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Judge Smith - A Biographical Note

Judge Smith (his real name) co-founded the influential rock band **VAN DER GRAAF GENERATOR** in 1967 with singer-songwriter Peter Hammill, and since then has been involved in numerous musical projects as writer, composer or performer.

During the '70s and '80s, he wrote several stage musicals in collaboration with composer Max Hutchinson: **THE KIBBO KIFT** was produced at the Traverse Theatre for the Edinburgh Festival of 1976 and at the Crucible Theatre, Sheffield the following year. **THE ASCENT OF WILBERFORCE III** was produced at the Traverse Theatre in 1981 and at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith in 1982. Later the same year, the Lyric also presented **MATA HARI**, a music-theatre piece he co-wrote with (and which starred) Lene Lovich.

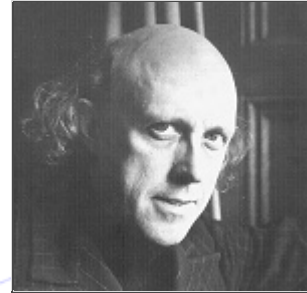


photo - Les Chappell

As a librettist, his works include the text for classical composer Joseph Horowitz's oratorio **SAMSON**, premiered in a radio broadcast from the Albert Hall in 1977, and for Michael Brand's cantata **PIONEER 10** (1992).

Following a twenty year collaboration with composer Peter Hammill, their opera **THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER** was finally completed and released in 1992, and in 1999, a revised and re-mastered recording was re-released on Fie! Records.

His own **REQUIEM MASS** for rock band, choir and brass was published in 1975 and still awaits its first full performance, but his chamber opera **THE BOOK OF HOURS** was directed by Mel Smith at the Young Vic Theatre, London in 1978. His short film **THE BRASS BAND**, which he wrote and directed in 1974, has won several international awards.

His songs have been recorded by Peter Hammill and Lene Lovich and featured on the early '80s TV comedy show **NOT THE NINE O'CLOCK NEWS**. A collection of his own early recordings, **DEMOCRAZY**, was released by Oedipus Recs in 1991, and a CD of new songs, **DOMED OF DISCOVERY**, is currently available on the same label. His most recent project, **CURLY'S AIRSHIPS**, a large-scale work of words and music about the R.101 airship disaster of 1930, was begun in 1994 and completed in 2000.

He is fifty-two years old and lives in Sussex on the South Coast of England.

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