



## LEGENDARY SPINAL TAP BASSIST DEREK SMALLS RETURNS

### ***SMALLS CHANGE (MEDITATIONS UPON AGEING)* OUT APRIL 13 ON TWANKY RECORDS/BMG**

**ALL STAR LINEUP FEATURES DAVID CROSBY,  
DONALD FAGEN, DWEEZIL ZAPPA, PAUL  
SHAFFER AND MORE**

*Photo credit Rob Shanahan*

**Derek Smalls**, the bass force formerly of the fabled heavy metal band formerly known as **Spinal Tap**, returns with the release of his first full length solo venture ***Smalls Change (Meditations Upon Ageing)***, out globally **April 13** via **Twanky Records/BMG** on digital, CD and vinyl.

Additionally, Smalls launches his U.S. tour "**Lukewarm Water Live: An Adventure in Loud Music**" on **April 14** in concert with the **Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra** at the **Saenger Theater, New Orleans**. Subsequent dates include **June 29** in **Atlanta** at the **Atlanta Symphony Hall** with the **Atlanta Symphony Orchestra** and a special appearance with the **National Symphony Orchestra** at the **Kennedy Center** in **Washington, DC** (additional details to be announced soon).

*Smalls Change* is a poignant and oftentimes furious contemplation on aging that explores the passing of time and all things loud. With styles that cross the gamut of musical genres, the album possesses the edgy rawness and Rock God sensibility that was always shared by Derek and his fellow former band members, Nigel Tufnel and David St. Hubbins. The album also features some of the greatest talents of rock and roll music and beyond including **Donald Fagen, Dweezil Zappa, Rick Wakeman, Richard Thompson, Steve Lukather, Joe Satriani, Waddy Wachtel, Michael League, Jeff "Skunk" Baxter, Paul Shaffer, Steve Vai, Larry Carlton, Judith Owen, Jane Lynch** and **The Hungarian Studio Orchestra**. *Smalls Change* is produced by **CJ Vanston** (Spinal Tap, Rodney Crowell).

Derek Smalls describes *Smalls Change* as "halfway between 'rage against the dying of the light' and trying to find the light." When asked how he managed to round up so many world-class rockers to join the project, Derek's terse response is "pity fuck."

#### **DEREK SMALLS BIOGRAPHY**

The Road of Rock is a rocky road, and no one's life exemplifies that more thoroughly than that of Derek Albion Smalls who celebrates his 75th birthday with a hoped-to-be triumphant return to at least one of the echelons of the rock firmament.

Derek was born April 1, 1941, having to endure growing up as an "April Fool's baby." His father, Donald "Duff" Smalls, raised Derek after his mother, Dorothy, left home to join a traveling all-girls' jazz band, The Hotten Totties.

While Derek had a quiet school career in his hometown of Nilford, on the River Null in the West Midlands, Duff carried on his work as a telephone handset sanitizer working for the pioneering firm in the trade, Sani-Phone, until it was absorbed by the former British Telecom, primarily, according to reports at the time, for its "robust bill-collecting operation."

At age 17 Derek enrolled in the London School of Design, primarily, as he later explained it, "because of the initials."

Like many art-school students of the period, he was more interested in music, and soon found himself a member of the all-white Jamaican band Skaface. "I never even tried to play the guitar, because it had too many strings and they were too small. Bass felt just right," he told *Ska News*.

Walking one day in 1967 through the then-tatty Soho district of London, Derek spotted a “bass player wanted” notice on one of the neighbourhood’s lampposts. It turns out Ronnie Pudding had just left the band Spinal Tap for a solo career when their first single “Gimme Some Money” failed to chart.

Derek fit right in and made a notable contribution to the band’s jump on the Flower Power bandwagon, mouthing a silent “We love you” at the end of its performance of “(Listen to) The Flower People” on the short-lived TV music show, “Bob’s Your Uncle.”

Tap then went on to carve out a reputation as one of England’s loudest bands. Its series of mishaps—breakups and reunions, drummers perishing in bizarre ways—was chronicled in a 1984 film. “A hatchet job,” Derek calls it dismissively. “There were plenty of nights when we found our way to the stage, but of course they didn’t show you that.”

In the late 1980s, as Tap’s fortunes waned, Derek joined a Christian heavy-metal band, Lambsblood. Their best-known song, “Whole Lotta Lord,” made a respectable showing on the Christian charts. To cement his relationship with the band members, all of whom were Americans, Smalls got a Christian “fish tattoo.”

As luck would have it, Tap soon reunited for the 1992 *Break Like the Wind* album and toured across America. Concerned that he would have to cover up the tattoo, Derek hired an artist to fix it, and the piece now featured a devil eating the fish.

Following that tour, Tap broke up and reunited twice more, once in 2000 for an American tour that included a historic New York venue that Derek described, onstage, as “Carnegie Fuckin’ Hall” and in 2009 for appearances at the Glastonbury Festival and Wembley Arena. In between, Derek cultivated a near-thriving career on camera, building upon his cameo role in the 1979 “Spaghetti Eastern” *Roma ’79*. He appeared in TV commercials for the Belgian snack food Floop, and served for a time as a judge (alongside the lead singer for the Europunk band Hot Garage) on the Dutch reality-competition show “RokStarz,” before the show was rebooted as “Tomorrow’s HipHop Hero.” Derek stepped forward as a composer during this time; his jingle for Floop, “I’m in the Floop Group,” was a regular earworm on European television until the publisher of “The In Crowd” threatened a plagiarism lawsuit.

Derek’s fortunes have fluctuated with his romantic entanglements. His long-time girlfriend Cindy Stang went through a good share of his back royalties to launch her ill-fated tech start-up, macrame.com. Of that project, Smalls now says ruefully, “It was ahead of its time. Or behind the curve. Or both.” He’s also had his share of personal struggles, having twice sought treatment for internet addiction.

Smalls’ return to music, and composing, came courtesy of a grant from the British Fund for Ageing Rockers. As he prepares to re-enter the spotlight for the first time, Derek tips his hat to the government grantors: “At least austerity was good for something,” he says.

### **SMALLS CHANGE with notes by Derek Smalls**

#### 1. *Openture* - Derek with The Hungarian Studio Orchestra

The philosophy of this record, expressed in fewer words than I’ve taken to almost describe it.

#### 2. *Rock 'n' Roll Transplant* - Derek with Steve Lukather (guitar, Toto), drum legends Jim Keltner (George Harrison) and Chad Smith (Red Hot Chili Peppers)

Whatever might be ailing you, rock 'n' roll is the cure. Ask Dr. Derek!

#### 3. *Butt Call* - Derek with Phil X (guitar, Bon Jovi) and Taylor Hawkins (drums, Foo Fighters)

In one lifetime, the telephone has gone from a miracle to a pain in the arse.

#### 4. *Smalls Change* - Derek with The Hungarian Studio Orchestra, Judith Owen (vocals) Danny Kortchmar (guitar, Don Henley) and Russ Kunkel (drums, James Taylor)

Why Lukewarm Water is no longer bracketed by Fire and Ice. A nod to what’s past, and a wink to what’s next.

#### 5. *Memo To Willie* - Derek with Donald Fagen (vocals), Jeff “Skunk” Baxter and Larry Carlton (guitars, Steely Dan) and The Snarky Puppy Horns

An urgent missive to the Honorable Member: continued tumescence, if you please.

#### 6. *It Don't Get Old* - Derek with Waddy Wachtel (guitar Keith Richards).

Life on the road, an endless series of pointless encounters. What could be better?

#### 7. *Complete Faith* - Derek with The Hungarian Studio Orchestra

A musical interruption.

#### 8. *Faith No More* - Derek with The Hungarian Studio Orchestra and Todd Sucherman (drums, Styx)

As I get older, I look back more fondly on all the people I’ve known. Except for Ian.

#### 9. *Gimme Some (More) Money* - Derek with Paul Shaffer (piano and organ), Waddy Wachtel (guitar) and David Crosby (vocals)

Time and technology change everything, except the need for change.

#### 10. *MRI* - Derek with Dweezil Zappa (guitars)

Everybody’s going to have one, eventually. It’s just another ride. To hell, but still...

11. *Hell Toupee* - Derek with The Hungarian Studio Orchestra

Think Satan doesn't have dark thoughts about his appearance as he ages? Think again.

12. *Gummin the Gash* - Derek with Steve Vai (guitar), Gregg Bissonette (drums, Ringo Starr) and Jane Lynch (vocals)

Losing your teeth closes one door, and opens another. A celebration of the meeting of two toothless cavities.

13. *She Puts the Bitch in Obituary* - Derek with Richard Thompson (guitar) and Jane Lynch (vocals)

A hymn to womanhood in all her splendor.

14. *When Men Did Rock* - Derek with Michael League (bass), Joe Satriani (guitar), Rick Wakeman (keyboards) and The Hungarian Studio Orchestra

## ALBUM CREDITS

### Producers:

CJ Vanston and Harry Shearer

### Guest Artists

Jeff "Skunk" Baxter (Steely Dan, Doobie Brothers)

Gregg Bissonette

Larry Carlton

David Crosby

Donald Fagen (Steely Dan)

Taylor Hawkins (Foo Fighters)

Jim Keltner

Danny (Kootch) Kortchmar

Russ Kunkel

Michael League (Snarky Puppy)

Jane Lynch (actress/singer)

Steve Lukather (Toto)

Judith Owen

Snarky Puppy Horns

Joe Satriani

Paul Shaffer (David Letterman, SNL, etc.)

Chad Smith (Red Hot Chili Peppers)

Richard Thompson

Steve Vai

Waddy Wachtel

Rick Wakeman (Yes)

Phil X

Dweezil Zappa

## Derek Smalls: *Smalls Change (Meditations Upon Ageing)*

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medienAgentur

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