
 Engineered by Max Norman
 Music Ltd. (3,5) Essex Music Int. Ltd. / Blizzard Music Ltd.
 (4) Essex Music Int. Ltd.

© 1980 Jet Ltd.
 MCPS/BIEM

33 1/3 RPM
JET LP 234

Jet
 RECORDS

ILPS-9213-A
 © 1972 Bronze
 Records Ltd.

GUNS N' ROSES
PETITE FOR DESTINY

1. WELCOME TO THE JUNGLE 4:31
 2. I SO EASY* 3:21
 3. CHYTRAIN 4:28
 4. IT GETS ME 4:20
 5. BROWNSTONE 3:48
 6. PARADISE CITY 6:48

WARRIOR RECORDS

VAN HALEN

STEREO
 33 1/3 RPM
 Made in UK

K 56470
 K 56470 A*
 (BSK 3075)
 © & © 1978

SIDE 1

1. RUNNIN' WITH THE DEVIL 3.32
 2. ERUPTION 1.42
 3. YOU REALLY GOT ME (Ray Davies) 2.37
 4. AIN'T TALKIN' 'BOUT LOVE 3.47
 5. I'M THE ONE 3.44

VAN HALEN
 Produced by Ted Templeman. Engineered by Don Landee
 All selections written by Edward Van Halen,
 Alex Van Halen, Michael Anthony,
 David Lee Roth, except where indicated
 (1,2,4,5) Warner Bros. Music Ltd.
 (3) Kassner Music Ltd.

MCA RECORDS

LYNYRD SKYNYRD
 Produced by Tom Dowd
 (1,3) MCA Music Ltd. (2) Copyright Control
 Original sound recordings made by MCA Records, Inc.
 MCA Records are the exclusive
 licensees for the U.K.



Seattle act **Heart** enjoyed huge success in the '70s, but as a new decade dawned the band's sales started to dwindle. It took until the mid-'80s – and a radical overhaul of both image and music – for the band to bounce back. Guitarist and vocalist **Nancy Wilson** speaks to *Malcolm Dome* about the intense pressures her band faced to deliver those multi-platinum sales...

“WE'D JUST ABOUT HAD enough of being told what to do by our record label Epic, by our management, and even by the guys in the band. We were suffering from a surfeit of hubris, if I'm honest.”


Back in 1981 Nancy Wilson was in a feisty mood. The Heart guitarist had good reason to be a bit punchy, though. Since joining her older sister and vocalist Ann in the Seattle band seven years earlier, back in 1974, Heart had enjoyed uninterrupted success. Their debut, 1976's 'Dreamboat Annie', was a million seller, and subsequent studio releases 'Magazine' (1977), 'Little Queen' (1977), 'Dog And Butterfly' (1978) had all gone platinum too. Heart was a big, big band at the time.

1980's 'Bebé Le Strange', however, marked a sea-change within the group. The Fisher brothers – guitarist Roger, and group soundman, manager and adviser Mike – had been dating Nancy and Ann respectively, but both relationships had eventually crumbled under the weight of band pressures. 'Bebé Le Strange' was the first album Heart made without the brothers and while it failed to go platinum like its predecessors, it was far

from a commercial disaster, hitting number 5 on the US *Billboard* album charts and achieving gold status. It wasn't a mega hit like those earlier albums, but 'Bebé Le Strange' only strengthened the sisters' resolve to become masters of their own destinies within a group that was, after all, primarily built around their talents and their image.

“What we wanted to do was break away from the controlling elements who were all around us at that time,” explains Nancy. “Yes, we'd been very successful, but now was the time to be a little more adventurous and experimental in the way we wrote and played music. We also felt it was the right time to be more in charge of the way things were being done in the studio, so we wanted a bigger say in production.”

THE LINE-UP that had recorded 'Bebé Le Strange' in Seattle in the winter of '79 was Ann, Nancy, bassist Steve Fossen, drummer Mike Derosier and new guitarist Howard Leese. Producer Mike Flicker, who'd been there from the start, was still involved. But the sisters' new-



Heart shot in 1985, revealing the image makeover that helped resurrect their career. L-R: Nancy Wilson (guitar and vocals), Mark Andes (bass), Ann Wilson (vocals), Howard Leese (guitar), Denny Carmassi (drums)

“WE DID WHAT WAS NECESSARY!”

found confidence and desire to direct their own careers had them thinking about making a change for the next album. They honed in on Jimmy Iovine, who was the big noise in production at the time following successes with Patti Smith, Tom Petty and Bruce Springsteen. But things didn't run smoothly...

“Jimmy listened to the songs we were planning to put on the record, and said he didn't hear enough commerciality,” admits Nancy. “He thought we should go away and come up with some more material that would give us a better chance of having hit singles. In a way Jimmy was absolutely right, and we really should have listened to what he was saying. But egos got in the way, so we turned our back on him and decided to handle the production on our own.

“It was a time when we thought we knew best and to a certain extent we really didn't. I still believe we were right

to try to be a little more experimental in what we were doing musically. But our huge mistake back then was in not taking on board what others were telling us. It was all because we were fed up of going along with *anything* we were told. To get away from that situation we went too far the other way.”

“WE HAD TO GO IN WITH OUR HEADS BOWED AND ADMIT WE'D GOTTEN IT WRONG ON 'PRIVATE AUDITION'. WE WERE FORCED TO BE A LOT LESS ARROGANT ABOUT WHAT WE 'KNEW' THE BAND SHOULD BE DOING.”

Convinced they could produce the goods themselves, the sisters began work on what would become 'Private Audition' in October

of 1981. The production team was Ann and Nancy, Seattle songwriter Sue Ennis (who had also worked on 'Bebé Le Strange') and guitarist Howard Leese.

RECORDED AT Studio 56 in LA and at San Francisco's Wally Heider Studios between October of '81 and March of the following year, the new album clearly showed Heart expanding their musical repertoire. Whereas 'Bebé Le Strange' was a taut and strangely angular hard ▶

DARK DAYS

rock record, 'Private Audition' moved across a number of different musical landscapes, from the sprightly pop of 'Bright Light Girl', to the psychedelic rock of 'The Situation', the AOR balladry of 'Perfect Stranger' and on to the hit single, the almost jazz-inflected 'This Man Is Mine'. But no sooner had the album been recorded than original members, bassist Steve Fossen and drummer Michael Derosier, were shown the door.

"It was a band decision that they should go," says Nancy. "We fired them, simple as that. Things within Heart were very complicated at the time. There were relationships formed [the word was that Nancy had been romantically intertwined with Michael Derosier after Robert Fisher] and that made things emotionally tough on all of us. In a way, we were like Fleetwood Mac. Just like they did, we found out that when you get personal situations coming up between band members it really does distract from what should be the focus, namely the songs and the music. So we decided we had to make the change."

"WE HAD A STARTLING IMAGE MAKEOVER. 'YOU WANT US IN HIGH HEELS? OK.' 'YOU WANT ME TO WEAR A CORSET? NO PROBLEM.' 'THE HAIR HAS TO BE BIGGER? SURE, WE'LL DO THAT!' AND IT REALLY WORKED FOR US."

BY THE time 'Private Audition' was released in June 1982, Heart had employed a new rhythm section comprising former Spirit man, bassist Mark Andes, and one-time Montrose drummer Denny Carmassi. Despite eventually going on to sell around 400,000 copies in the US, 'Private Audition' was considered a commercial failure, the first Heart album not to make the US Top 20. Speaking from a purely musical perspective, the album was actually far from the disaster many felt it to be. But the soft sales planted seeds of doubt. With the benefit of hindsight Nancy is objective about the work.

"I think there are some very good moments on it," she says now. "And I'm so pleased that we went out and did something a little out of the ordinary. But we were so full of egotism at that time that we lost sight of where we needed to go musically. All of us should have been a little more willing to realise that we were getting some good advice from people on the business side of things. Yet we really believed that we knew best and so could ignore anything we were being told. It was a stupid



"All of a sudden it was important for bands to have the right image and fashion was at the forefront."

Photos: IconicPix/David Plastik; Getty Images/Richard Creamer/Michael Ochs Archives

mistake on our part, and suddenly it looked like things were disappearing.”

Heart's first album, 'Dreamboat Annie', had been released almost five years before 'Bebé Le Strange', the album that had suffered the first commercial dip. Wilson felt this was a career cycle that had been seen many times before.

“If you talk to any big bands, they'll tell you that you can only expect to be really popular for four or five years, and then your lifespan comes to an end. It felt to us as if it was the end of Heart as a major name. But Ann and I were brought up as Marine Corps brats [their father was in the US services], so we just never give up to the inevitable, and we fight every inch of the way for what we want. So it was only the end of our first life span!”

AFTER THE disappointment of 'Private Audition', Heart were in a bit of a tough spot as they prepared to record their next album.

“We had to go in with our heads bowed and admit we'd gotten it wrong on 'Private Audition' and we accepted that we had to toe the line somewhat. We were forced to be a lot less arrogant about what we 'knew' the band should be doing and come down a few pegs. It was a hard lesson to learn, but we had to admit our approach hadn't worked out the way we wanted.”

Keith Olsen was brought in to produce the new album. But due to circumstances outside of their control, Heart didn't get to collaborate with a fully focused producer.

“Keith was having a few issues back then,” explains Nancy. “He was indulging in certain things and that affected the way the album worked out. I love Keith, and he's a fine producer. We just got him at his lowest ebb, which didn't help anyone. But at least we'd gotten through our period of just doing what we wanted, whatever the consequences.”

Recorded between March and June of 1983 at the same two studios where the band had laid down 'Private Audition', Heart's seventh studio album was titled 'Passionworks' and emerged in August of that year. Listening back to it today, it's clear that Heart's sound was, at this point, suddenly being tailored towards the AOR radio format that producer Olsen understood so well after crafting huge albums for the likes of Rick Springfield and Pat Benatar. In many ways it sounds exactly like the kind of record that could have been an

enormous break-out hit at the time, thanks to polished rockers like 'Blue Guitar', 'Sleep Alone' and the moderate hit 'How Can I Refuse?'. The album's downfall, however, is probably the fact that it lacked a killer, radio-friendly ballad. The quiet and gentle 'Love Mistake', for example, has more in common with the band's hippyish whimsy of their earlier days than, say, Journey's perfectly-pitched 'Faithfully' that was released the same year.

“YOU WANT TO CRITICISE US FOR PUTTING SUCCESS AHEAD OF ART? GO AHEAD! BUT WITHOUT THE FORMER THERE WOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN THE LATTER!”

'PASSIONWORKS' MADE it to number 39 in the US, the lowest peak position the band had ever had in their home country. Heart seemed to be in commercial freefall and by this time the band's label, Epic, had clearly lost faith in them.

“Our contract ran out and there was no enthusiasm from the company to renew it,” explains Nancy. “I suppose I can understand why there were a lot of people wanting to write us off. It was a turbulent time for music.

We'd been very successful in the '70s and now had to face the fact that we didn't seem to fit in with the way the trends were moving in rock. We asked ourselves, 'Can you actually adapt to the new demands, or are you just gonna give up and give in?'”

While those outside the band might have regarded Heart as a spent force, Nancy felt the band had plenty left in the tank, so to her mind

The Heart line-up that recorded 'Private Audition' shooting a video in Los Angeles in 1982. L-R: Howard Leese (guitar), Steve Fossen (bass), Ann Wilson (vocals), Michael Derosier (drums), Nancy Wilson (guitar)



splitting up was never an option.

“That idea never even entered our heads,” she confirms. “We were so used to travelling around the world and playing the biggest venues. That gives you a taste for being onstage and seeing thousands of fans coming along every night to see you perform. And once you've had it for as long as we were fortunate to have it, then you don't want to give it up. It's just so exciting, and it becomes your lifestyle. Every time we've had problems, we've stood together and battled back. So the band took a look at what was going on around us and decided what we needed to do – and that was to fit in!”

Wilson believes the mid-'80s was a weird time for music. But at least Heart's experience of failing to get things right on their previous two albums stood them in good stead.

“It was a very odd period, as everyone knows,” she confirms. “Things had been turned upside down. All of a sudden it was important for bands to have the right image – and fashion was at the forefront. You couldn't get away with looking the way you felt

most comfortable, as you could in the previous decade. MTV was becoming absolutely vital if you wanted success, and what made matters even more extreme was that people were getting out of control, ego-wise. Lots of people were taking lots of cocaine to fuel their arrogance. In every way, it was a different world to the one where we'd first had success. But what we had to do was swallow our pride and accept that we had to do whatever it took to get ourselves back on top."

HEART SIGNED a new record deal with Capitol and "made a conscious decision to redefine ourselves, to reinvent ourselves and to do whatever we were asked to do by the record

company or management. That's what it meant for us if we were going to turn things around." Part of the deal with the devil was that the band would not only record tunes by outside writers, but they would also open up their own writing processes to collaborators.

"Did we give up our independence for this attempt to get back what we lost?" asks Nancy, rhetorically. "Of course we did. But there was no other option. If we were truly committed to having a second life as a successful band, then we had to do what we were told. So, yes, we had to accept other writers like Holly Knight and Jim Vallance. But we weren't alone. Aerosmith had to deal with that and there were other, younger acts like Bon Jovi who needed input too. Bands were no longer left to their own devices. Now you had specialists to help refine your songs. It was the way things had gone."

But there was also a quite startling image makeover, wasn't there?

"There definitely was. 'You want us in high heels? OK.' 'You want me to wear a corset? No problem.' 'The hair has to be bigger? Sure, we'll do that.' And it really worked for us."

There was, however, a price to pay, particularly for vocalist Ann who'd had problems controlling her weight.



Heart photographed in 1982 with what you might call a less glamorous look. L-R: Mark Andes, Ann Wilson, Nancy Wilson, Denny Carmassi, Howard Leese

The singer was put under pressure to stay thin because image was now paramount.

"I don't think my weight should ever have been an issue," Ann has said. "It should have been all about the music and not the way we looked. However, I had to accept that to fit in with the way things were going, there was a need for me to control my weight. It was hard for me to do it, and the press were very mean about me.

That was the power of MTV back then."

"All of us had to make sacrifices to fit in with the way we were told the band had to look," agrees Nancy. "It was tough on all of us."

PRODUCED BY

Ron Nevison, Heart released their

eponymous eighth studio album in July 1985. A few hearts must have been in mouths waiting to see whether the radical changes in producer, image and songwriting could spark a renaissance. As it turned out – and with the help of a number of videos that MTV were all over – 'Heart' swept all before it. It reached number one in the US album charts, made it to an impressive number 19 in a notoriously reluctant British market and yielded an astonishing four Top 10 US singles, including the number one smash, 'These Dreams'. After suffering with two successive albums that had struggled to get the cash machines whirring, 'Heart' sold more than five million copies in America. Instead of wondering whether their top drawer status had disappeared forever, suddenly Heart were back on top as an arena headlining act. Unsurprisingly, Nancy is relieved that the band's compliance paid off so handsomely.

"It could have gone so wrong for us," she acknowledges. "But we did whatever was asked of us and everything came out in our favour. I still feel a little disappointed that we had to sacrifice artistry for the sake of sales, but that was our choice. We knew what we were doing. What mattered more than anything was to get a big album and those chart singles. But if you listen to the

'Heart' album it could only be us. We took the songs and gave them our own spin and drama.

"We were seduced by the success we'd had earlier on in our career and that led us down this particular path," she admits. "I have no regrets, though, and the odd thing was that despite the 'Heart' album being regarded as one of the defining records of that time, as a band we still stood apart."

THE THREE years from 1982 to 1985 were a strange time for Heart. Their integrity and self-belief had led them to release the sorely undervalued 'Private Audition'. They were forced onto the back foot for 'Passionworks' and that led to the band embracing the demands of the time to try to make up lost ground. In doing so, Heart showed that it was possible for an older band to reinvent itself and come back commercially stronger. Music sales had the potential to be so huge at the time that greed and avarice became a major part of the music business. Heart managed to use those prevailing attitudes as a springboard to enhance their career and give it some much-needed second wind.

Sadly, right now there are huge question marks hanging over Heart's future, despite Nancy's belief that "there might be a way for Heart to return." In August

2016 the sisters fell out massively when Ann's husband, Dean Wetter, assaulted Nancy's 16-year-old twin sons. The cause of the fracas was an argument over one of the boys leaving a door open on the tour bus, which had allowed Ann and Dean's pet dogs to escape. Wetter was put on a two year probationary period and right now the Wilsons have gone their separate ways. Ann will spend the summer of 2018 touring America with Jeff Beck and Paul Rodgers, while Nancy has a new band called Roadcase Royale.

"The big hair era was also over so fast," Nancy marvels. "One day it was selling and the next day the huge names who'd emerged were dead. But we survived it all and managed to move into a third life span. I would never hide the fact that we compromised on so many levels just to have success. But it meant we could carry on playing music - and doesn't everyone have to do that to get what they want? At least we managed all that without losing our identity - you look at the photos and videos we did in the '80s and it's still us; you listen to the songs and it's obviously Heart. You want to criticise us for putting success ahead of art? Go ahead! But without the former there would never have been the latter! Ultimately, you know what we did? We did what was necessary..." 🐻



Nancy rocks out at the Garden State Arts Center, Holmdel, New Jersey, 6 September 1985



Ann Wilson modelling... well, we don't quite know what she's modelling, actually

“JIMM



Jimmy Page. He turned up to check out a studio in a helicopter

Y'S LIKE AN INVENTOR!"

STUART EPPS WORKED CHEEK BY JOWL WITH LED ZEPPELIN GUITARIST JIMMY PAGE ON THE BAND'S POSTHUMOUS 1982 ALBUM, 'CODA'. HE TELLS ROCK CANDY WHAT IT WAS LIKE TO BE RIGHT AT THE HEART OF THE ACTION. INTERVIEW BY MALCOLM DOME.



PRODUCER AND ENGINEER STUART Epps started out in the music industry in 1967 as a 15-year-old junior in the offices of the Dick James Music label. He worked in A&R for Rocket Records and co-managed Kiki Dee before becoming chief engineer and studio manager at the famous Mill Studios in Berkshire, working with artists such as Elton John and Chris Rea. Over the course of his long career Stuart has worked with many rock bands including Vandenberg, Twisted Sister and, of course, Led Zeppelin...

"PRODUCER GUS Dudgeon [most famous for his work with Elton John] built The Mill Studios in Cookham, Berkshire back in 1975 and I'd helped him out putting it all together. But then Gus ran into some difficulties and around 1979 he decided that he wanted to sell. At the time I was working at The Mill with Gus on the debut album from an American band called Shooting Star, who were signed to Virgin. A lot of people came to look at the studio, including musicians like Alvin Lee. But then we were told that a major rock star was interested in buying the place and that he'd be arriving by helicopter to take a look. We weren't allowed to know who it was. It turned out to be Jimmy Page.

"Jimmy had just bought [famous actor] Michael Caine's old house out in Windsor and was looking for a place in the same area with a studio. Perry Press, who at the time was pretty much the estate agent to the stars, had helped Jimmy when he bought the Windsor house and he'd heard that The Mill was on the market. Because it was close to the place that Jimmy had just bought it clearly made sense for him to buy the studio as well.

"JIMMY TURNED up that first time looking every inch the rock star, but I don't remember showing him around the

studio. However, the next thing we knew a call came in and we heard that he was going to buy it. Jimmy never did business stuff face to face. He always had agents, lawyers and accountants to do that sort of thing for him. So I only heard indirectly that Jimmy wanted me and the maintenance man to stay on at the studio, but that was it. It was very exciting for me, though, as I assumed that the next Led Zeppelin album would be recorded there.

"Apart from a brief meeting at the time he checked the studio out, I hadn't really met Jimmy. But because he was my new employer I thought I'd better do so. Zeppelin were rehearsing for a German tour at Bray Studios in Windsor, which was just down the road. So I drove down there a few times, but missed Jimmy every time. The band had either just finished rehearsing for the day or they hadn't turned up. My timing was always off.

"'CODA' WAS A WAY OF EMPTYING THE VAULTS, GETTING 'NEW' MUSIC OUT THERE, PAYING TRIBUTE TO A REVERED BAND MATE AND ALSO FULFILLING AN OUTSTANDING CONTRACT."

"I READ about John Bonham's tragic death at Jimmy's house [on 25 September 1980] and then didn't hear from Jimmy for a long time. One day, right out of the blue, he turned up at the studio, which he'd renamed Sol Studios, and

told me that he wanted to put together a tribute to John Bonham. It was supposed to be just one track, 'Bonzo's Montreux'. Lots of multi-track tapes began arriving at the studio and I had the challenge of trying to make sense of what was a very peculiar recording indeed. It was 24 tracks of drums put through a synthesiser – and Jimmy wanted me to both edit and mix it.

"What started off as a single song ended up becoming a much bigger album project that would eventually be called 'Coda'. It was all very much Jimmy's idea and he was fully involved and oversaw everything. What struck me most working with him was the fact that he's much, much more than just a guitarist or a musician. ▶

Jimmy's like an inventor. His technical ideas are simply amazing. He hears everything in his head, tells you what he wants and comes up with the equipment to make it work. And even more incredibly, if that equipment doesn't exist, then he'll sit down and work out a way to get the sound he's after. He's astonishing, and people don't realise quite how brilliant he is.

"ONE OF the reasons for doing 'Coda' was that it would allow the musicians in Zeppelin to get out of the contract with their label, Atlantic Records. A full studio album would fulfil their obligations. Three of the songs used for the project were outtakes from the 'In Through The Out Door' sessions [recorded between November and December of 1978]. These were 'Ozone Baby', 'Darlene' and 'Wearing And Tearing'. They were really great tracks and were relatively straightforward to work on. But some of the others were a little tougher. The problem was that if there were any live recordings used, then the project wouldn't count as the final album of the record contract.

"I recall we had a live version of 'I Can't Quit You Baby' that had been recorded at the Royal Albert Hall back in 1970. Jimmy told me that he wanted to completely remove the audience from the recording to make it seem like the song wasn't a live recording at all [the track was listed as a rehearsal in the album's original sleeve notes]. However, he still wanted me to recreate the ambient atmosphere of the Albert Hall that had been lost when the microphone recordings of the audience were cut. Now that was very hard to do, of course. But I got in a brand new digital reverb machine and managed to do it to Jimmy's satisfaction. To this day I'm not sure whether people fully realise what was done to the track, but I think I can safely tell the truth now.

"As far as I can recall there were some guitar overdubs added to 'We're Gonna Groove', but again the audience from the live recording at the Royal Albert Hall was taken off for the same reason. [On the original album sleeve notes this time the song was credited as a recording from Morgan Studios in London from June of 1969].

"What's interesting is that unlike a lot of top guitarists, Jimmy wasn't solely focused on what the guitar sounded

like to the exclusion of everything else. He had a panoramic vision of the way an entire track should sound and that made him a superb producer. It also made it a pleasure to work with him.

"Robert Plant only came down to the studio on one occasion, and that was to do some vocal overdubs on the track 'Walter's Walk', which was an outtake from the sessions for 'Houses Of The Holy' [recorded between December of 1971 and August of 1972]. Robert was a really nice and relaxed guy, very easy to get on with, but I understood that he wasn't at all technically minded. Jimmy had been solely responsible for getting Robert's vocal sound in the studio. Now that the band had split and the two of them weren't working together any more, Robert was very keen to know how it had been done. He asked me how to get the 'wah sound' that Jimmy had got for him in the past. The 'wah sound' was the only way Robert knew to describe how his vocals sounded! He'd really left that side of things to Jimmy and now that he was going solo there was no way he could recreate the same style on his own.

"John Paul Jones also made just the one visit to the studio. Like Robert, he was a very nice person and was easy to get along with. But it was really funny when I played him some of the stuff we'd been working on for 'Coda'. John put his hands over his ears and shouted, 'It's so loud. Can you turn it down?' I thought it was hilarious that a member of Led Zeppelin, one of the loudest bands in the world, thought it was too loud!



"JIMMY LIVED UP TO HIS ROCK STAR REPUTATION, THOUGH THERE WAS A LOT MORE TO HIM THAN JUST THAT. HE WAS SHY, QUIET AND CHARMING, BUT WHEN IT CAME TO WORKING ON 'CODA' HE KNEW EXACTLY WHAT HE WANTED."

"JIMMY WAS very elusive when he was in the studio. There were plenty of times when somebody phoned for him and he'd ask me to tell whoever it was that he wasn't there. Robert Plant phoned once and when he asked to talk to Jimmy, I told him that I'd just see if he was there. Robert knew what was going on and simply said, 'Just put him on the phone, will you?!'

"One night the doorbell rang at the studio and when I answered it, there was this huge, imposing figure dressed in black standing in front of me. I believe he was carrying a doctor's bag, though I can't be sure. He asked to see Jimmy, so I invited him in and suggested he take a seat while I found out whether Jimmy could see him or not.

The guy looked at me like I was mad. Well ‘the guy’ was none other than [Zeppelin’s notoriously scary manager] Peter Grant! It was the only time I ever met him and he was certainly a forceful character.

“**THERE WAS** a lot of mystique and weirdness surrounding Zeppelin back then. There were things that happened in the studio that were a little unsettling to say the least. Jimmy lived up to his rock star reputation, though there was a lot more to him than just that. He was certainly shy, quiet and charming, but when it came to working on ‘Coda’ he knew exactly what he wanted. Fortunately the studio was really well equipped and I’m sure that’s what attracted him to it in the first place.

“**I DO** remember driving Jimmy home from the studio on more than one occasion. He didn’t know how to drive back then – I’m not even sure if he does now – and he usually had a chauffeur take him where he wanted to go. But there were times when I took the job on! So we got to know each other quite well. He even came to my wedding at a synagogue. I still have the image in my head of Jimmy sitting there wearing a skull cap!

“**ONE THING** I got from working on ‘Coda’ was a huge appreciation for John Bonham. People tend to think of him as a very heavy drummer, but he was also capable of being skilfully light with the sticks and that added so much to the power he generated. Nobody else sounds like him to this day, yet every drummer seems to try to emulate what he did.

“When John died, just like everyone else I assumed the band would replace him and just carry on. I know Simon Kirke was mentioned as one possibility. But as soon as I began working with Jimmy on ‘Bonzo’s Montreux’ I

understood why this never happened. John and Jimmy were so tight that there was no way anybody could hope to come in and take over.

“**BEING ABLE** to tell people I worked on a Led Zeppelin album has certainly stood me in good stead down the years. Every single band I’ve worked with wants to know what it was like to be involved in the making of ‘Coda’. The mystery and charisma of Zeppelin is frightening, and it seems to get bigger with every year. There’s

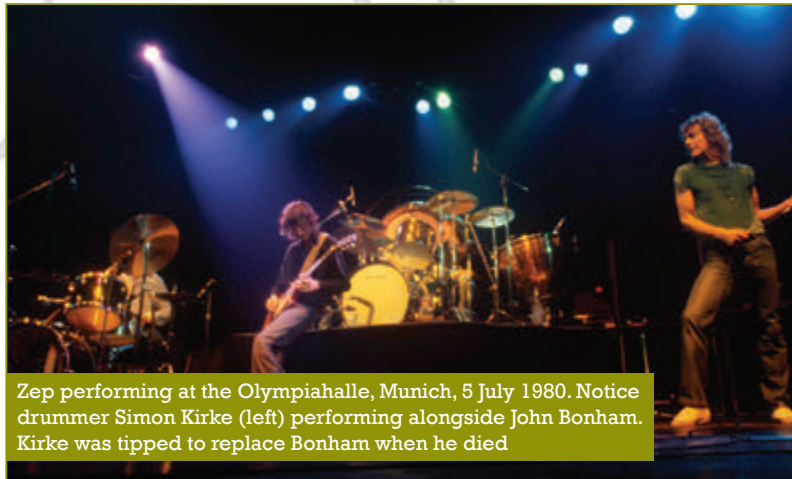
something about them that nobody else has. You have to put Led Zeppelin right up there alongside Frank Sinatra, Elvis Presley and The Beatles as true icons. Young bands who weren’t even born when Zeppelin split up in 1980 are still enthralled by the group. I’ve had lots of conversations with kids about them, which is amazing considering I’m now 65! At their

age I could never have imagined myself wanting to know about some musicians someone like me once worked with. But thanks to ‘Coda’ I’ve got lots of cred, lots of jobs and it’s an album I’m proud to have worked on.

“‘Coda’ only took up a few months of my life, so it didn’t turn out too badly, really. It did quite well, sales-wise, at the time. I believe Jimmy saw ‘Coda’ as a way of emptying the vaults, getting ‘new’ music out there, paying tribute to a revered band mate and also fulfilling an outstanding contract.

“The album served as my introduction to Jimmy Page’s working practices and I really was in awe of his technical knowledge and his improvisational abilities. ‘Coda’ has also given me something to talk about ever since. Being able to tell people I worked on a Zeppelin album has done wonders for me!” 🍷

Find out more about Stuart Epps at <http://www.eppsmusicproductions.com/>



Zep performing at the Olympiahalle, Munich, 5 July 1980. Notice drummer Simon Kirke (left) performing alongside John Bonham. Kirke was tipped to replace Bonham when he died



LED ZEPPELIN

‘CODA’
Released: 19 November 1982

LINE UP

John Bonham – drums, percussion
John Paul Jones – bass guitar, piano, keyboards
Jimmy Page – acoustic and electric guitars, electronic treatments
Robert Plant – lead vocals, harmonica

Produced by Jimmy Page
Engineering by Stuart Epps, Andy Johns, Eddie Kramer, Vic Maile, Leif Masses and John Timperley.
Executive production by Peter Grant

TRACK LISTING

We’re Gonna Groove (James Bethea, Ben E. King)
Poor Tom (Jimmy Page, Robert Plant)
I Can’t Quit You Baby (Willie Dixon)
Walter’s Walk (Jimmy Page, Robert Plant)
Ozone Baby (Jimmy Page, Robert Plant)
Darlene (John Bonham, John Paul Jones, Jimmy Page, Robert Plant)
Bonzo’s Montreux (John Bonham)
Wearing And Tearing (Jimmy Page, Robert Plant)

Tracks recorded at various locations between 9 Jan 1970 and 21 Nov 1978. Overdubs, editing and mixing 1982. Studio for the project: Sol Studios

“THEY SAID I COULD SELL CRAZY!”

Black Oak Arkansas were one of America’s biggest bands of the ’70s, fronted by **Jim ‘Dandy’ Mangrum**, a wild singer who set the standard for what an outrageous rock frontman should be. So why aren’t BOA universally revered today?

Giles Hamilton talks to Jim Dandy to find out...

MOST MUSIC FANS WILL define Southern rock by pointing to the work of three acts – The Allman Brothers Band, Lynyrd Skynyrd and ZZ Top. Yet to my mind the band that gave the genre its initial identity throughout the ’70s seems to have been cruelly obscured by time.

Black Oak Arkansas played Southern rock all right, but the subtleties of their approach meant the band was about much more than that. All of the group’s finest albums – and there have been a surprising number – are an astonishingly eclectic blend of musical styles from the late-’60s, both black and white.

In the space of a handful of songs, sometimes within a single number, you can hear the rhythm and blues of Stax; country and bluegrass from the Ozarks; psychedelia from Austin, Texas; gospel delivered from the churches of Arkansas; rock’n’roll from Memphis; and catchy pop courtesy of the British Invasion.

BOA’s first three albums – 1971’s ‘Black Oak Arkansas’, ‘Keep The Faith’ from ’72 and ‘If An Angel Came To See You, Would You Make Her Feel At Home?’ from the same year – are nothing less than potted histories of American music. Yet there’s nothing po-faced or worthy about BOA frontman Jim ‘Dandy’ Mangrum and his cohorts. The band’s ethos was wrapped up in a poncho of fury, fuelled by wild living and hard loving, just as you’d expect from a bunch of good ol’ Southern boys.

BORN IN Benton Harbor, Michigan on 30 March 1948, Jim Mangrum was raised a Southern Baptist in Black Oak, Arkansas. But, as he turns 70, the singer now lives in Memphis, Tennessee, less than 60 miles from the town he grew up in.

“We had all those influences you mentioned,” says Jim. “But what we really had was a lot of heart.”

BOA’s roots lie in a high school band, The Knowbody Else, formed by Mangrum and his classmate Rickie Lee Reynolds. The group, which also featured soon-to-be Black Oak members guitarist Harvey ‘Burley’ Jett and bassist Pat Daugherty, recorded an album for

legendary R’n’B label Stax. But when ‘The Knowbody Else’ was released on Stax subsidiary Hip Records in October of 1969 it sank without trace. Black Oak Arkansas rose from out of the ashes.

“Ahmet Ertegun [the founder and president of Atlantic Records] saw us play at the Topanga Corral club in Topanga Canyon, California around 1970,” says Dandy. “We were one of only a handful of acts he signed. He’d had a lot of success with Cream and Led Zeppelin and was on the lookout for more talented rock bands. I told him we weren’t worthy! It was amazing. Nothing we did happened on purpose, and anything I ever tried to put in place myself never did work. Whenever I planned anything it just messed up *God’s* plans for me!

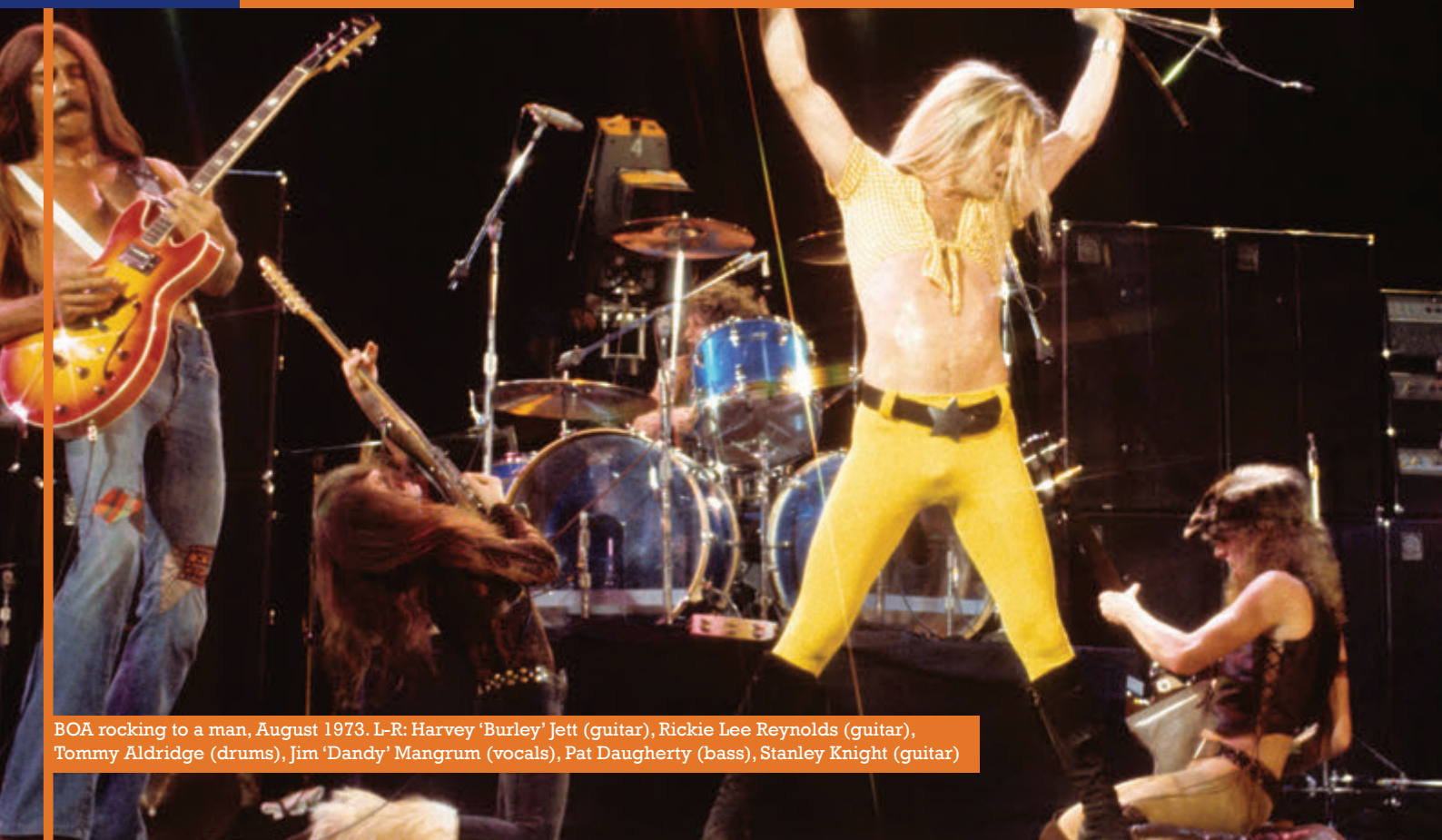
“We really didn’t know that much,” he continues, “because we came out of a town [Black Oak, in

“MY DADDY HAD CALLED ME JIM DANDY SINCE I WAS NINE YEARS OLD. THAT’S NOT THE KIND OF NICKNAME ANY SELF-RESPECTING MAN WOULD HAVE PICKED FOR HIMSELF!”

Photo: Getty Images/Beih Cwinn/Redferns



BLACK OAK ARKANSAS



BOA rocking to a man, August 1973. L-R: Harvey 'Burley' Jett (guitar), Rickie Lee Reynolds (guitar), Tommy Aldridge (drums), Jim 'Dandy' Mangrum (vocals), Pat Daugherty (bass), Stanley Knight (guitar)

Arkansas, of course] of just 300 people. If we'd known what they were doing in New York and LA at the time, then we would probably have been doing it too. People called us unique, but God shaped it. I never really worried about being accepted. We followed our hearts and were just having a good time. We were very enthusiastic and that was what everybody wanted a dose of. They wanted our enthusiasm to rub off on them."

THE MUSIC business was just getting its sea legs at the time BOA got underway. The whole thing was still pretty much uncharted territory. The idea of formula radio and focus groups designed to bring in the largest demographic of listeners was still in its infancy. The industry was still run by mavericks with a deep-rooted passion for music. Bands knew of no other way of getting their music out than by taking it to the people. Black Oak's first three albums, all released on Atco, were delivered within a period of just over a year. Incredibly, the material was of a uniformly high standard across all three records.

'Black Oak Arkansas', released in March 1971, is surely one of the great debut albums. The breadth of influences on display is simply breathtaking as the album moves from the country bluegrass of 'Uncle Elijah', through the '60s psychedelia of 'Memories At The Window' and 'The Hills Of Arkansas', the fiery garage rock of 'I Could Love

You', the gospel flecked 'Lord Have Mercy On My Soul', and the downright filthy rock'n'roll of 'Hot And Nasty'. The latter number served as a template for the kind of punchy rockers with which the band would go on to achieve international fame in the mid-'70s. The album closes with an instrumental, 'When Electricity Came To Arkansas', a live favourite that allowed the virtuoso players in the band to flex their muscles.

Hot on the heels of this blistering *tour de force* came second album, 'Keep The Faith', released in January 1972. Throughout the grooves you can feel a band that's gaining in confidence as the three guitar line up of Rickie Lee 'Ricochet' Reynolds, Harvey 'Burley' Jett and Stanley 'Goobar Grin' Knight is given greater prominence. 'Fever In My Mind' showcases some especially

nimble fretwork. Other highlights include 'The Big One's Still Coming' and 'White-Headed Woman', but there really isn't a weak link on the whole record.

UNSURPRISINGLY, GIVEN the speed at which BOA were releasing records, third album 'If An Angel Came To See You, Would You Make Her Feel At Home?' sometimes misses the mark. Released just six months after 'Keep The Faith', it featured what would become a live staple, the positively deranged 'Mutants Of The Monster', fan favourites 'Spring Vacation' and 'Full Moon Ride', and a

"WE REALLY DIDN'T KNOW THAT MUCH, BECAUSE WE CAME OUT OF A TOWN OF JUST 300 PEOPLE. IF WE'D KNOWN WHAT THEY WERE DOING IN NEW YORK AND LA AT THE TIME, THEN WE WOULD PROBABLY HAVE BEEN DOING IT TOO."



place pretty horny, let me tell you, and as soon as we were out of there we started making up for lost time!”

IN 1973 BOA were arguably at the peak of their powers. Their live performances were raucous affairs that the band’s ever-increasing fanbase loved. Any lingering concerns that this groundswell of support wasn’t being reflected in record sales were swept aside by the live album ‘Raunch ‘N’ Roll Live’, recorded over two nights in Portland and Seattle on 1 and 2 December 1972 and released in February of ‘73. The record is a thrilling, warts-and-all testament to just how exhilarating the band was live, highlighting the unmistakable rhythmic swing that drummer Tommy Aldridge and bassist Pat Daugherty created together. Despite only making it to number 90 on the US album charts, the LP was nevertheless certified gold, which goes to show just how many records were being sold at this point in time.

Black Oak were on a roll and by the time fifth album ‘High On The Hog’ was released in September 1973 they were really hitting their straps. The band’s musical template with which they would forever be associated had been established; fast and furious blasts of high-energy rock’n’roll topped off with Dandy’s Deep South snarl. There was absolutely no fat on the bone on ‘High On The Hog’, with songs rarely going over the three and a half minute mark. Here was a band sounding remarkably fresh and uncluttered, shorn of the self-indulgence of many of their peers. From the opening number, the infectious blast of ‘Swimmin’ In Quicksand’, the pace doesn’t let up. Perhaps there’s less variety than in their earlier work, but ‘High On The Hog’ nonetheless spawned the infectious ‘Jim Dandy To The Rescue’ single that scaled the *Billboard* Hot 100, reaching number 25 in February ‘74. The song was originally an R’n’B hit for LaVern Baker back in 1956, but given that Jim Mangrum had been using the stage name of Jim Dandy for some time already, the tune – where the singer shares vocals with female blues belter Ruby Starr – was an obvious fit.

“My daddy had called me Jim Dandy since I was nine years old,” he says. “That’s not the kind of nickname any self-respecting man would have picked for himself!”

Dandy admits that he’d never heard the song before, but someone else had...

“I got to be great friends with Elvis,” he explains. “He was the

most cosmic human I ever saw. He’d shake and you’d see a ripple go through the crowd. Before I witnessed Elvis I wanted to be a stock car driver. But anyways, his people called me one day and told me to expect a call from The King at two o’clock. I was scared to death! Right on time he called, not a moment later, and told me it was my destiny to record that particular song. I thought to myself, ‘You don’t have to get heavy. I’ll do the song!’ I just turned it into what I thought it had to be.”

THE SAME year that ‘Jim Dandy To The Rescue’ was lighting up the airwaves, Black Oak Arkansas played at the infamous California Jam alongside Deep Purple, ▶

serious psychedelic workout titled ‘Our Minds Eye’. The album was the first to feature drummer Tommy Aldridge, who replaced Wayne ‘Squeezebox’ Evans. Despite its musical ups and downs, though, the album became the first BOA release to penetrate the *Billboard* Top 100 as the band’s hard work began to pay off.

“We bought a hunting and fishing lodge in the Ozarks, which was far out,” explains Jim Dandy. “It was great for our children, wives and girls as we were always on the road, playing 300 nights a year – when we weren’t recording two albums a year, that is! Two albums a year is at least one too many. You shouldn’t put a time limit on creativity. But we kept working hard because we never thought we were going to last any time at all. It was a surprise to everyone that we managed to do it for as long as we did.”

By this time Jim was gaining something of a reputation as the wildest of wild-eyed frontmen. His frenetic live performances, where he gamely played a washboard while still somehow managing to be unashamedly and overtly sexual, started to draw attention from both fans and those who disapproved of such antics alike.

“I never worried about that,” he laughs. “I don’t know how to say this, but the sex thing was because... well, back in our tiny little town of 300 people we’d heard about sex, we’d heard about bucking. But we didn’t *know* about it until after we got out of Black Oak! We left that

“WE KEPT WORKING HARD BECAUSE WE NEVER THOUGHT WE WERE GOING TO LAST ANY TIME AT ALL. IT WAS A SURPRISE TO EVERYONE THAT WE MANAGED TO DO IT FOR AS LONG AS WE DID.”

BLACK OAK ARKANSAS

ELP and Black Sabbath. Held in April '74 at The Ontario Motor Speedway in California, the festival was arguably the greatest ever staged and drew almost 250,000 paying fans, as well as many more who simply crashed their way onto the site for free. More importantly, the event set a record for the loudest amplification used up to that point. Jim Dandy remembers the day well.

"It was such a huge show, with the biggest PA that I'd ever seen. I couldn't even see the back row. Deep Purple caused some headlines after having a run-in with the promoter and [Purple guitarist] Ritchie Blackmore was pretty arrogant and mean that day. We were getting \$65,000 for playing, same as them. But where we were different was that we didn't think being on stage gave you license to act like an asshole. It's far better to try to be nice to people. God knows, we're lucky folk. It's not that we're God's gift. We just came around at a time when things were magical."

That good fortune saw BOA spread their wings outside of the US, even playing the famous Reading Festival in the UK in 1976.

"We loved playing everywhere and made so many friends," says Jim. "I'm an insatiable conversationalist, just like my mom, and there were so many journalists in Europe, especially in the UK. Other bands would get mad at me for doing so many interviews - 14 in a single day - but that's who I am. I like to talk to people. It was just an outlet for me. I have some wild memories, like this time in Berlin when this crazy guy hit me on the head with a full beer can. I was lucky. He hit me with the round part. The bruise I got was unbelievable. We just carried on playing, because that's who we are."

Jim's not kidding. Black Oak in the '70s was a steaming live proposition (he calls them "atomic"), as the band's 'Live At Royal Albert Hall' album amply displays.

Recorded in 1975, but first released in 2005, this is an absolutely rip roaring set, with Dandy at his most lascivious. Neither of the band's two official live releases from the '70s, 'Raunch 'N' Roll Live' and 1976's 'Live! Mutha', capture the band's energy the same way, but all three prove rock at that time wasn't all about 30-minute guitar solos.



"WE'D HEARD ABOUT SEX, WE'D HEARD ABOUT BUCKING, BUT WE DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT IT UNTIL AFTER WE GOT OUT OF BLACK OAK! WE LEFT THAT PLACE PRETTY HORNY, LET ME TELL YOU!"

ALTHOUGH 'HIGH On The Hog' would prove to be the band's high water mark in terms of chart positions and sales, there was still a lot of gas left in the BOA tank. Dandy and Co. proved as much on the follow-up studio album, 1974's 'Street Party'. Tom Dowd had produced the two previous studio albums and once again directed operations on a night-on perfect collection of furious three to four minute bursts of energy. There's more Joey Ramone than Duane Allman in evidence and it's hard to believe that the movers of the nascent punk scene weren't in some way influenced by this record. 'Sting Me' is the album's best number, but in truth there's no evidence of flab here.

The same can't be said of 1975's 'Ain't Life Grand', which featured a change of guitarist. Harvey Jett had left the band in 1974 after 'Street Party' to be replaced

by Jimmy 'Soybean' Henderson in time for the recording of 'Ain't Life Grand'. But the sheer pace at which BOA were operating was beginning to take its toll and the material seems decidedly thin. A cover of The Beatles' 'Taxman' was a particular ear-sore, especially given that Dandy's vocal style simply didn't fit the song. A few stronger numbers like 'Fancy Nancy' and 'Keep On' couldn't save the album from 'ho hum'-ness. Tellingly, it was the band's first record not to chart.

"We were playing at the Shine auditorium in LA one time and I was talking to Tommy Bolin," remembers Jim.

Photos: Getty Images/Jack Mitchell; Getty Images/ABC Photo Archives; Getty Images/Michael Oclis Archives

“He told me that my band members looked worn out. Tommy said, ‘We need to do a project together to give those guys some time off!’ I said, ‘I guess I’ve been a bit self-centred.’ I hadn’t really been thinking about that. The only safety we had was in perpetual motion. I didn’t realise I was wearing out my band.”

The underwhelming performance of ‘Ain’t Life Grand’ led to a parting of the ways with Atco, but a new deal with MCA was promptly signed. Just four short months after ‘Ain’t Life Grand’, Black Oak put out their seventh studio album, ‘X-Rated’. The album returned the band to the *Billboard* album charts in the US, but in truth they would have been better advised to take longer over the recording. It starts off at a gallop with the sleazy, snarling ‘Bump ‘N’ Grind’, but from then on in it’s thin gruel, with the music leaning towards the burgeoning AOR/FM scene. The ballad, ‘Strong Enough To Be Gentle’ gave Black Oak a minor hit, but only the instrumental ‘Ace In The Hole’ is a match for the band at their best.

Released 10 months after, 1976’s ‘Balls Of Fire’ proved to be a more satisfying release. A brave crack at the Bob Seger classic ‘Ramblin’ Gamblin’ Man’ turned out to be a triumph. Other strong numbers included the heavy but groovy ‘Rock ‘N’ Roll’ and Dandy returned to his lascivious, dirty best on ‘Fistful Of Love’, a tune that you’ll be unsurprised to hear leaves little to the imagination. Ruby Starr once again made her presence felt on ‘All My Troubles’, but overall ‘Balls Of Fire’ is an uneven record, though it’s still worth seeking out for its highlights.

THE BAND had troubles a-plenty of their own by this stage, though, and ‘Balls Of Fire’ marked the end of an era. With frustration ever growing at the lack of sustained commercial success and inter-band tensions running high, most of the group departed and Jim Dandy took full control. Even guitarist Rickie Lee Reynolds, whom Dandy had been tight with “since eighth grade as brothers” was out of the picture.

With several new members on board, including future

’80s producer extraordinaire Jack Holder, Dandy wasn’t about to renege on his indefatigable work ethic. ‘10 Yr Overnight Success’ was in the shops just five months after ‘Balls Of Fire’. This time around, though, the speed at which the material had been cooked up didn’t compromise the album’s quality. The release heralded a notable return to form. It did, however, turn out to be the last record to feature that classic BOA sound

of short, sharp, dirty rock’n’roll played “just the way God intended it.” The funky yet furious ‘Television Indecision’ is one of Black Oak Arkansas’s truly great numbers. Yet despite the quality of the record, sales were once again disappointing. Clearly a rethink was required.

At the end of 1977 Dandy decided to drop the word Arkansas from the band’s name in order to place less emphasis on their Southern roots. He even toned down his vocal style as he strove to produce a more mainstream sound. Surplus to requirements at MCA, Black Oak nonetheless opted to sign with the Macon, Georgia label Capricorn, a renowned home for Southern rock acts including The Allman Brothers Band, The Marshall Tucker Band and the Outlaws.



Ruby Starr and Jim Dandy kicking it out at the California Jam, April 1974



Touring vehicles were less luxurious in the '70s

BLACK OAK released two albums on Capricorn, 1977’s ‘Race With The Devil’ and ‘I’d Rather Be Sailing’, which appeared the following year. The first release marked a clear attempt to move in a more sophisticated direction. Songwriting duties are spread throughout the band. Multi-instrumentalist Jack Holder came up with the goods on the hard rocking ‘Freedom’ and the rather lovely, ethereal ‘Rainbow’, which harked way back to the band’s more psychedelic sound of their early days. Holder also injected the same sophisticated radio friendly sound with which he would later conjure up success as a producer for ’80s singer-songwriter Tracy Chapman and smooth blues masters Buddy Guy and Albert Collins. The playing time was filled with a couple of cover versions; the Stones’ ‘Not Fade Away’, on which the band are really allowed off the leash, together with a snarling version of Gun’s evergreen ‘Race With The Devil’. On ‘I’d Rather Be

BLACK OAK ARKANSAS

Sailing' Black Oak moved squarely into MOR territory in an ill-advised attempt to ape the yacht rock and soul of Michael MacDonal-era Doobie Brothers. Sadly the record is a dud, a misguided step by a band that, even on their weaker releases, always had something worth hearing. Tellingly, this was BOA's first record not to garner a UK release, the country where the band had maintained a moderate but devoted following. Dandy took the hint and for the first time in a frenetic career went into a period of inactivity that would last six years.

Rickie Lee Reynolds, meanwhile, kept the band name alive with a Jim Dandy-free touring version of BOA in the very early '80s, fronted by vocalist Randy Ruff.

After his prolonged period of musical silence Jim reunited with his "brother" Rickie in 1984. A contract with the little known Hacienda Records ensued and 'Ready As Hell' was released both in the US and the UK (on the Heavy Metal America label) under the Jim Dandy name. Jim Dandy's Black Oak Arkansas then put out 'The Black Attack Is Back' album on the same labels in 1986.

"I never saw a penny from those records," explains Jim, "which is a shame as they were well received. We were doing more of a heavy metal thing by this time - or so they told us. But we didn't see ourselves like that. We never thought of it as metal. We never thought of it as anything. The songs were good, but the drum sound was terrible. The record company wasn't committed and we were ripped off."

JIM MIGHT not have seen it that way, but these albums did represent a clear attempt to jump on the prevailing heavy metal bandwagon. Trouble was, the scene was dominated by pretty boys. All of a sudden Jim seemed a whole lot less than the fully-fledged rock god he'd been in the '70s. The records are full of generic squeaky, shredding guitar work ('courtesy' of Steve 'The Axe'



Black Oak Arkansas photographed in London, 1975

Nunenmacher) that bears no comparison with Rickie Lee Reynolds's beautiful, succinct, subtle fretwork on earlier BOA records. Despite this, you can still find the odd good number on 'The Black Attack Is Back'. 'I'm On Your Side' and 'I Need More Love' are especially powerful, while '(I Want A Woman With) Big Titties' sees Jim shamelessly sending the PC brigade running for the hills. So certainly not all was lost. Sadly, though, like many other classic '70s rock bands, Black Oak Arkansas were

wrong-footed by the MTV-dominated '80s and when grunge arrived at the start of the '90s the death knell had well and truly rung.

The great rock'n'roll survivor Jim Dandy has soldiered on, however, recording and touring with a number of different BOA line-ups. Trends matter little to him and he's always remained steadfast in his belief that great rock'n'roll bands will never die. In 1999, Jim and his long-term sparring partner Rickie Lee Reynolds returned to the studio and produced a truly powerful, modern sounding album titled 'The Wild Bunch'. It was the band's finest release since the glory days.

THE NEW century has been notable for the resurgence of interest in classic rock and many great bands have returned to play to crowds the size of which they'd not seen since they were at the peak of their powers. Like many of their peers, Black Oak Arkansas were suddenly back in the spotlight and back in fashion as modern artists such as Blackberry Smoke acknowledged their influence. It's no secret that many rock fans feel David Lee Roth, and W. Axl Rose to a lesser extent, purloined much of Jim Dandy's stage show and appropriated it for their own ends. Jim is gracious in his assessment...

"They didn't steal it man," he says. "Because it wasn't

"YOU HAVE TO GO THROUGH THIS ADVENTURE WITH PEOPLE YOU LOVE AND WOULD TAKE A BULLET FOR. THE THING IS TO STAY TOGETHER LONG ENOUGH TO BE ABLE TO LAUGH ABOUT THE DISASTERS."

ours in the first place. It was just the love that I passed on. Everyone passes on something. As The Beatles said, 'the love you take is equal to the love you make.'"

To crown this upsurge in popularity, 2013 saw the band releasing 'Back Thar N' Over Yonder', a mixture of old songs re-energised, diamonds from the vaults and new material that fits completely seamlessly. The album only serves to remind us that Black Oak Arkansas truly were one of the great bands to emerge in the golden era of rock music. Don't expect to see this group's achievements recognised by the Rock & Roll Hall Of Fame anytime soon, though.

"That thing?" questions Jim derisively. "There's no Grand Funk Railroad or Black Oak Arkansas in *that* thing. They expect you to pay to be a member. I wasn't ever going to pay to be in the Hall Of Fame."

WHETHER HIS achievements are recognised or not, Jim Dandy is happy just to keep on keeping on. "I missed out on that whole 'live fast, die young and leave a beautiful corpse' deal," he laughs. "But my daughter says I was a real hunk when I was young, so that's good enough for me! I guess I've got good genes. My dad passed away

just last year at the ripe old age of 93. Missed my mama, I reckon..."

And the singer has his memories, of course, of the days when Black Oak Arkansas straddled the world as one of those five biggest earners...

"They said I could sell crazy," he says. "But what does that really mean? We were from this little town and we did something. The things we saw in the '70s... well even Jim Dandy is at a loss for words to explain them. Seems like young bands these days, even if they're successful, don't want to do more than three albums together. But the thing is, you have to go through this adventure with people you love and would take a bullet for. Some of the stuff we went through was so heavy and dangerous that we could have lost our lives. But now we sit and have a couple of drinks together and reminisce about all those times. You know what? The thing is to stay together long enough to be able to laugh about the disasters!

"We came in at a very special time in the world," he continues, "so I can't take the credit for what the good Lord has given us. I had very little to do with it, except that I rode that horse as hard as I could. And one thing's for certain. It truly was the golden era of music." 🤘

SIX STEPS TO HEAVEN

Half a dozen songs that will get you to the very heart of Black Oak Arkansas

'THE HILLS OF ARKANSAS' (FROM 'BLACK OAK ARKANSAS', 1971)

A lovely number from the band's first album that starts off as a straightforward country honk, but gradually introduces some exquisite slide guitar and a truly uplifting vocal and chorus lifted straight from the summer of love.

'FEVER IN MY MIND' (FROM 'KEEP THE FAITH', 1972)

Vintage Black Oak Arkansas this, as a searing lead axe does some serious damage over a bunch of insistent rhythm guitar riffs. And check out that irrepressible, lascivious vocal.

'TELEVISION INDECISION' (FROM '10 YR OVERNIGHT SUCCESS', 1976)

A really great song on a somewhat maligned album from a time when it seemed for all the world like the band had shot its bolt. But here they get it up again to remind us all about their funk powers on a number that's as groovy as hell.



'POST TOASTEE' (FROM 'THE WILD BUNCH', 1999)

After a pretty fallow 20 years Jim hits back with a bang here. Eschewing their customary brevity, the band are allowed to stretch their legs on this powerhouse number.

'HEY Y'ALL' (FROM 'LIVE AT ROYAL ALBERT HALL' CD/DVD, 2005)

To fully appreciate this song check it out on the DVD section of the Albert Hall CD/DVD pack. Recorded in 1975, a solid guitar groove heralds the appearance of Jim Dandy, all bare chested, legs clad in skin tight silver spandex and high frilled suede boots, grinning maniacally as he works his washboard like a demon lover.

'PLUGGED IN AND WIRED' (FROM 'BACK THAR N' OVER YONDER', 2013)

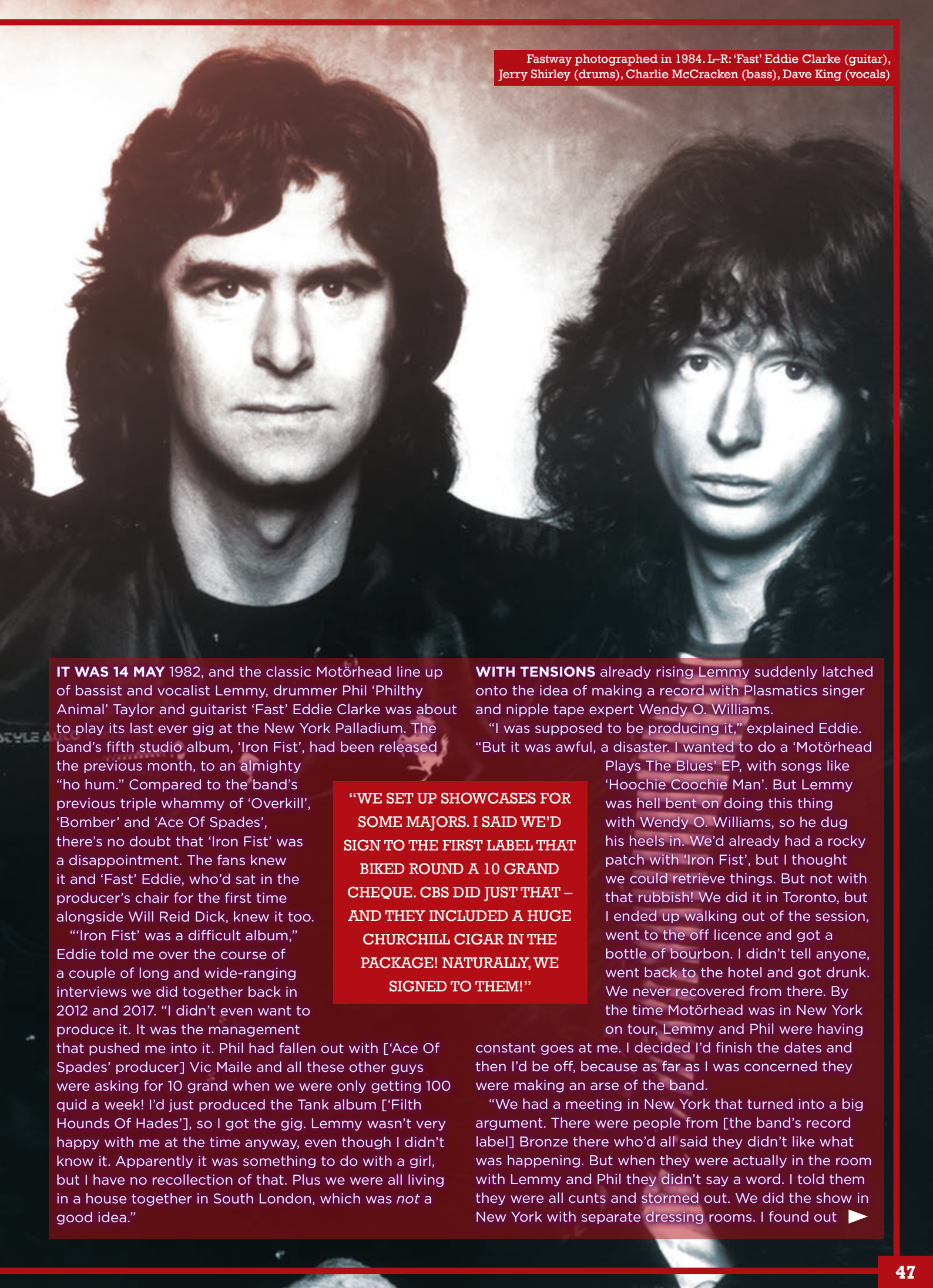
A number that's updated for a modern audience and perfectly encapsulates what made BOA great in the first place. Dandy sounds as though a day hasn't passed since he first strode out of rural Arkansas, washboard in hand, spandex on legs, ready to take on all comers.



FAST... AND FURIOUS!

When guitarist '**Fast**' **Eddie Clarke** found himself out of Motörhead in 1982 he immediately rolled his sleeves up and got to work on his next project, the classic hard rock band **Fastway**. The group went on to outsell Motörhead and provide the perfect platform for Eddie's elegant hard rock guitar style. *Howard Johnson* unpacks the history of a vastly under-appreciated act...

Fastway photographed in 1984. L-R: 'Fast' Eddie Clarke (guitar), Jerry Shirley (drums), Charlie McCracken (bass), Dave King (vocals)



IT WAS 14 MAY 1982, and the classic Motörhead line up of bassist and vocalist Lemmy, drummer Phil 'Philthy Animal' Taylor and guitarist 'Fast' Eddie Clarke was about to play its last ever gig at the New York Palladium. The band's fifth studio album, 'Iron Fist', had been released the previous month, to an almighty "ho hum." Compared to the band's previous triple whammy of 'Overkill', 'Bomber' and 'Ace Of Spades', there's no doubt that 'Iron Fist' was a disappointment. The fans knew it and 'Fast' Eddie, who'd sat in the producer's chair for the first time alongside Will Reid Dick, knew it too.

"'Iron Fist' was a difficult album," Eddie told me over the course of a couple of long and wide-ranging interviews we did together back in 2012 and 2017. "I didn't even want to produce it. It was the management that pushed me into it. Phil had fallen out with ['Ace Of Spades' producer] Vic Maile and all these other guys were asking for 10 grand when we were only getting 100 quid a week! I'd just produced the Tank album ['Filtch Hounds Of Hades'], so I got the gig. Lemmy wasn't very happy with me at the time anyway, even though I didn't know it. Apparently it was something to do with a girl, but I have no recollection of that. Plus we were all living in a house together in South London, which was *not* a good idea."

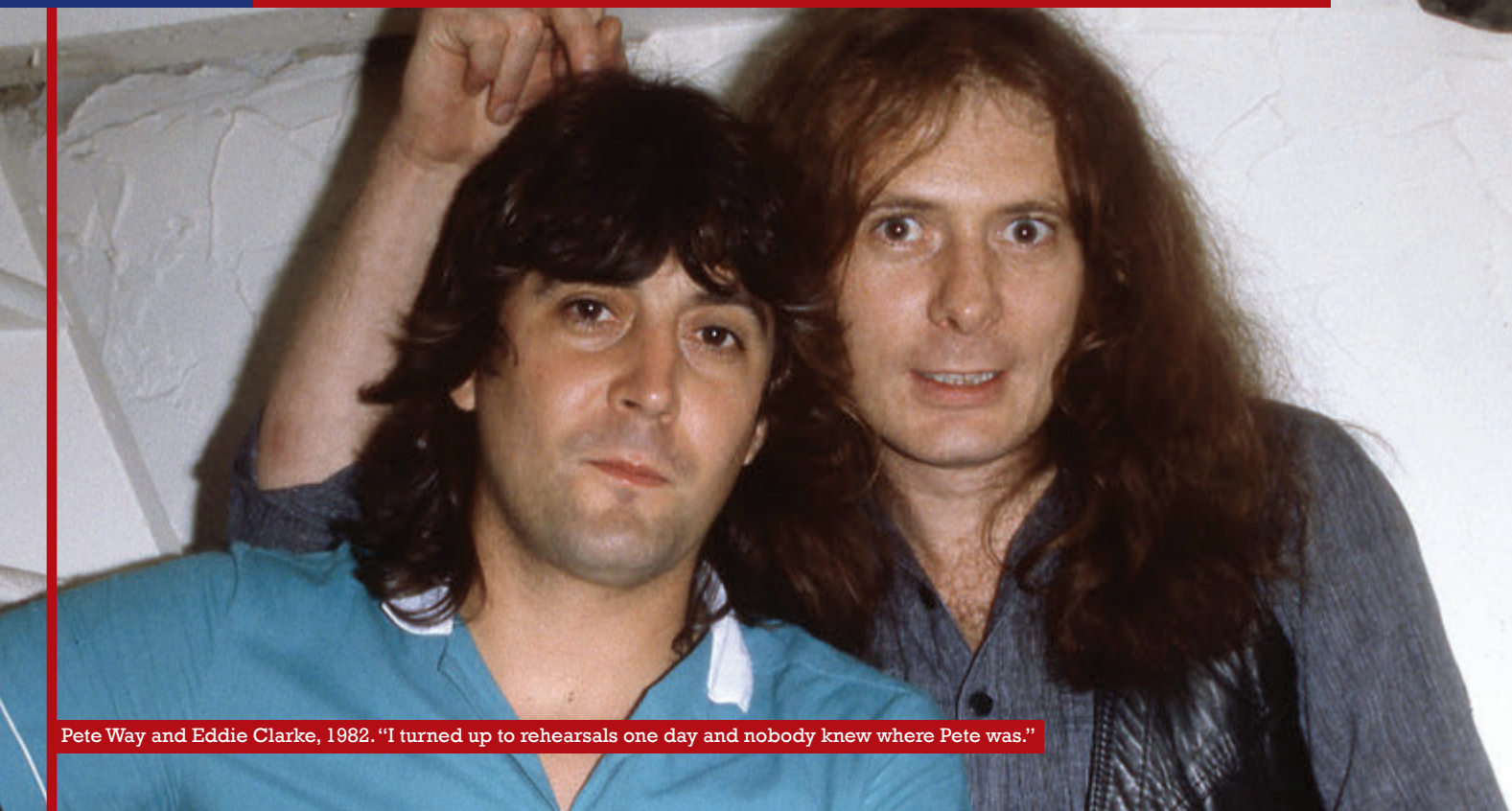
"WE SET UP SHOWCASES FOR SOME MAJORS. I SAID WE'D SIGN TO THE FIRST LABEL THAT BIKED ROUND A 10 GRAND CHEQUE. CBS DID JUST THAT – AND THEY INCLUDED A HUGE CHURCHILL CIGAR IN THE PACKAGE! NATURALLY, WE SIGNED TO THEM!"

WITH TENSIONS already rising Lemmy suddenly latched onto the idea of making a record with Plasmatics singer and nipple tape expert Wendy O. Williams.

"I was supposed to be producing it," explained Eddie. "But it was awful, a disaster. I wanted to do a 'Motörhead Plays The Blues' EP, with songs like 'Hoochie Coochie Man'. But Lemmy was hell bent on doing this thing with Wendy O. Williams, so he dug his heels in. We'd already had a rocky patch with 'Iron Fist', but I thought we could retrieve things. But not with that rubbish! We did it in Toronto, but I ended up walking out of the session, went to the off licence and got a bottle of bourbon. I didn't tell anyone, went back to the hotel and got drunk. We never recovered from there. By the time Motörhead was in New York on tour, Lemmy and Phil were having

constant goes at me. I decided I'd finish the dates and then I'd be off, because as far as I was concerned they were making an arse of the band.

"We had a meeting in New York that turned into a big argument. There were people from [the band's record label] Bronze there who'd all said they didn't like what was happening. But when they were actually in the room with Lemmy and Phil they didn't say a word. I told them they were all cunts and stormed out. We did the show in New York with separate dressing rooms. I found out ►



Pete Way and Eddie Clarke, 1982. "I turned up to rehearsals one day and nobody knew where Pete was."

afterwards that [Eddie's replacement in Motörhead, Thin Lizzy guitarist] Brian Robertson already had his ticket booked [to come out to the States]. So I went off to see this bird I knew in Toronto for a few days."

And that was that. Eddie claimed he never quit, but that he was fired.

"I was shellshocked at the time," he says. "Walking around with half a bottle of vodka in my pocket thinking I hadn't got a job. I just never thought we'd split."

BUT WHILE the rupture of this classic Motörhead line up was a big blow to the 31 year old, it proved to be far from a knockout punch. Incredibly, while the iconic status of Motörhead with Eddie would never be topped, the guitarist's next project would far outstrip anything he'd ever done previously in commercial terms. Mind you, no betting man would have given you any great odds on Fastway ever succeeding.

"Someone in the management office said that Pete Way had just left UFO," Eddie told me. "So we got together with the idea of forming a band and got on great right from the start."

Motörhead and UFO had little in common musically, apart from the fact that they were both rock bands. The former were brash, raw and direct, the latter much more considered, melodic and grandiose. But one thing did link the two unemployed musos. They both liked a party. It was hard to imagine that these two herberts would get much work done. But Eddie was on a mission, a mission

to prove that Lemmy and Phil were wrong to eject him from Motörhead.

"I went to see a guy where I used to rehearse to see if we could start getting things going at his place, and Topper Headon just happened to be there," Eddie remembered. Nick 'Topper' Headon had previously made his mark filling the drum stool with The Clash, so might not have seemed like an immediate choice to work with two strictly old school rockers. Not so.

"The three of us had a jam and those were the first sparks of Fastway right there," explained Eddie. "It was fantastic. Then people heard about what we were doing and they were interested straight away because it was like the first heavy metal supergroup. We didn't take that too seriously, mainly because Pete and I were in the pub most of the time. We both had a drink problem, you see? But it was all great fun. Unfortunately Topper couldn't stick with it, because he was pretty damaged by everything that had happened to him previously, what with

his heroin addiction and what have you. But I loved him. He was a great guy and a great drummer."

ON THE hunt for a new member, a friend of Pete's mentioned the fact that former Humble Pie drummer Jerry Shirley was available.

"We said 'You're joking! That would be amazing'," said Eddie. "We were both such Humble Pie fans! So we organised a meet with Jerry. Pete and I went to visit him in Farnham down in Surrey of all places. I think it was in

"I DIDN'T REALISE THERE'D BE SO MUCH HOSTILITY OUT THERE. THERE WERE PEOPLE WHO THOUGHT I WAS A TRAITOR FOR LEAVING MOTÖRHEAD AND PEOPLE DIDN'T LIKE THE NEW BAND BECAUSE IT WASN'T LEATHER JACKETS AND BULLET BELTS."

a pub! Jerry was covered in paint, because he was doing odd jobs at the time to make a few quid. Well, Pete and I were all over him trying to get him to join our band. He told us that he didn't even have his kit any more, because he'd hocked it. But we told him we could sort that out, that we could sort *anything* out. We knew he was the man for the job and when he agreed to join we were over the moon. The battle was being won!"

All the band needed to get on the starting blocks was a dynamite vocalist. But as is often the case with fledgling rock bands, this proved to be the hardest slot to fill.

"We auditioned something like 10 guys at Nomis Studios in London," Eddie explained. "But we couldn't find anyone who was right. It was frustrating. Then unexpectedly one morning Pete knocked on my door around 11 o'clock with a can of Special Brew in his hand. We'd put an ad in the papers saying prospective vocalists could send tapes and Pete had been going through them.

He said, 'I've got us two Robert Plants here.' One guy had sent a tape from Australia singing 'Communication Breakdown' and it was great. But he was in Australia. And then the other one was from a guy called Dave King in Dublin, and this bloke was singing an original tune. But it was absolutely spot on. You could see at once that there was a lot of potential there. So we phoned Dave up and flew him over for a rehearsal. We hit it off straight away." The Fastway line up of Eddie Clarke, Pete Way, Jerry Shirley and Dave King was ready to roll.

"We demoed three songs - 'Feel Me, Touch Me', 'All I Need Is Your Love' and 'Give It Some Action' - down at Rampart Studios in London and those songs got a lot of interest," said Eddie. "So we set up some showcases for major labels and CBS was one of the companies that bit. I said we'd sign to the first label that biked round a 10 grand cheque, and CBS boss Paul Russell did just that - plus he included a huge Churchill cigar in the package! Naturally, we signed to them!"

UNFORTUNATELY FOR Fastway, though, Pete Way was still signed individually to UFO's label, Chrysalis, and when they heard about the CBS deal for Fastway they weren't at all happy.



Fastway vocalist Dave King: "Robert Plant at his lung-bursting best."

"They got the hump," confirmed Eddie. "So they tried to put the blockers on Pete doing Fastway. They were just being difficult, because they'd had their chance to sign the band and they didn't take it. So I stormed their offices. I wanted to grab hold of one of the bosses, but he was hiding in his office shitting himself; he wouldn't come out! The secretaries were all running about saying, 'There's a madman out here.' Ha Ha! Well, that didn't sit too well with Pete, who's a bit of a softie, really."

Did Pete get cold feet about Fastway because of Eddie's 'hands on' approach to dealing with record companies? The guitarist felt it had more to do with a certain Sharon Osbourne...

"I think she had an axe to grind with me," claimed Eddie. "She was always on Lemmy's and Phil's Motörhead team and they didn't have a good word to say about me. So Sharon invited Pete to join Ozzy's band. I found out later that she tried to get Jerry to

join too, but he wasn't having any of it."

According to Eddie, the circumstances of Pete's departure from Fastway were bizarre to say the least.

"It was weird," he told me. "I turned up to rehearsals one day and nobody knew where Pete was. I didn't suspect anything at first. I just thought he was having trouble with his wife. So I phoned him, but couldn't get hold of him. Then somebody told the management company that had signed us [Part Rock, run by Stewart Young and Steve Barnett] that Pete wasn't coming back. Nobody wanted to tell me directly that he'd fucked off to join Ozzy Osbourne. They were worried I'd eat the messenger. I was absolutely devastated. Pete and I hadn't done that much together, but it felt great. I believed we were mates. How wrong was I? I think Pete joining Ozzy was mainly down to Sharon, who was Ozzy's manager and wife, of course. When I left Motörhead people said, 'Eddie's this and Eddie's that.' I think Sharon believed it and turned her vitriol on me. When I see Ozzy now I don't mention the whole episode, but I don't know why they did it. And then they went and sacked Pete after three shows! What were they thinking? People like that give the business a bad name. We had something really good going and it really wasn't necessary for Pete

to do that. But that's rock stars for you. They all think they're so great. We're only playing guitars and singing. We're not fucking rocket scientists! People have a go at me for getting pissed and taking a few drugs. But that's nothing next to loyalty. What's the matter with 'em?"

Eddie was used to the knocks by now, but his belief in the power of Fastway's music and the style that the new band had adopted was all-encompassing.

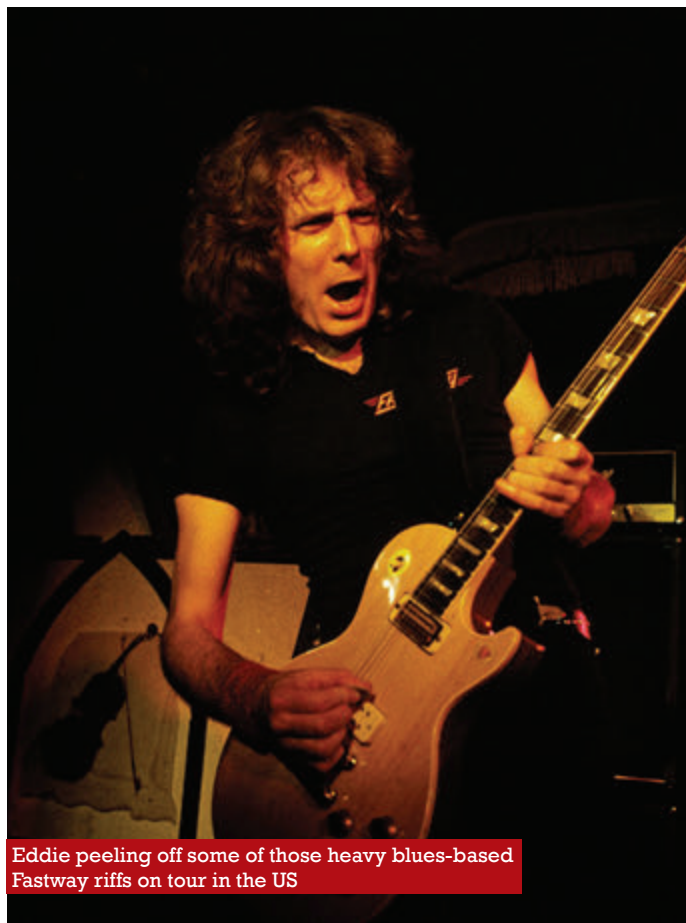
"I had all these riffs that I'd stored up inside me and I was bubbling," he recalled. "It was easy with Fastway, because that was my natural style. I'd had to adapt for Motörhead and that band was restrictive in certain ways. It was a bit of a straitjacket, because of Lemmy's particular way of playing bass."

THE BAND'S first album, 'Fastway', was recorded in London at Marcus Music and Maison Rouge, with renowned American producer Eddie Kramer at the helm. Session player Micky Feat performed bass duties on a release that bristled with hard rock energy. It wasn't Motörhead, but that was exactly the point. Songs like 'Easy Livin', 'Say What You Will' and 'Heft!' paid unashamed homage to the classic rock heritage of Led Zeppelin and Free, with Dave King's vocals highly reminiscent of Robert Plant at his lung-bursting best. Above all, though, when the album was released in early 1983 it showed that Eddie was a far more accomplished guitarist than people had given him credit for when he was in Motörhead.

"Micky Feat was brilliant, and he and Jerry worked so well together," recalled Eddie of the recording process. "It really clicked. But even so, I was never glad that Pete had left the band in the first place. Micky didn't want to tour, though, so we got in another bassist called Alfie Agius, who was the boyfriend of Stewart Young's PA at Part Rock. To be honest he struggled with his tuning and was up his own arse."

Yet Agius's tuning issues proved to be the least of Fastway's worries on the British tour the band undertook in support of the album.

"We didn't sell many tickets," Eddie admitted candidly. "To be honest I didn't realise there'd be so much hostility out there. There were people who thought I was a traitor



Eddie peeling off some of those heavy blues-based Fastway riffs on tour in the US

for leaving Motörhead and people didn't like the new band because it wasn't leather jackets and bullet belts. Don't get me wrong. It wasn't empty halls or anything like that; we did about 2,500 at Hammersmith Odeon. We did OK, but the tour lost money. The promoter Maurice Jones didn't mind, though, because we were great mates. I had lots of people helping me out after Motörhead, so all the bad-mouthing that was coming out of the Motörhead office towards me at that time was all bollocks. But all the same, after that tour I thought Fastway was finished. The album hadn't done much business and I didn't even know if CBS were going to pick up the option for the second record."

EDDIE WAS facing up to the

sad fact that Fastway might fall at the first hurdle. But then news came through that changed the landscape almost overnight.

"I remember when we were mastering the album the guy doing it told us that 'Say What You Will' would be huge in the States. We thought it was the worst track we had, but he turned out to be right and we were wrong. Out of the blue I got a phone call saying the 12-inch single for 'Easy Livin' had reached America. The Americans used to send scouts to the UK to find interesting records and the Cleveland radio station WMMS had got hold of it and loved it. They adored 'Far Far From Home' too, and creamed themselves for 'Say What You Will'. Before you knew it 'Say What You Will' was being played on 127 radio stations in the US."

Having been on the brink of disaster, suddenly it was all systems go for Fastway.

"We knocked a video together quickly and got a new bass player, Charlie McCracken [who had previously played with Rory Gallagher]," said Eddie. "Visually he wasn't ideal, but he was a lovely bloke and a great bass player. So off we went on tour in the States with Saxon and Iron Maiden. We got to the first gig in Casper, Wyoming and as we went in the back entrance there were women screaming Dave's name. I said, 'This is fuckin' ridiculous. What's going on?' What had happened was that MTV had jumped on us, so we had a really good leg up there. We sold about 400,000 copies of 'Fastway' and got to number 31 on the *Billboard* charts. We did three months with Maiden and Saxon and then hooked

up with the AC/DC tour, which was just blinding. Imagine getting to watch them every night for free!”

AMERICA HAD come to Fastway’s rescue, but if Eddie thought it would all be plain sailing from this point on, he was sadly mistaken. Constant touring to capitalise on the unexpected success of the debut, intense pressure to produce a follow-up quickly and the unexpected death of his mother at the end of 1983 led to Eddie not firing on all cylinders as the band started work on a second album, inappropriately titled ‘All Fired Up’.

“It was a real disappointment,” admitted Eddie. “I think we weren’t ready and Eddie Kramer, who again produced, was lame as fuck second time around. I had some good times with Eddie and he was fantastic on the first album, but he was abysmal on the second. I’d never been keen on using him again, because I felt we needed to change to move up the ladder. But I was outvoted by management and the other band members.

“When we sent the finished album to America,” he continued, “the record company there immediately said, ‘It’s not good enough. You’ll have to remix it.’ I had to fly to New York to do it, but it just wasn’t there on the tape. You can’t make a silk purse out of a sow’s ear, which was what we were trying to do. So we went back out to the States and toured with RATT, did a few shows with Billy Squier and then some more with Rush. We did some good gigs and were starting to cook, but the record just wasn’t good enough. It felt laboured, whereas the first album just flowed out. And once you start thinking with rock music, that’s when you lose it.”

THE BAND soon fell apart as Eddie fell out with Jerry Shirley and the record company put pressure on him to get rid of Charlie McCracken.

“I had a failed album and things were going down the tubes,” recalled Eddie. “You get desperate, so you do things you normally wouldn’t do. I’d lost the bravado to say, ‘I don’t care what you say or do.’ It was no longer like Motörhead. ‘Fuck off, we’re doing it anyway.’

A new version of Fastway, featuring members of Dave King’s pre-Fastway outfit Stillwood came up with the ‘Waiting For The Roar’ album, released in 1986. But Eddie knew only too well that the band was in freefall.

“We couldn’t get a tour in America and nobody really liked the record,” he admitted. “It was dead in the water and it had cost me something like £350,000.”

Out of the blue Eddie got offered the chance to write the soundtrack for a horror film called *Trick Or Treat*, “and amazingly it was really well received when it was released in 1986,” said Clarke. “It had a couple of good tunes on and I think the album sold about half a million copies. But Dave had told me that as soon as the record was finished he was done with heavy metal forever, so when it was over we parted company.”

EDDIE CONTINUED the Fastway name in various incarnations right up until 2011 when he released the excellent ‘Eat Dog Eat’ album with former Little Angels frontman Toby Jepson on vocals. But it was the excitement of the band’s early days that marked Fastway as a real hard rock gem. Dave King went on to find fame as the frontman of Celtic punk band Flogging Molly and, of course, Eddie sadly passed away on 10 January this year at the age of 67. No-one can deny that the guitarist will be best remembered for his contribution to Motörhead, a band that changed the face of rock music forever. But let’s not forget the importance of Fastway, a band that sold more than Motörhead and left behind a legacy of often-overlooked hard rock gems. 🤘

‘WAY TO GO

Five Rock Candy writers give you their must-play Fastway track, whether you want to discover what the band was all about or relive their glory days...



MALCOLM DOME

‘The World Waits For You’ from ‘Waiting For The Roar’ (1986)

This is classic rock that’s epic in scale, yet never gets bogged down under the weight of its own importance. There’s melody, emotion and drama all wrapped up in one fine package.



HOWARD JOHNSON

‘Misunderstood’ from ‘All Fired Up’ (1984)

A weird one, but a great one. The song is a mid-tempo groover worthy of Zeppelin at their sexy best, yet somehow Eddie’s ultra-cool guitar work still manages to conjure up the ghost of Motörhead past.



JOHN NICHOLSON

‘All Fired Up’ from ‘All Fired Up’ (1984)

A track that perfectly sums this band up as a kind of melodic, medium-paced Motörhead

with bit of UFO for seasoning. And the riff is so very Eddie. What a pity Pete Way didn’t actually get to play in Fastway.

DEREK OLIVER

‘Give It All You’ve Got’ from ‘Fastway’ (1983)

This number proudly displays Fastway drinking from the fountain of mid-period Led Zeppelin. The song is buried deep on their debut album but still has maximum impact, with Eddie peeling out prime Pagey riffage and Dave King squealing like a junior Plant.

DAVE REYNOLDS

‘Say What You Will’ from ‘Fastway’ (1983)

There are plenty of numbers in the Fastway arsenal that could be described as classics, but this is the pick of a very strong selection of songs on the first album. No-nonsense hard rock of the finest order.



VINNY APPICE

**THE POWERHOUSE DRUMMER BEHIND
SABBATH AND DIO ON RECORDING WITH
LENNON, TOURING WITH AEROSMITH
AND SHARING A HOUSE WITH RONNIE...**

Was it seeing your older brother Carmine whacking a kit that first got you into playing drums?

“There was actually a cousin of ours who already played, and our parents were both very supportive of us having a go. But yes, it was a big moment when I saw Carmine playing with Vanilla Fudge. Incredibly, Led Zeppelin supported Vanilla Fudge back then and I saw a show in New Jersey. Carmine told me to check out this amazing drummer they had!”

Is it true that you hung out with John Lennon very early in your career?

“It is true. My band was called BOMF, or Brothers Of Mother Fuckers, and we rehearsed at the Record Plant Studios in New York. One night in 1974 we were called down there because John was recording and wanted some people to add handclaps to a song he was working on. It was like, ‘Holy shit, it’s John Lennon!’ The song turned out to be ‘Whatever Gets You Thru The Night’. John came to check us out a couple of nights later and hung with us, smoking a couple of joints. We did some videos with him and he wanted us to be his new band. We backed him at what turned out to be his last ever live gig [on 18 April 1975, where he performed three songs at a tribute gig for impresario Lew Grade at New York’s Waldorf Astoria Hotel]. I regret never asking him for any pictures or for an autograph.”

The following year, 1976, you hooked up with American guitarist Rick Derringer. What was the deal there?

“I was playing in a band called Axis by this point and Rick flew down to see us in Louisiana where we were based. He liked me and the band’s guitar player, Danny Johnson. So we both ended up playing in Rick’s new band. We did shows with Boston and Foghat and went out with Aerosmith on the ‘Rocks’ tour. Man, there were a lot of drugs, but I’ve always stayed away from that stuff – apart from smoking pot. I didn’t even drink much, which is probably why I’m fit and healthy and still doing this.”

You got your big break when you joined Black Sabbath in 1980. How did that happen?

“What’s funny is that even before the Sabbath thing happened I got a call from Sharon Osbourne. She said she was putting a band together for Ozzy and asked if I’d like to join. I was still pretty young and the furthest I’d ever been out of the country was Canada. Ozzy’s reputation was pretty crazy because he’d just been fired from Black Sabbath, so I asked Carmine for his advice because he knew Ozzy. Carmine told me the last time he’d seen Ozzy he was asleep with his face in a plate of spaghetti. I turned him down and a couple of months later I got the call from Sabbath asking me to join when Bill Ward left during the ‘Heaven And Hell’ tour. Tony Iommi liked the album I’d just done with Axis.”

There was a rumour going around that [Sabbath vocalist] Ronnie Dio had recommended you for the gig. Is that true?

“No, it isn’t. I didn’t know Ronnie at that time as I hadn’t

been much of a Rainbow fan, to be honest. But I’d just heard ‘Neon Knights’ on the radio and thought, ‘Wow, Sabbath’s new singer is just amazing.’ We had four days to rehearse a set for a stadium show in Hawaii, but we spent most of it in the pub! ‘Neon Knights’ was the first song I played with Ronnie and then almost 30 years later it was the last song I ever played with him.”

“I WAS ASKED TO JOIN OZZY OSBOURNE. MY BROTHER CARMINE TOLD ME THE LAST TIME HE’D SEEN OZZY HE WAS ASLEEP WITH HIS FACE IN A PLATE OF SPAGHETTI. I TURNED HIM DOWN.”

Replacing a legend like Bill Ward was a big ask. How did you rate him as a drummer?

“We’re very different players and Bill has always said he’s a percussionist really, rather than a drummer. He’s very creative, in the same mould as Keith Moon, say, or Bonzo. I didn’t like Bill’s drum sound on those early Sabbath records, but his actual playing was amazing.”

You didn’t stay in Sabbath very long, leaving in 1982. Why did that line-up fall apart?

“It was all down to business. It had nothing to do with the music at all. I always thought Black Sabbath should be an organic thing, rather than simply saying, ‘Let’s get this guy into the band,’ which sounds OK on paper but doesn’t always work. When Ian Gillan joined they asked me to stay, but by then Ronnie was putting a band together that was more exciting.”

Was the ’80s the greatest time to be in a rock band?

“It was an awful lot of fun. I knew a lot of those LA bands like RATT as they were coming up, because we’d all played The Whisky in Hollywood together when I was in California with Axis. By the time I was in Dio it was amazing, because I’d be hearing ‘Holy Diver’ on the radio alongside all these records by my friends.”

You made eight albums with Dio. Was that your most satisfying musical experience?

“Oh yeah. We had a ball recording, smoking a lot of pot and doing a lot of crazy shit. But we never knew we were making rock history.”

But you also went back to Sabbath in the middle of your Dio career, just like Ronnie did, for 1992’s ‘Dehumanizer’, right?

“I did, but that album was put together for reasons other than wanting to make good music. Sabbath’s drummer at the time was Cozy Powell and Ronnie didn’t want to work with him. As it turned out Cozy had a riding accident and couldn’t play drums, so I was called in to cover for him. Ronnie and I rented a house together in Stratford-on-Avon. It turned out to be a dark album, but what I mainly remember is smoking a lot of hash and eating tons of Indian food.”

You and Carmine are both still playing and even recorded an album together, ‘Sinister’, last year. Is it still as enjoyable working today as it always has been?

“Sure. And playing with Carmine is a blast. He kicks absolute ass, so that really keeps me on my toes. To be honest I think we both inspire each other.” 🤘

Aerosmith shot backstage at RFK Stadium, Washington DC, 30 May 1976. L-R: Steven Tyler (vocals), Tom Hamilton (bass), Joe Perry (guitar), Brad Whitford (guitar), Joey Kramer (drums)



GET YOUR

WE LOVE AN ARGUMENT about rock music up at Rock Candy Towers. We can spend hours – no, make that *days* – arguing about the merits of any number of bands, albums and gigs. Things can get heated, but there is one thing that we all agree on. Between 1974 and, ooh, 1979, Aerosmith provided the gold standard for hard rock.

The Boston band's 1973 debut, 'Aerosmith', showed a whole lot of promise and included the jaw-dropping classic 'Dream On', of course. But in our opinion, from '74's 'Get Your Wings' right up to '79's 'Night In The Ruts' the 'Smith produced a huge body of awesome work.

ANCHORED BY the band's two-headed driving force of vocalist Steven Tyler and guitarist Joe Perry, Aerosmith were in their absolute prime at a really interesting time in America, when rock emerged from the underground to become both a stadium-filling giant and a money-making machine. But while the band – completed by bassist Tom Hamilton, guitarist Brad Whitford and drummer Joey Kramer – seemingly went from theatres to stadiums in the blink of an eye, Aerosmith's sound during this evolutionary period always remained rough and ready, expansive and varied, raw and passionate.



Photo: Getty Images/Fin Costello/Redferns.

Yes, the band enjoyed immense success in the '80s. But as far as we're concerned classic Aerosmith will always be 'Toys In The Attic', 'Back In The Saddle', 'Seasons Of Wither', 'Combination', 'Kings And Queens', 'No Surprize'... Need we go on?

IN THIS issue of *Rock Candy* we're bringing you our traditional 14-page mega-cover story as we go deep into our subject matter.

We're delighted to bring you an interview with Steven Tyler from back in 1976, when renowned English

journalist Chris Welch flew to the States for UK music paper *Melody Maker* and wrote a fascinating insight into a band at the very height of their powers. And we're honoured that the group's legendary soundman Bob 'Nite Bob' Czaykowski has chosen to talk to us exclusively about life on the road with the band in their heyday. Nobody was closer to Aerosmith during the golden era than Bob.

Aerosmith in the '70s is a period we could revisit time and time again. And Aerosmith, 1970s-style, are more than worthy *Rock Candy* cover stars!

“AERO-DYNAMIC”

AEROSMITH were the hottest band in America in October of 1976. The brilliant ‘Rocks’ album was breaking all sales records and the band’s live shows were incendiary. English journalist Chris Welch flew to the States back then to meet 28-year-old frontman STEVEN TYLER at his lakeside home in New Hampshire and came away with this fascinating insight into a band at the height of its powers...



HOWARD BUNKER LOOKED DOWN

at his instrument panel and spoke softly into the radio. There was no point in looking through the plexiglass canopy, for all around was a milky grey world, the disorientating confines of a cloud belt that clung like fog to the six-seater, twin-engined Cessna.

Mr. Bunker – silver-haired, with a confident, affable manner – used to fly President Kennedy from Boston, the city we had left in driving rain half an hour earlier. I suddenly felt like Ginger in the book *Biggles Flies North*, heading for the Canadian badlands, liable to be called upon to climb out of the cabin into the slipstream and hurl a can of bully beef at pursuing aircraft.

We were not going as far as the Canadian border, however, but to New Hampshire for a rendezvous with America’s highest flying band. The plane began to lose height, and we went into a steep bank. My stomach heaved and a bottle of beer slipped from my fingers.

Miraculously the world returned

as we dipped below the cloud cover. Below us spread a breathtaking view. A mountain loomed directly beneath us, dark and menacing in the afternoon light, while stretching away to the horizon lay mile after mile of copper gold maple trees, a vista broken by the waters of Lake Sunapee.

“That’s where we land!” shouted Bunker, twisting around in his seat, and pointing towards a tiny private landing strip on a golf course amidst the trees. The co-pilot adjusted instruments, we circuted the area, then lined up for a final approach.

As the motors died away we flashed over a knot of people gathered around waiting cars. Unmistakable amongst them, waving a greeting, was Steven Tyler, lead singer with Aerosmith and newest source of fascination for the rock-hungry youth of a brace of nations.

We taxied back down the runway. Steven pulled a red riding hood over his head and leaned up against a bright red 120mph Porsche. He looked every inch the rock and

Photo: Getty Images/Ian Dickson/Redferns



“GOT A NICE CAR. NICE HOUSE. GOT SOME NICE NEW FRIENDS. MET A LOT OF PEOPLE. SIX MILLION ON THIS LAST TOUR. BUT YOU HEAR STORIES ABOUT GUYS GETTING EGO TRIPS. I DON'T WANNA BE LIKE THAT.”



roll superstar as he moved cautiously toward the new arrivals in the land where Indians once roamed and the geese still fly.

AEROSMITH ARE a remarkable band. They are the first American group to successfully adopt the stance of those English bands who have dominated world markets for a decade. Led Zeppelin, Yes, ELP and Queen: we have seen them climb from obscurity to fame and riches. It could only be a matter of time before America would strike back.

Aerosmith have been berated in the States for their English approach, for the obvious influences at work in their brand of heavy rock. It is possible to detect both Yardbird and Zeppelin nuances, but this is hardly surprising as Aerosmith are confirmed anglophiles, and Steven Tyler has idolised the Beatles, Stones and

Yardbirds since he was a childhood fan. Even now he does not conceal his hero-worship of Mick Jagger.

But the critics' assault on Aerosmith did not sway the fans. As the band slogged around on endless tours, supporting many a British act on their way, they gradually built a following. After four years, they have become a record-smashing band – at home, that is. They remain virtually unknown in the land that provided them with so much inspiration.

They have had four platinum albums, which means a million sales each in American terms, and two of the albums have sold nearly two million each. All their albums are still selling around 10-15,000 copies a week and Aerosmith is the strongest-selling catalogue on the CBS label. "I'd like to know why," says their softly spoken manager David Krebs drily. "I still haven't figured it out."

Krebs is quietly delighted by the success of Aerosmith.

He began his career as an agent at the giant MCA organisation and later went into management, handling the New York Dolls. Today he manages Aerosmith, Mahogany Rush, Elliott Murphy and the heavy metal guitar hero, Ted Nugent. He fends off heart attacks and ulcers by retaining a composure that conceals his dislike of flying and rock and roll tantrums. His philosophy is that even the highest paid rock star should be encouraged to be an adult. Beneath the calm exterior there's a determined streak.



AEROSMITH start their first British tour in Liverpool on October 13, marking the climax of a remarkable year. They recently played to an estimated crowd of 80,000 at Pontiac Stadium in Michigan.

Their first album 'Aerosmith' was released in 1973 (a year later in England), followed by 'Get Your Wings' (1974), 'Toys In The Attic' (1975) and 'Rocks' (1976). The band was formed in 1970 but did not sign to CBS until 1972. Their work has remained largely unplayed and unknown in Britain until this year.

In the States they have built up their reputation on the exciting guitar work of Joe Perry and Brad Whitford, and the extraordinary stage presence of Tyler, who can leap a full six feet in the air with one gymnastic bound, and whose looks have been compared to both Mick Jagger and Freddie Mercury, a somewhat fearsome combination.

He has earned some notoriety as a wrecker of hotel rooms, a small guy with a big temper, liable to explode with impatience. As Steven drove me to his lakeside home through the beautiful New Hampshire countryside last week, with his pretty girlfriend, I awaited the first signs of madness. Instead he put the Everly Brothers on the tape player: "Weren't they good?"

In his red jerkin and tights he resembles a character from a Brueghel painting, a 15th century European with the fierce speech of a Harlem hipster. And yet he seemed to want to share his experience, to talk about his peculiar situation, a college drop-out loaded with fame, money, and responsibilities. People often like to hammer home the 'ordinary' qualities of rock stars. They are rarely ordinary except for the dull-witted and untalented. Steven Tyler cannot be ordinary, except for a few seconds. He is shaped by his experiences and opportunities. Filled with nervous tension, conceits, aggression, and an overriding boyish enthusiasm that flares up and dies away like the one-man firework display he devised as darkness fell on Lake Sunapee.

WE ARRIVED at the wooden house surveyed by electronic security devices, where he is living until a new



home is built nearby.

Straightaway he led us to a powerful motorboat moored inside the boathouse and, joined by Steven's old friend Bobby Womack, we were off with a roar across the deserted lake. Bobby's wife hid from the spray beneath a blanket as we hit around 40 miles an hour and Steve casually flipped the speedboat around the islet. His hair streamed in the wind and he gazed moodily into the sunset. Conversation was impossible. Back on land Steven took me on a guided tour of an old yacht club that he is to convert into a mansion fit for a star. "I'm having stone flown over - from Belgium," he revealed. "We're gonna have a rope bridge across to that islet, and we're gonna have a solarium on the roof..." He showed me an extraordinary collection of magazines and pictures from the golden age of British rock, publications designed to welcome to America such pioneers as the Stones, Beatles and Yardbirds in the early '60s.

As a kid Steven once rushed up alongside Mick Jagger in the street to have his picture taken beside him. Last week, Tyler enjoyed his first proper meeting with his idol and they discussed together the perils and pains of stardom. Steven also showed me his collection of guns, the real thing, as used in Vietnam, and on the streets of New York and Detroit when the mood takes the local inhabitants. I held one vicious, long-barrelled monster. It looked like a toy. While Bobby Womack went upstairs to rap with the house guests, Steven and I sat in the

AEROSMITH



Hat-trick! L-R: Tom Hamilton, Steven Tyler (with extravagant headgear), and Brad Whitford shot backstage at the RFK Stadium, Washington DC, 30 May 1976



kitchen with a jug of wine we managed to finish off during a two-hour rap in which he revealed that beneath the nervous tension was a strangely impressive being who had fought his way out of tough schools in the Bronx into the even tougher rat race of neighbourhood rock and roll bands.

YOU DON'T get anywhere being nice in America, and yet during our conversation Steven emerged as a genuine soul looking for meaning to his existence, seeking the kind of contentment expensive toys can't bring. Quite simply - he'd like to get married.

His immediate goal was to check out England, an experience he hoped would be pleasant, although one detected the feeling that with their enormous success in America it was something of a sideshow.

"I just spent the last two days over at Woody's house," said Steven, contemplating my opening questions about their British tour. "Mick was there and he told me a lot of good things about the halls and venues. He told me there aren't too many bands rocking out over there, not like they used to. Is disco happening over there? I hear the Arabs have bought the biggest disco in London." I expressed surprise at this intelligence. "That's what I heard on the news. Why does the Queen allow that?" I explained property deals were not subject to royal intervention.

Seriously though, Steven - did Aerosmith go in for the big stage presentation, dry ice and earthquakes?



I had visions of some kind of jockstrap suspended over the footlights. "It's a truss. It's 30 by 40 feet and we hang the lights from it." Steven mumbled indistinctly through his wine and I still had no idea what he was talking about. "It's a truss," he repeated, staring at me with unforgiving eyes.

"We don't go for none of that Kiss shit," he grunted with disdain. "You, can go just so far with that, y'know? We could jump from a plane onto the stage, I guess, but what do you do the next time? The biggest thing we have on stage is a truss."



Joe Perry posing with his Corvette Stingray in Waltham, Massachusetts, 10 August 1975

"We've also got a flash box that goes off in front of the stage for the very last encore, which is 'Toys In The Attic'. It works quite well. I'm afraid we're gonna keep away from the large halls next year, they're just too big. We played one for 85,000 people this year. This place was so big, all you could see

was security guys.

"The stage was 12 feet high and there were security guards and fences, so I had trouble looking out and being able to see a kid. It's so ugly when you have to sing to security guards. Fuck muscle heads, who wants to sing to them?"

"Another thing - I can't play too many nights now in case I blow my throat out. So now we do two nights and then have a day off."

A record was booming from the next room. Could we shut the door Steven? "There is no door. Turn that shit off, please!" he bellowed at our neighbours. "I'm trying to do an interview!" Steven grinned and shook his head.



Aerosmith performing in front of "80,000 people. It's a shock that takes five minutes to recover from every time."

a good time up there it bleeds right into the audience.

"That's why it has stuck together and nobody has quit, because we dig it. Everybody smiles on stage, and there's no ego stuff. It's a team, which so many groups aren't anymore."

Did Steven feel there was a gap in the American music scene that Aerosmith could fill?

"Sure. Who was happening then? Black Oak? I don't remember too much of what was happening because we were constantly on tour. People were filling houses back then, but..." Steven dropped to a conspiratorial whisper... "they just weren't rocking out."

AMERICAN BANDS usually seemed sloppy and unrehearsed, I suggested, and Steven admitted that Aerosmith were not that meticulous. "We rehearse a bit but it's time-consuming and I don't have much private life. It's been pretty nuts. A very fast four years."

Does Steven have time to stop and think about it all?

"Yeah, a hotel room sometimes, backstage before the show. But I was prepared for this life in a way because I grew up under a piano. My father was a classical pianist, and he tried to teach me himself but I yawned so much it blew his head. I just wasn't good.

"But I did a lot of theory in high school which was very good for me. I wrote 'Dream On', our biggest hit, on piano, plus 'One Way Street' and 'Home Tonight', which is the single now. What's happening with our playlist over in London, are they playing us?"

No, I revealed, not a lot. Steven shrugged and returned to his high school reminiscences. "They put a narc in our ceramics class," he said. I looked suitably baffled. We had neither narcs nor ceramics at Catford Secondary.

"This is a true story - he was selling us dope. Back then, like pot was taboo. They put this cop right there in the school. Right up until he popped us, he was selling us nickel bags of good shit he got off somebody else he popped.

"Oh man. The worm. He popped the whole gang of us. Took us to

the police station. All the girls were crying. They took me from my front door in handcuffs as my father was arriving home from work. 'My son!'"

Did Steven go to prison?

"Nah. I got out of the draft. You pay, y'see? Oh yeah, that's how the system is here. I got booked as a YO - a youthful offender. I was 19 years old."

So he got out of Vietnam?

"I wouldn't have gone anyway. I was against it. They were playing games with the draft system. If they wanted to pull a war, draft everybody, get 'em over there and let's win the goddamn war. It was just a game they played in Vietnam. If they wanted to win the war there, grab a gun and get everybody over there. I didn't believe in it anyway."

INSTEAD OF getting involved in that particular war, Steven jumped into the battleground of rock, playing small clubs, laying down the beat for surfing music.

"I went to see all the big rock shows, the Beatles, ▶

"**IT'S GONNA** be fun in England. The last four years has gone real quick since we toured with Mott The Hoople in those small halls. We used to open the show and nobody knew who the hell we were. Our very first tour was with Mahavishnu Orchestra. That was a bit weird - like Hendrix and the Monkees. But it was just to get us out on the road."

Did Aerosmith start in small clubs, or did they hit the touring circuit right away?

"We never did as a group, although I did small clubs in this area in my early years when I played drums. But when this band rehearsed, we got right out there and decided to do a few colleges, but no clubs. They stick you in a club and you've got to do two weeks and four sets a night and my voice would be like - THIS." Steven broke into a series of croaks.

Did Aerosmith imagine they'd achieve success so quickly?

"It was quick in that we'd play a small town, do well, then come back again shortly after to play a bigger place."

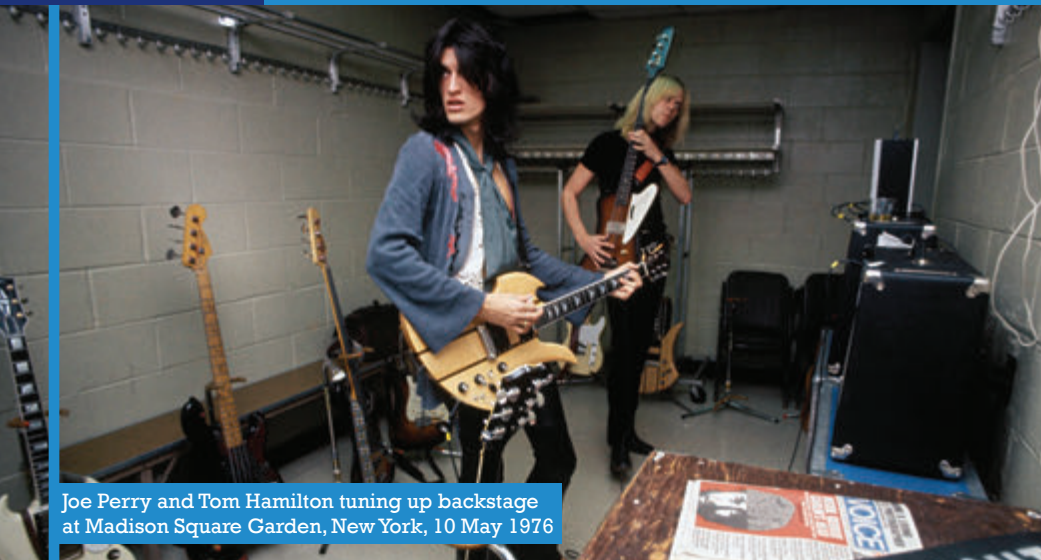
Did they have a plan of attack?

"Yeah, we had a direction. I used to tell the guys all the time, 'Next year at this time, we're gonna be on that radio.' Our objective was just to get up there and rock, and people were loving it.

"We opened for Johnny Winter and Humble Pie one time in New York City, packed all our gear in a bus, and although we had no bass amps, we borrowed some to get on that stage and play. It was the night Johnny had just come back from the rehabilitation centre. We did all originals, even a tune called 'Major Barbara' we've never released, and it went down quite well, no boos, just a couple of shouts. So it has always been a plus and a positive situation for the band.

"You get bad nights, for sure, but in general it's been just incredible. The kids get off just as much as we do. Fuck the money, fuck the press, the band is just interested in going on and rocking out, and we have such

"I TELL JOE PERRY HE'S PLAYING TOO LOUD, WHICH HE DOES MOST OF THE TIME, BECAUSE IT BLOWS MY SINGING AWAY, AND I CAN'T HEAR A THING. BUT THE BAND ARE BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE."



Joe Perry and Tom Hamilton tuning up backstage at Madison Square Garden, New York, 10 May 1976



Steven Tyler: "We have such a good time on stage it bleeds right into the audience."

Stones and Murray the K. They're the good old days I'll never forget.

"I used to see the Kinks and screamed with the rest of the kids. I loved it. All the English bands were so good back then. I played with the Incredible Alex Harvey on one show. What a loonie. But a good, nice guy.

"Before I was in this band I was in a group that toured with the Yardbirds, Beach Boys, the Animals - I could go on and on. I was singing lead at that time. I went back and forth between vocals and drumming. No, I didn't study drums - just picked it up.

"I used to play a lot of these strait-laced resort hotels up here in New Hampshire. Very grand places, y'know, nice ballrooms. I used to slick my hair back and play all these danceable toons. Society music. Very good training.

"You can't beat that shit. My father had his own band, still does and plays up here every summer. My uncle plays the saxophone and my father plays the piano."

The band was under Steven's parents' real name, Tallarico. "Yeah, it's an Italian name. My grandfather was Italian, and my grandmother was German. Mother was Polish - and Russian and German and Swedish! And Lord knows what.

"My grandfather got out of Europe by the skin of his teeth. He had a horse-breeding ranch until the Germans came over and machine-gunned it. 'Everyone out of the house,' and b-l-a-m! They gunned down his mother, father and sister. He jumped down a well, then grabbed the last boat out.

"He came over here and was looking in a paper in New York and saw Sunapee which was worth three grand in those days. He got a bit of money together and bought this place. We've still got 212 acres left. That whole mountain there is mine. Sunapee is only a teeny resort, but it's decent."

The Tyler family must be well-known in these parts?

"Yeah, but they live in Yonkers, New York, so they don't get to spend a lot of time up here. We lived in the Bronx

originally, in old apartment buildings. Then we moved to Yonkers where my father bought a house. But we came up here for vacations and I used to trap and hunt. That's why I like guns, but I don't kill anything anymore.

"I use to trap raccoons, skunks and possum and all that stuff, but when I bought myself a baby raccoon it got to be my buddy and I could never kill anything after that. It's horrible - I killed a lot of animals. But my childhood here was very happy. After I got busted at high school I used to sit in the park all day smoking pot with the rest of the kids."

WHEN HE was a kid, Steven didn't have much protection from those other kids who would pick on anybody with

a funny name. Today his home is protected from intruders by an elaborate electronic system. Did he get bothered much by fans?

"I was up here two weeks in the summer, and the kids started to find out and come to the door at night. It got pretty nuts so I had to put a fence up and an intercom."

When did Aerosmith reach the point of hero-worship?

"I think it started with that tour with Mott, when we started drawing their audience away. They started jumping over the barriers and grabbing. That's when I knew it was happening, and that was three years ago. Time goes quick, y'see. That's why it seems so fast - our success - although it really isn't."

Did Steven know all the guys in Aerosmith before they got together?

"Joe Perry and Tom Hamilton used to play in a group up here called the Jam Band, and I used to play up here myself all the time until five years ago. We'd blow the place away - have a blast. Joe Perry used to work in a place called The Anchorage, in the kitchen. Best french fries you ever had. But I also knew him from playing.

"I was then in a band called William Proud and we played out in South Hampton for the summer. I had just written 'Somebody' and realised I could write songs.

"I USED TO PLAY A LOT OF THESE STRAIT-LACED RESORT HOTELS. VERY GRAND PLACES, NICE BALLROOMS. I USED TO SLICK MY HAIR BACK AND PLAY ALL THESE DANCEABLE TOONS. SOCIETY MUSIC. VERY GOOD TRAINING."



Let's get crackin' here! I heard Joe and he blew my head off, I wanted to jump over the drum set and grab him, but I fell over my hi-hat and cracked my leg instead. Anyway, I left my band and hitchhiked up here, tracked down Joe in the Jam Band. There were three songs they played the whole night - one was 'Rattlesnake Shake'."

Steve and Joe teamed up and eventually Brad replaced the existing rhythm guitarist in the newly formed Aerosmith. Arrangements were supplied either by Steven, the guitarists, or producer Jack Douglas.

WHILE STEVEN writes most of the band's lyrics, he does not make any extravagant claims about their songs, and tends to shy away from analysis. The subjects, he declares, are about regular rock and roll matters, women, the road, with odd newspaper stories thrown in like 'Nobody's Fault', which is about the San Andreas Fault. Had success mellowed him out?

"Same shit. I may have gained a bit more knowledge. But we're just rocking out. Period. I love going out on that stage. You come out of that dressing room, down a corridor with bodyguards and road manager, up a ramp, onto the stage, and whoosh - 50,000 people. It's a shock that takes five minutes to recover from every time. One thing worries me - there have been enough guns pulled out of audiences. I just jump around all the quicker, just so they don't hit me if ever they decide to shoot me. I don't think they will, but there have been incidents.

"I played with Nugent, and some fuck was waving this .45 at Ted. It's nuts. You get all those people out there and *somebody* has to be crazy. But the biggest danger is to the kids when they get crushed at the front. The barrier is very important. It's six feet away from the stage, and we've designed it on a tilt so that they can't climb it.

"Yeah, I do feel a responsibility to the kids. I can control them, but I mustn't get too close, or I get pulled in. Ah, they're crazy. I don't talk to the kids much because we like to go from song to song. We keep the pace pretty quick - whe-e-e-h!

"No I don't get tense on stage anymore, but I used to get butterflies."

Did Stephen enjoy his superstar trip?

"Sure I enjoy it - to a certain extent I think about it. I am one. I'm called one. But I'm still Steven."

He didn't feel any different?

"I'm richer. Got a nice car out there. Nice house here.

Got some nice new friends. Met a lot of people. Six million on this last tour. But you hear stories about guys getting ego trips. I don't wanna be like that. It's strange, the end of the line, I don't wanna hear about it. Stupid. I keep a very low profile, and just take it from there."

Did he ever have fights with the band?

"Ah sometimes. Dumb, stupid things, like when they play too fuckin' loud. But we compensate. I tell Joe Perry he's playing too loud, which he does most of the time, because it blows my singing away, and I can't hear a thing. But they're beautiful people. Best drummer in rock and roll, y'know, Joey Kramer?"

How did Aerosmith fare with critics? I heard they suffered a pasting.

"I'll tell you man, the critics are old blokes here. They're fuckin' stupid, most of them. I would rather have a kid

who went to the show write the article than a critic who has been around for so long he saw the Stones. And he goes: 'Ah, well Joe Perry looks like Keith, and we have the Tyler-esque Jagger, or the Jagger-esque Tyler.' I mean, what the fuck? Who needs it? I'm not going to change my way when I'm up there. That's the way it is. I don't care if I look like Mick. I'm having a good time, the kids love it, fine."

There will come a point when you start to age rapidly, I warned.

"It happens to musicians, yeah.

But I believe in staying on the road, let the people see ya. I get a big kick out of being there, and playing songs like 'Dream On'. Sometimes I feel like screaming, though, and climbing up the wall. A lot of people will come up and say: 'Er, you look like Mick Jagger. How does this affect you Steven?' We get compared to the Stones because of my lips and the way I carry on."

DID STEVEN think he had found peace of mind?

"Peace of mind?" he snorted. "No, I have to learn to know how not to win. I have no peace of mind. I'm constantly pushed into gruelling situations where I have to make decisions. I'm the focal point of the band, okay, but there's no boss. I never make rash decisions without asking the other guys.

"I've got real mad, but I've not hit anybody. I had too much of that growing up in the Bronx. Street fights! An hour and a half they went on, and I came home bloody as hell. I was made fun of quite a lot at high school. They called me 'nigger lips'. Jewish white kids were constantly picked on, and they get to see a side of life the other side doesn't see. Prejudice - it's terrible."

Steven's face darkened and one could sense the impetus behind his drive and bravado. As he dashed out on the boardwalk around the boathouse, he sent fireworks soaring over Lake Sunapee and let out exultant whoops that echoed back from the mountain.

The kid from the Bronx was certainly enjoying the freedom rock music brings in its wake.



AEROSMITH

AN INSIDER'S VIEW

Nite Bob (right) with 'Smith guitarist Brad Whitford



"RIDING INTO TOWN TONIGHT..."

'Nite Bob' Czaykowski worked as Aerosmith's live sound engineer during the band's most creative period and witnessed the rise of an American rock legend first hand. He explains to *Howard Johnson* what it was really like on the road in their 1970s bubble...



Aerosmith performing live on *The Midnight Special* TV show, Burbank, California, June 1974

BORN IN 1950. LEGENDARY American sound engineer Bob 'Nite Bob' Czaykowski grew up across the river from New York City in Kearny, New Jersey. He started playing surf music on the guitar as a youngster, but was turned on to harder stuff by the English rock invasion led by the Beatles, the Stones and the Yardbirds. Bob's dad was an electrical engineer and helped him build equipment, sparking his interest in how to create and mix rock sounds.

A friend of Bob's got him his first job at a professional rehearsal facility called Baggy's Studios in New York, promising him that he'd meet a lot of interesting people and could rehearse his band for free. He started out as the studio's night guy – hence the 'Nite Bob' nickname – and quickly started making friends with the groups that rehearsed there. Watching acts like Foghat and Peter Frampton at close quarters made Bob realise that “the water was way deeper than I'd expected in the guitar playing scene,” so he switched his focus to sound, going on to work with many of the greatest acts of the '70s, including the New York Dolls, Emerson Lake & Palmer, Steely Dan and, of course, Aerosmith...

WHEN DID YOU FIRST COME ACROSS AEROSMITH, BOB?

“It was through my New York Dolls connection. The Dolls rehearsed a lot at Baggy's studio and through them I'd met people like [producer] Jack Douglas, [engineer] Jay Messina and [band managers] Leber-Krebs. At one point I was going to work with the Dolls, but for some reason it didn't pan out. Still, David Krebs said I should go and check out this band they had from Boston called Aerosmith who were playing in a club in Brooklyn. So I went to this little place called Bananafish Park in the Bay Ridge district and saw Aerosmith play. This would be late '73, maybe early '74. To be honest I thought the band was OK, nothing more. There was a lot of spandex and they just looked like a cheesier version of the New York Dolls. But the Dolls seemed more fun, so I didn't think too much more about Aerosmith. I didn't see them again for quite some time, though I do remember the management once asking me if I could give away 100 tickets for a show the band did in Manhattan, which wasn't selling very well. I was connected so helped out and gave everyone I knew a pair of tickets to the show. I didn't bother going myself.

“The next time I saw Aerosmith live was in September of '74 when they had Rory Gallagher opening for them at an outdoor music festival in Central Park in New York. Rory went over really big, but his set was cut short and the audience got really mad. They let Aerosmith know they weren't happy when the band came onstage. I thought to myself, 'These guys suck for not letting Rory do an encore.' New York didn't take to Aerosmith in the early days; it was one of the last cities to fall. But little did I know I'd be working for them a short while later.”

HOW DID THAT COME ABOUT?

“The Dolls were basically over by this time and I'd started working for an equipment company called IES

[International Entertainment Services]. I'd been out on tour with ELP, low on the totem pole, stacking PAs and learning from the sound guys. One of the guys was sometimes too out of it to work, so I actually mixed 'Brain Salad Surgery' live. Then I was all set to work with Nazareth, who had a hit record at the time, but just before the tour started the company said, 'We need you to go up to Boston to take some gear up to Aerosmith, who are getting dates together.' I thought, 'Oh no, not those people.' I went up there and set the gear up for them, but when the guys turned up it was bad. They seemed pretty angry and there was a lot of strife between band members.

Some gear got smashed and I thought, 'I don't want to put up with this.' So I got a plane back to New York and thought, 'Forget it.' But the company insisted that I stay with Aerosmith. So to cut a long story short I went off with them, kicking and screaming and not very happy about it.

“I was the head of the PA team, which was basically me and another guy, humping the gear and mixing the sound. The technology was rudimentary, but I knew what bands should sound like. It was a lot of hard work and I wasn't very pleased to be there. There were some incidents, like when Steven freaked out at one show and pushed all the monitors off the front of the stage and clocked one of the security guys. I was always saying 'That's it, I'm going home,' especially given that the tour was supposed to be for a month and then the goalposts kept moving. A week would get added, then another. But somehow I stayed...”

WHAT KIND OF VENUES WERE THE BAND PLAYING?

“2500 seaters, with the occasional big place in Detroit and Boston where they'd already built up a following. I'll give Aerosmith this. They worked harder than most bands. They'd been really beaten up by headline bands they'd opened for in the past, especially the Kinks back in '73 [Frontman Ray Davies had prevented them from soundchecking and dismissively referred to the band as 'Harry Smith']. Experiences like that made them angrier and tougher and I really began to change my view on the band when we'd play places like Madison, Wisconsin and they'd give it everything.

“We went everywhere, and everywhere we went people had a great time. They were a driven band. I liked their work ethic and playing such a lot meant they became a really good act. They'd learned their trade, had seen what worked, and incorporated it into their show. It started to become fun. Once you saw people getting blown away you went, 'Oh, OK.' No matter how hard the work was, we knew the band we were working for was going to kick ass, and there's a certain kind of pride that comes with that. Plus they attracted a lot of girls, so it was a good place to be!”

WAS AEROSMITH AN EASY BAND TO MIX LIVE?

“It wasn't difficult. Two guitars, bass and drums with two singers is an easy thing to do. When I came

“WE ALL KNEW WE WERE PART OF SOMETHING THAT WAS STARTING TO HAPPEN. AND IT'S FUN TO WATCH THAT ACCELERATION. IT'S FUN TO DO SHOWS WHERE PEOPLE ARE GOING NUTS.”

in they'd already done their third album ['Toys In The Attic'], their second album with Jack Douglas, so they knew the mechanics of how a band works much better than when I'd first seen them. Their songs and playing had tightened up and they were becoming a well-oiled machine. I started respecting what they were doing. Brad Whitford and Joe Perry were really into having individual sounds that worked together. They learned a lot of that from Jack."

WHO WAS THE DRIVING FORCE BEHIND AEROSMITH AT THAT TIME?

"They were all motivated, but I'd say Steven Tyler was way more motivated than the rest of them. Soundchecks were always really difficult, because Steven insisted on walking the room to make sure the sound was right everywhere. He wanted to know what it sounded like way up in the nosebleeds. He'd say, 'It's not that clear up here,' and I'd say, 'That's why those tickets are cheap!' Steven pushed more than anyone else, followed by Joe and then the other three guys. I thought that was a good thing. Most bands figure out that democracy doesn't work. If it's a democracy you can end up with the three not-so-brainy ones hooking up together and then they can direct the band. A benevolent dictatorship works a lot better. Don't get me wrong. The other four members of Aerosmith had a lot of input, but it wasn't like they'd vote. And the thing was, it was clear that it was working. When I came in things were really starting to bang for those guys and they just got better and better as a band. They were very consistent."

DID YOU GET TO KNOW THE GUYS WELL?

"Everyone was in it together at that point. For a while the five of them were all travelling around in the one stretch limo. We all stayed at the same Holiday Inns and when there was a day off there was plenty of hang time. As people they were actually pretty cool. Steven was fun, even if he could be difficult at times, but there were times when it became very adversarial between him and me. Familiarity breeds contempt, you know? But even so, we all knew we were part of something that was starting to happen. And it's fun to watch that acceleration. It's fun to do shows where people are going nuts."

BUT YOU QUIT AS 1975 CAME TO AN END, RIGHT, AT THE END OF THE 'TOYS IN THE ATTIC' TOUR?

"I did. When I finished that tour I said, 'I'm done' and swore I'd never work with Aerosmith again. Nobody was more surprised than me when they called me a short while later and hired me for 1976."

SO WHY DID YOU GO BACK?

"Because they made me an offer I couldn't refuse. They told me all I had to do from now on was mix the band. There would be no loading trucks and no heavy lifting - and I'd get paid 52 weeks a year whether the band worked or not! So of course I said yes. But the very next phone call I received after agreeing the deal was from Steven saying, 'If we're paying you, then we want you at the recording sessions for the next album.' So when they were working on it at the Record Plant in New York I'd go there every day and watch how the 'Rocks' record was made. In retrospect it was one of the most amazing educational experiences of my life. I came out of it respecting the band even more, and especially respecting Jack Douglas and Jay Messina, who both worked on the record. Being a player myself I know that it's very difficult in the studio; you don't get the same live power. Aerosmith had learned a lot by this fourth record and they could knock it out of the park, playing-wise. Plus you could really tell that the band was on the up at this point. When they were working on 'Toys...' they were staying at a Ramada Inn. Working on 'Rocks' they were staying at the Plaza."

"WHEN THEY WERE WORKING ON 'ROCKS' AT THE RECORD PLANT IN NEW YORK I'D GO THERE EVERY DAY AND WATCH HOW THE RECORD WAS MADE. IT WAS ONE OF THE MOST AMAZING EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES OF MY LIFE."



Steven Tyler in his extraordinary stage gear performing live at the Santa Monica Civic, California, June 1975

'ROCKS' WENT ON TO BECOME THE ALBUM THAT REALLY BROKE THE BAND, YES?

"That was the one that went nuclear. The band had really started to turn into something and 1976 was when we started doing a lot of big outdoor shows. Rock music was getting really huge. Kiss, Boston and Aerosmith were all on the rise and suddenly all of them were selling millions of records. Aerosmith really cared about the production. They cared about sounding good. They cared about looking good. They cared about their show. I'll tell you this - 1976 was the happiest year I ever spent

with Aerosmith. They were starting to see money, the gigs were big, people they'd been opening for six months ago were now opening for them, it was the beginning of merchandising, the band had their first trip to England, their first trip to Germany. It was exciting. We were staying in nicer hotels and travelling in better conditions with more time off between stadium shows, because you couldn't do back-to-backs at that level at that time. The year before we'd been driving around all cramped up, dealing with the drudgery of playing St Paul, Minnesota in minus 12 conditions. Now we had a bus! The album had barely come out and we were playing Pontiac, Michigan in front of 80,000 people! The band was happy, the promoters were happy, the management was happy."

AS THEY SAY, WHAT COULD POSSIBLY GO WRONG?

"Well, the band started 1977 by doing their first tour of Japan. It was the soberest tour Aerosmith had done in five years, because there are no drugs in Japan. There was a lot more drinking going on, and as far as I'm concerned that tour signalled the end of the good times. We came back to the States in February and it was time to do another record. But instead of starting the process at the band's rehearsal space in Boston like they'd done before, this time the band rented a big nunnery out in Armonk, 40 minutes outside of New York. We'd had such a good 1976 and it's hard to sing the blues when you're the happiest guy, if you know what I mean. They'd worked so hard up to that point and I think they weren't really sure where to go next. 'Draw The Line' was a very difficult record for Aerosmith to make. It was weird up in Armonk; there was a really odd scene up there. They didn't seem to be getting much done. There was friction, and friction doesn't make for good songwriting. I went to every 'Rocks' session in New York City. I only went to Armonk once. I wasn't there so I can't say too much of what happened, but from what I understand Steven had writer's block and things took forever.

"The album ['Draw The Line'] was eventually recorded between June and November of 1977, but we had shows booked during all that time and so we went out dragging the album mastertapes around with us. On days off they'd work on the record. There was a lot of



An early Aerosmith photo session from around 1975

track, but there wasn't a lot of lyric and that was a problem. Plus when you're out playing shows it's hard to focus on a record. They were trying to do a bit in London and a bit in Munich, and they were also trying to get the concept of a live album together. And then the money *really* kicked in and that made things even more complicated. As far as I'm concerned it was during the '77 tour that things started to come apart."

HOW SO?

"They began to play erratically for a start. And then when the record came out it didn't do the same business that 'Rocks' had done. Then the finger pointing started. When they heard the record the crew members were like, 'Is this it?' Everybody got mad with somebody. That always happens when

things aren't going well. At the gigs some of the guys in the band started telling me they weren't loud enough in the mix. 'Well, who's telling you that? How would you know? You're not out front.' Things started coming apart. People weren't talking to each other and the band members got really isolated from each other. It started to get messy. I'd already seen with the Dolls what happens when you start going into a tailspin.

"For the first time in two or three years I felt I was an outsider, that I didn't have the same connection I once had. Everybody else lived in Boston and I refused to move there. Why would I? I had a great place in New York. If they needed me in Boston I could be there in an hour and a half. But when people aren't talking to you any more you know something's wrong. So I got to the end of '77 and said, 'It's really been great, but I need some time off and so do you. I'm done.' They were fine about it, actually. They just said, 'We'll get somebody else,' and I said 'Fine.'"

AMAZING TIMES AND AMAZING STORIES, BOB. YOU WENT BACK TO WORK WITH THE BAND IN THE '80S AND ARE STILL FRIENDS WITH THEM TODAY. BUT WHAT ARE YOUR LASTING MEMORIES OF YOUR TIME WITH AEROSMITH AT THE HEIGHT OF THEIR '70S GRANDEUR?

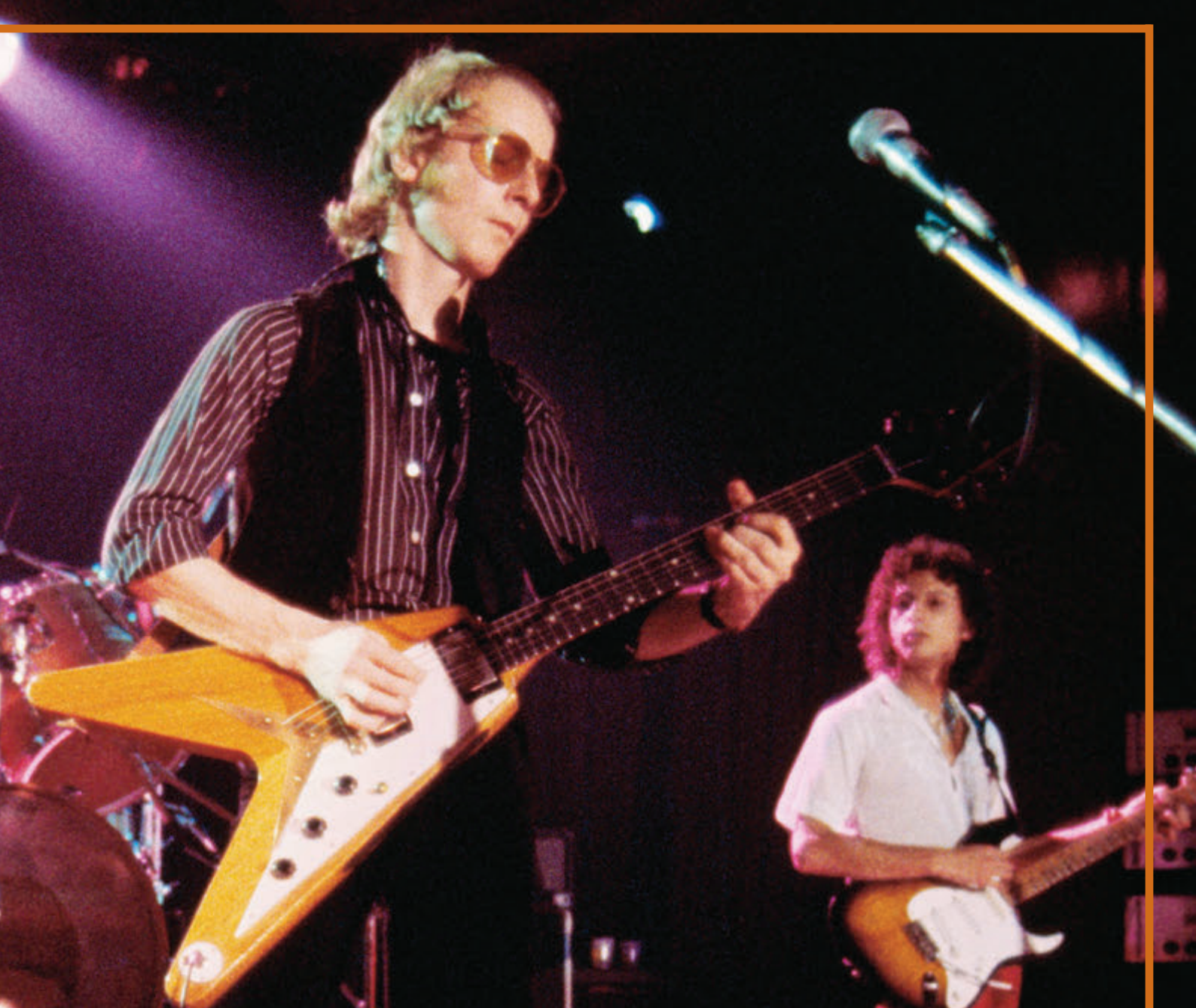
"Well I look back at my time with Aerosmith as being my rock'n'roll college. I learned so much from watching that band, and particularly how things can affect people in such an environment. Probably the most important thing I discovered was that rock musicians aren't indestructible. You just can't put them in that lifestyle and work them to death." 🍷

Wishbone Ash, 1976 vintage. L-R: Martin Turner (bass and vocals), Andy Powell (guitar and vocals), and Laurie Wisefield (guitar and vocals). Obscured behind the kit, Steve Upton (drums)



OUT OF THE ASHES

Wishbone Ash were seriously concerned that 1976's 'Locked In' album was so bad it would kill their career stone dead. But out of adversity the band chiselled out another release that same year, called 'New England', that helped them get back on their feet and inject new life into the group. *Dave Ling* talks to all the album's players about a fascinating, yet often overlooked period in Wishbone Ash's history...



PICTURE THE SCENE. IT'S early 1976 and a limousine carries Wishbone Ash's Andy Powell through the streets of New York. During the ride he plays a cassette of his group's just-completed sixth studio disc, 'Locked In'. Throughout the session Powell and his bandmates have been conscious of a gnawing dissatisfaction, but on hearing the album outside of the studio's confines a crushing depression descends. Finally the guitarist and singer curls into a foetal position on the back seat, head in hands. "Oh my God," he announces to nobody except the man at the wheel. "There goes our career."

Also alone while experiencing the finished 'Locked In' album for the first time, Martin Turner recalls similarly distressing emotions. "I was so dismayed that I cowed down on the floor quietly weeping," sighs the bassist and vocalist. "The album was a crock of shit." And as drummer Steve Upton adds, with customary understatement: "Were someone to write a school report on that one it would say, 'Must do better'."

WISHBONE ASH had relocated to the States in April of 1975, ostensibly seeking a new start, but also to escape the punitive tax laws of their British homeland. They'd

weathered the previous year's exit of Ted Turner - after four albums the guitarist withdrew a few hundred dollars in cash and flew to South America with a girlfriend, where he bought a couple of donkeys and set off to seek the Temple Of Divine Light. Former Home man Laurie Wisefield had proved a capable, slightly flashier replacement, yet the band were aware that ever since their 1972 masterpiece, 'Argus', Wishbone's trajectory was gradually slipping downwards. Powell would later acknowledge: "What we did in the first four years kept us going for the subsequent six."

Wishbone Ash hit an all-time low with the 'Locked In' project. One of the last things their long-serving manager Miles Copeland did for the band before his company BTM went bankrupt in 1976 - leading to a slightly awkward parting of the ways - was to engineer a new American distribution deal for the band with Atlantic Records. Elsewhere they remained on MCA. The group were holed up in a dismal Holiday Inn on New York's 74th Street, and when the label proposed Tom Dowd to produce 'Locked In' it seemed a sensible choice. After all, the New Yorker had made records with top artists in the fields of rock, blues, jazz and soul. ▶

Very quickly, though, Dowd and Wishbone Ash butted heads. The band were forced to sit in a semicircle and play through tiny amplifiers, augmented by a keyboard player. Their confidence was further undermined by the producer's demand that they took singing lessons. Just as unsettling for the group was that Dowd had a zero tolerance attitude to drink and drugs after some bad experiences with Lynyrd Skynyrd, Eric Clapton and others. Though the guys in Wishbone Ash fell some way short of being junkies, Turner admits "we used those things – but not to excess – and working sober really was a challenge."

"Skynyrd had gone through something similar with Dowd," points out Powell. "But their label simply shelved the results and they were never heard."

After such an unedifying experience with 'Locked In', the band took back the music once more. "We'd had enough of being controlled," Powell says now. The group would never again scale the heights of the 'Argus' era. Yet the follow-up to 'Locked In', an album titled 'New England', would give them a platform to dust themselves down, re-invent themselves to a certain degree, and continue with dignity re-established.

UNSURPRISINGLY, MARTIN Turner describes 'New England' as "a reactionary album", crafted in response to the misery of 'Locked In'. The start of a transition toward better things was a move from the temporary digs in New York City to a more permanent base in Westport, a leafy suburb of Connecticut, 90 minutes from the Big Apple. The band had initially moved from the UK to the US with their entire entourage – including wives, girlfriends and road crew – thinking it was a no-brainer as they were spending so much time on tour in the States. Just about everybody was excited by the prospect of a permanent base in Connecticut. But Turner – the sole opponent of the exodus at the time – felt the early seeds of discontent beginning to grow.

He was OK in New York, but the band had a strict policy. While artistic matters could and would be settled via debate, all business decisions were settled by consensus, which wasn't always easy within a four-man group. Ultimately, then, the bassist was forced to pack his bags for the countryside. Powell and his wife



“‘LOCKED IN’ LEFT US SO TRAUMATISED THAT THERE WAS A PERIOD WHEN WE SWORE NEVER TO GO INTO A RECORDING STUDIO WITH A PRODUCER EVER AGAIN.”

MARTIN TURNER

Pauline found a place they liked. Embracing the rustic lifestyle, Wisefield and drummer Steve Upton opted to share a log cabin. Yet Wishbone were massively unprepared for the weather and couldn't have been more different than the locals.

"With our flares and platform shoes we stood out like Martians in Connecticut," Wisefield sniggers. "The place was full of lumberjack shirts and we had no idea that there was three feet of snow in the wintertime, nor how hot it would get during the summer. At times it dropped to minus 20 degrees and then the place completely shut down."

After a long search Turner found a large property called Laurel Edge that was available for rent. Complete with swimming pool, it surpassed his personal requirements. Crucially, though, it also had a basement big enough for the group to rehearse

in. Though there was nobody for miles around they soundproofed it anyway, stapling carpet underlay to the walls and ceiling. Once the band's sound engineer Mark Emery (known as The Hobbit) achieved satisfactory results recording these rehearsals on what was then a state of the art TASCAM eight-track device, a plan was hatched to make the next record there.

"My suggestion was to use our advance from the record company to buy professional-quality, 24-track equipment," Turner claims. "A desk and a tape machine would have cost \$20,000 or \$30,000 and the rest of the guys umm-ed and aah-ed because it was a sizable risk. Being a democratic band we opted to hire a mobile studio instead."

IT MIGHT all have been a bit on the makeshift side, but an experience outside of the norm was exactly what Wishbone Ash were looking for.

"You've got to understand that 'Locked In' left us so traumatised that there was a period when we swore never to go into a recording studio with a producer ever again," Turner volunteers.

Powell believes he had the original idea of getting back to basics at Laurel Edge. "We knew that things couldn't get worse than 'Locked In', so it was a case of thinking

sensibly and reclaiming our destiny in a recording sense,” he says.

More than four decades later, how the brothers Ron and Howard Albert came on board to supervise the production on ‘New England’ remains uncertain. It was possibly because there was a shared connection with Criteria Studios, the Miami facility where Wishbone had recorded 1974’s ‘There’s The Rub’. Things worked out well, though, and the siblings – who had ties to Derek & The Dominoes, The Allman Brothers Band and Crosby Stills & Nash – would again work on the following Wishbone Ash album, 1977’s ‘Front Page News’.

“Because they were brothers, when they had to they could do 24-hour sessions without sacrificing consistency,” Powell recalls. “One of them would work for 12 hours and his ears would be bleeding, so the other would then take over.”

Such occasions were rare, though. On a typical day people would roll up at Laurel Edge mid-morning, take a swim and enjoy a gin and tonic on the patio before heading downstairs at around 1pm and grafting till midnight. All of the music, and even a few lead vocal parts, were laid down that way before the band and the Alberts decamped to Criteria in Miami for the final

“‘NEW ENGLAND’ IS PROBABLY THE MOST ENJOYABLE RECORD THAT I’VE EVER PLAYED ON.”

STEVE UPTON

recording stages and then the mixing process.

Wishbone’s trademark harmony twin guitar sound remained intact, especially on the boogie of ‘Outward Bound’. But the songs have an earthy freshness drawn from the rustic environment in which they were laid down. Listen closely and you’ll hear cicadas that were recorded and added to the mix.

“CONNECTICUT WAS so beautiful,” comments Powell, who all these years later still lives in the States. “Our circumstances had a big effect on how the recordings turned out because there was so much space around us. A lot of the songs – ‘(In All Of My Dreams) You Rescue Me’, for instance – were dreamy, perhaps a little bit stoned. And sure, we were smoking a bit of weed at the time. But more importantly, ‘New England’ captured that vibe of taking a cigarette break and seeing nothing but trees for miles and miles. For me it was a great experience because I’d cycle to the studio. It was a healthy time in my life.”

“‘New England’ is probably the most enjoyable record that I’ve ever played on,” says Steve Upton.

Save for the final track ‘Candlelight’, which dated back to the Ted Turner days, writing credits were split four ways. Three albums into his tenure with the band Laurie Wisefield had become prolific. He supplied the basic elements of ‘Mother Of Pearl’, ‘Prelude’ and ‘Runaway’, as well as the shimmering, deliciously sedate ‘(In All Of My Dreams) You Rescue Me’. These songs were tossed around for the others to add their own ideas to.

“I love that album because it’s so disparate,” Powell ▶

WHAT’S ALL THAT ABOUT?

Martin Turner and Andy Powell explain the bizarre Hipgnosis sleeve for ‘New England’...



THE ALBUM SLEEVE OF ‘New England’ saw Wishbone Ash continue their association with the late Storm Thorgerson, who died in 2013, and his renowned design company Hipgnosis. The same creative team had supplied the cover art for many of the band’s previous releases, notably ‘Argus’ with its ahead-of-its-time Darth Vader-style central character. That album preceded *Star Wars* by five years, remember... Shot in soft focus black and white and featuring two men naked from the waist up doing something or other with a knife and a sharp stick, in its own way ‘New England’ was just as provocative.

“The original idea was for us to be paddling around on a river, and Hipgnosis flew over and took some photographs of us doing just that,” Martin Turner remembers. “In the end they decided to use models instead. It’s definitely homoerotic, but I don’t have a problem with that. Male nudity can be OK.”

“That sleeve *is* homoerotic,” concurs Andy Powell. “And it was almost like Kraftwerk in that it influenced some forms of imagery that were subsequently used in magazines. I think Storm would have been the one to have pushed the homoerotic angle.” Why is that?

“Storm definitely saw the aspect of guys being in bands together as ripe for his work,” says Andy. “There was an earlier incident when he tried to push it on Wishbone Ash. He asked Ted [Turner] and I to get in a lip-lock together: ‘Well, you guys have got this twin lead guitar thing.’ And from an outsider’s standpoint he probably did think that was pretty gay. But, of course, he was mistaken. The image for ‘New England’ looks as though it was shot in the 1920s, so it’s cleverly done – and as a piece of artwork it was extremely arresting.”

smiles. "It has some jazz, some folky things and a few out-and-out rockers. It all made for an enjoyable mix."

NOTWITHSTANDING THE faux pas of 'Locked In', 'New England' marked the beginning of an Americanisation of Wishbone Ash's sound. This was a gradual process that wouldn't be reversed until they returned home for 'No Smoke Without Fire' in 1978. Turner feared it was inevitable from the moment the band members signed their immigration papers.

"I'm not saying it was necessarily a bad thing – some of our best music was made during that period," he clarifies. "But everything about that place – the culture, the lifestyle and the music – is so overwhelming. Once you've been there for a year or two you become

an American, and I'm very much a European. I missed classical music and the BBC. However, the majority insisted we try it for a year. It ended up being three."

Looking back, although the likes of Foghat, Slade and Status Quo paid a heavy commercial price in the UK for their perceived disloyalty towards original British fans, nobody in Wishbone Ash was unduly worried about the risk of stepping away to court a new and potentially lucrative market.

"Nah, we were young and fearless and at that age you've no idea what's coming down the turnpike," Powell shrugs. "After 'Locked In', the harsh reality was that we might not even have been a band two years later."

There was also one major upside to the Stateside move. Wishbone Ash were out of the country when the punk rock explosion began. Wisefield remembers coming back to London for a visit and walking into the Marquee Club as he'd done many times before, only to be faced with The Boomtown Rats. "I'd never heard of them," he laughs. "But everyone was spitting and jumping around. I didn't really know what was going on, but I appreciated the energy levels and that movement gave the old farts a bit of a kick up the arse, which was probably necessary."

The 'New England' album title the band chose was relevant for two reasons. Firstly, Connecticut is the southernmost part of New England. Secondly, Wishbone Ash were trying to revive some of their cultural heritage while they were away from home. The album turned out to be an undisputed high watermark of the band's

enormous catalogue. When it was released in October of '76 the band's fans responded positively, restoring Wishbone Ash to the Top 30 of the UK album charts. Interestingly, though, the record underperformed in the US, and fared even less well there than 'Locked In' had.



"WE WERE YOUNG AND FEARLESS AND AT THAT AGE YOU'VE NO IDEA WHAT'S COMING DOWN THE TURNPIKE. THE HARSH REALITY WAS THAT WE MIGHT NOT EVEN HAVE BEEN A BAND TWO YEARS LATER."
ANDY POWELL

AFTER THEIR split with manager Miles Copeland, the band were courted by the powerful management duo of Steve Leber and David Krebs, who looked after the highly touted Aerosmith.

"We'd done a few gigs with Aerosmith," says Turner. "Back then they were up and coming. Sometimes they would headline, sometimes we would headline. Leber-Krebs was a heavyweight New York company and my reaction to their interest in us was a pretty positive one. I felt that together we

could really do good things."

Steve Upton attended a meeting, but returned to the fold crestfallen. The offer had a sting in the tail. In return for joining the Leber-Krebs stable, Wishbone would have to hand the duo 50 percent of everything they owned, including the six studio albums they'd already released and the double-disc concert set, 'Live Dates'.

"The idea was that they would work their balls off for us for a year or so and make us huge stars, and our records from the early 1970s would sell like crazy – so they wanted a cut," Turner reasons. "They said that within 18 months the four of us would be millionaires. I told the band: 'Guys, didn't we come to America because everything is 10 times bigger?' It could have been a massive opportunity, but the catalogue clause proved to be the deal-breaker."

Turner was once again outvoted and Leber-Krebs turned their attentions to Ted Nugent instead. While the Englishmen looked on enviously, Nugent went on to enjoy massive solo success, peaking in 1977 with the multi-platinum 'Cat Scratch Fever'.

Turner still considers the decision "wimpy and wrong" and perhaps surprisingly, with the benefit of hindsight, Powell is now willing to consider that their refusal to sign with Leber-Krebs may have been short-sighted.

"We were in such a fragile state after 'Locked In', everyone was trying to get a semblance of reality back into their lives," says the guitarist. "The proposal felt daunting. We'd have had bigger success, but we would

Photo: Ron Sobol

also have given away more of the takings. Looking at the big picture, though, yeah... Declining that offer may have been a big turning point for Wishbone Ash. But who knows for sure?"

SOME FOUR years after the release of 'New England' Turner's self-confessed status as an "odd man out" would cost him his position in the band, a lone voice of opposition to the idea of recruiting a full-time frontman. Wisefield lasted until 1985 before going on to work with Tina Turner and Joe Cocker amongst others. He now plays with English rock band Snakecharmer. Upton was the last to bail out of Wishbone Ash and little has been heard of the drummer since 1990. Powell, however, continues to drive the band ever onwards, having

triumphed over the three co-founders (including Ted Turner) and Wisefield in a legal battle over the ownership of the group's name. Turner is now forced to bill himself as Martin Turner Ex-Wishbone Ash.

Although Powell contributed to the preparation of an officially authorised 30-disc boxed set, 'The Vintage Years 1970-1991' (see below for more info), there was no contact with his former bandmates during the process and relations are unlikely to thaw after the experiences of both sides facing each other in the dock.

"A reunion is out of the question," Turner concludes. "Steve Upton would find it hard to stand in a room with Mr Powell, and he's unable play the drums anymore. Even for a million dollars, he ain't gonna do it. And there could be no reunion without Steve." 🗿

"I FEARED IT MIGHT NEVER COME OUT..."

Dave Ling gets the insider view on the soon-come mammoth 'Vintage Years' box set...

FOR A BAND OF Wishbone Ash's status, their catalogue has been criminally ignored. So excitement was rife on fan forums when news emerged of a massive 30-disc box set arriving, containing remastered versions of all 16 of the group's studio albums recorded between 1970 and 1991. Bonus material would include rare album outtakes, B-sides and 12 previously unreleased studio tracks, plus individually autographed photos of Powell, Martin and Ted Turner, Upton and Wisefield.

Ash fans will be especially delighted by an exhumed recording of a show from Southampton that was originally intended for the 'Live Dates' set, but which was considered flawed when the band originally looked to use it. Modern technology now renders the bass drum mishap that ruined the recording repairable.

GIVEN THE bitter acrimony between Andy Powell and the other band members, Snapper Music's Ian Crockett used superhuman levels of diplomacy and patience to spend four and half years guiding the project past one headache after another. "Both sides are very sensitive about the dispute that happened between them and there were times when I feared it might never come out," Crockett admits. "One of the biggest sticking points was the title, which was changed several times. One person would like an idea, the rest wouldn't. Then the rest would approve an alternative and the other wouldn't give his blessing. There was a similar problem with the cover artwork, but everything was smoothed over eventually."

I must declare a personal interest here. I was asked to interview all five 'classic era' members of the band for a

lavish 156-page hardback book to accompany the release. I was thrilled, until I remembered the headaches involved in batting around the sleeve notes for a 2010 anthology, 'Sometime World: An MCA Travelogue'. Various drafts were submitted. Powell's camp would want something changed, then Turner's people would demand it be reinstated. Over and over again the same story, paragraph by paragraph: it did my head in. But where the box set was concerned, my heart ruled my head...



SECOND TIME around it seemed easier to go with the flow. After the notes were submitted Andy Powell sent a lovely email congratulating me on "an excellent job", capturing the "wit, ego, defensiveness, swagger, pride, sentimentality, delusion, mutual respect and humour" of his band's tale. When edits were subsequently demanded by pretty much all parties it felt frustrating. Steve Upton didn't like being called "the Lord Lucan of Wishbone Ash" and had the reference

removed, for example. And although the tale behind the band's debut album track, 'Queen Of Torture', has long since entered the public domain, Ted Turner nevertheless objected to his sexual history being singled out, so the red marker pen struck again. It was all very frustrating.

Fortunately, Ian Crockett was finally able to push the 'go' button and 'The Vintage Years' is set for release on 20 April. Retailing at around £250, only 2,500 copies are being made and once they're gone they're gone. In keeping with Snapper's policy - as with past boxes that have focussed on Streetwalkers, Family and Steve Hillage - there will categorically be no re-pressing, so if you're a real Wishbone Ash fan you'll need to move fast.

RAPID FIRE RECALL



STEVE VAI

THE GENIUS GUITAR PLAYER WHOSE
MIND IS AS QUICK AS HIS FINGERS.
INTERVIEW BY HOWARD JOHNSON.

BERKLEE COLLEGE OF MUSIC

“When I first went there [in 1978] I assumed I was the worst guitarist on the planet. But that was probably the insecure mind of an 18 year old. It was a great community of musicians to be in, with lots of people full of hopes and dreams, wanting to learn and share. I went ready to experience anything and everything I could, with anybody I could, so it was a tremendous period for me. I spent a lot of time in the library and it was the best musical education, because all of a sudden I had access to all this music that I had no idea even existed. That library had every Beatles record, everything by Stravinsky, Miles Davis, Zappa...”

FRANK ZAPPA

“Frank was the most extraordinary man I ever met. I still marvel to this day at the incredible opportunity I had to work with him. There isn’t a day that passes without me seeing how being with him has helped me in the way I do my business, how I make my music and how I explore things. Why? Because Frank was an independent thinker, an explosion of freedom. He was constantly, constantly creating. Frank didn’t just hear your words. He was honing in on the intent *behind* the words. So you had to be really careful, because he could smell shit a mile away. If anything you were saying smacked of ego or ignorance he’d really let you have it.”

ALCATRAZZ

“I loved being in Alcatraz. It was an opportunity for me to get into the rock scene, because I knew there were going to be a lot of eyes on whoever replaced Yngwie Malmsteen. I heard he’d just quit the band [in 1984], so I went down and auditioned, but was sure I wasn’t going to get the gig because there was another guitarist who came in straight after me called Chris Impellitteri. Chris had the uncanny ability to sound *exactly* like Yngwie and I sounded *nothing* like Yngwie. And then I got the call.

We didn’t have such a long run. The record we made [1985’s ‘Disturbing The Peace’] wasn’t a big seller and then as we started work on the next album I got the call from Dave Roth. The guys in the band were like, ‘Of course you have to take this gig.’ It was an opportunity that doesn’t come along too often and they knew it, so they gave me their blessing.”

DAVID LEE ROTH

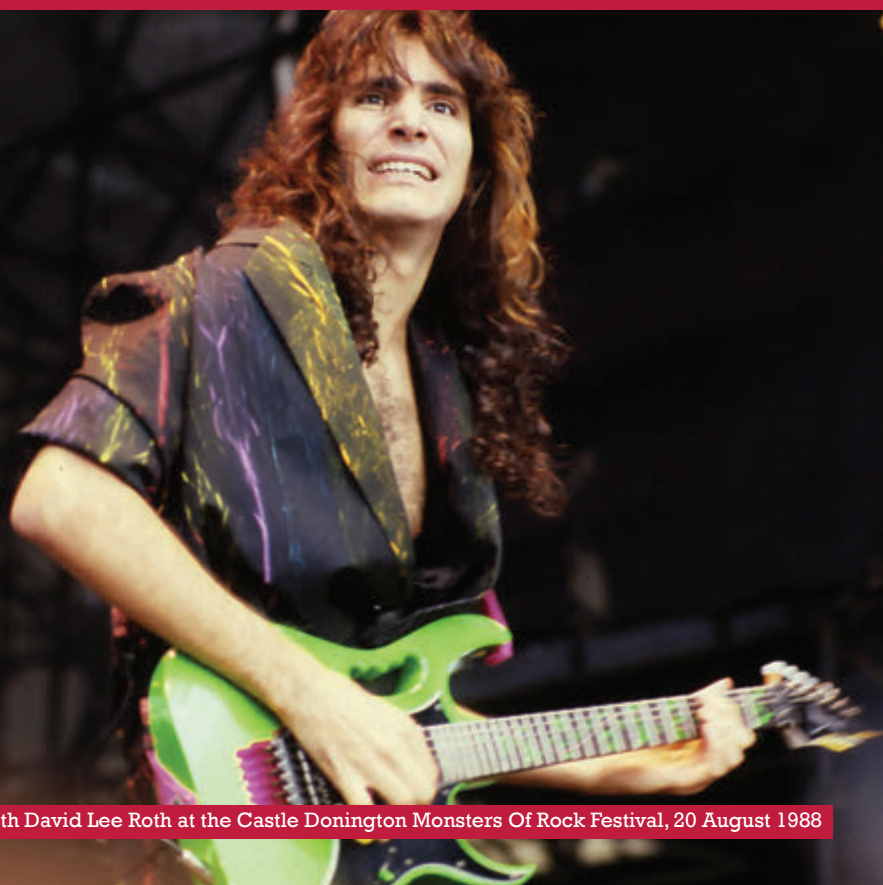
“A fiercely confident man. There’s so much perspective on David Lee Roth from so many people. But to know him and to work as closely with him as I did is to really appreciate him. I learnt so much from him. I’ve had four major mentors in my life. My first was my high school music teacher, Bill Westcott. The second was Joe Satriani. The third was Frank Zappa. And the fourth was David Lee Roth. I don’t use that word ‘mentor’ lightly. I learned a lot from everybody, but Dave was a game changer, because he was a master of stage charisma and I was this gawky Long Island kid.

“He’s the consummate rock star. He raised the bar on – how would I put it? – campy acceptance. There’s a persona there that he projects, but it’s not an act. It’s who he is. And he’s very professional and very disciplined. Let’s put it this way. If the recording session was at 11, then you’d better be there at 10.30.”

PLAYING JACK BUTLER IN THE FILM CROSSROADS

“In 1985 Ry Cooder was working on the soundtrack for the film and in the script was a scene where they needed a guitar duel – a battle for the souls of two of the characters in the movie. They’d been working on how to create something meaningful, but everything they did just sounded like people jamming. So Ry called *Guitar Player* magazine and asked who the hot new guitarist on the scene was. They played him my tune ‘The

“I LEARNED A LOT FROM EVERYBODY, BUT DAVID LEE ROTH WAS A GAME CHANGER, BECAUSE HE WAS A MASTER OF STAGE CHARISMA AND I WAS THIS GAWKY LONG ISLAND KID.”



Steve performing live with David Lee Roth at the Castle Donington Monsters Of Rock Festival, 20 August 1988

Attitude Song' down the phone line. He called me, which was a shock, came out to my house, showed me the script and asked if I thought I could contribute. When the director, Walter Hill, came in and heard what we'd done together he was really impressed and asked if I wanted to play the part of [the devil's guitarist] Jack Butler in the film. At first I was reluctant, because I'm not an actor and I wasn't interested in being an actor. They had to ask me a few times and eventually I decided I *could* do it, because there's a part of me that's very dark and very evil, and I can summon all that if I want."

'RISE' WITH PUBLIC IMAGE LIMITED

"That was such a glorious project. It represented a particular freedom for me that was absent in all the other projects I did at the time. In 1985 I got a call from Bill Laswell, who was producing the record. They already had a wonderful guitarist, Nicky Skopelitis, who was laying tracks down. But they also wanted something a little different, some fireworks. Bill gave me complete free reign to do whatever I wanted. I was on tour with Alcatrazz at the time, so I flew in and in two half-day sessions I did all the guitar parts. Sometimes when you're in a situation where you have to deliver, where you don't have time to mess around, certain things can happen that are really powerful. John Lydon was open-minded enough not to go, 'He's just a rock shredder. He's not right.' He even invited me to be in the band. I couldn't do it, but it would

"I DON'T VOTE IN THE GRAMMYS, IN GUITAR CONTESTS OR AWARDS, BECAUSE MUSIC ISN'T A COMPETITION AND I DON'T WANT TO CONTRIBUTE TO THAT CONCEPT."

have been kinda odd anyway. I'm such a rocker and they were anti-rock guys. But sometimes it takes those kind of pairings to get something interesting."

WHITESNAKE

"Whitesnake was the biggest band on the scene at the time. I loved their '1987' record and really liked David Coverdale's voice. But I was apprehensive about getting involved, because I'd just come from David Lee Roth and was already working on [second solo album] 'Passion And Warfare'. I was really ready to leave all the rock stardom stuff behind and just do this quirky music that felt very natural to me. But then the Whitesnake opportunity came along around 1989. The 'Slip Of The Tongue' record was already nearing completion, but it didn't have many guitar parts, just rhythm guides, because [the band's guitarist] Adrian [Vandenberg] had this issue with his hand. He couldn't

really do what he wanted to, so I ended up doing the guitars on the record. If I'm honest I was a bit of a prick at that time. I don't think I was a very nice guy. I'd just come from working with Dave and all the fame that came with it. It came in the back door a bit - the ego. I was perceived as being pretentious and self-centred. I was friends with everybody in the group and we got on well. But when I look back and watch interviews with myself there was this superficial air of superiority and pretension in me. If there was any kind of friction in that band it was probably down to me."

Photos: Iconic Pix/George Bodnar Archive; Getty Images/Robert Knight Archive/Redferns

'PASSION AND WARFARE'

"It was an explosion of freedom, because when I sat down to make that record I'd put all expectations for any rock'n'roll success – or any success at all, really – to one side. There's nothing on 'Passion And Warfare' that would work on a David Lee Roth record, or a PiL record, or an Alcatraz record, or anywhere. I enjoyed it so much, because I had no expectations. And when you don't have any expectations, then that creates an opening to do whatever the fuck you want, because you're not afraid of what people are going to think. I said, 'Vai, you've got to do this *now*. Just make this music that you've been wanting to make your whole life.' So that's what I did, and it was a lot of work to get it released [in 1990]. But it was really great fun. When you have an idea for something and you see it through, you get a much more authentic feeling of fulfilment than doing something that simply brings you success."

THE IBANEZ UNIVERSE SEVEN-STRING GUITAR

"I was so fortunate to be in a position where any of my obtuse creative ideas for the construction of a guitar would be completely manifested by Ibanez. So I was sitting with them one day and I'd always had this thought about how cool it would be to have an extra low string on a guitar. The conversation took about one minute. I said, 'Make me a guitar with an extra string' and they said 'Yes Mr Steve.' So I got this prototype guitar and that's the guitar I recorded the entire Whitesnake record on. I instinctively knew it would be really useful for certain musicians. I knew there would be young kids who'd see the potential for its use in really heavy playing. So surprise, surprise, I turn on the radio one day and there's Korn. But I didn't realise it would create such a subculture and it's a marvellous thing to be part of."

WINNING GRAMMYS

"It's always an honour to be recognised for your contribution. You put your head down and you work and you work and you work... and then someone taps you on the shoulder and says, 'You know what? This is pretty cool.' In the scheme of things awards are nice enough, but I don't create an identity for myself as a Grammy winner. At the end of the day things like that can wreak havoc on your psyche, because you can start believing you're the chosen one, you start pining for the next one and that could derail your connection with your authenticity. About 10 years ago I decided to pull out of any measuring of musical talent. So I don't vote in the Grammys, in guitar contests or awards, because music isn't a competition and I don't want to contribute to that concept."

WRITING ORCHESTRAL MUSIC

"For me, writing orchestral music is the greatest form of musical expression I can engage in. The idea of having a piece of blank manuscript paper and knowing that you can control the

notes and the activities of a large group of people was always absolutely fascinating. I wanted to know it, I wanted to master it, I wanted every aspect of it to be under my control. I studied my ass off, but it also came very naturally to me. Playing the guitar is not natural, which is weird. Anybody who put the amount of hours in that I did would have at least as much technique as me, if not more. But there was a natural clarity in my mind for hearing music in my head and getting it out on paper. To a lot of people it's a cloud."

PRACTISING

"My perspective on practising has changed quite a bit. The best choice a person can make is to do what feels natural to them. As a 13 year old, the idea of being able to move my fingers was very fascinating, so I practised and I practised and I practised. It was very regimented and rigid. If you want to develop some technical capabilities then it'll require some practice, but the amount of practice you need is based on your personal goals. My goal was to be effortless on the guitar. I pictured myself playing completely effortlessly, elegantly, beautifully, doing stuff that seemed completely impossible. I had a vision in my head and I knew it required a lot of physical training. But that's not necessary if it's not what you're interested in. You only need enough technique to get the point across that's most important to you. So I would say this to young people who have the big question mark over their head as to how much they should be practising. My answer is, 'Only do what feels good to you.' 🦋"



"Anybody who put the amount of hours in that I did would have at least as much technique as me, if not more."



Photo: Mark Weiss

WHEN THE STARS CAME OUT

As the mainstream music world worked together to raise much-needed money for a humanitarian crisis in Ethiopia back in 1985, vocalist **Ronnie James Dio** wanted to show that metal had a heart too. His resulting charity project, Hear 'n Aid, brought together many of the biggest names in rock, and the single 'Stars' helped generate even more cash. *Jon Hotten* uncovers the story of this unique 'time capsule' moment and talks exclusively to Ronnie's wife and manager **Wendy Dio** about how this memorable event came together...



Ronnie directs Judas Priest vocalist Rob Halford

LOS ANGELES, 1985. RONALD Reagan is America's president. Music channel VH-1 launches. *Beverly Hills Cop*, *Rambo* and *Back To The Future* are the big noises at the box office. David Lee Roth leaves Van Halen. Dire Straits are the biggest rock band in the world. Heavy metal singer Ronnie James Dio is 42 years old and in his prime. In the last five years he's released 'Heaven And Hell' with Black Sabbath and 'Holy Diver' with Dio, two of the three albums that, along with Rainbow's 'Rising', will form his legacy. Yet hard rock music is still a year away from the release of Poison's 'Look What The Cat Dragged In', and two away from Guns N'Roses' 'Appetite For Destruction', the albums that will turn the Sunset Strip into the ultimate hair destination...

L.A. BACK then was an insular, aspirational, feel-good place that symbolised the coming times, as far removed from what was taking place halfway across the world as it was from Jupiter or Neptune. The Ethiopian famine in Africa lasted from 1983 until 1985, and, exacerbated by a civil war, is thought to have killed half a million people at a conservative estimate. Its most lethal months came in the summer of 1984 when four provinces in the north and east were affected by a brutal drought, while the government allocated 46 percent of gross national product to military

spending to fight a rebel uprising in the south. This mass suffering remained background noise to the First World until 23 October of that year, when the BBC broadcast the first of reporter Michael Buerk's films on the evening news. He called Ethiopia "the closest thing to hell on earth." And he was right.

The public desire to help was overwhelming, and the brilliance of musicians Bob Geldof and Midge Ure's idea to produce a charity song was that it gave the response a focus and a purpose. Now, everyone from a child with pocket money to a little old granny could do something easy and productive to help. All they had to do was buy a record. A decade before the Internet, and many years before we knew or understood what 'crowdfunding' or 'virtue signalling' was, Band Aid provided the very first way for a public response to go

straight to the problem without the mediation of an official channel or a central government mandate. It was revolutionary in its way, and Geldof's anger and fervour - its impact eroded now by the mocked-up rage of reality TV - was shocking and convulsive at the time, a call to action that felt impossible to ignore.

America's reply came in American form: not first, but bigger, and therefore better. The star power behind USA For Africa and 'We Are The World' was dizzying.

"THERE WAS A FEELING THAT WE'D BEEN OVERLOOKED BY USA FOR AFRICA AND 'WE ARE THE WORLD'. WE'D WANTED TO BE INVOLVED IN THAT, BUT THEY THOUGHT WE WERE DIRTY, NASTY, METAL PEOPLE. THAT'S WHEN ALL THE METAL AND ROCK PEOPLE CAME TOGETHER."

WENDY DIO



The Hear 'n Aid team get the support of 'Saint' Bob Geldof

by the lack of heavy metal contributors in a town that was rammed full of them. So they decided to write a charity song, and once they had the bones of one, they took their idea to Dio. The timing wasn't great. The band were in the final stages of work on 'Sacred Heart', the third Dio album in as many years. Nonetheless Ronnie was caught by the notion.

"He put the album aside right away to do the Hear 'n Aid project," remembers Wendy Dio, his wife and manager. "Ronnie wasn't a multi-tasker; when he did something he'd throw himself into it. He would do one thing, do it perfectly, and then move to the next.

Here came Michael Jackson and Quincy Jones, Stevie Wonder, Lionel Richie, Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen, Tina Turner, Paul Simon, Diana Ross... 'Do They Know It's Christmas?' sold three million copies. 'We Are The World' sold 20 million.

IN JANUARY 1985 Bob Geldof, stirred by an idea from Boy George, began organising the Live Aid concerts, promoted at Wembley Stadium in London by Harvey Goldsmith and at JFK Stadium in Philadelphia by Bill Graham. A date was set for 13 July and it would prove to be one of *the* shaping events of the 1980s, crystallising the careers of some of the artists who appeared. One great rock band, Queen, seized the moment, crammed a clever 'greatest hits' set into 20 minutes and within a few months were back filling stadiums by themselves. In Philadelphia, an under-rehearsed Led Zeppelin and the hastily reconvened Black Sabbath would appear. Along with a line of vocal from Journey vocalist Steve Perry on 'We Are The World', this was the extent of hard rock's involvement in the most significant cultural event of the decade.

IT WASN'T for a lack of empathy or understanding, though. Vivian Campbell, the Irish guitar prodigy Ronnie James Dio had taken from the band Sweet Savage to play on 'Holy Diver', and Jimmy Bain, Dio's stalwart collaborator from as far back as 'Rising', had attended a 48-hour 'radiothon' called *Rock Relief For Africa* at a local Los Angeles station, KLOS. The idea was to raise money for the famine crisis. Both musicians were struck

The guys brought part of the song to him, he got excited about it and wanted to finish it. He was also a charitable guy. Right up until just before he passed away Ronnie did charity work for animals, for children. He was an unselfish person and I think he wanted to help."

"RONNIE WAS ALSO A CHARITABLE GUY. RIGHT UP UNTIL JUST BEFORE HE PASSED AWAY HE DID CHARITY WORK FOR ANIMALS, FOR CHILDREN. HE WAS AN UNSELFISH PERSON AND I THINK HE WANTED TO HELP."

WENDY DIO

THE SONG that would come to be known as 'Stars' was, according to its co-creator Bain, "just a straightforward heavy metal song. Very

melodic..." It was typical of its time, and typical of the kind of riffs upon which 'Holy Diver' and its successor 'The Last In Line' had been built. The song offered a no-nonsense, deep-throated guitar workout rooted in expansive classic rock, backed with Bain's trademark insistent throb of a rhythm that he'd been playing since before the NWOBHM began. It fell to Ronnie to add the pizzazz, and for a singer at his peak that was easily done. Had its birth been different, 'Stars' would have fitted easily alongside 'Hungry For Heaven' and 'King Of Rock And Roll' as the best of the material on the forthcoming 'Sacred Heart' album.

Wendy Dio recalls: "He had the song quite quickly, and then Ronnie picked up the phone, I picked up the phone, our publicist Sharon Weiss picked up the phone, and we started calling musicians, and it just started snowballing from there.

"There was a feeling that we'd been overlooked by USA For Africa and 'We Are The World'. We'd wanted to be involved in that, but they thought we were dirty, nasty, metal people. That's when all the metal and rock people came together and it was a remarkable thing. There ▶

Photos: IconicPix/PG Brunelli; Julia Goode



Twisted Sister guitarist Eddie Ojeda and Blue Öyster Cult guitarist and vocalist Eric Bloom, together with Iron Maiden guitarists Dave Murray and Adrian Smith at the Hear 'n Aid recording sessions



Guitarist Viv Campbell and vocalist Geoff Tate fail to get the horns right



Ronnie: "A man to be reckoned with."



Ronnie keeps an eye on Quiet Riot vocalist Kevin DuBrow





was just so much feeling there for it.

“Everybody banded together and said, ‘You know what? We’re people too and we care about people. Why should we be left out?’ I think we still get left out, to be honest. I think heavy metal people, they look a little different, they may act a little different, but they have very kind hearts. I find them to be so gracious, so helpful in giving their time and their talent. They’re great people.”

THE DOCUMENTARY film to record the event that was Hear ‘n Aid was shot at A&M Records Studio in West Hollywood on 20 and 21 May 1985. It’s time-capsule footage, not just of the individuals who answered the Hear ‘n Aid call, but of how rock music *looked* in the early summer of 1985.

Here was Mötley Crüe singer Vince Neil, in the midst of recording ‘Theatre Of Pain’ and just months after the car he’d been driving had killed Hanoi Rocks drummer Razzle and badly injured two others, stepping from a limo in a white jacket and blue neckerchief. Here was vocalist Geoff Tate of

“I WAS NERVOUS, LOOKING THROUGH THE GLASS TO THE CONTROL ROOM AND RONNIE IS IN THERE WITH ALL THESE LEGENDARY PERFORMERS... RONNIE HELPED CALM ME DOWN...”

GEOFF TATE

Queensrÿche, also in white, hair violently quiffed and sporting a pair of leather fingerless gloves. There was Judas Priest frontman Rob Halford in shining leather, the studs of his wristband catching the bright studio light. W.A.S.P. mainman Blackie Lawless was in a Harley Davidson T-shirt. Motor City madman Ted Nugent, pre-camouflage hunter phase, had opted for a *Miami Vice* box jacket. Swedish guitar virtuoso Yngwie Malmsteen went with giant hair and huge shades. Quiet Riot hunkered together near the back. Eric Bloom of Blue Öyster Cult turned up all bearded and dressed down. Actors Michael McKean and Harry Shearer, in character as David St Hubbins and Derek Smalls from the fictional band Spinal Tap, were indistinguishable from the real thing. And front of house there was Ronnie Dio himself in handsome purple stage get-up, speaking to camera with quiet authority.

THE BACKING track for ‘Stars’ had been recorded at Sound City Studios in Hollywood by Dio members Viv Campbell, Jimmy Bain, and drummer Vinnie Appice, with additional contributions from Quiet Riot’s drummer Frankie Banali. The track was then sent to the main vocal contributors, whose individual lines were orchestrated by Ronnie.

The chosen singers were Bloom, Halford, Tate and Dio, along with Don Dokken, Quiet Riot’s Kevin DuBrow, Y&T’s Dave Meniketti and Rough Cutt’s Paul Shortino. Guitar solos came from Campbell, Malmsteen, Blue Öyster Cult’s Buck Dharma, Quiet Riot’s Carlos Cavazo, Night Ranger’s

Brad Gillis, Giuffria’s Craig Goldy, Dokken’s George Lynch, Neal Schon and Twisted Sister’s Eddie Ojeda. Melody lines from the Iron Maiden pair Dave Murray and Adrian Smith had to somehow be stitched in too.

“Ronnie had sent the song out in advance – not to all of the chorus, but to people like Rob Halford and Geoff Tate,” says Wendy Dio. “They had the song to listen to, but I’m not sure if they knew exactly what they were going to be doing until they got to the studio. Ronnie, as always, was the ruler in the studio. He was a man to be reckoned with.”

Even so, it took some force of personality to keep everyone smiling and get the whole thing down on tape in just two days.

“Everyone absolutely took direction from him,” Wendy says. “You have to remember that Ronnie was friends with a lot of these guys, and he was also totally in control of his career. Anything to do with music, he was absolutely in control of, and because he was so good, people just... I mean a lot of people think Ronnie was just a lyricist, but he wrote ‘Holy Diver’, ‘Don’t Talk To Strangers’, ‘We Rock’... he wrote those in their entirety.

He was a respected musician. He played with Roy Orbison, people like that. He played trumpet with them when he was 14 years old. He had a band when he was 10...”

INTERVIEWED SOME years later, Ronnie offered an insight into how he’d wrangled a

roomful of rock stars into a cohesive performance: “I thought the chorus was going to be a definite problem so I just had Kevin [DuBrow] take care of things. I used a bit of psychology, you see? I took the biggest bad boy of the lot and asked him to keep things in order. He then had a degree of responsibility given to him by someone he respects, and he was great. It worked...”

“I was nervous,” Geoff Tate recalled. “Looking through the glass to the control room and Ronnie is in there with all these legendary performers... Ronnie helped calm me down...”

The guitars took longest of all, almost a day and a half, with Malmsteen shredding faster than a government department under investigation, Neal Schon keeping pace and Ted Nugent, who wasn’t due to play, telling anyone who’d listen that he could do it better.

“They did eventually leave their egos at the door,” Wendy Dio says. “The atmosphere was fantastic. Everybody was having such a good time and I think they were just enjoying doing something – singing or playing guitar or even just singing on the chorus. No-one was bothered. I think they just wanted to do their bit, and it was a lot of fun.”

ALTHOUGH THE feeling of exclusion had in part driven the ‘Stars’ project, two representatives of USA For Africa were at the sessions – executive director Marty Rogol, and Ken Kragen, who was the manager of Lionel Richie and Kenny Rogers and had helped to assemble the musicians on ‘We Are The World’.

Marty Rogol's words focused on the positive: "This is going to reach an entirely new and different audience," he said. "And what people are finding is that this seems to be a time in history when people are not just directed inwards. That they're looking for a way to be directed outwards. And when they have the people that they look to leading the way to do that, they are gonna follow."

WITH THE record cut, Hear 'n Aid had a protracted birth. The single was finally released in early spring 1986, delayed by the labyrinthine task of untangling the various permissions, a process made more complex by the decision to issue a compilation album in support of the project. That task fell to Wendy Dio.

"In terms of permissions it was tough," she remembers. "It's always record labels and managers. If they're not making any money from it they don't want to give permission, or it's not a priority. It's a real hard fight. Musicians are always there, and they're ready to give their all. It's what they do. Then you have the business people who ask, 'well, what are we getting out of it?' That's what happens. Luckily we pulled it through, and it came to pass."

In April 1986, 'Stars' reached number 26 in the UK singles chart, and peaked at 39 in the USA's *Billboard* Hot 100 a month later. The latter was a strong performance in the days when the physical sales and radio plays required to dent the charts were far higher. The Hear 'n Aid compilation album, which pulled in tracks from Kiss, Rush, Y&T, Dio, Accept, Scorpions, Motörhead and Jimi Hendrix, also reached the Top 100 in July 1986. It was not necessarily as Hear 'n Aid would have liked, and yet it had the unintended but happy side effect of keeping the appeal in the public eye well into the year following Live Aid. Wendy Dio estimates that a million dollars were raised in that first year, and that the final tally would be around \$3million. The time lag enabled a decision to buy agricultural machinery with the money, which overcame some of the

difficulties that other charities had encountered in trying to get their funds to those in the greatest need.

1985 FEELS like a long time ago. Ronnie James Dio died of stomach cancer in 2010, at the age of 67. Jimmy

Bain and Kevin DuBrow have also passed away. Many of the participants in Hear 'n Aid have reached their sixties and seventies, and an era is slipping by alongside them. For Wendy Dio, reflecting on Hear 'n Aid inevitably means reflecting on the wider career and legacy of Ronnie, which she has curated thoughtfully.

"Hear 'n Aid was a big heavy metal move, a big moment, and a lot of people who were innovators are gone now. It kind of pisses me off that Ronnie's not in the Hall Of Fame or whatever it's called. I mean, name another singer who's fronted three bands, where you see three landmark records, Rainbow's 'Rising', 'Heaven and Hell' and 'Holy Diver'. And he developed the Malocchio [metal horns] sign, because he didn't want to copy Ozzy in Sabbath with the peace sign. And now it's a universal symbol.

"We deal with people who are displaced," she goes on. "I deal with a lot of hard rock and heavy metal bands, and their audiences are people who've been left behind by society and they need some outlet, you know. These are normal people, not stars of Instagram, and they need something to dream and to live for... Maybe they've got horrible parents, there's all kind of things. That's why Ronnie always wrote about dreaming your dream, and doing whatever you want, because those are the fans out

there for most heavy metal people.

"It's certainly what 'Stars' was saying. You know? 'We're all stars.' I think it's an underrated number. I'm hoping to reissue it at some point along with some other songs, but it's just a lot of work. I'd like to do it for my charity [the Stand Up And Shout Cancer Fund], and it's been something I've been wanting to do for a while, and I will do it somewhere down the line." 🗿

"MUSICIANS ARE ALWAYS THERE, AND THEY'RE READY TO GIVE THEIR ALL. IT'S WHAT THEY DO. THEN YOU HAVE THE BUSINESS PEOPLE WHO ASK, 'WELL WHAT ARE WE GETTING OUT OF IT?' THAT'S WHAT HAPPENS. LUCKILY WE PULLED IT THROUGH, AND IT CAME TO PASS."
WENDY DIO



Ronnie and Wendy Dio pictured together in April of 1985



THE 'STARS' LINE UP IN FULL!



VOCALS

Eric Bloom (Blue Öyster Cult)
 Ronnie James Dio (Dio)
 Don Dokken (Dokken)
 Kevin DuBrow (Quiet Riot)
 Rob Halford (Judas Priest)
 Dave Meniketti (Y&T)
 Paul Shortino (Rough Cutt)
 Geoff Tate (Queensrÿche)

BACKING VOCALS

Tommy Aldridge (Ozzy Osbourne)
 Dave Alford (Rough Cutt)
 Carmine Appice (Vanilla Fudge/
 King Cobra)
 Vinny Appice (Dio)
 Jimmy Bain (Dio)
 Frankie Banali (Quiet Riot)
 Mick Brown (Dokken)
 Vivian Campbell (Dio)
 Carlos Cavazo (Quiet Riot)
 Amir Derakh (Rough Cutt)

Buck Dharma (Blue Öyster Cult)
 Brad Gillis (Night Ranger)
 Craig Goldy (Giuffria)
 Chris Hager (Rough Cutt)
 Chris Holmes (W.A.S.P.)
 Blackie Lawless (W.A.S.P.)
 George Lynch (Dokken)
 Yngwie Malmsteen
 Mick Mars (Mötley Crüe)
 Michael McKean (in character as
 David St. Hubbins of *Spinal Tap*)
 Vince Neil (Mötley Crüe)
 Ted Nugent
 Eddie Ojeda (Twisted Sister)
 Jeff Pilson (Dokken)
 Rudy Sarzo (Quiet Riot)
 Claude Schnell (Dio)
 Neal Schon (Journey)
 Harry Shearer (in character as
 Derek Smalls of *Spinal Tap*)
 Mark Stein (Vanilla Fudge)
 Matt Thorr (Rough Cutt)

LEAD GUITAR SOLOS

Vivian Campbell (Dio)
 Carlos Cavazo (Quiet Riot)
 Buck Dharma (Blue Öyster Cult)
 Brad Gillis (Night Ranger)
 Craig Goldy (Giuffria)
 George Lynch (Dokken)
 Yngwie Malmsteen
 Eddie Ojeda (Twisted Sister)
 Neal Schon (Journey)

RHYTHM GUITAR MELODIES

Dave Murray (Iron Maiden)
 Adrian Smith (Iron Maiden)

BASS

Jimmy Bain (Dio)

DRUMS

Vinny Appice (Dio)
 Frankie Banali (Quiet Riot)

KEYBOARDS

Claude Schnell (Dio)



SLAYER – ‘REIGN IN BLOOD’

The Slayer line-up that recorded ‘Reign In Blood’. L-R: Dave Lombardo (drums), Jeff Hanneman (guitars), Kerry King (guitars), Tom Araya (bass and vocals)

DATELINE: 7 OCTOBER 1986

THE WEST COAST THRASHERS’ THIRD ALBUM SAW THEM BRING IN A HIP-HOP PRODUCER WHO CHANGED THEIR SOUND AND HELPED THEM DELIVER A GAME-CHANGING RECORD. BUT DOES IT STILL STAND UP TODAY?



SLAYER
‘Reign In Blood’ (Def Jam)
Released: 7 October 1986

LINE UP
Tom Araya - vocals, bass
Kerry King - guitars
Jeff Hanneman - guitars
Dave Lombardo - drums

PRODUCED BY
Rick Rubin

RECORDED AT
Hit City West Recording Studios,
Los Angeles

TRACK LISTING
Angel Of Death (Hanneman)
Piece By Piece (King)
Necrophobic (Hanneman/King)
Altar Of Sacrifice (Hanneman/King)
Jesus Saves (Hanneman/King)
Criminally Insane (Hanneman/King)
Reborn (Hanneman/King)
Epidemic (Hanneman/King)
Postmortem (Hanneman)
Raining Blood (Hanneman/King)

WHICH CLASSIC ALBUMS WOULD YOU LIKE US TO REVISIT?
EMAIL: EDITORIAL@ROCKCANDYMAG.COM

TOM ARAYA ON ‘REIGN IN BLOOD’: “Everybody else was doing something slow. Kerry and Jeff said that they didn’t want to do a slow record - they wanted to do something fast. We were young. We were hungry. And we wanted to be faster than everybody else.”

BEFORE THE RELEASE OF 'Reign In Blood' in 1986, most people thought of Slayer as a second division thrash band lagging way behind Anthrax, Megadeth and Metallica. The four-piece group from Huntington Park, California, had released two albums – 1983's 'Show No Mercy' and 1985's 'Hell Awaits' – that had promise, but were let down by shoddy production. There was, however, something more interesting on 1984's 'Haunting The Chapel' EP. The opener 'Chemical Warfare' was a delightful cacophony of noise that persuaded me Slayer had potential. All they needed was a decent producer.

Enter Rick Rubin of Def Jam fame. Rick was already well established after working successfully with rap artists The Beastie Boys, Public Enemy and Run-DMC. But what many people didn't know was that Rubin was also a rock fan. His understanding of the inherent swing in Aerosmith classic 'Walk This Way' had convinced him the song would work well in a rap context, leading to a novel collaboration between the original band and Run-DMC. The song was recorded in 1985 and became a huge US hit in summer '86, just as Rubin was recording 'Reign In Blood' with Slayer in Los Angeles.

WHEN HE first heard of Rubin's interest in producing Slayer, the band's drummer Dave Lombardo was immediately up for it. The other three members – bassist and vocalist Tom Araya, and guitarists Jeff Hanneman and Kerry King – were less keen on signing to Rubin's hip-hop/rap label Def Jam. They felt they'd be more at home staying with their label at the time, Metal Blade. But after meeting Rubin and hearing his ideas on the way Slayer should sound, the band relented. Rubin's vision was to make the band's songs shorter and tighter, and give them a clearer, sharper studio sound.

Slayer got to work with Rubin at Hit City West Studios, Hollywood in June 1986 and completed the album in just over two months. The 10 songs on 'Reign In Blood' were short, sharp and ultra-direct. Seven numbers clocked in at under three minutes. According to Jeff Hanneman, the tunes were deliberately pared down as a direct response to thrash bands like Metallica and Megadeth who were writing longer and longer numbers. "If we do a verse two or three times we're already bored with it," he said.

This direct approach aside, what set 'Reign In Blood' apart from the rest of the competition was the clarity of the recording. Rick Rubin ditched the reverb that had cluttered the band's previous work, giving Slayer's music a new menace. "Rubin really cleaned up our sound," says Kerry King, "which drastically changed what we sounded like and how people perceived us."

THE 10 SONGS ON 'REIGN IN BLOOD' WERE SHORT, SHARP AND ULTRA-DIRECT. SEVEN NUMBERS CLOCKED IN AT UNDER THREE MINUTES.



Jeff Hanneman and Kerry King bring the noise to the Aragon Ballroom in Chicago on the 'Reign In Pain' tour, 14 November 1986.

EACH OF the 10 numbers is noteworthy, but opener 'Angel Of Death' caused the biggest stir because of its controversial subject matter – Auschwitz concentration camp and the torture of prisoners by psychopath Nazi physician Josef Mengele. You can feel the agony in Tom Araya's blood-curdling scream as the song gets into gear, and then sense the pain as he snarls, "Surgery with no anaesthesia, feel the knife pierce you intensely." For sheer musical impact, though, look no further than 'Jesus Saves'. Dave Lombardo's drum sound is incredible here, making you feel like you're inside a ginormous dustbin. The guitars of King and Hanneman spin wildly around you as Tom Araya maintains a vocal attack fully in keeping with a song that blasts along at 100mph. For me, though, the album's standout

track is 'Postmortem'. Hypnotic guitars chug menacingly as Araya snarls "*wanting to die is the reason to live*" before all hell breaks loose as the song moves into a speedmetal blur.

'REIGN IN Blood' still sounds every bit as fresh and vibrant today as it did the first time I heard it over 30 years ago. Kerry King really hit the nail on the head when, not long ago, he said, "If you released 'Reign In Blood' today no-one would give a shit. It was timing. It was a change in sound. In thrash metal at that time, no-one had ever heard good production on a record like that. It was just a bunch of things that came together at once."

XAVIER RUSSELL

THE ORIGINAL REVIEWS

"AAAAAHHHH!" Yes, from the moment Tom Araya gets kneed in the nuts and lets out that renowned death skream of his at the beginning of 'Angel Of Death', you the listener will be put thru an agonising, yet at the same time breathtakingly brilliant, 28 minutes and 58 seconds of the best Frash/Death/Hate/Speed Metal you're likely to hear this year."

Xavier Russell, *Kerrang!*, 2-15 October 1986

"Well, have Slayer changed? Improved, wimped out, discovered God or anything else? If Ke**ang! are to be believed they are now the saviours of heavy metal. Funny coming from a bunch of so-called journalists who drove 'Show No Mercy' into the ground and more or less compared Slayer to a road drill a couple of years ago... 'Reign In Blood' is just superb Slayer. They are the best at what they do and I for one am not bored with it yet."

Dave Constable, *Metal Forces*, Issue 19, 1986

'REIGN IN BLOOD' FACT: The band worried that 28 minutes and 58 seconds wasn't long enough for a complete album. So they asked Rick Rubin. "His only reply," says Araya, "was that it had 10 songs, verses, choruses and leads and that's what constituted an album."



Strangeways L-R: Ian Stewart (guitars), Terry Brock (vocals), Jim Drummond (drums), David Stewart (bass)



STRANGEWAYS – ‘Native Sons’

(RCA)

ORIGINAL RELEASE DATE – 1987

LINE UP

IAN STEWART – GUITARS

DAVID STEWART – BASS

JIM DRUMMOND – DRUMS

TERRY BROCK – VOCALS

DISPENSING WITH YOUR LEAD singer even before your debut album comes out is hardly the most auspicious of starts. But coming back with a sophomore release that’s now regarded as one of the greatest UK AOR releases of all time shows real tenacity.

When guitarist Ian Stewart, his bassist brother David, and drummer Jim Drummond opted for original vocalist Tony Liddle from over 900 applicants for the gig, he was actually second choice. Terry Brock, a singer who’d been quietly gaining a reputation as a backing vocalist over in his native America, had been the man the band really wanted. But Brock initially turned Strangeways down, opting to go on the road with Steve Morse instead. However, Liddle’s departure and Ian Stewart’s persistence eventually convinced Brock to take a chance on this unknown quantity.

SECOND ALBUM ‘Native Sons’ was recorded at the tail end of ’86, and released the following year. It showcased a band making music that was far removed from the unsophisticated AOR of their debut. Liddle had done a good enough job, but Brock added extra class to proceedings – think Steve Perry, Lou Gramm

and Michael Bolton. Lush, slick, songs crafted for the US market replaced the band’s distinctly British style of AOR. Whether it was the sublime ballad ‘Goodnight LA’, the Journey-influenced ‘So Far Away’ or the anthemic pairing of ‘Shake The Seven’ and ‘Stand Up And Shout’, these boys hit the target on every track. Above all, Brock’s vocals gave Strangeways much brighter colours than they’d had before.

You might think it unusual to see an AOR band without a keyboardist in their ranks. But actually that’s not quite the case here. Respected session man David ‘Munch’ Moore provided keys and contributed more to this album’s overall impact than he’s given credit for.

IN THE late ‘80s, most British AOR acts were far behind their colonial cousins in terms of quality. Strangeways, however, managed to take an old Vauxhall Viva and turn it into a turbo-charged Pontiac Trans Am. At long last here was a UK band good enough to take the Americans on at their own game – and ‘Native Sons’ is still, to this day, an album to be reckoned with.

Rob Evans



Three-quarters of Captain Beyond in action at the Roundhouse, Camden, London, 4 May 1972. L-R: Rod Evans (vocals), Lee Dorman (bass) and Larry Reinhardt (guitar)



CAPTAIN BEYOND – ‘Captain Beyond’

(CAPRICORN)

ORIGINAL RELEASE DATE – 1972

LINE UP

ROD EVANS – LEAD VOCALS

LARRY ‘RHINO’ REINHARDT – GUITARS

LEE DORMAN – BASS GUITAR, BACKING VOCALS, PIANO

BOBBY CALDWELL – DRUMS, ALL PERCUSSION INSTRUMENTS (INCLUDING BELLS AND VIBRAPHONE), BACKING VOCALS, PIANO

SOMETHING OF A MINOR league supergroup, Captain Beyond featured various alumni of heavyweight bands Iron Butterfly, Deep Purple and Johnny Winter. The four-piece played progressive heavy rock with some strong late ‘60s psychedelic/acid rock flourishes, and they played it mighty well, I have to say.

SINGER ROD Evans is in far better voice on this Captain Beyond début than on any of the first three Deep Purple albums, where he had come across as a kind of supper club crooner who’d accidentally arrived at the wrong audition. Had Evans been this good back in 1969 we might never have heard of Ian Gillan – imagine that! Former Iron Butterfly man Larry ‘Rhino’ Reinhardt produces some incendiary guitar work here, while former Johnny Winter drummer Bobby Caldwell sounds like he’s demolishing buildings.

THE OPENING blitz of ‘Dancing Madly Backwards (On A Sea of Air)’, ‘Armworth’, and ‘Myopic Void’ hits some seriously dizzying peaks. ‘Frozen Over’, meanwhile, is Purple-esque heavy metal that segues beautifully into

the late ‘60s vibe of ‘Thousand Days Of Yesterdays (Time Since Come And Gone)’. Now that’s what I call a title! Don’t you just dig those brackets? We must start a campaign to have more brackets in song titles again – I sorely miss them! But I digress. What makes ‘Captain Beyond’ special is the way the album manages to vary its moods and tempos throughout while never losing the listener’s attention.

IF YOU like your rock good and heavy, don’t miss album closer ‘I Can’t Feel Nothin’ (Part II)’ that finishes proceedings in fine style. Unlike a lot of early ‘70s efforts, ‘Captain Beyond’ is musically ambitious without ever falling into the trap of becoming overblown or pretentious. Two more albums followed, 1973’s ‘Sufficiently Breathless’ and ‘Dawn Explosion’ from 1977. But Captain Beyond never could capture the imagination of enough of the world’s rock-buying population. That’s a real shame, because on the strength of this debut they promised so much more.

Giles Hamilton



Legs Diamond L-R: Roger Romeo, Jeff Poole, Michael Diamond, Rick Sanford, Michael Prince

LEGS DIAMOND – ‘Legs Diamond’

ORIGINAL RELEASE DATE – 1977

LINE UP

Rick Sanford – lead vocals, flute, percussion

Roger Romeo – lead guitar, vocals

Michael Prince – keyboards, guitar, vocals

Michael Diamond – bass guitar

Jeff Poole – drums, percussion

BACKGROUND

If ever a band should have reached the very top, then surely it was Legs Diamond. Fêted by the cognoscenti, yet forever living in the shadows and suffering from perpetual bad luck, the band's reputation has only increased as the years have flown by. Many have come to recognise Legs Diamond's music as some of the greatest hard rock ever to have emerged from North America. Others have quite rightly called the band the American Deep Purple.

Formed in Los Angeles in the mid-'70s, LD developed their chops and killer look in all the hip clubs, refining and establishing their five-man line up before signing to major label Mercury Records. There was nothing shallow about Legs Diamond's music or message. Even on this, their debut album, the band produced cock-sure riffs, sublime vocals and intricate arrangements, all delivered with amazing confidence.

Although American audiences were receptive to the band's live performances, sadly (and bizarrely)

album sales didn't follow. With little airplay, the band gamely tried to carve out a niche through live work. Despite supporting the likes of Styx, Ted Nugent and Kiss, Legs Diamond failed to break through. Serious rock fans in the UK had started to take notice, though, and LD became a hot commodity among tape traders, enhancing the cult appeal of this tremendous group.



WHAT DRUMMER JEFF POOLE SAYS

"The band was smoking hot live. We rehearsed a lot and were well prepared for gigs. After one show we did with Ted Nugent at the Bakersfield Civic Center, Ted and Cliff Davies [drummer and producer, now sadly deceased] came in to our dressing room and told us, 'Tonight was yours!'"

TRACKS TO CHECK OUT

The prize knockout pairing of 'Stage Fright' and 'Satin Peacock'. Lengthy workouts such as 'Rat Race' and 'Can't Find Love' (weighing in at nearly nine minutes) take the band to the very outer limits of creativity, yet still pack a heavyweight punch.

MORE BANG FOR YOUR BUCK

The Rock Candy CD is an expanded 2CD set, freshly remastered and containing a massive 12 bonus tracks, a 16-page full-colour booklet, a 4,000 word essay by *Rock Candy Mag* contributor Dave Reynolds, enhanced artwork with previously unseen photos, full band involvement and new interviews.

THE WORD FROM RC BOSS DEREK OLIVER

"Produced by Derek Lawrence, who also worked with Deep Purple and Wishbone Ash, the original 'Legs Diamond' features seven fantastic tracks, but it's the inclusion of 12 bonus tracks on this Rock Candy release that will appeal to fans.

"Together with the band, we've collated a mouth-watering selection of previously unheard demos from their earliest days through to the birth of this, their debut album. Look out for stellar performances from every band member, but prepare to be astounded by vocalist Rick Sanford, a true 'one of a kind'."



Nutz L-R: Dave Lloyd, Keith Mulholland, Mick Devonport, John Mylett

NUTZ – ‘Nutz Too’

ORIGINAL RELEASE DATE – 1975

LINE UP

Dave Lloyd – lead vocals and guitar

Mick Devonport – lead guitar and vocals

Keith Mulholland – bass guitar and vocals

John Mylett – drums and percussion

BACKGROUND

Formed in Liverpool in 1973, this hard-rocking four-man outfit were signed to the hip-and-happening A&M Records and were one of an emerging breed of acts following in the footsteps of groups such as Deep Purple, Uriah Heep and Queen. ‘Nutz Too’, as the album title suggests, was the band’s second release and showcased a group displaying maturity beyond their years, attracting both strong reviews and a positive response from fans. At this stage of their career Nutz had already carved out a solid reputation on the live circuit, playing numerous clubs and colleges, and even opening for Queen on a 21-date UK tour in 1974. ‘Nutz Too’ was recorded in London’s Trident studios with the same producer – John Anthony – who’d successfully guided the band’s debut. Like their first album, 1974’s ‘Nutz’, ‘Nutz Too’ again showcased Mick Devonport’s inventive guitar playing and Dave Lloyd’s mellifluous voice. Housed in a risqué and controversial cover, ‘Nutz Too’ contains a number of intelligent

and well-constructed tracks. A solid record, then, and one that also gave Nutz the opportunity to make a memorable appearance on the BBC’s *The Old Grey Whistle Test* TV show.

WHAT BASSIST KEITH MULHOLLAND SAYS:

“Our agent was none other than Iron Maiden manager Rod Smallwood, working in one of his earliest jobs



in the music business. In fact, Rod expressed an interest in managing us back then. With Maiden, Rod showed just how much vision he had, and who knows what might have happened if we’d gone with him? When we toured with Queen we realised how vital it is for a band to have a plan and the foresight to carry it through. They were always destined to be giants. The same applies to Maiden. Someone like Rod

could have given us the focus to make a difference to our career.”

TRACKS TO CHECK OUT

There are some great hard rock nuggets here, including ‘Take It From Me’, ‘Cool Me Down’, ‘Sinner’, and the introspective ‘The Love You Lost’.

MORE BANG FOR YOUR BUCK

This Rock Candy release sees the album available for the first time ever on CD. It’s freshly remastered and contains a bonus track, a 12-page full-colour booklet, a 4,000 word essay by *Rock Candy Mag* editor at large Malcolm Dome, full band involvement with new interviews, enhanced artwork and previously unseen photos.

THE WORD FROM RC BOSS

DEREK OLIVER

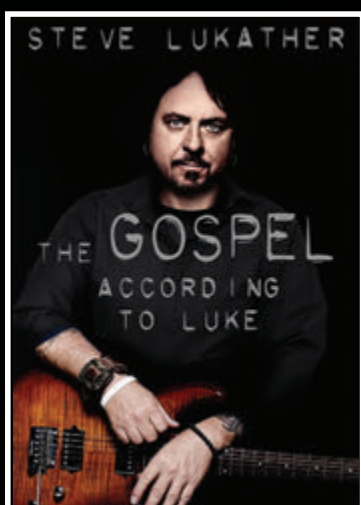
“I saw Nutz support Black Sabbath in the ‘70s and they struck me as one of the most engaging bands on the circuit. I hadn’t heard their records at that point, so made it my business to track them down. And what a pleasant surprise it was! Outside of the Purple, Quo and Nazareth axis, Nutz was one of the first British bands I’d heard in a long time that really hit the spot. It wasn’t all about rambunctious riffing. The great thing about Nutz’s albums is that they offer both loud and soft, all with that defined mid-’70s Britishness.”

Buy these albums and tons of other great releases at www.rockcandyrecords.com



STEVE LUKATHER *The Gospel According To Luke*

(CONSTABLE)



WHAT'S THE STORY?

Steve Lukather is universally recognised as a hugely talented guitarist. Not just because of his work with Toto, but also as an in-demand session man and guest musician who has played with some

of the biggest names in music history. Here he tells his incident-fuelled story with a large dose of self-deprecation and humour, together with a refreshing amount of honesty.

WHAT STEVE SAYS

"I had the old 'billion-to-one chance' speech from my dad and school teachers telling me that I was a bum and would never amount to anything ringing in my head. By the grace of God, most of the dreams that I had growing up got to become my reality."

BEST BITS

The tales that stand out in this book are not those about the mechanics of being in the studio recording iconic albums, of which there are many. Nor the anecdotes about being totally wasted. They're not the ones that stick in the mind either. Rather, it's the smaller incidents that make the most impression. You genuinely feel sorry for Lukather when he tells how Frank Zappa humiliated him during an audition. You raise an eyebrow as he claims to have inadvertently inspired

an idea that David Lynch used in *Twin Peaks*. And he leaves you emotionally drained when he confesses to how much he struggled to come to terms with the death of Toto drummer Jeff Porcaro.

DOES IT HIT THE SPOT?

Definitely. Of course there's an inordinate amount of name-dropping, but despite Steve's showbiz mateyness you still end up with a revealing portrait of a great character who appears genuinely amazed to have been so successful for so long. Lukather doesn't avoid examining his own battle with booze and drugs, but doesn't labour the point either. And you'll laugh out loud when he admits to being so unimpressed with Toto's worldwide smash 'Africa' when it was first recorded that he told keyboardist and vocalist David Paich that he'd walk naked down Hollywood Boulevard if it was a hit. There's a great story about Miles Davis and a stuffed dog, too, but we'll leave you to read the book to find out more about that one...

Malcolm Dome

VARIOUS ARTISTS *Inside Metal – The Rise Of LA Thrash Metal*

(WIENERWORLD)



WHAT'S THE STORY?

That's a good question, actually, as I always assumed that thrash metal started 383 miles north of LA, in San Francisco. Sure, Metallica may have formed and started out in Smog Angeles, but the minute the band realised

that glam and cock rock ruled LA in the early 1980s they sensibly upped sticks and relocated to the Bay Area to join the likes of Death Angel, Exodus, Testament and Trauma. Maybe the makers of this DVD should have thought it through better and called it *The Rise of California Thrash Metal*.

WHAT THE BANDS SAY

Unsurprisingly, Lars Ulrich has a lot to say, and he's interesting when he talks Slayer. "I remember we played with them at the Woodstock Club in Orange County," he says. "And they played 'Highway Star' and some Judas Priest stuff. They all had make up on, but very unlike anything you'd see down in Hollywood!" Elsewhere Armored Saint's John Bush wonders why he's being asked about thrash? He simply says, "We created our own style and stuck to that!"

HIGHLIGHTS

There are interviews with a number of people who weren't part of the LA thrash scene, including Frank Bello of Anthrax and John Gallagher of Raven, which suggests the makers might have had a hard time getting hold of enough people who were actually there. So for me, the highlight on this one hour 27 minute DVD is Megadeth bassist David Ellefson

outrageously saying, "GLAM stood for Gay Los Angeles Metal! A lot of us were embarrassed by it. We had to fight the good fight against what LA stood for!"

ANY EXTRAS?

Nope, this is a barren, extra-less wasteland!

DOES IT HIT THE SPOT?

Sadly, *Inside Metal – The Rise of LA Thrash Metal* is a bit of a shambles. The Q&A format used here soon becomes tiresome and repetitive. It would have been far more interesting if the filmmakers had mixed things up a bit more and included some interviews with 1980s LA thrash fans and club owners of the day. There's also a distinct lack of good archive footage from the early 1980s to give this documentary the proverbial kick up the arse it clearly needs.

Xavier Russell





SAXON 'Saxon', 'Wheels Of Steel', 'Strong Arm Of The Law'

(BMG)



WHAT'S THE STORY?

Much of the music released during the New Wave Of British Heavy Metal era was of its time. Saxon's first three albums, however, are still hugely relevant. It's astonishing that these records were all released during a 16-month period between May '79 and September '80, at a time when the band were also touring heavily. All three releases are freshly available again, sold individually in two formats: CD and good old vinyl (coloured splatter/swirl, if you like that kind of thing). The CD versions come complete with 24-page booklets containing lyrics, rare photos and memorabilia.

WHAT VOCALIST BIFF SAYS

"At the time we owned it, didn't we? Us, Priest, Whitesnake, Motörhead, Maiden... It was either us or the New Romantics. It was really exciting, and more importantly the industry was excited. That movement we were part of launched *Kerrang!*"

ANY EXTRAS?

All three CDs offer a treasure trove of add-ons. The eponymous debut boasts 14 bonus songs; demos, BBC sessions and live versions. 'Wheels Of Steel' has demo rehearsals, a live B-side and tracks from Saxon's spot at the first Monsters Of Rock festival in 1980 - eight songs in all. And

'Strong Arm Of The Law' now comes with four tracks from a BBC session, Abbey Road mixes of 'To Hell And Back Again', '20,000 Ft' and 'Heavy Metal Thunder', and a song called 'Mandy', an interesting forerunner of 'Sixth Form Girls'.

HIGHLIGHTS

There are a couple of fillers on 'Saxon', but the band still made a strong statement with 'Stallions Of The Highway', 'Backs To The Wall' and 'Still Fit To Boogie'. 'Wheels Of Steel' and 'Strong Arm Of The Law', however, are pretty much flawless. Both albums highlight the Barnsley Big Teasers' ability to complement obvious rock anthems like 'Heavy Metal Thunder' and 'Motorcycle Man' with songs that have more lyrical substance, dealing with planes and trains, the assassination of a US president and a particularly moving story about a dying girlfriend (one of the band's most underrated cuts, titled 'Suzie Hold On'). You need to replace well-worn original versions? Now's definitely the time.

Dave Ling

FIST 'Back With A Vengeance'

(DISSONANCE)



WHAT'S THE STORY?

At the end of the 1970s South Shields natives Fist were seen as real rock contenders. They were leading

lights of the NEWWOBHM (that's the North East New Wave Of British Heavy Metal, for the uninitiated!), alongside Newcastle's Raven and Hartlepool's White Spirit. Debut single 'Name, Rank And Serial Number' got Fist a lot of attention when it was released by Newcastle indie label Neat in April 1980. The band even ended up on major label MCA for their first album, 'Turn The Hell On', that was issued at the end of the same year. Despite tour dates with some big names, such as Iron

Maiden, UFO and Judas Priest, the record didn't do well commercially, and Fist were summarily dropped by MCA.

Back home in the Neat stable once more, and with a revamped line-up, Fist returned with second album 'Back With A Vengeance' in 1982 and showed that there was still plenty of quality in the group's ranks.

WHAT LINER NOTE WRITER JOHN TUCKER SAYS

"Fist have been all but cast into obscurity. Which is a great shame, as in their all-too-short existence they not only recorded some great songs, but also pushed the boundaries of lyric writing at a time when heavy metal was not regarded as a particularly poetic art form."

ANY EXTRAS?

There is a whole raft of them. Everything Fist ever released through Neat is here, together with alternative versions of

songs from both albums, some previously unreleased numbers and even tracks from a demo that they recorded at the beginning of their career in 1978 under the name of Axe. It all gives a widescreen picture of the band's career and why they were so lauded for a short time in the early '80s.

HIGHLIGHTS

The Axe demos prove this band had tons of aggression and energy in the tank, with 'S.S. Giro' and 'Collision Course' particularly memorable bangers. Much of the more refined material from the original version of 'Back With A Vengeance' still cuts through with style and class. But Fist were always at their very best when delivering full-on headbanging riffage, and so the bonus material actually better represents what made them so damn good.

Malcolm Dome

Bad Company photographed in Tokyo, March 1975
 L-R: Boz Burrell (bass), Paul Rodgers (vocals, guitar, piano),
 Simon Kirke (drums), Mick Ralphs (guitar)



LITTLE CAESAR FRONTMAN RON YOUNG OFFERS YOU A PERSONAL INSIGHT INTO THE GENIUS OF BAD COMPANY

“THE FIRST BAD COMPANY album came out when I was 14, at a time when music was still culturally and socially relevant. The '70s were my prime years for discovering bands and I first saw Bad Co. on a US TV show, *Don Kirshner's Rock Concert*, back in 1974. I used to wait every week to watch that TV show. It was the YouTube of my youth!

“BAD COMPANY sat somewhere between the musical tastes of my brother and sister. He was primarily into blues and heavy rock. She was an R'n'B and soul purist. I flipped out when I first heard Paul Rodgers sing. I thought, 'How can a white guy sing like that?' I wanted to sing like him and so my mission was to figure out how to do it. I don't recall where or when I bought the first Bad Company album, but the whole record was just great from start to finish. I played that debut LP so much that I had to get a second copy when 'Straight Shooter' was released in 1975 because the first one had got so badly scratched! I'd been handed down a great hi-fi system from my grandfather and I would always be in such a rush to put a new album on after the last one had finished that I'd just throw the one I'd just listened to on the floor.

“MY BROTHER and sister turned me on to so many records, and I had an insatiable appetite to discover new music. Through them I found out about Free and the original Mott The Hoople version of 'Ready For Love' that [Bad Company guitarist] Mick Ralphs had recorded with them. I also expanded my understanding of the roots of

all of this – right back to Muddy Waters and Howlin' Wolf.

“ALTHOUGH I saw the likes of Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath in 1976, and would go on to attend many other shows during my teenage years, I never did get to see Bad Company back then. I finally got to see them live in concert for the first time a few years ago when they played at the Orange County Fair in California. Paul Rodgers was so fucking good; I wondered whether it was even human to sing as well as he did at his age! That show really took me back to when I was 14 and 15 years old. The hairs rose up on my arms! I had great seats and I was listening to him like a fan, not someone who works in the music business. I bumped into my friend Junkman, who used to be a DJ at [US rock radio station] KNAC and was a huge supporter of Little Caesar back in the day. He was acting like a 15-year-old kid – just like me!

“PAUL RODGERS was a huge influence on me as a singer. To have that much soul and subtlety, to have that range and that much command of his voice, with just the right amount of grit... he was absolutely the benchmark.

“I'VE ONLY ever met Paul the once, and sadly I came over like a drooling idiot. Little Caesar were touring in Texas in the early '90s and I saw Paul in the lobby of our hotel in Houston. I had so much I wanted to talk to him about, but couldn't even string a simple sentence together. Of course, he had no idea who I was. He just patted me on the shoulder, said 'I understand', and walked off!"

THE ALL-TIME CLASSIC – ‘BAD COMPANY’ (1974)



“It’s so hard to choose between the first album and ‘Straight Shooter’, but at a push I think I’ll go for the debut. The songs are all there... ‘Ready For Love’, ‘Rock Steady’ – such a sexy groove, ‘Seagull’... The whole record is just great, with a solid, honest production that never leaves you wanting.

“People often ask how Little Caesar – a band of guys who look like a bunch of

tattooed, axe-murdering bikers – can play such nice songs. Well, it’s a bit like how Bad Company did it, really. People can overthink this stuff.

“There are no rules as to how you should sound. As a musician I’ve never considered myself to be a groundbreaker. Instead I pay homage to the bands I was influenced by, like Bad Company.”

THE ONE FOR CONNOISSEURS – ‘STRAIGHT SHOOTER’ (1975)



“When you dropped the needle on the first two Bad Company records they took you on a musical journey. Back in the ’70s bands would bring out records in quick succession. Just when you might have been getting a bit numb to the first, then the next one would appear. Second albums from great bands you’ve already discovered thanks to the first are a bit like sex after years of marriage. You’re well acquainted with

what your girl looks like naked, so you get straight to it. I was a 15 year old with raging hormones back then! Today a kid can just go find some porn on the Internet, but in the absence of getting my hands on a copy of *Playboy* music was the conduit. The songs on ‘Straight Shooter’ have everything that makes Bad Company great. ‘Feel Like Makin’ Love’ sounded so huge and powerful at the time.”

THE ONE TO AVOID – ‘THE FOREIGNER PERIOD’ (1986-1993)



“I can’t just pick one album here. I’ll go for all of the albums Bad Company made during that ‘Foreigner’ period with Brian Howe on vocals [‘Fame And Fortune’, ‘Dangerous Age’, ‘Holy Water’, ‘Here Comes Trouble’ and the live set ‘What You Hear Is What You Get: The Best Of Bad Company’].

“I couldn’t listen to any of those albums for long enough to find out what I most disliked about them individually. But to me,

these are just not Bad Company songs. They have zero connection to the band I know and love.

“At this point the group went somewhere else and became all generic. As far as I’m concerned the only band that has ever replaced the vocalist and still kept the essence of what made them great to begin is AC/DC when Brian Johnson joined after the death of Bon Scott.”

THE BEST BOOTLEG – “THERE ISN’T ONE!”



“I’ve never got the bootleg thing. Unless somebody tells me I *really* have to check something out, then I’ve always pretty much avoided them.

“To be honest, I’m not particularly a fan of live albums either, because they’re usually sweetened up in the studio. By the way, the Little Caesar live album [2016’s ‘Brutally Honest – Live From Holland’] wasn’t sweetened up! For me, live concerts are

things that you have to be present for. It’s a personal connection between the artist and the audience. As a fan, you’re there giving energy back to the band to inspire them to greater heights. It’s a bit like watching a video of two people having sex. It feels a bit creepy because you’re not there! If I’m listening to a live album I feel like I’m eavesdropping on a conversation. Oh, and I completely skip the drum solo!”

Bad Company bringing it live in '75



THE BEST FILM OR VIDEO – *IN CONCERT: MERCHANTS OF COOL* (2002)



“This is a DVD of a couple of live shows the band filmed at the Paramount Theater in Denver and at The Grove in Anaheim back in 2002. Despite the fact that this was shot almost 30 years after Bad Company’s prime ’70s period, the DVD made me disengage from my cynicism for seeing bands of my youth in their modern state to avoid tarnishing my memories. It actually encouraged me to get off my ass and go see Bad Company.

“I was so motivated to check the band out once I found out they were going to be in the area that I didn’t even bother trying to blag my way in. I just rang Ticketmaster up straight away and bought tickets. That’s rare, because when you’re a musician I think the fan in you gets pushed out. It almost feels like you’re taking your work home with you. But I wasn’t disappointed when I went to the gig. Paul could still sing like a son of a bitch.”

THE RARITY – ‘STORIES TOLD & UNTOLD’ (1996)



“Although Paul Rodgers could never be replaced as the singer of Bad Company, I thought Robert Hart did a pretty decent job as a Rodgers imitator when he fronted the band between 1994 and 1998. So although I shouldn’t really like any Bad Company album that doesn’t have Paul singing on

it, ‘Stories Told & Untold’ [a combination of new songs and re-workings of Bad Company classics like ‘Can’t Get Enough’, ‘Silver, Blue And Gold’, ‘Shooting Star’ and ‘Simple Man’] is a rarity for me, as I didn’t feel the songs were that bad. It had a bit of a decent tribute band feel to it!”



RON YOUNG'S BAD COMPANY PLAYLIST

'ROCK STEADY' (from 'Bad Company', 1974)

"This has such a groove and the riffs are so great. The way guitarist Mick Ralphs spreads the jam over the top of this number is exceptional!"

'DEAL WITH THE PREACHER' (from 'Straight Shooter', 1975)

"A really funky song. It sounds to me like it was cut at the end of the sessions as I detect a little weakness in Paul's voice that's very akin to when Paul McCartney gets to the top of his range. But that only adds to the song's authenticity."

'SILVER, BLUE & GOLD' (from 'Run With The Pack', 1976)

"This is quintessential Paul Rodgers. His delivery is spot on and the whole song showcases really great writing too."

'YOUNG BLOOD' (from 'Run With The Pack', 1976)

"A very sexy song, with a really cocky delivery from Paul that totally suits the emotional register of the tune."

'MAN NEEDS WOMAN' (from 'Burnin' Sky', 1977)

"It's hard to describe just how great the lyrical content and the authenticity of Paul's delivery here are. Cock rock, pure and simple."

THREE TO AVOID

'LIVE FOR THE MUSIC' (from 'Run With The Pack', 1976)

"Although I'd normally go for something released during the Brian Howe period as a song to avoid, this is my least favourite track on 'Run With The Pack'. I always skip it, because it doesn't speak to me in the same way other songs on that record do."

'NUTHIN' ON THE TV' (from 'Rough Diamonds', 1982)

"There was something about the 'Rough Diamonds' album that made me feel the band had lost their way. It sounded like they'd just grabbed a bunch of songs they'd written in a week and recorded them. There were no hooks and there was no emotion. The whole thing felt a little unfocused."

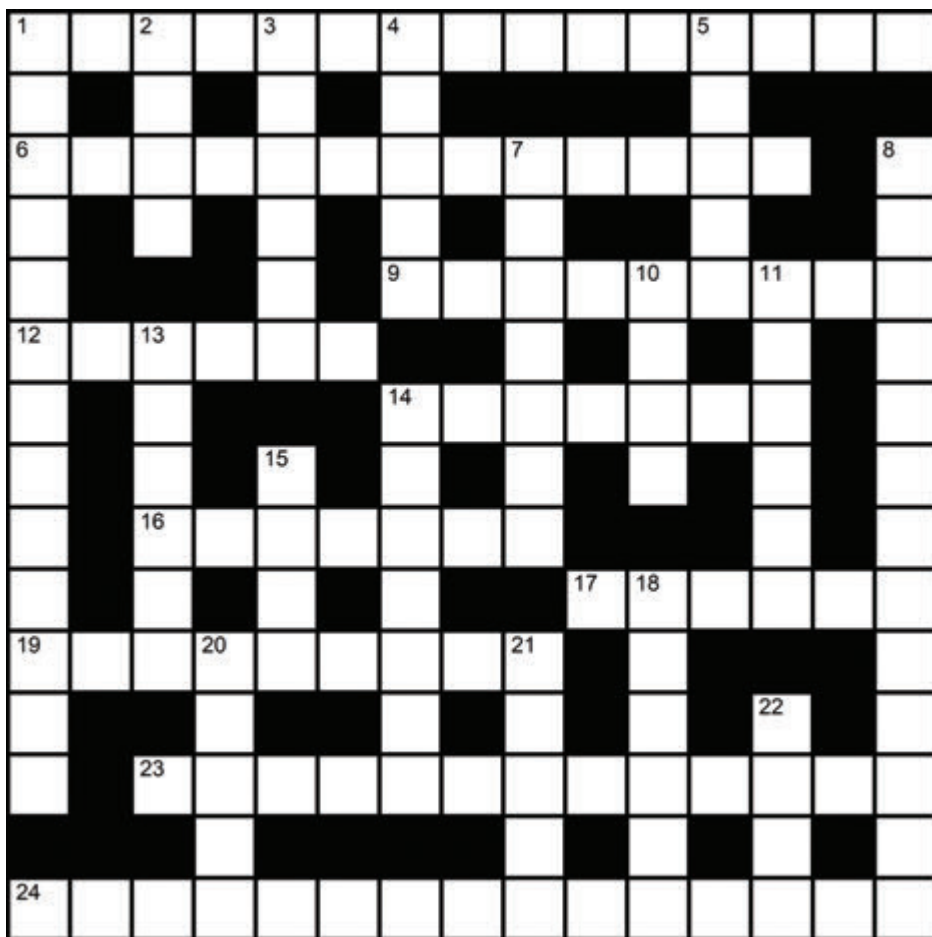
'ELECTRICLAND' (from 'Rough Diamonds', 1982)

"Although this was both the first single from 'Rough Diamonds' and a hit on *Billboard's* US Mainstream Rock chart [where it reached number 2], the song really didn't have anything about it that made you want to go 'Yeah!'"



Paul Rodgers performs at the Great British Music Festival, Olympia, London, 2 January 1976

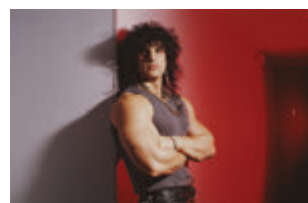
Can you beat it? Will it beat you? Seconds out, it's time for the famous *Rock Candy* crossword!



6 ACROSS: ACE FREHLEY



23 ACROSS: SAMMY HAGAR



4 DOWN: KANE ROBERTS



18 DOWN: ACCEPT

ACROSS

- 1 The first and last words in the title of a 1985 Saxon album produced by Simon Hanhart. (9,6)
- 6 Ace Frehley has difficulty with his motor functions on his fourth studio album, released in 1989. (7,6)
- 9 These guys must have eaten at 'Ma Kelly's Greasy Spoon' at some point. (6,3)
- 12 Last word in the title of the opening track on Metallica's 'Kill 'Em All'. (6)
- 14 Latino rockers who released the classic 'Abraxas' album back in 1970. (7)
- 16 Bizarrely, this wasn't the last track on from Judas Priest's 1976 album 'Sad Wings Of Destiny'. (7)
- 17 Legs Diamond told the tale of a 'Dance Hall -----'. (6)
- 19 'Sex Is -----' suggested obscure rockers A'la Rock on their 1990 release titled 'Indulge'. (9)
- 23 The title of The Red Rocker's 1979 album. (6,7)
- 24 This track from Yngwie Malmsteen's 'Unleash The Fury' opus had serious discipline in mind. (8,3,4)

DOWN

- 1 Manowar saddled up for their second studio album in 1983. (4,5,4)
- 2 Californian '80s Christian metallers, ---- Cross. (4)
- 3 A suitably metal first name for Zodiac Mindwarp's guitarist when he's onstage. He came into the world as the rather more prosaic Geoff Bird. (6)
- 4 'A Strong Arm ----- A Stronger Heart', reckoned

- muscle-bound guitarist Kane Roberts on his 1987 eponymous LP. (5)
- 5 Surname of notably feline painted rock drummer. (5)
- 7 First name of a Canadian solo artist who had a thing for black velvet. (7)
- 8 1988 Survivor album. Maybe they should have opened the windows... (3,3,2,5)
- 10 The Grateful Dead's 1970 track 'Operator' said: "It's floodin' down in Texas/Poles are out in ----." (4)
- 11 Surname of solo glam rocker who insisted 'Your Mamma Won't Like Me' back in 1975. (6)
- 13 Kate Bush and Peter Gabriel told us not to do this back in 1986. (4,2)
- 14 The first single taken from Cinderella's 1986 debut album, 'Night Songs'. (5,2)
- 15 Motörhead punched with an iron one. (4)
- 18 The bridge of Accept's song 'Breaker' from 1981 features this memorable rhyming couplet - "----- brains/ Bicycle chains." (6)
- 20 Proggy types IQ released their first album 'Tales From The Lush -----' in 1983. (5)
- 21 We can't resist this song written by Chas Sandford from John Waite's 1982 debut solo album, 'Ignition'. It's called '-----ation'. (5)
- 22 The Wildhearts were '----ing For Luckies' in 1996. (4)

For answers go to our website www.rockcandymag.com

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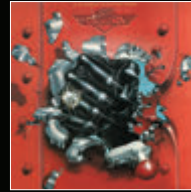
NUTZ - 'S/T'



MORNINGSTAR - 'S/T'



LEGS DIAMOND - 'S/T'



LEGS DIAMOND
'A DIAMOND IS A HARD ROCK'



LEGS DIAMOND - 'FIRE POWER'



NUTZ - 'NUTZ TOO...?'



MORNINGSTAR - 'VENUS'



SHADOW KING - 'S/T'



D'MOLLS - 'S/T'



MALICE - 'LICENSE TO KILL'



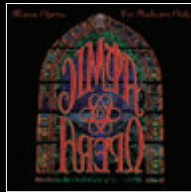
RIOT - 'FIRE DOWN UNDER'



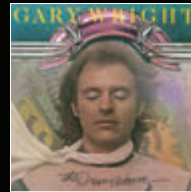
SHAW BLADES - 'HALLUCINATION'



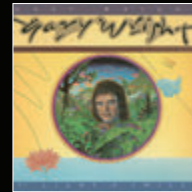
VALENTINE - 'S/T'



ATOMIC OPERA
'FOR MADMEN ONLY'



GARY WRIGHT
'THE DREAMWEAVER'



GARY WRIGHT
'THE LIGHT OF SMILES'



ST. PARADISE - 'S/T'



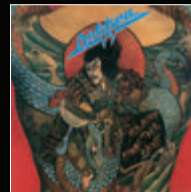
STONE FURY - 'BURNS LIKE A STAR'



ALANNAH MYLES - 'S/T'



JETBOY - 'FEEL THE SHAKE'



DOKKEN - 'BEAST FROM THE EAST'



BAD ENGLISH - 'S/T'



MICHAEL WHITE - 'S/T'



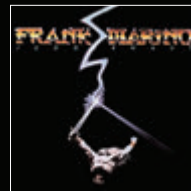
MAHOGANY RUSH - 'LIVE'



FRANK MARINO - 'WHAT'S NEXT'



FRANK MARINO
'THE POWER OF ROCK AND ROLL'



FRANK MARINO - 'JUGGERNAUT'



CREED - 'S/T'



SALTY DOG
'EVERY DOG HAS IT'S DAY'



LILLIAN AXE - 'S/T'



LILLIAN AXE - 'LOVE + WAR'



WARRANT - 'CHERRY PIE'



WARRANT - 'DIRTY ROTTEN
FILTHY STINKING RICH'



MOTHER'S FINEST - 'IRON AGE'



SURVIVOR
'EYE OF THE TIGER'

COMING SOON



NUTZ - 'HARD NUTZ'



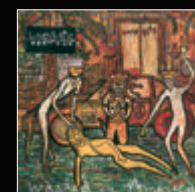
NUTZ - 'LIVE CUTZ'



SHELTER - 'FIRST STOP'



HOTEL - 'HALF MOON SILVER'



LOVE/HATE - 'WASTED IN AMERICA'

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