Shimmer Chill

ELEFTHERIA PARPIS

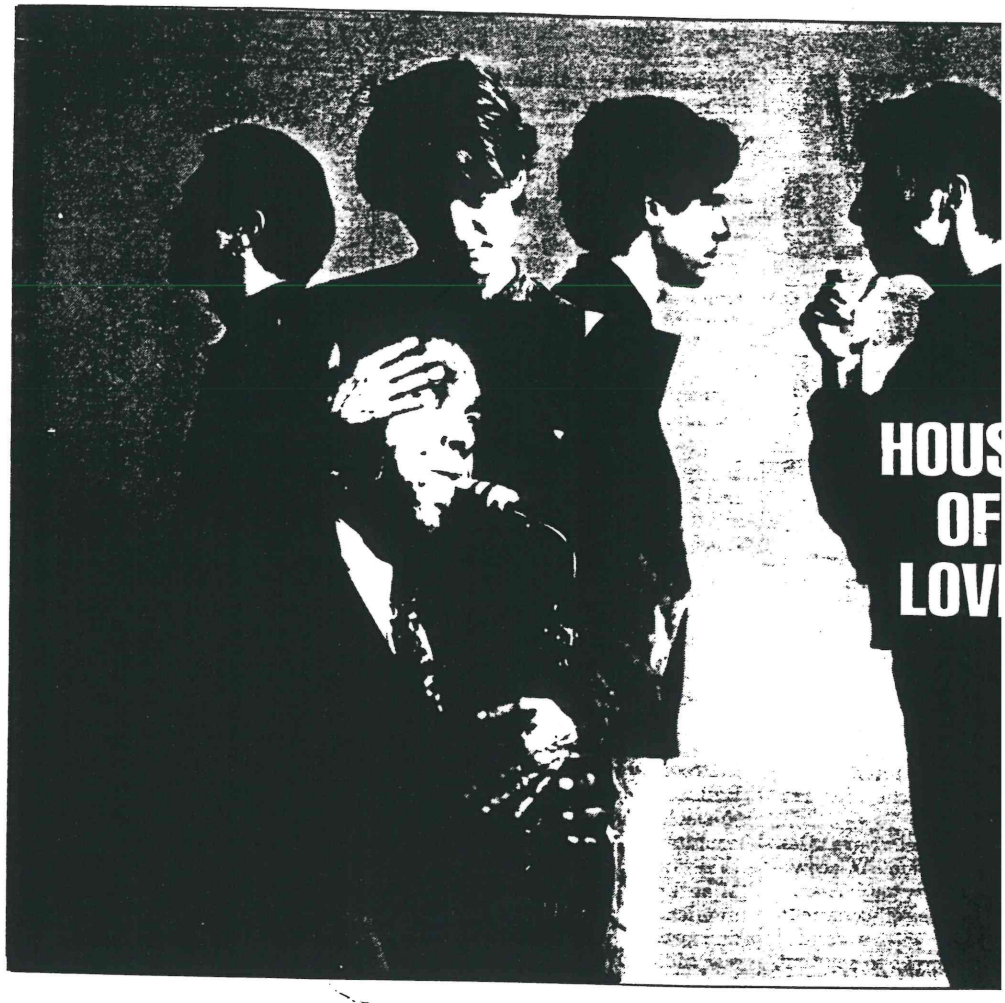
Guy Chadwick, the lead singer of House of Love—known as much for his reserved demeanor as his brooding music, is not one to mince words. "I think this is one of the best records to come out of England in a long time," he says, boasting of the accomplishments of House of Love's second full length release, *Babe Rainbow*.

Named after a Peter Blake painting in Pete Townsend's Eel Pie Studios in Twickenham, England, Babe Rainbow features the atmospheric guitar playing that has become Chadwick's trademark. With a new lineup that adds Woodentops' guitarist Simon Mawby to the constant rhythm section of bassist Chris Groothuizen and drummer Peter Evans, House of Love is finally nearing the original concept Chadwick had envisioned when the band was formed six years ago in Camberwall, London.

Producer Wayne Livesey, celebrated for his work with the The, Julian Cope and Midnight Oil, was chosen to help the House of Love record the new release, and produce an album that would keep all elements of the music in the forefront. "One thing we wanted to do is make a complete record with the depth we feel we have as a group," says the timorous frontman. "I felt we hadn't done that until now."

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One of the interfering elements has been Chadwick's presumed megalomania. "It sometimes becomes a problem," says Chadwick of his overshadowing of the other band members. "We know it's a band and that's the main thing. I'm the writer and I started the group, so from an outside point of view, it's easier to focus on me."



Preferring ambiguity in his lyrics to any interpretation at all, Chadwick says House of Love songs are at once both deep and meaningless. "I'm not a preacher or dogmatic in any way. I'm more into casual imagery that latches onto a theme," he says.

Most often the theme or tone is one of cynicism or impending doom an incessant use of sullen images and musical textures that has given both the songwriter and band a reputation for a sour disposition. Babe Rainbow is doused with grim hopelessness on songs like "You Don't Understand," "Crush Me," "Cruel" and "Burn Down the World." "I'm very up and down as a person and that's normal," Chadwick maintains. "Our music is based on emotion, not forumla."

While the House of Love has garnered some success in the United Kingdom and Europe, it has yet to warm up to American audiences past the noted indie hits "Christine" and "Shine On." Despite the fact that Chadwick says "America rules music" today with bands like Faith No More, the Red Hot Chili Peppers, Metallica and Nirvana, the singer downplays the importance of the States to the ambitions of House of Love. "We're not a pop band, so we've never had a big single anywhere," he says. "We only came to America for the first time two years ago."

COVER
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