

# Dr. Vic Visits A Pagan Place

I have been a fan of the Waterboys, abet with mixed feelings, since their first lp "A Pagan Place" was released in the mid-80's. I liked chief Waterboy Mike Scott's voice and songs a great deal, but felt that the arrangements tended, on both "A Pagan Place" and the follow up, "This is the Sea", to be a bit grandiose and overblown. In Scott's defence, the themes explored on these albums lent themselves to the Big Music, dealing with everything from our relationship with the Creator to being imprisoned in one of Stalin's Gulags for playing the saxophone. (Say, do you think we could get that Kenny G. dork sent away? His insipid new age sax doodlings are certainly a crime against humanity, if not against the State). The Waterboys sounded like no one else, all swirling, insistent violins and swooping horns, anchored by a raw guitar and the equally raw voice of Scott. Sort of punky folk-art rock.

The two constants in Scott's writing were his faith in God and

his strong sense of place. Hemined traditional English and Scottish music and writing to produce modern sounds. Interviews at the time of "this is the Sea" dealt at length with his feelings for Glasgow, and how that city influenced his music. So it was most surprising to find that he had up and left Scotland for Dublin a few years back, to immerse himself in traditional Irish music. The result of this move was the superb "Fisherman's Blues", a rollicking if somewhat dark collection of driving Celtic tunes. In this more intimate format Scott's writing, while retaining it's spiritual feel, came down to earth. It was music more suited for a peat-smoke-filled pub than a great cathedral.

Scott continues to use Irish music as a framework for his muse on the recent "Room to Roam" album. Although distinctly Celtic folk instruments like the fiddle and flute, along with the Bouzouki and Mandolin are employed, the overall feel is slightly less traditional than the last record. Songs like "Raggle Taggle Gypsy" and "Natural Bridge Blues" are indeed age old

drinking songs, but these are balance by numbers like "Something That is Gone," with its spare jazz piano feel, and the straight rock of A Life of Sundays.

Perhaps the greatest difference between the old albums is the sunny, playful tone of "Room to Roam". Fisherman's Blues was often marked by a sort of wailing banshee exorcism of pain, romantic but harsh. The new album is full of upbeat, joyous little ditties that make even Mr. Lethargy's toes tap. Scott's raspy yelp of a voice seems subtler, blending in with the other instruments, wrapping itself around the words. The songs continue to reflect a feeling of being part of hundreds of years of British and Irish history, of being anchored to a cultural continuity. The faith is still there as well, a faith in a benevolent God who protects those who wander through life. The whole mix seems touched by wonder and contentment. I'm sure my 3 year old nephew would enjoy "Room to Roam" very much — it is music that transcends age and passing fads.

# Mermaids

MERMAIDS  
Review by Kwame Dawes

Mermaids has been hailed by some oft quoted critic as the feel-good movie of the year. The problem with feel good movies is that their effectiveness depends too much on what you feel like when you go in to see them. Perhaps I was in a bad modd when I went to see Mermaids, perhaps I wasn't but when I came out of the theatre, I didn't feel any better about life. The problem is that Mermaids is not about anything particularly serious. It is the story of a girl coming of age and discovering something about her sexuality. It is story about a beautiful woman who has spent most of her time running from problems and is now forced to stick around and enjoy the love of a nice man who really likes her. It is the story about a girl who is discovering that her mother is also a friend and a woman who is discovering that her daughter is a woman. And in many ways, I have summarized the film.

What makes it as big as it is? Cher is in it and she is very attractive. She is freer in this film to be the outrages self-drive woman that she is and she seems less restricted by the script in this film than she does in Moonstruck. Curiously, I preferred the controlled performance of this remarkable woman in Moonstruck for just that reason. In Mermaids she is not granted as clear a through line and while she choses to hang around in the same city for a lot longer than is her wont, there remains a static quality to her character that makes the performance less compelling.

In fact, revelations and changes are very subtle in this film. Wiona Ryder as Cher's daughter is engagingly complex as a child with a vivid imagination and a strong moral sensibility that is couched in her over-zealous devotion to the Catholic faith. Typically, her sexuality, long suppressed but constantly present, is a potential

time bomb that fills her with a combination of guilt and titilating pleasure. She shocks herself at her own thoughts and the more she tries to be different from her mother, the more she becomes like her mother and throws herself at the body of a young fellow who she meets in the bell tower of the convent. Ryda's performance is refreshing for its innocent humour. Of particular note is the scene in which she runs away from home and enters the home of "The Perfect Family" where she proceeds to tell long elaborate lies about her life. there is a quality of insanity in her treatment of the scene which highlights the vulnerability of the character of this young girl.

The obvious sentimentality is the film is nicely off-set by Cher's failure to comply with the stereotyped images of the mother coupled with Ryder's sardonic and ironic narration through out the piece. Bob Hoskins is not brilliant in this film. His character is a peripheral one with very little depth. He plays his moments with the timing of an experienced actor, but there is little meat to this part; he must either be cutely charming as a fondleable bear, amusingly stern, as most good fathers should be, or gruffly sensual, (an impossibility for most people). He brings love and stability to the travelling family along with a touch of humour.

Mermaids is not rauccously funny and there is not very much at stake in the film. Hence is passes over you like a pleasant cup of hot chocolate on a cold night which you will forget by the next morning, (as in the case of the film) as soon as you step into the sub-zero temperature of a Winter night in Fredericton. For those who are suggesting that it should win Cher another Academy nomination, I can only suggest that they are wrong. Cher is alright in Mermaids. Ryder is better than alright and the film? Well, that is about all there is to it.

## CHSR-FM PLAYLIST TOP 40: Week Ending January 14th

| TW  | LW | ARTIST: Title (Label)   | WQ | HP |
|-----|----|---|----|----|
| * 1 | 5  | THE DOUGHBOYS: Happy Accidents (Restless)   | 3  | 1  |
| 2   | 2  | VARIOUS ARTISTS: Red Hot And Blue - A Tribute To Cole Porter (Chrysalis)            | 5  | 2  |
| * 3 | 1  | SKINNY PUPPY: Too Dark Park (Nettwerk)  | 5  | 1  |
| 4   | 3  | POGUES: Hells Ditch (Island)  | 7  | 1  |
| 5   | 6  | VARIOUS ARTISTS: Selections from Rubaiyat (Elektra)                                 | 5  | 5  |
| 6   | 10 | KMFDM: Naive (Wax Trax)   | 2  | 6  |
| 7   | 7  | EDIE BRICKELL AND THE NEW BOHEMIANS: Ghost Of A Dog (Geffen)                        | 4  | 7  |
| * 8 | 16 | HOLLY COLE: Girl Talk (Alert)   | 5  | 5  |
| * 9 | 4  | FERRON: Phantom Center (Chameleon)  | 8  | 4  |
| 10  | 11 | POP WILL EAT ITSELF: Dance Of The Mad - 5" (RCA)                                    | 6  | 10 |
| 11  | 14 | GOO GOO DOLLS: Hold Me Up (Metal Blade)   | 6  | 4  |
| 12  | 25 | ECHO AND THE BUNNYMEN: Reverberation (WEA)  | 4  | 12 |
| 13  | 13 | INSPIRAL CARPETS: Life (Mute)   | 8  | 5  |
| 14  | 40 | LUSH: Gala (4AD)  | 3  | 14 |
| 15  | 19 | THEY EAT THEIR OWN: They Eat Their Own (Relativity)                                 | 5  | 15 |
| 16  | 28 | THE PHANTOMS: Pleasure Puppets (Spy)  | 2  | 16 |
| 17  | NE | HAPPY MONDAYS: Pills, Thrills, And Bellyaches (Elektra)                             | 1  | 17 |
| 18  | 37 | VARIOUS ARTISTS: Where The Pyramid Meets The Eye - A Tribute To Roky Erikson (Sire) | 3  | 18 |
| 19  | 24 | THE WATERBOYS: Room To Roam (Chrysalis)   | 3  | 19 |
| *20 | 15 | JELLYFISHBABIES: The Unkind Truth About Rome (Pathetic Romance)                     | 10 | 1  |
| 21  | NE | CHEM LAB: 10 Ton Pressure (Fifth Column)  | 1  | 21 |
| 22  | NE | JERRY JERRY: Battle Hymn Of The Apartment (Capitol)                                 | 1  | 22 |
| *23 | 8  | FIGGY DUFF: Weather Out The Storm (Hypnotic/A&M)                                    | 9  | 4  |
| 24  | 18 | SISTERS OF MERCY: Vision Thing (WEA)  | 7  | 3  |
| *25 | 23 | FALLING JOYS: Wish List (Nettwerk)  | 5  | 21 |
| 26  | 22 | YOUSSOU N'DOUR: Set (Virgin)  | 3  | 22 |
| 27  | 27 | THE CHARLATANS (UK): Some Friendly (Dead Dead Good)                                 | 7  | 13 |
| *28 | 17 | WIPEOUT BEACH: Wipeout Beach (Wipeout)  | 9  | 11 |
| 29  | 33 | BUTTHOLE SURFERS: Hurdy Gurdy Man (Rough Trade)                                     | 2  | 29 |
| *30 | 21 | 64 FUNNYCARS: Hog Wild - 7" (Bruiser Boy)   | 7  | 21 |
| 31  | NE | BRENDA KAHN: Goldfish Dont Talk Back (Community 3)                                  | 1  | 31 |
| 32  | 38 | BLAKE BABIES: Sunburn (Mammoth)   | 2  | 32 |
| 33  | NE | BLUE RODEO: Casino (WEA)  | 1  | 33 |
| 34  | 34 | THE ART OF NOISE: The Ambient Collection (China)                                    | 5  | 20 |
| *35 | 30 | KATE AND ANNA MCGARRIGLE: Heartbeats Accelerating (Private)                         | 8  | 11 |
| 36  | 9  | THE YOUNG GODS: The Young Gods (Wax Trax)   | 8  | 9  |
| 37  | 12 | THE POSIES: Dear 23 (D.G.C.)  | 8  | 12 |
| *38 | 20 | INDUSTRIAL ARTZ: Industrial Artz (Xorcism)  | 9  | 2  |
| 39  | 26 | TOM ZE: The Best Of Tom Ze (Sire)   | 4  | 26 |
| 40  | 32 | MR. T. EXPERIENCE: Making Things With Light (Lookout)                               | 2  | 32 |

## Beautiful Dreamers

In addition to the regular Winter Film Series, The Beaverbrook Art Gallery will be showing the film, Beautiful Dreamers, on Tuesday, January 22, at 12:30 p.m. The film complements the exhibition, the Logic of Ecstasy, which features over 70 works by Group of Seven artists and their associates.

Beautiful Dreamers focuses on the professional relationship of two men: Walt Whitman and Dr. Richard Bucke. Whitman was an American poet who advocated the utopian notion of art as an expression of new spiritual values. An ardent proponent of the ideology of Whitman, Dr. Bucke wrote a book entitled "Cosmic Consciousness" in 1901 which had a profound impact on artistic circles, notably Group of Seven member, Lawren Harris.

Beautiful Dreamers will be held in The Beaverbrook Art Gallery's Lower Gallery. Admission is free and all are welcome!

# Ho

by Kwame Dawes

There is fascinating about new film Home Christmas story of a child who plays never transcends simplistic morality.

After the be overheard of the show: "What a riot!" cafe downtown commented that not impressed have children appreciate the the situation th

Home A boy who is acc by his family take a trip to Pa They are a obviously, and in which all the enough to lea holidays. The kid is left at ho mean achieve borders on th seeking to ma of credibility.

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Author of Elegies, R

For

STUDENT Thursday

January 18