

Maggie Perrin interviewing - Andy Treacy - Drummer

Born Nantwich 1969

Dad was engineer, Mum was housewife.

Andy's session work primarily in studio (recording)

Interest in music (late starter) started in 6th form watching school bands drummer play a 'military roll / beat'

Only drumming was of interest after this - made Andy listen 'more' to records - in depth.

Formed a band in 6th form - no formal training, self taught listening to Police records.

First band rehearsed in a demolition yard - band broke up because girlfriends fell out.

Friend (Pete) from next door went to a music course in Salford - Andy was hesitant as he would be judged on talent.

Andy succeeded on entering the course on second attempt.

During course got first paid session (live) playing with the 'Chameleons' in Manchester.

Post course Andy moved to London to join a (covers) band - auditioned and got the gig.

Played on some sessions at RAK for Tom Robinson - realised playing in London was 'Next Level' and initially intimidating.

More recommendations came in for Andy's playing - leading to more recording sessions - which was never the primary goal.

Session work (studio) paid the bills in London - they were a different skillset than live work.

Joined 'Faithless' - which opened doors - 'Dido' was singing with Faithless - Andy then played on sessions with Dido - recommended by producer 'Rollo'.

Sessions sometimes start days before the studio with demos and charts to be made up etc.

Sometimes if you are just required to turn up - turn up early! - always be professional.

For bigger sessions a friend would tech / set up for Andy - but mainly it was just arrive with kit in car and go through logistics with producer.

Studio sessions require no ego, ability to play and take on suggestions and be ok with trying several different approaches to a piece. Communicate well and keep nerves in check when the red light goes on.

Biggest fear was getting the groove wrong - apparent when listening in control room - this has only happened twice.

A recording session is a micro environment in which the common goal between all players is to make the best music possible.

In London you work with players and projects from many backgrounds.

The producer has final say - they (usually) know best and have the artistic vision - Andy would like to become a producer.

Sometimes 'Large Characters' can affect the sessions - record company execs or the like - the mood can change due to good / bad / premature decisions.

Sessions are largely a male dominated field - it has changed a bit with more female producers - but Andy has yet to play with one.

Andy's stand out London studio = RAK - LP session 'The Hours' and Damian Hirst - with Flood producing.

Love the desk at RAK - great history and Andy has worked in all of the rooms.

Each studio has it's own character.

Favourite session was with Ronny Wood through Chris Kinsey at Olympic in Barnes. Session was with an old flat-mate, Ronny Wood and Kelly Stereophonics and the Faithless bass player. Mick Taylor came in to overdub - and then Andy played tambourine in the control room.

From many sessions Andy learned to capture a 'vibe' and a 'moment in time' instead of perfection.

Andy said most payments came through producers - rarely through record companies.

MU rates didn't apply to pop / rock sessions in studio - only live and TV work.

Work / life business is difficult - hard to plan for holidays etc. Touring away not good for family life.

Reluctant to turn work down as it may lead to other gigs etc.

Session work better suited to family life in London.

Andy says everyone needs deputies in case of double bookings.

Andy has 3 x session worlds:-

STUDIO - forever there / more analytical / job satisfaction

LIVE - more energy / less stress / not so much satisfaction

TEACHING - sessions inform teaching / try not to think too much / let it flow

AT always wanted to be a band member - so conflict of being a 'Side Man' - but sometimes being 'invisible' is cool.

There is less work due to technology and loops / drum samples introduced.

Some sessions are easier as you only play some of the track - less pressure.

Studio session work is Andy's most pro side of career and most challenging - but also most rewarding when presented with 'finished product'.