

# Orchestra

Former members of ELO and ELO Pt 2



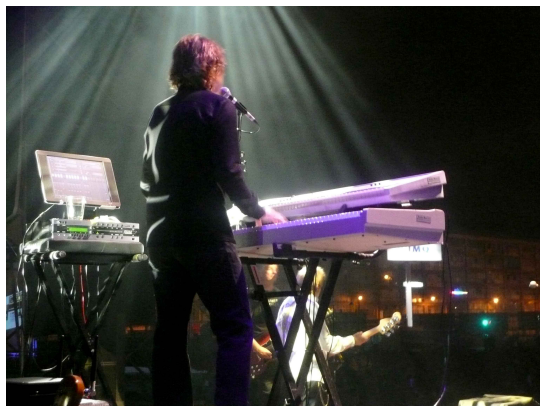
## THE ORCHESTRA IN BILBAO by Victor Barba Gomez



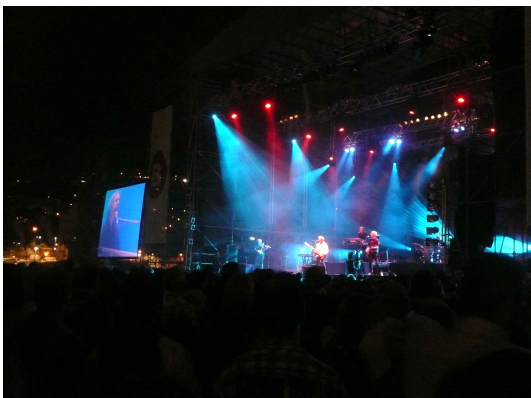
Last August 27th, the band played in Bilbao City situated in the North of Spain.

It was the Festivities of the city, called ASTE NAGUSIA, and every day of the week were concerts in the city, in different stages and THE ORCHESTRA played in the main stage, in front of almost 8.000 people. This show was the main of the week, closing the Festivities.

After the Fireworks, people were arriving to enjoy the wonderful sound of the guys that began at 12.00 in the night in a big stage with two screens. In charge of the sound was Dennis with the local crew. It was the first time that the band was playing in Bilbao, but not for Mik, who played in 1975 with ELO in his first tour in Spain.



Opening the show with the intro and Twilight, soon the audience was handed over to the band's songs. Glen, in Basque language, said hello to the attendance. The audience thanked this gesture. After Twilight, came All Over the World, R&R is King, Evil Woman, Sweet Talking Woman, Hold on Tight, Mama Belle, Showdown and Rockaria.



Before the sound check, the three vocalists Eric, Hux and Glen, were rehearsing together. While the band was in the rehearsals, some fans and public were approaching the stage to see the band, as a prelude of the massive attendance that later came to the show. There were press, TV cameras photographs, waiting the magic moment



Then was moment for the Intros, and Hux presented the members of the band.

After the Intros, Livin' Thing (as everywhere, at the beginning of the sound, the audience was applauding), Fire on High, Shine a Little Love, Telephone Line, Last Train to London, Turn to Stone, Standing in the Rain, Mr Blue Sky, Do ya,.....and finally DBMD.

People of different ages, enjoyed singing, dancing, clapping the hands..... and wanted more and more. Celebrations continued in the bars, in the street...and when the band returned to the hotel, people around recognised them and were giving congratulations to all the band.

A Wonderful gig that Bilbao will remember!

## Musical Influences - Mik Kaminski

Having heard about the band member's early lives it is time to move on to a new theme for page 2 of the newsletter. I asked fans what they would like to know about the guys and the answer came back, "what were the musical influences and who were the musicians that have shaped each member of the band's career?" So just before the Beatles Blues and Blue Violin gig in Bath this autumn I spent time with Mik in a local pub applying thumbs screws trying interview him. Those who know Mik know he is a shy man and hates being interviewed so between my awful interviewing style and Mik's natural reticence this is what I got!

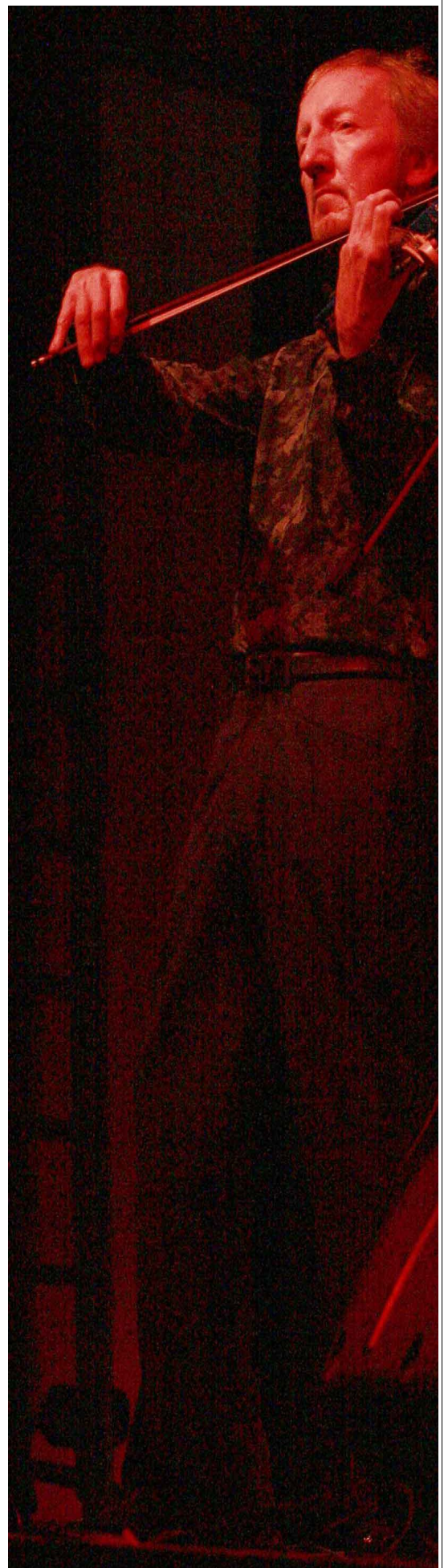
Mik's background, like many violinists is in Classical music. Initially playing with the Leeds Orchestra when he was 14, Mik was always keen to break away from the stereotypical role of the violinist in an orchestra. This led to Mik, while at the Leeds School Of Music, forming the band 'Cow' with his friends John Hodgson (drums) and John Marcangelo (keyboards and percussion). A band which soon took up so much of Mik's time, that he turned his back on the classical music career to branch out into Rock and Roll. Mik, even after two Violinski albums is still in touch with the two John's, who are themselves still in the music business, although these days it is more likely to be for social rather than musical activities.

Back to musical influences, Mik found it hard to quantify any one artist who has shaped his playing style. (Why blame just one person?) He feels that it has been developed more though a sort of osmosis, with elements of Jazz, Classical and Rock and Roll music all contributing to his playing. As Mik's says 'You hear something you like and you copy it and then it sort of creeps into your repertoire along with everything else' He does remember one player called "Sugarcane Harris" who he heard on Hot Rats, a Zappa album, as the first electric violinist he really listened to outside the classical world.

The one style Mik feels a bit more adrift from is country. He comments, "Although I've played a bit of country, country is something you are either very good or very bad at. I am probably the latter!" Despite his natural modesty Mik also admits that he believes Country is a style people will play all their lives whereas he has just dipped into it, 'which would probably raise the eyebrows of a true country person' As he says 'I am not a country person and even though I quite like the idea of spitting into a spittoon, with my sense of aim, it could be a very messy job!'

Of course many opportunities to investigate and experiment with different styles comes when playing together with the guys and they can influence each other just as the environment too. A great example of this can be heard on the last track of The Orchestra's 'No Rewind' album (and sadly only on some of the versions). The track starts with Mik knocking on a door. The band were apparently practising at someone's house and there was an old Honkey Tonk piano. Eric started playing and Mik joined in. With the addition of Hux's dog, which he has trained to bark to command, we get a wonderful insight into the guy's talent at adapting their styles according to the mood.

So musical influences for Mik Kaminski, you make up your own mind. I did not get a definitive answer to my question however during the interview I asked Mik if he felt that jazz had been an influence on his playing, perhaps through frequenting smoky clubs full of strange people in his youth? He replied in his inimitable way "I have been to a lot of very smoky clubs and met a lot of strange people but it rarely involved music!"

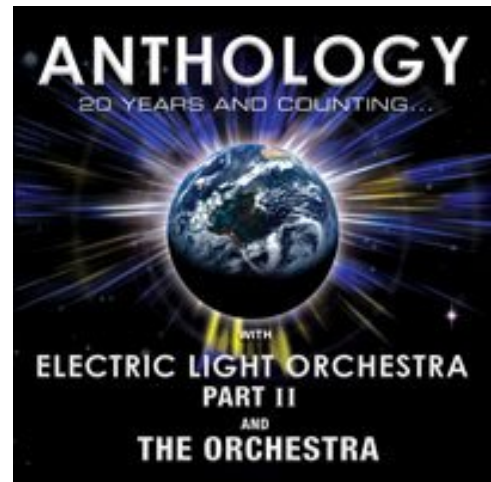


# The Orchestra Anthology

on sale at

[www.theorchestra.net](http://www.theorchestra.net).

I have been reliably informed that the Anthology will soon be available from The Orchestra's official website. However if you cannot wait Gill (see the back page of the newsletter) has a limited number available from who can be contacted via [magic.arts@ntlworld.com](mailto:magic.arts@ntlworld.com)



## First Records / Albums

We all remember the first record we ever bought, apart from a couple obviously very old members of the band! I remember one Christmas in my youth when I was asked if I would like an album for Christmas. I replied most keenly 'yes!' and dropped many hints that I wanted Simon and Garfunkel's '*Bridge Over Troubled Water*'. I was therefore thrilled to see a definitely album shaped parcel appear under the tree. On Christmas morning it was the first parcel I dived for, however all was not as I would wish. I realised all those hints had fallen on stony ground when I ripped back the Christmas paper to reveal 'Pinky and Perky's Christmas Party'. In one's youth it is amazing how wrong your parents can be!

Enough of my memories of first LP – can you match the band member to their first record bought. I shan't indicate whether it was a CD or perhaps a '78 as that may give just too many clues!

Louis Clark
Eric Troyer
Mik Kaminski
Gordon Townsend
Phil Bates
Glen Burtnik

Away Little Girl by Steve Laurence
No Idea!!! (This person must be very old then!)
'Shake it Up' by the Cars
'Scratchy' by Travis Wammack
Tannhauser Overture by Wagner
Got to be something by the Beatles

## Can you Help with a New Back Page?

I would like to thank Victor for sending me a review of the concert in Bilbao that I have included on the front page of this edition. Recently I have been asked by fans for more concert reviews. I would therefore like to include concert reviews on the back page or perhaps tales of meetings with the band. If you think you would like to contribute please send me any articles and I will do my best to include them. I may edit some content but as long as it is clean and fun, send them to me at [elo@rockans.co.uk](mailto:elo@rockans.co.uk) and share your best memories Electric Light Orchestra, ELO Part 2 or most importantly The Orchestra!

# On the Road with Gill – Definitely not just the person behind the T-shirts!

Gill is a familiar face to many as the person who sells the merchandise in the foyer of the venues at The Orchestra concerts. As I learned from her recently, her role goes well beyond selling the T-shirts.

Gill's career was launched through a chance meeting with Roy Wood at one of his gigs. Her friend Anna, who later married Kelly Groucutt, blagged her way backstage with a very shy Gill following in her wake. Roy took a great interest in the concert photos she had previously taken of him and her career was born. Henceforth, Roy magnanimously gave Gill the freedom to photograph all his gigs on condition he could use them for promotion! From this beginning, Gill has since worked with artists such as The Drifters, The Commitments, Fairport Convention, Sparks, The Idle Race, Carl Wayne, Ace Kefford, Procol Harum, Simon Townshend, Toploader and, most proudly The Wombles (!) to name but a few. She is currently working with West End musical 'Rockin' On Heaven's Door' and would like to do more work with the big musicals... preferably on Broadway!

Following the successful Heartbeat Charity Concert at the NEC in Birmingham (1986) Gill became involved with FTM (Face the Music magazine). The concert featured Roy playing alongside the likes of George Harrison, The Steve Gibbons Band, UB40, The Moody Blues and his old band the Electric Light Orchestra themselves. It was following this gig that Gill got her big break when Roy asked her to design the brochure for his next tour. She was, however, unsure she had the skills. Nevertheless, Roy reassuringly replied, "*Well, let's do it together and if it goes wrong, you can blame me!*" ... and Gill's career moved from photographer to include graphic designer. Her first opportunity to design CD packaging also came via Woody, thus giving her the confidence to take on further CD projects. It was shortly after this that Gill and Anna were asked to take care of the merchandise for Kelly and Mik's project – The Orkestra with a 'k'! A glittering career in band merchandising ensued but most importantly, they met and grew to love Kelly... and Mik, of course!

Throughout this period Gill continued to work with Andrew Whiteside, the editor of Face The Music magazine. FTM was an outlet for newly discovered skills (like, how to operate a computer!) and she further developed her interest in layout & design. It was at the re-launch of ELO Part II in 1993 that Gill was invited to rehearsals where she met with Phil Ackrill, an old friend of Bev Bevan and the band's accountant. Upon checking her portfolio, (which consisted solely of the Woody tour programme!) Phil and Bev were amazed that she had actually managed to successfully produce such a thing with Woody! She consequently landed the job of designing their new brochure, a role which still continues today with The Orchestra.

So Gill is not just the person who stands behind the stall. Before any tour, Gill's work starts 2-3 months earlier. She creates promotional leaflets and posters, designs and produces the tour programmes, along with any other merchandise such as CD packaging and T-shirts and organises the ordering/transport. Her gig days also begin much earlier than show time, setting up 'shop' (in whatever weird and less than wonderful corners and cupboards provided by the venues!), keeping the accounts and counting... anything that says 'The Orchestra' on it (!) whilst humming along to a backdrop of extremely loud sound checks! Gill is always grateful of her 'helping hands', primarily Kate, often Serena and of course Kelly who always came to help pack away after the show – it takes longer these days, but Kelly is still there in spirit... he's just not much use at lifting boxes! Bless him.

Gill's role as band photographer is ably supported by Ken Latta of [www.theorchestra.net](http://www.theorchestra.net), to whom she is eternally grapefruit (as Kelly would say!) and more recently Jane, from whom Gill suffers severe 'lens envy'!

So watch out for 'Gill-of-all-trades' supporting the band on tour, who says of her career "*I owe an awful lot to Andrew of FTM, to Ken Latta for his technical 'wizzardry' and eternal patience and of course, to Woody for giving me the chance to launch my career all those years ago*", a career that has led to so many opportunities including work for all the major record companies such as EMI, Sony, WB and Universal where she has been involved in many of the ELO related releases over the past ten years. But with all this success Gill is still modest about her abilities. For instance, when first asked to go on tour and travel for weeks on the tour bus with the band, amazingly she did not immediately leap at the opportunity. However, Kelly just assured her "*I'll look after you*" and she became part of the touring 'brotherhood' that is The Orchestra. Says Gill, "*I'd also like to thank the band for putting up with my remarkable tea making skills on a wobbly tour bus and filling the fridge with chocolate... my chocolate! Cheers Guys!*"

Gill can be contacted at [magic.arts@ntlworld.com](mailto:magic.arts@ntlworld.com). No job too small...!

ELO related CD s for which Gill designed the packaging:

I Wish It Could Be Christmas Everyday (live version)

Idle Race - Back To The Story

ELO - 1 Anniversary box set

ELO - II Anniversary box set

ELO - Early Years

Sony Records

ELO 1 & ELO II

Kelly CD

Roy Wood & The Wombles – Wombling Merry Christmas Everyday

Roy Wood & Wizzard – Main Street

Phil Bates & Mik Kaminski – Beatles, Blues & Blue Violin

**Tour Programmes**

ELO Part II      The Orchestra

Harvest Showdown

The Move - Message From The Country

ELO – The Harvest Years

Roy Wood – The Wizzard, EMI Years

Carl & Roy Anthology (original version)

Roy Wood – Boulders

Roy Wood

And anything else I've forgotten!