



Even though I saw the penultimate performance before Squeeze broke up (the "Saturday Night Live" dress rehearsal), I was never really a fan.

After hearing the new release by ex-member **CHRIS DIFFORD**, "Cashmere If You Can" (smmcmmedia.com), I may go back and try them again. This is a really fine pop (not in the Lady Gaga sense) release, with songs written and sung by Difford. After years of personal and addiction problems, Difford has turned his life around (albeit alone and broke). This is a very intimate record, including about how he spent the

years ("1975"), remembrance of both his own dad ("Sidney Street") and also Jools Holland's father ("Upgrade Me"), and even his sordid skinhead youth ("Back in the Days"). There are some imaginings, like how he wonders if his teen years being around the house was a hindrance to his parents sex life ("Passion Killer"), and what will happen when he's elderly ("Cotton Tops"). All really good songs, with well written melodies, strong and accessible lyrics, and his baritone voice with the right touch of emotion. His back-up musicians (Difford plays no instrument other than his voice) are substantial, and Ben Abrahams' production is solid, with the voice up front. The coda, "Wrecked," is about "meeting myself for the first time" and realizing he's happy. Hearing this collection made me content, as well.

