

ELECTRONIC SOUNDMAKER

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YES

INTERVIEW

Super Prize Competition

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WITH AN EMULATOR

SPECIAL REVIEW

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Yamaha DX9

Mensana
Rod Argent

YES

Atlantic Crossing

PROJECT #build a Sound Effects Synth

Interview

Yes arrived in the States during February to start a lengthy tour, and just before things got too hectic I squeezed in this interview; which began with a question to Chris Squire about how the decision to restart the band had come about: "To start with, it was Alan (White) and myself

together again? I told him we were very much involved in what we were doing and at that time I couldn't really see it. On the older records where Jon was doing most of the lyrics, I didn't know what he was saying, he was going on to himself. I'm not even sure he knew what he meant. We've asked him that question and he just

management and all kinds of different things. I wanted to do something different, so I learned how to play tennis. I wanted to be a tennis star."

One of the most interesting aspects of the

ATLANTIC CROSSING



who were writing together and after that we decided to put a band together. Not Yes but any band. We had Trevor (Rabin) and we got Tony Kaye (Yes's original keyboard player) to come back and play". Trevor, Yes's new guitarist; "We had played together as Chris has said and then I had come back to LA and Chris called Tony Kaye. I met him for the first time at the airport and we just started to rehearse". Alan White, Yes's drummer, explained that the group had rehearsed in London before going into the studios; "One of the good things about the music was that because Tony and I live in LA we rehearsed like five weeks and then I'd come home for three weeks. . . this gave us time to contemplate what we were doing".

How had Jon Anderson got involved? Chris: "He said do you want to get

Ron Bienstock, Editor of IM (USA), talks to Yes on tour in the States.

says, 'whatever you read into it'. When we had done all the backing tracks for the new album we had gotten to the stage where we felt it would be much better if we got Jon back, so Jon came, changed a few words, changed a few melodies, and we integrated the whole thing".

I asked Tony what he had been doing before rejoining Yes: "I came to America, I moved to LA nine years ago. I've played with several people. I played with Bowie. I had a band called Detective, and I played with Badfinger. I went into

new album '90125' is that it is produced by Trevor Horn, who is himself an ex-member of Yes, but perhaps better known for his production work with ABC and more recently, the infamous Frankie Goes to Hollywood. How did that come about? Chris: "He'd been involved in producing mainstream pop bands and he was getting a little jaded with that, so he wanted to get his teeth back into some electric guitars, so in November 1982 we started

working on this album. . . Trevor has always been a Yes fan which gives us a bit of an edge as to how we should sound".

How did they write new material for the album? Trevor: "When we were starting, they were writing a lot and I had 475,000 demos. It just happened that I had tons of material, we used to just pull things out here and there to work on". Chris: "Jon did stuff too. He changed words and when

he changed them for the better, we kept them, when he didn't we kept what we had. We tried to be as objective as possible. It was good that we had a producer to mediate".

Talking of Trevor Horn, do you still keep in contact with the former members of Yes? Alan: "We do, we keep in touch with one another".

In the past critics have said that Yes as a band doesn't really swing, but

*'On the older records where Jon was doing most of the lyrics, I didn't know what he was saying... I'm not even sure that he knew what he meant'.
Chris Squier*

'Owner Of A Lonely Heart' certainly does. Was this a conscious effort? Chris: "I think it was. On the things we were rehearsing that didn't go on the album as well, we were experimenting, if you can call it that. We were actually playing simpler music. I know basically my own playing on the album is a lot simpler, but for a reason, to have a modern version of Yes".

So what exactly is the point Yes are trying to put over in 90125? Jon: "The Yes thing has always been a sort of pointed opinion, musically, stage-wise, production-wise. We make a statement as to what we feel is happening. Some of the lyrics like 'City Of Love', they're done in street language from a lyrical point of view".

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Chris Squier*

The First Stage

What equipment will they be using on the US tour?

Alan: "I'll probably be using a Simmons kit on the road. They are more dynamic on stage than a conventional kit. But they have been used a little too much recently. It's a bit of a cliché."

Tony Kaye is going to be using an interesting set-up, as he explained: "It's pretty revolutionary, really, nobody's used it before. It's a method of connecting keyboards together to build a sound. It's a system of MIDI interfacing. I'm using two separate systems, two MIDI systems that can be programmed and connected together... it should be horrendous. One system is a Jupiter 8 and a OBXa and another system is the Yamaha Digital equipment; the DX7's connected to anything basically. I'll probably use another Jupiter and that'll be connected to the Emulator. The Emulator playing a lot of real sounds can be re-processed through any of those two, so the possibilities are endless".

Trevor uses a 1962 Fender Stratocaster, mainly, but "On the road, I'll be using a Roland guitar synthesizer, with a new programmable module I'm waiting for. On the album I used a Les Paul, a Telecaster every now and then, but mostly the Strat".

Chris will continue to use a Rickenbacker but besides

that he'll be using a bass made by MPC. "I used it on the single and also on 'City Of Love'. It has modules on the back, the most effective of which is the flanger. I also use an eight string bass that was made for me by Eric Rawar in Chicago. In fact, he also made a twelve string (guitar) that Trevor uses on the album — he's an excellent guitar maker". How do the band feel about the album's British chart placing? Chris: "I'm quite disappointed with the album in England. It came in at number 16 the first week, then it went to 28 and now it's dropped again, but I think that somehow it'll turn around and go back up. We've had very good reviews in England which is strange for us. It's still selling well, it's just an oddity".

Why are English bands doing so well in the States? Trevor: "American record companies are dictated to by the radio — 'this is what's happening, this is what we want to hear' — it filters down from the A&R guys to the guys who bring in the demos... that sort of stifles the originality of American bands".

Atlantic's London offices reckon there is a good chance that Yes will be playing some dates in the UK this year, though nothing has been finalised. The present tour will see the band taking their show to Japan as well as the USA. Will they be simplifying the stage show the way they had the music? Chris: "Do you mean make it less theatrical? No, I don't think so. We're looking at designs at the moment and they're quite big...". Alan: "What we're looking at now is a fairly simple stage, but it's clever in the way it works, it's gonna be something new like our music". What did they hope to achieve on this tour. Chris: "I'd like to play Moscow". Yes in the USSR? Don't laugh — it could happen. ■