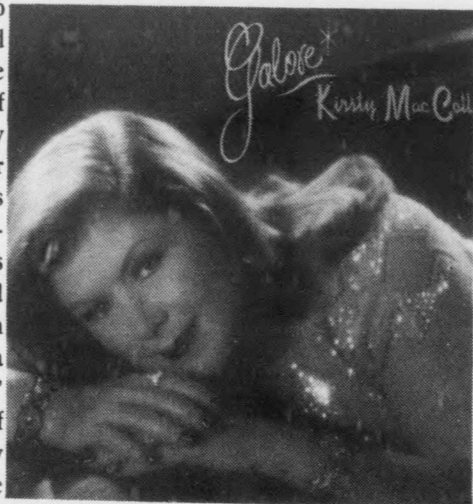


# GENRECID

# THE WORLD IS A VERY UNFAIR PLACE

MICHAEL EDWARDS

I am always more than a little disturbed when a talented singer has been around for a long time and no one seems to notice, and that is more than true of Kirsty MacColl. After fifteen years and four albums, she has just released *Galore* which would be a 'greatest hits' compilation if there was any justice in the



world. But, as we all know, the world is a very unfair place and so *Galore* is simply a collection of songs that everyone ignored when they first came out. Sigh. Yet I would bet that most people have heard her sing at one time or another - she has sung backing vocals for the likes of the Smiths, Talking Heads, Tracey Ullman, David Byrne and Billy Bragg to name but a few. When she dueted with the Pogues on "Fairytale of New York", she made it into the spotlight for a few fleeting moments. But then it was back to relative obscurity again. Sigh.

*Galore* is the perfect way to make your apologies, and find out what a talented person Kirsty MacColl is. Her own songwriting abilities are demonstrated by such gems as "They Don't Know", "Free World" and "There's A Guy Works Down The Chip Shop Swears He's Elvis" among others. She doesn't limit herself to one style of song either; she moves easily from country to pop to dancey-stuff to even samba on "My Affair". And it all happens so effortlessly - witty lyrics, gor-

geous tunes and, on top of all that, her voice. That's one of the most special things about her - a unique voice that is so difficult to categorize. The voice of an angel? Very probably - the multi-layered harmonies that she uses so well make every song her own, even cover versions. Its almost like listening to the songs made familiar by the Kinks,

Billy Bragg, the Smiths and Lou Reed for the first time again. If there is even the smallest amount of justice in the world, Kirsty MacColl will be a household name when her fifth album turns up later on in the year. We'll see.

And because I seem to be writing on the subject of injustice this week, I must also bring to your attention another new release, *The Sound of the Hit Parade*. This is the Hit Parade's third album (fourth if you include a special release in Japan where I am told they are very big...) and once more it is falling upon apathetic ears. Sigh. But something tells me that Julian Henry, the genius behind the band, must realise this - there is a warning on the sleeve that states "this long player contains thoughtful lyrics and tuneful singing that may cause offence". Apparently straight-forward, honest-to-goodness pop music is frowned upon these days, as that is what the Hit Parade has been producing since 1984 armed with only talent, taste and a love for the three minute pop

song, they never really stood a chance. Thankfully they have been rather persistent about their mission, and *The Sound of the Hit Parade* is a wonderful collection of songs; some are fast, some are slow, some even feature Cath Carroll, but all are the type of pop song that you thought nobody wrote any more. Listening to this album conjures up the spirit of innocence, of walking hand-in-hand along a beach while on holiday, of watching old black and white films...sigh. Listen to this record and feel all warm and fuzzy inside.

If I mentioned the name A.R.Kane, I'd imagine that most people would look rather nonchalant. Eyelids would not be batted if I said that they had released their first album in five years. Again, there seems to be a bit of a problem with the amount of recognition that this band gets. After all, they were at the forefront of the feedback-tinged guitar scene that emerged from the UK in the mid 80's (I can't bring myself to call it



'shoegazing'...) - the word 'influential' jumps to mind. The band christened their music 'dreampop', and that seems as good a term as any. Their first album, 69, is a landmark recording in the same

way that My Bloody Valentine's *Loveless* is; a record which shows how these things should be done. An inspiration to us all.

So that brings us to *New Clear Child* which was sneaked out at the end of last year, and once again it's a little gem. A.R.Kane are now more involved with their dub side than the walls of feedback they used to play with. This makes *dreampop* even dreamier and swirlier and just plain blissful. Rudi's voice is still way up high in the mix so that it tugs at your very soul, and those dreamy backing vocals too. Sigh. The music is sparser than before, making sure that every single note counts; things are never cluttered. Acoustic guitars, strings, children's choirs - it remains to be dreamy, and always on the good side of pretentious. No, really. But I can only use the word 'dreamy' so many times before it becomes redundant. They may not be the influential figures they once were, but they have carved a niche for themselves which no-one else will ever be able to encroach on.

When Weezer's debut album was released in May 1994, nobody really noticed. Then they supported Lush during their US tour and some people noticed, but fame was still a distant gleam on the horizon. Then they released their second single, and made a very clever video, and everyone no-

ticed. I probably don't need to describe it but for the uninitiated, the video for "Buddy Holly" puts the band

on the set of the sitcom "Happy Days" playing at Arnold's with 'appearances' by all the cast members. Very entertaining. And the song is rather good too - incredibly catchy with some of

those harmonies that I like so much, and some nice guitar work too. Maybe I am just being a bit on the cynical side, but I find it very hard to believe that they would have been noticed at all if it wasn't for the video. Living a MTV culture, it would appear that the video is much more important than the song when trying to guarantee airplay. And that's where the injustice lies. What about the rest of the album? Hmm - rather patchy to be honest. Apart from the two singles (the first one being the rather bizarre "Undone - The Sweater Song"), not much stands out at all - the more melodious ones are quite pleasant, but its all so forgettable. I have this horrid feeling that Weezer are going to be remembered as the "Happy Days" band and that's about it. That's the thing about living in such an unfair world - mediocrity can be rewarded with success in the right circumstances whereas talent seems to go unnoticed no matter what. We all suffer.



## PANORAMA

January 30, 1994

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CA	TW	LW	Artist	TITLE	LABEL	WO	HP
1	1	VIA	Trim Crusts If Desired	CINNAMON TOAST	3	1	
2	NE	Portishead	Dummy	GO DISCS/LONDON	1	2	
3	14	The Inbreds	Kommator	PE	3	3	
4	2	Corky and the Juice Pigs	Pants	DENON	4	2	
5	5	Pearl Jam	Vitalogy	EPIC	7	3	
6	8	Front Line Assembly	Millennium	ROADRUNNER	4	6	
7	6	Sook-Yin-Lee	Lavina's Tongue	ZULU	4	7	
8	64	Sarah McLachlan	Freedom Sessions	NETTWERK	2	8	
9	7	Nirvana	Unplugged in New York	DGC	8	2	
10	3	Lisa Germano	Geek The Girl	4AD	7	2	
11	11	The Spits	Hell's Kitchen	TAG	5	8	
12	4	Hip Club Groove	Trailer Park Hip Hop	MURDER	5	4	
13	18	Bush	Sixteen Stone	TRAUMA	4	13	
14	42	VIA	Volume 10	VOLUME	2	14	
15	10	Deus	Worst Case Scenario	ISLAND	5	7	
16	121	The Verys	Twentieth Century Fix	RED EYE/POLYDOR	3	16	
17	12	VIA	Dare To Be Aware	WOT	4	14	
18	34	Thrive	Sophistry	SPIDER	5	18	
19	24	Ten Days Late	Go With the Flow	KJARK	5	19	
20	33	VIA	Groove Garden	GUACAMOLE	3	20	
21	25	Catherine	Sorry	IVI	3	21	
22	9	Heavenly	The Decline and Fall of Heavenly	K	6	10	
23	52	Community FK	Vision and the Voice	CLEOPATRA	4	23	
24	61	VIA	This is Fort Apache	Fort Apache/MCA	3	24	
25	NE	VIA	The Jerky Boys	ATLANTIC	1	25	
26	29	Lambert	Nato	MUTE	7	26	
27	13	Butt Trumpet	Primitive Enema	CHRYSALIS/EMI	8	5	
28	90	VIA	Volume 11	VOLUME	2	28	
29	91	Throwing Muses	University	REPRISE	2	29	
30	92	Los Seamonsters	Los Seamonsters	enGUARD	2	30	
31	23	Baaba Maal	Firin' in Fouta	MANGROVE ISLAND	4	27	
32	15	Lou Barlow and Friends	Another Collection of Home Recordings	MINT	4	17	
33	48	Snowsue and the Banishes	Selections from the Rapture	Gelco	3	33	
34	63	The Monoxides	Stuck in the Basement 3	SUPERBLOOD	3	34	
35	NE	VIA	Decolines				



CA-Canadian Artist, TW-This Week, LW-Last Week, WO-Weeks on Panorama, HP-Highest Point, NE-New Entry, CHSR's Panorama is Based Upon Frequency of Air Play



## Tonight

### Banff Festival of Mountain Films

Films from OSA, Canada, France and Spain  
7 pm - 11 pm  
Rm 105 MacLaggan Hall  
Handgliding, parapenting, rock climbing, rafting, kayaking, ice!