

BREAKING DOWN THE

HOUSE OF LOVE

ARE CREATION'S

LATEST

HOPEFULS. JOY

PRESS INVITES

HERSELF IN

THE HOUSE OF LOVE: a tiny image, suggesting a warmer, more interior world. A romantic shelter where the slightest shudder is an earthquake, the wrong word an ending, and a kiss is all. A space where the vulgarity of deceit dissolves into the comfort of familiar knowledge, where rain reverberates. Real and yet unbelievable.

"The Doors did a song in which they saw the house of love as a brothel," observes singer and guitarist Guy Chadwick, crumbling the scenario completely.

As it is, things are not what they seem. The House Of Love meet me not in a house, not in a cave, not under a lilac bush, but in a pub. No... make that a bistro. Already there's a touching concern for cushioning appearances. Never mind that the band are poverty-stricken and on the dole; they actually made a few quid from their last

gig and they've just put out their first single on Creation.

"Shine On" is the single, a buoyant web of guitar brightness and romanticism. Velvets, Byrds, Spector — all of these have been mentioned, and one would be terribly out of line.

"For us it's just a theme — atmospheric, powerful and quite obscure lyrically. The first line is 'In a garden in the house of love...'"

Fleeting images whirl through the needle, from references to religion and youth to lines like "I'm not the pleasure that I used to be", while the meeting of Guy's voice with that of guitarist Andrea's finds a tenderness of its own. At a time when things are just getting louder and faster, progressively slurred and indistinct, a band with subtleties and a hint of nervousness might be canonised or served on a platter. They supported Zodiac Mindwarp at the Camden Palace and had sugar cubes thrown at

them. They laughed.

"The name The House Of Love' was taken from Anais Nin's 'A Spy In The House Of Love'. There's a sexuality and a mystery that she gets across and she's always pulling one over. For example, a lot of her writing was supposed to be written for males, and yet they're often peculiarly non-sexual, or extremely erotic for women. That sort of ambiguity interests me."

If this ambiguity allowed the sex-minded Doors to envision Nin's house as a brothel, what does the name suggest to you?

"We're a very, very close band," Guy says, as drummer Pete and bassist Chris nod.

"House Of Love actually became relevant to the way we felt. It can mean a family or a brothel or a clutch, but it's intimate..."

"The lyric is just painting a picture really. Religion does come up quite a bit, there's definite good and bad clearly

stated in one-off lines. Religion generally speaking in 1987 is the most ludicrous thing to live by, you either have to be very rich or very stupid. So it's a contradiction, religion representing good when in actual fact it doesn't. Everyone in the group is terribly romantic and it is quite romantic as a song."

Pete and Chris are both slightly startled as Guy laughs aloud: "We have decided it has no meaning!"

Romance?
"No, the lyric to 'Shine On' is just hopeful and optimistic."

A new band shuffling around the crowded stables of indie pop — not making an incredibly new noise or an infallibly polished noise, but just a moving, optimistic rumble — how can you be hopeful?

"It is hard to treat music as an art because so much has already been done, especially if

you play three guitars, bass and drums," Guy admits. "But as long as you still have passages that make people's hair go up..."

Guy searched out Creation because he saw it as one of the last indies to actually act like an indie and still have a respected profile. As for the nostalgia crew they're bound to get lumped in with, Guy sees their dissimilarities even at the root of influence: "We don't have the same reference points. I'm not influenced by music so much as other things like books and films."

"And we certainly don't have the 'perfect pop' mentality," interjects Chris. "Like you said, we have flaws and that's quite a compliment really because we're not bland and perfect."

At the same time, The House Of Love don't revel in amateurish imperfection. They're beginning to reconcile the ideals of freshness and control.

WALLS OF HEARTACHE

"Sooner or later we're going to have to do things like practise endings, because we tend to stop rehearsing when we've got the feel of something. And live, because we're so new and because we're so nervous, the little bits and pieces, the meanings and subtleties always get overlooked."

The House Of Love live are five people standing taut, waiting to be moved, occasionally exploding but keeping their hands over the rawness they imagine beating away underneath.

"We do this song called 'Plastic' about someone who loses his face in an industrial accident... Everyone has just latched on to the odd word or something, and now the music's much more potent than the lyrics. I sing deadpan because that's all I need to do. I have developed, I used to be so uncomfortable I couldn't look at an audience.

"We are a very shy group, and it can be misinterpreted. Andrea, for example, who's German, has only lived here about 15 months and doesn't understand English very well, and so people don't understand why she's not talking..."

"But there isn't a pleasantness about the shyness," Chris points out. "It's very real."

And real shyness can be sheer terror at a party, stammering and praying, or living in a bedsit for six months and talking to oneself so the voice won't wither. From one extreme to the other? Is this five shy people who want to be The Rolling Stones exorcising their fear on stage?

"There is a lot of truth in the creative person leaning towards excessive behaviours. I just read a biography about Scott Fitzgerald who used to drink all day, he was completely manic. But his books are so romantic and effortless."

That need to reach over self-consciousness is evident in The House Of Love. A fear of going the whole way smacks up against the determination to do so.

"It goes all the way through the group, that tension. It gets very weird sometimes. Even Andrea — she's the straightest, her playing's just perfect and she looks straight ahead — in the studio, you hear so much emotion pouring out! Or Terry" (lead guitarist) "the way his fingers walk up the fret like someone trying to find something. It's just chronic."

Emotion for The House Of Love seems to be the tiny moments of relief in between the walls they've built up. The momentary sting of their instrumental B-side before a total immersion in the dream-sleep of "Love". There are no historicisms, and no credo to boot. Just wishful thinking.

