



Baptism of Fire: A Year Living & Working with Duran Duran

by Ian Little

Review by Martin Hutchinson.

Featuring a Foreword by Hazel O'Connor, Ian Little's book tells a truly remarkable tale, one that is sometimes hard to believe because of the luck he had in being at the right place at the right time.

Ian, who was a young musical novice, had the amazing fortune to be minding the studio of Roxy Music, which had been recently built by guitarist Phil Manzanera, while the band were on a tour. By the time they returned, he had worked out how to use the studio and had signed a record contract and released his own single. So impressed by his skill, he became the production

assistant for their 1982 album, 'Avalon'.

That was just the start. This coincided with the emergence on the scene of Duran Duran, who had ambitions to become the biggest band in the world and they chose Ian to produce the album that proved to be their breakthrough. This book takes us on Ian's journey with the band to Sri Lanka, the South of France, New York, the Caribbean island of Montserrat and Sydney to create what became one of the defining albums of the eighties, 1983's 'Seven and the Ragged Tiger'.

But there is a downside too. The book tells the story of a meteoric rise, making an iconic album under pressure (encountering Bowie, McCartney, Dylan and other musical giants along the way), a 'too much too soon' spiral into addiction and homelessness in the years that followed and his fight to get his life back on track and his spiritual growth that gave him the strength to do it. It's a fascinating insight into the music world of the excessive eighties and the pitfalls that the author encountered.

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