

Dave Wakeling - Musician

DAVE WAKELING RECENTLY TOURED THE UK WITH HIS BAND THE ENGLISH BEAT. BACK IN THE LATE 70'S AND 80'S THE BEAT HAD SEVERAL BIG RECORDS IN THE CHARTS INCLUDING THE SMASH HIT SINGLE "MIRROR IN THE BATHROOM". AS A MULTI-RACIAL BAND MUCH OF THEIR REPERTOIRE REFLECTED THE TENSION OF THE TIMES, SINGING ABOUT UNITY, UNEMPLOYMENT AND POLITICS.



ONE SINGLE IN PARTICULAR, "STAND DOWN MARGARET", BECAME A FOCUS FOR DISSSENT AGAINST THE THATCHER GOVERNMENT.

ALTHOUGH THE SIX-PIECE JOINED THE LIKES OF THE SPECIALS AND MADNESS IN THE EARLY 80S TWO TONE MOVEMENT, DIFFERING DECISIONS ON HOW TO MOVE FORWARD SAW THEM EVENTUALLY SPLIT. DAVE ESTABLISHED A NEW BAND IN THE USA WITH FELLOW SINGER RANKING ROGER WHILE GUITARIST ANDY COX AND BASS PLAYER DAVID STEELE REMAINED IN THE UK, FORMING FINE YOUNG CANNIBALS.

DAVE TOLD THE BIRMINGHAM POST: "I JUST LIKE TO WALK AROUND THE CITY WHEN I COME HOME. I REMEMBER GROWING UP IN HARBURY ROAD AND WE WERE RIGHT AT THE BACK OF THE CRICKET GROUND. WE USED TO SNEAK INTO GAMES AND MANAGED TO SEE THREE INTERNATIONAL GAMES FOR FREE. I DREAM OF THAT STREET A LOT. IT IS NOW A REALLY HAPPY PLACE

FOR ME. I WAS NEVER VERY KEEN ON THE WEATHER... BUT THERE IS SOMETHING ABOUT BIRMINGHAM. I LIKE THAT GALLOW'S SENSE OF HUMOUR, AND A LOT OF MY SONG-WRITING CAME OUT OF THAT LOVELY RAISED EYEBROW OF BIRMINGHAM IRONY."

TALKING TO UNCUT MAGAZINE DAVE RECALLED THE NIGHT THAT LED TO THE FIRST RECORDING OF "MIRROR IN THE BATHROOM". THE BAND WERE BOOKED TO PLAY AT ASTON UNIVERSITY AS SUPPORT TO RADIO ONE DJ JOHN PEEL. THE BAND PLAYED THEIR 45 MINUTE SET AFTER WHICH PEEL ANNOUNCED THAT HE LOVED THEIR MUSIC AND WOULD SWAP HIS £300 FEE FOR THEIR £100 FEE IF



THEY PLAYED THEIR SET AGAIN! "WE DID AND WE TOOK HIM OUT FOR A BALTI ON THE LADYPOOL ROAD IN BALSALL HEATH. WE WERE DEAD CHUFFED AND HE OFFERED US A RADIO SESSION, WHICH IS WHERE WE FIRST RECORDED "MIRROR IN THE BATHROOM"

