

THE OFFICIAL

WRIANHEEP

APPRECIATION SOCIETY



ISSUE 29

THE OFFICIAL

URIAH HEEP

APPRECIATION SOCIETY



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URIAH HEEP'S OFFICIAL WORLD WIDE FAN CLUB ADMINISTERED BY DAVID OWEN & ALAN HARTLEY

Hi again and welcome to issue 29.

A lot has been happening since the last issue, Heep's new album "Sonic Origami" (see review in issue 28) is set for release in the UK and Europe (and hopefully in other countries) on 14th Sept. We look forward to receiving your reviews of the new album for the next issue. The formats available will be CD (and possibly cassette in East Europe). As we mentioned in the last issue, not all of the 14 tracks recorded may be used and the running order may alter. The new running order and track listing is:- Between two worlds, I hear voices, Perfect little heart, Heartless land, Only the young, In the moment, Question, Change, Shelter from the rain, Everything in life, Across the miles, Feels like, The golden palace. In Germany there will be a limited edition release with "Sweet pretender" as a bonus track. A CD single will be issued in Germany, initially as a promo release only, containing 4 tracks, these are Heartless land (edit version), Heartless land (album version), Everything in life and Sweet pretender.

The live promotion for "Sonic Origami" will start with a UK date. Heep will be the special guests of "Ronnie James Dio" at the London Forum on 22nd Oct. The two of us will be in the Bull and Gate pub which is close by the Forum during the afternoon if any UHAS members wish to meet up, the band hope to pop in also at some point to say hello to the fans before and/or after the gig. Please wear your badges or membership cards so we can easily spot you. Following the UK date the band will tour Germany with "Nazareth" the tour is called "The double trouble tour 98". As with previous tours with "Nazareth" both bands will take turns being the first act on. The dates confirmed so far, including shows prior to UK date that kicks off the "Sonic Origami" promotion dates are:-

4th Sept, Hells Blues Festival, Norway (with Status Quo)
10th Sept, Bruno, Czech Republic
11th Sept, to be announced, Czech Republic
12th Sept, to be announced, Czech Republic
13th Sept, Hradec Karlove, Czech Republic

22nd Oct, London, Forum (special guests of Ronnie James Dio)

Double trouble 98 tour - Germany
27th Oct, Munchen, Nachtwerk
28th Oct, Ohringen, Kultra
29th Oct, Weiden, Josefshaus
30th Oct, Dresden, Schlachthof
31st Oct, Belzig, A. Bauer Halle
1st Nov, Berlin, Arena
3rd Nov, Hannover, Capitol

- 4th Nov, Hamburg, GF 36
- 5th Nov, Bremen, Pier 11
- 6th Nov, Nordenham, Stadthalle
- 7th Nov, Vacha, Vachwerk
- 8th Nov, Koln, Rhein Rock Halle
- 10th Nov, Nurnberg, Hirsch - Nazareth
- 11th Nov, Nurnberg, Hirsch - Uriah Heep
- 12th Nov, Halle, Easy Schorre
- 13th Nov, Plauen, Festhalle
- 14th Nov, Deggendorf, Stadthalle
- 15th Nov, Saarbrücken, Garage
- 17th Nov, Stuttgart, Longhorn
- 18th Nov, Gross Umstadt, Stadthalle
- 19th Nov, Braunschweig, Jolly Joker
- 20th Nov, Cottbus, Stadthalle
- 21st Nov, Mittenwald, Mehrzweckhalle

We look forward to receiving your reports from these gigs for printing in the next issue. Following these dates the band hope to play more European shows but none of these are confirmed as we go to print. If you would like details of any extra dates that may be added onto the end of the tour please send a SAE (UK members) or IRC and a self addressed envelope (overseas members) and we'll do our best to get the information to you.

The "Double trouble 98" tour is partly sponsored by VH 1 and Heep will be making an appearance on this channel in Germany to promote "Sonic Origami" and the tour, this will most likely be in the form of an interview interspersed with the band selecting videos. There is no date set for the appearance as yet so keep your eyes on the TV listings.

Collectors may like to know that the King Biscuit Flower Hour CD, "Uriah Heep live at San Diego 1974", is now out in the UK, complete with a photo of the John Lawton line up on the cover. Ops!!

John Lawton's Gunhill play a selection of dates in England and Germany and those confirmed at the time of going to print are:-

Germany

- 4th Sept, Magdeburg, Groeninger Bad
- 5th Sept, Berlin, Neu Helgoland
- 7th Sept, Halle, Thalia Gewoelbe
- 8th Sept, to be announced
- 10th Sept, Braunschweig, Tam Tam
- 11th Sept, Cottbus, Alte Weberel
- 12th Sept, Finsterwald, Brauhaus Radigk

England

- 18th Sept, Hartley Whitney, Hants, Lamb Hotel
- 19th Sept, Hemel Hempsted, Snooks
- 20th Sept, Sheerness, Fiddlers Cat
- 4th Oct, Tunbridge Wells, Prince O Wales
- 16th Oct, Hartley Whitney, Hants, Lamb Hotel
- 17th Oct, Hemel Hempsted, Snooks

Germany

- 22nd Oct, Koblenz, Cafe Hahn
- 23rd Oct, Hamburg, Down Town Blues Club

24th Oct, Rendsburg, Bullentempel
26th Oct, Schwerin ??? to be confirmed
27th Oct, Haltern ??? to be confirmed
29th Oct, Luebek, Rider's Cafe
30th Oct, Marburg, Schrader's
31st Oct, Witerberg/Niederfeld, venue to be confirmed

England

7th Nov, Kings Langley, Rose and Crown
13th Nov, Hartley Whitney, Hants, Lamb Hotel
29th Nov, Eastbourne, Fishermans Club
11th Dec, Kings Langley, Rose and Crown
12th Dec, Uckfield, Uckfield Club
24th Dec, Hartley Whitney, Hants, Lamb Hotel

For more information please e-mail; gunlaw@mcmail.com or visit the web site at:
<http://www.aha.ru/~uheep/lawton>

Ken Hensley tells us he is very busy with various projects in his "Upper Room" studio, including the first record of Javier Mendoza who Ken manages, he's an artist with a powerful voice who writes and sings in English and Spanish. Ken's also doing some production work for Gary Meeks, who's son Travis is the lead singer in the band, "Days of the New" and he's working on the new "Basic Streams" record with Steve Bailay and Victor Wooton. He will return to work on his long awaited new Christian album from his band "Visible Faith" once the above projects are complete. Once the "Visible Faith" recordings are finished Ken hopes to do some selective live Christian festivals and some European dates next year. He's also been working on a new "Best of Ken Hensley" CD with 3 new tracks and a new Heep box set in the States, more news when they are nearer to being released. Sound bytes of Ken's new material can be heard on his web site who's address is: www.ken-hensley.com and those with access to the web may like to visit his studio's web site who's address is: www.upperroomstudios.com You can also e-mail ken at: UHEEP@aol.com or write to him at: The Upper Room Studios, 1502 South Big Bend Boulevard, St Louis, Missouri 63117, USA.

Ken's brother Trevor can be seen performing with "Gerry's Kitchen" at The Dove, Wing, near Aylesbury, on 27th Sept.

Those who's membership expires with this issue will find a renewal form enclosed with the mag. As it is costing us a fortune to send out reminders we would ask those who intend renewing their membership to return their renewal form and subscription by the end of November 1998. This way we hope to cut to the absolute minimum the number of reminder letters we need to send out.

Our thanks once again go out to Mick, Bernie, Trev, Phil and Lee. John Lawton, Ken Hensley, Tina Hartley, Brian T O'Mally and Sylvain Girard. Congratulations to our French members on their football teams recent world cup win, seems the English being there didn't make that much difference in the run of things, oh well, as I said back in 1994, we'll just have to content ourselves on having the best band in the world.

Enjoy the mag,
Keep on rockin
and we'll see you in about 3 months.

Alan & David

Sept 1998.

SONIC ORIGAMI

“I’M VERY HAPPY WITH IT, THE BAND ARE VERY HAPPY WITH IT, THE ULTIMATE JUDGE IS THE FANS”

MICK BOX - AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

Alan: The first question is the same as the one put to Bernie in the last issue, how do you think “Sonic Origami” stand up against “Sea of Light”?

Mick: I’ll let everyone else judge that but I’m very happy with it, the band are very happy with it and everyone who’s heard it is ecstatic with it so all the signs are good. The ultimate judge is the fans.

Alan: How did you decide what you wanted in terms of album cover artwork?

Mick: We wanted a very simplistic idea, We’ve gone away from what we had last time, “Sea of Light” and it’s cover was geared for the fans, it was our statement about that fact. Now we’ve been together as a band for 12 years and we’re looking forward, we wanted the artwork to have a very simplistic and modern day approach and I think we’ve found it. It’s simplistic in the way that such as “Nike” with their tick is instantly recognised, you see the tick everywhere and you know it’s “Nike”. We’ve got an image with the artwork that if you see it anywhere you’ll know it “Sonic Origami” and Uriah Heep.

Alan: Is it an image you would hope to use on future albums?

Mick: Not really, it just suited “Sonic Origami”. Even the photos inside follow it through, we got a guy called Vincent Lagana of “VNL Images” who took some shots of us in Italy. He showed us his photos and I think it was Trevor who loved one of the photos and said he’d like to use it for the album. We decided to use all live shots and what we did to make them sonically fit, rather than just being any old photo pasted inside, we got five good photos and had them digitally treated to give them a very sonic effect. The effect is different on each photo which makes it more interesting and we’re very happy with the finished product.

Alan: Do the band have any input as to which track is chosen as a single?

Mick: Yes, we do have an input but it’s no good us saying: “This is going to be a great hit” and the record company or distributor feel that they can’t sell it in their market. The game is that the record company or distributor in their own particular market should choose what they feel is the best single because they’re the people who have got to get out into the field and get it played on radio, they have to have the confidence in that song and as much as we have an opinion and we can guide it generally, it’s up to the guys who are actually in the field to decide.

Alan: Are their any video’s planned?

Mick: Not right away no, everything is step by step, if there’s success here, then something else will happen, if that’s successful then the next thing will happen. That’s how it’s done these days.

Alan: What do you feel Pip Williams brought to the album?

Mick: I think he brought the best out of the individuals as players and as a band. I think he got some good performances out of all of us. He probably extended us all more than we perhaps would have done. He's got a great insight into it all and he's a very very loveable man, everything we did felt right. We had a lot of fun doing it, he has a great personality and he loves a laugh as much as we do, but he's just as professional as we are. He was a good part of the team, similarly with Norman Goodman the engineer, we had the same rapport. Pip's enthusiasm for the project was enormous and I feel you can hear that in the music. He's probably got more of a radio friendly sound if you like. I don't like all these words like commercial and radio friendly, I hate using them but the flow of the album's very very good and I think the best comment I've heard so far is when people get to the end of it, they just want to put it on again. The other good thing is that everyone who's heard it have all chosen different singles which shows the depth and strength that the albums got.

Alan: Bernie told us about the guitars that Pip brought into the studio and you used his 1958 Fender throughout one of the tracks.

Mick: Yeah but it wasn't on "Shelter from the rain", that was all done on my Yamaha. It was "Perfect little heart" where I used his 1959 Fender Esquire all the way through, I played the whole rhythm part in one hit, no overdubs or anything, and it was just wonderful. But apart from that it was minor overdubs here and there using his guitars. Most of the main work was done on my Yamaha Pacifica 921.

Alan: Was working with Pip a lot different than working with Kalle Trapp on "Sea of Light"?

Mick: Very much so, the producer is there to get the best out of the band in every aspect, the playing, the vocals, the overall performance, everything. He has to enhance it and come up with ideas, it's a very important role to play. They have to get it down on tape in the particular way that they like, in the right order for mixing. Then they have to sit down and mix the whole thing. If it's been recorded badly it's often very hard to mix. The best thing about Pip is that his CV is full of artists of all various degrees, he can go from rock right through the whole spectrum of music, he does everything. When you think that our music encompasses a lot of everything and bringing Pip on board meant he was able to cope with all the different musical styles that make up Uriah Heep. The difference between Kalle and Pip is that Pip is more of a complete mate, there was a good vibe between us and he was great fun to work with. Kalle would only work certain hours and we found that quite restrictive, but Pip was willing to work for how ever long it took to achieve what we wanted to achieve.

Alan: How comfortable were you with using "Everything in life" which is about 6 year old now and what made you decide to use it this time rather than last time?

Mick: Because of the modifications we've made to it, I felt that it was incomplete before, I knew there was some elements that were missing, one of them was a guitar solo and an important riff, which we've included into it and that's given it another dimension. It's like most things, you can toy with them for a while and that's why they're left sometimes, you need time to think about it to get the best out of it. Then and only then you commit it to tape.

Alan: On the last album some of the songs had some quite definite statements, stories and meanings behind them, such as "Universal wheels", "Against the odds", "Fires of hell" and "Dream on" etc. Are there any statements, stories or meanings behind the tracks on "Sonic Origami"?

Mick: Yes there are lots of deep meaning but I would want people to read the lyrics and

take their own meanings from the songs. It's hard to discuss these things because I don't want to establish something in people's eyes, I'd rather they read what they want to read into the songs. If you put your meanings forward at this stage you're not allowing anyone else to have an imagination. That's the reason why videos occasionally have a negative effect on me, they create such a strong image of a song that you can't think of it in any other way. If it's left to the individual then they'll see it differently to me and to somebody else. One of the comments I've had so far is that some of the lyrics are wonderfully strong and they make people's hair stand up, that's all I could wish for.

Alan: Did you have a lot more songs than the 14 you actually recorded and if so, how do you go about choosing which ones to take into the studio?

Mick: Yes, there was a lot more songs but we as a band decide together which ones we want to work on.

Alan: Does that happen when the songs are at an advanced stage or are they just basic ideas when you make the decision?

Mick: No, everything would be presented to the band as a completed song which is played to the band and you get a vote on it. It's quite ruthless really, you get a yes or a no. No matter how many hours you've put into it up to that point, if the band don't want to work on one of your songs you have to be able to put it to one side. You have to be quite hardened as a writer.

Alan: "Across the miles" wasn't written from within the band, do you feel it fits in well with rest of your own material?

Mick: I think it has it's place at the moment, it's well played and it's a good song. I think other people are choosing tracks over and above it, I don't think it should be a major talking point. It just fits in and it has it's place. If it gets picked up then it's done it's job. (Mick's since told me in a recent conversation that the Americans are looking at putting out two radio promo singles, one for adult contemporary radio - AC radio - which will be "Across the miles" and one for rock radio which will be "Only the young" and "Feel's like").

Alan: Do you have any particular favourite on the album?

Mick: It's too early to say. The first one we started writing for the album gives me the same buzz when I hear it now as it did when Phil and I first started writing it, the song I'm talking about is "Question", it has a lot of strength in the lyrics and if I had to choose now it would be that one.

Interview by Alan Hartley.

QUIZ TIME

This is the same as the quiz in the last issue, you can win a signed copy of "Sonic Origami" by answering the following questions:-

1) Where was the album recorded? 2) Who produced the album? 3) Which track from the album featured in the band's live set 5 years ago?

Please enclose a first class stamp (UK members) or international reply coupon (overseas members) with your entry. Good luck.

MEMBERS' LETTERS

If you have any questions you need answers to, any comments or opinions about the band, the magazine or the service of the UHAS, we want to hear them. If you want a personal reply please include a SAE (UK members) or an International Reply Coupon available from any post office (overseas Members). Hope we hear from you soon.

Dear UHAS. Thanks for issue 28, it was a good read as usual. The new album sounds very encouraging, perhaps, just perhaps, this might be the UK breakthrough that Heep badly need. It's terrible that such a strong album as "Sea of Light" sunk without a trace over here. A commercial single is obviously on the band's schedule, and if they can come up with a hook that sticks in the mind of the 'average' record buyer then maybe something might happen. There's no disgrace in being poppy, I recall the criticism "Extreme" received for "More than words" a few years ago but it didn't harm their career. Most rockers crack the charts with a power ballad, so why not Heep?

I think it's important that we get behind the band and show them our support. It's good that Phil and Bernie have received recent support, the current line up is Heep for the millenium and beyond. Bernie has a great rock voice, the nearest one to him is Bruce Dickinson. All of the previous Heep vocalists have their place in the evolution of the band (though I still place a question mark against the Sloman period). The doubters should live in the present, Ken Hensley is one of the best keyboard players in the history of rock, and many of his superb songs are Heep anthems. However, his business interests and his intent to remain away from any touring situation means he will never rejoin Heep. Therefore Phil is the best choice for the band and his songs with Mick point the best way forward into the future. Some of their strongest material is the "Sea of Light" album and I can't wait to hear "Sonic Origami".

One area where the Appreciation Society could make a difference is merchandise. I can't be the only fan at the Astorig gig last year who was underwhelmed by the dreadful T-shirts. Where are the purple tie-dye "Spellbinder" shirts one person asked? A decent T-shirt is a great publicity tool for any band, and if you wear it to the pub, club, or other band's gigs it gets people thinking about forgotten groups like Heep. How about it? **Nick Gould, England.**

***UHAS reply:-** It's a good point that there's no disgrace in being poppy, as long as it's done well and retains something of the band's character, I think "Extreme" did that with "More than words" and Heep have done it with their "Sonic Origami" material that falls into the commercial category. As for the merchandise, you may remember that prior to "Sea of Light" we did offer quite a lot through the Society, at that time the band were dealing with the merchandise themselves. Under their contract with "SPV and CBH Records" I believe that the responsibility for merchandise was with "SPV and CBH", hence the band weren't able to offer any through the Society. we don't know the position with the new "Eagle Rock" deal yet.*

Dear UHAS. I've liked Uriah Heep since the early 70's and especially the classic Box, Byron, Hensley, Kerslake and Thain line up. But the fact is that two people from that line up are dead. I think people should stop complaining about Bernie and Phil, "Sea of Light" is a masterpiece and I know that if it had been recorded in 1973 with this present line up we would all hold it as high as the rest of the classic Heep albums. **Thomas Thulin, Sweden.**

***UHAS reply:-** I personally hold it up there with Heep's best regardless of when it was recorded. Even though I'm a fan from the early 70's and as such still have a soft spot for*

the Byron era, in my list of favourite Heep albums there are more Byron era albums below "Sea of Light" than there are above it. I'm sure most of you will feel the same way if your honest.

Dear UHAS. Thanks for issue 28, I always look forward to receiving it as no news appears anywhere else, not even in "Mojo" which I thought was supposed to be for our older fans. Firstly, in reply to Alister Blockley's letter, I have to agree with him on how good the Heep remasters are compared to say, the "Sabbath" ones, which are also good but the Heep ones just have that extra personal touch which reflects what the band are like as a band, partly why I like and support them. In response to UHAS's reply to Paul Inglis that Heep are not living on past glories, where as so many other 70's acts are, "content to churn out the same old thing with nothing new to offer" I have, thankfully, to disagree with the second part. I find it amazing that over the last 10 years or so, so many 70's bands are still going - but I'm glad they are! Most of these bands have come through the weak years of the late 70's to the mid 80's and now seem to be producing excellent new material, with or without a full compliment of original members. These obviously include Uriah Heep, as well as "Wishbone Ash", "Jethro Tull" (Roots to branches), "Black Sabbath" (all their Tony Martin era albums are superb adult hard rock), "UFO" (Walk on water), "Nazareth (Move on), "Blue Oyster Cult" (Heaven forbid), "Yes" (Talk) and many more. But who buys these? In England very few because people don't know about them, let alone hear them. People drop out of rock and buying CD's due to families etc, and younger potential fans are just used to a depressing diet of rap, dance and throwaway pop, many just don't know how to appreciate anything else. So God bless Heep and all the others, please just keep on rockin' for as long as you all can.

If anyone has connections with sound men at rock shows, can I suggest these be used as a tremendous opportunities to advertise classic rock new releases before and after the support acts, rather than the obvious stuff that's always played. People who go to a "Deep Purple" or "Page/Plant" gig would then know that Heep and the others are still around.
David Walters, England.

UHAS reply:- Well, seems I'm wrong about some of the 70's bands and what they're currently up to, and I'm glad to be wrong, I'm afraid I'm one of those people who have lost touch with many of the bands who's albums I used to buy and every tour I used to attend. Maybe it's the 60's groups that I was really thinking of! Good point about getting Heep played at rock gigs, especially if they were able to announce who it was they were playing. Not only big gigs are good for this, small rock pubs could be full of old Heep fans who think they're long since gone so a bit of new Heep played in those places may also be a good promotional idea.

Dear UHAS. I've just received issue 28 and it was great to read that the new Heep opus "Sonic Origami" is due to be released in September. It cheered me up following Scotland's "surprise" exit from the world cup, (I had a bet with the bookies on us winning it). I'm very glad the track "Everything in life" will not be forgotten for evermore. It will give all the Heep fans a chance to hear an old set number.

Regarding the comment about Dougie White in issue 28, another Heep connection is that he had a spell with "Praying Mantis" in 1991 (post Bernie). It's trivial I know but there you are. More importantly, another Heep related release:-

BLACKFOOT - KING BISCUIT FLOWER HOUR (70710-88037-2) Recently I was in London and I saw a "Blackfoot" KBFH CD Live in 1983 complete with Ken Hensley. So I bought it and it's tremendous. The tracklisting is:- Rattlesnake Rock 'N' Roller, Wishing Well, Teenage Idol, Train Train, Easy Livin, Highway Song, On The Run, Fly Away, Livin In

The City and an interview with Rick Medlocke. Ken's keyboards come through very well on the CD, and the highlights for me are Teenage Idol, Easy Livin and of course the "Blackfoot" anthem Highway Song. During Easy Livin Ken plays slide guitar and it's a stomping version. In the booklet there's a photo of Ken on his slide guitar together with Rick Medlocke. It's a great souvenir to have of Ken's time with "Blackfoot" especially as the two albums he did, "Siogo" and "Vertical Smiles" are hard to find. In fact I do not think they are available on CD. All in all it's a bit pricey as it is an import but it's worth it. Ian MacLaren, Now in England, originally from Scotland.

UHAS reply:- Thanks for the info about the "Blackfoot" CD, I don't know if Ken's two albums with "Blackfoot" are available anywhere in the world on CD but if they are I'm sure one of you will let us know.

Dear UHAS. Thanks for the last mag, as always it's been a very interesting to read. But there's one big drawback that has happened in every issue so far and it diminishes my reading pleasure. Yes, you've guessed it, it is those terrible spelling mistakes again! The review of the new album is titled "Sonic Oragami", of course we all know that it's "Origami", but still, is this necessary. I know there have been complaints about spellings again and again and you said you had someone who does the proof reading. Maybe you should replace him? He's either not able to write a correct English sentence or he just doesn't care or both. Even if I am under the greatest imaginable pressure, I could not manage to put so many spelling mistakes in so few sentences. Why don't you use the spell checking option of "Microsoft Word" by the way? I'm sorry for this negative stand, but the spelling issue really is annoying, not only for me but for many members whom I have talked to. Of course, I'm eagerly waiting for the new record to appear in the shops as well as the new tour. **Stefan Pawlata, Austria.**

UHAS reply:- I couldn't believe it about the mistake on the spelling of "Origami" in the review in the last issue, but there it was, in the big black letters of the title. (The spell checker we use doesn't recognise the word 'origami' so it everytime it brings it up as a mistake, the only option it offers is 'orgasm', hence each time it comes up it was just over ridden). What can I say other than accept the blame myself, the proof reader hasn't been proof reading the mag for a couple of years or so and although I'm sure many of you would offer your services, there isn't usually time to send a proof to someone before the mag goes off to print. It's easy to say make time, but it's hard to do when it's ones spare time that is used to run the society and produce the mag. We can't use the spell checker of "Microsoft Word" because we don't use that program to prepare the mag. But we do use the spell checker of "Professional Write" which is the word processor we use. Every time the mag comes back from the printers and I open it at any page, a spelling mistake hits me in the face, they seem so obvious, but they're so hard to spot when preparing the masters. I don't mean to make excuses but if the might of an organisation like Castle Communications can produce such prestige items as box sets full of mistakes, and that with all their recourses, then I don't think that our little tin pot set up does too bad. I believe we've provided one of the most, if not the most, informative and longest lasting official fan clubs the band have ever had throughout their entire career, but we are sorry if our mistakes distract from the pleasure of the information we provide.

Dear UHAS. Great news about the album which I can't wait to get my hands on. This new record company seem to be enthusiastic about the band which has got to be good for the group. Just one piece of news which should interest you and the other Heep fans is that "The Dickies", a punk/pop band from the USA have a new 4 track CD being released sometime soon which includes a cover version of "Easy Livin". My brother who is a huge "Dickies" fan informed me of this recently, the band have been touring the UK over the

last couple of weeks and he got the information at one of their concerts. We don't know any other information such as release date or label, but as they're touring at the moment it must be available soon. "The Dickies" had a big hit years ago with "The Banana Splitz" theme song and they also did covers of "Sabbath's" Paranoid and "Moody Blues" Nights in white satin, both played at about 10 times the speed of the originals. So, the Heep cover should be interesting. Would this be the first cover version of a Heep song? **Bryan Scott, Scotland.**

UHAS reply:- *Thanks for the info, no it's not the first cover of a Heep track, there have been a good few - anyone out there with any details please send them in and we'll try to compile a definitive list. Please include catalogue numbers, formats, country of release etc if you can.*

Dear UHAS. A little while ago I received a live Heep tape from a show in New Zealand back in 1984. There was also an interview and soundcheck, and during the soundcheck the reporter mentioned that the show was being recorded on a 16 track tape recorder and that a live album of the show would be released. Well, obviously the album never made it to the record stores. My question is:- what made the band decide that it shouldn't be released, and is there any possibility of it being released in the future? It's a great show, and even though the tape is good quality a CD release would bring a marked improvement to the sound. **David Amendolara, Belgium.**

UHAS reply:- *The gig was recorded on Heep's "Head First Into New Zealand Tour 1984" and the tape you have will be taken from the New Zealand TV show that featured the gig. UK readers may be interested to know that Phillip Schoefield, once of Children's BBC and now Dr Dolittle fame - and all the rest in between - is the reporter involved in this show. Despite the fact that Phillip does actually say that the show would be recorded for a live album, Mick says this was never the intention.*

Dear UHAS. It has been fantastic over the last year to discover just how many Heep fanatics there are. Before I joined UHAS I had really thought I was on my own! I knew a few people who had the odd couple of Heep albums, but I never realised there was such a solid hard core of genuine support. Without going into too much detail (I'll save that for a later letter) I have a few observations to make if I may.

1. Hopefully the last word on the Bernie Shaw/David Byron controversy. I realise that I am risking the wrath of many fans, but here goes. Technically, there is no comparison. I was fortunate enough to see David on the "Return To Fantasy" tour, but would still have to say that he has been the poorest lead singer Heep have had, technically. (Yes, I do include John Sloman). This was more than made up for by both his vocal style and sheer stage presence. Bernie Shaw is an unbelievably gifted vocalist, and has improved on stage over the years to the point where he is now a consummate front man. I struggle to choose between him and Peter Goalby as to who is the best lead singer Heep have had, and usually declare it an honourable draw.

2. Most memorable gig - can't say, so here's a few potted highlights. John Wetton's amazing solo on the "Return to Fantasy" tour. The awful turn out and performance at the Wolverhampton Civic Hall by the Slade/Dechert line up. An orgasmic version of "Firefly" on the "Firefly" tour. How surprisingly full the Birmingham Odeon was for both the "Fallen Angel" and "Conquest" tours and how brilliantly the band played at both gigs. Finally, Dudley and Stoke last year. Meeting my heroes of 24 years standing - I was so excited before Dudley that I couldn't eat and meeting the band fulfilled my lifetimes ambition!

3. An idea for a future issue that will really stretch your readers. Invite members to choose their one, yes one, favourite Heep track with a brief description and reason. For me even

the worst Heep tracks are good so it is obviously going to be very difficult, and hopefully stimulate debate. My choice is "Blood Red Roses" as it's quite simply the most perfect melodic hard rock track I have ever heard. The hook line, the chorus, solo, lyrics are all absolutely spot on, and the track always reminds me of two blinding gigs at the Wolverhampton Civic Hall. **Rikki Fox, England.**

***UHAS reply:-** David Byron, technically the poorest singer Heep have ever had, if that doesn't get people putting pen to paper I don't know what will. Is it a fair and valid point? Let us know what you think. As for the idea about inviting members to pick their one favourite Heep track, it's a good one and we intend to use it as part of our new "My Top 12" feature which you can read in this issue.*

Dear UHAS. As the band's newest release is hovering right around the corner, I thought this might be a good time to re publish the list of "things you can do to help make a CD release a success". This list was compiled with the input of Radio Programmers, Promotion Managers and Disk Jockeys, and is specific to the USA market. Once again, the whole idea is to create a buzz around the release prompting the industry to take notice, so it will turn on it's promotional machinery behind it. Here's the list:-

1. Buy the CD in the first week of it's release. Not only will this look good to the record company and retail store buyers, but it could help it make Billboard's "Heatseekers" chart, which really generates industry buzz.
2. Even if you bought the import, buy your own country's release. That's the only way to get the record in to the charts.
3. Call your local radio station and request the single only. Do it until they play it. Don't worry about bugging the DJ's, that's the point.
4. Write to MTV and flood them with letters to play the new video. Nothing gets the industry's attention like numbers, so get your friends and relatives to write too! The address is:- MTV Viewer Services, 1515 Broadway, New York, NY 10036. Also, once a video is in MTV's rotation, you can request it over the phone toll free by dialling 1-800-DIALMTV. You can also correspond with MTV via their website:- www.MTV.com
5. If the band plays near you, get to the gigs. The music industry takes notice of band's who constantly sell out their shows!
6. Turn on your friends and co workers. For every small push, that much greater the momentum.

Thanks guys, every little helps. Now here are my suggestions for the "Return to Wizards and Magicians" tribute CD. (If you're gonna dream, you may as well dream big!)

- 1) Easy livin - new Blizzard of Oz (Ozzy, Lee Kerslake, Bob Daisley, John Sinclair & Trevor Rabin).
- 2) The magician's birthday - Dream Theater.
- 3) Gypsy - Deep Purple.
- 4) Pilgrim - Ronnie James Dio, (with Mick Box, Rick Wakeman, John Wetton & Terry Bozzio).
- 5) Footprints in the snow - The new Gods (Greg Lake, Ken Hensley, Lee Kerslake & Trevor Rabin).
- 6) Weekend warriors - Rush.
- 7) Stealin - John Lawton (with Tony Iommi, Billy Sheenan, Ken Hensley & Bill Ward).
- 8) Beautiful dream - Magellan.
- 9) Rollin on - Glen Hughes (with Garry moore, Billy Sheenan, Ken Hensley & Lee Kerslake).
- 10) Lady in black - John Wetton (solo acoustic).
- 11) Free n easy - Blue Oyster Cult or Fates Warning.
- 12) Suicidal man - Peter Goalby (with Trevor Rabin, Trevor Bolder, Keith Emmerson & Terry Bozzio).

I actually think that if Castle Communications or Red Steel were to get involved, such a

project could happen, but all due respect to Mr Athouel's letter, I believe Ken Hensley and Rob Corich are the only two guys who could pull this off. Anyway, thanks for letting us dream. **Joseph E Kelly, USA.**

***UHAS reply:-** Thanks for the list and if members in any other countries have addresses for MTV etc that can be used to adapt this list for their own countries use, send them in and we'll print them. Making up those bands is some dream! If you'd like to send us your track listing for a fictional Heep tribute album and the bands you would like to perform each track, - and we'd prefer them not to be made up bands as they're harder to type - we'll print them in future issues, again, this is the only one we've received since the last issue.*

Dear UHAS. Maybe you can answer a question concerning a release of John Lawton's. I don't know anything other than the title which is "The Devil's Touch" but I believe he recorded and released it with "Lucifer's Friend. In issue 21 of the mag, Geert Ryssen didn't mention it in his article on "Lucifer's Friend". Can you help me? **Walter Deutschmann, Austria.**

***UHAS reply:-** Sorry it's taken so long to get onto this question Walter, we've asked John about it and he knows nothing about the release. He did say that he knows there are some "Lucifer's Friend" releases that are nothing but the original albums with maybe a couple of B sides included and they are given different titles. He doesn't know any more details but he can only assume that this could be one of them. If anyone know any more details please let us know and please keep the letters coming in.*

CLASSIC CONCERT

Well, my first exposure to a song by Heep was probably in 1978 when I heard "Easy livin" on a rock compilation album owned by my older brother. Wow! to hear those grating fuzzy power chords by Mick Box and that smooth bass line from Gary Thain really did it for me. I got into the "Sweet Freedom" LP heavily that year. Anyway, 23rd April, 1982, and a show by Uriah Heep at M.R.C.'s Rock Palace, Lowell, Mass, USA My friend and I went expecting greatness and we got it. Pete Goalby was the vocalist, at times he had a hard time getting over the wall of sound Uriah Heep was putting forward. I distinctly remember Mick Box playing through a Marshall amp, a Burman amp, a cry baby wah and a Les Paul sunburst guitar. This was the "Abominog" tour so they played "Too scared to run", "The way that it is" etc. Also a lot of oldies like "Easy livin", "Stealin" and "July morning" were played and these really got the audience cheering. The man on bass, Bob Daisley, really presented a kind of ominous-scary presence, it seemed to really fit in with the music.

Mick Box shook my hand at the very end of the set, and as everyone knows, he's an excellent and friendly person. Always smiling and getting off on the peoples excitement. Mick's wah wah work, power chords and back ground vocals/harmonies during the show was mind blowing. I've heard people call Heep noise but depending on where you stand at a concert and the quality of the PA can make a difference. To me they've always made melodic, heavy and scary music and I'll take that over Bruce Springsteen any day!

Brian T. O'Mally.

Please send in a review of a concert from any era of the band telling us why it was a classic for you.

SONIC ORIGAMI

“IT’S FAR BETTER THAN SEA OF LIGHT”

TREVOR BOLDER - AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

Alan: Mick told us a few issues ago that the band would be looking for a section of the new album to be more radio friendly or commercial. Did you feel that your style of writing would easily fit into that?

Trev: Yeah, I think “Only the young” definitely fits into that and the Americans have picked up on it already. “Shelter from the rain” is a bit long but I think that’s very commercial also.

Alan: “I hear voices” has an instantly likable feel to it, would that do well on the radio?

Trev: We call that song “Nutter” because it’s about being insane, it’s not particularly a commercial song. It’s actually a true story, it’s about an experience I had in a pub when I was playing darts with some mates. This woman came in and ordered a pint of Guinness and drank it straight down, then she ordered another one and drank that straight down also. Then she sat at a table with another pint of Guinness and started talking to somebody who wasn’t there, she was saying to everybody that it was her son and went on to tell us all about him, but there was nobody sitting there. Then she started arguing with him, she was screaming and shouting and by this time she’d downed about six pints in 15 minutes and the landlord was staring to get upset. The all of a sudden the doors burst open and these three guys in white jackets carted her of back to where she’d escaped from. I tried to imagine what must have been going on in her head, she was dragged off and put in a place where she obviously didn’t want to be and I wondered if there would be anyone who would help her come back to reality. That experience was what started me off with that song.

Alan: Was it always called “I hear voices” or did you call it “Nutter” at first?

Trev: It never had a title, Pip started calling it “Nutter” in the studio because we didn’t have a title but “I hear voices” is one of the lyrics so that’s where the title came from in the end.

Alan: How disappointed were you the “Dream on”, which to me had huge chart potential, wasn’t really allowed to do anything because of the way the record company handled it?

Trev: Very disappointed, we all thought it was commercial enough to be a hit but we had such a weak record company in many areas. They put it out as a DJ single and hoped that people would pick up on it without promoting it or anything. They didn’t give it the chance to really be a proper single where as if they had I’m sure it would have done well. It’s always gone down well when we’ve played it on stage and it always got good reviews.

Alan: I thought “Fear of falling” would have been a good single, it was a little bit different but really catchy.

Trev: It was never considered as a single, they guy who owned the record company was picking the single and his favourite band was “Motorhead” so he would have never considered it for a single, his head wasn’t thinking in the same direction as us. Everybody liked it but we only ever played it live twice, it was a bit difficult for me to sing and play. But it could have been a single, definitely. It’s difficult to say when you write a song that it should be the single, you get too close to the songs, you might like something but the

others might not.

Alan: When you write do you follow a set formula for constructing a song?

Trev: I usually start off with music, I'll sit down and plonk away on the guitar until I come up with some chords or a feel that I like, and then start adding to that. Then I'll sing along with it a little bit to get a melody, from that I'll work on the lyrics.

Alan: Is it the case that when you've written a song, it can be arranged in such a way to make it more commercial or more heavy?

Trev: Yeah, "Nutter" for example was actually done on two acoustic guitars and a bass when I did the demo for it, it was a lot lighter than the version on the album. It had the same intro but we decided to heavy that up with the electric guitar and from then on it became heavier and heavier. But the original is completely different, it's a lot lighter and a bit more personal where as the band's version is more in your face. I also had a strange Bowie like ending on it and everyone said: "you've nicked that from Bowie", but I hadn't, it was just a really strange ending.

Alan: How do you feel when you've got a song that's in your mind and on your demo as one thing, then the band take it and it turns out to be something completely different on the finished album?

Trev: They're always going to be different I suppose, "Shelter in the rain" is more or less exactly the same as my demo but it still has a different feel to it when the band recorded it. The version on the album has a Heep feel to it, where as when I did it, it was me. That was quite personal because I played everything on the demo and got it exactly how I wanted it to sound, but when you get other musicians involved they tend to twist it a little bit to the way they feel it and the way they want to do it, because of that it turns out slightly different and it's something that happens to everybody who writes. It doesn't mean it's any better or worse, it just becomes slightly different. When I did the demo of that song the guitars were more prominent, especially the picking guitars, I made it more haunting. When we added the Hammond to it, it gave it more of a Heep feel. It turned out just as good and I was really pleased with the end result.

Alan: Is the band's version of "Only the young" faithful to your demo?

Trev: It's basically the same but it's slightly slower on my demo.

Alan: Would you ever use any keyboard on your demos?

Trev: I haven't got a keyboard but one of these days I must go out and get one.

Alan: Are there any bass parts on the demos Mick and Phil bring in?

Trev: They have the guitar and keyboard parts are worked out, along with the vocal melody line and the harmonies, but I put the bass on as I think it should be.

Alan: "How do you feel about "Sweet Pretender" being dropped from the album apart from the German limited edition version?

Trev: I wasn't very pleased that it was coming off to be honest, I couldn't see why at all.

Alan: It's got quite a Heep style shuffle to it don't you think?

Trev: Yes and I thought we did a really good version of it. Originally I wasn't going to present it to the band because I never really finished it off, I got fed up with it. When we went to rehearsals and we were all playing through stuff, I happened to play a bit of it, I left

it on and everyone wanted to do it. I finished it off in the studio and although I may have rushed it a little bit, I got the best out of it. Unfortunately it was decided that it should come off the album but it should be on the German promo single.

Alan: How do you think "Sonic Origami" compares with "Sea of Light"?

Trev: I think it's far better than "Sea of Light", there are a lot of more classier songs on this one and there's some great playing. It's a broader album in respect of the type of music that's on it. It touches on different areas and that to me is really good. Even though it's commercial in a lot of areas, it's also got other direction. We're trying to be the Uriah Heep of today rather than the Uriah Heep of yesterday. A lot of fans need to understand that this band has been together for 12 years and if we home on our past all the time we'll be dead and buried. I don't know if you've heard the last "Deep Purple" album but it's dreadful, it's them hanging on to the past but trying to be modern in a way by copying everyone else. At least Heep are trying to move in different areas and are trying to bring out another style from within the band, I think that's healthy because it keeps us mentally active. We can play any type of music we want within the rock area and within what we are, we've already established what sort of band we are and now we want to progress with the music. Some of the songs on "Sonic Origami" are really clever songs with really clever lyrics.

Alan: How do you feel about "Across the miles" which, out of all the tracks on the album, is probably the furthest away from what people would know Uriah Heep for?

Trev: When it was first played I thought it was different, it was a good song but more American AOR late 1980's and I wondered what we could do with it. We changed it and put our own feel on it and I like listening to it for the way the band plays it. It was originally done by "Survivor" and I think it's quite a well known song in America, I'm sure a lot of people will know the song but not know who did it because it was never a big hit. Yes, it's different and it's not fully within the style of the album so it is a risky one. We thought everyone would go for it as a single, that's what we were looking to get from the song and in some respects that's not been the case, they've gone for the more Heepy stuff.

Alan: Do you have a favourite track off the album?

Trev: I don't really, I try not to pick favourite tracks but I think "Question" is a great track, I like listening to that one a lot, but they all have something to me. I got the CD of the album about a month after we'd finished and I refused to put it on at first. I was thinking: am I ready to play it yet? Is it too soon? Will I start picking fault? So I waited about a week or so then put it on really loud so I could hear it all over the house whilst I did some cleaning, I just listened to it as an album and it really did sound good. The more I've listened to it, the more I've got into it. It's really hard to listen to your own album with fresh ears when you've been working on it for so long. Once it's released it's not really down to whether we like it or not, it's really down to the people who are going to buy it, if it gets to them then we did a good job of it.

Alan: Do you listen to albums you've been involved in differently to the way you'd listen to someone else's albums?

Trev: Yes because I'm playing on it, I'll sit there and pick fault with the bass parts and think: I should have done this or I should have done that. But when you're in the studio it's quite intense and if you don't play something like you should have played it, then you think afterwards: if I'd have only played that it would have been better. That's the hard thing, to step away from it and just listen to it, that's what's recorded and it can be a big mistake to look back and think about how it could have been done differently.

Alan: Do you not listen to other people's music with the same critical ear?

Trev: Not really no, I just listen to it as an overall record, that's how they recorded it and I just sit and listen to it. If I like it I'll play it forever, if it's awful then I won't bother with it. I'm a punter once I start listening to other people's music.

Alan: Having contributed many ideas to the production of "Raging Silence", produced "Different World" yourself and had a big hand in the production of "Sea of Light", how did you feel about handing over the production duties to Pip Williams on "Sonic Origami"?

Trev: It was great to have somebody else there to do it, he sat back and let us get on with it, he guided us into getting everything on tape. He didn't go into the rehearsals and say: I think you should change the bass part on this or the guitar part on that". If we got a bit stuck he'd come up with suggestions but he didn't change any of the songs in any way. He was very much a listener to what everybody else in the band wanted and I think that's the sign of a great producer. I hate producers that say: "I want to do it my way and bugger what the band wants". Any band that creates really good music should be left to get it onto tape, the record company signed them up on the strength of their demos and it's up to the producer to get the best out of the band and get the best the band can achieve down on tape. Pip is like that, he sits back and guides you but never restricts the musician.

Alan: What would you hope the new live set will consist of?

Trev: A lot of the new songs, we're going to do quite a bit off "Sonic Origami" but I don't think we should loose anything off "Sea of Light" either. Usually we dump everything from the last album but still play the old stuff together with the new album. To me that gets a bit boring, I'd rather still keep playing the "Sea of Light" material and still do some of the old stuff, but don't do masses of it. I'd like to replace some of the old stuff with different tracks rather than keep doing the same ones. I know you've got to play to the punters who want to hear that but after twenty odd years of playing it I'd like to move on. As I said before, if we stick just in the past the band will kill it's self, I rather hear people saying the new Heep album is great as opposed to hear them saying they're just the same old Heep. To get in the press, or to get on the radio, and to lift the band's profile to enable us to play bigger gigs, you have to get the people at the radio stations and in the press, who are young people anyway, interested. We love all our fans and we understand that many are fans from the old days, but we have to keep going forward, otherwise there won't be any Heep.

Alan: Is it any disadvantage to the Heep of today that the band were so big in the 70's?

Trev: I don't really know, yes and no, it's an advantage because of the name but it's a disadvantage that it's got a past that's not really this band any more. It's Mick and Lee mainly, and me from 1976 onwards, but the "Easy livin" period is not this band, that was a different band and people have to understand that. Maybe one of the best things the band could have done years ago was change their name and see what happened, maybe called it "UH" or something, just put an album out a see what would have happened, maybe we'd have picked up a whole new following. But we decided to stay as Uriah Heep and stay loyal to what we were.

Alan: Do you think you'll bring any of the "Raging Silence" material back into the set?

Trev: I was listening to that the other day and I was really impressed by it, I thought there was some really good stuff on that album. It's this band's past so why not, it was a well respected album. It's hard to compile a set list and cater for everybody, if "Sonic Origami" really took off and there was a whole bunch of new fans, then the majority would expect to hear more of the new stuff.

Alan: How realistic is it that "Sonic Origami" will really take off?

Trev: It's definitely possible, the German record company are really behind it and the American record company have decided that it's their priority, so we could take off in the States again, especially now we've got American management. If we take off in America then it would spread back to Germany and that would spread through Europe. The possibilities are there and we've all got faith in it, we'll do everything we need to do as a band but then it's down to the media, the radio stations and the people who will go out and buy it. If it sells it elevates us up to bigger venues, we'd love to do places like Manchester Apollo and Newcastle City Hall again, and sell them out. I still think that Heep are one of the best live bands around, I've seen so many bands and they don't even compare, everybody tells us this so it makes us wonder why we aren't back up there. It's only through getting the radio play and good press that will get people to notice us.

Alan: When you talk about the German record company and the American record company, are they just distributors for Eagle Rock?

Trev: With Eagle Rock, as with a lot of record companies these days, they have a distributor, but the distributors are in charge of selling the album. They're like your record company but it's handled through Eagle rock, if they believe in it then they're like any other record company, they don't just stick it in the shops and do nothing, they take the album on and sell it, they'll hopefully do everything to make sure the album will be in the press and be heard on the radio. We didn't have that with "Sea of Light", it only came out in Europe and Japan, what good is that? Even though it did really well in Japan and got great reviews, you want a world wide release and with "Sonic Origami", that's what we'll have. I think the music industry is going to have to change, they'll have to start looking for rock bands that like "Led Zep", "U2" or "The Police", "U2" were the last really big band to come from these shores, even "Oasis" aren't that big. The industry needs to focus on the type of bands who can sell mega amounts of records over 10 or 20 years, not the one hit wonders who are around for a year or so, then break up. There are no bands for fans to follow, it's all a bit sad and it's all down to the accountants who are running the record companies, they only look at quick initial sales but don't look to the future and allow real bands to develop.

Alan: Has this sort of thing had an influence on the way Heep have been handled by their record companies over the past 10 years or so?

Trev: Not really, we've only been with small companies and it's very difficult to sell records on these small labels. Thank God we're with Eagle Rock now who are doing very well. We're all looking to the future and we can't wait to get out there and get started. We're looking forward to the London show with "Dio" and I think it would be good to do a couple of warm up gigs to work the new songs up. It's nerve racking enough on the first gig with a new set wondering if you're going to remember all the new songs and it will be worst at a gig like that. Being on with "Dio" you don't know if you're going to get a proper soundcheck or not but if you've learnt the set and you've got it together and are playing it really well, then the "Dio" gig would be a lot easier to do. I'd be happy to play anywhere, some of the clubs we did with "The Spiders" would do.

Alan: That would keep a lot of people happy over here.

Trev: Yeah, I'll have to talk to Mick about it. I'd like to go up to Scotland or the North East, we haven't played up there for ages. We wouldn't make any money on it but at least we'd get a couple of gigs under our belt and it would be a good warm up for the "Dio" show, and for the German tour.

Interview by Alan Hartley.

FIRST TOUCH - HOW I BECAME A HEEP FAN

In 1975, I spent most of the summer holidays in my parents summer house. I was 15 at the time and had been introduced to the music of Uriah Heep earlier in the year by two of my cousins who were a bit older than me and had money as they owned many Heep albums. They were talking about Heep all the time and I was kind of wondering why, there was something like a halo of mystery around the band because their music was never played on our radio and there were no features to be found in any of the rock magazines that graced the newspaper stand of our little town. Then I bought the "Sweet Freedom" album in the first days of my vacation and fell under the spell of that distinctive heavy sound and the 'up to the sky vocal harmonies'. One of my cousins said that whenever Heep were playing or singing they sounded like a 'gang' of their own. And so were my cousins and I. Heep had something we could really relate to and I still feel the 'gang' presence whenever I play "Stealin", "If I had the time" or "Seven stars", due mostly to those aahs sung in harmony. But most of all it's that long hot summer feeling that I get every time I play the album. That makes me a very 'umble but very 'appy Heep fan.

Sylvain Girard.

Please send in the story of how you first became a Heep fan.

BERNIE SHAW - MY TOP 12

This new feature in the mag is based on the old Radio 1 program of the same name where a celebrity guest would choose their top 12 tunes and talk a little about each one. Well we thought we'd adapt it and invite past and present Heep members to choose their own top 12, starting with Bernie.

EAGLES/LOVE WILL KEEP US ALIVE. Off the "Hell freezes over" CD, it was a very special song for me and Biggi, especially if I was about to be going off on tour. Very sentimental and beautiful song.

BAD CO/READY FOR LOVE. I first heard this song in 1974 when I was signing in my Canadian band "Cold Sweat". Killer album, killer songs, killer voice!

JOE COCKER/UNCHAIN MY HEART. Ok it's not all that old but I first heard it in Germany when some one was warming up the PA before our sound check. It sounded so big I thought Joe was there that night in the venue.

STEVE EARLE/COPPERHEAD ROAD. Great haunting song. Lots of space between the track to let it breath and a fantastic drum sound.

FOREIGNER/UNTIL THE END OF TIME. Ok, this is just one of many of my favourite songs by Mick Jones. Too many to mention but they all strike a chord with me.

BRUCE HORNESBY/THE WAY IT IS. I don't know - maybe it's because he's Canadian - I just love his piano playing.

STAGE DOLLS/AMMUNITION. A great song by an almost unheard of Nowegian band. I have both their albums and always take them on the road with me - my stereo is set up before my suitcase is unloaded.

SAMMY HAGAR/ONLY ONE WAY TO ROCK. Again only one of the many Hagar songs

I like, the man has got "THE" rock 'n' roll voice to me - and he's a killer live aswell.

VAN HALEN/THE SEVENTH SEAL. well, where there's one, there's the other. Well in my book anyway.

JOHN FARNHAM/THE VOICE. And this boy has it. A superb song done by an amazing singer

BURTON CUMMINGS/BREAK IT TO THEM GENTLY. Used to be the lead singer with "The Guess Who". "American woman" might have been a bigger hit, but this song off his solo album does it for me. What a voice.

NEIL YOUNG/HARVEST. Yeah, I know he can't sing in tune to save his life but he doesn't have to. He's still got all the emotion and it's a great song.

MEGADEATH/SANDMAN. Ok so there's a bit of contrast in my list of songs but I listen to almost anything. Great band, great live shows and sometimes these guys just get it right.

So that's what I'm listening to right now and I did run to 13 songs, but next month it could all be different. Maybe some "REM" mixed with "Dan Reed" washed down with a little "Pink Floyd". All just goes with the territory of being a musician.

BERNIE SHAW

We would also like to include the top 12's of the UHAS members in this feature so we'd like to hear from you with your selection. There's only one rule and that is no Heep tracks may be included in the top 12. If the songs are taken from an album please include it's title along with a paragraph or two about each of your chosen songs and why you like them. Please also include your favourite all time Heep track and the reason for your choice (as suggested in the letters section) in addition to your top 12 of other artists material, and a photo with your name printed on the back. Thanks in advance.



SONIC ORIGAMI

“IT’S AN EXTENSION OF SEA OF LIGHT WITH STRONGER SONGS SO I GUESS YOU CAN SAY IT’S A BETTER ALBUM”

PHIL LANZON - AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

Alan: First of all I'd like to go back to "Sea of Light", it's an album that a lot of the fans liked much more than "Different World" due to it's traditional Heep sound. It also received great critical acclaim, how disappointed are you that it didn't achieve more for the band than it did, and what do you blame for that?

Phil: Quite simply we were unhappy with the way things worked out with the record company. There was no record company back up in any way, shape or form, we didn't have a team working for us who really believed in the whole package, there was very little contact, if any at all, on an artistic level and thankfully we are no longer associated with

album into America in the new year so who knows, maybe something will come out of it from that market through our new label, Velva Records.

Alan: How easy was it for you personally to slip into the classic Heep sound that made up "Sea of Light"?

Phil: After "Different World" there was a gap of a few years and we had time to take stock of the situation. On many occasions I'd said that we really had to take a page out of the old Heep book to continue with the band, the people who know and love Uriah Heep love the band because of the old stuff, you can't deny it and you can't get away from it. Rather than completely immerse ourselves in the old stuff, we decided that we'd go through various high points of the early Heep to analyse them a bit, get the feel of the sound and the lyrical content and weld that type of idea into our modern day approach. I think that's exactly what we achieved and it actually worked. Had a proper company been behind it then I'm absolutely certain that something would have happened with it. Maybe it will happen in America next year but it still stands as a good album regardless of what happens and I'm happy about that fact.

Alan: How do you feel "Sonic Origami" differs from "Sea of Light"?

Phil: "Sonic Origami" is a large step forward on the basics of "Sea of Light", it's like a huge jump forward but it still retains the essence of the old, the songs are generally stronger overall. There's also a leaning towards commerciality so it does please a lot of people across the board. We're trying to aim for the general market as well as the rock market which we'll always be in. Mick and I were saying the other day that it would be nice to be on a level where we are making one album a year and be able to spend more time in the studio rather than all the touring. There's a lot of experimental things we'd like to pursue in the studio which we haven't really had time to do previously.

Alan: Do you see this commerciality as being mainly the future direction of the bands music?

Phil: In a some ways yes, it never will move completely away from the old Heep, there will always be the Heep trade marks in the sound, in the lyrics, in the production, but we're always looking towards something that's different and when we move into an experimental phase in the new year, I think something interesting may come of that. I've now got a studio set up at home and I'm starting to experiment now with things. I'm not saying that anything of it is connected with Heep, but when it moves a little further down the line we'll see how it goes, who can tell.

Alan: Do you think "Sonic Origami" is a better album than "Sea of Light", or is it hard to judge because of the slightly different direction?

Phil: It is hard to compare them, it's an extension of "Sea of Light" with stronger songs so I guess you can say it's a better album.

Alan: Your writing partnership with Mick seems to have developed into something quite special, do you find him an easy partner to work with?

Phil: Oh yeah, we've always had a knack of working together right from the very start and we also have a formula which helps to make the writing go quite smoothly. We work with riffs and chord sequences to start with to build up a picture that way. I'll start working on a vocal over the music and when we're happy we'll sit down and start knocking out lyrics. We're very disciplined with lyrics, I hate using the word disciplined but we do sit down and say: "right, here we go, we'll get into it and have this done by tonight".

Alan: Do you never jot lyrics down as they come to you and bring these bits and pieces to the disciplined stage of the writing?

Phil: Sometimes, but the reality of it is that it's that sitting down that gets things done, we start to form the picture of the story that's going to be. Generally the lyrics have messages, some are quite clear and some not so clear, it depends on how an individual may perceive it.

Alan: So you both work on all aspects of the song together, it's not the case that one of you will do the music and one the lyrics?

Phil: It can be an even split between lyrics and music but then on other occasions I may have more lyrics and Mick more music, or visa versa. It depends what ideas each of us have when we start writing.

Alan: Did you have to intentionally change you writing style and your approach to the writing process knowing that the band were aiming for a slightly more commercial element with "Sonic Origami"?

Phil: Yes, the approach of commerciality was deliberate and there are maybe 4 songs that grew in that way, we kept them that way deliberately without making them too complicated. Of course there are other songs on the album that are completely non commercial.

Alan: How did your son become involved in the writing of "Heartless Land" and what part did he contribute to it?

Phil: When we were writing the songs for "Different World" in 1991, I asked Matt, my son, to send me any lyrics if he ever happened to write any. One day I received a letter from him with two sets of lyrics in with it, one wasn't very good, it wasn't us at all, and the other one was "Heartless Land", I thought there was a message in there so I said to Mick: "let's see if we can do something with these. He had an intro already sorted out and we tried the lyrics to see if they would fit around that. We wrote a bridge and chorus and put it on tape with the rest of the songs. It stayed there and for no real reason it was forgotten. Just before we finished the "Sonic Origami" writing sessions we just started playing it and said: "hang on, that's Heartless Land, do you remember that", so we dug out the cassette, listened to it, and wondered why we never recorded it. That was it, we used it on this album and Matt was over the moon when I told him.

Alan: One track on "Sonic Origami" that I feel is quite different than the rest of the album is "Across the miles". Are you comfortable with a track like that or do you really prefer your own material such as "Between two worlds", "Question", "Change", "Everything in life" etc? which are probably more in the traditional Heep style.

Phil: "Across the miles" was recorded just for commercial reasons, in my own personal opinion I find it's a little bit AOR or middle of the road. So I'm not 100% over the moon with it, but I quite like it, it's alright, and I'm sure it would get a fair amount of airplay in America and Canada because it's more designed for that territory. I not knocking it, it's a good song, but as for other countries, I don't know if it will get so much airplay, but we'll see how it goes.

Alan: How did you prepare the orchestral sections for "Sonic Origami"?

Phil: First of all, with "The Golden Palace", I actually had a song written in my head after our long Russian tour of 5 weeks, I was so affected by everything that happened on that tour. I worked on the song for a while and then left it alone. Eventually, after 6 months of

not writing, I couldn't remember it at all, I'd forgot the whole song with one exception and that was the melody line in the chorus. In Sydney, on one of our writing sessions, it seemed to fall into place with one of Mick's chord sequences. We put the two ideas together and had the whole song written in a day, except the lyrics which we did separately. At the beginning of it there's this strange Russian chord sequence that I'd been using and as it was so Russian we thought we may as well use it on the song. Further down the line when we got into the recording of the song I scored it out for orchestra and played all the parts from the score. It sounded so Russian it suited the song perfectly.

Alan: So you sampled the orchestral instruments and played it through a keyboard?

Phil: Yes, it's as near to the sound of an orchestra as is physically possible, it's not string machines, it's samples of actual instruments.

Alan: Is this the same method you used for the orchestral sections on "Sea of Light"?

Phil: Yes it was but we used Pete Becket to score it out on that album because there wasn't enough time for me to do it. This time there was more time for me to do it all myself.

Alan: Bernie was talking in the last issue about your ability in working out the individual part of multi voice harmonies. Is that a complicated process or is it something that comes easy to you?

Phil: It's generally easy to do, you sit down at the piano and pick out the harmonies. The difficult bit is getting everyone to hold the note in their memory, but once we've done it and knocked it out a few times, everyone's pretty good at it. It's also making sure that you're asking people to sing in a range that sounds good, you can't give anyone any note, you've got to make sure it's in the right register for each individual from Lee's very low voice to Mick's high voice. Altogether they sound great when they're recorded and we're very pleased with the result. It is a technical thing to prepare but if you've got what they call a keyboard brain when you're composing you see things instantly. If you don't have that kind of thinking you can't see the sound. With keyboard thinking you can see all the notes and the harmonies in your head even before you play it. It's a common thing for many people who play keyboards but for some reasons other musicians in the rock world don't seem to see it so clearly.

Alan: On "Sea of Light", the band really produced the album and Kalle Trapp was the engineer, he was given production credits for his input, were you happy to give the production work over to somebody else on "Sonic Origami" having had such a big hand in it last time?

Phil: Absolutely, we knew Pip's track record and we distinctly wanted to hand over the reins to somebody who could take over completely, we deliberately wanted it that way, we trusted Pip's ability and in our eyes the result is excellent. We love what he's done. Having said that, we're like any other bunch of musicians when it comes to mixing, but he held the reins all the way through.

Alan: Will reproducing the recorded sound of "Sonic Origami" live involve a lot of work for you personally?

Phil: A little bit but it's just like everything else, you make sure you have the equipment you need and you just get on with it and do the job. I don't see any problem with anything but it is very important to say that live performance and recorded performance are two totally different animals. For anyone to expect to hear an exact recorded sound live is foolish. Music live is what happens at that event at that time.

Alan: Did you use the real Hammond Organ on the recording of "Sonic Origami"?

Phil: Yes, we used our Hammond, we use the Rhodes VK1000 on the road because it provides the colour we require when we're playing live. The cost of transporting the real Hammond and the Leslie cabinets is so huge these days, it doesn't make touring worth while.

Alan: When we talked about "Sea of Light" earlier, you talked about the failings of the old record company, are you confident that with "Eagle Rock" everything will be as you would want it.

Phil: Everything they have been speaking about to date has been very encouraging, I've got a lot of confidence in Eagle Rock, we all have. Let's see what happens after September 14th.

Alan: What are your 5 or 6 favourite tracks you've recorded during your 12 years with Heep?

Phil: From "Raging Silence" there's "More fool you" and "When the war is over" is a good track also. The last track on "Different World", "Cross that line", "Love in silence" off "Sea of Light" and off "Sonic Origami" I really like "Between two worlds and "Only the young".

Interview by Alan Hartley

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