



Live at the

**o<sub>2</sub>academy**  
SHEFFIELD

26th April 2009





*“The band said that they are not great at taking compliments, so I’m not allowed to tell you that they are clearly the greatest band in the world. I am allowed to say that they are my favourite band ever.”*  
Mark Kermode Sheffield 26th April 2009

They came from Sheffield, from Scotland, and from London, and amazingly fans travelled even further afield - from Holland, the USA and Australia to see the first Comsat Angels live performance in 14 years.

Visitors to the “Sleep No More” website and mailing list had been discussing the band’s music for years, and had always prayed that this day would come. Hints about a possible live reunion had been dropped a few times over the past few years, but the Sensoria festival was the eventual catalyst for the 2009 reformation that took place in the Steel City on the 26th April.

Long time fan, and very vocal Comsats champion, Mark Kermode introduced the band who walked onto the stage to the familiar strains of layered guitar and synths that signalled the opening track, the mesmeric *Sleep No More*. Kevin’s distorted bass and Mik’s powerhouse drums shifted the tempo up a gear for the next track, *Be Brave*.

*“Out of the dark, into the light”*

The O2 Academy was packed, and the band seemed genuinely surprised by the turnout, and by the warmth and affection shown by the audience. If any bad memories of the last Comsat Angels gig in 1995 crept into their thoughts, they would have been quickly banished by this crowds response.





*On The Beach* washed the audience back in time to the tail-end of the 1970's and the very beginning of the 1980's, a time of recession and uncertain futures. Some things never change.

*Total War* saw the first breakout of massed singalongs in the crowd, unheard of at previous Comsat Angels gigs!

The power of the **Sleep No More** album was well represented at this gig, with *Gone* and *At Sea*, the latter featuring some wonderful atmospheric keyboard washes from Andy and an almost freeform interplay between the rhythm section of Kevin & Mik.

The band's debut album **Waiting for a Miracle** was revisited with *Real Story*, which was followed by the first **Fiction** track of the evening in *Ju Ju Money*, which featured Doors like keyboard and guitar interplay, and a slightly different arrangement to the album version.

The slow-burning *Dark Parade* was even more powerful in this 2009 live incarnation than on record, and what was a great gig suddenly becoming an amazing gig as the band seemed to click through to another level from *Pictures* onwards. Coming straight after the ferocity of *Dark Parade*, *Pictures* showed the wide palette used by the band on the first three albums. Amazingly, this was the first time that the song had been played at a Comsat Angels gig.



The opening track from the Comsat's debut album was next, and *Missing in Action* really got the crowd moving, whilst another resident of the first album, 'Baby', had the crowd noisily singing in unison with Steve during the "baby, baby" section towards the songs climax. A Comsat's choir if you will, a spine tingling moment for sure.

*"When times are hard,  
I think about you."*

Even after all these years, *Postcard* has lost none of its bite, and featured some wonderful distorted bass from Kevin and some muscular percussion work from the man Glaisher. *Waiting for a Miracle* resulted in more dancing and shuffling on the sticky floor of the arena, before the harmonics of the still fresh-sounding *Independence Day* finished the set, and resulted in several Comsat's moshpits appearing in the crowd. Yet another first.





Steve commented that the gig seemed to last about 2 minutes!

There was no way that this crowd, who had waited so long, were going to let the band go that quickly, and the band responded to the very vocal audience with the first of two encores, starting with the single *Eye of the Lens*, which almost foretold our current CCTV culture, and resulted in several outbreaks of pogoing in the Sheffield crowd, I kid you not.

The shimmering cymbals heralded the timeless *After the Rain*, closely followed by a note-perfect performance of *What Else?!*



*The Eye Dance* sounded as relevant now as it did back in 1981, highlighting that although the band and it's audience have aged, the music is as powerful and sounds as contemporary now as it did all those years ago. Ending the show with the moving *Our Secret* was an inspired and fitting finale.

The four band members came to the front of the stage, and took a bow, soaking up the cheers and the warmth of the 800 or so fans, who had waited so long for this concert. As the house lights flickered back on, the crowd didn't instantly head for the exits like at most rock shows, but wandered around as if they were not really sure that it was all over. Some people were in tears, and groups of fans embraced each other. It was a very emotional end to a powerful concert.

I just hope that for Steve, Mik, Andy & Kevin, a fire has been reignited. Because.....

*“We will never, we will never, we will never – give it up”*



## CREDITS

Words

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Logo

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