

The Year in Music

by Don Teplyske and Sean Gynane

1985 is over and it is now time to reflect on the music of the past year.

The music industry is a fast moving business with dozens of albums and singles released every day; of these records, one or two crack the top forty each week. Obviously, a great amount of exceptional music can be missed if you do not live in a record store.

In 1985 music became more than chunks of cheap vinyl. It was the year musicians lined up to perform for various charitable causes. Locally, Edmonton continued to develop original talent.

Our purpose here is to discuss the more memorable events of '85. The year in music that was — 1985.

The Albums

Sean: We'll begin by discussing our personal favorite albums of 1985.

Kate Bush *Hounds of Love* was far enough removed from the mainstream to be interesting but close enough to it to be one of her most accessible. Though Bush retained her quirks, she channelled them towards creating an album of intelligence while allowing for commercial potential.

"Hounds of Love" is my favorite song on the album — a simple song that builds emotionally.

Don: Don't neglect "Cloudbusting" which is a typically dynamic Kate Bush single.

In my opinion, the strongest album of 1985 was the debut of San Francisco's **Lone Justice**. The band has traditional country and gospel roots injected with powerful 'sixties' overtones.

Their album received universal critical accolades but met with limited commercial success; the reason for this lies in the music itself. Radio programmers were put off by the blend of country and rock — it was too rock for CFCW but too country for CHED.

Maria McKee possesses what is possibly the most exciting female country voice since **Dolly Parton** quit singing country. *Lone Justice* is an exciting album from an undiscovered silver mine.

Sean: Another of my favorite albums was **Dire Straits** *Brothers In Arms*. *Brothers in Arms* will stand the test of time as all the characteristics of a masterpiece: impeccable musicianship, songwriting and production.

Witness the growth in **Mark Knopler's** lyrics. There is a greater sense of realism in his lyrics and music whilst retaining a lighter side previously seen on songs such as "Twisting By The Pool" and "Industrial Disease."

Don: A standout of the past year was **The Judds** *Rockin' With The Rhythm*. The

mother/daughter duo is one of the few saving graces among the sludge currently being passed off as country music.

Wynonna Judd's heart tugging voice is soothed by her mother **Naomi's** harmonies. These traditional country vocals are complimented by the instrumental arrangements of **Don Potter**.

This is a class effort all the way. Sean: **Tears For Fears** have become very stylish as part of the ever changing pop fashion. Next season the kids will be wearing someone else on their shirts and perhaps TFF can return to the progressive, experimental pop displayed on their debut, *The Hurting*.

Songs From the Big Chair was initially very enjoyable but after infinite listenings one becomes aware of the holes in its cloth.

Don: I agree. Tears For Fears "Mothers Talk" was an outstanding performance — basic rhythms given original arrangements. "Shout" and "Head Over Heels" were also interesting on initial listenings.

Eventually, I tired of their depressive mutterings disguised as synthesized intelligence. I, too, look forward to their return to the style of *The Hurting*.

Now, let's discuss an album we both enjoyed, **Pete Townshend's** *White City — A Novel*.

Sean: Townshend has almost finished the hurting and baring of his soul that filled *Chinese Eyes*. He has begun once again to dig at other people's souls.

The introversion of his songwriting though still apparent, is coloured by an extroversion that prompts the listener to question the actions of other people, not just those of Townshend.

Don: Pete Townshend has written his most challenging, and subsequently, most enjoyable music while going through personal crisis. *Quadrophenia* and *Who's Next* were written at a time when Townshend was unsure of his spiritual beliefs. *The Who By Numbers* was written during the lowest depths of alcohol abuse while *Chinese Eyes* was developed as Townshend battled with marital problems and severe heroin addiction. When Pete Townshend is comfortable, his music is less than satisfying; witness **The Who's** last album.

1985 found Pete Townshend comfortable, his life, after twenty years, finally in order, yet, on *White City — A Novel*, Townshend's complacency does not have a negative effect on his music.

Throughout the album it is apparent that Townshend has removed the self imposed 'burden' of representing the entire youth of

England and accepted his responsibilities to himself and to his family.

He has embraced middle age in an attempt to depict the social instability of urban England. *White City — A Novel* is a lyrically challenging attempt at righting some of this imbalance.

Finally, after a dozen albums, Townshend has cured his pitiful, broken soul.

Sean: Let's continue our focus on other personal favorites of 1985.

Don: I have always disliked the "comeback" label. More often than not the performer had never left.

Heart made a colossal jump out of the delete bins in the past year. Their self-titled album was typical of most Heart albums — very hard and noisy in some places, beautifully melodic in others. *Heart* does not have a weak moment in its forty — crisp production, strong songwriting and powerful performances by a rejuvenated band.

Heart is all the more of a delightful surprise because no one expected the band to bounce back from three flops.

Someone who made a legitimate comeback was **John Fogerty**. *Centerfield* has the same basic ingredients as the best of **Credence Clearwater Revival** songs, which is a testimony to the strength of those classic performances.

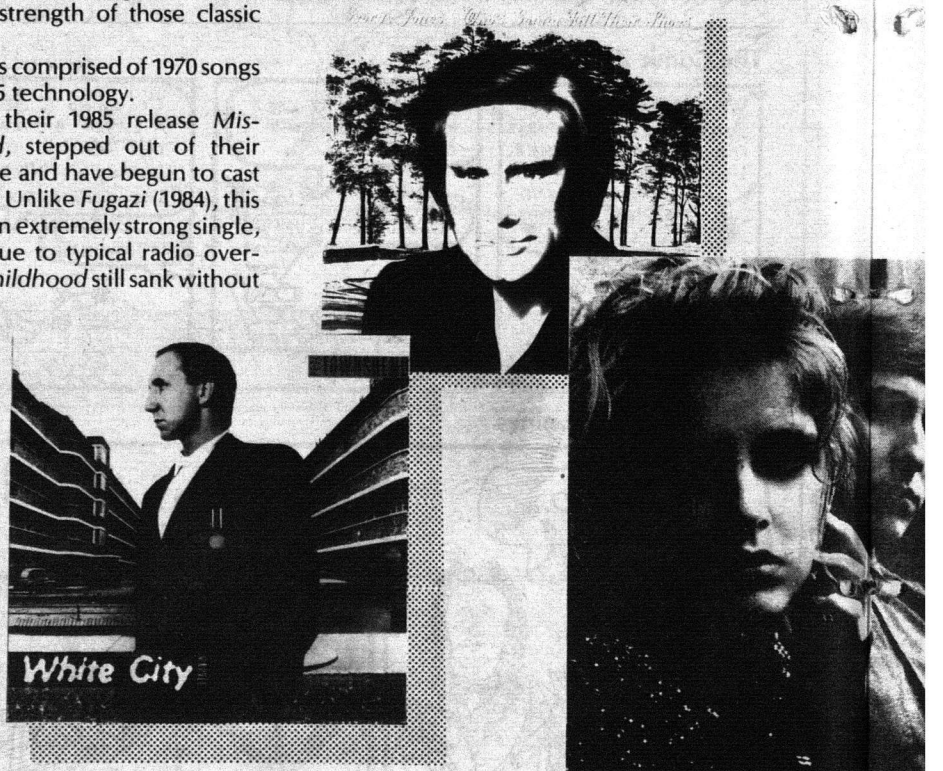
Sean: *Centerfield* is comprised of 1970 songs recorded with 1985 technology.

Marillion, with their 1985 release *Misplaced Childhood*, stepped out of their **Genesis**-clone stage and have begun to cast their own shadow. Unlike *Fugazi* (1984), this album contained an extremely strong single, "Kayleigh". Yet, due to typical radio oversight, *Misplaced Childhood* still sank without a trace.

Don's Favorite Albums

1. Lone Justice — Lone Justice
2. the Judds — Rockin' With the Rhythm
3. Pete Townshend — White City
4. Prefab Sprout — Steve McQueen
5. John Mellencamp — Scarecrow
6. Heart — Heart
7. Loretta Lynn — Just A Woman
8. Katrina and the Waves
9. the Boomtown Rats — In the Long Grass
10. George Jones — Who's Gonna Fill Their shoes
11. John Fogerty — Centerfield
12. Jason and the Scorchers — Lost and Found
13. Artists United Against Apartheid — Sun City
14. Strange advance — Two
15. Eurythmics — Be Yourself Tonight
16. The Three O'Clock — Arrive Without Travelling
17. The Knitters — Poor Little Critter on the Road
18. Nina Hagen — In Ekstacy
19. New Order — Low Life
20. Graham Parker — Steady Nerves
21. Prince — Around the World In A Day
22. Kim Carnes — Barking At Airplanes
23. Dead or Alive — Youthquake
24. Scritti Politti — Cupid and Psyche '85
25. Darkroom — A Test of Time

Don Teplyske is a regular Gateway entertainment writer.



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