

Peter Hook Brings Britain's Joy Division to Moscow

By [Robert Lee](#)

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Peter Hook and the Light performing last year. The band regrets that Joy Division never played Moscow, despite their wide following in Russia today.

Peter Hook, founding member of two of the most influential British bands ever, the immortal Joy Division and the equally revered New Order, takes to the stage Saturday at Milk with his new group but will, nevertheless, be looking back at the original group.

His group, Peter Hook and the Light, pays tribute to Joy Division — the group that defined post-punk and broke up in 1980 with the suicide of lead singer Ian Curtis — and to its "Unknown Pleasures," one of the most timeless and iconic debut records of all time.

"The Light started when I got a couple of my mates together to finally celebrate Joy Division," Hook said in a telephone interview.

The shock suicide of Curtis came just days before the band was set to tour the United States

for the first time, and it hit Hook and the other Joy Division members hard.

"When Ian died, I more or less dived into a beer barrel," he said admitting that "in New Order, we very successfully ignored it for nigh on 30 years."

The new venture is part of an extended grieving process, he said. But he insists that it is far from a gloomy affair.

"It is like rediscovering this wonderful toy that you had when you were a kid, and you find it again at the back of a cupboard and remember how fantastic and in love with it you were!" he said with genuine warmth.

Hook is adamant that the Light will not "slip into tribute band territory." The show is built around playing Joy Division's debut album "Unknown Pleasures" in its entirety, but he sees the set as a "translation" of the band's music into a new ear, rather than an attempt to recreate the sound and rawness of the past.

The group is playing Moscow partly after some timely advice from Andy Rourke, the former bassist of the 80s gladioli rockers, The Smiths.

"Andy was basically telling me what a great time they had when he was here last and how well looked after they were," he said. "When I DJ'd here, as I have been doing for the last six years, I was also really well looked after."

Joy Division has a surprisingly wide following in Russia and it is not difficult to draw a line between them and Kino, the legendary 1980s Soviet group whose lead singer, Viktor Tsoi also died young. Fans say they first listened to Kino before moving on to Joy Division and other post-punk English groups.

The concert will be the first chance for many to hear that Joy Division sound for real.

"Joy Division never made it to Russia. ... They never made it out of England hardly!" said Hook, but this Saturday he promised "an enthusiastic, passionate, faithful rendition of Joy Division."

Peter Hook and the Light plays Moscow on Fri. at 8 p.m. Milk, 9 Ulitsa Sergeya Makeyeva. Metro Ulitsa 1905 Goda. Tel. 726-0998. www.milkclub.ru

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