

# singles

Two months in a row means we're on a roll in chartland, and one of the month's finest is **Edwyn Collins'** classic finger poppin' jukebox romance 'A Girl Like You' (Setanta). A touch of dancefloor echo, a 50s pop hook and the marvellous Collins vocal drone has already made this a diamond amongst the rubble in the dreadful Top of the Pops. Also included on the single is a demo of the charming 'Don't Shilly Shally', and a couple of Collins' other unassuming popular works in 'Something's Brewing' and 'Bring it on Back'.

Any doubts as to **Radiohead's** standing in rock 'n' roll disappeared with the growing brilliance of *The Bends*. 'Fake Plastic Trees' (Parlophone), with its beautifully fragile, desolate delivery, builds to a moving climax and is yet another great single from the album. It comes in two packages — the limited edition, with a poster and an acoustic version of the main song etc., or the standard format, with 'India Rubber' and 'How Can You Be Sure?' Buy both, you can't miss.

**Therapy?** started out as ugly Irish grunge, but now with 'Stories' (A&M), and on the threshold of their third album, they sound as if the Undertones' crown of exquisitely crafted kinetic pop could be theirs.

**Juliana Hatfield** covers her bets on the infectious 'Universal Heart-Beat' (White), as she goes all laid-back in the verses and hauls out stun-grunge guitars and hollers for the chorus. Should be catching. And **Offspring** definitely are contagious in small doses. 'Gotta Get Away' (Cortex), from the *Smash* album, accompanied by two breaknecks, 'We Are One' and 'Forever and a Day', are ideal for waxing the skateboard to.

Meanwhile, **Faith No More** decide to hit *King For a Day* for a ballad and come up with the extremely OK, Lionel Richie-ish, melodic lode of 'Evidence' (Liberation). Cool. And the highly propelled 'Digging the Grave' makes another appearance. This EP's mawkish send-up is 'Spanish Eyes'.

This month's selection sorta divides itself into pop as the wonderful weapon of enter-

tainment (see above), and the more serious and often dull practitioners (see below).

**REM's** 'Strange Currencies' (Warners) is a good love song, with desperation and determination guiding Stipe's interpretation. But it's yet another song from *Monster*, and how long can they continue to cut into that old beast and pretend this single is where we're at now, man?

Supergroup **Mad Season**, made up of Screaming Trees and Pearl Jams, are heavily into introspection and depression on 'River of Deceit' (Columbia), a plaintive but ultimately dull dose of self pity.

**The Boss** (**Springsteen** to the cave dwellers) is back with a new fan catching song, lifted from his *Greatest Hits*, 'Secret Garden' (Columbia). It's got the same soporific, lush, keyboard laden, over tasteful, sax soundtrack feel that blighted 'Philadelphia'. Compared to this, 'Murder Incorporated' sounds like a revolution.

GEORGE KAY



Juliana Hatfield

## HARDWARE

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