

= Joy Division =

Joy Division were an English rock band formed in 1976 in Salford , Greater Manchester . Originally named Warsaw , the band consisted of singer Ian Curtis , guitarist and keyboardist Bernard Sumner , bassist Peter Hook , and drummer Stephen Morris .

Formed by Sumner and Hook after the two attended a Sex Pistols gig , Joy Division moved beyond their punk roots to develop a sound and style that made them one of the pioneers of the post @-@ punk movement . Their self @-@ released 1978 debut EP , An Ideal for Living , drew the attention of the Manchester television personality Tony Wilson , who signed the group to his independent label , Factory Records . Joy Division 's debut album , Unknown Pleasures , recorded with producer Martin Hannett , was released in 1979 to critical acclaim . As the band 's popularity grew , Curtis , who suffered from personal problems that included severe depression , a failing marriage , and epilepsy , found it increasingly difficult to perform at live concerts , during which he occasionally collapsed into seizures .

In May 1980 , on the eve of the band 's first American tour , Curtis , aged 23 , committed suicide . The group 's second and final album , Closer , was released two months later ; the album and preceding single " Love Will Tear Us Apart " became the band 's highest charting release . After Curtis 's death , the remaining members continued as New Order and achieved critical and commercial success . Although their career spanned less than four years , Joy Division have continued to exert a vast influence on a variety of subsequent artists .

= = History = =

= = = Formation = = =

On 20 July 1976 , childhood friends Sumner and Hook separately attended a Sex Pistols show at the Manchester Lesser Free Trade Hall . The following day Hook borrowed £ 35 from his mother to buy his first bass guitar . Sumner later said that he felt that the Pistols " destroyed the myth of being a pop star , of a musician being some kind of god that you had to worship " . Inspired by the performance , Sumner and Hook formed a band with their friend Terry Mason , who had also attended the show . Sumner bought a guitar , and Mason a drum kit . They invited schoolfriend Martin Gresty to join as vocalist , but he turned them down after getting a job at a local factory . An advertisement was placed in the Virgin Records shop in Manchester for a vocalist . Ian Curtis , who knew them from earlier gigs , responded and was hired without audition . Sumner said that he " knew he was all right to get on with and that 's what we based the whole group on . If we liked someone , they were in " .

Buzzcocks manager Richard Boon and frontman Pete Shelley have both been credited with suggesting the band name " Stiff Kittens " , but settled on " Warsaw " shortly before their first gig , referencing David Bowie 's song " Warszawa " . Warsaw debuted on 29 May 1977 at the Electric Circus , supporting the Buzzcocks , Penetration and John Cooper Clarke . They received immediate national exposure due to reviews of the gig in the NME by Paul Morley and in Sounds by Ian Wood . Tony Tabac played drums that night after joining the band two days earlier . Mason was soon made the band 's manager and Tabac was replaced on drums in June 1977 by Steve Brotherdale , who also played in the punk band Panik . During his tenure with Warsaw , Brotherdale tried to get Curtis to leave the band and join Panik and even got Curtis to audition for the band . In July 1977 , Warsaw recorded a set of five demo tracks at Pennine Sound Studios , Oldham . Uneasy with Brotherdale 's aggressive personality , the band fired him soon after the demo sessions . Driving home from the studio , they pulled over and asked Brotherdale to check on a flat tyre ; when he got out of the car , they sped off .

In August 1977 , the band placed an advertisement in a music shop window seeking a replacement drummer . Stephen Morris , who had attended the same school as Curtis , was the sole respondent . Deborah Curtis , Ian 's wife , stated that Morris " fitted perfectly " with the other men , and that with

his addition Warsaw became a "complete 'family' ". To avoid confusion with the London punk band Warsaw Pakt, the band renamed themselves Joy Division in early 1978, borrowing their new name from the prostitution wing of a Nazi concentration camp mentioned in the 1955 novel *House of Dolls*. In December, the group recorded what became their debut EP, *An Ideal for Living*, at Pennine Sound Studio and played their final gig as Warsaw on New Year's Eve at The Swinging Apple in Liverpool. Billed as Warsaw to ensure an audience, the band played their first gig as Joy Division on 25 January 1978 at Pip's Disco in Manchester.

= = = Early releases = = =

Joy Division were approached by RCA Records to record a cover of Nolan "N.F." Porter's "Keep on Keepin' On" and were afforded recording time at a professional Manchester studio in return. Joy Division spent late March and April 1978 writing and rehearsing material. During the Stiff / Chiswick Challenge concert at Manchester's Rafters Club on 14 April, the group caught the attention of Tony Wilson and Rob Gretton. Curtis berated Wilson for not putting the group on his Granada Television show *So It Goes*; Wilson responded that Joy Division would be the next band he would showcase on TV. Gretton, the venue's resident DJ, was so impressed by the band's performance that he convinced them to take him on as their manager. Gretton, whose "dogged determination" would later be credited for much of the band's public success, contributed the business skills that Joy Division lacked to provide them with a better foundation for creativity. Joy Division spent the first week of May 1978 recording at Manchester's Arrow Studios. The band were unhappy with the Grapevine Records head John Anderson's insistence on adding synthesiser into the mix to soften the sound, and asked to be dropped from the contract that they had recently signed with RCA.

Joy Division made their recorded debut in June 1978 when the band self @-@ released *An Ideal for Living*, and two weeks later a track of theirs, "At a Later Date", was featured on the compilation album *Short Circuit: Live at the Electric Circus* (which had been recorded live in October 1977). In the *Melody Maker* review of the EP, Chris Brazier said that it "has the familiar rough @-@ hewn nature of home @-@ produced records, but they're no mere drone @-@ vendors? there are a lot of good ideas here, and they could be a very interesting band by now, seven months on". The packaging of *An Ideal for Living*? which featured a drawing of a Hitler Youth member on the cover? coupled with the nature of the band's name, fuelled speculation about their political affiliations. While Hook and Sumner later admitted to being intrigued by fascism at the time, Morris insisted that the group's obsession with Nazi imagery came from a desire to keep memories of the sacrifices of their parents and grandparents during World War II alive. He argued that accusations of neo @-@ Nazi sympathies merely provoked the band "to keep on doing it, because that's the kind of people we are".

In September 1978, Joy Division made their television debut performing "Shadowplay" on *So It Goes*, with an introduction by Wilson in which he misidentified Sumner, and not Hook, as being from Salford. In October, Joy Division contributed two tracks recorded with producer Martin Hannett to the compilation double @-@ 7 "EP *A Factory Sample*, the first release by Tony Wilson's record label, Factory Records. In the *NME* review of the EP, Paul Morley hailed the band as "the missing link between Elvis Presley and [Siouxsie and ] the Banshees". Joy Division joined Factory's roster, after buying themselves out of the deal with RCA. Rob Gretton was made a partner of the label so as to represent the interests of the band. On 27 December, Ian Curtis had his first recognisable epileptic episode. During the ride home after a show at the Hope and Anchor pub in London, Curtis had a seizure and was taken to a hospital. In spite of his illness, Joy Division's career progressed. He appeared on the cover of 13 January 1979 issue of the *NME* following the persistence of music journalist Paul Morley. That month the band recorded their first session for BBC Radio 1 DJ John Peel. According to Deborah Curtis, "Sandwiched in between these two important landmarks was the realization that Ian's illness was something we would have to learn to accommodate".

### == = Unknown Pleasures = = =

The band recorded their debut album , Unknown Pleasures in April 1979 at Strawberry Studios , Stockport . Producer Martin Hannett significantly altered their live sound , a fact that greatly displeased the band at the time . Hook said in 2006 that the album " definitely didn 't turn out sounding the way I wanted it [ ... ] But now I can see that Martin did a good job on it [ ... ] There 's no two ways about it , Martin Hannett created the Joy Division sound " . The album cover was designed by Peter Saville , who would go on to provide artwork for future Joy Division releases . Unknown Pleasures was released in June and sold through its initial pressing of 10 @, @ 000 copies . Tony Wilson said that the relative success of the album turned the indie label into a true business and a " revolutionary force " that operated outside of the major record label system . Reviewing the album for Melody Maker , writer Jon Savage called Unknown Pleasures an " opaque manifesto " and declared " [ leaving ] the twentieth century is difficult ; most people prefer to go back and nostalgize . Oh boy . Joy Division at least set a course in the present with contrails for the future ? perhaps you can 't ask for much more . Indeed , Unknown Pleasures may very well be one of the best , white , English , debut LPs of the year " .

Joy Division performed on Granada TV again in July 1979 , and made their only nationwide TV appearance in September on BBC2 's Something Else . They supported the Buzzcocks in a 24 @-@ venue UK tour that began that October , which allowed the band to quit their regular jobs . The non @-@ album single " Transmission " was released in November . Joy Division 's burgeoning success drew a devoted following who were stereotyped as " intense young men dressed in grey overcoats " .

### == = Closer = = =

In January 1980 , Joy Division set out on a European tour . While the tour schedule was difficult , Curtis experienced only two grand mal seizures in the tour 's final two months . With Martin Hannett again producing , the band recorded their second album , Closer , that March at London 's Britannia Row Studios . March also saw the release of the Licht und Blindheit single ( featuring the songs " Atmosphere " ( A side ) and " Dead Souls " ( B side ) ) on the small French label Sordide Sentimental .

Lack of sleep and long hours destabilised Curtis 's epilepsy and his seizures became almost uncontrollable . Curtis would often have seizures during shows , which left him feeling ashamed and depressed . As the band worried about their singer , some audience members thought his behaviour was part of the show . On 7 April , Curtis attempted suicide by overdosing on his anti @-@ seizure medication ; phenobarbitone . The next evening , Joy Division were set to play a gig at the Derby Hall in Bury . With Curtis recovering , it was decided that the band would play a combined set with Alan Hemsall of Crispy Ambulance and Simon Topping of A Certain Ratio filling in on vocals for the first few songs . Curtis came onstage to perform for part of the set . When Topping came back out to finish the set for Curtis , some in the audience began throwing bottles at the stage . Gretton leapt into the crowd and a riot ensued . Several April gigs were cancelled due to the continuing ill health of Curtis . The band played what would be their final show at the University of Birmingham 's High Hall on 2 May ; the show included Joy Division 's first and only performance of " Ceremony " , which would later be recorded by New Order and released as their first single .

### == = Curtis ' suicide and aftermath = = =

Joy Division were due to begin their first American tour in May 1980 . While Curtis had expressed a desire to take time off to visit a few acquaintances , he feigned excitement about the tour around the band because he did not want to disappoint his band mates or Factory Records . At the time , Curtis 's relationship with his wife , Deborah ( the couple married in 1975 as teenagers ) , was strained . Contributing factors were his ill health , his excluding her from band activities , and his affair with a young Belgian woman named Annik Honoré whom he had met on a European tour . The evening

before Joy Division were to fly out for their first American tour , Curtis returned to his home in Macclesfield to talk to his by then estranged wife . He asked her to drop the divorce suit she had filed ; later , he told her to leave him alone in the house until he caught a train to Manchester the following morning . Early on 18 May 1980 , having spent the night watching the Werner Herzog film *Stroszek* , Curtis hanged himself in his kitchen . Deborah discovered his body later that day when she returned to their home . It came as a shock to both band members and their management . Wilson said in 2005 , " I think all of us made the mistake of not thinking his suicide was going to happen [ ... ] We all completely underestimated the danger . We didn 't take it seriously . That 's how stupid we were " .

Music critic Simon Reynolds said Curtis 's suicide " made for instant myth " . Jon Savage 's obituary said that " now no one will remember what his work with Joy Division was like when he was alive ; it will be perceived as tragic rather than courageous . " In June 1980 , the posthumous single " Love Will Tear Us Apart " was released , which hit number thirteen on the UK Singles Chart . In July 1980 , *Closer* finally came out , peaking at number six on the UK Albums Chart . NME reviewer Charles Shaar Murray wrote , " *Closer* is as magnificent a memorial ( for ' Joy Division ' as much as for Ian Curtis ) as any post @-@ Presley popular musician could have . "

Stephen Morris has said that even without his suicide it was unlikely that , because of his depression and illness , Curtis and Joy Division would have endured as they were . The members of Joy Division had made a pact long before Curtis 's death that , should any member leave , the remaining members would change the name of the group . Eventually renaming themselves New Order , the band was reborn as a three @-@ piece with Sumner assuming vocal duties ; the group later recruited Morris 's girlfriend Gillian Gilbert to round out the line @-@ up as keyboardist and second guitarist . Starting as a member of punk group The Inadequates , Gilbert had become friends with the band 's members and had played guitar at a Joy Division performance when Curtis had been unable to play .

New Order 's first single , 1981 's " Ceremony " , was formed from the last two songs written with Curtis . While the group struggled in its early years to escape the shadow of Joy Division , New Order went on to far greater commercial success than their predecessor band with a very different , more upbeat and dance @-@ orientated sound .

A number of outtakes and live material have been released since the band 's demise . Still , featuring live tracks and rare recordings was issued in 1981 . Factory issued the *Substance* compilation in 1988 , including several out @-@ of @-@ print singles . *Permanent* was released in 1995 by London Records , which had acquired the Joy Division catalogue after Factory 's 1992 bankruptcy . A comprehensive box set , *Heart and Soul* , appeared in 1997 .

= = Musical style = =

= = = Sound = = =

Joy Division took time to develop their style . As Warsaw , they played " fairly undistinguished punk @-@ inflected hard @-@ rock " . Critic Simon Reynolds wrote that their originality only " really became apparent as the songs got slower " . Their music took on a " sparse " quality ; according to Reynolds , " Peter Hook 's bass carried the melody , Bernard Sumner 's guitar left gaps rather than filling up the group 's sound with dense riffage and Steve Morris 's drums seemed to circle the rim of a crater . " According to music critic Jon Savage , " Joy Division were not punk but they were directly inspired by its energy " . In 1994 Sumner said the band 's characteristic sound " came out naturally : I 'm more rhythm and chords , and Hooky was melody . He used to play high lead bass because I liked my guitar to sound distorted , and the amplifier I had would only work when it was at full volume . When Hooky played low , he couldn 't hear himself . Steve has his own style which is different to other drummers . To me , a drummer in the band is the clock , but Steve wouldn 't be the clock , because he 's passive : he would follow the rhythm of the band , which gave us our own edge " . By " *Closer* " , Curtis had adapted a low baritone voice , drawing comparisons to Jim Morrison of

the Doors ( one of Curtis 's favourite bands ) .

Sumner largely acted as the band 's director , a role he continued in New Order . While Sumner was the group 's primary guitarist , Curtis played the instrument on a few recorded songs and during a few shows . Curtis hated playing guitar , but the band insisted he do so . Sumner said , " He played in quite a bizarre way and that to us was interesting , because no one else would play like Ian " . During the recording sessions for Closer , Sumner began using self @-@ built synthesisers and Hook used a six @-@ string bass for more melody .

Producer Martin Hannett " dedicated himself to capturing and intensifying Joy Division 's eerie spatiality " . Hannett believed punk rock was sonically conservative because of its refusal to use studio technology to create sonic space . The producer instead aimed to create a more expansive sound on the group 's records . Hannett said , " [ Joy Division ] were a gift to a producer , because they didn 't have a clue . They didn 't argue " . Hannett demanded clean and clear " sound separation " not only for individual instruments , but even for individual pieces of Morris 's drumkit . Morris recalled , " Typically on tracks he considered to be potential singles , he 'd get me to play each drum on its own to avoid any bleed @-@ through of sound " . Music journalist Richard Cook noted that Hannett 's role was " crucial " . There are " devices of distance " in his production and " the sound is an illusion of physicality " .

= = = Lyrics = = =

Curtis was the group 's sole lyricist . He wrote frantically when the mood took him , and then listened to the band 's music ( which was often arranged by Sumner ) and chose lyrics most appropriate to the sound . Imagery and words revolving around " coldness , pressure , darkness , crisis , failure , collapse , loss of control " recur in his songs . In 1979 , NME journalist Paul Rambali wrote , " The themes of Joy Division 's music are sorrowful , painful and sometimes deeply sad . " Music journalist Jon Savage wrote that " Curtis 's great lyrical achievement was to capture the underlying reality of a society in turmoil , and to make it both universal and personal , " while noting that " the lyrics reflected , in mood and approach , his interest in romantic and science @-@ fiction literature . " Musicologist Robert Palmer wrote that William S. Burroughs and J. G. Ballard were " obvious influences " to Curtis , and Morris also remembered the singer reading T. S. Eliot . Deborah Curtis also remembered Curtis reading works by writers such as Fyodor Dostoevsky , Friedrich Nietzsche , Jean @-@ Paul Sartre , Franz Kafka , and Herman Hesse .

The band refused to explain their lyrics to the press and did not print lyrics sheets . Curtis told the fanzine Printed Noise , " We haven 't got a message really ; the lyrics are open to interpretation . They 're multidimensional . You can read into them what you like . " The other band members later admitted they paid little attention to what Curtis was writing . In a 1987 interview with Option , Morris said that they " just thought the songs were sort of sympathetic and more uplifting than depressing . But everyone 's got their own opinion . " Deborah Curtis recalled that only with the release of Closer did many who were close to the singer realise " [ h ] is intentions and feelings were all there within the lyrics " . The surviving members of the band in retrospect regret not seeing warning signs in Curtis 's lyrics . " This sounds awful but it was only after Ian died that we sat down and listened to the lyrics " , Morris said in 2007 . " You 'd find yourself thinking , ' Oh my God , I missed this one ' . Because I 'd look at Ian 's lyrics and think how clever he was putting himself in the position of someone else . I never believed he was writing about himself . Looking back , how could I have been so bleedin ' stupid ? Of course he was writing about himself . But I didn 't go in and grab him and ask , ' What 's up ? ' I have to live with that " .

= = = Live performances = = =

In contrast to the sound of their studio recordings , Joy Division typically played loudly and aggressively during live performances . The band were unhappy with Hannett 's mixing of Unknown Pleasures , which reduced the abrasiveness of their sound . According to Sumner , " the music was loud and heavy , and we felt that Martin had toned it down , especially with the guitars " . In concert ,

the group interacted little with the crowd ; Paul Morley wrote , " [ D ] uring a Joy Division set , outside of the songs , you 'll be lucky to hear more than two or three words . Hello and goodbye . No introductions , no promotion " . While singing , Curtis would often perform what was referred to as his " ' dead fly ' dance " , where the singer 's arms would " start flying in [ a ] semicircular , hypnotic curve " . Simon Reynolds noted that Curtis 's dancing style was reminiscent of an epileptic fit , and that he was dancing in the manner for some months before he was diagnosed with epilepsy . Live performances became problematic for Joy Division , due to Curtis 's condition . Sumner later said , " We didn 't have flashing lights , but sometimes a particular drum beat would do something to him . He 'd go off in a trance for a bit , then he 'd lose it and have a [ n epileptic ] fit . We 'd have to stop the show and carry him off to the dressing @-@ room where he 'd cry his eyes out because this appalling thing had just happened to him " .

= = Legacy = =

Despite their short career and cult status , Joy Division have exerted a wide @-@ reaching influence . John Bush of AllMusic argues that Joy Division " became the first band in the post @-@ punk movement by [ ... ] emphasizing not anger and energy but mood and expression , pointing ahead to the rise of melancholy alternative music in the ' 80s . "

The band 's dark and gloomy sound , which Martin Hannett described in 1979 as " dancing music with Gothic overtones " , presaged the gothic rock genre . While the term " gothic " originally described a " doomy atmosphere " in music of the late 1970s , the term was soon applied to specific bands like Bauhaus that followed in the wake of Joy Division and Siouxsie and the Banshees . Standard musical fixtures of early gothic rock bands included " high @-@ pitched post @-@ Joy Division basslines usurp [ ing ] the melodic role " and " vocals that were either near operatic and Teutonic or deep , droning alloys of Jim Morrison and Ian Curtis . " Joy Division has influenced bands ranging from contemporaries U2 and the Cure to other artists such as Radiohead , Interpol , Bloc Party and Editors . In 2005 , both New Order and Joy Division were inducted into the UK Music Hall of Fame . The Italian psychedelic progressive rock band Twenty Four Hours , in addition to having been inspired by their name from the famous song of Joy Division , dedicated a song to the singer Ian Curtis .

Joy Division have been dramatised in two biopics . 24 Hour Party People ( 2002 ) presented a fictionalised account of the rise and fall of Factory Records , in which the band served as supporting characters . Tony Wilson said of the film , " It 's all true , it 's all not true . It 's not a fucking documentary " , and that he favoured the " myth " over the truth . The 2007 film Control , directed by Anton Corbijn , is a biography of Ian Curtis ( portrayed by Sam Riley ) that uses Deborah Curtis 's biography of her late husband , Touching from a Distance ( 1995 ) , as its basis . Control had its international premiere on the opening night of Director 's Fortnight at the 2007 Cannes Film Festival , where it was critically well received . That year Grant Gee directed the band documentary Joy Division .

= = Discography = =

Studio albums

Unknown Pleasures ( 1979 )

Closer ( 1980 )