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Love & Sex



TODAY SIMON CALLOW: MY FIRST LOVE TOMORROW FANTASIES & FETISHES



Gordon Brown was given a personal rating of just 4.3 out of 10 in the poll of 788 Labour members and supporters carried out for *The Independent* by Labourhome.org PA

Now the grassroots turn against Brown

By Andrew Grice
Political Editor

THE LABOUR Party's grassroots have turned decisively against Gordon Brown and a majority want him to stand down, according to an exclusive poll for *The Independent*.

A survey of rank-and-file Labour activists found 54 per cent would prefer some-

EXCLUSIVE Poll shows most activists want PM to quit

one else to lead the party into the next general election. Mr Brown's personal rating was lower than every other member of the Cabinet except the Chief Whip Geoff Hoon and the Transport Secretary Ruth Kelly.

The findings are a crushing blow to the Prime Minister on the eve of a make-or-break annual Labour conference in Manchester starting tomorrow. He had been relying on the supposed support of ac-

tivists to dampen the whispering campaign against him in Parliament. Some 45 per cent of those who responded believe that changing the party's leader before the next general election would improve Labour's prospects. Some 27 per cent believe that a new leader would make no difference to Labour's chances, while 28 per cent think it would worsen them.

A majority (57 per cent) believe there

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Rick Wright's legacy

PLUS: Metallica
Ian Rankin

THE
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Arts & Books Review

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The Progfather

Rick Wright's
shimmering legacy

PLUS

- Emmanuelle Béart
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Portrait
of Rick Wright
from Pink Floyd
KARL GRANT / BETNA



Rick Wright gave Pink Floyd their surreal, spacey sound. **Andy Gill** bids farewell to the man, and the band, who changed the face of rock

Interstellar overdrive

With the death this week of keyboardist Rick Wright, the dim hopes for another Pink Floyd reunion finally faded. With David Gilmour and Roger Waters's individual tours both featuring their own interpretations of choice moments from the band's back catalogue, it appears that the group's brief reformation for the Live 8 benefit concert did indeed constitute the Floyd's last hurrah.

There are several ironies about this situation, not the least being that Wright was at one point kicked out of the band. Nor, indeed, was he one of the group's central composers, contributing sparsely to their oeuvre as a writer. But his distinctive keyboard technique was such an integral component of the band's sound that, although session players might easily replicate his parts, it would be like giving the group a soul transplant.

Undoubtedly the most significant British band to surface from the late-1960s hippie boom, Pink Floyd brought a questing originality and inventive spirit to rock music as they developed the signature sound that blossomed so spectacularly on *Dark Side of the Moon*. Uniquely among their peers, they

managed the extraordinary feat of abandoning their chief songwriter (or vice versa) not once but twice, with subtle changes in approach but little diminution in popularity.

Imagine Pete Townshend leaving The Who, or Keith Richards leaving the Stones: such a loss would clearly be terminal. Yet the Floyd managed to dispense first with the quicksilver, quixotic genius of Syd Barrett, bassist Roger Waters stepping assuredly into the breach as creative mainspring, to lead the band on the journey that would reach *Dark Side of the Moon* and *The Wall*; then, when Waters in turn departed, guitarist Gilmour (who had originally joined to cover Barrett's growing unreliability) covered for the loss by flexing his compositional muscles in a much more decisive manner. Arguments still rage among fans – and band members – as to the relative merits of the Barrett, Waters and Gilmour eras, but the Pink Floyd brand endured regardless.

While the band's roots are customarily located in Cambridge, where Waters, Barrett and Gilmour first made each other's acquaintance, the Floyd only came together in London where, in the early 1960s, Nick Mason, Waters and Wright were all studying

architecture at London Polytechnic (now the University of Westminster) in Upper Regent Street. The three became part of a loose association of musicians operating under a variety of whimsical names – Sigma 6, The Architectural Abdabs, The Tea Set – before Waters's Cambridge chum Barrett joined and the group settled as the four-piece Pink Floyd Sound, named after a couple of obscure American bluesmen, Pink Anderson and Floyd Council.

Oddly, unlike most bands of the era, the line-up came about not by replacing the least competent players, but the most capable. "It stabilised around people of equal ability, or equal interest," Mason told me. "I seem to remember that the guy who had the best guitar, and knew the most songs, was the guy who left! Though I know that Rick would be most aggrieved by that. He was more committed to music earlier than the rest of us – in fact, he left the Poly after the first year and went to music college."

Mere competence, however, was never a high priority for the band. Nor was the fluff and nonsense of chart pop – though they would be one of the first "underground" bands to score hit singles. Instead, the quartet ►



Rebirth: (clockwise from left) Nick Mason, Dave Gilmour, Roger Waters and Richard Wright in 1970; (far left) Pink Floyd reunite at Live 8 in 2005 MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY IMAGES; JO HALE/GETTY IMAGES

REMEMBERING RICK, BY NICK MASON

Losing Rick is like losing a family member – in a fairly dysfunctional family. He's been in my life for 45 years, longer than my children and longer than my wife. It brings one's own mortality closer. I'll remember Rick with great affection. He was absolutely the non-contentious member of the band and probably suffered for it. I wouldn't say he was easy-going, but he certainly never pushed to any aggravation. It made life a lot easier.

I first met Rick at the Regent Street College of Architecture. And I think Rick was always pretty much that same character I met in 1962. Rock'n'roll is a Peter Pan existence; no one ever grows up. Over a period, we gravitated towards the people who were less interested in architecture and more in going to the pictures and making music. The band

happened a couple of years later. We all had very different ways of working. He always knew what he wanted to do and had a unique approach to playing. I saw an interview he did on TV, and he said it clearly: "Technique is so secondary to ideas." Roger [Waters] said the more technique you have, the more you can copy. Despite having some training, Rick found his own way.

To some extent, I think, the recognition for what he did in the band was a bit light. He was a writer as well as a keyboard player, and he sang. The keyboard in particular creates the sound of a band. By definition, in a rock'n'roll band people remember the guitar solo, the lead vocal or the lyric content. But a lot of people listen to our music in a different way. The way Rick floats the keyboard through the

music is an integral part of what people recognise as Pink Floyd. He wrote "The Great Gig in the Sky" and the music for "Us and Them".

We were a very close-knit band and one always has the memory of that. We spent a lot of time together between 1967 and the mid-1970s. Rick was a very gentle soul. My image of Rick would be him sitting at the keyboard playing when all the fireworks were going on around him. That's the main quality one remembers, in a band where Roger and David [Gilmour] were more strident about what they believed should be done.

If there's something that feels like a legacy, it's Live 8 [July 2005, Hyde Park] and the fact that we did surmount any disagreements and managed to play together. It was the greatest occasion.



The gig in the sky: Richard Wright in concert in 2006 BRIAN RASIC/REX FEATURES

THE DIVISION BELL ALSO TOLLED FOR THESE ARGUMENTATIVE ACTS



TAKE THAT

Robbie Williams walked out on Take That in 1995 to forge a solo career, and he and Gary Barlow subsequently feuded for many years. Despite rumours that the pair had reconciled, instead of Williams rejoining the group for the reunion tour more than 10 years later, fans had to make do with a 20ft hologram of the star.

THE LIBERTINES

One of the most shambolic tales of recent rock'n'roll history. Pete Doherty wouldn't give up the drugs and so Carl Barat gave up Doherty. Doherty was finally kicked out of the band in 2003 after he burgled Barat's flat. Yet last year the pasty-faced poet asked Barat to be his best man.



Andre Csillag/Rex Features

THE SMITHS

The intense relationship between Morrissey and Johnny Marr became strained throughout the Eighties until the band split in 1987. Morrissey was reportedly annoyed by Marr's work with other artists and Marr disliked Morrissey's obsession with covering Sixties popsters. "I didn't form a group to perform Cilla Black songs", he later said.

SPANDAU BALLET

The Eighties new romantic band's spectacular fall-out ended in the High Court. Nine years after they split in 1990, Tony Hadley, Steve Norman and John Keeble lost their action when they sued Gary Kemp for a £1m share of the songwriting royalties.

Elisa Bray



◀ favoured outlandish experimentation, encouraged by their tutor (and landlord) Mike Leonard to incorporate sound effects and *musique concrète* elements into the pieces they created to accompany his lighting artworks. At the time, Fender was starting to produce amplifiers with vibrato effects, and the first of the new generation of sonic gizmos were appearing; tape-delay machines like the Watkins Copycat and the Binson Echorec, the latter becoming an integral part of the band's sound.

"There was a lot of using echo repeat to play triplets in a 4/4 rhythm," explains Waters, "which is what you get on 'Pow R Toc H', with all that tapping of the microphone, things like that. They're very simple devices, but very effective."

Particularly influential on the band's sound was the low-budget sonic genius Ron Geesin, who was experimenting with tape-delay effects long before anyone else in the UK. "He invented the technique of pulling the tape out between the record and playback heads to create a long delay," Waters recalls. "You'd run the tape past the record head, then pull it off the machine, round a mic stand, and back into the machine. Then, by moving the mic stand closer or further away from the machine, you could change the length of the delay."

With a couple of vicars' sons, Peter Jenner and Andrew King, assuming managerial duties, the band secured gigs in London, became fixtures at early hippie clubs like UFO and Middle Earth, and even started playing outside their comfort zone, to provincial audiences less inclined to take their lengthy experimental jams as entertainment. An ironic low was reached when the group played a Catholic youth club, after which the promoter refused to pay them on the grounds that what they were playing "wasn't music". When they took him to the small claims court, the promoter won the case. It was official: they weren't playing music!

Nevertheless, they were creating enough of a stir for EMI to offer the Floyd a recording contract, which soon resulted in hit singles such as "Arnold Layne" and "See Emily Play". Listen now to those early records, and what's most striking about them is not the voice or the guitar or the beat, but the washes and whizzy keyboard noises with which Wright fleshed out Barrett's songs, and gave them a sort of audio-visual context as strange, surreal and haunted as the courtyards and landscapes inhabited by Giorgio De Chirico's busts, bananas and mannequins.

Without Wright's contributions, they would be just whimsical little nursery-rhymes from Barrett's bag of songs about gnomes, cats and scarecrows, a kindergarten world of English eccentricity in the mould of Edward Lear and Hilaire Belloc. But with his unique additions, they assumed a more sinister, forbidding aspect.

When Barrett became too fried on acid to contribute reliably, Wright's jazz- and classical-influenced keyboards took on a new importance as the group's output metamorphosed from maverick kiddie-pop psychedelia to the longer, unhurried space-rock pieces that would become their trademark. It was Wright who provided texture and colour to the vacuum of space, so to speak, on signature tracks like "Careful With That Axe, Eugene", tracking the music's progress from contemplative reflection to juggernaut aggression. Without meaning to, he and the band had in effect invented a new genre, progressive rock, which for other, less innovative bands became simply an excuse for long, masturbatory instrumental solos, but which in the Floyd's hands offered much subtler, more intriguing musical possibilities.

"One of the great things about the Floyd is the dynamics of the music," Wright believed. "You rarely hear those kind of dynamics in a live concert, from quite quiet to a lot of noise; but it's been the Floyd's thing, ever since we started, to have a more subtle

balance between quiet and loud. For me, that might possibly have come from being brought up on classical music, in which the symphonies have huge dynamics."

That dynamic balance was not easy to capture in the studio, however, as early synthesizers proved about as unreliable as Syd Barrett. "On the Mini-Moog, you'd tune three oscillators together to get the sound," Wright explained when I interviewed him a few years ago. "It's really quite an intricate process - if one oscillator goes slightly out, it's ruined. Nowadays, you just push a button and anything you want comes out. But when we started, there were no synthesizers; the first time we got near anything like that was the VCS3, developed by the BBC Radiophonic Workshop, which we used for 'On the Run'. Basically, all our sound went through the Binson Echorec: my Farfisa organ, Syd's guitar, even Roger's bass, occasionally. That was all we had! These days, computers have made it so much easier - but people still struggle to get that *Dark Side of the Moon* sound, there's something very unique about that."

It was to *Dark Side of the Moon* that Wright contributed perhaps his most memorable compositions, "The Great Gig in the Sky" (made especially notable by Clare Torry's histrionic wordless vocal solo) and "Us and Them", which many consider the heart of the album. Originally written for the Antonioni movie *Zabriskie Point* but rejected by the director for being "beautiful, but too sad... it makes me think of church", it has since

Without Wright's contributions, they would be whimsical little nursery rhymes from Barrett's bag of songs about gnomes, cats and scarecrows

become one of the emblematic Floyd melodies, its air of melancholy resignation perfectly evocative of the soothing, distinctly British discomfiture underlying much of the band's output. But such moments became rarer as the band's more dominant warring personalities fought for control of authorship.

"Sometimes, I'd sit down at rehearsal or sound check and play something, improvise a little," Wright recalled, "and David would come over and say, 'What was that? It's really good!', and I'd say, 'I have no idea, I can't repeat it.' Sometimes I play something, and I haven't recorded it, and I don't know where it came from, why my hands did what they did, what key it was in, anything. For me, playing music is like meditating - I just play and don't really think about what I'm doing, I just let it happen. And those moments can be really, really precious."

With the advent of punk, Pink Floyd became one of the least hip bands around - not that falling out of fashion exactly harmed their sales, as 1979's *The Wall* proved colossally successful, vying with *Dark Side of the Moon* as their biggest-selling album. But the kind of things the Floyd represented - doubt, introspection, lengthy development of themes, grandiose stage presentations - would for a while be scorned by tastemakers, a situation not helped by the comparatively lacklustre albums that followed *The Wall*.

It would take another decade for their star to rise again, during the late-1980s boom in loved-up dance music, when producer-DJ outfits such as The Orb would use many of the methods invented by Pink Floyd - and probably a few actual sampled tones and textures, too - in their sonic collages. Since then, the group has resumed its position as one of the legendary touchstones of British rock music, no more embarrassing an influence to cite than The Beach Boys or Leonard Cohen, legends whose careers have likewise waned and waxed back into favour. But now, alas, less likely to be seen again.