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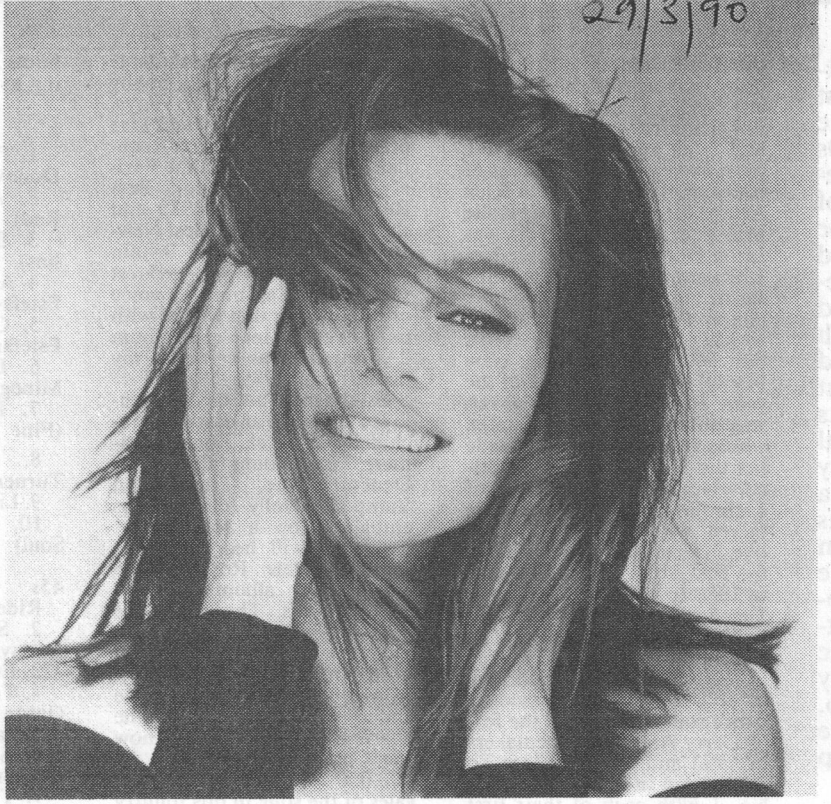

Belinda Carlisle

Record review

1988 will be remembered as the most successful year for women in pop music. For the first time in 35 years of pop charts three girls in succession were No. 1 – namely Belinda Carlisle, Tiffany and Kylie Minogue, and there was also an all-female Top 3 for the first time. Both these feats were repeated later in the year, emphasising the strength and popularity of female performers.

In America, Whitney Houston broke the all-time record of six consecutive No. 1 hits set by the Beatles (in 1966) and the Bee Gees (in 1979), when her "Where Do Broken Hearts Go?" became her seventh successive chart-topper. The artist of the year was the Australian Kylie Minogue who became the youngest girl (at 20) to reach No. 1 in the LP chart. Her "Kylie" became the top seller ever by a woman, the best selling debut of all time, and Ms. Minogue was the youngest artist ever to have a million-selling album. Folk-singer Tracy Chapman from America beat Kylie by a matter of weeks to become the first woman to top the LP chart with her first release.

Marty Wilde's daughter Kim enjoyed success throughout the 1980s with a consistent run of hit singles and 1988 proved to be one of her best years. The former singer with the Go-Gos Belinda Carlisle overcame her personal problems after the group's demise, to become one of the major solo stars of the year with a string of great singles – the best being the summer ballad "Circle In The Sand". It was also a great year for Yazz who enjoyed the biggest hit of the summer with her remake of "The Only Way Is Up". Other ladies to enjoy chart action in 1988 included Mica Paris, Joyce Sims, Anita Baker, Sade and a shining new local talent – Julia Fordham from Hayling Island. On the soul scene Will Downing recorded a superb debut album including a spine-tingling remake of the old spiritual number "A Love Supreme", while the under-rated British outfit Loose Ends released their most polished album to date "The Real Chuckeeboo". The husband and wife team Womack and Womack enjoyed a seemingly endless run on the chart with the dance floor classic "Teardrops" while the Pasadenas arrived on the scene to great raptures with a slick album of tuneful pop and soul mixed with shimmering ballads like "Enchanted Lady".

In America George Michael had four No. 1 singles including the top record of the year "Faith". His album of the same name was also the top seller, making him the first person to achieve this double for 20 years. Apart from George British influence in the American charts had declined rapidly after peaking in 1985, and by 1989 we had one of our lowest percentages of placings.

Here at home Liverpool F.C. reached No. 3 with "Anfield Rap" to become the most successful team (apart from England) in chart terms as well as on the field! Harry Enfield's "Loadsamoney" was the comedy disc of the year and it also became the catchphrase of 1988! The teenage trio Bros began a successful run on the Singles chart, aiming for the younger record-buyers, while Fairground Attraction a group of former buskers, released an album with a refreshing new folk sound and a terrific single "Perfect". The electro-dance due Erasure were deservedly voted top group of the year on the strength of their best album "The Innocents". After a decline in popularity in the 1970s Cliff Richard was more popular than ever in the 1980s, and this was emphasised when he had both the No. 1 single and album over Christmas 1988.

These were positions 71 to 80 in the Top 80 of the 80s (all reached No. 1):

71. The Lady In Red (Chris De Burgh) 1986
72. Geno (Dexy's Midnight Runners) 1980
73. Down Under (Men At Work) 1983
74. Dancing In The Street (Mick Jagger and David Bowie) 1985
75. A Town Called Malice (Jam) 1982
76. I Should Be So Lucky (Kylie Monogue) 1988
77. Together We Are Beautiful (Fern Kinney) 1980
78. Coward Of The County (Kenny Rogers) 1980
79. I Feel For You (Chaka Khan) 1984
80. Ghost Town (Specials) 1981

Bob Woodhead.