

STRANGE FOLK



KULA SHAKER FANZINE

ISSUE NO. 1

Gig Reviews

MILTON KEYNES, KING'S COLLEGE LONDON

EXCLUSIVE!

Interviews

Kula Equipment

PART 1: PAUL'S DRUMKIT

The Return Of The King

SING-ALONG-SONGS BY
The Magic Bullet Band

Hello and welcome

to the first issue of **Strange Folk**, the premium Kula Shaker Online Fanzine!

One stop shop for all your Kula needs.

Yes, the unthinkable happened, **Kula Shaker reformed** in late 2005, minus Jay Darlington (which is a shame as they are now a beardless band!).

This fanzine was started by Daniel and Andrea, as we realised that although there is a lot going on in the Kula Shaker camp, unless you know the band or hang around on the message board for an unhealthy amount of hours, most of it is going to pass you by. That's why we decided to make all things Kula available for you, and collected loads of interesting stuff in this zine. Reviews, news, gossip, and discography are all in here as well as an **exclusive** interview with Crispian, Paul and Alonza (more interviews to follow, including one with new boy Harry).

We're planning to release further issues as soon as we've got enough interesting stuff together. Like for the next zine, Dan is working on an exclusive interview with Don Pecker, the bands Madness guru and mentor. This happened through a chance meeting with him in Kingston (it was the second time he has ever busked in Kingston, first time being with the fledgling Kula Shaker outside of the shopping centre back in 1995). So he's going to go down and do an extensive interview with Don on all things Kula and things not so Kula (to quote: he is going to give me only 50% bullshit compared to the 80% bullshit he gave all of the music rags back in the 90's!).

There are lots of exciting things in the pipeline, stay tuned and until then: Enjoy reading our first little Kula Kollektion!

Daniel & Andrea



If you would like to contribute please do not hesitate to get in touch!

Check out the Strange Folk mailing list:

<http://launch.groups.yahoo.com/group/StrangeFolkZine/>

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Gossip & News

The *Revenge of the King* EP was recorded within four days. Afterwards they mixed it "in a garage somewhere in London", as Paul said.

"Revenge of the King" was supposedly written along with a member of the Medieval Baebes (Alonza is married to one of them!), although this turned out to be just a rumour.

Kula Shaker obviously have six more songs ready to record. All that's still missing is a record deal...

The date that Kula auspiciously chose for their official comeback gig was the 11th of March! (Are we surprised...)

The *Revenge Of The King* EP is finally getting a Limited Edition vinyl release. Buy two copies if you can, as The Jeevas' "Scary Parents" 7" which was sold for 1 pound is now worth 14 pounds.

Kula Shaker will be playing two festivals in the summer: T in the Park and V2006. In autumn they'll head to the rest of Europe "if everything goes well for us" (Crispian).

For their reunion tour Kula Shaker didn't really have a crew. That's why Paul set up his drumkit himself "and I really don't mind that". The only one who still got a tech for his instruments is Crispian (which is Simon who'd worked for Crispian for the past years too).

Simon of Bucky (who is a lovely bloke by the way) has been upgraded from guitar tech to tour manager, for these two latest tours. "I dunno why they think I can handle this", he said.

The reason that Jay isn't back in the band is because the band's respective wives don't get on (how footballers wives is that), although he has expressed interest and has kept in touch with the band.

The new keyboard player is called Henry but the band calls him Harry. He told me his full name but it was double-barrelled so I forgot it (see the Crispian Interview).

Don Pecker has been teaching Crispian to play golf and to quote Mr Pecker: "The little bugger's getting competitive, he beat me last time".

On a side note: It was Don Pecker who taught Crispian to play guitar.

Paul said that he dislikes "Sound of Drums". He doesn't like his drumming parts. "We weren't satisfied with the song after the recording and spent too much time and money on it."

Paul spent the past seven years playing for a band called Thirteen:13. He was also member of an unsigned Camden-based band Zero Point Field which played small clubs in London.

Paul actually took the test to become a London bus driver, needless to say he failed miserably (this was back in the day, pre Kula Shaker fame).

Crispian has been doing some low key acoustic dates with Don Pecker (his musical name is "Hobby Horse"). They have even gone busking together!

The solo album that Crispian recorded prior to The Jeevas is floating around on the net, my opinion is that it is going to be widely leaked real soon (wink wink, that's all I am saying).

Ohh and a bit of Mills' related trivia for all the people that like this kind of thing, the Small Faces rhyming slang for pills (not the kind that cure constipation mind) was "Hayleys" as in Hayley Mills. (Don't ask me how I know)

Apparently Crispian used to write to Rowntree to congratulate them on the quality of their confectionary to get free sweets (it worked).

And on a final note as Crispian said way back in 1996: "If your mother starts liking your band, it's time to start making love to goats on stage".

Collected by: Daniel and Andrea



Comeback in Milton Keynes

"The nerve centre of all rock'n'roll in the Galaxy" (Crispian Mills)

For those of you who are unaware, Milton Keynes is a town in Middle-England (think Harry Potter, think Little Whinging) which was purpose built in the 1960s. Depending on who you ask, it is either an atrocity against design in general or an ironic post modern statement.

Needless to say The Style Council wrote a song about it called "Come to Milton Keynes":

*"May I slash my wrists tonight,
On this fine conservative night tonight
I was looking for a job so I came to town
I easily adopt when the chips are down
I read the ad about the private schemes
I liked the idea but now I'm not so Keyne"*

Anyway this was the place that was chosen for the reincarnation of Kula Shaker!
So I got up really early, kitted my self out in my usual time warp psychedelic regalia and

got the train to Milton Keynes for what was to be Kula Shaker's comeback gig (albeit they did a gig at the Leighton Buzzard before Christmas but this one was the official one).

So the venue was the Milton Keynes Snowdome and in case no one mentioned it was in the bloody café. I arrived really early and camped outside the venue with my vinyl copy of *K* (I got Jay's signature last year). I managed to meet all of the band so my copy of *K* now has the full autograph set on it. I also met the legendary Don Pecker who is the archetypal ageing hippy (and lives just down the road from where I grew up in Devon). He is the band's "madness guru" and has known them for yonks, he was a mine of information and told me among other things that he (Don) and Crispian still go busking and that they have done some low-key acoustic gigs together.

I then hit Weatherspoons for a swift pint and headed back to the venue. I managed to catch the sound check, as the back of the café was screened off by curtains but there was a massive hole. So I managed to catch a really nifty instrumental version of "Super CB Operator" and a few run throughs of "Revenge Of The King" which was nice as they had alternate lyrics, and a funny middle eight with excerpts from the 1911 Music Hall song I'm Henry The 8th written by Fred Murray and Robert Percy Weston (made famous by Herman's Hermits).

I then joined the queue and got inside, got a nice spot down the front and waited an excruciating four hours for the Mighty Shaker to come on. The support bands were abysmal, I mean really bad, apart from the band that were on last called Zero Point Field - which was the band that Paul played with after Thirteen:13 broke up - they were really good and very tight, even if the singer seemed a little arsey!

And then the stage was cleared, I watched the guitar tech for the evening gaffer tape the longest guitar lead to the floor from the amp to the effects pedals and plug the shortest lead in front the effects to the guitar! Then the incense was lit and Don Pecker ambled on and shouted to the crowd "What are their names, what are their names!", the crowd frenziedly replied like devotional scene from some hindu temple, and at ten to ten the Mighty Shaker took to the stage.

They plugged in and Crispian with his gaze averted to the floor kicked the proceedings off, with a slow juttering collection of chords, as the music got faster and faster, the crowd held their collective breaths, Crispian raised his head slowly and the chords morphed into "Knight On The Town" the crowd cheered and the rest of Kula Shaker crashed in behind Crispian, looking as if they died now they would be happy!

New boy Harry on the Hammond fitted in nicely (even if he isn't Jay, I miss seeing a beard and platforms and some vintage denim behind the organ). It was a mighty song and a good opener even if Crispian fluffed up some of his lines. The in-between songs banter was good, and Crispian gave the reason behind Kula Shaker reforming as "we decided that we had to save the world again, so we go to call on the bat phone!" The band were looking very dapper, and Paul was smiling away behind the traps, one got the impression that they were a little nervous onstage, but I was just so glad that they were still good, as a lot of bands from the nineties that are still going have turned mediocre (why is it that most great bands have to turn shit!).

They then kicked into "Big Bad Wolf", probably my least favourite new song even though the lyrics are very good, "how can you be right when you're so wrong" for example. I suppose I forgot that this was their first official gig on over 6 years (I remember hearing that they all jammed together minus Jay at a party about 2 years ago), but this was their first advertised gig!

Anyway the energy was there and there was an edge of uncertainty that made it quite exciting. Of all the new tracks the one that sounded most like Kula Shaker of old was actually "Diktator Of The Free World" with a swirling Hammond line, even though it got a lot of flak when people first heard it. I was surprised that they included "Shower Your Love", which by the way was written in Highgate, London around 1994. It sounded a lot rockier and actually more like the great lost Britpop anthem that it should have been.

They then let rip into "Last Farewell" which I was actually surprised that they played seeing as they had so many other songs that they could have played, even though the guitar intro was sublime live, the sort of stuff that makes prepubescent boys with dodgy moustaches drool.

They played "Tattva" which was good but not as mystical as I had expected, it merged into "6ft Down" and it was the strongest of the new Kula songs in my own (humble) opinion, but only Mr Mills could come up with a song about "being alive to experience your own death" and set it in a shopping centre!

Predictably the crowd went wild when they played "Hush" which sounded as mighty as ever, "Hey Dude" also went down well.

I am always surprised at how good a slide guitar player Crispian is. They then closed with the almighty "Govinda", managing to squeeze another new song in before hand. It was strange as I never thought that I would ever get to see "Govinda" live, still it was spine tingling stuff, as potent as ever, even if it is centuries old. Although I was surprised that they omitted "Grateful When You're Dead", as that always goes down well!

The highlight of the gig was seeing the interplay between the musicians, it just made me remember what an integral part of the band Alonza and Paul are! People do focus on Crispian because he is the singer and the guitarist so he is obviously responsible for a lot of the sound, but without Alonza and Paul it wouldn't have been Kula Shaker. Albeit you can answer that without Jay it isn't Kula Shaker either, and you might be right as Jay was one demon wizard in a blizzard on the old ivories, so it was less proggy and more rocky (whether that's a good or a bad thing is open to opinion).

I didn't think that Harry seemed out of place, but it obviously cut down on the amount of songs they could do as, he had only learned a few, and for a band that only released two studio albums, they have an immensely large back catalogue from which to choose from.

In conclusion the new songs sounded good, really good, actually fucking amazingly good, although the impression I got was that they

weren't all that tight as a band (The Jeevas were bloody tight and so were Kula in '98) but it was their first official gig so I am sure they will tighten up, especially if you compare them to a band they were before the break up, which had basically toured non stop for four years.

For a comeback gig it was truly successful. I don't think that anyone went away feeling short-changed, even if they didn't play "Sound Of Drums". It's just nice to know that the soul rocking, body moving, mystic warriors are back from the mists of the abyss that threatened to swallow the mighty Kula Shaker forever.

SETLIST

1. Knight on the Town
2. Big Bad Wolf
3. Revenge of the King
4. 303
5. Die for Love
6. Diktator of the Free World
7. Shower Your Love
8. Last Farewell
9. Tattva
10. 6ft Down
11. Hush
12. Hey Dude
13. Super CB Operator
14. Govinda

The Reunion

Billy Sloan

Shaken not stirred



Hush money: Crispian, left, with Alonza and Paul

Shaker boys return.. Kula than ever

ROCK star Crispian Mills has reformed Kula Shaker – six years after walking out.

I can reveal the group will release a free download EP, *Diktator Of The Free World*, and play live in Scotland next month.

The surprise reunion sees the singer back with original members Alonza Bevan (bass) and Paul Winterhart (drums).

Crispian told me: "Kula Shaker is like a marriage.

"It's a long-term relationship. There was a separation but now we're back together.

"The band remains a big part of my life. We never stopped talking.

"A year ago, I started writing with Alonza, who was playing with former Smiths guitarist Johnny Marr."

In 1996, Kula Shaker – who take their name from a ninth century Indian king – exploded on to the UK rock scene.

Their debut album *K* hit



Huge hit: Crispian Mills

No. 1 and sold in excess of one million copies.

The group notched up a string of eight hit singles including *Tattva*, *Hey Dude*, *Govinda* and *Hush*, a cover of the classic Joe South song.

They supported Oasis at Knebworth and the following year won Best Newcomers at the Brits.

Their 1998 album *Peasants Pigs And Astronauts* was also a hit – then Crispian quit.

He said: "The pressure of people making money out of us took the thrill out of it. The new material has the same vibe and energy but the songs have sharper teeth."

●To find out more about the band check out

Ten years on.. Kula return to T

TEN years ago, Kula Shaker kick-started their career in Scotland with a show-stopping performance at T in the Park.

I can exclusively reveal the group are on their way back. Singer Crispian Mills, right, and his band will be back on the King Tut's Stage on July 8.

He said: "Scots are the loudest audience in the world. If you can see the Great Wall of China from space, I wouldn't be surprised if you can hear the T audience from there, too."

Hope Of The States have been added to the Tut's bill for the same day and While Coheed And Cambria play on the Sunday.



If you see Kula Shaker appearing in a magazine or newspaper, scan the article and photos and send them to us! We'll add them in the following issues of *Strange Folk*. - Ed.

Revenge of the King EP

I've been waiting six years for that moment. Just a few minutes, then I'll get to hear them again. Yes, now that I'm downloading the new EP it is official: Kula Shaker are back. And I'm going to hear their new songs. Just in a minute. Even though it's not the same as buying the brand-new CD in a record store, leafing through the booklet and putting the beautifully designed CD into the player and just sitting down and enjoying, I don't mind. I mean how could I?

So I'm sitting in front of my computer, scrolling down the song titles, hearing the first tunes from "Revenge of the King". And I think to myself: "That's it." That's what I've been waiting for all that time and that no other band could give me. It's Crispian's voice and that the oh-so-familiar Kula sound. Yes, it is different, but it's Kula Shaker at last. I don't move. I just listen. What Crispian is telling me!

Revenge of the King wins me over within seconds. Hell yeah! There's truth in it. "We've been waiting so long". Revenge of the King! Finally. Obviously we're not starting where we ended. This feels like everything has developed. Six years since Kula last worked together and you can feel it: it's a lot more political and critical. But that doesn't make it bad. Oh no!

"Dictator Of The Free World" is just class: "I'm a dic(k) I'm a dic(k) I'm a dictator". I couldn't have described Bush better. Those lyrics just keep stuck in my head. I keep it to myself and let it be my own little, but special, music experience.



"Troubadour" is probably the most outstanding track cos it touches your heart. It really does and funnily enough, I smile about Crispian singing "Doll, be kind". Crispian calling someone a doll? It sounds unusual but it does fit. I love the metaphor about the wild horses, very witty. It's a sad, yet very warm song and that's the first one I have to put on repeat at once.

"Six Feet Down" is a classic. I don't know why, but to me it has a similar feel to it like "Revenge of the King". Very riff driven and the hand claps fit in very well. There are no mantras, no Indian flutes, and no mention of Krishna in any way. Quite a departure from other Shaker material.

These are the best tunes I have heard in a long time. I can't wait to hear more! So please, would you keep it together this time? Just for one more album? Pretty please?

Lyrics

Revenge of the King

Freedom, spring has come
Healing everyone
God bless the King

Brothers gather around, get ready to sing
We been waiting so long
Revenge of the King

The oil has run dry
The great seas did rise
And the water ran under your door
Everybody knows there'll be more

Freedom, tears of joy
Weeping, love of God
God bless the King

Brothers gather around, get ready to sing
See the demons afraid
Revenge of the King

There's a breed of man
With blood upon his hands
He was crazy since the day he was born
But we don't have to fear them anymore

Say I don't want to die like a rat on a ship
I don't want to die for somebody's kicks
Give me some fire
In my hand
I'm just a loser but
I'm going to make a stand

Freedom, tears of joy
Weeping, love of God
God bless the King

Dictator of the free World

I'm a killer, I'm a digger in the Arctic lands,
Who cares about the weather
When you're as rich as I am,
I'm making waves... baby, cos Jesus saves!

People say are you crazy I say wow!
I'm going to send you ass to Guantanamo
No one else is quite as rich as me
Or does as much for charity

I'm a Dic, I'm a Dic, I'm a Dic, and I'm a
Dictator
Dictator of the free world – a c'mon!

Let us pray
God is with us on our side
Who cares if coloured people die!
Hell, I'm so good at making friends
I tell you know... that this is the end!

I'm a Dic, I'm a Dic, I'm a Dic, and I'm a
Dictator
Dictator of the free world – a c'mon!

I'm an A1 major league Sociopath
My Daddy's in oil and my life is a gas
It's good to be King
Oh yeah... let choirs sing out, sing out!

I cut my foes and my enemies down
I blew up their homes and their towns
No one is as powerful as me, enthroned in
popularity

I'm a Dic, I'm a Dic, I'm a Dic, and I'm a
Dictator
Dictator of the free world – a c'mon!

Lyrics (continued)

Troubadour

I'm dreaming of your brazen arms again
Your skin that's softer than snow
Keeps my darkness company
I swear that I'll never let go

Girl is kind, be mine,
Let me be your troubadour
I don't deny, I can't sing and I'm poor
You make a liar, you make a cheat
You make a prince out the poet in me

I see two wild horses by a stream
Heading for the old country
A voice says "boy it's all in your head"
It seems pretty real to me

Girl be kind, be mine,
Let me be your troubadour
Let me be your troubadour
I don't deny, I can't sing and I'm poor
You make a liar, you make a cheat
You make a prince out the poet in me
A Troubadour

My love, my muse
Come with me
Cast out from the world we know
Eastward bound
Out in the sea
Our fortune awaits us there
Our fortune awaits us there

Doll, be kind, and be fine,
Let me be your troubadour
I don't deny, I can't sing and I'm poor
You make a liar, you make a cheat
You make a prince out the poet in me
A Troubadour

Six Feet Down

I am six feet down in an open grave
Living dead shuffling through my brain
In a shopping mall, or a multiplex
All I see is the presence of death

Don't ask me
To the party tonight
I'd bum you out,
Yeah I'd spin you out, oh woe

I'm six feet down in an open grave
Thinking bout all the mess I made
In my world of pain, but I'm all alone
I can bear a voice, but I'm all alone
Oh my, I need the magical seed
That's the sound of love coming to rescue me
Coming' to rescue me
A love to rescue me

Oh my Jesus, you can heal the blind
Oh my Jesus, I'm similar kind,
Oh my Jesus, can you spare some time at all

Oh my Jesus come and rescues me
Oh my Jesus come and rescues me
I'm six feet down whets become of me
Oh my Jesus, come and rescue me

Well I'm six feet down
At the end of the line
I've got no shoes
I got no time
But thank you Lord,
For laying me here,
For the end is nigh
And I feel no fear

All songs written by Mills/Bevan



By Andrea Zachrau

Deaf in London

The Mighty Shaker enters the city of London for the first time since 1999

Kula Shaker at King's College, April 12th 2006



What an amazing day! I know people must have thought my boyfriend Sebi and I are completely crazy, flying over to Kula's London gig from Germany... But I'd been waiting for the reunion for six years so I just had to go!

Being in London, we didn't have anything better to do than go to the venue at around 2 pm. We thought maybe we could catch a sight of them when they were arriving. To be honest, we'd have left after about half an hour cos we'd surely have been completely bored of waiting, but then we met Yam. We had a nice chat and discussed all things Kula. After a while a small white van arrived and Paul got out! Fine, I thought, got my *Peasants, Pigs & Astronauts* booklet signed (he was a bit irritated cos Jay's signature was the only one on there so far, I got him to sign it in '99) and I had a picture taken. He really liked my bag (with an OM-sign on it) and Rebel Motorcycle Club were any good ("my missus likes them too").

He came back after a while and started to chat again. He told us some weird stories of him smoking a bong at the house of Stephen Perkins, the drummer from Jane's Addiction. Then my boyfriend had the very silly idea to ask Paul if it would maybe be possible for us to watch the sound check... and he agreed!

So we went upstairs, watched him and some guys from the crew arranging the instruments and had another hour of chats with Paul coming back to us whenever he didn't have anything else to do. I guess he and Yam had a really good discussion about drums - I didn't understand too much of it to be honest. But he also told us about the recordings for the new EP and how The Jeevas thing didn't work out ("they might have more hair than me and Lonzo" was one of the things he mentioned...). As to the future of Kula he just said "We'll see how things turn out", since they still have no record deal but they did have six songs ready to record.

After a while Crispian and Lonzo arrived too and they started sound checking. I was just sitting there, completely stunned. I couldn't believe it was really them standing on stage. All of a sudden I remembered why Kula always stayed my favourite band: it was so magical to see them live! They rehearsed about four songs. Two of them were "Revenge Of The King" and "6ft Down", one other was a song I'd never heard before, which was called "Die For Love".

Crispian didn't seem to be in a very good mood, he looked a bit ill and was a bit annoyed about the sound technician. However I did get to speak to him afterwards; he remembered that I gave him an Indian badge a couple of years ago – he still keeps it and showed me that he is now wearing it on the red dragon guitar. He thanked us for coming all the way from Germany and said they wanted to check out how things are going in the UK and then come to Europe in autumn. Before that they'll play UK festivals.

The doors for the gig opened at 6.30 pm and we managed to get a good place in the 2nd row with a nice view on the stage. We really liked The Magic Bullet Band as I had only seen

them during the sound check; Andy kept smiling through the whole gig and seemed to enjoy the set as much as the crowd did.

Then Kula came on. The venue was packed by that point and everyone kept cheering like mad. Crispian greeted the crowd with "Hello! London! London!" He seemed to be really happy to be back for a gig in THE city. He picked up his guitar and started the intro for "Knight On The Town". How much I had missed that! I couldn't choose where to look first – I looked at Crispian, then Paul, Alonzo and back to Crispian. I really had to assure myself it's really them together on stage again! I bet I was smiling stupidly right from the first chord but I couldn't care less! Before they kicked into "Big Bad Wolf", one of the new songs, I completely fell in love with from the first second I heard it, Crispian announced: "We'll play some songs that we just wrote in the dressing room and hopefully everything will go according to plan and we'll all go deaf together!" Oh yeah.

After a mind-blowing "303" (with the classic intro that already makes you shiver) which was as good as ever and animated the first people to dance around (or just jump as high

as you can!) we got to hear another dressing room song: "Die For Love". It's not one of my favourites to be honest but it was very beautifully played live. Other new songs: "Dictator Of The Free World" ("Dictated to all the free people and all dictators of the world."), "6ft Down" and "Super CB Operator" (groovy!). To be honest, I wouldn't be able to choose which one I liked best. Classic as always were "Grateful When You're



Dead", I absolutely love the guitar riffs, and of course "Tattva". I have to say, I was never a big fan of "Shower Your Love" but the new live version was excellent! The crowd went wild during "Hush" and "Hey Dude" which was class!

A typical Crispian thing: he seemed to be really pissed off with the sound man. "He's very gay", he said, and: "You can't make a noise, you have to wave, cos he's very deaf." Nice! You can never satisfy Mr. Mills, can you? I have to admit, in my humble opinion there was nothing wrong with the sound... Anyhow, even though he was a bit ill and stopped by Simon every now and then to get some pills (for his throat I guess) Crispian seemed to genuinely enjoy the gig, giving us his thumbs up. The same for Paul: he kept smiling throughout the whole set! It was strange not to see a hairy man sitting behind the organ, but I had the feeling Harry fitted in very well. Just Lonz seemed a bit worn-out, I hardly ever saw him smile.

When the chords morphed into "Govinda" the crowd went wild, though at that point I knew that the gig was coming to an end. The sadness flew away as soon as the first chanting was to be heard – I was just standing there, enjoying every single tune of that song which didn't lose any of its magic to me! What a classic ending to a brilliant gig. Utter brilliance! Thank you fellas!



SETLIST:

- 01 Knight On The Town
- 02 The Big Bad Wolf
- 03 Revenge Of The King
- 04 303
- 05 Die For Love
- 06 Dictator Of The Free World
- 07 Grateful When You're Dead
- 08 Last Farewell
- 09 Shower Your Love
- 10 Tattva
- 11 6ft Down
- 12 Hush
- 13 Super CB Operator
- 14 Hey Dude
- 15 Hollow Man (Part II)
- 16 Govinda

Perfect sing-along numbers

Often support bands suck, or they are even better than the main act. And sometimes they just manage to leave the audience happily smiling and ready for the return of the Mighty Shaker. That's what The Magic Bullet Band managed to do at quite a few gigs recently during the last two reformed Kula tours.

Some of the concert goers must have thought "Somehow I know these guys...?". And you're right: drummer/singer Andy Nixon and Dan McKinna (bass and backing vocals) used to tour up and down the country with Mr. Mills as The Jeevas.

After the three-piece split, Crispian got Kula Shaker back together, and Dan and Andy went off and formed the MBB together with Daniel Lundholm (guitar/ backing vocals) in early 2005 down in the coastal town of Brighton. Then Crispian got all of his fellow band members, past and present, together for the Kula reunion tour. Not only did he do Dan and Andy a favour, it also enabled them to just hang around with their friends and extended band family.

Especially remarkable about the new beat combo is the fact that it's Andy who drums as well as handling lead vocals, Andy sure knew how to get the audience going! In their songs



the MBB use country and blues styles, as well as psychedelic rock'n'roll and as the concerts have proven so far, most of them are perfect sing-along numbers which manage to draw a smile on people's faces right from the first tune. By the way, for their live-performances the guys are supported by Rich Cason on Hammond/ Wurlitzer who is no one less than their former teacher!

As for their influences, MBB name check: The Band, Creedence Clearwater Revival, The Faces, Bill Withers, Calexico, Dr. John and Jimi Hendrix. The Magic Bullet Band are still unsigned, but they have already released a self funded EP which is usually sold by Andy & co after the gigs. If you can get hold of it, it's well worth a listen! The record contains four songs which are as follows: "Nail In My Coffin", "East Street", "Green Fingers" and "Ballad Of A Broken Man".



UK Discography

ALBUMS

SHAKER 1MC	K	Cassette; 9/96
SHAKER 1CD	K	CD; 9/96
SHAKER 1CDK	K	CD digipak; 9/96
SHAKER 1LP	K	12" (with inner sleeve); 9/96
SHAKER 1MD	K	MiniDisc; 9/96
XPCD 806	K	Promo CD
SHAKER 2MC	Peasants, Pigs and Astronauts	Cassette; 3/99
SHAKER 2CDX	Peasants, Pigs and Astronauts	CD; 3/99
SHAKER 2LP	Peasants, Pigs and Astronauts	LP; 3/99
XPCD	Peasants, Pigs and Astronauts	Promo CD; 3/99

EPs

CK68514	Govinda/Gokula/Dance In Your Shadow/Raagy One (Waiting For Tomorrow)/Moonshine/Troubled Mind	08/97; EP released in America
	Dictator Of The Free World/ 6ft Down/Troubadour/The Revenge Of The King	3/06; EP released on iTunes

SINGLES

KULA 71	Tattva (Lucky 13 Mix)/Hollow Man Pt 2	7"; 12/95
KULA CD	Tattva (Lucky 13 Mix)/Hollow Man Pt 2	CD; 12/95
KULA MC 2	Grateful When You're Dead – Jerry Was There/Another Life	Cassette; 4/96
KULA 72	Grateful When You're Dead – Jerry Was There/Another Life	7"; 4/96
KULA CD 2	Grateful When You're Dead – Jerry Was There/Another Life/Under the Hammer	CD; 4/96
XPCD 781	Grateful When You're Dead (edit)/ Grateful When You're Dead/Jerry Was There	Promo CD; 4/96
KULA CD 73	Tattva/Tattva on St. George's Day/Dance In Your Shadow	7"; 6/96
KULA CD 3K	Tattva on St. George's Day/Dance In Your Shadow/Red Balloon (Vishnu's Eyes) incl. Poster	CD; 6/96
KULA CD 3	Tattva/ Dance In Your Shadow/ Moonshine/ Tattva (Lucky 13 Mix)	CD; 6/96
XPCD 797	Tattva/Tattva On St. George's Day	Promo CD; 6/96
KULA 74	Hey Dude/ Troubled Mind	Jukebox 7"; 8/96
KULA CD 4K	Hey Dude/ Tattva/ Drop In the Sea/Crispian reading from the Mahabharata incl. Poster	CD; 8/96
KULA CD 4	Hey Dude/ Troubled Mind/Grateful When You're Dead (BBC Session)/ Into The Deep (BBC Session)	CD; 8/96

SINGLES (continued)

KULA MC 4	Hey Dude/ Troubled Mind	Cassette; 8/96
XPCD 818	Hey Dude	Promo CD; 8/96
KULA 75	Govinda (Radio Mix)/ Gokula/Temple Of The Everlasting Light 7", limited to 5000 by mail order only; 12/96	
KULA CD 5	Govinda (Radio Mix)/ Gokula/ Hey Dude (live at London Astoria)/ The Leek (credited to Bevan)	CD; 11/96
KULA CD5K	Govinda (Hari and St. George)/ Gokula/ Govinda (Monkey Mafia Pigsy's Mix)/ Govinda (Monkey Mafia's Ten To Ten)	CD incl. Poster; 11/96
KULA MC 5	Govinda (Radio Session Mix)/ Gokula	Cassette; 11/96
XPCD 837	Govinda (Radio Mix)	Promo CD; 11/96
XPR 2324	Govinda (Monkey Mafia Pigsy's Mix)/ Govinda Monkey Mafia's Ten To Ten	Promo Vinyl 12"; 11/96
KULA MC 5	Hush/Raagy One	Cassette; 11/96
KULA CD 6	Hush/Raagy One/Knight On The Town (live at London Astoria), Smart Dogs (Live at London Astoria)	CD; 2/97
KULA CD 6K	Hush/Raagy One/Unter The Hammer (Hold On To The Magical Key)/Govinda (live in Plymouth, 26.1.97)	CD incl. Poster 2/97
KULA 76	Hush	7"; 2/97 (re-released 7/97)
KULA 21 MC	Sound Of Drums/Hurry on Sundown (Hari Om Sundown)	Cassette; 4/98
KULA 21CDX	Sound Of Drums (Radio Edit)/ Hurry On Sundown (Hari Om Sundown)/ The One That Got Away/Smile	CD incl. Poster; 4/98
KULA 21CD	Sound Of Drums (Album Version)/Hurry On Sundown (Hari Om Sundown) /Reflections Of Love/Fairyland (feat. Don Pecker)	CD; 4/98
XPCD	Sound Of Drums	Promo CD; 4/98
KULA 22MC	Mystical Machine Gun/Guitar Man	Cassette; 2/99
KULA 22CD	Mystical Machine Gun/ Guitar Man/ Prancing Bride	CD; 2/99
KULA CDX	Mystical Machine Gun/ Avalonia/ Holy River	CD; 2/99
XPCD 1088	Mystical Machine Gun/ MMG No. 2	Promo CD; 2/99
KULA 23 MC	Shower Your Love/ Goodbye Tin Terriers	Cassette; 5/99
KULA 23CDX	Shower Your Love/ The Dancing Flea/ Light Of The Day incl. 4 Postcards	CD; 5/99
KULA 23 CD	Shower Your Love/ Goodbye Tin Terriers/ Sound Of Drums (live Radio 1 session)	CD; 5/99
XPCD 1118	Shower Your Love	Promo CD; 5/99

Paul's Drumkit

Greetings, salutations and a massive wassup to all those in Kula land! This section/ chapter/ bit, whatever you want to call it, is for all you gear heads out there, who as well as loving The Shaker, also are curious to the point of arguing about it on forums, about what gear the lads use. Well, in the coming weeks I shall be revealing what gear exactly Crispian, Alonza, Harry (Jay, back in the old days) and Paul use.

This week, I shall be mostly talking about Paul.

A CONVERSATION WITH PAUL: PART 1, OUTSIDE KING'S COLLEGE



Kula Shaker was one of the biggest bands of the 90's. They had one of the fastest selling debut albums since Definitely Maybe and were selling out gigs everywhere. Their videos were on all the music channels, their songs on the radio and they seemed to be supporting every big name act out there, namely that of Oasis. However, after the release of Peasants, Pigs and Astronauts, things started to go downhill for the group. Until one day, Crispian decided that he wanted to go his own way, and so there endeth Kula Shaker. It was a shame for

many reasons, firstly British music had lost a frickin awesome band, and also I, a massive Kula fan, had never got to see them live.

However, six years and various projects later, Kula Shaker have reformed, released a download-only EP which went top 10 in the download charts, and are selling out intimate venues across the UK. It was at the end of the first leg of the UK tour, at King's College, where I saw Kula Shaker live for the first time, and also got to speak to, in my opinion, one of the greatest drummers ever: Mr. Paul Winterhart.

One of the main reasons I started playing drums all those years ago was because I had heard Paul on "K" "Yeah people are pretty thankless when they tell me things like that," chortles Paul. His style is simple, yet effective and he, along with Alonza, were one of the main driving rhythms such songs such as "Hey Dude", "Govinda" and "Mystical Machine Gun". So to speak to one of my idols and to find out what makes him tick, and to find out what gear he uses is a dream come true.

After the obligatory, photo taking, thanking, and compliment giving, I, Andrea and her boyfriend Sebastian spoke to Paul for a lengthy amount of time. Such topics included Black Rebel Motorcycle Club "My missus quite likes them" and a quite amusing anecdote about meeting Stephen Perkins, the drummer of Jane's Addiction in L.A: (the following and the rest of the conversations I had with Paul are taken from memory, they are not the exact words but they are the gist of what Paul had told me and replied)

"Yeah, I was in L.A. recording, and this guy, who turned out to be Stephen's tech said 'Hey you wanna meet Stephen Perkins?' and I was like 'Yeah.' So he took me to this modest



looking house in L.A. and we went to the garden and at the bottom there was this shed. Inside there were three drum kits with percussion between 'em, and just enough space to get through. Anyway, it ended with me getting high and just sitting at the kit trying to keep time, while they played some mad rhythms."

Quite an amusing story I think you'll agree. It was at this point that Seb kindly asked Paul what me and Andrea couldn't "could we possibly watch you sound check?" To which Paul replied "Well, I'm not sure if you'll get kicked out, but you're welcome to come up with me."

A CONVERSATION WITH PAUL: PART 2, INSIDE THE KING'S COLLEGE STUDENTS UNION

As we took our seats in the rather ordinary

looking students bar in the Kings College building, we just could not believe our luck. Once Paul had finished setting up his kit, he graciously came over to us and started chatting. I just could not help but ask Paul about his kit, "Well, do you wanna come over and see 'em?" I think you all know the answer to that question.

As many of you gear heads will have seen in many pictures and many television appearances, Paul has favored his "low profile" 1970's Slingerland drum kit. He has played others, such as a black Pearl Export set up at the Pukklepop festival in 1999. However, this has been his main drum kit for live use. "Yeah, I hardly recorded on this one. For some of the songs I used a little Gretsch kit."

The kit itself is well worn, yet still sounded superb. It consisted of a 22 inch bass drum, 13 inch rack tom mounted on a snare stand,

a 16 inch floor tom, and 14 inch Ludwig snare. Cymbals wise, Paul was using some well used Paiste's: 14 inch Hi-hats, 16 and 18 inch crashed and a 20 light ride. "I did have another crash, but these are the only spare cymbals I have right now." Hardware wise, it was a mixture of Yamaha stands for the cymbals and a Ludwig Speed King pedal for the kick drum.

TheMusicalElitist: I noticed that your kit used to be very low...

Paul: Yeah, it was. It was so low that I had a bruise on my right thigh cos I was hitting the ride cymbal so hard. After Kula Shaker broke up, I took lessons, which I never did and the teacher told me to raise everything up a bit. It suits my playing better.

Simon started to set up the stage at this point, and so we took it as a cue to go before Simon "got very angry."

A CONVERSATION WITH PAUL: PART 3, THE SEATS BY THE WINDOW

TheMusicalElitist: You don't have a tech now, how are you finding that?

Paul: Well, I don't mind teching my own gear cos I haven't had a tech since 1999. So it's alright.

TheMusicalElitist: So, everyone must be dying to know, what did you do between Kula splitting and now reforming?

Paul: Well me and Alonza lived on the same road for ages, and we did some work with Aqualung and I've also got a little band I play with in Camden.

TheMusicalElitist: I read somewhere that you were also teaching drums...

Paul: Well I wasn't really teaching, I was just putting on some music and telling these groups of kids to play along to it on the drums.

TheMusicalElitist: Ah, well that sounds excellent. So, do you guys have any plans to tour Europe?

(I just have to note that Andrea was listening intently to this question, cos as many of you know she is from Germany)

Paul: Well we'll see what happens. Hopefully we should be touring Europe in the autumn, we don't have a record deal at the moment so it's all up in the air.

It was at this point that Crispian and Alonza arrived and we had to let Paul go. We watched them sound check and Crispian get very cross with Graham the sound guy, and we also watched The Magic Bullet Band set up and then sound check. Coincidentally, Andy Nixon, the lead vocalist and drummer of MMB and also formerly of The Jeevas, has the exact same set up as Paul. Before Paul and the rest of the crew left, he came back to us and shook our hands. "It was nice meeting you; I'm gonna go get something to eat. I don't know if you'll get thrown out, but you've all got tickets, so it's OK. Anyway, I'll see ya later, enjoy the show." With that we watched one of the greatest drummers walk out of the room. What a guy.

KOOL SET-UP

DRUMS

1970'S SLINGERLAND KIT:

14" Snare

13" Rack tom (mounted on snare stand)

16" Floor tom

CYMBALS:

PAISTE:

16, 18" Crashes

20" ride

HARDWARE

Mixture of Yamaha and Ludwig
Vic Firth 5b Sticks.

With Crispian, Alonza & Paul

APRIL/MAY 2006

I finally managed to track down Paul and Shep for some interviews on the last date of their recent tour. Apologies for the shortness of the interviews, fuller interviews are going to happen over the coming months (that's a promise).

ALONZA

Strange Folk: What recorded track that you have played/recorded has your best performance as a bass player?

Alonza: Oooh I don't really know, but of the new stuff, it was fun recording "6ft Down" as I got to use a big fuzz pedal.

SF: I have heard that you are quite into folk? So what kind of folk are you into?

A: Not the sort of thing that you would want to admit publicly, however I like a lot of the stuff on the "Witch Season" label (Ed.: Groundbreaking late sixties/ early seventies folk/acoustic label, set up by American Joe Boyd and distributed on Island. It's a very collectible label.) Nick Drake, Bert Jansch etc. I also like some early music with Hurdy Gurdys and Zithers!

SF: How do you find Kula Shaker fans?

A: I am always amazed over how diverse our fans are, from old hippies to young musicians, they seem to have the same stream of madness.

SF: What has been the best reunited Kula Shaker gig in your opinion?

A: Milton Keynes was exciting, if only because it was our first proper gig in six years.



SF: Is the leek still your favourite vegetable?

A: Yes, my wife makes the best leek pie!

SF: How long have you been a vegetarian?

A: About eighteen years.

PAUL

Strange Folk: Is it true that you actually overturned a hire car in Devon?

Paul: Yes.

Continued...



SF: I have heard that you used to be a "Little Feat" fan, are you still?

P: Yeah, Andy (Magic Bullet Band) asked me which was a good album to get, I said *Dixie Chicken*, but Lonz said he bought it and it was rubbish. I used to love it all, but now think that they were corrupted by coke!

SF: What are the best albums that you own?

P: Best of Lee Dorsey, *Wish You Were Here* - Pink Floyd, the first Rage Against the Machine album.

SF: Being signed to a major recording label (Columbia) must have been harrowing, how did you find it?

P: First right on Regent's Street, before Oxford Circus, No. 10 Great Marlborough Street. HoHo!

SF: What Kula Shaker song are you most proud of?

P: Ballad of a thin Man.

SF: How do you find the fans of Kula Shaker?

P: Very diverse, quite mad! Funny that!

SF: What has been your favourite concert from the past two mini tours?

P: Glasgow ABC.

SF: The fans of Kula Shaker are largely unaware of your influences, so what musicians have inspired you?

P: Lee Dorsey, Jackie Liebezeit, Bill Bruford, Josh Freese, Andy Newmark, Tom Morello, Rebirth Brass Band (New Orleans), The Metres, Barry White, Bill Withers, Fleetwood Mac and Neil Young.

SF: Do you own any instruments with "heritage"?

P: The other half of my silver kit is owned by Mike Joyce of the Smiths!

SF: What happened to the band Shep, as they sounded really interesting?

P: We did some gigs, Lonz sounded better on his own with a studio and some loops of me. It can be difficult to get a new band to get in the studio!

SF: Do you buy vinyl or CD?

P: Neither anymore. When I have some disposable income again I will buy both.

SF: Obviously Kula Shaker are a very mystical band, does that tie in with your personal beliefs?

P: Do popes love coke?

SF: What's your favourite vegetable (sorry, Beatle-esque question)?

P: Aubergine!

SF: And last but not least, how long have you been a vegetarian?

P: Eleven years.

CRISPIAN

Strange Folk: Would you still say that Kula Shaker are a mystical band?

Crispian: Life is mystical, get mystical or get dead.

SF: The new album comes out later this year, can we expect any epic Indian numbers?

C: Maybe, we've done a pretty epic Indian track for the School of Braja, you'll be able to get it in a couple of months.

SF: How are the attempts going to convert Harry to vegetarianism going?

C: Slowly but surely.

SF: Could you explain how you got hold of Harry and what his actual full name is?

C: Henry Broadbent Bowers. He played in a band called the Killermertes, very good, we stole him away, used chloroform etc.

SF: Are we going to hear a full version of "Strange Folk" at any given point in time?

C: Hmm, who knows.

SF: The tours have been pretty much sold out, are you planning on playing larger venues?

C: Slowly, yes. But this is about great gigs, not how many people the room can hold. We see this as a long campaign, although the have been getting bigger, like the Tardis, the festivals will be big!

SF: What happened to Jay, as there are various "footballers wives" rumours floating around?

C: Our lips are sealed.

SF: Any ideas what the new album is going to be called?

C: Yes, but if I told you I would have to kill you!



SF: Who did the *Revenge of the King* artwork?

C: Carly (Crispian's stepsister) did the face – she's an animator, the logo was done by Sudarshan a hot rod freak from Santa Cruz.

SF: A rough version of Diktator was leaked onto the net before it was released. How do you feel about that sort of stuff as a band, are you for or against?

C: You can't complain, Lars Ulrich (Metallica) found that out.

SF: What are your favourite songs to play live?

Crispian: "Die For Love"/"Govinda"

Alonza: "6ft Down"

Paul: "6ft Down"

Harry: "Die For Love"/"Hey Dude"

Continued...

SF: What Kula Shaker track would you NEVER play again?

C: "Psychedelic Gangster", an old track. It was too long and made no sense whatsoever.

SF: What ever happened to the Winged Boy?

C: He is currently being defiled by a bunch of accountants in Hollywood.

It's my fault for writing an expensive script, the more money a film costs to make, the less control the writer has over the finished result. They say they will make it this summer in New Zealand, even if it was set in Ireland.

SF: You recorded three unreleased albums in the time between Kula Shaker and The Jeevas (one with Pi, one acoustic and one solo). Is there any chance that they will ever be released?

C: Not if I can help it

SF: As regards to the School of Braja, its release was slated as early this year. Now that early this year has passed, when is it actually coming out?

C: It's being printed now, we will sell it at gigs, online, Amazon etc (ye of little faith).

SF: How does one go about getting anything by The Kays, as I know that you released some EPs?

C: Again, our lips are sealed.

SF: Every Kula Shaker album to date has a hidden track; can we expect one on the forthcoming album?

C: It's a little too early to say.

SF: You all obviously have lucky numbers (I notice that you chose the 11th for your comeback gig), are there any numbers that you consider unlucky?

C: Eight is the number of death, but even death can be positive if you are switched on to what's happening!

SF: I know that you guys are into St. George and all that; I recently found out that St. George was reputedly killed in 303 AD. Is the song 303 related to that or is it strictly about the road?

C: Everything is connected, Einstein will back me up.

SF: You guys burn a lot of incense live, I have noticed that it is often Nag Champa. Is that your favourite incense?

C: YES, because it's "best quality" (Indian accent).

SF: I heard that "Revenge of the King" was a collaboration with the Medieval Baebes, how did that come about?

C: It wasn't a collaboration, Alonza and me wrote it.

SF: I have heard from my sources that Don Pecker has been teaching you golf. Do you play as a band, or would that be too competitive?

C: That's our little secret!!

SF: In conclusion, now that Kula Shaker have reincarnated, what madness can we expect in the coming months?

C: It's the world that's mad, we're quite sane!! An album, more gigs, more hurricanes.



Karma Comedian

Guess who's lightened up? Chastened by all those retro Nazi posho jibes and baffled by his non-trendy Belgian fanbase, *Kula Shaker*'s Crispian Mills is on the fast train to Rehabilitation Central with a mental new album in the guard's van. "We're so open for piss-taking," he tells Tom Doyle.

Grey-flecked, middle-aged furry freaks peer stagewards through greasy locks and granny specs, nodding rhythmically. Crap dancing twentysomething "straights" throw pointy-fingered shapes in hellish, synchronised routines. One crisp-shirted, expensive raincoat-wearing businessman and Michael Douglas lookalike, burning like a beacon of stiff-arsed awkwardness in the midst of the throng, cannot tear the permanent grin from his face. Onstage, *Kula Shaker* strike the final chord of *Hey Dude* and Crispian Mills stares out into the audience with a look of barely disguised incredulity.

As the post-song whoop goes up, he enquires, in his best Brixton Bowie, "You enjoy that then?"

Welcome to Friday night in Brussels. Outside in the grey, deserted streets of the somehow soulless appointed capital of a united Europe, light drizzle conspires with piercing wind to complete a grim picture. Inside *La Botanique*, the city's former botanical gardens-turned-arts-hub, the sound of *Kula Shaker* reverberates around the high-roofed dome that is the unorthodox setting – part tiered lecture theatre, part mini-Albert Hall – for this last date on their European warm-up club tour.

As the band roll through their 13-song set, confirming their reputation as a blistering live act, the motley crowd assembled here collectively serve to underline another point. One million copies of debut album *K* later, and with every likelihood that its grandly-titled follow-up, *Peasants Pigs & Astronauts*, might

follow suit, there appears to be no such creature as your average *Kula Shaker* fan.

Later, Mills will claim that, from his perspective, tonight's audience appeared to consist of "ten people down the front doing Jane Fonda's workout video and three hundred behind them with their arms folded". Still, he visibly shudders, that was nothing compared to Leeds, where a dominating beer boy presence vocally interpreted *Govinda* as a curry house anthem. "I could hardly sing the song," the frontman recalls, wide-eyed. "I was looking at them, thinking, What the *fuck* is this all about?"

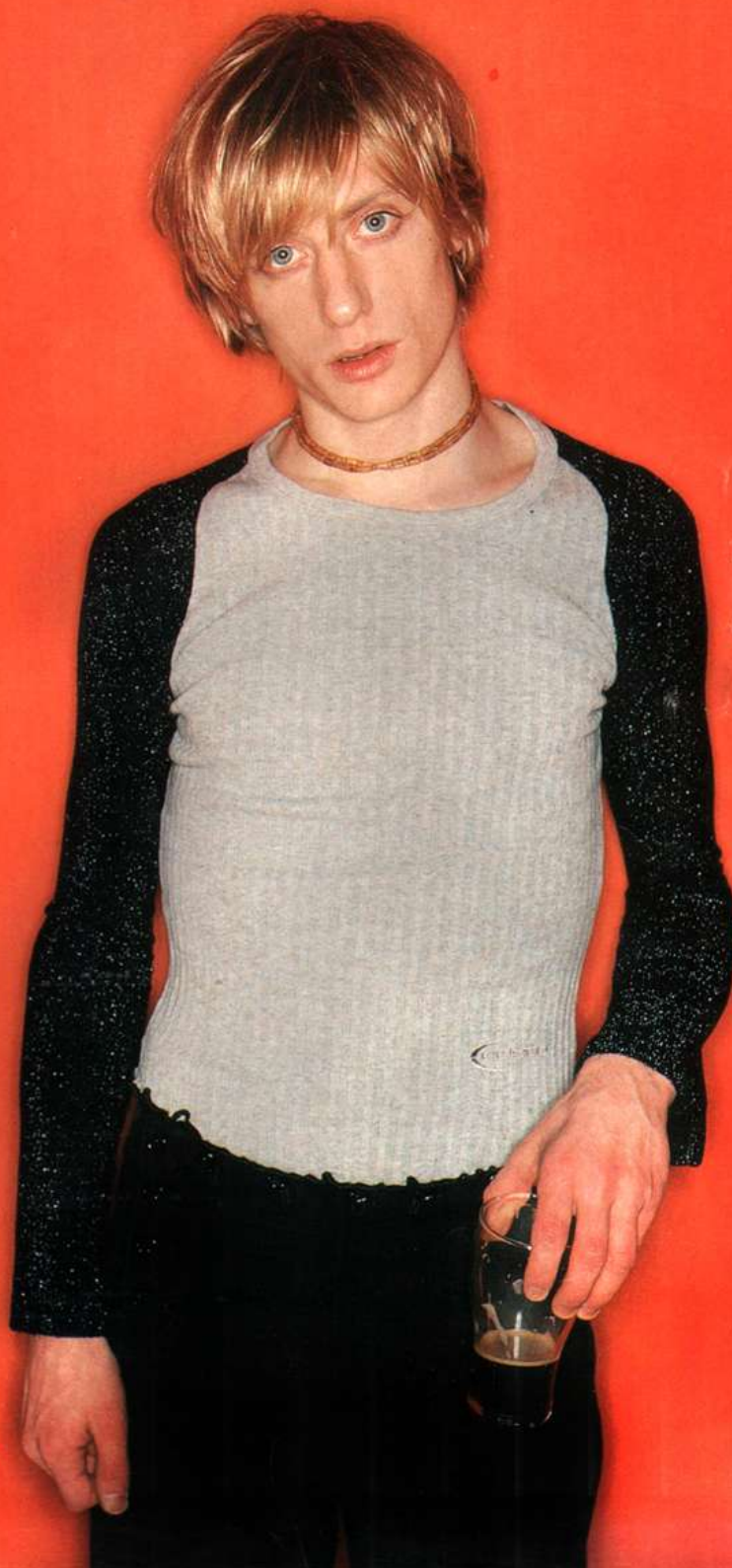
If the typical *Kula Shaker* devotee cannot be easily identified, then the *Kula Shaker* hater is easier. Not in recent memory has a group polarised the listening public to such extremes. The detractor argument goes that the stripy-strided outfit are, variously: unfeasibly retro; too posh to rock; peddling half-cocked spiritual dogma; possibly Nazis. To the converted, they are bona fide successors to the merry prankster tradition, clearly possessed of a deeper wisdom than, say, *Oasis* and purveyors of fine pop-flavoured psychedelic rock.

Onstage tonight, Crispian Mills cranes his neck skywards to take in the full scale of *La Botanique*'s dome and, for no clear reason, says, "I'm expecting this place to fill up with water at any minute..."

In the unlikely event, there's a few here who'd volunteer to form a human life raft to spare the members of *Kula Shaker* from a watery death. Elsewhere, there's an equal number who would gladly turn on the tap.

Photographs
by Pat Pope

Crispian Mills, Light Zoo
Studios, Edgware Rd,
London, February 4, 1999.



"I grew up with pictures
of my mum standing
with John Wayne or
Walt Disney. That did
something to my head."

Crispian Mills on actress mother Hayley

Kula Shaker

FOUR DAYS LATER, Crispian Mills receives Q in the London home of his manager. As he stirs tea in the kitchen, the occasional cat skittering past his feet, he searches for words to sum up the mood his band were in at the close of K's hugely successful campaign, when Kula Shaker were bundled into a remote cottage on the Devon/Cornwall borders to contemplate its successor.

Aside from the more pleasurable perks of Kula Shaker's rocket-fuelled ascent, there was a looming legal battle with their former manager to contend with (settled with "a substantial amount"), not to mention the media scars inflicted by Mills's comment in an interview that "Hitler knew a lot more than he made out". The wording was ill-chosen, though the singer claims he was only trying to point out the hijacking of the swastika, an Indian mystic symbol of ancient vintage.

"By the end," Mills sighs, "what with litigation, media and record companies and the whole big mental second album syndrome bullshit trip, we had our fair share to deal with. I think we were all pretty tired and a bit philosophical. Tell you the truth, we weren't answering the phone much."

Fittingly, this morning in the first week of February, the British public are howling for the blood of Glenn Hoddle, following the pigeon-baited pronouncements that will eventually lead to his sacking. Surely Mills must feel some measure of empathy?

"Well... I don't know what he said, y'know," he offers, carefully. "I wouldn't believe he said that for word what they said he did... but it sounds a bit hardcore. Whatever he believes, he isn't putting it across the right way. I think with a lot of this New Age spiritual stuff, people get into really ancient esoteric subjects and they're just not mature enough to be able to communicate it. I'm sure I've been guilty of that."

Did you worry that your comment might have snuffed out the band's career?

"DID I REALLY SAY THAT?" THE WISDOM OF CRISPIAN MILLS

1 Time

"Time is an element, a very subtle element. It's like if you drop a pebble in very smooth water, you get very clear ripples."

2 King Arthur

"Arthur represents man being empowered by a higher energy, a divine energy, a spiritual energy... with Merlin representing magical intervention and power coming from the Mother Figure."

3 Cosmology

"There are other universes besides this one. You know when you're a kid and you get into the idea of being an atom on a giant's toenail? It's as bad as you might imagine."

4 Tantric Sex

"Kundalini is this mad fluid that emanates at the base of the spine, and when you're withholding orgasm, you're reversing the kundalini and semen. You send it up the spine into your brain."

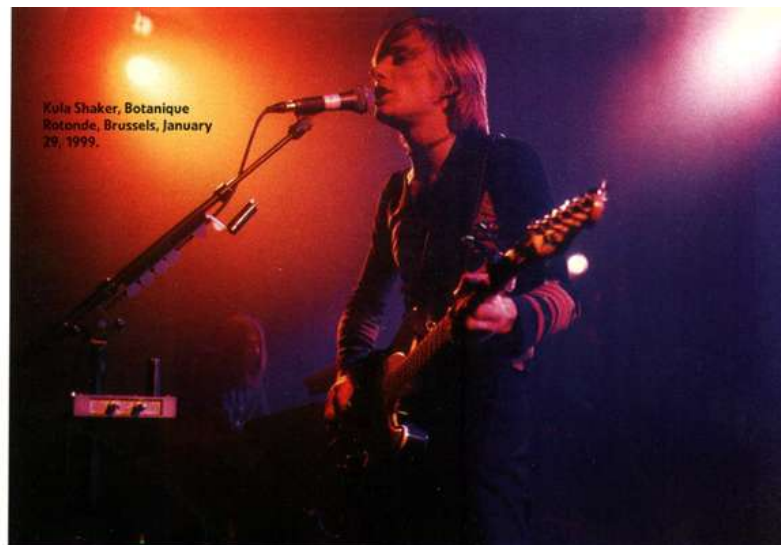
5 Darwinism

"We're all gurglings in the pea soup of existence. It all happened out of nothing and we're just a bunch of naked monkeys. That's just a theory but it's not taught like one."

Jon Clarke



You silly, silly man.



Kula Shaker, Botanique Rotonde, Brussels, January 29, 1999.

"Uh... naaah. There were some people around me who did. It's whether you want to listen to them or not."

The arch irony of the soundbite blunder was that – of all people – Crispian Mills really should have known better. As the grandson of Sir John and son of Hayley, Mills enjoyed a rare grounding in how best to negotiate the slippery rungs of fame. This, he agrees, compounded the agony for him.

"I thought I'd be more comfortable with it," he acknowledges. "Obviously I couldn't read when I was two, but with my parents splitting up and then my step-parents and the shit reviews, I've seen family and friends go through it. I didn't have some horrible malignant concept of the media. But

certainly I'd had more of a hands-on experience of it."

Still, the incident doesn't appear to have quashed the 26-year-old frontman's confidence. Where you'd expect him to be more guarded than ever, he's keen to look for the key to his complicated public life in his famous family past.

"I grew up with pictures of my mum looking very very young, standing with John Wayne or Walt Disney," he says. "That did something to my head. I thought that that was kind of normal. That's what happens – once you get to twelve, you start making movies. It was only when I got to twelve that I realised that, obviously, that wasn't the case."

"Sometimes it's a bit too abstract for me to be

The pre-Kula Shaker band, Objects Of Desire (from left): Alonza Bevan, Paul Winterhart, Marcus Maclaine, Crispian Mills, Lee Morris.



objective about fame 'cause I did grow up with it. But at the same time I was aware it wasn't like being the son of John Lennon or the son of Kennedy or someone. It was quite a quiet scene. But then once they start associating you with it, then they associate you with the Mills... thing."

THE "MILLS THING" resurfaced in the tabloids recently when "Hayley toyboy" Marcus Maclaine turned up, eager to stir the ordure and remind anyone who cared to listen that Kula Shaker (previously Objects Of Desire) had once been *his* band, and Mills, Winterhart and Bevan his protégés. Amid shag-and-tell revelations concerning Crispian's mum, hippie adventurer Maclaine recalled how Sir John had thrown bread rolls at him in a restaurant and alleged that Crispian, initially happy to accept the guitar lessons and the spiritual guidance, turned hateful. In no uncertain terms, he accused Mills of hijacking the band and wrecking his relationship with Mills's mère.

Phew. Having a go at Crispian Mills could be declared the national sport. On top of everything else, there's the common assumption that he was somehow handed – as a Bird's Eye advertising campaign once put it – success on a plate.

"Oh yeah," he nods. "They think I was a bit t

Kula Shaker

"I like, Mummy, get me a record deal now. If only it was that easy. One German interviewer once asked Jay if he thought Kula Shaker had only made it because of Crispian's famous mother. He said, Yeah, of course, she bought all the albums."

"But," he continues, more soberly, "I knew the media shitstorm was inevitable from the moment we got a record deal. I knew what the band was like and... we're so open for piss-taking."

ONE BY ONE, the other three-quarters of Kula Shaker gradually shuffle in. First Jay Darlington, Hammond wizard and the most sartorially "experimental" member, followed by tall, reasonably posh bassist Alonza Bevan and then frighteningly posh drummer Paul Winterhart (the only Shaker, they later claim, to have attended a comprehensive school). An affable, relatively unpretentious bunch, it becomes clear that there is little you could throw at them that they haven't learned to deflect with the shield of self-deprecation.

Moreover, certain preconceptions about the group appear unfounded. Mills dithers when the subject of meditation is raised, along the lines of it



Kula Shaker (From left): Crispian Mills, Jay Darlington, Paul Winterhart, Naomi Campbell (possibly), Alonza Bevan.

"Oh, we're quite aware of what year it is... It's 1968, isn't it?"

Kula Shaker's Jay Darlington

"really being about how you are with someone and how you interact and what you're driven by", before admitting with a Mutley snigger that, no, he doesn't meditate. No big-time drug dabbler either, he hasn't "done" acid in three years and can barely function if he smokes a spliff.

"I was interested in acid because I associated it in a pop music way with what was a counter-culture," he reasons. "It didn't take long for me to realise that the drug movement now is just part of the culture, not the counter-culture. I remember meeting this guy from Hounslow when I was about eighteen and everyone was talking about E. He was saying, Yeah, you've got to have a fucking fight on it, man, seriously. I said, Wait, I thought it's all about love when you're on E. He said, Yeah, you have a fight and you fucking love it."

Kula Shaker as a band are far more eager to stick out than blend in. Eagles member-manqué Jay Darlington looks like he's been dragged through Oxfam backwards but insists, "No... it was forwards," and warns that his walrus moustache "might come back... I'm finding the look that has the piss ripped out of me the most and I'm going to stick with it." Two days later, he'd shaved it off.

Musically, Kula Shaker's intentions are just as flighty and brazenly OTT. For Peasants Pigs & Astronauts, they've coaxed '70s production icon Bob Ezrin (Pink Floyd, Alice Cooper, Lou Reed) out of retirement in their hankering for days when, as Mills puts it, "the album was a story-telling art-form". The group realised that Ezrin was the ideal candidate for the job "when he said that he liked what we'd tried to do on K. We agreed... so many things are fucked about it."

This new, extra-amiable Kula Shaker even fail to bridle when Q suggests that the album's pile-

they feel is rife within rock music circles.

"There's a heavy censorship on what's acceptable and not acceptable to be a pop person," Mills argues. "It's like, I'm sorry, if you come from that background, you're not allowed to sing in Sanskrit. Some of the criticism we got I thought was quite totalitarian. It's all about families and the class system. Y'know, you've got to judge people on how they act and how they are."

"I think as long as you make good music and you're being honest," Darlington adds, "what more can you ask for? It's like the public school punk rock thing—Shane MacGowan and Joe Strummer—I mean, who were they kidding?"

Has there been anything said about Kula Shaker that really hurt?

"Yeah," beams Darlington. "Your mum smells."

Bevan chips in, dryly: "You should be able to kill a man for that."

WHILE DARLINGTON AND Mills represent the drug-free element of Kula Shaker, Bevan and Winterhart are the epitome of the nice-but-bumbling, perma-stoned rhythm section. Winterhart recounts an occasion in LA where he was invited by the drummer of Jane's Addiction for a jam and ended up so herbally incapacitated that he couldn't even pick up his sticks.

Together the drummer and bassist embarked on a visit to India in the brief holiday time afforded the group and quite literally found themselves up shit creek without a paddle. In a mood for unguided exploration in the middle of a boat trip, they faked Delhi belly, made the vessel take a pitstop and, once on the shore, legged it into the jungle.

"We had to walk ten miles around this lake to get back," the bassist grins. "Then we got up this

driving S.O.S. (Spawn Of Satan) has a whiff of the '70s rock musical ("Yeah," Mills concedes. "It is a bit Hair"). In fact, only one issue really gets their backs up: the inverted snobbery

mountain to try and check our bearings and, of course, an electrical storm starts coming in and we're at the highest point around."

"Alonza was screaming actually," the drummer offers.

"Oh yeah, I was," Bevan continues, unfazed. "We ended up getting down and finding a stream that would take us back to the lake. We were both wading around, covered in leeches."

Mills, of course, is an old stager when it comes to the subcontinent.

"When I first came back from India," he remembers, "I was 20, and I met this guy on the platform at Kentish Town tube. He clocked me wearing these torsi beads that you can only really get there and said, You been in India? This guy was really pissed-up and it was like, How long were you out there for? I said, Ten weeks, and he was was like, That's fuck all, mate. I was there for five years. I got sent back for dealing fucking smack."

KULA SHAKER HAVE a developed sense of their own ridiculousness. Which perhaps is just as well. "There's always one of us there to make sure it's noted whenever a Spinal Tap moment occurs," they insist.

For the record, then, in the States, they once bumped into a lofty, disinterested Metallica, in town to play the local enormodome, in a hotel lobby ("Couldn't fucking believe we were reliving that classic Tap moment"); yes, they have played Cleveland and uttered the immortal words, and yes, they have been forced to blow out a gig in Boston ("Still, not a big college town"), although to date, lacking a multi-instrumentalist, they have not yet been forced to bag mandolin strings in Milwaukee on a Monday night.

To those whose cages they rattle, the keyboardist directs this message: "It's sort of flattering that we really get up your noses... we know we're on the right track."

Kula Shaker, then. No sleep 'til 1970.

"Oh, we're quite aware of what year it is," Darlington insists. "It's 1968, isn't it?"

