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**The Best Pop Artist of the 1980s You Probably Never Heard Of….**

Let me set the scene:

Teapots routinely wore woolly jumpers, some people still had black and white TVs and kung fu films had been criminalised. Welcome to 1989. I was 10 years old and ready to take secondary school by storm! The soundtrack to my brand of anarchy? **Brother Beyond**, **Sonya** and (of course) Rick (drumroll please) …Wilson??

Attached to the cover of ***Your Sinclair Magazine*** was a tape containing the stand-out track ***Hold My Hand Very Tightly (Very Tightly)*** by **Whistlin’ Rick Wilson**.

A detailed history of The Man and The Music can be found here:

<https://www.yoursinclair.co.uk/wiki/Main/DavidWilson>

Being computer game enthusiasts, my Brother and I had bought the magazine and this tune found its way into our hearts.

The irreverent sense of fun from the song and performance sank into the subconscious and soon many other artists came onto our radar. We never really knew anything about this guy and even though we sort of knew it was a joke taking the mick out of **Stock, Aitken and Waterman** and **Rick Astley**, the song was a perfect pop gem.

Eventually we formed bands with our mates and started gigging and writing our own stuff and the song was lost in time, every now and then creeping into the mind as an unplaceable earworm.

Years went by, still writing and performing. We even got some tunes onto magazine covers ourselves.

Then one day, the coronavirus pandemic hit and our world, everybody’s world…The World(!) changed overnight. I retreated like many others, inside my house and inside my head. Thinking about days gone by and trying to get creative again.

From completely out of nowhere a friend who used to spend many hours with us on the **ZX Spectrum** in those days whatsapped me…

He said he was out walking with his young daughter and he asked her to hold his hand very tightly while crossing the road and BAM – this song suddenly started pinging around his head and he thought of me.

I instantly heard the melody and words “*Hold My Hand Very Tightly OO-EE-OO-EEE-OOO*” and was transported right back to Richmond Upon Thames, 1989. It was such a vivid recollection and I had to find out more about this lost classic. A bit of googling found the link above.

We wanted to make a tribute to how this track made us feel back then as kids and now as over 40’s, so we set about getting our best musician friends (**The Helmholtz Resonators**) to rerecord the song as faithfully as possible to channel the inner **Whistlin’ Rick** within all of us.

It is a realisation that you shouldn’t have to justify everything you do; you can just have fun. Who cares if you make a fool of yourself? You never know who you might inspire. It might take 30 years but you could make a tune that puts a smile on another person’s face at a time of bleakness.

So, thank you, **Whistlin’ Rick**! I hope you like our version and appreciate our love for you. Wherever you may be……

A group of people standing next to a sign

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