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URIAH HEPP A CLASSIC NAME
IN HARD ROCK AND METAL, ONE OF THE
INSPIRATIONS TO MANY OF TODAY'S BIG NAMES
WITH GROUNDBREAKING HEAVINESS AND A
CAREER THAT HAS SPANNED FOR MORE THAN
FORTY YEARS, 30 MEMBERS, AND 20 STUDIO
ALBUMS THEY HAVE TO BE CONSIDERED
ONE OF THE GREATS.

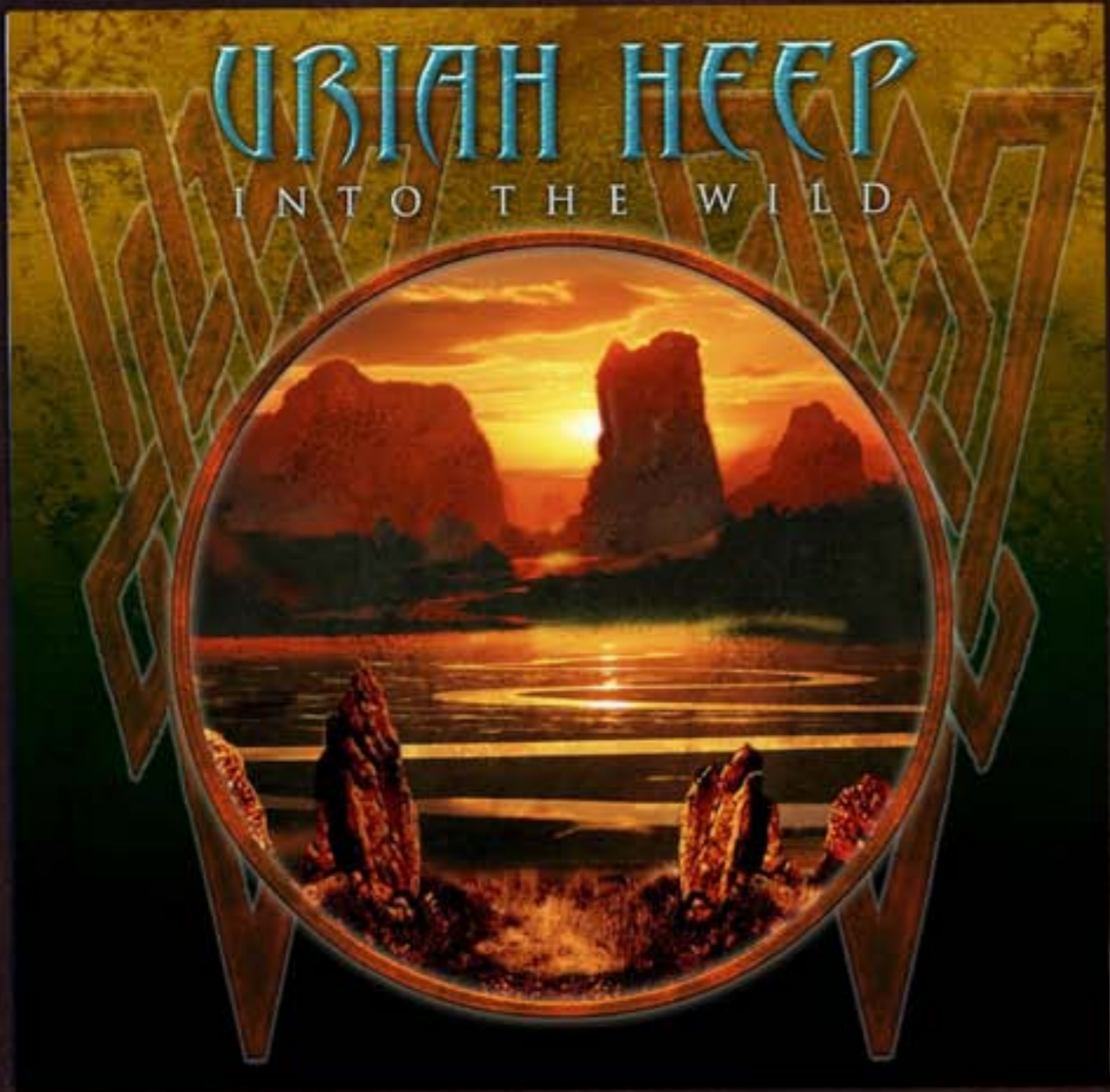
TO THIS OCCASION THIS ARTICLE IN REL.
TO THEIR 23RD STUDIO ALBUM IS THE
BIGGEST I HAVE EVER UNDERTAKEN IN
SO OPEN THE BOOK AND LEARN: →



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VERY 'EAVY, VERY 'UMBLE
FOR FORTY YEARS
OF ROCK MUSIC
THE STORY OF URIAH HEEP

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HALLOWED MAGAZINE
CAY WÄLLMAN
NYKÄRDSVÄGEN 1



~~THE~~ HOW IT ALL BEGINS

The history of Uriah Heep can be dated all the way back to 1967, the year after the English World Cup of Football victory. It was then a young man called Mick Box started a band called Stalker and played local clubs and so on. This was in Walthamstow, London, Great Britain. When the singer of Stalker left, drummer Roger Pennington suggested his cousin David (Byron) to sing. David had been coming to see the band earlier and after a few pints also been singing on stage with them according to Mick Box.

Having higher ambitions than their fellow band members Mick Box and David Byron quit their day jobs to focus on the music and started a new band which was named Spice. Drummer Alex Napier was found through an ad in a music paper, he got around the rule of no wife or girlfriend ties by saying that his wife was his sister. The line up was completed with bassist Paul Newton who came from The Gods, maybe not literally from the gods but a band with that name.

- We were always striving to do something original, Box recalls, and

though at first that made it difficult getting gigs, eventually we built a little cult following because of that.

In 1969 the band found a major break after slowly building more and more support and reaching higher levels. The man behind that break was management/production magnate Gerry Bron of Hit Records Productions, he saw the band at the Blues Loft in High Wycombe and was impressed with what he saw. He thought he could make something out of the band and signed them at that basis, his production company had a deal with Phillips record who

subsequently became Vertigo.

During the following months after beginning to work with Bron, the band changed the name to Uriah Heep (the 'horrible little character' from David Copperfield by Charles Dickens who was very much in fashion then because of the hundredth year since his death) on suggestion from Bron; they also started using the keyboards in their music.

- We'd actually recorded half the first album when we decided that keyboards would be good for our sound, says Box who got this inspiration somewhat from being a fan of Vanilla Fudge with their Hammond organs with guitars soaring on top. They decided to shape it like that along with David's vibrato vocals.

First they had session keyboardist Colin Woods who was brought in by Bron and it was when they started looking for a permanent keyboardist they found Ken Hensley who had been playing with Newton in The Gods and was now playing the guitar for Toe Fat. Hensley explains that he saw the potential to do something different with Uriah Heep which is why he joined the band. And it was not only Hensley's talents as a keyboard player that would benefit the band, he could also write music even though his contribution to the first album Very 'eavy, Very 'umble was to re-record some of Woods' keyboard lines and finishing the last couple of tracks. Box and Byron was the creative force behind the first album, an album where the band replaced drummer Napier with Nigel "Ollie" Olsson three quarters into the recordings. The album was released 19th of June 1970.

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Despite the fact that the debut album was diverse and innovative while still in line with the times, it was picked on because of the heaviness. The critics reviews ranged from "interesting", "skillful but not particularly original", "a veritable pain to listen to", to the now infamous Rolling Stone promise that "If this band makes it I'll commit suicide. They sound like a third rate Jethro Tull." To the latter, Box just replied that none in Uriah Heep had ever played the flute and that none of them was capable of standing on one leg. (I have not been able to find any info on whether the reviewer committed suicide or not, but I guess not.)

You could say that this album baffled the reviewers but it had impact, rather large impact musically with

this album. It was also still an experimental time for the band with the writing relationship between Byron, Box and Hensley just in their early stages.

Salisbury was the next album by Uriah Heep and for that drummer Ollie Olsson had left the band to go back to Elton John because of his success in the states. New drummer was Keith Baker.

Gerry Bron was once again the producer but this time in the songwriting there was a lot of Ken Hensley who wrote half of the songs and co-wrote the other half of the songs on the album.

Salisbury is an album known for more diversity and a musical development from the debut but also for it's over sixteen

minute long title track that is a mix of orchestral things, woodwinds, keyboards, brass and what have you, it is probably one of the most ambitious things ever undertaken by the band. The press however did not really see this side of the coin, they were still preoccupied with the heaviness of the band and as Ken Hensley said: "all we knew in those days was that we wanted to play loud rock and roll music" it might not be that difficult to see why even though it is a very complex and diverse album, maybe in part due to the band still looking to find their own identity.



Washington, April 20, 1865,

The Early Years



- I never quite knew what happened to him, 'Box replies to the question of whether drummer Keith Baker spontaneously combusted, a question that still remains unanswered.

CROSSING THE OCEANS
It was now that the band

members.

And with that experience behind them the band returned home to Britain to start working on their third album, this was to be released on Bron's own label Bronze since his deal with Vertigo was now over.

'July Morning' they made their first album that made it into the charts at number 39.

The chemistry between Box, Hensley and Byron was evolving so fast at this time and even if the music was becoming more consistent and finding the voice of the band, the same could not be said for the ones outside the nucleus of these



was going for their first trip to the states, with new drummer Ian Clark in the band they were well received when they got to the states playing in front of 20'000 people supporting Three Dog Night and Steppenwolf.

- Playing with Three Dog Night was all wrong musically but it was invaluable experience for us, Box re-

The recording of Look at Yourself was done during the summer of 1971, for the third time in Landsdowne which was becoming like a second home for the band. This was also the album where the band according to Bron found their own musical direction and with songs like 'Look At Yourself', 'Tears In My Eyes' and

three mentioned. Both Iain Clarke and Paul Newton was not very happy in the band at this time and Newton was the first to go in favour of Mark Clark who should not be staying for long. Iain Clarke left the band and allowed for Lee Kerslake to join the band. Also of The Gods, he was approached earlier when Keith Baker left, he had de-

clined that time but now he was not going to miss the opportunity. Kerslake was



followed by Gary Thain, a New Zealander who replaced Clark halfway through the American

tour. With Kerslake and Thain in the band everything just seemed to click into place,



or as Hensley stated in the liner note for the album Demons & Wizards: that the band was now completed and how excited they were with the reorganisations that had taken place.

For the uninitiated it would seem that Demons & Wizards was a step into the magical and the fantasy themed but it was not that simple, sure there are some songs like 'The Wizard' for instance that are in that theme but there are also classic rock songs like 'Easy Livin'' on this album so it is as Hensley stated: "just a collection of our songs that we had a good time recording".

Demons & Wizards were the band's first international success and 'Easy Livin'' was a hit single all over the place, except for in Britain. They were in the charts in Britain for eleven weeks with a peak position of 20. It was a great success for the

band and helped them establish a niche for themselves.

THE MAGICIANS BIRTHDAY

The following album, The Magicians Birthday cannot be said to have established a niche for the band however, it was rather a natural extension of its predecessor. It was released just six months after Demons & Wizards in November 1972 and by some it was regarded as slightly superior to Demons & Wizards as it was more or less similar to its predecessor but maybe slightly more mature.

"Uriah Heep used to have an image, now they have personality," wrote Melody Maker in 1973 in accordance with how the band's lifestyle of luxury, limos and

ladies rubbed of on their stage personalities. At this time the individual personalities in the band had summed up to make a band with lots of character, much thanks to flamboyant singer David Byron.

- David was the communication point, the focal point of the whole group's stage presentation, said Hensley many years later.

All of this personality that evolved at this time might have been the reason as to

why the next album was a live album, or maybe it was just a natural thing at the

band's character and personality at the time. It was a

double album lavishly packaged in a gatefold with an eight page booklet to accompany it.

The album held the classic medley of rock songs that

had been the cornerstone of their show for some time now, but it was also known for the inner sleeves with loads of press clippings both good and bad.

Following the release of this live album the band went for another tour to Japan before it was time to work on the next studio album which is called Sweet Freedom, an album that deviated from established routine. This time



time. With the imaginary title Uriah Heep Live this live album was recorded in January of 1973 and is said to be a testimony to the



the band recorded at Chateau d'Heronville in France mainly due to tax reasons. Sweet Freedom was an album that consolidated the band's position while they were still striving to move on, it was also an album that divided the critics in two factions, a bit of a love 'em or hate 'em. The album did really well in sales, it charted at 18 in Britain and the song 'Stealin' was a hit song all over the place.

It was also this year that Hensley released Proud Words on a Dusty Shelf, a solo album in a more mellow mood than Uriah Heep.

DEMISE OF THAIN

It had been a new experience to record abroad for the band and it was not without its problems, a lesson Uriah Heep learnt when they in 1974 found themselves in Musicland studios in Munich.

The album Wonderland is by many seen as a bit of a disappointment in the Uriah Heep catalogue, it was said to be underproduced, hurried, lacklustre

and directionless even though the critics at the time gave the band credit for attempting something different.

- Recording abroad disrupted the band's normal method of operation, and that had a big negative effect on the group. Our communication was falling apart, we were arguing over stuff like royalties and we were getting involved in matters beyond music, Hensley said about

this time.

- That was the most dramatic album I've ever worked on, David was drunk for most of the time, Kenny was having an emotional time of it and I was constantly trying to help them so it was difficult for me too. There was also a little bit of friction because Kenny didn't like all the attention that David was getting, is Box's recollection of the same time.

Another concern of the band was that the drug use (something he carried from before joining Uriah Heep) of bassist Gary Thain was to finally take its toll on him.

- All I remember is going to the amplifier to adjust the equalisers, the next thing

that happened was I blacked out, Thain explain what happened when he was electrocuted on stage in September in Dallas. This led to Thain being hospitalised for a while and that in turn led to cancelled dates both in the USA and a few in Britain, something that did not sit too well with Bron and the whole thing led to a war of words that reached the papers. Thain said that the music had been forgotten and that it all was a financial thing, something Bron tried to diffuse by calling it a misunderstanding, but from this moment Thain's days in the band was numbered.

He was out of the band only three

months later as he was in no condition to continue with the band as his physique was so poor and all parties involved agreed that it would be best for him to leave the band. On december 8th 1975 Thain was found dead in his home, having overdosed on Heroin. Gary Thain lived to the age of 27.

- I always loved Gary as a person he had a quality of irresponsibility that I always liked. I think he died because he misjudged what he was doing and it got the better of him, Hensley said later in remembrance of his fallen comrade, Box agree with him and says "you couldn't help loving Gary."



- I used to spend a lot of time trying to persuade Gary to find another reason to live apart from music, says Bron, but for Gary Thain it would seem that the music was everything he had and without it there was nothing.

DEMISE OF BYRON

Thain was replaced by John Wetton known

number seven in the charts. An album that was also recorded at Landsdowne back in Britain. This album also saw the band take a year long tour with a guesstimated 30'000 air miles and attendance around a million people.

1975 also saw Uriah Heep releasing a best of album, Hensley released his second solo album Eager to Please



from King Crimson and also for his guest role with Roxy Music and he was rushed into things immediately and had an impact as well. Return to Fantasy was the album released in May 1975 and became the band's best selling album and reached

and Byron released his debut Take No Prisoners.

- It was getting a bit lightweight. It was less of the 'eavy and more of the 'umble, says Box about the following album which was called High and Mighty and released in 1976.

The band produced the album themselves thanks to Bron being busy with other project and Hensley feel that this album was neglected by Bronze to prove a point and the sales might suggest that he has a point.

- It was Heep's worse album, is what Bron says about the album.

In typical Uriah Heep mid-seventies manor the launch of this album was spectacular with a bunch of journalists and industry people taken to the top of a Swiss mountain for an experience they would not forget. At this time excess was really something this band

and tour manager, Byron meanwhile was drinking heavily and Mick recalls a moment in Philadelphia during this tour.

- We were playing this 20'000 seater and David, having been drinking heavily, rushes out onto the stage, steps onto one of the legs of the mike-stand and of course, it smacks him in the mouth. The whole crowd

opened but David, thinking they're having a go at him, turns round and says, 'You can go and fuck off if you don't like it.' I'm standing there at the side of the stage thinking 'Oh, no, he's just told 20'000 of our fans to fuck off!' We couldn't catch a cold there after that.

TIPS FÖR RECENS
BÖGPNOLAR
I SPORTSÄNDNINGSTIK
KLAGA PÅ ENDST
OBS!
IRONI!



Lindt

Sometimes things do repeat themselves

This also led to Hensley being so disgusted that he returned to England and it was only thanks to Bron's persuasion that he stayed in the band.

- That was where the problem started with David, says Hensley. He'd always get drunk after the show but it had never got to the point where it would jeopardize the show itself. The performance had always been first and foremost with David. It was when the show started to come second that the problems began. David was pissing away his career and ours with it.

- It's a tragedy to say it but David was one of those classic people who could not face up to the fact that things were wrong and he looked for solace in a bottle,

Byron was fired from the band in July 1976 after the final show of the Spanish tour. He did some attempts to reach the same levels of success for himself but did not reach the big time again and in 1985 he died from a heart attack aged 38 and still abusing alcohol at that time.

Second half of 1976 was a turbulent time for Uriah Heep, not only was the singer of long fired, John Wetton also decided to leave the band for pursuing a solo career, he subsequently enjoyed great success with Asia.

THE LAWTON YEARS

The loss of both singer and bassist did not discour-

replacements at both position, Trevor Bolder as the the bassplayer, a man who has been in the band almost ever since. Before joining Uriah Heep he was playing with David Bowie and Mick Ronson to mention some.

- I knew Heep were the right band for me - we hit it off immediately, Bolder said when joining the ranks of Uriah Heep.

The singer was another matter, people like David Coverdale (Whitesnake) auditioned for the band, Ian Hunter (Mott the Hoople) or Gary Holton (Heavy Metal Kids) were also speculated upon, the choice however was none of those. John



Moving on

Lawton who was known for his part in German band Lucifer's Friend.

- Image-wise he wasn't quite what we were looking for, but his pipes were perfect and so we went for the music end of it, Box explains the decision.

Firefly was the new album

said Hensley about their following tour in the states supporting Kiss.

- We chose them to support us, and it was great having them with us. They were incredibly professional, and so consistent that their worst nights were excellent and their best were tremen-

ver, the snake whose eyes are the one of drummer Lee Kerslake. It was not that successful in England but sold over a million copies in Germany alone and became the best selling album ever for them.

Fallen Angel completed the trio of albums with Lawton as a vocalist, it was also a more commercially sounding album than usual



released in 1977, an album that got decent reviews from the press and signified a bit of a new beginning for them as they had a lot working against them with electrocutions on stage, drug abuse, death in the band and so on.

- We knew we were faced with an uphill task and that's the main reason we're doing this tour with Kiss,

dous, said Kiss's Paul Stanley about their companions on the US tour.

Even back home in England things went well and the band topped their British appearances off by headlining the first day of the Reading Festival.

Later the same year it was time for another album, Innocent Victim, the album with the snake on the co-

for Uriah Heep, Box said for example that the album was a bit too poppy sounding for his liking. The reviews were quite good though, ironically. The relative outward calm of the band with no changes was just a front for the frictions going on behind the scenes, the fact that Hensley had most of his songs on the albums and therefore made much more



money and also showed it to everyone led to resentment from the rest of the band who felt that they got no real chance of getting their songs on. Hensley blamed short deadlines from the label, all things still run by Gerry Bron who was manager, producer and record label boss for Uriah Heep. The friction was worst between singer Lawton and Hensley which led to Lawton's departure from the band.

SLOMAN

Lawton was quickly replaced by John Sloman who was the antithesis of Lawton in that he was younger and also able to play many instruments, "an all rounder" as Box described him. With the singer position filled the drummer's was vacated by Kerslake who still complained about the songwriting issue and said

that he was tired of Bron's favouritism towards Hensley.

Most of the album *Conquest* had already been recorded but now the band had to re-record it with new singer Sloman and new drummer Chris Slade of Manfred Mann's Earth Band. Therefore the album emerged in 1980 and reached a chart position of 37 in Britain which is better than any of the three albums with Lawton on vocals. But there were still problems and Hensley who had opposed the appointment of Sloman left the band. Hensley did record one more Solo after he left the band, *Free Spirit* which was not that successful, he also briefly was part of American band *Blackfoot* and he has lately

been doing some guest appearances on albums, nothing major.

Summer of 1980 saw Canadian Gregg Dechert fill the role of keyboarder for the band and 23 date tour of the UK playing smaller venues and obscure towns was his introduction. There seemed to be a general lack of inspiration within the group following *Conquest* and this led to the departure of

singer Sloman who felt his musical ambition laid in another direction than the one with Uriah Heep.

THE WILDERNESS YEARS

It was here that for a while it all seemed to end, Box and Bolder tried convincing Byron to return to the band but he would have none of it and tired of Bron and the management Bolder instead accepted an offer from *Wishbone Ash*. Shortly after Dechert also left, leaving Box all by himself.

- I locked myself in my flat for two days, and drank myself senseless in complete self-pity. But I somehow managed to pull myself together and consider my options. Neil Warnock, my agent, was suggesting I go out and do the guitar hero thing, because the time was right, but I wanted to look at the possibilities of Heep still. I was getting a lot of mail from fans all over the world, saying how we had been a part of their lives, and also lots of kids just discovering us too, so I was encouraged by that quite a lot, says Box of the time.

And from there a new and reformed Uriah Heep was born. First off Box contacted Kerslake who had been recording with *Ozzy Osbourne* who incidentally to no knowledge of Box had left (was fired from) *Ozzy* along with bassist *Bob Daisly*. These two were both interested, Kerslake happy that

the song writing issue that caused him to leave was out of the way. John Sinclair filled the role of keyboardist and the singer was ex *Trapeze* vocalist Peter Goalby who was rejected in favour of Sloman though being the preferred choice of Hensley. The problem now however was whether or not it would still be Uriah Heep.

- We obviously couldn't continue in our previous direction, ie. *Conquest*, and we couldn't do any more *Return to Fantasies*, that era had gone. But with us all contributing to the writing we forged our new direction, Lee Kerslake recalls and Box adds that the spirit was there.

- I realised that it was coming together when we were interspersing our new songs from *Abominog* with our old ones and they all sounded as if they belonged, Box explains.

Abominog was released to critical acclaim and also fairly successful with high charting singles among other in the US. Ashley Howe was the producer of this album meaning that all about Heep would have been changed from before. The cover artwork was also an attention grabber for those who missed the hits receiving airtime on MTV and so on.

Following *Abominog* was *Head First* which was the band's fifteenth studio album and even though deemed a worthy successor to *Abominog* it did not do as well. Some critics blame bad promotion from Bronze records who went into li-

quidation just a month after the release of *Head First*. This was an album where all musicians were credited for the song writing to avoid earlier problems that had plagued the band and for the entire band to make equal money. The Release of *Head First* also brought with it the departure of *Bob Daisly* who returned to *Ozzy* again.

Replacing Daisly was Trevor Bolder who got back to the band after his time with *Whishbone Ash*, he got back to a band that was winning momentum again but they were losing ground in the states. They still spent some time there supporting *Rush* who owed them a few favours, *Judas Priest* who apparently treated them like shit and *Def Leppard*.

- They were the best band that we've ever toured with either as a headline or support, because there was no ego, no pretentious kind of stuff. They were good in as much that we learnt a lot from them, they always gave good advice without saying, 'Listen, son', with that smarmy, father-like attitude. And Mick Box has got to be one of the funniest, most genuine men I've ever met, is the singer of *Def Leppard*, Joe Elliot, quoted saying.

It was now that the band also started expanding their horizons in terms of travelling, they started longer runs and visiting odd places for hardrock or heavy metal like India, Indonesia or Malaysia. They even ventured into the eastern block before going back into the

studio in 1984 to record the album Equator.

Equator was released on CBS-label Portrait and it was produced by Tony Platt.

- We were going out and playing, doing really good business but you couldn't buy the bloody record!, Box says about how the album was promoted by the label.

They had a hard touring schedule and it started to take its toll on singer Goalby who had problems with his voice for a while before finally loosing his voice altogether in the middle of the Australian tour. This heavy touring and the lack of support from the label led to Goalby deciding that it was enough and left the band.

- I loved and believed in Uriah Heep but it kicked the shit out of me in the end, Goalby is quoted saying.

THE SOLID LINE-UP

Goalby was not the only one to depart, shortly after his departure, Sinclair also left the band.

Sinclair was replaced by Phil Lanzon who by Mick Box had been seen playing with The Sweet, his past also included Grand Prix and Sad Café. Steff Fontaine briefly took the singer's position but got the boot after the American tour.

- He was desperately bad, couldn't believe anyone could be so unprofessional.

He had a great voice but his discipline was something else. He'd go for

a walk during rehearsals and then get lost. He even missed a gig in San Francisco once, Mick Box is quoted saying about Fontaine.

New vocalist now was ex-Grand Prix, Praying Mantis and Stratus singer Bernie Shaw who still is the voice of the band, selecting Shaw seemed to put the final piece there since a new and stable line-up was finally formed for Uriah Heep.

- It was like everything falling into place, Mick Box remembers.

- I felt honoured at being invited to join such a legendary band, Shaw stated also recollecting himself playing covers of Uriah Heep songs earlier in his career.

There was an air of newfound optimism within the band during this time 1987, a time when they had also changed management to Miracle Group, along with whom they found a new challenge in their expansion

into new Horizons, Russia, a nation where only the likes of Cliff Richards, Elton John and Billy Joel had played and was considered strictly out of bounds for heavy rock music.

However, their song 'July Morning' had done really well in Russia and they had established their name there in the later seventies. And with Hungarian promotor Laszlo Hegedus (close contact of Miracle) securing them, Uriah Heep was the first ever western rock band to be invited to Soviet Union to play.

They got a reception upon arrival to the Soviet Union that Bernie Shaw describes as something like the Beatlemania, and they played for ten consecutive nights in Moscow's Olympic Stadium in front of a total of over 180'000 people. Their history making concerts also opened the door for other western bands like Status Quo, Scorpions or Bon Jovi.



These concerts were also recorded and released in form of the Live in Moscow album to commemorate this momentous occasion.

The Moscow thing also rippled back to their home country where it served a little as a wake up call to people that they were not yet dead and buried. It also led to three sellout concerts in Czechoslovakia, where they also were the first ever

claim for their performance, band of the day said RAW's Dave Ling. That festival was then followed by a UK tour before the band finally was to record a new album. Raging Silence was released in 1989 and was produced by Richard Dodd with Ashley Howe helping with the pre-productions but being otherwise engaged it was Dodd who did the production.

Following this album there was more extensive touring, amongst other to Leningrad, East Berlin, Poland and so on, they played for 100'000 in

was begun on in 1990 but with touring a lot in North and South America and doing festivals in Europe the band found themselves going in and out of the studio and producer Richard Dodd was unavailable so the producing duties fell on Bassist Trevor Bolder.

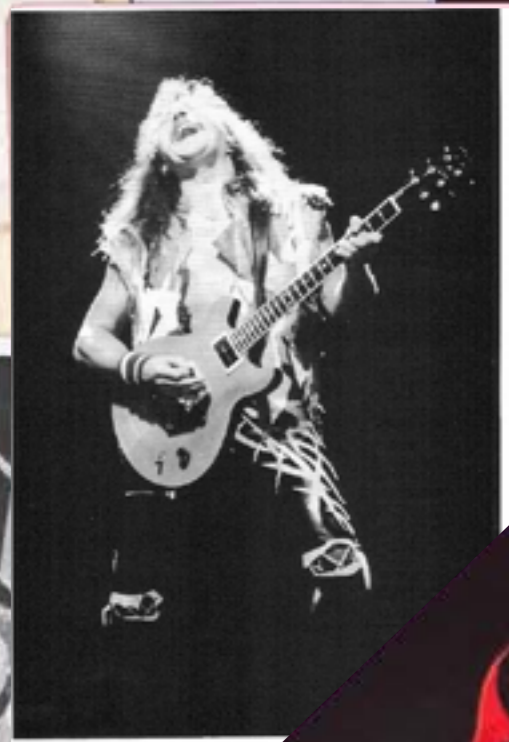
When the album finally saw light of day, delayed, it received some mixed reaction, Kerrang was seen insulting the members, another review wrote that Bolder should always produce their album since "Different World is a very strong album indeed, containing quality songs, immaculate arrangements and

heaps of appeal". It was Andy Bradshaw of Metal Hammer who said that.

The release of Different World coincided with their biggest UK tour since the seventies. But the album was also plagued by poor promotion and led to the band leaving Legacy Records.

INTO THE 2000s

In 1995 the band released Sea of Light which



western rock band to play. They also became the first ever western rock band to tour Bulgaria and was there seen by something like 80'000 people.

After making history they returned to England for the 1988 Reading Festival where they won much ac-

Russia, 80'000 on a free concert in East Berlin, they had time to visit Estonia as well and with that the total number of nation having been visited by Uriah Heep that time was 38.

They did release some live material in 1990 before moving on to the next album Different World which work

is by the fans regarded as one of the best ever Uriah Heep albums. It was released by Castle records and also signified a time when the current line-up of the band has been the longest lasting of them all, even though it might not have done as many albums they have been constantly out touring in all kinds of countries. As it is said in the book of Uriah Heep "Two Decades In Rock" A History of Uriah Heep, Still 'Eavy, Still Proud. By Kirk Blows: "The present line up of Mick Box, Trevor Bolder, Bernie Shaw, Phil Lanzon and Lee Kerslake spans over a third of their history and is the longest lasting of all. Mick Box may be the only ever present member but Lee Kerslake has been around for all but a couple of years, Trevor Bolder has played bass in Uriah Heep for almost three quarters of the band's career, Shaw has been the longest serving of all the vocalists and Lanzon's time on keyboards will by 1996 be equal to Ken Hensley's time in the band. They work better together today than any of the previous line ups and their latest album, Sea of Light has been hailed as their best since the days of Demons and Wizards and The Magicians Birthday. This box set contains 2 demos from the sessions prior to the latest album along with the track 'Time Of Revelation' - a song not unlike some of the great rockers from days gone by. Uriah Heep have indeed had

an eventful history, with both successes and set backs, there can be no doubt however on the impact and influence they have had in the development of Rock Music. They are a band that are very 'eavy, very 'umble and very very good."

Three years after Sea of Light they released a new album called Sonic Origami, it was produced by Pip Williams and was followed by a successful European tour and during touring for this album they visited 45 countries. A tour of the United States was planned but cancelled in 1999 but that did not stop Uriah Heep from continuing their work and taking it into their fifth decade. They were more active than ever in 2002 releasing DVDs and a double live album. In 2001 they had a reunion gig with Hensley and Lawton, The Magicians Birthday Party which was the first celebration of Heepmusic which has now turned into a tradition, in 2004 the party was held at the Astoria.

LATEST MEMBER CHANGE

1 January 2007 drummer Lee Kerslake had to leave the band due to ill Health. In 2006 the band was touring heavily in places like Indonesia, Thailand, Russia, Brazil and so forth, in some twenty territories and that took its toll on Lee and had to take his time to recover from his health problem. This was of course a hard blow on the band with Lee having been in the band for so long and like a brother

to them, Mix box said: "All the band are fully behind Lee in his efforts to become fully match fit again. For me, it is particularly devastating to lose not only someone who I have worked with for some thirty five years, but also one of my closest and oldest friends who I love like a brother."

As the band had just recently signed a record deal with Sanctuary Records they had to start working on the next album and also have consistency over the 18 month tour that was to follow this album.

Russel Gilbrook replaced Lee Kerslake and was part of the recording of the album Wake the Sleeper that was released in 2008, it was produced by Mike Paxman. In 2009 the band released the album Celebration which commemorated forty years of rock for the band and is an album of re-recorded classic Uriah Heep songs and two new songs. Of this album there was also released a deluxe set which contained a live DVD recorded at the Sweden Rock Festival in 2009.

The Uriah Heep history then moves on towards fifty years with the release of Into the Wild 2011.

It is Uriah Heep's 23rd studio album...

Hallowed had the opportunity to have a chat with Trevor Bolder, long time bassist of Uriah Heep a few weeks before the release of the new Into the Wild album. An album which according to Bolder is a classical Heep album, it has all the trademarks with the Hammond organ, the melodies and harmonies that the band has gotten known for during their many years around.

It was also an album that was a bit different in the way they recorded it.

- It was a quick recording, we just went into the studio rehearsed and in the afternoon recorded the songs, Trevor Bolder explains.

- It was a new way for us to record, we did it all in the studio and the recording of the tracks ran very quickly just two or three takes. We tried and had to think quickly and it turned out great, it was almost like we played live, as a rock band should play.

According to Bolder the album was said by one journalist to be similar to the one prior to it, Wake the Sleeper, almost like a second part of it. He also stated that for him it was quite hard to judge the album with the production and everything being so close, he explained that he usually take some six months away from the album and then returns to it with a fresh perspective.

So far he says that everyone has been positive towards the album and that there has been no negative comments that he have heard so far.

- Mike Paxman did a really good job producing the album, I am really satisfied with how it turned out, he explains.

He says all that without me asking anything but to say a little about the album, and he goes on for several minutes talking about the music and everything being very enthusiastic

"I AM REALLY SATISFIED WITH HOW IT TURNED OUT" BOLDER ABOUT THE ALBUM

about it, kind of like those younger artists that have just released their first album. On the following question about how the reception for the album has been so far the reply is maybe not as lengthy but he has much to say.

- Great, the company (Frontiers) loves it, that is the most important thing as they are the ones who are supposed to push for the album. It is not only that, it has gathered great response from the press, I haven't heard or seen anything negative yet. With this record it seems that nothing can go wrong, is the interesting part of his reply.

WORLD TOUR

As usual with Uriah Heep they will go for a big world tour, visiting lots of places. First there will

be an Australian tour which is not really part of the tour for Into the Wild, then the Into the Wild tour starts in Holland and goes on in Europe before the band goes off to America, then back to Europe again, Bolder explains that they try to visit as many countries and places as possible during their tours.

- We will definitely go to Sweden, we would like to visit Sweden Rock Festival again and maybe do a tour of Scandinavia it was a while since last time. I think it was two years ago but we like Scandinavia the audience is great and we always get a great response from the fans we used to play a lot there earlier but not as much anymore, I don't know why but we definitely want to get back and play to find a younger audience and new fans, Bolder says and replies to a question that I was going to ask before I had the chance to ask it.

It seems that there is no problem whatsoever for Bolder and the others of Uriah Heep to motivate themselves during their work, tours and whatever they are about to undertake. This suspicion is confirmed by Bolder as he explains that he doesn't feel a day older than sixteen and believes that none of the others in the band does that either.

- I don't think you can ever really retire from music I am not sure any musician have retired. And everytime you step up on the

stage to play live it is the biggest thrill, there is nothing better. Music is like a drug but it keeps you going and it keeps you young and I don't ever want to stop, he explains and add that he will keep going for as long as he is healthy enough.

Speaking of health, playing on stage and extensive touring often requires one to be rather fit and for that exercise is usually needed, therefore I asked Trevor if he exercises to stay fit four the tours.

- Used to, but I damaged my knee recently and had to have an operation so I had not been able to exercise as I want to and because of that I have put on some weight as you do. Before the injury stopped me I used to exercise for about an hour a day and then of course you tend to sweat a lot on the stage as well, he explains.

TIMES CHANGE...

Uriah Heep has been around for over forty years now and Trevor Bolder has been in the band since before the release of Firefly in 1977 bar an eighteen month period when he was with Wishbone Ash. During these years the music industry has changed quite a bit, for starters the illegal downloading of copyrighted music for free has made it much harder for bands to sell their music and if they are to make any money from their music they have to do it in other ways now.

- The only thing we really see is that we don't sell as many records as before now that it is possible to download it for free. That

is a shame as now everyone has to try to sell a lot of merchandise to earn an income, says Bolder sure that Into the Wild will not rack up sales in the millions.

Like most other successful rock bands, Uriah Heep made their name in the seventies and eighties when the industry was different, when illegal copying was not as widespread as now, at least one person in a group of friends needed to buy an album to have the chance to hear it back then and it was probably because of that sales were higher then, and also that the times were different of course.

- We were lucky to that we were big in the seventies and eighties and made a lot of money then, Bolder explains and goes on to say

that they are now just coasting and enjoying themselves and not worrying about it, they don't need to. He also adds that younger bands seems to respect them more now since they have been around for such a long time.

Even though it does not really effect Uriah Heep in any major way since they are quite set, Bolder still see many problems with the decline in record sales and the attitude of people towards musicians today. One thing that he feels is very disturbing is the fact that the physical record stores are going away and with them some

of the feel for music also goes away.

- You can look at all the albums, feel them and flip through them, you can't do that online and this helps as you can be reminded when you are flipping through the albums about a good band or something. Online it

THIS PART OF THE ARTICLE IS WRITTEN ON THE BACKSIDE OF THE BULLET PAPER SHEET.

feels like you need to know what you are buying while you can just browse the store and shop more spontaneously I think, says Bolder and I do think he hits the nail on the head with that last remark. As a buyer of music myself I find that I buy nowhere near as much music now as when we had a local record store, seeing an album and just being in the stores makes it much more appealing then looking at covers and song titles in an online store and not to mention the terribly confusing iTunes store. Me and Bolder had



quite the lengthy conversation about this matter and I think we both agreed upon the sad in what is happening, but there is really no quick fix for it either, the music industry must come up with new ways if they want to keep making money. But it is not only for the labels to make money because if no one makes money out of selling music then there will be no concerts, there will no longer be albums and only a few enthusiasts will release a track or two online, that is where we are going now with both music and films,

quality are already down but that is a little sidetrack we got into for a while.

While on the subject of online and internet, there are also fantastic ways to make yourself heard no matter who you are, I asked Trevor Bolder if he did anything like that, after all he belongs to a generation that was before computers, still young in mind though it seems.

- No, not really, I have a bit of computer fear and have not really gotten into it. I have a myspace which is ran by a friend in

Brazil, I visit it from time to time, he explains and adds that he have a hard time finding the time for it as there is so much else to do in life with the home and the music and the family.

He points out that his son sits in front of the computers all the time, not as when he (or I for that matter) was young when they used to be outside playing, hooking up with friends



and doing more active stuff instead he is just sitting in front of his computer and does whatever he does. Still, Bolder does not feel that computers and internet are all bad and destructive even though causing decline in sales of records and lazier (fatter) children.

- I think the computers are a great thing since you can do so much with it but it can also be very bad if you spend all your life just sitting in front of the screen, he says

and in a way describes our times quite well in that sentence. Of the guys in Uriah Heep, it is the man who was there from the beginning, Mick Box who is the most active and according to Bolder he is connected all the time.

BUT EVERYTHING REMAINS THE SAME

Connecting to the very lengthy story about Uriah Heep that we have found in a nice leather book, it felt a bit like neglecting things if I did not ask at least something

about how he feels the band has changed/progressed over the many years he have been part of the band.

- It is still the same atmosphere, we are a friendly band and we all get on really well. Me and Mick are really good friends and have been that since before I joined the band, and Lee who left the band due to his health we have a good balance which is the same as before, Bolder explains that it is a case of the band remains the same

while the people change which conjures up a funny thought in my mind, can this band maybe even go on forever with only the people changing while still being the same band? I did not ask this question because it came to me now.

- We always seem to pick the right members, there has never been any problems, I have been in the band for 26 years now and it is hard to say what's changed. I would say it is the same band

as always but with different musicians all great at what they did. I think we are more united than the earlier, Bolder explains.

26 years is a long time, but the band is over forty years old which is quite amazing when you think of it and as Bolder says towards the end of our chat when speaking of the band, "we stood the test of time" and I think that the catalogue, all the travels, the shows, all of those who have seen the band, everything of this

points towards the fact that he is right in what he says: Uriah Heep stood the test of time and they still deliver more than forty years and over thirty bandmembers later.

Their latest album Into the Wild is out now and according to the Hallowed review it is well worth checking out.

Thank you all for reading

The sources facts for the "ancient book" is, wikipedia, the book "Two Decades of Rock" by Kirk Blows, uriah-heep.com and various forums around the internet.
Some facts also from the interview with bassist Trevor Bolder.

Be sure to check out our review of Into the Wild at the website, hallowed.se

Design and design idea by Daniel Källmalm.
Photos of the band: Press & Promotional shots.
Other Photos: Daniel Källmalm