

The Unforgettable Fire
U2
Island/WEA
review by Warren Opheim

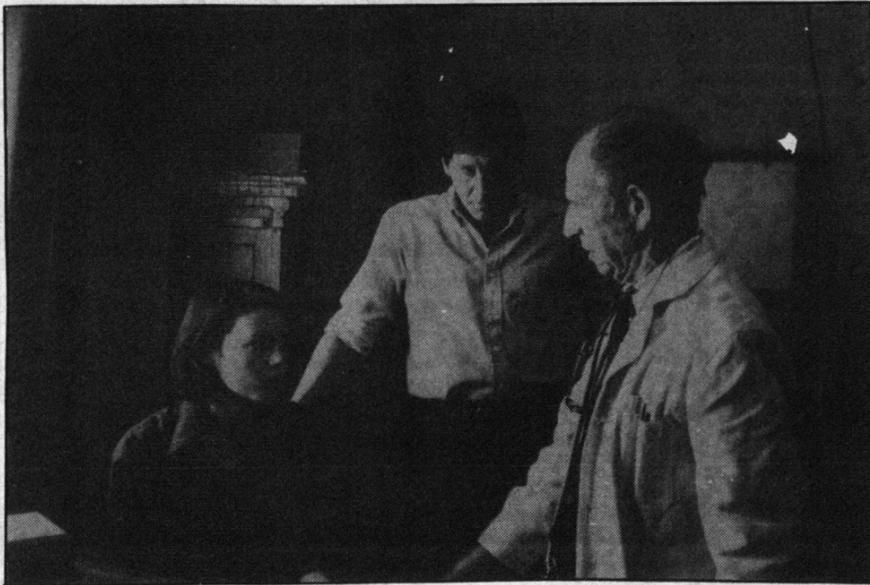
With the exception of the single, "Pride (in the name of love)," and only brief moments on other songs, there is nothing typically U2 on their latest (and perhaps greatest) album, *The Unforgettable Fire*. The Edge's trademark squealing guitar, copied unsuccessfully by so many others, is almost absent, but is replaced by rhythmic scratching ("Indian Summer Sky"), jingling ("Elvis Presley and America"), and subdued plucking ("Promenade," "4th of July"). Bono's vox as it were, is exploring ground thus far uncovered on any previous U2 release. The production is such that his voice weaves around the music a la Simple Minds ("Wire") and,

like the guitar, is less of a dominant force on a few tracks, but no less powerful or sincere. His passionate shouting appears on some songs, but his animal-like howling is kept to a minimum.

One big surprise is the use of a Fairlight CMI, most apparent on the title track. Bono, especially, has mentioned in interviews his preference for more "natural" sounds, i.e. guitar, bass, drums, piano, etc. But it ain't what you use - it's the way you use it; and it's used very effectively here thank-you.

In comparison to the other albums, *The Unforgettable Fire* is not as reactionary or outraged as *War* was. It's certainly not like the wide-eyed and innocent adolescence of *Boy*. However, there is a dark and haunting feeling like that of their best album (that is, until now), *October* which was released three years ago this month.

The pleasant irony of this directional change is that U2 still sounds like U2. *The Unforgettable Fire* is uplifting and hopeful as ever, but this time they've crated a masterpiece. Granted, it's not as immediately gratifying as *Boy* and *War*, but after all, if they have put all they've got into making this new record, shouldn't we put all we've got into listening to it?



Old-Time pow wow in *Impulse*.

Rockwellian fantasy

Impulse
Twentieth Century Fox

review by David Jordan

"What is wrong with this Norman Rockwell picture?" That was director Graham Baker's initial approach to filming *Impulse*. Baker does a beautiful job of capturing the innocence of Small Town, U.S.A., but as the Rockwellian veneer cracks, and the hidden neuroses of inhabitants surface, the audience is more likely to laugh than be horrified.

Impulse follows a standard horror film formula. Jennifer (Meg Tilly) returns to her hometown, accompanied by boyfriend, Stuart (Time Matheson). As Terror Unknown advances from school gym to Main Street, the hero and heroine set up shop in Doc's lab, racing to find the antidote before Total Destruction prevails.

It is to Baker's credit that he does not fall back on special effects and fortuitous sex and violence. We are drawn right into the Rockwell tableau, and some insightful screenwriting could have shocked us into seriously questioning the line between sanity and insanity. But imagination is lacking: a local boy is jealous of Stuart, so he breaks his own fingers to impress Jenny; Mrs. Ashley is pissed off when Stuart takes her parking place, so she rams his car. Little boys playing with matches, old men pissing in the street, and even doctors playing God in life and death situations — these run-of-the-mill neuroses are hardly going to shock us.

Where the film totally collapses is with its passion for explanations. The credibility that Baker so patiently builds up is destroyed when two doctors come up with the hokey explanation that "the censor urge in people has been removed." Scriptwriters Bert Davis and Don Carlos Dunaway smack us over the head with the plot's solution fifteen minutes into the movie. ("You know I never drink that stuff," Jennifer, the only character unaffected by the mysterious psychosis, says as camera zooms in on milk pitcher.) The explanations go from sledge hammer sub-

tlety to wrecking ball demolition when the writers make a slap-dash attempt at introducing a political element.

Impulse had terrific potential to explore the dark side of human nature, and its direction and photography deliver, with an all-too-rare subtlety. The sophomoric writing, though, leaves *Impulse* bound by the same realism that makes Norman Rockwell so boring.

Canadian literature live

The University of Alberta English department has been organizing the Slater Reading Series since 1978. The series includes readings by well-known Canadian authors, unpublished writers, and even student writers. Every year, organizers also try to include poetry readings in at least one language other than English.

Funding from Alberta Culture usually includes the stipulation that readings be limited to Alberta writers, but this year additional assistance from Canada Council will allow for five readings from across Canada in the second term.

This year's Slater Reading Series covers the entire range, from readings of original works by U of A students to 20th century Japanese poetry in the original and in translation. All readings are on Thursday at 12:30 in HC 2-42 unless advertised otherwise.

- Oct. 11 — Monica Hughes (fiction for young adults); U of A Writer-in-residence.
- Oct. 25 — Marie Moser (fiction). Sharon Carlson-Berge (poetry). Silvan Zamaro (poetry)
- Nov. 1 — Dr. Sonja Arntzen of East Asian Studies will read 20th century Japanese poetry in the original and in translation.
- Nov. 15 — Dr. Henry Kreisel (fiction)
- Nov. 29 — Dr. Bert Almon (poetry). Dr. Sara Stambaugh (fiction)
- Jan. 15 — Eli Mandel (poetry)

- Jan. 24 — Lola Tostavin (poetry)
- Feb. 7 — Robert Kroetsch (poetry/fiction)
- Feb. 14 — Ian Adam (poetry). Gloria Sawai (fiction)
- Feb. 28 — Sandra Birdsell (fiction)
- Mar. 14 — Student REading including Paulette Dube, Lenard Wyatt
- Mar 28 — Aritha van Herk (fiction)



Monica Hughes, U of A writer in residence.

Photo Bill St. John



The Album Playlist is based on Airplay - a combination of programmer preference and listeners' requests. Tune in every Sunday at 12:00 for the **Alternative Countdown** - the favorite albums, EP's singles and tapes.

ALBUM PLAYLIST

1. *Tom Verlaine* — Cover — (Warner Brothers/WEA)
2. *Various Artists* — Something to Believe In (Better Youth Organization)
3. *Stockholm Monster* — Alma Mater (Factory)
4. *Robyn Hitchcock* — I Often Dream of Trains (Midnight Music)
5. *Bangles* — All Over the Place (Columbia/CBS)
6. *Kid Bastien's Happy Pals* — Kid Bastien's Happy Pals (Sunny South)
7. *The Replacements* — Hootenanny (Twin Tone)
8. *Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields* — Amadeus (soundtrack) (A&M)
9. *Rickie Lee Jones* — Magazine (Warner Brothers/WEA)
10. *General Public* — All the Rage (I.R.S./A&M)
11. *Leo Smith* — Rastafari (Sackville)
12. *David Wilcox* — Bad Reputation (Capitol)
13. *Sprangeen* — Sprangeen (Springthyme)

14. *Xmah Deutschland* — Tocsin (4AD/Polygram)
15. *Rip Rig and Panic* — Attitude (Virgin)

EP's, SINGLES, TAPES

1. *Captain Beefheart and His Magic Band* — The Legendary A&M Sessions (A&M)
2. *Dead Can Dance* — Garden of Arcane Delights (4AD)
3. *Wah* — A Word to the Wise (Beggar's Banquet/Polygram)
4. *Factual* — Factual (Faction)
5. *Omni Garage* — The Fighter (Tape)
6. *Damned* — Thanks for the Night (Damned Records)
7. *Gil* — Scott Harron — Re-Ron (Arista/Polygram)
8. *The Work Party* — The Work Song (Mo-Da-Mu)
9. *Frank Zappa* — Music from "The Perfect Stranger" (Angel/Capitol)
10. *Bolero Lava* — Bolero Lava (Mo-Da-Mu)



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