



THE WEB UK/OFFICIAL MARILLION INFORMATION SERVICE

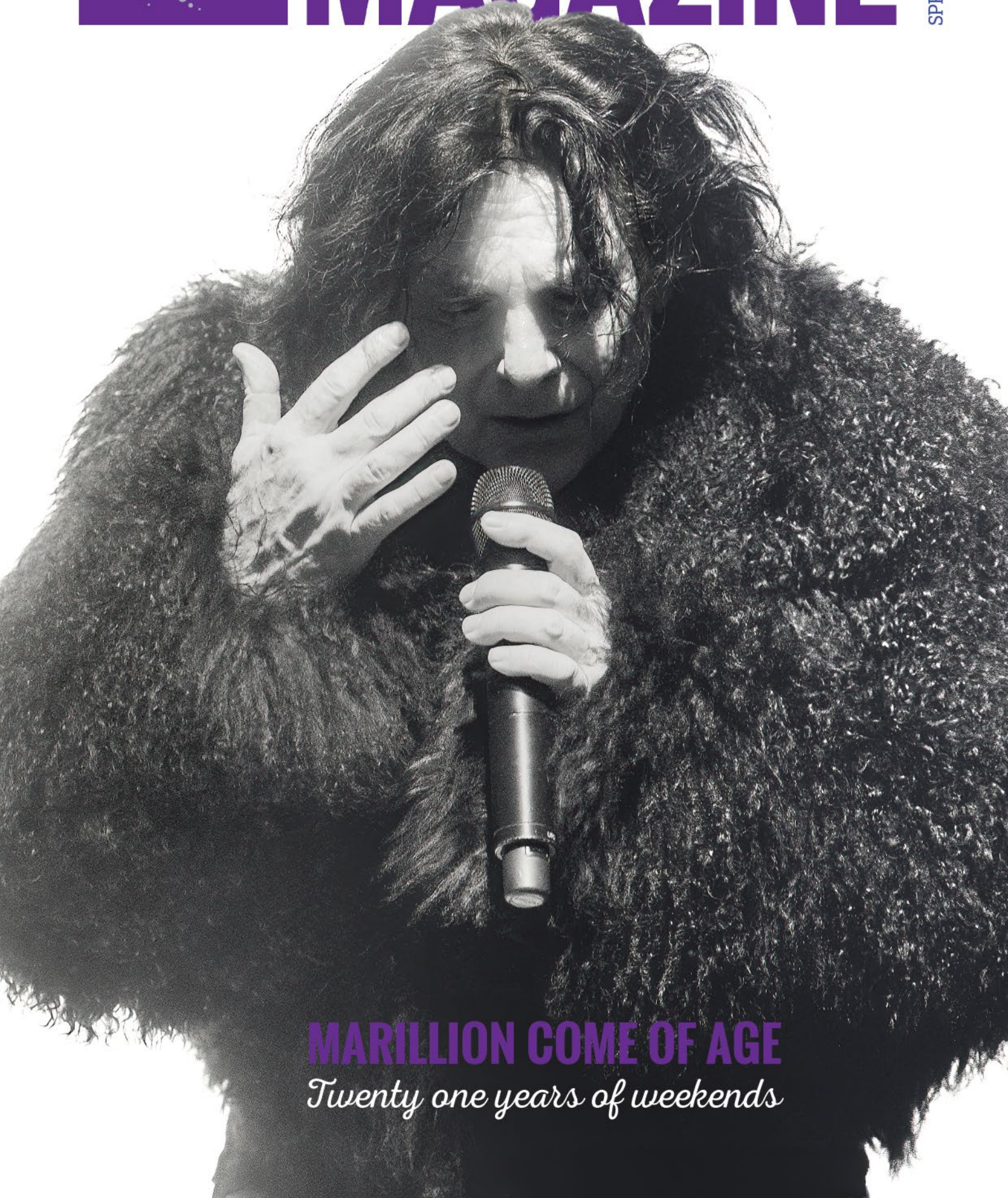
The Web UK Magazine Spring/Summer 2023: Volume 23, Issue 1

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THE WEB UK MAGAZINE

SPRING/SUMMER 2023



MARILLION COME OF AGE
Twenty one years of weekends

Closer To The Heart

As we dictate these opening words to the Web UK Scribe, the band are in Haarlem, preparing for the second of the Marillion Weekends 2023. By the time you read them, they will have additionally completed Italy and maybe even Canada.

For now, all we can tell you about is the PZ weekend and how extraordinarily good it was. We've acknowledged before that we're biased but it really is rarer than an oligarch showing humility for a band that's been around for so long to be performing at the level that the fine gentlemen of Marillion do.

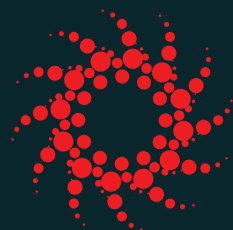
It's not moony-ism that makes fans say that Saturday night in PZ is a contender for their best ever Marillion gig; that's how good they were and that's why we're delighted to be able to bring you some reviews of PZ '23 to give a flavour of quite how outstanding those gigs were.

One factor in Saturday being special was Luis Jardim on percussion, so we got him and Ian to sit down and tell us all about the joy of hitting and shaking! We've also got a Q&A with the one and only Lucy Jordache, an interview with Pete Trewavas about Transatlantic and Marillion, and finally, we caught up with Simon Ward for a long-overdue chat about the art of *An Hour Before It's Dark*.

All in all, there's enough quality material in this edition to have you unable to do much more than point and just say, "Yeah..." A bit like the band.

The Web UK

Alan, Anne, Francis, Fraser, Lisa, Lucy, Malcolm, Pete, Sheelagh and Stuart



Marillion

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Admin Corner

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Web UK Membership is now administered online. Your account can be accessed by going to: www.marillion.com/account

Instructions for log in are available on that page. Once logged in, you can manage all aspects of your Web UK Membership, including resubscription, editing your billing information and delivery address.

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The Internet: For the latest breaking news, tour dates and release information, visit the official Marillion website: www.marillion.com

You can also visit the Web UK website which contains news and all sorts of interesting stuff: www.theweb-uk.com

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Every effort has been made to accurately credit photographers. As ever Lucy Jordache, Stephanie Bradley and Mark Kennedy. Thanking you.

Steve Rothery Band to play two dates in Manchester

Steve Rothery brings his outstanding solo band back to the UK for a very special two day event

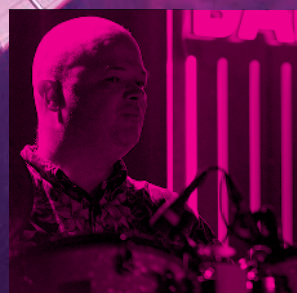
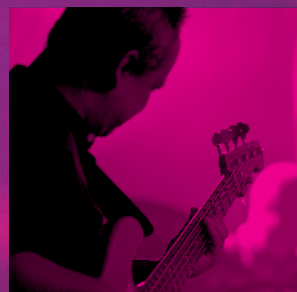
Steve and his band will be playing on 9th and 10th June 2023 at The Hole In The Wall in Manchester and these promise to be very special shows.

Featuring tracks from his critically acclaimed solo album *The Ghosts Of Pripyat* followed by a selection of early Marillion songs including tracks from the *Fugazi* and *Script For A Jester's Tear* albums. On subsequent nights there will also be complete performances of the *Misplaced Childhood* and *Clutching At Straws* albums.

This will be a couple of nights to remember and a celebration of forty wonderful years of Marillion's music!

Support for the weekend will be provided by Russian progressive rock/chamber pop duo *Iamthemorning*

For tickets go to:
<https://www.wegottickets.com/f/12982>



MARILLION MONTHLY



Marillion Monthly is a new programme on YouTube especially for Marillion fans. The service started in January with content that included Lucy's in-depth chat with Mark, Ian rummaging through some Marillion swag for an amazing prize haul for our first competition, Rothery treating us to a smorgasbord of televisual recommendations and h and Pete responding to Lucy's Quickfire Questions. There was also big news about a special end of year gig for subscribers to the channel. February saw Steve Rothery being grilled by Lucy and there was a look at how the rehearsals for this year's Marillion Weekends were progressing. We looked ahead to Steve's solo activities, why Steve Hackett was in the Racket Club and we went through a few of the comments from last month's edition. There were also some great fan memories included.

We've now also had a Marillion monthly special of the Audience With Marillion from Port Zélande and April's band member spotlight was with the one and only Pete!

The band want you, the fans, involved by sending brief video clips about memories of the band and where you live, so if you haven't already, head over to YouTube, search for Marillion Monthly and subscribe **now!**



MERCH CORNER

THE LATEST MARILLION MERCHANDISE FOR SALE

SILENT & HIGH
THE MAKING OF SOUNDS THAT CAN'T BE MADE



SILENT & HIGH

- 01 Twisted History
- 02 Refugee Song
- 03 Middle Eastern Pulse
- 04 Middle Eastern Loops
- 05 Inside Your Head
- 06 Immortal
- 07 Finding The Right Sounds
- 08 Aurora Borealis
- 09 Love Like Rain
- 10 Bend Your Head
- 11 Odd Keys
- 12 The Way I Love You
- 13 Marbled Power
- 14 Je t'aime My Darling
- 15 Falling Into Montreal
- 16 Fates Entwined
- 17 My Little Notes
- 18 Abbey Road
- 19 I Truly Am
- 20 Lovely Descending Piano
- 21 The Guitar Loop Above the Rain
- 22 Trying To See the Blue Sky

- 01 Gaza
- 02 Sounds That Can't Be Made
- 03 Pour My Love
- 04 Bluesy
- 05 Power
- 06 Montreal
- 07 Invisible Ink
- 08 Lucky Man
- 09 The Sky Above The Rain

PANNING FOR GOLD

- 01 The Thunder Approaches
- 02 Pandemonium
- 03 Jet Engines And Demolition
- 04 The Wind-Chimes
- 05 Modern Times
- 06 Something Is Cooking
- 07 Melt Our Guns
- 08 We're Not Green
- 09 Boxes Of Noises
- 10 Thrills Of The Night
- 11 We Are The Leavers
- 12 New York
- 13 Vapour Trails
- 14 Somewhere Forgotten
- 15 Slowly Unravel
- 16 We Come Together
- 17 Noise And Light
- 18 Different Shades Of White
- 19 In My Head Tonight
- 20 Colours Of Fire
- 21 Fear
- 22 We Are The New Kings
- 23 Too Big To Fall
- 24 Trickle Down
- 25 I'll Tell You A Tale
- 26 They Can Do Anything With Computers
- 27 Why Is Nothing Ever True
- 28 It's All Shattered Now

- 01 El Dorado
- 02 Living In FEAR
- 03 The Leavers
- 04 White Paper
- 05 The New Kings



PANNING FOR
G O L D
THE MAKING OF FEAR



MARILLION
XXI
THE BEST OF THE WEEKENDS

XXI Blu-Ray

- 01 The Invisible Man
- 02 Be Hard On Yourself
- 03 Market Square Heroes
- 04 Incommunicado
- 05 Somewhere Else
- 06 This Strange Engine
- 07 The Crow And The Nightingale
- 08 Trap The Spark
- 09 Man Of A Thousand Faces
- 10 Easter
- 11 The Great Escape
- 12 Made Again
- 13 Three Minute Boy
- 14 The Space
- 15 This Train Is My Life
- 16 King
- 17 Splintering Heart
- 18 Power
- 19 Neverland

EXTRAS

- 20 Beautiful
- 21 The Uninvited Guest
- 22 Fantastic Place
- 23 A Legacy

Recorded at various Marillion Weekends between 2002 and 2022.

h NATURAL LIVE - DVD

- 01 Fantastic Place
- 02 Half The World
- 03 Way Over Yonder
- 04 Rocket Man
- 05 Thankyou Whoever You Are
- 06 The Model
- 07 Everybody Knows
- 08 Runaway
- 09 The Corona Diaries Live (Chat with Ant Short)
- 10 It's Not Your Fault
- 11 My Love Will Protect You
- 12 Beyond You
- 13 Beautiful
- 14 Neverland (with Mark Kelly)
- 15 Estonia (with Mark Kelly)
- 16 Karma Police
- 17 No One Can
- 18 The Cage
- 19 Really Like
- 20 The Christmas Song
- 21 Faith
- 22 Cloudbusting
- 23 Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas
- 24 All You Need is Love

BONUS TRACKS

- 25 Going To A Town
- 26 Free Man In Paris

All available now from
Racket Records:
<https://marillion.com/shop/index.htm>



h Natural Live
Steve Hogarth

TWO BIRKING TAVAN

No one can accuse Pete Trewavas of not working hard. When he isn't Marillioning there's Eddison's Children and Transatlantic to keep him occupied. We don't know how he fits it all in!

> by John Merrick > Photos by Luke Harman, Nidhal Marzouk and Stefan Schulz

Hi Pete, how are you?

Hi John, I'm very well.

Have you been rehearsing today?

We have.

How's it going?

It's going well. You know you go through various stages of rehearsing. You start off programming everything and then you're learning basic arrangements of songs and then you get into the finer details. We're now in a stage where we're looking at the finer details of certain things, certain songs and so it looks like we've still got piles of work to do, because you want to get everything right in every song but actually we're probably in better shape than we've been in before.

Fantastic, how many weeks have you been rehearsing now?

We all did a bit of preparation and then we rehearsed for about three or four weeks. Then we had a week off and we came back in this week. So, we've got this week and another two more weeks. Yeah, it's three weeks today that I fly out so you guys will be there probably a couple of days in advance maybe?

Yeah, we always travel in advance of show days. We go out on the Tuesday so we've got just two weeks left.

Can you look forward to it at this stage or it just a lot of work in front of you at the moment?

I'm starting to. There's still quite a lot of work and it's just a case of trying to keep all the little bits and pieces in place in your mind.

Can I ask about the *Final Flight* live album? It's just come out and it looks and sounds fantastic. You must be pleased with how it's turned out?

Yeah, I'm very pleased with what we've achieved. I mean I'm very pleased with everything we've achieved actually, considering what we were when we started. It was a project that became a band, and you know we're very pleased with this album and I think we leave behind a big legacy.

It's an amazing body of work.

Yeah, and this last live album has a very strong set list. The tour was an interesting tour as we were rehearsing for two sets of shows. Because we had two shows at Morse Fest on the American leg and then we also went on to the cruise where I had two separate shows with Transatlantic and two separate shows with Marillion so I had a lot of music in my head.

How does that work? How do you hold all that music in your head?

Well, I took on more than I should. I really did bite off more than I could chew. After it all I was physically and mentally drained. Luckily, I had a week off at the end of all of that. So after the cruise Fiona and I had a week in Florida so I just basically stayed in bed for two or three days.

I'm not surprised!

I was really run down and not very well for a couple of days but we've got a timeshare in Florida and the

weather was nice. I slowly got to a stage where I wanted to go out and start enjoying eating good food and going to nice places and stuff so that was cool but yeah this album is very impressive.

How do you find the difference between MorseFest and the Marillion weekends?

It's a different kind of vibe. With Marillion obviously I'm very much a part of it. I think you know, all five of us are, I suppose it's all about us which is lovely! With MorseFest it was really about Neal Morse of course and what he's done. I think one of the reasons he started MorseFest was because the big dream was to have Transatlantic play.

He's had most of the other bands that he's been involved in, like Flying Colors and various other reincarnations of various other bands and albums done with Mike over the years and, of course, The Neal Morse Band which is a pretty amazing band. I went to see them live last year and they are good. I mean they're immense players all of them. I saw them in June at Shepherd's Bush Empire; it was a very impressive show. Eric Gillette, oh my goodness, what a player.

Have you seen him playing the drums?

Yes I know, he actually auditioned for Neal Morse Band as a keyboard player who could play guitar as like the extra member of the band. A bit like we do with Transatlantic, we have a fifth member you know, and then they realised he can just do everything.

He's a virtuoso, he certainly is.

Yes, he is ridiculously talented and a lovely chap as well. I mean they all are.

How did you find working with Ted Leonard with Transatlantic?

Good yeah, I've always got on well with Ted. Ted of course was in Enchant who I met years ago

when Steve Rothery produced them. We rehearsed over there for Steve's first solo album, *The Wishing Tree*. We rehearsed at Ed's place (the bass player). He had a little studio in his basement in San Francisco. Sounds very cool and way more glamorous than it actually was, but you know it's kind of cool doing that sort of thing. Just getting out of your comfort zone a little bit and trying some different sorts of music as well and meeting new players to play with. It's all good you know.

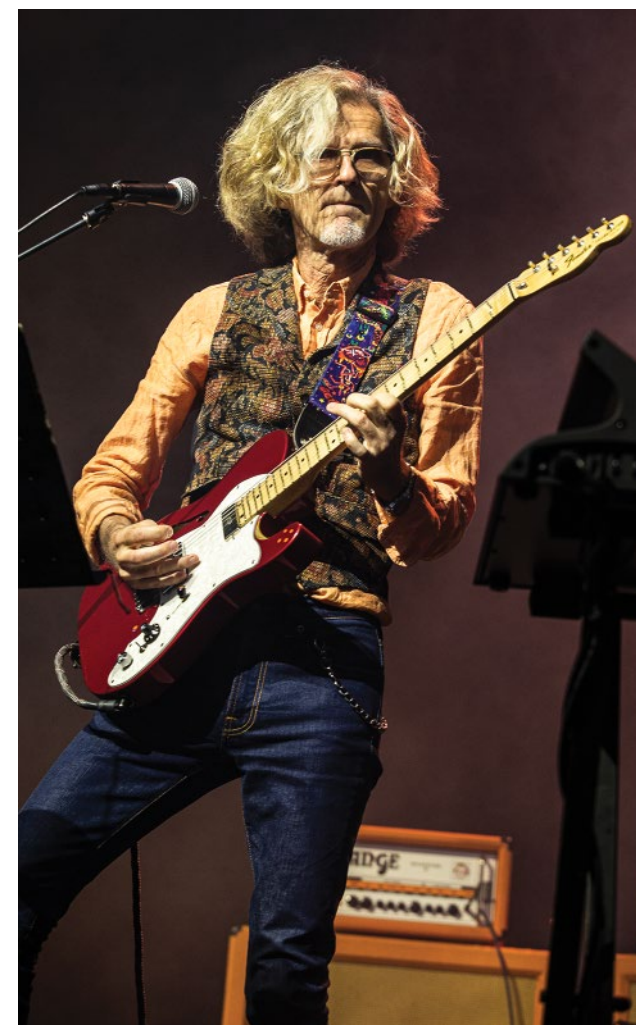
What is it that you get from Transatlantic that's different to what you get from Marillion?

Each band has different challenges and different things that keep me being creative. I think the main difference with Transatlantic is that it's kind of like a show band. I put that in an interview once and then I decided to change that wording because that doesn't sound quite right, but we all kind of show off like every member of The Who did, that's the vibe, especially live.

We get as much out of the music as we can and the way we write, as well, is that we bring back themes. I will bring back pieces of music and maybe you know one of the reincarnations will feature the guitar, one of the other reincarnations will feature the keyboards more and the rhythm section has a lot to say in the band. It is, in that respect very prog.

The Absolute Universe seemed like it was a really equal split with the writing contribution, more than the other albums.

I mean I generally contribute less than Neal and Roine. They are more prolific writers than I am. At the start of the *Absolute Universe* project, we spent about two or three years, from around 2014-15 talking about trying to get back together to do something. We felt that the time was right and everyone was up for it and we talked to Thomas at InsideOut and he was very accepting of what



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we wanted to do. He was very pleased that we wanted to get back in a studio and be creative together. It took a while for us to get our diaries to marry up but eventually by 2018 we all knew that we were going to be working on an album in 2019 so we all started to write and submit work that could be included. That's usually what happens. Mike is more of the kind of overseer.

He's the guy with the grand plans and he will be the person who takes over the arranging side of the bigger picture and try and get an overall feel for what the album will achieve. But the rest of us will submit music. Then we all agree what we like and what we don't think should be included. Then we go into the studio and start arranging it in the hope that we'll end up with an album we can demo and eventually record. So, we went to Sweden in September 2019 and we only managed to arrange the album. I say only, but it was a huge album and I thought at the time, In fact

I kind of I hinted that it could be scaled down a little bit in places and maybe shortened. The consensus at the time was, well let's let everything run its course and later on down the line we can see if we need to cut anything out or add anything. We expected to be recording it remotely and then going on tour in 2020 but of course that didn't happen.

We had a lot of time to mess about with it and we ended up coming up with two versions. Neal spent some time away from it and came back and thought it should be rearranged and that maybe it meandered a bit too much in places. He kind of cut it down a bit and then he added a song. One of the consequences of the pandemic and having the time on our hands to play with the album was that we decided to do two versions as we couldn't decide whether we wanted a scaled down version or whether we wanted the actual long full version. When you've got a four piece band it's very difficult

to get a consensus! When two people want this and two people want that and we don't trust anybody else to have a casting vote, so we decided to run having two versions of the album past the record company.

They really fell in love with the idea and ran with it and it's become a huge success. Because of the schedule that I had with Marillion, we wouldn't have been able to schedule a full tour until late 2023 which everybody felt was way too late considering the album came out in 2021 so we had to fit the touring around my Marillion schedule. So, we ended up playing a few dates in America before the Cruise to the Edge and then we did the European dates later in 2022. Europe was a scary time for me because I was flying out of Heathrow on the day that Heathrow was in chaos. Bear in mind I was flying out of Terminal 2 and I had two guitars and a load of equipment and they were all in this big flight case that we call the coffin, if you see it you'll

know why! It's a big aluminium flight case, really light, but it can hold two or three guitars and a lot of other gear.

When I got there, everyone was queuing outside of the terminal. They were calling people when they had to actually get through check in/bag drop and security, so about half an hour to forty five minutes before the flight. You had to kind of bundle yourself through to the to the check in desks, quickly check in and get through security. That didn't give enough time for my gear and my bag to get put on the plane.

So, I flew to Romania as we were doing a festival in Sibiu but we were flying via Vienna. When I got to Vienna I quickly checked my app, I've got air tags in my cases and I realised that my cases were still in Heathrow! The plane was delayed getting to the gate at Vienna airport so I only had twenty minutes to get to my next flight. I was really thirsty, so I ran to nearest kiosk

to get a water for the plane but then in all of the chaos I left my wallet at the airport! I ended up in Sibiu in Romania without my luggage, without my guitars. I just had my carry-on bag and I'd lost my wallet in transit, so I thought "Well I don't know what to do now!". If you're a touring musician, it's your worst nightmare. And I didn't know anybody either, the only people who were going to be on the tour that I knew were the lighting guy and the band. I didn't know the tour manager or any of the other crew, they were all new to me.

Luckily I was picked up at the airport by a lovely guy called Ovidiu, a music journalist who was working the festival. He took me to the hotel and arranged to pick me up the next morning to go shopping and go back to the airport to try and sort things out. When we got to the hotel, one of the American guitar roadies Corey, was in the lobby so I explained to him what had happened and he kindly took

me out to the old town for lunch and we walked down through the town looking for water and a tooth brush.

The next morning Ovidiu picked me up and we drove to a mall he new as I needed pretty much everything, I had nothing. So he just looked after me for the day, he was a writer and a lovely chap, he bought me a bag, change of clothes, toothbrush, shaver and you know all that kind of stuff. The next day we were rehearsing, so I had to borrow a couple of basses. There was this amazing band who actually left Ukraine around about the time the trouble was starting and they got into Romania and they were based in Sibiu strangely enough. They said "come over to our studio we've got all of our equipment from our studio in the Ukraine that we brought over!"

They had basses, guitar amps and things, so I borrowed some stuff. They didn't have a bass guitar that would have really



worked for the show but luckily there was a jazz bass player in the town who had an Ibanez bass which coincidentally was an early version of the basses I use. It had a two octave neck and was perfect for what I needed to play Transatlantic stuff and he lent me it to me for the show.

So, I borrowed this bass that I had never played before. He had a show the evening before so I only got a quick look at it after we'd finished rehearsing. I got one of our techs Stefan to change the strings and lower the action a bit and it played and sounded great for the festival. The only problem was the basses I use for TA have a drop tuning system, called a hipshot and it allows the low E to go down to a D but I didn't have it, so for certain parts of the show I had to just improvise and play around.

That must have made the first festival show them pretty hairy?

Yes, very hairy! I didn't have bass pedals either which was a shame. The next show was in Cologne so we hired a load of equipment from the same company where we hired the drums. We hired some bass pedals and a keyboard that I could use to generate the bass sounds. We also hired a two octave Yamaha bass and I played most of the shows with that setup. After another couple of days of trying to get my bags sent on to us we decided we'd reroute my bags back to London and my home address. On the day we played London my bass guitars arrived at home and Fiona brought my equipment to London but she arrived just before the show started. We had already sound checked so I decided to use the bass we hired for that show. The next day we were playing Paris so for the last show I actually played my own bass. Which was the first time I had seen it since I went away! I was able then to play all the bass parts that I actually expected to play!

You had a mini keyboard as well on the tour?

Yes, it was a Moog Sub Phatty. That was the keyboard, but I was just using the brain of it to get the Taurus sound and I was triggering that through the mini pedals I used on the floor.

It's not something I'd seen you use before.

Well, I do use bass pedals but usually with Marillion they are triggered through Mark's rig and with Transatlantic they trigger a little brain that Moog do called a Minitaur which is a mini Taurus. It's the brain of a Taurus. Having said all of that, it was a chaotic time for me, but it was a really good tour and the shows were amazing.

I saw the London show it was phenomenal!

I think the medleys came out really well. I didn't used to be a fan of bands that put medleys together. Having said that, I think our medleys work really well and when we've got so much music and also because of the length of the songs it's really the only way to get a reasonable amount of the right kind of music into the show.

That final medley really builds. The crowd are really bouncing by that point. It's great end to this to show. Was it a conscious decision that there's nothing from Kaleidoscope in the set list or was it due to time constraints?

I think it was partly down to what we thought was the strongest music. We already had those two medleys in various forms, we just had to embellish them a little bit. We'd done a Whirlwind medley on the *Kaleidoscope* tour, and we'd already done the other medley on the *Whirlwind* tour.

I think it is in a slightly different format but the bulk of it was the same.

Yeah, we kind of chopped and changed a little bit here and there. It's great having Ted there as well. Someone who can just help with everything.

You've got more vocals on this tour than I've ever seen you do with Transatlantic. But Ted's got a fair chunk of singing as well. Well of course Ted's the lead vocalist with Spock's Beard, so it's fitting that we show him respect. He's not just a hired hand.

No, it doesn't come across that way. He is very different to Daniel though. Daniel was leaping around, wasn't he?

Oh yeah, it was Daniel's show! Daniel is larger than life and a great guy as well. As is Ted and they are both very capable musicians. They could cover whatever was required and both have amazing musical ranges in their vocals. I mean their vocal ranges are both staggering which is great because they can sing both the high parts and the low parts. So, it allows us to have really lush harmonies as well.

You had a lot more solo singing, certainly on *The Absolute Universe*.

Yeah, I was singing lead vocals on the songs I wrote and the sections where I sang on the albums. On each version of *The Absolute Universe* there are different members singing on different versions of the songs. I jumped in and sang a chorus on one of the versions. So, it was nice. My main problem with singing, apart the fact that I'm not really a singer so it doesn't really come naturally to me. Although I love singing harmonies and I'll jump in and sing harmonies till somebody carries me upstairs to bed!

With lead vocals though I've got a terrible memory with words, even the words I've written. You'd think I'd at least know those wouldn't you? But no, not a clue! There were a couple of lines I kept getting wrong. On both of my songs where Neal sings harmony and he'd be looking over as if to say, "what are you going to sing tonight then?" He'd give me one of those looks, but I got it right in the end.

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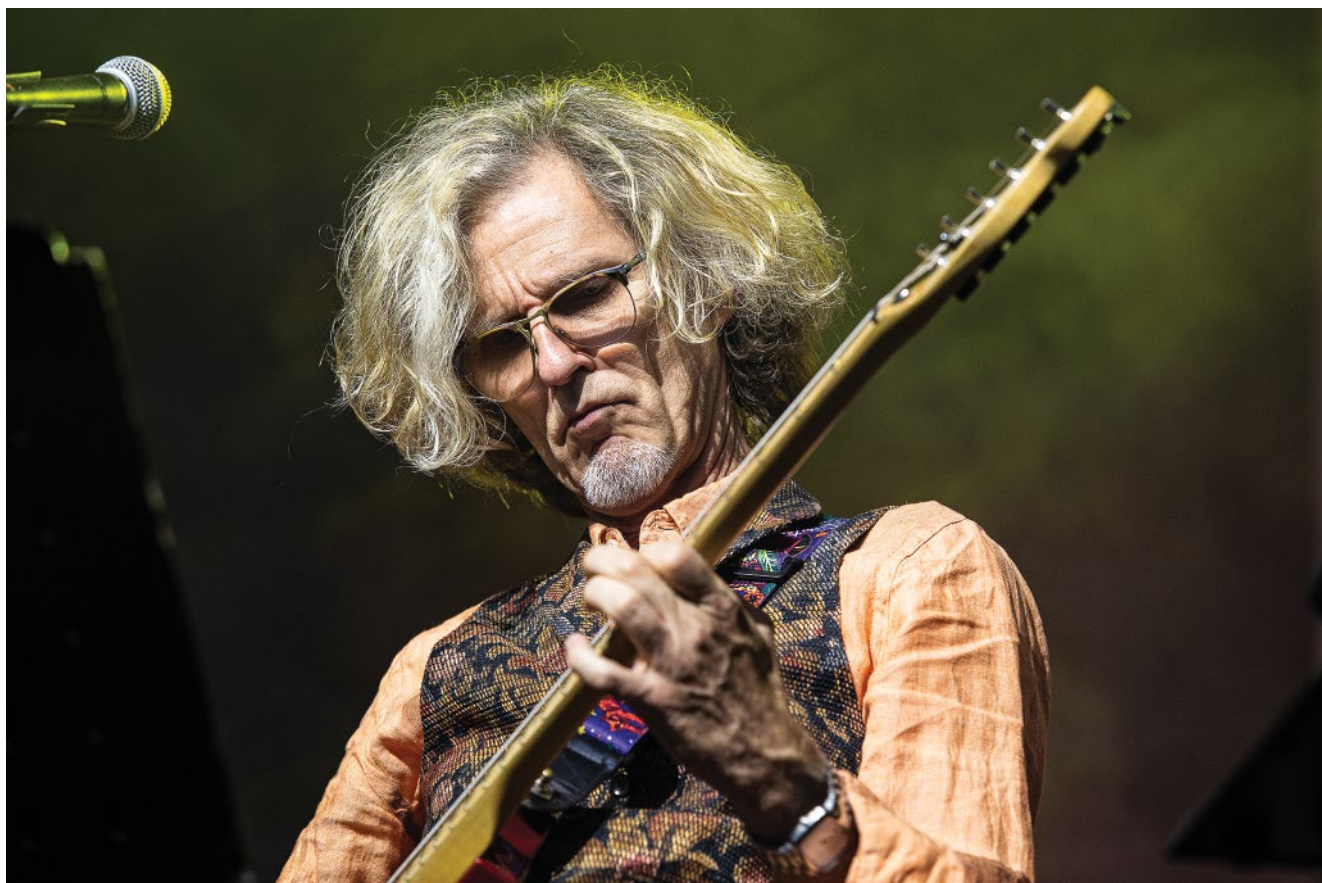
There was no overthinking, it was all done on the fly, so it's amazing that it turned out so well really!

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Absolutely. Paris was fine you know the one that's recorded for posterity!

And got it right for London as well, I think?

Well, I didn't notice you get any wrong so I wouldn't beat yourself up about that! Professional, you see!

Have you got any specific memories of the Paris show?

Well, it's an amazing place isn't it L'Olympia? I'm lucky enough to have played it twice. I played it with Marillion as well. I remember when we played it with Marillion thinking that this is like the Royal Albert Hall. It's that big a deal. It's got such history and so to come back and do it with Transatlantic was a real feat, I think. It was a really nice thing to do because, as I said, it was a project that became a band and so to have done all these things it's quite special really.

I don't think I've asked you this before Pete, but can you tell me a little bit about how you first got involved with the band?

Yeah, I mean I've known Mike since Dream Theater supported Marillion about 1983/84. We played two shows in New York during that time. They supported us and as we've supported lots of different bands over the years, we wanted people who supported us to at least be treated well. Some crews do things to either mess up your show or really put you off.

We've had ultimatums before now, if you can't get your gear on stage in ten minutes, you're off the show and things like that. That tends to be what people expect at big shows in London and probably even more so in America because playing a lot of union shows, there's very little time to do anything. You're not allowed to move this and not allowed to move that and can't put your gear on stage until it's six o'clock because everybody's having a break.

Then you've got the bands crew coming up to say if you've not got your stuff on stage by 6:00 o'clock then you're not on the show. They're just messing with you so consequently Dream Theater were treated well which is nice. We were probably back at our hotel, but anyway, apparently we were really nice to them and Mike remembered that. Years later they were doing a show at Ronnie Scott's where they were playing covers of some of their musical influences and favourite bands. They wanted to do a version of *Easter* with Steve Rothery playing guitar and Steve Hogarth singing.

Afterwards when there was a lot of e-mail to-ing and fro-ing about whether it could be released. Mike put at the bottom of one of the emails by the way will you ask Pete if he's interested in being part of a project? I think this e-mail went to Steve Hogarth and he read it out. He said what do you think about being part of a project with Mike Portnoy? I think I said, "well what do you guys think" And they all said we think you should do it. So I said OK. Then Mike got back in touch and we arranged how it might work. We were going to go into a studio for a week but then I was hit by a car just before my 40th birthday and I ended up in hospital for quite a few weeks. Or was it months, it's all a bit vague now! I was lying in bed in hospital in one of my more lucid moments because I was on morphine which I needed at the time but I wouldn't recommend it, thinking well that's the end of that then.

Anyway, I got an e-mail back from Mike saying we're holding off the project until you get better. When I read that I was thinking oh that's nice but then as soon as I came out of hospital, and I had a plaster on my leg I ended up flying to New York. I arrived at JFK and met Roine and we drove up to the north of New York State to the studio where we met Neal. I'd never met either of them before so we were tip toeing around each other a bit and getting to know each other that night.

Then Mike turned up next morning. We just listened to all the music that Neal and Roine had, and we started recording. As soon as we got sounds and were ready to start recording we decided to start with *All Of The Above* as Neal had sent a demo of that song to us all. We didn't know exactly how it would go as we changed some bits of it, missed some of it out, embellished it and added a section of mine to it. I held my hands up at this point and said, I'm not very good at remembering too much music in one go, five minute sections or ten minute sections at the most otherwise it's just not going to work for me and it will be a terrible mess!

Luckily we all agreed that sounded sensible, so that's pretty much how we did it. We'd arrange five minutes and record it. Then we'd arrange the next section and the next one and the next one. By the time we started to record the next day, we'd forgotten how it had all been put together! It was very much done on, yeah that works, let's record that now! There was no overthinking, it was all done on the fly, so it's amazing that it turned out so well really! It was a good studio with lots of retro amps and a retro desk. It just had a nice old kind of sound to it. So that's kind of how it all started.

If I were to ask you which one album from the five sums up Transatlantic which album would you pick?

That's really hard actually. The thing is, I've got a really soft spot for *The Whirlwind* because that's, probably, the first time I felt like a fair amount of my music was used. There were a couple of themes that reoccur in *The Whirlwind* that are used all the time that I wrote. I like the fact that *The Whirlwind* is its own thing and it's such a concept, I love that about it. So, in some ways, I think *The Whirlwind* is a good shout but probably the album that sums up the band the best I would say is *Bridge Across Forever*. But that's like asking you to choose one of your children! I don't want to offend anyone!

Of course, the Million Dollar Question... is this really it?

I know, it is the Million Dollar Question question that everyone wants to know the answer to. I think we all felt like it had run its course at the end of this tour. We don't want to just keep repeating ourselves. You are in danger of starting to do that if you're not careful. It's such an immense amount of time we put in and we have to do things with very little comfort involved. We don't give ourselves days off. We don't give ourselves much time to rehearse. We don't travel in too much style because it's more to do with being economical, so that it's worth our while.

Also, we're all getting older so if we wait for another ten years or even another five years you know one or two of us are going to be quite old! Life kind of catches up with you all of a sudden. You might feel twenty one but trust me when you wake up the morning after a Transatlantic show or even a Marillion show, you really know about it. It's a lot harder at our age to do these shows and recover quickly.

But, never say never! If somebody came along and said we want you to play the

Superbowl or something massive and we thought that would be nice or that's worth doing then you never know we might come out again. But we're not on the phone to each other saying that went really well, what are we doing next? I think we all feel like that was great and if this is the end, it was a good way to go out.

If you look at a band like Porcupine Tree who have been away for ten years they've come back and they're playing arenas and huge places. Maybe that that period of absence could elevate it to the next level.

Well, you never know you. There's a lot of love for Porcupine Tree. I'm really pleased for them because I think it's very well deserved.

So just finally you were talking about the shows being long and quite draining so is this the thought process behind the two-day Marillion weekends?

Partly, it's very hard to do three or four shows in a row. Singing and maintaining having a voice are crucial to Steve's well-being and quite often when we do these things, the third night Steve's voice is lacking one or two

of the bits. He's a professional and a fantastic singer, he's got an amazing voice and it's so unfair for him to have to go onstage when it's not at it's best.

It's shooting yourselves in the foot really. I think that's part of it and also, it's a physically draining job being a drummer as well. Those are the two positions that really take all the energy. Being a bass player and guitarist depends how much you want to run around and how much energy you want to expend. Everybody gives as much as they possibly can but those are physical exertions on the body before you do anything else. If you sing for two hours that's a tough gig.

So maybe more weekends, but shorter weekends, is the answer?

I think so and you know all these things are experiments. If it doesn't quite work out that way we will have another rethink, we will find another way. The same with touring. We've been toying with the idea of having tours where, rather than doing so much travelling ourselves,

we will do two shows in each city. We could organise it in such a way where that would work for us and the fans, We don't always want to get back on a bus and pretend to sleep while it's moving because it's not a rewarding sleep really.

Does that not get any easier even after all these years?

No, you only sleep on a bus when you're so dog tired because you haven't been sleeping. It's almost like being knocked out. So that can be draining, and you wake up in the morning and there's another bit aching because of the way you slept on the bus. Well with the roads in England the way they are I don't think anyone would sleep. That's my social rant over now!

Pete it's been fantastic to talk to you. I love the live album and I'm really looking forward to Leicester and Port Zélande weekends.

They are going to be great. I mean honestly superb shows, we've got some fantastic music lined up to play. Thanks for your time today John. ●

“
I really did bite off more than I could chew. After it all I was physically and mentally drained. Luckily, I had a week off at the end of all of that.
”

Q&A WITH LUCY J

> by Lisa Donlevy-Evenden > photos by Anne-Marie Forker and Ian Mosley

It's been awhile since we've heard from Der Management, so we asked fans to come up with questions for Lucy. She kindly took time out of her busy schedule to reply...

One day, hopefully not in the too near future the band may decide to throw in their towels... As a fan that would leave my life and possibly others quite empty with no Marillion tours or get togethers with fellow fans... Would you feel the same way having managed them for so long and... would you ever consider keeping the tours going so yourself and the fans can still keep the Marillion family and their music going by doing something similar to the Abba Voyage concerts... so holograms of the band members that can recreate Marillion weekends every couple of years? - Andrew Latham

Lucy: Well if we had the millions that ABBA do then yes, but we don't so it's an easy no! But don't worry, their music will live on forever and there is still a lot to come. They are not done yet.

Maybe not too original but how is it being a woman manager in such a masculine world like the prog one? - Isabel Ortiz



Lucy: I don't actually think about it often. It's not just the prog world, the whole management and business side of the music industry is mostly men. It used to bother me, but now I just get on with what I have to do and stand proud to be a woman.

Hi Lucy, not including Marillion what are your top five albums of all time - David Green

Lucy: Queen – *A Night At The Opera*
Blur – *The Great Escape*
Queen – *A Day At The Races*
Coldplay – *Parachutes*
My fifth one is joint and would be Queen's *Greatest Hits* and Duran Duran's *Greatest Hits*.

When exactly is bin day this week, and which bin is it? - Tony Furminger

Lucy: This week is green and grey bins and it's ALWAYS on a Wednesday (unless it's bank holiday, obviously).

Is there a decision regarding the band and promoting them that you regret making and if you could go back what would you do differently? - Francis Donlevy-Evenden

Lucy: Life is too short for regrets. What I love about my job and this band is that we'll give anything a try and if it doesn't work then at least we know we have tried. We are in charge of our own destiny that way and not beholden to a record company.

Which band from the past would you most liked to have managed and why, and what part of your job do you most dislike? - Kevin Green

Lucy: Oh I'd loved to have managed Blur, simply because I

adore them. I worked with them briefly when I worked at EMI and they were great people.

The part of my job I dislike the most? Hmm... how Brexit has changed our industry for the worst, also I hate doing withholding taxes and VAT!



You've effectively and efficiently managed a bunch of misfits for years. Ever thought of becoming an MP? - Graham Calder

Lucy: I don't have the patience for that. I would just want to be in charge.

In a parallel life if you weren't managing Marillion what would you be and why? - Sarah Golding-Keanne

Lucy: I would be a travel journalist and be paid to travel and write about the world (only staying in lovely hotels of course and only in hot places). I love to travel and I love the sunshine so I would have much to offer – only in sunny places of course.

“LIFE IS TOO SHORT FOR REGRETS”



What is your proudest moment as the band manager? - Graeme Smith

Lucy: Couch Convention without a doubt. So proud to have had that idea and to see it come to fruition once the rest of the team and band got involved. It was great to see how much joy it brought to all the fans.

What gives you the most joy in your work (apart from denouncing twats)? - Martin Jansen

Lucy: I love making people happy. Having been a fan myself since 1983, I remember the feeling of excitement getting some communication from the band for example, or getting to meet them or watch a soundcheck. I love trying to make being a Marillion fan a great experience in whatever way I can.

How do you choose the support acts? Along with Marillion, the best band in the world, we have discovered some great acts. - Jane Wheeler

Lucy: We have a way for people to submit music for our consideration (support the band) and all the good ones are kept in a file on my computer until it's time for us to choose support acts. Also the band quite often have

suggestions so between us that's how it usually happens!

Which is your favourite song of those which the band play only rarely live? (Or not at all) Do you keep trying to persuade them to perform it? - Neil Radcliffe

Lucy: *Real Tears For Sale* every time. They don't love it that much and I really have to plead with tears in my eyes. I'll never stop trying!

Name an idea that you wanted the band to pursue but they opted not to travel that route? - Steven Harrington

Lucy: Honestly I can't think of anything. Maybe I have ways of persuasion!

What's the best gig you've been to that didn't involve Marillion? - Stephen Wicks

Lucy: Live Aid was amazing, all the Take That concerts I go to are always amazing, Blur in Hyde Park 2012 was off the scale but the winner has to be Queen at Knebworth. What a show, what a band, what memories.

Describe a working day for Marillion's manager. I am sure there is no typical day, but what is one usually like? - Kirt Van Overen

Lucy: There really isn't a typical day, but most days do include a damned Excel spreadsheet of some kind! On any given day, it does depend what's coming up as to what I am doing. Most days include some kind of social media interaction and a LOT of forward thinking. Whether it's what to release in Racket, record deals to look over, press opportunities or and most often, spreadsheets for our cashflow. It's different every day but a lot of the same. Was that a good answer? Probably not!

Why have you stayed with Marillion so long? - Kenneth Mason

Lucy: Apart from the fact I am literally married to one of the band, this job (for the past twenty three years and counting), has been the most incredible and fulfilling thing I have ever done and I can't see working for any other band would bring me that sense of joy.

Who is your favourite Star Wars character and why? - Lisa Donlevy-Evenden

Lucy: Han Solo obviously because he is the dude! ❤️



The *Rhythm* Method

> by David Smith > photos by Anne-Marie Forker, Alison Toon and Robert Zant

For their live shows towards the end of 2022, Marillion added percussionist Luis Jardim to the touring band in order to supplement the band's sound. David Smith took the opportunity to interview Luis and Ian together, on behalf of the Web UK, to see what makes them tick.



Luis, it's the obvious question to ask I guess: how did the collaboration with Marillion come about this time around?

LJ: Well, I met h twenty years ago, I played on some of the things he recorded earlier, so we knew each other. Then we happened to both be doing an album for Trevor Horn, the producer. An all-stars album, h featured on a couple of the songs. I think Trevor is still working on it, like he does – he takes five years to work on an album. But we met, we chatted and h invited me to go down to the studio one day.

Unfortunately, I didn't meet Ian there because Ian wasn't around, but I played on a couple of tracks. Then I was invited by the band to go and play in Portugal. They came to do a concert in Portugal which was very successful, it was great, and I loved it. They asked if I wanted to come on tour with the band and I jumped at it because I am a fan of the band for many years; since the Eighties – so that's how this came about. I know Ian pushed for me to be here, which is very rare because drummers in general don't like percussionists.

IM: I've heard you say that before, but I find it quite strange. My idea of heaven is just being able to play something really simple and let it all go off around me, I love that.

LJ: But you know a lot of the percussion players – especially the Americans – they bring their Latin influence very heavily in pop/rock bands, so they are not so popular with drummers because they get in the way because when you play Latin, like if I played Brazilian-style, or wait, Cuban. Cuban fits better because it's more direct and it's normally 4/4 cha cha, straight – but a lot of percussionists play too much, and the drummers like to funk or just groove, and they get this geezer next to them...

IM: Going mad!

LJ: Getting in the middle you know.

Luis, with regards to the percussion parts on the new album, were you presented with them, or did they come organically from you and then they were recorded onto the album?

LJ: Obviously there were some that had been done on the record, so when I was recording, I made some

notes. So those it's easy to transfer to live, obviously I have to make slight modifications because live is another story. I just got a huge list of songs from the road manager and I went through all of them and made notes; perhaps tambourine here, but then I come to the gig and at that point h is playing tambourine, so I then have to think, "shit he's already doing it, so I have to play something else". So, some of it is, let's call it improvised, but it's not improvised because now I have fixed positions for things, but some of it I had to think, "what would a percussion player do with that?"

Let's face it, it's a progressive rock band really and I said, you know, I have to adapt myself to the style, which I have done for years on records because I have played



with a lot of rock bands. So that was one of the things I had to do; I sat down for about two weeks at home and listened to all the songs and made notes and luckily no one has told me off.

So, at the gig there was a point where Steve Hogarth turned round to look at you and smiled, and I was just wondering if he was expecting you to play a tambourine and you played a marimba instead, just he turned around and gave you a really good smile.



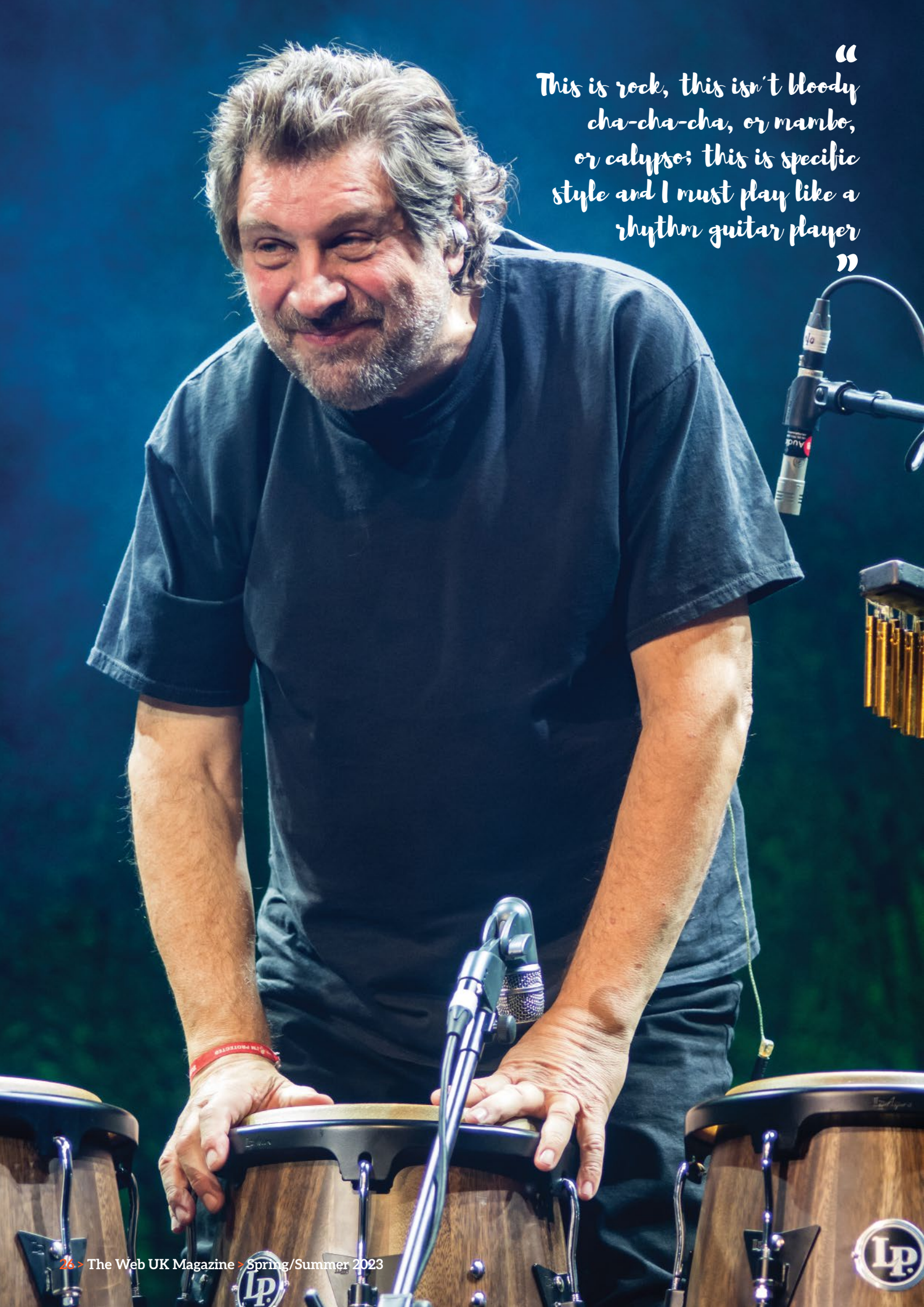
LJ: There might be a moment where one of them thinks, "what the fuck is he playing?" I mean, I get some filthy looks from Mark occasionally because I'll get in the way of something he's doing.

Ah ok.

LJ: He'll give me filthy looks, so I'll immediately grab something that makes little noise.

Ian, do you have to change the way that you drum to make space for Luis when you're playing live or on the record, or have you not had to do that?

IM: No, we didn't have to change anything really. What Luis did for me, when Luis appeared in Lisbon at the convention, immediately it made the whole band focus a bit more, because they suddenly realised, hang on a minute, we've got Luis with us and because he's top notch he's going to be playing in time. So, I noticed that straight away, that the whole band concentrated more. That was a gift for me and having Luis on board, suddenly I had someone on stage who could relate to the problems that I have because we play to click tracks and all that kind of stuff.



“ This is rock, this isn't bloody cha-cha-cha, or mambo, or calypso; this is specific style and I must play like a rhythm guitar player ”

A band with you pulls and pushes with the time, so I've got Luis there who knows, he's seen it all, so he knows what the problems are. But no, Luis just did his own thing, as he said, some of the album had bits of shakers and tambourines as a kind of rough guide, but we really said to Luis, "just do what you want" because, yeah, we know nothing.

Luis, according to h in his recent podcast, you told the band that the recent tour was the best that you'd been on. Which, bearing in mind the people that you've been on tour with and played with, is high praise. So, what's made the Marillion tour so special?

LJ: Well for a start, Ian is probably the greatest player I've played with without a question, not because he's sitting here! He's got a style that I love, from the great drummers like Steve Gadd and all those kinds of people. And Ian's got that kind of knowledge, and he can do that kind of style in his own way. He is a very creative drummer, he doesn't just go poot-poot-pah, poot-poot-poot-pah, you know what I mean. He's giving you a lot of feed and whatever he does, it inspires me to do something.

There's also the fact that I've followed the band since the Eighties and I travelled a few times to see them, and they were great concerts. I've loved the band, especially after Fish left, I wasn't a fan of Fish I must be honest, then when Steven joined. The band has got five great musicians, to which they all play something good. I mean Peter is a very unusual bass player because of his style with the pick. He's a driver, he drives it doesn't he Ian?

IM: Oh yeah, he sticks to me like glue, I mean he really does. I can just play, and Pete makes me sound good because he's with me. I'm not really thinking, "I'm gonna follow Pete here" - he follows me - so I can just play something and Pete's with me. Because we've been together so long, we know each other.

LJ: And then of course Mark is the scientist isn't he, with the buttons,

the push buttons and the turn buttons and the mix tracks. And Steven is a fucking great guitar player, that sound! Steven has one of the best sounds that I know, he really knows how to use his own sounds, a great player. And h is a great singer. But of course, a percussionist relies on the drummer. If you go into a gig and the drummer gives you inspiration, which is thank God what Ian's done for me. As I said to Ian, if I drop dead after one of these concerts at least I've found out that there is a God.

High praise!

IM: I have to keep paying Luis to say that.

LJ: He pays me a fortune to say these things!

IM: When he mentioned Steve Gadd in the same breath as my name! I've got the Steve Gadd Gaddiments Rudiment book at home.

LJ: Have you never read it?

IM: I'm on page two! I've had it for a year!

LJ: Yes, but you've not got Gadd ears; he's got elephant ears. He's the most musical drummer, because drumming is not just drumming. Ian is very musical, Ian plays with the vocals, and he knows when to wrap to roll, and it's not because he's sitting here, he's a fucking great player. It's an honour to be sitting next to him.

From a purely fan perspective, they're the best band in the world. Always have been, always will be, and I totally agree with what you're saying.

IM: We're doing something right, the band as a unit. I might not have such a good gig one night, but if people go "what a great band", that's kind of what it's about really.

I think so. And for a band to be so far into their career - which is not a polite way of saying you're really old, you just really are so far into your career - and to bring out this album which, from

my perspective, is the best one you've ever done, I just think it's absolutely fantastic.

IM: It is encouraging. Like you say, we've been going for a long, long time. We're going out playing a new album from beginning to end. Most bands that have been together thirty or forty years, they go out on tour and it's nostalgia; they play all the old stuff and that's it, so we're really fortunate.

I think the only criticism has been that it's taken so long between each album. Most people are desperate for new music all the time.

LJ: You've got famous people from the same time as us, but they go on stage and they play the old things and they don't write anymore; they don't know how to write anymore. This band, they know how to write songs that are fucking unreal. They're unreal songs, I mean there is one I'd die for, which is *Care*, and everyone gets up at every concert and stands up to clap. There's many, *Murder Machines*, I sit there and I think, I've never played with a band that plays such great songs. Nobody knows how to write now. I'm being awkward, but it's a fact, very few people can write now at this calibre, pop - there's plenty of people write pop, but this is something special.

Well when you get things like the guitar solo in *This Strange Engine*, or the guitar solo at the end of Part 3 of *Care*, everybody gets up for a standing ovation for Steve at that specific moment in time because it just hits everybody so perfectly. The emotion of those guitar solos and everything else that goes with Marillion is just fantastic.

IM: You're right, I mean it is a shame it takes so long but that's the way Marillion write. It's mainly jams to start with. The major contribution really is Mike Hunter, the producer, who goes through thousands of jams and goes, "this bit's really good and this bit's good" and the band can't even remember playing them.



He must have an eidetic memory.

IM: He's got an encyclopaedic memory, Mike Hunter will say, "what do you think of this?" and he'll play me something and I'll go, "yeah, when did we do that?" and Mike will say, "last week". And Steve Rothery is the sort of guitarist that has to be totally in the mood to play and be able to feel it and be spontaneous. If we're in a room jamming, we have to record every jam because Steve might play something amazing and if we don't record it, he'll never repeat it. Steve sometimes plays a riff and I'll go, "that was great, play it again" and he'll say, "what?"

Luis, have you had to change anything about your style of percussion playing for this tour with Marillion?

LJ: Yes, of course. As I said, this is rock, this isn't bloody cha-cha-cha, or mambo, or calypso; this is specific style and I must play like a rhythm guitar player. I must be there to support what Ian is doing because that's how rock works. With Latin percussion, which I've played on lots of dance records, you're kind of featured in a way. Here is different, here is a song that is structured. There's a style, so I fit that.

When I played on the record with The Rolling Stones I did the same thing. The Stones is mainly maracas and some very simple congas underneath a pattern that doesn't change, because that's how they liked it. With U2 it was a tambourine, I think that's all I've ever played with them. I've played with loads of rock bands, and I think the answer to my success if I may be a bit... flashy is that at the age. I'm 72 and I still play with producers that I played with thirty years ago, because they know I don't come in to interfere, I come in to support and that's what a percussionist should be.

IM: Yeah, he's absolutely right, that is actually the role of a drummer as well; to support whatever's going on, to support the other people. That's meant to be the key role, but

sometimes the drums are featured, or the percussion's featured. But yeah, try and contribute to the overall song, the piece of music.

No, I understand. Luis you can play guitar as well, you can play bass, so, knowing how to play other instruments, does that help with whichever genre you're playing on when you do percussion?

LJ: Not necessarily, I mean playing bass is a different story. You've still got rhythm, but you've got riffs and you've got accents. With the percussion, it should drive. You should sit on something and stay for a while there pushing it. Percussion is a different thing altogether, I've played tambourines at 130 bpm on dance records, people can't even walk down the street at that speed. I've played them for twelve minutes, my arm at one point... people used to say, "how can you play that for that long?" It's only because I've been doing it for thirty years and the muscles have somehow developed.

Have you ever wanted to be part of a permanent band, or do you prefer the collaborative aspect of what you do?

LJ: Well, I enjoyed what I did because I had a lot of variety. If I was to join a band permanently it would have to be a band like this. Put it this way, if they invited me to join the band I'd be there. I'd get on my knees and go thank you! No, it's true, if I'm going to join a band it'd have to be a band like this – that I really love, musically and the players. I've been offered a lot of jobs in bands, and I've turned them all down. Lots of famous bands and I've said, "no, not permanently".

Has it always been percussion, or have you been a kit player as well?

LJ: I was many years ago, I started on kit. But somebody smelled that I was half-Brazilian, half-Portuguese when I came to England and they said, "give him some fucking congas and some tambourines". Then there was a clinical aspect

to this as well because when you played in those days – the Seventies and late Sixties – if you played bass, you got the union rate, for three hours it was a hundred quid.

When I played percussion, whenever I went in people would say, "I need you to play on this, that and the other, how about a thousand quid for the day?", so, I thought, "screw the bass, screw the drums", you know, because you were doing naughty things. I had fixers in those days, they were people that fixed sessions. David Cash would phone up and say, "I got you a nice little job, ten days playing with some French or Italian artist, he's going to pay you like eight hundred quid a day for ten days".

You're talking about the Sixties, you could buy a car at the end of the week, so I thought "ok". I thought "If I'm going to work and play on things that most of the time I'm not going to like, I'm just going to play because I've been asked to play, I might as well go and get that much money".

That makes sense. So, if there was a band swap around, how would you feel about playing percussion Ian? And Luis you playing drums? Would it work?

LJ: I would refuse because I can't play anymore, my legs don't work.

IM: I've dabbled with percussion over the years. I mean, I could play a tambourine or a triangle or cowbell for someone, but if I'm honest, percussion is another planet and it's another lifetime's work, it really is, and I could only pretend. I could bluff for little bits but really... and also, I mean I didn't know, but Luis's biggest influences were Cuban.

LJ: Cuban yeah, I mean I'm Brazilian, but my influence is Cuban.

IM: Big differences between Brazilian and Cuban in the way percussion works and I didn't know that really, so I'm learning, you never stop learning, do you?

LJ: Drums, you have to have good legs. You have to really know how to play with your feet, and not only that, it's an instrument that requires some power, some strength. And I did when I was very young because it was all pow-pow-pow. But now, sit down and play some thing tasteful, I'm not sure if I could.

IM: The young drummers coming up are scary and some of the metal prog drummers, they're Olympian, I mean I couldn't play that.

LJ: Yeah, you'd drop dead if you played [with] those bands you know.

IM: I used to practice a lot like everyone does, and practice meant to get my technique really good. The idea being that if you've got the really good technique you don't have to work so hard, your techniques will just... **Get you through.**

IM: But some of these modern drummers now, it's like they've got the technique, but they've got that...

LJ: Muscle.

Yeah, I don't know how drummers do it day in, day out on tours. Two or three hours constant, you must have to be pretty fit.

IM: These days though, with Marillion it's more a mental thing than physical to be honest. It's not all guns blazing all the time, it's just trying to remember stuff.

LJ: It can be quite tricky these arrangements, there are some songs that you really need to keep your eye on it.

I remember you released a video, was it last year or the year before, of the click track and you said, "this is what I have to deal with" and there was like, I mean I'm an absolute novice, but it was like what the hell was that?

IM: There's a track called *This Strange Engine* and I just put it up on YouTube that this is what I put up with, and it's the click track for the whole song.

LJ: But here, because we have the scientist, Mark, I think he gets extra to confuse us completely.

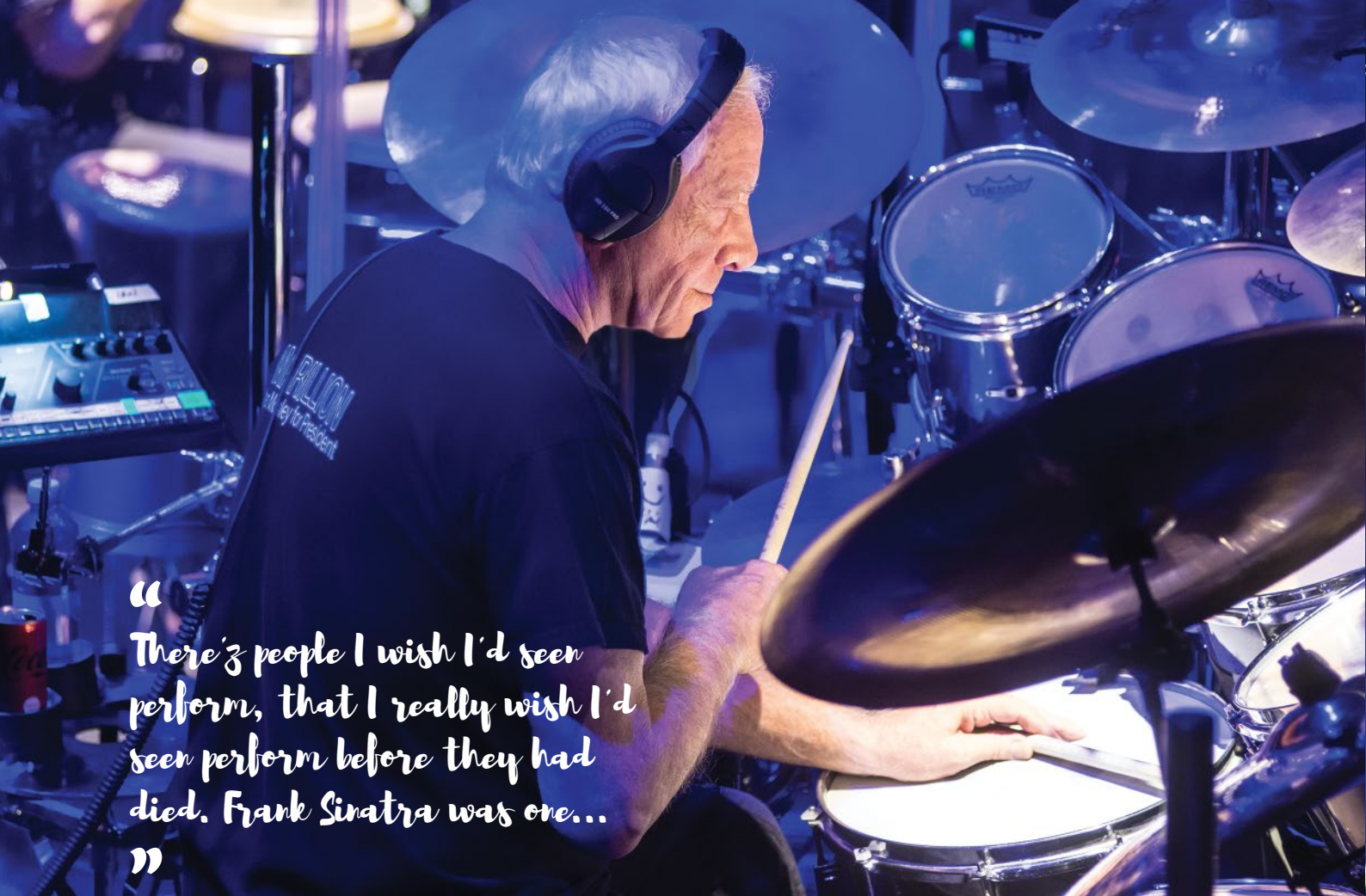
That sounds like Mark.

LJ: With Mark it's not just one click. Some of it Ian drives the click, some the computer drives the click, so he's at the receiving end you know, because sometimes you're playing away and you think, 'what the fuck, where's he gone?' then something else appears and you go "what was that?"

This is a question for the pair of you, if you're in your car and a tune comes on the radio and it's that full steering wheel drumming bit, for both of you what song is that likely to be?

IM: I don't know, I mean I love all sorts, I'm really diverse with everything. Something that would get me tapping would be a Michael Jackson track usually, something like that. There's some great Michael Jackson riffs. I don't know, I'm still quite old fashioned you know, I like Cat Stevens. All his first albums I thought were





“
There's people I wish I'd seen perform, that I really wish I'd seen perform before they had died. Frank Sinatra was one...
”

drumming on them, more complicated than they sound.

LJ: I had a band in the early 70s and we gathered quite a [lot of] success in Canada. I toured Canada as a support act to a guy with his own band, Gino Vanelli, not many people know him. And I toured with this band, and he had this drummer, which then became Santana's drummer, Graham Lear, this boy of eighteen or whatever he was. I would stay there at the side, and he took one hundred singers on stage, it was serious! It was the tour of *The Gist Of The Gemini*, and he took one hundred singers on tour and he had a twelve-piece band. The band was his brother on keyboards and this young boy Graham Lear. They were musicians really that became very famous. And I fell in love with this thing. I must admit he's got seventeen albums and I play them in the car all the time. These are thirty or forty years old. Then I have people like – what was the band with the piano player – great pianist, deep voice; Mike McDonald with the Gibson Brothers, not the Gibson Brothers...

Dooby Brothers?

LJ: Yes! So that's another favourite. And I like some of the Jackson stuff – some of the black stuff, I like a lot of the black stuff – and obviously things like, the standard British bands like Genesis. I love The Beatles, I have all The Beatles things, I quite enjoy listening to Revolver, that fills me up you know. I like a lot of jazz too; I like a lot of jazz.

IM: I think we're really diverse, it's right across the board really. We can listen to stuff, like you said, Jon Bonham, Kashmir...

LJ: Oh, that's incredible isn't it. Of all the albums I've played on, I don't have any at home. My daughters have, my wives, my exes have them. I'm on the fifth series now so I had five wives, and they all have collections of my albums. I have one album which I did with Jeff Beck and Terry Bozzio, and that for me is the album that I played on that I don't mind listening to, the rest I go, "oh shit, oops, I made a mistake there oh shit!"

Here's a question for you Luis, you played on *Slave to the Rhythm* by Grace Jones. She always comes across as really, really difficult to work with, how did you find her?

LJ: Well, it's really funny because I was working with Trevor Horn on this track which took two years to record, one song – the whole album is one song with different arrangements and it took two years for this album. Grace Jones phoned us up, I'll never forget because it was my wife's birthday on a Tuesday morning, and Trevor phoned me in a panic and said, "you've got to come in the studio", she's coming in and she said, "I'll give you forty five minutes man, I've got to get on a plane". She was filming on a James Bond, some famous film, and she came in for forty five minutes. She was really pleasant. She was slightly pissed, which she is



always. If you see we did a Prince's Trust and she's featured on it and she was well pissed, she was falling off the stage. I thought she was wonderful, she was treating us like, "Hey baby...", it was all babies and this you know, and she did forty five minutes and fucked off and that was it. Trevor never got another note out of her.

Wow. Because I always remember – Ian you might remember this – that interview she had with Russell Hearty.

IM: Oh yeah, where she smacked him.

LJ: She smacked him didn't she.

IM: Well, he deserved it.

I can't remember now.

LJ: I can't remember what he said, but he got smacked.

IM: He had his back to her and she was talking and she said "that's very rude", which it was kind of. But it's difficult to know. You hear different stories about different people.

LJ: And Trevor [Horn] knows her really well and he said that's how she is all the time; she's always in a rush, she hasn't got much time for anything because she's always filming, doing this, doing that and the other, and it's like a favour for her to come down and do something.

IM: The Queen's jubilee, not the last one but the one before, when she played at Buckingham Palace and she came on stage with a hula hoop and she sang and then kept the hula hoop going for the whole song I mean, Jesus!

Very serious question for Luis now, can anyone make Pastel De Nata properly outside of Portugal?

LJ: Nobody makes pastel de nata except the Portuguese.

Anything else is a pale imitation, is it?

LJ: I mean there are some Spanish imitations, they're absolute crap.

IM: Yeah, I've had them from Tesco and if you've had them in Lisbon or somewhere, nah, there's no comparison.

I kind of guessed that. That was the real serious question out of the way.

LJ: That's pretty good.

So Luis, after the Marillion tour, presumably it'll be a rest, and then what's next for you after that?

No, I've always got bits of work, sessions, television, because in Portugal I do television





and so there's always things happening. But in a way I'm my own boss now, if I decide to take ten days, I take ten days, sod it. When I was thirty I took everything, during the day, during the night, during the weekend but not now, now if it doesn't smell good, I don't go.

That's fair comment.

IM: We've got some more conventions next year, which I hope Luis is going to do.

LJ: Oh, we're doing some yeah. With Marillion, anything they want, I'm free. Any time, anything.

Hope to see you at PZ then. Again, for the pair of you, obvious question but is anybody else on your bucket list that you've never played with, but you think, yeah that would tick a box for me?

LJ: I mean the ones I would like to have played with, most of them are dead.

IM: I don't know, I never really think about that to be honest. I mean there's people I wish I'd seen perform, that I really wish I'd seen perform before they had died. Frank Sinatra was one.

LJ: Frank Sinatra yeah, Tony Bennett – I'd loved to have worked with Tony Bennett. I think he's a wonderful singer.

Yeah, he is a good singer.

LJ: And now moving into the pop things there is I would like to play with, Bruce Springsteen for instance, some guys like that. Presley, I would have loved to have played with Presley.

IM: Presley really was great. His drummer, I forget his name, but I mean great player as well. But yeah, I don't really think about playing with other bands. Maybe I should start thinking about that.

LJ: Mike McDonald, I would love to play with Mike McDonald, a great, great singer. I'm a singer fan, I love singers, if they're good, they've got men's voice. I don't like squeaky little, up high, I'm not a falsetto man. I like guys who sound like guys but I like Mike McDonald, that kind of voice you know... deep. Tom Jones, I was with The Squires when Tom started playing at the beginning of his career. I did a television show that he did and I used to love Tom, he could fucking sing.

Again, another question for the pair of you: cowbells on *Reprogramme The Gene*, who's idea was that because it sounds absolutely immense, can you remember?

LJ: Well it wasn't me because you know, all the cowbells I was going to do, Steven does. Every time I got a cowbell out he'd go, "no, no, I'm playing cowbell on that".

Ok, because you're credited as cowbell, I'm pretty certain, for every programme they did.

LJ: Oh, on the album yes. But live, h is a good percussion player, he plays tambourine well, he plays shakers well, cowbell, his timing is good, so let him do it. I've got a pedal, I've got the pedal with the cowbell, which I use it as an ashtray.

IM: Yeah, he's got a pedal with a cowbell on it with a beater so he can tap it, but because he's not using it at the minute it's being used as an ashtray. But Luis is right, I've worked with a few singers in my career and h is the most consistent. I mean the vocal performance... but yeah, his timing is really good.

LJ: His timing is good. Sometimes I'm playing and I don't know if you hear it outside but I've got the loop of the things he is playing, and they really help because he drives it well and he does it very elegantly. The way he hits that tambourine, he makes Ray Cooper look like a beginner.

Yeah, he is absolutely a showman. And again, for the pair of you, if you were granted one wish what would it be?

LJ: Well, mine is that I die playing good stuff like this. You know, drop dead like Buddy Rich dropped dead after a solo. He said, "If I'm going to die, I want to die after a solo." And he did. So, if I kick the bucket, this would be my wish, being with a band like this because it makes me reborn, I was reborn since I found this job. I was beginning to talk about retiring to my wife, I was saying, "it stinks man, all these fucking dance records, all these DJs producing records" I said, "if it continues like this another year, I'll [give up]" and she said, "you'll never do it, you'll die playing" and then I decided yes I will die playing.

IM: That's something else I've never really thought about. I don't really want to die in Ikea, you know, come out in a flat pack.

Yeah, go out doing what you love I suppose.

LJ: Listen, Ian's done everything so it's difficult to know what to wish for.

Yeah, I've read his book.

IM: Oh, you've read my book have you? I'd just like to try and be happy, whatever happens, stay happy you know and have as little emotional trauma in my life as possible.

And when I kick the bucket, everyone's happy and looked after, that would be nice.

LJ: Well, you can't kick the bucket and everyone's going to be happy, no one is going to be happy!

IM: Except all these drummers that I'm surrounded by.

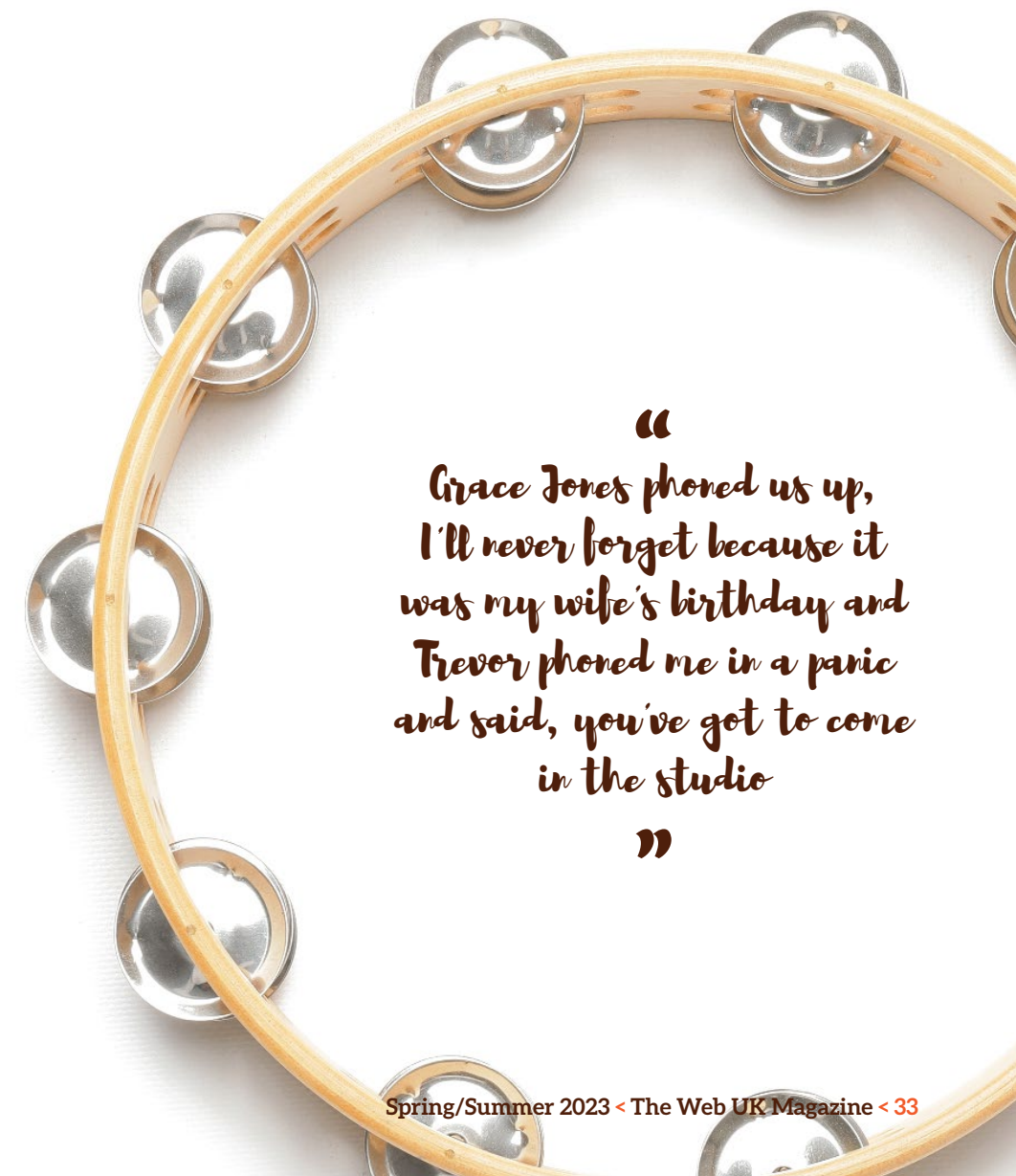
LJ: The drummers, the ones you nicked worked from, they'll be going "Thank fuck he's gone".

IM: Yeah, Jesus, when I was wanting to join a band, the only way you could join an established band was if someone died, and it's probably still the way. You get people saying, "oh I'm really sorry so-and-so died... so, is there a gig going?"

Well, you'll be very pleased to know that was my final question.

IM: Well done.

Thank you I appreciate it, thank you for your time.



“
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was my wife's birthday and
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GRAND DESIGNS

SEE THE COLOURS SPLIT AND LIGHT DIVIDE

> by Fraser Marshall > Images by Simon Ward



The day after the band performed *An Hour Before It's Dark* at the PZ Marillion Weekend, Fraser Marshall sat opposite Simon Ward to quiz him about the artwork for the album. As they remarked to each other, the set up sitting either side of a desk felt a bit like a job interview, hence the first question...

Fraser Marshall: So, Simon Ward, you want the position of designer for Marillion?

Simon Ward: I'll give it a go...

Fraser: Walk me through the process? When does somebody say to you, "Simon, we want an album cover"?

Simon: Actually, it was slightly different this time, I suppose, because I'm not in the office day-to-day now. I am obviously still in contact with people, I know Michael Hunter really well so I kind of knew that they were starting to do something. Last time I was involved right from the very beginning. This time they had a good year I suppose, of doing their jams and things before I got involved.

I think I approached him initially, just to say "Hello!" and see what they were up to, and he sent me a lyric for *The Crow And The Nightingale*. I think at the time he was keen on that whole concept as a possible title, but it was very much like, "This 'might' be a good title so a possible thing to start with".

I just got to making a load of imagery based around that, a lot of which didn't get used but some did end up coming through. Particularly, the sort of graphic style of the crow and everything which came out of that.

Care
اکثرث



I had a lot of 3D-based imagery then, which I was exploring before we knew what the actual title was going to be but it all started from those sessions. It was probably about two years ago, so this time of year probably 2021.

We did that first round of designs and as I was doing that, dropping in and out of it, doing other things as well, the rest of the music started to come together. It probably wasn't until the summer where they had a more definite sense of where they're going and what songs they were doing. The first time I heard music, they were more or less complete things. They weren't mixed, with all the bits and bobs on them, but they were running from beginning to end and they were definite concepts.

When they were at Real World, I guess, I must have seen some other things because I'd seen the "hour before it's dark" line in *Be Hard On Yourself*, so there must have been other lyrics being sent.

Fraser: You were the one who suggested *An Hour Before It's Dark* as the album title. Is that right?

Simon: That's how I remember it, yeah! I just pulled it out as a line, "Oh, that's a really great lyric! That would be a really good title!" and I think everybody just was on board with that fairly quickly, so it was obviously going to be a strong thing to hang everything on. It doesn't always work like that, but that time, it did.

Fraser: Clearly, you then move into doing the logo and front cover and it's all based on time and we'll get into that in a moment. But until that point, you hadn't had a clear direction..?

Simon: No, no, not at all.

Fraser: So what had you done at that point? Because clearly an album title dictates what a whole load of the other stuff fits around. What was that looking like?

Simon: Well, we had a lot of *Crow And Nightingale* based imagery.

There were a lot of images with sort of silk-wrapped suns because I was very keen on that as an image, it's a great visual line; it immediately jumped out at me when I read that in the lyric.

Fraser: It's a great image!

Simon: That's the thing, and I was also quite into the sort of 'witch black hill' vibe and all of that, but that never really went anywhere. But the idea of the sun and wrapping something that you can't really wrap or obscure, sort of impossible imagery... was something that was messed around with a bit along with some sort of Icarus type themes.

Fraser: Which is an image touched on before.

Simon: We didn't go down that route. It was something that the band didn't really wanna get into, as the *Afraid Of Sunlight* material had already touched on some of that imagery.

Fraser: Let's talk about the front cover. I genuinely love it! I think I was immediately struck by the fact that it was such a bold, very iconic sort of image.

Simon: Thank you. Yes.

Fraser: It almost looked like something you could imagine New Order or someone like that using. It was very stylised and I really liked it. What was your thinking when you got the title of the album? Take me through the process.

Simon: Initially, I was trying to push more for... we had this idea of almost like an art installation on an urban wall, which was based around the climate ideas that were in some of the lyrics. So we had it almost like a papier-maché-looking world globe, something more 'physical' or 'real world' combined with a very urban sort of street scene, with a fire escape and an idea of warning posters. There was some talk of actually making something, setting up a scene and shooting it

photographically. We had a lot of those sort of ideas, some of which has come through in some of the other booklet imagery and some of which were used in the big screen media last night (Saturday night, PZ 2023 - Ed).

I was really keen on doing something like that, more three dimensional but there were a number of ideas knocking around. Normally what you do is you get a load of roughs and you put them in front of everybody and usually everyone picks the one that I least like! That's really how this one went down and in hindsight I guess there's something in that wheel that everybody picked it out and wouldn't budge at all.

I even tried a load of physically painted versions but we kept coming back to the spirit of that original rough.

Fraser: The colour palette choice is really interesting. It was like that from the start, wasn't it?

Simon: It was yes and then that led through to the whole idea of each of the tracks having their own colour palette that relates to the track. So *Be Hard On Yourself* is like blues and greens of the Earth; *Murder Machines* is very red, like the blood viruses; *Sierra Leone* is kind of yellow, like sandy earth. Then *Care* is loosely based around that NHS-blue sort of thing. So it all started to come together really.

I'm a massive Anton Corbijn fan. That's my thing. So it's kind of weird, I was trying to get them to do a very 3D-rendered looking thing but it ended up being very graphic as in that sort of more electronic kind of style. Actually when it came to doing the rest of the art, I was very into it. I enjoyed working on it and it has turned out really well.

Fraser: On your website you've written somewhere the concept was born out of trying to find interesting ways to visualise 1/24s.

“ All of a sudden, it's massive and it's all part of the music and the whole vibe ”



Simon: Yes, exactly the 24 hours in a day and the hour tally marks. Those two ideas that came together quite nicely in the package.

Fraser: Was the tally marks something that came up in terms of the original ideas you presented to the band?

Simon: For the cover, yes. They didn't go with that one, although they really liked it.

Fraser: That was used for the pre-release material, wasn't it?

Simon: It was. That was used quite early on. I think probably I was more into that than I was into the colour wheel thing. I think

there was some support for the tally marks. It was definitely liked, but very stark, very black and white, you know, so this obviously had a bit more colour and a bit more to it. What I really wanted to do with the packaging was a kind of cut-out thing, so it was literally cut out with the colour beneath, so physically it was more interesting and three-dimensional.

Fraser: Presumably prohibitively expensive to do though?

Simon: That's the thing. It was just too complex for all the

different versions and everything. So I had to abandon that one.

What I did do is re-create the rough cover in 3D, so whilst it was very 2D-looking it was all rendered in 3D, so there was a bit of three dimension to it with texture in the colours of the background. If you look closely, it's more than just blobs of flat colour.

Fraser: I was going to ask whether there was any sort of physical elements, but it's all in a computer?

Simon: Yes, it's all digital 3D-rendered, virtual layers in a 3D scene.

Fraser: There's sort of powder paint type feeling to those blobs.

Simon: Well, a lot of the ideas we were coming up with had a sort of urban/street flavour. A bit Banksy-ish. That was what was in my head. Spray paint and that kind of thing.

Fraser: The one that's particularly Banksy is the *Reprogram The Gene* image.

Simon: Yes! There was a lot of that style of thing being messed about with.

<Simon notices an image while flicking through the booklet>

The black hole was quite an early image for a cover, particularly combined with the 'push the button' guy.

Fraser: What are the numbers on him?

Simon: That's the age of the Earth and population. It's kind of like a broken earth-man type of idea. I was really keen on that as a cover.

Fraser: That's a lovely image, actually. It's nice, really very strong.

Simon: And he kind of looks like he's fighting for breath.

Fraser: Yes. And you were going to combine it with the black hole?

Simon: There was a combination of the two and there was one also which was just this guy on a sort of a spacey kind of background. I was really into that, actually!

Fraser: I'm assuming the brick work is all just a rendering trick and everything and then you got this sort of decay.

Simon: Yes, that's all done in 3D.

Fraser: That was something I noticed as I went through this sort of signs of flaking and things breaking down. In terms of doing those effects, this isn't brushes, this is applied effects.



Simon: There was definitely a lot of that.

Fraser: In terms of actually creating it, this isn't digital brushes, this is presumably just a sort of blanket effect that you can add?

Simon: It's digital. I use the open source programme Blender for 3D, in combination with Photoshop and other programmes.

Fraser: So that's actually a 3D image but it's come across as totally flattened.

Simon: That is a 3D image. It's a background environment in a 3D space and this effect is created with a sphere in the middle which is kind of like a lens and the virtual camera is effectively inside a volume, so I can move this background around in 3D space and it creates this halo.

Fraser: That's interesting! And then you've reused some of the effects, the brick appears in a couple of other ones and the crinkled effect and the flaky paint thing appears in a few of them.

Simon: Yeah, they're just sort of textures are used to give the background a bit of life. And then the symbols for each track, I was really keen on and that went down well.

Fraser: Again, solely designed in the computer, there's no you sitting with a piece of paper and scissors or anything?

Simon: No, it's all digital. I don't really do much drawing, I haven't done for a while. But again the song symbols are all 3D and it's got a texture on. I tend to use After Effects a bit. Once I've done the art, I tend to put it in After Effects and put some effects on top of stuff.

Fraser: You were saying there was perhaps more of this kind of Banksy style?

Simon: Yeah, there's the School Strike image, and there's the La

Pieta statue that h had sent me, which is used in *Care*. h's really good visually, because he tends to send random stuff which definitely can and has inspired ideas to work on.

That's La Pieta, The Pity or Compassion, I think is the translation. It just fits really well with that idea of care and death. That song initially was called *Death or The Death Song*. It was very much a death song. A lot of the imagery for *Care* was based around that and then the title was changed fairly late on, I think.

Fraser: If you're Marillion, actually putting the word 'death' into a song title, is maybe a bit close to the knuckle for them.

Simon: It's the classic 'death and water', isn't it? But again the Banksy sort of style, this one was was sort of sprayed on the wall.

Fraser: That's not Leonard Cohen imposed on that one is it?

Simon: No, it's just a virtual silhouette projected onto a wall in a 3D space. While we're on the subject, the image of the nurse is what really inspired h to write that lyric. Actually, that was also a cover possibility at one point. Maybe a bit too literal.

Fraser: Was it? So that's Johannah Churchill's image of her colleague, Melanie Senior, the nurse. This image is based on her photograph rather than the actual mural that was done in Manchester, isn't it?

Simon: Yes, we had both. We had access to both, h contacted all the people involved with that. He was in touch with them and they were into the idea and once he got all that organised, we started looking at how could we use the image. It ended up being used in that way similar to the mural but more in the style of the rest of the booklet. That's a great image.

Fraser: It's so powerful. It's a real shame they painted over it, in Manchester. It's been replaced with something else.

Simon: Did they? Wow! I didn't know that. Why would they do that?

Fraser: It's a real shame. I think they probably do it the whole time and that wall is just constantly repainted. I don't know.

Simon: Yes, because it looks amazing on the building. At one point we were definitely looking at just the mural on the building as a possible cover.

Fraser: I've seen the photos of it and you could completely see how that would work.

Simon: It was just maybe too literal, when it came down to it, but really nice with the blue and the grey and that and then come together with the tally marks.

Fraser: What's the word underneath it?

Simon: It's 'care' written in [Dari or Pashto], the Afghan language. At the point when I was putting that image together, there was all the stuff going on in Afghanistan and the exit of all those people. I just felt like I wanted to put that in there as a little nod - where's the care in what's going on there? It just felt right. I put it in there and sent it to h thinking maybe that it might not end up in there, but he was really into it.

Fraser: OK. Does it appear anywhere else in the other images?

Simon: I don't think so. I think I only used it there. I did use it on the screens last night.

Fraser: So then you've got the Greta one, that's obviously Swedish, that's the 'school strike for climate change' slogan?

Simon: Yes, which was a big starting point for h, I think with some of the lyrics and sentiments of *Reprogram The Gene*.

Fraser: Let's have a look at *Reprogram The Gene* because you've done some quite



interesting stuff on that one. So here we've got the hexagon and you've got all the ACGT's, all the bases in DNA and everything has a very digital feeling to it. Not in the sense of being done on computer but in terms of referencing digital technologies.

Simon: I'm really into that you know, genes and all the medical technology generally. I think it's really interesting. All the CRISPR science, gene editing techniques, etc. Visually I was really interested in doing designs that had a tie in with all of that. And then of course, he had come up with this song. So it worked. It worked really well. These things tend to come together! It's weird you have these ideas in your head, "I would love to do something in that sort of vibe" and then all of a sudden, he's got a song. That's happened a few times with Marillion's work actually.

Fraser: Right, synchronicity! This image is interesting, the X-ray of the skeleton. You sort of shifted some of the bits out of phase almost. Was that what you just mentioned, the gene editing?

Simon: Yes. It's kind of like messing with the human condition, the body.

Fraser: This material that's overlaid, all this information.

Simon: Yes, that's all sort of DNA sequencing technical things that's just grabbed from around the place.

Fraser: This green image really flummoxed me because for ages I couldn't see it, then all of a sudden, "Oh, there's a person there!". Once you see it, you can't not see it but it took me ages!

Simon: It's the whole death tie-in with nature. Again, an idea I'm really interested in. How we are born out of the world and go back into the world when we die. We're all part of the same make-up.

Fraser: Here's a painting, but the paint looks much more degraded, like decay.

Simon: This image actually came out of another one that I had where this guy was seated on a chair with an IV drip. That's the sort of the position he's in. He had IV drips all around him. That was a *Maintenance Drugs* image originally, that's ended up here.

Fraser: This one's very strong with the head with the flaking paint. I really like that.

Simon: That actually comes from another cover idea. I've got a few other things I could show you. I had exactly this as a cover with a paint stroke coming across the eyes, like a sort of 'blind to the world' type of theme, with some of those paint strokes from the cover. I actually got a cover that was fairly well ahead, I'll send it to you.

Fraser: What that description immediately conjures in my head is Steven Wilson's *Hand Cannot Erase* album cover. Do you know the one? That's got a stretch of paint across the eyes as well.

Simon: Quite photographic that one. I think that's a Carl Glover cover. I love Carl's work.

Fraser: Yeah! Do you still collaborate with Carl on projects?

Simon: Not really. Collaborate, no, but I've certainly spoken to him a few times over the years. When I first started out, I was speaking to him a lot and he had a little bit of input with *Sounds That Can't Be Made*. When I did that, he had a few suggestions, once we had a cover. I've grown up with his images, so he's one that I really like. He's been a great inspiration to me. In fact, somebody said to me yesterday that *The Crow And The Nightingale* material was a bit like some of his *The Raven That Refused To Sing* artwork.

Fraser: Oh, right!

Simon: I hadn't seen his *Raven* stuff. I'm not very familiar with Steven Wilson and I don't know much of his music.

Fraser: There's no law against it!

Simon: But Carl, I'm definitely a big fan of his work.

Fraser: OK. So is that a real photo of a crow?

Simon: That's a photograph that I think I messed about with slightly. Got the head in a better position, but that is basically just a photo from up the road from where I live on the coast. The scratches are added by me and then obviously added the Leonard Cohen material to the other images.

Fraser: So we've got the silk image there with the crow and then it's brilliant how it's such a simple image but if you know him at all, you immediately go "That's Leonard Cohen!"

Simon: Yes. I was looking for something simple that just said 'Leonard Cohen'.

Fraser: It just is!

Simon: It's a big theme around the lyric. I was pleased with how that came out. It works really well, but it's quite simple. That's just photographic and I made my own silhouette from a Cohen photograph.

Fraser: And then we've got *Sierra Leone*, which he mentioned on stage last night. He essentially said, "It's the odd one of the album, because it doesn't fit with the theme". The artwork seems similar because you've got more sort of photo-realistic designs on this one than the rest of it. What was the thinking behind that?

Simon: Well, it's done in the same sort of way as the other artwork so it's still 3D again but yes it's more photographic, I suppose.

Fraser: I'm guessing these aren't real diamonds?

Simon: No, they're digital renders, just overlaid. A lot of what I did last night on the screens was more about 3D lenses and refractions, actual refractions of



I was looking for something simple that just said Leonard Cohen

light and things. These are more overlays and now there is some 3D. That's a 3D object placed in a scene with shadows, with a photograph put behind it and then shot with a virtual camera, then brought into After Effects for some overlays.

Fraser: It struck me with this image with the very clear refractions. It occurred to me that when dealing with a prog band, like it or not, if you're dealing with refractions of light, you've got to really be careful not to do end up doing Pink Floyd, cause everyone will make that comparison.

Simon: *Dark Side Of The Moon*, yes.

Fraser: So I wondered whether you thought of that explicitly?

Simon: I quite like the fact that it references that. I don't have a problem with things being a bit of a homage. There's a bit of that with the rose in *Care* and the Depeche Mode, *Violator* cover.

Fraser: Oh yes, it is, isn't it?

Simon: But it all goes in the brain box and kind of comes out somewhere and I don't necessarily care as long as it's not a direct rip. I quite like the associations.

Fraser: If you listen to his lyrics,

he does that lyrically with bits of poems and quotes or paraphrases of other people's songs.

Simon: I think it's a valid thing. As long as it comes from the right intention. But that wasn't in my head for that one. I'm really into triangles and pyramids. I don't know why just, spatially.

Fraser: Then, looking at *Care*, we've got some pills. They're obviously 3D ones.

Simon: For that particular image, again, I was really into that IV drip image, but the band were not into it at all. It was not what they wanted.

Fraser: I can sort of see why. It's a bit on the nose, isn't it?

Simon: Yes, I think that possibly was a phrase that was used! So, we ended up more with just kind of pills and things.

Fraser: So, a more general question if I may? Does the re-emergence of vinyl mean that you reconsider how you design albums again? Because obviously when we went into the CD era everything got smaller. And then when we went to the digital everything became simpler again because it's going to be this tiny little thumbnail. But with the resurgence of vinyl, does that affect how you design things?

Simon: Only sort of. Practically, if I'm doing stuff for an album I would just always do it large format so because you never know what you're going to end up using, even if they're just roughs. To start with you're always working at a decent resolution, something that can be 12 inches square if it has to be.

I'm trying to think whether that's something that's changed more recently. But certainly with *FEAR*, I worked like that. I probably didn't do that with *Less Is More*. That was the first proper thing that I worked on. I don't think I would have sort of started out vinyl-sized, if you like, with that but I think with *Sounds* and *FEAR*, we were definitely working at the larger size and then you can crop.

Although that wasn't quite so successful on the *FEAR* thing, really because of the construction of that. That was a weird one, where the vinyl looked amazing and then the CD maybe ended up a bit brown, which wasn't the intention, because of the way it was cropped. That sort of somehow got kind of missed, because the band have got a thing about brown. They're not good with brown covers, any hint of brown.

Fraser: *This Strange Engine!*

Simon: Yes. Although, I like it.

Fraser: Me too!

Simon: But yes, that's the only thing, just practicality, so you just don't find you're ever at a point where you've got some really low res image and everybody loves it but you can't really make it work physically. Although there's ways around that these days and as technology moves on you can enhance things so it's less of an issue than it once was.

Fraser: And then finally, so in the show last night a lot of the work was yours. What in particular, I mean obviously the *Hour Before It's Dark* visuals. Talk me through what your thinking was when you were putting that together?

Simon: I wanted to steer away from narratives, so I concentrated on symbols, graphics and motion. Just something that adds to the lights rather than something you need to focus on.

Fraser: You just said something interesting there. Does that mean that Yenz has done the lights first and you work to him?

Simon: No, usually it depends on timings but with these he probably has done some programming on the lights. I give him the films and then he's lighting to those.

Fraser: To the films. Right!

Simon: Although that's not gospel, they don't always work like that. Sometimes, it's not practical just with the timings because there's never enough time to do any of these things and sometimes you've just gotta get them done quickly.

Fraser: You mentioned before we started recording about the impact of actually seeing it on the big screen.

Simon: Yes, it was just amazing! It's always great to see something that you've been doing at home, in the office and on a small screen.

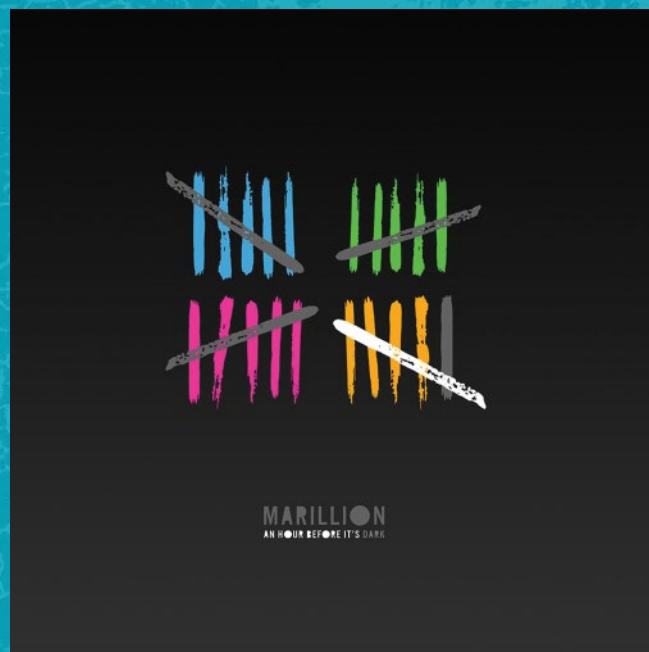
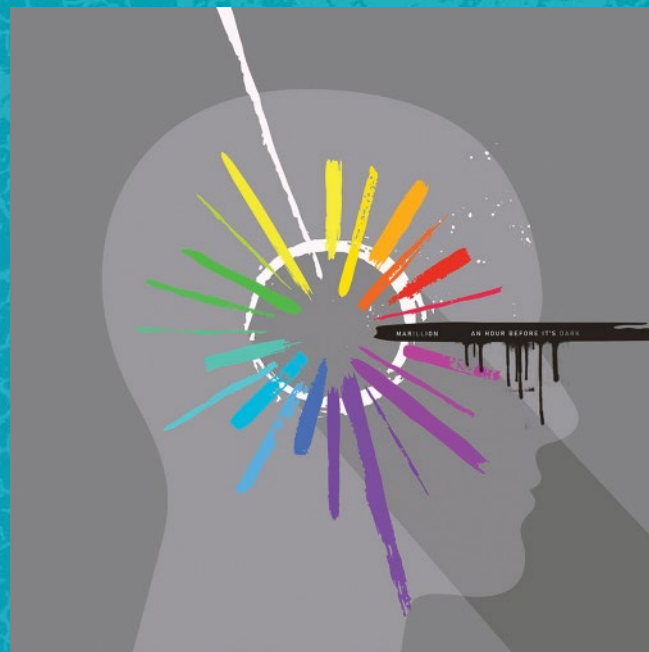
All of a sudden, it's massive and it's all part of the music and the whole vibe. It's just great. I love it, and I love their music. So, it's a real dream. It's awesome!

Fraser: It looked really great and you've every right to feel proud! Thank you very much for your time Simon! Really appreciate it. And by the way, you've got the job! ❤️



An Hour Before It's Dark Alternative Covers

Here are some of the alternative artwork mentioned in the interview with Simon Ward



THANK YOU

> by Sheelagh and Lucy Jones

WHOEVER YOU ARE

Following the devastating earthquakes in Turkey and Syria earlier this year, Marillion and the charity fundraising team asked the fans to step up and donate at Port Zélande - here's the story of our charity stall and amazing team effort.

They say charity begins at home. But what if you no longer have a home? What if everything and everyone you have ever known and loved had suddenly been taken away from you in one cruel act from Mother Nature? What would you do, where would you turn and how would you even begin to think about salvaging any sense of your life and belongings? It's an unthinkable prospect for an adult, but imagine the process for a child unable to comprehend such devastation.



The images projected into our homes via the news shocked and upset the world; we knew we had to do something to help. Marillion asked the charity at Port Zélande to raise funds for the DEC (Disasters Emergency Committee) and specifically Save The Children. We know the Marillion family will always rally together and this year you went above and beyond.

There is also another saying: 'There is no 'I' in team'. As soon as we knew the charity we were raising funds for, Facebook was a hive of activity... "Can you donate to our raffle?", "I can't make things, but I can give my time", "What can I do to help?" - you get the idea. There's some wonderful souls out there and before long we were inundated with prizes, volunteers and craft items.

This was Lucy's first Port Zélande weekend and she didn't really know what to expect but as soon as we arrived and set up on the Thursday people were coming over to the stall eager to take part, many of whom had seen our posts on Facebook, with updates of items to buy and the various prizes on offer. This was a continuous theme over the weekend and we had many returning visitors, all keen to help spread the word and raise much needed funds. Although the cause was a serious one, we can honestly say over the weekend the stall was full of laughter (mainly at Lucy's bad attempts at various languages!), fun, generosity, love and compassion for the children affected and amazement at the kindness of strangers.

We had asked the Marillion crafting community to make items for us to sell and we were inundated with wonderful items - crochet hearts, key rings, stickers, photographs, knitted items, artwork and embroidery - to name a few products. As the weekend went on, it wasn't uncommon for someone to put a bag on the table and say "I've heard about your fundraising,



I've made a few items to help". Even some of the Center Parcs staff stopped by with donations! All of these items had one thing in common - they were all handmade and all donated with every euro going to charity. We operated a 'give as you feel' donation policy which worked beautifully and people gave with their hearts.

'There's no such thing as a bad donation' soon became a motto of ours as we reminded those who were less able to give financially that all the small donations added together to make a bigger total.

Teamwork, another theme of the weekend.

We would like to extend our thanks to everyone who stopped by over the weekend who took part in the raffle, bought some items, gave us encouragement and even those who just stopped to say "Hi". Every one of you made this a wonderful experience and it was so lovely to hear little snippets about what these Marillion weekends and the band themselves mean to you. (Including the young boy who told us the band had signed his hat but he was going to wear it because "They're just people. Not gods. Just people like us" - still makes us laugh now, he was lovely!).

We'd also like to say a massive THANK YOU to everyone who donated, because of your generosity this year the charity total was a record busting phenomenal amount of €7650! (Approx £6723 or US\$8326) You should all feel proud of yourselves because you helped to make this happen.

There are also many people who gave their time, crafts and prizes which helped to make this a success. We hope we've remembered everyone, but we'd like to thank (in no particular order, it was a team effort):



Francis Donlevy-Evenden, for creating the thought-provoking poster advertising our charity, they really had an impact and reminded everyone why we were there. Davide Costa, Stefano Vitali, Virgil Caine, Karen Parkhurst, Denise Romano Bright, Stefan Schulz (and the Web Germany, Danke Schön!), Solveig Negelen, Emma Seifert, Sarina Hoogendam, The staff at Port Zélande, José Carlos Maltez, Carla Barros, Marco Pronk, Peter Vink, Carmen Julia Quintero, Lucy Jordache, Marillion and Racket, Mike Hunter, Rob and Lily Bakelaar, Heather and Steve Derrick, friends of Piet Spaans, Dianne Kuypers, Christa Rusbach, Cyrilla Holkenbrink, Kim Dodsworth, Monica Ambriz, Sonja Shirley, Vicky and Elizabeth Hirst, Rosi Baxter, Andrew Latham, Gine Ge, Katrin K, Julie Welch, Sally Warburton, Mandy Green, Nicole Chase, Felipe Fleury, Alison and John Redfern, Lee Shepherd, Cyndi Diane, Andy Rotherham, Fraser Marshall, John Dalms, Christa Stoutenberg, Linda Williams and Christian Steig. Thank you, thank you, THANK YOU for being stars and making a difference.

And finally, on behalf of the children of Turkey and Syria, Teşekkürler and Shukran. Thank you for your kindness, whoever you are.

There's still time to donate if you are able, in the UK you can donate to [Dec.org.uk](https://www.dec.org.uk) or please check your country for earthquake appeal donation points.

Making MEMORIES

> Photos by Anne-Marie Forker, Mike Gusway,
Alan Jones and Alison Toon

As Marillion celebrate twenty one years of Weekends, The Web UK presents three reviews of the first 2023 Weekend at Port Zélande

We're back. It's been a long four years, and there has been much water under the bridge since we all came together in 2019 for the last Marillion Weekend here in deepest, brightest Holland. As Tom Keifer of Cinderella once wrote though, the more things change the more they stay the same.

THURSDAY 16TH MARCH

Strap in, get ready, foot down, push the button...

Myself and my partner, Fiona Boubert, have been lucky enough to have been at all previous Port Zélande weekends, though I don't think we have started our journey quite as early in the morning as we had to this time. Having moved house (during the week of the first lockdown in 2020), we are further away from Edinburgh Airport than before, so a 4:00am alarm call on Thursday morning it is. Feed the cat (who is looking somewhat shocked and surprised at our early appearance), head to the bus, then tram, getting to the airport round 6:30. Told we are too early so a spot of breakfast before getting the case away and through security. We have made a couple of trips to see my family in Bristol since

things quietened down, so while there is still a quiet strangeness to the airport, it is running smoothly enough (might be due to the ungodly hour as well!) and there are no problems or dramas before getting off the ground around five minutes after the scheduled departure time.

Flight to Amsterdam – slept! Think we landed somewhere close to Brussels as it seemed to take longer to taxi to the terminal than the actual flight time, and there is always that bridge across the motorway to be negotiated. Will it collapse this time?

Once through Schiphol security, head to the meeting point. Some familiar faces are already there in the shape of the West Country Pumpkins, who are waiting on the next coach. We have shared parties and all manner of shenanigans with this group of people in previous years – more of that later! A big shout out at this point to Res Nova, who have provided the shuttle service between Amsterdam, Rotterdam and PZ since we first visited in 2007, and do a magnificent job of getting us all to and from PZ with a minimum of fuss, and always with a smile.

During the coach journey, in a conversation with Pumpkins Mark and Mandy Green, I mentioned "this feels like going home". It was a thought that would come back across the weekend, especially as we reconnected with friends we hadn't seen for a long time.

As we headed along that final stretch of Dutch road, toward a now so familiar skyline, memories of previous years drifted through my mind, and pulling into Centre Parcs, seeing the tent and stopping at the bus stop just made that sense of 'returning home' even stronger. Nice to be back.

A couple of our chalet mates had already arrived (and obtained some bikes for the weekend), so while Fiona stood in the merch queue, I obtained towels and got the luggage to the chalet (same one we had four years ago).

Thursday night is party night (well, the first one anyway!), and with an almost open theme (movies) for the fancy dress, and an eighties soundtrack to dance away to, some truly magnificent creations were on show. I had to change my idea at the last minute, so best I could come up with at short notice was a leather jacket and a seriously bad attempt at Marlon Brando from *The Wild One*. Fiona went for the Angelina Jolie look from *Maleficent*, Gordon and Kryse chose *Tron* (including neon spurs on the bikes!), with Graeme recreating his *Joker* from a few years back. Pamie and Andy decided to shock, appearing as Laurie Strode and Michael Myers respectively (*Halloween* for those of you not keeping up!).

Elsewhere it was obvious some had put a lot of time and effort into their creations, with the

winning costumes thoroughly deserving the prize.

FRIDAY 17TH MARCH

I wanna share your thoughts, I wanna waste your time...

Fiona and Pamie went off early in search of seating tickets for the gigs – as both are short in stature it's best so they can see the great productions in all their glory. I went for a swim! If you haven't used it, the pool at PZ is superb. I got chatting to Steve Wilson (no, not that one) who, it turns out, was at the very first Fan Club Convention (as they were then) at Pontins in 2002. This was his first convention since, and he was looking forward to seeing how things had changed since those heady days of the early 2000's!





Refreshed, it was time to meet back up with the girls and sit around having a few beers and something to eat. It seemed that almost every five minutes someone else we knew drifted into sight, the hugs and greetings peeling away the pain of the last three years. Consume some food (Italian, from the restaurant upstairs – how much was in that bolognese pot?) then back to the chalet to change for the main event of the day.

Not going to add too much about Dilemma – they are probably very good at what they do but sad to say they didn't really float my boat. Sorry guys!

Once Dilemma's equipment had been cleared from the stage, you could feel the atmosphere building. I was about halfway back, in front of Pete, with a decent view of everything around me. On screen, a countdown timer began (5 minutes, 4:59...4:58...4:57...). At zero, the screen changed to the now

familiar (and obligatory) list of attending countries (missed one!), before a list of those attendees whose birthday falls across the weekend. Usual messages about talking in gigs (pet hate of mine!), holding phones up for long spells (mostly heeded by one and all – thank you) and then it began.

With the bigger than usual area to use, Yenz uses everything at his disposal to produce a magnificent light show every time. If anything he may actually be getting better as they years pass.

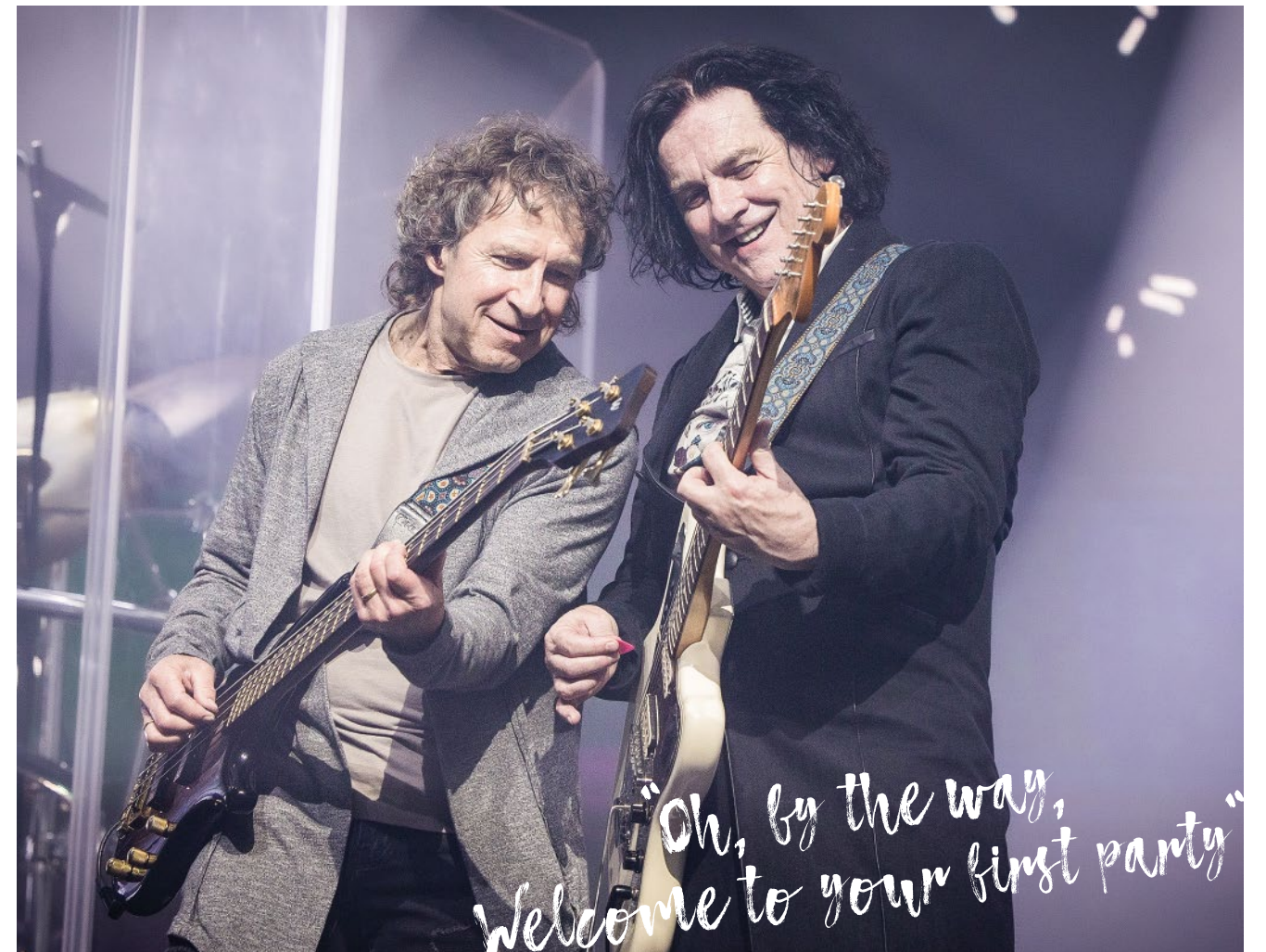
The Party is one of those songs where Steve Rothery shines. The solo itself is a simple repeat pattern, but he plays it beautifully every time. I think it is because of that almost pause before he launches into it- just makes you ache for it to start. And when he does... wow!

On most days, my all-time favourite Marillion song is *Fantastic Place*. Having been a fan since the early days, picking one from the

extensive back catalogue is never going to be easy, but for me this one always strikes the right chord, from the slow, gentle beginning, through the middle section and solos then to the quite incredible ending... "Put your arms around my soul, And take it dancing".

The crowd noise during the final section of *That Time Of The Night* was off the scale – just an amazing burst of noise that could well have been heard all the way back to Amsterdam. Talking to Fiona afterwards, she also mentioned this, as well as the sea of hands throughout. With *Three Minute Boy*, you now know there is going to be an extended end section, and this didn't disappoint. Once again, h has the crowd eating out of his hand as we all make a sound barely above a whisper, moving towards a crescendo that could have taken the roof off the tent.

Another of my favourites is *This Strange Engine* and on more than one occasion I have played the end section from one DVD



or another to people as I really think it is such an emotive piece. This is also another song that I feel is improved by the screen projections, the beating, swirling heart matching the music and lyrics.

And that's it. We head out into the night - some to the Adventure Factory, some to the Market Dome, others to chalets and parties - with the first night behind us.

"This love" indeed.

SATURDAY 18TH MARCH

*Incalculable riches,
Everything I ever wanted,
All that men desire, I don't
need that now*

A leisurely morning, and for me, another swim. I had some major knee surgery quite a few years ago following a significant football injury, and while I am okay walking/standing etc, discovered this weekend that I no longer have the strength to 'kick off' in a pool. I'll have to see where that goes in the next few years.

Back to the chalet, shower and sort myself out. A couple from the chalet headed to the Quiz, one of the highlights of the weekend for many. I have known Darren, Felicity, Vicky, John and Fraser for a number of years and know how much work they put into the quiz. For us this time, just back into the Market Dome for some food and some beers - I am taking things a bit easier than in past years, enjoying the break as well as the music.

Support tonight would be Pure Reason Revolution. A friend gave me a copy of one of their albums a number of years ago, and although it didn't grab me then, I was still intrigued to hear what they sounded like now, having reformed in 2018 after a break of seven years. While they held my interest for their set, I am not sure I'll be visiting their back catalogue anytime soon, though



can appreciate why they have an almost cult following (sounds like another band we know).

Having been at Leicester last year, and then in Glasgow for the (incredibly quickly re-arranged) gig on the tour, I have heard the new baby live in all its glory a couple of times now. To me, it is their best album of new material since *Happiness Is The Road*, although both *Sounds That Can't Be Made* and *F E A R* have their moments, overall I really love *An Hour Before It's Dark* and it works so well in the live environment. The final section of *Care* certainly raised the hairs on the back of my neck, the on-screen graphic of the wall with a nurse in a mask still as striking as it was when I first saw it.

The introduction of *In Praise Of Folly* is a welcome sight again, the four ladies add some extra,

beautiful textures to the sound, and are always given a rapturous reception. Tonight was no different.

The reworked version of *Estonia* is particularly haunting. Tonight was the first time in probably six years that I haven't cried during this song, but it was close. *The Space* has always been a favourite of mine, and it is almost magical with the orchestrations, while the band and guests have some fun with *Zeperated Out*. Oh, and there were balloons!

Headed to the Market Dome again, and joined Andy and Nicole Smith for a beer or two (might have been three!). This led to us joining a larger group - the Pumpkins (mentioned them earlier, remember?). All round to theirs it was then! As always, Wayne Woodley was a livewire, a blur of movement and mirth. You can be

sure that the party will go on long into the night while he is around! Not for me this time though - absolutely shattered so retired to the chalet and some sleep around 1:30am - this getting old lark is no good for anyone.

Definitely "wide awake on the edge of the world" now!

SUNDAY 19TH MARCH

*Howlin at the moon,
Squawking at the sky, A
racket, And a tune*

Refreshed after a long sleep, I decided to take a bike ride around the park. I was considering heading to Ouddorp, but the weather wasn't looking too clever, so decided against it. Oh well, just have to sit and have a few beers, daft conversations flying around all afternoon.

The Audience With Marillion is a seriously light hearted, and usually completely chaotic, hour of fun. While Lucy tries very hard to keep everything under control, it really doesn't work like that. This section also has a series of photos with the band and even an on stage proposal (congrats to Marc and Vladi).

I saw the Christmas tour in 2007 in Amsterdam (the same night Led Zeppelin played the O2 in London) and the band opened then, as tonight, with the opening salvo from *Brave*. Knowing *Fruit Of The Wild Rose* was in the set, I wondered if they would do as they did that night, but not to be. *Fruit...* is one of those songs that is vastly

improved when played live, and as it isn't one that is a set regular, it was nice to hear it again.

My gig buddies for the evening were Dominik Berg and Lars Goeldner. Dominik is one of the lucky souls who has appeared during a Swap The Band session, playing bass on *Sugar Mice* in 2017. The performance tonight left him in tears. Man hugs, beers and some fine single malt whisky put the world to rights again.

Luis Jardim also joined the band again for the evening, making his delicate little noises at the back of the stage. This shone particularly well on *Afraid Of Sunrise*, before a rousing *Map Of The World* nearly lifted the roof off.

Tonight saw the first live performance of *Older Than Me*, which received a great reception. Also thrown in was an improvised version of *The Bell In The Sea* while Ian had a drum changed. This is a much under rated, and under played song, another in the long line of songs about death and water and really should be played more often.

The final song of the night, and the weekend, was a superb rendition of *A Few Words For The Dead*, complete with the traditional confetti cannon shooting thousands of red paper hearts and over forty people on stage with "Or You Could Love" on cards in their native language. An emotional end to an emotional weekend.

Off into the night, a beer or two, and the start of the long goodbyes. Gordon and Krys from

our chalet were heading out on the first shuttle back to Schiphol at 6:00am, so the three of us sat up, finishing some beers, chatting away about nothing and everything. After I had seen them onto the coach, I wandered around the park, and managed to capture a couple of pictures of a great sunrise.

MONDAY 20TH MARCH

*These are the days that
will flash before our eyes
at the end, These are the
moments burned into
the sacred places of
our hearts*

And all too quickly, it's time to head home. Once again, the band have delivered three nights of magic, from the opening notes of *El Dorado* to the closing notes of *A Few Words For The Dead*, the fans, as always, lapping it all up, as we always do.

It really was something special to be able to catch up with so many friends across the weekend, grateful to see they had come through the horrors since March 2020 - as I sit and type this particular section, I am reminded that it was three years ago tonight, right about now, 6:00pm March 23rd 2020, that Boris Johnson announced the first national lockdown in the UK.

We truly are the best family in the world!

Neil Kennedy ●

"I saw a man paint a woman on the wall, mask on her face, screen over her eyes, hospital clothing, worried and exhausted. A thing of beauty, a thing of care... Pure class right there, right there. The angels in this world are not in the walls of churches"

After attending many UK Weekends, I finally managed to get to Port Zélende for the first time back in 2019 and like everyone else hoped to return for the 2021 Weekend but as we all know due to the state of our world this became the 2023 event.

After applying for a place along with my chalet-mates from 2019, it was a case of all fingers crossed and eventually we were lucky enough to be successful. With deposits and balances paid along with arranging flights and the ResNova coach shuttles, it seemed like no time at all before Thursday March 16th came about and I was bidding my family a fond farewell before heading via an Easyjet flight from Luton Airport to Schipol, where after collecting my bag I was soon on a ResNova coach west to PZ along with many other freaks.

On arrival, check-in was swift, efficient and friendly, then I trundled my case along to chalet 618 where my friends Carin and Dennis from Stadskanaal in the Netherlands, Alison and John from Manchester and Horst from near Bremen in Germany had already arrived and settled in. After hugs and greetings all round we had a splendid meal courtesy of Dennis before they all went off to don their fancy dress gear (I abstained!), before we headed for the 'Adventure Factory' for a few drinks and the disco finally adjourning to the Market Dome for a chat and then off to get some sleep as we would need it!

Friday was dry despite the gloomy forecasts and after breakfast some of us went to the merchandise stands to queue and buy lots of lovely Marillion gear.

Walking back to our chalet for lunch we said hello to Pete Trewavas as he passed us by, then returned to the Adventure Factory to catch some of June Road's set. I went off to queue for doors opening, when the usual controlled stampede started. I managed to get a good spot near the front on Rothers' side of the stage.

Dutch band Dilemma took to the stage on-time and gave the crowd a rousing set of melodic prog-

rock, mainly from the 2018 second album *Random Acts Of Liberation* with one number from their first album *Imbrocatta*. I thought they were excellent and really got the crowd going and this was their first gig since Covid.

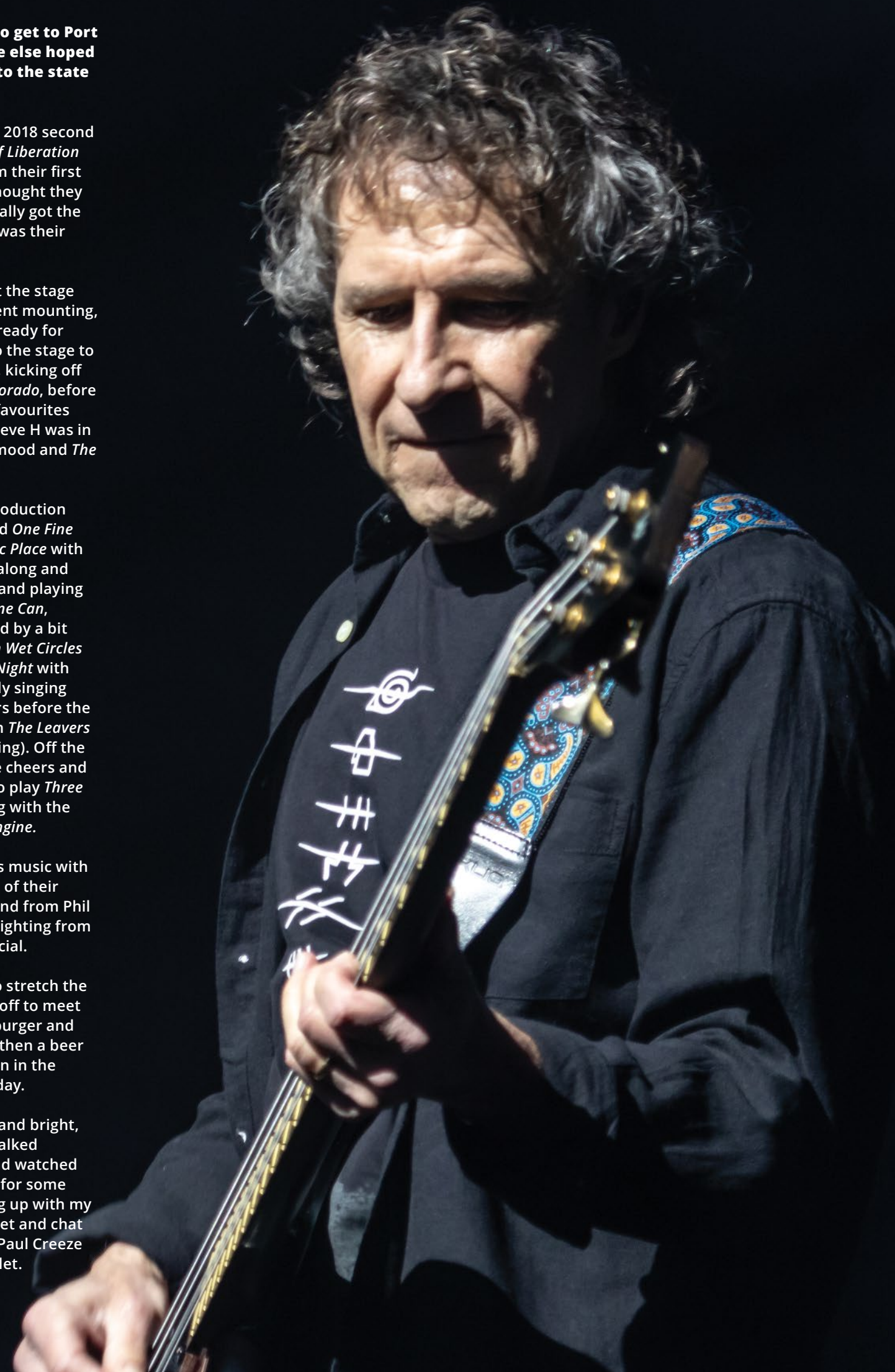
A short interval to get the stage set and with excitement mounting, the crowd was really ready for Marillion, who took to the stage to thunderous welcome, kicking off proceedings with *El Dorado*, before going into one of my favourites *This Train Is My Life*. Steve H was in his usual boisterous mood and *The Party* came next.

After a nice drum introduction by Ian the band played *One Fine Day* and then *Fantastic Place* with the crowd all singing along and continuing with the band playing along. Next was *No One Can*, then *Dry Land* followed by a bit of Fish-era with *Warm Wet Circles* and *That Time Of The Night* with the crowd boisterously singing along to both numbers before the main set finished with *The Leavers* (cue more crowd singing). Off the band went to massive cheers and applause, returning to play *Three Minute Boy* and ending with the mighty *This Strange Engine*.

A cracking first night's music with the boys really on top of their game, the superb sound from Phil Brown and beautiful lighting from Yenz making it so special.

Outside it was time to stretch the aching legs and head off to meet my friends and grab burger and chips in Frites Affairs then a beer with a bit of Progathon in the Dome to end a great day.

Saturday started dry and bright, so after breakfast I walked around the Marina and watched the yachts setting off for some sailing before meeting up with my friends, getting to meet and chat to Dilemma guitarist Paul Creeze on the way to the chalet.



Back in the merchandise area I bought Dilemma's second album and a few other bits before we had lunch in the Dome, where my friends noticed all of Dilemma except singer Wudstick passing by, so off I went to get my CD signed and a few photos before getting to say hello to Mark Kelly and his wife.

We all attended the quiz where the teams almost outnumbered the observers this time! Some very difficult questions and a hard won victory – sorry I forget most of the team's names but 'Splintering Fart' is one you just cannot erase!

I managed to see some of the Dave Foster bands set with Dinet and Riccardo before again heading to the queue where there was 'rain below the sky' and we all got somewhat damp before the doors opened and I placed myself facing centre stage for the night.

Pure Reason Revolution from the UK were good, although I preferred Dilemma's set (each to his/her own). After the interval, the lights dimmed and Marillion appeared to a thunderous welcome, starting off with a faultless rendering of *An Hour Before It's Dark*, accompanied by Luis Jardim who added another layer of sounds to those wonderful musical textures, the crowd all enthusiastically singing along. The standard of musicianship was simply brilliant as they worked through *Be Hard On Yourself*, *Reprogram The Gene* and *Murder Machines*. Then h went off stage and on to great applause came the wonderful Follies with h returning in his latest furry black stage jacket!

Next was my personal favourite *The Crow And Nightingale* and Rothers guitar solo got me once again. *Sierra Leone* has really grown on me and it's superb as a live number, while the epic *Care* is such an emotional song it is hard to hear it without getting tearful, with the wonderful back projections and lighting all adding to the moment.

All too soon *AHBID* was over and the room was buzzing as the boys, Luis and the Follies went off-stage, all returning to loud applause to give us the wonderful *Estonia*, *Afraid of Sunlight* and *Go!* which is always a great live sing-along song and no different tonight as we all sang our hearts out.

Off they all went again, returning to play *The Space* and finally *Separated (Zeperated) Out* with the Follies rocking out as huge balloons were launched over the crowd while they played that *Kashmir* section before it was all over for the night. Time to catch up with my friends, get another healthy burger and fries in the Dome with a few drinks, while Progathon kept us singing till it was time to get some sleep!

Sunday was dry but cloudy and there was time for breakfast before returning to the Dome for chats, drinks, and to rearrange my return trip with ResNova (now a 06:30 departure – gulp!).

A quieter afternoon meant there was chance for a quiet lunch and some 10-pin bowling before heading off to

queue again, luckily in the dry and I positioned myself on PT's side of the stage after the doors opened. First up was the band Q&A session with Lucy compering. There were some great 21st weekend anniversary congratulation videos from Robin Boulton, Richard Barbeiri, Aziz Ibrahim, Dave Gregory, Steve Hackett, Steve Wilson, John Welsey, Trevor Horn, Focus and the ever-crazy Nick Beggs, dressed in a fetching lime green mankini doing the ironing (help!).

The questions received some very funny responses and a knock-out round was swiftly over! Then the band's wives came on stage for photos with their other halves followed by the winning quiz team and charity prize winners Sheila and Kirsten Docherty as Lucy told us the charity fund-raising team had raised an incredible some 7,600 Euros for the Turkey earthquake appeal.

A touching moment followed as fans Marc and Vladi became engaged on-stage. What a fantastic way to do this!

After a short break, our last night with the band began as they came back on stage to start off with a great *Brave* quartet which they followed with the first surprise of the evening with *Born To Run*, not played live since 2013. The next surprise was *Older Than Me* which has never been played live before. h got his son Nial out on stage to tell us this was his last gig with the band as he was off to do other things (good luck Nial) then we had several numbers that had not been performed live for some years.

With Ian having to get a broken drum-head replaced, Pete led an great improvised run of *The Bell In The Sea* before we had *Somewhere Else* to close the main set.

Returning for an encore we watched as fans from many of the countries at PZ populated the stage sides with placards led on my side by Stephanie Bradley ('Or You Could Love' I could read... the others I hear were maybe a correct translation!), while the boys with Luis Jardin performed *A Few Words For The Dead*, another number not played live for some

time, h touting his fake machine gun, then the heart confetti rained down on us and suddenly it was all over as they left the stage to massive applause, cries and clapping while *Hocus Pocus* pounded out of the PA and we danced! A final meet-up with friends in the Dome for a last burger, fries and beer then it was time to get to the chalet and ensure the packing was done and grab a few hours' sleep.

Early on the Monday I said farewell to some in the chalet (others had gone at 05:00!) and caught my ResNova coach ride to Schipol. After a lengthy wait following some breakfast, my flight, which was delayed about an hour in the UK by fog, finally took off and I reached home by about 15:45.

The whole weekend was absolutely brilliant, the band and everyone involved were superb, there were good friends, great banter and above all else some awesome music - here's to PZ 2025!

Kevin Wilkins ●



"Put your arms around my soul
And take it dancing"



Sunday night, 19th March 2023

It's a bit of a strange experience. The concert is over and you linger for a bit. Around you nothing but hundreds of delighted faces, just like you still recovering from one of the more special concerts of their lives. The floor is littered with hundreds of red paper hearts, everywhere people are taking pictures with groups of compatriots and fellow fans. The mood is exuberant and festive, like there's just been a big party.

Then you eventually walk outside to the Adventure Factory and you meet the first people outside that 'zone'. And the contrast couldn't be greater: the first person immediately says that it was 'okay', but that it's very unfortunate that no attention was paid to Script at the album's 40th anniversary. And the reaction of the next person is that there is a reason that some songs are rarely if ever played live, and that it has

become clear again tonight what that is. I continue my way into the Adventure Factory and luckily, there, the party atmosphere soon returns. So many people, so many tastes, shall we say; I just had a wonderful final night!

AN AUDIENCE WITH MARILLION

The evening started with An Audience with Marillion, Lucy's now familiar onstage interview with the entire band. She starts with apologies to Poland, which was forgotten on Friday at the start of the weekend, on the screens of the countries represented at Port Zélande. They receive their honourable mention on 'slide A' and loud cheers after all. Then follows the shout-out of all representing diverse countries, from Argentina to Wales and many places between them alphabetically. You can see them all in the April edition of Marillion Monthly (<https://tinyurl.com/395usw2k>) Probably someone else has been forgotten too and there are some comments from the audience saying India!

After that, it is also determined with cheers who's present in PZ for the first, second, third ... up to and including the eighth time, with the latter group definitely sounding the largest. When Mark asks who's been to ALL Marillion weekends, including Pontins, a respectable group still stirs. Lucy replies that she hasn't, because she missed one due to the flu, but that Stephanie has been to every single one. Spontaneously, the audience starts chanting a loud "Stephanie", for the great organizer behind PZ.

Lucy then plays a game with the band members where they have to take turns at naming a song title in alphabetical order. The men unfortunately do not get any

never really quite got, but it blew me away completely. I was very, very pleasantly surprised by that, and thought it was great." When Lucy asks if they'll play it again, he replies, "We will, we'll play that when we get a minute but not tonight. It's really, fucking hard. It sounds simple, doesn't it, but it's all over the place." Pete concurs.

Next, it's time for the band members to turn their chairs towards the screen for the compilation of "Marillion are..." fan videos, that Lucy asked for on social media. The answer of one fan is, "...costing us a fortune", which can count on a lot of recognition and laughter, even from the band. They clearly appreciate this whole tribute a lot. It is followed by congratulations on the Weekends' 21st birthday from old acquaintances of the band.

This is followed by the photo opportunity for the winners of various competitions and this weekend's lottery, the proceeds of which will benefit the earthquake victims in Turkey and Syria. Finally it is Marc Willemsen and his Vladi's turn, for a proposal from the former to the latter that does not leave many in the audience, including him, unmoved.



To conclude, Lucy takes the mic once more: "I just want to have one more photograph with the band. They say that behind every great man, there's a great woman... All the great women that belong with the band are here, so I thought it would be lovely, for the first time, to have a photograph all together".

set up between Ian and Mark tonight, that could mean something beautiful. I tell our little group that we might hear (a piece of) *Brave*, because I seem to remember that set-up from earlier times. And when the first, introductory sounds of the evening are started, my suspicion is confirmed: they are the familiar ambient sounds of (Mike Hunter's) *River*. When the band comes on, the first sounds of the fog-horn in *Bridge* are heard and when h has also taken his place behind the keys, he does indeed start the song.



That would be something: *Brave Live 2003*, followed by *2013*, followed again by *2023*. It would amount to a kind of double

lustrum reunion with the album. Surprisingly, the audience remains completely silent and after the always 'blood-curdling' opener, a tight, bouncing version of *Living With The Big Lie* follows. That in turn is followed by *Runaway* and the mood is immediately set for the enthusiastic singing audience. When the last "poor little runaway" slowly dies away, it turns out that not all of *Brave* is on the programme as *Runaway* is followed by *The Hollow Man*. h is in fine voice tonight and delivers a version as beautiful as I think I've ever heard it.

After that, the singer welcomes the audience to the final evening of this weekend. He says that as the band thought we're all not getting any younger, this time they wanted to make it a bit of a mellow Sunday night, to wind down after a long, intense weekend. He explains that we will hear a mix of favourites and

SUNDAY NIGHT, SURPRISE NIGHT

The Sunday nights have a tradition of surprising setlist choices. After the 'Audience with...', when the equipment has been set up for the concert and peace has returned to the stage, h' keyboard is prominently placed at the front of the stage. Because Luis Jardim's percussion instruments are again

songs that are less often played live. He then also asks for a round of applause for his son Nial, who has just cleaned up the broken, traditional, white tulips from Runaway. Nial does his very last gig as a roadie with the band tonight, and his father proudly hugs him, with a heartfelt “my boy”, to loud applause. (Later, on her ‘Lucy’s Friday Questions!’ Facebook page, when asked what Hogarth junior will do next, Lucy replies, “I have no idea! But he’s got a baby on the way so I don’t think he wants to travel more and more. x”. Well congratulations, Nial!)

The band continue with the gem *Born to Run*, in which we get to hear a beautiful sample of Rothery’s more subtle, bluesy guitar and Mark’s jazz organ sound. h’s voice also seems to have gained a suitable kind of grit over the years for this lived-through song. It has only been played live nine times in twenty five years, seven of which during Weekends and feels like a real treat.

When it’s over, Rothery’s guitar tech hangs his rarely seen, metallic light blue, electric 12-string guitar around his neck. What’s this?

What follows is *White Paper*, last played five years ago. Normally the guitarist plays this on his double-necked, white Italia Rimini 12/6 string, but this one – a ‘FosQ blue’ Italia JF12, for guitar enthusiasts – too, sounds beautiful and looks ditto. I also notice there seems to be a bit more room in the mix this evening for Mark’s more subtle keyboard lines and Ian’s hi-hat and cymbals, which I and some people I spoke to afterwards sometimes had to listen very closely for, the two previous evenings.

When the band then embarks on *Sugar Mice*, h can take a break. He’s very much aware of this, as he leaves the vocals on the first half of the song almost entirely to the audience, who sing along en masse. The rest of the song the singer also has to make an effort to rise above the fans. As always, it is a goosebumps moment to be part of that togetherness and musical bond between the band and its audience. The men themselves also visibly enjoy it and thank and give the crowd a round of applause afterwards. The party continues, albeit in a slightly lower gear, with *Genie*, which is also received with cheers

and supported by hundreds of voices in unison. We have arrived at the funky section of the set and that clearly tastes morish. For the next song we are treated to *The Fruit Of The Wild Rose*, which was played in reverse order with *Genie* at PZ19 and is also not often heard.

After that, the band already has its next surprise in store for us. Mark already let slip in his Marillion Monthly interview with Lucy that we would be presented with a song that we had not heard live (during Weekends) before. After all the speculation I had my money on *Thunder Fly* or *Older Than Me*, with a slight personal preference for the latter as I’d already seen the former live in 2008 and 2009 and the latter had never been played live at all. And so it is done. Maybe it’s not the greatest live track for a reason, since it’s a very small, intimate song both lyrically and instrumentally. But while listening to it, I am pleasantly surprised by how rock solid it is, especially when carried by h like this. A veritable small monument, erected for a loved one. It is very special to hear this played live, and if that’s not possible during a Weekend in Port Zélande, then when?



The band continues with the warm-sweltering *Afraid of Sunrise*. Of course we already heard *Afraid Of Sunlight* the night before, an absolute favourite of Piet’s [Spaans; prominent co-founder of The Web Holland, sadly deceased on December 9, 2022; Ed.] and I suddenly realize that in all those years, I’ve never talked to him about what he thought of this, its ‘little brother’ – and so he’s present here, for a moment, in my mind. I think it’s very special to be able to hear this live; the last time (unless you were there in Brazil in 2016) was no less than twenty years ago – and in my case only from the *Before First Light* DVD! h then recounts the story of a great piece of music at the time of recording *Anoraknophobia*, that he just couldn’t seem to come up with lyrics for. He was then sent off by the band to Barbados, not entirely reluctantly of course, to have a short holiday at the plantation house of Nick van Eede [producer, singer and songwriter of Cutting Crew; Ed.]. With Van Eede’s help, he came back with

a fitting chorus and then wrote the verses. With Rothery’s opening guitar riff to *Map Of The World*, we are then set in motion again. Another track that we last heard in 2015, during the *Anoraknophobia* album night. The band play the song as if it never left the setlist.

Subsequently, h announces a song whose lyrics, written by John Helmer, were only dusted off and provided with music after years of being on the shelf: *Pour My Love*. I have never heard this song live since the *Sounds That Can’t Be Made* tour in 2012 and MW PZ13, although fans in South America were treated to it in 2016 and 2017. I’ve always found it an underrated gem and thoroughly enjoy the band’s wonderful rendition here: working understatedly towards the middle section and the lovely guitar solo, and then winding down to Mark’s almost tender, final keyboard strokes.

If there’s one thing that stands out about all these lesser-played

songs tonight, for me, it’s that the band plays them like a well-rehearsed, well-oiled machine, as if they never do anything but play these hidden treasures. What follows is another jewel that we have not heard since the Weekends in 2017. h, as always, dedicates it to one of his heroes, which the song is about, John Lennon: *A Voice From The Past*. Once in a while, when I listen to this song in an unguarded moment, as it culminates in the repeated lines “someone else’s pain” and Rothery’s solo, the tears well up from out of nowhere and a sob sticks in my throat. Likewise now; and I stand there, as the last sounds fade away (“Deaf and dumb-dumbed-down / A tap with clean water”), blinking away my tears behind my glasses.

h is about to announce the last song of the set when Ian appears next to his drum kit with a helpless gesture of one hand and a snare drum in the other. He turns out to have to replace a broken drum head. No sooner has



h explained this than Pete, without a moment's hesitation, throws in what seems to be a familiar-sounding bass line: *The Bell In The Sea!* Almost as if he's waited for this all weekend, the bass lines roll off his fingers. h steps in, has the lyrics ready and seamlessly they segue from an attempt, a starting jam, into a serious performance of the song. When Luis Jardim also joins in after two verses and choruses and adds his magic, after a few minutes a rock solid funky-jazzy version of the Uninvited Guest B-side has materialised. It earns the trio an ovation from the audience and a bow and applause from Rothery and Mark, while Ian takes his place behind the drums again.

Then follows *Somewhere Else* which, apart from being played as tight and convincing as ever, before we forget, like the entire set, is supported tonight by very atmospheric images on the screen

behind the stage. While "floating round in Orion" sounds, we look at fairy-tale nebulae in space, and when the band erupts on "to look at myself", and Yenz, the magician with the light, releases all brakes as well, it is as if the exploding stars on the screen radiate their heat into the room. Rothery's guitar rips and howls as usual, and at the end of the song the band leaves us breathless.

Really, breathless? We scream, whistle, clap and stomp our lungs out, and of course the gentlemen return to the stage after a short time. They resume one last time, with *A Few Words For The Dead*, which I think is a worthy conclusion, after the bizarre turn that world history has taken in Ukraine last year. Again, it is striking how well-practiced, seemingly effortless and convincingly our five-piece manages to lay down the song, which really has a number of difficult tempo and

timing moments. Halfway through, familiar faces from the band's entourage and lesser-known faces of fans from around the world, slowly, to the beat of Ian's drum roll, enter the front of the stage from either side, holding white signs in their hands. On "Or you could love" they turn them and hold them up into the air, to show that phrase repeated in various languages, while the air cannons blow thousands of red, crepe paper hearts into the air. The naively elated last part of the song is then the perfect, celebratory end to a great weekend, with an incredible amount of brilliant, brilliantly performed music that will stay with me for a very long time.

Martin Jansen

(With special thanks to Andy Reusser and in-house Luthier Andy Rotherham)



Nicole Chase also wrote a very emotive review of her experience at Port Zélande this year but it was so long that there's not enough room in the magazine to do her words justice, so we have put her review on The Web UK website. To read Nicole's review go to: <http://theweb-uk.com/archive.html>

A big thank you to Neil, Kevin and Martin for their reviews. If anyone fancies sharing their experiences at any of the other weekends this year, please send them to info@theweb-uk.com

