



Nigel Godrich

Nigel Timothy Godrich (born 28 February 1971) is an English record producer, recording engineer and musician. He has worked with acts including Radiohead, Travis, Beck, Air, Paul McCartney, U2, R.E.M., Pavement, Roger Waters, Arcade Fire and Idles.

Early in his career, Godrich worked as the house engineer at RAK Studios, London, under the producer John Leckie. He first worked with Radiohead while engineering their second album, *The Bends* (1995), at RAK. Radiohead hired him to produce *OK Computer* (1997), which was a major success and brought him attention from major artists. He has produced all of Radiohead's albums since, along with several other projects with the Radiohead members Thom Yorke and Jonny Greenwood. Godrich won the Grammy Award for Best Engineered Non-Classical Album for the 2003 Radiohead album *Hail to the Thief*.

Godrich is a member of the bands Atoms for Peace (with Yorke) and Ultraísta. In 2006, he launched the music webseries *From the Basement*. With Beck, Godrich composed the score for the 2010 film *Scott Pilgrim vs. the World*.

Early years and education

Nigel Godrich was born in Westminster, London, the son of Victor Godrich, a BBC sound supervisor, and Brenda Godrich. He was fascinated by recording at an early age.^[1] As a child, after he asked for a machine to make records, his father bought him a cassette machine; Godrich used it to make recordings of his television, train sets and running water.^[1]

Godrich was educated at William Ellis School in North West London, where he shared classes with his friend and the future Zero 7 member Henry Binns. Godrich began playing guitar, inspired by Jimi Hendrix and Frank Zappa. He first visited a recording studio at the age of 16, when his band recorded a

Nigel Godrich



Godrich performing with Thom Yorke in 2018

Background information

Birth name	Nigel Timothy Godrich
Born	28 February 1971 <div>Westminster, London, England</div>
Genres	<u>Alternative rock</u> , <u>experimental rock</u> , <u>electronic</u>
Occupation(s)	<u>Recording engineer</u> , <u>record producer</u> , <u>musician</u> , <u>DJ</u>
Instrument(s)	Keyboards, guitar, bass
Years active	1990–present
Member of	<u>Ultraísta</u>
Formerly of	<u>Atoms for Peace</u>

demo at Elephant Studios, Wapping, and spent time asking the engineer questions.^[2] He studied at the School of Audio Engineering (SAE), London.^[3]

Career

After graduating from SAE, Godrich became a junior staff member at the Audio One studio complex, working as a tea boy.^[3] He did not enjoy his time there.^[4] According to Godrich, "With a beeper in my pocket, I'd wait next to the kettle, ready to deliver my hot beverages. I wasn't even allowed in the studios, but I [would] hang there thinking, 'OK, it's only the first rung, but at least I'm on the ladder.'"^[3]

After the closure of Audio One,^[4] in 1990 joined RAK Studios, London, first as a messenger and later as a studio assistant. He would stay late at night, inviting musician friends to play there while he practised recording them.^[3] At RAK, he became a tape operator for the producer John Leckie, with whom he worked on albums by Ride and Denim.^[4]

After four years, Godrich left RAK to go freelance and set up his own studio, Shabang, where he planned to create dance music.^[4] Six months later, he was hired to engineer and mix The Sound Of... McAlmont & Butler (1995), the debut album by McAlmont & Butler. Godrich said it was a "brilliant experience" and credited Bernard Butler with teaching him how to produce records.^[4] Godrich produced the self-titled debut album by Silver Sun, released in May 1997.^[4]

Radiohead

Godrich first worked with the rock band Radiohead when John Leckie hired him at RAK to engineer their EP My Iron Lung (1994) and their second album, The Bends (1995).^[3] The band nicknamed him "Nihilist", approving of his efforts to take their sound in new directions.^[3] When Leckie left the studio to attend a social engagement, Radiohead and Godrich stayed to record B-sides. One song, "Black Star", was instead included on The Bends.^[3] In 1995, Godrich produced Radiohead's charity single "Lucky".^[5]

Radiohead invited Godrich to co-produce their third album, OK Computer (1997).^[3] It won Best Alternative Album at the 40th Grammy Awards^[7] and sold more than 4.5 million copies worldwide.^[8] Working in improvised studios without supervision, Godrich and the band learned as they went, and credited the success to the open process. In 2013, Godrich told the Guardian: "OK Computer was such a big thing for me because I was given power for the first time. Some of these incredibly intelligent and insightful people said 'do what you want' to me so I worked my arse off for them and together we did something that represents where we all were at the time. And it stuck for some reason. People got it, so that changed my life."^[9]

Godrich has produced every Radiohead studio album since. He won the Grammy Award for Best Engineered Non-Classical Album for their sixth album, Hail to the Thief (2003).^[10] For their seventh album, In Rainbows (2007), Radiohead initially hired a new producer, Spike Stent. According to the guitarist Ed O'Brien, Radiohead wanted to get out of the "comfort zone" by working with a new

I can only ever have one band like Radiohead who I've worked with for this many years. That's a very deep and profound relationship. The Beatles could only have ever had one George Martin; they couldn't have switched

producer,^[11] and the bassist, Colin Greenwood, said Godrich was busy working with Charlotte Gainsbourg and Beck.^[12] Radiohead re-enlisted Godrich after their sessions with Stent proved fruitless.^[13]

Godrich's father died during the recording of Radiohead's ninth album, *A Moon Shaped Pool* (2016). Godrich wrote: "Making this album was a very intense experience for me. I lost my dad in the process. Hence a large piece of my soul lives here in a good way."^[14] Godrich provided sound design for *Kid A Mnesia Exhibition* (2021), an interactive experience created for the anniversary of *Kid A* and *Amnesiac*.^[15]

In 2006, CBC described Godrich's collaboration with Radiohead as "the most adventurous band-producer partnership in modern rock".^[3] He has been dubbed the band's "sixth member", an allusion to Beatles producer George Martin being called the "fifth Beatle".^[3] Godrich also plays Chieftain Mews, a long-running character who appears in Radiohead's promotional material.^[16]

producers
halfway through
their career. All
that work, trust,
and knowledge
of each other
would have been
thrown out of the
window and
they'd have to
start again.

—Godrich in
2016^[6]

Side projects

Godrich has produced most of the solo work by the Radiohead singer, Thom Yorke, including his albums *The Eraser* (2006), *Tomorrow's Modern Boxes* (2014)^[17] and *Anima* (2019).^[18] Yorke credits Godrich with helping edit his work, identifying which parts need improvement and which have potential. He gave the example of the *Eraser* song "Black Swan", which originally was "a six-minute load of crap, except for this one juicy bit, and [Godrich] goes past and goes, 'That bit. Fuck the rest.' Usually it's something like that."^[19] Godrich said that working with Yorke alone was more straightforward than with Radiohead, as he did not have to manage the relationship between Yorke and the other band members. On *The Eraser*, he and Yorke were able to "pull in the same direction".^[20]



Godrich (left), Joey Waronker (rear) and Flea performing with Atoms for Peace in 2014

In 2009, to perform songs from *The Eraser*, Godrich and Yorke formed Atoms for Peace, with Godrich on guitar, keyboards and synthesisers. The band also includes the bassist Flea of the Red Hot Chili Peppers, the drummer Joey Waronker of Beck and R.E.M., and the percussionist Mauro Refosco of Forro in the Dark.^[21] Their debut album, *Amok*, produced by Godrich, was released in 2013,^{[22][23]} followed by a tour of Europe, the US and Japan.^[24] Godrich engineered *Junun*, a 2015 album by the Radiohead guitarist Jonny Greenwood, the Israeli composer Shye Ben Tzur and the Indian ensemble the Rajasthan Express, recorded at Mehrangarh Fort in Rajasthan, India.^[25]

Godrich produced *A Light for Attracting Attention* (2022), the debut album by the Smile, a band comprising Yorke, Greenwood and the drummer Tom Skinner.^[26] The Guardian critic Alexis Petridis said the Smile "sound like a simultaneously more skeletal and knottier version of Radiohead", exploring more progressive rock influences with unusual time signatures, complex riffs and "hard-driving" motorik psychedelia.^[27] Godrich mixed *Jarak Qaribak*, a 2023 album by Greenwood and the Israeli rock musician Dudu Tasa.^[28]

Other projects

Following his success with *OK Computer*, Godrich mixed most of Natalie Imbruglia's hit album *Left of the Middle* (1997)^[3] and R.E.M.'s *Up* (1998).^[3] Godrich produced three albums by the American singer-songwriter Beck: *Mutations* (1998), *Sea Change* (2002) and *The Information* (2006). The first two, particularly *Sea Change*, were noted for their atmospheric folk/pop sound, a departure from the spontaneous, sample-heavy style Beck was known for.

Godrich produced several albums by Travis, including their commercial breakthrough, *The Man Who* (1999), and its followup, *The Invisible Band* (2001).^[3] According to the Travis songwriter, Fran Healy, Godrich was frustrated after the gruelling sessions for Radiohead's albums *Kid A* and *Amnesiac*, and so "took it out on us because he couldn't take it out on Radiohead".^[29] The mood settled after an argument.^[29] Healy felt it was good for Godrich to work with "melodic" bands such as Travis as well as more experimental acts such as Radiohead.^[29] Godrich co-produced the Travis albums *The Boy With No Name* (2007) with Mike Hedges.

Godrich produced Pavement's final album, *Terror Twilight* (1999), with Radiohead's Jonny Greenwood contributing harmonica on two tracks.^[30] Godrich, a fan of the band, hoped to help them find a bigger audience with a less "sloppy" record.^[31] Songwriter Stephen Malkmus later described the album as "overproduced" and described conflicts with Godrich.^[32] In response, Godrich tweeted: "I literally slept on a friend's floor in NYC to be able to make that album."^[32] In 2020, Godrich said that he loved the album and had enjoyed making it.^[32]

In 2001, Godrich remixed U2's "Walk On" for its single release, and mixed and contributed production to Air's albums *Talkie Walkie* (2004) and *Pocket Symphony* (2007). In 2002, Godrich was hired to produce the second album by the Strokes, *Room on Fire* (2003). He was fired when their work, according to the band, proved "soulless".^[33] Godrich said of the failed collaboration: "The problem there was that me and [singer Julian Casablancas] are just too similar, we're both control freaks. He wanted to do it his way, I wanted to do it my way, and obviously that's the point of me being there. And I'm saying 'Well, why am I here if you're not prepared to try and do it the way I want to do it?' We got on great, it was just one of those laughable things where it just doesn't work. I wanted them to change, and they didn't."^[34]

Godrich produced the 20th-anniversary version of "Do They Know It's Christmas?", released in December 2004, which featured artists including Paul McCartney, Yorke and Greenwood. Godrich said in 2009: "I'm glad I did it – it raised quite a bit of money. It came on when I was sitting in a lobby somewhere once, and it took me a while to recognise it. It sounded good though, better than I remembered."^[35] McCartney hired Godrich to produce his album *Chaos and Creation in the Backyard* (2005) after he was recommended by the Beatles producer, George Martin. Godrich fired McCartney's touring band and demanded that he abandon songs Godrich found clichéd, over-sentimental, or subpar.^{[3][36]} The album was nominated for several Grammy Awards, including Album of the Year, and Godrich was nominated for Producer of the Year.^[3]

In 2010, Godrich and Beck composed the score for *Scott Pilgrim vs. the World*, Godrich's first film work.^[37] In October 2012, Godrich, along with Joey Waronker and singer Laura Bettinson, released an album as Ultraísta. In 2015, he produced the live album *Roger Waters: The Wall*,^[38] and made a cameo as a Stormtrooper in *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*.^[39] He mixed the Red Hot Chili Peppers' eleventh studio album, *The Getaway* (2016).^[40] Godrich produced the fifth solo album by Roger Waters, *Is This the Life We Really Want?*, released in June 2017.^[41] Godrich, a fan of Waters' work with Pink Floyd, was

critical of Waters' previous solo work and felt his role as producer was to "encourage him, to push him a little bit".^[42] During the COVID-19 pandemic, Godrich worked with the Arcade Fire in isolation in El Paso, Texas, producing their album We (2022).^[43]

***From the Basement* (2006–2009)**

In September 2006, it was announced that Godrich, along with producer Dilly Gent, producer James Chads and John Woollcombe, were shooting the music series *From the Basement*, filmed from London's Maida Vale Studios.^[44] The series focused on intimate, live performances by musicians without a host or an audience. Godrich said, "I'm really interested to capture some really iconic, bigger names– really the whole point is to get people who are having their moment, to try and get a definitive record of what they're doing."^[45]

Godrich conceived *From the Basement* as a means of authentically documenting music being made. Drawing further inspiration from British television music series *The Old Grey Whistle Test*, Godrich came upon the idea of a television programme. Despite early reports, *From the Basement* did not initially appear on British television, because of not taking on corporate sponsors.^[45]

When the pilot was in production, *From the Basement* was to be an online programme only. However, this was not feasible as it did not generate enough money to produce the episodes to the quality level desired. Instead, the producers went to international TV networks to receive money up front to produce the series.^[46] The series did eventually air on television; the first UK broadcast was on Sky Arts on 1 December 2007, featuring four songs performed by Thom Yorke on 8 December 2007.^{[47][48]} The United States premiere was on Rave HD on 22 February 2008, followed by a run on Independent Film Channel, as part of the network's "Automat" block of television programmes in the autumn of 2008.^[49] On 3 November 2008, the series was released on DVD.^[50] A new series of *From the Basement* began on YouTube in May 2022, featuring acts including Idles, Warpaint and Caribou.^[51]

Approach and influences

Godrich credited the producers Phil Thornalley, John Leckie and Steve Lillywhite for teaching him his craft, saying they were "people I watched directly and emulated".^[1] He named his "heroes" as the Beatles producer George Martin, for "inventing the job", and Trevor Horn, for being "the thing that really made me sit up and listen".^[34] He said Joni Mitchell was his favourite artist, citing her "unique combination of musical and lyrical talent".^[1]

Godrich said that although he enjoys listening to "clinical" and "shiny" music, he works best creating "organic" sounds: "Making a dark brown soup was more my skill, [rather] than making a big fairy cake."^[34] He does not approach acts he produces; instead, he waits for them to contact him, as he does not assume he could improve the work of acts he already admires.^[1]

Godrich said he believes people place too much emphasis on studio equipment and "trickery", which is less important than musical sensibility and communication. He said: "I get very annoyed with people asking me what my favourite microphone is. It doesn't matter ... One of the reasons why music has

become generally worse, and I'm sorry to say that, is that people think about technology more than the actual music they're making."^[1] He feels that "the recording process is best when fast, because it's then the smallest obstacle to the actual music".^[1]

Discography

Year	Title	Artist	Credits
1990	<u>Scandalo</u>	<u>Gianna Nannini</u>	<u>Assistant engineer</u>
1990	<u>Tune In</u>	The Silent Blue	Engineer, producer
1991	<u>Superstition</u>	<u>Siouxsie and the Banshees</u>	Assistant engineer
1992	<u>Vivienne McKone</u>	Vivienne McKone	Assistant engineer
1993	<u>Buffalo Skinners</u>	<u>Big Country</u>	Assistant engineer
1994	<u>Carnival of Light</u>	<u>Ride</u>	Engineer
1994	<u>Heitor</u>	<u>Heitor</u>	Engineer
1994	<u>My Iron Lung EP</u>	<u>Radiohead</u>	Producer, engineer
1995	<u>The Bends</u>	Radiohead	Engineer, producer ("Black Star")
1995	<u>Feeling Mission</u>	Harvest Ministers	Engineer
1995	<u>Totally</u>	Tee	Engineer
1995	<u>Booth and the Bad Angel</u>	<u>Tim Booth & Angelo Badalamenti</u>	Engineer
1996	<u>English and French</u>	<u>Hopper</u>	Engineer
1996	<u>Sun..!</u>	<u>Sun..!</u>	Engineer
1996	<u>Sound of..McAlmont & Butler</u>	<u>McAlmont & Butler</u>	Engineer, Assistant engineer, <u>Mixing</u>
1997	<u>OK Computer</u>	Radiohead	Balance engineer, recording technician (Producer)
1997	<u>Silver Sun</u>	<u>Silver Sun</u>	Producer, mixing
1997	<u>Plagiarism</u>	<u>Sparks</u>	Engineer
1997	<u>Left of the Middle</u>	<u>Natalie Imbruglia</u>	mixing
1998	<u>Mutations</u>	<u>Beck</u>	Producer, mixing
1998	<u>Sisters in Pain</u>	Jamaica	Engineer
1998	<u>Try Whistling This</u>	<u>Neil Finn</u>	<u>Remixer</u> , mixing
1998	<u>Up</u>	<u>R.E.M.</u>	Mixing
1999	<u>Can You Still Feel?</u>	<u>Jason Falkner</u>	Engineer

1999	<u><i>The Man Who</i></u>	<u>Travis</u>	Producer, mixing
1999	<u><i>Terror Twilight</i></u>	<u>Pavement</u>	Producer
2000	<u><i>Kid A</i></u>	Radiohead	Producer, engineer, mixing
2001	<u>"Walk On"</u>	<u>U2</u>	Remixer
2001	<u><i>Amnesiac</i></u>	Radiohead	Producer, engineer
2001	<u><i>The Invisible Band</i></u>	Travis	Producer, mixing
2001	<u><i>Regeneration</i></u>	<u>The Divine Comedy</u>	Producer
2002	<u><i>Rouge on Pockmarked Cheeks</i></u>	<u>Brazzaville</u>	Producer, mixing, String ensemble, Fender Rhodes
2002	<u><i>Sea Change</i></u>	Beck	Producer, engineer, mixing, synthesizer, percussion, keyboards
2003	<u><i>City Reading</i></u>	<u>Air & Alessandro Baricco</u>	Mixing
2003	<u><i>Hail to the Thief</i></u>	Radiohead	Editing, mixing, Operation, Recording, producer
2004	<u><i>Absent Friends</i></u>	The Divine Comedy	Mixing
2004	<u><i>Heroes to Zeros</i></u>	<u>The Beta Band</u>	Mixing
2004	<u><i>Talkie Walkie</i></u>	Air	Producer, engineer, mixing
2004	<u><i>When It Falls</i></u>	<u>Zero 7</u>	Guitar, Sounds
2004	<u>"Do They Know It's Christmas?"</u>	<u>Band Aid 20</u>	Producer
2005	<u><i>Chaos and Creation in the Backyard</i></u>	<u>Paul McCartney</u>	Producer, piano and Epiphone acoustic guitar loops
2005	<u><i>Guero</i></u>	Beck	Mixing
2005	<u><i>The Roads Don't Love You</i></u>	<u>Gemma Hayes</u>	Mixing
2006	<u><i>The Eraser</i></u>	<u>Thom Yorke</u>	Producer, mixing, musician, arranger
2006	<u><i>5:55</i></u>	<u>Charlotte Gainsbourg</u>	Producer, mixing
2006	<u><i>The Garden</i></u>	<u>Zero 7</u>	Acoustic guitar, engineer
2006	<u><i>The Information</i></u>	Beck	Producer, engineer, mixing, keyboards, Programming, Effects, Scratching,

			Tambourine, percussion, background vocals, <u>Speak & Spell</u> , whistle, Tote A Tune, Kalimba, drums, <u>Game Boy</u>
2006	<u>Dad's Weird Dream</u>	Silver Sun	Remixing
2007	<u>Pocket Symphony</u>	Air	Producer
2007	<u>The Boy With No Name</u>	Travis	Producer
2007	<u>In Rainbows</u>	Radiohead	Producer, engineer, mixing
2008	<u>Odd Couple</u>	Gnarls Barkley	Engineer, mixing
2010	<u>Turn Ons</u>	<u>The Hotrats</u>	Producer, engineer, mixing, Additional instruments and noises
2011	<u>The King of Limbs</u>	Radiohead	Producer, engineer, mixing
2011	<u>Supercollider / The Butcher</u>	Radiohead	Producer, engineer, mixing
2011	<u>The Daily Mail / Staircase</u>	Radiohead	Producer, engineer, mixing
2012	<u>A Different Ship</u>	<u>Here We Go Magic</u>	Producer
2012	<u>Ultraísta</u>	<u>Ultraísta</u>	Composer, engineer, mixing, producer
2013	<u>AMOK</u>	<u>Atoms For Peace</u>	Producer, Programmer
2014	<u>Warpaint</u>	<u>Warpaint</u>	Mixing
2014	<u>Tomorrow's Modern Boxes</u>	Thom Yorke	Composer, producer
2015	<u>Junun</u>	Shye Ben Tzur, Jonny Greenwood, the Rajasthan Express	Recording, engineer, mixing
2016	<u>A Moon Shaped Pool</u>	Radiohead	Producer
2016	<u>The Getaway</u>	<u>Red Hot Chili Peppers</u>	Mixing
2017	<u>Is This the Life We Really Want?</u>	<u>Roger Waters</u>	Producer, keyboards, guitar, sound collages, arrangements

2019	<u>Anima</u>	Thom Yorke	Composer, producer
2020	<u>Sister</u>	Ultraísta	Composer, engineer, mixing, producer
2022	<u>We</u>	<u>Arcade Fire</u>	Producer
2022	<u>A Light for Attracting Attention</u>	<u>The Smile</u>	Composer, producer
2024	<u>Tangk</u>	<u>Idles</u>	Producer

Composition credits

Year	Song	Artist	Album
1997	"She"	<u>The Sundays</u>	<u>Static & Silence</u>
2004	"Speed Dial No 2"	<u>Zero 7</u>	<u>When It Falls</u>
2006	"Movie Theme"	Beck	<u>The Information</u>
2006	"Soldier Jane"	Beck	<i>The Information</i>
2006	"The Horrible Fanfare/Landslide/Exoskeleton"	Beck	<i>The Information</i>
2006	"Motorcade"	Beck	<i>The Information</i>
2010	List of composed songs "Universal Theme" "Hillcrest Park" "Fight!" "Love Me Some Walking" "Talk To The Fist" "Rumble" "Feel The Wrath" "The Grind" "Hello Envy" "Mystery Attacker" "Second Cup" "The Vegan" "Bass Battle" "Sorry I Guess" "Roxy" "The Ninth Circle" "The Fight Is Over" "Gideon Calling" "Level 7" "Welcome To Chaos Theatre" "Fast Entrance Into Hell" "Chau Down" "Game Over" "So Alone" "Round 2" "A Different Guy" "Boss Battle" "Blowing Up Right Now" "Aftermath" "Bye And Stuff"	Nigel Godrich	<i>Scott Pilgrim vs. the World (Original Motion Picture Score)</i>

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External links

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 - [Allmusic Credits \(https://www.allmusic.com/artist/p152770/credits\)](https://www.allmusic.com/artist/p152770/credits)
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