

Greg Lake

ELP's **Greg Lake** tours the UK in November (see greglake.com) and RC asked him what else he's up to. "I'm working on a record which was inspired by something that came to me when I was writing my autobiography, *Lucky Man*, which is out later this year. I realised how cut off I had become from soul and gospel music, but during my formative years, as a singer/guitarist, I often performed Motown or blues-influenced rock'n'roll. But once I became involved in progressive music, I hardly ever got to perform it again. I'd like to revisit that chapter of my musical life and enjoy all the wonderful things it has to offer."

If you could revisit any of your albums, what would you change?

I don't really like to revisit things because, at the time of making the records, I gave them everything I had in order to make them as good as I possibly could. So they're a record of that particular moment in time. Whenever you go back to try to improve something, you may improve certain elements, but you'll almost certainly lose something into the bargain. You can never recapture that initial moment of inspiration when everything was fresh and exciting, when the journey of discovery had just begun. And one's perceptions change over time, so you can never really view things with the same creative feeling. There's something magical about original recordings which cannot be replicated.

Is there any ELP still unreleased?

I don't believe there is.

What was your favourite record shop back in the day?

A little record shop in my home town of Poole, Dorset. It was the first place I could go and stand in a cubicle and listen to fantastic new artists like Elvis and Bobby Darin.

What was the first record you bought?

Little Richard *The Girl Can't Help It*.

What's the last album you bought?

Brad Paisley *5th Gear*.

Was anyone in your family a musician?

My mother played a little piano.

Did you ever write songs under the influence of any "substances"?

During the early 70s, I used to smoke quite a lot of hash when I was writing. Now I get ideas for titles or a melody when I'm walking.

Have you kept studio notebooks?

I have a few remnants of various writing periods.

Which band would you answer questions about on Mastermind?

The Beatles.

Which two songs would you most like to hear a DJ mash up?

Isn't that what you do to potatoes?!

Who would you do best in karaoke?

You're making me feel ill!

Of all the people you've worked with, who taught you the most?

I learned a lot from Ringo (Starr) in a philosophical, humanitarian way.

What fact about you may surprise fans?

I collect old first edition books, which I highly recommend, because it takes you into all sorts of new worlds.

If you were running an ice cream van, what song would it play?

Mars: *The God Of War!*

Greg Lake, right, with Ringo Starr

