

Mp3 The Laborforce - Music For The Middle Classes



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Rock that swings into sensitive singer song writer terrain pumping funky grooves but always focusing on strong melodies and loud drums. 9 MP3 Songs POP: British Pop, POP: with Live-band Production

Details: Notes on the band by John Sheerin A couple of years ago, a friend of mine came up to me in work and said he was heading over to Dublin for a few days and could I recommend any bars, clubs, and other assorted hang-out spots that would be worth checking out. I listed a few places that I liked and a few others that I personally hate, but where I seemed to have the minority opinion and then added that if possible he should try and see a friend of mine Greg Kavanagh play live. At the time he was playing under the name of Gregory Spade and the Love Tailors. Trouble was that I couldn't remember the name of the club they played Saturday nights. So I started checking out the web to see if I could find any information. Then I remembered a beer fuddled bar conversation from a few nights previous when another friend had been extolling the virtues of this great new search engine, which through lots of technical trickery most of which sounded like black magic to my Luddite ears could pretty, much find you anything you wanted. Unfortunately much beer had been consumed and I couldn't remember its name either. However, from somewhere in the booze-addled recesses of my brain, I managed to retrieve something like "Foodle Or maybe Froodle. Something like that anyway. So I typed in froodle and I ended up on the web page of some band called (perhaps unsurprisingly) The Froodles. I was just about to back out of the page when I caught sight of a teeny bit of band bio in the corner of the page. It said "In addition to playing with The Froodles, Zamo Riffman also plays with Gregory Spade and the Love Tailors." And I had to ask myself what were the odds? (I incidentally also had to contact Greg and find out exactly who Zamo Riffman was) When I related this story to Greg, he laughed and then used it as evidence of his personalized grand unified field theory of the synchronous interconnectedness of all things, and that how

every so often, planets and stars will align, and the universe will flower to show you its true potential. To me though, the story highlights the vague notion in me that Mr. Kavanagh's life is, if not more exotic than mine, than at least more routinely transcendental. That the eyes he is using to look at the world are more finely attuned to things that other people can't or don't see. And I think it is this quality above all others that makes him special not just as a musician but as an artist. A while ago I went to an exhibition of Ansel Adams pictures on the South Bank in London, and spent a pleasant couple of hours trawling around looking at prints. The work of another photographer was on display " I can't remember his name (for those who can be bothered to look it up, one of his photos was used for the cover of Primal Scream's Give Out But Don't Give Up album. And it occurred to me that it must be pretty easy to take a decent photograph in Yosemite National Park. I'm not dissing Adams, and I know there are a billion technical reasons why his work is unsurpassed but at the same time a mountain range is pretty friggin' impressive regardless of whatever mung-bong is working the camera shutter. But to sit in a trailer park, and take picture after picture that inspires and captivates without you having moved for more than ten feet from the stoop of your double-wide, now that to me was something else. To me that is the quality of the great artist " to create art from the mundane. To make people realize that their own existence and experience is paradoxically full of universal experience and at the same time completely unique moments. It is why Patrick Kavanagh is a better poet than W.B. Yeats. It is why Jim Sheridan is a better film-maker than Ridley Scott. It is why Greg Kavanagh is a much better musician than just about most of his contemporaries. People stand in a gallery looking at a painting by Jean Miro and think Shit, I could have done that. " the standard response being Yeah, but you didn't. You listen to one of Kavanagh's songs and you think Shit, I could have said that and then you realize that at some point you probably did. There is something about a line as simple as All I needed was to see you one more time. that just reeks of honesty " to paraphrase Hannibal Lecter, there is nothing of the elaborations of a bad liar about it. Or when Kavanagh sings I gotta get up and find the door. on the chorus of Never Seen and somehow he takes a very simple phrase that I have heard drunken variations of any number of times at the tail end of any number of parties and invests it with plaintive heroism that makes you want to jack in your job, find Sancho Panza and go tilting at windmills. A workmate who has heard the song in my car stereo several times was recently lamenting his job and saying that he would have to get up and find the door. I doubt he was aware that he was quoting something he had heard, but it is a perfect example of the way that Kavanagh's music makes itself at

home in your head. To describe Kavanagh as a singer/songwriter while technically accurate (Kavanagh after all does write and sing his own material) is somewhat unfair summoning as it does negative images of Ford Mondeo rock and almost by default setting him on the same bare stage occupied by David Gray and Damien Rice. Kavanagh himself says I pause before I describe myself as a singer-songwriter..... It means you're a loner and a Billy no mates.... I don't want to be a solo artist, never have, The plan is that it'll look like a band, and it WILL be a group effort because good music requires collaboration. So in essence Laborforce (the name he now plays under) is a group He pauses to consider the label of singer-songwriter The best singer songwriters, in my opinion, have been women, I think Joni Mitchell stands head and shoulders above most musicians male or female, Suzanne Vega is original and interesting. I'm fishing around here a bit but I suppose really the idea of a guy with an acoustic standing on a dimly lit stage is overdone and hasn't ever turned me on, except for Jeff Buckley, but he wanted to be in Led Zeppelin and when I saw him he had a full band. Born and raised in Dublin, Kavanaghs early songwriting and performance collaborations were with friends, most notably Shane McCarten and Marcus McDonald and one of their early ventures was the formation of Papa Seed. McCarten was one of Kavanaghs closest friends and Kavanagh remains proud of the songs they created together "" one of the more memorable was Find Me Alone which achieved an especially haunting resonance when Kavanagh played it at McCartens funeral in Dublin. Kavanagh has always maintained that he and McCarten could have been a great songwriting team and that together, they could have produced something really memorable. Certainly their work showed a lot of promise. I have just stopped writing this to go and listen to one of the few pieces of McCartens music that I managed to get a recording of, a beautiful little fingerpicking melody that he was working on prior to his death. I have written previously about McCartens murder and wont add to it here except to say that his death was not just Kavanaghs loss and the world is simply an uglier place for it. Years later Kavanagh would write Something Bout the Sun, a perennial live favorite, and almost heartbreakingly in its regret. There was something about the way you lived your life is just about the best epitaph anyone could hope for and certainly summed McCarten up more than any other single line I can think off. I asked Kavanagh if the song was painful to write and he was philosophic about it. I wrote that chorus when I was realizing that life had changed for ever, and I said it in the way that was true for me, I still remember exactly when the idea popped out first, then the song was built around it, contrived around it, but the chorus still holds the kernel of how I felt, when i felt like never

before, and people might read that, they mightn't know exactly what I'm on about but they know I ain't lying AND and this is the big AND they can remember something that maybe felt like that, 'something's up but I'm not sure what it is'. The best songs don't say anything, they just give you a place to rest your own emotions, music is just a series of vibrations and requires interpretation by the listener and a cultural context to make sense, it truly is in our heads. Plus I'm quite private and I would hate to bore people so a bit of vagueness gives the listener something to wonder about and keeps my history private while allowing me to get my interior to the exterior. Inside on the outside indeed - it seems pretty clear that when Kavanagh sings I'm a little too young to be talking about my youth. that he considers McCartens death to be a pivotal moment in his life. . I didn't have the focus that a force like Shane would have provided he adds ruefully. I was designed to complement him, it was a spectacular mix, and after his death I was done being a band leader and dealing with egos. So began what Kavanagh refers to as the long drift. It did not help that he was becoming increasingly frustrated by the narcissism of the Dublin music scene. There was a brief period between Manchester and Seattle when Dublin was the trawling ground of A&R men and Kavanagh remains vitriolic about that time to this day. I was lost in the Dublin music scene, he says the moaning about the fact that they weren't getting Grammys for singing about being burned by fires and washed away by the sea. But I was too much of a chicken to say anything, instead of starting an anti-all-that band I just hid in my navel. At the same time the naval gazing was producing some good songs and he was fast making the front of the stage his home turf. Here are two memories that I have (out of many) of Kavanagh playing live. One was at an open mic session when Ashley Delaney, a friend of Kavanaghs had joined the Love Tailors and was belting through perennial country favourite Delta Dawn. At the end of the song, Kavanagh took great delight in upping the key several times, so that three or four key changes later Delaney looked like he was about to have an embolism and was singing at around the pitch where only dogs could hear him. Another time was at a Christmas Eve gig in Dublins The Sugar Club when Kavanagh was funkng his way through Sex Machine "" when over the bridge he took five minutes to explain the true story of Christmas "" how the angel of the lord had appeared onto Mary, told her she would conceive a boy child, who would be holy and close to God as would all those who follow him and that in accordance with the prophecies she should name him "" James Brown. And do you want to guess how many people failed to respond when Kavanagh added Lemme all hear you say..... James Brown. None. Thats how many. I counted them. Twice. This is

something that Kavanagh instinctively knows "" that all music is supposed to be fun. I think this is probably why Kavanagh found the Dublin scene at the time frustrating. My own abiding memory of gigs at that time can be reduced down to one moment "" sitting in Eamon Dorans listening to a band called Cacophony wondering if it would be possible to slit my own throat with a broken Pringle, which should give you some idea of why Kavanagh would not feel exactly at home in such a setting where it was rapidly becoming de rigeur to sit and noodle on a guitar with a moody spotlight on you and publicly peel your own soul like an orange. Because Kavanaghs gigs are the antithesis of all that "" they are a blast, a direct throwback to Mississippi Delta Roadhouses or that mythical Oirishness that James Cameron tried to capture in third class steerage. . Whether it be something like the above to the incredible funk version of Smells Like Teen Spirit (which has to be heard to be believed) to the everybody in on the chorus of his attempt at Rocky Raccoon "" well lets just say if they could bottle that feeling wouldnt nobody be making a living from selling horse trunks on street corners. Its an obvious and self-evident point "" music is about making your own noise, but it never hurts to state it just once more. After all, it took U2, the yardstick by which all Irish musicians are doomed to be measured against about six albums to remember it. Kavanagh himself speaks of his days in The Sugar Club this I learned some great things about what the great performers did just by playing their songs, plus the Sugar Club was total anarchy and we could experiment and take outrageous chances because we had wigs on, but we were totally sincere about playing that music, we never played anything we never absolutely loved and that came across. It did indeed. One night Kavanagh stopped mid-song and through his mic asked the sound guy to stop chatting up women and get back to the board because the feedback was killing them. How sincere about your music is that? New York. Kavanagh raves about New York and he finds it amusing that while I will think of New York in cinematic terms (my own particular drug of choice) such as the opening of Manhattan or the young Vito Corleone looking at the statue of liberty from Ellis island, he will always think of it in musical terms. Within a block of where I live Charlie Parker changed jazz, Yip Harburg wrote the Wizard of Oz, the Beats changed literature, Beck played his first show on my street a, Cole Porter and the tin pan alley greats grew up around the neighborhood, Maddonna's first place in NYC was on the next street, Jimi Hendrix built his studio a mile away and Stevie Wonder recorded his breakthrough 'grown up' albums there, the list is endless, a statistician would say that something's going on here When quizzed about the move Kavanagh shrugs. I can't say but making songs is a process of following your feelings and in 99 I had a

huge feeling that New York was calling me. The best theory so far, I heard from an old woman on the streets, is that a spirit lives in Tompkins Square Park and is inspiring people. I'd have to give the credit to the city, I always had it in me but NYC is a university and educated me in the true sense of the word. Well you'd have to live under a rock not to have been affected by NY in some way, I think the whole of civilization is responsible for the city. It doesn't really belong to the U.S. and it isn't like any other place in the country. It is where Kavanagh can now be found playing and were back to Kavanaghs idea of the universe opening up to show you the possibilities. His output getting increasingly sophisticated and engaging Kavanagh was now wearing his producers hat at a rakish angle, sampling, mixing, distorting, throwing in weird electronic noises, hell throwing in whole string sections, and still managing to produce a clear and vibrant songs that never sounded too busy or contrived. Kavanagh laughs about his own efforts though Never Seen has a door slamming which I still wake up at night shivering about whether that is the lamest idea ever. He neednt have worried "" it makes the perfect bookend to the sampled Marrakech street market musicians at the start of the song "" basically in that one punctuation mark of a door slam, he re-states that oft quotes Tolkien line about all journeys beginning from your own front door. It is great songs to introduce you to Kavanaghs work, funk with all the fun and none of the strut, an anthem about nothing more than just getting out there and seeing the world. Plus it contains one of my favorite Kavanagh lines ever. Beauty matters more than proof to me. Isnt that just a kick in the balls? Ive read books several hundred pages long that havent had one line that good. Magic Touch is a beautiful song where Kavanagh is content to repeat a simple couplet over and over (like someone saying to a lover No I REALLY love you) while adding layer upon layer of instruments to the melody, letting the music take care of the emotion. Disarmingly simple lyrics mask a complicated and deep song. LA String Ensemble is the musical equivalent of a Terence Malick film, an almost frustratingly unpredictable piece of music which grabs your interest, and almost dares you to lose it again as it heads off in all sorts of weird directions that never seem to be the same directions as they were the last time you listened to it. For the stoners out there, this would be one to stick on a compilation in between Honky Tonk Women and Number 9 Carry Me Away is Kavanagh at his enigmatic best. He sings that love keeps you moving on and on closely followed by dont walk away and shortly thereafter burn it down and light it up again Its not that Kavanagh is not unaware of these contradictions (moving and staying, destroying and creating) "" if anything he relishes them. For what is more contradictory than love. Kavanagh doesnt have the answers and he

cheerfully admits it. This is what I know, you dig a hole and plant a note and watch it grow, but I don't know. He just likes asking the questions. Summer Days and Joyce are almost like coffee and cream. Joyce is music layered under James Joyces Paris recitations of 1932 and in Kavanaghs hand is simultaneously a cry that we should embrace our artists, not deify them and a celebration of the ballsy pretentiousness of a young upstart trying to lig a bit of intellectual glamour and just about getting away with it. Summer Days complements this because it the flip side of that same point in youth - at the same time mourning not just the passing of a relationship but of a certain point of young life when people have the nerve, the pretension and the intelligence to see themselves and their own lives as a kind of literary narrative with distinct chapters and where time is just the turning of a page. Kavanagh takes his recurring themes of time and motion equaling life and experience one step further in There Was A Time. Although its not a particularly original idea, Kavanagh runs with the notion of being stuck in a moment that you cant get out off. There was a time for us. Now theres no time. That there is no us does not need to be said. Too much heat is worse than being cold. This is a man all out of his own ideas Now theres no time, now theres no rush. Time and forward motion have literally stopped. It is impossible to get past this moment. A dark idea nicely expressed and one that I find myself coming back to more and more when Im away from the song. This is clearly a big idea for Kavanagh who has stated that You have to keep swimming forward or die. It's like a cosmic joke, the higher you climb up the ladder the more vast you realise the world you're in is. It's never ending. The keys unlock the doors to rooms that just get bigger and bigger. And finally Stay Here, a rocking little tune that at slightly less than three minutes doesnt overstay its welcome. Produced and polished as hell, but interesting with it. I had to take this song out of my CD alarm clock after threatening to take the advice of Dont get up for work today. too seriously. It is a nice refreshing lemon sorbet that bounces you back after the more maudlin songs introspection and regret without feeling the need to retire to your bed for a week. Greg Kavanagh should have fame and money and liberal air-hostesses heaped upon him, not just because he is good but because if he doesnt, then we may as well all quit everything and give up. He is not too concerned about making it and has on more than one occasion expressed the feeling that he doesnt care if he ends up as Dylans Poet who died in the gutter. Not that he is interested or fascinated by the mythology of self-destruction that people associate with many Irish singers "" Van Morrison, Lynnott, Gallagher, McGowan etc, its just that he recognizes that music is not really about what Hunter S Thompson referred to as the plastic and shallow trench, where

pimps and whores run free and good men die like dogs, its about making a genuine connection with other people, making a conduit for other people to reach each other, and after that, who gives a shit whether youre leaving the gig in a limo or on the El. Kavanagh should be listened to because he is not afraid to point to his own failings and his honesty allows you to recognize your own failings and learn from them. His songs might say love is hopeless, but they also say that there is hope. Plus every so often, sometimes against your will, he will just drag you out onto a dance floor and make you shake that thang. Let me go back to Hunter S. Thompson for a second. Ben Fontaine once said that Gonzo journalism not about the essential kernel of truth at the heart of everything it was when we sent Hunter S Thompson to cover a sporting event, and he would drink a lot and write about himself. I am sitting here " it is 9.30 pm on a Tuesday and I have a drink. In about five minutes, I will go and have a smoke, but before I do I am going to tell you why you see Kavanagh at least once before you die. I once wrote a screenplay based around the lives of several friends Kavanagh included. I was pretty happy with it, except for Gregs character, which I found frustratingly elusive and impossible to pin down. Eventually after several drafts, I got a version that I was reasonably happy with and showed it to a few people, Greg included. When I asked him what he thought he laughed and said Thats not me man, its you. Disgusted I took it back and read through it again. And I realized that he was right. It really was me. Except that I was cool. And I could really play guitar. Producer: Ron Gozzo is an experienced performer with a successful career as a professional musician. Ron has played with many great artists including Chico Mendoza, Ratzon Harris, Dave Valentine and Butch Morris. He has also toured throughout Europe and the United States with various artists, including a 2003/2004 tour of Ireland (Kinsale/Cork Jazz Festival.) Ron has performed in many notable New York venues such as The Village Gate, Cornelia Street Cafe, The 55 Club and Detour. His most recent accomplishments as a jazz saxophonist are a Best Soloist award at the Villanova Jazz Festival, as well as a Best Soloist Award at the University of Connecticut Jazz Festival. In addition Ron has won a 2001 Promax award for his work on Ken Burns documentary film JAZZ. He currently writes original music for such clients as Mercedes-Benz, Bayer, PGA Golf, PBS, FOX, CNN, OPRAH and various independent film directors in NYC. His most recent film work has been seen on Showtime/Sundance and IFC. Ron has also dedicated some of his professional life to education. He has been a faculty member at Brooklyn College since 1997, and has taught privately since 1990. His latest producing credit includes "LABORFORCE" "Music For The Middle Classes" 2005

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