

Entertainment

GENRECIDES MICHAEL EDWARDS

I suppose that the first 'British Invasion' was headed by such bands as the Beatles and the Dave Clark Five in the sixties. It was a fairly successful one really, and ever since there have been quite a few bands from the other side of the Atlantic which have a certain degree of conquest. And once more the time has come when most of the bands that are being regarded as having the ability to change the face of rock and roll as we know it. Or something like that anyway.

And just who are the latest suspects in this onslaught? Well, some names that jump to mind are Elastica, Shampoo, Echobelly and Suede.

Suede? But weren't they the next big thing

two years ago? Umm, I suppose that they were, but this time they are going to be really big. I mean huge. Even *Q* magazine said so. Of course, last I heard, their rather talented guitarist Bernard Butler had left the band but we can ignore that as he was still around when they recorded their new album *Dog Star Man*, and his contribution is very welcome too as the guitar work is damned fine. The most obvious thing about their second album is that it is so much more mature than the likes of 'Animal Nitrates' or 'The Drowners'. Brett seems to have left behind his whiny, nasal vocals too (for the most part anyway...) going into his crooner mode like Vic Reeves (like anyone over here knows him; sigh) or even Morrissey. In addition to those inspiring guitars, there are lush arrangements with strings and brass that give the album an almost cinematic feel on 'The Wild Ones'. A surprisingly good album, and its more than enough to keep any Smiths fans happy until the reunion finally happens.

The Smiths are a name which is bandied around an awful lot when Echobelly are being discussed. Some-

thing along the lines of Deborah Harry doing her best Morrissey impersonation while fronting Suede. Or something like that. Not my words. Their first album has just come out in Britain, but has unfortunately been held up here until the start of next year due to the fact that all of Sony's promotional efforts are being concentrated on Michael Jackson's Greatest Hits. If ever there was an album that didn't need to be promoted. Anyway, I have finally been able to get

my hands on something of theirs, namely their third single *I Can't Imagine The World Without Me*. Those comparisons with the Smiths are deserved, but that doesn't mean that they have nothing to

offer society. Quite the contrary - it is one of the best singles I have heard in quite a while; Sony has a gorgeous voice which sounds so swell sitting amongst all that guitar, piano and trumpet. With a disorienting shift in tempo, it builds up towards its horn fuelled climax before ending as abruptly as it started. A thing of true beauty.

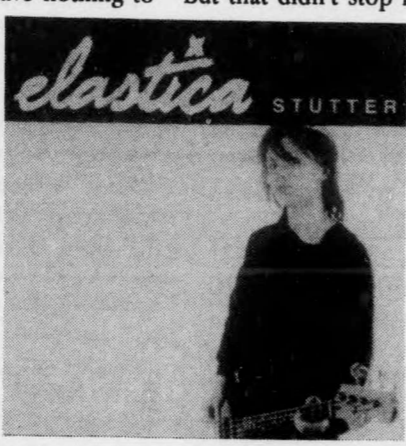
And then there is Shampoo - two teenage girls from London who have been described as a "sparkling, glittering bolt of lightning", played with the Lemonheads at the personal invitation of Evan Dando, and have already gained two 'Single of the Week' awards in the UK. Hmm. So why are Shampoo getting all this attention? Gee - so many questions today. The feeling I get is that there is so much mediocrity around at the moment that anything that is simply average will stand out. And Shampoo are just that - average; their music is hardly

original or particularly inspiring. But yet their is something about *We Are Shampoo* which draws you in. For a while anyway. Until you realise that every song sounds alike and those two girlie voices get very irritating very quickly. The word "kitsch" sums it up nicely; from its wonderful cover to the rather tacky song titles ('Saddo', 'Game Boy', 'Viva La Megababes', etc.), this is worth a full two and a half minutes of attention.

Last of this particular bunch are Elastica - part of their notoriety comes from the fact that their guitarist and singer Justine Frischmann used to be in Suede before they were famous. Spooky how it all seems to come back to Suede this week. Anyway, their debut single, *Stutter*, has finally appeared over here a mere twelve months after it was first released. Its initial pressing was rather on the limited side - just a thousand or so, making it more than a bit difficult to find. But that didn't stop it from being

named as last year's best by every single British music magazine. And quite rightly so as it is one of those songs that once you hear you just can't imagine living with-

out it again. Just over two minutes of spiky guitar pop, it is everything a perfect pop song should be. Its only when you compare it to the other three songs on the EP that you realise just how impressive it is - the other tracks are disposable which is very sad. Sad for the reason that it hints to the fact that Elastica will probably never record a song as good as this ever again. Buy this and cherish it. Savour it every time you play it as it may be a while before something this good comes along again.



La Traviata



By Denyelle Theriault

La Traviata was my first "real" opera experience, next to what I have seen on television. It is an opera in Italian by nineteenth century maestro, Giuseppe Verdi. Verdi created the opera in 46 days, basing it on the play, *Les Dames aux Camélias* by Alexandre Dumas.

L'Atelier lyrique de l'Opéra de Montréal performed the Italian masterpiece in its abridged version at the Sainte-Anne Community Centre on October 28th. The community centre hosted this event in conjunction with Youth and Music Canada, as part of L'Atelier's current tour.

L'Atelier lyrique is part of a programme aimed at initiating young Canadians to the real world of opera.

La Traviata is the story of Violetta (Monique Pagé) and Alfredo (Michel Corbeil), two lovers introduced to each other at a party. Before the end of the evening, Alfredo confesses his love to Violetta, who warns him that she cannot love him. She gives him a camelia and invites him to return with the flower the next day. After everyone is gone, Violetta rejoices in the joy of being loved.

The story continues with Alfredo and Violetta staying in the country. Alfredo is content with his life and drinks to his happiness. Meanwhile, Violetta receives a party invitation, which she immediately dismisses. It is only after Giorgio (Marc Boucher), Alfredo's father, persuades her to leave Alfredo that she decided to attend the party. Giorgio is only concerned with preserving the family honour as he convinces Violetta to leave Alfredo. Alfredo is enraged that Violetta has left him and follows her to the party.

At the party, Alfredo gambles heavily and is fortunate enough to win. Alfredo is drunk and makes a big scene in front of everyone, throwing his winnings at Violetta to repay her for all the

sacrifices she made for him. Giorgio arrives and berates his son for his ugly behaviour toward a defenceless (I don't like this word) woman. The Baron (Normand Richard), Violetta's escort, challenges Alfredo to a duel—and loses (but we did not get to see the duel).

In the final act, Violetta is dying with only hours to live. Alfredo has returned from Europe to beg Violetta's forgiveness for what he did to the Baron. Violetta forgives him and the two become lovers again. Violetta shares a few happy moments with Alfredo before she dies.

A lot of effort was put into the performance by the cast, but this does nothing to change the fact that they needed more time to prepare. There was no problem for them to reach the difficult high notes, but they flowed unevenly and were ear-piercing. Overall, except for a few select cast members, the singing was almost painful to listen to.

Claude Webster's fingers sailed smoothly over the ivories. His piano playing was flawlessly melodic and beautiful. The music alone made the show worth seeing.

Pagé, in the lead role of Violetta, gave me the impression that she was striving to make herself heard. This was totally unnecessary given the size of the theatre and caused me to immediately dislike her character. However, I do have to admit that she has talent and with a few more years of hard work, she will be capable of stunning audiences with her voice.

Giorgio, Marc Boucher, put on a spectacular performance, and as far as I am concerned, stole the show. Boucher's voice is far more developed than any other cast member and deserves recognition. Boucher had no trouble making the lines flow evenly, while being heard clearly. Along with Webster's piano playing, his performance is not something I would have wanted to miss.

Former Brunisie a Literary Success

By Jethelo E. Cabilete

On occasion, it's nice to hear some good stuff happening to people who work, or used to work, at the Bruns. This is what happened to former editor-in-chief Kwame Dawes, who is now an English professor at the University of South Carolina. He won the Forward Poetry Prize for Best First Collection in Britain and was presented with 5,000 British pounds, in London on October 6, 1994 for his first book of poems, *Progeny of Air*, published by Peepal Tree Press.

Most people who were around from 1987 to 1992, will remember Kwame Dawes' poems in the Brunswickan, his work as a dynamic editor-in-chief in the Bruns office and as a popular broadcaster on CHSR. However, he is most popularly known as the lead vocalist and energetic force behind the reggae band, Ujamaa. The band toured Canada and the United States, releasing a fantastic CD/cassette, *Chokota* and appearing on Muchmusic. Many of Ujamaa's lyrics were written by Kwame himself.

A second publication, entitled *Resisting the Anomie*, will contain poems about his life in Fredericton and will be published by Goose Lane Editions in the Spring.