

PHIL BATES PRESENTS THE ORCHESTRA

Orchestra



Former members of ELO and ELO Pt 2

The Orchestra Due to Play in the USA April 2010



Current news of plans for 2010

I recently contacted Eric about The Orchestra's plans for 2010 apart for the Atlantic City date in April and this was his reply-

"We are looking at dates all over the globe for the year, but as of yet, not much to announce...in the spring we will do a festival in Denmark (in May) and a couple of festivals in the UK are looking very likely for June and July...details to follow!"

Eric Troyer

Mr Blue Sky by ELO for Summer #1 in 2010

AJ Makin has had the brilliant idea of getting Mr Blue Sky number 1. He has started a Facebook group, which you are able to join or you could just follow the instructions below.

Message from AJ

"OK - Plain and Simple really! One of the greatest British songs to NEVER get to #1 in the UK. You know you love it - so buy it for Number 1 - Summer 2010."

So Let's introduce today's youth to ELO - and bring back memories for the rest of us too!

Monday 31/5/10 - Sunday 06/06/10 - BUY THIS TRACK THEN!!!!

RIP Kelly
One Year On!



BBBV Tour

March 2010 sees Phil and Mik off on tour with their very own BBBV with Tina McBain.

For details go to www.philbates.co.uk

The Beatles, Blues and Blue Violin Project

featuring former E.L.O. and Electric Light Orchestra Part II members and current members of The Orchestra

Phil Bates, Mik Kaminski

with **Tina McBain**



The show does exactly what it says on the tin - exploring some new arrangements of Beatles songs, especially where the Beatles and the Blues meet.

The show will include some great blues classics, material from Phil's solo repertoire and of course ELO and Violinski material, naturally.

This show will appeal to fans of The Beatles, ELO and all its incarnations, and those who like classic blues and excellent musicianship.

www.phil-bates.co.uk

Phil Bates

Inheritance

Tracks



I was born and brought up in rural Staffordshire 3-4 miles outside of one-horse town called Tamworth.

These days its more of a two or three-horse town, but you would probably get them stolen or vandalised if you left them in one place too long. Tamworth, in those

days, was a market town with a castle and a lot of great historic buildings that, in truth, needed renovating. In the 1960/70s the local council in its wisdom(?) decided that we didn't need that, what we needed was a load of new precincts and shops built in pre-cast concrete that would deteriorate, crumble and look bloody awful before they were 10 years old, so they tore down the old buildings and gave us this wonderful gift instead. Residents are still living with this generous legacy. At least they didn't knock the castle down, but I'm sure they would have if someone had slipped the right people the right amount of money

I lived with my mum, dad and younger brother David in a council house that was so cold in winter that the inside of the windows froze in November and didn't thaw until Easter. Eee, were were poor, but we were 'appy. The Bates household was not as full of music as you would expect, although we did have family music sessions on Sunday afternoons – someone would play comb and paper, I played a drum kit consisting of tin cans and biscuit tins with knitting needles, there was an old accordion nobody could play, and there was a lot of singing.

My earliest memories of recorded music came instead from visiting my paternal grandparents house, which was quite close by. I used to go there quite often and the big treat was to listen to my uncle Graham's record player. I used to love these visits, and the tables have turned somewhat these days as Graham now comes along to concerts to hear my music that he probably inspired all those years ago. One very special track from that time is 'Mr Sandman' by the Chordettes ([Click here to listen on Youtube](#)). This one really 'struck a chord' with me (excuse the pun!) with its key changes and close harmonies. Reflecting on it now, I think that this early exposure to close harmony, pre-dating the Beatles, Beach Boys and the Hollies by 5 years or so, shaped my musical tastes and maybe set the scene for me eventually joining ELO Part 2. It certainly gave me the right musical sensibilities. Graham also had a lot of rock and roll 78s, plus, I remember Guy Mitchell's 'Singing the Blues', in particular.

Nevertheless, The Beatles have always been my greatest love. They were the reason I became a musician, and this love has stayed with me all my life. These days there's always music going on in our house, usually on i-pods or MP3 players, but The Beatles still feature in there pretty prominently, especially with Sarah. Up until Rosie and Sarah were 5 and 3 years old we lived in a small house in Malvern, and I can remember Rosie being able to recite the track list of the 'Magical Mystery Tour' album. As one track ended she would correctly predict the next track and ask for other tracks on the album by telling us which track number it was. One particular favourite was 'Penny Lane' ([Click here to listen on Youtube](#)) which I have come to realise is the perfect 3 minute pop track for any generation, and impossible to improve on, another was 'Strawberry Fields Forever', which was, and still is, just gloriously weird. At the same time, both girls loved singing and dancing to a great song of Jo's called 'Samba'. Over the years I would notice my Beatles albums regularly disappearing from the CD rack, and I would soon hear Penny Lane, and then another, and then another track being played in the distance again and again. Recently on tour in Russia I was sitting and listening to this track appreciating the perfection of the arrangement and the song itself, and conjuring-up images of home, my family and particularly my girls love for this track.

Sarah now has very broad and eclectic tastes, but she also seems to share my love of blues guitar, particularly Buddy Whittington, Rosie loves new country music, like the Dixie Chicks, and we all love singing and playing together, on stage when we can ...anything that takes our fancy.

Thinking of Booking a Holiday?

I recently asked the guys for their favourite holiday destination and these were their answers. Visit one of them and you never know who might turn up in your hotel lobby!

- Lou Clark** – London for the entertainment, the bars and time to meet old friends
- Mik Kaminski** – Staying with my Dad in Tenerife
- Eric Troyer** – Visiting my Grand-kids in Vancouver
- Phil Bates** – Le Touquet in France – It's a great town, with great shops, beach and atmosphere
- Gordon Townsend** – Los Angeles to visit friends, a cruise or Hawaii if I had lots of money ☺
- Glen Burtnik** – Santa Fe, New Mexico; San Diego, CA; Key West, FL and The Carribean

As Seen on Stage!



Below – Thomas and Connie Hoyer from Potsdam with their banner from the Prague concert



Answers to Whose Car is Whose from the Winter 2009 Newsletter

	Name	Make / Model of car
1	Glen Burtnik	Red Karman Ghia (VW)
2	Phil Bates	White Ford Zodiac Circa 1966
3	Gordon Townsend	Mazda 323, White (Gordon ended this with a ☹ - I am not sure whether that is sad he does not have the car anymore or embarrassment!)
4	Mik Kaminski	Dark Blue Fiat 128
5	Lou Clark	Hillman GT
6	Eric Troyer	56 Chevi – two tone – light and dark green

Most Unusual Job

This Newsletter I am going to test your knowledge of the guys with guessing who had which job. Draw a line from the band member to the job and find out whether you are right in the 2010 Summer Newsletter.

Gordon Townsend	Human Research Subject for the US Army
Lou Clark	A Croupier
Eric Troyer	Madonna's dog walker
Phil Bates	Door-to-door salesman for Fuller Brush Company
Glen Burtnik	The one he has at the moment!
Mik Kaminski	Playing in an Old-Time Dance Band Wearing a Straw Boater

On the Road with - Phil McDuff

Monitor Engineer

Phil McDuff, the man in the wings, describes his move into the music industry as being a bit of an accident really. "I never really intended to be a sound engineer, more a solicitor or some other high earner in a suit, but I just woke-up on morning and it had happened!" Phil, like so many of the crew, at the age of 13, started his career in the back of a church in a little town outside Darlington called Newton



Acliffe. It was some years of helping out at local venues before Phil got his first paid work was at the Whitby Gothic Festival. "The festival was all a bit dark in those days, with people doing things like chanting 'doom' and 'despair'". He particularly remembers a band called 'Goth-Tech' who were painted white with fluorescent blue dreadlocks stapled to their heads! Or the delights of working in a Gay Club in Middlesbrough ("Oh No sir we're not gay here" – mince mince!), and a few 'transit' tours.

Phil describes starting at the bottom and working up as one of the best ways to learn the craft. In the early days going to a venue with some gear that mostly works. Setting it up in a room that does not work e.g. shiny walls etc. Finally plugging in a 'Band' that definitely doesn't work. "It's up to you; you have to make it happen, even if it is plastered together with old boots, chewing gum and bits of string, you learn how to manufacture the gig. In the end nothing can faze you too much" You learn how to not panic, you fix it and then find out what's wrong in that order – especially if there are faults mid-concert. If you have time you can make things work properly, if you have 3 minutes, often the decision is rip it out and replace it and then workout what went wrong later.

Having worked at Festivals with people such as Ryan Adams, Nevil Staples (lots of trombone!) and the Prodigy to name just a few Phil is on his second tour with The Orchestra. His day consists of turning-up at a venue and splitting off part of the sound signal from a central box. This feeds both his desk and the sound engineers desk at the back of the auditorium (basically the sound engineer controls the sound going to the audience and Phil controls the sound going to the band). He sets up the stage box, the power in and runs all the little snakes that go to different parts of the stage. He wires radio rack with all the transistors; sends a stereo feed to a transistor pack, which in turn sends a signal to the battery pack the band wear on their belts; they plug their earplugs and away they go. "This has the advantage of providing a lot of acoustic isolation, which seals the wearer inside their head, this is a good and a bad. It tends to isolate the band member a bit, however it brings all the levels down on stage, making the sound engineers job a bit easier as you are far less likely to get feedback. With speakers on stage, you have all the different speakers and wedges competing and if the vocalist wants to hear themselves I have to crank-up the vocals and that creates feedback. Earphones you can just adjust without any problems".

During the show the band members may gesticulate at the wings, this is often to Phil. Generally signals are 'me up' or 'me down' for instance. However the main show is programmed and Phil can just hit recall on his desk for certain parts of the set. For instance at the end of Mr Blue Sky, Glen needs to hear Lou in his earpiece so he can do the last few notes accurately. Phil says the most important part of his job is ensuring the band can relax, feel comfortable and give their best performance. The only problem for Phil's is he says that the band are all so polite that he has to tell them to talk to him if anything is wrong. For a man trying not to be seen, he has a real stage presence – for the guys in the band that is!