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The Making of Pink Floyd The Wall

Written by Gerald Scarfe

Foreword by Roger Waters

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THE MAKING OF

PINK FLOYD
THE WALL

GERALD SCARFE

WEIDENFELD & NICOLSON



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FOREWORD BY ROGER WATERS

I remember it was in 1973 that Nick Mason saw Gerry's animated film *Long Drawn Out Trip* on the BBC and he rang me to say 'Check this out; I think we should do something with this guy.' So I did check it out, it was beautiful, exquisitely insane, so I rang Nick and I said 'he's obviously fucking mad, let's get him on board'. Obviously I don't really remember all of the above, it was after all 38 years ago, but that was definitely the gist of it. Anyway, we all got together at Nick's house in Camden Town (or was it Camptown – I'm almost certain it was the one without the racetrack). Gerry was already a celebrated political cartoonist by then whose acerbic style and unerring ability to upset apple carts and deflate the over-inflated appealed to us all. He says now, that at that first meeting he didn't know what to expect 'wot wiv us bein' a fucking rock band an' that' but was relieved that we all seemed 'surprisingly civilized'. I have to say Gerry seemed 'alarmingly civilized' himself; I'm pretty sure he had a sheepskin coat, and those weird leather gloves with knitted backs that one always imagined young toffs were wont to wear, at the wheels of open sports cars (not at all easy to say 'were wont to wear' and I dare say not at all easy to read, but there we are). I shouldn't really tell you this, but at the time, Gerry did own one of those awful frog-eyed Austin Healey Sprites. Shusssh!

What next? He tells me we invited him to a gig at The Rainbow Theatre in Finsbury Park – it seems we were performing *Dark Side of the Moon* (very appropriately, still sporting a secondary title, 'A Piece for Assorted Lunatics') and it was then, apparently, that Gerry got hooked on what we were doing. I mean, I can totally understand why, we had a model German plane – a Stuka dive bomber no less – coming from behind the audience, on a wire, trailing smoke and crashing in flames on stage, sort of Max Wall meets Herman Goering: who could resist that?

Anyway, the next thing is that Gerry came to a crappy little studio called Unit (sounds like one of Frank Zappa's children) in King's Cross, (even I remember it was in King's Cross) where we were recording something or other or maybe rehearsing something or other, and Gerry started making some drawings for something or other. Gerry had by this time eschewed his sheepskin coat and driving gloves in favour of a rather rakish leather jacket. Now we could be friends, and I guess it all just snowballed from there.

The Wall, as I guess everyone knows by now, grew out of an alienation from certain sections of our audience that I'd felt at one stage in my career. It's also about the alienation I felt at the loss of my father – who was killed during World War II. In fact, seen as a broader canvas, about alienation in general.

Gerry is similarly obsessed with alienation, as witnessed in his Vietnam works and also in the drawings of the moment in August 1962 when an 18-year-old East German bricklayer called Peter Fechter climbed over the Berlin Wall. He was shot by the border guards and lay beside the wall for hours screaming before he bled to death. Gerry's work was full of alienated beings and tortured souls and it was obvious to me and Nick that he had just the right dark but humane imagination we needed.



‘It was obvious to Nick and me Gerry had just the right dark imagination we needed.’

So we worked together on animations for the shows for *Wish You Were Here*. And then:

THE WALL

I shall not attempt to preface that story. This book takes care of it. Suffice it to say I am a huge fan of the work Gel did on that project, and also very proud of the work he and I and Nick and David and Rick and Alan Parker and Bob Geldof and everyone else did together. It was a memorable experience. Working with Gel was always fun: if I have one particular abiding memory it is that we laughed a lot. Gel has a very loud laugh. I can hear it now. Not literally of course because I'm in New York and he's in London. I mean it was loud but not that loud.

Roger Waters

Introduction



ACCESS ALL AREAS

I met a fan in Los Angeles who was star struck to find that I worked on *The Wall*. 'Wow!' he said, 'you worked on *The Wall*?' 'Yes.' 'Wow! What was it like?' 'Well, it was just like any other job, at the time.' 'Didn't it change your life?' he gasped. 'No,' I said. 'Wow!' he went on, 'it sure changed mine!' So *The Wall* obviously hit a nerve for the young at that time – and continues to do so today.

This book is, to a certain extent, a report from a war zone, a personal view of those six years when I worked closely with the band and along the way had some of the best fun as well as some of the most miserable times.

It was after seeing *Dark Side of the Moon* performed live that I was first attracted to work with Pink Floyd. The explosive visual effects that play an enormous part in the theatricality of their shows appealed to my delusions of grandeur. I have designed opera, ballet, ice shows and West End theatre, but none of it can hold a candle to the blaze of light that was *The Wall*. This seemed the show for me – a gigantic wall which spanned a huge arena, giant inflatables haunting the stage like ghosts. Animated film spilling my grotesques onto the screen and the wall. Lights and then, eventually, camera and action, when the show grew into what is now a cult film.

For a long time I have wanted to do a book of the hundreds of sketches, drawings and paintings I did over my years with Pink Floyd – many of them never seen or published before. In the process I have become fascinated by the detective work necessary to piece the jigsaw together, to give a picture of what went on over those years. And the drawings themselves are great triggers to my memory, rather like notes in a diary. Naturally one tends to remember the highlights. It's the things that go wrong that stick in the mind. An argument or a cock-up is more memorable than a normal day. Many of my diary entries for the period covering the making of *The Wall* simply say 'Roger, snooker: 12.00'... And the diary entries over those years are not only sometimes brief, they are also somewhat random; as Nick quite correctly says, I am no Doctor Johnson.

This book is, to a certain extent, a report from a war zone, a personal view of those six years when I worked closely with the band and along the way had some of the best fun as well as some of the most miserable times. I was caught in the middle of the band's break up and also in the middle of the fight between Alan and Roger and Roger and the band. It was like being a war correspondent caught in the crossfire.

This is not a back-stabbing exercise. I have long since forgotten the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune that I suffered while trying to design and direct the film of *The Wall*. It is ironic that the whole piece, though dedicated to tearing down walls between people, should at the time have built so many. Most of what went on now seems, if anything, amusing today.



TOP LEFT: Real walls have been a part of my life. In 1964, *Esquire* magazine sent me to draw the Berlin Wall. I drew the spot beneath the wall where Peter Fechter, a young East German, bled to death after being shot climbing the wall.

LEFT AND ABOVE: An earlier brush with Rock and Roll. John Lennon, George Harrison, Ringo Starr and Paul McCartney all drawn at their homes for a *Time* magazine cover in 1966.

BELOW: Animation made for the BBC, showing the typical grotesqueries that were part of my work at the time when I met the band. The flower theme makes an early appearance.





Roger, David and Nick all spoke to me at length, specifically for this book.

I am proud of the immense body of work I produced with Pink Floyd. In many ways, working with them released me and enabled me to explore different avenues, allowing and encouraging me to use methods of expression that I might not otherwise have experienced. From *Wish You Were Here*, *The Wall* and beyond to Roger's *Pros and Cons*, it has been a wonderful trip, and has brought my work to a world-wide audience.

Roger, David and Nick all spoke to me at length, specifically for this book, and I am extremely thankful to all three of them for their whole-hearted support and participation. Roger and Nick came independently to my studio in Chelsea and went through the book in its early stages, page by page, and reminisced about old times. I then took the draft of the book to David, on his farm where he lives, to show it to him and get his reactions, and he gave me some fascinating memories and thoughts.



ABOVE: David and I reminisce in the gardens at David's farm.

LEFT: Nick and I chatting over old times in my studio.

RIGHT: Alan and I.

Generously, my old adversary, Alan Parker, came to my studio – he lives nearby – and we laughed at what had been a difficult period for us both. Many others who were part of the project also talked to me and I'm very grateful to all of them for their encouragement, and the stories that they told, which appear in this book.

