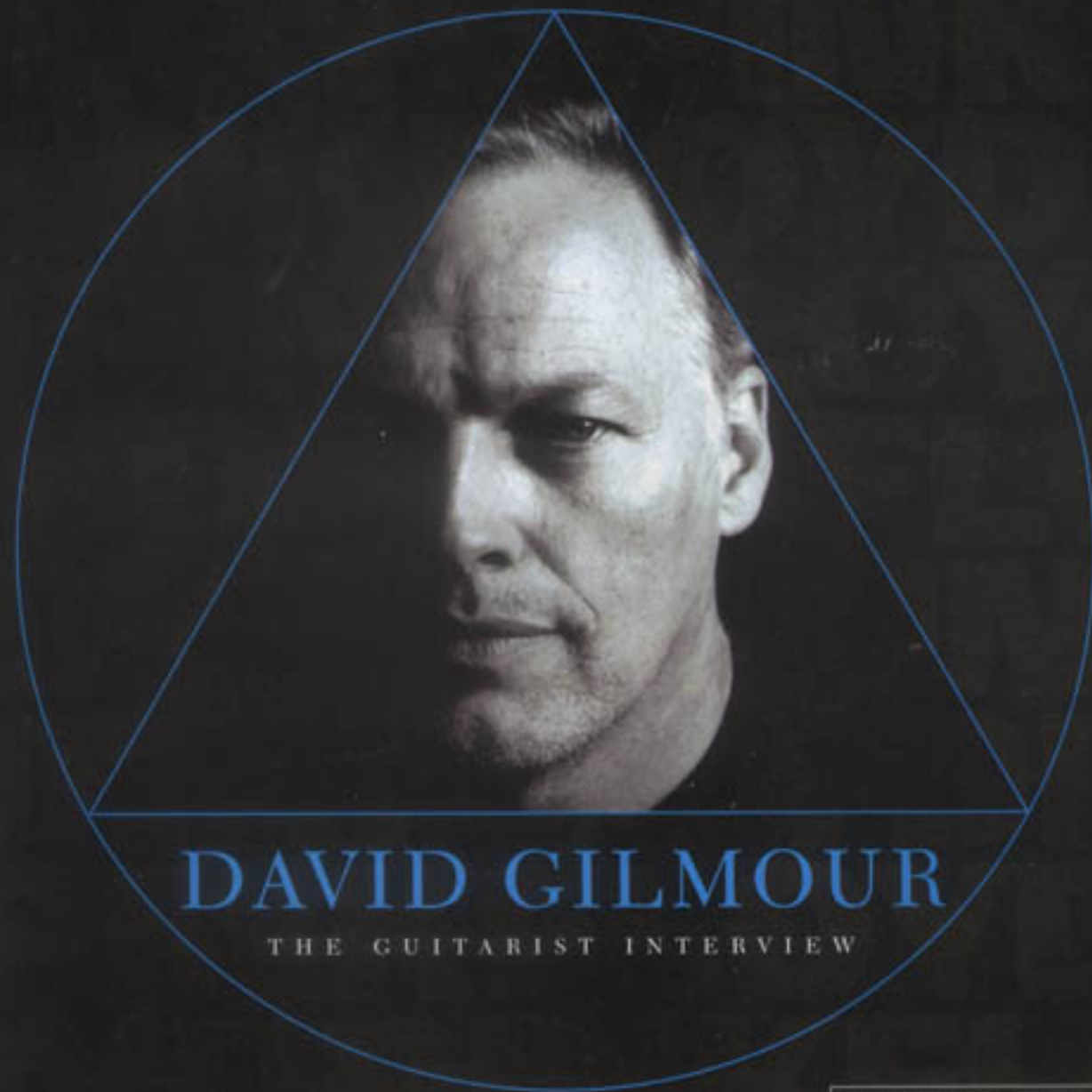


Guitarist

JULY 1995 - £2.70



DAVID GILMOUR

THE GUITARIST INTERVIEW



Pink Floyd's
'Dark Side Of The Moon'
operates in two time
spheres; that of its original
nascence in 1973 and its
re-emergence as
a complete work during
Floyd's 1994 world tour
and subsequent
live album, 'Pulse'.
David Mead insists that
there's no dark side really...

David Gilmour

The *Guitarist* Interview





You've all read the facts: 28 million copies sold worldwide, 800 weeks in the American charts, a copy in one out of five UK households, the cover, the posters, the stickers, the Abbey Road doorman, the quad version, the CD, the digital remastering, the 20th anniversary boxed set, the unreleased BBC recording... and now it's back to the surprise and delight of those fans lucky enough to have bought tickets for the 94 Floyd tour on a 'Dark Side' night.

Pink Floyd are, and will no doubt remain, one of the biggest bands on earth with a reputation for excellence in all things. Their original 60s commitment to provide an audio visual experience for their audiences which was second to none is still very much in place nearly 30 years later. Always keen to take advantage of new technology, they have reground acknowledged cutting edges in both the recording studio and on stage with every album release and subsequent tour.

Last year, with another chart triumph under their collective belt, they undertook a tour which went above and beyond anything seen, heard or done on a rock stage before. What's more, some audiences got to hear a contemporary reading of 'Dark Side'. But far from being a masterstroke of strategic planning, the decision to perform the piece which had not been heard in its entirety since 1975, was almost off the cuff. For, although plans were afoot to resurrect the Floyd magnum opus well in advance of last year's mammoth outing, it wasn't performed in its entirety until the band were three months into the USA leg of the tour.

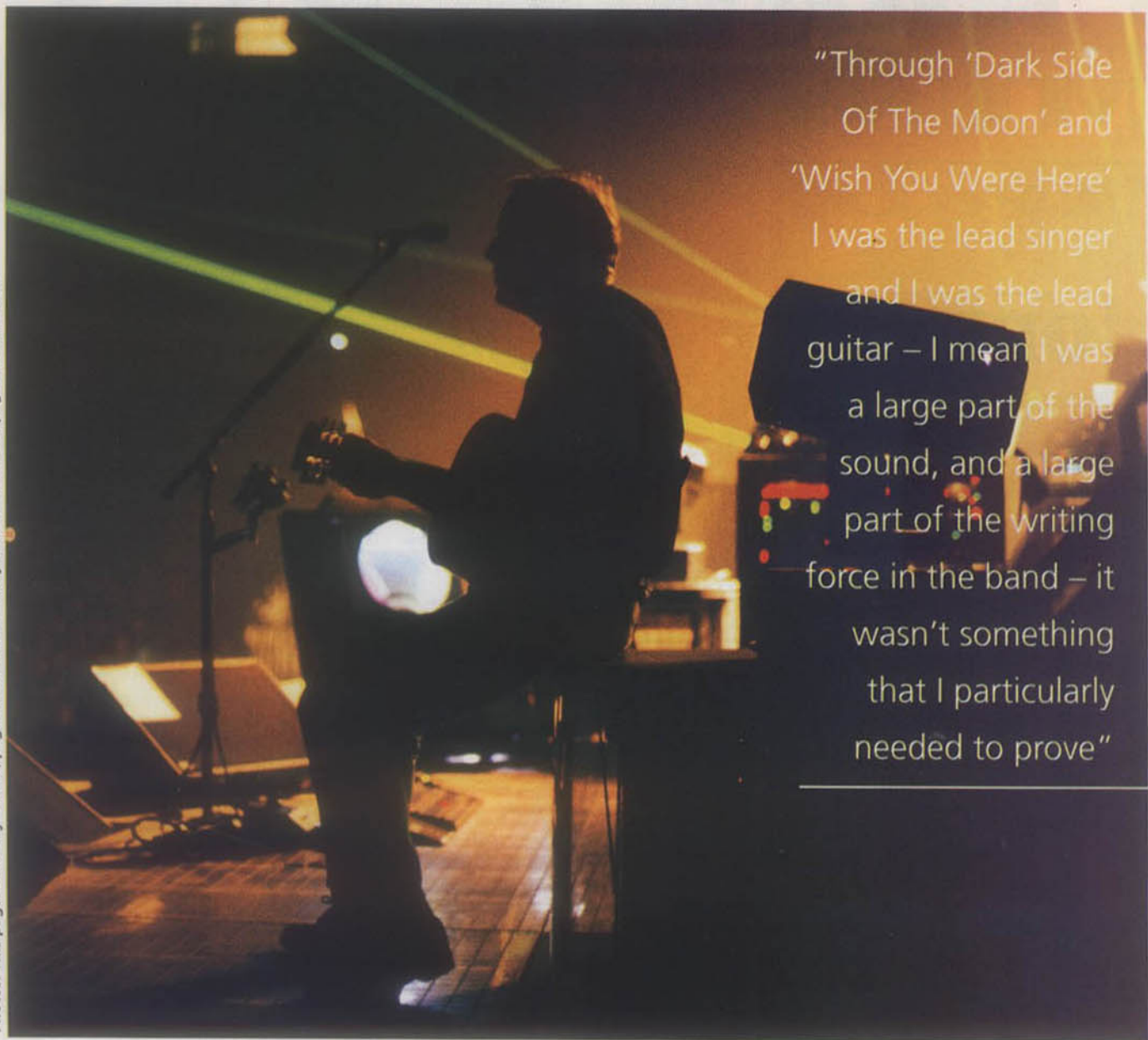
"It was just one of those ideas that gradually fermented in our minds," says Gilmour. "We realised that we were actually doing two thirds of it and thought it would be really good fun to do it as a whole. We'd been intending to change the show, in fact we were changing the show every night, doing slightly different versions of the songs. Gradually it got to the point where we

could do the whole thing when we got to Detroit, towards the end of the American part of the tour.

"We initially didn't want to announce it or have people knowing about it, we thought it would be a really nice surprise. We only did it about four times in America, but then I suppose we were doing it once every five or six shows around Europe just on a purely arbitrary basis, usually when we were playing the same place twice or something like that – we would just throw it in."

Far from 'just throwing it in' the preparation necessary to stage such a complex piece took months of preparation.

"Well, the most work was getting all the stuff together, the necessary bits of quad tape and bits of film – some we had to re-shoot – and remembering how and where some of them went. That took a while and of course rehearsing on the road is not easy because we would usually go along in the afternoon for a soundcheck but at those stadium shows in America they like to let people in at two or three in the afternoon and we don't have rehearsal rooms or anything, we just used to go on and rehearse one song and run it through a couple of times. I don't know if we played the whole thing through before we did it! I think we played all the changeovers, you know, we did a shortened version like you'd start a song then finish that song and do the tapes and changeovers and move onto the next. It was quite frightening, the first time we did it in Detroit – we weren't at all certain how it would go.."



"Through 'Dark Side Of The Moon' and 'Wish You Were Here' I was the lead singer and I was the lead guitar – I mean I was a large part of the sound, and a large part of the writing force in the band – it wasn't something that I particularly needed to prove"

One would think the audiences tended to see things Floyd's way, though.

"Well, in America it was received with stunned, shocked silence! By the time we got into Europe, through the fanbase and the Internet and all that sort of stuff people were aware that this was a possibility so it was maybe less of a surprise. So that would bolster them up a bit and they'd start cheering quicker and earlier at the beginning, as soon as the heartbeats and stuff started."

The decision to revitalise 'Dark Side' could be awarded the same significance as, say, The Who performing 'Tommy' or The Beatles deciding to dust off 'Sgt Pepper'.

"I don't know. I don't know about *significance*, it was just really good fun. On the 'Momentary Lapse Of Reason' tour we'd done *On The Run*, and we'd done *Money*, *Us And Them* and *Time*, so there was not that much more to rehearse, just *Breathe*, *Any Colour You Like*, *Brain Damage* and *Eclipse*. We've never really thought that much of doing *Brain Damage* and *Eclipse* before because those were the two songs on 'Dark Side' that Roger actually sang. I thought I might feel a little uncomfortable singing them, but it was fine."

But in general the piece was welcomed back with tumultuous applause.

"Yeah, it was brilliant."

One of several staples of Pink Floyd's live performances is the famous crash sequence during *On The Run*, featuring either a bed

or plane flown over the heads of the audience from the back of the stadium to a fiery, explosive end behind the PA.

"On the last tour we played *On The Run* with the flying bed because we made a film for it and we thought it would be good fun. And it gives us a little break as well, to pop off stage for a fag or something."

"There was always a plane, initially, but the bed seemed appropriate on the 'A Momentary Lapse Of Reason' tour but obsolete on this one."

It's probably an impossible question to answer, but musicians responsible for other acknowledged indelible rock masterpieces have often been asked whether, at any stage in the preparation of the work in question, it had occurred to them that it was beginning to take on a life of its own. Literally that they were present at the birth of a 'masterpiece'.

"An impossible question to answer!" Gilmour laughs. "We knew it was good, probably the best we had ever done as we were making it, but no, you can't possibly know that it's going to reach the sort of significance that it has."

"We performed 'Dark Side' quite a bit before we recorded it. We actually did it for five nights at the Rainbow in London in 72 although some of it was in a slightly different form to that which ended up on the record; the *On The Run* section was a sort of instrumental jam back in those days and many of the other tracks were slightly different. But an awful lot of time went into writing it

PINK FLOYD

"They said you couldn't get any better or any bigger when we did 'Dark Side Of The Moon' in 1973, and 22 years later you're asking me the same question!"



Photo: Brian Rasic/Rex Features

► in rehearsal rooms and when we first got it together, took it out and did it on shows, it changed all the time. I can't remember when the specific changes happened and cemented it into being."

The film *Pink Floyd Live At Pompeii* includes historic footage of the band recording the album at Abbey Road.

"We had finished the *Live At Pompeii* film a year and a half before and, as they had taken so long to get it ready for release, they wanted to modernise it a little bit because it was already out of date. So they came along to the studio to record us doing a bit of 'Dark Side Of The Moon', to show a bit of our latest album being made in the process and to try and cut it into the film to update it a little."

Despite the dramatic success of 'Dark Side Of The Moon', David has often been quoted as saying that it is their next album, 'Wish You Were Here' that ranks as his personal favourite.

"I'm very fond of 'Wish You Were Here'," he affirms. "I think it's better in some ways than 'Dark Side Of The Moon'. My problem with 'Dark Side', and I've said it before and I'll no doubt say it again, was that I thought that Roger's emergence on that album as a great lyric writer was such that he came to overshadow the music in places and there were moments when we didn't concentrate as hard on the music side of it as we should have done – which is what I voiced to all the band after the making of 'Dark Side'. That was absorbed into an effort to try and make the balance between music and the words a better one on 'Wish You Were Here'."

The recording of 'Wish You Were Here' was not without upset; at one point concert favourite *Shine On You Crazy Diamond* had to be re-recorded owing to a slight mishap in the studio.

"It was a new desk and no one was certain how to work it and the engineer had actually recorded the reverb from the whole of a track onto the drum mikes so it meant that we had spill from things we no longer wanted and reverb all over the drums and there was no way we could get rid of it. We didn't notice it for a while, we carried on working on it because we always thought, well, that's just the reverb... but then we tried to get rid of it, tried to kill the reverb one day and we couldn't."

"I think we ended up redoing the whole of the basic track of drums, bass and all the guitar for *Shine On You Crazy Diamond*."

Is it true that the whole of that song was inspired by the four guitar notes that occur a little way into the piece?

"All that opening stuff came from that guitar phrase; we were rehearsing in a room in Kings Cross and that sort of fell out of my guitar somehow and fell out several more times because I liked it and Roger sort of went, Hmm... yes. He said it was a highly evocative little motif, if you like, and maybe that's what got him thinking about Syd."

A lot has been talked about over the years regarding Pink Floyd – the band, but the individual members have always fought shy of too much personal media attention. Not much, for instance, is known about David's initial influences as a guitarist.

"Blues players, folk players, all sorts of players..... Hank Marvin." Seriously?

"Yep. My initial early guitar playing stuff came out of folk music, actually; Pete Seager and all sorts of other people. I spent a lot of time with friends, and Bob Close, who was in the very early incarnation of Pink Floyd and was one of my childhood friends, he

played a lot of blues music and stuff to me. My scale of interest was incredibly broad; folk music through blues and through to straight pop music. I wouldn't say blues was the dominant one.

"The first guitar I got – I was about 14, probably – was a Spanish guitar, I think it was a Tatay. My next door neighbour's mother gave it to him and he was not terribly interested and so I borrowed it from him and never gave it back. I think.

"I wanted to be able to play along to Elvis Presley records on it but I was given by my parents a record called 'The Pete Seager Guitar Tutor Record' and the first band of that record is how to tune the thing, then it teaches you a few chords, and I never got beyond the third lesson! But that got me started and thereafter I would sit up and listen to Radio Luxembourg on headphones late at night trying to work out the bass, rhythm and lead guitar parts of every record that came on."

And when did David's lifelong association with the Strat begin?

"Hank Marvin had a Strat and it was all I always wanted but I couldn't afford one. When I was young I had a Hofner Club 60 which was a very nice guitar, and my parents gave me a Telecaster for my 21st birthday, which was when I was living and working in France. That got stolen while it was in transit on a flight to America, and I took that opportunity on the first American tour I went on with Pink Floyd in 1968 to go and buy a Stratocaster. I've played other guitars, but the Strat's my number one choice for versatility."

When somebody thinks of the archetypal Strat sound, David Gilmour's is never far from mind and yet some of his more famous solos were in fact recorded on other instruments. Take, for instance, the solo to *Another Brick In The Wall Pt 2*: Strat? Nope – Les Paul!

"That was a strange sound, because that solo on *Another Brick In The Wall* was done through the desk; it was direct injected straight onto tape from the neck pickup of an old Les Paul with P90s. But then I didn't think it was quite biting enough and so we then ran the tape out through a bit of wire and plugged it into an amplifier and put a mike in front of it, then I fiddled around with the amp and turned it up a little bit, got some volume on it and then we mixed that sound and the direct inject back together."

That would probably go a long way to explaining the overbend in that solo where the B string is bent from a C up a major third to an E – easier on a Les Paul where the string tension is less, but on a Strat...

"I do it on a Strat live! It's easy

enough, but if I need a bit of help, I sometimes pull up on the wang bar at the same time, and I always expect the string to go but luckily it doesn't too often."

All the same, the fact that the solo was recorded on a Les Paul and not a Strat probably ranks alongside many people thinking the definitive Les Paul sound is Jimmy Page's on the solo to *Stairway To Heaven* when it was, in fact, a Telecaster. Any other surprises lurking in the guitar closet, Dave?

"Well, I've tried them all, I just don't like the other guitars as much as a Strat. The third loudish guitar solo on the original record of *Money* isn't a Strat, it's a guitar called a Lewis made by a guy called Bill Lewis in Vancouver, Canada. When I was trying that solo out I wanted to get higher than a Strat goes; you can't get up to high E on a Strat, you're three frets short. I do it on tour sometimes but it takes a lot of bending and it hurts your fingers. This guitar had two full octaves on it so I did the third solo on this other guitar, which I've still got somewhere.

"There were some different guitars used on 'A Momentary Lapse Of Reason'; I used a Steinberger on some of it, I had one of those ➤

PINK FLOYD

funny white Steinbergers with three pickups, quite similar to a Strat in some ways I thought, three single coil pickups. I think all of *Sorrow* was done originally on that, but you tell me the difference; you'd never know. I could do all those strange bend bits because

it's got that whammy in tune and that's one of the sounds on the record which I now have to fake a little bit live on a Strat, because the Strat strings go down completely different – they don't go down anywhere near in tune."

'The Final Cut' is often overlooked as a Floyd album, despite the fact that it has some excellent guitar playing on it. However, due to the well documented internal pressures within the band, it remains David's least favourite album.

"I think there are three great tracks on it – I don't think it's completely a pile of shit but I think some of the weaker moments on it are filler. I didn't approve of them, I don't think enough went into it. But a lot has been said about that moment in time, I don't think anyone's particularly proud of it. But there are three very good tracks on it, *The Final Cut*, *The Gunner's Dream* and *Fletcher Memorial Home* are all really good.

"We went and did some guitar overdubs for that album in Wax studios – Mickie Most's – and we took the big guitar gear. Sometimes I use big stuff, sometimes I use little stuff. We just put the big stuff in and Phil Taylor [*Floyd's head of backline* – see January 95's *Guitarist*) wasn't around. I had someone else who wasn't a roadie or anything take it in, I told him more or less what to plug in and we just turned it on and it instantly sounded great! We did all the guitar stuff just there and it was so easy. I don't know why, that room for some reason at that particular time just worked so great."

Apart from the four (now three) central players in the band, Floyd have occasionally called on other musicians to lend a hand.

"If I remember correctly, we actually used Lee Ritenour on one part of 'The Wall', on a rhythm part for *One Of My Turns*. Mike

"Some people start thinking that we have some mysterious handle on matters of a much more deep meaning and so the confusion between that and some sort of religious import comes about. But we don't have answers for anything; we're just musicians trying our very best"

Landau, I think, played on *One Slip*; there are these funny little notes which originally came out of a thing I was doing with Phil Manzanera. My timing is not that precise and sometimes those things get tough and when they do I'll get someone else in to play them. If I can think of a part but I can't actually do it as well as I'd like to hear it done then I'll get someone else who can."

Coming as it did after a very public split within the band, the 'Momentary Lapse' album and tour must have proved that many still had faith in the band's durability.

"It wasn't really something I needed particularly proven to myself; I know that through our early years, through 'Dark Side Of The Moon', 'Wish You Were Here' I was the lead singer and I was the lead guitar – I mean I was a large part of the sound, and a large part of the writing force in the band – it wasn't something that I



particularly needed to prove. Obviously how the audiences would react to it was something I needed to *know* but I didn't need to prove it to myself."

Throughout the band's career, it's possible to find references to previous works nestled within contemporary songs. Recently, for instance, the Strat enhanced 'whale song' from *Echoes* turns up once again on 'The Division Bell'. Is there a conscious plan to insert these 'bookmarks' occasionally?

"Not really, I mean finding the old whale noise out of *Echoes* and sticking it in whatever it was in more recently is just a little joke! It's nice to jog people's memories: you can jog people like that in the way that you can jog your own mind and emotions with a smell you haven't smelled for years – going into your parents' house when you haven't been there for a long time or one of those things – and to do that with one of our little things I thoroughly enjoy."

There seem to be certain lyrical references, too...

"Obviously you'd have to talk to Roger about most of that; most of the lyrical theme throughout the years. But it's not a conscious thing to try to follow, it's just the areas t h a t

one's mind tends to move towards when you get into a

contemplative mood when writing."

A question that many people who have been scouring the Pink Floyd Newsgroup on the Internet recently will doubtless want to ask David is if he is aware of the so-called Publius Enigma?

"No, I don't know about that, what's that?"

Okay, for David and the folks at home: as soon as 'The Division Bell' was released, the Internet was awash with rumours that the album's cover and musical content were encoded with clues which would lead the crafty cryptographers among Floyd's fanbase to a 'tangible prize'. The rumours were started by an anonymous character calling himself Publius. So, for the last year, theories have abounded – some faintly plausible, some frankly ridiculous. Dave?

"I think some people have got over active imaginations myself!"

Even the site of the cover photographs, our very own Ely, is allegedly at risk from hordes of American Floyd fans intent, it would seem, on excavation.

"Poor farmer!"

So there are no hidden clues musically, lyrically, photographically or otherwise on 'The Division Bell'?

"No."

Sure?

"Yeah."

So we can say 'forget it' to Publius?

"Absolutely."

There was meant to be a date on the tour last year when the word 'Publius' appeared in lights at the foot of the stage and on the Earl's Court video someone scrawls 'Enigma' on the rear screen, which would seem to imply that *someone's* up to *something*.

"Not to my knowledge. I don't know, maybe Marc Brickman, who's keen on the Internet and stuff was playing along. I haven't seen it, I hadn't noticed really."

We could fax you the details...

"Ooh, no thanks!"

Sorry, Internet chums, we tried. A change of subject would probably be appropriate here: what about 'Pulse'? It's an analogue

PINK FLOYD



David's Tatay,
which he still
has today

Photo: R Ecclestone

on modern tape machines and whether one is persuading oneself or whether it's a reality that there's a warmth and a presence to analogue recording I'm not a 100% certain. I know one time we did quite a hard test in the difference between recording a drum kit digitally and recording it analogue and we could all notice that the sense of space and the sense of air that surrounded the drum kit was significantly better on analogue because taking to pieces the incredibly complicated sound wave forms of reverbs and echoes and sibilance and transients and translating that all down through an analogue to digital converter into little numbers and then converting them all back again... some people think that 44,000 of them a second is quite enough."

When the masters of the live album had been pressed, Floyd rejected them and held out for better quality – putting the album's release a month behind.

"Yep, that's right. James Guthrie rejected them, they came back and then he sent me the ones when he thought they were good. I never listened to the difference, I did try to listen to the difference between some of them at home but by the time you've got up, opened your CD drawer and put another one in and got to the same place and played it again, I couldn't honestly tell the difference. You really have to have two of them running more or less in sync and just be able to flick A/B between the two and I never did that. James and Doug Sax at The Mastering Lab in Los Angeles are two people whose ears I trust better than anyone else's in the world; they're both agreed that more could and should be done and we tracked something down to some clocking problems and we believe that these ones now are as good as we can get."

The album benefits from having been mixed in Q Sound, too.

"Yeah, it's quite an interesting thing. It's not the same as being in a hall obviously, it's something you have to handle with a great deal of care and be very careful what you put into it and what you use it for. For most applications it doesn't suit, I mean most actual instruments, most percussive things – drums and stuff – it really doesn't work for, but for some of that audience sound, some of the sound effects and the quad tapes, where it doesn't matter if these quad ►

► recording, which would seem to contradict The Floyd's hi-tech stance.

"Does it? I disagree. The drums and bass and stuff on 'Momentary Lapse Of Reason' – we did all the backing tracks analogue, then we synced up to a Mitsubishi 32 track and did vocals and lots of the overdubs digitally. I mean, the technology, the progress in analogue equipment hasn't stopped because digital equipment has come along. The reason for using digital is because of ease of use and because there's no tape hiss and stuff, but I defy you to hear any bloody tape hiss

"On the last tour we played *On The Run* with the flying bed because we made a film for it and we thought it would be good fun. And it gives us a little break as well, to pop off stage for a fag or something"

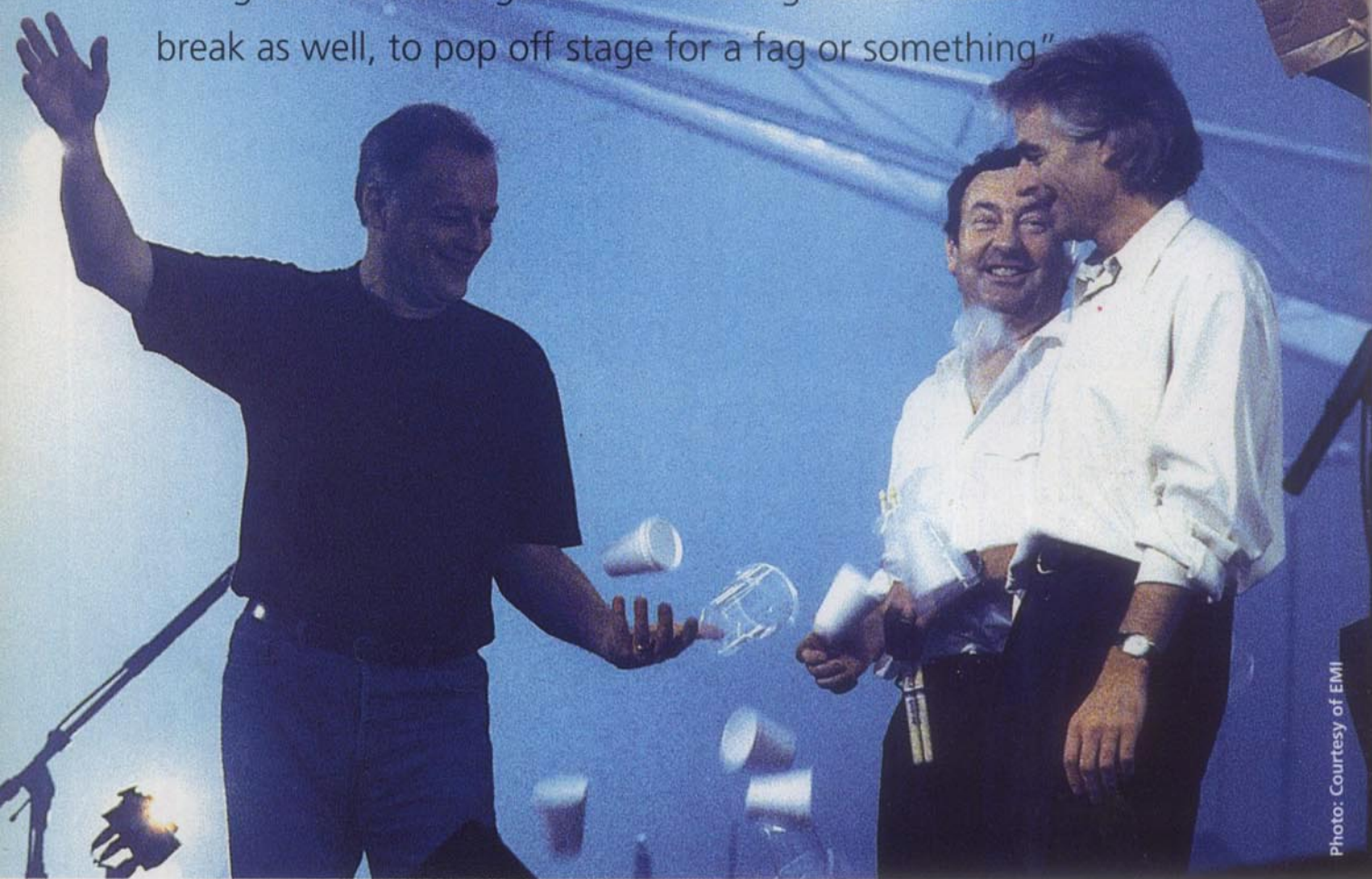


Photo: Courtesy of EMI



things that come right out to here in quite ordinary home speakers and that's great."

'Pulse', of course, has a winking red light on its spine with liner notes ascribing some sort of significance. Really?

"It's a winking red light! Someone came up with the idea – Storm Thorgerson, I think – of having this little LED flashing. It's good fun, it's sort of a visual representation of the heartbeat at the beginning of 'Dark Side Of The Moon', if you like; it helps you find it when you're staggering around your living room late at night with the lights dimmed down a little bit and your tired old eyes can't pick out one CD from another on the shelf... and it's a gimmick!"

And, according to those liner notes, a bogus car alarm.

"You can leave it in your car and try it!"

But as far as the music on 'Pulse' is concerned, it has to be said

voices sound a bit faint and strange, there it's great. You can add a little ambience – a whole sound *around* the stereo, it means you've got your stereo picture in front of you, six feet wide or whatever it is on your stereo system and we are getting some effects and

that much of the music is very similar – as is the personnel – to that found on the last live Floyd epic, 'Delicate Sound Of Thunder'.

"We wouldn't have done a live album or released a live video if we hadn't been doing 'Dark Side Of The Moon' at that stage. I think a lot of people would like to have 'Dark Side Of The Moon' live and on video; but we wouldn't have put it out, we wouldn't have bothered with the live album on this tour, although there are significant amounts of people that would like to have a live record of the shows that they've been to see, but I don't think we would have justified it without the fact that we were doing 'Dark Side Of The Moon' so that was where we came from. At one point we nearly put out just the 'Dark Side Of The Moon' thing but then it was too short so we thought we might as well give them the whole lot again, and fought and fought with the record company to keep the price down to a nice reasonable price for a double CD."

When *Guitarist* witnessed the tour last year, we described it as the eighth wonder of the world and most people who were present would seem to agree. How involved were the members of the band in the planning stages for the live show?

"We're very involved, all through the process. I mean we couldn't do it all ourselves, one has to delegate and we have other people in to make things and we have other people in whose ideas we usually like. I mean, Storm has been doing work with us since *I've* been doing work with us virtually; he was involved in the cover on the 'Saucerful Of Secrets' album which was the first one

I was on and so he's part of our thinking team. Marc Brickman has been doing stuff with us since 'The Wall' live and Mark Fisher has been doing stuff with us and Roger since God knows when. So yes, we have a team of people, all of whom give us their views and their thoughts and we take it on from there. We have lots of meetings where people suggest ideas, we put forth ideas and people go away and try to make them work. We're involved all the way through in everything."

When you talk to someone who attended last year's shows they tend to refer to being almost *spiritually* moved by the whole thing. Is there a deliberate attempt to create that kind of feeling in people?

"It's entirely deliberate, yeah. We're trying to make people have an experience that is meaningful in their lives and we want to move them; we want them to come out thinking differently to when they went in. It's not just entertainment, not for me – one gets to the point where there's a very difficult line to be drawn in there where some people start thinking that because we are trying to do that and succeeding to some degree that we have some mysterious handle on matters of a much more deep meaning and so the confusion between that and some sort of religious import comes about. Sometimes one finds oneself skirting a little close to the edge but we don't have answers for anything; we're just musicians trying our very best."

Supposedly the only problem for Pink Floyd now is how to follow 'The Division Bell' live show.

"That's something for you to worry about, not for me! You just do the next thing; the terms 'bigger' and 'better' don't really mean anything, you just do the best you can do at any given moment."

Surely the show can't get any bigger or better.

"They said you couldn't get any better or any bigger when we did 'Dark Side Of The Moon' in 1973, and 22 years later you're asking me the same question!"

It has to be asked: are there any plans for another tour?

"Nothing at the moment. We're not continuing this tour, there have been lots of rumours about it but we're not continuing; this one's done."

But for the future?

"No doors are closed."

What about another studio project?

"Haven't even thought about it." ■

Guitarist July 1995

"I've played other guitars, but the Strat's my number one choice for versatility"



The Rack Side...

And now something you can try at home...

There follows a track by track breakdown of 'Dark Side' listing the effects David Gilmour uses – drawn from his own records for the last tour. Bear in mind that despite the individual units' apparent simplicity in terms of their public domain availability, they have been tweaked, generally modified and then embroidered in a custom switching rack system by Pete Cornish.

So don't blame us if this only gets you halfway there!

Speak To Me n/a

Breathe Boss CS-2/Tube Driver 1/Uni-Vibe/TC Delay (long delay)

On The Run n/a

Time Intro – MXR Dyna Comp/Ibanez CP-9 Compressor/Boss CE-2/TC Delay (long delay)/PCM 70 Delay (Binson multi-tap type delay)/Graphic B
Verse – Tube Driver 2/TC Delay (long delay)
Solo – Big Muff/Tube Driver 2/Uni-Vibe/TC Delay (long delay)

Breathe (Reprise)

Boss CS-2/ Tube Driver/Uni-Vibe/TC Delay (long delay)

The Great Gig In The Sky (slide guitar)

MXR Dyna Comp/Boss CS2 Compressor/TC Delay (v long delay)

Money

Riff – Pete Cornish Soft Sustainer/Tube Driver 2

Solo – Boss CS-2/Tube Driver 1/Sovtek Big Muff/TC Delay (long delay)

Solo (dry) – Tube Driver 1/Rat

Us And Them

Boss CS-2/Tube Driver 1/TC Delay (long delay)

Any Colour You Like

Boss CS-2/ Tube Driver 1/Uni-Vibe/TC Delay (long delay)/

Dynacord CLS222 Leslie

Brain Damage

Boss CS-2/ Tube Driver/Uni-Vibe/TC Delay (long delay)

Eclipse

Boss CS-2/ Tube Driver/Uni-Vibe/TC Delay (long delay)/CLS222 Leslie

So all you need in addition to the above is some Hi-Watt heads, Marshall and WEM 4x12s, some Doppolas, a 1958 reissue Strat fitted with EMGs... and David Gilmour's talent!

James Guthrie Paranoid Ears

The original 'Dark Side Of The Moon' album was generally accepted as the first real high fidelity rock album, being awash with the state of the art technology of its time. The new rendering as part of 'Pulse' is still setting standards 22 years later despite producer James Guthrie's decision to record using analogue equipment.

"I just prefer analogue to digital, I find it more musical. Dave said, By the way, are we doing this on digital? And I said, Well, analogue... and he said, Oh good. It has to end up on digital anyway, but my experience is that the longer that I can keep it analogue up to then, the more warmth and detail I can give it before going to

"If James says it's not
good enough then it isn't,"
says Dave Gilmour.

David Mead meets the man
with the best ears in the business

that final CD domain.

"I have discovered that there's so many problems that can occur with digital, just in the transferring process from tape to glass master. People thinking that it's perfect when you make a one-to-one transfer is sadly far from the truth. The first test discs that I received did not resemble the master that I had sent them, so I thought very hard about what we could do. We had done a lot of experimenting with reclocking the digital signal, and I found that when you play a CD back, off a conventional machine, if you reclock, it makes it sound like a different recording. So I suggested that we followed that train of thought."

What is involved in the reclocking process?

"I guess the easiest way to explain it is that it reduces the amount



of clock jitter that you would get by making a digital copy of something. I suppose it's the equivalent of reshaping the time code when you copy it. The difference is quite staggering; it's not just cleaner but the low level detail is vastly improved – by low level

detail I mean things like echo are greatly enhanced. The stereo width can be improved and in this case the low end became more extended so that was an improvement but still it didn't sound enough like the master that I had sent in. My opinion was that the pressing plant had some problems with their laser beam recorders, so Doug Sax who mastered the record told me about this guy named Richard Clark who works in a company called AMI in North Carolina. He's a real audiophile and really listens to these things carefully, and so we sent him a copy of the tape as well and asked

there, there are harmonics being set up that all contribute to the way you appreciate the music, so you get used to this incredible feeling of extension over the top end and when you put it to the digital it's a bit of a disappointment. But because of doing that, with the fact that we took all that time and care, I think that the final product has a sort of warmth and a more *analogue* feel to it."

Another slightly mysterious process is the Q Sound mixing system.

"This is the fourth album that I've done using Q Sound and I'm so used to having that extra wide sound field within which to place instruments that I think it would be tricky to go back to just stereo now. When I was first told that the band wanted to do a live recording of 'Dark Side Of The Moon' my initial reaction was that it was a really tough act to follow because there's a lot of people who are intimate with every detail of the original album and indeed are quite attached to many of those details, myself included. So first of all the goal was to capture the atmosphere and the feel of a live performance, but I also wanted to try to recapture the atmosphere and the feel of the original recordings and that's the tricky bit! So we did a lot of things to try and do that; we had band meetings and sat and listened to the original album during the tour – not necessarily

to copy it – obviously we wanted it to be different because of the live feel of the thing, but really just to remind ourselves of what the original *sounded* like. We paid a lot of careful attention to things like tempos and some of the harmony parts and things and I think that helped a lot in trying to establish the original size of the thing. It's very difficult to compete with the excitement of being at a live gig and there's that incredible excitement of the moment of being there and the immediacy of the whole thing – and it's impossible to compete with the sheer volume of a Pink Floyd quadraphonic PA system! So I just wanted to try and do anything I could to make the experience feel more like you were *there*. With Q Sound, so long as you are sitting in the middle of the speakers when you listen to it you will feel much more width and the audience all around you. It just gives another dimension of feeling more like you're there, that you're in the moment."

"Everything you're hearing is a live recording, a *live* performance. There may be a word or a guitar chord or something that's taken from another night, just to fix it, but *that's all*"

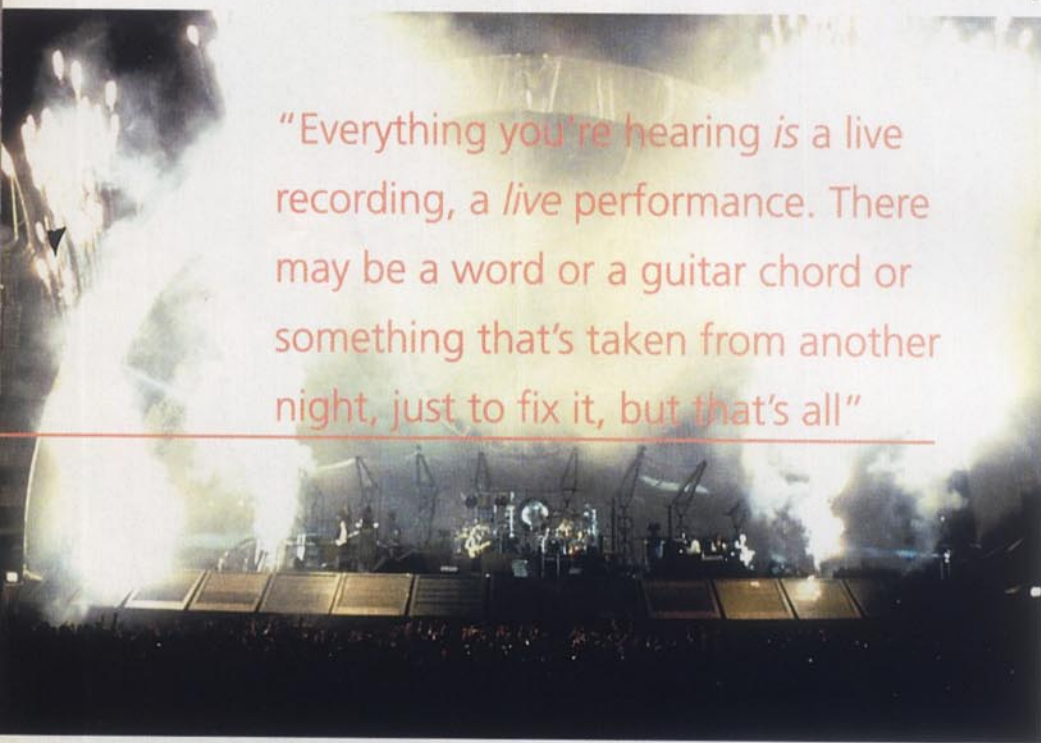


Photo: Courtesy of EMI him to do a test for us and he sent it back and it was so much better. I spoke to Dave about it and elected to let him make all our glass masters, so Richard Clark cut all the glass and sent it to the plant at Swindon and they then did the metalwork from that glass and made all the stampers and did all the pressing in the UK and Holland.

"In the US obviously the band are on Sony and Sony have done their own glass over there, and that was a whole other can of worms, because we had similar problems.

"But it's not just analogue that I'm a fan of; I'm a big fan of vintage valve equipment, too. That again will give additional size, punch and warmth to the thing. The tape machine that we mixed the album to was originally built around 1962, and it's been rebuilt by this real valve electronics boffin up in Cambridge who really understands the stuff better than anyone I've met. I mixed it to 15ips, non-Dolby CCIR; the machine is 3dB down at 10 cycles and 3dB down to 38k which for 15ips is unbelievable! And at 30ips it goes up to 55k and so it's a much higher resolution two track machine than you would normally find and so there was a feeling of extension from that. It made it even trickier to get over to digital because obviously transferred down to dig at 22k it's off – there's nothing happening above that frequency. Although you don't normally hear above

In layman's terms the Q Sound process is of course...

"Q Sound is a computer system that creates a three dimensional environment from a two speaker source. You don't need to buy any additional equipment to listen to it, in order to experience the additional width. That was the failure with quad: you had to go out and buy additional amplifiers, speakers and decoders, whereas with this, you just buy the CD and whatever you play it on, so long as the speakers are in phase and you're sitting in the centre of the speakers, you get the full effect."

So how does the Q Sound process compare to Holophonics – another system for simulating 3D sound favoured by The Floyd in the past?

"Holophonics was a system that really only worked in headphones and was something we used on 'The Final Cut'. It was very interesting but unfortunately it went downhill; the original demo tape that I heard when I was first introduced to it before we used it on the album was really quite staggering on headphones. It was very, very wide, but they then changed it and I never really heard that width again. I mean, it worked; it was wider than normal headphones but it wasn't as dramatic as when I first heard it. It didn't really translate particularly well to speakers, but Q Sound on



the other hand works well in speakers and not at the moment in headphones. However, the Q Sound company up in Calgary are working on a prototype box to make it work in headphones as well. I don't know when that's going to be commercially available

but I have heard a prototype version of it and it was pretty impressive."

So while Holophonics is a physical recording process, Q Sound is brought in at the mixing stage?

"Yes, that would be a very accurate statement. Holophonics involved the dummy head which they named Ringo, which had all the different fluids in it to approximate brain fluid and there were different textures of skin, and more densities trying to duplicate cheekbones and all that sort of stuff and it was very much a recording process. Whereas with Q Sound you record as you normally would, although once you get used to using a system like Q Sound there are certain things that you know you want to do later in terms of positioning so you might split things on tracks slightly differently than you normally would.

"Apart from placing instruments out in the Q positions, I do a lot of work with echoes and delays out in that position which just gives a great three dimensional quality to it as well. So when the singer starts singing, the echo will have the effect of rolling past you and coming straight out of the speakers."

An example of one of the more spectacular aspects of Q Sound is to be heard on the last beat of *Another Brick In The Wall Pt 2* from 'Pulse' which appears to disappear over the listener's head.

"The actual hit is one of Gary Wallace's low percussion kicks – the ones that are really up high. He hits one of those and that's positioned centrally, but most of its echo is Q positioned so you get that feeling of the echo rolling straight past you. It also happens in *Run Like Hell*, where there's a low frequency explosion. Likewise you'll hear it on Dave's vocals at the beginning of *Coming Back To Life* and *A Great Day For Freedom* – there's all sorts of stuff that comes out past you."

While nothing was actually re-recorded for the album, it is compiled from 20 complete shows.

"It was very time consuming. When you've got 20 shows to choose from, you think to yourself, Okay, we're going to mix the song *Sorrow* now, there are 20 of them, they go on for 13½ minutes each... I would say to my assistant, Okay, start playing them and I would make lists to choose the performance and I would get a short list of maybe four or five of them and I would say, Let's listen to those four or five again, and that's a day gone by! Then you start thinking about repairs and stuff, so the actual mixing was the smaller part of it really.

"I spent a lot of time on 'Dark Side Of The Moon'; I listened to the original back and forth and I'd try to choose versions where the tempo was very similar, or that the feel was very similar, just to try to capture as much of that original recording as possible."

The other feat performed by James Guthrie recently was re-mixing the sound for the 'Pulse' video which has been transformed (for the better) since its original BBC airing last year. Whereas the album was a blending together of many different gigs, the video was just one night.

"Exactly, so really we approached it as that. It was, Okay, this is what it is – it's that night. I didn't have the luxury of choice, and thankfully I think it's worked out really well. They all played so well; there were some things that previously concerned me or worried me, but in fact when we got into the mix of the thing and started to work the balances correctly I think it's come out very very well.

"The video is also mixed in Q Sound so people who connect their TVs up to their hi-fi will get that full width as well. And I believe when you play a Q Sound mix in Dolby Surround it takes a lot of the phase related information and sticks it in the surround speakers, so just the fact that it's mixed in Q Sound should make that a very wide experience as well."

Live recordings always fall foul of the 'it wasn't quite all right on the night' syndrome and post production 'repairs' often become necessary.



"The approach that we took to this was that first of all we decided that nobody in the band would actually come down to the studio to make any repairs. In other words there would be no *new* playing on the record. Any bum notes or bad vocal lines, anything that needed to be repaired, I took from another night and flew it in. I did do that on the album, but we tried to keep it to a minimum, but really my feeling about this sort of thing is that there are the purists who will say, Oh, this isn't a live recording... but everything you're hearing is a live recording, a *live* performance. There may be a word or a guitar chord or something that's taken from another night, just to fix it, but that's all. The original video was live total honesty! We did that the night it went out on a satellite Pay Per View, live broadcast to 22 countries, and that has all the mistakes on it! Any playing mistake, any of my mixing mistakes, they're all there, for everyone one to hear."

That was true for the live broadcast, but what about the new, re-mixed and re-edited version?

"On *Comfortably Numb* I shortened the solo but it's only slightly abridged – there's only a small chunk of the solo cut out. Likewise with *Sorrow*, I took a little bit of the solo out and there are a couple of other bits and pieces – a little bit of *One Of These Days* has been shortened slightly..."

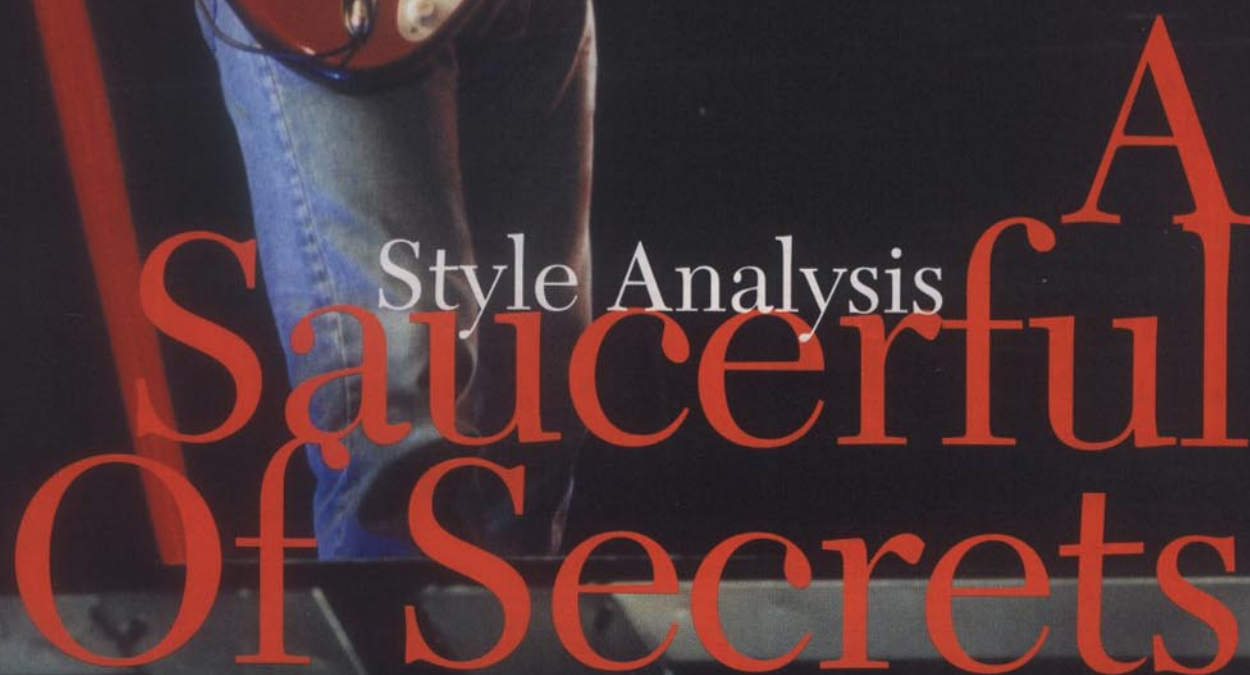
Photo: Dimo Safari

The Pink Floyd logo, featuring the words "PINK" and "FLOYD" in a bold, white, sans-serif font, stacked vertically against a dark, textured background.

PINK
FLOYD

Hey You! Ever
wondered what it
takes to play the
Gilmour way?

Read on... ►

A photograph of David Gilmour playing a red Fender Telecaster electric guitar on stage. He is wearing a black t-shirt and blue jeans. The background is dark with some stage lighting.

A Style Analysis Saucerful Of Secrets

➤ One thing which has to be said in any discussion of David Gilmour's style is that there's no way of accurately showing taste on a sheet of music. So, although these examples will give you some idea of what notes to play, the only way to get the feeling and phrasing right is to listen to the records.

Although Mr G says his influences are varied, there's an unmistakable thread of blues running through his entire career. Try Ex 1. This could be from any album, including 'The Division Bell', but it's actually representative of his style circa 1970!

Ex 1

1 Gm C/G Gm

The next two examples are both bluesy and both in the key of B. However, while Ex 2 has an out-and-out blues feel, Ex 3 comes from a more authentic rock-type tune. To me this is the essence of Gilmour's playing – his style is bluesy, but he doesn't play blues (!).

Ex 2

1 Bm7

Ex 3

1 B5 A5

David Gilmour's certainly not a Fripp-like theoretician, but here's a bit of info that might prove useful... Take the E minor pentatonic: E G A B D. Played over an E minor chord (or E bass riff) it's well on the way to being the good old blues scale. But over a G major chord (the relative major of E minor), it miraculously becomes the G major pentatonic, and assumes a more folk/country sort of sound. Try Ex 4 over both chords (as DG does on 'A Momentary Lapse Of Reason') and hear for yourself.

Ex 4

1 Em C Em

Ex 5

1 Em

► One aspect of Gilmour's playing which may well have come from the blues is his effortless bending. While most people stick to one and two fret bends, Dave will routinely go up to three frets and beyond, as in examples 6a and 6b, where you'll find a couple of four fret bends and – honestly – a five fret one! Be careful, or it'll be absolutely curtains for your B string!

Ex 6a

Re-pick bent note

BU LD BU

1 Dm

Ex 6b

BU CO CO BU BU BU LD BU

1 Dm7

While obviously a great soloist, David Gilmour has propelled some of Floyd's best songs with simple, effective rhythm playing, much of which has a funky, choppy feel. Here are two examples: the first uses just a D minor chord, while the second moves through various triads on the top three strings.

Ex 7a

CO

1 Dm

Ex 7b

CO CO CO CO CO CO CO CO

1 Dm Dm C Dm C G F

Ex 8

Let ring...

1 G Gmaj7/F# G7/F Em

On Pink Floyd's most recent albums, David Gilmour has made use of a digital delay to provide an even, sequencer-like rhythm background. While his use of the DDL isn't as complex as, say, Albert Lee's, it's the same principle. Here's how it works. First of all, take the number 45. Divide into it your tempo, in beats per minute, then multiply the result by 1,000.

For example, at 100BPM, $45/100 \times 1,000 = 450$

Set your DDL to 450 milliseconds and try playing a few simple patterns, based mainly around 8th notes (see Ex 9). The delayed notes will sound 3/4 of a beat later.



Ex 9

You play... With delayed notes A more detailed example etc
 CO CO CO CO

5 5 5 5 5 5 (5) 5 (5) 5 (5) 3 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 3 5

To create a Gilmour-type carpet of sound, keep your playing sparse and even, and the DDL will fill in any empty spaces. Over the top of your backing, you could always play some twin guitar fills like these...

Ex 10

Guitar 1 H CO BU
 5 7 5 6 (6) 5 7 (8) 7 5 (5)

Guitar 2 CO BU
 5 7 5 7 (7) 6 8 (10) 8 6 (6)

On the subject of effects, you probably won't be able to find a distortion device capable of reproducing the exact sound of Ex 11, but it's such a simple little phrase, so you might like to have a go.

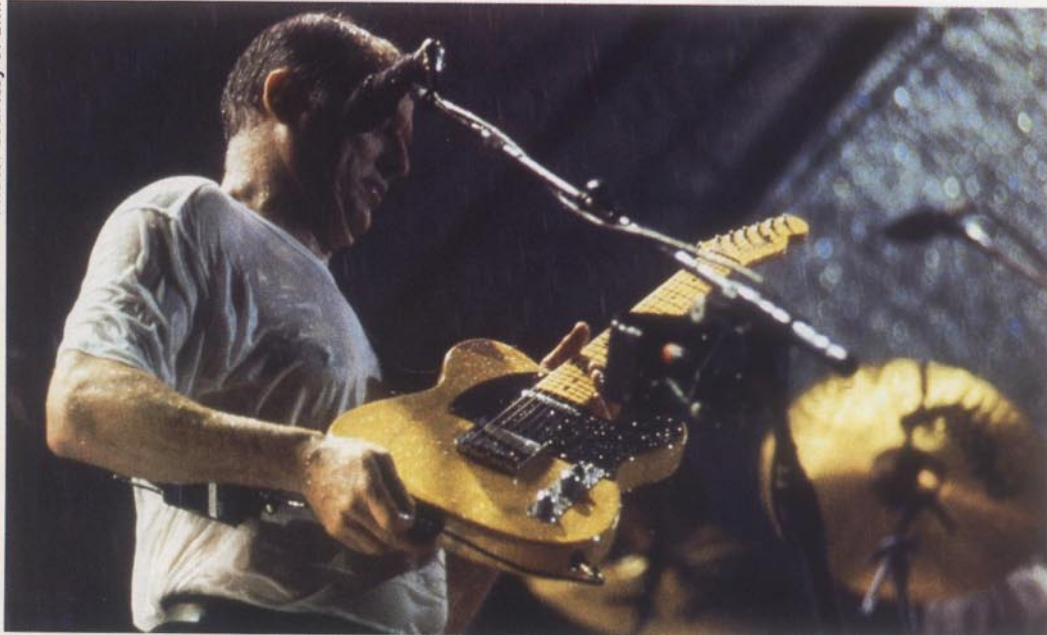
Ex 11

gliss gliss etc
 BULD S CO S TABD TALB

7 7 (7) 7 (9) 7 5 (5) 3 2 5 5 (5) 0 (-2) 0

And, finally, here's a thought for you to meditate upon as you play through these examples: "If you don't eat your meat, you can't have any pudding. How can you have any pudding if you don't eat your meat?"

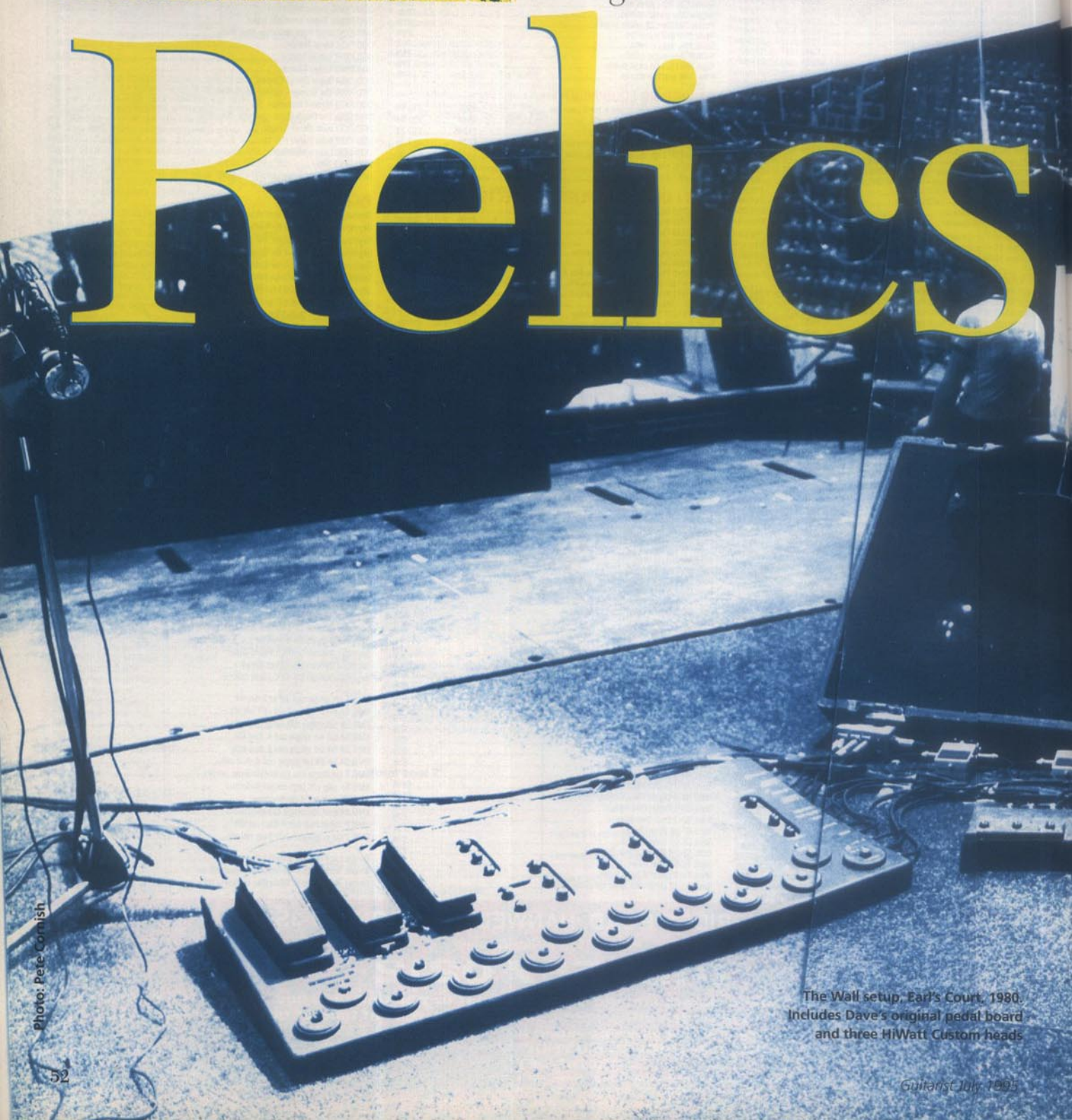
Photo: Courtesy of EMI





In the January 1995 issue of *Guitarist*, we put David Gilmour's current amplification/effects setup under the microscope and this article is intended as a kind of prequel. Strangely enough, much of the gear David has used throughout his tenure with

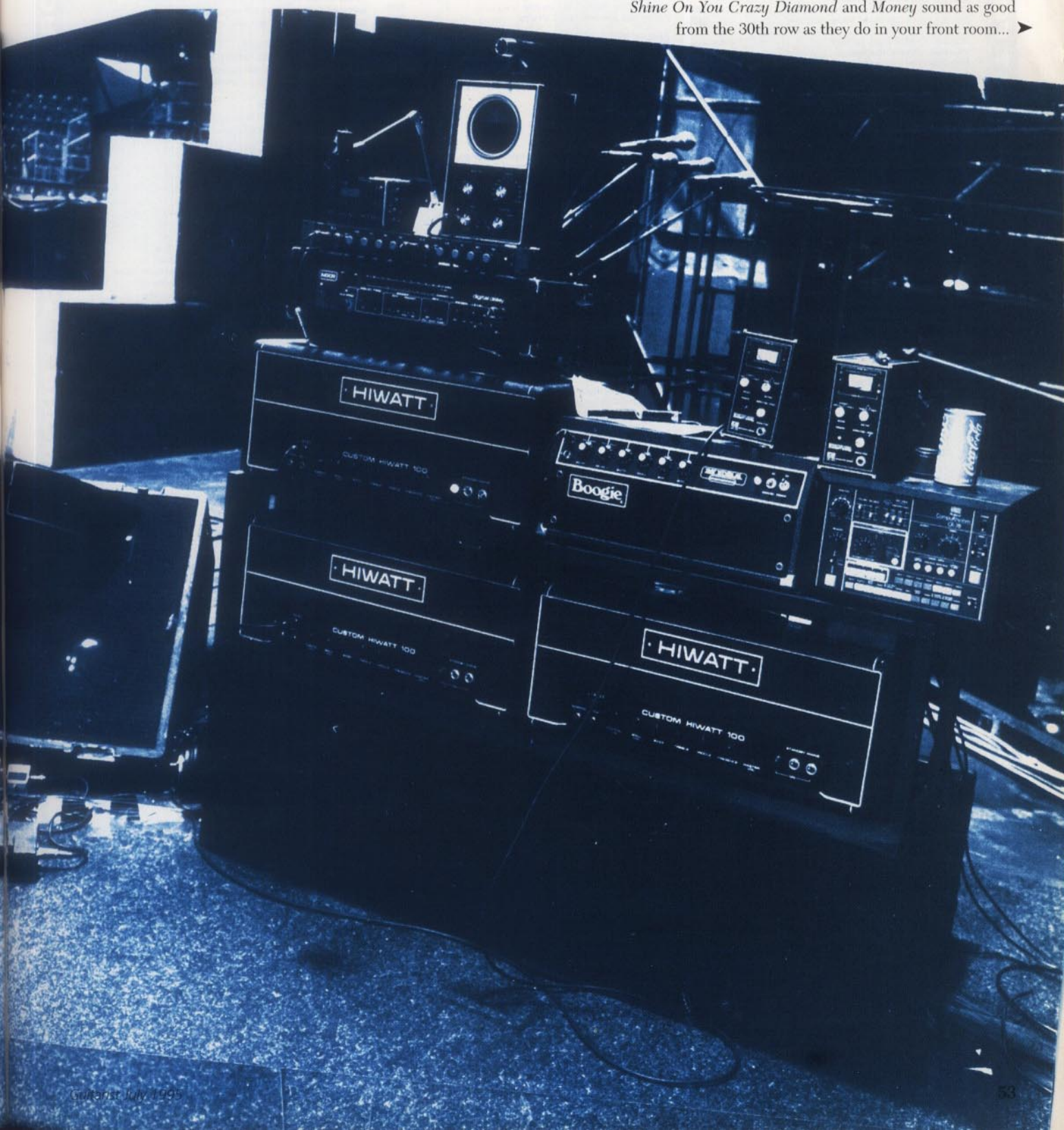
Relics



Floyd still survives, under the watchful eye of Phil Taylor. David Mead spent an afternoon sorting through 'Dark Side' memorabilia at Floyd's warehouse while Jordan McLachlan picked up some pedal points from rackmeister Pete Cornish

There are few British superstar musicians since the early 70s who have not had reason to call on the services of Pete Cornish. Queen, Genesis, The Police, Black Sabbath, Iron Maiden, The Pretenders, Eric Clapton, Sting and even non UK residents Bryan Adams and Lou Reed have turned to the amplification and effects guru when they have had need of a fully custom tailored, handbuilt system to get their guitar or bass sound together.

One of Pete's longest standing professional relationships is with Pink Floyd – he has been closely involved with putting together rigs for several of the band's musicians, including Mr Gilmour of course, off and on for nearly 20 years and here he takes us through the major projects undertaken to ensure that works like *Shine On You Crazy Diamond* and *Money* sound as good from the 30th row as they do in your front room... ➤



► “March 7th 1976 was when the very first drawings were done for the first board I built for Dave – that included a Fuzz Face, a Cornish Custom Fuzz, MXR phaser, a Uni-Vibe, a CryBaby, MXR Dynacomp and an MXR noise gate.

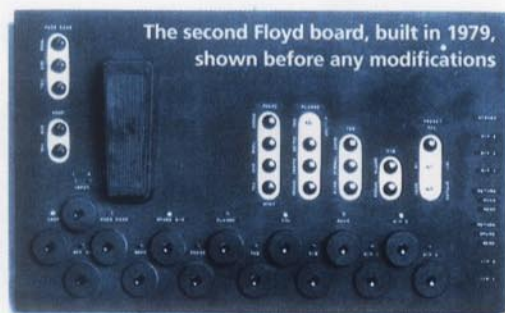
“The routing starts with an input selector for two guitars, then onto a strobo tuner feed, then a master bypass before we get to the effects. First of all there’s a tone control – the board had three modified CryBabys on it – one of them is a tone control and one is a volume control, only one was actually a wah. The next thing is the Fuzz Face – Dave really liked the Dallas Arbiter Fuzz Face a lot – then my fuzz, then the MXR Phase 100, the Uni-Vibe, then the wah with a reverse switch on it to reverse the travel, the MXR Dynacomp, then a send and return, then the CryBaby volume pedal, another send and return, the MXR noise gate and then three outputs, each with their own on/off switch, so Dave could have any combination of the three amps (HiWatt, Marshall or Yamaha) on at any one time.

“In 1977 we moved the tone circuit to just before the volume pedal, and we added a treble and bass boost, which I think was a Colorsound unit – that went between the Uni-Vibe and the wah.”



Dave Gilmour's original pedal board, pictured post-1977 modifications

“The drawings for the second board are dated 15/2/79 – my birthday! It’s got the same input selector as the first board, master bypass, MXR Dynacomp, Fuzz Face, Big Muff,

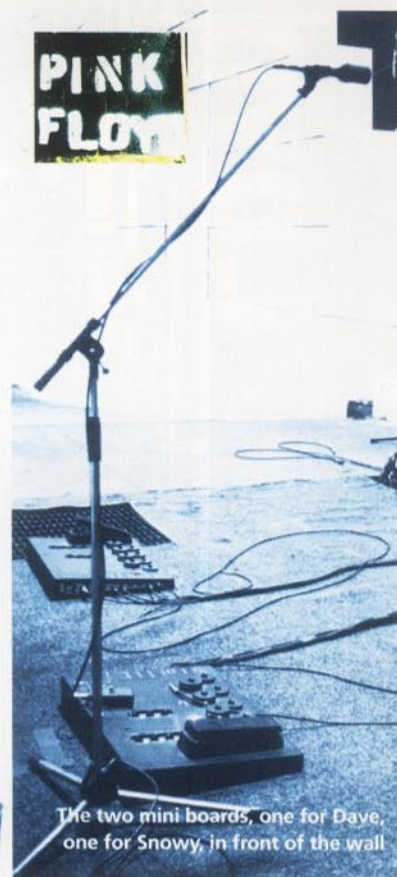


The second Floyd board, built in 1979, shown before any modifications

send and return for echo, MXR Phase 100, a Deluxe Electric Mistress flanger which has been modded, the Colorsound treble and bass boost, a volume pedal, and a ‘Vib’ pedal, which is known as the *Money* pedal. Something I’m asked to do quite a lot is reproduce sounds from records which can be difficult, but it has its advantages – I’m nearly always given the artist’s whole back catalogue to work from!

“This board’s got just one CryBaby, fitted out as a volume pedal – by this time we’d standardised the CryBaby body for pedal controllers, they looked good, they were very well built and sturdy and Phil liked them! And then up to about Oct 82 I did certain other mods – the Fuzz Face had a tone circuit fitted, I fitted a Boss CE2, and actually we moved the compressor to a parallel circuit with the treble and bass boost.

“For ‘The Wall’ Dave had his main board, the one with three CryBabys on and I made another one for Snowy White for all the acoustic guitars. They sat behind the wall but during the show the musicians moved to the front of the stage, in front of the wall that had been built. Obviously they couldn’t pick up all that stuff and move it so I made four small pedal boards – two bass and two guitar – because each member of the band was shadowed by another person, dressed in grey, I think. I made the boards as mirror images of each other, so in a pair one would have all the leads to the right,



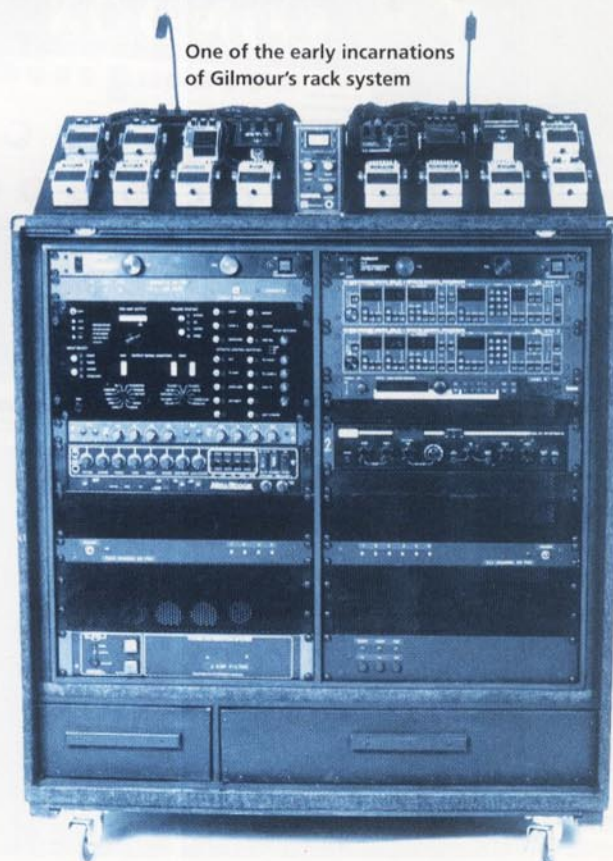
The two mini boards, one for Dave, one for Snowy, in front of the wall

like Dave’s, and Snowy’s would have all connections to the left, so they could stand next to each other and play.

“These little boards have a single input, a Big Muff, one send and return, the Electric Mistress flanger, a volume pedal and a master bypass, all coming out of two outputs, which went into the HiWatt amps.”

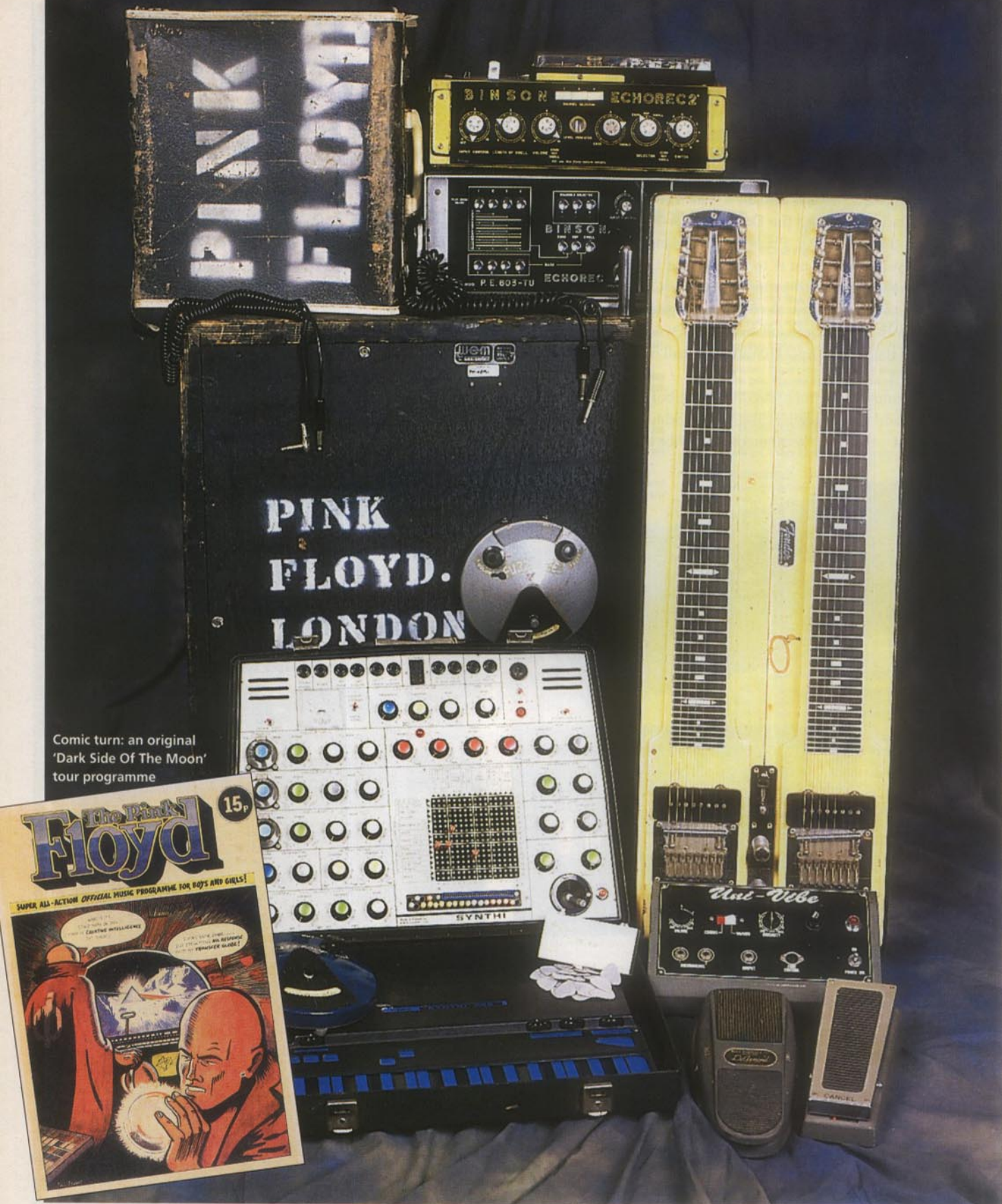
The Rack

“I didn’t build it originally, I was asked to, er, improve it somewhat. Dave was using Alembic preamps by this time, so I put insert points on his HiWatt heads so he could use the power stage from those, although Phil insisted,

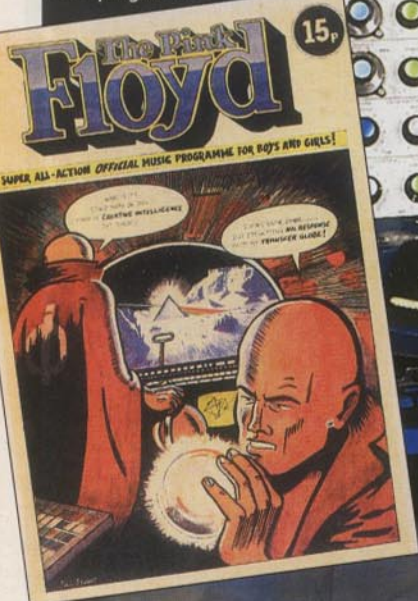


One of the early incarnations of Gilmour's rack system

that we should still have the option of using the heads as normal in case anything went wrong. There’s actually 16 switches and the original list of pedals runs; two compressors, a Tube Screamer, a Rat distortion, TC distortion, Boss Digital Metalizer, Big Muff, a Boogie amp send and return, in effect a preamp, a chorus, an MXR DDL a TC 2290, another TC 2290, a PCM70 and a left chorus. By this stage we’ve become stereo and the way we did that was to have a chorus on the left side, bearing in mind that all the echoes and stuff were in stereo. Whereas previously we had three outputs, in mono, now we’re always running two amps in stereo.”



Comic turn: an original 'Dark Side Of The Moon' tour programme



► The accompanying 'still life' of David's gear dates back to the original tour in support of 'Dark Side Of The Moon' back in 1974 – and some of it before then. The WEM speaker cabinet (with its back turned to us) features in the film *Pink Floyd Live At Pompeii*, for instance. The case with the stencil on the front used to house David's spare strings and allen keys, whereas the Fender double neck slide guitar (actually a pedal steel, but David rarely, if ever used it as such) is the actual one used for *The Great Gig In The Sky* its doubleneck status allowing it to be used for two separate slide tunings – one for *Great Gig* and the other for *One Of These Days*.

The synthesiser on the left is an AKS Synthi – a suitcase version of the British made VCS 3 whose characteristic voice can be heard on many Floyd albums. This particular synth is one of two which David used to perform *On The Run* live – the other being preset to deliver the explosion at the end of the track.

Also shown in the picture are a couple of Binson echo units, very much a part of the Gilmour guitar sound of the period, some Arbiter Fuzz Faces, De Armond volume pedals, a Uni-Vibe, picks and curly leads – all of which formed a part, however small, of 'Dark Side Of The Moon'.

PINK
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Lewis Guitar

David was introduced to a guitar maker from Vancouver, Bill Lewis, whilst on tour in the States in the early 70s. Bill offered to make David a guitar and so DG chose the wood, a single piece of mahogany, and a few months later the guitar turned up.

It has twin humbuckers – probably made by Lewis, too – but a mini switch beneath each can be employed to produce single coil settings. As the guitar's rear view shows, the back of the instrument is a removable cover which reveals some extensive routing and the simplicity of its electronics.

The Lewis was used during the recording of 'Dark Side' most notably for the track *Money*, on which David sought notes just beyond the range of his Strat.

But whatever happened to the 'Dark Side' Strat itself? Well, it is currently enjoying life on the wall of the Hard Rock Cafe in Dallas! As far as anyone can recall, the Strat originally had a maple neck which Dave exchanged for a rosewood boarded version. ■

Guitarist would like to express sincere thanks to Pete Cornish and Phil Taylor (truly the curator of the Pink Floyd Museum!) with their help in preparing this article.