

HEAVEN SENT

'HEAVEN 17' FROM PAGE 14

been working class in Sheffield it's hard to imagine how bad working class can be.

"There's a question a lot of journalists ask - 'How can you reconcile your success in the music business with your socialist beliefs?' It's a reasonable question and my reply is that it's the fear of going back to the life-style I had as a child. I've no intention of being that poor again.

"We lived in a three-roomed house until I was nine, and my parents, myself and brother had to sleep in the same bedroom. I had to sleep in a cot until I was six and I had to bath in the sink. At the time we took it for granted but looking back it's pure horror.

"I had the most incredible arguments with expatriat Britons in America who believed that Margaret Thatcher was the best thing to happen to Britain and who said they used to vote Labour. I've no time for people who, because they've got a little more money in their pockets, forget where they came from and how they could end up again."

Are Heaven 17 working class heroes?
"I don't know, we'd never sell ourselves on that basis."

But you're obviously not part of the growing chic that regards the working classes through rose coloured glasses as a pack of unwashed romantics?

"Right. The essence of *Penthouse and Pavement* was to show the opposite streams of class aspiration. The middle and upper classes aspire to be lower class as it has more credibility and the lower class want to be upper class in order to end the drudgery, they just want to survive.

"I get sick to death of people in the music business who say they really had a tough childhood when in fact they used to live in a 10 room detached house in Buckinghamshire with three cars and two garages. It doesn't wash, it's detestable."

From the point of view of content *The Luxury Gap* concentrates its strength on the second side which culminates in the mystifying, haunting ballad, 'Best Kept Secret'.

"It's the most political track on the album and it was the most difficult track to write lyrically. We spent six hours locked in a very small room writing that song and a lot of it only makes sense from our point of view. The chorus is concerned with political conspiracy and the idea of a world going on underneath - a world of paranoia. The positive aspect is that you can escape this world if you want to learn."

'Temptation' has already made its commercial presence felt and the second single from the album, 'Come Live With Me' a tale of an older man's love for a teenage girl, has already done a bundle in Britain. It's a song not to be underestimated. It has pathos and a keen sense of loss.

"Yeah, it's an extremely tragic song as the relationship in the song is doomed to failure from the start - love doesn't follow the course of romantic novels. The guy, in the course of the song understands that he has to place her interests before his own and the fact that he's forcing her to grow up more quickly than she

should makes him decide to leave her for her own sake.

"We did a video for the song in Paris and it's the best one we've done and it makes it clear that he can't possibly see her again and in the video she commits suicide."

Critically, *The Luxury Gap* was on the receiving end of a lot of flak in Britain largely because many people believed that it fell well short of the high standards created by 'Fascist Groove Thang and *Penthouse and Pavement*. But commercially it went gold in two weeks. So who's right, the press or the public?

"So far as we're concerned the British press don't know what they're doing. I think they're the worst in the world at the moment and they used to be the best. None of the reviews had anything to say that was interesting and they're more interested in whether you're fashionable or not now whether something's good or bad. It annoys me that they're planting negativity into a lot of people's minds just because they're bitter people. You can look at a music paper in Britain and they'll like maybe three out of thirty albums a week. That's ridiculous. Everybody should be working together. We're in a leisure industry and people want entertainment they don't want to be told Jean Paul Genet wouldn't like this album because..."

The rock merry-go-round demands that successful albums be followed up by sell-out tours. Are Heaven 17 planning to conform to that cycle?

"No we're not playing live at the moment because the time's better spent writing and we enjoy our spare time. But we still want to meet the people who buy our records and to that end Ian has an idea I don't mind telling you about but if I told it here it would be ripped off immediately. The idea is to hire clubs all over the world and have Heaven 17 party nights where we'd programme the music and we'd be there to dance with and meet people instead of setting ourselves up as some sort of demi-gods on stage."

The intellectual electronic prole art threat begins here?

George Kay

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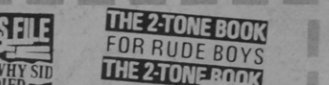
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- 56 Teardrop Explodes. D.D. Smash and Mick Jones Part 2. Neighbours. Richard Burgess.
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- 58 Blams. Teardrops. Hall & Dates. Bill Wyman. Kottke/Redbone interviews.
- 59 Human League. Men At Work. Chills. Tim Finn. Motels. Elvis Costello live. Furtive EP.
- 60 Split Enz in Canada. John Hiatt. Nares. Dance Exponents. Lindsay Anderson.
- 61 Graham Brazier & Harry Lyon. Fall. Jim Carroll. Daggy & Dickheads. Hip Singles. Dropbears.
- 62 Split Enz on Road Part 1. Fall's Mark E. Smith interviewed. Altered Images. Randy Crawford. This Sporting Life. Cold Chisel.
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- 64 Icehouse interview. Simple Minds interview. Hunters & Collectors. Alastair Riddell. Dance Macabre. Naked Spots. ABC. John Cooper Clarke.
- 65 Yazoo. Joe Cocker. Zoo (ex Pop Mechanix). Guriz and Jo Jo Zep Interviews.
- 66 Psychedelic Furs. Dexy's Midnight Runners (Kevin Rowland). Midnight Oil. Neil Finn and Jed Fetalmania interviews.
- 67 Siouxsie & The Banshees. Toots. Church. Sweetwaters. John Martyn. UB40. Psych Furs.
- 68 Herbs. Culture Club. Bauhaus. Kiwi Animal. No Tag. Sharon O'Neill. Thompson Twins. ChCh special (Wastrels. Flying Nun. Bill Dieren etc).
- 69 Joni Mitchell. Dance Exponents. Who. Neighbours. Dire Straits. Talk Talk. Milton. Stowaways. Blond Comedy.
- 70 Fun Boy 3. Birthday Party. Split Enz. Diehards. Spines. Marching Girls. Body Electric. Wgtn Punk.
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- 72 Talking Heads. U2. Malcolm McLaren. Netherworld Dancing Toys. Beatles' Photographer Dezo Hoffman.
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EXTRA 2

New Wave dates (75-80), Last Weekend in Auckland (Newmatics, Pop Mx, Penknife Glides, Techtones), Kinks profile, mod Ray Columbus, David Bowie pic, UK Scene by Jeremy Templar, Newtones, Heavenly Bodies, Chris Knox pic.

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