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SPANDAU BALLET
ON PARADE

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ON PARADE

SPANDAU BALLET

Shooting the photo session for your album sleeve is not usually the most demanding job in the world — just line 'em up and away we go.

But Spandau Ballet decided they wanted a little bit more than that. . . in fact a lot more!

And so, in a studio in London's Ladbroke Grove, we find *Blue Peter* girl Sarah Green, *Islington Page Three* star Samantha Fox and young TV actress/singer Patsy 'Peapod' Kensit all dressed in majorette outfits. . . the Spandau dads carrying a Trade Union banner. . . Carmen Miranda, *Blue Rondo* singer Chris Sullivan, a girl in a lion suit. . . and in the middle, Gary Kemp and the rest of the group trying to organise the whole affair.

The intention is to have this parade dancing along the bottom of the album sleeve

For Spandau Ballet 1983 was the Year of the Dove.

That famous 'True' sleeve design signalled their most successful run in the charts to date. Now, some nine months after their last single 'Gold', the Islington Idols are back with a new single 'Only When You Leave', a new album 'Parade', and a whole new look to go with it. Harlequins, majorettes, soldiers and a New Orleans band are just some of the characters that appear on the new album's sleeve. And there are a number of guest celebrities hidden inside the uniforms.

Paul Simper got involved with this strange Parade and talked to Gary Kemp and the group's artist David Band about the new album.

beneath a massive building.

There's a lot of bustling, a lot of running around, in the four or five hours it takes to get the photo together — but finally it's done.

The extras slip away, the sound of the band dies down

and Gary Kemp relaxes for half an hour before dashing off to a video meeting.

As usual he's hardly been standing still since the band finished their world tour last Christmas.

There's the new LP 'Parade',

which they recorded with 'True' producers Steve Jolley and Tony Swain in Munich — and it's evident that all five members are ready now to get back into the swing of things.

With a few alterations, of course. As Gary Kemp explains. . .

RETURN OF THE SLEEVE

"With 'Parade' I wanted to return to making the record sleeve important. So much has been done with videos, while the sleeve has just been passed over.

"What with all the 12-inches that come out as well as genuine LPs, the sleeves have become so commonplace as to be almost disposable.

"But the record sleeve's an important part of an album. Unlike a promotional video, it's something permanent,

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Fearless Tony Hadley tussles with a Chinese dragon and Carmen Miranda.



Blue Rondo singer Chris Sullivan with Tony. "It's a bit strange," says Chris. "Everyone else is dressed up in costumes for this parade while I've got my normal clothes on!"



"Is this what mum meant by getting a proper job?" Simper with Spandau fan club secretary Jacqui Quaife.

ART'S COOL BAND

Scottish artist David Band first worked with Spandau Ballet on 'Communication'. He then went on to design the sleeve for their third album, 'True', with its famous dove symbol, and has collaborated with the band ever since.

Apart from Spandau, David has designed sleeves for Altered Images, Aztec Camera and his brother's band Bourgie Bourgie, as well as having his work in a number of exhibitions.

Like previous Spandau sleeves, 'Parade' came about as a collaboration between David and Gary Kemp.

"I'd been working on a painting of a man holding a megaphone for the album sleeve when Gary came up with 'Parade'. That sparked off all the different images," says David.

"It was good for me to get into painting with oils – rather than the felt pens of the 'True' sleeves – and 'Parade' gave me that opportunity because Gary's quite into art as well.

"Gary's really good to work with, because unlike a lot of people he's interested in all the arts – not just music.

"Everything I've done, we've worked out together – he's good to bounce ideas off. He understands what I'm trying to get at.

"In fact all the band are good to work with because they actually like what I'm doing. It does help.

"Some bands couldn't care F.A. about what you're doing.

"Off and on it takes me about a week to do an oil painting, but I work really quick.

"Gary and I originally started work on this sleeve two or three months ago, which has been a great help. So often you have about two days to get a sleeve done – that's how long I had before 'True' was released. It was mayhem!

"At the moment I'm trying to replace the dove symbol from 'True'. That's what the harlequin figure on the record is all about.

"I was a bit suspicious though when Martin (Kemp) got me dressed up in a harlequin outfit for the album sleeve parade – I almost throttled him!

"Still, originally I was going to appear with a paint-pot and beret, which I guess is even more ridiculous. The artist at work!"



"I said paint the sleeve, Dave, not wear it!" Gary and David Band stop parading for a minute.

something you can keep.

"This album will have a gatefold sleeve – and we got John Shaw, who specialises in advertising photography, to take the picture of the parade."

WORLD PARADE

"The idea behind 'Parade' was that this year we are really parading ourselves to the world.



"Well, it beats opening letters about Martin's underpants . . .!" Spandau's fan club secretary Jacqui Quaife only came down to the photo session to help out – next thing she knows she's a drummer boy. Funny life, innit?



"Come and have your picture taken Dad, he said . . . Meet Sam Fox, he said . . . Not a word about holding this bloody banner for four hours!" John Keeble's dad Stan 'The Man' muses on life at the top.

"We're going to places like Australia, New Zealand and Japan which we've never played in before.

"I hate the word 'tour', so this world trip will be called The Spandau Ballet World Parade '84-'85.

"I like the musical and visual images that the word 'parade' conjures up.

"There's that interesting juxtaposition of the military and the carnival. And that's really what touring is like – you work out your strategic plans for taking over the world and then when you're playing there's that carnival atmosphere.

"One day I just sat down and thought of all the different types of parade – an army, a New Orleans band, Trade Unions. . .

"I love the power that a group of people together possess, the camaraderie. There's something very powerful about a crowd of people moving forwards together in a positive direction.

"There's that same sort of feeling within the band.

"On the album sleeve there's the gigantic figure of a man standing in front of a building. He's pointing forward with one hand while the other is shielding his eyes from the sun.

"That was what it was like touring last year after the success of 'True'. Every city we went to, we received accolades – which was great – but it was like having a light hanging above you, glowing, the whole time.

"The idea for the harlequin figure, which has replaced the dove on the sleeve, came from a Russian ballet by Diaghilev, 'Parade'.

"Another interesting thing is 'Parade' in French means a 'show'.

"One of the original ideas for the 'Parade' sleeve was to recreate The Beatles' 'Sergeant Pepper' sleeve using people in the entertainment business, sport and politics who sum up the best of the '80s. But it was too short notice to get it together.

"Also it could have looked a bit too 'kitsch'.

"The one thing I didn't want to do with the new album was pull one track off it and make that the title. It throws too much light on one track and I think it tends to look rather like a marketing ploy."

THE GUESTS

"There was no particular reason behind choosing Sam, Patsy and Sarah as majorettes, except they are all up-and-coming stars in their different fields within the entertainment business.

"The clothes were the most important thing, but it was good that they could do it.

"Blue Rondo's Chris Sullivan is again a friend. He did design our suits last year, but we haven't had any made this time. We wanted to be more ourselves, although I love uniforms.

"The world tour this year starts in the Mediterranean, so

we need something to combat that heat."

ONLY WHEN YOU LEAVE

"It has been quite a while since 'Gold' but the delay before a new single wasn't because we were overawed by the stigma of 'True'.

"It would have been far worse if we hadn't released 'Gold'.

That lost the enigma of 'True', because 'Gold' stayed near the top for quite a few weeks.

"There was no sense in worrying whether it got to No. 1 or not.

"So there was no pressure on us when we went away to record the new album in Munich. We had a rest – well, not really a rest because we were touring – and then we had two months to record the LP. There was no room for paranoia.

"I think 'Only When You Leave' is a good mediator between 'True' and 'Parade'. It's got quite a bare arrangement but it's still melodic, still soulful.

"That's the only way I can write because I'm a songwriter first, not just a musician."

CITY SOUNDS

'Parade' certainly has a different sound to 'True'. That's the

difference between recording in the Bahamas and doing it in Munich.

"In Munich we were working in a studio underground with no windows. It was great – we needed a city to work in.

"I play a lot more guitar on the new album and I think we're playing much more as a unit now, which comes from last year's tour.

"'Parade' is more like us. And I would hope it's matured a little bit. Steve's certainly come on well as a sax player, but it's hard to really pinpoint the changes.

"It's like when you get up each morning and look at yourself in the mirror. You don't notice you're changing. You still think you look like you did when you were twelve."

JOLLEY AND SWAIN

"It was no trouble working with Steve (Jolley) and Tony (Swain) again. Steve is a great support for Tony (Hadley) – he appreciates the troubles of singing.

"We flew the pair of them out to New York for our last gig so that they could hear how we sounded now – which was the sound we wanted for the new album. And they agreed.



Frank Kemp enjoys seeing his lads do a bit of work for a change.



Ready for action. The three star majorettes, from left: Sam Fox, the Page Three girl who's just had her breasts insured for £250,000, Patsy Kensit, star of the recent TV series Diana and perky TV presenter Sarah Green.

"The thing is, 'True' was just as much their album as ours – so obviously they wanted a positive step forward too. It's like a team with them."

DRINKING THINKING

"When David Band and me get together to discuss new artwork ideas it's never done like a meeting. We just go out and get smashed and come up with loads of ideas.

"Then in the morning we sort out the bad from the not so bad.

"David's great to work with. He's one of my best friends and we both share a keen interest in modern art. Getting David to do our sleeves is a good way of exploiting an artist's talent and getting him recognition."

AN EYE ON THE OPPOSITON

"I don't think a great deal has changed in the charts since 'Gold'. The only real difference for us is that now we're competing with Howard Jones and Nik Kershaw as well. At the end of last year it was a three-horse race.

"I buy loads of records. I buy everything. I listen to them now much more for technical reasons, though. I've almost

forgotten the day of buying as a fan because I liked the sleeve or whatever.

"You've got to keep looking around, though, otherwise you end up disappearing up your own arse.

"At the moment I like the Sade record and Joe Jackson's latest LP. I'm probably more open-minded now. I like records because I like the song, not because it's played on the right radio station."

NOW AND BEYOND

"It's great to be back working here again. I love doing all the TV, playing all the different roles. You know, for three months you have to be musicians recording the album, then you're pop stars. . . .

"I love *Top Of The Pops*. I hate bands who slag it off. That's like saying Father Christmas doesn't exist.

"This year we want to take the band the whole way. No half measures.

"But that said, the most important thing to me at the moment is waking up on the Tuesday morning and hearing we've got a nice chart position.

"For now that'll do."