

Sex Pistol Glen Matlock returns to Edinburgh

The departure of original Sex Pistols' bassist and songwriter, Glen Matlock, is now widely regarded as one significant reason the Pistols imploded shortly after the release of their debut album, *Never Mind The Bollocks*.

That record in 1977 helped thrust punk into the mainstream and is still heralded as a classic. Matlock, however, is on his way for a Scottish tour to celebrate a long career working with the likes of Blondie and the Faces as well as his solo work. Before the Sex Pistols headline in Glasgow at a punk-all-day event in June, Matlock will be touring with his solo band after his most recent long player *Consequences Coming* and an autobiography *Triggers: A Life In Music* were both well received by fans and critics.

As well as Glasgow and Aberdeen he will return to Edinburgh's Voodoo Rooms where he previously performed Iggy Pop's *Lust for Life* album in 2023.

The record simmered away as a music fan favourite and was given a shot in the arm nearly 20 years later when the lead track 'Lust For Life' featured in Danny Boyle's *Trainspotting* film, highlighting the album's kudos among Edinburgh's young working-class of the late 1970s and early '80s.

The city's Hibernian FC play the track before kick-off with an

accompanying video on the big screen. The 2023 show was attended by Irvine Welsh and featured legendary Blondie drummer, Clem Burke, on drums. The news of his death from cancer in April was a shock.

Matlock explained: "We've been friends for fifty years. it's been weird because he would stay with me whenever he was in London and I would stay at his place in L. A when I was over there. Just wandering around the house (since his death) has been a little bit odd. Clem and I were cut from the same cloth. When Debbie (Harry) got Covid the dates were postponed and we ended up kicking about New Jersey where he was from and where his old man lived and worked. He had an American version of my upbringing really."

Burke was that rare example of someone in the music industry that no one had a bad word to say about while being highly regarded as one of rock n' roll's greatest drummers.

Glen said: "He was a fantastic showman and drummer. He would instigate things and make them happen. When I went to America last year he put the band together for me and brought in people like Kathy Valentine (Go-Gos) and Gilby Clarke (ex-Guns N' Roses). He adds that while Blondie has a new album ready to be released the future is uncertain. "I don't know what will happen, I knew Clem had been ill for a little while and Blondie had been put off, there's a new Blondie album in the can but I don't know what will happen and now the Pistols stuff has come up."

The return of the Sex Pistols is going from strength to strength despite John 'Johnny Rotten' Lydon not being in the line-up. Frank Carter whose punk credentials were cemented with Gallows and Frank Carter & the Rattlesnakes was drafted in to join three of the original Pistols and his performances have helped attract a new generation of fans.

"I could be cynical and say we are helping everyone relive

their youth but that's not true," explained Matlock. "With Frank being in the band it helps and the music we did is timeless really, we sound like we did (almost 50) years ago."

John Lydon has slammed the reunion saying "I am the Pistols and they're not" and left the media under no illusion about how he feels. Matlock added that "it was Steve's band. We were all the songwriters and we all did our bit. It would never have happened without any one of us. The problem is John won't give anyone else any credit which is why we are where we are now. He still can't think it through ... but he can do what he likes. He comes across as bitter and twisted while we are all having a laugh, making some good money and sending everyone home with a smile on their face."

So does that mean there will never be a reunion with Johnny Rotten? "Never say never. It's sad the way it's unfolded, life is short and the hourglass of time is dripping away for us. Who wants to sit at home thinking about what could have been?"

Matlock originally left the Pistols to make way for the late Sid Vicious on bass. While he became a punk icon, especially after his premature death, the band imploded leaving Steve Jones to admit that if Matlock had remained in the Pistols they would have made more records.

With former disagreements now put to rest is there likely to be more music?

"I don't know but nobody is saying 'no'. We're not like The Beatles in A Hard Day's Night. When I first saw that I did think they all lived in the same house. On tour now we have breakfast together and get on the same flights and trains in Japan and that's quite a novelty since the days of yore. Steve Jones came round the other day to watch QPR (v Swansea) I'm a QPR fan, he likes to bet on everything. We got beat (2-1) so he went home with £10 of mine in his pocket."

When I ask Matlock about the guitarist's football leanings he compared him to the memorable cigar-smoking Scottish character in a camel coat Charlie Endell (Iain Cuthbertson) from the 1970s television series Budgie also starring Adam Faith.

"When Steve lived in London he would watch QPR, Fulham and Chelsea. When he moved to L. A the team doing best was Chelsea so he had a better chance of watching them on TV and ended up more of a Chelsea fan. He was like Charlie Endell who Budgie was always falling fowl of, he'd say 'Why do you put yourself through it all Budgie? Why don't you just be like me and support the winning team?'"

Glen Matlock will play The Voodoo Rooms Edinburgh on Tuesday 20th May



Glen Matlock