

# The British Rock Symphony

TIM JONES HAS A HEARTY LARF WITH  
ROGER DALTRY, THE WHO FRONTMAN  
WITH MORE THAN ONE STRING TO HIS BOW

**R**oger Daltry, singer, actor and loud tenor, was in fine fettle when he paid a visit to London to promote his latest artistically-leathered rock extravaganza. Still the steady stream down the pub, he laughed at the "bestie presentation" surroundings of his post-hall, before talking about his latest project.

The "British Rock Symphony" is a concept album and live show (naturally) that took the USA by storm and arrived on these shores this month. Roger Frampton, a veteran of the American performance, was one of the many big names contributing to renditions of classic songs for such regards as the Who (naturally), the Beatles, The Floyd, Janis Joplin, and the Rolling Stones.

The array of talent on the album, produced by Ron Jackson, also includes Paul Rodgers and his partners, Bob Whitlock, Alice Cooper, The Byrds, Ann Wilson (Steak), Tommy Stinson (Steak), John Bonkuk (the Who), Jan Stanley, and Roger Kennedy.

**Do you ever have fun with your album's look, Tim?**

It wasn't the who got it together but producer David Good, Al Christmas '81, he said, "I want to get a rock band and orchestra and choir, and play the music of all the great 60s and 70s bands. What do you think?" I said, "I've experimented with orchestras and it works wonderfully when the songs are well structured and the orchestra doesn't play music. It's some of the best music you'll ever hear, but you'd go broke doing it!"

He said, "What do you, headline is how I got one together!" I said, "NO! I had a lot of going work, the Who had just finished touring "Quadrophonia" and I just didn't want to be on the road for a while. Then my friend, the conductor Keith Lewenson, who I'd recommended to David, phoned me and said, "There's got students from the Royal College of Music and this choir from Berlin. It isn't headline, it won't happen, just think of the benefits that there'll be for these students and their kids — can't you just do it for free?" I said, "Oh... alright!" And the record did nothing at all — the students and kids — to watch them develop their confidence.

I was nervous early on, but I was very aware that it could become stupid. "Terry Lane", for instance, is great when the Beatles play it, but it can only be music 'cos it always was music! Laughed, but I hadn't been in that situation since the 60s with the Who, playing water pipes, struggling to make something work. I really got off on that, and he proved there was an audience for it — he'd do seven thousand (quite a right, which is good when people don't know what it is). They love it's symphonic rock, but I don't. It's a rock band, but a great one, not an orchestra just playing rock.

**Had you worked with Peter Frampton at any of the offices before?**

Peter did the first show in New York, but I didn't. It's a tour that changes lineup. It's headline for these shows, then someone else can take over. Alan Cooper did one in Australia, and then's Paul Rodgers, Robin Burdonak on it too. He's brilliant. If I ever get a rock band together and go out and play, that's by his man. When he had joined the Who, he had the usual problems of excess of substances and he found it very difficult to live on the road. But he's come through all that and turned into a lovely human being.

**When you started out, James the Blue, you were the Outlaws, and then the High Numbers. What music were you doing then?**

The Outlaws was when I was fourteen — it's a bloody long time ago! We did Buddy Holly, Elvira Brothers, Bo Diddley — a "great" list based on the pub circuit. Whatever was in the chart, we had to reproduce for the following weekend. We even did the jazz — John was trumpet (Peter was horns, I was members around like an Irish show band).

Then we got into blues. Peter went to an school and met this guy with a huge record collection, and we saw (down here). That's really where we started to "develop" but one thing, you have not get monotonous. You have to be in a particular mood, and when you're young, you can't be down forever! So when I got to the point the foundation of "Oh, how me, it's another one of those "beatle-like numbers" came out. That's where all the feedback and oh's started and now the Who's music was born.

**Do you have any amusing stories from the time that are published?**

The 60s was like a big, bloody party! You'd go out to clubs, with your mates, and it's with the Beatles and the Stones, Marley. And I think the funniest one was the last of Clapton's, Keith's and Townshend's faces, when we went to see that Jimi Hendrix gig at Blaxton in '68. We went all day... looks stomped, and laughed, I think I'd said, "I'm going home to practice!" I mean, it did make you feel like going up.

What I mean regarding Jim, along the road here (at Hagan's) in 1967, and to Lambert (the Who's co-manager) brought him in, having just signed him — he was the common out on a low-night in a restaurant (played Jim) had got the wild hair, and we were like, "back!" or "... who's he?" He was such a gentleman and a quiet bloke, but he looked like a raving madman! He said, "You a guitar? We're just signed."

Four weeks later, "the Jim" came out, and that's when he got his first showcase at Blaxton, and everyone was good, but then he stage and did change a lot, and he came in on top of us. Unhappy, he was just playing straight. All that stuff with the guitar, head-bob, banging the speakers, with pure Townshend. What I mean doing at that time '64, so we let a lot happened. Obviously he went home and practiced as well. Probably your best known album is "Tommy", isn't it?

It's a shame, 'cos it's not our best work by far (laughter) but I think it was a gear change for the whole pop industry, along with "Sgt. Pepper".

**New generations know "Tommy" from record to stage. What do you think about them, and performers in them, the Who?**

That, in '80, we did charity gigs with Paul Collins and Billy Joel. Billy was great as cover! Keith, and as the Ace of Hearts in "Quadrophonia". Only he wasn't right for that, so we changed to a young one, but it more worked for me, simply because Billy wasn't the right age. He was representing what was going on in the head of a pissed-up kid, and the fact that Billy had was a star (it is)

