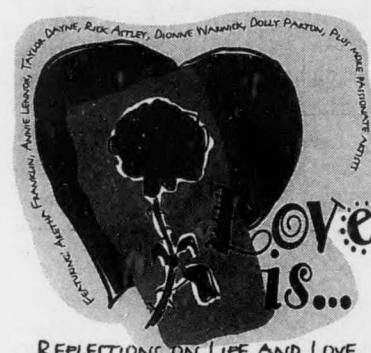


# GENRECIDES

MICHAEL EDWARDS

If you have paid a visit to a record store lately, you must have noticed the vast numbers of CDs vying for the lucrative Valentine's Day market. The thought is that if people are faced with the choice of the new Iron Maiden album or a compilation full of romantic songs, the latter will be picked. Or that's the idea anyway. And if you feel that way, you can pick from five or six new compilation CDs that have been released just for that special day - I only got one of them though, so I suppose that makes me a touch unloved. Sigh. Oh well.

Let's take a look at *Love Is...* which apparently contains 14 of the most romantic songs ever. Or so they would have you believe. If you stick a heart on the cover and make sure that 'love' is mentioned enough times in the titles of the songs, it would appear that you can make these outlandish



REFLECTIONS ON LIFE AND LOVE

claims. Sure, you do get Air Supply's classic 'All Out Of Love' and Mr. Mister's 'Broken Wings', but most of the other songs are very forgettable. They even include Dolly Parton's original version of 'I Will Always Love You' instead of the Whitney Houston version that everybody knows and (ahem) loves. Instead of wasting your money on this, just buy a blank tape and record your own favourite songs to avoid the disappointment of listening to Alabama singing 'Love In The First Degree'.

Frank Black is back, and he's weirder than ever. By the time that the Pixies final album turned up, it was becoming apparent that he had more than a passing interest in space, science fiction and other unexplained stuff. Even the title of his new album, *The Cult Of Ray*, refers to one of the more famous people from that scene, namely Ray Bradbury, and most of the songs make some sort of mention of weird stuff in their peculiar lyrics. *The Cult Of Ray* features some of his most Pixie-ish work since the band called it a day back in 1991; those chiming guitars feel like an old, familiar friend. But like in the other work he has done since the Pixies croaked their last, he tries his hand at being a bit of a rocker

It was recently observed that there has never been a photograph of a hedgehog in *The Brunswickan* during its illustrious 129-year history. In order to make up for this oversight, here is a hedgehog. Enjoy.

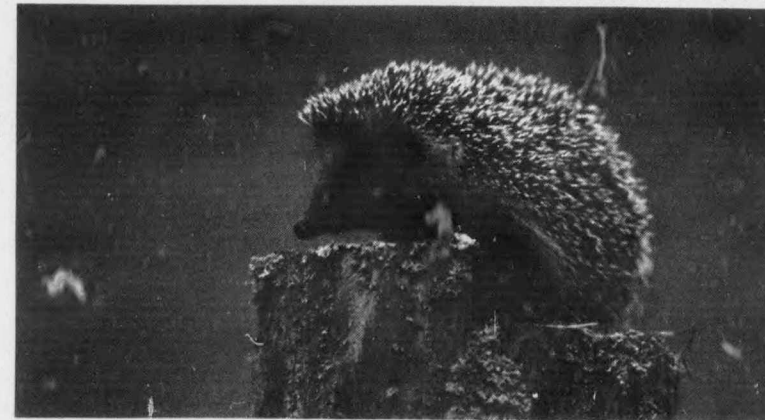
ever since he recorded two tracks for the Otis Blackwell tribute album, he seems to have harboured a desire to be the new Elvis. Or something like that. Because it only features 13 songs, *The Cult Of Ray* is a more satisfying album than *Teenager Of The Year*. And that is simply because you don't have to sift through the filler to get to the meat. The meat is good. Very good. Just listen to 'Men In Black', 'You Ain't Me' or 'I Don't Want To Hurt You (Every Single Time)' for evidence of that. His best solo work to date.



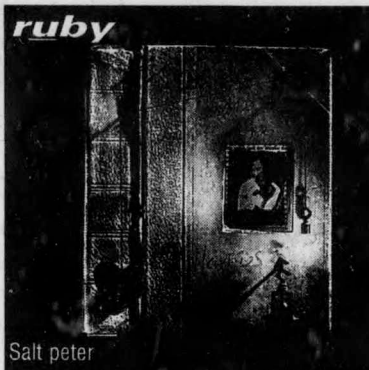
I'll admit it - I've always liked the Indigo Girls. From the first time I heard their wonderful self-titled album, I was smitten. Amy and Emily's voices work so well together, and most of their songs can make the hairs on the back of anyone's neck stand on end. They've been around for so long now that they have just put out a double live CD entitled *1200 Curfews*. It gathers together songs from their past five albums, and adds a few extra covers for good measure. While some of the songs don't live up to the potential of their early ones ('Chickenman' for instance), there is no denying that the acoustic frenzy of 'Land Of Canaan' is a wonderful, rousing song - the good far outweighs the bad. It is hardly the kind of thing that will win any new fans, but it will keep their existing fans happy until they head back into the recording studio.



So, time for some Canadian stuff now. Toronto's An April March had an EP out earlier in the year which found them sounding more like the Cocteau Twins than ever. They



might try to shirk such comparisons, but they just can't escape them. The combination of Danella Hovevar's voice and Christopher Perry's layer after layer of guitar is quite the joyous thing to behold. *Lessons In Vengeance* does find them shifting their focus just a little bit to include acoustic work. They also put the effects pedals on one side for some songs - the word 'ethereal' could even be dispensed with, and that must come as a real shock to the band. But most of it sounds pretty much as you'd expect them to sound. They are going to have to fight the mention of the Cocteau Twins for ever more. All they can do is take it as a compliment (in most cases I'm sure that is what it is meant as) and get on with making more music. Is that really too much to ask?



Lesley Rankine has been around for quite a while now. She started her musical career in a loud, angry band Silverfish where she displayed one of the finest pair of lungs in thrash. Then she disappeared for a few years, turning up from time to time doing weird collaborations with country rockers, the Rockingbirds and some industrial rockers. Working with the folks from Pigface probably influenced her new direction in her new project Ruby. The debut release is entitled *Salt Peter*, and could be considered as the noisier cousin to Portishead. The kind of cousin that your parents warn you not to go near as they are scared. The kind of cousin that gets kept in the basement, and never sees daylight. That kind of cousin. While there might be similar hip hop beats, the guitars are a lot harder. More aggressive. The lyrics are more sinister. And funnier - Lesley has the kinds of sense of humour that makes her lament the fact that she can't write her name in the snow. But there is all kind of symbolism in both the songs and the artwork that makes *Salt Peter* intriguing and mesmerising. An impressive debut (of sorts), and well worth checking out.

# PROTRACTING THE ANGLES

by PETER J.

Valentine's Day. An occasion traditionally regarded as a *jour d'amour*, a celebration steeped in romance, a day to confer love and admiration (and gifts!) upon that special person in your life. Ahh, such bliss and glory on beautiful, wonderful Valentine's Day.

But does anyone question why Hallmark rakes in a fortune on February 14? There are several mentions of various St. Valentines throughout history, but Valentine's Day is predominantly derived from the actions of two particular 'men of the cloth.' Both ventured to Rome, both cured physical ailments, and both were beheaded for their troubles. Today we acknowledge their deaths in the best way we know how: 'In honour of brutally unfair twelfth century decapitations, I'll express my love with some very yummy candy!' If only pure milk chocolate could have saved St. Valentine...

Well, the Valentines do ultimately correlate with affection and love. Plus the specific date established for Valentine's Day also contains other implications of amorous rituals, while the idea of designating February 14 for professing admiration and adoration breaks up the week's monotony. Most importantly, though, it occurs four days before my birthday.

These points need to be made to keep individuals informed. However, when rapturously enamoured with their beloved, those busy people don't have time to contemplate such thoughts.

But I do. See, I don't have a significant other. I don't even have an insignificant other. Nor do I have the time to actively participate in a search for any sort of other, unless it's that girl who borrowed money from me in October. Believe me, I'm still hunting for that one.

However, once in a great, great while I'll stumble into someone, not through a friend, not via Internet, not even using a 900 number, but through sheer luck, fate, kismet... whatever. And she'd be smart, funny, and able to taste the difference between ordinary popcorn and Orville Redenbacher's new secret brand. But of course I don't stand a chance with this girl, right? So in the spirit of Valentine's Day, I propose a new system of attracting people that might possibly give me a fighting chance to sway that special someone. Hey, why can't reality be altered to my benefit for once?

First of all, my past relationships have all ended amicably, so to my credit I've still maintained my friendships and they hold me in high regard. Therefore, why can't I ask ex's for a letter of reference? That would save so much time and effort, and just avoid that 'trying to prove yourself' stage. 'Look, it says here that I'm a caring, intelligent guy with a sense of humour and can carry a conversation. It's true! Here are my references! They'll vouch for me!' Alas, that's morally undermining and probably illegal. But such a good idea...

So how about one of those Ten Day Trial Periods? Wouldn't that be something? Then the girl really has nothing to lose because if she's not satisfied after the elapsed time, she can just stuff me back in the box and ship me back to *The Brunswickan*.

Or maybe some kind of 'Get Out of Relationship Free' card. Wow, wouldn't that be a huge incentive to commence a relationship, knowing you can cash that in to get out of it, no questions asked? Coincidentally, I never seemed to get that 'Get Out of Jail Free' card when I played Monopoly. I always obtained the \$10 prize for winning the beauty contest, though. (Hmm, I smell irony.)

But alas, my imaginative rules will never come into being. It's too bad, really, because then maybe people wouldn't be so afraid to take a chance.

Basically, Valentine's Day should be a day of freedom. It should be an opportunity for people to express their feelings to others, to let the 'apple of their eye' know how they truly feel about them. I look around and see guys and girls that remain single because others are too timid or hesitant to express their feelings towards them. Don't be so scared, because what do you honestly have to lose? Wherever you are, you should phone, or exploit your E-mail, or send a carrier pigeon to let the other person know that they mean something to you - before it's too late.

Because, y'know, that's what the St. Valentines' really would have wanted. Well, before they had their heads chopped off, of course.

PS - This story is offered in regard to the depressing Valentine's material saturating this week's *Brunswickan*. Hopefully my ever-present cheerful feelings counter the despair of the other writers. Hey, it's fun to be happy.

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