

= The Division Bell =

The Division Bell is the fourteenth studio album by English progressive rock group Pink Floyd . It was released in the UK by EMI Records on 28 March 1994 , and the US by Columbia Records on 4 April .

The music was written mostly by David Gilmour and Rick Wright ; lyrically , the album deals with themes of communication . Recording took place in several locations , including the band 's Britannia Row Studios , and Gilmour 's houseboat , Astoria . The production team included Pink Floyd stalwarts such as producer Bob Ezrin , engineer Andy Jackson and saxophonist Dick Parry . Gilmour 's new wife , Polly Samson , co @-@ wrote many of the album 's lyrics , and Wright performed his first lead vocal on a Pink Floyd album since 1973 's The Dark Side of the Moon .

The album reached number one in the UK and the US , but received mixed reviews . Its release was followed immediately by a tour of the US and Europe . The Division Bell was certified gold , platinum and double platinum in the US in 1994 , and triple platinum in 1999 .

= = Concept = =

The Division Bell deals with themes of communication and the idea that talking can solve many of life 's problems . In the Studio radio host Redbeard suggested that the album offered " the very real possibility of transcending it all , through shivering moments of grace " . Songs such as " Poles Apart " and " Lost for Words " have been interpreted as references to the estrangement between Pink Floyd and former band member Roger Waters , who left in 1985 ; however , Gilmour denied this , and said : " People can invent and relate to a song in their personal ways , but it 's a little late at this point for us to be conjuring Roger up . " The title refers to the division bell rung in the British parliament to announce a vote . Drummer Nick Mason said : " It does have some meaning . It 's about people making choices , yeas or nays . "

Produced a few years after the collapse of the Eastern Bloc , " A Great Day for Freedom " juxtaposes the general euphoria of , for instance , the fall of the Berlin Wall , with the subsequent wars and ethnic cleansing , particularly in Yugoslavia . Audio samples of Stephen Hawking , originally recorded for a BT television advertisement , were used in " Keep Talking " ; Gilmour was so moved by Hawking 's sentiment in the advert that he contacted the advertising company for permission to use the recordings on the album . Mason said it felt " politically incorrect to take ideas from advertising , but it seemed a very relevant piece . " At the end of the album Gilmour 's stepson Charlie is heard hanging up the telephone receiver on Pink Floyd manager Steve O 'Rourke , who had pleaded to be allowed to appear on a Pink Floyd album .

= = Recording = =

In January 1993 , Gilmour , Mason and Wright began improvising new material in sessions at a remodelled Britannia Row Studios . Although the band were initially apprehensive about recording together , because Roger Waters had left the group after the album The Final Cut . They were in need of a new bass player , and after the first day their confidence improved and soon , bassist Guy Pratt (who had , since the end of the Momentary Lapse of Reason Tour , started a relationship with Wright 's daughter , Gala) was asked to contribute . According to Mason , " an interesting phenomenon occurred , which was that Pratt 's playing tended to change the mood of the music we had created on our own " . Without the legal problems experienced during production of their 1987 album , A Momentary Lapse of Reason , Gilmour was at ease ; if he felt the band were " getting somewhere " , he would press the record key of a two @-@ track DAT recorder . At one point Gilmour surreptitiously recorded Wright playing the keyboard , and captured material which later formed the basis for three pieces of music .

The improvisations the band recorded helped spur their creative process , and after about two weeks they had around 65 pieces of music . With engineer Andy Jackson back on the team , and Bob Ezrin employed as co @-@ producer , production moved to Gilmour 's houseboat and

recording studio , Astoria . The band listened to and voted on each track , and whittled the material down to about 27 pieces of music . Eliminating some tracks , and merging others , they arrived at a list about fifteen strong songs , before cutting another four to produce a tracklist of eleven . Song selection was based upon a system of points , whereby all three members would award marks out of ten to each candidate song , a system skewed somewhat by Wright 's decision to award his songs ten points each , and the other songs no points . Wright was not contractually a full member of the band , a situation which upset him . Wright later reflected : " It came very close to a point where I wasn 't going to do the album , because I didn 't feel that what we 'd agreed was fair . " Despite his frustration he chose to remain , and received his first songwriting credits on any Pink Floyd album since 1975 's *Wish You Were Here* .

Gilmour 's new wife , Polly Samson , also received songwriting credits . Initially , her role was limited to providing encouragement for her husband , but she later helped Gilmour write " *High Hopes* " (a song about Gilmour 's childhood and early life in Cambridge) . Her role expanded to co-writing a further six songs , something which did not sit well with Ezrin . In an interview for *Mojo* magazine Gilmour admitted that Samson 's contributions had " ruffled the management 's [feathers] " , but Ezrin later reflected that her presence was inspirational for Gilmour , and that she " pulled the whole album together " . She also helped Gilmour , who , following his divorce , had developed a cocaine addiction .

Keyboard player Jon Carin and drummer / percussionist Gary Wallis were brought in to complete the band before recording began . Five backing vocalists were also hired , including Sam Brown , and Momentary Lapse tour singer Durga McBroom . The band then moved to Olympia Studios , recorded most of the ' winning ' tracks over the space of a week . After a summer break , they returned to Astoria to record more backing tracks . Ezrin worked on the various drum sounds , and previous collaborator and orchestral composer Michael Kamen provided the album 's string arrangements which were recorded at Abbey Road Studio Two by Steve McLaughlin . Dick Parry played saxophone on his first Pink Floyd album for almost 20 years , on " *Wearing the Inside Out* " , and Chris Thomas was booked to undertake the final mix . Between September and December recording and mixing sessions were held at Metropolis Studios in Chiswick , and the Creek Recording Studios in London . In September , the band performed at a celebrity charity concert at Cowdray House , in Midhurst . The album was mastered at the Mastering Lab in Los Angeles , by Doug Sax and James Guthrie .

Jackson edited unused material from the Division Bell sessions , described by Mason as ambient music , into an hour @-@ long composition tentatively titled *The Big Spliff* , but Pink Floyd decided not to release it . Some of *The Big Spliff* was used to create the band 's final album , *The Endless River* (2014) .

== Instrumentation ==

With the aid of Gilmour 's guitar technician , Phil Taylor , Carin located some of Pink Floyd 's older keyboards from the warehouse in which they had been stored , including a Farfisa organ . Some of the sounds sampled from these instruments were used on the tracks " *Take It Back* " , and " *Marooned* " . Carin was joined on keyboards by Ezrin , Durga McBroom supplied backing vocals alongside Sam Brown , Carol Kenyan , Jackie Sheridan , and Rebecca Leigh @-@ White .

Gilmour used several styles on the album . " *What Do You Want from Me* " is influenced by Chicago blues , and " *Poles Apart* " contains folksy overtones . Gilmour 's improvised guitar solos on " *Marooned* " used a DigiTech Whammy pedal to pitch @-@ shift the guitar notes over a full octave . On " *Take It Back* " , he used an EBow , an electronic device which simulates the sound of a bow on the strings , on a Gibson J @-@ 200 guitar through a Zoom effects unit .

== Packaging and title ==

To avoid competing against other album releases (as had happened with *A Momentary Lapse*) Pink Floyd set a deadline of April 1994 , at which point they would begin a new tour . By January of

that year however , the band still had not decided on a title for the album . The list of names being considered included Pow Wow and Down to Earth . At a dinner one night , writer Douglas Adams , spurred on by the promise of a payment to his favourite charity , the Environmental Investigation Agency , suggested " the division bell " (used in the lyrics for " High Hopes ") , and the name stuck .

Longtime Floyd collaborator Storm Thorgerson provided the album artwork . He erected two large metal heads , each the height of a double @-@ decker bus , in a field near Ely . The sculptures were positioned close together , and photographed in profile , to give the illusion that not only were they either facing or talking to each other , they also presented the viewer with a third face . The sculptures were devised by Keith Breeden , and constructed by John Robertson . Ely Cathedral is visible on the horizon . The sculptures are now in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland , Ohio .

The album was released in the UK and US on CD , vinyl , and compact cassette , each with its own format and label @-@ specific design . It was also available in mini @-@ disc format . Two 7 @. @ 5 @-@ metre (25 ft) stone sculptures were made by Aden Hynes for the cassette releases , and photographed in the same style as the metal heads . The artwork inside the CD liner notes revolves around a similar theme , with the image of the two heads formed by various other objects , such as newspapers (" A Great Day for Freedom ") , coloured glass (" Poles Apart ") , and boxing gloves (" Lost for Words ") . Pages two and three portray a picture from the Chilean Cerro Tololo Inter @-@ American Observatory . The CD case itself had the name of Pink Floyd printed in Braille on the left front side .

= = Release and reception = =

On 10 January 1994 a press reception to announce The Division Bell and world tour was held at a former US Naval Air Station in North Carolina , in the US . A purpose @-@ built Skyship 600 airship , manufactured in the UK , toured the US until it returned to Weeksville , and was destroyed by a thunderstorm on 27 June . Pieces of the aircraft were sold as souvenirs . The band held another reception , in the UK , on 21 March . This time they used an A60 airship , translucent , and painted to look like a fish , which took journalists on a tour of London . The airship , which was lit internally so it glowed in the night sky , was also flown in northern Europe .

The Division Bell was released in the UK by EMI Records on 28 March 1994 , and in the US on 4 April , and went straight to # 1 in both countries . The Division Bell was certified silver and gold in the UK on 1 April 1994 , platinum a month later and 2x platinum on 1 October . In the US , it was certified gold and double platinum on 6 June 1994 , and triple platinum on 29 January 1999 .

Despite strong sales , The Division Bell received mixed reviews . Tom Sinclair of Entertainment Weekly gave it a " D " , writing that " avarice is the only conceivable explanation for this glib , vacuous cipher of an album , which is notable primarily for its stomach @-@ turning merger of progressive @-@ rock pomposity and New Age noodling " . Rolling Stone 's Tom Graves criticised Gilmour 's performance , stating that his guitar solos had " settled into rambling , indistinct asides that are as forgettable as they used to be indelible ... only on ' What Do You Want from Me ' does Gilmour sound like he cares " . Nevertheless , the album was nominated in the 1995 Brit awards for the " Best Album by a British Artist " , but lost to Blur 's Parklife . In March the same year the band was awarded with a Grammy for the " Best Rock Instrumental Performance " on " Marooned " .

In Uncut 's 2011 Pink Floyd : The Ultimate Music Guide , Graeme Thomson wrote that The Division Bell " might just be the dark horse of the Floyd canon . The opening triptych of songs is a hugely impressive return to something very close to the eternal essence of Pink Floyd , and much of the rest retains a quiet power and a meditative quality that betrays a genuine sense of unity . "

Uncut reviewed the album once again in 2014 to celebrate the 20th anniversary reissue , and in their review praised the album for its production , citing that the album sounded much " more like a classic Pink Floyd album than 1983 's The Final Cut " and throughout the album noted the empathy and connection between Wright and Gilmour , stating that these moments were " at the album 's musical heart " .

= = Tour = =

Two days after the album 's release , the band 's Division Bell Tour began at Joe Robbie Stadium , in suburban Miami . The set list began with 1967 's " Astronomy Domine " , before moving to tracks from 1987 's A Momentary Lapse of Reason , and The Division Bell . Songs from Wish You Were Here and The Dark Side of the Moon featured , as well as The Wall . Backing musicians included Sam Brown , Jon Carin , Claudia Fontaine , Durga McBroom , Dick Parry , Guy Pratt , Tim Renwick , and Gary Wallis . The tour continued in the US through April , May and mid @-@ June , before moving to Canada , and then returning to the US in July . As the tour reached Europe in late July , Waters was invited to join the band , but he declined , and later expressed his annoyance that some Floyd songs were being performed again in large venues . On the first night of the UK leg of the tour on 12 October , a 1 @,@ 200 capacity stand collapsed , but with no serious injuries ; the performance was rescheduled .

During the tour an anonymous person named Publius posted a message on an internet newsgroup , inviting fans to solve a riddle supposedly concealed in the new album . The veracity of the message was demonstrated when white lights in front of the stage at a performance in East Rutherford spelled out the words Enigma Publius . During a televised concert at Earls Court in October 1994 , the word enigma was projected in large letters on to the backdrop of the stage . Mason later acknowledged that the Publius Enigma did exist , and that it had been instigated by the record company rather than the band . As of 2014 the puzzle remains unsolved .

The tour ended at Earls Court on 29 October 1994 , and was the group 's final concert performance until Live 8 . Estimates placed the total number of tickets sold at over 5 @.@ 3 million , and gross income at about \$ 100 million . A live album of the tour , named Pulse , and a concert video , also named Pulse , (which was shot on 20 October 1994) were released in June 1995 .

= = Track listing = =

All lead vocals performed by David Gilmour , except where noted .

= = = LP = = =

= = = 20th anniversary double @-@ LP edition = = =

= = = Reissues = = =

Since its release in 1994 , The Division Bell has been reissued twice . The first was part of the 2011 Why Pink Floyd ... ? campaign which saw it remastered by Andy Jackson and released as a standalone CD and as part of the Discovery box set which collects all of the 14 studio albums together for the first time . The second reissue occurred on 30 June 2014 , which saw the album released as a " 20th anniversary deluxe edition " box set and a 20th anniversary double @-@ LP vinyl reissue . The box set contains the 2011 remaster of the album ; a 5 @.@ 1 surround sound remix by Andy Jackson ; 2 @-@ LP record on 180g vinyl ; a red 7 " " Take It Back " single ; a clear 7 " " High Hopes / Keep Talking " single ; a blue , laser @-@ etched 12 " " High Hopes " single ; book and assorted art cards . The 2014 reissues saw the first release of the full album on vinyl as the 1994 vinyl release saw only edited versions of the songs to keep it to a single LP .

= = Personnel = =

= = Charts and certifications = =

