

## GENRECIDÉ MICHAEL EDWARDS

"IF IT'S NOT SCOTTISH..."  
MICHAEL TAKES A LOOK AT TUNES  
FROM THE HOMETLAND

From the title, this may appear to be some sort of "if its not Scottish..." nationalistic rant. Well, it may be that, but there is some basis to the whole idea, especially when considering the music of the post-punk period when many of the more influential bands have come from my fair homeland. So over the next few weeks, I shall give you a guided tour through some of the more interesting history of Scottish music since the early 80s conveniently by-passing the Bay City Rollers (despite the magnificence of 'Shang-A-Lang'...)

Back at the start of the 80s, we were just coming out of the punk era that finally killed off disco (until 1993 anyway - sigh) and brought in a new breed of music. And in Scotland, we were lucky enough to have the absolute darlings of the music press and the saviours of music as we know it in the shape of Orange Juice. Their debut on Glasgow's Postcard Records "Falling and Laughing" sold out in two weeks and found its way into the hearts of many. A fresh sounding slab of melodic guitar pop, it lead to Postcard becoming the epitome of cool in music and influencing the way that music was heading. After the violent growth of punk, Postcard paved the

way for the many guitar-based pop bands that emerged over the next five or six years. The other two Postcard bands were Josef K and Aztec Camera, with the latter going on (like Orange Juice) to produce a stunning debut album after they left Postcard.

The guitar pop band was always a popular choice in Scotland throughout the eighties with such candidates as the Bluebells, del Amritri, Fruits of Passion, Altered Images, Win and Lloyd Cole & The Commotions although just reading that list should tell you how many actually had any sort of success. Even in Scotland itself, many of these bands fell on the wayside very early on in their careers despite a few hit singles. As was the case with Postcard, critical acclaim doesn't pay the bills so all we were left with was a rather impressive back catalogue and some happy memories. Some other notables in that section are the Beat Poets (a Scottish surf band a la Shadowy Men), Hipsway (one good album then it all went horribly wrong) and Bourgie Bourgie (they only released one single, 'Breaking Point' which wasn't a hit but they still get talked about). A real shame.

And then there were the Pastels. Its hard to believe that they have been around since 1982, and people are still buying their records but their importance is so easy to underestimate. I re-

member the first time that I played a tape to a friend and they complained that the singing was tuneless, the music was sloppy and the backing vocals even worse. But that IS the Pastels. If it wasn't for the Pastels then there would be no K Records today. No Sarah Records either. Their shambling kind of music spawned many imitators (need I say more than Beat Happening?) and Stephen Pastel a figurehead of a whole new scene. This scene was best typified by what was going on in part of Glasgow called Bellshill. It all started here with the Vaselines (produced by Mr. Pastel) and continued with the Soup Dragons, BMX Bandits and what went on to become Teenage Fanclub. All the bands started out as being not very good, but with the exception of the Vaselines have stuck around and despite many changes in their line-ups, have had put out some fine records. The other things about Bellshill is the way that the members of the bands all switched from band to band - something that continues today with members of Teenage Fanclub playing for BMX Bandits.

Another band which created a sound all of their own which led to many others trying to emulate them are Grangemouth's Cocteau Twins. Since their debut in 1983, they have released seven albums, numerous EPs and have

carved their own niche. Many adjectives have been used to describe them from ethereal to pretentious, but its impossible not to be drawn in by Elizabeth's incredible voice (which is even more incredible witnessed live). Using sounds rather than words over the top of layers of swirling guitars, what was once a unique sound now has more imitators than you can name. They could be said to be the most influential Scottish band of the 80s if it wasn't for the next bunch.

And they are the Jesus and Mary Chain. Where to start. Since their debut "Upside Down" in 1985, the Reid brothers have been doing things with guitars that Jimi Hendrix never even thought of. From their sonic assault of feedback to their Spectroesque ballads, they have a charm all of their own not to mention the way that they made white noise an acceptable part of pop. They paved the way for bands like My Bloody Valentine and other purveyors of feedback while continuing to issue stunning records of their own. This year their almost mythical acoustic album is supposed to see light of day and they will once more come into their own. Mark my words.

Primal Scream and the Shamen both started out as bands playing around with guitars, the former in a Pastels sort of way while the latter ex-

perimented with psychedelic rock. But both underwent quite incredible metamorphoses. The Shamen moved towards a psychedelic dance music that reached near perfection with 'Progen' whereas Primal Scream collaborated with Andy Weatherall for the ultimate indie-dance single 'Loaded'. Both have continued their journey into dance territory - the Shamen have unfortunately begun their decline into near mediocrity, but Primal Scream are due to release a sequel to the legendary 'Screamadelica' this year. The Soup Dragons also experimented in this area, and had their taste of commercial success before it all went sour. Oh well.

And that is a very potted history of Scottish music since 1980 without mentioning the folk influences seen in the Waterboys, the Proclaimers and Fairground Attraction. Or the dance perfection of the KLF. Or the strangeness that is Momus. Or the sophisticated pop of Danny Wilson and Deacon Blue. Or the sheer joy of the Orchids. Or the rock and roll that is Elvis. Didn't you know Elvis was Scottish? Well known fact in Glasgow...

## UNB Campus Entertainment

presents

# ISI

## HEADSTONES

# THE Morganfields

## FEBRUARY 15, 1994

## S.U.B. CAFETERIA

DOORS OPEN AT 8:30 P.M.  
TICKETS - \$3.50 FOR UNB STUDENTS  
\$5.00 FOR ALL OTHER.

TICKETS ON SALE AT THE  
DEEP CENTRE