

= The Final Cut ( album ) =

The Final Cut is the twelfth studio album by the English progressive rock band Pink Floyd , released on 21 March 1983 by Harvest Records in the United Kingdom and internationally and on 2 April 1983 in the United States by Columbia Records . It is Pink Floyd 's last studio album to include founding member , bass guitarist and songwriter Roger Waters , and their only album on which he alone is credited for writing and composition . It is also the only Pink Floyd album that does not feature keyboardist Richard Wright .

Waters originally planned The Final Cut as a soundtrack album for the 1982 film Pink Floyd ? The Wall . With the onset of the Falklands War , he rewrote it as a concept album , exploring what he considered the betrayal of his father , who died serving in the Second World War . Waters sings most of the lyrics ; lead guitarist David Gilmour provides vocals on only one track . The packaging , also designed by Waters , reflects the album 's war theme . Although it reached the top of the UK Albums Chart , the album received mixed reviews .

Recorded in eight British studios from July to December 1982 , with an accompanying short film released in the same year , production of The Final Cut was dominated by interpersonal conflict . Waters left the band in 1985 and The Final Cut remains the last Pink Floyd studio album he worked on .

= = Background = =

The Final Cut was originally planned as a soundtrack album for the 1982 film Pink Floyd ? The Wall . Under its working title Spare Bricks , it would have featured new music or songs re @-@ recorded for the film , such as " When the Tigers Broke Free " and " Bring the Boys Back Home " , respectively . Bass guitarist , vocalist , and primary songwriter Roger Waters also planned to record a small amount of new material for the album , further expanding The Wall 's narrative .

As a result of the Falklands War , Waters changed direction and wrote new material . He saw British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher 's response to Argentina 's invasion of the islands as jingoistic and unnecessary , and dedicated the new album ? provisionally titled Requiem for a Post @-@ War Dream ? to his father , Eric Fletcher Waters . A second lieutenant of the 8th Royal Fusiliers , Eric Waters died during the Second World War at Aprilia in Italy , on 18 February 1944 . Gilmour was unimpressed by Waters ' apparent politicising and the new creative direction prompted arguments between the two . Several pieces of music considered for but not used on The Wall , including " Your Possible Pasts " , " One of the Few " , " The Final Cut " and " The Hero 's Return " , had initially been set aside for Spare Bricks , and although Pink Floyd had often re @-@ used older material in their work , Gilmour felt the songs were not good enough for a new album . He wanted to write new material , but Waters remained doubtful as Gilmour had lately contributed little to the band 's repertoire .

The Final Cut was about how , with the introduction of the Welfare State , we felt we were moving forward into something resembling a liberal country where we would all look after one another ... but I 'd seen all that chiselled away , and I 'd seen a return to an almost Dickensian society under Margaret Thatcher . I felt then , as now , that the British government should have pursued diplomatic avenues , rather than steaming in the moment that task force arrived in the South Atlantic .

I 'm certainly guilty at times of being lazy , and moments have arrived when Roger might say , " Well , what have you got ? " And I 'd be like , " Well , I haven 't got anything right now . I need a bit of time to put some ideas on tape . " There are elements of all this stuff that , years later , you can look back on and say , " Well , he had a point there . " But he wasn 't right about wanting to put some duff tracks on The Final Cut . I said to Roger , " If these songs weren 't good enough for The Wall , why are they good enough now ? "

The album 's working title was changed to The Final Cut , a reference to William Shakespeare 's Julius Caesar : " This was the most unkindest cut of all " . " When the Tigers Broke Free " was issued as a single on 26 July 1982 , with " Bring the Boys Back Home " on the B @-@ side . The single was labelled " Taken from the album The Final Cut " but was not included on that album until

the 2004 CD reissue .

= = Concept and storyline = =

The Final Cut is an anti @-@ war concept album , whose lyrics explore what Waters regards as the betrayal of fallen British servicemen ? such as his father ? who during the Second World War sacrificed their lives in the spirit of a post @-@ war dream . This post @-@ war dream was that their victory would usher in a more peaceful world , whose leaders would no longer be so eager to resolve disputes by resorting to war . The album 's lyrics are critical of Thatcher , whose policies and decisions Waters regarded as an example of this betrayal . She is referred to as " Maggie " throughout the album .

The opening track , " The Post War Dream " , begins with a recorded announcement that the replacement for the Atlantic Conveyor , a ship lost during the Falklands campaign , will be built in Japan . Waters ' lyrics refer to his dead father , the loss of Britain 's shipbuilding industry to Japan , and Margaret Thatcher , before moving on to " Your Possible Pasts " , a rewritten version of one of the songs rejected for The Wall . In " One of the Few " , another rejected song , the schoolteacher from The Wall features as the main character , presented as a war hero returned to civilian life . He is unable to relate his experiences to his wife , and in " The Hero 's Return " is tormented by the loss of one of his air crew . " The Gunner 's Dream " discusses the post @-@ war dream of a world free from tyranny and the threat of terrorism ( a reference to the Hyde Park bombing ) and is followed in " Paranoid Eyes " by the teacher 's descent into alcoholism .

The second half of the album deals with various war @-@ related issues . While " Southampton Dock " is a lament to returning war heroes and other soldiers heading out to a likely death , " Not Now John " addresses society 's ignorance of political and economic problems . " Get Your Filthy Hands Off My Desert " deals with Waters ' feelings about war and invasion , and " The Fletcher Memorial Home " ( the title is a nod to Waters ' father ) reflects a fantastical application of " the final solution " on a gathering of political leaders including Leonid Brezhnev , Menachem Begin and Margaret Thatcher . The album 's titular song deals with the aftermath of a man 's isolation and sexual repression , as he contemplates suicide and struggles to reconnect with the world around him . The album ends with " Two Suns in the Sunset " , a song that portrays a nuclear holocaust ; the final result of a world obsessed with war and control .

= = Recording = =

American composer Michael Kamen , who had contributed to The Wall , oversaw the orchestral arrangements . He also stood in for absent keyboardist Richard Wright , co @-@ produced , and mediated between Waters and Gilmour . James Guthrie was employed as the studio engineer and co @-@ producer , while Mason 's drumming was supplemented by Ray Cooper , and when unable to perform the complex timing changes required of him , replaced on " Two Suns in the Sunset " by Andy Newmark . It was Mason who suggested the repeated reprises of " Maggie , what have we done " be rendered instrumental rather than sung . Raphael Ravenscroft was hired to play the saxophone . Recording took place in the latter half of 1982 across eight studios , including Gilmour 's home studio at Hookend Manor , and Waters ' Billiard Room Studios at East Sheen . The other venues were Mayfair Studios , Olympic Studios , Abbey Road Studios , Eel Pie Studios , Audio International and RAK Studios .

Tensions soon became apparent , and while Waters and Gilmour initially worked together , playing the video game Donkey Kong in their spare time , the two eventually chose to work separately . Co @-@ engineer Andy Jackson worked with Waters on the vocals , and Guthrie worked with Gilmour on the guitars . They would occasionally meet to discuss the work that had been completed and while this method was not in itself unusual , Gilmour began to feel strained , sometimes barely maintaining his composure . Kamen too felt pressured ; Waters had never been a confident vocalist and on one occasion , after repeated studio takes , Waters noticed him writing on a notepad . Losing his temper , he demanded to know what Kamen was doing , only to find that the pianist had been

writing " I Must Not Fuck Sheep " repeatedly .

Like previous Pink Floyd albums , The Final Cut used sound effects combined with advances and innovations in audio recording technology . Mason 's contributions were almost entirely limited to recording sound effects for the experimental Holophonic system , an audio processing technique used to add an enhanced three @-@ dimensional effect to the recordings ( The Final Cut is the second album ever to feature this technology ) . The technique is featured on " Get Your Filthy Hands Off My Desert " , allowing the sound of an explosion to surround the listener . Sound effects from earlier Floyd albums are also evident ; the wind from Meddle is re @-@ used , as are parts of The Dark Side of the Moon , Wish You Were Here , Animals and The Wall .

After months of poor relations , and following a final confrontation , Gilmour was removed from the credit list as producer , but would still be paid his production royalties . Waters later admitted that he was also under significant pressure and that early in the production of The Final Cut he believed he would never record with either Gilmour or Mason again . He may have threatened to release the album as a solo record , although Pink Floyd were contracted to EMI and such a move would have been unlikely . Mason kept himself distant , dealing with his own marital problems .

In a June 1987 interview , Roger Waters recalled the making of the album :

The Final Cut was absolutely misery to make , although I listened to it of late and I rather like a lot of it . But I don 't like my singing on it . You can hear the mad tension running through it all . If you 're trying to express something and being prevented from doing it because you 're so uptight ... It was a horrible time . We were all fighting like cats and dogs . We were finally realising ? or accepting , if you like ? that there was no band . It was really being thrust upon us that we were not a band and had not been in accord for a long time . Not since 1975 , when we made Wish You Were Here . Even then there were big disagreements about content and how to put the record together ... But making The Final Cut was misery . We didn 't work together at all . I had to do it more or less single @-@ handed , working with Michael Kamen , my co @-@ producer . That 's one of the few things that the ' boys ' and I agreed about . But no one else would do anything on it .

= = Packaging = =

Storm Thorgerson , a founder member of Hipgnosis ( designers of most of Pink Floyd 's previous artwork ) , was passed over for the cover design . Instead , Waters created the cover himself , using photographs taken by his brother @-@ in @-@ law , Willie Christie . The front cover shows a Remembrance poppy and four Second World War medal ribbons against the black fabric of the jacket or blazer on which they are worn . From left to right the medals are the 1939 ? 45 Star , the Africa Star , the Defence Medal , and the Distinguished Flying Cross .

The poppy is a recurring design theme . The interior gatefold featured three photographs , the first depicting an outdoor scene with an outstretched hand holding three poppies and in the distance , a soldier with his back to the camera . Two more photographs show a welder at work , his mask emblazoned with the Japanese Rising Sun Flag , and a nuclear explosion ; a clear reference to " Two Suns in the Sunset " . The album 's lyrics are printed on the gatefold . Side one of the vinyl disc carries an image of a poppy field and on side two , a soldier with a knife in his back lies face down amongst the poppies , a dog beside him . The back cover features a photograph of a soldier stood upright and holding a film canister , with a knife protruding from his back ( the film canister and knife may reflect Waters ' tumultuous relationship with The Wall film director Alan Parker ) .

= = Release and reception = =

The Final Cut was released in the UK on 21 March 1983 and in the US on 2 April . It reached number one in the UK , something that The Dark Side of the Moon and The Wall had each failed to do . It was less successful in America , peaking at number six on the Billboard album charts . Issued as a single , " Not Now John " reached the UK Top 30 , with its chorus of " Fuck all that " bowdlerised to " Stuff all that " .

Although it enjoyed a degree of commercial success , the album received mixed reviews . Melody

Maker deemed it " a milestone in the history of awfulness " , and the NME 's Richard Cook wrote : " Like the poor damned Tommies that haunt his mind , Roger Waters ' writing has been blown to hell ... Waters stopped with The Wall , and The Final Cut isolates and juggles the identical themes of that elephantine concept with no fresh momentum to drive them . " Robert Christgau opined : " it 's a comfort to encounter antiwar rock that has the weight of years of self @-@ pity behind it " , and awarded the album a C + grade . More impressed , Rolling Stone 's Kurt Loder viewed it as " essentially a Roger Waters solo album ... a superlative achievement on several levels " . Dan Hedges of Record also approved , writing : " On paper it sounds hackneyed and contrived ? the sort of thing that was worked into the ground by everyone from P. F. Sloan to Paul Kantner . In Pink Floyd 's case , it still works , partially through the understatement and ingenuity of the music and the special effects ... but mostly through the care Waters has taken in plotting out the imagery of his bleak visions . "

With over 1 @,@ 000 @,@ 000 units shipped in the United States , the Recording Industry Association of America certified The Final Cut Platinum in May 1983 . It was given double Platinum certification in 1997 . Despite these achievements , The Final Cut was the lowest @-@ selling Pink Floyd studio album in the United States and worldwide since Meddle . Gilmour claimed that this relative commercial failure supported his assertion that much of the material on the album was weak . Waters responded :

It 's absolutely ridiculous to judge a record solely on sales . If you 're going to use sales as the sole criterion , it makes Grease a better record than Graceland . Anyway , I was in a greengrocer 's shop , and this woman of about forty in a fur coat came up to me . She said she thought it was the most moving record she had ever heard . Her father had also been killed in World War II , she explained . And I got back into my car with my three pounds of potatoes and drove home and thought , good enough .

The album 's release was accompanied by a short film , also titled The Final Cut . It features four of the album 's songs : " The Gunner 's Dream " , " The Final Cut " , " The Fletcher Memorial Home " and " Not Now John " . Produced by Waters and directed by brother @-@ in @-@ law Willie Christie , it features Waters talking to a psychiatrist named A. Parker @-@ Marshall , while Alex McAvoy , who played the teacher in Pink Floyd ? The Wall , also appears .

The Final Cut was released on compact disc in 1983 . A remastered and repackaged CD was issued by EMI in Europe and on Capitol Records in the US in 2004 ; this included an extra song , the previously released " When the Tigers Broke Free " . In 2007 , a remastered version was released as part of the Oh , by the Way boxed set , packaged in a miniature replica of the original gatefold LP sleeve .

= = Aftermath and legacy = =

With no plans to tour the album , Waters and Gilmour instead turned to separate solo projects . Gilmour recorded and toured About Face in 1984 , using it to express his feelings on a range of topics from the murder of musician John Lennon to his relationship with Waters ? who also began to tour his new solo album , The Pros and Cons of Hitch Hiking . Mason released his second solo album , Profiles , in August 1985 .

In 1985 , faced with a potentially ruinous lawsuit from his record company and fellow band members , Waters resigned . He believed that Pink Floyd was a " spent force " . He applied to the High Court to prevent the Pink Floyd name from ever being used again . His lawyers discovered that the partnership had never been formally confirmed , and Waters returned to the High Court in an attempt to gain a veto over further use of the band 's name . Gilmour 's team responded by issuing a press release affirming that Pink Floyd would continue to exist ; he later told a Sunday Times reporter that " Roger is a dog in the manger and I 'm going to fight him ... "

Waters wrote to EMI and Columbia declaring his intention to leave the group , asking them to release him from his contractual obligations . With a legal case pending , he dispensed with manager Steve O 'Rourke and employed Peter Rudge to manage his affairs . He later contributed to the soundtrack for When the Wind Blows and then recorded his second solo album , Radio K.A.O.S.

Owing to the combination of Pink Floyd 's partial breakup and Waters ' dominance on the project , The Final Cut is sometimes viewed as a de facto Waters solo album . The personal quality assigned to the lyrics are related to Waters ' struggle to reconcile his despair at the changing social face of Britain , and also the loss of his father during the Second World War . Gilmour 's guitar solos on " Your Possible Pasts " and " The Fletcher Memorial Home " are , however , sometimes considered the equal of his best work on The Wall . More recent reviews of the album have weighed its importance alongside the band 's breakup . Writing for AllMusic , Stephen Thomas Erlewine said " with its anger , emphasis on lyrics , and sonic textures , it 's clear that it 's the album that Waters intended it to be . And it 's equally clear that Pink Floyd couldn 't have continued in this direction ... " , Stylus Magazine wrote : " It 's about pursuing something greater even when you have all the money that you could ever want . And either failing or succeeding brilliantly . It 's up to you decide whether this record is a success or a failure , but I 'd go with the former every time . " Rachel Mann of The Quietus said " flawed though it is , The Final Cut remains a tremendous album " and " still has something fresh to say " . Mike Diver of Drowned in Sound was less generous : " Rays of light are few and far between , and even on paper the track titles ? including ' The Gunner 's Dream ' and ' Paranoid Eyes ' ? suggest an arduous listen . Q Magazine once compiled a top ten list of depressing records , and this was on it . Enough said , I think . "

= = Track listing = =

All songs written and composed by Roger Waters .

All lead vocals performed by Roger Waters , except " Not Now John " by David Gilmour and Waters .

= = Personnel = =

= = Charts and certifications = =