

ELECTRIC RENTBOOK

Tribute Edition

Issue 7 - February 2001



*“and though you’re gone
you’re with me every single day believe me”*

Goodbye to the "Voice of an Angel"

It was the summer of 1981 when I first heard Kirsty MacColl, she was performing *There's A Guy Works Down The Chipshop Swears He's Elvis* on Top of the Pops. Like most others, I'd completely missed Kirsty's debut single *They Don't Know* until it was a number 2 hit for Tracey Ullman in September 1983.

That first hearing of *Chipshop* I remember not so much because of the song, it wasn't 'crash bang wallop' enough for me - in those days I was more into bands like The Damned, The Stranglers and The Buzzcocks, it was the gorgeous redhead singer that got my attention. Being a seventeen year old hormone filled bag of boyhood it was the sight of this slightly different looking singer.

Gorgeous and redhead were terms I'd never used in the same sentence before, these days I like redheads with the possible exception of Chris Evans and Patsy Palmer!

I never bought Kirsty's first hit single but later purchased the *They Don't Know* picture disc (around the same time as *Chipshop* was in the chart), having stumbled upon it at my local independent record shop - Discount Records in Keighley for those of you who might have known it (like most of you will know where Keighley is, let alone Discount Records). Back in those days you had real record shops, not just your HMV's and Virgin's, owned by the person behind the counter who were actually passionate about the music they were selling and who actually stocked the more obscure single.

I'd forgotten about Kirsty until early 1985 when she entered the chart with a cover of Billy Bragg's *A New England*, a brilliant version of a brilliant song and Kirsty's version remains number 2 in my personal favourite singles of all time, only kept off the top spot by The Undertones *Teenage Kicks*. Once again I found myself the owner of a Kirsty picture disc. It seemed the marketing men at Stiff appreciated Kirsty's beauty as much as I did!

Along with the record buying public I ignored the follow-up single, *He's On The Beach*, not even the picture disc tempted me this time.

I was never a fan of The Pogues, I can remember seeing them as the support act for Elvis Costello and the Attractions at the Hammersmith Palais in October 1984 and thinking how "Bloody awful!" I thought they were. But in 1987 they recorded one of the best, if not THE best, Christmas songs ever - *A Fairytale of New York* with Kirsty duetting

with Shane MacGowan. I still didn't like The Pogues but that was one brilliant record!

In 1989 Kirsty released what I still believe to be her greatest album - *Kite*. I now considered myself to be a fan and finally saw her playing live in 1995, on the *Galore* tour at Leeds Town and Country Club and on the bill of that year's Heineken Festival.

In 1998 I stumbled across the address of Kirsty's then management and wrote care of them asking Kirsty for an autograph and whether she knew where I might be able to get my hands on a promotional video which had been put out at the time of *Electric Landlady* to promote that album. I was overwhelmed when not only did I receive the requested autograph but Kirsty had written a personal note and enclosed a copy of the elusive video for me.

The year 2000 came and Kirsty announced a few dates in February to play new material from her forthcoming album *Tropical Brainstorm* and I managed to see her at Manchester University. At this point I decided to launch *Electric Rentbook* and in March issue one was out. Kirsty and her management at *Major Minor* approved of my efforts and when Kirsty played more shows in May I was placed on the guest list at gigs in Sheffield and Manchester. I was invited to the Sheffield concert early to catch the soundcheck and meet Kirsty. Now, they say you should never meet your heroes but Kirsty was everything I imagined and more. This was the first of a few meetings and I feel so privileged to have met her. I was on the guest list at two further gigs, Manchester, again, and Warwick Arts Centre, not only was I seeing Kirsty perform live I was getting in free, that in itself made doing this fanzine worthwhile.

I really don't know what to say about Kirsty's death, mere words can't express the sense of loss. All I do know is that the grief felt by her fans is huge. But if you multiplied that grief by thousands you still won't be near the sense of loss that must be felt by Jamie, Louis and James. My heart goes out to Kirsty's family and I hope they take some comfort in the knowledge that Kirsty was truly loved by so many people from all walks of life.

The world has lost an amazing talent and I shall miss her greatly.

Graham Scaife, *Electric Rentbook*.

Kirsty MacColl October 1959 - December 2000

Sometimes the unthinkable happens. On Monday 18th December, in Cozumel, Mexico, it did. Kirsty died following a boating accident, while on holiday with her sons and boyfriend. The accident happened when Kirsty, a keen diver, was hit by a speedboat travelling illegally in an area reserved for swimmers.

Kirsty had just finished recording a series of programmes for BBC Radio Two about Cuba and it's music. Ironically the eight part series was due to start broadcast on Wednesday, 20th December but following Kirsty's death it was postponed as a mark of respect.

I've received hundreds of messages from grieving fans and this issue of the fanzine is made up of just some of the tributes made by Kirsty's loyal fans.

I am stunned by the news of Kirsty's passing. I had only just bought *Tropical Brainstorm* for a friend's Christmas present when I heard the news late in the afternoon.

Tropical Brainstorm had been my choice for presents all through 2000 and I had in fact given the CD to a friend who had let me stay in her apartment on a recent trip to New York in late November. My friend had never heard of Kirsty before so it was great to watch her reactions when she played it.

I was lucky enough to see Kirsty in 2000 at The Forum in London and she was sensational. I cannot believe we will never hear her wonderfully perceptive, but joyously funny, lyrics again. Along with Morrissey she was the best lyricist of her generation and I feel as profoundly sad at the news of her tragic death as I did when I heard of Dusty Springfield's. Although I never met her I feel I have lost a friend.

I remember buying the seven inch picture disc of *They Don't Know* when it was released and thinking she looked the sort of girl you would want to be best mates with at school!

My heartfelt sympathy goes to her family and close friends and I hope they can draw some strength from the fact that she was so universally loved and respected.

Thank you for the days, and the songs, Kirsty.

Chris Voisey, England.

I had a phone call at work telling me the news, and had to make my excuses and leave for a walk. I said a friend had died. I've listened to Kirsty every day for ten years. She sang *Fifteen Minutes on French and Saunders*. When it was repeated, a year later, I remembered the lyrics from its one previous showing, and bought *Electric Landlady* the next day. I saw Kirsty on stage three times in my life; Leicester, during the *Galore* tour, was the first concert I went to. Last year, Wolverhampton. I talked to her at the stage-door afterwards. She thanked me for knowing all the words, and admitted that she wished she did! She'd fluffed *Don't Come The Cowboy*, and had lip-read me to get back on track. A few months later, at Warwick, we met again, as the band came out of the stage-door, one by one, they all said to me "Were you at Wolverhampton?" "Kirsty remembers seeing you." She said it was "nice to see a friendly face".

The half-dozen of us stood at the stage-door were so excited when Kirsty came out. I'd given her some flowers when she came on stage. She thanked me for them and gave me a toy aeroplane. One of those little polystyrene ones you slot together. It's on top of my telly now and is one of my most treasured possessions.

Socially, emotionally, politically, musically and personally, Kirsty MacColl was someone I admired. It's not very often that you get a chance to meet your idol and, when you do, there's no guarantee they'll want to meet you or even give you the time of day. Kirsty was so different. Maybe because her lyrics were so soul-baring; because she was so committed to her political and social beliefs and to her family; because she refused to dumb-down her lyrics or dumb-up her appearance.

I'm sure so many people reading this will agree that she seemed so approachable and friendly.

I wish I'd bought her a pint.

Chris Winwood, Worcester

Goodbye to the "Voice of an Angel"

It goes without saying what a devastating time this is for anyone whose a fan of Kirsty's, I really didn't feel like writing but I felt I owed it to the good lady to at least make an effort.

I'm not going to go on about the singer/songwriter, for my money there's nothing to be said, the quality of her work speaks for itself, and besides which, Kirsty was never one for looking back, so I thought I'd just write a couple of lines about the girl herself.

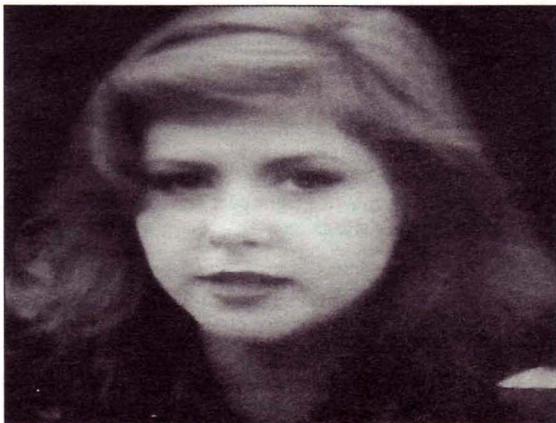
It can sometimes be very disillusioning meeting people you admire for a number of different reasons, meeting Kirsty on many occasions was never that, if it had been, then we'd never have gone on to become the mates that we did, she had a genuine interest in people, and without being patronising, it didn't matter what walk of life you were from or what job (if any) you did, she wanted to know about you.

At the gigs at the beginning of last year, I took along some mates who'd never seen Kirsty before, and they were all taken by how friendly not just Kirsty was, but all of the band, and you could put that down to her not being able to stand falseness of any kind, she certainly couldn't stand fools and if you were a bullshitter, forget it!

Consequently the people closest to her, were there because she wanted them to be, she was a very astute girl if nothing else, she was honest in everything she did and all she expected in return was the same, and in these times of 'Stars In Their Eyes', manufactured 'pop' music and talentless tribute bands, she was indeed special although I'm sure she'd call me a tosser for saying that.

Somebody very close to Kirsty, said to me recently, and I still think it sums her up best, "she was unique".

Wayne Connolly, Leeds.



The circumstances and timing of Kirsty's passing seem unbearably cruel - my heart is with her family, especially Jamie and Louis.

Much as I loved Kirsty's music - what a beautiful voice, and what a talent as a writer - I will miss the person more. She was a breath of fresh air in the music world. From day one, I was captivated by her honesty in interviews. Self deprecating, ironic and above all **funny**. I would have loved the chance to spend an evening in the pub with her!

The news completely devastated me, it was like losing a very good friend. I'd like to thank you for the fanzines - they are first rate, well put together and informative, and a worthy tribute to an astonishing talent.

Michael Stafford, Ashington.

I am personally still in shock, and could not believe what had happened to her.

My father introduced me to Kirsty's music ten years ago, when I was just ten years old. He had been playing *Walking Down Madison* and I instantly fell in love with that beautiful voice. I remember saving up all my pocket money to buy the *Electric Landlady* album and from then on became a devoted fan. I will miss her greatly.

Thomas Ovens, Glasgow.

Fans of Kirsty felt special because we felt touched by her humour, grace, talent and charm from afar; but for Kirsty's children, her friends and those she loved, remember this always; you had her love.

That is yours and yours alone, always. Bless you all.

Stephanie and Hugh from NYC/Baltimore.

Kirsty MacColl October 1959 - December 2000



It is very difficult to know what to write in the aftermath of the tragic news of Kirsty MacColl's death but I feel a need to assert what a difference she made in my life. Although I didn't know her and I don't pretend to understand what her friends and family are feeling, she was very special to me.

I will always remember sitting watching *French and Saunders*, aged 11, when Kirsty MacColl came on and performed *Fifteen Minutes*. Her voice and her song made a great impact on me and I really wanted to hear more. It was the start of a wonderful discovery. Firstly of Kirsty's music, but secondly of Kirsty MacColl as a person. So many strangers have commented that they felt like they knew her and I think this bears witness to her candour and down-to-earth attitude. When she spoke on the radio or television she was as inspiring as when she sang and she became a role model for me.

When I was lucky enough to meet her, she was as lovely as I had imagined. As a musician Kirsty MacColl had so many talents. From her unmistakable singing to her lyric writing. From finding the perfect tune to building up those lush, characteristic harmonies. I believe Kirsty MacColl knew her own worth in the music industry and this makes it all the more remarkable that talent did not go to her head. But it didn't. She has inspired me as she has inspired many others. No one will ever replace her.

Jennie Sykes, Oxford.

I switched the radio on in the car at 4 p.m. this afternoon and heard the news about Kirsty.

I can't ever remember being so shocked by the death of a celebrity. Maybe I didn't realise how big a fan I was. It just seems so unfair that it should be her. I feel so sorry for her boys, especially at this time of year.

I've spent this evening listening to her albums and reading the most recent issue of *Electric Rentbook*. It's amazing that so many things can be altered forever in a moment. It's so ironic that she says what a good year 2000 has been for her.

As for me, I know I'll always be a fan of her music, and I'll keep on telling anyone who'll listen how good she is.

Simon Lee, Yarm.

I received a copy of the *Rentbook* earlier this year when Kirsty played Manchester Student's Union, which goes down as one of the best gigs I've ever been to. It was the first time I'd managed to see her in concert during my fifteen years as a fan, and now sadly takes on a new significance as the last.

Her death will leave a big hole in my music collection and many other people's I'm sure. I will never forget the first time I heard *A New England* on the radio in a fifth year school common room back in the 80's, and having to sit through a boring French lesson before I could investigate who it was that was singing it. That was probably the only day that I was ever glad to be in school.

Lara Taylor, Darwin.

I greatly admired Kirsty's songwriting and attitude to life. She so seemed my kind of person (I imagine anyway).

Very sorry for her family and friends.

Cheryl Hounslow, a fan.



A recording career

June 1978 - Kirsty debuted on record as Mandy Doubt on the Drug Addix's *Make A Record* EP, released on the Chiswick record label.

June 1979 - signed to Stiff Records, Kirsty releases her debut single *They Don't Know*. It fails to chart following a distribution strike which prevents the song from fulfilling its sales potential.

October 1979 - Stiff's follow-up single *You Caught Me Out* withdrawn.

February 1981 - Now signed to Polydor the single *Keep Your Hands Off My Baby* is released and fails to chart.

May 1981 - Polydor release *There's A Guy Works Down The Chipshop Swears He's Elvis* and the single peaks at No. 14 during a 9 week run in the charts.

June 1981 - Kirsty's debut album *Desperate Character* is released by Polydor, despite the singles success the album fails to chart. Kirsty also appears on the cover of *Smash Hits* magazine.

September 1981 - *See That Girl* is released as the follow-up to *Chipshop* but fails to chart.

November 1981 - *You Still Believe In Me*, a cover of a Beach Boys song fails to chart and Polydor drop Kirsty.

August 1983 - *Berlin* is released on the North of Watford record label.

October 1983 - Back on the Stiff label, Terry is the new single.

January 1984 - Kirsty provides vocals on Simple Minds' Top 20 single, *Speed Your Love To Me*.

January 1985 - A cover of Billy Bragg's *A New England* gives Kirsty her biggest chart placing, peaking at No. 7. The promotional video features a visibly heavily pregnant Kirsty.

March 1985 - Polydor cash-in on the success of *England* by releasing an album called *Kirsty MacColl* which is merely the *Desperate Character* album re-released with additional tracks. The album fails to bolster the album chart.

June 1985 - *He's On The Beach* is the follow-up single to *England* and battles everybody by failing to chart.

November 1987 - Kirsty guest on The Pogues seasonal single *Fairytale Of New York* which is kept off the top of the singles chart by The Pet Shop Boys cover of the Elvis hit *Always On My Mind*.

February 1989 - *Free World* is Kirsty's first single for the Virgin record label. The single peaks at No. 43.

April 1989 - *Kite* is Kirsty's first proper album since *Desperate Character*. It peaks at No. 34 during a 12 week run on the album chart.

June 1989 - *Days*, a cover of The Kinks song, reaches No. 12 in the singles chart (coincidentally the same chart position reached by the original).

September 1989 - *Innocence* fails to enter the singles chart.

March 1990 - *Don't Come The Cowboy With Me Sonny Jim* also fails to chart.

November 1990 - *Miss Otis Regrets/Just One Of Those Things* (with The Pogues) is released for the AIDS charity *Red Hot And Blue*. Fails to chart.

May 1991 - *Walking Down Madison* gives Kirsty a No. 23 chart position.

June 1991 - Virgin release the album *Electric Landlady* which reaches No. 17 in the album chart.

July 1991 - *My Affair* is released as a single and peaks at No. 56.

October 1991 - *All I Ever Wanted* is lifted from the *Electric Landlady* album and fails to chart.

December 1991 - A re-issue of *Fairytale* gains a No. 36 chart position.

November 1993 - Stiff release *The Essential Collection*, an album made up of old material recorded while Kirsty was signed to the label.

December 1993 - *Angel* is released on the ZTT label. Once again the single fails to chart.

February 1994 - *Titanic Days* reaches No. 46 in the album chart.

February 1995 - *Caroline* is the new single for Virgin and reaches No. 58 in the chart.

March 1995 - *Galore*, a greatest hits package, becomes Kirsty's best selling album, enjoying a 27 week run in the album chart and peaking at No. 6.

June 1995 - A duet with Evan Dando on the cover of Lou Reed's *Perfect Day* scrapes into the single chart at No. 75.

July 1995 - A re-issue of *Days* reaches No. 42 on the chart following its use on a Sony Handicam television advertisement campaign.

February 1998 - Hux Records releases *What Do Pretty Girls Do?* an album of radio sessions.

November 1999 - *Mambo De La Luna* is Kirsty's first new material in 5 years. The single, on V2, fails to chart.

February 2000 - *In These Shoes?* is released and, once again, fails to give Kirsty a chart hit.

March 2000 - The new album *Tropical Brainstorm* peaks at No. 39 in the album chart.

2000 - V2 also released promo only singles of *England 2 Colombia 0* and *Treachery*.



Goodbye to the "Voice of an Angel"

It was the end of November, 1998, just a few weeks before I would act on what would be possibly the biggest decision of my then 28 years. I had committed myself to move from Connecticut to California, 3,000 miles away, and I was preparing to be further away from my sister than I'd ever been, to leave the place I had known most of my life, and to say goodbye to friends who had become like family since my parents had made the same move five years earlier.

Galore was the only Kirsty album I owned at the time and it spun constantly in any CD player I could get close to. One cold, snowy day about a month before the Big Day, the lyrics to *He's On The Beach* hit me like a ton of bricks - I couldn't get it out of my head. The lines, *Still he had to take his chances, he said the time had come for him to make a move away* summed up exactly how I felt about the move.

The move was the hardest thing I'd ever done, and it still holds that honour, but *leaving was the best thing [I] could do*. And looking back over the two years I've been here, I know moving was the best thing I could have done for myself. Since I've been here, my Kirsty library has grown to include everything I can get my hands on, but no song speaks to me louder or truer than this song.

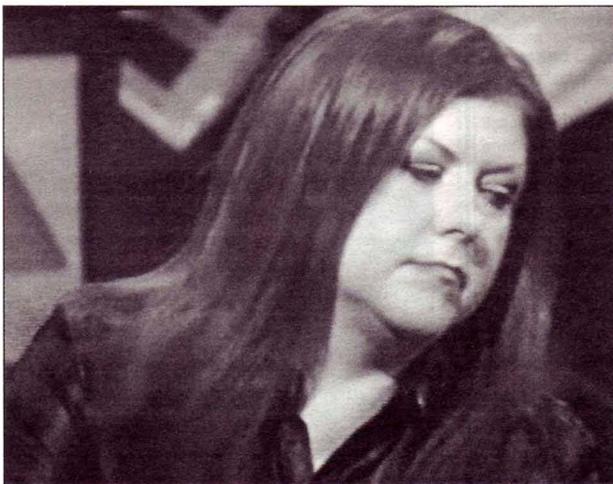
I've come to the conclusion Kirsty could tap into some sort of cosmic understanding of relationships, whether it's between two people or between one and one's heart. My own personal list of artists who have that incredible ability to pen such lyrics is always being added to, but she'll always have a permanent place at the top of it.

Michele Young, Orange, California.

There are few who have passed through this life and touched so many.

God bless Kirsty.

Nigel Hughes, Rushden.



I can not begin to tell you how terribly sorry I am about the tragic loss of our beloved Kirsty.

I found out at work through the BBC News internet site and was speechless, I cried all day and for days after. She has left a void which will never be filled by any other singer/songwriter.

I have never been as shocked by the death of a public figure before, but through Kirsty's music I felt as if I knew her.

I will never forget the happy times she gave me whilst watching her last few concerts. I am proud to be able to say that I saw one of her last and very finest performances at Coventry, it seems even more poignant that she decided to include *Fairytale* in her set.

I have a wonderful signed poster of Kirsty that I had framed some months ago, it remains one of my most valued possessions. And with the keyring you sent I will always feel that I have Kirsty's music and sense of humour with me.

Lee Noble, Carlisle.

Kirsty MacColl October 1959 - December 2000

I first discovered Kirsty's music in the late 70's. In the years since, I've come to appreciate so much her musicality, honesty, humour, and insight.

Despite the awful circumstances of her death, I look to her as an inspiration, not as "a victim to pity and cry for." I think she was one of the very few significant songwriters of the past twenty-five years. In a world in which most "popular" music is puerile, banal, and most often, acutely dull, her music is an oasis of sophisticated wit, lucid thoughtfulness, and unpretentious intelligence. All my best wishes and prayers to her family and close friends.

Ed Goodstein, Atherton, California.

I felt that I wanted to say something to somebody, but don't know what to say or who to say it to...

Mark Saunders, Wellingborough.

I bought *Chipshop* when it first came out and have been an almost pathological fan since then. What pisses me off more than anything is that who else is going to write stuff of that quality, who else has a voice and an understanding of harmony and irony to the same extent. She's irreplaceable.

Gordon Scott, Dursley.



I was shocked and saddened by the terrible news. It's been a terrible last few years, so many talented people gone.

Sadly I never saw Kirsty performing on a stage, I met her twice - both times at BBC Radio, about ten and twenty years ago. I liked her as a person. She was a very talented singer and songwriter.

Somewhere I still have the handwritten letter Kirsty wrote me when she worked at Croydon's Exchange and Mart.

Keith Tooke, St. Leonards-on-Sea.

My wife, my son and myself were deeply saddened by the death of Kirsty MacColl. We have always admired her as she had an original talent.

We are practising Christians and we pray for Kirsty's soul. We particularly pray for her sons and family at this very sad time.

The best of Kirsty MacColl is one of my favourite CD's and I have played it a lot since the tragic news. It is a marvellous tribute to her. We will not see her like again. May she rest in peace.

Jonathan Barrett, Skipton.

I don't know why I feel compelled to write a tribute for Kirsty, as I never met her, or spoke to her, or even went to one of her concerts. The news of her tragic death however shook me very deeply. I think that everyone who liked her music came to regard her as a friend, regardless of whether we had actually met her or not. We knew how she felt about political issues, we knew how events in her life had shaped her, we even knew what kind of music she enjoyed. All these things made her as much of a friend as any of the people we meet in our lives.

The last time I saw her was on Gloria Hunniford's Open House, of all places. She seemed to be really enjoying life, and was enjoying making music, and investigating the Latin American scene. How tragic that she should be taken from us at this time. My deepest sympathy is extended to her family.

Robert Rainford, Musician.

Goodbye to the "Voice of an Angel"

The songs of Kirsty MacColl have always been very emotionally rich for me. I could always spin a Kirsty tune whenever I wanted a laugh, to feel bitter at a heartless boyfriend, or, more recently, weep like a child. She is gone now, and the tragedy that ended her life has resonated very deeply with a lot of caring people. But I have come not to bury Kirsty, but to praise her, so here goes.

There is a quote from a local magazine, by a guy named Mark Leviton, regarding Gram Parsons, that is extremely appropriate now: "*Kirsty MacColl was on loan to us for a little while, but we didn't look up fast enough.*"

I don't usually take celebrity deaths very hard at all. It's a shame when someone dies, but that's it. When I got the news of Kirsty's death, it hit me like a truck. This great talent, this remarkable woman is gone. I will never encounter her and be all sycophantic. I will never have a drink with her, and have a great laugh. I'll never get to play her my songs, and some of her own. Because that was part of her appeal, you see. She seemed like the sort of person you could really talk with. She was real. I always counted on Ms. MacColl to be there, whenever I needed her. Her voice was with me every single day, much to many of my friends' chagrin.

You heard it in her voice, that sense that she was just the same as all of us. That voice... I could write this entire thing about how beautiful and full and affecting it is to me. I can go on and on about how, even now, after hearing it a thousand times, that part in *You Still Believe in Me*, when the music swells, and there are 20 Kirstys singing, it still makes my spirit soar. I can close my eyes now and feel it, the majesty of her voice for those few seconds. She has said of herself that her voice isn't very expressive, that it's the words that get to people. I think she was selling herself very short there. Her voice expressed more to me than I could ever find the words to explain. Her voice, to me, was like magic.

From this point on though, I resolve to

celebrate her life, not mourn it's loss. She is gone, and I'd give anything to have her back again. But thoughts like that are futile at best. Kirsty's music was everything that life is, and like life, her music will go on forever. She is a part of me, and many others, and her shadow will loom large over my life. To me, she will ever be dancing the *Mambo de la Luna* on an exotic island. She will always be on that lonely bench in *Soho Square*, hopeful for the future, as well as the brash young girl who's *motor* is so easily turned on.

My eyes now seek out my Kirsty collection, which is pretty decent. It is a brilliant legacy. It is a body of work that anyone would be proud of. I cannot think of a single horrid song in the lot. But then again, there will always be those songs of hers that will make me cry for her great, lost self. (*The Hardest Word, As Long As You Hold Me, Angel, Fabulous Garden...*). There will also be those gorgeous slices of pop that will always bring a smile to my face, albeit a melancholy one. (*He's On the Beach, The One and Only, You Know It's You, Terry...*). For all of that, for the joy, the tears, the anger, and the laughter, I thank Ms. Kirsty MacColl from the bottom of my heart. I thank her and celebrate the life and work of a unique songwriter and talent.

Though I don't drink alcohol anymore, I'd like to raise a glass of Pepsi to my all time favourite musician. It will always be a huge regret of mine that I will never get to meet her. What the hell....

Alegria, Kirsty
Happiness and joy
Wherever you are.

Angela Greene, Carson, California.

I just wanted to share my shock with someone at the death of Kirsty MacColl - an artist I much admired for her music and as a woman - who refused to conform to the skinny rock chick image. My thoughts are with her family.

Jane Armstrong, Bracknell.



Like most people who live on their own, I normally do not put on my radio when I get home from work until I have had my dinner and read any mail that as come for me that day. Accordingly, it was not till about seven at night that I heard the news that Kirsty MacColl had died. For the rest of that night I tried to put in focus what Kirsty meant to me and what she stood for.

To me, Kirsty stood for the rights of the underdog, for those whose circumstances mean that life will always be hard and for whom successive governments, despite loud press statements to the contrary, are not prepared to lift a finger to help. For the people in the under developed countries whom the governments of the so called developed countries continue to bleed dry year after year. For the people of Cuba for whom Kirsty has worked tirelessly year after year.

A few years ago I decided to write to Kirsty, c/o her record company, asking for a signed picture. Almost by return of post I was delighted to receive a couple of signed pictures. Anyway, these are just a few of my thoughts on Kirsty and what she stood for. I understand that the native Indians of America believe that the spirit of the good live on forever, if this is true then Kirsty will be with us, in spirit, from now until the end of time.

David MacDonald, Glasgow.

Furrie Dice & Chutney

This poem was received before Kirsty's death but I still feel that it's worthy of inclusion.

A cockney gal, of frozen bones
Amber fire and lucid tones
A desperate character of London town
Scouring streets for rhythm and
sound.

Where neon-lights flicker, weary
people tread
Amongst distant corridors towards this
electric landlady's bed!

Glamour:- Is this what all pretty young
girls do?

Where the heartache is many, the
conquests so few.

Clever dicks & cowboys glance without
a second care

Like strangers on a subway train
heading nowhere

To a new England perhaps, an angel to
guide them

Through a Titanic corruption, a sea of
spineless men.

Glitz:- Where are my red high heels
Maggie Thatcher?

So I can walk up your back
Whilst Elvis the King strums his guitar
Alongside a tropical track.

It's my affair, go light a cigar as you
reach for glorious Caroline
Who's score with Brazil is far better
than mine!

Kirsty, we salute you, xxxx.

Natasha Vann, Chesterfield.

Music Fund For Cuba

Many people have enquired about how they can act to do something in Kirsty's memory. A fund has been set up called *Music Fund For Cuba*. Money raised will be used to provide instruments, sheet music, etc. predominantly for children in Cuba.

You can make a donation by sending a cheque or postal order (payable to Music Fund for Cuba) to:

Music Fund For Cuba
c/o Major Minor Management
99c Talbot Road
London
W11 2AT

COMPETITION TIME

You are probably not in a very competitive mood at the moment and so I'm sure you'll forgive me for not heralding our competition with the usual fanfare.

The winner of the 12 inch white label copy of *Shoes*, signed by Kirsty and offered as the prize in the last issue of *Electric Rentbook* was **Simon Lee of Yarm, North Yorkshire**, who correctly identified ***Titanic Days*** as the last Kirsty album to get a release on the vinyl format.

I have four copies of the *Treachery*, one track promo cd - all signed by Kirsty. For the chance to win one of these promos tell me:-

Who co-wrote *Treachery* with Kirsty and what band was he a member of when they took a *Dreadlock Holiday*?

All answers by postcard or email to *Electric Rentbook*, 8 Ashville Terrace, Cross Hills, Keighley, BD20 7LQ. or electric.rentbook@talk21.com

I anticipate a huge amount of entries for this competition, being the last chance to get Kirsty's autograph, and all entries must be received by **Saturday 24th February 2001**, when the four correct entries drawn will each be winners.

AND FINALLY

This will probably be the last ever issue of *Electric Rentbook*, following the tragic events in Mexico.

When I began this fanzine, following the positive reaction I received from Kirsty, her management and you the fans, I had an ambition to make *Electric Rentbook* as big as *The Stranglers* "Strangled" magazine was in the 1980's.

I wanted it to complement, not compete with, Alan Officer's *Freeworld* website. I wanted to provide a decent newsletter for people, just like me, who adored not only the music but the person that was Kirsty MacColl.

I thought the fanzine and Kirsty's career would go on for several years. After five years absence from the 'limelight' the year 2000 saw Kirsty producing music again, touring and making appearances on television and radio. We were happy to see her back again and Kirsty was happy. She said herself she was happier than she'd ever been and tribute should be paid to *James Knight*, Kirsty's partner who contibuted greatly to this happiness. She was producing, possibly, the best music of her career and it's just so unfair that she is no longer with us.

I'd like to thank everybody who helped to make *Electric Rentbook* what it was:- Lisa-Jane Musselbrook and Sarah Clayman at Major Minor Management, Kevin Nixon, Alan Officer, Ross McMichael, Janice Long, everybody at Dixon Target, Alan Markham, David Hyde, Paul Crossley, Alan Morris, Leigh Smith, Chris - Jennie - Jonathan (it was a pleasure to meet you at Warwick), Catherine Allton, Sofi Maria and Brandon Scaife, anybody who ever read the fanzine, everyone who ever wrote or emailed me (keep in touch, eh?), Pete Glenister, Dave Ruffy, Chucho Merchan, James Knight, Michelle Drees, Ben Storey, Joe de Jesus and finally Kirsty MacColl.

I'm planning to produce a book, which will be made up of all seven issues of *Electric Rentbook*, as a lasting tribute to an incredible talent.