

Egg

Egg were an English progressive rock band formed in January 1969.

Members: Dave Stewart – keyboards, Mont Campbell – bass, vocals; , Clive Brooks – drums.

The founding members of the group were Dave Stewart who played organ (not to be confused with guitarist David A. Stewart of Eurythmics), Mont Campbell on bass and vocals and drummer Clive Brooks. The band emerged from an earlier quartet formed by boys attending the City of London School, called Uriel, the other member of which was guitarist Steve Hillage. After Hillage left the band in August 1968, the other three continued as a trio. Having signed a deal with the Middle Earth club's management branch, they were advised to change their name to Egg, allegedly because Uriel "sounded too much like 'urinal'". In mid-1969 the band signed a deal with Decca's 'progressive' music subsidiary Deram and released their debut album in March 1970 in the label's short-lived Nova series.

While not a commercial success, it was received well enough for the label to finance the recording of a follow-up, but when the time came to release it, it changed its mind. The album was all but shelved until producer Neil Slaven's lobbying finally resulted in *The Polite Force* coming out in February 1971. Now signed to The Groundhogs' management company, Egg finished the year with an increased touring schedule, but in spite of enough material for a 3rd album, they were unable to secure another record deal, and split up July 1972.

In 1974 Stewart, now with Virgin as a member of Hatfield and the North, got a deal for Egg to record their unreleased material, which resulted in the farewell album *The Civil Surface*.

In December 2007 a selection of live recordings from between 1969 and 1972, entitled *The Metronomical Society*, was released.

Egg are often regarded as part of the Canterbury scene, a loose movement of progressive and psychedelic musicians, based on Stewart's later membership of Hatfield and the North and National Health, although the band have no geographical connection to Canterbury. Their music can be described as progressive rock with elements of psychedelia and chamber rock (later exemplified by the Rock In Opposition movement). They employed unusual time signatures, as reflected in songs like "Seven Is A Jolly Good Time". They also brought a humorous element to their music. Mont Campbell, the band's main composer, acknowledged the strong influence of Igor Stravinsky, which resulted in multi-part suites such as the imaginatively-titled "Symphony n°2" and "Long Piece n°3".

Campbell was also initially involved with Stewart in National Health. In 1981 Stewart teamed up with Colin Blunstone to record a UK No. 13 hit by covering "What Becomes of the Brokenhearted", originally made famous by Jimmy Ruffin. Later that year he had a UK No. 1 hit with former Hatfield and the North backing singer Barbara Gaskin when they covered Lesley Gore's "It's My Party (And I'll Cry If I Want To)". The latter partnership continues.

Two members of the band worked together again on Campbell's solo release *Music From a Round Tower* of 1996. All tracks were composed and performed by Campbell (who by this time had become an expert on many ethnic instruments) and Stewart co-produced and made incidental musical contributions (as did Barbara Gaskin).