

on the verge

STEVE GILLICK

IDLEWILD

"When we first began, our performances were based on our lack of ability disguised by us going crazy," admits Idlewild's tousle-haired and quick-tongued singer/lyricist Roddy Woomble. "It was more about getting drunk and jumping about." Formed in Edinburgh, Scotland in late 1995 by four college mates, Idlewild gigged around for a couple of years and released the underground EP *Captain* before signing to the UK's prestigious Food Records in 1997. Their stateside debut, *Hope Is Important* (Odeon-Capitol), is a visceral collection of jagged punk anthems shot through with unconventionally appealing hooks and strikingly direct lyrics. "I like the title, because it can be either the most positive thing you could ever say or the vaguest statement you could ever make," laughs Woomble, vibing on the band's flair for the incongruous. Add the contradiction-in-self moniker (nicked from Anne of Green Gables' playhouse) to the seismic shifts between frantic furies and charming calms, and Idlewild's stab at the art of noise is as inscrutable as it is stirring. [»»Nevin Martell](#)