**Dave Marriner: Vocals & drums [very small] **

**Jono Fosh: Guitar & Vocals [pretty small] **

**Jeroen ‘t Gilde: Bass & Vocals [very tall] **

Fragment are 2 small Englishmen and a ridiculously tall Dutchman. Here’s how it all happened:

A long time ago Dave, Jono and Tim Alexander met each other at school in Essex, England, where together with various friends they formed Fragment. After various line-ups the band stabilised into a trio, playing concerts around Southend-On-Sea and in London.

30 years later, Fragment has had a long and surprisingly successful career. In that time, they have performed more than 5000 concerts, mainly in The Netherlands, the country which they have happily called their home for the last 25 years or so.

They have played at countless festivals, [such as Zwarte Cross where they have been a sort of house band for the last 12 years or so], and even had a few minor hits with their own compositions along the way. They’ve often been on TV and radio, where they were a sort of Radio 3FM house band for a while. Nowadays Fragment is known as one of the best and most entertaining cover bands around. Giel Beelen, the Dutch radio DJ says of the band: “It’s an insult to call them a cover band. They add their own dimension to the songs. It’s always a party when they play” [*“Ik vind ´t een belediging als je ´t een coverband noemt. Ze geven er gewoon een eigen dimensie aan. En ´t is altijd een feestje”].*

The organisers of the Zwarte Cross festival said of the band: “Whereas some bands need 10 people on stage in order to produce a decent sound, those bloody Englishmen manage it with just the 3 of them”*. [“Maar waar sommige bands 10 man op het podium nodig hebben om het een beetje te laten klinken, flikken die verdomde Engelsen het met z´n drieen”]*

 *How did Fragment end up in Holland?*

*Fragment: “*We originally came to Holland to play a tour of about 6 concerts. We enjoyed the gigs, but when we had finished playing them, we decided we’d like to stay a bit longer. So we started performing on The Lijnbaan in Rotterdam, on the street. The Lijnbaan was great fun. We used to get all sorts of stuff thrown at us - once someone gave us a bottle of champagne, another time a 100 guilders note, another time a little kid of about 5 years old went up to Dave and just spat water at him. It’s on The Lijnbaan that we really learned how to entertain the public, cos if we didn’t entertain, we got no money, and went hungry.”

*In 1991 and 1995, Fragment performed 2 successful concerts at the Ahoy in Rotterdam, as the main act.* *How on earth did that happen?*

*Fragment:* "Loads of people saw us playing on the streets and started booking us for gigs, so that, after a while, we had enough concerts to stop playing on the streets. We were making money from concerts, playing whatever people would listen to, even Dutch songs [sung with a strange accent...]. In the beginning all the profits we made went into financing our own music. We made a few albums and released some singles, including “Love. Lust and Lucidity", which was a big radio hit. For a while we were on the radio a lot and also on TV.”

“In the summer we were playing 2 or 3 times a week at the legendary “Hooizolder” disco in Zeeland, as well as many other venues. We realised that we were sometimes playing to ten thousand people in a single week. A friend pointed out to us that that was enough people to fill the AHOY, and so, to cut a long story short, we rang up the AHOY, booked it, printed ten thousand tickets, and sold them from the stage at our concerts. The AHOY concert was a great success. So we did it all again a few years later.”

*So the band became incredibly rich and famous?*

*Fragment:* “Clearly not. Things got a bit strange at this point. We embarked on “an American adventure”, but actually it was a nightmare. We had recorded an album before we first performed in AHOY. It was called “The Dream Orchard” and we were about to release it in Netherlands, when we were approached by a well-known American manager. He persuaded us to sign a contract with him and he flew us over to Florida to play some concerts, and to speak to various music industry people there. One of these people was Frank Sinatra’s manager – really. Another was Bruce Springsteen’s former manager. Strange days indeed.”

“We could write a book about this episode in the band’s history. But it was anything but fun. We broke our contract with our manager, and were threatened with a worldwide legal suit. So we returned to Holland to our career as a cover band, which was more fun. The American episode kind of deprived us of the ambition to have a recording career.”

*So what have the band been doing since 1995?*

*Fragment*: Bringing up our families. And performing live. Loads and loads of gigs. It’s what we do. We’ve recently gone past the 4000 concerts mark. That’s the equivalent of playing a concert every day for about 11 years. Not many bands have done that. And up till 2013, we did this with the same 3 original band members.”

 *In 2013, Tim left the band to buy and run a “chateau” in France, and was replaced by Jeroen, a Dutchman. How is that going?*

*Dave and Jono:* “It was strange to have a new band member after all those years, but Jeroen’s a great bloke. Despite his ridiculous size, and the misfortune of not being English, he fitted in immediately, and, to be honest, the change has given us a new lease of life, a new drive and freshness. We’re really having fun. Jeroen is too, we think… And importantly, the bookings are still rolling in. Onwards and upwards to 6000 concerts.”