

# THE McALLISTERS

**The McAllisters** VENUE ■

*Tropic Club, Bristol*  
Judgement from on high (the N.M.E. in this case) has deemed that The McAllisters - along with 'nearly every other Bristol band' - are 'precious and boring'.

According to my dictionary this means they're 'affecting distinction'. Fair? Let's see...

Something in the atmosphere recalls the heady days of punk - dark, delightfully seedy clubs which were the ideal backdrop to bands which could confirm your worst fears or open up fresh avenues of pleasure. The McAllisters dress the part, look very serious, but actually balance a commitment to their music with a tongue in cheek approach to this thing called rock 'n' roll.

Despite the rumours they are not The Fall/The Pop Group mark two, and, over the past few months, they have developed a sound on which their own hallmark is firmly stamped. A solid, choppy rhythm underpins a much more melodic and integrated harmony than was present when I last heard them. This tunefulness is evoked in particular by the use of keyboards, harmonica and distinctive lead guitar. Another plus is the vocalist whose lyrics are increasingly upfront (unusually, even more so than on the E.P.), though still not as clear as they deserve.

Poases are struck which simultaneously show their debt to rock's cliches, whilst mocking its excesses. It's worth seeing the band for the bassist's grimaces alone.

This is a band which is growing, developing, with new material emerging. Precious? Nah, but pretty valuable nevertheless. (Sian Davies)

■ The McAllisters/God Bless You Tropic Club Bristol. 9pm-2am. £2 A fine double bill for this Hunt Sabs benefit. The McAllisters are frighteningly good and fast-improving, with the ability to bypass the superfluous and hit the central nervous system where it really hurts. Direct but never simplistic, they're a brutal band with plenty of bite.

The McAllisters... are just as brutally compelling, and are the nearest thing Bristol has to The Fall. Hypnotic, repetitive and attacking, they're a band you'll hear a lot more of as the year winds on.

**THE McALLISTERS AND OTHERS**

Herb Garden - Nouveau Hippies in Denace The Menace Jumpers - Freak out acid-head frontperson - Urgent grungy guitar - Sort of Gong meets hardcore. The Herb Garden churned out a deviant rock noise, that was consistently given pointed emphasis by the gesticulations of their manic, weird singer, Carl, who managed to pull off a hat-trick by coming on like Catweazle on speed as he flopped in frenzied rag-doll fashion around the tiny stage of The Thekia; a cheeky, irresponsible smile frozen on his face, he punctuated a storm of shuddering chords with whiney, staccato, Lydon-like vocals.

I was inclined to pass off The Long March, not only as the ugliest band in Bristol, but for perpetrating an insipid desire to be a soaring Boy's Own Rock Group of the fuzziest variety (a la Killing Joke, perhaps?) When I was informed that they were playing at only three-fifths capacity and had a prardilection for experiment, had it not been for their impressive performance of "You've Lost That Loving Feeling".

Why was the brass turned down at this gig for The McAllisters? I like to feel it throbbing through my arteries: a particular pleasure when it comes to appreciating them. They were nevertheless in fine fettle this evening: caterwauling to the crowd with idiosyncratic, punching rhythm, for which the lack of additional volume did not deter bizarre male bonding rituals from taking place below decks. An unrelenting evening of filthy rock thunder. (Alex Self)

● The McAllisters/The Long March/Arkatryne/Old Profanity Showboat. Thekia. Bristol. 8pm. Good local band package that should have included The Inquisition but now doesn't because one of them has sustained temporary injury. The McAllisters are the nearest thing Bristol has got to The Fall, with a stage intensity all their own and a great debut 12" "Too Much Money Propaganda" to their credit.

Much more hypeworthy are the McAllisters whose next single is imminent and brilliant, so sez a source close to the band... sorry that should read 'In the band'... well I reckon they're going to be the next local crew to get the attention nationally they deserve. so there..!

The McAllisters. Brutal, down to earth and powerful, they've got a lot of attitude and even more talent.