



Dance Album Reviews:

By Gareth Lancaster

**SeeFeel - Succour
(Warp WAP28)**

SeeFeel were pretty quiet in '94, only releasing the well received 'Starethrough EP' and the 'Fracture/tied' single. Now they are back with their new album and what a stonker it is too. For those of you who aren't familiar with this group you could have them described to you as electronic ambient-tiers, but that would miss out a vital point. To the purists, ambient music must have little or no beat and as for the use of a guitar...well they'd probably use it to string the musicians up by if it was suggested. But the guitar plays a major role in SeeFeel's music, distorted, mistreated and generally man handled as it is throughout the creation of their tracks. Undeniably pivotal to the sound they manage to produce, along with the deep, thumping rhythm and rasping bass apparent in most of their tracks, like the tribal 'Gatha'. They have a sound that is almost like a minimal-



ists' 'Portishead' but weirder, moodier and heavier. So do you get it now? You're not going to hear much like this anywhere else. Take the washes of sound in 'Meol', it really is beautiful and that's no exaggeration. Then switch to the bass and drums of 'Extract'. Yes they are varied in the way their music expresses itself and yes they are original and yes let's hope that 1995 is a good year for them.

**Leftfield - Leftism
(Hard Hands LP 2T)**

Who can forget 'Open Up' with the wonderful lyrical interpretation of John Lydon? Apart from that, however, there has been silence. Now imagine for a minute the late 1980's when House music was rampant up and down the United Kingdom. Think of the groups around that encompassed 'that sound'. Now think about bringing that bang up to date whilst still remembering the roots. That's this album in a nutshell. It's a late 80's retro-sound merged with more modern overtones. It would have made

them famous back then and it's doing much the same now. It's full from start to finish with great tracks, so let's

pick some of them out. 'Release The Pressure' is a slow, almost ambient track with lyrics that leave the feeling that you're listening to Shades Of Rhythm instead of Leftfield. Then there's the soft 'Melt', the smooth and mellow 'Song Of Life', the absolutely thumping 'Space Shanty' and the almost KLF-like '21st Century Poem'. But there's something else that makes this album so good - the amount of collaboration on the lyrical front. The collected vocal textures really help to make the tracks different from one another, ranging as they do in pitch and quality. And it must be said that it's a nice trick to use. Everything's so fresh and alive to listen to.

**Sun Electric - 30.7.94
Live (Apollo AMB5938)**


We owe a great deal to The Orb. They realised what a prospect Sun Electric were and got them to support their tour and write tracks with them. And all I can say is thank heavens for The Orb realising, otherwise the world may not have got to know Sun Electric. I think it's only fair to tell you now that I'm probably in love with them, I'd probably have their children if it was possible. They are God sent to make good electronic head music, it was their whole purpose for being born, and this album just goes to prove that even further. So how can you trust that I can do an impartial



2wentys

our price





review of this album?
Well to be quite honest

you can't but it is a GREAT album and I can say that without reservation! It was all recorded live during an open air concert on..well...30th July 1994 (where did they get the album title from I wonder) in Copenhagen where 5000 people watched Sun Electric, Mixmaster Morris and the Higher Intelligence Agency. But listening to this album, closing your eyes and letting yourself go, you can imagine you are there. It's that easy. The music is high in the mountains of the most luxurious ambience ever produced. It's floating up there with the best. But it goes beyond that, it takes on a life and a vibrancy all of its own, composed and played in a way that only Sun Electric could do and it's damn near perfect. People sometimes mock live electronic music, claiming that the acts are merely stretching the phrase 'live' to include using DATs etc., but I say who cares, and when you get the quality of NEW music on live albums like this one (and you undoubtedly did with Future Sound Of London's last excursion 'I.S.D.N.') is anybody really going to argue? I don't think so. I think they'll just shut up and be taken away on the musical flow (probably).

**The Aphex Twin -
Classics (R&S 95035)**

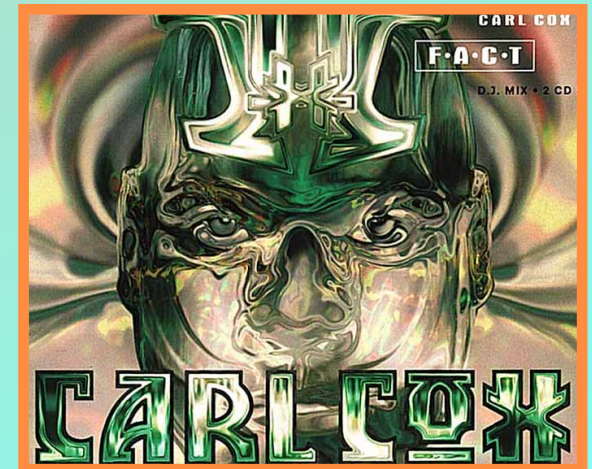
I'll start by telling you straight:
this isn't really worth the plastic

that's been used to make it. Now I'm of the belief that Richard James has a real musical talent. No his music isn't every bodies cup of tea but most people seem to find a little something in there (however small) to be impressed by. Take the '93 track 'On'. It even appeared on more mainstream compilation albums, in fact for a brief while every compilation album under the sun seemed to carry a copy of this purely inspirational track (if you've listened to that awesome grumbling bass kick in you'll know what I mean). So where is that on this album? Nowhere. And what about the music released under the name Polygon Window? Not a single second of it. And why? The answer is the record label this album is on: he never did his best work for R&S. His best has been reserved for the quality filled likes of Warp and Rephlex. That's where Aphex Twin's classic back catalogue can be found. But there are some saving graces, some tracks that can be labelled 'classics', the most obvious being 'Digeridoo'. If you've heard of Aphex Twin then you've heard of this track, if you haven't then...erm...I don't know why you've missed it because it is blinding. But there is another point why this album might be important to some people - it contains tracks that you aren't going to get by hook or by crook anywhere else. The original releases aren't seen all that often as they were produced in small quantities (it took me ages to find a copy of

one of his recent releases 'Analogue Bubblebath 4') so those wanting older Aphex Twin tracks look no further. Personally I'd rather buy a few copies of his new single 'Ventolin', now that's Mr. James at his best.

**Carl Cox - FACT
React CD 56**

Carl Cox's future alliance of communications and Tecknology 2 CD set is a mixture of every musical style known to dance. From the ambient trance of Cygnus X The orange theme to the to banging hardcore of DJ hell Hot on the heels of love. FACT is a collection of all the tracks that Cox has played and loved in clubs throughout Europe. This is a compilation to go out and get immediately, it's not Sunday morning chill-out it's Saturday night sorted. 27 seamlessly mixed tracks, that'll keep you going all night. It's also good to see old DAF front man Robert Gori back in full effect.





Gareth Lancaster

Top Ten Tracks currently doing the rounds or just about to:

Renegade Soundwave - Brixton (Mute)

Techno inspired beats and bassline with funky lyrics. Brilliant.

Wagon Christ - Rissalecki Ep. (Rising High)

Jazz club electronic music. Confused? It's a bleedin' stunner!

Transglobal underground - International Times 12" Remixes (Nation)

Tribal delights and ethnic wailing. What more could you ask from them? This 12" includes 'International Stomp' a Justin Robertson 'shake you body' type mix that sounds nothing like the original -(Only available through specialist dance record shops).

Aphex Twin - Ventolin (Warp)

Strange electronic sounds from Mr. Oddness himself. Two CDS full of wildly different remixes. This time all inspired by an asthma cure.

Autechre - Garbage (Warp)

Yet more electronic weirdness from the studio of Booth and Brown. Unconventional but strangely attractive.

Alter Ego - Soul Free (Harthouse)

Trance a go-go. Any adjective that ends in 'ing' to describe



music applies here. It's damn fine.

Finitribe - Love Above (London)

Oh yes, high energy dance music that just gets inside you and won't let go.

Infiniti - Game One/Think Quick - Limited edition 12" blue vinyl (KMS UK)

Techno from Detroit. Two stunning analogue squelching, drum pumping tracks that offer just that little something different.

Bandulu - Crisis A Gwan (Infonet)

Those beats go on and on and on and on and on.... Three thumping tracks, not much more I can say.

Phonic - Dirty Fantasy / Lewis!

Lewis! (Crowd Control)

Nothing new but full of vibe and determination, so how can you resist?

Andrew Stone

Five tracks hitting the decks for Mr Stone

Winx Don't Laugh on XL

Josh Wink's original mix trances things up beautifully in a strictly old school groove. The Eternity (or should that be laugh- apella?) mix carries on into the runout groove for mixin' tricks, but the majordomo here for me is Vasquez' Sound Factory Dub. So the club's closed down and my pilgrimage can never happen, but sod it - this is the finest thing he's done! Mad sirens go full-on then totally wig out into a slowdown that has the last word on what Slo-Moshun and Greed started.

Hashim Al-Naafiyysh re-released on NetworkRetro

John McCready, ex Network man, and more recently DJ and remixer in his own right gets to work on this with a bassline that reminds me of the theme from "The Word", and drums that sort of lean to early Detroit but don't... listen while your mellow is all I can say. Terrence Parker does a wibbly-wobbly basslined Jovan Blade remix, and two original mixes come on the flipside.

System 7 Acid Wave Richie Hawtin and Steve Hillage Plastikman remix on Butterfly.

Little to say, except that it's damn fine acid house muzik, all 19 minutes and 35 seconds of it!, it gets madder and madder, then the drums drop out leaving just a drone with a slowly approaching Helicopter (like "De Niro" on a trip), then back to full-on 303 madness - a beauty.

Mr Monday Future Roach Motel remixes

Roach Motel have remixed the Mr Monday classic from 1990; I still love the original, but don't object to this as it takes a _totally_ different slant on things, sacking any references to the original on the B-side.

Talamus Sans Studio Fixe / Dissonance on Hexagonal

One side's pure head-down-and-dance techno with acid twiddles in the later stages, and the other's a very weird sort of cross between electro and mellow stuff that New Electronica like putting out.





singles reviews

BY Colin Hamilton

the boo radleys wake up boo.

The Boo Radleys' last album, Giant Steps, was a masterpiece. So vast, so clever it was difficult to imagine the Boos ever topping it. With Wake Up Boo they've managed to. An enormous single which is wonderful on the first occasion you hear it and gets better each time after that. It pulsates with life, it elevates you to new heights of pleasure it fills you with the joys of summer and it's not even spring yet. This is truly superb.

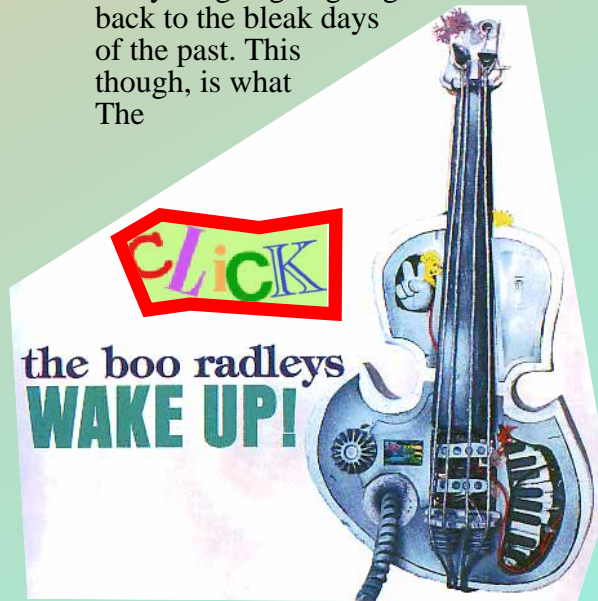
The lyrics are simple, bland even, but they are sung over the elaborate melodies with such passion that its academic. The tune has more than a nodding acquaintance with the harmonies of the Beach Boys or the Beatles yet it has an innovative feel. The opening brass section is similar to the Style Council then it smoothly develops with tunes most groups would die for and a chorus that the milkman will be singing tomorrow. This is all done with an assured vitality that makes it easy to listen to yet it is in no way monotonous

A confident step forward and one which will surely see The Boo Radleys become a mainstream group surpassing the 'talented

but weird' label that they currently

the tindersticks no more affairs

The Tindersticks evoke memories of dark, rainy nights spent in bars alone, despondent and contemplating a miserable future. This is typical a downbeat song which focuses squarely on Stuart Staples' tired voice. Behind it, sparse instrumentation, not demanding attention just maintaining the low key atmosphere for the evocative images to lie on. The lyrics tell of last chances and a rejuvenated intimacy and, with an upbeat tempo, this could have been a song of hope. However, the music implies that this is a false expectation and the probability is that everything is going to go back to the bleak days of the past. This though, is what The



Tindersticks do best and long may they continue.

american music club help me

Another band who spend more time than is good for them dwelling on how the past has been unkind. Mark Eitzel, the singer seems to have spent most of his life in flawed relationships with the only high point being that he managed to construct a career singing about them. He looks at all angles before finding the downside. Why did you leave me? Why won't you stay with me? Even 'This relationship is so wonderful it can't last you must be about to leave me'.

In 'Help Me?' Mark is lamenting how a big love has always eluded him. Just as well really or he'd have no stimulus to motivate him, and nothing to get down about. Falling in and out of love has kept him in lyrics for a fair few years now.

The single is taken from the recent album, San Francisco. Those who bought the last single, will have a smart green box to put it in. You will have discovered by now that this box does not fit comfortably with the rest of your C.D.'s. Not their problem, American Music Club are at their best when things are uncomfortable

kirk brandon's 10:51 children of the damned

First, a little history. Kirk Brandon was once the lead singer of Theatre Of Hate,





a band who made a number of fine, if rather anemic, singles. He then formed Spear Of Destiny who, despite scant chart success, managed to survive for over five years producing some fairly inconsequential music. Six years ago, though Kirk Brandon disappeared. Rumours flew around, someone saw him selling chips, someone else spotted him driving minicabs.

Whatever he was doing was sure to be more productive than making this single. To say that it is pedestrian would be overstating its value. It is a flat apathetic dirge with inane lyrics and a less than ordinary tune. It's so bad even The Alarm would have rejected it if they written it for a b-side. I found it difficult haul just to listen to it all the way through the once.

However, I did and to prove it the last words on it are "tune in, turn on, switch off".

Excellent ideas, apart from the "tune in turn on" bit.

Taxi.

glam metal detectives everybody up !!

There's a little part of our brain which stores the songs that we try hard to forget and makes us absent mindedly sing them at inopportune moments. At the moment it has "Where did you come from, where did you go, where did you come from Cotton Eyed Joe" waiting to unleash itself just



when you don't need it. This is about to change though. The new lyric to be stored will be "Everybody up, everybody down", the chorus to Glam Metal Detectives' new single.

The song owes much to Trevor Horn, the man who proclaimed that "Video Killed The Radiostar" and a vital cog in the ZZT machine which gave us Frankie Goes To Hollywood and "Relax". Both of these songs have been resident in the trivial storage area of the brain and both reached the 'all important' number one spot.

The Glam Metal Detectives are the spoof band from the BBC2 TV series of the same name. Their aim is to save the planet's ecological system with their top hit records. To achieve this they dress in thrill to please clothing and play music which consists of various slogans held together by a funky baseline. Consider 'Funk and justice for all' as a good example.

It is doubtful that they will make any significant headway on the environmental front and they may not reach number one. However you can be sure that they'll replace the Rednecks inside your trivial storage area.

gene haunted by you.

Taken from their forthcoming debut album, Olympian, Haunted By You, is another gem of a single from the ever improving Gene. Three angst ridden minutes in which Martin Rossiter, the intelligent, articulate singer, contem-



plates a love that he has lost but cannot forget.

Your tongue it cannot harm me now he enthuses early on. However, I'm still haunted by you.... you're still in my way is the harsh conclusion he reaches by the end. The melodies, provided by guitarist Steve Mason, are bright and catchy neatly complementing Rossiter's heartfelt anguish.

Gene are no flash in the pan and this single will take them another step towards the commercial success which they thoroughly deserve.

catatonia bleed.

Catatonia come from Wales and make short, to the point tracks. Their poppy, likable sound hints that they should be filed under bubblegum, but that would be unfair. The lyrics are far more compelling than the sugary 'I love him and he loves me' that bubblegum bands tend to produce.

Bleed is a warning song. 'Now his intentions unfold they're not what they seem, he only wants to take control.' sings Nerys with her delicate yet forceful voice.

Catatonia, producing bubblegum which bites back.





INDIE ALBUMS

By Colin Hamilton

WOLFGANG PRESS.
FUNKY LITTLE DEMONS.
4AD.

Over the past twelve years, The Wolfgang Press have been responsible for some challenging and innovative work. However, some of their material has been dreary and tired. Their new album, Funky Little Demons, is a pastiche of all that, good and bad. The songs are crafted with care. Huge upfront bass lines as their foundation; meandering around them rhythm guitars, synthesisers, various percussion and Martin Allan's distinctive vocals. When focussed this works well. Going South, the current single, is a clever, catchy tune built around a simple guitar riff. Eleven Years also demonstrates what makes the band, when on form, rather special. It's a far more overblown affair, featuring saxophone and Allan bemoaning his less than glorious career in show business. The problem, however, is the smooth production which often masks the ingenious structures of the songs. The urgency has not been captured and the tracks start to drag unsatisfactorily, never reaching a genuine climax.



Though this is not unpleasant the music lacks the edge to make it memorable. The lyrics fall down too, being far too tongue in cheek to be meaningful. The result is an album which is not immediate enough to be enjoyed straight away but not compelling enough to be satisfy the enduring listener. Funky Little Demons ? Funky? maybe. Demons? Not quite yet.

THE FALL
Cerebral Caustic.

Each new Fall album is a scare. Expectations are riding too high. Will it be radically new yet reassuringly the same? Will it match the heights reach by earlier albums. Will I like it? The first listen is never a calming experience. All the tracks sound too similar, the heavy baselines and dense drumbeats all but drowning out the tuneless vocals. It's The Fall conveyor belt casually producing a new album.

All far too obvious.

The second time is worse. The novelty of the initial hearing departs and each track outstays its welcome. The relentless basslines drag on and the repetitious drums are never ending. The worst possible conclusion is reached. Their reign as defiant masters of their craft is over. All that is left is their generic sound, The Fall drone. The golden rule with Fall albums, is never to criticise too hastily. If there is doubt hold fire. Wait a while, then revisit. This once more proves to be worthwhile.

Subtleties are revealed, the tracks have far more depth than first thought. The driving beats become a backdrop for the complex textures of guitars and keyboards. Each twist anticipated with relish. Each track now has a invigorating appeal. The high point is, The Aphid, a fresh revamp of the standard Fall style, completely compulsive. Other highs include Life Just Bounces, an exhilarating reworking of a five year old b-side and Don't call me darling featuring the re-recruited Brix screaming over Mark's restrained vocals. The experimental tracks, such as Bonkers in Phoenix, also have an edge which makes them listenable. As ever, The Fall have continued to develop, unhindered by the current musical trends. This time, though, nothing has been compromised. There are no easily accessible tracks for the casual listener making Cerebral Caustic an album for the Fall faithful, rather than the masses. Somehow I doubt The Fall will lose much sleep.





OASIS

The Fillmore
San Francisco

By Richard Charlesworth.

Britain's next big thing hit San Francisco recently and the obvious question was, "Will Oasis live up to the hype?" Bands like Blur, the Stone Roses and Suede (or London Suede as they are known here) have come over to the U.S. with big reputations made in British weeklies but they've failed to live up to their notice. America has remained unimpressed, and bands like Pearl Jam and Green Day rule the airwaves. Still, the signs have been encouraging for Oasis: healthy sales of their album and heavy rotation of their video for "Live Forever" on MTV.

The Manchester quintet played a nonsense 85 minutes for an appreciative and enthusiastic sold-out crowd at the Fillmore, San Francisco's former hippy palace. Exploding into "Rock 'n' Roll Star", Oasis did not let up until they had played most of Definitely Maybe and a few b-sides such as "It's Good to be Free" from the "Whatever" single. The very Buzzcock-sounding song "Fadeaway" was particularly satisfying. Finishing with the obligatory "I Am the Walrus", Britain's newest sensations omitted their most recent

LIVE From SF and London !

single "Whatever"- did they think America hadn't heard it yet or perhaps they needed the string section?! Fears that Liam would lose his voice and leave the stage as he had days prior in Portland, were allayed as his voice seemed to be in excellent condition. To these American eyes, Oasis' stage presence was both powerful and a bit strange: they stood still. No leaping about or unnecessary drama, just music. Still, Liam is more than a bit odd. As the rest of the band came to an instrumental break, Liam would amble away from the microphone back to the drum riser and looked on at the proceedings whilst drinking various beverages. The rest of Liam's stage repertoire consisted of a few shrugs, odd hand gestures and vacant stares between songs. The other Gallagher brother, Noel teased the crowd repeatedly with the



intro to "Cigarettes and Alcohol", and for the rest of the night hammered out solid and imaginative riffs that often recalled the best of their spiritual forefathers, bands like the Sex Pistols and T-Rex (two bands, incidentally, who were never commercially successful in the U.S. - maybe now it's time.) While Oasis are not stunningly original, they bring an intensity, excitement and attitude lacking in all too many bands in America today. Oasis are on their way, and if they can deliver the goods on their second album (due in August), Oasis may have their way with America

And by Roger Hand

Oasis played in San Francisco last October. It was at a tiny club, and





I couldn't get in but in the large crowd hoping to get in there was definitely the feeling that something big was going on. This time Oasis were playing in the much larger Fillmore and once again it was sold-out. It was strange to see such a large audience in America you start thinking that the only music that'll draw a big crowd is mindless ooze like Mariah Carey, or ancient "classic" rockers wheezing around the country on another farewell tour. Where did all these people suddenly come from that liked Oasis? The crowd was too large to be the usual knot of Anglophiles. There weren't any Pearl Jam t-shirts that I could see. maybe things aren't so bad after all. "It's All Too Much" blared out the PA, Oasis came on stage and launched into "Rock 'n' Roll Star". From the first chord of the night the guitar sound was a massive tidal wave, crashing over everyone in the hall, and the deafening non-stop pounding of the drums bludgeoned you into a state of trance. Through the din Liam sauntered to the mic at center stage, his hands clasped nonchalantly behind his back. "Ah luf mah lof in the citeeee" The groovy snide melody floated thru the sonic mess. It was fantastic! Everything you could hope it would be! America had no chance.

Some were screaming, some were dancing in place, most just stood and watched, but it was clear that Oasis had won over

this crowd. They got to hear almost all of Definitely Maybe and a few bonuses besides, such as the great "Fadeaway". Liam and Noel spent much of the night joking with the crowd front center, perhaps they weren't used to more people at their American shows, because not once did they lift their eyes past the first twenty feet of paying customers. Then again, part of the magic of a live Oasis show is that, despite the big sound, they don't do the big leaps and poses that most bands seem to think are necessary. Oasis just couldn't be bothered, and that's the attitude that drenches every note of every song: I'm happy now - don't bother me.

My Life Story

The Garage, London.

By Colin Hamilton

My Life Story are not like your normal indie music combo. For a start there's eleven of them, which makes the Garage's stage rather full. They've negotiated stages far smaller than this, though and they seem to be rather enjoying the extra room. They've even managed to cram an industrial sized fan on to the side to make them feel more at home.

It is the delight that My Life Story engender which also sets them aside from the normal, unemotional stance

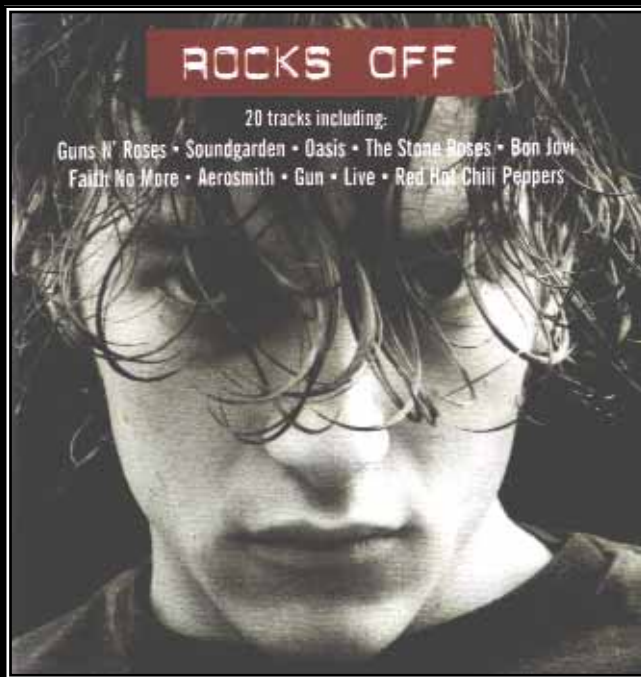
that many groups portray on stage. First and foremost they are here to entertain.

Jake Shillingford, the charismatic frontman, has written a clutch of catchy songs and he performs each with relish. Lines such as 'kissing you is like licking a battery' from the Lady is a Tramp are typical of his output. Behind him, the string section are dressed to the nines, glitzy dresses and big earrings. They celebrate each song's twist and turn with spirited animation. Helen Caddick on keyboards also takes on a few rock poses with her tongue firmly in her cheek.

The highlights of the performance are the recent single, Sparkle, the captivating Girl a, Girl b, Boy c, and the overblown Triumphant, which features the fan blowing remarkable volume of paper flying through the air.

My Life Story are walking a dangerous line. They want to have fun and maximise the showmanship angle but they don't want to fall into the category of 'novelty act' which has been the end for so many of their contemporaries. They have songs of which they are rightfully proud and, without isolating the audience, they take care that their diversions don't undermine them. This could be their big year, let's hope so, because eleven mouths are a lot to feed and their demise would be everyone's loss.





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