

# Demystifying Moist

The angst of popularity

by Jen Horsey

I've encountered two basic reactionary groups when I mention the name Moist. First, there are the people who have seen their videos on Much Music and who've heard tracks from their album, *Silver*, on their favorite commercial radio station. These people think Moist are pretty cool, vaguely alternative, and think it's good that they're coming down. The other group of people are the indie snobs who hate Moist. They hate the corporate image of the band, apparently they also hate the music, but no one has ever been able to tell me why that is. If you are among the people who are looking forward to their arrival, read on.

Vancouver based Moist released their first album, *Silver*, in January as an independent group. They filmed a simple, inexpensive black and white video and fired it off to Much Music expecting three or four plays. The video for 'Push' did far better than expected, and in no time Moist found that the demand for their product was beyond their control. In February of this year, they went looking for a label.

These guys are an impatient bunch, and when I spoke to their bassist over the phone, he complained that it "took a while" for them to find a label. They were signed in April, to EMI.

Since then, they've had success with two more videos for 'Silver' and 'Believe Me.' Much Music has been instrumental in promoting this band, and it is through their videos that Moist has achieved the majority of their recognition.

Moist is quickly becoming less and less alternative as time goes on (and

some would argue that they never were). They are in the middle of what they're calling a "perma tour" right now, which means that they've been on tour for six months. Aside from the week that they'll be taking off at Christmas, they anticipate that they will continue to sleep in their tour bus for another six months, until they go into the studio to record their next album.

Even if you're in the group of people who hate these guys, you've got to give them credit for their ambition. Jeff mentioned that only one in six bands who get signed actually make any money. Moist, it would seem, are striving to be that one in six. And they're not there yet. "We're not making any money still" said Jeff over the phone from Albuquerque, "We're making due with minimal means."

I actually asked them, on suggestion of one of the people in that second group of individuals, (the ones who find Moist distasteful) 'What brand of angst they were taking.' I could hear the guy wincing over the phone. They object to the suggestion that they are "contrived in any way." He suggested that there are people in the indie scene who resent them, but stressed how hard they are working to achieve success. "We aren't just this band that's has success given to us on a platter", said Jeff, "We gave up everything."

The most recent video for 'Believe Me' takes Moist into new video territory. It is filmed as a story and ends with the suicide hotline number. They saw the opportunity to try and make an impact with the song, and hope that it will have an effect, and maybe help somebody. In case you were wonder-



## ARTIST PROFILE... OR 10 HORRIBLE QUESTIONS TO ASK AN ARTIST

This week: Kate MacDonald  
Kate is a 22 year old writer and native Haligonian

GAZ: What are your goals?  
KM: I don't really think of writing in terms of goals. It is not about working towards something specific.

GAZ: What is your major source of inspiration?

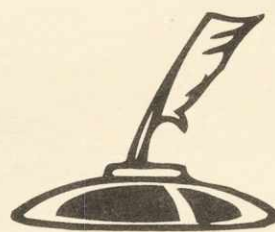
KM: Writing is a habit for me. It is just something I have always done. My earliest memory is writing my first story. Not writing would be unnatural.

GAZ: Is there any one or thing that you idolize?

KM: If I was going to idolize something it would not be a person or even an idea. Either would make writing pointless.

GAZ: Are there specific messages being conveyed by your work?

KM: Oh, always!



GAZ: What are you working on right now?

KM: I'm trying to get a grant from the Canada Council so that I can spend some time really focused on my writing, and get away from distractions. A grant would help me do that. I also have about half a dozen unfinished manuscripts on the go.

GAZ: What was your most satisfying artistic experience or which piece was the most satisfying to finish?

KM: Finishing a piece is almost anticlimactic for me because the tail end of the writing process is a very charged experience. In the past couple of years I became able to show people things that I had written and received what I feel are honest reactions.

GAZ: Now time for my favourite question: Are there any questions that I forgot to ask?

KM: Nothing that I'd actually answer.

GAZ: Is that because you despise me or because I'm likely to print whatever you say?

KM: Neither.

by James Beddington

# DECONSTRUCTING '94

## ALBUMS

- Frank Black - Teenager of the Year †
- Hole - Live Through This †
- Charlatans U.K. - Up to Our Hips †
- Weezer - self-titled †
- Spine - Hot, Handsome, and a Honey to Handle †
- Sloan - Twice Removed †
- Sonic Youth - Experimental Jet Set, Trash and No Star †
- jale - Dreamcake †
- Sarah McLachlin - Fumbling Towards Ecstasy
- Tragically Hip - Day For Night
- Coil - Love's Secret Domain
- The Crow - soundtrack
- Pulp Fiction - soundtrack †
- Apothiosis - Umbratha
- Hip Club Groove - Trailer Park Hip Hop
- Vangelis - Themes
- Erasure - I Say I Say I Say

## TV

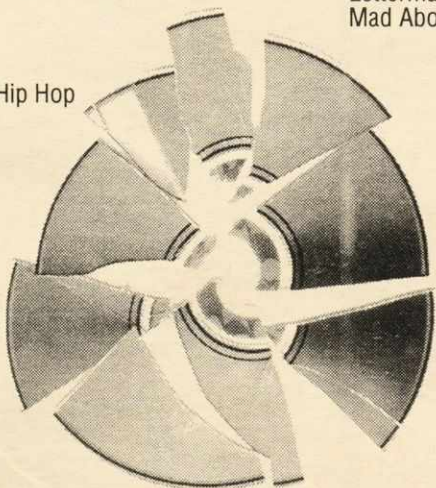
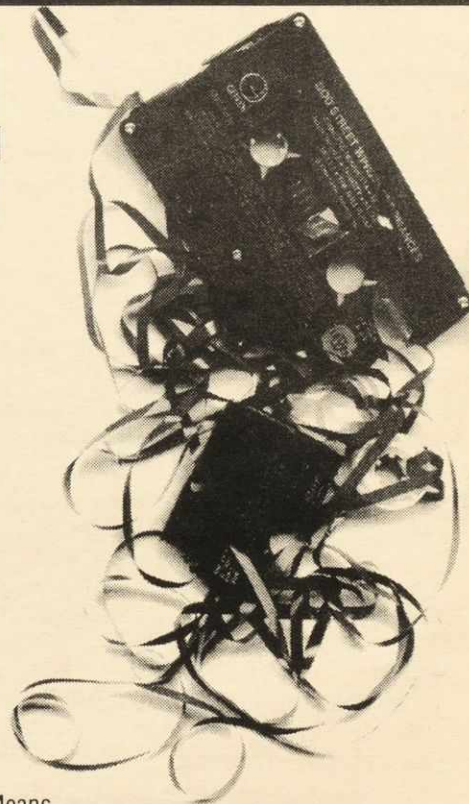
- Conan O'Brien †
- Simpsons †
- Frasier †
- Mighty Morphin' Power Rangers
- Mr. Bean †
- Larry Sanders †
- X-Files
- This Hour Has 22 Minutes
- Dr. Quinn
- Letterman
- Mad About You

## ADS

- Ad Busters
- SEGA! †
- Leon's

## GIGS

- Any Spine gig - anywhere †
- Stereolab - Pop Explosion †
- Change of Heart - Pop Explosion †
- Scarce - Pop Explosion †
- Lawn Jam †
- Big Sugar - Grawood †
- Crappo II - Brunswick Hall †
- Horseshoes & Handgrenades/Eric's Trip/NoMeans
- No/Hanson Brothers - McInnes Room †
- Hip Club Groove - Pop Explosion †



## SONGS

- Superstar - Sonic Youth †
- Basket Case - Green Day
- Rocket - Smashing Pumpkins

## VIDEOS

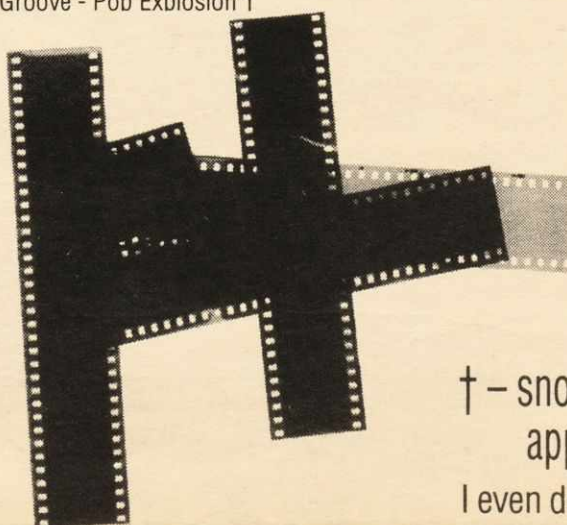
- Beastie Boys - Sabotage †
- Nine Inch Nails - March of Pigs †
- Frank Black - Headache †
- Weezer - Buddy Holly & Undone †
- Primus - DMV †
- Neil Young - Piece of Crap †

## MOVIES

- PULP FICTION †
- True Lies †
- The Crow †
- A Low Down Dirty Shame †
- Natural Born Killers †
- Shawshank Redemption
- The Professional
- Pulp Fiction
- Six Degrees of Separation
- Being at Home with Claud
- Speed
- Age of Innocence
- The Crow †
- The Trial †
- Four Weddings and a Funeral
- Hudsucker Proxy
- Priscilla
- Pulp Fiction

## BOOKS

- "People still read??"
- Lost Soul
- Yarrow
- The Shipping News



† - snobby arts editor approved

I even designed this - M.G.