

albums, but lost interest after they lost Syd. Still, those first singles and songs continue to play regularly in the jukebox of my mind.

GOODBYE BLUE SKY From The Wall

Among The Wall's gentler moments, but nevertheless, alongside Gilmour's gently-plucked guitars and sweet "oohs", Waters still finds room for "falling bombs" and "frightened ones".



Gerald Scarfe, illustrator/ animator, The Wall album, stage-show and movie Roger said he had this magnum opus he wanted to produce. He came to my

house and played me the raw tapes, watching like a hawk. There was an awkward silence. Roger said, "I feel like I've pulled down my trousers and shat in front of you." At that point The Wall didn't mean a lot to me. But when Roger talked to me about what was behind it, we had in common being affected by the Second World War. Roger's father had been killed in it, and I'd had a miserable time. "Didyousee the frightened ones, didyou bear the falling bombs/The planes are all long gone, but the pain lingers on" - those are lines in "Goodbye Blue Sky" I can very much identify with. I was four when the war started. I was born into a world of ultimate chaos. I have very strong memories of air raid shelters and having to wear these ghastly gas masks. As an asthmatic, I couldn't breathe. I used all of that in the animation for "Goodbye Blue Sky" in the film - the frightened troglodytes have gasmasks for heads, and are crouching underground. The song, and the animation, has a sadness that resonates with my real past very strongly. And with Roger's.

BREATHE

From The Dark Side Of The Moon

Dark Side...'s curtain-raiser begins languidly (another pastoral Floyd album?), but its lyrics ("Run rabbit, run") are wickedly booby-trapped.



Guy Garvey, Elbow My sisters loved The Dark Side Of The Moon, so it was always playing somewhere in the house. At 17 or 18, I had an acid experience and it made me listen to

the album in a completely different way. I think Pink Floyd's ethos for Dark Side... was very different, too. It was industrial, experimental rock and represented a machine-made freedom. They were utilising everything at their disposal, experimenting within themselves. It was a classic example of using the studio as an instrument. "Breathe" is as simple as dimples in the way it's sung, but they use an interesting vocal tracking style. The lyrics are delivered ad hoc, then tracked to lend them weight. It was something Pete Waterman later picked up, but that was to protect a bad singer. Pink Floyd put that song down as they felt it, then bolstered it to give it real weight. It was something else altogether.

ISTHERE ANYBODY OUT THERE?

From The Wall

An aural collage from an American hotel room (TV, passing traffic, ominous bass noises) drifts off into dreamy English folk music.



Jim James, My Morning Jacket
I love a lot of Pink Floyd. To me their
music is classic and will transcend all
time. As long as there are people on the
earth they will be listening to Pink

Floyd. But the cut I listen to most would be "Is
There Anybody Out There?", which is a short
instrumental. Starting at about 1:15 is one of the
most beautiful little classical guitar pieces I have
heard. I listen to it on repeat. They say no one
knows who really played it. I mean, I'm sure
someone does, but in The Wall movie it's in one of my
favourite scenes. After Pink has smashed his hotel
room to pieces, he builds this beautiful sculpture
on the floor out of all the remnants of the smashed
goods. It's quite a beautifully heartbreaking scene!

ATOM HEART MOTHER (SUITE)

From Atom Heart Mother

A six-part suite, conceived (with co-composer Ron Geesin) for rock group and choir, initially known as "The Amazing Pudding".



Iain Banks, author I have a weakness for bands with semisymphonic ambitions. We all - by golly, quite rightly - recoil in horror from the excesses of the triple-sleeve

concept album so beloved of certain progressive bands of the '7Os. But even allowing for the fact that in some ways the three-minute balls-out head-thumping thrash is what pop/rock is most truly about, it's good to hear talented musicians giving their imaginations room to play in. Floyd taking a side of an LP to launch into an widescreen abstract soundscape of madly chuntering choirs and sonic weirdness was an almost predictable step after the serial indulgences of *Ummagumma*, but it could still all have gone horribly, embarrassingly wrong. It didn't. This is one of their finest pieces. The Floyd always had the tunes to match their ambition, and that makes all the difference.

B-side of the single, "Point Me At The Sky" (December 1968). Did not chart

Sprawling psych improv, and a crowd favourite a great live version appears on Ummagumma.



Genesis P Orridge, Psychic TV/ Throbbing Gristle By 1969, I was living in the HoHo Funhouse, a semicommune full of freaks in an old fruit warehouse in Hull. Pink Floyd were

touring Ummagumma and the university asked us to do the light show. Everyone was stoned and tripping, but I vividly remember "Careful With That Axe, Eugene", which nobody had heard yet and seemed to go on for three hours. We had these glass slides with liquid in, and an epidioscope, onto which we put live maggots. So you had this psychedelic light show, with six-foot long maggots crawling across. Floyd played their first set, then came back on wearing overalls from a building site and carrying wood, a saw, some hammers and some nails. And they started building a very ramshackle table, sat on the wooden boxes they'd just made and had a tea break. Pre-industrial rock!

ILUCIFER SAM

From The Piper At The Gates Of Dawn Originally entitled "Percy The Rat Catcher", this feline yarn ("be a hip cat, be a ship's cat") was inspired by Syd's moggy.



Jim Reid, The Jesus **And Mary** Chain I almost feel that I should apologise for

choosing a Syd/Floyd song because

although it took a while, I eventually realised what a great band they were with or without Syd. I remember as a teenager sitting in my bedroom trying to play the guitar riffs for "Lucifer Sam" and make out the lyrics. The version I used to play, if you were being kind, could be described as punk/avantgarde, or more truthfully complete shite, but I enjoyed hacking away at it anyway. Ineverunderstood why Floyd didn't release it it as a single, it seemed like a sure hit to me.

When the Mary Chain appeared on The Tube in 1985, Dave Gilmour was there playing with Pete Townshend's band. In between the rehearsals, William [Reid, JAMC] was onstage doing a really bad job of painting his lovely old vintage Gretsch guitar. Gilmour came over to watch. He had a look on his face as though someone was taking a shit on The Bible. A couple of years ago, at an awards ceremony, he came up to me and mentioned this. Christ, I was astonished he could even remember it! I thought fuck, what have we done to the poor guy? He must have been traumatised to remember that, 20 years later. I wanted to shake his hand and give him a big hug, but I just smiled meekly and disappeared into the shadows.

FEARLESS From Meddle

Overlooked album track with a naggingly insistent Gilmour riff, a lazing-on-the-lawn feel and a crowd of overdubbed Liverpool FC fans.





artist and schoolfriend

Of course I love "Shine On You Crazy Diamond", the key to Floyd's past. But this is overlooked, haunting

and melodic, and very beautifully sung by Dave. I suppose it's about being confident, believing in yourself-going forward without fear. There's what feels like a backward-chord sequence, strange and incredibly telling, and a very simple but interesting guitar chord-riff. But I don't really think about any of that. Songs grab you by the throat or the bollocks. "Fearless" isn't complex, but simply beautiful. It's more or less faultless. And it's a key song on a seminal, underrated album.

JUGBANDBLUES From A Saucerful Of Secrets

Syd says goodbye in extraordinary style, singing along to an oompah band, but his stuttering lyrics hint at an all-too-real psychosis...



Mick Rock, photographer There was certainly no conflict in Syd when I first met him in December '66, when he played at the Cambridge Arts College Christmas Party. He was this

incredible figure, bouncing up and down, while the other members of the Floyd were anonymous. I did take one acid trip with Syd and a fun affair it quite relaxed, smiling a lot. I remember us playing Coltrane and Stones records and looking at Robert Crumb comics. In 1971, I did the final interview he ever did, for Rolling Stone. He described himself as having "a very irregular head" and said, "I'm full of dust and guitars." The lyrics that kick off "Jugband Blues"-"It's awfully considerate of you to think of me here/AndImmuchobliged to you for making it clear/ That I'm not here" - seem to be making some kind of statement about his situation. And it's not like any other song in the world. It's always haunted me. Maybeit's a great description, not just verbally but sonically, of a schizophrenic state and a kind of psychic disintegration. It seems to sum Syd up for me more than any other song in existence.

ASTRONOMY DOMINE

From The Piper At The Gates Of Dawn Swapping his kaleidoscope for a telescope, Syd contemplates the universe with awe...



Peter Jenner, Floyd manager, '66-'68 I was at the studio when they were making the first LP. Syd suddenly said, "Let's have you read a bit through a megaphone." And I was

game for that, so they used it on the song. Syd had me read bits from a book of his, from which he was getting all his info about astronomy. Syd wasn't

SETTHE CONTROLS FOR THE HEART OF THE SUN

From A Saucerful Of Secrets (June 1968)
Wonderfully atmospheric Floyd cosmic-rock
prototype, written by Waters, full of spooked
whispers, eerie keyboards, spine-tingling
glockenspiels and pummelled tom-toms.





It's a good example of something that we got our teeth into, which is that not everything had to be flat out all the time. We could be a bit more

subtle and laid back. I can see now more clearly where the influences came from, so far as the drums are concerned. Do you remember a film called Jazz On A Summer's Day? There was a sequence in that where Chico Hamilton played with mallets. I always had this in the back of my mind, long before Pink Floyd were even thought of, as something that was fantastically cool. Ginger [Baker] also played mallets with Cream on "We're Going Wrong". It's that whole thing about being able to repress, instead of the endless, wild banging away that characterises so much rock music. And I think that this is also a wonderful, held-back drum part.

We recorded this around the time that Syd left. Before it all went wrong, ha ha! I'm not entirely sure if Syd was at this recording session or not – it was one of the Abbey Road dates where Syd was around for some but not others. But he would have dropped quite easily into proceedings were he there.

I think you can see this as us not so much looking for a new direction rather than just developing something that was already kicked off – songs like "Interstellar Overdrive" and "Astronomy Domine". We started getting into the business of extending everything, particularly anything we played live. It soon became unthinkable that we'd go on stage and begin and end a song within six or seven minutes.

Actually I think there was quite a lot of structure to these songs, even if it doesn't sound like it! When we were doing Saucer – even tracks like "Interstellar Overdrive" – there was a move to put some structure into it, there's actually quite a disciplined structure of sorts. And certainly, ASaucerful Of Secrets was highly structured in the way that it worked. Having said that, we went on to release stuff like "Echoes" and a number of pieces that could be unspeakably open-ended and witter on for as long as anyone had the patience!

It's weird that, around 1967-'68, we all still thought we wanted to be an R'n'B band. We all thought it terribly important to permour hair and wear leather trousers. But it's absolutely true what David and Roger say about our lack of musicianship being turned into a positive attribute. As we admired those fairly "authentic" R'n'Bmusicians like Eric Clapton and John Mayall, we couldn't quite do that, so we ended up doing something else. And one positive product of that - one that we weren't aware of at the time! - was the significance of having our own material. So many great artists like John Mayall and Aynsley Dunbar would release albums where virtually every song was a traditional blues song, arranged by them. I think our limitations meant that we ended up making music like "Set The Controls...". I still think it sounds fantastic and I love playing it today.



that of a very English eccentric.

WISH YOU WERE HERE From Wish You Were Here (September 1975)

Waters' bleak vision of incipient middle age and failing marriage would prove strangely popular with buskers...



Phil Manzanera, Roxy Music
I saw Floyd in the early days, at the
Albert Hall with Hendrix, Amen
Corner and The Move. It was the most
amazing package tour. I was 16 or 17

and it was incredibly exciting. Floyd, particularly the atmospheric and textural stuff, were a huge influence on my own guitar-playing with Roxy.

Like a lot of people, I've heard all the tracks, but had never tried playing them. So when David [Gilmour] asked me to go on tour with him, I had to create a guitar sound that was as close as possible to the originals. And of course, every backpacker from here to Timbuktu knows how to play "Wish You Were Here", but not me! So I had to learn it from scratch, which was hilarious. It's one of their most well-known numbers and I spent the whole tour learning how to play it properly.

That riff is like the other great riffs, like "Shine On you Crazy Diamond". The minute you hear it, you know what it is. Halfway through the tour, I told David it was getting so embarrassing. So I went into his kitchen and said, "For fuck's sake, show me exactly how you play it!" I think on the very last gig, which is the live version that's coming out, I do finally get it right! When you're playing those songs, you marvel at the simplicity of it all, yet it's totally self-contained. It's quite minimalist, so each part is distinctive.

ANOTHER BRICK IN THE WALL (PART 2)

From *The Wall*; released as single Dec 1979. Highest UK chart position: 1

School brutality set to a midtempo disco beat. Their first hit single since 1967.



Ice Cube It was a big hit, it was getting a lot of airplay at the time, even on black stations. It's a seriously funky track, it's got a tight drum beat and a killer bassline. I remember we used to

PINK FLOYD

march around the playground singing the lyrics from this song. "We don't need no education/we don't need no thought control... Hey teacher! Leave them kids alone!" Ha! When you're a kid at school, of course you're going to love a lyric like that! The idea that we're all just bricks in the wall, just identikit packages that the system requires. That's the shit. It's real. And it's true. It's still true now.

ARNOLD LAYNE Released as a single, March 1967. Highest UK chart position: 20

Not your standard debut single, or debut hit – Syd's lyrics tell of the arrest and imprisonment of a ladies' underwear fetishist...



Joe Boyd, co-UFO Club founder and producer "Arnold Layne"

In the studio, Syd was a quiet leader. Roger was more vocal, but everyone deferred to Syd's opinion. He sat at the

back and kept quiet most of the time, but everyone listened when he spoke. The sessions were easy and fun: record one night, mix the next. I don't recall any conflict. Roger had an ego, Syd did, too, but was more diffident and oblique. The early Floyd songs are pretty European and blue-note free. David Bowie has been quoted as saying that Syd taught him how to sing like an ordinary Englishman – no blues, no mockney accent.

I think their un-Americanness is the key to Floyd's strength over the years.

TERSTELLAR

From The Piper At The Gates Of Dawn

Bacharach-David's "My Little Red Book" meets the theme from Steptoe And Son in a psychotropic, stereopanning, nine-minute freak-out...



Dave Brock, Hawkwind It's very true that it's the same tune as the theme to Steptoe And Son. I saw

them play it once at UFO on Tottenham Court Road, when the light-show was giant blobs behind the screen, and they went off at great tangents. My collection of Floyd is allearly days, nothing since Ummagumma. What they were doing then was lovely and free, those long

tracks we loved listening to. Prior to all this, it was two- or three-minute tracks. The record companies freaked out, they thought our attention spans wouldn't take any more. "Interstellar Overdrive" was avant-garde rock music. We were doing psychedelic freak-out stuffin a circus tent when they were rising stars. They were the kings of space-rock then, with those repetitious chords, elongated solos and electronics - going out there for long periods. You can make a parallel with modern jazz. They were making rock music abstract. Of course they had to give the odd nod to the music business - an "Arnold Layne". But "Interstellar Overdrive" gave us absolute freedom.





SEE EMILY PLAY Released as a single, June 1967. Highest UK chart position: 6

Irrepressible, childlike psych that namechecks the band's own

"Games For May" concert at the QE Hall...



Paul Weller There are so many of Syd's songs that I love, but this is my favourite. I remember hearing it on the radio as a kid and being totally bowled over. It was a proper hit single, which is

unbelievable when you look at the state of the charts now. Melodically it's brilliant, and the arrangement is so compact and concise. It does so much in less than three minutes. Sonically, it's amazing. The introis fucking overwhelming, it still sounds fresh today. But then for me, all those great psychedelic records haven't dated at all.

I like the fact that lyrically it's a simple song. I read an article

> recently that explained that it was inspired by a girl called Emily Young who hung out with the Floyd. She was friends with Anjelica Huston, I think. There's a purity about the song which reflects that.

It's funny. At the time it came out I didn't know what Syd looked like. I had no idea that he was this amazing, beautifullooking character. Which is odd, because I used to watch Top Of the Pops religiously every week.

Ididn't actually buy it until years later! Syd has been an influence on all my music. I heard "Start!" on the radio the other day, and it reminded me that the guitar break was totally influenced by Syd. Even if it didn't sound like him, in my mind I was trying to get that psychedelic feeling over. To me, that's what Syd's Floyd were about: creating a mood you can't quite put your finger on... CONTINUES OVER *

INTERSTELLAR OVERDRIVE — THIS MONTH'S FREE CD

Nearly two years ago, the Uncut team compiled a free CD called Comets, Ghosts & Sunburned Hands, documenting a new legion of psychedelic outlaws and their extraordinary music. With Pink Floyd on the cover this month, the time seems right to take another trip into these wild and flourishing rock hinterlands. Hence Interstellar Overdrive; a musical journey from the New Mexico desert to the heart of Sumatra that takes in kosmische throb, stoner dronefunk, eldritch folk, disorienting chamber pop, lo-fi freak-outs and much, much more. Beginning, as all good things should, with boogie...

Endless Boogie

Smoking Figs In The Yard Not the most psychedelic moment by this battlehardened bunch of NYC veterans but hell, we had to start an Uncut compilation with this sooner or later. A ferocious linear ramalam that makes us think of "Autobahn" rescored for monster trucks. Taken from the No Quarter album, Focus Level

2 Stephen Malkmus & The licks Elmo Delmo

Rumour has it that Malkmus buys his psych rarities from record-dealing Endless Boogie frontman Paul Major, so this one should logically come next. A folkrockfol-de-rolexpanded into a heroic Deadhead jam by the mighty Jicks. Taken from the Domino album, Real **Emotional Trash**

Wucan

Doughty Canadian survivors from our last psych comp, this time bringing the pulsating cosmic funk and

imprecations of doom from this year's breakthrough second album. Taken from the Jagjaguwar album, In The Future

4 Wooden Shjips We Ask You To Ride

And in the same vein, here come San Francisco's Wooden Shjips, ridinga bobbling groove that reminds us of both The Doors and Spacemen 3. Full story about this lot on page 24. Taken from the Holy Mountain album, Wooden Shjips

5 Brightblack Morning Light Hologram Buffalo

Recorded in the New Mexican mesa entirely by solar power, a highlight from Brightblack's imminent third album: sunburned hippy gris-gris in the vein of peak-period Spiritualized. Taken from the forthcoming Matador album, Motion To Rejoin

6 White Rainbow MysticPrism

A palpable progtronic shift

now, as Portland's Adam Forkner assumes his position behind the massed synths for a giant, meditative, kosmische throb...

Taken from the Kranky album, Prism Of Eternal Now

7 Animal Collective #1

Classically disorienting reverie from the marvellous Collective's last album, with the strafed electronica vibes of Panda Bear's Person Pitch solo album subtly in evidence. Taken from the Domino album, Strawberry Jam

8 Caribou

And more modernist shenanigans from another Canadian, Dan Snaith, who's perfected a dappled, processed take on the most winsome and melodic brand of '60s psych-pop. Taken from the City Slang album, Andorra

9 Mike Wexler Pneuma

A real overlooked gem from 2007, this. Wexler is a New Yorker whose elaborate.

creepy chamber-folk recalls some lost trinket from the early '70s Canterbury scene. Taken from the Amish album. Sun Wheel

10 Yeasayer Ah, Weir

A snatch of Brooklyn's sainted Yeasayer, not in globally inclined new-Peter-Gabriel mode, but at their most lysergic, spectral and Beach Boys-like. Taken from the We Are Free album, All Hour Cymbals

Suarasama Fajardi Atas Awan

Straight out of the University Of Sumatra's ethnomusicology department, this awesome trackfrom'98clearly influenced the likes of Six Organs Of Admittance. An acid-folkclassicbyaccident! Taken from the Drag City album, Fajar Di Atas Awan

SpirallingSkeleton Memorial

Another artist we've been trying to put on an Uncut compilation for a while: a lovely example of this



London guitarist's intricate and enveloping music. Read more about him on page 24. Taken from the Important Records album, O True Believers

Widow's Weeds

An old Uncut favourite, as Greg Weeks, Meg Baird and their Philadelphian comrades rustle up one of their most Velvetsy psych-folk drones. Taken from the Wichita album, Espers II

14 Voice Of The Seven

Second Transition

Mancunian Rick Tomlinson is usually known as an acid-

folkfingerpicker, but he canalsokickupafierce duststorm of Easterntinged freak-out rock. As he does here, happily. Taken from the Twisted Nervealbum, Voice Of The Seven Woods

15 Sic Alps Co/Ca

And finally, San Francisco's Sic Alps are trailblazers in the brand new manifestation of psych that's cutely been christened 'Shitgaze'. Outsider lo-fithat reminds us of Skip Spence or, a little, of Syd Barrett. Howfitting. Taken from the Siltbreeze album, U.S. EZ



SHINE ON YOU CRAZY DIAMOND

From Wish You Were Here (1975)

Pink Floyd were world-famous, rich beyond their dreams, and under pressure. Waters revisited the theme of mental illness (which had been central to Dark Side...), but this time rooted it in the real-life disintegration of Syd Barrett. Unfolding over 13 carefully measured minutes, the song's mood is one of equipoise before the onslaught – and while Waters rarely allowed sentimentality to creep into the Floyd, it's clearly appropriate on "Shine On...", and is judged perfectly.

David Gilmour It's great that this is No 1, as it's the purest Floyd song, the peak of that particular stage in our development. We wrote the song in a dingy rehearsal room near Kings

Cross-I have no idea why we were in such a dark, cheap and horrible rehearsal space when we'd just

released one of the biggest-selling LPs in history! Ha! Maybe it was tight-arsed management.

The song fell out of a four-note guitar figure that I came up with – that distinctive opening sequence. Roger really liked it. It had that haunting, serial quality, like something from a piece of modern classical music, or from a film soundtrack. The rest of the song was a joint effort, which was becoming rare at around that time, where me and Roger tended to write separately and bring the ideas into a rehearsal. But here the song seemed to emerge organically out of a jam. There's the pedal bassline that links into the last part, lots of interesting chord changes, and Nick's drumming, which switches between a kind of 12/8 shuffle to a swing beat and back. The ideas

and back. The ideas were all so good that we wanted room for them to breathe, which is why the complete version is about 26 minutes long, and needed to be split in two as it didn't fit on one side of an LP.

Roger would always disappear for a few days to write lyrics and he came up with this tribute to Syd. They're beautiful words and it's a heartfelt tribute that speaks for us all. It had been four or five years

since we'd last seen him, and I think it was all tied up with our feelings of regret and possibly guilt. It was a remarkable coincidence that, not long after we'd finished recording "Shine On...", Syd wandered into the studio at Abbey Road. Everyone's memory of the event is a bit hazy. My memory is of a rather plump chap wandering around No3studio while we were mixing in the control booth. God knows how he managed to get past security - it was pretty tight then and I'd imagine that it'd be impossible nowadays! And it took us all a while to work out who it was - we were all a bit shaken as to how different he looked. We had a chat with him. When we played him some of the stuff we were working on he thought it was really good "but a bit long". Ha!

For years after he left, Syd was the elephant in the room when it came to Pink Floyd. He was the glue that linked us all. He knew Roger, Rick and Nick from the first incarnation of the band, obviously, before I joined, but me and Syd were also close friends, dating back before the band. I liked to remember the Syd of my teens, this sweet, crazy, fun-loving friend that I went to France with and went busking with. And the terrible thing is that I couldn't really equate that figure with the person that he turned into. The thing was, his mental problems always seemed to come up when the issue of the band surfaced. So it was his family's preference that members of Pink Floyd didn't visit him, as it might set off another relapse. So it's astonishing to think that that time in Abbey Road was the last time I ever saw him.

Obviously, the news of his death was enormously sad. I'd known he was ill for a long time, but the reality was terribly sad, even if me and the rest of the band had been grieving for him for over 30 years. The thing was that the Syd I knew hadn't been around for a long time. If I have one regret it's that I'd not been more forceful with his family and gone to visit Syd in Cambridge. But it's a difficult one to negotiate, isn't it?

Syd's death affected the way I now play "Shine On...". It's a tremendously adaptable piece of music. On the original it's a pretty big production, with harmonies and backing singers. On my last tour, it became more mournful. I stripped away everything. After a few dates, it became more experimental. We developed a new way of playing the opening where Phil Manzanera, Guy Pratt and Dick Parry would play wine glasses – you know, rubbing a wet finger over the rims – that had been tuned to an open chord, replicating the organ part, and I'd play the guitar riff over the top. That was a throwback to the LP we were initially going to make instead of Wish You Were Here, in which the sounds

were going to be made with household objects, an idea we ditched but which influenced some of what we did after that. It makes the track even more haunting and ethereal. •

Interviews: Nick Hasted, Rob Hughes, John Lewis,

Paul Moody and Jaan Uhelszki