

CHILDREN OF GRAFFITI

FREE

ISSUE 1 - SPRING 2000

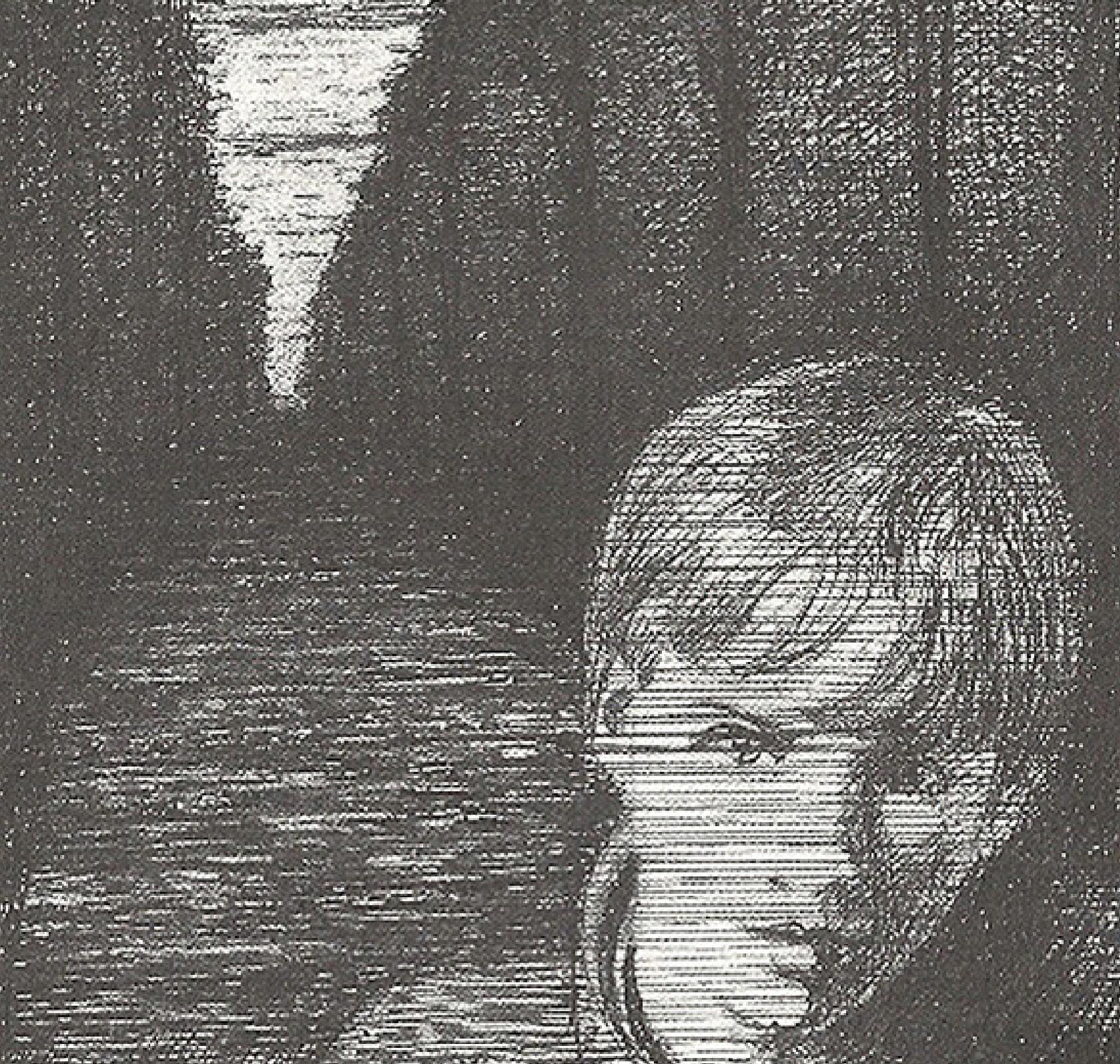
PEARL JAM

THE BAND WHO STOLE YOUR HEART AND SOUL

PLUS . . .

BUSH . THE JUNKET . HIM . DEFTONES
MY VITRIOL . TWIST . SLIPKNOT

If you love ROCK MUSIC you know what it's like to live in an ALTERNATIVE dimension. When you listen to the records you LOVE, TIME becomes something you can fly back and forth through. The artists featured in CHILDREN OF GRAFFITI offer you a feeling of OMNIPRESENCE, a sense that something about the way we communicate is NOT TRANSITORY. This music is NOT DISPOSABLE. And neither is this magazine. Collect all 12 issues and use them as your doorway to an era when bands broke out of the backrooms and into your hearts.



CONTENTS

4. SAWYER SAYS

Editorial. Rant. Diatribe.
Discussion. Deep. Pointless.
Call it what you want.

5. ALL TIME ALBUM 1

Our retrospective review of
Pearl Jam's life-changing debut
album 'Ten'.

5. OOM... THIS IS NEW!

Bush, The Junket, HIM and
Deftones album reviews.

8. TIME OF OUR LIFE

My Vitriol, Twist and Slipknot
gig reports.

9. WHERE WE ARE

Profile of our favourite pub -
The Falcon.

10. IT MEANS EVERYTHING

Beautiful Chambers writing
beautifully about his memories
of Pearl Jam's 'Ten'.

11. SHAMELESS SELF-PROMOTION

A David's-eye view of our song 'The
Lights Will Go Up'.

12. TOP 10

Songs that remind us of being
tiny 13 year olds.

Rock and Roll. I know you kids aren't calling it that these days but that's how I still like to think about it. Like a rock through your greenhouse of a life or a roll in the hay. Like a rock-et to the moon or a drive in a Rolls-Royce. Like a... well, you get the point.

Or maybe you don't. 'Cause it looked like you were going to need a microscope to find music that was going to make your hair stand on end as the Twentieth Century dropped its final curtain. And, of course, the microscope would be in a box and the box was bound to be buried God knows where. So you were going to need a map to locate it, then a spade to unearth it and then a key to get it open. Hell on Earth. I need to have a lie-down just thinking about all that effort. I thought that Rock and Roll was easy. Like me. Kidding. Although I am lying down already, so...

Anyway, I moved to the city 'cause I thought to my post-sixth-form, small-town self: 'There must be more to this SUCKFEST than someone's letting on.' The winter of 1999 showed some promise. Nine guys from Iowa dressed in red boiler suits, jumping off amp stacks and hitting each other around the head with blunt instruments. Now That's What I Call Music. At the other end of the scale, there was little Coldplay who only recently played The Camden Falcon, my local drinking

den, before ending up at Shepherds Bush Empire in November. Okay, they were first on and the main act was Shack but singer Chris Martin was quite the centre of attention at the bar upstairs, record industry types hovering all around him like he was a very delicious jam sandwich.

January 2000 suggested things were really on the up. I saw Twist play in The Falcon. Afterwards, I spoke to the band and one of them told me about being at a festival, getting off her head and ending up in a

**"You are a God,"
I told Robbie Williams...**

toilet, thinking: "I am Doctor Who." I giggled at everything the four Twist girls said and when I went back to the boy I was with, he glared at me. "I'm just doing stuff for the Graffiti fanzine," I told him. My face was flushed. Hell on Earth.

Elsewhere in the city, Feeder headlined The Astoria. I've being crazy for them since they played The Falcon last year. Drummer Jon Lee was on crutches back then and such a sweetheart. "How are you?" he asked me when we passed at the bottom of the stairs. I didn't know what to say. My Vitriol were on that Astoria bill as well and could take a leaf out of cheery Feeder's book. If you see

edgy Som Wardner in The Water Rats or anywhere else around, he never much looks like he's making the front covers of the weekly music papers. But he is. Cheer up, dude. You're doing good.

I love living in the city. I love the year 2000. There's something in the air and writing this page gives me an excuse to randomly throw myself in the way of any band or interesting person that crosses my path. "You are a God," I told Robbie Williams when I saw him at the Keith Moon bar. Which is an odd thing to say, right? But what was he doing at an Incubus gig? Too weird. And pop stars freak me out. What I like about my favourite musicians, and what I'm discovering to be truer than I could have ever imagined when the city was only a place in my dreams, is that they all hang out in the same places as the rest of us. They're from the same world. And so when I glanced across the downstairs room at The Monarch the other week at this dude with big, red spiky hair, I liked that the first thought I had wasn't: 'Oh, it's the singer from Muse.' Instead, I thought: 'I recognise that guy from The Falcon.'

That's what it's about. The city isn't just a city. It's a place where your favourite songs turn into taxis and, whizzing around the streets, you can see life exactly how it's meant to be. And it's not such a suckfest after all...

PEARL JAM, TEN (EPIC)



Seattle in April 1991. The city of dreams? Not really. Andrew Wood, peacocking frontman of local stars-in-waiting Mother Love Bone is dead. Chris Cornell, his old roommate has written an

album in dedication to his lost friend but no one in the outside world seems to care much. Nirvana have been to England and Alice In Chains have been oddly billed on tour with Slayer, Megadeth and Anthrax but you're seriously crazy if you think every kid who lives for rock music is soon going to be looking in awe at this rainy, buzz-saw of a place.

But, then, Eddie Vedder's only recently moved into town and no one's heard 'Ten' yet. With Stone Gossard and Jeff Ament from Mother Love Bone on guitar and bass respectively and a singer soon to be iconned as a figure-

head of the grunge scene, the Pearl Jam debut is a defining moment in the history of music. Vedder's bluesy lyrics and soulful vocals are essential to the record's impact. He tells stories of abuse and agony as if he's lived right through them. Hopefully he hasn't.

Either way, the pain is transferrable and universal, and married to some of the most unforgettable guitar lines ever written, it's overwhelmingly tangible. Trying to pinpoint 'Ten's' perfect moments is pointless. It's enough to observe that best known tracks 'Alive' and 'Jeremy' are not stand-out. They are typical.

OOM... THIS IS NEW!

BUSH, THE SCIENCE OF THINGS (INTERSCOPE)

'I memorise the basics,' sings Gavin Rossdale as 'Warm Machine', the opening track on Bush's third album, explodes.

It's an interesting opening given that the band's detractors would say that's all this group have ever done. Widely disdained, particularly in the UK (only in the UK?) for taking the blueprint of grunge and then re-hashing it with no concern for its inherent essence, Bush are out on their own. Mainly, those same cynics would say, because that's where they deserve to be. Exiled. Banished. Barred.

It's a ridiculous state of affairs. Bush's debut long-player was an achievement of monolithic proportions. Second record 'Razorblade Suitcase', despite the radio-conquering 'Swallowed', didn't quite meet the same standard. But 'The Science Of Things' is a massive statement of intent. Stadium-sized yet introverted, it's a tapestry of ruthlessly melodic guitar playing and consciously acute vocals. 'The Chemicals Between Us' is the noise of a band articulating the sound of water - with 'The Science Of Things', Bush have built a record that simulates the emergence of Atlantis - whilst the emotions on 'English Fire', on

'Spacetravel', on 'Letting The Cables Sleep' are both distant like a mountain view and close-up like a memory you never realised you had. And there's a fury on 'Prize Fighter' and 'The Disease Of The Dancing Cats' that actually makes sense of the grunge comparisons.

If 'The Science Of Things' proves anything, it's that Bush have soul.

At once submerged and fin-sharp, it's a cusp-millennium blues record with added distortion and it glues the sound of falling Rome to the hopefulness of a sunrise.

OOM... THIS IS NEW!

DEFTONES, WHITE PONY (MAVERICK)

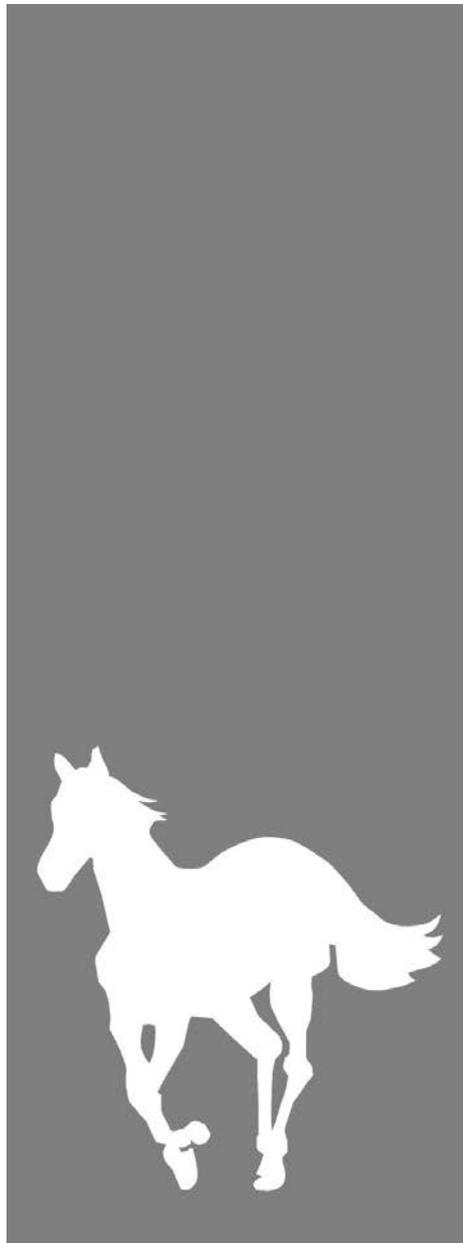
There was always something about Deftones. Frontman Chino Moreno's silky vocals meant the Sacramento quintet were immediately far more than just another scene band. There was a sensuality to early songs such as 'Bored' that wasn't evident in, say, Korn's 'Blind'.

That romantic streak was emphasised even more potently on Deftones' second album 'Around The Fur'. Still, though, 'White Pony' comes as something of a shock. It's truly a great album, one that people will talk about in ten, twenty, thirty years' time.

Again, Moreno's vocals do much of the important work. It's easy to imagine him like a miniaturised miner, working with a pick and excavating your heart, digging for coal or oil or whatever it is that actually makes us human. You can literally feel the singer hammering against your heart, resuscitating you - if it wasn't for this album you might never have realised you weren't properly alive to begin with. Such is the physicality of Deftones' music.

The production here is key. It would have been easy for the heavy, heavy guitars to sound too aggressive; instead, though, the rhythm section massages rather than mutilates. Even 'Elite' - which isn't as much a song as some form of musical extermination - somehow never loses a lullaby-ish essence. And 'Change (In The House Of Flies)' will be the track that turns Deftones into stars. An epic, dramatic narrative, it's a moment of true, inspired beauty.

The rest of 'White Pony' may not be so accessible but that 'easier' song (positioned carefully near the end of the album) should serve as a hint of the rewards to be found beneath the surface of this entire record should you take the time to unearth them.



OOM... THIS IS NEW!

THE JUNKET, LUX SAFARI (LIME STREET)



The Junket have got a cool record collection. We're sure of it. The Cure, The Peadarillos, Pavement, Smashing Pumpkins, Built To Spill, Deus. There are bits and pieces of all these artists here. But, boy, this Kettering outfit have engineered their influences with an integrity and a spirit that will make them YOUR NEW FAVOURITE BAND.

'Night With Red' sounds like a racing car driven by James Dean. It's cartoonish but only in a way that reminds you how closely art mimics reality. And it's only fantastical if you've already decided your imagination needs to be curbed by other people's rules or expectations.

Ultimately, 'Lux Safari' changes every time you listen to it at a different volume and it's actually verging on being seriously insane. Maybe it's the three vocals (of guitarist Rik Flynn, bassist Stevie Rees and drummer Reu Humphries) that cloak this full-

length debut with a quivering twitchiness; the singers interweave like thread but invest '59 Rope' with a surround sound that feels claustrophobic and schizophrenic. Bonus track 'The King Of The Lettuce Line' is an unexpected climax and one that really sends this record over the edge and into the stratosphere. Even Nirvana never sounded so alienated or pissed off. No question about it - 'Lux Safari' is the first essential album of this century.

HIM, RAZORBLADE ROMANCE (BMG)



Ville Valo, frontman of Finnish quartet HIM, is half Byron poem and half Byron himself. Rock music has never been so romantic and HIM's second full-length album is the sound of Brontë's Heathcliff and Cathy being reborn at the beginning of the new millennium.

'Poison Girl' is as captivating as anything here. 'I did it all just for her,' sings Valo and the sense of infatuation - not just with a woman, but with the abstract concept of love itself -

is profoundly affecting. That the theme of paralyzing passions is continued throughout this record without ever becoming wishy-washy is HIM's greatest achievement. Bruising guitars, heart-piercing pianos and an enchanting melodiousness all combine to make 'Razorblade Romance' a heavyweight creation that bears the weight of comparisons to Wuthering Heights. It's an endorphin rush of a record - some feat given Ville's Siren-like habit of encouraging listeners to: 'die tonight for love' ('Join Me In Death') and 'witness it all go wrong' ('Death Is In Love With Us'). And the serotoninal results might appear somewhat paradoxical considering some of those lyrics but the rush actually makes sense of HIM's intention to highlight our spiritual capacity.

It's as if HIM are pushing us to the edge of reason so that we can uncover some hidden potential. And if that all sounds a little masochistic, there's no doubt HIM are the kind of band capable of attracting a fanbase utterly committed to embracing the Finnish outfit's world view as a lifestyle. Not that you have to. Just listen in for 45 minutes, if that's all you want to do, and indulge in the otherworldly sound of Ville Valo tearing his body apart in the hope of finding his soul. Powerful.

TIME OF OUR LIFE

MY VITRIOL, CAMDEN FALCON

They don't come more hyped than My Vitriol. How many gigs have the band played? More than five, less than ten. However you add it up, that's not many. And yet somehow the band - alongside Coldplay, JJ72 and Muse - find themselves heralded as the saviours of British guitar music. Not a bad place to be considering only a handful of people have seen them play live.

Tonight, though, we do get that chance and when they perform 'Always Your Way' and 'Pieces' from their debut Org issued double A-side, the crowd are hooked.

The attention thrust Som Wardner's way may fluster him a little and he looks nervous but My Vitriol's songs never sound anything less than as big as an ocean. Which is about what you'd expect from a band who manage to fuse Foo Fighter-esque hooks with My Bloody Valentine-inspired 'nu-gaze'. 'Am I wasting your time?' Wardner sings and the answer is clearly: NO.

TWIST, CAMDEN FALCON

Being a musician has seemed like such hard work in the last year or two. Worse than that, playing in a band has looked DULL. There's such little glitter, so little energy and anyone picking up a guitar looks shy about it because what if all those people who say this kind of music is actually DEAD have got a point?

It's a worry and on one hand it kind of makes sense that so many musicians are in a right mood. Most of the UK is listening to Oasis or dance music and hardly anyone's listening to the interesting bands which means they'll be stuck playing back rooms in pubs FOREVER.

One group who couldn't give a hoot are Birmingham's Twist. They're brash, smart and they've got an English angularity which is both awkward and exhilarating. Tonight they are primal, pumping The Falcon full of life. Just maybe ROCK has a future after all...



SLIPKNOT, ASTORIA

You can tell Slipknot are coming long before you see them. Stage lights like torches, dry ice like dawn fog. The sickening whirl of nine light combat helicopters. Sirens wail, phantomish air raid warnings pulsate. We are half-euphoric, half-exhausted, half-sick. Nothing quite adds up anymore. The onset of hypoxia. No one runs. We've arrived. Breathe.

Our hearts beat, beat, beat like tiny battery-powered toys. The smoke gets thicker until it's a wall. We've fallen into a 3D comic book. Into a war, into a fairytale. Maybe this is the apocalypse. It sounds like it. Sirens still howl. Nobody moves. Nobody.

Then, through the choking mist, we see them. Nine soldiers emerging from the death zone. One by one, we count them. They flicker like an old film. They are wearing masks. Our faces melt. Like candles. Flicker.

From Iowa to the front line. With songs louder than bombs. It's time to choose. You're with them. Or not. Decide.

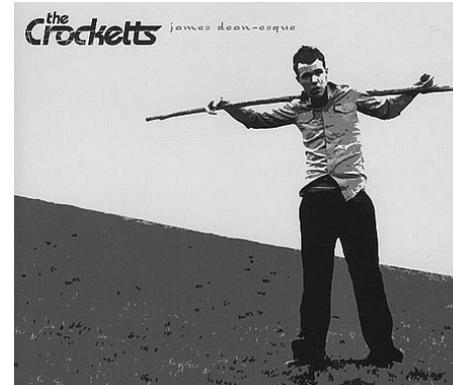
They are barbed wire. You are too. That's right. You.

This is hell. You've arrived. Welcome.

You ready? Right.

"SPIT..."

WHERE WE ARE



CAMDEN FALCON

It's May 1999 and there's a massive poster advertising Crocketts single 'James Dean-esque' on one wall of the pub. At the door there are piles of infant magazine *The Fly*, and scattered underfoot there are flyers for a performance by a band called Muse upcoming at this venue next week. The floor is sticky, empty plastic glasses litter the top of the battered pool table, and the sign to the Gents has been crossed out and replaced with the title Cocks. The Ladies has been adapted in a similar fashion.

Amidst the selection of photos on the wall that detail the tiny venue's prestigious history of discovering bands first, there's a shot of singer Davey Crockett. Wild-eyed, and bleeding from a self-inflicted cut on his forehead, he stares down from the wall. In the other corner of the room sits the real thing. He's drinking Guinness, and the rest of his band are kicking about too in various states of inebriation. This is The Camden Falcon.

That was a little over half a year ago - the first time I think I really appreciated what I was part of. Some of the posters will have changed since then. And there might be a different band - Rachel Stamp maybe, Three Colours Red perhaps - sitting in the corner. But the sensation that, in The Falcon, you're somewhere

you belong will never change. And that's why it's a place worth knowing about. Real people hang out here. The glossy, neon world of the bright lights/big city seems miles away and who knows how The Falcon managed to get left behind. Maybe because it couldn't be bothered to follow the crowd - it was too drunk and there was too much rock 'n' roll to listen to. Probably because it stuck its claws in the ground, believed that one day guitar music would matter to people again and it was just a case of waiting it out. And that's what it feels like everyone's been doing here. The door staff are part of the fabric of the place, the bartenders are the same every night, the soundtrack on the CD player is as diverse as the music that gets played on stage in the back room. It looks a bit like a bunker in here and that makes sense.

In 2000, The Falcon would be well within its rights to throw its arms in the air and start yelling out the words to 'We Are The Champions'. Coldplay and that band Muse are spear-heading a fleet of acts taking music that means something back into the public consciousness - and it's this back street platform which has given those artists a launchpad.

And because people have started to realise just that, this Camden pub gets busier every night now. The word's out that this is the place to be. Some of us have known for much longer, of course. And if you were here the night Travis handed out tapes of their first demo, or when, at the beginning of last year, Feeder played an intimate show to launch the release of 'Yesterday Went Too Soon' then you'll know what I mean when I say The Camden Falcon is a magical place with music plastered into its very infrastructure. There may be beer on the floor and cigarette burns in the upholstery but these are the venue's battle scars. They've been well-earned.

IT MEANS EVERYTHING



CHAMBERS ON 'TEN'

School didn't make much sense to me. It wasn't that I felt older than everyone in my year group - more that they seemed younger. I can see how that might appear to amount to more or less the same thing but it doesn't. It was a kid called Junkie

who handed me the Pearl Jam album one morning. He was a couple of classes above me and he walked around school, not like he owned the place but like he didn't think it was owned by anyone. He had this way about him that made him seem detached from anyone else's expectations, as if getting through life wasn't hard for him at all. If you watched him carefully, though, you would notice that he had this nervous habit of rubbing his forefinger over his eyebrow. "You got to listen to this," Junkie said to me and he held out a copy of 'Ten' on cassette.

When I got home, I lay on my bedroom floor and put my headphones on. Listening to those songs for the first time was like meeting someone my age at last. And of course I was only thirteen years old so I knew the singer - I looked up his name, Eddie Vedder, in the inlay notes - was not my age at all. But his voice spoke to me as clearly as the voices of all my peers did not.

And it's not like I had any desire to hide a '16 gauge under my clothes' like the boy in 'Once' did, but the way Vedder narrated that character's story connected with me. I could understand how feeling like you were on the outside of things might turn to bitterness or anger. I didn't feel that way exactly - my disassociation was much more passive - but I did relate to the sense that actual happiness

depended on working out a Maths equation written in hieroglyphics.

On a more specific level, the detachment in my home life rationalised the immediacy of my relationship with Pearl Jam and pinpointed the stabbing I felt in my gut when Eddie Vedder repeated that same question: 'Why go home?' My domestic set-up wasn't a situation I killed myself over but somewhere deep beneath the understanding that over-thinking it was pointless, I guess a part of me still needed the sanctuary that 'Ten' offered. There was a warmth to it.

Songs like 'Black' were physical entities. They stood up in front of me and I could feel the heat from them as surely as if I'd turned on a radiator. And then there were those Stone Gossard riffs that inspired me to pick up a guitar. Never ostentatious or over-blown, they suited a band that managed to be big and melodic without sacrificing integrity. 'Ten' made my life better. I reckon that's about all you can ask from an album.

SHAMELESS SELF-PROMOTION



DAVID ON 'THE LIGHTS WILL GO UP'

A cool thing about this cut is its reference points. I grew up in a different world to JD and Chambers, and definitely to Sawyer, but it turns out we grew up watching the same movies and listening to the same music. And

it was 'The Lights Will Go Up' that brought this to my attention. Carlito had been bugging me for I don't know how long to hear the demo, and eventually I listened. So, yeah, man, I heard 'The Lights Will Go Up' and I thought that these kids must have something about them. And because they sang about Stand By Me and Pearl Jam, I was willing to overlook the Feeder reference.

Obviously we recorded it for about ten pence and in about half a second, which is the kind of thing that could drive Gandhi crazy, but even regardless of that it would have been hard to get right. On one hand, it's a rousing, upbeat track - it wants you to do what it tells you to do - 'dance, dance, dance' - but at the same time, it's a pretty personal song...

Of course, JD wanted it to be both those things at once. The same way he wanted it to sound exactly like Blind Melon and Bush at the same time. The fortunate end result is that it sounds like neither (more fortunate in the latter case than the former). But that's just luck, man. That kitten's on his own planet.

The thing is with this song is we've all been there. And as much as you can hear 'The Lights Will Go Up' and see JD and Chambers cutting back on the town hall steps or whatever - I think JD

said there was a church on the edge of his hometown square and that's where he sets it - it could be the narrative of any of a billion teenagers, right? And it feels so personal because actually it is that personal to any individual who has ever looked through rose-tinted shades at a life they think they recognise from a Dirty Dancing movie. And, dude, who doesn't want to believe that life can feel like a Brat Pack film? Or that a mannequin can come to life and fall in love with you whilst a Starship soundtrack plays in the background? I'm a sucker for that jazz. And, as I said, that's half of what sold me on these cats.

But it wasn't just that these guys bought into that Lost Boys thing. It was the fact that they really believed that the 'one for all and all for one' stuff could actually be a part of their real life. And, man, I guess deep inside of me (don't tell anyone) there was still a dreamer who believed that too. No doubt, he was a bit sick from smoking since the age of ten, but he was still alive.

And I reckon that dreamer still exists in everyone - trapped in some kind of stasis booth like Dave Lister on Red Dwarf. So, 'The Lights Will Go Up', I guess, is for your inner Lister. Your inner Dave. Or something like that.

What was the question?

TOP 10 - SONGS THAT REMIND US OF BEING 13

SAWYER



1. PEARL JAM: JEREMY
2. TEMPLE OF THE DOG: HUNGER STRIKE
3. COUNTING CROWS: MR JONES
4. BUFFALO TOM: TAILLIGHTS FADE
5. BUSH: GLYCERINE
6. NIRVANA: SOMETHING IN THE WAY
7. BLIND MELON: NO RAIN
8. FEEDER: HIGH
9. NIRVANA: HEART-SHAPED BOX
10. CANDLEBOX: FAR BEHIND

DAVID



1. MOTHER LOVE BONE: THIS IS SHANGRILA
2. PIXIES: PLANET OF SOUND
3. LOVE BATTERY: ONE SMALL STEP
4. TEMPLE OF THE DOG: REACH DOWN
5. ALICE IN CHAINS: GOD SMACK
6. GREEN RIVER: THIS TOWN
7. MUDHONEY: TOUCH ME I'M SICK
8. TEMPLE OF THE DOG: HUNGER STRIKE
9. MOTHER LOVE BONE: STARDOG CHAMPION
10. NIRVANA: LOVE BUZZ

CHAMBERS



1. BLIND MELON: CHANGE
2. CRANES: PARIS & ROME
3. ERIC'S TRIP: BEHIND THE GARAGE
4. SUEDE: STILL LIFE
5. RED HOUSE PAINTERS: KATY SONG
6. MASSIVE ATTACK: UNFINISHED SYMPATHY
7. PEARL JAM: BETTER MAN
8. SMASHING PUMPKINS: LANDSLIDE
9. JAMES: OUT TO GET YOU
10. ANGELO BADALAMENTI: TWIN PEAKS THEME

JD



1. NIRVANA: DUMB
2. MANIC STREET PREACHERS: ARCHIVES OF PAIN
3. RADIOHEAD: CREEP
4. BLIND MELON: TONES OF HOME
5. VERVE: ALL IN THE MIND
6. THE SMASHING PUMPKINS: SLUNK
7. SOUL ASYLUM: RUNAWAY TRAIN
8. SUEDE: THE ASPHALT WORLD
9. THE AFGHAN WHIGS: WHAT JAIL IS LIKE
10. PEARL JAM: OCEANS

CHILDREN OF GRAFFITI HAS BEEN ADORINGLY ASSEMBLED BY SAWYER WITH THE HELP OF ROCK 'N' ROLL REVIEWER JD, CHILLED OUT, CLOSET OBSESSIVE CHAMBERS AND DROP-DEAD DEGENERATE DAVID. ALL FOUR OF THESE PEOPLE ARE ALSO IN A BAND CALLED CHILDREN OF GRAFFITI.