WET WET WET

WEMBLEY ARENA, LONDON

WET Wet Wet are commercially triumphant and are reviled by the music press. Understandably so. One of them looks like Stuart Pearce, another like Tin-Tin. Yet Wet Wet Wet have made six (count 'em) of the best Top Ten hits of the last four years. All are made great by two factors. One is key changes. You don't wanna know. Key changes are, like, musical stuff. Wet Wet Wet are good at key changes like Dorothy Parker was glib, zebras have stripes and Margaret Beckett hired an image consultant four weeks ago.

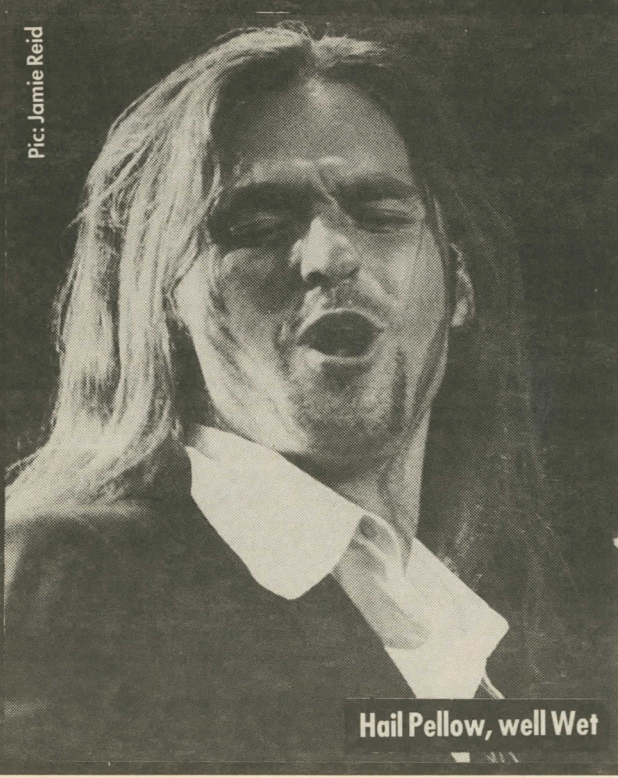
The other thing that makes Wet Wet Wet great – and this, though true, is both grotesque and distressing – is Marti Pellow. Sometimes God gives people gifts, and He is not always discerning in his charity. God made Linford Christie fast. Christie appears to be a decent sort. God made Jeanette Winterson an intellectual. Winterson writes shit books. It's all random, see. We inhabit a meaningless universe. While watching Wet Wet Wet, I am guided to this realisation. Marti Pellow is a zealously uncool goon but he has a vocal ability and a grasp of the effective cliché unrivalled in the contemporary pop circus. Life is unfair.

It is unlikely that the audiences are considering the injustices of existence. Young, old, fat, thin, unisex and uninformed, they whoop (even for the profuse cover versions) and sing badly with a determined denial of irony and camp. They are serious. They probably "see right through" such "fakers" as Pulp. When Marti says, "Let it go, Wembley", they come on and let it go. Marti is so self-consciously handsome he's ugly, so narcissistic he's loose. If you were forming a band at school and someone like Marti came along wanting to be the singer, you would be grateful for your good fortune. You would.

All this bollocks about 2 Unlimited and Reel 2 Reel being hip in two decades' time? Way too shrewd a theory. Pop is not shrewd. Pop is random and unfair and daft, just like the other one, life. Pop is the sort of thing that means "Love Is All Around" is the biggest hit of 1994 and will still be played across the board in 2014. You hate it. You'll love it. You'll stroke the shiny heads of your children and beam beneficently, knowing it is tedious to whinge about Wet Wet Wet. It is fate. You'll feel it in your fingers, you'll feel it in your toes.

What I reckon is, God has an awesome sense of humour.

CHRIS ROBERTS



Pic: Jamie Reid

Hail Pellow, well Wet