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NEWSLETTER 033 – OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2016

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OVERLEAF: MARC ALMOND INTERVIEW WITH MARC, AND TYRANNOSAURUS REX MENTIONS

The article is a long one so here are the 'Marc Mentions'. Use the link below to read the whole article

<http://www.theartsdesk.com/new-music/theartsdesk-ga-musician-marc-almond>

[home](#) > [new music](#) > theartsdesk q&a: musician marc almond

■ reviews, news & interviews

theartsdesk Q&A: Musician Marc Almond

In an epic interview, the veteran singer talks Soft Cell, parrots, rehab, blues rock, and much, much more

by [Thomas H Green](#) | Saturday, 05 November 2016

Perhaps a Sunday afternoon session chez Almond

Marc Almond (b 1956) grew up in Southport, on the Lancashire coast. He first achieved fame when Soft Cell, his Leeds Polytechnic art school electronic project with Dave Ball, much to both their surprise, had a huge global hit in 1981 with their electronic cover of an old soul song, the 1965 Gloria Jones B-side, "Tainted Love". In its wake the band were leading lights of early Eighties synth pop, releasing three albums and a string of successful singles, including "Say Hello Wave Goodbye" and "Torch", before splitting in 1984.

What were you playing last Sunday?

I was playing *A Beard of Stars* and *My People Were Fair [and Had Sky in Their Hair... But Now They're Content to Wear Stars on Their Brows]* by Tyrannosaurus Rex, and also *More Johnny Mathis Greatest Hits*, some of his really early stuff.

Have you maintained an affection for prog rock, stuff which you must have cast off during punk?

I've always loved prog rock, even secretly as a guilty pleasure during punk rock. I never stopped liking it. All the different genres I've liked I've stayed true to. I still love Sixties pop, I like blues rock from when I started buying records when I was 12 or 13 – Deep Purple, Black Sabbath, Jethro Tull. Then, of course, came David Bowie and Marc Bolan who swept everything away. Then it was punk, post-punk, disco and electro, and I liked all those genres. Even though I might have put my other records aside for a while and immersed myself in new music, I've always gone back to them and they still influence me.

“ Life’s got to be about having a great adventure, meeting great people, trying to entertain, stir a few emotions ”



**COMPREHENSIVE NEW BOOK ON GLAM ROCK.
HERE'S THE DANGEROUS MINDS REVIEW**



'SHOCK AND AWE': HOW PLATFORM SHOES, MASCARA AND GLITTER SAVED ROCK 'N' ROLL

10.12.2016
10:13 am

Topics:
Literature
Music
Pop Culture
Punk

Tags:
Glam rock
Shock And Awe
Simon Reynolds



In 1972 rock music rolled out of the 60s as pale and cold as a corpse on a hospital gurney. There was the occasional death twitch but rigor mortis had set in and for most of us rockers there was a sense of *hopelessness* as we listened to vapid shit coming out of our radios.

How bad was it? Here's the top ten tunes of 1972 according to Billboard magazine:

- 1 "The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face" Roberta Flack
- 2 "Alone Again (Naturally)" Gilbert O'Sullivan
- 3 "American Pie" Don McLean
- 4 "Without You" Harry Nilsson
- 5 "The Candy Man" Sammy Davis, Jr.
- 6 "I Gotcha" Joe Tex
- 7 "Lean on Me" Bill Withers
- 8 "Baby, Don't Get Hooked on Me" Mac Davis
- 9 "Brand New Key" Melanie
- 10 "Daddy Don't You Walk So Fast" Wayne Newton

That list is completely devoid of anything that remotely could be called "rock and roll." With the exception of Joe Tex's "I Gotcha," virtually every song falls into the easy listening/pop category. Sentimental, corny, goofy, maudlin and over melodramatic, none of this stuff *rocks*. The closest the top 20 got to rock that year was Neil Young's "Heart Of Gold." And as lovely as that song is, it's one of Neil's most middle-of-the-road creations and still more *folk* than rock. In the entire Billboard top 100 of 1972 there are two songs that could be categorized as hard rock with some bonfide badass attitude. They were Alice Cooper's "School's Out" and T.Rex's "Bang a Gong (Get It On)." Elton John, Derek And The Dominoes, Badfinger and The Hollies all had hits with power ballads or top-forty schlock. The Hollies aping Creedence Clearwater with "Long Cool Woman (In A Black Dress)" may be memorable, but it also could have been recorded by just about *any* half-decent band. Completely unidentifiable as a Hollie's song. 1972 was also the year that arguably the greatest rock composer of all time, Chuck Berry, released "My Ding A Ling." This was the kind of shit that made a rock fan like myself weep.



In 1972, I was 21 and writing record reviews for a newspaper in Boulder, Colorado. At the time, record companies were very generous in sending out review copies of LPs to just about anyone claiming to be a rock critic. As a result, I was receiving well over a hundred copies of new record releases each month. Every day the postman would drop a load of vinyl on my front porch and I was like a kid at Christmas. Unfortunately, most of the freebies were real shit. But some good stuff would squeak through and occasionally the good stuff would be better than merely good. There were records among the dross that would eventually change my life.

From '72 to '75, when I did most of my reviewing, the albums that blew my mind were coming from reggae artists like Bob Marley and Toots And The Maytals followed by Brit rockers T.Rex, Roxy Music, David Bowie, Mott The Hoople, Cockney Rebel and American outliers Lou Reed, The New York Dolls, Sparks, Alice Cooper and Suzi Quatro, among a handful of others. What these performers shared in common was an energy that recalled some of the best of 60s garage bands, British Invasion, doses of psychedelia and a theatricality that was eccentric, fresh and provocative. Their songs tended to be short and to the point, with strong hooks and infectious beats. And they were sexy! This was the beginning of what eventually became known as glam rock. I know calling Marley glam is a stretch but let's face it, Bob was glamorous and songs like "Lively Up Yourself" could be dropped into a mix with Bowie and Marc Bolan without missing a beat. Even if the twain does meet, we'll still keep reggae out of the mix for sake of argument.



Glam rock blew open the doors for the punk scene that quickly followed on its heels. There's not a single rock band that emerged in 76/77 from CBGB, Max's, or The Marquee Club that weren't inspired by glam bands. A few hate to admit it, but most know it's true. From Johnny Rotten to Joey Ramone to Patti Smith, the visionaries in platform shoes with glitter in their hair like Marc Bolan, Bowie and The Dolls turned budding punks' heads around and pointed them in a direction that would change them forever... just as they did for me.



Glam rock was *fun* at a time when rock *wasn't*. The music I loved had become too self-important or too inconsequential to capture my heart and gut. Easy listening "elevator music" on MOR radio tossed with the pompous orchestral rock of Emerson, Lake and Palmer and Yes and the blowhard power ballads of Kansas and Styx created a mind salad that was all cellulose and little fiber. Even bands I had once looked to for some hard-edged three-minute rockers, The Who, for instance, were creating pretentious rock operas that were large-gestures but intellectually feeble. I wanted plain old pinball machines *without the wizards*. When rock songs started taking up entire sides of an album, I found myself dragging out my old Seeds and Music Machine albums. Few rock artists could sustain the longform song for me. Only the Doors, Jimi Hendrix and The Velvet Underground could pull that off.



So glam put the fun back into rock. It also put sex back into rock and returned some color, glitter and style to a musical culture that had turned to faded denim, faux blues and pretentious bluster. It was bigger than life, but as light as moonbeams. While Rick Wakeman and Mike Oldfield were pumping hot air into the balloon of pop culture, Sparks and Roxy Music were sticking needles in it. Underneath their wild threads and crazy hair, the glam rockers were smirking at the artifice of it all, using the theater of rock and roll to remind us that rock music was as silly as it is *essential*.



Simon Reynolds book *Shock and Awe: Glam Rock and Its Legacy, from the Seventies to the Twenty-first Century* is the definitive book on the music and pop culture explosion that put style, extravagance and a sense of—yes—*absurdity* back into rock and roll. Written from a place of genuine love for his subject, Reynolds' 700 page history is formidable in its research and thoroughly entertaining. It's smart without being academic and contains none of the "hey look at me" smarty pants rock crit that focuses more on the writer than the subject at hand. Reynolds is passionate about what he's writing about and it's truly infectious. From the big lights of Bowie, Roxy and Bolan to lesser known, but equally amazing, groups like Wizzard, The Sensational Alex Harvey Band and The Tubes, Reynolds covers dozens upon dozens of artists starting with proto-glamster Jerry Lee Lewis, The Stooges, through the rock scenes impacted by glam including punk, new wave, hair metal and techno. Like with his terrific book on post-punk *Rip It Up and Start Again: Postpunk 1978-1984*, Reynolds obviously knows what he's talking about. As well-researched as his books are, they're never larded with too much minutiae or footnoted to death. They move like rock and roll moves. *Shock And Awe* has the energy and exuberance of a tight chugging Marc Bolan guitar riff. You can dance to it. Buy it [here](#). Really, buy it. At 12 bucks it's a fucking steal. Thank me later.

Read the article online and watch a video, which is at the bottom of the review here:-

http://dangerousminds.net/comments/shock_and_awesome_how_platform_shoes_mascara_and_glitter_saved_rock_n_roll

HERE'S THE IRISH TIMES REVIEW

Sat, Nov 19, 2016, 06:00

Shock & Awe review – glam rock, pop's own ballroom blitz, gets its due

Bolan, Bowie, Slade, Mud, Sweet, Roxy Music – the glittering stars of glam are all here



Marc Bolan of T. Rex in action. Photograph: Michael Ochs/Getty Images

“Mike Chapman and I were watching TV in my flat,” recalls Nicky Chinn, one half of the most successful songwriting partnership of the 1970s glam rock era. “The Osmonds were landing at London Airport, the place was going crazy, and the reporter said, ‘This is like a teenage rampage.’ I just said immediately, ‘That’s the next single.’”

Combining a level of commercial nous, creative serendipity and an old-school rule of journalism – two is a coincidence;, three is a trend, glam rock (1971-1975) played a pivotal role not only in the development of punk but also in the advance of gender fluidity.

The genre was also one of the most diverse of the past 50 years, encompassing disorderly teenage sweeps (T. Rex, The Sweet, Gary Glitter, Slade, Mud, Alvin Stardust, David Essex), artful, cerebral types (Roxy Music, David Bowie), proto-punk acts (Heavy Metal Kids, Sensational Alex Harvey Band, Silverhead) and, all too slightly, proto-feminism (Suzi Quatro).

Under its multi-coloured, glittery canvas the genre gathered together pop fluff (Mud's Dyna-mite, Alvin Stardust's My Coo-Ca-Choo), high concept (Roxy Music's In Every Dream Home a Heartache, Sparks' This Town Ain't Big Enough for Both of Us), barely contained hormonal riot (T. Rex's Jeepster, The Sweet's Ballroom Blitz, Alice Cooper's School's Out), and the critically regarded (Slade's Mama Weer All Crazee Now, David Bowie's Jean Genie).

Sea change

Author Simon Reynolds expands on the 1998 book *Glam! Bowie, Bolan & the Glitter Rock Revolution*, by fellow UK music writer Barney Hoskyns; in doing so he provides a rather more perceptive analysis of a genre that made possible a sea change in popular music from the mid-1970s onwards. Reynolds's starting point is Marc Bolan's T. Rex, a band that arrived out of the UK 1960s underground scene, changing, from 1971, into a beast of a completely different character. Cheerily confronting sexual ambiguity, and openly flirting with teenage eroticism ("you're dirty and sweet and you're my girl" – Get it On), Bolan's blend of grind and toothy charisma threw down the gauntlet. Many picked it up, but very few with such single-mindedness or style.

Structurally, *Shock & Awe* is flawless. From Bolan onwards, Reynolds charts a course that sees David Bowie – glam rock's spine and standard-bearer and arguably its most potent, progressive figure – weave his way throughout the genre's range of misfits, ne'er do wells, chancers, reformers and thinkers.

Season by season, Reynolds places the music and its creators in context. From lucky British bandwagon-hoppers (Alvin Stardust, Gary Glitter, Mud, David Essex) to plucky American oddballs (Alice Cooper, Jobriath, Wayne County); from post-glam (Roxy Music, Cockney Rebel, Be-Bop Deluxe, Japan) to pre-punk (New York Dolls, Lou Reed, Iggy Pop, Brian Eno); from pop music classicists (Slade) to one/two/three-hit wonders (Hello, Chicory Tip, The Arrows), Reynolds documents it all in persuasive prose that hits every correct historical note.

Pop culture grammar

While his premise of Bowie being the person who influenced everything might, for some, be far-fetched, there's no denying that Bowie's reach was often on-point and prolonged – he really did make anything seem possible, even if many musicians couldn't keep up with his systematic reinventions.

Reynolds is also very good at deconstructing pop culture grammar: he describes the single most illustrative image of the late 1960s as the (once banned) front cover of John Lennon and Yoko Ono's album, *Two Virgins*, pointing out that Lennon's summation of the counterculture was contained in his articulate "sick and tired" protest song, *Gimme Some Truth*.

Glam's shriek for help, posits Reynolds, was "gimme some untruth – it believed fantasy could set you free, not reality . . . For all its compelling characters, legendary exploits, outsize gestures and marvellous records, glam rock was a movement rooted in disillusionment. It was a retreat from the political and collective hopes of the sixties into a fantasy trip of individualised escape through stardom."

For all its occasional tinfoil follies, over 40 years later glam rock's waves continue to ripple. This excellent book tells us why. *Bang a gong* etc.

Tony Clayton-Lea writes on pop culture for The Irish Times.

www.irishtimes.com/culture/books/shock-awe-review-glam-rock-pop-s-own-ballroom-blitz-gets-its-due-1.2866462

WHAT A SHAME THIS NEVER HAPPENED

BOLAN PLANNING ANIMATED CARTOON SERIES FOR REX

T. REX are likely to be featured during 1973 in a series of TV animated cartoon films, based around the activities of the group and featuring their music on the soundtrack. Marc Bolan is at present working on the idea, and has already evolved basic scripts and story lines. He plans to produce the series independently, and then to offer it to British TV

companies, as well as for sale around the world.

Bolan says that he is adopting a completely fresh approach to the series. He added: "It will be something which people have never seen on television before. I am already totally involved in it, and it is giving me a lot of creative satisfaction."

Although several cartoon

series involving a name group have come out of America — notably the Archies, the Jackson 5 and the Osmonds — Bolan's project will be the first major British venture into this field, although the Beatles' "Yellow Submarine" followed this pattern in the cinema. The NME understands old and new Rex material would be featured in the series.

SMALL PHOTO OF MARC, JUNE AND A BABY. IF YOU KNOW HER NAME LET US KNOW



SEPTEMBER 2016 ARTICLE TO MARK MARC'S 39TH ANNIVERSARY, ALTHOUGH THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE WAS WRITTEN FOR MARC'S 30TH ANNIVERSARY.

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The Last Days Of Marc Bolan

Features / 16 Sep 2016 / by Geoff Barton



(Photo: Getty Images)

It's been almost 40 years since the Guru Of Glitter was killed in a car crash – just as his career was on the up again. Classic Rock uncovers his final hours

This article originally appeared in Classic Rock #111.

"You see, my idea of rock'n'roll is... that subterranean homesick blues feel," said Bolan. "Surrealistic rock'n'roll. That's what I like, that's what I've always wanted to do. I think I got close to it when I wrote the line 'cloak full of eagles'. It's a great idea – you open up a cloak and it's full of eagles..."

'You should never 'You should never meet your idols.' If that's not a saying, an adage, a maxim, a motto... then it damn well should be. Of course, meeting an idol is an occupational hazard when you're a rock journalist. No names mentioned, but the reality more often than not fails to live up to your fantasy. A face-to-face encounter with an idol can be a deflating, sobering, even depressing experience.

One of the rare exceptions was Marc Bolan. I only ever interviewed him once. But it was an occasion I'll never forget. It was November 1975 in the offices of Tony Brainsby Publicity, shortly before the release of the Futuristic Dragon album. Not one of Marc's best-known works, admittedly. But with his days as the teen-scream Guru Of Glitter well behind him, with the great ship T.Rextasy lost off the misty coast of Albany, he needed the press. And I, in turn, embraced – better make relished – that the chance to talk to my schoolboy (it's that word again) idol.

Bolan looked coolly confident, well accustomed to the experience of The Interview. Hair tinted with wispy gold and blue hues, he sported large square spectacles, presenting a somewhat bizarre cross between Cliff Richard conservativeness and Elton John outlandishness.

But hold on. Wait a minute. Did I detect some slight nervousness, a little apprehension behind those lenses? Was Bolan, after all this time, still dubious about talking to the press?

"No, not at all dubious, not in the least," he said in reassuring tones. "When I started out with Tyrannosaurus Rex the press were always very good to me – no one ever understood me, but it was quite nice, they helped to give me exposure. Then Ride A White Swan [Bolan's 1970 hit single] happened and suddenly I was very sellable. It was very fashionable to use my face on the cover of everything.

"I still think that, regardless of what anybody writes in the papers, it's good to have the space," he continued. "I've always got something interesting to say as long as the right person asks the right questions. Alright, so I went through a period of time when I didn't want to say anything in the papers, but I think every artist goes through that..."



In truth, Bolan had gone through a very problematic period of time. He was only now attempting to reassert his mercurial talents, and re-establish his popularity.

He had fallen a long way. At the height of T.Rex's popularity in 1971 Bolan had had two No.1 singles (Hot Love and Get It On) and a No.1 album, Electric Warrior, an all-time classic full of cosmic boogie, slinky sex, unmitigated raunch – and rounded off by bucketloads of pixie charisma. Oh yeah, and there was a No.2 single that year as well: Jeepster.

'Life's a gas... I hope it's gonna last,' Bolan crooned at the peak of his fame. Unfortunately, it didn't. In June 1973 he proclaimed: "Glam rock is dead." In spring 1974 he quit Britain to binge on cocaine and booze, and, in thrall to his new love, American singer Gloria Jones, try his hand as a soul-music producer in the States. Now he was back in Britain, his explosive mouth on overdrive, fit, healthy and strutting the Beltane Walk again. At least, that was the plan.

Bolan certainly talked a good fight. “People were saying that I was done for even from the time when Debora [Tyrannosaurus Rex’s 1968 single] came out,” he told me. “A lot of people like what I do, a lot of people don’t. Success has its degrees. Through 1971 and 1972 I was much newer and fresher than I am now, and I hit a big peak. Now I’ve levelled out. I’m still here.”

As our interview progressed, it took on a jumbled, disorganised, almost stream of consciousness quality. Bolan’s mind was brimful of new projects, some completed, several half-finished... but most of which never saw the light of day.

All the same, I listened intently, half in awe of the man, half in bemusement at his agitated blathering.

“...I played the first Tyrannosaurus Rex album recently and then I wrote about 10 songs in the same style, just to show myself that I could still do it...

“...‘The high woods filled with the bones of broken gods.’ I wrote that the other day, it’s a lovely line, isn’t it...

“...I mean, how can I honestly sit down and think that in the past I’ve been compared to David Cassidy? I’ve written some great lyrics, and people say it’s all mindless garbage. Why, even William Blake would have grooved to my lyrics, you know...

“...I’ve got a great story called Future Man Buick, which is incredible, it may be done as a movie. I haven’t been into cars for years. I’ll have to get back into cars...

“I might be doing something with Marvel Comics. They might be using one of my characters. I talked to Stan Lee, the head of Marvel, when the Conan The Barbarian weekly comic first came out in Britain. Stan doesn’t really like Conan that much, did you know? My Electric Warrior character was meant to be a sort of Conan, actually, except that he didn’t follow the conventional boring barbarian pattern...”

Bolan rambled on, going round and round in ever-decreasing circles. But at the same time, he was strangely compelling. His mind seemed to be travelling in a million different directions at the same time. “I’m afraid it is,” he admitted. “I’m afraid it is. That’s the problem with me, you see. I’m a lunatic.”



You hum it, I'll play it, performing with Elton John on Top Of The Pops in 1971 (Photo: Getty Images)

Despite Bolan's bravado, *Futuristic Dragon* only reached a feeble No.50 in the UK album chart. The scale of the task ahead was rammed home when, on May 3, 1976, Marc and Gloria Jones went to see David Bowie play Wembley's Empire Pool. Four years earlier, Bolan had headlined the venue himself.



“When David started singing he and Marc forged a great friendship,” recalls Jones today. “Then came the rivalry, but their camaraderie never really diminished. David loved Marc very much, and Marc loved David.”

After being friendly glam-rock adversaries, the pair’s careers veered off in radically different paths. By spring 1976 Bowie had re-energised himself as the über-suave Thin White Duke and was playing six sold-out shows at the aforementioned Empire Pool on his Station To Station tour.

Bolan, by contrast, was being lumped in with likes of Alvin Stardust and Showaddywaddy. He had been reduced to playing London's Lyceum Ballroom on his Futuristic Dragon tour in front of just 1,000 people. The tour was a supposedly low-key one, hence the undersized attendance. Still, that didn't stop Melody Maker describing Marc as a 'faded old tart' in a live review.

Bolan's long-time record producer Tony Visconti recalls the battle with Bowie: "They saw each other as competition right from the start. But they were such contrasting personalities. Marc was a rock'n'roller, and his other passion was mythology. He loved Tolkien's stories, but Bowie had no interest in them at all. Marc bought me The Lord Of The Rings and said: 'If you want to know more about me, read this.'"



Bowie and Bolan duet on the final episode of Granada TV show *Marc*, September 7, 1977. Nine days later, Bolan was dead

BP Fallon was Bolan's publicist at the height of his charge's fame. Fallon invented the term 'T.Rextasy' and was immortalised as 'purple-browed Beep' in Telegram Sam. He offers his perspective on Bolan versus Bowie: "Yes, Marc was a rock'n'roll boy. David was, and indeed still is, an artiste with an 'e' at the end. David can put a Kabuki painting to music, but for all his brilliance he's not a get-down rock'n'roller. That's what people forget about Marc. To see him on stage playing his guitar, laughing and singing... now that was rock'n'roll, y'know? He had that tease, he had that sexuality, and he had a real sense of fun. T.Rex records worked so well because they were celebratory and a bit cheeky at the same time."

But a failure to reinvent himself as successfully as Bowie cost Bolan dear. As Visconti explains: "Marc found a formula that he stuck with, which in the end didn't serve him well. He started to evolve toward the end of his life, but it was too late. He was a little afraid. You can imagine he was so heady with the success of T.Rextasy. He was afraid to let go."

You can see why. When Tyrannosaurus Rex morphed into T.Rex, mystic aura and attentive audience (small) was replaced by wild sexuality and riotous audience (large). A few 'heads' grumbled the words 'sell' and 'out', but Bolan left them for dust.



Tyrannosaurus Rex at London's Middle Earth club

“What actually gets forgotten is how uptight a lot of strait-laced people got with Marc’s behaviour,” BP Fallon reflects. “Here was a guy with glitter on his cheeks, wearing gold shoes. And tights. Is it a boy? Is it a girl? People got as weirded-out with Marc as they did with Bowie. I remember one Top Of The Pops where Marc was wearing a toy plastic Roman breastplate that he’d bought in Woolworth’s – and one of his nipples was showing! It caused outrage.”

While it’s true that the hits never totally dried up for Marc Bolan, there’s little doubt his creative muse fizzled rather than sizzled in his latter years. Steve Harley, the Cockney Rebel frontman and close confidant of Marc’s, states of Bolan’s later work: “It was just fifth-form poetry. It didn’t mean anything. He gave up writing proper poetry once he realised he could be on every girls’ bedroom wall with Ride A White Swan onward. His earlier work was a joy to behold – A Beard Of Stars [Tyrannosaurus Rex’s 1970 album] is a classic, it’s in my Top 20 of all time. But Marc got a little bit lazy later on.”



Bolan and Jones shot in London in 1976 (Photo: Getty Images)

Bolan’s June 1976 single, I Love To Boogie, was more of a simplistic chant than a cast-iron classic. Nevertheless, it heralded a comeback of sorts, reaching No.13 in the chart. The relative success of I Love...

led to a one-off TV special, *Rollin' Bolan*. And then, much to Bolan's delight, he was offered a TV series all of his own, simply titled *Marc*.



Steve Harley takes up to story: “Muriel Young kick-started it all. She was a kids’ TV presenter – she used to work with a puppet called Ollie Beak, remember him? – and then she became a TV producer. She offered Marc a teatime TV series. And he was very excited – as you would be. He saw every little appearance on the small screen as making him more famous in Sainsbury’s. Marc loved it all. He loved all the adulation and the recognition. He thrived on it.”

“Marc was grateful to have a second chance,” says Tony Visconti. “He loved kids and he loved kids’ TV shows. That was how Geoffrey Bayldon [the actor in *Catweazle*] got a part in the *Born To Boogie* movie. Marc was back on form. He was the cosmic punk again.”

Talking about punk, Bolan was one of the few mainstream music stars not to be horrified when Babylon began to burn. Indeed, many of the burgeoning bands of the day such as Generation X and The Jam guested on Marc.

“I was at the Weeley Festival in 1971, where Marc played. I think I was still a schoolboy, actually,” recalls Captain Sensible of The Damned. “It was amazing, because Bolan had just had his first big hit single. He went on stage and I’ll never forget what he said: ‘Hi. My name’s Marc. You might have seen me on Top Of The Pops.’ It was absolutely brilliant. Total class.”

On Bolan's final British tour, promoting his 1977 album *Dandy In The Underworld*, he invited The Damned to join him on the road as T.Rex's support band. "Marc was firing on all cylinders," Sensible recalls. "He'd got rid of his drug habit, he'd gone through his arrogant stage, he was almost humble. He was getting fit, the cheekbones were coming back, he was excited, he had a great band, and the songs were getting better."

However, Steve Harley believes Bolan's endorsement of punk was purely a means to an end. "He would seize any opportunity to further his own career. The Damned weren't bona fide punks, anyway. Marc would've embraced any movement as long as it reflected well among the gullible."

"I say this with no criticism and no malice, but Marc was a fully paid-up member of the Fantasy Island Club. He'd just make things up. I was on the same label as him, EMI, and he'd say: 'Oh yeah, my new single, it's done 30,000.' And I'd say: 'Marc, I've seen the figures. It did 3,000.'"

"Marc had to talk everything up. Why tell the truth when an exaggeration would do? Bless him. I mocked him, constantly. I ribbed him. I adored him and his crazy madness." Marc Bolan's mini-revival ended abruptly in the early hours of Friday, September 16, 1977.



Bolan's wrecked Mini 1275 GT on Barnes Common (Photo: Getty Images)

**MARC
BOLAN
KILLED
IN
CRASH**

*Evening
Standard*

The night before he had been at Morton's restaurant in London's Berkeley Square, celebrating Gloria Jones's return to the UK from California, where she had been recording an album. Marc had been drinking heavily for most of the day.

Bolan and Jones left Morton's at about four o'clock in the morning in a purple Mini 1275 GT. Jones was driving. The pair headed to their house in Upper Richmond Road West, East Sheen. A little before five o'clock the car left the road at Queens Ride, Barnes Common, and crashed into a tree.



They were barely a mile from home. Bolan was killed – his seat swivelling through 180 degrees and ending up in the rear of the vehicle – and Jones was severely injured.

To the best of Classic Rock's knowledge, Jones has never spoken publicly about the smash.

"We don't need sensationalism right now," she states plainly. "This year is the 30th anniversary of Marc's death. It would also have been his 60th birthday on September 30. We need a celebration, but we also need a closure.

If people still want to speculate about the manner of his death, fine. But right now let's look on the positive side. It was a long time ago. We need to move on now."

It has been alleged that Jones was drunk at the wheel but one source who does not want to be named, but who was close to Jones at the time, refutes this: "Gloria had a lot of self-control. She had a very clear-minded American outlook in that respect. She was the type to have one drink, then call it quits and not have any more, because she wanted to stay in control of her faculties."

THE LAST FAREWELLS



Princess Grace with Princess Caroline at the funeral of Maria Callas.

Weeping fans pay tribute to two great stars



Superstar in mourning . . . A shaken David Bowie after the funeral service at Golders Green for his close friend Marc Bolan.

THEY were from opposite sides of the musical tracks . . .

The fiery Greek opera singer and the Jewish kid who became a rock superstar.

And yesterday the fans and the music world gathered in London to say goodbye to Maria Callas and Marc Bolan.

A tribute service to Callas was held at Baywater's Greek Orthodox Cathedral.

And hundreds of weeping, wailing fans turned up for Marc's funeral at Golders Green Crematorium.

Friends like David Bowie, Rod Stewart and Steve Harley attended the service, and there were

wreaths from Elton John, Cliff Richard, Keith Moon, Gary Glitter, and Alvin Stardust.

The ceremony, a simple Jewish one, was conducted by Rabbi Henry Goldstein.

"At 29 he had so much before him," he told the mourners.

Comforted

"But we must not think of this. Marc's life, although short, is one we must remember as complete."

Throughout the service Marc's mother, Mrs. Phyllis Feld, wept aloud and was comforted by her husband, Simeon.

The tribute to Maria Callas was attended by stars of the British and international opera world.

The service was held at the same time as the funeral of Miss Callas, who died at her Paris home last week, was being conducted at the Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Paris.

At the Paris service, Princess Grace of Monaco and her daughter, Princess Caroline, were among the mourners.

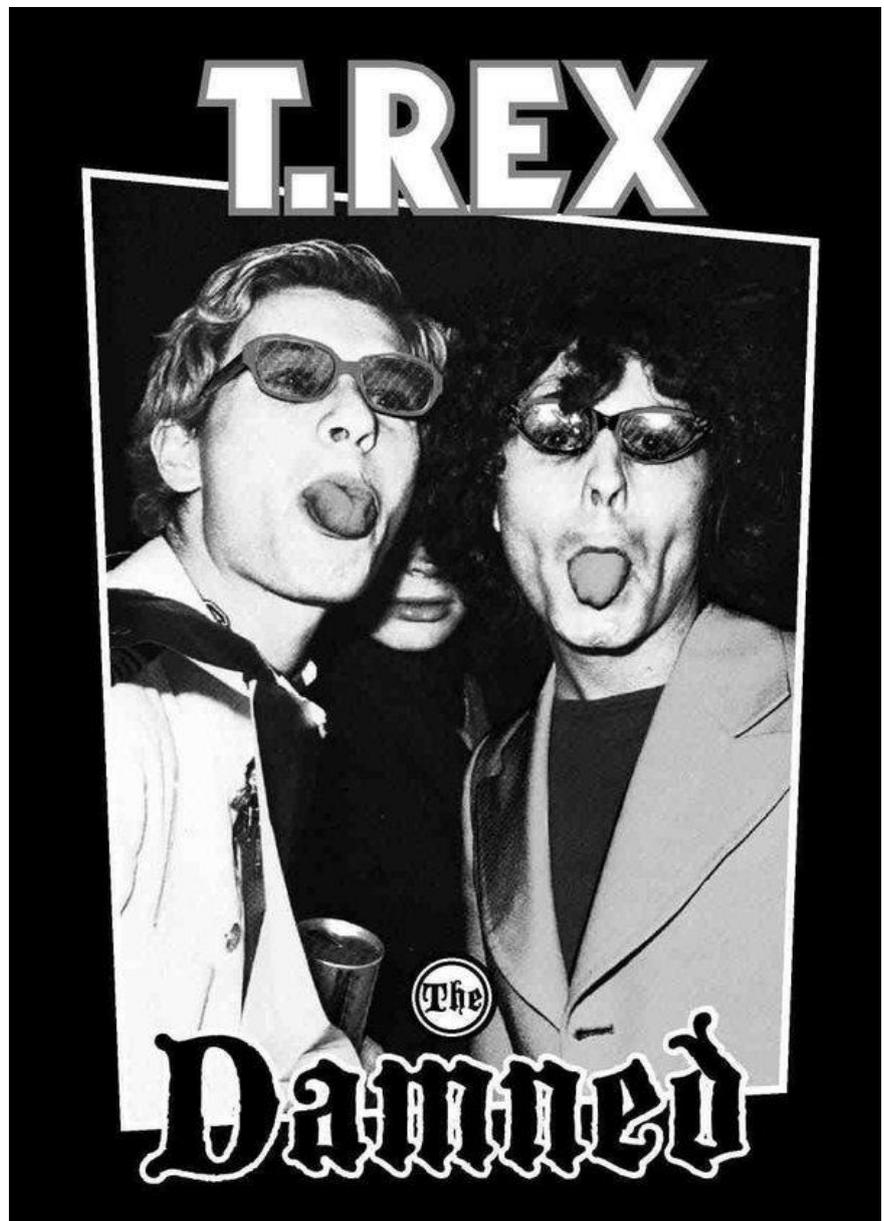
The service in London was organised by Franco Zeffirelli, and at the close a record of Callas singing "Vissi d'Artù" from Tosca was played.

The spotlight fell on the Mini, which had recently been serviced. Its wheels had been balanced and a tyre had been replaced. As Mark Paytress noted in his book *Bolan - The Rise & Fall Of A 20th Century Superstar*: 'When the Mini was examined after the accident, the pressure on the offside front tyre was only 16lbs, 12lbs less than it should have been; one of the rear tyres was marginally down; and two nuts on one of the front wheels were not even finger-tight. There was also talk that the vehicle may have been one of several used by Pink Floyd's management company, and that it had been "souped-up" in accordance with the band's thirst for high-speed motor racing.'

“I was in Los Angeles when it happened,” Steve Harley recalls. “The managing director of EMI, Bob Mercer, phoned me up. My tour manager and I were on the first plane to England. I knew that, with Marc being Jewish, the funeral would be very quick. I came back and went straight to the hospital to see Gloria – she had facial injuries and her jaw was all wired up.”

“I was in Berlin working and I immediately flew home for the funeral,” says Tony Visconti. “It was such a jolt that I had to find the nearest place to get a drink. I remember gulping down about three shots of something just to handle the news. My PA back in London said: ‘The journalists want a quote from you.’ I went: ‘A quote? I can’t think, I don’t have anything to say. It’s a tragic loss.’ I came up with something stock. I couldn’t gather my thoughts. I couldn’t even believe he’d died.”

“I was sitting out in my garden. It was a sunny afternoon, if I remember rightly,” says Captain Sensible. “I was living with my mum and dad. Terrible isn’t it – don’t tell the press! We had a little semi-detached in Croydon. My mum came back from the shops and said: ‘Your pop-star mate, Roley or Boley or whatever his name was, has died.’ I said: ‘Not Marc Bolan!’ I ran round the corner, got an Evening Standard, and there it was. It was true.”





BP Fallon (seen on the left with Marc and T.Rex) visited the crash site in Barnes personally. “I got a phone call in the morning from my friend Fachtna O’Kelly, who was the manager of The Boomtown Rats. He said: ‘Have you heard the radio today? Marc’s dead.’ It was unreal. Elvis had died not long before, and I was round Marc’s house when the news broke.

Marc said: ‘Do you know what? I’m really glad I didn’t die today because I wouldn’t have made the main story.’ When Marc died I think it was the same day as Maria Callas – he got the main story, thank goodness.

“But when you think about some of Marc’s phraseology... ‘Tyrannosaurus Rex – eater of cars.’ ‘Hubcap diamond star halo.’ ‘Seventy-seven is going to be heaven.’ [The latter being a line from Bolan’s final single, Celebrate Summer.] It’s all writ. It’s all known.

“So I went to the tree. The tree the Mini had run into. There was all this glass on the ground; nobody had bothered to clear it up. Already people had started leaving notes and messages. There was no one there apart from me. Then this girl appeared. She was gorgeous. I found myself chatting her up. I could imagine Marc saying: ‘For fuck’s sake, there he goes, he’s standing right where I died, by the tree, and he’s chatting up a bird.’ People may lose their physical continuity but it doesn’t mean you have to lose them.”

In contrast to BP Fallon’s somewhat spiritual outlook, Steve Harley refutes any claim that Bolan had a death wish. “Oh, no. People talk such bollocks. You can’t believe a word of that. He was never going to burn out, Sid and Nancy style. Not a chance. He was grounded in many respects. Marc wanted to live forever. He lived for the day. He loved life. He never thought he was going to die young. No one thinks they are going to get wrapped around a fucking tree in the early hours of the morning. Nobody could have foreseen that.”



Estranged wife June Bolan (née Child) went to pay her respects to Marc's dead body. "She told me his face looked so beautiful and he had one little mark over his eyebrow," says Tony Visconti. "That was the only indication he'd been in an accident. She couldn't understand how that had killed him. Just one tiny little mark."

Marc Bolan's funeral took place on Tuesday, September 20, 1977 at Golders Green Crematorium. David Bowie and Rod Stewart were in attendance, as were Steve Harley and members of The Damned. Elton John sent a bouquet. The centrepiece was a huge white swan made out of chrysanthemums. According to Visconti, who was there with his wife Mary Hopkin, the occasion turned into a circus.



“It was a Jewish ceremony. There was a rabbi reading a eulogy, and Marc’s coffin was in the middle of these twin tracks, like on a railroad. The eulogy was beautiful, and then this funereal music started up on the organ.

A big robotic arm appeared out of a crack just in front of the coffin and moved it along the rails. A pair of doors opened up like the mouth of Hades. There were flames bursting out in front of us. At that moment Marc’s mother just shrieked: ‘My boy!’ I started crying and everyone lost it.”



No one can quite agree on what exactly Marc Bolan would be doing today, if he’d lived.

Gloria Jones: “He’d be doing his own music, he’d be doing film, he’d be enjoying time with his son, and we’d possibly be living in Malibu. Because that was the plan. He would be good-looking and still sharp.”

Tony Visconti: “I think he would have acted. I think he would have written a film. I think he would have stretched out into other fields. We were working on this rock opera called *The Children Of Rarn*, and I was dying to get back to him and do that one properly. The demo was put out posthumously, and it had all the signs of a great work. But Marc never got around to doing it properly. His pitfall was always: ‘Let’s just do one more for the kids.’”

Captain Sensible: “Crikey. I don’t think I’ve any idea. That’s the amazing thing, isn’t it? You think, what would Jimi Hendrix have done if he’d lived? If Paul McCartney had died and John Lennon had lived, what would’ve happened then? It’s really tough to answer.”

BP Fallon: “He’d be writing fantastic books. He used to write wonderful stories, but I don’t know what happened to them. Magical stories, in that peculiar handwriting of his. And maybe acting, too.”

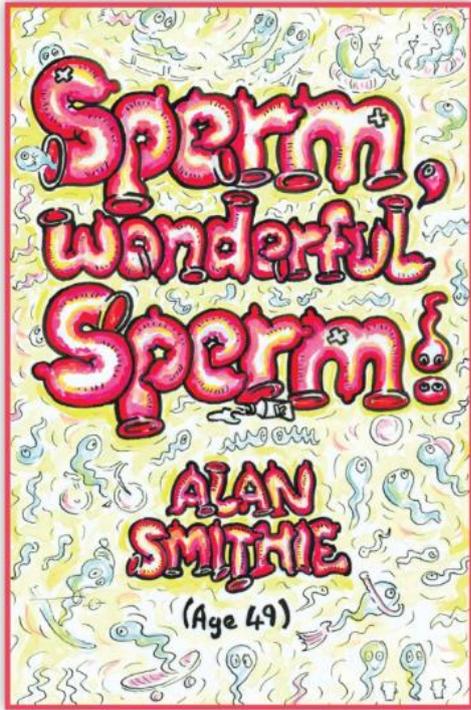


Steve Harley:
“Marc would be pushing 60, but he’d look about 45 because he would’ve had all the Botox, he’d’ve had tummy tucks, liposuction – ha-ha! Because he was so vain.”

I used to say to him: ‘Vanitas vanitatum. Vanity, vanity, all is vanity, Marc.’ The world was a mirror to him. He couldn’t walk past a shop window; he couldn’t walk past a fucking bus stop without looking at his reflection in the glass. But I adored all that. So I miss him to this day. I can say that in absolute, total truth. I’m talking about him as if I can see him now. It’s a very strange feeling.”

Read the full article with the videos using the link below.
<http://teamrock.com/feature/2016-09-16/the-last-days-of-marc-bolan>





MORE BOOK NEWS ...

A BRIEF AND POSSIBLY A HINT TASTELESS MARC MENTION – BLAMING THE TREE (AGAIN)

This was spotted in a fictional (or at least semi-fictional) Book entitled *Sperm, wonderful Sperm* by *Alan Smithie*.

Sunday 16th September 2007

SCENE 1: ACT 1

16 September 1977 - a little before 4 am. Two people in a purple Mini head south across Barnes Common, South London.

DRIVER (Gloria)

Do you love me **Marc**?

*The passenger, **Marc**, breaks into song.*

MARC

You're my woman of gold,

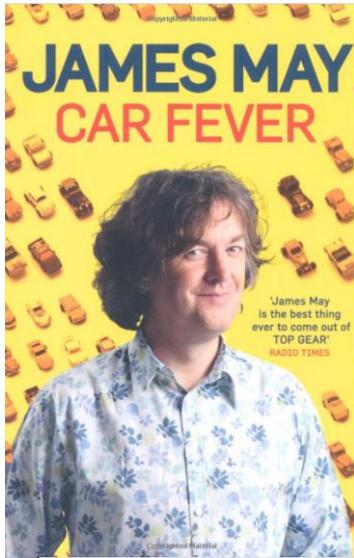
And you're not very old aaaaahghhaaa!!

*The Mini collides with a **tree**.*

***Marc Bolan**, lead singer with T.Rex is killed instantly.*

It's a Mini-adventure.

11.09 pm. Exactly thirty years ago today **Marc Bolan** plucked his last guitar string. To this day the sycamore **tree** that failed to move out of the way when his mini left the road is decorated with colourful ribbons and fans can remember him at a nearby shrine.



MORE TASTELESSNESS ...

JAMES MAY - NOT AN OBVIOUS COMIC

Some of you might be upset at the *throw-away* comments made by James May, which was spotted in his book "*Car Fever*". The words though were originally published either in James May's Daily Telegraph and Top Gear Magazine columns ☹

The 'offending' comments are below and of course once again, the Tree is blamed.

If you're not happy do write to James May.

PLEASE BE CIVIL.

Comment on Twitter:-

<https://twitter.com/MrJamesMay>

The contents of this book first appeared in James May's *Daily Telegraph* and *Top Gear Magazine* columns.

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London NW1 3BH

But I do agree with the basic premise that streets should be social places. In fact, the street where I live already is one. People live on it, run in and out of each others' houses to borrow a cup of sugar, grow plants, talk rubbish, and moan about the bin men. We cook meals for each other, help each other with small DIY tasks and the subsequent rush to hospital, recommend builders and ask each other politely to turn the radio down. All this happens on my street. We even drive up and down it occasionally, although if other people drive up and down it too fast, we go out and shout at them. Multi-functional? We're already there, although we haven't yet used it as a landing strip.

How could this be improved? Well, apparently, speed humps could be removed – hoorah! – in favour of a doctrine of 'shared space'. But hang on. Surely they're not suggesting that there should be no delineation between the bit generally occupied by the cars and the bit that people walk on? My own experience of ignoring this well-established divide – when crossing the road, for example – suggests that this is a good way to get run over.

But I'm afraid that's exactly what they are suggesting. In the future, the road and the pavement will be on the same level, and trees will be planted at the edge of the road bit to 'slow cars down'. I don't think this will work. I was going to ring and ask Marc Bolan, but then I remembered that he died some time ago when his car hit a tree at the side of the road.

OVERLEAF – GOOD NEWS ... ANOTHER MARC BOLAN ROCK SHRINE LISTING ON THE WEB

Overleaf is another web page, which is part of a Web Site, dedicated to Uncovering London Sites which many may not know about. It's always a delight when such sites choose to include Marc Bolan and we at TAG like to think that we are promoting the name of Marc Bolan since 1999. As it stands that is over 17 years and TAG is looking forward to our 18th Anniversary in Marc's 40th Anniversary Year of 2017.



- HOME
- LONDON CITY
- LONDON WEST
- LONDON EAST
- LONDON SOUTH
- LONDON NORTH
- LONDON SUBURBS
- WALKS

MARC BOLAN - ROCK LEGEND

AN UNTIMELY DEATH

By the side of Queen's Ride, one of the roads that skirts Barnes Common, a flight of steps ascend to the roadside memorial to rock legend Marc Bolan (1947 - 1977).

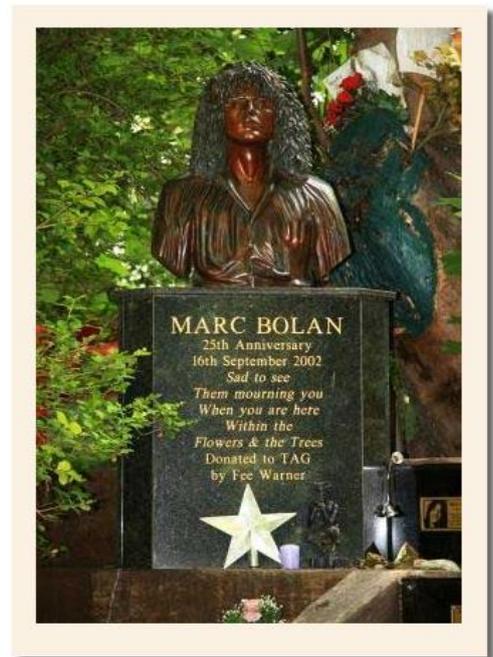
It was here that a fatal, early morning crash, ended the career of one of the great superstars of the glam-rock era, and it is to this spot that fans from all over the World still come to leave their tributes to another rock star who was tragically cut down in his prime.

At around 5am on 16th September 1977 Marc was being driven home by his American girlfriend, Gloria Jones, when she lost control of the car on this bend and smashed into a tree.

Marc Bolan died instantly after his side of the car took the full impact of the crash.

He was twenty-nine years old - just two weeks short of his thirtieth birthday - and, having just completed a television series, he was on the verge of making a comeback after spending the previous three years abroad as a tax exile.

The bronze bust at the top of the steps that lead up to the tree was unveiled on the 25th anniversary of the accident by Marc's son, Rolan.



HOW TO FIND IT?

LOCATION

Queen's Ride, Barnes Common, Barnes.

CLOSEST RAILWAY STATION

Barnes Station

GETTING THERE

Leave Barnes Station via the exit on platform 4 and turn left through the concrete bollards across from the steps.

Go along the asphalt path and at its end turn left along Queen's Ride.

Cross cautiously to its right side and follow the earth path that runs alongside the brown brick wall. A little way along on the left go up the steps to reach the memorial.

BOWIE? THE CHEEK OF THE FINANCIAL TIMES WRITER JOHANNA THOMAS-CORR

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August 16, 2016 5:10 am

Leopard print stalks the catwalks

Johanna Thomas-Corr

Decadent, predatory and firmly on trend: the big cat look is back

In Mike Nichols' *The Graduate* (1967), Anne Bancroft's predatory seductress, Mrs Robinson, is at her most scheming and sexy when wrapped in leopard. But, by then, it had already become the symbol of the trophy wife – decadent, cruel, out-of-touch – and it fell out of fashion favour until it was taken up by punks and glam rockers – Debbie Harry, David Bowie, Patti Smith, Wendy O'Williams – who wore it on jumpsuits, glittery leggings and bandannas. In the 1980s and 1990s, it became synonymous with anti-conformists and subcultures, while the likes of Christian Lacroix and later Dolce & Gabbana continued to push the print as a symbol of decadent excess.

Read the full article using the link below.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2/b636ea16-4a6c-11e6-8d68-72e9211e86ab.html>

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Letters

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September 2, 2016 9:35 pm

Bolan, not Bowie, was the '70s big cat

Share Author alerts Print Clip

Sir, Johanna Thomas-Corr's "Return of the big cats" (Life & Arts, August 20) was a little off track. In the '70s it was the late, great Marc Bolan who was the main purveyor of leopard print. I don't recall seeing David Bowie wearing leopard print at all.

People often forget the important influence of Marc Bolan on both fashion and music. His spirit lives on.

For all the cats – you know who you are.

Amanda Nicholls

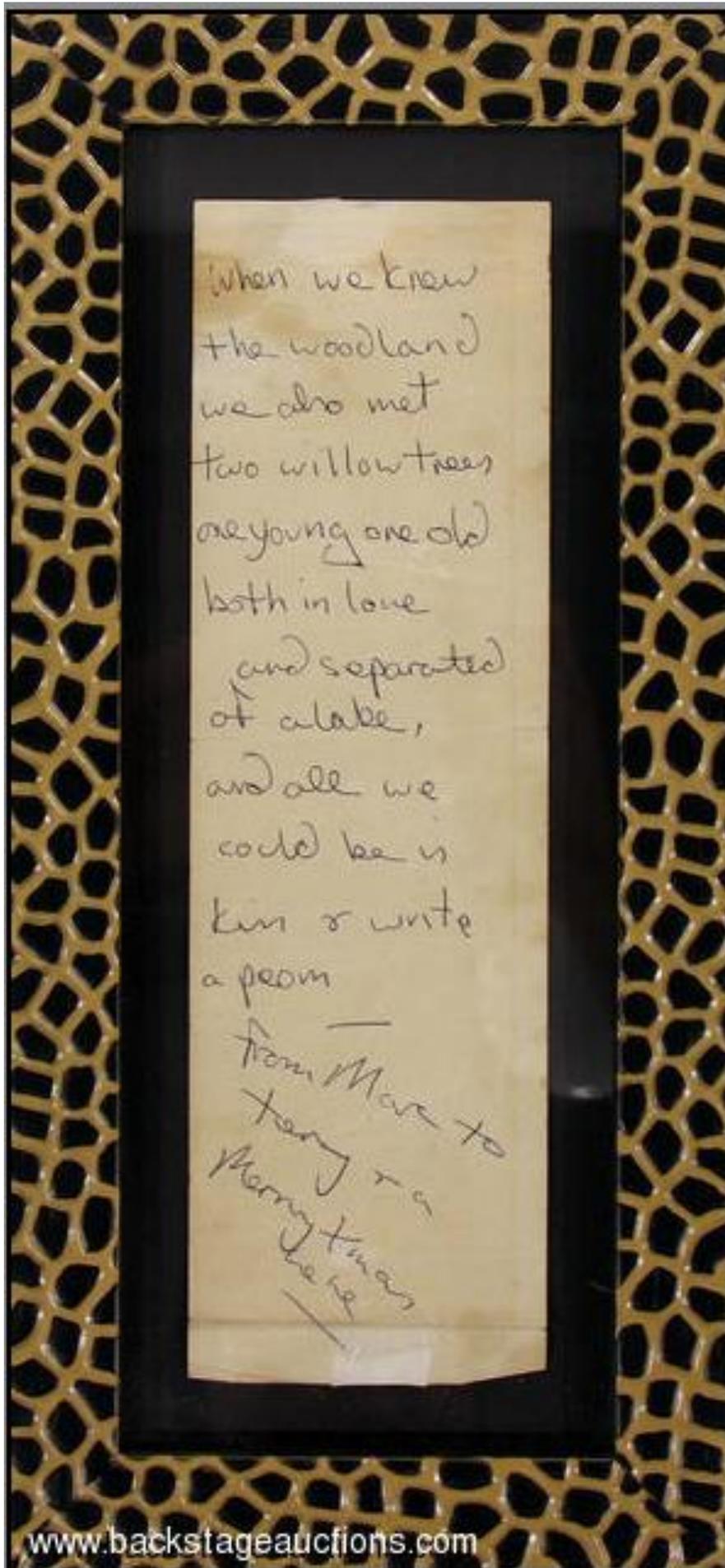
WELL SAID AMANDA!

You only have to look at our one Christmas card design to see Marc in a funky fab fake fur jacket.

SPOTTED ON THE WEB. TOO NICE NOT TO INCLUDE IT ☺
(Even with the watermark)

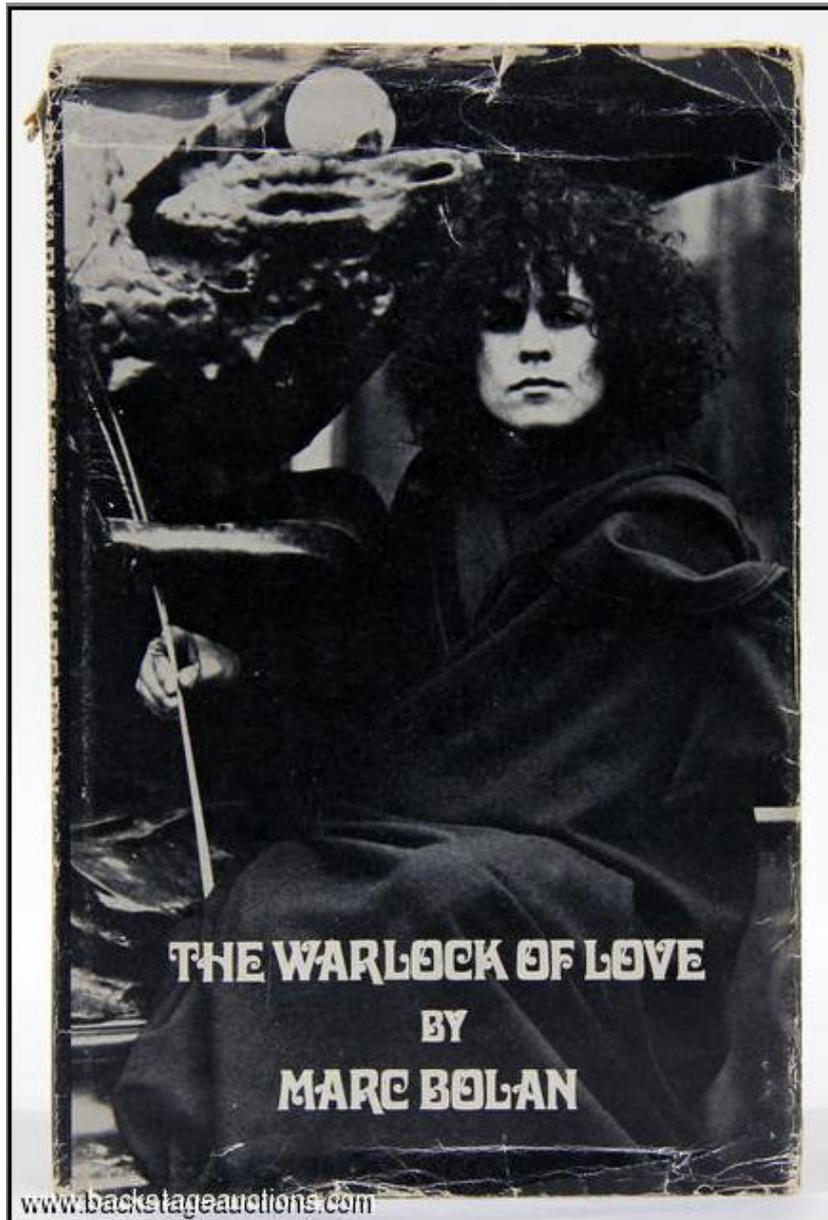


AUCTIONED RECENTLY 1)



<http://www.backstageauctions.com/catalog/lot-1920/ai/0/25987/>

AUCTIONED RECENTLY 2)



<http://www.backstageauctions.com/catalog/lot-1921/ai/0/25988/>

INTERESTING POST FROM TWITTER



marcbolanhangups

marcbolanhangups Original photo used for The Electric Warrior sleeve taken at Nottingham on May 14th 1971





ABOVE:- A David Bowie fan punched Marc a Bowie fan punched Marc as he was getting off the tour bus in Manchester. The Bowie fan shouted “Bowie's better than you”

LEFT:- A couple of days later at the New Brighton gig Marc wasn't taking any chances! Tanx to member John Wass for the info



THIS NEWSLETTER WAS PRODUCED FOR THE MEMBERS OF TAG'S MEMBERS CLUB

TAG relies on the sale of fund raising items and memberships to maintain Marc Bolan's Rock Shrine. We plan to publish 6 to 8 newsletters per year. Membership for one year is £6.00 + P&P for your DVD/other item making these newsletters less than £1.00 each *assuming you don't count all the Photo Galleries, Articles, Videos, Music and other goodies. If this newsletter has been passed on to, you please join for get your own copy!

Please Note: Members of our Club are not 'FULL' members of TAG.

TAG FULL MEMBERS are: Chairman – Mr. Kevin Warner; Secretary and Founder – Mrs Fee Warner BSc (Honours) First Class; Hands on, Design, Packing – Eleanor Warner; Hands on qualified Builder – Mr. Mark Rowe

TAG, PO Box 5278, Hove, BN52 9QP, UK

For general enquiries Email TAG@Marc-Bolan.net

For Subscription enquiries Email subscriptions@Marc-Bolan.net

Back-Up Email tagwebby@gmail.com

