

I just remember he was there and it did take a while to work out that this chap, who was slow and fat and bald and didn't look a bit like the slim, curly-haired Syd we knew, actually was him. We talked. I don't know what we said.

Of course following *Dark Side Of The Moon* was no easy task. Having gone from cult to icon suddenly, what was your take on your relationship with your fans back then?

We would not give any consideration to what fans or anyone else thought or liked. We were strictly insular. Pleasing yourself is the only way, artistically, to move forward I think. Otherwise you trap yourself in second-guessing and trying to be popular.

You discussed this? It was band policy?

Definitely. Do what you think is right. Take no notice of other people's views. Which is tricky in a band!

Ah. Between yourselves, you mean?

Yes, that ethos is going to cause some problems within a band set-up, which is of necessity a compromise. And, you know, there were many problems, constant problems. But they were all overcome.

Speaking of which, how do you react to this shot from 1975? (A picture from the current *Wish You Were Here* CD booklet: Waters with his arm round Gilmour, both laughing about something long forgotten.)

Nice picture. Must have been a good moment, mustn't it? It's easy to think that with all the bile and drivel that's gone on in the last 20-odd years that there was never any companionship or joy. We had really good times quite a lot of the time. All of us. We lived and breathed Pink Floyd and we were... pals... in a way.

As if to restore his emotional equilibrium, Gilmour gives the chumbush a quick plink. The steel-grey afternoon darkens a shade and we stare down the barrel of the worst time of his life. He mutters unease about discussing it. Old scars, the hazards of reopening them...

The making of the bilious *Animals* (1976), passed with only the normal tensions, the creative kind of rows "about passionate beliefs in what we were doing", as Gilmour once put it to MOJO.

But at the end of that tour, Waters ran into the notorious Damascene moment that proved the beginning of the end for the foursome. It arose from his growing "despair" at the way stadium gigs crushed "the intimacy of connection" he'd previously perceived between audience, music and band. It came to a head at Montreal Olympic Stadium on July 6, 1977.

When John Harris asked him to discuss it last year, Waters said that what he had written on the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame's *The Wall* exhibit was his best summation: "I found myself increasingly alienated in that atmosphere of avarice and ego until one night... the boil of my frustration burst. Some crazed teenage fan was clawing his way up the storm netting that separated us from the human cattle pen in front of the stage, screaming his devotion to the demi-gods beyond his reach. Incensed by his misunderstanding and my own connivance, I spat my frustration in his face. Later that night, back at the hotel, shocked by my behaviour, I was faced with a choice. To deny my addiction and embrace that comfortably numb but magic-less existence or accept the burden of insight, take the road less travelled and embark on the often painful journey to discover who I was and where I fit. *The Wall* was the picture I drew for myself to help me make that choice."

➤ **Phil Manzanera and (right) Brian Eno: les freaks, sont chic.**

Confessions Of A Teenage Floyd Freak

From Syd to The Dark Side and beyond! Floyd's three defining eras as witnessed by Roxy Music guitarist **Phil Manzanera**.

1965-1967: THE BARRETT YEARS



"I was a grovelling teenage Pink Floyd fan. Soft Machine were the grooviest, coolest psychedelic band of the era and I noticed Pink Floyd through following Soft Machine because they often played on the same bill. I'd follow their progress and when the first album, *The Piper At The Gates Of Dawn*, came out [in August 1967] it was really exciting. I was still at school, very impressionable, sucking up influences.

"I went to Christmas On Earth Revisited [at London's Olympia, December 22, 1967]. I had a rather nice French girlfriend so it was a bit like background music but it was wonderful. There were different stages, Hendrix was on, we tranced out until the tube started again in the morning. It seemed so big, culturally and socially it was what was happening.

"Floyd with Syd was a vision of wacky Englishness and experimentation with sound. The production was fantastic and they were part of the light show scene that was coming on – epidiascopes, wobbly stuff. I was too scared to take acid but the shows fuelled my imagination, I looked on in awe and amazement.

"Syd's songs too were unique. There were a lot of people who were trying to do the same thing – break out of established song structures. Put that with Velvet Underground and that gave me the push to head towards Roxy."

1968-1986: WELCOME TO THE MACHINE



"My brother Eugene [Targett-Adams] was at Cambridge University and when he was up there he had met David and he arranged for us to have lunch together. I was 17 at the time and David had just joined Pink Floyd.

"I met David in a restaurant opposite where he lived on Brompton Road – he was sharing with Syd I think. My brother was buying – he had a proper job with a bank. We had this conversation. He said keep practising the scales or keep taking the tablets. I think we went up to the flat and he showed me his guitar. He's got a proper Fender Strat, and you have only got a Galaxy...

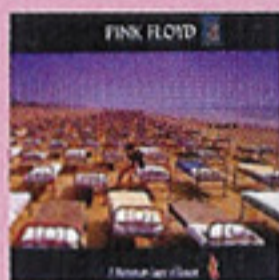
"At the time when they changed from Syd to David it seemed a continuity, though there was a change in the amount of instrumental stuff being played. David did create a different sound.

"I liked *A Saucerful Of Secrets*

[Floyd's second album, released June 1968]. I loved *Set The Controls For The Heart Of The Sun*. We played that in our school band. You could play the riff at the start, then improvise for half an hour, then come back to the riff and everyone seemed happy. Only jazz musicians – and Soft Machine – did that then. That idea of experimenting was what I was into.

"Floyd were doing things with sounds, having fun with the traditions of *musique concrète* and the Radiophonic Workshop making this spacey music. I loved the use of echo. When you got to *The Dark Side Of The Moon* [released March 1973] it came together. The songs, the atmospherics, the complete approach – it was all there. In Roxy with Eno we were definitely influenced by them at that point. After I heard David's solo on *Money*, I sent him a telegram telling him I was in a band and I'd joined Roxy. I think he said something encouraging. Then we bumped into each other over the years."

1987-2006: AFTER THE WAR



"In the '80s I was managed by [Floyd manager] Steve O'Rourke too. I had a studio in Chertsey and David and his family would come over for our Christmas Carol service.

"When David started working on *A Momentary Lapse Of Reason* [Floyd's first post-Waters set, released in 1987, we put a track together and worked on that.

"David and I are neighbours in Sussex now, so I popped round to borrow a couple of riffs and a cup of sugar and 20 months later I was co-producing his solo album, *An Island!* For the first time in a long time, he wasn't going to be affected by the pressure of a brand – he didn't have to sound like Pink Floyd. Of course, he does because his voice is very distinctive.

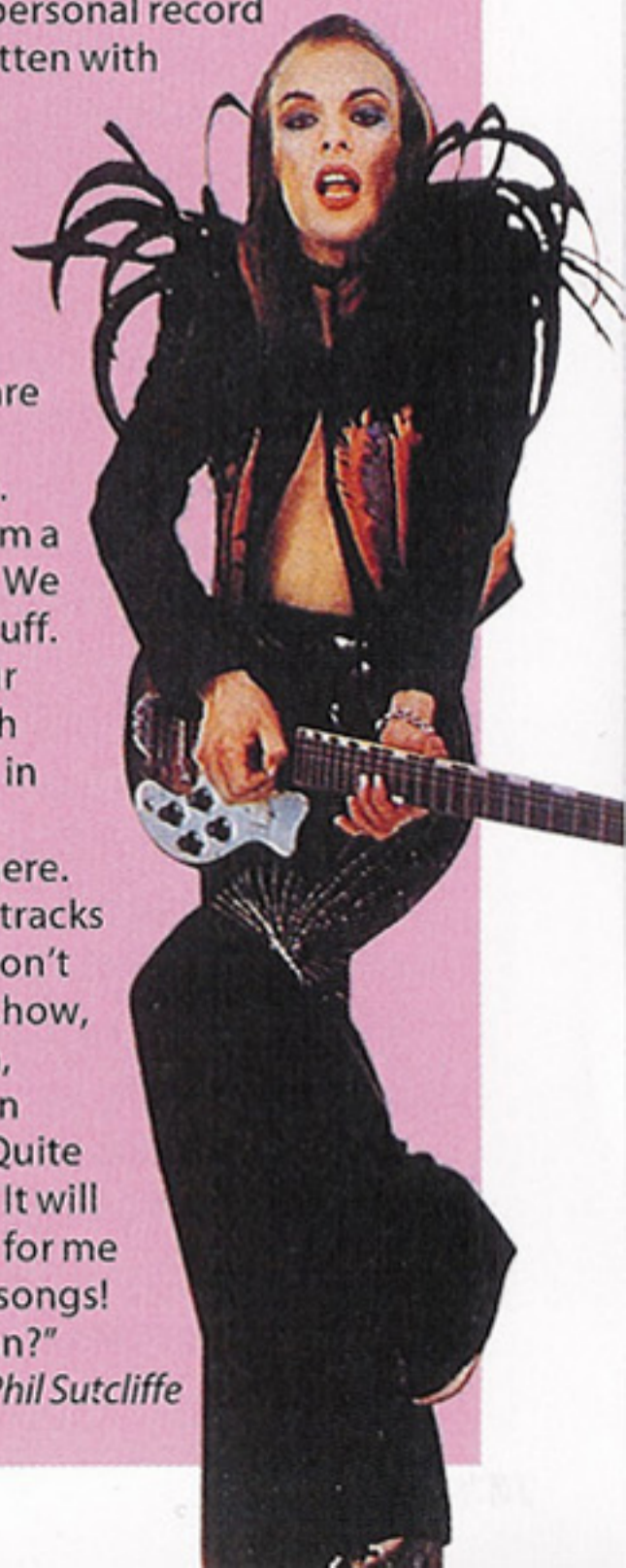
Nobody else sings like him and that's very much part of Pink Floyd, which a lot of people don't realise. It's a very English sound, the tradition of Nick Drake and Robert Wyatt. I don't mean just the accent, it's how you phrase it. And there's his guitar playing too which does reflect his personality – very melodic, very strong, it can have an edge, it can have a pastoral tone.

"The album is a personal record because David's written with Polly [Samson, – his wife] who worked with him on *The Division Bell* [Floyd's last studio release, 1994]. It's personal but there are all sorts of different tracks waiting there.

He could do an album a year for three years. We recorded bags off stuff. Then there's the tour which I'm doing with David – 27 dates, 10 in Europe, a dozen in America and a few here. Yes, there are Floyd tracks in the set but tour won't be a big Pink Floyd show, more like *Meltdown*, making a connection with the audience. Quite brave of him I think. It will be quite something for me to be playing Floyd songs! What does it all mean?"

As told to Phil Sutcliffe

"In Roxy with Eno we were definitely influenced by *Dark Side*."



"After Dark Side people wanted more stuff to boogie to..."



Floyd on the 'bilious' Animals tour; (below) Floyd fans would feel Waters' wrath on the tour which led to *The Wall* (bottom).

< From Waters' purposeful and coherent – though certainly immoderate – reaction to this incident sprang a need to take total control of Pink Floyd so that the band would say what he needed to say. Over the next six years, through *The Wall* and *The Final Cut*, this inevitably involved, by stages, pushing his friends'/colleagues' creativity aside. Further, the self-loathing aspect of his philosophical and emotional alienation would often erupt into contempt for those erstwhile bandmates. Naturally, wounded-ego wars ensued. Looking back on this period years later, he reckoned, "There was nobody in the band you could talk to about this stuff" and "There was really only one chief and that was me".

First to get the elbow was Rick Wright, then adrift in a sea of personal troubles and artistically inert. He was moved out of band membership and onto wages for *The Wall* tour. Even mild-mannered Nick Mason, who has lately built his own bridge back to friendship with Waters, reckoned that back then, "Roger made Stalin look like an old muddle-head" and that "he was deliberately keeping Dave down and frustrating him".

Essentially, the battle of Gilmour versus Waters developed into the championship scrap for the soul, and brand name, of Pink Floyd.

Meanwhile, as if to ensure that sweet reason would never get a look-in, events beyond Pink Floyd's musical lives only raised their anxiety levels. With work on *The Wall* just starting, a complex financial crisis frayed their nerves. An adviser, later jailed for these and similar activities, had invested pre-tax millions in an illegal attempt...



– unknown to the band – to evade the Inland Revenue's attentions. Many of the chosen companies, as Gilmour puts it, "went tits up". This left them with a huge tax bill to pay on the £3.3 million they'd already lost.

In consequent nomadic tax exile, Pink Floyd's *The Wall* sessions became ever more agonising, as Canadian co-producer Bob Ezrin told me last year: "We'd have these bash-'em-ups that would go on for weeks – as they're English and I'm Canadian we were very gentlemanly about it, but no one would budge." Gilmour calls Comfortably Numb, one

of only three tracks that he co-wrote out of 26, as "the last embers of our ability to work collaboratively".

During this period, Gilmour threw himself into solo albums, played with a plethora of other artists (including Roy Harper, Wings, Propaganda and Doll By Doll), and helped Kate Bush through the door at EMI. But as *The Wall* was succeeded in 1983 by *The Final Cut* – often described as Waters' first solo album – there was no avoiding the torments of Pink Floyd.

Was your first solo album, *David Gilmour*, in 1978, a retreat from Pink Floyd's "creative tensions"?

No. I was reacting to us taking so long, maybe a year, to write and record