

In all, “An Index of Metals” is bound to strike the listener not so much as a musical development as an almost tangibly sculptural process, Eno and Fripp using electronic tools to give shape to the invisible black marble of silence. During this period, they occasionally gave live performances together of music that sounded much like what we hear on *No Pussyfooting* and *Evening Star*. The rock press paid less attention to their collaborations in this vein than to Fripp’s work with King Crimson or Eno’s solo rock albums. One critic wrote a sympathetic review of a Fripp/Eno performance at the London Palladium in June 1975 that included the comment:

There was such variety in the textures created that, depending upon the degree of individual concentration, one could focus on one of any of the levels of sound patterns. One therefore became a participant in the creative process, creating through individual selection individual compositions for oneself, rather than blindly accepting an already well-defined and regulated musical formula.⁴

Fripp was to undertake a global tour in 1979, performing alone in small venues and record stores with his guitar and two tape recorders set up as Eno had taught him, he would repeatedly stress the importance of the audience’s creative listening contribution.⁵

In 1973, Fripp’s reputation and standing in the rock press and among a large following in Great Britain and the United States was, if controversial, already firmly established through a string of diverse and original King Crimson albums. For Eno’s budding career, the release in the same year of the contemplative *No Pussyfooting* and the frenetic *Here Come the Warm Jets* was a risky move, but one that set him on the eclectic course he was to follow. As he explained,

The difference between those two albums created a kind of confusion about my image, which my managers bewailed. But it proved to be the best move I could have made – and it was quite by accident. It put me in a position where I don’t have to be consistent. I can start each record anew, without having a trademark.⁶

With David Bowie

Bowie, like Eno and Byrne, had a background in the visual arts, his public career has been as much a matter of shrewd manipulation of his ever-changing, chameleon-like image as it has been a musical evolution. His transformations from space-age androgyne to Ziggy Stardust (a “doomed messianic rock icon”),⁷ to the White Duke (purveyor of funk and disco music to the

⁴ Allan Jones, “Caught in the Act: Fripp and Eno: Formal Beauty,” *Melody Maker* 50 (14 June 1975), 49.

⁵ The “Frippertronics” style that grew out of this tour represented a streamlining of the Eno/Fripp approach to the signal-loop situation. The primary published recording representing this style is *Let the Power Fall: An Album of Frippertronics*, Editions EG EGS 110, 1981.

⁶ Stephen Demorest, “The Discreet Charm of Brian Eno: An English Pop Theorist Seeks to Redefine Music,” *Horizon* 21 (June 1978), 83-4.

⁷ Pareles and Romanowski, *Rolling Stone Encyclopedia of Rock & Roll*, 61.