

## COCTEAU TWINS & FRIENDS

LONDON BRIXTON ACADEMY

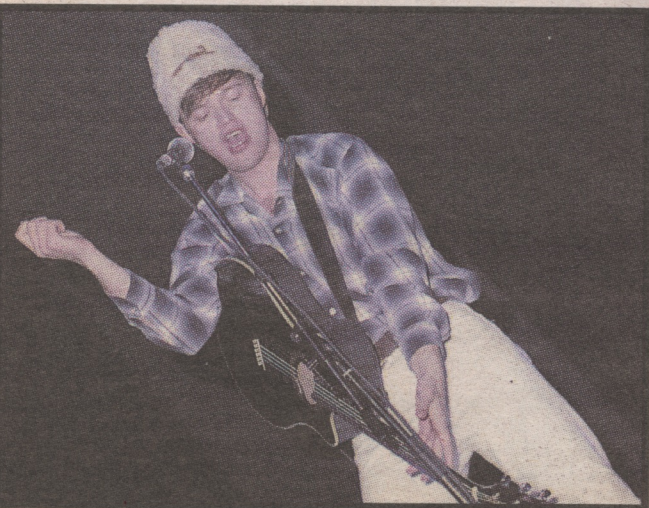
YOU SHOULD never drop names, as Robert De Niro said to me the other night, but the Cocteau Twins, 'Special Guests' night makes it a little unavoidable. Not since Andy Warhol's secret car-boot sale of Velvet Underground Ray-Bans in Pollockshields, 1982, had so many netherworld pop celebrities gathered in the same place. Nearly.

The idea of the Cocteau Twins inviting their muso mates to act as their support line-up is actually quite a good one. Liz and Robin are not exactly known for leaping on stage to 'jam' with Sinéad 'n' Annie, or going out on the town to celebrate Amanda De Cadenet becoming Godmother to their baby. So tonight seemed to suggest a promising move towards accepting Leisure Industry absurdity.

As befits a Cocteau's audience who demonstrate their allegiance to rock lore very tentatively (polite mingling, wine and cheese punk reminiscences, holding hands, subtle leather jackets, specs) the supporting pals went for the subdued, intimate mood. Problem is, in a whopping great cavern like the Academy the effect is a bit like doing an origami act on centre stage at Glastonbury. It doesn't exactly knock you dead.

The Jesus And Mary Chain, slimmed down to Jim, William and Ben (who went to school with Kylie Minogue — showbiz fact) strummed their way through three songs, 'Darklands', 'Drop' and one new piece. All were played sans drums, at slug-slow pace, with Jim (and William on 'Drop') murmuring husked, crippled vocals, and all sounding very 'Candy Says'. It was a deeply low key, but dignified appearance during which Jim distinguished himself by sitting down to play guitar, and William, by wearing a pleasant cardigan, the mad f—er.

The next Scots Star Turn had us all going for a while with a stirring impersonation of Billy Connolly doing a monologue (check shirt, silly hat) the razor wit of which was somewhat undermined by its complete inaudibility. Edwyn Collins (for it was he) then busked through an old piece of Orange



# COGS' MUCKER BLUES



Amanda De Cadenet (above) teams up with mates Midge Ure (inset) and Eric Clapton (below)

Juice shimmy shammying, done clap-a-long style, and with a glitzy peck on the cheek greeted Roddy Frame.

Buddy-buddy C & W guitar 'licks' were traded and Roddy 'Strummer' Frame picked out one of his tenderest ballads. An

amiable affair, the top chums act was only slightly devalued by the realisation that the baldie doing the sit-down thigh slapping, stage left, was not really Matt Johnson.

Rumour had it that Robert Smith (who went to school with Dostoevsky — showbiz fact) was due to make an appearance, but a follow-up rumour claimed his manager had advised against it. Thus Robert was saved from making the profound *faux pas* of sharing the same hairstyle space as the also wildly plumed Ian McCulloch. Dressed subversively, as a cross between Roy Orbison and Chairman Mao, Big Mac received a proper pop star reception as he joined the burgeoning supergroup of Frame and Collins, and proceeded to show true star form by dragging heavily on one cigarette for a full eight minutes. Miraculous.

'Candleland' (minus Liz Cocteau's album duetting), and

The Velvets' 'Pale Blue Eyes' were given passable, fragile, murmuring treatments, but really, given the off-the-cuff 'ambience' of the evening this was far more of a Personal Appearance than a musical event.

The Cocteau's beatific flotation tank dramas followed, sadly uninterrupted by any guest 'jams', and despite the presence in the audience of suitable types like Kim from Pixies and Mick from the Mick Jones Band, the temptation to finish off as an arm-linking ensemble, drunkenly bawling 'We Are The (Under) World' was resisted.

A few sweet tunes did come out of it, but the central fascination was seeing yesterday's oppositional cool kids coping (just about) with creeping Eric Clapton & Friends syndrome. Amanda De Cadenet didn't show up, but then she wasn't at the car-boot sale in Pollockshields, either.

Roger Morton

## THE SHAMEN MANCHESTER HACIENDA

WHO WANTS to see two blokes wander The Shamen either. Wisely, they realise a brilliant band may be, there's limited performance-shy blokes strolling around.

With a heightened awareness of the Hacienda into the throbbing mass, blokes may not command control of your friends (rapper Mr C, or singer Plavka) and transformed with lights around the travelling DJ, ranting serenely in the bass.

To be honest, it's a bit 1988; complete said that, with the three month lifespan, unfaithful, decadent pop disposability, some of the sequenced riffs, and the their best and greatest, culminating in a 'Mine', every song drowned in smoke.

The Shamen have invested much in recycling the human face of dance; the also human beings. To be honest, the some of the sequenced riffs, and the their best and greatest, culminating in a 'Mine', every song drowned in smoke.

At last, someone out-did The Hacienda.