February 1991

KITCHENS OF DISTINCTION

A&M PRESS DEPARTMENT

BIOGRAPHY

They have been called unique, intelligent and brilliantly eclectic, but yet the music of **KITCHENS OF DISTINCTION** remains impossible to label. They have been compared to Joy Division, Echo and the Bunnymen, Psychedelic Furs, Cocteau Twins and countless others, but without question the **KITCHENS** are true only to their undefinably independent sound and vision as evident on their debut A&M domestic release, **STRANGE FREE WORLD.**

Singer-bassist Patrick Fitzgerald, guitarist Julian Swales, and drummer Dan Goodwin met nearly four years ago in an Amsterdam club and expressed their shared desire to make music. Their varied influences only sealed their decision to make music together. "We all listened to the Beatles and the Stones," says Patrick, "and when punk came along, we al listened to that – Joy Division, dance music and a lot of reggae."

The **KITCHENS** first album, **LOVE IS HELL**, was released stateside by Rough Trade in 1989 and was compiled of single and EP tracks which had previously garnered critical acclaim through out England, Eurole and had attracted a strong U.S. following via college radio and underground press.

STRANGE FREE WORLD was recorded at Chipping Norton Studio, near Oxford in England and produced by Hugh Jones (Echo and the Bunnymen, del Amitri, Ultra Vivid Scene, etc.) and displays the band's melodic storm of multi-effected, multi-layered guitars, controlled feedback and plaintive vocals – a sound Melody Maker likened to a "chandelier of stalactites crashing on a ballroom floor into a thousand multi-colored hues of light." Patrick recalls of the sessions, "the studio is an old schoolhouse which has been converted into a 24-track studio, with little houses on the property where we lived for the month of recording. We were fed, free beer and wine and it was warm there," he laughs. "It was all very luxurious!"

From *"Railwayed,"* the album's first track, to the sweeping and expansive *"Under The Sky, Inside The Sea,"* the **KITCHENS OF DISTINCTION** create a disturbing yet beautiful wash of sound that recalls the ethereal swirl of Cocteau Twins, the electro-sting of The Jesus and Mary Chain and perhaps the cinematic drama of early David Bowie, yet still sounds nothing really like any of the above. It's something different, something utterly original and unnervingly exciting. "Our noise is sensitive, a nice noise – it's not a 'we will destroy you' noise, adds Patrick.

The band also feels strongly about the lyrics which should be as imaginative and compelling as the music. Patrick explains the process, "all the music is done first, and then I write about two page worth and knock it down until it rhymes," he laughs. "The lyrics always seem to suggest themselves – we all interpret them differently, which I think is good."

But why **KITCHENS OF DISTINCTION**? What's in a name… According to Patrick, "the three of us sat down in a room one day during rehearsal where we put together a list of ten names, and they were all so horrible and rude and disgusting that we just laughed – we couldn't use any of them. The next day, Julian turned up saying he saw a sign on a bus advertising, 'Kitchens of distinction,' which made a ll of us hysterical – so we thought, what a wonderful name. It's very English, because

you can go round and see shops that say things like ‘funerals of distinction.”

The title of the album, **STRANGE FREE WORLD** also comes with an interesting story. “ This Japanese girl wrote to us,” says Pat, “ and when she listened to our music she said her soul floated close to the ocean that took her to a strange free world. Isn’t that fantastic?”

STRANGE FREE WORLD will at last sonically stimulate their readymade American fans and capture the hearts and minds of those awaiting a brave new world of sound and that is the **KITCHENS OF DISTINCTION.**