

Bio information: **MATCHING MOLE**  
Title: "**MARCH**" (Cuneiform Rune 172)

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**FILE UNDER: ROCK/PROGRESSIVE ROCK**

**Matching Mole** was the band that drummer/vocalist **Robert Wyatt** formed after he left the pioneering UK outfit **Soft Machine** in July, 1971. **Soft Machine** had been hugely popular in France, and Wyatt named his new band after a play on the French translation of **Soft Machine**: *machine molle*. Over the course of its brief, one-year existence, **Matching Mole** developed a characteristic sound, a unique take on fusion, with interesting structures that encouraged individualistic expression through solos. Its legacy included two studio albums, over fifty concerts in Britain and continental Europe, and a number of TV and radio broadcasts.

**Matching Mole's** first, self-titled album was released in early 1972. Wyatt originally began it as a solo album in 1971, but midway through the recording broadened its scope. ***Matching Mole*** as released featured the band's first quartet line-up – Wyatt and guitarist **Phil Miller** (Delivery, Hatfield & The North, National Health), organist **Dave Sinclair** (Caravan), and bassist **Bill MacCormick** (Phil Manzanera's 801) – as well as a guest, electric pianist, **Dave McRae** (Mike Westbrook). The group supported the album with shows at home and a European tour. Not long after, Sinclair left the band and McRae joined full time.

The quartet of Wyatt, Miller, MacCormick and McRae proved to be **Matching Mole's** most experimental as well as most active lineup, performing numerous concerts throughout Europe. The band recorded a second album, ***Little Red Record***, which was produced by Robert Fripp of King Crimson and released in 1972. Shortly after the album's release, Wyatt decided he did not want the responsibilities of band leader and dismantled his band.

In 2001, Cuneiform Records released ***Smoke Signals***, containing previously unreleased live recordings. The material was selected from several different performances and arranged on the CD to replicate a typical **Matching Mole** concert. The band was so pleased with the way this record came out that when one of the members chanced upon a forgotten live concert from the same period, Cuneiform was contacted and arrangements were made to release this new **Matching Mole** CD, entitled ***March***.

Like ***Smoke Signals***, **Matching Mole's** second live album was recorded during the band's most intensive gigging period, the spring of 1972. On the CD, Bill MacCormick, Dave MacRae, Phil Miller and Robert Wyatt, the band's most adventurous line-up, give free-spirited renditions of songs from the oeuvre of **Matching Mole** and some Canterbury friends. The songs include four drawn from ***Little Red Record*** as well as two works from the band's first album and a surprising version of **Caravan's** "*Waterloo Lily*". The live recording was remastered and edited by writer **Michael King**, who compiled the prior live **Matching Mole** CD and wrote a biography of Wyatt, ***Wrong Movements*** (1994, SAF Publishing). Like ***Smoke Signals***, ***March*** features cover art (including sculpted/modeled **matching / marching moles**) by **Tom Recchion**, an artist, musician, and former Warner Bros. designer based in California.

The two live **Matching Mole** albums released by Cuneiform double the recorded output of that important Canterbury band. The live recordings illustrate that the band's concert renditions of recorded songs differed dramatically from the heavily overdubbed versions on its studio discs, and thus reveal the integral role that jazz and improvisation played in **Matching Mole's** work, in theory/aesthetic as well as practice/performance. ***March*** is sure to prove to be a revelation for both long time fans of and newcomers to the **Canterbury** school of progressive music and the work of Robert Wyatt.