

TUBULAR BELLES

● Are LUSH the new Mike Oldfield? Does the old Mike Oldfield reckon his fans are "twats"? Is STEVEN WELLS picking on their gurdy petal rock for the mindless macho sake of it? Or are Lush merely sitting pretty at the top of League Division Four? Multiple images: KEVIN 'Pop Art' CUMMINS

I looked up "Lush" in *The International Encyclopedia Of Hard Rock And Heavy Metal* (fully revised and updated and with an introduction by Tommy Vance) and they weren't in it.* BAD SIGN!

What do your punk muckers back in Kendal think of Lush, Chris?

"F—ing crap. It's not like Rudimentary Peni and Crass, is it? So it must be crap. Here's Chris, he's a pop star and his music's f—ing crap."

Chris Ackland, drummer for Lush, looks like a punk rocker should look. He has that chiselled, shadow-casting rock 'n' roll death-mask, that hawk-eyed thinnish glower that says consumption, heroin, TB, rickets, diphtheria, leukaemia, tapeworm, amphetamine sulphate, bowel cancer, veganism and thrusty vest-off pelvis grinding sex with top models in seedy Paris hotel bedrooms. I mean, this guy makes Sid look like Gary Clail.

Oh, Lush! May I gush? Oh pleaseeease let me gush! There are them as says that Lush — whose excellent new EP 'Black Spring' is in the shops now — make soppy wallpaper muzak which is bought solely by mock-camp innado Morrissey fanboys to whom melancholy, introversion and feeble bleating is the very nectar of the gods, and whose idea of paradise is to get severely depressed and curl up on damp, acne-cream stained sheets under a 'Rupert' duvet in some stinking suburban bedroom and blame it all on Mum and Mrs Thatcher — in that order.

That Lush are mush. That they are AFRAID TO ROCK. There are them as says that Lush are symptomatic of the nauseating resurgence of the utterly bland and CRAP indie music of the mid-'80s that the rave scene was meant to have hunted down and killed. That Lush are the indie anti-Christ that The Eagles' 'Hotel California' warned us would rise from the desecrated grave of sad-music after the rumpy-pumpy dance fun of Madchester had burst a blood vessel in the brain and died of disco-biscuit induced Parkinson's Disease:

"We stabbed the shoe-gazing bastard with our steely knives/But we could not kill the beast/No no no no/It would not die/Oh no/This isn't what you call 'good' rock music, is it?/F— off you Southern wankers..."

But me, I think the spine-tingling, toe-curling, mind-liquefying tumult of silken, gushing, iridescent beauty that is Lush is ace.

Emma Anderson, guitarist for the glowing, hushed, heavenly orgasm of crystalline loveliness that is Lush, is a big sister from hell. She wrinkles her nose and flaps a slim hand at the cancer curling from the pile of crushed Silk Cuts that Miki chain-smokes. Bad sign. Never trust anybody who isn't rock 'n' roll enough to not mind dying from your disgusting habits whilst having her eardrums pulped by disgustingly loud music.

"I'm going to turn this music down..." she says, sensitively.

Miki Berenyi, cooing vocalist for the peace-dolphins a-swimming in an ethereal space-sea of soothing sensuality that is Lush, is a stinking Dot Cotton fag dangling from the yakking red slash of a gob that says "FAK AWF YOU WANG-KER!" more often than it says "I love you"; is interrupted by a phone call from a young man.

"I don't faking care if some faking wanker says I'm a faking ugly cow. I don't give a f— FAK AWF YOU W..."

"Miki, it's for you..."

Miki takes the phone and changes from raging rock chick to pussy cat coquette.

"Hellllllo!" she purrs slyly.

Steve the bassist is as cute as a little blond button and doesn't say very much, but afterwards he tells me that maybe the band would be different if it



Colour me pop? From top: Emma, Miki, Steve and Chris

didn't have women in it and anyway what's the point of being Crass and The Sex Pistols when those bands so patently failed to smash capitalism and make the world safe for cows, whales, baa-lambs and the endangered Indian Ocean Vegetarian Sea Slug?

This is the dilemma. You get four GEEZERS what like a pint and a laff and say — O! O! And two of them used to do rude glue-sniffers' bible called *Alphabet Soup* wot stuck two used tampons up at everyfink gurdy and soppy and insipid. And they sound like... well, like Lush. Whom some would say sound gurdy and soppy and insipid. Not me though. I think Lush are, um, well, let's have the rest of the music press tell us why Lush are so great.

Me: Why are Lush so great?

The Music Press (REAL quotes): "Oh, am I allowed to gush, oh please allow me to gush... fragile skin and bone... angelic... a glinting explosion... smouldering heaven, luxuriant tipsy growth, casually transcendent... Lush exemplify what My Bloody Valentine meant when you wake up you're still in a dream... hello trees, hello flowers... I wish I was a little birdy... wank".

The rest of the adult world:

"BLEEEEEUUUUUUURGH!"

Chris nearly chokes on his spinach and mung-bean vindaloo with extra lentils.

"Aw f—... it's journalists trying to... aw f—... trying to... I can't say it! I can't do it... they, like trying to describe things..." he spits out, along with a couple of chick peas.

LUSH FACT!: Chris of the gossamer winged, spidery souled clashing, shining, shimmering cosmic lusciousness that is Lush, is a really crap dancer. I



mean we are talking seriously crap. Score PLUS 8,000,000,000 on the Rock 'n' rollometer.

Emma: "They use the same words to describe all those bands."

All what bands?

Emma: "Well all those bands they use those words about..."

Like whom?

Chris: "Like The Cocteau Twins and The Pale Saints and My Bloody Valentine and whoever makes beautiful music with sensitive vocals."

Mmmmm! Three really great rock 'n' roll bands! Miki: "Wispy vocals and clashing guitars that talk about incandescent waterfalls..."

What about the quote "Miki's cute, almost

There are them as says that Lush make sloppy wallpaper muzak which is bought solely by mock-camp innado Morrissey fanboys to whom melancholy, introversion and feeble bleating is the very nectar of the gods.



Oriental vocals, float on top..."

Emma: "If she wasn't half-Japanese they wouldn't write that."

Miki: "Chris' almost Cumbrian drums."

Chris: "Aye, ah lahk that!"

All: "Giggle giggle!"

Lush have been passed around this select group of shoe-gazing journalists in a nauseating perverts' circle of cuddle the parcel. Don't you think you've had an easy ride? Don't you think you've been coddled?

Miki: "We have been slagged."

Not for ages.

Emma: "I dunno... that is just... what...?"

Hasn't all the foul blank verse that's been written about you carried the fetid stench of the barely repressed lust of sexually maladjusted public schoolboys?

Emma: "Possibly..."

Miki: "Probably..."

Chris: "Um... probably..."

There is now a brief interval of stunned silence as (the tumescent rosebed of hushed innocence that is) Lush try to work out why the hack hasn't got his tongue up their collective bottom as per usual. The only noise I can make out on my tape recorder is "hug", "nggg" and "urrrr" and the sickening splash of vegetarian curry slopping out of slack jaws onto a formica table. Eventually...

Emma: "No, I think that's probably right, a lot of the time... Oh God... when you get women in bands they're always sort of looked at sexually."

But what's the real difference between this sort of lame, breathless, secret-poetry-readings-in-the-dorm, torches under the bed sheets, giggling Fotherington Thomas approach and cor, get your tits out, darling?

Miki: "Nnnnnnn... at least they're trying to suppress it. At least they're trying... I can't pinpoint what it is but I'd rather they printed that sort of garbage than cor, what a pair of knockers! Or something. I think I'd find that fairly offensive..."

Given the fourth generation anarcho-punk rocker rude fanzine frashy UGH! UGH! UGH! that are the backgrounds of the individual members of the sighing, blissful April shower of heavenly angel's tears that is Lush, seeing as originally you were going to use the BRILLIANT name *Baby Machine*, why do you make such weedy, quiet, introverted music?

Emma: "IT'S NOT! WE'RE NOT QUIET! Have you seen us live! WE'RE NOT QUIET!"

Miki: "The first songs we wrote were like shouty vocals and like sorta Hagar The Womb. It was! It was like EEEEEUUNGHAH! Nah na nan nah nanana!"

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LUSH

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And that just sounded so SHIT that . . ."

Emma: "I just fink, like, *Alphabet Soup* was like our past and the stuff we write is not meant to reflect our lifestyles. It's . . ."

And here Emma says one of the most BORING things anybody can say in an interview.

" . . . It's just music."

Which is exactly the sort of thing Mike Oldfield said in interviews in 1975. It's just music.

Mike Oldfield: "It's just music."

Emma: "Nah, it does relate to other things but it's not . . . I mean . . ."

What?

Emma: " . . . I dunno . . ."

Mike: "Those early songs were just girly shouting and a load of noise and they where *shit!*"

This is my problem, right. My idea of rock 'n' roll heaven is a load of gurdy shouting and just noise. Your music is so smooth you could fall off it. You can hardly hear the lyrics to songs called things like 'Fallin' In Love', 'Monochrome' and 'Downer'. And it's obvious that the journalists who like you are macho-wimps nursing painful erections, I mean, do you know why people like you? Got any good theories? I mean, why do you like yourselves?

Chris: "Uhhh . . ."

Mike: "Uhhh . . ."

Emma: "Aaaaaaak . . ."

Mike Oldfield: "Uhhhhh . . ."

Chris: "Oh God. Personally I like it because I'm involved in it but if I wasn't in Lush I wonder if I'd be into it?"

Emma: "Well you don't like bands with female vocals."

Chris: "I do, I like Blondie . . ."

Emma: "Well that's one . . ."

Chris: "No, I think it's . . . good. I do. Because I know where it's coming from and . . . I mean, I don't know, I'm a rock drummer, you know what I mean?"

Here you are in your safe little Indie tower. Ever feel like having a stab at the grown-up charts? Why don't you write a song as good as 'I Am Sexy For My Car'? I mean, if you weren't in Lush, would you play your records to do the washing up to?

Chris: "Uh . . ."

Emma: "Yeah!"

Mike Oldfield: "No way!"

Chris: "Yeah, well you get up on a morning and you play records that lift you up and on an evening you play something that is . . . moody . . ."

Emma: "SHAT AP, CHRIS! JUST SHAT AP!"

Chris: "Well, you do . . ."

Miki: "Fak awf you wang-ker! What are you saying?"

Well, do you achieve catharsis playing your music?

Chris: "Yes . . . no . . . what does that mean?"

Like a good dump followed by a really good wank and a fag?

Chris: "On some records, yeah."

Why don't you want to be The Beatles or The Sex Pistols? Why are you happy with just being a hyped little indie band in kiddy-land? You're just sort of ambling along . . .

Emma: "Yeah, great, innit?"

And now Miki says the second most boring thing you can say in an interview.

Miki: "We just enjoy doing it (yaaaaaaaawn!) I don't really care if my neighbour hasn't heard our record . . ."

Isn't it a bit like being top of the Northern Premier League?

Chris: "Oooh, I think you've put it all into perspective actually. We're probably in the Fourth Division now and we're doing quite well and we're sort of working our way through. I've got a trilby and a sheepskin . . ."

Emma: "Why does being in the charts mean success?"

That's what being in a pop band means, being pop-ular. Your fans are sneered at rather a lot. Are they a bunch of sad, inadequate wankers or what?

Miki: "Bollocks! You can say that about any audience. You look at a bloody Cartah audience, they're just a banch of blahdy wang-kers."

Emma: "Yeah!"

Chris: "Everybody is a wanker except for the bands, the bands are just plagued by wankers."

Miki: "They're good people but taken as a group they can be categorised as being absolute . . ."

Go on . . .

"TWATS!"

Emma: "'Ere, are we doin' more photos?"

Celestial petals of muzzy, Elysian bliss float like the slumbering breaths of smiling cherubim upon beautiful breezes of liltling, intoxicating, psychotropic saintliness.

Mike Oldfield: "Look, this is all a bit mindlessly macho, isn't it?"

Geezer.

* The closest entry to "Lush" is "Lucifer's Friend" - a German combo heavily influenced by Uriah Heep and featuring the legendary Herbert Bornhold on drums. By an amazing coincidence Herbert's reportedly very thin but good looking father spent the years 1943-'45 as a POW working on a potato farm but seven miles from Kendal, and he regularly re-visited the area on holiday throughout the '60s.