

## DRAFT INTERVIEW FOR SPANISH MAGAZINE

How do you planned the recording of That sentimental Slush? Is there any previous idea? Or is it a compilation of all that you've composed since your last record?

Answer = when we finished the Suburban crimes of every happiness album we were completely drained. We had worked so hard on that album only to see it disappear without a trace. I always keep writing and recording but confidence was low and also I didn't want us to make another great record and then for no one to hear it. So the slush lp took a long time to put together for a number of reasons lack of finance being a factor in the time it took to record. But the songs themselves are always there. All albums are usually a compilation of work over a certain period of time but I'm usually editing and shaping as we go and one album will often be a reaction to the last one

-That Sentimental Slush seems a very open record. Indeed, it has dramatic pop (Attempted Life or City Of Glass), brit pop, pub rock (Moving to the city is a powerful song)... Do you feel closer to any group or scene? Or do you agree with Art Brut when they say: "Haven't read the NME in so long / Don't know what genre we belong"?

Answer = that's a good line from art brut

And I will say that we have never really belonged in any genre I myself and likewise the rest of the group like all types of music and styles .initially it has made it hard for people to get a handle on the springs but over the course of our six or so albums it has served us better in the long run. Plus we don't feel constrained musically and I feel we have earned the right to play and sing what we like

-That record is, in the beginning, a hit-after-hit one, but in its last part turns to something more introspective. Don't take this on the bad way but are you a bipolar group or is it a consequence of when the songs were written?

Answer = because the album comes from a period of 4 years there was a lot of material to choose from and I would have made it a double cd . So I had many attempts at a running order and almost drove myself mad with the variations But I think taking the time to sequence the songs paid off in the end result It does get a bit more introspective towards the end. Think of it as long day with all the emotions you might go through over a 24 hour period.

-All your lyrics seem like those sentimental-but-political groups of Thatcherism. Is that only a listener's feeling or are you interested in those themes?

Answer = I don't know which groups you mean but I was a teenager in the Thatcher years and I hated that whole selfish me me me attitude that Thatcher and the Tories promoted. Ive always been a labour man But when I look at Blair's government I can't help but feel disillusioned it's not what we used to call labour I am not sure what Englishness really is but I know I don't want to be an American.

-Rich arrangements and a splendid creative form are the ingredients of your last record, but do you think that "That Sentimental Slush" is so much different from your previous records as press reviews say?

Answer = I don't really think about such things. At the time you work on any song you are just trying to get all the right feelings/sounds and capture a moment. I think it could be that the press reviews have more to say about this record is in part due to the fact hardly anyone heard the last album 'which was just as good and I'm sure would have had as much critical success

-Anyway, you sounds like a very cynical person..

answer = is that so? I try not to be. In my view I am an optimist and my glass is never half empty always half full. It has to be' how else would we have produced all these albums with no label finance and little or no encouragement.

-...but the title of your last record could be understood in a romantic way. Was that your intention?

Answer = I am a very sentimental person myself and struggle to keep a healthy balance of cynicism and sentimental slush. Without sentiment the world would fall apart 'too much and it would be like living in a Disney film

-What is your favourite lyric on history music? And your Bitter Springs' favourite lyric?

Answer = I am a lyric person so I have millions of favourites I like to get other peoples lyrics completely wrong and I'm often disappointed to hear what they are actually singing about that's why I like records in languages I don't speak .

"It's time that the tale were told of how you took a child and you made him old"  
Reel around the fountain = the smiths

"Many times we've been out drinking and many times we've shared our thoughts  
And did you ever stop to wonder the kind of thoughts I've got "

bonnie prince Billy = I see a darkness

"I ache in the places where I used to play"

Tower of song = Leonard Cohen

"Never thought you'd be a child again now they stare at you all day you let go of the balloon but it's you that floats away" = red mist descends Bitter Springs

"It doesn't make it worth remembering just because you wrote it down" = the little things =unreleased as yet Bitter Springs track

-Could you give a little commentary of how you see your past records, one by one?

Parish of arthritis = kitchen sink like... We were just changing from being the last

party .And were becoming bitter springs it was the same group nothing changed except the name But like sentimental slush it was the grouping together of a four maybe 5 year period of songs So it was a pretty varied collection and lot's of different styles on their . it's business the Addison brothers and absence makes the hair grow blonder all released as singles

Five die filming this lazy lark = this was done in a more home recording kind of way And mostly with wiggy at his Chiswick studio or at my house on 4 track kind of avant folk in style and features our only instrumental to date in The march of the individually wrapped cheese slices plus 3 singles manners piano's and mouth organs Barbara and a good provider

Benny hills wardrobe = strange one this I listened to it the other and thought it hung together very well features both our most menacing track and possibly our sweetest in little stubby fingers and weekend at your parents

Best bakers on the island = released on Spanish label aquarelle .this was a sort of compilation but again we spent some time putting it together No singles on it but the outskirts should have been one .

Suburban crimes of every happiness = our big rock album Julian swales and Dan Goodwin from kitchens of distinction joined us on 3 tracks .criminally ignored on release should be reissued and sell millions world wide. Stop the world released as a single contains a lot of great songs look out for the twelve minute Vagina trees with penis leaves.

That sentimental slush = we had enough materiel for a double cd with this Probably make 2 eps from the songs we couldn't fit on in fact the first one is ready for an august release and it's called FIRM FAMILY FAVOURITES EP

-Why do you think you are only admired for a little number of fans? In fact your music could be very mainstream (or, at least, as mainstream as Pulp songs, for example). What could be the reason for your lack of success?

Answer = I don't know but maybe it's for the best maybe it's why we are still able to make music

-To me, your history is like Go-Betweens: an awesome band that hadn't a stroke of luck. Do you agree or do you think I'm just a fool fan?

Answer = I felt the go betweenes were best when they didn't appear to be playing the radio friendly games . Terrible shame about Grant McLennan's recent death the thought of a world without him and Robert standing together singing their beautiful songs somewhere is very sad indeed

-The musical press of your country have discovered with that record. Has anything changed for The Bitter Springs since that recognition?

Answer = nothing changes with us we move on to the next record

-In your last gigs here in Spain, you've convinced even those that take you for a middle-of-the-road band, because of your powerful live acts. Is that the consequence of so many years together or just a sign of your good form?

Answer = we try to keep it fresh live by never repeating a set list twice  
And sometimes it can be our undoing but we play every song as if it were the last we will ever play.

-When do you become top of the pops? When do you conquer the world?

Answer = the new single might get us on top of the pops stranger things happen as for conquering the world I think the world has been conquered enough don't you?

-What are your immediate plans? How much longer do we have to wait for your next recording?

Answer = ah the new ep Firm Family Favourites is ready for an August release (just after England win the world cup) 4 new songs not from the slush album the A side so to speak is our attempt at an Andy Williams style northern soul stomper called I know it's not what you wanted plus track 2 also available a lounge jazzy number track 3 is Hugh Grant a cover of a holy joy song in lyric only and new music and extra lyrics by me and Nick from the band it features legendary poet Jock Scott on lead vocal track 4 is The taming of the dogs a country song about the perils of dog shit . it's released on our own Harvey records (Harvey cd02) and distributed by Cargo in England and Dock in Spain

And we are working towards the next album which has the working title of the honeymoon period the whole album may or may not be one family's tale in 14 songs

That's all, but I have a last request. In my blogzine, I've a section called "Esos Vinos de Reserva (Those vintage wines)", where our favourite artists give us 10 recommendations of artists, records or anything we MUST discover.

It's like a play list of favourite things with a little explanation of the reasons of each choice. I would like to know your selection.

Henry the human fly / Richard Thompson

Some wonderful songs on here never see it featured in Thompson best of's  
Poor ditching boy is a favourite

The best of Sonny and Cher = just saw a made for TV film about these 2 and got the LP cheap' it has Sonny solo song called laugh at me plus all the hits I never knew they had if it had included Cher's Gypsies Tramps and Thieves it would be perfect fave track laugh at me it sounds a bit like the Velvets actually

Liberty belle and the black diamond express = the go between  
Just my favourite go between lp ... perfect from beginning to end favourite track is  
bow down

Street legal = Bob Dylan

Thought I'd put this Dylan one in my list because it never gets a mention in great  
Dylan lists but I love it . Also when it came out around 78 I think' he did a big open  
air concert at blackbush in England and me and my partner Kim ( we were 15 at the  
time)stayed out all night and skipped school the next day cause we were so knackered  
So it has extra memories attached. Our son Charlie has just put one of the tracks on  
his I pod ...baby please stop crying my favourite track is changing of the guard

Sparks = kimono my house

They are still making great records now. My sister took me to see these when I was  
eleven at Hammersmith Odeon And I was blown away ' it has the two great singles  
from that time this town aint big enough for the both of us and amateur hour  
favourite track amateur hour

Hunky dory = David Bowie

Like Dylan I could have picked any Bowie lp but this is from a time when I was ill  
with appendicitis stuck at home I played it over and over knew every word still do  
probably. Must also mention the early Bowie stuff when he sounded like Anthony  
newly ' I love all that period as well we might cover little bombardier some time  
Favourite track life on mars

On the beach = Neil young

My most played album ever favourite track on the beach no all of them

Closer = joy division

I was at a very impressionable age when this came out and it left a very beautiful and  
lasting impression favourite track decades

Hex enduction hour = the fall

From the 2 drum line up period of the fall smith lyrically never better and live the  
band were unbeatable at that time favourite song winter

Leonard Cohen = various positions

This was the album before he became cool again but it's better than the ones that  
followed I also love his death of a ladies man which is considered his worst by a lot of  
people favourite track either the captain or dance me to the end of love