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MEDDLE

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"The whole idea with
Meddle was that it had to
be a group effort."
- Nick Mason

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THE RIPPLE EFFECT

Terrace chants, Steve Marriot's dog and Hendrix's guitar pedal.

The lesser undulations in **Pink Floyd's** 1971 textural opus built a cultural tsunami.

Tommy Udo meets **Nick Mason** to explore

Meddle, the unsung masterpiece that changed Floyd and prog rock forever. Plus, on the eve of their giant back catalogue revamp, Mason reviews every Floyd album and Floyd right-hand Andy Jackson guides *Prog* through the workings of the remastered haul.

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That sound, like a sonar
signal.

PING.
Or a radio signal from deep
space.

PING.
Or a heart monitor, measuring
out a life.

PING.
Incrementally.



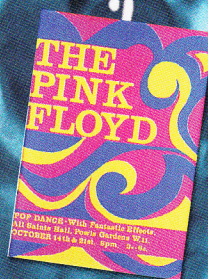
Swell season: Roger Waters and Dave Gilmour in the run-up to *Meddle*, 1971.

The 'ping' on the opening and close of *Echoes* was, as we all know, produced by Richard Wright playing a single note on a concert grand piano and feeding the signal through a Leslie rotating speaker. It's a perfect opening, as iconic in its way as Elvis belting out 'Well since my baby left me...' at the start of *Heartbreak Hotel*, or death knocking at the door at the start of Beethoven's *Fifth*.

Echoes is the centrepiece of *Meddle*, an album that is now widely regarded as the one where Pink Floyd got everything just right. In *Meddle* you can almost hear *The Dark Side Of The Moon* and *Wish You Were Here* and even *The Wall*. You couldn't necessarily say the same about *Atom Heart Mother* or *Ummagumma*. Those albums, brilliant as they are in their way, are still the sound of the Floyd finding their way, trying to escape from the shadow of their brilliant erratic insufferable genius ex-front-man Syd Barrett. They had come a long way from the

hallucinogenic whimsy of *Piper At The Gates Of Dawn* and its less satisfactory follow-up *A Saucerful Of Secrets*. The psychedelic chaos was left behind and a new Pink Floyd emerged. They were still adventurous and experimental, but they were also more structured and stable. By the end of the 60s they had developed into a formidable live touring band. *Meddle*, although it was an album that revelled in its use of the recording studio, was the first album to capture some of the potency and excitement of the Floyd live experience. After *Meddle*, nobody called them 'the' Pink Floyd. The kids who bought *Meddle* in 1971 didn't ask 'Where's Syd?', they increasingly asked 'Who's Syd?'.

It's now generally agreed by Floyd aficionados that *Meddle* was the point where Pink Floyd as we know them really began. There's the fizzing energetic opener *One Of These Days* which is the blueprint for half of the songs on *...Dark Side Of The Moon*. The soundtrack music that they had recorded was there to serve a function: it was atmospheric. But they weren't



Former glories: A poster from Syd Barrett's madcap incarnation.

great songs. *One Of These Days* is Pink Floyd 2.0. While in their early incarnation they were a pop band as well as a psychedelic free-form freak-out band, Arnold Layne and *See Emily Play* both being hit singles, the subsequent years saw them completely lose interest in the singles chart. In that way they were going with the flow of their contemporaries, becoming an albums focussed band. But *One Of These Days*, a great song (despite not having words other than a spoken phrase) proved that they were still able to turn out something approachable when they felt like it.

One Of These Days is still one of the ➡



Piper At The Gates Of Dawn
EMI, 1967
Psychedelic classic dominated by Syd Barrett



"In terms of spending time in the studio it was great, the songs were very good, most of them were rather more perfect versions of what we were playing live. In fact they all were. They were rehearsed and when they came out in the studio they sounded much better than the way we heard them live. The only song that was cut down was *Interstellar Overdrive*. It was arranged so that it would fit on the record."

Highest position in chart: 6
Outstanding songs: *Interstellar Overdrive*

8/10

best Floyd songs ever recorded. According to David Gilmour in a recent interview, it's one of the songs where their work was at its most collaborative.

"We'd done the individual solo tracks and decided that we worked better together," says Nick Mason when *Prog* meets him in his North London offices, a haven of Floydian ephemera and reminders that, aside from the occasional musical flirtation these days, he is today more preoccupied with his passion for automobiles. "There wasn't any great plan when we did *Meddle* other than it would be a group effort. We weren't under any pressure from EMI to release anything. There was no concept. I don't think we had anything already written when we went into studio. After *Ummagumma* and *Atom Heart Mother*, we thought I suppose that we should maybe make a group album, something that was maybe a reflection of where we were going live."

"It's got that sound, hasn't it?" says Steven Wilson of Porcupine Tree, a long-time champion of *Meddle* as the great Floyd album. "It's got that 1971 sound. It's so warm and organic and so golden and there's something about that. Things were just coming out of psychedelic music and the influence was still there, not completely gone."

It's an album that they started without any overarching ideas as to what it was going to be. Although *Echoes* is the centrepiece of *Meddle*, there are other songs like *One Of These Days* and *Fearless* that are just as important.

"They were just back from the US. I remember Dave Gilmour had just got the same wah-wah peddle that Jimi Hendrix used. The seagull sound you hear on *Echoes* is that, the Cry Baby. Hendrix died in the middle of recording which I think affected them a bit," recalls engineer John Leckie, then recruited as a tape operator but eventually credited as engineer on *Meddle*.

They had also worked in Italy on the soundtrack for Michelangelo Antonioni's counter-culture film *Zabriskie Point*. The band arrived tired and jet-lagged and were booked in the studio from midnight until six. This



Soundtrack to the film *More*

EMI, 1969

The first post-Syd album, also their first full-length soundtrack album and the first Pink Floyd album to be produced by the band without assistance from Norman Smith



"This worked really well with the film and was our first experience of working with Barbet [Schoeder, Franco-Swiss film director]. We went into the screening with stopwatches then we'd go into the studio and record something that was flexible enough to fit on the film. Musically, not very high marks, because it's not quite the same as writing songs. It's different. It was all a bit rushed."

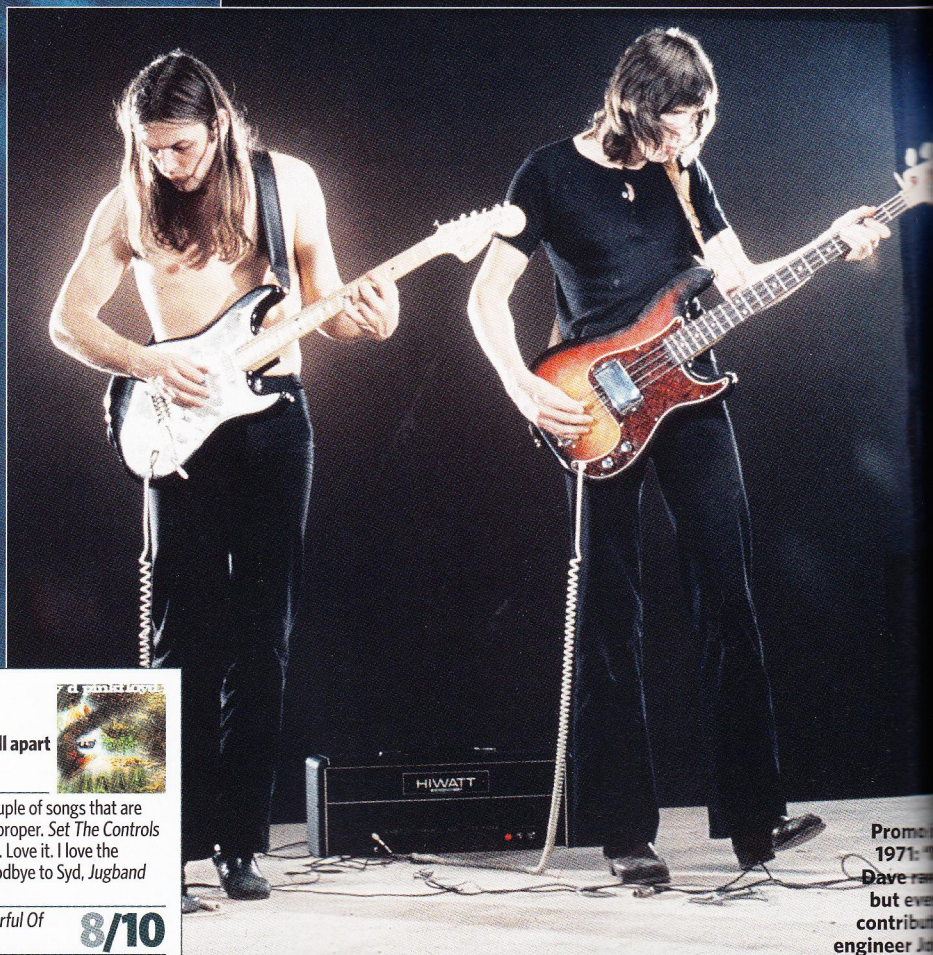
Highest position in chart: 6

Outstanding songs: *The Nile Song*, *Cirrus Minor*

7/10

"IT WAS A GROUP ALBUM REFLECTING WHERE WE WERE GOING LIVE."

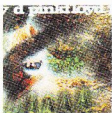
NICK MASON



A Saucerful Of Secrets

EMI, 1968

The difficult follow-up recorded as Syd fell apart and grew away from the band



(Laughs) "I'm really fond of that record. I think there are a couple of songs that are lacking. You can hear the beginnings of Roger's songwriting proper. *Set The Controls For The Heart Of The Sun* is a brilliant song, great to play live. Love it. I love the atmosphere of it. The whole thing. There's that really sad goodbye to Syd, *Jugband Blues*. I really like it."

Highest position in chart: 9 Outstanding songs: *A Saucerful Of Secrets*, *Set The Controls For The Heart Of The Sun*

8/10

Promo 1971: "Dave ran but even contributed engineer John Leckie"



Smokin'!: Echoes aimed to capture what Floyd had achieved live.

was to prove a frustrating experience as the Italian director rejected a lot of the music that they recorded.

"I don't think he exactly hated it," says Nick Mason, "but it's difficult when someone else has the music in mind for a particular sequence of film. Antonioni wanted total control, and the only way he could have control of the music was to be able to select from lots of different versions. Whereas before when we'd worked with Barbet Schroeder [director of *More* and *La Vallée*, both films with Floyd soundtracks] he would give us the brief, we'd go off and do it and generally he said 'yes, fine' and we moved on. It [*Zabriskie Point*] was a bloody hard slog."

Much of *Meddle*'s success is down to the fact that their label, EMI, not really having much of a clue about Pink

Floyd other than that they sold lots of records, pretty much left them to their own devices.

"We had just signed a new contract that gave us a slightly reduced royalty in return for unlimited studio time," Nick Mason tells us. "I think only The Beatles had a similar deal at the time."

Pink Floyd were one of the first bands to be allowed to produce their

own albums. Peter Brown, who had worked with them on *Atom Heart Mother*, and John Leckie recorded and engineered the bulk of the recording work at London's Abbey Road studio.

"They were left alone," recalls John Leckie. "Colin Miles, who was the only person at EMI who could 'relate to Pink Floyd', used to turn up occasionally with a couple of bottles of wine. Maybe some spliff. They worked hard, though, it wasn't a party."

Floyd were an established band. They weren't at the stage where they could afford a garage full of sports cars, but they were making a fairly good living from touring and recording. They were starting to have success in the US and had just returned from a US tour when they started work on *Meddle*.

Leckie remembers that the atmosphere in the studio was good: "They weren't really different to any other band. It was quite energetic, everyone had a say. Nick came up with a lot of the crazier ideas. It's his voice through a ring modulator that you hear on *One Of These Days* saying 'One of these days I'm going to cut you into little pieces'. Rick contributed a lot. Roger and Dave were running the show but everybody was contributing."

Starting in early 1971, the band recorded at Abbey Road, sometimes bringing in ideas that they had worked on at home. They continued to gig, setting up the gear in the studio then going off at night to play headline shows, albeit at colleges and polytechnics.

"We were trying out a lot of stuff live at that time," says Mason.

Echoes, at that time a series of unconnected parts labelled *Nothing* – there was *Nothing Part One* through to *Part 36* – which eventually took shape when they debuted it live at a gig in Norwich in April. It was still listed under its working title *Return of the Son Of Nothing*.

The band were now pushing the possibilities of the studio.

Mason remembers: "Abbey Road had just invested in an eight-track, but were ready to go 16-track. So we went to Air studios, which was great. A very different atmosphere to EMI. EMI was very established, had the big canteen... there was already a lot of change, though. The Beatles did that a few years before. But Air was state-of-the-art."

It was the possibilities offered by 16-track that changed everything.

"Yes, by definition, though unfortunately it made the process of recording slower. There were almost too many options," says Mason. "Mixing took a hell of a lot longer." ➔



Ummagumma

Harvest, 1969

A brilliant live album and an interesting though flawed studio record with each member of the band recording a solo slot. For all its faults, it is still essential to listen to 'get' where Pink Floyd were going. It also has quite possibly the best Pink Floyd album sleeve.

"I like the snapshot of the live playing. It shows that we work better in general as a band than as individuals."

Highest position in chart: 5 Outstanding songs: *Interstellar Overdrive* (live), *Careful With That Axe Eugene* (live)



6/10



Atom Heart Mother

Harvest, 1970

The *AHM* suite was conceived as a concert piece with an orchestra and a choir. Arguably it's more successful than similar attempts to fuse rock with classical music such as Deep Purple's *Concerto For Group And Orchestra*. It's an ambitious work that hasn't really stood the test of time particularly well. Originally the band planned to call it *The Amazing Pudding*.



"It was a bit of a cul de sac for the band. Great credit to [composer] Ron Geesin and [choirmaster and conductor] John Alldis, who got the orchestra to do the right thing. Probably the live versions were better, because Roger and I did the backing track on our own for 20 minutes because nobody wanted to cut two inch tape. It meant that the whole backing track was a little erratic. Obviously if we were doing it today it would be a hell of a lot better."

Highest position in chart: 1
Outstanding songs: *Atom Heart Mother*

6/10

They also recorded at a third studio, Morgan in Willesden.

"Morgan was one of the first British studios to go 24-track, though not at that time," says John Leckie. "What's interesting is that years later I recorded some of the first Stone Roses tracks there, when it was called Battery."

Although they had worked on long form pieces before *Echoes* was a bit of a departure. Songs like *Interstellar Overdrive* and *A Saucerful Of Secrets* came from the Syd era when the band were more improvisational. These were essentially extended jams. *Atom Heart Mother* was conceived as a sort of quasi-classical piece. *Echoes* was different: it incorporated several ideas, different passages and moods, but it was a structured and planned song. Its creation involved trial and error. A lot was thrown out. But it was a song with a final, almost definitive form. The version you hear in the film *Live At Pompeii* or the BBC sessions isn't markedly different to the version on *Meddle*. *Interstellar Overdrive*, particularly in the Syd era, was never the same twice.

"*Echoes*, for me, is the quintessential, ultimate epic. It just has a perfect shape. They hadn't tried to cram too many ideas into it, so it still has a lot of room for building up and breaking down and improvisation, and it has that lovely song sequence that book-ends the piece," says Steven Wilson.

"I'm sure that one of the reasons that they did *Echoes* was because of Roy Harper," says John Leckie. "They shared management with Roy and he was a big mate of the band. He was always around and he was working on *Stormcock*. I'd worked with Roy and I think played a big part in my being hired for *Meddle*."

Stormcock is a ground-breaking 1971 album by Harper that includes four epic acoustic songs, all between seven and 13 minutes long.

"I don't think it was any kind of one-upmanship with Roy," says Mason. "Roy was extraordinary. I loved the fact that he could do a song differently

"FLOYD, ELP AND YES WERE 24-TRACK BANDS IN AN EIGHT-TRACK WORLD."

NICK MASON



In the studio: Meddle gave Nick his first taste for producing.

every time. He'd record with a band but the acoustic version would be just as good. And he never used them. God knows where those recordings are."

Harper, of course, would later join the band on *Wish You Were Here* to sing *Have A Cigar*.

"We quickly worked out that doing a song like *Echoes* was comparatively easy because of the repetition. Listening to it now it sounds a bit overlong – it could be chopped out of it which would make a better piece," says Nick.

Ah, and maybe Leonardo Da Vinci thought in later life that the *Mona Lisa* would have been improved by wiping the smile off of her face.

The album also includes three absolutely perfect short songs: *One Of These Days*, *Pillow Of Winds* and *Fearless*. *Fearless* includes the Kop Choir singing *You'll Never Walk Alone*. Naturally John Peel flogged it to death on the radio.



Meddle

Harvest, 1971

The album where the Floyd became the Floyd we know.



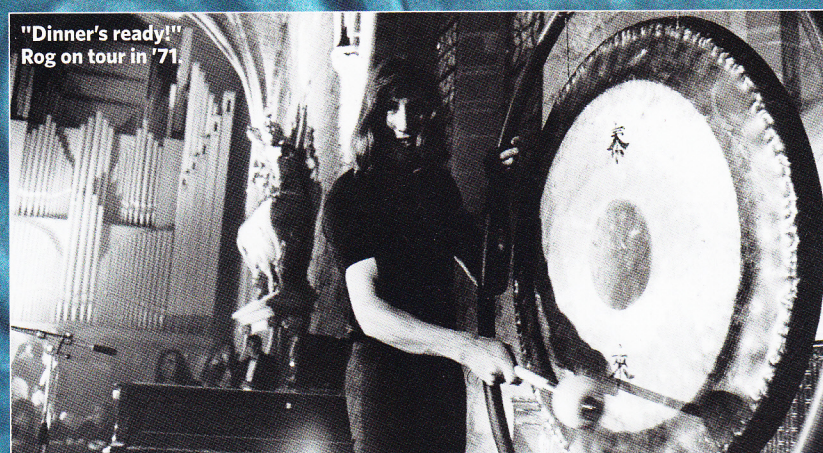
"This was the template. It was where we were going. There was a certain jump from *Ummagumma*."

Highest position in chart: 3
Outstanding songs: *One Of These Days*, *Echoes*

7/10



Coked up to the eyeballs: Hamburg, 1972.



"Dinner's ready!" Rog on tour in '71.

"Fearless is still the one that everyone in Liverpool plays," says Leckie. "Not just for the football chant, but those churning acoustic guitars. That's the one that The Las and all those bands tell you is the classic Pink Floyd track."

Roger Waters, a lifelong Arsenal supporter, played the acoustic guitar parts. He used an open tuning, which gives the song its ringing quality. It's a sound that does indeed surface in the work of bands like Echo & The Bunnymen and The Teardrop Explodes. It's also a song that has been covered by a wide range of artists, from ex-Marillion frontman Fish to The Black Crowes by way of Midwestern indie 'slowcore' band Low.

A *Pillow Of Winds*, inspired, according to Nick, by the game of Mahjong that he and Gilmour and their respective partners used to play while on holiday together, is a fairly straight love song. It's one of the pastoral pieces that they had toyed with before in songs like *Julia Dream* and *Grantchester Meadows*.

"There's a couple of songs at the end of side one that maybe you could say are filler, but certainly those three songs: *One Of These Days*, *A Pillow Of Winds* and *Fearless*, are as good as anything they recorded. I think *Fearless* does always get overshadowed because



Obscured By Clouds

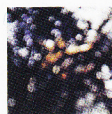
Harvest 1972

Another soundtrack, for a film called *La Vallée*, directed by Barbet Shroeder, who had made *More* a few years before. Notable in being the first Floyd album to use the VCS3 synthesiser which would be employed to great effect on *The Dark Side Of The Moon*.

"Very similar to *More* in that it was short, done quickly, some nice moments but not given the same attention to detail."

Highest position in chart: 6

Outstanding songs: *Free Four*, *The Gold It's In The...*



6/10

of the two pieces that they played a lot live," says Steven Wilson.

San Tropez was not composed collaboratively. It was written by Roger Waters and was brought to the studio in a completed form.

The notorious *Seamus* – a great sense of humour test – was named after ex-Small Faces then-Humble Pie frontman Steve Marriott's dog.

"Steve would always be around the studio. They noticed that the dog would start barking in tune with the music," says Leckie.

The dog that appears in the film version in *Live At Pompeii* is in fact

'KIDS WHO BOUGHT MEDDLE DIDN'T SAY 'WHERE'S SYD? BUT 'WHO'S SYD?'

another one, a female Russian Wolfhound named Nobs, which belonged to Madonna Bouglione (the daughter of circus director Joseph Bouglione) took a bit more coaxing for her performance than *Seamus* did.

Live At Pompeii, a good snapshot of where the band were in 1971, was one of the first films of this kind. It prefigures the rock video by filming a performance in an exotic location without an audience.

"Steve O'Rourke [Floyd's manager at the time] came to us and said 'there's this French based documentary maker wants to do a film'. The deal we did turned out to be very hard work and we never saw any money from it for a long time. On the other hand it turned out to be a very useful and I think a very good film. What Adrian [Maben, director] did, by doing it in Pompeii, it was a controlled environment as there was no audience, so we could cut, stop and reshoot. But the open air and the dust and everything else made it feel like a real live show. There was a bit of grit to it," says Nick.

Apparently some reels were lost.

"It was Dave and Roger from *One Of These Days*, which is why it's mostly me," he says.

Meddle was released in October



Dark Side Of The Moon

Harvest, 1973

A classic of its era, the classic Floyd album, the one that was their commercial and artistic breakthrough. If you grew up in the early 70s it sometimes seemed as if the government issued you with a copy on your 13th birthday. Never made number one, but was in the charts forever.

"Everything on *Dark Side...* was very tight and nothing overstayed its welcome. What more can I say about it that hasn't been said really."

Highest position in chart: 2
Outstanding songs: All of it

9/10

John Leckie:
Meddle's desk
manager.



1971 in the US and November in the UK. It was packaged in a sleeve that Hipgnosis partner Storm Thorgerson has said was his least favourite Pink Floyd sleeve: "I think *Meddle* is a much better album than its cover," he said. The cover was supposed to have been a close-up picture of a baboon's bum. The band told him that they wanted something to do with water, maybe an ear underwater. It certainly fit with the mood of the album in a way that somehow you don't feel that an ape's anus would have done.

Regardless of its packaging, in the UK *Meddle* reached Number Three on the album charts (*Atom Heart Mother* had been Number One) while in the US it's felt that it bombed upon its initial release.

"If in doubt, blame the label," says Mason. "We felt at the time that Capitol [Floyd's North American label] was really an old fashioned company, it was the label of Frank Sinatra and Dean Martin, and the executives were all old. I don't think they really approved of us. They didn't understand it. Consequently, they never worked the records anyway."

"EMI, on the other hand, saw the potential particularly from European sales. And they decided to make it a hit. That's the thing. The success of *...Dark Side Of The Moon* had nothing to do with the loveable mop tops who made it. It was all the record company."

The band lost patience with Capitol and secretly signed with Clive Davies to Columbia in the US. They felt that they

"ECHOES IS
THE ULTIMATE
EPIC. IT HAS
A PERFECT
SHAPE."

STEVEN
WILSON



Wish You Were Here

Harvest, 1975

The difficult follow-up. The band had already started and abandoned an album called *Household Objects*, that was to be made up of songs played on household items like food mixers and wine glasses.

"It's a nice album, but I have to deduct half a mark for taking too long. The pressure was really on with *Wish You Were Here* so I think that's why there was such a long gap."

Highest position in chart: 1 Outstanding songs: *Shine On You Crazy Diamond Parts I-IX*, *Have A Cigar*



8.5/10



Up Pompeii! The
Floyd go widescreen,
prefiguring the
modern rock vid.

were without the support that they got in the UK and Europe.

Obscured By Clouds, the soundtrack to *La Vallée*, was recorded in a matter of weeks later that year. Then they started work on *...Dark Side Of The Moon*. They had an appetite for work. Yet they would never record at this pace again.

"No because we got spoiled. After *...Dark Side...* we were a number one band," says Nick. "And also, the pressure was then on. You couldn't just go in and knock another album off. You had to think about it, not repeat yourself."

According to Steven Wilson: "You feel that Floyd were still a band that were playing live, going out there and experimenting, and I think by *...Dark Side Of The Moon*, that had gone. They'd become great sonic architects by that time, but a lot of the danger and a lot of the hangover from that period of experimentation had been gradually refined out of their sound."

It's a sobering lesson for anyone who makes a living writing about music to go back and read the sort of reviews that were written in the music press at the time of an album now considered an undisputed classic. Reviews of *Meddle* were lukewarm though favourable. Some seemed to miss the point: one reviewer compared *Meddle* unfavourably with *More* and *Ummagumma*. Arguments as to whether *Meddle* belonged in the same file as *Fragile*, *Tarkus* or *Nursery Crymes* now seem fatuous.

The Floyd, like Yes, ELP and Genesis, were just slightly ahead of the technology that was available. These were like 24-track bands in an eight-track era.

After *...Dark Side Of The Moon*, something was lost: *Meddle*, and even *...Dark Side Of The Moon*, are far from being perfect. Afterwards, though, the drive was to create and sometimes meticulously over-egg the pudding in the studio. This culminated with *The Wall* and was probably what ultimately tore the band apart.

For Nick, working on *Meddle*, he says, gave him the confidence to start producing himself. Later that year he worked on *The Asmoto Running Band*, the second album by whimsy-prog oddballs Principal Edwards Magic Theatre. He later produced Robert Wyatt's classic *Rock Bottom* and The Damned's second album *Music For Pleasure* (though apparently because they couldn't get Syd Barrett).

After the one-off solo album Nick Mason's *Fictitious Sports* in 1981, he worked with Rick Fenn and then jazzier Mike Mantler. But Nick, being rich as Croesus, is under no pressure to get in the van and go gigging.

"Yes, I've been thinking about doing something for a while," he muses. He won't be pushed on details. And what about another Pink Floyd reunion? Mason only recently appeared on stage with Roger Waters and David Gilmour, performing *Outside The Wall* at one of Waters massive O2 shows. He says that touring or playing with Gilmour or Roger is a possibility.

"I'd love to do something like Live8 again," he says. Then he adds, perhaps enigmatically: "If it was to be arranged."

Was that a hint? Or was it what we want to hear? That the journey that really got underway 40 years ago on *Meddle* hasn't quite come to its end?

Pink Floyd's reissues revamp starts September. See www.pinkfloyd.com.

A man with dark hair, wearing a light blue V-neck t-shirt and a watch on his left wrist, stands in a recording studio. He is leaning on a black chair. The background shows a large mixing console with many sliders and buttons, and a window with curtains. The ceiling has several circular lights.

"THEY WERE VERY, VERY GOOD...!"

"They trust me!":
Andy Jackson at
the helm of David
Gilmour's Astoria
studio, Hampton Court.

He's been **David Gilmour** and **Pink Floyd's** right-hand man since 1982. Now he's the curator of Floyd's ultimate relics as the *Experience*, *Discovery* and *Immersion* box sets are prepared for launch. **Chris Roberts** meets studio whiz **Andy Jackson**.

I've racked my brain about this," muses Andy Jackson. "What is it that makes *The Dark Side Of The Moon* so enduring? In some ways you'd think you could steal the formula – lots of people try to – but it's never the same. Why does it work as an album so well? It really shouldn't, if you analyse it. On *The Run* second track? That shouldn't work. And side one is very short on lyrics and only has two songs as such, *Breathe* and *Time*. It's quite jagged, not as mellow as you think. Despite 30 years of working with them, I can't understand why it's so good. But I can understand why they're so good."

Andy got involved as the in-house engineer-mixer for Pink Floyd on the soundtrack to the film of *The Wall* in 1982, and has worked with them and David Gilmour ever since. He was Grammy-nominated for *A Momentary Lapse Of Reason* and *The Division Bell*, has engineered albums for Gilmour and Waters, and back in the day mixed *The Boomtown Rats' I Don't Like Mondays* and engineered everyone from *Fields Of The Nephilim* to *Heatwave*. He's released his own music and plays with *The Eden House*. Yet the Floyd have dominated his studio time, and the imminent re-release programme of the band's 14 studio albums and the *Discovery*, *Immersion* (a six-disc box set) and *Experience* editions of *The Dark Side...*, to be closely followed by similar all-encompassing box sets of *Wish You Were Here* and *The Wall*, has seen him combining the skills of treasure-seeker, detective, technician and protector of Holy Grails.

Work on this project began years ago. There were, as he puts it, "three teams of us at the coal face". Lana Topham handled the films and animation footage while James Guthrie and Andy tackled the small matter of some of the most beloved and revered music of the last century. "There was so much audio work to do that it was split between myself and James in California. James remastered all the albums and worked on the Blu-rays, while I handled all the mixing and supervising of the unreleased material." This last, it transpires, was gold dust. *The Dark Side...* set will include a previously unreleased live performance of that album from 1974 at Wembley, as well as live cuts from Brighton in '72 and a host of oddities and extras ranging from Roger Waters' original demo of *Money* to excerpts from the band's sort-of-legendary *Household*

Objects project. The *Wish You Were Here* set will offer further live tracks from the Wembley show, which Jackson describes as "the centre-piece" of all the new-found material.

"The funny thing regarding the Wembley show is – I was there! Aged about 15. So it's a strange, circular thing. I sadly don't have too much memory of the night, it was so long ago: though I remember that I couldn't see Dave from where I was. But this music is familiar territory to me; I've crossed paths with it before while working with Dave in the studio and on the road, so it wasn't too odd to be given their trust on it."

At this point Andy's phone goes off, emitting a high-pitched sequence of chimes and notes. Asked if it's an exclusive preview of a new techno direction, he laughs, "Actually it's a sample from the one of the lesser-celebrated nuances at the very beginning of *Shine On You Crazy Diamond*! Nobody's spotted it yet. Only two people in the world have it..." I ask him how the whole process worked, when he wasn't making out-of-context ring-tones. Did he have to go through all the tapes with a fine-toothed comb and make tough calls on what was worth using and what wasn't?

"Well, by the time I got to it, much of what was to be worked with had already been picked," he explains. "Dee, who works with me and with Dave at his studio, had started piecing things together – like the sound effects from the shows that were played front of house but had been missing from the quad tapes. Essentially, we used half of...*Dark Side*... from one night and half from the other night, and he'd done the donkey work of joining them together. Then my job was: get in there, sort them out, start mixing. There was an awful lot of hugely challenging fixing up to do. For example, one of the big problems I had was that on one night the bass drum mic, by the sound of it, was facing the wrong way, and there was almost nothing on it except general guitar spill. It was un-usable. This was one reason why it hadn't been dealt with before now. So I made the decision to sample a kick drum that sounded like Nick Mason's and then hand-pasted it in, every single kick drum note for the entire show, tracking Nick's playing. Before the current technology we'd looked at this tape and sighed: well, we can't do anything with it. But with digital workstations, we could dive in there."

And the band relies on you to do the right thing, to make the



The Wall

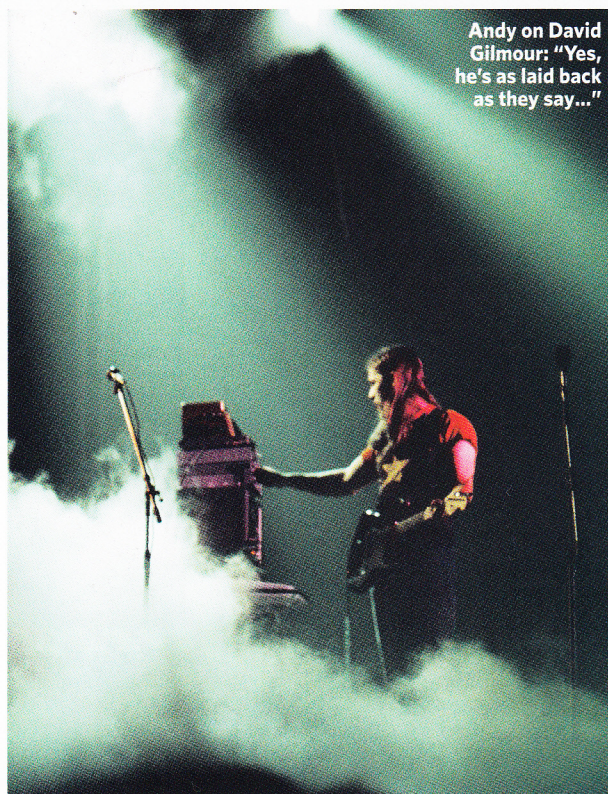
Harvest, 1979

A massive record, an album of huge importance, much hot air has been expelled on *The Wall*.

"I'd give it nine out of 10, partly because it was very successful. In some ways it probably could have benefited from being half an album less. Half a side. Maybe the whole thing would just have been a bit tighter. But...it is what it is."

Highest position in chart: 3 Outstanding songs: *Another Brick In The Wall Pt 2*, *Comfortably Numb*, *Run Like Hell*

9/10



Andy on David Gilmour: "Yes, he's as laid back as they say..."

ROBERT ELLIS/REXPHOTO

"I WAS AT WEMBLEY IN '74! IT'S A STRANGE, CIRCULAR THING..."

ANDY JACKSON



Animals

Harvest, 1977

A concept loosely inspired by George Orwell's political fable *Animal Farm*, this is where Roger Waters started to dominate Pink Floyd. Having

said that, *Dogs* is one of David Gilmour's strongest pieces as a writer and guitarist and it takes up almost half of the album.

"Right for the period, it showed lots of different influences, like punk, like having our own studio. Successful in some ways, not so in others, but still a good... Ha! I'm not going to give bad marks to anything that took a year of my life."

Highest position in chart: 2 Outstanding songs: *Dogs*



8/10

right choices? Isn't that a bit like being charged with restoring *The Last Supper* while Leonardo Da Vinci's still alive and looking over your shoulder, saying "No pressure or anything?"

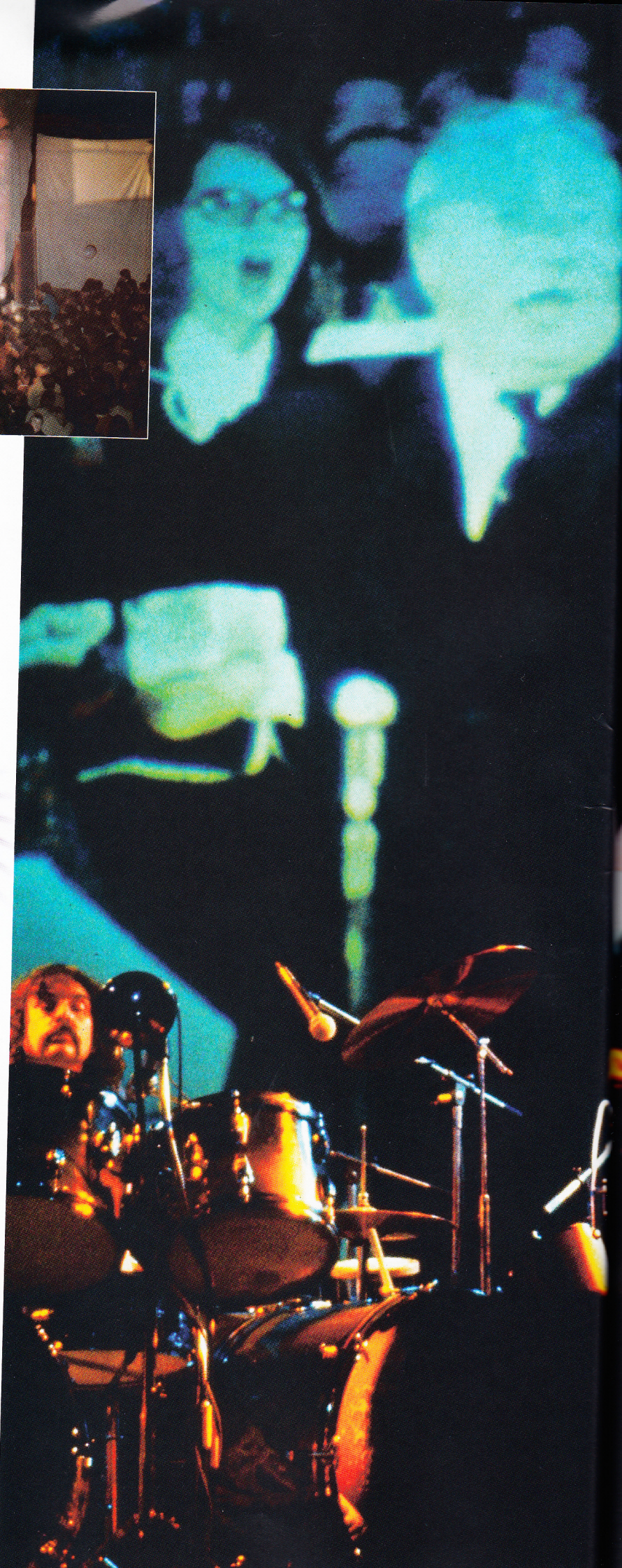
"It's... fine, y'know? I've been working with them so long. They trust me and James. It's never a case of them saying: aw, this is all wrong! It's more like: oh, a little more this or that, perhaps? Or the time-honoured musician's comments on a mix: turn me up. This is the fourth Floyd or David thing I've done in the last five or six years. I tend to work on one song, or natural lump of two songs, at a time, glue it all together, and then we sit down and listen through. We'll go back and cycle through any changes until we think we've done it. Then we play it to the band, and they give their notes, until we really have done it. If I played the version I presented first, then the finished version, 99 per cent of people couldn't tell the difference."

There must be occasions where you get frustrated if your work gets amended...

"It all comes back through me anyway, so it's my interpretation of the final version – I still make it work to my mind!" laughs Andy. "Also, something I worked out a long time ago – it's not my record. It doesn't say my name on the front, it says Pink Floyd. You'll find me somewhere in the booklet at



Floyd at Camden Roundhouse 1966 (above, and opposite page) and on tour in 1974 (right). Their films and projections now form part of the new box set campaign.



the back, and within the community the work's recognised, but in terms of the general public's perception, they don't know or care who I am. It's a Pink Floyd record, and what they want goes, and that's fine.

"I do consider myself incredibly fortunate really, that this is the camp I ended up in. It's completely up my street, musically: I love it. An old engineer friend of mine similarly ended up with a long-term client, and it's Mick Hucknall. So, y'know, I'm grateful!"

Given the notoriously volatile nature of the rapport between Dave Gilmour and Roger Waters, it seems reasonable to ask if Andy ever has to act as peacekeeper and juggle sounds delicately to satisfy both. Again, he's completely unfazed.

"Well, you have two strong characters working together on a creative process, making a record. But disagreements are more likely to occur when you're making fundamental content decisions. In this case, the content is fixed: it's that show. It's what they played. That's it. So it's a question of refinements. Nobody's going to say: I think we should try a different bass line now..." Is Dave as laid-back as he comes across to the distant observer? "Yep! Ha ha, of course like any other human being he can get annoyed or impatient on occasion, but generally no – he's very easy-going."

"As for Nick," adds Jackson, "he turned up one day with a big cardboard box full of quarter-inch tapes from his garage: stuff he'd

"I CONSIDER MYSELF INCREDIBLY FORTUNATE. I LOVE THIS MUSIC."

ANDY JACKSON

The Final Cut

Harvest, 1983

The last album before Roger Waters made his exit. Waters is credited with writing every song and Dave Gilmour only sang on one song.

Michael Kamen had temporarily replaced Rick Wright. Waters and Gilmour were apparently at war during the recording. Waters himself said: "The Final Cut was absolutely misery to make."

"By then the band was fragmenting. Knock half a mark off because we really shouldn't have made it like that. It should have been Roger's solo album. It's certainly not a bad album, but it doesn't reflect much of the band."

Highest position in chart: 1

Outstanding songs: Not Now John, The Fletcher Memorial Home

6.5/10





The Division Bell

EMI, 1994

The last Floyd album and one seen by many fans as a real return to form. The door is always open for more....



"I really like it. We went back in there thinking 'let's make this as a band'. We recorded together, in a room together, and I personally think that *High Hopes* ranks as one of the top five Pink Floyd songs. I really like it. It's a really strong song. I think the idea is strong. I like playing it live and I like listening to it."

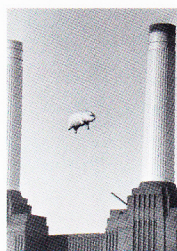
Highest position in chart: 1

Outstanding songs: *Cluster One*, *High Hopes*, *Take It Back*

8/10

acquired over the years. A lot of it was irrelevant, just stuff he'd taped off the radio, say – he had no idea as he hadn't written on any of them. But we found some great things in there. A lot of very early stuff, from before *The Piper...* back when they were still trying to be an R&B band. That could maybe prove valuable to a future project. Unfortunately things have been lost but lots of stuff turned up that was thought lost forever."

Not least the films and animations that accompanied Floyd live back then, and that now grace the DVD packages here. "Lana Topham sourced all this stuff: it was a labour of many years. Things were buried in vaults in France; she and EMI have been hard at it. There were tremendous complications with the films. There were so many variants, and nobody was exactly sure what went with what. Film-makers back then would show up with bits of abstract footage, not for any specific number, and Roger and the band would try them out. So Lana did a lot of fantastic detective work. She then laid in a sound-bed to the full video as she thought it was, and gave it over to us to do properly, so to speak. We'd tweak a few frames here and there to get something to switch nicely on a change – which is more than happened at the time! On top of that she'd sometimes be working with old prints that were covered in mildew in a cellar; the chest is truly empty now!"



Animals: Andy Jackson's favourite Floyd album of all time, "the forgotten bastard-child".

"IT'S STILL FLOYD'S SOUND – A JAG WITH A WELL-POLISHED DASHBOARD."

ANDY JACKSON

Is it though? Really?

"Nick Mason and I were talking about this recently. Do people really want this series of remasters and unreleased extras, or is it just silly? But Nick said he was in a record shop, flicking through, and as a jazz buff he saw a Coltrane box set of everything that had ever been recorded, including 18-second false starts, all that. He bought it instantly because he's a Coltrane-head. And he said he thought: ah, this is the point, isn't it? Nobody's making you buy it. If you want to, there it is. This here is everything we could possibly find to do with these Floyd albums. This is IT. It's not exploitation; it's not a posthumous Michael Jackson album padded with filler. You may well already own *...Dark Side...*, but if you want a new version which hopefully sounds a little better because it's been mastered again, you can. If you like the sound of Pink Floyd, we haven't done anything perverse. It's still a Jag with a well-polished walnut dashboard."

Andy goes on to enthuse about "the other half" of the Wembley show, which will emerge with the WYWH set, in which the band try out then-new material. "The versions of what became *Dogs* and *Sheep* are radically different – oh, as are the early versions of *The Great Gig In The Sky*: you get a real insight into work in progress..." It turns out *Animals* is Andy's favourite Floyd album. "The forgotten bastard-child: overshadowed by coming between the "golden landmark" releases, but such an oddity. Dave calls it their "punk" album, and his playing on it is brilliantly edgy."

Right now, though, the focus is on the recasting of Floyd's softly spoken magic spells. There's room for them where your nostalgia, curiosity and wonder meet: beg, borrow or steal. You might even find an intriguing easter egg on there (Andy, who pushed for its inclusion, swears me to secrecy "until after it's released and someone whacks it on the internet"). And if none of us can adequately explain the unique mysterious pull of *The Dark Side Of The Moon*, Mr Jackson can justifiably eulogise the newly-unearthed live sets. "There's a human element about them. There was a limited amount to what we could do, so there's an edge retained in the playing: this Wembley show is one to dig out over and over and enjoy for years. They toured a lot around that time, so they were genuinely very good. They were very, very good."

The Dark Side Of The Moon Discovery edition is out September 26 via EMI.



A Momentary Lapse Of Reason

EMI, 1987

...Lapse... started as a Gilmour solo record. Mason was brought in as was Richard Wright, though only Mason and Gilmour appear in the photos on the inner sleeve.

"It was done under duress and again, being wise after the event, things were done that probably shouldn't have been done that way. Too many session players, too many people involved, an inevitable product of the period."

Highest position in chart: 3

Outstanding songs: *Learning To Fly*, *On The Turning Away*



7/10