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## THE MARS VOLTA p34

We hang out with Cedric and Omar in Mexico and hear their views on everything from swine flu to prog rock to, er, farting into microphones. What, you thought they were just a couple of muso dullards?

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# 10 TRACKS

YOU HAVE TO HEAR THIS WEEK



FREE COMEBACK

## 1 THE CRIBS We Were Aborted

First announced on *NME.COM*, this free download (too much abortion and masturbation for the radio, you see) finds them as raw and serrated and rough-edged as ever, but with a formidable, manly weight behind them. Shifting and switching beneath you like a bucking, punking bronco, it gores any doubters with fierce, uncompromising, unflashy guitar-work and furious vocals. 'Ignore The Ignorant', Indeed: The Cribs are back to take their crown.

On *NME.COM/artists/the-cribs*



THEY'RE BACK!

## 2 ARCTIC MONKEYS Crying Lightning

We knew back in January, when we singled it out as the best of the four new songs the Monkeys debuted at Big Day Out in New Zealand, that 'Crying Lightning' was a keeper. And it seems the boys agree with us, making it the first taste of their minty and refreshing 'Humbug'. We imagine that if you did cry lightning, the effect on your tear ducts would be roughly the same as the one that this song has on your ears.

On *iTunes* now

## 3 SOULSAVERS FEAT BONNIE 'PRINCE' BILLY Sunrise



Soulsavers' third album is yet another multi-name pile-up, studded as it is with the likes of Mike Patton, Mark Lanegan and Jason Pierce. It's preceded by a single featuring non-album songs, like this lush cover of Lanegan's 'Sunrise', which sees Will Oldham take to bluesy brooding like a duck to rye whiskey.

On *NME Radio* now

## 4 DAN AUERBACH Heartbroken, In Disrepair

At time of writing, it's hot enough to boil a lobster in the sweat of our brows, so we feel a resonance with the sweaty, desert-hazed blues-rock of this solo offering from *The Black Keys* singer. It's biblical in its lusty intent, like 'To Bring You My Love'-era PJ Harvey circling *Kings Of Leon* at their filthiest, with gritty guitars shimmering over bedrock-hard drums and Dan's wildcat yowl. Cold shower?

On *NME Radio* now





## 5 FLEET FOXES Blue Spotted Tail



The international hunger for the cooings of Robin Pecknold and his band of West Coast fingerpickers represents something of a modern-day gold rush. So when they debuted a new song on a BBC 6Music session, it flashed across the internet like light glinting off nuggets in a pan. *"Floating in the vacuum, not a purpose, not a one/Why in the night sky are the lights on?"*, trills Robin, the sound of a soul in exile and a woolly hat.

On [tinyurl.com/nayurjnow](http://tinyurl.com/nayurjnow)

## 6 PRESTON Dressed To Kill

A proviso, and warning of sorts: these tracks... most of them you have to hear because they're great. Some of them, you just have to hear so we can prove to you we're not making this shit up. This is one of those. Mr Preston 'How dare you say that about my Chantelle!' Ordinary Boy is back, recast as tattooed boy-band pin-up (Look! On the right!). Now, he's not the first to ravage the wonderful, minimal riff from Siouxsie And The Banshees' 'Happy House' (see also Capella's actually-quite-brilliant '90s rave tune 'U Got 2 Know') but after this, we think it's safe to say he'll be the last.

On NME TV now



LATIN PUNK COVER

## 8 MARIACHI EL BRONX I Would Die 4 U

What's even more fun than punk daddies The Bronx? Easy - punk daddies The Bronx playing Mexican love music as Mariachi El Bronx. But what could be even more fun than Mariachi El Bronx? We'll tell you - Mariachi El Bronx doing a Prince cover! Part of the rather excellent US mag Spin's tribute album 'Purplish Rain', this take on Mr Rogers Nelson's brittle electro classic is romantic, funky, hysterical and brilliant. Even if it does fill us with the strange urge to wave at passing strangers and say, "Could we have two more Margaritas, please?"

At [tinyurl.com/m26bjznow](http://tinyurl.com/m26bjznow)



NEW WAVE FUN

## 7 KOKO VON NAPOO June

Now, we know this lot are French, but we are going to do our best not to indulge in cheap jokes, crude national stereotypes or terrible puns. They, and we, are better than that. Toupie (yes, Toupie), Renarde, Kokoboy and Klddo are the sound of loud, skinny-limbed youth, smoking Gauloises round the back of *les sheds de la bicyclette*. DAMN IT! Somewhere between the new wave pop of Altered Images and the yelpy experimentalism of The Slits, it's a rough-diamond bit of electro-pop, dancing in circles round a swirling disco synth.

On NME Radio now

## 9 NOAH AND THE WHALE The First Days Of Spring



Unseasonal? Just wait until you hear it. Starting off with a funereal mockery of the classic 'Be My Baby' drumbeat, it melts into an ache of haunted strings and a forlorn guitar line. Charlie Fink's voice is a lot less affected than of old, and the track sports a Spiritualized-tinged grandiose beauty. *"There's a hope in every new seed and every flower that grows upon the earth"* intones Charlie. Mortality, the death of love, the eternal cycle of the seasons. That shit.

On MySpace now

## 10 GOLDHEART ASSEMBLY So Long St Christopher

Hark, what heavenly choirs do we hear? Is this the afterlife? Did we finally fall asleep in the bath? No, we're not dead, it's just a London six-piece doing a fine job of keeping the UK end up in the competitive field of radiant psych-folk, but with a less beardy take than a certain Seattle bunch also on this page.

On MySpace now





"That's great, Chris. Now can you play the Seinfeld theme?"

Studio exclusive

## Muse new album - first listen

Matt Bellamy and co invite *NME* into their Italian studio to hear forthcoming record

**M**use have revealed the tracklisting for their fifth album, 'The Resistance', and given *NME* an exclusive first listen at their studio in Lake Como, Italy.

The band will release the record on September 14, having been working on the album all year, free of any deadline.

"We had unlimited time to work on it, which made it much better for us," explained Matt Bellamy. "For some bands that might be a disadvantage as it means that they go on forever changing stuff, but for us it's definitely the best thing."

For the first time the album was produced by the band themselves.

"Because we didn't have a producer, we had to resolve all the discussions about the music

ourselves," said drummer Dominic Howard of how the band policed themselves. "So if two people were having a disagreement, it was up to the other person to resolve it!"

Of the songs featured, some, such as 'Unnatural Selection', are built around Bellamy's gigantic guitar riffs, while on 'Undisclosed Desire' only the singer's vocals are featured, the rest of the song being built around electronic drum patterns and some slap bass from Chris Wolstenholme. "I know it's probably not ever been cool to play slap bass," he admitted, "but on that song it just seemed to work, so we kept it in."

Other highlights include 'United States Of Eurasia', which builds into a climax of multi-tracked Queen-style vocals and the closing, three-part 'Exogenesis Symphony', which lasts

over 15 minutes and is more bombastic than anything Muse have ever previously done. Featuring classical piano from Bellamy and a full orchestra throughout, the singer says the piece took "about three months, on and off" to put together.

"I kind of had to get the other two to trust me a bit with that one," he laughed. "But I think it's turned out amazing."

**"It's probably never been cool to play slap bass, but it seemed to work"**

**CHRIS WOLSTENHOLME**

### THE RESISTANCE

- 1 UPRISING
- 2 RESISTANCE
- 3 UNDISCLOSED DESIRES
- 4 UNITED STATES OF EURASIA  
(COLLATERAL DAMAGE)
- 5 GUIDING LIGHT
- 6 UNNATURAL SELECTION
- 7 MK ULTRA
- 8 I BELONG TO YOU  
(MON COEUR S'OUVRE A TA VOIX)
- 9 EXOGENESIS: SYMPHONY PART I  
(OVERTURE)
- 10 EXOGENESIS: SYMPHONY PART II  
(CROSS POLLINATION)
- 11 EXOGENESIS: SYMPHONY PART III  
(REDEMPTION)



(l-r) Conor Oberst, Mike Mogis, M Ward and Jim James



*Supergroup!*

# Hookers haunt Bright Eyes' folk project

Conor Oberst, M Ward and My Morning Jacket team up for Monsters Of Folk

**M**onsters Of Folk – the alt.folk supergroup comprising Conor Oberst and Mike Mogis from Bright Eyes, M Ward and Jim James from My Morning Jacket – have told *NME* that their forthcoming album was haunted by the ghosts of prostitutes.

The sessions for the self-titled 15-track collaboration (out September 22) took place at Malibu's Shangri-La studios, where the likes of Neil Young and Bob Dylan have recorded, but it was the spectres of residents from further back which spooked the band out.

"Before it was a studio, back in the 1930s, it was a bordello," explained James. "There's a lot of convergence of a lot of different ghosts and you can feel some of the scary, sad ghosts of the brothel and there's a lot of energy. I felt the ghosts, but M actually saw one. He was freaked out, he didn't want to be in that room for a while. You feel a lot of ghosts there but most of them feel pretty friendly."

The Monsters Of Folk project came about following two tours in 2004 entitled 'An Evening With: Bright Eyes, Jim James and M Ward', which saw Oberst, James and M Ward guest on each other's songs. "I think it started

with our tour manager at the time giving us shit," said Oberst of the band's name, "calling it the Monsters Of Folk. At one point we'd say it onstage with a lot of delay on the microphone, 'We're the Monsters of FOLK-FOLK-FOLK-FOLK'."

Talk of a collaboration album between the three bubbled under until the start of 2008, when they reconvened at Oberst's Omaha studios before heading to the haunted Shangri-La several months later for the bulk of recording.

"The only rule we made was that we only wanted the four of us to play on it," explained Oberst, "so there were no extra hired guns, no drummers... we all took turns playing drums and bass and experimenting with the instruments. All the keyboards, bass, guitars, everyone switched around, took turns, musical chairs."

And according to the trio, their efforts were not in vain. "I'm really fucking happy about it," says James, "because it's a big production, but not too big a production. It's definitely not a folk album, we like people to think of it as a band making a record and playing a lot of different instruments, real collaborative."

## NANOS

### THERE'S GOING TO BE MORE PARAMORE

Paramore have confirmed their new album will be called 'Brand New Eyes'. The band's third record will be released on September 29, and they are expected to tour the UK near its release.

### YEAH YEAH YEAHS' ROAD TRIP

Yeah Yeah Yeahs have announced a winter UK tour. The band will kick the jaunt off at the O2 Academy Leeds on November 29, before touring the country. Head to *NME.COM* for the full list of dates.

### SYMPHONY FOR THE BEAR

Grizzly Bear will play a one-off show with the London Symphony Orchestra. The collaboration will take place at London's Barbican on October 31. See *NME.COM* for full details.

### METROS REACH THE END OF THE LINE

The Metros have tragically split up. The South Londoners were due to play their "last ever gig" at the weekend. They are yet to give a reason for why they're calling it a day.

### IS THIS THE GREATEST SUPERGROUP EVER?

Dave Grohl, Josh Homme and Led Zeppelin's John Paul Jones are recording together. The trio have been rumoured to be working together since 2005, but are said to have finally hit the studio in Los Angeles.



# COMMON PEOPLE'S PARTY

Jarvis mixes with politicians on *Question Time*

**T**here's the former leader of the Tories, and the former lead singer of Pulp! Do not adjust your set, last week (July 2) Jarvis Cocker mixed it up with some political big-hitters (Iain Duncan Smith, David Laws MP and Deputy Labour Leader Harriet Harman) on BBC One's *Question Time*. Having given his opinion on railway privatisation, schools and ID cards, *NME* gave Jarvis a question time of our own...

**How did you find your fellow panellists? Some of them could have been Prime Minister...**

"Well, I'm a senior figure too, you know? Harriet Harman used to be my MP in Peckham – we had a quiet word about refuse collection."

**What convinced you to do *Question Time*?**

"I like to do things where there is a strong chance of me making a fool of myself: it keeps my brain ticking over. I read the newspapers thoroughly but I thought that my function was to be highly unrealistic and over-opinionated."

**How did the audience differ to a Jarvis crowd?**

"Actually, I thought I saw some familiar faces – not quite as much dancing though."

**Any political aspirations? Are you the future leader of the Common People's Party?**

"I think my function is to ask questions and – hopefully – stimulate debate. Our political system needs an overhaul: the parties were established so long ago that they no longer represent the needs and desires of the population."

**What was the aftershow like?**

"Mate, I am still recovering! Mental."





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3:32 FREE BEARS

04:20 ORKIDEN



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*NME Gallery*

# MGMT

Prospect Park, New York,  
01/07/09

Forget tie-dye and headbands, a sharp-looking MGMT emerged from the studio last week to perform in Brooklyn. Ditching the hippie-ish overtones of their first record, Ben Goldwasser and Andrew VanWyngarden made their live return at the Celebrate Brooklyn! festival in some neat threads and bustling moves the Beastie Boys would be proud of. The pair are now set to support Paul McCartney in Boston next month before they head back into the recording studio to finish their second album, due out early next year.

PHOTO: BEN ROWLAND





*NME Gallery*

# BLUR

Hyde Park,  
London 02/07/09

"We feel privileged to be able to do nothing for years then come back to this," Damon Albarn told a sold-out Hyde Park as Blur played two emotional shows last week. "It's incredible, really incredible!" Fresh from their Glasto triumph, the band filled the Royal Park twice, performing a career-spanning set, and Albarn told the crowd there will always be a piece of his heart devoted to Hyde Park. "I had the idea for this song in this park. I used to live nearby, and used to watch pigeons and people and all that stuff," the singer explained. The song? 'Parklife'! For pictures and live reports from the gigs go to [NME.COM](http://NME.COM).  
PHOTO: ANDY WILLISHER





## HUNG UP ON SOULJA BOY

A couple from Oldham have received around 60 phone calls from Soulja Boy fans after a number sequence in his song 'Kiss Me Thru The Phone' accidentally matched their phone number.

## TING TINGS TO JAZZ THINGS UP

The Ting Tings have revealed they are heading to a Berlin jazz club to record the follow-up to their 2008 debut, 'We Started Nothing'. The duo told Radio 1's *Newsbeat* they intend to test their new material by hosting parties at the unlikely studio.

## FOREIGNER SEE BIGGER PICTURE

Birmingham-based Johnny Foreigner release their second album 'Grace And The Bigger Picture' on October 26, shortly after they finish a UK tour. Fans can download the three-track 'Feels Like Summer' EP, featuring new songs, from [johnnyforeignerband.com](http://johnnyforeignerband.com) now.

## SONISPHERE TAKES BIZKIT

Limp Bizkit have been added to the Sonisphere festival line-up. Fred Durst and co, who played Download last month, will perform on Aug 2 with Linkin Park and Metallica. See [NME.COM/tickets](http://NME.COM/tickets) for details.

## LIGHT SPEED CHAMP'S CAT

Dev Hynes is to perform a full cover set of Cat Stevens' soundtrack to cult 1971 film *Harold And Maude* at Suffolk's Latitude festival between July 17 and 19.



# Exclusive Editors cut dystopian record

Band to surprise fans with their electronically re-engineered and "cinematic" third album

**F**orget *Terminator Salvation*, Editors' third album is going to be the dystopian vision of 2009.

The Birmingham-based band are currently mixing 'In This Light And On This Evening' (out September 21), and frontman Tom Smith has told *NME* that the record, recorded with producers Flood and Ben Hillier in London's Resident Studios, will boast an electronically-enhanced dark vision of the future.

"There's definitely a sheen to the whole album," explained the singer. "Some kind of backdrop to a scientific future – I don't want to say sci-fi because I think it gives the wrong impression – but you know how *Blade Runner* looks beautiful, that kind of civilisation on the brink of the edge, too much going on for its own good? Well, it feels the album could soundtrack that kind of thing. The *Terminator* theme was one that Chris [Urbanowicz, guitar in particular got really excited about, but it still feels human."

The band played *NME* four tracks – 'Papillon', 'Bricks And Mortar', 'Eat Raw Meat = Blood

Drool' and 'Like Treasure' – which saw the band embracing synths in order to achieve their dark visions.

"We didn't want it to be clinical. Electronic records can be so emotionless and we didn't want that for ours," said Smith of the group's radical re-engineering. "We tried to make a record that lives and breathes and not being expert at the tools we were using gave it the defects that make it – the human quality."

Despite the electronic shift, the album should pleasantly surprise the band's fans and detractors alike, while Smith was keen to point out that the record plugs organically into our times.

"A couple of songs have a healthy dose of a lack of trust with the people in charge, which I think people our age have. There's a healthy dose of London in the record, it almost feels like the backdrop to every song," he explained.

"The whole album is very cohesive and it has the same setting, it doesn't have to be London but it could be the opening credits to *Blade Runner* or it can be anywhere, I guess. It's turned out to be quite cinematic."

## ON THE NME STEREO

Unreleased tracks and old classics we're spinning

### MGMT

**DAN TREACY** (COLUMBIA)

Features whistling, bird squawks and lyrics about the Television Personalities

### THE COMPULSIVE GAMBLERS ROCK'N'ROLL NURSE

(SYMPATHY FOR THE RECORD INDUSTRY)

"My hands are shaking/my boss can't find my wallet/somebody stole my shirt" – pretty much everyone in the office after Glasto then.

### PISSED JEANS

**KING OF JEANS** (SURF POP)

Like a drunk tramp shouting at pigeons set to a doom-punk soundtrack.

### THE CAPITOL YEARS

**YOU CAN STAY THERE**

Philly indie-rock genius. Guided By Voices and Sparklehorse.

### THE TEMPER TRAP

**RESURRECTION** (INFECTIOUS)

Tense, fraught and downright mesmerising stuff from Australia's big hopes

### FANCY LADY FEATURING KYLE FALCONER

**COMPLACENT** (UK RELEASED)

Kyle from The View goes down. No, really.

### ANIMAL KINGDOM

**TIN MAN** (WARNERS)

For all those people who ever wondered what it would sound like to have Neil Tennant singing Editors at karaoke.

### BLUR

**GIRLS & BOYS**

(LIVE AT GLASTONBURY)

We're weening ourselves off Worthy Farm by rewatching this cut from Blur's festival-stealing set. Watch it now at [NME.COM](http://NME.COM).

**NME RADIO**

**NEW ON THE PLAYLIST...**

Charlotte Hatherley – 'White'  
Dan Auerbach – 'Heartbroken, In Disrepair'  
White Belt Yellow Tag – 'Tell Your Friends (It All Worked Out)'  
Tune In: 94.5, 106.7 or at [NME.COM](http://NME.COM)





Vamps (l-r): Chris Baio, Ezra Koenig, Christopher Tomson, Rostam Batmanglij

In the studio

# Vampire album

The band reveal their second album plans, and why they had to take a day off last week

**V**ampire Weekend had to dash out of the studio just days before finishing their second album because they couldn't turn down the chance of supporting Blur at Hyde Park last Friday (July 3).

The New Yorkers have been recording the follow-up to their eponymous debut in New York since January and, although they're putting the finishing touches to their record, they told *NME* they didn't hesitate to accept the invitation to join Blur in London.

"Blur seemed like a special stand-alone experience because it was such a huge show and we were really excited when they asked us to play," explained drummer Christopher Tomson.

"We have to get the album finished in the next few weeks," added frontman Ezra Koenig. "We flew to London to do Blur and then we went straight back."

Back to Treefort Studios in Brooklyn, that is. Tucked away next to a building site – "they were working on it when we recorded our first album here!" note the band – the studio owned by a friend is a dark, wood-paneled room on the sixth floor of a storage depot/office block filled with instruments, recording equipment, couches and a broken-down bicycle.

"We talked about recording the album in other places, and the idea of recording in California was floated around and was attractive, but I guess, ultimately, we'd been away from home for such a long time, so it's nice that we didn't have to pick up again when we wanted to record," Koenig told *NME* when they visited the studio. "Even though we're working really hard on this album, in some ways it still feels like a vacation from touring because we get to go home."

As with the band's debut, keyboard player Rostam Batmanglij is producing the album which is expected to be 10 songs long. While at Treefort *NME* heard 'Cousins' (a pacey, South American-inflected song), 'California English' (a rhythmically driven, intricate yet soaring clash of styles), 'Taxi Cab' (which, with its slow pulsing bass and nocturnal vocals, takes VW into ballad territory for the first time) and 'White Sky' (which should be familiar to fans as it featured in the band's set last year, though has been completely reconstructed with stomping drums and fizzing guitars).

All the tracks unmistakably bear Vampire Weekend's fingerprints, retaining the global outlook and heady range of influences from their first album. However, Batmanglij has



Christopher Tomson awaits his takeaway



With a guitar as well as a relaxed bass



# re Weekend's session blur



**"THERE ARE NO SONGS ABOUT TOURBUSES!"**

EZRA KOENIG

honed his production skills with this album (plus on recent side-project *Discovery* – reviewed last week), which means their second LP looks set to be a much more muscular-yet-intricate affair.

"I'm only successfully producing bands that I'm in, because I start changing everything," Batmangly laughed. "I think I've stepped it up as a producer and a songwriter on this album. I think all of us have on this album, and the fact that those are connected allows us to do more. If we want to approach a song that had totally different sounds, having a producer in the band allows us to mould that process in a unique way. With modern music the production and the songwriting are the same process, so to have everything within the band is an important part of what we do."

Lyricaly too, the band have graduated from the collegiate backdrop of their opener, taking in a wider world view. "The first record's lyrics represented the time of our lives when we made the album, which was being in school, and I would like to think the lyrical themes of this album represent where we are now: 25 and out of school," explained Koenig. "But there are no songs about tourbuses! There's songs about places: California and England. On the first album people would describe it as being geographically about the East Coast and



I don't think you can describe this album that simply. The geography of the album has opened up. Sometimes it's hard to know where everything comes from but as the palette gets broader it becomes more specifically Vampire Weekend. No matter what we do, it's wrapped up in our identity as a band."

The album is pencilled in for a September release, and while a title and running order are currently being finalised, predictably for a band who passionately believe in the connection between their music and their record sleeves, artwork for the band's second album is already underway.

"Rostam made a mock-up of a possible album cover a couple of months ago and emailed it out to the band," recalls Koenig. "One of the first things I did when I got it was to listen to all the demos I had on my computer while looking at it and, magically, it all made sense, sometimes it made even more sense."

**NME.COM**

Head to [NME.COM/blogs](http://NME.COM/blogs) now for Vampire Weekend's exclusive video tour around Treefort Studios

**NANOS**

## IT'S ALL WHITE

Doves and Biffy Clyro have joined the line-up for the White Air festival. The Brighton beach event takes place between Sept 18 and 20. The Cribs, White Lies and British Sea Power are also playing. See [NME.COM](http://NME.COM).

## WE HEART INDIE

Indie record labels are being celebrated with Independents Day 2009. Labels including Beggars, FatCat and Bella Union are hosting nights at the ICA in London this week (July 6-10). The celebration also has more events scheduled around the world.

## TOM GETS SOME MORE BUDD

Kasabian's Tom Meighan has ended up on Jersey Budd's new single after an all-night party. The pair jammed out backing vocals for 'She Came Back' (out July 13) before hitting the studio at 8am the next day. "Not bad work for a four-pack of Fosters and 20 Marlboro Lights!" said Meighan.

## THERE'S NO OTHER BAY

Pirate Bay may be going legitimate. The torrent site has been sold for £4.7m with the new owners, Global Gaming Factory X AB, saying they will provide faster and better quality downloads.

## MORE FOR READING/LEEDS

Jack Peñate has joined the Reading and Leeds Festivals line-up. He plays the NME/Radio 1 Stage down south first (Aug 28), then plays the Leeds site on the 30th.



## CRIBS SLAM CAREERIST UK INDIE

Jarmans and Marr criticise their peers as they seek to keep it DIY

**T**he Cribs have lashed out against the current crop of British bands, claiming they are too careerist to be truly indie. Despite the anticipation for the quartet's fourth album, *Ignore The Ignorant*, (out in September) they still see themselves as indie outsiders.

"People aren't doing it [indie music] well," Ryan Jarman said, surveying the 2009 scene, suggesting that bands who were too obviously commercial have suffered. "The people who are in it for the wrong reasons have fallen by the wayside."

Guitarist Johnny Marr added that he believed his band's politically-charged new album title *Ignore The Ignorant*, inspired by the band's disgust at the British National Party being elected to the European Parliament, demonstrated how The Cribs refused to compromise their values to grab sales.

"Whether you want to call it politics with a small 'p', or in capitals," he said, "the band have made no apologies about being political in the past. That makes us a different prospect to a bunch of bands in white plastic suits. Everyone knows that The Cribs are a group of individuals rather than coming off some cold ironic faceless band conveyor belt."

"Part of the reason people like our band is because we go against the grain," added drummer Ross Jarman. "People still see us as an alternative to those watered-down bands."

However, the band insist their indie declaration is not about posturing, it's just ingrained in their DNA.

"We don't have the mindset to operate in any other way," summed up Ryan Jarman. "You can call it bloody-mindedness or closed-mindedness, but I don't ever take things like that [whether lyrical content could affect sales] into consideration."





# THE OTHER SIDE OF

Contrary to popular opinion, there's more to **T In The Park** than bands and that famous 'atmosphere'. Like flying nuns, healthy food and er, snowboarding...

**T**he Scots pride themselves on being able to show the world a thing or two about having a proper party and anyone who's been to T finds it hard to forget the

Heironymus Bosch-ish levels of insane debauchery. And yet T has changed over the last few years, moving away from the booze-and-bands no-frills approach towards Glasto's more multifarious, grown-up territory. Apart from, as usual, boasting one of the strongest line-ups of the summer (Kings Of Leon, The Killers and Blur headline, with able support from the likes of Franz, The Specials, Manic Street Preachers and Elbow), it now boasts seven different stages across its devilishly handsome site, including the new BBC Introducing... Stage, and a wide variety of things to see and do beyond chugging and yakking.

## THE CAMPSITE

T is quite unique in that it actually puts on late-night entertainment within its campsites, rather than just ejecting everyone out of the main arena and letting them wander around in the darkness like zombies in a human-free zone. They're opening the campsite early this year, on the Thursday, and that evening a campsite cinema is being set up to entertain the first-comers. But the fun really starts on the Friday, with three party areas within the campsite: Boom Town, The Sunset Strip and the slightly less Sin City-sounding Red Bull Lock In Area. The latter has DJs playing from a 1950s Swedish military vehicle (no doubt a trophy the Tartan Army picked up one night) and Boom Town has the Cabaret Voltaire Boombus (the Edinburgh club night, not the Sheffield industrial-electro freaks), but the place to be is the Sunset

Strip, with both a Silent Disco and something called the A-Listed Indie Disco. Basically, they allow you one final chance to pull before you throw yourself back into your tent like a bag of sick.

## FANCY DRESS FRIDAY

Last year *NME* turned up and everyone was either dressed as

Bananaman or a nun, making it look like the most badly organised speed-dating night ever. It was actually Fancy Dress Friday, which rewards the best costume of the festival with four free VIP tickets to next year's festival. It provides a brilliant incentive not just for people to dress up, but also to show off at all times in case one of the judges is walking past. Don't carry a clipboard out into the main arena or you'll disappear underneath a flock of flying nuns within seconds.

## HEALTHY T

In a spirited response to accusations that T In The Park is one massive beer-sponsored glorification of poisoning your own body for a temporary high, the Scottish Government have sponsored Healthy T, a large open space where you can go to sit, chill out and eat some nutritious and really quite fantastic global food. It's right next





# "IT'S A WEEKEND-LONG PARTY"

Our Scottish supergroup share their favourite memories of their homeland's legendary festival

## RAB ALLAN, GLASVEGAS

**Why is the T atmosphere special?**

"I think people go to have a party. Other festivals are a little bit more cultured where people go to listen to the music, but people go to T to have a good time, which is great."

**What do you make of the new eco and holistic elements to it?**

"I don't know, I think sticking to a kebab and a Tennent's lager will be the route I'll go down."

**Have you got any special stage moves planned?**

"We would probably be thrown off the bill if I was to reveal them to you."



**Looking forward to it this year?**

"It should be good. We played it for the first time last year. The tent filled up about 40 minutes before we went on, so they had to close it. I saw a guy cutting a hole to climb through!"

## RODDY WOOMBLE, IDLEWILD

**How many times have you played T?**

"I think this will be our sixth time. The first time was '98, but we haven't played in a while. The last time was the year The White Stripes pulled out [in 2003], and we got pushed up the bill, so it was us, The Flaming Lips then REM. It was unexpected but good."

most memorable year was 2002. We'd been watching the Woodstock film, and you know Jimi Hendrix does the 'Star-Spangled Banner'? Well, Rod, our guitarist, tried doing the same with 'Flower Of Scotland' before we went onstage (laughs) Not quite the same political statement but the crowd certainly responded to it. It's a brilliant festival."



**Which one was the best?**

"I think they've all been memorable, just being a Scottish band in general you always go down well. I think the

## GAVIN DUNBAR, CAMERA OBSCURA

**Looking forward to T this year?**

"Absolutely, it's the biggest festival in Scotland. It's a big weekend-long party that people are always up for."

**Why is T so special?**

"The punters that go are just absolutely up for enjoying it, seeing bands and carrying on."

**Are festivals a good indication of how well the band's doing?**

"Yeah, you do notice crowds getting bigger where suddenly you can't see the back of tent because there's so many people. We've got a backdrop of our album cover which is exciting - we couldn't afford one before!"

**Is the T crowd the drunkenest crowd in the world?**

"It is the most drunken crowd, but in a nice way. We don't before gigs these days, but after it'll be a different story!"



## DAMIEN STANFORD, THE PHANTOM BAND

**You're headlining the T Break stage - are you excited?**

"I can't wait. I went to the first ever T In The Park. Before it moved site, it was in the playing fields right at the back of our school. I must have been 12 or 13 and I saw Cypress Hill, Rage Against The Machine, and Blur and Oasis played that year as well."

You'd see all these festivals like Reading and Glastonbury and you couldn't go. So to have one suddenly on your doorstep with all your favourite bands, people really embraced it."

**Are you staying for the whole thing?**

"I'm staying in the campsite - most of the band will be. I'm looking forward to The Specials, Blur... I can't wait."



It's T time: (clockwise from left) the start of the queue for the Domino's pizza stall; dressing down; you can't make a Glasto logo with your hands can you?; the big wheel... or is it a giant pizza?; mmm pizza



to the Futures Tent and also sports a Bedouin tent giving out holistic treatments (when having a massage while pissed, try not to ask for a happy ending), free fruit and free condoms being handed out (combine the two for practice), plus breakdancing and graffiti displays (groan) and a limbo dancing championship (when leaning back, don't drape your head in faeces).

## MOBILE DOMINO'S PIZZA STORE

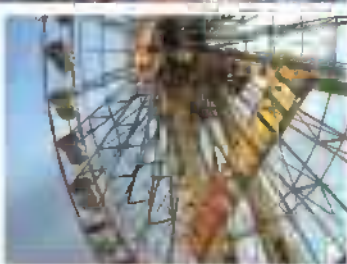
For the other 90,000 people who just want to eat filth, Domino's have a mobile store set up in the main arena this year. Pepperoni Passion is the best hangover cure known to man and more addictive than any opiate: heil Dominos, heil!

## FAIRGROUND

Brilliantly, although T In The Park is becoming more eclectic, it still sods off anything like a poetry tent in favour of a massive funfair. It's like a mini-Blackpool without all the scared pensioners. Having a go on the famous ferris wheel is an absolute must for both thrill-seekers and couples wanting to cop off, but druggies should fear this area like dogs fear traffic cones.

## REFRESH AREA

In here, for £2, you girls can have access to hair straighteners, hairdryers, make-up, cleansing stuff, um, and all the gels and potions required to look like you've not spent three days snorting vodka. Now, it's doubtful they have enough of this stuff to go round for everyone, so



imagine scenes inside to resemble a medieval battle.

## VISITSCOTLAND DOME

In here, you can either find out more about Scotland or have a go on an inflatable snowboard simulator. It's a tricky one.

## ECO VILLAGE AND CHARITY VILLAGE

Sure, T likes the odd litre of Buckfast, but it's also a very caring, forward-thinking festival too. Did you know it's the biggest carbon neutral festival in the world? Fact.





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## Hold on for just a second...

**T**he Rumble Strips have turned into the lavish bastard love-sprog of Jacques Brel and Elvis Costello. The Reverend has become a mariachi shaman of dark '60s psychedelia. Jack Peñate's gone dance. Down is up, black is white, nothing is certain any more, other than that the second Twang album will be laddish pub baggy on drugs. Um, won't it?

Much noise is being made at the moment about the demise of the Difficult Second Album Syndrome, sparked by an influx of quite startling examples of what your dad might call 'a sophomore effort'. It's not difficult to have predicted impressive second turns from The Maccabees and Future Of The Left, both of whom have returned with grand, ambitious improvements on their debuts, but would you have expected the remaining Holloways, with half the band absconded, to be piecing together the pop album of the year, as I found them in their Hammersmith studio a few weeks ago? And six months back, if you'd have dreamed that The Horrors might come out with a critically acclaimed follow-up to the utterly mentless 'Strange House' you might also have believed that Dick & Dom could produce an Olivier Award-worthy *Waiting For Godot* or that Tom Meighan might pen a poetic masterpiece to rival *The Waste Land* in his sleep. While I'm personally too familiar with the source material shamelessly ripped off for 'Primary Colours' to be as enthusiastic about it as some of the gibbering loons in the office who you'd think had never had a sniff of 'Isn't Anything' before, even I can recognise a huge leap in the right direction when I hear one. Whatever



Jack Peñate might be a pop star but his mum won't be pleased he's got his boot on the sofa

### JACK'S GONE DANCE, REV'S GONE PSYCH, NEXT UP: JORDAN'S BOOKER PRIZE?

next? A Booker Prize for Jordan?

It's to 'Primary Colours' that I believe we largely owe this current shift, not so much due to its own arguable merits as to the enormous critical *volte face* it's forced on our attitudes to second albums in general. See, for too long it's been easy to criticise bands for releasing a second record too similar to their first. If that sort of mentality had been prevalent in the '80s and '90s then the likes of REM or The Flaming Lips would've faced the critical firing squad

a dozen times over before breaking through, but today it's as if critics have come to adopt the major labels' impatience for success – ie, if a band hasn't reached its fullest potential by album number two then they automatically deserve the shoeing of a lifetime before being ground down for meat to fatten up the next pack of ravenous punk-rock hounds. No allowance has been made for gradual development, critics have come to mirror the capitalists with the result that actually-damn-good second albums from The Strokes to The Vines to The Rakes to Maximo Park to The Kooks to Hard-Fi suffered an unfair Death By Mild Predictability. But hey, if a band as

wholeheartedly dreadful as The Horrors can come good on their second go then surely all bets are off. We've been forced to quash all preconceptions and consider the possibility that the next classic album might come from literally anywhere. Jack Peñate might go dance and it'll be brilliant. And stone us, it is.

Then, of course, there's the desperation effect of the Sword Of Damocles hanging over the heads of all new bands, no matter how successful. Gone are the days of the guaranteed six-album deal where a band can rest on their debut's laurels, churn out the same record for a decade and watch their press hype float off down the Swanee safe in the knowledge they won't be back on the bins until after their Greatest Hits, at least. These days, if your second album even makes a *smell* like it might not match the sales of your debut then chances are it won't come out at all.

So if you're a band whose debut was received by the press with all the enthusiasm of a turd in a box from The Levellers, why the hell not throw all caution to the wind and radically change direction for album two? You've got one more shot, at most, so you might as well just go coo-coo loco crazy nuts! Death or glory! Nothing to lose, but a whole new genre's audience to gain! The situation's thrown open all doors of some possibility – I can no longer slot any band's CD into my MacBook and be sure of what I'm going to get. Except Oasis, obviously. I'm predicting the next New Young Pony Club album might well be skiffle; and there's nothing to stop Hadouken! from going minimalist Norwegian reggae. If development is dead, best do all your experimenting in one go, right now. Second albums are now all about the shock of the unlikening. We've entered The Age Of The Anti-Statement where unpredictability is the only rule and playing safe is the unsafest way to play of all. It's potentially looking like the most interesting and exciting time for music this decade.

This just in: The Twang's second album sounds like Fairground Attraction. And it's ace.

## THE SONG REMAINS THE SAME



Pixies: better than Kula Shaker

**F**irst there was Don't Look Back, the gigs where bands play classic albums for one night only. Then came the tours – Roger Waters did 'The Dark Side Of The Moon', The Wedding Present did 'George Best', and now Pixies are hitting the road to play their masterpiece 'Doolittle' in its entirety every night. So far so frickin' fabulouso, but I dread the reformation of the bands who only ever did one successful album. Those gigs will be more like army recruitment adverts than entertainment, essentially challenges of endurance on the part of the crowd: can you survive Kula Shaker playing 'K' all the way through? What's your limit? 'Govinda'? Is it the

garbled 'mystical' gobbledigook of 'Tattva'? Is it the 375th student sitar solo, accompanied by the faint whiff of burning swastikas?

What happens when one-hit wonders jump on the bandwagon? Will Hot Hot Heat do entire tours playing 'Bandages' over and over again until the audience are queuing to jump to their deaths from the balconies? How many NME reviewers will have their brains liquefied trying to review Electric Six's 'Danger! High Voltage' tour? Imagine it: "Thank you for hanging around all these hours – we never thought anyone would come to hear the same tune 32 times! Now for our encore here's 'Move Your Feet' again! No, wake up! Paramedic!"

### WHAT I'VE BEEN LISTENING TO...

- Dan Black – 'Symphonies'
- Peaches – 'Lose You'
- Slow Club – 'It Doesn't Have To Be Beautiful'



# MY MUSIC

## REGINA SPEKTOR

PLAYING AT



### To make me dance...

'99 RED BALLOONS'  
NTNA



"It starts out really slow and dreamy and it ends really slow and dreamy and then in the middle it just goes all nuts. I think that one of the amazing things about that song is that it inspires you to dance, but the lyrics are so amazing and so touching – it's like your body dances and your mind kind of goes on a trip. It's about war and it's about peace. You've just got to listen to it, I can't explain it!"

### A tearjerker...

'IMAGINE'  
JOHN LENNON



"Knowing that his life was cut short and listening to those lyrics always makes me sad. My parents really loved The Beatles, they had all these recordings even though they weren't published officially in Soviet Russia. We always listened to The Beatles in the house and my dad had a lot of cassette tapes and things passed from hand to hand that were treasured."

### My favourite lyrics...

'SUBTERRANEAN  
HOMESICK BLUES'  
BOB DYLAN



"For the line 'Don't follow leaders/Watch the parking meters'. When he says that I always laugh. I love how his mind works, I love his voice and I just think he's so fucking funny – he's got such great joy. It seems like it's surreal, but it just makes perfect sense to me – I wouldn't be able to explain how, but it just does!"

### A record by heroes...

'REVOLVER'  
THE BEATLES



"From song to song it's so different – it just goes to so many places and every place it goes to feels just right. I love everything about it. There's so much good stuff on it! 'Eleanor Rigby' is probably my favourite – it has such a spirit to it with the strings; it's both sad and happy at the same time. It's a really passionate song. It was one of the rare western music things that we had in the house."

### For karaoke...

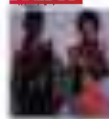
'HOUND DOG'  
ELVIS PRESLEY



"I've only been to karaoke twice in my life. I did it first in London when I was 19. It was in Tottenham – I studied at Middlesex University for a year – there was a pub right across the street that had karaoke. Who knows why I picked it, I was quite drunk at the time and it just felt right! The other time was in Barcelona and it was 'The House Of The Rising Sun'."

### Right now I'm loving...

'THE YOUTH'  
MGMT



"It's awesome, I'm still loving this! I love the lyrics and how it sounds – it just feels right. A few months ago I was at my friend's house and she put on the record and I just loved the whole thing. Then the video came out – I saw it on a website. I really like called *Boingboing.net* – and just really got into that song, I was always walking around singing it."

### My first gig...

BB KING, IRVING PLAZA,  
NEW YORK



"I had just entered university and a professor of mine had two VIP tickets. He offered the tickets to anyone in the class and my hand shot up so fast because I'd never heard any kind of real proper show. I was so broke growing up that if we did ever go to something it would always be a classical concert. I was very excited. I was 18 and Irving Plaza is such an amazing place to see shows – it was just cool to see people all standing in this smokey place listening to blues. BB King was so youthful and he was such a great spirit to watch play."

### Another influence...

BALLAD OF A SOLDIER



"It's a Russian film from the '50s. I think I saw it for the first time with my parents but I don't remember if I saw it when I was still living in Russia or after I had already emigrated to New York. It's this amazing and really beautiful film about the Second World War and it's kind of a triumph of the soul – it's very sweet and very heartbreaking. It's different from a lot of war movies because most of it takes place in the time that the soldier's travelling to visit his mother and it's about his attempt to visit her and all those things that he sees of the civilian life at wartime."

Regina Spektor has a laugh at the latest Bob Dylan album

DISCOVERY



LP

"Brutal and beautiful,  
inclusive and alienating"  
THE SUNDAY TIMES

"Fabulously disorientating"  
MOJO

"Weird and wonderful"  
CLASH



# PETER ROBINSON VS

**RALF LITTLE**

He plays Chas from Chas & Dave in the new *Telstar* movie and he likes free stuff...

**H**ello, Ralf, where are you?  
"I'm in my publicist's office!"

**The world of the publicist's office is a strange one.**

"This is quite a sparse room, but I've just walked past posters for every successful British film of the last few years, plus merchandise from things like *Chicken Run*. I'm sure it's the same at *NME*."

**Tragically the quality and expense of musical promotional gifts has fallen in line with the increase in file-sharing. You're fine in the world of film for approximately two more years.**

"Yes, until download speeds get better then we've all got problems. Everyone's going, 'Well, there must be another viable way to get a return on it', but who doesn't want to get free stuff?"

**I LOVE FREE STUFF.**

"Exactly."

**In music people have decided that instead of CDs they will make money out of touring. I suppose for films it's a bit less easy to go out on the road.**

"Exactly – so if *Telstar* came out and everyone downloaded it for free, we'd have to go and do a stage version."

**Which would take the *Telstar* story back to where it started, as something on the stage. This idea might have legs!**

"Yes! A beautiful symmetry!"

**And to explain *Telstar* to *NME* viewers who may not be up to speed with the**

**story, it's basically the film of the play of the true story of a 1950s answer to Louis Walsh. Is that a fair summary?**

"Well, I don't know much about Louis Walsh – what I do know about Joe Meek is that as well as being a manager he was also a producer who was a genius."

**What are you working on now, Ralf?**

"I'm working on a new ITV comedy drama called *Married, Single, Other*."

**Oh God. When you say 'ITV comedy drama', that doesn't inspire confidence.**

"Well, what might inspire confidence is – and we're being careful about bandying this around – but in tone and style we hope it will be similar to *Cold Feet*."



**"I'M WORKING ON A COLD FEET-STYLE COMEDY – WARMER FEET"**

**Can I use the phrase 'ensemble cast'?**

"You certainly can. There's six of us."

**Is this like when they made *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, but with *Cold Feet*?**  
"Slightly Warmer Feet?"

**Let's call it *Tepid Feet*.**

"(Laughs) No! That's why we're being careful about saying *Cold Feet*."

**Is it as good as *2 Pints Of Lager*...?**

"(Laughs)"

**I know you think I am taking the piss but *2 Pints Of Lager*... is actually amazing.**

"It's a funny one – critics, when it first came out, were very snobbish about it, but over the years people came to it and found there was an honesty to it."

**The *Girls Aloud* of the sitcom world.**

"I'll let that comparison stand, seeing as you're a music journo."

**Earlier this week I spoke to Chas out of Chas & Dave, who YOU PLAY in the *Telstar* film.**

"Was that something to do with this?"

**No, it was a complete coincidence. He gave me advice on growing courgettes – do you have any similar courgette tips?**

"I like to think I've turned my hand to a few things over the years but that's one avenue yet to be explored."

**How about if I asked you to tell me about Chas teaching you the piano?**

"Well, do you know there's a whole story about this? (Launches into long anecdote which translates phenomenally badly in print) so then 'e goes, 'Well, I'm not 'avin' that', an' so 'e sits daahn, they were DELIGHTED!'. There you go."

**What a privilege it is to be able to have a chat with someone who was involved in the actual dawn of rock'n'roll. Incredible.**

"I've got a fact about Chas that not many people know..."

**STAND BACK – IT'S A CHASFACT!**

"Yes! He played on the song that Eminem sampled on 'My Name Is' (Every fucker knows this – Pub Quiz Ed)."

**FYI...**

■ Ralf's Chas impression is amazing. Sadly this is a magazine rather than a radio show.

■ *2 Pints Of Lager*... really is amazing.

■ Stay tuned to Peter Robinson Vs for Chas' amazing courgette tips.

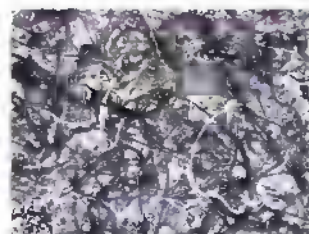
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# LETTERS

YOU WRITE IT, WE PRINT IT, EVERYONE

by Emily Mackay

LETTER  
OF THE WEEK  
WINS A NEW  
SAMSUNG BEAT  
DJ MOBILE  
PHONE. WITH  
AUDIO BY BANG  
& OLUFSEN  
ICEPOWER



Letter of the week

## End of HIsTory

**B**y no stretch of the word, I love Michael Jackson and he will always be my hero. There are just no words to express the shock, grief and turmoil caused by his untimely death. I am sick of hearing 'all-star' tributes being spouted by meaningless celebrities who would have had nothing to do with him over the past 10 years – especially those who grotesquely turned to Twitter as an outlet for their thoughts. And I really cannot take any more poorly researched and written newspaper articles or TV montages and debates. It no longer matters if he did this, did that, wanted to look that way or not – none of it means anything any more. All we can do now is remember his greatness, never forget his legend and finally leave him and his family in peace.

**Kate Allen, Swinetown**

NME should consider reprinting the interview it had with Michael Jackson approximately 12 years ago (it was 28 actually, and you'll find it online at NME.COM/blogs – EM) as it was so prophetic. The man's melancholy was virtually tangible. I remember the interviewer making comparisons with Elvis Presley's death at a young age and touched on Michael Jackson's possible early demise. Personally I am relieved that all the tributes that have come forth are in praise of the man's creative talent and live performances and thankfully not his looks or lifestyle.

**Geoff Poole, Edgbaston**

### GLASTOLD?

I just heard that story that the BBC sent over 400 employees to cover Glastonbury this year. Now, this letter is not just a block of text where I splutter with righteous anger over the authoritarian abuse by the institution of our hard-earned licence fee, etc. On the contrary, I welcome such extensive coverage and hope this is extended to other festivals. However, I only wish that the Beeb could have done more with it. Festivals, as well as being a

chance to see all your favourite bands in one place while so off your face that the weekend will be tattooed across your mind for years, are also an exciting opportunity to hear new exciting music in its most intense setting: the stage. So why did I know just about every band playing? It's not that my music knowledge is that incredible, but more due to the focus on mainstream indie bands such as Yeah Yeah Yeahs and Kasabian as an alternative to the established names who were, although brilliant, not far enough from my usual taste to make the coverage not feel like a wasted, lonely weekend. Could NME go to the BBC and beat them up for me?

**Will, London**

*Much as I'd love to settle this by choke-slaming Jo Whiley, Will, the televisual coverage can only reflect what's there, and you're not the only one to have noted a lack of new names on the main stages this year. Glastonbury's a big place, though, and the smaller venues around the site hosted many fresh gems... it didn't have to be a senior weekend. Er, well, not for some... – EM*

Glastonbury 2009 was totally bonkers. Here's my top five moments. At number five: Samsara in Chai Wallahs on Saturday – if you missed them keep an eye out or ear. Ska is coming! (Start building an ark, kids – EM) At number four: The Wonder Stuff on the Avalon stage (The Wonder Stuff? What year is this? – EM) – the whole place was bouncing. At number three: Madness (missed The Specials, stuck in the Green Fields) – again a bouncing, singing nutty crowd. At number two: Yeah Yeah Yeahs made me love them even more. At number one: Kasabian in the thick of it with my missus and kids... words can't



**Yeah Yeah Yeahs:**  
Jason from Frome's  
number two



# STALKERS

It can't be illegal if it's love... right?



**STEVE, SOUTH SHIELDS**

"Me with Graham Coxon at the Blur gig in Newcastle. It was amazing and he's such a nice bloke"



**ELLIE, MANCHESTER**

"This is Serge Pizzorno from Kasabian signing my bra after a gig in Manchester!"



**ROSIE, BRISTOL**

"Me with Josh from The Horrors at the Thekla. I drank his cider and told him where to play pool"

express how awesome they were. Only two bad points: no encore and why were they not headliners?

Jason, Frome

**Why not Kasabian as headliners?**  
Two rhyming reasons: 1) THE BOSS 2) They're toss - EM

## SWELLSING UP

Although it is sad that poor old Michael Jackson died, it is also equally sad that legendary NME journo Steven Wells has passed away. To those underexposed to the Swells experience, he spunked his way through these very pages in his own inimitable way, usually in a shower of expletives and, more importantly, very funny. Yes, he couldn't stand Morrissey and prompted Lush to rettle one of their songs 'Steven Wells Is A Fat Cunt' at Glasto '92 AND made terrible records Single Of The Week but his heart was in the right place. He was

vehemently anti-sexist, anti-homophobic and anti-racist but also cared passionately about the music he wrote about. Swells was MeNTAl, but he was brilliant and anyone who took a passing interest in the NME between 1986 and 2001 could regularly testify to this. So rest in peace, Swells. God love ya, you made the world a better place. John O'Reilly, via email

Can I suggest that the current crop of pathetic smears of humanity paid by NME to regurgitate press releases are made to read everything Swells ever wrote. They will then immediately fuck off and work in insurance or devise ad campaigns for proprietary kitchen cleaners which is obviously where their 'talents' are best suited. The rag can then be repopulated by people who give a toss. It was the case that NME used to seek out new music and proselytise on it. The other day I read a piece in the Radar section on Pixie Lott. Pixie cocking Lott! In the New Music section Pixie Lott? One of the most hyped, manufactured slivers of faecal waste yet to have hundreds of thousands of pounds churned into her nascent career. Glory be, do you know who her manager is? Her agent? Who does her press? The NME don't go out and find new talent any more - they're told what to print. The Pixie Lott piece was clearly vetted (probably written) by her press department. What is the point of NME any more? Grow a collective spine, you snivelling bedwetters. Mark Moon, via email PS Wankers

Oh, it was all vituperative left-wing fields round here when you were a lad, eh Mark? Actually, most of us did grow up voraciously reading every word Swells wrote but the worst tribute we could pay would be to just mimic his unique style. I might question how much attention you paid, with your assumption that he'd scorn Pixie Lott because she was 'manufactured'. The last thing Swells wrote for NME, last year, was a column furiously defending the genius of one Katy Perry, and he constantly railed against indie-schmindie elevation of 'real bands' over pop music. We've never had anything 'vetted' by a press department, and we write about music we like regardless of its origin. No matter: keeping to the tone you adopted for your tiresome and predictable letter, I hope your rage-wank leaves you drowning in your own self-righteous jism. Swellsian enough for you? - EM

## SHUFFLE OFF

I have fought off writing this for a very long time, but I fear that I must now put fingers to keyboard and send this letter. I am close to giving up. Metal kids, indie fans, new ravers and emos all battle each other through publications like this and the internet and I am bored of it. All music is valid. ALL MUSIC IS VALID!

As I write this I am listening to The Clash, Prince, Bruce Springsteen and The Fratellis (Wow! Now there's eclecticism, kids - listen and learn - EM), with many other weird and wonderful songs on my iTunes shuffle, proud of the fact I love varied music. Please just love music, don't hate each other Paddy, Teddington

Aw, wouldn't it be great if we all lived in Paddy's wonderland of tolerance and shared information? No, it wouldn't. Keep fighting each other kids. Did you hear what Tom Meighan said about Paris Badwan's mum? - EM

## LOVE OR LUNACY?

On first listen to 'West Ryder Pauper Lunatic Asylum', impressions were good, except that 'Thick As Thieves' stuck out from somewhere. Now listen to 'Man For All Seasons' by Robbie Williams and you'll see 'Thick As Thieves' is rather similar. I love the rest of 'West Ryder...', but I'm just upset you fail to pick up on these similarities when you did so well with 'Music For The People'. Sean Atkinson, via email

Now Sean, I would never miss the chance to take a pop at Kasabian's turgid bollocks. But, I must confess, I hadn't noticed the Robbie-isms, having heard 'Thick As Thieves' as a woefully uninspired, whine-voice mash-up of Kinks, Beatles and Doors. Having compared the two, I must say the resemblance is indeed utterly passing - EM

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# AND ANOTHER THING...

In case you've still not made your point

## FIERY BISCUITS

My mate Big Jim is at Glasto and told me he'd rather see Jack Peñate than Lady Gaga. Twat! DOM, AMERSHAM Yeah, where are Peñate's flaming mammaries, eh? - EM

## HE SPEAKS THE TRUTH

Crystal Castles are sexy. JAY, EASTBOURNE I know, right? They can slash my chest with razors any time - EM

## I LOVE COLLEGE

What kind of education should I get so that I can work in NME? BERNARDO OLIVEIRA, VIA EMAIL A strict regime of sunlight avoidance and home-schooling from a reading list including texts such as I Prefer Their Early Demos, Genre Invention For Beginners, Advanced Cowardly Abuse and Adjectives: More Is More should do nicely - EM

## CRIB NOTES

Am I the only one who can't stop saying "we were abaaaahted" in a Wakefield accent? MAY, BEDFORD Don't know what the hell you're on abaaaaht - EM

## MASSIVE PLAGIARISTS

Whenever I hear Marmaduke Duke's 'Rubber Lover' I get the Saved By The Bell: The College Years theme tune stuck in my head. "Johnny had a pink rubber lover"... "Standing on the edge of tomorrow" - See it??? JO MCNULTY, VIA EMAIL Now that is uncanny. Check it out on YouTube: <http://tinyurl.com/m5vjs5> - EM

## MOAN YERSEL BIG MAN

I am doing this now, even though the whole process is futile as you never print what I am about to say (HA! - EM). So here goes: why was the coverage of T In The Park 2009 so pathetic? STEVE FUTURE BOY JOHNSON, VIA EMAIL Oh Christ, we have to put up with pre-emptive whinging now as well? See you there, Steve, I'll bring you a chip for the other shoulder - EMILY 'SELF OPPRESSING SCOT' MACKAY



# RADAR

FIND

Edited by Jaimie Hodgson



## NEED TO KNOW...

What's Piston-driven post-punk for the art-yob generation

For fans of: The Futureheads,

Arctic Monkeys, Mclusky

Recommend: 'Holler For The Holiday'

ANDY WILLIAMS/GETTY





Better cloning through chemistry: (l-r) Simon Bellamy, Jim Webster, Michael Webster, Danny Rowton

## NME LOVES

Robo-punk Essex boys will have you seeing double. Just don't step in their creative process

# BADDIES

**A** slightly sweaty *NME* is on the upstairs balcony at The Railway Hotel in Southend, watching a decidedly sweeter Baddies pummel head-first through one hell of a homecoming show.

We look from singer to drummer and back again, mystified – hang about, someone's only gone and cloned the perfect handsome cartoon robo punk superstar! Either that or frontman Michael Webster and drummer Jim Webster are actually just twins... oh, right. But how, aside from the obvious – one holds a guitar, the other a pair of drumsticks – do you tell them apart, especially seeing as they're wearing exactly the same ruddy clothes? "One's a lot uglier than the other," confides guitar player Simon Bellamy in the dank graffiti'd dressing room after. "One's a bit more ginger than the other as well." Excellent, we say, pretty much unable to decipher any grading of ginger-ness in the murky pub light.

In fact, it's not just Michael and Jim who wear the same kit – a nicely ironed light blue militia shirt, black jeans and DMs – Simon and bass player Danny Rowton do too. All the bloody time, even in the studio. "When we go make music together, this is what we wear," says Michael, comparing their get-up to a school uniform or football kit.

Onstage in their sodden blues, Michael is orally assaulting a microphone covered with a sock, a precautionary measure so as not to smash any teeth out – as happened rather bloodily at the Bristol Thekla a couple of weeks back. Cutting through the pong of wet paint in the freshly decorated venue like aural white spirit, Baddies' live show is a post-punk performance masterpiece, like Devo showing The Futureheads how to disco or XTC flinging Darts Of Pleasure at McIsky; it's a tearaway sonic scuffle where the moonshine chorus and fruggable peculiarity is king.

Though the balls-to-your-office-job escapist clatter of single 'Holler for My Holiday' and propulsive 'At The Party' might seem like the perky fall-out from a crash-bang-wallop geetar explosion, there's

a more introspective side to Baddies. 'Colin's David Lynchian lyrical inspiration is derived from a story of Jim and Michael's little brother, whose pal did too many disco biscuits and munched a hole in the side of his mouth.

"He was committed to a mental institution and he kept complaining that there was an old woman hiding under... is bed that tickled his feet in the middle of the night," Michael tells us. Of course the powers that be – and his mum – didn't believe poor Colin, what with him being a mentalist and everything. "Then one night he was screaming and crying and they opened the door and there was an old woman under his bed grabbing his feet." Thanks for the nightmares, chaps.

All Baddies tracks are spawned from the band's unique saliva-splattered songwriting process. "Jim, Danny or Si will have a riff and they'll feed me that," starts Michael, "then I'll sort of chew on that for a little while and then spit it out. Then we all stamp in the spit for a bit and then that sort of ends up as a little puddle of foam and songs."

The puddle that is their debut album, 'Do The Job', is due to be unleashed in September and was recorded in one frantic week at the legendary Rockfield Studios in Monmouth, Wales – where Oasis laid down 'What's The Story?' Morning Glory', Black Sabbath, Motörhead, Kasabian and, um, Toploader have all had their wicked way at Rockfield too – as have Queen. "Somewhere in the mix there's a little bit of a piano that Freddie Mercury wrote 'Bohemian Rhapsody' on," points out Simon. "It does feel a little bit weird," adds Jim, on

living at the studio. "You're having a bath and then you think, 'Freddie's shaved his balls in here...'"

Nice. Pass the soap, lads.  
*Leonte Cooper*

**"We all stamp in the spit and that ends up as a puddle of foam and songs"**





# RADAR

## OTHER STUFF YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT



### TWEE HUGGERS

## Cute'n'summery indie for the fey at heart **APPLES**

Twee not fun to say, less fun to listen to. The twee militia that lopes around boutiquey labels such as Young And Lost Club encourage bands to be all endearingly self referential and like Los Campesinos before stabbing them in the back with a post ironic knitting needle.

Now the granny specs are being peered over at Midlands five-piece Apples. Their feathery indie, their oh-so-silly interview answers, their free giveaway of a bottle of Herefordshire apple juice with their next single. Easy meat.

But Apples might still rise above the nonsense. For one thing, we could do with a new Rumble Strips since the last ones got cosy with Mark Ronson. And, like their heroes XTC,

Apples have a good line in guitar pop that will jitter you out of the slumber.

It's just that when they lapse into sickly sentiment more at home on Piers Morgan's autocue, it's hard to fight the gag reflex: "Music at the moment reflects the credit crunch world we find ourselves in. All Apples want to do is to show that there can be some fun and joy thrown in for good measure," they say.

If you managed to get through that doozy and your eyes aren't bleeding, enjoy. *Sam Wolfson*

### NEED TO KNOW...

What: Summery guitar pop with added lots  
Download: 'Reason 45'

### BLOG BUZZ

## Love is the drug down in South Carolina

## **TORO Y MOI**

Like most others whose days are spent safely within sanity's grasp, I've always thought that bass guitars should be treated the same way as naughty chimpanzees, in that no matter how strong the urge they should never, ever be slapped. Strange, then, that my morals should melt so easily upon tuning into Toro Y Moi (pronounced 'tuh-row e mwah'), whose burned-brain transmissions gurgle with the sound of strings flapping against fretboard.

Not that Chaz Bundick writes songs to beat zoo animals to - he's a 22-year-old suburban smoothie, and any residual lo-fi menace is tamed by an optimism only encountered in FM house and Animal Collective's stash tin. I have no idea what people do in South Carolina,

where Chaz is from, but 'Sad Sams' suggests it's a perpetual party, *Donnie Darko* teens mating in trees and swimming in lemonade.

"My songs are about how we entertain ourselves in the suburbs. Doing things for the first time," the man explains.

Perhaps that's how the slap-bass taboo was broken. He's no fighter - these are all love songs. Isn't that right, Chaz?

"One hundred per cent, man."

See, Toro Y Moi wants to be friends, to take you swimming in lemonade. *Kev Kharas*

### NEED TO KNOW...

What: Outsider stoner party jams  
Download: 'Big Weekend'



### HEINOUS HYBRID

## Metalcore on Bacardi Breezers and poppers

## **ATTACK ATTACK!**

If the synth-scrubbed skate-screamo angst of Enter Shikari isn't wacky enough for you, it's time you gave Attack Attack! a spin.

On their new single 'Stuck Stickly', the Ohio six-piece combine nu-metalcore riffs with the unashamed pumping pop pulse of Aqua, while the vid shows off a look best described as AFI making out with Hannah Montana. Best of all, three quarters of the way in, the song surreally launches into a jaw-dropping Basshunter-esque trance interlude. Their penchant for arpeggiated synths can also be heard on their, er, unique screamo-Eurodance remix of Katy Perry's 'I Kissed A Girl'.

If all this wasn't perplexing enough, owing to guitarist Andrew Whiting's bizarre balls-

scraping-floor crab-like stance while playing live, the band have been branded 'crabcore' and the term has now become an internet meme, with GIFs of Whiting bouncing up and down being posted on numerous forums.

Not that this bothers drummer Andrew Wetzel in the slightest. "We just discovered the crabcore thing. Andrew has played guitar like that for years and we think it's absolutely hilarious that kids can try and bring us down." Unfortunately for Andrew and his chums, he's not the only one laughing. *John McDonnell*

### NEED TO KNOW...

What: Yanky metalcore on a resort break  
Download: 'Stick Stickly'



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# the

*Welcome to the walk alone*

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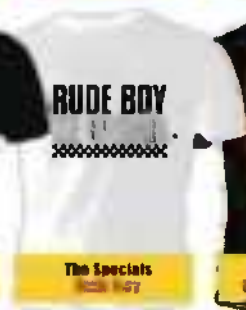
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## JAIMIE'S ROUNDUP

FEELING UP NEW MUSIC

I realised the other day what a rare beast simple honesty is becoming in new British music. At the moment everyone's putting on an act. Whether it's a tea-cosy knitting buttercup-fairy, a crystal meth-mainlining ex-rentboy, an Antarctic synth-deity or a banjo-toting Victorian chimney sweep, far-fetched theatrics, it seems, have never been so crucial. Of course, there's nothing wrong with that in theory, many of the bestest bands ever revelled in artistically constructed role-playing, but once in a while you crave some heart on sleeve and feet on ground. Which is why Young Rebel Set have been greeting my ears with a degree of fondness usually reserved for grannies welcoming their muddy scamps back home after Sunday afternoon kickabout for



## SCENE CLOSE-UP

# The sand of 2009

Dan Martin investigates the latest tremors from the Californian desert

**T**he desert around Joshua Tree has long inspired the more expansive corners of rock, and King Joshua Of Homme has long been its posterboy. Most of the players may have relocated to Los Angeles, but the dense fug has long eclipsed the hoary excesses of hair metal that for so long shaped that city. With even Arctic Monkeys getting in on the act with Homme-honed new album 'Humbug', the mysticism is even infecting indie. It also means that Josh's sabbatical as producer has given the revolving personnel of musicians that make up QOTSA license to spin off in exciting new directions. Dean Fertita, of course, has been making rumblings with a guitarist you may have heard of. But just as exciting are Troy Van Leeuwen's *Sweethead*. Troy has always been the louche, besuited Queen and, with cherrybomb singer Serrina Sims providing the gloss and members of the Mark Lanegan Band providing the grit, they may just set the world on fire in the way Spinnerette keep threatening to. Think The Kills but with a Sunset Strip sheen substituting the wasted London swagger. Their EP, 'The Great Disruptors', is out July 13.

Meanwhile, QOTSA bassist Mikey Shoes has been using the downtime to create *Mini Mantrions*, who make lush psych-pop like Conor Oberst fronting The Flaming Lips. It's still early

days, but they've already opened for The Dead Weather and their MySpace track 'Majik Marker' is a thing of exquisite beauty.

Spiritual cousins *Black Math Horseman* are currently wowing the LA hippies (if not hipsters) with their spooky lady-prog. We'll leave the jury out until Halloween at least, but any band who lists their only influence as 'mythology' have to be promising, right?

Far better to wig out (do people actually 'wig out' any more?) to are *Earthless*, whose momentarily grinding instrumental psychedelia makes us wish we'd had the guts to try peyote that time. Among the brightest

## SWEETHEAD ARE LIKE THE KILLS BUT WITH A SUNSET STRIP SHEEN



Sweethead



We Fell To Earth

sparks of the underground scene fizzing in nearby San Diego, they arrive for their first UK tour later this month.

A final mention for *We Fell To Earth* who, out of everyone, perhaps inhabit the spirit of the desert best. Wendy Rae Fowler played the witch in Queens' hyper-real 'Burn The Witch' video and met collaborator Richard File at the abled desert HQ the Rancho De La Luna in Joshua Tree. Having relocated to London, they've fashioned an album of eerie, ambient electro that goes off with a marvellous bump in the night. Think UNKLE when they were good, if you can remember that far back, and think a July 13 release. As Wendy puts it herself, 'Whether you hail from Joshua Tree or you are just passing through, it seems no-one leaves unaffected by everything that is, and is not, of the desert. It's no wonder that a scene of sorts has begun to emerge. A place that holds such natural magic is bound to give birth to a creative movement sooner or later - it's inevitable.'



Young Rebel Set

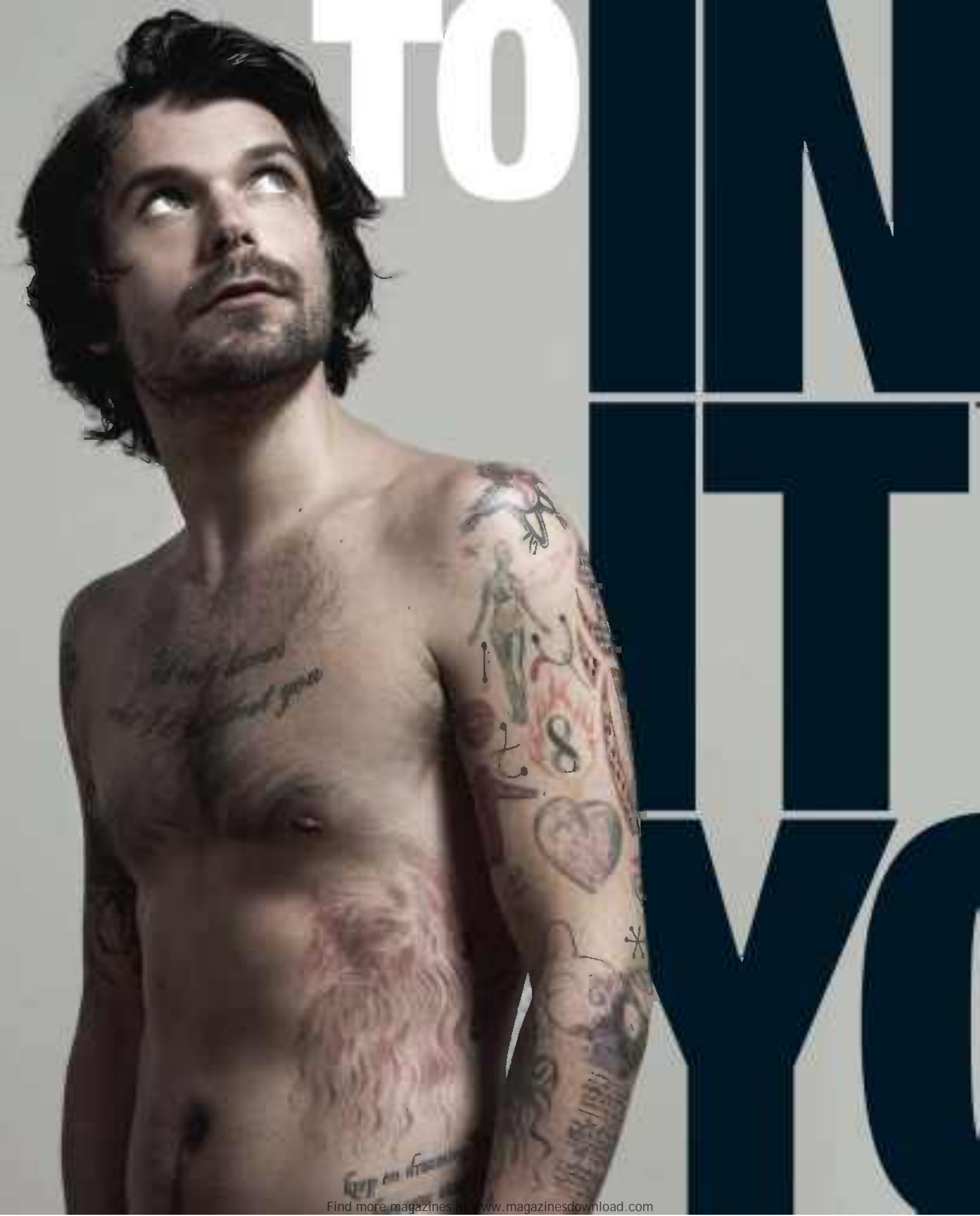
a hotpot. Imagine The Boss had he been 'Born in The Yorkshire Dales' rather than the USA. It's blue collar life lessons as taught by the senile old man that runs the scrapyard round the back of the brewery. What with The Chapman Family, and now these fire-bellied prole-rock bombardiers, Stockton On Tees seems to be becoming something of a hub. And, in such masquerading times of fantastical flights of fancy, the like of YRS are as good an ol' honest surprise as a ploughman's stotty on a dank afternoon, or a crate of dandelion and burdock delivered straight to your door.

*Jaimie Hodgson*

Jaimie Hodgson

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BIFFY CLYRO  
PICTURES BY TOM OXLEY

# FIN Y AND ON

AFTER 14 YEARS OF  
SOUL-BARING  
ROCK'N'ROLL GRAFT  
(COULD THIS BE THE  
YEAR THAT UNLIKELY  
MEGASTARS BIFFY  
CLYRO GO  
STRATOSPHERIC?  
JAMES MCMAHON  
TRAVELS TO LA TO  
FIND OUT



**A** thought considering how befuddling, complex and beautiful rock'n'roll is, by the same token, it ain't half depressing just how formulaic its modern form can take.

A rant: normally, when a band graces the cover of a magazine like this for the first time they're new, they're young, they're naive. And these aren't necessarily bad things – fuck, no!

But that's the nature of the business these days – we live in climes where warts are lasered off quickly and efficiently (not that we're calling Arctic Monkeys' Andy Nicholson a wart, but...), where unglamorous and mundane pasts are diligently glossed over (what, you didn't know one of The Horrors used to work as a press officer?). Where everyone from La Roux (actress policewoman mum) to Brandon Flowers (Republican party-sympathising practising Mormon) gets all huffy if something as trivial and human as a fact blemishes the veneer of anaemic cool their A&R team have worked so tirelessly to construct.

While we might not have ever asked for it, it's how we've come to expect our pop – box-fresh, bubble-wrapped and ready for use. Bleh! And then we moan that our bands so rarely get to develop/ make second records/say anything wise/funny/interesting. We really shouldn't be surprised. We treat them like battery hens!

Things weren't always thus: by the aforementioned logic, you'd have no Nirvana, Pulp, My Chemical Romance, Lemonheads, Muse, Kings Of Leon, Motorhead, Teenage Fanclub, Green Day or Radiohead. Or Blur – given that a) all of the above have members who look like they've tripped and hit their head on a sink (OK, maybe not Kings Of Leon) and b) made either unassuming or woeful debuts before they really found their stride.

Now a band is considered lucky if they get to make a second record and *blessed* if they get to make a third; as if the notion that a band might actually get better over time is as weird one. And, y'know, maybe now is as good a time as any to let any aspiring bands out there in on a little industry secret – it's *really* hard to get your band signed if you all look like humans are supposed to look. Y'know, average. 'They're too ugly to get anywhere' is spat out at new bands across the industry for looking thus, as if that has anything to do with anything at all. "Oi, Black Francis, there's the door. Yes, we know you've written some of the best rock songs anyone will ever get the opportunity to hear... but you look like a peeled maggot."

You can't help thinking that the music industry needs to remember they're in the business of producing art sometimes. Not tins of baked beans.

Or, perhaps in the case of Biffy Clyro, those tins of baked beans with sausages and spaghetti shaped like little spaceships in them.



**"WE'VE NEVER BEEN VERY CAREERIST. BUT WE ARE AWARE OF PEOPLE EXPECTING THINGS OF US"** *SIMON NEIL*

**F**our albums and almost 15 years into their career, Ayrshire art-rock trio Biffy Clyro are made from something different to most bands.

A bit of backstory: veterans of the Barfly circuit since the early days of this decade, you might have known Biffy Clyro back then as that peculiarly monikered art-rock band who were maybe opening for, say, Oceansize, or another of those crappy British no-mark rock bands that don't sound as good as any of the American rock bands they're ripping off, in a crappy venue in a crappy town, in front of one man and a crappy dog.

That is, until 2007's 'Puzzle', which – thanks in part to the band jumping from Beggars Banquet to major label offshoot 14th Floor, and the band leaning more in the direction of rock than art – actually made a bit of a dent into the side of the mainstream. New fans went back and listened to the three records

preceding ('Blackened Sky', 'The Vertigo Of Bliss' and 'Infinity Land') and acknowledged that they were a brilliant and unique band after all. Folk who'd been there since the beginning bitched about where their eight-minute jazz metal interludes had gone. Such is life.

Meanwhile, the band toured with My Chemical Romance, Foo Fighters and The Rolling fucking Stones and put the quarter of a million records they'd shifted down to (admittedly unsexy) words of the kind you rarely hear in conversations about music any more. talent and hard work.

Now to the present day: as you read this, Biffy Clyro are in Los Angeles' Ocean Way studios – the location where Frank Sinatra laid down his vocal for 'My Way' and, as the Gold disc hanging on the main corridor wall testifies, where the late Michael Jackson made 'Dangerous' in 1991 – two weeks into two months of making their fifth and as yet untitled album with Rage Against

The Machine/Gallows and 'Puzzle' producer Garth 'GGGarth' Richardson.

Expectations for their new output are high. In fact, given their hefty tenure on the UK rock scene, their longevity (the band all met, aged 14, at school) and the fact that one of their number is ginger, another is ginger and almost bald, and their group plays a strand of rock'n'roll with a good few more chromosomes than pretty much every other band of their ilk – ie, that they contradict and zealously defy the generic ingredients required for pop success circa 2009 – it's astonishing that the expectation awaiting the new album is that Biffy Clyro are this year's most likely to "do a Muse". Hey, don't look at us like that! We didn't say it – that's a quote that comes directly from the mouth of their record label.

"That's what they're telling us too," says singer and guitarist Simon Neil, surreptitiously rolling a joint in Ocean Way's kitchen space while bass player





To Biff and die in LA: James, Simon and Ben



Even at Reading 2008, shirts were of no use to Biffy

But surely after toiling around toilet venues for so long, you don't want to go back to all that?

Simon laughs. "Well, it's certainly not the intention."

**W**hich is good news indeed. See, despite the band unleashing the odd coy soundbite ("We want to be a fucking big band, not fucking big rock stars") the increased prominence and swelled fanbase of Biffy Clyro suits them.

For one thing, after the introspection and deep-seated sadness of 'Puzzle' (much of the record is concerned with Neil's depression in the wake of his mother, Eleanor's, death – key lyric: "Everywhere I look, someone dies/ Wonder when it's my turn"), they deserve some fun – and being in Biffy Clyro right now sounds like it must be a fucking blast. Witness the band gushing excitedly about a trip to Universal Studios they've got planned for the next day. Or goofing around with their instruments to Shania Twain's 'You're Still The One' so *NME's* photographer Tom Oxley can take some shots of the band at play.

Then, much later on, getting messed up in an LA hotel room, rabid martial arts enthusiast Ben demonstrates a choke hold he's learned on a tub of talcum powder – and coats both me and the hotel room in soapy goodness.

As both a humanist and a fan of rock music, I'm happy to say that the prevalent sense of doom that infused 'Puzzle' is gone. On the outside at least.

"I do think," says Simon, sombrely, "that it'll probably inform every record we make from now on, as things in your life do. You have to presume when you're younger that there's going to be a point when you're like, 'Ah! I'm an adult and I'm happy', but I don't think that that necessarily ever happens. This record is

definitely going to be more upbeat – the lyrics are still a bit dark, but the music is definitely more positive.

"Other things have happened in my life, like I got married and that's a happy thing, so I've got other things to write about, and so this record won't be as sad and as specific as 'Puzzle' – that stuff was the only thing at the time I could think to possibly write about."

It seemed that the only press I read about 'Puzzle' concerned your mother's death – do you regret putting all that stuff out there? It must have been hard digging stuff up every time you talked to a journalist.

"It concerns me more that I took a bit of a mystery away from the listeners by

explaining what the songs were about," continues Simon. "But it definitely did get to a point at the end when we were going to Australia for the first time and we're getting asked the same questions we had been asked for the last year and a half. It did take its toll a wee bit, but that was my fault. I put the information out there and it's a music journalist's job to ask these questions, you know." He smiles. "I don't think I'll make the same mistake this time."

This gear-shift in emotional mood is evident when the band play four new songs from the forthcoming record. It's so early in the recording process that little has been done beyond nailing drum tones, while James' melody parts

## "IT'S A BIFFY SISTER BAND"

It's been a busy year for Simon Neil. In May this year Marmaduke Duke, the "conceptual rock band" co-fronted by Simon under his alias The Atmosphere, released their second album, 'Duke Pandemonium'. Busy lad, eh?

### NME: WHERE DOES MARMADUKE DUKE FIT IN WITH BIFFY?

Simon: "It's a way to pass the time between doing Biffy records, really. It does my head in people saying, 'Right, you've written all the songs for your album, now we're going to record them all in three months, get the album out three months after that...' Marmaduke is a break from that. We made our album in a week."

### WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MAKING MUSIC IN BIFFY AND MARMADUKE?

"With Biffy being a rock band, the Duke is an opportunity to make different kinds of music. I don't think

it should be an effort to write new music and make a record, it doesn't have to be fucking brilliant all the time, you've got to keep creating to keep your juices flowing. And there's the dressing up thing – we couldn't really do that in Biffy, but no-one really cares about that in the Duke. They don't mind if we're a bit sloppy. And there's more of a licence to get drunk as well."

### DO THE OTHER MEMBERS OF BIFFY FEEL PUT OUT AT ALL?

James: "Not at all – we've always been involved and welcomed as members. It's kind of like a Biffy sister band really..."

James Johnston (ginger) and his drumming twin Ben (ginger and bald) listen on and sigh.

Can you be creative under that kind of pressure?

"Well, we've been around so long, and around the block so many times, that I think we're quite experienced at knowing when someone's blowing smoke up our ass," smiles Simon.

Ben laughs. "Right at the start of the band we drove all the way down to Redditch – to meet some guy who'd advertised in the back of some music magazine saying he was from a record company and wanted to meet bands. We were like, 'Fuckin' hell! This guy's going to meet us!' but when we got there we just realised it was a massive con. We've been quite suspicious of what people want from us ever since."

Simon: "We've never been very careerist – we're satisfied playing to five people or to a stadium. But we are aware of people expecting things of us. But we do everything we can to ignore it."

"It's actually more evident when we're making videos and things like that," adds James. "Much more than actually making the record – it's like, 'Christ, there's an awful lot of people here!' And you do kind of wonder what they're all doing."





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# PARIS GOT FASHION. WE GOT WHISKEY. (SORRY, PARIS.)

JACK DANIEL'S  TENNESSEE WHISKY

Drinking responsibly is always in fashion.

DRINKAWARE CO UK





are still in their infancy. Without anything committed to tape, the band have no option but to plug in and play the songs live. I sit in the control room with the record label people and studio engineers. When GGGarth has finished watching the ice-hockey match on his laptop, he raises the faders.

The best of the songs is 'That Golden Rule' – a punchy, angular punk rock 'thing' that suggests, however indebted to anthems Biffy became on 'Puzzle', the oddness that makes them more than just your average fuzz-pedal-driven rock band hasn't diminished one jot. It reminds me of System Of A Down's 'Sugar', all mental brain-worm melodies and snaky sludge-metal guitars. It's probably the most exciting rock song I've heard in forever, recalling the likes of stoner-rock heroes Clutch having one of their songs cut up by an alcoholic beat matcher. It's infectiously giddy.

"It's the sound of the main stage mosh pit at Reading 2010," says someone from the record label, proudly, which is a very record label thing to say.

They play a song called 'Cloud Of Stink' which I don't really like very much, but is named after a funny story Simon read in the newspaper about a literal 'cloud of stink' coming over from France "or somewhere" and engulfing the south of England, yet by the time they play 'Many Of Horror' I'm enthralled again. It's stadium rock, Jim, but in the way only Biffy could create – it'll most likely get played on drivetime radio. It might even make a few people crash into a tree. It's Coldplay's 'Yellow' turned inside out and stitched back up.

Yet it's 'God And Satan' that suggests the biggest about-turn in Biffy Clyro's outlook. Featuring one of the most beautiful, yearning Simon Neil vocals I can ever remember him uttering (and sung in a broad Scottish accent, almost as a riposte to the cloth-eared fools who criticise the man for sometimes sounding American, despite indie-rock by its very nature being a uniquely American creation...) it's a song that literally places God in a battle with Satan. Circa 'Puzzle', where Biffy sounded beautiful, glorious, but ultimately defeated, they would have perhaps been beaten down by the hoofed one. Now, it sounds like they're drilling down to hell to 'ave a word. Really, it's Muse who should be looking to 'do' Biffy.

Do you wish all this had come sooner?

"I think at the time we would have welcomed it," says Simon. "But in retrospect absolutely not. I'm really happy with how everything has happened has given us valuable knowledge of what to expect in the future. It's a nice trajectory."

"I just don't think we were ready back then," adds James. "We didn't have any self control. It's like, look over there, there's a big bag of weed on the table and I can't wait to smoke it, but we can't yet because we need to do some photos for NME. We had a big bag of weed when we did another photoshoot in 1999 and when the photographer turned up

## "I DO THINK PEOPLE MISUNDERSTOOD WHAT WE WERE ABOUT"

SIMON NEIL

we were all stoned out of our minds... was just a total waste of fucking time."

Simon laughs. "We learned a lesson there – you only get half stoned in future! But, no, I think we would've gone mental if all this had happened early on. If someone had given me a million quid to make a record or whatever, I would have just gone 'aaayyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyy'. The way it's happened has meant we've been allowed to become a proper band."

Did you ever feel a bit underappreciated before?

"I think we did," Simon pauses. "It felt for a few years that people kind of misunderstood what we were about. But it was just motivation to show people what we were about."

It's been too long coming and there's been too much sorrow, but come the release of the album they'll show the world exactly who they are. If you can't wait that long, here's a heads-up.

They're impeccably nice men; not very rock'n'roll I grant you, but in an industry of men who'd rape their grandmother for a payrise, this is quite something.

They're really quite clever; normally when a band is taken for dinner by their record label, they'll be blissfully unaware that they're paying for it out of their own advance. Not Biffy, who both question whether we really need another course of food that we're only going to be too full to eat at the end of the meal and snarl politely under their breath during dinner at the injustice of the record company staying in a luxury hotel while the three of them and their tour manager bed down at a rented house.

But away from industry politiks, on a music tip, they're a band who've earned their stripes by doing what rock bands do – rocking – both in crappy venues in crappy towns, in front of one man and a crappy dog and in front of loads of people in a massive stadium while Keith Richards looks on and taps his feet.

And they've done all this by playing some of the most clever, yet emotive, but also experimental, not forgetting hard-edged, but definitely still yearning rock music ever written. They're proof that beyond haircuts, the computer airbrush, bands signed and dropped in a one album cycle, stupid magazine hype bands – ie all the things that sully rock'n'roll, ie the greatest fucking thing in the whole wide fucking world, ie the reason why I'm just about to punch the air the moment I finish reading these words – rock'n'roll still has hope. Especially when these three Scotsmen are just "doing what bands do".

For the record, they're probably the best rock band in the UK too. (Punches air).

Insert 'Simon's back' gag here

BIFFY CLYRO



# "THE MEDIA'S REPORTING OF SWINE FLU IS AN ACT OF TERRORISM..."

Or so said **The Mars Volta** to *NME* on 15 May 2009. But what about everything you read in the papers? **Barry Nicolson** headed to Mexico to investigate the duo's views on the pandemic

**W**e feel the creeping unease as soon as we step off the plane and are herded onto the bus that takes us to the terminal. We've landed in a kingdom of fear and suspicion; a scorched earth wasteland where microscopic airborne agents of death are sucked into your respiratory system with every inhalation. So choose your breaths wisely. Avoid touching anything. Scrub with alcohol-based hand sanitiser if anyone so much as smiles at you. Do this, we're told, and we might come back from Mexico alive.

Except it's really not like that at all. Upon returning from a trip to Kenya in 1979, Richard Pryor commented that he "didn't see any niggers there, only beautiful black people who still had their self-respect". Similarly, if you walk the streets of Guadalajara, you won't see

a panic-stricken population living under the shadow of swine flu, you'll see only dignified Mexicans going about their day-to-day business. The real sickness, as Omar Rodriguez-Lopez points out, is the ignorance of the outside world.

"They want you to think that Mexico is a disease-ridden place and that the border should be closed off," rails The Mars Volta's guitarist, Puerto Rican by birth but who recently moved here, and who describes American overreaction to the outbreak as an act of "international terrorism" against Mexico.

"The *Los Angeles Times* actually ran a piece a couple of weeks ago that said the scientists had been wrong, that swine flu started in the US, then someone brought it to Mexico and it festered here. There were more cases in New York, but they didn't shut that city down for two weeks like they did in Mexico City, did they? Can you imagine the economic consequences for America if they shut New York down even for a day?"

"And have you heard about the Mexicans who went to China?" he asks, clearly on a roll now. "They weren't even sick, but the Chinese government quarantined them, put 'em in a hotel, evacuated everyone else out of it and wouldn't let them out for three weeks. That's where they spent their vacation. That's the sort of ignorance we're dealing with."

A couple of hours earlier, Rodriguez-Lopez pulls up outside *NME*'s hotel to drive us to his home studio in the leafy, affluent city of Zapopan. On

the way there, he stops at a roadside café in a poor area of Guadalajara. He's something of a regular here; he comes in frequently to buy their home made *aguas frescas*, a kind of blended fruit water, the drinking of which, he says, has become "a religious experience in the band recently".

He buys us one, and asks afterwards, "Were you afraid of the guy who made your drink? Do you feel the need to wash your hands? You know, if you watch Fox News in the US, everything becomes a little more obvious. They're like, 'You see! These dirty people want to infect our country, we should put up a wall and close them out forever!' What I love is that you can see how they're gearing it towards their audience. If

It may be that The Mars Volta will one day channel the rage and injustice they feel about this issue into an album, but 'Octahedron' isn't it – their fifth LP was completed last summer, long before anyone had even heard of swine flu. 'Octahedron' is, however, in the context of The Mars Volta, the unlikely album of the year; a song-based record that's largely bereft of the bells, whistles and psychedelic wig-outs the band have come to be loved and

loathed for. Omar says it's the first of their albums he can listen to for pleasure.

Restraint is not a concept commonly associated with The Mars Volta; were they ever to star in their own edition of *Guitar Hero*, gamers would probably find it akin to trying to complete *Call Of Duty 4* using only

a rubber chicken and their sense of humour. And yet, restraint became the watchword of 'Octahedron's' recording. Aesthetically inspired by the likes of Nick Drake, Syd Barrett's solo work and Vic Chesnutt, it's also the first Mars Volta album that hasn't been subjected to what Omar calls his "Frankenstein process" of songwriting.

"I start with the mythic structure of a song," he says of his usual method, "then it goes into a laboratory and gets opened up and broken apart and stuck together again with pieces of different animals. You still have a bird's eye view of where the original song is and what the structure is, but you've deformed it as much as possible. Then you add electricity and let it be born. The idea with this record was to just let it be as close to the original intent as possible."

## "They want you to think Mexico is disease-ridden and should be closed off"

**OMAR RODRIGUEZ-LOPEZ**

they're gonna have a piece on immigration, they'll be discussing it, and then suddenly it'll be like, 'BREAKING NEWS! We've just tracked down a rapist from Mexico, who entered the country illegally and raped however many women... and now, back to the immigration issue!' They see pictures of people out in the streets wearing masks, and they're like, 'Oh! Silly little Mexicans. They don't realise – as we superior beings in the US do – that the mask doesn't protect them from swine flu, but it makes them feel better, so let them'. And it's not about that at all. People here know the mask doesn't protect them from getting sick. They're wearing the mask as a socially conscious effort not to infect other people. Of course, the US could never understand this."



Lazarro the dog: "You swine, I haven't got flu"



Omar's house-cum-studio



The Mexican analogue keyboard mountain



# IG OF



"No señor, we don't do battered sausage and chips"



Mex on fire: Omar and Cedric hit the streets of Guadalajara



The Basilica de Zapopan, in The Mars Volta's hood

In addition to hummable melodies, unheard-of accessibility and the toning down of proggy excess (Omar recently trimmed the band of two members; they now number a positively *svelte* six), 'Octahedron' is something of an anomaly in that it doesn't feature a central concept or narrative, on y the loose theme of disappearance and kidnap, manifested in the eerie imagery of Cedric Bixler-Zavala's cryptic lyrics.

"I was interested in modern legends," says Zavala, the sullen, intense counterpoint to Omar's nerdish excitability, "like Jimmy Hoffa, or Oscar Zeta Acosta, who was the guy the Samoan lawyer in *Fear & Loathing In Las Vegas* was based on. The way he

disappeared [he vanished while travelling in Mexico in 1974] was just so bizarre. Watching *Close Encounters Of The Third Kind* as well, where they discover long-lost ships and people who've been missing since the '50s, I always found that idea fascinating."

"The unanswered is always very difficult for human beings," adds Omar. "When someone dies, if you believe they go to heaven or they're reborn as a rabbit, or even if they're just in the earth and the worms are eating them, at least you can categorise it. At least you have some kind of answer. But when someone just disappears, you never know..."

As Omar shows us around his idyllic hillside mansion, we're introduced to his dog, Lazaro, who survived a 60-foot leap from the freeway when his previous owners left him there to die. Now, he spends his life obsessively chasing a tattered tennis ball in and out of the

swimming pool. "Music is my tennis ball," says Omar.

And how. Much of his home is given over to the studio he's built, where The Mars Volta record and rehearse. Racks of vintage guitars line the walls. old analogue mixing desks jostle for space with sitars and South American percussion instruments, and he has

a collection of effects pedals that stretch into triple digits. His daily schedule is carefully regimented on the kitchen whiteboard for all to see: a 9am rise, followed by lunch at three and dinner at eight – both made by a live-in chef so he doesn't waste time cooking when he could be working – before going to bed around 4am.

"When the shark stops swimming, he dies," smiles Cedric.

With his unkempt shrub of corkscrew hair and Coke bottle glasses, Omar has the air of a mad professor, but what people often don't understand about The Mars Volta, as Cedric says, "is that we're basically just a celebration of absurdity".

"People take us way more seriously than we take ourselves," agrees Omar. "It's like an inside joke to us. Humour has to be an integral part of what you're doing, otherwise you're just some asshole 'artist'. Let me put it this way:

our first three records all have Cedric farting on them. I recorded him farting and said, 'I'm putting it in there'. So somewhere in the mix, there's a fart. That says it all, really! I remember Rich Costey's face when he was mixing it. He said, 'What the hell is this?' I was like, 'That's what makes it ART!'"

One thing they are serious about, however, is progress. 'Octahedron' is already old news for the band, something, in Omar's words, "we did a while ago, and we learned a lot from, but we've moved forward. We're light years into the future."

On the drive back to our hotel, Omar stops off again at the same roadside café for another *agua fresca* and chats in Spanish to the old man who runs it. Omar's assistant tells us that she can't stand this part of town; it's dirty, smelly and overrun with gangs of feral children, but he describes the place and its people as "beautiful" and makes a point of bringing all his visitors here.

Perhaps it's an act of defiance – this, after all, is exactly the sort of place our GP warned us about before we came – or perhaps he just really likes the *aguas frescas*. Whatever it is, you sense that if there's inspiration to be drawn from his newly-adopted homeland, it's not in the fear and hysteria that's been focused on it recently, but the warmth and honesty of its people. Wherever The Mars Volta land next on their long, strange trip, Mexico will almost certainly have a part to play in the journey.



# FRIDAY 10th JULY

## MAIN STAGE

**\_KINGS\_OF\_LEON\_**

FRANZ FERDINAND  
MAXIMO PARK  
JAMES MORRISON

## 10 NME STAGE

NICK CAVE AND THE BAD SEEDS  
YEAH YEAH YEAHS  
IDLEWILD • THE MARS VOLTA

## KING TUT'S WAH WAH TENT

THE VIEW  
THE COURTEENERS • JAMIE T  
EDWYN COLLINS • THE MACCABEES

## RED BULL BEDROOM JAM FUTURES STAGE

CRYSTAL CASTLES  
THE TWANG • GO:AUDIO • CAMERA OBSCURA  
VAGABOND • WILL AND THE PEOPLE • SAVING AIMEE

## T BREAK STAGE

THE PHANTOM BAND • PEARL & THE PUPPETS  
THE TEMPER TRAP • MING MING AND THE CHING CHINGS  
DEAD BOY ROBOTICS • MAPLE LEAVES • HOMEWORK

For One Out Line up  
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# SATURDAY 11th JULY

## MAIN STAGE

**the KILLERS**

RAZORLIGHT  
THE SPECIALS  
JAMES  
PAOLO NUTINI  
LADY GAGA  
CALVIN HARRIS • BJORN AGAIN

## 10 NME STAGE

NINE INCH NAILS  
JANE'S ADDICTION  
THE TING TINGS • KATY PERRY  
WHITE LIES • STARSAILOR  
YOU ME AT SIX • THE HORRORS  
THAT PETROL EMOTION

## KING TUT'S WAH WAH TENT

MANIC STREET PREACHERS  
GLASVEGAS  
JASON MRAZ • FOALS  
FRIENDLY FIRES • NOISSETTES  
M83 • IGLU & HARTLY • MUMFORD & SONS

## SLAM TENT

2 MANY DJS  
LAURENT GARNIER (LIVE)  
GREEN VELVET (LIVE) • FELIX DA HOUSECAT  
SLAM • MR SCRUFF • BEARDYMAN  
CLAUDE VONSTROKE • SILICONE SOUL

## RED BULL BEDROOM JAM FUTURES STAGE

FLORENCE AND THE MACHINE  
OF MONTREAL • TWIN ATLANTIC  
METRONOMY • FIGHT LIKE APES • THE VIRGINS  
DINOSAUR PILE-UP • THE HOURS • DELPHIC  
MY PASSION • LADY LYKEZ

## T BREAK STAGE

1990S • HIP PARADE • SUCIOPERRO  
WALLIS BIRD • PRISCILLA AHN • JILL JACKSON  
HEALTHY MINDS COLLAPSE • PUNCH AND THE APOSTLES  
TRAPPED IN KANSAS • BRONTO SKYLIFT  
THE FRENCH QUARTER • MIKE NISBET • GONG FFI

## BBC INTRODUCING STAGE

BROKEN RECORDS • TELEGRAPHS • THE LAW  
ANSWERING MACHINE • YOUNG FATHERS • LOWKEY  
UNICORN KID • CAT HOUSE • DALLY KING • THE LOCALS  
ORPHANS & VANDALS

# SUNDAY 12th JULY

## MAIN STAGE

**blur** **SNOW PATROL**

ELBOW  
BLOC PARTY  
THE SCRIPT  
SEASICK STEVE  
SQUEEZE  
THE PARSONAGE

## 10 NME STAGE

KEANE  
PENDULUM • LILY ALLEN  
DOVES  
EAGLES OF DEATH METAL • THE GAME  
THE DYKEENIES • THE GASLIGHT ANTHEM  
IN CASE OF FIRE

## KING TUT'S WAH WAH TENT

PET SHOP BOYS  
TV ON THE RADIO • MOGWAI (PLAYING LAST)  
PETER DOHERTY • REGINA SPEKTOR  
THE SATURDAYS • DANIEL MERRIWEATHER  
GARY GO • CAROLINA LIAR

## SLAM TENT

JEFF MILLS  
THE STREETS • DAVE CLARKE  
SIMIAN MOBILE DISCO (LIVE)  
TIGA • BOYS NOIZE  
BEN SIMS • JORIS VOORN • FUNK D'VOID

## RED BULL BEDROOM JAM FUTURES STAGE

THE AIRBORNE TOXIC EVENT  
LADYHAWKE  
JACK PENATE • PATRICK WOLF • LITTLE BOOTS  
PASSION PIT • HOCKEY • VV BROWN  
GENERAL FIASCO • THE AUTEUR • THE TUNICS

## T BREAK STAGE

TOMMY REILLY • WE WERE PROMISED JETPACKS  
IAIN ARGYER • THE BIG PINK • CASSIDY • PAPER PLANES  
PULLED APART BY HORSES • MY COUSIN I BID YOU FAREWELL  
BROTHER LOUIS COLLECTIVE • BARN OWL • LITTLE ESKIMOS  
TANGO IN THE ATTIC • GIFT

## BBC INTRODUCING STAGE

THE TWILIGHT SAD • DANANANANAYKROYD  
SEAL CUB CLUBBING CLUB • HITCHCOCK • MILK KAH  
ALTO ELITE • DECIMALS • MY LUMINARIES • ERZA BANG  
LENI WARD • FINDO GASK

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2009



# SPEED DIAL BRIAN FALLON

(THE GASLIGHT ANTHEM)

US: LONDON, 5.30PM  
HIM: A TOURBUS, 5.30PM

Their hero Bruce Springsteen joined them onstage at Glasto: it's been a busy week...

**H**ello, Brian. Good weekend?  
"It was pretty good, how was yours?"  
Yeah, it was great. I watched you guys in Hyde Park and also on TV at Glastonbury...  
"Oh, the BBC?"

Yeah, they seem to love you now.  
"So far so good. We'll see if that sticks, right?"

I see sales of 'The '59 Sound' have gone up 200 per cent since then.  
"Yeah, it's been a big couple of days."

Have you worked out how many houses you're going to buy?  
"Er... still none. You gotta sell quite a few more than that, it's a tough business."

So I hear. Well, what was it like looking over at Bruce Springsteen singing a song you wrote?  
"The thing that really mattered is that it really legitimised everything we're doing - now there's nothing left to talk about. Whatever anybody says it's really put to bed."

Because Bruce likes you?  
"Very much so. It's put the proverbial sock in the mouth for naysayers, and encouraged the... encouragers further. And it's opened the door to the next place for us. Now we've got a send-off from the parent of the genre of music that we do, it's like, 'Go out into the world!'"

The thing I liked most was that Bruce was so enthusiastic he kept getting one of the lyrics wrong.  
"Yeah, I think he thought it was 'song' when it was 'choir'. But the next day [at Hyde Park] he got it right, which means he must've practised it."

Is it liberating knowing you've made this massive step, or are you wondering where to go next?  
"I don't want to say it's like passing the torch because that's a mighty statement and I'm not sure if that's what he meant by it, but he hasn't got up onstage with a lot of other bands this year. A lot of other bands come onstage and do their songs, but it's not often that he comes two days in a row and does another band's song, then invites them up to do his song with him. It was borderline ceremonial, that's how it felt. Like a graduation day."

Will you be answering questions about Bruce and this eventful weekend for a long time?  
"No, I don't think so. We're moving on

**"Bruce likes us. Now there's nothing left to talk about"**

pretty quickly with the rest of the year, and I'm definitely going to control how long it goes on for. Guys like Bruce, they're not interested in what's happened in the past because their career is constantly moving. You can say you don't want to talk about it and move on, and say, 'If you're interested in this topic, here's where I suggest the best story is'. I could say I did an interview with *NME*, read that one. I'm being presumptuous, of course, assuming I'm going to like your piece (laughs)."

Fingers crossed, eh? Let's talk about the summer. You've got a date with *T In The Park* coming up, do you know much about it?  
"I know it's a repeating thing, like it's kind of a tradition. I'm not really sure what it is. We normally find out on the day, and then are a bit blown away."



It's Scotland's biggest festival, so it feels like the whole of the country is there. *Surviving T* is seen as something of a victory.  
"That's awesome. A lot of crowds are really judgmental; they stand there with arms folded until you can prove yourself, but in Scotland they're always

In that environment, how do you relax and switch off?  
"I think you have to retreat into who you are. You're a performer from this time to this time, and when the show's over you have to not be that person any more. It's like a character you invent, and you play that role."

Are you conscious of being a frontman?  
"Not so much. That only happens maybe 30 seconds before, as I'm walking to my guitar on the stage. It just happens, and then the moment I hand the guitar back to Ian, the guitar tech, it ends. It's a position you've been graciously put in, you can't live your life like that. I watch videos of us, and I wonder why I can't be like that all the time."

**NME.COM**  
Watch the band perform 'The '59 Sound' at [NME.COM/video](http://NME.COM/video) now

**WHO SHOULD WE GET ON THE PHONE NEXT?**  
Him out of The Twang? Her out of The Kills? Email your suggestions to [letters@nme.com](mailto:letters@nme.com) putting 'Speed Dial' in the subject line



# TIME FOR HEROES ENTER SHIKARI

From local hardcore bands to legendary visionary poets, **Enter Shikari** reveal their biggest influences and greatest idols

**E**nter Shikari, exit your bowels. St Albans' foremost hardcore-trance band have returned with an album so loud it's already made God complain from upstairs. 'Common

Dreads' is its name; mighty is its sound and furrowed is its brow. The nation's in a state, and this blast of anti-authoritarian, anti-war, anti-conformity but somehow incredibly positive nutter music comes on like shock treatment for drooling drones everywhere

"There's a lot of distractions for young people these days," says lead singer Rou, "a lot of stuff you can escape into to forget about everything. As well as giving people music to escape into, we give them substance. We open a few eyes and minds."

They also continue to raise a few eyebrows, with their genre-clusterfuck tunes, the parent-scarecrow sound of a punks Vs ravers ruck. With this in mind *NME* spoke to Rou and guitarist Rory to sleuth an answer as to where the dickens this mad music came from. What became clear was this band – who, lest we forget, were instrumental in the new wave of self-released, genuinely independent music – are still firmly rooted in their formative years on the local hardcore circuit, but are now ready to kick parliament in its hairy old nuts. As Rou says, "We've got a lot more confidence to not hold back. Everything on this album is a lot more outspoken."

Here are the inspirations behind the bolshiness...

## 1 RADIOHEAD

Rory Clewlow (guitar): "We've always listened to them, but especially recording this second album. Before going into the studio I bought loads more pedals, and I ended up learning loads of Radiohead stuff. It's just inspiring to see how other people make songs and play guitar and discover new techniques. It definitely had a bearing on how the sounds developed guitar-wise."

Rou Reynolds (vocals): "They come across as the kind of people up for experimentation with their music, and with their lives as well. They did quite a lot of research into making their gigs as green as possible, by encouraging people to use public transport and using LED lighting, and that's pretty admirable and inspiring."

## 2 SICK OF IT ALL

Rou: "They're probably my favourite hardcore band. I got into American hardcore after seeing local hardcore bands and hearing what they had to say – Sick Of It All have always been quite socially relevant."

Rory: "I like their vigour and emotion. A lot of this sort of hardcore nowadays isn't really hardcore, it's just more of a fashion – without wanting to sound too clichéd and moany – but they still have something relevant to say, and they're still the leading voice in the hardcore scene."

## 3 MONG HANG

Rou: "We heard about them when we first went to Japan about three years ago. Mong Hang are the most ridiculously experimental, crazy... basically everything you'd expect from a Japanese rock band. One minute their music will sound like something at a circus and then it'll sound like The Dillinger Escape Plan, then a Tibetan choir. Everything's thrown in and it totally works. They're a real feel-good band. Their melodies are really interesting – I guess they're not just being influenced by western music, they've got all sorts of cultural influences and it really shows."

"If we're going to influence people, we want to say something worth saying"

**ROU REYNOLDS**

## 4 DJ TIESTO

Rory: "When we used to put on shows back in the day, we used to bust out his tunes between bands and at parties. He's a classic dance inspiration for us."

Rou: "He represents the whole house and trance culture. Just watching a live DVD of him, it's mad, the show is just unbelievable. It's a completely different experience from a rock band but one which has a lot of similarities"

Rory: "There is a lot of crossover in the emotions that you get from seeing both types of styles and genres. We just try and unite them in one music genre."

## 5 CRY FOR SILENCE

Rou: "This is a band that we grew up listening to. They're from Watford, the town next to us, they used to play at our local youth club and pub and they're basically one of the biggest local influences to our hardcore side."

Rory: "That whole Watford, St Albans, Hemel scene was really big. There was a lot of ska, a lot of punk, and it was one of the biggest influences when we were starting. We got the singer of Cry For Silence to do the vocal on 'All Eyes On The Saint', a B-side for a single we just released [Juggernauts]."

Rou: "That was a real honour for us."

## 6 WILLIAM BLAKE

Rory: "I did English for A-level and a lot of the poets we studied I wasn't really into. I guess being that age the last thing you want to do is read sappy poetry all day. But when I got to Blake and the first poem I read, *London*, it was a bit of an eye-opener once we broke it down. His stuff grabbed me then – just how brave he was in his day and how extremely relevant he still is today. And I guess something made me realise with our lyrics we had power, just by having a voice, to say something, and we probably should, given the big opportunity and the big stage we've made for ourselves."

## 8 TONY BENN

Rou: "He's a very brave character. Everyone seems to look up to him. I wasn't alive when he was a minister, but everything I hear about him saddens me when you see the politicians today."

Rory: "Recently, we've been to a few Stop The War protests and he's at the head of that coalition. Seeing him speak is very inspiring, to see the power of his beliefs. It's inspiring for us as a band."

## 9 THE DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN

Rou: "We went to see them at the [London] Forum four or five years ago, and just the energy in that room, coming off the stage and coming off the crowd, was like nothing I'd ever seen. The way those guys put 150 per cent in every night and still manage to play an immaculate set of incredible music is inspiring. These high energy bands really stuck with us. Before we go onstage we always watch a Dillinger Escape Plan video to get us all riled up."

## 10 HIGH CONTRAST

Rory: "He's one of the first drum'n'bass producers I got into and opened up a whole new world. The energy you get from d'n'b goes hand-in-hand with the energy from hardcore bands."

Rou: "We realised that one of our songs, 'The Feast', the main chorus is quite hardcore guitar-wise, then we realised that if you take the guitar out it sounds exactly like drum'n'bass. There's so many similarities we can easily tap into."

## 11 LOWKEY

Rory: "He's a rapper-cum-activist, and very influential on our lyrical side of things. He shows you can bring people together through music, and get points across that mainstream media wouldn't be brave enough to do."

Rou: "It wasn't a conscious decision to make the album outspoken. What happened is that there were so many bands condoning negativity, and you need more bands on the other side of the scale. If we're going to influence people, we want to be able to say something worth saying."

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Enter their bedroom (clockwise from bottom) Rob Reife, Rou Reynolds, Rory Clewlow, Chris Batten



# THE RUMBLE STRIPS... THEY'RE THAT DEXYS RIP-OFF BAND, RIGHT?

Retro. Copy-cats. Fighters. A lot's been said about *The Rumble Strips*. As they unleash their croon-tastic new album, *Mark Beaumont* explodes the myths and legends

**T**hey're a gang of Young Soul Rebels, so addicted to Dexys that they've already invested in a job lot of gypsy dungarees.

Wrong! They're a yokel fun-time festival band. Uh-errrr! So many myths and half-truths have grown up around The Rumble Strips – rock's most misunderstood band – that you half expect Dan Brown to write a book about how they're the secret keepers of the truth about Christ's transsexuality.

Don't, for instance, ever call them 'ska'. "It's something we've studiously tried to avoid," says trumpet and piano maestro Henry Clark. "If we ever write a song and someone puts a ska offbeat in it, it's frowned upon."

It was that kind of talk, though, that saw this Tottenham-via-Tavistock bunch become big favourites of skinheads, dads and bouncers. But, with their Mark Ronson-produced second album, 'Welcome To The Walk Alone', ditching much of the brass of 2007 debut 'Girls And Weather' for a classic Scott Walker orchestral sweep, they're keen to jettison some half-cocked presumptions too. So *NME* gathers them in a Kings Cross café to explode some myths, repeal some rumours and burst some bubbles of bullshit...

**MYTH 1** They're up for a fight With singer Charlie Waller often sporting black eyes onstage, and new single 'Not The Only Person' recounting the story of how he scared off a mugger by drunken shouting alone, you might presume The Rumble Strips are partial to the occasional rumble. Not so!

"I think I've just got a hittable face," says Charlie.

Henry: "When we were in Newcastle, on Charlie's way home from the pub to the hotel he got nussed twice by separate people."

Charlie: "I think they're scared of their own homosexuality and they take it out on me."

Tom Gorbutt (sax/vocals) "You're stirring something inside of them they don't like."

The single finds Charlie being saved from a knife-wielding thug by his wife.

Charlie: "I like that. You're not saying,

'I'm gonna get you', you're saying, 'My woman's gonna get you!'"

**VERDICT: FALSE**

**MYTH 2** They're 'that Dexys band' It was partly the 'Geno'-esque horns and partly Charlie's shitting-a-basketball vocal strainings, but The Rumble Strips have constantly been plagued with Dexys Midnight Runners comparisons.

Charlie: "He [Kevin Rowland] has a weird voice, man. I always wanted to sound like ['60s doo-wop singer] Dion and I just couldn't. Maybe he was trying to sound like Dion as well and we met in the middle."

Henry: "We did an interview with Kevin Rowland for *NME* and we both sat there going, 'I don't think we sound anything like each other'."

The lush '60s lounge atmospheres of 'Welcome To The Walk Alone', however, are a million miles from any Celtic Soul Brotherhood. But then Dexys also followed a brass-heavy debut with a record full of fiddles; are you sure you're not living out their career step-by-step?

Tom laughs. "The third album's going to be really unsuccessful."

Henry: "It's going to be a masterpiece that no-one ever hears."

**VERDICT: FALSE**

**MYTH 3** They've bought in a classic pop sound "That's what I was hoping!" Charlie yelps as talk turns to the matter of working with Mark Ronson. "The fucking bastard, he got all these old-sounding recording techniques! I wanted it to sound like Usher!"

The collaboration came about less cynically than Charlie's joke might suggest – Charlie then sang Amy Winehouse's 'Back To Black' at his Electric Proms show in 2007, leading to Mark taking the band on tour, before his suggestion to work with them on a couple of tracks turned into a whole album. But, um, Mark Ronson and The Rumble Strips... bit obvious, innit?

Charlie: "If you look at it on paper, yeah. But it grew really gradually. He's a really positive guy and that's nice to be around because sometimes we're a bit miserable and negative."

Tom: "We thought he'd go, 'OK guys,

let's get the brass out,' and make an indie version of his sound. But he went with what we wanted to do."

Indeed, it's arranger Owen Pallett – of Arcade Fire and Final Fantasy fame, and the man behind the similarly archaic strings of The Last Shadow Puppets – whose fingerprint is most obvious on the new album.

Charlie: "We were going for a big sound. When we first got some arrangements from other people it was cheesy, it sounded like money. Owen was so inventive and punched into the bits to let it breathe."

**VERDICT: FALSE**

**MYTH 4** They're stuck in the past 'In Rainbows' this certainly ain't. If one criticism can be levelled at 'Welcome To The Walk Alone' it's that, like the Shadow Puppets, it's a wilfully retro record. The band disagree.

Tom: "I don't feel like we're trying to recreate something. We've got aesthetics we like from the past, but I don't think we're trying to recreate that. Some other bands are trying to recreate, not the sound of 30 years ago, they're trying to recreate what they think is the sound of now. They're not inventing it, they're trying to do it like Bloc Party."

Sam Mansbridge (bass): "If you listen to the first 10 seconds and it's got a sound, a reference, that's not listening to the music. By that respect, if you've got something with brand new bleeps and blips then it's [seen as] completely new and original when actually it could have the most standard chord progression."

**VERDICT: SORT OF**

**MYTH 5** They're 'nice' Charlie: "One thing that does annoy me is we get these double-edged compliments saying, 'They're nice guys making nice music'. It's like saying, 'You're mediocre', and I don't think we are. I think we were quite brave at times and that was always missed."

**VERDICT: FALSE**

**MYTH 6** They're shit at remixes We've got them bang to rights on this one. When Ronson originally hired the band to remix 'Back To Black' they simply covered the song themselves and

put Winehouse's vocal over the top. Cheats!

Henry: "That's fair enough."

Charlie: "I don't remember agreeing to it, to be honest. It was quite fun, though."

**VERDICT: TRUE**

**MYTH 7** They've cheered up Early whispers suggested 'Welcome To The Walk Alone' was to be a more upbeat album than its predecessor, but the finished product is full of lies, mistrust and madness, from the loneliness of the title track to the broken dreams of 'Running On Empty', in which Charlie finally gets the bike he dreamed of in 'Motorcycle'. "That's the sequel. The first one is that real optimism, 'Imagine what you can get' and then the second one is getting it and it being crap."

There are up-points, though – the guy taking a booty-ride to London in 'Dem Girls', for example.

Charlie: "I don't think it's upbeat. He ends up in St Ann's Psychological Hospital. You bunk off school, go up to London to meet a girl and she tells you about her past and you end up going crazy. It's just what happens. Have you never been in a relationship?"

**VERDICT: FALSE**

**MYTH 8** They're destined to always miss out on a hit 'Alarm Clock' – Number 41. 'Motorcycle' – Number 46. 'Girls And Boys In Love' – Number 64. The Rumble Strips' singles discography makes them look like eternal nearly men. Do you ever dream they had a Top 50 instead? You'd be superstars!

Tom: "Gorky's Zygotic Mynci got the most Top 75 but not Top 40 hits."

Henry: "We want to break their record."

With an unexpected belter of a second album crammed full of crooning classics? Fat chance.

**VERDICT: FALSE**





"I think we were  
brave and that was  
always missed"

*Charlie Waller*

Rumble on (l-r): Sam  
Mansbridge, Henry Clark,  
Charlie Waller, Matthew  
Wheeler, Tom Gorbett



# ALBUMS

ALL THE RELEASES THAT MATTER *Edited by Hamish MacBain*

## Dog's dinner



### THE DEAD WEATHER

HOREHOUND  
(COLUMBIA)

5

Patchy effort left too clean by White wash

**T**here's good reason for the close air of anticipation hanging over this album. The Dead Weather, after all, feature that bloke with the huge bulge in his trousers who reanimated the corpses of both blues and rock'n'roll when they were rotting away in a coffin somewhere. The man who arguably created the first new sound to have been cranked out of a guitar in years: that omnipresent riff from 'Blue Orchid' that sounds like Jack White is cutting granite with a lawnmower.

But The Dead Weather aren't The White Stripes. And away from his homebody pardner Meg, White has, if we're honest, been responsible for some bobbins music. That godawful Bond theme with Alicia Keys to name one example, as well as a crushingly dull second album by his other 'other' group The Raconteurs that should have elicited far more shrugs than it did.

Of course, extra-curricular activities are to be applauded if they result in songs like The Raconteurs' 'Steady, As She Goes', which was so laden with

hooks it positively clawed open our hippocampus. White is still odd, too ('Icky Thump' anyone?). He's also brutally uncompromising, as he proved when the Stripes headlined Glastonbury in 2005 with a set that was so face-scorching they began attracting free-jazz fans. But the truth is, away from his day job, White is less creatively liberated, and surrounding The Dead Weather there's a very strong whiff of conventional, rather clumpy Middle America jock rock.

It's still a bolt from the blue, though. Even if White isn't handling the reins here (he's on drums), Alison Mosshart from The Kills has recast herself (although quite tamely) as a kind of blasphemous, snake-hipped voodoo rocker on the mic, and Queens Of The Stone Age's Dean Fertita and The Raconteurs' Jack Lawrence handle guitar and bass. Not one of them we would have taken for a fan of Rage Against The Machine, Korn or '90s rapcore outfit Senses. And yet 'Treat Me Like Your Mother' sounds like it slipped through the time-warp with RATM

when they reconvened in 2007 and sees Mosshart and White spelling out 'M-A-N-I-P-U-late' like neutered, A-level revolutionaries. 'I Cut Like A Buffalo' is an interminable reggae-metal racket and 'Three Birds' sounds like a muddy nu-metal hybrid of the *Blow-Up* soundtrack and sports-goth luminaries Korn.

But whatever the other members' input, everything on 'Horehound' is definitely painted a shade of White, from the whirring guitar sound he's loaned out to his Dead Weather cohorts to Mosshart's mimicking vocal (isn't she always posturing?). And why not? He's the only real, earth-shattering talent on board. But even with his large hands over 'Hore...'s rudimentary parts, he's not done the thing that makes him great: prune the bad bits off. That means that the album remains an overblown and indulgent frat-boy (and girl) jam.

Like anything involving White, or a member of QOTSA, there are moments of real dynamism here that would shame any million pound pyrotechnics display. The riffs and cymbals dance like lunatic Hendrix fans, 'Will There Be Enough Water' is the haunting southern blues White wanted ('Just because you caught me, does that make it a sin?') that wouldn't sit amiss on Robert Plant's 'Raising Sand', and 'Hang You From The Heavens' swings menacingly like a noose.

Ultimately, though, it's disappointing. After 'burning the candle at both ends' (they say), the band set up in White's Nashville studio and bashed out 'Horehound' sharpish. The tale, the title and the photos of them looking like dirty stop-outs who'd been pulled through a deep thicket backwards suggested this was to be a decadent, seedy incarnation. The reality is as fucked-up and sexy as a night out in baggy combat shorts racing shopping trolleys into bushes. *Chris Parkin*

DOWNLOAD: 1) 'Hang You From The Heavens' 2) 'So Far From Your Weapon' 3) 'Will There Be Enough Water'

### DID YOU KNOW...

Horehound is a medicinal herb: the white variety is used to treat coughs, the black, nausea

**NME.COM**

For photos of The Dead Weather performing at Glasto 2009, head to [NME.COM/festivals/glastonbury](http://NME.COM/festivals/glastonbury)

### DEASTRO

MOONDAGGER (GHOSTLY INTERNATIONAL)

8



Randolph Chabot is the bespectacled prince of laptop pop which leans elegantly towards the experimental. He's also

acquainted with late-night existential crises - the two may or may not be linked. Whatever, 'Moondagger' is a tune-rich excursion into lo-fi romanticism, with 'Parallelogram's' multitracked vocals harmonizing over a groundswell of glockenspiels sharing DNA with Animal Collective. 'Biophelia's' 8-bit riff and balls-out melancholia is reminiscent of Conor Oberst before he stopped paying electricity bills, while 'Pyramid Builders' blends brain-battering Squarepusher percussion with a harpsichord. But it's the way Deastro wrestles with the big issues that twist your heart. Heavy stuff. *Louise Bralley*  
DOWNLOAD: 'Parallelogram'

### BILLY TALENT

BILLY TALENT III (WARNERS)

5



Refusing to bow to the punk-band-on-a-major archetype (write hit, get signed, smoke corporate pole) by, well, sounding

just like they did when 'Try Honesty' landed in 2003, Toronto's Billy Talent have always peddled as decent a line in melody as screechiness. Their third is business as usual - 'The Dead Can't Testify' and 'Rusted From The Rain' are serrated, moralising pop-rock, and 'Devil On My Shoulder' and 'Diamond On A Landmine' have a chunky hookiness - but a change of pace would've worked wonders, as the nasal vocals and ever-climbing guitar become as familiar as a mild hangover. 'III' is unspectacular, yet it's laudable that Billy Talent's chins to remain unencumbered by the hallbays of big business. *Ben Patashnik*  
DOWNLOAD: 'Tears Into Wine'

### ROYAL CITY

ROYAL CITY (ASTHMATIC KITTEN)

8



"Here comes success/Hooray success!" slurs Aaron Riches sardonically on the opener of the posthumous

release from the sadly now disbanded Royal City. A Canadian outfit formed at the turn of last century that combined woeful deadbeat Americana alt-rock with a romantic slacker heart, which has to this day served as a blueprint for modern-day mards like The Broken Family Band. As a collection of B-sides, assorted rare goods and covers, this is a blissful reminder of the delicate idiosyncrasies of a long lost band and an ironic indicator that Royal City will experience more "success" in death than in life. Three cheers for the ultimate slacker heroes - hip hip, hoo... ah, whatever. *Ash Desaijha*  
DOWNLOAD: 'In The Autumn'





## ESCLIN SYNDO SLEEPING TRAVELER (ELSI)

5

Magyar mavericks Esclin Syndo are dementedly eclectic: a typical song might borrow from Massive Attack in one bar and Rush in the next. Beyond trip-hop and pomp-metal, they also dabble in brooding electronica, elegiac synth-pop and raunchy funk. So 'Sleeping Traveler' has the makings of a wonderful musical adventure. Sadly, the ship is sunk by Dalma Berger's vocals; when she's not stage whispering or impersonating Björk, Berger practises a style of histrionic bellowing made infamous by Linda Perry of 4 Non Blondes. Yes, her. Once, Perry ruined only her own albums. Now, it seems, she can even ruin records indirectly, and her evil tentacles reach as far as eastern Europe. Be afraid. *Niall O'Keefe*

DOWNLOAD: 'Memory Man'

## PATRICK KELLEHER YOU LOOK COLD (JOSAK)

8

A 24-year-old-Dubliners with all of Joyce's love for experimentation and all of Beckett's restraint, this is Patrick Kelleher's first LP.

Like Ariel Pink, minus the tape hiss, Kelleher crafts songs to be sung outside closed windows, or from behind drawn curtains. Perry Como meets Passion Pit on 'Until I Get Paid', as sleepy "doo-wops" and grainy instrumentation sidle underneath Kelleher's slinky tones. Elsewhere, 8-bit blitzkriegs are blasted in homage to *Miami Vice* ('He Has To Sleep Sometime') and 'Coat To Wear' is the track Owen Pallett wishes he'd written. Though the record swoops from texture to texture, it all remains united under a slight cloud of reverb. Ever tried. Ever failed? Oh no. Ever tried. Ever succeeded. *Aibhe Malone*

DOWNLOAD: 'Coat To Wear'

## ONEIDA RATED 0 (GASGASGAS)

8

It's interesting enough that Oneida spent the first decade of their existence being a so-so rock band before transforming into a mind-blowing vessel of the spectacular, like Supergrass waking up one morning as Led Zeppelin. Then if you consider the partial insanity that has led them to release the second instalment of their interstellar psych-rock triptych 'Thank Your Parents', which is in itself a treble album, well, that really is something. But the fact that this mad man's breakfast is actually nothing short of jaw-dropping should be the cause of spontaneous mass copulation in the streets. Opener 'Brownout In Lagos' explores the territory between dubstep, ragga, Spacemen 3 and Hawkwind. And then it really gets strange... *John Duran*

DOWNLOAD: 'Folk Wisdom'

## HERMAS ZOPOULA ESPOIR (ASTHMETIC KITT)

3

Forget the blues legend about being the seventh brother - Hermas Zopoula is allegedly the 36th of his brood. Maybe the 49th had blues-squared levels of talent, because Hermas doesn't. He became friendly with an American couple gap yearing in Burkina Faso - and what better way to repay him for showing them round than by, say, arranging a record deal with Sufjan Stevens' label? It's already being billed as diamond-in-the-rough triumph over impossible odds, but he's no Ouagadougou Susan Boyle. If soukous and Congolese rumba sound exotic, the reality is as bland as yam quiche. The only high points are comic and unintentional - like when 'Espoir' whacks on the Alvin & The Chipmunks pitch-shift. Please, no-one tell him about Auto-Tune. *Gavin Haynes*

DOWNLOAD: 'Espoir'

## THE DUCKWORTH LEWIS METHOD

4

THE DUCKWORTH LEWIS METHOD (DIVINE COMEDY)



Here's an unlikely phrase: 'indie cricket concept album'. But The Divine Comedy's Neil Hannon has indeed teamed up with

Thomas Walsh, an Irish demi-pop star from the '90s band Pugwash, in an ode to the gentleman's game. There are some lovely moments: the surrealist intro and outro is light-hearted and atmospheric, Walsh's whimsical tone on 'Flatten The Hay' and the driving piano on 'Rain Stops Play' are quite joyful, but as a pop album it fails to convince. The record lurches between clichéd harpsichord-driven ditties and cringeworthy soft-rock pop songs that rely on the inventiveness of their concept over the originality of their music. *Nat Davies*

DOWNLOAD: 'Rain Stops Play'

## VARIOUS ARTISTS SIDETRACKED: HERCULES & LOVE AFFAIR (RENAISSANCE)

6



Back in the days of cassettes and Commodore 64s, compilations wielded the power of taste-makers. Yet in a modern

age where the internet has murdered the middle man in the name of DIY discovery, you have to doubt the potential, or point, of a mix such as 'Sidetracked'. The first of a new series by dance brand Renaissance, its purpose is apparently to show that electronica artists can DJ. Hercules & Love Affair's Andy Butler is the first curator, with a slick mix of obscure house and disco from past and present. Nothing especially groundbreaking here compared with compilations such as the Kitsuné Maison series, but listenable nonetheless. *Stephen Kelly*

DOWNLOAD: 'Hercules & Love Affair, I Can't Wait'

# Un-convincing

5



DAN BLACK  
UN  
(A&M)

Despite the new year hype, there's little of substance on the synth-popper's debut

Just like winning the Mercury Prize or being named Noel Gallagher's new favourite band before it, scooping a place in the BBC Sound Of 2009 might just be pop's new poisoned chalice. Halfway through the year and La Roux and Little Boots have jumped from tip sheets to magazine covers. Meanwhile, Dan Black is still waiting for underground buzz to convert into actual fame, and worrying exactly when that 'next big thing' tag is gonna start to drag like a millstone.

Let's have a weigh of his debut album. 'Un' was pieced together after Black, frontman of indie-rockers The Servant, dumped his old band, moved to Paris and started recording solo with a laptop, inspired, as his MySpace puts it, by "Jay-Z, Sigur Rós etc" (good luck joining the dots there). Originally, it was due to kick off with Black's blog hit, 'Hypnotize' - a cover of Notorious B.I.G.'s 'Hypnotize' backed with John Carpenter synths and the drums from Rihanna's 'Umbrella' which saw this Buckinghamshire boy cooing tributes to "my hooligans in Brooklyn" in angelic sing song. On the eve of its release as a single, though, Biggie's estate refused permission - so instead, Black rewrote it as 'Symphonies', using the loss of the lyrics as a jump-off for sparking heartbreak pop.

So 'Symphonies' is great. Black's problem is topping it. Sure, 'Un' has its moments: 'Alone' refines jerky post-punk bass and cracked falsetto into

gleaming pop music, while 'Pump My Pumps' is the sort of glitched up club banger Calvin Harris would flog. Dizze's number to get his mitts on.

But after a few listens, just when these songs should be beginning to grip, you get the creeping sensation Black's slick production chops are essentially papering over flimsy songs. Stripped of its R&B skitter, 'Cocoon' is the indie-lite ballad that boy bands release as the fourth single off the album. Thom Yorke will be overjoyed to hear his vocal register employed by someone out to change the world with "my plans on the back of a cigarette pack" ('Cigarette Pack'). And the album's final third - vaguely philosophical songs called things like 'Life Slash Dreams' and 'Let Go' - see Black slowly retreat into his own navel as synths wobble pointlessly.

Truth is, Dan Black surfed this hype wave by doing a clever thing with bits of other people's songs. 'Symphonies' aside, he's still got to find himself in them. Will he get a second chance? *Louis Pattison*

DOWNLOAD: 1) 'Symphonies' 2) 'Alone' 3) 'Pump My Pumps'

## DID YOU KNOW...

The album was recorded entirely in Dan's bedroom, in an 18th century French apartment





## Faecal attraction



**THE SHITTY LIMITS**  
BEWARE THE LIMITS  
(BOSS TUNEAGE)

6

Away from their live shows, the Reading DIY punks don't quite take it to the edge

**P**eople say punk is some big spiritual attitude, or a grand ethic or a gas or something, but it's not really. It's just a racket fired up by righteousness. Reading garage outfit The Shitty Limits understand this. There's something really rather clever going on somewhere within these 20-odd minutes of UK punk but they don't sound like they care too much if you work out what it is – it's much more fun to simply break stuff. The Shitty Limits have already scared audiences into admiration with spit and snot a-flying to become one of the hottest tipped bands on the UK DIY scene in a very long time. Wary of conventional press and marketing methods, the secretive quartet go only by initials. They've already flatly turned down *NME* for a *Radar* interview (we went ahead and gave them the love anyway), have a notable lack of any moody press shots, hell, any press shots at all and they don't use Twitter. Something tells us these awkward keepers of the faith won't be attempting a Gallows-sized leap into the mainstream any time soon. With their early limited singles long since sold out, they now limber up for a debut full-length that could only be more bedraggled if it was crack-addicted, wearing a binliner and shouting abuse at students at Camden Tube. But it's also tremendous fun, channelling everybody from The Germs to The B-52's. If the songs are deceptively intelligent, they're still spat out like Tourette's episodes and, on 'Show Me', whichever one of our no-

named friends is the singer struggles to get the words out, sounding like a hyena suffering from a nasty scrotal hernia. The ferocious 'Your Limits Are My Limits' is their no-fi version of a signature tune.

Things reach critical mass with 'Television'; a song that perfectly understands the contradictory truth that sometimes the most profound messages can be found in the most stooptid boxes. All the usual pop-political concerns about mass-culture propaganda and the 'dumbing down of discourse' explode into a simple smart bomb with the sheer screamed intensity of the repeated line "I saw it on the television!" So much so that by the time the closing title track starts trying to channel the seething rage of the Pixies it actually sounds like a relative breather. But in the end, listening to 'Beware The Limits' in a controlled environment rather than in its natural surroundings – a sweaty, shouty gig – leaves you with the slight disappointment of the premature ejaculator: sure, it's lots of fun, but wouldn't it be a lot nicer if you got to do all the pushing and showing as well? *Dan Martin*

DOWNLOAD: 1) 'Television'  
2) 'Your Limits Are My Limits'  
3) 'Show Me'

**DID YOU KNOW...**  
The Shitty Limits are one of Fucked Up's favourite UK bands, and appeared on their *Mixtape Vol 3* cassette

**MARTIN CARR**  
YE GODS (AND LITTLE FISHES) (BOSS TUNEAGE)

8



Martin Carr never seemed to enjoy being a pop star. After his band The Boo Radleys belatedly hit the big time with 'Wake Up Boo!' in 1995, he spent the remaining four years of the band's tenure reacting against it and, following their demise, released six increasingly oblique albums as Bravecaptain. Now, he releases his first solo album proper, and it's a very warm, human record that mixes folk, acoustic lamentations and fizzing electronics with lyrics about youth ('Goldrush '49') and the passing of time ('Bear Lake'). Essentially, it's a pop album and opener 'The Dead Of Winter' even returns to 'Wake Up Boo!'s galloping beat and trumpets. Clearly Carr has come to terms with what he is: one of our finest songwriters. *Nathaniel Cramp*  
DOWNLOAD: 'Goldrush '49'

**LECUBE**  
FROM HERE TO NOW (OUTERPHONIE)

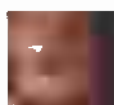
4



You know how there is always one guy at every barbecue brandishing a guitar? Julian Barbagallo is that man. Hailing from southwest France, he perfects acoustic meandering 'in the style of' others, from the bass-noodling Serge Gainsbourg opening of 'Creatures' to the Elliott Smith falsetto of 'Shoot The Nanny'. Save for a couple of up tempo tracks, with twee vocal refrains and a maraca-bothering Latino vibe, 'From Here To Now' is torpid. The eight tracks have a pensive summery plod and fail to assimilate the stylistic ingenuity of Lecube's influences. For those with no plans to spend a summer navel-gazing in the Pacific this is an untimely revival of the 'gap year album' – and about as stuffy as hayfever. *Hazel Sheffield*  
DOWNLOAD: 'Creatures'

**YEARS**  
YEARS (ARTS & CRAFTS)

8



"This album is a time stamp and music is about the moment," states the PR bump for Ohad Benchetrit's first solo foray. Crumbs, this is going to be fun. Yet, while on paper the latest project from Do Make Say Think and Broken Social Scene's multi-instrumentalist reads like one big muso masturbation sesh, 'Years' is sonically inventive and – get this – hugely listenable too. Rhythms pulsate around these mostly instrumental soundscapes like demented rattlesnakes while acoustic guitars, horns, wind, strings and distorted riffs combine, surging and sliding to astounding effect. Some call it IDM (intelligent dance music) but we wouldn't be so lame. Wisful and powerful and intricate and warm; that's the Years sound. *Camilla Pla*  
DOWNLOAD: 'The Major Lift'

**SOUTHPORT**  
ARMCHAIR SUPPORTERS (BOSS TUNEAGE)

5



It's easy to forget that punk-pop didn't always rely on expensive production to capture the hearts of disaffected kids. Southport mainman Simon Wells cut his teeth in Brit pogo-kings Snuff a good decade before Sum 41 et al invaded the charts and he clearly yearns for those simpler times. There's an endearing DIY charm to 'Armchair Supporters' in the terminally off-key vocals, chugging guitars and sun-bleached harmonies, particularly on fizzy opener 'Days Like These'. Occasionally the band overcompensate with detours into organ-led filler on dubious curio 'Disco 3000', or cookie-cutter mall punk like 'Optimism'. Still, their stubborn refusal to submit to middle age is admirable. *Tom Edwards*  
DOWNLOAD: 'Days Like These'

**CLINT MANSELL**  
MOON (BLACK)

8



This is the soundtrack to the directorial debut by David Bowie's son, Duncan Jones. The film's like a British version of *Solaris*, about a man who seems to be going insane in the loneliness of space. Anyway, the music was done by Clint Mansell, the former frontman of Pop Will Eat Itself who has reinvented himself as a soundtrack genius (he did *The Wrestler*, among others). But basically, we'll review anything with even the most tenuous link to David Bowie so here goes: this is a truly beautiful ambient work, achingly sad and really quite eerie. Oh Christ, we're dying to say it sounds like 'Low'... Gah, OK, we'll compromise and say it sounds like Brian Eno. *Martin Robinson*  
DOWNLOAD: 'Welcome To Lunar Industries'

**THE STUPIDS**  
THE KIDS DON'T LIKE IT (BOSS TUNEAGE)

5



Some things are better left in the past. Whether it's Pat 'Funhouse' Sharp's hair or MC Hammer assuring us we can't touch him, certain foibles should just be forgotten about. For all its obvious charms, punk rock is no different, but ever since Johnny Rotten and the boys pissed on the memory of the Pistols by jumping on the reunion bandwagon, there's been a host of pretenders following suit. The Stupids are one such band and 'The Kids Don't Like It' is their first record in 21 years. In many ways they're like those old dudes in '80s movie *Cocoon* – their mind is willing but their body is weak. Songs such as 'Hate Hate' may bleed with the bravado of old, but ultimately we're left feeling it's about time they changed the record. *Edwin McFee*  
DOWNLOAD: 'Lover's Carvings'



## MARC CARROLL THE DUST OF RUMOUR (HIGH NOON)

2

The '80s are typically remembered as a decade of power ballads and naff synth pop, but the Pixies and the Roses delivered us from a greater horror: pious stadium folk-rock. The Waterboys, Bono and Tracey Chapman telling us to free Mandela and eat our greens... So why Marc Carroll wants to take us back there, God only knows. Erstwhile frontman of failed '90s indie bands Puppy Love Bomb and The Hormones, Marc now mainlines singer-songwriter cliché direct from California. More Bryan Adams than Tom Petty, the only listenable song here is 'You Just Might Be What I've Been Waiting For' and that's because it's a blatant Byrds-via-Teenage Fanclub rip-off. Avoid like salmonella. *Sam Richards*  
DOWNLOAD: Some Pixies stuff instead

## WE FELL TO EARTH WE FELL TO EARTH (IN STEREO)

6

After DJ Shadow left, UNKLE's visions of doom became great for soundtracking the second series of *Prison Break*, but nothing more. So it's with trepidation that we approach the new project from Richard File. And while 'WFTE' is free of their world-weary heaviness, it's clear you can take the man out of UNKLE but you can't take the UNKLE out of the man. Instead, we're transported into the post-trip-hop world of the late '90s/early '00s. 'Sovereign' has File and singer Wendy Rae Fowler doing their best Tricky and Shirley Manson Impressions, while 'Lost in Flames' whizzes about like an early Killis song. Nice, but there's not too much to get worked up about. PS: 1998 called; they want their beats back. *Priya Elan*  
DOWNLOAD: 'Sovereign'

## RHYTHMS DEL MUNDO CLASSICS (UNIVERSAL)

1

We feel compelled to mention that Rhythms Del Mundo have their heart in the right place. A bunch of Cuban musicians backing some of the world's biggest artists in aid of climate change charity Artists Project Earth - what could go wrong? Frankly, we don't quite know where to start, though teleporting the overly intrusive brass section out of the recording studio would have been a good enough place. If you think The Killers' Vegas lounge act take on 'Hotel California', Jack Johnson's smarmy 'Imagine' and KT Tunstall's salsa strings version of 'Because The Night' are cheesy, wait until you hear The Kooks' 'Are You Ready For Love'. Quite possibly the most soul-sapping 19 tracks we've ever heard. Seriously, aren't there any other ways we can sort out climate change? *Leonie Cooper*  
DOWNLOAD: Some carbon dioxide



## Top gun

### THAT FUCKING TANK TANKNOLOGY (SOUTHERN)

8

## A two-man barrage of drums and guitar that sounds like war

**T**anknology' opens with perhaps the most righteous sound ever committed to tape. Twelve seconds of Cornish surf rockers Reef's accompaniment to the letters segment of Chris Evans' execrable '90s talk show *TFI Friday* are suddenly bludgeoned by Andy Abbott and James Isip's assault corps of drums and guitar. Lightning Bolt and Death From Above 1979 might have been rocking the bro beats'n'strings dynamic a few years back while That Fucking Tank were still largely unknown, but it's our boys from Leeds who look set to be victors in the longer campaign.

Both the Bolt and the bombers failed to contain the sweats and furies of their live show on record. By contrast, TFT's

follow-up to debut 'The Day Of Death By Bono Adrenaline Shock' sees them fine-tuning their riffed-out instrumentals for a foray into broader, more populated plains. 'Keanu Reef', with its mathy chalkboard of sound and texture, is a hard-hauling dray horse counterpoint to Foals' more delicate gambol. 'Dave Grolsch' drives with the precision of Pittsburgh's Don Caballero, but the Brits' ride is pimped and bouncing off its suspension. 'Stephen Hawkwind' (these chaps pun with the best), meanwhile, has a restrained grace, begging to be unleashed in a live bombardment.

Crucially, TFT playfully subvert the rock canon, and especially imbue geekrock with a rarely seen *joie de vivre*. They even blow raspberries at

classicism: 'Bruce Springstonehenge' takes The Boss' 'Dancing In The Dark' for an off-road trip through grit and oomska, and 'Ludwig II Of Bavaria' has a guitar line as imperious as the highest turret of one of that legendarily potty ruler's castles. Hear these monstrous forces come. AIEEEEEEE!!! *Luke Turner*

DOWNLOAD: 1) 'Ludwig II Of Bavaria' 2) 'Bruce Springstonehenge' 3) 'Stephen Hawkwind'

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## BUSDRIVER JHELLI BEAM (ANTI-)

7

There's no doubting Regan Farquhar's talent as a rapper. This is because, as Busdriver, he knows how far he can push the hip-hop blueprint into abstract territory before it cracks. Here he summons the spirit of Zappa, Blackalicious and Gil Scott-Heron to stunning effect. But when he's speeding through neighbourhoods of clownish rhyme schemes, alliterative gibberish and sped-up Mozart sonatas, you wish he'd take his foot off the pedal slightly - though that's not to say skid off into a dead-end street of girls, guns and gangsterisms. *John Doran*  
DOWNLOAD: 'Handfuls Of Sky'

## VARIOUS ARTISTS PALERMO SHOOTING OST (CITY SLANG)

8

The music of director Wim Wenders' new film is a crash course in straddling the divide between insouciant European cool and life on the American fringe; something the quietly legendary Wenders has been doing for years. Here, though, he sets his existential scene in his native Düsseldorf for the first time in over a decade, yet curiously the OST rings with a distinctly Western twang. Iron And Wine, Calexico and The Velvet Underground's (Lou Reed has a ghostly cameo) contributions are the sound of bearded beatniks sat on dusty porches, and the

first of Grinderman's original offerings tears at the fug of dustbowl loneliness. Weirdly, the German contributions seem neutered to fit this same stars'n'stripes-clad mould - Thom sounds like Nickelback stuck in the '80s, and Monta could make a living as a Benjamin Gibbard impersonator - and it's left to Europhile Beirut to conjure that traditionally European sound. The electrified danse macabre rhythm of Grinderman's second new song suggests a fateful end for Wenders' protagonist, but nevertheless this should leave you at a crossroads of musical discovery. *Laura Snapes*  
DOWNLOAD: Calexico, 'The Black Light'



# LIVE!

UPFRONT AND BACKSTAGE

by Dave Karger

Vannis and Jimmy: yes, even the coolest bands lose their dignity in the hot weather

PLAYING AT  
**T**  
IN THE  
PARK

## Hoof!

**FOALS**

THE LEXINGTON, LONDON  
WEDNESDAY, JULY 1

### Oxford heroes beat the heat to showcase new songs

**F**oals' return to the live arena has been hotly anticipated. Even the weather is on message: outside, a heatwave has pushed the temperature to 33 degrees, and the lucky fans crammed into The Lexington are sodden, thirsty and giddy with expectation.

The late-arriving Foals meet a wave of adulation, but it washes over them. They play the early part of this set as if faced by bottle-throwing haters rather than swooning Shoreditch indie kids, their attitude halfway between arrogance and twitchy neurosis – in creative terms, a great place to be.

The Oxford quintet has emerged from hiding as a fearsomely tight live unit. After angry instrumental opener 'Cans Of Rainwater', a relic of Yannis Philippakis and

Jack Bevan's former incarnation The Edmund Fitzgerald, a crowd-sating trio of 'The French Open', 'Olympic Airways' and 'Balloons' is dispatched before we get a taste of the in-progress second album. 'TLF', with its funk riff, complicated time signature and keyboard-aping guitars, comes off as classic Foals. There's even a familiar whiff of intellectualism when "singularity" crops up in the chorus.

The curveball comes two songs later, with the arrival of another newbie. Foals' detractors have always pointed to their lack of a big song capable of drawing in the math-rock agnostics. 'Spanish Sahara' is that song. Its intro finds Philippakis singing in a mournful, high-pitched croon over echoing twangs of country guitar but, just as you're coming to terms with the concept of a Foals ballad, it suddenly shifts

gear. "Let's forget the horror here" sings Philippakis warmly over a swelling chorus. The darkness soon falls, though, as he adds: "I'm the fury in your head... I'm the fury in your bed".

Once 'Cassius' has ignited the moshpit, there's a further shock of the new. Built over a hypnotic descending riff, 'O-Funk' is loose and expansive and rises only gradually to its climax, a desperate, repeated shout of "Keep us young!"

Foals certainly retain the fizz of youth; as they hammer through 'Electric Bloom', they sound more intense than ever. Philippakis introduces the floor-shaking encore of 'Two Steps, Twice' with the words, "See you soon, once the record is done." By now, the suspense is burning. *Niall O'Keeffe*





# T and no sympathy



**JAMIE T**  
ELECTRIC BALLROOM, LONDON  
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24

Is that really the best he can do? So half-arsed...

**A**s some of you may have noticed, between sweating profusely and casually mourning the deaths of celebrities like they're fucking *Doctor Who* characters, it's the summer season of non-stop excitement. Have Blur at Hyde Park! Have a festival! Fuck it, have hundreds! No wonder a boring old Jamie T gig just doesn't cut it any more, if only he'd packed *Buckaroo*.

It's hard to put your finger on it; even to this former Jamie T admirer something about this show sucks. It's not that the songs are shit. 'Sheila' (yawn) and 'Calm Down Dearest' (yawn) hold exactly the same limping charm as they did two-and-a-half years ago. It's not even that new material from forthcoming album 'Kings & Queens' doesn't cut it. 'Spider's Web' and '368' in particular are unlikely to leave many fans disappointed, but perhaps that's the problem; no surprises, no radical new direction, no effort. Hurling himself into the crowd only two songs in is an act that speaks less of impassioned fervour and more of another tick on the list of clichés designed to distract from the fact he's been peddling this apples-and-pears bullshit for centuries, and the record label are probably on his arse.

"Obama sounds like Osama to me" he sneers on one of the new tracks that are good only by virtue of sounding exactly like the old ones, pandering shamelessly to the kind of fearful dross masquerading as intelligence that's absolutely everywhere nowadays.

For all the adoration tonight's audience pour into this performance there seems to be very little return musically, with the same old Billy Bragg platitudes plus stock issue circa-2001 guitar sound minus Auto-Tune and a salient political message. Plus, he seems to have recruited a band composed entirely of lank-haired sixth formers who learned three Specials riffs to charm the Saturday girl at the guitar shop. Their half-arsed jangling goes in one ear and out the other with frustrating consistency. Much as we try to enjoy it, it's like grasping at smoke.

No wonder that everyone in the audience is knocking seven shades of shit out of each other. We're not saying he's responsible for the boorish beer-swilling contingent and their intense desire to fight with anyone as long as they get to bite an ear but, y'know, if you lock your cat in the lichen cupboard it's going to chew its leg off. As far as fun in the sun goes, give us travel *Scrabble* any day. *Rebecca Robinson*

## SHORT SETS

**SAM ISAAC**  
THE VICTORIA,  
LONDON, 27/06/09  
Not content with looking like the kind of creep who spends too long talking to your parents when he visits, Sam Isaac is also intent on kicking your ears in the bollocks. His music is emo with the punk, the tattoos and the anger removed, leaving just a tremulous whine in their place. Before 'Bears', a rancid composite of Christian folk, Dido and Coldplay-lite, he simpers about wanting to live among the ursine killing machines, as if he were a dim nine-year-old. Still, let's hope he gets his wish. Now where's that DVD copy of *Grizzly Man*? *John Doran*

**LORD CUT-GLASS**  
KING TUT'S WAH WAH HUT, GLASGOW  
27/06/09

Alongside shortbread and whisky, dry-witted, acerbic indie-folk is one of Scotland's main exports, but Lord Cut-Glass – aka ex-Delgados main Alun Woodward – has a style and sound all of his own. Combining flamenco guitar with frail, folksy, nursery-rhyme melodies, songs such as 'I'm A Great Example To The Dogs' and the snide, back-handed 'Even Jesus Couldn't Love You' are beautifully arranged and performed. He may be unassuming, almost apologetic onstage, but with his debut album Lord Cut-Glass has created a thing of quiet beauty. *Barry Nicolson*



## FOCUSING ON THE FUTURE

**CAMERA OBSCURA**  
WEBSTER HALL, NEW YORK  
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24

**I**t's hard not to derive a feeling of British superiority when you look back at American rock history. The likes of Hendrix, Nirvana, The White Stripes and The Strokes are welded into the fabric of US pop culture, but it was over in dear old Blighty that they first got noticed. And how did Uncle Sam return the favour? By giving bloody Bush stacks of cash, fame and Gwen Stefani.

However, in the shape of Camera Obscura, the Yanks have clawed back a substantial amount of that debt. Since the Glaswegians' wordy third album 'Let's Get Out Of This Country' emerged in 2006, they've quietly become indie-rock mainstays Stateside but still struggled to outgrow the 'Belle-&-Sebastian-but-with-no-fans' tag in their homeland.

In a way, the delayed interest in Camera Obscura's maudlin career is understandable, especially when you consider how slowly tonight's show unfolds. There are no bombastic entrances, no flashing lights and certainly no theatrical "Hellllloooooo Noooo York!"s. There's probably more spectacle to be had at a heavily sedated Tupperware party, but any showy nonsense would get in the way of the heart and soul that goes into songs such as 'Tears For Affairs', or the affecting break-up tale that is 'James'. She can write lyrics with the best of them, but such is Tracyanne Campbell's ability to vocalise vulnerability you get the feeling she could sing what she had for breakfast in some rare Amazonian dialect and still make it sound like a tear-jerking tale of emotional anguish.

The closest they get to playing to the crowd is during the encore when Campbell announces her intent to tackle some Springsteen, but it's not an excuse to orchestrate a cheap singalong. Instead, their tender rendition of the nakedly honest 'Tougher Than The Rest' fits so seamlessly into the set it could pass for one of their own tunes. It's been a slow sell all right, but it looks like Camera Obscura are finally about to do some long overdue cashing-in. *Hardeep Phull*



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# Second chancer

**JOE LEAN & THE JING JANG JONG**

LOUISIANA, BRISTOL  
SATURDAY, JUNE 27

After junking their debut album, their next shot at the bigtime is surprisingly good

If there is an internal Jangometer in Joe Lean's head, the loud tick-ticking of its cogs seem muffled today. Backstage, post-show, Joe is almost Zen-like in his calm. He reads us the party line with a beatific grin... They've taken their time. To get it right. And they're in a much better place now. Ex-guitarist Tommy D left to focus on working with his sister (ex-Pipette Rose Dougall). It was all very amicable. And his American replacement, Randy Michael, he's a lovely guy, so, well, it's worked out swell. Hasn't it just? His beakish lips suck in the last drops of a roll-up even thinner than his legs.

Eleven months after pulling their debut album, Joe and co are 'back' in a slight-return kind of way. Their first gig in 10 months celebrates a Dan Carey-produced replacement record now in the can. Blur requested them as support at their Newcastle show two days ago. And they're now looked after by Amy Winehouse's manager. How does he do it?

True to his word, Joe has jettisoned a fistful of songs for the new record. In a rammed Louisiana, he whips the sheet off five of their replacements. Some of the soul edge has evaporated. There's more mod in the mix. 'Dreams' has got The Knack. 'One Woman' sounds like 'Count In Fives'-era Horrors. 'Kaleidoscope's' funk chops splurt into a schmaltz chorus like The Virgins. 'Tonight' sounds like a hit-triumphalist tropical tart pop just west of Wham!-with-guitars.

They're all good, all an improvement, but it's still the early-promise trilogy of 'Where Do You Go', 'Lonely Buoy' and 'Lucio Starts Fires' that really kill the sweatpit. And for a man who's last significant band was "a sort of Guns N' Roses outfit", Randy does seem to fit the bill. Whether his new chums can climb the same mountain twice remains to be seen, but by rights they should have been cast out into eternal night by now, reduced to wanking off tramps for pennies with a brand reading 'DON'T FUCK WITH THE MUSIC INDUSTRY' scalded forever into their behinds. Instead, it looks like they've got a proper second shot. How does he do it? *Gavin Haynes*



New sound, new hair, new outfits. My, how they have grown



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Stage

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## NEW BAND TIPS...

### 76 DON'T JUST PLAY, PERFORM

NME says: Make your gigs special by playing like you mean it



A band that plays their songs note-for-note onstage is dull. Put a little bit more thought in, and you've got far more chance of playing the bigger stages. The Futureheads' guitarist **Ross Millard** gives his advice on improving your live show.

#### NME: WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE A NEW ACT LOOKING TO IMPROVE THEIR STAGE SHOW?

"You've got to be self-confident, and try to be as captivating as possible – the best bands are the ones that can control a crowd. You've just got to try and relax, that'll come with time. And remember that fluffed notes or slightly out-of-tune singing isn't the end of the world."

#### IS IT A CASE OF PRACTISING YOUR ROCK MOVES IN FRONT OF THE MIRROR, OR SHOULD IT BE MORE SPONTANEOUS?

"It should be more spontaneous, definitely. I'm not a fan of rehearsed one-liners; I've seen setlists with notes like 'Thank crowd' or 'Talk about the city' between songs, and that's a little bit sad. A good live show should not depend on anything pre-planned. Mix things up a bit, as it's boring for you, and your audience, if you play the same set over and over."

#### WHAT ARE THE MAIN DOS AND DON'TS?

"Have a lot of contact with the crowd. They make the show as much as the band, so the more they're involved the more special the night becomes. Get them involved, look them in the eye, try to get them to participate. For instance, if someone's wearing a funny T-shirt, engage them. By the end of the set, you want people to have done things they didn't expect to do."



#### WHAT NOW?

Book as many gigs as possible – practice really does make perfect here. When you play, make yourself aware of the audience and practice striking a rapport. But don't overthink banter.

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# I WANT TO SOUND LIKE... FRIENDLY FIRES



Frankie Rycott, 16, Ipswich: "I've been asked to join a band to add guitar lines like Edd Gibson does in Friendly Fires. How do I do that?"

## THE SOUND

Friendly Fires' debut album won over both the underground and the mainstream with easy-on-the-ear melodies given lashings of lush indie-dance orchestration. Among lead guitarist Edd Gibson's influences are My Bloody Valentine and Japanese drone-rockers Boredoms.

## THE GEAR

Edd plays a Fender Mustang, which is popular for beginners as it's shorter than a bog-standard guitar. He plays it through a Roland JC120 amp, but whatever amp you use, make sure to use the cleanest possible sound out of it (the JC120 is famous for being clean). This means that the sound of pedals can really shine through, and you're going to need a few to get Edd's sound. From the Boss range, get a Tremolo (for good wobbly sounds), a Wah (for funk), a Digital Delay (for swirl), a Compressor (increases the punch of your playing) and a Digital Reverb (makes things sound huge). If you can only afford one, though, get a Korg AX3000 multi-fx unit for £170.

## IN THE STUDIO

Paul Epworth (Primal Scream, Bloc Party) produced the album, and one of the main missions was to ensure even the electronic sounds had a human quality to them. If you're looking to have guitar parts that don't sound like guitars, especially in amongst all the synths, the best thing to do is get the song written and the basic parts recorded, and then place the parts on

top of them. This method will give you a lot more freedom to experiment.

## THE TECHNIQUE

When you're playing the kind of part Edd plays, you don't need to be able to 'play the guitar'. Spend lots of time learning your pedals to concentrate on textures. Start off with one note and work out what you can do with that. Once you're comfortable, learn some two-note chords and take it from there. It's the quality of the ideas that matter, not the playing technique.

## BEST TRICK

Making guitar parts that don't carry the song often provide the extra depth that make the tune itself much more listenable. And being able to play your pedals just as well, if not better than your guitar is a fine thing if done in the right way.



WHO DO YOU WANT TO SOUND LIKE?  
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Gallows**

Words by John Callaghan from...

**Guitar** August issue  
out now



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0872 on 0800 100 1002

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AMBITIOUS & DEDICATED  
BAND WHO ARE MAKING  
SERIOUS PROGRESS IN THE  
MUSIC INDUSTRY. I AM SELF  
TAUGHT WITH 8 YEARS OF  
EXPERIENCE AND LESSONS  
FROM PAUL ELLIOT IN  
LONDON. I CAN PLAY TO A  
CLICK AND AM FULLY  
COMMITTED.  
BEN.SPOWELL@AOL.COM  
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# GIG GUIDE

THE UK'S BIGGEST GUIDE TO THE WEEK AHEAD *Edited by Ash Dosanjh*

544 GIGS  
ACROSS  
THE UK &  
IRELAND

## PICK OF THE WEEK...



PICK OF THE WEEK

### THE TWILIGHT SAD

**WHERE: LONDON ICA (THURS), T IN THE PARK (SUN)**

With their dark and brooding post-rock-fused new single 'I Became A Prostitute' out in early August, the four Scotsmen of the apocalypse head to London for a one-off date to preview tracks off their astoundingly loud and harrowing second album 'Forget The Night Ahead'.

[WWW.NME.COM/artists/twilight-sad](http://WWW.NME.COM/artists/twilight-sad)

EVERYONE'S TALKING  
ABOUT

### THE RAYOGRAPHS

**WHERE: CARDIFF THE GATE (SUN)**

Masterful Breeders-esque harmonies by way of the acerbic tongue of Patti Smith and the post-punk urgency of The Raincoats. These three rowdy songstress head out on tour in support of the excellent A Hawk And A Hacksaw.

[WWW.NME.COM/artists/the-rayographs](http://WWW.NME.COM/artists/the-rayographs)



### PICK OF CLUB NME IS TROPICAL

**WHERE: CHELMSFORD BARHOUSE (FRI)**

Bombastic electro madness that touches on the playfulness of Metronomy makes its way to Chelmsford. Support comes from Electric Child House.

[WWW.NME.COM/clubnme](http://WWW.NME.COM/clubnme)



### DON'T MISS ENGINEERS

**WHERE: LONDON BUSH HALL (FRI)**

This week they release 'Three Fact Fader', their first album in more than four years; this is their first gig in well over two. Yes, things move slowly in the world of Wigan shoegazers Engineers. But if this gig is half as good as the album – and with German electronica chap Ulrich Schnauss helping out on keyboard duties, it will be – the wait will have been well worth it.

[WWW.NME.COM/artists/engineers](http://WWW.NME.COM/artists/engineers)

### RADAR STARS CYMBALS EAT GUITARS

**WHERE: LONDON BARFLY (WED), LONDON WINDMILL (THURS), LONDON PROUD GALLERIES (SAT)**

A veritable feast of drums and strums. This ferocious experimental indie-pop four-piece from New York City is about to devour your aural senses. [WWW.NME.COM/artists/cymbals-eat-guitars](http://WWW.NME.COM/artists/cymbals-eat-guitars)



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O<sub>2</sub>



# WEDNESDAY

JULY 8

Ever the eccentric, Patrick Wolf joins Iain Baker on The Forum to discuss this week's singles, from 4pm

**NME**  
RADIO

**Nial Rice** Empire 028 9024 9276

**The Bellrays** Engine Room

01273 728 999

**From Plan To Progress** Freebutt

01273 603974

**The Lanes/Black Soul Strangers/**

**New Street Adventures** The Albert

01273 730499

**Athlete Fleece** 0117 945 0996

**Gomez/Sleeping States/Stanton**

**Delaplane** Start The Bus

0117 930 4370

**The Silhouette Showgirls** Louisiana

0117 926 5978

**Glasslights** Portland Arms

01223 357268

**Prufess 73/Diamond Watch Wrists**

**The Globe** 07738 983947

**Teller/Less Than Me** Buffalo Bar

02920 310312

**Winch House/The Story So Far/Kid**

**Keep Dancing** Barfly 029 2066 7658

**James Academy** 00 3531 877 9999

!!! Whelan's 00 3531 475 9372

**Easy Rollers** The Ark 0131 228 9393

**The Shee Pleasance** 0131 556 6550

**ENTER**

**Random Noise** 01482 484628

**CATERHEAD**

**Ry Cooder/Mick Lowe** Sage Arena

01482 484628

**Douglas T Stewart/Dumb Instrument**

**Oran Mor** 0141 552 9224

**Logic Problem** 13th Note Cafe

0141 553 1638

**The Mods New Roscoe** 0113 246 0778

**M83/Maps** Cockpit 0113 244 3446

**City Of Ships/Brave Young** Criterion

01162 625418

**Fare Evaders** 02 Academy 2

0870 771 2000

**Wallis Bird** Korova 0151 709 7097

**Anderson/Hello, Superhero/**

**The Brackets/Remodel**

**Dublin Castle** 020 7485 1773

**An Horse/Gilts/Cymbals Eat**

**Guitars** Barfly 0870 907 0999

**Bad For Lazarus/The Black Heart**

**Orchestra/The Midnight Lycan**

**Party Windmill** 020 8671 0700

**Big Linda/Imperial Vipers/Great**

**Northern** Monto Water Rats

020 7837 4412

**The Brute Chorus/The Bookhouse**

**Boys/Gold Sounds** Haddon Square

**Bar & Kitchen** 020 7613 0709

**The Crimson Dishes/How To Flower/**

**The Refinements**

**Bull & Gate** 020 7485 5358

**Daniel Ward-Murphy**

**The Fly** 0870 907 0999

**The Duke & The King**

**Borderline** 020 7734 5547

**Funny Face/The Rulin Comedy**

020 7839 7261

**Gina Birch/Christy & Emily/Helen**

**McCookerybook/Alana Sweta**

**Barden's Boudoir** 0770 865 6633

**The Grants/The Ragamuffins/Belis**

**For Rene /The Teasers Arts Club**

**020 7460 4459**

**Killa Kela Cargo** 0207 749 7840

**The Lucksmiths** The Scala 020 7833 2022



**Orphans & Vandals** Boogaloo

020 8340 2928

**Phantom/Slow Blade/Jack Jack**

**Daws** Good Ship 020 7372 2544

**Pull In Emergency** Buffalo Bar

020 7359 6191

**The Red Chord** Underworld

020 7482 1932

**Revere/The Strange Death Of**

**Liberal England** The Lexington

020 7837 5387

**Reverend & The Makers** KOKO

020 7388 3222

**R Kelly** Wembley Arena

0870 060 0870

**Social Distortion** 02 Shepherds Bush

**Empire** 0870 771 2000

**We Fell To Earth** 93 Feet East

020 7247 6095

**White Denim** Heaven 020 7930 2020



Reverend And The Makers, KOKO, London

**Chief Night** And Day Cafe

0161 236 1822

**Ian Adamson** Roadhouse

0161 228 1789

**Lucy Wainwright Roche** Ruby Lounge

0161 834 1392

**Paul Jackson** Egypt Cottage

0191 232 0218

**White Belt Yellow Tag/The Chemists**

**Cluny** 0191 230 4474

**You Animals** 02 Academy 2

0870 771 2000

**Elliot Minor** Waterfront 01603 632717

**Into Flight** Brickmakers 01603 441118

**The Neutinos** Arts Centre

01603 660352

**Sleepy Sun** Bar 7 0115 970 4662

**Thunder** Rock City 08713 100000

**Me My Head** Bullington Arms

01865 244516

**Burning The Prospect** Bar Risa

0118 959 5395

**Here We Go** Magic Harley

0114 275 2288

**The Skinks** Boardwalk 0114 279 9090

**In Her Rulin** Hamptons Bar

07919 253 508

**Wartore Helmsicker** Horn

01727 853143

**The Guns/Boys With X-ray Eyes**

**Sin City** 01792654226

**Hank Williams III** Wulfrun Hall

01902 552121

**Eve Sells Band/Two Fibbers**

01904 651 250

**The Wounds** City Screen

**Basement Bar** 01904 541144

# THURSDAY

JULY 9

**The Answering Machine** The Tunnels

01224 211121

**Something To Live For** Esquires

01234 340120

**Delirium/Bleached Wall** Flapper

0121 236 2421

**Ginger Asylum** 0121 233 1109

**The Beautiful Word/The Self Help**

**Group** The Albert 01273 730499

**Elliot Minor** Concorde 2 01273 673311

**Plague Of Ashtaka** Freebutt

01273 603974

**Wide Eyed Order/Second Time**

**Lucky/Mike Newsham** Providence

01273 727822

**The Chemists/White Belt Yellow Tag**

**Louisiana** 0117 926 5978

**Medallist/On Off Switch/Fitness**

**Club Flasco** Start The Bus

0117 930 4370

**Night By Night/Dead Against The**

**Rest** Fleece 0117 945 0996

**The Red Chord/Burning Skies** Croft

0117 987 4144

**Telepathy/Katie Stelmanis** The

**Cooler** 0117 945 0999

**Greg McDonald** Band Portland Arms

01223 357268

**Me My Head** Barfly 029 2066 7658

**The Holloways** Brickyard

01228 512220

**A World Defined** The Victoria Inn

01332 740091

**Calm Harris** The Royal

01332 367720

**Boban Markovic** Picture House

0844 847 1740

**The Bridges/Seaford** Foxes The Ark

0131 228 9393

**Yulll Scott & The Haight** Cabaret

**Voltaire** 0131 220 6176

**Athlete** Phoenix 01392 667080

**The Ghost Of A Thousand/**

**The Computers/Sharks** Cavern Club

01392 495370

**UK Subs** Hub 01392 424628

**Imelda May** Cheese & Grain

01373 455420

**Lisa Hannigan** Roisin Dubh

00 35391 586540

**The Dykenes/Alto** Elite King Tut's

**Wah Wah Hut** 0141 221 5279

**Hollywood Tease/Nozia/The Black**

**Cherry** Group Rockers 0141 221 0726

**The Lucksmiths** Stereo 0141 576 5018

**Noma** 13th Note Cafe 0141 553 1638

**Martin Harley** Boilerroom

01483 440022

**Cry For Silence /Cinders Fall /The**

**Haunting** Marquee Club 01992 414242

**The Bible Code** Sundays

0'Neill 0113 244 0810

**The Cat Empire** 02 Academy

0870 771 2000

**Defibrillators** Brudenell Social

**Club** 0113 243 5866

**The Mods New Roscoe** 0113 246 0778

**The Temper Trap** Cockpit Room 3

0113 2441573

**That Petrol Emotion** Cockpit

0113 244 3446

**Great Northern** Korova 0151 709 7097

**My Emergency** Barfly Loft @ Masque

0151 707 6171

**Acoustic Ladyland** Cargo

0207 749 7840

**The Bellrays** Borderline

020 7734 5547

**Cartel** 100 Club 020 7636 0933

**Cory Mabo** Buffalo Bar 020 7359 6191

**Cymbals Eat** Guitars Windmill

020 8671 0700

**Domino** Theory The Fly

0870 907 0999

**The Electric Boys** Underworld

020 7482 1932

**Grace Jones** Somerset House

020 7344 4444

**The Heavens/Muarena Helena/Jok/**

**Shambolic** Bull & Gate 020 7485 5358

**Look, Stranger/The Straylings/**

**British Broken Class/Adam Dones**

**Good Ship** 020 7372 2544

**Mann Friday** 02 Shepherds Bush

**Empire** 0870 771 2000

**The Mighty Rars/The Ramblin'**

**Singles/Chasing Ora/Forwardman**

**Rhythm Factory** 020 7247 9386

**The Miss Organ/Ben Williams/The**

**Starlings/The Beginners/Gilts**

**Monto Water Rats** 020 7837 4412

**Prospect Lane/Hella Cholla/**

**The**



# FRIDAY

## JULY 10

Flashguns Moles 01225 404445

The Molepit Esquires 01234 340120

Willie Byrne Empire 028 9024 9276

Battle For Prague Address & Bishop

0121 236 7426

I Thee Lothario/Brass Monkey/The

Dials 02 Academy 3 0870 771 2000

The Late Eighties The Victoria

0121 633 9439

Wild Palms Island Bar 0121 632 5296

Dark Horses Engine Room

01273 728 999

End Of Level Baddle The Albert

01273 730499

Itchy Fingers Latest Music Bar

01273 687 171

The Shoestring The Hope

01273 733 568

The Subliminals/Jog On Providence

01273 727822

Kill Cassidy/Son Louisiana

0117 926 5978

White Trash Ambition/My Own Flag

Croft 0117 967 4144

Rusholme Ruffians The Met

0871 230 1094

Talkshift Junction 01223 511511

Wrong Planet Portland Arms

01223 357268

Lounge On The Farm: The Horrors/

A Hawk And A Hacksaw/Wild

Beasts/It Hugs Back/The Ghost

Of A Thousand/Casokids/Toddla T

Merton Farm 0871 230 1094

Foolsgame Barfly 029 2066 7658

Friendship Buffalo Bar 02920 310312

Telepathic Club Bar Bach 029 2023 2199

The Luchagors Cyprus Avenue

00 35321 427 6165

The Vendettas Clancy's

00 35321 427 6097

Broken Bones The Victoria Inn

01332 740091

Austin Carter The Party Kitchen

00 3531 6770945

Deerhoof Whelan's 00 3531 475 9372

Sad Society The Ark 0131 228 9393

The Nextmen Cavern Club

01392 495370

Lisa Hannigan Roisin Dubh

00 35391 586540

The Cat Empire 02 Academy

0870 771 2000

Girls Play Boys Nice N'Steazy

0141 333 9637

Glasslights Square 01279 305000

The Stuntmen Neptune Bar

01273 324 870

Oxegen: Blur/Passion PR/

Dinosaur Pile-Up Punchestown

Racecourse 0871 230 1094

T In The Park: Kings Of Leon/Franz

Ferdinand/Maximo Park/James

Morrison/Nick Cave And The Bad

Seeds/Yeah Yeah Yeahs/Idlewild/

The Mars Volta/Crystal Castles/

The Phantom Band

Barado 0870 169 0100

I Call Shotgun/Shakeshudder

Cockpit Rogin 3 0113 2441573

Micky P Kerr Faversham

0113 245 6817

White Light Parade Cockpit

0113 244 3446

Zun Zun Egal Brudenell Social Club

0113 243 5866

Chelmsford Is Tropical + Electric

Child House

01245 356811

Doncaster

Andy George

The Frisky

01302 768204

London

Trouble Andrew +

Great Northern

0207 388 3222

Leicester

The Bellways Club 0116 258 0080

Buzzcocks 02 Academy

0870 771 2000

Connecting Flights 02 Academy 2

0870 771 2000

The Jacs/You Animals Barfly Loft @

Masque 0151 707 6171

Billy Franks 100 Club 020 7636 0933

Bitter Things Barfly 0870 907 0999

Daedalus ICA 020 7930 3647

David E Sugar Cargo 0207 749 7840

Elliot Minor 02 Islington Academy

0870 771 2000

The Enemy Somerset House

020 7344 4444

Engineers Bush Hall 020 8222 6955

Goldhawks Watershed 020 7792 8101

Gomez Luminare 020 7372 7123

The Kaboodles/Violet Violet Buffalo

Bar 020 7359 6191

Monsieur Monsieur/Cercueil 93 Feet

East 020 7247 6095

Pull Tiger Tail 02 Academy 2 Islington

0870 771 2000

The Roads Dublin Castle

020 7485 1773

Rooster Hope & Anchor 020 7354 1312

Wet Paint Windmill 020 8671 0700

The Winterness/The Dirty Feel

Good Ship 020 7372 2544

Crosby, Stills & Nash Evening News

Arena 0161 950 5000

The Heartbreaks Night And Day Cafe

0161 236 1822

The Ram Rald/Nine Till Dawn

Academy 3 0161 832 1111

Role Tomassi Muho Live

0161 834 8180

Sleepy Sun Deaf Institute

0161 330 4019

Uncle Dad Fishpond 01629 581000

The Buddhas O Neills 0191 269 3001

That Petrol Emotion 02 Academy 2

0870 771 2000

The Underdogs The Robin Hood

0191 257 0265

Witchkraft Star Inn 0191 222 3111

FairSAFE Roadmender Centre

01604 604222

Badalava Kid & Dad Arts Centre

01603 660352

The Mary Jones Scandal Blueberry

01603 475001

Warrior Soul Bar 7 0115 970 4662

Loose Baby Charlotte Met Lounge

01733 566100

Wild Palms White Rabbit

01752 227522

Athlete Wedgewood Rooms

023 9286 3911

Dead Like Harry 02 Academy 2

0870 771 2000

Route 66 New Barrack Tavern

0114 234 9148

Jools Holland & His Rhythm & Blues

Orchestra Quarry Park 01743 281 281

Get Your Ass To Mars Talking Heads

023 8055 5899

The Queue Joiners 023 8022 5612

A Stranger In Moscow Cellars

02392 826249

Everything On Red Sugarmill

01782 214991

Paul Weller/Florence And The

Machine Eden Project 01726 811911

The Trickhobles The Vic 01793 535713

Matt Wright The Forum 08712 777101

As Silence Falls Snooty Fox

01924 374455

The Dauntless Elite Escobar

01924 332000

The Drifters Wulfrun Hall

01902 552121

Thunder Civic Hall 01902 552121

Northern Glory The Stone Roses Bar

01904 670696

Standard Fare City Screen Basement

Bar 01904 541144

The Temper Trap Fibbers 01904 651 250

# SATURDAY

## JULY 11

Big Hand Moles 01225 404445

Manns Esquires 01234 340120

Bunny Waller Q Club 0121 212 1212

Exit Calm The Victoria 0121 633 9439

Optic Therapy/Dinky Actress &

Bishop 0121 236 7426

The Sticky Labels/Adam Walker

02 Academy 3 0870 771 2000

Juan MacLean Digital 01273 202407

No Made Sense Holgobin

01273 602519

The Repercussion Providence

01273 727822

Azalea City Penis Club/Robin

Allender Croft 0117 987 4144

Ebony Bones Start The Bus

0117 930 4370

Short Stories Cube Cinema

0117 907 4190

Lounge On The Farm: Portico

Quartet/The Temper Trap/

Wolf People/SCUM/The Allens/

The Pan I Am/Baddies/Ippo

Facto/Golden Silvers/The Wave

Pictures Merton Farm 0871 230 1094

Dead Against The Rest Barfly

029 2066 7658

Sleepy Sun Club/for Bach

029 2023 2199

Cornbury Music Festival: Scouting

For Girls/Sharleen Spiteri/The

Magic Numbers/The Boy Least

Likely To/The Damned/Peter Green

Cornbury Park 0871 230 1094

Prefuse 73/Diamond Watch Wrists

Cyprus Avenue 00 35321 427 6165

The Restarts The Victoria Inn

01332 74 00 91

Stephen James The Party Kitchen

00 3531 6770945

British Sea Power Leigh Road

Recreation Ground 023 8065 2333

Cash From Chaos/Straighten Out

Barnermans 0131 556 3254

Crosby, Stills & Nash Castle

020 7771 2000

The Energy Plan The Ark

0131 228 9393

Crossfire 13th Note Cafe 0141 553 1638

The Koffin Kats Stereo 0141 576 5018

Hello Wisconsin Bar Eleven

01422 341515

The Haunting Of Leica/A Long Time

Dead Club 85 01462 432767

Oxegen: Kings Of Leon/Bloc Party/

Elbow Punchestown Racecourse

0871 230 1094

T In The Park: The Killers/Passion

Pit/The Specials/Lady Gaga/

Calvin Harris/Jane's Addiction/

Manic Street Preachers/Friendly

Fires/Foals/Glasvegas Balado

0870 169 0100

Forever Never Fusion 0871 230 1094

The Bellrays Brudenell Social Club

0113 243 5866

Here We Go Magic Faversham

0113 245 8817

Lifescreeen Cardigan Arms

0113 274 2000

Scarlet Daggers Cockpit

0113 244 3446

The Little Hydes 02 Academy 2

0870 771 2000

Sean Francis Butler Bluecoat Arts

Centre 0151 709 5297

The Red Pills Pandly Mill

0871 230 1094

The Brays Scala 020 7833 2022



# SUNDAY

## JULY 12

### BRIGHTON

An Albatross Rebut 01273 603974  
The Impellers Latest Music Bar  
01273 687171  
Invisible Plane Komedija  
01273 647100  
Kalkuta Millionaires Concorde 2  
01273 673311  
You Animals Engine Room  
01273 728 999

### BRISTOL

Kylesa/Taint Croft 0117 987 4144  
Rose Elinor Dougall Start The Bus  
0117 930 4370

### CANTERBURY

Lounge On The Farm; Edwyn  
Collins/Billy Childish & Musicians  
Of The British Empire/Mr Scruff/  
Kid Harpoon/Trost/Tames Taylor  
Quartet/Underground Heroes  
Merton Farm 0871 230 1094

### CARDIFF

A Hawk And A Hacksaw/The  
Rayographs The Gate 0871 230 1094  
Sparky Deakap Buffalo Bar  
02920 310312

### CHARLBERY

Combury Music Festival:  
Sugababes/The Pretenders/  
Lightning Seeds/Imelda May/  
Nature Boy/Mary Coughlan  
Combury Park 0871 230 1094

### CORK

Deerhoof The Pavilion  
00 3532 427 6228

### DERBY

Bastards Trained By Bastards  
The Victoria Inn 01332 740091

### DUBLIN

Bruce Springsteen & The E Street  
Band RDS 00 3531 668 0866  
Prefuse 73/Diamond Watch Wrist  
Whelan's 00 3531 475 9372

### EDINBURGH

Blind Assassins The Ark  
0131 228 9393

### Futuristic Retro Champions/

Holly Oglvie The Electric Circus  
0131 226 4224

### The Wilders Bongo Club

0131 558 7604

### GLASGOW

Brazen Cars Nice'n'Sleazy  
0141 333 9637

Matthew Herd Quartet Brel  
0141 342 4966

Random Hand/The Skints The  
Twisted Wheel 0141 221 4851

### GILDARE

Oxygen: The Killers/Razorlight/  
Manic Street Preachers Punchestown  
Racecourse 0871 230 1094

### KINROSS

T In The Park: Mogwai/Blur/TV On  
The Radio/The Twilight Sad/Elbow/  
Bloc Party/Lily Allen/Pendulum/  
Pet Shop Boys/Ladyhawke Balado  
0870 169 0100

### LEEDS

Hat Fitz Hi-Fi Club 0113 242 7353  
Sleepy Sun Bradenell Social Club  
0113 243 5866

### LEICESTER

Superlungs/The Hubris/Hollywood  
Tease/Volcanoes Shed 0116 262 2255

### LIVERPOOL

The Birthday Massacre O2 Academy  
2 0870 771 2000  
Sharleen Spiteri Echo Arena  
0844 8000 400

### LONDON

Adam Wedd And The Independents  
Bacchus Bar 020 8546 7798  
Alasdair Roberts/Stephanie  
Hladowski Luminaire 020 7372 7123

All Shall Perish Underworld  
020 7482 1932

Broadcast 2000/Cherbourg  
Arts Club 020 7460 4459  
Sunny Walker Apollo 0870 606 3400

The Butterscotch Bandits/Inland  
Empire Whelan's 020 8671 0700

### Cavalier 100 Club 020 7636 0933

Flo Rida The O2 Arena 0870 701 4444  
Groundation Jazz Cafe  
020 7916 6060

Juke Baritone & The Swamp Dogs/  
The Utopians/The Chambers/Boris  
And The Spiders Dublin Castle  
020 7485 1773

Mellohell Barfly 0870 907 0999  
Monade/Zoe Van Goey/The Lovely  
Eggs Blitali Bar 020 7359 6191

Orquestra Imperial KOKO  
020 7361 3222

The Trilbees 12 Bar Club  
020 7240 2622

MANCHESTER

The Eagles Evening News Arena  
0161 950 5000

Spinnerette Academy 3 0161 832 1111

NEWCASTLE

The Bellrays Cluny  
0191 230 4474

Diablo Egypt Cottage 0191 232 0218  
Mental Giant The Tyne  
0191 265 2550

The Rives Star Inn 0191 222 3111

NOTTINGHAM

Ann Dugan Band Running Horse  
0115 978 7398

READING

Shrag/Violet Violet/Sixty Watt  
Bayonets Oak Social Club  
0116 234 1134

WARRINGHAM

Let's Wrestle/The Spills/  
Strangeways/Children For  
Breakfast Old Fire Station  
01142 797901

SOUTHAMPTON

The Wonder Years Joiners  
023 8022 5612

WAKEFIELD

The Kept Snooty Fox  
01924 374455

The Stupids/Vanilla Pod/The Down  
And Outs Escobar 01924 332000

# MONDAY

## JULY 13



Spinnerette, O2  
Academy 2, Oxford

### BIRMINGHAM

Flo Rida O2 Academy 0870 771 2000

### BRIGHTON

The Wonder Years Freebutt  
01273 603974

### BRISTOL

Fever Ray O2 Academy 0870 771 2000  
Synthetic Dream Fleece  
0117 945 0996

### CAMBRIDGE

Athlete/Official Secrets Act Junction  
01223 515111

The Night Marchers Portland Arms  
01223 357268

### CARDIFF

Death Before Sunrise/Nothing  
New/Magden Audio Buffalo Bar  
02920 310312

### DUBLIN

Allen Toussaint Whelan's  
00 3531 475 9372

### GLASGOW

Re-To SECC 0141 248 3000  
Sleepy Sun Captain's Rest  
0141 331 2722

Tomorrow We Radio/Pink Flower  
Rockers 0141 221 0726

### LEEDS

The Warlocks/Wild Palms Brudenell  
Social Club 0113 243 5866

### LIVERPOOL

Pet Shop Boys Echo Arena  
0844 8000 400

The Sums O2 Academy 2  
0870 771 2000

### LONDON

Al Perkins/Brigitte DeMeyer/Two  
Fingers Of Finewater Luminaire  
020 7372 7123

Amber States/Vera Bohl The Old  
Queen's Head 0207 839 7261

The Defiled Underworld  
020 7482 1932

Fallsafe Barfly 0870 907 0999  
Heather Christian 12 Bar Club  
020 7240 2522

Kid Champion/The Cess Ailan Band  
Hope & Anchor 020 7354 1312

Leela James Jazz Cafe 020 7916 6060  
Local Natives/Your Twenties  
The Leighton 020 7837 5387

The Mars Volta Somerset House  
020 7344 4444

The Omega/Slide Of The Sky/Sonic  
Delays The Fly 0870 907 0999

Paul Dello Troubadour Club  
020 7370 1434

Spiral 25/My First Radio Dublin  
Castle 020 7485 1773

Tete Monty Water Rats 020 7837 4432  
Trost Broadline 020 7734 5547

TV On The Radio O2 Brixton Academy  
0870 771 2000

Vile Imbeciles/Slow Blade/IS Carat  
Love Affair/The Barnacles Buffalo  
Bar 020 7359 6191

The Wind Whistles/The Telegraphs  
Slaughtered Lamb 020 8682 4080

### MANCHESTER

The Boss Hoss Ruby Lounge  
0161 834 1392

St Vincent Night And Day Cafe  
0161 236 1822

### NEWCASTLE

The Birthday Massacre O2 Academy  
2 0870 771 2000

### NOTTINGHAM

Tesseract Roadmende Centre  
01604 604222

### OXFORD

Spinnerette O2 Academy 2  
0870 771 2000

### SHEFFIELD

Joshua Radin O2 Academy 2  
0870 771 2000

Kylesa Corporation  
0114 276 0262

### SOUTHAMPTON

Glasslights Joiners  
023 8022 5612

### SOUTHSEA

The Music Club/Dedicals Cellars  
02932 826249

### WAKEFIELD

Tonight We Fire Escobar  
01924 332000

### YORK

Random Hand/The Skints Fibbers  
01904 651 250



Lily Allen, T In  
The Park, Kinross



# TUESDAY

JULY 14

Swoon to the sound of the radio as Bombay Bicycle Club head into the studio to perform an exclusive session from 4pm

NME  
RADIO

## BIRMINGHAM

Reverend & The Makers O2 Academy  
0870 771 2000  
The Temper Trap Rainbow  
0121 772 8174

## BRIGHTON

The Dolphin Parade/Dead By  
Seven/Monocure The Albert  
01273 730499  
Glasslights Audio 01273 624343  
Tom Allalene & The 78s Freebutt  
01273 603974

## BRISTOL

Lisa Hannigan Fleece 0117 945 0996

## CAMBRIDGE

9FoldPunch Portland Arms

## CARDIFF

Flashguns/Cat Mouse Cat/Rico And  
The Thieves Barfly 029 2066 7658  
Oratorios Buffalo Bar 02920 310312

## DERBY

The Ocean Between Us The Victoria  
Inn 01332 74 00 91

## EDINBURGH

Brainz In Jazz/That's What The Old  
Man Said & He Never Came Back/  
Ian Ryan Th + Ark 011 793 9393  
Cryoverbillionaires/There Will  
Be Fireworks The Electric Circus  
0131 225 4224  
Sleepy Sun Sneaky Pete's  
0131 225 1757

## EXETER

Cure The Disaster Hub 01392 424628

## GLASGOW

All Shall Perish Ivory Blacks  
0141 221 7871  
Anny Celsi/Nelson Dragg 13th Note  
Café 0141 553 638  
The Birthday Massacre Stereo  
0141 576 5018  
Bruce Springsteen & The E Street  
Band Hampden Park  
0111 620 4000

## FRANKFURT/CHARLIE KING TUT'S

Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279  
Just Jack Arches 0141 221 4001  
The Pretenders ABC 0870 903 3444  
St Vincent Nuclei/Sleazy 0141 333 9637  
The Wilders Class 'ic Grand  
0141 271 4585

## LEEDS

Ares And Elights/Gaze/Kinch Cockpit  
0113 244 3446  
The Game O2 Academy 0870 771 2000  
Prefuse 73/Diamond Watch Wrist  
Brudenell Social Club 0113 243 5866

## LIVERPOOL

Leonard Cohen Echo Arena  
0844 8000 400

## LONDON

Delphic/House De Racket/  
Oh Minnows Madame Jojo's  
020 7734 2473  
Horseman Shakes & The Draymen/  
Salute Mary Hope & Anchor  
020 7554 1312  
James Rhodes 100 Club  
020 7636 0193  
Juliette Commagere/The  
Phenomenal Handcap Band  
Borderline 020 7734 5547  
Lady Gaga O2 Brixton Academy  
0870 771 2000  
The Layanias/Rob Cowen And The  
Diskdents/The Beyonders Barfly  
0870 907 0999  
Leela James Jazz Café 020 7916 6060  
Lost In Fifi Comedy 020 7839 7261  
Nosh! Bull & Gate 020 7485 5358  
Of Montreal O2 Shepherd's Bush  
Empire 0870 771 2000  
St Francis/Sunday School/Pirate  
Radio/The Kid Jones Rhythm Factory  
020 7247 9318  
The Ting Yings Somerset House  
020 7344 4444  
The Twang Electric Ballroom  
020 7485 9006

## MANCHESTER

Gross Purposes Ruby Lounge  
0161 834 1392  
Dirty Rabbit Roadhouse  
0161 228 1789  
Fever Ray Academy 2 0161 832 1111  
Flo Rida Apollo 0870 401 8000  
Nine Inch Nails/Jane's Addiction  
Evening News Arena 0161 950 5000

## NEWCASTLE

The Warlocks/Wild Palms The Other  
Rooms 0191 261 9755

## NOTTINGHAM

The Jet Boys/The Amber Herd  
Junktion 7 0115 911 6959  
Kytasa/Dead In The Woods/Diet  
Pills Rock City 08713 100000  
Steve Pincock Running Horse  
0115 978 7398

## OXFORD

The Ghost Of A Thousand O2  
Academy 2 0870 771 2000  
Jake & Elwood And Their Black  
Rhino Band New Theatre, Apollo  
0870 606 3500

## SHEFFIELD

The Airborne Toxic Event Leadmill  
0114 221 2828  
Athlete O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000

## SOUTHAMPTON

The Eighties Matchbox B-Line  
Disaster Joiners 023 8022 5612  
Groundation Hamptons Bar  
07919 253 508  
You Animals Talking Heads  
023 8055 5099

## ST ALBANS

The Nimblewits/The Papersnakes  
Horn 01727 853143

## ST AUGUSTINE

Oasis Eden Project  
01726 811911

## WAKEFIELD

Estates & Streets Snooty Fox  
01924 374455



The Twang, Electric Ballroom, London

GIGS

TICKETS ON SALE!

BOOKING NOW



## FLORENCE AND THE MACHINE

STARTS IN STG O2 ACADEMY, SEPTEMBER 17

Following the release of her debut pop offering Florence Welch takes her well-oiled machine on an extensive UK tour this autumn.

[WWW.NME.COM/artists/florence-and-the-machine](http://WWW.NME.COM/artists/florence-and-the-machine)



## SAINT ETIENNE

STARTS SOUTHGOLD LATITUDE FESTIVAL, JULY 14

British indie dance sensation Saint Etienne head out on the road amidst some festival dates.

[WWW.NME.COM/artists/st-etienne](http://WWW.NME.COM/artists/st-etienne)



## CORNERSHOP

STARTS MANCHESTER MONO, JULY 17

The indie popsters from Leicester make a welcomed return to the gig circuit to support the release of new album 'Judy Sucks A Lemon For Breakfast'.

[WWW.NME.COM/artists/cornershop](http://WWW.NME.COM/artists/cornershop)



## THE DRONES

STARTS BRIC MONTE ALBERT, NOV 2

One of the best things to come out of Australia since forever return to these shores for some heavy duty rock.

[WWW.NME.COM/artists/the-drones](http://WWW.NME.COM/artists/the-drones)

O<sub>2</sub> customers can get Priority Tickets to thousands of gigs nationwide up to 48 hours before general release. Just register at [o2.co.uk/priority](http://o2.co.uk/priority) When Priority Tickets are gone, they're gone. Terms apply.

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# GEAR

STUFF WE LOVE Edited by Ben Patashnik



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## MP3 AMP

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## CRIMINAL DAMAGE SHIRTS

Check shirts are still hotter than a ready meal that's been nuked on high for a day and a half and then dunked in a volcano while Karen O points at it, so go buy some. Crim Dam do some natty ones, with all the squares in the right places, see?

www.criminaldamage.co.uk

## KASABIAN T-SHIRT

So, you're looking through your summer wardrobe to find that exact garm that screams 'I'm a little bit mad, plus I like music, plus I enjoy setting things on fire'. A Kasabian T-shirt that says the word 'lunatic' (and some other stuff) on it is just the ticket, and we've got 10 to give away (five medium and five large; if you're skinny, man up and eat some pies) as well as 10 deluxe copies of their new album on both CD and vinyl. BUMPER. For a chance of winning, correctly complete the crossword below. And specify your size!

WEST  
RYDER  
PAUPER  
LUNATIC  
ASYLUM

WIN  
THIS!  
ENTER THE NME  
CROSSWORD  
BELOW

## NME ONLINE STORE

### THE WHO MUG

We've all spent the last week talking about how awesome Glasto was - and seriously, it really bloody was - so how's about a bit of nostalgia over a cup of tea? When The Who headlined in 2007 it was stupidly good, so brew up and lie on a rug while cranking out 'Baba O'Riley' at ear-bleed volume.

www.nme.com/store

# THE NME CROSSWORD

## WIN THE KASABIAN BUNDLE

### CLUES ACROSS

- 1+10 It's coming back after 42 years? Jefferson Airplane's finest ever piece of music? Oh, it's an ash free download (6-2-5-6)
- 9 It's in the body of a Franz Ferdinand compilation (5)
- 10 He's from an area in Ga way Bay, and named on British Sea Power LP (3-2-4)
- 11+30A A trio lack some adaptability to become an indie foursome (5-4)
- 12 It was a race to get this Teenage Fanclub LP out (5-4)
- 13+20D Then Big Bob's coming around with a girl from Portishead (4-7)
- 14 Kiki, duetted with Elton John on 'Don't Go Breaking My Heart' (3)
- 15+22D With a fruity wobble they forecast it to be 'Nice Weather For Ducks' (5-5)
- 17 "Convex you bend, twist and shout, twist and shout, twist and shout", 2006 (7)

### CLUES DOWN

- 1 (See 1 across)
- 2 Hockey didn't sound at all genuine with this song (3-4)
- 3 Goldfrapp to go places just like the Lone Ranger (4-1-5-5)
- 20+24D We Close Our Eyes' - which explains how this '80s duo were totally lost (2-4)
- 21 "Cos there's nothing at all except the space in-between", 2007 (4)
- 23 Get a little wind of a performance coming from Creation label band Slowdive (5-3-6)
- 25 The founder of 4AD records makes comeback in a movie (3)
- 26 Zak Starkey's dad (5)
- 27 Married to Shania Twain, this rock producer came at a different angle (5)
- 29 Southampton indie band featuring brothers Greg and Aaron Gilbert (6)
- 30 (See 11 across)

- 4 Lily Allen sounding very surprised to be working with Mark Ronson (2-2-3)
- 5 A new ban somehow imposed on a 1996 number one hit (7)
- 6 Find it to be made up about Bob Dy an album (8)
- 7 Wire number sounding very close to The Bees (7-4)
- 8 A gem of a hip-hop band from New York (4)
- 16 He was born Shaffer Chimere Smith in Arkansas, 1979 (2-2)
- 17 Came in strangely with member of Steps included doing a Yeah Yeah Yeahs' song (7)
- 18 Just an idea that this may refer to Kings Of Leon (6)
- 19 She's a 'Good Girl Gone Bad' (7)
- 20 (See 13 across)
- 22 (See 15 across)
- 24 (See 20 across)
- 28 Ministry output from the Ironworks (1-1-1)

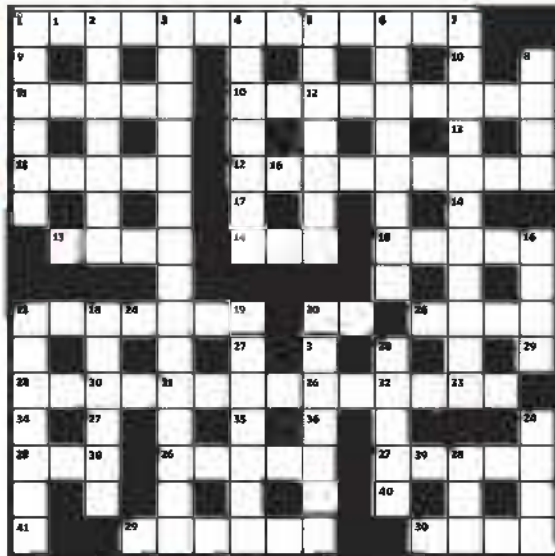


Compiled by  
Trevor Hungerford

### JUNE 13 ANSWERS

ACROSS  
1 Music For Men, 8+24A In For The Kill, 10 Grizzly Bear, 11 Yere, 12 Shalimar, 13 Helena, 17 Rescue, 19 Yow, 21+23A I'll Do Ya, 25 ELP, 27 Ian, 28 Sex, 31 Voice, 32 Gee, 34+40A Pomme, 35 One Second, 36 Pixies.

DOWN  
1 Magistrates, 2 Shivers, 3+21D Coz I Luv You, 4 Oh Yeah, 5 Mael, 6 Miranda, 7+33A Green Day, 9 Fire, 13 Neu, 14+19D Neil Young, 16 Boy, 18 Cake, 20 Warhead, 26+39A Place Of My, 29 Xymox, 30 A Delc, 34+22D Pop Levi, 36 Eve, 37 Nat.



Simply cut out the crossword and send it, along with your name, address and email, marking the envelope with the house date, before Tuesday, July 14 2009, to the following address: Crossword, NME, 4th floor, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London, SE1 0SU. First correct one out of the lot wins!



## PICK OF THE WEEK



**WIN THE CHANCE TO SEE PENDULUM LIVE AT IBIZA ROCKS!**

All this week on NME TV - win the chance for you and a mate to jet off to Ibiza, for one night only to see Pendulum live at Ibiza Rocks!

## PLUS...

### WEDNESDAY

#### NME ROCK CHART

With Linkin Park, Fightstar, Green Day and AAR.

July 8, 4pm



### THURSDAY

#### RADAR

With Temper Trap, Matt & Kim and Chairlift.

July 9, 11pm



### FRIDAY

#### BASEMENT JAXX TAKEOVER

Coming live from Ibiza.

July 10, 11pm



### SATURDAY

#### THE VIEW TAKEOVER

The Scot rockers' pop picks.

July 11, 3pm



### SUNDAY

#### TOP 20 OASIS

The best 20 vids by the Gallaghers.

July 12, 8pm



### MONDAY

#### TIME FOR HEROES

A selection of Peter Doherty's best moments.

July 13, 9pm



### TUESDAY

#### DIZZEE RASCAL'S ULTIMATE FESTIVAL LINE-UP

His dream choices revealed.

July 14, 9pm



Full listings: [NME.COM/NMETV](http://NME.COM/NMETV)

SKY CHANNEL 0184  
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[NMERADIO.CO.UK](http://NMERADIO.CO.UK)

## IN OUR STUDIO



### BAT FOR LASHES

Session played: Weds, June 24

We love a bit of Bat For Lashes at NME Radio and her songs are DJ favourites, so it was a no-brainer to invite her in for an exclusive chat and live session prior to her Glasto show. Natasha Khan talked to us about her Worthy Farm slot ahead of Yeah Yeah Yeahs and her hometown of Brighton before treating us to shimmering versions of 'Daniel' and 'Pearl's Dream'.

## COMING UP...

### ■ PATRICK WOLF

A rescheduled *Forum* appearance for the indie pixie, talking about his new, fan-funded album and passing judgement on the week's singles.

Wednesday, July 8, 4pm

### ■ BOMBAY BICYCLE CLUB

After their much talked-about Glasto show, the best band named after a curry restaurant play a session and shoot the shit with Iain Baker.

Tuesday, July 14, 4pm

## ON THE PLAYLIST...



### ■ MIKE SNOW

Cult Logic

### ■ SONIC YOUTH

Sacred Trickster

### ■ PLASTIC LITTLE

La La Land

### ■ ASH

Return Of White Rabbit

### ■ WE HAVE BAND

You Came Out



### ■ GRAHAM COXON

Sorrow's Army

### ■ DINOSAUR JR

Over It

### ■ METRIC

Satellite Mind

### ■ YEAH YEAH YEAHS

Heads Will Roll

### ■ DEPECHE MODE

In Sympathy



### ■ KASABIAN

Fire

## The NME Chart TV



### 1 KINGS OF LEON

'NOTION'

### 2 THE KILLERS

'THE WORLD WE LIVE IN'

### 3 LA ROUX

'BULLETPROOF'

### 4 KASABIAN

'FIRE'

### 5 THE MACCABEES

'CAN YOU GIVE IT'

### 6 JAMIE T

'STICKS N' STORIES'

### 7 FLORENCE AND THE MACHINE

'RABBIT HEART...'

### 8 GOSSIP

'HEAVY CROSS'

### 9 THE ENEMY

'SING WHILE YOU'RE IN LOVE'

### 10 YEAH YEAH YEAHS

'HEADS WILL ROLL'

VOTE NOW!

Go to [WWW.NME.COM/NMETV](http://WWW.NME.COM/NMETV) to have your say



# WHAT ROCK'N'ROLL HAS TAUGHT ME...

by **NIGEL TUFNEL (SPINAL TAP)**

The Tap's guitarist issues forth on doomed drummers and encountering 14th century kings

**IF YOU WANT TO LAST AS LONG AS SPINAL TAP, A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE IS CRUCIAL.** "I've made a point of keeping relationships with young women – not too young – but young enough to keep me young. I don't drink or smoke, either – it's a healthy life I live. And I always wear gloves. What happens to your hands during the day can be pretty brutal so regular linen or cotton gloves will help protect you from bacteria. If I was drinking and smoking and not wearing gloves, I might not be talking to you now."

**NEVER MIND THE DRUGS, LEGAL HIGHS ARE MUCH BETTER.** "I was never very big on drugs. They never did much for me except make me go to sleep but what I did do a lot of was experiment with hypnophasia. That's where you get a piece of cardboard or paper with various designs and patterns, you put a hole in the middle and put it on a turntable. As it spins about, you stare at it very closely. It sent me to some very interesting places. One time, I got transported to the 14th century where there was this weird slow-motion music playing. Then this bloke came up to me with a golden crown with jewels in. He was obviously a king and he was going to imprison me in his tower to torture me but then I said, 'No, no, don't do that.' And then he said, 'Oh, OK then, I won't.' It was intense."

**MAKE SURE YOU DON'T GET STITCHED UP BY PEOPLE MAKING DOCUMENTARIES.** "That atrocious film (*This Is Spinal Tap*) was a piece of fucking crap, basically, because it showed something that really wasn't accurate. There are always certain moments in a tour that just don't go well and that guy (director Marty DiBergi) didn't show the bits that were successful because no one wants to see that. Everyone just wants to see disaster – the tripping and falling. My life goes pretty smoothly now. Like today: I got up and had some breakfast. Did I choke on the eggs? No. Then I went outside. Did I fall down a hole? No. Then I walked down the street. Did an elephant step on my penis? No.



Nigel Tufnel, far left, he's a guitar and leather

**"THAT ATROCIOUS FILM WAS A PIECE OF FUCKING CRAP BECAUSE IT WASN'T ACCURATE"**

Nobody's interested in that. Now, if we were in the middle of a tour and someone said they wanted to film us, I'd say no fucking way. But if someone said they'd like to do a painting of me, on the other hand, I'd say yes."

**IF YOU'RE IN A BAND, YOU DON'T HAVE TO SPEND EVERY MINUTE WITH EACH OTHER.** "Me and David (St Hubbins, Tap singer/guitarist) still argue sometimes but there will always be friction between two people who do things creatively. But since Jeanine (David's old girlfriend) left – and good riddance, too – me and David have been able to get back to what we do best and that's writing songs. We're not super-close like we used to be in the old days but we still work well together and, occasionally, we speak to each other too. Derek (Smalls, bass) is a bit of a mystery. He is still trying out for football clubs. He tried out for one club that only had nine on the side, there were no wingers and they'd lost every game. They're the lowest of the low but

he still can't make the team. It's quite pathetic. He can't kick a ball with either right or left foot, and he won't head the ball, so it's hopeless. But it's a dream he's had since he was a lad – to play for Sheffield Wednesday."

**ALL OF OUR DRUMMERS ARE DOOMED FROM THE START.** "The drummer thing is an ongoing mystery (the Tap's drummers continue to be victims of tragic accidents and disappearances to this day). We can't get them insured anymore. We have one chap who's sitting in at the moment called Skippy Scuffleton who's doing a great job. He's a little bit naïve, though. Why? Well, because he's playing with us. Any day, any second, there's so much that can happen to you. I look behind me during every song and I expect to hear silence. I have some theories as to why this might be happening and one is

based on the idea of parallel motion. Let me explain that: when you go down the street – well, I try not to walk down the street actually because I don't like people very much – but when one does go down the street, you put one leg in front of the other. That's called walking. But you've probably noticed that other people are walking in different directions. So when you have people walking in different directions from each other it creates negative ions – it's a disturbance in the air, which then forms what is known as the 'Pyramid Of Doom'. It's like a wave you can't see, and it's very dangerous for drummers."

**SOMETIMES, ONE NOTE IS ALL YOU NEED.** "I'm working with a one-stringed instrument at the moment. It's a very ancient instrument and it just plays one note but if you pluck that one string in the right way, what you can't see with the naked eye is that it creates a vibration that is like an entire spectrum of sound. It's like a rainbow from just one note. It becomes many notes, many colours, many tastes even. Playing with six strings is the norm but if you have the kind of in-depth musical knowledge as I have, you can do the same job with much less."

**BEING A GUITARIST IS A BIT LIKE BEING A FISH.** "I don't know if you've heard of this, but they have this thing called scuba diving where you can go underwater with a tank and mask and look at tropical fish. It gives you some clues about how to play guitar. The decisions that a fish makes are very similar to the ones a guitarist makes. Like a guitar player will think, 'Should I play an A or should I play a C?' The fish thinks, 'Shall I go this way or that?' Now you might think I'm being literal but I'm not; you have to do something called extra-po-late."

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
**■ Nigel formed the basis of Spinal Tap at the tender age of seven years old when he first met David St Hubbins and they wrote their first song together, 'All The Way Home'**  
**■ Nigel has conducted extensive studies into the building of Stonehenge and claims that it was built by a solitary man called 'Duncan'**  
**■ One of Nigel's rider stipulations on tour is to have a plate of Oreo cookies laid out with the filling removed**







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# Russell HOWARD

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**14 NEWCASTLE**

Metro Radio Arena 0844 493 6666

**15 NOTTINGHAM**

Trent FM Arena 08444 124 624

**16 LIVERPOOL**

Echo Arena 0844 8000 400

**17 BIRMINGHAM**

The NIA 0844 338 8000

**18 ABERDEEN**

AECC 0844 477 19000

**19 SHEFFIELD**

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**[www.russell-howard.co.uk](http://www.russell-howard.co.uk)**

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a place for comedy