



THEMES FOR GREAT CITIES:

A New History of Simple Minds

Graeme Thomson

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“Graeme Thomson’s will be the definitive biography of this most mercurial of bands. Thomson knows how to take it apart – without demystifying the mystery, he gives us the art school band that never had an art school, but went instead on an endless adventure and took a bit of all of us with them” – Alan Warner

“They did wonders.” – Bobby Gillespie

An illuminating new biography of one of Britain’s biggest and most influential bands, written with the full input and cooperation of Simple Minds, shedding new light on their dazzling art-rock legacy.

Emerging in 1978 from Glasgow’s post-punk scene, Simple Minds transitioned from restless art-rock to electro Futurism, mutated into passionate pop contenders and, finally, a global rock behemoth. They have sold in the region of 60 million records and remain a worldwide phenomenon. The drama of their tale lies in these transformations and triumphs, conflicts and contradictions.

Themes for Great Cities features in-depth new interviews with original band members Jim Kerr, Charlie Burchill, Mick MacNeil and Derek Forbes, alongside key figures from within their creative community and high-profile fans such as Bobby Gillespie, James Dean Bradfield and Mogwai’s Stuart Braithwaite. The book reclaims and revivifies the magnificence of Simple Minds’ pioneering early albums, from the glitchy Euro-ambience of *Real to Real Cacophony* and *Empires and Dance* to the pulsing, agitated romance of *Sons and Fascination*, *New Gold Dream* and beyond.

Themes for Great Cities tells the inside story of a band becoming a band. Inspiring, insightful and enlightening, it celebrates the trailblazing music of one of Britain’s greatest groups.

Graeme Thomson is the author of several acclaimed music books, including *Under the Ivy: The Life & Music of Kate Bush*, described by the *Irish Times* as ‘the best music biography in perhaps the past decade’, and *Cowboy Song*, the authorised biography of Philip Lynott, published by Constable in 2016. In 2020, *Small Hours: The Long Night of John Martyn* was a Book of the Year in the *Sunday Times*, *Financial Times*, *Telegraph*, *Evening Standard* and *MOJO*. Graeme is pop columnist for the *Spectator* and writes on music, literature and popular culture for a number of publications, including the *Guardian*, *Radio Times*, *Uncut* and *Pitchfork*.

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