

RECORDS

Simple Minds New Gold Dream Virgin

With the release of *New Gold Dream*, their fifth album, Simple Minds have left behind their formative phase (*Life in a Day* and *Real to Real Cacophony*) and the travelogue images of *Empires and Dance* and *Sons and Fascination*.

Taken literally *New Gold Dream* is a realisation of the need for a new approach, a desire to avoid stagnation and formula. It's also the acceptance of commercial potential and the power of accessibility and melody.

If *Sons and Fascination* was locked into the drive and repetition of rhythm, the new album with three different drummers in tow, offers beauty and Jim Kerr's private fears without losing the band's determined bottom line.

The sirens first: 'Promised You a Miracle' ('love waits for fame') the new single 'Glittering Prize', 'Someone, Somewhere in Summertime' and 'Hunter and the Hunted' ('and I do get to see the light of day') are glorious tunes, seductive and triumphant belying and reinforcing the lyrical doubts/hopes that underlie them.

The remaining tracks bear a more traditional yet still aching blend of past and present Simple Minds. 'Colours Fly and Catherine Wheel', 'Big Sleep', 'King is White and In the Crowd' and the title track all combine the ethereal and the intangible with the more familiar Simple Mind's existence of pulse beat.

In reality, *New Gold Dream* is the most compassionate and moving album Simple Minds have achieved. It moves beside the Associates' *Sulk* as the album(s) of the year. George Kay

Dexys Midnight Runners Too-Rye-Ay Mercury

Let's get one thing straight — this album isn't going to shake things up the way *Searching for the Young Soul Rebels* did.

Kevin Rowland's anti-rock dance stance is chic now — it wasn't when *Soul Rebels* came out in late 1980. To boot, gaelic folk isn't near as strong a peg to hang your allegiance on as the first album's soul sass.

In fact, Rowland's step from blasting horns to violins (and from donkey jackets to dungarees for that matter) seems at first a long and arbitrary one. But a

bit of digging shows this album and the "new" style have been a long time in the making.

'Celtic Soul Brothers', a policy statement in the same manner as 'Burn it Down', was released as a single last year and 'Plan B', 'Let's Make This Precious', 'Until I Believe in My Soul', 'Liars A to E' and 'Soon' (the untitled intro to Side Two) have been around for as long as 18 months.

Horns haven't disappeared, of course, merely sat back a bit. They are used to exhilarating effect on tracks like 'Precious'. The Emerald Express violin section is integral to most of the music. Expect it to be there in the background on the next Dexys album, whenever that may be.

'All in All', 'Until I Believe in My Soul', 'Precious' and the stomping 'Come On Eileen' are

probably the best tracks, but the quality is so even it's almost impossible to pick.

The album's greatest strength — Rowland's voice — is also perhaps its only discernable fault. His emoting occasionally makes embarrassing listening, but as he says in 'I'll Show You': 'If these words sound corny, switch it off, I don't care.' Russell Brown

Icehouse Primitive Man Regular

It would be easy to low-rate this album, given the methods used in its recording. The Lin Drum Computer features largely, three of them being used in the recording process. In fact, most of the songs were actually 'programmed' before they got anywhere near a studio. Songwriting by machine. Vapid, no soul, maaan. You can hear people decrying such things.

But pause for a moment to consider the skills needed to master such new technology. Then listen to this album carefully. It's quite a breakthrough and by no means bad listening.

Icehouse (formerly Flowers) now consists solely of Iva Davies, who was always the kingpin of the old band anyway. He wrote the songs with the aid of the drum computer and an eight-track recorder, transferred them to 24-track tape and then did the final mixing at the Westlake and El Dorado studios in L.A. Giorgio Moroder's and Roger Linn's computers were also used.

The result is an album of 10 subtle and distinctive songs, varying from the sweeping vistas of 'Great Southern Land' and the Ultravox influences of 'Uniform Street', to the almost-Ferry-style vocals of 'Street Café' and 'Hey Little Girl'. 'One By One' and 'Mysterious Thing' could both do well on 12-inch disco mixes. 'Break These Chains' recalls the earlier days, using more conventional instruments and those who saw the last Icehouse tour will recall the wonderful 'Goodnight, Mr Matthews', a song reminiscent of Sergeant Pepper-vintage Beatles.

Davies uses modern technology to his own ends, unlike Gary

Numan, whose personality (if he has one) is subjugated by it. *Primitive Man* needs several listenings to bring out its virtues and is actually best appreciated on headphones. The rhythms lend themselves to strolling in the summer heat, taking in the scenery.

What Iva Davies has done is create the first Walkman record. Duncan Campbell

Psychadelic Furs Forever Now CBS

With the departure of two key members after *Talk Talk Talk*, the Furs found themselves in a major quandry, whether to break up or continue as a four-piece. Never having achieved much recognition in their native England, they chose to follow up minor American success and record their third album *Stateside*.

The importance of a third album is undeniable, so it is no surprise that the Butler boys brought in Todd Rundgren to engineer and produce. On one level this has been tremendously successful, witness the Furs' strongest single yet in 'Love My Way', a song I can't praise enough. But on the other hand, even the best producer can't disguise substandard material, and there is some on *Forever Now*.

Although you can't deny Richard Butler's obvious charisma, he's no great shakes as a vocalist and it's often his retreaded phrasing that lets the average songs down. On the title track (actually a killer cut) he sings:

*Doesn't this remind you
Of these things we've done
before...*

All things aside, this album features some of the Furs' strongest ideas yet. 'Forever Now', 'You & I', and in particular 'No Easy Street' all are a marked departure from the overbearing heaviness that marred much of the previous two albums. It's depressing, but it's an optimistic depression (I don't understand either). It envelops the listener and leaves you elated, rather than deflated.

Well, with Flo and Eddie on backing vocals, you can't stay unhappy forever, now can you? Mark Phillips



Simple Minds

Iva Davies, Icehouse



The Psychedelic Furs

After the Carnival!

GRAEME GASH

records & cassettes available on SIREN records through 

Past/Kalylee
Lee Connolly · Steve Gerrish

records & cassettes available on SIREN records through 