



The James Fanzine
Change of Scenery
Issue 10



I Just Hope you're feeling happy
.....That's Saul

Change of Scenery Issue 10

Feel like...erm...Lionel Blair

Hello again , and welcome to a much delayed CoS issue 10 .

In an attempt to be more like the band , the James fanzine release date had to be put back , in an attempt to increase speculation and keep fans wondering what's going on .

In fact we have had a pretty awkward few months . As some of you may be aware we had a large quantity of Issue 9 confiscated at the December 98 tour by James official merchandising staff . As a result , our printing costs were not recovered , and we have had to de lay printing until we can absorb the costs . We have reprinted copies of issue 9 which are now available from us again .

As well as this , Mercury have changed the promotional and press company dealing with James and we have been trying to reestablish a rapport with the new people so we can bring you the latest news and interviews from the "World of James".

We are hoping to get issue 11 out in time for the December tour , so we need input regarding the new album , gigs as well as any feedback with regards to this publication. We will also need any questions you have , that we can put to the band for our next exclusive interview.

The latest news we have involves an acoustic set on Jo Whaley's Radio One show and an appearance at Manchesters Heaton Park , both in September . We have also had details of the album release (Reviewed this issue) which has been moved to October 11th .

The December tour is confirmed , and we hope their will be a low key warm up gig or two , so check local press , as these gigs tend to be a bit special (see Blackpool and Liverpool reviews in this issue) . It has been refreshing to see the band live again , and the stage shows have been nothing short of fantastic . You can really see the band are enjoying playing the new material , and truly believe in the new album.

We hope you enjoy this issue of CoS and look forward to seeing you at the various gigs coming up , as these are gonna be the last (and possibly best) James gigs of the millenium .

Yours

John



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What's the World : Nynex Arena : Dec'98

By Jean Gribbin

The only way I can handle James these days is to think of them like old and new Labour. I don't like or agree with a lot of what they do or the direction they are taking but the alternatives are even worse. So I trailed across the country on a foul winter night yet again. The Nynex is nice as far as arenas go and the best that I have been to.

The show - **Johnny Yen** and **Sometimes** were solid and workmanlike but that fire that used to have me bopping along was missing. I love **Waltzing Along**, the only 'new' song that cuts it for me, but it was soooo short. I'd have liked to prolong the buzz. Next Tim says 'this is for old James fans' so I cheer looking for a What For, Whoops or Chainmail so why did I feel insulted when they struck up with **Heavens**.

The first new song has potential but sounds very much like James making James noises. The second (**Fred Astaire**) was dreadful, reminiscent of the awful Tina Marie song from the 80's. **Destiny Calling** and **Born Of Frustration** were flat, the highpoint being Tim going into the audience.

Out To Get You was great, that old James spark reappearing. **Laid** was very gentle, very different with the audience singing along and tim seemed genuinely touched. The next new song was the best of the three. It's changes and moods could develop into a corking song.

I could have lived without **She's A Star**, professional sounding but again flat and a bit like watching paint dry. Old James came back with a vengeance for **Tomorrow**, the only song to really get the adrenalin flowing. **Sound** was decent, the new treatment, but done far better at the Academy earlier in the year. Sit Down set off at breakneck pace and thankfully was over very quickly.

The **Say Something** and **Come Home** encore was slick, short and sweet but didn't leave me screaming for more, but a thanks to Tim who sang Say Something in the crowd just above me, a treat for those of us with seats which made the band look like Star Wars figures.

So why did I go and see new james? As I've said the alternatives are worse. I love live music, the excitement of a show and looking at the Nynex future attractions there was only one I'd get out of bed for and the others would have to pay me to sit through a show.

New James isn't the old James that I loved so well but sadly it's all we've got and I suppose the glorious 10 minutes we got is better than nothing.
(But please, now the bank account is filled up could we have a small venue acoustic tour for us old James people - PLEASE??)



We heard from Change Of Scenery that Tim Booth was to do an acoustic set at the Octagon Theatre. YES! That's all we needed to know and the tickets were booked within a matter of hours.

We arrived at the theatre not knowing how long Tim was to be on for or who else from James might accompany him. We just had to wait - very patiently as he was on after the interval. Whilst in the bar we could hear the soundcheck but I couldn't tell who the backing singer was. It was good to hear him sing live again, it seemed ages since the December tour.

After what seemed like an eternity we were allowed into the theatre which was smaller and more intimate than I expected. We had pretty good seats and I scanned the area for potential James fans but I could only see a few. We waited while the likes of Bernard Wrigley and Peter Kay entertained us until at last it was time.

Tim strolled on stage to tumultuous applause along with Michael Kulas which was a pleasant surprise. Tim had dressed down for the evening with a denim jacket and jeans and was looking rather well.

They kicked off with a slow version of **Laid** with Mike on backing vocals followed by **Fred Astaire** which has improved since the last time I heard it and has to be the best song that they have done in a long time. Another new song came next which I vaguely recognised and was totally brilliant. Because of the shape of the stage Tim had to keep moving around so that the whole audience could see him enabling me to take plenty of pictures.

Mike sat at the piano and after Tim shouted at the lighting guy to "dim the spotlight because it's making me nervous" he introduced the next song which he

explained was about child abuse and then Mike proceeded to play the opening bars of **Lullaby**. Mike played beautifully and proved that he was a quality musician rather than an 'extra'.

After **Lullaby** came something which sounded like **Surprise** although I could be wrong. The audience cheered and I noticed more cameras flashing indicating more James fans.

Time was passing by and I thought we'd had our lot until Tim began to tell his now infamous mental institution anecdote signalling the start of **Out To Get You**.

Fall In Love With Me was next and Tim said that he rarely gets the chance to sing this song because it isn't a James project and that it was the first love song that he ever wrote after 10 years of songwriting.

The 8th song of the evening began with Tim emotionally spitting out the first line of **Destiny Calling** before grinding to a halt and sheepishly asking Mike if he was in the right key. Both clearly amused they carried on with what I thought to be an unusual choice for an acoustic set but I was proved wrong. **She's A Star** was next until sadly they announced their last song which when done acoustically is one of my favourites - **Lose Control**.

The end came too soon but we expected 5 or 6 songs and got 10.

The applause was deafening from the theatre from young and old people alike and as I stood looking around the Octagon Theatre I thought to myself that there must be far more James fans at the end of the performance than there was at the start.

Q: How do you confuse Tim Booth?

A: Put him in a round room and tell him not to sing with his back to the audience.

Set: The Bolton Octagon Theatre. A dimly lit circular auditorium with lecture-hall type seating in the round with a small stage-area at the bottom of the seats containing 2 microphones, a piano, a keyboard and a chair

Filling the seats should be a mixture of people with a number of young student-types there for a gig, some older couples dressed for the theatre, all sitting quietly.

Enter one skinny Mancunian singer named Tim wearing a pair of brown trousers, a navy blue t-shirt that has shrunk in the wash, showing off his tummy, and a denim jacket, along with a bespeckled Canadian guitarist wearing leather. Singer should make a few improvised jokes to the audience, try and situate himself so his back isn't facing any part of the crowd, realize embarrassingly that he is in a round room, and launch into the opening verses of "**Laid**" backed only by the hunky Canuck.

And there we have the setting for one of the most odd yet stunning "James" performances in years. This was not the ideal location for a rock concert, resembling more the setting for some avant garde theatre piece; but the bizarre venue, coupled with near-perfect acoustics and a subdued-but-enthusiastic crowd set the stage perfectly for Tim Booth, accompanied by Michael Kulas, to amaze people once again with the beauty and intensity of both his voice and his lyrics. He opened his set with an acoustic version of "**Laid**," before proceeding to serenade the crowd with three new songs, "Fred Astaire," which was played on the band's December arena tour, along with two other new songs which had never before been played live. They continued the set with such favourites as "**Lullaby**" and "**Out To Get You**" before Kulas

moved over to the keyboard.

Tim explained that the song he was about to perform was one of his favorites that he'd ever written. He told the crowd that it was the first love song he'd written over his 10+ year career, but that he'd never had an opportunity to perform it live in front of an audience as it was not a James song, but instead had appeared on his Booth and the Bad Angel project, co-written with Angelo Badalamenti. He explained that when he and Badalamenti had been on a tour of American radio stations promoting the album that he'd actually had an out of body experience while singing it. He then gave one of the most heartfelt

performances of his career, singing "Fall in Love with Me" nearly a capella to a backing track of eerie keyboard noises rather than a tune. They finished off their set with "Destiny Calling," "She's a Star" and "Lose Control." Throughout the set the audience clapped politely while cameras snapped left and right, although Tim did look a bit perplexed to see pensioners exiting the theatre en masse after the first 3 or 4 songs.

I must admit I was skeptical about Tim performing without the rest of the band, but he really did himself justice, showing off the simple beauty of the melodies which often gets obscured by theatrics and noise in a live arena. It may also have been the last chance to see any portion of James in such an intimate setting, as they seem fairly poised to take over the world come September.

The night as a whole was a success, allowing Tim a creative outlet he has not had the opportunity to exercise in the past and raising over £5,000 towards the payment of the Octagon's debts. Anyone wishing to contribute towards this fund, which has only reached part of its goal, should phone the Octagon at 01204 520661.



On 23rd of July 1999, EXOT52 (a band featuring two of Jim Glennie's brothers) stepped out to support James on the stage of the Tower Ballroom, Blackpool.

Q: Who are you?

PETER: We are EXOT52. We are Paul Barker (drums), James McLynn (bass), David Glennie (vocals) and Peter Glennie (guitar). We are the sun, the moon, and occasionally the stars. We are sex on legs. We are terrible liars.

Q: How did the gig come about?

PETER: Jim (Glennie) has been to just about every one of our gigs since February (he's become one of our biggest fans) and he phoned me one day asking if we'd support James at Blackpool. "You know... only if you want to..." he kept saying. After deliberating for a good three-quarters of a second, we agreed to do it. It was all touch and go until the last few days - we were half expecting to get a phonecall on the morning of the gig saying "Sorry lads, there's been some terrible mixup, we wanted Level 42", but it never came. So we loaded up the van with equipment and nerves and made our way up the M6 to sunny Blackpool. The rest, as they say, is a blur...

Q: Behind us in the queue were people from Jeopster. What's the story?

DAVID: Someone at Jeopster likes us and has lined up some national gigs for us (check the website)... er... that's it.

Q: How did you feel the crowd reacted?

PETER: Personally I was absolutely terrified at first, we chugged our way through Splash and waited for the eerie silence to descend once it was finished. I was totally amazed by the response - people were screaming, cheering, clapping, jumping around - it was astounding. Considering it was a small gig especially for hardcore James fans, and they'd never heard of us before, they made us feel REALLY welcome. One voice in particular was very enthusiastic - in the way through the gig I could hear Michael (Kulas) screaming and cheering from behind the monitor desk.

Q: What other gigs have you played?

DAVID: We're regulars on the sub-Nymex Manchester scene: Roadhouse, Life Bar, Middleton Civic Hall (!) etc. we play Night And Day about once a month - because we want to (sic).

Q: Who is the driving influence in the band musically?

PETER: David normally provides the starting point, he'll come into rehearsal with a basic song idea and the rest of us will sketch some ideas over the top until we get something that sounds worthwhile, then we'll run it and run it, tweaking bits here, adding bits there... At other times we'll start from a guitar line, chord sequence or a bass line - we rarely jam, someone usually has some idea of where the song should head.

Q: Musical influences?

DAVID: Many and various. John Barry, Elvis Costello, Flaming Lips, Deaf, Husker Du... et al

Q: How did you meet?

PETER: David and I have known each other for 24 years (obviously) and we've been writing together for the past 11 years. We met James

and Paul while I was at university through friends of friends. It's really good to have the line-up that we do, James and Paul were fans of the band before they joined, and when we lost previous members it seemed logical that they should step in. As soon as they did we wondered why we hadn't taken them on in the first bloody place.

Q: What do you hope for the band in the upcoming 6 months?

DAVID: In 6 months time we will have been signed, released two singles and been dropped.

Q: When can we expect to see you live again. What about record releases?

PETER: We play Manchester regularly and we'll be playing a big Jeopster gig at the Stage in Hanley (Stoke on Trent) on October 10th. We've got a gig at Night and Day in Manchester on either the 20th or 21st of September and will be playing the Roadhouse soon after that. We'd also love to support James again, but we'll see what happens. Check the website for details, or give us an e-mail, or drop us a line, we'll get back to you (we're nice like that). We've also just finished our new demo, so if anyone wants a copy... you know what to do.

Q: What do you think of James?

PETER: They're the second-best band in the world (of course!)

Q: (Smash Hits) Would you ever consider becoming romantically involved with one of your fans?

DAVID: Absolutely... That's the point of having them.

Q: (Melody Maker) Would you ever consider becoming romantically involved with the Manic Street Preachers?

DAVID: Absolutely... That's the point of having them.

Q: Any requests?

PETER: Yes, I'd like everyone who reads this to chant "Little Pete, Little Pete..." towards Jim at the next James gig they go to. He'll know what it means.

Q: Finally, What is Jim's worst habit?

DAVID: Insufficient nepotism (vitamin B if you're German). PETER: A propensity towards calling me "Little Pete" - if only he knew...

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Liverpool L2 9th July 1999

Review By Tim Allan

I haven't looked forward to a James gig as much as this since the 'comeback' at the Sheffield Leadmill in 1997. Not even staying in a B&B straight opposite Anfield (which being a Man United fan was pretty hard to swallow) could put me off - I'd waited since the December tour to hear the new songs the band keep shouting about. The venue was bigger than I'd expected, but still pretty small... especially the stage, which didn't look like it would give the band much room to hide if Tim was a dancing mood.

The support band - The Parma Violets - did a decent job, (which is more than can be said for some of James' supports over the years), even if they did sound like a Verve tribute band. But to be honest the crowd didn't seem very interested, and were chanting for James well before the scheduled 8.15pm start

When they did come on stage, it was a bit of an anti-climax - no build-up music, no Sit Down '98 intro (thank God) - Jim just wandered on like he'd taken a wrong turning backstage, and before the crowd really knew it the familiar bass intro of Out to Get You was being played. That was however certainly the only anti-climax of the first half of the gig. Tim didn't even bother singing the first verse - he just stood and smiled as the crowd sang in football chant style. It was a typical 'James' moment and Tim looked genuinely moved. It would have been perfect, were it not for Adrian using his electric guitar instead of the acoustic one that the song deserves. 'Laid' came next - a return to a more extended version than the one they seemed to play

on the December dates, and was followed by the current single 'I Know What I'm Here For', with a long new drum intro that fooled most of the crowd into thinking it was a totally new song. It sounded brilliant, and looks set to take its place alongside the older crowd favourites.

I can't remember the order of the rest, but I was delighted to hear 'Someone's Got It In For Me', which I wasn't sure about from the Octagon gig, but which sounded superb with the full-band accompaniment. The highlight though was 'Crash', with infectious backing vocals from Kulas, which sounds like Homeboy's nasty brother, and which I reckon would make a great single after 'Fred Astaire'.

From the Hits, they did 'Say Something' (they were going to do 'If Anybody Hurts You', but a monitor/amplifier packed up), 'She's a Star', 'Come Home', 'Destiny Calling', 'Sometimes', a cracking 'Sound' (the last song before the encore) and 'Tomorrow' (the last song of the evening). All of these were good to hear, but for those of us who went to any dates on the April or December 1998 tours, it was a bit like going through the motions. I guess we should bear in mind that a lot of people there will have been seeing the band for the first time, and for them hearing the singles played live is a new experience, and is essentially why they bought the tickets. Maybe if we didn't turn up at every gig they did we wouldn't scrutinise them so closely and complain when they don't totally change the set-list each night (although I am as pissed-off as anyone that they've stopped doing that).

But back to the gig. Even though they haven't played some songs for about a decade, or didn't have them on the set-list, it didn't stop some people from trying. I was sandwiched between a guy who was calling for 'Ya Ho' all night (a bit unlikely that one, mate) and his mate who only wanted to hear the fantastic new 'Vervacious'. Although the band ignored both of those, they did eventually give into the pressure and played the best 'Johnny Yen' I've ever heard, which just shows what can happen through improvisation. Let's hope there's room for some of that in the new songs.

The biggest downer of the night was the revamped (or should that be de-vamped?) 'Fred Astaire'. It was slowed down, shortened, had a dodgy piano intro and had the guitars taken out of it. It didn't sound a patch on the December 1998 version, and I hope the album track resembles that more than it does the Liverpool version.

Overall I'd say it was well worth the wait, although a little disappointing that more of the new stuff didn't make an appearance. Oh yeah, they didn't play Sit Down, which is something I hope they don't change in the set-list for quite a while !



MILLIONAIRES : The Definitive Review

by Dave Brown

So finally we have it, a year later than promised, but they've finally made it. We may have heard half of it on tour last December and played the bootlegs to death, but this is the real thing - is this going to be album that makes James into the millionaires they ironically declare in the title or send them back into the abyss with Mercury dropping them like a stone? You're probably reading the wrong publication for an objective answer but here goes.....

Album opener "Crash" is a high-octane listing of seemingly random words in the verse leading to a chorus of "someone got hurt, someone got high, someone got left behind the lines", prefaced by a bout of woo-hoo's, presumably from Michael. "Crash" is a very powerful way to start the album and a sign of things to come.

Next song is "Just Like Fred Astaire", which as we speak may be James' first number one single or another relative chart disappointment. Backed with a killer synth hook from Mark, which takes some getting used to, Tim launches into a wandering journey describing the symptoms of a new-found love dismissing the cynics sniping that love is "just a disease". Truly magical stuff and a must for all the romantics out there - play this as the James song at your wedding.

"I Know What I'm Here For" follows on and seems a little out of place on this LP - it still sounds a disappointing take on a song that was for many the highlight of the new songs on the December tour.

Following on is "Shooting My Mouth Off" which was played in December under the title of Real World Jam. Again, this is a love song, Tim stating how the relationship he is now in is different from

anything else before it and hoping that he isn't just carried away on the whole thing. A very restrained performance by the rest of the band simply adds to its beauty - one of my personal favourites on the album.

"We're Going To Miss You" is the fifth track on the LP - described by Tim as a "spell of protection" to ward off all who wish to do evil to the band. Adrian and Saul play as a two-man orchestra over the chorus where Tim repeats the mantra "there's a mirror with your name on, singing we're going to miss you when you've gone". The verse is very dark, brooding and threatening in contrast to the seemingly happy chorus.

The mood slows down for the next track "Strangers" which is a lament to loneliness and being used by people around you who are there simply for the ride and not to support you in achieving what you aim for and the difficulties in changing your environment. The chorus is a very simple message "worn down by strangers, all you need's a friend" and the music is again very understated.

The understatement goes further with "Hello" where Tim's accompaniment is mainly a very sparse piano whilst he half whispers half sings to an unnamed woman about how they should get together.

In complete contrast, "Afro Lover" is the album's big pop moment. Produced by Faithless, this has to be a serious contender for the third single with its chantable "everybody wants to be happy, everybody wants the same thing" and the upbeat musical accompaniment which just strengthens that message. It might upset the James purists slightly, but this is the type of song James need to try and finally shake the





PHOTO CREDIT: KEVIN WESTENBERG

James



A UNIVERSAL COMPANY

Sit Down albatross that has been hanging round the necks for far too long and stretch past their loyal fanbase to reach the mass market.

"Surprise" follows and comes across all swaggering with Tim and Michael's vocals intertwining across the chorus. Sadly, some of the better lines lyrically have been dropped for the final recording and a few of the lines do sound a little awkward, but this does not distract from the power of the song.

A surprise inclusion on the LP is "Dumb Jam" played live in 1994 on a couple of US dates and which may be known to you as Where Did You Go? on the Unreleased tape. This has been resurrected for this LP and clocking in at just over two minutes is a frenetic up-tempo romp through male and female behaviour in relationships. Another personal favourite of mine.

A highlight of the recent live shows "Someone's Got It In For Me" just about fails to be the showstopping oh-my-god blockbuster it has been at the shows, a strange-sounding vocal arrangement slightly takes the edge off Tim's desperate portrayal of a paranoid victim surveying the wreckage of his dreams and the environment around him. The chorus still maintains its epic feel, Michael and Tim's voices once again complementing each other perfectly.

The real disappointment on the album is the closing track "Vervacious". Those who heard this on the December tour would expect an overblown epic-sounding number, swooping and diving between quiet introspective moments and full-on improvisation. Sadly, the whole thing is very understated and at the moment where you expect the whole thing to take off and carry you away for the last minute and a half of the album, all we get is a treated

version of Sinead O'Connor singing the opening verse. A bizarre end to the album and really quite unnecessary.

So overall impressions? Millionaires is an album where James play to their strengths, there are six or seven potential singles that could sit alongside the tracks on the "Best Of" and generate the same reaction from a gig crowd. Slightly disappointing is the lack of real experimentation that characterised Whiplash and Wah Wah and there is a sense that it might be a little over-produced in striving for perfection.

I have my own doubts on whether Millionaires will be the massive seller that everyone is hoping that it will be. That's not to detract from what is an excellent album that can stand proud next to all the other James albums and I'm sure the sales figures will reflect that. However there is this nagging doubt that James had their chance at being the biggest band in Britain in 1992 and didn't grab it and even an album of this quality won't recreate that chance. I hope I'm wrong.



BUY IT NOW T-IN-THE PARK

BY DAVE PROWSE

I Know What I'm Here For

one track promo in jewel case with custom sleeve £3-10

one track promo video in custom slipcase sleeve £4-10

I Know... / All Good Boys cass. single £1

I Know... / All Good... Imagine Ourselves - CD single £3

I Know... / Downstairs / Stolen Horse - CD single £3

Just Like Fred Astaire - one track promo in jewel case with custom sleeve £5

Just Like Fred Astaire - one track promo video £tbd

Just Like Fred Astaire - cass. single £1 (rel. Sep 27)

Just Like Fred Astaire - 2 x CD (b-sides unknown) £3

Millionaires

5 Tracks (I Know What I'm Here For, Crash, We're Going To Miss You, Strangers, Surprise) - five track CDR in white jewel case sleeve £6-10

5 Tracks - earlier version of above CDR, same tracks, no album name - £35

4 track album sampler - blue custom slipcase sleeve - tracks as above except Surprise £4-10

full album promo in blue custom slipcase sleeve £20-30

full album gold acetate CDR in white jewel case sleeve £25

Finally, after a three year wait and two cancellations James made their first ever appearance at T in the Park with the sun blazing on an expectant crowd who had just to suffer an excruciating set from Placebo. James opened with a storming version of Johnny Yen which despite being James oldest regularly played song always goes down well especially in a improvised state. Saul was on top form on violin and Tim as usual dancing like a dervish. Next up was, "the song about sex" Laid, to which the crowd went mental and I, standing in the second row, was seriously struggling to keep upright. Keeping the tempo going Destiny Calling was followed by a bouncing Shes A Star, Tim proving there was no throat infection this year! Next came the first of the new songs, an unexpected Crash, which was very impressive on its second ever live performance and great fun to sing along to. Déjà vu struck with a technical hitch at the start of Walking Along, the intro of which has turned into a bit of a popular (but tuneless!) sing along with Scottish crowds. Come Home, still in its '97 guise followed to get the masses dancing. Things calmed down so we could take a breather with an emotional rendition of Someone's Got It In For Me, which though not being the most obvious choice of song for a festival, was well received despite being unwisely introduced as a tribute to 'victims' such as Paul Gascoigne (we were in Scotland!!). I Know What I'm Here For was next, sounding more like the single than earlier live versions and better for it, with excellent backing vocals from Michael. Say Something was followed by Tomorrow when there was only time left for one more song. Tim asked but knew what we wanted to hear, a 1,2...1,2,3,4...and Sit Down closed a fantastic festival set.

I withdrew beersoaked from the fray in my (slightly damp!) James T-shirt many people came up to say how fabulous James had been with quite a few reckoning they were the best band they had seen at T in the Park. Who was I to disagree?

StuartHowey

Blackpool Rock : 23rd July 1999

By Wendy Williams

Outside the people waited, quietly chatting amongst themselves about gigs that had gone before. One fan, proudly wearing in a "winter '93" tour shirt even though it had obviously seen better days, stood eager to be one of the first through the doors. Once opened he would charge forward to claim his place at Saul's feet.

Friends happily divided by strangers in order to ensure they stood front row. After all it didn't seem to matter that we didn't know their names we were all like family and this showed as one guy curiously allowed a female of shorter stature a place at his side on the front row, ensuring her a better view. I stood centre stage and awaited the appearance of the one man who seemed to know me best, he is one that understands, I speak of course of Tim Booth.

The support band "EXIT 52" were better than most, as support bands go. Vocalist, Dave and guitarist, Pete did a good job of showing the crowd and brother Jim Glennie that they had what it takes and did not seem at all un-nerved by the enormity of the whole affair. The Manchester based band gave it their all but the crowd began to grow impatient for James by the time 'Exit' had completed their fourth song.

The 'Exit' set complete, the stage fell to the organisational skills of the stage hands as they checked and changed, brought on the towels and strategically placed bottled water. Meanwhile the crowd are gearing up ready to welcome their heroes to the venue that Melody Maker described as being a "gigantic hollowed-out Ferrero Rocher".

With all the finery that is the Tower Ballroom it would be difficult to find a more appropriate venue for such a fine bunch of lads.

The crowd take a sharp in-take of breath when Mark Hunter, adorning a glitzy silver shirt that shone almost like a mirror ball, rose from the depths beneath the stage. "Bloody hell", I hear as the eyes of the audience realise that Mark is sat before the Wurlitzer that is probably more famous than he is. And what an entrance....

The crowd cheer with exhalation as they leap in with the opening notes of "Laid"! Instantly everyone begins to jump to the beat, singing their heads off. I guess we all felt that we just had to let them know who we were there for. Gliding smoothly through the playlist of "Destiny Calling" and "She's A Star" (one, many of us girls will connect with) to the first of the new ones, Crash. I have to say that I am quite fond of this one with it's punchy, up-tempo melody that is so very typically 'James' in every way. It is one that is oh-so-very Booth...ay-dancable

Next came another 'racy' one, "sometimes" which easily succeeds in kicking the audience up another gear it two as they sing along to another old favourite. In complete contrast the audience's vocals quieten to listen to the "over-the-top love song", 'Feels Like Fred Astaire', we are all hanging on to every word. One has to wonder if this is a Tim-favourite at the moment due to his own self-confessed blinded-by-love state of mind. We wish him well.

Like many of the yet-to-be-released this one has the anthemic feel to it. To many die-hard fans, there is no greater anthem than "Johnny Yen". Tim and the audience could almost have been dueling for vocal volume and both would win, both were as enthusiastic about their singing this number as radio stations are of playing 'sit down'.

'Out to get you'...with the fans bowing their hands to point to Tim while he sang the words, "is you, is you, is you", preceded 'Someone's got it in for me'. It fitted together well, the crowd settled as the 'mood' was lowered. Then just as masses by lifting the mood and rekindling hope with the jolly toe-tapping "Walzing Along" and the masses approved.

After 'Tomorrow' and 'Miss You' Tim asked the crowd "Do you know what you're here for?" the crowd responded with "YOU" and Tim chuckled to himself. IKWHIF went down a storm, with what seemed like the majority of the crowd already knowing all the words. 'Come Home'... they did their fans proud indeed.

During "Sound" the megaphone simply would not work. Several attempts later the frustrated Tim smashed it onto the stage, bouncing shattered pieces of it in to the audience. He then carried on regardless, emitting such drive as if to say, F... it lets go for it anyway. What a showman. You could feel the increasing energy emitting from the stage as the band fed the hungry crowd with fix after fix of raw emotion.

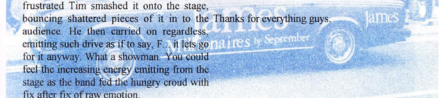
We were all on "top of the world", but we knew that this was not the end, we could feel it, sense it, we were still not satisfied. We

were all on a high but we needed just that bit more. In true style James delivered with their final encore. "Say something" with Tim and Saul singing to each other, they were really giving it their all. Their actions and enthusiasm said everything.

No let up for anyone as they came straight back in with old faithful "sit down" complete with balloon and confetti shower. It was certainly a fitting finale for such a fine setting and at last, just for now, the fans were satisfied. Each went away smiling. Many, like myself, will most certainly re-live the night by numerous re-runs of the such an "alive" performance.

It's those extra touches that make James concerts so personal that you and the rest of the crowd feel like you are jamming with the band. At one stage Tim picked one guy and one girl out of the audience to dance on stage with them. I was positioned on the front row directly in front of Tim. At one point he walked over to stand right in front of me and yes you guessed it, I touched him....Wouldn't you? "Top one, Tim!" At the end of it all I found that I had been given Saul's plectrum. Up close and personal that is one thing that makes James so very extra special.

Thanks for everything guys.



My Story by Emma Houghton

I suppose, in terms of the length of time James have been around, I am a new fan. I have been listening to James' music for about two years, although songs such as Sometimes, Say Something and Ring The Bells, were already familiar to me. Of course I knew Sit Down so really, to mention it is just absurd so I won't ponder it any longer.

I have seen James play live five times; twice at the Apollo Theatre in Manchester, once at Key 103 in Manchester, once in Albert Square in Manchester and most recently at the M.E.N. Arena in Manchester. Yes you've guessed it, I'm Mancunian and I'm sure like many other Mancunian James fans I feel a particular attachment to them just because of this fact.

I remember when I was about 10 years old (about 10 years ago), my parents used to show and breed dogs and were close friends with another dog breeding couple from Chorlton in Manchester (I know this seems irrelevant but I am getting to the point), whose daughter was, and as far as I know, still is a big James fan. She'd known them since they had first started playing and was quite good friends with them. When I ask them about it now, they say that she still talks to them on the odd occasion. Of course it is much harder to keep in contact with them these days. Apparently, according to my mother, she

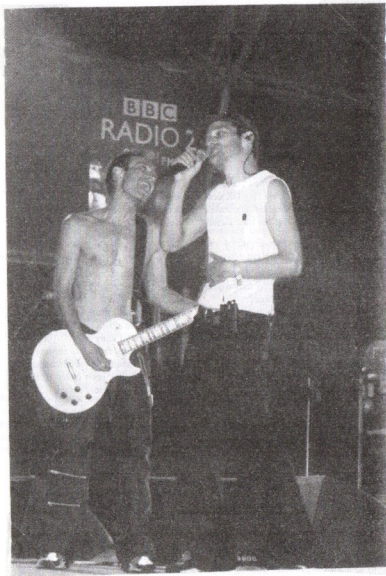
became a little less enthusiastic about the band when they made it big with Sit Down in 1990 because the sudden popularity made it harder to keep in contact with them. I don't know just how accurate this information is but I shall continue. Around this time, she gave my Mum a James badge which for around 7 years, she kept in a jewellery box, continually ignoring my advice to "throw it away, nobody would want it any more". Shame on me!!! Then when I started seeing my current boyfriend

John, he was a small time James fan and so my Mum gave him the badge, much to his delight and he couldn't believe the story that I have just told to you. I mean how's that for luck???

Now John and I are big James fans, although he dominates the record collection, but we share it. And now, lady luck has

wafted her little wand over us again because just a couple of days after the gig at the M.E.N. Arena, John found an original One Man Clapping on which Burned is my favourite song.

Such item apparently sells for 100 smackers and John got it for 20 quid!! So, I guess the moral of the story boys and girls is keep looking because for every ten new James fans there is one who ceases to exist.



Sire Times

Edward Barton quote to Tim

"Be careful , they'll label you and forget you"

Long before number one albums and sell out stadium tours , James were having problems with record companies , well one to be precise .

As the U.S deal has expired , and the final album from their existing UK deal with Fontana , "Millionaires" is released , we look back at the last time James changed labels .

After the releases on Factory , James needed a deal that would allow their records a broader base , so fans would actually be able to buy them .

After interest was shown by several labels , they decided to go with Sire records , owned by Seymour Stein , who had previously discovered and signed to the label : The Ramones , Talking Heads and (favourite of Tim Booths') Patti Smith.

Jim said "They signed us , the Mighty Lemon Drops and the Soup Dragons , probably hoping that one would have a hit and if they didn't they were always tax deductible."

Of Sire , Tim said " We wanted a record company we could trust our records with".

Unfortunately trust did not carry across the Atlantic to the maverick Stein.

"We accepted a lower total from Sire thinking they were more genuine. They offered us total artistic control , only for us to learn that it meant nothing." said

Tim , "Unless we did what they wanted , they would say it was rubbish and refuse to promote it."

Initially things seemed to be going well. Lenny Kaye , well respected member of The Patti Smith Band , agreed to produce the album , as he was a friend of Steins' . The first album was to be called "Lost Innocence" but was changed to "Stutter".

But Sire were not happy with the finished article , accusing the album of being "Too English".

The irony here being that Sire saw James as successors to the soon to be vacated crown of The Smiths , arguably the quintessential "English" band. The music press gave lukewarm reviews of the album , pointing much of the blame at Lenny Kaye . They also felt the album failed to capture the majesty of James live performances , a criticism that has been tabled in many subsequent release reviews. The album's chart placing was disappointing , and the relationship with Sire became awkward.

Hugh Jones was brought in to produce the second album.

Jim recalled "We had five days to do three mixes , but after five 20-hour days through which we had to stay up , he'd only come up with one.....and a sub-standard one at that !"

Tim commented "Just choosing the order of the songs took four days"

"We had seven or eight versions of each song to choose from . For 'What

by John Pude

for' we had fifteen !" added Jim.

"The record company didn't want us to record so they didn't give us any money" said Tim regarding the financial constraints being imposed on them .

Elliot Rashman , manger of another Manchester band , 'Simply Red' , became the new manager of the band , and delayed the release of "Strip-Mine" until Sire were prepared to finance a remix.

The delays continued and the band then had problems with touring . Sire were unhappy to shell out for a tour unless they had a product to promote.

The scheduled release in 1987 became 1988 , but Tim felt it had served a purpose , "Delaying the record was a downer but it had to be done to get the respect from the record company."

Again , a disappointing chart place ensured that James would not be top of Sire's Christmas list . The only options left open to the four band members was to split the band , or desist from recording , utilising a loophole in the contract that meant if they failed to record for a period of time , they could inform Sire that they were no longer contractually obliged to stay with the label.

After the contract expired , James aligned themselves with Rough Trade , using contacts and a bank loan procured by taking the bank manager to a gig .

"One Man Clapping" was released .

The album achieved great success , even though Sire then contacted the band , unaware that they were no longer signed to Sire , and demanded a percentage of the sales .

"The head of Sire collects bands like they're bits of art , probably as much to make sure other people don't get hold of them , as to use them himself ." reflects Tim. "One cynical lesson we've learnt is that the amount of money a record company offer you is the amount of commitment they'll make. If they put money in they'll want it back and so work hard to get it ."

Of the money , Jim quips "We owed Sire a quarter of a million for Stutter and Strip-Mine"

"We just got caught up in a multi national and everything had to go through the boss , and the boss was an American." Tim summarises.

And the final tip to a band thinking of signing that magical record deal comes from Tim .

"Get a good lawyerand an even better manager."

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Issue 11 should be available in early December, but as yet we have not clarified the position in relation to us selling the 'zine outside the gigs. The best way to receive the latest issue when it is available is to send 5 x 2nd class stamps to us in advance.

We will be giving away signed merchandise in a competition in our next issue.

We are also working on a collection of all the interviews and great articles from issue 1-10 of Change of Scenery as well as A Sound Investment issue 1-4 which we hope to have available at a budget price, more info next issue.

