

The Orchestra



Former members of ELO and ELO Pt 2



Autumn Tour 2009

Well the members of The Orchestra are gearing up for the October UK Tour following their successful UK spring tour, individual dates in Jersey and Israel earlier this year. As word spreads about the quality of the performance fans are proving to bridge the whole gamut from the stalwarts of the 70's to the new 21st Century fans. The band will be playing 23 dates from Glasgow in the North, Truro in the south, Cardiff in the west, Ipswich in the East and many stops in between. I don't know the content of the set but you can be sure that they will be covering all the old favourites and hopefully the new inclusions such as Mik's Clog dance, that had everyone dancing in the aisles this Spring. Whatever will be played we know that the quality and fun will be maintained – so if you haven't got your tickets yet, visit the official Orchestra site - www.theorchestra.net for more details.

What are the Guys Listening to?

I have asked the guys what was the last CD they bought? The answers may surprise a few readers – but then again!
Mik Kaminski - Hot Rats by Frank Zappa. 1969 - It was while I was at Music College that someone introduced me to this album and the crazy violin playing of Don 'Sugarcane' Harris. This was probably my first taste of what a violin was capable of away from classical music, and things could only go down hill from there...

Mik. - P.S. It still sounds great.

Louis Clark - 5CD box set, Ultimate HANDEL (the essential masterpieces) - Excellent stuff!

Eric Troyer - Robin Ward, Wonderful Summer... Glen and I were driving around and listening to his old CDs from the 60's and I remember this song, so I bought some collections on Amazon with this song and others on it...Also, I just bought on iTunes, One More Heartache, by Paul Butterfield Band...I thought that Phil could really play and sing this one really well.... If I Ever Feel Better, by Phoenix a really great track for production etc....and 1901 & Lisztomania by Phoenix from their latest album also 1940 by the Submarines, another really nice track, love that girl's voice! I also just listened on YouTube to: 'I'll See You in My Dreams' by some popular English guy playing the Uke. I saw him play it on a UK TV show...what a nice song.... actually it made me sad, and I got to thinking about this year with Kelly's passing, and then our wonderful Tubby's passing.... so, it really brought on some tears....

Phil Bates - 'Songlines' and 'Already Free' - **Derek Trucks Band – 2006 +2009** - Derek Trucks is far too young, i.e. around 30, to be such a magician on the slide guitar. He plays like no one else I have ever heard. 'Songlines' is such a diverse album, containing even ragas and collaborations with Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, I think. Both albums just make you feel so damned good.

Gordon Townsend - I love everything Imogen Heap has released - her latest 'Ellipse' is no exception. About two years ago I discovered this guy Bleu (LA-based indie-pop) and his most recent 'A Watched Pot' is excellent. Butterfly Boucher (another favourite) just released 'Scary Fragile' and I'm loving that.

Of course, I'm super-excited about the remastered Beatles catalogue!

Glen Burtnik - 'Your Twist Party' - **Chubby Checker 1960** - Just to be different a vinyl album but as Glen says, "It was an impulse purchase and the big colourful album cover and title was too good to pass up. It's beautiful in all it's zaniness and I do remember the Twist craze of the early 1960s...so as a completist, I thought it'd be best to have at least one Chubby Checker album in my collection before I die."

Louis Clark's Inheritance Tracks

I don't remember much of my mother as she died when I was very young; my aunt, who was a very strict Catholic, brought me up. Consequently, I too was brought up as a Roman Catholic and used to go with my aunt to Mass at a small church in Bridgenorth. We went every Sunday; in fact Sundays, Thursdays, it was as though we went every day of the week when I was small. When I was very young my aunt used to take me, but as I got older I became an altar boy and would go off each week to Church by myself. Once there I would help the priest in preparing the gifts to be offered at the Mass, and the books, censer and candles during the services. It was here I used to listen to the choir and it was probably listening to sacred music that first inspired me when I was young.

I particularly remember when I first heard them sing Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Ave verum corpus* (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6TfAyX8I5-g>) it 'blew my mind' I thought 'wow, that's great!' I still remember those days in the church when I hear that piece, and the joy it brought me.

I would like to leave a piece of my own library music for my daughter. Occasionally I write library music, which is made available to people if they want to find a sound track for films or TV. The Music Library named the one I would chose 'My Country'. It is so special to me because my wife, Gloria, came up the aisle to it at our wedding in 1986. We were married in a small Methodist church in Cleveland, Ohio and I had hired an orchestra to play. I couldn't manage to conduct and get married at the same time, so as I looked at Gloria, my eyes beginning to water at how beautiful she was, I was quietly panicking that the Orchestra would mess-up. Fortunately they did not, but unfortunately that piece of music has never been recorded so is not available for this article.

I have therefore chosen a piece of music by the Beatles. As a young boy I had developed a love for classical music but all that changed when I discovered The Beatles. I wasn't interested in Rock'n'Roll, although I was an adolescent, but then the Beatles came along. I could not believe the emotion in their music. It was the whole package I got into. It was really tracks from the second album onwards when they were allowed to write their own songs that I really became hooked. I would have to choose 'No Reply' (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rIFXy6GptZo>) from the album - 'Beatles for Sale' (1964). When I heard the way they composed their music and pour feeling into their songs, I felt I've got to do this; "that's what I want to do"...and the rest I suppose is history!



Su Doku Madness!

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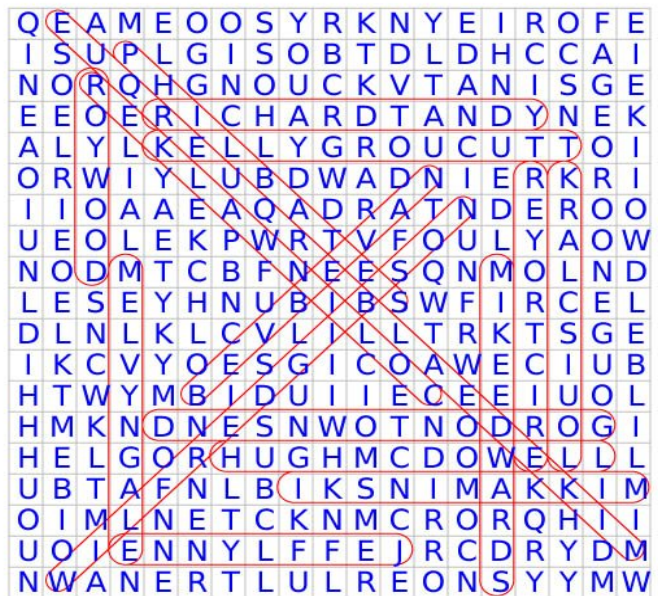
For Fun – Su Doku with a Twist!

Instead of traditional Su Dokus using numbers I have created two Su Dokus using Names. The First Su Doku is based on 'Phil Bates' with every row column and square containing the letters to Phil's name (Thanks Phil for having a 9 letter name with no letters repeated – very handy!) The Second Su Doku is a harder version using the letters OrCHESTRA. Please note as the bands name contains two r's therefore one of them has to be in lower case. I am not sure whether this makes it easier or harder – Good Luck and enjoy this bit of nonsense!



The Orchestra In Jersey

The guys spent a sunny weekend in Jersey playing at The Old Opera House. The gigs were excellent and very well supported. Despite the pressure of sound checks and busy schedule, the members of the band were still able to take in some of the sights as seen here with Phil exploring one of the gorgeous beaches on the island.



BevBevan
GordonTownsend
KellyGroucutt
MikeDealberquerque
PhilBates
wilfredgibson

ColinWalker
HughMcDowell
LouisClark
MikeEdwards
RichardTandy

EricTroyer
JeffLynne
MelvynGale
MikKaminski
Roywood

On The Road with . . .

Greg Szabo

Lighting Designer / Tour Manager

I first got into the music business after leaving school. It was a difficult time and I immediately found myself to be one of 'Thatcher's' 3 million unemployed. I used to go to a church youth group and one of the leaders played guitar in a local band. He suggested I come along to gigs and assist with the lighting. It was fairly unusual for small bands to be 'lit' in those days and it was a pretty homemade set-up. The switches were household light switches and the lights themselves, coloured light bulbs attached to 4 planks of wood. We would gig around the Midlands most weekends and during this time, to get myself out of the house; I also did some volunteer work for a charity in Wolverhampton. The charity wanted to promote themselves and consequently I found myself driving the van, doing sound, and using slightly more professional lighting equipment. (4 lights on stands!)

This led to the lighting hire company asking if I would do small jobs with them. I started to get work, picking up bits and bobs here and there and gradually got more experience. The real change came when I was asked to do an Easter conference, and a band that came along were going on to do an 8 week tour of the USA and asked me if I wanted to come along with them too! So from a simple church group one thing led to another and I found myself in a new career - Lighting Designer.

I've always had an eye for detail, my father taught me photography from when I was still at primary school. I see lighting as painting with light. It's why I try to keep my stages clear and uncluttered. Alas sometimes the band messes up my canvas.

On any tour my work starts with designing the lighting rig, drawing it out, ordering and organising equipment needed and of course making sure it works when it comes to show time. Lighting Designer (LD) is my main profession and it has led to me working with many bands over the years, going back with the ELO Part 2 guys to 1993 I started 1 gig later than Phil. In the last year I have worked for Katherine Jenkins, The Orchestra and festivals such as Wychwood, Greenbelt and Liverpool Pops. Sadly having toured with M People last year I had to turn down Heather Small this Spring, as the tour went out at the same time as the Orchestra. It is like that sometimes - no work for months then two jobs come along together. Sometimes my work extends to surprise 'one-offs'. For example when I got a call to say Beyonce was coming over and they needed a Lighting Director. For the first time in 20 years I had to send a cv and beat off the opposition.

I must point out though that at our end of the gig we don't see it in the same way as others. Stars don't shine like they do for fans. To me/us, they are (or should be) everyday people - but with special needs (hahaha), - Whether I have worked with Beyonce or the local busker, shouldn't affect my CV. Everyone is just the same to us. ..just bigger budgets, headaches and or responsibilities.

That's not to say that there aren't some great moments and I have tremendous privileges.

In January I had the pleasure of meeting Ranulf Feins; I've played pool with Sir Bob Geldof; Tammy Wynette cooked me dinner; I nursed Kelly in bed in Australia, I've also had memorable moments with bus drivers, guitar techs and a local farmer in Nigeria.

You can tell, I don't believe in celebrities. Everyone is special.

On some tours I am also employed as Tour Manager (T.M.) e.g. the Orchestra and Jane McDonald. For The Orchestra, the TM's role is to take over from the Production Manager who books all the venues and equipment etc. prior to the tour. I'm supposed to make sure everything then goes to plan. I have to deal with sound, lighting, catering, transport, merchandise and everything the band, crew and venue need to know before the performance. The advantage of a combined TM/LD role is that you have more control. I enjoy this, as although I am not a 'control freak', I do expect certain standards from others. If you're not the Tour Manager it is far harder to demand other crew members live up to your expectations. The disadvantages are the higher workload and additional pressures during the day. It's a pretty full-on job but I still look forward to every tour!

One tip to pass on from my experience so far...always be your own critic. I learnt early on, that the day you work your socks off and everything comes together, someone will complain about something and bring you down, Yet on the day you don't manage to get it together, another person will undoubtedly complement you. Wise old LD he say...Others know nothing, only you know if you have done well, ignore the compliments and complaints alike, be proud of your work; if you fail one day, do better tomorrow. Don't let others bring you down.

