

# No future in the past for veteran



Reluctant campaigner: David Gilmour.

**D**AVID Gilmour was midway through his first solo project in more than two decades when Bob Geldof called. Would he join fellow Pink Floyd alumnus Roger Waters for a global concert to raise awareness of poverty in Africa?

A once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for a noble cause. How could Gilmour turn it down?

But he did. Or at least tried to. "I said, 'No thank you. I support your cause, but I think you can manage perfectly well without us,'" Gilmour says.

"But then he got Roger to call me up and I finally gave in."

Last year's reunion with drummer Nick Mason, keyboardist Richard Wright and Waters was perhaps the highlight of Live 8. It even helped to end some of the discord between Waters and Gilmour.

But it put Gilmour's solo album off track: "Trying to get the thread of what you were doing before, to get back on track, took a while," he recalls.

David Gilmour's long-awaited album will not disappoint Floyd fans, **NEKESA MUMBI MOODY** reports

But this month, the threads finally came together with the release of *On An Island*, which made its debut on the US pop album charts at No.6.

Gilmour says the album's inspiration is "my life, the place I've got to in my life right now, which is a pretty nice place to be. I'm grateful for it".

The album, which mixes instrumental jazz, folk and rock, has been described by some as very Pink Floydian.

It's the guitarist's first solo album since 1984's *About Face* (he also released the Waters-less Floyd album *The Division Bell* in 1994).

But Gilmour was always thinking music. Eventually, with the encouragement of his lyrical collaborator and wife, writer Polly Samson, he decided to pull his ideas together.

Besides his wife, there are

several other collaborators on the album, including David Crosby and Graham Nash, who perform on the title track. That wasn't so much a planned production as a chance encounter, Gilmour notes.

"They were playing a concert in London. I had a chat with them and I just thought, no harm in asking," he explains.

"We went down to my studio, and we sat in front of my friends and they sang like birds.

"It wasn't something that I really set out to make — a list of people who I wanted. It's just the people who I bumped into and know and love and respect."

Of course, his most high-profile collaboration in years didn't take place on the album, but onstage.

His reunion with Waters at Live 8 in London, despite the much-detailed acrimony that

has enveloped the pair for years, not only caused Pink Floyd album sales to surge, it also renewed hope from fans that the pair may put their differences behind them for an extended reunion down the road.

In an interview last year, Waters shot down such speculation and Gilmour does as well.

"I don't feel that I would get more happiness or satisfaction out of going back to that old thing," he says.

Still, they were able to patch up things, to a certain extent, as a result of Live 8.

"It's defused a lot of stuff. I'm very thankful for that," he says.

And even though he has no plans for a reunion with Waters, his approaching US tour in April will feature not only his new material, but also classics from the rock group's catalogue.

"It is all part of what I've spent my adult life working on and I still enjoy quite a lot of it."

*On an Island* is out now.