

UNCUT

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DAVID GILMOUR
INTERVIEW

PINK FLOYD

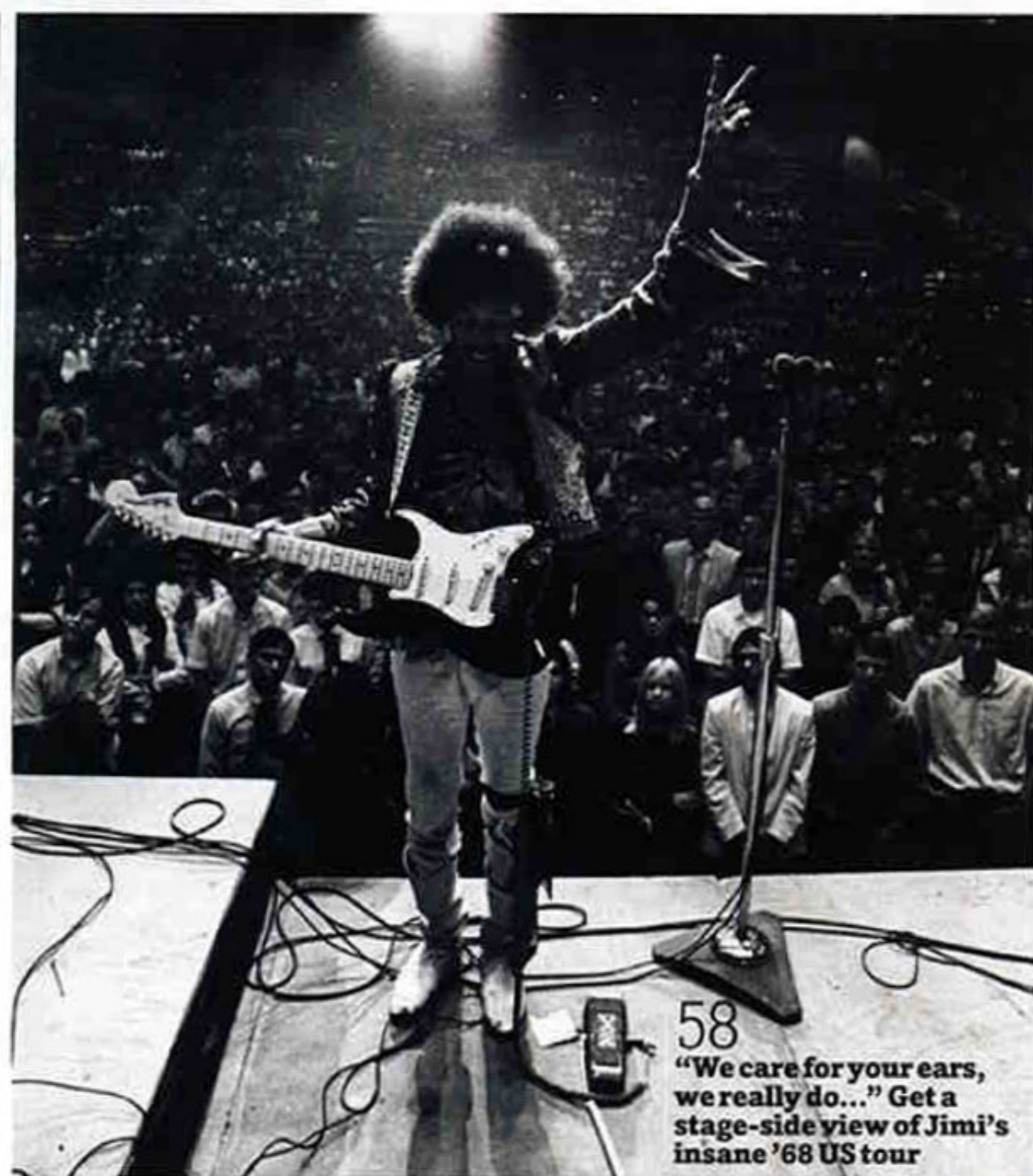
30 GREATEST SONGS

CHOSEN BY DAVID GILMOUR
NICK MASON ★ PAUL WELLER
THE JESUS & MARY CHAIN AND MANY MORE



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AOL Keyword: Uncut



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THE EDITOR



I would have read about Pink Floyd before I ever heard them, initially via tantalising mentions in what used to be *Melody Maker*, by the paper's resident

acid head, Nick Jones, son of *MM*'s legendary jazz writer, Max, who once told me a racy anecdote about Billie Holiday and her pet dachshund that I hesitate to repeat here.

Anyway, what I read from week to week about these new heroes of London's psychedelic scene, on the evidence of Nick's teasing descriptions of the places he used to hang out and the people he knew from it, a wholly exotic world, made me utterly desperate to actually hear what they sounded like, and I would have given just about everything to see them play live.

By the time that latter opportunity came along, in November 1967, "Arnold Layne", "See Emily Play" and *The Piper At The Gates Of Dawn* had all been released and were at the time among the most played records I'd so far bought, alongside, that distant summer, *Are You Experienced*. How mind-blowing, as it turned out, for the 15-year-old I then was that when I see the Floyd that November, they are on the same bill as Hendrix, who was headlining one of the most spectacular package tours of the era, the bill also including The Move, Andy Fairweather-Low's Amen Corner, The Nice and Eire Apparent.

It's a measure of the impression the early Floyd made on those of us who saw them at that time that in many respects we'll always associate them most affectionately with the music they made then - I mean, who'd heard anything quite like this before, apart from what Jimi was simultaneously doing? Hence, I guess, the weight of songs from the period before Syd so sadly lost the plot in this month's Floyd Top 30, even though the track that in the end seemed to sum up both the Syd era and the group they would go on to become without him comes from much later in their long career. As ever, now that our celebrity panel has had their say, we'd like to hear from you. Email me at the usual address with your own choice of your favourite Floyd songs.

Talking about Hendrix, as we briefly were, could I just point you in the direction of John Robinson's fascinating feature on Jimi's 1968 US tour, an extraordinary odyssey, that starts on page 58. And if you've got some spare cash, you might want to get yourself along to the Idea Generation Gallery, near Liverpool Street Station, on September 4, when the Fender Strat that Hendrix set fire to on stage at the Finsbury Park Astoria on March 31, 1967 - the first time he pulled the pyrotechnic stunt - goes up for auction, scorch marks and all. Be warned: it's expected to go for something in the region of half-a-million quid.


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"When I joined the band it looked like we wouldn't be able to write any songs at all, let alone 30 that different people love," exclaims Pink Floyd's magisterial guitarist and de facto

CEO in his intro to our cover story, starting p36. The recipient of a CBE and, in 2008, an Ivor Novello award, he is also an experienced pilot. If you ever see a "lovely old bi-plane" wandering the skies, it just might be him...

ROBERT ELLIS



...started out as a photographer in the Midlands in the late '60s, moonlighting on local newspapers while studying at college. In 1971 he was hired by *NME*, then enjoyed a

brief tenure at *Melody Maker*, but he was mainly out touring with bands. In the '80s he founded Repfoto, which evolved into Repfoto.com in the '90s. Robert was at Ziggy Stardust's last gig in 1973. See Snapshot, starting p72.

PAMELA LITTKY



...enjoys a unique relationship with her subjects and her passion for music has left an indelible imprint on her work. Spontaneous, disarming and intimate, her environmental

portraits are immediately recognisable. She's photographed numerous musicians including Johnny Rotten, Green Day, The Killers and Tom Petty. Her latest contribution to *Uncut* captures the ubiquitous Jenny Lewis, p54.



PINK FLOYD



30 GREATEST SONGS

...as voted for by **David Gilmour** and **Nick Mason** and their friends, fellow musicians and famous fans, including **Paul Weller**, **Jarvis Cocker**, **Wayne Coyne**, **Ice Cube**, **Jim Reid**, **Mick Rock**, **Robert Wyatt** and more

FOREWORD BY DAVID GILMOUR

So, the Top 30 Pink Floyd songs. Hmm. When I joined, it sometimes never looked like we'd even be able to write any songs at all, so to have 30 songs that different people love is something of an achievement, I suppose! Looking through the Pink Floyd songbook of the past 40 years surprises me sometimes. There are hundreds of songs, we go through lots of different styles of music, three different leaders and at least three different singers, and dozens of guests. But everything's linked by this collective psyche. When you're playing a Floyd song, there's a certain underground feel – it's difficult to define, but it's about texture, about atmosphere, about the use of space. It's rarely about the technical stuff.

I suppose there are several distinct stages in Pink Floyd's songwriting history. Obviously, there's the Syd era, which was before I joined. Then the second stage occurred in the years

after he left, when we were all scrabbling around, trying to fill that Syd-shaped hole in the band and not knowing entirely what we were doing. We initially tried to write the quirky, well-structured pop songs that Syd wrote, but we couldn't. Then, quite by accident, we developed what we *were* good at – those spacey, atmospheric instrumentals. And then there's a third stage, where we started to turn those instrumentals into properly structured songs, and that hit a peak with *Dark Side Of The Moon*, *Wish You Were Here* and *Animals*. Then the stuff after Roger left is yet another stage.

On my first solo tour in 1985, I didn't want to do any Pink Floyd songs. I think I grudgingly did a version of "Money", but the whole issue of playing old material was a bit sore. Nowadays, when I tour, both as a solo act and as one third of Pink Floyd, I'm happy to play Pink Floyd songs from every era of the band's history. There's an emphasis on my side of the songs – or mine and **CONTINUES OVER**»

