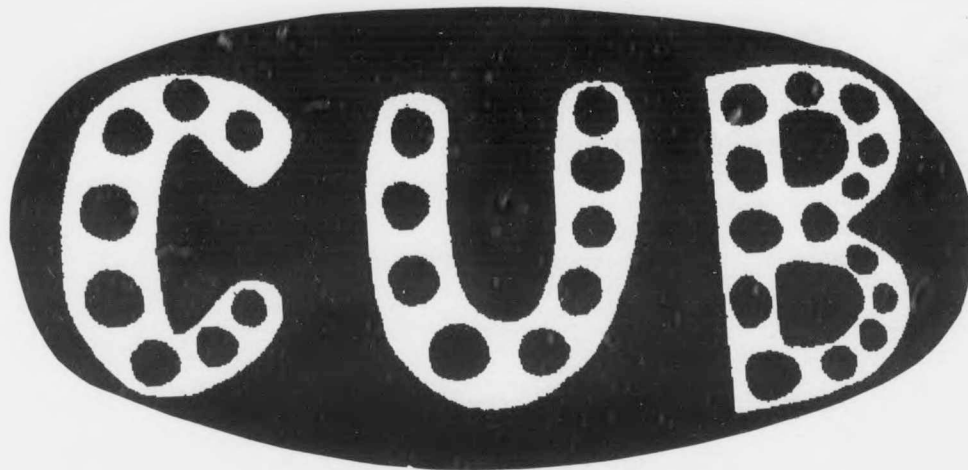




I think that it is pretty safe to say that Cub are the cutest band in Canada, maybe even the cutest band in the world. And a very cool band too; they managed to convince Archie artist Dan DeCarlo to draw the cover of their first album while Toronto artist Fiona Smyth does the honours on their new album *Come Out Come Out*. So that brings me to their new album which I did briefly mention a few weeks ago, but now seems as good a time as any to tell you all about it. After all, they have been touring for the past three weeks and have another three to go - they deserve some blatant publicity.

So what of *Come Out Come Out*? Well, it's very tempting to say that it's more of the same from them, but yet the more I listen to it, the more I think that they have come a long way in the past couple of years. The debut, *Betti-Cola*, was a very fun collection of 24 short songs - that isn't a criticism as I have long been a supporter of songs which know when to shut up. I find it really tough to think of a better pop song than 'My Chinchilla' which is still one of their finest moments. But on the new album, I am almost tempted to say that their songs have more depth, but that sounds incredibly pompous so I won't. There are 13 songs on *Come Out Come Out*, all of them brand new, apart from the two almost mandatory cover versions - the Go-Go's 'Vacation' and Yoko Ono's 'I'm Your Angel' (which they thankfully left her customary wailing off...), and a couple of hidden surprises stuck on at the end. And the best thing is that all of them make me feel happy. Cub's music has that ability - I swear you can hear Lisa smiling as she sings, and that sort of feeling is very infectious. Couple that with



by Michael Edwards

some fuzzy, buzzing guitars and the occasional sweet harmony and you have one of the best pop albums I have heard in a long time. Everyone should send \$12 to Mint Records in Vancouver and beg them to send you a copy as quickly as they possibly can.

Unfortunately, Cub didn't stop off in Fredericton as they sped along the East coast. But I made the trek down to Halifax last Saturday to catch them in concert. The added bonus of the evening was that the two other bands playing on the same bill were the Inbreds and Halifax's very own Jale. The Inbreds were rather good - for the uninitiated, they have a unique bass-and-drums-only sound which is a bit weird for the first couple of songs, but then it becomes beguiling. I liked them. Jale were more than a little disappointing though. Some of the old favourites were there and they still wove their spell over the crowd. But much of the songs they performed were new (they must be getting close to a second album...), and they seemed more than a little on the uninspired side. Maybe it was just because the songs were unfamiliar, or that the band was a bit tired. But it saddens me to say that their time on stage dragged. Sorry.

And then there was Cub. They were the first band to play which meant that the evening started in a very happy, jolly sort of way. Lisa, Robynn and Lisa took to the stage wearing some rather natty suit and tie ensembles and worked their way through a whole bunch of songs. Some from each album, with the emphasis being on the new one, and even a few new songs too. Cub songs are hardly known for lasting a very long period of time so in their 50 minute set, they managed to cram a lot of them in - it's so nice to get value for money these days. Things become a bit louder in concert too; Robynn's guitar playing got even fuzzier, and Lisa's bass was being plucked as if there was no tomorrow. At one point Robynn and Lisa G. switched places on guitar and drums, just to show what talented multi-instrumentalists they are. *Very* impressive. They also had a rather good rapport with the audience; the occasional joke, telling us how wonderful it was to be back in Halifax and Lisa G (the drummer) even took a photo of us all for their scrapbook. It was an awful lot of fun, and well worth the drive to get down there. I just hope that the next time they come out touring they can be convinced to stop off in Fredericton.

If all that wasn't enough, I even managed to conduct a bit of an interview with these delightful girls. They answered a whole lot of questions, and even though she must have been exhausted (seeing she answered most of the questions) Robynn took the time to draw the lovely cartoon that you see nestling in the corner of the page. So here goes with everything that you wanted to know about Cub, but were afraid to ask...

Tell me all about being cute.

Robynn: The whole cute thing, I feel, is another media pigeonhole/label. Regardless of what you do, once the media has decided on a category for you it's very difficult to change. The "darker songs" aren't an attempt to shake that image - they have been there all along, but are overlooked most of the time in favour of the happy melodies. What do we feel about the 'cute' thing? Well, there's worse things we could be called, but why waste your energy stewing over it.

Do you enjoy being on an indie label?

R: We are very happy being on an indie label, especially Mint. They're great! We've got such an excellent relationship in which we totally help each other out. Lisa, Lisa G and I all go down to the Mint offices whenever we can to answer phones, stuff envelopes, etc. The Mint guys have road-managed for us and sold stuff at shows for us too.

And what about the music scene in Vancouver?

R: The music community is terrific. Lots of diversity. Lots of support. Lots of 'zines. Lots of indie labels. But not enough venues to play at.

Do you enjoy touring?

R: We always seem to have a fab time on tour meeting lots of very cool people from all over the place. We love touring. So far we've been all over Canada and the US. On this tour we'll be playing with some really great bands like Sebadoh, Jale, The Inbreds, Pluto, The Smugglers and even Guided By Voices in Seattle.

What's the deal with all your drummers? Is there some sort of Spinal Tap thing going on?

R: Our original drummer was Valeria, she left to devote her life to chocolate (Yum!). On our very first tour, Neko (now drumming for Meow) from Tacoma, Washington was our drummer. Then, on our west coast tour David Carwsell (guitarist for the Smugglers) drummed for us. We figured that we should probably get a full-time drummer, and as luck would have it, Lisa G had a drum kit! We'd met her while working on the Self-Esteem Queen 'zine.

What were the first records you bought? Any clues into early influences?

R: Mine was one of the Bay City Rollers' (I think).

Lisa: Beach Boys' Greatest Hits for me.

Lisa G: A wonderful 7" of 'I Have A Dream' by Donny Osmond. I still have it and listen often!!!

And some of your female influences?

R: Our moms, Heather from Beat Happening, Georgia from Yo La Tengo, Lois.

So if you could be an animal, which one would it be?



R: A walrus (I don't know why, but if we were playing word association that's what my answer would be).

L: A zebra because I look sooooo good in stripes!

L G: A very difficult question since so many habitats are being ruined..... So my first inclination would be a cat (independent, always lands on their feet, 9 lives). But house cats are often abused.....and in the savannah I could roam as a lion. But heck I'd be a hawk cause then I could FLY and have CLAWS!

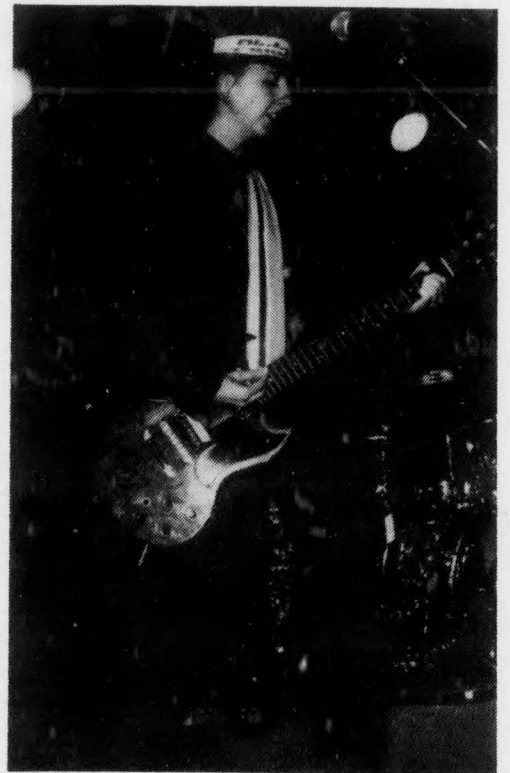
Tell me a secret about Cub.

L: We're all saving up for nosejobs! Cher is our idol!!

And some final advice for any aspiring musicians?

R: If you think that you might wanna be in a band, do a 'zine, or whatever, what the heck, give it a try....and have fun doing it.

(If you want to get in touch with Cub or Mint Records, then write to: 699-810 W. Broadway, Vancouver, BC, V5C 4C9. And please remember to tell them who sent you...)



Guitars-a-gogo frenzy time with Lisa G, and the much more leisurely Robynn.