

# Claytown Troupe

Claytown Troupe returned home like conquering heroes. The frequent gigging really has payed off, giving them both a large and highly loyal following as well as confirming the bold, epic sound that this sort of music requires. The singles 'Prayer' and 'Hey Lord' have already acquired the feel of classics and are greeted as such, and with the other material shot through with the same ingredients they are going to have to do something incredibly miscalculated to fail now. Their horizons seem to be getting more expansive and what with the confirmation of The Cult support slot they may to be heading west like their spiritual brothers.

The touchstone of the Troupe sound is the voice and presence of Christian Riou. Blessed with a powerful and

soaring set of vocal chords, he exudes the same positive sense of belief which capaulted a little known Dublin quartet to various stadiums around the world. The band's obvious commerciality is perfectly timed and calculated, containing aspects of both the Astbury and the Bono mobs without being clumsily derivative. The instrumentation could be perhaps bolder at times and aid Christian in carrying the burden of the melody, but this a minor niggle in the face of the whole sound. The passion and emotional content of the music reaches anger on 'Hate to Hate', which is fittingly and sarcastically dedicated to a certain dodgy free newspapers, who have gleefully discovered a new local rock star to harass.

As the encores came and went, each received as a major triumph, there was even the Bootlegger's dream, the unreleased song, the one not included on the album, which perversely always seems better than the ones on the LP! The nineties will be financially remunerative for Christian and Co. Their audience is going to grow and grow and there's going to be a hell of a lot of jealous Bristol bands. (Flynn)