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# Spaced Out

## Cosmic Boogie



**O**n a number of occasions these shared gigs ended up with members of both bands joining each other on stage and jamming. This pairing initially began at the Bath Festival in 1970, and subsequently became known as Pinkwind. They would go on to play together at many other free events, community benefits and festivals, most notably perhaps the Isle of Wight festival of 1970, and under the arches of the Westway motorway in West London. The two bands have been inextricably linked ever since, but it is the pre-'73, Paul Rudolph era line-ups of the Pink Fairies that over the years have become most associated with Hawkwind and the subsequent Pinkwind jams. This article examines what made the Pink Fairies sound so special and it looks at some of the key events that defined the Pinkwind axis – between the summer of 1970 until

Paul Rudolph left the Pink Fairies in May '72 – and what happened in the immediate years afterwards.

The Pink Fairies and Hawkwind were both based at the heart of the “freak” community in the Ladbroke Grove area

**“When evening concerts at the Bath Festival finished, the Fairies would set up on a flat-bed truck with their own generator, and then the people’s concert would begin”**

of West London and, along with a shared interest in mind expanding substances, they had much in common. In terms of ideology they were both regarded as bands of the people, frequently playing community benefits and festivals. In fact, festivals became an integral part of the ethos and lifestyle of the community bands and counterculture in general. The Pink Fairies and Hawkwind would sometimes set up outside the perimeter fences of major festivals and provide free music to those unable or unwilling to pay the admission price. Both bands liked to stretch out and jam, going wherever the music took them, but, when it boiled down to it, the two bands were quite different in terms of musical style. In a *Friends* article from November 1970, Jonathon Green got the analogy right when he said, “[Hawkwind’s] nearest partners in the musical revolution,

Photo: Lebrecht

The PINK FAIRIES may never have been regarded as spacerock in the way that Hawkwind were, but there was such a close affinity between the two bands that they became synonymous with each other, especially in their early 1970s heyday when they established a tradition of taking it in turns to headline when sharing the same bill, writes RICH DEAKIN



Pinkwind in action – Hawkwind and Pink Fairies play together outside of the Bath Festival in June 1970

the Pink Fairies, take the opposite, but complementary role.” In other words, whereas Hawkwind provided the more cerebral, out-there spacerock vibe, the Pink Fairies provided the good-time “cosmic boogie”. Green had even referred to the Fairies as “Kosmic Rock ‘n’ Roll” in a *Friends* article a month previously, when he compared them to Jefferson Airplane – particularly Fairies guitarist Paul Rudolph and bass player Duncan ‘Sandy’ Sanderson, who he likened to sounding “strangely” like Jorma Kaukonen and Jack Casady. The West Coast Californian influences on the Pink Fairies aren’t too surprising though: Paul Rudolph certainly hailed from the West Coast, albeit the Canadian West Coast of British Columbia – Gibson’s Landing, near Vancouver to be more precise. These influences became even more pronounced when The Deviants, the band out of which

the Pink Fairies evolved, ended up in San Francisco in late ‘69 after an ill-fated series of gigs in Rudolph’s home city. Singer and frontman Mick Farren had a full-blown breakdown, exacerbated by amphetamine psychosis and some particularly strong LSD, but that’s a different tale altogether!

This story picks up from when Farren returned to England in a somewhat frazzled state of disrepair. The remaining Deviants travelled down to California, where they were put up by various movers and shakers from the local counterculture scene, including Chet Helms at the legendary Family Dog commune on the Great Highway. But it was whilst they were staying at a commune on Oak Street – where they had access to a well-equipped rehearsal room and virtually unlimited time – that the future Pink Fairies set began to take some semblance of shape. Deviants’

roadie Boss Goodman has recalled, “The guys used to take organic mescaline and they’d go in there... and they’d just jam for hours.” Sandy remembers it was where old Deviants riffs were reworked into new songs and elongated space-jams that would later become Pink Fairies’ staples.

Before they returned to England The Deviants made their way back to Canada and played a series of gigs at McGill University in Montreal to earn enough for flights back to England. Paul Rudolph now says, “I think we were getting used to just the three of us playing together as a threesome, and then came the idea of Twink and two drummers and the Pink Fairies. I think it was all coming together to that point during our winter in Montreal. Jamie [Mandelkau] played a role in getting it all together from the London end with Twink and other contacts.”



Pinkwind at the Isle of Wight Festival 1970

Although they didn't have a fully formed set upon their eventual return to England, Rudolph says, "We did have a few good ideas and riffs to build on," and they wasted no time in hooking up with Twink and really set about honing their chops. Rudolph continues, "Certainly playing with The Deviants was a seed of some sort for the Fairies [but] I think the Pink Fairies sound really came together when all four of us played together and fused our energies."

John 'Twink' Alder was a veteran of the '60s music scene and had been drummer for The Pretty Things prior to the Pink Fairies. He had also recorded a solo album with various members of The Pretty Things and The Deviants before they headed off to Canada and the United States. After Mick Farren's premature departure from the band and subsequent return to London, Twink helped out on his solo album *Mona: The Carnivorous Circus*. Farren, Steve Peregrin Took, Twink and Twink's girlfriend, Silver, even performed a ramshackle gig using the name Pink Fairies. But when Twink joined the remaining three Deviants on their return from North America they took the Pink Fairies moniker and transplanted it to the new band.

Given Rudolph's predilection for West Coast rock and the fact that The Deviants had recently spent time amongst the San Francisco counterculture scene and music community, it would be reasonable to assume that the idea of two drummers had somehow been influenced by the Grateful Dead. Indeed, comments by the likes of

## "The Pink Fairies pitched camp next to Hawkwind and set up their equipment outside Canvas City, then both bands played the first of that weekend's Pinkwind jams"

Deviants and Pink Fairies stalwart roadie Boss Goodman and Jamie Mandelkau also suggest that this could have been the case. Boss recalls that it was after seeing the Dead whilst they were in San Francisco that the idea came to fruition, "They had two drummers, and we all fell in love with the two drummers situation at that point."

Mandelkau, who was not only a close friend of the band, but was also instrumental in hooking Twink up with Rudolph, Hunter and Sanderson, now says, "The idea of Twink joining The Deviants and Pink Fairies – now a working band instead of party crew – I think grew out of an osmosis of playing together where everyone was in agreement to move forward with the project. The Grateful Dead with two drummers was also probably an 'ideas platform' for the team."

Rudolph refutes the idea though, "It was not a nod to the Grateful Dead. It was about not only the drive of two drummers with the guitar and bass line-up, but the energy of Russ and Twink playing together, which was powerful."

This is perhaps borne out by Twink who has said that it was originally intended that he should be the singer for the new band, but only became drummer by default after Russell's drum kit was impounded for several weeks on its return from Canada. Russell got his kit back just in time for their first gig in April 1970, and Twink remained on drums too – thus the classic dual-drum line-up was born. Like Rudolph says, the energy of the two drummers was powerful indeed and when they were unleashed in tandem the results could be awe inspiring – or, depending on whether you like long drum solos or not, downright tedious. It was the age of the extended drum solo after all!

The Pink Fairies certainly played their fair share of free gigs and festivals during the summer of 1970, including some that have gone down in counterculture folklore. First up was the Bath Festival of Blues and Progressive Music. The Pink Fairies laid out their plans in an interview with *Friends*, "When the major bands [finish] the evening concerts at the Bath Festival the Fairies will set up on a flat-bed truck with their own generator, and then the people's concert will begin, outside the fenced-off festival area. The band will play for the campers and those who don't want to go home, and

any others who want to keep going after the main PA is switched off.”

Not only did they achieve their purpose of protesting against the high entrance fee to the main festival, but Bath is also significant in that it was the first time the Pink Fairies and Hawkwind played together. Boss Goodman recalls how Hawkwind manager Doug Smith approached him and said, “Do you mind if my group can get up and play?’ We were only too relieved to let somebody else get up there and have a bash and that was the first time we met Hawkwind.” Thus the legend of Pinkwind was born. After this the band played together on a number of occasions and not just at free impromptu events, but at regular gigs too. Boss explains how the situation developed, “Lots of people started booking us together, and so we’d turn up in different towns and posters would say THE PINK FAIRIES supported by Hawkwind, or HAWKWIND supported by Pink Fairies, depending on the promoter’s favourite.”

That summer, the Pink Fairies also played at Phun City Festival, but there wasn’t a Pinkwind jam on this occasion. A report in *Friends* suggested that Hawkwind did turn up at Phun City with the intention of playing, but were too incapacitated due to their “monumental dope consumption”. Phun City has gone down in the annals of counterculture history as the first truly “free festival”. It was not only organised by Mick Farren, who had buried the hatchet with his former Deviants’ band mates, but the Pink Fairies raised their profile by ending their set with both drummers cavorting naked on stage.

If Hawkwind had been conspicuous by their absence at Phun City, they were in attendance at the Isle of Wight Festival that August, along with the Pink Fairies. The circumstances and subsequent events of the 1970 Isle of Wight Festival have been examined in great detail many times over the years, but what is important here is that it is now probably regarded as one of the most famous Pinkwind jams. Continuing the tradition of what had begun at Bath Festival earlier that summer, both bands did their bit by protesting against the high admission charges to the main event again and participated in an alternative festival outside the perimeter of the main arena. Meanwhile Mick Farren played a part in the rabble-rousing that eventually led to the fences being pulled down.

Hawkwind arrived at the festival the day before the Pink Fairies and after unsuccessfully trying to negotiate a gig on the main stage with festival promoter Rikki Farr, they camped outside the festival and played in an inflatable tent called Canvas City. When the Pink Fairies arrived the next day, they pitched camp next to Hawkwind and set up their equipment in the dust outside Canvas City, after which both bands

Photo: Ron Reid

played the first of that weekend’s Pinkwind jams. *Friends* reported, “Friday afternoon saw a superstar jam session as both bands set up together between the entrances of the dome. There were three drum kits, three guitars, one electronics controller, about eight roadies and countless dancers. Yahoo!”

Switching from Canvas City to the Fairground Tent for the Saturday jam was even more impressive according to *Friends*, “Everyone and everything is in full participation, with the whole thing becoming like an unstoppable monster... Everyone has a good freak and expounds potential energy.” Hawkwind’s Nik Turner told *Friends* that the owner of the tent had spiked the coffee with acid so everybody in the tent was tripping whilst Pinkwind jammed for seven hours non-stop!

When word got round about the alternative event, musicians who were booked to play at the main festival made their way to watch Pinkwind jam, including Jimi Hendrix, Carlos Santana and Miles Davis. According to Nik Turner, he invited Jimi to join in the jam, but his manager declined on his behalf saying “he was a bit fucked.” Hendrix did dedicate a song from his set later that night to Nik Turner saying, “This next one’s for the cat with the silver face.”

Paul Rudolph now says of the Pinkwind jams in general, “The line-up was always in flux and could change several times in just one jam. We all used to love doing it and there were a few occasions where all three drum kits were used and virtually both bands’ members were all on stage.”

Russell Hunter recalls the spontaneity of it all too, “There was never a Pinkwind rehearsal, and nothing structured, although obviously you try to remember what worked and what didn’t from the previous outing – well, I tried to anyway”, before adding, “Actually, there weren’t many Pinkwind outings, probably not as many as people now remember”.

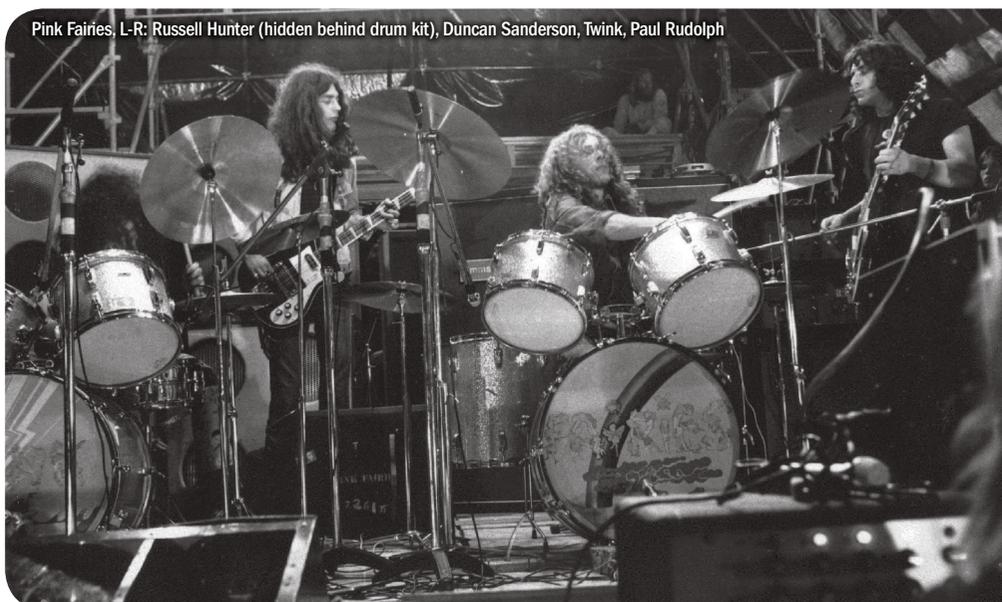
Even if Russell suggests the number

of Pinkwind jams has been somewhat exaggerated over the years, it can’t be denied they have undoubtedly gone down as legend in Hawkwind and Pink Fairies lore. Rudolph now says somewhat wistfully, “The music was powerful, creative and spontaneous. It was always created on the spot so it was always different and the music reflected the energy of the band and equally the audience. There was just a special feeling when it happened – spacey, tribal, experimental, hypnotic.”

The Pink Fairies’ own live set was very much improvisational too. Russell Hunter now reflects, “There were a lot of extended jams on just about everything, very loosely based on whatever the number nominally was supposed to be. We had a beginning, a couple of verses, and away, then a cue to – hopefully – get us into an ending – it worked sometimes, and Paul was brilliant at that sort of stuff, very West Coast of the times.”

On the subject of West Coast influences once again, one of the songs the Pink Fairies played from very early on after their formation was an energised version of Jefferson Airplane’s ‘3/5 Of A Mile In 10 Seconds’, on which Twink sang. However, it was two of their own self-penned numbers, which were possibly as far removed from the traditional West Coast sound as you

**“Hawkwind’s Nik Turner said that the owner of the tent had spiked the coffee with acid so everybody in the tent was tripping whilst Pinkwind jammed for seven hours non-stop!”**





Photos: Peter Sanders

could imagine, that have in no small part been responsible for the Pink Fairies being given a “Godfathers of punk” tag. Also sung by Twink, ‘Do It!’ was an agit-rock number with a political message and its overtly anti-authoritarian lyrics espoused taking matters into your own hands. According to Pink Fairies friend and roadie, Joly MacFie, ‘Do It!’ was conceived at the end of 1970 in his Morris Minor whilst on the way to recording sessions for the band’s first single ‘The Snake’ on which it eventually ended up as the b-side.

Both sides of the single were blistering examples of what has since been described by various commentators as proto-punk. Indeed one only has to see how many key figures from both the British and American punk scenes of the mid/late ‘70s have name-checked them to see just how influential the Pink Fairies were. Russell Hunter now says of the influence exerted by the Fairies on the development of punk, “There does seem to be a certain overlap from Fairies to punk that is not attributed to other bands of our era. This most probably comes from the constant references to our ability... or perceived lack of it... I always thought this a silly and invalid mountain from a molehill, and particularly unfair to Paul and Larry [Wallis – Rudolph’s eventual replacement in the Fairies], both of whom could more than hold their own in most musical company – it’s only rock ‘n’ roll not fucking brain surgery set to music – the ‘artification’ of it made some critics’ reputations – and continues to do so – and created a whole bogus artistic subculture of reverence and respect.”

Then there was ‘Uncle Harry’s Last Freak Out’. At their last ever UK performance in

## “Hawkwind did turn up at Phun City, but were too incapacitated due to their dope consumption”

Hyde Park in September ‘69, The Deviants performed a rudimentary, prototype 17-minute version of what, according to Mick Farren on discovery of the grainy but glorious black and white film footage in 2011, the Pink Fairies would title “Uncle Harry’s Last Freakout.” It was punk writ large, almost ten years ahead of its time, and Farren was also moved to comment, “I guess that was the real difference between the ‘60s and ‘70s. We could make a thrash last seventeen minutes where The Clash or the Pistols would cut it off after three.”

According to Sandy, ‘Uncle Harry’ was one of the songs that evolved further in the San Francisco Oak Street commune before finally taking shape for the Pink Fairies with a new set of lyrics as well. Lyrically the song was about being busted for jamming in a London park. Rudolph says, “We used to go to Holland Park and hang out and play acoustic instruments in the day. One afternoon as we were sitting in the field we were surrounded by uniformed and plainclothes police who appeared out of the surrounding bushes. We were all searched and questioned and generally made to feel unwelcome and a potentially bad influence on the teenage school kids who frequently

had their lunch in the park.”

But, if numbers like the aforementioned ‘Do It!’ and ‘The Snake’, in particular, have come to embody the more breakneck punk side of the Pink Fairies over the years, ‘Uncle Harry’ still had a heavy edginess to it too. Live, on any given night, it could vary in length from anywhere between ten minutes to half an hour – depending on how elongated Rudolph’s freeform guitar explorations became, or whether Twink and Russell decided to drop in a lengthy drum solo or not. It was also very possibly dependent on what stimulants, depressants and psychedelics, or combination of said drugs, they might have already taken! One thing that is certain though is that ‘Uncle Harry’s Last Freakout’ became something of a Pink Fairies tour de force: after the opening lead notes give way to the driving, almost relentless riff, it eventually breaks down to give free-rein to Rudolph’s fancy finger work on the fretboard. This could sometimes veer into a section from The Deviants’ ‘Billy The Monster’, or on other occasions what would ultimately become the frantic hoedown style lead break from ‘Pigs Of Uranus’. In a dazzling display of shimmering lead guitar, Rudolph sustains and bends those notes with wild abandon through a wall of distortion and wah-wah, proving he really was one of the great unsung guitarists of his generation. More often than not, an extended percussive onslaught worthy of a howitzer barrage was also dropped in, until the whole thing exploded into full-effect once again before finally grinding to a jarring climax.

There always was a distinct element of blues boogie to the Pink Fairies sound too, not unlike Canned Heat at times. Rudolph



says, “I’ve always loved Canned Heat and thought at the time that we could pay homage to that boogie style but with a little more speed and heaviness. None of us at the time listened to them much, although I did listen to them a lot before moving to the UK.” Alternating between a driving no-nonsense heavy riff and a more spacey psychedelic vibe, ‘Uncle Harry’s Last Freakout’ is a prime example of what Rudolph has said the Fairies were trying to achieve in terms of this heavier, speed-boogie style – or “cosmic boogie”, to use a term that Rudolph also once used to describe the Pink Fairies’ music.

Joly MacFie sums up this aspect of the Fairies sound perfectly, “There were a couple of factors that made the Pink Fairies spacey. One was Paul’s variance of tone: from hillbilly twang, to lyrical sweet Gibson echoed mellowness, to hard-ass fuzz. At the same time, in the improvised bits, the two drummers would kind of go their own way and drift in and out of phase, then as Paul kicked back into drive and the drummers came back in sync, listeners would experience an intense rush as they were brought back in to awareness. I considered this one of the keys to the people’s love of the band. No other band really did it so well.”

Their debut album *Never Never Land* was released in May ’71, and the West Coast influences were particularly evident on the beautifully haunting and very Santanesque ‘War Girl’. But elsewhere the Pink Fairies sound didn’t really translate that well to the recording studio and although it certainly had its moments, an extended version of ‘Do It!’ with an acoustic intro,

## “The guys used to take organic mescaline and they’d go in there... and just jam for hours”

‘Uncle Harry’ and another proto-punk belter ‘Teenage Rebel’ being cases in point, on vinyl it wasn’t entirely representative of what they were capable of live. Some critics, including some of those close to the band, attributed this to it being under-produced. It wasn’t particularly well received by the mainstream music press or underground press either. One reviewer was moved to say it would have benefitted from the inclusion of a couple more of the Fairies’ live staples, such as their radical remakes of The Beatles’ ‘Tomorrow Never Knows’ and The Ventures’ ‘Walk Don’t Run’.

Throughout the summer of ’71, the Pink Fairies continued to do what they did best though and made what was arguably one of the most famous live appearances of their career at Glastonbury Fayre that June. Because the schedule was over-running the Pink Fairies allegedly mistimed the dropping of acid, so by the time they eventually went on stage they were subsequently peaking on LSD. Nevertheless, they still turned in an inspired if anarchic performance that included ‘Do It!’ and ‘Uncle Harry’s Last Freak Out’. Immortalised on the ’72 album of the same name, it’s suitably raucous and gloriously shambolic. It also proved to be

Twink’s last gig with the band for some time, as he left soon after to travel to Morocco.

In marked contrast to the bucolic idyll of The Isle of Avalon, the Pink Fairies made one of their first live appearances without Twink under the arches of the Westway, at Portobello Green in July ’71. Subsequently they and Hawkwind played several more gigs that summer in the shadow of the Westway. When the motorway first cut a swathe right through the heart of the community it may have divided the neighbourhood geographically, but it also brought much of the wider community together as they largely united in opposition against it. So called community bands like the Pink Fairies and Hawkwind utilised tracts of land under the arches of the recently built motorway to play for free and provide entertainment for the local freaks, Saturday afternoon shoppers, Portobello Road tourists, or anyone else who cared to watch.

In 2009, Mick Farren remembered these early Westway gigs, “The first shows were guerrilla ones... the White Panther shows with Hawkwind and the Pink Fairies. Everyone was real drunk ’cos we went down the pub to get our courage up. Boss set up with a couple of Hawkwind’s roadies, and there was a place across the street where we were getting power from and we stashed the gear in their backyard and they plugged in and ran it out with the stacks already connected and the Fairies went on – I think it only took about 10 or 15 minutes before the cops rolled up and that was the end of that! Then the next one was kind of longer, and we started negotiating with officials. Then there was a Hawkwind one that Doug Smith put together where



Paul Rudolph, Bob Calvert (in head dress)

Photos: Joe Shombo

they moved everything down to this weird bit of land... about 3-400 yards down the Westway towards Latimer Road."

Apocryphal or not, some commentators have said the power was supplied from a favourite greasy spoon café on Portobello Road called The Mountain Grill. Hawkwind later paid homage to the café in the title of their '74 album, *Hall Of The Mountain Grill*. Paul Rudolph remembers the Westway gigs like this, "The gigs under the Westway were a bit of social action. After a few gigs there with a generator, the council, I believe, had a mains outlet installed in the space we used and a little stage. Mick [Farren] loved to do it, as the old bill would come. I remember the first time we did it, the police showed up and asked if we had permission to put this concert on, to which Mick replied 'We didn't know we had to have permission to do this - we were just doing it!'"

On one occasion Russell Hunter allegedly had to be forcibly removed from his drum stool by the police after they turned up following a complaint from a disgruntled



Dave Brock, Paul Rudolph (guitars), Terry Ollis (drums)

## “Community bands like the Pink Fairies and Hawkwind utilised tracts of land under the recently built motorway to play for free”

local resident because he “couldn't hear his television”. The Pink Fairies went on to write a song for their next album referring to the incident - 'Right On, Fight On'. Those early Pinkwind gigs were really instrumental in establishing something more permanent. The Westway Theatre was established the following year and by '73 the Greasy Truckers were organising gigs at various locations under and around the Westway, including the 'Magic Roundabout' gigs featuring the likes of Ace, Kevin Ayers, Camel, Chilli Willi, Keith Christmas, Henry Cow, Clancy, Global Village Trucking Company, Gong and Skin Alley. In '75, something more permanent was provided in the form of Acklam Hall, which later became Subterranea. The final word on the Westway gigs must go to Mick Farren though, "The guerrilla gigs started up, 'cos we thought, 'well fuck it, we've got this fucking great place we should put bands on in them!'" It really was 'Space Rock' in more ways than one then.

By the end of '71, Hawkwind's musical space rock tendencies were becoming even more pronounced and they released their second album *X In Search Of Space*, replete with a 24-page booklet entitled *The Hawkwind Log*. Both album and booklet provided indicators of what was to come the



Russell Hunter (having forcibly been removed from his drum kit by the police), Bob Calvert (on microphone)



Clockwise from left to right: Bob Calvert (in head dress), Del Dettmar, Duncan 'Sandy' Sanderson (bass), Russell Hunter and Terry Ollis (both on drums).

following year when they recorded their next studio album *Doremi Fasol Latido*. In the meantime, the Pink Fairies were adapting to life without Twink. Mick Farren later said in a '75 *NME* retrospective about the band, "With one flailing drummer removed, the emphasis of the band's live show fell more on guitarist Paul Rudolph... [his] playing expanded its scope at an alarming rate while, unhampered by a second drummer, Russell's technique improved rapidly."

A number of extant live recordings from the period bear testimony to this. Just listen to the Pink Fairies' aforementioned rendition of Johnny Smith's jazz standard, later popularised as a surf classic by The Ventures, 'Walk Don't Run', or 'Tomorrow Never Knows'. The latter was by now increasingly being used to open the Pink Fairies' set. The Pink Fairies were never spacerock in the way that Hawkwind were perceived as being. For a start they never wrote any songs about space, and didn't incorporate the use of synthesizers or other electronics for that added dimension usually associated with the genre. But they could certainly create the vibe when the occasion warranted. The lyrics to 'Tomorrow Never Knows' were adapted from Timothy Leary, Richard Alpert, and Ralph Metzner's book *The Psychedelic Experience: A Manual Based on the Tibetan Book of the Dead*, so it was more inner-space than outer-space. It took The Beatles much studio chicanery with the technology available to them at the time in '66 to produce this psychedelic masterpiece, but the Pink Fairies completely steamrollered it live. Indeed it explodes into the stratosphere as it veers into the territory of spacerock at times. Of course it's a more brutal and minimalistic exercise in psychedelia than The Beatles' original, but thanks to some judicious application of Rudolph's guitar effects – a Sola Sound Tone Bender, Binson Echo Rec Unit or WEM Copy Cat unit and Cry Baby Wah-pedal – the Fairies turned the original psychedelic classic on its head and made it their own.

Throughout the winter of '71/'72 the Pink Fairies' thoughts were turning to making their second album *What A Bunch of Sweeties*. Situated in the Grove neighbourhood, they chose Island's Basing Street Studios to record it. The former Move guitarist and bassist Trevor Burton lived opposite, and along with the likes of Paul Kossoff and Chris Wood was a familiar face on the local music scene as well as a regular at the Basing Street Studios. Burton also happened to live in close proximity to Paul Rudolph, so it was inevitable that their paths would cross sooner or later. It wasn't long before he was asked to join the Pink Fairies as a loose arrangement to augment Rudolph on guitar. Burton told Nigel Cross in a '89 interview for the German music magazine, *Hartbeat*, "I hadn't been on the road for a couple of years and I was slowly going mental. I got to know them and they said 'Come along and jam'. I was never a permanent member, I had the freedom to go on tour with them or

play whenever I felt like it."

By the time they started to record *What A Bunch Of Sweeties* Burton had already played a handful of live gigs and he ended up guesting on a clutch of tracks on the album, including the aforementioned 'Right On, Fight On' and 'Portobello Shuffle', Rudolph's paeon to the 'hood' and yet another example of the Fairies' trademark cosmic boogie. 'Walk Don't Run', conspicuous by its omission from the debut album, finally made an appearance, as did another live favourite, and a cover of another Beatles' song, 'I Saw Her Standing There'. A couple of other new numbers that also stood out were the chugging and distinctly funky sounding wah-wah driven 'X-Ray' and 'The Pigs Of Uranus'. On the one hand the latter's title might have suggested some kind of interplanetary spacerock epic, but on the other of course it also suggested schoolboy humour, and it was indeed a piece of tongue in cheek, but mighty fine, frantically-fried cosmic hoedown, that took

## "It's only rock 'n' roll not fucking brain surgery set to music"



its lyrics and inspiration from a Gilbert Shelton cartoon strip, *Wonder Warthog*.

But even before the album was released in the summer of '72, and just as it looked like Rudolph's songwriting was really coming together and the Pink Fairies were on the verge of something happening, Rudolph quit – inexplicably so to many minds, and seemingly out of the blue. A number of reasons for his departure have been cited over the years, not least because of Rudolph's apparent dissatisfaction with the types of drugs increasingly being used within the band by then, but because, according to Sandy, after he had been playing with "more talented musicians", such as Burton, Kossoff and Wood he maybe became frustrated with what Sandy has also said he possibly perceived as being the musical "limitations" of the other two Pink Fairies. Whether Sandy is being somewhat over critical of himself and Russell is open

to conjecture, but Rudolph himself now says, "I feel that I was going through a bit of a stagnant period at the time and feeling somewhat devoid of mind-bending ideas."

Then, somewhat ironically, even if musically the Pink Fairies were probably more suited to the more mainstream record buying public's ears, it was Hawkwind who went and had a surprise Top 10 chart hit with 'Silver Machine' in the summer of '72. Although it wasn't included on Hawkwind's third album later that year, parts of the accompanying tour were recorded live and were subsequently released as what is arguably Hawkwind's magnum opus – *The Space Ritual Alive In London And Liverpool*. This album has possibly come to define the genre of spacerock more than any other British album since its release in '73.

Russell and Sandy eventually replaced Rudolph later that summer with a guitarist of considerable pedigree called Mick Wayne. But it soon became apparent that the chemistry wasn't right, and they recruited former Entire Sioux Nation and UFO guitarist Larry Wallis before sacking Wayne. To some extent the band's fortunes were revived briefly, and although both Rudolph and Wallis are revered in equal measure by Fairies fanatics, it was a different beast altogether. Russell Hunter admits as much too, "[They were] two quite different bands, Larry brought the real songwriting and the harder rock edge to things."

The new line-up of the Pink Fairies did occasionally find themselves on the same bill as Hawkwind and sometimes still partook in a Pinkwind jam if the occasion warranted – Trentishoe Festival '73 being a case in point. But as Hawkwind's success and stature grew exponentially to that of the Pink Fairies, such occurrences became less frequent. By the time the Pink Fairies' third album *Kings Of Oblivion*, largely penned by Larry Wallis, came out, things had moved on and Hawkwind were by now courting the mainstream following the success of 'Silver Machine' and the subsequent popularity of the *Space Ritual* album.

Russell Hunter now says of Hawkwind's success, "After 'Silver Machine' took off, we didn't share that many stages, they were propelled up to a new level that we weren't part of – nothing sinister or unpleasant in that, just a fact of life and the business – we never begrudged them their success, we really didn't. And still occasionally met up in Portobello pubs. Then Paul joined them!"

The Larry Wallis line-up of the Pink Fairies initially split up in '74, but reunited for two well received shows at the Chalk Farm Roundhouse in '75 – the first of which was supporting Hawkwind. Twink was present at one of the reunions, whilst Paul Rudolph played both. But any chances of a permanent reunion involving Rudolph him were scuppered when he did indeed go on to join Hawkwind for almost two years, after replacing Lemmy when he was sacked

during a North American tour in the spring of '75. When asked today if he would have considered rejoining the Pink Fairies on a more permanent basis following the reunions if he hadn't had the call from Hawkwind, Rudolph says, "I don't think I would have continued in a reformed Pink Fairies. I think my interest in the band was waning and I very much enjoyed working with (Brian) Eno. Working with him was really creative and satisfying and had a very artistic vibe to it."

Although they first met when Rudolph was playing in one of his post Pink Fairies groups, Uncle Dog, at a gig under the Westway, Brian Eno and Rudolph first worked together when Eno produced Hawkwind frontman Robert Calvert's solo album *Captain Lockheed And The Starfighters* in '73. Rudolph played most of the guitar and some bass parts on this album as well as Calvert's follow-up album, *Lucky Leif And The Longships* released in '75 and also produced by Eno. Through this association, Rudolph also ended up guesting on a couple of Eno's solo albums, most notably *Here Come The Warm Jets*, featuring the track 'Baby's On Fire', on which he contributes to one of the most blistering guitar solos of all time, and one which has been the focus of some conjecture over the years. Rudolph now elucidates, "The guitar solo was both Robert Fripp and myself, artfully coached and produced and edited by Eno's amazing feel and talent for putting together sound, ideas and people."

As it eventually turned out though, like his predecessor, Lemmy, Rudolph was also booted out of Hawkwind. Over the years some accounts have said that it was due to Dave Brock's insecurity over Rudolph's prowess on the guitar, even though he was ostensibly the bassist. In a '77 interview for

fanzone *Sniffin' Flowers*, Calvert intimated that Rudolph's departure was precipitated because, during the recording of Hawkwind's '76 album *Astounding Sounds, Amazing Music*, "Rudolph was always carping about not doing it [sci-fi influenced numbers] and it affects you", whilst Brock attributed it to his ego. Today Rudolph himself puts it down to "musical direction and personal conflicts. It became apparent that Dave was in charge and that's OK - he started the band! Recording *Quark [Strangeness And Charm]* brought out some real issues and perhaps we should leave it like that for now. I think everybody at that time was strung out and dysfunctional in many different ways - and there was a very strange energy present."

Whatever the reasons, not long after his departure from Hawkwind in early '77, Rudolph formed a band called Kicks with former Hawkwind drummer Alan Powell. But he soon became somewhat disillusioned with the music business and traded in whatever vestiges of spacerock he

**"The music was always created on the spot so it reflected the energy of the band and the audience"**

was still interested in for space of another kind - the wide open expanses of his native Canada - where ever since he has indulged himself in that other passion of his, cycling.

Rudolph now recalls, "I just felt like there was not enough musically interesting stuff to do - Eno's sessions were really creative and

fun - but I felt the need for a change for a while." He continues, "At that point I felt like I really needed some down time and quiet. I mainly stayed in my friends' converted bus in Malaga as a base and ventured forth from there. I did have a Les Paul with me." Touring Spain on his bicycle he ultimately returned to Canada and established his own bicycle business. He may have kept his hand in on the guitar in the intervening years, but he has remained firmly out of the limelight, even if the cult reputations of both Rudolph and the Pink Fairies have increased in stature over the years.

Although the *What A Bunch Of Sweeties* line-up of the Pink Fairies reunited to record a new version of 'Do It!' in 2009 whilst Rudolph was vacationing in the UK, it seems that offers from promoters to lure Rudolph out of his semi-musical retirement to partake in maybe one last Pink Fairies tour have proved fruitless. But one can only hope something might eventually happen. In the meantime slip an old Pink Fairies LP onto the turntable, or listen to their live *Finland Freakout 1971* CD, partake in whatever's your favourite poison, lose yourself in the music... oh and "don't forget to boogie!"

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*Rich Deakin is the author of Keep It Together: Cosmic Boogie With The Deviants and Pink Fairies (Headpress). He also compiled the CD Portobello Shuffle: A Testimonial To Boss Goodman And Tribute To The Deviants And Pink Fairies (Easy Action Records)*

Photos: Paul Welch



L-R: Russell Hunter, Duncan Sanderson, Twink, Paul Rudolph