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~ MUSIC THAT STANDS THE TEST OF

TIME

by Ryan Sparks

Often in life you hear about people being in the right place at the right time, getting their foot in door so to speak and seizing the opportunities presented to them, and for British born guitarist/ vocalist Dave Kilminster nothing could be further from the truth.

Kilminster began playing the piano as a young child, but quickly traded in the ivories for the guitar and hasn't looked back since. In 1991 he was voted Guitarist Magazine's "Guitarist of the Year" and when reflecting at the time on the future, his aspirations were surprisingly straight forward in that he wanted to "get into a really great rock band, tour the world and make music". Taking stock of things in 2007, Dave has made the most of every opportunity and as been an instrumental and driving force in every band he's been a part of. His resume is stunning and reads like a who's who of progressive rock. He has touted and recorded with John Wetton in Qango, done the same with Keith Emerson and Carl Palmer, and most recently served as a touring guitarist and vocalist in none other than Roger Waters' solo band. In Roger's group he was given the daunting task of covering much of the guitar and vocal work originally played by Pink Floyd guitarist David Gilmour. These high profile gigs with some of the biggest heavyweights in classic rock have shone the light squarely on Kilminster's incredible talents as a musician.

In addition to being an invaluable addition to the aforementioned bands, Dave has somehow managed to find the time to actively pursue a solo career and his most recent effort entitled *Scarlet* is a work of staggering beauty and depth. If you've had the opportunity to witness his talent firsthand with Emerson or Waters, believe me when I say that it really only scratches the surface of the man's overall abilities.

Ryan: I really want to talk about your latest solo release *Scarlet* which is an absolutely magnificent piece of work.

Dave: Thank you.

Ryan: You can really hear the effort that went into this recording. I think anyone that has heard or seen you play and knows what a talented musician and guitarist you are may be a little surprised to find out that you're also one hell of a writer as well. This CD spoke to me more about Dave Kilminster the musician than it did Dave the guitar player.

Dave: That's great, and to be honest I think of myself more as a musician than I do a guitarist. I've always been into music, melodies, songs, lyrics, and the whole thing. I never set out to- I can't think of anything more boring for me to do than to record a rock instrumental album. It's not stuff I would listen to so I wouldn't dream of doing something

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like that. When I was listening to the radio growing up, it was all bands like 10cc, Queen and The Sweet, just loads of really cool tunes.

Ryan: It was a great time to be growing up listening to music wasn't it?

Dave: Oh it was fabulous. It was the best.

Ryan: I know you've been much more in demand these past few years playing in Keith's band and more recently your high profile stint with Roger Waters. Was it difficult finding time to work on **Scarlet**, and how long did the actual recording take?

Dave: I have no idea how long it took because I started it probably about two years ago. I basically wrote the tunes and I sent finals to the drummer Pete (Riley) and he put his drums down and then he sent the file off to Phil (Williams). He put his bass on and then he sent it back to me. That's the way it was kind of progressing, and then one day we were rehearsing for a Keith Emerson tour and were just sort of messing around recording some ideas, and the recording from that afternoon just had so much life and energy to it. I thought that's what was missing. I was overdubbing these little parts and I said music is not like that, it has to grow and it reacts with the people that are playing around you. So I basically scrapped the whole album and I said "Ok new plan, we're going to record this thing live". The actual backing tracks went very quick, maybe two or three days to do all the tracks. We recorded the bass and drums live, also the guitar, but due to the fact that we were using Pete's studio which is a small, low tech studio we didn't really have enough mic's to mic up the guitars properly. However at least I had a live backing track to play to for when I did my guitar parts. I just went into the studio and stood next to the amps, and it just felt great. It was great to record it like that.

Ryan: It was a bit of a return to the old days of recording then?

Dave: Yeah totally. I should have realized it earlier, but that's kind of how all my favorite music was recorded.

Ryan: It's interesting that you've gone back to that method of recording because many musicians that I speak to nowadays tend to work the other way. They don't have to be in the same country and they can send files back and forth and so on.

Dave: Yeah but how much emotion can you get in something like that?

Ryan: I agree with you, but it's surprising because when you listen to a lot of recordings, if you didn't necessarily know how it was done, could you tell the difference?

Dave: I think there's a magic that happens when three people get together, and if you listen hard enough you can here them reacting to each other. Phil would play a particular bass figure and Pete would be straight on it and he'd follow that, and then I would accent that with my guitar and the whole thing would just come alive.

Ryan: Speaking of recording in today's technological age where any sound can be reproduced via keyboards or the computer, I thought it was great that you actually used real string players on **Scarlet**.

Dave: Yeah. I'm a big fan of classical music so it had to be real strings for me. Certain things drive me nuts, like if you go into a health spa and they've got these pan pipes playing, which isn't really pan pipes but keyboards, I'm like "Oh c'mon". I just wanted to have real instruments, and apart from the piano- unfortunately I had to use an electronic piano. I would have loved to use a real one but unfortunately there wasn't one in the studio. I was basically up against a deadline. I gave myself a certain amount of time to record the album, and then I got the call as I was recording the album. I got a call from my manager who got a call from Roger Waters saying they were looking for a guitarist and I thought "Oh c'mon, I just want to finish my album" [laughing]. I basically had to take

another year off to finish it. I finished it last Christmas between the American and Australian tours. It was a real struggle because I didn't stop from one tour to the next. I was in there recording Christmas eve and back in on Boxing Day. I was recording on New Years day. Every day I had available I was in there trying to finish it.

Ryan: You managed to get it done and have it available for people to purchase at the shows correct?

Dave: Correct. That was one of the main reasons why I wanted to finish it over that period. I had spoken to Roger about it and he said "Yeah sure, you can sell your album if you want".

Ryan: That's great because if people come to see Roger's show and maybe have never seen or heard you before and like what they hear, they can go out to the merch table and pick it up.

Dave: Yeah. So I thought I had to finish it, there was no two ways about it. I'm really glad it worked out because at the time I was going slightly crazy to be honest. It's best to be able to have a bit of space when you're recording, to do a vocal track and then maybe come back in a day or so to listen to whether it's good or not. I was just throwing things down. There are one or two vocal things I would have liked to have sung better but at the time I had this throat infection from the last tour that I couldn't get rid of, because I was singing all the time. I was really up against time and I really had to finish it and part of the reason for that also, apart from having it available for sale at the shows, was when you're playing someone else's music, trying to play and sing, it's really nice to have something that says this is me, this is what I'm doing if you're interested.

Ryan: I either read or heard an interview where you said you don't think you really have a 'lead vocalist' type of voice. Do you still feel that way? Because I think I'd have to disagree with you.

Dave: Ok... thank you [laughing]. This is my first attempt and I've never sung lead vocals before on a record. The first time was singing a few songs on the Keith Emerson tour and it was ok I think.

Ryan: Well I heard you do "Lucky Man" acoustically on the Rock Line radio show and that was awesome for just two guys in the studio.

Dave: Thank you. That was a really nice moment and I'm not entirely sure how that happened. We hadn't rehearsed it or anything, we just kind of went in there and when we finished, the interviewer just had this look on his face like "Oh my God" [laughing]. I guess I'm a perfectionist and I don't feel like I can sing as well as I'd like to be able to, but I guess that's what keeps pushing you forward. The first album is done now and I've got some confidence. I've had some amazing comments about the album, but also about my voice as well so that helps instill some confidence. I think what I hear on one or two of the tracks is someone trying to sing as opposed to someone just singing. With the confidence, you just think this is how I sound, I'm just going to go and do it. So hopefully next time it will be even better. I always set my goals ridiculously high anyway.

Ryan: So you feel that you're still finding your legs so to speak as a vocalist?

Dave: Yeah. I listen to people like Jeff Buckley, Glenn Hughes, Stevie Wonder and Curtis Mayfield, guys with really amazing voices and I think "Ok, I've got a way to go yet".

Ryan: Well there are a few Buckley moments on *Scarlet*.

Dave: Ok that's cool.

Ryan: You stretched your voice on those tracks and went outside your comfort zone a bit. It's interesting that you mentioned Jeff Buckley because he was a freak of nature as a vocalist.

Dave: Yeah. He's my favorite male vocalist ever basically. I just totally adore his voice. When I first heard him it almost gave me license to sing like that in a way, because I hadn't heard too many people like him doing Benjamin Britten. There's a Britten tune on his first album that he just did a wonderful job on. He just had a ridiculous range, the passion and control.

Ryan: Sure I mean look what he did with Leonard Cohen's "Hallelujah". I don't think too many people would disagree that Cohen is a better writer and poet than he is a singer.

Dave: Yeah [laughing]

Ryan: That song was up for grabs and Buckley just took it and made it his own.

Dave: Yeah I think it's his song. I can't listen to any other version of it.

Ryan: Then the song started turning up in Shrek. They sure as hell weren't going to put Leonard's version in that movie; it would have put the kids to sleep.

Dave: [laughing] They didn't use Jeff's version in Shrek though did they?

Ryan: I thought they did.

Dave: I found it really disappointing because I loved the film, but c'mon use the right version [laughing].

Ryan: Music that has many different facets or feelings is often referred to as possessing the light and shade effect, which I think is something you successfully achieved on this recording. Was that your intention when you were writing these songs, to really highlight these different flavors so to speak?

Dave: They just kind of developed like that. I have a fairly eclectic music taste, but I like the fact that you mentioned the light and shade dynamics because that's a huge part of it for me, it really is.

Ryan: You did it two different ways. The album itself has harder, funkier tracks and you've also got the mellower ballads, but not only did you separate the songs that way, you also employed the light and shade effect within the same song as well.

Dave: I just love the way you can build a song. You can start off fairly quietly in an acoustic manner or whatever and just build it up throughout the whole piece.

Ryan: Two of my favorite songs are the last two, "Rain...(On Another Planet)" and "Harkness". On the later track you created this really serene vibe and then suddenly you just kick in with that guitar riff which takes the song to a completely different place. To me, as an avid listener of music that's what it's all about.

Dave: Well that's great. Some of my favorite comments about the album have been people saying that they not only love the dynamics, but the more they listen to it the more stuff they hear, which is great. All of my favorite albums- some of them I wasn't even sure if I liked it the first time I heard it. I would go "Ok, I'm not quite sure what happened there, I'll have to check that out again", but you'd just grow to love it and all it's little intricacies. It's

sometimes a case of hearing something you haven't heard before I guess, but also going back to the dynamics, that's another huge reason for us recording live because the dynamics are right there. Phil and Pete listen to each other and they're just wonderful players, you just really feel that power of three people just going for it. The end of "Angel" I guess is one of those moments. They are such great improvisers as well. There were a couple of tunes where I said "Here are the arrangements up until this point, this last chorus and then from there let's see what happens" [laughing]. Generally that's kind of what happened at the end of "Rain" as well. Pete and Phil started doing some incredible stuff and I just thought "Ok I don't really want to cover this with a solo", but I couldn't just leave it as a bass and drum piece either [laughing]. So I ended up doing a two minute guitar solo at the end of it, hopefully with enough spaces so that you can still hear what they're doing as well.

Ryan: You do give the songs the necessary space to breathe and as a result they end up being pretty lengthy don't they?

Dave: If someone had told me before I started the album that I was going to record a nine and half minute song I would have just laughed and said they were crazy [laughing].

Ryan: You mentioned earlier about this record having the live feel to it, which it certainly has. Having said that I'm assuming that having played previously with both Phil and Pete in Keith's band and knowing them so well, that it was a no-brainer having them as your rhythm section on this album wasn't it?

Dave: Yeah. Basically what happened when I first got together with Keith was he asked me if I could put a band together. He lives in L.A. and I'm mostly living in England, so I went about getting a bass player and drummer to put a band together. I asked him if he wanted to have name players and he said "No, just make sure they're nice people". Pete is the best drummer I know and also a lovely guy and Phil is exactly the same. I had never played with them together. I had played with Pete in a jazz fusion band that I play in sometimes, and Phil who normally sings with Tony Hadley from Spandau Ballet, I first met him playing in a rock covers band. I knew they were both good and I just had a feeling that with the three of us together, that something good would happen. I can't wait to explore that on the next album.

Ryan: Some of these songs on **Scarlet** go back a few years and if I remember correctly you were performing one of the songs live with Keith, it was "Just Crazy" wasn't it?

Dave: Yes. It went down pretty well. I had this little pedal called a boomerang and I basically just played and sang the whole tune and when it got to the end, as I was playing I just recorded the last two chords and then played it back and did a bit of a solo, on a twelve string I think it was actually. Everyone had a solo section in Keith's band but I don't have a big ego and have a need to go and do a guitar solo. Keith would say "Well just go ahead and do something because I need a toilet break or whatever" [laughing]. So I took that opportunity to do something different.

Ryan: Do something a little different and it's also a great way to promote yourself at the same time.

Dave: Yeah. That was kind of secondary though. I never usually do things like that or for those reasons. I'm a terrible salesman and terrible at promoting myself. I just love playing and that seemed to go down well. When we had our last couple of gigs in Japan we played "Static" as well which I had started writing as a possible track for a Keith Emerson Band album. I also had another tune for **Scarlet** which was actually a reggae tune but I just figured there were a lot of different styles on the album already and I didn't really want a reggae track, I just wanted something a little harder.

Ryan: Are you saving that track and is there a chance we'll get to hear it eventually?

Dave: Yeah I guess I'll stick it on the next album. It's a great track.

Ryan: Do you feel that this collection of songs represents who you are as a musician and as a person right now?

Dave: No I've moved on a few steps from there. I'm obviously very proud of it but because some of the tunes are a little older, I have new influences now and new things I've been listening to and new things that I want to try out.

Ryan: For yourself as an artist you've lived with your creation for so long but we as the audience always tend to be one step behind that way.

Dave: I think it depends on who the artist is. I think what generally happens is you have all the time you need to record your first album, and then if you're successful you end up having two weeks to do the next one. So everything is fresher and there's a faster turnover. As far as my career goes, there's no rush about it [laughing]. Everything just happens how it happens, so at the moment I've got an added luxury of being able to work on my next album without the added pressures of having to go out and tour.

Ryan: So you don't necessarily feel the need to get another album out there quickly to capitalize on the high profile work you did with Roger and the fact that more people know who you are now?

Dave: I don't think so. I just think certain albums take time. We talked about Jeff Buckley earlier; his first album *Grace* didn't do anything for ages. It just sat around the shops for months and all of a sudden it started picking up a little bit and more people started hearing about it. I hope that's what will happen with this album, I don't know. As I said I'm not really that great publicizing myself. I'm going to take my time and record the music that I want to record and be happy with it. Then when it's ready I'll put it out and see if people like it. The business side of music doesn't interest me at all.

Ryan: Sure because you hear some real horror stories about the music industry and how musicians get totally screwed.

Dave: Obviously with Roger everything was the best of the best and you couldn't ask for better. It was just so nice to be in a situation where you know everything is straight down the line and there's not going to be any problems. It's an amazing organization and I'm very fortunate to be involved.

Ryan: Tell me a bit about the fantastic acoustic CD *Playing with Fire* which was re-mastered, that you recorded with Fraser Thorneycroft-Smith.

Dave: Thank you. I'm very proud of that. Classical guitar is a very attractive sound for musicians and non musicians. It was recorded live in one evening basically, so yeah it has a very special place in my heart. I put one of the tracks up on MySpace and it's been getting the most wonderful comments and I'm thinking "Ok I recorded this..."

Ryan: In 1996, so about 12 years ago.

Dave: Yeah that sounds about right. So that was done 12 years ago and people are just discovering it now which I think is great.

Ryan: I noticed that you mentioned that by re-issuing this disc, it not only gave you an opportunity to make some sonic improvements but more importantly it gave you a chance to put some newer photos of yourself in the booklet [laughing].

Dave: Oh god yeah. Those were embarrassing photos [laughing]. What can I say? It was the 90's but I was still in the 80's. These things happen [laughing]. You don't normally worry about these things as a musician.

Ryan: Maybe not but sometimes these things come back to bite you on the behind [laughing].

Dave: Yes they sure do [laughing]. I just wanted to fix it up a little bit sound wise for the simple reason –when I do my next album it’s going to be out when it’s ready, because it will be out forever or at least for the foreseeable future. So why would I want to rush and get it done a month or two early when it will be out for maybe the next ten, twenty or thirty years? It’s great that people are still playing *Dark Side of the Moon* thirty years later. As far as record companies saying “C’mon you’ve got to get another album out” I’m like “Go away”.

Ryan: Other than your own projects, what other albums have you contributed to that you’re proud to have been a part of? I would imagine the tribute for Eric Roche must have been very special for you?

Dave: Yeah, it’s strange that you bring that up because I was thinking about him only yesterday. I’m thinking about going out and doing some solo acoustic shows, mainly because I find it quite terrifying, so that’s always a good reason to do something, but also to improve my voice. When you just sit there with an acoustic guitar and voice you often feel very exposed, so it’s a great way to improve that way. I’ve got these acoustic guitars and maybe they don’t sound that great, and I just remembered seeing Eric playing and what an amazing sound he had, so I went on his website to see what kind of gear he was using. I was just thinking that it’s over two years now.

Ryan: How long had you known Eric, you were both at the ACM (Academy for Contemporary Music) at the same time weren’t you?

Dave: Yeah we were both at the ACM so I would see him a couple of times a week for years. I remember at the funeral when we contributed the track, I was talking to some of the guys and said “We should do this annually” and everyone said “Yeah, yeah lets do it” and of course a year passes, and I guess that’s the useful part of the music business in that it actually takes someone to come along and say “Right I want a track from you and track from you, or you organize this and print this up”.

Ryan: Someone needs to be the catalyst.

Dave: Exactly. Everyone is so busy and it’s a real shame. At the funeral I saw people I hadn’t seen for years and it’s a shame that someone has to die to bring us all back together again. He was such a sweet and amazing guy.

Ryan: Obviously playing with Keith and Roger definitely exposed you to a wider audience. In Keith’s band you had room to stretch out and improvise whereas with Roger things were a bit more regimented.

Dave: Yes they were.

Ryan: Was it difficult to adapt?

Dave: Yes it was [laughing]. I got told off once or twice [laughing]. Not from a playing point of view but definitely from a visual point of view. I had literally just come off from playing with Keith, being the lead vocalist and thinking “Ok I’ve got to put on a show here because everyone looks at the lead vocalist” and I was just trying to be as entertaining as possible. I wasn’t trying to do exactly the same thing with Roger but certainly I was moving a lot more in the beginning of the tour than I was towards the end [laughing]. I understood it completely and I saw one of the videos and there was a lot of activity on my side of the stage compared to the other side and it detracts – because it’s not about that with Roger. It’s about the light show, the visuals and the amazing sound system that he uses. What can I say? It was youthful enthusiasm. It’s never an ego thing, I just move when I play. It’s something that I can’t help doing. It made me think about it when I was in the studio last Christmas doing some more guitar parts. I was standing next to my amps and I was all mic’ed up and I had my headphones on and Pete and Phil were really loud in the headphones, and I’m just dancing around and I realized that there was no one in the world watching me. I just can’t help it, that the way I feel and express music.

Ryan: Roger has a history of employing top notch guitar players and of course he played with another Dave for a long time who is a pretty good player in his own right. Was it intimidating for you to step into his shoes, not only to play his parts but to sing them as well?

Dave: It was. I was never a huge Pink Floyd fan.

Ryan: That's interesting.

Dave: I know. Most of my guitar player friends would have sawed their own legs off to get the gig. When I got the call from my manager and he told me he had Roger's manager on the phone, I said "Roger who?" I didn't know. In that way I thought I'm sure I can play this stuff it's all just really slow isn't it? [laughing] It didn't scare me in that respect.

Ryan: When you said "Roger Who?" You knew who Roger Waters was right?

Dave: No I didn't.

Ryan: Wow!

Dave: When they said they were doing "Comfortably Numb" I thought, great I really love The Scissor Sisters [laughing] (ed note: The Scissor Sisters had a disco hit in 2004 with their version of the Pink Floyd classic)

Ryan: I know you had a rather unique audition.

Dave: It was a disaster it really was. The more I looked into the audition and the more I found out about Roger, the music and the places they were going to be playing, I thought it was going to be really scary. From a technical point of view the guitar parts certainly are a lot easier than anything I played with Keith, but you've got to get them right. Everyone knows them and is expecting to hear those first couple of notes of "Wish You Were Here" or whatever, so the actual pressure involved when you come to play even the simplest stuff, can really stress you out.

Ryan: It just magnifies everything doesn't it?

Dave: Yeah. I was going onstage thinking that everyone in the audience knows these lyrics better than I do and if I messed up everybody would notice. So from that point of view it was a fairly daunting task, but it was also a lot of fun.

Ryan: Your first gig with Roger was a pretty big one wasn't it?

Dave: Yeah it was a small warm up in front of about seventy five thousand people [laughing]. It was actually broadcast live on Portuguese T.V. and appears to be available as a DVD in various places. This was the first gig so the last thing I wanted to see was cameras flying around. I had enough to think about as it was [laughing]. It went ok but the later gigs were a lot better and I'm hoping, because we actually did film several shows, so depending on whether Roger likes it, hopefully one day it will be pieced together as a live DVD.

Ryan: So we might actually get to see you immortalized on DVD.

Dave: I would love to see that show. Not even so much what I'm doing but just to see the whole thing. Because of the inner ear monitors that I was using to avoid any clutter or confusion, I had the very basics. I had a click track, my voice and an acoustic. I could already hear the drums because he was right behind me, and I could hear my electric guitar, and that was pretty much it. So there were whole chunks of the show where I wasn't hearing anything anybody else was playing. That was what I felt I needed to perform the best I could. With Keith it's all about the improvising and the interaction.

Ryan: You're feeding off of each other.

Dave: Yeah and it was the same when I was recording my album, but this wasn't about that at all. It's about getting the parts right and letting the music and the visuals take people on this special little spiritual trip that they all seem to go on when they come to the concerts. For me to do the best job that I could I didn't want to be hearing too much of what other people were doing. Not because I don't appreciate what they're doing, I just wanted to concentrate on doing the best job that I could. I could hear if my acoustic guitar was slightly out of tune or if it was buzzing, any feedback or whatever, because there was nothing else to get in the way. Also if someone else makes a mistake it doesn't throw you off.

Ryan: I understand you did meet David Gilmour when he was rehearsing with his band next door. That was a unique situation in that he was rehearsing with one half of Pink Floyd with Rick Wright and Roger was rehearsing with the other half with Nick Mason, what was that like?

Dave: Yeah we were rehearsing in studios right next to each other and we sort of met up in the canteen. I was sitting talking to some of the guys and Dave actually just came over and said "Hi I'm Dave" and I said "Me too" [laughing]. I told him I was going to be his stunt double for a couple of months and he said "It's not too difficult is it?" and I said "Well..." He was lovely, and seems like a really sweet guy, but then Roger is a really sweet guy as well so I don't see why... well I don't know. Everyone has got their own way of doing stuff I guess.

Ryan: I guess when you're on the outside looking in so to speak, it's hard understand their history together.

Dave: Yeah and music is such, especially if you're writing things yourself, it's such a precious thing and you want to give it the best send off you possibly can. I mean towards the end of mixing my album I was having arguments with the engineer. I'm paying him and I'm having arguments with him, because its important for me to try and get it to the places that I hear in my head, but also because he had put so much work into it and gotten attached to it and was hearing it different ways.

Ryan: You certainly don't want your music ending up in a tug of war.

Dave: No and that's basically what was happening with Pink Floyd towards the end and I'm very happy for that [laughing].

Ryan: Sure because as long as their relationship is cordial at best that means you still have a gig.

Dave: Yeah I'm very happy. I wouldn't have had this year and a half.

Ryan: When you were traveling with Keith you would all hang out on your days off and obviously touring with Keith was done on a much smaller scale. How would you spend your days off with Waters? Is he the type of guy you could go and catch a movie with?

Dave: There wasn't a huge difference. Roger would still take us all out for dinner and it's an important thing for him, despite the fact that it's his name on the top of all the posters. He really cares about every single person in the band and actually all the crew as well. There would always be a band and crew dinner towards the end of the tour and he would go around and remember everyone's name, I mean everyone, from the lorry drivers to the guy who would do the lights or whatever. He's an incredible character, ridiculously intelligent, very sharp and very funny. He's very witty and very generous with everyone.

Ryan: I know you probably share something in common, in that you both love classical music and of course he did his own opera project, did you get

a chance to discuss things on that level at all?

Dave: Yeah I did actually ask him how he went about composing certain parts. He was doing it all on computer which I thought was great because when I wrote the string arrangements on my album I did it the old fashioned way, with manuscripts because that's what I like. Are using tapes for this?

Ryan: Yes.

Dave: I think they're great. I love cassette tapes.

Ryan: Yeah but then I'll transfer it over to CD to transcribe it.

Dave: Ok that makes sense. The guys in Keith's band were really taking the mickey out of me, because when we were rehearsing I had my little cassette player and they were going "What is that?" [laughing] I just like things like that, that still work.

Ryan: We're not talking about a DAT player right?

Dave: No I'm talking about cassettes. They're really cheap now and you can get loads of them for hardly any money [laughing]. Yeah so I got off the track their slightly but I did talk to Roger about some classical stuff.

Ryan: He said that "You were an absolute natural and had a lot of technical ability and in many respects you were like a virtuoso concert violinist". That's a pretty nice compliment coming from your boss.

Dave: Yeah I know. When I first read that I was quite choked up actually. He treats the music, especially something like *Dark Side of the Moon*, that's his version of *The Planets* or whatever. If you went to see an orchestra perform *The Planets* they wouldn't be improvising half way through "Mars" or have a stupid drum solo in "Venus". You would expect to hear it as it was written, and that was his approach on this. For me that was an easy thing to do having transcribed for Guitar Magazine for about ten or twelve years. I'm not only used to writing stuff out but reproducing it as well. If you're not improvising you try to get it as close to the original as possible, so it was like an extension of that for me, and also because of the teaching which I've done a lot of as well. I would teach particular classic session styles which would include classic solos. I would show them how to play something like "Hotel California" or "Sultans of Swing" or whatever, actually just reproducing guitar parts, so that was an easy job for me.

Ryan: Are there plans to work with Roger again at this point?

Dave: I've been asked if I'm available for a certain part of next year because there might be some more work with Roger so I'm keeping my fingers crossed. I'd love to do something else again. I did that charity gig which was just him and I and a school orchestra which was for the VH1 Save the Music show in New York. That was a blast and such good fun.

Ryan: What did you guys play?

Dave: They flew me over for a few days [laughing] and we played one number which was "Another Brick in the Wall" but it was a long version. Roger could have knocked out a version of it, but he decided to write orchestral score for it. I had never heard it before until rehearsal but I thought it was really cool. It had a completely different arrangement. We've finished the tour obviously, but he has been having such a great time playing and most of the band has said that they've never seen him this happy before. He's just having the time of his life and who wouldn't you know? You record an album and you can go out and perform it thirty years later and people are still going absolutely crazy for it, that's wonderful.

Ryan: After playing these songs night after night do you have a new appreciation for Pink Floyd's music now?

Dave: Yeah. I guess music like Pink Floyd's could easily be looked down upon by musicians who are trying to play faster or trying to play more complex chord changes or whatever. However going out and playing those tunes you realize the beauty, the simplicity and the space. I've never played tunes that slow before to be honest. [laughing]

Ryan: Prior to playing these songs did you perhaps have a preconceived notion of what Floyd's music was that maybe wasn't correct?

Dave: No I just never really investigated it. I'd obviously liked what I'd heard, things like "Shine On", "Wish You Were Here" and "Welcome To The Machine" I thought was a great track. Most of the songs off of *Dark Side* and *Wish You Were Here* I thought were really great; I just hadn't really investigated them much beyond that.

Ryan: Do you find teaching others to be equally or more rewarding than creating your own music?

Dave: Not so much. It is nice if they haven't been playing long and you can kind of show a student something. Their face lights up and all of a sudden they can play something they never thought they'd be able to play. That's really nice, but to be honest I didn't pick up the guitar to show other people how to play [laughing]. I picked up the guitar to play music that was in my head and was driving me nuts.

Ryan: Was the guitar your first instrument?

Dave: No I actually started on piano. Two of my uncles played piano, their father played piano and my grandfather as well. I come from a long line of piano players so it seemed natural that I should play the guitar [laughing]. We didn't have a piano at home but when I would go to school or to my grandmothers house I would just pluck myself down in a particular room and I would just play. I just loved creating tunes.

Ryan: Do you remember what that first piece of music was that inspired you to become a musician?

Dave: Oh wow! [pauses] I think the first tune I ever tried to play, a friend of my fathers had a plastic guitar which had one string on it and I sat there for about five or ten minutes and I managed to work out "Those Were The Days" by Mary Hopkins.[laughing] I don't know if you remember that one because it's very old. [sings] "Those were the days my friend, I thought they'd never end". I managed to work out the whole melody line just on that one string [laughing]. Then I decided to get a guitar that actually had six strings. Once I had my six string guitar, I got a music book from school which was *The Best of Bread*. So the first proper tune I actually played was "Make it With You", a really great tune. What can I say? I knew some kids whose parents had really great record collections; unfortunately my mom had things like *The Best of Bread* and The Carpenters. Unfortunately those were my first influences [laughing].

Ryan: I wonder if that subconsciously explains why you weren't into Pink Floyd originally.

Dave: Maybe [laughing]

Ryan: We could probably do a whole session on that topic but my role isn't to be a psychiatrist here Dave.

Dave: [laughing]

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