

pink floyd a momentary lapse of reason

Pink Floyd A Momentary Lapse of Reason

Pink Floyd's A Momentary Lapse of Reason stands as a significant milestone in the band's illustrious career, representing a period of transition, experimentation, and reinvention. Released in 1987, this album marked Pink Floyd's first studio project after the departure of founding member Roger Waters, showcasing the band's ability to evolve while maintaining their signature atmospheric and progressive sound. In this article, we will explore the background, musical style, themes, reception, and legacy of A Momentary Lapse of Reason, offering a comprehensive overview for fans and newcomers alike.

Background and Context

Formation and Transition

Pink Floyd, formed in 1965 in London, had established themselves as pioneers of progressive and psychedelic rock with iconic albums like *The Dark Side of the Moon* (1973), *Wish You Were Here* (1975), and *The Wall* (1979). However, by the mid-1980s, internal tensions, creative differences, and the departure of Roger Waters in 1985 created a period of uncertainty for the band.

Development of A Momentary Lapse of Reason

Following Waters' exit, David Gilmour, Richard Wright, and Nick Mason embarked on a quest to redefine their sound and identity. The album was primarily produced by Bob Ezrin, known for his work with Alice Cooper and Kiss, aiming to craft a polished, accessible yet complex record. The recording process took place across multiple studios worldwide, reflecting the band's evolving approach to music production.

Musical Style and Composition

Sound Characteristics

A Momentary Lapse of Reason showcases a blend of traditional Pink Floyd elements with modern rock influences of the late 1980s. The album is characterized by:

- Rich atmospheric textures and soundscapes

- Layered guitar effects and synthesizers
- Extended instrumental passages
- Polished production and electronic influences

While the band's earlier albums leaned heavily on conceptual storytelling, this record emphasizes mood, experimentation, and sonic exploration.

Notable Tracks and Musical Highlights

Some of the standout tracks include:

1. **Learning to Fly** – An uplifting anthem with soaring guitar riffs and optimistic lyrics.
2. **On the Turning Away** – A socially conscious song with a gentle, melodic approach.
3. **Signs of Life** – An atmospheric intro track featuring ambient sounds and synthesizers.
4. **One Slip** – A rhythmic, groove-oriented track with sharp guitar work.

The album also includes instrumental interludes and sound effects that contribute to its immersive experience.

Themes and Lyric Content

Exploration of Personal and Societal Issues

Unlike earlier Pink Floyd concept albums, *A Momentary Lapse of Reason* is more abstract in its thematic approach, focusing on:

- Reflection on personal identity and mental states
- Commentary on societal complacency and apathy
- Experiences of change and uncertainty

The lyrics often evoke introspection, hope, and a sense of fleeting moments, capturing the album title's

essence.

Symbolism and Interpretation

The album's imagery and lyrics suggest themes of:

- Lost innocence and the passage of time
- The importance of awareness and awakening
- Breaking free from mental and societal constraints

Listeners are encouraged to interpret the songs personally, as the album's abstract nature leaves room for multiple meanings.

Reception and Critical Analysis

Commercial Success

A Momentary Lapse of Reason was a commercial hit, reaching number one on the UK Albums Chart and number three on the US Billboard 200. It was certified multi-platinum in several countries, reflecting its widespread popularity.

Critical Response

Initial reviews were mixed to positive. Critics praised its production quality, melodic sensibilities, and innovative sound but noted that it lacked the conceptual depth of previous Pink Floyd albums. Over time, many fans and critics have appreciated the album for its atmospheric richness and melodic craftsmanship.

Legacy and Influence

Despite some criticism, A Momentary Lapse of Reason has influenced modern progressive and alternative rock artists. Its emphasis on atmospheric textures and studio experimentation has inspired many musicians to explore similar sonic landscapes.

Legacy and Live Performances

Tour and Live Shows

The band embarked on the A Momentary Lapse of Reason World Tour in 1987-1988, which was one of the most ambitious of its time. Notable features included:

- Innovative stage designs with large screens and laser effects
- Performances of tracks like "Learning to Fly" and "On the Turning Away"
- Special effects and elaborate lighting that enhanced the immersive experience

Reissues and Remasters

The album has undergone various remastering efforts, including a 2011 reissue that improved sound quality and included bonus tracks. These releases have helped sustain interest and introduce the album to new generations.

Conclusion

Pink Floyd A Momentary Lapse of Reason represents a pivotal chapter in the band's history, embodying their resilience and capacity for reinvention. While it may differ stylistically from their earlier masterpieces, it retains the emotional depth, sonic experimentation, and atmospheric richness that define Pink Floyd's legacy. Whether appreciated for its melodic appeal, production quality, or thematic introspection, the album continues to resonate with audiences worldwide.

For fans exploring Pink Floyd's discography, A Momentary Lapse of Reason offers a compelling listen—an atmospheric journey through fleeting moments of clarity amid the chaos of life. Its enduring influence and memorable tracks ensure its place as a significant work in the landscape of progressive rock.

Keywords: Pink Floyd, A Momentary Lapse of Reason, Pink Floyd albums, Pink Floyd songs, progressive rock, 1987 albums, learning to fly, album review, music history, Pink Floyd legacy

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the significance of Pink Floyd's album 'A Momentary Lapse of Reason' in their discography?

'A Momentary Lapse of Reason' is Pink Floyd's first studio album after Roger Waters' departure, marking a shift towards a more atmospheric and progressive sound, and signifying the band's transition from their classic era to a new phase.

When was 'A Momentary Lapse of Reason' released and how was it received commercially?

The album was released on September 7, 1987, and it was a commercial success, reaching number one on charts worldwide and achieving multi-platinum status, reflecting its popularity among fans.

Who were the primary contributors to 'A Momentary Lapse of Reason'?

The album was primarily created by David Gilmour, Nick Mason, and Richard Wright, with Gilmour taking a leading role in songwriting and production after Waters' departure.

What are some of the notable tracks from 'A Momentary Lapse of Reason'?

Notable tracks include 'Learning to Fly,' 'On the Turning Away,' 'Sorrow,' and the title track 'A Momentary Lapse of Reason,' which collectively showcase the album's atmospheric and introspective style.

How does 'A Momentary Lapse of Reason' differ stylistically from Pink Floyd's earlier works?

The album features a more polished, synthesizer-driven sound with less emphasis on traditional psychedelic and experimental elements, emphasizing atmospheric textures and melodic hooks.

Was 'A Momentary Lapse of Reason' involved in any significant band conflicts or lineup changes?

Yes, the album was created after Roger Waters left the band, leading to a more collaborative effort primarily among Gilmour, Mason, and Wright, with some contributions from outside musicians.

Has 'A Momentary Lapse of Reason' been remastered or reissued recently?

Yes, the album has been remastered and reissued multiple times, including a notable 2011 remastered version that enhanced sound quality and included additional material.

How has 'A Momentary Lapse of Reason' influenced Pink Floyd's legacy and modern progressive rock?

While sometimes viewed as a transitional album, it demonstrated Pink Floyd's ability to evolve and incorporate new sounds, influencing modern progressive and atmospheric rock artists and maintaining the band's relevance in the late 20th century.

Additional Resources

Pink Floyd: A Momentary Lapse of Reason – An In-Depth Exploration of the Band's 1987 Masterpiece

Since their inception in the mid-1960s, Pink Floyd has been synonymous with innovative soundscapes, concept albums, and groundbreaking production techniques. Among their extensive discography, *A Momentary Lapse of Reason* stands out as a pivotal album that marked a new chapter in the band's evolution. Released in 1987, *Pink Floyd: A Momentary Lapse of Reason* represents a period of transition, experimentation, and reflection for the band, showcasing their ability to adapt and redefine their musical identity.

In this comprehensive guide, we'll delve into the album's background, themes, production, reception, and legacy, offering a detailed analysis for both longtime fans and newcomers alike.

Background and Context

The Post-Waters Era

By the early 1980s, Pink Floyd had undergone significant changes. The departure of founding member Roger Waters after *The Final Cut* (1983) left the remaining members—David Gilmour, Nick Mason, and Richard Wright—facing both creative and commercial challenges. The band's internal tensions culminated in Waters leaving the group, prompting the others to forge ahead with a new vision.

The Making of *A Momentary Lapse of Reason*

Initially conceived as a solo project for Gilmour, *A Momentary Lapse of Reason* was crafted during a

tumultuous period. The album's recording process was characterized by a desire to capture a fresh sound, moving away from the conceptual heaviness of previous works like *The Wall* and *The Dark Side of the Moon*. Producer Bob Ezrin, known for his work with Alice Cooper and Kiss, played a crucial role in shaping the album's sound.

Album Overview

Release and Cover Art

Pink Floyd: *A Momentary Lapse of Reason* was released on September 7, 1987. The album cover features a simple yet evocative image—a floating, luminous white light against a black background—symbolizing clarity, introspection, and perhaps the fleeting nature of perception.

Track Listing

The album comprises 10 tracks, with notable singles such as “Learning to Fly,” “On the Turning Away,” and “Sorrow.” The tracklist is as follows:

1. Signs of Life
2. Learning to Fly
3. The Dogs of War
4. One Slip
5. On the Turning Away
6. Yet Another Movie
7. Round and Around
8. A New Machine (Part 1)
9. A New Machine (Part 2)
10. Sorrow

Thematic Analysis

Themes Explored

Pink Floyd: *A Momentary Lapse of Reason* is thematically rich, exploring concepts such as:

- Perception and Reality: The album's title itself hints at fleeting moments of clarity or insight.
- Isolation and Reflection: Many tracks delve into personal introspection and the human condition.
- War and Conflict: Songs like “The Dogs of War” address themes of power struggles and the human toll of conflict.

- Environmental and Social Consciousness: Addressed subtly through lyrics that critique societal complacency.

Lyrical Content

While Roger Waters' influence was less pronounced than in previous albums, the lyrics maintain Pink Floyd's characteristic poetic and philosophical tone. Gilmour's voice and songwriting focus on emotional expression, often juxtaposing hope with disillusionment.

Musical Style and Production

Sound and Influences

The album's sound is marked by a polished, more accessible style compared to earlier experimental works. It blends elements of progressive rock, art rock, and pop, with notable use of synthesizers, drum machines, and layered textures.

Key Tracks and Their Significance

- "Learning to Fly": An uplifting anthem about hope and perseverance, driven by a catchy melody and expansive guitar work.
- "On the Turning Away": A socially conscious song criticizing apathy towards suffering and injustice.
- "Sorrow": An epic closing track with a dark, atmospheric tone, reflecting on loss and despair.

Production Techniques

Bob Ezrin's influence is evident in the album's clean production, use of electronic instruments, and layering of sounds. The studio work emphasizes clarity and depth, allowing each instrument and vocal to stand out.

Critical Reception and Commercial Success

Initial Reception

Upon release, *A Momentary Lapse of Reason* received mixed reviews. Some critics appreciated its melodic accessibility and production quality, while others felt it lacked the depth of earlier Floyd classics. However, fans generally embraced it as a solid entry that demonstrated the band's resilience.

Chart Performance

The album was commercially successful, reaching number 3 on the Billboard 200 charts and topping charts in the UK. It generated multiple hit singles, notably “Learning to Fly” and “On the Turning Away,” both of which received heavy radio play.

Legacy and Influence

Impact on Pink Floyd's Career

Pink Floyd: A Momentary Lapse of Reason reinvigorated the band's career, serving as a bridge between their classic era and future projects. It proved that Floyd could evolve without Waters' presence, maintaining their signature sound while embracing new production techniques.

Live Performances and Tours

The album was promoted with a major world tour, featuring elaborate stage designs and visual effects. The tour helped cement the album's popularity and showcased the band's renewed energy and creativity.

Critical Reassessment

Over time, the album has been re-evaluated more positively, appreciated for its mature songwriting, production craftsmanship, and emotional resonance. It is often regarded as an underrated Floyd record that balances accessibility with artistic integrity.

The Album's Place in Pink Floyd's Discography

Pink Floyd: A Momentary Lapse of Reason occupies a unique position in the band's catalog. It reflects a period of transition, both personally and musically, and demonstrates the band's ability to adapt and thrive amidst change. While it may not possess the conceptual grandeur of The Wall or Dark Side, its focus on melody, atmosphere, and emotional honesty makes it a compelling listen.

Final Thoughts

Pink Floyd: A Momentary Lapse of Reason stands as a testament to the band's resilience and versatility. It captures a moment in time when the members explored new sonic territories while staying true to their artistic roots. Whether you view it as a standalone masterpiece or a transitional album, its significance in Pink Floyd's legacy is undeniable.

For listeners seeking a blend of memorable melodies, thought-provoking themes, and innovative production, *A Momentary Lapse of Reason* offers a rich and rewarding experience—one that continues to resonate decades after its release.

In summary:

- It marked a new chapter post-Roger Waters
- Features hit singles like “Learning to Fly” and “On the Turning Away”
- Combines polished production with emotional songwriting
- Showcases the band’s adaptability and resilience
- Remains a beloved and influential part of Pink Floyd’s discography

Whether you're a longtime fan or new to Pink Floyd, exploring *A Momentary Lapse of Reason* reveals the enduring power of their music to evoke reflection, hope, and introspection—if only for a moment.

Pink Floyd A Momentary Lapse Of Reason

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Philippe Margotin, 2017-10-24 A comprehensive look at the unique recording history of Pink Floyd, one of the world's most commercially successful and influential rock bands. *Pink Floyd All the Songs* tells the full story of every recording session, album, and single that the band has released. Since 1965, Pink Floyd have been recording sonically experimental and philosophical music, selling more than 250 million records worldwide, including two of the best-selling albums of all time *Dark Side of the Moon* and *The Wall*. In *Pink Floyd All the Songs*, authors Margotin and Guesdon describe the origins of the band's nearly 200 released songs, including details from the recording studio, what instruments were used, and behind-the-scenes stories of the tensions that helped drive the band. Organized chronologically by album, this massive, 544-page hardcover begins with the band's 1967 debut album *The Piper at the Gates of Dawn*—the only one recorded under founding member Syd Barrett's leadership—and runs all the way through their 2014 farewell album, *The Endless River*, which was downloaded 12 million times on Spotify during its first week of release. Packed with more than 500 photos, *Pink Floyd All the Songs* is also filled with stories that fans will treasure, such as Waters working with engineer Alan Parsons to implement revolutionary recording techniques on *The Dark Side of the Moon* during sessions at Abbey Road Studios in 1972, and producer Bob Ezrin's contributions that helped refine Waters' original sprawling vision for *The Wall*.

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by a green felt puppet to the rock anthems played by a Journey cover band. In between, life-long friendships are forged, true love is found and adversity is met head-on. Each defining moment in his life married to a song and each song an anchor to an everlasting memory. *Basement Songs* is a journey full of heart, humor and above all, a love of music.

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poignant lyrics and some of the most powerful, genre-defining rock music ever made. Roger Waters, Rick Wright, Nick Mason and the tragically brilliant Syd Barrett fused English whimsy with electrifying voyages through inner and outer space. Their underground gigs are the stuff of psychedelic legend, but between 1968 and 1971, with Barrett replaced by David Gilmour, their sonic inquiries were never braver. Some were delivered instantly while others were revealed slowly, but all played crucial parts in rock's development. During the 1970s, the music matured as the messages darkened. While Floyd continued to prove that emotional weight can be forged from deceptively modest arrangements, the band's live spectacles reached a pitch of technical complexity and extravagance none has matched. With insightful analysis and witty objectivity, Richard Butterworth appraises afresh Pink Floyd's official recorded canon, from 'Arnold Layne' to The Endless River and beyond to 2022 and the first all-new Floyd music for 28 years. Richard Butterworth's grown-up career began in advertising, first as a paste-up artist and later as a graphic designer. Settling on copywriting, for years he reaped the pleasures, pains and penury of freelancing. As a lifelong believer in the healing and redemptive power of music, however, he knew that humankind's highest art form would eventually saddle up and ride him into the sunset. Today Richard lives in Cornwall, UK with his partner Sue, two golden retrievers, a tenor saxophone and a justifiably ancient laptop computer, on which he still writes about the music he loved before he was a grown-up.

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