



UK PREMIERE

I've Been Trying to Tell You

+ Q&A with Alasdair McLellan and Bob Stanley

Do you look back on the optimism of the 1997-2001 era as a lost golden age, or do you see it as a period of naïvety, delusion and folly? There's a lot of nostalgia for the nineties at the moment, especially from people too young to remember it who see the decade as a simpler, pre-internet time. Modern nostalgia often draws on corporate American-90s mall culture, but what about British culture? With *I've Been Trying to Tell You* – made to accompany the Saint Etienne album of the same name – director Alasdair McLellan evokes the era through the fog of memory. The resulting film, shot in locations from Grangemouth to Portmeirion to Southampton, is both beautiful and enveloping.

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Saint Etienne

Saint Etienne released their first single, 'Only Love Can Break Your Heart', on Heavenly Recordings in 1990. They followed it with the Mercury Music Prize-nominated *Foxbase Alpha* and, through the 1990s, they were chart regulars, earning three gold discs (for the *Foxbase Alpha*, *So Tough* and *Too Young to Die* albums), scoring 11 Top 40 hits (including 'You're in a Bad Way', 'Who Do You Think You Are' and 'He's on the Phone') and appearing six times on *Top of the Pops*. The *Guardian* have described them as 'London's musical laureates... perhaps the only band to capture the teeming variety of the capital.'

Bob Stanley and Pete Wiggs have known each other since childhood and first entered a recording studio in 1988, inspired by the invention of samplers and the Acid House explosion. Bob was writing for the *New Musical Express* at the time; Pete was the more technically minded, and started to assemble a home studio with vintage analogue equipment.

They met Windsor-raised singer Sarah Cracknell two years later. She had been in a variety of indie bands, but her instantly recognisable, very English voice was perfectly suited to Stanley and Wiggs' songs. The trio soon began to write together. As they were recording the *Finisterre* album in 2002, they decided to make a film to go with it, in collaboration with their regular video director Paul Kelly. They had long been intrigued by London's geography and complex history, and both film and album documented the city at a specific moment early in the 21st century. They continue to write and produce the scores for each Paul Kelly/Saint Etienne project.

***A London Trilogy: The Films of Saint Etienne 2003-2007* DVD booklet (BFI, 2013)**

I'VE BEEN TRYING TO TELL YOU

Director: Alasdair McLellan
With:
AJ Adamu
Iris Law
Fern Bain Smith
Nora Attal

UK 2021
45 mins

THE FILMS OF SAINT ETIENNE

Asunder + intro by Esther Johnson
and Bob Stanley
Sat 4 Sep 12:00
Finisterre + Q&A with Bob Stanley and
Pete Wiggs
Sat 4 Sep 15:00
How We Used to Live + Q&A with Pete Wiggs and Travis Elborough
Sat 4 Sep 17:20
Saint Etienne: Shorts Programme
+ intro by Paul Kelly and Pete Wiggs
Sun 5 Sep 13:00
Lawrence of Belgravia + Q&A with Paul Kelly and Lawrence
Sun 5 Sep 15:30
What Have You Done Today Mervyn Day?
+ Q&A with Pete Wiggs and Paul Kelly
Sun 5 Sep 18:30

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