

The written word is not my preferred method of expression - grammatical errors have been left uncorrected.

My Road To Finish The Story

My first important step to becoming a member of **Finish The Story** was being taught basic guitar chord shapes by my father. He was a member of the **Maurice Cooper Quartet** who performed around the Birmingham area in the mid 1960,s. One review of his band in 'Midland Beat' shared column inches with a review of an embryonic **Slade**. I still use his guitar, a Boosey Hawkes acoustic with a Schaller pick-up, which he imported from the United States. I learnt to play classics like 'The Sunny Side of the Street' and 'All of Me', which is still one of my favorite songs.

At school I was taught English by **Clifford T. Ward** who had a massive hit in 1973(?) with a song called '**Gaye**' – Gaye was my girlfriend. This long haired Wordsworth reading hippy's life changed over night. One day he was driving a battered old Ford Cortina and the next a flash Scimitar. I can remember thinking, "*I want a bit of that*". I hope I don't suffer the same slow lingering death he suffered, decades of illness and wasting decay.

In 1976 I went to Exeter College of Art to do my degree in Fine Art. Punk was becoming a tangible thing, powerful and a culture I could understand but didn't really belong to - I was becoming very middle class and 'Art School' even though my politics had its foundation in (real) Socialism and Communism (my grandfather and uncle were ex coalminers and my great uncle was a left wing councilor). My exposure to the history of art (composers: John Cage, Stockhausen, artists: Rauschenberg, Gauguin, Pollock, Stella) helped to define my musical and artistic position.

I first met Garry Smout in 1977. He joined Exeter College of Art and was a charismatic pivotal character, who embraced the spirit of the time and became one of the key members of the '4D studio' (a remarkably brave department at Exeter College of Art, one of the first in the UK to recognize that video and sound could be classified as an art medium.) Garry was a frustrated musician; he bought a sax and formed a band called **The Drills** which I had a role in as guitarist.

I can't remember the chain of events but we eventually evolved into a band called **T34**. This was close to the real thing for me and enabled me to write songs and lyrics the way I wanted to, needless to say the sound we made (Garry, Mike Shearer, Bun, and I) was not commercial and not definable as Punk in the perceived sense of the word. Even now the songs we created sound bizarre and unusual – these were the foundations of the music for **Finish The Story**.

My graduation show was in 1979 and **T34** were booked to perform at the graduation ball as the support act to a local band called 'The Urge'. I was sharing a house with a photography student called Russell Young (who later took the definitive picture of **George Michael** in a leather jacket – an 'almost' iconic image) he was the singer in **The Urge** an out and out Post-Punk band, with an unstable guitarist who ended up in a psychiatric ward a couple of weeks before 'The Ball'.

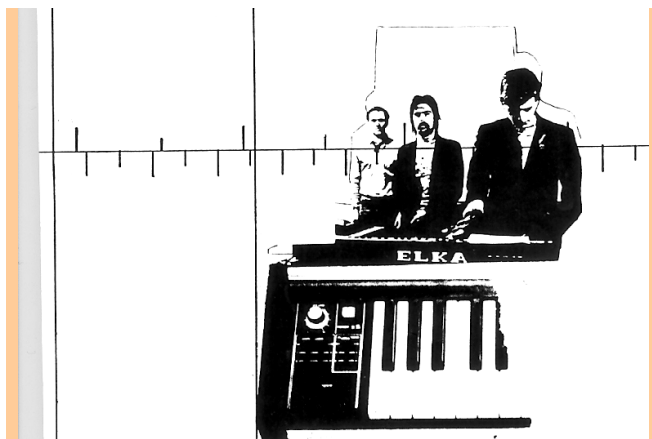
There was panic. Russell in desperation asked me to sit in and play guitar for him, a task I jumped at. I knew I was a better guitarist than their founding member, I was harder and more aggressive, I was young and I could take on the world.

The night of the ball was a multi-tasking nightmare – I had to show guests my work in the gallery, sound check for both bands, entertain my parents and finally play with **T34**, do a quick change and perform with **The Urge**.

There was a reasonable sized audience and amongst the invited was Peter Kent an AR man from **Beggars Banquet** and **Bauhaus** mentor. **The Urge** set was very raw and exciting to play (I had to read the chords of a sheet – I didn't know the songs). After the performance Peter Kent came over to Russell and asked him to support **Bauhaus** in London with a view to maybe signing to the new **4AD** label (the label was originally called **Axis** – but there was a

cock up. **Axis** already existed so the name had to be changed.) Russell explained about the lack of guitarist but was told that I was part of the deal. This was an opportunity I wasn't prepared to miss. I left **T34** and then embarked on one of the most exciting periods of my life.

Being the support for **Bauhaus** was a great honor and an extremely fast learning curve. This was the first time I had gigged in London. We also supported **Adam and the Ants**¹, **Protex**, **The Innocents** and **The Pack**². I was also invited to witness **Bauhaus'** contract signing to **4AD** in a pokey office at the back of **Beggars Banquet's** record store. This invitation was a prelude to **The Urge** being offered the same deal as **Bauhaus** – to be their stable mates. The contract was offered and after legal advice we turned it down and then split up. The bass player was called Jez Gibson – who is a missing link in the **T34/Finish The Story** chain.



T34 reformed with Garry on keyboards, Jez Gibson on bass and me on vocals and guitar. Yet again the music we created was more alternative than alternative – but we wrote some great songs together³. However, I ran out of cash and had to return to my hometown to join the family business.

T34 montage on the left by P.Bright 1980

Russell and I were still close friends and we got together in London in a flat above Goodge Street station and created a surreal performance ensemble called **In a Glass Darkly**. This group comprised of Russell, two ballerinas in tutus and on point and me playing guitar with a fencing mask, accompanied by backing tapes of dripping taps and ticking clocks. We performed at all the trendy night spots in London and for some bizarre reason we appeared in Italian Vogue.

Meanwhile back in Bromsgrove - Garry phoned and asked me to help him get a set together with a young child called Nicola Baby Go Slippers. **In a Glass Darkly** was fun but not really sustainable and by this time had fizzled out.

I was glad when he called and asked me to help with the Malvern gig, things were at a low ebb for me creatively...I needed to flex my grey muscle.

Driving to 'the farm' for the first rehearsal was a happy journey - I was full of optimism - the bounce up the drive in my old Austin A60 pick up - passing the odd Did and stray dog...I was adopted by the 'did pea pickers' - they wanted the pick-up - it was all optimistic. I felt that both Garry and I had served our apprenticeship and now it was the time to do it for real.

The Malvern gig for me was one of my better moments - I wasn't sure what I was doing - it was instant and edgy (the best way - like my first **Urge** gig). 'Better than the second coming'- The rest is written history.

Peter Bright (May 25th 2005)

¹ We were thrown off the tour – he was a tosser – the reviews said The Urge were better than the Ants.

² One of the songs we did was called 'Exeter Rapist' which was written by The Drills – and subsequently lead to Russell being arrested by Devon Constabulary on suspicion of being a rapist – This lead to some bizarre news coverage, including Radio One – I was virtually hounded out of my home by disgusted villagers.

³ In 1990 I played in Belgium as 'This Window' and used one of T34's tracks as a backing track. The song was called '21' this live version was released by EEtapes in Belgium – I'm still proud of that little song.