Subject: "A Trick of the Tail"
Posted by Wayne Parham on Fri, 30 Apr 2004 10:51:57 GMT
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This morning, I'm listening to "Trick of the Tail" by Genesis.I'm a long time fan of Genesis, and own absolutely everything they ever did in vinyl. I mean, everything. I have obscure stuff that was weird and hard to find back when vinyl was the norm. So Genesis and Peter Gabriel have been favorites of mine forever.Having said that, I must say that Trick of the Tail is still just as enchanting as it ever was. I was always sad that Gabriel left just before this album, but he did just fine on his own. It allowed Phil Collins to flourish, even though this album is an imitation of the old "Gabriel Genesis." Nothing wrong with that. The changes that followed were popular and put Genesis on the map. Not willing to call them sell-outs, I liked 'em before and after. Same with Gabriel, going from Solsbury Hill to Sledgehammer.But I digress. Trick of the Tail was a slow, driving and enchanting album. It was easy for a teenager to miss, moving on to faster-paced more energetic albums. But Trick of the Tail grew on you. You were pulled in at first by Dance on Volcano and Squonk. But after a few plays, you become intrigued by Mad Man Moon and Trick of the Tail. Robbery Assault and Battery and Los Endos were good too. But soon you found yourself mezmerized by Entangled and Ripples. Those two and Squonk are etched into my mind, like an oh-so familar hymn from my youth.Set the way-back machine to 1979. I had a pair of

channel receiver. Source material consisted of a Technics turntable, Pioneer Reel-to-Reel and an Onkyo 4-head cassette. Really good stuff considering my budget, and it was the best I had ever heard at the time. I still think highly of that system; It was great equipment even by audiophile standards then or today.I was playing my Genesis albums on a Technics direct-drive turntable with an Audio-Technica gold limited edition AT20SL cartridge. Tracking weight set for a gram, anti-skating set for 0.8. Every time I played an album, I went through "that little ritual." Run a hair thin bead of cleaning fluid (never distilled water or alcohol, 70% or 99%) on the Discwasher, put the album on the turntable and rotate the platter backwards with my finger. Wipe the groves three times, and remove the debris from the Discwasher brush using its scraper brush each time.Then one pass across the needle with the Discwasher needle brush, which was about a million tiny little thin fibers designed specifically for the purpose. Letting the platter spin freely now, use the anti-static gun and squeeze it once, let up and squeeze again. Remove the gun to point out in free air to release the second time. Use just enough pressure on the handle each time so that the piezoelectric crystal generates enough voltage to ionize the air and not arc internally, making that buzzing sound and discharging its energy inside. Now, stop the platter, power it up to speed and lower the needle down to the surface with the hydraulic damper. Lights out, sit and enjoy.I'm telling you what, that was heaven. I remember thinking how lucky I was to have those moments. I felt like I was in a world of my own, that few were blessed enough to enjoy. Presumptuous, perhaps. But I guess that's what all audiophile's share, an elation with good music that makes us wonder if we have found the place that is nirvana. Surely, nothing else is as enchanted as

one could have told Wayne Parham 1979 that he would be listening to a hi-fi tube system in 2004. A quarter century later I would be listening to a system using technology that died a quarter century before.But here I am.I take my half-speed master copy of Trick of the Tail and place it on my Rega P2 turntable. Can't spin it backwards, it's a belt drive. So I power it up and let it spin forward instead, cleaing the record and gently helping it against the drag with assist from my finger. I see now why a separate cleaning platter is nice, and I am careful to maintain speed so

the belt isn't strained.  Same cleaner from 25 years ago, cleaning the same album.What I couldn't have known then, was that Enchanted passes you through another gate when run through a system that's valved from phono stage to output iron.  Ripples gives you just that.  I mean, really.  Across the ages comes those same warm and driving rhythms, but with even more warmth than before.  It is truly magical.  This is what tubes are for, an order-of-magnitude more involving than even the audiophile-approved lyricists are.  You are absolutely thrown into another world, one where there is nothing but fond memories and the innocence of youth.  It's the magic of the ages, a feeling of Stonehenge and the Great Pyramids right there in your midst.How in the hell do I re-enter the "real world" to get any work done?That's The Trick of the Tail.

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Subject: Re: "A Trick of the Tail"
Posted by Manualblock on Sat, 01 May 2004 16:44:11 GMT
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Hey Wayne; Long time big fan myself. I like the Trick album but my favorite has always been Selling England By The Pound. Especially I Know What I Like(In your wardrobe) and The Cinema Show. I always try to Take A Little Step Back( with father Tireseus). I bought the new remastered version of The Lamb Lies Down On Broadway and there is some fine sounds, the bass is now real musical and the sound is spacious and lots of ambience, definately worth the money. Watcher of the Skies tour back in 1969 I was a little pipsqueak there when Gabriel dressed up in a giant sunflower. Any way I took a trip back then to florida with a bunch of others in a datsun. Lots of goodies but the only two tapes we had were Mountain Climbing and Trick of The Tail. Halfway to Daytona the mountain tape broke and we were left with the Trick tape. We must have played that tape 100 times. It was the background music to the whole trip! Your comment that some of the music is dreamy; well I tell you that is the right word, chemically assisted I may add. What a soundtrack. J.R.

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Subject: Re: "A Trick of the Tail"
Posted by Wayne Parham on Sun, 02 May 2004 09:47:45 GMT
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Another Gabriel and Genesis fan.  Cool!  I like the older Genesis too, and I agree with you on Selling England by the Pound.  I also like Tresspass, Foxtrot and Nursery Crime.  The Musical Box is a song I always liked, so is The Knife.  There's a bunch of others too, but those two click in my mind just now.  The Cinema Show, yeah, that's cool too.I saw that Genesis had remastered a 5.1 version of the Lamb when I made the link to the Genesis website.  You found the bass and ambience improved, huh?  I'll have to check that out.Do you have a copy of Genesis - Live, the live album from '73?  It has  Musical Box and The Knife on side one and Watcher of the Skies, Get 'Em Out by Friday and Return of the Giant Hogweed on side two.  I don't know how they managed on what must have been a pretty lean budget back then, but it is excellent quality, especially for a live performance.  They were able to capture that elusive crowd ambience and give make it sound

3D.  They also cought what's just as hard, to mic every instrument and make them sound balanced, without leaving something out or over emphasizing something else.  Vocals are pure, no distortion and cymbals are crisp.The record carries the Charisma label and was distributed by Phonogram.  It was recorded at the De Montfort Hall and the Free Trade Hall in Laicester and Manchester, England, respectively.  The album was mixed at Island Studios in London, and produced by John Burns and the band.  The net effect of all these efforts is a really great album, so check it out if you don't have it already.  It was easy to overlook, because the sleeve design and photos made it lok like a pirated knock-off or something.  But it's great.

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Subject: Re: "A Trick of the Tail"
Posted by Manualblock on Sun, 02 May 2004 18:12:51 GMT
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Yes thats right, I have a copy of that album issued by an Italian label called Successo that is authorised by the Famous Charisma Label. Its the one with Gabriel on the cover. The sound is good comparable to the original. I also bought the Classic records Nursery Cryme remaster the same time I got Lamb.Suppers Ready comes out well on that one. The remasters have more depth,bass,sounds clearly identify the players even in complicated passages. I think Gabriel was the artistic force behind them. While the later stuff is good rock the really interesting things were his. Tell me, much of the art rock music seemed overindulgent at times but now with the passage of time I find I am starting to listen again and enjoy. Crimson is on the table a lot as well as Pink Floyd Atom Heart Mother, and ELP. I tried Take A Pebble from their first recently, that guitar intro is a killer! As soon as you hear them; all the old solos come right back, singing along with the synthesizer on Lucky Man, who woulda thunk it. Can't beat it with a stick! In fact I am looking at Seconds Out as we speak, must listen, must listen.

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Subject: Re: "A Trick of the Tail"
Posted by Wayne Parham on Mon, 03 May 2004 09:02:09 GMT
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"Squonk" on Seconds Out is excellent.  In fact, that whole album side is great.  I love "Afterglow" at the end.Do you know of anyone that mixed and mastered a decent copy of Court of the Crimson King?  Every copy I ever heard had audible compression and tape hiss.  Some albums are like that, another extreme example that comes to mind is Queen, News of the World.  A lot of Moody Blues albums are marginal until Every Good Boy Deserves Favour.  But you can get good half-speed masters of On the Threshold of a Dream and Days of Future Passed.Have you ever heard of Gentle Giant?  They were a very interesting band.  If you haven't heard of them, try to find a copy of the album called Pretentious.  It's a two-album set on the Vertigo label, sort of a "greatest hits" except they aren't a top-fourty kind of band.  Like not at all.  Check 'em out, they're most interesting.

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Subject: Re: "A Trick of the Tail"
Posted by Manualblock on Mon, 03 May 2004 10:44:06 GMT
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I have a double album called The Young Persons Guide To King Crimson. Its a personal selection compiled by Robert Fripp for EG Records Limited that has a real clean master of Court. One of the used record stores should be able to wrestle up a copy. My First good system was Dyna St 70 and Pas that a freind built for me in 1972 used KLH model 5's for a while then I acquired a pair of JBL L1oo's and I remmember listening to Court and Pink Floyd until my ears were bleeding. Moodies sound was awful too bad I still have not heard a really good recording, to me the MSFL's are the best but they still leave something to be desired. Gentle Giant, I like the double live album. The sound is amazingly well balanced for live, no drop-outs or mis-mikes, I'm sure you are familiar with it, Playng The Fool on capital, great version of Funny Ways and Experience. I must confess to being a big Mountain fan. I saw them live at the Felt Forumn News Years Eve three years in a row. The live version of Nantucket Sleighride is embedded in my head. Someday someone will remaster them, but Leslie West is caught up in legal issues it seems. Has anyone heard the remaster of Blind Faith, very good sound, much better than all the other versions, Can't Find My Way Home is hard to believe how good. Check out this website, Technical Web Of Sound on SHOUTcast radio. It is a continous rock station playing all the pyschedelic stuff from the 60's along with the original commercials, last night I learned that the original lead guitar player from Geneisis became lead for Steppenwolf! 1967.

Subject: Re: "A Trick of the Tail"
Posted by Manualblock on Mon, 03 May 2004 12:28:45 GMT
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Hey Wayne; I am listening to an add for Motor Honey, remmember that stuff, Cher sings the add.

Subject: Re: "A Trick of the Tail"
Posted by Wayne Parham on Mon, 03 May 2004 13:56:58 GMT
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Cool, we definitely travel the same paths where music is concerned.

Subject: Re: "A Trick of the Tail"
Posted by Wayne Parham on Mon, 03 May 2004 13:58:28 GMT
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Oh, wow, she's currently doing an add for that product?  I know what it is, but I prefer the Slick50 high mileage additive.

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Subject: Re: "A Trick of the Tail"
Posted by Manualblock on Mon, 03 May 2004 18:41:44 GMT
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No Thats a very old add from the early 70's. I listen to that Technoweb.com off shoutcast. It's all 60's pschycadelic music coupled with adds from that time period and DJ's from back then. It plays all day and the signal is good. The p[laylist in the time I wrote this has been Moodies with Tide Rushes IN, Beatles When I'm 64, Buffalo Springfeild Broken Arrow and Stones Dandyline as I close Jethro Tull is doing Sunday Feeling from the first album. It plays in my house all day now and my wife is holding a big knife and waiting for me to go to sleep. She says it goes or I go. First big giant speakers and now this, last night she pulled the plug on Captain Beefheart and The Magic Band; can't imagine why? Some of the most obscure psychycadelia you can imagine.

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Subject: Re: "A Trick of the Tail"
Posted by Wayne Parham on Tue, 04 May 2004 10:48:26 GMT
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Oh, now that's cool.  I'll definitely have to check that out.  Alona will thank you, I'm sure.

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