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bio...

BRONSKI BEAT

Bronski Beat are a London-based electro-funk trio who take their monicker from a character in the novel The Tin Drum. This is about the sanest piece of information you're likely to get out of them, but just for the record, here goes...

Jimi Somerville, Larry "Laz" Steinbachek, and Steve Bronski have been playing together for about a year now, gigging around London, building up a devoted following, and assaulting the top of the British and European charts with hugely popular back-to-back hits, "Smalltown Boy" and "Why?" Jimi sings (squeals, he puts it), writes most of the lyrics and plunks out a couple of melodies on the synth. Laz and Steve write and arrange the music and give Jimi a hard time. Most of the songs are written in Jimi's tiny bedroom high up in a Camberwell tower block where they all crowd in with the Yamaha DX7, Memory Moog, Linn Drum, etc., and drive the neighbors to distraction.

Jimi, who'll be 23 in June, was born and raised in Glasgow and left North Kelvinside Comprehensive School at 16 -- a "thicko," he claims. He spent a miserable two years working in a paint factory, then migrated to London and more misery selling kitchen accessories and do-it-yourself products in department stores. He got sacked from his next job as apprentice baker for sleeping in the ovens after strenuous nights at the disco dancing to Donna Summer, Gloria Jones, Northern Soul (classic dance/soul) Records, and (his biggest fave) Sylvester. That was his last job, and he barely survived thereafter courtesy of the ever frugal British welfare. He met his flatmate Connie at this time who introduced him to a new toy -- the video camera. They worked on the award winning educational video, "Framed Youth," a hilarious and moving series of interviews with teenagers on their experiences with their families, lovers and the law. The video includes a song written and sung (unaccompanied) by Jimi called "Screaming" - the result of other project members hearing Jimi sing along to Connie Francis and suggesting he write a song for them. This showed great courage on their part, and it worked. Larry and Steve heard it, liked it, and set it to music. They played Jimi the tape they had made, and the three of them started Bronski Beat "for a laugh".

Steve (nicknamed Stella Stagefright) also comes from Glasgow. Born in 1960, his last school was Smithycroft Secondary - "by the prison" -- where he was tragically forced to wear a tie. This



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