

ELECTRIC RENTBOOK

**Kirsty MacColl Homage
Issue 2 - May 2000**



FREE - SECOND ISSUE



Well, there were certain people who thought that it couldn't be done, but *oh no* - here it is, the second issue of Electric Rentbook is in your very sweaty, but all the same very sexy, hand!

My thanks go to all the people who requested Issue One and if you were not one of them but you'd like to own a copy of the historic first issue all you have to do is send me an A5 sized SAE and I will forward said issue. Back issues will only be available for a limited period, so if you want issue one, *don't delay - write today!*

I hope that you enjoy this current issue, Electric Rentbook Issue Three shall be out in July. In the meantime, keep slapping that copy of Tropical Brainstorm in the CD drawer of your stereo and you can even press the play button if you want - I noticed this heightened my listening pleasure!

The new album - What the reviewers thought

No doubt we have all been down to our local record shop and handed over our hard earned cash for a copy of *Tropical Brainstorm*. There will, I should imagine, be very few of us who haven't delighted in the new songs and Anglo-Latin style, but what was the verdict in the music press? Here we take a look at what the critics said:

Ian Cranna at Q Magazine wrote:

So where has Kirsty MacColl been for the last five years? Cuba and South America, it seems. Once past the culture shock of wholesale percussive shuffles, mariachi trumpets and African guitars, this sparkling collection of Anglo-Latin pop is a delight. The Latino music enlivens, rather than overpowers MacColl's flawless tunes and there are countless clever couplets, from wistful heartbreak through cutting comment to wit that makes you laugh out loud.

As sharp as ever on follies of relationships, this album includes a touching recipe for heartbreak, Amazonians falling for City Boys, lies and treachery, and an Internet fling with a pornographer ("and in his hand - is that a mouse I see?"). Even her own demure lead vocals have acquired some life and latin drama. A rare treat.

★★★★☆

Mick Meikleham at Uncut Magazine wrote:

Timeless pop craftswoman takes us to Cuba after five year hiatus.

Since 1995's Galore Best of, MacColl's been bobbing about in Bermondsey, Brazil and Cuba, getting tango'd, tickling her tonsils with foreign consonants, fashioning crafted pop songs of relationships gone wrong with that dry precision we've come to expect but now set to lazy Latin rhythms and up tempo Kid Creolisms. Still with a comic bent and the clarity of a crystal bell, the lushly husky folk-popper of yore handles rejection on the sublime "Wrong Again", Internet sex on the delightfully sick "Here Comes That Man Again", and an extended "Autumn Girl Soup", lyrically a little overdone this time, bringing her to a point not far from bubbling over into Victoria Wood country (albeit more stylish and sophisticated).

Even if diverse to the point of spreading itself too thinly, Tropical Brainstorm will be loved by gently man-hating wagettes the world over.

★★★★☆

Phil Sutcliffe at MOJO Magazine wrote:

Scintillating smithstress of word and tune, back after four years. Huzzah to V2 for backing talent while others sucked their teeth.

Of late, Kirsty MacColl has spent a lot of time in Latin America and restricted her UK appearances to guest spots with salsa bands at Cuba Solidarity benefits. Now, for once, maybe she has struck lucky. With UK hips on ball bearings and ready to roll after a Latino summer, here comes Señorita Sarky - sounds tabasco, words old English vinegar. To rhythms rumba, mambo and bossa whatsname, she debunks a romantic bullshitter with In These Shoes ("Let's make love on a mountain top... Honey, in these shoes? I don't think so"), or cooks up a culinary metaphor to make Delia Smith blush in Autumn Girl Soup (bring to the boil, simmer then, "You can stuff me with whatever you've got handy"). Stir in a pinch of achy-breaky wistfulness (Wrong Again), a drop of Billie Holiday languor (Head), a heaped tablespoon of wry intelligence and sacroiliac action, and grump a drôle olé.

They don't give stars in MOJO

There's always one, isn't there?

Tacky Lads Magazine Front wrote:

Kirsty MacColl is well known for her Dawn French-style comfortable wit, and it's still present on Tropical Brainstorm. On the plus side, this is by far the funniest thing she's done. Not only are there stories of serial liars with three children, stalking ex-fans, football scores and shoes, told with her acidic gag-a-minute tongue, there's an amusing musical twist... Kirsty's gone all Latin! It's sambas, rumbas, tangos and salsas, and it's just ridiculously stupido! Probably not quite what she intended. Women will probably love it.

★☆☆☆☆



Tim Perry at The Independent wrote:

After an absence of more than five years, the bard of Croydon returns with more witty couplets and strange lyrical scenarios, but this time they're set to Cuban and Brazilian beats.

It takes some getting used to and is not fully authentic, but in the end her charm and writing skills shine through.

★★★★☆

Colin Irwin at Channel 4 Teletext wrote:

After five years spent mainly in Cuba and Brazil, Kirsty is back with a bona fide Latin Pop album.

Unlike the recent aberration by Geri, her embracing of the sunny rhythms of South America is unforced, natural and perfectly fitting for the sexy wit and mischievous popperiness of her songs.

It's fun, it's feel-good, it's clever, it's accessible and it ought to be a great big hit. Bet it isn't.

★★★★★



Interview with The Electric Landlady (Part 2)



Continuing our exclusive interview with Kirsty (you should have seen the drinks bill!).

So Kirsty, how did you enjoy the five British gigs that you played in February?

It was great to play the recent gigs and it was nice to see we still have an audience.

The question I've been dying to ask since I saw you in Manchester, How did you fit your seven piece band on the tiny stage at The Duchess of York in Leeds?

With difficulty!

I was really impressed by your backing musicians, especially the female percussionist and the bass player who very much reminded me of Blockheads bass player Norman Watt-Roy. From where did you assemble such a talented bunch?

Pete Glenister (guitar) and Dave Ruffy (drums) are long time collaborators and co-produced the album with me. Chucho Merchan on bass is Colombian and has worked with lots of people, in particular the Eurythmics

and Pete Townshend. Michelle Drees has her own Brazilian Style band and has jammed with Milton Nascimento's band in Brazil. James Knight (sax) and Ben Storey (trumpet) both played on the album. Ben was in the Halle Orchestra and James has a degree in Jazz. Joe de Jesus (trombone, flute and trumpet) is originally from Puerto Rico. He came over on tour with David Byrne a few years ago and stayed.

You recently returned from a promotional trip to Europe, did you play any gigs whilst there or was it

just radio and television appearances?

The European promo trips included a lot of radio and TV in Scandinavia and press only in Belgium, Germany and Holland.

With Tropical Brainstorm 'in the can.' - When does work begin on the next record? Are you constantly writing new songs?

I haven't had a chance to write much since the promo started apart from "Good For Me" which appears on CDI of the "Shoes" single and was co-

produced and performed with James Knight.

What was the last concert you went to?

I haven't caught a gig this year because of the promo schedule but last autumn I went to see Eminem, Morrissey, Cold Cut and Van Dyke Parks.

In V2's press release for Tropical Brainstorm (featured in Issue One of Electric Rentbook) it says you considered giving up the music business altogether, how close did you actually come to doing this?

I come close to doing this every other day. (see *Boybands - on Kirsty's interview on the website @ V2).

Have you read Billy Bragg's autobiography - Still suitable for miners? When can we look forward to the Kirsty MacColl autobiography, is this something you'd ever consider doing?

No I haven't read Billy's book and writing my own story is something that I'd never do!

Finally, a trivial question, if you were invisible for a day, what would you do?

I've been invisible for bloody years, so nothing new there!

With that we say farewell to the 'Invisible woman' for this issue.

Cheers Kirsty!

The word from Kirsty's management is that England 2 Columbia 0 will be the next single lifted from Tropical Brainstorm

BBC Radio Two deserve a mention this issue for their continued support of Kirsty.

Terry Wogan continues to play Kirsty MacColl records on his *Wake Up to Wogan* show.

He's played *In These Shoes?* and he regularly plays *A New England*, *Days and All I Ever Wanted*.

Sarah Kennedy has also played the current single.

Janice Long played *In These Shoes?* on consecutive weeks on her *Saturday Music Show*, featured Kirsty on her 3 from 1 section of her programme on March 4th; playing *Chipshop*, *My Affair* and *In These Shoes?* and Kirsty was Janice's guest in the studio on March 11th. Janice also mentioned this very fanzine!

Steve Wright featured *In These Shoes?* on his *Round Table* review slot on the 18th February, when guest reviewers *Foster and Allen* and *Tony Hadley* voiced their opinions on the new single.

Tony Hadley, the former Spandau Ballet frontman, said he liked the new single and expressed his admiration of Kirsty as an artist.

Foster and Allen expressed their admiration for Kirsty but they weren't too sure about this new single and expressed doubt as to whether it would receive airplay and thus a chart position.

I keep scanning the digital television music channels for any Kirsty video plays, but to no avail. The majority of these channels seem to have a fixation with Britney Spears and Robbie Williams - that says it all really!

Win an autographed copy of Tropical Brainstorm

It's competition time - do you remember when that cry used to cause scenes of mayhem on Saturday mornings within the studios of a certain TV programme (*Tiswas*)? I'll have you all doing the 'Dying Fly' yet! Complete our Wordsearch and return it to us at Electric Rentbook and you could be the winner of a copy of ***Tropical Brainstorm*** signed by ***Kirsty herself!*** A stupendous prize that money just can't buy - well you could buy the CD, but it wouldn't be the same signed by the girl at the Virgin Megastore instead of Kirsty MacColl - would it?



The Kirsty related words that you are trying to locate are:

ANGEL

BAD

BILLY BRAGG

CAROLINE

DAYS

DRUG ADDIX

ELECTRIC

FREEWORLD

GALORE

HAPPY

INNOCENCE

KINKS

KITE

LANDLADY

MAMBO DE LA LUNA

MY AFFAIR

PERFECT DAY

POGUES

RUTS

STIFF

THE SMITHS

TERRY

Completed Wordsearchs should be sent to Electric Rentbook, 8 Ashville Terrace, Cross Hills, Keighley BD20 7LQ.
Closing date for your entries to arrive is **Saturday 17th June, 2000**. The winner will be drawn on that day and notified by post.

Introducing.....

We are all aware of the various artists that Kirsty MacColl has helped out on their records and live dates, but what about the great artists that have guested on Kirsty's material?

In this issue we take a closer look at Kirsty's drummer and co-producer and songwriter **Dave Ruffy**.

For those of us old enough to remember (the thirty-somethings) Dave was the drummer in one of the great new wave bands - **The Ruts**.

Formed in Southall, South London in August 1977, The Ruts featured Dave on bass guitar along with Paul Mattock on drums, guitarist Paul Fox and frontman Malcolm Owen. By the time they began gigging regularly Dave had switched to drums and John Jennings had joined on bass.

They released their debut single *In A Rut* in January 1979 on the independent label People Unit. Quickly attracting the attention of Virgin Records, they signed to the major and enjoyed a number 7 smash hit single with their first release for the label - the classic *Babylon's Burning*. A further two Top Ten singles followed, with *Something That I Said* a number 29 hit in September 1979 and *Starring At The Rude Boys* a number 22 hit in April 1980.

With the world at their feet, tragedy hit the band on 14th July 1980 with the death of Malcolm Owen from an accidental heroin overdose. I can vividly

remember this, as it was shortly after the music world lost another genius with the suicide of Ian Curtis, lead singer and songwriter of the fast rising Joy Division.

The rest of the band elected to continue and with the recruitment of Gary Barnacle they changed their name to **Ruts DC** and had a further hit single with *West One (Shine On Me)*.

The Ruts had a number 16 hit album with *The Crack* in 1979 and in 1980 Ruts DC had a number 28 album with *Grin And Bear It*. They released a further two albums - *Animal Now* and *Rhythm Collision Vol. 1*, but they never fully recovered from the loss of Owen and in 1983 they split.

Dave Ruffy joined **Aztec Camera** and played on their debut album *High Land Hard Rain*.

He first joined **Kirsty** on her 1994 album *Titanic Days* and he plays on and co-produced *Tropical Brainstorm*, as well as co-writing *Mambo De La Luna* and *Alegra*. If you've seen Kirsty touring this year, then you've also seen Dave Ruffy hitting them there skins!

From one of the greatest punk rock bands to backing **the** greatest solo artist, surely this makes Dave Ruffy a drumming legend.

Recommended Ruts listening - *Something That I Said* - *The Best Of The Ruts*. Virgin CD (CDOVD 454). And its available at Mid-Price!

.....Dave Ruffy

Acknowledgements

I'd like to extend a great big thank you to the following good people:

Kirsty MacColl without whom this fanzine would most definitely not be possible, for continuing to support me and answer my mundane interview questions. **Lisa-Jane Musselbrook** at Major Minor Management, for her continued support. **Janice Long** for the free publicity and encouraging words. **Leigh Smith** for giving me the inspiration to do this in the first place. **Teletext** on Channel 4 for the good review. **Alan Officer** at the Freeworld Website for featuring this 'zine on the net. **Record Collector Magazine** for the review. And last, but by no means least, **Catherine Allton** and **Brandon** and **Sofi-Maria Scaife** for putting up with my Kirsty MacColl and Stranglers obsessions which, I admit, sometimes verge on the unhealthy.

Issue Three of Electric Rentbook will be out in July



Well there we have it - the second issue of Electric Rentbook.
Another twelve pages of lovingly prepared Kirsty MacColl homage.

Please send me your views and any contributions you may wish to send for future issues.

Send me your details if you wish to go on the Electric Rentbook mailing list.

Name:

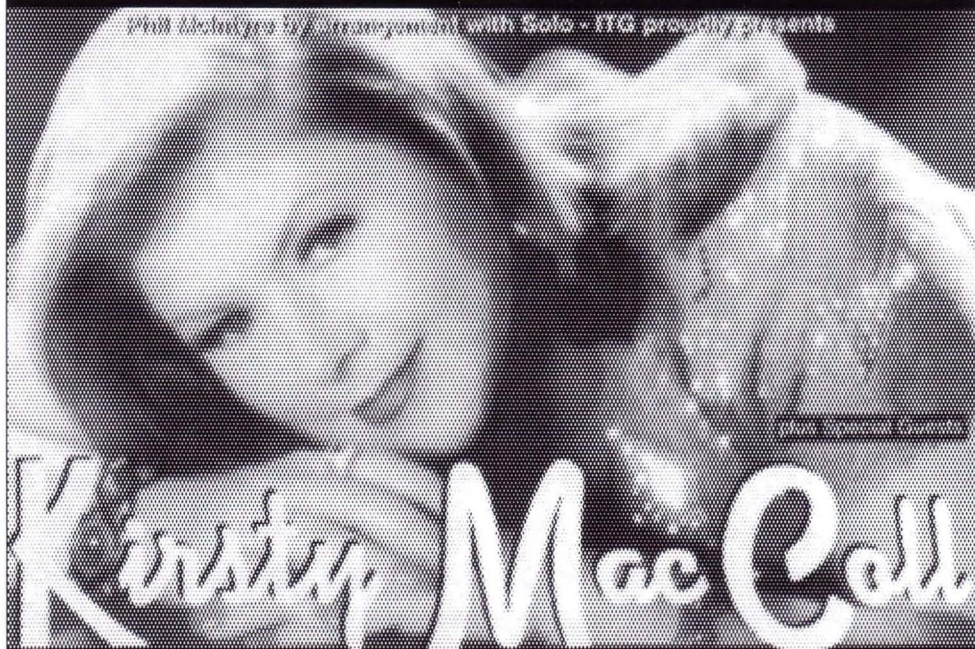
Address:

Please send all correspondence to:

Electric Rentbook, 8 Ashville Terrace, Cross Hills, Keighley, BD20 7LQ.

The Galore Tour of May 1995 - Did you catch any of these dates?

Phil McIntyre is proud to present with Solo - ITC proudly presents



Kirsty MacColl

Sunday 7th May Wednesday 17th May
Redcar Bowl Leeds Town & Country Club

Monday 8th May Thursday 18th May
Glasgow Garage Sheffield University

Wednesday 10th May Friday 19th May
Norwich UEA Wolverhampton Wulfrun Hall

Thursday 11th May Sunday 21st May
Northampton Roadmenders Cardiff St Davids Hall

Saturday 13th May Monday 22nd May
Cambridge Corn Exchange Portsmouth Pyramids Centre

Sunday 14th May Tuesday 23rd May
Leicester De Montfort University London Forum

Monday 15th May
Manchester University

Parking is restricted in Kentish Town. Please use public transport.
Kentish Town British Rail Underground
& Buses 134 & 136. Car parking available in Regis Road NW5
Tickets £8.00 in advance except London £10.00
Subject to Booking Fee.

"Galore" - The best of Kirsty MacColl, available from all good record stores