

David Gilmour

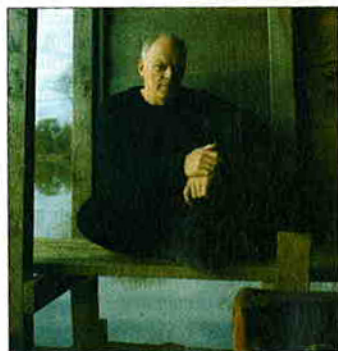
Ten things you might not know about the Pink Floyd axeman, who plays at the Royal Albert Hall on Monday and Tuesday.

1 In the summer of 1964, after finishing A levels at Cambridge Tech, Gilmour and his schoolfriend Syd Barrett went busking in the south of France, playing songs from The Beatles' 'Help' album. The pair were arrested for 'lewd behaviour' in a St Tropez nightclub and put in jail.

2 When Gilmour eventually joined his school pals in Pink Floyd three years later, Barrett – who'd learned to play guitar from Gilmour – was so fried that he didn't remember him.

3 In May 2003, Gilmour sold one of his homes, a Georgian townhouse in Notting Hill, and donated the £4 million raised to the homeless charity Crisis.

4 He famously 'discovered' Kate Bush, recommending her to EMI after being played one of her demo tapes in 1974. He co-produced her debut album and has guested on several others.



Gilmour Sold his house, moved to a lake

5 He's also played on – or produced – records by Roy Harper, The Dream Academy, Grace Jones, Tom Jones, Elton John, Arcadia, Bryan Ferry, Berlin, Ringo Starr, Robert Wyatt, Hawkwind, Jools Holland, Paul McCartney, Sam Brown, Propaganda, Pete Townshend, The Who, Supertramp and Warren Zevon.

6 He appeared at Robert Wyatt's Meltdown in 2000, inviting Wyatt to make his first stage appearance in more than 25 years to sing on 'Comfortably Numb'. Salman Rushdie was spied in the Royal Festival Hall audience, playing air guitar during Gilmour's solo.

7 At his live shows he's been known to perform Syd Barrett's 'Terrapin' and 'Dominoes', 'Hushabye Mountain' from 'Chitty Chitty Bang Bang', a Bizet aria called 'Je Croix Entendre Encore', Richard Thompson's 'Dimming Of The Day', Nina Simone's 'I Put A Spell On You' and Leiber and Stoller's 'Don't'.

8 Gilmour and his manager Steve O'Rourke were injured in the 1992 Pan-American Rally when their Jaguar went off a cliff in Mexico. Gilmour suffered only cuts and bruises; O'Rourke broke both his legs.

9 He gained his pilot's licence in April 1997 and owns a large collection of historical aircraft, including supersonic jet fighters and several old biplanes.

10 Gilmour's very first vinyl release is valued at £1,000. It's a 1966 recording of his band Jokers Wild playing soul standards. Only 50 private pressings were made. There is an even rarer seven-inch that Gilmour recorded for Jonathan King that year, featuring versions of Sam & Dave and Otis Redding songs.