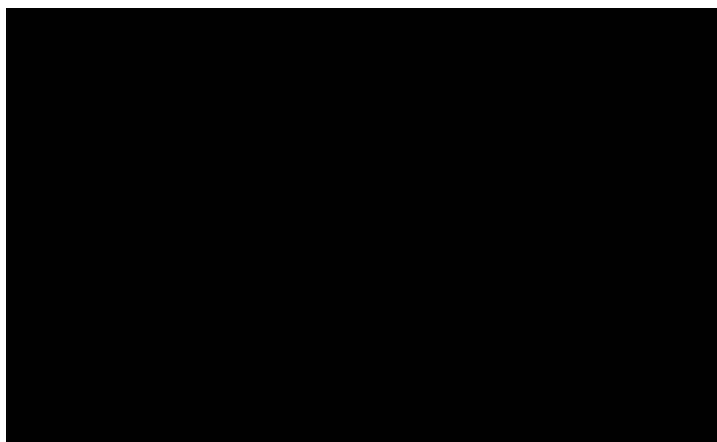


Progressive rock, Rock Music — July 11, 2013 at 9:14 am

## 'Of course, it was a real shock': Greg Lake on the iconic cover image of King Crimson's debut album

by *Something Else!*



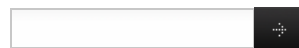
Nearly 45 years later, the cover of King Crimson's ground-breaking debut album is understood to be a genre-defining prog classic — and the personification of the project's signature song, "21st Century Schizoid Man."

"It's a once-in-a-lifetime album cover," former Crimson frontman Greg Lake says in the attached video, "and it's now become one of the iconic album cover images of the late 20th century."

Of course, everything was decidedly less clear, as long-time band leader Robert Fripp and Co. were completing work on the "Schizoid Man" session, with no real idea yet on how to present King Crimson on its 1969 forthcoming debut disc — an project which would eventually be titled *In the Court of the Crimson King*.

"All of a sudden, it dawned on us that we didn't have an album cover," says Lake, an old friend of Fripp's who had a part in Crimson's first two studio efforts. "We needed an album cover, and none of us knew the first thing about graphic art."

Pete Sinfield, who'd eventually collaborate as a songwriter both with King Crimson and then Emerson Lake and Palmer, offered to contact Barry Godber — a friend who Lake says worked at a local graphics company. The young man arrived with the iconic image already completed, unveiling it before the stunned band members.

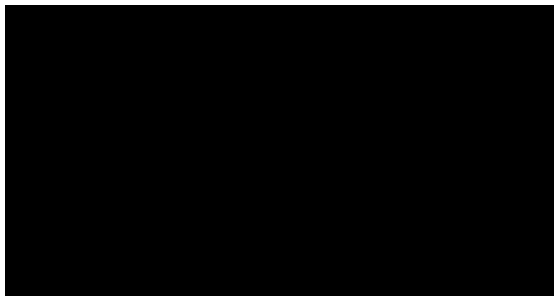


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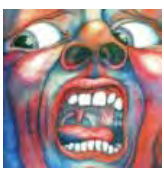




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"Of course, it was a real shock," Lake says. "I don't know what we were expecting, but it wasn't that. It's plain that what you're looking at is the face of 'Schizoid Man,' the screaming face of 'Schizoid Man.' The incredible thing is, there was no way he could have known about the song, because we'd only just recorded it — literally — the day before. He had no knowledge of the song, so it was a remarkable, remarkable coincidence."

Mere months after King Crimson's debut, Godber — at only 24 — dropped dead on the street from a heart attack, Lake adds, only compounding the mystery surrounding this mythical image. Lake says King Crimson discussed perhaps shelving the cover, out of respect, but ultimately decided to use it anyway. "I'm so glad we did," Lake says, "because it's a wonderful tribute to a great artist."

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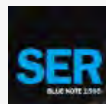
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