

= A Trick of the Tail =

A Trick of the Tail is the seventh studio album from the English progressive rock band Genesis . It was released in February 1976 on Charisma Records and was the first album to feature drummer Phil Collins as lead vocalist following the departure of Peter Gabriel . It was a critical and commercial success in the UK and U.S. , reaching No. 3 and No. 31 respectively .

Following Gabriel 's decision to leave the band , the remaining members wanted to carry on and show they could still write and record successful material . The group wrote and rehearsed new songs during mid @-@ 1975 , and listened to around 400 audition tapes for a replacement frontman . They entered Trident Studios in October with producer David Hentschel to record the album without a definitive idea of who was going to perform lead vocals . Eventually , Collins was persuaded to sing " Squonk " , and the performance was so strong , he sang lead on the rest of album .

Upon release , critics were impressed by the improved sound quality and the group 's ability to survive the loss of Gabriel without sacrificing the quality of the music . The group went out on tour with Collins as frontman and Bill Bruford as an additional drummer , and the resulting performances in the US raised Genesis ' profile there . The album has been reissued on CD several times , including a deluxe package with bonus tracks in 2007 .

= = Background = =

Founding member and lead singer Peter Gabriel decided to leave Genesis in late 1974 , midway through the tour for the album The Lamb Lies Down on Broadway . The other members hoped he would reconsider , as they were still in debt and felt his departure could destroy the band 's future , but ultimately accepted that he would leave . The remaining members felt they still wanted to collaborate musically , and show journalists and critics they were primarily a song writing team that could still produce good music . Keyboardist Tony Banks had been close to Gabriel personally , and did not want the band to split up on top of seeing less of one of his best friends . He had written a number of songs for a possible solo project before deciding they should be used on the new Genesis album .

Following the end of the tour , guitarist Steve Hackett recorded a solo album , Voyage of the Acolyte with guitarist / bassist Mike Rutherford and drummer Phil Collins , feeling unsure that Genesis would survive . He reconvened with the remaining group members in July 1975 . Banks and Rutherford were particularly keen to write and record new material so that critics and fans would accept Gabriel 's departure . The group began rehearsals in a basement studio in Acton , and quickly wrote material they were happy with , but had not yet found a replacement lead singer . They placed an anonymous advertisement in the music paper Melody Maker for " a singer for a Genesis @-@ type group " , which received around 400 replies . Some applicants sent photographs of themselves in costume and wearing masks , as Gabriel had done on stage . A few weeks into rehearsals , Melody Maker managed to find out about Gabriel leaving the band , and their story made the front page of the 16 August issue , where journalist Chris Welch declared Genesis dead . The group spoke to the music papers to deny they were splitting up and explaining they had an album finished and waiting to be recorded .

= = Recording = =

Recording began in Trident Studios in October 1975 with producer David Hentschel . Hentschel had served as tape op and then engineer on earlier Genesis albums and Collins had become a fan of his album Startling Music , a re @-@ recording of Ringo Starr 's album Ringo on an ARP 2500 synthesizer . Collins thought the group could carry on as an instrumental act , but other group members felt that it would be boring without vocals . The group had still not decided on a replacement singer , so they decided to start recording backing tracks and audition singers as they went .

Some songs such as " Ripples ... " were written with the intention that Collins could sing them , similar to " More Fool Me " on Selling England by the Pound , but he did not want to take over as a permanent replacement , opting instead to teach potential lead singers the songs . The group still wanted a regular frontman for live performances , as they thought Collins would not be able to handle all the material , and it would be problematic trying to sing Gabriel 's vocal parts while drumming on tour . One of the auditionees , Mick Stickland , was invited into the studio to sing , but the backing tracks were in a key outside of his natural range and the band decided not to work with him . Having failed to produce a suitable vocalist , Collins reluctantly went in the studio to sing " Squonk " . His performance was well received by the band , and they decided that he should be their new lead vocalist . Hentschel stayed on as co @-@ producer for future Genesis albums up to 1980 's Duke .

= = Songs = =

The opening track , " Dance on a Volcano " was the first song written for the album . Rutherford felt in contrast to the material on The Lamb ... , it was easy to write , and was intended to show how Genesis would move forward . " Entangled " was mostly written by Hackett , with help from Banks . Rutherford recalled that Hackett " started writing verses which were very airy @-@ fairy and then he came down with a bang . " " Squonk " is based on the North American tale of the Squonk which , when captured , dissolves in a pool of tears . The song combines a main theme written by Rutherford against a middle section written by Banks , and was designed to sound like Led Zeppelin 's " Kashmir " .

" Robbery , Assault and Battery " was mostly written by Banks , in an attempt to capture some of the humorous lyrics that Gabriel had written for earlier albums . Collins sang the song in character , inspired by his earlier role as the Artful Dodger in Oliver ! before he became a professional musician . " Ripples ... " was a combination of a 12 @-@ string guitar piece composed by Rutherford and a piano @-@ led middle section written by Banks . The title track was inspired by Banks reading William Golding 's The Inheritors and described an alien visiting Earth and the reaction to it .

The closing song , " Los Endos " , was written by the whole band . Collins came up with the basic rhythmic structure , inspired by his work in side project Brand X and wanting to take the looser playing style into Genesis , while Banks and Hackett wrote the main themes , including reprises of " Dance on a Volcano " and " Squonk " . The opening piece was recorded for a completely different song , " It 's Yourself " , which was later released as a B @-@ side . The track became a live favourite , and continued to be played through to the 2007 Turn It On Again tour . In 2014 , Hackett added the song to the playlist of his extended Genesis Revisited II tour .

= = Reception = =

A Trick of the Tail had a positive reception from music critics , who were impressed that the group could not only survive the loss of Gabriel but still deliver a good album . The sound quality had improved from previous albums as a result of Hentschel 's production skills . The album reached No. 3 in the UK , remaining on the charts for 39 weeks , and No. 31 in the U.S. It was certified Gold in the UK by the British Phonographic Institute in June and in the US by the RIAA in March 1990 . The album remained in the UK charts for 39 weeks and recouped a significant amount of \$ 400 @,@ 000 worth of debt they had accumulated by the time Gabriel left .

For the first time in their career , Genesis filmed promotional videos for their songs . The first to be filmed was the title track , which features the band playing to the song together around a piano , including composite shots of a miniature Collins hopping around on a piano and a guitar . The group also produced promotional films of " Ripples ... " and " Robbery , Assault and Battery " .

= = Tour = =

Even after the album had been completed , Collins was unhappy about leaving the drumkit to sing

lead , and the band were unsure he would be comfortable as frontman on tour . The group decided to try anyway , and needed someone to drum while Collins was singing . Collins insisted on choosing the touring drummer himself , selecting Bill Bruford , who he had already worked with in Brand X. Collins continued to drum during instrumental sections .

The new line @-@ up rehearsed in Dallas for a North American tour , starting in London , Ontario . Collins was nervous about what to say to the audience between songs , so Rutherford and Hackett helped with some announcements . Unlike Gabriel 's theatrical approach , Collins developed a humorous rapport with the audience , and it was immediately successful . Audiences were happy for Collins to sing old material such as " Supper 's Ready " in concert as he had been recruited as frontman from within the group . The resulting tour raised Genesis ' profile in the U.S. , where they had been relatively unknown while Gabriel was in the band .

= = Track listing = =

This is the first Genesis album to credit songwriters individually , as opposed to the band as a whole .

= = = 2007 SACD / CD / DVD release = = =

A new version of A Trick of the Tail was released in the UK and Japan in 2007 as part of the Genesis 1976 ? 1982 box set . This includes the entire album in remixed stereo , surround sound , and related video tracks . A further DVD release includes audio and video tracks , including an interview with the band , the promotional videos , and the film Genesis : In Concert , filmed during the 1976 tour promoting the album .

= = Personnel = =

Genesis

Mike Rutherford ? 12 @-@ string guitar , bass , bass pedals

Tony Banks ? pianos , synthesizers , organ , Mellotron , 12 @-@ string guitar , backing vocals

Phil Collins - drums , percussion , lead & backing vocals

Steve Hackett ? electric guitar , 12 @-@ string guitars

Production

Genesis ? production

David Hentschel ? production , engineering

Nick " Haddock " Bradford ? engineering

Tex and Jeff ? equipment

Neal , John and Terry ? liquid sustenance

Hipgnosis ? sleeve design

Colin Elgie ? sleeve design

Special thanks to Tony Smith , Alex Sim and Regis

Recorded at Trident Studios , London

= = Certifications = =