

# THE UPS AND DOWNS

OF STEPHEN DUFFY AND THE LILAC TIME

ISSUE 1

JUNE, 1992



WHAT YOU ARE HOLDING IN YOUR HANDS IS THE FIRST ISSUE OF A NEWSLETTER ABOUT THE MUSIC OF STEPHEN DUFFY AND THE LILAC TIME. HOPEFULLY, THERE'S SOMETHING IN THESE PAGES THAT YOU'LL FIND OF INTEREST. TO START THINGS OFF ON THE RIGHT FOOT, THERE'S A LETTER FROM DUFFY BEGINNING ON THE NEXT PAGE (THANKS STEPHEN!). IT IS ALSO APPROPRIATE ON THE EVE OF THE RELEASE OF DUFFY'S THIRD SOLO ALBUM, THAT WE TAKE ANOTHER LOOK BACK AT HIS LAST SOLO ALBUM "BECAUSE WE LOVE YOU". AND FOR THOSE WHO DON'T ALREADY HAVE A COPY OF THE LATEST LILAC ALBUM "ASTRONAUTS" (WHICH STILL HAS NOT BEEN RELEASED IN THE U.S.!) WE REPRINT SOME REVIEWS FROM THE ENGLISH PRESS. FINALLY, THERE'S AN ASSORTMENT OF INFORMATION THAT WE THOUGHT YOU MIGHT FIND INTERESTING. LET US HEAR YOUR THOUGHTS ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER (SEE THE ADDRESS ON THE LAST PAGE).

ENJOY!

# LETTERS

THE FOLLOWING LETTER WAS WRITTEN BY STEPHEN DUFFY IN APRIL, 1992 ESPECIALLY FOR THE NEWSLETTER. WITHOUT FURTHER ADO, HERE'S STEPHEN:

I'm in a strange state of limbo at the moment. The solo album is half finished; that is, bass, drums and guitar are done - vocals, strings and tambourine to go. The strings might not be recorded until September, so the album might not be out until '93! Which gives me time to...

I've started rehearsing another little project and writing songs for that, so we'll see which comes to fruition first. The solo album recordings sound great and it's been the best studio experience I've ever had. No manic depressions yet. Nigel Kennedy and his quartet will provide the strings if all goes to plan, but then I never expect things to go to plan or count my string quartets until they're firmly on tape. A couple of other people have expressed an interest in playing on certain tracks, but I don't want to jinx the thing by saying now. I'm not going to let the l.p. become an assortment of guests doodling over my songs though. I play acres of guitar and so does Sagat Guirey who joined the Lilacs for the last two tours and "Astronauts". This'll be my eighth album (2 solo, 1 Calculus, 4 Lilacs) and it feels like I'm still trying to get it right. Each one feels like the first tho' too.

The first l.p. was a real odds and sods collection of demo's (all the electro ones), the Booker T. Jones sessions ("Wednesday Jones", "Believe in Me", "Be There" & "The World At Large"), the art of noise ("Kiss Me") and the beginning of my collaboration with Stephen Street ("Icing on the Cake"). "Icing" should really be on the second album. The first one was me looking for a direction. Before signing with WEA or Virgin, I'd been in Smiths/Stonesy guitar bands, so being expected to come up with "Kiss Me's" every five minutes was a strain. Being signed to make electro pop turned my head. I tried to rewrite "Baby Love" by the Supremes for at least a year!

When "Kiss Me" took off in the U.K., Virgin wanted the album and quick. I had all these unmixed tracks, a shambles. I asked Geoff Travis (Rough Trade guru and label boss) who he thought I should get to help salvage the tracks. He said Morrissey only works with this new engineer Stephen Street. So without pausing to thank Geoff, we booked him at Island Studios, Chiswick, where he then worked in house. We had fun. He made the best of a bad job. I couldn't listen to it now although I know a lot of people like it. It did about 60,000 sales in the U.K., enough to be top ten now, but then it didn't even go top 20.

By this time tho' we were recording "Because We Love You" and having a great time. But because "Unkiss that Kiss" didn't rocket into the charts, the album was messed about with, tracks added and deleted and it came out a little weaker over a year later. In the mean time, ecstasy had hit these shores and I had my own bunch of merry pranksters: Dr. Calculus. Those were strange sessions, some of it filmed so at least I know I was there. "Perfume from Spain" from the "Designer Beatnik" album is one of my fave tracks.

Oh yeah, I could do my fave tracks...let's think. In chrono' order:

1. "Sunday Supplement"
2. "Julie Christie"
3. "Black Velvet" (U.K. single or U.S. l.p. mix)
4. "The Lost Girl in the Midnight Sun"
5. "Trinity"
6. "Grey Skies and Work Things"

I've just written a song called "Natalie", I really like that and another new one "It Sparkles", both current faves that you might not hear till next year.

I'm trying to get Fontana to release The Lilac Time's b-sides as an l.p., and if they don't want to, to let me give them to another company to do it.

I find myself singing "Gone for a Burton", "Julie Written on the Fence" and stuff more than the a-sides. I want an l.p. of them so I can go out and sing these songs on tour, get them out of the house!

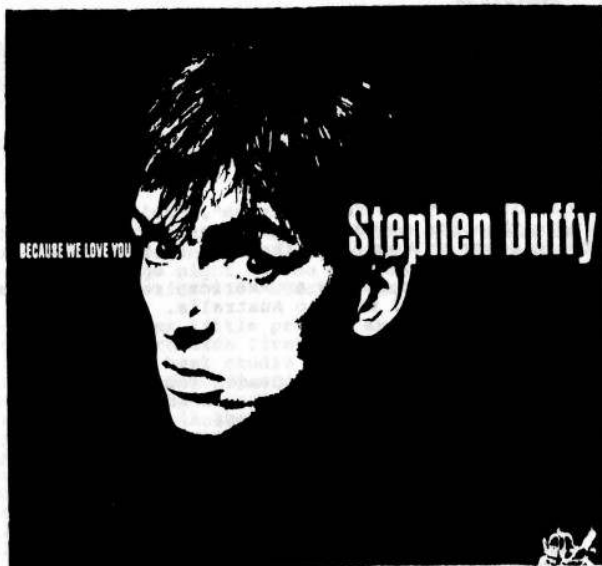
Another thing I must sort out is an American release of "Astronauts". I forgot all about it when I went to Australia.

I don't know what else to tell you.

1. I'm currently living in Camden Town London.
2. My fave group at the moment are Adorable, about to release their first single on Creation.
3. I went to see Primal Scream at Brixton Academy last Saturday.
4. I wish I could make a record and release it without starting something else halfway through.
5. I have three brown suede jackets
6. ...and green eyes.
7. Ian McCulloch is older than me.
8. Alan McGee younger (slightly).
9. After recording "Astronauts" I thought I'd never make another record again and went off and played tennis.
10. I wish I'd been sane and kept working with Creation. It was only after the album came out I realised what I'd done and that, hey!, I've got twenty five new songs, let's make a record. That's the way it goes. (I suppose.)

love  
Stephen Duffy.  
x

# REVIEWS



Stephen Duffy's second solo album, "Because We Love You", released in 1986 was a follow-up of impeccable perfection sought after the release of his debut solo album, "The Ups and Downs". The album "Because We Love You" contains four singles, including "I Love You", "Julie Christie", "Something Special" and "Unkiss that Kiss".

Duffy creating a jazz pep sound managed to use over one dozen musical instruments in compiling the album. In addition to implementing real music, Duffy composed and sang each track. Duffy also played half a dozen instruments himself on various tracks on the album.

Upon release of the album, a track titled "I Love You" received a lot of flack from critics and the record company who printed it because it contained questionable lyrics such as "You, you've got a funny way of saying hello, and a pocket full of undisclosed dreams. You pave my way to helplessness but no one gets inside your jeans". What an utter joke compared to the lyrics contained in top 40 music today! What about Madonna? Her entire career is based on sexual exploitation.

Without further mention of the above criticism, Duffy truly produced a gem in the music industry which captivates the ears of all of his many loyal fans. Unfortunately, after the release of this album, Duffy ceased to exist as a solo artist. His two solo albums disappeared from the shelves and he founded a new band called The Lilac Time.

Duffy's new attempt in the music industry has been a tremendous success, yet his early work in compiling "Because We Love You" will not be forgotten. The album is a real collectors item and, if you are lucky enough to find a copy, I strongly recommend that you buy it. I rate the album four stars or an A+.

- S. Durrant

Forgive me Stephen, but I never thought that "Something Special" (the album's opening track) was all that special. It's a battle (yes, it's that messy) between horns versus vocals, with the horns the victors and us, the listeners, the ultimate losers. And just who is Sandii Shaw anyway? Next track...

For a long time, "A Lot of Ink" was my favorite track on the album, although I was always troubled by the fact that the mix is a bit muddled and nowhere near as crisp as some of the album's other tracks (see side two for grooves that jump out at you!). With all of the remixes being done these days, here's a track that could really benefit from a major remix overhaul. I'm not sure what the lyrics mean on this one; all I know is that I like this song ... a lot ... there are some things that you just can't explain. If I had no regard for my turntable's needle, I'd play this one backwards and check for subliminal messages!

I've come to know "Sunday Supplement" as the song with the Mary Tyler Moore reference. I thought that the reference was tacky the first time I heard it. I still do. Next up is some classic Duffy, asking the poignant question, "Why Shouldn't I Love You?". Unfortunately, the recording is marred by a case of overproduction "which ruins everything" (a prophetic point Stephen made in "Wednesday Jones" from his first album "The Ups and Downs").

From the title alone, "Unkiss that Kiss" sounds promising and a logical choice for a single in the wake of "Kiss Me"'s success. No promises kept here though. And what are Ray Charles' "uh-huh!" girls doing on this track?

The cacophonous horns, the overproduction and the silly sentiments that marred side one ... you forget them all starting with the whisper of the words "I love you" which kick off side two. What a glorious track! "I Love You" is a clever, witty and a bit acerbic piece of pop. "Let's improvise, a perfect world without the lies." And the vocals ... oh, the vocals! Up front, right there ... how can you resist this?

The hits just keep on coming from this point on. "When You Go to Bed" is almost cinematic. The image of him, her and him ... pillow talk with the lights turned low. Before long, it's time to leave the bedroom and head on out to the "Love Station". When Stephen sings "meet me by the traffic light at Corporation Street", you know that you don't want to be late.

On another track, Duffy puts a new spin of the line "there's plenty of boys in the sea" by adding "but none of them love you like me". No argument here. (Note: The Ray Charles "uh-huh!" girls make another appearance here ... but this time it's a welcome return. I especially like the song's closing note "oooooh".)

Before long, this record is almost over, closing with "Julie Christie". Is this the same "Julie" who is written on the fence? A beautiful song for someone who must be a beautiful person. Sincerely touching.

If it were possible to pry the two sides of vinyl on this album apart, you could be left with one nearly perfect disk. The record label says that Stephen Duffy is a "Happening Producer". Unfortunately, things don't start happening on "Because We Love You" until side two. But when they do ...

In the end, there's enough here to love, embrace and satisfy.

- S. Hocevar

## THE LILAC TIME

### Astronauts

(Creation/All formats)

ONCE saw Stephen Duffy at Piccadilly Circus tube. He was going down the escalators while I was going up. He had a child's rucksack strapped to his back and seemed mildly bemused by modern life. He looked, through rose tinted spectacles, like an English prince of poetry.

This record was – and this is important – recorded in Malvern. An idyllic slice of countryside made up of roving hills and rambling fields, where life trundles by in peace and quiet. It's the perfect place to be a visionary, to be imaginative, descriptive, excitable, and above all else loving. Like Duffy, it keeps alive a dream that has yet to be spoilt by cynicism and capitalism.

Creation's Carpenters have recorded the perfect, sublime pop summer album. It's good company when you're alone or pleasant to listen to with a fellow daydreamer. It contains many of The Lilac Time's trademarks: acoustic guitars, wailing bass and unobtrusive drums. In that respect there is no surprise.

What is remarkable is where once Duffy was inconsistent, delivering heaven and then hell on the same record, the 12 tracks here are, without exception, amazingly good. The only point where the listener could be forced out of earshot is when Duffy becomes too idiosyncratic for his own good; when he retells a tale

that is so personal ('North Kensington'), that one cannot relate to it unless like him you first made love to your sweetheart in North Kensington.

But broader sweeps of the love brush are a delight. 'A Taste For Honey' is Side One's stand-out track. A chorus that runs: "I got a taste for honey from your lips and now every other kiss is just a kiss", a mild mannered acoustic strum with '60s lead breaks and a sublime melody. 'Dreaming', the single, starts Side Two, the only track not produced by Duffy himself. Although Hypnotone have added a dance beat and some weird noises, it fits rather uneasily with the sedate nature of the rest of the album. Forget about it and move onto the austere 'The Darkness Of Her Eyes', a Simon & Garfunkel-style acoustic underpins the sadness of a song whose simple truth is: "There may be less between us than we thought".

Stephen Duffy brings with him polo necks, picnics and peace. In these times they are attributes that often get shouted down by football tops, fast food joints and noise. He may be an eccentric, foolish English aristocrat but he's talking a lot more sense than most. (B)

Simon Dudfield  
3 August 1991  
New Musical Express

MELODY MAKER, September 7 1991

## TOP 20 INDEPENDENT ALBUMS

1	(1)	EVERY GOOD BOY DESERVES FUDGE	Mudhoney/Sub Pop
2	♦	THE KING	Teenage Fanclub/Creation
3	(2)	STRANGITUDE	Ozric Tentacles/Dove Tail
4	(3)	TO MOTHER	Babes In Toyland/Twin Tone
5	(9)	BABY TEETH	Therapy?/Wijija
6	(7)	COASTAL	Field Mice/Sarah
7	(4)	WASTELAND	Radical Dance Faction/Earth Zone
8	(5)	QUEER	Wolfgang Press/4AD
9	(14)	DIARY OF A BLACKMAN	Katch 22/Kold Sweat
10	(8)	GREAT WHITE	Pooh Sticks/Cheree
11	♦	DOGS HITS AND BOOTLEG ALBUM	Dogs D'Amour/China
12	(6)	EN-TACT	The Shamen/One Little Indian
13	♦	THE RUBY SEA	Thin White Rope/Frontier
14	(20)	PEEL SESSIONS	Tim Buckley/Strange Fruit
15	(10)	FREQUENCIES	L.F.O./Warp
16	♦	HARDELL	Various Artists/Earth
17	(13)	A CATHOLIC EDUCATION	Teenage Fanclub/Paperhouse
18	(16)	SHOTGUN BLOSSOM	Snapper/Avalanche
19	♦	YERSELF IS STEAM	Mercury Rev/Mint Film
20	♦	ASTRONAUTS	Lilac Time/Creation

CWNN independent charts compiled from sales reports from Chain With No Name retailers

## THE LILAC TIME ASTRONAUTS

(Creation)

THEY don't so much kick ass as gently pat bottom – and this, in the final analysis, is just as effective. It takes a while to adjust to The Lilac Time's pastel-shaded world, but once you've realised that there aren't going to be any wild surges or sudden shocks, the subtle, piquant flavours in this creamy-smooth music start to emerge.

If anything, The Lilac Time have grown even more softly-spoken than before; only "Dreaming", the single, is even slightly boisterous, thanks to its somewhat incongruous grafted-on dance beat. Stephen Duffy is clearly a man who believes that raising your voice only leads to trouble, and his tone throughout this LP is one of quiet, whispering insistence. But in their own sweet way, these acoustic shimmers and swirls are as hypnotic as the noisier musical mesmerism offered by, say, The Shamen.

For all their surface tranquility, some of these songs contain sinister shadows. "The Darkness Of Her Eyes", for instance, has Duffy desperately seeking solace in the arms of his beloved because he just can't face the world outside; while "Sunshine's Daughter" is an explicit rejection of reality that could almost be Primal Scream chilling out at the end of a traumatic day.

Perfect post-rave comedown music, then; and I don't even wish to know why the final item, "Madresfield", opens with the sound of sheep bleating. Just don't forget your wellies, Stephen.

DAVE JENNINGS MELODY MAKER, August 24 1991

## The Lilac Time • Astronauts

LP • MC • CD

A Creation Records Product.

Out Now

# MEMORIES

HOW ABOUT SHARING YOUR STORY OF HOW YOU GOT TURNED ON BY STEPHEN DUFFY AND THE LILAC TIME'S MUSIC? SEND IN YOUR STORY TO THE ADDRESS LISTED ON THE LAST PAGE OF THIS NEWSLETTER.

In the summer of '85 I was out dancing one night and the D.J. played a tune I had never heard before. It sounded something like this, "Kiss me with your mouth, your love is better than wine, but wine is all I have, won't your love ever be mine?". The tune was rather catchy and fun, so I asked the D.J. who sang the song. Stephen tin tin Duffy sang the track titled "Kiss Me". I liked the song so much that I went to the record shop the next day to pick up a copy, only to discover that the album containing the song was printed on a U.K. label and wasn't available at that time in the U.S.

A few months later, I was in another record shop and I happened to come across a copy of "The Ups and Downs", by Stephen Duffy. I listened to the first track, "Kiss Me", and then the second track and the third, and so on. The album was like none other that I had ever heard. I loved it immediately and made a game of calling as many radio stations as I could to request Duffy.

A year or so later, I heard that a new album was in print titled "Because We Love You". I found a copy and loved it as much, if not more, than the first. I found the correspondence mailing address on the inside cover and wrote Duffy a letter. I asked him questions about rumors I had heard that he was an original founder of the pop group "Duran Duran". I also asked him why his albums were so hard to find in the U.S. Upon mailing the letter I never believed that I would actually hear from Duffy. I just figured his fan club would respond, which would have proved satisfactory. I was quite wrong. A few weeks later I received a large envelope with an English postmark. As I ecstatically opened the envelope, I pulled out two autographed photos of Duffy, a discography of his music in print and a personal letter from Duffy. I was rather flattered to receive such a nice answer to my letter.

Upon hearing from Duffy, I made a pact with myself that if I ever happened upon any of his music, I would buy it. With Duffy being as low key as he is, I found it extremely frustrating at times but always managed to remain a loyal fan because of the fun I had tracing his albums and singles from shop to shop.

Several years later, and with a great deal of help from Duffy and our current correspondence, I find myself still searching for a lot of Duffy's music; only now I have grown to be such a fan that I often crop a real attitude with record shop owners who claim to carry a reputable import line and have never heard of Duffy or the Lilacs.

I have spent countless hours and money paying tribute to a real musician who has, in turn, paid much more tribute to his fans through the quality music that he produces and the friendly low-key disposition that he shares with all who know him. To you, S. Duffy, I say thank you for your talent and love of music that you share with people in the parks of London and with me in the U.S.A.

- S. Durrant

# TOP 10'S

IF YOU'D LIKE TO SEE YOUR LIST OF TOP 10 TRACKS BY STEPHEN DUFFY AND/OR THE LILAC TIME APPEAR IN FUTURE ISSUES OF THE NEWSLETTER, SEND THEM IN TO THE ADDRESS LISTED ON THE LAST PAGE OF THIS NEWSLETTER.

The following was submitted by S. Hocevar:

1. "The Darkness of Her Eyes" by The Lilac Time (from the lp "Astronauts")
2. "And the Ship Sails On" by The Lilac Time (from the lp "The Lilac Time")
3. "Kiss Me" by Stephen Tin Tin Duffy (12" extended version U.S. mix 1982)
4. "Gone for a Burton" by The Lilac Time (b-side "Return to Yesterday" single)
5. "Reunion Ball" by The Lilac Time (b-side "Return to Yesterday" single)
6. "The Beauty in Your Body" by The Lilac Time (from the lp "Paradise Circus")
7. "Cocksure" by Stephen Tin Tin Duffy (b-side "Something Special" 12" single)
8. "The Darkest Blues" by Stephen Tin Tin Duffy (from the lp "The Ups and Downs")
9. "The Last to Know" by The Lilac Time (from the lp "Paradise Circus")
10. "Bed of Roses" by The Lilac Time (b-side "All for Love & Love for All" 12" single)

The following was submitted by S. Durrant:

1. "Fields" by The Lilac Time (from the lp "& All for Love")
2. "Kiss Me" by Stephen Tin Tin Duffy (12" extended version)
3. "Together" by The Lilac Time (from the lp "The Lilac Time")
4. "The Girl Who Waves at Trains" by The Lilac Time (b-side 12" acoustic version)
5. "Unkiss that Kiss" by Stephen Tin Tin Duffy (12" extended version)
6. "Icing on the Cake" by Stephen Tin Tin Duffy (12" extended version)
7. "Cocksure" by Stephen Tin Tin Duffy (b-side "Something Special" 12" single)
8. "Wednesday Jones" by Stephen Tin Tin Duffy (12" extended version)
9. "You've Got to Love" by The Lilac Time (cd single)
10. "Hold It" by Stephen Tin Tin Duffy (12" extended version)



THAT'S ALL FOR THIS ISSUE OF THE NEWSLETTER.  
IF YOU'RE INTERESTED, PLEASE WRITE TO US.  
WE'RE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR PEOPLE WHO WANT  
TO SHARE INFORMATION AND OPINIONS ON STEPHEN  
DUFFY AND THE LILAC TIME'S MUSIC.

- SEND IN ARTICLES (ANYTHING GOES) THAT EITHER  
YOU HAVE WRITTEN OR THAT YOU'VE COLLECTED FROM  
MAGAZINES, NEWSPAPERS, ETC. (LET US KNOW IF  
YOU WANT ORIGINALS RETURNED).
- LOOKING FOR SD/TLT RECORDS? SEND IN YOUR WISH  
LIST ... MAYBE SOMEONE CAN HELP YOU GET WHAT  
YOU'RE LOOKING FOR!
- SEND IN YOUR LIST OF SUGGESTED TRACKS FOR  
A POSSIBLE FUTURE ALBUM OF SD/TLT B-SIDES.  
LET DUFFY KNOW WHAT YOU THINK!



C O R R E S P O N D E N C E

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WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!