

# LET'S GO! STREET SCENE

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## STREET SOUNDS

### The next Hundred Years

— Ted Hawkins

In 1988, Ted Hawkins released his second album on the Rounder label. Entitled "Happy Hour," it featured a marvelous song that he called "Bad Dog," having to do with noticing, upon his release from jail and moving back home, that his dog barked at everyone who came to the house except one particular man. Funny, savvy, and delivered in his Harry Belafonte rasp, I was hooked.

Now that he's signed to the David Geffen Company label, his fortunes are on the rise. The label wants nothing less, it seems, than to make him a household name. Dave Marsh wrote the liner notes, and heavyweight rock critics Kurt Loder and Peter Guralnick are quoted as pretty much declaring Hawkins to be the new Mescal.

Through it all, the Venice Beach, Calif., street singer of some 30 years duration, has managed to sidestep the hype and just go on about his business which, coincidentally, pretty much lives up to the hype, in spite of it.

No, it's not the greatest album ever recorded. It may not even be the best Hawkins album. It is, though, unquestionably powerful and born of the soul. Blues and country (which are much more commonly rooted than most folks appreciate) share space in his universe.

Listen to the pedal steel on "Afraid" and then cue up the bluesy treatment given to Jesse Winchester's "Blind." His covers of John Fogarty's "Long as I Can See the Light," one of the cleanest and most startling ever recorded, and Webb Pierce's "There Stands the Glass," an emotionally draining reading, are equally powerful.

But it's more than the songs; it's a delivery. These are, perhaps, the works of a blues man as much as of the modern day troubador. They are the works of a brilliant artist and stand among the testaments to life that have made Ted Hawkins an indispensable part of the musical landscape.

Mark E. Gallo

Mark Gallo is a Farmington Hills resident and longtime blues fan.

### Stranger Than Fiction

— Bad Religion

After kicking around L.A.'s punk underground for 12 years, Bad Religion is finally receiving some recognition. This time out, they've ditched the superstar cameo, eased off the MTV crossover appeal of last year's "Recipe for Hate," and have a more serious, occasionally dazzling album to show for it.

The band is in peak form on "Stranger Than Fiction" (Atlantic), burning through 15 quick and bruising songs, the best of which are the raging opener "Incomplete," the catchy title track, and the slower (only by Bad Religion standards) "Infected," with its pleasantly melodic chorus.

In fact, the songs are all so fast that it becomes slightly repetitious. When the tempo slows down, as on "Infected," and "21st Century Digital Boy," the songs greatly benefit from the extra space.

As with many albums today, there are simply too many songs included. Three or four could have been cut for a more streamlined, consistently thrilling package. But at its best, when "Stranger Than Fiction" is cooking, turn it up and get out of the way.

— Todd Wicks

A Rochester resident, Wicks is a student at Michigan State University.

### Cover Girl

— Shawn Colvin

Having established a rep as one of the singer/songwriters to keep a close ear on over the past few years, this collection of songs by other people will, undoubtedly, catch more than a few Shawn Colvin loyalists off guard. Not to worry, though. This hardly signals a dry gulch in her creative pool.

Paying homage to singers past and present, famous and obscure, "Cover Girl" (Columbia) is a tribute to the process. Some of the material you'll recognize, like the Police's "Everything (He) Does Is Magic," the Talking Heads' "This Must Be the Place (Naïve Melody)," and Tom Waits' "Heart of Saturday Night."

Certainly, the older folks will give up a smile for her version of Dylan's "You Gonna Make Me Lonesome When You Go," and fans of the Band will be impressed with her take on "Twilight," one of their more obscure gems.

The best songs are from the pen of Greg Brown, a relatively well-known modern folk singer, who contributes "One Cool Remover," and from the wholly out-of-the-blue Roly Bailey, whose "Killing the Blues" should be all over the radio in an ideal world. It's not that radio intelligent world that we all hope for, so I suggest a trip down to the local record (or CD) emporium to get your ears a well-deserved treat.

— Mark E. Gallo

Mark E. Gallo is a freelancer from Farmington Hills.

## Cranberries: 'Doing it' again

■ There was a point where it seemed like The Cranberries' hit song, "Nothing Left at All" described their future. But with a new manager and a new outlook, the band has spawned two hits that have moved it close to the top on the charts.

BY CHRISTINA PUOCO  
STAFF WRITER



Ireland's platinum-selling band The Cranberries are thankful for the success that they've had. Probably more so than most groups. Their naivety almost got the best of them.

Guitarist Noel Hogan, his bassist brother Mike and drummer Fergal Lawler formed the group — originally known as The Cranberry Saw Us — as teenagers in their hometown of Limerick in 1990. When the quietly intense church choir member Dolores O'Riordan joined the band and released the single "Nothing Left at All" they became the darlings of the finicky British press.

But a possessive manager left the band broke and emotionally distraught. The fanfare surrounding The Cranberries began to fade as well. After much deliberation — which included possibly ending the band — the group fired their manager and learned a valuable lesson.

"There's a lot more to the industry than playing the songs," said Lawler via telephone from Paris, France. "It definitely helped us learn a lot about the business. At first we thought you write your songs and that's it. You don't worry about nobody else."

There are so many bands through the years that didn't make it because they didn't have the right people working with them. They ended up getting screwed basically and it affected their career. We don't want that to happen to us."

So far it hasn't. The band is now managed by former Rough Trade executive Jeff Travis, who signed The Smiths, and O'Riordan's billowing yodels on their debut "Everybody Else Is Doing It, So Why Can't We?" spawned two major hits, "Nothin' on Your Mind" and "Down."

Their new record "No Need to Argue," produced once again by Stephen Street (The Smiths, Morrissey, Psychodelic Furs), has proven even more successful. The distorted guitars coupled with O'Riordan's capricious yodels on the single "Linger" have catapulted the band near the top of the charts.

"It definitely paid off — all the



Arguably a top act: The Cranberries — Mike Hogan from left, Dolores O'Riordan, Fergal Lawler and Noel Hogan — perform a sold-out show at the State Theatre in Detroit Thursday, Nov. 10.

hard work," Lawler said with a giggle. "We're an artist band. We don't pose about and act like rock stars and stuff. There's an honesty in the music that you don't find a lot these days."

"We're kind of self-critical. We are really big fans of music. It's kind of like we've got to please ourselves first and that's the most important thing. If you make yourself happy and really enjoy what you're doing, a lot of people will be happy as well."

Even after the band conquered their management problems, the acceptance of U.S. audiences was still an uphill battle. It took almost two years of incessant touring to reach the peak of their popularity here. "The whole last year was a mind-blowing experience. We went to the States thinking we'd play small gigs," Lawler said. "It took off so

well that we just kept going and going. It was a big surprise — a bit freaky for awhile. It was weird people asking us for our autograph."

With all the touring, it's amazing that the Irish quartet found the time to record a follow-up so quickly.

"What usually happens is, we write a lot on the road. Noel or Dolores plays guitar on the bus and play around with some chords and stuff," he said. "At soundchecks, we just keep rehearsing every day. We're lucky really that way. It had been nearly two years since the first album was recorded."

"When we were writing new songs we were playing them live as well just to see the reaction. . . . It was good (because) that way we got them really right. When we did go into the studio we knew exactly what we

wanted to do."

Despite the immense popularity, the bumpy bespectacled Lawler, who was prominently featured in a Cranberries fashion spread in "Rolling Stone" magazine, is determined to keep a good head on his shoulders.

"I don't want to be famous; I want to be Fergal who plays the drums and stuff. . . . (I try to remember) you're not any different than anybody else. It will go to your head. You have to stick to your roots and remember why you got in the business. Don't ever go to your head."

The Cranberries, along with MC 900 Foot Jesus and Gogol Auntie, perform an all-ages show at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 10, at the State Theatre, 2115 Woodward Ave., Detroit. For more information, call (313) 961-5451 or (313) 645-6666.

## Jesus and Mary Chain — 10 years later

BY CHRISTINA PUOCO  
STAFF WRITER

The Jesus and Mary Chain is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year and to member William Reid, it really isn't a big deal.

"It's the 10th year of The Jesus and Mary Chain, but we've been together since he was born," he said about his younger brother and partner Jim Reid, in a rare bout of humor.

The release of "Stoned and Dehroned" not only marks the anniversary but a departure from the usual fuzzy guitars and down-and-out lyrics. The dreary lyrics and music have been replaced by powerful, elegant, upbeat songs that may alienate longtime Jesus and Mary Chain fans. Reid is just happy that they recorded the album their way.

"I think we're good at making noise, but we're also good at toning down the noise," he said. While recording "Stoned and Dehroned" The Jesus and Mary Chain wanted to tone it down even more.

"We did want to make an acoustic record," Reid said.

The trio — who also includes Ben Lurie — felt trapped into doing an acoustic album after word spread throughout the industry and magazines that that was what they were going to do. "We're old friends, and stuff gets spread in magazines and stuff. People were ranting, and we caved into the pressure that we got to make this," he explained.

It didn't take long until they changed their mind. "That wasn't working out; we just felt we were compromising the songs by doing it totally acoustic (so we) added bass and drums and all the other (stuff)."

The new material will only be about 30 percent of the band's show when it plays the State Theatre in Detroit with Mazy Star and Velvet Crush Monday, Nov. 7, included on the set list will be "Somebody Always," "Down," between Jim Reid and Mary Reid. That song, according to reports, troubled Sandoval during the recording.



"It wasn't easy for her to come down to our studio and be told basically how to sing a song. It wasn't easy for us to tell her (what to do) either," he said. "She's a brilliant singer and she's used to going into the studio and recording songs (her way)."

Reid relaxed Sandoval with a little wine and the result is a top 10 alternative hit.

"They have the same kind of disaffected (ticked) off tone in their voices. I like that when (they) sing it live on stage. They look at each other and it comes across weird," said Reid, who is romantically involved with Sandoval.

The rest of The Jesus and Mary Chain's show will be a retrospective of the band's career which, Reid said, he's happy with the way we wanted it to go artistically, and commercially, it's not going the way I wanted it to," he said. "I thought we'd be selling 10 billion records and we're not. As an artist I think we've done exactly what we wanted to do."

The Jesus and Mary Chain performs an all-ages show Monday, Nov. 7, at the State Theatre, 2115 Woodward Ave., Detroit. For more information, call (313) 961-5451.

Returning:  
The Jesus  
and Mary  
Chain —  
Ben Lurie  
(from left),  
Jim Reid and  
William Reid  
— perform at  
the State  
Theatre in  
Detroit Nov.  
7.