

ROCK TALK

With Stephen Fearing

by Kirby Ferguson

This interview was originally twice this length; half was actually about Stephen Fearing and half was me asking him about music. I boiled it down to the half I think more interesting. I considered my questions about him mechanical ("How did you learn to play guitar?" Who wants to read that shit?) and I think I got mechanical answers. I believe this interview is far more interesting. Anyway, enjoy, I guess.

Here's the basic facts about Stephen Fearing that I ended up throwing in the thresher: Fearing will be opening for Sarah McLachlan, March 11 here (a gig that will already have happened by the time you read this; hope you saw it, it's one of the most interesting shows I can think of to come here in a long time); he has two albums, *Out to Sea* and *Blue Line*; and is not unlike Bruce Cockburn. He's quite a talented man and gave me a pretty interesting interview.

The man you are most often compared to is Bruce Cockburn. Do you see the similarity, and was he an influence on you?

I see the similarity in that we're both songwriters. I wouldn't say I've been influenced by him in a direct way in that I've learned all his songs, though I've certainly learned some of them, but it's more just being influenced by watching someone who you admire continue to go and grow and do their thing and write songs. I think at some point or another when you're doing this you look at other people to see how it's done, and he's certainly someone I've watched to see how it's done.

You've played with him, haven't you?

Yes, actually I did a tour with him before Christmas, and I think we did about eleven shows together.

And how was that?

It was great. It was great to hear some of those tunes that I know pretty well, like "Waiting For a Miracle," performed to see how they've changed also with his new band.

If someone goes out and buys *Blue Line* and loves it, what are some other albums you'd recommend they check out?

Well, some of the albums that I love--there's an album by a fellow named John Martin called *Solitaire* [I think, either that or *Solid Air*]. John Martin is someone I'd definitely tip my hat to as an influence for me, more in his guitar playing and singing style than his songwriting, but I just love what he does. It's a very percussive use of the acoustic guitar, very rhythmic.

I guess some of Richard Thompson's stuff as well. If you went back and looked towards some of his mate-

ESSAYS
RESUMES

TYPING
566-5413

LASER PRINTER

