

CHANGE OF SCENERY WOULD LIKE TO THANK:

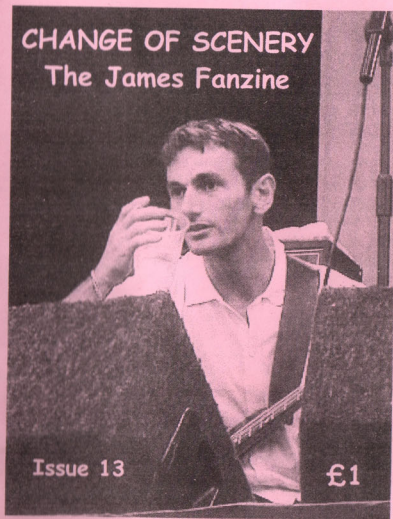
Peter Rudge
Stuart Maconie
James Bass
Mindy Silverboard
Hayley Fisher
Ray Gillespie
Dave Brown
The Fudgie Dancers
Jake Stavrinides
Justhipper
Laurie Russinko
Lori Chin
Kerry Rafter
Eoin Connell
Chugg

who helped or contributed to this issue of CoS.
Keep on supporting James
and Change of Scenery.

Front Cover picture
Jim Glennie in unique "Not looking left across stage photo"
(V2000)

Used by permission of Låurie

www.jamestheband.com



Change of Scenery Issue 13

The band James have been synonymous with longevity, with consistency, with The Smiths.

At last, and in their own words, many people involved in the last 20 years of "James" have spoken to Stuart Maconie, to compile a well overdue history of our favourite band.

Change of Scenery provided fan related information to Stuart going back to 1983.

This issue of CoS contains details about this comprehensive biography, including an EXCLUSIVE interview with the man himself, reviews of the book and your chance to win a copy.

We also have details and articles from the current plethora of James related webpages, gig reviews of V2000, and a new feature from us: Fan Interviews.

We hope to extend this feature to the

upcoming UK tour, so expect to be asked about your favourite James memory, song, gig etc as CoS put your feelings directly onto the page.

We are trying to arrange an interview with the band during the tour, so if you have any questions you wish to put to them, let us know and we will try to get them answered.

We hope you enjoy this issue of CoS and feel encouraged enough to contribute to future issues on anything James related.

Cheers



John Pude

Editor: Change of Scenery

Back issues of Change of Scenery are still available in very limited quantities:
Issue 1-6, 8, 10 and 11 are SOLD OUT

Issue 7 features: 1997 tour stuff PLUS EXCLUSIVE Kulas interview, gig pics, gig reviews, Lollapalooza

Issue 12 features: A collection of all the EXCLUSIVE band interviews carried out by CoS since 1994.

Back Issues can be ordered via our address and cost 4 x first class stamps (UK only)

The opinions expressed in this issue are the opinion of the contributor, and not necessarily those of the band James, anyone connected with the band, the editor or anyone connected to the fanzine. Change of Scenery apologise for any inaccuracies included in this issue, and cannot be held responsible for any loss resulting from information contained herein. Reading of this issue is an acceptance of these conditions.

History Repeating

An Interview with James Biographer Stuart Maconie

With words that simply aren't out of touch

With the genuine feelings which lead to their birth

Most things are better not written or heard (Folklore by James 1983)

Who are you, and what are your qualifications for writing the James biography?

Who am I? A big question that philosophers down the ages have wrestled with. I'm a journalist and broadcaster who started working in the media in the late 80s for NME. Eventually I became Deputy Editor there before eventually jumping ship in the big, errm, "ship - jumping" that saw myself, Danny Kelly, Andrew Collins, Steve Lamacq and Mary Anne Hobbs all leave in a matter of weeks. Since then I've been freelance and have devoted a lot of my time to presenting and writing for TV and radio.

How did you become involved in the book?

The second live review I ever wrote was of James at International 2 in Manchester just before Gavan left and before things started to happen. Then I got to know the band around the time of Gold Mother and hung out with them on tour a lot for

various stories and just for fun. I liked them a lot and since then we've maintained a kind of friendship. Anyway, I wrote a biography of Blur whom I'm also mates with and that did well. I was vaguely aware that there were moves afoot to get an official James biog under way because friends of mine like Andrew Collins and John Aizlewood were mooted for the job but there were a lot of problems with the project and the band rejected several writers before, I think, suggesting me. Ian Gittins the then editor approached me and I was happy to take the job on.

What access did you have to personnel from the early days?

I had whatever access I could create for myself. Obviously, as Folklore is an official biography I assumed I'd have the co-operation of the current band members - it wouldn't have been worth doing otherwise - and I got that although it's not easy getting the interviews done with a band who are scattered from the far North of Scotland to the South coast of England via North Wales.

As far past characters, I either interviewed or got my hands on material relating to all the key players. I tracked down Paul Gilbertson whose now a minicab driver in Wittington and was given extensive interview material with Gavan that a friend of mine, the journalist Dave Cavanagh had done when he'd started a

book on the band in the mid 90s. Essentially, I've covered everyone involved except Martine McDonagh who was approached but declined.

Who was the most "interesting" member of the band?

I couldn't possibly comment! They're all interesting in different ways as I'm sure the people reading this will know.

You spoke to Tony Wilson. What is he like?

I've met Tony many times down the years and he's a terrific bloke. I think he's sometimes given an impression at odds with what he's really like. He's a very funny, very passionate individual who's always been much too cool and clever and too interested in music to be a record label boss. I think Jim and Tim both feel now that Factory were not the slick image-obsessed company they had them tagged as and really they should have stuck with them. It's all in the book.

What is the most unusual story that is in the book?

I think there are sections concerning the Lifewave religion, Jim's tearaway youth, Saul's bizarre youth and Larry Gott's cabaret career that should get the pages turning

Are there any stories that could not be in the book for "legal reasons"?

Hmm. Let's say there were stories that I felt it prudent to gloss over

How happy are you with the book?

I'm very happy in the sense that I think it's the best I could have done in the time allowed and given that it's a long, tortuous story involving many eccentric episodes an individuals. There are a lot of conflicting perspectives in there and I wanted to reflect them all, hence the title. It's a kind of mosaic of people's narratives.

Were you a James fan before, and are you a fan now?

I was a big fan before and I remain one. I love Millionaires and I thought that review was about as wrong-headed as you can be. From what I've heard of the new material, it sounds great.

Who would you like "to do" next?

I think that's it for me and band biogs. What I'd really like to do is a big comprehensive, readable but analytical survey of British pop in general from Tommy Steele to Robbie Williams. A sort of complete history of pop from these islands but I'm aware that to do it justice it would take a couple of years full-time work and at the moment I can't really spare that. Maybe in a year or two.

Thank You Stuart.

Folklore: The Official History of James is available on November 9th from Virgin Publishing priced £14.99

Virgin

MUSIC

Folklore
James The Official History

Stuart Maconie

Key Selling Points

> James are now one of the biggest and most enduring bands on the British music scene, with a loyal and devout fanbase

> They regularly play arena and stadium gigs around Britain - their Manchester G-Mex arena shows are now a Northern tradition

> This is James' official biography, written after over a year of research and copious interviews with all surviving and former band members

> Stuart Maconie is a highly respected music journalist who has previously written *3862 Days*, the award winning official history of Blur

> This is the latest addition to Virgin's respected series of official biographies of major bands, following the histories of Blur, Manic Street Preachers and Billy Bragg

The Specs

Title: Folklore
Subtitle: James - The Official History
Author: Stuart Maconie
Pub Date: 9 November 2000
Imprint: Virgin
Category: Music
Rights: World

Title Origin: Original
Pages: 272
Price: £12.99
Format: PB
Size: 234 x 153mm
Author Base: Birmingham

The Book

James have been a bizarre, quixotic feature on the British musical landscape for over 15 years now. The band fell together in their native Manchester in the mid-eighties and were championed by Morrissey, the lead singer with The Smiths. Appealing to a similar studenty, fiercely independent fanbase, they quickly became one of the leading lights of the British music scene, enjoying both critical and commercial success with a string of leftfield, individualistic albums. As the nineties developed, James penetrated the mainstream and became consistent chart-toppers while never losing the credibility earned by the quizzical intensity of their talismanic singer Tim Booth. Their story is not an untroubled one - the band have been riven by internal tensions, and suffered personality clashes and significant departures, and their star has risen and fallen. Yet James have now been a totem for two generations of alternative music fans, and as they enter a new millennium their fire burns as brightly as ever.

The author

Stuart Maconie began as a staff writer on the New Musical Express before going on to interview the biggest names in rock for Q and Select. He was co-presenter of ITV's Collins & Maconie's Movie Club and has also presented a series on Northern Soul, a personal passion, on BBC Radio Two. He hosts Radio Fives satirical and current events series *The Treatment*. Maconie's first book in 1999 was *3862 Days*, the official story of Blur, which was voted Book of the Year by Melody Maker

Folklore : The Biog Reviewed

With the new James Biog soon to hit the shelves, CoS got two of James' most outspoken fans to cast their pedantic eye over the tome. How did they receive the story of their favourite band? Does the book survive their scrutiny? Is it worth £15?

Band biographies tend to fall into three categories - the slavishly sycophantic, the deep emotional evaluation and the simple no-thrills story.

Folklore fits like a glove into the latter. Evaluation of the music is critical rather than emotive and instinctive. This is no bad thing - we have 260 pages here for a 20 year story - and what a story it is - and you and I all have our own reasons for being James fans.

The characters are introduced as and when they come into James - there is no assuming you know anything about them just because you have bought their records. For me, this is the most fascinating aspect of the book. There is no skimming over the shady early days and the story is often told in the words of the actors themselves.

More than half the book concentrates on the pre-1989 James, an amazing feat given the paucity of the documentary material on this periods. It is a must-read for the older fan as that story has never really been told and an eye opener for the younger fans who are maybe not aware of that history.

The book then becomes a series of ups and downs. There are some

fascinating insights into the Gold Mother, Laid and Wah Wah sessions, but relatively little on the more fractious times in between.

The period between Gold Mother and Seven, the three hiatus and Black Thursday and the near breakup at the time of the Best Of are glossed over. It is perhaps a little unfair to blame the author for this as the real story of these times lie with the band themselves and some serious grievances and personal animosity have had to be laid to rest. Dragging them back up at a time of relative harmony would be self-defeating, but the book does suffer from this as a result.

So in the final analysis, is the book worth the extortionate £14.99 Virgin are asking for? The James story, all the way back to the very beginning, is critical to understanding the music the band was producing at any juncture in their career. Despite an odd chronological error and the comments earlier, the book is by far the most comprehensive telling of that story to date.

Read, inwardly digest and go back and listen to your collection.

Dave Brown

Before I really get into this, I want to point out, at the start, just so there is no confusion about this, that I think that any James fan who is interested in the history of the band should go out, purchase and read *Folklore* by Stuart Maconie. It is a good read, particularly about the formative years of James, and is chock-full of great interview tidbits.

Now, having said that, I'd really like to know what Mr. Maconie (and James at that), a professional journalist, was thinking!!!!

This book is an official history, and as such, is bound to be glossy, positive propaganda. It seemed pretty reasonable to expect before reading it that the book would be history as the band wanted it, and not would not necessarily tell us everything that has ever happened. What I was NOT expecting is exactly how many gaping holes this would leave. While the first half of the book, covering the early years up until about 1989 is incredibly detailed and thorough, and even surprisingly upfront at times, the story of James over the last 11 years has been glossed over and summarized. Andy Diagram – who made an essential contribution to the sound of the band on *Goldmother* and *Seven* – is mentioned once in the entire book. He never joins or leaves, he simply is in the studio at some point and does horns for the song "Goldmother" never to be mentioned again. The 1998 tour promoting the *Best Of* where the band were clearly unhappy and not getting on, again

glossed over. Problems within the band after Larry Gott's departure are put down to resentment over Tim Booth pursuing solo work instead of sticking around to help write *Whiplash*, but Maconie relates this led to nearly 2 years during which Jim Glennie and Tim Booth were not on speaking terms. Somehow, all of this is ironed out in one meeting which gets a sentence. So what exactly aren't they telling us? I found the second half of the book to be rushed and lacking in crucial detail. Some of this may be down to the short time frame the author was given to complete the work, but certainly not all. Furthermore, I'd like to point out that the Blackpool Empress Ballroom gig that took place around the release of *Millionaires* happened in 1999, after the first single "I Know What I'm Here For" had been released, AFTER the album had been completed – there were copies floating around already, and NOT before they went back into the studio to finish it. Furthermore, someone should have caught Larry's flawed statement that the Foo Fighters had been onstage before James in 1990 – the Foo Fighters did not exist until 1995 or 1996 at least. But that's just being picky.

What really struck me most about the supposed professionalism about this book was the fact that Mr. Maconie seemed to have done an incredible amount of interviewing. The bulk of his material seemed to come through detailed interviews about every stage of the band's

career – until I came across a couple of quotes I recognized from elsewhere. Only the sections in bold faced type with a bandmember's name in front of them actually came from his own interviews. The rest of the quotes in the book, despite not being credited to anyone, did NOT come from Mr. Maconie's own interview tapes. Now, most first year university students understand that this is plagiarism. Apparently, Mr. Maconie, someone who has been a journalist for over twenty years, does not.

Finally, and most importantly, there is one main thing that the book blatantly lacks. As a band commissioning a book, James had the opportunity to answer all their critics, to cement the importance of their role in British music. But nowhere does Mr. Maconie try to justify the creation of his book. Why is the story of James an important one? If I weren't a fan, I wouldn't have known before reading the book, and I still would not after finishing it.

This book is a historical record of the band's achievements, but beyond stating chart positions and pointing out that live shows were well received, there is no explanation or discussion of what makes James special; what their contribution and influence has been, and why they have touched so many people. In a book that is only 259 pages (and took a mere 4 hours to read), surely there is a place for this, if only to state it for posterity. In fact, it seems the most important exercise of all, certainly more important that going through early pre-James lineup changes in minute detail.

Overall, while I learned some things I didn't already know, and I managed to entertain myself reading it one morning when I felt ill, I think this is a very poor attempt at capturing the spirit and the substance of one of the most important indie bands to come along in British music.

Just Hipper

Change of Scenery would like to thank:

Dave Brown(One of the three) <http://members.tripod.co.uk/oneofthethree> and

Justhipper (One Fan Clapping)
<http://www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Studio/4996/>
for contributing this article.

The final verdict is up to the book buying public

One lucky fan can get a copy of the book FREE in our great Folklore competition. Just turn to the inside back pages for details.

James @ V2000 - Weston Park, Staffordshire 19/08/2000

James have had their good times. They've had their bad times. And they've had their long periods of relative seclusion, and it is from one of these that they greet V2000. "I just got off the plane from California yesterday", declares Tim Booth, "so I don't really know where I am". Still, as the opening chords of 'Laid' blast out over the speakers, the audience are certainly not confused as to their whereabouts, instantly immersing themselves into the inevitable hits - and they keep on coming. 'Sometimes' and 'She's A Star' continue the festival-friendly set, Booth's voice hitting top form to exploit the fantastic atmosphere, the audience safely at home, singing along with the lyrics deeply imprinted into the back of their minds.

Next, a cover of 'China Girl', originally by David Bowie, set to feature on the forthcoming b-sides compilation album. Again, the band pulls together to give a tight, near-perfect performance, the thick guitar sound augmenting the vocals - they take the song, thoroughly digest it and make it their own.

Splitting the new and lesser known songs up with more hits, we're told that James only rehearsed once for this performance: "we're no corporate whores" yells Saul. Older song 'Stutter' gives Tim a chance to indulge in the maniacal dancing for which he is famous - certainly no choreography needed here as Booth's

body writhes around in exquisite harmony with the music. "Can I have some new batteries please?" says Tim when his microphone has problems, "I must be getting old". That the band have been around 17 years is apparent from the crowd - there's everyone from teenagers to middle-aged people with children, all adding to the atmosphere.

'Out To Get You' sees Saul lose his guitar in favour of his violin, the slower pace bringing back the magical atmosphere and harmonising the crowd, whilst 'Someone's Got It In For Me', the only track from most recent album 'Millionaires' to be played, continues this theme.

Less certain of its place in the set is 'Tomorrow', a song too much like 'Ring the Bells' for my liking, and with plenty of other fantastic songs to choose from I can't see why it was needed.

"We can't really play this one", announces guitarist Saul Davies, "so if you could join in then it would really help us". New song 'Everyone's A Junkie' was premiered at the MTV 5 Night Stand in May and is an obvious choice for a forthcoming single. Backed by a string quartet, it captures the beauty that is James and holds it out for everyone to see.

Another brand new song, which I'm inclined to call 'Coffee and Toast', emerges. Very different from the rest of

the set but by no means out of place, it's pop undertones put it in league somewhere near 'I Know What I'm Here For', yet no other band could pull it off. It also has single potential, though as Booth muses 'come round to my house and I'll make us some coffee and some toast' it's obvious that the lyrical qualities of past times aren't reflected here.

As the set draws to a close, attention is turned back to the hits. 'Sound' is limited to about six minutes, probably a good decision for the short festival set, and builds the audience up ideally for what was, for me, a perfect final song. Amidst the thousands of cries for 'Sit Down', the opening bars of 'Ring the Bells' radiate. 'Shout at the crowd, wake them up' sings Booth, not that this crowd needed awakening, the frenzied extended ending

giving the crowdsurfers the perfect opportunity to make their final exit.

Then, all too soon, it's over. "Thank you Chelmsford" shouts Booth. Well, you might not be sure where you are, Tim, but you can still pull off one hell of a performance. There's obviously plenty of batteries left yet.

By Hayley Fisher
hayley.fisher@btinternet.com



SATURDAY TICKET
WESTON PARK, STAFFORDSHIRE
Saturday 19th August 2000

ROSECLAIM LTD
PRESENTS

V2000

Gates open noon.
Not valid for Campsite.

Virgin Cola Budweiser

What the Paying Public say

V2000 Interviews
Chelmsford Sunday August 20th 2000

Dave Aged 24 from Wembley

HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU SEEN JAMES PLAY LIVE?

This is my first time.

WHAT DID YOU THINK OF THEM?

They were ace although I was disappointed that they didn't play "SITDOWN" and "DESTINY CALLING", but what a way to start with "LAID"!

WHAT DID YOU THINK OF THE NEW STUFF?

I liked the new songs, I hadn't heard any of them, it was really good stuff but it was the old stuff that I had come to see.

DID YOU BUY MILLIONAIRES & WHAT DID YOU THINK OF IT?

Yes I did, I haven't played it enough but I did like it. It was a very good album.

Stephen Belcher from Boston USA

HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU SEEN JAMES PLAY LIVE?

This is my first time.

WHAT DID YOU THINK OF THE SET?

It was great, there are so many

songs that I wanted to hear, but of course it's impossible to hear them all in 40 minutes and I just wanted to hear everything.

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE BEST SONG THEY PLAYED TONIGHT WAS?

"Lester Piggott",

YOU MEAN "SOMETIMES"?

Yeh that one.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE NEW SONGS?

They are pretty good, I'm just wondering whether they will be on the new album or not.

Rob Aged 20 from Hertfordshire

ARE YOU A JAMES FAN?

No, not especially a James fan no.

WHAT DID YOU THINK OF THEIR SET TONIGHT?

Well I was watching it from way back there, I thought it was alright as James goes but I couldn't see much as I was sitting down at the back.

SO WHO ARE YOU HERE TO SEE THEN?

Paul Weller, who's just about to come on hopefully, then I'm going to move and watch Moby.

Jo from Gloucester

ARE YOU HERE TO SEE JAMES?

Yes I am.

HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU SEEN JAMES PLAY LIVE?

9 times.

WHAT DID YOU THINK OF THEM?

They are really good, I love them, I think they are a really good live band and I will keep coming back to see them for as long as they keep playing.

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE BEST SONG THEY PLAYED TONIGHT WAS?

The second new song they played (SENORITA) I remember hearing it before, that's quite a good song.

Andy from Grays in Essex

WHAT DID YOU THINK OF THE JAMES SET?

It was good apart from, I think the second or third song it was an incredibly poppy song, one of the new ones I think.

DO YOU OWN ANY JAMES ALBUMS AND WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THEM?

I loved "MILLIONAIRES", it was very good, blinding, one of the best albums that I've got. I only recently got into James.

HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU SEEN JAMES PLAY LIVE?

This is my first time and I'm very impressed, they were very good.

James Aged 23 from Swindon

HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU SEEN JAMES PLAY LIVE?

This is my first time.

WHAT DID YOU THINK OF THEM?

They're the best thing in music, as in pop music today, they've been going so long now and they are absolutely brilliant. I've followed them since they started. The best record is definitely "COME HOME", they're really good.

WHAT DO YOU THINK WAS THE BEST SONG THAT THEY PLAYED TONIGHT?

I'm not sure, they did a new one, I think it's called Addict (SENORITA) it was the second new one they played, that was good.

Kate, Lee and Ellie from Bath

HAVE ANY OF YOU SEEN JAMES PLAY LIVE?

No we haven't.

SO WHAT DID YOU THINK OF THE SET?

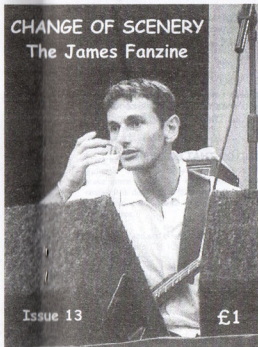
They were really good, we only caught the last half of the set but we thought they were good.

WHAT DO YOU THINK WAS THE BEST SONG THEY PLAYED?

I don't know, we don't know any of the names of them. I don't know if

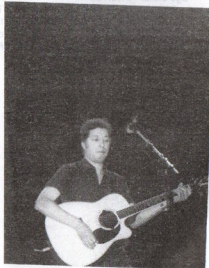


CHANGE OF SCENERY
The James Fanzine



Issue 13

£1



they played "LAID" but that's my favourite, everyone usually saves the best until last that's why we usually catch the end of the set rather than the beginning.

DO ANY OF YOU OWN ANY JAMES ALBUMS?
Yes, The BEST OF.

WHAT OTHER BANDS ARE YOU HERE TO SEE?

Beth Orton, Moby, Leftfield, we saw Travis and Macy Gray yesterday and most of the others really.

Duncan from the Isle Of Sheppey in Kent

HAVE YOU SEEN JAMES PLAY LIVE BEFORE?
Yes, it was here a couple of years ago either '97 or '98

WHAT DID YOU THINK OF THE SET TONIGHT?
They were very good but I think they were better last time, the crowd seemed to enjoy it more last time.

WHAT DID YOU THINK WAS THE BEST SONG THAT THEY PLAYED TODAY WAS?
The single they had out last year "FRED ASTAIRE".

DO YOU OWN ANY JAMES ALBUMS?
Yes but only the BEST OF.

Graham from Ormskirk

DID YOU SEE THE JAMES SET?
I certainly did, I saw it yesterday too.

WHAT DID YOU THINK?
I thought it was really good, the best I've seen so far and I've seen them about 7 or 8 times now, and that was definitely the best.

WHAT DO YOU THINK WAS THE BEST SONG THEY PLAYED TONIGHT?
"SENORITA" because I saw it at Shepherds Bush and it's been a favourite since then.

ARE YOU GOING TO BUY THE BOOK WHEN IT COMES OUT?
Yes I am I try to get anything James related.

DO YOU BUY THE FANZINE THEN?
If you mean Change Of Scenery I don't but I keep meaning to send off for it.

AND ON THAT BOMBSHELL....

So with possibly the worst main stage line-up in festival history, what were James going to bring to the party? A greatest hits set to please the masses or were we to witness a return to the awkward setlists for the more discerning James fan?

Opening with Laid, it became quite evident from the very start that Tim's voice was in particularly good form, as he had demonstrated so powerfully performing the same track with just Michael on keyboard accompaniment an hour earlier in the Virgin tent. The sound was crystal clear and the band had obviously worked on the arrangement as there was a noticeable but subtle change without losing the rhythm and tempo of the track

"Let's party" Tim urged the crowd before launching into Sometimes, the metronomic guitar playing of Adrian, Saul and Michael whipping the moshpit into a heaving mass. She's A Star had a similar effect - it seemed that James had gone for the safer but sure-fire hit set. They were pulling it off spectacularly as well backed up as at Shepherds Bush by the Wired Strings quartet.

"This is one of those accidental pop songs that we stumble across every now and again" was how Tim introduced the first new track Coffee And Toast.

Reminiscent of Afro Lover as a shameless uptempo pop song, it makes no pretence of being a Five-O or PS, with Tim inviting the audience "if you come back to my house, I'll make some coffee and toast." An obvious single, it is destined to infuriate further those who were unimpressed by Tim's lyrics on Millionaires.

Stutter followed and was probably the highlight of the set - again. The strings merely augmented the sound, particularly in the frenetic ending. Considering the song was probably new to most of the audience, it received a rapturous round of applause.

Out To Get You came next and induced an

V2000 : Chelmsford

outbreak of arm-waving. The song remains as touching and poignant as ever, but does tend to get a little lost in the open air. The slowed down tempo continued with Someone's Got It In For Me, one of Tim's personal favourites. The emotion he was putting into the song was evident in the close-ups on the large screen.

The expected return to the hits to finish off the set was delayed even further by another new song Senorita, which was debuted at Shepherds Bush in May. Saul apologised in advance for them probably messing it up and it did sound a little clumsy than before, but the basic beauty of the song still shone through.

Johnny Yen came next and was recognised by more of the crowd than I had expected it to. Tim used the improvised section to question the purpose of men and what success (in the music business) has to do with the song. He dedicated the song to suicidal tortured artists. Tomorrow started off a trio of hits to round off the set. The middle section again showed that the band had put work in on the arrangements, admirable given the lack of gigs recently and the inevitable focus in the studio on the new album. Sound was curtailed after about six minutes which was probably a good thing in the circumstances as the extended version works in a hour and three-quarter James set, but not in a fifty-five minute festival set.

The set ended surprisingly with Ring The Bells, the crowdsurfers took advantage of the frenetic elongated ending to make their last exit. So what was the overall verdict? The band were on top form, the string section fitted in perfectly, the songs sounded noticeably different in the arrangements.

Was it a success? The setlist was far more adventurous than I had expected, which personally was not a bad thing. For the general public, there were probably too few hits - no Sit Down, Come Home, How Was It For You?, Destiny Calling, Say Something, Waltzing Along still, how many bands boast that sort of repertoire you could leave out?

Dave Brown

World Wide What-for ?

Those of you that have not used the internet to gain the latest information about James are really missing out.

Here at CoS, we recommend that next time you are in your nearest town centre, go into a cyber cafe and use 30 mins looking at these sites.

It's surprising what info is on offer: Bootleg info, downloadable MP3's, Pictures, chat, new release details, household items that look like band members, poor American spellings. Literally all human life is here.

Most of these sites have LINK pages to the ever expanding cyber world of James:

<http://www.geocities.com/justhipper/>

<http://www.jamestheband.com>

<http://www.sitdown.co.uk/>

<http://james.wattyc.com>

<http://www.thisisnotasong.co.uk>

<http://www.stateofbliss.co.uk>

<http://members.tripod.co.uk/oneofthethree/index.htm>

<http://www.crescendo.homepad.com/>

<http://www.jamesonline.co.uk>

<http://www.changeofscenery.co.uk>

www.SitDown.co.uk

The Sit Down website, run by Ray Gillespie (AKA Homeboy) and conveniently located at www.sitdown.co.uk, comes complete with something to satisfy any James fan. From long forgotten live MP3s to add to your collection (as well as the opportunity to trade your live tracks) to backdrops for your desktop and customised toolbars, the diversity of the content is impressive.

There's information on every release, including not only the albums but videos too, and news about tours, releases and the forthcoming biography.

The site contains one of the most comprehensive James lyrics archives on

the internet - from the best of to rare and forgotten b-sides, everything's there.

Coupled with guitar tabs for many singles and album tracks, this makes the perfect resource for any aficionado.

The customary guestbook shows the variety of fans visiting the site, from Poland and Mexico, amongst others, and the links section has a comprehensive listing of similar sites.

With a smart, unobtrusive background and an abundance of information vital for any James fan, the Sit Down website is one not to be missed.

-Hayley Fisher

One Fan Clapping

In 1997, I founded One Fan Clapping with a friend because we felt that although there were a couple of fantastic James websites to supply information about the band itself (most notably Stutter and the James (The Band) site), there was nowhere for James fans to express themselves. I have always viewed the purpose of fanzines and websites to be not only to give discographies, news and band histories, but also to allow fans to interact and to build a community of people with a passionately shared interest. The initial idea for One Fan Clapping was that we would ask James fans to send us stories about how they got into James, what made James' music so special to them and about any sort of special moments in their lives they had experienced in which James or James' music had been involved. Initially we did receive a groundswell of support. We then expanded the site to include photos of crazy things people had done in the name of James. We also came up with the James Fan Finder, conceived as a listing of James fans around the world who wanted to exchange emails, trade shows, or meet up for gigs. And created a James Fan Quiz to test people's level of obsession with the band. As time passed and original submissions from fans have all but disappeared we have had to slightly alter the purpose of site itself in order to provide fresh, different, and interesting things for the fans to read. To that extent we created our Wide World of James which includes such things as the Mark Hunter Fan Club, an archive of

misheard James lyrics, the James Jive Lyrics page, our interpretation of James songs based on what the boys have said in interviews, and, of course, the James Vague News.

We have also involved ourselves in staging 3 successful James Nights, a disco held in Manchester following James' last 3 gigs there which has allowed fans to get together in one place and dance to James songs and get completely bladdered.

Despite the lack of new material from fans, I still feel that the most important part of the site is the part which allows the expression of James fans and which enables people to interact with each other; and I have been feeling extremely disappointed that people no longer seem interested in contributing their own experiences but would prefer to see me duplicate those services provided elsewhere, such as reprinting articles from the music press, and providing full lyrics, video clips and MP3's. The best way to run your own fanzine or website is to provide your own special slant on why James have been an important part of your life, not to provide services already supplied more than adequately by the band's own official site. Therefore, I'd like to make a plea for your support through your submissions and a request that anybody who does not want to send us (or one of the fanzines) a story, or a review or anything else instead go and set up their own website or start their own fanzine in order to give us their own personal perspective on the greatness of James.

www.geocities.com/justhipper/

Weather Change?

James, since their formation in 1981, have always been an amorphous band. They are, indeed, a very different band to the four young men that started it all in Manchester University's Union Bar. The core however, remains intact, even with just Tim Booth and Jim Glennie being the only members of the original foursome.

The music of James has changed immensely throughout their 19-year history. The subtle, melancholy ambient beats of *Egoiste* are a far cry from the ecstatic, frenzied raw sound of *Stutter*. Throughout the years, James have evolved, and with each evolution have moved into new territories and directions, sometimes disappointing the fan-base, but always producing quality music with a distinct "James" sound.

With the release of *Millionaires*, James moved on again. Many people argued that the band created an album full of shiny pop tunes, absent of the randomness and creativity that the previous albums were blessed with. Other people blamed the over-production of the album for it being too slick. There were even cries for another "Laid", generally the most popular album among the majority of the James fan base. But this would never, and could never be done. James have always prided themselves on being different, and forever changing and seeking

new pastures. The experiences, emotions and environments that James were in during the composition of *Laid* are gone, as is, the then lead guitarist, Larry Gott. But the change that James underwent from *Whiplash* to *Millionaires* can only be good. The sound is not the same as it was in 1993, but it sounds fresh. I know *What I'm Here For* was the first single released off the album. Criticised by many for it's pop-dance sound, was contrasted with the acoustic but powerful notes of *All Good Boys*, a b-side from the single. James are always full of surprises, never letting on what their next work will be like.

And now, James may be changing again. The new songs unleashed at the MTV 5 Night Stand and *V2000*, show great contrast even at this early stage, to much of the music on *Millionaires*. The dark but passionate *Signorita* gives an indication of one direction the band may be moving into, but the dizzy energetic *Coffee And Toast* takes the sound into a completely different new field. Coupled with the addition of singer/songwriter Michael Kulas in 1998, the band may only just beginning to show it's full potential.

We will just have to wait and see.

What is a true James fan?

By Christine Blais

Being from the same land as Micheal Kulas, believe me, far and away from anything that's James' related, my only connections with the band was their internet sites. If you have ever been to one of those you have probably noticed the James' zeal and mania going on? That circus often made me feel like a little lost fan... I don't know every single note from *Stutter* as I don't own every single James' album. Nevertheless, stuff have happened and I found out that I am really a huge James fan. Whatever I own or not, whatever I have done or haven't. But can you say the same? Can you call yourself a true James fan?

I should say first that one of those miracles of life brought me into what we may call the epicentre of James mania! :) So, there I arrived in Manchester, welcomed by this great and generous person I had met over "One Fan Clapping", a cool James' web site. With her, I met and chatted with several nice British and worldwide James fans. Some of them where active on the James' front: Web site, fanzine, bootlegs (oups!)... As you can see, I was in the swim of things to find out about the meaning of being a true fan.

Anyway, on my duty list, there were three gigs planned (Brighton, Birmingham, Manchester)... which changed to five over the week! (Newcastle, Glasgow) Wasn't life great or what?

The first two shows were amazingly awesome. Believe me! Then, things began to feel more usual. Another James concert tonight, I hope they'll finally play *Five-O*... A bit of excitement was still in the air, but nothing compared to the joy and happiness of the first days. The last night was the Manchester gig. I'm practically not overstating when I say that I was constantly looking at my watch hoping that there would be no encores. What in the world was happening to me?! I had gone from complaining about James is never coming to America, to praying God, they wouldn't play the same setlist! Was I already spoiled to the point of being bored like that? Sad to say, I

just couldn't appreciate my great luck anymore.

Of course, this is not how things should be! Going to your fave band concert should always be magical, something beyond your every day life's routine.

Well for me it should. But, there I was surrounded by a lot of people who seemed to have lost all that excitement too. Maybe they liked it this way and it's alright, I'm not here to judge anyone. Anyway, that's when I consequently hit this disillusion state about being a true fan. This label can't only be for those maniac fans who attempt every hand-related event.

It surely covers more than that. The more I think about it, the more I'm sure: being a true fan should fundamentally be about the overall appreciation and the great satisfaction earned from listening to most of the band material and nothing more.

Probably tons of people will disagree with me. Thinking that when you really like and therefore know a band very well, you can become more critical of their work. You know what, I just really won't argue with that because it's common sense. Really it is. But just because I'm letting the others debate about what the next single should be and because I'd rather keep my innocent joy and appreciation, I hope that doesn't make me less of a fan. Um, you know what, I don't even care about the rating on my James' passion anymore. Neither should anybody. Whether you've been to one or to all gigs, to me, the only important thing is the pleasure you have gotten out of it.

Actually, going on this trip was a tremendous life experience and I have no regrets whatsoever. I had tons of fun at and outside the venues, I met nice people who have been more than exceptional to me... and I'm not feeling so lost and little anymore! As long as I can listen to my James CDs and totally enjoy the experience, I'm fine with that... Pretty fine.

Don't Wait that Long

Dublin 1999 By Eoin Connell

At last the return of James, not seen in Ireland since August 1998 when they played a great set (despite being criminally low on the bill) at Slane Castle. One particular memory of mine from that day was that Tim hilariously dedicated opening song "Johnny Yen" to Micheal Jackson!

Now they play two nights in the cosy surroundings of Dublin's Olympia Theatre. From the opening "Born of Frustration" it's clear that the Magnificent Seven are on top form tonight. They soon warm up from the freezing night with huge tunes from the excellent new album and favourites from the past including "Ring the Bells", "Tomorrow" and the brilliant bass-heavy-keeping-Jim-busy tune "Jam-J".

Tim was, as usual in dancing mood tonight and I've danced just like "Fred Astaire" himself. He also climbed up on the speakers to the box seats for "She's a star", and then across to the upper level and sang the excellent "Laid up there, cool". While this was happening Saul was screaming "Come oooooonnn" to the crowd and he brought John onto the stage for some Tim-esque dancing. If they weren't already (and us front people were), after this the crowd were eating out of Tim's hand.

The lads seemed to really be enjoying themselves with Jim and Saul having an on-stage staring match at one point! We danced through the encore, "One of the Three", "Honest Joe", and the much screamed for "Come Home" was the brilliant sing along finale to a great night.

After this the only thing to do was to go again the next night! We weren't disappointed, the setlist was quite different. The lads opened courageously with the emotional "Hello", they also played "Sometimes", "Stutter", and one of my personal favourites, "Say Something". They also gave us what Tim said was a first time ever live rendition of the track from Stutter, "Really Hard" which was unusual because

when we met the man himself, my sister told him how she loved that song, he introduced it as a special request also which leads us to believe it was played for her!! After this surprise they finished with "Sound" and the evergreen "Come Home".

Over those two amazing nights they showed that after sixteen years they are still as essential as ever, with tunes that can make this listener feel ecstatic and euphoric like no one else..... Goodbye for now James, We're gonna miss you when you're gone.

How Was It For Me?

FANTASTIC.

A day in a fans life by Kerry Rafter

I don't know if I have missed Issue 12 but I must explain why the December tour was my most memorable.

A cold, rainy day took me to waiting at M.E.N. arena for a glimpse of my idols. I waited for 3 hours and to my amazement Saul walked up the street and I got his autograph (Cheers Saul, the three hour wait was worth it!).

As for the gig that was fantastic. A photographer asked for my picture as I proudly displayed my James tattoo on my right arm (I have since acquired Tim Booth's name on my left arm!).

The songs were brilliant and I was really pleased to hear Stutter. I was also pleased to touch Tim as he ran through the crowd to introduce his mum. So I'd just like to say thanks lads for a brilliant night and all my mates who laugh at me for being James obsessed don't know what they are missing.

www.thisisnotasong.co.uk

The TINAS website, with its "best of" era daisies in the backdrop, contains a wealth of information, and has a real "James" look and feel to it. First, there's the info page, with a short but sweet biography of James, and also news pages relating to James and to the TINAS website's progress.

Then there's the music page, with album lyrics and listings, and press reports and reviews, neatly split up into singles, albums and live reviews, along with the various articles.

Also present, is the mandatory guestbook, with about 30 signings to date. It serves its purpose well, including a "favourite song" option to fill in, which is interesting to see the variety of songs that people from all over the world see as their favourite.

Elsewhere on the site is the pictures section, with about 10 or so publicity pictures, a couple of pictures from the IKWIHF video, and pictures of the album covers as well. The links page is also very useful, as it contains a lot of James links, but also links to other similar bands websites, and other music related topics.

The site looks pretty, with the help of a bright backdrop that doesn't distract from the text, and random pictures scattered throughout the site. It's definitely one to bookmark.

Ray Gillespie

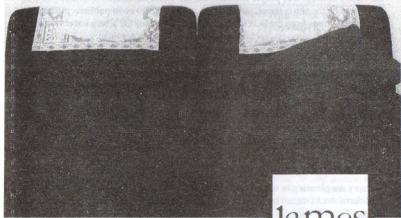
Latest News : Well, the latest we have !

Mercury are planning to release a "b-sides" album which will be out next year. Additional tracks muted include the cover of "China Girl" performed for Radio 1 on Iggy Pop's birthday.

Remastering of all Mercury albums is currently underway, with new album artwork and comprehensive sleeve notes. It is possible that some relevant session tracks may be included in each release.

None of the new album has currently been recorded, but a tentative release date is May 2001. The band are continuing their association with Brian Eno on the as yet untitled 7th Mercury studio album.

Support on the upcoming tour will be BMG signed Shea Seger, and perennial James support EXIT52



James

folklore
the official history

by Stuart Maconie

COMPETITION

This is your chance to win a copy of the new James biography "Folklore" by Stuart Maconie from Virgin publishing.

This book retails for £14.99, but CoS has a copy to give away. We are gonna try and get it signed by Stuart Maconie, and maybe the band.

All you have to do to win this is to answer this question:

**"Folklore" appeared on two James releases :
Jimone and The Village Fire EP .**

BUT

What record label released them ?

- a. Sire
- b. Factory
- c. Rough Trade
- d. Fontana

Just send your answer on a postcard to :

Folklore Competition
12a Woodlea
Leybourne
West Malling
Kent
ME19 5QY
ENGLAND

or e-mail the answer to :
comp@changeofscenery.co.uk

Our NEW address for contributions etc is:

Change of Scenery
12a Woodlea
Leybourne
West Malling
Kent
ME19 5QY
ENGLAND