

PAUL COIA finds Del Amitri making a fresh assault on the slopes of success

Del Boys go for a peak performance

STRANGE locations have long been a feature of the pop business, since the Beatles first lugged their gear onto a wind-swept roof and bemused passers-by below with an al fresco performance of *Get Back*. This week it is the turn of Del Amitri, who are attempting a couple of acoustic numbers on the slopes of Ben Nevis before the winter blast calls for a sharp exit.

Apart from the odd startled sheep, the select audience will be composed mainly of reps from A&M records, plus a few music press people. The idea is to psyche everybody up for the impending launch of *Twisted*, the Glasgow band's new album, preceded by a new single release tomorrow.

The Ben Nevis gig is probably the strangest Del Amitri appearance since they were selected as the only Scottish band to play the Woodstock 25th anniversary concert in the US last year. This might have seemed like an opportunity to become part of a legend, but Justin Currie, the band's singer, found the whole experience a "cynical, corporate, corruption of ideals. A

Disneyland of Rock". Apart from the fact that the Elysian fields of '69 were now knee-deep in discarded Amex slips and mobile phones, the band preceding the Del Boys on stage were a metal rock group who finished their assault on the ears with a fireworks display and, for good measure, the lead singer's appendage being waved in salute to the crowd.

"Thirty seconds later, the stage revolves and there's four quiet guys from Glasgow saying: 'Hi. We're Del Amitri,'" chuckles Currie. "It was just awful — and we played really badly, too."

Telling a tale against himself doesn't seem unusual for a singer who is forthright in his opinions and honest to the point that when he catches himself contradicting what he's already said, he points it out in case you've missed it. He believes that a good pop star should recognise when his shelf life has expired. "I sometimes worry I'll end up at 50 doing a disco version of our hits in a Lanark social club."

Currie's feelings for his home town of Glasgow are ambivalent, despite Del Amitri being held up as an example of how you don't need to leave your roots



Here and now: with the new single and album, Del Amitri are ready for a tour that could mean a year's globetrotting

to have success. "When I hear someone say that about us, I think: 'Rubbish!' I live in Glasgow because of laziness, that's all, and I go through periods of hating it. Because Scotland is a small country, there's a tendency to blow our character out of all proportion so that it obscures the cosmopolitan nature of the

place and turns us into a small-town mentality."

The new album sees Currie co-writing with guitarist Iain Harvey on all 12 tracks. One of them, an infectious number called *Here And Now*, is the new single, with the album due for release at the end of February. Then comes a Brit-

ish tour, followed by seven weeks in America and, depending on reaction to the new songs, a year-long world tour.

After that, Currie may well feel he has reached middle age — so will he follow his own advice and retire gracefully? He hesitates, then laughs. "Of course not. Don't be ridiculous."