

# STEVE HACKETT

## Out Of The Tunnel's Mouth

After being a member of GENESIS from 1971 to 1977, Steve HACKETT has been pursuing his own musical journey for 30 years.

Equally highly skilled with either the electric or acoustic/classical guitar, this multifaceted artist has collaborated with numerous other artists and has never ceased to get involved in projects both varied and ambitious.

Separated from both Kim POOR and his ex manager since last year, Steve has since gone back to work, not without difficulties, but with a renewed energy and enthusiasm. Last year was a turning point in his career with a lot of innovations: A full European tour, a new website layed out like a log entry and an album being released on a new label...

Steve kindly accepted to answer to a few questions for his French fans.

**Your new album *Out Of The Tunnel's Mouth* is released in early October.**

**How would you describe it?**

**How well is *Fire On The Moon* received live?**

My new album *Out of the Tunnel's Mouth* is different to any album that concentrates on one style...

I like to mix genres to the extent that audiences can't believe it's the same artist who appears in one guise, only to switch to another. It's like a series of ambushes or a character actor on an imaginary journey through shifting scenery adopting various musical disguises... Andalusian flamenco, rock, Turkish, Indian, jazz and fusion are just a few of the various hats that the team get to wear. It works like a film for the ear and the dreaming eye starting with *Fire on the Moon*, which is already part of the live show.

**With your current tour and this new album released on a new label (Wolfwork)...could we say it is a new beginning in your career?**

Wolfwork Records is both a new start and a continuation of surprises like bringing rabbits out of a hat.

Fortunately unlike many of my contemporaries I don't feel I've peaked. I'm always starting out. This time we got it right under very difficult circumstances – opposition from former partners who have made it difficult for me to function professionally. All this has acted on me like red rag to a bull. I have worked harder than ever in the face of adverse conditions. The new record feels particularly strong because I am able to be fully myself and there has been a lot to fight against. The music can't be silenced. Yes, this is a new beginning in my career.

**You are going to play 3 dates in France this year, it has been a long time.**

**Why is that? Are you glad to come to see your French audience?**

Former partners made it difficult for me to tour in certain places, including France.

I'm thrilled to be playing in France again. I never wanted to stay away. Now that I've survived a divorce in both personal and business terms I'm back with a new band and album, aiming to fulfil the promise I showed early on in my solo career.



**You alternate between acoustic and electric projects.**

**How do you decide between them? Do you have a preference for either?**

I set myself a difficult task years ago – to be an equally committed electric and acoustic player.

Over time I explored various techniques including inventing 'tapping' for electric and 'drumming' for acoustic, along with countless other tricks that I searched for in the corners of the instrument. I learned fingerstyle and recorded some Bach pieces on my Tributealbum. I don't force this down throats live. I entertain rather than educate. Gigs are fun. I love both electric and acoustic equally, and I feel that alternating between them presents both ends of the musical spectrum – both sides of my character!

**After 35 years of solo career, how do you perceive your whole work, today?**

I perceive my work as eclectic. I aim to swim against the tide.

Once a rebel, always a rebel! I enjoy a challenge, to prove to myself I can do what initially seems like the impossible. I like to get feedback from fans, to meet the audience and sign memorabilia from way back to the present day.

**What made you pick up the guitar? Who are your mentors/inspirators in this field?**

Electric guitar was always the most exciting instrument from the SHADOWS to Brian JONES, and then I graduated to SEGOVIA\*. All of them inform my playing...

(\* Andres SEGOVIA : famous spanish classical guitarist to whom Steve offers tribute in the Tribute album)

**The GENESIS box set "Live 1973-2007" comes out this month.**

Late last year the box set "1970-1975" was released.

**Were you personally involved in these projects? What do you think of Nick DAVIS' take on it?**

I made some suggestions for the material on the GENESIS box sets, but I'm so involved with other projects such as working with Chris SQUIRE, Anthony PHILIPS, Nick BEGGS and many others . that I don't want to be spread too thin. I think Nick DAVIS does a fine job. But he has been dealing with material from a long time ago. Where do you start with the past where you hear the struggle in every bar? I'm a different person now with different standards than those I was happy with as a 23 year old.

**You were in GENESIS from 1971 till 1977.**

**How would you summarize your work in the studio and live with the band? What has stayed with you from then, even today?**

**Which track symbolizes the best your stamp on the band?**

In GENESIS it was a lifetime away – an enormous amount of touring! *Selling England By The Pound*, where the guitar is most important, is my favourite GENESIS album.

I still play some of my favourite GENESIS tracks, like *Firth of Fifth* and *Blood on the Rooftops* in my gigs today, while at the same time I like to always move forward.

**Do you think that a GENESIS reunion with Peter GABRIEL and yourself is still feasible?**

If enough fans call for it, it's possible. I'm flexible but I'm equally happy with every other possible opportunity.





**You were the first band member to release a solo album with *Voyage Of The Acolyte* in 1975. Back then, how did you live this new direction in your career?**

I started writing masses of material for my first album, which gave me a confidence I'd lacked until then.

**Your main influences are Rock, Jazz, Blues and Classical Music.**

**Is there any other genres that are of interest for your future projects?**

Eastern music has always been an influence which I've shown more recently. I also love African drums.

**You have done an appearance as a special guest with DJABE, an Hungarian band of multiple influences. What did you gain from this experience? Would you possibly work with them for a new studio album?**

DJABE are interesting, each concert is totally different from the previous one as there is so much improv. It's like abstract painting with gypsy freedom.

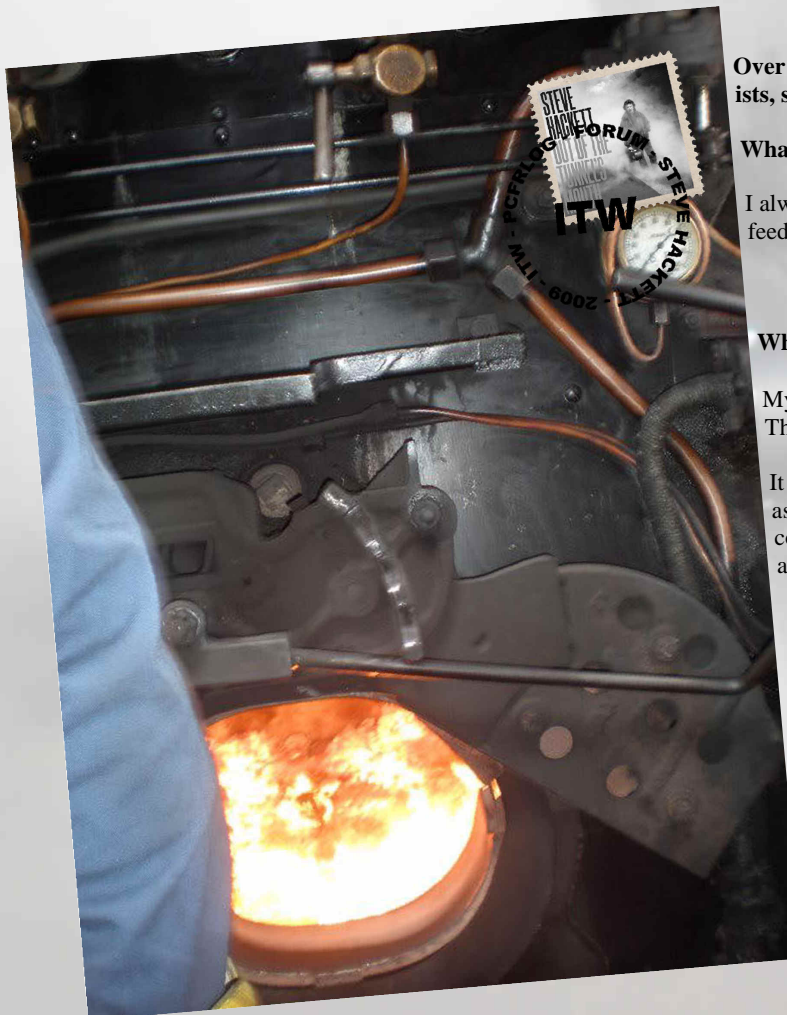
Extraordinary players. Flexible team that varies from show to show.

**You have recently worked with Chris SQUIRE from YES on a joint project.**

**Can you tell us more?**

Chris SQUIRE is a fabulous player as YES were and still is a great band.

GENESIS and YES had and have much in common, including me, as I've worked with several of them live and in the studio... Pete BANKS, Steve HOWE, Rick WAKEMAN and now Chris on a new album that promises to be very strong!



**Over many years, you have been playing regularly with the same artists, such as your brother John, Nick MAGNUS or Roger KING.**

**What is their contribution to your music?**

I always enjoy working with talented musician friends. I love them all. We feed each other ideas.

**What are your plans for 2010?**

My plan for 2010 is to work with enthusiasm and to have some laughs. The Hackett Songs website is like a virtual newspaper.

It also allows me to release unusual things like old dubious bits of film as well as activities of my more mature years! It's great to have that connection with fans. I hope to put out music in every way and to tour as much as possible in several territories.

Interview produced by Raphaël for the PCFRLOG forum.

Many thanks to:

- Steve HACKETT for his kindness and time
- Thierry, Phildas, Hervé and Marie for their precious help and assistance.

Photos : Jo LEHMANN (The Golden Age Of Steam)

The new album *Out Of The Tunnel's Mouth* will be available soon on Steve's official site at [www.hackettsongs.com](http://www.hackettsongs.com)

PCFRLOG © september 2009

