



2009 Covers Competition – results, judged by Cerise Reed

Hello, everyone!

First of all, I have to say a huge 'thank you' to everyone who put so much time, effort and talent into this competition. As always there are some absolutely stellar entries, and picking the winners each year is getting ever harder and I found myself wishing I could pick more than one – you certainly didn't make it easy for me!

This overall winning artist receives a **fully signed Return to Eden Screen Print poster**, signed by the band backstage in Glasgow on the second date of the Return to Eden tour 2009. And of course, ALL the category winners and runners-up get bragging rights, and quite deservedly so!

Just a few notes:

Special mention goes to **Glenn Kennedy**, who submitted an amazing **FIFTEEN** entries! Well done.

Another special mention goes to **Container**, who submitted our very first accompanying **video** - and I love it! Thank you.

Entries in the **Originals category** – please don't forget that entries, whilst original, should be a piece which most sounds like something Ultravox could've/should've written and recorded – but didn't. In other words, entries must have an element of Ultravox style about them. It's drifted away from that a bit this year, so please don't forget! :o)

Something that surprised me this year was that there were only two entries into the **Most Unexpected** category (both wonderful, I have to say). This is probably the category that we look forward to the most, and there are many many more styles out there to explore – so please do keep 'em coming.

Right then! We'll start off by quoting Warren's intro from the first 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, I took the judging very seriously and listened to the entries multiple times, often comparing to the originals and considering many aspects before making my 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. I looked for mood and overall feel, plus naturally, my own degree of whimsy. It was a tough, tough job to decide between them.

Ready? Here we go...

BEST COVER

The winner is...

01 Moon Over Moscow by Christopher Watson

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?

Christopher Watson's cover of Visage's Moon Over Moscow is spot on – it even has the warm, analogue sound of the original (in fact it was so darn close I had to check it against the original!). Well done.

The runners-up are...

02 We Came to Dance by Martin Taylor

Musically this version of We Came to Dance by Martin Taylor is spot on and again, virtually inseparable from the original apart from the little flourish at the end. Vocally, you've done the harmonies throughout very well. Excellent.

03 Sleepwalk by Electro 80s

A fantastic cover of Sleepwalk by Electro 80s – I love the new intro. I felt that the vocals were a little too echoey, as if sung in a large room – one of the features of Midge's vocal in this song is that it was very personal, sung very close to the mic, particularly in the choruses. It doesn't detract from this great cover, though.

04 Sleepwalk by Darren Cowie

There were four covers of Sleepwalk to choose from in this category, all excellent. Whilst Darren's cover had the right 'energy' to it, it would have been great to hear it with vocals – so the Electro 80's version has the edge.

BEST RE-COVER

The winner is...

01 The Wild, the Beautiful and the Damned by Glenn Kennedy

This category is for your own interpretation of an original Ultravox (or related) arrangement.

This re-cover of The Wild, the Beautiful and the Damned by Glenn Kennedy perfectly captures the energy and excitement of early Ultravox! live. As with Moon Over Moscow, the old analogue 'warmth' is captured. Fantastic guitar work – this track absolutely blew me away.

The runners-up are...

02 Señor X by Elmoncho The Man From

Wow. Not only is this an excellent, modern cover of Mr. X by Elmoncho The Man From, but – in a stroke of genius, Spanish vocals turn it into Sr. X! Ultravox of course recorded a German version, named Herr X – I wonder how many other languages might work?

Joe definitely seems to be channeling Warren, as he has his deep, laconic style down pat. Musically it's also spot on and I had trouble choosing between this and The Wild, the Beautiful and the Damned for the top spot, but Glenn just edged it. Even so, Sr. X is absolutely wonderful.

03 Vienna by Kevin Murphy

I love the 'male voice choir' style vocals in this version of Vienna by Kevin Murphy. A firm favourite!

04 Lament by Box of Sky

Oo, this is a lovely laid-back version of Lament from Box of Sky (even more so than the original!). I really like the vocal – reminds me of Jon Marsh from The Beloved.

BEST RE-MIX

The winner is...

01 Serenade by Ultima Bleep

This category is for covers with a completely new arrangement and/or sound.

Ultima Bleep's Serenade is fantastic, faster-paced with a dance beat and great vocals. Excellent, love it.

The runners-up are...

02 New Europeans by Harald Steffen

A brilliant mix of New Europeans by Harald Steffen, with a dark new sound. I really like this.

03 I Remember (Gimme the Money Mix) by Mistrust (Tim B)

Now this is a bit different! This re-mix of I Remember (Death in the Afternoon) by Mistrust blends Midge's Band Aid phone call with I Remember to create an almost entirely new track. Love it!

04 Visions in Blue EMP 09 Remix by EMP (Paul Boddy)

This re-mix of Visions in Blue by EMP retains Midge's original vocal and builds this slow track up into a dance classic. I found the 'pulsing' a little distracting at first (especially as it's not entirely in time with the music), but I like this track a great deal.

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BEST ORIGINAL

The winner is...

01 *The Implausible Man* by Adam Leonard

This category is for original pieces which most sound like something Ultravox could've/should've written and recorded, but didn't.

The Implausible Man by Adam Leonard is so early Ultravox!-like, with lyrics and vocals so reminiscent of John Foxx, that I had to keep reminding myself it wasn't a cover version! I can absolutely picture Ultravox! playing this, no question about it. A fantastic piece.

The runners-up are...

02 *Ocean Road – Billy's Kitchen Sink Mix* by Phil Marsh

This made me chuckle more than once – you definitely did throw Billy's kitchen sink in there, Phil!

I'm not so sure it's really Ultravox in style, but it's certainly very Billy. Brilliant!

03 *Before* by Container

At first I didn't think this was very Ultravox, but then I realised I was just being distracted by the gothic vocal style. Musically it is very 'Rage in Eden' period – and after a few plays it grew into one of my favourites.

Container also submitted a wonderful and bizarre animated video of a clockwork world, which **completely** blew me away. If you guys have an album, let me know – I'd definitely like to check it out.

04 *Limelight* by Fredrik Helander

The instrumental Limelight by Fredrik Helander takes a very well-deserved fourth place. I wouldn't be surprised if I heard this on an Ultravox B-side! Well done.

MOST UNEXPECTED

The winner is...

01 *Love's Great Cocktail Adventure* by Neil Dube

This category was created two comps ago in response to some unusual entries that got us really excited. Its full name is **Didn't See THAT One Coming: Best Cover in a completely unexpected style**.

I certainly didn't see THIS coming – Neil's lounge version of Love's Great Adventure really made me laugh! It's a completely different feel to the original, but still entirely recognisable.

Neil, I loved the 'thank you, thank you very much' – you're completely in persona! I can't wait to see what you might come up with next year. This is what this category is all about. It shouldn't work – but it does, *brilliantly*.

The runner-up is...

02 *Rivets* by Waverider

Oo, Prog Rock style! Fantastic! Well done to Waverider for turning Rivets, the tiny ad music gem, into a full three minute track. The guitars are great and the whole thing really makes me think of such prog rock classics as Dave Greenslade's Pentateuch of the Cosmogony.

There were only two entries for Most Unexpected this year, which really surprised me! This category has the most scope in which to surprise us and make us laugh – it's fertile ground for the overall prize. So come on everyone, make sure you give it a go next year!

OVERALL WINNER

The OVERALL winner is...

01 *The Implausible Man* by Adam Leonard

It just had to be The Implausible Man by Adam Leonard. It's an incredibly Ultravox original track and there was no question in my mind that it should be the overall winner. Adam receives the **fully autographed Return to Eden screen print poster**. Congratulations!

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 and every single entry was wonderful. You were altogether fabulous and I enjoyed this immensely – I hope that you did too.

Perhaps we can do this again next year? It's up to you! The end date has been set for **April 1st 2011**, about sixteen months from now (and Billy's birthday).

Ladies and gentlemen, start your engines please..!

All the very best,

