Roger interview

Roger Meddows Taylor: I think it's a very important thing that any group has to be good in live performance, so we attach a lot of importance to that.

Interviewer: I remember when your first album came out, and it was all like a Roger Taylor solo project. Did you ever intend or it to last that long?

Roger Meddows Taylor: It was never meant to be a solo project, you see. It was always meant to be a group, and this has been a big problem - I've never been able to convince people that it's a group - everybody writes, everybody shares the money equally, really it's not the Roger Taylor solo experience, and I'm just the singer.

Interviewer: When did you want to be a singer?

Roger Meddows Taylor: I've always been a singer. With Queen I've sung all of the harmonies, for many years, before that I was a singer anyway, and a drummer. Live, I would sing in every song, harmonies at least, and in some songs, like I'm In Love With My Car, I would sing the lead anyway, so I'm use to singing, so that wasn't new. The thing that was new was to be at the front, not playing an instrument too much.

Interviewer: Why do you never play drums?

Roger Meddows Taylor: Because we have a drummer! And I'm not the drummer. This is what I can't get people to understand - I'm \*not\* the drummer!

Interviewer: And how did you find the other members of the band?

Roger Meddows Taylor: Er... Spike was a friend, who had played the keyboards with Queen on their tours, 'cause when Freddie has to sing, you know, and get up and move and thing, somebody else has to play the keyboards, so I knew him for about three years. And, er - we decided to start this thing up, you know, so we wanted to find three younger people just so it wasn't all older people who weren't influenced by what was happening, or anything. Then we found the guys, we made the band, and we started it - you know. It's been very hard, very tough.

Interviewer: Is that because many people still think it's Roger Taylor?

Roger Meddows Taylor: Yeah. You just can't get away from it. Um - It's frustrating really. People like to put you in a drawer - you know - in a box. This is a different thing - completely separate.

Interviewer: This album was recorded at Real World Studios. A studio where there's a lot of world music being done. Did that have any influence on you, or did you just pick it?

Roger Meddows Taylor: Er... when you say world music, you mean music from other countries?

Interviewer: African music and things.

Roger Meddows Taylor: Yeah, well Womad is based there, yeah - No, we picked it because we liked the look of it. Our music is like classic hard rock, and I like the idea of the world music thing [laughs] but no, that had nothing to do with it. It was a good studio, a good location, and a nice place and we liked it very much indeed. I've known Peter for many years. Very many years.

Interviewer: How pleased are you with the new album?

Roger Meddows Taylor: I don't know. If you want me to be honest - I think it's quite good. We have a producer this time. I think the album is good - have you heard it? Do you like it?

Interviewer: I like it.

Roger Meddows Taylor: Good.

Interviewer: The second song is the single, isn't it.

Roger Meddows Taylor: I think it's the second one, yeah.

Interviewer: It's the second one yeah. It's my favourite anyway.

Roger Meddows Taylor: Really? Oh good, well good. Um - yes it's difficult. I usually have to wait six months before I know, you know, how much I like something, but we've worked hard, and I hope people like it. I can't say a lot more than that really. I hope that the music is real. It's not pretending to be anything. It's sort of, quite grown up rock music.

Interviewer: Was it difficult to work with a producer who's ever so young?

Roger Meddows Taylor: No. Ever so young? He's not that young!

Interviewer: He's only 31.

Roger Meddows Taylor: Oh - 31 is not that young. He's very experienced, he's worked on The Joshua Tree, U2, and assignments... Jeff Beck, this is all the stuff we like, and so he's great. He's older than three members of the band you know, so - not older than me, but he's older than the others. But he was very good, it's fantastic. I really enjoyed him telling me what to do. I enjoyed that for a change.

Interviewer: Really?

Roger Meddows Taylor: Yeah. Nice to receive direction, than give it.

Interviewer: But you produced the others yourself?

Roger Meddows Taylor: Really, yes, and the rest of the band also, so you need someone from the outside to give you that outside direction, I think.

Interviewer: To tell you?

Roger Meddows Taylor: Yeah, 'cause you're too involve, you're too closely involved, and you just can't give an objective view, you know?

Interviewer: When you're writing for the Cross, do you write while you're jamming, or does everybody -?

Roger Meddows Taylor: No. I write by myself. I can't write with the others. Sometimes if I write with the guys, it's usually the lyrics, or to change what they already have, or to write a lyric from the beginning. Um... like with 'Bad Attitude', that's one, but the songs I write myself I write completely by myself, and then we bring them in and work it out.

Interviewer: Did you have a lot of songs to choose from when you did this album?

Roger Meddows Taylor: Yes, we had about 25, and we sat down with the producer one day, and we said "Which ones do you like?" and he said "I like this one... I like this one..." And we let him choose.

Interviewer: So, you are going on tour now? Is it very difficult for you to play in smaller venues than you usually do?

Roger Meddows Taylor: Well the Cross - we've been on tour several times before, so you know, so no I'm used to it now, and I remember it from years ago, anyway, from my very beginnings, when I was a teenager, I used to play in very small places and also the beginning of Queen was in very small places, you know - so no. Although I haven't played in small places for many years. Actually even Queen went back at one time to very small clubs, just to remind us, you know, to remind us to make it interesting. I like playing in small places. It's good, and we're going to play with a band called Magnum, who I know very well - do you know that band? I think they write very good songs, they have a strange image - like us it's difficult to define. but - they write very... in a genre... that style. They write very good songs. I produced an album for them, six years ago, called 'Vigilante'. I thought they were very good. they have a great song writer, Terry, and I think that there'll be a very good mixture, you know. A good show altogether.

Interviewer: Do you think that the Cross and Magnum have a similar audience?

Roger Meddows Taylor: Yes I do. I think it's the same audience, yeah. They're the people who like hard rock, but not stupid hard rock, you know. They like people to have good musicians, and also to have intelligent songs. Sung intelligently. They're real. They don't dress completely - like - hair to the waist. Go to America, folks - it's strange - looks like 1973 there. I grew up in that with Queen, and we like to wear all this...

Interviewer: Long hair.

Roger Meddows Taylor: Yeah, and so it's very strange to see all that happening again, you know.

Interviewer: With the heavy metal.

Roger Meddows Taylor: Yeah. We were the start of heavy metal, and Led Zeppelin, and everybody was like glam heavy metal, you know, whatever. And it's all coming back round again.

Interviewer: How do you like the rest of the music scene?

Roger Meddows Taylor: Not good at the moment. There's not enough good stuff. I think in America you can hear more quality music then in Europe at the moment, because it's too dance orietated for my tastes - everything is dance, dance, dance, and the music is - there are no new ideas, they're ripping off all the old ideas - they're recycling all the old good songs, and you hear very little good music. I like EMF. I like that song...

Interviewer: Unbelievable.

Roger Meddows Taylor: yeah. that had a great riff, you can hear that they might be able to write really good songs, more good songs, but a lot of it is just electronic crap. It's gone one week. Shelf life one week, you know?

Interviewer: So you're an original rock 'n' roller?

Roger Meddows Taylor: yeah, absolutely. The thing is, you see, it lasts - it's timeless. It lasts - there are hits from the sixties now - some of the best soul too.

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