

# Rarest in Eden

*In this, the last installment of Rare in Eden, we're concentrating on what for most people is the rarest of all Ultravox related items – namely Torque Point. If it's rare tracks and unreleased mixes you're after then Torque Point isn't for you. Instead, the reason for its inclusion here is because of the 'demo' picture sleeve that houses test pressings of the Vienna album. So the question we put to Warren, Chris and Midge was how all of this came about...*

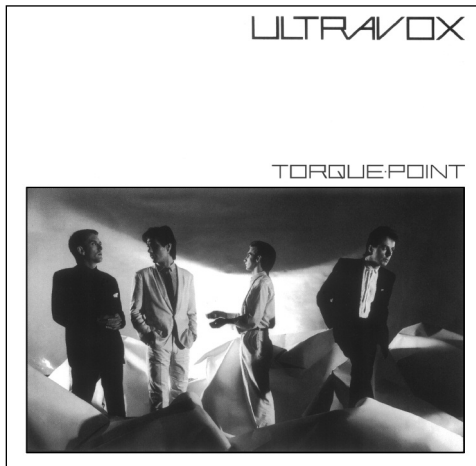
**WARREN:** My very first recollection of that takes me back to sitting around the kitchen table at Conny's; the band was talking about possible album titles. I was briefly toying with something I considered sort of trendily-vague and techno-ishly encompassing... and came up with **Torque Point**... not brilliant, but these things depend on keeping up a constant stream of ideas and not getting bogged down. I offered it into the pot, as it were, and distinctly remember Bill immediately asking what 'Torque' meant. I said something to the effect of, "it refers to a rotational force, a twisting force...". It was met with rather blank stares all round. After a few seconds, Chris and Midge started taking the piss. Bill started to like it (I think!... my memory of this particular aspect of the story isn't all it could be.) and I became not so sure (I think...).

**CHRIS:** Billy was very keen on that. He thought it was good on two levels if I remember rightly. One was that it's about power and turning, so that it was like a new thing and the other thing is he thought people that were into motorbikes would like it... how he thought that I've got no idea at all (*laughs*), but I remember him trying to sell it as an idea to us.

**WARREN:** Yes, when you've had a few and you're trying to get the creative juices flowing – as opposed to the juices readily available in bottles, of which we were never in short supply – you can come up with some real duds. Like, what were we thinking! Though I have absolutely no memory of any of the other possible titles we were coming up with, it didn't take long before **Torque Point** became representative of everything the album title SHOULD'N'T be and its very mention was guaranteed to start us howling. It took its place as one of a score of our standing private jokes. Naturally, we mentioned it to numerous people as a

possible album title and endeavoured to keep a straight face as we did so. Our sense of humour often backfired on us, this is obviously one of those times. It was NEVER seriously considered as the album title. Just how it ended up on some test pressings is truly beyond me!

**MIDGE:** I think when we did **Vienna** we knew it was something special, although we tried to ignore that, hence calling the album **Torque Point**. What nonsense!



**WARREN:** Later, I recall Midge saying that, for him, the album simply had to be called **Vienna**, it was the standout track and the standout choice for the title. Perhaps I was being perversely difficult but it just seemed so OBVIOUS... perhaps there was a title lurking about that wasn't derived from one of the tracks on the record; I wanted to look at all the options. But it was soon, uh,

obvious to me that it was obvious for a damn good reason – it was the best title!

**CHRIS:** I think Midge and myself always wanted **Vienna** because it was so obvious, so strong and it was the thing that was the most different really.

**MIDGE:** It reverted cos I think Chris O'Donnell [CMO Management] came down and slapped us in the back of the head and said, "Don't be so bloody stupid! It's got to be called **Vienna**, this track's a killer".

**WARREN:** We'd put ourselves under a lot of pressure making that record. We were so utterly committed to giving it our absolute total best down to the smallest detail and perfection that we were, of course, adamant that the matter of the record's title had to be brilliant. There was no serious alternate contender to the choice of title, **Vienna** was clearly the best.

**MIDGE:** It sums up the whole flavour of the album, the whole mid-European influence thing that was going on at the time.

**WARREN:** We rolled it around for a short time as "that's the one". It felt good. The decision upon **Vienna** was unanimous and, once made, we relaxed over the issue and felt comfortable with it. Obvious was good. I liked obvious.

**MIDGE:** We actually did the original artwork with **Torque Point** on it. Funnily enough, when we ended up working with Peter Saville, he'd noticed that the sleeve format was exactly the same as his artwork for **Closer** by Joy Division. White sleeve, the panoramic black and white photograph in the middle, except they had used a classical photograph or some kind of painting, but the layout was exactly the same, we were all thinking along the same kind of lines. But yeah, thank God we didn't call it **Torque Point**!

**EV:** So, is there a connection between **Torque Point** and **Keep Talking**, the extra track on the B-side of the 12" version of the **All Stood Still** single?!

**WARREN:** **Keep Talking** wasn't even a demo, it was a jam that we'd recorded during rehearsals.

**MIDGE:** Yeah... It's that jam thing we did, we recorded it on Warren's cassette player.

**CHRIS:** We all used to record all of the rehearsals. Warren used to keep it absolutely documented as well, you could get rehearsal tapes from whenever from him if we needed them.

**MIDGE:** It was the machine Warren always had next to his setup, so that when we were jamming we'd go, "oh I like that bit", and without having to go "quick, remember, how does that go?". He's got thousands of hours of jams and stuff, all logged, all labelled and all sorted. I've got nothing.

**WARREN:** It was completely spontaneous and we later discovered that there were a few sounds in there that we had absolutely no idea of how to get again, in particular a strange synth noise that seemed to sound vaguely like someone speaking.

**CHRIS:** Yeah, it was one of my keyboards. We had these little Yamaha things which had a sort of pretty volatile memory and if you listen to it... it would be a noise that you would get in the film **Eraserhead**. It's a really horrible noise in itself, but the memory had gone on the computer and we got near to it, but it was

never as good as it was on the rehearsal tape. Warren had a little £20 Panasonic... almost like a dictaphone. It's just got a single mic in it and automatic levels. Just about the straightest cassette thing you could ever get. And we'd gone to Germany and we tried to recreate it from what we could remember from it and we just couldn't do it. But we had that rehearsal tape, so we had to fly Warren's tape machine over to Cologne to Conny's so that we could get the best playback from it 'cos we tried doing it from other tape machines and the signal wasn't brilliant. So we thought that if we used the original machine we'd get the best volume we could get.

**WARREN:** We transferred the cassette to multi-track tape and cleaned up the recording as best we could technically... that was it!

**MIDGE:** That's right. That made it as good as it is, which is pretty nasty actually! But that's what we were into, we quite liked the idea of doing that stuff, it's a piece of music, it's just not recorded in a 24-track studio.

**WARREN:** After briefly trying to decipher the important elements of the music and write a piece around it, we decided it had charm as a 'captured moment' and that it'd be fun if we put the thing out just exactly as it was as – warts and all – as a glimpse into how we worked on our music.

**EV:** So why did initial pressings list the track as **Keep Torqe-ing** on the label, whereas the sleeve still referred to it as **Keep Talking**?

**WARREN:** It wasn't exactly a misprint, more like a private band joke that got a little out of control, or a complete misunderstanding of a hand-written title on a tape box label, perhaps both... it was never meant to appear on the record.

**CHRIS:** Yeah, it's possible we did that just for a laugh, just to make it interesting. I can't remember.

**WARREN:** The title came about when one of us was on the telephone talking to Chrysalis in London... they wanted to know what the title was going to be and were being very persistent about it. The trouble was we hadn't really decided upon one. While we were stalling with them on the line someone, who was very busy at the time, gestured to the person on the phone and said, "...uh... just keep talking... keep talking..." Midge or Chris (can't remember which) then said suddenly, "...that's it! **Keep Talking!** That's the title..." We were happy with the title, it fitted perfectly with the aforementioned 'talking' sound on that track. A fine case of serendipity.

