



It's been some time since the Motors have made much of an impact on this part of the world, only the odd television rendition of "Forget About You" keeping their memory alive. It seems that they have not been idling, though. They and rising-star producer Jimmy Iovine have been locked away working on their most ambitious project to date — *Tenement Steps*.

Now reduced to just two members, Nick Garvey and Andy McMaster, the Motors are pursuing a rather different style from their original marriage of punk and pop. Their new album seems to be steering them closer to the wide-screen pop reconstructions of early 10cc. In this interview, Nick Garvey talks about their new work and the events of the last few years.

On the new record, you get a huge, full sound. It reminds me very much of Phil Spector. Is that what you were trying to do?

I think that particular sound ... that sort of majesty ... I think it's something we've always tried to do. I think the first album, to a certain extent, was trying to do that but it was limited because it was guitars. It wasn't specifically limited because it was guitars but you know what I mean. There was just something about getting the rhythm right. There weren't too many fiddly bits on the first album. I think we just tend to see things in that size. That enormity is something which appeals to us both. A sort of operatic feel to things.

If someone actually asked you to define The Motors what would you say? A band? A songwriting partnership? What?

I've no idea. I mean we both are in the music business and we both have a partnership in which we get done more or less what we want to get done. I really don't know.

But as a partnership you and Andy seem to be able to operate with a considerable independence?

I think we're just finding this particular independence, because the first album that we made was when we first really started working together. I said to my manager who was paying me twenty pounds a week to write songs, "Look, there's this bloke lives across the street and he writes amazing songs. Why don't you give us five hundred pounds and we'll go into Pathway and make some demos. It'll be great." He hummed and hahed a bit because he didn't like involving people he didn't know, but anyway, he said yes. And of course when the demos came back they were all guitar things with a little bit of piano but very very little and they sounded great. They sounded amazing. It was more or less on the strength of them that we got a record deal because my manager said that we should put a band together. So we did put a band together. So he could sell a whole package — a performing group.

But you are now very much a studio band?

I think we were always forced out onto the road because our manager's idea at the beginning was that he'd been publicist for all these big American heavy rock groups, and he thought that's how to really do it all. Go to America, be wonderful, then you'd be able to play to 150,000 people and your albums will sell 15 million. I think that's what he thought. And of course we never ever had any sort of a show to go with any sort of live performance we did and very, very few of the performances we did were actually very good.

How long did your new album take to make?

Two months. There was a bit of fiddling around done in America. We did put an orchestra on a couple of tracks in America. It took a while. Every track took a day and some took two days and some were re-mixed. We both bash something out and if we have to play something which is subtle we really have to work at it to learn how to play it properly. It's very difficult. We don't really trust other people to play things that we have the idea for though. We're not perfect musicians, so we really have to struggle hard to play these bits right and of course a lot of studio time is wasted.

Is the album simply a collection of songs or is it something more? Is it supposed to hang together?

No. It is simply a collection of songs. When it came to us making another album ... because everybody said it would be a good idea and Jimmy said, "You've got to make this album it'll be amazing" ... everybody was looking for what songs we could use.

Why did you think it necessary to call in another producer?

We recorded a couple of things last year after having had a bit of a lay-off. Virgin were saying, "Come on. We want some more stuff." So we went in and recorded 'Tenement Steps' and 'Love and Loneliness'. Jimmy Iovine happened to hear a cassette of them in America and he said, "I think these are wonderful but I can make them sound better than this." And he talked his way into the job. He said, "I want this job. I want to produce this band." So Virgin flew him over to see us and meet us because, you know, we're always really wary of people like that. And he was amazing. He just seemed like a really nice guy. He seemed to know what he was doing. He said, "I can make you sound amazing." It wasn't "I'll try and make you sound amazing." It was, "You're going to sound amazing." And that was that.

It seems to me The Motors have a tremendous diversity of style. I mean 'Modern Man' is very different from 'Love and Loneliness'?

I'm writing a song at the moment and I can see it has its roots in the sort of thing I wrote in

THE *Virgin* CATALOGUE

THE MEMBERS

1980: The Choice Is Yours V2153/TCV2153
At The Chelsea Nightclub V2120/TCV2120

THE MOTORS

Tenement Steps V2151/TCV2151
Approved By The Motors V2101/TCV2101
1 V2089

ANDY PARTRIDGE

Take Away/The Lure Of Salvage V2145

INTERVIEW

Snakes & Lovers V2157
Big Oceans V2123

CAPTAIN BEEFHEART AND THE MAGIC BAND

Shiny Beast (Bat Chain Puller) V2149/TCV2149

PUBLIC IMAGE

Second Edition VD2512/TCVD2512
Public Image V2114/TCV2114

SID VICIOUS

Sid Sings V2144/TCV2144

THE MEKONS

The Quality of Mercy Is Not Strnen V2143

SPARKS

Terminal Jive V2137/TCV2137
No 1 In Heaven V2115/TCV2115

MIKE OLDFIELD

Platinum V2141/TCV2141
Exposed VD2511/TCVD2511
Incantations VDTR101/TCVDTR101
Ommadawn V2043/TCV2043
Tubular Bells V2001/TCV2001
Boxed (4LP Set) VBOX 1/ITCVX 1

JANE AIRE & THE BELVEDERES

Jane Aire & The Belvederes V2134

THE RUTS

The Crack V2132/TCV2132

STEVE HILLAGE

Open V2135/TCV2135
Live Herald VDG3502/TCVGD3502
Motivation Radio V2777/TCV2777
Green V2098
L V2066
Rainbow Dome Musick VR1

GLADIATORS

Naturality FL1035
Sweet So Till FL1048

THE RECORDS

Shades In Bed V2122/TCV2122

FINGERPRINTZ

The Very Dab V2119/TCV2119

KEVIN COYNE

Millionaires & Teddybears V2110
Dynamite Daze V2096

WILKO JOHNSON SOLID SENDERS

Wilko Johnson Solid Senders V2105

NOEL

Is There More To Life Than Dancing V2126/TCV2126

SUPERCARGE

Body Rhythm V2118
Horizontal Refreshment V2067
I Think I'm Gonna Fall In Love V2999

DAVID BEDFORD

Instructions For Angels V2090
The Odyssey V2070

DELROY WASHINGTON

Rasta V2088

CAN

Flow Motion V2071

U-ROY

Rasta Ambassador V2092
Natty Rebel V2059

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MAGAZINE

The Correct Use Of Soap V2156/TCV2156
Secondhand Daylight V2121/TCV2121
Real Life V2100

XTC

Drums & Wires V2129/TCV2129
Go 2 V2108
White Music V2095

FLYING LIZARDS

Flying Lizards V2150

SHOOTING STAR

Shooting Star V2130/TCV2130

JOHN FOXX

Metamatic V2146/TCV2146

SEX PISTOLS

Flogging A Dead Horse V2142/TCV2142
Never Mind The Bollocks V2086/TCV2086
Some Product VR2
The Great Rock n Roll Swindle VD2510/TCVD2510

SKIDS

Days In Europa V2138/TCV2138
Scared To Dance V2116

COWBOYS INTERNATIONAL

The Original Sin V2136/TCV2136

HUMAN LEAGUE

Reproduction V2133/TCV2133

POET & THE ROOTS

Dread Beat & Blood FL1017

CULTURE

Harder Than The Rest FL1016
Cumbolo FL1040
International Herb FL1047

PENETRATION

Coming Up For Air V2131/TCV2131
Moving Targets V2109

PETER BAUMANN

Transharmonic Nights V2124

EDGAR FROESE

Stuntman V2139
Ages VD2507

TANGERINE DREAM

Force Majeure V2111/TCV2111
Cyclone V2097/TCV2097
Encore VD2506/TCVD2506
Stratosfear V2068
Ricochet V2044
Rubycon V2025
Phaedra V2010
Electronic Meditation L35450/IT25450
Zeit L45583-4/IT25583/4

PETER COOK

Here Comes The Judge VR4

MALLARD

Living In A Different Climate V2077

SLY DUNBAR

Sly, Wicked & Slick FL 1042

JULIE COVINGTON

Julie Covington V2107/TCV2107

YELLOW DOG

Beware Of The Dog V2104

VARIOUS

Virginité VPR1
Guillotine VCL5001
Frontline — Your Last Chance FLB3001
Frontline Sampler — Frontline 3 FLB3002

ALTHEA & DONNA

Uptown Top Ranking FL1012

GONG

Expresso II V2099

MIGHTY DIAMONDS

Ice On Fire V2078

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'Love and Loneliness', but there's no guarantee that the next song I write will be anything like that. I mean you just get an idea and then you write a whole song from it. You have to work very hard at writing songs I think. I used to just toss them off very quickly but they were never very good songs and it's only in the last couple of years that I've discovered that you have to work very hard to make a song work properly all the way through.

You've had a very diverse career. You started off as a roadie, then a bass player in a pub rock band, then producer, singer,

songwriter — out of all those things which do you enjoy the most?

Well it's all of them, really. If I were just a songwriter who gave his songs away ... I don't know how well I could cope with that, because when you actually write a song you know how it's going to go. I think that actually to write a song and then to carry it right through until it is a finished production, to have started from absolutely nothing and to end up with a finished performance is a wonderful experience and of course that involves everything I do.

THE END

COMING SOON
TANGERINE DREAM
TANGRAM
HUMAN LEAGUE
TRAVELOGUE
MARTHA & THE MUFFINS
METRO MUSIC
ORCHESTRAL MANOEUVRES
IN THE DARK
LOCAL OPERATOR

