

own way as any of the post-everything New York contenders. Diversion, distortion, discrepancies, disgust, depression, deception are amongst the things they're about. Anything but simple law and order. I spoke to Susan and Robert afterwards and they seemed satisfied enough with their performance, enthusing about their bevy of followers.

You guys seem less politically active these days (they once wrote a song called 'Elliot Abrahams In Hell' about the then US Secretary Of State) and more atuned to the politics of love, whatever that entails.

Robert: "We didn't intend it to be this way, but the record ended up being about love and the emotions, relationships, etc. It's a phase we're going through. Teenagers in love. The songs are about flawed relationships, or complicated relationships, about power and the politics of one's emotions."

These are very reactionary times. Is there a place for Noise these days, what with the tendency towards CD blandouts and New Age music? There's even New Age House ferchrissakes.

"We're trying to keep a place for it," claims Susan.

"We're trying to make a place for our own personal noise. Sometimes it's in the midst of more populist stuff. My favourite part of the night is when we go back to a more noise-orientated sensibility after more traditional excursions."

These could also lead to misconceptions and unwarranted comparisons to Sonic Youth.

"Certain things crop up on record out of our collective rock 'n' roll subconscious," adds Susan. "'Which Dream Came True' has a Stones ghost sound to it. We're not afraid to deal with things we grew up with. Each of us was having a tough time and what came out of it was an abrasive, uncompromising rock thing. It evolved that way."

SUNDAY NIGHT in Birmingham is the most coherent night for both acts. Karen's reappearance in The Band Of Susans shows exactly how much she contributes and how important the triple-guitar interplay is for their stratospheric sound. Not spacey but right on the button anyways. It's completely electric, nay electronic, and the times spent moonlighting with Glenn Branca, John Cage and Rhys Chartham seem to have paid off. They have no wounds to lick. Guitar symphonies wash over my nether-regions and I, for one, am glad I'm not a nihilist anymore. Self-destruction is soooo passe.

Throwing Muses, on the other hand, come as close as they ever will to playing things straight down the line. From 'Say Goodbye' onwards everything signposts a major, lumbering rock beast struggling to get out. Sometimes things go haywire or haphazard but it's always with *intent*, carefully meditated chaos.

If the medium is the message, then the Muses are telescreens reflecting the accumulated knowledge of a thousand years, feeding on the results and giving birth to candy-shaped bugs. Even as I write I can't get the refrain from 'Santa Claus' out of my head. Help!

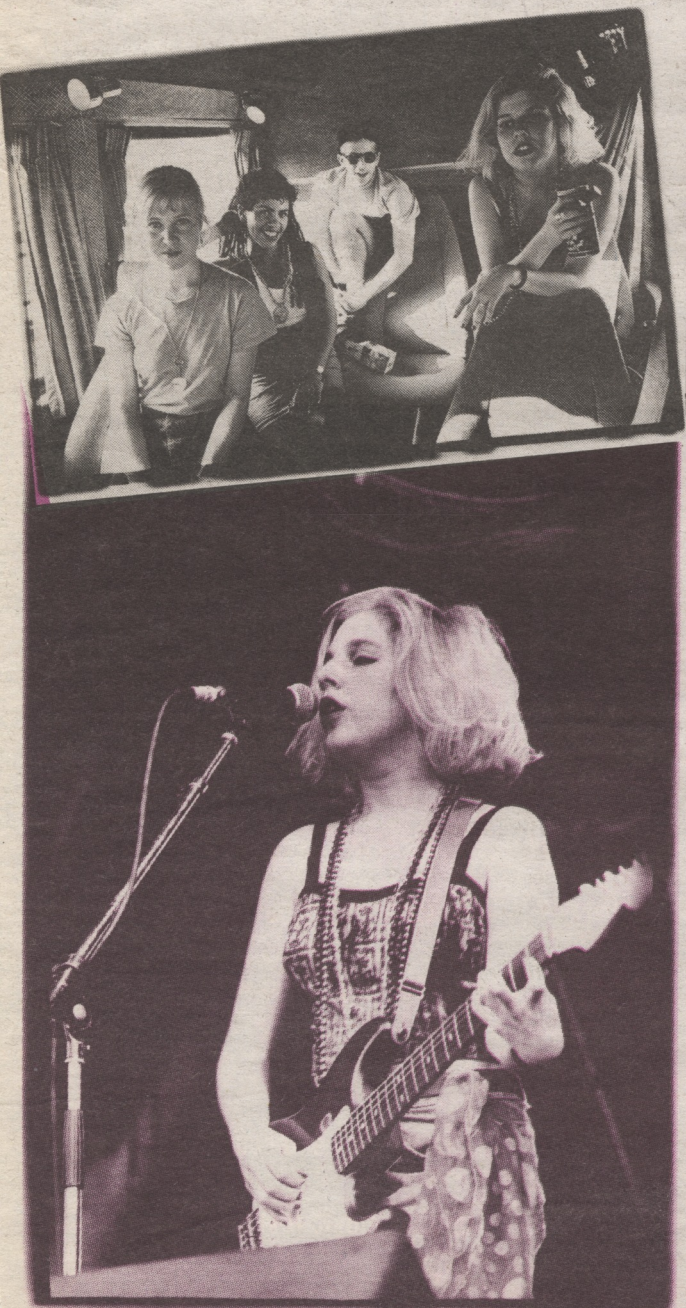
Dave: "I'm just afraid that people will end up falling in love with whoever's standing on the soapbox and when they fall out of love all the slogans and ideas go with that so they go on to something else. It's important when you're championing a cause to make sure that's what's coming across . . ."

In an era of so much rampant conservatism . . .

Kristin: "It's important not to reduce what you're saying to a slogan, because then all the subtleties are gone, and that becomes very blinding for people regardless of whether they would believe it or not, or would agree with it or not."

. . . Throwing Muses shelter us from the storm. It's a love thing.

Dele Fadele



Bussing a gut: above (L to R), Kirstin, Leslie, Dave and Tanya: "Anyone for a chicken sandwich?"