

## Fleetwood Mac; *Rumours*

A review by Jake Daisley



### Introduction

**T**here is no truer testament to making the best of out the worst situation than Fleetwood Mac's

*Rumours*. Born out of internal conflict, affairs, divorce and a cocaine addiction, *Rumours* went on to be the seventh bestselling studio album of all time and according to Mick Fleetwood, the drummer and founder of Fleetwood Mac, "the most important album we ever made".

### About the Band



**Lindsey Buckingham:** lead guitarist and vocalist. Born October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1949 in Palo Alto, California. Lindsey dropped out of competitive swimming to pursue a career in music. Lindsey and his then-girlfriend Stevie Nicks recorded an album titled *Buckingham Nicks* in 1973. Mick Fleetwood heard the song "Frozen Love" from the Buckingham Nicks album. Impressed, he asked Buckingham to join Fleetwood Mac and replace Bob Welch, the former lead guitarist for Fleetwood Mac. Lindsey told Mick that he and Stevie Nicks were a team and that he didn't

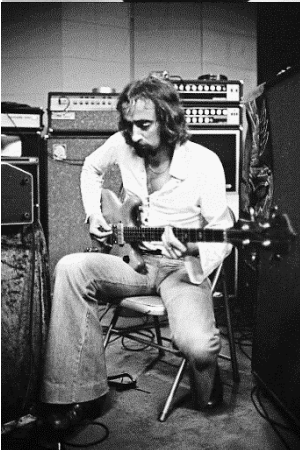
want to work without her. Mick Fleetwood agreed and hired both of them without an audition.



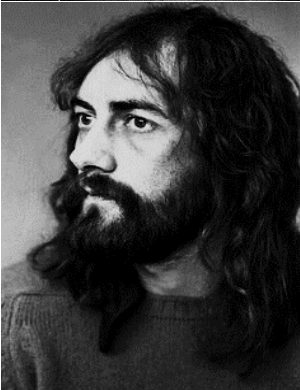
**Stevie Nicks:** vocalist, recognized as the "Reigning Queen of Rock and Roll". Born May 26<sup>th</sup>, 1948 in Phoenix, Arizona. Stevie's grandfather taught Nicks to sing duets with him by the time she was four years old. She first met Lindsey Buckingham, during her senior year of high school, she saw him playing "California Dreamin'" at a party, and joined him in singing harmony. Stevie and Lindsey opened for Jimi Hendrix and Janis Joplin, it was those two artists who inspired her own stage intensity and performance. Stevie joined Fleetwood Mac in January 1975.



**Christine McVie (née Perfect):** pianist, vocalist. Born July 12<sup>th</sup>, 1943 in Bouth, England. Her father, Cyril Perfect, was a concert violinist and music lecturer and her mother, Beatrice was a medium and faith healer. Christine was introduced to the piano at age four, at 15 she shifted her musical focus to rock & roll. Christine studied sculpture at an art culture graduating with a teaching degree after 5 years. She decided to not pursue a career in teaching and instead turned to music. She recorded a solo album, *Christine Perfect*. After marrying Fleetwood Mac bassist John McVie, she joined Fleetwood Mac in 1970.



**John McVie:** bass guitarist. Born November 26<sup>th</sup>, 1945 in London England. At age 14 John began playing the guitar in local bands. Soon after leaving school at 17, John trained for nine months to be a tax inspector while playing in a band called the "Krewsaders". John and Mac Fleetwood later formed Fleetwood Mac. Fleetwood Mac is an amalgamation of Mick Fleetwood's last name and John McVie's nickname "Mac". While touring with Fleetwood Mac, John met his future wife, Christine Perfect. After only two weeks of dating, John and Christine got married.



**Mick Fleetwood:** Drummer, Percussionist. Born June 24<sup>th</sup>, 1947 in Redruth, England. Mick lived in Egypt and Norway as a child because his father travelled with the Royal Air Force. He attended school in Norway and became fluent in Norwegian. At fifteen, Mick moved to London to pursue music. In London he formed a band with Peter Green, Jeremy Spencer and Bob Brunning, the early incarnation of Fleetwood Mac. Mick would be the only original member to stay with the band through its multiple line-ups. After several album releases and member changes, the group, now with John and Christine McVie moved to the United States in 1974, where they later met Lindsey and Stevie.

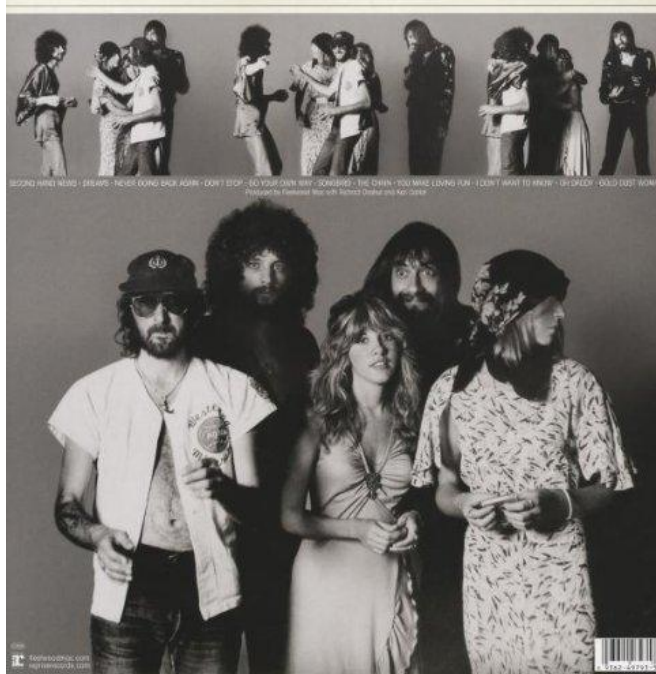
## Behind the Album



Although *Rumours* was a wonderfully successful and critically acclaimed album, it was notoriously difficult to record. John and Christine were divorced, and only spoke to each other about music. Lindsey and Stevie were a famously off-and-on couple and constantly fought. Stevie was also currently battling a severe cocaine addiction. As if that wasn't bad enough, Mick Fleetwood found out that his wife of six years, Jenny, was having an affair with his best friend. The album title *Rumours* came from all of the hearsay and inaccurate stories from the press, such as Christine McVie having a serious illness, and Stevie Nicks and Lindsey Buckingham were secretly the parents of Mick Fleetwood's daughter. The recording sessions were apparently incredibly wild, fueled by cocaine, drinking, and heavy partying. Chris Stone, the owner of the Record Plant, where Fleetwood Mac recorded, said "The band would come in at 7 at night, have a big feast, party till 1 or 2 in the morning, and then when they were so whacked-out they couldn't do anything, they'd start recording".

## Go Your Own Way

The first single from *Rumours*, and arguably the most famous song from the album, 'Go Your Own Way' was released as a single in December 1976. Written by Lindsey Buckingham during a vacation to Florida with the rest of the band. According to Mick Fleetwood "It was hardly a vacation. Aside from the obvious unstated tension, I remember the house having a distinctly bad vibe to it, as if it were haunted, which did nothing to help matters" Lindsey wanted the drums to be similar to "Street Fighting Man" by The Rolling Stones, which proved difficult



for Mick. The lyrics were about the struggles of Lindsey's relationship with Stevie Nicks. Personally, I believe this is song really encapsulates the theme of *Rumours*.

## Dreams

Dreams is my personal favourite song on *Rumours*, and my second favourite Fleetwood Mac of all



time, second only to Rhiannon. Written by Stevie Nicks in only 10 minutes, the song focuses on the personal problems going on in the lives of the band members, especially between Stevie and Lindsey Buckingham, who were ending their eight-year relationship. During an interview with Blender magazine, Lindsey said "We had to go through this elaborate exercise of denial, keeping our personal feelings in one corner of the room while trying to be professional in the other." When Stevie first played Dreams, the rest of the band didn't want to put it on the album, Christine McVie really disliked the song, claiming it was boring and flat.

## Never Going Back Again



Never Going Back Again was written by Lindsey Buckingham in the wake of his breakup with Stevie Nicks, and his rebound relationship with another woman. The song reflects on past mistakes, and vowing to not repeat them. The upbeat tone contrast really beautifully with the serious subject matter, giving it "a sweet and naive tone" in the words of Lindsey Buckingham. Rolling Stone critic John Swenson describes "Never Going Back Again" as "the prettiest thing on *Rumours*," noting that the "delightful" vocal "belies the bad-news subject matter."

## Gold Dust Woman

Written by Stevie Nicks, this somber tone reflects on Stevie Nicks' cocaine addiction, as well as a "...symbolic look at somebody going through a bad relationship, doing a lot of drugs, and trying to make it. Trying to live. Trying to get through it." The song was recorded at recorded at 4 a.m, Stevie Nicks had wrapped her head with a black scarf, numbing her senses and tapping genuine memories and emotions. To accentuate Stevie's vocals, Mick Fleetwood broke sheets of glass in the background.



## The Chain

The Chain is the only song on *Rumours* the entire band wrote together. It is an amalgamation of multiple different works that didn't make it onto the album. The song talks about the feelings each of the members had at the time, from thoughts about the fighting amongst the group, to love and relationships. This song really encapsulates the theme of *Rumours* and is a very important song in Fleetwood Mac's discography.