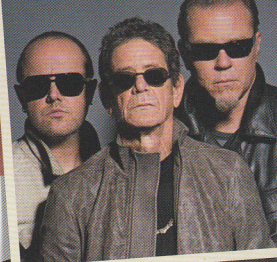


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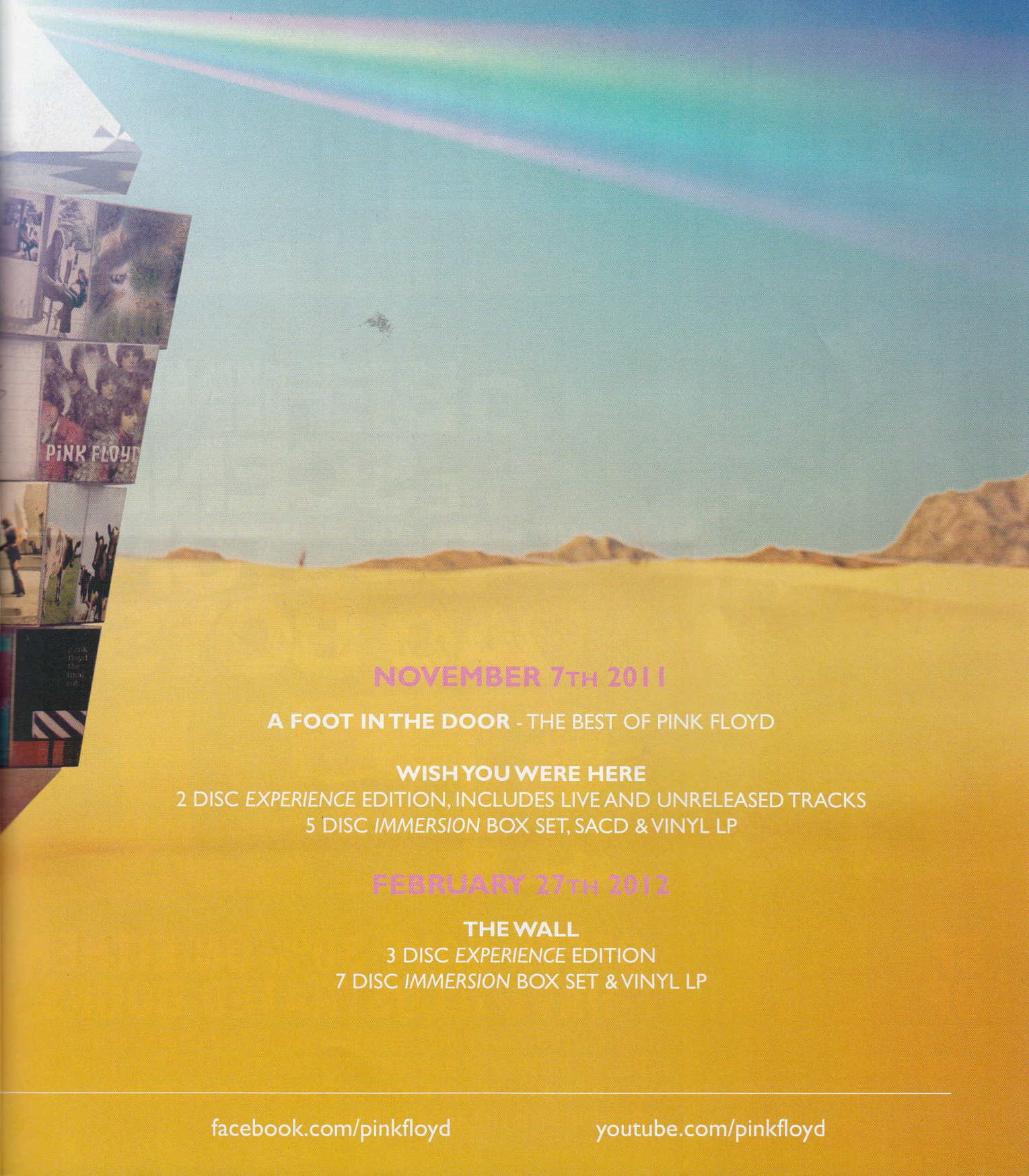
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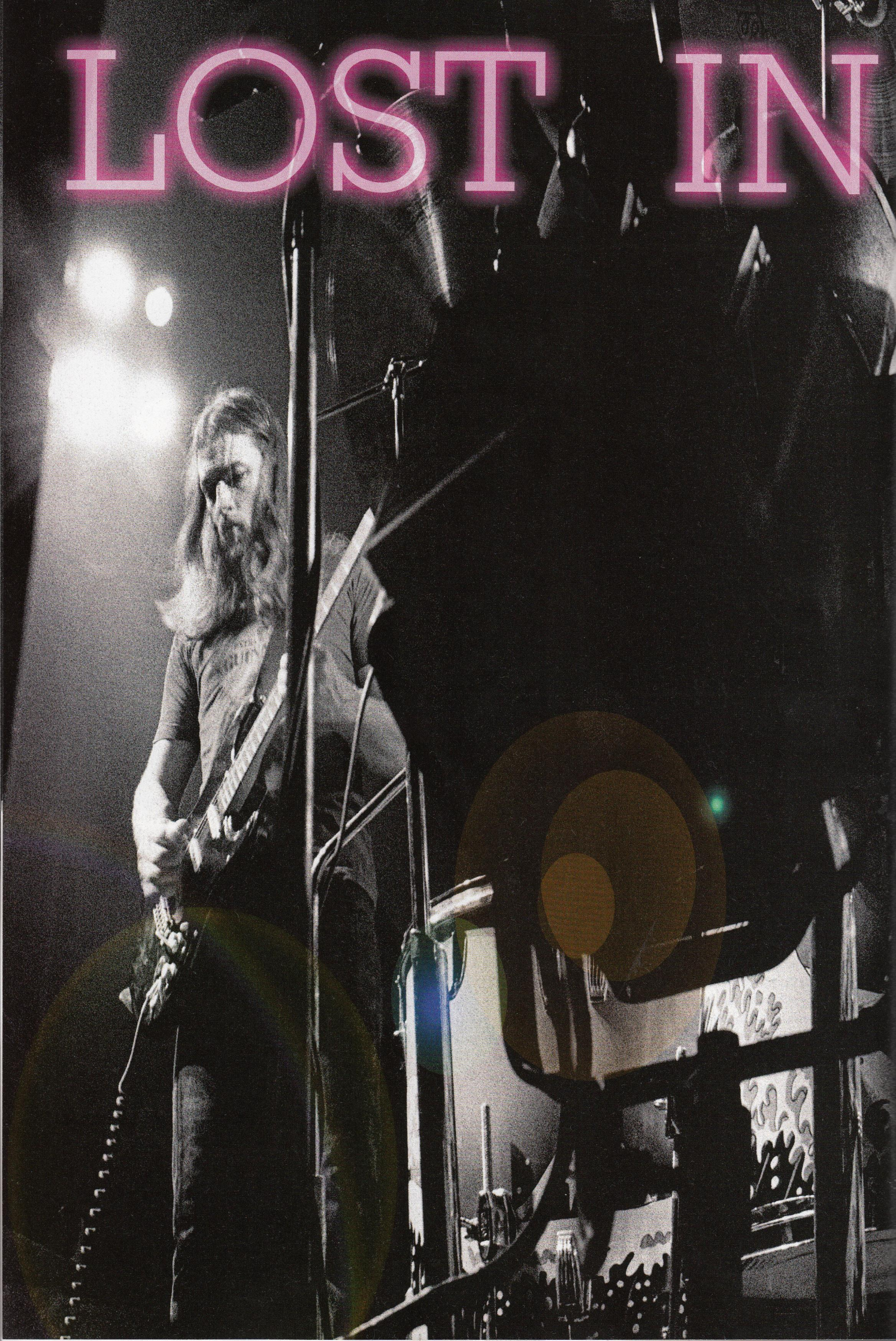
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SHOT **PINK FLOYD** TO
THE STARS THEN SUCKED
THEM INTO A SPIRITUAL
BLACK HOLE. YET OUT OF DRIFT
AND ENNUI WOULD GROW AN
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VERSIONS OF DARK SIDE AND **WISH
YOU WERE HERE** DUE THIS AUTUMN,
MARK BLAKE EXAMINES THE IMPACT
OF THE FORMER AND THE TORTURED,
SOUL-SEARCHING GENESIS OF THE
LATTER, WITH EXCLUSIVE, BRAND-
NEW INPUT FROM **NICK MASON**
AND **DAVID GILMOUR**: "WE'D
BEEN REVERED BY THE FANS. NOW
WE WERE THE SELL-OUT KIDS."
PICTURE BY **JILL FURMANOVSKY**.

LUNAR TUNES

Pink Floyd struggled to follow *The Dark Side Of The Moon*, and no wonder. Here are MOJO's favourite musos on its ever-waxing greatness.

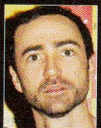
SPEAK TO ME



Mark Huckridge (Gallops): "Speak To Me is the album's brief overture, the build up to Breathe, but it sets up the atmosphere really well, with the heartbeat sample and the clock and the voices. For the vocal sample for our

version, the 'I've been mad for years' line that originally was one of Pink Floyd's roadies, we went on Twitter and asked if anyone wanted to contribute, so this girl from a band in Bath, called Hysterical Injury – which I think is a really suitable name! – recorded a spoken word piece for us. I was about 12 when I first heard *The Dark Side Of The Moon*, in 1999. I was listening to Nirvana and Green Day at that time, real teenage stuff, but I'd read about Floyd, it was just one of those classic 'hear this before you die' albums. I didn't realise how many songs I already knew. So I pretty much got the album first time around – and yes, we'd smoke a lot while listening to it. At 12, I wouldn't have understood the concept of madness, but I responded to the brilliance of the sound and the atmosphere, the juxtaposition of the slow and melodic and spacey with the darkness in the lyrics. It doesn't sound like Gallops but I was influenced by the album's mixture of electronics and guitars, the craftsmanship, and how they pushed the envelope. The album felt like a whole new entity, a whole different feeling."

BREATHE



James Mercer (The Shins, Broken Bells): "I first heard *The Dark Side Of The Moon* around 1980, when I was nine. There was this older kid, maybe 13, who lived upstairs to our apartment at Ramstein Air Force Base [Germany, where James' father was stationed]. I was just going into puberty and that's what I associate this record with. It's funny because it touches on those issues. Breathe itself talks about the existential situation we are in, the physical and tangible world being pretty much all there is. Even at that young age I picked up a bit of that. This kid had been raised as an atheist, and he became my introduction to avant-garde art and crazy thoughts."

"Not too long after this I was on a train – I was maybe 12 and still loving this record – and there was this really attractive punk girl. She was talking to a guy and they were making fun of Pink Floyd. My world was upended. I didn't know there was this other level where you could be so critical of something so fucking beautiful. I started to question my taste."

"The Shins started doing Breathe in sound-checks. Then, during a strange lull in one of our sets, Dave [Hernandez] started playing it and we all began joining in. We ended up playing the entire song. It was almost like an in-joke, but everyone recognised it and loved it. We just did our best to

capture the vibe of the record we grew up listening to; we weren't going to do a Shins version of it."

"Because the album was introduced to me at an important period of my life, it's very personal to me. I feel really close to it. I really get it. I don't have a Bible to rely on – I have a couple of books and records, like *The Dark Side Of The Moon*."

ON THE RUN



Paul Hartnoll (Orbital): "I didn't hear *The Dark Side Of The Moon* until 1994. Growing up, I was too into punk and 2-Tone. But that first time was perfect. The sun was just rising, I was lying on someone's living room floor in a sleeping bag having been clubbing, and drinking copious amounts of chocolate milk and brandy. I slipped the album on in this half-dream state and it was amazing. I just remember the electronics and *musique concrète* whizzing left to right, and it was all joined together, like joined-up writing. Grown-up music. It worked as a coherent whole, which is how I like it; music has to be in the right order, which is why I hate shuffle. On *The Run*, particularly, is part of the foundation of British electronic music; Floyd were using VCS 3 synths, made by EMS, the original British synthesizer. Tonto's Expanding Headband were around but few others were using that monophonic repetitive loop manipulated over time to create organic, trippy effects. Acid house reinvented the sound in 1988, this time with Roland 303s, but it was the same progressions. It's now a constant part of the musical landscape. Which means *The Dark Side Of The Moon* is one of the most influential albums ever. When I hear it now, it sounds like something just spurting out of creativity, landing in a perfect shape."

TIME



Jack Sharp (Wolf People, MOJO CD star): "I didn't know *The Dark Side Of The Moon* well before we recorded *Time*. Our guitarist Joe is a fan, but my parents, who gave me my musical education, were listening more to Captain Beefheart – my dad hated *Dark Side*... And my mate's parents, who'd wear the faded T-shirt with the prism on it, insisted on listening to the album with the lights off. So I was very wary of it. But I've grown to love *Time*. Working out the structure and chord changes, and Breathe, which is reprised at the end of the song, you see how the vocal melodies fit so beautifully – like, how did they come up with that? They seem really simple, as if they've been there forever, but they're actually complex. And for all the massive production, at heart it's quite a humble English record. But the way we approached *Time* was to make it faster and more driving, with a gung-ho attitude, like a band in a room."

THE GREAT GIG IN THE SKY



Jim James (My Morning Jacket): "I was young and angry and really tripping hard – so I started ripping up shrubs and throwing them into a lake. On the banks of the lake lay a giant trout, gasping for water. With his last few breaths he moaned that I should just go swimming instead. So I fell into the lake and *The Great Gig In The Sky* came on for the first time for me and it felt just like the water. It built and built... Clare Torry ravaging my soul. I started crying but my face was so wet already. I couldn't tell tears from water."

MONEY



Phil Manzanera (Roxy Music, et al): "In 1968, I had lunch with David Gilmour. I was 17 and wanted to join a band, which my little Colombian mother was very worried about, so my elder brother Eugene, who knew David from Cambridge, said, 'Let's go ask this guy in a band.' Five years later, I'm in Air Studios starting to record *For Your Pleasure* with Roxy Music and next door they're mixing *The Dark Side Of The Moon*. When I heard Money, and David's guitar solo, I sent him a telegram saying, 'Remember me? I'm in a band now. I just heard your absolutely brilliant solo, well done!' So Money has a very personal connection for me. My band before Roxy, Quiet Sun, got stick for funny time signatures, but Money was in 7/4 and people were still tapping their feet to it. Everything I loved about music, being raised on The Beatles and *musique concrète*, was there – the cut-up loop of coins and cash register at the beginning, the clever, edgy lyric and the guitar solo, which David double-tracked. He's very good on tuning and has big thick fingers that really work the guitar well. It sounds as classic now as it did then, because of how they recorded it, the placement of microphones, the analogue machines, to capture that breathtaking moment in the studio."

US AND THEM



Jonathan Wilson (Jackson Browne's pal): "My older brother dropped *The Dark Side Of The Moon* on me before I'd even started middle school. I was 10 or 11, and spending a lot of time in his room in Thomasville, North Carolina, loading records onto a silver chipboard Soundesign home stereo. The album artwork meant something to me before I'd ever heard the songs. The geometry beckoned; I knew it was heavy and I knew people associated this music with alternate reality. It has this sense of sonic mood, of power and patience, of virtuosity and restraint. It's a journey. It feels larger than life. *Us And Them* contains so many of my favourite elements. The melody is fulfilling, there are Doppler effects around every corner and the vocal is delivered calmly and assuredly. Dave Gilmour and Rick Wright together are pristine. It's a band in complete sonic control. The saxophone is precisely the type of outlaw overdub woefully lacking in records today. The whole album has been such an influence on me. It's a languid blueprint for grandiosity and a glossary of studio ambition. It's that perfect marriage of experimental and popular music."

"IT SOUNDS LIKE SOMETHING JUST SPURTING OUT OF CREATIVITY, LANDING IN A PERFECT SHAPE."

ANY COLOUR YOU LIKE



Matt Berry (musician, comic actor, MOJO CD star): "That was the one I was praying no-one had taken. I've got a massive thing for the *D Minor-to-G* thing. It makes everything so melancholic and sad, and I love songs with that change, like Todd Rundgren's *I Saw The Light*. *Dark Side*... as a whole has always been one of the most important records for me. Everything is right on it; they're all on the top of their game, including Alan Parsons, and of course it quickly became this iconic work, a staple as a hi-fi demonstration disc. It was state of the art, and there are textures and atmospheres on there that are up there with Tangerine Dream, Walter Carlos, avant-garde stuff, but it's all so tastefully used. It's not at any point about the technology. For an instrumental, I always feel that *Any Colour You Like* is really emotional – it's the comedown

after a great party. The hangover that makes you feel quite weepy. Bittersweet, but not in an obvious way."

BRAIN DAMAGE/ ECLIPSE



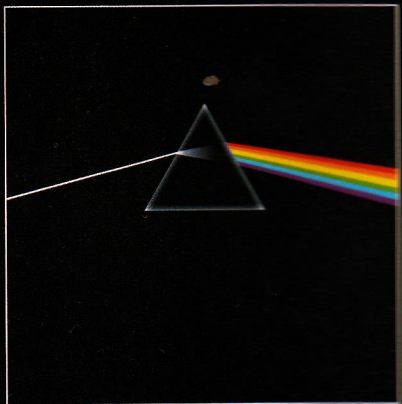
Wayne Coyne (The Flaming Lips):

"We have been performing these two connected songs recently in some of our concerts. There is an uncanny power to these tracks that I never realised was there until,

lucky for me, I sang them live. The line, 'And if your head explodes with dark forebodings, too... I'll see you on the dark side of the moon,' is a grand empathetic statement, and there is this unified sense of relief within the audience... as if we are saying, 'I understand'.

"All that you touch and all that you see. All that you taste... All you feel" is such a unified cosmic mantra that it's hard to remember what it actually means. It's kind of like singing the National Anthem – you sing it without it triggering anything in your mind. But once the magnitude of this perfect statement is grasped it transcends just being a song, it becomes a way of living your life!! It is... a motherfucker!!!!"

Interviews by Martin Aston,
Danny Eccleston, Stephen Worthy



S

OMETIME IN FEBRUARY 1973, the four members of Pink Floyd, assorted engineers and faithful roadies assembled in a room at London's Abbey Road Studios to hear a final mix of the group's new album, *The Dark Side Of The Moon*. It was a familiar scenario. They'd all been here before. Several times.

"It's what we did every time we made a record," says guitarist David Gilmour, casting his mind back a dizzying 38 years from the modern-day seclusion of his West Sussex

farmhouse. "There is something about the moment when you do the final edit on the final track, join everything together, and think, Right, let's listen... It doesn't matter how many times you've heard the rough mixes, there is still nothing quite like that moment, hearing something fantastic, and all turning round and going, 'Fuck me, that's brilliant.'" He hesitates and laughs. "Hearing *The Dark Side Of The Moon* for the very first time was one of those moments."

Yet tracks from the soon-to-be globe-bothering album were being played in front of live audiences more than a year before the album's release. With several UK Top 10 albums behind them, Floyd's popularity was already such that a bootleg from their four London Rainbow shows in February 1972 was rumoured to have sold several thousand black-market copies over the next 12 months. EMI executives fretted over its possible impact on *The Dark Side...*'s sales, but needn't have worried. Released in March 1973, the album went to Number 2 in the UK as well as topping the American chart.

Its success, compared to that of earlier Floyd releases, *Meddle* or *Atom Heart Mother*, wasn't hard to fathom. The music was still rooted in the underground rock tradition, but Floyd had edited themselves, to be, as David Gilmour remembers, "clear, direct and concise". The avant-garde touches added rather than detracted from your listening pleasure: the snatches of speech heard between tracks in which Floyd roadies discussed madness and fighting intrigued those listening with the aid of chemical enhancement and the clear-headed sound buff road-testing his state-of-the-art hi-fi system.

The album's philosophical message set out in bassist Roger Waters' lyrics was equally direct: greed is wrong; it's OK to worry about life; relax, we're all mad... It may have been simple – "sixth-form stuff" said a self-critical Waters – but its appeal remains

universal. "We all knew absolutely that it had what it took to be more successful than anything we'd done before," says Gilmour. "It was the moment everything came together."

By mid-1973, Pink Floyd had achieved the success they'd always dreamt of. But with the fame and money came an eerie realisation. "It was the end," said Waters. "We'd reached the point we'd been aiming for since we were teenagers. There was really nothing more to do."

The Dark Side... was certainly a hard act to follow. Transfixing the first of many generations of musicians and music fans, it had quickly ascended to the embryonic Rock Album Hall Of Fame, the next milestone in the developing seriousness of the genre after *Sgt. Pepper*. But follow it the group would have to, and though the process proved tortuous even by Floyd standards, the result would be an album as cherished in its way by the group and its faithful. *Wish You Were Here* would transcend its circumstances, and spin what guitarist David Gilmour called "many of the negative aspects of fame" into a UK and US Number 1, featuring arguably the post-Syd group's defining musical statement, the incandescent 20 minutes of Shine On You Crazy Diamond.

This autumn, EMI will re-release expanded versions of both *The Dark Side Of The Moon* and its follow-up. As well as the re-mastered albums, collectors can purchase the "Experience" Editions, containing the album and ➤

Famous, Getty Images (2), Retna, Redferns

Nick Kent in 1973: "I went a bit over the top..."



In 1974, the NME's **Nick Kent** monstered **Pink Floyd** in a live review that caused seismic rumbles in the newly-imperial band. In 2011 he revisits the fallout... and the dandruff.

TURGID" IS THE word that most springs to mind when I try to recall the performance Pink Floyd gave at Wembley's Empire Pool on November 11, 1974, one of the first tentative UK public unveilings of material written to follow-up *The Dark Side Of The Moon*, and which I went on to review in the NME with a merciless disdain. There was a giant circular screen projecting flashing images for certain songs, and a mirror ball and costly lighting bathing proceedings at key junctures, but all I remember now is watching four blokes loitering on a big stage struggling in vain to invest some kind of inspired momentum in their repertoire, and failing miserably in the process.

The quartet had long built their live reputation on catapulting their audience's senses into sonic outer space but this performance remained depressingly Earth-bound, unable to reach any kind of satisfying lift-off. This was particularly evident in the three new songs they previewed that evening which effectively took up the first half of the concert. Raving And Drooling sounded like an uninspired re-write of One Of These Days, first heard three years earlier on the *Meddle* album. You've Got To Be Crazy – a more ambitious composition – didn't seem fully worked out yet and suffered accordingly with out-of-tune vocals and a barely in-synch rhythm section. And the British premiere of Shine On You Crazy Diamond had none of the stately floating grandeur of later versions, meandering on instead like one of those deathly slow minor-chord blues numbers that never seem to end.

The group spent the second half of the concert complacently reprising most of *The Dark Side Of The Moon* as well as one of two old favourites from their '68-'71 repertoire, but left the stage clearly underwhelmed by what they'd achieved together that evening. The audience duly gave them a standing ovation – in a muted sort of way – before stepping out in the winter air, but back in Row F I was still seething at what I'd just beheld and



Gilmour: "Have you read this shit about my hair?"
Wright: "I see Jonah Barrington won again."

WISH I WASN'T HERE

remained that way in the following days, during which time I penned a long, splenetic put-down of the show and Pink Floyd's general standing in the mid-'70s rock marketplace. "Indolent musical deadwood" was one of the more fanciful phrases I used to describe their "new" music; "facile and soulless" another. I rubbished the Waters-Mason musical axis as "rock's dulllest ever rhythm section" and even went so far as to take David Gilmour to task for not using more hair-care products on his lanky locks.

IN SHORT, I went a bit over the top. It was just one bad gig after all – nothing to get in an extended hissy fit about. What had mostly got my goat – I now see – was the group's own seeming indifference to their audience and the way that audience seemed incapable of discerning when the group was playing well and when it was barely going through the motions. The key sentence in my diatribe went, "One can easily envisage a Floyd concert in the future consisting of the band simply wandering on-stage, setting all their tapes in action, putting their instruments on remote control and then walking off behind the amps to talk about football or play billiards." Back in 1974 that was considered one serious put-down, though in 2011 it could just as easily define what many electronica-based music acts do each night as a career-choice.

The review was published by the NME in mid-November and promptly instigated an avalanche of angry letters from the paper's

predominantly Floyd-friendly readership. Even John Peel weighed in with a diatribe penned for *Sounds* decrying my media assault in a haughty "how dare he insult our noble Floyd" tone. David Gilmour then sat down with my NME colleague Peter Erskine and rebuked the review's points one by one in an interview that ran shortly afterwards. He was the only Pink Floyd member to go public on the subject, but it was not hard to imagine his views being roundly shared by his aggrieved bandmates.

So imagine my surprise when – slightly less than 12 months later – I met Richard Wright for the first time at a party in Ladbroke Grove. He thanked me for having had the gall to criticise his band in print at a time he felt they were starting to drift apart and not address crucial issues within their music-making agenda. My jaw dropped even further years later when I read the following from Nick Mason's autobiography *Inside Out*: "Inevitably we were castigated by some of the music press, most notably by Nick Kent who, also being a particularly fervent Syd Barrett devotee, was unrestrained in his attack. The trouble was we recognised some of the criticisms were valid and in fact his comments may have had some influence in drawing us back together."

Thirty-years on, it's nice to know that something positive came out of something so relentlessly negative (The Floyd refocused and set to work on what is for me their most playable '70s recording). But reading the review again fails to fill me with any particular sense of accomplishment. I'd just like to belatedly apologise to David Gilmour. Those comments about your hair, mate – well out of order.

"I RUBBISHED THE WATERS-MASON MUSICAL AXIS – CALLED THEM ROCK'S DULLEST EVER RHYTHM SECTION"

Floyd audience contemplate a "muted" standing ovation, Wembley Empire Pool, 1974.



◀ a second disc of alternative versions and live tracks, and the five-disc “Immersion” box sets, containing all of the above, Quad and Surround mixes, a DVD of films projected behind the band at their mid-’70s shows plus tickets, backstage passes and drinks coasters designed by Floyd familiar Storm Thorgerson. Not bad going for a band who’d done it all by the summer of 1973.

DRUMMER NICK MASON CONDUCTS his Floyd business from the office of his company Ten Tenth, the first port of call for anyone needing to hire a sports car, helicopter or Penny Farthing bicycle for their film, TV show or ad campaign. Pondering the enormity – and earning potential – of the Floyd reissues campaign, the drummer quips that it should keep EMI in business for “Oh... another week at least.” Of course *Wish You Were Here* was made in a different era. Yet with all the

can to create the sound of a hi-hat.” The idea was abandoned in favour of what became *Meddle*, but with no better plan afoot the group went back to “Household Objects” in the winter of 1973.

“It was like we were setting ourselves obstacles to overcome,” recalls Gilmour today. “Very silly. For some reason we found this great sound you could make if you held a rubber band over a matchbox, as it amplified everything. These days you could get your sampler out, plonk these things in, tune it and do it in no time flat.”

“We worked on it for a couple of months,” continues Mason. “I was doing the percussion sounds – having an axe hitting a piece of wood, hitting a cymbal and then dipping it in water. We had the idea of recording the wine glasses. [Keyboardist] Rick [Wright] was especially involved with that. That was a nice idea, and the wine glass was used on what became Shine On You Crazy Diamond.”

“Household Objects” was abandoned by Christmas (Mason: “I think it probably was a delaying tactic”). Meanwhile, fired up by the staggering sales of *The Dark Side Of The Moon*, EMI reissued Pink Floyd’s first two albums, *The Piper At The Gates Of Dawn* and *A Saucerful Of Secrets*, as *A Nice Pair* in January ’74, just as the band began rehearsals for an upcoming French tour. Their chosen venue was Unit Studios, a windowless room in London’s Kings Cross.

DG: Having been in the ascendancy with *Dark Side Of The Moon*, I cannot conceive why we would choose to go to that studio (laughs). It was like the black hole of Calcutta, this tiny room down an alley behind a pub. I had a look for it when I was driving past the other day... couldn’t find it. It was a shit-hole. Perhaps we took the view that if there was nothing else to distract us, the creativity would come. There was absolutely nothing else to do. But *Shine On You Crazy Diamond* was started in that room.

MOJO: Roger once said you lifted the



negative energy enveloping the band after *The Dark Side Of The Moon* it seems a miracle the record came out at all. “*Wish You Were Here* was,” says Mason carefully, “the album where we all went, What do we do now?”

MOJO: Surely, you could do anything you liked?

Nick Mason: We were in a luxurious position. We had renegotiated our EMI deal so we now had unlimited studio time at Abbey Road. We felt we *should* go back in the studio because that’s what we’d always done. But I don’t think we had a single idea between us.

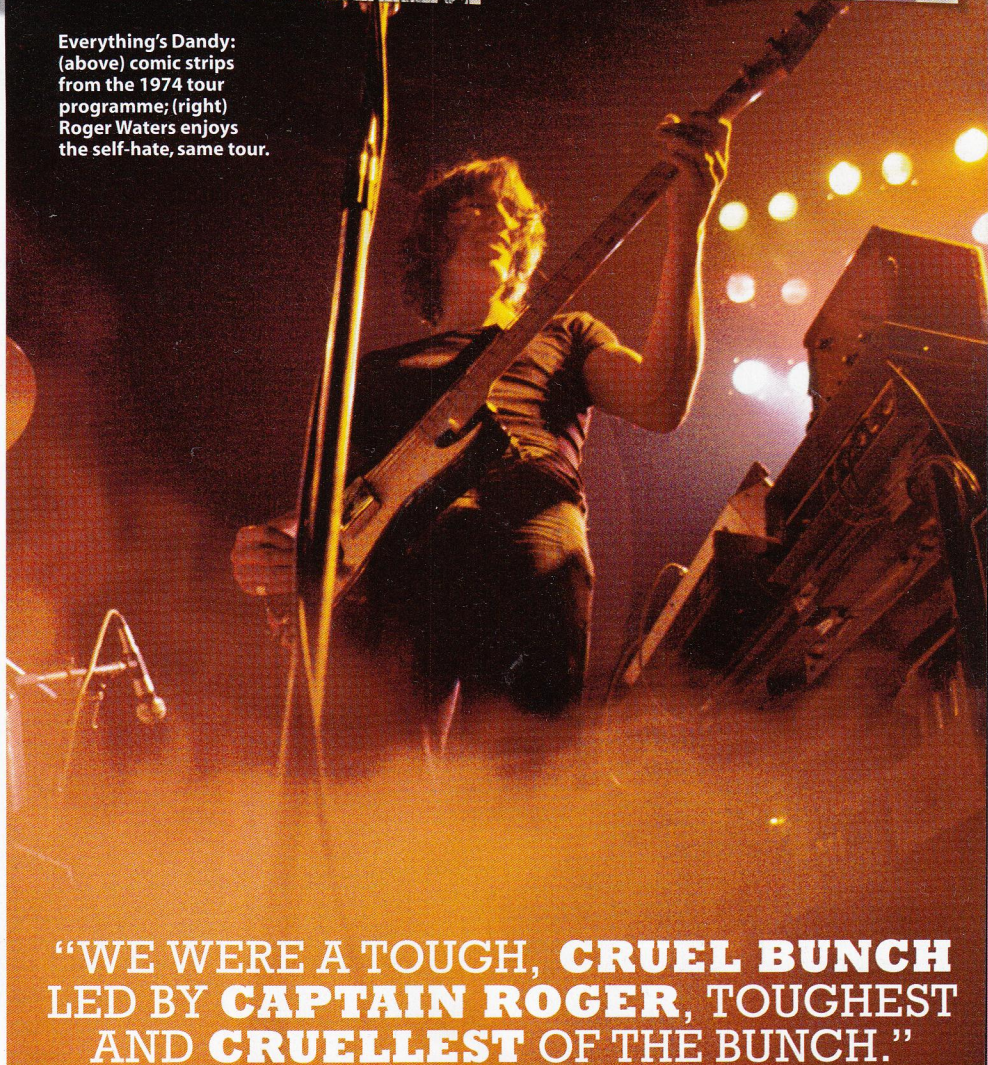
David Gilmour: When you look at the timescale now it seems ridiculous. These days a band would take five years off. And the success of *Dark Side Of The Moon* scared us. You do start thinking, Was that a fluke? Is it that it for us? Are we done?

MOJO: *Dark Side...* had been Roger Waters’ concept, Roger Waters’ lyrics... Did he now regard himself as the leader?

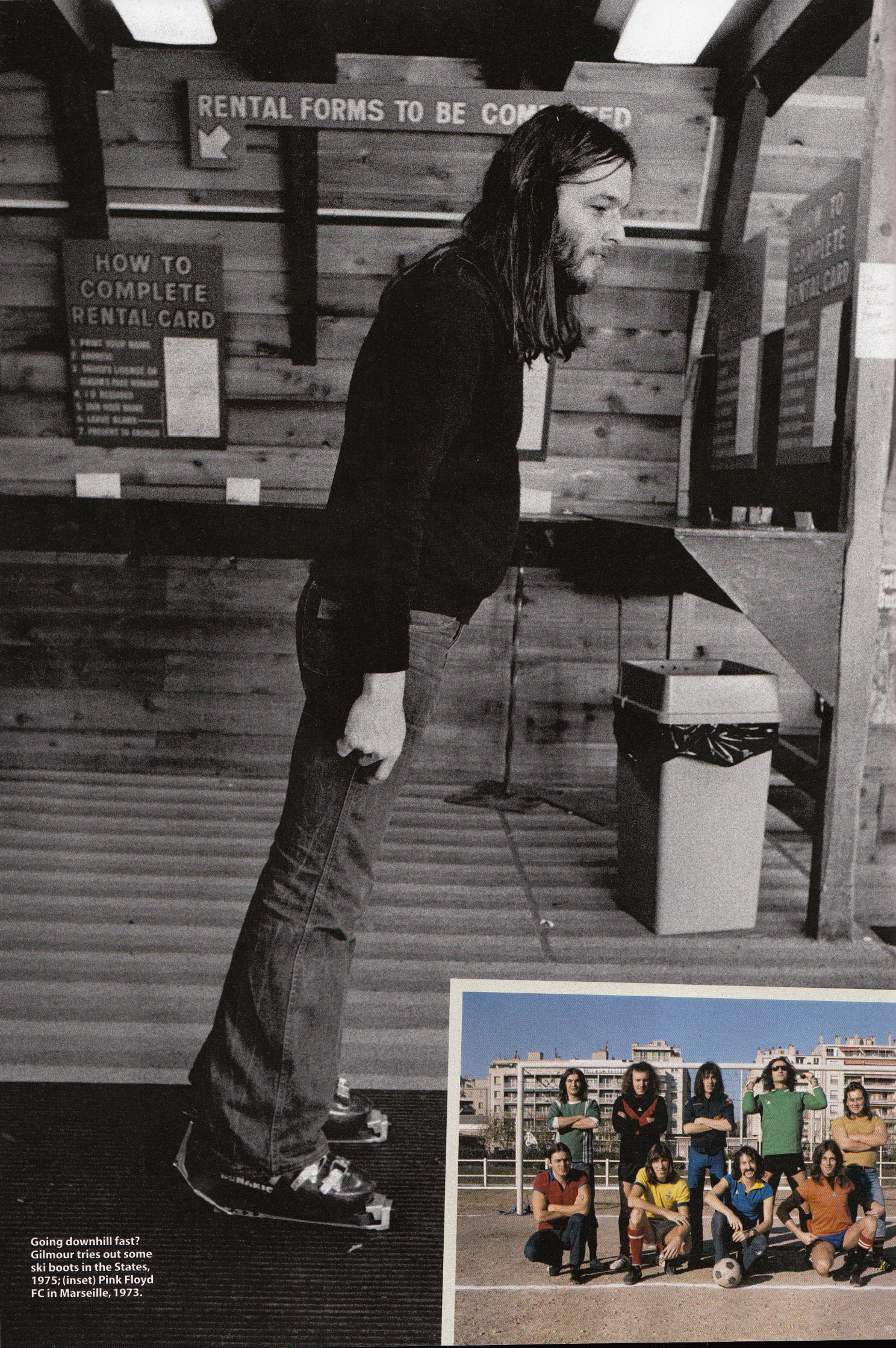
DG: It was never agreed that any one of us should be the leader. Roger was always the guy that drove things forward and had the ideas and concepts – and none of us objected to that. But I always thought I was the better musician. I was never willing to relinquish my equality.

BACK IN THE MISTS OF 1970, PINK Floyd – art-pranksters sprung from an underground scene used to such whimsy – had begun a project making music with stuff they found about the house. Floyd engineer and future Stone Roses/Muse producer John Leckie remembers “tearing newspaper to get a rhythm, and using the hiss of an aerosol

Everything’s Dandy:
(above) comic strips
from the 1974 tour
programme; (right)
Roger Waters enjoys
the self-hate, same tour.



“WE WERE A TOUGH, **CRUEL BUNCH** LED BY **CAPTAIN ROGER**, TOUGHEST AND **CRUELLEST** OF THE BUNCH.”



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Going downhill fast?
Gilmour tries out some
ski boots in the States,
1975; (inset) Pink Floyd
FC in Marseille, 1973.

< intro from the theme tune to [1950s radio show] *Take It From Here...*

DG: Absolute bollocks. (*Sings the vaguely similar four-note intro to Take It From Here*). Someone made that connection later, but it's something I will not have. These stories do the rounds, I know, but there is much more truth to the one that *Interstellar Overdrive* [from *The Piper At The Gates Of Dawn*] came from [Love's] *My Little Red Book* and the theme tune from *Stephoe And Son*.

MOJO: Was Shine On... about Syd Barrett even then?

DG: Yes. My memory is of Roger explaining his words to us and we always accepted it was about Syd Barrett. With lyrics like "you crazy diamond" it couldn't be about anyone else.

THE FRENCH TOUR BEGAN IN Toulouse on June 18, 1974, but events off-stage made it an awkward experience. Two years before, Floyd had been paid by a French soft drinks company to appear in print ads for the Gini bitter lemon drink. Waters told *Street Life* magazine that the band pocketed £50,000 for the campaign. "It could have been as much as that," says Gilmour. "We went to Marrakesh and were photographed in the desert, and the ads were only going to be seen in France." However, a clause in the contract stipulated that Floyd would be accompanied on their next set of French dates by a posse of models (Mason: "a frightful gaggle of groovy people") waving Gini placards and generally denting the band's underground credibility.

"It was our own fault," sighs Nick Mason. "It was a particularly bad decision because the French audiences always respected us and thought Pink Floyd were an art band with a cultural element. I think we rather brutalised that by having this nonsense going on."

MOJO: In August 1974 you told *Sounds* magazine that you gave the money to a French charity...

NM: (*Long pause*) We didn't give the money to charity... I don't think. No, we were rather acquisitive back then. We took the money and then realised that the commercial realities were more painful than we thought.

DG: We gave the money to charity. I have a feeling it went into a school for disabled children in France. We fell into that trap again with Volkswagen on the *Momentary Lapse Of Reason* tour [in 1986]. One gets these moments of weakness in life, and that

was one of mine. I gave the money to charity then. You hear these poor bastards claiming that without massive sponsorship they wouldn't be able to tour. And I always think, Yeah, right, pull the other one...

BUT WHOEVER ENDED UP benefiting financially, the Gini deal left a bad taste. Waters began writing a self-flagellating song, the still unreleased *How Do You Feel*, on the flight home from Morocco. Answering criticism from a French journalist that the deal had upset the band's French audience, he said, "Life isn't fair. If their enjoyment of the music rests on this misleading idea that we're saints, than I'd rather they didn't listen to the music." Waters' anger could be heard in the band's new music, and was apparent when Pink Floyd went back on the road for a short UK tour, beginning on November 4 at Edinburgh Usher Hall and slated to include four nights at the cavernous Wembley Empire Pool.

The touring party included *The Dark Side...*'s saxophonist Dick Parry, plus backing vocalists Carlena Williams and former Ikette Venetta Fields. Floyd now performed in front of a circular film screen on to which images of animated clock faces and rush-hour commuters were projected. "The films were made in such a way they didn't have to sync too closely," says Mason. "But the technology could be a bit cranky."

Journalists were refused tickets for the first night, but Melody Maker's Chris Charlesworth paid a tout, and, to Waters' ire, even secured an interview with Rick Wright, who revealed that Gilmour had the lyrics to the new songs "stuck on to the top of his guitar". Little wonder, as the words for *Raving And Drooling* and another new song, *You've Got To Be Crazy* (later to become *Sheep and Dogs* on the group's 1977 album, *Animals*) were complex and, in the case of the latter, unusually pointed: "You gotta keep everyone buying this shit..."; "gotta forget that you're gonna get cancer."

"The problem was that there were just too many words," says Gilmour. "I said to Roger, I can't get 'em out, >

ASTRONAUTS, VIOLIN... CUTLERY?!

Inside the "Immersion Editions" of *Dark Side...* and *Wish You Were Here*.

THE IMMERSION box-set editions of *The Dark Side Of The Moon* and *Wish You Were Here* contain concert performances, early versions of studio tracks and original screen films used on the 1973, '74 and '75 tours. They chart the progress of both albums and how the music developed on the road. Film-makers including Peter Medak (director of the Peter O'Toole-led 1972 black comedy *The Ruling Class*) and the future Wall artist Gerald Scarfe produced footage for the circular film screen which hung behind the Floyd on-stage. Scarfe's animated film for *Welcome To The Machine*, which has the grotesque visual elements he would develop further on *The Wall*, is reproduced in the *Wish You Were Here* box, while Medak's chilling hospital footage accompanies *The Dark Side Of The Moon*.

Audio wise, *The Dark Side...* box has an early version of *The Great Gig In The Sky*, before session singer Clare Torry added her vocal. Instead, engineer Alan Parsons included dialogue between astronauts from NASA's archives. "I did it when the band were off watching a football game," recalls Parsons. "I thought it worked very well. They didn't."

Among the rarest of rarities is *The Hard Way*, a remnant of the 1973 *Household Objects* material featuring a funky rhythm created with human footsteps and an elastic band, and an orchestral-sounding chord built from tuned wine glasses. Just as startlingly, an alternate take of the song *Wish You Were Here* has an improvised solo by jazz violinist Stéphane Grappelli, who was also recording in Abbey Road, with classical counterpart Yehudi Menuhin. His playing adds a gypsy camp-fire feel to the ballad. Nick Mason is a big fan. "At the time we thought, Well this is supposed to be us making this record, not special guests. But I think Stéphane's version is wonderful. Why we didn't use it instead, I don't know."

"THE HARD WAY FEATURES A FUNKY RHYTHM CREATED WITH HUMAN FOOTSTEPS AND AN ELASTIC BAND."

Gerald Scarfe's nightmarish animation for *Welcome To The Machine*, available on *Wish You Were Here's* "Immersion" version.

"WE WERE MORE INTERESTED IN PLAYING SQUASH THAN DRUGS. THOUGH WE DID BOTH."

Floyd at play. Gilmour and Waters give it some Omar Sharif while Rick Wright and Nick Sedgwick take a ciggy break, USA, 1975.



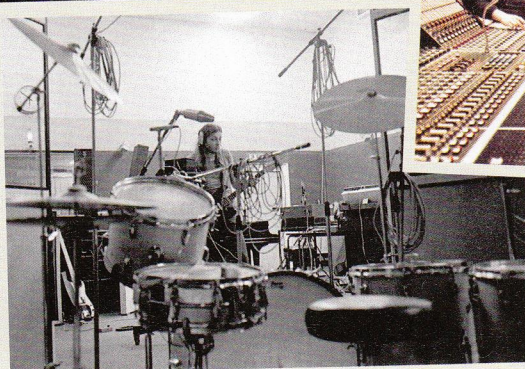
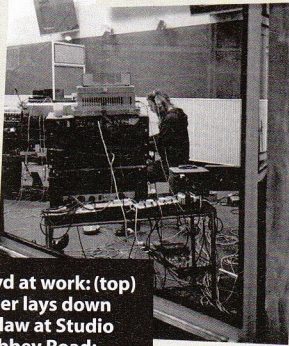
“THE MAGIC WORD WAS **ABSENCE**. AN ABSENCE OF **SYD**, AN ABSENCE OF **WIVES**.”

◀ Rog, I can't do 'em fast enough. Can we change 'em please? Which we did.”

Pink Floyd's winter live show began with the distorted voice of 'housewives' choice' Radio 2 DJ Jimmy Young. His babbling built up to fever pitch before the throbbing bass notes of Raving And Drooling signified Pink Floyd's arrival. It was a dramatic opening. However, the first few shows were hampered when a new mixing desk failed to work properly. Matters improved with the recruitment of a new front-of-house engineer, Brian Humphries, who'd previously engineered Floyd's soundtrack album *More*, but not enough to alter the prevailing air of business-as-bloody-usual, punctuated by golf, backgammon and outings for the Pink Floyd First XI FC. “On that '74 tour we were more interested in playing squash than taking drugs,” recalls Mason. “Though we did both. Perhaps the drug dealers owned the squash courts.”

The first two performances at Wembley on November 14 and 15 were reviewed in New Musical Express by Nick Kent, whose stinging critique accused the band of looking bored, and described David Gilmour as having “split ends... and filthy hair” (see panel, p82). The guitarist was so angry he contacted NME and was given the right to reply.

Floyd at work: (top) Roger lays down the law at Studio 3, Abbey Road; (centre) Gilmour noodles; (bottom) Wright doodles.



MOJO: Did the NME review hit a nerve?

DG: Nick Kent had every right to say whatever the fuck he liked... I was over-sensitive about my split ends. But to say I never washed my hair? Untrue. Libellous! (Laughing). The thing is that was an uncomfortable moment, because we didn't think that

Wembley gig was up to much either. But there's a whole performance from Wembley from that tour on this new [Immersion] version of *Wish You Were Here*, and when I heard it again I thought it sounded brilliant.

NM: When the reviews were bad, we didn't retire, but we did want to be approved of. We had been loved and now we weren't. It did feel as if we were being punished for being successful.

DG: The most difficult problem on that tour was our lovely lighting director Arthur Max. He was a bit of a superstar and he wanted to be a fifth member of the band on equal pay. We said, “Arthur, much as we love you, no!” He decided it was enough and we decided it was enough, and he left on the train to Liverpool. [Max would become an Academy Award-nominated movie art director.]

MOJO: Did the mood improve after he left?

DG: In some ways, yes. But in some ways the inspiration in the visual department became diluted. I'm not trying to make a pun, but the mood on that tour was on the dark side.



THE MOOD WAS APPARENT TO sleeve designer Storm Thorgerson and writer Nick Sedgwick. Both had grown up with Gilmour, Waters and Syd Barrett in Cambridge, and had been assigned to write a book about the band. Storm and Nick's

closeness to the group enabled them to record some of the band's conversations. “I had tapes, not of arguments... but, shall we say, ‘discussions’,” says Thorgerson. “At times people may have said things they wished they hadn't said, but it does display the dynamic within the Floyd at that time.”

By the final dates, Waters was dedicating *Shine On You Crazy Diamond* to “Sydney Barrett”. Yet it would be a while before the band came completely to terms with their former leader's legacy.

“Being constantly compared to how it was with Syd niggled us,” says Mason, “because there was some truth in it. He had done all the writing and here we were daring to carry on without him. But when Syd left we could play what we wanted and now it would sound good.”

“In 1968 I was certainly nervous about people saying I was a pale imitation of Syd,” concedes Gilmour, “and that we were a pale imitation without him. But by the time of *Shine On*... I think our love and respect for Syd outweighed any desire to be free of the demon of Syd. I didn't think there was anything wrong with us doing a song that had something to do with Syd Barrett.”

The band returned to Abbey Road in January 1975, taking Brian Humphries with them. “We started recording and it got very laborious and tortured,” said Waters. Notably, they spent days just trying to record the

backing track to Shine On... Part of the problem was Nick Mason's drumming...

DG: Nick had a particular style, but I had been nagging him going way back to use that style to its best advantage: stick to a regular beat and a groove. I nagged him and nagged him. In the end he was brilliant.

NM: *Wish You Were Here* was the beginning of me having to pare everything down. I'd think, Ah, that's a good place to put in a major fill, and I was told not to. That later led to things like the start of Comfortably Numb [on *The Wall*] which has some of the most minimal drums ever.

MOJO: You told Capital Radio DJ Nicky Horne that you "found the time in the studio extremely horrible. I really did wish I wasn't there." Was it really that bad?

NM: I've tried to blank it out of my memory... No, I will tell you what it was like. On *Wish You Were Here*, we were in this place where nothing would get done. And you could be there from midday until midnight, but we didn't seem to have any clear idea of what we were doing. I had this feeling of ennui – which I suspect was shared by all of us – because things weren't happening.

MOJO: You all had lives away from the group. Some band members' marriages were in trouble...

NM: Rick and I had families and we all had lives outside the band. Consequently, we were all getting unbelievably ratty. We would get fantastically cross about people being late to the studio, but it's not as if anything was going to happen whatever time they arrived.

DG: We were a tough, cruel bunch led by Captain Roger, the toughest and cruellest of the bunch. There always has to be a bit of Alpha Male-ing in life. Roger was the Alpha Male but we all joined in quite heartily with the teasing. I don't think we realised that some people took it to heart a little more than others.

MOJO: Who took it to heart?

DG: Brian Humphries found it a bit hard to take. Brian was a nice guy, but being in a band situation with us was like being thrown to the lions. He had a rag that he used to wipe the chinagraph [pencil] marks off the mixing desk. It was always the same rag – this piece of white cotton that eventually became black. Later we had it mounted in a picture frame and presented it to him... so Brian wouldn't lose his rag (laughs).

AFTER SIX MORE ARDUOUS WEEKS in the studio, Roger Waters called a band meeting. He proposed dropping Raving And Drooling and You've Got To Be Crazy, using Shine On... to open and close the record and writing some new material that would, he said, "have some relevance to the state we were in at the time." The others, except David Gilmour, agreed. "I have read that I disagreed with getting rid of those songs. I don't remember," he says now. "But guilty as proven. I was wrong. I probably argued my side vociferously but then I got on with it."

"The magic word was absence," says Storm Thorgerson, a frequent visitor to the studio. "An absence of Syd, an absence of wives – as I think some of the band were getting divorced – and to some extent an absence of commitment from the band themselves."

Absence gave Waters his theme. Three new songs: Have A Cigar, Wish You Were ➤

"IT REACHED OUT TO THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE ON A VERY PERSONAL AND EMOTIONAL LEVEL."

DIAMONDS AND PEARLS

Wish You Were Here, judged by a panel of musical experts... and one of its vocalists...

SHINE ON YOUR CRAZY DIAMOND, PARTS I-V



Steven Wilson (Porcupine Tree):

"Even before my teens, I'd hear my dad playing Pink Floyd as I was going to sleep, night after night, so I was brainwashed early on and developed a penchant for musical journeys, the idea of the album as a musical continuum rather than pop songs. What separated Floyd from other art or prog bands was that it wasn't about the musicianship, the vertical complexity, extraordinary though the performances were. It was the horizontal complexity, in how the music unfolded, which is why their music has prevailed. The first half of Shine On You Crazy Diamond is virtually flawless, the way it slows everything down to texture and flow. It was incredibly brave for a mainstream band, even in an experimental decade like the '70s, to begin an album with four minutes of almost pure atmosphere. Then the way the guitar figure enters is sublime. I-t has a momentum that's true to the song sections. Some people, particularly Syd Barrett fans, have criticised the lyrics for being an over-romanticised and guilt-ridden attempt to make up for what they'd done to him, but on their own terms, the words and images are beautiful. We all know someone who's somehow lost a spark, or the fire."

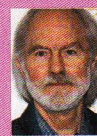
WELCOME TO THE MACHINE



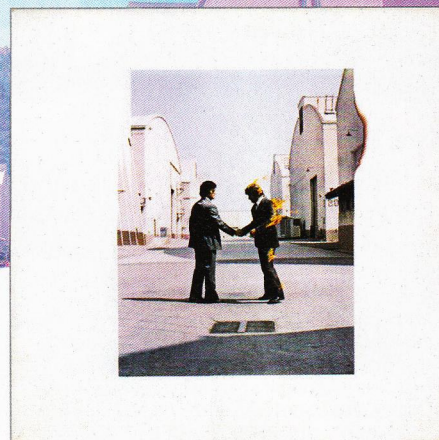
Billy Fuller (of MOJO CD stars BEAK>):

"I heard our version was upsetting the staff at [MOJO's office neighbours] FHM – that's a seal of approval for me! This track completely exemplifies one of the best things about Pink Floyd – their ability to blend synthesizers with 'real' instruments and get that really balanced, contained sound. So we took that as the inspiration on our cover, taking the 'Machine' idea as far as we could. There's something post-punky about the original track, a taste of the future, and using a chorus pedal on my bass, for the first time in BEAK> I got something of that Peter Hook sound. The original vocal is a bit pompous for me, but I think any musician can identify with the lyric: 'You dreamed of a big star/He played a mean guitar/He always ate in the Steak Bar.' The reality of the music business can be very different from the dream – something I've had the chance to ponder when driving a lorry round Wiltshire delivering vegetables to schools."

HAVE A CIGAR



Roy Harper (lead vocalist!): "We were recording at Abbey Road, in studios next door to each other, and they'd written this song, but both Dave and Roger, who'd been doing quite a bit of singing by then – couldn't get up there."



As it went on, it got worse, because you try to sing something that's high for you, and after a while your voice just says, No! They'd been at it for two or three days, and the next time I went in there, they were still struggling with it, and I said, Well, I'll do it. The original joke was, they'd give me a life-long season ticket for Lord's in return. I took it away, and changed it a little bit to suit myself. I changed accents. Then I came back and did it. My words still survive there, in the original Orwellian Newspeak – 'k's where the 'c's should be. Did I ever ride the 'gravy train', as per the lyric? No. But I believe that Roger eventually saw it as a self-fulfilling prophecy, this song. I, of course, haven't wanted it to be that. I've fought that battle for 40 years."

WISH YOU WERE HERE



Lia Ices (MOJO CD star): "This is really the first time I've been in a band mindframe, and we approached our cover more collaboratively than any music I've done before. It was a challenge to re-imagine it in a way that sounded like me. In a way it helped that Wish You Were Here is one of Pink Floyd's most 'songy' songs – really beautiful and meditative but not tied to an iconic instrumental part. I have to thank MOJO for the project launching me into a big Pink Floyd phase. I'm reading a book on them, and listening to the Syd Barrett stuff and everything. The mystique of Syd's absence is central to this song, of course, but it's not just Syd; it's like a loss of what the band used to be, a longing for the way it used to operate. There are so many layers of meaning it's fascinating."

SHINE ON YOUR CRAZY DIAMOND, PARTS VI-IX



Alex Paterson (The Orb, Gilmour collaborator, MOJO CD star): "When I was young, my brother would sing me to sleep with an acoustic guitar – Bob Dylan was my bedtime story – so I've always had fondness for a guitar and vocal, and that's what distinguishes the beginning of Shine On You Crazy Diamond, but then it develops and becomes this all-inspiring piece. And then to top it off, with those chords – duing-duing-duing-duing! It takes you into another world – very poetic and very laid back, simply Pink Floyd, like nothing else. The Orb's version of Shine On... Parts VI-IX has a more beefed-up, 21st century, dancier feel, with an 'Orby' bassline, and because the guitar on Shine On... is second to none and we didn't have guitar on our version, we sampled Gilmour's guitar from the track's first half, which he was cool with. His guitar has this ambient quality – 'cosmic' is a good adjective. I've often wondered what Floyd would have been like with Eno producing them. But Shine On – the whole of *Wish You Were Here*, actually – reached out to thousands and thousands of people on a very personal and emotional level that can never really be put into words. But that's what music can do to people, and Floyd knew how to do that."

Interviews by Martin Aston, Danny Eccleston, Andrew Perry

THE MADCAP VISITS

Syd Barrett's Abbey Road manifestation: Banquo's ghost meets the unreliable witnesses.

NOT TWO PEOPLE in Pink Floyd's world have matching stories to tell about Syd Barrett's studio visit during the recording of *Wish You Were Here*.

Arranger Ron Geesin recalled a perfectly *compos mentis* Syd dropping by Abbey Road in 1969 while Floyd were making *Atom Heart Mother*. But six years had, it seems, wrought a harrowing transformation. In Nick Mason's words, the once slender, angel-faced Syd was now "a large, fat bloke with a shaven head, carrying a plastic shopping bag."

Apart from the band, those who claim to have been there include Storm Thorgerson, Waters' pal Nick Sedgwick, Humble Pie and former Syd Barrett drummer Jerry Shirley, Roy Harper's then producer John Leckie and Floyd's backing vocalist Venetta Fields.

Most seem to agree that Barrett was at Abbey Road on June 5 while the band were completing *Shine On You Crazy Diamond*, although David Gilmour is uncertain "which song we were working on." The entire band initially struggled to recognise their former bandmate, with Roger Waters and Rick Wright telling interviewers that they were moved to tears once they realised.

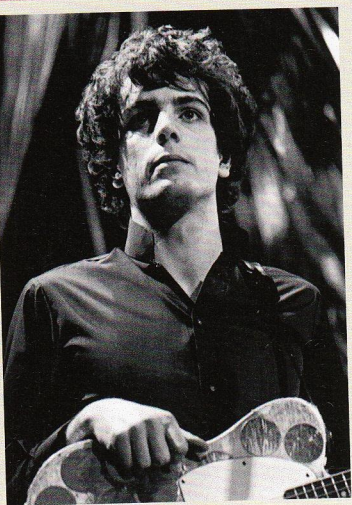
Venetta Fields, who had never seen Syd before, told the *Fleeting Glimpse* Pink Floyd fansite: "He looked as if he were on medication. He was dazed. I think no one knew what to say to him. The vibe was tense for a few minutes, but then we got back to work."

Then there's the issue of what Barrett is supposed to have said and done during his visit. John Leckie, who'd helped engineer Syd's second solo album *Barrett*, tried talking to him, but received no response. Storm Thorgerson remembered his old friend "looking terrible... asking, awkwardly, if he could be of any help." Rick Wright claimed Syd kept brushing his teeth while listening to a playback of *Shine On*... before adding more pathos by asking, "Right, when do I put the guitar on?" Jerry Shirley remembered Syd being asked what he thought of the track and answering, "It sounds a bit old." Nick Sedgwick recalls Syd in the control room, drinking orange juice and chewing Amplex breath-freshening sweets. When asked his opinion of the music, Sedgwick recalls him answering, "It's all a bit Mary Poppins." And so it goes on...

Others, including Pink Floyd's former managers, Peter Jenner and Andrew King, say they saw Barrett in the Abbey Road canteen at a meal to celebrate David Gilmour's wedding to his first wife, Ginger, on July 7. The groom has denied any knowledge of this. Asked by one of the diners why he was so fat, Syd is supposed to have answered, "I've got a fat fridge in the kitchen and I've been eating many pork chops."

But whatever the exact circumstances, the June 5 apparition would be the last Syd Barrett's bandmates ever saw of him.

Barrett in his prime. Did the 1975 version think WYWH was "a bit Mary Poppins"?



"HE WAS A LARGE, FAT BLOKE WITH A SHAVEN HEAD, CARRYING A PLASTIC SHOPPING BAG."

◀ Here and Welcome To The Machine would be worked up over the coming months. And just as *The Dark Side Of The Moon* had exposed Waters' fears at the time, these new songs documented the post-*Dark Side* comedown. There was an emotional salute to Syd Barrett, sadness over Waters' failing marriage to his first wife Judy, guilt over the Gini fiasco and contempt for the music industry.

Working in the next room at Abbey Road was Roy Harper, recording his album *HQ*. Gilmour played guitar on *HQ*'s *The Game*, and as Harper's producer John Leckie says, "Roy and the Floyd were in and out of each other's sessions all the time." Hence Harper's unpaid cameo on *Wish You Were Here*.

MOJO: Why did Roy sing the lead vocal on Have A Cigar?

DG: Roger had a go at singing it and one or two people were unkind about his singing. One or two people then asked me to have a go at it. I did, but I wasn't comfortable. I had nothing against the lyrics. Maybe the range and intensity wasn't right for my voice. I can distinctly remember Roy leaning on the wall outside Abbey Road, while we were nattering away and saying, (*growls*) "Go on, lemme have a go, lemme have a go." We all went, "Shut up Roy." But eventually we said, "Go on then, Roy, have your bloody go." Most of us enjoyed his version, though I don't think Roger ever liked it.

MOJO: The track is very negative about the music business. Did you share Roger's misgivings?

DG: It was a tricky time and we all had to sit around and assess it – if you like – music and life. But before *Wish You Were Here* was done I had reached the assessment that, Right, I am a musician and I like being a musician.

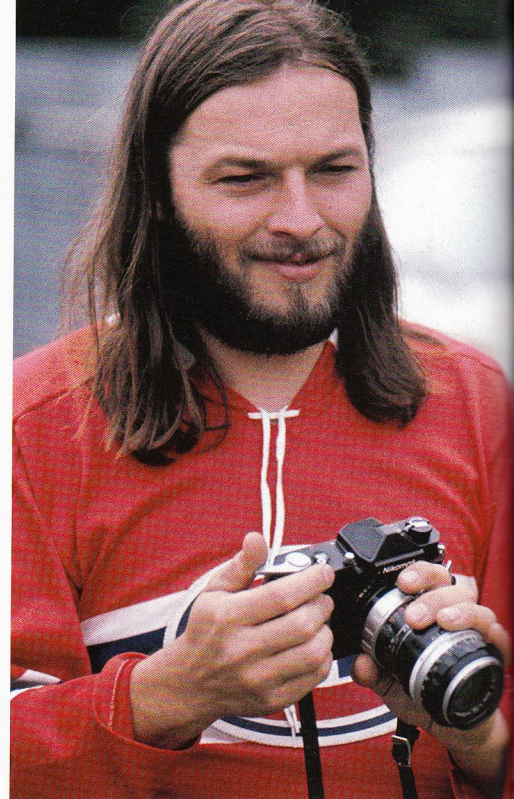
IN APRIL, THE BAND FLEW TO the US for yet another stint on the road. Storm Thorgerson joined the entourage to continue work on the book. "But the idea was petering out," he says. "I was busy, the band were busy, Roger was getting a divorce. There were also various – how shall I put it – indiscretions that might occur on foreign rather than domestic tours, and that might not have gone down well if reported. And we would have been very likely to report them."

Thorgerson raised the issue of infidelity with one unnamed band member and was told "to get the fuck off my moral high horse, because I had no idea of the difficulty in resisting temptation."

According to Waters, though, it was Gilmour who stopped the book after reading some early chapters, "because it didn't fit with how he thought of himself and his role in the band." Fair comment?

"I felt aggrieved by it, yes," says Gilmour. "I didn't think it portrayed us accurately and certainly not kindly. So I probably did manage to get it canned."

"The book was an interesting



idea," volunteers Mason, "but the trouble is Nick Sedgwick was very much Roger's friend. Even if the book wasn't slanted towards Roger, there was a perception that it was. What we should have done was get someone entirely independent and say, Write what you like."

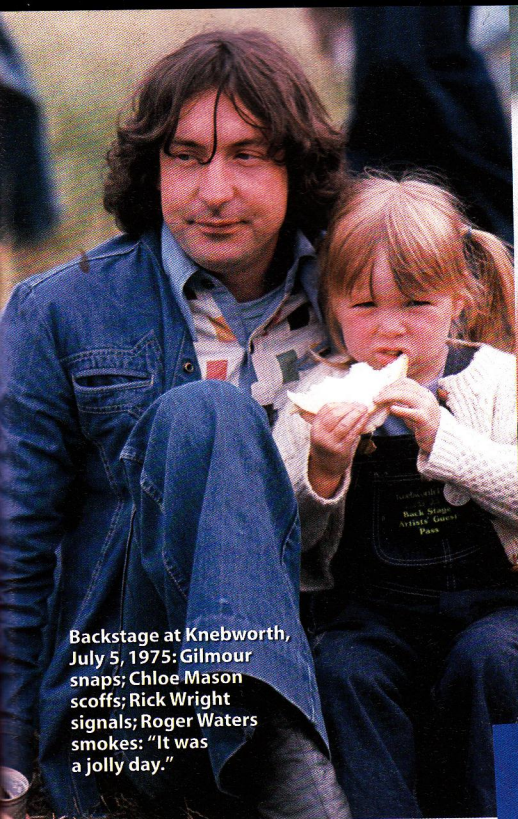
While staying in the local Hilton for the group's concert at the Seattle Centre Coliseum, Roger Waters called Judy at home, only to hear a man's voice answer the phone. Waters would recreate the call for the song *Young Lust* on *The Wall*. In the meantime, his disintegrating marriage suffused the lyrics to *Wish You Were Here*, a song in which Waters addressed "the battling elements within myself".

"I love the lyrics to *Wish You Were Here*," comments Gilmour. "I know it is not specifically about Syd, but I've always thought there was a little of Syd in there as well."

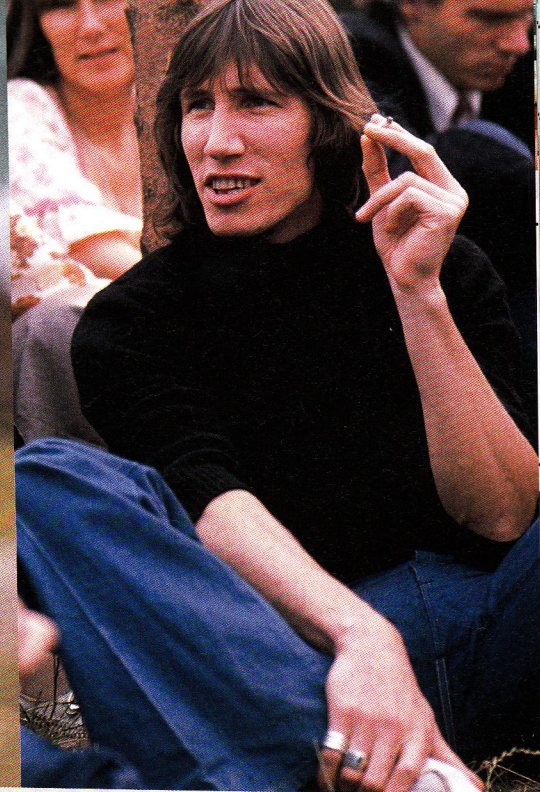
As if conjured by the content that had finally, miraculously, begun to cohere, the group returned to Abbey Road to come face to face with an apparition. Syd Barrett's reappearance while his former band made music inspired by his departure adds another strange patina to the Syd myth. If only everyone who claims to have been there could agree on the details...

DG: People love to be involved with a moment, and that's how these stories get about. I saw this guy wandering in and out and I thought he was a house engineer. Then he came into the control room and someone said, "That's fucking Syd." I think it was me, Roger thinks it was him... and so on. We tried to engage him in conversation, and then he wandered off down Abbey Road and that was the last we ever saw him. I have heard people say he came for two or three days. I don't think that's true. I also don't think he said any of the things people claim he said while he was in the studio [see panel left].

NM: It was an absolute shock. I took the photo of him that appears in my book [*Inside Out: A Personal History of Pink Floyd*]. Rick plays a bit of *See Emily Play* on the fadeout of *Shine On* (*sings the notes*). If you listen closely you can hear it.



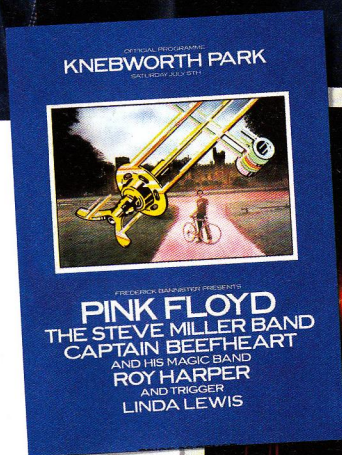
Backstage at Knebworth, July 5, 1975: Gilmour snaps; Chloe Mason scoffs; Rick Wright signals; Roger Waters smokes: "It was a jolly day."



"WE HAD BEEN LOVED AND NOW WE WEREN'T. WE WERE BEING PUNISHED FOR BEING SUCCESSFUL."

AT THE BEGINNING OF June, 24 hours after finally finishing up at Abbey Road, Pink Floyd flew to Atlanta to resume their interrupted US jaunt, by which time Waters claimed, "I hadn't got an ounce of creative energy left in me." Faced with as many as 50,000 people in open-air arenas, the band had acquired an inflatable, helium-filled pyramid, which was supposed to float over the stage: "A bloody nightmare," sighs Mason. At some point, it escaped over a stadium wall, dragging its mooring ropes with it. While the helium balloon inside escaped, the flimsy pyramid landed in a parking lot, where it was hacked to pieces by fans.

Floyd finished the tour in England on July 5 at Knebworth Park, headlining over Captain Beefheart and Roy Harper. "It was a jolly day," offers Gilmour. "Monty Python were there as well." According to Waters, however, jolliness was not universal, and when Roy Harper discovered his stage clothes had been stolen he smashed up his trailer. Alongside the phone call to his soon-to-be ex-wife, Waters noted the incident, and Harper's wrecking spree would later inspire a song (One Of My Turns) on *The Wall*.



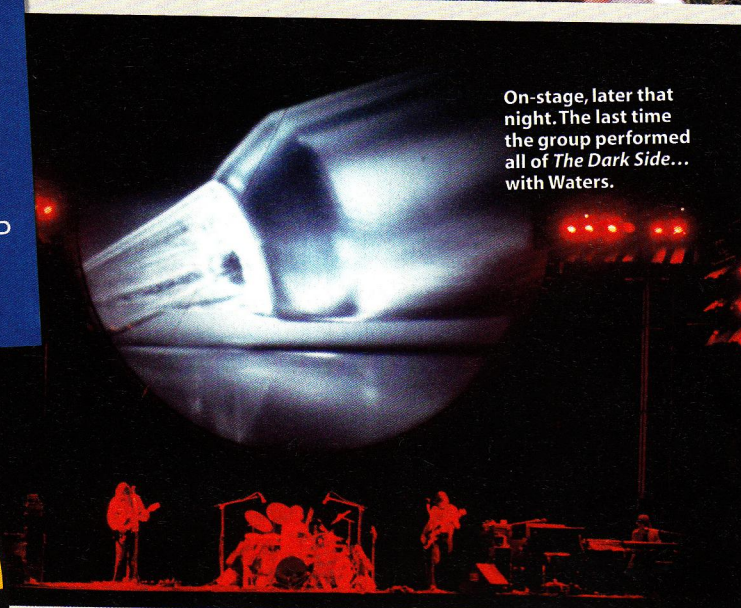
EXTRA! FLOYD!
MORE MOJO

THE ROAD TO THE DARK SIDE, A VIDEO PLAYLIST; STORM THORGERSON ON WISH YOU WERE HERE'S ARTWORK; AMORPHOUS ANDROGYNOUS'S GARRY COBAIN'S FLOYD EPIPHANY AT MOJO4MUSIC.COM

public premiere in September 1975. It met with mixed reviews (Sounds: "Light years better than *Dark Side Of The Moon*"; Melody Maker: "*Wish You Were Here* sucks!") but would become the group's first US and UK Number 1 album. Interviewed by Nick Sedgwick at the time, Waters applauded "the sadness" of the album but, proving that there really is no pleasing some people, questioned the wisdom of including some of Shine On... 's long instrumental passages.

NM: There are elements to *Wish You Were Here* that aren't on *Dark Side Of The Moon* or *The Wall*, but are still part of our heritage. Those elements go back to the long, meandering songs on albums like *A Saucerful Of Secrets* and *Meddle*.

DG: If I was to have a criticism of *Dark Side*... it's that at the same time that the songs needed to be tightly focused and separate, I also liked what



On-stage, later that night. The last time the group performed all of *The Dark Side*... with Waters.

The album they had just spent the best part of a year and a half fretting over,

Wish You Were Here made its

we had done with Echoes on *Meddle*. I thought that somewhere between the two was the ideal place where we should be heading.

MOJO: There seems to be a lot of *Wish You Were Here* in the music you made after Roger Waters left...

DG: One has one's musical palette that one develops. But it can work both ways. What can define your music, can also limit you. Sometimes the palette can get narrowed down. In some ways, whatever I do will come out sounding like *Wish You Were Here*, because that's the stuff I like. There is a certain magic mood that pervades that record. I understand why it is some people's favourite. I think it's a near-perfect album.

NM: *Wish You Were Here* wasn't made with the same white heat of enthusiasm with which *Dark Side Of The Moon* came together. But it's a wistful, romantic album, which allows the listeners to paint their own picture over the music. Other albums, like *The Wall*, are much more specific. With *Wish You Were Here* people can make up their own ideas. It's that theme of abstraction again. We still hear it from people. They say, "I know what it's about. I've got it. I've got it." And we always says, "Yes. OK. If you say so..."



Pink Floyd in Belsize Park, north London, October 1968: (from left) Rick Wright, Nick Mason, Roger Waters, David Gilmour.

Looks familiar

A 14CD introduction, if any were needed. By John Harris.

Pink Floyd



Discovery Box EMI

WELCOME TO a reissue onslaught of such breadth that it seems pretty much unprecedented. Under the somewhat gnomic banner of Why Pink Floyd?, there will be – and I quote from the PR blurb – “CDs, DVDs, Blu-ray discs, SACD [sic], an array of digital formats, viral marketing, iPhone Apps and a brand-new single-album Best Of collection.” The deluge is sub-divided into three parts, based on a rather patronising punter-typology, whereby people will go for either the *Discovery*, *Experience* or *Immersion* options. The first, it seems, is aimed at people who may only be distantly aware of who Syd Barrett was; the second at those who probably own most of the albums, but fancy a slew of new bonus tracks; the third at people who are intimately familiar with, say, Snowy White’s contribution to the In The Flesh tour, cannot get enough reproduction posters, tickets and coasters (coasters!), and wish to pay around £90 for one album and its associated nick-knacks. The essential point is that each album is to be re-released four times. Really: it’s a gas.

And so to the world of *Discovery*: all 14 Floyd albums, digitally remastered by their long-time aide and associate James Guthrie, and available separately or in a “Catalogue Box Set” – which, according to the official website, will retail for £147.93 at Asda, and £140.47 at Tesco. Said box

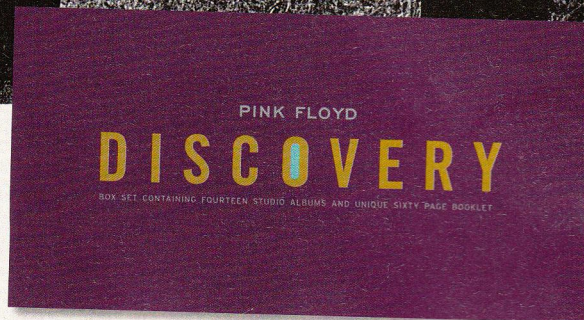
comes with a gorgeous 60-page booklet titled *Graphic Tales*, in which Storm Thorgerson presents various works that spun off the original designs for the albums, from a wire sculpture of the cow from *Atom Heart Mother* to a *Wish You Were Here* guitar. More importantly, it spans a vast array of music, from *The Piper At The Gates Of Dawn* to *The Division Bell*.

The sound, inevitably, is lovely – as proved by a few random examples. The best bits of *A Saucerful Of Secrets* are so sharply rendered as to seemingly put you at the very centre of the freak-out, not least for the managed chaos of the title track. On *Meddle*, the underrated *Fearless* is alive with acoustic nuances you barely knew existed. The technical clarity brings a new appeal to even dustier parts of their history: not least, the often overlooked movie scores *Soundtrack From The Film More and Obscured By Clouds* (eg the instrumental try-out of *The Dark Side*... aesthetically titled *Mudmen*). And obviously, the more iconic parts of the Floyd oeuvre sparkle anew. The intro to *Time*, once beloved of people doing demonstrations at ’70s hi-fi shops, sounds more immense than ever; so too does *Shine On You Crazy Diamond*.

Along the way, you’re alerted once again to the reasons why this group became such a colossal force. Personally, I have long thought that things began to go awry with *Animals*, when Roger Waters decisively took the controls and rendered things both cold, and far too complicated. By contrast, there is economy, space and amazing human warmth in the best of

this music, partly based on their limited technique (particularly true in the case of Waters and Nick Mason), but also indicative of a very English sense of understatement. It’s what makes *The Dark Side Of The Moon* and the best bits of *Wish You Were Here* such elegant creations; and what also underlines the fact that the overwrought, occasionally unlistenable *The Wall* was profoundly out of character. But from then on, the die was cast: what makes *A Momentary Lapse Of Reason* and *The Division Bell* so disappointing is the sense of Gilmour trying to maintain the bombast, when he’d have been much better off trying to elaborate on the simpler designs of the early-to-mid 1970s.

In the end, though, the most important judgment of this whole enterprise should be less about artistic considerations than the extent to which naked commerce too often sullies great art. If you already own the 1992 box set *Shine On*, if your shelves are buckling under such product as 2000’s live collection *Is There Anybody Out There?*, 2003’s Hybrid SACD version of *The Dark Side*..., the 2006 reissue of *Pulse*, or 2007’s spruced-up *The Piper*..., you may well groan at the prospect of yet another, even bigger marketing drive. Put another way, I wanted my abiding vision of 21st-century Pink Floyd to be those four wizened figures making their peace at Live 8 and playing a blinder; instead, I can hear the same tills that begin *Money*, tinkling on with a saddening sense of cynicism, possibly forever.



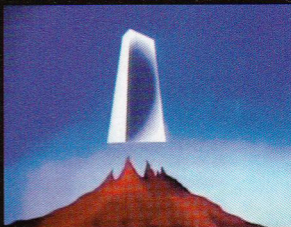
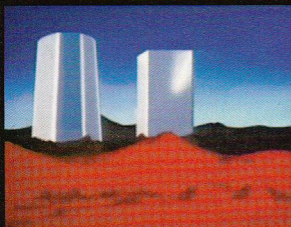
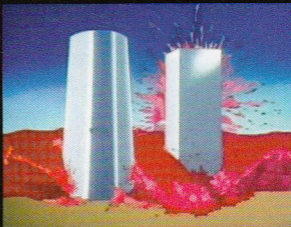
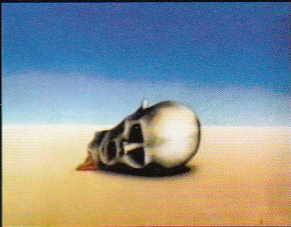
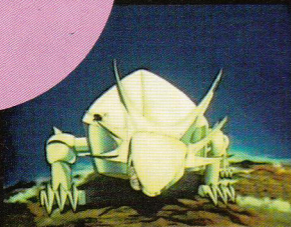
ASTRONAUTS, VIOLIN... CUTLERY?!

Inside the "Immersion Editions" of *Dark Side... and Wish You Were Here*.

THE IMMERSION box-set editions of *The Dark Side Of The Moon* and *Wish You Were Here* contain concert performances, early versions of studio tracks and original screen films used on the 1973, '74 and '75 tours. They chart the progress of both albums and how the music developed on the road. Film-makers including Peter Medak (director of the Peter O'Toole-led 1972 black comedy *The Ruling Class*) and the future Wall artist Gerald Scarfe produced footage for the circular film screen which hung behind the Floyd on-stage. Scarfe's animated film for *Welcome To The Machine*, which has the grotesque visual elements he would develop further on *The Wall*, is reproduced in the *Wish You Were Here* box, while Medak's chilling hospital footage accompanies *The Dark Side Of The Moon*.

Audio wise, *The Dark Side... box* has an early version of *The Great Gig In The Sky*, before session singer Clare Torry added her vocal. Instead, engineer Alan Parsons included dialogue between astronauts from NASA's archives. "I did it when the band were off watching a football game," recalls Parsons. "I thought it worked very well. They didn't."

Among the rarest of rarities is *The Hard Way*, a remnant of the 1973 *Household Objects* material featuring a funky rhythm created with human footsteps and an elastic band, and an orchestral-sounding chord built from tuned wine glasses. Just as startlingly, an alternate take of the song *Wish You Were Here* has an improvised solo by jazz violinist Stéphane Grappelli, who was also recording in Abbey Road, with classical counterpart Yehudi Menuhin. His playing adds a gypsy camp-fire feel to the ballad. Nick Mason is a big fan. "At the time we thought, Well this is supposed to be *us* making this record, not special guests. But I think Stéphane's version is wonderful. Why we didn't use it instead, I don't know."



Venetta Fields, who had never seen Syd before, told the Fleeting Glimpse Pink Floyd fansite: "He looked as if he were on medication. He was dazed. I think no one knew what to say to him. The vibe was tense for a few minutes, but then we got back to work."