Extended Essay

Visual Arts

"What contribution did art make to the success of Pink Floyd?"

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Picture 1: Original Pink Floyd members, from left to right: Rick Wright, Roger Waters, Syd Barrett and Nick Mason. Late sixties, London

Abstract

The aim of this essay is to investigate the forms of art that helped the music band Pink Floyd becoming famous. The topic relates to Visual Arts as the band used many kinds of visual arts during their career to illustrate music. They mixed visuals to their sounds to create a higher experience of the senses compared to other bands at the time: using hearing and sight combined together. That is why I chose my research question to be: "What contribution did art make to the success of Pink Floyd?"

To answer this question throughout the essay, I had to go back to the genesis of the band: how did they get known in the first place? It was not a surprise to discover they got famous with the help of oil projectors they used during their concerts that young underground Londoners were fond of. Since then, Pink Floyd kept on using artistic concepts and forms in order to be differentiated from others and to offer a whole new level of performance on stage or with the records.

Following the chronology of their works has been very useful to notice the evolution of their artistic journey. The word limit has been a real constraint to me (I am passionate about Art and Pink Floyd) because I had to take off a lot of information to make it to 4000 words. Also, rather than comparing Pink Floyd with recent bands/singers who use installations and videos on stage I chose to focus on Pink Floyd to fully learn about their development.

The conclusion of this essay shows that the mix of various art forms helped Pink Floyd to get famous and remembered by many as for instance with the *Dark Side Of The Moon* album cover.

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Introduction

This essay examines the question, **"What contribution did art make to the success of Pink Floyd?** It focuses on how art helped the band to be special. In this essay, the most recognizable kinds of art that Pink Floyd used will be stated. They used more than music to be famous, and artists nowadays follow the same path, wearing extravagant clothing or performing shocking shows, it's all about being remembered. Pink Floyd used a lot of artistic concepts such as oil projections in the background of their concerts in the 1960's, the installations and videos showed in concerts, their album covers and the movie plus the concerts of "The Wall". The research creates awareness that Pink Floyd is more than a music band: the concepts, visuals, and symbols also shaped their success.

Background information

The band was originally created by Roger Waters (bassist, vocalist and lyricist, born on September 6, 1943)[1], Syd Barrett (guitarist, vocalist, and lyricist, January 6, 1946-July 7, 2006)[2], Richard Wright (keyboards, July 28, 1943-September 15, 2008)[3] and Nick Mason (drums, January 27, 1944)[4] (Picture 1). In 1967, David Gilmour (guitarist and vocalist, March 6, 1946)[5] joined in. In 1968, front man Barrett quit the band due to major drug use[6].

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[1] "Roger Waters." *Wikipedia.org*. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roger_Waters>.

[2] "Syd Barrett." *Wikipedia.org*. <https%3A%2F%2Fen.wikipedia.org%2Fwiki%2FSyd_Barrett>.

[3] "Richard Wright." *Wikipedia.org*. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Wright_(musician)>.

[4] "Nick Mason." *Wikipedia.org*. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nick_Mason>.

[5] "David Gilmour." *Wikipedia.org*. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Gilmour>.

[6] Blake, Mark. *Pigs Might Fly: The inside Story of Pink Floyd*.

1. <u>Light projections</u>

Anthony Stern, (with who Barrett shared an exhibition) recalls that, in his studio, "Syd and I would spend ages in there, having endless conversations about the nature of film and art and music. There was a man (…) Red Gadney, who made light boxes in his room. He showed us these things-they were like huge television screens behind which there were a series of mechanical gadgets and light projections. These were (…) ideas that later became part of psychedelia, and which the Floyd used in their light shows.[7]"

Barrett made home-made light shows his art school friend, John Gordon. Waters' lecturer, Mike Leonard, experimented with lighting effects, designing and building devices with glass and Perspex, also experimenting with oil slides. Barrett and Waters helped Leonard with his prototype light inventions[8].

During Pink Floyd's first gigs (Barrett era), Joel and Toni Brown took care of light shows, using colored slides and a projector. As it was revolutionary and new, light shows and back projections combined with music permitted Pink Floyd to visually differentiate themselves from competitors and to touch multimedia (Pictures 2 and 3). In 1966, Wynne-Willson (lighting technician) experimented stretching condoms over wire frames, dripping oil paint onto it, through which light shone. Willson created one of the first oil slide effects. These effects used in shows defined Pink Floyd.[9]
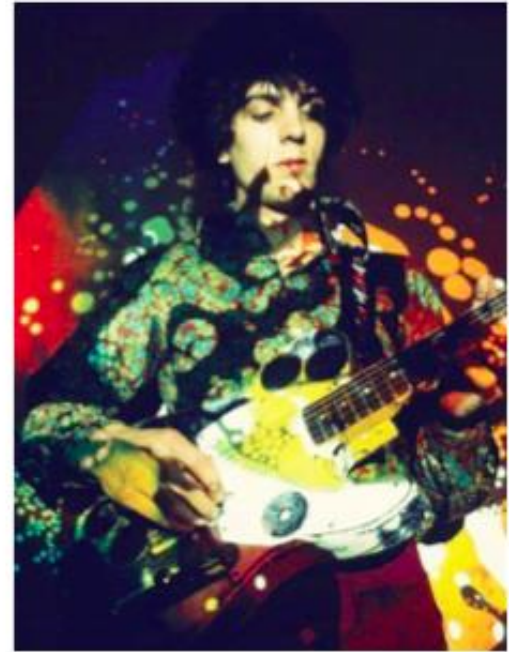
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[7] Blake, Mark. *Pigs Might Fly: The inside Story of Pink Floyd*.
[8] Blake, Mark. *Pigs Might Fly: The inside Story of Pink Floyd*.
[9] Blake, Mark. *Pigs Might Fly: The inside Story of Pink Floyd*.

Picture 2: Pink Floyd at the All Saints Church Hall, (October 1966)

Picture 3: Syd Barrett, being projected over during a show, London, late sixties.

William Moritz, (visual music historian) wrote that light shows are "a living art work of organic complexity considerably more interesting, challenging and satisfying than any of the flat, static art styles of the past, including painting and the traditional fictional cinema."[10]

Light shows link to visual music, which refers to methods that translate sounds into a visual display. It links to color organ which "refers to a traditional (…) device built to represent sound or to accompany music in a visual medium."[11]

In the 18th century, Louis-Bertrand Castel invented a color organ (Picture 4). Controlled by a piano keyboard that covered a screen with changing colored light, his

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[10] Zingman, Greg. *Joshualightshow.com*. <http://www.joshualightshow.com/about-classic/joshua-light-show-1967-68>.

[11] "Visual Music." *Wikipedia.org*. Wikimedia Foundation, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Visual_music>.

creation was a new musical instrument. It made both sound and the relevant

associated color for each note at the same time[12].

Picture 4: A caricature of Louis Bertrand
Castel's ocular organ made by Charles
Germain de Saint Aubin.

"Since ancient times artists have longed to create with moving

lights a music for the eye comparable to effects of sound for the ear"[13](Morritz). In

the twentieth-century the cooperation between art and music lead to new art

forms, such as multi-media performances with images and sounds. With technical

procedures innovations, new ways of artistic expressions

appeared and developed further abstract visual performances. There is rhythm in

both audio and image and there needs to be a harmony between auditory and

visual levels to create a whole experience. Linking sounds to images

happened during the sixties till the eighties in rock concerts with light shows or

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[12] McDonell, Maura. "Visual Music." <http://homepage.eircom.net/~musima/visualmusic/visualmusic.htm>.

[13] "Visual Music." *Wikipedia.org*. Wikimedia Foundation, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Visual_music>.

projections, and continued with music videos that became an essential marketing part for song nowadays[14].

After seeing Pink Floyd performing, John Hopkins and Joe Boyd founded the UFO club (1966), a venue staging similar events like Soft Machine (Picture 5). It was a hip underground place for fashionable people, psychedelic music in the background and space age lighting effects[15]. Pink Floyd linked sounds to visuals, giving a full experience for people to dance and discover something new. Mark Boyle (lighting technician) mixed substances between clear slides that were warmed by a projector lamp, melting and spreading across the band on stage [16](Picture 6,7).

Picture 5: An UFO ticket (1967)

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[14] "Visual Music." *Ucsb.edu*. <http://www.mat.ucsb.edu/~wakefield/amv/visualmusic.htm>.

[15] Blake, Mark. *Pigs Might Fly: The inside Story of Pink Floyd*.

[16] Blake, Mark. *Pigs Might Fly: The inside Story of Pink Floyd*.

THE Pink Floyd burst on to the London club scene in a kaleidoscope of colours some months ago. Literally, because colour, shapes and light gave impact to the staggering, tumultuous waves of sound which made up their act. Pop—or pop in Britain, at least—was never like this before. Pre-Pink Floyd groups were content to go onstage and grind out a succession of old hits or bad copies of American records.

The Floyd have denounced this visually boring performance. "Our lighting man is the fifth member of the group" they say—and engulf the audience in a symphony of weird shapes and violent colours which confound the senses as much as their driving, thirty-minute-long songs.

But are they just a brief bubble on the pop scene, or have they the ability to last?

Picture 6: Article about Pink Floyd, 1967

Picture 7: Pink Floyd performing at the UFO Club, with projections, during the late sixties, when Syd Barrett was still in the band. From left to right: Syd Barrett, Richard Wright, Roger Waters, Nick Mason

2. Photography and graphic design in album covers

For "The Piper At The Gates Of Dawn" (Picture 8), photographer Vic Singh was hired to shoot the band. He said: "Their music seemed alien and quite surreal"[17], so the band had to get a representative album cover. He got a prism lens from George Harrison, asked Pink Floyd's managers to buy them the brightest clothes he could find.

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[17] Blake, Mark. *Pigs Might Fly: The inside Story of Pink Floyd*.

The photographer was glad: "It was unusual and different, and they were delighted with it"[18]. The cover represents the band in a kaleidoscope manner, with repetition in the image creating a mind-bending effect. The psychedelic cover represents the band and their music, and differentiates itself from other bands' formal album covers.

Picture 8: "The Piper At The Gates Of Dawn" (1967)

Red is a dominating color in this photograph, with yellow-based "tomato" reds. Red captures attention and could be why the band wore red clothing. This color focuses behind one's retina that forces the lens to extend outwards and attracts the eye[19].

This cover links to Psychedelic Art: "(…) it may also refer to the art of the 1960s counter-culture movement. (…) art that is a visual depiction of kaleidoscopic-

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[18] Blake, Mark. *Pigs Might Fly: The inside Story of Pink Floyd*.
[19] "Red The Meanings of Red." *Colormatters.com*. <http://www.colormatters.com/the-meanings-of-colors/red>.

like patterns to the psychedelic art movement (…) closely linked to the psychedelic music of the 1960s as well and was evident in (…) record album covers"[20]. The features of psychedelic art are: surrealistic content, kaleidoscopic patterns, bright/contrasting colors and repetition[21].

"Dark Side Of The Moon" (Picture 9), became one of the best selling album of all time. The designer, Thorgerson commented,"(…) Rick Wright, (…) suggested we do something clean, elegant and graphic, not photographic – not a figurative picture. (…) connect this idea to their live show, which was famous for its lighting, and subsequently to connect it to ambition and madness, themes Roger was exploring in the lyrics… hence the prism, the triangles and the pyramids. It all connects, somehow, somewhere.[22]" Their most famous album cover was inspired by the props that made them known in the first place, how ironic? Aubrey Powell, a collaborator of Thorgerson, said in 2014, "In the 1970s, the album cover was what people looked at to get a visual resonance of their favorite band. (…) There will always be music and visuals together-there always has been-but the digital has destroyed the relevance and prominence of the visual."[23]

The album sold sixty-five million copies[24], a lot of people saw the symbolic design. After more than forty years after its release, the cover still remains a cultural

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[20] "Introduction to Psychedelic Art." *Arthistory.net*. <http://www.arthistory.net/psychedelic-art.html>.

[21] "Psychedelic Art." *Wikipedia.org*. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychedelic_art>.

[22] " Cummings, Greg. "Tales from the Rift: The Dark Side of the Earth." *Talesfromtherift.blogspot.nl.*. <http://talesfromtherift.blogspot.nl/2013/07/the-dark-side-of-earth.html>.

[23] Dunne, Carey. "The "Dark Side Of The Moon" Cover Designer On The Making Of Iconic Rock Album Art." *Fastcodesign.com.* <http://www.fastcodesign.com/3039377/the-dark-side-of-the-moon-cover-designer-on-the-making-of-iconic-rock-album-art>.

[24] "The Dark Side of the Moon." *Wikipedia.org*. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Dark_Side_of_the_Moon#Packaging>.

icon that marked many generations with its mysterious, simple and recognizable design. The band and album's name isn't stated, but many people can identify it, because of the impact it got when it was released.[25]
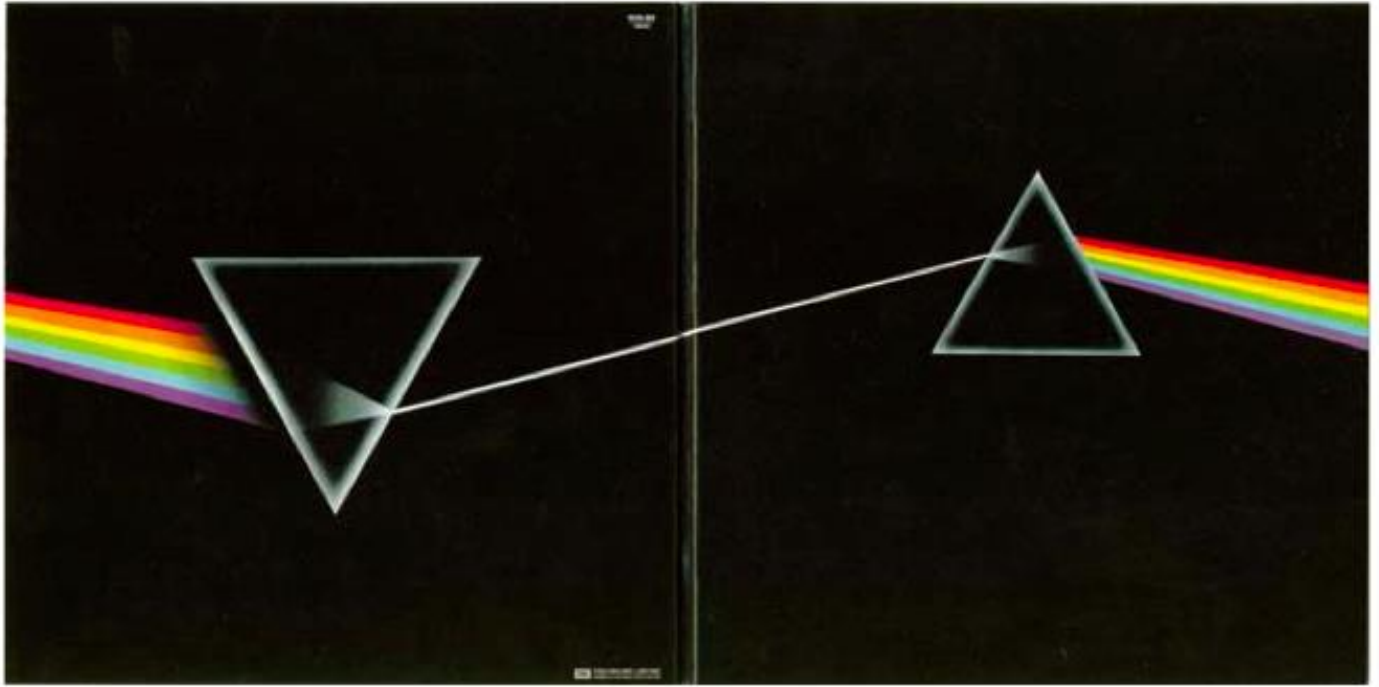
Picture 9: "Dark Side Of The Moon" (1973)

The composition of the graphic designed cover is simple: black background with a prism that reflects light into a rainbow. The prism is centered and is the only subject.

The prism links to a comparison that Castel made with Newton's explanation of the interaction between light and dark[26] (Picture 10). A symbol is found with the album's key themes being celebrity (song "Money") thus light, and insanity ("Brain

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[25] "Pink Floyd's "The Dark Side of the Moon": How an Album Cover Became an Icon | Superhype." *Superhypeblog.com*. <http://superhypeblog.com/music/pink-floyds-the-dark-side-of-the-moon-how-an-album-cover-became-an-icon>.

[26] "Louis Bertrand Castel." *Wikipedia.org*. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis_Bertrand_Castel>.

Damage"): darkness. The album cover is a representation of the interaction between light and darkness which links to the musical content.
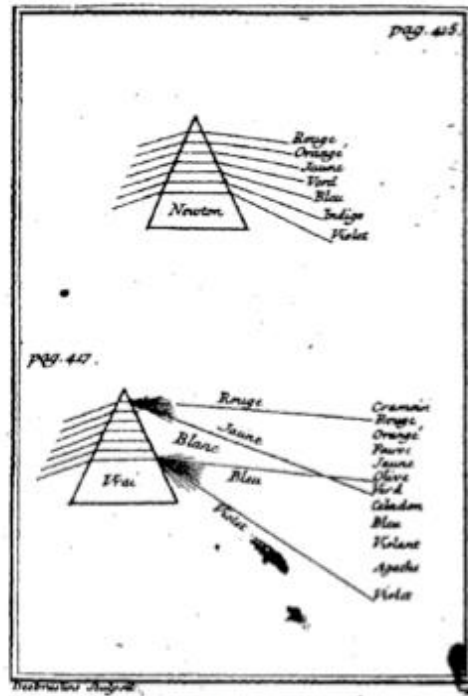
Picture 10: Castel's drawing of his comparison between Newton's idea and his about the interaction of light and dark. (1740)

For "Wish You Were Here" (Picture 11), the designer group Hipgnosis (created by Thorgerson and Powell) was hired. The foreground represents two businessmen shaking hands, one of them set on fire. Movie studios are in the background, symbolizing people with money. On the right, there is a white column where there's the album name. The burnt mark on the column links it to the man on fire. The body language of the two figures shows formality and distance between them. The burning man shows the album cover is surreal: if someone was burning, he'd be running, not shaking hands. The handshake is the focus of the photo, placed in the center. There is a contrast in the palette of colors between the cold blue sky and the green floor, and the warmth of fire.
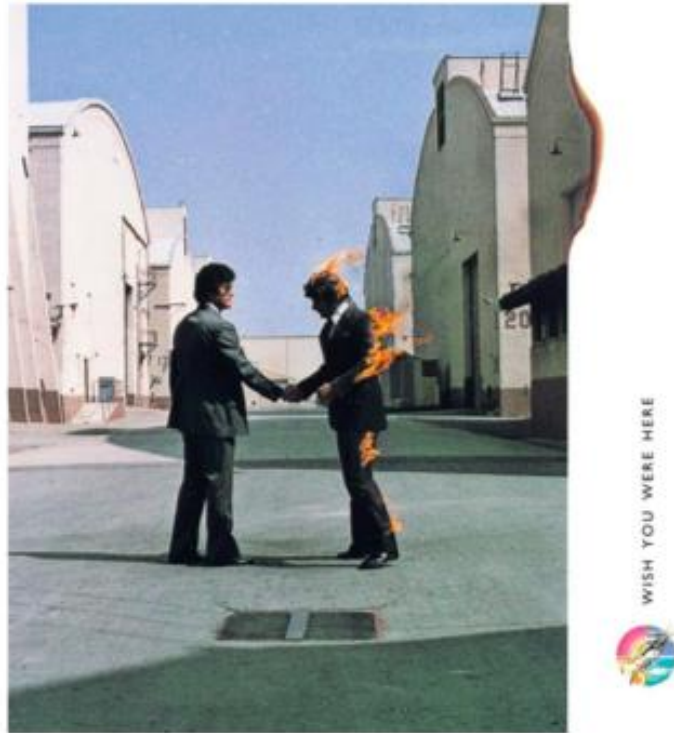
Picture 11: "Wish You Were Here" (1975)

The themes of the album are the emotional absence of someone (Barrett) and the truth about the music industry. Thorgerson explained the concept of the cover: "The handshake was a symbol of the whole notion of how you may get hold of somebody, shake them by the hand, and they're trying to tell you how much they're really there when they gripped you, but in fact they're miles away."[27]

Pink Floyd chose a meaningful and symbolic image that represents the album's themes.

Another cover Hipgnosis designed is "Animals" (Picture 12). It's a conceptual album, depicting the human population divided into three types of animals: dogs,

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[27] Blake, Mark. *Pigs Might Fly: The inside Story of Pink Floyd*.

sheep and pigs. Waters wanted a photograph of the South London power station with

a flying pig in between the four towers. He wanted a huge inflatable pig the cover but

also for the next tour. There was no Photoshop or collage used to get the inflatable

there. The 30 feet "Algie" pig was brought onto the photo shoot site, it took three

days to shoot the final photograph[28]. Hipgnosis hired fourteen photographers so

the pig would be perfectly captured flying next to the "doomy, inhuman" building as

Waters describes it, saying it'd become a "symbol of hope"[29]. This cover is a

reference to their live shows and their inflatable props.
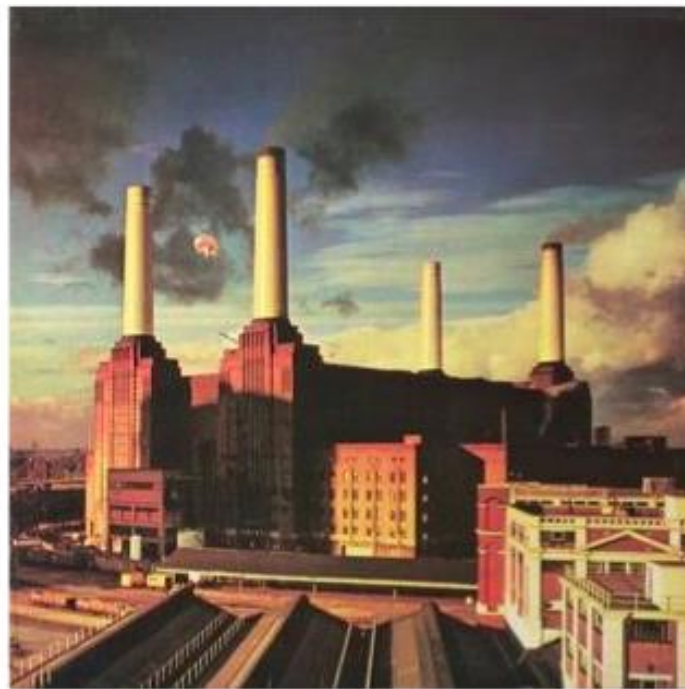
Picture 12: "Animals" (1977)

The photograph has a retro feeling, as if filtered with sepia effects.

The factory is centered and the symbolic flying Algie is on the first

vertical third of the photo. In the background, colored clouds appear: light

blue, white/grey and black ones. The black clouds represent pollution emitted by

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[28] Blake, Mark. *Pigs Might Fly: The inside Story of Pink Floyd*.

[29] Montgomery, Erwin, and Rob Horning. "Dragged Down by the Stone." *Thenewinquiry.com.*
<http://thenewinquiry.com/essays/dragged-down-by-the-stone/>.

the power station. It can be interpreted as humans bringing pollution to earth (pig representing people holding wealth and power). The link of the power station and power of the human pigs is important: Waters thinks that human pigs are "(…) at the top of the social ladder (…) they (…) manipulate the rest of society and encourage them to be viciously competitive and cutthroat, so the pigs remain powerful". It is logical the pig flies, to be superior, higher than the power station that represents the working men, the rest of society[30].

With album covers, Pink Floyd used the concept of cover art: "either an artwork as illustration or photograph on the outside of a published product such as a book (…) or music album. The art has a primarily commercial function, i.e. to promote the product it is displayed on, but can also have an aesthetic function, and may be artistically connected to the product, such as with art by the creator of the product"[31]. Album covers advertise the musical content of the LP/CD, with the help of photography, illustration or graphic design[32].

These four iconic album covers hold similarities: they are symbolic and visually represent the musical content. "Dark Side Of The Moon", "Wish You Were Here" and "Animals" share the same framing: centered subject (graphic design/photograph). These three albums don't represent the band but the album content, none shows their name, as if the covers were self-explanatory. They emit dark, gloomy moods with the colors (black background) or what it represents (burning man, black clouds).

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[30] "Pigs (Three Different Ones)." *Wikipedia.org*. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pigs_(Three_Different_Ones)>.

[31] "Cover Art." *Wikipedia.org*. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cover_art>.

[32] "Album Cover." *Wikipedia.org*. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Album_cover>.

3. <u>Installations and videos in concerts</u>

In 1969, as Pink Floyd was performing the album "A Saucerful Of Secrets", they conducted an art performance on stage: a table was constructed during the show, where the crew sat and drank tea while listening to a radio which was amplified through the speakers. A band's crew member showed up dressed as a gorilla, cannons were fired and a smoke bomb exploded. Tim Renwick, commented about this show: " It was all very "art school" (…) talking to him, even back then, Roger always had this thing about wanting to do something more than just a rock show. He wanted a big presentation."[33] Already in 1969, Waters had big motivations to create spectacular shows that were new to the audience, using mixed-medias and costumes. He was innovating and bold enough to experiment grotesque acts. "There was a period in the sixties where fame and fortune were irrelevant to people's lives, it was all about the creativity"[34]. (Duggie Fields)

After their success with "Dark Side Of The Moon", Pink Floyd went on tour and obtained a 40 feet circular screen that was put behind them on stage. Movies and photographs were projected. The band desired to have a range of images to project behind them to give the shows a more interesting look. The most recurrent person they asked to create short movies and animated sequences is Gerald Scarfe. Nick Mason contacted him and gave a pile of Pink Floyd albums to listen to. One of his resulting animations included a human figure that dissolved into sand. His animations were used for the 1974 tour.[35]

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[33] Blake, Mark. *Pigs Might Fly: The inside Story of Pink Floyd*.
[34] Blake, Mark. *Pigs Might Fly: The inside Story of Pink Floyd*.
[35] Blake, Mark. *Pigs Might Fly: The inside Story of Pink Floyd*.

Picture 13: Pink Floyd during their "Dark Side Of The Moon" tour, with the moon being projected behind them. (1972-1973)

In another tour, which opened at Edinburgh's Usher Hall, "The Dark Side Of The Moon" album was performed with an image of the moon projected onto the forty feet screen behind the band, growing bigger with each heartbeat played [36](Picture 13). Pink Floyd presented a visual to look at while listening to music.

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[36] Blake, Mark. *Pigs Might Fly: The inside Story of Pink Floyd*.

Picture 14: the inflatable pyramid during the US tour (1975)

During the 1975 US tour, the band obtained more special effects: a range of pyrotechnics and a model aircraft which went over the audience and crashed during "Dark Side Of The Moon". Pink Floyd chose Scarfe again for his animations, as it became the band's trademark. Another new invention that went on stage was an inflatable pyramid which floated above the stage, joined with cables, representing the prism on the album cover of "Dark Side Of The Moon"[37] (Picture 14).

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[37] Ward, Dave. "All In the Nuclear Family The 1977 Tour: Those Were the Inflatables." *sparebricks.fika.org.* <http://sparebricks.fika.org/sbzine06/sections/features2.html>.

On the Animals tour, the recurrent inflatable pig was suspended on steel

cables and traveled the length of the arena or exploded during intense moments of the

show[38] (Picture 15)

Picture 15: The inflatable pig during the "Animals" tour
designed by Mark Fisher and Jonathan Park (1977)

What Pink Floyd did with the props during concerts refers to installations.

"Installation art is used to describe mixed-media constructions or assemblages

usually designed for a specific place and for a temporary period of time"[39].

"(…) installation is a form of conceptual art – a genre in which ideas and "impact"

are regarded as being more important than the quality of a (…) work of art. (…) an

installation allows us to experience the "artwork" (…)"[40]

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[38] Blake, Mark. *Pigs Might Fly: The inside Story of Pink Floyd*.

[39] "Installation Art." *Tate.org.uk*. <http://www.tate.org.uk/learn/online-resources/glossary/i/installation-art>.

[40] "Installation Art." *Visual-arts-cork.com*. <http://www.visual-arts-cork.com/installation-art.htm>.

4. **"The Wall" experience**

"The Wall" is an autobiographical concept album based on Roger Waters' life story: the death of his father during World War II, the bullying schoolteachers of his youth, his overprotective mother and the divorce with his first wife[41]. The album's conceptuality and visuals were priorities. Bob Ezrin (music producer) helped Waters writing a script for a movie, inspired by the album's story, making sure the music fit. When Ezrin finished a forty-page book and read it to the band, they could finally "see" the album. Ezrin decided to include Waters' experience without making it only about him, but about a random rock star, to reach more people and broaden the themes. Waters asked Scarfe to create animated parts to be part of the movie[42].

When Scarfe (June 1, 1936, cartoonist, illustrator, and graphic designer) was approached by the band to participate in the making of the movie, he said, "I've got to work with these guys because they're very very visual"[43].

He is known to be a satirical political cartoonist and as Waters talks about the war in the movie, Scarfe was perfect for the job. He said: "I was able to visualize the whole thing for him (Waters). He was not only given "The Wall" an audio personality but I've given it also a visual personality."[44]

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[41] Blake, Mark. *Pigs Might Fly: The inside Story of Pink Floyd*.

[42] Blake, Mark. *Pigs Might Fly: The inside Story of Pink Floyd*.

[43] "Gerald Scarfe on the Making of Pink Floyd's The Wall." *YouTube.com*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hX_juxgZt7Q>

[44] Gencarelli, Mike. "Gerald Scarfe Talks about Working with Pink Floyd on "The Wall" and "Wish You Were Here"." *Mediamikes.com*. <http://www.mediamikes.com/2012/09/gerald-scarfe-talks-about-animating-pink-floyd-the-wall-and-working-with-the-band/>.

With animation, Scarfe created twenty-four images/second for the flower
scene, each image taking at least a day.[45] (Pictures 16 and 17).

Pictures 16 and 17: This animation scene (by Scarfe) in "The Wall" movie (1982) represents two flowers and they are a metaphor for a couple having sex. Scarfe said "The flowers end up making love and then I thought well what happens when people fall in love, sometimes they hate one another. So then the female ends up devouring the male and flies away." This part was a reference of Waters' divorce.

The animation of Scarfe is caricatural, represents the subjects in
their worst light (Pictures 18 to 20). He highlights what Waters thinks about them,
using metaphors and exaggerated imagery with a mocking tone.

Picture 18: The schoolmaster by Scarfe (1982)

This animation scene in "The Wall" movie when teachers are shown to be dictators who transform children to simple worms through school/a butcher machine.

Picture 19: The marching hammers by Scarfe (1982)

This animation scene in "The Wall" movie when the hammers marching symbolize the forces of repression, cruel and relentlessly mindless as it smashes down.

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[45] "Gerald Scarfe on the Making of Pink Floyd's The Wall." *YouTube.com*.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hX_juxgZt7Q>.

Picture 20: The judge by Scarfe (1982)

In this animation, the judge is represented as an "ass with legs". Scarfe said, "My experiences of judges are that the ministry of the law is a tricky business and they always make mistakes, so to me the law was an asshole, so that was that (laughs). "

Picture 21: The movie poster for "The Wall" (1982) made by Gerald Scarfe
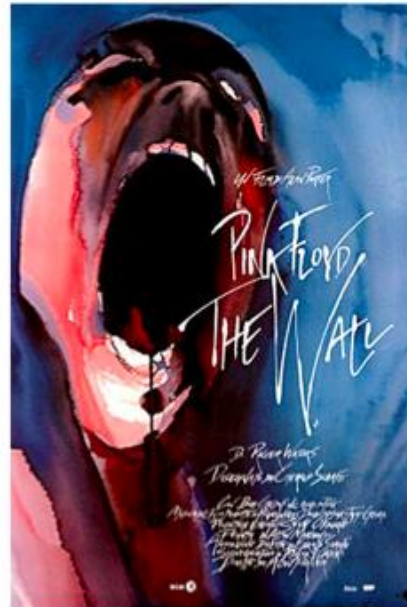
"Animations precedes the invention of photography and the cine camera by several decades. It is an art form in which a world of dynamic image and sound may be synthesized completely out of nothing but a thought"[46] (Peter Greenaway).

Animation is a form of art because Scarfe created something unique and expressed his view of the subjects given by Waters in a different way. He translated the music and lyrics into visuals. Animation requires creativity and technical skills. Animators give life to drawing they made themselves and think about every detail of their creation[47].

Waters wanted "The Wall" to be a full experience. Besides the record and Movie (Picture 21), he wanted to create a magnificent show, and as Tim Renwick said, " (…) by then Roger was looking for ways to intimidate the audience. "The Wall" was all about giving the audience a hard time"[48]. His extreme choice was to

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[46] "What Is Animation?" *Minyos.its.rmit.edu*. <http://minyos.its.rmit.edu.au/aim/a_notes/anim_intro.html>.

[47] Chen, Lisa Youxi. "Animation Is Also Art." *Blogs.babson.edu*. <http://blogs.babson.edu/entrepreneurship/2013/10/09/animation-is-also-art/>.

[48] Blake, Mark. *Pigs Might Fly: The inside Story of Pink Floyd*.

build a wall in between the band and the audience during the show (Picture 22). Each brick added was another hard time he went through and the more he underwent , the more he isolated himself behind his "wall". As the show went on, bricks (that were flat-packed cardboard boxes) [49] were removed to show the band. Scenes from the movie were acted by Waters to visually share what the music means and to illustrate the story behind the album.

Picture 22: The wall of bricks separating the audience from the band during the shows.

Gerald Scarfe's animations were also used for the shows: a circular screen was projecting his work while the band performed. Fisher and Park, (inflatables designers) helped to give life to Scarfe's drawn characters by creating the 49 feet-high school master (Picture 23), the 35feet-high mother, a snake, a praying mantis and "Pink" the protagonist (sculpted before they became inflatables). The final effect was the destruction of the wall, to finally let the audience see the band and break the distance Waters was so pleased to create.[50] "The Wall" show used multi-media to give a great experience.

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[49] Blake, Mark. *Pigs Might Fly: The inside Story of Pink Floyd*.
[50] Blake, Mark. *Pigs Might Fly: The inside Story of Pink Floyd*.

Picture 23: The schoolteacher inflatable puppet, based on Scarfe's animations, during "The Wall" shows, made by Fisher and Park.

The stage construction was a complicated process that included different types of art (giant inflatables puppets, animations, performance art) and great technical achievements[51].

"The Wall" links to performance art, "modern artists used live event to promote extremist beliefs, often through deliberate provocation and attempts to offend bourgeois tastes or expectations"[52]. Performance art is " (…) a genre in which art is presented "live" usually by the artist but sometimes with collaborators or performers. It has had a role in avant-garde art throughout the 20th century, playing an important part in anarchic movements such as Futurism and Dada."[53] "(…) performance art has been a medium that challenges and violates borders between disciplines and genders, between private and public, and between everyday life and art, and that follows no rules"[54]. In "The Wall" shows, everyday life scenes are acted by Waters.

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[51] Moreton, Cole. "Backstage with Roger Waters as He Prepares for The Wall Spectacular $60 Million Live Show." *Dailymail.co.uk*. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/home/moslive/article-1327045/Roger-Waters-Backstage-prepares-The-Wall-live-show.html>.

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Performance art is a "new form of contemporary art – which emerged out of Happenings and Conceptual art to become a major form of avant-garde art during the late 1960s and 1970s – takes as its medium the artist himself: the actual artwork being the artist's live actions. (…) Performance art is typically intensely theatrical, often taking acting and movement to extremes of expression (…) words are rarely prominent, while music and noises of various kinds often are."[55]

"Performance art (…) is meant to be memorable"[56].

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<u>Conclusion</u>

Pink Floyd became famous in the beginning of the sixties, when the London youth went through a cultural revolution[57]. It was the perfect timing for this highly artistic band that dared to be contemporary and different. They are an avant-garde band[58] because of their innovative and experimental use of art kinds such as: light projections, photography, graphic design, installations, performance art, animation, film and illustration. Their strength was using so many types of art to reach more types of people from many generations. There are a lot of symbols expressed through art in their works like the meaning of the musical content of albums represented visually, or the marching hammers in the animated scene of "The Wall" representing forces of repression. They are a poetic band, that uses imagery, and can be theatrical when acting scenes of a narrative album.

Pink Floyd stood out by linking meaningful sounds to representative visuals to create a full experience that the audience can enjoy and understand through the symbols emitted.

Word count: 3996

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[57] Rabasse, Manuel. "Et Londres Commença à Swinguer..." *Rolling Stone*

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Appendix:

Example of early live concerts with oil projections

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oV5rDUhXzBc

"The Wall" tour documentary

https://www.youtube.com/watch?t=70&v=XAnMqGx3MSQ

"Animals" TV commercial (1977)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CU8GdKpnDIs

Extract from the movie "The Wall" with Scarfe's animations

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_0v07InoFiU

Live visuals from 1977 tour (by Gerald Scarfe)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T_muYSA4CmQ

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