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...

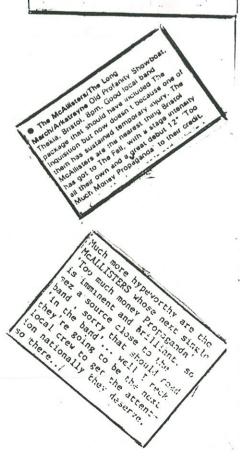
Something in the atmosphere recalls the heady days of punkdark, delightfully seedy clubs which were the ideal backdrop to bands which could confirm your worst fears or open up fresh avenues of pleasure. The McAllisters dress the part, look very serious, but actually balance a commitment to their music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

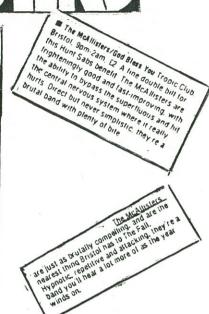
Despite the rumours they are not The Fall/The Pop Group mark two, and, over the past few months, they have developed a sound on which their own hallmark is firmly stamped. A solid, choppy rhythm underpins a much more melodic and integrated harmony than was present when I last heard them. This tunefulness 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

than on the E.P.), though still not as clear as they deserve.

Poses 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 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 devlant 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-doil fashion around the tiny stage of The Thekla; a cheeky, irresponsible smile frozen on his face, he punctuated a storm of shuddering chords with whiney, stattaco, Lydon-like wocals.

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 fuzzier variety (a la Killing Joke, perhaps?) When I was informed that they were playing at only three-fifths capacity and had a pradilection for expriment, had it not been for their impressive performance of "You've Lost That Loving Feeling".

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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 line fettle this evening; caterwauling to the crowd with idiosyncratic, punching mythm, 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)

