

Live Among the White Trash: A history of no-man on stage



“There are no **No-Man** concerts scheduled for the foreseeable future.”

(from the official no-man website)

Anyone who has followed no-man’s career over the previous ten years or so will be acutely aware that the band does not play live. If no-man “exist” as a band at all – and their infrequent releases mean they are more an ongoing understanding between two men rather than an active unit – it is only in the studio. Over a series of uncompromising albums no-man’s music has become ever more complex, yet ironically, “live sounding” than the release which proceeded it. But this organic “liveness” is mainly an illusion; the feeling of spontaneity often the result of numerous edits and takes which only the precision of studio work can produce.

Others have tried to perform equally difficult music live: Radiohead ambitiously thrusting their clicks-and-cuts post-rock upon the world’s stadiums, for example. But for a variety of reasons, no-man simply haven’t tried – at least, not since 1994 and not until a one-off performance in 2006. The only comparable case is Talk Talk’s retreat into the studio in the late 1980s. Both bands have undoubtedly crafted their best work without going near an audience.

But it wasn't always so. no-man were once very much a live act, promoting singles and albums with dates and undertaking two full-blown tours – though they rarely played outside London, never went further north than Newcastle, and never played outside Great Britain. The traditional rock strategy of combining frequent record releases with gigs did get the band noticed: no-man's media profile was at its height during their most prolific live period in the early 1990s. Like thousands of bands before and after them, no-man trudged through a combination of support slots and headliners at pubs, clubs and student venues – 62 gigs in all, it's thought.

It's been 20 years since no-man – Tim Bowness and Steven Wilson – first made music together. Discographies abound. But their live performances have received very little attention. Indeed, a recent snapshot survey of active no-man fans on discussion groups found that only a handful out of more than 300 had seen them live. There is no list of venues, dates, or setlists anywhere online – and the band don't have one either. Indeed, Tim Bowness, who has provided much of the information presented here, admits to being slack when it came to maintaining the no-man live archive:

"Weirdly, while looking and failing to find dates of no-man gigs, I found a diary from the early 1980s that scrupulously recorded my every fatuous utterance and performance during 1982 and 1983. Clearly, after that I lost the will to list".

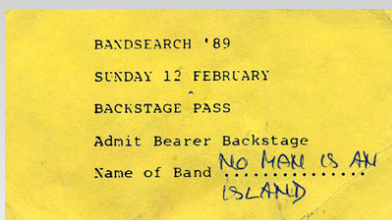
This, therefore, is an attempt to fill most of those gaps and hopefully inspire others to regain "the will to list" where I have failed to find the facts. It's not complete but it sheds bright light on the live work of a band whose gigs have become legendary due to their rarity. A chronology of no-man's history from 1987 to 1994 follows the text.

(One more point: No Man, No-Man, No-man or no-man? I choose the latter. It might not be grammatically correct, but Tim prefers it. no-man it is).

1989

The first track Tim and Steven recorded together was released on a compilation in 1987, but it wasn't until very early 1989 that no-man (then working under the name of No Man Is An Island) first played live at the Rosemary Branch pub/theatre in Islington, London. The maximum capacity for no-man's performance is likely to have been no more than 60-100 according to the pub's current owners. The line-up at this time was twice its current size: Tim sang, Steven played keyboards and tapes, Ben Coleman was on violin and Stuart Blagden (aka "The Still Owl") on guitar. Stuart had previously been in a Manchester-based band with Tim called Still, which despite high praise from then-local radio DJ Mark Radcliffe ("the most important band since Joy Division") lasted just two months and two gigs in 1983.

The gap of more than two years between the very first no-man material and their live debut meant the band already had a considerable amount of material to draw upon (see appendix). As a result the live sound was similar to that of the music found on **Speak**, which compiled songs recorded from 1988-1989. "We started off producing very delicate and textured live music," says Tim, who remembers the "indifferent, slightly aggressive, pub atmosphere" of this first gig. "Although a few people came up to us afterwards telling us how much they liked what we did, in certain respects it was a little like This Mortal Coil playing a Dumpy's Rusty Nuts support!" He concedes that in the early days audiences were made up of "a few friends and disinterested inveterate drinkers."



The second gig was on Sunday 12th February at an event called "Bandsearch". Winning a Battle of the Bands competition is usually a sure-fire kiss of death but history shows that no-man escaped the curse. Tracks played were *Dull Day* (later known as *Long Day Fall*), *Forest Almost Burning*, *Heaven's Break*, *The Miracle Game* (which was never released), *Life Is Elsewhere* and *The Girl From Missouri*. The band entered as a joke but still walked off with the title on their home turf of the Pavilion, Hemel Hempstead. One of the judges was none other

than Jakko, guitarist with Level 42 and future member of King Crimson veterans 21st Century Schizoid Band.

Long-term collaborator Michael Bearpark, who had played with Tim in Plenty and would do so again with Samuel Smiles, was also at this gig. “Tim introduced me to Steve shortly after they met, just after they’d made the first duo recordings as no-man,” he recalls. “I went to see them a lot when they played live - though not every show – mainly because they were good! But also because I knew Tim.”

Mike kept a diary throughout this time – a source which has provided much of the information found here. He recalls no-man being favourites with the judges, if not the crowd. “They were competing against some very slick cabaret acts, and seemed completely out of place”. Steven also won a flanger pedal for “best instrumentalist” as keyboard player and arranger. But that wasn’t all. “Believe it or not, one of the other prizes for winning this was a “professionally” edited video of the performance, which I still have,” says Steven. “I can’t say that I have ever been able to face watching it”. (note: since writing this, Steven has finally faced his demons and watched the video to produce the set-list above). And there was more. “We also ‘won’ a couple of days in a professional studio,” says Tim, “which we used to record the appalling *Girl From Missouri* single.”

The first of a series of occasional “acoustic” gigs took place on 12th March at King’s College London, where Tim and Steven performed with a grand piano. Two more gigs with the full line-up followed in the summer. A gig at the 100 Club in central London (undated, but during the early summer) featured support from what Mike Bearpark describes as a “James Dean-outfitted Japanese language student” who bought a large crowd from his school. “The Japanese crowd [was] in hysterics.” Mike remembers the 100 Club being well-suited venue for no-man’s jazz-influenced art rock approach. *The Girl From Missouri* stood out as an early live favourite “partly because of the live balance of improvisation against strict arrangement,” according to Mike. “Stuart, who is primarily a classical guitarist, and Ben [were] able to develop chord/melody/noise, which on its own would probably have been too unpalatably ‘arty’ for many, but gave edge to the song arrangements. A striking combination.” Tim’s view of *The Girl...* is more concise: “surprisingly popular live, though utter shit on record.”

The first recorded evidence of no-man live is of a gig at the Production Village in Cricklewood, North London on Saturday 10th June. *Dull Day* opens the set with an improvised “overture” before heading into the track recognisable from the version recorded years later. The sampled voice of a child singer recorded on short wave radio which would later appear on **Speak** and *Iris Murdoch Cut Me Up* leads into *Forest Almost Burning* - the first opportunity to hear a no-man track with Stuart Blagden’s guitar and Steven Wilson’s keyboards to the fore. The sombre, art-rock mood continues with more improvised vocals over the top of a taped pornographic monologue by an American woman which leads into *Bleed*. It’s lyrically similar to later versions but musically is a perfect example of just how quickly no-man’s music mutated: the two-part build and climax of later versions is present, but the aggressive industrial drum loop which characterises *Bleed*’s latter half on record is here a far more conventional rock rhythm.

Heaven’s Break – the only track to last almost every phase of no-man live - follows. The revelation here is that the closing harmonica part which (to these ears) was first heard on the re-recorded version in 1999 is present, albeit very low in the mix. Still, this is possibly the no-man song that changes the least throughout the band’s career. Another example of no-man re-cycling pervades the next song, *The Miracle Game*, as its most prominent violin line was later re-used on *Kiss Me Stupid*. Otherwise the two songs couldn’t be more different: *The Miracle Game* is down-tempo and with another layer of déjà vu as the drum pattern is reminiscent of that used in *And The Swallows Dance Above The Sun* by Porcupine Tree. The more conventional tone continues with *Life Is Elsewhere* before the aural pornography returns accompanied by more improvised, wordless vocals. This is a difficult trick to pull off (no pun intended). The combination of taped sample and live voice is a powerful one, but the swooning nature of Tim’s vocal sounds as if an attempt is being made to mirror the lusty actions being related by the unknown woman. One wonders whether the audience found this a stroke of genius or a pretentious folly.

The set ends with the infamous *The Girl From Missouri*. As an art-rock three-minute pop opera it certainly makes more sense at the end of this highly theatrical performance than it does as a stand-alone single, encapsulating the various moods of the concert in one song. Overall the mood of the gig is dark, experimental, thoughtful and dramatic – all tones which no-man would continue to dip into over the next 17 years, but never again with the same intensity. While later gigs and releases would highlight playfulness and humour, the Production Village performance presents an earnestness far removed from the rugged pop which would become no-man fare within months.

The show is thought to have been Stuart Blagden's last gig with no-man. Tim, Steven and Ben briefly considered replacing Stuart with former Plenty guitarist Brian Hulse, "but it wasn't right for us at the time", says Tim. "Brian was an excellent guitarist, but had a very clean, spiky and economical style that didn't seem right for what the band wanted to do. He wasn't as flamboyant as either Stuart or Steven, so we decided to see how we'd sound as a 'power trio' with backing tapes." Mike Bearpark recalls a rehearsal at Ben's flat, "where it was clear that Steven's very different approach from Stuart to guitar would work. More direct and hard hitting."

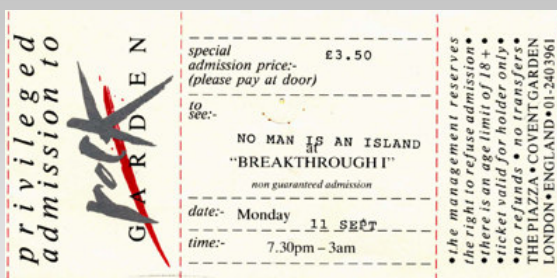
It would be easy to assume that the departure of Stuart and the beginning of no-man's beat-driven material happened simultaneously. But Steven Wilson's chronology of when songs were written and demoed (see appendix) suggests the band must have continued playing material from the first live phase of no-man for about another four gigs. The first piece of **Swagger** material, *Flowermouth*, wasn't written until August.

Steven believes the band were definitely down to a three-piece by the Covent Garden Rock Garden gig of 31st July. This latter gig is thought to be the only time the band performed a cover version of *Atmosphere* by Joy Division. "Atmosphere used to segue into a few lines from Van Morrison's *Astral Weeks* (it's the same chords)," recalls Steven. Unfortunately there are no recordings of no-man playing this combination of covers. (The band also demoed *Suzanne* by Leonard Cohen, but it's not thought to have been played live).

The band gradually began their journey away from the ambience of **Speak** and towards what Tim describes as "a hard rockin' 'beauty and the beats' combo" in the late summer and autumn of 1989. Although the sometimes hostile pub audience reaction to the quieter material was a consideration in the change of style, the driving factor was Tim and Steven's growing interest in acts using samplers within dance music. Hip-hop bands such as Public Enemy, A Tribe Called Quest and De La Soul were a major influence. Tim: "Because of our very different musical heritage (Ambient, Art Rock and singer songwriters), we felt we could bring something unique to this exciting musical explosion of the late 1980s. At the time, because we were perceived as a Rock band with beats and I was from the North, we got caught up in the emerging indie dance/Madchester scene and that led to our first contracts".

The "Swagger" sound was characterised by "pronounced use of beats and guitars", according to Tim, and was "Trevor Horn-inspired shiny pop", according to Steven. Beat-driven tracks such as *Flowermouth* and *Mouth Was Blue* were typical of the change in direction which marked no-man's second live phase. It's worth noting that this was *not* the start of the looped sound of *Colours*. But unlike the vast majority of the Speak-era material, many songs from the Swagger period did survive into the third live period of no-man which began in 1990. *Life Is Elsewhere* lasted the longest, being played into 1991.

The band had their first encounter with a former member of one of their major influences, Japan, when they played at a convention held at the 100 Club on 27th August. The event, which was organised by the founders of the Japan fanzine 'Bamboo', also featured an appearance by the band's guitarist Rob Dean. A flautist friend of Steven's called Becky (full name Rebecca Clarke) joined no-man's live line-up both for this show and their appearance at the Hampstead Free Festival on 3rd September. Nigel Kennedy and Soft Machine's John Etheridge were also on the bill.



A significant gig for Tim was the performance at the Rock Garden, Covent Garden, London on 11th September. This was his first date with future girlfriend Yvonne (more of whom later). They were to live together for eight years.

The band first met a significant future collaborator on 29th November at The Lady Owen Arms, Islington, London, supporting The Venus Flytrap. Fellow support at this gig was from The Bush Babies, which featured

future Burning Shed co-founder Pete Morgan as "a one-man Pet Shop Boys/Blue Nile", according to Tim. "He and his wife came up to us afterwards to tell us how much they liked what we were doing."

The final live "performance" of the year came in the form of a radio interview with Tim and Steven on a north-west-based local radio station MFN in December. It's notable for the band's early efforts to distance themselves from *The Girl From Missouri*, and also reveals their intention at the time to record an album for Plastic Head records under the title **Prattle**.

1990

1990 was a breakthrough year for no-man, with July's single *Colours* gathering rave reviews. It was also the band's busiest year for gigs. There was a second visit to King's College on Saturday 3rd March. It's thought they were supporting a punkabilly band which Steven Wilson remembers completely sabotaging the no-man slot, for reasons unknown. Mike Bearpark nearly had a fight with the band's sound engineer, and no-man walked off early.

A third trip to the college followed eight days later on Sunday 11th March when the band played four songs acoustically under the names of The Lengthy Pigeon, The Swiss Militia and Ben Coleman. This afternoon engagement was the first meeting with another member of their future musical family, "Lord" Peter Chilvers. "I was on the bill, playing in an embryonic instrumental version of Samuel Smiles with Mike Bearpark," remembers Peter. "Tim was singing (in Hammill-esque form), Ben was on violin and Steven was in fact playing the grand piano."

The set ran as follows: *The Miracle Game*, *Life Is Elsewhere*, *Days In The Trees* and an early version of *Angel Gets Caught In The Beauty Trap*. Tim's reaction to hearing a recording of the concert is characteristically supportive of others' contributions while scathing of his own: "The material...is excellent (as is Steven and Ben's playing). Sadly, my Nick Cave / Cathal Coughlan/Peter Hammill ramblings are far from recognisable or interesting."

He's being typically harsh on himself but it's true that Tim's vocals at this point – and throughout much of no-man's live career – bear little resemblance to his elegant and understated performances in the studio or the gigs of later years. There is a tendency to over-emote, particularly towards each songs' climax. The early version of *Angel*... certainly suffers in this respect, though *Days In The Trees* doesn't: it's possible that the less strong performances occur when there's a desire to compensate for weaker material. Tim makes no apologies for any shortcomings at the gig but he was undoubtedly hampered by the fact that there was no mixing desk at the venue. "I was actually singing acoustically and trying to compete with the instruments, so there was no microphone. Still, that tone, that anger, that lack of sensitivity!"

On a positive note what really shines from this short set is the simplicity of the songs' melodies when transferred to piano, the recurring motif on *Days In The Trees* (overshadowed by the drum loop in the studio version) being the highlight. Despite its flaws this acoustic performance points towards a path the band could have gone down if they hadn't been lured towards the brighter lights and greater contemporary relevance of indie-dance.

A popular venue for the band at this time was the Flag in Wembley, London. "The Flag was an electro-pop/electronica club that was run by two people (one of them we knew as Frank Flag) who were in Gary Numan's circle", says Tim. "They genuinely loved the band (as did their regular audience) and consequently booked us back a lot." 'Frank Flag' was in fact Francis Drake [no joke] who later became a fairly successful Eurobeat DJ under the name of Frankie D. The other half of the Flag duo, "Peter", was the original manager of Tubeway Army, according to Pete Morgan.

There's evidence to suggest that no-man played nine gigs at The Flag in 1990-1991. The band, however, think they didn't do this many. The problem is that with one exception (where a recording exists), there's no way of saying for sure which ones did or didn't take place. Mike Bearpark still has tickets for Flag gigs on 3rd February and 23rd June, and a backstage pass for one on March 17th. His diary also lists a gig on 5th May, though there is no further information.

The infamous Bearpark diary also notes an appearance back at the Covent Garden Rock Garden on 16th March starting at 10pm. Assuming this gig went ahead, it's the only occasion prior to the two tours of 1992/3 that no-man played live on consecutive nights.

Very few musical changes of direction happen overnight, and no-man were no exception. Nonetheless, the Park Royal Hotel gig in London 2nd April may be significant in that Tim recalls it marking the start of another "new sound" which can be seen as the third phase of no-man live. The looped drum rhythms of Madchester - and in particular *Fools Gold* by The Stone Roses - had been festering in the minds of the band and influenced new material such as *Heaven Taste*, *Swirl* and *Love Among the White Trash*, all written around this time.

The high watermark of no-man's new found interest in dance loops was the summer recording and release of *Colours*. Although not directly related to the band's live performances, Steven Wilson recalls "panicking when *Colours* started to get attention because we didn't have anything else in that style, and [!] went back and retro-fitted break-beats to *Days in the Trees* and some other pieces.



"My tape archive tells me that *Days in the Trees* had originally been written and demoed in April 1989 along with *Angel Gets Caught in the Beauty Trap* and another song called *Sit Silent*, in the beat-less **Speak** style, so the break-beat (which I was happy to find fitted perfectly) wasn't added to the song until we needed more material in the *Colours* style."

Despite this change of sound, and just to show that nothing is straightforward in the world of no-man, it's thought a gig at the Robinson College, Cambridge on 25th May may have been as an acoustic duo.

The summer saw no-man on a roll with *Colours* named Single of the Week by Melody Maker and Sounds in July. Tim also appeared on Mark Radcliffe's Hit The North show on Radio Five to promote the single around this time. The band played The Powerhaus in Islington, London on 9th August, and the Boardwalk in Manchester (supporting The Joy) soon after on the 23rd. Music publishers Hit & Run were in attendance at this latter gig and informed the band back at their hotel that a deal would go ahead – though in fact no contracts were signed for several months. The late Paul Young (then-Manchester resident and member of Sad Café and Mike and the Mechanics) was also present that night as he too was published by Hit & Run.

no-man's popularity at The Flag paid off in September when they appeared third on the bill at a London showcase event for the club - at the more central Marquee - on the 13th.



Flyers for the gig (which place the band third after Papertoys and Shakedown) still used the name No Man Is An Island, despite the launch of the shorter title on *Colours*. There were very positive reviews in at least two of the broadsheet music papers. "No Man, quite simply, are exquisite," said Paul Malins in Sounds. "Like a prodigious magician, No Man taunt you with their dexterity, slyly straying from a plaintive whisper to a disturbing scream, without relinquishing their uncanny sense of balance. By rights *Days In The*

Trees... should collapse under the weight of its own ambition, yet somehow it blooms, resulting in a grandiose swoop that sounds something like 'The Blue Nile Play Three Feet High And Rising (Talk Talk Remix)'... While madcap vocalist Tim Bowness, proud owner of the wildest stare in pop, shows off his rather swishy Arabian Knight meets Brian May look, guitarist Steven Wilson is obviously determined to resurrect the "men in dresses" debate that most had thought confined to the dusty annals of history."

Melody Maker's Chris Roberts claimed "They promised me a rose garden and No Man are superbly over-ambitious and have a wonderfully over-inflated sense of their own importance. Various observers mutter about Soft Cell and Genesis, but No Man actually stand or fall somewhere between Japan, **Lodger**, The Associates and a troupe of Trappist monks on monocycles... Pomp rock abounds and every epic song boasts 18 choruses where it should settle for four (*Bleed* and *Flowermouth* are particularly guilty) but that magniloquent violin is always teasing and twirling and fending off ennui... No Man are proud of their effeminacy. Steven, being a sexual politician, convinces some that he is a woman (he's not)... Singer Tim Bowness swaggers and swoons, cries and sighs, and pulls chunks of his hair out every five seconds. Fortunately he has a lot of (leonine) hair. No Man are tremendously theatrical and when their reality matches their fantasies they'll be showstoppers."

On 28th September no-man had scheduled a return date to the scene of their victory in Bandsearch 18 months earlier: the Hemel Hempstead Pavilion. But it didn't go according to plan. Steven Wilson: "We walked out an hour or two before doors because we found out we had been scheduled to play down the bill before some dodgy covers band. Riding high on the exposure that *Colours* had received nationally, we considered ourselves above this. So we walked out! The gig still went ahead without us."

Another member of the no-man family makes his first appearance in this history on Saturday 18th November, when the band played Clare College Cellars in Cambridge. Os (real name Andrew Ostler) was a maths student, gig booker and sound engineer who according to Mike Bearpark arrived at the gig "with the look of a medieval jester." Os would later go on to remix no-man and Bass Communion among others and play with Tim and Mike in Darkroom.

The recording of this gig finds the band fulfilling the potential of the "power trio" envisaged by Tim Bowness. A year on from the lo-fi of the *Swagger* cassette the sound has almost arrived at the polished hard beats of the early One Little Indian period. The gig is notable for its first track being an unreleased song called *Heaven Taste* (no relation to the later instrumental JBK partnership of the same name, but an early example of no-man recycling). It's fast, catchy and combines a Kraftwerk/Pet Shop Boys-esque rhythm track with a soaring violin riff straight from Vienna-era Ultravox. *Days In The Trees* follows; very similar to the single version still eight months away, though with a couple of extra guitar lines. *Mouth Was Blue* goes down well: "They're amazing aren't they?" comments one audience member. "The best band I've ever seen in here," adds her friend.

Colours B-side *Drink Judas* (with Ben's violin leading) is preceded by a plug for the single. *Housekeeping* is described as "another new song", but again is almost identical to the **Loveblows** version released two-and-a-half years later. *Flowermouth's* aggressive opening is greeted with cheers by the crowd: it's clear that the *Swagger* material sounds far better live than it does on tape. *Swirl* is the set closer; using the same rhythm made famous on *Fools Gold* by The Stone Roses exactly one year earlier it also goes down very well. Interplay between Ben Coleman and Steven Wilson is sharp on this performance and it's easy to imagine (harder to prove) that the very positive reaction is heightening everyone's game. Unsurprisingly the crowd genuinely want more: "Come on you bastards," shouts one.

The band return, with one punter requesting *Colours*. But the much-praised single isn't played. Instead the backing tape is fumbled - not for the last time in the band's live history - as *Drink Judas* briefly begins before being corrected in favour of a re-run of *Days In The Trees*. The recording cuts out before the gig's conclusion.

Mike remembers Tim's "thousand-yard stare" from this gig, and has other memories of the night: "We finally notice that the guitar isn't coming through the PA. But bathed in pina colada-scented smoke, no-one much cares."

It's typical of the band's uncompromising approach throughout their career that *Colours* wasn't played that night, or indeed hardly ever. Steven Wilson recalls the critically acclaimed single being performed just two or three times. The view within the band was that while *Colours* was a great track - one which simply couldn't have sounded the way it did were it not for evolving studio technology - it wasn't a great *live* track. A more hungry and less bloody-minded band would have started the set with *Colours*, ended with *Colours*, played *Colours* as an encore and played it again just to make sure the audience got the point. Not no-man. For better or worse that classic single was to stay almost exclusively in the studio - an early sign that the band quietly knew that the stage wasn't the ideal place for their material.

Steven Wilson was quoted at this time as saying "I like extreme reactions. I hate mediocre ones. I'd like people to absolutely adore us or absolutely loathe us. I think that's what we base our live performance on." no-man live certainly divided the critics as the growing number of live reviews showed. A return to the Rock Garden, Covent Garden on 1st December was featured in NME. "No-Man are very clever to hide behind their wonderful single [*Colours*]", wrote Susan Corrigan. "The singer has a slight Robert Plant resemblance, and the otherwise quite capable guitarist stands beside him, demurely, in a frock from Monsoon. No-Man take every horrible genre available to them, chew it up, and spit it out. No, it's not time for Ultravox-and-the Mish-meets-James-Brown... Singing about "Too much love and understanding" was a bit premature. There isn't enough of the stuff around to allow the continued festering of music mutants like this."

There was a return to Cambridge on 5th December, this time at the Selwyn College Snowball. But the early morning audience (which technically makes the gig on the 6th!) was very different from the enthusiastic Cellars crowd. “no-man, beautiful and inappropriate, cleared the room”, says Mike Bearpark of the Snowball. Tim says the two “ball” gigs were “pointless.”



The year ended with a flurry of gigs back at The Flag. A flyer for the 11th October date was billed as “A Decadance Club Night With No-Man”. Steven Wilson remembers that the appearance on 7th December saw no-man sandwiched between Crashing Time at the bottom of the bill and Horse Thieves at the top. The final gig of the year was a support slot on 15th December with Bourbonese Qualk.

Tickets for this gig show the full “...Is An Island” name was still, confusingly, being used, and that no-man’s value had increased by 50p since their earlier shows: entry was £3.

1991

Another year, another Single of the Week (*Days In The Trees* in July), and more one-off gigs around the south of England. Friday 4th January and Friday 29th March saw yet more trips to The Flag, now with no-man headlining.

A superb recording of this last gig at the Flag shows no-man have again made massive musical leaps since the last evidence from November 1990. *Bleed* opens the set, and although it’s clearly the same song heard almost two years ago in Cricklewood it now contains a sharp energy and contemporary feel lacking in the earlier version. A *Drink Judas*-esque sequencer line underpins the complete song and as a result it sounds less like a track of two halves that in does in earlier (and later) performances. Indeed, an almost Krautrock-like rhythm chugs throughout, and Ben and Steven’s playing is distinguished by taut riffs not soloing - a partnership not captured to the same extent in the studio. *Days In The Trees* and *Drink Judas* play pretty close to the single versions, but *Mouth Was Blue*’s facelift gives it a sheen which far out-glamours its previous appearance on **Swagger**.

Kiss Me Stupid plays slightly more laid-back than on **Lovesighs**, with a beat-less middle section highlighting violin. But *Swirl*, supercharged by *Fools Gold*, kicks and stomps. Steven’s guitar circles and rattles while the sampled break which launches the recorded version into its final act is heard for a split second here before the track ends messily and gloriously in noise. *Long Day Fall*, next, is an oddity - as out of place here as it would later seem at the end of the *Only Baby* single; a relic of no-man past but this time with a fade-out reminiscent of the dying moments of Roxy Music’s *For Your Pleasure*. *Heaven Taste* follows a similar course to its November 1990 version, with a backing track sounding more than ever like Kraftwerk’s revamp of *Pocket Calculator* (though this gig proceeds that record by three months). Surprisingly set closers *Life Is Elsewhere* and *Flowermouth* don’t seem to have undergone the makeover given to other material and lack the sparkling modernity of the majority of the set. Overall though we hear no-man surfing on the post-Madchester wave of big tunes and beats with ease. Of all the live recordings this is the one which most sounds the way one would expect the no-man of the One Little Indian years to sound: fresh, fun, ambitious and clever. Despite the successful combination of three men and a drum machine Tim recalls the record label pushing them towards replacing technology with the real thing. And so the first of three recruitment drives for drummers occurred on 5th May. The lucky winner was one Kevin van Doort who (like Chris Maitland after him) was based near Cambridge. Mr van Doort played only one gig with no-man: on Friday 17th June in a marquee at the Clare College May Ball. James Brown’s JB’s headlined, followed by no-man, the Brand New Heavies and three other bands (including Love X&Y, featuring Os and future Burning Shed artist Tim Closs). Mike Bearpark recalls no-man’s short-lived drummer playing over a DAT tape with a minimal drum kit. Tim says their set was cut short by twenty minutes due to the Brand New Heavies doing an extended two-chord jam.

Monday 8th July saw no-man sharing the limelight with fellow One Little Indians L Kage at a label-sponsored showcase event at the Borderline, Tottenham Court Road, London. “A very jolly thigh-slapping time is guaranteed for all”, promised the flyer. This was one of two showcase events for One Little Indian: the other, date unknown, was at The Water Rats in Kings Cross, London alongside L Kage and Airstream. Tim recalls the events being well attended and no-man going down best on both occasions: “I think this pissed off OLI a little as they had high hopes for both Airstream (who did have a minor chart hit) and L Kage.” Dean O’Loughlin from L Kage ultimately got his fifteen minutes of fame when he appeared on Big Brother 2.



King Crimson fans remember the Moles Club, Bath as being the first venue played by the "Discipline" line-up of the band in 1981. Ten years later - on Wednesday 7th August 1991 - no-man made their first gigging trip to Bath here. Another date followed a week later on the 16th at the Powerhaus in Islington, London headlining an indie-dance night. The place was "packed with journalists (and real people) and reviewed very favourably in the Melody Maker", according to Tim.

Indeed it was. "No-Man have it in them to be quite extraordinary indeed," wrote Paul Lester. "No-Man are at least twice as brill as the last fab combo we thrust at you... [they] bulge with the kind of promise we haven't witnessed, ooh, at least since Curve or early Slowdive... No-Man don't just boast a corking LP's worth of mannered electro-pop delights, they're also the most conventionally tall, dark and handsome bastards to enter pop since Billy Mackenzie and Alan Rankine [The Associates]." Mr Lester then compared Tim's looks to Tim Buckley, Ben's to Warren Beatty and Steven to a "non-rugged-pretty-boy-with-androgynous-features."

The review is notable not only for its length and unashamed praise, but also for the fact that it appeared opposite another review by Paul Lester for the then-fledgling Cranberries. "He dismissed them entirely. Proof that journalists rarely get things right!" says Tim.

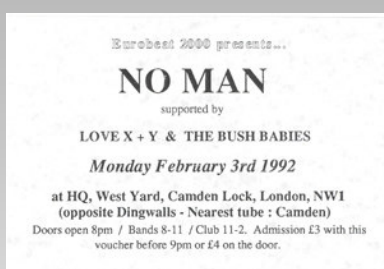
Five days later on the 21st, Tim was a guest once more on Hit the North on Radio Five. Some no-man material was played, none of it live.

Friday 4th November saw what would become another big name play beneath no-man when the band returned to the Borderline, this time supported by Tori Amos. The final gig of the year saw another visit to the Clare College Cellars in Cambridge. Love X and Y were in support.



1992

An atypical year for the band: starting with the usual mix of one-off gigs and an album launch; ending with their first proper tour with three of their musical inspirations.



1st February saw no-man once more back at Clare College in Cambridge, with Love X and Y and Samuel Smiles in support. Two days later the band played the HQ, Camden Lock as the headline act for a new night (from the people behind the Flag) called

Eurobeat 2000. The Bush Babies and Love X and Y were once more in support. Tim remembers The Bush Babies starting their set with a sample taken from *Days In The Trees*. "Pete hadn't realised that he was on the same bill as us. Jokingly, after the gig myself and Steven threatened to sue him. It was after that we became friends".

no-man recorded the first of several BBC radio sessions early in January. *Break Heaven*, *Heartcheat Pop*, *Housekeeping* and *Days In The Trees* were all performed at the BBC's Maida Vale studios, although Steven decided to leave *Days...* off the Radio Sessions CDR to avoid repetition.



The launch for no-man's first album **Lovesighs** was Tuesday 9th April at Ronnie Scott's, Soho, London. Possibly as significant as the gig itself was the presence of three musicians who went on to become frequent collaborators with Tim and Steven. Drummer Steve Jansen, fretless bassist Mick Karn and keyboard player Richard Barbieri had all been in the band Japan, who were one of the most popular bands in the UK by the time they split in 1982. Although their contribution to Japan was frequently overshadowed by the high profile of singer David Sylvian, Jansen, Barbieri and Karn (JBK) had all released a number of records since Japan's demise and enjoyed a large cult following. JBK's presence at this gig stemmed from a phone call from no-man's publishers Hit & Run to Richard Barbieri in which he was told of the band's interest in working with them.

Tim remembers the chain of events which led to the collaboration: "We were looking for a distinctive rhythm section, but after months of auditioning players who were competent Karn and Jansen clones, I thought it might be an interesting idea to approach the players we admired at the time. Two of our favourite albums of 1991 were Talk Talk's **Laughing Stock** and the **Rain Tree Crow** [aka Japan] album. We were both impressed with the sound and playing of both band's rhythm sections, so I jokingly suggested that we approach them. Our publisher Dave Massey from Hit & Run did some investigative work on our behalf, and within six months JBK were working with us and we were being managed by Talk Talk's manager."

Around two weeks of rehearsals preceded the tour at Nomis studios in London. Depeche Mode, John McLaughlin, Betty Boo (a pleasing sight to Ben and Steve Jansen apparently) and Morrissey were also rehearsing there at that time. The newsletter from JBK's own record label Medium noted the next year that "rehearsals went to schedule but there was continual hesitation as to whether or not to go ahead with the tour, due to the record company's lack of commitment." Mike Bearpark remembers Steven choosing to use his own amp and Axxeman box, having discarded much of the high-end gear he was offered as "too rock."

Despite those problems the jaunt did go ahead, with no-man accompanied by tour manager Chris (who'd previously worked with the kiddie hip-hop duo Salt'n'Pepa and somewhat more impressively was Talk Talk's live sound engineer), roadie Oggs (formerly the drummer in Peter and the Test Tube Babies) and Mike Bearpark. Mike was by this time providing technical support to the band. "Steve's guitar style was very different to Stuart [Blagden]'s, and he used to break a lot of strings... so I think it was a question of finding someone they could trust, who was available. Also, maybe I was supposed to share a room with Ben, which neither Tim nor Steve were that keen on!"

The forthcoming tour was first discussed publicly when Tim made another appearance on Mark Radcliffe's Hit The North show on Radio 5. The recorded versions of *Road* and the new single *Ocean Song* were played.

The autumn 1992 "JBK" tour - in support of *Ocean Song* - is undoubtedly the most well-documented and remembered event of no-man's live career. Although JBK had all played very occasional live dates with other artists since Japan split, this was to be the first time that all three had played together on the same stage in 10 years. In one respect this was a great coup for no-man; publicity for the tour, such as it was, meant JBK fans would hopefully turn out for the shows. On the other hand, anyone who didn't like Japan was highly unlikely to go to see no-man once word of JBK's involvement got around.

Either way, no-man's live sound changed dramatically due to the input of the Japan veterans. For those still keeping count this can be considered the fourth phase of the band's live career. Less material was on tape, and the overall soundscape was far more expansive. Rather than merely reproducing studio recordings, JBK's presence made the gigs sound exactly like what they were: collaboration between no-man and three-quarters of Japan.

The tour started on 28th September with a gig at the Clapham Grand, London. Tim: "The Clapham Grand gig was a well attended co-headline with The Lemon Trees (who'd had a minor hit at the time) and was filmed by MTV. Myself and Steven Wilson were interviewed by Paul King and I was unexpectedly taciturn and nervous. Something I made up for a week later when interviewed on a late-night ITV show. I believe on that occasion that I jabbered like a Jim Carrey doppelganger." MTV ultimately showed a brief live clip of *Days In The Trees* sometime in October.

The band played the Underworld, Camden in London on Thursday 1st October, followed by another appearance at the Moles Club in Bath on Tuesday 6th. For reasons unknown no-man were billed as "Withnail" on this occasion. Tim speculates that this was a "typical One Little Indian mistake."

On 7th October the expanded no-man did their most significant promotion for the tour with another appearance on Mark Radcliffe's Hit The North. (The no-man Radio Sessions CDR incorrectly lists this as being recorded on the 3rd). Although five tracks appeared on the cassette and CD recording of the show, *Taking It Like A Man* - complete with a very short cover version of *Smoke On The Water* as an intro - wasn't transmitted. The banter established between Tim and Mark Radcliffe on their previous meetings resumes and at one point Mark asks Tim if we will ever learn the identity of Steven's other project. "The Porker? Never", replies Tim. This is probably the first mention, oblique or otherwise, of Porcupine Tree on the radio. Tim also gets in a lengthy plug for the rest of the tour.

The session was released soon afterwards on mail-order cassette - although it was saved for prosperity almost as a fluke. "I thought these sessions were recorded and archived routinely", recalls Mike Bearpark, "but I only found out shortly before that this wasn't the case! There was no DAT recorder or spare DAT, but someone did manage to locate a spare 1/4" reel, and the session was captured. *Smoke On The Water* and all!"

Musically the session highlights the extent to which JBK were given the freedom to put their own spin on no-man's material. *Ocean Song* in particular is barely recognisable compared to the chirpy gurgling dance track heard on the single version - infact this contains the bassline which would go on to form the backbone of *Sweetheart Raw*, released through mail order only a couple of months later. *Break Heaven* is also noticeably more plodding than the slinky R'n'B-influenced studio version heard previously on the Maida Vale version and later on **Loveblows and Lovecries**. Steven Wilson describes the session as "very sterile," and regrets not having recorded any of the other shows.

The following night on the 8th October no-man appeared at PJ Bells in Manchester. The small venue was packed, (probably due to a combination of the Radio 5 appearance and a cover article on the band in local arts listings Up Town) and eye-witnesses recall Mick Karn dominating proceedings. Despite the standing of no-man's new recruits, Tim says the younger no-men were not concerned they'd be upstaged by JBK. "We were fairly confident in our own abilities and certainly felt that in Ben, we had an instrumentalist as good as anyone anywhere. Having said that, Mick was an excellent presence live and Steve and Richard gave our live music a sophistication that it hadn't had previously."

Mike remembers the sound at this gig being poor, with manager Chris being given a hard time as a result. A possible consolation may have been the "great frozen vodka", although the band hit a setback when heading to a hotel disco for some post-gig entertainment: JBK failed to get in because their jeans, pristine and black though they were, weren't allowed.

Some photos taken at PJ Bells are available elsewhere on this website. What these photos do not show is the "skirt" which Steven was wearing that night (and on several previous occasions). Tim now reveals all: "The infamous 'skirt' was a dress and belonged to my long-term on/off girlfriend Yvonne. My bigger-than-big hair was entirely natural, definitely not a mullet and partly maintained to annoy One Little Indian who demanded that I have a haircut to enhance my 'pop appeal.' Needless to say, I only cut it after they weren't bothered anymore."

The next date was two days later on the 10th at the University of Essex in Colchester, sponsored by British music newspaper NME. Support was from an act which Tim recalls as being called The Boy Jannasen, which led to a new nickname for drummer Steve. Three days later no-man appeared at Middlesex Polytechnic. This gig went down so poorly that most of its details have been erased from the collective no-man memory. Tim thought it was cancelled; Mike Bearpark remembers nothing more than that a date did take place involving "a college up an long leafy drive." Steven, however, remembers "it was another room clearing exercise as the students endured us interrupting their Madness disco for 45 minutes."

The 14th saw no-man back up north again at the Leeds Duchess of York. This gig is notable purely because it's the only no-man gig in the band's history to be widely available among fans. The tracks performed were *Painting Paradise* (almost 10 minutes long and with slightly different lyrics to both recorded versions), *Heartcheat Pop*, *Days In The Trees*, *Kiss Me Stupid*, *Ocean Song*, *Housekeeping*, *Break Heaven*, *Taking It Like A Man*, and a repeat of *Days In The Trees* for an encore - a typical set-list for the tour given the tracks were keyed to a DAT. The band played for just short of an hour, with *Colours* noticeable by its absence. Unfortunately the audience recording is so poor in quality that it's hardly worth reviewing in full. However the arrangements are similar to those on the easily available Hit the North session. Some songs work better than others: *Days In The Trees* and *Heartcheat Pop* benefit from live drums, *Kiss Me Stupid* doesn't, and Tim's vocals throughout are less restrained and precise than in the studio. There's the odd duff note from almost all involved, very little audience/band interaction and applause is reasonable but not overwhelming. A lone voice cries for "More!" after the encore. The band don't oblige.

The Leeds gig was reviewed by Dave Simpson for Melody Maker, who said no-man were “too arty and melodic for the indie crowd and too wordy for the mainstream. And yet, emerging from the shadows comes a glimmer of hope in the shape of Messrs Karn, Jansen and Barbieri, all ex-Japan and with precisely the kudos and presence to make (some) people take notice. Maybe I’m being overly optimistic, but the effect the trio have had on No Man’s music is startling. The Karn/Jansen rhythm section has laced the sound with a sexy funk undercurrent and a wickedness that previously eluded No Man.”

The next day no-man were heading back south again for a gig at the Derby Warehouse. Tim recalls this date was “appallingly attended and we found out that no-one had done any press or posters for the event.” And as a sign that the Midlands were not no-man’s natural stomping ground, a planned date in Birmingham on the 16th was cancelled too. The date at Coventry Tic Toc on the 17th did go ahead though, and was reviewed by Johnny Cigarettes for the NME. “Laughable in an altogether more tragic sense are No Man, who now have the dubious claim to fame of featuring 3 ex-members of Japan in their backing band, though to the initiated they come across as 3 craggy muso casualties, looking more ready for the knackers’ yard. The whole band is dressed in black (cue Twilight Zone theme music) in front of a painfully pretentious backdrop featuring a 20 feet high sheet of Letraset with a set list reading like a top ten of pomp-rock buzzwords (e.g. *Ocean Song*, *Painted Paradise*). And the drummer wears headphones. BAN THIS FILTH!”

The tour wound up back in London at the Marquee on the 18th. A privately-owned video recording of the gig shows the setlist to be the same as the bootlegged Leeds gig. The concert elicited more comment from Melody Maker’s gossip column, which this time supported the NME’s hostile line: “More scenes of hero worship where, in the week of an international Japan convention, hordes of Japanese Japan fans scuttled down to the Japan reunion gig at the Marquee. The fact this was in fact a show by No Man (so named because no man ever turns up to their gigs), featuring the talents of three ex-Japan people, didn’t deter the diehards from wielding the wrong stick completely and assuming that singer Tim was David Sylvian! Hence all the diligent queues of gentle folk waiting after the show to tell “David” how much his voice had improved, and how wonderful the new songs are. “David”, ever the businessman, didn’t waste the opportunity, and sold No Man records to every one of them. Accordingly, they will henceforth be known as Twelve-Man.”

The Medium newsletter of Summer 1993 records JBK having mixed feelings as to their involvement. “It was an enjoyable experience to be in a live situation again,” said Richard Barbieri, although I felt the set was rather short, maybe forty-five to fifty minutes. There wasn’t the time and space to develop too many ideas or incorporate enough of one’s own style. Particularly from my point of view, it was often important to reproduce the arrangements as they existed in the recordings due to the fact that they contained the melodic and chordal identity of the track.”

Steve Jansen: “The club gigs were generally a pleasure to do. I enjoyed the close proximity of an enthusiastic audience. Some of the dates, though, I felt should never have gone ahead, but the guys in No Man had an enthusiasm and excitement about going on stage that young bands tend to have, no matter what the odds – we were the same when we started out and in retrospect it was quite refreshing to see it again. But in all honesty, on certain occasions, I was very tempted to give it a miss.” And Mick Karn: “Strangely enough, one of the worst gigs for us to play [Leeds Duchess of York] actually had the most complimentary live review of all. Very few people knew about the show that night because of poor advertising, therefore the attendance was low. We knew a journalist from Melody Maker was likely to be there and we thought to ourselves... ‘this is the ideal opportunity to slag us off once and for all.’ But somehow, the journalist loved the performance and made it sound like a show that no-one should have missed. We could hardly believe it.”

Finally JBK were asked why they weren’t involved in the 1993 tour. Richard replied: “First of all, the majority of shows were going to be supports [with U-Vox]. I knew that, that was going to mean no sound checks on most nights. From a technical standpoint I didn’t feel happy with that – there are too many things that could go wrong. Secondly, during the first tour we experienced some business-related problems and we were a bit concerned that those same problems would arise again. Anyway, there’s no bad feelings with the guys in the band. They understand the situation well enough. We started to develop a friendship on the tour that I hope will grow.” So, did the no-man/JBK tour live up to the sum of its parts? Blandly, yes and no. Despite the occasional low attendances the pairing certainly raised no-man’s profile, parading them before JBK’s long-established and committed fan base. The new arrangements also showed that no-man had musical ambitions above the tight drum machine-based pop songs they’d mainly released up to that point. Most importantly the collaboration led to musical partnerships which continue to this day. But the music doesn’t quite deliver; no-man’s pop songs of the time aren’t directly suited to JBK’s more expressive, improvised style.

In fact this is arguably the period of no-man to which JBK were least-suited. They'd have fitted in fine with the material on **Speak**, even better years later with **Flowermouth**, **Returning Jesus** and **Together We're Stranger**. But here it sounds as if the two teams are occasionally pulling in opposite directions, with the result being a compromise which helped neither no-man's proto-trip-hop nor JBK's more ambient/progressive leanings. The teaming produced far better results in the studio, with both the lengthy instrumental *Heaven Taste* (recorded in a gap during the tour) and the dark pop of *Sweetheart Raw* bringing out the best in both sides.

Steven Wilson believes there was a simple reason for the problems with the tour: the single the band was trying to promote. "The tour with JBK suffered as a consequence of the poor reviews and press that the *Ocean Song* single had received. After the excellent press that had built up around *Colours* and *Days In The Trees*, to go with this much more slight and shallow choice was clearly a big mistake."

1993

1993 was no-man's most prolific year in terms of releases (one album, three singles) and also saw a final flurry of live activity before the band stopped gigging.

Another tour loomed and this time the line-up was a five-piece with Tim, Ben and Steven joined by future Porcupine Tree drummer Chris Maitland and Silas Maitland (no relation) on bass. "We had a series of auditions at Nomis and the two Maitlands appealed to us the most," says Tim. "Silas was from a Jazz and soul background and Chris was from a Rock background. There were probably players that were as good who auditioned (I particularly remember an excellent funky rhythm section from Scotland and a fantastic female drummer who later played with McAlmont), but both Maitlands had a noticeably good feel. During the tour that followed, I'd say that Chris was the star of the show in much the same way that Mick Karn had been on the previous tour."

But Chris Maitland remembers that he was recruited individually before Silas: "Steven rang me to tell me that I had 'won' by audition and that no-man's management would be giving me a call. This I thought was going to be the business deal... Did I have enough muscle to tug the deal in my favour without losing the opportunity? Equally, would I be able to have the self-respect to decline a poor deal? Keith Aspden [no-man's manager] rang and I launched into my prepared speech... He stopped me: 'Never mind all that, do you want to do television Tuesday?' Television!! I was sold..."

So within days of Chris winning the audition in late March or early April, came an appearance on *The Beat* - a late night ITV show presented by Gary Crowley. The pre-Silas four-piece mimed to *Housekeeping*, *Heartcheat Pop* and *Only Baby*, meaning Chris had to learn the material, and fast. "Miming is actually harder than playing live," he says. "I went to Steve's flat the afternoon of the shoot and spent the entire time air drumming to the three tracks with some plastic pens which I hadn't realised had spattered blue drops of ink in his living room! It paid off though. I managed to remember all the detail except you can see I slightly hesitate towards the end of *Housekeeping* in not being sure which was the final round!"

But the drums weren't the problem - that came elsewhere. Only Tim's vocals were live, but were to prove problematic as no-man followed post-punk veterans The Fall on stage. Tim takes up the story:

"What should have taken The Fall 10-20 minutes (3 mimed songs with live vocals) took over three hours. As we were last on, by the time we hit the Astoria stage (past midnight), the crew wanted out. Desperately. We were rushed onto the stage and told to do what we did. Quickly. The backing music was still at Fall volume and I couldn't hear myself sing (imagine singing aloud while playing your Walkman with your headphones on). We went through our three songs in 10 minutes and then we were off. I asked the technicians if it was okay and everybody (all too keen to leave) said yes, it was fantastic.

"A couple of weeks later when *Only Baby* hit the screens, it was embarrassing. I was in tune one in every four notes and the sustained vocals sounded painfully off key. As it was our first live performance on TV, people were incredibly cruel (friends, girlfriends, band, record company etc...) and blamed me for fucking our big chance up in a grand style. For a few days, the house of Bowness was not a particularly happy one. In the subsequent weeks, the versions of *Housekeeping* and *Heartcheat Pop* (recorded at the same time, of course) turned up on the show and turned out to be good (especially *Housekeeping*, which generated some positive phone calls to the programme). In many ways, the miracle was, given the circumstances, that I was in tune at all. At a much later date, SW (for one) apologised for being nasty about my *Only Baby* abomination."

The appendix lists the broadcast dates for the songs.

Another audition followed soon after for a bass player, as Chris Maitland remembers: “On being asked my opinion I expressed that in addition to Silas’ naturally relaxed confidence and style, there must be something in us both unusually sharing the same surname!” Bassist Pete Morgan recalls being asked to audition for the tour, “but I couldn’t get time off work to even go [due to the] crap office job I was doing at the time”. He finally got an opportunity to play live with Tim 11 years later.

The tour itself began on 11th May at the Borderline, London – exactly one week after no-man’s second album **Loveblows and Lovecries** was released. This was followed by gigs at the Old Trout, Windsor on the 15th; Joiners, Southampton on the 19th; and the Splash Club, Kings Cross, London on the 20th. The next five dates (Town Hall, Birmingham on the 21st; Exchange, Cardiff on the 22nd; Riverside, Newcastle on the 25th; Portsmouth Festival (in a large tent by the docks) on the 26th; Forum, Kentish Town, London on the 27th) were as support for another of 1982’s big names, Ultravox. But this version of the band, re-branded as U-Vox, featured only Billy Currie from the original line-up. As with the JBK dates the link with a well-known band should (note ‘should’) have been good for audience turnout. But the uninformed who saw no-man not as a 90s act but 80s revivalists were likely to have their perceptions compounded by this latest combination.

The Cardiff gig (the only date no-man ever played outside England) was attended by old-school Ultravox fan Andy Davis, who at the time had never heard of the support act. Andy recalls the turnout was not good – he says he counted just seventeen people in the audience for no-man’s slot. Thankfully the evening improved when the band appeared on stage: “With a guitar was this hippy with very, very long hair; what looked like a chap with a perm on vocals; a violinist, bass and drummer. These guys started to play in what looked like an impossibly small space on stage, but boy did they play. We [Andy’s wife was one of the seventeen!] were blown away by the music... The guy on guitar was obviously a hidden genius... the chap singing had great lyrics and great expression, and the rest of the band were so tight it was awesome.” Incidentally, Andy describes the headlining act’s performance as “shit.”

A date at Middlesbrough Arena was scheduled for the 24th May but didn’t happen (in fact, Tim claims he’s never been there in his life!), and a return visit to PJ Bells in Manchester was mooted, but can’t be confirmed.

Tim remembers this second tour to be a more positive experience than the first: “The JBK tour had some real high points (PJ Bells, The Marquee and the Clapham Grand), but many more low points due to lack of promotion by the agent and One Little Indian. The shows with the Maitlands were equally mixed (some great and well attended, some not), but there were fewer lows... Whenever we played in front of a large crowd, such as a couple of the Ultravox supports, we got great reactions.” He remembers the London and Portsmouth dates being very well-attended, the Birmingham audience as reasonable, but tumbleweed making up the numbers elsewhere.

The last two proper “gigs” were in support of the *Painting Paradise* single, released in June 1993. On the 12th June, no-man supported Television at the Forum, London, a gig reviewed by Jon Selzer of Melody Maker. After a fair few lines of critique which could be read as either praise or damnation, Mr Selzer says of no-man “everything they do carries the same blend of innocence and cunning, desire and conceit. Tim Bowness slouches effeminately across the stage like a lovelorn little-boy-lost, fixing doe eyes theatrically on the middle distance, but when he sings he exhales such ravished allure that you’d swear he was Byron reincarnate... they’re impossibly lush... No-Man don’t just suspend your disbelief, they leave it floating up there in a silk balloon and provide it with every luxury it desires.”

The third radio session was recorded at BBC GLR’s studios in June, where the four-piece (without Silas) performed *Days In The Trees* and *Lovecry*.

The final date of the tour – and the penultimate gig - was at Camden Underworld on 3rd July, with My Life Story in support. (Ironically My Life Story played their final gigs at the same venue in December 2000). It’s thought Brian Eno was in attendance (11 years later he was also in the audience for Tim’s gig at the Spitz, London, where Eno’s brother Roger was also performing). A recording – thought to be the only one of the tour – exists. After the disappointment of the Leeds gig nine months earlier, the tape provides a revelation: no-man’s last full “band” performance is fantastic, a fitting end to the fifth (yes, fifth!) live phase.

The taped violin introduction of *Loveblow* gives way to a *Heartcheat Pop* which ups the stakes even on the JBK version. It’s impossible not to single out Chris Maitland as the most vocal player; in contrast to Steve Jansen’s less-is-more method, Chris thunders and fills at every opportunity. It should jar given the sparse machinery of no-man’s studio percussion. Instead the then-unknown drummer gives this and the remaining set a previously-unheard punch.

Days In The Trees builds even more deliciously than on record, Silas Maitland's bass finding a voice of its own as opposed to a cut-price Mick Karn. Tim's operatic ending to the track remains, but even before the final chords have disappeared he's introducing the next track *Sweetheart Raw*. This should be the toughest to deliver: the studio version has JBK all over it. But it's just as epic live: Steven's guitar provides a sinister edge to the verses and competes with Ben during the screeching climax. The DAT keyboards are clearly evident but damage nothing.

The "tribute to Barry White" *Break Heaven* regains almost all of its studio-swagger after the dull JBK rendition, but it's *Painting Paradise* which highlights why Tim describes this period as the band's "Motorhead phase." It's not metal but it is heavy; the drums attack and again the momentum builds effortlessly throughout as Steven goes wah-wah crazy. The quiet *Heaven's Break* is an oddity in such a ferocious set but *Housekeeping* ups the ante again before the crowd-pleasing return of *Swirl*. The track is again obviously DAT-heavy but it's clear to see why this was a live favourite; the guitar is more playful than on the *Ocean Song* single, and Tim's voice sounds intentionally frenzied rather than fighting a battle against the mixing desk.

The crowd want more and this time no-man oblige...first with an unintentional DAT of the *Days In The Trees* introduction, then a largely acoustic *Lovecry*, the only indication of the future direction for the band. In an uncanny prediction of reality TV Tim puts the final track to the public vote, and *Swirl* wins out over *Days In The Trees*. This gig cements no-man live as more Meat Beat Manifesto than Talk Talk. Freed from the need and desire to incorporate JBK's elaborate and occasionally meandering contributions, this gig finds no-man in fiercely confident form.

Steven Wilson began a live career of a very different kind on 4th December, when Porcupine Tree performed their first gig.

1994

A low-key, gig and release-free start to the year was a sign that things were slowly down within the no-man camp – a taste of things to come. Most significantly this would be no-man's first year without Ben Coleman, who'd left the band during the **Flowermouth** recording sessions of late 1993.

There was though another BBC radio session, this time recorded at Pebble Mill in Birmingham with yet another drummer, Chris Baker, formerly of Slab! Following in the footsteps of Kevin van Doort before him, this was Baker's only performance with the band as Chris Maitland was unavailable for the session.

Sweetheart Raw, *Days In The Trees* and *Housekeeping* were all recorded in front of a small invited studio audience of no-man fans as part of a chat show on Radio 5. Tim was part of the "celebrity" panel, which included presenter Rusty Lee. no-man's music provided the "light relief" from the chatter, according to Tim. "The performances were okay and pretty well recorded as I remember, but I think Steven felt the songs had been done better elsewhere and we both had a suspicion that the 'new' drummer wasn't quite up to the job." Indeed, Steven is scathing of the session: "It was very poor and under-rehearsed with missed cues etc." Unsurprisingly it remains unreleased.

But 1994 really began for no-man in April. Three years to the month after no-man released their first album came their third. **Flowermouth** is one of several musical right turns taken throughout the band's history, and this time it was sharply away from the baggy beats they'd made under One Little Indian, and very different from any of their recent live performances.

Despite **Flowermouth's** change in mood, beats per minute and duration of the tracks, touring with the album wasn't ruled out. But Tim and Steven wanted to do it their way this time. "We felt that we wanted to do the album justice if we toured with it," says Tim. "We wanted to play theatre venues as opposed to indie clubs with poor sound systems. We didn't want to produce inferior, more aggressive versions of the songs, and sadly the budget, the agent and the audience weren't there at the time to get us the dates we wanted."

"Although aspects of the 'indie dance-rock' incarnation of no-man were enjoyable (the frenzied climaxes to *Swirl* were always thrilling), the live band was increasingly at odds with the studio band," Tim continues. "From a personal point of view, it was very difficult for me to sing the delicate studio vocal lines over the much louder music we were playing, so in order to be heard, I frequently resorted to screaming tunelessly. I hated my singing in that context and I'm sure Steven did too."

There was yet another radio session though, back at BBC GLR in London on 8th July. The line-up featured Tim, Steven and Chris along with an unknown violinist chosen for the band by Dave Massey. Two songs were played from **Flowermouth**: *Watching Over Me* and *Teardrop Fall*. Tim believes it was one of the best sessions they did, “despite the slightly hesitant violinist”. no-man appeared on the show straight after actor Martin Clunes, and were followed by comics Willie Rushton and Barry Cryer, both of whom Tim chatted with. Again, this session is unavailable although it was filmed by TV show *The Big E*. The show, featuring both songs from the session, was shown on Channel 4 on 24th July 1994 along with an interview and clips of the *Only Baby* video.

no-man’s final live performance was on 31st October 1994, at a Halloween Society night. The Society specialized in the showing of short films with musical interludes. no-man’s slot came about through their friendship with Society founder Phil Ilson, who was at the Clapham Grand gig the previous September. The venue was the church hall turned indie-art venue Notre Dame Hall off Leicester Square in London. The audience was made up of film enthusiasts and a contingent of no-man supporters which meant little then but much now: Mike Bearpark, Peter Chilvers, Os, David Kosten (Faultline), Tim Closs and Chris Wild (Prophets of Bliss).

no-man, appearing in the purest form of Tim, Steven and a healthy dose of backing tapes, performed *Pretty Genius* (then called *Brightest Colours*), *Time Travel in Texas* and *Taste My Dream*, all of which would appear on **Wild Opera** two years later. Long-term no-man supporter Dann Chinn was there, making him—prior to 1996 - probably the last “active” fan to see the band live. He remembers the pace was slow: “Everything they played seemed to be travelling at the same hypnotic 40bpm trip-hop rate. Without much apparent effort, they made it all sound sensual and slightly disturbing. Tim [was] freed from fighting with other instruments and the boom of miked drums [and] Steven seemed to be rolling great sweeps of whale-song off from his slide guitar.” Dann also recalls the audience treating the performance very much as a break between films, as “small talk...and fag smoke hazed the songs into the background.”

With hindsight the significance of this gig can be romanticised any way you want: a quiet coda to the farewell roar of Camden; an up-yours joke on the music industry which had failed to deliver no-man’s pop promise to the masses, or an open-for-business sign to their musical future. But this is no-man, where everything that’s planned will fuck up and random happenings turn into triumphs. So it is what it is – a low-key, arty one-off which just happened to become *The Last Gig*. Live phase Six? If you like. It lasted about 15 minutes.

Tim: “It went down well enough and some strangers enthused about *Pretty Genius* and *Taste My Dream*. My vocals cut through in a way that they hadn’t before and Steven’s sophisticated production was far more apparent. However a couple of long-term no-man fans seemed very disappointed by the muted nature of the songs and the absence of stage show. Despite that, if there’s a recording, I suspect that it’ll reveal one of our best performances.”

One of the best, possibly, but definitely the last. By this time it was evident that the once very real possibility of no-man becoming not just the darlings of the grown-up music papers but a quirky part of the pop mainstream was not going to happen. It’s difficult to define why commercial success escaped them. The singles were contemporary and commercial, the reviews were good, and no-man certainly did the legwork in terms of gigs. But after four years of being within touching distance of breaking through, no-man decided they’d had enough. The traditional formula of gigs-promoting releases-promoting-gigs was abandoned, never to be revived. After all, according to Tim, the lack of touring ultimately made no difference. “We’d had excellent press for **Lovesighs** and **Loveblows & Lovecries** and had a couple of indie Top 20 singles, but it was the album we didn’t tour with – **Flowermouth** - that raised our profile and sales.”

1995 to present day

Since 1994 Steven Wilson has performed live hundreds, if not thousands of times with Porcupine Tree and Blackfield. Tim Bowness has also made a number of infrequent live appearances with Peter Chilvers, Darkroom, Henry Fool, Centrozoon and most recently with his own “band.” no-man songs have been performed since 1994 on several occasions, ranging from Tim and Peter’s “unplugged” versions to full band renditions. Steven Wilson has also performed *Shell of a Fighter* acoustically. Of all these performances it is arguably the Tim Bowness “band” appearances which are most significant in relation to no-man. The sextet play in a style most similar to no-man’s recent recordings, producing a robust yet delicate sound which leaves room for improvisation without ego-fuelled soloing. The May 2005 Norwich Playhouse performance of *Together We’re Stranger* is probably closest to how collective imaginations might envisage a 21st century no-man concert. A superb quality recording of this concert is now circulating among fans.

There were a couple of “near-misses” as regards a no-man live reunion in the early 2000s. Tim and Peter supported Porcupine Tree at the Astoria, London in 2003, and Steven performed with Ben Coleman (for the first time since 1993) as support for Blackfield, again at the Astoria, in September 2004. The duo didn’t perform any no-man songs. And Tim, Ben and Steven were all photographed together after Tim’s “band” show at the Bush Hall, London in March 2005. A picture is a long way from a concert, but it was at least a public acknowledgement that no-man existed. The presence of a smiling Ben also suggested that time had healed wounds and gave a first, minute hint that no-man’s future might possibly involve one more of its original members – a possibility that so far remains just that.

Still, for years – years – one question was asked of no-man more than any other: “why don’t they play live anymore, and will they ever do so again?” The ever-growing popularity of Porcupine Tree is the most obvious answer, though there is more to it than just this. Both Tim and Steven have, after all, frequently found time to take part in projects which are far more “under the radar” than no-man. It’s also true that with each year that passes there’s an increased inertia to overcome, and a growing expectation from a fan base completely different to the one no-man had the last time they played live in 1994.

Despite all the reasons *not* to perform, the will certainly seemed to be there. Writing in early 2006, Tim said: “Given that at this juncture, we probably do have the interest that could enable us to play at the theatre venues we’d like to, personally I’d love for us to play live again. It’s something that’s been discussed, and we both feel that with the experiences we’ve had since 1994 that we’d be better than we ever were in the early days. I also think it could make for an ideal opportunity to reunite with Ben Coleman. For obvious reasons, I’d like it to happen before I have to use an ear trumpet and a zimmer frame in order to perform.”

Steven Wilson also sounded relatively upbeat when he was asked by the Porcupine Tree fanzine Carbon Nation if no-man would ever play live again: “I hope so... I think if there was going to be a time when we’d do it, it would be around a new album release... but it’s the same problem as Blackfield [another of Steven’s projects], because actually it’s just the two of us so to put a band together and do it would be expensive in terms of time and money and I really don’t know. Tim would love to do it; I would love to do it. Again it’s down to the record sales. no-man have a very dedicated, but small audience and we could probably do a show in London in a small theatre, a few more shows in Europe in small theatres. But the amount of preparation would be significant.”

So the announcement on 25th April 2006 that a Burning Shed concert to be held in Norwich the following July would include performances by Steven Wilson, Tim Bowness and Ben Coleman came as something of a shock. The publicity did not state that any of the three musicians would be performing together: indeed, Steven Wilson’s website explicitly stated that that he would *not* be appearing with the others. Nonetheless, the fact remained that this would be the first time all three members of no-man were to perform on the same stage on the same night for 13 years. That in itself was understandably enough to fuel speculation, not least of all because the chosen venue – The Garage in Norwich – fitted the definition of a “small theatre” perfectly. The “very dedicated, but small audience” could also be guaranteed.

With a week to go it was made known that Ben Coleman would not be appearing. If there was to be a no-man reunion on Friday 16th July, it would be only of its two core members. But this still wasn’t enough to dampen quiet hopes that something – who knew what? – might happen.

An appearance by Robert Fripp at Norwich Cathedral on the same afternoon was enough to draw several fans into the city early, and small talk still centred on the possibility of Tim and Steven performing together again for the first time in 12 years. The mood among the international crowd (Holland, Germany, Norway, Italy, United States, United Kingdom, Belgium and Iran were represented) was cautiously hopeful, if not quite optimistic.

The schedule for the evening gave no clues. Looping guitarist Andy Butler played first, followed by The Tim Bowness Band – minus keyboard player Stephen Bennett. No no-man songs were performed. Steven Wilson’s solo set followed an interval. Again, no no-man, although the increasingly boisterous seated crowd of around 120 were clearly anticipating that there might be something a little...special...for the encore.

And so it was. With little fanfare the Tim Bowness Band re-entered the stage to predictably enthusiastic applause. On-stage banter made it clear that “the amount of preparation”, despite Steven Wilson’s pre-requisites for a no-man live performance, was not “significant”. In fact, the first of the three songs to be performed, *Watching Over Me*, was the only one to enjoy any rehearsal time at all.

It’s inevitable that this small, three-song show will be the most highly-documented of no-man’s career so far. In the London of October 1994 the average audience member would not have had the means to record sound, pictures and even video on a hand-held device. In the Norwich of July 2006 there is unlikely to have been a single attendee who couldn’t do at least one, if not all, of the above. In 1994 no-man fans were unlikely to have known of each others’ existence; the band’s mailing list was a usually one-way central hub which kept individuals in touch with the band, but not each other. Today the fans circle the band through the internet – and inevitably a recording of no-man’s latest performance will circulate too.

But that recording, no matter how perfect, could not capture such a highly-anticipated moment, regardless of the content of the performances. *Watching Over Me* – sounding surprisingly similar to the recorded version of 1994 – was the most hesitant, with Steven Wilson keeping eye contact with Mike Bearpark to ensure the soundscape wasn’t swamped by his additional guitar. But it was the remaining two tracks, *Together We’re Stranger* and *Things I Want To Tell You*, that fulfilled the promise, the expectation of no-man live. By the last song only Tim, Steven and Peter Chilvers remained. Less was more: the fragmented desolation of the lyric and song structure were suited perfectly to the clearly improvisational nature of what was happening on stage. There had been no rehearsal of the piece – in fact as Mike Bearpark says, “the last song was probably chosen as they walked on for the encore”.

The physical spacing between Tim and Steven also reflected the organic nature of the performance. The conventional band set up of a two- or three-metre gap between singer and guitarist wasn’t there. There was no indication that their closeness was staged to please the numerous flashing cameras. Instead there was a feeling that the partners were guiding each other through the performance, as well they might given the lack of rehearsal. The evident desire to underplay the event was carried through to the last moment when the duo left the auditorium. No centre-stage arms-round-shoulders bows as is so common at such events; more a shuffle into the safety of the wings.

So there it was, and it was there. no-man. Live. Gig number 62. After all the years, all the talk, all the reasons, why this couldn’t happen, it did. Because two men decided that afternoon that it could, and should. It’s so simple.

Audience response on the night – and from envious admirers that couldn’t be there – was joyous. And it’s just so no-man that after 12 years this short performance happened the way it did. As the previous “last show” in 1994 occurred without fanfare, so the July 2006 performance trickled out onto the stage without a single flyer being printed. Commercial suicide, as per usual. But otherwise, perfect.



Pictures 1 & 2 Simon Clarke Picture 3 Sonic Chronicler

So how did no-man live in 2006 happen? Fans certainly felt that if it wasn't to happen that night, given the venue and the audience and the musicians present, it would never happen. Maybe the band felt the same too. But there was no masterplan when the concert was devised. Mike Bearpark: "I think Tim suggested it at the soundcheck, and Steve suggested a) playing over TB band versions of songs; b) that we quickly run through them! But all that was half-prepared in advance was *Watching Over Me*".

This was not a performance prepared for for the past 12 years. 12 minutes more like it. Tim Bowness: "We only rehearsed a small section of *Watching Over Me* together, followed by SW working out an appropriate sound to play over *Together We're Stranger*. This was all being done after the official sound check had been completed and as people were being let into the Garage foyer".

The band were very pleased with the performance. Mike Bearpark commented that despite hardly being able to hear the drums on stage due to Steven's "massive" guitar sound, he "could also feel something overwhelmingly positive from the audience".

Tim Bowness: "Although everything else was fine (and the evening was a success), I thought that the no-man section had a spirit and a magic that I don't think existed in the individual sets.

"Despite the complete lack of rehearsal and planning, the no-man songs were the most confidently and emotionally delivered, and the most effortlessly right (for me, anyway). Given that this had the possibility to be the most disappointing and disillusioning part of the show, it was surprising that there were no nerves or mistakes. It also seemed like the T-Bo band seemed to raise their game in the presence of Steven".

"Obviously, I'd love for us to do it again".

But will it? Although that inertia has finally been overcome, the old difficulties remain. Tim and Steven are busy with other things professionally and personally. A new no-man album must be the priority (along with numerous other projects), and a one-off show of three-songs before a dedicated audience in a tiny venue is not the same as organising a tour, however small.

Fans are greedy. Do one performance in 12 years and they'll be wanting another one the next week. They'll continue to argue that no-man live doesn't have to be expensive, extensive, or complex: Tim and Steven and a couple of microphones will suffice, and Norwich 2006 possibly proved that. I suspect however that the band still don't see it that way, and given the high pedigree of guesting musicians on no-man's albums, nothing less than a similar line-up on stage will do. We should respect this. How many bands "re-form" for the right reasons? How many times does a live performance after a lengthy absence live up to memories of previous shows? This is worsened in no-man's case in that almost none of their current audience seem to have experienced them the first time round, meaning the real thing may never compare with long-held imaginary set-lists and line-ups.

What we do still have are infrequent live performances by both Tim and Steven, and a large body of recorded work to go with them. Perhaps we should be happy with the knowledge that no-man have produced finer studio work than the vast majority of bands who vigorously tread the boards of anything from spit and sawdust pubs to arenas year after year because they believe *This Is What A Proper Rock Band Should Do*. no-man have never followed traditional routes. They've never received any thanks for doing so either, but maybe it's a little late to change the habits of twenty years. Maybe they'll have a serious think about that tour for the 40th anniversary.

- Richard Smith, 25th March 2006, revised 18th June 2006.

Appendix:

no-man chronology 1986-1994

Please note the dates given for the writing and first recording of tracks relate to the music, not the lyrics; hence the discrepancies between some of these dates and those given in the Loveblows and Lovecries CD booklet.

1986

From A Toyshop Window released on Exposure compilation album (Steven Wilson solo track)

1987

August: Faith's Last Doubt and Screaming Head Eternal recorded (first no-man material to feature Tim Bowness). Faith's Last Doubt released on Double Exposure compilation album

November: Dull Day Fall, Absurd Walls, Beaten By Love, Stone, The Summer Place, Mouth Was Blue written/demoed

1988

January: Life With Picasso, Hard Tongue, Play Martyr written/demoed

March: French Tree Terror Suspect, The Ballet Beast, Death and Dodgson's Dreamchild written/demoed

March/April: Ben Coleman joins

May: Desert Heart, The Summer Place (Apart), River Song, Heaven's Break, Dreamer In A Dead Language written/demoed

June: Naming Baby and Turn written/demoed

Mid-year: Bleed written/demoed

August: First session with Stuart Blagden; Suzanne demoed, Riverrun and The Hidden Art Of Man Ray written/demoed

Autumn/winter: Back To The Burning Shed written/demoed

1989

January: Iris Murdoch Cut Me Down, Night Sky Sweet Earth, Pink Moon, The Miracle Game all written/demoed

January/February: First gig: Rosemary Branch, Islington, London

12th February: Bandsearch, Hemel Hempstead

12th March: King's College, London (acoustic duo: TB/SVV)

March/April: Days In The Trees (ambient version), Angel Gets Caught In The Beauty Trap written/demoed, The Girl From Missouri recording session

May: The Girl From Missouri released

? Summer: 100 Club, London

June: Screaming Head Eternal released on Expose It! compilation album

10th June: Production Village, Cricklewood, London (last gig with Stuart Blagden)

31st July: Rock Garden, Covent Garden, London

August: Flowermouth written/demoed

27th August: 100 Club, Oxford Street, London (with flautist Rebecca Clarke)

3rd September: Hampstead Free Festival (as above)

11th September: Rock Garden, Covent Garden, London

October: Curtain Dream written/demoed. Swagger recording session.

November: Swagger released

29th November: Lady Owen Arms, Islington, London

December: Tim and Steven interviewed on MFN (north-west radio station).

1990

February: Heaven Taste written/demoed

3rd February: The Flag, Wembley, London

3rd March: King's College, London

March: Swirl [electronic drums version] written/demoed

11th March: King's College, London (acoustic, performing as The Lengthy Pigeon, The Swiss Militia and Ben Coleman)

16th March: Rock Garden, Covent Garden, London

17th March: The Flag, Wembley, London

April: Love Among The White Trash written/demoed

2nd April: Park Royal Hotel, Park Royal, London

5th May: The Flag, Wembley, London

25th May: Robinson College, Cambridge (acoustic duo of TB/SW?)

June: Colours recorded

July: Colours released; Tim interviewed on Hit The North, Radio 5

August: Drink Judas, Sit Silent written/demoed

9th August: Powerhaus, Islington, London

23rd August: The Boardwalk, Manchester

September: Days In The Trees (beat version), Swirl ("Fool's Gold" version) demoed; See No Angels, Housekeeping, James Joyce Goes To Heaven written/demoed

13th September: Marquee, London

11th October: The Flag, Wembley, London

18th November: Clare College Cellars, Cambridge

December: Tulip, Iris Murdoch Cut Me Up written/demoed

1st December: Rock Garden, Covent Garden, London

5th December: Selwyn College, Cambridge

7th December: The Flag, Wembley, London

15th December: The Flag, Wembley, London

1991

January: Days In The Trees Shamen remix completed; Days In The Trees Reich, Bach mixes completed

4th January ?: The Flag, Wembley, London

March: Walker and Kiss Me Stupid written/demoed; Days In The Trees Bartok mix completed

29th March: The Flag, Wembley, London

5th May: drummer auditions

June: Painting Paradise written/demoed

17th June: Clare College May Ball, Cambridge (Kevin van Doort on drums)

July: Days In The Trees released

8th July: The Borderline, Tottenham Court Road, London

August: Heartcheat Pop written/demoed

7th August: Moles Club, Bath

16th August: Powerhaus, Islington, London

21st August: Tim Bowness on Hit The North, Radio 5

4th November: The Borderline, Tottenham Court Road, London

29th November: Clare College Cellars, Cambridge

December: Break Heaven written/demoed, Road demoed

Unknown: Water Rats, Kings Cross, London

1992

'Early': Ocean Song written/demoed

January: session, BBC Maida Vale studios, London

1st February: Clare College Cellars, Cambridge

3rd February: HQ, Camden Lock, London

March: Lovecry written/demoed

April: Lovesighs released

9th April: Ronnie Scott's, Soho, London (Lovesighs launch)

September: Ocean Song released; Tim Bowness interview on Radio 5; Shell of a Fighter and Sweetheart Raw written/demoed

28th September: Clapham Grand, Clapham, London (all remaining 1992 dates with JBK)

October: Heaven Taste recorded with JBK at some point during tour

1st October: Underworld, Camden, London

6th October: Moles Club, Bath

7th October: Hit The North session, BBC Manchester studios

8th October: PJ Bells, Manchester

10th October: University of Essex, Colchester

13th October: Middlesex Polytechnic

14th October: Duchess of York, Leeds

15th October: Warehouse, Derby

17th October: Tic Toc, Coventry

18th October: Marquee, Tottenham Court Road, London (last gig with JBK)

December: Animal Ghost demoed/written

1993

January: Sweetheart Raw and Hit The North Radio Session released (mail order)

March: Teardrop Fall written/demoed

March: Only Baby released

Late March/very early April: Drummer auditions, TV recording for The Beat (with Chris Maitland)

April: Speak:1988-1989 released (mail order), bassist auditions

4th April: Interview plus Only Baby video broadcast on The Big E on Channel 4

6th April: Only Baby "live" recording broadcast on The Beat on ITV

20th April: Heartcheat Pop "live" recording broadcast on The Beat on ITV

May: Babyship Brown written/demoed (later re-titled to Babyship Blue)

4th May: Loveblows and Lovecries: A Confession released

11th May: The Borderline, Tottenham Court Road, London (All May/June dates with Chris Maitland and Silas Maitland)

15th May: Old Trout, Windsor

18th May: Housekeeping "live" recording broadcast on The Beat on ITV

19th May: Joiners, Southampton

20th May: Splash Club, Kings Cross, London

21st May: Town Hall, Birmingham

22nd May: Exchange, Cardiff

25th May: Riverside, Newcastle

26th May: Portsmouth Festival

27th May: Forum, Kentish Town, London

1993 continued...

June: **Painting Paradise** released

June: Soft Shoulders, Watching Over Me, You Grow More Beautiful, Things Change, Simple all written/demoed

June: BBC GLR radio session (without Silas Maitland)

12th June: Forum, Kentish Town, London

3rd July: Underworld, Camden, London (final performance with Ben Coleman)

'**Late 1993**': Final recording session with Ben Coleman

4th December: First Porcupine Tree gig, Nag's Head, High Wycombe

1994

?: BBC Radio session, Pebble Mill, Birmingham (with drummer Chris Baker)

April: **Flowermouth** released

8th July: BBC Radio session, GLR, London (with unknown violinist)

16th July: GLR session and interview broadcast on The Big E, Channel 4

31st October: Notre Dame Hall, Leicester Square, London

2006

16th July: The Garage, Norwich. Steven Wilson and Tim Bowness with Mike Bearpark (guitar), Pete Morgan (bass), Peter Chilvers (keyboards) and Andy Booker (drums) as part of a Burning Shed night.

Credits

Above all, big thanks to Tim Bowness , Mike Bearpark and Steven Wilson for enduring endless emails in the search for forgotten trivia. Mike's CD with Bernhard Wagner, Pedaltone, is available now from www.burningshed.com

Thanks too to Chris Maitland, Pete Morgan, Peter Chilvers, Os, Chris Roberts and Andy Davis for anecdotes and flyers.

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NO MAN IS AN ISLAND EXCEPT THE ISLE OF MAN



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<p>Matthew Sargaison, Gundula Azeez, John Brecknell, Rachel Harrison, Rachel Howells, Tom Hughes, Jim McElwaine, Jerome Ranawake, Alex Shepard, Damian Thantrey, Tim Wigmore, Roger Schofield, Adrian Travis and Martin Weale</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">welcome you to the 1991</p> <h2 style="text-align: center;">CLARE MAY BALL</h2> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">by kind permission of the Master and Fellows of Clare College</p> <p>Please retain your ticket for security reasons. Note that there will be no re-admission to the Ball.</p> <p>Members of the Committee may be identified by their sashes or found in the Thirkhill Room to answer any queries. St. John's Ambulance Service are also present.</p> <p>Gentlemen's and Ladies cloakrooms may be found on A, E, G and H staircases. A Seamstress is available for minor repairs in the cloakroom on A staircase.</p> <p>Representatives of Coe Colour Centre will be in the Fellows' Garden between the hours of 9.00pm and 2.00am, and in the Godwin Room between 9.00pm and 1.00am to photograph couples. Photographs should be ready for viewing and collection from 2.00pm on Tuesday in the Latimer Room, and for the rest of the week at the University Centre.</p> <p>The Survivors' Photograph will be taken at 5.30am in the Fellows' Garden.</p> <p>The Committee would like to thank the many people who have made this Ball such a great success.</p>	<h3>Old Court</h3> <p>The Umbrella Big Band Dance the soles off your shoes Banoffi - Fire Juggling</p> <p>Jazz Dancing Professionally choreographed The Umbrella Big Band</p> <p>Banoffi Strauss Orchestra Waltz the night away Banoffi</p> <p>Jim Tavare A comedian with a double-bass as sidekick!</p> <p>Baron von Nasti Mad mime</p> <p>Jazz Dancing Martin Taylor Even sceptics will marvel at this hypnotist</p> <p>Baron von Nasti</p>	<h3>Main Marquee</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vibes To The Bone We raise the curtain - they raise the roof! • Root Jackson's Unfinished Business Talented purveyors of funk • Fast Freddie's Fingertips Will satisfy all musical tastes • Brand New Heavies Giants of acid jazz • No Man Dance and intimate music combined • Haji Ahkba And The Funk Ambassadors Half of James Brown's band kicking the groove 	<h3>Latimer Room</h3> <p>Dave Howman Emmy-winning rock guitarist</p> <p>Wolodymyr Dyszkan Laid-back Ukrainian entertainment</p> <p>The Ugliest People Cambridge's cleverest comedians</p> <p>Thomas Verscht Sheer magic SPAM! Close harmony from Clare's a cappella group</p> <p>Wolodymyr Dyszkan</p> <p>Dave Howman And his Monty Python composition</p> <p>Thomas Verscht Mind-boggling tricks SPAM! The coolest crooning in town</p>	<h3>Clare Cellars</h3> <p>Anita Chakraborty Lady sings the blues</p> <p>Masquerade Hip-swinging African music</p> <p>Anita Chakraborty The mistress of mellow music</p> <p>Innocent Lies A heady mix of jazz, folk and pop</p> <p>Masquerade Sizzling sounds from the Gold Coast</p> <p>Footprints Soothing and soulful sounds</p> <p>Wolly And The New Cranes Storming rock with a hint of the Ukraine</p> <p>Love X & Y Haunting sounds from Clare's star band</p>
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