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REVEAL THEIR
FUTURE AT**

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BLUR
**MAXIMO
PARK**
**MANIC
STREET
PREACHERS**
**AND THE
WEEKEND'S 10
BEST BANDS**



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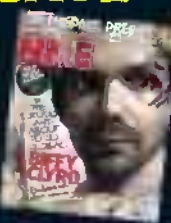
JANELLE MONAE p48

P Diddy's protégée brings her bonkers 28th century sci-fi concept album, finger-painting and futuristic funk jams to Brooklyn – check out our live review to find out why she's destined for superstardom

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6 T IN THE PARK EIGHT-PAGE REVIEW SPECIAL

The 10 best bands at the Scottish bash revealed, including Kings Of Leon, Blur, Maximo Park, Elbow and Manic Street Preachers – plus, everything else you might have missed



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10 TRACKS

YOU HAVE TO HEAR THIS WEEK

The Very Best, with VW's Ezra Koenig (inset)



VAMPIRE WEEKEND BREAK

1 THE VERY BEST FEAT EZRA KOENIG Warm Heart Of Africa

Not content letting bandmate Rostam rock the side-project look, Ezra Koenig has stapled his name to 2009's best chance at afro-pop crossover. Franco-Swedish production duo Radioclit met Malawian Esau Mwamwaya when he sold them a bike in their local junk shop; together they became The Very Best. Filtering Eurodance production techniques through a span of African genres from kwaito to kuduro, their album's lead track features Ezra (in English) and Esau (in Chichewa) trading verses over a joyous, loping beat, while hi-life guitars plink and plonk behind. The favour's already been returned: Esau recorded a version of 'Cape Cod Kwassa Kwassa'.

On MySpace now



BACK! BACK! BACK!

2 AIR Do The Joy

Just what we need in the sultry dog days: a cool blast of Gallic synth sophistication. Sounding darker and more bewitching than we've heard them in a while, this opening taster of Air's forthcoming album 'Love 2' recalls the beautifully zonked-out soundtrack they did to *The Virgin Suicides* with the addition of dirty rock guitars, fuzzed-out keys and celestial piano all whirling round in a slow vortex. Stoned love.

Free download from www.aircheology.com now

3 ELLIE GOULDING Starry Eyed

Welsh songstress Ellie Goulding's 'Starry Eyed' is so perfectly crafted that, even if your name was Sir Genius Pop, you'd still have to ask how she does it. She bestows a genre-hopping innocence that has Frankmusik handling the synths on 'Wish I Stayed' and she's even covered Bon Iver's 'The Wolves'. The result of this 21-year-old dabbling in folk, pop and electronica sounds like Frou Frou making fairy cakes using Laura Marling as a whisk. Dig in, and tell your dentist to piss off.

On Myspace now



4 LES COX (SPORTIFS) The Hand The Heed Grew



Sometimes a record drops through our letterbox that is so perfect we can't stop blabbing about it. Taken from their new EP, 'Total Straightness', 'The Hand...' is a mind-melting combo of everything amazing and awful about the '80s in one razor-sharp scramble for attention. The guitar strings sound like rusty barbed wire, the bassline makes your stomach tremble and the weird kid lyrics are delivered with the sort of Scottish croon that melts hearts. The coolest escapism we ever heard.

On MySpace now

5 CYMBALS EAT GUITARS And The Hazy Sea

If this Staten Island four-piece have as much trouble with omnivorous instruments as their name suggests, this rock game's going to be an expensive business for them. It would be worth the cost, though, as this achingly epic track ably demonstrates. With all the grandeur of British Sea Power, it's lent a delicious detail in the fluid guitar work, reminiscent of Smashing Pumpkins' James Iha.

On NME Radio now



6 THE KILLS Willow Weep For Me



NME recently found by chance a badge reading 'It's Sinatra's world: we just live in it'. iTunes know this to be true and, even if their tribute collection 'His Way, Our Way' features dubious homages by The Kooks and Maroon 5, Ol' Blue Eyes would surely have twinkled to hear this classy take on a jazz standard he made his own. Jamie Hince's surprisingly rich croon and Allison Mosshart's refreshingly un-try-hard sweetness are backed only by an acoustic guitar.

On iTunes now



DANCEFLOOR RETURN

7 SUGABABES Get Sexy

We lost them for a while to the 'mum's birthday present' market, but Sugababes were never going to be able to resist the dancefloor for long. Their comeback single knocks memories of the woeful 'Girls' out of the way with its ridiculous, banging aggression, like being mauled by a techno cougar on heat. RedOne, producer to Little Boots and Lady Gaga, sets a steel-eyed intent behind Keisha's playful "When I'm walking down the street, they say, 'Hey sexy'" and Amelle's brilliantly hard-faced boast "I'm too sexy for this club". It's really good to hear them back on top.

On YouTube now



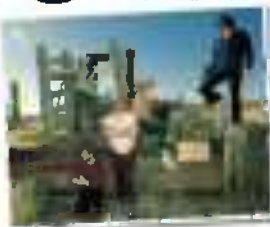
BARKING MAD MIX

8 FEVER RAY Triangle Walks (Rex The Dog Remix)

Our slavish devotion to shamaness of the northern wastes Karin Dreijer Andersson grows apace. The Knife songstress' strange and beautiful solo album hasn't been far from our grasp in the past months, and the remixes have only furthered our obsession. Here, dance producer Rex The Dog takes the chiming Tantric techno of the original and turns it into a no-less-satisfying quick one-two.

On YouTube now

9 PORTUGAL. THE MAN Lovers In Love



Why is nobody paying attention to this band? The second best thing to come out of Wasilla since comedy cannon fodder Sarah Palin have thrown everything at this latest in a bid for recognition: bongos, wah-wah, strings'n'synths, the depths of their souls... Go forth and do them justice.

On NME Radio now

10 THE RULING CLASS Marian Shrine

Woah! Did we drop through a wormhole into late-'80s Manchester? Because this howl-cutted London five-piece are baggier than a rhino's granny knickers. Devoid of Kasabian's bluster, their stoned groove also weaves in elements of shoegaze to create something very special indeed. Get your maracas out.

On MySpace now



REVIEW **T** IN THE PARK

THE 10 BEST BANDS

We all love a party. So over the next eight pages we honour the acts that got the weekend going at Scotland's biggest festival



From here you get a perfect view of the drum tech pixie

THE MAJESTIC HEADLINERS

KINGS OF LEON

MAIN STAGE, FRIDAY, 10/07/09

Of the myriad homemade banners and mates-on-shoulders that the TV cameras swoop past during Kings Of Leon's headline set tonight, one in particular catches the eye. It's unfurled by a refreshed-looking young lady perched atop an obliging friend and reads simply, "CALEB, YOU CAN SLEEP IN MY TENT!"

Clearly, this girl never got the memo. Perhaps back in their younger, druggier days of grime and gonorrhoea she might've gotten somewhere, but Kings Of Leon circa 2009 are a band almost unrecognisable from the four young men sporting curiously feminine haircuts – and couture to match – who first left Tennessee in 2003 and spent the next few years on their own endless, intercontinental keg party. They look different, they sound different, and they *certainly* don't do tents; in all likelihood, they'll be bedding down tonight

themselves that they can now get away with anything. The sense of underwhelmment is palpable...

...And short-lived. Because while Kings Of Leon have made a career out of their cold, distant cool, tonight they heartwarmingly reveal themselves to be sentimental old fuddy-duddys, who may secretly be having just as good a time as the 55,000 people in front of them. Except Matthew, of course, who simply puffs his way through an entire packet of Camels without ever missing a note or raising an eyebrow.

Though their choice of opener is a little odd, there are few complaints about the rest of the set. From its weedy garage-blues beginnings, 'Molly's Chambers' has now become a slow-burning Southern gothic grind that sounds absolutely huge, while a defiant, celebratory 'Fans' signals a mid-set gear-shift towards the anthemic that continues with an atmospheric, doom-laden 'Closer' and the industrial chug of 'Crawl'.

"I always forget how beautiful you guys are," drawls Caleb. "I'm having a few sound troubles, but the good thing is, I have something to drink. I know if there's one place in the world where it isn't frowned upon to drink, it's here. And I know you guys also like to sing, so."

Then they launch into 'Sex On Fire' as though it were no big thing, while the earth shakes around us and the air becomes thick with mangled vowels as several thousand people sing along in drunken unison. Even Blur will struggle to top that.

It seems almost comical now to think that Kings Of Leon were once lazily characterised as The Southern Strokes. Their shift into stadium status may have been maligned by critics, but it fits occasions such as this perfectly. Songs such as 'Tour Kicks' prove they haven't abandoned the role entirely, but Kings Of Leon are now predominately a 'rock' band, an event band, even. The sort of band that you probably *should* hate, but just can't. They're simply too good. And for their part, tonight's crowd is too partisan for even the normally nonchalant Kings to ignore.

"I want you guys to know that we love you all so very, very much," gushes Caleb before 'Manhattan'. "You guys have made us Kings Of Leon. And guess what? We're gonna be here forever!"

Flagrant arrogance and disarming humility, all in the same breath. This is the balance that all aspiring stadium rockers must strike. Johnny Borrell failed miserably. Kings Of Leon, you sense, will not. And as Caleb rams the neck of his guitar through Nathan's bass drum at the climax of 'Black Thumbnail' and throws it into the crowd with a gleeful grin, you get the feeling he knows it too. **Barry Nicolson**

"YOU GUYS HAVE MADE US. AND WE'RE GONNA BE HERE FOREVER"

CALEB FOLLOWILL

on dodo-feathered mattresses and drooling on pillows made of pure money.

Such are the spoils of massive success. But opening tonight's show – their third T in as many years, but their first headline slot – with a song as humdrum and neither-here-nor-there as 'Be Somebody' seems nothing short of baffling, as though they've played one too many mega-gigs and have convinced



Kings opt for Scottish national costume: the uniform of Glasvegas



2 FESTIVAL PRINCES CHASING KINGS' CROWN

MAXIMO PARK

MAIN STAGE, FRIDAY, 10/07/09

Deep breath, everyone. "I look back through history, and whether it's Caravaggio getting wealthy patrons to pay for what he did, or Paul Auster getting an inheritance that gave him the freedom to write his first novel, there is that element of an artist needing someone outside of the art to fund what they're doing." Ask yourself this: who, other than Paul Smith, would say something as erudite as this a few hours before playing some pop songs to thousands of devotedly rowdy fans? After all, there aren't many punters up here in Kinross with a Federico Zuccari (one of Caravaggio's contemporaries, as if you didn't know, philistine) T-shirt this weekend. Then again, there aren't many aping Smith's duck-egg-blue suit, but they love him nonetheless.

Arguably, that's always been the problem with Maximo Park. Self-consciously and unapologetically literary, Paul Smith, in particular, has been painted as a stoic bookworm with a severe medical allergy to fun. No matter how many photos are published of him scissor-kicking his way through another gig, the image endures... despite the fact they've quietly, almost

sneakily become one of the biggest bands in the British Isles.

"People expect us to be po-faced, but music is fun! In particular, the music we make is fun," grins Smith backstage. "A lot of people have had a lot of preconceptions about our band."

Nevertheless, here they sit on the bill of Scotland's biggest festival just below local heroes Franz Ferdinand and Kings Of Leon, the closest thing there's been to a genuine global phenomenon over the past year. Next month, they're third headliners at Reading And Leeds Festivals, below the Arctics and The Prodigy. Their third album 'Quicken The Heart' went to Number Six in the chart. Not bad for a band who know they have detractors. "Now and then we meet people in town who are like, 'I thought you were going to be a right knobhead, but you're really sound!'" People don't realise, three albums down the line, what we're about," continues Smith. "There's a certain sort of person who'd love it if we were still in Newcastle playing local gigs."

But they don't make a virtue out of such negativity, they



thrive on it: whether it's Lukas Wooller playing keyboards one-fingered to free up the rest of his body to dance like a man holding the winning lottery ticket or Smith shimmying and jerking his way around the stage, all flicked elbows and skipping knees, Maximo are a truly joyous live band. The roar that greets 'Our Velocity' and the way the first verse of 'Books From Boxes' is bellowed back at Smith, Wooller, bassist Archib Tiku, guitarist Duncan Lloyd and drummer Tom English are fair reward for the way they perform. Smith himself seems to have become a frontman who can command vast audiences; he's a real festival frontman and, just as the reigning Kings will attest, knowing how to own a festival is the real ticket to that next level. Hell, they even have fans who'll cheer

their synth riffs – and no-one cheers synth riffs, not even synth players. "You're encouraged to think of these things [festivals] as benchmarks, and even you posting the question makes it sound like there's an imaginary trajectory," says Smith.

**SMITH SHIMMIES
AROUND THE STAGE,
ALL FLICKED ELBOWS
AND SKIPPING KNEES**

Now hold this pose for 10 minutes, Paul



"And when I go onstage at Reading I won't be thinking we have to live up to our billing, I'll be thinking, 'Look at all those people!' and just play the show. As soon as you're out there, the songs guide you - all those benchmarks and statistics go out the way."

'Quicken The Heart' goes some way towards explaining this metamorphosis. Recorded in a newfound state of calm in Los Angeles, it was, as Wooler says, "the first time we felt like this wasn't the last record we'd ever make... Instead of a blank cheque [label Warp have] given us a blank canvas." Instead of their single-heavy previous two albums it's a much more coherent and consistent work. The songs aired from it today, particularly fierce opener 'Wraithlike' and single 'Questing, Not Coasting', sit flush in their catalogue and, considering they have in 'Our Velocity' and 'Apply Some Pressure' two solid-gold Tunes That Make People Run From The Bar To The Dancefloor, that's impressive. They've always had a certain confidence in what they do, but now it's bubbling over.

And so, as they hop offstage and get on the bus to Oxegen as part of summer's never-ending feast of festivals, Max mo Park finally look like they're comfortable. **Ben Patashnik**

PARK LIFE

LADY GAGA

Main Stage, Saturday

"I know it's crowded, and you're hot, and you smell," says the mirror-clad alien onstage. "But you know what you gotta do? PUT YOUR HANDS UP AND DANCE, MOTHERFUCKER!". Few things are as confusing as a mid-afternoon Gaga set. She's dressed for a 2074 brothel, touching her bits, kicking out hits - you don't know whether to be aroused, terrified or amused - 'armufied', perhaps. If this is wrong, right can take a ride on our disco stick.

FIGHT LIKE APES

Red Bull Bedroom Jam Futures Stage, Saturday

"I'm onstage with the microphone," states FLA singer MayKay flatly, "so if you could just keep it zipped for the next 20 minutes, that'd be great." That's not how she greets all her fans, just one charmless chump in the crowd who's presumably yelled for her to get *something* out. The non-twats in the crowd were already struck dumb by the raw, hair-flipping aggression and energy of the Irish trio - their temper-tantrum blend of post-hardcore, pop and punk is all they need to whip out to give us a thrill.

KATY PERRY

Radio 1/NME Stage, Saturday

Mere hours after Gaga, Katy Perry tries to up the 'slightly controversial' ante. She gets out an inflatable cherry ChapStick, demeans ginger people and almost slips out of her tartan dress - she is in Scotland, of course - at least three times.



THE TING TINGS

Radio 1/NME Stage, Saturday

Shrieking: you either love it or you hate it, but connoisseurs know the place to find the good stuff is in Salford. The Ting Tings have plenty of aces to trump a sizeable Main Stage crowd with, all of which, live, end up exactly the same way: Katie White screaming blue murder, tiny fists clenched, as Jules De Martino leathers the drums and loop pedals. Now that they're no longer so omnipresent, we suddenly remember that we kind of love them.

THE SPECIALS

Main Stage, Saturday

There are few people in the world capable of smoking a fag with such insouciance as Terry Hall. The Specials' singer strides on to delirious whoops, suited and cool as a mildly sunburnt cucumber to kick off 'Do The Dog'. There's nothing reserved, though, about the Scottish crowd - 'Too Much Too Young' sets off mass outbreaks of high-stepping. Now there's 'Gangsters', and it's sunny, and everything is brilliant.

James' flying wire worked brilliantly



3

WALES' FINEST UNITE THE CLANS

MANIC STREET PREACHERS

KING TUT'S WAH WAH TENT, SATURDAY, 11/07/09

Just Divine Brilliance. That's what the James Dean Bradfield-worshipping banner on the front row says and, not at all coincidentally, it fits in rather well with the theme of this review. It's been, as Nicky Wire acknowledges, 10 years since the Manics played T, and they seem intent on making up for every year of that decade in one night.

From the start, it's no messing about, 'Motorcycle Emptiness' igniting crowd and band for a set that manifests all their eras. As the emotionally searing guitar line of 'Everything Must Go' live favourite 'No Surface All Feeling' ripples over the crowd, JDB screams 'jump!' They oblige.

A double-volley of later hits 'Autumnson' and 'Ocean Spray' doesn't drop the pace. It's amusing to watch different sections of the crowd jumping slightly harder for different Manic incarnations: those who go crazy for the jagged pop of 'Your Love Alone Is Not Enough' are slightly less animated when a different group lose their shit for 'Faster'. Rarely has a band united so many different kinds of people.

'The Everlasting' makes a rare showing in gorgeous acoustic form, while late classic 'Tsunami' sets the crowd moshing in tidal surges. Only 'Peeled Apples' makes the setlist from 'Journal For Plague Lovers', but its bruising intent is as breathtaking as the first time you heard it. The sense that you're watching a band renewed is confirmed when Bradfield picks up and dons a pair of shades thrown from the crowd before 'You Love Us', only to toss them aside seconds later. Clearly, he's still not going to wear anyone's deathmask uniform.

"You're my guitar hero!" bellows Nicky, clearly not an Xbox man, as James takes the solo. Tonight, though, Bradfield is less rock god, more like some strange breed of Welsh terrier, doggedly chasing riffs around the stage, scampering one-legged in circles for 'Everything Must Go'. Nicky, too, seems to have largely overcome his recent back troubles, although he still (reluctantly, you can tell) stays clear of the star-jumps. Most inspiring of all, though, as they close with the immortal, audacious 'Motown Junk' and genuine 20th century masterpiece 'A Design For Life', is the sight of a boy in the front row, arms clasped tight over the barrier, with Richey hair, white T-shirt and leopardskin scarf, and next to him, a girl with glittery eyes and an armful of bangles. They know every word. The gospel of divine brilliance, it seems, is always gathering new followers. **Emily Mackay**

Damon loves wristband face

PARK LIFE

GLASVEGAS

King Tut's Wah Wah Tent, Saturday

"Everyone knows this is the best fucking crowd in the world," says James Allan. The best, and right now, just about the biggest: it's safe to say Glasvegas are taking their huge jump up the bill a year after their T debut in their stride. The power of their songs goes way beyond national partisanship. 'It's My Own Cheating Heart...' is enough to make grown men weep, and as Allan lies down on the stage to bellow 'Daddy's Gone', he's not the only one who's floored.



THE GASLIGHT ANTHEM

Radio 1/700 Stage, Sunday

Emboldened by the Kingsteeanian Seal Of Approval and celebrating his fifth wedding anniversary onstage ("Thanks to you guys for making my wife's mum not think I'm a chump!"), Brian Fallon's in a particularly good mood. And why not? Everyone's singing along, the sun's out and it's all because of him.

THE STREETS

Slam Tent, Sunday

"Get down on the fucking floor NOW," says Mike Skinner, brandishing a Scottish Saltire flag. "Everyone who's standing up does not give a shit about THIS." This man knows how to work a crowd. Bouncing around like a wideboy boxer, leading dancing from on top of the decks, starting glowstick fights with the audience... it may be, as he asserts, The Streets' last ever T show, and if that's the sad truth, they certainly go out with a bang. 'Dry Your Eyes' never sounded so poignant, 'Blinded By The Lights' never so blinding.

PET SHOP BOYS

King Tut's Wah Wah Tent, Sunday

You don't come to see PSB for stripped-down acoustic integrity: their stage set is appropriately preposterous and fabulous in equal measure. Block-limbed dancers cavort around the ever-unruffled Neil Tennant as Chris Lowe guides the delirious crowd through a set that spans from the early bleakness of 'West End Girls' to the high camp of 'Go West' and glossy recent single 'Love Etc'. Pop in excelsis.

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THANKS TO CLARE AT DOMINOS

4

OVERCOMING ILLNESS TO END ON A HIGH

BLUR

MAIN STAGE, SUNDAY, 12/07/09

Bluuuuuugh! Graham Coxon is ill, T In The Park head honcho Geoff Ellis announces from the Main Stage in the early evening to a predictable cascade of boos. The guitarist is supposedly puking up his guts in a nearby hospital. It's bad news – and it gets worse. Snow Patrol have had their "co-headline" (ha!) set shifted back to bide time for the guitarist's recovery. If Coxon doesn't make it, Gary Lightbody and co might end up headlining this thing.

Clearly, this can't be allowed to happen. So at 9.15pm – half an hour before Blur were supposed to have started – the announcement comes. He's OK. On his way, Blur will headline T In The Park. An hour passes...

When Blur finally traipse onstage at 10.15 for their final scheduled live show, Graham raises his arm in a show of strength before strapping on his axe, looking significantly healthier than most of the bands who have played T over the weekend. Which isn't saying much considering The View and Pete have been in and out in the last 24 hours, but still.

It's never been up in the air whether Blur could pull off topping T. From Glastonbury to



Hyde Park, they haven't put a foot wrong. In a way, with the set shorn short due to Graham's gut-twistings, they've got it even easier – everything tonight can be called an 'enormous hit' T crowds might piss against walls more than most, but they also pogo more than most – at least a foot higher than any previously for 'Girls & Boys' and 'Country House'. "We nearly didn't make it," Damon says. "Graham literally walked out of a hospital to come here." Then the semi-bombshell. "This is our last gig."

Well, we knew there were no more dates on the MySpace. And with the band continually swatting away questions about new material, there's nothing left to rehearse for. The set is wonderfully epic: 'Tender' is a diaphragm-ripping heartache, encore finale 'The Universal' sending adrenalin pumping around Scottish veins. Albarn says a simple "Goodbye" and grins. When the sick buckets

are emptied he'll have to decide whether this is worth sticking with – as ever, it'll be down to his whims. But really, you'd have to be a bit ill in the head – let alone the stomach – not to want to run with this.

Jamie Fullerton

**"GRAHAM LITERALLY
WALKED OUT OF
HOSPITAL TO BE HERE"**

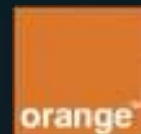
DAMON ALBARN

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Guy Garvey: rls
sunburn for his
art. The rebel



5

GUY GARVEY MAKES IT ONE BIG ANTHEMIC LOVE-IN

ELBOW

MAIN STAGE, SUNDAY, 12/07/09

I want to burn for you!" Guy Garvey may be talking about the dangers of wearing insufficient sunblock, but the bloke's heart is in the right place. Yet while he'll never be remembered as a self-immolating casualty of love, here he is on T In The Park's cavernous Main Stage singing his heart out. And a lot of people are singing his words back at him: is this the last time they'll play a festival in the daytime?

If the grand scale of the likes of 'Starlings' and 'Mirrorball' are anything to go by, this time next year they could be bumped up yet further on festival bills. Lifted gracefully by a string quartet – at a time when more bands than ever are stripping their performances back to save a few pennies – these songs soar into the sunny Kinross sky, buoyed on the waves of goodwill emanating from the vast crowd. Of course, 'One Day Like This' and 'The Bones Of You' have almost become modern anthems for the lovelorn, cheered-and-beered-up alike by virtue of their exposure on so many sports montages, but it matters not: Elbow have big songs, and when played on a big stage they take on a life of their own. And people truly love them.

Of course, the knock-on effect is that when 'Leaders Of The Free World' is unleashed, it falls slightly flat. The success and visibility of 'The Seldom Seen Kid' doesn't appear to have

translated into appreciation for their previous albums, and it shows. Of course, that's no fault of the band; having the temerity to win the Mercury Prize hasn't hurt them in any way, it simply suggests that in order to step up they'll have to come up with something of a similar size to '...Kid'.

But that hardly matters to Garvey – throughout their set he has the look of a man who just woke up to find he's a king. Granted, he always looks like he's just woken up, but the appreciation he shows for the masses is almost

ELBOW HAVE BIG SONGS, AND ON A BIG STAGE THEY TAKE ON A LIFE OF THEIR OWN

achingly genuine. He's so likeable that when he leans yearningly into the crowd (despite being a good 20ft away) you can tell he just wants to get closer to his public. And while he'll never be some godlike rock star, it's obvious he doesn't want to be. His sun cream advice is the tip of the iceberg: he knows that everyone who cares about his band is worth caring about, and if they can keep setting that feeling to glorious widescreen melodies, soon Elbow will be on top of the world. **Ben Patashnik**

6

BRINGING THE SAMBA

FRIENDLY FIRES

KING TUT'S WAH WAH TENT, SATURDAY, 11/07/09

Apparently, it's all about champagne speed this year, that's what everyone's on. It's speed, but pink." So says Ed Macfarlane about the intoxicant of choice for the fashionable hipsters he comes across during his band's travels.

He's obviously been avoiding the pink powder himself today though, as his dancing during Friendly Fires' afternoon set is way too close to perfection for a speedfreak. Despite it pretty much being his one and only stage trick, it's still the most celebratory and beguiling thing visually about Friendly Fires. Fuck, the boy even has rhythm when he's swigging his Evian water.

Despite the band telling *NME* they're keen to not go too OTT with the samba they've become synonymous with, onstage it's difficult not to fall for the magic of drummer Jack Savidge's carnival beats. It seems like every song has undergone a South American transplant – and it really works in their favour.

'Jump In The Pool' becomes even more anthemic than on record, the power shifting from Macfarlane's wide-boy b-boy vocals to Savidge's ingloriously deft work on the skins.

'In The Hospital' and 'On Board' are equally 'bigger' too, the latter quite literally when Foals' Jack Bevan bounds onstage to add some extra percussion. As if they needed it.

But it's new single 'Kiss Of Life' that's the best example of the band's newfound glories. Staggered over a number of different sections – each separated by stopgaps of silence – it's the perfect culmination of where Ed and his mates' headspace is currently at (ie, somewhere between downtown Rio and Soul Jazz Records HQ). You get the impression they're obsessed with the idea of the entire world waiting for the Paul Epworth produced track's release too, which is handy because it's also the poppiest thing they've written to date.

So where do Friendly Fires go from here? Well, for starters they're off to samba central, Brazil, keen to glean even more info about the pulsating grooves which have so bewitched them.

"We also really wanna just get out there and show them our version of their rhythms mixed with pop stuff," Macfarlane beams. Savidge cuts him off. "Yeah, but they'll probably go, 'What the fuck is this crap?'" Crap? Not a chance, chap. **Matt Wilkinson**

Swanky samba
sex-pots slay
Scotland shocker



Invisible microphones were all the rage at T



7

BOSTON'S BUZZ-GATHERERS FULFIL POTENTIAL

PASSION PIT

RED BULL BEDROOM JAM FUTURES STAGE, SUNDAY, 12/07/09

It starts off as a series of ever-so-faint vibrations in the air that we first notice as we're crossing the field. Gradually, it morphs into a low-level droning that grows in volume as we trudge towards the tent. From a few hundred yards away, you'd swear it was a hum. But take one step into the tent, and it instantly becomes clear that what we're dealing with here is buzz. Lots of buzz. The kind of buzz for which you should really pack a vial of anthrax with 'BREAK GLASS IN THE EVENT OF BUZZ' written on the side of it.

But at least Boston quintet Passion Pit have a healthy disdain for it all: not only did frontman Michael Angelakos recently deride bloggers as 'lame', but his band's excessive use of children's choirs is the kind of thing that makes a mockery of any notion of 'cool' that anyone might have.

Their hazy electro-pop may be cerebral, but it's also great fun, and never takes itself too seriously. Occasionally, it's also anthemic; the stage they're on today is too small for the soul-stirring 'Let Your Love Grow Tall' to reach its true potency, but this time next year, it'll be a

different matter. 'The Reeling', meanwhile, with its euphoric synth riffs, loose-limbed groove and infectious falsetto-sung chorus, whips things into a frenzy and sees Angelakos

**THEIR HAZY
ELECTRO-POP MAY BE
CEREBRAL, BUT IT'S
ALSO GREAT FUN**

venturing out from behind his synth and uncharacteristically going Mick Jagger on us.

There's not much going on visually – unless you count four chic geeks bobbing up and down in synchronicity at their keyboards, that is – and they don't strike up much of a rapport, with "Hello", "Goodbye" and "Thank you" being about the limit of their chat. But there's real potential here nonetheless. At the end of 'The Reeling', we turn round and notice that the crowd has grown exponentially since the start of the set. They came here for the buzz. Thankfully enough for Passion Pit, they stayed for the tunes. *Barry Nicolson*

8

THE RETURN OF ELEGIAC RAVE

DELPHIC

RED BULL BEDROOM JAM FUTURES STAGE, SATURDAY, 11/07/09

One of the best things to experience at a festival is seeing a young band playing an early slot on a small stage and *knowing*, without a doubt, that there's going to be a lot less standing room when you see them next summer.

Manchester quartet Delphic won a lot of fans at the start of the year with their epictronic debut single 'Counterpoint', and there's a clutch more on show here today. Combining two great Scottish loves in euphoric emotion and bug-eyed dance music, how could they fail? Opening with 'Clarion Call' – very much, as its lyrics attest, a "call to arms, a call to everything you wanted" – their sound has all the drama of Bloc Party but is alive with the electric energy of Friendly Fires or, indeed, their most frequent comparison, New Order. The throbbing, thrumming sound pushes out from the stage into the afternoon sun, audibly searching for a bigger space. Not so much the Main Stage, though, as the cosmos.

Visually, you wouldn't expect four serious and intense young men in muted shades of grey and brown to command a stage, but James Cook is a magnetically Intent figure, stalking the stage as if he's perhaps dropped the transcendent release sought by the rippling synths that surround him on the floor somewhere.

Their songs, a beautifully organic and human hybrid of dance and indie, segue seamlessly into one another. 'Doubt', driven by a strange, distorted and stuttering vocal sample, contrasts with Cook's serotonin-dripping yowl. 'This Momentary', circling round a cry of "let's do something real", gradually morphs into a techno torrent, Cook abandoning vocals to join in on synth duty as his handmates batter drumpads. 'Halcyon' is appropriately Orbital-esque, with wonderfully fluid guitar, and the rave-mystic assertion that "it's all a state of mind".

They close with 'Counterpoint', its disturbing lyrical dreamscape ("Late at night I run through streets and empty corridors") redeemed by silvery harmonies and a flickering, glittering synth line, as Cook howls "tell me nothing's wrong today". Truly, an oracular spectacular, and we foresee great things. *Emily Mackay*

Delphic, aka The Band Most Likely To Go Massive By Next Year



Young Fathers:
they're dad fer it

10

GENRE-BENDERS DISTILLING ROCK HISTORY

PHANTOM BAND

T BREAK STAGE, FRIDAY, 10/07/09

It speaks volumes that tonight – in T's smallest tent, during one of the best sets of the weekend – security take a whopping two minutes or so to even notice the stage invader during The Phantom Band's penultimate song.

So far, he's managed to awkwardly clamber over the poorly guarded barrier, roll around the floor a bit and pilfer someone's straw hat from the stage. He tops it all off by doing a bum waggle-for-bum waggle version of Jarvis Cocker's BRIT Awards Jacko invasion, before finally being asked by security's very own Gareth Keenan lookalike if he'd very much mind hopping back into the audience because, y'know, there's a gig going on and that. And what a gig it is. The Phantom Band's five-song, half-hour set to a somewhat diminished audience is near perfect – they brim throughout with the kind of confidence that only a group who know their time is finally coming can muster.

Fronted by a triple-headed serpent covering the history of rock's most sullenly egotistical – from left to right we get a young Keith Richards (guitarist Duncan Marquiss), Will Oldham (singer Rick Anthony) and Man! (bassist Gerry Hart) – the six-piece set about carving up a handful of tracks from their excellent debut 'Checkmate Savage', turning each into a motorik hell-racket. It's like they're in love with the idea of chopping Neu! and early Cure into the same potent wrap.

Live centrepiece 'Burial Sounds' even sees them borrow from Robert Smith and co's fondness for putting an entirely out-of-place solo somewhere it just shouldn't go and making it work. In this case it's an obscenely loud, acid-flecked keyboard power-boost, and it literally shakes the tent's core.

Of the three stooges, each command the stage equally, meaning the only niggle we've got is that we can't watch them all at the same time. They're funny too. "This next song has been on the radio..." Anthony says before 'The Howling', "...at least twice."

Much will be made of their pandemic-like influences (which group elements of Nick Cave and The Beta Band as well as Scots stalwarts The Delgados), but all you really need to know is this: The Phantom Band are big-time fun, insulating what could be construed – negatively, perhaps – as hip dad-core (hello The Coral/Aliens/Bees) with a pogoing, late-'80s punk urgency that those bands can only dream about. **Matt Wilkinson**

The Phantom Band play their phantom drums



9

SCOTLAND'S NEW HIP-HOP HEROES

YOUNG FATHERS

BBC INTRODUCING STAGE, SATURDAY, 11/07/09

New bands: a hint. Don't, when asked why people should spend their valuable TITP time watching you, reply with something as anodyne as "because we make music that we find fun, so hopefully other people will too". Especially if, in the case of Edinburgh hip hoppers Young Fathers you're interesting and exciting enough to merit attention even though you aren't savvy enough yet to be able to converse solely in attention-dominating soundbites.

Taking to the BBC Introducing Stage in the dazzling evening sun, Kayus, Ally and G immediately burst into 'Bring It Home' and set about getting the admittedly small crowd – the vast majority of whom are diminutive, female and really very excited – moving. Theirs is a curiously modern hybrid of big-bass hip-hop, electro-heavy rap and good old fashioned showmanship. The trio break out into a series of coordinated dance moves at various points throughout, running the gamut of styles from

pissed B-boy to dyspraxic bodypopper, but somehow manage to keep it looking charmingly unrehearsed rather than painfully contrived. Did they consider changing their approach given that they're playing to a fieldful of revelers rather than their usual tight hip-hop crowd?

"No, there's no compromise," laughs Kayus.

"If they like it they like it, if they don't they don't!" And those who are within earshot seem hell-bent on, as they say, having it. It's their enthusiasm and refusal to take themselves too seriously that wins people over, and while they might seem like just three happy-go-lucky guys with an ear for a bassline, there is – cliché of clichés – another layer to Young Fathers.

"We've never, ever considered ourselves to just be a party band," says Ally. "It sounds contrived if you're always like, 'We're having fun!', but even if we're doing a song that's quite dark then we'll still be having fun." And considering 'Bring It Home' features a hands-in-the-air singalong to "I'll make you jump from the top of a building", perhaps he's got a point. Whether they can find the middle-ground between let's-get-crunked fun times, charmingly cheesy choreography and whatever griminess acts as their inspiration remains to be seen. But they're on the right track. **Ben Patashnik**

IT'S THEIR REFUSAL TO TAKE THEMSELVES SERIOUSLY THAT WINS PEOPLE OVER

WHAT'S HAPPENED. WHAT'S HAPPENING

Edited by Paul Sirois

Can you get
NME TV on that
thing, Doctor?



Exclusive!

Mighty Boosh become superstar DJs

Noel Fielding tells NME about their strange new music project – and where their first gig is

The Mighty Boosh will launch their latest and weirdest musical project at a charity gig next month, the comics have exclusively told NME. Following gigs by The Mighty Boosh: The Band at several festivals last summer, Noel Fielding is dipping his toes into musical waters again, this time as a DJ under the guise of *The Doctor And The Pencil*.

The duo, also featuring Bollo actor Dave Brown, will make their live debut as part of cancer charity Macmillan's Brick Lane Takeover on August 13.

NME can reveal that the pair will be headlining the Vibe Bar as part of the charity festival, which will take over seven venues in the Hoxton area of London on the day.

"The Doctor came to London from Eastern Europe in 1876, he rode into town on a mule

dragging a half-man half-pencil behind him on a pencil case the size of a hospital stretcher," Fielding maritally declared. "The Pencil woke up with no recollection of the great journey [and], frightened, incensed and slightly jet-lagged, he ran straight to London Zoo and skewered a pack of rare monkeys, making the world's largest marmoset kebab.

"That night The Doctor and The Pencil were arrested on top of Primrose Hill cooking up their giant primate shish. They have been in a hospital for the criminally insane ever since, although The Doctor occasionally discharges himself and his violent pointy friend in order to indulge in music therapy or DJ gigs."

The Doctor And The Pencil are being coy about what their live act will contain but, as these exclusive pictures show, the pair won't

simply be hanging around behind the decks.

"Two inmates of ours, Inmate Number 231,

The Doctor, and Inmate Number 232, The Pencil, are very much looking forward to their evening's release to the Brick Lane Takeover," added Fielding. "Please return them back to the Sunnyvale Institution For The Criminally Insane once they are done."

The event itself will also see performances from the likes of *The Chapman Family*, *Jersey Budd*, *Dan Le Sac Vs Scroobius Pip* and more. Entry is £20, see www.bricklanetakeover.com for details.

**"THEY WERE
ARRESTED COOKING
A PRIMATE KEBAB"**

NOEL FIELDING



They were going to be renamed TV On A Bridge but decided against it

Side-project

TV On The Radio will be back after the break

...But in the meantime guitarist Kyp Malone launches new band

TV On The Radio's Kyp Malone has told *NME* that the band are preparing to go on a lengthy hiatus after they finish touring this August. However, rather than take a holiday, the vocalist/guitarist will be throwing his weight behind his new side-project, *Rain Machine*.

"I think everyone is ready for a break when we finish this tour," Malone explained of TV On The Radio's immediate future. "But saying that, I can't be comfortable not working!"

With the release of *Rain Machine*'s self-titled debut album pencilled in for September 21, the guitarist says he is looking forward to seeing what TVOTR fans make of the record's bizarre influences – particularly on the track 'Give Blood', which he claims fuses Beyoncé-style pop with in-depth biblical analysis and MOR '70s rock.

"I was hearing all this classic rock and blues-based rock from the '60s and early '70s that was playing in a café, and I was breaking it down in my head as to what worked about it for me and what was corny," Malone said of the track. "But I was listening to Beyoncé's [2008 single] 'Single Ladies' a lot on that same day. I think they kind of melded in my mind

musically – I was trying to combine those two things in that song.

"Also, I was reading this book called *Abraham's Curse*, about the roots of violence in Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and thinking about that too. It all finds its way into that one song... though we'll see if any of that's translatable at all!"

With work on the album already complete, Malone will be turning his attention to finding a new band to play it live. "When I get done this summer with TV On The Radio, it's my intention to put a band together and do some touring," he said, adding that his new group will be traditionally folk-rock – because he's tired of "amplifiers turned up too loud" on tour.

"I want to be in a situation where the expectation isn't that there's going to be a set of 'burning' rock songs and a couple of ballads. I'd rather it would be in the opposite direction," he explained. He added that the break and the new project do not signal the end of TVOTR and his bandmates are 100 per cent behind his decision to release 'Rain Machine'.

"Everyone's been very supportive," he declared. "There's no conflict as far as scheduling or anything either."



NANOS

MACCA NOT MAD AT JACKO

Paul McCartney dismissed reports that he's annoyed Michael Jackson didn't leave him the rights to his Beatles songs in his will. Writing on Paulmccartney.com, he said the rumours are "completely untrue."

BECK GRILLS WAITS

A new section of Beck's website features the star interviewing other musicians, artists and public figures. First up for the *Irrelevant Topics* area of Beck.com is Tom Waits. The two chat about hot dogs, Los Angeles and rail disasters.

WOLF AT THE EX-PM'S DOOR

In an interview with *NME* Radio, Patrick Wolf let slip that he used to live above former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in London. "I could hear her through my drainpipe!" he told *DJ* Iain Baker.

NEW FOO FOR BARACK

Foo Fighters aired new track 'Wheels' during a special *8* in front of US President Barack Obama on July 4. They were playing a benefit gig on the White House's South Lawn for the families of US military personnel.

JACK THE LOUD LAD

Jack White says he doesn't realise how loud he's playing onstage anymore. "The sound guy comes over and he'll hold the decibel meter and it's 127 decibels," he told *Rolling Stone*. He said his guitar sounds "wimpy" if it's not loud.



Belated return

CORNERSHOP'S BRIMFUL OF GAGA

'Poker Face' singer inspired band's comeback

Cornershop's TJinder Singh has said that he was so sick of the UK music scene he refused to release an album for seven years until the likes of Lady Gaga made the "rock scene diverse enough" for the duo's return.

The pair – guitarist Ben Ayres completes the line-up – have not released an album since 2002, but finally feel confident enough to return with 'Judy Sucks A Lemon For Breakfast', which is out on July 27.

"It just seemed to be white guitar music or black R&B [in the recent past]," Singh declared. "That wasn't a good environment for us – we like to do a hell of a lot of different things, even in one song. Now the atmosphere's changed – for example the whole girl-fronted stuff has a lot of variation, from Lady Gaga to Micachu."

Singh said he had been particularly depressed by the indie scene ("We're not a group who'll think about dancing with someone called Michael," he moaned) and claimed that Cornershop still stood out from the pack.

"A lot of British guitar bands, when I look at them, aren't fronted by a 'wog'," he said provocatively of people's perceptions of his band. "It's not an aesthetic thing – it's in the make up. I had to learn about The Beatles and that kind of music, most groups are born with that knowledge."

Singh added that despite delaying the release of 'Judy Sucks A Lemon For Breakfast', the duo weren't tempted to call on famous friends like Norman Cook – whose remix of 'Brimful Of Asha' propelled it to Number One in 1997.

"We've not let anyone else on it," he explained. "We've not had Noel Gallagher [who played guitar on their 2002 song 'Spectral Mornings'], we've not had [Kasabian and Cornershop producer] Dan The Automator on it. It was a concerted effort not to – so people can't say that's why it's so damn good!"

Scrap!

Crystal Castles fight back - literally

Duo break the silence on why they hit a bouncer at infamous Sonar set

Crystal Castles have spoken for the first time about their disastrous gig in Barcelona, which ended with the band attacking festival security. Their June 21 midnight set at Sonar was beset by sound problems, which resulted in the crowd booing them and singer Alice Glass punching a bouncer in the face.

"We don't think the problems were as bad as they were made out," explains Ethan Kath. "It says in your review (*NME*, July 4) that we soldiered on, but the truth is that we didn't know there were any sound problems. In our monitors [speakers], everything was fine."

Indeed, fans were offered the bizarre sight of Alice Glass continuing to scream and writhe on the floor while no sound was coming from the main speakers. Once the volume had been restored, the troubled set concluded with Alice tipping over the band's drumkit.

"After we were done, to signify that the set was over and that we'd played our last song, she tipped over the drums. She didn't smash them. She didn't do anything crazy. It was our drumkit, anyway - we can do what we want with it," he added.

"So the security guard runs onstage, grabs her, picks her up and moves her away from the drums and puts her down. So she punched him in the face. Then I grabbed him to make sure he didn't retaliate, then they grabbed hold of me to make sure I didn't assault him..."

The troubles didn't end there. "Now they're talking about not paying us for the gig because apparently we assaulted their crew. Do you know how much it costs to bring everyone over to do a show like that?" moaned Kath.

For the pair, who've suffered more than their fair share of gig malfunctions in the past (including a Glastonbury 2008 show cut by security after Alice scaled a lighting rig), the Sonar gremlins were deeply deflating. "This band is our lives," he declared. "We've put everything into it, and if something goes wrong, how can you expect us not to be disappointed?"

"THEY MIGHT NOT PAY US BECAUSE WE APPARENTLY HIT THE CREW"

ETHAN KATH

Alice Glass at Sonar, June 21, 2009



NANOS

PANIC CUT
IN HALF

Guitarist Ryan Ross and bassist Jon Walker have left Panic At The Disco. A message on the band's website said the duo left because the members had "creatively evolved in different directions".

NINE INCH
NO MORE

Nine Inch Nails' Trent Reznor has announced that the band will play their final ever shows later this summer in New York, LA and Chicago and the Toronto Virgin Festival before quitting the live scene for good.

KASABIAN'S
FAN DEDICATION

Kasabian have paid tribute to a fan who died while travelling to one of their gigs. Jennifer John was killed in a car accident on her way to the Eden Project on July 4. "She'll be massively missed by the band and many others," Tom Meighan wrote on Kasabian.co.uk.

SQUIRE'S ROSES
TICKET RUSH

John Squire has revealed that even family members were asking for tickets when rumours of The Stone Roses reforming reached fever pitch. "The wife was getting calls from my cousin's kids," he told BBC News.

BEATLES AND
STONES MOSUL
KLEIN DIES

Allen Klein, once manager of The Beatles and The Rolling Stones, has died aged 77. Klein, who was blamed by some fans for the Fab Four's split, had been suffering from Alzheimer's disease.

Gwilym: going
for Gold on the
NME Radar Tour



NME News!

"Everyone's waiting to see who'll kill it on the night"

Golden Silvers and co gear up for rock'n'roll madness on NME's annual new talent tour

NME Radar Tour headliners Golden Silvers have this year's outing will summon the spirit of early rock'n'roll pioneers Chuck Berry, Buddy Holly and Jerry Lee Lewis. The band will top the bill, which also includes Marina & The Diamonds, Local Natives and Yes Giantess on the 15-date tour (see below for dates), and Golden Silvers' singer Gwilym Gold claims the shows will invoke the legendary gigs of the '50s, when the rock'n'roll legends fought it out onstage together.

"It's got that element of old-school rock'n'roll about it... like Chuck Berry and Jerry Lee Lewis when they used to tour together," declared Gold, "and everyone's waiting to find out who's going to kill it on the night!"

Despite the rivalry, the Londoners say they are looking forward to meeting their tourmates on the first night at the O2 Academy in Oxford on September 26. "I hope it's gonna be quite social," Gold said, adding that he's up for a few collaborations. "I've heard a bit of Local Natives and they're almost a harmony band, aren't they? We do a lot of harmonies too, so maybe we should harmonise together?"

The singer added that he's already started planning for the shows, predicting "a glorious extravaganza" and stating that the penultimate gig of the tour – at London's KOKO on October 23 – will be particularly special for the band.

"It's probably the biggest show we've ever played in London," he explained. "We've got plans for that one, but I'm not giving anything away yet!"

THE DATES

O2 Academy Oxford Sept 26
Sheffield University Foundry Sept 27
Manchester Academy 3 Sept 28
York The Duchess Sept 30
Glasgow Oran Mor Oct 1
Newcastle Northumbria University Oct 3
Stoke Sugarmill Oct 4
Liverpool University Stanley Theatre Oct 5
Portsmouth Wedgewood Rooms Oct 7
Bristol Thekla Oct 8
Coventry Warwick University Oct 9
Wolverhampton Civic Hall Bar Oct 10
Norwich Waterfront Oct 12
London KOKO Oct 13
Brighton Concorde 2 Oct 14
Get your tickets at NME.COM now

ON THE NME STEREO

Unreleased tracks
and old classics we're
spinning

DOT ALLISON FEATURING PETER DOHERTY I WANNA BREAK YOUR HEART

(ARTHOUSED)

Dot & Peter's paean to Lee & Nancy finally sees the light of day.

MGMT VOICES CARRY (YOUTUBE)

Another new MGMT song... except, it's not, because this is a cover of 'Til Tuesday's 1985 classic. Chairlift's Caroline Polachek features on vocals.

HOPE SANDOVAL & THE WAR INVENTIONS THROUGH THE DEVIL SO

Heart-busting moments of My Bloody Valentine-enhanced raw beauty on ex-Mazzy Star singer's new album.

DISAPPEARERS DRAMAMINE (UNSIGNED)

Majestic stuff from the east London wonderkid (who was formerly called F Luneaire).

METRIC GIMME SYMPATHY

The Canadians make a shock with their most brain-invasive.

BRENDAN BENSON MY OLD, FAMILIAR FRIEND

(ECHO/COOPERATIVE MUSIC)

Our old, familiar friend's back with a batch of new, yet weirdly familiar tunes.

YOUNG REBEL SET WON'T GET UP AGAIN (UNSIGNED)

The Boss if he had come from Teesside rather than New Jersey.

MICHAEL JACKSON BILLIE JEAN (LIVE AT MOTOWN 25)

(YOUTUBE)

Farewell, then, to the King Of Pop...

NME RADIO

NEW ON THE
PLAYLIST...

- Was A King 'Norman Blek'
- Biffy Clyro 'That Golden Rule'
- Jullian Plenti 'Only If You Run'

Tune in on the NME Radio 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 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NME Gallery

OASIS

Wembley Stadium 09/07/09

Oasis reached the climax of their UK summer tour last week, as they returned to Wembley. The Manchester band were the last British band to headline the London stadium before it was rebuilt, and the Gallaghers proved they were still 'familiar to millions' as they rocked up to their three gigs.

Swaggering into the home of English football with Kasabian, The Enemy, Reverend And The Makers and thousands of fans in tow for the opening night last Thursday (July 9), Oasis were thankful to the crowd for the loud backing vocals. With the sound cutting out briefly, the fans had to finish 'Wonderwall' without the band, but this was no repeat of Heaton Park's PA problems as the rest of the show went off without a hitch. "Last time this happened it cost us half-a-million quid," Noel joked with the crowd after the blip. "So just to be clear, none of you are getting your fucking money back!"

Oasis are now set to headline the V Festival in August.

PHOTOS: ANDY WHITTON



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Jamie T's up a year of releases

Wimbledon troubadour plans to follow up album 'Kings & Queens' with a series of EPs

Jamie T has told *NME* he's hit such a rich songwriting vein that he intends to follow up his second album with a string of stand-alone EPs.

The Wimbledon troubadour gave us a preview of new LP 'Kings & Queens', including the tracklist and artwork (see right), and explained he wants to keep new material flowing.

"When I finished the album there were still songs coming along, so that's what I've got the EPs for," he explained. "I'm hoping to do three or four of them. I want to be releasing all year."

The singer-songwriter, who returned with his 'Sticks N' Stones' EP last month and recorded some of the album in his garden shed, said he isn't bothered about chart eligibility (which ignores singles with more than three tracks) and is keen to get his songs out.

"EPs are wonderful," he declared. "They're

short, sweet and you can set your own scene. I'm not sure when I'm going to release them all, but I've got so many songs I'm excited about that wouldn't fit on the album."

NME had an early listen to the album, which is set for release in the autumn. It boasts more variety than its predecessor, 'Kings & Queens' reveals Jamie's reflective side, with tender acoustic tracks like 'Emily's Heart' and 'Jilly Armeen'. 'Earth, Wind And Fire', 'Hocus Pocus' and 'Castro Dies' meanwhile thrive on bustling beats and hook-heavy choruses, while '368' and 'British Intelligence' are classic rabble-rousers.

"We did all the mixing, then had that thing, which is quite integral, where you leave it for a week, then go to a mate, 'Do you want to hear my album?'" he explained. "You listen to it, go, 'Fucking hell! Hope you don't see any problems, I'm pretty happy with it as it goes!'"

KINGS & QUEENS

368

HOCUS POCUS
STICKS N' STONES
THE MAN'S MACHINE
EMILY'S HEART
CHAKA DEMUS
SPIDER'S WEB
CASTRO DIES
EARTH, WIND AND FIRE
BRITISH INTELLIGENCE
JILLY ARMEEN



The public can't be trusted

What would you like us to play?" said Kim Deal, eyeing me inquisitively, pen hovering over a scrap of paper.

Instantly, the art gallery and all the Becks chugging liggers that had gathered there for an invite-only gig to launch the Pixies' 'Minotaur' box set vanished into a reverse parallel dimension. That's Kim Deal. Asking me what I want the Pixies to play! Inevitably I couldn't think of a single Pixies song to suggest, eventually stammering, "um... 'Head On'?" To which Kim huffed, "I don't want to play that, it's not even our song!" and swung away to field a dozen requests from other guests for 'Debaser'.

The resulting gig was obviously fantastic... but frustratingly predictable. 'Monkey Gone To Heaven', 'Gigantic', 'Debaser', 'Where Is My Mind?' all Pixies set staples. To an obsessive anorak sado like me it felt like a waste of an opportunity to block-vote obscure fan favourites. But would that have ruined it for the Pixies part timers? And did the Pixies secretly just want to play Ver Hits all along?

Maximo Park got their fans to choose their opening set for Glastonbury. Two days later Bruce Springsteen grabbed signs from the front row requesting songs and played his pick of them. In this ever more interactive world where the public expect to decide which bozo gets this week's televised lynching or who gets a career as a West End diva, musicians are increasingly keen to allow their fans some input in compiling their set-list. But why? It doesn't happen in any other arm of the arts. You wouldn't go and see Patrick Stewart play King Lear and shout for your favourite Jean-



He might be called The Boss but at Glastonbury, Bruce Springsteen put the crowd in charge. The softy

I ENJOY BEING THE BAND'S BITCH AT GIGS, GRATEFUL FOR THE ODD TUNE I LIKE

Luc Picard speeches. There's no Internet vote on whether Tracey Emin's next work should be (click A) a pair of her piss-stained old pants or (click B) one of her pickled ovaries in a jar. But with fans already allowed to pick and choose which songs should be on the albums they buy, music has already reduced the artistic value of an album to simple supply and demand. So, duh, it makes

sense to extend that choice to gigs too. Make everyone feel involved, please all the people all the time, right?

Wrong. You only need to cringe your way through the average Top 10 run-down to realise that the general public cannot be trusted to decide en masse what makes good entertainment. In my experience, fan-chosen gigs fall into two categories: the big bands end up playing all the obvious hits and the cult bands end up playing two hours of B-sides and early stuff. Both gigs are as disappointing as the other - we've

already heard the big band's hits too many times and the cult bands always end up playing the wrong B-sides. Occasionally it can work. Peter Gabriel (whom Vampire Weekend fans will know is officially brilliant now) pulled off a superb rarities set at the Eden Project by imposing a no-songs-he-played-on-his-previous-tour rule to the voting, and if it wasn't for The Boss' request section he'd not have played a song I knew for 90 minutes straight. But in general I enjoy being the band's bitch at gigs, subservient and grateful for being tossed the odd tune that I like between the new stuff.

As soon as the balance of power shifts and we start leaving gigs in a huff, demanding refunds because they didn't play the tune we'd spent three hours repeatedly voting for online beforehand, music becomes nothing but an EU election with middle eights. Democracy in rock? I was quite happy with the dictatorship, thanks.

CAMPAIGN SUPERNOVA

Having written in favour of rock stars opening up on political issues in the interest of encouraging discussion among the supposedly 'apathetic generation', I was saddened to recently see the media happily battenning down the hatches of closed-mindedness in rock. Jarvis was berated for going on *Question Time*, beating the poor lad back into his pop kennel with patronising cries of 'musicians should stick to what they know!'.

Then that venerable thinker and philosopher Noel Gallagher weighs in to have a go at Coldplay and U2 for raising issues at gigs, as part of his on-going Keep Rock Thick campaign. "I have been to loads of concerts where bands don't

play, they just talk about politics," he said. Really Noel? Are you sure you're not mistaking 'loads of concerts' with 'St John's Wood WI Debating Society'? "There is always a message about poor people or people dying from hunger," he went on. "Can't we just have a nice evening, do we always have to feel guilty?" A nice evening listening to, say, 'Give Peace A Chance', 'God Save The Queen', 'What's Going On', 'Killing In The Name', 'What A Waster' or 'Elizabeth My Dear'? At the time of writing Oasis were due to be supported at Wembley by a 'nice evening' of acts including The Enemy, Reverend And The Makers and Kasabian. Noel might be advised to open his ears.



WHAT I'VE BEEN LISTENING TO...

- The Northwestern - 'All The Ones'
- Totally Enormous Extinct Dinosaurs - 'Moon Hits The Mirrorball'
- Django Django - 'Storm'



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At karaoke I'd sing...

'PARTYMAN'
PRINCE



"Well, you wouldn't get me doing karaoke for a start. It's not my idiom, you know? You don't go on a night out with a builder and ask him to make you some shelves. But if I had to, it would be this from the *Batman* soundtrack. Prince has done lots of spooky crap over the years, but the man can definitely write a pop song when required. Maybe it's the heels."

I've played to death...

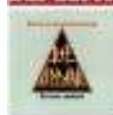
'INCHES'
LES SAVY FAV



"This album by Les Savy Fav I have played to absolute death. I bought it halfway through an American tour, then just lay in the back of the tourvan and listened to it constantly. It's recorded in reverse-chronological order, so the most recent stuff is at the front. 'Inches' enchants me far more than any of their previous works."

My guilty pleasure...

'POUR SOME SUGAR ON ME'
DEF LEPPARD



"How is the addition of sugar going to help an act of oral sex? Surely good hygiene is more essential than coating them in glucose. I'm with Alan Partridge on this one. Pouring chocolate on someone is demented. Not that I really agree with the concept of a guilty pleasure; if you like Peter Gabriel you're not exactly cheating on him by listening to Wire."

All bands should hear...

WIRE



"Bands starting out shouldn't listen to any particular record. There's probably too much 'required reading' in popular music these days. Keep it simple, trust your instincts, play from the heart. Let's hear it. Let's hear you, warts and all. However, on a personal level, I'd say Wire do pretty much everything you'd want to do in a band, particularly the first three albums."

I wish I'd made...

'THE LIVING END'
HUSKER DU



"To me these live recordings are much better than their studio albums, which are really destroyed by the '80s production. The drums sound as if they're recorded in your bathroom, and not in a sexy way. I love the rawness of it; the songs come through in a much stronger way than any of the allegedly more high-fidelity studio versions."

Everyone should hear...

'SNAKE MAGNET'
KONG



"It was recorded a couple of years ago but it's not released yet. Anyone who likes loud, dirty music that their parents will hate, this is the one. The lazy comparisons would be to Fugazi and Shellac. Lots of space and, yeah, it's all kind of undercut with a very sinister, genuinely frightening centre. Jon-Lee, the singer, did the artwork for our first record, 'Curses'."



"I know it's sunny but I'm still not taking my jacket off"

A record by heroes...

'SHEER HEART ATTACK'
QUEEN



"I have bands I like. Describing them as heroes makes me feel very fruity. I think of someone who has dolls of them all at home. I suppose the first band I really liked was Queen. I maintain that 'Sheer Heart Attack' is one of the greatest rock records of all time. It just exposes the band's personality really well. And I love Wire, especially 'Chairs Missing'. Although it inspired a lot of bad bands later, it's obscenely good - songs such as 'I Am The Fly', and 'French Film Blurred'... It's the benchmark for lots of alternative and not-alternative music."

My first record...

'CHINA IN YOUR HAND'
T'PAU



"It was either 'China In Your Hand' by T'Pau or 'Stutter Rap' by Morris Minor And The Majors. I took them both into school to lend to someone in PE and sat on my bag and broke them. I was probably attracted to Carol Decker's shiny red hair, which seemed to scream at me like a beacon of hope. I was about 11 at the time and 'Stutter Rap' was fantastic to an 11-year-old's sense of fun. It seemed to tick all the boxes of rap at the highest level, particularly the bits where you thought they were going to swear but they didn't. That was the real genius."

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PETER ROBINSON VS

KRISTEN SCHAA

Mel from *Flight Of The Conchords* has a DVD to sell you – unless you're deaf and blind

Hello, Kristen. Let's look to the future. What are you doing after this chat?
"I'm going to call a couple more people, then write the pilot I'm shooting in London."

Less than a minute into the interview and we're already onto exciting news about future career plans.

"Well, it's for Channel 4 and it's called *Penelope Princess Of Pets*, which is a web series I invented. We're shooting the full pilot in London. We've written the treatment, now we're writing the jokes. I did some research into your UK Government system, so now I know all about your 'Earls' and your 'MPs'."

What's the difference between an Earl and an MP?

"OH GAAAAAD. Well, the MP is more into passing legislation and the Earls just seem to hang out a little bit more."

If you're an Earl you really are leading the good life.

"You can, if the mood takes you, probably eat a swan or something."

However: never trust an Earl!

"No!"

Was all this researched on Wikipedia?

"No, there were other bits of the internet as well. (Laughs) I'm not going to READ A BOOK! Just so you know, after my first research I then interviewed some people in the UK while I was there and it's all TRUE!"



"EARLS CAN, IF THE MOOD TAKES THEM, PROBABLY EAT A SWAN"

Who represented the UK in these interviews?

"Gordon Brown. Gordon Brown."

But it wasn't actually Gordon Brown.

"No, Peter."

I appreciate that when it's all written down that will look hilarious, but I just need to have it clear that it was something you said because you thought it would be funny, and not something you want *NME* readers to believe was true.
"OK. I didn't speak to Gordon Brown."

Anyway, we're talking today because you're plugging the *Flight Of The Conchords* Season 2 DVD. Do you actually

Do you find that you have DVDs you have bought and never watched?

"Er... no."

I do. I think that one day when I am in my seventies or eighties I will have time to sit down and revisit every DVD I've ever bought. Which, quite apart from the fact that DVD will be a dead format by then, is just stupid because by that point I will, of course, be enjoying being 70 or 80.
"Well, I'm sure you'll have time to watch them if you play your cards right."

At what age would I be able to watch *Flight Of The Conchords* and enjoy it in a different way?

"Maybe 79."

That's quite a long wait.

"But 79-year-olds view things differently. They're sort of on their way out, they don't take anything lightly..."

Is it correct or not correct that you are writing a book?

"No, that is correct. It's not finished. It's just BEGINNING."

I've never written a novel, how do you write one?

"I haven't either. It's incredibly time-consuming. Just to get a paragraph out takes so long. You've got to focus and trust yourself and keep going. But the hardest things can turn out to be the best, so let's hope this is one of those."

I've got to go now.

"I do too."

FYI...

■ Kristen once worked on a cartoon called *Snake 'N' Bacon*

■ She still uses public transport. We know this because she was spotted on a bus in Ladbroke Grove in London

■ "Yes," says the TV funnywoman, "I do look like a chipmunk"

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LETTERS

YOU WRITE IT, WE PRINT IT, EVERYONE ARGUES *Edited by Hornish MacBain*

LETTER
OF THE WEEK
WINS A NEW
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AUDIO BY BANG
& OLUFSEN
ICEPOWER



Letter of the week

Tied to the '90s

In 1995 Blur beat Oasis' 'Roll With It' to Number One with 'Country House', and 14 years later they have trounced them again. I have seen both Oasis at Heaton Park and Blur at the MEN Arena this June, and can say that whereas Oasis raised the bar considerably in my estimations of them as a live band, Blur blew the fucking roof off. Damon, Alex, Dave and Graham sweat talent through every pore... and I managed to grab hold of Damon's armpit as he mingled in the front row. Mmmm... the armpit of success!

Richey, via email

Right, Richey, you win this week, but only in the hope that holding a snazzy, futuristic mobile in your hand will maybe, just maybe, make you realise that it's not fucking 1995 anymore and no-one gives a shit about Blur versus Oasis, least of all Blur or Oasis – HM

RAGE AGAINST THE REVIEW OF THE MACHINE

You gave Florence And The Machine's album six out of 10 (*NME*, July 4)? 'Lungs' is such an amazing album – it's really powerful and spiralling, a modern piece of art. You didn't even mention 'My Boy Builds Coffins' or 'Between Two Lungs' which are the best bloody songs on the album! Also you gave Bombay Bicycle Club eight out of 10 (*NME*, July 4), and they're a poor man's Maccabees but really depressing. Also Jack Peñate should have got at least an eight for his album, 'Everything Is New' (*NME*, June 13). I don't mean to sound like Jeremy Kyle, but sort your life out.
Billy, London

I've followed Florence And The Machine for over a year now and have agreed with your amazingly accurate reviews of her live performances and what a huge name she will become, but your review slated Florence's new album. One moment you are bigging her up and the next you're putting her down. Florence's

album is without doubt worthy of at least a seven. Especially when La Roux (who is good) got a nine (*NME*, June 27). Don't you think Florence's talent is more important than computerised sounds? But you gave Florence a six! And say she is "drunkenly yelling" when only a few months back you absolutely loved her. You put Florence as the biggest name of 2009 and La Roux was thrown into 'extras', so were you wrong or do you need to make up your mind? You're contradicting yourself!
Ibury, via email

What can I say, except that one person's 'Brightest Hope For 2009' would appear to be another's 'Poor Man's Enya'? There ain't no reviews by committee around these parts, baby. Just as variety is the spice of life, opinions are the spice of a decent reviews section (along with bribes and nepotism) – HM

THE PENDULUM SWINGS

After witnessing The Prodigy at Glastonbury I would like Maxim to note the following: I AM NOT ONE OF YOUR F'ING PEOPLE AND I AIN'T ONE OF YOUR F'ING WARRIORS! Why on Earth you kept insisting on repeating this during each song is beyond me, it just made you look a cock. You've had your day and it's time to step aside. The future is Pendulum, who were amazing, didn't need to use the F-word once and were not so full of shit. Now I have that off my chest I feel better.
Cookie, Stratford Upon Avon

You're mad. Pendulum are not only the worst band in history, they're also a shameless, limp imitation of The



Florence has brought flowers for her favourite letter writers

STALKERS

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



BILL BRYANT, SWINDON

"NME, this is me and my favourite vocalist, recording artist and performer ever, Brandon Flowers"



ELLIE, MANCHESTER

"This is me with Frederick Blood Royale from Ox.Eagle.Lion.Man. He's the friendliest guy alive!"



BETH, BRISTOL

"Here's me and Max from You Me At Six at the O2 Academy. He was watching support band Emarosa"

Prodigy. It's like going, 'Fuck Blur, it's all about Kaiser Chiefs!' In fact, it's even more like that, in that both acts you mention should really just turn it in, retain some dignity and go and do summat else - HM

FLOCK WITH YOU

Is it me or has everyone who hated Michael Jackson before he died suddenly fallen in love with him? It's a joke! People used to slag him off when he was alive, calling him a paedo, a freak, a weirdo to name just a few. All the insults and crude jokes, but now he's dead, everyone idolises him! I personally don't like Michael Jackson and I don't like his music. I have respect for people who do like him and his music, but those who have changed their minds because he's dead, YOU'RE ALL FUCKING HYPOCRITES! It's like the Jade Goody incident all over again. People hated her saying she was racist,

now she's dead, they want to make a movie of her life. What a joke. Am I the only one who dislikes Michael Jackson that still has that opinion now he's dead? John, via email

Well, yeah, sort of, but... frankly, when I die, I hope that for the first couple of weeks at least, everyone who knows me goes on about how staggeringly talented, beautiful and good at dancing I was before they move on to the questionable table manners, the tendency to waffle on about Oasis and the fact that they all thought I was a c--t. Give it a few days, John, I'm sure the whole freak schtick will be back with a vengeance - HM

I praise your MJ tribute issue (NME, July 4). It was such a sad day when one of the world's best performer was taken away from us. I was so looking forward to seeing him on his This Is It! Tour. Being a student I saved up the full 80 pounds or so to get these tickets, and was so overwhelmed when I saw the confirmation email telling me that I was one of the lucky ones. However, now that I won't ever get to see the genius at work. Despite being tight on cash, I will without a doubt be keeping my ticket stub as a remembrance of what could have been the greatest night of my life. Jack, via email

When the words 'Michael Jackson is dead' flashed upon my television screen on Sky News, I simply couldn't comprehend this tragedy. Me saying 'guted' doesn't really justify the impact his passing had on me and probably still is happening to the rest of the world. Like so many of the musical geniuses that have graced us briefly with their presence - Kurt Cobain, Ian Curtis, Richey Edwards - The King Of Pop has died before his time. It would seem that the forfeit for being such an influential musician means dramatically shortening your lifespan, so not only do I feel sympathy for Jacko's friends and family but also for anyone who by some miracle claimed a ticket for his comeback tour as they have just missed out on seeing possibly the greatest performer who ever lived, proving that when something truly magnificent comes along it should be celebrated relentlessly. Pearce_d, via email

Alright, maybe we'll keep it going for a few more days - HM

SWELLING UP

When I started to read Mark Beaumont's blog on NME.COM last week I wasn't exactly surprised to detect a slight sense of joy in the fact that Michael Jackson had died. Then I carried on reading. And

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I was stunned. The name Steven Wells only rings a slight bell in my 17-year-old mind, but as I continued to be enveloped by Mark's ever-engaging, respectfully less acidic words, and I followed the link to Wells' obituary, I discovered something wonderful. The man was a genius. That gorgeous flow of digital vitriol that seeped down the page, preceded by the emotive words of a grieving James McMahon, opened my eyes, and made me realise that I had a hell of a lot of catching up to do if I was ever to develop, and take the shape or form of a world-renowned journalist. Those two articles genuinely moved me, I actually felt my eyes filling up (then read the line "Don't be a fucking idiot" and smiled), which no journalist has ever been able to do before. It was clear to see how influenced these men were, especially Mark, as they seem to carry on his sumptuously vulgar prose with ease. I've been told not to get involved in music journalism, "it's far too competitive", but so help me I'm tempted. So, I leave you with a quote from the late-and-bloody-great Steven Wells, which pretty much sums up the reason why I decided to start reading NME in the first place: "I came prepared to be awed" Abigail Evans, Pontypridd

Nice moves, Abigail. That's as lovely and pure a tribute as I've read to the late, great Steven Wells. In fact, fuck the idiots who go on about Blur and Oasis, for this you are getting this week's Letter Of The Week prize. Happy texting - HM

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AND ANOTHER THING...

In case you've still not made your point

TRES 'BIAN

Before 'Fire' and 'Underdog', I was never a fan of Kasabian. But since hearing the songs, I think they're fucking amazing! Thank you NME for featuring them in your amazing magazine.

ELLIE, LONDON

Erm, to be honest I think Tom and Serge have to take the lion's share of the credit for your U-turn rather than us - HM

G-LOVE

If I work hard and play hard will that mean Noel Gallagher will love me too?

ARCHIE, COVENTRY

A 'good hair - good shoes' combo is a more obvious route to his heart - HM

DREAD WRONG

While I wouldn't say 'Common Dreads' by Enter Shikari is one of the best albums I have heard in my life, I wouldn't say it is awful either. And that's coming from an indie ponce. I have a fringe, I wear cardigans, I like Enter Shikari. Is that allowed? DEAN, VIA IPHONE

EH?

Isn't Fopp bloody brilliant?

SAM, BIRMINGHAM

Is it still open? - HM

LA WOMAN-LOVER

I may be a dirty ginger lesbian, but La Roux is SUMMINNNNNNNNNNNN' ELSEEEEEEEEEEE. She is too dirty to clean her act up!

NICOLA, ESSEX

Cahn down, dear - HM

ALL THE OLD DUDES

I think '21 Guns' by Green Day sounds like Mott The Hoople. It is also five minutes too long.

PETE, STANSTED

Five minutes, 21 seconds if we're being accurate - HM

SIMON SAYS

Whenever I hear Marmaduke Duke's 'Rubber Lover' I get Saved By The Bell: The College Years theme tune stuck in my head. "Johnny had a pink rubber lover"... "Standing at the edge of tomorrow" See it?

JO, VIA EMAIL

In a word, no - HM

NME LOVES

The next biggest girl band in the universe
don't need/want your approval

MINI VIVA

Do I think *NME* readers will like us? Oh, I hope so! (Pause) Is *NME*, like, a rock magazine? I've never read it. Amazing.

Backstage in a Swindon dressing room, 20-year-old Britt Love sits alongside her Mini Viva bandmate Frankee Connolly and smiles as she unintentionally twists the knife. It seems, though it's hard to tell, that she might be fluttering her eyelashes. Just as the space-age duo's glacial treadmill-disco single 'Left My Heart In Tokyo' isn't really like other pop music, so hers is an attitude at the very opposite end of the spectrum from the endless queue of musicians who so desperately purchase the right clothes as they do everything they can to get into *NME*.

"Oh god, people worry too much about their appearance and their image,"

Britt suddenly announces.

"They don't think deep down to the music itself and they cover it up with image and they use all that to capture you. Then, when you're captured, you realise there's nothing else there. Rubbish."

You could, at a push, describe Mini Viva's breezily casual nature as rather pleasantly punk rock except, of course, 'pleasantly punk rock' is a contradiction in terms. The last time Britt stuck her finger up at someone it was from behind the blacked-out glass of a people carrier. They certainly seemed the happiest and most polite band of the weekend when *NME* saw them at Camden Crawl, having become obsessed with the heavily blogged independent release of '...Tokyo', co-produced by French house legend Fred Falke and issued last November on World's Finest. Other songs failed to disappoint: 'Hooked' was bursting with the warm, layered synth sounds of a Kylie epic, 'I Wish' was an instant modern pop classic and 'Emotions Of Love' topped most

of the Sugababes' recent output.

Mini Viva's pop music, like the very best pop music, has not been invented for the benefit of children or idiots, which might make rather a lot of sense in light of the news that there is slightly more to this than meets the eye. World's Finest was invented by Xenomania, the production team behind all the proper grown up pop Girls Aloud have been banging out for almost a decade, who wanted to test the waters with an indie release as they worked on Mini Viva alongside a raft of new acts. The band had started life a couple of years ago as a four-piece, which then became a three-piece. "Then the third girl wasn't right for the group," says Frankee, who spent three months of college doing business studies before switching to hair and make-up, "so she had to leave."

Frankee's words echo the Xenomania team's ruthlessly efficient attitude, a perfectionist approach which frequently results in era-defining pop tuneage. And yet there's a curiously

unmanufactured feel to Mini Viva. This is not about the crowbarring of stage school buffoons into pre-defined roles but a duo - "like sisters and best friends" - who slowly evolved into their own creation and began to inspire everything that happened around them. The latest two things to have happened are a record deal with Geffen and a management deal with Spice Girls, S Club and *American Idol* supreme Simon Fuller.

"It is a little bit scary that it's happened quite so fast," Frankee says, "but we're ready for everything that's going to get thrown at us."

You're planning for that to involve general international pop stardom, aren't you?

Britt smiles again. "That's certainly Plan A, yes." *Peter Robinson*

"Is *NME*, like,
a rock magazine?
I've never read it..."

BRITT LOVE

NEED TO KNOW...

What: The Son to pop perfectionists Xenomania's Father and Holy Ghost For less on Girls Aloud, Sugababes, Neneh Cherry
Download: 'Left My Heart In Tokyo'

Viva la Viva: Britt
Love and Frankee
Connolly



PHOTOGRAPH BY

RADAR

OTHER STUFF YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT



POPJUSTICE SAYS:

Fin has a passion for what makes pop great and an understanding of what makes it cool



BLOG BUZZ

Not enough dosh for Freemasons? Better call...

STARSMITH

You wouldn't want to bump into Fin Dow-Smith at a party. Slip a harmless "What do you do?" into conversation and he'll bring you a cushion to make you comfy for his response: "I'm a 20-year-old Londoner trying to make a name for myself by writing funky electropop-faux-French-disco-house."

"I am," he'll continue, "a cross between Quincy Jones, Daft Punk, George Benson, Calvin Harris, Cassius and Rachmaninoff."

Still, we know why he wants to side-step the two words that best describe what he does – "bedroom producer" seems inexorably descriptive of a chode-fingered Daniel Bedingfield bashing away on his school's

pinched copy of Cubase while mumsy brings in trays of high juice and fig rolls.

But Starsmith is joining the ranks of remix conveyer-belts like Soulwax, whose laptops have liberated them from needing to switch creativity to 'on' for nine days in someone else's studio. This freedom means he fondles and caresses the likes of Katy Perry, Marina And The Diamonds and writing partner Ellie Goulding until their choruses are throbbing from under a filthy metallic sheet **Sam Wolfson**

NEED TO KNOW

What: Bedroom flinker Download: 'I Am Not A Robot', Marina And The Diamonds (remix)

EURO DELICACY

Free-loving Swedes will make you grin 'til it hurts

LE KID

"We are the L E/The K I D/The only thing your mama wanna see!" chant Johanna and Helena, emoting like a duo of malfunctioning Stepford wives.

It's the start of Le Kid's single 'Mercy Mercy' and their high kicking agenda is clear: crafting songs for Generation OMG and people who wear plastic cow-print t-shirts, that's what.

Yes, they're Swedish (insert quote about alchemising the minor chords of Abba/Ace Of Base/Robyn into pop gold here), and they were also the masterminds behind Alcazar (aka the Scissor Sisters that didn't make you want to eat stinging nettles). Backed by the treacle-siphoning triumvirate of Anton Malmberg Hård af Segerstad, Märta Grauers

and Felix Persson, Johanna and Helena have crafted the likes of 'Mercy Mercy' ('Can't Speak French's brassier cousin) and 'Telephone', which recalls Saint Etienne's cross-channel hook-up 'He's On The Phone'.

Their photoshoots look like they've been ripped straight outta *Look In* circa 1987, they post missives about "flute-playing dwarfs" on their blog and promise to let their fans sleep with a band member of their choosing in five years time. We've already pencilled it in our calendars. **Priya Elan**

NEED TO KNOW

What: Bubblegum, heart-busting Swedish pop Download: 'Mercy Mercy'



POPJUSTICE SAYS:

Their Gwen Stefani-meets-Alphabeat pop is unselfconsciously big and relentlessly amazing



POPJUSTICE SAYS:

At this rate he'll be an international superstar within 36 months

INDUSTRY BUZZ

Today: 'lektro-soul' genius. Tomorrow: GCSEs

MNEK

Way back at the dawn of time (2004), in an ungodly wilderness (south London), a nine-year-old melded his mind into some music-making software and distilled his tween joy for Girls Aloud and JoJo into his own smooth production line.

Now 14, super-prodigy Mnek (pronounced em-en-ee-kay) as a MySpace stockpile with dizzying 'lektro that sniffs Frankmusik's behind before bypassing his erratic operatics for a UK soul edge. It's a gloopy neon soup of super-sweet bleeps cut with lyrics about made-up girls (he's only had one proper squeeze as yet). On 'Nose Job' he mixes metaphors from *Romeo & Juliet* – his last school coursework topic – with bubbling bubblegum pop. On

'Devil In Pumps' he croons about a fantasy vixen over the hook from MJ's 'Rock With You'.

With his glasses and composed demeanour, Mnek has the more studious air of a backroom scribe than a pop star. In fact, that's his key ambition. "I'm not thinking about [record deals]", he essays. "I just wanna get a publishing deal, so I can be a songwriter before I become a full-on artist." Far be it from us to patronise him, but isn't he a clever little fellow? Expect a *Paradise Lost* concept album next term. **Gavin Haynes**

NEED TO KNOW

What: Why old studio bods wanna top themselves Download: 'If Truth Be Told'



I don't know about you, reader, but I'm still reeling from the news of the Good Books split a few weeks ago. And then - oh, cruel fate! - just a week later, The Metros played their final gig. The pain of a nation was summarised when one commenter noted on *NME.COM*: "I'm gutted I'll never get to see this very average-looking band that nobody has ever heard of."

Think of how few famous people there were when your grandparents were growing up, before multi-channel television, and think about the various obituaries and tributes as, one by one, they die of old age. Now think about how many people are famous in 2009. In another 40 years there will be too much death for brief obits in the papers, or sad 'and finally' items. How, for instance, will the death of Alexa Chung be marked?

With so much music so much of the time, it's already a problem for bands. Before long, so many bands will be



splitting up that the *NME* news section will spiral out of control and there will need to be a whole different *NME* - an *Old Musical Express* - to keep up with all the splits. There will be an anti-Radar section in which the tragic demises of hundreds of uninspiring indie bands will be documented. "The most mediocre old bands - first." Scenes will begin to develop. One week, for example, there could be an Old Wave Of New Rave special in which the bands who seemed quite a good idea in 2006 all split up in the same week and *OME* pays Omeage. Its website will have an Omeage. It will be edited by Josh Ome.

Peter Robinson
Popjustice.com

EMAIL PETER: RADAR@NME.COM
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IN THE KNOW

Space Cowboy



Fresh, glistening meat from the latest master DJ/studio genius/Lady Gaga collaborator

I've spent a lot of time in Los Angeles recently and there are 3,000 strong raves out there with people attracted to the dubstep sound.

This is nuts really, but it means that behind the scenes a lot of US producers are starting to work on incorporating that sound into their work and bring it into the pop realm. everybody's talking about it now. I'm yet to hear the 'wow - that's it' track, but it's definitely moving in that direction with big pop songs that have a dubstep feel. The concept's amazing and if it can happen that's brilliant.

It's amazing for someone like me, coming from England and being able to make electronic pop music in the States. Lady GaGa's definitely opened the door for a lot of that very European-influenced music. Her producer, RedOne, has been a huge part of that, and he's from Morocco via Sweden. He has this crazy pop sensibility which isn't at all rooted in R&B.

It's a pretty awesome time for people experimenting; we just did a song with a band called *Cinema Bizarre*, who are from Germany. The song's very glam-rock but with a synth-pop style and we just shot the video for it in a German country house. They're a bit like Tokio Hotel in that they wear a lot of make up and look

fantastic; the track's called 'I Came To Party'.

Back here in the UK, *Frankmusik*'s a great talent who's got a lot more to offer; he's just remixed my track 'Falling Down'. And *LMFAO*'s still doing it for me too, but all the other stuff I'd like to recommend is about partying, actually.

I'm really into a new track by *LMFAO* - two guys from California - and it's a Lil Jon collaboration called 'Shots'. It's about drinking shots. Their live shows are crazy, it's the two guys and they've got this girl called the LMFAO Bikini Girl and she comes onstage and is



GAGA'S OPENED THE DOOR FOR A LOT OF VERY EUROPEAN MUSIC



generally awesome. It's great because it's not about champagne or Ciroc or whatever, it's more about simply having a party and drinking whatever's around, which from my experience is a more accurate depiction of what parties are like!

And that leads us straight to the *Paradiso Girls* - they're a five-piece from America, France, Barbados, London and the Philippines. I've worked with Chelsea from the band on my song 'Falling Down', and I've also mixed their track 'Patron Tequila' which features Eve and, once again, Lil Jon. They're just really, really awesome - like a Pussycat Dolls but who sing about getting drunk and being sick. And they look incredible.

Finally, there's *Far East Movement*, who have a song called 'Girls On The Dancefloor'. They're four guys from different parts of Asia, they're very funny. 'Girls...' is this massive club track whose subject matter might not sound too extraordinary but it's a great tune, produced by Stereotypes who are really hot at the moment



Moshi's Michael (left) and Stephen

Moshi Moshi's 10th anniversary year offers us all a chance to generally wish good things upon a label who've grown to be among the most idiosyncratically influential of recent times. Moshi has become a place where many of our favourite bands started life, from Bloc Party and Hot Chip to Florence And The Machine, Friendly Fires and Kate Nash. Founders Stephen Bass and Michael McClatchey originally set it up to put out the stuff they couldn't release in their day jobs at big labels, and, six months of dithering later, they finally had a name. Ten years of dithering down the line, they've finally got an alphabetically-ordered feature in *NME*. Yes, dreams can come true...

A **Au Revoir Simone**
Icy synth maidens in possession of a top new album.
Michael: "They came down to see Hot Chip and they really liked them, so they said, 'OK, we'll sign to you guys'. In the early days, I remember occasionally having both Hot Chip and Au Revoir Simone sleeping in our flats at the same time."

B **Bloc Party**
First released 'Banquet'/'Staying Fat' on a seven-inch

C **Casiokids**
Puppet loving retro-pop keyboard-bashers who last year released Britain's first-ever Norwegian-language single on Moshi.
Michael: "We're doing The Very Best, too, and they're singing in Malawian - it's the guys from Radioclit producing a Malawian guy they met in a furniture shop. So we've become a bit of a hive for foreign language indie music lately. I have no idea why."



B-boys Bloc Party

THE A-Z OF MOSHI MOSHI

NME celebrates 10 years of the label that introduced us to Kate Nash, Friendly Fires, Florence, Hot Chip, and more...

D **anacanayanayknwyd**
Enenenenenenenough said

E **Envelope**
An abandoned early name for the Moshi Moshi project.

Michael: "As in 'pushing the envelope'. That was going to be the name for the first six months or so." Also rejected: We Were Monkeys and Smooth Cyborg. Thankfully.

F **Florence And The Machine's 'Kiss With A Fist'**
To date, Moshi's highest-selling single, and a proper paid-up hit

G **The Grates**
Australia's ballsy clatter punks.

H **Hot Chip**
The dazzling electro-jewel in the crown, Hot Chip were Moshi's first bona fide find, and pretty much single-handedly kept them busy for years. Stephen and Michael put them on at a gig as a late replacement for Kieren Hebden's Fridge and instantly fell in love, going on to release their

beguiling debut album 'Coming On Strong'.

Stephen: "Bloc Party were already known to most A&Rs, but Hot Chip were very much still unknown. In those days, you could almost define a particular year by a particular band. 2004 was all about Hot Chip. We never had any money so we couldn't book cabs for them. It was always me driving them to Leeds, us all getting up at four in the morning to take the cheapest flight going... Of course, we were heartbroken when they eventually signed to a big label, but only in the natural way - sort of like *Born Free*, when Elsa goes off into the jungle..."

I **Incest**
They're all at it. "The Moshi family is just like any other family," proposes Jon from The Mae Shi. "It has a father who cares more about his favourite T-shirt than your well-being and a mother you can ask anything of. But

who cares about parents when you have the best siblings that independent record label money can buy, Slow Club?"

Rebecca from Slow Club sings with The Mae Shi onstage occasionally, and has covered their songs. Other intra-label love-ins include Hot Chip and Slow Club covering Au Revoir Simone, and Au Revoir Simone and Slow Club combining to cover Echo & The Bunnymen.

J **Janee**
Appearing on upcoming single 'Sex In The City' (a collaboration with Bless Beats and Tinchy Stryder), and one for Moshi's grime tendency (they nearly signed Lethal Bizzle - in his day job, Stephen's most successful single ever was More Fire Crew's 'Or'). Twenty-one-year-old grime prodigy Bless Beats produced Wiley's 'Wearing My Rolex' and Janee is basically the nu-Beyoncé.

K **Kate Nash**
Moshi put out her first-ever single, 'Caroline's A Victim'. "Stephen was in touch with me really early on, before



Moshi's nu-Beyoncé Janee



anybody else was, before I even got management," Kate recalls fondly. "I could put out whatever I wanted on limited edition seven inch. Stephen's smart and funny, extremely passionate and nerdy about music and bands. He signs what he loves, regardless of what's hot or not – in turn, making Mosh a very cool label."

L **Late Of The Pier**
'Bathroom Gurgler' debuted on Mosh.

M **Moshi Mosh**
Michael: "It's a Japanese telephone greeting which translates as 'hello'. We basically went with it because we just liked the phonics."

N **N4**
The Finsbury Park postcode of Mosh's spiritual home.
Michael: "Stephen and I have both lived there for over 10 years. Our current label manager – Hannah – was recruited from behind the bar in our local (and still works there). We shot Hot Chip's first video in the pub, and it played host to many an aftershow. All these Mosh bands have grown to love the place. Each year in Finsbury Park itself we host our five aside football tournament. Previous teams have included Paul Epworth, Hot Chip, Franz Ferdinand, Metronomy and Slow Club."

O **Oasis**
Um... Stephen used to live on the same street as Bonehead's brother.

P **Padfic!**
Mosh's criminally-underrated Scandi-pop gang.

Q **Quiz night**
Mosh's glitterati-studded pop quiz night is still held in their local pub.
Michael: "It's not a remotely cool pop quiz. That was always the intention. We've been doing it there since 2002. You'd get a weird mix of indie minor royalty and the Finsbury Park alcoholics, so you'd have to make sure

R **The Rakes**
"Moshi Mosh helped The Rakes out very early on by releasing our 'Retreat' EP" Alan Donohoe explains. "We were invited to record some demos to see if we'd all get along – in Mosh Mosh's studios in west London, darling. One day I was outside the studio with a cigarette and a can of beer when Sir Cliff Richard walks past, heading into the building. 'Morning,' I say to Sir Cliff but he just gives me the old up and down and doesn't say a thing. Bloody judgemental Christian. Ought to be stripped of his title."

S **Sukpatch**
Mosh's first-ever release came care of two highly stoned dudes

might get a big advance, but it's just like going to university... If you don't plan for your career, you might have a nice time, but three years later you're left with nothing but a big hangover and bigger debt. You've got to think about how to launch long-term, stable, fan-driven careers."

V **Variety**
Through Tilly And The Wall, Hot Club De Paris, The Teenagers, The Mae Shi, Friendly Fires and Lykke Li, Mosh's always been brain-bogglingly eclectic. Why?
Stephen: "People say we're a 'cool' label, but it's not meant to be cool. It's just stuff we like. Even Creation back in the day – when they were good, they were picking up on the things that other people didn't. That's the sort of ethos we want – to do something new."

W **The Wave Pictures**
David Tattersall's shamble-folk eccentrics have already released two Mosh albums within a year. "I think Stephen thought that we had some very naïve or reactionary views about the world," Tattersall recalls of the first time he met his future bosses. "And we sort of saw them as a pair of ridiculous Hoxton hipsters."

X **Xzibit**
A popular rapper, who once shared a lift with Stephen and Michael.

Y **Yeti**
Ex-Libertine John Hassall's band, who released an NME Single Of The Week, 'Never Lose Your Sense Of Wonder', on Mosh in 2005.

Z **Zee you zoon, Mosh...**
There's much, much more to come.

"It's not meant to be cool, it's just stuff we like"

STEPHEN BASS

you wrote a very diverse range of questions. Nash came a couple of times, Black Kids, The Concretes, Alexis from Hot Chip – he loves his pop quizzes. NME's Alan Woodhouse kept turning up and winning it at one point, so I had to stop inviting him."

who were into Butthole Surfers and transformed tape loops into woozy psychedelia.

Stephen: "It's still one of my favourite releases. It was quite a definitive Mosh release in many ways."

T **The Cocknbulldid**
Recently-signed indie-electro tip.

U **University**
A metaphor for when Stephen and Michael give bands 'the talk' about safeguarding their future.
Stephen: "It's about persuading bands to work their arses off and get to that point where you can earn money within a couple of years. On a big label, they



THIS HIATUS IS NON- OPERATIONAL



After recent hints that Texan post-hardcore legends **At The Drive-In** might reform, an excited **Ben Patashnik** argues that they could have been as big as Nirvana

Everyone in the world wants to hear three little words. When said by the right person they can prompt a starburst of happiness and, for millions of people, a man called Omar is very much the right person. Last month he said those very three words when asked if *At The Drive-In* would reform: never say never. Immediately after, music fans across the planet shat diamonds in excitement. As loved and feared for their ferocious live shows as their albums, *ATD-I* burned brightly and left a kaleidoscopic contrail. In seven short years they managed to attract an army of fans, make one of the greatest American rock records ever in the shape of *'Relationship Of Command'* and cauterise the eyes of anyone lucky enough to see them live.

"It seemed to happen so fast," remembers Damian Abraham from *Fucked Up*. "It seemed like one week I saw them as the third band on at [legendary California DIY punk venue] Gilman Street and the next they were on the *Late Show With David Letterman*."

And the thought of a reunion is a real tonic: they never namedropped or fucked any models, never sought

column inches by relating in earnest detail just how many drugs they took and they never gave a shit about how they were perceived, both in terms of their image – lest we forget, two of them had afros – and what they spoke out about. *ATD-I* weren't afraid to stand in front of thousands of people and call them dicks. Not since (and these names aren't being dropped lightly) *Nirvana* or *REM* had a band worked their way up from the underground so flawlessly, but instead of racking up the gold and platinum discs, the pathetic *Behind The Music* TV special and the lonely lapse into obscurity, they committed collective suicide. *Pixies*, *Blur*, *Rage Against The Machine*, *The Specials* et al's comebacks might have been a lot of fun for a few summer nights, but the loudest noise at the end of the night was the cash register chiming away. *ATD-I* weren't like that.

Laura Mary Carter and Steve Ansell from *Blood Red Shoes* agree. "They were one of those weird blips where an underground punk band gets so undeniably good that they end up in the mainstream, like with *Nirvana* in 1991. They proved the real deal will always resonate more than over-stylised, careerist bullshit."

Foals, *Fucked Up*, *The Kills*, *Rolo Tomassi*, *Blood Red Shoes*, *Idllewild*, *Dananananaykroyd*, *The Futureheads*... all of them, whether they're aware of it or not, owe a debt to five righteous dudes from El Paso, Texas. "If I'm honest," says James Spence from *Rolo Tomassi*, "they're the band who have influenced me most. But I'm still trying to get to where they were."

When Jim Ward met Cedric Bixler-Zavala at El Paso High in 1989, they bonded over a love of *Black Flag*, the *Misfits* and *Metallica*, but the initial buds of *ATD-I* didn't blossom until 1994. It took until 1996's fine debut *'Acrobatic Tenement'* for Omar Rodriguez-Lopez to join the fold and the line-up solidified in 1998 with the addition of Paul Hinojos on bass and drummer Tony Hajjar. That same year, with second album, *'In/Casino/Out'*, *ATD-I* started to kick off.

"They were a classic word-of-mouth band," says singer-songwriter Frank Turner, formerly of UK hardcore heroes *Million Dead*. "No massive hype, just one by one people started calling each other and going crazy for them."

After touring with *The Get Up Kids*, none other than Zack De La Rocha personally invited them to support *Rage Against The Machine*.

"I first saw them opening for *The Get Up Kids* at the Metro in Chicago in the autumn of 1999," reminisces *Idllewild*'s Roddy Woomble. "I'd never heard of them, but after one song I pushed my way to the front of the balcony and stood transfixed by one of the best rock'n'roll performances I'd seen. They were something else."

There they stood, staring into the maw of the mainstream music industry; they jumped straight in.

"ATD-I STILL SOUND AMAZING AND INSPIRING 10 YEARS ON"

BLOOD RED SHOES



Left to right: Paul Hinojos, Jim Ward, Omar Rodriguez-Lopez, Tony Hajjar, Cedric Bixler-Zavala

ATD-I's Cedric does his best hardcore pose



Cedric: probably making sheep noises again

But despite touring with one of the biggest bands in the country, all five members had to work day jobs when they weren't on tour: Bixler-Zavala in a junk food emporium, Ward as a waiter, Hinojos in a factory and Hajjar in a chemistry lab. Rodriguez-Lopez split his time between the twin industries of telesales and selling drugs. 'In/Casino/Out' was winning them both critical plaudits and major label attention; for a vocal minority of fans it's their best album. But, again, they knew they could do better.

"They had been building up to something like this for a while, one album that would be critically acclaimed and blow people's minds at the same time," notes Spence. "This" was 'Relationship Of Command', a record Turner cites as "the best post-hardcore album outside of Fugazi ever made". And, astonishingly for an album that united practically every alternative tribe under the sun, it came out on a major label - Beastie Boys' Grand Royal imprint. It's a decision that could have seen them being labelled sell-outs, were 'Relationship...' not one of the most perfect records ever made.

Kitty Empire, who was *NME*'s New Music Editor around the time ATD-I started tongues wagging, recalls the buzz around them. "We were very excited about the fact that they were young, obviously indebted to Fugazi

and the arty end of post-hardcore," she says. "They were a prequel to The Strokes, almost."

And, like Fugazi, they stood for something: they hated the dumb violence of moshing at hardcore shows. "We were more on the feminine side of punk rock, not on the masculine, testosterone side," Ward explained to Eric Grubbs for his book *POST: A Look At The Influence Of Post-Hardcore 1985-2007*. "We were more on the artsy, non-violent [side]." They felt everyone had the right to enjoy their shows without fear of getting beaten up and, at Big Day Out in Australia in 2001, Bixler-Zavala lambasted the moshing crowd for being mindless sheep before the band left the stage in protest after only 15 minutes. Hours later, a 16-year-old girl died in a crowd crush during Limp Bizkit's set.

"I always liked their anti-moshing stance," says Dananananaykroyd's John Baillie Jr. "They seemed to be really uncompromising, and Cedric doing the sheep thing is a really brave way of doing it."

'Relationship...' was the push into the mainstream that they needed and, not long after its release, they played *Later*. With *Jools Holland*. It was an unbelievably attention-grabbing

performance, like someone had wired a direct line from the napalm assault of the US underground into the UK's front rooms - fellow performer Robbie Williams didn't know where to look. 'Relationship...' was voted the fifth best album of the year in the annual *NME* poll, ahead of 'Kid A', but ATD-I would be dead two months later, as Rodriguez-Lopez and Bixler-Zavala split the band to pursue more experimental expansiveness with The Mars Volta. Ward, Hinojos and Hajjar wanted to play more by-the-book melodic rock and formed Sparta. Five months after they released one of the best albums ever, ATD-I disintegrated.

Could they have been as big as Nirvana? With hindsight 'Relationship...' is vastly better than 'Nevermind' and seeing as their core fanbase stayed with them after they signed to Grand Royal - perhaps because turning one's back on a band who'd just put out an album that good is so churlish as to be laughable - it's more than possible they could have gone nuclear. It was almost unbearably frustrating to see them shatter the glass ceiling of the punk rock scene by doing nothing other than being a staggering band - but they pissed it away, the obtuse bastards.

"They didn't last long once the serious spotlight shone on them, but 'In/Casino/Out' and 'Relationship Of Command' still sound amazing and inspiring 10 years down the line," note Laura-Mary and Steven. "Much like Nirvana, you can still crank those records and jump around the place, and you can still hear the influence of their sound in music being made today."

Uniquely, their legacy remains entirely unsullied. But most of all, they're the sort of band who wouldn't do anything unless it was wholly on their terms, which means that if a reunion did happen, it would be the sort of event that could change lives

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

CEDRIC BIXLER-ZAVALA

The voice of ATD-I, Bixler-Zavala threw himself wholly into The Mars Volta after drumming in De Facto with Omar Rodriguez. Their sixth record, 'Octahedron', recently came out, and Bixler-Zavala also plays in El Nuevo Grupo de Omar Rodriguez Lopez ('Omar Rodriguez Lopez's new band', in Spanish) with, er... some dude.

OMAR RODRIGUEZ-LOPEZ

One of the founding members of The Mars Volta, Rodriguez Lopez has steadily continued to release solo records, usually featuring contributions from Bixler-Zavala and legendary Hella drummer Zach Hill. He has a nascent acting career and has worked with soundtrack guru Hans Zimmer to provide music for Guillermo Arriaga's *The Burning Plain*.

JIM WARD

Joined Sparta on the request of Hajjar and Hinojos, but earlier this year said in an interview with Stereokill that he couldn't see them playing again (their last album 'Threes' was released in 2006). Is now helming Sleepycar, who supported Coldplay last year in the States.

PAUL HINOJOS

Initially formed Sparta with Tony Hajjar, but left in 2005 to work with The Mars Volta as a "sound manipulator", before leaving earlier this year. Now plays in Dios Kilos and solo under the name Hour Of The Monarchy.

TONY HAJJAR

Has been relatively quiet since the demise of Sparta, but recently began The Strange Atomic with Jonathan Case from Restaurant.

NME.COM

For proof that ATD-I were one of the best live bands ever, go to NME.COM/notesfromtheunderground

ALBUMS

ALL THE RELEASES THAT MATTER Edited by Hamish MacBain

Skid Mark



THE RUMBLE STRIPS
WELCOME TO THE WALK ALONE
(ALLIDO/ISLAND)

4

Devon band's quality is on the slide: blame Ronson... and their lack of ideas

Idea for a TV series: *When Good Bands Go Bad*. It's got it all! Power, sex, intrigue and bright-eyed sensitive types gazing into the abyss and realising that hey, nice guys finish last. Put a moderately successful British indie band at one end of a field, a big pile of cash at the other and watch them trip over themselves to surrender their integrity on the way to get it, crying and compromising along the way. First up for Episode One are The Rumble Strips.

It turns out that branding, a rigidly defined and unique selling point and blanket advertising can't make you anything you're not: like any good. 'Welcome To The Walk Alone' may have the skeletal blueprint of pop genius running through it like words in a stick of rock but it verges on insulting. Mark Ronson production, chirpy post-pop guitars, luvvy-duvvy-wuvvy heart-on-sleeve lyrics about pretty girls... and yes, you can guarantee there'll be bloody trumpets. On lead single 'Not The Only Person' they're obviously shooting for Orange Juice's 'Blue Boy'

with the euphoric melody and yelping vocals, but the textbook string section is hollow and, in its most faux-earnest moments, Charlie Waller's voice verges on the vomit-inducing. We can't help pining for the vibrant and enthused band that took the NME Tour by storm and wondering when making it all so slick that personality bounces straight off became so damn important.

Some people love this kind of animatronic metamorphosis, but only the kind of people who went to Glastonbury this year because *Grazia* rated it five phwoars out of five on the manometer. This is obviously good news for the music industry: upper-middle class *Big Brother* rejects tend to have a lot of expendable income because they only buy cocaine and live with their parents. Squeezing yourself into the already-bulging mould of Razorlight, The Kooks et al is still more likely to guarantee you a low status main stage billing than actually sounding good, and so creativity takes a back seat.

Luckily, 'Mark Ronson-produced' has already become synonymous with

'garish and unlistenable', so we've saved the inevitable crushing disappointment when The Next Big Thing turns out to be just another indie-by-numbers, stadium-filling, over-produced, shamelessly derivative, five-man, smug faced shit factory. We like to imagine the recording process involved Ronson beating them with sticks and screaming, "Be more epic!" This album is the solitary cockroach scuttling around in the post-apocalyptic nuclear wasteland of British music circa-2001. Pick any song on the album you like; 'London' (The Young Knives did it better), any other song (The Futureheads did it better). It's shameful. Well presented and immaculately recorded, but still shit sub-Maccabees schlock.

And the pilfering doesn't end there: this album will be massive, but that's no excuse for not picking apart the underlying laziness that makes its advert-friendly wipe-clean Stepford Wives-rock so hard to stomach. Opening track 'Welcome To The Walk Alone' sounds like The Killers after their second lobotomy while both 'Raindrops' and 'Daniel', like much of the album, cherry-pick from The Last Shadow Puppets without recognising that it's not just a matter of gunning through it like Justin Lee Collins doing a big band sketch on *The Sunday Night Project*.

Then there's the filler and, dear God, there's a lot of filler. We barely remember what 'Sweet Heart Hooligan' sounds like because it keeps getting mixed up in our head with the music from the Müller Rice advert, but then you know what they say about small mercies.

Oh well, they look pretty old - this was probably their last shot at making a go of doing 'something they love' so maybe selling their soul to Satan was fair enough, something we like to call 'Wombats Syndrome'. Hopefully, it's deadly. *Rebecca Robinson*

DOWNLOAD: 1) 'Not The Only Person' 2) 'Daniel' 3) 'Dem Girls'

DID YOU KNOW...

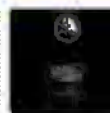
The song 'Daniel' is about the band's soundman, while 'Douglas' is about a dog

NME.COM

Head to NME.COM/artists/rumble-strips to hear their new album in full

THE FREQUENCY
MORNING TO 3AM (TRUSSED)

7



Da Vinci hit the nail on the head when proclaiming simplicity as the ultimate sophistication. With the rise of Auto-Tune we seem

to be immersed in a grim cycle of façade. Many genres are being whizzed together manically, resulting in a not-so innocent smoothie of dizzying sounds and complex crossovers. And any era when someone suggests taking a "ride on your disco stick" (thanks, Lady Gaga) spells danger. Luckily The Frequency's debut EP is tied together with slick, stripped-back music strengthened by simplicity as much as beauty. 'Unlikely Morning Song' could calm even the most bilious of souls, while 'Ego Is The Drug/3am's 17 minutes of poetic adventure has the scale of an instrumental *liad*.

Chris Mandle

DOWNLOAD: 'Ego Is The Drug/3am'

ANDREW MORGAN
PLEASE KID, REMEMBER (BROKEN HORSE)

6



Last year UK indie imprint Broken Horse were responsible for Plush's brilliant 'Fed'; 'Please Kid, Remember' - the second

album from Kansas-based Andrew Morgan, and the product of a tortuous six-year creation - suggests it's a style they're keen to pimp out. Our subject isn't quite as good as Plush, but that's hardly a condemnation. Riddled with harpsichord, twinkly synths and mini-orchestral flourishes, Morgan's vision comes from The Flaming Lips' more dad-friendly moments, or Elliott Smith when he indulged his '60s idealism. Impressively efficient to boot, with 17 tracks lasting just 34 minutes, 'Please...' is likeable but not loveable - perhaps due to it lacking the eccentricism of some of its precedents. *Noel Gardner*

DOWNLOAD: 'As Long As We're Together'

TARA JANE O'NEIL
A WAYS AWAY (K)

8



Tara Jane O'Neil might not be the most instantly recognisable name in alt. rock, but she's been involved in some of the

most inventive US indie created in its late-'90s/early-'00s halcyon days. The Portland native has helped define the American South's post-'Spiderland' musical identity in the shape of her work with June Of 44 and The Grifters as well as Low and Sebadoh. So it's no surprise that on her seventh album she's combined lo-fi elements of math, post-rock, bucolic folk and ambience to create an album of unique, dusky atmospherics. From the sepulchral beauty of opener 'Dig In' to the dark 'Beast, Go Along', this is an album for grimy shadows, haunted barns and thousand year old legends. Like nothing else you'll hear this year. *Priya Elan*

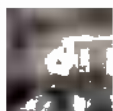
DOWNLOAD: 'Beast, Go Along'



FOREST FIRE

SURVIVAL (BROCKEN SOUND)

7



Recorded in their own practice rooms, 'Survival' is no rush-job. Initially released online last year, the blogosphere's folkiet

took to it like a Dylan disciple to a straw hat. And it shows, because even when they dither with free jazz ('Promise'), FF sound aligned with the constellation of Messrs Pecknold, Olson and Gano; indeed, this could be Violent Femmes on salvia. A highpoint is Nathan Delffs' guitar, veering from Byrdian glint ('Echoes Coming') to 'I Make Windows' toffee-strung fuzz. Elsewhere, 'Survival' (the song) is piping hot, having been swiped from the lorry carrying the stems of the Stones' 'Sweet Virginia'. But it's indicative of much of the album - convincingly seductive in its wooziness. **Matt Wilkinson**

DOWNLOAD: 'I Make Windows'

JONSI AND ALEX

RICEBOY SLEEPS (PARLOPHONE)

2



Jón Þór Birgisson's side-project targets a narrow demographic: those who find his band Sigur Rós to be too fast-paced.

'Riceboy Sleeps' is a tedious album of orchestral drones, produced by manipulating piano, strings and choir samples on solar-powered laptops (in - yes - a Hawaiian commune). The nine tracks average over seven minutes each, and important things are absent: beats, narrative, any semblance of a point. Its most tolerable pieces sound like waves lapping at a beach; others evoke accidental calls from unlocked phones. Sigur Rós once set a gold standard in pomposity by writing songs in an invented language. In releasing this, Birgisson outdoes himself. **Niall O'Keefe**

DOWNLOAD: 'Anything off 'Drum's Not Dead' by Liars instead

THE DULOCS

CHILDREN OF THE SEA (TOTO)

8



Fuck race, fuck nationality, fuck gender - there are only two kinds of people: dickheads and dudes. Which camp you

fall into can be determined by how you feel about this, the debut from glam lo-fi pop queens The Duloks (named after the evil Ewoks in the *Star Wars* spin-off cartoons, fact fans). If, for example, you despair at the potty-mouthed lyrics, 8-bit drums, Bontempi organ or commitment to quality over competence, you're a massive dick. Whereas, if you acknowledge tunes such as 'Octopus In Love' and 'Lovelorn Unicorn' outline that the London trio are the rightful heirs to the much lamented Shampoo (another litmus test of dickdom and duedeism), well, be content - you're a superior breed of person to that other lot. **James McMahon**

DOWNLOAD: 'Lovelorn Unicorn'

GEORGIA'S HORSE

THE MAMMOTH SESSIONS (PRE)

8



You can tell what most musicians used to play at when they were young just by listening to them. Richard Ashcroft was

a youthful astronaut with a goldfish bowl on his noggin, Noel Gallagher a footballer and Jon McClure a Native American chieftain. Teresa Maldonado, the singer-songwriter at the core of Texan alt.country act Georgia's Horse, sounds like she was a cowgirl. There are acres of loneliness in these brittle songs that stick up out of the sandy floor like skeletal remains. There are echoes of the (expat) Americana of The New Pornographers, a light dusting of the folk psychedelia of Smog and the torrid country death songs of PJ Harvey's 'To Bring You My Love'. And she makes it sound like child's play. **John Doran**

DOWNLOAD: 'Snake And Sparrow'

OEN SUJET

LIFE GIVEN TO QUIET PLACES (SARFACORDINES)

4



Coming off like some synth-prog soundtrack to a bunch of clowns going shopping, 'Life Given To Quiet Places' is a willfully

obtuse beast. Packed full of abstract musical phrases and meandering rhythms and textures, the Montreal-based three-piece may be lauded by the clued-in likes of Ladyfest, but sadly Julie-Blanche Taillon's honeyed vocals can't save their debut from being a dislocated disaster. There are fleeting moments of beauty, such as the rousing gang vocals on 'Bird And Binocular', but ultimately it tends to repeat like last night's pizza. With a great producer this could've soared to the stars, but in its current form it's an unsatisfying effort for all concerned. **Edwin McFee**

DOWNLOAD: 'Bird And Binocular'

RIVAL CONSOLES

10 (CRANED TAPES)

7



Proving there's plenty of pretension to still be tapped from an acid line, Ryan Lee West's Rival

Consoles project revives the schism between the commercial house music of suburban hell-holes and the perverted beats of electronica's golden boys. 'Preoccupied Fashion Bastard' snipes at Mason's 'Exceeder', those once ubiquitous stabs sounding like they're being fed through a rubbish compactor. '10' takes the ambience of Radioslave's eczema-dry aesthetic and piles on the rolls of fatty distortion and Chris Clark-informed crunchiness. And 'Digital Fuck'? A massive slice of jagged grandiosity that kicks you in the nuts for so much as looking at a Deadmau5 record. Sure, Lee comes across as a bit patronising, but '10' is a party record even snobs can enjoy. **Louise Brailley**

DOWNLOAD: '10'



Light-weight



V V BROWN

TRAVELLING LIKE THE LIGHT (ISLAND)

3

Her rockabilly pop may be jaunty, but it can't hide a yawning lack of substance

According to the deluge of fawning broadsheet profiles and fashion mag spreads, V V Brown is the kookiest, craziest, cleverest thing to happen to British pop since Paul McCartney invented the double thumbs-up. A statuesque Caribbean girl from Northampton with a rockabilly quiff who performs with a 'real' band writes her own brass arrangements and muddies her pink wellies at 'proper' festivals, VV is being marketed as the 'indie' option in a world of Pixie Lott.

But don't be fooled. Even if she wasn't cooked up in a crisis meeting at Island after Winehouse's wagon deposited her in a ditch once again - and the suspicion lingers - VV Brown's irksome brand of 'doo wop indie' is about as substantial as a Danyalea triangle. Most of these songs were supposedly penned in the wake of a painful break up from a no-good man, so you'd think a title like 'Crying Blood' might allow for a little emotion to seep to the surface. Instead, the song sounds like Matt Bianco doing the Time Warp.

Listening to 'Travelling Like The Light' is like being trapped inside a '50s-themed Las Vegas diner where the waitresses do dance routines between doling out cheeseburgers. It's so unrelentingly jaunty it makes Jack Peñate's debut sound like 'Unknown Pleasures'. Admittedly 'Shark In The Water' is a pretty fine pop song, the ersatz retro window-dressing shoved aside to let a soaring, Xenomania-style

chorus burst through. 'Back In Time' benefits from a simpler arrangement, although VV refuses to let up with her constant mugging. She's got a bunch of good voices, but not one she could truly call her own. Over the course of the album she goes from Eartha Kitt to Kate Nash and back, in a bizarre performance that seems expressly designed to conceal any hints of her true self.

By the time 'Crazy Amazing' comes around, based on that annoying 'Chopsticks' tune everyone learnt to play on the school piano, you know who to book should you ever have to organise a birthday bash for a millionaire's 10 year-old daughter. But unless you're hyped up on a cocktail of Sunny D and Haribo yourself, you'll find most of this album very annoying indeed. **Sam Richards**

DOWNLOAD: 1) 'Shark In The Water' 2) 'Leave' 3) 'I Love You'

DID YOU KNOW...

VV Brown used to be a songwriter-for-hire, having a hand in writing for Sugababes and Pussycat Dolls

NME.COM

Make your own mind up and listen to 'Travelling Like The Light' in full at NME.COM/artists/vv-brown now

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MAGNOLIA ELECTRIC CO

JOSEPHINE (SECRETLY CANADIAN)

8



Frontman Jason Molina describes this as being about "dislocation". Yet lurking in the background is a ghost - literally and

figuratively. While ghosts are a lyrical theme, this is also the first record MEC have completed without bassist Evan Farrell, who died in late 2007. A paean to a faded photograph, 'Josephine' inhabits a lonely landscape, but not one without redemption. 'Hope Dies Last' promises to "bring home the Northern Lights" before quietly acquiescing: "hope dies last of all". The working title for 'Josephine' was 'A Map Of The Falling Stars'; in changing from the slightly saccharine latter to the evocative former, Molina has summarised the appeal of this record far better than I ever could. *Alibhe Malone*
DOWNLOAD: 'The Hanging Down'

GOODNIGHT AND I WISH

A RUFFLED MIND MAKES A RESTLESS PILLOW (INDIEPOP)

5



Not finding much joy in Neils Children? Experiencing huge bouts of insomnia? Live in a haunted house? Are you a drummer? It seems that the only cure for such afflictions is to stay up all night making bedtime soundscapes and calling it "lullaby pop". Or so thinks ex-NC sticksman Brandon Jacobs. Taking his cue from the dark, enticing work of film director Tim Burton - so much so he's named a song after him - tracks such as 'Snow Angels' take you back to the childlike innocence of *Edward Scissorhands*. But it's not all fairytale ditties. Jacobs is taking his new project into the realm of the nightmarish, with mixed results. He should try a mug of Ovaltine instead. *Ash Dosanjh*
DOWNLOAD: 'Ghost'

KEVIN DEVINE

BROTHER'S BLOOD (BIG SCARY MONSTERS)

8



Brooklynite Kevin Devine is back with album number five (though his first on a UK label) and we're excited. Not just 'cos he's finally getting an overdue release here but because, in 'Brother's Blood', Devine has made an album that captures an intimate sense of lyrical drive that suggests he 'accidentally' left his diary out knowing full well we'd read it. The haunting atmospheric that linger on 'Another Bag Of Bones' prepare us for the rock anthem riffs and growls of 'Brother's Blood', while single 'I Could Be With Anyone' fluently transcends into a shouty, aggressive, yet-still-quiete-polite scuzzy garage situation. It's as if we're meant to learn about human flaws from Devine's own frustration. One of folk rock's more anonymous stars is about to get noticed. *Kelly Murray*
DOWNLOAD: 'Another Bag Of Bones'

TARA BUSCH

PILFERSHIRE LAKE (TUNNY TOUNO)

7



With a penchant for haunting falsetto and woozy melody, 'Pilfershire Lane' stakes a fair claim to establishing its creator as

Kate Bush for the modern age; ethereal, sinister but strangely sweet. 'This Is Love' deals in delicate build-ups and melodramatic choruses, while 'Get Drunk And Fuck' is aural schizophrenia; so far, so Kate. The difference between Miss Bush and Miss Busch, however, is that the latter's obsession for all things technologically offbeat means the pianos of yesteryear become the Mystery Circuits Breadbox Synths of today, resulting in a sound that evokes both wistful Victoriana and futuristic mysticism. Aside from the vapid 'Superfriends', it mostly succeeds. The torch has been passed. *Lisa Wright*
DOWNLOAD: 'This Is Love'

STEVE BUG

COLLABORATORY (HARFUT)

8



Buy DJ/producer Steve Bug's fourth album and you're not just choosing 11 tracks of evocative electronic music. You are choosing Sónar over Glastonbury; laptops over guitars; Berlin over Ibiza; evolution over Inertia. You are choosing multicultural, unisex European techno over small-minded British guitar bands. You are choosing to see music, not in terms of The Beatles and the Stones or even Kraftwerk and Can, but as a matter of curiosity, where elements of neo-soul, modern classical or dubstep can all be deployed in what you might call electronic pop. You are choosing to reject easy nostalgia for the alien drama of 'Strong Moment' or 'Passing Clouds'. You are choosing excitement and feeling over death. *Tony Naylor*
DOWNLOAD: 'Passing Clouds'

GARETH SAGER

SLACK SLACK MUSIC (CREEPING BENT)

8



Gareth Sager was guitarist in legendary post-punkers The Pop Group and his debut solo album follows their wobbly avant-reggae lines. Instead of sticking to minimalism, though, it piles on funk, soul, glam, and howls of invocation like a demonic game of *Buckaroo*. 'Bad Bad Loser' is like The Fall joining the dancefloor to intimidate the dancers with full throttle agro-funk. 'So Fired Up' is voodoo rockabilly straight from a David Lynch nightclub, 'Dollar Hungry' like John Spencer doing Prince and 'Hot Hits Vol 27' is a genius Tom Waits/Elvis hybrid. Titles such as 'Not Since The Accident' and 'Draining Swan Lake' indicate the level of wit on display here and the album feels fun in a way you wouldn't expect from the old guard. Sager's the disco Captain Beefheart. *Mega. Martin Robinson*
DOWNLOAD: 'So Fired Up'



Busted

BUSTA RHYMES

BACK ON MY BS (UNIVERSAL MOTOWN)

6

It would be so much better if he knew who he was and didn't rely on 100 producers

Busta Rhymes on a unicycle, juggling balls while eating fire and hypnotising rabbits he's recently pulled from hats isn't just a good concept for his next Hype Williams video, it's an apt summary of his latest release. It's been a full three years since the sleek, edgy minimalism of 2006's 'The Big Bang', and given that album's *Billboard* Chart-topping status and strong critical reception, right now seems like a good point in his ridiculously lengthy career for Busta-Bus to use that banked creative capital to go a bit auteur on us. Sadly, 'Back On My BS' is the exact opposite: the sound of Busta waking up one morning in a cold sweat, terrified the public have forgotten him and scattergunning all points on the compass to win them back. Smooove slowies, piano plonking introspection, dancehall, an oily jism of Dirty South synth horns, enough Auto Tune to finally, surely, drive the last nails into its garish coffin and plenty of straight-ahead fayre in between all amounts to no more than the sum of its parts. With 11 different producers across 13 tracks, if this album sounds like it could've been made by anyone, then that's because the cast list is an effective summary of which guns-for-hire are cutting it right now. So, in the producer's chair, say hello to our old friends Pharrell, Danja and Ty Fyffe. Stacked on top of their efforts, Busta opens the door wide to other high-net-value, cross-synergising brand platforms such as Lil Wayne, T-Pain, TI, John Legend, Akon

and Estelle. The only reason Young Jeezy doesn't appear is that his part was overdubbed to make way for Lil Wayne, which says it all, really. We'd begrudge him such a transparent approach if it didn't throw up as many hits as misses. Pharrell's 'Kill Dem' and the Weezy-featuring 'Respect My Conglomerate' are deliciously crunchy. The head-nodding genius of 'I'm A Go And Get My...' features a shot homie spluttering pathetically about Medicaid in one of the most comical death scenes this side of Tarantino. When the material is weak (anything smooth, anything Auto-Tuned), Busta can't seem to work up the effort to attack it. When it's strong - as on the 'Sweet Dreams'-sampling Flo Rida riposte 'World Go Round' - he rises to the occasion and knocks it out the park. Taken on its own merits, there are more than enough moments on 'Back On My BS' to stop the world from forgetting his name. The pity is that, given he's one of rap's most distinctive voices, right now Busta seems to have no idea who he is. *Gavin Haynes*

DOWNLOAD: 1) 'World Go Round' 2) 'I'm A Go Get My' 3) 'Respect My Conglomerate'

DID YOU KNOW...

The album was originally due in late 2007. Some tracks released as singles such as 'We Made It' featuring Linkin Park, never made the final cut

LIVE!

UPFRONT AND BACKSTAGE

Published by Harper & Row



Mr Hudson
shoots Kanye
a wistful gaze



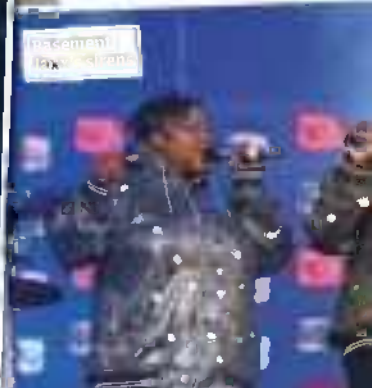
Mike Skinner; or
in those shorts,
any Brit abroad



The crowd: before
Kanye bored them,
obviously



Peñate has
a party



Wild West End



WIRELESS FESTIVAL

HYDE PARK, LONDON
SATURDAY, JULY 4 - SUNDAY, JULY 5

Kanye makes a failed bid for the vacant King Of Pop title but the UK's MCs reign supreme as parklife turns bonkers

Just days after Blur's triumphant Hyde Park comeback shows and you might have expected an air of hungover contemplation to settle over central London's greenest acreage. Far from it. The Essex lads who chanted 'Parklife' all the way back along the Central Line last night have merely been replaced by their younger brothers yelling 'Bonkers', ripped to the tits on pear cider, poppers and sunstroke.

At least it means that everything on Wireless' rather eccentric, cobbled-together bill gets a raucous reception, even the mumsy Europop of **Saint Etienne** or a brief flurry of voguing from Britain's Got Talent dance divs **Diversity**. Only the fey, folky sounds drifting over from the Bella Union bandstand succeed in thoroughly perplexing the gangs of shirtless geezers marauding merrily through the festival site.

The parkies are still fishing Blur-branded bumf out of the Serpentine when **The Phenomenal Handclap Band** bound onstage at 2pm. An eight-strong troupe of hippy-dippy New Yorkers

fronted by two near-identical raven-haired beauties and a bloke who looks like Justin Lee Collins, they play cosmic '70s funk-rock with the smiley, cult-like zeal of The Polyphonic Spree. It's not quite phenomenal, but it's certainly a lot of fun.

Jack Peñate's new tropical direction, meanwhile, is tailor-made for the mid-afternoon sun and, fleshed out by brass and backing singers, he's sounding better than ever. If only he wasn't so dislikeable. His between-song banter is hopelessly

insincere and he keeps moaning about the heat, despite refusing to remove the jacket that makes him look like a Ukrainian mobster on safari.

Inevitably, the day's best outfits belong to the ladies of **Basement Jaxx**: one minute they're new-rave lollipop ladies, the next they're clad in mirrorball hoodies, then they're back onstage dressed as The Supremes. The hits come thicker and faster than the costume changes: 'Oh My Gosh', 'Red Alert', with newie 'Raindrops' slotting right in. It's an exhilarating spectacle. But the nagging feeling of something missing is

It's a bold, impressive move, and we're with him, right up until the lumpen 'It's Amazing', when four topless, gold-painted models stroll on and drape themselves at his feet like he's some kind of minor deity.

"Sometimes people don't understand what I do," moans Kanye, before embarking on an interminable version of 'Say You Will'. As the irascible crowd resume lobbing plastic bottles at each other, Kanye only becomes more and more distant up on his crystal podium. Then it hits you: the rolled-up jacket sleeves, the shades, the gloves, the

Christ-like poses, the swooning acolytes at his feet, the way he never once looks down at the crowd but always up to the sky as if he's getting his affirmation from a higher power - Kanye actually thinks he's Michael Jackson. He's spotted the vacancy for a King Of Pop and this bombastic, self-indulgent performance is his application form. Expect to see a 50-foot high statue of Kanye West floating down the Thames any day now.

Ultimately, the weekend belongs to two British MCs without such lofty views of themselves. **Dizzee Rascal** reprises his Glastonbury turn with even more infectious gonzo energy and 'Bonkers' goes off like a firecracker, sending everyone in a mile radius completely doolally. It's in danger of all going a bit Club 18-30, however: Dizzee's corny new single 'Holiday' is perilously close to being this generation's 'Agadoo'.

It's left to **The Streets** to inject some love into the occasion. Discarding his bomber jacket and T-shirt as the Stage 2 tent reaches a temperature that could support nuclear fusion, Mike Skinner orchestrates his congregation of sweaty, strung-out ravers to skank, mosh, 'go low', laugh, cry and sing their hearts out. It's the only set of the festival to generate the same kind of heart-busting bonhomie as Blur managed the night before. Maybe we don't need a new King Of Pop: we just need a slightly out-of-shape chap in cut-off denim shorts telling us everything's going to be alright. **Sam Richards**



"Yeah, I heard backstage Kanye telling some girls that it really is thiiiiiiiiis big!"

underlined when they drop in a snatch of 'Sex On Fire' and it elicits the biggest singalong of the festival.

Sunday is inescapably **Kanye West** day. He's inveigled his two latest protégés onto the bill - **Kid Cudi** is bouncy and charming but unlikely to ever have another hit; **Mr Hudson** is slick and annoying but will have plenty - and backstage gossip concerns the silly money Kanye is apparently getting for turning up. At least he's ploughed some of the cash back into constructing an incredible sci-fi stage set that makes it look like he's singing from inside a giant game of *Asteroids*.

From the moment he kicks off with 'Coldest Winter' it's clear that Kanye isn't playing the obvious summer festival game. His set draws heavily on the introspective Auto-Tuned balladry of '808s & Heartbreak', with even 'Touch The Sky' and 'Through The Wire' painted in yearning, melancholy hues.

"It's OK Mr Hudson, I'm coming soon!"

Dizzee bigs up our headline



Pub-squall wizards

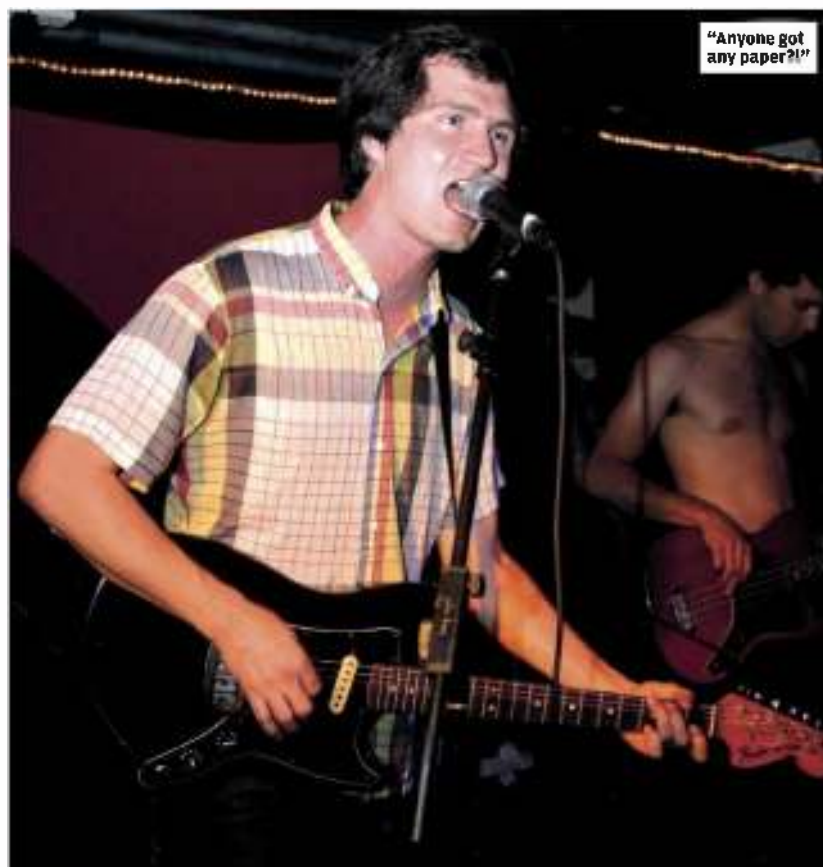
INVASION
THE MACBETH, LONDON
FRIDAY, JULY 3

Knocking metal out of its niche and out of the park

The last time *NME* was in this posour's paradise in east London it was as a DJ. The set included a track by Italian doom metallers UFOmammot which was so heavy it made one unfortunate punter void his bowels on the dancefloor, causing the venue to be, er, evacuated. Luckily, the closest we get to this tonight is by having to declare that *Invasion* are the shit. Their set has to be cut short because London-based Japanese psych-rock-opaths Bo Ningen play well over their allotted time (but are brilliant nonetheless). This works in *Invasion*'s favour as not only are the audience of hipsters rattled by the sight of crazy long-hairs in garish dresses playing guitar solos with their teeth, but the main act have to become as focused as a James Bond baddie's

laser beam to impart their musical message. This message may be one of refinement and recontextualisation rather than radical and bold strides into uncharted territory but that doesn't matter because, to put it simply, they are heavier than Mechagodzilla's bollocks and rock like a Weeble on crystal meth. They open with new song 'Behind The Black Gate', the B-side to next single 'Spells Of Deception', and this sets out their stall like a man with a sack full of monkey's paws in a dusty bazaar. Six-(well, three-) stringed assassin Marek plays in front of a miniature 'Henge constructed entirely from vintage Orange speakers, unleashing slugs of sludge-blasted doom and Mesolithic Blue Cheer riffola. He is bedecked in a vintage Led Zeppelin T-shirt, which is apt because the octopus aping ghost of John Bonham seems to be occupying the corporeal

form of flame-haired drummer Zel tonight. The focal point of the stage at all times, though, is Chan Brown who, resplendent in a striped kaftan/wizard's robes, is a shamanistic singer who finds new ground to call her own somewhere between the blues explosion of Beth Ditto's holler, the gritty soul tones of The BellRays' Lisa Kekaula and the psychedelic gospel wail of Chrome Hoof's Lola Olafisoye. A guitar malfunction causes Marek to explode and fling his axe wildly at an innocent piano before plugging in a see-through perspex model and continuing. And, after 'Rainbows', as Zel reduces her kit to matchsticks, you realise this is a happy metaphor for this colourful band who throw showmanship, electricity and glamour in the face of dour authenticity and smash restraint to pieces. Awesome. No shit. *John Doran*



Top bogs



THE SOFT PACK
GINGLIK, LONDON
THURSDAY, JULY 2

Flushed with hype, the San Diegans now land in a converted toilet, but come up smelling of roses

A man stands outside an old public toilet in west London. Looking shifty, he paces the pavement with his hands clasped tight in his pockets, trying not to attract attention. It's 35 minutes until The Soft Pack are due onstage and frontman Matt Lamkin appears to be nervous. This isn't unexpected. Now that the hype about the San Diegan quartet has died down, the real pressure is on, with cynics eager to find out if they're actually any cop, and Lamkin knows it.

The buzz of tonight's secret gig has spread enough to ensure that Shepherd's Bush venue Ginglik (aka the disused underground public bogs on the Green) is the most scrutinised convenience since George Michael went for a piss in Hampstead Heath – and an air of expectation abounds.

Onstage, the band look way more convincing than when we first saw them, supporting Black Lips back in February. Lamkin is the embodiment of this newfound bravado. He doesn't stalk or swagger or jump around, he

prows. It works best when his guitar is in its rack and he's free to hold the mic, weirdly recalling a more-of-this-planet Shaun Ryder.

Of the tunes, 'Extinction' still greets you like a long-lost friend (it's the lazier, better-looking cousin of 'Last Nite'), while the final instrumental minute of 'Rite And Wrong' just is rock'n'roll – four men gleaming unadulterated aural brilliance from a few bits of stringed wood. Newie 'More Or Less' also stands out; its CBGB riff all spunked up and nostalgic enough to spike surely the lamest of Topshop knobbers into action.

But... as yet, the revolution holds no real revelations. The Soft Pack's refusal to bend over and let uncle sell-out do his business has left them somewhat isolated, walking the tightrope between seeming impishly negligent and being plain old scenerist wank material. They are undoubtedly on the right track though, so with a little luck the fruits of their gestation will benefit from their coyness. After all, too much hype early on only sends bands down the shitter. *Matt Wilkinson*

SHORT SETS

UNTITLED MUSICAL PROJECT

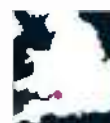
THE LEXINGTON
LONDON, 06/07/09
Recession. Swine flu. A new Kasabian album. Let's face it, life can be pretty shit. More so now Birmingham's power-punk treasures Untitled Musical Project have decided to shut up shop. But, as a final farewell, the trio unleash their cataclysmic fury in the only way they know how – by playing songs called things like 'Why Isn't Paul McCartney Dead Already?', jovially berating some Dutch people for being overly enthusiastic and forcing the front row to mosh. Their loss is enough to give you the UMP. *Ash Dosanjh*

HERE WE GO MAGIC

ICA, LONDON
06/07/09
At the ICA for their first UK gig, the onus is on Here We Go Magic to prove whether they're mere smooth-bollocked Harry Potters from the hipster Hogwarts that is Brooklyn, or sorcerers made of sterner stuff. At times, they borrow from dusty tomes of lore left by avant garde, lo-fi sonic explorers to create an atmosphere dense and detailed, like a forest viewed from a distance. Yet these crones are often overly polite, and if they're going to conjure enough of a distraction to stop us on the blasted heath, HWGM must add darker ingredients to their cauldron. *Luke Turner*



SAINTS AND WINNERS



ST VINCENT
THEKLA, BRISTOL
MONDAY JULY 6

If there's one thing more sickening than the recent deluge of jaws agog at the notion that two X chromosomes do not an insuperable musical deficiency make, it's the fact that some of the most innovative and crucial female musicians remain underrated in favour of certain mould-fresh synth-poppers. Step forward Annie Clark, the chaotically-coiffed Oklahoman who goes by the name of St Vincent and sounds nothing like The Human League, Kate Bush or Björk – suck on that, pigeonholers! Yet, despite the near universal acclaim showered on her equal parts 1930s Disney-soundtrack and King Crimson-inspired second album, 'Actor', it's comparatively quiet aboard Bristol's Thekla this evening, and there's the sweet scent of schadenfreude in the air at the expense of those who are missing out.

From the thrusting jazz-lounge bop of 'Marry Me' in all its live syncopated wonder, it's pretty clear that Clark's interest in glitter and theatrics lies solely within the music; the perfectionist intuition between her and her band of bearded merry men is such that the flicker of an eyebrow or drawing of breath acts as a sort of Morse code for speed and sparkle, but it never feels clinical or rehearsed. On 'The Strangers' she coos her own spacey backing vocals on dual microphones, harmonising eerily with the woodwind, and 'Save Me From What I Want' corrupts its recorded beauty with a jarring time difference between guitar and vocals.

Incongruity is perhaps one of Annie's greatest strengths – walloping and poised, during the demonic shredding on 'Now Now' and single 'Actor Out Of Work' she convulses as if trapped in a lightning bolt, and beats her guitar during the thumbnail-screw riff of 'Marrow' to make it scream louder. The encore's a perfect juxtaposition of celestial beauty and gnarliness with 'The Party' and the rapturously-received 'Your Lips Are Red', but she's humble to the last. Never mind the showgirls – it's always the quiet ones. *Laura Snapes*



LIVE!

Spaced oddity

JANELLE MONÁE

BROOKLYN ACADEMY OF MUSIC, NEW YORK
MONDAY, JULY 6

Remember the name: this pocket dynamo is heading for superstardom

The last time Janelle Monáe was in Brooklyn was when she opened up for Of Montreal a couple of months back. On that occasion, she enthralled the po-faced, indie-schmindy wimps in attendance – most of whom would like the biggest buzz they usually get was masturbating to *Pitchfork's* 9.0+ album ratings. By contrast, tonight she's faced with the borough's free Afro-Punk festival crowd; a much grittier gathering of streetwise skateboarders, dreadlocked Bad Brains fans and local homeboys just out to see what the fuss is all about. The end result, however, is exactly the same: pandemonium. That's how good the elfin, P Diddy protégée from Middle America really is.

That crossover appeal couldn't be more obvious if she had a marketing report taped to her backside, but there's not a trace of cynical, record company engineering to Monáe. Her talent is 100 per cent natural. She's got the to-die-for voice of Beyoncé, the lightning fast moves of James Brown, the outrageous flair of Grace Jones, the gravity-defying quiff of Little Richard and the visionary mind of George Lucas. It's a combination of styles, influences and passions that hurtle at you like a soul train from the 28th century, and that's not an arbitrary epoch we've chosen either. The year 2719 is the time in which her first album, *'Metropolis: The Chase Suite'* is based and, in light of the otherworldly excitement created by *'Violet Stars Happy Hunting!'* and *'Many Moons'*, it's a damn convincing concept.

Having left the crowd enraptured by the sci-fi R&B of those two openers, she then does an about-turn by playing *'Smile'*, an epic, *'Purple Rain'*-sized ballad which stops the party dead by the power of voice alone. For anyone else, it'd be a showstopper, but for Monáe it's a mere prelude to her finger-painting exploits during *'Mushrooms And Roses'*, before she again drops jaws with the sub-atomic funk of *'Tightrope'* – a tune which makes her collaborators OutKast sound like they've got as much groove as Chas & Dave.

It takes just 40 minutes for Janelle Monáe to tick all the boxes on the *'Things A Great Pop Star Should Be'* checklist and create a few extra attributes too. Her reward for this can't be far off. *Hardeep Phull*

Janelle indicates that there's only one direction that quiff's going

Sun people:
lead singer
Brian Aubert...

California steaming

SILVERSUN PICKUPS
MANCHESTER ACADEMY 2
THURSDAY, JULY 2

LA gang bring out their scorching melodies

Two noticeable things happen when an LA band plays Manchester. Firstly, their gig sells out leaving everyone in the venue feeling like it's raining sweat and, secondly, when the band arrives onstage, they immediately gush about playing in the city where "a lot of our favourite bands are from". But while anyone with common sense will tell you that Mancunians are some of the proudest gobshites on the planet, we're not here to talk about us; tonight is all about the sweet rock'n'roll of LA's Silversun Pickups – and they've even brought the sun with them.

Opener 'Growing Old Is Getting Old', with its slow-starting, dreamily-harmonised double vocals, kicks in after three-and-a-half minutes courtesy of Brian Aubert's guitar, teasing and

building up the sort of exciting, explosive intensity we wish all gigs began with. The often underrated 'Little Lover's So Polite' is no such thing here as, behind a shy smile, bassist Nikki Monninger's voice glides seamlessly from here into the next track, the killer chorus number 'It's Nice To Know You Work Alone', where Aubert begrudgingly confesses "my head is reeling".

One of the best things about Silversun Pickups as a live band is how tight they sound during even the most impromptu of bleeding-bass endings, their presence is felt 'til the very last second of the very last note on the grungy twists of 'Kissing Families'. Make the comparisons to Billy Corgan's best-known venture if you must, but that'd be all too easy; for one thing, unlike Smashing Pumpkins, this lot aren't fronted by a complete mentalist, plus they actually seem to like each other. Finishing on the gorgeous 'Lazy Eye', a tune which should surely be stadium singalong material one of these days, SP are just as sweaty and happy as their fans.

There must be no shortage of music at any given time in LA all making a potent mixture of the good, the bad and the downright '80s ugly. But, for tonight at least, the City Of Angels seems like a lifesaver for letting this worthy bunch out of the smog and into the Manchester sun. *Kelly Murray*

...and bassist
Nikki Monninger

SHORT SETS

STRANGE FOLKS

DUBLIN CASTLE, LONDON, 01/07/09
Didn't see this one coming. The bearded weirdos *NME* just spotted trotting around this Camden boozier in baggy jeans and waistcoats and specs, tooting randomly on harmonicas and rattling bells, are now onstage dishing out romantic, dusty folk rock. Singer Idan Rabinovici, eyes closed throughout, hit every branch of the hotted tree on his way down, which certainly helps tonight's compelling performance along. Think *Tindersticks* with Jonny Greenwood guitars; all warmly-layered, nicely textured and tight. Truly eccentricity gone right. *Camilla Pin*

FAKE BLOOD

SHINE, BELFAST 04/07/09
Though a clipped robotic voice announces his arrival onstage, the latest titan of the turntables, Fake Blood, twiddles knobs and drops beats with fluid ease tonight. A mere 10 minutes into his set and Theo Keating has united punks and pill-heads under his skewed sonic vision and he doesn't let up for an hour-and-a-half. He treats us to snippets of the Tetris theme, flirts with Todd Terry-esque shuffles, loops 'La La Land' and gets punters to indulge in games of invisible basketball, effortlessly proving just why he's worth all the hype. *Edwin McFee*



GENTS NO MORE

THE VICTORIAN ENGLISH GENTLEMEN CLUB
CLWB IFOR BACH, CARDIFF
FRIDAY, JULY 3

To those boasting correctly functioning libidos, it seems sex and indie rock are uncomfortable bedfellows. Except nobody told Cardiff art-rock anomalies The Victorian English Gentlemen Club, whose second coming – no pun intended – has velled nookie on the damn brain. Not that the uninflated would twig via visual clues alone. Announcing their reincarnation with a hometown shindig that proves more succinct than sexy, there's precious little pillow talk, pleasantries banished in a rush to bash out as many gems as possible from overdue forthcoming second set 'Love On An Oil Rig'. Romance isn't dead, y'all. It just went a little, well, weird.

VEGC are notably altered from the trio that clattered through a partially-fulfilling self-titled debut three years ago, sonically and literally. Now numbering four, new drummer Dan Lazenby renders them statistically ballsier at 50 per cent gentlemen. He's a crashing sticksman contributing necessary velocity to clout their inner Belle & Sebastian dead. And, aside from increasing twee-secretary-standing-on-an-amplifier vibes, additional guitarist Steph Jones cranks up clanging treble levels sufficiently to neuter anybody straying too close to a stage decorated like Morrissey's dream village fete: plentiful flowers strewn under wavering bunting.

Nowhere is VEGC's new danger more apparent than brand spanking single 'Parrot', two minutes of Louise Mason's gut-awakening bass grind peppered with "oh-way-oh" harmonies. Klaxons would auction their Mercury Prize for. Frontman Adam Taylor leads the undead shuffle, a veritable CB6 Kurt Cobain, blond fringe obscuring lips emitting streams of (possibly) Innuendo-ridden yelps.

'Periscope Envy' turns a submarine into an item of sexual comparison. Even 'Bored In Belgium', a Pixies-echoing ditty outwardly detailing a continental migraine, can't resist slipping in the alarmingly sugar-sweet mantra "banging and banging and banging". And 'The Venereal Game'? We don't even want to know that back story. Ask not what the Victorians did for us, but rather what these Victorians will do, given half a chance, to you. *Adam Kennedy*

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Britten Sinfonia • The Irrepressibles
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NEW & UNSIGNED

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NEW BAND TIPS...

71 GET YOURSELF SOME STYLE

NME says: Don't just work on your music – getting your band to look good is important too

It's always been the case that the very best rock stars look good as well as sound great. Your band might just be starting out, but it's never too early to spruce up your look with a bit of thought and some charity shop-trawling. Aldene Johnson, who styles Florence

And The Machine, gives her advice on looking – as well as sounding – the part.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR A NEW BAND TO LOOK GOOD?

"The industry these days is all about the whole package. As well as sounding good, which is obviously first and foremost, you want to put across the best essence of yourself – and looking great goes a long way to doing that. It'll also give you the confidence to put in a better performance."

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE MAIN DOS AND DON'TS?

"Stay true to yourself and your own personal style. Trying to be something that you're not is the worst thing you can do. Understanding what you look good in is the first step, and then try to incorporate things into your personal style that you feel comfortable in. Don't just be dictated to by the high street!"

WHAT CAN YOU DO ON A BUDGET?

"If you want to be styled, look for local fashion colleges or design schools in your area and team up with a budding designer or stylist. Have an appreciation for fashion by looking in magazines, and go to charity shops – they're a big winner in terms of finding cheap cool pieces."



You may have to buy your own flag and flowers

WHAT NOW?

Contact a local fashion or sixth-form college to try and find a creative who you could consult on your band's style. Think about what look would fit best with your music, and start the bargain hunt for suitable clothes and accessories.



www.myspace.com/catwalktrash

NME SAYS: Sassy, Scout Nibett-ish one-woman guitar menace from Cape Town



NME SAYS: Strutting rock'n'roll brawn



NME SAYS: Clattering grunge racket from the black country

WORDS: ROX WEBB PHOTO: TONY DOLLEY

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I WANT TO SOUND LIKE... GALLOWES



Jim O'Driscoll, 17, Belfast:
"What guitars and recording gear do I need to sound like Gallows on 'Grey Britain'?"

THE SOUND

Pulverising riffage delivered with smarter-than-you-think techniques are the order of the day from the Hertfordshire hardcore rockers. Guitarists Steph Carter and Laurent Barnard summon up the crusading spirit of great ol' school punkers like Minor Threat and the classic raw vibe of rock veterans Black Sabbath.

THE GEAR

Although Fender Telecasters are always welcome around the Gallows guitarists, the mainstays of the sound are Gibson Les Pauls. If you've got a Marshall, Mesa Boogie or Orange amp head you'll be in a position to get a Gallows sound. A Durham Electronics Sex Drive will also come in handy to boost the signal to mosh-friendly levels.

IN THE STUDIO

In a bid to transfer the energy and vitality of the music intact, Gallows recorded 'Grey Britain' on to tape. What this lacks in terms of pristine audio quality is made up by a dynamic that makes it a lot warmer to the listener's ears (regardless of how raw the music is). Modern recording techniques are based on recording each individual sound and then mixing them all together in the right way. If you do this on tape the sounds still bleed in to each other, which makes it sound much more like

a band playing. If you want to try this out you can pick up a Tascam Portastudio on eBay for £30.

THE TECHNIQUE

The basis of Gallows' guitar sound is fast downstrokes (rather than strumming up and down) that add power to the proceedings. Start slowly, and only increase the speed when you can do it right at your current speed. And relax; tensing your whole arm will cause cramping.

BEST TRICK

Fast-picking melodies are a lot easier when you play closer to the neck of the guitar rather than the bridge, as the strings have a lot more give in them.



WHO DO YOU WANT TO SOUND LIKE?
EMAIL SOUNDLIKE@IPC.COM
AND WE'LL DO THE FRET WORK FOR YOU

NEXT WEEK:
Grizzly Bear

Words by John Callaghan from...

Guitar August Issue out now



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GIG GUIDE

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

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PICK OF THE WEEK...



PICK OF THE WEEK

GROWING

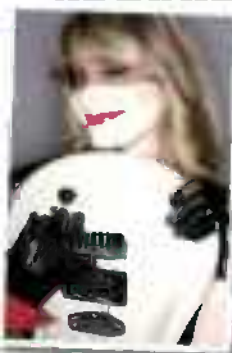
WHERE: LONDON | LIMINAIRE (MON), BRIGHTON FREEBUTT (TUE)

Psychotic, hallucinogenic noisecore; or, the middle ground where the fraughtness of drone and trippiness of ambient music blissfully co-exist. These shows follow the Brooklyn via Washington State trio's support slot with Boris last year.

WWW.NME.COM/artists/growing

EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT

MARNIE STERN



WHERE: LATITUDE FESTIVAL (SAT), CARDIFF BUFFALO BAR (MON), LEEDS BRUDENELL SOCIAL CLUB (TUES)

Following her triumphant performance at last May's ATP, singer-songwriter extraordinaire Marnie Stern heads back to these shores for the summer's festivals and her own solo tour.

WWW.NME.COM/artists/marnie-stern



PICK OF CLUB NME

TELEGRAPHS

WHERE: DONCASTER PRIORY (FRI)

Making sure they get the alternative rock message through to Club NME this week are Brighton five-piece Telegraphs. Shout it loud, Doncaster.

WWW.NME.COM/clubnme



DON'T MISS

SUPER FURRY ANIMALS

WHERE: LONDON SOMERSET HOUSE (SAT)

Something for the weekend: the Welsh quintet get set for the glorious surround-sound treatment, as they take part in the majestic Somerset House's annual series of outdoor gigs.

WWW.NME.COM/artists/super-furry-animals

RADAR STARS

THE SOUND OF ARROWS

WHERE: LONDON HOXTON SQUARE BAR & KITCHEN (WED)

Saint Etienne meets Lemon Jelly with not an Enya-loving humpback whale in sight. The glittery and shiny Swedish ensemble of Stefan Storm and Oskar Gullstrand hit the UK for a much-anticipated one-off date in the capital to perform their wayward powered pop. Expect nothing less than beautiful fantasy.

WWW.NME.COM/artists/the-sound-of-arrows



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WEDNESDAY

JULY 15

Field Day and Underage Festival organiser Tom Baker joins Iain Baker (no relation) to discuss this week's singles from 4pm

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Ebony Bones Waterfront
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Nial Rice Emme 028 9024 9276

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Carina Round O2 Academy 3
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Ne-Yo NIA 0121 780 4133

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Glomp Fire Albert 01273 730499

Lisa Hannigan Komedia
01273 647100

Sleepy Sun Freebult 01273 603974

BRISTOL
Solid Gold Start The Bus
0117 930 4370

You Animals Louisiana 0117 926 5978

DERBY
Athlete/Official Secrets Act/
Rain Archer Rockhouse 01332 209236

DUBLIN
Emmy The Great Crawdaddy
00 3531 478 0025

Manchester Orchestra Academy 2
00 3531 877 9999

GLASGOW
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Black Alley Screens Nice n' Sleazy
0141 333 9637

The Derek Trucks Band ABC2
0141 204 5151

Flo Rida O2 Academy 0870 771 2000

Kylea Ivory Blacks 0141 221 7871

Laid To Ruin Rockers 0141 221 0726

Lifestream Classic Grand
0141 221 4583

The Original Silencers Oran Mor
0141 552 9224

GUILDFORD
Anna & The Odd Socks Boiler Room
01483 440022

LEEDS
Bear Driver Cockpit 0113 244 3446

Warrior Soul Rios 01274 735549

LIVERPOOL
The Game O2 Academy
0870 771 2000

The Pogues Echo Arena
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As Silence Falls The Fly
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Bayofondo LOKO 020 7388 3222

Band Of Skulls/Goldheart
Assembly/King Charles
The Lexington 020 7837 5387

Betamar Comedy 020 7839 7261

The Bossbass Garage 020 7607 1818

The Eighties Matchbox B-Line
Disaster 100 Club 020 7636 0933

Gannets/Braindead Collective
Windmill 020 8671 0700

Glasslights Queen Of Hoxton
020 7422 0958

Jacob's Stories/Richard Walters
Betsey Trotwood 020 7336 7326

The Last Details 93 Feet East
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The Night Marchers Underworld
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Nine Inch Nails The O2 Arena
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Pendulum Somerset House
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& Crosses Band Bulfalo Bar
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Soldiers Of Jah Army Jazz Cafe
020 7916 6060

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Bright Light Hoxton Square Bar
811tchen 020 7613 0709

Stanley/The Elements Dublin Castle
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Scritchlight/UK Bull & Gate
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Reverend & The Makers Academy 3
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JULY 16

Cambridge, Massachusetts outfit Passion Pit join Samantha from 12 noon for an intimate chat about their year so far

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Wound The Royal 01332 367720

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Willie Byrne Empire 028 9024 9276

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Apollonia 02 Academy 3

0870 771 2000

The Derek Trucks Band

02 Academy 2 0870 771 2000

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0870 771 2000

NORTH AMPTON

City 41 Delete Roadmender Centre

01454 641452

NORWICH

Mutya Brown UEA 01603 505401

NOTTINGHAM

Spiritual Bed Rescue Rooms

0115 924 3434

Hey Vampires Mucky Mulligans

01738 632 650

Dead Havana Met Lounge

01733 566100

Toxic Twins Hog And Hesper

07813 153 647

Tim Spark Cellars 0871 230 1094

Mindshock The Mad Ferret

01772 257180

Elephant Keys Boardwalk

0114 279 9090

The Gentlemen Plug 0114 276 7099

My Generation New Barrack Tavern

0114 234 9148

Broken Links Talking Heads

023 8056 5899

The Novatores Joiners 023 8022 5612

Latitude Festival: Pet Shop Boys/

Bat For Lashes/Ladyhawke/Broken

Family Band/Flashguns/Temper

Trap/Chairlift/1990s/Amazing

Babyl Henham Park 0870 060 3775

STOCK ON TIGHT

Use Home Base Sugarm J

01747 14 941

ST ALBANS

Polly Poulton Horn 01727 811143

STEWARDS

Broken Daylight The Vic 01793 535713

Calm Like A Bomb The Furnace

01793 534238

Aldehyde Snooty Fox 01924 374455

Leadis Band Escobar 01924 332000

Caretaker The Railway 01962 867 795

Conquest Of Steel Fibbers

01904 651 250

The School City Screen Basement Bar

01904 541144

The Strands The Stone Roses Bar

01904 670696

SATURDAY

JULY 18

Hip Parade The Tunnels 01224 211121

Port Erin Moles 01225 404445

Thomas Tantrum Oh Yeah Music

Centre 028 90 310 845

Gillman Street 02 Academy 3

0870 771 2000

Jon Allen Glee Club 0870 241 5093

WtN Sawhney Concorde 2

01273 673311

Paige Freebutt 01273 603974

Casino Drive Fleece 0117 945 0996

Evita 02 Academy 0870 771 2000

First Degree Burns Croft

0117 987 4144

Go Dutch/The Goodness Louisiana

0117 926 5978

Katie Steimanis Start! The Bus

0117 930 4370

The Mounthoolies Portland Arms

01223 357268

Geek Girl The Globe 07738 983947

Right Hand Left Hand Club for Bach

029 2023 2199

The Grudge Cyprus Avenue

00 35321 427 6165

The Souvenirs/Young Guns/

Theremino/Dog Is Dead

Rockhouse 01332 209 236

Adrian Crowley Whelan's

00 3531 475 9372

Simple Minds Castle 020 7771 2000

The Wonder Years The GRV

0131 220 2987

Arca Felix Stereo 0141 576 5018

Bad Day? ABC2 0141 204 5151

Blair Douglas Oran Mor 0141 552 9224

Malcolm MacFarlane Quartet Bre!

0141 342 4966

Nell McClafferty 02 Academy 2

0870 771 2000

Punto The Feet Capitol 0141 331 0140

Spinnerette King Tut's Wah Wah Hut

0141 221 5279

Take A Worm For A Walk Week/

Divorce Nice/Sleazy 0141 333 9637

Tiesto/Andy Duguid SECC

0141 248 3000

Withered Hand 13th Note Cafe

0141 553 1638

The Kahoolas Club 85 01462 432767

A Lot Like Eskimos Cockpit

0113 244 3446

The Kingcrows Cardigan Arms

0113 274 2000

Unknown Cause Rios 01274 735549

Alexis Blue 02 Academy 2

0870 771 2000

The Christians 02 Academy

0870 771 2000

The Accelerators/Zatopeks Windmill

020 8671 0700

An Albatross Borderline

020 7734 5547</

SUNDAY

JULY 19

BIRMINGHAM

The Warlocks Rainbow 0121 772 8174

BRIGHTON

Jason Ringenberg The Albert

01273 730499

Kong Free Juhl 01273 603974

Sabbat Engine Room 01273 728999

BRISTOL

Joseph Arthur & The Lonely

Astronauts Thekla

0871 310 0000

CARDIFF

Swim Team/Man Without Country

Buffalo Bar 02920 310312

DUBLIN

Neosupervival Whelan's

00 3531 475 9372

GLASGOW

Eclusion Rockers 0141 221 0726

Flood Of Red/Jocasta Sleeps

Kling Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279

Morace Andy Ferry

01698 360085

I Have Clones The Twisted Wheel

0141 221 4851

The Laughing Assassins Nite'n'Sleazy

0141 333 9637

The Wonder Years Ivory Blacks

0141 221 7871

LEEDS

Shadows Chasing Ghosts Rios

01774 735549

LIVERPOOL

Art Brut O2 Academy

0870 771 2000

LONDON

Allen Toussaint Jazz Cafe

020 7916 6060

Sat For Lashes/Polly Scattergood

Roundhouse 020 7482 7318

The Delicateers/The Schoolgirls

Dublin Castle 020 7485 1773

Gagarin Arts Clinic 020 7460 4459

Lovebox Weekender: Gruff

Rhys/New York Dolls/Doves/

Danananaykroyd/Bombay

Bicycle Club/Chew Lips/Chairlift

Victoria Park 0870 040 0058

Morrissey O2 Brixton Academy

0870 771 2000

Ne-Yo Indigo @ The O2 Arena

0870 701 4444

No Turning Back Live @ World

020 7482 1932

Sarah Leanne Palmer/Mikki Felle

Good Ship 020 7372 2544

Secondhand Serenade Borderline

020 7734 5547

Specimen Embassy Club 0871 230 1094

NEWCASTLE

The Force Egypt Collage

0191 232 0218

The Revolutionaries The Tyne

0191 255 2550

The Smittens Head Of Steam

0191 232 4379

Stottin Headaches Star Inn

0191 222 3111

Wolf In A Q2 Academy 2

0870 771 2000

NOTTINGHAM

The Bridal Procession/Many Things

Untold/Zenith and The Winterhill

Syndicate Junkies 7 0115 911 6959

Eliza Gilkyson Muzo 0115 947 5650

PERTH

Joey Terrifying/A War Against

Sound Lucky Mulligans

01738 632 650

SOUTHAMPTON

Have Heart/Rise And Fall Talking

Heads 023 8055 5899

Hayseed Dixie Brook 023 8055 5366

Julie Burridge Platform Tavern

023 8033 7232

Shaped By Fate Joiners

023 8022 5612

SOUTHWOLD

Latitude Festival: Nick Cave And

The Bad Seeds/Thom Yorke/

ILUKETRA/NS/Saint Etienne/

Magazine/Gossip/!!!/Mirrors/Sky

Larkin/Fight Like Apes/Slow

Club/Cashkidds/Marina And

The Diamonds Herham Park

0870 060 3775

STOKE ON TRENT

Dividing The Line Sugarmill

01782 214991

WAKEFIELD

12 Gauge Facelift Shouty Fox

01924 374455

YORK

Justin Moorhouse City Screen

Basement Bar 01904 541144

MONDAY

JULY 20



Calvin Harris, Somerset House, London



Specimen Embassy Club, London

BIRMINGHAM

Kid British Rai Junction 0121 772 8174

BRIGHTON

Still Flyin' Freeburt 01273 603974

BRISTOL

The Zatopeks Croft 0117 987 4144

CAMBRIDGE

Leah Mason Portland Arms

01223 35721

CARDIFF

Marnie Stern/Tartuffi Buffalo Bar

02920 310312

The Warlocks/The Wild Palms/The

Muscle Club Barfly 029 2066 7658

DUBLIN

Booker T Jones Vicar St

00 3531 889 4900

Leonard Cohen The O2 01 819 8888

EDMURGH

Flood Of Red/Here Lies A Warning

The GRV 0131 220 2987

EXETER

Hayseed Dixie Phoenix 01392 667080

GLASGOW

Mimi Soya/The Auteur/Lost On

Campus/My Actions Your Exit

Ivory Blacks 0141 221 7871

New York Dolls Garage 011 332 1120

The Smittens Stereo 0141 576 5018

Wolf In A Glass Youth/The Darlen

Venture King Tut's Wah Wah Hut

0141 221 5279

HAVE HEART/RISE AND FALL

Joseph's Well 0115 203 1861

Joseph Arthur & The Lonely

Astronauts Brudenell Social Club

0113 243 5866

LIVERPOOL

The Death Set Korova 0151 709 7097

LONDON

Amos Lee Jazz Café 020 7916 6060

Calvin Harris Somerset House

020 7344 4444

Clint Mansell Union Chapel

020 7226 1686

DM Silth Hoxton Square Bar & Kitchen

020 7613 0709

Growing/Weissenhofdai/Team

Brick Luminaire 020 7372 7123

The 1 Hearts/Deadwax 93 Feet East

020 7247 6095

Let's Wrestle Barfly 0870 907 0999

Long Knives/Aime Duffy Hope &

Anchor 020 7354 1312

Lucas Renney Windmill

020 8071 0700

Melko The Fly 0870 907 0999

Monster Bobby The Old Queen's Head

0207 639 7261

My Dark Star/Jajuka Dublin Castle

020 7485 1773

Ryan Whatley Troubadour Club

020 7370 1434

SUGAR RAY FORD & THE ZEPHYRS OF SWING

100 Club 020 7636 0933

MANCHESTER

Alexis Kartell

0161 261 6740

Deaf Havana/Dividing The Line

Satan's Hollow 0161 236 0666

Ignominious Incarceration Jabez

0161 272 8612

NEWCASTLE

The Leisure Society Cluny

0191 261 4474

OXFORD

Lisa Mills Bullington Arms

01865 244516

PORTSMOUTH

Army Stud Cellars 0871 230 094

SHEFFIELD

Testament Corporation

0114 276 0262

SOUTHAMPTON

The Kabeedies Joiners 023 8022 5612

SWANSEA

Paige/Thekkid/fireworks/Portraits/

City To City/Skip To The Next Track

Sin City 01792 654226

WAKEFIELD

The Hypes/Astor/Feels Like Tuesday

Escobar 01924 332000

YORK

Richard Walters The Speakeasy

0871 230 1094

TUESDAY

JULY 21

BRIGHTON
Growing Freebutt 01273 603974
The Polly Sharg Kuan Band
The Albert 01273 730499

BRISTOL
Conscious Unconscious/I Am Bodhi
Fleece 0117 945 0996
Joshua Radin 02 Academy
0870 771 2000
The Warlocks Thekla 08713 100000

CARDIFF
Still Flyin' Buffalo Bar 02920 310312
Straight Lines/Cuba Cuba/Tiger
Please/Motion In Colour Barfly
029 2066 7658

DUBLIN
Aela Diane Crawdaddy
00 3531 478 0225
Chucho Valdes Vicar St
00 3531 889 4900
Eric Bogle/Wheeler's 00 3531 475 9372
John Mayall & The Bluesbreakers
Academy 00 3531 877 9999

EDINBURGH
Dave Arcari Henry's Cellar Bar
0131 221 1258
Luxury Car The Electric Circus
0131 226 4224
Mighty Moth Magents The Ark
0131 228 9393
6 Day Riot Sneaky Pete's
0131 225 1757

GALWAY
Booker T Jones Roisin Dubh
00 35391 586540

GLASGO
Be A Familiar/Tango In The Attic
King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279
The Second Hand Marching Band
Stereo 0141 576 5018
Storm The Walls/Iconoclast/
The Party Program Rockers
0141 221 0726

Testament Garage 0141 332 1120
GUILDFORD
Amy Studt Boilerroom 01483 440022

HEMEL HEMPSTEAD
The Black Lights Jumpin Jaks
01422 292209

LEICESTER
The Auteur/Mimi Soya/Lost On
Campus Cockpit Room 3 0113 2441573
Dividing The Line/Deaf Havana
Joseph's Well 0113 203 1861
Marmie Stern/Nissenenmondal/
That Fucking Tank/Tartuff Brudenell
Social Club 0113 243 5966

LIVERPOOL
Simple Minds Echo Arena
0844 8000 400

LONDON
Bad Brains 02 Shepherds Bush
Empire 0870 771 2000
Blacksmith/Boy About Town Barfly
0870 907 0999

Black Joe Lewis Jazz Café
020 7916 6060
Bo Ningen/Azzurri/Psychedelic
Desert/Gish Good Ship 020 7372 2544
Carina Round/Reverso/Anna Cahl
Monto Water Rats 020 7637 1112

Cherry Brakewells/Tiny Tigers/
Velvetines/Heavy On The Levee
93 Feet East 020 7247 6095
Hjaltalin The Lexington 020 7837 5387
Jack Savoretti Bush Hall
020 8222 6955

John Watts 12 Bar Club
020 7240 2622
Junc/Folle Ordinaire Rhythm Factory
020 7247 9386

Lo-Fi Culture Scene/The Kabeedies/
Lion Club/Pull In Emergency
Luminaire 020 7372 7123
Morrissey 02 Brixton Academy
0870 771 2000
No Hope Astronaut Proud Galleries
020 7482 3867

Pentagram Underworld
020 7482 1932
Quarrel/Holly Dearden/Lyrebird/
Alex Wilson/Eddy Johns Troubadour
Club 020 7370 1434
The Ruling Class 100 Club
020 7636 0933

The Sagens/Missing White Women
Comedy 020 7839 7261
Saving Aimee Borderline
020 7734 5547
Zoo For You/Elle Jay/
Doug Sheridan Hope & Anchor
020 7354 1312

MANCHESTER
Grammatics Ruby Lounge
0161 834 1392
Joseph Arthur & The Lonely
Astronauts Deal Institute
0161 330 4019
The Leisure Society/Dan Michaelson
& The Coastguards Academy 3
0161 832 1111

Me Vs Hero Roadhouse
0161 228 1789

NEWCASTLE
Flood Of Red 02 Academy 2
0870 771 2000
Krystal Vayne/The Bimmys Cluny
0191 230 5474

NORTHAMPTON
Kid British/Skint And Demoralised/
The Jacks Roccomende Centre
01604 204

NORWICH
Jon Allen Arts Centre 01603 660352
Phil Brooke The Green Man
01603 782693

PETERBOROUGH
Ignominious Incarceration/
The Boy Will Drown/The Argent
Down/Bleed From Within
Met Lounge 01233 566100

PORTSMOUTH
The Foxes Cellars 0871 230 1094

SOUTHAMPTON
The Broadcast Harpingtons Bar
07919 253 508
The Longest Day Joiners
023 8022 5612

ST ALBANS
Elements Of Refusal/Firetone/
Hiding In Reno Horn 01727 853143

YORK
Les Cox Sportifs City Screen
Basement Bar 01904 541114

TICKETS ON SALE!

BOOKING NOW

Pixies' Black Francis
plauding the guitar



PIXIES

STARTS: BIRMINGHAM OLYMPIA, OCTOBER 1

Oh my golly! The seminal alternative rock four-piece regroup for a brief, but much-welcomed UK tour. If their not-so-secret gig in east London last month was anything to go by, then this is a string of dates not to be missed.
WWW.NME.COM/artists/pixies



THE FLAMING LIPS

STARTS: LONDON THE TROXY, NOVEMBER 10

The Oklahoma four-piece get set to tour following the release of their 12th studio album due for release this September.
WWW.NME.COM/artists/the-flaming-lips



BAT FOR LASHES

STARTS: Bournemouth OPEN A HOUSE, OCTOBER 1

Pearl's a dream. Natasha Khan, aka Bat For Lashes, announces a welcome batch of dates across the UK.
WWW.NME.COM/artists/bat-for-lashes



GREEN DAY

STARTS: GLASGOW SECC, OCTOBER 19

Pop-punk veterans Green Day carry on riding the crest of the success of their eighth studio album '21st Century Breakdown'.
WWW.NME.COM/artists/green-day



Morrissey, 02
Brixton Academy,
London

O₂ customers can get Priority Tickets to thousands of gigs nationwide up to 48 hours before general release. Just register at o2.co.uk/priority
When Priority Tickets are gone, they're gone. Terms apply.



GEAR

STUFF WE LOVE Edited by Ben Patashnik

NME ONLINE STORE

LENNY T-SHIRT

The man born Ian Fraser Kilmister's about as badass as it's possible for one human to be. And this T-shirt - featuring him in a Lord Kitchener-esque 'YOU MUST HAVE SOME WHISKY' pose - will go some way towards turning you into as much of a hard-livin' motherlover as he is. Oh, and to complete the image, you must answer every question anyone asks by jumping on a table and shouting, "You win some, lose some, it's all a game to me!"

NME.COM/store



£16

ECO DAB RADIO

The modern dilemma: you want to listen to digital radio, but you also like Planet Earth and don't want to kill her. The Pure Ecoplus Mini DAB is recommended by the Energy Saving Trust so, if you're in London, you can listen to NME Radio and save the world at the same time. To be in with a chance of winning one, correctly complete the crossword below.

£39.99



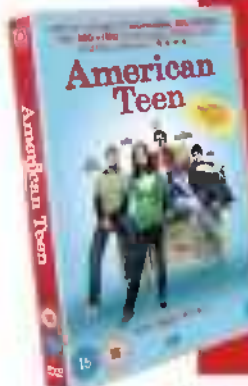
WIN THIS!
ENTER THE NME CROSSWORD BELOW

AMERICAN TEEN DVD

Geeks, nerds, jocks, freaks, weirdos, princesses and that pretty girl stuck in the middle - high school in the States has been reduced to a series of clichés by every teen movie ever. But *American Teen*, from Nanette Burstein, is a documentary that seems to say every stereotype is true. An enlightening and sometimes uncomfortable portrait of a bunch of kids growing up in Middle America.

www.paramount.com/homeentertainment

£17.99



£12

LOOPS MUSIC JOURNAL

Obviously we're biased here, but music journalism seems to be going from strength to strength. To celebrate good writing, Domino and Faber have joined forces to produce *Loops*, a high-end six-monthly journal full of insightful and delightfully long articles. Issue one has an unpublished Nick Kent article on Nick Drake (from 1978!), an extract from Nick Cave's novel *The Death Of Bunny Munro* and a bunch of other great features. If you take music seriously, you'll be happier than a vinyl junkie lost in an eternal record shop.

www.loopsjournal.com

THE NME CROSSWORD

WIN THE ECO DIGITAL RADIO

CLUES ACROSS

- 1 'In For The Kill' not such a sure-fire hit after all (11)
- 7-40 A largely colourful career so far for Robbie Furze's band (3-4)
- 9-25A Stepping out to Michael Jackson. 'Bad' cut it sounds like (5-2-3-5-5)
- 10 Icelandic band who took their name from Nick Drake's album 'Five... Left' (6)
- 11-22D Their albums include 'Aftermath' and 'Sticky Fingers' (7-6)
- 12 A bit of a chinwag with some rappers (1-1-1)
- 13 (See 23 across)
- 15 Member of Cast involved in a novelty song (5)
- 19 "No sleeping at night, but I'm going from bar to bar/ Why can't we just..." Paolo Nutini (6)
- 20-7D Glaswegian band on Creation label, 2005 Wheaties single or 1983 film starring Nicole Kidman (1-1-1-7)
- 21 The Sugarcubes' album that announces its

- own importance (3-2)
- 23+13A US towns going crazy for Bat For Lashes (3-4)
- 24 Madness to work with Texas and Wu-Tang Clan (6)
- 25 (See 9 across)
- 27 He was in a 'Dilemma' with Kelly Rowland (5)
- 29 Legendary New York music venue for mainly black acts such as James Brown (6)
- 31 Latest Pet Shop Boys' performance coming from Billericay, Essex (3)
- 32 Half thinking of an album by Belly (4)
- 33 'Falling Off The Lavender' by Lightspeed Champion or 'Lady's...' by Richard Hawley (6)

CLUES DOWN

- 1 Bob Lane remix for The Soundtrack Of Our Lives (5-2)
- 2 Avert your eyes, it's Big Country (4-4)
- 3 Skill knows no bounds for '90s indie band A House (7-3)
- 4 (See 7 across)
- 5 Band whose 'Inward Parts'

- include Dominic Masters (6)
- 6 Regina Spektor work sorted into a tidy file (8)
- 7 (See 20 across)
- 8 One of The Allman Brothers; he was married to Cher in late '70s (5)
- 14 Perhaps went in own Little Boots (3-2-4)
- 16 Immediately following a bum by The Sensational Alex Harvey Band (4)
- 17 Kings Of Leon are readily available (2-4)
- 18 At 16 she had a Number One hit with 'I Think We're A One Now' (7)
- 20 Frontman of '80s band The Sound found in ruined old barn (7)
- 22 (See 11 across)
- 23 Net return made on a Pearl Jam album (3)
- 26 In line to get a Smiths album (4)
- 28 Sounds like you'll be a member of The Velvet Underground (4)
- 30 Their biggest hit was in 1997 with 'Toxygene' (3)

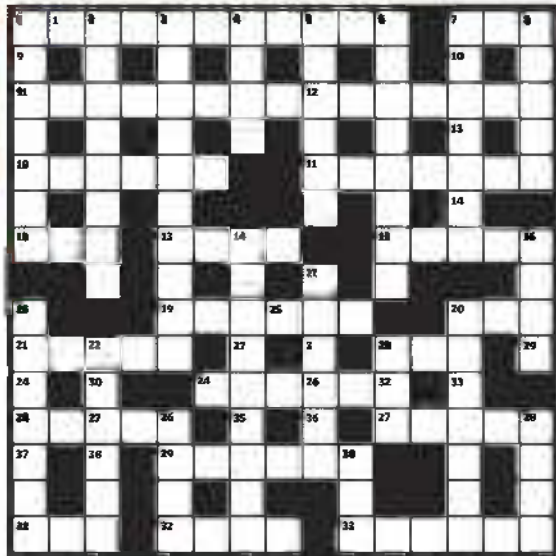


Compiled by Trevor Hungerford

JUNE 20 ANSWERS

ACROSS
1-9A West Ryder Pauper Lunatic Asylum, 10 Pin, 11 Desire, 15 Goldie, 17-28A You're Gonna Lose Us, 18 Gone, 20 Who You Are, 23 Tulu, 24-12A Fountains Of Wayne, 27 Radio.

DOWN
1 Walk Away, 2 Sonic Youth, 3 Ruts, 4 Decade, 5 Resist, 6-19D All Or Nothing, 7 Pump, 8 Round Here, 13 Enemy, 14-26D Anna Friel, 15 Game, 16 Light, 20 Who, 21 O'Jays, 22 Rescue, 24 Fall, 25-29A Noel Fielding.



Simply cut out the crossword and send it, along with your name, address and email, marking the envelope with the name date, before Monday, July 21 2008, to the following address: Crossword, NME, 4th Floor, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London, SE1 1JL. Post correct one out of the lot please.

PICK OF THE WEEK



TOP 20 MICHAEL JACKSON

Four weeks later, and with the worldwide grief showing no sign of abating, we thought it was time to honour the big man. So get the white glove on, pour yourself a stiff Jesus juice and get ready to reminisce. From 'Thriller' to 'Earth Song', it's all here.

Sunday, July 19, 1pm

PLUS...

WEDNESDAY

NME ROCK CHART TOP 20 COLLABORATIONS

With Run DMC and Aerosmith
July 15, 1pm



THURSDAY

KILLA KELA TAKEOVER

KK chooses the tracks and treats us to some beatboxing.

July 16, 10pm



FRIDAY

PARTY HARD

With Kasabian, La Roux and The Cribs.

July 17, 11pm



SATURDAY

TOP 10

It's The Strokes Vs Yeah Yeah Yeahs.

July 18, 6pm



SUNDAY

A LIST

With Franz, Dizzee, La Roux, KOL, Manics.

July 19, 3pm



MONDAY

TIME FOR HEROES

Simply sit tight for an hour of pure Jay-Z.

July 20, 9pm



TUESDAY

TOP 20 MINDBLOWING VIDEOS

Featuring The Prodigy

July 21, 9pm



Full listings: NME.COM/NMETV

The NME Chart TV



- 1 **KINGS OF LEON**
'NOTION'
- 2 **LA ROUX**
'BILLETPROOF'
- 3 **THE MACCABEES**
'CAN YOU GIVE IT'
- 4 **GOSSIP**
'HEAVY CROSS'
- 5 **THE KILLERS**
'THE WORLD WE LIVE IN'
- 6 **JAMIE T**
'STICKS N' STONES'
- 7 **THE ENEMY**
'SING WHILE YOU'RE IN LOVE'
- 8 **YEAH YEAH YEAHS**
'HEADS WILL ROLL'
- 9 **BAT FOR LASHES**
'PEARL'S DREAM'
- 10 **FLORENCE AND THE MACHINE**
'RABBIT HEART...'

VOTE NOW!

Go to WWW.NME.COM/NMETV to have your say

SKY CHANNEL 0184
VIRGIN MEDIA 975
FREESAT 727
DAB IN LONDON or
NME RADIO.CO.UK

IN OUR STUDIO



THE HORRORS

Session Played: Tuesday, June 23

Everyone's favourite post-goth rockers dropped by recently to play some exclusive tracks for NME Radio. They also spoke to Iain Baker about the second record and, at the end, Faris nipped off to persuade his brother to change the name of his band, which he said was "the worst name ever", although he wouldn't reveal what it is.

COMING UP...

NME FORUM

Tom Barker, promoter for London's Field Day and Underage festivals joins the debate over the week's singles. Expect sparks to fly.

Wednesday, July 15, 4pm

SAMANTHI

Massachusetts' most-hyped band since - well, ever - Passion Pit drop in live for a chat to talk about how they keep fame from going to their heads.

Thursday, July 16, 12pm

ON THE PLAYLIST...



DEASTRO
Vermillion Plaza

- THE BIG PINK
Stop The World
- PLASTIC LITTLE
La La Land
- THE PAINS OF BEING
PURE AT HEART
Contender
- PASSION PIT
Folds In Your Hands



MIKE SNOW
Animal

- DARKER MY LOVE
Two Ways Out
- KASABIAN
Where Did All The Love Go?
- PEACHES
Lose You
- JULIAN PLENTI
Only If You Run



PETE DOHERTY
Broken Love Song

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

by **TOPPER HEADON**

The former Clash drummer on drugs, staying young, busking and rocking the casbah

A BAND IS ONLY AS GOOD AS ITS DRUMMER. "When I joined The Clash they had the attitude, but, as far as I was concerned, the music left a little bit to be desired – so I put in some of that funkier stuff, like on '(White Man) In Hammersmith Palais' and that took the band forward. When I auditioned it was between me and Mark Laff, who went on to drum for Generation X. If they'd have gone with him, I think they may have stayed with the punk stuff. Then, in 1982, the chemistry between the four of us changed when I got kicked out for being messed up on drugs. Mick [Jones, guitar] and I were musical allies. When I was getting sacked, he was the one who stood up for me – he was crying and he didn't want me to go. Then they got Terry Chimes [original drummer] back in, who was a good rock drummer, but he couldn't do the other stuff that I'd done. That was their biggest mistake, I think. If they'd have got a good studio drummer in they might have lasted longer."

KEEP YOUR FANS AS CLOSE AS YOUR FRIENDS. "Before the punk era, bands were so stuck up their own arses. Emerson, Lake & Palmer, Yes, Pink Floyd, Jethro Tull... all those bands were so far removed from ordinary people. You'd go to the gigs and you'd never get a chance to meet or talk to the musicians. That's what I loved about punk – after the gig, everyone went backstage to meet them. Joe [Strummer, singer/guitarist] was really, really keen to find out who Clash fans were and what was happening in their lives. That's where a lot of his lyrics came from."

A BAND SHOULD NEVER LET THEIR MANAGER HAVE TOO MUCH OF A SAY. "I make no bones about it, I never got on with Bernie [Rhodes, Clash manager]. From talking to Joe and Mick, he was very important to the group before they were signed and before they became a real band. He got them into writing songs about politics and talking about what was really going on. It didn't suit him when I joined and we became musically good, because he couldn't manipulate us as



"THE SEX PISTOLS' ATTITUDE PROBABLY MADE THEM THE PUNK FIGUREHEADS"

much. Don't forget that towards the end of The Clash, it was just Joe and Bernie composing. I think Bernie wanted to be more than just the manager. I did see him at the premiere of *Joe Strummer: The Future Is Unwritten* and he said, 'Shall we make amends?' I said, 'Well, there's no need to is there really?' After that, we hugged and talked about how proud we were about what we had done."

THE ONLY OTHER UK PUNK BAND WHO CAN COMPARE TO THE CLASH ARE THE SEX PISTOLS. "The Pistols broke the whole thing open. The songs were really great, but it was that attitude that was important – all that sneering and swearing. The fact that everyone's parents hated them made them even

Paul [Simonon, bass] – it was constant. My first addiction was drumming. I'd do it for seven or eight hours a day and I didn't care about anything else. No matter what it was, if I loved doing it, I'd do it all the time. I'm one of those people that was wired a bit different, but it led me down some pretty hard roads. After The Clash I ended up in jail, then a hostel for the homeless, bankrupt and busking on the underground. That was for quite a while too. I used to go in for treatment and sort myself physically, but then I'd think, 'I feel good now so I'll try it just one more time'. That's the insanity of addiction – doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results."

THE CLASH NEARLY REFORMED – BUT I'M GLAD THEY DIDN'T.

"When we got inducted into the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame, Joe wanted us to do four or five numbers there. I said yes, Mick said yes, Paul was um-ing and ah-ing but, in the end, the decision was taken out of our hands because Joe died. I think Paul was probably right to be a bit sceptical because the only pictures you see of The Clash now are of us as four young, good-looking men, very slim, with full heads of hair. If we'd have played at that gig, you'd have seen Mick being bald, Paul being bald, me being bald and wearing glasses and Joe with a bit of a paunch! It was better the old way! I also remember going to see Joe play with The Mescaleros at Shepherd's Bush Empire a few years back. I was chatting to Joe after and he was

disappointed that there would only be a smattering of applause for the new songs, but then he'd play 'I Fought The Law' and the whole place would go mad. I know that if we had got The Clash back together it would have been the same."

DID YOU KNOW?

■ **Topper's real name is Nicholas Headon. He got his nickname 'Topper' because he looked like Mickey The Monkey in the old Topper comic**

■ **Topper composed most of 'Rock The Casbah'. He played the drums, bass and piano on the recorded version, although he had been replaced by Terry Chimes when they filmed the video and the song became a hit**

■ **Before The Clash, Topper had already played briefly with Mick Jones in his proto-punk group London SS**

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