

# David Gilmour

## On An Island

EMI (out tomorrow)



A David Gilmour album wouldn't normally be an event for anyone outside the tight circle of Pink Floyd fans, but Live8 has changed that. Turning 60 tomorrow, Gilmour finds himself almost the man of the moment. There's nobody else who can go on Radio 4, as he did on Thursday, and explain that the germ of one song came when he played 'an unusual form of E major seventh chord, with the E major note rather low'.

Gilmour is the most statesmanlike of elders. His songs unfold with sumptuous leisureliness; his guitar solos, always measured, never screechy, seem to last for weeks. The majestic plod of the Floyd is much in evidence here.

The album opens with an art-rock overture containing sound effects so familiar (bells!) that Gilmour may be mocking himself. There is even a helicopter, though that could just be the kids coming home from school.

It's not exactly a concept album, but the mood and the lyrics, mostly co-written by Gilmour's wife, Polly Samson, keep coming back to islands and holidays. After decades of existential gloom, Gilmour has gone over to the light side.

The title track, the one with the E major seventh, is a formidable mini epic involving a solo of such meticulous grandeur that the builders at Wembley will surely get a move on just so it can ring out at the next big charity gig there.

Take A Breath, a very different beast with a marching rhythm and a sinister edge, demands to be downloaded. But mostly Gilmour's happiness writes white and there's not enough drama.

He should give Roger Waters another call.