

NEWSLETTER No.1

SEPTEMBER 2011

The official newsletter for the updated biography, due for release in autumn 2012, *DESIRE: Paddy McAloon's Prefab Sprout*. Includes background notes from the book's research, extracts from interviews and related stories, quotes and grapevine... contributions are welcome... what is it *you* wish to see in the book?

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WORLD EXCLUSIVE – NEW ALBUM !!!

My Story: The Early Days

Extract from our interview with Neil Conti on 25 June 2011

JB: Take us back to the beginning, Neil. What started you off into a music career?

NC: I always knew I was going to do something in music. I actually started out with classical piano when I was very small. I would be very uncomfortable if I wasn't doing it all the time to be honest. I did a degree in graphics, more to keep my parents off my back. When you have got something real in your blood it sort of helps you to make sense, without wanting to go too deep; it helps you to sort of make sense of your existence, because you are doing something that feels very natural, so it's a never ending learning curve really.

JB: Tell us how you moved from classical piano to drumming then.

NC: Well, I don't know. When I was studying classical piano I was six years old. The problem for me was, and because I showed a lot of potential my parents were maybe a bit over-enthusiastic and I had to do hours of scales and exercises every day; they kind of decided that I was going to be a 'concert pianist'. With young kids, they are always more enthusiastic when they have found out something for themselves, rather than be told they have to do something. If you tell kids that they have to do something, you won't get a good reaction. So I was doing it, it was hard work. I had two teachers and they were both pretty strict, and then the whole thing happened with my cousin. I don't know if you know about this, but my cousin Morgan Fisher was in Mott the Hoople.

Basically, he was a keyboard player in a band called The Love Affair – we are talking about the late 60's early 70's – they had the big hit *Everlasting Love*; I started seeing them on TV and remember thinking, 'Wow, that looks very exciting.' Then he joined Mott the Hoople and they recorded the song that Bowie penned for them, *All the Young Dudes*.

JB: Bowie?

NC: It was kind of ironic really. It went full circle and I ended up playing with Bowie. But that song ended up a hit and I started to become interested in what was going on with him, and seeing him more on TV, then going to see him live. It was phenomenal. I was, what, 12? I was standing on the side of the stage at a venue called Friars in Aylesbury, a famous old rock venue. The band, Mott the Hoople had made their name on the live shows – they put on a very high energy Glam Rock show, it was almost punky in its attitude and really full on.

At Friars, if you stood at the side where the stage door was, you'd actually find yourself in line with the drummer. The singer seemed to stand a bit forward. The drummer was fantastic. He was one of the most underrated in England, his name was Dale Griffin, and had the nickname 'Buffin'. He actually ended up being a producer for the Radio One live shows done from the Maida Vale studio, often recording bands for John Peel and various others. He ended up producing new bands. Anyway, he was a fantastic drummer with a very impressive, sparkling drum kit. I remember looking at him and thinking, 'That's fantastic.' Remember, when you're 12 you are impressed with stuff like that... and the funny story about that gig is that the support band, was a young band just out of university called Queen. They were dreadful, really awful, and there was hardly anyone there. They



PHOTO COURTESY OF JOE GRIMES

all turned up for Mott the Hoople, as no one had heard of Queen. They had only just started to play together, the singer had a bit of an attitude, and the rest of them couldn't really play that well. It wasn't till much later they got their stuff together.

JB: So tell us about the gig...

NC: I went backstage at that gig and hung out with the band. The drummer was very chatty and friendly. I noticed he had all the girls around him after the gig, which impressed me, as I was only 12. I thought, 'Ah, that's how you get the girls... play drums.' So that started the whole thing off with Morgan. I used to go and see him London and hang around in the studio which was in St John's Wood. I used to hang around with him and watch them recording and stuff and then I started playing on the pots and pans, the old drummer's cliché. I used to get all the pots and pans out of the kitchen and whack them until my parents finally gave in and bought me a cheap drum kit for about twenty quid, which was a lot of money back then. I started messing around in my bedroom, like you do, and I would run home from school every day and bash away for an hour or two before anyone came home. I used to have the neighbours come round and tell me to turn it down a bit, although when I had been practising a year or so, they came round and said, 'Turn it down a bit – by the way, you've improved. It's still a racket but it's less of a racket.' So, like I was saying, if young kids find something they want to do, they will work at it. I was just obsessed with it, I don't know why, it may be some rhythmic thing, I don't know. I just really took to it and really enjoyed it.

There is absolutely no truth in what people say, 'Oh, it must be so enjoyable to be able to let out all your frustrations on a drum kit.' That's a complete fallacy; because when you play the drums you can get so much noise from it you can destroy the whole band. It's the opposite – it's all about control and restraint really. So that's how I ended up playing the drums. I still play piano now; I have always played a bit. I have come to more so recently, while I have been producing. I have played the keyboard on quite a few things I have produced

JB: What was your first live engagement on drums?

NC: Oh my God, the first live thing I did was at school. I was about 15-16 we did *Joseph's Technicolour Dreamcoat*. We did that in the school hall, so it wasn't really a proper gig. There were about 20 people and we were miserable, but that was my first experience of playing the drums in front of people. My first proper gig was in a village pub in Dunstable, which is near where I am from in Bedfordshire. I can't tell you how I ended up there, with a guy who played the organ, with the foot pedals playing the bass. I can't remember how I met him. Oh yes, it was in a music shop where there were drums. He used to play standards like *Tea For Two*, Glen Miller, playing a few 60's-style lounge tunes. I remember I got told off by these old ladies because I was playing with drumsticks and it was too loud. So I had to switch to playing with brushes, which was a great disappointment for me, but there you go. I got paid half a lager and £1 – that's what I got paid for the gig.

JB: Wow, big time!

NC: Yes. For me, it was massive. It's funny – it's all relative. I was more nervous about that than doing Live Aid with Bowie.

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PERFORMANCES OF PADDY McALOON'S WORKS; IDEAS 'ON THE SHELF'

by John Birch

AVENUE OF STARS

In July 2003, I drafted out a musical stage show, which incorporates twelve of Paddy McAloon's songs, all taken from the albums *Andromeda Heights* and *I Trawl the Megahertz*.

A mixture of family issues and professional commitments avoided the project from manifesting beyond the draft script and some scenery layouts/storyboards. Time flew by and I ended up making a documentary based on rain forest destruction, including footage from the UK and Brazil. The project, involving an internationally recognised cameraman, led to me being the owner of some really high quality equipment. It'll come in handy one day.

I regularly play my CD compilation, which has all the songs in chronological order, relative to the story. A 'love story', the musical 'preview' of McAloon songs, has never left my mind. I now find myself living in the Alsace region of France thinking about how I can put on the show I wrote, but recently have decided a different tack.

Following the publishing of the book in autumn 2012, I intend to re-write the story into 12 x 10-minute chapters for video. The video format, known as a 'mash-up' (or montage), will include the songs, video footage of actors, written word, voice-overs and video footage from other existing sources (such as classical film footage.)

FROM 'TIN CAN POT' TO 'TIN PAN ALLEY'

In July this year, I interviewed Peter Foley, an award-winning musical theatre composer based in San Francisco. Attracted to musical theatre at a very young age, he became an understudy to Stephen Sondheim.

Peter, with friend, singer Manoel Felciano, who had performed Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd*, has come up with a plan to organise a 'review' of Paddy McAloon songs. The problem is pitching it to the American public, so the right opportunity is awaited.

Peter, also a massive Prefab Sprout fan, is helping us with some research. He has related about the time when he played some of Paddy's songs to Sondheim himself – all will be revealed in the book.

The Sondheim and Sweeney Todd connections don't stop there, either. On interviewing *Hey, Manhattan!* producer Andy Richards, he recalls re-arranging Sondheim's musical score for Tim Burton's film by the same name... and some insights into how this chapter in Paddy's life changed things forever...

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'FLASHBACK' GALLERY



Wendy Smith – kindly offered to show Pete Townshend how to play one of Paddy's chords



Old Rollmøf fanzine art by John Birch



Prefab Sprout – stood next to a skip load of old ex-drummers

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***** WORLD EXCLUSIVE *****

Paddy McAloon fans Torquil Campbell and Sondre Lerche are recording an album of Paddy's songs. The news was broken to us early in September, following the submission of contributions to the book by both artists. Expected to feature a surprising selection of songs, there's already suggestions that this album could well spawn further work together from these two amazing songwriters. There will be more information as it comes.

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WHAT HAPPENED TO THE FIFTH SPROUT?



A Focus on Thomas Dolby Extract from the interview with John Birch on 22 August, 2011.

Often credited as having created the 'sound of Prefab Sprout' in their earlier days, Thomas Dolby has not been 'active' with the band (excepting his re-mastering of the Steve McQueen Legacy Edition CD) since the recording of *Jordan: the Comeback*, way back in 1990, where after he all but vanished from the music industry. So where is he now, and can we expect further collaborations between him and Paddy McAloon?

JB: It was at the time of *Andromeda Heights* that a UK music magazine stated you'd retired from the music industry in 1990... was that when you formed your company, Beatnik?

TD: In the early days what Beatnik did was make fascinating interactive music experiences, rather like some of the things that you're seeing on iPads and iPhones now – music apps – alternative interfaces to allow regular people to have fun making music, you know, the software. We were doing that in the early 90's. Had a great time doing it, but there was absolutely no market for it whatsoever. In fact, on the web nobody wants to pay anything for content at all. It was so easy to get investment money in Silicon Valley, so I just got rich investors to fund me to make these fascinating experiences. I would take them to big companies like Yahoo!, Netscape and Microsoft, and you could see them sitting

there, thinking, 'Wait a minute. You're going to use your venture capital investment money to make content for me, that I put on my site with my logo over it, and I get the credit for it and you also get me backstage to the next David Bowie gig?' It was like that for many years, but finally it got serious, and towards the end of the dotcom boom we chanced on a deal with Nokia. We'd created a synthesiser – a sound chip – and when Nokia compared ours to others on the market, it was found to be the most efficient at the time. We'd designed it to allow faster downloads from web pages. It was tiny; they wanted to put it in their phones, so we sent engineers to Finland to work out how we could integrate it into their phones. That was in 1999 and it's been in every one of their phones since – and in most of their competitors'.

So basically, there are about three billion Beatnik synthesisers out there.

Beatnik finally became successful and I lost interest in it all together, really. I realised that I'm not a great businessman because I only really care about things when they're sort of beginning and you don't really know what the heck you are doing. You know, the moment you actually establish a regular business, and it's all about sales and engineering and stuff like that, I lose interest in it all together.

So I wanted to get back into music and I had some songs that I acquired over the years. Rather than just 'dive in', I thought that I should reconnect with my audience and gave it my own shot as a musician, basically. So I decided to go out and play live a bit and get back into the swing of things before I did any recording. So I put together a one-man show, where I was messing around with some different tools – so I could loop and layer songs live on stage. I played in quite small venues.

JB: Is it possible, do you think, for a Thomas Dolby/Paddy McAloon project any time soon?

TD: The last time I spoke with Paddy his health was such that, at the time, he couldn't really imagine going back into the studio, so I'm pleased to hear that he's doing something. The last time I spoke to him, he was having such a lot of trouble with his hearing that it was really very painful for him to do much work. Everything sounded like it was in a gymnasium – all distorted – so that was very distressing for me to hear.



Thomas Dolby is set to release his new album, *Map of the Floating City*, on October 25th. In an interview from his web-group, he offered the following:

"Firstly, I've decided to release the 'Oceanea' EP commercially – the music from the EP has been getting some radio play in the US and UK. Despite only being available to a limited audience, there seems to be a growing interest in my new music in the media and the public at large. "People's responses to 'Oceanea' has been so overwhelmingly positive. I've rarely seen so many superlative fan reviews of a release. I evidently struck a nerve with this one! It's all good news and I'd be foolish not to take full advantage of it.

"But now here's something truly exciting and extraordinary. There's been a change of strategy with regard to the proposed 3rd EP from the upcoming album. I have said from the beginning that I wanted to let fans hear my work-in-progress on the new album 'A Map Of The Floating City' by releasing three EPs prior to the album coming out. Well, for 'Urbanoia' I have decided to go one better....

"For the last six months, I've been developing an online multiuser event entitled 'The Floating City.' Call it a game, if you will, but it's nothing like a typical computer game--it's more like a FES magical mystery tour. It will take place for twelve weeks leading up to the full release of the album this summer. A segment takes place in the continent of Urbanoia, and that's where the party will be at when I'm ready to debut the songs from that segment. So you won't need to buy a download of the 'Urbanoia' EP; but to hear it, you'll need to play the game and find your way to the party. And that will be an intriguing journey unlike anything you've experienced.

"Imagine a curious, post-apocalyptic parallel world. In the wake of a terrible planetary catastrophe, a few stunned survivors cling to what's left of the Earth's major landmasses. Technology has imploded, and all that's left are strewn relics of a former age. Trying to escape the boiling temperatures, tribes of humans take to the oceans in the ghostly hulls of abandoned ships. With no fuel available to power them, the vessels are only able to move across the sea by 'rafting up'. Inevitably, gridlock forms, and the Floating City is born. A bizarre trading culture emerges. And the residents begin to piece together the dark history of what led up to the disaster that hit their civilization.

"As a player in the game, you'll be using familiar media like web pages, social networks, linking up with your friends from Twitter and Facebook, to meet and collaborate with others to solve the enigma of The Floating City. This is not only

for gamers – nor is it only for Dolby fans. It's an easy and fun way to explore and enjoy my music and lyrics from the early 1980s all the way up to the present day.

“I'm extremely excited about this project, and it's very much an extension of the atmosphere and sentiments of the songs on the new album. There are excellent graphics, done by Paul Sizer who art directed the two EPs (that's his charred map fragment at the top of this message.) It also combines into a single framework the lyrics and music from my entire back catalogue, all the way back to 'The Golden Age Of Wireless.' It's a natural extension of the eccentricity of The Flat Earth Society, where over the years the frequent digression into Dolby-related fan fiction has been inspiring and bewildering!

“There's been a lot of talk about the album's 'hidden theme', going back to the 'Amerikana' EP release last year. I can reveal that both EPs to date, along with the 'Toad Lickers' iPhone app, have contained embedded clues that relate to the whole Floating City enigma. Up to now, no-one seems to have been able to solve the riddles. (I wonder why?) This game will bring all those clues together in a fascinating way. And yes, you will still be able to hear the 'Urbanoia' songs...if you and your friends are able to discover them within the game. And if it's not to your taste, don't worry because all the music will appear on the album when it comes out later in the year.

“It is not a competitive game, per se, because it's not about individual prowess or high scores. No single player can 'win' outright. However, nine tribes will collaborate and match their skills to try to solve the mystery of the Floating City, using their knowledge and understanding of the music and lyrics. There will be rewards for all participants, including free music, merch prizes, and a sneak peek at the songs you haven't heard yet. And for the most industrious tribe, there will be a fabulous top prize: an invitation to attend an exclusive private concert at which my band and I will perform the album in full.”

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Desire: The Book Launch

I am planning a book launch in autumn 2012 in Newcastle and wish to put on a 'do' of some sort. A book signing is all good and well, but I want it to be a celebration of 35 years of Prefab Sprout. I have several speakers lined up to be involved in the evening already.

It might well be a gig, a convention, a collectors' exchange day... and possibly much more. So I am asking for ideas for the event – and offers from people to help organise, feature in, promote and contribute to the event. I expect to fund the event costs through advanced sales of the book, which will offer those paying in advance the opportunity to read the book a month before it is available on general sale and also to benefit from early access to limited edition bonus items, such as an audio interview CD, a bonus paperback and a book launch T-shirt.

Please send your wishes and pleas of help to me at johnbirch1960@yahoo.co.uk

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The Pleasure and Pain of Collecting

by Tim – Part One

Collecting Prefab Sprout live recordings is, I suppose, an odd thing to do.

After all, they were never a band who would disdainfully ignore stage curfews and play encore after encore until a satiated audience could no longer bear to bring their aching hands together in applause or raise a last hoarse yelp to bring their heroes back on stage..

As a matter of fact you'd be lucky to get a reprise of one or two of the songs the band had already played anyway, and surprisingly often even a sustained attempt to bring them back would be met only by the ritual deflation of the illumination of the house lights – a recording of the Lyceum concert in 1984 records a very respectable five minute attempt at raising a final encore, but without success, where a few nights previously in Lancaster they had returned. Many of the contemporary reviews suggest a detached, disconnected, even sterile approach to live performance.

But that in itself was always part of their charm. Prefab Sprout never quite did things conventionally. For Paddy McAloon, the only concern was the music he was writing at any given moment, and you felt he never wanted any witness to that other than the carefully constructed albums which were already ancient history to him as he performed the songs in front of his fans. Record promotion was at best a grudging nod to what he felt bands were obliged to do, and would lead him into some spectacularly odd and arguably counter-productive decisions as to when and where to appear. As a fan you would spend hours persuading your cool indie mates that Prefab Sprout were worth a listen, and then they'd appear on Saturday night TV introduced by a glove puppet.

It's that perversity that creates an affection and an attachment; when official recordings are few and far between, live recordings are at least something an affectionate fan can obsess over. And it's hard too. Where a collector of a Pink Floyd or a Led Zeppelin can rely on armies of fans scouring the world for the slightest scraps, a Prefab Sprout collector is all alone in a big world where whole generations of fans have arrived and listened and quietly lost interest in the interval between

one album and the next, and what cassettes there were are probably mostly rotting in landfill. It's been an absorbing hobby for me certainly. For just over a year I have followed obscure clues and tracked sources down wherever they may be lurking and as I've done so the story of Prefab Sprout as a live band has emerged little by little.

Much of this is recorded on my website <http://psgigs.wikispaces.com> where I've accumulated photos, details of recordings, reviews and recollections and whatever I could find, though I can't host any recordings. If you have any live Sprout then please do get in touch.

So where do we start? Well if we stick strictly to live performances, the earliest concert recording I know is of Paddy McAloon's early band Avalon playing to (as I am reliably informed by the bass player, who played me the tape), upwards of 10 people in a bar in the North East. At this point, Paddy played guitar and sang a little, and this tape allows you the pleasure of hearing him cranking out covers of Brown Sugar, Sweet Jane and Wishing Well. There's some Hall and Oates, and other band compositions, but the most interesting material comprises early versions of Walk On, Silhouettes – very different from the later B side - and a 7 minute Paddy composed song called Marble Halls which seems to nod somewhat to Peter Gabriel. For anyone who has ever dabbled in music, the interest of Avalon is mostly that they were the kind of band many of us were ourselves in. Accessible, in a word. Blues scale noodling, crunchy guitar and sometimes out of tune vocals, enjoyable on a night out probably, but they were a young pub band and not much more.

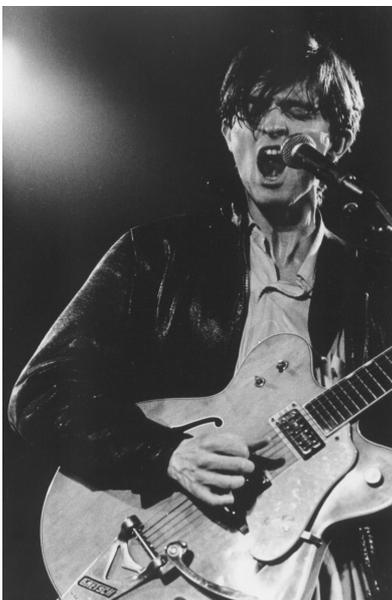
Paddy was quickly to outgrow Avalon, and in the next live tape we find the early Prefab Sprout and a band who were clearly aiming higher. There are rumours of the existence of a complete soundboard tape of the 1980 Domefest performance, but all I've ever been able to find from that is a selection of songs including Tin Can Pot, Faron Young, Spinning Belinda and Donna Summer. What comes across is a competent, tight, original group who had worked hard on their playing and were now a force to be reckoned with on the local scene. Even at this point, Prefab Sprout's songs seemed irreducible and together, and they were verging on power pop.

To many of their contemporary fans, this line up was the best ever, but by the time of the next recorded performance at the Darlington Arts Centre in April 1983, considerable changes were underway. A single had been recorded, and Wendy Smith had joined to general surprise, prompting one fan to comment that her restrained performance style and contribution to the music "made Bez from the Happy Mondays look like Mike Oldfield". This recording, and another from June of the same year at El Hacienda are well worth a listen, and document a band in a state of transition from local hopefuls to the next big thing. The El Hacienda tape provides the only live performance I am aware of the B Side "Radio Love", and the early staples "Cherry Tree" and "Constant Blue" are included on both recordings. There is also an early run out for Horsechimes which was later to appear on Protest Songs.

They mark the end of Mick Salmon's period on drums too, and the start of a Spinal Tap drummer procession.

1984 was to be the year Prefab Sprout emerged into the wide world, and they were booked into the ICA for the January Rock Week in the company of Billy Bragg, Einsturzende Neubaten, and Bronski Beat amongst others. Expectations were high and the rock press had gathered in force around the new darlings of post punk. The result is the stuff of legends and nightmare: poor sound on the stage monitors and a leaden performance by Steve Dalder who had joined on drums created a perfect storm in which the delicate tracery of Prefab Sprout's music was disastrously drowned in an out of tune cacophony. So bad were they that Paddy was still apologizing during next London concert at the Savoy in February

The ICA gig was however recorded professionally, and three songs from it were broadcast on Capital Radio – tapes of this are preserved in the British Library. However despite extensive searching for a surviving copy off air, I have drawn a complete blank. This is a true holy grail, so check your attics please! A full copy of the concert would be perhaps too much to hope for.



The band did improve however, although Wendy's vocals were often a bit hit and miss. Dave Ruffy joined the procession of drummers for the gigs leading up to the release of Swoon in March, and the best recording from this period is a very reasonable audience tape from the February gig in Edinburgh.

What marks this period in more general terms is Paddy's proficiency as a live performer. He was confident, a little cocky even, and the evidence of a short section of video material recorded at the Manchester Hacienda on the promotional tour post Swoon, by which time Virginia Astley had been recruited on barely evident keyboards and Neil Conti on drums, is that he had considerable presence and attitude on stage. Indeed he cut an almost swaggering figure with his Gretsch guitar and military jacket, which look was captured in a promotional photograph that found its way onto many Xeroxed covers of Camden Market bootlegs. The video material was filmed for the Bristol show, RPM, and may be viewed at the National Film Library on request.

One final tape is worthy of note from this period. The audience recording of Lancaster University is a fine piece of clandestine tape work and a worthy document.

"Diana" was a staple in the set at this point and both opens and closes the concert, bookending an extensive selection of songs from Swoon as well as a rocking "Spinning Belinda". In many ways this closes the book on the formative years of Prefab Sprout as a performing band, for they were about to enter the studio with Thomas Dolby to record the album that would cement their credentials in the first rank of 1980s post punk bands, Steve McQueen.

Part Two out in November 2011.

Readers may contact Tim directly at prefabsprout2010@googlemail.com

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Paddy in print...

"There is nothing wrong in being inspired by a book or an film, but to follow a style slavishly or to look to other people's achievements for your starting ground is something you do when you are younger. Then as you get older you should try and do something that is true and then hope that maybe because you are saying it in a more effective way it is becoming more truthful and simple."

The Irish Times, May 1984



"We're not subverting anyone. I listen to all sorts of junk and it doesn't affect me; I don't believe that you are what you eat. I'm aware of instigators like Beefheart and Neil Young but I don't need to be fed truths all the time. Pop music isn't an annexe of literature."

The Face, March 1984

"I'm always frightened when people say its poetry or poetic language. Some of the lyrics I've got are more direct and are a bit less intense and I've got songs that are just a laugh. I work on instinct, on feeling; a lot of people have failed to pick that up. Articles that have been done on us seem to think it's a kind of clever – whether that's a good or bad thing... – people never seem to realise that everything I do is instinct, even if I work at the lyric to try and get it right in the end it's not my mind I'm appealing to, it's the heart and the feeling it gives."

Debris Fanzine, August 1985

"Something is up with us songwriters. I don't usually feel connected to the guard of the post-Costello generation, Roddy Frame and all, like I said before, we are more weird, strange and awkward, but one thing recently affiliates the new songwriters. We all write songs about songwriting. We've all grown so conscious. From Green's "Wood Beez" (Scritti Politti) to us. So much is true, but why?"

Spex, September 1985

"I'm not trying to recreate that old thing of the nine-to-five guy just doing a job who doesn't want to be bothered about semantics. But I'd like to write something where the truth of the statement lies below the trumpeting of the lyric, and I don't really know how you do it. That's very difficult now because this is the Eighties and we've probably never been this self-conscious before."

The Guardian, March 1988

"Wit and delicacy aren't required by the industry today. The A&R men don't think the audience is there. I hate most contemporary records. I hate the sound of them, I hate style of them. And if they had a smell I'd hate that too."

Vogue, September 1999

"I know just how hip I am, and I'm not, in terms of the cover of this week's music press, but I am in terms of longevity. Now, you can say it should be throwaway stuff, but the best of it lasts – the best of it is covered in some form. You can only assume people do a George Gershwin song or a Beatles song today because it's lasted in some way. If you're doing your job properly, then your stuff would last as well. It's like: I don't think there's been anything much better written than West Side Story."

Guitarist, September 1990

"Actually, when we started, we were a raucous three-piece rock band. We didn't have keyboards or loads of studio facilities and technology, and a lot of what we do now is a reaction of those early days. I might wake up one day soon and decide to make a record that works purely on the level of eccentric noise for three minutes, that doesn't sound like anything else, just samples – you never know."

Sky Magazine, January 1990

What can you contribute?

You may be surprised at how you can contribute towards the book. Please feel free to contact me if you can help with any of the following:

- If you have any memorabilia of historical significance relating to Prefab Sprout
- We are seeking photographs for the book – any kind considered, but must be of a good quality
- Any old newspaper, magazine or fanzine articles
- Maybe you would like to see something in particular covered in the book... well, what is it?
- We would be happy to consider suggestions or submissions for a front cover
- Maybe you have some rare documents that could be of use?

Feel free to contact John at johnbirch1960@yahoo.co.uk

