

# Ultravox

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## 2006 Covers Competition – results, judged by Cerise Reed & Robin Harris

Hello, everyone.

First of all, we have to say a big 'thank you' to everyone who put so much time, effort and talent into this competition. There are some absolutely stellar entries, and picking the winners was not an easy task.

Secondly, we had four excellent Ultravox-related entries this year, which caused a bit of a dilemma. Warren's original definition of the Best Cover and Best Re-mix / Re-cover categories did state Ultravox covers or remixes, but after some deliberation agreed that the definition should be expanded to include related tracks, in which a member or members of Ultravox played a part. The definitions will be clarified for next year's competition.

Thirdly, in order to obtain a wider sampling of opinions, Rob and I asked our forum moderators to independently submit marks out of ten plus notes for each track via an Excel document. Some didn't have time (but bless you anyway!) and some rose to the occasion beautifully, thanks guys! We took these into consideration after adding our own marks and notes, and totted up the totals across the board to find the winners.

From this year onwards there will be a special **Ari Leppä Award for Excellence** in memory of our dearly missed friend and avid contributor, for the best track out of all the category winners. This overall winner will receive a 'goodie bag' prize of Ultravox items: Cathedral Oceans illustration (from the CO exhibition book) autographed in gold by John, Helden Holding On 7" vinyl, John Foxx Quiet Man set of 6 postcards, Ultravox Lament-era set of 4 postcards, and the Quartet vinyl LP, autographed in silver by Warren. ALL the category winners will receive a Helden 7" and a set of Lament postcards, plus bragging rights of course!

We'll start off by quoting Warren's intro from last year, as it's still totally relevant:

*"I know that a lot of time and craft went into these tracks. You weren't doing it for money (none!) or recognition (except from those who visit Extreme Voice), you put in the effort because it was fun and you feel close to the music. You are all extremely good sports. It made me feel very proud.*

*"The sound quality was good-to-exceptional, considering you had to work under domestic circumstances and not the luxury of a full-blown studio. If any of you did have access to such, those of you who didn't shouldn't feel at a disadvantage – I can assure you it only made it harder.*

*"In many ways, it's much worse doing a cover - when you're writing the song in the first instance, you just have to worry about making it work and seeing it through to a satisfying conclusion. When you're recording a cover, you have to try to replicate every single intricate element and nuance... very difficult! I'm sure there was many a moment of "Just what the hell is going on in that bit, exactly?..." and, "...er... how do I get that sound???" If it's any consolation, we used to feel the same, too".*

Following in Warren's footsteps, we took the judging very seriously and listened to the entries multiple times, often comparing to the originals and considering many aspects before making our choices. The criteria were fairly constant. Sound quality and the degree of polish of the mix were not at all the ultimate deciding factors, though these were undeniably important in getting a song across. We looked for mood and overall feel, plus naturally, our own degree of whimsy. You may all be very pleased with yourselves because you did not make it easy!

As with last year, an 'Honourable Mention' is given for the second highest entry, which might be only a point or two behind the winner. Also, a new feature this year is 'bubbling under' – other entries that either almost made it, or just plain had a certain spark deserving of recognition.

Ready? Here we go...

### BEST COVER

The winner is...

**Fade to Grey by Thorsten Schäfer and Holger Kircher**

In this category, the idea – as Warren saw it – was to record a song which sounded as much like the original version as possible. Voice, keyboards, drums, everything. A tall order! All of the entries were excellent, with many achieving the original sound extremely well. It then came down to atmosphere and nuance – were they well captured, did the track *add* something to the original whilst capturing it perfectly?

Thorsten and Holger's version of Fade to Grey is excellent, and highly marked across the board. We love it!

Honourable Mention goes to...

**Lament by Maurizio Daniele**

Maurizio's version of Lament is spot on in atmosphere, pace and instrumentation, with immaculate attention to detail. Well done!

Bubbling under...

White China by **Casm**, Vienna by **Electro 80s**, Max Headroom by **Mo's Lotion**, and Slow Motion by **Dave Glover**.

### BEST RE-MIX/RE-COVER

The winner is...

**My Sex by EMP (Paul Boddy)**

We absolutely love the guitar on this wonderful version by EMP / Paul Boddy, which highlights a counter-melody that sits much further back in the original. A firm favourite.

Honourable Mention goes to...

**Western Promise, by EMP (Paul Boddy)**

There is great power in this remix, which gives a more techno / dance feel to the original. Excellent, Paul.

Bubbling under...

I Never Wanted to Begin by **Conscience/Rüdiger Illg**, Dream On by **Dyne X System/Christian Fiedler**, New Europe(Eons) by **Frederik Helander**, My Sex by **Lee Prosper**, Death in Avalon by **Frederik Helander**, Heart of the Country (Chill Out Remix) by **Crusader/Jesper Klitfelt** and Mr. X by **Doug Wright**.

In the previous two categories, you either had to adhere strictly to the Ultravox sound, or feel free to disassemble it. We feel that the next category deserves special merit in that it gave you the freedom to explore. These were your songs, as seen through an Ultravox lens.

### BEST ORIGINAL

The winner is...

**Half Life by A Better Blue (John Curry & Jamie O'Callaghan)**

We can really picture Ultravox playing this, in tune, instrumentation and percussion. Can't quite place the

era, as it seems to nicely bridge the divide between Foxx-Vox and Ure-Vox. Some lovely use of viola. Excellent!

Honourable Mention goes to...

**The Fabulous Neutrinos by TBass (David Hughes, Dave Wilson, Jules C)**

Another excellent entry that we can imagine Ultravox playing, perhaps more towards the U-Vox era. Actually it's very reminiscent of the pre-U-Vox demos that we've heard, with Warren on rhythm guitar. Very nice!

Bubbling under...

A Question of Time by **TBass/David Hughes, Dave Wilson, Jules C** and The Treasure by **Neovox/Sly Domanski**.

### MOST UNEXPECTED

The winner is...

**The Thin Wall – MIB Version by Mike Lyden**

This brand new category was created in response to three particular entries this year. Its full name is **Didn't See THAT One Coming: Best Cover in a completely unexpected style**. And we certainly didn't see THIS coming – Mike's country & western style version of The Thin Wall completely blew us away. It shouldn't work – but it does, brilliantly. This entry received a perfect 10 score almost completely across the board.

Honourable Mention goes to...

**Mine For Life by Frederik Helander**

This is a wonderful version of Mine For Life, which sounds like an old gramophone record in style and production.

Bubbling under...

Someone Else's Clothes by **Frederik Helander**. A special mention must also go to Frederik for submitting no less than SEVEN excellent, original entries across the categories!

### ARI LEPPÄ AWARD

The OVERALL winner is...

**The Thin Wall – MIB Version by Mike Lyden**

It just had to be this version of The Thin Wall for the overall winner, receiving the **Ari Leppä Award for Excellence**, and we feel certain that Ari would have loved it. Completely unexpected and entirely wonderful, we just have to keep playing it. Congratulations, Mike!

Thank you and congratulations to all of you! Well done. Very, VERY well done.

If you weren't mentioned here, take heart as it was all in fun. You were altogether fabulous and we enjoyed this immensely. Perhaps we can do this again next year? It's up to you. The end date has been set for October 31st 2007, 18 months from now. Ladies and gentlemen, start your engines please..!

All the very best,