

David Gilmour

On An Island



Gilmour's our fave Pink Floyd man. He's the one who sold his Notting Hill house for a million quid and gave the money to homeless charities. He does

great live shows which mix up operatic arias, Syd Barrett songs and idiosyncratic versions of showtunes. He's behind all the best bits in Floyd's post-Syd Barrett canon – those coma-paced ballads, those soaring guitar solos, that multi-tracked voice.

'On An Island', his first solo album in 22 years, is high-quality comfort food for Floyd fans who love Gilmour's woozy, spliff-friendly ballads but hate the bombast they accumulated after 'The Wall'. Most of its ten tracks (six of them co-written with his wife Polly Samson) sound like unplugged revisitations of Floyd's finest moments. The title track is a sublime 6/8 shuffle featuring blissful harmonies from David Crosby and Graham Nash, along with a 'Comfortably Numb'-style guitar solo from Gilmour. 'The Blue' would segue happily into 'Us And Them'; 'Red Sky At Night' recalls the intro to 'Shine On You Crazy Diamond'; 'Smile' and 'Then I Close My Eyes' would both fit comfortably on to 'Atom Heart Mother'.

Gilmour loses brownie points for his back-slapping bar-room jam sessions (both 'This Heaven' and 'Take A Breath' are a little toxic) but this is still better than any album by a sixtysomething rock dinosaur has any right to be. *John Lewis*