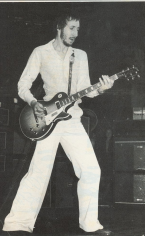


THE WHO'S SOLO CAREERS

A COMPLETE GUIDE TO THE SOLO CAREERS OF TOWNSHEND, ENTHWISTLE, DALTRY, MOON AND JONES, WHICH HAVE PRODUCED SOME OF THEIR MOST COLLECTIBLE RELEASES

BY PETER DODDART



When it comes to the connection between an artist and one of London's most prestigious literary publishers and the star of a recent television special? Quite simply, they represent the current preoccupations of the two leading members of one of rock's most durable super-groups. Both adventures, which have led Pete Townshend to a pastiche piece at Abbey and Fisher in London, and Roger Daltrey to find a fresh challenge in an adaptation of "The Huggan's Quest", are far removed from the level of fanfiction, creative credits and mad imagery that surrounded the Who's initial on the British rock scene in 1964. Although the band's individual careers haven't always been as idiosyncratic, it's time to see that line of the group's solo releases comes out to making the impact of the band as a whole. At least three of the Who have always taken their rock-and-roll credence very seriously, but the strength of the band's collective imagination presented most obstacles to write off their stunts for personal satisfaction as self-serving but ultimately limited diversions from the band's real progress.

That attitude is what, overlooking as it does some of the Who's most subtle and committed work, which was the last decade has perhaps been true to the band's ideal than their often backwater jazz projects. Pete Townshend, in particular, seems to have revealed to the solo environment, that at last he wrote for himself rather than for Roger Daltrey, the accepted voice of the band.

PROJECTS

Daltrey, Townshend and John Entwistle have all been involved in projects which overlap the usual boundaries of group "solo" projects. Entwistle was the first to release a true solo album, although a year earlier he and Townshend had been represented on record by albums which on all counts and purposes were solo endeavors. Townshend's ventures were limited releases, available only to followers of his gear, White Noise. John Entwistle's first representation was rather more accessible to the public.

Towards the end of 1970 Track Records launched the "Backtrack" series of single albums, split originally between releases of original LPs and various artists compilations. The exception was "Backtrack 14", credited solely to "The On". In fact, the album was a collection of previously-released material by the Who — the interest being the fact that every song on the album was written (and usually sung) by John Entwistle, excepted a new recording solo instead of his customary two tracks an album. The album's under songs emphasized the lyrical and often macabre bias of Entwistle's writing, something that was also made in evidence on his first two solo releases, "Sound Your Head Against The Wall", issued in the early summer of 1971.

Powered by a rather optimistic single, "I Believe in Everything", the album showed the extent of the soloist which had been waiting in Pete Townshend's shadow for the previous six years, aided by musical help from Keith Moon. John turned in nine well-crafted rock songs, including a remake of "Houses Are Built" (originally the signature of the Who's "Sommerville Blues" single) and also found on "The On". The album was also

Pete Townshend, lead guitarist and chief composer for the Who, alone solo career began with limited release, which dedicated to himself, White Noise.



Roger Daltry appears in *Tommy* at the Embassy Theatre in London on December 10, 1970, the performance in *Tommy* apparently helped to the launch of his solo recording career the following year.

issued in the States on MCA, where it apparently was released before release in Britain, the album was delayed in 1970, and it now hardly had to be said.

A following, "White Heat", emerged eighteen months later. The recording in the title was apparently an oblique reference to the constant stress that had afflicted Farinelli's own persona over the years, his single was taken from this release, which was similar to but less spectacular than his performance. Once again Keith Moon stopped by to help and his parents in the dynamic section, while Peter Frampton and Jimmy

McCulloch were both featured on guitar. This time the American version of the album sounded exactly the same around here, but to make up for that some of the song titles were slightly altered for overseas consumption.

Farinelli has always claimed to have been inspired while playing on the road, and the increasingly long delays between *Who* have led him to form his own live band. Although Roger Martin didn't hit the road until 1975, John's new group appeared on stage in 1970, when "Roger Martin Live In" appeared a mere six months after "White Heat". The LP was a tribute to the classic years of rock and

roll, containing covers of "Good Dog", "Ladies" and the already mentioned "No Business", although some have looked hard to get and originally a number of what was perhaps Farinelli's best song for the Who, "The Who". "Made In Japan" was taken from the LP as a single in Britain, credited just to Roger Martin, although in America the qualification "John Farinelli" was added to the band's title.

NUCLEUS

Besides Farinelli, Roger Martin was joined around the middle of Graham Downes, Tony Adams, Steve Gray, Alan Ross and Bryan Williams. Downes, Rubin and Gray assisted the Farinelli's new project with his new band, Oh. They were joined by guitarist Jim Ryan and Mike Wedgwood, a devotee of backing vocalists and other freelance musicians, including Eddie Gibbon, who was also playing with Roger Martin during the period. John Farinelli's Oh made just one album, "Bad Dog", which was issued with a few more on Downes' only in 1975, while the one track was released as a single. "Bad Dog" was a full-blown hard rock record, much less distinctive than Farinelli's earlier solo work, but perhaps better suited to live performance. With a reduced lineup of just five musicians he toured Britain and America following the release of the album — though neither musician did much to boost the LP's sales. After "Bad Dog" Farinelli went back into his shell, retired temporarily for the Who to resume touring, and all the time pointed to get most of his songs accepted by the group. Not until 1981, by which time the entire focus of the Who was in doubt, did his resurgence as a solo artist, with a surprisingly successful set of important rock. "You Late the Best" was collaboration with Jay Walsh, who produced and played guitar on the album, and just as to did on the recent Kings' last album, "The Wave". Walsh succeeded in convincing John Farinelli's own musical personality to the extent that "You Late the Best" could be the product of his average but fantastic rock musicians. Both the album and its single did, and John has shown to sign more of recording his solo career.



John Deacon as a young musician as much as himself, joining the band, Queen, along with whom he recorded the album "Queen Greatest Hits II". Two years later, he formed another band, called Q.

The bond between bandster and drummer in the Who was emphasized by Keith Moon's involvement in Townshend's early solo projects. Moon himself remained into individual work only out of necessity, and his only album, "Two Sides Of The Moon", is more a testament to his humor and sense of spontaneity than a serious musical exercise. Originally produced by ex-Beatles side kid Paul McCartney, and then hastily reworked by Ray Taylor and John Brumback when MCA found the initial results, "Two Sides Of The Moon" came out of the same 'long weekend' as John Lennon's production of Barry Gibb's "Pony of Crome", and featured many of the same subjects.

DRAGGED

Almost every studio musician and singer who could be dragged into the Record Plant in L.A. was involved in the sessions, and the resulting tape, where Moon's wild and perhaps marginally controlled outbursts of howling singing and fragments of guitarists, are a loose collection of Moon's personality that is up of any of the questions which made the Who famous. The album featured a new version of "The Kids Are Alright", alongside covers of the Beach Boys' "Don't Worry Baby" and John Lennon's "In My Life" and "Moochies in the U.S." "Don't Worry Baby" was issued as a single in America and Britain in its original, Mel Frank-produced state, while the U.S. version, "Foreign Girl", was also available in two different states. Both the album and its singles are now very scarce, although over a couple of years ago the LP was commonly found in the bargain bins.

Keith Moon's encounter in the Who, however brief, actually launched a brief solo career at the same time as Moon's. He recorded just one solo single, "Ready to

Go!", for the UK Records, the label which was the focus of Ronnie Lane, Moon's choice in the Flies and Small Faces. It flopped, and John retreated behind the drumset.

John Deacon was always the member of the band most adamant that he couldn't carry off a solo career and still remain one of the Who. A series of sessions at his home studio at the end of 1972 changed his mind, however, and was less heated with Adam Faith, Dave Courtney and Les Segar, all of whom contributed songs for the project. The results were issued as "Deacon" in the spring of 1973, and couldn't have been further from Roger's previous style. Courtney and Segar followed a series of failed and timely pop songs for the Who vocalist, who suddenly found himself achieving the mainstream middle-of-the-road success that had always eluded the group. "Going to All Stars" became a major hit single that summer, although the album's lack of acceptance by the Who's traditional audience was reflected in its failure to make the charts. Follow-up singles weren't so successful, but Deacon's name was kept in the charts by an unexpected version of "The Face", produced from the Los Angeles version of Peter Townshend's vocal, "Johnny". A later "Johnny" version, this time as a studio pleasure by Ken Caillat, produced another Deacon single in "Listening To You", but this time chart success was fleeting.

Once again, a "Johnny" session coincided with a Deacon solo project. "Rise A Rock Home" was his most successful album ever, although its inclusion between R&B and hard rock made some critics uncomfortable. Both singles from the album (Don Ballard's "Can You Love" and Walter Thomas's "Walking The Dog") flopped, however.

seven months later, another album bearing Bellamy's name (positionally on the cover was in the shape). Kopy was the star of another Ken Keseloff epic, "Lionsman", and shared the soundtrack album with Bob Waterman. Bellamy put lyrics to four of Luce's sketches, and two of them, "Captain Kopy"/"Luce's Dream", were released as an MGM single to tie in with the release of the film. Critical reception was poor, and the single, album and film all achieved similar levels of commercial failure.

MEMOR HIT

Bellamy's third full-size album was "One Of The Boys", which produced a minor hit single in "Without On The Wind" (a track that was usually replaced by "Say It Ain't So, Joe" on American pressings). The title track was issued next, but failed, and so Polyrite decided to go for "Say It Ain't So" as the third British single from the album. Her confusion takes over. Many accounts suggest that the song was never scheduled for release, with first "Hatin' And Lavin'" and then "The Swinger" as B-sides, but both times we searched before copies reached the shops. In fact, it appears that the second issue of "Say It Ain't So, Joe" was given a full release, but no title promotion that it was a complete commercial failure, making copies very hard to find today.

A film project with which Bellamy had been involved for several years finally came to fruition in 1968. "McPhee" told the story of the infamous criminal, now portrayed, John McPhee. Bellamy also contributed an entire soundtrack to the film, with help from friends



Even those days seemed now just courage to his head while then to his mental ability, and the song was carried over outside only one version, an LP issued in 1972 called "The Side Of The Moon".

like Pete Townsend, Kenny Jones, Billy Nicholls and Ronelf. The last two of whom wrote most of the songs. Both the songs issued as single, "Two Me" and "Without Your Love", were small hits, the

latter also including the theme of "Say It Ain't So, Joe" (especially on the flipside). More recent film, stage and TV appearances have to be postponed waiting on record, although we can expect further soundtrack recordings.

