

lifeblood

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SINGLE, WHAT SINGLE?

Almost a month after the release of "Swamp Ophelia", the first single "Touch Me, Fall" has yet to appear on MTV or in record stores. A promo CD for the second single, "Least Complicated", has reportedly been released, but it is not yet clear if the video or a commercial version will be out soon, if at all. Hopefully, with the kick-off of the U.S. tour right around the corner, Epic will release both songs in the near future.

So far, the autographed LP's seem to be a lot easier to get a hold of than was first expected. If you have not had any luck try contacting Jinny at Eat More Records or any other Atlanta record store and you should be able to find one. Apparently, at least a few of the LP's were pressed in green vinyl, but I don't know how many or how they were distributed.

As far as the Jewel vs. Cardboard case distribution, from the people I have talked to the Cardboard case seems to be the most prevalent, the only Jewel case I have actually seen was a promo copy given away the Dallas release party. Some additional promotional materials that were released with the album are a press release (reprinted on the next four pages), flats of the album cover, and a cardboard table topper (approx. 12x8) with the same drawing as the pin.

Printed on recycled paper



INDIGO GIRLS

Swamp Ophelia

Each new album by Indigo Girls presents new facets of their distinctive artistry. The Grammy-winning duo's latest Epic release, **SWAMP OPHELIA**, is no exception: Here, Emily Saliers and Amy Ray--in partnership with producer Peter Collins and engineer Dave Leonard--have crafted the most musically and lyrically ambitious album of their nine-year career.

Certainly, there's nothing in the duo's back catalog quite like Amy Ray's "Touch Me Fall." Call it a two-part magnum opus in miniature: The song balances Amy's raging electric guitar and the ace rhythm section of drummer Jerry Marotta and bassists Sara Lee and Jan Dykes with a soaring string quartet created by John Painter. Conversely, few Indigo Girls recordings stand as nakedly beautiful as Emily Saliers' "Fare Thee Well." It's nothing more than her voice and acoustic guitar, but that's all the song needs.

The adventure in orchestration which began with "Ghost" on 1992's *Rites Of Passage* (and brought cellist Jane Scarpantoni and violinist Scarlett Rivera into the Indigos' touring band) now culminates in the lush "Wood Song," with Lisa Germano's lead violin backed by the string and woodwind arrangement of Mike Batt. There's a new richness and detail in *Swamp Ophelia*'s vocal arrangements as well, with Amy and Emily joined on various tracks by singers Michael Lorant, Jane Siberry, Sam "Shake" Anderson, and The Roches.

"This Train (Revised)" is *Swamp Ophelia*'s closing song--and will doubtless prove to be its most controversial. Not since Captain Beefheart's "Dachau Blues" has a piece of popular music addressed the subject of the Holocaust with such emotional force and searing detail. The Amy Ray song was inspired by a visit to the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C. "I'd studied the Holocaust when I was college, but the Museum took my interest one step further," she says. "I had to get these feelings out of my system."

Based on the traditional gospel song of the same title, "This Train"'s lyric cites gypsies and homosexuals as well as Jews among the Nazis' victims. "That was important to me. There's a lot now being uncovered about the homosexual experience of the Holocaust and how it affected those survivors who'd been listed as what they called a '175-er'. At the Museum it's made very clear that although Jews were by far the main victims of the Holocaust, there were many others too."

In another new song, "Reunion," Amy's lyrics examine "that loss of youthful fire, the end of that period when you broke the boundaries, when you ran as hard as you could. You got older and started to temper yourself 'cause you thought that was the way to fit in. But in doing that, people seemed to shy away from their really good experiences and to dramatize the bad things. 'Faith is one thing that's hard to deliver'--that's really the crux of the song.

"Musically, it was real simple. Emily and I did the arrangement, and we put in a modulation, almost a turn-of-the-century waltz type thing. We cut it live with Jerry and Sara, then The Roches sang what we call the la-la section, then Michael Lorant sang his part. Danny Thompson put on the stand-up bass when we sent him a tape in England, and Emily played the bouzouki."

A different rite of passage is examined in "Dead Man's Hill." "I wrote this out of an experience I had when I was really young," Amy recalls, "my first exposure to real evil. I saw some high school boys light these cats on fire, and it was pretty traumatic for me."

"The point of view kind of shifts back and forth from child to adult. In some ways the song is directed to my parents--that's why I asked my dad to sing on it. It's like I'm saying 'when things are bad I may not be able to ask for your help, but I'll let you know they're bad!'"

Emily Saliers really was sitting "two stories above the street, like the lyric says" when she began writing "Least Complicated," one of several likely singles from Swamp Ophelia. "I just started thinking about the patterns I've repeated in my life--the way most people do, actually. The lessons you could've learned early on, you just passed 'em by somehow. The song is really pretty simple in content, and it just came naturally in the verse-chorus form."

Emily describes "Power Of Two" as "a straightforward love song with a little groove to it. I found those chords and liked the progression, and I wrote it very quickly. Amy and I learned it and we didn't change it in the studio, except we got Shake Anderson to sing on it. I heard Shake opening up for another artist at a gig in Nashville, just him on guitar and another guy on sax. He had this deep, booming, soulful voice that really brought out the r&b fanatic in me."

"Mystery" was the last song Emily wrote for Swamp Ophelia, about "an inexplicable attraction between two seemingly opposite people. Jane Siberry was perfect to sing on that track--her work is so mysterious to me. That's her in the third verse, that siren sound...you're not really sure it's a human voice."

Amy wrote "Fugitive" during the Indigos' last round of touring; not so coincidentally, perhaps, the song ponders the conflicting demands of love, work, and privacy. "Got to learn to respect what we don't understand," goes one key line. "That's when you're having a relationship and your relationship is invaded because of what your career is doing," Ray explains. "At the same time, you're reaping positive things from your career, you're alive and healthy..."

"It's just saying that we have to respect the way things are moving, even if we don't understand sometimes. Maybe there's something bigger in the works that we'll understand later. The song is more about wrestling with yourself than it is about being famous--we're not that famous!"

INDIGO GIRLS DISCOGRAPHY & CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

1985

Indigo Girls make their recording debut in the summer with the single, "Crazy Game" b/w "Someone To Come Home," issued on their own Indigo label.

1986

An EP, *Indigo Girls*, is released on their own Indigo label in November. Songs include "Cold As Ice," "Finlandia," "History Of Us," "Land Of Canaan," "Lifeblood," and "Never Stop."

1987

Strange Fire, Indigo Girls' first full-length album, is released on Indigo Records in the fall. This limited-edition disc, produced and engineered by John Keane, includes the original versions of "Blood And Fire" and "Land Of Canaan" plus "Left Me A Fool," "Strange Fire," "Crazy Game" and six more.

1988

Indigo Girls sign with Epic Records. Their self-titled label debut album is recorded in Los Angeles with producer Scott Litt in the fall. Participating musicians include Peter Buck, Mike Mills and Bill Berry of R.E.M. ("Tried To Be True"), Michael Stipe of R.E.M. ("Kid Fears"), Hothouse Flowers ("Closer To Fine," "Secure Yourself"), and Luka Bloom ("Closer To Fine").

1989

Indigo Girls is released in February. A single, "Closer To Fine," enters the Billboard Hot 100 in July and reaches #52; the album peaks at #22 and remains on the chart for 35 weeks. Indigo Girls tour as club headliners and as support to R.E.M. and Neil Young. *Indigo Girls* is certified gold in September, and *Strange Fire* is reissued on Epic in November with an added bonus track, the Youngbloods' "Get Together." A "Get Together" video is created in co-operation with the non-profit housing group, Habitat For Humanity. In the 32nd Annual Grammy Awards, the Indigos are nominated for "Best New Artist" and Indigo Girls is voted "Best Contemporary Folk Recording."

1990

In January, Indigo Girls' first home video, *Live At The Uptown Lounge*, is released by Sony Music Video. In May, Indigo Girls headline a benefit concert for the Children's Health Fund at the personal invitation of CHF founder Paul Simon. A new Epic album, *Nomads*Indians*Saints*, produced by Scott Litt, is recorded in Athens, Georgia and Los Angeles in the summer and released in September. The supporting cast includes drummers Kenny Aronoff and Jim Keltner, bassist Sara Lee, Mary Chapin-Carpenter (backing vocals on "Hammer And A Nail" and "Southland In The Springtime"), and The Ellen James Society ("1-2-3"). Indigo Girls' single, "Hammer And A Nail," is nominated for a Grammy Award as "Best Contemporary Folk Recording."

1991

In January, Indigo Girls make their first appearance on "The Tonight Show" with Jay Leno. In June, Epic releases an eight-song live EP, *Back On The Bus, Y'All*, recorded at Notre Dame

University, West Georgia College, and the Uptown Lounge in Athens, GA plus "1-2-3" from Nomads*Indians*Saints. In December, Indigo Girls make their fourth appearance on "Late Night With David Letterman." In the 34th Annual Grammy Awards, Back On The Bus, Y'All is nominated for "Best Contemporary Folk Album"--Indigo Girls' fourth Grammy nomination.

Indigo Girls 1991 benefit performances: for Humanitas, with Joan Baez and Mary Chapin-Carpenter (October, San Francisco); for the Verde Valley School, with Jackson Browne, David Crosby and Graham Nash (October, Phoenix); for Native American land rights in James Bay, with Browne and Bruce Cockburn (October, New York).

1992

Rites Of Passage, Indigo Girls' fifth Epic release, is issued in May. The album is produced by Peter Collins and recorded at Bearsville Studios in Woodstock, NY. The Indigos begin a US tour May 22 in Atlanta, GA. It includes four sold-out June shows at the Beacon Theater in NYC and an August 9 appearance at the Newport Folk Festival. Indigo Girls sold out two shows each at Wolf Trap (Washington, D.C.), Chastaine Park (Atlanta), Red Rocks (Denver), and the Greek Theater (Los Angeles).

In September, Rites Of Passage is certified gold after just twelve weeks on Billboard's Top Pop Albums chart--the fastest-selling Indigo Girls album to date. A new single, "Joking," is accompanied by a new video directed by Katherine Dieckman. On September 28, Indigo Girls begin a European tour combining Indigos solo shows with co-headlining dates with the Neville Brothers. By November 15, the Indigos are back in the US for a tour which begins in Montgomery, AL and ends December 6 at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, MA.

1993

On January 19 at Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C., Indigo Girls make their second annual appearance at the "Voices For Choice" benefit concert with David Crosby & Graham Nash, Elayne Boosler, Melissa Etheridge, and Betty. Proceeds are donated to Voters For Choice, a national reproductive rights organization. On February 2 in Des Moines, IA, Indigo Girls play the first of three Midwest concerts in support of the Indigenous Women's Network and its 1993 "Honor The Earth Campaign."

On April 4 at Eddie's Attic in Decatur, GA, Indigo Girls and their band kick off a two-week tour of small clubs, with all tickets and t-shirts priced at \$10.00 each. The "Ten-Dollar Tour" ends April 18 at Cabaret Metro in Chicago, IL. On April 20, Indigo Girls--as an acoustic duo--begin a college concert tour at Valparaiso University which ends May 7 at Franklin & Marshall College in Lancaster, PA. The Indigos are off the road until August 8, when they headline Ben & Jerry's Newport Folk Festival in Newport, RI. Two stadium shows with the Grateful Dead in Eugene, Oregon (August 21-22) are Indigo Girls' final US performances in 1993. In November, Indigo Girls enter Woodland Sound Studios in Nashville to begin recording their fourth full-length album, Swamp Ophelia, with producer Peter Collins.

1994

On January 4, the Epic Soundtrax album Philadelphia is released. It includes Indigo Girls' interpretation of Danny Whitten's "I Don't Want To Talk About It," originally recorded by Crazy Horse. By February, Swamp Ophelia has been completed. In March, Indigo Girls fly to Los Angeles to film their scenes in the movie Boys On The Side, starring Whoopi Goldberg, Drew Barrymore and Mary Louise Parker, directed by Herb Ross. Swamp Ophelia is released on May 10.

Interview with Chris Zegarelli after the University of New Hampshire show, April , 1994:

You recorded this latest release in Nashville, at the Woodlands studio. I did a little research and found out that Liberache recorded there, Barbara Mandrell recorded all of her stuff there, and Vince Gill and Patty Loveless did as well. I don't think of you guys in that same group, so tell me what it was like to record at the Woodlands studio, or in Nashville in general.

Emily: We picked Nashville, to be honest, because the studios are cheaper there. We wanted to cut down our budget. We spent too much money at Woodstock. Nashville is fairly close to Atlanta. They just searched out studios till they found Woodland. I loved it there. It's not portentous, its not slick, the studio just had a very good vibe.

How did you feel about recording in Nashville? Are you at all influenced by country music?

Emily: I love country music. I don't know if I am influenced by it, but I definitely love it.

Amy: I would say you are. (laughter) Over the last three years, I would say that you have been. (turns to me) She used to write songs that were much more jazzy. I think her country influence has taken some of that away and replaced it with more melody type sounds, like the way that she writes the hook. (turns to Emily) You didn't use to do that as much.

Is there anything on Swamp Ophelia that you consider a direct tie in to that influence?

Amy: No, probably not. Well, "Language or the Kiss", maybe.

Emily: As a country influence? (turns to Amy)

Amy: To me, yea.

Emily: Really? Wow.

Amy: It's that new country sound. Its like a country folk sound. Narrative, you know, really acoustic. I guess because country music seems more folksy now than it used to be. I mean, a Mary-Chapin Carpenter type thing, not like Hank Williams.

The press release photos of you two show you jumping on an acoustic guitar. (laughter) You also play the electric guitar on "Touch me, Fall". I was wondering if that was an intentional change of image that you guys had.

Amy: No. You know, we didn't even think about it. (laughter)

Emily: There was just this old guitar at the photo shoot.

Amy: It might have been a change of image that our publicist thought of. (laughter) It was just there, and we decided to make it one of the pictures, us jumping on the guitar. Those pictures just turned out better than some of the other ones. It is not a change of image. We are presenting ourselves the way we always have.

What is the influence and meaning behind the song, "Touch me, Fall"?

Amy: It is very abstract. I don't think it is easy to understand the meaning of it because I don't really either. I just kind of let it all come out. It is sort of about decomposition in general. Decomposition of love, life and fame. Everything. It is the beauty of decomposition and I am tying it into the fall, meaning the season.

Do you ever feel pressure when you are writing your music about what you listening audience will think when they hear it?

Emily: I don't think that while I am writing. I might think of it afterwards. I wonder what people will think of the songs, if they'll like them. Obviously, you want people to like your songs. I don't think while I am writing, well, I better change this. Or, if I say this, I might get this reaction. That never occurs to me.

Do you feel any kind of pressure to have a message in every one of your songs, or can you just write for fun?

Amy: I never write for fun. I hate to say it.. I write because it is something I have to get out of my system. Its tortuous almost. I am driven to do it. I write for work. I don't write because we have an album coming out. I write because I am compelled to do it. My idea of fun is when we get together and arrange the songs. You can play around as much as you want. You can learn how to sing harmonies better. Its challenging and it is fun. When you are writing the songs, though, its painful.

Do you write alone, or do you write separately?

Emily: Separately.

Why separately?

Amy: Different styles.

Emily: Yea, totally different styles, different influences, different ways of expressing ourselves. We arrange the songs together, though.

You said that arranging was fun, but do you ever have disagreements on how the song will sound in the end?

Emily: Well, if one suggests an idea and the other one doesn't particularly like it, we might say that we really didn't have that in mind for this, or whatever, but it is no big deal. Actually, arranging comes pretty easy to us.

Amy: Yea, it takes a long time but we each get final say in each of our own songs. It's pretty clear.

What kind of music do you listen to now? What are your influences on your most recent album, Swamp Ophelia?

Amy: Well, for me, while we were making it I was listening to a lot of the Beatles, the Beach Boys and the Clash. Those were the things in my CD player, but I wasn't listening to that much music. I don't tend to listen to that much music when we are making records. (turns to Emily) What were you listening to, Emily?

Emily: James Sabory, Yea, I played her CD every day. And then we got a copy of Ferron's new CD. She's Canadian. She's great. I listened to her CD a lot.

Amy: Yea, she is great.

Emily: A lot of Queen Latifa. I am really into Queen Latifa. I love her strength. I think she's a beautiful role model and she is so soulful.

Tonight you guys did a beautiful version of Paul Simon's "American Tune". I also heard you do "Daddy's all Gone" by James Taylor. How do you choose the songs you will cover? I was also wondering about the history of "Love of the Common People".

Amy: Well, we choose covers that are either obscure or ones that we think we can do differently from the way someone did it originally. It is also usually people that we like a lot. That is a great James Taylor song.

Emily: Yea, we picked "Down by the River", by Neil Young and "Tangled up in Blue", by Bob Dylan. We absolutely love those songs. It is so fun to sing a song that you love.

Amy: "Love of the Common People"...

Emily: I knew that song from years and years and years ago.

Amy: A nun taught you that, or something. (laughter)

Emily: And then Paul Young recorded it when we were in college. That is the version we learned. We used to look for songs to cover.

Amy: Because we were a cover band at one time.

Do you have any personal favorites out of the songs that you have written, or songs that you love to perform live?

Emily: There are songs now that we dread to perform live. (laughter)

Amy: Yea, there are plenty of those. Our favorites change all the time. I really like to play the new stuff now.

Was that a weird feeling for you to know that the songs you performed tonight were previously heard by none of the members of the listening audience?

Amy: It is a weird feeling if it doesn't go over too well, but tonight everyone was so supportive that it didn't feel funny.

Emily: It is definitely not the same as when people really know it and are singing it. It is a different vibe, but tonight it was such a great crowd. You could tell that they were really listening and trying to take it in. There is a lot of stuff to take in on this new album, too. I don't think all the stuff is immediately accessible.

What do you think of the fact that there is an Indigo Girls mailing list on the Internet, on the computer. They talk a lot about your music and live performances, and I was wondering how that made you feel.

Amy: Well, there are positive parts about that. A lot of that internet stuff has helped a lot of musicians that I know as far as publishing tour schedules. The only negative ramification I see is when people start talking about you personal life. Where they last saw you...

They try to steer away from that.

Amy: ...well, I know they don't. I have seen a lot of print-outs. (laughter) So I can tell you they definitely don't steer away from it.

Emily: Is that the stuff we used to read on the bus? Horrible stuff...

Amy: Yea, there are certain people that don't steer away from it. And they infiltrate the whole system. And then there are people who are responsible. And it is hard to keep the whole system responsible, because people will be people, so I think you have to take the good with the bad. The bad with the good. (laughter) You know? I appreciate the support it gives us, but...

There is a fine line that can't be crossed?

Amy: ...well, it is not necessary to try and guess where somebody lives. Or guess where you saw somebody the other night. It's just like, get a life. But the support of the music itself, I think that is a brilliant idea. To support musicians through the whole computer system I think is great. And it works. It has helped a lot of my friends.

They talk a lot about other artists who have relations to you or other groups that they have listened to, who are the same genre as you. And it seems to help those artists who are trying to make it. Like Kristen Hall.

Amy: Totally. Totally.

How did you guys get involved in the New Mongrels?

Amy: Well, the guy who wrote all the songs for that is a friend of ours from Emery, he is an actor now. He moved from Atlanta to Seattle to LA. He had an ongoing group called the New Mongrels. He always talked about one day getting together and making a CD, and so he decided to do it and I decided to put it out on Daemon and we are now a part of it. It is a group of a bunch of different musicians. Us, Gerard McHugh, Michael Lorant...

Michelle Malone is a part of that as well?

Amy: ...Michelle Malone, different members from Big Fish Ensemble, a drummer from a band called Celibate twist, from Seattle. Half of it was made in Seattle and half was made in Atlanta.

Was it hard for you guys to play in a larger group?

Amy: We didn't record anything live. All the songs were done in pieces. Everyone came by and did their piece. We sung to the tape, so it wasn't hard at all. It was really easy.

Have you worked with Michael Stipe since he sung with you on the song "Kid Fears"?

Amy: No. We never see him. They [REM] are everywhere. We never see him. (laughter) We met them in the beginning and did an acoustic trio thing together at the Athens Music festival. We started writing a song together, and then he helped us. He didn't get us a record deal, but he inspired us and gave us encouraging language and the people around him encouraging language. I think he lent more validity to the situation for us.

Emily: We opened for them on their tour and that was a huge kick start.

Amy: There were a lot of people there. That was very nice of them.

What's next for you guys?

Emily: We are doing these four college shows, and then we are going to Europe in May. We are doing Earth Day in Atlanta, at the Earth Jam. Mary-Chapin Carpenter will be there along with Nanci Griffith and Jackson Browne. And then we will start touring the states in June. And then at the end of the year we will do a rock-and-roll club tour and some theatres. Then we will do a benefit tour to help support Native Americans.

Amy: Yea, in '95.

Are you guys going to do a version of the \$10 tour?

Amy: Yea.

Emily: Yea, cheaper, though.

Amy: We are going to do the \$7.50 tout (laughter)

Which cities is that tour going to be passing through?

Amy: We don't know yet. We don't know if we are going to do east coast or west yet.

East please, east? (laughter)

Amy: Maybe we will try to split it up and do half on one coast and half on the other. It will just be me and Emily.

Are you going to be playing with a larger band?

Amy: We will do theatres and probably colleges later in the year with the band...with some band.

Emily: It will be fun though.

Do you find it to be a hard life? Being on the road and all?

Amy: No. I mean the invasion of privacy. Obviously, that issue keeps coming up. That is the only negative part about it. And that is a pretty minimal thing to handle, when you get to travel all over.

Emily: It is a great life, I mean it gets tiring at the end of the touring season. An you are away from home so much and your personal life suffers. But, there are many blessings.

Amy: And nothing to complain about.

That's nice to hear.

Amy: Ask us in three months. (laughter)

From The Chicago Tribune, May 1994:

Artistic schmaltz

Indigo Girls flounder in the quagmire of 'Swamp Ophelia's' humorless excess

Indigo Girls Swamp Ophelia (Epic)

★★

Once a folk duo whose soaring voices often overcame overly precious lyrics, Emily Saliers and Amy Ray have discovered Art. The sweeping, heavily orchestrated arrangements are meant to add drama to songs like "Fugitive" and "Touch Me Fall," but they only make Ray and Saliers sound like they're doing a bad Springsteen imitation, circa "The Wild, The Innocent and E Street Shuffle"—embracing the excess while missing all the jokes. Although there are many individual moments of beauty, they're never sustained for an entire song. Without a single memorable melody or a smidgen of humor, "Swamp Ophelia" is a mess. As Saliers sings, "The hardest to learn was the least complicated," and this album proves it.

Greg Kot

From the Baltimore Sun, May 10, 1994:

Indigo Girls' Flashy "Swamp Ophelia" Gets Bugged Down In Sound

by J.D. Considine

From the first, the conventional take on the Indigo Girls was to peg them as latter day folkies. It seemed logical enough. They had the right look (work-class casual), the right background (years on the coffeehouse circuit) and, most importantly, the right sound (acoustic guitars and intertwining voices). All told, it was such a comfortable pigeonhole for the duo that neither Top-40 success nor MTV could dispel most listeners' initial impression.

"Swamp Ophelia" (Epic 57621, arriving in stores today) ought to change that in a hurry. Although it doesn't mark an especially dramatic change in their sound -- no, the Indigos haven't gone grunge or added a rapper to their entourage -- the album does find the duo abandoning the unvarnished simplicity of folk music for the carefully crafted sound of singer/songwriter pop.

This isn't necessarily a bad thing. On one level, this shift allows the Girls to broaden their sonic palette. Rather than leave the album mired in the monochromatic strum of acoustic guitars, there's a wide array of instrumental color, fleshing out their tunes with everything from marimba to melodica.

Granted, the arrangements don't necessarily call attention to themselves. "Language or the Kiss", for instance, seems at first glance to present the Girls au naturel, with nothing beneath the vocal line but a touch of acoustic guitar. But a closer listen turns up electric bass, hand drums, piano and the marimba.

Other songs are less circumspect in their approach. "Fugitive", for instance, starts in a blaze of color, whipping cellos, trumpets and tubular bells into a semi-orchestral froth. Add in the Indigos' intertwining vocal lines, and the result seems to sweep the listener along in lush swirls of sound.

Trouble is, that sound and fury signifies nothing, apart from a fondness for flashy arrangements. "Fugitive", like most of "Swamp

Ophelia", is great when it comes to making grand gestures but a good bit weaker when it comes to making sense. It isn't that the lyrics tend more toward the overblown than the poetic -- though how else to describe lines like "I was aching with freedom kissing the damned"? -- so much as the way the song suggests urgency without seeming to have anything particularly urgent to say.

Runaway ambition, though, is clearly the group's Achilles heel. It's easy enough to spot on the lyrics sheet, and not just because the thing sports more verbiage than the average novella.

It's a little trickier, however, to pin down the problems in a song like "Touch me, Fall". Is it the way the string quartet section unexpectedly leads into a bad imitation of Springsteen's "Jungleland"? Is it the arty bridge with its noodling trumpet and self-consciously dissonant string glissandos? Or is it the ridiculous raucous rave-up that caps the song?

No, it's that each of these elements follow one another without any sense of purpose.

Still, even that bit of artistic self-indulgence pales when compared to the album closing "This Train (Revised)". Apart from the fact the Woody Guthrie's "This Train Is Bound For Glory" wasn't particularly in need of revision, the ham-handed holocaust lyrics the Indigos insert convey not horror or outrage but clinched and predicable sanctimony. No doubt it was meant to be stirring, but frankly, the only thing it moved this listener to do was turn the stereo off in disgust.

From Mademoiselle, June 1994:

indigo girls

SWAMP
OPHELIA

When the Indigo Girls released their first album in 1989, they had a twinge of the smugness that gives political correctness a bad name. But anyone who ignored them for that reason ought to reconsider, because their sixth release (on Epic) offers music that is sincere without being pretentious. It's one of those rare albums that has universal appeal: Their songs are sweet, and they're full of hummable melodies. Emily Saliers and Amy Ray strike a balance of harmonies, backed by gentle folk guitar and piano. Even the most jaded listener will appreciate the simple intimacy of the love ballad "Fare Thee Well." Like many of the Indigo Girls' songs, this one calms the soul. ●●●●

THE BACK PAGE

I have gotten a lot of questions lately about my move to Atlanta, all I can say at this point is that the big Merv has seen fit to transfer me into a better job than the one I had before so it appears that my address will remain as follows for the foreseeable future:

Carolyn Spidle
P.O. Box 940643
Plano, Texas
75094
(214) 424-1591

If you have called or written lately and haven't heard back from me, my apologies, things here in Texas have been chaotic at best. They appear to have settled down for the time being so if you want to give me another try I promise to try to do better.

If you are interested in obtaining the EP, I have been contacted by someone with one to sell, so give me a call and I will hook you up with them. This is the first one of these that I have heard of for sale in over a year.

The great interview with Chris Zegarelli was sent to me by someone from the Internet, I am not sure if it is slated to be published anywhere or not.

I got a call after the last issue asking why I published negative reviews of "Swamp Ophelia" (there are more in this issue). I have stated this before but will again, I think it important to present all points of view, even those that I may not necessarily agree with. It's the only way to get a full picture.

As always, thanks for your patience and your support of Lifeblood, and if you are fortunate enough to have tickets for any of the upcoming shows have a great time!

Take care and be well -

Carolyn