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# ROCK QUEEN

*"Everyone thought we had this huge monster plan, but it's an illusion"*

Brian May

THE  
DECADE THEY  
HAD IT ALL,  
LOST IT ALL  
AND GOT  
IT BACK  
AGAIN

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there's plenty here to suggest Paice Ashton Lord were simply born in the wrong time.

■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■  
Neil Jeffries

## Marc Bolan & T. Rex

Bump 'N' Grind DEMON  
Raw boogie blueprints.



"It's very unnatural but I think it works," reasons an irrepressibly bopping Bolan after leading a charged vamp through *Light Of Love*, unwittingly nailing the fearless, other-worldly glamour, killer pop hooks and cosmic teenage poetry that made him the UK's biggest pop star from 1970 to '73.

Raw evidence shines on this set held in esteem by Bolanites since its release in 2000. Revamped on blue vinyl for Record Store day, it's often revelatory hearing Bolan's guitar before it was submerged in his wall of sound; abrasive, overloading and rude, driving 'working' versions of *The Groover*, *Telegram Sam's* risqué prototype, *Silver Lady*, *Metal Guru* and *Jitterbug Love*, and predicting punk on *Easy Action* and 20th Century Boy.

Often framed with studio banter, the set displays Bolan as a studio perfectionist striving to make that next hit, still resonant on 1976's *The Soul Of My Suit* and intriguing psychedelic soul excursion *Dishing Fish Wop*.

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Kris Needs

## Procol Harum

Broken Barricades LSO/UMC  
Southend psych-poppers beef up and rock out.



The evolution of a band is often strikingly fast, but it's still surprising how quickly Procol Harum (still to many the Dylanish organ waiters of *A Whiter Shade Of Pale*) adapted to the changing climate of rock by going, er, rock. 1971's *Broken Barricades* was the band's fifth album and their last with guitarist Robin Trower.

Despite – or perhaps because of – this, it's one of their most guitar-led, as if Trower is dumping every riff and solo he has left before departure. There's even a rare Trower vocal, on the very axey Jimi Hendrix tribute *Song For A Dreamer*. There are no *Hamburgs* or *Salty Dogs* here, just thunderous, bluesy numbers

on which even the orchestra play second fiddle, as it were, to the guitars.

The result sounds surprisingly liberated, and free of the ponderousness that often filled Procol albums. Fans of continuity will be relieved to hear that this reissue of *Broken Barricades* includes two additional discs of material from a New York show and BBC sessions, in which songs old and new feature alongside the usual coterie of alternative versions, backing tracks and the like.

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David Quantick

## Patrick Moraz

The Story Of I LSO/UMC  
1976 solo album by former Yes keyboard player.



Having temporarily replaced Rick Wakeman in Yes, Patrick Moraz joined his fellow band members in each making a solo album. His *The Story Of I* is based on a concept devised by Moraz involving a huge architectural complex in which residents realise their impossible dreams. John McBurnie supplies English lyrics

to flesh out this conceit, but it's most fully realised in the musical structure created by Moraz – an elaborate, impressive construction of synths and keyboards of various shades and metals, with an energy provided by a layered mass of South American-influenced rhythms.

The results, as on *Impact* and *Descent* with its super-fast swarm of keyboards, are joyful and vivacious rather than pompish, despite Moraz at times conforming to the routine prog idiom of fast soloing.

The album is a reminder of how the sun used to shine in the 70s. The bonus tracks, including *Cachaca's Children's Voices*, remind of the fun that fuelled this album.

■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■  
David Stubbs

## Gong

Flying Teapot CHERRY  
Daavid Allen at his most wilfully out there.



Everything you might imagine Gong sound like, they sounded like on this quirky, often charming, often irritating, wilfully self-indulgent 1973 album.

In places, they sound like Syd Barrett-era Pink Floyd – all the sudden stops and starts, background voices and wacky instrumentation on *Radio Gnome Invisible* and *The Pot Head Pixie*. This is Gong charming and not too off their faces (or perhaps just off their faces enough).

In places, they sound like the worst aspects of current prog rock progeny King Gizzard et al with the noodling and whimsical jazzy asides that end up going precisely nowhere – the wrongfully unedited and arduous title track, also the scarily unterrifying *Witch's Song/I Am Your Pussy*. This is Gong off their face perhaps just a little too much.

Be that as it may, this album is considered something of a Gong milestone – it is the first part of the *Radio Gnome Invisible* year-long trilogy of albums and was released the same day as Mike Oldfield's *Tubular Bells* (the first two albums on Virgin). It was also the first Gong album to feature Steve Hillage – although only slightly, as he turned up late.

Fans will love it, but probably already possess it.

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Leverett Tree



## Ronnie Lane

Just For A Moment: Music 1973-1997 UNIVERSAL

Pretty much the complete post-Faces Plonk.

Following his departure from the Faces in 1973, Ronnie Lane moved to Wales, throwing himself into the guise of a rural gent fronting a raggle-taggle folk rock band of barley wine drinkers called *Slim Chance*. Naturally, the Plaistow boy retained his roots; the cover of his first solo album, *Anytime For Anymore*, showed a couple of cockney coalmen on a horse and cart. Such imagery was already fading out of London life, but Ronnie was both an incurable romantic and a nostalgic, quasi-spiritual fellow.

*Just For A Moment: Music 1973-1997*, a six-CD box set of all Lane's albums (single-CD and double-vinyl versions are also available), complete with hardback book and poster, does him justice, with stacks of previously unreleased material, BBC live sessions, a Rockpalast concert and tracks cut when he moved to America, where he died in 1997 after a long battle with multiple sclerosis.

Immediately recognisable classics such as hit single *How Come*, *The Poacher* and a retooled *Tell Everyone* are joined by early examples of his

*Passing Show* gypsies-on-the-road adventures with a stop-off at the Thames Hotel in Oxfordshire and a gorgeous *In Concert* version of his heartbreaking song *Debris*. The title track comes from an obscure Canadian film, *Mahoney's Last Stand*, for which Lane and Ronnie Wood provided the soundtrack, including the tantalising *I'll Fly Away* and the Dobro driven *From The Late To The Early*. That standard is maintained throughout *Slim Chance* and *One For The Road*. Signs of debilitation do mar *See Me* (Disc 4), but the Romany traveller's epic *Kuschy Rye* still sounds vital. For all his contrary nature, Lane drew kindred spirits into the fold. Gallagher and Lyle, Pete Townshend and Eric Clapton fell under his spell, and the persuasive little geezer had the chops to back up his ramshackle Welsh Marches muse. Listening to *Around The World (Grow Too Old)* or *Last Night*, you could be breathing the smoke of his campfire. Non-



fanatics might want to pass on the live-in-Texas-and Japan extracts, but then they'd miss out on a crackling *You're So Rude* and a proper knees-up on *Ooh La La* where his use of the vernacular must have bamboozled our chums across the Pond.

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Max Bell