Twitter Thread by Joe Banks



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Here's some New Year fun (which I'm sure we could all do with right now). When I was getting ideas together for the book, one of the potential chapter headings I had was 'Hawkwind's Thwarted Pop Career'... Here's a "what if?" alternative singles schedule for the 1970s ;-) 1/17

‘Mirror Of Illusion’ – July 1970. At the last minute, the A & B side of Hawkwind’s debut single are swapped when John Peel tells Doug Smith that ‘Hurry On Sundown’ takes “too long to get going.” It doesn’t chart, but Peel gives it lots of spins on Top Gear https://t.co/fbJQPYfIs4

‘You Know You’re Only Dreaming’ – Oct 1970. Their profile boosted by reports of their Isle Of Wight performances, Andrew Lauder suggests a standalone single. A re-recorded version of this track from the Trident sessions is rush-released and sells strongly https://t.co/Nhy0mXutNc

‘Master Of The Universe’ – Sept 1971. By now the biggest band in the underground, Hawkwind trail the release of their second album with an edited version of this soon to be classic track. To everyone's surprise, it charts for four weeks, peaking at no. 37 https://t.co/eNwxogGjFG

‘Silver Machine’ – June 1972. Hawkwind’s next single crashes into the charts, its space age boogie loved by teenyboppers and Hells Angels alike. Pan’s People perform a ‘sexy robot’ routine to it on Top Of The Pops, and the following week, it goes to no. 1 https://t.co/pB9lzhNqIz

‘Orgone Accumulator’ – March 1973. With an album of the acclaimed Space Ritual tour upcoming, Hawkwind release an edit of one of its stand-out tracks, which peaks at no. 13. Promotional interviews take place inside wooden packing crates at UA’s offices https://t.co/DjsERrOO6u

‘Ejection’ – Sept 1973. Abandoning plans to release ‘Urban Guerilla’ thanks to the IRA, Hawkwind persuade Robert Calvert to let them record a version of his Captain Lockheed single, with Lemmy on vocals. Much to Calvert’s annoyance, it charts at no. 22 https://t.co/JTcDLhj9va

‘It’s So Easy’ – July 1974. Having lost money on their US tours, Doug Smith insists that Hawkwind’s next single is a track that Dave Brock worries is “too commercial.” But Smith is right – following a live performance on Top Of The Pops, it gets to no. 8 https://t.co/KUwmUYsP38

‘Motorhead’ – March 1975. With ‘Kings Of Speed’ deemed to contain too many drugs references, irony of ironies, its mooted B-side is released as a single instead. It reaches no. 27, though Lemmy is disgruntled to discover that Brock has replaced his vocal https://t.co/wPSy1gBUM4

‘Kerb Crawler’ – July 1976. The promo film for this single, which features Calvert cavorting with two scantily-clad ladies in a car, is hurriedly pulled when militant Women’s Libbers picket Charisma’s offices. Despite the publicity, it only gets to no. 48 https://t.co/PsFKiOaVcr

‘Back On The Streets’ – Jan 1977. Dismayed by the initial mix, Alice Cooper producer Bob Ezrin is recruited to beef up Hawkwind’s new single, which peaks at no. 36. Their one and only OGWT performance ends with Calvert chasing Bob Harris with a riding crop https://t.co/Qx4L9PhBYp

‘Quark, Strangeness And Charm’ – June 1977. Hawkwind break back into the top 30 – albeit at no. 29 – when their latest single is used as the theme tune to Magnus Pyke’s Don’t Ask Me. However, it’s pulled after complaints about its wildly inaccurate lyrics https://t.co/gSDd0w6uGy

‘Jack Of Shadows’ – March 1978. Sire insists that the band needs a single to promote their US tour, and this track is used from the recent PXR5 sessions. In the end, it’s only sent out to American radio stations and becomes a much prized collector’s item https://t.co/Z9gi42195n

‘Psi Power’ – Sept 1978. Well-timed to coincide with Britain’s ESP craze, the Hawklords’ debut single gets an additional leg-up when it’s used in a BBC documentary about Uri Gellar, boosting it to no. 25. Initial copies come with a mini pack of Zener cards https://t.co/jS9eXByS7z

‘25 Years’ – Jan 1979. Charisma’s support for the Hawklords dwindles rapidly when Calvert leaves, and this single only gets to no. 57. A video featuring live footage from Brunel University is shown just once in the UK, on Saturday morning kids show Tiswas https://t.co/cX4Balnq9i

‘We Like To Be Frightened’ – July 1979. Contractually obliged to release one more single by Hawkwind, Charisma issues this track despite protests from all involved, with Calvert and Brock waging a war of words in the music papers. It doesn’t chart https://t.co/oX0hCKF8ra

‘Shot Down In The Night’ – June 1980. Written off by the press and presumed dead by many fans, Hawkwind stage a successful comeback tour at the end of 1979 and align themselves with the NWOBHM. Coming with a sew-on denim patch, this single peaks at no. 18 https://t.co/nqG8BKsSlR

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