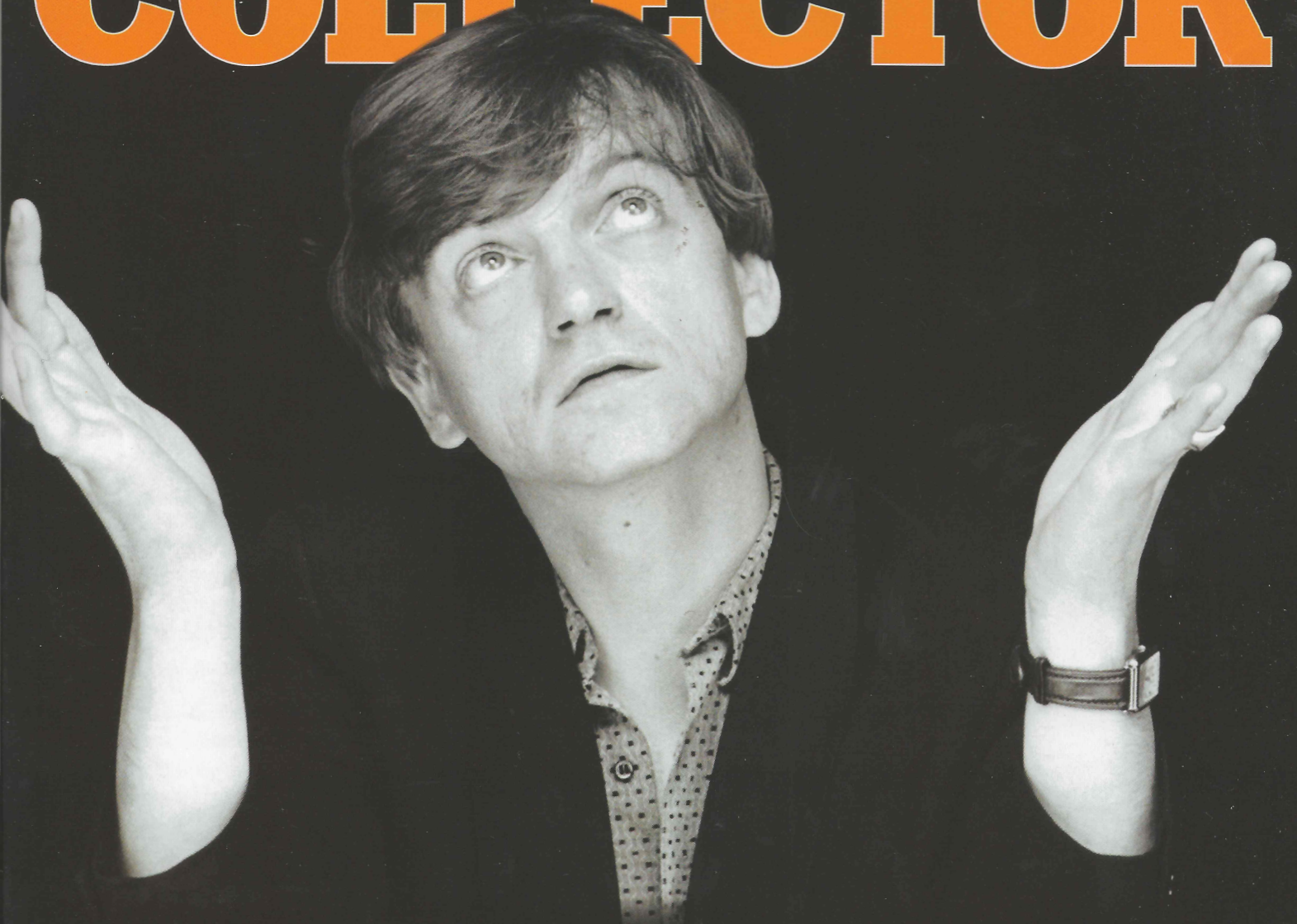




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KURIOUS ABOUT MUSIC



MARK E SMITH

Why The Fall mattered, the mid-80s glory years, discography, and Stewart Lee on their later work

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REBELLIOUS JUKEBOX

Our celebration of **Mark E Smith** and **The Fall**'s work begins with *RC*'s resident member of The Fall Army, Daryl Easlea, with a very personal account of what it meant to be a fan and collector.

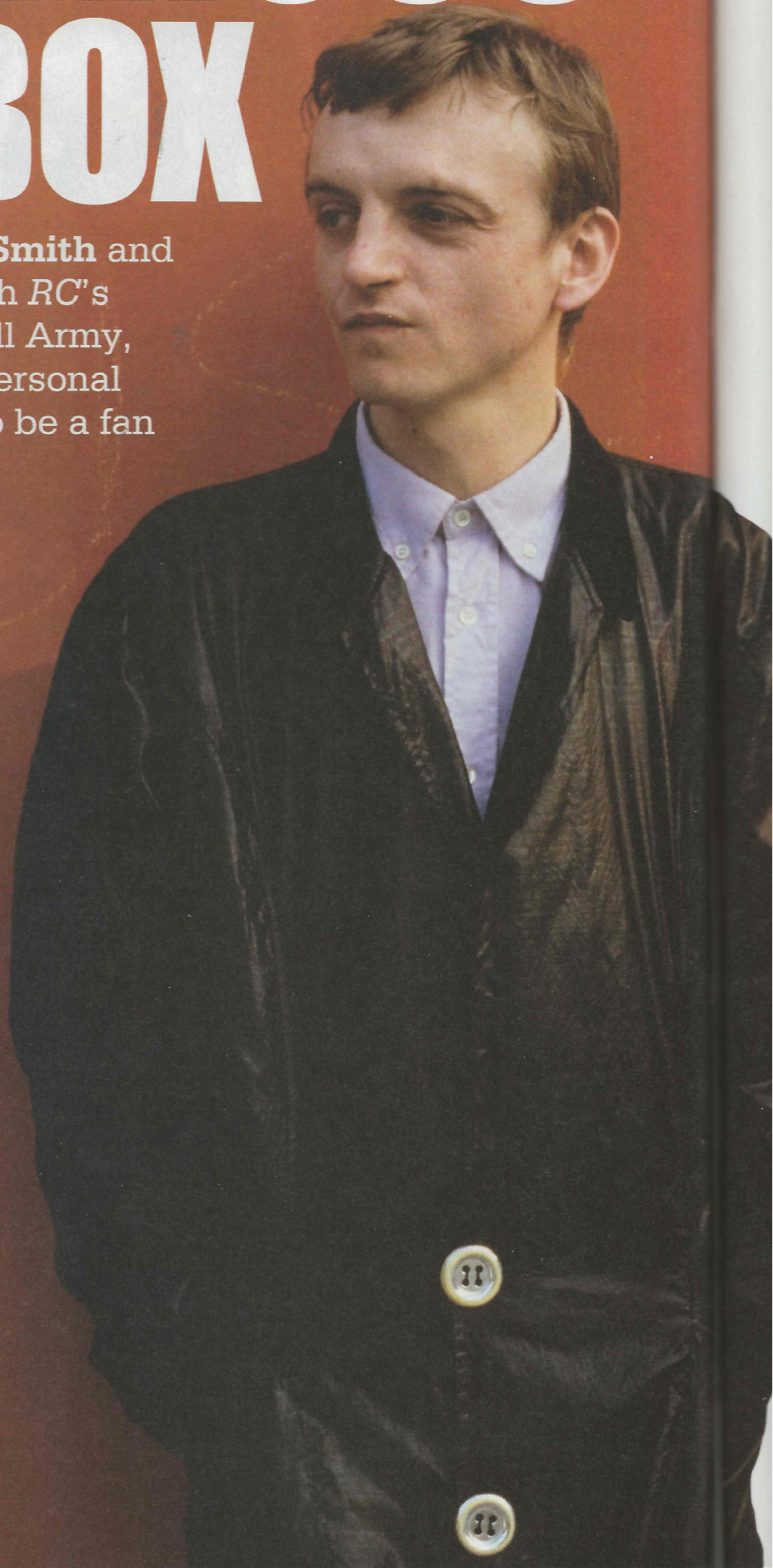
The outpouring of emotion in response to Mark E Smith's passing demonstrated that, while The Fall may always have been considered a niche-within-a-niche, cult-within-a-cult band, the devotion of writers of a certain generation for their hero was truly heartfelt. To witness the BBC's *10 O'Clock News* paying brief tribute and *The Guardian* dedicating middle-page pull-outs to him seemed a million miles away from trudging to see the group at The Albany, Deptford or The Prince Of Wales Centre, Cannock, back in the day. But it's easy to see why his death made such an impact; the devout nature of The Fall army's fandom was one of the things that made following MES so unique.

The basic storyline is well-covered elsewhere – what is clearly known is that Smith was a difficult individual with a crystal-clear vision and a taste that was completely his own. Smith's world of The Stooges, Camus and Can permeated down to his followers, and through him we were introduced to – among others – Lana Pella, Wyndham Lewis, Turf Moor and Gene Vincent.

The Fall were certainly the group I saw most in my life, and were in an everyday sense, far more impactful than the groups and artists who possibly had greater influence – quite simply they were *there* – a working band who did not stop working. You knew that if you missed them this time, it wouldn't be *that* long before they came around again.

And, it goes without saying, The Fall appealed to the sensibilities of the collector. It is little wonder how many books eventually appeared on them, and now, the fabulous website thefall.org (run with true devotion by Stefan Cooke and Conway Paton) catalogues every detail. In many respects, The Fall were the group the internet was made for.

There is the need to share; for instance, how you first tuned into the enigma, and for me, it was through my dear friend Phillip Short, who I thank on every Fall sleeve note I've written. Phil used to go on about *Totale's Turns*, saying how he was intrigued by the plain white sleeve and scrawled writing, and that the cheaply-typed sleeve notes on the back had him laughing out loud. Live rock albums do not generally include "last orders at half-past-10." The album was, at times, barely listenable in the conventional sense but you simply had no choice. By 1982, he'd bought me



Hex Enduction Hour for my birthday, calling it “a rough sketch of a masterpiece.” It didn’t look like other records, it didn’t sound like other records. Through today’s ears, *The Classical*, with its use of the n-word, is truly problematic. Its use sends shivers up the spines of the very liberals the song was taking a swipe at. Smith was railing against political correctness – and this was 1982.

From then on, mine was not an uncommon trajectory. I bought everything; the bootleg tapes, the official releases; looked for glimpses on TV; played the *Perverted By Language Bis* VHS till it wore smooth; went to as many shows as humanly possible. Could bore for England on them. I made my oldest friend a cassette introduction to them. In fact, I’d make anyone anything if I could share a bit of love. The shelves of the Our Price stores I managed creaked under the weight of everything they’d released, imports duly stocked too. On the right night, I could tell you how the version of *Guest Informant* was much better live at The Woolwich Coronet in 1986 than its subsequent inclusion on *The Frenz Experiment*. We’d scour the stage for new faces, and in the pre-internet age, look for as many clues as possible. To know Marcia Schofield had been in *Khmer Rouge* pre-Fall was like a badge of honour.

In the early 21st century, when I was a staffer at *Record Collector* (a magazine I first bought back in March 1986 (issue 79), because it featured a Fall discography),

I was asked if I would be interested in writing some sleevenotes for them. Steve Hammonds at Sanctuary – one of the key figures in the group’s recent history – was beginning to tidy up their sprawling, unruly catalogue, and needed someone to annotate it. I’d been recommended because I’d written a Fall primer for the briefly-in-existence *Mojo Collections*, and he knew that I was a huge admirer of Smith’s work.

After a couple of comps for Sanctuary, (*Totally Wired – The Rough Trade Anthology* and *The Rough Trade Singles Box*), Steve began assembling the grail stuff – the original albums, with additional in-era material being added, presented as 2CD sets. My view was to write the notes so that they could form chapters in a book. My aim was simple – to tell the story, contextualise and introduce the curious to the group. I decided to go in the main – but not always – without interviews, gathering as much of the material (and citing) that I had studiously cut out of papers as a youth, and look at a period, sometimes a year, sometimes longer in the group’s history. As time went by, *The Fall’s* site, always lovingly credited in the notes, began to fill in more and more gaps with sources.

The Fall’s beloved forum was, of course, split on the results. *Every Fall fan* can write



better sleevenotes than you. If I hadn’t got the gig, I certainly could have done. Some of this writing is deeply dated; even now I wince at the chumminess of it, but all I merely wanted to do was to share my enthusiasm for one of the greatest pop groups of the recent age.

In 2003, there was no Spotify, iTunes was still suspicious to some, vinyl was seen as the preserve of members of the Ludd Gang and the CD was still the format of choice. For Sanctuary to be finally able to licence from all of the group’s labels – Step Forward, Rough Trade, Kamera, Beggars, Fontana, Permanent – was big news. It was the first time the entire catalogue had been at a compiler’s disposal.

Steve Hammonds – working with Will Nicol – asked me to put together a cross-career best-of – stretching to three discs. Oh, what tremendous fun. I was very clear that I wanted to put *Repetition* back front and centre for The Fall. By this point, it seemed as if it had almost been written out of the group’s history; that, and *Industrial Estate*. The first discs filled themselves – sticking mainly to singles, there were album tracks that simply couldn’t be avoided – *New Face In Hell*, *The Classical*, US 80s-90s. The remarkable Conway Paton from the site advised on tracks toward the end, suggesting some I didn’t have. In the end, Steve decided to make it a two-disc compilation.

Knowing what an influence Elvis Presley had been on MES, and the fact there is the picture of the album on the back of the *Grotesque* sleeve, I wrote an email to Hammonds: “I had a cover idea – do you remember the K-Tel *Elvis 40 Golden Greats* LP with the illustration of his head in the middle of it in front of a golden 40? Get an illustrator to do the same with MES on it!” The designer, Becky Stewart, couldn’t locate the *Golden Greats* image but came up with a marvellous parody of the much-loved Elvis comp, *Gold Records, Volume 2: 50,000,000 Elvis Fans Can’t Be Wrong*, using multiple copies of Kevin Cummins’ 1978 “diamond jumper” shot of Smith. I laughed on seeing Becky’s creation and suggested the title *5,000 Fall Fans Can’t Be Wrong*. The most important thing about the collection was that it was fully endorsed by Smith himself; and he made one significant change – upping the number of fans by 45,000. He wanted the number to be nearer a battalion as 5,000 seemed too small.

We asked some of those who found themselves under Smith’s spell in one way or another – from life-long fans to recent converts, from interviewers to producers – to tell us about the experiences The Fall gave them, encounters with Smith, and collections, CD singles and all...

Grant Showbiz (producer)

From the first time I met Mark in 1978 I was amazed by his vision and confidence. After a year of mixing their brilliant gigs we had formed a solid bond – he knew I really revered and cared about The Fall. This led to me producing *Dragnet* and one of the first strokes of his “mad genius” I witnessed. We both knew we wanted:

- as little studio trickery as possible
- none of the sea of reverb that had swamped ...*Witch Trials*
- live takes with few overdubs
- bending and breaking as many rules as was possible.

He sang most of the vocals live, not in a vocal booth, but roaming the studio... an early version of his “live mixing.” When he suggested we used a cassette recording for part of *Spectre vs Rector* I didn’t blink and spliced it in. The record sounded exactly as we planned it.

We carried on this synergy through many albums up to and including *The Unutterable*. I remember one day on our tight schedule Mark was concerned about the height of the microphone and called me in, saying it was too low. I happily made the quite convoluted journey from mixing desk to live room and adjusted it. I returned and we had another go at a take. No, apparently the mic was still too low. I must have gone back and forth quite a few times – it was clearly some new technique Mark had worked out to get a roomy sound. Probably a precious hour into the process he turned to the engineer and said, “bloody Grant, he’s got no idea,” pointing at the mic that was now two feet above his head and laughing madly. A little while later he did the vocal for *Dr Bucks’ Letter* in one amazing take.

After that recording he became much more interested in remixing the albums I did with him. I would present my coherent stereo mixes, he would express great joy in them, and then I’d hear the final, remixed versions and wonder at how he heard stuff. We’d started talking about making the next album and I was – as always – looking forward to going in to the studio with him and the group.

We will not see his like again. I will miss him terribly, but that body of work will live on well after the majority of “Top 10 hits” have faded away....

I closed the note with the lines, “this compilation is the Fall album I’ve been looking forward to all my life. It could have been compiled a thousand different ways. It is a route one march through the commercial high-end of this nation’s saving grace. Rather than apologise for what isn’t here, revel in your opportunity to compile your own 39. *50,000 Fall Fans Can’t Be Wrong* gives one particular view.”

It gave an order to something that seemed untameable. “Where do I start?” was a frequently asked question by those who knew little of the group. With this album, released in June 2004, we had given people just that. It is delightful that many people were introduced to The Fall through that collection; from friends to musicians to comedian Frank Skinner; and it was partially based on the same cassettes I made my friends in the mid-80s. At the time of writing the Official Chart Company posted: “In 2004, The Fall released a greatest hits compilation titled *50,000 Fall Fans Can’t Be Wrong*. Current UK sales? Errrr, that’ll be 48,767 copies. Come on fans of The Fall, do him proud. RIP Mark E Smith.” It still perplexes me that we didn’t include Dr Buck’s Letter, but, hey, what on earth can you do?

Since then, I’ve been fortunate to have written a further twenty or so notes, including the Beggars Banquet box sets

“They were like some creature from mythology, they grew ever stronger”

of *The Wonderful And Frightening World* and *This Nation’s Saving Grace*, (with Steve Webbon, who had worked with the group when they were signed to the label) where I interviewed everyone – bar Smith – associated with the eras. My other delight was tinged with sadness; I completed the notes for the group’s *The Complete Peel Sessions* box just as Peel left us in 2006 – the set stands as testament to the relationship the DJ had with the band. Steve Hammonds moved to Cherry Red where, with Adam Velasco, he guided Smith through all of his releases there.

I have had the considerable pleasure of meeting and interviewing several ex-members, writers and producers of The Fall. I know Smith was aware of my notes; I heard through the Fallvine that he was happy with the “sleevenote fella.” I was in several rooms with him, and gave him a cheery wave after he’d scarpered from his *Renegade* book launch at the Cobden Club in Kensal Rise and repaired to the old boys’ boozier opposite. Best of all was finding his drunken head on my shoulder at Manchester’s Roadhouse, watching Earl Brutus. It was quite a thing.

The Fall continued, as parts dropped off,



they were like some creature from mythology, they grew ever stronger. That an album as robust as *Fall Heads Roll* should emerge seven years after the group’s infamous implosion in New York and Steve Hanley’s departure was testament to Smith oft-quoted line that The Fall could be him and “your granny on bongos.” This final act of The Fall was quite astonishing; the cross of Krautrock and death metal was challenging yet frequently beguiling. *The Last Night At Hammersmith Palais* marked a truly significant closure for the band, and can be viewed as a late peak.

And then, the books came. Ex-members Steve Hanley and Simon Wolstencroft; Paul Hanley and Brix Smith-Start. Some of these were direct Fall tales, many put in the context of a wider career – Paul Hanley set the band against a compelling chronology of Manchester music. The wit and intelligence of the writing underlined that Smith would only hire the best. Though all may have had their issues with Smith as a human being, all were unwavering in their admiration for his talent.

And this talent, buffeted by illness and a lifetime of hard living could still be witnessed all the way up until last year. *Couples Vs Jobless Mid 30s* on last year’s *New Facts Emerge* had all of the sinister overtones of 1979’s *Live At The Witch Trials* and their mid-80s goth era, but the chaos and unpredictability was stronger, stranger. The group had the ability to whip their audiences into a frenzy; a dark black mass that brought an old-fashioned punk frisson.

It was at times, a huge effort to be a fan, but it was so rewarding if you put in the legwork; there were plenty of songs like

Light/Fireworks and Mollusc In Tyrol scattered throughout to make you question your faith. But it was part of a piece. And there is always that moment – and the later bands had it down perfectly, where it just goes – about 6.45 into *Auto Chip* 14-15 on *Sub-Lingual Tablet*, for instance, where you seriously begin to question your love of any other group.

My Fall mentor, Phil Short said, “I had read interviews with Mark Smith in the music press and thought, ‘how obnoxious.’ I kept reading though. The more contrary he was, the more I read. There was something compelling in Smith’s voice, sarcasm, attitude, nous, whatever it was you couldn’t honestly ignore it.” It was this ability to keep people interested by his very archness, contrariness, simply a viewpoint fundamentally outside of what was expected.

There seemed to be a view that the capital could either make him conform, or like some 20th century John Merrick, parade him as some form of northerner *du jour*. Smith, of course, was having none of it. When he did sign to a major, the launch for *Extricate* was held in his Prestwich local, with just a handful of executives and some regulars. Inexplicably, Smith wore a grey wig throughout.

Nobody is suggesting Mark E Smith was a saint. He was a deeply singular, at times, deeply flawed individual. He knew his USP and played up to it. And now it is over, over. But the body of work left behind – the sheer weight of it, will live on for a very long time. I am so proud that The Fall remain one of “my” bands and I have contributed modestly to the ongoing “biggest library yet” of writing on the group.



LAY OF THE LAND

While it's undeniable that Mark E Smith essentially was The Fall, help was needed to turn his work into vital music. Tim Peacock talked to Brix Smith and Steve Hanley about their time in Smith's service.

Mark E Smith's reputation as the most irascible and iconoclastic leader of a band ever is now set in stone. Yet, while Smith's hiring and firing tactics are notorious, shouldn't we also celebrate the collaborators who stuck around long enough to experience thick as well as thin and make decisive contributions to The Fall's most important recordings?

Originally one of the group's roadies, bass leviathan Steve Hanley clocked up almost 20 years' active service and he's rightly regarded as Smith's most loyal lieutenant. Enlisted following the release of their debut album, *Live At The Witch Trials*, in 1979, Hanley joined after The Fall's first major personnel reshuffle. However, the core of their next line-up – Smith, Hanley and guitarists Craig Scanlon and Marc Riley – endured for the next three years, during which time they were augmented by drummers Mike Leigh, Karl Burns and Steve's younger brother, Paul Hanley.

Released by indie imprints Step Forward, Rough Trade and the short-lived Kamera, the albums issued by this iteration of The Fall included *Dragnet*, *Grotesque (After The Gramme)*, the 10" *Slates* mini-LP and the hallowed *Hex Enduction Hour*: dense, but compelling post-punk touchstones frequently featuring songs with a supernatural bent such as *A Figure Walks*, *Impression Of J Temperance*, *Jawbone & The Air-Rifle* and the MR James-influenced *Spectre Vs Rector*.

Though these enigmatic titles attracted considerable critical praise, The Fall remained strictly a cult concern and by 1983, their future looked increasingly uncertain. After a gruelling Australasian tour in the summer of 82, Smith had sacked Marc Riley (now a much-respected BBC broadcaster) on the latter's wedding day, and while Rough Trade welcomed The Fall back into the fold, the label were concentrating on a new Manchester band they'd just signed, ironically called The Smiths.

"I've actually since found out Mark was

thinking of packing it in after *Hex Enduction Hour*," Steve Hanley remembers. "Though he never discussed it with us at the time. By 1983 we were back with Rough Trade and (label boss) Geoff Travis was trying to get Mark to go solo, saying he should use session musicians. That was never gonna work, because what would Mark do without a band? He needed someone to shout at!"

Further strife befell the band on a tempestuous US tour; Smith's long-time partner and band manager Kay Carroll walked out, never to return. However, during that same tour, Californian-born Laura Elisse Salenger (known to most by her nickname 'Brix' from her favourite Clash song, *The Guns Of Brixton*) went to see the band at The Metro in Chicago: an event which would radically alter the course of The Fall's immediate future.

The story of how the Joy Division, Blondie and Clash-loving Brix, a college student with her own group, Banda Dratsing, fell in love, left the US for Manchester and



married Mark E Smith is documented in detail in her excellent book, *The Rise, The Fall, And The Rise*. Yet even before that fateful night at the Metro, Brix was smitten with The Fall, having purchased a copy of *Slates* in Chicago's Wax Trax Records.

"They sounded like nothing else that ever existed," she recalls for *RC*. "Heavy, murky and hypnotic. Subtle and poetic. It wasn't derivative of anything for me. Every time I heard *Slates*, there was something new. There were layers upon layers upon layers in there and no matter how hard you tried to decipher it, it actually became a reflection of your own psyche. It was intellectual music, like a musical Rorschach Test. The aural equivalent of looking at the ink blots, each time you'd make out a different shape or figure."

Initially doing lights for the band on tour, Brix gradually eased into playing guitar in The Fall alongside Craig Scanlon. Smith added lyrics to her song One More Time For The Record and – renamed as Hotel Blöedel – it became the first song she recorded with The Fall. It remains one of the stand-out tracks on *Perverted By Language*: the band's final album for Rough Trade before they signed a new contract with Beggars Banquet.

Scotching what has long been assumed to be an apocryphal tale, Brix reveals that en route to inking this deal, The Fall almost signed to Motown. "They were opening a British branch and I guess they'd heard we were looking for a label," she explains. "We handed them a pile of albums, of which *Hex Enduction Hour* was on the top. The first song on it, The Classical, has that line 'where are the obligatory niggers?' According to Mark, they heard that and we were instantly unattractive to them. That wasn't the first time something like that happened either. Prior to that, the authorities refused us entry to the former Czechoslovakia because they

said the lyric 'Pink press threat' (from *Slates*' Prole Art Threat) was anti-Communist."

Regardless of these travails, The Fall soon found a far more sympathetic home with Beggars Banquet, with whom they remained until they signed with Phonogram in 1989.

"Beggars were perfect for us," says Hanley. "They were a just-big-enough independent, they had money and resources and pretty much let us do what we liked."

"We loved them," Brix enthuses. " (Label boss) Martin Mills was one of the most supportive, brilliant guys I've ever worked with. When I later signed to Phonogram (with post-Fall project Adult Net), I discovered how bigger imprints can come down hard on their artists. In retrospect, I wish I'd stayed with Beggars Banquet. They are one of the great labels."

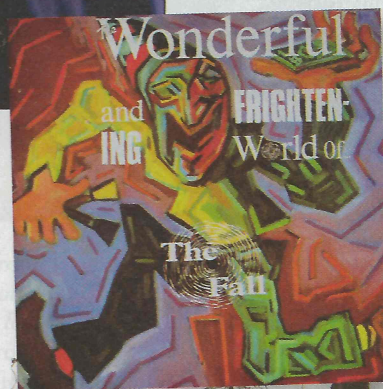
During 1984-89, The Fall recorded a series of landmark titles for Beggars Banquet. Though these discs retained the band's traditional spikiness, Brix's inherent pop sensibility and new producer John Leckie's studio nous ensured that their next two LPs *The Wonderful & Frightening World Of...* and *This Nation's Saving Grace* rank among the most accessible in their canon.

"John Leckie started as a tape op at Abbey Road, so he'd engineered for Spector and worked on Lennon's solo LPs. He knew all about 60s studio techniques and he was so full of energy", says Brix.

"But before meeting us, he'd given up music for a while and he'd taken his family to live on an ashram in Seattle. Yet he left it behind to return to music. He was very, very zen and super chilled out – and then the first people the poor man ends up coming to work with on his return are The Fall!"

Initially, even Smith couldn't faze this seemingly unflappable new producer, of whom Steve Hanley says: "He barely spoke above a whisper, yet he always got your attention and brought a sense of calm."

The Fall responded by recording some of the most compelling music of their career. *The Wonderful & Frightening World Of...* included popular live staples such as the brooding, *Quatermass*-inspired Lay Of The Land, the mutant rockabilly of 2 x 4 and the confident Slang King. 1985's *This Nation's Saving Grace*, meanwhile, featured material as diverse as the vengeful, pummelling Bombast, the eerie, Can-influenced I Am Damo Suzuki and the nagging psych of LA.



"In my whole life I've never written a love song to a person, but with LA, I wrote a love song to the city I missed," Brix says.

"I loved what I was doing with The Fall, but I was so fuckin' homesick. I wanted LA to capture the feeling of optimism that the city had at the time.

It's very different now, but back then you could go there and be a star – you just needed the drive, the determination and the razor sharp focus. It was dark, sexy, dirty, psychedelic – and the song was an ode to all that."

Accurately critiqued by *The Guardian* as "[The Fall] operating just on the edge of the mainstream

and at the peak of their accessibility, and yet strangeness," *This Nation's Saving Grace* reflected the band hitting a new peak. Smith's lyrical diatribes still gave little away, yet they were thrillingly absorbing, and as Brix notes, the entire crew were firing on all cylinders at this point.

"Mark has been quoted as saying Steve Hanley is the sound of The Fall and he really is," she confirms. "But let's talk about Craig Scanlon for a moment. He had no ego and he was quiet and reclusive, but lest we forget that guy was one of the most brilliant guitar players on this effing planet. He played guitar like nobody else and created soundscapes that were just mind-bogglingly brilliant. He rarely gets his due and to this day I have no idea how he did what he did – what came out of him was alchemy!"

Strangely enough, while he readily agrees it deserves its classic album status, much of

the recording of *This Nation's Saving Grace* passed Hanley by as he went on paternity leave during its creation. During this down time, Hanley spent time employed in his family's pie shop and at a Manchester garage.

"It is a great album, though frustratingly for me, it's The Fall LP I had the least to do with," he says. "I took six months off when my first child was born and in that time, they toured Britain and the US, put two singles out and wrote that album. Unbelievable work rate. I should point out Mark could probably have got someone else in and kept them in the band, but the fact he was prepared to give me the time off and let me back in says a lot about the way he was back then. He certainly wasn't all bad."

Usually referred to as the third instalment in their triumvirate of classic albums for Beggars Banquet, 1986's much-anticipated *Bend Sinister* featured their signature cover of The Other Half's Mr Pharmacist and rewarded them with their first Top 40 album chart success. With the band's stock rising, Beggars Banquet arranged for the sessions to take place in the relative opulence of London's Abbey Road, but the mood was less than harmonious, with Smith kick-starting most of the chaos.

"We were still married, but Mark and I were not getting along at that point," Brix comments. "He went through these cycles of destroying stuff, self-sabotaging things. When things went too well, he'd want to fuck it up, whether it was sacking people or messing with our amps onstage or whatever. I understood why he did it to a degree, even at the time – through creating chaos, you create energy and that keeps you alive and thriving and makes you sharper. But it's infuriating for everyone else, believe me."

On this occasion, John Leckie felt the wrath of Smith's bombast. Regularly sloping off to the pub during the sessions, The Fall's leader would return and argue repeatedly with his producer. Smith then decided to master some of the tracks from a cassette he'd listened to on his Walkman.

"That was the last straw," Hanley recalls. "It eventually led to us parting ways with John. Not that I blame him. We'd just been in Abbey Road for a month which costs a fortune and for John, who'd put so much time and energy into the production, his reputation was on the line. Understandably, he didn't want to be associated with an album that sounded like it was recorded down a mine!"

Brix elaborates: "It's a shame, because there's potentially brilliant stuff on there. US 80's -90's is

another of my favourites. I play it now and I just love that fuckin' song. Realm Of Dusk (R.O.D) and Gross Chapel – British Grenadiers could have been great. In retrospect, I think it would be so interesting to take the masters and get John Leckie to have another go at mixing the record. The way *Bend Sinister* came out was so frustrating, because it could even have bettered *This Nation's Saving Grace*."

Despite Smith's repeated attempts to shake things up, The Fall's profile was at its highest in the late 80s. They chalked up bona fide hits with memorable covers of The Kinks' Victoria and R Dean Taylor's There's A Ghost In My House and even found time to veer off into high art projects.

Smith's fascination with David Yallop's best-selling book, *In God's Name* – examining the mysterious death of Pope John Paul I – led to one of The Fall's best 45s, Hey! Luciani (the title referring to the late Pope's birth name, Albino Luciani) and a musical of the same name.

The band also provided the music for Michael Clark's 1988 ballet *I Am Curious, Orange*, celebrating the 300th anniversary of William Of Orange's ascent to the English throne. This elaborately-choreographed live show yielded reams of positive press and drew sell-out crowds in Amsterdam, Edinburgh and London's Sadler's Wells.

"That was exciting as we were in London for a month and most nights it sold out too, so it became quite a cultural event," says Hanley, who played the Pope in *Hey! Luciani* and remembers it fondly: "It was exciting, if typically chaotic. With the best will in the world, we weren't actors and none of us ever understood the script," he laughs. "I say 'script', but Mark never explained it or even really completed it – he was still writing and changing parts of it while we were doing dress rehearsals."

Hanley also describes the *I Am Curious, Orange* ballet as "one of the best things The Fall ever did." The project spawned a well-received spin-off album *I Am Curious, Oranj* featuring key Fall tracks such as Cab It Up! and New Big Prinz (the latter an inspired upgrade of *Hex Enduction Hour's* Hip Priest), but for Brix it was a time of emotional upheaval as her relationship with Mark had disintegrated.

"Despite what was happening with us, all the way through to *I Am Curious Oranj*, we still had this amazing songwriting partnership. I'd usually write on my Rickenbacker or Gretsch, unplugged in the sitting room while Mark was in the dining



Glyn Rogers (fan)

The Fall have been my favourite band for well over 30 years and I have managed to catch them live over 40 times. However, I've only met Mark once.

It was before a Fall gig in Cricklewood in 2006. We were walking along the Broadway when we noticed Mark in an Asian mini-market. I went in and offered to buy the two cans of lager that he was holding for him. He said, "Why?" I explained that I was a long term fan of the band, had seen them many times and was on my way to see them again. He handed me the cans.

We joined the queue at the counter and were soon joined by his sister who was holding a music magazine. He looked at me, looked at the magazine, took it and forced it into my hand (I didn't mind, I'd have bought anything he asked me to).

While this was happening, all I had in my mind was, "Threw some change on the Asian counter and asked polite if it covered two lagers" from Deer Park (*Hex Enduction Hour* 1982.) The most important musical artist of the last 40 years – no contest!

Paul Wood (fan)

Like many others I discovered The Fall via John Peel in the mid-80s. *Bend Sinister* was the album at the time and it's still a favourite in their massive back catalogue. I worked backwards to the spiky late-70s output and followed loyally (blindly?!) through the late 80s dalliance with chart fame, the dip in the 90s, the resurgence (for some) in the 00s and the unpredictability of the 2010s.

Among my vast music collection, nothing compares to, or gives me as much pleasure, as my ridiculous Fall collection (pictured below). I say "ridiculous" because many of them are, frankly, redundant rubbish. But that's collectors for you, right? Pictured below are some of my 156 CD releases by the group which I laid on the floor of my apartment. That's the kind of pointless thing collectors do at times like this, right?



Andrew Bennett

The first time I saw The Fall was when *Fall Heads Roll* came out. Mark took ages to take the stage and was hit square in the face with a full pint of beer; he didn't even flinch, just mopped his brow and carried on. The encore was performed from behind the curtain because he was allegedly too far gone to get back on the stage. I went on to see The Fall around another 30 times and was never once disappointed. To my mind Mark E Smith is the most punk man that has ever lived. A beautiful human being, a presence, a showman and not one non-essential album in a 40-odd year career. ➤



room next door. I'd bring him the riff and he'd have literally hundreds of pages with lyrics all over the floor. He'd hear what I'd written, rifle through them all and pull out exactly the right lyric for it. That was an amazing thing. Mark and I were psychically connected as songwriters. As a huge Brill Building fan, I used to have this fantasy of using like Gerry Goffin and Carole King."

Despite this, Mark and Brix separated in 1989 and later divorced. Yet, despite moving on in their personal lives, Mark welcomed Brix back into the band as their lead guitarist in 1994. During her time away, The Fall's post-Beggars Banquet deal with Phonogram resulted in more critical acclaim and Top 40 placings for early 90s albums such as *Extricate*, *Shiftwork* and *Code: Selfish*, but with Britpop in vogue, The Fall's spiky post-punk rumble appeared to have passed its sell-by date.

Unlike their Beggars output, *Cerebral Caustic* and *The Light User Syndrome*, the two mid-90s albums featuring Brix rank among the runts of The Fall's litter. With Mark's alcohol abuse spiralling out of control, Brix quit for a second time after a horrific UK tour promoting *The Light User Syndrome* in 1996.

Brix subsequently left music behind completely and was embraced by the fashion world. She was so burnt out after her two stints in The Fall that it took the catharsis of writing her book and the welcome pressure exerted by her husband, fashion entrepreneur Philip Start, and close friends to convince her she should play again.

"I didn't even touch a guitar for 15 years," Brix admits. "I sold or gave most of them away, bar three, which I left in my closet to gather dust. One of them was adorned in these plastic flowers I'd used in an Adult Net video which had just rotted away. But when I started to play again, it was amazing – it was like there was a bag of songs just waiting in the ether."

For his part, Steve Hanley struggled on with The Fall, but in the aftermath of another catastrophic US tour in 1998, he too threw in the towel. He went to work as a school caretaker, but kept his hand in, recording 2004's *Abba Are The Enemy* with Tom Hingley & The Lovers: an underrated Manchester outfit also featuring Paul Hanley, guitarist Jason Brown and former Inspiral Carpets frontman Tom Hingley.

Hanley hadn't seen Brix in person for 15 years until she attended the launch of his book, *The Big Midweek*, in 2013. As part of the event, Steve performed some Fall songs with a band including his brother Paul, Jason Brown and several guest vocalists including Tom Hingley and The Membranes' frontman John Robb.

"They did a bunch of songs and when they got to Mr Pharmacist, Jason – who I didn't know at the time – was playing my part and I just freaked out," Brix laughs. "This energy coursed through my body. I wanted to rush up onstage, push Jason over and grab his guitar. It was like whatever had left me was back all of a sudden. I think that writing my book had reconnected me with this music and recalibrated my creativity."

Since then, Brix, the Hanley brothers, Jason Brown and another ex-Fall member, guitarist Steve Trafford, have formed Brix & The Extricated. Their debut album *Part 2* was released on the Blang label last autumn.

Though it includes newly-recorded versions of Fall classics *Feeling Numb*, *Hotel Bloedel* and *LA*, it's a vibrant, confident debut on its own terms. Freshly-penned tracks, such as *Pneumatic Violet*, *Damned For Eternity* and the anthemic *Hollywood*, show The Extricated have the all the smarts they need to negotiate the future, regardless of how much their collective past weighs.

"The new album's running order is very specific," Brix explains. "What we decided to do was take listeners on a sonic journey, starting with *Pneumatic Violet*. That song's time signature and the aggression is very Fall-like, so it's something people would expect us to do. But, as the record progresses, we're taking you down a new path towards the final track, *Hollywood*, which gives you some idea of where we want to go now."

"Mark used to say he needed to keep the tension going because people would become complacent, but we play just as hard in The Extricated and we've still got the hunger, which – with hindsight – shows a lot of that nonsense didn't help," Steve Hanley says, with feeling.

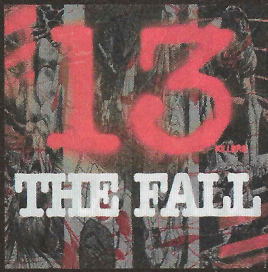
"But saying that, I'll always be really proud of The Fall and what we did and while I didn't follow what Mark did after I left in any detail, I like what I've heard and I like the line-up he had for the last decade. They're good lads and I think they earned the right to call themselves The Fall."

"Mark was my first love and I'm more than aware of why The Fall are seen as such an important band, so regardless of everything that happened, the music will always be there," Brix says in conclusion.

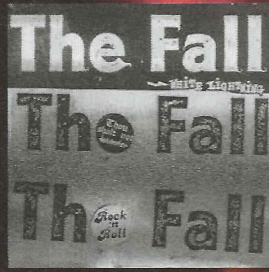
"But I think of The Extricated being to The Fall as like The Breeders are to the Pixies. We came from this amazing thing, but now we're a completely different band. People feel empowered when they see us live. They're happy, they smile and they walk out of our shows feeling fantastic. Nowadays, it really is like The Fall with sunshine, if you can imagine such a thing!" ►

The Fall

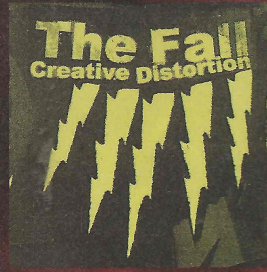
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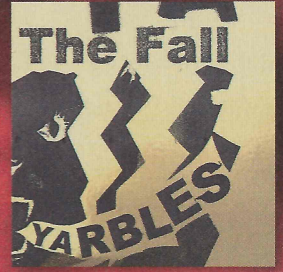
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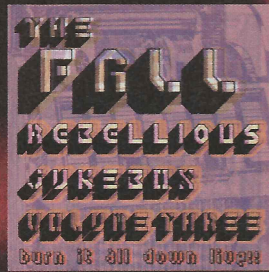
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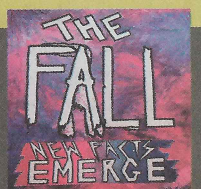
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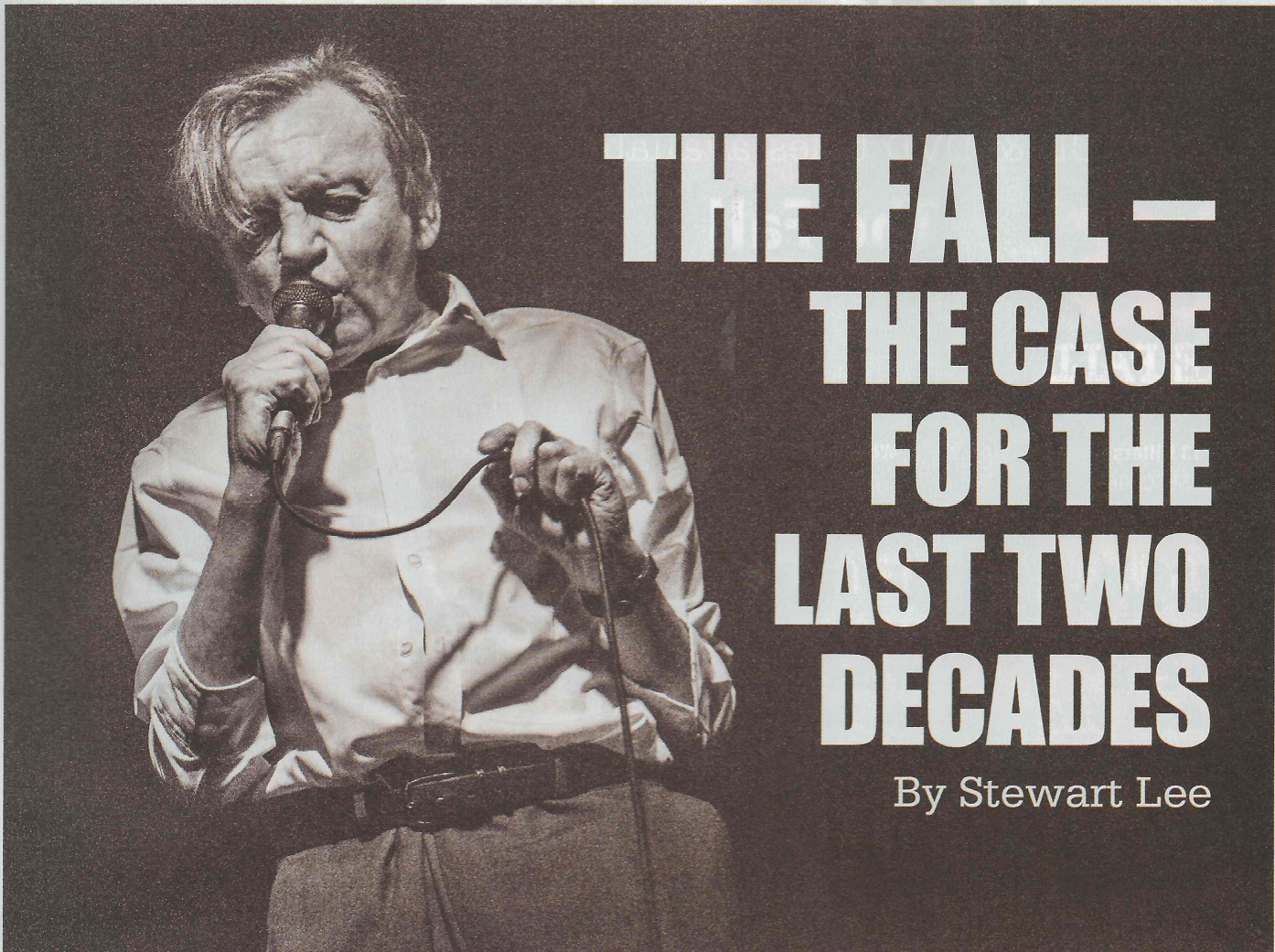


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THE FALL — THE CASE FOR THE LAST TWO DECADES

By Stewart Lee

Posthumous summaries of the career of Mark E Smith, The Fall's guiding intelligence, who died at the age of 60 on 24 January 2018, often broke the group's 40 years of recordings into two distinct phases, but was the latter really the lesser period it is commonly assumed to be?

After a messy on-stage altercation at New York's Brownies club on 7 April 1998, Smith parted company with bass player Steve Hanley, a cornerstone of The Fall's initial two-decade run who, between 1987 and '93, had even helped to wrestle The Fall into the Top 50.

Obituary wisdom has it that the 20 years following the severing of his last links with the punk-era Fall represent a protracted decline for Mark E Smith, and the second half of The Fall's career displayed little of the twisted pop sensibility that had entertained fans from the mid-80s to the mid-90s. But, by considering the actual recordings the group made in the period, rather than the soap operas that barnacle its underbelly, it's easy to make the case that, in his last decade, Smith finally captured The Fall Sound that had always been buzzing in his head.

And he did this for better or worse, by accident or by design, and whether it was what you wanted The Fall Sound to be or not.

The Marshall Suite

Artful LP; ARTFULLP 17, 2LP. Cherry Red CD reissue: CDTRED 491, 3CD.

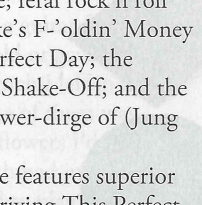
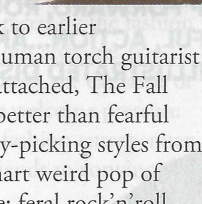
With keyboard player Julia Nagle the only link to earlier incarnations, but with human torch guitarist Neville Wilding newly attached, The Fall produced an album far better than fearful fans had expected, cherry-picking styles from its whole history: the smart weird pop of near-hit *Touch Sensitive*; feral rock'n'roll covers like Tommy Blake's *F-'oldin' Money* and The Saints' *This Perfect Day*; the electronic maelstrom of *Shake-Off*; and the Zeppelin-channeling power-dirge of (Jung Nev's) *Antidotes*.

The triple-CD reissue features superior Peel sessions, Wilding driving *This Perfect Day* at 100mph without a map, and a coruscating XFM live set.

The Unutterable

Eagle CD: EAGCD 164. Voiceprint CD reissue: VP 451 CD (2CD).

Old comrade Grant Showbiz produced an uncharacteristically clean set under disinfected laboratory



conditions, dusted with sometimes incompatible electro-frosting. The sterile setting didn't suit Wilding's impulsive ethos, though he combusts during *Two Librans* and *Hands Up Billy*. *Dr Buck's Letter*, assembled by bassist Adam Helal on *Pro Tools*, is nonetheless a Fall classic, Smith reciting a facile Pete Tong questionnaire over menacing swamp funk. Lou Reed's *Kill Your Sons* is reshaped into the sinisterly shimmering *Ketamine Sun*, one of The Fall's best blue sunshine visions. The 2008 reissue includes uninteresting demos.

Are You Are Missing Winner?

Cog Sinister/Voiceprint LP; COGVP 131 LP. Castle CD reissue: CMRCD 1352 with bonus tracks

Even to fans used to Smith's handbrake turns, the dirty garage minimalism of *Are You Are Missing Winner*, recorded with little finesse by an anonymous line-up of unknown urchins, was a shock. But it was the first step toward the style that sustained The Fall's final, imperious and imperial, phase. There's no keyboards here and precious little structure, just vast monumental riffs that Smith can wander

about in at will; sturdy and flexible forms built for impulsive vocal improvisations and on-a-whim expansions. The mysterious Ed Blaney co-writes, Bourgeois Blues is reappropriated from Leadbelly via The Panther Burns, and The Troggs' I Just Sing Inspires the psychedelic stomp of Crop-Dust.

Live At The Knitting Factory LA 14th November 2001 Hip Priest/Voiceprint CD: HIPP 017 CD

Live In San Francisco 19th November 2001 Ozit - Morpheus Records LP: OZITDANCD 9014, 2LP

Touch Sensitive Box Set

Patronaat, Haarlem, The Netherlands on 6 April 2001
Melkweg, Amsterdam, The Netherlands on 7 April 2001
Concorde 2, Brighton on 17 April 2001
Crocodile Cafe, Seattle on 20 November 2001
The Knitting Factory, New York on 23 November 2001
Castle 5CD box: CMYBX 752

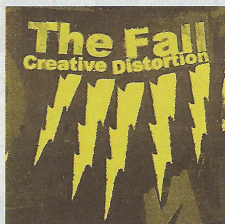
2G+2 (Studio recordings mid-2001 and November 2001 US), Action CD: TAKE 18 CD

Live At The Garage London 20th April 2002 Hip Priest/Voiceprint CD: HIPP 016 CD

Live At The ATP Festival 28th April 2002 Hip Priest/Voiceprint CD: HIPP 018 CD

In bewildering Fall fashion here are no less than nine full live shows, boasting often challenging degrees of fidelity, drawn from a mere five months from November 2001 to April 2002. Over-documenting a slimmed-down line-up based around newcomers Jim Watts on bass and Ben Pritchard on guitar, these fluidly brutal versions of songs from 2001's then unloved *Are You Are Missing Winner?*, and 2000's difficult-to-replicate live *The Unutterable*, reveal a ragbag of recruits learning the ropes en route, and discovering shat-pants courage and red-eyed resourcefulness they never knew they had in them.

Creative Distortion (22nd September 2002) Secret Records 2CD+DVD: SECD P088



Yarbles (22nd September 2002) 29/9/14, Secret Records LP: SECLP104

Creative Distortion, misleadingly released in shorter vinyl form as Yarbles, sees an

uncharacteristically nostalgic Smith play popular tracks from the back catalogue live, for one night only, presumably in exchange for a plastic bag of cash. The new line-up deliver a radical but powerful reinterpretation of 1992's *Free Range*, enhanced by Eleni Poulou on keyboards, another loyal musician wife of Smith's, who was to define the group for 14 years.

Mark E Smith - Pander! Panda! Panzer! Action CD: TAKE 19 CD

The Fall Vs 2003 Action CD: TAKE 20 CD single; 7": TAKE 20

2002 offered Smith's second spoken-word album, following 1998's more digestible *Post Nearly Man*, and a lone single. Its lead track, *Susan Vs Youthclub*, featuring drummer Dave Miller's Faustian pulsations, bridges the provocative reductionism of *Are You Are Missing Winner?* and the cyberpunk fusions of the forthcoming album.

The Real New Fall LP, formerly Country On The Click Action LP:

TAKE 021. Released in different form in the US, Narnack LP: NCK 7018.



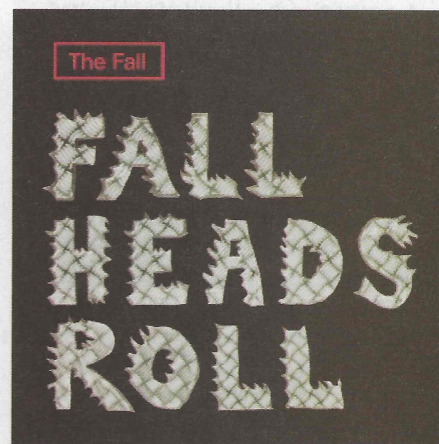
We Wish You A Protein Christmas Action Double 7": TAKE 22

Live At The Knitting Factory New York 9th April 2004 Hip Priest/Voiceprint CD: HIPP 015 CD

Interim (Live And Rehearsal, Studio August And September 2004) Hip Priest/Voiceprint CD: HIPP 004 CD

2003's *The Real New Fall LP, Formerly Country On The Click*, is one of the great Fall albums, an embarrassment of riches so plentiful no-one knew how best to present it, the Pritchard/Poulou/Watts axis at its zenith. An early pirated mix was suppressed, and the UK release was swiftly followed by a US version with different mixes. Grant Showbiz got the meeting of studio trickery and as-live excitement exactly right this time. The Fall were now a space rock steamroller, a post-punk Hawkwind, with Smith's lyrics clear and focused in a way they would rarely be again.

Theme From Sparta FC became a BBC football staple, Green Eyed Loco Man mixes ayahuasca with bin juice, Mountain Energei and Janet, Johnny & James lope like lupine late 70s Iggy Pop. With extra tracks on the Protein Christmas single, essential outtakes on the *Interim* album, contemporary live material, and a superb Peel session in the vaults, surely someone can find it in themselves to knock together a four CD edition?



Fall Heads Roll Slogan LP: SLOLP 003

Fall Heads Roll is the one that got away. Ben Pritchard and Eleni Poulou were now paired with bassist Steve Trafford and the *Are You Are Missing Winner?* era's drummer Spencer Birtwistle. By design or necessity, Smith assembled the vast pulverising krautobilly riff blocks of *Pacifying Joint*, *What About Us*, *Assume*, *Bo Demmick*, *Youwanner* and *Clasp Hands* in such sturdy dimensions that the exact location of his presence in a song was irrelevant. The album gave us both the mighty throb of *Blindness*, one of the great doom-funk Fall workouts, and the surprisingly plangent tones of Pritchard's *The Early Days Of Channel Fuhrer* and Trafford's *Midnight In Aspen*. But somehow, many of *Fall Heads Roll*'s key tracks rocked inexplicably harder in non-album incarnations, *Blindness*' Peel session take remaining the definitive reading.

Typically, the reliable and pliant line up that produced *Fall Heads Roll* folded somewhere in Phoenix, Arizona on 7 May the following year, six months after the album's release. Less than 48 hours later Smith and Poulou were on-stage in San Diego with a new American Fall, culled from the LA psychedelic band *Darker My Love*. A revealing bootleg shows them almost pulling off a set of songs they'd presumably learned from the records in a day while Mr and Mrs Smith drove West towards them, and an uncertain future.

Reformation Post TLC Slogan 2LP: SLODV 007

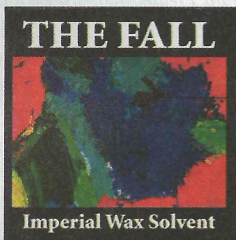
Last Night At The Palais (1st April 2007) Sanctuary CD+DVD: 2713432

Sometimes billed as "Mark E Smith And His American Fall", Smith and Poulou and their swiftly hired hands pulled off another great album in the shape of *Reformation Post TLC*, repurposing some songs the line-up Smith abandoned in Arizona had already made studio stabs at, any writing credits erased. Smith chooses to credit himself with the composition of the opening track *Over!* *Over!*, which must be a surprise to the members of *The United States Of America*, who wrote and recorded exactly the same

track in 1968 under the title *Coming Down*. But this quibble aside *Fall Sound, Systematic Abuse and Reformation* (essentially Can's *Mother Sky* retooled) find the fluid and road-worn Americans concocting more of the flexible repetitive drone-grooves now best suited to Smith's wayward wordplay.

As usual, these tracks flourished live in a way the studio never captured, but the playful *Insult Song* shows how happy Smith was with his American indie apprentices. The US release featured longer versions of two tracks, and the subsequent live album, from the final night of the Hammersmith Palais, saw a hybrid British-American Fall deliver superb selections mainly from the last two albums. And then the Americans were gone. With their beards.

Imperial Wax Solvent Sanctuary LP: 1766796



Here, Smith stabilised a core quintet of new boys Peter Greenway on guitar, Keiron Melling on drums, and Dave Spurr on bass, with Poulou still on keyboards, which was to remain more or less constant until his death. It's also on *Imperial Wax Solvent* that Smith chose most obviously to escape from the prison of perceptions of himself as post-punk's premiere poet, and instead pursue a kind of studied incoherence. Smith's new vocal range of visceral animal growling could descend into any section of a song at will, and defied the analysis of the English Literature graduates and beard-kneading academics running Fall lyric websites.

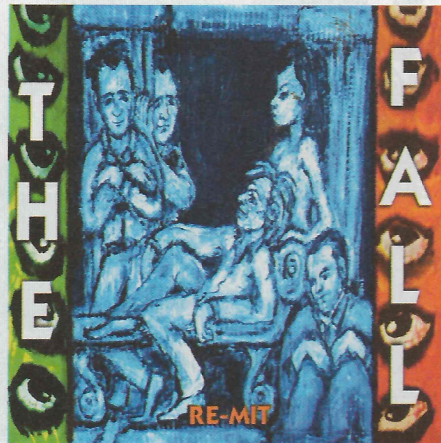
The 11-minute *50 Year Old Man* is a manifesto for the next decade, a rockabilly rumble with minimalist trance-like repetition, spiked by a country and western breakdown mid-section, that snarls satirical assertions of impotent power in a barely understood gurgle.

Your Future Our Clutter Domino 2LP: WIGLP 245

Domino cracked the whip and The Fall danced, delivering a career high point, 32 years in, and one which makes a compelling case for the Greenway/Spurr/Poulou/Melling incarnation as being as adept at channeling the indefinable spirit of The Fall as the Hanley/Scanlon/Brix combos always held in nostalgic fondness. Smith's daring and suicidal vocal leap up the octave on *OFYC Showcase* is one of the great Fall moments, and there's not a duff track here on an album characterised by bulldozer brutal repeated riffs, spindly surf lead lines, Poulou's perfectly-pitched keyboard embellishments, and twangy 50s boogie. It closes with the whispered threat, "You don't deserve rock'n'roll."

Ersatz GB Cherry Red LP: BRED 500

Smith often followed a successful and coherent album with a deliberate attempt to sabotage any developing identity, but *Ersatz GB* continues *YFOC*'s quest to combine everything he appeared to love about post-war popular music in one epochal package. *Cosmos 7* is cosmic greaser rock and roll; *Taking Off* is bass-heavy space rock; *Nate Will Not Return*'s stuttering post-punk pogos on the spot for six minutes; *Greenway* provides a dense thicket of hard rock within which Smith growls his guitarist's name; *Happi Song* is a sublime moment of psychedelic trance-pop voiced by Poulou; *Monocard* showcases eight minutes of Smith's evolving ruined throat vocal range. It's another great album that's easy to love.



Re-Mit Cherry Red LP: BRED 580

The Remainderer Cherry Red 10": BREDEP 600

Live Uurop VIII-X11 Places In Sun & Winter Son Cherry Red 2LP: BRED 599

Live In Clitheroe (25th April 2013) Ozit - Morpheus LP: OZITDANLP 8029

Re-Mit was studio album number 30 and The Fall showed no sign of slowing. Check Smith's explosive guttural land grab for the listener's attention on the highly combustible wig-out of *Sir William Wray*, his mastery of rock's essential inarticulacy undimmed. We kept writing about Smith as a wordsmith. But I think he knew that rock and roll was also about the sheer power of precision-bombed consonants and vowels. Smith's "ba ba ba ba ba ba ba ba ba" could say as much as his finest Philip Dick-induced poetry.

Swapping in a few songs from the subs' bench of the subsequent *Remainderer* EP, such as the barked swagger of the title track, the skeletal *I Wanna Be Your Dog* steal of *Rememberance R*, or Smith and Poulou's *Lee And Nancy In Hell* duet-duel *Touchy Pad*, would have elevated *Re-Mit*, the least convincing release of the group's majestic last decade, into the premier league of final Fall albums.

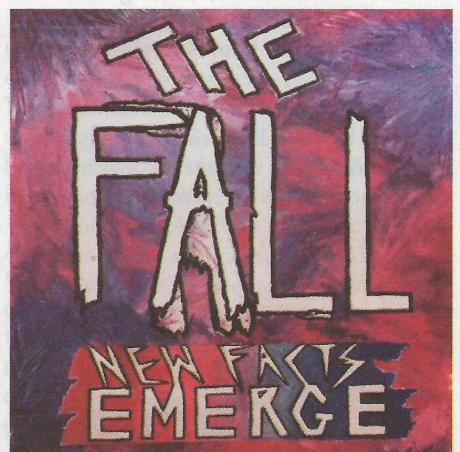
Live Uurop, actually recorded between 2008 and 2013, finds the consolidated final Fall power through its current repertoire with both finesse and fury, a combination that had eluded many earlier incarnations, as Smith continues to mutate into a compelling and deliberate hybrid of street preacher and Oliver Reed's wolfman. *Live In Clitheroe* is an uncharacteristically sensible reading of the current set, prefaced by a fascinatingly listless introduction from the promoter.

Sub-Lingual Tablet Cherry Red 2LP: BRED 580

Wise Ol' Man Cherry Red 12": BREDEP 666

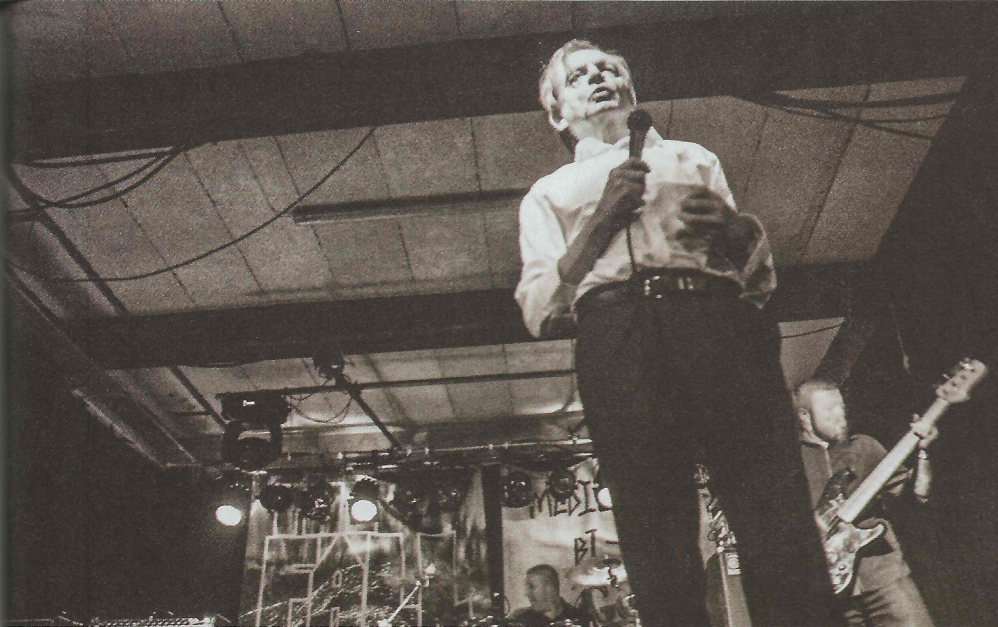


Fans should be pathetically grateful that Smith survived to complete this particular phase of The Fall, *Sub-Lingual Tablet* being another superb release. Thirty-eight years in, and two years from close of business, *Auto-Chip 2014-2016* is one of the great Fall songs of all time, and a 20-minute reading from *The Highbury Garage* that's surfaced on Youtube could be the group's finest live moment. *Greenway's* inter-tangled licks chime and slither over 10 minutes of high-speed motorik kraut rhythm, making for an immersive experience which is simultaneously both mind-bendingly psychedelic and yet vein-poppingly invigorating. It breaks down. It builds again. And it never lets go. Thrusting relentlessly forward in the same furrow, *Fibre Book Troll* comes a close second. The accompanying *Wise Ol' Man* EP features another lengthy disruption, *All Leave Cancelled*, alongside stray remixes and live tracks.



New Facts Emerge Cherry Red 2x10" LP: BRED 706

On The Fall's final LP, sadly without Poulou on side, Smith took the persona of the incoherent animal-shaman he'd been perfecting for the last decade to a whole new level of total theatre. On *Fol De Rol*, *Greenway's* perfectly considered keening guitars swoop over clattering rhythms around Smith's ravaged roars. Who is he on



“It was still music your dad would hate, even if you were now your dad.”

Couples Vs Jobless Mid 30s? Some haunted seer, possessed by all-knowing goblin spirits, that torment and taunt you from an indeterminate point way back in the mix. The opening of the Shakin’ Stevens-like *Second House Now*, where Smith’s ‘ba ba ba’s initially defy the song’s rhythm and then meet it head on, is a masterpiece of comic timing. The joyful and perfunctory loudhailer gobbledygook of *O! Zzztrrk Man* is, like so much of The Fall at their best, joyously, absurdly, laugh-out loud funny. Gibbs Gibson, interpreted by some as a comment on the moon-faced appearance Smith’s medical problems gave him, is a spritely rock’n’roll number that could have appeared on a 70s Fall B-side, while *Groundsboy* too has something of that ‘country and northern’ swing of the same era.

And how fitting that the last song The Fall released in Smith’s lifetime, *Nine Out Of Ten*, a final riposte to the critics he felt had underrated his group, is an extended

unaccompanied ghost guitar vamp from which Smith is absent for the last six minutes, having finally walked, head held high, out of his own movie.

The run of nine studio albums from 2003’s *The Real New Fall LP, Formerly Country On The Click* to 2017’s *New Facts Emerge* is a sequence of great recordings any band, at any time in their career, would have been proud of. And the fact that it came at a point where most would just cash in credit earned on former glories makes it even more remarkable. Listeners still longing for the anti-pop hits of the late 80s/early 90s, or the integrated electronic sheen of the Phonogram era were to be perpetually disappointed. Instead, from 2005’s *Fall Heads Roll* onwards The Fall were, brilliantly and permanently, in the same realm of cosmic garage rock minimalism that spawned the stand out epics of the early 80s glory years; *I’m Into CB*, *Deer Park*, *And This Day*, *Garden*, *Smile and Cruisers’ Creek*. But Smith had shed the burden of being the clipped and articulate wordsmith in chief to become instead a kind of abstract presence, haunting his own work and with growls and slurs and yammerings and hammerings that reaffirm rock and roll’s primal power to bypass sense. It was still music your dad would hate, even if you were now your dad.

The Fall toured relentlessly until the end and the albums rolled out with rigorous regularity. The last decade saw a permanent unit grow in confidence and audacity. Far from being a decline, the last 10 years in particular of the group’s 21st century career could be argued to represent the final fulfillment of whatever the fuck it was The Fall was supposed to be all along. We were privileged to have been around to witness it. What really went on there? Well, as of now, we’ll only ever have these extracts.

Luke Haines (musician)

There are many stories about him. But, perhaps they’re a self-constructed smokescreen, to conceal *Thee Great Workings* hidden within the greatest lyrics ever written in rock’n’roll. Let’s put it another way – MES was rock music’s only true occultist, and it may be a way to explain his cryptic appeal.

I realised that Smith had shamanic powers when I first witnessed The Fall on the *Hex Enduction Hour* Tour in ’82. To watch The Fall, in all their donkey-jacketed, intellectual yobbo glory was to see an event that may have only been comparable to the Yippies levitation of The Pentagon back in 1967. Smith was a shapeshifter, and back then it was hardly concealed. *Dragnet* (1980) is the aural equivalent of a particularly malevolent night in a late 70s Prestwich B&B. It even opens like a séance, “Is anybody there?”, barks Smith at the beginning of *Psychik Dancehall*. *Dragnet*’s masterpiece, *Spectre Versus Rector* (a tale of ineffectual possession), is the most terrifying rendering of Lovecraftian sick horror in unpopular culture. All Fall albums up to *Perverted By Language* (*Garden!*) hover around the occult. Then something changed.

The natural occultist keeps The Gift hidden. True occultists do not boast. Crowley and his ilk were charlatans, as is anyone who takes money for tarot readings, clairvoyance, and séances. The true occult is represented in the writing of Arthur Machen and in films like *Kill List*; all Barrett homes and witchy offering behind cheap Ikea bathroom cabinets. Smith knew all this – and perhaps to protect himself and the gift, Fall lyrics became murkier. On the final brace of albums Smith was speaking in tongues. Too much clarity lets too much in. “It’s like I drunk myself sober – I get better as I get older”, rapped Smith on *Spectre Versus Rector*.

Machen called it, “the hidden world,” (read Machen’s *The White People* – a punctuationless description of a witchcraft initiation ritual – for full MES/Victoriana horror crossover) and the only one who can see the true horrors beyond the veil is the true shaman, and that is what Mark E Smith was.



Photo: Stephanie Elizabeth Third, taken 12 May, 2016 at The Marble Factory, Bristol



RC's **Oregano Rathbone** nominates five Fall faves

1: **Rowche Rumble**

(Step-Forward 7", 1979)

When the band lurches in after that beautifully baggy drum fill, it's like a mutinous school orchestra half-remembering Sister Ray while spewing from one of those treacherous metal roundabouts you used to get in 60s playgrounds. It's labyrinthitis in a riff – I remember checking the single to see if it had been pressed off-centre – and chronicles government-sanctioned cycles of prescription-drug supply and dependency. "Loads of people across the land, who do a prescribed death dance while condemning speed and grass, they got an addiction like a hole in the ass."

2: **Slates, Slags, Etc**

(From *Slates* 10" EP, Rough Trade, 1981)

An extraordinary, 360° "definitive rant" in which Mark E pillories the thick, the pretentious, the violent and the stodgily unoriginal like a crop-sprayer of opprobrium. The sullen, feedback-prickled two-chord riff suggests The Stooges fighting The Seeds over the bones of the first four Kinks singles. Recognising yourself among the accused ("Academic male slags, reel off names of books and bands") diminishes the enjoyment not a whit. Not many sentient beings escaped Smith's death-ray gaze, including his own band: "Don't start improvising, for God's sake."

3: **Edinburgh Man** (From *Shift-Work*, Fontana, 1991)

This ostensibly fond paean to the Scottish capital seemed so out of character that it took a couple of beats to interpret Smith-the-balladeer as a rather magnificent punk gesture, if Mark E had cared about any such thing. Conspicuously lacking in rancour, it has become one of the more controversial and polarising Fall tracks, which is a fine irony. "As I sit and stare at all of England's sores, I tell you one thing," Smith sighs: "I wish I was in Edinburgh." Such wistfulness, set to a sweet-natured indie jangle, skirts perilously close to benevolence: but Smith tempers his cordiality by declaring "keep me away from the festival," before treating himself to a generous quarter-gill in the middle eight. He was subsequently reported to have shifted his allegiances to Glasgow.

4: **Dr Bucks' Letter** (From *The Unutterable*, Eagle, 2000)

With its glowering locked groove, looping inscrutably under a grainy electronic cloud, Dr Bucks' Letter addresses acute pangs of remorse after falling out with a friend – "Of my own making, I walk a dark corridor

of my heart". Quite brilliantly, the narrator's mode of escape from regret is to: "Put the radio on, get the magazine out and read about 'The essence of Tong'". The following checklist informs us that DJ Pete Tong never leaves home without his sunglasses, Palm Pilot, mobile phone and Amex card. This masterful *objet trouvé* insertion renders the banal more banal, and the poignant more poignant.

5: **50 Year Old Man** (From *Imperial Wax Solvent*, Castle, 2008)

The apotheosis of The Fall's "always different, always the same" principle: a grimy, splenetic, scattershot, magic-realist growl ("That Steve Albini, he's in collusion with Virgin Trains against me"). It's the interior monologue of, yes, a stubbornly proud, nonconformist 50-year-old man which also takes the piss out of stubbornly proud, nonconformist 50-year-old men: you realise halfway through that a surprising number of punk-era firebrands were cūrmudgeonly 50-year-olds even in their 20s.

Tim Cumming (journalist)

I'd been told to go to the Malmaison bar. I did. It was about 50 paces from the station entrance. And there I was, thinking I might end up in Salford. I later learnt the place was owned by Mick Hucknall. The comedian Bill Bailey was at the bar, looking like his publicity photo. No MES. Stripped down, steel-finished, and an insect din of voices. I took a table near the window, view of the door, the street, pints of lager. MES came down the slope from the main door on crutches. I hailed him, got drinks, and we drank, smoked and talked for a long afternoon.

Though I had in my head all these foggy second-hand tales of MES stubbing out fags in journalists' eyes, that wasn't the man or the artist I met. He was friendly and funny; a fascinating gentleman, soft spoken, much given to laughter, uninterested in addressing prosaic questions, always on the ball when it came to more freeform talk about art and music and the body politic. I think that with MES, what you got from him was what you brought to the table. It helped to know your stuff, and not to trust the internet. We drank and talked until his then-wife, Elena, came to join us. Soon, they went off in a cab, I skulked around the station a bit. Those days of transcribing from those lo-fi little tapes was a nightmare, but meeting Mark was a dream, really.

The next time I met him, in a weirdly straight bar at the top of Piccadilly, he said, "I didn't realise it would be you." The last time we met, we finished off in a big dark, empty late afternoon pub, of the older, heavier kind, drinking tequila. He had a weird smile hanging off his face, his back to the window, in silhouette. It was like looking at someone laughing in outer space. There was no sound. I remember him at one point

reassuring me that "I'd not end up in prison". Thanks for that, Mark.

David Quantick (journalist)

He was a godsend to us *NME* writers. Quotes flowed from him, he had contrary opinions on everything, and a spikiness that was both exciting and hilarious ("Why doesn't Billy Bragg tell sexist jokes?" he once said in a television interview, "Cos he doesn't fucking know any.") Even in the late 80s, when I first came across him professionally, Mark E Smith had been around for ever. He was as much part of the fabric of *NME* as the walls. We quoted his lyrics in our daily conversation. "Free range!" we would say to each other, just because we liked saying it. We swapped stories of Mark E's remarks – the time he'd seen a photographer's expensive car and said to him, "No explanation necessary, pal", a rare moment of near-praise.

Smith was not famous for praise. His comment on his appearances in a column I wrote with Steven Wells was, "Are they in a homosexual relationship, then?" while his response to a series of questions about how he was going to spend his Christmas – he was out when I phoned so I had to read the questions out loud to his answering machine – was to use the tape of me asking the questions as the coming-on-stage intro tape to their next live show.

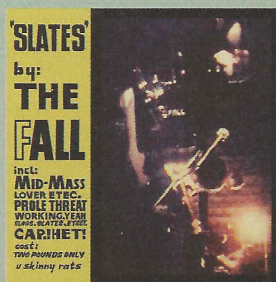
As a result, I would have been nervous when he came into the office to review the singles and it was my job to play them to him and record his responses. "I couldn't do your job," he said sardonically as he opened another can of lager. It turned out that the afternoon was brilliant, if only for one moment. I had to play Mark the debut single from Verve, later The Verve. "What's all this about, then?", Mark asked. I told him the only thing I knew about the group, that the singer, Richard Ashcroft, known at the time as "Mad Richard", had recently told a journalist that he could fly. Mark listened to the long, spiralling record and, as it faded out, said, "God help us if there's a war."

Gaz Partington (fan)

Hearing about Mark E Smith isn't like hearing about Bowie. The Dame was a part of that internal world we all have growing up. The posters on the bedroom wall, the concerts in your head. The Fall were different, in that they felt physical and real in a manner which our childhood heroes can never quite be. Still iconic, but something you could almost touch. No leper messiahs here. We're keeping shit real.

I met fans. I went to gigs. I wrote articles for fanzines which 50 people read. I interviewed their manager in a shit pub. I stood five feet away from the onstage Mark, feeling almost hypnotised, while he pissed about with his guitarist's amplifier. The wife ignored the theatrics and had a dance instead.

The Fall were – and are, through the glorious friends I'd never have known



otherwise – as much a part of my world as the morning coffee.

A lot of you would have heard his name, but not the music. And I'd be lying if I said that wasn't part of the appeal. Here is this cult group, revered and loved by the critics and certain music heads, but which most people haven't even heard of. It's ours.

Sure, it would have been easy for a personality like Mark to get on the TV circuit, like John Cooper Clarke is doing these days (and more power to him), putting his face out there and casting the net for newcomers. But instead, he stubbornly ploughed his field. Record, release, tour. The music is there if you look; take it or leave it. And who needs a massive house in Cheshire anyway?

The music world is emptier – duller – without his presence. As are the lives of those who welcomed with open arms his unique brand of genius wit. He shall be greatly missed.

RC's Steve Burniston on his first Fall single

I bought *Lie Dream Of A Casino Soul* as soon as I heard it. Key point; like so many Fall songs, it's a great tune and sounds

better the louder it gets. It's the drums that stopped me cold; a double percussion racket with that watermarked Fall rumble on top of it. Like some anti-matter rockabilly, heard at high volume in a record shop, how could I not buy it? There was no time to decipher Smith's words, not on the first listen, but the snippets were half the fun: having an awake dream, putting weight back on, Victorian turrets. Meanwhile, the band crash out the tune – drums blazing, keyboard shrieking, while Smith calmly reports. Even when it all seemed to break down and that vocal do-do-do-thing made it sound unhinged, I couldn't stop listening. As the drums reared up again, I knew this was a fabulous record. The flip, *Fantastic Life*, is fabulous in its own way. With something about Rasputin's brother, it often feels like a fridge is tumbling down the stairs. It was my 671st single.

Wayne Barrow (fan)

The first record I heard by The Fall was *Shift Work* in '91. Though I quite liked it, it took me a further four years or so to buy one of the compilations, a further five years to really get into The Fall, and then inexplicably, a further eight years to see them live and become well and truly hooked. By that reckoning, if I first heard The Fall today as a 43-year-old, I wouldn't be a fanatic until I hit 60!

To say The Fall are an acquired taste is an understatement, but when it does finally click, it is there for life. For me it's like when you try your first beer and the taste kind of puts you off, you think, "how do people drink

this stuff every weekend," you try it again and it's a bit easier on the palate, and before you know it, it becomes a part of life.

That is The Fall and I hope a few more people who have checked them out for the first time due to the sad passing of Mark E Smith give it a little time and hopefully become Fall fans.

Martin Roe (fan)

I am lucky enough to be old enough to have bought their first album, *Live At The Witch Trials*, in the first week of release and have bought every album since, always in the first week of release. Going to Fall gigs has taken me all over the UK, as well as European dates, seeing more or less every line-up of The Fall – 72 gigs in all over 39 years including the *I Am Curious, Orange*, ballet at Sadler's Wells Theatre and the *Hey, Luciani* play at London Hammersmith Riverside Studio.

At the latter, exhilarated by The Fall's music, but bemused and confused by the storyline, one lad clearly wanted to spice up the proceedings by leaving his seat and walking on stage, walking to Steve Hanley who was busy typing away at his desk, screwing up a sheet of paper and casually dropping it in the bin next to the desk and walking off. Steve Hanley continued typing as he tried to suppress his laughter and everyone could see his shoulders shaking, but Smith? He remained unmoved and continued as if nothing had happened, 100% professional as always.

This wasn't the case a few years later at Manchester Lesser Free Trade Hall when midway through one song it was Mark E Smith's turn to falter slightly as the group played on. A dog walked across the stage, to high amusement from the audience and a double-take and smile from Smith. The dog had a quick look around and then wandered off stage.

Mark E Smith was never shy on audience interaction. At a Sheffield Polytechnic gig in 1981, one female member of the audience was shouting obscenities between each song; it was clearly audible throughout the venue. After just half-a-dozen songs, MES had clearly had enough and pointing at the girl in question retorted, "Hey, look who it is, it's Siouxsie! It's Siouxsie & The Banshees everyone. And next time you come out, get your f*****g hair combed." She was quiet after that.

It wasn't just the audience who were targeted; the following was heard on a live tape from Belfast Harp Lounge in 1978. The live recording opens with the strains of Sid Vicious' *My Way* being played over the PA and as it ends the compere, keen to hit the limelight announces to the crowd, "Ladies and Gentlemen, won't you please welcome to the stage...THE FALL." There is applause and a cheer from the crowd until Mark E Smith can clearly be heard: "No, not yet you fool, play another record!" There is a little laughter, and the compere tries to recover the situation, "Well it seems like The Fall aren't quite ready, here's another record."

John Thorpe (fan)

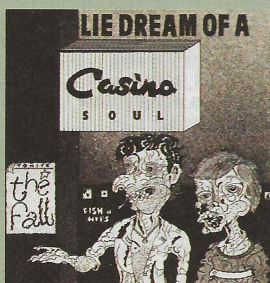
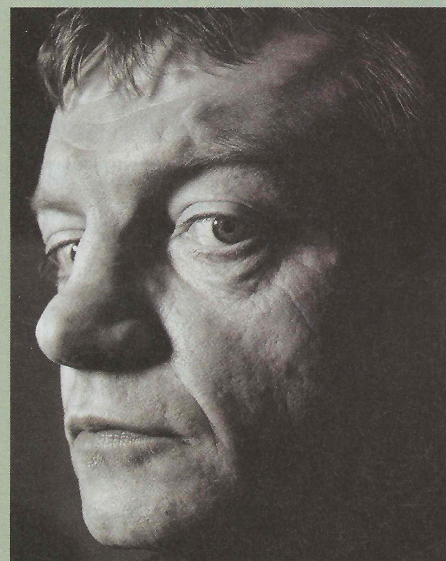
The Fall are my all-time favourite band (bar none) and have been so for 30 years, since I was 16. Throughout the years I never missed a release of his or The Fall's and I've amassed a vast collection. Mark always fought prejudice, blatant plagiarism and the status quo. He became a great figure for many, like me, who felt neglected in society. He gave me the strength to feel that I was *right* in the face of adversities and provided me with self-esteem or confidence even when others were telling me otherwise. You can't put a price on that.

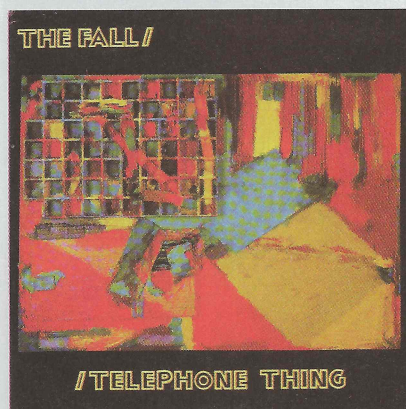
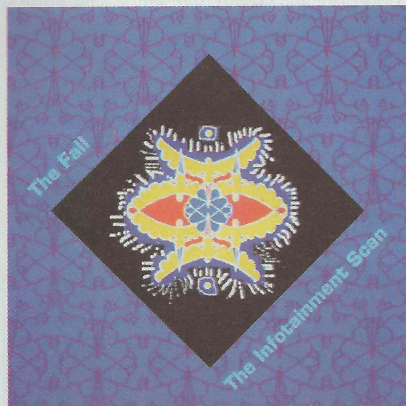
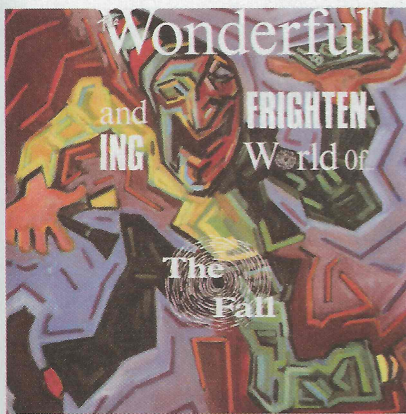
I first met Mark when I was 19-years-old, when I showed him my jacket with a hand-painted "The Fall" logo on the back of it which, despite numerous clear-outs through the years, I still own. That night the band were celebrating the release of their *White Lightning* single and he was very nice; attentive, down to earth and friendly towards me with no pretensions. It seemed that he genuinely felt he was no better than me in real life.

Fast forward 27 years to 2017 and despite being unwell and having to sing half a set from the dressing room he not only signed both mine and my 19-year-old son's copies of his autobiography (*Renegade*), but added some typically hilarious, MES-styled messages in them, proving even to the end his spirit, attitude and humour wouldn't be countermanded. As if that wasn't enough, he provided us with some free beer. What a night to remember! How many performers would ever bother to do that, especially as they were (unbeknown to us) so ill?

People go on about how cantankerous he could be and how he had a bit of a drink problem. But I've always admired how well he coped (for 40 years) with what was often relentlessly placed on or said about him. I feel that fans (or more importantly those who *really* knew him) should defend him now he's no longer around to defend himself.

Thanks to everybody who shared their stories, Lesley Bleakley at Beggars, and, of course, Mark himself.





THE FALL selected discography

SINGLES/EPs

- 78 Step Forward SF 7
- 78 Step Forward SF 9
- 79 Step Forward SF 11
- 80 Step Forward SF 13
- 80 Step Forward SF 13
- 80 Rough Trade RT 048
- 80 Rough Trade RT 056
- 81 Rough Trade RT 071
- 81 Kamera ERA 001
- 82 Kamera ERA 004
- 82 Rough Trade RT 133
- 82 Kamera ERA 014

- 83 Rough Trade RT 143

- 84 Beggars Banquet BEG 110
- 84 Beggars Banquet BEG 110 T
- 84 Beggars Banquet BEG 120 E

- 84 Beggars Banquet BEG 116
- 85 Beggars Banquet BEG 134
- 85 Beggars Banquet BEG 134 T
- 85 Beggars Banquet BEG 150
- 85 Beggars Banquet BEG 165 T
- 86 Beggars Banquet BEG 168
- 86 Beggars Banquet BEG 176
- 87 Beggars Banquet BEG 187 H
- 88 Beggars Banquet BEG 200
- 88 Beggars Banquet BEG 206
- 88 Beggars Banquet BEG 206 B
- 88 Beggars Banquet FALL2 B

- 89 Beggars Banquet BEG 226
- 90 Cog Sinister SIN 4
- 90 Cog Sinister SINR 5
- 90 Cog Sinister SIN 6
- 90 Cog Sinister SIN 7
- 91 Cog Sinister FALL 1
- 92 Cog Sinister SINS 8
- 92 Fontana SINCD 912
- 92 Fontana SINCD 9

- 93 Permanent 7 SPERM 9
- 93 Cog Sinister 12 SPERM 13
- 93 Cog Sinister 12 SPERMX 13
- 93 Cog Sinister CDSPERMD 13
- 93 Cog Sinister CDSPERM 13
- 94 Permanent 10 SPERM 14
- 94 Permanent 12 SPERM 14
- 96 Jet JET 500
- 98 Artful 10 Artful 1

- 98 Artful CDARTFUL 1

- 98 Artful CXARTFUL 1
- 99 Artful 12 ARTFUL 2
- 99 Artful CDARTFUL 2
- 99 Artful CDARTFUL 3
- 99 Artful CDXARTFUL 3

- 01 Flitwick MK 45 1 FG
- 02 Action TAKE 20
- 03 Action TAKE 22

- 04 Action TAKE 23
- 05 Hip Priest HIPPO 005 CD

- 05 Slogan SLOSI 1005
- 07 Sanctuary SLOXD 009

- 07 Sanctuary SLOW 1009

- 09 Action ACTOUR 01 V
- 10 Domino Rug 363
- 11 Cherry Red Cherry 500
- 12 Cherry Red Cherry 501
- 13 Cherry Red Cherry 502
- 13 Cherry Red CDMRED 600

- 13 Cherry Red BREDEP 600

- 16 Cherry Red CDMRED 666

- 16 Cherry Red BREDEP 666

- 17 Cherry Red Cherry 521

- BINGO-MASTER'S BREAK-OUT! (EP) £30
- It's The New Thing/Various Times (p/s) £25
- Rowche Rumble/In My Area (p/s) £25
- Fiery Jack/Second Dark Age/Psykick Dancehall 2 (black & white p/s) £25
- Fiery Jack/Second Dark Age/Psykick Dancehall 2 (yellow p/s) £20
- How I Wrote 'Elastic Man'/City Hobgoblins (p/s) £15
- Totally Wired/Putta Block (p/s) £15
- SLATES (10" EP, 33rpm) £30
- Lie Dream Of A Casino Soul/Fantastic Life (p/s) £15
- Look, Know/I'm Into CB (p/s) £10
- The Man Whose Head Expanded/Ludd Gang (p/s) £10
- Marquis Cha-Cha/Papal Visit (p/s, B-side plays Room To Live, withdrawn) £100
- Kicker Conspiracy/Wings/Container Drivers/New Puritan (gatefold, 2x7") £15
- Oh! Brother/God-Box (p/s) £10
- Oh! Brother/Oh! Brother (Mix)/God-Box (12" p/s) £10
- CALL FOR ESCAPE ROUTE Draygo's Guilt/Clear Off/No Bulbs (with bonus 7" No Bulbs 3/Slang King 2) £20
- CREEP/Pat-Trip Dispenser (p/s) £10
- Couldn't Get Ahead/Rollin' Dany (p/s) £10
- Rollin' Dany/Couldn't Get Ahead/Petty Thief Lout (12", p/s) £10
- Cruiser's Creek/LA (p/s) £10
- Living Too Late/Hot Aftershave Bop/Living Too Long £15
- Mr Pharmacist/Lucifer Over Lancashire (p/s) £8
- Hey! Luciani/Entitled (p/s) £5
- There's A Ghost In My House/Haf Found Bormann (hologram p/s) £5
- Hit The North (Part 1)/Hit The North (Part 2) (p/s) £5
- Victoria/Tuff Life Boogie (p/s) £5
- Victoria/Tuff Life Boogie (limited edition 7" box set with inserts & badge) £20
- Jerusalem/Acid Priest 2088/Big New Prinz/Wrong Place, Right Time No 2 (limited edition 2x7") £10
- Cab It Up/Dead Beat Descendant (p/s) £6
- Telephone Thing/British People In Hot Weather (p/s) £6
- Popcorn Double Feature/Zandra (p/s) £6
- White Lightning/Blood Outta Stone (p/s) £6
- High Tension Line/Xmas With Simon (p/s) £6
- So What About It/Edinburgh Man (promo only) £20
- Free Range/Everything Hurtz (p/s) £6
- ED'S BABE (CD, EP) £8
- Ed's Babe/Pumpkin Head Xcapes/The Knight The Devil And Death/Free Ranger (12" limited edition) £25
- Why Are People Grudeful?/Glam-Racket (p/s) £8
- BEHIND THE COUNTER (12", EP, volume 1) £10
- BEHIND THE COUNTER (12", EP, volume 2) £10
- BEHIND THE COUNTER (CD, EP, volume 1) £5
- BEHIND THE COUNTER (CD, EP, volume 2) £5
- 15 Ways/Hey! Student/The \$500 Bottle Of Wine (10", p/s, clear vinyl) £10
- 15 WAYS (12" EP) £15
- The Chiselers/Chilinst (p/s) £8
- Masquerade (Mr Natural Mix)/Masquerade (PWL Mix) /Masquerade (Album Mix) (10") £8
- Masquerade (Single Mix)/Ivanhoes Two Pence/Spencer Must Die (Live)/Ten Houses Of Eve (Remix) (CD) £15
- Masquerade (Single Mix)/Calendar/Scareball/Oh! Gang (Live) (CD) £15
- Touch Sensitive/Antidote/Touch Sensitive (Dance Mix) (12") £50
- Touch Sensitive/Antidote/Touch Sensitive (Dance Mix) (CD) £5
- F-'Oldin' Money/Perfect Day (New Version)/Birthday Song (New Mix) (CD) £10
- F-'Oldin' Money/The REAL Life Of The Crying Marshall (New Version)/Tom Raggazzi (New Mix) (CD) £10
- Rude (All The Time)/I Wake Up In The City (500 only) £50
- The Fall Vs 2003: Susan Vs Youthclub/Janet Vs Johnny (p/s) £8
- (We Wish You) A Protein Christmas/(We Are) Mock Goth/(Birtwistle's) Girl In Shop/Recovery Kit 2 (2x7") £10
- Theme From Sparta FC 2/My Ex Classmate's Kids (live) (p/s) £8
- RUDE ALL THE TIME: Distilled Mug Art/'I Wake Up In The City'/Where's The Fuckin Taxi? Cunt/My Ex Classmates Kids (CD, EP) £10
- I Can Hear The Grass Grow/Clasp Hands (p/s) £6
- Reformation! (Uncut)/Over Over (rough mix)/ My Door Is Never (Rough Mix)/Reformation! (Edit) (CD) £8
- Reformation! (Uncut)/Over Over (Rough Mix)/My Door Is Never (Rough Mix)/Reformation! (Edit) (12") £25
- Slippy Floor (Mark Mix)/Hot Cake Part 2 (tour-only 7") £6
- Bury!/Cowboy Gregori (7") £10
- Laptop Dog/Cosmos 7/Monocard (p/s) £10
- Night Of The Humerons: Victrola Time/Taking Off (live) (p/s) £10
- Sir William Wray (Single Mix)/Jetplane/Hittite Man (Single Mix) (p/s) £6
- THE REMAINDERER/Amorata!/Mister Rode/Rememberance R/Say Mama - Race With The Devil/Touchy Pad (CD, EP) £6
- THE REMAINDERER/Amorata!/Mister Rode/Rememberance R/Say Mama - Race With The Devil/Touchy Pad (10", EP, gatefold) £15
- Wise Ol' Man (Edit)/All Leave Cancelled/Dedication (Remix)/Wise Ol' Man (inst)/Venice With Girls/Facebook Troll - No Xmas For John Quay/All Leave Cancelled (CD) £10
- Wise Ol' Man (Edit)/All Leave Cancelled/Dedication/Wise Ol' Man (inst)/Venice With Girls/ Facebook Troll - No Xmas For John Quay/All Leave Cancelled (10") £12
- Masquerade/Masquerade (PWL MIX) (7", limited edition) £10

ALBUMS

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| 79 Step Forward SFLP 1 | LIVE AT THE WITCH TRIALS (LP, 1st pressing) | £45 |
| 79 Step Forward SFLP 4 | DRAGNET (LP, 1st pressing, with insert. Lyntone version with LYN 7552/3 and SFLP 4 in run-out groove) | £45 |
| 79 Step Forward SFLP 4 | DRAGNET (LP, 1st pressing, with insert. Non-Lyntone version with SFLP 4 in run-out groove) | £40 |
| 80 Rough Trade ROUGH 10 | TOTALE'S TURNS (IT'S NOW OR NEVER) (LP) | £30 |
| 80 Rough Trade ROUGH 18 | GROTESQUE (AFTER THE GRAMME) (LP) | £30 |
| 81 Step Forward SFLP 6 | THE EARLY YEARS 77-79 (LP) | £30 |
| 82 Kamera KAM 005 | HEX ENDUCTION HOUR (LP) | £50 |
| 82 Kamera KAM 011 | ROOM TO LIVE (LP) | £20 |
| 83 Rough Trade Rough 62 | PERVERTED BY LANGUAGE (LP) | £25 |
| 84 Beggars Banquet BEGA 58 | THE WONDERFUL AND FRIGHTENING WORLD OF (LP) | £20 |
| 85 Beggars Banquet BEGA 67 | THIS NATION'S SAVING GRACE (LP, gatefold with inner sleeve) | £20 |
| 85 Situation 2 SITU 13 | HIP PRIEST AND KAMERADS (LP) | £20 |
| 86 Beggars Banquet BEGA 75 | BEND SINISTER (LP) | £20 |
| 87 Cog Sinister COG 1 | PALACE OF SWORDS REVERSED - COMPILATION 1980-83 (LP) | £15 |
| 88 Beggars Banquet BEGA 96 | I AM KURIOUS ORANJ (LP, gatefold) | £20 |
| 88 Beggars Banquet BEGA 91 | THE FRENZ EXPERIMENT (LP, with Bremen Nacht Run Out 7" (FALL 1)) | £20 |
| 90 Cog Sinister 8422041 | EXTRICATE (LP) | £15 |
| 90 Beggars Banquet BEGA 111 | 458489 A SIDES (LP, compilation) | £30 |
| 91 Cog Sinister 8485941 | SHIFT-WORK (LP) | £15 |
| 92 Cog Sinister 5121621 | CODE: SELFISH (LP) | £30 |
| 93 Permanent PERMLP 12 | THE INFOTAINMENT SCAN (LP) | £25 |
| 94 Permanent PERMLP 16 | MIDDLE CLASS REVOLT (LP) | £40 |
| 95 Permanent PERMLP 30 | CEREBRAL CAUSTIC (LP) | £40 |
| 95 Permanent PERMLP 36 | THE TWENTY SEVEN POINTS (2LP, gatefold) | £25 |
| 96 Jet JETLP 1012 | LIGHT USER SYNDROME (LP) | £30 |
| 97 Artful ARTFUL LP 9 | LEVITATE (LP) | £70 |
| 99 Artful ARTFUL LP 17 | THE MARSHALL SUITE (2LP) | £80 |
| 00 Eagle EAGCD 164 | THE UNUTTERABLE (CD) | £20 |
| 02 Cog Sinister COGVPLP 131 | ARE YOU ARE MISSING WINNER (LP, picture disc) | £50 |
| 02 Turning Point TPM 02208 | LIVE AT THE WITCH TRIALS (LP, reissue) | £15 |
| 02 Turning Point TPM 02209 | DRAGNET (LP, reissue) | £15 |
| 02 Turning Point TPM 02210 | GROTESQUE (AFTER THE GRAMME) (LP, reissue) | £15 |
| 02 Action TAKE 18 CD | 2G+2 (CD) | £5 |
| 03 Action TAKE 021 | THE REAL NEW FALL LP (LP) | £60 |
| 04 Sanctuary SMEDD 017 | 50,000 FALL FANS CAN'T BE WRONG (2CD) | £8 |
| 05 Slogan SLOLP 003 | FALL HEADS ROLL (LP) | £35 |
| 05 Castle CMXBX 982 | COMPLETE PEEL SESSIONS (6CD box set) | £40 |
| 07 Slogan SLODV 007 | REFORMATION POST TLC (2LP) | £30 |
| 07 Castle CMXBX 1558 | THE FALL BOX SET 1976-2007 (5CD box set) | £40 |
| 08 Sanctuary 1766796 | IMPERIAL WAX SOLVENT (LP) | £80 |
| 09 Sanctuary 2713432 | LAST NIGHT AT THE PALAIS (CD/DVD) | £30 |
| 10 Domino WIGLP 245 | YOUR FUTURE OUR CLUTTER (2LP) | £18 |
| 11 Cherry Red BRED 500 | ERSATZ GB (LP) | £15 |
| 13 Cherry Red BRED 580 | RE-MIT (LP) | £15 |
| 14 Secret SECLP 104 | YARBLES (LP) | £15 |
| 14 Let Them Eat Vinyl LETV 109 LP | THE UNUTTERABLE (2LP, reissue) | £50 |
| 14 Cherry Red BRED 599 | LIVE (2LP, as 'The Fall Group') | £18 |
| 15 Cherry Red BRED 580 | SUB-LINGUAL TABLET (2LP) | £15 |
| 17 Cherry Red CRCDBOX 30 | SINGLES 1978-2016 (7CD box set) | £40 |
| 17 Cherry Red CDBRED 706 | NEW FACTS EMERGE (CD) | £11 |
| 17 Cherry Red BRED 706 | NEW FACTS EMERGE (2x10") | £18 |

F-'Oldin' Money: 12 Fall Collectables

Dresden Dolls a three track 7" bootleg single on Total Eclipse Records featuring early rehearsal/home demo recordings of Dresden Dolls b/w Psycho Mafia and Industrial Estate.

Marquis Cha-Cha Kamera 7" single originally scheduled for release in 1982 but then withdrawn, a small number were released in late 1983.

Nord-West Gas a German compilation LP issued by Fünf Und Vierzig in 1986 with a selection of songs from the albums *The Wonderful And Frightening World Of...* and *This Nation's Saving Grace*, and associated singles.

I'm Frank US Promo a four track 12" promotional single, released by Fontana/PolyGram in the US in 1990, with a unique sleeve.

White Lightning Promo a promotional 7" single released by Fontana in 1990 with an accompanying miniature bottle of White Lightning tequila. Bonus points if the bottle is undrunk.

So What About It? Remixes a promotional 12" single issued by Fontana in 1991 featuring three remixes of the track from the *Shift-Work* album.

Selections From 'The Infotainment Scan' Plus Crash Course '84-'92 a US promotional CD issued by Matador/Atlantic in 1993, featuring nine tracks in total. Two were taken from *The Infotainment Scan* album, six were back catalogue album tracks, and one was a previously unreleased live track.

Masquerade White Label a white label 10" single issued by Artful in 1998. Often incorrectly referred to as a Chemical Brothers remix, the A-side was in fact remixed by Mr Natural (real name: Aaron Gilbert). Extra points if you have one of the copies signed by Mark E Smith, Steve Hanley and Julia Nagle.

Rude (All The Time) a free 7" single sent out by Flitwick in 2001 to people who had subscribed to their mailing list. Limited to 500 copies.

2 Librans Demo a one-sided 7" single sent out by Voiceprint in 2004 to people who had collected and returned a set of eight tokens included with all The Fall CD reissues released by Voiceprint during 2002. Limited to 500 copies.

Blind Man promo a one-track promotional CD sent out by Voiceprint in 2004 to its mail order customers who had previously bought Fall product. Blind Man was the original demo version of the track Blindness.

Reformation Post TLC test pressing 2LP white label test pressing by Sanctuary in 2006, which contained the incorrect album mix and was rejected by Mark E Smith.

Compiled by Conway Paton of The Fall online - www.thefall.org

