



THE INGENIOUS DAVE VAMFER IN ACTION

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Never let it be said (certainly not without challenging the speaker) that technology is a panacea, the greatest accomplishment of mankind, or the most characteristic aspect of the epoch in which we live.

Sometimes the lack of technology, the seemingly ever-present glow of orbs big and small, engulfing living rooms and pubs, or simply fitting snugly into one's back pocket, is an even better actuator for something much greater...

Ingenuity, that is.

"My parents were re-housing into a two block [building] on about the 20th floor," **Dave Vamfer** recalled. "As it happened, you couldn't get television when we first moved in. The block needed a communal area for television. At that time, there was no internet or anything. So I had no television for about six weeks and, during that time, I started to play a lot of records. And, I really got into music."

The then-teenager got into music so much that he shortly thereafter joined a band. As the bass player, of all things. Mind you, he hadn't had any lessons and, prior to joining, likely hadn't spent any considerable amount of time around any sort of guitar, let alone a bass.

All of this, of course, brings us to "sunny point number two". There are few things that go better with ingenuity than...

"...determination," Vamfer concluded, when recounting his initial foray into music. "I was largely self-taught. Later on, after I could play the guitar, I had a few evening classes. But at that time, I could [already] play."

Vamfer's been playing, in some way, shape, form, or fashion, almost ever since. He was the lead singer and guitarist in Gallop, a band in the United Kingdom. He released a solo album, *Find the Sound*. Moreover, he's on the cusp of dropping yet

another solo album, entitled *Tricks of This Life*, at the end of the year or at some point.

“When I’m writing it’s more than just a song and a hook”, Killah Priest, Black August, 2003

Musicians are motivated by any number of things. Younger ones, perhaps? The babes, the booze, the band’s very lifestyle. For others, it’s the recurring thrill of playing live, rocketing around from town to town, country to country, or just venue to venue, watching the masses vibe and sway along to sounds of their own design.

For Vamfer, the calling may have centered on the above at some point in his life.

But certainly not now.

“What I really enjoy is the writing and arranging,” Vamfer admitted. “I decided what I want to focus on is the writing and arranging. It’s not that I won’t perform live. It’s just that for me, it isn’t the best part of music.”

Instead, the wide-sweeping variety of progressive rock that Vamfer plays—and which is contiguous to an amplitude of genres as diverse as samba and hip hop—is most enjoyable for the guitarist, producer, modest keyboardist, and bedroom engineer during the creative process.

Simply ask Vamfer about how he writes a song, or what the options are. It’s one of his favorite subjects in terms of his music and, perhaps, hints at his affinity for simply writing in general.

“It’s probably not a good analogy but nevertheless, I believe it was Louie Armstrong; somebody asked him about how he played jazz because it’s not written down anywhere, so how does he know what notes to play next,” Vamfer mentioned about the improvisational overtones of this treasured genre of music. “And he said, I just look up at the tree at the apples, and whichever apple is ripest, I pluck it, and that’s how I know which note to play.”

That same reliance on instinct, intuition and, once again, ingenuity, courses through Vamfer’s songwriting process. He frequently begins with a part of a lyric, fleshes it out in time, summons a melody from within, bangs out a few chords on the guitar, and then selects a genre and the particulars of the arrangement to put his tracks together.

That’s just what he did for the first single from the new album, “Tricks of Life Medley”, which is a medley of three cuts from the project: “Tricks of Life”, “You Need a Little Kick (To Move On)”, and “A Bit of What You Fancy”. “Tricks of Life Medley”, however, won’t be on the album.

By Deuce