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# **music 92**

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THE DIVA INSIDE  
**ANNIE  
LENNOX**

**'ABC FOR KIDS MONTH' SUPPLEMENT**  
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**VIDEO 92: GHOST, KEEF, SALT 'N' PEPA**

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# ANNIE LENNOX

## Better The Diva You Know...

**A**fter the Eurythmics' last album and tour, Annie Lennox the band's cool, strikingly beautiful singer felt it was time for a holiday. Her co-Eurythmic, David Stewart, stayed unusually busy: he released two albums of fairly traditional guitar rock (a far cry from his band's style), turned his hand to production duties for a slew of new bands, and generally retained a high profile. Lennox, however, just seemed to vanish.

Predictably, the rumours abounded: it was claimed that she had been broken completely by the still-birth of her child with Israeli film-maker Uri Fruchtmann, that she was suffering severe exhaustion, that she had given up music altogether and gone into retirement.

Now, with a healthy daughter and the release of her first solo album, the aptly-titled "Diva", the singer sets about clarifying the situation, and explaining just where she's been for the past two years:

"Those retirement reports were more wishful thinking, I think!" she laughs. "I just wanted to have a break. I'd been making music for what felt like forever, and I'd never really had any time to myself.

"I also knew I wanted to start a family, and so I thought I'd stop all musical activity completely until I knew what was happening. And as luck would have it, I did become pregnant again.

"But while I was carrying my daughter, I started to wonder what I could do afterwards, and the thought of writing a record of my own really appealed to me."

For one so long so long associated with a songwriting and performing partnership, the decision to go it alone was, surprisingly, not as daunting as Lennox feared: "I'd had visions of having a terrible time without my collaborator there, without Dave, because the two of us worked so closely together for so many years.

"So I took my time with the

than her Eurythmics output which, though sublime pop, dwelt unhealthily upon the miseries of love.

"I was always looking for a good relationship," she confessed in interview last year. "Eurythmics was the mainstay of my existence and yet it was hollow. The irony was that though I was lonely, miserable

record, and tried not to feel under very much pressure. I started with a clean slate: a new manager and musicians I'd never worked with before. And really, the only problems I had were during the songwriting process. I had doubts about my songwriting ability — I've always been like this, I hasten to add — and I missed having

Garden" and "Sweet Dreams (Are Made Of This)".

"Well, perhaps it does sound a little like the first Eurythmics things, but it's not a deliberate thing. I suppose, I was just trying to find a source of music that I identified with.

"To me," she adds, "it's a very female-sounding album; it's very feminine in its atmosphere and its sounds. Looking at it in a more objective frame of mind, now, because I'm further away from it, it seems like a woman's work, somehow."

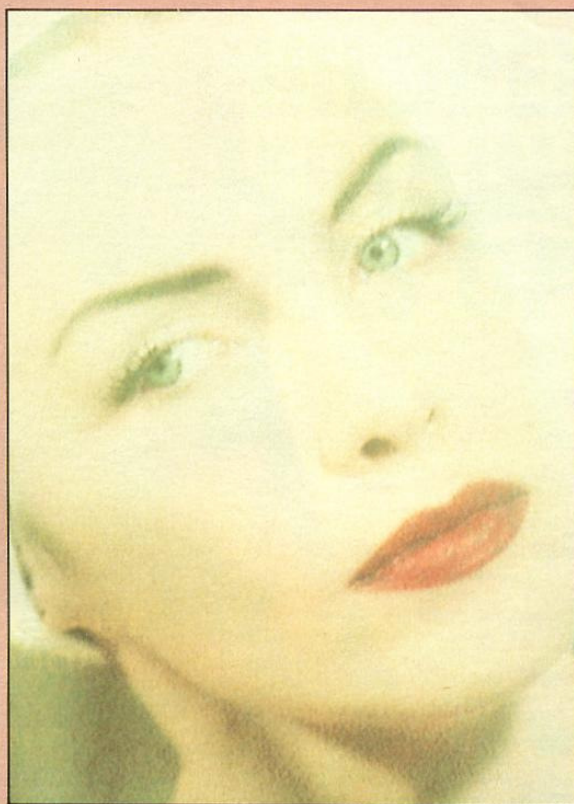
The album is actually a richer work than the last couple of Eurythmics' albums. The first single, *Why*, is indicative of the rest of the songs: a moody, meditative piece driven by a lush synthesiser wash, over which her voice flickers brightly. The majority of the songs are slower numbers, at once directly emotive (the lyrics) and coolly artificial (the music) in a way that suggests early triumphs like *Love Is A Stranger*.

Lennox agrees, adding, "It's very important to change. The longevity of the Eurythmics must mean something, and I think a lot of that was due to the fact that Dave and I wanted every record to sound different from the one before. So many people just tread water, sadly. They end up sounding like pale copies of themselves. Whereas we always thought there was something else on the horizon, and so we chased that. And that's what I'm still doing today I hope," she adds lightly.

"With the Eurythmics, a lot of the songs were very personal statements cloaked in a kind of symbolic disguise. If I've learnt anything from the success I've had," she says quietly, "it's not to give all of myself, to always try to keep something back, and to retain some privacy. That's very important to me, because I've always felt slightly apart from people not superior or inferior but simply ... distant. That's just the way I am."

Annie Lennox: *Diva* (BMG)

SHANE DANIELSEN



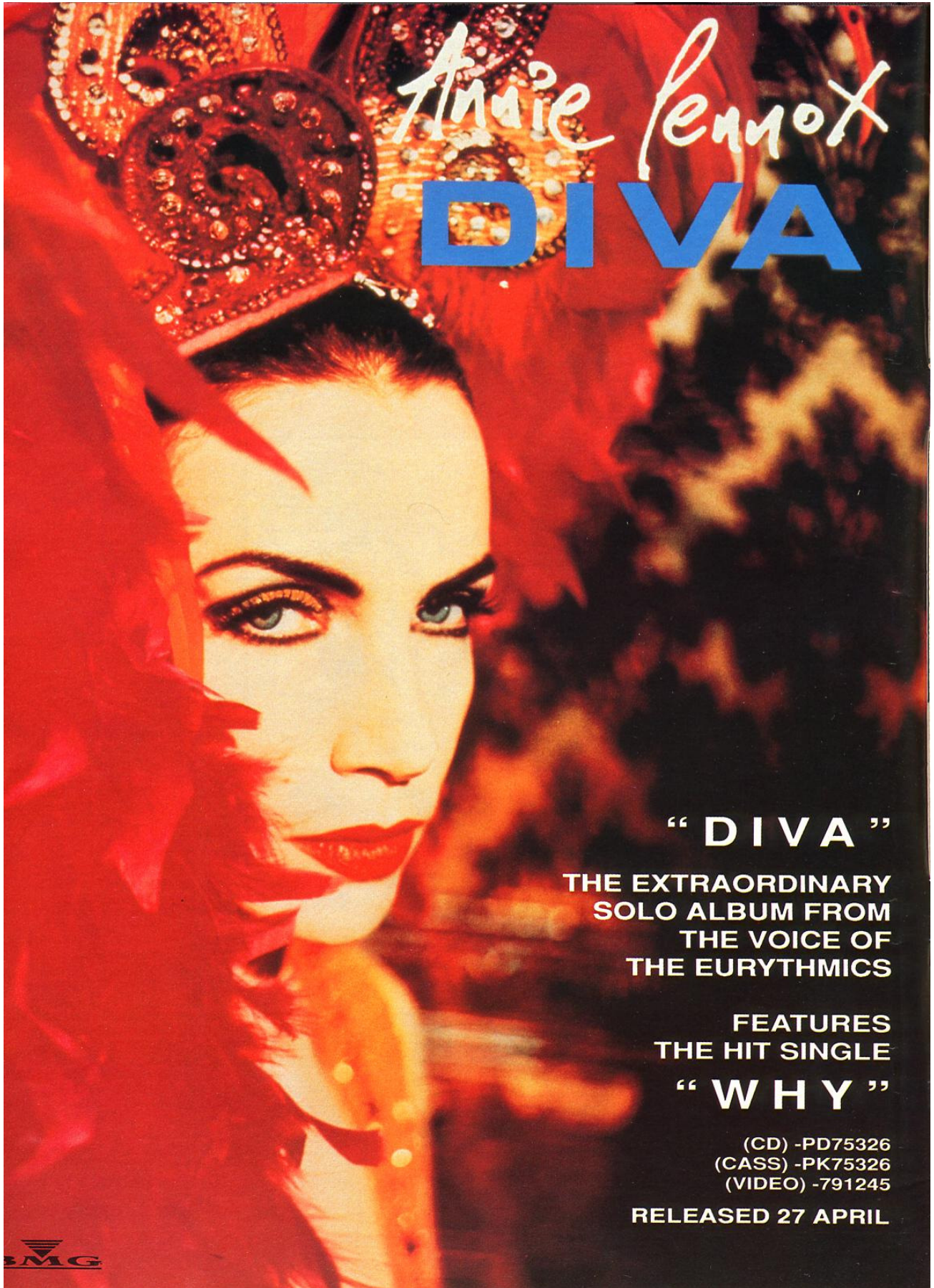
and unsatisfied, the more hurt I'd get, the more intense the songs — like *Would I Lie To You?*)

On "Diva", the only real 'pop' song, the sardonic *Keep Young And Beautiful*, is an extra track, included on CD and cassette only. Musically, "Diva" comes closest to the keyboard-dominated first Eurythmics albums "In The

Dave to bounce things off.

"But when I was kicking and screaming that I couldn't do it, Steve Lipson, who produced the record, told me I just had to get on with the record. And since there was no way around it, I managed to get through it."

On "Diva", songs like *Precious* and *Legend In My Living Room* hint at a greater emotional maturity, and calm,



Annie Lennox  
**DIVA**

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