

Pink Floyd founder member Richard Wright dies at 65

By Cahal Milmo

Chief Reporter

RICHARD WRIGHT, the self-taught pianist and founding member of Pink Floyd whose keyboard playing and compositions were at the heart of the band's classic albums, has died from cancer.

The 65-year-old, originally considered the leading force in the band before falling out with the singer and bassist Roger Waters, was diagnosed recently and died after a short illness, according to a spokesman.

His death came days after David Gilmour, the band's lead guitarist, said that a one-off reunion

by the group at the Live 8 concert in 2005 was the last time he would play with the band.

Wright wrote two songs on the 1973 concept album *The Dark Side of the Moon*.

A spokesman for Wright, who had three children, gave no further details about his illness. He said: "The family of Richard Wright, founder member of Pink Floyd, announce with great sadness that Richard died today after a short struggle with cancer. The family have asked that their privacy is respected."

Wright helped found the group that became

Pink Floyd when he met Waters and

d r u m m e r Nick Mason while studying at the Regent Street College of Ar-

chitecture in the early 1960s. After several incarnations, including Sigma 6, Pink Floyd started out as an R&B band, before adopting an experimental approach when Syd Barrett, the singer and guitarist credited with creating their most psychedelic music, joined in 1964.

Wright rejoined Pink Floyd in 1987 after a six-year hiatus, and also worked on solo projects and collaborations with other musicians.

Pink Floyd songwriter, vocalist and guitarist David Gilmour said: "In the welter of arguments about who or what was Pink Floyd, Rick's enormous input was frequently forgotten. He was gentle, unassuming and private, but his soulful voice and playing were vital, magical components of our most recognised sound. I have never played with anyone quite like him."



Richard Wright, left, and far right with, from left, Roger Waters, Nick Mason and David Gilmour in 1972 PA