



CHAPTER 10

We Are the Champions

It was also in October that we decided to run our own club with another band Colossus, called "Champions of the Empire". The first gig was set up in January 2009 and we concentrated on being ready for that. Colossus had already done a couple of nights under this banner, but they weren't the official promoters of the night. Our gig in February 2008 at The Bullet Bar was one of those. February 2009 was to be the first one where we'd be joint promoters/club owners and the idea was to run the club properly and do things differently, but the one in January would still be with the old promoters. So many clubs and promoters just put nights on and throw bands together willy nilly with no rhyme or reason and do absolutely no promotion really. Ours, we decided, would be different.

Then came the next problem. Marcus decided to leave in November. With family and work commitments he believed he would only be able to get up here for rehearsals once a month, which he knew was not enough for the gigs we already had planned for next year. He knew we had big plans for 2009 and it scared the hell out of him.

I'd always said to Marcus, I'd rather he didn't do it than cause problems with his home life, so therefore completely understood why he had to leave. I knew it would happen one day, but was quite surprised after our initial positiveness about carrying on as a three piece after losing Ben that he decided to leave then. Still, Tomoko and I remained positive (as always) and decided with our new technology, though not ideal, we could do it as a two piece, until we found a suitable replacement.

This proved to be a lot easier than expected.



We advertised and soon found Marco Monaco. Due to the previous problems of bringing in outsiders to the band, I decided to be very careful, but Marco seemed to fit the bill perfectly. He totally loved what we were doing and was totally in the right place to give us 100% commitment. I'd decided he was the one before I'd even heard him play. He seemed an ideal replacement for Marcus.

From Marcus to Marco. I've always wanted to say that, now I have. Marcus has always been an intelligent drummer, not a meathead like quite a lot of drummers. He always had creative ideas about how to go about things and I could tell Marco had similar qualities just by talking to him.

"He's not like other drummers", I used to say about Marcus and I think he was quite proud of that.

Marco seemed to fit that description quite well too.

For now though Tomoko and I had to focus on the January gig as a two piece. There was no way Marco would be ready in time.

In between we did a remix for a very talented Welsh songsmith who goes under the name Toy Horses. He asked us to do a remix, so we picked "And It Was You" and he was very happy with the results and planned to use it for promotion when he played SXSW Festival in Texas, USA in March.

So, January 28th we played our first gig as a two piece at The Bullet Bar and was stunned how well it went down. It was a brand new set featuring mainly new songs. We decided to open the set with "Sunday Morning" which used to close our old set. The idea was (in my head) to start with the song we played last before, then move onto the new stuff and never go back again in future (if that makes sense). The set we played was Sunday Morning, The Line, So We Say, Searching For a New World, Hallucination Generation,



Searching For Hallucegens.

Simon Phillips reviewed our performance...

“Next up and the main reason I was there were Clinker, who have been around for a while and have several albums you can download for free from there website www.clinker.org.uk. For this show they were performing as a duo of Pete and Tomoko, both of whom played guitar and sang and played various gadgets including drum machine and all sorts of backing noises

They opened with a wonderfully ramshackle version of Sunday Morning, with Petes vocals drifting away from the tune at times, but it's always cool to hear a good Velvet Underground cover.

The main highlights of the rest of the set, that was nicely spacey and at times a touch ravey rather than Psyche, were the version of The Line that sort of carried me off into some sort of dream where the tune was the background music for some Brit Gangster flick and the main characters are doing there Lines to it before we see the consequences of their actions and all the while the music is droning and beating its way into my brain it was nice.

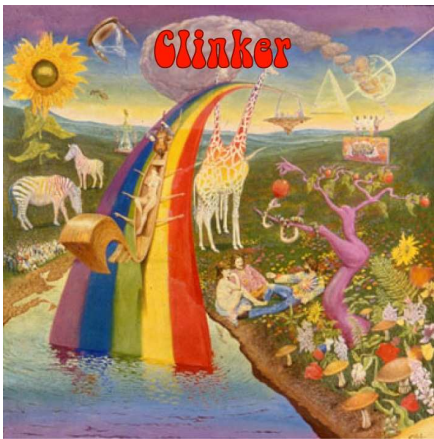
The set came to a great close with a super version of the new limited edition single Hallucination Generation that let them get properly Ravey as they took us back to the Madchester summer of Love type hallucinogens and really got the place going and the crowd dancing and cheering and then just as they finished I looked through the window on the door by the side of the stage and I could see this bloke through it and he had a dog on his shoulder and the dog had on a rather natty red scarf!! Was I hallucinating or was this real I shook my head to try to figure out reality from Hallucination and realised yes



Clinker
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he was real and also that Clinker had played a very cool set that would work very well with say They Came from The Stars or Eugene Machine.”

We made a free CD single available at the gig of “Hallucination Generation”. It featured the title track, “Searching For Hallucegens”, plus an Opera Dog remix of the main track and a DTT remix of “Music Gives You Power”.



1. Hallucination Generation
2. Searching for Hallucegens
3. Music Gives You Power (DTT remix)
4. Hallucination Generation (Cain'd n Able remix)

We went home buzzing, feeling we'd played our best gig yet.

A few days later we met up with an experimental film-maker Ambrose Yalley who would like to make some videos for us.....