

THE BABY GLASS STORY

I don't recall exactly when Baby Glass first sprang to life, but it was some time in the summer of 1992. Phil Swan and I had been getting together and playing some songs on bass and acoustic guitar, and when my parents went on holiday, we built a rudimentary recording studio in their lounge. Armed with two cassette recorders, a four-way mixer from Tandy and a microphone we recorded nine songs. Thankfully none of these are included on this CD, but the tape is the earliest evidence of Baby Glass - unless you include the photos of an unbelievably knackered Ford Transit with 'Baby Glass Tour 92' sprayed woefully on the side, from around the same era. Needless to say we never toured in it - come to think of it we never even got it started.

Spurred on by our home recording experience, Phil and I spent an evening at a friend's home studio in August to make our first 'proper' recording. This time we had 1/4" tape and a big 16-track mixing desk, but the difference between the new recording and the home demo was suspiciously slight, and we were disappointed. A cynic may suggest that the common element was our lack of any discernable talent. Nevertheless, the three songs we recorded, including 'Whiskey Tears' (the first song I ever wrote), are all included here.

At the end of the month, came the first Baby Glass gig - an event of major importance for me, for two reasons. Firstly, this was my first proper gig and as such enormously scary. Secondly, we were supporting a band called Urban Fox, whose drummer was one Darren Millburn. We were soon to poach Darren from the mighty Fox for Baby Glass, and he was to become my drummer/flatmate/drinking & miscellaneous debauchery buddy for the next few years - to this day I've shared more great yet comically tragic musical adventures with Darren than anyone else.



I have no doubt he'll be appalled that I've gone to the trouble of producing this package. A few minutes of this legendary evening are featured on the DVD.

There was no stopping the Glass by this point, and the next recording session was planned. This time we expanded the sound, adding my electric guitar and a drum machine courtesy of Mark McLeod (from local prog-rockers Lorien). We headed back to High Wycombe and recorded four songs, including a full version of 'Should've been a



Star'. The plan was to expand the band to include another guitarist and a drummer - I'm hazy as to the sequence of events but I seem to recall Darren coming down to the studio with us one night, as well as guitarist Simon Ness. I don't think Simon played on these sessions... if he did, he's probably grateful I've forgotten. Anyway, by the time the recording was done, Baby Glass was a band. The songs we recorded were released as a demo tape with the impossibly wanky name of 'As the Angels Part'.

We started gigging with this line-up at the beginning of 1993, but Phil Swan was not long for the band. We'd decided to get another bassist - bass playing wasn't really Phil's

strong point, which was a bit of a drawback for a bass player. Phil muttered something about going to Egypt and we set about rehearsing with Rob Gladman in his place. Rob was the only other bassist we knew, and luckily he was pretty good. The bulk of the DVD footage is from an April gig with Rob in Milton Keynes. Phil was to reunite with Darren and I a year or so later in Down, and if he wasn't actually in one of my bands then there was a fair chance he was the roadie. He never made it to Egypt though.

The last Baby Glass studio recordings were done over a weekend somewhere in North London in May, and this time the whole band was involved. 'Prettiest Girl in Town' and 'Painted Smile' from these sessions stand up ok – by which I mean that they're mildly embarrassing, as opposed to completely embarrassing. I remember very little about this weekend other than a real tension emerging between myself and Simon – he subsequently left the band soon after, and I think being part of Baby Glass was enough to put him off playing bands for life. An interesting side-note is that I was at school with Simon, and it was actually him that inspired me to get my first guitar when I was 15.



Matthew Warner was roped in as the new guitarist. Matt and I had learnt to play guitar together a few years prior, and as he was a good deal more proficient than Simon I was able to hand over all the electric guitar work to him. As a result the sound changed dramatically, and we did a couple of good gigs coupled with a radio session in Milton Keynes, but Matt and I were much happier drinking together than playing and it never really worked out.

Baby Glass ceased to be in the autumn of 1993. I lost interest in the sound and songs, and wanted to try something different (i.e. I now wanted to rip off The Only Ones instead of The Jacobites and Suicide Blonde), but basically it just ran out of steam because we simply weren't very good. I know with certainty that Darren had had enough too, but remarkably he was there to play drums in our new venture in 1994. As yet the band have received no offers to reform, and a re-union looks unlikely...

