

Thanks to Will Minting

So here it is...the eagerly awaited new interview with the one and only, the superlative...David Paich! As some of you know, it has been in the works since May 2005, when we started the interview by telephone. We finally had an opportunity to conclude it when I caught up with the guys at the Falling in Between sessions at Simon Phillips studio, and more recently a few emails about the latest Falling In Between mixes. This interview was a LOT of fun in the making and there's more to come from David about the new album with the release itself, in January/February 2006. Thanks to Sarlic for transcribing the telephone conversation and the hard laughs we had calling David and Joseph on Skype that day!

DAVID PAICH INTERVIEW

NOVEMBER 2005

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Will: How's things, David?

David: I'm fine, thank you. The reports of my demise have been greatly over-exaggerated!
[Laughs]

Will: Hahaha! Yes indeed! It's been an honour listening to the early mixes of the new album here at Simon's studio and great to hear you recording some vocals this afternoon!

David Paich

Scritto da Administrator
Giovedì 04 Giugno 2009 21:32 -

David: Thanks, William. Early mixes are always fun and most people usually bring tomatoes to hurl at me when they come to my vocals sessions.

Will: Hahaha! I brought biscuits but they were too good to throw, and Greg ate most of them anyway! We know that it's largely been a band-written record but which songs have you been most involved with?

David: I'm not one to speak up on my own behalf and everyone did give a lot of input. I am most proud of the lyrical work I did on "Bottom of your Soul" that I worked months on, and "Hooked", that came very quickly but required a lot of drafts. Den of Thieves (Smoke and Mirrors) is also the result of many months work.

Will: It's very apparent from the mixes I've heard that you've all dug very deep on this album. I caught up with Joseph Williams at his studio yesterday. He was thrilled to be asked to record some vocals on "Bottom of your Soul." It's great to hear Joseph back in the vocal mix, with Bobby, Luke, Greg and yourself!

David: Joseph is a musical treasure. He started by editing the words written, then added harmonies that gave it a deep rooted past. That's the REAL Toto sound with multiple singers.

Will: When we spoke recently, you gave me some fascinating insights as to how the album tracks evolved but I'm saving those gems for the CD liner notes. Greg Phillinganes has of course now been made up to a full member of the band. How is it working out with Greg in the studio?

David: Incredible. He fits like a magical glove. Definitely the most fun and educational time I've had in years.

Will: Do you both work on the same tracks, or do you each perform on separate songs?

David Paich

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David: There's no set rule book. Sometimes we track all together, and other times it'll be Greg or myself with the band. Both Greg AND myself act as a more of a conduit for Steve Porcaro.

Will: A couple of years ago, you made the decision to cut back your touring commitments and you chose Greg Phillinganes to replace you on tours.

David: It was an easy choice. Greg is like the Michael Jordan of keys! He's the greatest all round player I've ever seen or heard. He's done it all from Quincy to Clapton and Stevie [Wonder].

Will: Where did you first meet Greg?

David: I met him on a session about 25 years ago. I believe it was a Kenny Loggins session. I was on piano, and he was on organ.

Will: So is that the way you approached the new record? For instance, is one of you playing more synths and the other piano? How did you decide who played what?

David: That's a great question. Honestly, we don't really have a system to it. Sometimes I'll start to play on a certain track and he'll say "Oh I know what you mean" or "GET UP!" and then he'll sit down and play it, and I might like his playing better than mine, so we'll record him. Or the opposite might happen. I'll understand where Greg is going with a particular piece, and then I'll sit down and play it. We trade off back and forth. There's no egos involved. We've been working together so much, we just switch randomly.

Will: In the old days, you played a lot more piano than Steve Porcaro, who played mostly synths.

David: I was more piano and organ oriented, and Steve was a lot more synth oriented. But now, because there's a lot of piano stuff on digital keyboards, I brought my 9 foot Baldwin SD-10 out

which was used on the original albums. I also have my Hammond organ there's a lot of the original gear on this record. It's really a lot of fun.

Will: Is the new Toto record taking up most of your time right now, or are you doing other projects?

David: Well, I am doing a few other things. In the summer I was musical director for the grand opening of George Lucas Industrial Light and Magic at the Presidio in San Francisco. There was a VIP concert for about 3000 people, and Boz Scaggs and I were in charge of the music. I put together a "supergroup" of players like Steve Lukather, Boz, Chris Isaac, Bonny Raitt, Michael Tilson Thomas and quite a few others. I'm also working on some commercials.

Will: Sounds great. Going back to your writing over the years do you write more on piano or synths?

David: You know, it's a combination of both. It really happens to be what's there. I wrote a lot more on piano before digital synths were around. Now, however, I tend to write more on the Motif8's and the Tritons.

Will: Sure, I heard your original demo of Angel Don't Cry a while back, just you on synth, drum machine and vocals. Jeff played your programmed drum machine part almost exactly!

David: He probably programmed the beat you heard.

Will: Cool! I don't think it's very well known that Jeff programmed drum machines, albeit that it was only a demo. It would seem that Greg has "stolen" your rig and left you at home without your keyboards! That isn't very nice of him!

David: [laughs] It's not very nice at all! They're very insensitive about that. They just don't take this music thing seriously. I can't play with them anymore because they don't take it seriously.

Hahaha!

Will: Tell him to put his hand in his pocket and buy his own kit!

David: [laughs] Yeah, you know. What about that Simon Phillips! He has 3 kits. Why doesn't he just pick one and play it?

Will: [laughs] He's an octopus! What new gear are you using these days? Have you moved on from the Triton Studio 76 or the Motif8?

David: Not really. I'm using them, my Hammond organ, and Fender Rhodes, and my Baldwin SD-10.

Will: Yes, I enjoyed playing your Baldwin before you arrived at the studio yesterday! It sounded great to me!

David: Hahaha! I'm actually borrowing Jeff Babko's Fender Rhodes. I'm also using a Yamaha S-80 and a Roland JP-8000. I'm also using some virtual synths that use the Pro-Tools system. We're using more and more of them, like a Hammond B4. I have a Hammond A100 in the studio as well. The S-80 and the Tritons are being used in conjunction with the Hammond, so we have a digital Hammond and the real thing.

Will: Have you ever owned a B3?

David: Nope. Just the A-100. It's really the same thing as a B3, but it has a built-in speaker. It's like a living room model of the B3.

Will: What makes one Fender Rhodes sound better than another? You mentioned that you're

using Babko's. What makes that one better?

David: Well really it's the newer it is. The less it's banged around, the less it's played, and one that's really in good condition. They tend to wear out if they get a lot of use.

Will: Whilst we're on the subject of equipment that's been banged around, how's your personal equipment since the sex change?

David: [laughs] Actually, I had 2 sex changes. I came back to being a man.

Will: [laughs] Which one was more painful?

David: Well, I was unconscious for the most part. Right now I'm just waiting for the stitches to heal. Actually, I'm a little sensitive about this conversation. [laughs]

Will: [laughs] Greg has recently had tech support from Steve Lu. Is John "JJ" Jessel still working with you at your studio? What's he doing these days?

David: He's essentially my studio manager. He does a lot of Pro Tools programming for me. He's helping me get acclimated to that, because I just got it a little bit ago. We're logging a lot of the older songs that I've done.

Will: Some of the fans have noticed that JJ isn't on the road anymore.

David: No. Not with me anymore. Right now, it's pretty much just the studio.

Will: A lot of people are curious about the fact that you're not currently touring as much. We appreciate it's a sensitive subject, but could you share with us why you're not touring these days?

David: Sure. My sister is very sick. She's getting ready to go in for a major operation a lung transplant. I'm part of her support team here, so it's a family thing I'm helping with. It's going to be a major life-style change. I don't really want to go into depth on it at this point, but that's the major reason.

Will: I'm sure that the fans would wish for me to pass on their best wishes to you and your family. In time, do you anticipate going back on the road overseas?

David: Absolutely, but you know, when I can so long as time permits. I love playing live with the band. I just did four concerts with them out on the West Coast, Bakersfield, Las Vegas, Long Beach and LA. Whenever it's possible, my dream come true is playing live with this band. I will from time to time be out there, so long as the situation permits.

Will: Speaking of your favourite bands, in Marseille a couple of years ago, you asked me to get a Rolling Stones CD played before the show to get the crowd rocking!

David: Out of all the people I haven't played with, I'd love to play with the Stones. I always tell Chuck Levall that he owes me a phone call! [laughs] I was raised on The Beatles and The Stones. It would be a dream come true.

Will: So what about new music these days? Who's been pressing your buttons during say the last 5-10 years?

David: Well I'm listening to a lot of soundtrack music these days. James Newton Howard and a few others. I also really like Elton John. I was listening to a group called Tool right before we started talking here. I share records with my daughter here, so I hear a lot of Slip Knot and Marilyn Manson!

David Paich

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Will: There's a rumour going around that you like rap!

David: That's true! I've had one of the guys from the Black Eyed Peas in my studio. I think there should be rappers in Rock bands. I loved when Aerosmith had Run DMC on Walk This Way, I thought that was the perfect combination band.

Will: Right. Have there been any other projects going on at your studio recently?

David: Yes, I'm working on an independent film for two students about a young native American Indian.

Will: What other new artists could have a 30 year plus career like you've enjoyed?

David: I think Norah Jones is on her way to becoming a great artist. Sheryl Crow I like a lot, and also Alicia Keys. Joss Stone is mind boggling. She came to my studio.

Will: Talented singer-songwriters.

David: Absolutely.

Will: Before signing off, I have to ask you to reveal your funniest touring memory. I am sure there are a lot to choose from!

David: We tied our road manager Martin to a chair and set him out on stage for the encore. He hates being on stage!

David Paich

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Will: Hahahahaha Fantastic! Well, thanks a lot David, it's been great catching up with you, and the fans will be very appreciative to hear from you as well. Do you have anything else you'd like to add?

David: My pleasure Will, thanks for your unending patience. Your name on anything connected with Toto should be GOOD WILL MINTING. It's been great seeing you again, you tart. [Laughs]

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