

Chapterhouse always managed to be in the right place at the wrong time. They were acid-rockers as acid house hit; they were shoegazers when grunge germinated; they were experimental dance-rockers as Britpop broke. It's only with the benefit of hindsight that we can see they have always been a band *ahead* of their time.

Formed over the summer of 1987 by a bunch of school friends from Reading, they started out jamming on Stooges covers and songs from the *Pebbles* compilations for fun, which initially led to them being taken under the wing of Spacemen 3.

After a couple EPs, the band dropped the classic 'Pearl', with its mix of guitars and beats borrowed from John Bonham and Schoolly D. It still sounds daring and audacious to this day and is rightfully revered alongside My Bloody Valentine's 'Soon' as one of those significant moments that pushed indie music into uncharted new waters.

It also features backing vocals by Rachel Goswell from their Reading contemporaries Slowdive, whose guitarist Christian Savill fondly remembers the early Chapterhouse gigs as "*some of the best I've ever seen*".

Chapterhouse's 1991 debut album *Whirlpool* is a shoegaze touchstone. A wonderful record that manages to be both weird and accessible at the same time and saw them collaborating with Robin Guthrie of the Cocteau Twins. Record company politics clouded the creation of the follow-up a couple years later, but *Blood Music* is a brilliant album and one that has aged remarkably gracefully. Its synthesis of dance and rock has frequently been cited as an influence by electronica artists such as Ulrich Schnauss, helped by the *Pentamorous Metamorphosis* reworking by Global Communication.

However, as the Britpop battles raged, the band struggled to find a way forward when everyone else was busy looking backwards and decided to call it a day in 1995. But it wasn't the end, a one-off festival performance in 2008 blossomed into a full-blown reunion the following year, with tours in the UK, US and Japan. Even when they reformed, Chapterhouse managed to be ahead of their time – their reunion pre-dating the reformation of their contemporaries from the shoegaze scene.

And now they are back to do it all over again; 35 years on from the release of their classic debut – which proudly sits at number 17 in Pitchfork's list of the best shoegaze albums ever – this is finally the right place *and* the right time for Chapterhouse.