





THIS WEEK'S NME

10/4/2010























THE STATE OF MUSIC TODAY

To celebrate the first issue of a new-look *NME*, this week's magazine comes with 10 different covers, each featuring one of the most influential artists of 2010. Inside, we've asked all 10 for their views on what it's like to be a musician and music fan right now. *The State of Music Today* begins on **p25**

THURSDAYS CHANNEL 4

MUSIC IIII



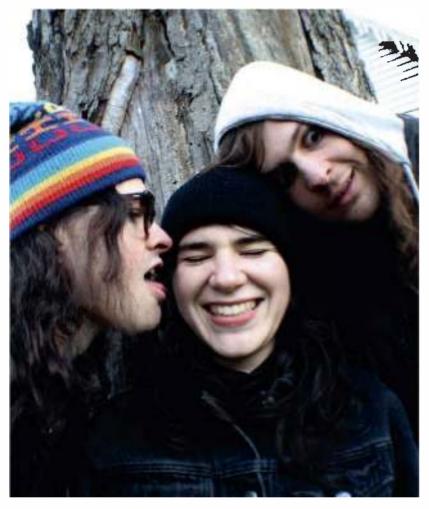
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ON REPEAT

THE SOUNDS RATTLING AROUND THE SKULLS OF THE NME STAFF THIS WEEK



TRACK OF THE WEEK

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

'Subliminal Message'

So, you've been dumped in a harsh way. Probably over text, or Twitter if they're a real heartless bastard. And, well, that's too bad. But before you go crying into your pillow, take the advice of this Vermont trio who, unlike you, "don't want to fall apart". Now the cynical among you may think subliminal messages are nothing more than a governmental ruse to box you into a life of Brave New World oppression. Not so Happy Birthday, who believe in order to win back the love of your life there's nothing like a bit of mind control via the medium of song. The first single to be lifted from the new self-titled album

There's nothing like a bit of mind control via the medium of song

from Sub Pop's latest signings is hypnotic to say the least. Frontman Kyle Thomas, sometime member of

J Mascis' outfit Witch, possesses a Brother Danielson-meets-Sleepy Jackson-era-Luke Steele vocal that coaxes you into playing along to Happy Birthday's every whim. "I'm sending you subliminal message/To your heart", Thomas croons. And when he says, "Everything is going so well", it's like a thousand hearts mending at once. Ash Dosanjh, Assistant Reviews Editor Free download from subpop.com now



SLASH

By The Sword

Slash's forthcoming debut solo album features guest spots from a host of rock legends – plus Wolfmother's Andrew Stockdale. Surprisingly, though, his contribution is the most listenable, primarily because it weaves an actual melody in among Slash's solos. And it's great, in a leather-kecks-akimbo kind of way – but come on, Slash, wouldn't you have more fun rejoining Guns for Reading and Leeds? Luke Lewis, Deputy Editor NME.COM Hear it on NME Radio now

LCD SOUNDSYSTEM

Drunk Girls

More anticipated in certain corners of this place than The Strokes, Klaxons and Libertines comebacks combined, LCD's return is loaded with the added pressure of being the lead single from their last album ever (or so James Murphy claims). It's Bowie! It's Devo! It's the wry observational lens of 'Losing My Edge' turned on the curious mating rituals of the young, tender and incapacitated! It's basically everything you'd want in a song, ever. Krissi Murison, Editor Hear It on NME Radio now

THE NATIONAL

Bloodbuzz Ohio

Having slogged for a decade only to become everyone's 'overnight' critical sensations with 'Boxer', The National's return proves pleasingly unstraightforward. On the face of it this comeback MP3 is an ode to the band's hometown. Yet 'Bloodbuzz Ohio' is actually a surrealist, regret-tinged reminiscence that somehow manages to be heartbreakingly sad yet euphorically inspiring between breaths. Gently epic. Paul Stokes, Associate Editor Free download from americanmary. com now

DELOREAN

Stay Close

Relocating from the hotbed of electro talent that is Spain's Basque country (see also: Crystal Fighters and, erm, that's it) Delorean decamped to Barcelona to produce more of their Balearic blog house. 'Stay Close' picks up where last year's raved-about 'Seasun' left off, which is lying in warm sand absentmindedly toying with vintage synths.

Tim Chester, Assistant Editor, NME.COM Hear it on MySpace now

HARLEM

Friendly Ghost

Kudos to Austin's hardest-working band - still a bunch of messed-up delinquents, thankfully – for coming up trumps with this Dirtbombs-meets-Standells rumpus. We're dealt guitars so lo-fi they end up sounding like the skew-whiff piano bit from 'White Light/White Heat', a wonderful opening lyric about living in a graveyard and a chorus so singalong it could have been penned by Frank Black two decades ago. Matt Wilkinson, News Reporter Hear it on NME Radio now

FRANKIE & THE HEARTSTRINGS

Tender

Disparate things do great pop singles make: an exciting guitar solo, Modern Lovers organ stabs, and a singer – Frankie, of course – who yelps like he's got his dick stuck in his zipper. OK, so this Sunderland five-piece still haven't written a song as good as their haircuts – but this is easily as good as their shoes. James McMahon, Features Editor Hear It on Itsgettingboringbythesea. blogspot.com now

I AM ARROWS

Nun

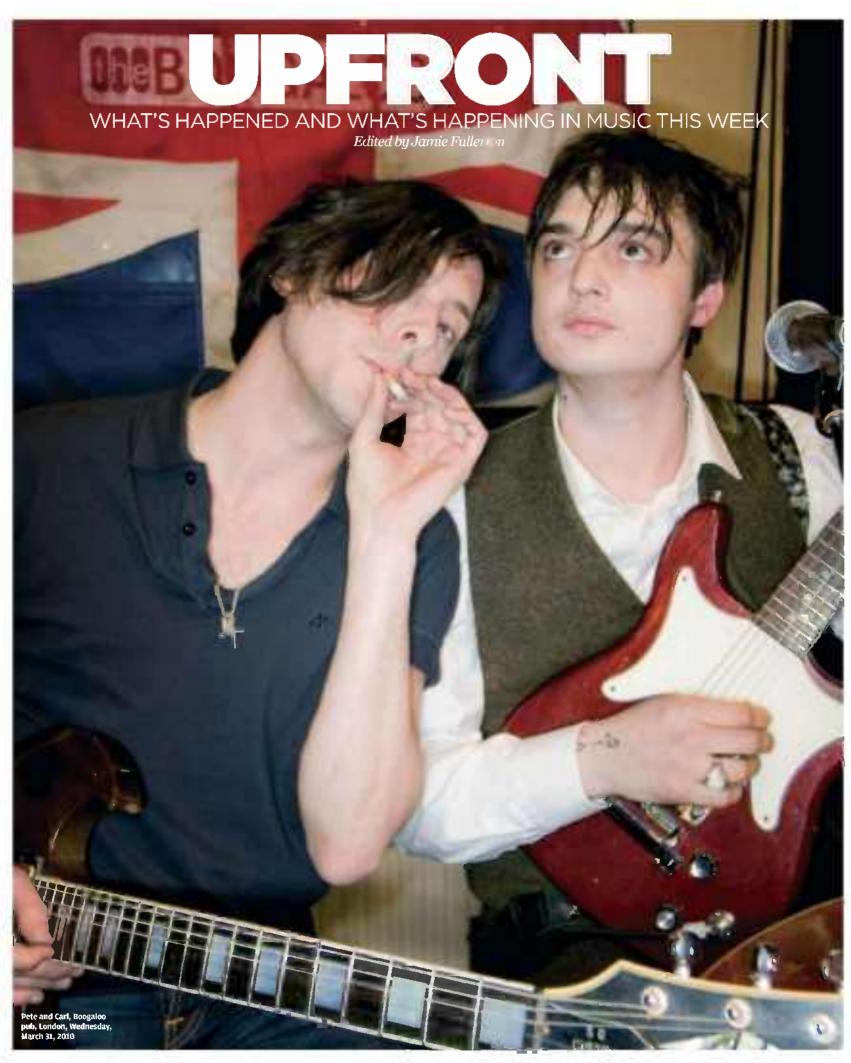
Until Andy Burrows released his solo album in 2008, I for one thought there was little more of worth to come from the Razorlight camp than freak-pointing schadenfreude. 'The Colour Of My Dreams' was a low-key surprise, but this shuffly, charming number suggests his new guise will be a more full-blooded affair. With Andy playing all the instruments, it recalls the warm psych-pop of Jim Noir and is really quite special. Emily Mackay, Reviews Editor Hear it on NME.COM now



RUSKO

Woo Boost

If this track had a vocal it'd be the old Millwall chant: "No-one likes us, we don't care". While the dubstep 'community' is set on distancing itself from the 'wobble' subbassline, Rusko (the loon above) is waving it like a team scarf. The first single from debut 'OMG' is ridiculously silly, with a b-line that strides along like the Ghostbusters Marshmallow Man dancing to Black Lace. Jaimie Hodgson, New Music Editor On YouTube now



INSIDE THE LIBERTINES' CHAOTIC COMEBACK GIG

With the world's media crammed into a north London pub, NME tags along with Pete and Carl for a few songs, several drinks and a hilarious – and controversial – press conference

ake it away, Pigman!" shouts a beaming Carl Barât to his old sparring partner Pete Doherty. It's 6.15pm in London, March 31 - the moment The Libertines officially play together for the first time since kicking the bucket in 2004. With the world's media watching (and filming) their every move, the duo - flanked by John Hassall (playing acoustic) and Gary Powell (sitting contentedly beside them) - are in a world of their own. Instead of one of their own songs, they're thrashing out a cover of Ray Charles' 'Georgia On My Mind' to the bemused throng. But this has always been the way of The Libertines random, ramshackle, bizarre, brilliant.

Officially, tonight's billed as a press conference, but as NME walks into the Boogaloo pub in Highgate -- scene of many a Libs triumph of yesteryear - to see roadies mic-ing up acoustic guitars and laying down plectrums, it becomes clear that the band have more than chat on their minds. But whereas in the past, Libs Boogaloo gigs have been filled to the rafters with frenzied fans, today is somewhat more reserved. The nation's press are camped out, supping coffees and setting up huge cameras inches away from the two cocktail tables and four stools lined up in front of a crumpled Union Jack.

At about 5.20pm, Pete strides into the throng, nonchalantly taking his scarf off, closely followed by John, who politely thanks the press for coming and says the media scrum is all "a bit far out". Carl – wearing what looks like a child's pirate jacket – rocks up next, while Gary trundles behind. Guinnesses are ordered, a compere takes to the mic, then Pete makes the reformation official. "Welcome to the Thurs... I mean, Wednesday night cabaret at the Boogaloo," he quips. "We are The Libertines..."

With that, we're off. The band are hilarious throughout the Q&A session Pete goading Carl to "do your grasshopper mating impression" (he refuses, so Doherty does it instead), the duo spontaneously breaking into song, and on spotting a tabloid reporter cowering at the back of the room, laying into him for "ruining people's lives" More importantly, both Pete and Carl say they're up for writing new material, hinting that there will be life for the band after those Reading And Leeds dates. They're also adamant that there won't be any no-shows or cock-ups this time round, with all four emphasising they're ecstatic to simply be hanging out







together again. "I'm dying just to play some of those songs with the boys and get some new things done," Pete says, while he and Carl fall into fits of giggles and embrace each other often.

After the questions, the fun really starts. Pete, Carl and John strap on guitars and strum the aforementioned Georgia...'. The first proper song they play is 'The Good Old Days'. Ironically this is the song they closed their 'final' set at London's Infinity club with back in 2004, their future bleak. Here it sounds brooding and majestic. Huge smiles spread across all four member's faces as they run through renditions of 'Death On The Stairs', 'Can't Stand Me Now' and a heartrending 'Music When The Lights Go Out'. Bum notes are played, chord sequences forgotten, but Pete and Carl hold everything together through sheer chemistry, while John stoic as ever - keeps time and chips in with the odd backing vocal. They even find time to bring out their old Irish drinking buddy (literally, he's about 70) 'Rabbi' John Conner for a run through obscure B-side 'Sally Brown'. Again, only The Libertines, in front of the world's press at their official reunion,





(Main pic): Like a pair of merry travelling minstrels, Pete and Carl on Archway Road heading towards the Boogaloo, north London. (Small pics anticlockwise from top): Pete gooning for the press; guerilla gigging Libs-style; Journalists flud a legitimate excuse to go to the pub; more acoustic shenanigans; Carl shows how, if this reunion all goes tits up, he'll have no trouble fluding gainful employment; althih, group hu

would have the chutzpah to do that. First comeback gig over, we join the band in the smoking area of the Boogaloo, followed by the rest of the press pack, who are slightly eager for a chat. "Bit weird all this, innit?!" Carl tells NME as more drinks are ordered. "I'm enjoying myself though. Feels funny. But it feels right, too." Seconds later, the bemused four-piece are ushered in front of Sky News for a live broadcast. Pete swears, Carl almost walks off, and Gary inexplicably starts talking about an argument he had with his dad last week. It's gloriously chaotic, but things get even funnier when a rival broadcaster also goes live, cutting the Sky interview short. Pete takes offence at this, so spits his rum and coke over the presenter while she's live on air, provoking the fury of Ian Wright back at the Live From Studio Five show. With that, the band retire to the confines of





the Boogaloo's upstairs area for some well-earned quiet time. Job done.

The following day's reports of the night aren't concerned with drugs, or supermodel ex-girlfriends, or infighting. Instead, the band and their music take centre stage. It's still early days, but it seems as if they might just be doing the impossible, and picking up where they left off in 2004 – on the cusp of going massive. It's blindingly obvious they still have limitless chemistry and affection for each other. So what's stopping them from finally realising their true potential?

Turn to p15 for our verdict on why the Libs had to reform, and head to *NME.com* to see our video of the press conference

for the Teenage Cancer Trust, Arctic Monkeys stayed in west London to play the O2 Shepherds Bush Empire, running through third album 'Humbug' in full, along with a B-side encore.

While we're now used to older bands running through their classic albums, it's unusual for someone like the Monkeys to perform their current album in such a fashion, and this intimate, low-key affair should probably be considered a send-off for the album in the UK. The difficult, but compelling 'Humbug' has been a divisive release for the band. Matt Helders admitted to us. "I understand why people didn't respond to it as well as the others - you have to do a bit of work to enjoy it "

- My Propeller
- Crying Lightning Dangerous Animals
 - Secret Door Potion
- **Approaching** Fire And The Thud
- Cornerstone Dance Little Lian
- Pretty Visitors The Jeweller's
 - Hands Nettles
 - Sketchead Catapult
- · Joining The Dots Red Right Hand

'Potion Approaching' to the back of a security guard's bald head, and the band doing a quick run-through of 'My Propellor' B side Joining The Dots' to remember how it went before launching into the tull-on version. The set ended with their regular Nick Cave cover 'Red Right Hand'.

The Monkeys are now set to head to the US for more gigs (bet they play 'I Bet You Look Good On The Dancefloor' for them), and then what? Who knows, but we can regard 'Humbug' as a watershed, where they shed their mainstream indie-pop incarnation and headed off into murkier waters. With that voluminous hair to support them, they should stay affoat



MUMFORDS' NEW DIRECTION

Marcus and the gang are going from country-folk to just country

You know what Mumford & Sons need? More banjos. Never ones to be afraid of wearing their influences on their sleeves (or waistcoats), the band say they are set to tread even further down the country/bluegrass path for a new stop-gap EP later this year.

Singer Marcus Mumford explained that he's not worried about the band being stereotyped for their fondness of mandolins and banjos. "The idea is just to let our hair down a little, have a bit more of a country wig-out," he said, adding that the collection will contain songs stretching back to Mumford & Sons' earliest days. "Two of them were written before the album, but we felt like they just didn't belong there, and a few of them have been written since. But then there's one where half of it is a *really* old song of ours that we're gonna try out." The new EP is likely to come out on the band's own Gentlemen Of The Road label, or through Chess Club Records.

'SHE'S GONE, SHE'S GONE...' NO REALLY

lasvegas have announced that stickswoman Caroline McKay has quit the band in the middle of writing their second album. Singer James Allan says it was solely her decision to leave: "We are really sad that Caroline has decided

to leave as she is one of the coolest drummers around. But we respect her decision and say goodbye with all our love and luck." The rest of the band are going to continue working in Los Angeles with no word on a replacement yet. The 'toth coolest person in the universe' (© NME Cool List 2008) will be missed.





NEWS ROUND-UP

SKATEBEARD
Devendra Banhart
has cancelled his US
tour due to an
accident while
skateboarding: "I
wanted to play the
shows in a bed, but
the doctors thought
it was a bad idea."
So is skateboarding
at your age, Dev.

YOU
WHAT?
"I'm under the
influence of medical
marijuana. I've
never performed
without it."
Snoop Dogg is still
ill even after all

these years of

herbal treatment.

Pray for him





The Who enlist Vedder and Meighan for Quadrophenia as they sign off the TCT shows

The Who had

asked Liam

Gallagher to

play, but he was in Disneyland

The Who's Roger Daltrey had originally asked Liam Gallagher to join them onstage for his band's Teenage Cancer Trust show at London's Royal Albert Hall, believing him perfect to play the part of Ace Face in their rock opera Quadropbenia (the role played in

the film by that proto Liam, Sting). Sadly, Liam was away playing with Goofy in Disneyland so, as the natural heir to the Gallagher crown, Kasabian's Tom Meighan stepped in to help Daltrey and

Townshend perform the 1973 LP in full. The other guest star, Pearl Jam's Eddie Vedder, was the first to take to the stage beside Daltrey for a version of 'The Punk And The Godfather'.
Meighan, wearing a natty silver mod suit, then joined them both for 'I've Had Fnough', and also popped up during 'Sea And Sand' and 'Bell Boy'.
Townshend stopped windmilling for an acoustic version of 'Drowned' before

everyone gathered onstage for the climactic 'Love Reign O'er Me'.
Daltrey had previously told us this was likely to be the last time they'd run through the album in full and, given Townshend's escalating tinnitus

problems, this could be the beginning of the end of The Who's live performances. Let's hope not, they could go far, this lot.







The first Drums song ever written, "The one that started it all," Jacob Graham explained to NME. The album's lead single and regular live opener is a vaulting cavalcade, with subject matter straight from 'Leader Of The Pack'. "You were my best friend, and then you died... Every day I waited for you", Jonathan Pierce sings.



An urgent spew of '80s celluloid moods á la early Psychedelic Furs, co-written by Jonathan and Jacob. The whooping hooklines near-define the debut's statement of intent, each refrain giving way to another rush of serotonin.

LET'S GO SURFING

After announcing it would be culled from the album, their breakthrough single is now back on the tracklist. As Jon reasoned, omitting it would be "like going to see a band live and them missing out the song that got you into them in the first place".

SKIPPIN' TOWN

All fluttering pace and agit drums, two-parts Orange Juice to one part barbershop quartet. Again, it's Jon's woozy chorus that gleams the brightest. A tribute to the joy of basking in sorrow, complete with panpipes peppering the wash of trebley tremolo. "I thought that my life would get easier, instead it's getting harder", Jon mourns with a chilly air reminiscent of their '80s twee-pop heroes The Field Mice.

FOREVER AND EVER, AMEN

The album's most cinematic song, it's an avalanche of curtain-call keys and vast guitar strikes. Total drivetime fodder, no doubt. Reverberation spills into every crack of its minimal arrangement, as the epic title echoes to fade.

DOWN BY THE WATER

The only other survivor from last year's "Summertime!" EP. A hazy lament for lost afternoons making promises to that special someone. It sounds even muggier and hornier lodged between the album tracks.

IT WILL ALL END IN TEARS

The backbone programmed drum parts that Jon based every song on have been left prominent here, giving an almost old-school house rhythm to this bluster of soured bubblegum pop. Its warning to a commitment-phobe ex evokes Jacob's beloved Sarah Records.

One of the original recordings left over from their first 2008 Florida jam sessions. The perilous guitar lines and ominous percussion feel rather Factory Records, but nothing can falter Jon's pin-up croon.

I NEED FUN IN MY LIFE

A last-minute addition recorded on tour. It's waif-like, bobbing along with an inertia-like hook that repeats the title over and over. While it feels like an afterthought, there's something about its pining sentiment and whispy melody that stays rattling round your brain.

I'LL NEVER DROP MY SWORD

The only acoustic guitar on the album features here. Combined with equally uncharacteristic keyboard parp, the song is as bold, striding and defiant as its title suggests. For proof of Jon's Morrissey worship, look no further.

THE FUTURE

The last album track to be written, and the only one recorded in a friend's cabin in Woodstock. It's a swoonsome deluge of subtle distortion and echo which nods to the romantic punk of their number one inspiration, The Wake.

The Drums are so rock'n'roll they can't ren be bothered to put eir jackets on properly





Title: 'The Drums'
Release date: June 7
Produced by:
Jonathan Pierce
Recorded:
Jacob Graham's flat,
Florida; the band's
NYC flat; a cabin,
Woodstock, NY

A MOVING **JIMI HENDRIX**

New sex tape DVD dances for cash on the rock legend's grave

"That's his dick, and I should know!" shrieks the not-at-all publicityhungry ex-groupie Cynthia Plaster Caster in the promotional material for Jimi Hendrix: The Story Of The Lost Sex Tape coming to a legitimate DVD retailer on May



3. Jimi's latest, er, 'release' consists of 11 minutes of recently unearthed Super-8 footage from 1968 supposedly showing the late guitar legend being pleasured by two women. But after a gag-inducing airing in the NME office we're still sceptical it's him; the evidence simply seems to rest upon the fact the fella in it is wearing a bandana (pictured). But have a check for yourself and let us know if you think it's him or not at NME.COM/artists/jimi-bendrix.

GRUFF RHYS IN ODD ALBUM SHOCK!



inging about DeLoreans with Boom Bip, eating carrots on a Misty's Big Adventure album... you could never accuse Gruff Rhys of being too conservative when it comes to collaborations. His latest is with Brazilian TV repair man/inventor/musician Tony Da Gatorra. Gruff met Tony while filming his "psychedelic western road movie" documentary Seperado! (out this summer) in Brazil. The pair hooked up to iam and will now release their album 'The Terror Of Cosmic Loneliness' some time in July and play gigs around it. Rhys says of the project: "Armed with five flasks of coffee, 75 sticks of gurn and a bank of vintage compressors we mixed 'The Terror Of Cosmic Loneliness' at extremely loud volume in one epic 12-hour session." Somewhat predictably, he added that the results sound "experimental".

THE STATS

1,000 The number of copies of each vinyl debut album reissue coming out on Record Store Day (April 17) from The Cribs and Bloc Party to mark the Wichita label's 10th anniversary

39 Number of tubes of skin-whitening cream recently found at Michael Jackson's house

139 Months since **Courtney Love** last put out a Hole album. The next one. 'Nobody's Daughter'. has finally been given a release date of May 3





The band are beginning the follow-up to 'Wall Of Arms' on the Isle Of Wight

"That's the fun

of it though, I look forward to the battle"

FELIX WHITE

The Maccabees have revealed that they've started work on their third album. "We're all going to go to dinner next week - we've done a load of

individual stuff and we're going to try and mash it all together to create something good," guitarist Felix White told us. "Then we're going to the Isle Of Wight for a week to see if we can put some songs

together to start with. Everyone's got a lot of ideas and, as always, everybody's ideas don't correlate at all and are completely different spectrums. That's the fun of it though, I look forward to the battle, I really do look forward to it!"

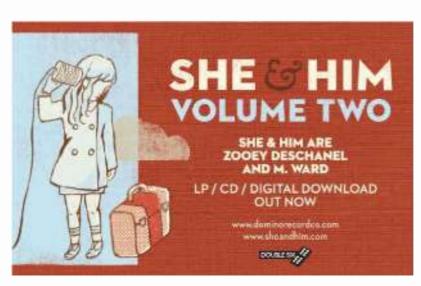
"Spectrum"? "Mash it all together"?

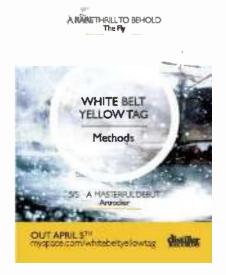
"Don't correlate"? These are words and phrases that often crop up in interviews with bands and artists who haven't got a clue what their next album's going to sound like. Referring to writing sessions as

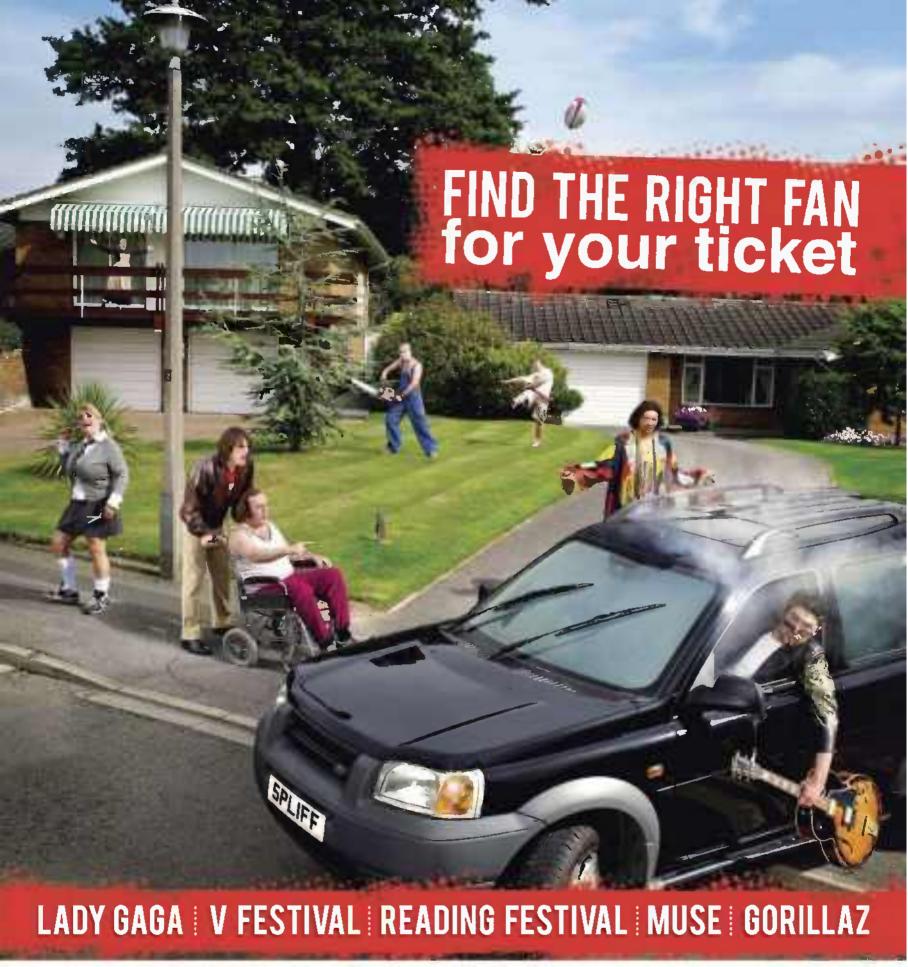
a "battle" though? An indication that we're in good hands with these boys. Expect to hear some of their new material at Reading and Leeds.











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SPEED DIAL KELE OKEREKE

On a break from Bloc Party, the frontman reveals all about his bold new dance act he's very aptly calling Kele

We had a preview of your solo album 'The Boxer' this week and have to say we're quite surprised by the direction you've taken...

Kele Okereke: "It's really reassuring that you were taken by surprise because that's the intention."

Sounds like you've been chibbing a lot lately...

"I've been into clubbing for years. I've said from the beginning I'm into dance: it gets me excited and WIN! I think this record is going to go some way to prove that to people, hopefully." An Ibiza Rocks Kele trip

Unlike a lot of dancefloor-orientated records, you've left a lot of personality on the album. Your vocals are clearer than on some Bloc Party songs...

"Yeah, I think with this record there was nothing I wanted to hide behind. I've never felt so switched on making a record as I was making this one. I think my greatest asset is my emotive-sounding voice, and for a long time I rallied against that. It's really in 2009 that I've come to savour the quality of my voice. It's strange talking about your own voice as something separate from you - it isn't to me, but it seems to have an effect on people."

Did anything trigger that change?

"There were some changes in the last two years that made me really examine myself. There was just a big exhalation, a big sigh of relief in 2009. There was



an examination of my life that year and a lot of the tension went away. I feel happier now then I ever have done. I know that's crap Hollywood speak but I'm older and I'm doing something I love every day. What is there not to

be happy about?"

NME is offering the

chance to win

return flights for

two from London,

tbiza airoort

transfer, four nights' accommodation in

the Ibiza Rocks

Hotel and tickets to

see Kele's gig on

August 31. Head to

NME.COM/win now

to enter.

So who made the record with you?

"I wrote the songs on my own in 2009 and then went to New York, deconstructed them and put them back together and wrote more. It was me sitting in (producer) Alex's back room. He goes by the name of XXXchange, he's an electro hip-hop producer. He produced the Spank Rock record and the last Kills one. So it was me staring out over Brooklyn at the end of the summer from his studio. It's definitely a summer record."

You can also hear the influence of New York.

"Making a record has really made me fall in love with New York. I'd never seen the soul of the city until I recorded my record there. It made me realise I have to move there.

I'm going to move there this year."

You play more synths than guitars on the album. How did you cope? "It was a complete liberation! If I'd picked up a guitar it would have been Bloc Party.

Was it scary to deny yourself the instrument you know best?

"It's scary, but doing things in a new way is kind of the point of making music. Finding new limits for yourself. That's the only point when truly great things happen. Bottom line is, it was a good scary (laughs)!"

So when does this all come out then?

"I'm too scared to look at my day schedule because it's like Tetris: all the blocks are falling into place now and bit by bit, my year has been taken from me. The single 'Tenderoni' will be out some time in April and the album will be in June."

You were recently on the cover of Butt magazine: what happened to your hair?

"I shaved my head just after Reading actually. It's a change of scene, it felt right. I was finishing up the solo record and I felt I needed to divorce myself from what had gone on before and it was a symbolic act for me. It's important to let people know it's a new phase."

In terms of that piece, how have you found the reaction? Online there's been a focus on your sexuality.

"There hasn't been any reaction and that wasn't what the focus of the piece was for. It was just a conversation really, to let people know what I was doing for the rest of year. You should read it, it's a good read."

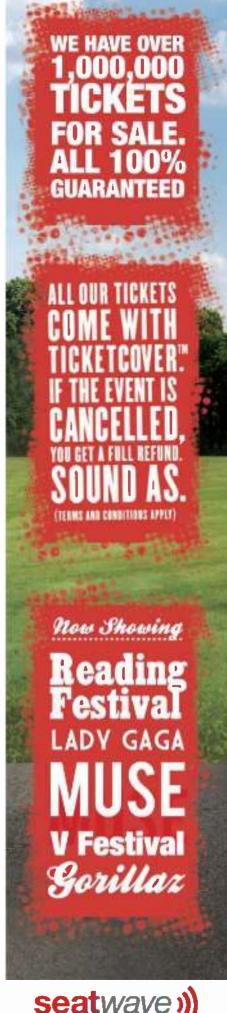
"There's talk of some shows in May. We'll start low key to get our touring legs going, probably in a bunch of clubs, which will be

Any plans for your solo live debut?

good to get our confidence up. Then we'll be coming to a tour near you soon."

Finally, how long did it take you to come up with the band name?

"(Laughs) It was going to be something else until a couple of weeks ago, but everything about this project seems to be flowing into itself and it is me. It's no-one else and I'm proud of that so I changed the name to Kele at the last minutel"





www.seatwave.com



IE BAILEY

arses, but Jack admits one of the

reasons they're doing an acoustic

album is to allow more time for an

album proper. "We always thought

this'd be a good way to keep people

"I was thinking we could rent some

vintage cars to drive round in...We want

to play in churches and art centres." It's

official: Bombay Bicycle Club, named

after a curry house, have gone posh.

Southwark's Miloco

studio

Expected release:

Summer 2010



POP SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO EMBRACE RIOT GRRRL

Purists are up in arms about **Kate Nash**'s new political punk direction and Le Tigre writing with Christina Aguilera. But Kate has a message for the naysayers...



K, when I heard Christina had hooked up with someone out of Le Tigre, I was surprised. But I don't think that pop and underground can't cross over. I recently met up with JD Samson of Le Tigre in New York – we went for dinner, and she was telling me about Christina's album.

Apparently, she really liked Le Tigre's track 'Deceptacon', got her label to get in touch, and JD agreed to meet her. They quickly agreed to do a bit of songwriting with her. JD told me that Christina is officially 'nice'. I really love Le Tigre, and if you listen to their music, there is a lot of pop in there, although it's quite raw and mixed with punk – but there's definitely a pop sensibility within the songs. Also, JD's done a lot of really upbeat dance-sounding stuff. I did a gig recently with her band MEN, who are really fun. They're quite clubby and dancey. Obviously, Christina's a massive star from a different world, but it'll be interesting to hear the results.

I was a 16-year-old at college when I first heard Bikini Kill. You find out about bands and then they link to another band and another band, and so I found out about people like Moldy Peaches and Kimya Dawson and then Le Tigre. Bikini Kill are my favourite riot grrrl band because they're just so integral to it. But I really, really love Sleater-Kinney as well. This music has became so important to me. Sometimes you tend to lose what was important to you as a teenager, but I think it's become more important being a female in the music industry. It's meant

more and more as time goes on.

Beth Ditto is carrying the torch of riot grill today; she's really outspoken about being a feminist. A lot of girls today are afraid of saying that they're a feminist – I think that's a shame. I hear loads of female artists saying, 'I'm not a feminist' – they're scared of the word. Beth Ditto is completely herself; she always does her own thing and doesn't care what anyone thinks.

As for it being a feminist betrayal for Le Tigre to be working with a sexualised pop star like Christina... Well, first of all, I did like Christina's 'Dirrty' when it came out, I can't deny it. But a lot of Christina's songs such as 'Beautiful' are about being individual and being yourself and being accepted and that kind of ties into what Le Tigre would say as well. I don't think that JD would work with somebody that she thought wasn't cool.



TALKING HEADS

IT HAD TO BE THIS YEAR OR NEVER FOR THE LIBERTINES

Pete, **Carl**, **John** and **Gary**'s reformation is no normal reunion – it's unfinished business, says **Anthony Thornton**, author of The Libertines: Bound Together

"Any later and it'd be the

exercise in nostalgia"

10th anniversary, a hollow



o The Libertines have reformed. So what? Every band is reforming every day. Suppress that yawn and move on. But The Libertines' reformation had to happen. It had to happen because there is a more powerful force at work here than the mere dusting down of some classic tunes or fiscal rewards. Those forces can be distilled down to this: unfinished business. When Pete Doherty waltzed off the stage of Club Infinity on June 7, 2004 – the last time The Libertines ever played together – it was just two years and four days since they'd released their debut single. In that time I saw at first hand across a string of shows big and small how Pete, Carl, John and Gary completely redefined what a band could be. They released a string of brilliant singles, and recorded a classic album and a half. It was an incredibly short time they were around for but an incredibly

productive (even as it was destructive) burst – to put it in perspective, remember it's been over four years since the last Strokes album.

What's more, they played countless breathlessly exciting tiny shows and released works in progress for free. There were no guestlists and you didn't

have to be a celebrity to gain admittance to their world; all you needed was a half-decent internet connection. In doing so, they revitalised British guitar music, saving us from Toploader, Stereophonics and Travis. Quite simply, they made music exciting and made it matter again. Plus they made a lie of an idea that aging music fans cling to:

that in an age of iPods, no-one cares as much about music as *they* did. Even now it's comforting to remember how they opened up a generation gap equal to the one the sniffy older fans had with their parents.

Yet, while they burned brighter and shorter than any band since the Sex Pistols, they never truly fulfilled their potential. The scars were too raw to reform any earlier. But time was running out on when they could get back together for it to be meaningful. Their deadline was 2011. Any later and it would be 10-year anniversary time and that would, whatever the intentions, make it a hollow exercise in nostalgia. It would be about pot-bellied, balding fans on a night off from their families bellowing lyrics they stopped believing in long ago.

Right now the reformation has a chance to be vital and they have the chance to be as era-defining as before. And they have the opportunity

to make up for the indic landfill they inadvertently inspired, that they couldn't stop because they weren't around to clear up the mess and show how it should be done.

Most important of all, perhaps they can end the way they want to rather than stumbling to an undignified end

playing a Pete-less gig supporting PJ Harvey for competition winners on a Parisian industrial estate. Even if they just play a couple of shows and disband, they have an opportunity to put a full-stop to it the way they want to: to have the fitting finale. Or, of course, start something completely new...

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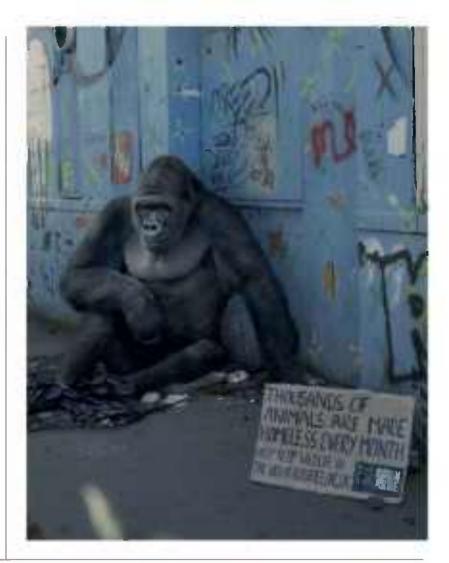
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Pieces Of Me **ANGUS ANDREW**

The Liars frontman guides us through the cultural pointers and debauched beach parties that made him the man he is today

My first album VARIOUS - 'THROBBIN' 84'

"It was an Australian compilation with a lot of awesome stuff like Van Halen, The Cure, Michael Jackson and INXS. I wanted to buy the first Cyndi Lauper album, but I realised that this had more bang for the buck."

First song I fell in love with THE CURE - PICTURES OF YOU'

"This came out when I was going out with my first ever girlfriend and it was the be-alland-end-all of pulling at the heart strings and throwing them around the room."

My favourite lyric SYD BARRETT - 'TERRAPIN' "WELL, OH BABY, MY HAIR'S ON END ABOUT YOU"

"I don't try to emulate Syd. We did try songwriting on acid once - I was just laughing and throwing myself into the drumkit."

My favourite album PJ HARVEY - 'IS THIS DESIRE?'

"I always come back to this because it covers so many styles and creates so many sounds. There are sounds on it that I heard in 1998 that I've still not been able to recreate."

The most inspiring gig BLONDE REDHEAD IN NYC, 2001

"I saw a couple of songs and it was so powerful I had to leave and get to work. The solidity of it knocked me down and I felt like I wasn't worthy of watching the rest of it."

The book that changed me **PUBERTY BLUES BY GABRIELLE CAREY AND KATHY LETTE**

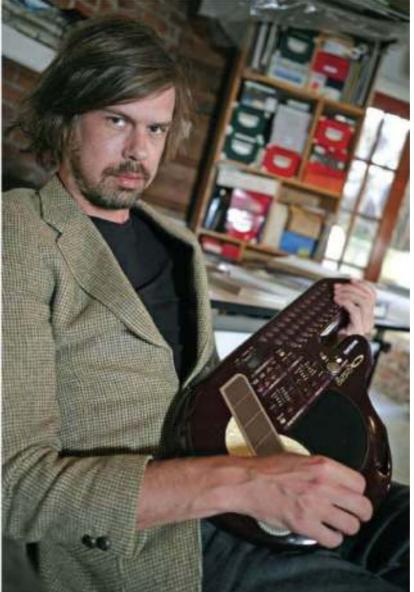
"It's about two teenage girls growing up in Sydney and for me it uncovered all those secrets you wish your older sisters had told you about sex, drugs, cheating at exams and where to smoke cigarettes at school."

My favourite piece of art BITS & PIECES PUT TOGETHER TO PRESENT A SEMBLANCE OF A WHOLE, BY LAWRENCE WEINER

"It's just these words written on a wall. The idea is that things don't need to be made. It was really influential as a basic principle for me. It's the idea, not the work of art, that's important."

My style icon ALAN VEGA, SUICIDE

"He's a cool guy. He's not a young lad but when I met him he was wearing silver

















Clockwise from top left: The cover of Puberty Blues; The Cure in 1992; a bonfire on Bondi Beach, Australia, at dusk; Yan Halen in 1984; the cover of 'The Madcan Laughs' by Syd Barrett; Suicide in New York; PJ Harvey's sleeve for 'Is This Desire?'

basketball boots, a tracksuit, leather jacket and sunglasses. That's how I want to look when I'm the same age as him."

Right now I love **FACTORY FLOOR**

"This band are amazing. I actually did a remix of 'A Wooden Box' for them. It's got this whole Underworld vibe to it which I really like."

My favourite place BONDI BEACH, SYDNEY,

"When I was younger you were allowed to have bonfires and drink on the beach and it would turn into a complete bloody zoo. I had my first sexual encounters on the beach. It's really easy to end up living there - cheap wine and a three-day growth."



Peter Robinson Us SHAKIRA

The clothes-shedding She Wolf on her weird dreams, the Dalai Lama and the World Cup



· There is a statue of Shakira in Colombia, but there is not a statue of any member of Mumford & Sons make of that what you will.

· She looks just like Marina, if 'iust like' means 'not an awful lot like' and you also happen to be blind in one eye.

. It is disappointing that Shakira would consider taking a bung. Aguilera you'd expect it from, but Shakira? Shame. Hello, Shakira. Have you ever owned a reptile?

"No, but I had grasshoppers when I was younger and I recently realised that the grasshopper is the symbol of happiness in Chinese culture. I dreamt about a grasshopper last night and when I phoned my analyst this morning, he told me."

Did you phone your analyst specifically to talk about the

grasshopper dream?
"Not about the grasshopper. It was about something else in the dream."

Is there anything you'd like to share with me?

"Not that I want you to publish!"

So what can you tell me about life?

"I don't know if I've found out a lot. Give me another year and I'll give you a decent conclusion."

Well, I suggest you get on with it Shakira because I first met you in 2001, which means that we've known each other for almost a decade and if you can't tell me something about life now, when, I wonder, will the revelation come? Ever?

"Oh, I'm so sorry. Well, I promise that one day I will write a book about the very few things I've learned. I will send it straight to you. First copy!"

Who's the worst person you've ever met?

"I've forgotten whoever that person is - I have a really bad memory for people who aren't worth meeting."

There is one specific person who works in what I shall simply call 'the music industry's live sector'. I suspect he is the worst person in the world.

"I suppose it is a defence mechanism in my brain that erases that memory."

Who's the nicest person you've met?

Well, this might sound cheesy but I would say the Dalai Lama. He was nice, but I suppose being nice is part of his whole thing, isn't it? I didn't want to say anything, I just wanted to listen, especially to his laugh."

Did it sound like a rainbow?

"It sounded like optimism. It sounded like, 'Hey, it is definitely possible to be happy'."



Now, you've recorded a song for this year's World Cup...

"Do you like soccer?"

No. Let's be honest, Shakira, it's a waste of everybody's time.

"I never met an English man who doesn't like soccer! My dad doesn't like soccer either."

Maybe he and I can go shopping together when there's a match on, the shops are always empty.

"I like that the World Cup's like a big truth: all the countries focusing on one event that unites people from different conditions and religions and idiosyncrasies."

Do you remember when Diana Ross opened the World Cup in 1994 and had to kick a ball but amusingly missed the goal? "I don't remember that."

It's on YouTube. Basically, I'm wondering if you'd accept a bribe to deliberately miss a goal? "Well, what kind of money are we talking about?"

Somewhere in the region of £100. "Add a zero and I'll think about it."

Was it a point of annoyance that you went down the 'She Wolf' route just as everyone else went mental for vampires?

"Well, there's enough room for all of us in this world, and when it comes to people's imagination and playing with my own, that's the most fun thing about what I do."

The difference also being that vampires don't exist.

"I'm glad you recognise that."



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AUDIO SULLYS 'ONLY MAN'

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OFFICIA



LAPPING IT U

If you've ever had the dream of becoming a superstar DJ, then look no further than entering this NME competition with Dell

eing in a band is not all glamour. Sharing groupies, lugging heavy equipment, the grotty toilet dive circuit, pffft These days, what with new technologies, the smart route to musical glory and adoration is via the DJ booth. Heaps of people singing along to every tune you drop, and you don't even have to write the songs. From rock anthems to bass-quaking dubstep, it's up to you...

The chaps at Dell have been working alongside NME Radio to make this dream a reality. They're offering the chance for four readers to jet off to a Club NME venue in one of its worldwide hotspots, it could be anywhere from New York to Berlin! Once there, you, a mate and NMF Radio DJ James Theaker will take control of DJ proceedings, and you get to bang out your selection of tunes to a sardined club of revellers.

All this is in aid of Dell's revolutionary bit of kit, the Studio 15 laptop range, the saviour of music and movie fans everywhere. They look tool-as-hell and they pack quite a punch. The lightening fast 2010 Intel® Core™ processor runs with Hyper Thread technology, which means it adapts its running speed to whatever you use

the laptop for, be it enjoying a movie in full HD, or tearing it up in the club with interrupted crystal clear playback. In short, Dell Studio 15 brings your music to life. Ît's even got a double headphone jack, in case you fancy collaborating, or want company on film night. So!

To win this dream trip to an exotic Club NME destination, and one of those laptops, log on to NME. COM/dellsackthedj. I hen select your own fantasy DJ playlist. Users will vote for their favourite, and the most popular playlist wins! Winners will be whisked away with James to hear their playlist aired live. James will also host a special London night working his way through all the winning playlists to a packed throng of party people. The top 200 playlists win an invitation to this night, and just by voting for your favourite playlist, you will qualify to win one of the Dell laptops.

For updates, tune into James' show, NME Modified, 8-topm every Saturday, where he'll preview all the best playlists so far. Listen to NML Radio at NML. COM/radio, DAB, Sky Channel 0184, Virgin Media 975 or Freesat 727.



If you fancy showing the world (and your mate) your boxfresh and impeccable music taste in some far-flung location, it couldn't be easier. Head to www.nme.com/dellsackthedj and tell us your idea of the perfect playlist. Could be anything from good old indie rock to hardcore gabba, we're not fussy...

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RADAR

FUTURE STARS, BREAKING SCENES, NEW SOUNDS...

Edited by Jamie Hodgson



Where Swedish folk meets Deep South rap – it's a whole new world

en minutes into JJ's first ever English interview, and it's becoming hard to keep a grip of what it is we're actually talking about. The three of us - NME, 21-year-old singer Elin and 23-year-old production maestro Joakim - are huddled in a bar booth, musing the concept of 'being in a band', or rather, 'not being in a band'. We're not quite sure anymore. "I wouldn't call it a band. It's like a belief. It's around you all the time. It just \dot{s} . It's bigger than music, music's just the best way we've found of tapping into this place. This energy."

"It's a movement," Elin offers. Now, let's just click our giant pretentious cliché alarm on snooze for one cotton-picking minute and hear the kids out, OK. Two childhood escapees from the seedy Stockholm suburb of Vallentuna, JJ aren't into talking to journalists about their music, or any of the trappings that usually come hand-in-hand with pop for that matter - naming records, playing live. Onstage Elin mews - vacant, magnetic - over a vast backing

track. Usually a few songs in, Joakim barges through the crowd, theatrically joining her onstage with a warm embrace, only to spend the entire set smoking a fag and shuffling around.

JJ cite an all-consuming pursuit of some kind of mysterious creative utopian state. "I think Lil Wayne's a rare example of someone who lives and breathes his art," says Joakim. "He doesn't know what he's making because he discovers as he does it. By instinct." We just thought that was the syrup.

Talking narcotics, it's that familiar sickly swell of anodyne euphorics and Auto-Tune that have helped garner JJ as many crunk culture comparisons as they have the pastoral Scandofolk that Joakim's post-everything patchwork production resembles. "Of the drugs I've tried, music's the strongest for me," smiles Joakim. "Life should be about exploring ourselves. For us, discovering JJ is how we've learned to connect with this higher state we knew was there but couldn't reach before." The only explanation for a shtick like this is that JJ are very much in their own little world. On record you realise that their little world is enormous. Jaimie Hodgson

NEED TO KNOW

- · JJ are planning a mixtape which features the reworking of famous tracks by Dr Dre and Akon
- · JJ stands for Joakim and jag ("jag" means me or myself in Swedish)
- · Elin's joint favourite singers are Janis Joplin and Bob Dylan



RADAR MIXESITUP

The best and most inspiring new tracks available for free? We know how to spoil you

After the massive success of our first ever mixtape, coinciding with NME's January Radar issue (100k+ downloads to date), we can announce the arrival of a new monthly series of mixtapes cast in the same mould.

From now on, every few weeks Radar will compile the 20 best tracks of its favourite artists from the most recent magazine and online features and upload them all into one zip file 'mixtape' format to a special URL.

It's the first venture of quite this kind by any magazine in the world, and looks to provide a unique service to fans of breaking music everywhere. The last mixtape featured exclusive tracks by the likes of Ellie Goulding, The Drums, Everything Everything and Hurts, to blog smashes from Washed Out, Surfer Blood, Magnetic Man and Giggs. In short, a pretty definitive launching pad for the new year.

The next in the new series, 'NME Radar Volume 2', is online now and available to download from NME COM/radarmixtape. We think it sorts the good from the bad in the hype machine, and is a pretty inspiring summation of all that is here and now. Here's your tracklisting:

- r) JJ 'Let Go'
- 2) The Smith Westerns 'Be My Girl'
- 3) Magic Kids 'Hey Boy'
- 4) Starkey 'Multidial' 5) Sleigh Bells 'Infinity Guitars'
- 6) Salem ft Gucci Mane 'Round One' 7) Freelance Whales - 'Generator
- 2nd Floor'
- 8) Ikonika 'RESOL'
- 9) Wilder 'Girls Vs Boys'
- ro) Jamaica 'I Think I Like U 2'
- 11) French Horn Rebellion 'Beaches And Friends (Hey Champ Remix)'
- 12) Yuck 'Georgia'
- 13) Villa Nah 'Rainmaker'
- 14) Veronica Falls 'Stephen' 15) Summer Camp 'Ghost Train'
- 16) Envy-'Nadine'
- 17) Small Black 'Despicable Dogs'
- 18) The Middle East 'Blood'
- 19) Cerebral Ballzy 'Your Idol' 20) Perfume Genius 'Mr Peterson'

HEAD TO: NME.COM/RADARMIXTAPE

to download your mixtape now comprising 20 MP3s or equivalent digital audio format files). One zip file per person. We may substitute an alternative free download of similar value if the original download offered is not available. No responsibility is taken for tracks that cannot be downloaded for any technical or other reason nor for any failures caused by something outside our control.

BAND



Marcus Mumford from Mumford & Sons' favourite new band

"We met The Middle East at Laneway Festival in their native Australia and invited them to explore North America with us for five weeks of gigs in May and June. They write beautiful songs and their live show is ridiculously inspiring."

RADAR GLOSSARY

This week's impenetrable muso slang decoded

SKWEEE

Skweee is the onomatopoeic Scandinavian techno subculture born in Stockholm and exported to Oslo. Pioneered by producer Daniel Savio and then DJ Pavan, the quirky Middle Eastern swirls and techy grooves are perfect for a chilly night out.

The Buzz

The rundown of artists, scenes, labels and tracks setting the underground on fire this week



WU LYF

Like most bands that everyone wants to know everything about, WU LYF don't want to reveal anything. Here's what we do know: they're a Manchester-based 10-strong collective of musicians, artists and thinkers. Their name stands for World Unite, Lucifer Youth Foundation. They went to school with Egyptian Hip Hop. The two tracks they've leaked online are stunning. 'Heavy Pop' and 'Concrete Gold' are like Jason Pierce in his darkest hours. At the few A&Rswooped-on shows they've played they sold demo tapes for £50 each just to fleece the major label scouts. The tapes, of course, sold out.



2 WAKA FLOCKA FLAME

This Atlanta-based NYC expat has gone from being Radar fave Gucci Mane's scary hanger-on to one of the most-talked about names around. Two things helped this: getting shot and the release of his white label smash 'O Let's Do It'. The superhot remix features an all-star cast of P Diddy. Rick Ross and his incarcerated mentor.



3 SINCERELY YOURS

This Swedish label, founded by enigmatic sugar-synth duo The Tough Alliance (left), is undergoing something of a purple patch. The latest act carrying on its innovative message are the svengali'd crunk-folk duo JJ (previous page) who are soaring into the public conscience with new album 'JJ3' (via the Secretly Canadian imprint).



4 MISTER SATURDAY NIGHT

The Big Apple is going bonkers for DFA-pal Justin Carter's new Mister Saturday Night soiree at hyper-buzz venue The Market Hotel in downtown Brookyn. The illicit allhours debauchery and smutty house grooves have got them reminiscing about NYC's warehouse art-party heritage.



5 JAMAICA'S NEW VIDEO

Jamaica are a Parisian duo, formerly called Poney Poney. They're produced by Justice's Xavier de Rosnay, have a debut video directed by So Me, and spend their lives bro'in down with the Ed Banger label family. Jamaica make sunny, clicky indiepop. 'I Think I Like U 2' is well catchy and that video a killer.

BEATS, RHYMES AND STRIFE

Tim Westwood is the first of Radar's new regular columnists



It's Westwood about to jump off with my brand new column. We're gonna be bringing you the heat on all the records that you need in your life from the US and UK. The UK scene is raging right now. Tinie Tempah showed you could do it with a proper record, as opposed to

a European dance record. It feels big out there, so a lot of artists are very focused. Dirty South is still big, and funky house is enormous out there - that's a zoo, man. If you're looking for something more offbeat, there's always Trilla. He's a bassline artist out of Birmingham who's got a song called 'Who Are Ya', which is a sort of football chant thing. He also had a great song last year called 'Etap', and he had a hot summer over in Ayia Napa, so this year is pretty well cued-up for him. You gotta keep on looking at Giggs - he's got a new track called 'Look What The Cat Dragged In', and he came on my show not so long ago. There's Wiley in A-List - that's his new thing with J2K and Shola and Sadie

BIG DAWG'S
5 PHAT
ONES **NICKI MINAJ** 'Beam Me Up Scotty' 2 DRAKE 'Over' 3 **ROSCOE DASH & SOULJA BOY** 'All The Way Turnt Up' 4

TRILLA

'Who Are Ya'

5 GIGGS

'Look What The Cat

Dragged In'

Ama... that's his new crew, that's looking pretty powerful out there. Obviously, America is still continuing to drive things. Roscoe Dash and Soulia Boy have made a massive record in 'All The Way Turnt Up'. There are remixes by Trey Songz, Pastor Troy, and Lil' John, but the original's the one that's doing it. That's a real zoo when that comes on. Gucci Mane is superbig right now. He's still in fail, but people are talking about his new track 'Lemonade'. He's worked with Nicki Minaj, who has to go on my list. She's got a song called 'Beam Me Up Scotty' which is real big. Most importantly, there's Drake. His track 'Over' is probably 2010's most significant record so far. In fact, he's gonna have the biggest album of the year. Tim's on BBC Radio 1xtra, weekdays, 4-7pm **NEXT WEEK'S COLUMNISTS:** Simian Mobile Disco

Woodlands, Stornoway, Scotland, April 9 **HUNX AND HIS** PUNX The Comer, Manchester, April 10 THE CROOKES Sugarmill, Stoke, April 12 CHAPEL CLUB (pictured) Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton. Annil 13 **GOLD PANDA/** SEAMS/DAM MANTLE Spanky Van Dyke's, Nottingham, April 16

This week's

band shows

STORNOWAY





LONDON LEXINGTON TUESDAY, MARCH 23



Can someone please point me at the page of the rock'n'roll rulebook that says when performing the Big Music, one must never overshadow it

with a Big Personality'? Doves, Elbow, Radiohead, Band Of Horses, Grizzly Bear, Frightened Rabbit, Broken Records: sounds from the broiling depths of ancient volcanos. shirts from the scraggly depths of the Topman sale buckets. Are such bands humbled into innocuousness by the might of their own music? Have they never heard of Arcade fucking Fire? This is all your fault, The Internet.

While somewhere in the world Darwin Deez is doing brilliant between-song synchronised dance routines with his band like a hipster Brooklynite Glee Club, Manchester's Airship trudge onto the Lexington stage touted as the saviours of epic rock but looking like they're about to do a college PowerPoint presentation on igneous rock formations. Singer Elliott Williams has a hunt sabber's beard and campus-hippy hair; the rest hide behind their fringes like they're waiting for their alarm clock to sound the theme to Deal Or No Deal. Then they start playing 'Kids' and their noise is - predictably, familiarly - mindblowing. Like a pop Prego or an ecstatic Editors, they pile flange pedal upon fuzz modulator upon Cathedral-In-A-Box to make their guitars sound like Messerschmitts crashing into the world's largest underground cavern or squadrons of Virgin Galactics diving into the sun. First single 'Algebra' incorporates a mild dose of mathrock into its roaring waltz of a tune and 'Summertime' dazzles like John Barrowman's teeth. At times, though, you'd be forgiven for drifting off, day-dreaming

that you're in the Mercury Awards judging

room having liquified clouds licked off your toes by Edith Bowman, Mmmmm...

"Heeeyars to electrical stooooormmms!"... YOIKS! We awake to the Sound Of Guns essentially a fledgling Scouse Walkmen. They've got a better grasp of gang-band showmanship; all leather jackets, greaser threads and the look of the Ramones if they'd had the bloke from The Music singing and a biker Nicholas Lyndhurst on guitar. They rock some too: Kasabian's tribalist beats clash with The Enemy's expansive guitars to make ricochet wail-rock tunes with Verve-ish ambitions like 'Bullets' and 'Gallantry', complete with a verse seemingly nicked from Echo & The Bunnymen, They work best when they're writhing around in the Strokes-y garage filth of 'My White Noise' or hoisted on the runaway rock steamroller of 'Architects'. Shame the records sound so chart-rock, because tonight the songs steam, jugger and jolt as if trapped in a sweltering Detroit garage in 1969. Finally the Big Music gets a band to match. Mark Beaumont



Roscoe Dash: loved by Westwood



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THE STATE Of CONTROL MUSIC TODAY

One's a singer, songwriter, producer, entrepreneur and label boss who's single-handedly overseeing the survival of record stores through this decade. Another's an international pop phenomenon, intent on introducing British dubstep to an American mainstream. Alongside Jack and Rihanna, there's also the 20-year-old godmother of nu-folk (Laura Marling); Britain's biggest rock band (Biffy Clyro); Britain's biggest band full-stop (Kasabian); the electro pioneer (LCD Soundsystem's James Murphy); the current face of UK indie (Foals); the homegrown superstar who was discovered singing in a Soho toilet cubicle (Florence Welch); the global magpie who paved the way for Santigold and Lady Gaga (MIA); and, of course, Magnetic Man, the dubstep supergroup formed by Skream, Benga and Artwork, who are presumably a big hit around Rihanna's house. They might all look, sound and view the world completely differently, but what each of this week's 10 cover stars have in common is that they are all at the forefront of 2010's breakthrough sounds.

To celebrate this very special launch issue of a new *NME*, we wanted to ask each of them about their different experiences of being a musician and music fan today. To go behind the bleating headlines – 'the music industry is dead', 'illegal downloading is killing new artists', 'in the future, all rock stars will look like Ke\$ha' – to find out if it really is all that bad. Or, as our hunch suspected, not bad, just new, un-chartered, confusing but ultimately completely open-ended and all the more interesting for it.

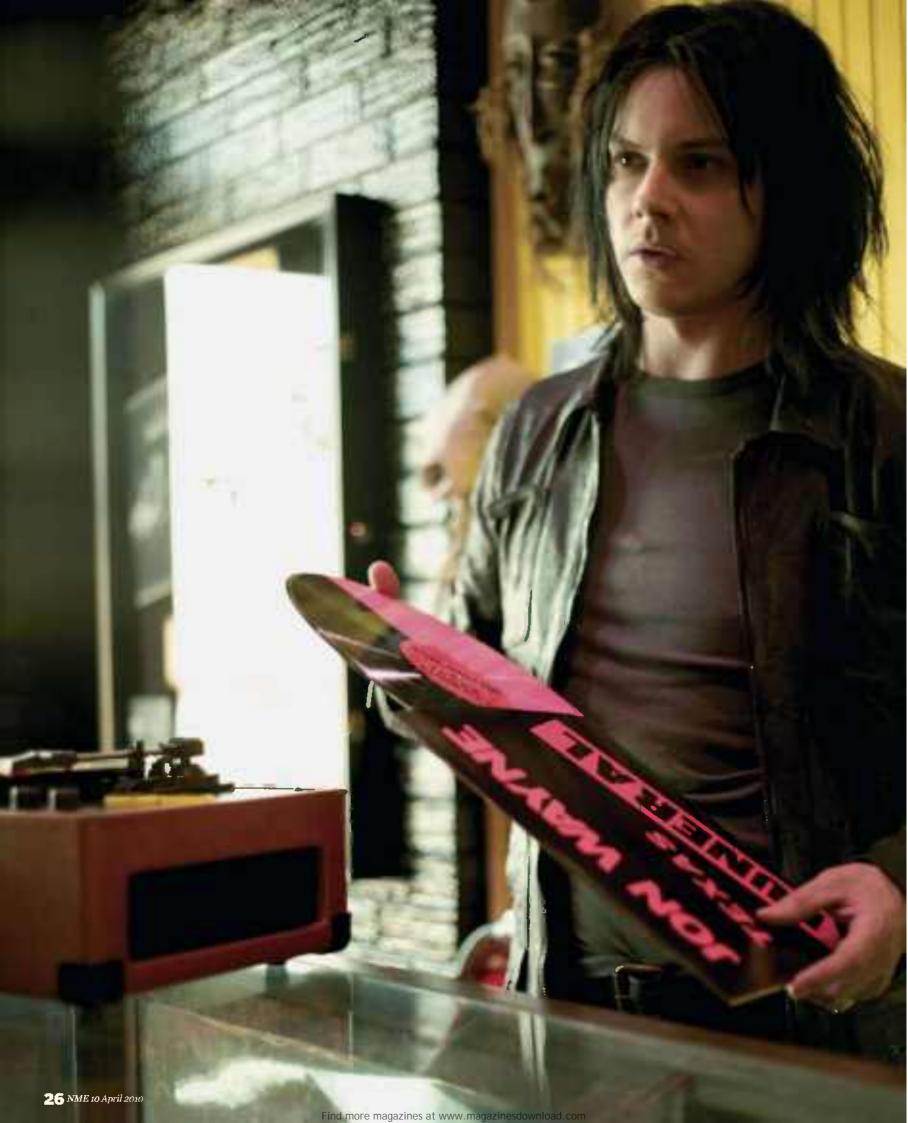
There were some unexpected revelations: "the band is dead" alleged Yannis from Foals, in front of his bassist, drummer, guitarist and keyboardist. "The guitar band is dead!" furthered Simon from Biffy, clutching a Fender Stratocaster. But also many unavoidable truths: albums are not an endangered format, there are better reasons to get into music than making money, and there's simply no escaping the omnipresence of the aforementioned Stefani Germanotta. And while there is a lot to be nostalgic for – notably the dissolution of music tribes and being able to scream 'sell-out' at anyone going within 50ft of an ad sync – there's also much to be excited about in the coming decade. Not least the next *Twilight* soundtrack.

Knissi Musja.

Krissi Murison, NME Editor

Yes, hopefully you've noticed by now that this issue indeed marks the first of a new-look AME. We've spent the past few months working behind-the-scenes to make the magazine look and read even before than before, with more in-depth news features in our new Upfront pages, more new music info than ever before in Radar, totally new regulars such as This Week In..., On The Road and Does Rock'n'Roll Kill Brain Cells?, as well as a completely new design. But what do you make of it all?

Please email me at editor@nme.com with 'NME FEEDBACK' in the subject to let me know.



In a world of omnipresent blogs, album leaks and free MP3s, **Ben Swank** meets the man who's fighting to keep the tangible magic in music

ou guys remember when Jack White crawled out of a Detroit boiler room with nothing but a mop converted into a Diddley bow and his big sister playing a shoebox, and everybody in England gawped and choked on their own spit, threw away their Boards Of Canada records and smashed their radios into little red and white shards, and the chicks all started dating dirty boys? Who knew? Turns out rock'n'roll was more liberating than meticulously produced electronic music... It's undeniable that Jack commanded the 2000s, and he summed it up last year by proving that, now James Brown is dead, he's the hardest working man in showbusiness. Last year Jack released an album and toured with his new band The Dead Weather, and The White Stripes brought out their first ever live album, boxset and film 'Under Great White Northern Lights'.

But maybe the strongest example of the man's work ethic and feelings on the state of the industry has been the launch of his own record label Third Man Records. Based in Nashville as a 'one-stop shop' for artists, Third Man's offices contain a live venue, photo studio, darkroom, distribution facilities and, of course, a record shop to sell all Third Man releases. Dedicated to the resurgence of vinyl and analogue production, Third Man has been a massive creative outlet for Jack. He's produced and played on records by the likes of Wanda Jackson and Karen Elson, released limitededition pressings in his 'pop-up shops' and founded a subscription service, The Vault, that offers 'bespoke viny? - his work at Third Man has done much to bring back the fun and immediacy of the music business. Jack says, "We want our records to be the definitive version of a band's release. The digital is always going to exist but we want fans to have something they can hold, see, feel, listen to or even taste if they want to. The tangible has in a lot of ways been lost in music."

We spoke to Jack as he was heading back out on tour with The Dead Weather ahead of the release of 'Sea Of Cowards', their second record in under a year.

NME: When people look back in future decades, how will people describe music in 2010?

Jack White: "They will probably sense the desperation of the record companies to stay afloat. And they will probably marvel at the lack of soul that songs had from recording on computers - of course, they'll be recording on microchips implanted in their vocal chords by then, maybe that will sound better."

Name three things every new artist starting out today needs.

"They need to quit playing video games, throw away their Auto-Tune program, and cut three strings off their gustar."

Which artists are you most excited about

"Jay-Z, Danger Mouse, Alison Mosshart."

PHOTOGRAPH JO MCCAUGHEY, NASHVILLE, MARCH 10, 2010

Do musical tribes still exist like they did in previous decades? "The internet seems to disperse crowds, maybe a good

side effect is that individuality is promoted in a way. Of course, after reading about three words of someone's comment at the bottom of an article I turn [the internet] off. Maybe one day people will figure out the responsibility of the written word. It's a powerful thing."

Is there any place for politics in music in 2010? "Why? Obama won. Maybe back when Bush was 'president', but politics and music should mostly stay strangers to each other until there's another dustbowl."

THE ENEMY OF MUSIC? THE INTERNET. THE INTERNET. YOUR MOM, AND THE INTERNET

What do you think your career would look like today if the internet hadn't been invented?

"I don't know about my career, but there'd be a few more record labels around to sign artists, and those artists could feel secure in the fact that people would actually pay for their creations. In my head I'm still fiving and working as if there is no internet, and treat it as a nuisance and use it for whatever is good about it that we can scrape together after the fact. The internet is a beautiful tool for many, many things, but it is in direct opposition to the art of music being treated with respect, and delivered to the majority in a tangible way. As every day passes music is more and more looked at as a soundbite and a trifle."

Do we still need record labels? What will they look like in the future?

"Somebody needs to mind the shop, for the time being the formats are digital and vinyl for the next decade - another interesting question might be, 'What will movie studios look like in the future?"

What's your opinion of reality TV music contests? How would you have fared on one?

"They are for overweight Aunt Millies and girls who wear gym pants to the mall Why? Do you actually

watch that garbage? Why don't you ask me about something important like licensing your song to a video game?"

What is more important to you: performing live or making records?

"Both. Making music alone that nobody ever hears is important to me too. Playing a guitar in a pawn shop in a small town when nobody's looking is important too. It's hard to compare them. There are a thousand stages you can perform on, for yourself and for others."

What does the future hold for the album as

"Ğood question. I wish somebody would leak the answer."

How important are image and visuals to the music you make?

"They're always important. I think about the person who's looking at all the equipment on stage before the band gets there. An album cover is one of the biggest visual statements a musician is allowed to make. Some things are just inspiring to look at as well. I have no idea if Bridget Bardot is a good actor or not."

Where is the true alternative music underground in 2010?

"The blues."

Who or what is the enemy of music right now? "The internet. The internet. Your mom, and the internet."

Is it still possible for a musician to sell-out

"Does it mean anything anymore? Can you think of anyone who has? You should probably ask Noel Gallagher or whichever one of those brothers is the smart onc."

Would you ever record a song for a Twilight

"If it felt right to me, or made sense in some way, yes."

Is it time we all accepted that recorded music has to be free?

"No. Why don't you just say, 'Is it time that movie theatres just accept that we can all sneak in the back door?' or better yet, 'Is it time that we accept that there won't be many new artists soon since we keep expecting them to work for free?' Fuck it, let's all work for free! I'll dig ditches, and you writers can go back to

What do you hope to be doing in 2020?

"Digging ditches. Respectable work."



2

FLORENCE

Following her massive success back home, the UK's most brilliantly unique star is preparing for global domination, finds **Rebecca Nicholson**

ot untypically, Florence simply whirls into the studio for *NME*'s photoshoot, all gangly limbs and

neon red harr. "I'm the red beacon!" she chuckles. "That's what my friend says - when she looks for me at festivals, she just looks for the red beacon." She swears she's going to dye that mop soon, just as soon as the 'Lungs' promotion is finally over. Ah yes, 'Lungs', that turned out all right in the end, didn't it? The love-heror-hate-her luvvie indie oddball turned into a proper mega-selling pop sensation before our very eyes and is now even something of a national treasure. This coming year could be even bigger for her; when NME speaks to her she's about to head over to the States for her first major tour there, which includes a possiblydefining slot at California's Coachella Festival. Once America's been dazzled by the red beacon, she'll return to these shores to make a start on album number two (rt's going to be a lot more guitar-based, apparently). And, as she almost absentmindedly blurts out to us, she'll also have to find time to fit in work on a top secret song for an exciting top secret project that she can't quite talk about yet. But it's a biggie. Absolutely no pressure or anything, then? "I'm still a bit bemused by it all," she shrugs, smiling. Florence Welch, then: happily baffled by her fortunes but conquering the world nevertheless.

NME: How do you think people will look back on music now in 10 years' time?

Florence Welch: "I'm just trying to think what was I interested in 10 years ago. I was 12, so that was Britpop era, the Spice Girls and Oasis. I loved Pulp. Maybe you should ask me again in 10 years how I feel about music now, and I'd be able to give you an answer."

Tell me what an artist starting out today needs to know.

"It's strange because a lot of things I've done have been through accidents, impulses and actions, and not really thinking about consequences. And I would not want to give that advice to anyone. It's terrible. I suppose I'd say the standard thing is don't ever Google yourself, ever. I really avoid it. If your friend says something mean about you it's in your interest to find out why, but if it's someone you've never met before you don't have to look at it. You'd lose your sense of who you are."

Tell us which new artists are exciting you this year...

"Obviously I'm a huge, huge fan of The xx, and it was a dream to tour with them. I'm really excited about Drake. And Nicki Minaj! I really like the stuff she did with Usher. I'm really obsessed with R&B and hip-hop at the moment. I found out recently how they do a hip-hop clap—they record like 15 claps and put them all together really closely so it just sounds like it's one big whooosh."

PHOTOGRAPH DEAN CHALKLEY, LONDON, MARCH 23, 2010

What you did with Dizzee went across genres, but do you think there are any music tribes left?

"I was definitely part of a tribe when I was 13. When you're growing up you want something that's going to protect you, some kind of strong identity. Music's always going to be there. Perhaps it's less defined now, but that's because music is less defined. If people are becoming broader in their tastes that can only be a good thing."

Do you think there's ever any room for politics in music?

"Um. (long pause) I think... music's one of the most powerful voices that people have outside of the government. So there's definitely room for it. But it's not a question of 'should pop stars be political'—it's a question of whether you want to use what you're doing in that way. It hasn't really arisen in my lyrics yet but maybe I'll develop really strong political views. I think I'm just not that focused on politics as a person yet."

Could you have got to where you are now without the internet?

"The way I got discovered was through playing live around London. I didn't have a MySpace for months. Whenever I've done stuff with the internet I've had to be gently persuaded: 'I think your fans would like it if you maybe did a blog!' I'm like, 'Do a blog? What? OK, but I'm only doing it when I want to!' But I don't think the internet has ruined pop stars' mystique. We've had some of the most extraordinary pop stars recently – Lady Gaga, for example, is a pop phenomenon. Come to think of it, another thing I can't look at is Wikipedia. There was a thing on it that my mother was Irish and that I've got bipolar disorder! In some sense, there is more mystique, because there's so much information that you really don't know what's real and what's not."

What's your take on shows such as The X Factor? Do you watch them?

"I get so anxious for the people doing it that I have to leave the room. There are thousands of people out there who are desperate to sing and that's their way of doing it, but it's not a way I could have done it. I wouldn't have got through the auditions. I would have been one of those joke ones they play at the end! (sings 'Dog Days Are Over' really badly) 'NEXT!"

Is playing live more important to you than making records?

"Well, I'm so self-critical that when I listen to a final project I don't think it's finished. So with live performances, every time you get the chance to finish it all over again."

Do you think the album format has much of a future?

"If you have put effort into the artwork and the tracklisting, and there's a whole process about the way you've made your album, it would be really nice to think that people would respond to that attention to detail by buying the physical thing. I love albums. I love them as physical objects. And I remember being a kid and always singing along to music, holding the insert."

Are you still using a CD walkman?

"I am actually. It's a Disney one. I'm always carrying around a big bag of crap CDs. It's definitely the way I like to listen to music, to get involved in the whole thing, then listen to a couple of the songs from an album repeatedly."

Do you think musicians still take risks?

"I really do. Lady Gaga is doing really risky things in a completely mainstream environment. I don't really think we're at a very consorious time in music at the moment."

Is there anyone or anything that you'd consider to be an enemy of music?

"Censorship and small-mindedness."

Have you encountered anything like that?

"When 'Kiss With A Fist' was released there was a bit of a fuss like, 'Is she glamorising domestic violence?', which of course I was not. I'd written the song when I was 17, so I never thought it would ever get to the stage where people could comment on it. But, because the subject of the song was all metaphorical, it was quite strange to have that."

Can a musician sell out any more? Is that concept dead?

"Selling out!' Imagine if you said, 'I'm never going to play at a venue that's sponsored by O2'. (laughs) It's the way you use it, I suppose. Whether you use a corporation to help your art or whether they're using you to sell stuff."

Would you ever do a song for the Twilight soundtrack?

"Yessss... yes, I would (giggles)."

Have they asked you?

"(smiles knowingly) It's not confirmed yet..."

What do you hope to be doing in 10 years' time?

"What will I be, 33? I'd definitely still like to be making music, but maybe touring less. It will be funny to look back on this album. I wonder if we'll be doing one of those shows, you know the ones where a band plays their whole album in full? We'll be doing a 'Lungs' tour..."



LCD SOUNDSYSTEM

James Murphy is calling time on his NYC electro pioneers, but before he does, he speaks to **Dan Martin** about politics in pop, Simon Cowell and why he'll be buying vinyl forever

ames Murphy has blazed a trail above and beyond that of being one generation's token dance-act-for-indie-kids. He provided that as well of course, with his snarling, satirical punk-funk live project LCD Soundsystem injecting personality into an often faceless scene – albeit a grumpy, self-effacing one.

But, as lynchpin of the seminal DFA label he's also built one of New York's coolest hothouses by very virtue of his total disdain for all that which pertains to be cool. This is a man whose breakthrough, after all, was a song called 'Losing My Edge', about the pains of being the oldest swinger in town. Pulling off the near impossible trick of making the guitar work it on the dancefloor, DFA became the genetic successor to Factory.

Lesser individuals would have struggled to resist the temptation of taking the dollar as a for-hire pop producer *de jour*, and gone the way of Pharrell, Ronson, even Timbaland in the process. But alongside his well-tuned ear for divining, Murphy's secret ingredient has been his integrity.

And now, having outlasted the scene he created, he's calling time on the whole thing, bringing LCD back for one last hurrah in a landmark third set 'Everything Happening All At Once' – a record that might be said to be what 'OK Computer' was to his early work's 'Pablo Honey'. And then, understanding the power of the trilogy as much as the creative instinct to never stay still, he's off to plot an even smarter next move.

NME: When people look back in future decades, how will people describe music in 2010?

James Murphy: "I think erroneously people will look back and think it was an awesome year as they typically do. In 10 years people will look back and think its terrible, and in 20 years they will look back and think it was great, because that's just what we do. I hope we're in some sort of calm before the storm. I do remember the same 10 years ago; it was so dulf it became really easy to do interesting things because people were bored. And I think now people are bored again."

Name three things every new artist starting out today needs.

"To be awesome. And be really different from what everything else is right now; I feel like so much ground's been laid to be safely avant garde, make a bunch of noise and be out of tune, or do lots of delays and layers and be abstract. And be a good live band – if I could say anything really matters it's to be a very, very good live band again. I think it's gonna take bands being relevant in really smaller venues without being self-congratulatory."

Which artists are you most excited about in 2010?

"Hecuba is a duo that makes songs out of LA. The only other stuff I know is stuff on my label that I always feel funny about saying 'they're awesome' because obviously I think they are. The Holy Ghost record has the potential to be amazing. The Shit Robot record makes me really happy to have that

PHOTOGRAPH PIETER M VAN HATTEM, NYC, MARCH 24, 2010

finally coming to play. The Planning To Rock record is insanely good. I'm excited about Yacht too, because he's coming at things from a really interesting place."

Is there any place for politics in pop music in 2010? "Sure of course, Billy Bragg makes pop music doesn't he? Just not for me. There's still cause to be angry about things, it's just different. I've never veered toward being particularly angry – it's like being angry at the rain for being wet. I prefer to just be hostile."

What do you think your career would look like today if the internet hadn't been invented?

"I'd be stuck someplace. Well, if we'd had the benefits of the internet's exposure I'd be loaded because we'd have sold a lot more records. But I don't think we'd ever have been as successful without the free information, without the ability to go around systems. That said, we're a bigger band than we ever had a right to be. There's so many things wrong with us as a band. I'm too old. Most of the time I don't even sing really."

Do we still need record labels? What will they look like in the future?

"In some form. Though I'd love to see them crash and burn and turn back into what they should be. I blame the CD. When I was a kid and it came out I thought, 'this is the end'. When you have a record you take care of it; you keep it on a shelf and you clean it. They made the CD into a cassette, not a record. And it was only a matter of time until that became just a means of storage. So why buy it? Why own it? Why feel proud of it? That was a terrible, terrible error – to make it less like an object."

What is your opinion of reality TV music contests?

"I'm not really angry or against them, it just feels like the same shit as most other pop music. I don't know what the big harm is. In one way it's grotesquely honest, which make me sad that we're so numb that we're OK with it – with Simon [Cowell] being a piece of shit and 'this is how the business is'. That makes me sad that people accept it. But it's no worse than anything else."

What's the future of the album as a format?

"Nothing. It's over. That's one of the primary reasons I'm out of here. It's not necessarily a bad thing, it's just a bad thing for me because I'm 40 years old and I make albums. I'm the youngest of four kids born in 1970, I'm a cusper. I grew up as a young kid listening to classic rock, I was a Beatles fan who was six, so I'm an oldish dude with a much older sensibility. I was already anachronistic when I was 30. Now I'm just laughable."

How important are image and visuals to the music you make?

"They've always been really important, because I make albums and I'm not particularly handsome.

With DFA we wanted something awesome, we wanted to be as much as possible like the kids we were when we first liked music. We thought, 'Let's make something awesome', I drew a lightning bolt and we were like, 'Yeah that's it!"

So it wasn't some big manifesto?

"We had lots of manifestos, but we also did lots of drugs. Which tend to give you big ideas."

Where is the true alternative music underground in 2010?

"Luckily, I have no idea. I want to be in the room where the sound's bad with a really cute girl DJing on her iPhone, because that's always more fun. Until the underground can make a party that fun, I don't wanna go."

Who or what is the enemy of music right now?

"Almost everyone! The record companies and the bands that hug them. When people forget they're working in music, they seem to be working in finance and marketing.

Is it still possible for a musician to sell-out in 2010? Does it mean anything anymore?

"Oh yeah. I don't think selling out means you are doing things because you make money, but what are you then going to do with it? I had this problem with a car advert where a lot of money was offered. My instinct was to just say no, but that money would've made a big difference to DFA. I did say no, but I felt weird. I've done adverts though. I did one for a video game and I didn't feel bad because the song is in the video game so in a way it's advertising itself."

People used to find that stuff distasteful, but how is a band supposed to pay their rent anymore?

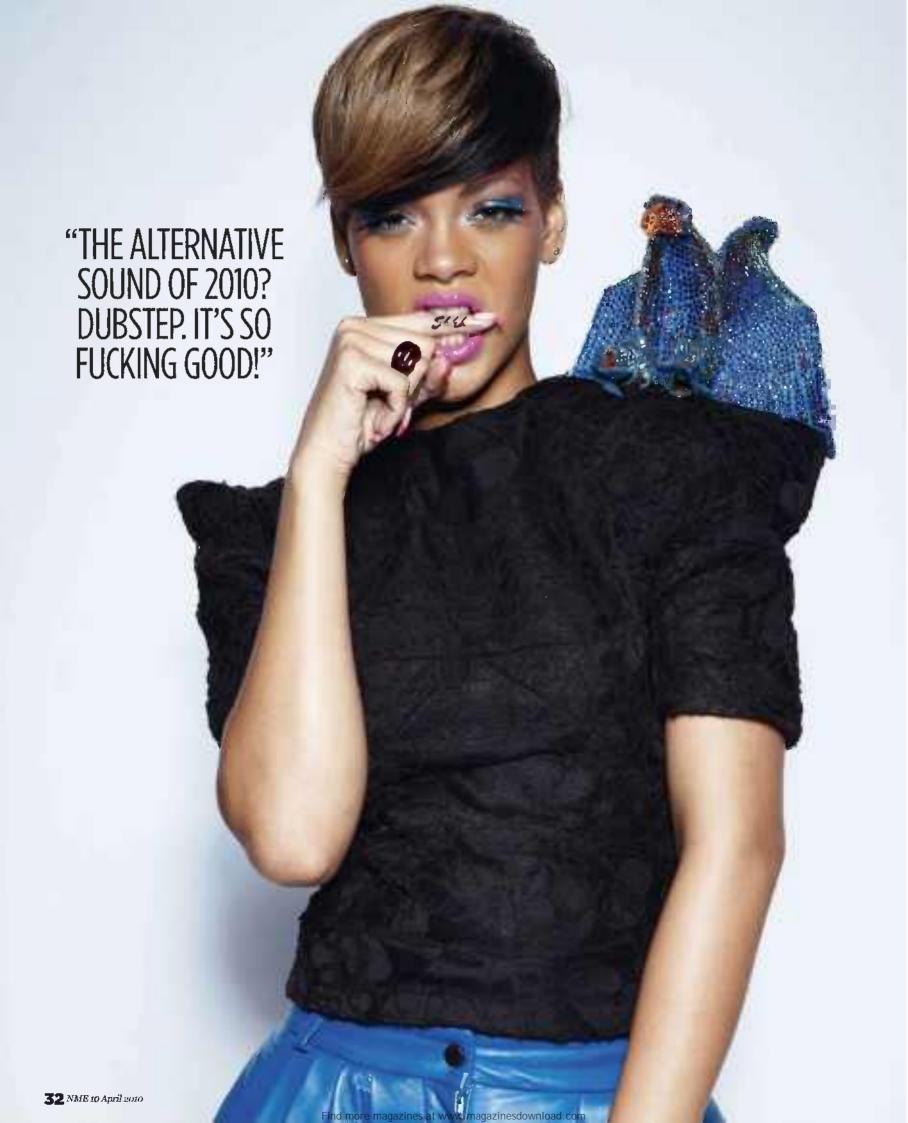
"Well here's the other thing. Why do we assume that bands are supposed to get rich? Plumbers don't get rich, why do bands have to get rich? I made music my whole life and it did nothing but cost me money my entire life. But I did it because it's what I cared about and it made me happy. And at this point in my life, it's my job. But you get into a world where you're surrounded by people who tell you should be making a lot of money. And I don't believe that."

Is it time we all accepted that recorded music bas to be free?

"I don't think that's true. I think people will make music that they sell even if it's just on seven inch or whatever. There'll be an alternative. Remember that TV was free, and then we paid for cable because we wanted something else. And very often the very best shows are on HBO. But I do think getting rid of the idea of getting loaded off music straight away means you will get rid of the assholes."

What do you hope to be doing in 2020?

"Writing books. Having kids. I wanna write fiction I like books. It's what I went to school for, it's what I was supposed to do, but I got derailed by my musical meanderings. It'll be fun."



Reinventing The Global Superstar

RIHANNA



The R&B icon tells **Sam Wolfson** of her love of dubstep, hatred of product placement and why you shouldn't believe everything you read on the internet

ME has always been for brutal, no-holds-barred, alternative pop, and right now no-one can

touch Rihanna. Her music is fearlessly forward-thinking, her attitude pure punk-rock, her integrity beyond question. Consider where she started, and Rihanna's current status as a global pop phenomenon becomes all the more impressive. After being scouted by Def Jam when she was 16, her first album was a sugar-coated dancehall pastiche, on which she cooed, "Just call me whenever you're lonely" on lead single 'If It's Loving That You Want'. At 18 she was singing, "I don't want to be a murderer" on 'Unfaithful', a song about Rih Rih's fear that breaking up with her boyfriend would literally kill him. That's wanton girl-next-door to homicidal heartbreaker within just two years.

After that came 'Umbrella', the song that would cement Rihanna's reputation as a true pop idol. But, even as her star rose, she refused to deal in schmaltz. When it came time to perform 'Umbrella' at the Brits, she opted to eschew the single version for a dark mash-up with 'Golden Skans', which she performed with Klaxons. Then last year, after she suffered a brutal and public assault, her blistering comeback chorus on Jay-Z's 'Run This Town' firmly established that she was stronger than ever.

While she doesn't write her own songs or play any instruments, she contributes in many other ways. Her music would sound like cheesy pop dross in the hands of Britney or Mariah, but Rihanna is a completely different kind of pop star. There's no falsetto acrobatics or wobbly bottom lips. Rather she delivers her love songs – which are packed with all the life or death melodrama of The Supremes and The Shangri-Las – with a destitute heartbrokenness. It's that haunting 'Love Will Tear Us Apart' thing. So here we are, a global pop megastar airing her views on the state of music in 2010...

NME: What three things do all new artists starting out today need?

Rihanna: "A lot of artists have become very calculated and it just comes across as nervous and a little less authentic. New artists, you need to stay focused, you need to have fun because if you're not enjoying it then it doesn't make sense. And you need to have good people around that aren't afraid to tell you when you're fucking up."

Do you think your career would be different if it wasn't for the internet?

"Definitely. For better and for worse. I mean, everyone watches videos online these days, and thank god they can because videos don't play on TV anymore. The internet makes people stay interested and they see what you do every day. Like, I took nine months off between my third and fourth albums but it didn't fee! like I went away, even for me, because there were new

PHOTOGRAPH TOM OXLEY, CALIFORNIA, MARCH 24, 2010

pictures of me online every day. That's what the internet does, it keeps you out there. And sometimes it's a good thing and sometimes it's a pain in the ass. Sometimes you don't want people knowing about every part of your life."

Are pop stars able to keep any kind of mystique when you can see their every move online?

"Sometimes you can't help those things. There are a lot of things I didn't want the world to know about me, and there were things that I would have loved to not be the focus of my life, but sometimes you just can't avoid people finding out. But I guess the mystique I have kept has been because I don't say a lot. There are a lot of rumours about me, every day it's something new. I guess by not replying to those things, people never know what's true and they never know what's not true. So that kinda leaves them wondering – they see me, but they never know what's in my mind."

What about on reality TV shows such as The X Factor, where singers' lives are scrutinised even further?

"Sometimes showing an artist's growth from the beginning can damage them. Instead of people seeing the finished product, they are seeing their actual development and that can affect their credibility. In the end, it depends on how good they are. I never think of Kelly Clarkson or Leona Lewis as talent show winners, I see them as individual artists. And if I was still a regular girl living in Barbados and there was an opportunity like that for me to have a career that I have dreamt of all my life then, hell yeah, I would have taken it with both hands—I wouldn't even have looked back."

On the flipside of those stars, what do you see as the alternative sound of 2010?

"For me, it's dubstep. It's so fucking good. When I was making 'Rated R', I wanted to go completely against what was on the radio. I wanted a sound that was strong enough. So I started doing some research and I listened to Chase & Status and The Prodigy and some of the newer artists too. I really got into the culture of it. It's one of the most underground sounds around but it's so powerful. It's not well-known in the US but it should be."

What about the concept of 'selling out'? Is that something that still exists when pop is so commercial?

"Yeah, like for instance, I hate doing product placement in my videos. I hate it. I think videos should just tell the story of the song. And then with product placement it all just becomes this big ad campaign. I just don't like that. Sometimes we have to do it, for whatever political reason, but it's never my first choice. I just really enjoy underground, independently made videos. I don't like things to be so commercial."

How important are image and visuals to the music that you make?

"Of course, it's important - things have to match and make sense. That's why people make music videos: to see a song played out visually adds another element. My look has always been a play-off between tomboy and chic. Whatever it is, we try to make it look a little tough, but still girly. Right now it's getting very competitive in the female part of the industry in terms of look. A lot of women are starting to go for more extreme looks, and that works for some, but for others it doesn't work at all. I admire Lady Gaga's style because it comes from her own individuality, and that's where real style comes from, but if I see another artist who is trying to do something like that it'd totally turn me off, because it would be like they're chasing something that's not really them. I like the people who set their own trends, not the people who follow them."

How can artists take control back from the machine of the music industry?

"When I started, I just went with it for the first couple of albums. I was new, I didn't know what to expect. I had to earn the trust of my creative team. After my first two albums I just said, 'I'm ready to do it my way, completely.' So a couple of us went into the studio, cut my hair, died it black. The label hadn't seen anything, they didn't know what was going on. But when they actually saw it and they heard the music, they totally got it."

What artists would you say you're excited about in 2010?

"There are a lot of new artists about but in terms of true, well-rounded performers I think Justin Bieber. Justin Bieber has locked into an audience that have been missing someone for so long. All the R&B stars are grown up and sexy now. But the mothers of these little girls aren't going to allow them to listen to their music. So here is Justin Bieber, out of nowhere, a kid they can relate to. He's locked into that audience and that's where he's going to win. I think they're going to grow with him because he seems very real – he's not forcing anything."

He seems like a nice kid, but what's with that fringe? Maybe when it gets to his second album you could get out the black hair dye and the scissors and give him the Rihanna cut?

"Haha. No way! He loves that hair boi!"



The Arena Rock Specialists

KASABIAN

That 'Biggest Band In Britain' tag is not going away any time soon. **Matt Wilkinson** sits with Tom and Serge in a north London pub to discover just how they hold onto it

t's lunchtime in a Kentish Town gastropub, and everybody is staring at two men sat at a cocktail table. Not that Tom Meighan or Serge Pizzorno notice. Here, perched regally among the hordes of suits on their lunchbreaks, the cofrontmen of the "biggest band in Britain" (their words, taken from the last time they graced these pages) are mulling over the months ahead.

If all goes to plan, Serge predicts that Kasabian's forthcoming headline slots at V and T In The Park will see them fired triumphantly into the really big league; something they've been on the cusp of since 'West Ryder Pauper Lunatic Asylum' permeated the mainstream and kicked all previous accusations of loutish laddism into touch. Later, both he and Tom will talk about how luck and timing have played their part in the Kasabian story; how they've worked hard while other, less talented acts have triumphed. Sure, we'll get bursts of Gallagher-esque tongue-lashing, but for the most part the duo are more like the snuggle brothers; finishing off each other's sentences and affectionately comparing their clobber. "These'd look like fucking shorts on you, bruv!" Tom jokes of his immaculate D&G jeans to Przzorno, whose sparkly, tassled blouse is nothing short of absurd. "I want everything to be wild," the songwriter explains, which is kind of the exact statement that makes him so perfect for this stardom stuff anyway.

The new songs are flowing too, apparently, with Serge hinting at a Motown-inspired direction and proudly asserting that he "can't stop writing at the moment" – despite the fact he's meant to be taking a break. "We've fought so hard to get this far, and now we've got it," says Tom of the band's ever-expanding horizon, before Serge butts in to big-up those burgeoning festival slots: "It's starting here (puts his band in line with his shoulders), and it's gonna finish with us making people's heads fucking explode!"

Given guitar music in 2010 sounds like Kasabian, it was inevitable we'd talk to them for this special issue. Take it away, lads.

NME: When people look back in future decades, how will they describe music in 2010?

Tom Meighan: "Well there's no bands in the Top 40 at the moment, is there? That fucks me right off! What's up with that?"

Serge Pizzorno: "Hopefully this year's the start of something new. Things need to change. I mean, the way things are now, with the internet and that, new bands are kind of dying far too quick because no-one gives them the time."

Tom: "Personally I think the internet's massively took the shine off rock'n'roll. It's definitely fucked it up. It might be good for some things but its massively fucked music over. Everything's so splintered now." Serge: "I suppose you can't argue that it's fantastic in some ways, but I don't think it's been that massive a thing for us so far, really."

PHOTOGRAPH DEAN CHALKLEY, LONDON, MARCH 23, 2010

Is it time we all accepted that recorded music has to be free?

Tom: "No. N-O. No!"

Serge: "The way I see it is this – if you like a band, go on the net and download whatever you want. Then if you like it, go and buy the album. Simple."

Name three things every new artist needs.

Tom: "Tunes, tunes, tunes! Not the fucking sweets..."
Serge: "Tunes is all you need. It really is. It's not about aesthetics. In any case, if you've got a good tune you'll pretty much have something good to say anyway."

Which artist are you most excited about in 2010? Serge: "I'm hoping there'll be some cheeky little shits who'll come along and mess things up a bit!" Tom: "Tame Impala, they're fucking cool. They sound so '60s, but it's dancey too."

Serge: "Yeah, this goes back to what I was saying before about the internet — Tame Impala are a band that deserve a chance, but will they get one? That's what worries me. With us, when we got signed it's like we jumped on the last boat out of Armageddon. Look what's happened since — it feels like we're one of the last remaining bands to actually make it to the shore."

Do musical tribes still exist like they did in previous decades?

Tom: "Nope, no chance. All that's gone now."

Serge: "The emo thing, that was kind of something."

Tom: "But it's really hard to make a dent on culture now, 'cos everything's just rehashed all the time."

Serge: "Yeah, but when Britpop kicked off it was everywhere – that hit British culture. At the same time that's what killed it all I think."

Is there any place for politics in music in 2010? Tom: "If you're into politics I'm all for it. Or if you wanna write about a girl you love, write about that. Or if you wanna write about fucking taking acid then do that! It doesn't matter, as long as you actually know what you're on about."

What if the Tories used one of your tunes in their campaign?

Tom: "They're fucking horrible! I'd set fire to 'em!" Serge: "I'd let the Greens use one."

Tom: "Yeah, they're alright. The Tories, though, I'd just set fire to the fuckers. I mean, they're just horrible aren't they?! I would actually set fire to them. Every single one of them, one by one!"

Have the internet and TV talent shows ruined the mythology of rock'n'roll?

Tom: "Yeah. That's the main killer right there,

that's the hole in the head. We're a nation obsessed. I mean, we started this band in 1998. We were 17. Seventeen years old! It's a long time. Eleven years we've been together [er, that's 12 – Basic Numeracy Ed]. We worked so hard, and then you see some shithead on TV! It's a killer." Serge: "I didn't watch one episode of *The X Factor* and yet I know all about this fucking 'Jedward' thing. I don't wanna know anything about that shit! Why's it in my life? I can't escape it. I think Twitter, all that communication overload, I think that's ruined it a lot too. I just don't wanna know. I really enjoyed the myths of rock'n'roll. I don't care what Amy Winchouse had for dinner, you know?"

Who's the last act who had the right mythology about them?

Serge: "Aphex Twin. He's had some of the greatest myths ever. Whether they're true or not I don't care. I heard he lived in a disused bank and he drives a Securicor van!"

Is it still possible for a musician to sell-out

Tom: "Yeah, of course. We do get approached for adverts and things – we've done loads for Sky Sports. But that doesn't mean we've sold out. They want to use our tune for the football, so why not? I think it's brilliant actually."

Would you ever record a song for a Twilight soundtrack?

Both: "No."

Tom: "Fuck that! I don't even wanna see it!"

How important is image and visuals to the music you make?

Serge: "Massively important. I just fucking buzz off psychedelics, you know? I love Sly Stone and Jimi Hendrix – I want everything to be wild. I don't wanna look back when I'm old and grey and go, 'Why the fuck did I wear them jeans?!"

Tom: "It's like when you [Serge] wore that coat at

Glastonbury [2009] – people didn't know what the fuck was happening!"

Serge: "Half the people thought I was a cunt but I could see the other half thinking, 'Fucking hell!"
Tom: "I loved it – Serge looked like a cheetah and I looked like a fucking strawberry!"

What do you hope to be doing in 2020? Tom: "Well, hopefully I'm still on this planet. Ha! And hopefully still making music. I do hope we'll still be here in 10 years, doing what we do. Ten years is a long time, but I think we could be. Why not?"

To be in with a chance of winning one of five Kasabian back catalogues, visit NME.COM/win



LAURA MARLING

Leonie Cooper meets the woman who's saved British acoustic music from its own drabness. She's only just turned 20; we can't wait to hear what comes next

Il hail the mighty Laura Marling, the musical mouse that roared. Just turned 20, she's already

on to her second album, the glorious 'I Speak Because I Can', and also has a third ready to go, which will be released later this year. Laura shrugs off this increasingly rapid output, "It's over two years since the first album came out, so I had a lot of time to write. I think this one's more rootsy and more country-ish. I think the next one will be a bit more low-key." Nonetheless, there's no denying that she's suddenly beloved of everyone from Zane Lowe to the Radio 4 Woman's Hour gang. "Does the mainstream scare me? Yes! I consider mainstream the record-company-manufactured pop band or beautiful girl singer, but maybe it has [changed], maybe real music is making a bit of a comeback."

Laura's not just the leading light of the vibrant UK folk scene, but the glue that binds it together; a former member of Noah And The Whale and pretty much the reason why Mumford & Sons got together, this woman is to the acoustic guitar and the achingly beautiful lyric what clotted cream is to strawberries; damn well delicious, not to mention frightfully and gloriously English. As such it makes damn near perfect sense to have her on one of our 10 covers for the all-new NME. Smart, successful and shockingly talented, Marling looks set not just to be one of 2010's most heralded artists, but someone who we'd bet a litter of kittens on to still be putting out incredible material in 10, 20, Christ probably even 50 years time.

NME: When people look back, how do you think they'll describe music in 2010?

Laura Marling: "The same way we look at music from the '60s. There's such a wide variety of it. It's either Lady Gaga and a huge show or there's the indie bands that write lyrics and have a live career. Am I a Gaga fan' I think it's phenomenal, the playing with reality. I think it's brilliant, kind of shameless: 'I am a huge spectacle', as opposed to just purely selling sex."

What three things does every new artist starting out today need?

"Talent. Integrity. And, I don't know, probably a little bit of self-loathing! You've got to have your head screwed on. Is that something you can learn? You have to come like that. Otherwise you're done. Done before it's even begun."

Do you think musical tribes still exist like they did in previous decades?

"I think at this particular moment in time there's not that. I mean, a few years ago there was 'indie' – you know, if you wore skinny jeans and you had Converse on, you were an indie music lover. I think it's when fashion crosses over into it as well..."

Is there any place for politics in music in 2010? "I'm torn on this. I don't know, you can do it in a slightly poncey way. It's when people fob off their political opinion because they've got the limelight

PHOTOGRAPH TOM OXLEY, LONDON, MARCH 5, 2010

[that] I find a bit difficult, or when they're doing it to slightly further their career. Am I going to vote? I should, yes – I hope so! I think it's important to vote. You can't sit and complain about how the country's going if you haven't [voted]."

Where do you think your career would be without the internet?

"If I hadn't started a MySpace, which was the first thing I did, I would not be here today. Nobody would have had a route to get hold of me, or a way of listening to the music. As much as it's good, it's also a bit of a bugger because nobody's making any money!"

"I THINK IT'S IMPORTANT TO VOTE. YOU CAN'T SIT AND COMPLAIN ABOUT HOW THE COUNTRY'S GOING IF YOU HAVEN'T"

Do we still need record labels?

"I certainly couldn't have done without a record label. If I hadn't had a record label, I would have put out 'London Town' and that would have been a complete disaster and my career would be totally different. They're basically a loan company and they have creative input. I'm lucky that I've got a nice label."

What is your opinion of reality TV music contests and how would you have fared on one?

"I wouldn't have got bloody anywhere! It's not a music contest, is it? It's just a fame contest. It's dreadful. I can't watch them – I think it's cruel."

What's most important to you, performing live or making records?

"That's tough, because they're both vital in my career. I think you've got to have the records, so I think probably making records."

What does the future hold for the album format? "I think there'll be a renaissance of sound quality.

Eventually they'll find a way of making internet speeds quick enough to download huge files and computer space big enough, so that sound quality will be better. What's good about records is the sound quality. I think artwork is the biggest tragedy, physical artwork is the one that's lost out."

Where is the true alternative music underground in 2010?

"Gosh, I don't know. I'm nowhere near cool enough to know where that is!"

What artist are you most excited about in 2010?

"I'm excited about Alessi's Ark. I first met her when I was 16 — we did a dreadful photoshoot for teenage musicians where they put us all on a school bus. She was so strange. I'd never come across anyone so wonderfully naive. And for a second I thought, 'Nah, really?' and then I heard her music and I just couldn't believe it. I've never [heard anything like it], other than maybe Joni Mitchell. It just makes your hair stand up on end."

Are there still risks being taken in music?

"For sure. There's a very freeing thing that comes out of the alternative. You can go from one extreme to the other, you can go Lady Gaga doing the whole show or you can go Joanna Newsom doing a three-hour long album. I think Joanna Newsom's taking the bigger risk, how did that happen?"

Is it still possible for a musician to sell out in 2010?

"I don't know, I haven't seen anyone who I'd say 'what a sell out' to yet. They've just chosen a path and, if it's the path they want to go down, they can go down that path and it's fine. I wish them all the luck in the world."

In a recent NME live review there was a mention of you playing a song possibly written for the Twilight soundtrack. Can you tell us any more?

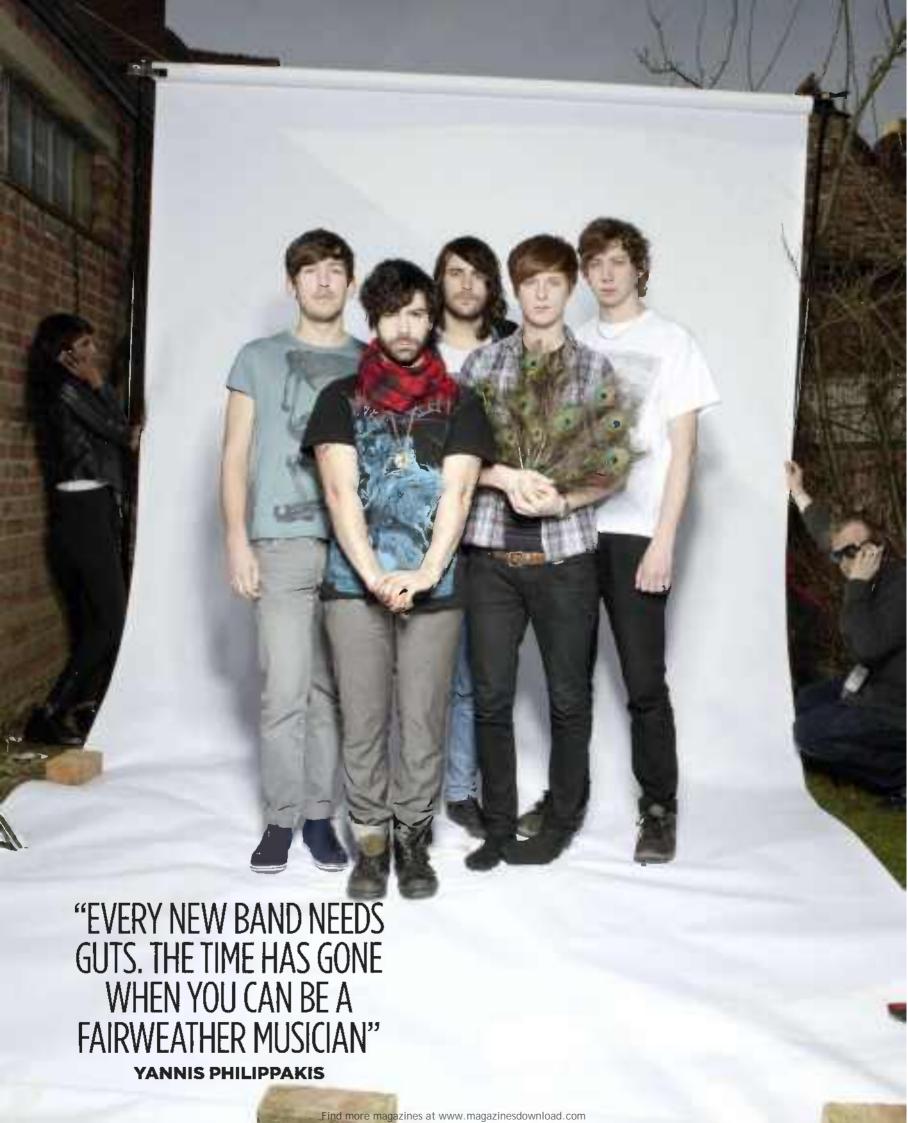
"That was never confirmed at the gig! I said it could have been good for a film. It could have been for *Twilight*, that's true. I have read the books and I thought they were phenomenally good. Dreadfully written, but the stories were just so brilliant. Would I ever do it? I don't know. If it was going to do me good, then yeah, why not?"

Do you think music should be free?

"No, because of the time and money it takes. I don't think people should be criminalised for getting music for free because it's there, it's offered to them. It's promised to them by the internet server people, it's promised to them by the phone companies. I think it's their responsibility."

What do you hope to be doing in 2020?

"Still doing this, but in a different place. Hopefully on a farm in Middle England, that'd be just lovely."



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FOALS

Mark Beaumont travels to Oxford to meet five men cut from a different cloth – a band boldly going where no indie band has gone before

wouldn't be surprised if the end of 'the band' was closer than we think it is."
Yannis Philippakis is pondering the future of music, and believes the music-making format he shares with keyboardist Edwin Congreave, drummer Jack Bevan, guitarist Jimmy Smith and bassist Walter Gervers could become a thing of the past.

"To have a band that's truly functioning you need a couple of dynamo mindsets that are quite obsessive," Yannis explains. "[But] if you knew how cumbersome and time-consuming and expensive and fraught the band experience can be, you might resort to buying Logic and a few mics and sitting in your bedroom and having total control. I think there'll be a shift to solo musicians whose material is undiluted by producers or other people. More singular visions of minds rather than collective bands."

Foals are a band unafraid of the future, however harsh, lonely and strewn with bassists' P45s it might be. Having redefined math rock for the masses with their debut album 'Antidotes', their second 'Total Life Forever' adopts a more accessible pace and lusher atmospheres while tackling concerns over the human race's evolutionary collision with technology. As such avid forward-thinkers, and being a band determined never to repeat themselves musically, they're at the forefront of the new tide of UK guitar music shifting away from the traditional indie jangle and towards inventive and amorphous new shapes.

NME: When people look back in future decades, how will they describe music in 2010?

Yannis Philippakis: "Whereas before you could cannibalise certain elements, it was generally from a band perspective. But recently it's become OK to look to urban or R&B or more commercial, higher production-value types of music. A year or two ago bands were looking to Africa or other continents where there were still fresh avenues to explore and incorporate it within your sound. Where there was a proper ethic to being a rock band – now it's more open-minded. Stuff like Dirty Projectors being seen in a positive light for having an R&B and American pop influence. The question is whether it's courageous and exciting or whether it's just one of the last places for bands to go."

Name three things every new artist starting out today needs.

Edwin Congreave: "Balls, a gun and a laptop."
Yannis: "Guts. The time has gone when you can be a fairweather musician or the equivalent of a Sunday writer. It's got to be either a compulsion or an addiction or it's got to be part of your genetic make-up. That's the balls bit, the self-belief. You need weaponry to protect your lot and also have the power to self-destruct if you need to. Having a laptop is to be industrious and self-sufficient. With the declining architecture of the music industry, self-sufficiency will differentiate bands. Reliance on a structure you don't

PHOTOGRAPH DEAN CHALKLEY, OXFORD, MARCH 18, 2010

have control over is too cumbersome - you have the ability now to create your own world and make sure nothing is taken out of your hands."

Which artists are you excited about in 2010? Edwin: "Caribou. His work is the product of one mind. There's a lot of influences from all over the musical spectrum."

Do musical tribes still exist?

Edwin: "I walked past the Kentish Town Forum the other day and there was some emo band playing. I saw a glimpse of this massive scene where everybody wears exactly the same clothes and they're religious about it." Yannis: "As a tecnager you want to belong to a family that's more exciting than your biological family. That's hard-wired into your hormones."

Is there any place for politics in music in 2010? Edwin: "It's a good idea for bands not to be that explicit about politics. I don't think people in bands are generally very well informed."

Yannis: "Our record is in some ways political, but I don't think it's party politics because that doesn't really exist anymore. None of us feel affiliated with a particular political way of thinking. The things that are troubling today are things like environmental issues that aren't tied to a particular party; concerns about the future are about health and humanity."

What would your career look like today if the internet hadn't been invented?

Edwin: "We'd have a lot less fans in Mexico. We are huge there."

Do we still need record labels? What will they be like in the future?

Yannis: "There's a climate of stingyness, 360 deals [contracts allowing labels to get a percentage of all the band's activities such as merchandise, gig revenue, etc, as well as record sales] are a dumb idea, musicians shouldn't sign them. Bands are a cumbersome thing, though. Bands are expensive, they're time-consuming, you have to deal with different personalities, different egos, different opinions on music. If you are creatively inclined to the point where you would set up a band, those people are much more likely to cut the hassle."

What is your opinion of reality TV music contests? How would you have fared on one?

Yannis: "We wouldn't have got past the audition stage. 'You all look wrong, none of you know how to play your instruments..."

Edwin: "It's pretty easy to say those kinds of things are poisonous to society, but that's because it's true."

Yannis: "If bands and singers were providing enough entertainment there wouldn't be a need for a [form] of music that is so gladiatorial. People are bored of the conventional, they like that it's turned into a sport."

What's more important to you, performing live or making records?

Edwin: "When we're on tour I hear Yannis say, 'I just want to be in the studio.' Then when we've been in the studio it's, 'I can't wait to get back on the road."

What does the future hold for the album format? Edwin: "The Pink Floyd court case, with respect to them, that's the act of a dinosaur band. They made these incredible concept albums and they're clinging on to that because it's being ripped apart by people. But people are making music less and less like that." Yannis: "Having opinions on these things is irrelevant because the march of the technology is so inevitable. It's like being in one of those rooms that they have in cheesy cartoons where the walls start to crush you—it's like sitting there and having an opinion on what the wall's doing. All you're actually thinking about is how you're going to be paste in two minutes."

Where is the true alternative music underground in 2010?

Edwin: "There's a lot of exciting dance music in London but that isn't really underground anymore because Joy Orbison is in the Sound Of 2010 poll. A lot of R&B is completely renegade, they do things totally backwards and make the most incredible exciting rhythms. In 10 or 20 years' time people will be listening to that over a lot of indie music."

Who or what is the enemy of music right now? Edwin: "Ke\$ha."

Is it possible for a musician to sell out in 2010? Yannis: "There's obviously the argument that the moment you sign a record deal you're a sell-out and there are some valid points for that. With indie rock and guitar-based music the primary motivation is for expression and the money is something that comes secondary to that."

Is it time we all accepted that recorded music has to be free?

Yannis: "Yeah, as long as I can just go into a shop and steal stuff as well. I generally don't care, but that does mean I get to steal Snickers and whiskey."

What do you hope to be doing in 2020? Yannis: "Being an emotionally distant father." Edwin: "Being a father to a child you didn't even know about."

To win signed artwork from the new Foals album, visit NME.COM/win



MIA

Maya Arulpragasam tells **Kev Kharas** how she will always be be an artist – whatever that word will come to mean – and explains why she's the anti-Lady Gaga

orrrrry." MIA's been busy – very busy.
So busy our interview happens 44 hours later than was originally scheduled. Maya Arulpragasam has valid reasons for living up to her stage name, though – she's only just back home in London after being marooned in the US for 18 months; "banned", she says, from leaving. Maya is seen by the government of her native Sri Lanka as a dissident, publicly accusing them of "genocide" for their part in a 26-year civil war that ended last May. She claims they've been "pulling the strings" recently to make life difficult: disappearing visa applications and hacking into her Twitter and email accounts, "wishing all kinds of crazy illness on my baby and stuff like that".

"People used to come and park outside my house in LA," she says. "I felt so powerless."

Add in a mother alone and made sick by similar visa bullshit this side of the Atlantic, and it'd be churlish of *NME* to rue a few hours spent twiddling thumbs.

It hasn't been all espionage and irritation, though – there was the arrival of that aforementioned baby, son Ikhyd is a year old now – and a new album too. Due out this summer, the follow-up to 2007's 'Kala' sees MIA hook-up with dubstep hoodlum Rusko and rekindle her creative relationship with Wes Pentz, AKA ex-boyfriend Diplo, for the first time since 'Paper Planes' ("It's OK now, but was awkward at first," admits Maya, now engaged to Ikhyd's father Benjamin Bronfman).

Last year also delivered an Oscar nomination for her music's appearance in *Stundog Millionare* while she's recently signed Sleigh Bells and Blaqstarr to her own label, NEET. She also scooped a slot on *Time* magazine's list of the 'World's 100 Most Influential People', and this true star looks like she will continue to set the agenda into the next decade. We can't wait to see what MIA's got in store for us...

NME: In future decades, how will people look back on music in 2010?

MIA: "I'm not sure, but music now should be like sonic massage. You want to really *feel* it, internally. The police use sound cannons at public protests that explode people's insides with a single note – human beings have to come up with the opposite of that."

Which artists are you most excited about in 2010? "The new Sleigh Bells album epitomises how kids are feeling in America – so much energy, but nothing to do with it. Everyone wants you to be an apathetic consumer over there, so it's cool to have some weird discomfort going on. I like that Alexis [Krauss, vocalist] used to be a really nice girl in a pop band that never made it. She followed every step an American child usually follows – singing in the mirror, wanting to be Britney, etc. – so for her to arrive at this noisy place is really interesting. I've signed Blaqstarr too. He's from Baltimore, and whenever he goes out a

PHOTOGRAPH
PAMELA LITTKY, SANTA MONICA, MARCH 9, 2010

million screaming girls follow him. People are gonna hear his voice and suddenly be reminded of what's human about us all."

Do musical tribes still exist?

"There aren't tribes any more – how can there be when we all live in computers, in social networks? People listen to and access music differently now, so the tribal thing has to be reformatted."

What place does politics have in music today?

"I'm always encouraging people to be more vocal. Google's more powerful than any government now – people think it's God. They're storing all our data and one day they're gonna turn against us. That's what my new album's about – I'm living fucking proof that politics doesn't work. Every time I breathe it's documented on my computer, and yet I'm still on some stupid list somewhere that says I'm a terrorist."

Do we still need record labels?

"Are they even interested in making money from music any more? Gaga plugs 15 things in her new video. Dude, she even plugs a burger! That's probably how they're making money now – buying up the burger joint, putting the burger in the video and making loads of burger money."

What do you think of The X Factor?

"Oh my god, I'm so *bored* by it already, people need to get over it. *X Factor* shit's irrelevant. I'm more concerned by how someone like Ke\$ha can so blatantly copy Uffie. Everyone's fine with it. No fucking lawsuit in sight."

How do you think you'd have fared on the show? "I totally would've flopped. Are you serious?! I'm not a 'showbiz' person — I got signed and made an album without playing a show. I scouted four different people to sing 'Galang' before I put it out as my own demo."

Do you think those programmes and the internet have destroyed the mythology around rock and pop stars?

"I don't know. Again, there's Gaga — people say we're similar, that we both mix all these things in the pot and spit them out differently, but she spits it out exactly the same. None of her music's reflective of how weird she wants to be or thinks she is. She models herself on Grace Jones and Madonna, but the music sounds like 20-year-old Ibiza disco, you know? She's not progressive, but she's a good mimic. She sounds more like me than I fucking do! That's a talent and she's got a great team behind her, but she's the industry's last stab at making itself important — saying,

'You need our money behind you, the endorsements, the stadiums.' Respect to her, she's kept a hundred thousand people working, but my belief is you Do It Yourself."

What's more important to you – performing live or making records?

"Making records is my art, but if you're an artist questioning a lot of things it's important to have that live space where what you do isn't gonna be twisted and manipulated."

How important are image and visuals to your music?

"Very. But it's not like 'House Of Gaga' (laughs).

Me blindfolded with naked men feeding me apples and shit."

Where's today's true music underground?

"In people's hard drives and their brains, it just hasn't been outputted yet. It's really important to be physical, especially now so many of us have become typists and voyeurs. We need a digital moshpit like we've never seen, harder than how people were doing it in the punk era. We need that energy, but digitally. I think it's coming."

Who's pushing music forward in 2010? Are people taking enough risks?

"Of course they aren't — we have, what, a million songwriters? And probably three risk-takers. I like this guy DJ Borgore. He's coming out of Tel Aviv which has gotta be weird, and in terms of dubstep he makes the hardest shit."

Who or what is the enemy of music right now? "Money is always the enemy of music."

Is it still possible for a musician to 'sell-out' in 2010?

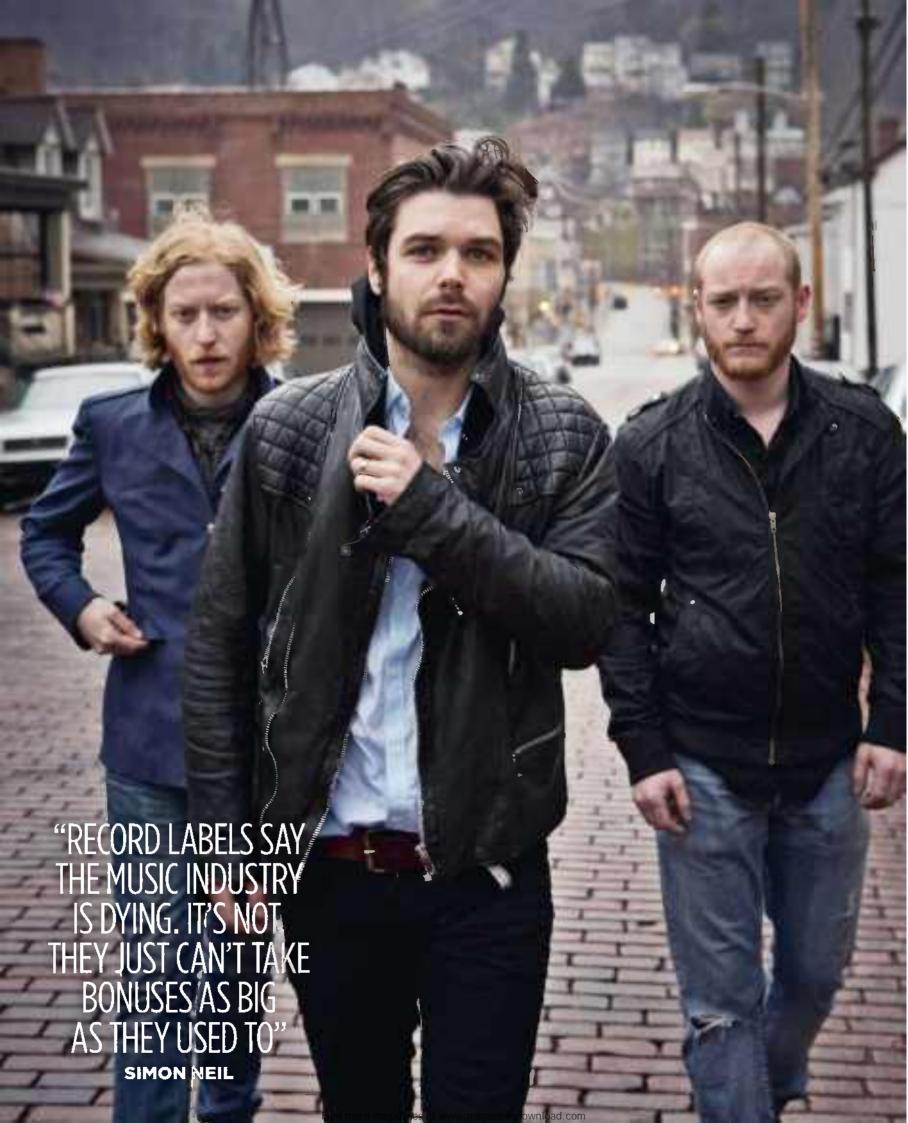
"Back in 2003 I was in a bedsit, hand-spraying every 12-inch and just wanting to make art. Everybody gets turned into a product push so fast – these weird fucking 'hipster' parties promoting Red Bull or whatever. There's a difference between saying 'no' to everything and 'yes' to everything. I'm not fucking Coldplay because I said 'no' to certain things. When I did my 'selling-out' show for MTV they paid me a hundred grand and I built a school with it in Africa."

Would you ever record a song for a Twilight soundtrack?

"They asked me. Luckily Jimmy [Jovine, chairman of MIA's US label Interscope] had beef with the *Twilight* people, so he stepped in and told them to fuck off."

What do you hope to be doing in 2020?

"I'm going to be an artist. Whatever I think an artist is in 10 years, I'll be doing that."



DE 9

BIFFY CLYRO

Is there still a place for good old fashioned hard rock in the brave new genre-less music world of 2010? Simon Neil tells **James McMahon** that nothing will ever kill guitars

f all the artists who grace the to different covers of NME this week, it's arguable that none are more uniquely placed to comment on the state of music in 2010 than Biffy Clyro, 15-year veterans of rock. For one thing, they saw in the last decade, and they formed smack bang in the middle of the one before that. They've been a band pre- and post-internet, and served on an indic and a major label. While over the five albums and "thousands of rock shows" they've seen the scene change and change again. They say with age comes wisdom but, in Biffy Clyro's case, it's also seen them become Britain's most consistently awesome hard rock band.

They've got no intention of slowing down in 2010—even if their work isn't all Biffy-related: "I'm really keen to start on the People record, a new band that's in its early stages," pants singer Simon Neil. "But me, James [Johnston, bass] and Ben [Johnston, drums] are also working on a side band called Empire State Bastard, I'm doing another one called Rocky Hollywood & The Eager Dudes which is going to be a funny jazz record, and I also want to finish off the Marmaduke Duke trilogy. Then it'll be time to get to work on the next Biffy album. Biffy is always the priority."

But before Simon starts work on that little lot, there's some questions to be answered...

NME: When people look back on future decades, bow will music in 2010 be described?

"As a transitional period. Genre barriers in music just don't exist any more. There's no such thing as a 'guitar-based' band anymore, just people making music. But people are still coming to terms with what that's going to mean – I'm talking about the death of tribes and all of that stuff I'm going to miss."

What are you going to miss about it?

"Well, I'm 30, and I think I'm part of the last generation of music fans defined by what music they like. It's been suggested that the death of tribes will result in more people establishing their own identities, but I actually think the palette has become so huge that it's almost just a question of who likes music and who doesn't now. Also, you've got to admit the old way of genres bringing people together will be missed. When I was younger, gigs were where you met people who were like you. That's almost gone forever."

So you think musical tribes are dead now?

"I think so. I think people's minds are more open to different kinds of music now. I even think that of myself. I used to think of myself as a metalhead or a rocker but my tastes are so much broader than they ever were, and that's because all these genre barriers have been broken down by the internet and stuff. Also, I love the fearlessness of new bands today—it's inspiring that there are people out there doing new shit, not worrying what genre or style they fit into."

PHOTOGRAPH
PIETER M VAN HATTEM, PENNSYLVANIA, MARCH 25, 2010

Like who?

"Definitely Rolo Tomassi – I think the way their minds work is really unique and they're the epitome of the kind of band I've been describing. They're heavy, they're light, they use guitars, they use keyboards; they sit under a really wide umbrella, much like The xx. I'm loving the Trash Talk record too. I think they're the closest a modern band have got to the spirit of Black Flag."

Biffy have been around a long time – what advice would you give to a new band starting out now?

"Make your music for the right reasons. If a band starts with the desire to be rich or whatever then you're only going to be disappointed. If you want to make a lot of money then go work in a fucking bank or something. Being in a band is about spiritual fulfilment of the soul."

What do you think your career would look like today if the internet hadn't been invented?

"Well, we started in 1995, before the internet really, so it wasn't a tool we used until 2002/2003. We're from the generation of giving out cassette tapes and trying to get your name around! I think the tough thing for a new band now is that if you play your first show it's gonna end up online and you might get written off before you've even begun. I'm really glad Biffy had the chance to evolve behind the scenes."

Do you think we still need record labels?

"I think we do – there still needs to be an element of quality control. In my experience, a lot of record companies are too stupid to have any idea what a quality band is – but you do need a filter. There are still certain labels you can trust, like XL, 4AD, Sub Pop. You can trust music on those labels to be good. I'd hate to lose that."

How do you think record labels need to change?

"They need to get their egos in check. The days of record companies being the lords of what bands do is gone. The power is slowly coming back to bands... thank god! But labels need to stop wasting money on stupid shit. They've been so cocky and arrogant about money. They say 'the music industry is dying'. It's not. They just think it is because they can't take bonuses as big as they used to."

Can you think of someone or something that is pushing music forward in 2010?

"I don't really think about things like that. I just want to hear good songs. It's ridiculous to think that someone behind a laptop is any more innovative than

someone behind a guitar. It's the human element of music that people need. Good on people that enjoy dubstep and stuff, but for me it won't change lives, not like someone spanking the fuck out of a guitar will do."

What's your opinion of The X Factor and things like that?

"It's always just been Saturday night entertainment — The X Factor is for the kind of people who buy fucking Robbie Williams calendars. I don't think it's a threat to 'real' music at all. It's just entertainment. It's just what The A-Team was in 1986. And Simon Cowell isn't the devil, he's just someone who wants to make shitloads of money, and fair play to him."

Would you ever record a song for the Twilight soundtrack?

"Well, I don't think there's any shame in it – I think Twilight fans are just the sort of people who would have been going to see Bauhaus 20 years ago – but we don't really have any vampire songs right now! There's been some good songs on those soundtracks; I liked the Death Cab For Cutie song, and the Lykke Li one and, in my view, if it's good enough for Thom Yorke, then it's good enough for anyone."

Is it still possible for a musician to sell out in 2010?

"Well, if a band pitches themselves as DIY to the max then takes a sponsorship from Pepsi, then that's totally selling out. But I think it depends on the music they're making. If Dillinger Escape Plan started sounding like Hannah Montana it would be pretty odd – but even then I would think that was fucking nuts and amazing. Bands need to grow and they need to make money, and that's harder for bands than ever before – the first thing I thought when I heard that Big Pink song on the Xbox advert was 'good on them'."

How important is image to what you do?

"We don't really care – that's why we play with our shirts off, even though, perversely, that's become a bit of a thing. People expect it of us where we might just want to wear a shirt. But again, it depends on who the band is. I love Guns N'Roses, and I wouldn't really accept those guys looking like the Pixies, even though I love how normal someone like Frank Black looks. But, really, who gives a shirt?"

Finally, what do you want to be doing in 2020? "Making more and more records, man. My biggest fear is waking up in the morning and not feeling inspired, so I want to keep creative and keep busy and keep loving music. Apart from family, there's nothing else, is there?"

To win signed Biffy Clyro swag, visit NME.COM/win



×10

MAGNETIC MAN

Skream, Benga and Artwork have been shaking up the bass scene for a decade. Now, says

Louise Brailey, they're set to blow all that work apart...

ome people believe that contemporary music is derivative, unable to better what's come before. Pity those people as they're unlikely to experience the transcendent moment when the sub-bass kicks in on Skream's seminal remrx of 'In For The Kill'. Or that summer when 'Night' - co-produced by Benga - was caned everywhere from Ayia Napa to Dalston? Dead to them. For everyone else though, dubstep is evidence of electronic music's insatiable drive to innovate. An offshoot of the UK's bassdriven, future-striving dance tradition, the sound has gone from modest beginnings to, well, the three guys standing in front of NME, keyed up and poised to take it to the next level. "Look at us! We're cooler than every other pop act out there!" exclaims Benga. He has a point.

Oliver Jones, Beni Uthman and Arthur Smith were there at the beginning of course, working shifts at Croydon's Big Apple Records while producing tracks (as Skream, Benga and Artwork respectively) that would go on to shape the genre. However, it's this collaborative effort, Magnetic Man, with which they caught the major label's attention, temporarily swapping the council blocks and crackle of pirate radio for green space and fresh air as they relocated to a Cornish studio to work on their debut. "We made it urban down there for a little while," laughs Artwork. Now, posing for a photoshoot in Ray-Bans, you wonder if Croydon seems like a long way away. "It doesn't feel any different. We're still pushing forward." Judging by the clues, the new material is set to recalibrate expectation, smashing the very dubstep template they helped establish. "People are going to think 'wow!' exclaims Benga. "They should be excited," elaborates Skream, "we're putting everything we've learned in the last 10 years into this project.

Three pioneers, reconvening to reset the course of music, just like they did a decade ago. We're excited alright.

NME: When people look back, how will they describe music in 2010?

Skream: "They'll say it was an exciting time. Lots of different music has come together, there's a festival crowd in the clubs now."

Artwork: "People are into so many different types of music, they're not just into one thing."

Skream: "They'll say it was the year of mephedrone!"

Name three things every new artist starting out today needs.

Benga: "A computer."

Skream: "Common sense. And bollocks!"

Do musical tribes still exist?

Skream: "It's categorised more by drugs now."

Benga: "We try to bring everyone together. We don't look like a dubstep band - we wear skinny jeans."

PHOTOGRAPH TOM OXLEY, LONDON, MARCH 11, 2010

Is there any place for politics in music?

Skream: "In the clubs people are just out to rave, everyone's together again."

Artwork: "There's apathy everywhere for politicians because they're just shit, they're uscless! They don't give a shit about fixing the country, they care about what their soundbite is going to be."

What do you think your career would be like today if the internet hadn't been invented?

Skream: "We probably wouldn't be here."

Benga: "Dubstep took off because of the internet."

Artwork: "And it took off around the world at the same time."

Benga: "We'd still be making music, but I'm not sure it would have gone down the same road because people wouldn't have been pushing it into certain avenues. Skream's album wouldn't have been followed so strongly if there hadn't been the internet."

Do we still need record labels?

Artwork: "If the person running a record label likes a sound and knows his shit it makes your search easier than if it was just you looking through MySpace. There's billions of them, they're all shit."

Skream: "In the future you'll have label blogs."

Artwork: "You'll do it from your iPhone."

What's your opinion of reality music contests? Skream: "I'd like to do one where you tell them all there's a hundred-grand prize and when they win they don't get anything!"

Artwork: "What you going to call it, Stress Factor?"

How would you have fared?"

Benga: "I would've killed it. I wouldn't even have sang, I would have got on my vocoder and been so different they would have loved it!"

Has the internet and talent shows ruined the mythology of rock'n'roll?

Skream: "It shows people care more about what the artist is doing than what he is making."

What is more important to you: performing live or making records?

Artwork: "With Magnetic Man it's hand-in-hand. The show we've built is mental. We're working with Chris Elliot from NOVAK and letting him run wild."

What does the future hold for the album as a format?

Benga: "It's so important. You're always going to get people picking songs on iTunes, but if someone gets that album right you're going to go out and buy it."

How important are images and visuals to the music you make?

Artwork: "The visuals are very important, that's how we've tied the music into the live show. As we bring in different sounds, they send a message to a computer that flashes up a shape, or colour, or image, all live." Benga: "I personally wear all black, I don't have any other colour of clothing apart from white."

Where is the true music underground in 2010? Artwork: "At our mate Ken Chodley's bedroom 'do's; maximum capacity eight people, but some of the best shit you'll ever hear."

What is pushing music forward in 2010? Are risks being taken in music?

Artwork: "There's some risky tracks on the album that we've done. We could just sit down and write straight-up dubstep tracks, but instead we're taking risks. We're not doing what people expect."

Who or what is the enemy of music right now? Benga: "The people who are trying to shut down [the club] Plastic People: Hackney Council." Skream: "It was important to dubstep because it felt so slow, people didn't know how to dance. At Plastic People you aren't worried about anyone watching you." Artwork: "That's what music is about, not just huge glitzy clubs that pump out X Factor rejects. You need it for culture, for people to make up their mind who they are. If you haven't got that, you're fucked."

Is it still possible for a musician to sell out in 2010? Benga: "If you get a glimpse of pop music, say you break a song, then you change your whole sound to fit – that's selling out. If you carry on doing what you're doing, there's no problem, is there?"

Would you ever record a song for a Twilight soundtrack?

Skream: "Write a song for the biggest-selling movie of the year? I'd love to!"

Is it time we accepted that recorded music has to be free?

Artwork: "How is that artist supposed to live? You've got a short time writing songs then what are you going to do? It's a nice idea that someone could sit in their room, write a song and give it to the world for free but then he can't pay his gas bill."

What do you hope to be doing in 2020?

Benga: "I want kids that are making music."
Skream: "Kids of your own or you just going to steal them?! (Raucous laughter) Benga's gonna create his own

Benga: "It's been 10 years already. We would never have said we'd be doing this 10 years ago, who knows what we'll be doing in the next 10 years?"

REVIEWS

DARWIN DEEZ' FREAKY THRILLS, PLAN B'S MOTOWN MAKEOVER AND DREW BARRYMORE'S DIRECTORIAL DEBUT

Edited by Emily Mackay



MGMT

CONGRATULATIONS COLUMBIA

Not quite as mad or suicidal as rumour suggested, the duo's follow-up to 'Oracular...' is more conflicted than courageous



t's unfair when a new album's clouded in popular myth before most people have heard it. It's unfair as, invariably, the received wisdom of industry mutters turns out to be bullshit. So, unless you want to bullshit, DON'T SAY this about 'Congratulations': "Christ, MGMT have disappeared up their rabbit holes with a pig-headed suicide note of an album"; DON'T SAY: "It's so brave of MGMT to release the LSD 'Kid A', bending new corners and alienating fans." Neither are true. Both make you sound like an awful blogger.

Frankly, anyone who's ever seen the band's wilting live show or listened to the songs on 'Oracular Spectacular' not called 'Time To Pretend' or 'Kids' shouldn't be surprised by what's here. Unfortunately for MGMT, they have a load of two-song fans, and last month

they were booed in London for not playing 'Kids'. But, frankly, meatheads like that deserve to be disappointed, and God knows the band won't miss them at the next show. In reality, MGMT haven't written a suicide note, they've committed murder on that unwanted portion of their fanbase.

Nothing wrong with that; what's disappointing is how they've done it — not with an unsettling dash for the leftfield, but by sabotaging themselves and releasing the remains. 'Congratulations' has dropped the hooks and shrugged off pop, but it isn't the dramatic art project you'd hope for from cynical acid princes with a blank cheque and Sonic Boom's phone number.

It's easy to see why on first listen people were racing to write this off as an unlikable, unapproachable record; it's less of an album,

more a collection of psychedelic highs strung together by very little indeed. It's like listening to an inspired collection of outtakes by some classic damaged band – a catalogue of half-ideas, which, fully realised, could have been brilliant.

It's so discombobulated that the 12-minute time-frame of the centre-piece, 'Siberian

Breaks', seems utterly arbitrary, a bracket which could have been thrown over any section of this record, with equal success and coherence. Like the album, there's plenty to admire inside the song—ideas, a willingness to flit between styles and moods, flashes of beauty and moments of fun—but, just like the rest of the album, every thought is discarded before it blooms.

It's not a trait that will impress the casual downloader. But to accredit this ambivalence towards structure to MGMT's disregard of the fairweather fan may be overstating the solemnity with which they approach their art. The incomplete feel of 'Congratulations' seems more like half-heartedness than hard-headedness.

Perhaps we shouldn't be surprised that the band have

approached their own talent with such little reverence; after all, their first hit was a guide to becoming a rock star cliché. They're still entertained by ironic pranks: the slapstick levels of reverence heaped upon the comical 'Brian Eno' reek of a stoner private joke; funny for them, sure, but, like most such sniggers, just annoying for anyone else.

For all the frustration, though, there are inspired flashes: 'Someone's Missing' is an anthem sitting strangely as a three-minute song at the top of the album, 'Flash Delirium' is a directionless drama, but is full of moments of well-orchestrated complexity. 'Lady Dada's Nightmare' is a flitting, diminutive 'Great Gig In The Sky', which will probably sit on repeat in hot-boxed dorms through 2010, while 'I Found A Whistle' is a triumphant, complete and uplifting song. Unfortunately, these moments are distributed like a lashed handful of pebbles

Overall, MGMT's refusal to co-operate with the listener jars with the crisp and professional production—which, despite Sonic Boom's involvement, is more Van Dyke Parks than Spacemen 3 and leaves 'Congratulations' sitting somewhere in the middle, not complex enough for the prats, but too obscure for the jerks. Alex Miller

DOWNLOAD: 'I Found A Whistle', 'Lady Dada's Nightmare', 'Siberian Breaks'

THE TALLEST MAN ON EARTH

THE WILD HUNT DEAD OCEANS



You know that moment about 4am on the Sunday night of a festival when, strung out and mangled, you let yourself sink deliciously towards

sleep? And then, into sweet relief cuts a flaccid bleat of "Hallelujaaaaah" and milksop, maudlin acoustic strums, and all you can think is 'garden shears... garden shears and hot needles'? NME feels like that every time another witless whiner who sees no irony in using the words 'reminiscent of Bob Dylan' on their press release limps out of our postbag. And vet. for all that Swede Kristian Matsson, sometime singer with country-rockers Montezumas, nestles snugly into the Dylan-esque bracket, there's a rough'n'ready energy fuelling his pastiche (seemingly the Swedish national genre). The lustiness of his Bob-cat yowl on warm and well-weathered numbers such as 'King Of Spain' makes 'The Wild Hunt' a refreshingly clean listen, like a fruit and water fast after weeks of binging on glo-fi and mathcore and frou-frou-step and whatever the fuck else. Ambitious? No. Delicious? Yes. Emily Mackay

DOWNLOAD: 'King Of Spain'

MI AMI

STEAL YOUR FACE THRILL JOCKEY



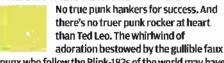
If you're doing something vaguely original in hipster guitar land today, you won't be for long. In a subculture of culture sharks, the rip-offs are

instantaneous - thus 'lo-fi' fuzz, beards and a dude-like drawl have torn through the hipster community of late like Californian wildfire. But no-one wants to copy Mi Ami. The San Franciscan trio suffer arcane, kaleidoscopic seizures that are often wildly embarrassing ~ "I felt something man, I got excited", frontman Daniel Martin-McCormick explains on 'Latin Lover'. "Is it cool, to get excited?" The question's delivered in a shredded-throat screech: half-apologetic, half-goading. As the EP progresses, its erratic behaviour starts to intoxicate - 'Dreamers' is brains blowing in slow-mo; 'Secrets' misbehaves like it's At The Drive-In on carnival drugs. In the fury of these cool-crushing rushes Mi Ami are exhilarating, roaring forwards, chasing risk like Can tied to the back of a pick-up truck and dragged across the surface of the sun. Kev Kharas

DOWNLOAD: 'Dreamers'

TED LEO AND THE PHARMACISTS

THE BRUTALIST BRICKS MATADOR



punx who follow the Blink-182s of the world may have evaded Leo (therefore making him punk by default) but no-one could deny that this New Jersey native has been keeping it real for the duration of his 20 years-plus career. Here, Leo romanticises his teenage love for the frenetic energy of Thin Lizzy ('Bartomelo And The Buzzing Of Bees') and the socio-political assertion of Minor Threat ('Bottled In Cork'), broadcasting the subversive policies of leftist politics without preaching you into a corner; and all the while singing like a hyperactive Elvis Costello ('Even Heroes Have To Die'). As tempting as it might be to chastise Leo for stomping the same ground as previous records, his formula does remain punk as fuck. *Ash Dosanjh*

DOWNLOAD: 'Bottled in Cork'

FACES TO NAMES... What the reviewers are doing this week



BARRY NICOLSON
"This week I've been
wandering around
Savannah, Georgia,
looking for alligators
and taking pictures of
the bus stop from
Forrest Gump while
listening to R Kelly."



ALEX MILLER

"Like every week, I've been trying to contact lan Sinclair, Grayson Perry and Chris Morris. I've also taken photos of the cat outside my window – when that guy turns up you know summer's coming."

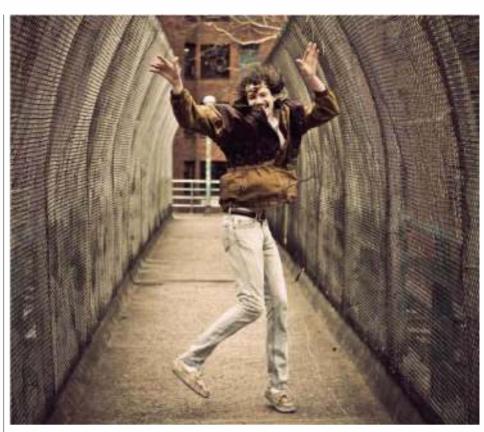


SAM WOLFSON
"I've started drinking
Diet Coke, got an
account on dating site
Plenty Of Fish and
watched the video for
'Telephone'. Oh, and
INTERVIEWED
RIHANNA."



JAMES MCMAHON

"I've mostly been listening to the new albums by Trash Talk, The Dead Weather and The Futureheads, watching Kick-Ass, Tony and Doncaster Rovers getting mugged."



DARWIN DEEZ

DARWIN DEEZ LUCKYNUMBER

The hottest 'tache in indie defies natural selection with a charmingly low-key anomaly of a debut



For the sake of a good soundbite, we'll call it Reverse Darwinism, akin to dredging the lake and finding a three-titted, five-eyed mutant piscine flapping

around at the bottom of it. It makes no sense. It simply shouldn't be. And boy, is it weird lookin'. All the same, there it is: survival of the strangest at work. Whenever we cast our nets into pop music's unplumbed depths, we're always liable to discover a couple of these freakish anomalies who persist out of sheer bloody-minded uniqueness. As much as Darwin Deez can fit into any category, he fits into this one. Up until about six months ago, if you were familiar with Darwin Deez, it was probably as a member of obscure Brooklynbased indie-rockers Creaky Boards. As a disciple of Indian mystic Meher Baba, Deez doesn't indulge in drugs or alcohol, and has been known to enthuse about Jimmy Eat World as much as he does Washington, DC math-rockers Q And Not U. There's also the resemblance he bears to John Oates, one half of '80s soft rock titans Hall & Oates and cultivator of pop music's most ridiculed moustache. You can't decide whether he's too ironically hip to live, too hopelessly uncool to function, or something more substantive. That this album was originally going to be

called 'Astrological Epochs & The Sands Of Time' and somehow came to be called simply 'Darwin Deez' says a lot. It's a more honest title, for starters – with 10 songs that, like the starry-eyed indie pop of 'Constellations', rather than cosmological in scope, are uniformly short, sweet and were recorded on a laptop. It also hints at Deez's weariness of being perceived as pop's passing oddball.

The result is a compulsive album that often feels like a collection of demos, but that's no bad thing; it's casy to see how the simple, toy-like melodies of 'The Bomb Song' or 'Radar Detector' might be ruined by excessive production, while in their lo-fi form they're easy to fall in love with. It's drawn comparisons to The Strokes and The Moldy Peaches, but both are misleading: if it sounds like anything, it's Albert Hammond Jr or Brendan Benson's solo albums; similarly stripped-down, songwriterly affairs.

Deez's sunny optimism also comes in peaks and troughs; for every chirpy 'Up In The Clouds' or 'Constellations', there's the spacey melancholy of 'Bed Space' or the ringing romantic disappointment of 'Deep Sea Divers'. On 'Bad Day', meanwhile, he manages the neat trick of wishing gut-punch after karmic gut-punch on a love rival while still sounding sociopathically cheerful.

Not all the songs are good enough to benefit from Decz's minimalist approach, but most of them are. He's mooted a "more introspective, emotional, Radiohead-whatever" follow-up. That sounds like a colossal misstep, but then that's kinda what Darwin Deez is anyway. And it's certainly worked so far. Barry Nicolson

DOWNLOAD: 'The Bomb Song', 'Deep Sea Divers', 'Radar Detector'



PLANB

THE DEFAMATION OF STRICKLAND BANKS 679

Ben Drew's shift to conceptual Motown is surprisingly snazzy, but we still like him best scary



High unemployment clearly isn't affecting UK MCs, as they keep popping up in new jobs. Ms Dynamite has reappeared as a breakstep vocalist on DJ Zinc's 'Wile Out',

while Craig David's released an album of soul covers. Now Plan B - who you may remember as the rapper who struck fear into children and the elderly with his spectacularly violent soliloquies on debut 'Who Needs Action When You Got Words' - has come back with a collection of Motown pastiches. Go figure.

The transformation is glaring. Album opener 'Love Goes Down' is smothered in Lionel Richie sax lines and call-and-answer backing singers. From there on, it's horn stabs, blues guitar and pretend vinyl crackle all the way.

By rights, you should hate it. Yet, as a Motown carreature it's oddly loveable. Plan B's go at Smokey Robinson's falsetto is admirable, and unlike recent efforts to recapture the '60s from the likes of Duffy and VV Brown, he's actually got some stonking tunes rather than just an expensive producer.

But Plan B is attempting more than merely an enjoyable homage because (whisper it) this is a concept album. '... Strickland Banks' isn't just the title but the record's lead character, a wheeler-dealer who ends up incarcerated. We daren't reveal any more of the 'storyline', because it's completely ludicrous and laced with constant cliché. There's even a bit where he sings about the dark cell within his mind, presumably as he ticks a checkbox marked 'metaphor'. The whole narrative element is torturously cringeworthy, aiming at 'A Grand Don't Come For Free' but ending up closer to High School Musical 2.

When he falls back into his old ways, though, all is forgiven. The rapped verses on the best track, 'The Recluse', prove that Plan B is still one of the most talented MCs in the country. His dynamic, free-flowing streams of consciousness show up a lot of today's grime-pop pap-rappers. Not a bad record then, but one that's debased by the disappointment of one of the UK's bright hip-hop hopes selling soul rather than surprises. Sam Wolfson

DOWNLOAD: 1) 'The Recluse' 2) 'She Said' 3) 'Stay Too Long'

CASTROVALVA WE ARE A UNIT BREW



Madness takes many forms, but none so alluring as a trio of feral noise bastards who enjoy nothing more than getting all up in people's grills.

Comprised of drummer Daniel Brader, bassist Antony Wright and frontman Leemun Smith, 'We Are A Unit' is a fine display of this Leeds trio's skills, both positive and negative - the alternately shrill and punishingly bassy 'That's What I'm Talking About' stays the right side of quirky thanks to its soupy groove, while 'Hooliganz R Us' is a honking in-joke and 'Thuglife' squeals like a wolf trapped in a fence - but you'll need patience to stay the distance. Do so, however, and you'll be rewarded with fun, and lots of it. Rob Parker

DOWNLOAD: 'Pump Pump'

SHAKESPEARS SISTER SONGS FROM THE RED ROOM CARGO



Back in 1992, Shakespears Sister released succulent duet 'Stay', the only chart-topper in the history of goth: similarly mordant fare loads the rich

table of 'Songs...'. For this unexpected late flowering, though, the histrionics of that Number One are replaced by nail-scratch electronics, Siobhan Fahey's voice flapping above turrets of synths manned by robots in pointy brassieres. It's a slightly kitsch success, harnessing the best of late electro to Fahey's spells. Stand-out track 'Bad Blood' might mark the first moment when someone has attempted to combine the delirious vocal melody of Donna Summer's 'I Feel Love' with the garrulous fizz of The Fall in their poppiest phase. Luke Turner DOWNLOAD: 'Bad Blood'

of the week



Coheed & Cambria **Year Of The Black Rainbow'** Neon-Bauhaus, design-porn money shot.

> Worst sleeve of the week



Ted Leo 'The Brutalist Bricks' Typical, Bloody bees dying all over the place.

Best lyric of the week "You and I buy star maps and drive my car around Los Angeles/ You and I buy star maps and ding-dongditch a televangelist" Darwin Deez, 'Radar Detector'

Worst lyric of the week "While my girl cries tears in the gallery/This has got bigger than Lever could have planned/Like that song by The Zutons, 'Valerie'" Plan B, 'She Said'



Paul Weller 'Wake Up The Nation' Music Go Music 'Expressions' Kate Nash 'My Best Friend Is You'

SCOUTING FOR GIRLS **EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE ON TV EPIC**



This is the soundtrack to the future dystopian hell where the Conservatives get their creepy mitts on the means of cultural distribution, shutting down

all that's good and true and leaving a shit slick of homogenous base-grade pig-feed as an excuse for music in its wake. As if SFG couldn't get any more heinous, they've discovered Auto-Tune and sub-Calvin Harris synths on their second album, aping everyone from Pulp ("Posh Girls") to Queen ('Blue As Your Eyes'). They peddle clichés about ugly ducklings and shagging that are so offensive they make a donkey braying into a bin sound like the ripe observations of a Charlie Brooker column. Laura Snapes

DOWNLOAD: Have your teeth pulled instead

HIGH PLACES

VS MANKIND THRILL JOCKEY



Mary Pearson and Rob Barber, aka High Places, are swift workers: their eponymous debut was issued some 18 months ago, and its follow-up is a

superior beast to that gauzy shoegazing-via-Animal Collective disc. The chill still lingers, but their pop hats are on: 'The Longest Shadows' - bearing at least as much resemblance to Blondie's 'Rapture' and 'Frozen' by Madonna as it does to like-minded pushers of opiated alt.rock - serves as an announcement of their intentions from its opening-track perch. Yet when they deviate into a treacly world of dub and shifting tones ("The Channon'), there's still a lineage, along with an identifiable personality. Noel Gardner DOWNLOAD: 'The Longest Shadows'

WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?

How long have you been together?

Mary Pearson (vocals) "Almost four years; we started out pretty punk, playing DIY shows with PAs of various shapes and sizes."

Why are you a duo?

"Instead of thinking we were a smaller version of a big band, we figured we were like a bigger version of solo projects."

What are the main differences between 'Vs Mankind' and your debut?

"It's more about specific things, interactions that happen to you when you're human. I think it's more accessible than the first one."

How big are you in the US?

"My mom sometimes asks if I'm famous. To a very small minority, maybe. But you watch any late-night talk shows that have bands at the end right now, and the bands are getting much stranger."

VALGEIR SIGURDSSON

DRAUMALANDID BEDROOM COMMUNITY



Best known for his masterful production work for the likes of Björk and Will Oldham, here Sigurdsson has composed the soundtrack to a sobering

documentary about the exploitation of Iceland's natural resources. Beautiful and compelling, Nico Muhly artfully conducts the small orchestra through understated moments of expansive beauty, gentle piano and subtle strings that swoon and surge into an ominous force, made all the stronger by the electronic wizardry of Ben Frost, whose crackly textures on 'Nowhere Land' and 'Helter Smelter' add to the underlying sense of unease. Sigurdsson hasn't just created an accompaniment to a film, but an incredible album in its own right. Tessa Harris DOWNLOAD: 'Dreamland'



WHIP IT (MANDATE PICTURES/FLOWER FILMS, 12A)

Drew Barrymore's directorial debut is a warming mix of relationships, rivalries and rollerskates



Be honest, Drew Barrymore could come round to your house, slit your dog's throat, spit in your tea and insist you watch He's Just Not That Into You: The

Extended Cut and you'd still love her, right? Everyone loves a survivor - especially a cute, blonde one who's shagged a Stroke and has Courtney on speed dial - and from ET's Gertie to the acceptable face of romcom in under 30 years, Barrymore's directing debut, Whip It, marks the most recent stop in a remarkable journey. A drinker at 11, a coke user at 13, a suicide attempt at 14; Barrymore lived a life in childhood that most adults would balk at given 80 years. Perhaps that's why her new movie reads like a love letter to more innocent formative days.

Based on Shauna Cross' novel Derby Girla real-life account of life with the Lonestar Rollergirls team from Austin, Texas - Whit It deals with themes of making your own way in the world. In this case, Bliss Cavendar (Juno's

BEARS, MAYORS, SCRAPS AND BONES

and, with an added heavy throat work-out, manage

Between the lung-shaking dirty punk

hell-bent string roars on 'Doomed To

riff fuck of 'Trust No One' and the

sneer of 'Sleep This Away', the spin-cycle

Ellen Page) is a 17-year-old indie kid in small town Bodeen, Texas who rejects her mother's passion for beauty pageants and heads to Austin to enlist in the bizarre, grrrl-dominated contact sport that is roller derby.

Against an impressive soundtrack (Ramones, The Breeders and Har Mar Superstar - who also has a cameo) and a sassy script, this means falling in and out of love, redefining her relationship with her best friend (Arrested Development's Alia Shawkat, who also plays the fictional bassist in The Runaways) and duelling with rival rollergirl Iron Maven (Juliette Lewis). All of which sits within a larger story are of Bliss attempting to assist her team, the pathetic Hurl Scouts, bag their first ever victory. All of which makes Whip It akin to The Mighty Ducks meets Dazed & Confused meets John Cusack's Better Off Dead. Not only a fine debut from the girl behind the camera but an exciting indicator of where Drew may go next. **James McMahon**

To win a Whip It soundtrack, visit NME.COM/win

COHEED AND CAMBRIA YEAR OF THE BLACK RAINBOW

ROADRUNNER



Don't let anyone tell you Coheed were better in their early hardcore incarnation - the filthy Rush-gonemetal delights of 'Good Apollo I'm

Burning Star IV' was where they really got it going on. 'Year...' continues to follow that bombastic course, packed from start to finish with grandiose, rousing flourishes and ample proggy ballast. The spirited first single 'Here We Are Juggernaut' is a case in point with no shortage of fist-pumping ardour. It's all about as camp as Rob Halford conducting a herd of dancing pink elephants, and as much fun as that'd be to witness. Tom Edwards DOWNLOAD: 'Here We Are Juggernaut'



and scamming



Book **David Bowie:** A Biography, by **Marc Spitz** Yes, another Bowie biog. but you'll be glad you made room for Spitz's account, a warm, anecdotal and winning account of the Thin White Duke's life.



lan Dury: Rare And Unseen On the 10th anniversary of the original party animal's death comes this telling doc complete with photos, exclusive footage and original music, all exemplifying Dury's enduring legacy.



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SUMMER CAMP

GHOST TRAIN MOSHI MOSHI



In the same way the Dirty Projectors take you to that magical place, with almost a timewarped and nostalgic sound, this record is very sweet and

beautiful. The vocals are gorgeous and sad, the chanting backing vocals remind me of Johnny Cash rhythms. What a lovely introduction to the band; good stuff for a lighter evening!

PROFESSOR GREEN

I NEED YOU TONIGHT VIRGIN



I'm a fan of Professor Green's rhymes, big time: he's a talented rapper with a real style that's a bit cheeky. For me, the INXS sample is just too repetitive

and blatant, it takes away from Pro Green's talent, wit and style. If it helps him get noticed by more people, though, which he can then reel in so they can hear his other tunes, it's all good!

GOLD BLOOD TWILIGHT LANGUAGE EP

HUMAN SHIELD



All this constant referencing and taking inspiration from the '80s in music has its merits, but sadly it has its downfalls too. When a record like this reaches

your ears and doesn't do anything new or interesting or warm, it leaves me a little cold. I had a much better time listening to Chariots, the former band of Emile Bojesen, who's half of Gold Blood. Confusingly, they were a hardcore band.

THE FUTUREHEADS **HEARTBEAT SONG NUL**



They're like a favourite jumper, aren't they, the 'Heads? Hearing them is always comforting, and their brilliant guitar-punk-pop songs are literate,

romantic, sweet and honest. I'm hearing the same honesty in Frankie & The Heartstrings' music too, and because they're also from Sunderland I thought I'd mention them here!

DETACHMENTS

HAL THISISNOTANEXIT



Hike the way the Detachments always switch things up and mix in different elements to their sound. There's broken beats, big bass, interesting vocals. This

is begging for a 12-minute, epic club remix which, handily, Andrew Weatherall has already provided. Excitingly they can pull it off really well live, too.

RACE HORSES

PONY FANTASTIC PLASTIC



There's huge energy and a real instant rush from this not-at-all pony single; the melodies are lush. Race Horses have nailed that tricky beast, a big melodic

fun-pop two-and-a-half-minute hit which is a lot of fun to listen to. Live they're a treat; they're prone to wig out onstage, have properly weird lyrics, and are a blast to watch.

Listen to Huw every Wednesday 9pm-10pm & Thursday 12am-2am on BBC Radio 1. www.bbc.co.uk/radio1/huwstephens

Fail', for album number three Toronto's premium hardcore delinquents offer a whipping that'd have Bettie Page in a frenzy. Once you've salved your welts, there's also a freakishly clever version of Beastie Boys' 1994 classic 'Sabotage' to sink your retro teeth into. CB turn the rock up to metal, discard the rap

HASSLE

to make this tune sound brand new. Suffice to say, we're stoked they're back. Kelly Murray

DOWNLOAD: 'Sleep This Way'

CANCER BATS



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ROYAL ALBERT HALL, LONDON THURSDAY, MARCH 25/FRIDAY, MARCH 26

ould he debut

new material?

No answers about the future, but a glorious reminder of how much he's achieved so far

Would he slag off Liam? Would he prise Gem or Andy back from Liam's band to play with him? Would he tell us a solo album's coming out? Would we be able to buy knock-off Pretty Green from the Del Boys outside? The announcement last January that Noel Gallagher would play two Teenage Cancer Trust shows at London's Royal Albert Hall immediately threw up more questions than kicking Stephen Fry's cue-card box would Playing his fourth year of gigs for the charity, all eyes were on what had the potential to be two of the most significant

shows in recent British rock history.

But come on - very few of these questions were going to be answered in a manner that would shed much light on the future of one of our greatest living songwriters, were they? For a start, organiser Roger Daltrey would surely have had him sign on the dotted line for these shows long before Noel's favourite guitar span towards its woodsplinter destiny on that fateful August night in Paris. These nights would still be taking place if Oasis were still going, the setlist (almost exclusively carly Oasis material, mirroring his 2007 TCT show) and set-up would probably be the same. Gem Archer is indeed on guitar, Oasis' live keyboard player Jay Darlington is present, an eight-piece orchestra add strings and the 50-voiced

Crouch End Festival Chorus all help out. The only noticeable difference is the ripple of boos from one side of the stunning venue when Daltrey mentions Liam as he introduces the second night. It's cut against the football chant-retort of "I 1am1 I 1am!" from the front-row contingency. I hen, when one bold drunk yells, "Where's Liam?" after 'Cast No Shadow', that wry smile kicks across Noel's face and he finally responds to the up-turned litter-box of tabloidfunnelled insults and snubs thrown his way by his brother since last August: "He's probably being a real northerner somewhere, designing the perfect desert boot."

Noel Gallagher continued over the page >>

• (It's Good) To Be Free

- Talk Tonight

• Fade Away

Cast No Shadow
 Half The
 World Away

Don't Go Away

 The Importance Of Being Idle

• Listen Up

Sad SongWonderwall

• Rockin' Chair

Slide Away

Digsy's DinnerWhatever

The Masterplan

Married With

Children
Don't Look

Back In Anger





Noel Gallagher continued >>

Zing! Still, while we're no closer to finding out if Noel is pondering acoustic learnings, Amorphous Androgynous-inspired psych, or his own Oasis Mk II, nothing should detract from the fact that both these nights are stunning examples of why Noel's songwriting must be considered equal to the greatest this country has ever produced.

With support from The Courteeners and Plan B, the set-up is essentially unplugged but with cnough subtle beef from Noel's rhythm guitar (Gem takes on lead) to lift B-side openers '(It's Good) To Be Free' and 'Talk Tonight' to the ceiling before the choir debut on 'Cast No Shadow'. They may be 50-strong (Noel: "If you want to commit a burglary in Crouch End, tonight's the night...") but due to either clever level-mixing or the fact that the crowd drown them out with a continuous wave of cheering, their inclusion never makes affairs epically contrived. 'Half The World Away' is played a touch too briskly to let its moochy tranquillity shine through but 'Don't Go Away' and 'Listen Up'

When one bold drunk yells 'Where's Liam?' a wry smile kicks across Noel's face

are predictably stunning. The crunchy 'The Importance Of Being Idle' is given more country swing by Gem's squalling lead and 'Wonderwall', despite the obvious temptation to attach strings and send it up like a hot air balloon, is backed by a swelling hum of violin and cello that gives a beautiful warm buzz rather than the orchestra-attack a lesser conductor than Noel might have insisted on. 'Married With Children' seems a touch too fun to be part of the encore. But 'The Masterplan' and 'Don't Look Back In Anger' are both moments so touching they're enough to dispel any question marks about Noel's future in the minds of those present. Moments that will last in those minds far longer than the stitching in the seams of a £245 parka. Jamie Fullerton



ROYAL ALBERT HALL, LONDON MONDAY, MARCH 29

The 2 Tone pioneers attempt to shake the RAH's acoustic diffusing discs off the ceiling...

rom the stage, Terry Hall glances at his watch.

"Look, I've got to be home in 15 minutes," he pronounces. "BBC3 are showing a repeat of On The Buses." Droll, droll droll. That's how The Specials roll, with a tongue in their cheeks, and a whistle on their lips. With a weird combination of shtick – the tootling and parping, skanking and a-jiving you've come to know and love – mixed-in roughly with the more heartfelt and political

aspects. There's always been this tension between the poison-pen likes of 'Little Bitch', the positive realism of 'A Message To You Rudy', and the more played-for-laughs elements of their stagecraft, like when Lynval Golding runs into the first rows of seats throughout the evening. At the Shockwaves NME Big Gig as part of the Teenage Cancer Trust concerts they amplify both parts.

As if anxious to jump clear of any reverent elder-statesman status that might have come attached when they rightfully laid claim to our Outstanding Contribution Award, The Specialsminus-Dammers bound on. They brass their way into 'Do The Dog', its juddering pogo-rhythm causing the RAH itself to physically skank up and down like a building on hydraulic suspension, the lead-in phrase "All you punks and all you teds. . keep on fighting 'til you're dead" now feeling more like an exhortation to their longevity than a description of tribal war in UK '79. It's unclear exactly what the eternally boyish Terry Hall did too much of too young, but it probably involved five-mile runs, Ryvita, quinine shots and abstaining from sin. Lynval Golding is very spry indeed, and Neville Staple is so energised he's basically 2 Tone's answer to Keith Flint. Soon, the chants of 'ruuuuuudeboy' ring all the way up to those weird flying-saucer

things on the RAH ceiling, and their call is met by the only natural response: The Maytals cover, 'Monkey Man', "Look, I know this isn't the time or the place," Hall continues after 'Little Bitch', "but I'm dying for a piss. Would you mind?", before scarpering offstage for the first half of 'Nite Klub'. The shtickiness is put on hold for 'Concrete Jungle' – perhaps the most anomalous and arresting of their canon – before 'Too Much Too Young' comes out to remind everyone that it's not

just Broken Britain 2010 that doesn't know which way round a condom gocs – the only sign o' the times being that these days no-one would consider an unplanned pregnancy reason to get married. Still, there's one more thing missing. Could it be a lack of adequate skanking? "Now I really want to see you skank it," Golding suggests, until the main set ends semi-sombre, with 'You're Wondering Now' – the sense of doubt and disappointment within its chorus ('You're wondering now what to do, now you know this is the end...') being transmogrified into something beautifully piquant and all-inclusive – a big joyous, singalong tender throb of a thing.

Later, outside, one middle-aged woman is making for the Tube. "I think I get more political as time goes by," she confides to her friend. "But when I listened to that, well, I can't help but think of Thatcher's Britain and what it did to me..." There are a lot of clichés like that floating around tonight. But they seem to work too, perhaps because the spirit of the evening hasn't been so much that of a tribute to another era as an attempt to reconnect — to remember the truth in its voice. Metaphysically, it's been a Big Gig. *Gavin Haynes*

Head to NME.COM for an exclusive video interview with The Specials





Jeff Small, Cardiff

What brings you here then? "I've followed these guys since I was nine: The Beat, The Specials, the whole 2 Tone scene."

Was it as good as back in the day? "Saw 'em in Cardiff, they were brilliant, but this was better."

VERONICA FALLS

93 FEET EAST, LONDON SATURDAY, MARCH 27

orrissey once took issue with the instant success that comes so easily to today's batch of young whippersnappers in bands. With the Arctic Monkeys in his sights, he grumbled, "It's all a bit unnatural... They haven't been driving up and down the M1 in a van for 15 years." Goodness knows what he'd make of Veronica Falls, then - a Scottish four-piece courted by their record label a mere 10 minutes after setting up their MySpace account - as they shuffle on to the stage at 93 Feet East to provide some witching-hour delight to the bleary-eyed fans in attendance.

Yet if the rise of their cult fanbase can be attributed to the postdigital age, their sound harks back to the era of the cassette tape and, more specifically, the jangling guitar and sugary melodies of C86 indie-pop. Single 'Found Love In A Graveyard' is the sweetest ode to gothic-tinged romance imaginable, a maelstrom of lo-fi fuzz and gorgeous harmonies capable of causing all but the most stone-hearted of folk to swoon, while 'Starry Eyes' combines the infectious hooks of The Pastels with the reverb-drenched feedback of My Bloody Valentine. Simultaneously retro and fresh, theirs is a charm that no amount of time spent trawling up and down motorways can bring, Ben Hewitt

PEGGY SUE

RELENTLESS GARAGE, LONDON MONDAY, MARCH 29 hey've gone from '... And The Pictures' to the '... And The Pirates' to plain of Peggy Sue, gained a drummer, lost the pseudonyms and taken on a classical string section. Now, with everything in place, Rosa Slade and Katy Young plus Olly Joyce on skins are finally starting to gamer the attention that's most deservedly due them. If tonight's show proves anything, it's that the path may have been a lengthy one but the fans they've picked up along the way are in it for the long haul.

From the off each track is honoured with enraptured silence and bookended by the kind of raucous whoops generally reserved for stone-cold classics rather than tracks from a newly released album. It's the kind of supportive and generally victorious atmosphere that can only come from a band that's done it the old-fashioned way.

There's 'February Snow''s pounding, bitter lament, 'Watchmen's ballsy, a cappella refrain and 'The Sea The Sea's shanty swagger, but it's in terms of sheer vocal prowess that Peggy Sue really come



into their own, the duo's spine-tingling harmonies elevating them from pretty damn impressive to all-out, head-over-heels brilliant.

From tonight's shy display of slight bemusement and selfeffacing banter it seems clear that Slade and Young are still getting used to this 'being a bit popular' malarkey. All we can say is they'd better start learning fast. Lisa Wright

IS TROPICAL

02 ACADEMY 2, NEWCASTLE THURSDAY, MARCH 25

hen Superman wanted to blend in, he slipped on a pair of glasses and became Clark Kent. Tonight, Is Tropical do everything they can to conceal their faces from the crowd; they fashion masks

from bandanas and wear hoods. The set is fragmented; a patchwork sewn together by myriad musical influences. 'What?' alludes to early Foals, while there's an eccentric and precious madness to 'Seasick Mutiny' akin to Hot Chip's geek-pop. Playing in near-darkness with concealed faces, these boys would seem to be content with staying in a niche big enough for three. And yet their music is far from obscure, a scrapbook of popular electro-pop hooks that hark to an early Klaxons. Let's just hope that shying away from their potential doesn't come to be their kryptonite. Chris Mandle

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Ryan Farman at Laura Marling, London Barfly

How did you end up at this gig tonight? "Well, I was put on the guestlist and I'm trying to expose myself to as much new music as possible so I thought I'd come down and check it out."

Do you like her new hair?

"Well, I'm a fan of brunettes, as I'm a brunette myself."

Will you be buying her new album? "Yes, I think I will."

What's On OUR

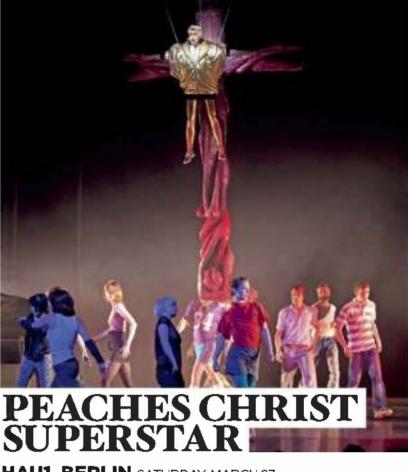


The Twilight Sad, Harley, Sheffield

- 2 bottles of vodka 1 bottle of bourbon - 3 bottles of red
 - wine
 - Buckfast Ketamine

 - Coke
 - Red Bull Marmite

· A saw Jacob's Ladder video



HAU1, BERLIN SATURDAY, MARCH 27

Saucy minx's take on Lloyd-Webber's show sees the Messiah crucified on a giant penis

Peaches' indignant tweets about German authorities shutting tonight's one-woman recreation of the Andrew Lloyd Webber rock opera Tesus Christ Superstar down ("PEACHES CHRIST SÚPERSTAR CRUCIFIED BEFORE OPENING NIGHT!") may have been premature, but the publicity can't have hurt. After all, there's little in the way

of shock value here unless you're really, really uptight. Hardcore bible-bashers protesting out front are noticeable by their absence. Maybe present Christianity is modern enough to not care about a sexy female son of God; maybe the church just couldn't care less what Peaches it up to when massive scandals about sexual abuse are springing up all over Europe.

Peaches strips the play back to the bare bones of the story. There's just her, singing all the characters, only staged by understated, but effective light, wearing a super-tight white suit in the first act and a bulbous golden outfit in the second that looks like Berlin Mitte hipster-couture meets Starlight Express. Chilly Gonzalez' prano does a very good job in

replacing a composition for a whole orchestra with just his subtle and expressive playing.

Peaches has always been more about her stage presence and her charisma rather than her voice, but the vocal performance isn't crucial. It's the way Peaches can inhabit the story while still stamping it with her signature.

> Rather than turning it into a glitzy kitsch-fest, she treats the matter with respect, but still makes it very Peaches. The stand-out moment is 'I Don't Know How To Love Him' (Maria Magdalena offering most to identify with for a feminist icon). The hammy 'Herod's Song', meanwhile, generates most opportunities for an über-ironic adaption.

> The latter leads straight to the climax: Christ's crucifixion, Surrounded by singing and dancing followers, Jesus gets lifted on to a giant phallus-like cross designed by Berlin artist Andreas Golder. Of course, Peaches Christ Superstar would have to be crucified on a cock, as if to say, "It might not have sounded like one, but this is still a Peaches show." Andreas Richter



BIG Mouth

The noise from

Ingrid & Juliane, both 25 from Berlin

Should ALW be worried about Peaches doing it? Ingrid: "Not at all. I even think this was more original,"

What was your highlight?

Juliane: "The penis. I'm a woman. These things touch me."

On The ROAD WITH WILD BEASTS

Thought touring with the Kendal fops was all poetry and dreaming? No chance. As NME discovers, this is just one long "stag-do on wheels"

OISIN DUBH, ALWAY

THURSDAY, MARCH 25

here'll always be something righteous about bands that load in their own gear at venues. There's just no clearer distillation of hernia-rupturing dedication to the cause of artistic expression. But three nights after Wild Beasts' name was up in lights outside Camden's 1,500-capacity KOKO for the second time in a month, NME hadn't expected to see the Cumbrians racing amps, flight cases and drums across a busy Galway street into their latest stop-off, the Roisin Dubh. "Remember lads," warns tour manager Scotty as four weary Beasts stumble off the bus, 'you're back in work mode now.'

It's a sobering image. After all, the Beasts' sold-out KOKO shows were grand flag-hoisting victories for a band that have decisively overcome the general public's initial fear of Hayden Thorpe's counter-tenor since their arrival on 2008's 'Limbo, Panto'. The band's recent American gigs "were like the second coming of Christ", says Thorpe's fellow vocalist Tom Fleming over a pint. Then there's the love note from Antony Hegarty... "A guy from the label gave me a note," Fleming adds. "It said, 'I love you gay Tom,' with gay crossed out, and he said it was from Antony. I was like, 'Fuck off.' Then he gave me another: 'Sorry I can't come tonight, I have swine flu. Good luck."

All of these are signs that Wild Beasts are being ushered into that space in pop music reserved for intense, poetically resonant bands that inspire a proper, stalker-ish obsession - like The Smiths and Suede. So the daily grind they've returned to on the Irish leg of this tour is a much bumpier return to earth than the one NME experienced on the plane that flew us here to join them.

It's certainly a far cry from early depictions of the band as laudanumsnuffing literary yokels, something Thorpe says the band had a hand in creating as he unfurls a mic lead.

We wanted to be unhinged and to be the band that had that effect because we'd grown up in such a mundane place. It was a reaction, like, 'Fuck it, let's see what we can throw at people."

The reality is these are well-read footy fans (Blackburn, Newcastle and



Manchester United are their teams) who live life on this never-ending tour as if it's "a stag-do on wheels", keeping their pecker up with a photo of Claudia Winkleman taped to a keyboard ("That's one hell of a woman," says Fleming). The only romance in their routine life right now is in their evocative character-driven songs about aimless, sexually-charged bovver boys in shiny boots who read Henry Miller. It's this dark, shadowy twist on reality, along with a willingness to get their hands dirty, which makes these dreamers from Kendal perfect for these austere times.

"We've been doing this for years, turning up at venues at the weekend, loading in our gear," says drummer Chris Talbot, the band's master musician according to guitarist Benny Little. "The UK tour was the first time we paid people to do it and it felt wrong. It's like you're at the top of the pyramid and you've got no right to be there."

Over in the corner of the Roisin Dubh, Little channels the spirit of children's TV resourcefulness as he crafts a flight case out of cardboard and bubble wrap for his new amp - bought for a knockdown price on eBay.

It's a strange in-between world these long-time friends inhabit, then: stardom beckons but the music industry's

diminished economy keeps them tethered to a meagre daily allowance. And the Wild Beasts' live shows exist in a similarly strange netherworld. Their intoxicating blend of propulsive rhythms, taut, silvery guitars and thrilling music hall drama is fast being accepted but, says Thorpe, "people don't know whether to dance or stand

ın sılence". Well, they do in Galway. Tonight the sweeping elegance of the KOKO shows is cast off like a corset as the band reveal something about 'Two Dancers' many have missed - that it's a record infused with the euphoria of dance music. The chiming sounds of 'Hooting And Howling' sound like '90s house, another product of austerity, while 'All The King's Men' could give Delphic a run for their money and Little's percussive guitar lines bring to mind the emotional electronica of labelmates Junior Boys. Other songs boil down to eerie, underwater outros that reveal their love of dubstep.

Everything tonight is

adventures". · G reckons "American bands are the worst. they're just prima

imbued with intensity. The songs are sinewy, thumping and, like the twinkling minimalism of the Steve Reich soundtrack they walk on to, totally hypnotic. Blown clean away, the fans in Galway choose to dance.

CYPRUS AVENUE, CORK

FRIDAY, MARCH 26

Theories abound as to why people are beginning to tune in now, but we're keeping with the one about Wild Beasts being an austerity band, in tune with our threadbare times. Reading the Irish Independent as we trail them from Galway to Cork, we discover research says that when we're down on our luck we like nothing better than shagging. And sex, of course, runs through Wild Beasts' songs like streams down mountains. Just like Fleming says about his preferred kind of read: "It's always stuff about sex and death. I hate to talk in primary colours, but it just is."

And there's something about their horny, goodtime characters, some prone to murderous thoughts, which appeals to people in these dark ages. Especially to those who've packed out Cork's Cypress Avenue. After a weary, mid-set lull the crowd urge the band on, singing the "oh, oh, oh, oh ob-oh-oh, oh obs" from 'All The King's Men' unprompted. It's a

moment of reconnection and the band, taken aback, ramp things up to a dramatic climax. Backstage it's all grins. It's a long, hard slog for Wild Beasts right now with only the onstage hour providing any comfort to them, so crowd reactions like these are confidencebuilding sustenance - as is the sold-out Dublin date they head off to next.

"It's a sense of empowerment," says Thorpe. "People are listening now so we can really give them something. Now people know the characters we work in. That's exciting, like writing a soap opera. Once you've built the characters you can do things with them that surprise people."

Wild Beasts should see themselves clear of austerity quicker than most. We're banking on it. Chris Parkin





'G', Wild Beasts

· The band's driver is G, whose jokes turn the air bluer than a toilet brick. He sees "all kinds of weird and wonderful sexual

donnas".

54 NME 10 April 2010





Friday, 1.50pm, Cork Tucking into a nutritious meaf of... waifles. They weren't even tasty





Friday, 11,20pm, Cork Stalkers! Even worse, stalkers in sports casual wear! It's a glamorous life, rock'n'roll. Unless you're Wild Beasts



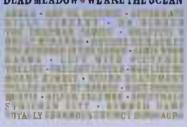
Saturday, 12.45am, Cork



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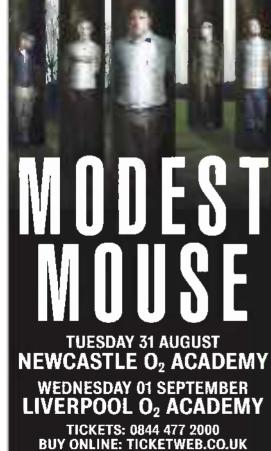












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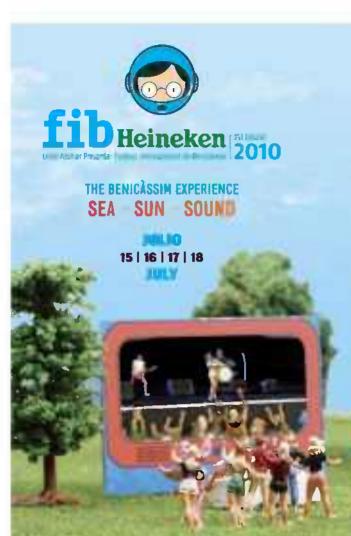
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THIS WEEK:

Blaine: Show me your goods baby, and I'll show you the money. Possibly. Just don't make me spill my wheatgrass shake.

Tony (drums): "We're called the Deccas and we're from Medway. We've been together three years, and recently got down to the final 12 out of 2,000 entrants at an unsigned bands competition at The Cavern. We brought out a self-financed album last year called 'Ways To The Sun', and we have our own Wiki page!"

Wicki-dy wack, mack daddy. Can't any old fool do their own entry?

"No, there's certain rules. We did a Desert Island Discs-style show for Radio Caroline, which entitled us to have our own page because we've had over 30 minutes of radio time dedicated to us."

Ah, course. I knew that aiready. So what's the new sound, melon-farmer?

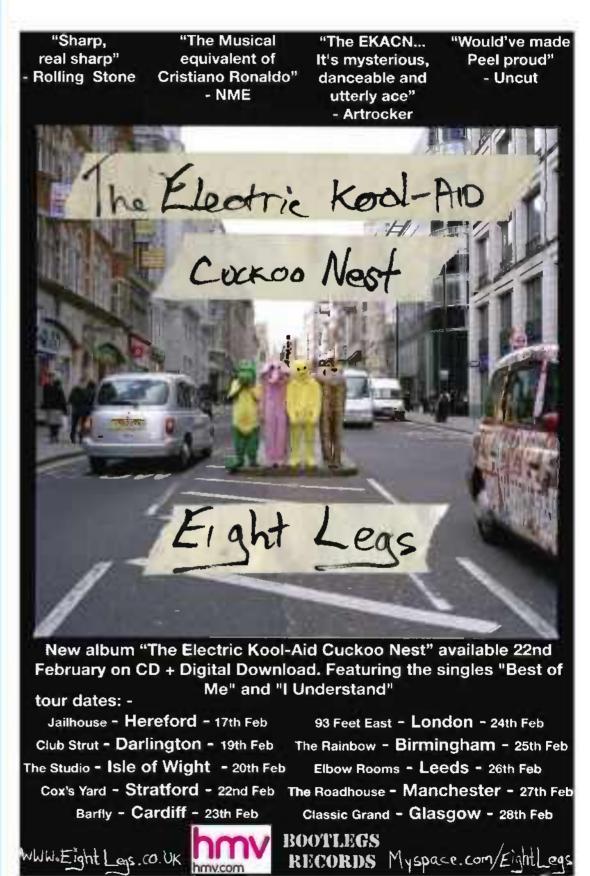
"We do mod sounds with a bit of Motown. It's quite anthemic and catchy. One blt of press said we sound like 'the best of the '60s, '70s, '80s and '90s."

Hey, narrow that playing field, bro.

"Well, we've also been called short, sharp songsmiths. Check out our song 'Leave It Alone' on our MySpace. It was co-written with our singer Wes' seven-year-old son. He was bathing him and the kid was stopping Wes from playing with the toy letters stuck to the bath, and saying, 'Leave, leave, leave it alone'. Wes thought, 'I'm having that!'"

You boys sound good, but that kid sounds like a genius. Totally Beethoven. Let's get the kid in for a showcase. Airight, Blaine out. MySpace.com/thedeccas

In an unsigned band and fancy going head-to-head with Blaine? Email letters@nme.com with a link to your MySpace page plus a contact email and phone number and the subject line "A&R wanker"



NME SAYS: Manic indie ney-do wells







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BANDeAID

No dilemma is too big or small for NME's Resident Cognitive Disputational Resolutionist (aka Agony Uncle) Pete Cashmore



NOW WHO'S STALKING?

We have recently acquired our first fan, who also happens to be a pretty psychotic stalker. She follows us everywhere, but she's the only person willing to pay for our music. Should we be glad of the attention, or does it all seem a bit too Flight Of The Conchords for comfort? Frightened fellows, Cambridge

Now, is she a stalker who is pretty psychotic, or a psychotic stalker who happens to be pretty? Please distinguish, it's important. Because, frankly homeblood, you should have had a Jerry Maguire moment reading back your letter - "you had me at 'willing to pay for our music'." For a new band, a psychotic stalker is like a wheat crop - you nurture It, you reap the harvest for a while and then, when autumn comes, you scrape off the seeds and turn them into porridge. Or something. Uncle Pete

SICK OF IT ALL

Our singer is having a bit of a Pete Doherty moment of late and keeps getting utterly wasted before going onstage - at our last gig he puked up his dinner mid-chorus, which a few of the fans in the front row weren't very impressed with. How can we instil sobriety?

Sickened, Reading

First, you could make sure you check the 'Best Before' dates on any seafood products your singer may wish to consume before each gig - fish can turn very quickly and will then combine quite unfavourably with heroin withdrawal. Remember, though, you can't 'make' anyone sober up, so my advice to you would be to capitalise on your singer's onstage barf attacks by simply adding a "free food provided" caveat to your fivers. You'd be surprised how ill-nourished some gig-goers are. **Uncle Pete**

MO' BETTER BLUES

The cold hard truth is I'm more talented then the rest of my band. They're my mates, but I ultimately feel they're snuffing my potential in the long run – how do I know when the time is right to go solo? Shackled, Suffolk

Always good to have an intra-band squabble to mediate. Shackled, all

you have to do is to never once wane in this assuredness of your own obvious superiority, and make sure that everyone you know, meet, or address through a PA system knows about it too. In particular, make sure your bandmates' girlfriends know how much better you are. And then the decision about when you go solo will almost certainly be made for you. Uncle Pete

Fancy having your band problems solved once and for all? Just send your musical quandaries to bandaid@nme.com, and Uncle Pete will endeavour to assist

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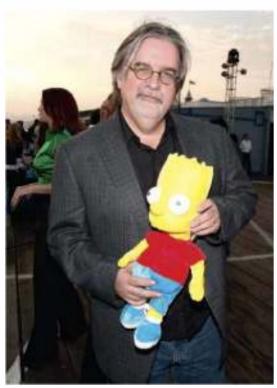
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ATP CURATED BY MATT GROENING

STARTS: Butlins, Minehead, May 7

DON'T

For a decade now, All Tomorrow's Parties has been servicing the indie community with bands ranging from the sublime to the ridiculous. As part of their 10th birthday celebrations, ATP have roped in the animator behind The Simpsons, Matt Groening. No stranger to the ATP empire (he curated it in California in 2003), Matt has invited some of his favourite acts to be a part of his stellar line-up. With bands such as hell-raisers Iggy And The Stooges, Spiritualized, The xx, Deerhunter, a newly reformed Raincoats, the Boredoms and Cold Cave, plus Joanna Newsom and Liars as new additions to the line-up, it would be sally to miss it.

NME.COM/festivals



LUCKY SOUL STARTS: London Cargo, April 15

With the release of 'A Coming Of Age', Lucky Soul head out for a headline tour. NME.COM/artists/ lucky-soul



BROKEN SOCIAL SCENE

STARTS: O2 Academy Brixton, May 13

The Canadian collective leave the cold and hit the venues of Britain. NME.COM/artists/ broken-social-scene



LADY GAGA \$TART\$: Nottingham Trent FM Arena, May 27

The empress of ostentatiously absurd wardrobes appeases fans who missed out first time round by extending her Monster Ball tour. NME.COM/artists/ lady-gaga



STARTS: Southampton University, April 19

The indie stalwarts are still going strong despite turning their back on full album releases. Do not miss. NME.COM/artists/ash



GREAT ESCAPE FESTIVAL

STARTS: Brighton. various venues, May 13

The annual industry shindig showcasing bands such as The Fiery Furnaces takes over Brighton. NME.COM/festivals



GREEN MAN BOAT PARTY

STARTS: London Thames Path, May 29 Launching the annual Green Man Festival are Silver Columns (above) and Matthew And The Atlas for this one-off boat party down the Thames.

NME.COM/festivals



CHROME HOOF

STARTS: London Queen Elizabeth Hall, April 22 Three long years since their

last release, CH are back with new album 'Crush Depth'. NME.COM/artists/ chrome-hoof



A PLACE TO BURY **STRANGERS**

STARTS: Birmingham Hare & Hounds, May 18

The post-rock noise trio are back in the UK in support of album 'Ego Death EP'. NME.COM/artists/ a-place-to-bury-strangers



TWO DOOR CINEMA CLUB

STARTS: London Heaven, May 26

BRITISH SEA

STARTS: Colchester

Arts Centre, April 25

After their NME show, BSP

head out on their own tour.

POWER

The electro-poptastic Bangor indie trio tour new album 'Tourist History'. NME.COM/artists/ two-door-cinema-club



AGAINST ME!

STARTS: London Garage, June 1

The Floridian punkrock outfit hit the UK in June in support of their forthcoming fifth album 'White Crosses'. NME.COM/artists/ against-me



CONVERGE

STARTS: Brighton Concorde 2, July 10

Bursting a new eardrum for metalheads. Massachusettsians Converge head back to the UK to tour last year's 'Axe To Fall'. NME.COM/artists/ converge



What to see this week? Let us help



LAURA MARLING

STARTS: Belfast Limelight, April 9

PICK

You don't need a cliché to tell you that less is more. No-one knows this better than Laura Marling. As a performer, she's very much a minimalist; when not backed by a band made up of current squeeze Marcus Mumford and assorted Sons, she can usually be found onstage on her own dressed down and unstyled. Fortunately, Marling's songs speak loudly enough. With her latest album 'I Speak Because I Can', the 20-yearold abandons the naive routine of her Mercury-nominated debut 'Alas I Cannot Swim' in favour of an expanded range of songwriting that includes topics as heavy as womanhood and sexuality. Prepare to be pleasantly surprised by her transition. NME.COM/artists/laura-marling



Everyone's talking about KATE NASH

STARTS: Academy. Dublin, April 7

'Made Of Bricks' may have marked Kate Nash as the cutesy alternative to Lily Allen, but the Harrow native has a few surprises in store with new album 'My Best Friend Is You'. Gone are those naff songs about lemons replaced by lo-fi punk-rock that sees Nash assert her feminist credentials. NME.COM/artists/ kate-nash



Don't Miss MOTHLITE STARTS: Jazz Café.

London, April 7

Unsung anti-heroes of plotted sound saturations and warped phonic thought, Mothlite skulk in the shadows with their dark and shimmering soundscapes. Composer Daniel O'Sullivan may also be a contributor to Sun O))) and The Big Pink, but Mothlite, out on tour supporting Cranes, create a gloriously esoteric sound all of their own. NME.COM/newmusic



Radar Stars SUMMER CAMP

STARTS: The Lexington. London, April 8

As unlikely as it sounds, this London outfit made up of folk wanderer Jeremy Warmsley and sometime NME hack Elizabeth Sankey have created a sure-fire soundtrack to the oncoming warmer months. Serving up the kind of woozy indie pop fit for a John Hughes movie, this is one gig you do not want to miss. NME.COM/artists/

summer-camp

GIG GUIDE KEY:

#14 = 14 AND ABOVE #16 = 16 AND ABOVE AA = ALL AGES CS = CLUB SHOW R = FREE ENTRY WA = UNDER 14S WITH AN ADULT UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED ALL GIGS ARE 18+

WEDNESDAY

ABERDEEN

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Bowling For Soup O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA

The Broadcast O2 Academy 3 0870 771 2000 WA

N-Dubz O2 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA

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Acoustic Ladyland Harley 0114 275 2288

Lauren Pritchard Forum 0114 2720964

Mever Cry Wolf Boardwalk

0114 279 9090 SOUTHAMPTON

Big Num Joiners 023 8022 5612

STOKE ON TRENT

Glamour Of The Kill Sugarmill 01782 214991

WAKEFEELD

Thea Ford Band Snooty Fox 01024 374455

WOLVERHAMPTON

The Monobloggers/The E-Gos/ The Cubans Robin 2 01902 497860

WREXHAM

Cerys Matthews Glyndwr University 019 78 29 30 72





THURSDAY



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John Smith Glee Club 0870 241 5093 BRIGHTON

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Bad Company Clyde Auditorium 0141 248 3000

Ellie Goulding King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279

First Step To Failure 13th Note Café

Robyn Hitchcock 02 ABC2 0141 204 5151 WA

Schnapps The Ranch 01698 881 171 GUILDFORD

Chapel Club Boileroom 01483 440022 HEBDEN BRIDGE

Last Harbour/Hidden Bek The Hole in The Wall 01422 844 059

INVERNESS

Stornoway Mad Hatters 01382 200008

DEMICH

Eaststrikewest The Swan 01473 252485

LEEDS

Return To Aljustrel Carpe Drem 0113 243 6264

LIVERPOOL

N-Dubz O2 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA Ramona O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA

LONDON

And So I Watch You From Afar

Borderline 020 7734 5547 A Sunny Day in Glasgow Windmill 020 8671 0700

Balmorhea Barden's Boudoir 0770 865 6633

Belphegor Underworld 020 7482 1932 Chamber Club/Ono Palindromes/ Claw Of Panther/Buffalo New Cross

Inn 020 8692 1866 Chris Cutier Café Oto 0871 230 1094

Firefall Down/Johnny Cola And The A Grades/Charlene **Huskinson/The Beat Presidents**

Dublin Castle 020 7485 1773 Hunx And His Punx/Plug Camp

Basement 0871 230 1094 Joshua Radin O2 Shenherds Rush Empire 0870 771 2000 WA

Kunt & The Gang/Don't Walt

Animate/Heads.Hearts

229 Club 020 7631 8310 Little Teeth Slaughtered Lamb

020 8682 4080

Madina Lake Forum 020 7344 0044 The Marshall Arts Family/ The Guns Of Pig Alley/The I Hearts

Ghost Bar 0207 278 2301 Moses And The Black Cats Rhythm

Factory 020 7247 9386 My Single Line/Arms Of Mexico/

Atlases Hope & Anchor 020 7354 1312 New Adventures Hoxton Square Bar & Kitchen 020 7613 0709 Paolo Nutini Royal Albert Hall

Professor Green/Rinse MacBeth 020 7739 5095

020 7589 8212

Red'N Pink/Someones Daughter Bull & Gate 020 7485 5358

Renegade Sound On The Rocks 020 7278 1074

The Savage Nomads 12 Bar Club 020 7240 2622

Scarlet Harlots Arts Club 020 7460 4459

Slan Alice Group Garage

020 7607 1818 Summer Camp/Spectrals/Babe

Shadow The Lexington 020 7837 5387 Tiger Please Barfly 0870 907 0999 +14

Victoria And Jacob/Tim And Sam's Tim And Sam Band With Tim And Sam/The Title Sequence The Old Queen's Head 0207 839 7261 The Wave Pictures/The Lost Cavairy/Silent Paper Radios Lock Tavern 020 7485 0909

Weird Naked Indian 100 Club 020 7636 0933

We Have Band King's College 020 7836 7132

MANCHESTER AudioFun FAC 251 0161 27 27 251 The Paddingtons Roadhouse

Tom Cawley's Curios

0161 228 1789

Band On The Wall 0161 832 6625 Ultravox Apollo 0870 401 8000 Whitney Houston Evening News Arena 0161 950 5000

NEWCASTLE

Airbourne O2 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA

The Hyads Head Of Steam 0191 232 4379

New York Alcoholic Anxiety Attack

Trillians 0191 232 1619 Rob Tognoni Clurry 0191 230 4474 NORWICH

Adelaide's Cape The Birdcage

01603 633 534 The Beat Waterfront 01603 632717

Joan Armatrading Theatre Royal 01603 630000

Sonic Boom Six Arts Centre 01603 660352

NOTTINGM

Eyehategod Rock City 08713 100000 PORTSHOUTH

Evil Scarecrow Wedgewood Rooms

023 9286 3911 Jon Amor Cellars 0871 230 1094

SHEFFIELD

Dogan Mehmet & The Deerhunters Boardwalk 0114 279 9090

James 02 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA

Nat Johnson And The Figureheads Leadmill 0114 221 2828

Polly Mackey & The Pleasure Principle Plug 0114 276 7093

Twenty Twenty 02 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA

SOUTHAMPTON

Walter Schreifels Joiners 023 8022 5612

MODININA

Good Dog The Rolleston 01793 534238 Jen Olive The Vic 01793 535713

WAKEFIELD

Winter Of Life Snooty Fox 01924 374455

WIGAN

Last Days Of Lorca/Aged Yummy/ Mind Erase This Officers' Club 01942 826 535

WOLVERHAMPTON Broken Again Little Civic

0870 320 700 YORK

Does It Offend You, Yeah? The Duchess 01904 641 413

FRIDAY

April 9

AREDDEEN

Robyn Hitchcock Lemon Tree 01224 642230

BELFAST

Laura Mariling I melight D28 9032 5942

BIRMINGHAM

Eyehategod Asylum 0121 233 1109 Panic Cell 02 Academy 3 0870 771 2000 WA

Vidina/Chapters/Carcer City/ Viatrophy Eddie's Rock Club @ BUSK 0121 643 2093

BRIGHTON

Candi Staton Concorde 2

01273 673311 RRISTOL

And So I Watch You From Afar The Cooler 0117 945 0999

Bowling For Soup O2 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA King Creosote Louisiana

0117 926 5978 Moreton Vue/Dead Lieutenant Croft 0117 987 4144

CAMBRIDGE

The Beat Junction 01223 511511 The Courars Man On The Moon 01223 474259

Joan Armatrading Com Exchange 01223 357851

CARU Glamour Of The Kill Barfly

029 2066 7658 +14

CORK

Port O'Brien Cyprus Avenue 00 35321 427 6165 DERBY

Goldblade/The Rainman Suite The Old Bell 01332 343701

DUBLIN Chew Lips Crawdaddy

00 3531 478 0225 Colette Cassidy JJ Smyth's

00 353 01 4752565 Jedward Helix 00 3531 700 7000 Paul Brady Grand Canal Theatre

GALWAY

The Butterfly Explosion Roisin Dubh 00 35391 586540

GLASGOW

Dave Berry Royal Concert Hall 0141 353 8000

Isa And The Filthy Tongues

Stereo 0141 576 5018 Joe Longthorne Pavilion Theatre

0141 332 1846 John Butler Trio 02 Academy

0870 771 2000 WA Modeselektor OZ ABC

0870 903 3444 WA The Ray Summers King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279

Ricky Warwick Classic Grand 0141 847 0820

GUILDFORD Nick Harper Boileroom 01483 440022

HARTLEPOOL

Feed Me Woodcutter 01429 272 826

HITCHIN

Out Of The Trees Club 85 01462 432767

LEEDS The Erics Hanover Arms

0113 263 0508 The Half Nelsons Peggy Tub 0113 270 0218

ice Sea Dead People Cockpit 0113 244 3446

MI Mye Joseph's Well 0133 203 1861 Red Mosquito Thornhill Arms 0113 256 5492

Rodina Wardrobe 0113 222 3434 Russian Circles Brudenell Social Club Shady Dealz New Roscoe

0113 246 0778

Vashti Bunyan/Beth Jeans Houghton Howard Assembly Room 0113 243 0000

LIVERPOOL

The Escaldas O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA

Royal Bangs Korova 0151 709 7097

LONDON Aeon Zen/Jebo/Emerald Sky

Luminaire 020 7372 7123 Amp Fiddler East Village 020 7739 5173 Baby Honey Buffalo Bai

020 7359 6191 The Broadcast O2 Academy 2 Islington 0870 771 2000 WA

Chima Anya Barfly 0870 907 0999 The Clientele ICA 020 7930 3647 Daniel Honey Blag Club



Ferry Corsten Indigo @ The O2 Arena 0870 701 4444 Get Shakes/Portasound 93 Feet East

TRENT UNI 0115 848 6200

020 7247 6095 The Giltter Band Scala

020 7833 2022 God Dainn Snakes/End Of The Spectrum/Your Mourning Glory

Bull & Gate 020 7485 5368 Jao Brasil/Michel Dupont/Arcade Old Blue Last 020 7613 2478

Jonny Black/The Bleach Boys/ The Bracelettes/Bright Young Nights Hope & Anchor 020 7354 1312

Kid Carpet/Milk Kan 12 Bar Club 020 7240 2622 King Adora Garage 020 7607 1818 Ledisi Bush Hall D2D 8222 6955.

Mats Gustafsson Cafe Oto. 0871 230 1094 Michael Monroe O2 Academy Islington 0870 771 2000 WA

Moss Borderline 020 7734 5547

Paolo Nutini Royal Albert Hall 020 7589 8212 The Pioneers Jazz Cafe

020 7916 6060 Robots in Disguise King's College 020 7836 7132

The Sexual Objects/Flesh/Gareth Sager Dublin Castle 020 7485 1773 5t Jude 100 Club 020 7636 0933 This is a Standoff Underworld

020 7482 1932 Tiny Tigers Monto Water Rats 020 7837 4412 The Triffids Barbican Hall

020 7638 8891

Watershed Halfmoon 020 8780 9383

MANCHESTER

AFI Academy 0161 832 1111 Cerys Matthews Royal Northern

College Of Music 0161 273 6283 Deep Street Soul Band On The Wall 0161 837 6675

Karen Lake Duo The Stock Exchange 0161 839 6644

Kranius Club Academy 0161 832 1111 N-Dubz Apollo 0870 401 8000 Secret Moves Night And Day Cafe

0161 236 1822 There For Tomorrow Roadhouse 0161 228 1789

Whitney Houston Evening News Arena 0161 950 5000 Your Mama's Cookin' Ruby Lounge

0161 834 1392 MILTONKEY

01908 313864

Sonic Boom Six/Knock Out/ Anti Vigilanti/A War Against Sound Crauford Arms Hotel

NEWCASTLE Lights In The Dark O2 Academy 2

0870 771 2000 WA Megadeth Trillians 0191 232 1619 Solarity Digital 01912 619755 The Soldiers City Half 0191 261 2606 This Beautiful Thief Dog & Parrot

NEWPORT

Failures' Union/Bedford Falls Le Pub 01633 221477 NORWICH Sennen Arts Centre 01603 660352

Terry Wisbey's Texas Thunder King Edward VII 0844 414 5188

0115 9505097

NOTTINGHAM Fists Rescue Rooms 0115 958 8484 Hunx And His Punx Chameleon

Twenty Twenty Rock City 08713 100000

We Have Band Bodega Social Club 08713 100000

OTTLEY Jon Gomm Korks 01943 462 020

Chapel Club Jericho Tavern 01865 311775 Plan B O2 Academy

OXFORD

0870 771 2000 WA PETERBOROUGH

Belphegor Met Lounge 01733 566100

CHEFF The Law Abiding Citizens 02 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA

Tom Cawley's Curlos Millennium Hall 0871 230 1094 SOUTHAMPTON

The Devil's Conspiracy Joiners 023 8022 5612 STORNOWAY

Stornoway Woodland Centre 0115 912 9000 ST ALBANS

Golden Tanks Horn 01727 853143 SWINDON

Gaz Brookfleid The Rolleston 01793 534238 Little Comets 12 Bar 01793 535713

Wille And The Bandits The Vic 01793 535713 TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Beaty Hearts The Forum WAKEFIELD

The Kingcrows Shooty Fox 01924 374455

WOLVERHAMPTO Brokencyde Slade Room 0870 320 7000

YORK The Crookes The Duchess

01904 641 413

Secret Circuits The Stone Roses Bar 01904 670696

10 April 2010 NML 67

SATURDAY

April 10



Tune into All Mixed Up from 10pm-12am as Firas heads back from the Snowbombing Festival in Austria with interviews and exclusive tracks

BATH

Chapel Club Moles 01225 404445

The Whybirds Esquires 01234 340120 RELEAST

Ashanti Soring & Airbrake 028 9032 5968

Chew Lips Stiff Kitten 028 90238700

Plan B 02 Academy 2 0970 771 2000 WA

BRIGHTON

Bad Company Centre 0870 900 9100 Control Engine Room 01273 728 999 I Ludicrous The Greenhouse Effect 01273 204783 The King Blues Komedia (Upstairs)

01273 647100

BRISTOL

The Goodness Louisiana 0117 926 5978

Khanatara Croft 0117 987 4144 We Have Band Thekla 08713 100000 CARDIFF

Viatrophy Barfly 029 2066 7658

COVENTRY The Pockets/Just Morale/ Shackletons/Echo Empire

Taylor John's House 024 7655 9958

DUBLIN

Anti-Pop Consortium Whelan's 00 3531 475 9372

David Lyttle Three JJ Smyth's 00 353 01 4752565 Laura Mariling Academy

00 3531 877 9999 Paul Brady Grand Canal Theatre

0871 230 1094 Verona Rlots Whelan's (Upstairs)

00 3531 475 9372

EDINBURGH

The Bluetones Bongo Club 0131 558 7604 Goldblade/The Rainman Suite

Citrus Club 0131 622 7086

Meursault Cabaret Voltaire 0131 220 6176

GATESHE

Dave Berry Sage Arena 0870 703 4555 Witchkraft Three Tuns 0191 487 0666

GLASGOW

Colette Nelli O2 ABC2 0141 204 5151 WA

Strangeways King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279

There For Tomogrow Ivory Blacks 0141 221 7871

Three Blind Wolves

Stereo 0141 576 5018

Miss The Occupier 13th Note Café 0141 553 1638

HITCHIN

Little Comets/Ou Est Le Swimming Pool/5afari Remix 0845 257 5727 LAUGHARN

Fionn Regan Laugharn Weekend

0871 230 1094 LEEDS The Autonomads The Common Place

0845 345 7334 The Beat TJ's 0871 230 1094

Biscuithead And The Biscuit Badgers Cardigan Arms 0113 274 2000

Blaze Camero Cockpit Room 3 0113 2441573

Brokencyde Cockpit 0113 244 3446 Elephants On Acid Carpe Diem

Feed Me Hoagy's Bar 0113-243 9351 The Heaviside Elbow Rooms

0113 245 7011 Lou Rhodes Holy Trinity Church 01132 454268

Maths Royal Park Cellars 0113 274 1758

0113 243 6264

Oui Bee Burley Liberal Club 0113 2453912

The Port Brothers New Roscoe 0113 246 0778

Sorry And The Sinatras Joseph's Well 0113 203 1861 The Survivors Traveller's Rest

0113 264 5475 Tragical History Tour Thornhill Arms

0113 256 5492 LEICESTER

Redtrack/The Breakdowns/ Princip Music Café 0116 262 5050

LIVERPOOL Twenty Twenty O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA

LONDON

Aerials Up/The Interventions Dublin Castle 020 7485 1773

Allister Whitehead/Doll & The Kicks 93 Feet East 020 7247 6095

Angelic Upstarts Garage 020 7607 1818

Blackeyed Susans Borderline

The Brute Chorus/Officer Kicks/ Teeth Scala 020 7833 2022

Clan Of Xvmox O2 Academy Islington 0870 771 2000 WA Crissy Criss Rhythm Factory

020 7247 9386 **DJ Yoda** Forum 020 7344 0044

The Effect Church House 0871 230 1094 Eyehategod ULU 020 7664 2000

Frankle Beverly Indigo @ The O2 Arena 0870 701 4444

Galley Beggar/Gambling Hearts Hone & Anchor 020 7354 1312 Hijak Oscar Barfly 0870 907 0999 Jamle Clarke's Perfect Buffalo Bar 020 7359 6191

The Laze/Thrush Metal Old Blue Last 020 7613 2478 Mats Gustafsson Cafe Oto

0871 230 1094 Miss Pink Shoes Peel 020 8546 3516 Mundy Luminaire 020 7372 7123

Nojus Bush Hall 020 8222 6955 Rachael Dadd Slaughtered Lamb 020 8682 4080

Ray Gelato Glants 100 Club 020 7636 0933 Royal Bangs Proud Galleries

020 7482 3867 The Rumour Underbelly 0207 613 3105

Six Second Silence Underworld 020 7482 1932

Stan Tracey Quartet Jazz Cafe 020 7916 6060 The Taily Bull & Gate 020 7485 5358 The What World's End 020 7281 8679 MANCHESTER

Death To The Strange Green Room 0161 236 1677

The Detachments FAC 251 0161 27 27 251 Humx And His Punx The Corner

08712301094 John Butler Trio Academy

0161 832 1111 Soullazz Orchestra Band On The Wall 0161 832 6625

Timo Maas Sankey's 0161 661 9668 MIDDLESBROUGH The Hyads Riverside Stadium

0871 230 1094 **NEWCASTLE**

Kim Richey Cluny 0191 230 4474 NORTHAMPTON Joan Armatrading Royal Theatre

NORWICH Grupo Lokito Arts Centre

01603 660352 NOTTINGHAM

Glamour Of The Kill Rock City 08713 100000 Joshua Radin Rescue Rooms

0115 958 8484 OXFORD

Rolo Tomassi 02 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA

PORTSMOUTH

China Crisis Cellars 0871 230 1094 READING Vienna Ditto Oakford Social Club

0116 255 3956

Orphan Boy/The Neat The Priory 01724 270077 SHEFFIELD

Andrea Glass Grapes 0114 249 0909 Dale Storr Cobden View Hotel 0114 266 3714

John Renhourne Boardwall 0114 279 9090

Risky Heroes Plug 0114 276 7093 Steve French Band New Barrack Tavern 0114 234 9148 SOUTHAMPTON

The Lambrettas Joiners 023 8022 5612 STOKE ON TRENT

Terracotta Army Sugarmill 01782 214991

ST ALBANS

Pay No Respect Horn 01727 853143 SWANSEA

Fallures' Union/Bedford Falls/ The 255's Sigma 01792 790 088 SWINDON

Jason Welt The Vic 01793 535713 Just Supposin' The Furnace 01793 534238 TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Sick Of It All The Forum

ULLAPOOL

Stornoway The Arch 01854 612454
WAKEFIELD Clown Corpse Snooty Fox

01924 374455 WOLVERNAMPTON Airbourne Civic Hall 01902 552121

Nick Harper Fibbers 01904 651 250 +14

SUNDAY

April 11

ABERDEEN

The Bluetones Warehouse 0844 847 2319

5tornoway Snafu 01224 596 111 REDECIDE

The King Bees Esquires 01234 340120 BELFAST

Jedward Waterfront 028 9033 4455

Plan B Concorde 2 01273 673311 RRISTOL Meet Me Today Croft 0117 987 4144

CARDIFE And So I Watch You From Afar Barfly 029 2066 7658 +16

CODE

Anti-Pon Consortium Cyprus Avenue 00 35321 427 6165

GATESHEAD

Bone Idle Three Tuns 0191 487 0666 Balmorhea Captain's Rest

0141 331 2722 Beach Fuzz 13th Note Cafe 0141 553 1638

Brokencyde 02 ABC 0870 903 3444 WA The Detachments King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279

Iain Morrison Brei 0141 342 4966 Lou Rhodes Oran Mor 0141 552 9224 MakethisRelate/Rinoa Rinoa

Classic Grand 0141 847 0820 Whitney Houston SECC 0141 248 3000

GLOUCESTER

Cerys Matthews Guildhall Arts Centre 01452503050

GUILDFORD

Don Broco Boileroom 01483 440022 LAUGHARN Flonn Regan Laugharn Weekend

0871 230 1094

Charlie Speed Band New Roscoe 0113 246 0778

David Ford Brudenell Social Club

0113 243 5866

Dc66 Northern Monkey 0113 242 6630 Feed Me Mr Foleys 0113 242 9674 Maths Royal Park Cellars

0113 274 1758 Panic Cell Joseph's Well 0113 203 1861 There For Tomorrow Cockpit

0113 244 3446 The Union Rips 0844 414 2182

LONDON **Bad Company Wembley Arena**

0870 060 0870 The Blueberries/The Cads/ The Upper 5th Dublin Castle

020 7485 1773 The Bomb/The Cut Uns/The Magnificent/Serf Combat Windmill

020 8671 0700 The Boxettes Cargo 0207 749 7840 **Eugene McGuinness/Wave Machines** Shoreditch Church 0871 230 1094 The John Moore Rock And Roll Trio/ The Loose Moorelles Old Blue Last

020 7613 2478 The Messengers 100 Club 020 7636 0933

The Paddingtons 02 Academy 2 Islington 0870 771 2000

Slaves Of The Fallen/Neon Halo Bull & Gate 020 7485 5358 Sonic Boom Six Barfty 0870 907 0999 +14

Ultravox Apollo 0870 606 3400 Vashti Burryan Union Chape 020 7226 1686

9 Blind Garage (Upstairs) 0871 230 1094 MANCHESTER

New Education Moho Live 01618348180 The Nile Band Iguana Bar 0161 881 9338

Robyn Hitchcock Club Academy 0161 832 1111

NEWCASTLE

AFI 02 Academy 0870 771 2000 The Matadors Cluny 0191 230 4474

NORWICH

Dave Koz The Forum 01603 662 234 The King Blues Waterfront 01603 632717

Royal Bangs Arts Centre 01603 660352

NOTTINGHAM

Airbourne Rock City 08713 100000 OXFORD

Bowling For Soup 02 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA

SHEFFIELD

M-Dubz O2 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA

Rolo Tomassi Corporation 0114 276 0262 Wild Willy Barrett Boardwalk

0114 279 9090 **SOUTHAMPTON**

Ingested Joiners 023 8022 5612 Rufus Walmwright Guildhail 023 8063 2601

STOKE ON TRENT

Does It Offend You, Yeah? Sugarmill 01782 214001 ST ALBANS

Innerhatred Horn 01727 853143 TUNBRIDGE WELLS Little Teeth The Forum 08712 777101

WAKEFIELD King Creosote Henry Boons 01924 378126

Goldblade/The Rainman Suite New Tavern 01942 243871 WALVEDHAMDTON

WIGAN

R Kelly Civic Hall 01902 552121 YORK Ellie Goulding Fibbers

01904 651 250 +14 Seth Lakeman The Duchess 01904 641 413



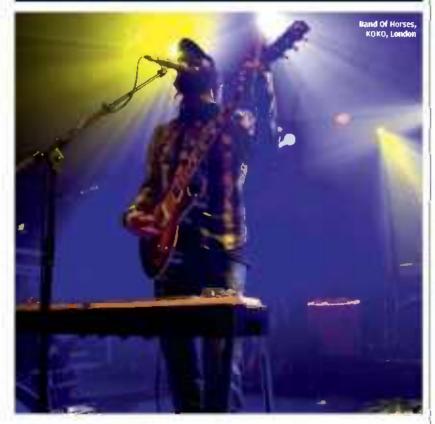
GET IN THE GIG GUIDE!

DO YOU WANT TO GET YOUR BASH INCLUDED IN THE NME WEEKLY GIG GUIDE? GO TO NME.COM/GIGS AND SUBMIT YOUR LISTING FOR FREE. YOU MUST SUBMIT DETAILS AT LEAST THREE WEEKS BEFORE THE GIG DATE

MONDAY



Firas covers Sarah Kerr's breakfast session while she's on holiday. Catch it from 7-11am RADIO every weekday



The Alfouz Moles 01225 404445 BIRMINGHAM

AFI 02 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA Dogan Mehmet Kitchen Garden Café 0121 443 4725

Joshua Radin O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA

BRIGHTON Royal Bangs Freebutt

01273 603974 RRISTOL

Your Twentles 02 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA

Shield Your Eyes Portland Arms 01223 357268

CARDIFF

Cerys Matthews Glee Club 0870 241 5093

Chapel Club Barfly 029 2066 7658 16

COLCHESTER Sorry And The Sinatras/Fake

Exterior The Twist 01206 562 453 Bowling For Soup King Tut's Wah Wah

Hut 0141 221 5279 **Dropkick Murphys Barrowlands**

0141 552 4601 Father Murphy 13th Note Café

Hunx And His Punx Captain's Rest 0141 331 2722

LEEDS

Jen Olive Oporto 0113 245 4444

Moon Unit Cardigan Arms 0113 274 2000

LIVERPOOL

Robyn Hitchcock O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA

LONDON

Aghast!/Here Be Monsters

Dublin Castle 020 7485 1773 Band Of Horses KOKO 020 7388 3222 Bright Light Bright Light/Friends Electric The Lexington 020 7837 5387 Flithy Pedro 12 Bar Club

020 7240 2622 Jive Aces 100 Club 020 7636 0933 Khog Charles Hoxton Square Bar &

Kitchen 020 7613 0709 MEN Cargo 0207 749 7840

Plan B Garage 020 7607 1818 Rain Machine Village Underground 020 7422 7505

Roy & The Devils Motorcycle Club/ The Hall Of Mirrors/Still Corners Windmill 020 8671 0700 Roy's Wife/Vekta Sigma

93 Feet East 020 72/7 6095 Second Impression Bull & Gate 020 7485 5358

Sun Ra Arkestra Café Oto 0871 230 1094 Tiny Tigers/Gemma Mewse/

Bloodthirsty Hippies Hope & Anchor

MANCHESTER

Biltz Kids Dry Bar 0161 236 5920 The King Blues Academy 2 0161 832 1111

Laura Martine Lowry 0161 876 2000 Lou Rhodes Band On The Wall 0161 832 6625

Rolo Tomassi Roadhouse

0161 228 1789 MEWCASTLE

Brokencyde 02 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA David Ford Cluny 0191 230 4474

NORWICH Fake Problems Waterfront

01603 632717 Liam Frost Arts Centre 01603 660352

NOTTINGHAM Russian Circles Rock City

08713100000 **PORTSMOUTH**

There For Tomorrow Wedgewood Rooms 023 9286 3911

SHEFFIELD

Panic Cell 02 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 TIA State Vour Place Boardwalk

0114 279 9090 Young Rebel Set Leadmill

0114 221 2828 STOKE ON TRENT

The Crookes Sugarmill 01782 214991 THINBRIDGE WELLS

Neon Skies The Forum 08712 777101 WAKEFIELD Gunshot Residue Escobar

01924 _37000

VODE Elliot Minor Fibbers 01904 651 250 +14

TUESDAY

April 13

BELFAST

Airbourne Mandela Hall 028 9024 5133

BIRMINGHAM

Whitney Houston LG Arena

0121.70 4103

BOURNEMOUTH

James 07 Acedemy 0.1202 399922

BRIGHTON

BRISTOL

Joan Armatrading Dome 01273 709709

Joshua Radin Concorde 2 01273 673311

There For Tomorrow Engine Room 01273 728 999

Thomas White/Chris T-T/The Foxes The Basement 01273 699733

Fake Problems Thekla 08713 100000 Mustard Plug/Dirty Revolution/ Kenisia/Splutter Croft 0117 987 4144

CARDIF All The Damned Vampires Clwb Ifor Bach 029 2023 2199

The Jim Jones Revue Barfly 029 20 4 7658

CH LMSFORD The Conflict Within/Legion

Barhouse 01245 356811

EXETER

Desecration/Red Mist Cavern Club 01392 495370

GLASGOW

Bowling For Soup Oran Mor 0141 552 9224

ice Sea Dead People/Ex-Wives 13th Note Café 0141 553 1638 Laura Marling Old Fruitmarket

0141 787 5511 Plan B Classic Grand 0141 847 0820 The Retrofrets Nice'n'Sleazy

0141 | 9637 Rolo Tomassi Stereo 0141 576 5018 Stornoway King Tut's Wah Wah Hut

0141 221 5279 GUILDFORD The Biltz Kids Boileroom

01483 440022 LEEDS

Alesana Cockpit 0113 244 3446 LONDON

Active On Earth/Euphoria Audio Oublin Castle 020 7485 1773

Benii XIII Troubadour Club 020 7370 1434 David Ford KOKO 020 7388 3222 Don Broco Barfly 0870 907 0999 +14

Elliot Minor Garage 020 7607 1818 The Fifty Fours/The Filthy Nights/Kabogaeries Bull & Gate



AUDIO 01273 606906

Friendshin Buffalo Bar 020 7359 6191 Gary Numan Scala 020 7833 2022 Good Weather Girl 12 Bar Club

020 7240 2622 I, Sald The Spy/Above The Underground/Caboose/ The Lipstick Melodies Hope & Anchor 020 7354 1312

Joe Perry Project 100 Club 020 7636 0933 Laura Victoria Green Note 0871 230 1094

Mos Def 02 Shepherds Bush Empire 0870 771 2000 WA Nell Bryden Luminaire 020 7372 7123

Park Bench Poet/Azlz (brahim The Bedford 0208 682 8940 Race Horses The Lexington

020 781 7 387 Royal Bangs/Not Cool/Buzz Aldrin White Heat Madame Jo Jo's 020 7734 2473

Russian Circles Underworld 020 7482 1932

Sorry And The Sinatras Borderline 020 7734 5547 Spectrum 7/The Dogbones/

Deathline/The Myways The Gaff 020 7609 3063 Sun Ra Arkestra Café Oto 0871 230 1094

Televised Grimewave/Phantom/ Lovechilde Old Blue Last 020 7613 2478

Tiffarry Page Garage (Upstairs) 0871 30 1094

MANCHESTER

Angeispit Moho Live 0161 834 8180 Brokencyde Academy 3 Q161 832 1111 Lou Rhodes Baild On The Wall 0161 832 6625

Rain Machine Deaf Institute

0161 330 4019 NEWCASTLE

Dropkick Murphys 02 Academy 0870 771 2000 W/

The King Blues 02 Academy 2 0870 771 2000

The Union Cluny 0191 230 4474 NORTHAMPTON

Glamour Of The Kill Roadmender Centre 01604 604222

NORWICH Elie Goulding Waterfront

016C_ -32717 John Renbourn Arts Centre

01603660352 Lee Vasey Big Band The Green Man 01603782693

OXFORD Twenty Twenty O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA

PORTSMOUTH The Alfonz Cellars 0871 230 1094 Does It Offend You, Yeah?

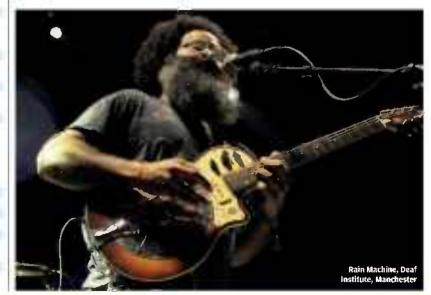
Wedgewood Rooms 923 9286 3911 Jon Amor Band Boardwalk

0114 279 90 0 Rohyn Hitchrock 02 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA

WOLVERHAMPTON

Chapel Club Slade Room 0870 320 7000 YORK

Your Twenties Fibbers 01904 651 250 +14



THIS WEEK IN 1974

NEW MAEL, A MISSING IG AND THE SEARCH FOR SYD



Could this pair of wombats possibly be Hot Property?

SPARKS MAKE NME DEBUT

On the eve of releasing 'This Town Ain't Big Enough For The Both Of Us', the eccentric Mael brothers tell NME how they "wanted something that would elicit some kind of reaction immediately", and that they would feet "really out of place in blue ieans or neon suits".



IGGY GOES AWOL

The Stooges legend is wreaking havoc as ever... this time by not being around. British promoters expecting Iggy at the end of the month are informed by his US booking agent that he has simply disappeared from view. "Providing he reappears," they explain to NME, "we may think about rescheduling for autumn."

THE TALE **OF ACID'S BIGGEST CASUALTY**

Imost four years on from 'The Madcap Laughs', and Pink Floyd's former leader had descended into reclusive madness. He remained close to the heart of legendary NME writer Nick Kent, however, who speaks here at length to those who were as close to Barrett as it was possible to be, trying to get inside his hero's head.

David Gilmour states that he doesn't "know what Svd thinks or bow he thinks"; June Bolan, ex wife of Marc, talks of how he "used to come round to my house at five in the morning covered in mud from Holland Park when he had freaked out". But as well as all the tragi-comic tales of LSD laced cross-dressing/chaotic TV appearances/ fraught recording sessions and a total inability to communicate, Kent's piece is full of unbridled passion, and remains as definitive a portrait of this most indefinable of souls as you could wish for. More than that, though, this was to be the template for music writers who saw the value of delving deep into the psyche of their subjects in order to understand their records better.

The next time Syd's face would grace the cover of NME would be in July 2006, a few days after his death.

Also In The Issue That Week

- NME writer Andrew Tyler is offered cakes and a choice of tea or whiskey by John Betjeman
- A piece on Status Quo declares them to be "no turkeys, even if their visual presentation is to stand in line and wobble their heads"
- · John Cale declares that reforming The Velvet Underground would "feel like returning to an old girlfriend"
- NME hack Chrissie Hynde makes The Kinks' 'Mirror Of Love' Single Of The Week
- · A back cover ad is Captain Beefheart holding a fistful of money in one hand and a vinyl of his 'Unconditionally Guaranteed' LP in the other. Above it, in big letters, it says: "I don't like to talk about my records but I'm going to do it anyhow"



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TAXING THE FINEST MINDS IN ROCK'N'ROLL FOR SIX DECADES



CLUES ACROSS

1+5A 1+28D Alas, I cannot swim. Oh hello, is that the RNLI? (1-5-7-1-3)

The RNLI? (1-5-7-1-3)

9 The Big Pink are performing this evening (7)

10+36A "I had some dreams, they were clouds in my coffee, clouds in my coffee", 1972 (5-2-4)

11 Eminem's addience demanding a repeat performance (6)

13 US singer who had 60s hits with 'Runaround Sue' and 'The Wanderer' (4)

14 (See 20 down)
15 Embarrassed look after rag goes wrong for

Kooks' drummer (6)

18 Adaptation of music on Mark Ronson's album

23 They chewed it over before entering 'Showbiz' in 1994 (3)

24 Duo ____ & Cher had hit with 'I Got You Babe'

25 The return from bar of Glasvegas member (3)
27 The return from sales of Pearl Jam album (5) 29 US vocal group whose hits included 'Save The Last Dance For Me' (8)

34 (See 19 down) 35 She sounds jealous, rapping out 'Set Yourself On Fire' (4)

36 (See 10 across)

CLUES DOWN

1+12D Hit single that finished off Linkin Park

2 "I wonder to myself, could life ever be sane again", 1986 (5) 3 (See 21 across)

4 An album from Ned's Atomic Dustbin is something to get your teeth into (4)
5 How tearful to be with The Box Tops and Alex Chilton (3-4-1-4)

6 A change of direction for Usher in 2002 (1-4)
7 Supergroup featuring Johnny Marr, Bernard

Sumner and Neil Tennant (10)
8 Verve album comes out of concealment (5) 12 (See I down)

15 Do sad jig around to Faithless number (3-2-1-2) 16 Moby number to continue without interruption 17 Drummer for Editors found amongst the pissed

layabouts (2-3) 19+34A What an idiot! It's the Heavenly labelled

22-20s (4-1-4)
20+14A Off our tether, having included act doing

the 'Rounds' (4-3)
22 'Everybody Loves A ___', a crackpot thing for

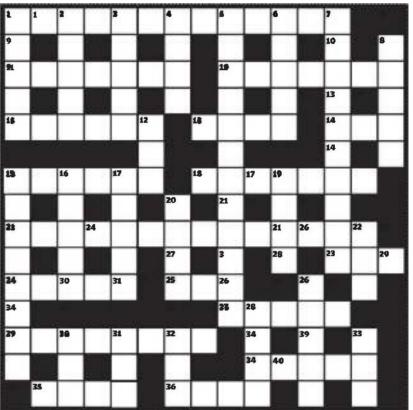
22 'Everyood', Loves A ___, a trackpot thing for Johnny Cash to say on early album (3)
26 This Mortal Coil album, Franz Ferdinand remix compilation or Editors' single (5)
28 (See 1 across)
30 One of the Skelly brothers in The Coral (3)

31 A bit of country from Nelly Furtado (3)
32 Keyboard player from influential US act Suicide starts a revival (3)
33 Famous rock band found hiding in the loo (3)

Normal NME terms and conditions apply, available at NME.COM/terms.

Simply cut out the crossword and send it, along with your name, address and email, marking the envelope with the issue date, before Tuesday, April 13, 2010, to the following address:
Crossword, NME, 4th Floor, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 OSU.

First correct one out of the hat wins!





MARCH 13 ANSWERS

ACROSS
1-29A YOU OVER'II I DOII, 8+5D Manna And The Diamonds, L1+22D Pablo Honey.
12 YMCA, 13+22A No More Heroes, 14 Drift, 16 Kowalski, 19 Korm, 21 Cave,
24 Logos, 27 Two, 28 Tosh, 30 VCR, 31+9A Ian Dury.

l You Don't Know Love, 2+20A Dn My Own, 3 Europe, 4+32A Don't Believe The Hype, 6 Teddy Picker, 7 Relax, 10 REM, 15 Three, 17 Win, 18 Skik, 23 Self, 25 Geri, 26 Stan, 29 Die.



SEVEN INCH STORIES BY PHILLIP MARSDEN









FANMAIL

YOU GET IN TOUCH, WE RESPOND, THINGS GET OUT OF HAND

Edited by Leonie Cooper









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The Big Issue

What's been keeping us locked in email battle all week



LIBS FOREVER?

From: Tom Sampson To: NME

Thank God the Libs are back. Seeing them on your cover (NME, April 3) made me realise just how sorely missed they are from British music. Arctic Monkeys may have better songs, but they're a lesser band purely because the Libs embody what rock'n'roll is all about: charisma. The chaotic excitement of their guerrilla gigs is worth 1,000 nights seeing the Monkeys at Earl's Court. Albion forever!

From: NME To: Tom Sampson CC: Dan Swash

Tom, Leonie from NME here. Sure, the Libs' frenzied guerilla gigs of yore might have been some of the most straight-up thrilling shows of the last decade, but do you think a second-to-headline slot on the Reading and Leeds Main Stage will see them capture that same intimate passion? I've CC'd in Dan here, who emailed us calling the reunion "bullshit". So come on lads, want to have an attempt at convincing us as to why Tom's in the wrong? – LC

The thread continues... From: Dan Swash
To: NAME
CC: Tom Sampson

It's embarrassing, Just a floundering schmindie band buckling at the knees at the first whiff of a few quid. I'll be in my tent early that night, cranking.

From: Tom Sampson To: Dan Swash CC: NME

Well, who cares? When they're onstage with 80,000 people singing back 'Time For Heroes' at them, money will be the last thing on their minds. Or, the thought that there's some sad case 'cranking' in his tent half a mile away...

From: NME To: Dan Swash

CC: Tom Sampson
You enjoy that crank Dan,
because while you're in your
tent weeping, me, Tom and,
oools, probably the other
99.9 per cent of the festivalgoers will be shedding an

altogether different kind of tear, watching Petehr Carl. And maybe they can buy themselves some shower gel with those millions, eh? - LC

Win!

NEXT WEEK'S

STAR LETTER

WINS GIG

VOUCHERS

AND 4MUSIC

DVDS

To celebrate 4Music's Funny Mondays, we're going to be giving away comedy DVD boxsets and £100-worth of See Ticket vouchers to the best letter next week. Get in touch at any of the above addresses, plus winners should email letters givine, com to claim their prize.

THE HUNT FOR BETTER FRONTWOMEN

From: J Robbins' jockstrap To: NME The current 'indie' scene

is overbearingly weedy, even more so than usual. If any dues are to be gleaned as to why this is the case, look no further than Blood Red Shoes' influences on your My Music page (NME, March 27), Steven Ansell's view that Q And Not U have had a huge influence on the current crop of indie - Klaxons. Foals et al - is right on the money. However, my view is this is exactly why 'indie,' in its current form, is so shit. Everyone knows that cool musicians rarely have good taste in music, and so it goes. Rather than other Dischord bands who do matter, and can be held up as an influence, who actually rocked. Particularly Jawbox, who along with many other 'indie' bands sold out, but who, unlike many current indie bands still fucking rocked. Basically Q And Not U weren't nearly half as good as a wealth of other bands on Dischord. We need more rock in indie: Kathleen Hanna has more balls than most of today's indie kids. Where is the next Kathleen Hanna? It certainly isn't Laura-Mary Carter...

From: NME

To: J Robbins' jockstrap Oh dear – do we sense a case of 'my-obscure-posthardcore-band-is-waybetter-than-your-obscurepost-hardcore-band? You might have a pop at Jawbox for selling out, but surely that concept is redundant now, isn't it? Hell, even Kathleen Hanna signed to a major label for the last Le Tigre (see right) album. So, anyway, if Laura-Mary isn't

the next Hanna, who is? - LC

From: J Robbins' jockstrap To: NME

Okay you got me, one person's triple chocolate fudgecake treat is another person's fatty heart attack. On the question of who is the next Kathleen Hanna. hmmm? Perhaps we need to look at this from another direction and say 'what if'? What if NME sponsors a programme to find a feisty creative independent woman frontperson for a 21st century post-punk/pop band. It could be called 'Finding Emo' and the panel



could be made up of your good self, Kathleen Hanna, Graham Coxon (I do believe post-hardcore is his bag baby) and a guest performer from the world of hardcore post-punk. As an extra bonus, they can get offered a deal with a label like Holy Mountain, Sick Thirst, JagJaguar, or Kill Rock Stars or they can be offered the opportunity to sell-out straight off the bat and get roundly booed/cheered depending on if you have any integrity or not.

From: NME

To: J Robbins' jockstrap It's undoubtedly a great idea. Sadly, all of NME's vast reality talent show TV production budgets have been siphoned off into making Keep Rolling! A Making The Band-esque format show hosted by Fred Durst, that follows him as he pieces together the group to kickstart the obvious impending nu-metal revival - LC



STALKER From: David Jones To: NME

This is me and and the god that is Ian Brown in Chinatown in London. Massive thanks goes out to the random person who agreed to take the photo for me!

HEY TEACHER! LEAVE THOSE **BANDS ALONE**

From: Chloe Rutland To: NME

I'm writing because I seriously need to get this off my chest, and quick. The other day in class, my Media Studies teacher told the group that 'guitar music is dead'. For the record, I'd just like to say that I so desperately fucking wanted to stand up and shout an obscenity at the teacher. Alas the only reason I didn't, was the fact that I would have been excluded from school for about two weeks. And that simply stopped me. Sorry NME.

From: NME To: Chioe Rutland

Excluded for two weeks for sticking it to The Man? A fair price to pay, say we! Guitar music is alive and kicking as we - and you - well know, Chloe. Or at least it's only having a wee catnap. But who are your favourite axe-wielding bands at the moment? - LC

From: Chloe Rutland To: NME

Actually, as it goes, I'm more into banjo-wielding: ever-so-slightly in love with Mumford & Sons (below). Thank you for the feature!



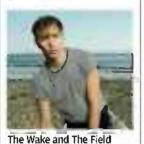
From: NME To: Chloe Rutland I'm first in line with you at the Mumford shows Chice.

you mark my words. But I've tried dousing both an accordion and a banio in lighter fluid and summoning the flames up like demons from the depths, and I've just ended up feeling like a right tit - LC

SHE BANGS (ON ABOUT) THE DRUMS

From: Eleanor Payne To: NME

I don't want to seem like an obsessive fan or anything, but I genuinely think The Drums (below) and Holiday Records are the best thing to happen to me and music for a long time. Through hearing Jacob Graham in interviews and on his blogs I've discovered so many great bands like



Mice. Sarah Records and Holiday Records have given me massive inspiration, because I've always wanted to start a record label. But as I'm not surrounded by anyone who is into the same music as me, its been quite hard finding inspiration and help. People in the music business don't really take me seriously because of my gender and age, but Sarah Records just totally opened my eyes and made me realise that I don't need to think about other people as much as I do. So thank you to The Drums for turning me on to music I might otherwise never have come across. They were also amazing on the NME Awards Tour in Newcastle.

From: NME To: Fleagor Payne There's nowt wrong with being an obsessive fan, Eleanor. Where do you think The Drums would be now if they hadn't spent most of their lives geeking out over The Cure, The Wake and the Shangri-Las? Not on the cover of NME. that's for sure, But back to your record label - when can we expect the first releases? - LC

Web Slinging The highlight of this week's NME.COM blogs

NME GOES TO THE MOVIES

To mark the launch of NME.COM's new movies section (NME.COM/movies), we've compiled our 50 favourite music movies in a celebration of rockumentaries, biopics, great soundtracks and, well, films that music fans should want to watch over and over.

1) 24 Hour Party People (2002)

2) Anvil - The Story Of Anvil (2008)

3) Control (2007)

4) Almost Famous (2000)

5) Some Kind Of Monster (2004)

6) Trainspotting (1996) 7) Quadrophenia (1979)

8) Don't Look Back (1967)

9) This Is Spinal Tap (1984)

10) High Fidelity (2000)

Read the FULL 50 on NME.COM now

Best of the responses... Good list, I especially liked the Top 10. Though I would place Trainspotting higher than 24 Hour Party People (with Control being third). **E**mma

> Riding In Vans With Boys... brilliant doc about an unknown band touring with three of the biggest poppunk bands ever, Green Day,

Blink and Jimmy Eat World... watch it, it's awesome. Ash

The Virgin Suicides had an absolutely awesome soundtrack and a wonderful score composed by Air. Should have been on the list. You can add Lost in Translation to Air-supplied (see what I did there?) films, along with Kevin Shields' contributions. Cocksucker Blues (if you can find it) is an eye-opening document of the Stones' fingers at their sticky-est. babygiraffe

Something's wrong with my computer; I've looked at the list twice now and missed Purple Rain both times. Thornton

No The Great Rock'N'Roll Swindle? Or Jimmy Cliff's The Harder They Come???? hilly

Where's Once Upon A Time In The West? Legend has it Sergio Leone had the soundtrack blasting from big speakers during filming, so the actors could get in the right mood. Mason



From: Eleanor Payne To: NME

Hi again! Sometimes I am guilty of forgeting that most musicians at one point were obsessive fans too, so I suppose there isn't anything wrong with being an obsessive fan after all... Sarah Records is in my mind the perfect record label, they knew where they were going and set themselves clear goals. At risk of paying too much homage to them I would like to set up my label with the same type of principles. When I do find somebody to record, which hopefully will be quite soon, I'll probably do a vinyl-only release and try to make it as bespoke as possible. I love the idea of music being special and a physical thing, and in an ideal world all my releases would have a different recording for each copy, like Daniel Johnston's early cassettes.

From: NME To: Eleanor Page It's pretty reassuring to finally hear someone getting dewy-eyed about holding records in their hands again. Next thing we know people will actually start buying a few of

them bastards... - LC



STALKER From: Alex Ford To: NME

Here, have a picture of me with Damon Albarn from Blur! I met him and Mick Jones when I went to the Gorillaz gig at the Bristol Trinity Centre, I would just like to say that they were both really top guys.



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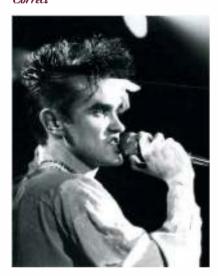
DOES ROCK'N'ROLL KILL BRAIN CELLS?

TESTING MUSICIANS' MEMORIES AFTER A LIFETIME OF ABUSE

This Week

QUESTION 1

Who was The Smiths' original bassist? "Dale Hibbert. He quit because we made him have his hair cut. I don't know why because it was a pretty fancy haircut and much better than the one he had before that. But, wherever he is now, I hope he learned something from the experience." Correct

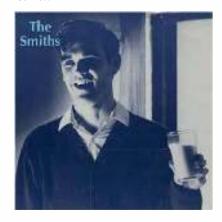


QUESTION 2

When and where was The Smiths' first ever US gig?

"It was in New York on New Year's Eve...
1983. It was at a venue called the Danceteria and I think we only did seven songs. I'm almost certain that Madonna was playing on the same bill that night."

Correct

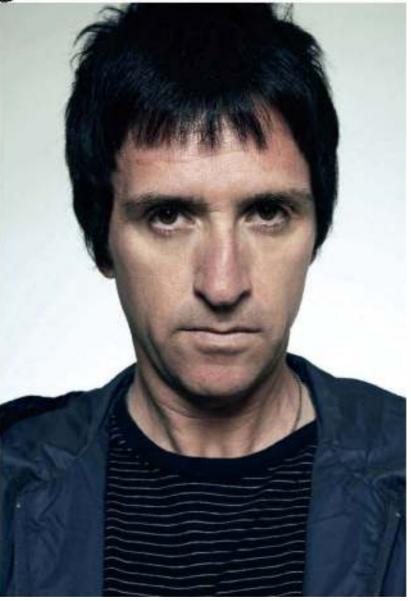


QUESTION 3

Which British Smiths single was the only one to feature a member of the band on the front cover?

"It was Morrissey on 'What Difference Does It Make?'. We wanted to use an image of Terence Stamp originally, but he refused us permission so Morrissey recreated his pose." Correct

JOHNNY MARR



QUESTION 4

The Smiths were featured on the classic TV show The Old Grey Whistle Test playing live at which venue in 1983? "Derby Assembly Rooms. A lot of people loved it, but I hated that gig which is why I'm scowling all the way through on the footage. It looked like it was going off, but compared to our normal gigs it was very tame. I did have a nice stripey sweater on though." Correct

QUESTION 5

What was Electronic's biggest UK chart bit and what number did it reach?

"I think it was 'Disappointed' and I'm guessing it reached... Number Six? But I'm probably wrong."

Correct

QUESTION 6

How many songs on Oasis' fifth album 'Heathen Chemistry' did you make a guest appearance on? "Two. One was '(Probably) All In The Mind' and the other was 'Born On A Different Cloud'."

Incorrect. It was actually three in total, the two he mentioned and the other being 'Better Man'

QUESTION 7

Which singer played the part of bartender in Modest Mouse's 'Dashboard' video?.
"Wow! That's completely thrown me, I want to say James [Mercer] from The Shins..."

Incorrect. It was Seasick Steve

QUESTION 8

single you guested on?

"(Nothing But) Flowers' off the 'Naked'
album. It was a lot of fun doing it - quite
a collaborative effort but if you watch the
video I was a little bit too stoned I think,
I was also rocking a centre-parting haircut
that I copied from David Bowie's 'Low'."

Correct

What was the name of the Talking Heads



QUESTION 9

Complete the Cribs lyrics: "She was the glamorous type/There were times when you'd never have guessed it..." "Did you see her clothes/Everyone said she looked like a mess'. The way that line was sung was like love at first hearing for me. I didn't think there was anyone who could sing punk rock that well any more." Correct

QUESTION 10

Which two Beatles reissues outsold The Cribs' 'Ignore The Ignorant' when they were released on the same day in 2009?. "I'm gonna guess 'Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band' and 'Abbey Road'." Correct



"I'll take 8/10. Maybe I haven't done enough rocking'n'rolling in my time if my memory is still holding up that well. Come back in 10 years and see what I'm like then!" Coming Next Week

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