

**What's the focus of your new documentary, Resurrection?**

It's about how it was a bit too much for me to begin with, and the whole mental health side of it, and then the long struggle to get back to where I had been before I self-imploded my career. I didn't take to the whole fame thing at all, really. It was just full-throttle madness. And it was sudden. I was a young kid.

**In the film, Dave Grohl likens that sudden huge success he experienced with Nirvana to a traumatic event.**

Yeah. People will struggle to understand this. You see the money, the adulation, me standing on this massive stage and everyone going mad. What can be wrong with that? And they're right. But they don't see all the stuff that you don't really talk about. I lost



Foo fan: Dave Grohl

# SIXTY SECONDS

With Gary Numan

THE SYNTH-POP PIONEER, 64, ON RESCUING DOGS FROM CHINA, TRACTOR DRIVING AND HIS LIFE-SAVING MARRIAGE

INTERVIEW BY PAUL SIMPER

count of the death threats. It's your mum being put under police protection because there's a kidnap threat or a petrol bomb being put under your dad's car.

**You met your wife Gemma at your lowest point in 1992. What did she say to you that turned everything around?**

It took a good year or two of her trying to explain to me what she thought I'd been doing wrong. I was

in a bad place. I had no record deal at the time. I wasn't seeing any realistic chance that I was going to get another one. I was finished. I was firmly convinced that I was the weak link in my records. I thought my singing and my playing weren't good enough. My songwriting had gone downhill. Gemma said, 'You might not be the best singer in the world but you sing in a certain way and you have a certain sound. That's what people liked. They liked the quiriness and the unusual qualities of your voice.' It was all down to Gemma making me realise what my strengths were. I'd seen them as weaknesses. She also got my dressing sorted out.

**She mentions a certain lemon and grey jumper and a pair of braces she wasn't keen on...**

Ha ha, guilty as charged! Like she says in the film, she had to put up with a lot until she got that all sorted out.

**One critic said, 'No one of any worth will be influenced by Gary Numan.' How satisfying is it to hear stars like Trent Reznor and Dave Grohl talk about how your music changed their lives?**

It's nice but I've not spent the last 34 years being bitter or wanting to be vindicated. Mine was a new kind of music and people are not going to like it. But I'm really glad it's different now.

**Cars is the happiest song I ever wrote and it's about road rage and nearly getting beaten up**



REX

**depression and then you had depression...**

She was sort of coming out of hers as I was going into mine. When people argue and it gets bad, the problem is, you stop listening. It becomes about winning and point-scoring. Lost was meant to be a list of all the things that made me right and her wrong, ha ha. But it ended up being a list of all the things that are brilliant about her. I went back and said sorry and then she said sorry and that was that. Done.

**You once said that happiness doesn't make you want to write, it makes you want to go to the beach. Is that still true?**

Totally. If you are having a good day and all is right with the world, why would you write about that? I'd rather enjoy that than write about it. Cars is the happiest song I ever wrote and that's about road rage and nearly getting beaten up.

**There's a very large dog and an interesting looking cat in the documentary. What other animals do you have?**

We've just got another dog. We rescued a dog from China and the Yulin meat festival, where they torture dogs. It's horrendous. I am very involved in an organisation called Soi Dog who go in and hijack the trucks that are delivering all these dogs to the festival. I've got my own field in Thailand, the Gary Numan Field, where they exercise the dogs. We do a lot of fundraising for them. We've got three dogs now: a mastiff called Mildred, a St Bernard called Ronnie and Wellington, who is a husky Burmese mountain dog cross. Cat-wise, I've actually lost count.

**More than ten cats?**

We had 15 at one point. We might have six or seven now. We have got one cat called Skidaddle who lived in our house for three years before I knew what it looked like. We found out it was living in a sofa. It would come out at night only when people had gone to bed.

**The documentary features Lost, a song you wrote when Gemma had post-natal**

**What are you doing with the rest of your day?**

I am going to be on my tractor. We've just bought this place in Scotland, a big old baronial mansion with towers, and it's got a lot of land around it. When I lived in London we used to have quite a lot of land. I used to spend hours just driving up and down on a tractor, mowing the grass. I loved it. It's good for thinking.



Dress sense: Wife Gemma

Gary Numan: Resurrection is on Sky Arts and NOW TV on Saturday