



El talento de Mr. Rivers. Foto: Óscar García

BITTER SPRINGS

Pocket Club-Mercat de les Flors, Barcelona, 24 de marzo

Lo sabíamos desde hacía unos cuantos años, pero ha sido necesario que Bitter Springs se sacaran de la manga una obra tan descomunal como "That Sentimental Lush" (2005) para que nos llevásemos las manos a la cabeza y repitiésemos anonadados aquello de "menudo grupazo". En directo, las canciones de su nuevo disco —que no dudaron en calzarnos prácticamente entero— resultan más inmensas si cabe, adquiriendo un matiz eléctrico y desbocado más propio de unos Dinosaur Jr o unos Pavement en sus años mozos que de una banda británica al uso. Simon Rivers, líder del grupo, resulta ser, además, un *showman* de los que cuesta encontrar: sabio, directo y entregado, con las tablas suficientes para que casi una hora y media de concierto se nos hiciera corta. No olvidemos añadir a todo esto la rotunda soltura de una banda cuarentona y

hooligan a la que los años y los kilos parecen sentar de maravilla. Una banda que, aun desprendiendo aquella opacidad ochentera que a día de hoy tanto se agradece —la misma que tenían, por ejemplo, The Go-Betweens o Television Personalities—, no duda en acercarse al reggae o al vals para llevar sus composiciones hasta lo más alto. En definitiva, podríamos decir que Bitter Springs son uno de aquellos grupos de pop que saben construir, a partir de parámetros clásicos, canciones con algo que decir en un futuro. Y no sólo hablo de las letras.

Como previo al intensísimo concierto que dieron Bitter Springs, los barceloneses THE EPIC KIND, un grupo de medios tiempos, largos desarrollos y melodías redondas, se balancearon con valentía y gracia entre la intuición neozelandesa, la calidez de Sarah Records, el primitivismo de los Pastels y cierta oscuridad afin a grupos como Wild Swans o Joy Division. Como bien dijo Rivers al final de su concierto: "*This band is gonna go far!*". **ADRIÁN DE ALFONSO**

EUROS CHILDS

Moby Dick, Madrid, 31 de marzo

En su primer álbum en solitario, "Chops", el galés Euros Childs no ha querido sa irse ni un ápice del guión de folk-pop retorcido que lleva escribiendo desde hace años en la banca que lidera. Junto a su hermana Megan,

Gorky's Zygotic Mynci. Él mismo reconocía en las páginas de esta revista que con este disco sólo quería hacer "algo fresco y divertido", no diferente (ver Rockdelux 238). Así es fácil imaginar que su directo en Madrid, con la compañía de Alun Tan Lan y Peter Richardson, fue una vez más una muestra ➔



The Bitter Springs **Poor Trace EP (Harvey)**

Everett: Band from South London. Literate, sensitive. Getting older. Perform live with Vic Godard (Subway Sect).

Kick: 'Delicate'. Like a flower or a matchstick church. I've gone into metaphor overdrive now. You may have to break my fingers.

Louis: What is the gist of this song?

Everett: The growing pains of parenthood.

Frances: I like the little piano.

Everett: These springs are almost as bitter as me.

Frances: It's like a big old pub in South London. You can hear the echoes. And see the dust.

Bitter Springs - El periodico de Catalunya una crítica concierto 30/3/06

POP-ROCK

Del pub al club, en chándal

The Bitter Springs
Mercat de les Flors-Pocket Club
VIERNES, 24 DE MARZO

DURACIÓN: 75 minutos

ESPECTADORES: 80

EVALUACIÓN: Los londinenses demuestran gracia pop, energía rock y sabiduría vital. Naturales y efectivos.

JUAN MANUEL FREIRE

jfreire@elperiodico.com

Como sus antiguos aliados de discografía The Montgolfier Brothers, The Bitter Springs son la viva antítesis del glamour: aparecen sobre el escenario del Pocket con ima-

gen, como dicen los sajones, casual, en chaqueta de chándal y vaqueros, se diría que teletransportados desde algún macilento pub del West London. Su música es tan natural como su imagen: un personal pop-rock desafinado, muy británico pero sin mucho de Beatles ni de Kinks, amigo del fraseo gritón, el estribillo aún más gritón, la épica decalada, el ruido descasajaringado. Las letras también caminan a ras de suelo, aunque a menudo guardan doble, triple sentido, resultado de un ingenio realmente poco común. Aunque ellos no lo crean -ni tampoco, al parecer, el mundo real-, Las Amargas Primaveras es uno de los mejores grupos con los que cuenta el rock inglés.

En Pocket Club, de campo y playa, lo muestran de sobras. El violín de Phil Martin apenas se escuchaba -una lástima-, pero sí todo lo demás: cinco hombres sin piedad, sin equilibrio y sin



UNO DE LOS MIEMBROS DEL BATTER SPRINGS EN EL POKET CLUB DE BARCELONA

vergüenza, con un brutal Simon Rivers al frente de la entrañable compañía. Una desgajada *Music it's a young mans game* marca la pauta para *City of glass*, *Follow your heart*, *Moving to the city* o una *The King and I* que Rivers presenta con su peculiar sentido del humor: «Ahora 'El rey y yo', una película malísima que no he visto, como 'Las

minas del rey Salomón'. ¿Cómo? ¿Tendrá el bueno de Rivers manía a Deborah Ken? Si es así, merece perdón. Sobre todo por regalarnos como cierre la poco escuchada en directo *Stop the world* (de su epé del 2001, para el sello Acusmática), seria y vital, una valiosa llamada a la interrupción en un mundo ahogado por la velocidad.

EL PERIÓDICO

JULIÁN BARRERA

Barbara

TA

Ce M 1012



THE BITTER SPRINGS FREE BUTT, BRIGHTON

THEY don't play "The Addison Brothers" – a gentle, brooding lament reminiscent of The Go-Betweens at their most melancholy, or perhaps Pavement shorn of all pretence – until near the end. By then, we've already fallen for their clumsy charm – the way the shaven-headed guitarist can't even bear to face front, the procession of female friends clambering on stage to add tentative, almost inaudible backing vocals, the accordion which causes the whole evening to take on a distinctly *Continental* feel. We've checked the lonesome, downtrodden vocals about laundrettes and hospitals and holding hands in the queue for

the night-bus. We've hugged ourselves, shivering, unnerved by the awkward grace of these south London boys (men?). We've noted their stirring cover of our mainman Vic Godard's swinging "Stop That Girl" and sung along lustily, not caring for cool. We've felt romantic, overburdened, driven by despair and lust and all that happens in between. We've been swept along helplessly, carried by the chiming guitars and clattering drums along memory lanes too poignant to be completely real. And we've *sighed* wantonly, happy in the knowledge that music can still make us feel this special

The Bitter Springs are the band Creation should've signed all along.

EVERETT TRUE



THE BITTER SPRINGS ACTON ARMS, LONDON

EVEN before he took a break from the creation of pop records, Vic Goddard was telling interviewers of his wish to be a postman. This is almost all I know about him, yet Goddard's indifference to pop's mores seems to make him a little more interesting than most of his contemporaries. Tonight, he contributes some vocals and guitars to "The Addison Brothers", a track by The Bitter Springs.

SJ Rivers, their singer, also delivers mail. I'm not sure how relevant this is. Certainly, though, he's been awake since four in the morning and will

have to rise at the same time (only five hours away) the next day, and yet he can still find the motivation to perform. This suggests that The Bitter Springs do not exist merely to be liked – a fairly dull but popular reason to form a band. Rather, it's something they *haveto* do.

By alluding in their songs to Jeanette Winterson and Joe Orton, The Bitter Springs are not simply badge-wearing or equating a literary reference with depth, intelligence, meaningfulness (though presumably the sexuality of both authors is relevant). "Ken", all fragile mandolin, is their best and saddest song tonight. It's about Kenneth

Halliwell, Orton's lover. "*Lay awake and watch you sleep/ Could you only know what happiness means?/ I lay awake and watch you sleep/ A sleep that lasts forever...*"

These songs often sound dizzy with a wholly *necessary* bitterness, and afterwards, the singer tells me he is literally dizzy with tiredness. Live, minus bassplayer, The Bitter Springs sound more gnarled, more caustic than on their Vespertine release. My only regret is that in this context (and particularly in this venue), the group are never likely to recreate anything quite so sublime as their B-side, "Shiver In Feb".
DAVID HEMINGWAY





THE BITTER SPRINGS

LONDON ISLINGTON HOPE & ANCHOR

AN INDIE MOMENT TO CHERISH. THE SHOW having ended, Bitter Springs keyboard supremo Wizard strolls out of the venue, his faithful Casio under his arm, and asks an unsuspecting passer-by when the next number 43 bus is due. That's rock'n'roll, kids, albeit on a very low budget.

Still, as long as you've got love, who needs money? The Bitter Springs' erratic career has won them the affections of a smattering of indie losers across the land and their infrequent live shows (usually between the bingo and the meat raffle) have confirmed that this is the final resting place of The Fall's antagonistic ark.

They look like difficult old men, but the phlegmatic bursts of pop they mete out are amongst the simplest and most brutally effective of their time. Singer Simon Rivers barks last year's jangly 'It's Business' like the Inspiral Carpets after six hours waiting at the housing benefit office, while the songs from their forthcoming 'Five Die Filming This Lazy Lark' LP sound suitably venomous, accordions and all. Furthermore, their curmudgeonly crust hides a soft centre as the plaintive 'Benny Hill's Wardrobe' goes to show.

In short, they rock like bastards and they still get the bus home. How cool is that?

Jim Wirth

BITTER SPRINGS LONDON Highbury Garage

THERE IS A SORT OF INVERSE arithmetic to these things. Bands who make it huge are forced to endlessly replay their portfolio of hits. Oasis, for example, will only ever play three or four sets in their career. The Bitter Springs, on the other hand – possibly the worthiest outsiders pop has seen for some time – have enough songs to keep an Xfm DJ in guitar musings for a whole week. There's a massive 20 songs on their new album, and half the songs tonight are new. Go figure.

They save their *coup de grâce*, 'It's Business', for a riveting finale in which singer Simon Rivers sneers his words half into the mike, half to the floor in frustration. He drops his guitar in a proper pop star strop on his way offstage too. His beef? That the patchy early-evening crowd fails to be totally won over by his band's fiercely intelligent, nostalgic jangles. Some of them tap a foot, granted; but you can understand how he feels.

Because from the first

countryish notes and Casiotone solo of 'A Simple Life', it's hard to see how anyone with half a soul can fail to be moved by their understated melancholy. "You can't wrap your arms around a memory," groans Simon on 'King Of Road Safety', and it doesn't matter if he's talking about his ex or a childhood lollipop lady. It's irresistibly lovely.

To be fair, he's probably talking about the '80s, where much of the Springs' inspiration clearly lies. The Go-Betweens are a useful reference point, but the Springs are fiercer live than their sodden hankie pedigree would suggest. They play with passion, not impotence; the bitter 'Barbara' even contains the line, "I always f—ing hated you."

And then, of course, there's that scabrous last song, a former *NME* Single Of The Week and evidence that, just possibly, the Bitter Springs understand the arithmetic of success only too well. That's business.

KITTY EMPIRE

THE BITTER SPRINGS DINGWALLS, LONDON

THE endless stream of yesteryear's musicians ploughing on always raises suspicions. This criticism should apply to The Bitter Springs. They've been here before, back in the Eighties, and with a new

sobriquet they're keeping on during the Nineties. The epitaph "They came, they saw, they left" could've been made for them. And yet they're so bloody good at it, let's give a cheer that they're still fashioning small beat classics.

They define themselves by the magnanimity with which they fail

in love and the beauty in which they respond. We're not celebrating failure – they are, and that it sounds so triumphant is for our joy. "Good Provider" is a sea-shanty My Life Story, back street desolation without the frills but with all the low-rent thrills.

"Crippled" is a sober Pogues, violin reeling in a mournful groove while singer Simon Rivers takes a long, lonesome walk past old haunts. They're plagued by a life of merely adequate sex, bad racing tips and unprepossessing melancholy. Wry rather than resigned, The Bitter Springs are the unpublished poets of the jilted generation.

They've got the blues, and if there's a hell below, "Benny Hill's Wardrobe" is undoubtedly gonna go there. Eschewing the tawdry and superficial at every turn, they mine the emotional seam, looking for diamonds. They hit paydirt nearly every time; the fact that they fail occasionally is only fitting. They close with a song from 10 years ago, "Bug Going". There's room in every generation for pearls like these.

BEN CLANCY

Music: Rock, folk & jazz

Tether + This Machinery + Comfort Kings
Head Fulham, 8.30-12pm; £3.

Vanilla Pod + Birdhouse + Monkey Boy
Powerhaus N4, 8pm; £4.

Weegee + Sara Sara + Chaser Bull & Gate
NW5, 8pm; £3.50, concs £3.

Roots, Folk & Country

★ **The Bitter Springs + Tom Greenwood**
Twelve Bar Club WC2, 8.30pm; £5.

The 'springs play an intelligent mix of darkly cool, indie-folk, nestling somewhere between The Go Betweens and Tindersticks. Their rather fine (if appallingly titled) single, 'Absence Makes The Heart Grow Blonder' is just released as part of the Trade 2 Singles Club. In support, Greenwood is rockier and touts a diffident variant on the sensitive, acoustic-infused singer/songwriter type of thing.

programación

JUEVES 9

20:30 VRANCA

21:45 GALLON DRUNK

Además

19:00 Mesa Redonda **"Portales de Internet: una perspectiva alternativa"**.
Con **Jesús Bombín** (Karonte Producciones), **Marcos González** (Inditex),
Carlos Prieto (Inditex), **Pedro de la Escalera** (Factoría Gris)

VIERNES 10

23:00 NOSOTRASH

00:15 THE BITTER SPRINGS

01:30 JACQUES

02:45 final

Además

21:00 Mesa Redonda **"La crítica musical en España"**. Con **Nando Cruz** (El Periódico de Catalunya, Sputnik), **Xavier Cervantes** (Rock de Lux), **Víctor Lenore** (La Razón), **Ignacio Juliá** (Ruta 66) e invitados por confirmar.
Modera: **Salvador Catalán** (Diario de Cádiz, Diario de Sevilla, Universidad de Cádiz).

/THE BITTER SPRINGS

LONDON Highbury Garage

DID YOU HEAR THE ONE ABOUT the none-more-indie indie band who were too old and too ugly and, yup, too working class, but who overcame all these inherent failings to write some of the most honest, affecting pop since David Gedge was last in a proper band? Nah, but The Bitter Springs have and it's called 'Fuck The Lot Of Yer, Yer Southern Fuckers' and features a bloke squeezing an accordion.

The title's hopefully a joke, because The Bitter Springs are soft Southerners themselves, albeit ones with skin like cracked leather and, really, no-one's going to tell singer Simon Rivers how, um, *incongruous* his bright orange Saturday Nite shirt looks for fear of a broken limb or two. Still, trouble with girls is the message, even though they're all probably happily married'n'mortgaged in Middlesex.

DROBE.

INE

Springs

Piers Martin



NOVEMBER 21 1998 *Melody Maker*

**VESPERTINE
RECORDS NIGHT
THE BRITON'S PROTECTION,
MANCHESTER**

With neat sleight of hand, token Londoners **THE BITTER SPRINGS** plait the ephemera of British life ("Benny Hill's Wardrobe") into their wry, dry, serrated tales. *"From good to bad/from bad to worse/a hundred women in knickers chase your hearse"*, sings Simon Rivers, while

the band set about the angular pop of The Go-Betweens and Babybird with the tightly coiled zest of those weaned on The Clash. It might sound like it's all held together with Sellotape at times, but Rivers wrings every last remnant of feeling from these deceptively simple pop songs.

They're hopelessly unfashionable, but so what? Tonight, Vespertine prove there's intelligent life beyond the bland residues of Britpop. Really, you'd have loved it.

TONY NAYLOR



Evening Standard

LONDON, WEDNESDAY, 15 OCTOBER 1997

INCORPORATING THE SUNDAY

Music

Bitter Springs: There's quite a buzz surrounding this Middlesex trio, whose new-fangled brand of fizzling, crunchy pop got them much effusive praise (including NME single of the week). The two supports also have the shiver of imminent, off-beat success — Hazeldine are busy keeping American country alive with a dose of progressive spirit, while White Hotel have played with PJ Harvey and Barry Adamson, which should give some clues to their treacly, bluesy sounds.

Upstairs at the Garage,
N5, doors 8pm, 0171 607
1818.

ALTERNATIVA

Il Tanned Tin Festival

La ciudad de Santander acoge durante tres días la segunda edición del Festival Tanned Tin, un festival que se desmarca de los demás con un contenido que apunta hacia un público interesado por la *cultura pop*. El objetivo es aunar tradición e innovación, clasicismo y originalidad, con unos grupos clasificados como *arty*, tanto por sus canciones como por sus relaciones con el cine, la literatura, las bandas sonoras o la poesía.

Artistas como Sr. Chinarro, Nacho Vegas —ex Manta Ray— y Migala, han pasado por este festival, que en esta nueva edición contará con importantes actuaciones internacionales como las de Gallon Drunk, Jacques, The Bitter Springs, For Stars, The Montgolfier Brothers o Sonic Boom; además de importantes aportaciones nacionales como las de Nosoträsh o Vranca.

Santander del 9 al 11 de noviembre, Centro Cultural Caja Cantabria.

Más información:

www.acuareladiscos.com/tannedtin



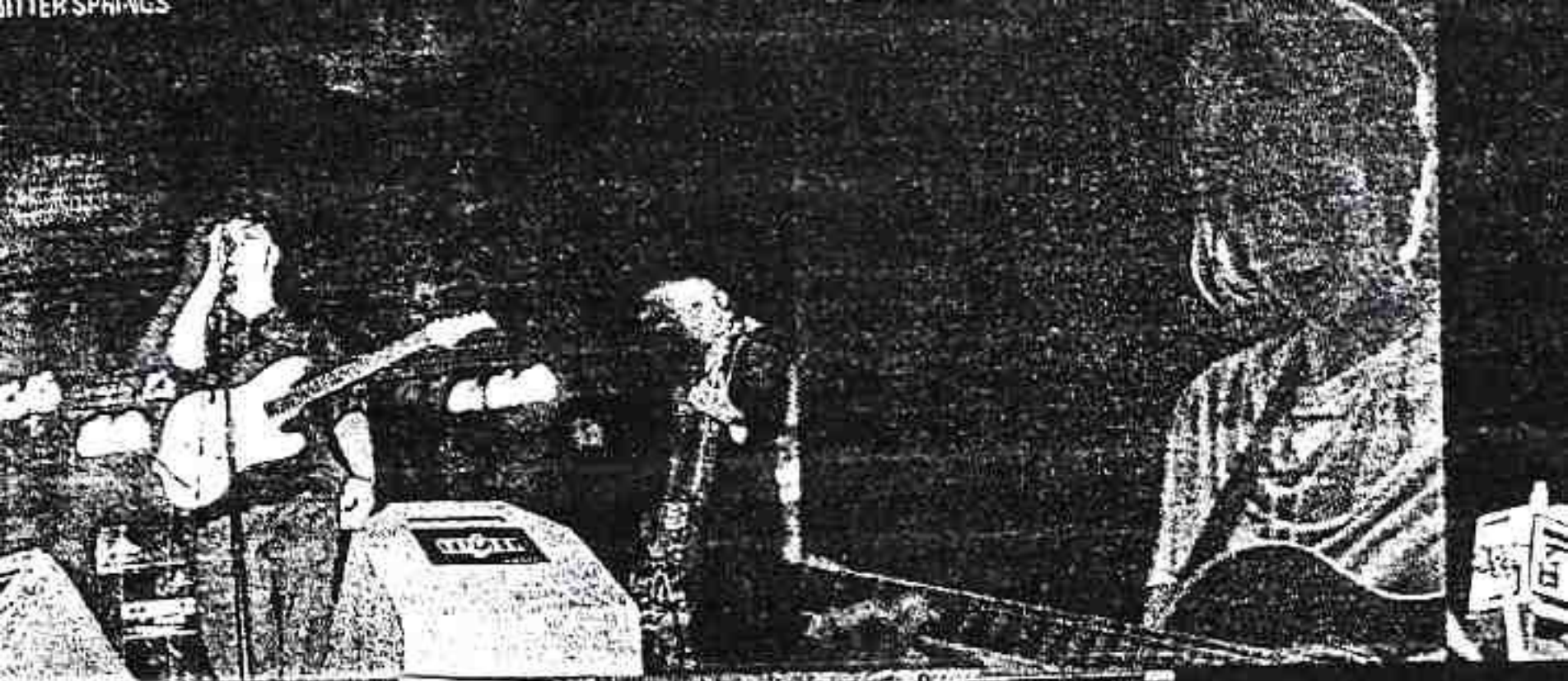
JACQUES



NOSOTRÄSH

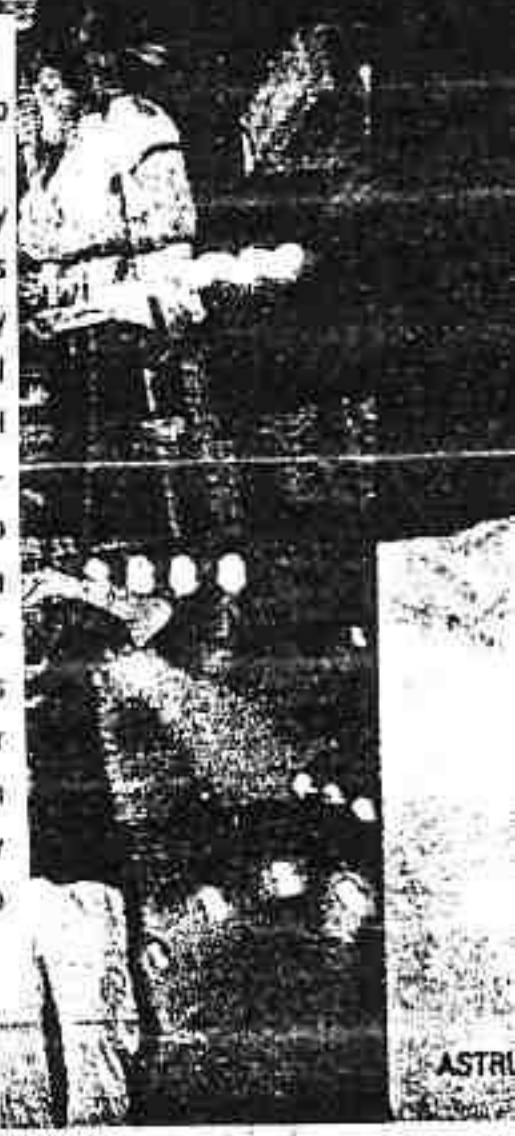
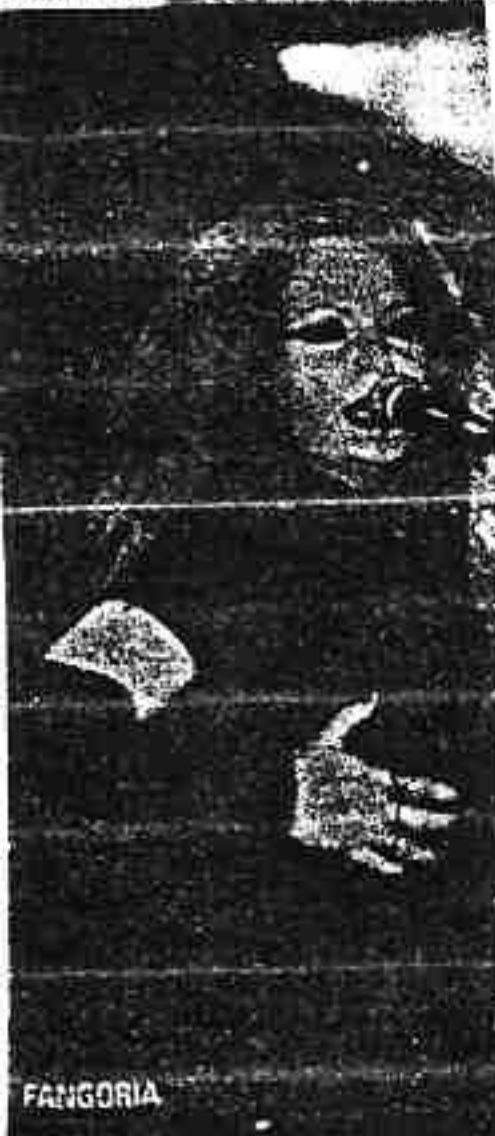
THE BITTER SPRINGS





BITTER SPRINGS VIERNES 24. PLAÇA DEL REI

Aún me tiemblan las piernas. El famoso psicópata ruso Ciudadano Chicatilo anda suelto y toca los teclados en The Bitter Springs. Resuena en mi cabeza la letanía "I'm already dead, I'm already dead..." que se repetía tenebrosamente la noche en que Charles Manson se cebo en la familia Polanski. Con tipos como éste no hay quien se quite el estigma de grupo freak y loser. Andy Gwatkin, el violinista, sin embargo, es un encanto (aún lo recuerdo al final del concierto intimidado por dos groupies de doce años totalmente alcoholizadas). Los Bitter Springs venían para que llorásemos como lo haría yo si me cruzase con Robert Foster o Lindy Morrison algún día por la calle. Algunos problemas técnicos y una actitud un tanto tabernaria hicieron que acabase lamentablemente con los lagrimales intactos. Qué más da. Para mí fue un concierto estupendo, como ver a Wedding Present o a The Fall en sus mejores tiempos. Empezaron ruidosos pero terminaron encadenando *Barbara*, *A Good Provider* y *Benny Hill's Wardrobe* y eso a mí me basta para que sigan siendo uno de mis grupos de cabecera. **FERRAN LLauradó**



FANGORIA HYPE & ZINC ASTRI



BAM99

NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS

THE BITTER SPRINGS LONDON ISLINGTON HOPE & ANCHOR

AN INDIE MOMENT TO CHERISH. THE SHOW having ended, Bitter Springs keyboard supremo Wizard strolls out of the venue, his faithful Casio under his arm, and asks an unsuspecting passer-by when the next number 43 bus is due. That's rock'n'roll, kids, albeit on a very low budget.

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In short, they rock like bastards and they still get the bus home. How cool is that?

Jim Wirth

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LIVE

EDITED BY JAMES OLDHAM

the bitter springs

Inglaterra



fecha viernes, 10 de noviembre

hora 23,00 h.

lugar Centro Cultural Caja Cantabria.
Santander.

Uno de los platos fuertes del Festival es el directo de la banda que colabora con Piano Magic. Cita obligada para los fieles del sonido independiente.

ALTERNATIVA

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Nosotrăsh o Vranca.

Santander del 9 al 11 de n

Centro Cultural Caja Canta

Más información:

www.acuareladiscos.com

Tanned Tin 2000

2º festival internacional Caja Cantabria
de cultura independiente

THE BITTER SPRINGS



BITTER SPRINGS (Reino Unido) 00:15

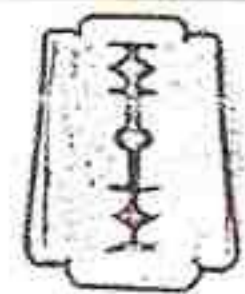
Tozudos, independientes y sin formar parte de escenas ni movimientos, S... y Daniel Ashkenazy han estado componiendo, grabando y tocando duran

Santander del 9 al 11 de n
Centro Cultural Caja Canta
Más información:
www.acuareladiscos.com

BITTER SPRINGS (Reino Unido) 00:15

Tozudos, independientes y sin formar parte de escenas ni movimientos, Simon Rivers y Daniel Ashkenazy han estado componiendo, grabando y tocando durante mas de veinte años. Después de sus primeros grupos, No Trains At the Bay y Last Party, la banda reemerge como The Bitter Springs en 1996. Desde esa fecha han publicado seis singles y tres elepés en sellos como Vespertine, Dishy o Wurlitzer Jukebox, siempre con éxito entre la crítica especializada. "Best Bakers on the Island (El grande español)" es el curioso título de su nuevo álbum, publicado por Acuarela. Contiene cuatro canciones inéditas, temas des-catalogados, remezclas y caras B. En total, 17 piezas sobre el ruido y la furia, lacónicos relatos sobre ex-novias, tragedias de mesa camilla y el doloroso deseo de escapar a través del romanticismo. Bitter Springs han sido comparados con los Go-Betweens o los Pulp de "This is Hardcore". En "Best Bakers of the Island" colaboran Vic Godard, y Jack Hayter (Hefner). Esta será su segunda visita a España.

Santander 9/10/11 noviembre
Centro Cultural Caja Cantabria



viernes 10 a partir de las 20:00

nosoträsh + bitter springs + jacques



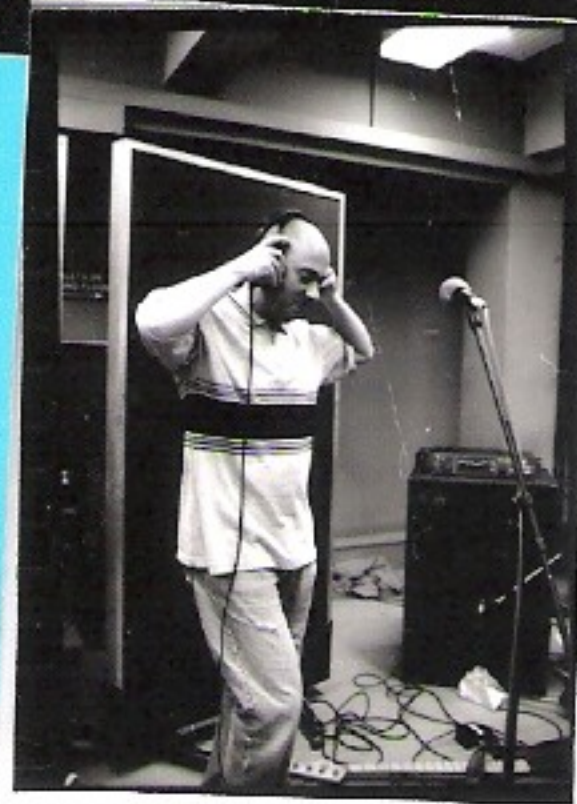


THE BITTER SPRINGS

Los recuperados Bitter Springs vuelven con su sexto álbum, donde alcanzan unas cotas de composición y lírica inimaginables. Antes eran buenos, pero ahora son extraordinarios. "Unos maestros del pop que duele(de verdad), pero que divierte tanto como los mejores momentos de The Futureheads o Franz Ferdinand." (ROCKDELUX).

VIERNES 24- MARZO-2006- BARCELONA- Pocket Club

[ver +](#)



MUDKISS FANZINE

THE BITTER SPRINGS/ TERRY EDWARDS/ FISHWIFE'S BROADSIDE @ ST PAUL'S CHURCH, BRENTFORD 03/12/11

– REVIEW BY LEE MCFADDEN



December's first Saturday, and whether you wished to celebrate the onset of Christmas, or alternatively indulge in a couple of hours of escapism from the shopping, cards, grottos and suchlike, the artists on show provided a substantially solid night of entertainment. Fishwife's Broadside are an eight-piece fired up acoustic collective from Bedford. Folk music began as social commentary on contemporary themes, so the bands missives on middle age in the 21st century quintessentially follow the folk tradition more closely than is apparent at first. It is easy to imagine feisty frontman Andy Driver as a modern-day Wat Tyler on tracks such as "Battle Of Boney Attic" and the arresting final track of the set "Naive Song".

The tempo relaxes with the appearance of Terry Edwards. Playing solo performances of his covers album "Cliches", songs on show range from the plaintive Alex Chilton number "Give Me Another Chance", Jesus & Mary Chain's "I Love Rock 'n' Roll" (One of many acts who Terry has recorded with) and the

MUDKISS FANZINE

sax/guitar hybrid of James Brown's "I'll Go Crazy" – not the easiest combination or instruments to play as a solo act! It's telling that James Brown classed himself as 'The hardest working man in showbiz' when Edwards' colossal CV of studio and live work – plus being one of the most regular participants of John Peel Sessions – surely puts him in lane for that grand title.

Amongst his catalogue of appearances is as guest on the Bitter Springs download single released earlier this year - the impossibly monickered "Gary Glitter Fan Convention", and tonight he reprises the role on stage. Too many lines have been written and too many heads have been scratched about how the music of The Bitter Springs and the quality of Simon Rivers' lyrics have remained inexplicably underneath the critical and mainstream radars, so tonight it just needs to be said that the band's performance was electrifying throughout. From the family showbusiness memories of "Benny Hill's Wardrobe" through to the sardonic observations of "Simple Life", the movie script in waiting "Barbara", and culminating appropriately in "Christmas Number 1" ('I believe in Santa Claus/He's in the kitchen on all fours') – the band perform on of the more enriching live shows I've seen this year. The band's back catalogue is sizeable, yet finding sub-standard songs within it is all too remote a possibility.

Lee McFadden 6/12/11

Vic Godard & The Bitter Springs/The Nectarine No 9

Glasgow 13th Note

All the studied art-school cool of The Nectarine No 9 can't mask the total absence of ideas and passionate emotional fire at the heart of their angular pop tones.

Tonight's set, as part of Scottish underground label Creeping Bent's fifth birthday party, is antiseptic and uptight.

Singer and guitarist Davey Henderson made some diverting noise as part of Tom Verlaine fan-boys The Fire Engines in the early-'80s, but his subsequent career has been unremarkable, with time spent making music for lager commercials as Win being a particularly low point. They finish with an embarrassingly limp run through of Sun Ra's cosmic 'Rocket No 9'. It stinks of desperate name-dropping.

Vic Godard, on the other hand, plays a blinder – afflicted by none of the self-conscious paralysis that defeats the Nectarines. Godard still boasts one of the most unique voices in music, gargling wildly and drawling on phrases with a totally intoxicated air. No-one sings like that any more.

Since his time in the Subway Sect, one of the UK's greatest punk groups, he's stayed true to his initial vision which, despite titles like 'We Oppose All Rock & Roll', drew heavily on classic post-Velvets US rock sounds. Tonight, enthusiastically backed by The Bitter Springs, he offers a ragged set, which peaks with a venomous version of Subway Sect's 'Empty Shell'. It's a reminder of what true punk was all about.

David Keenan