

# 'I keep photo albums of all our tours'

Roddy Woomble (pictured, below left), singer and songwriter with Scottish band Idlewild, took time out from the group's autumn tour to talk to **Anne Giacomantonio** about his ongoing love affair with photography



## When and why did you first become interested in photography?

I lived in America when I was a teenager. I was supposed to be doing painting, but there were too many people in the class. There was an opportunity to go into photography so I did that. Within a couple of years I was just immersed in it. I completed two years of my degree and at that point the band started going on tour so there really wasn't much point. I remember talking to my lecturer and telling him exactly what I was doing and he was like "just leave!" I have carried my camera with me every day



Roddy Woomble

since; that's how I ended up doing most of the early album art and single artwork.

## What has been your best subject to photograph?

I keep photo albums religiously of all the tours. I've done them for no one else really, other than myself because they're like memories. I have got pictures of all the bands we have toured with, whether we have supported big acts like Coldplay or Pearl Jam or our own support bands we pick and tour with. It's just a great opportunity to meet a new group of people and to take pictures of them.

## Who are your favourite photographers?

I like people such as Robert Frank and William Eccleston. People who've made a career out of that kind of photography, travelling and noticing things. I also love any old Gus Wylie pictures of the Hebrides and also Margaret Fay Shaw. She was the first person in the Twenties to take her camera up to the Hebrides and take pictures of the crofters.

## How do you feel about digital photography?

I think I'll stick with using a film camera. I bought a new film camera

recently and the man told me that in a couple of years' time you won't be able to buy them. That's a little bit depressing but at the same time I am a little bit of a hypocrite because I do have a digital camera. It's no substitute for film. I much prefer the whole process of taking a proper picture and getting it developed. The ceremony around it. It's much more exciting.

## Do you prefer being in front of or behind the camera?

I am not a poser, I don't look forward to photo shoots. None of us in our band are like that maybe to our detriment. All of us are more inclined to shy towards the back so you can never tell who is the drummer. We all just stand there looking inconspicuous.

## Have you picked up any tips from any of the photographers who have photographed the band?

It has been great over the years to be able to meet all these great photographers and to learn a bit from them. Specifically people like Danny Clinch who is brilliant. I think he is the kind of best modern rock photographer. Also Tom Sheehan, the English photographer, who has been taking pictures for 20 odd years. He's a brilliant person too.

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