

Beyond Imagination

In January 1997, IQ began work on 'Subterranea', their sixth studio album and without doubt their most ambitious project to date. The 105-minute 2CD set would form the basis for a completely new stage show. "After we'd finally managed to release 'Forever Live', we didn't really want to release a single album studio album", explained Mike Holmes. "We felt it would have been a bit of an anticlimax after there quality and standard of the boxed set. We also had quite a bit of material kicking around."

Peter Nicholls: "When we were writing 'Subterranea', I came across loads of old rehearsal tapes with ideas that we'd never finished because we'd got sidetracked by something else. There was an awful lot of material there that we felt we should have another look at." The decision to build the album around a concept was an important one for the band, as Martin Orford remembered: "With this album, it was nice to have the framework of a story to work to so that we knew the sort of pieces we had to find for particular sections."

So creative were the 'Subterranea' writing sessions, though, that IQ had no need to resort to reworking unfinished ideas. In fact, two tracks, 'The Universal Scam' and 'Eyes Of The Blind', were omitted from the final album, only being released two years later on the rarities CD, 'The Lost Attic'.

"Right from the beginning, this project was conceived as an album and a live show", explained Peter Nicholls. "We've always wanted to present the band on stage this way but there's always been a reason, usually financial, for not doing it. To have a double album's worth of new music meant we could approach the live presentation in a different way, more as a complete piece."

Supported by their resourceful road crew whose task it was to help realise the band's live vision, IQ unveiled 'Subterranea' on 5th September 1997, at The Met in Bury. Played live in its entirety, the album was accompanied by an impressive multi media stage show, the like of which had not been attempted in a rock setting for many years. Album and show were an instant success.

April 1998 saw IQ embarking on a gruelling European tour, performing 'Subterranea' in full each night. In Canada and South America, where it would have been impossible to fly out all the necessary equipment, certain songs were selected in order to present a condensed version of the show, using video projections and costumes.

'Subterranea' came home to Britain for its final London performance at The Astoria on March 21st 1999. IQ delivered a confident and spellbinding show, rounding off an emotional evening with an unprecedented (and unrehearsed!) fourth encore. "If you hear sounds that aren't familiar", warned Peter, "you have to substitute them for the right sounds in your heads!" This was followed by a complete version of their classic, 'The Last Human Gateway'.

"Originally, we were only intending to play the middle section", Peter later recalled, "but then we decided to surprise everyone and do the whole track!"

After this memorable concert, IQ returned to The Met for the final UK 'Subterranea' show and then headed off to Holland to film its last ever performance, at the 013 in Tilburg. This would later appear as the CD, video and DVD, 'Subterranea: The Concert'.

Incredibly, the full 'Subterranea' show was performed live only 16 times and those who saw it

will never forget it. This triple CD package captures some of the unique atmosphere in London on that special night. Enjoy !

PRRP Staff

Notes from the *Re*-Master

This is generally a very good audience with music signal up to 16,000 Hz. Pops and crackle were the most offending noise that needed to be removed. Also, The high range treble was too accentuated and lead to the pronunciation of the letter “S” as piercing so it was cut down. Applause was a bit too loud in many places so this was reduced where necessary. Finally, the last few minutes of the show were missing from the original source but we were able to track down a video of the show that had the missing section. We transitioned the audio from a high quality audience taping device to a video tape source. The transition works well but the reduction in quality is obvious. We felt it was important to include the complete show despite this reduction in fidelity.

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Tracklisting

Disc One		Disc Two		Disc Three	
01. Overture	04:00	01. Laid Low	01:33	01. The Wake	07:11
02. Provider	01:39	02. Breathaker	05:27	02. Human Nature	11:39
03. Subterranea	05:29	03. Capricorn	05:53	03. Out Of Nowhere	09:50
04. Sleepless Incidental	05:58	04. The Other Side	02:25	04. The Last Human	22:57
05. Failsafe	08:42	05. Unsolid Ground	05:03	Gateway	
06. Speak My Name	03:45	06. Somewhere In	06:39		
07. Tunnel Vision	06:49	Time			
08. Infernal Chorus	04:49	07. High Waters	02:31		
09. King Of Fools	02:16	08. The Narrow Margin	20:42		
10. The Sense In Sanity	04:40				
11. The State Of Mind	02:13				

Personnel

Paul Cook	Drums & Percussion
Mike Holmes	Lead Guitars & Keyboards
John Jowitt	Bass Guitars & Vocals
Peter Nicholls	Lead Vocals
Martin Orford	Keyboards & Vocals
with Special Guest - Tony Wright: Saxophones	