



Charton Christopher (Chris) Frantz was born on 8 May 1951 at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, into a military family. He went to High School in Pittsburgh and in 1965 he was in a High school band called The Hustlers. In March 1969, The Hustlers evolved into The Beans, featuring Chris on drums, Randy Linhart on guitar and vocals, Lloyd Stamey on bass and vocals and Sebastian De Nunzio on keyboard and vocals. Since Pittsburgh wasn't exactly the place to be discovered they moved north to New York City and managed to get a residency at The Electric Circus on St. Marks Place. It didn't work out. The management wanted them to play current Top 40 songs instead doing their own things and Chris left to enroll Rhode Island School of Design in July 1970. The Beans lasted sixteen months.

For the next three years Frantz abandoned the drums in favor of painting, but his love of music inevitably got the better of him once again. The result was The Artistics, a primitive-sounding ensemble created in 1973 with former fellow student David Byrne that would dispense songs by The Troggs, The Knickerbockers, and several other bands (punctuated by a couple of their own compositions) at extremely high volume. The Artistics dissolved after only a year, at which time Byrne moved to New York; a few months later, upon graduating from the RISD, Frantz and his girlfriend Tina Weymouth joined him there, the three moving in together into a loft on the Lower East Side. At the start of 1975 they began putting together material for a new band, but it wasn't until May that public performances (starting with an opening gig for The Ramones at CBGB's) were initiated under the name Talking Heads. After a year cultivating a following on the New York club scene, the trio signed with Sire Records near the end of 1976, releasing the single New Feeling b/w Love Goes to Building on Fire and adding fourth member Jerry Harrison in short succession afterwards.

After the release of their full-length debut Talking Heads: 77 -- and in particular the single Psycho Killer -- the band's following began to spread internationally, carried along with the rise in popularity of what had come to be referred to as "new wave" music. For their second release More Songs About Buildings and Food (1978), the production skills of Brian Eno were enlisted: an association that would continue through the albums Fear of Music (1979) and Remain in Light (1980). By the release of this latter album, the band's line-up had extended to include a large roster of "guest" musicians, with Frantz's drum parts being augmented by percussionist Steve Scales. During a hiatus from group activity in early 1981, Frantz and Weymouth created Tom Tom Club, a more dance-music oriented project whose self-titled debut featured the popular radio hit Genius of Love. A second Tom Tom Club album (Close to the Bone) was released in 1983, but the pair had far from abandoned their involvement in Talking Heads, one of their most popular albums Speaking in Tongues (and its single Burning Down the House) surfacing between the two Club efforts.

The Talking Heads mid-80s output -- in particular the album/film combination projects Stop Making Sense (1984) and True Stories (1986) -- secured their position as one of the most popular acts of the decade. What was initially presented as a temporary break after the release of the album Naked in 1988 had become the permanent dissolution of the band by 1991; by this time Frantz and Weymouth had resumed work as Tom Tom Club, having already issued Boom Boom Chi Boom Boom (1988) and Dark Sneak Love Action (1991). As the 90s progressed, the

two extended their activities to include production work for performers that ranged from Shirley Manson's pre-Garbage vehicle Angelfish to Happy Mondays to Ziggy Marley.

An attempt to resurrect Talking Heads in the middle of the decade mutated into a project eventually called The Heads after David Byrne refused to participate; a single album was released in 1996 using a variety of replacement lead singers (Blondie's Debbie Harry, XTC's Andy Partridge, and Richard Hell minus the Voidoids, amongst others). Byrne initiated legal proceedings against his former bandmates as a result of the too-similar band name, but an out-of-court settlement that allowed them to continue its use was ultimately reached. Despite this disagreement, all four were able to come together amicably enough for brief public reunions celebrating the 15th anniversary of the release of Stop Making Sense in 1999 and their induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2002. In 2000, Tom Tom Club finally returned to action with The Good, the Bad, and the Funky and its associated tours. The band is still around and did shows with Gang of Four and Devo in the summer of 2008.

Collaborations:

- Drums on Robert Palmer's album "Clues"
- Drums on Kurtis Blow's "These are the Breaks"
- Producer (with Tina Weymouth) for Ziggy Marley's album "Conscious Party"
- Producer (with Tina Weymouth) for Ziggy Marley's album "One Bright Day"
- Producer (with Tina Weymouth) for Happy Monday's album "...Yes, Please !"
- Producer (with Tina Weymouth) for Los Fabulosos Cadillacs's album "Rey Azucar"
- Producer (with Tina Weymouth) for Angelfish' album "Angelfish"
- Remixer of Zita Swoon's "Bananaqueen"