

MANGLING THE RUMOUR MONGERS
(THE TWINK/BEVIS FROND INTERVIEW)

May 1989

Rumours have been abounding for some time of a possible collaboration between Bevis and the legendary Twink, who's history has been so well documented elsewhere that it's hardly worth repeating that his career spans virtually the whole spectrum of English psychedelia from Tomorrow to today. To set the record straight, the Terrascope commissioned a unique interview between our two heroes, which in future issues will follow the whole of Twink's remarkable career; firstly however, details of the forthcoming collaboration and of Twink's other more recent activities are hereby presented straight from the mouths of these two psychedelic warhorses, thus reducing any further rumourmongering from ill-informed fanzine writers such as myself.

Over to you, lads....

Bevis: So, let's talk about the projected Twink/Bevis album. From my point of view, the whole project is particularly exciting since it gives me the chance to work with someone I've long been an admirer of...

Twink: And as far as I'm concerned, it's exciting because I'm working with someone who's moving upwards very fast!

Bevis: Well, we're in a kind of similar situation really; at the vanguard of something that seems to be happening, and there's just not much competition around at present to be honest, here in England at least. There's a lot of people writing about it, but not too many actually doing it.

Twink: That's a good point - I hadn't thought about it like that before.

Bevis: Anyway, we're going into the studio next Wednesday [mid-March 1989] and laying down some stuff, and then will resume recording in June when you return from the 'States, so we'll be looking at a possible release date of August or so, on Woronzow records. By the time people get to read this, you'll actually be in America: what are you going to be doing over there?

Twink: During May I'll be on the West Coast working with some musicians based in San Diego, doing some shows in Los Angeles and in San Francisco, as well as doing various radio and TV interviews. Before then, in April, I'm doing some gigs with Plasticland as well as working on a single with them. It's for a German label, the A-side will be "10,000 Words In A Cardboard Box", the B-side is yet to be decided.

Bevis: I've heard a live tape of that, and it promises to be really good, an absolute corker. The association with Plasticland is one that at first glance doesn't seem to be an obvious one: how did it come about?

Twink: They've been fans of most of the bands I've been with, going back as far as The Fairies, through Tomorrow, The Pretty Things, the Pink Fairies... listening to their albums, I can hear all those influences coming through. They sound more English than they do American!

Bevis: So did they contact you, or what?

Twink: I was put in touch with them by Nigel Cross...

Bevis: Ssssss! No, actually we're just about on speaking terms now. At least he hasn't slagged me off in print for 6 months or so.

Twink: Yeah, well he put us in touch, and then a year later I met John Frankovic at the Acid Daze gig in Finsbury Park when I was doing a show with the reformed Pink Fairies. We were introduced and really hit it off, and we talked back then of doing some gigs together. Last October I went out to Wisconsin and did an album and some dates with them; the LP is coming out on Midnight Records in April in the U.S. It's a great album, a piece of history. The new generation meets the old. We became friends and intend to get together once or twice a year just to have a good time.

Bevis: Sounds fine to me! What's maybe surprising to a lot of people is that unlike a number of musicians from the Sixties and Seventies, Twink is very much involved in 1989. Not just because of the Pink Fairies reforming, which was unlike many other reformed bands just trading on past successes, but because of all your other activities.

Twink: I was thinking about that recently. When the Pink Fairies reformed I was already actively involved, I'd started Twink Records, and four years ago I started to massage my career and get myself back on track. When the Pink Fairies came along, I just let my heart rule my head and it was perhaps something of a step backwards.

Bevis: Was it regrettable that Paul Rudolph was not involved?

Twink: I think so. We should have at least invited him to participate.

Bevis: Why didn't that happen?

Twink: I wasn't actually driving the reunion, I was just invited along to do it and I rushed in. In retrospect we should have invited Paul even though he's in Vancouver. The chances are he wouldn't have been able to get involved, but we should have invited him and I accept part of the blame for that. The whole thing was a step backwards though, and it went bad - if not for the rest of the guys, certainly for me. It started out a lot of laughs, but I realised I wasn't getting anywhere which is why I eventually left. I'd had an offer to do some work with Anglian TV, and since I had no dates booked with the band at that time I accepted; then when a date came in, I phoned the agent who offered to move the date by a couple of weeks. Then when I called the band up and told them there had been a problem but I'd sorted it out, they said it was still a problem since why should they change the date just for me? So I offered to talk about subsequent dates, but they just hung up on me. Basically, I'd made a commitment to the band and I was willing to see it through to the end, even against my better judgement, but I must say I was glad when the 'phone went down on me.

Bevis: So, freed from his commitment with the 'Fairies, Twink now has dates lined up with Plasticland, dates for himself in America, he's got a thing coming up with the 'Fronk, got his own album planned for Crash Landing Records on the Distortion label...

Twink: I'm in the studio with my UK band working on that. It's a forthcoming Twink studio album, called "Mr Rainbow" on the Distortion label, as you said. There's a Twink Band tour lined up at the end of November, also plans to hopefully go to Europe towards the end of October.

Bevis: What a lot of people won't be expecting is that you're largely not drumming at the moment. Any reason for that?

Twink: I enjoy playing drums, but not on a full-time basis any more. I'm enjoying myself too much being a front man, miming, doing the theatrical thing - it's not an ego trip, just something I love doing. I enjoy drumming though, I've played with some great musicians over the years.

Bevis: Most recently on the Magic Muscle tour of course: by all accounts, the live gigs which I unfortunately didn't catch any of were pretty good - excellent, infact?

Twink: Yeah, they were and I really enjoyed the time I was able to spend with them - which was actually about a week. Two days of rehearsals, then four gigs, the last of which was recorded for a live album. We really had a lot of fun, the gigs were good...

Bevis: And the album's awaiting release. It's imminent, but seems to be taking rather a long time to get there...

Twink: Yeah, well I said to Muscle that providing I wasn't doing anything I'd be very happy to help them out; unfortunately though, the way things are going my diary's full right up to next year, so I told the Muscle that they can't rely on my participation. I made it clear to them, but then I saw a quote in "Bucketfull Of Brains" where they said I was willing to become a full-time member, which simply isn't true because of my other commitments.

[I conducted that interview and wrote the article in the Bucketfull, and the information was based on the advice I was given at the time: my apologies for not corroborating the truth of the matter! - Ed.]

Bevis: So does this sever your connections with Magic Muscle totally, or is it still feasible that in the future you might still be working with them?

Twink: No, I don't really think it's feasible.

Bevis: So if the Muscle want to continue as a going concern, they're going to have to find another drummer since you haven't got the time to devote to it. As far as I can make out though, it's been a pretty amicable split?

Twink: Absolutely. I made it clear in the beginning. My initial input to the record company was that we had something good, so why were we waiting until February 1989 to put the record out - March or even April now.

Bevis: I can't see why they didn't put it out last November...

Twink: That would have been the right time, which is what I told them, but for whatever reason the record still isn't out and the momentum has been lost. I'd made myself available at the beginning of February, but basically because nothing has happened for a whole month I've found myself not being able to participate any more.

Next issue, Bevis guides Twink through the early stages of his career from the late 1950's when Twink was treading the boards as Johnny Flash... watch this space!

THE BANK MANAGER'S CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATION INTERVIEW

(TWINK/BEVIS FROND PART 2)

Last issue we promised you Part 2 of the Twink / Bevis Frond interview, which Nick conducted back last March. In some respects this would normally have been Part One, since it goes over the early days

of Twink - taking us right up to his stint with The Pretty Things, which for many people was the first they'd heard of Twink, the drummer and performer. (That statement is based entirely on the fact that my bank manager who, when I approached him with the idea of setting up the Terrascope, had heard of none of the acts and artists I told him we would be covering until I mentioned the Pretty Things, whereupon his eyes glazed over and fond memories obviously started to flood in to his otherwise majestically formed and unbedazzled brain. But I digress. On with the interview:)

Bevis: Let's go back to the dark days of the late 50's and early 60's, when the young Johnny Flash was flashing his way around Essex -

Twink: He was also flashing his way around the 21's coffee bar in Soho! I actually played at the 21's twice, once with a band called The Strangers and once with an outfit called Eddie Lee Cooper & The Trappers - both bands from my home town of Colchester.

Bevis: Was that Rock 'n' Roll, skiffle, or what?

Twink: Rock, Rock 'n' Roll. Eddie Lee Cooper was fond of Gene Vincent and Eddie Cochran, and The Trappers were more into Cliff & The Shadows. The funny thing about one of the gigs at the 21's was that Vince Taylor was there, and I used to sing his song "Brand New Cadillac" as part of our set, playing the drums and singing at the same time. He introduced us this particular night, probably an Eddie Lee Cooper show, and I sang our version of "Brand New Cadillac" - which was nowhere near as good as the original. Funnily enough, I saw Vince Taylor's first ever show, which was in Colchester. Cliff & The Shadows were billed to appear at The Odeon, but they couldn't make it as Cliff had laryngitis or something so they put up on the notice board outside that Vince Taylor & The Playboys were depping. Nobody had heard of 'em of course, but anyway there were other acts there like the Viscounts and the Vernon's Girls...

Bevis: Essential stuff! Odd that everything begins with a "V"!

Twink: Yeah, pretty cosmic, eh? Anyway, the Shadows were there, called The Drifters at that time, and they did their set which was absolutely great. They were a vocal group at that point, did "Feeling Fine" and "Saturday Dance" - really good. So then it came to the time for Vince Taylor, and nobody really knew what to expect. It was amazing! One of the most exciting shows I've ever seen. The curtains opened, and the Playboys started up with "Move It", Cliff's song but which was like 10 times heavier than the Shadow's version. Suddenly this leg and foot came out from the side of the stage, wearing a black and white shoe, and everybody went, "Woow!!"

Bevis: So Vince Taylor was actually a black and white shoe!

Twink: Well, then he appeared on the stage, looking the dead spitting image of Elvis. The whole place just erupted. I became a big fan of Vince Taylor right at that point, bought "Brand New Cadillac", "Right Behind You Baby" and "Jet Black Machine"; all the records by him I was able to get, in fact.

Bevis: I've got "Brand New Cadillac", but that's the only one.

Twink: "Right Behind You Baby's great - have you heard it?

Bevis: Heard it, but never seen a copy.

Twink: Oh, and "Jet Black Machine", that's great too. [Twink launches into an impromptu version...]

Bevis: So we're looking at Twink in his very first flush as a drummer, down at the 21's in the early 60's, post skiffle perhaps?

Twink: I was involved in skiffle, which is where I started out. In fact, I started with a guitar, I really wanted to be like Bill Haley when I was around 12 or 13. Music had always had my attention though; I'd been into Bing Crosby before Rock 'n' Roll came along - I saw "Rock Around The Clock" and I was gone. Absolutely sold.

Bevis: The one that really did me in was seeing Hendrix on Ready Steady Go. I'd been into the Beatles and stuff up until then - I was quite a reasonable guitarist by the time I was 13, writing my own songs as well. Then I saw Hendrix, banging his guitar on his leg, playing with his teeth, sticking it down his trousers, and my life really changed! By that time of course, you'd been involved in so many different bands and types of music - the first major band though was The Fairies, would that be fair to say?

Twink: Yeah, I think so. I'd been with Dane Stephens & The Deepbeats before that, but The Fairies were the first ones that really cracked it. The singer for the Fairies, Dane Stephens himself, was involved in an accident while he was driving the group van - without any licence or insurance. He hit another car and killed maybe 4 people. So we lost him for a year and got Nick Wymer from Nix Nomads instead. We had been actually about to break at that point, there was no doubt about it. We had Mickey Most producing us in the studio, we had a single out and another one on the way, an agent who was getting us booked back again everywhere - we were good, a really good R&B band.

Bevis: In the same sort of mould as The Pretty Things?

Twink: No. Not the original Fairies. We became like the Pretty Things when Nick Wymer came along - mostly because Nick looked and sounded so much like Phil May. With Dane Stephens though, our shows were not only blues but soul numbers, touches of jazz as well. He was an amazing singer, very very special. Had a great voice, played amazing blues harp - not knocking Nick Wymer though, he was pretty special too, but it was the original Fairies that were just about to break big.

Bevis: What happened to Dane Stephens?

Twink: He went to jail after the accident, and then after he came out Nick left and we got Dane back but we were really trying to recreate something which we'd already lost.

Bevis: So from The Fairies, did you make a direct move across to The In-Crowd?

Twink: Straight across, yeah. I was asked to join the In-Crowd, and I'd already been hanging around with the guys before that. Junior and Keith West anyway; not so much Steve Howe - he was always a bit of a loner at that point, so I didn't have too much to do with him. But I'd always been interested in their music - they were another very exciting band.

Bevis: I've got a few In-Crowd singles, and there seems to be quite a heavy kind of Motown or soul influence?

Twink: Yeah, there was. Their stage act was very exciting as well. Steve of course was an absolutely amazing guitarist. Things hadn't been going too well with The Fairies, so when Ken Jones, their drummer, left they came down to the Cafe D'es Artistes in Earls Court and asked me to join. I

jumped at the chance. I gave my notice in to The Fairies that night - it was traumatic, as we'd been through a lot together, but it was just something that had to be done.

Bevis: So The In-Crowd continued as a pretty well respected club band, and then with the first flowerings of psychedelia they changed their name?

Twink: That's right. We found that there was all this new music happening which we were starting to experiment with and we weren't able to play at the places that we wanted to, like the UFO and Blaises Club, because they just weren't interested in a band with a name like The In-Crowd. So we had to change the name overnight, although the music had already begun to alter.

Bevis: Who thought up the name, "Tomorrow"?

Twink: Friends of mine had suggested the name Now, which I took along to the meeting with me. Junior chipped in with "what about 'Tomorrow' then?", which we all agreed was great.

Bevis: So Tomorrow was born - and met with quite extraordinary success?

Twink: It was - amazing. We really started to move very fast.

Bevis: On the album, a lot of the tracks are credited to Hopkins/Burgess - who were they?

Twink: Hopkins is Keith West's real name. Burgess was a friend of his who was a songwriter.

Bevis: "My White Bicycle" became a minor hit in Britain and a major smash on the Continent. Did it come about as a result of the white bicycle thing in Amsterdam?

Twink: Yes, it did. I was very much interested in the idea of people having white bicycles and just leaving them around for anybody to use - it's a beautiful concept, and I was telling everybody about it. Keith just said, "oh, yeah" and it became a song!

Bevis: I remember the album coming out and getting a copy and just looking at it... strangely though, the "Claramount Lake" track only ever appeared as the B-side of a single. I don't suppose the band had much say in that?

Twink: We didn't actually record "Claramount Lake" for the album, but I don't recall whether it was specifically recorded as a B-side or whatever.

Bevis: Tomorrow made two singles, "My White Bicycle" and "Revolution"...

Twink: I gave Keith the idea for "Revolution" as well. It happened the night the Rolling Stones were thrown into jail, I think. We were performing at the UFO club that night - I forget how it actually came about, but we used to do a lot of mime stuff and audience participation things and I ended up running around the audience screaming "Revolution! What we need is revolution NOW!!" - within the next two days, Keith came up with the song.

Bevis: I read somewhere that there was a twenty minute long version of "Why?" (the old Byrds number) around?

Twink: Yeah, there is - or was. We used to open up with that, and recorded a version at EMI. My understanding is that the tape was destroyed immediately thereafter though. It was really a live song,

which didn't work that well in the studio. In retrospect, it was probably the wrong thing to do, to destroy the tape.

Bevis: Who would have done that?

Twink: Mark Wirtz and Keith West probably. Nobody really objected at the time.

Bevis: Tomorrow seemed, as far as I can recall, to end rather abruptly. They were buzzing along nicely, had an album and a couple of singles out, and then suddenly didn't exist any more?

Twink: It was Keith West's "Excerpt From a teenage Opera" that really screwed things up. It got to Number One all over Europe and the whole vibe of the band was shattered over the incident. It was Mark Wirtz's idea for the Teenage Opera, but my understanding was that the whole idea was to promote the band as well; to release the record as Keith Tomorrow, and then we'd all get the chance to have a single out. But that didn't happen at the end of the day. The album came out as "Tomorrow Featuring Keith West" which really pissed everybody off, just wasn't acceptable as far as I was concerned. We had no control over the black and white sleeve either, or even the mixing, which could have been a lot better on some of the tracks.

Bevis: So what happened?

Twink: We all had a meeting, and Keith said basically, you're going to be a 3-piece band and I'm gonna be Keith West, but I'm going to write all your songs and produce you and probably sing on the records but not actually be a part of the band. So we told him to fuck off.

Bevis: As you would!

Twink: Well, yeah. It got really silly at that point! So anyway, that's how the "Aquarian Age" thing was born - which was really mine and Junior's project, although Steve helped out. We went up to the Bryan Morrison Agency one day - he was Tomorrow's agent as well as the Pretty Things', and Skip Alan had just left the Pretty Things so Dick Taylor said: Twink, Skip's left and we've got to go to Italy over the weekend, can you help us out? I said OK, but only for the next month because I was working on this Aquarian Age project with Junior. Actually, I stayed with them longer than that - and Junior obviously wasn't going to sit around twiddling his thumbs whilst Twink decided to be in the Pretty Things, which made it easier for me, as I was making pretty good money with them. So Junior got into his own thing and became a croupier...

Bevis: There are some demos recorded of the Aquarian Age project though?

Twink: A few, we did them at the EMI studios in Manchester Square - the head office, rather than the Abbey Road studios. We wrote what I think are some very, very good songs and ideas. The songs themselves still exist because neither of us have forgotten them, but I don't know what happened to the tapes. We were also working on a play about two wizards, which we were actually rehearsing at one time, which there was quite a lot of interest in. It was a mixture of music and theatre - Mark Wirtz was involved in some of the music, and in fact gave us the right to call the project the Teenage Opera - but trying to combine the two projects into one didn't really work out.

Bevis: So The Aquarian Age left us one single, which was "10,000 Words"? I should think the rest of the stuff was a prime candidate for reissue in 1989...

Twink: I'd have to think carefully about that, as they were only demos.

(Hopefully next issue we'll get on to the Pretty Things - assuming the bank manager doesn't pull the plug on us before then for not keeping our side of the bargain this time around!)

Twink/Bevis Frond Pt. 3)

Last issue, we left our chums discussing the Aquarian Age project in the period leading up to when Twink joined the Pretty Things. For the last in this series of interviews, Bevis guides Twink through the Pretty Things, Pink Fairies, Stars and Rings and back to the present day, which is where we came in...

Bevis: The Pretty Things seemed, around the time that you joined them, to really suddenly go into another gear. The S. F. Sorrow project was the first rock opera that actually worked - the Teenage Opera had attempted it, but not gone beyond a project, but the first one that really took off was S. F. Sorrow. So I suppose it was quite a milestone really - what are your memories of that project?

Twink: It's hard to say, because when I started working with The Pretty Things, I was really excited about the Aquarian Age single which was coming out and the S. F. Sorrow stuff which I started to work on with them was really... Although I enjoyed it I didn't get into it straight away.

Bevis: It wasn't so much your project though, was it?

Twink: It wasn't, although I became more and more involved in it, because I got more and more involved in working with the Pretty Things. We did a Norman Wisdom film, which was lots of fun; we were recording tracks for that.

Bevis: Which all came out on the De Wolfe label as The Electric Banana albums. Am I right in thinking you are not on the first one, the ten inch Electric Banana album?

Twink: I'm only on the ones that are in the "What's Good for the Goose" film.

Bevis: Because they actually did three Electric Banana albums. Having heard them, the first Electric Banana album is just hopeless, but the other two are really good.

Twink: I'm on "Alexander", "Blow Your Mind" and "Eagles Son", "What's Good for the Goose" and "I See You".

Bevis: And of course the Norman Wisdom movie. There was a phase when films always had the swinging party scene picturing a group - I'm quite fond of those, you kind of always wonder who's going to be at the swinging party; sometimes its the Marmalade and sometimes its someone else, American ones used to do it when bands like Moby Grape would crop up in movies. Anyway, in this particular one there's an inordinately large amount of Pretty Things in it. They don't just do their 20 seconds in the background - you actually get quite a lot of footage in it. It looks like you were having a lot of fun?

Twink: We did have a lot of fun. We went up for 2 weeks in Southport, and it was like a big family living in a hotel together.

Bevis: What was Norman like - because he's a bit of a drummer himself, isn't he?

Twink: Yes, I think he is. Norman was very much like he is on screen.

Bevis: Anyway, Pretty Things and you parted company - how did that happen?

Twink: That was because I started to get more and more involved in the Pink Fairies Motor Cycle Club and All Star Rock and Roll Band, which in fact lead me on to doing my solo album, which I started doing when S. F. Sorrow was just coming to an end. So really I became more and more interested in what was actually happening with the Deviants and Mick Farren and T. Rex; Steve (Peregrine) Took, that side of T Rex. We were kind of thrown together Mick, Steve and myself, so we used to go out and have a good time. So that's really what pulled me away, doing the album "Think Pink" and working with Steve and Mick away from the Pretty Things. I decided to leave the Pretty Things initially to concentrate on a solo career and then the idea of the Pink Fairies came up.

Bevis: Can we just talk about "Think Pink" for a little while. I really like it - I think it's a kind of over rated and an under-rated album strangely enough. I think at the time it was under-rated, it was almost as if Polydor were a bit ashamed of it when it first came out, like they didn't do anything to push it?

Twink: I don't think they were ashamed of it. They licenced it from Sire - it wasn't a Polydor recording, it was a Sire recording - and it came out in the rest of Europe and in the States in 1970 and didn't get picked up in the UK. Polydor used it as an introduction to "Never Never Land" [the first Pink Fairies album], because it came out about 2 or 3 months before "Never Never Land" did. That was maybe why it was under played by Polydor.

Bevis: If I remember right it was a cut-price LP as well. I read somewhere that it was £1.49. I can't remember it being £1.49, but maybe that's just because I can't remember. It's a nice album though, because it's got a lot of... it seems like everybody's having a good time on it.

Twink: It really was a lot of fun to do it and I thoroughly enjoyed it. The only thing that was disappointing was Mick Farren's mix. Mick was essentially producing it; he'd arranged the deal with Sire, he had the producers cap on, but his mix was absolutely awful. So I went back in and remixed it with Steve Took's help - and that was the final product.

Bevis: Who's the girl on the cover?

Twink: That was Silver, my first wife. Or at least, I sometimes call her my first wife - we lived together.

Bevis: We're now getting on to the time of the Pink Fairies, who have got a reputation as being one of the most out-on-the-edge British bands of the 70's - if not ever. Their reputation is one of absolute insanity, a "who gives a shit" kind of attitude.

Twink: Yes, I think we did have that kind of attitude, I think we were pretty much out on the edge. I'm trying to focus on the Pink Fairies band, but obviously it began before the band. The Pink Fairies band, Twink, Paul, Rudolph, Russell Hunter and Duncan Sanderson, grew out of the Pink Fairies Motor Cycle Club and All Star Rock and Roll Band, which was a drinking club. I was with the Pretty Things at this particular time, the beginnings of the Motor Cycle Club, and we used to do a lot of gigs alongside Mick Farren's Social Deviants and Marc Bolan's T. Rex, we used to have a lot of fun jamming at these shows together and we would roll on to clubs afterwards and we would go out drinking and stuff. What happened was myself out of the Pretty Things and Steve Took out of T. Rex and Mick Farren out of the Social Deviants, the three of us got thrown together and we used to hang out a lot together; that was really the nucleus of the drinking club and that's really how the Pink Fairies started.

Bevis: Chronologically, the Pink Fairies happened just after "Think Pink", is that right?

Twink: It was really happening during the recording of "Think Pink", because the album came out in America and the rest of the world before the Pink Fairies album. So I always consider "Think Pink" was the first Pink Fairies album in the true sense.

Bevis: "Never Never Land" was the first Pink Fairies release, fetches quite high prices now for the original packaging with the transparent envelope. Did you have any say in that or is that just Polydor?

Twink: That was my idea. The Band had an album out called "Stage Fright" and there was some sort of transparent thing happening with their sleeve - that gave me the idea and I took it to Polydor and said "look, we would like a transparent sleeve, we would like the transparent sleeve to be working with the inner sleeve and we'd like a gate fold sleeve as well", because what we were trying to do is kind of get the most to people we could get from the record company. "We'd like it printed both sides so people could take the inner sleeve out and decide which side they wanted to put on their wall and they'd still have the transparent sleeve to play with". It pisses me off a bit because on the sleeve it says, "sleeve concept Penny Smith and Tony Vessley" - they did the actual art work, but the concept wasn't theirs it was mine.

Bevis: Nice! But of course, Polydor didn't continue with that pressing of it, that was just the initial few thousand that had the transparent backing and then they just resorted to the basic sleeve. I guess it must have been quite an expensive thing?

Twink: At the meeting one guy turned to the other and said "can we do that, well I suggest that we do it", he said "yes, I think we can do that" and they just went ahead and did it.

Bevis: I was listening to it the other day and it's a great album; for a band with the real crazed off the wall kind of image, it's quite a kind of melodic, produced album.

Twink: We had a lot of criticism at the time, for the type of album we put out given the fact we were kind of anarchic and rubbing shoulders with the MC5 and stuff, because it wasn't too anarchic at all. It wasn't a vehicle for preaching revolution. We were spreading the word, you know, love and peace, in our own way.

Bevis: And of course around this time the Pink Fairies seemed to be gigging every five minutes - they were never off the road as far as I can recall.

Twink: If the band wasn't on the road then the Pink Fairies Marching Band was doing something somewhere, you know a fete or whatever. That was something we didn't have really a chance to develop, the marching drum and the bass drum and everything.

Bevis: The Pink Fairies were like a phenomena, they kind of continued like a few of the bands, like Edgar Broughton and maybe Hawkwind to a certain extent, going alongside with the beginnings of glam rock; Bolan and The Sweet and things like that. Especially as you'd started off with people like Bolan and Took and he'd gone off in that kind of pop thing, did you never feel that the Fairies should go more pop or did you scorn that type of thing, did you look at Bolan as if he'd sold out?

Twink: At the time, yes we did - we kind of scorned it, but I think it was more like an obvious move for us. Had things held together at that particular time I think the Fairies could have made it really big. Maybe with the right management... I don't know, who can say? I think potentially the Fairies in their original format were quite a unique combination, which could have got on a lot further than it did, but that didn't happen.

Bevis: How long did you actually stay with the Fairies?

Twink: I suppose it was about a year or something like that.

Bevis: So the second album that came out was "What A Bunch of Sweeties" - I don't think you were on that?

Twink: No not at all. In fact it has gone in writing that I appear on the album, but I don't.

Bevis: So what happened?

Twink: Why did I leave? Well, basically it was personal problems that I had to deal with. I went to Morocco for a month or so, although I was out of the country for longer because I travelled down to North Africa and then came back and stayed in France for a while, in Normandy.

Bevis: What was next musical thing you did after that?

Twink: I moved to Cambridge when I came back, and I worked initially with the Last Minute Put Together Boogie Band. The lead vocalist was a guy from San Francisco called Bruce Payne, who was the lead singer in the original American version of Hair. We just put this kind of rock band together, had lots of fun. The Honk was playing bass with us (from Junior's Eyes) and we did a few shows, then I was playing with some other guys - we called the name of the band ZZZ; it was Alan Lee Shaw and Rod Latter who eventually became the Rings, at a later stage like about 6 years down the road, but anyway we had this little thing going in Cambridge called ZZZ. We did a few shows and then that's when Syd Barrett appears on the scene.

Bevis: Did you know Syd?

Twink: I knew Syd from the Floyd and from Tomorrow days, because we used to do a lot of shows together in Europe and in the UK.

Bevis: So it wasn't a big surprise that you should get together - if Syd was planning to come out of the shadows again, it's not a kind of unlikely combination?

Twink: Not really because we were acquaintances - I wouldn't say we were mates, but we knew each other. One evening I was playing with the Last Minute Put Together Boogie Band, backing a guitarist called Eddie Guitar Burns - an American Blues guitarist. Jack Monk was playing bass with the Put Together Boogie Band at that time. Jack's wife Jenny used to be a girlfriend of mine and was also a former girlfriend of Syd's, so she knew us all. She invited Syd down that evening to the session, I think it was in the basement of Kings College or one of the Colleges anyway and Syd came down and brought his guitar along and jammed with us.

Bevis: That must of been nice!

Twink: It was great, it was wonderful just to see Syd there, after all the stuff that had been written about him. I had seen Syd perform on stage and actually do nothing, but I'd also seen Yoko Ono do some of her stuff on stage and for me what Syd did was absolutely pure art. I loved it when the Floyd were standing there and Syd was at the front of the stage with his guitar strapped around his neck just looking at the audience for an hour, I thought that was wonderful. It was a day or two later that Jenny suggested that we go and see Syd, myself and Jack, and we should suggest to Syd that we form a band together. We all thought it was a great idea - I was particularly excited because Syd

seemed to be coming out of something, and I always like to help some way if I can. So this sounded like a good idea and off we went to Syd's, three of us, Jenny, Jack and myself went round to Syd's house and knocked on his door. I think his mum came to the door and she said, "Syd there's someone at the door for you" He came to the door and Jenny said, you know Twink and Jack, they want to form a band with you. Syd invited us in and asked if we'd like a cup of tea, and we had a cup of tea and some cakes and stuff and talked about putting a band together. We started rehearsing in Syd's basement in his house the next day, took all my drums round there and just started jamming. Eventually we needed a bigger rehearsal place so we started rehearsing in my room in Cambridge - I was living at the back of a shop, it was big enough for rehearsals and we were knocking some of Syd's songs into shape.

Bevis: What kind of material were you doing?

Twink: We were doing all of Syd's stuff, old material like "Lucifer Sam".

Bevis: He hadn't written a batch of new songs or something?

Twink: Not that I'm aware of, although he was working on new stuff and painting a lot as well - he was a great artist you know, oil painting. He was standing there one day, I think it was the first day that we went down to his studio, and he had all these oil paintings that he'd done. There was this one big one and I was looking at it thinking how beautiful it was, and Jenny said "I think that's lovely, Syd" and he said "that's for you Jenny", he just gave it to her. All the time that I was working with him, it was a pleasure, it really was.

Nick: So you actually got The Stars, as they were called, together?

Twink: How the name came about was we'd all had the same idea, we'd all thought of the same name without discussing it at the same point in time. Jack Monk wanted to call it Jack Monk's Stars, I wanted to call it Twink's Stars and Syd wanted to call it Syd Barrett Stars, so we all agreed on Stars.

Bevis: It's easier than being called Twink, Syd and Jack Stars! So anyway, you actually did some gigs?

Twink: Yes, we did about half a dozen gigs. I think it was a pretty tight set but some of the gigs were kind of loose because we didn't have road managers, we just had people helping out and stuff. We played all around the Cambridge area, didn't go out of Cambridge, just places like coffee bars - and we played the Market Square on May Day with a huge audience, that was was the most memorable gig. It was a good gig, it was really brilliant.

Bevis: A lot of fruit stall holders had a good time?!?

Twink: I think it was cleared that day for the May Day celebrations, but God there was such a crowd - it was unbelievable.

Bevis: I've read somewhere that these gigs were actually recorded by someone?

Twink: Yes they were, they were definitely, there's no doubt about that, we know who it was but we don't know if he still has the tapes.

Bevis: I read it was something to do with Leonard Bernstein?

Twink: Yes, Leonard Bernstein's cousin Victor, he used to come around to the gigs, with a really professional machine recording all the shows - but I lost touch with him. He introduced me to Leonard Bernstein and all this other stuff, so I know the connection is real.

Bevis: The tapes must be somewhere around, one would think, unless he kind of wiped them out and put the Archers over it? I've never seen bootleg versions of them, so they obviously haven't materialised, because they'd be prime bootleg stuff?

Twink: They've never appeared, so obviously if they still exist they're untouched.

Bevis: Have you ever seen Syd again?

Twink: I've seen him, you know just bumping into him. I would like to just drop by and see him when I'm up in Cambridge. It would be nice to put The Stars together again. I've got Jack's number. Jack Monk is still around, but I don't know what he's doing now.

Bevis: So it all came to a rather abrupt end?

Twink: Yes, one of the shows we did at Cambridge Corn Exchange was very very poor, everything went wrong for us that night, and there was somebody there from one of the music papers reviewing the show and they put a really bad review in, I think the NME or something. Syd saw the review, came round to my house the next day and said he didn't want to play any more - and that was it.

Bevis: Then you did what?

Twink: I moved back to London shortly after that and started hanging out with Hawkwind, doing some shows with them and at the same time I started to do some shows as Twink. This would be in about 1973. I was never a fully paid-up member of Hawkwind, just sat in with them if Terry Ollis was to ill to play.

Bevis: At this time you didn't ever think of resuming stuff with the Pink Fairies?

Twink: It was just a little bit later that I rejoined for a short space of time, about mid '73, but the same kind of problems that I experienced on the reunion tour recently were existing then, you know. The same sort of unmanageability was there, so when I rejoined it didn't last very long.

Bevis: So they were doing the Kings of Oblivion stuff by about then weren't they? You never actually recorded any more stuff with the Fairies?

Twink: No, only in '75, the Live at the Roundhouse thing with Paul Rudolph and Larry Wallis that came out in about 1981.

Bevis: So then we're getting into the pub rock, Dr. Feelgood sort of era, followed of course by punk music and then, lo and behold, Stiff, the new wave label, put out a new Pink Fairies single. Nothing to do with you?

Twink: No, because by that time I was involved with The Rings. That was the Cambridge connection again, it was Alan Lee Shaw and Rod Latter and really we just started to do all that stuff for fun.

Bevis: And The Rings got a deal with Chiswick?

Twink: Chiswick, yes. Ted Carrol came to see us at Dingwalls and signed us up for a single, just a one-off thing called "I Want To Be Free".

Bevis: With the picture of you jumping up in the air on the front?

Twink: It was fun, and of course I was the lead vocalist with that band. Things were starting to happen and then we got a booking at the Mont de Masson, the festival in France on the Spanish borders. That's when things started to fall apart. There was a whole load of stuff going on in the background which I wasn't aware of. The rest of the guys were forming another band to capitalise on the event, so what happened was that I was able to put another band together as The Rings. I phoned up the promoters and told them what was happening.

Bevis: Psychedelic Punkaroo, that was the next project?

Twink: Yes, "Do it '77", but it came out in 1978 and someone pointed out in the press at the time that Twink got the year wrong. That wasn't the point though. You're right, it was the Psychedelic Punkaroo project, but Chiswick records didn't like the track and I jammed "Do It" with the Lightning Raiders which they preferred.

Bevis: So after that what happened? Somewhere about this stage you dropped out of the music industry for a period.

Twink: Yes, in late 1978 I moved to Belgium, although I didn't actually drop out of music at that point because I did some work for Elton Matello on his studio albums.

Bevis: You were actually on those albums?

Twink: Well, on the first one I'm playing drums on about 90% of the tracks, although he doesn't give me a credit, you know he actually puts his own drummer's name.

Bevis: Tell us about Belgium and onwards.

Twink: Nothing really happened. I was looking around at the scene there, but the scene was quite dead as far as playing gigs was concerned. I eventually found myself in a situation that I totally hated being in; I wasn't involved in music and I was spending my day working for someone else. I started to work for an American company in Brussels, and although I must admit I really kind of enjoyed the early days because it was something else to learn, it quickly became very, very boring. The job I had in Brussels relocated to Swindon, so I decided to use the opportunity to return to England and to get back into music via the Swindon groups. I went round to some local music shops and stuff, looking at the names on the cards, the little ads, the lOp a week things, and I went along to 2 or 3 rehearsals. The first band that I hooked up with was a country band which I really enjoyed; told them straight away, "look, this isn't my kind of music but it's just that I'm not doing anything right now, I'll just hang out until you get a drummer or I find what I'm looking for". That was fun for like 2 or 3 weeks, and then I spotted an advert from some guys who were looking for a drummer from between 19 and 25, so I thought what the fuck... I phoned them up and we met. The band was called This World and it was really interesting, New Wave music, I enjoyed that. Eventually I stopped working for the American company and moved back to London. I was still struggling with those personal problems, but then all of a sudden it clicked, exactly what the problems were and some of the steps that I should take to resolve them. I'd been kind of stumbling along for 20 years, trying to work out something very basic and very very simple and suddenly it hit me like a blinding flash, and from that point on things started to get better. So 3 years ago I started my own record label. I made some classic mistakes, like putting out 4 singles instead of 4 albums, but it was all

good stuff and I knew what I was doing was what I wanted to do. It had come to the point where I had to decide if I was going to stay in music - and I realised music is my life.

Bevis: So that more or less brings us up to the present day, which is where we started this interview. I guess we've almost covered everything, unless there's anything else you want to add?

Twink: Well all I'd like to say is you'll have to read the details in my autobiography which I'll be starting very shortly, assisted by my Manager. There's loads of stuff that will be revealed there that is still unknown.

Bevis: I can hardly wait!

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