

= Richard Wright (musician) =

Richard William " Rick " Wright (28 July 1943 ? 15 September 2008) was an English musician , composer , singer and songwriter . He was a founding member , keyboardist and vocalist of the progressive rock band Pink Floyd , performing on all of the group 's albums , except for The Final Cut , including The Piper at the Gates of Dawn , The Dark Side of the Moon , Wish You Were Here and The Division Bell , and playing on all of their tours .

Wright grew up in Hatch End , London and met future Pink Floyd bandmates Roger Waters and Nick Mason while studying at the Regent Street Polytechnic . The group found commercial success in 1967 with frontman Syd Barrett before Barrett 's instability led to him being replaced by David Gilmour , with Wright taking over songwriting duties with Waters . Initially a straightforward singer / songwriter , Wright later acted as an arranger to Waters and Gilmour 's compositions . He began to contribute less towards the end of the 1970s and left the band after touring The Wall in 1981 . He rejoined the band as a session player in 1987 for A Momentary Lapse of Reason , and became a full @-@ time member again for The Division Bell in 1994 . Sessions with Wright during this period were later released on the album The Endless River . Away from the Floyd , Wright recorded two solo albums , including a collaboration with Anthony Moore on Broken China , and briefly formed the duo Zee . After rejoining Waters , Mason and Gilmour as Pink Floyd for Live 8 in 2005 , he became part of Gilmour 's regular solo touring band , singing occasional lead on songs such as " Arnold Layne " , before his death in September 2008 .

Overshadowed by band mates Barrett , Waters and Gilmour and being the quietest and most reserved member of Pink Floyd , Wright 's contributions have been overlooked , but his death brought a reappraisal and recognition of his talents . His jazz and improvisation influences and keyboard performances were an important part of the Pink Floyd sound ; being a prominent player of the Farfisa and Hammond organs and the Kurzweil synthesizer . Wright sang regularly in the band , and occasionally took the lead vocal on Pink Floyd songs such as " Time " , " Remember a Day " and " Wearing the Inside Out " .

= = Early life = =

Wright , whose father was head biochemist at Unigate Dairies , grew up in Hatch End , north west London and was educated at the Haberdashers ' Aske 's School . He taught himself to play guitar , trumpet and piano at age 12 after he was recuperating from breaking a leg . His mother helped and encouraged him to play the piano . He took private lessons in musical theory and composition at the Eric Gilder School of Music and became influenced by the trad jazz revival , learning the trombone and saxophone as well as the piano . Uncertain about his future , he enrolled in 1962 at the Regent Street Polytechnic which was later incorporated into the University of Westminster . There he met fellow musicians Roger Waters and Nick Mason , and all three joined a band formed by classmate Clive Metcalf called Sigma 6 .

Wright 's position in the band was tenuous to begin with , as he did not choose a definitive instrument , playing piano if a pub had one , otherwise settling on the trombone or rhythm guitar . Wright moved in with Waters and Mason to a house in Stanhope Gardens , Highgate , and began serious rehearsals to become a professional group . Although Mason and Waters were competent students , Wright found architecture of little interest and after only a year of study moved to the London College of Music . He took a break from studies and travelled to Greece for a sabbatical . Their landlord , Mike Leonard , purchased a Farfisa organ , and briefly replaced Wright in the band . However , the organ ultimately became Wright 's main instrument . Through a friend , he arranged the fledgling group 's first recording session in a West Hampstead studio , just before Christmas 1964 . Guitarists Bob Klose and Syd Barrett joined the band , which became Pink Floyd .

= = Pink Floyd = =

Pink Floyd had stabilised around Barrett , Waters , Mason and Wright by mid @-@ 1965 , and after

frequent gigging that year became regulars on the Underground live circuit in London . While Barrett was the dominant member , writing most material , singing most lead vocals and playing lead guitar , Wright played a supportive role , playing keyboards and singing , with occasional lead , and writing his own material . As the most qualified musician , Wright was responsible for tuning guitars , and would often tune Waters ' bass for him in concert . Later on , he had a Strobotuner to tune guitars silently during gigs . In the band 's early days , before acquiring a full @-@ time road crew , Wright was responsible for unloading the gear at the end of each gig .

While not credited for vocals on *The Piper at the Gates of Dawn* , he sang lead on Barrett @-@ penned songs like " Astronomy Domine " and " Matilda Mother " . Examples of his early compositions include " Remember a Day " , " See @-@ Saw " , " Paint Box " and " It Would Be So Nice " . Wright was close friends with Barrett , and at one point the pair shared a flat in Richmond . After Barrett left the group in 1968 due to mental health issues , Wright considered leaving and forming a group with Barrett , but realised it would not have been practical .

Following Barrett 's departure and replacement by David Gilmour , Wright took over writing duties with Waters but gradually became less involved as a singer and songwriter as the band 's career progressed . His organ playing remained an important part of the band 's live set , including " Interstellar Overdrive " , " Set the Controls for the Heart of the Sun " and " Careful with That Axe , Eugene " and he contributed musical themes for film scores (*More* , *Zabriskie Point* and *Obscured by Clouds*) . He made significant contributions to Pink Floyd 's long , epic compositions such as " Atom Heart Mother " , " Echoes " (on which he harmonised with Gilmour for the lead vocals) and " Shine On You Crazy Diamond " . On 1973 's *The Dark Side of the Moon* he composed the music for " The Great Gig in the Sky " and " Us and Them " . He also contributed to other album tracks such as " Breathe " and " Time " , singing the lead vocals on the latter 's chorus .

Wright 's contributions to the band diminished in the late 1970s as Waters began to write more material , with *Animals* being the first album that he did not receive any songwriter credits . By the time the group was recording *The Wall* in 1979 , Waters had become frustrated that Wright was not contributing enough yet still claiming an equal share of production royalties . Wright refused to catch up on the recording backlog as his first marriage had deteriorated and he had not seen enough of his children , deciding family was more important . Waters considered suing Wright , but ultimately decided an easier thing to do would be for Wright to leave the band at the end of the project . As the band was in financial trouble at the time , Wright agreed to these terms . Several other musicians , including Waters , Gilmour , producer Bob Ezrin , composer Michael Kamen and session player Fred Mandel played keyboards on *The Wall* . Wright was retained as a salaried session musician during the live concerts to promote that album in 1980 ? 81 , but ironically he became the only member of Pink Floyd to profit from the initial run of the costly Wall shows , since the net financial loss had to be borne by the three remaining " full @-@ time " members . Wright did not attend the 1982 premiere of the film version of Pink Floyd ? *The Wall* . In 1983 , Pink Floyd released *The Final Cut* , the only album from the band on which Wright does not appear . His absence from the credits was the first time fans realised he had left the group , which was officially confirmed some years later .

After Waters ' departure in 1985 , Wright began to contribute to Pink Floyd again , beginning with sessions for the album *A Momentary Lapse of Reason* . However , he did not legally rejoin as an equal to Gilmour and Mason , and was a salaried musician for the resulting tour , as his contract said he could not rejoin as a full member . On the album credits , his name was listed after Mason and Gilmour and his photo did not appear on the cover .

By 1994 , he had rejoined the group full @-@ time as an equal partner with Gilmour and Mason . He co @-@ wrote five songs and sang lead vocals on one song (" Wearing the Inside Out ") for the next Pink Floyd album , *The Division Bell* . This was followed by the double live album and video release *Pulse* in 1995 . Wright , like Mason , performed on every Pink Floyd tour .

On 2 July 2005 , Wright , Gilmour and Mason were joined by Waters on stage for the first time since the Wall concerts for a short set at the Live 8 concert in London . This was the last time that all four (post @-@ Barrett) Pink Floyd members performed together . Wright underwent eye surgery for cataracts in November 2005 , preventing him from attending Pink Floyd 's induction into the UK

Music Hall of Fame .

Wright 's last Floyd appearance , a posthumous one , was on 2014 's The Endless River . The album contained mostly instrumental music recorded during the Division Bell sessions in 1993 @-@ 1994 .

= = Other work = =

Wright rarely played live outside of Pink Floyd compared to the other members . Along with Gilmour , Wright played on Barrett 's second solo album , Barrett in 1970 and helped with production . He later recalled working on the album as a way of helping Barrett in any way possible . In 1974 , he guested at a concert by Sutherland Brothers & Quiver at Newcastle Polytechnic .

Wright recorded his first solo project , Wet Dream , in early 1978 in Super Bear Studios , France , which featured touring guitarist Snowy White and saxophonist Mel Collins . The album was released in September with minimal commercial success .

During 1984 , Wright formed a new musical duo with Dave Harris (from the band Fashion) called Zee . The pair had been introduced by a mutual friend , saxophonist Raphael Ravenscroft . They signed a record deal with EMI Records and released only one album , Identity , which was a commercial and critical flop . Wright later referred to Zee as " an experiment best forgotten " .

In 1996 , inspired by his successful input into The Division Bell , Wright released his second solo album , Broken China , which had been co @-@ written with lyricist Anthony Moore , who helped with production and engineering . The album covers the theme of depression and helped Wright come to terms with seeing friends affected by it . Musical contributions came from Pino Palladino on bass , Manu Katché on drums , Dominic Miller (known from his guitar work with Sting) and Tim Renwick , another Floyd associate , on electric guitar . Gilmour contributed a guitar part for " Breakthrough " but his performance didn 't make the final mix of the album . Wright considered taking the album on tour , but concluded it wouldn 't be financially viable . Sinéad O 'Connor sang lead vocal on two tracks , " Reaching for the Rail " and " Breakthrough " , with Wright covering the remainder .

In 1999 , touring Floyd keyboardist Jon Carin joined with Wright 's wife to bring Wright and Waters back together after some 18 years apart ; the two men met backstage after a tour date by Waters .

Wright played at several of Gilmour 's solo shows in 2002 , contributing keyboards and vocals , including his own composition " Breakthrough " . In 2006 , he became a regular member of Gilmour 's solo touring band along with former Floyd sidemen Jon Carin , Dick Parry and Guy Pratt . He contributed keyboards and background vocals to Gilmour 's solo album , On an Island , and performed live in Europe and North America that year . On stage with Gilmour he played keyboards , including a revival of the Farfisa for performing " Echoes " . Wright sang lead on " Arnold Layne " , which was released as a live single . He declined an offer to join Waters and Mason on the The Dark Side of the Moon Live tour to spend more time working on a solo project .

In 2006 , Wright joined Gilmour and Mason for the official screening of the P ? U ? L ? S ? E DVD . Inevitably , Live 8 surfaced as a subject in an interview . When asked about performing again , Wright replied he would be happy on stage anywhere . He explained that his plan was to " meander " along and play live whenever Gilmour required his services . The same year , he co @-@ wrote the Helen Boulding B @-@ side , " Hazel Eyes " , with Chris Difford .

Wright 's final vocal performance took place at " The Madcap 's Last Laugh " a tribute concert at The Barbican in London on 10 May 2007 . It was organised by Joe Boyd in the memory of Barrett who had died the previous July , and featured Waters solo before Wright performed as part of Pink Floyd , including a performance of " Arnold Layne " . His final live performance was as part of David Gilmour 's band at the premiere of Gilmour 's concert DVD Remember That Night on 6 September 2007 at the Odeon Leicester Square , London . After an edited version of the film had been shown , the band took to the stage to jam .

= = Personal life = =

Wright married his first wife , Juliette Gale , in 1964 . She had been a singer in one of the early bands that evolved into Pink Floyd . They had two children and divorced in 1982 . His second marriage to Franka lasted between 1984 and 1994 . Wright married his third wife Mildred " Millie " Hobbs in 1995 , with whom he had a son , Ben . They separated in 2007 . Wright 's daughter Gala is married to Floyd and Gilmour touring bassist Guy Pratt .

Wright had been fond of the Greek islands since a sabbatical visit in 1964 , before Pink Floyd were formed . He moved to Greece in 1984 after Zee , briefly retiring from music , and enjoyed sailing and yachting . In his later years , Wright lived in France and spent time on a yacht he owned in the Virgin Islands . He found sailing therapeutic , relieving him from the pressures of the music business . He was also a keen collector of Persian rugs .

= = Death = =

Wright died at home of lung cancer on 15 September 2008 , aged 65 . At the time of his death , he had been working on a new solo album , which was thought to comprise a series of instrumental pieces .

The surviving members of Pink Floyd paid Wright tribute . Waters said " it is hard to overstate the importance of his musical voice in the Pink Floyd of the ' 60s and ' 70s " and was happy that they had managed to reunite for Live 8 . Mason said Wright 's contributions to Floyd were under @-@ rated , and that his playing " was the sound that knitted it all together " , comparing his " quiet one " status in the band to George Harrison . Gilmour called him " my musical partner and my friend " , praised the ability of the two men 's voices to blend , such as on " Echoes " . Wright 's death brought Pink Floyd to a formal end , with Gilmour re @-@ iterating that it would be wrong to resume touring without him .

On the day of Wright 's death , Elton John , while playing a concert in Saskatoon , Saskatchewan , Canada dedicated the song " Believe " to him . On 23 September , Gilmour performed " Remember a Day " , a Wright composition from Pink Floyd 's second album , A Saucerful of Secrets , on a live broadcast of Later ... with Jools Holland on BBC Two as a tribute to Wright . In an interview later on in the show , Gilmour said that Wright had intended to perform with him that day , but that he had texted Gilmour a couple of weeks before his death to advise him that he would not be well enough to attend .

= = Musical style = =

Wright 's main influence was jazz , particularly Miles Davis and John Coltrane . He never considered himself a typical songwriter , preferring to create whole albums of music with a theme , later saying " if the words came out like the music , and we didn 't have anything else to do , then quite a few would be written " . A number of compositions credited to Wright came out of improvisation and randomly trying ideas , some of which were picked up enthusiastically by his band mates . Wright later said " I just play and don 't really think about what I 'm doing , I just let it happen " . Of all the Pink Floyd members , Wright was the most reserved , sitting down behind the keyboards and concentrating on the music .

In the 1970s , Wright listened to some contemporary progressive rock bands , and particularly liked early Peter Gabriel @-@ fronted Genesis . He later asked some of the musicians in Gabriel 's solo touring band to play on Broken China . Wright enjoyed playing the organ , and considered the style he used in Pink Floyd to be unique . He played solos in the early part of Floyd 's career , frequently using Egyptian scales , such as on " Matilda Mother " or " Set the Controls for the Heart of the Sun " . His jazz background led to him being interested in free form music , with adherence to tempo being less important . Later , he was more interested in complementing each piece with organ , electric piano or synthesizer as a backing instrument , while still featuring occasional solos .

= = = Equipment = = =

In the early days of the band , Wright dabbled with brass before settling on Farfisa electric organs as his main instrument onstage . He originally owned a single @-@ manual Combo Compact model , which was used for early recordings of " Interstellar Overdrive " , and later upgraded to a dual @-@ manual Compact Duo . During the 1960s , Wright relied heavily on his Farfisa fed through a Binson Echorec platter echo , as heard on the Ummagumma live album . On later tours , the instrument was fed through a joystick control allowing the signal to be sent through up to six speakers in an auditorium , which was called the " Azimuth Coordinator " . Wright stopped using the Farfisa after The Dark Side of the Moon , but revisited it in later years , playing it on Gilmour 's On An Island tour . It was recorded for the sessions that eventually became The Endless River .

Wright played the piano and Hammond organ in the studio from the start of Pink Floyd 's recording career ; using the Hammond 's bass pedals for the closing section of " A Saucerful of Secrets " . He used a Mellotron in the studio for some tracks , including Ummagumma 's " Sysyphus " and on the " Atom Heart Mother " suite . For a brief period in 1969 , Wright played vibraphone on several of the band 's songs and in some live shows , and reintroduced the trombone on " Biding My Time " . He started using a Hammond organ regularly on stage alongside the Farfisa around 1970 and a grand piano became part of his usual live concert setup when " Echoes " was added to Pink Floyd 's regular set list . All three keyboards are used in the concert film Pink Floyd : Live at Pompeii .

In the 1970s , Wright began using synthesizers such as the VCS 3 , ARP String Ensemble and Minimoog , which were featured on " Shine on You Crazy Diamond " . Wright wrote the closing part of the track alone , and included a brief extract of the band 's early single " See Emily Play " on the Minimoog towards the end . He used a number of electric pianos during the 1970s , including a Wurlitzer fed through a wah @-@ wah pedal on " Money " and an unaccompanied Rhodes introduction for " Sheep " on Animals .

From the 1987 Momentary Lapse of Reason tour onwards , Wright and touring keyboardist Jon Carin favoured Kurzweil digital synthesizers , including the K2000 keyboard and K2000S rack module for reproducing piano and electric piano sounds . Wright retained the Hammond along with a Leslie speaker , playing it onstage and using it during the Division Bell sessions .

= = Discography = =

= = = With Pink Floyd = = =

See Pink Floyd discography

= = = With Syd Barrett = = =

Barrett ? 1970

= = = Solo albums = = =

Wet Dream ? 1978

Broken China ? 1996

= = = With Zee = = =

Identity ? 1984

= = = With David Gilmour = = =

David Gilmour in Concert (DVD) ? 2002 (guest appearance)

On an Island ? 2006

Appears on two tracks : " On an Island " (Hammond organ) & " The Blue " (backing vocals)

Remember That Night (DVD / Blu @-@ ray) ? 2007

Live in Gdańsk (CD / DVD) ? 2008