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Rock Legends Recap the Life of Past Band Member

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Few bands hold higher level of unanimous esteem and admiration over Pink Floyd. Known for their atmospheric, psychedelic sounds and deeply personal lyrics, Pink Floyd has tapped into the dark side of the human subconscious while weaving everything from ideology to the social unrest of the 1960s into their songs.

Floyd is the direct result of post-war industrial England coping with the loss of the beat generation and the induction of the so-called 1960s psychedelic era. The band carries an intense responsibility: they are one of the only bands, other than The Beatles, to artistically have represented their generation. Their songs hold such profundity and deep underlying subject matter, it's no wonder the band collapsed under its own weight in the mid-1980s.

Pink Floyd's initial architect, Syd Barrett, was an art student from Cambridge University. Barrett laid out the basic construction of how the band sounds. From the experimental and moody splendor of their songs to the hippy, drug induced themes, he played an essential role in his protégé David Gilmour's succession as lead guitar player. Essentially, Barrett's legacy and body of work was a skeleton for Pink Floyd to be born out of Barrett's departure.

Unfortunately, Barrett's exodus was a tragic one, which John Edginton's new documentary, *The Pink Floyd and Syd Barrett Story*, examines. The 48 minute film captures Pink Floyd as a newly formed band, still finding their sound and place in the world. Through such songs as "Arnold Layne," "See Emily Play" and "Bike," we see firsthand the creative genius behind their

music.

The film includes interviews with bassist Roger Waters and Gilmour. What's more, Nick Mason and Rick Wright give accounts of the legend before his downfall and LSD-fueled binge.

The decadence proves heavy on the band, as they expressed their sadness for the loss of their friend and band-mate. There are a few moments when Waters comes close to tears when explaining their album *Wish You Were Here's* initial purpose: a longing for their colleague and friend to return to sanity.

"I didn't recognize him at all," Wright said when Barrett made a surprise visit during the album's recording session one day. "I don't know if it was coincidence, fate, karma, but it was certainly very powerful to have Syd after seven years of no communication just come in one day as we were recording 'Shine on You Crazy Diamond.'" The song, as all Pink Floyd fans know, is directed at Barrett.

As the film progresses, we learn Barrett was in fact the first casualty of the drug generation—before Jimi Hendrix or Janis Joplin. The aura surrounding Barrett's endeavor with drugs left him permanently out-of-sync with reality and completely departed from the physical world. He was unable to perform everyday activities, let alone continue touring and writing music for a band that was beginning to find an impressive audience.

The film brilliantly follows the fall from grace that was once Pink Floyd's original founder and architect for their later groundbreaking work on *The Dark Side of the Moon* and *The Wall*. Barrett is the quintessential underdog of 1960s rock and his story strikes every chord.

ist for Student Affairs Geoffrey
ng the Q&A Dinner on Oct. 9.

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