

WHO ARE YA? NICK CASH

They are one of punk rock's most enduring yet underrated bands, but 999 remain one of the biggest draws at the recent Rebellion festival and are legendary as one of the UK new wave/punk acts that really should have cracked America. And they gave it a pretty good go too, touring long and hard in the US in the '80s on the back of hits like 'Homicide', 'Emergency' and their cover of Sam the Sham and the Pharaohs' 'Lil' Red Riding Hood'. Formed by singer guitarist Nick Cash and his brother Guy Days, they reportedly turned down Chrissie Hynde and Jon Moss (Culture Club/Damned) at auditions before finalising their line-up and playing their first gig in January 1977. Nick Cash had been part of the pub rock scene but found his calling with the band, named after the UK's emergency telephone number. Having released their 11th studio album in 2020, VLR got the beers in and asked Nick 'Who Are Ya?'.

HIGH ENERGY PLAN

"I was born in Gosport, Hampshire in a military hospital. Our father was in the R.A.F. and we were sent to different postings all over the world which resulted in myself attending 26 different schools so it was a new school, new friends and new bullies for the new boy 26 times. We both started bands, me in Malta and Guy in Cyprus. When Guy came back from Cyprus he had become a brilliant guitarist. We then started what was to become 999 at the demise of Kilburn and The High Roads and the pub rock scene.

FACE TO FACE

"The first things that got me rockin' was the sound of the electric guitar and at 8 years old whilst stationed in Gibraltar the song 'Davey Crockett' by Fess Parker. Extraordinarily many years later Ian Dury said to me 'I have a great song I would like to do called 'Davey Crockett' and thus the song that got me rockin' became part of the Kilburn's repertoire. There was talk relatively recently of Kilburn and the High Roads reforming and the possibility of Andy Serkis, who plays Ian Dury in the movie *Sex & Drugs & Rock & Roll*, taking on the roll of Ian in the Kilburn's. When I got the call about reforming, myself and the other Kilburn's unanimously declined the offer agreeing that something so very special should remain special. However, at the 70th birthday bash of The Kilburn's piano player and songsmith Russell Hardy four of us Kilburn's Charlie Hart (Slim Chance, The People Band), Humphrey Ocean (artist/bass player) Russell Hardy and myself on guitar reformed for a one-off gig and performed to an ecstatic audience. One of the songs was 'Davey Crockett' - if only we had recorded the set."

WOTABUNCH!

"It was a brilliant, artistic, creative and educational life in Kilburn and the High Roads the best times although sometimes the most argumentative. It was a life changing time without which there would have been no 999. The pub rock scene was the only available outlet for new bands to start playing to audiences with the exception of a few forward-thinking social secs. at unis and art colleges who jumped at the opportunity to put on something new and different. Many of the gigs on the pub rock scene i.e. The Hope

and Anchor, The Nashville etc. also launched punk rock. Pub rock led to Kilburn and the High Roads supporting The Who on The Quadrophenia tour and also performing a show at The Kings Road Theatre, London in 1974 where the band's clothes were designed and made by Malcolm McLaren in conjunction with the band and our then-manager Tommy Roberts (Mr. Freedom). As a London band we had a set of Tower Bridge made especially for the event and the bridge section was raised and the band walked out. Yeah, Kilburn and the High Roads didn't make it, the band was ahead of its time and a lot of people just didn't get it. Guy Days' guitar playing inspired me to start a punk rock band together and it was also a natural progression for me through all my experiences with Kilburn and the High Roads. The only thing was I didn't want to capitalise on being the

guitar player with The Kilburn's so I became Nick Cash and played to new audiences with 999 from day one."

OBSESSED

"It is our ambition to continue to evolve. We have an adage with 999 that goes - if the music can go to your brain, get to your heart, move your ass and make you dance then we have done our job and this is what we still base our song writing and sound on."

HOLLYWOOD

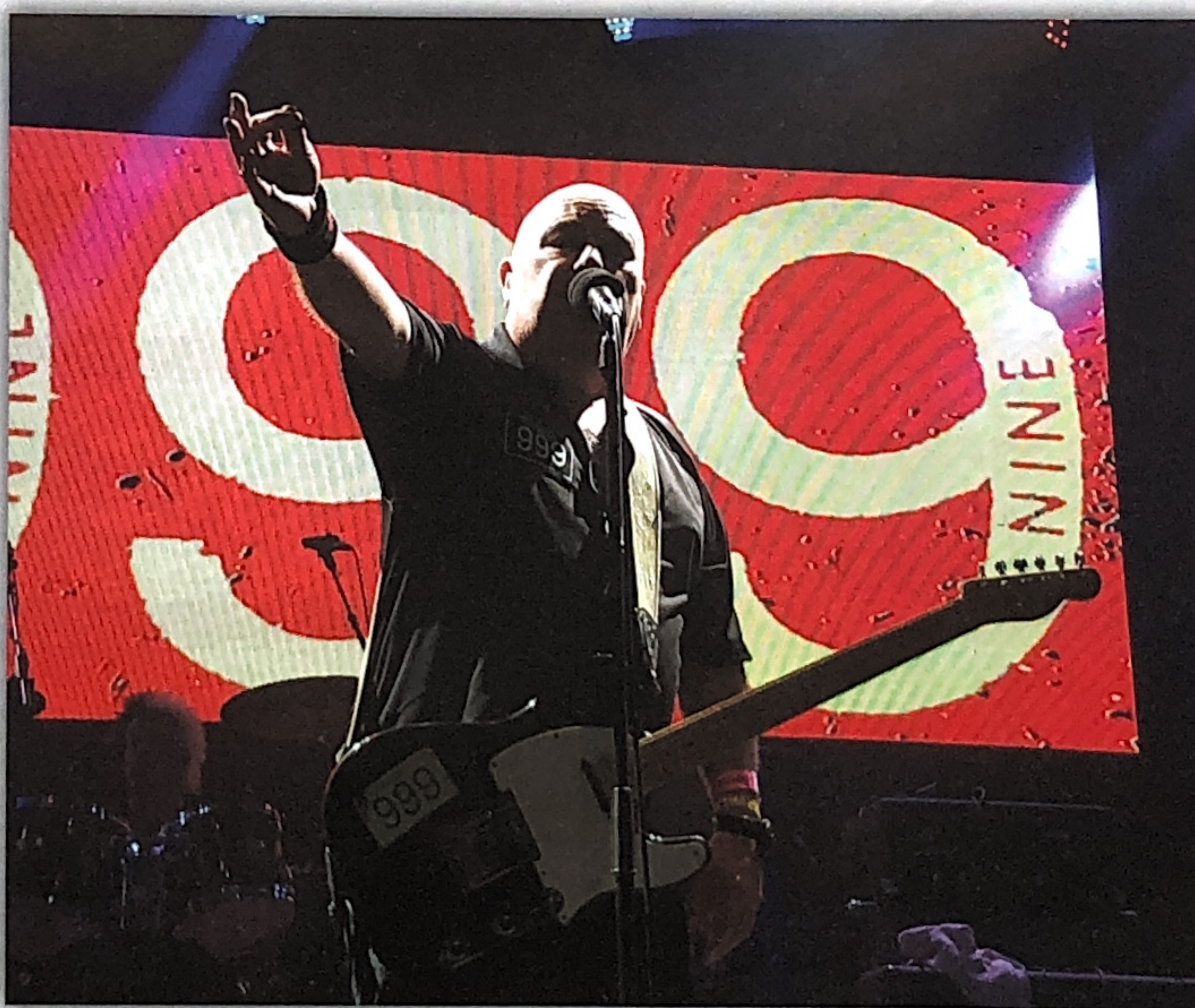
"We worked hard in the USA doing fifty six back to back tour dates. Yeah, we almost cracked it and to this day it remains our main territory and has rewarded us with our music being included in may US TV series, and films like *Killing*

of America, *Shameless*, *Too Old To Die Young*, etc. 999 toured the USA pre-pandemic in 2019 and our latest album 'Bish! Bash! Bosh!' is all thanks to an American label, Cleopatra."

BOYS IN THE GANG

"What keeps me and Guy wanting to carry on? A deeply shared love of the music, performing live and being able to settle our differences unlike some other brothers in bands who don't work together anymore whose names I shall not mention here. Long live the music." **VLR**

999 play the *Vive Le Rock* sponsored Cleopatra Records 30th Anniversary show at London's O2 Islington Academy on 26th October with Jah Wobble and Eater



999

**BISH! BASH!
BOSH!**

(Cleopatra)

Adrenaline-fuelled carnage from punk mainstays 999, who batter us with cheap, cheerful jaunts on this comeback album. Nick Cash and Guy Days are masters of the craft, and they make you wish for the days of old 45s with golden nuggets like 'My Dad Trashed The Submarine' and 'Don't Start A Fight'. You'll have oodles of fun with this.

