

Transmission: How to dance your way through a recession

With bands like the Buzzcocks, Magazine, Echo and the Bunnymen and many more all re-touring for the first time in years there is obviously room to take a good look into one of the most fertile moments in British musical history. Transmission does not and cannot content itself with Topshop making Blondie t-shirts and mass Ian Curtis necromancy...

Transmission rides the deepest wave of the Eighties revival – digging through piles of old magazines and vinyl and investigates everything with the curiosity of the archivist: Glasgow City Council's ban on punk; Scritti Politti's Marxist squat; Martin Gore's first walks around Basildon with a sampler; the rise of synthesisers and the hunger for DIY in a radically changing political and social landscape (which is eerily similar to the present...). It looks at the timelines of Mute, Factory and Rough Trade and revels in the cultural resonance of the first sounds heard after punk, which in Jon Savage's words, had changed the face of music forever.

Glasgow Calling

As well as spawning many of the acclaimed bands of the era, Glasgow remains influenced by the post-punk movement. The rhythmic structures, band culture and style that define today's 'Glasgow Sound' are in many ways inherited from the city's early Eighties and institutions, such as the Barrowland Ballroom and the Art School. In many respects, Glasgow never abandoned the early Eighties and has always hosted parties and gigs in honour of bands like Orange Juice, Talking Heads and The Associates. As the show has often noted, there are bands here making music as if it was still 1979, as well as die-hard punks for who The Damned playing Glasgow in '85 is more memorable than their wedding day. Transmission has befriended many musicians and writers who are interested in samplers, concerts and club nights. People listen from France, Italy, USA, Germany and numerous UK cities - however all sharing the same cultural resonance.

The Modern Dance?

Transmission plays a mix of sounds, from dark plaintive Goth to frivolous New Romantic, from industrial cold wave to Polish synthpop. Some of them are classics that everybody needs to pull out every so often, others are demos found on DIY mixtapes of the time or similarly obscure material. Though I do cultivate my listeners with my musical experience and specialised knowledge, the real aim of the show is to plunge them into a certain atmosphere of the time, talking through the trends, moods, obsession of the epoch and trying to make sense of them and of why they're so appealing thirty years down the line. Yes, you want the listener to dance to every beat of the drum machine, but you also want to investigate the preoccupations of the time, of which songs like Dancing on the Berlin Wall, The Queen is Dead, Everything Counts to name but three provide such incredible insight. This is also why a lot of my episodes are loosely themed: 'Playing with a Different Sex', 'State of the Nation', 'Radio Europa'... This show's first year has covered a great deal of ground in its attempt to excavate the 80s era, and yet there are still new routes to explore.

She's in Parties

I have had a great passion for this music since an early age. I started Djing at about 15 and built a crowd of post-punk lovers around me, although often outside of my own age range. After a brief love affair with faux 80s Electroclash I went back to playing more obscure and more interesting new wave and similar.