



# UGLY BALD BASTARD SPEAKS

● He leaves the toilet seat up! He does stuff in the privacy of his own house! He's worth 22 million! He's not a rich arsehole, he's cheeky, chunky-knit, Cockernee chappy PHIL COLLINS, talking to bald, wizened pauper STEVEN WELLS. Ug shots: KEVIN CUMMINS

**P**hil Collins does not wear chunky knit sweaters and he is sick of his image as the bald and wizened millionaire gnome of sappy pop.

He is at great pains to point out that no way is he as nice or as sensible or as ugly as people think he is. In his wilder moments he contemplates marrying his 13-year-old cousin or spitting at Kylie and kneeling Jason in the nuts at the Brit-Awards ceremony or maybe even joining Pop Will Eat Itself as a go-go dancer. Probably. Anything to bust his cosy-nice-bloke-but-a-bit-of-a-boring-bastard-who-goes-on-and-on-and-on-about-his-boring-divorce-all-the-time image.

I mean here he is in the *Juke Box Jury* studio and he's just said that he quite likes the Sigue Sigue Sputnik single. And this gonk with a pair of fishnet tights over his face comes up to him and sneeeeeeers and says:

"God! We must have really got it wrong if you like us!"

Phil is flabbergasted! He opens and shuts his mouth like a goldfish with an ant's egg stuck in the windpipe prob.

"What's wrong with me?" he asks. "I mean if Phil Collins likes it — it must be shit — right? Eh?"

What's wrong with Phil is that he was and is the lead singer of Genesis and thus partly responsible for Marillion and Fish and student music in general. And let's not forget that he's a middle-aged pop star who your granny quite likes. What a bastard!

"I really regret the family entertainer bit," says Phil. A roadie walks past carrying a blow-up doll with a battery operated "vibro-mouth" to stand in Phil's place for the lighting rehearsals.

But Phil, I say, are you as sensible as people make out? Phil admits that he is very sensible with the same mixture of bitterness and self-loathing that junkie metal-heads express when confessing alcoholism or a predilection for necrophilia.

"Sometimes I think I'm being too sensible and so I try and stop myself . . ."

Give me an example of when you've been too sensible.

"Um . . . washing up before you eat the food you've just cooked. I think to myself — Don't do this! F—ing idiot! EAT!"

Are you a domestic fascist? Do you beat the children if they fail to wash up properly?

"Um, well it's not quite like that but I do like a clean kitchen — GAAAAAAAAAAAAAH! — I can't believe I just said that! — 'I do like a clean kitchen'. That sounds terrible doesn't it? After I put coal on the fire I sweep up the dust so that I don't tread in it and Lilly doesn't eat it . . ."

**SUDDENLY, PHIL leaps up. Kicks over his chair and screams. "YEEEEEEEEAAAAARGH!" he yells, hurling an empty Jack Daniels bottle against the wall. The heroin punctures on his arms glow a bright red. "F— IT! Let me tell you about last night, right? Me and my best mate Eric Clapton lured these 14-year-old schoolgirls back to his pad and we dressed up in Nazi helmets and ballet gear and pranced around to death metal and stuck our heads**

*in a suitcase of Colombian coke and then we drank some virgin's blood and our own urine out of a cup fashioned from a baby's skull and WE DIDN'T WASH UP AFTERWARDS! OK, so we did. But we certainly didn't do the drying. Not properly, anyway . . ."* (NB: Fantasy Sequence — IPC lawyers)

DO YOU have any annoying little habits?

"Oh, I leave the toilet seat up. We were showing my aunt around the house and she said — 'Oh, toilet seat's up, daddy's home!'"

What about this cheeky chirpy Cockney bit. You do play up to that a bit . . .

"Well, I don't know how else to be! This is me, maybe that cheeky chappy is me! If you'd have come an hour earlier you'd have heard me raving and ranting at the lighting engineers. You know we were supposed to be rehearsing right now but we got half way through the show and the lights were a shambles and I just blew my top and sent the musicians home . . ."

"Now some people may say — Ooh! That's not the Phil Collins we know and love! — I mean I hate to keep dragging up all these incidents where I've been nasty to people but I'm just a normal person. I don't see why everybody has to keep going — You're nice! You're nice! Why are you nice? — I'm normal! This is what I am!"

Do you torture animals?

"I never torture animals . . . What, never? "I'm not going to admit to it anyway . . ."

Isn't it a bit daft that you're a multi-millionaire and yet you've got this 'ver lads' image?

"It's happened so gradually to me that maybe I haven't had a chance to get big headed — I still don't think I'm really there. You've got your Bruces and your Michael Jacksons or whatever — they're the stars. Me — I'm just earning a lot of money for what I'm doing and I don't really understand why."

Have you ever yearned to be a lithe and tight-trousered, two fisted, pissed-up sex god?

"Um . . . what are you getting at exactly?"

A bourbon-addled hell-raiser, a burnt-out, shuddering rock corpse, a screaming kamikaze teetering on the very edge of oblivion?

"You're just assuming I don't do those things! I mean that's why I'm uncomfortable with that image because I'm perceived as something which maybe I'm not."

MAYBE! What a great word that is. If only we could really peek into the secret world of Phil Collins — Rock 'n' Roll Casualty.

You are perceived as being rather more of a sensible chunky sweater than a gold lamé sweat suit with a giant scarlet cod piece?

"Yeah, but there's nothing I can do about that . . ."

Yes there is. You could start by vomiting on me now . . .

Phil gives me a strange look.

... Couldn't you start thrashing dogs onstage or something?

Phil sighs.

**"Joe Jackson — he's f—ing ugly and no one has a go at him about it. Well, y'know, I look at him and I think well if I'm ugly what the f— is he?"**

"I mean, I do do stuff in the privacy of my own home you know, I've got a side to my life that people don't know about . . . (LIKE WHAT!? WHAT DO YOU DO IN THE PRIVACY OF YOUR OWN HOME? DO YOU WORSHIP THE DEVIL, YOU BASTARD, DO YOU? DO YOU TAKE CRACK AND E AND ACID AND DO YOU STRIP NAKED AND ROLL IN A TROUGH OF BAKED BEANS WHILST RENT BOYS TEASE YOUR PUBIC HAIR WITH HEATED ROLLERS? TELL ME SO I CAN TELL THE SUM) . . . maybe it doesn't seem, er . . . (AAAAARGH! SPILL THE BEANS! LET RIP, PHIL YOU CAN TRUST MEEEEEEEE!) . . . you know . . ."

(YOU BASTARD! AAAAAAAA-AAAAAAAARGH!)

Do you get people ringing your doorbell at midnight asking for their pound of flesh?

"People mostly arrive at half past ten at night — can I have your autograph Mr Collins? They've had a bet down the pub. Some weekends I fancy a bit of privacy so I lock the gates . . ."

Why don't you hire a lookalike butler to sign autographs for you?

"Nah! I don't mind it! It's a small price to pay. I mean these people are taking a big risk that they'll get turned away. They've risked all the possible humiliation — they don't know if I'm going to say — Go on, f— off! Can't you see it's f—ing

late? F— off out of my f—ing house! — I mean why be an arsehole if you don't have to be?"

And with that my attempt to smash the image of Phil Collins as a thoroughly nice geezer is shot down in flames. Sorry Phil, you've blown it.

**YES — I USED TO SMOKE POT!**

WHEN PHIL tours with Genesis he plays table tennis backstage. Oh yeah — sure you do, Phil! And is it true that the white lines on the table are actually lines of COCAINE? And is it true that every time you win a point you get a SNORT?

"Heh heh heh!" chuckles Phil and he doesn't exactly wink at me but I get the feeling that — nudge nudge wink wink — he's been around if you know what I mean, squire. But he can't tell me outright, you see, because then all the mums and dads would stop buying his records. I mean, there's no way that Phil Collins is going to tell the *NME* — 'Yes! I do take drugs! I've had more bits of whizz up these nostrils than Axl Rose has had brain operations!' — not really.

"Heh heh heh! Lines of coke on the table! That's not entirely true but I do like the idea! We used to smoke a bit . . ."

AH HA! GOTCHA! MUCH LOVED ALL-ROUND FAMILY ENTERTAINER PHIL COLLINS ADMITS — I WAS A DRUG FIEND!

"I mean, that dead time in between sound check and gig, what do you do? You can't really drink a lot. Gone are the days when you had a joint before a gig. I think the last time I had a joint before a gig was in LA in '76 or '77. I was going — how does this verse start? Heh! It's a matter of time and place really . . . anyway . . . what were we talking about?"

We were discussing cannabis

(TO PHIL COLLINS)



abuse and short term memory loss.

"Heh heh heh heh!"

**I WAS A STUNT DOUBLE FOR GRAHAM POPPY'S ARSEHOLE**

PHIL COLLINS is not so ugly that if you had a dog with a face like his you'd comb hair over its eyes and walk it backwards. Alright, he's no Jason Donovan, but neither would he make any of the great Ugly Squads of history — Leeds Utd circa 1974, The Glitter Band or the Tory Cabinet when it included Leon Brittain. So it is rather surprising when one realises that 99 per cent of the shit that flies in Phil's direction is thrown at him because he's not a chisel-cheeked bimbo.

"It's a cheap shot. I mean Joe Jackson — he's f—ing ugly and no one has a go at him about it. Well, y'know, I look at him and I think well if I'm ugly what the f— is he? What pisses me off more now is with this latest album when my reasons for writing these songs have come under fire from people who don't know me. I asked them to send me all the reviews, I thought, you know, maybe this time it's my time for a bit of credibility . . ."

No way! Phil was pilloried for . . . But Seriously by dickheads who resented the fact that at least two of the tracks — 'Colours' and 'Another Day In Paradise' — were not the "boo hoo my missus has left me" for which Phil is renowned.

"These people have only heard the singles and so they think that everything I write is about my divorce — gah!"

Phil takes criticism very seriously, he sat down and wrote out a seven page letter to a local newspaper which slagged him off. 'Colours' is about Nelson Mandela.

"People living without their rights! Without their dignity! But how long does one man have to shout before he's allowed to be free." OK, so it's not the greatest polemic ever written, but does that mean we should take the piss out of Phil, with his nice house and his £22 million in the bank, for actually daring to care?

"The criticism was on the level that I'm a millionaire so therefore I must be an arsehole . . ."

Um, well, millionaires do tend to be arseholes, don't they?

"Do they? Clapton's rich, I assume Rutherford and Banks (*Genesis*) are rich and Richard Branson's rich and I wouldn't say any of us were arseholes . . ."

Me? I didn't say anything. Not a dickybird.

"I mean, I earn a lot because I work a lot. I don't have time to spend my money. I don't have any expensive vices, I live in a nice house but I don't live in a huge house. I drive myself, you know, I push a cart around the supermarket. Maybe normal wealthy people are arseholes but I'm not . . ."

But what about the absurdity of Paul McCartney — worth umpteen zillion quid — playing Live Aid? He

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# PHIL COLLINS

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could have donated twice the money that Live Aid raised and still have lived in luxury for the rest of his life. I mean, I am sat here opposite a man who is worth 22 million! I'm trying to guilt-trip Phil Collins so that maybe he'll give me—a genuine poor person—just one teensy weensy little million. He wouldn't miss it! GIVE ME YOUR MONEY YOU BASTARD!

"Well, it was a matter of doing something or doing nothing," says Phil, and he's got a point. But the event had its seedy side—like Madonna having the backstage area closed off every time she went for a slash so that nobody would see her enter or leave the ladies.

"Well, yeah, you can't fight that sort of thing. On the other side of the Atlantic you had that We Are The World thing which was champagne and caviar and it was strange, Americans do things in a different way, but I'm sure that Quincy Jones and Diana Ross and George Michael, I'm sure their hearts are in the right place—it's just that the show had this, um, ostentatious sheen to it.

"Backstage you could hear these stories of people telling Bill Graham (US promoter)—you get me on this bill or I'm afraid you're not going to get my tour—there wasn't that in this country, it's very easy to be cynical about the whole thing. All I know is that I did it for the right reasons and so did a lot of other people."

You get paid an insane amount of money just for writing pop songs...

"Mmm...". Phil nods. Isn't it obscene that you've got so much money when people are starving to death?

"Well, what do you do? How do you rectify that? Do you say you don't want any of that money? It is ridiculous. I haven't done anything I don't want to do in my life. The only time I've ever had a real job is when Genesis went on two weeks holiday and I did interior decorating for two weeks and I hated it. And I'm not a religious person but I thank God I can do something I want to do and I get paid for it.

"The money is a by-product of what I do, to be honest. I just do the work and there's this guy who just comes along after me with a shovel sticking all this money in a sack, y'know? I do it because I enjoy working and I look back and there's a load of money! I mean it's a kind of very nice by-product."

You refer to yourself as a drummer—do you really think you've got anything in common with, say, the drummer of some anarcho-punk band who travels from gig to gig in the back of a Transit van living off £30 a week? Could you hold a conversation with him?

"Yeah, I think so. I think it's slightly superficial to think that just because I've got money..."

It's not just the money, is it? There's a massive difference in attitude and lifestyle...

"Yeah, but I've done all that. I've not always driven a BMW. Once I was at Heathrow and The Clash were there and Topper Headon—after he'd had a good look round to make sure there was no press around—came up to me and he said, 'Man, I'm so pleased to meet you, you're one of my heroes'..."

TOPPER HEADON—PUNK TRAITOR!

"I mean, The Dead Kennedys. I was at the Roundhouse and they were all watching television and one of them came up to me and said what a big fan he was..."

It wasn't Jello Biafra was it? "Dunno, mate. I wouldn't know one Dead Kennedy from another."

DESPITE CLAIMS made in the NME a few weeks ago, Phil is patently not shitting himself at the arrival of Birdland into the charts. Although he admits to their allegation that he wasn't all that keen on punk the first time round—

"I was your typical outraged musician"—he's now a big fan of the punk rock classics.

"I've got The Sex Pistols' records on my jukebox at home, y'know, 'Anarchy' and what's that other one? There's two of them... Well, anyway, they're great singles, they sound great, they've got a lot of energy..."

And to set the record straight—Phil claims he was never a big fan of Yes, Pink Floyd or even, would you believe it, Jethro Tull.

"It took me ages before I heard Marillion. I kept on hearing about these second generation Genesis groups—Pallas were another one—and I didn't want to hear them. I wasn't even that keen on first generation Genesis stuff..."

In 1977 Genesis became so closely identified with a

**"I just do the work and there's this guy who comes along after me with a shovel sticking all this money in a sack, y'know?"**

stereotyped pseudo-cerebral spotty student audience, frowning and making notes as they danced—that the band seriously considered changing their name.

What to? Severed Head And The Neck F—ers? "Nah—The Shits!"

### SPARE A COPPER, GUV?

THE OTHER shock horror how-dare-he controversial track on the album is 'Another Day In Paradise'. It's about the homeless and about how Phil can't get used to living in a country where people beg on the streets and nobody gives a damn. In the song a wealthy man is faced with a homeless person who asks him for the price of a sandwich. The bastard turns away and walks off.

"I came out of the studio after recording it and this guy came up to me and asked for some money, it was weird. I didn't know what to do..."

He walked off without reaching into his pocket. Life imitating pop. And he's as guilty and as confused as hell about it. When I try and steer Phil in a political direction the interview starts to break down. Phil thinks long and hard before answering. The words drip... out... one... at... a... time. I try to get Phil to say something outrageous like 'vote Labour'...

"Well I remember last time. I don't think it's right that you should earn £100,000 and then they take £90,000 off you! How dare they!"

What? If it's taken off you to build hospitals and schools? "Um..."

### HUMOURLESS GIT?

PHIL APPEARS on *Spitting Image* as a tear-squirting hideously ugly wimp whining about his divorce.

The next day Eric Clapton meets the incredibly young, handsome, talented and underpaid Simon Bates. MASTER BATES: Hi! Eric! My main man! Did you see Phil last night? CLAPPO: Oh yeah! Oooh yeah! He won't be amused! (NB: Clapton is making a joke.)

The next day Bates goes on air with his world exclusive. WANKER: Crikey! Phil Collins is extremely upset!

"Of course I wasn't. I was actually very flattered that they spent all that time taking the piss out of me, writing that song and everything..."

The image of Phil as the

whining deserted hubby still lingers.

"I wrote all those songs as messages. I felt like giving my wife the cassette and saying—listen, right?"

So how were you able to tear your heart out and then see these songs become just another record company product?

"Should I be bothered about that? I think it bothered her..."

### CONSIDER YOURSELF AT HOME

OUTSIDE MADAME Tussaud's rock waxworks a looped tape of Phil says over and over:

"Hello, I'm Phil Collins. Most people think of me as a singer who drums. I like to think of myself as a drummer who sings..."

But before he was either, professionally at least, Phil was an actor. When his voice broke he was playing The Artful Dodger in the West End stage version of the greatest musical ever written in the English language—*Oliver*. His early credits included

*Junior Points Of View*, knitwear

catalogues (modelling chunky jumpers) and a part in the cult drugs film *Calamity The Cow*.

You weren't one of the *Double Deckers* were you?

"Oh no!"

You never auditioned for the Milky Bar kid?

"No, he was a good friend of mine though."



Hoskins...—OK, fair enough, I suppose I do look a little like him. Now a couple of days later I read another article that went—'Phil Collins is the Danny DeVito of pop music'—right? I mean that's a little far out! I mean that's a little cruel!"

Yeah, poor old Danny!

"Yeah, f— you too."

So Phil is at this press conference and a hack asks him what his next film project is going to be and off the top of his head he says—'The Three Bears starring me, Bob Hoskins and Danny DeVito...' The pisstake gained a life of its own and a script is now being prepared.

If the film ever gets made, Phil, who's going to play the woman? I suppose you and Bob will have to fight it out?

"Well, I dunno, we'd probably try and get Darryl Hannah or..."

No, you misunderstand me. She'd be OK for Goldilocks and Danny, being the smallest, has to be the baby bear, but who's going to play mummy bear...?

For just a second Phil's brow is wrinkled in perplexity.

"Oh! I see what you mean! Nah. Hah! It's not going to be in *costume!*"

And for the first time in the interview I feel savagely disappointed.



# THE NOTTING HILLBILLIES



THE DEBUT SINGLE

your own sweet way



Guy Fletcher Mark Knopfler Steve Phillips Brendan Croker

### ON TOUR

APRIL	ASSEMBLY ROOMS	SOLD OUT	TUNBRIDGE WELLS	SUN 22	CITY HALL	SOLD OUT	SHEFFIELD
MON 2	CIVIC HALL	SOLD OUT	GUILDFORD	WED 25	PAVILION THEATRE	SOLD OUT	GLASGOW
TUE 3	HEXAGON THEATRE	SOLD OUT	READING	THU 26	PLAYHOUSE THEATRE	SOLD OUT	EDINBURGH
WED 4	CIVIC HALL	SOLD OUT	AYLESBURY	FRI 27	TOWN HALL	SOLD OUT	MIDDLESBOROUGH
THU 5	CORN EXCHANGE	SOLD OUT	CAMBRIDGE	SAT 28	THE UNIVERSITY	SOLD OUT	NEWCASTLE
FRI 6	APOLLO THEATRE	SOLD OUT	OXFORD	SUN 29	OPERA HOUSE	SOLD OUT	YORK
SAT 7	HIPPODROME THEATRE	SOLD OUT	BRISTOL	MON 30	CITY HALL	SOLD OUT	HULL
MON 9	LEAS CLIFF HALL	SOLD OUT	FOLKESTONE	MAY TUE 1	RITZ THEATRE	SOLD OUT	LINCOLN
TUE 10	CONGRESS THEATRE	SOLD OUT	EASTBOURNE	WED 2	ASTORIA BALLROOM	SOLD OUT	LEEDS
WED 11	DOME THEATRE	SOLD OUT	BRIGHTON	THU 3	ASTORIA BALLROOM	SOLD OUT	LEEDS
THU 12	GUILDHALL	SOLD OUT	PORTSMOUTH	FRI 4	ASSEMBLY ROOMS	SOLD OUT	DERBY
SAT 14	GUILDHALL	SOLD OUT	SOUTHAMPTON	SAT 5	UNIV OF EAST ANGLIA	SOLD OUT	NORWICH
SUN 15	ARTS CENTRE	SOLD OUT	POOLE	SUN 6	TOWN HALL	SOLD OUT	BIRMINGHAM
MON 16	THE ACADEMY	SOLD OUT	PLYMOUTH	MON 7	FESTIVAL HALL	SOLD OUT	CORBY
TUE 17	VERBEER MANOR	SOLD OUT	WILLAND NR EXETER	TUE 8	UNIV OF ESSEX	SOLD OUT	COLCHESTER
WED 18	RIVIERA CENTRE	SOLD OUT	TORQUAY	THU 10	TOWN & COUNTRY CLUB	SOLD OUT	LONDON
THU 19	LEISURE CENTRE	SOLD OUT	NEWPORT	FRI 11	TOWN & COUNTRY CLUB	SOLD OUT	LONDON
FRI 20	APOLLO THEATRE	SOLD OUT	MANCHESTER	MON 14	DOMINION THEATRE	SOLD OUT	LONDON
SAT 21	ROYAL COURT THEATRE	SOLD OUT	LIVERPOOL				