

Bloodflowers . . . The Last Resolution?

With every bright flash of the spotlight, his dark intense eyes beamed straight into the entire crowd. He was electrically charged, and the intensity of his voice was plagued with enchanting melan-



BY LILLY SCARPINITO

choly. Robert Smith gave his fans an unforgettable show on February 24 at the Roxy Theater in Atlanta, Georgia. Could this be the end of *The Cure*? Will Dream Tour 2000 be the last of these gothic pop legends?

The Cure, a British band, formed in 1976 when seventeen-year-old Robert Smith joined schoolmates Michael Dempsey, Lol Tolhurst and Porl Thompson. The group's original name was The Easy Cure. In their first year, they were already writing their own songs and recording demos. They produced two popular songs, which grabbed the attention of the rock world: "Killing an Arab" and "10:15 Saturday Night." Since these early beginnings, they have sold over 27 million records.

Many members of The Cure have come and gone, but the only constant of the now legendary

gothic pop band is Robert Smith. He is known to tease his raven black hair and don lily-white facial makeup with blood red lipstick; he is often called the "messiah of melancholy." Smith composes the lyrics, plays the guitar and is the lead vocalist of The Cure. The present members of the band are Robert Smith, Simon Gallup on bass guitar, Perry Bamonte on the guitar, Roger O'Donnell on the keyboards and Jason Cooper on the drums.

In their third decade of entertainment, The Cure has finally released the last installment of their masterpiece trilogy, *Bloodflowers*. The first two albums in this collection were *Pornography* in 1982, and *Disintegration*, in 1989.

Bloodflowers is the band's thirteenth studio album, debuting in the United States, February 2000.

In the week of release, the album climbed the charts to number 16. This was the best showing from a new release that week. The nine tracks on this album make up what is, in Smith's opinion, the most perfect Cure album to date.

"Performed with a musical sensibility that is truly moving, the emotional and lyrical clarity combine to make the listener uncomfortably aware that this could indeed be the oft threatened 'last ever' Cure album." - The Cure biographer, author unknown.

Rumors floated indicating *Bloodflowers* could truly end the

The Cure. Indeed, the current tour could be their last. Before the official start of the band's Dream Tour 2000, they are performing a limited number of smaller promotional shows in Europe and the United States to promote the debut of *Bloodflowers*. I had the fortunate opportunity to attend one of these promotional shows in Atlanta.

Tickets for the show in Georgia sold out in a matter of seconds, but against all odds, we decided to make the trip anyway. We had no tickets, but we went, merely hoping for a glimpse of Robert Smith. We got much more. Not only were we able to meet him, but all of us got his autograph, chatted with him and received free tickets for the show that night! He added us to the list of people to be let in to the show, no questions asked. We were all thoroughly overwhelmed and in awe of his presence.

"It was unexpected that we got the chance to meet and talk with Robert Smith," said Diana Diehl, who also attended. "It was 'Just Like Heaven'! My mind went blank except for the oblivion of him and

his words. I watched him graciously sign autographs, and couldn't believe his willingness to let all four of us in for free." For four tickets into the Roxy Theater that night, it

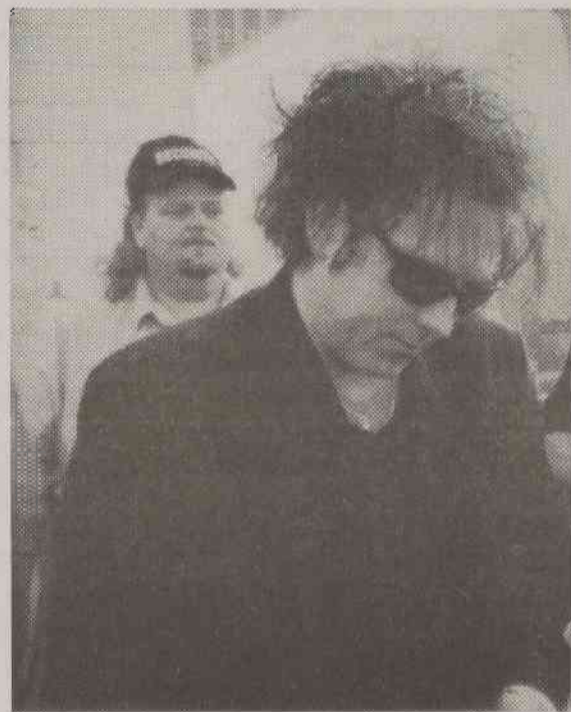


Photo by Diana Diehl

Robert Smith (above) signs autographs before the Roxy Theater performance.

would have cost us a maximum of \$2,800.

"Smith sings his own epitaph in his haunted voice: 'The fire is almost out...,' said Arion Berger of the *Rolling Stones Press*. Is *Bloodflowers* truly The Cure's farewell album? No one knows for sure at this point. However, in the lyrics of *Bloodflowers*, strong evidence hints towards the end of the professional group. Even if this is goodbye for The Cure, they will certainly never fade away. "This dream never ends, you said...The time will never come to slip away...These flowers never fade."-Robert Smith, from *Bloodflowers*.

Pick up a copy of *Bloodflowers* in the bookstore... it's definitely worth it!

Firehouse speaks on releases

Back in 1989, Firehouse blasted on the music scene with their self-titled debut album. The album featured such hits as "Love Of A Lifetime" "Don't Treat Me Bad" and the grungy rock anthem "All She Wrote." Now an older and wiser Firehouse will release three new albums next month, *Bring Em'*

features numerous power ballads and awesome guitar licks. However, the mellow feel separates it from previous albums.

"We have matured as musicians and as people. We are all now married and it has affected our music but you can still hear the new stuff on the radio and know that it is Firehouse," said singer CJ Snare.

There is also more acoustic work on this album than any other Firehouse album.

Super Hits is just another greatest-hits album but is worth checking out. Featuring all the hits, this album will help the newcomers become more familiar with Firehouse. Eighty percent of music lovers would recognize the songs on the album.

Bring Em' Out Live features 15 songs from the Japan concert last April, and new songs from *Category 5* such as "Acid Rain" "Dream" and "Bringing Me Down". An awesome acoustic version of "I Live My Life For You" gets the

crowd roaring. The audience sings along with CJ on "Don't Treat Me Bad" and creates enormous intensity. The intensity is hard to appreciate because it was recorded in the presence of a small crowd.

Listening to Firehouse's music, I have never once heard anything vulgar or obscene in their lyrics which is hard to find these days. "We try to write music that we can play for our families even though it is hard sometimes," said Bill Leverty. That is something to really admire in a rock band. "We are all very religious which most people find hard to believe," said drummer Michael Foster.

All three of these new albums are worth checking out if you like bands like Kiss, Whitesnake or Van Halen. *Category 5* is very inventive and magnifies the entire band's talent and how they come together as a whole. *Super Hits* is a great album but it is hard to rate a greatest hits considering all the songs on

that album were chart toppers. With the help of Rudy Radovich who said, "this CD rocks and I can't wait until it comes out (in the states)." Much could have made the album better, such as Bill Leverty's awesome 6 minute long guitar solo he plays at every gig and a live version of my favorite song on *Category 5*, "The Day and The Week and The Weather."



BY CHRIS "FLOWBEE" FREDRICKSON

Out Live, *Super Hits* and *Category 5*. Even though music's "flavor of the month" trend is different every month, Firehouse has not given into trends of pop culture.

"*Category 5* symbolizes us staying true to our roots lyrically and melodically," said Firehouse guitarist Bill Leverty. *Category 5*