

# NME

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**OASIS**  
SPEAKERS  
p38

**RAGE AGAINST  
THE MACHINE'S  
VICTORY SHOW**  
FULL REPORT FROM  
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**NEW STROKES  
ALBUM DETAILS**  
BY THE ONE MAN  
WHO'S HEARD IT



**PETER ROBINSON  
Vs KYLIE  
MINOGUE**

# The 50 MOST FEARLESS

**PEOPLE In MUSIC**

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# BECK'S VIER





# ON REPEAT

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



TRACK  
OF  
THE  
WEEK

## KANYE WEST

Power

Kanye West has done a very good job in recent times of making himself appear like a prize berk in a number of public forums and media. As a result there's probably gazillions of people who are hoping that he falls flat on his face so hard when the 'Good Ass Job' album drops that he ends up needing his jaw wired again. On the evidence of 'Power', though, they're going to have to wait a little longer to wallow in *schadenfreude*. It may be about as subtle and understated as using Semtex to blow out a candle, and West seems constantly on-the-verge-of-but-not-quite-being ready to apologise for his recent buffoonery ("They can kiss my asshole," he elucidates at one point, "I'm an asshole") but musically he's back in 'Jesus Walks'

territory, with a hefty backing of rousing tribal chants, martial drums and an ever-swelling barrage of huge stabs of metal guitar. There are some very cute lines

*He's not apologising for any buffoonery... it's got a feeling of a counter-attack*

in there too ("They say I was the abomination of the Obama nation/ well that's a pretty bad way to start a conversation") but it's more about the feeling of force reassembling, of counter-attack, that sets the spine tingling. The album boasts some of hip-hop's greatest producers of all time. Be afraid.

**Pete Cashmore, writer**  
On YouTube now



## SHUNDA K

Here I Am To Save The World  
Shunda K, one half of Florida's most exciting gay Christian hip-hop duo Yo! Majesty, returns with a route-one electro bludgeon that will either have you krumping round your bedroom like a maniac, or idly wondering 'Hang on, this is basically Basement Jaxx isn't it?', depending on your tolerance for Shunda's tireless bragging.  
**Luke Lewis, Deputy Editor, NME.COM**  
On MySpace now

## CROCODILES

Groove Is In The Heart/  
California Girls  
The San Diego duo's new James Ford-produced single 'Sleep Forever' is great. But their mash up of Dee-Lite's 'Groove Is In The Heart' and The Beach Boys' 'California Girls' on the flip is awesome. Fuck, fuse that bass riff with a Shed Seven B-side and it'd be better than most recorded music ever.  
**James McMahon, Features Editor**  
On NME Radio now

## BOMBAY BICYCLE CLUB

Ivy & Gold  
Banjos, sweet harmonies, the stench of moonshine... BBC have made the bold and slightly mental decision to do an acoustic folk album, and this first taster from it requires a suitably cartoonish double-take. But after the initial shock of the nice, it turns out to be pretty good. Like a naughty Simon & Garfunkel finger-picking their noses.  
**Martin Robinson, Deputy Editor**  
On NME Radio now

## 1,2,3

Confetti  
Lazy, snarly, gnarly scuzz-pop with a lurching nod of its greasy cap to the Pixies, a hint of MGMT's polished psych and a slightly countryish twang, beneath the nonchalant slacker cool there's a fiendish eye for structure that suggests Pittsburgh newbies 1,2,3 know just what they're about from the off.  
**Duncan Gillespie, writer**  
On the Daily Download at NME.COM now

## SMITH WESTERNS

Girl In Love  
Don a mini-skirt or grow your chest hair (according to gender) - The Smith Westerns want to take you back to the '60s with this psychedelic rocker. The shaggy-locked

Chicago foursome provide all the distorted summery-pop you'll ever need in one song.  
**Abby Tayleure, writer**  
On the Daily Download at NME.COM now

## MAGNETIC MAN

Mad  
Opening with synths that seem to tweak at your eyeballs, Mad takes the saturated palette of much of Hyperdub's current output and solders it to the steel-enforced swing that Benga and Skream do so well. Despite its mass it feels deceptively spry, the pinched melodies weaving throughout the leaden groove. Consider us officially excited.  
**Louise Brailey, writer**  
On twitter.com/1\_skream now  
Turn to p10 for an interview with Skream

## DOMINIQUE YOUNG UNIQUE

War Song  
Bored of MIA? Tired of waiting for Santigold's return? Then meet Dominique Young Unique. "Get up on my block/And you'll feel... this... glock" the Tampa rapper threatens on 'War Talk's ace chorus, but in reality the 19-year-old is nothing more than a relentless ball of frantic, doe-eyed teen energy. No firebrands here - just big-time fun.  
**Matt Wilkinson, News Reporter**  
On www.thefader.com now

## CRYSTAL CASTLES

Celestica (Thurston Moore Remix)  
A rare remix from the Sonic Youth helmsman's ever done soothes the fevered brow of CC's higher-than-the-sun trance triumph with some warmly wonky clanging guitar before flexing its formidable noise-dance muscles. Does what most half-arsed remixes never do, which is take a song somewhere totally different while also renewing your love for the original. Oh, and it's utterly, utterly, amazing.  
**Emily Mackay, Reviews Editor**



!!!

AM/FM

Just as the sun's come out it's time to cram back on to the dancefloor as !!! return with an exquisite series of feet-friendly oscillations. This free download leads the way with hip-shaking wobbliness, low strung bass and even a bit of a KLF '3am Eternal' mysticism as it pings around the airwaves.  
**Paul Stokes, Associate Editor**  
On NME Radio and the Daily Download now



# UPFRONT

WHAT'S HAPPENED AND WHAT'S HAPPENING IN MUSIC THIS WEEK

*Edited by Jamie Fullerton*





THE  
MAIN  
EVENT

# RAGE: "WE FOUND A WAY TO TOPPLE A GIANT POP MONOPOLY"

On Sunday, Rage Against The Machine fulfilled their promise to play a free gig after smashing Simon Cowell's Xmas Number One stranglehold. Dan Martin went backstage with them

**A**cross town he is being gifted a Special Award going at the TV BAFTAs, but on Sunday night (June 6) somewhere within his soul, Simon Cowell is crying. In front of 40,000 music fans in north London, a cartoon avatar is taking the piss out of his "strangely erect nipples" and making a symbolic dent upon his empire. Voiced by socialist comedian/author Mark Steele, cartoon Cowell declares: "It gives me great displeasure to introduce to you the greatest rock'n'roll band in the world, Rage Against The Machine!"

And with that the LA rock legends make good on their promise that if the campaign to get 'Killing In The Name' to last year's Christmas Number One over Joe McElderry's Miley Cyrus cover succeeded, they would come over to the UK for a free show.

One might have expected a free rock show in one of London's beeriest football districts to descend into carnage. But the mood at 'The Rage Factor' in Finsbury Park is one of hope and pride and heroic moshing – and a renewed faith in the power of the human spirit, and music's influence over it.

Rage tear through a seamless 90 minutes of incendiary, righteous rap-rock, also paying lip-service to London's punk tradition with a cover of 'White Riot' by The Clash. For singer Zack de la Rocha, throwing the party is nothing less than his duty as a citizen of the world. "This show is about an organic initiative," he tells us. "Over the last 10 years or so, the charts have been dominated by a rigid formula. In the UK it seems there aren't as many choices when it comes to the mainstream. It's not about Simon Cowell, but it's about what he represents. I think that somewhere between that grass-roots initiative and the cracks in the armour of the *X Factor* formula is something you could define as a cultural revolt."

Indeed, this was not Rage's campaign. But when they saw the support growing for the fan-led Facebook campaign last Christmas, they were inspired to throw their weight behind it. The band was not even active, and had no firm touring plans for this year. But as Zack explains, the decision soon became inevitable. "I have a friend that runs a local bookstore in my neighbourhood in east LA. I went to see her one day and she said, 'Is there some kind of contest going on in the UK using a Rage song?' I went, 'That sounds

strange, but I wouldn't put anything past Sony at this stage of their downfall'. So I investigated and I thought, 'Oh my gosh! The sides were drawn and it couldn't have been clearer what was at stake culturally. It took about 30 seconds of thought to decide to come. All over the UK people had found a way to topple this giant distraction and this giant pop monopoly, even for a brief moment, and one of our songs was used to do it. It really was like democracy in action."

The people responsible for this were Jon and Tracy Morter from Essex, who were as surprised as anyone that their stab at mobilising people-power led to such big and bizarre consequences.

"We would moan about it at home," says mum-of-three Tracy. "I do watch *The X Factor* because it's fun. But I don't think our charts should reflect that completely because there are so many different types of music that people love. The

charts belong to all of us, but there's so much apathy. People won't release a song at Christmas because they think they won't get anywhere. We're not going to have amazing bands in the future if that's how we treat our music. We won't have another Led Zeppelin if that's how the music industry is."

The Morters later get to share oxygen with Jimmy Page, just one of the many who have come to pay respect to their campaign. And back in the compound, they finally meet the idols who have inspired them, exchanging hugs with Zack and Tom Morello, who later welcomes them on to the stage as "the

David to *The X Factor*'s Goliath." They then accept a cheque on behalf of Shelter for £162,713.03, the band's royalties from the extra sales of 'Killing In The Name'. Rage covered the costs of the free show; their sets at Download and Rock Am Ring are taking place to pay for it. But Zack hints that there were dark forces in the industry opposed to their gesture. "I can't tell you how difficult it was to just put on a free show in London. And without burning any bridges or talking about people that profit off music, it was surprisingly difficult to do. We didn't want to have a surcharge on the tickets, we didn't want to have anything that got in the way of it being a totally free show, and that was very difficult."

As night falls on Finsbury Park, the run of classics culminates in a pre-encore airing of McElderry's 'The Climb',



Clockwise from main image left: Zack de la Rocha won't do what that man there tells him; Tom Morello salutes the crowd; fans arrive early for the free gig in Finsbury Park; creators of the Facebook campaign Jon and Tracy Morter meet Zack and Tom; Rage lap up the adoration; the full stage set-up was all paid for by Rage Against The Machine; Zack thrilling in the name



accompanied by a montage of press quotes including the South Shields boy's now-legendary slating of 'Killing In The Name': "They wouldn't get through to boot camp on *The X Factor* – they're just shouting." The final screenshot reads simply 'YOU made history', after which mass hugs erupt; the shoutalong to "Fuck you, I won't do what you tell me" can never have been more widely felt. But how does Zack really feel about *The X Factor* and *American Idol*? "I'd be lying to say I don't watch the show," he admits with a smirk. "It can be mildly entertaining, but for the most part *The X Factor* is to modern music what McDonald's is to food: you take a few bites of your Big

Mac and it tastes good and after the sixth one it tastes like shit and you feel awful and you wanna go and do some exercise. To me that's what *The X Factor* is – it's cheap, indigestible and flies in the face of what is interesting about culture."

And yet, Joe McElderry may just have contributed to rock history in a way he cannot yet comprehend. With Rage now active again and enjoying each other's company, Zack won't rule out making a new album. "I think it's a genuine possibility," he says. "We have to get our heads around what we're going to do towards the end of the year and finish up some other projects and we'll take it from there."



BEHIND  
THE  
SCENES

# SUMMER KICKS OFF... IN NEWCASTLE

Festival season came early on May 31 for The Horrors, Everything Everything, De La Soul, Egyptian Hip Hop and Dananananaykroyd. NME went backstage at Newcastle's Evolution



1

## EGYPTIAN HIP HOP

The quartet were whisked away after their set to play in Manchester. "We can say that we've shared a stage with De La Soul!" gushed guitarist Louis. "I was hoping to meet them."

## FARIS BADWAN

"I'm not really disappointed to miss Paolo Nutini," explained The Horrors man of the bill, "but I'm looking forward to Ou Est Le Swimming Pool. Tom [Cowan] and I once lived with Charlie [Haddon]."



3



2

## DANANANAN- AKROYD

After a set of secret shows across the UK, the band played the Spillers Wharf stage. "One of our mates described the new songs as Paul Simon playing the Beverly Hills 90210 theme tune," singer Calum Gunn explained.

## EVERYTHING EVERYTHING

The band played 'Suffragette Suffragette' and 'MY KZ UR BF' in their set, but had to cut it short due to running late. "It's always manic at festivals," sighed singer Jonathan.

## THE HORRORS & DE LA SOUL

US rap royalty met dark-hearted London art-rock when De La Soul's Posdnuos found time for a quick 'hello' with The Horrors' Tomothy Furse.



4



5

## DE LA SOUL

This year 33,000 people attended Evolution, which took place across three stages in Newcastle and Gateshead. DLS played classics 'Me Myself And I' and 'A Roller Skating Jam Named "Saturdays"' on the main stage.



6





## ROSS: GOOD KLAXONS BOSS

*Seems like Ross Robinson had no idea the lads had been struggling*

So, Ross Robinson was the producer who finally managed to nail down Klaxons' second album. But he must have felt a bit of pressure helming the problematic follow-up to 'Myths Of The Near Future'?

"I had no idea they were struggling to make a record!" Ross told us from LA - where the band recorded the tentatively titled 'Touching The Void' at the end of last year, proving that ignorance really is bliss when it comes to following up new rave classics. "I flew to London on a whim... my job was to set those guys on fire. James Ford's a genius, I had no hopes of topping what he did on the first album."

The Korn and Slipknot producer also warned fans that taster track 'Flashover' wasn't a true reflection of the album, despite the positive reaction to it. "Flashover" is so full-on, but it's not representative - there are huge choruses, and the beats all have a bounce to them." Guess we'll have to wait until later in the year to hear if he's right.

## WIN VIP V FESTIVAL TICKETS

V Festival has sold out again this year, but we've got hold of two pairs of VIP tickets for each site (Chelmsford and Staffordshire) to give away. Kings Of Leon, Kasabian, Florence + The Machine, Jamie T, The Courteeners and a load more are on the bill (see [NME.COM/festivals/v-festival](http://NME.COM/festivals/v-festival) for the full line-ups), for the events on August 21 and 22. Each VIP ticket will grant access to the site and VIP guest area, but a £20 charity donation has to be paid on entry by each ticket holder. Head to [NME.COM/win](http://NME.COM/win) to enter and for full terms and conditions.



## NEWS ROUNDUP

### DRUM SOLO

Radiohead drummer Phil Selway will release a solo album, 'Familial', on August 30, featuring Wilco sticksman Glenn Kotche and singer/songwriter Lisa Germano. No word if it'll be pay-what-you-like or if you have to unlock a digital code from an online goblin to hear it, or whatnot.

### YOU WHAT?

"We need the power of goodness like them. The goodness is shining from their music." Yoko Ono on Oasis - she said she wants the band to reunite. Someone tell her about Beady Eye.



## MUMFORDS' INDIAN SUMMER

*Marcus and co ditch the bluegrass and banjos to release new India-recorded songs*

In a move akin to Slipknot losing their masks or James from Glasvegas performing without shades welded on his face, Mumford & Sons' Marcus Mumford has revealed that the band have shelved their mooted bluegrass EP in favour of a new release featuring a bunch of Indian musicians they met on tour in the country last year.

The band will perform with the musicians on July 9 when they play at the iTunes Festival in London, with the frontman telling us they're planning on releasing recordings they canned in Asia when they toured there last December. "I can't wait to see them again, they're really lovely people. We did three different recordings when we were out there, one of theirs, one of Laura Marling's and one of ours, and we're planning to release them quite soon."

When asked what was going on with their planned banjo-tastic bluegrass EP, he added: "We're focusing on the Indian one for now - the songs might come out as an EP or as a single."

But before they start their next India-related adventure, the band are set to finish their current mammoth US tour, which Marcus said had proved an interesting affair so far. "We've been here for three weeks and we've got another three weeks to go," he said. "It's a long tour but it's a lot of fun. We had a couple of days off between Minneapolis and Seattle, so we had a long drive, and we went to see Yellowstone National Park. We had a really nice day off yesterday in California, half of us went to play golf and half of us went to see the giant redwoods. We saw a grizzly bear by the side of the road."

WIREIMAGE, PAMELA LITTEY

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# SPEED DIAL SKREAM

The dubstep pioneer, Magnetic Man man and 'In For The Kill' remixer has a new solo album – but definitely no Katy Perry collaborations

*You were there from dubstep's beginning at Big Apple Records in Croydon; how has it felt watching it grow?*

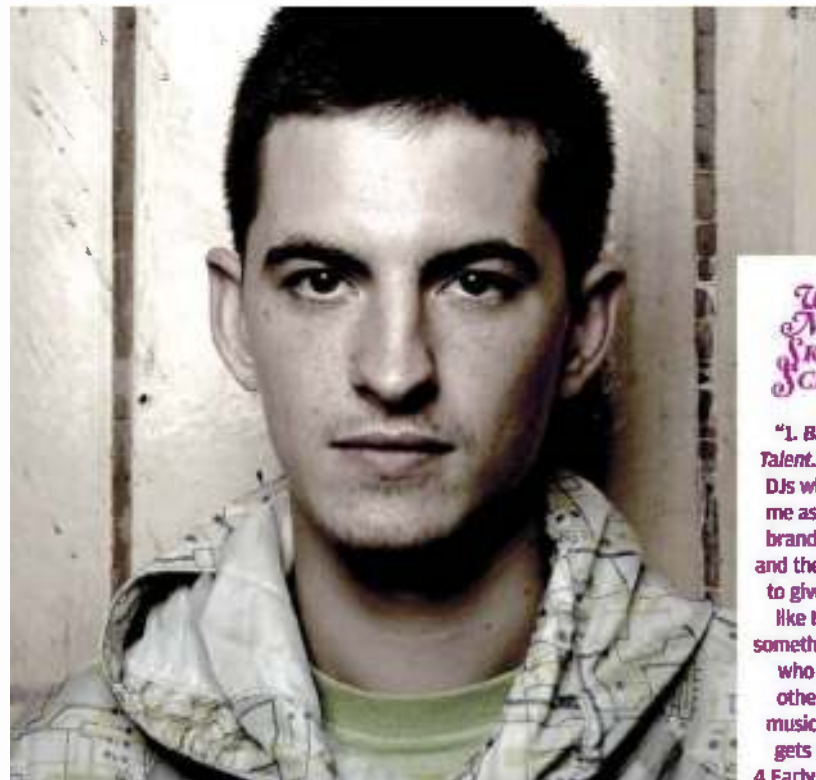
**Skream:** "It's amazing really, considering that seven or eight years ago we were standing in a club with probably not even 20 people listening to this really dark music and now you see these dubstep compilations being advertised on Channel 4 and it's mental. I'm happy in some ways, in other ways not so happy because of the bandwagon jumpers who haven't put any graft in."

**Do you feel pressure to define the genre again with your new solo album, 'Outside The Box'?**

"I feel a lot less pressure, really. This one is for me, if people don't like it they don't like it, I'm happy with it. The first time round I'd just turned 20 so I was pretty nervous – there was more pressure on me then than there is now. Now I've really crossed styles and genres and mixed it up."

**Is it a pure dubstep album?**

"With this album I'm showing people what I've done for ages, I've always made loads of different styles. Some of it's 2step garage, some of it's ambient. I still play dubstep parties, the majority



of my DJ set is dubstep, and the rest is all over the place."

**You've teamed up with La Roux again on one of the tracks – who else have you worked with?**

"A girl called Freckles, a new artist, then there's a rapper from LA called Murs from a crew called Living Legends. I've been working with someone called Sam Frank as well, who actually wrote the Freckles track and features on a track called 'Where You Should Be', which is quite sexy, but it's quite sad at the same time. Who else? Also D-Bridge and

Instra:Mental, I've been working with them, I'm a massive fan."

**After your 'In For The Kill' remix the offers must have come piling in...**

"The only ones I did after La Roux were ones I asked to do or if it was people I really respected like Chromeo. I asked Bat For Lashes' label if I could do a remix but it never got released. Thing is, I knew the offers would come flying in after the La Roux thing, but they'd all want me to do the La Roux thing.

I got an offer for that 3Oh!3 and Katy Perry tune ['Starstruck'], but it's fucking awful, and a lot of stupid pop songs I got sent and I was like, 'No, it's not me.' I did one for The Dead Weather, a really, really underground, old school dubstep mix – I liked it but I don't think they got it."

## WHAT MAKES SKREAM SCREAM?

1. Britain's Got Talent. 2. Unknown DJs who message me asking me for brand new tracks and then expect me to give it to them like I owe them something 3. People who copy each other's style of music, that really gets on my tits. 4 Early mornings on the weekend make me scream 5. Erm, I'm not really an angry person really... actually."

**Your Magnetic Man album with fellow dubsteppers Benga and Artwork is also due this year, what's the skinny on that one?**

"It's sounding really good. The first single is a track called 'I Breathe Air' featuring Angela Hunte – you might know her, she co-wrote 'Empire State Of Mind'. There are some big artists on the album, I'm just not sure how much I'm allowed to say yet."

**How do you decide what's solo and what's Magnetic Man?**

"Since I've finished my album I've been putting everything into Magnetic Man. If it was something I didn't believe in, there would

be things I would keep to myself. But we're all working together as a team."

**Are Benga and Artwork down with you doing a solo album?**

"Yeah, Benga's been playing loads of stuff off it and Artwork really likes the first single 'Listenin' To The Records On My Wall'. If they don't like it then Magnetic Man is over!"







# FRANKLY, IT'S ABOUT TIME...

*After a million and one support slots on the hype run, Frankie & The Heartstrings finally play their debut headline London show*

## FRONT ROW

"It's nice to play somewhere you've heard about on TV and in magazines," Frankie Francis says, a couple of hours before clopping down the stairs of one of the capital's iconic venues (June 3) "Why not do your first London headline gig at... THE 100 CLUB?"

Frankly, it's about time. Since emerging as one of the great hopes of 2010, Sunderland five-piece Frankie & The Heartstrings have been playing through a support slot tour schedule that made Twisted Wheel's Oasis-prop-up gig calendar pale in comparison.

Still, they're far from sitting back and wallowing in adoration during 7pm get-the-beers in slots now. Their gritted teeth on show as they take to the stage suggest they're determined to live up to and surpass their hype. The room is packed, too, quelling any fears that this mob couldn't fill a place with their own

## THE SETLIST

- Possibilities
- What Goes Around
- Tender
- Want You Back
- It's Obvious
- Photograph
- Ungrateful
- Hunger
- Don't Look Surprised
- Fragile

name on the top of the posters. Did someone say 'turning point'?

With the band opening with 'Possibilities', the set is rapturously received, the likes of 'Ungrateful', 'Hunger' and set-closer 'Fragile' showing that fan-stealing at these support slots has become something of a speciality for this lot.

It's easy to get carried away with all the enthusiasm in the room, and Frankie isn't quite ready to make the step up beyond beamy appreciation of all this rock'n'roll malarkey quite yet.

"Whenever it feels like it can't get any better it does," he gushes. "I'm just glad I've got my best mates doing it with me. It's hard to express how great it is to have had all these opportunities." Maybe their biggest problem now is just making sure that their band name actually fits on the top of those tour posters...

Frankie Francis just realised he's not put on his own F&TH merch tee

RICHARD JOHNSON





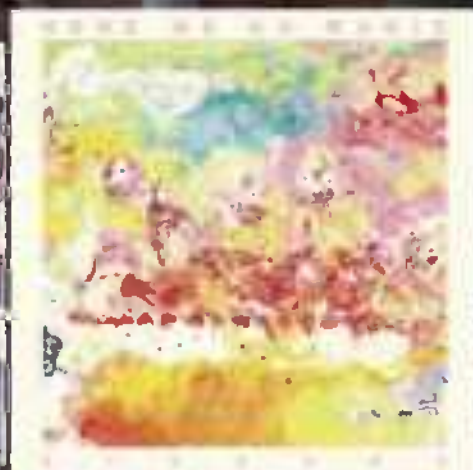
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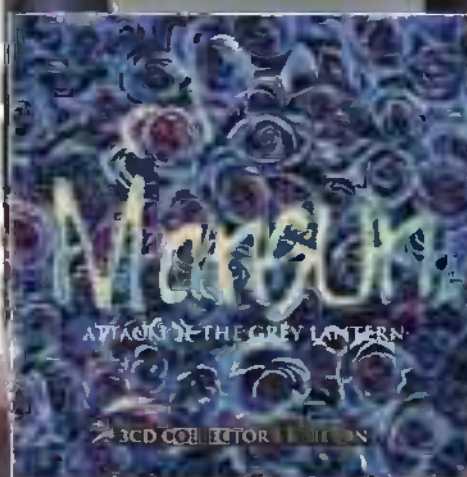


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## "WE PLAYED TWICE AS FAST"

*Pulled Apart By Horses avoid ghosts (but not studio clichés) on hyper-speed debut album*

If you're a band known for blood-spilling stage antics and songs named things like 'I Punched A Lion In The Throat', honing what you do into a debut album must be like catching lightning in a bottle. "I can see the reviews now," laughs Pulled Apart By Horses' singer/guitarist Tom Hudson of their self-titled album, out June 21. "It's not like the live show! We kept that in mind as we were recording – keeping that edge."

Fired up from their festival shows last year, the Leeds band entered Lodge Studios in "a really weird seaside town" called Bridlington, owned by producer James Kenosha. New songs include 'Yeah Buddy' and the seven-minute 'Den Horn'. "The album is half songs we've reworked, which we now play

twice as fast as when we started, and the other half is stuff we made up in the studio," says Tom.

Lodge Studios, meanwhile, supplied its own spectral entertainment – the band seemingly unaware of the old 'haunted studio' cliché that seems to have done the rounds on pretty much every studio recording session for every band since the dawn of time. Tom: "James told us it was haunted. It used to be a big family house, there was a room where people in the family would go to die."

So are there any supernatural fingerprints on the record – a guitar line no-one remembers laying down, or any of those old chestnuts? Tom: "If that happened, it was probably [guitarist] James Brown. Just because of what he's like. One too many beers."

### TIME SCALE

8

The amount of days Bono has been told to rest for – he's now left hospital after the back surgery that meant Gorillaz will replace U2 at Glasto

### Q1 2011

When Trent Reznor says he'll have his new *How To Destroy Angels* album out – that's marketing speak for early next year

44

The amount of months it's been since The Strokes last played a gig... until Saturday's (June 12) *Isle Of Wight* show. Turn over the page for more thoughts on the comeback



## GAGGLE'S CAST OF 1,000

*Forget albums, the 48-legged band are tackling a 1969 opera*

When you're a 24-strong choir band, deciding on your next musical project must be a diplomatic nightmare. However, Gaggle's helmswoman Deborah Coughlin has said that the band are set to embark on a rather ambitious project – reinterpreting an opera from 1969 that has a cast of 1,000.

The band have already made a video featuring sections of their version of the opera *The Brilliant And The Dark* (watch at [NME.COM/artists/gaggle](http://NME.COM/artists/gaggle)) after being asked to contribute to the Out Of The Archives exhibition at the Women's Library in London. Now Deborah has told us that they're set to perform it in full in September. "We had to make a three-minute tune for a video [see the still below], which is on show there now," she explained. "All the way through the opera, there's a tapestry being stitched – they're telling the story of women in history from medieval times up until World War II. In the version that we're doing, we use some of the original recording. We cut and splice loads of it up, so it's like Gaggle are singing with the women from 1969. We're doing

*"We're performing in London in September. Then who knows where?"*

a bigger performance there in September. Then who knows where we'll take it. Ideally we want to take it back to the Royal Albert Hall."

Deborah said that the band agreed to get involved despite being busy working on their debut album because, with the huge head count of women in the original, "It just seemed like the absolute most perfect project for Gaggle to do." However, they were keen to put a bit of a modern twist on things, with fashions having changed considerably since the opera debuted in the late '60s. "Filming it was fucking hilarious, because everybody just wanted to get into unitards and run about," she explained. We Lady Gaga'd up the original costumes with pointy shoulders and bigger headdresses." Haus Of Gaggle, anyone?



## COVERING UP

NME covers don't just look good sprawled on your bedroom floor, neatly filed in a drawer or poking out of a stylish knapsack. They also look good on T-shirts, which is why we've put some classic mag covers on them. Have a look at [NME.COM/store](http://NME.COM/store) now, they're £19.99 each and feature the likes of The Clash, The Libertines,

The Stone Roses, Joy Division and Kurt Cobain. We've also got 20 to give away for absolutely nothing – head to [NME.COM/win](http://NME.COM/win) for a shot at picking up a free one.



### CRIB IN A WIG

It was always a matter of time – Kate Nash has enlisted Ryan Jarman for a music video. The Crib dances around wearing a wig in the promo for 'Kiss That Grrrl' – watch at [NME.COM/artists/kate-nash](http://NME.COM/artists/kate-nash)

## I'VE GOT MAYA REVENGE!

Cripes, who'd interview MIA these days? Well, us, of course, but we think we got off lightly recently. Now Maya has taken offence to a *New York Times* article written by Lynn Hirschberg about her. She even went to the extent of posting the journo's phone number online and recorded a new song about Hirschberg called 'I'm A Singer', posting it up at [Neetrecorder.com](http://Neetrecorder.com). The *Times* then clarified the article, saying they shouldn't have switched round some of the quotes. Still, we all got a new song out of it, didn't we?





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## TALKING HEADS

# THE STROKES AREN'T RETURNING FOR THE CASH

*Adam Green has supposedly heard the new Strokes album sessions. Which is why, if he finishes his Macaulay Culkin film, he'll be at Isle Of Wight and RockNess*



**M**acaulay Culkin is probably the only other person aside from me who's heard anything from the new Strokes record. He's part of The Strokes' inner circle. I'm going to try and head out and join the band this summer across the festival circuit, but I'm finishing a script for the new Macaulay Culkin movie. It's about his life story, kind of like his biopic. People are fascinated by Macaulay Culkin, but it's funny because Macaulay Culkin is fascinated by The Strokes.

There are so many reasons that everyone should be excited about

The Strokes' comeback. For one thing, I've never seen a bad Strokes concert. I always like to watch the crowd when they play too. People get really euphoric and enraptured, like they're seeing the light or something.

I think Julian Casablancas only said they were doing this summer's festival shows for the money to be provocative. I don't think those guys do anything for the money. It's not like when you go to see The Rolling Stones live and they have, like, 12 people onstage. There's no lame DJ overdubbing scratches or anything. I think that's a shitty way to do things. It's just going to be the five of them and it'll still be better than anything else you'll see all summer.

But there's one thing I'm more excited

about than the live shows: the album. One of the reasons it's taking so long is that they each came into recording with, like, 20 songs. I've heard a couple of things so far. There's a definite metal influence; people never could figure out how Nick Valensi had so many chops but he's always been a serious shredder. He grew up listening to Pantera. Albert Hammond Jr listens to a lot of Wagner and Handel operas. Fab Moretti has been getting into Native American music and traditional Navajo stuff.

I know they've also been using a children's choir who provide some

tribal chanting. There's also a George Michael-ness coming out of Julian's songwriting this time. I can also say that I was called up a couple of times by the band during recording and asked if I knew a good saxophone player, so I'm assuming there's some saxophone on it. Don't worry, I'm sure they'll use it tastefully. They've recorded part of it at The Cloisters in Harlem which is like a medieval castle/museum. There was one track I heard that sounded like it was underwater and seemed to have fish sounds on it but I was also on mushrooms at the time, so who knows? In any case, you should think of them as a punk-as-fuck fireball coming towards the UK at a vast speed. Brace yourselves.



## TALKING HEADS

# WHY I HATE THE WORLD CUP (APART FROM 'THREE LIONS')

*World Cup 'fever'? For NME's Gavin Haynes the screwdriver is firmly embedded in the pig's bladder – and not just because of the woeful new Dizzee Rascal song*



**B**all ball ball," sang Joe Cornish in his Adam & Joe Show standard 'The Footie Song': "Footie footie footie." I have to say, I concur wholeheartedly with his wise words. Football... well, whoop-de-doo! Summoning up fake enthusiasm for *ver byootiful gayme* is a practice I have long since dispensed with, and I'd rather hoped the rest of the nation might've decided to finally give it a rest too.

No such luck. As that time of the decade approaches, and the International Millionaire Spitroasting Conference descends on South Africa, the entire British way of life is about to undergo a collective aneurysm. Even Glastonbury will soon suffer the indignity of big screens showing big games, while your favourite art-punk act is rendered as a far-off dim playing to a crowd of three on the Park Stage.

An NME colleague once tried to convince me that Joey Barton was a 'rock'n'roll footballer'. Not long after, he was jailed for assault. But our hack had already missed the central point: Barton couldn't be rock'n'roll to start with no matter how many pints he sank or barstools he nipped, because football is just *not rock'n'roll*. It is not outsider culture. It is the opposite. It's homogeneity as culture. Its central message is that you are not an individual, but a tiny cog that delivers unqualified obedience to club and country. And that you must therefore on all occasions leave your brains at the stadium door.

***Football is just not rock 'n' roll - it's not outsider culture. It's the opposite***

The act of caring overly about 22 men and a pig's bladder is inherently ridiculous. That's why every footie song ever ends up sounding like 'Agadoo'. Music amplifies meanings, so stretching sport-based words across a musical canvas only holds up to the light how pathetically arbitrary the whole thing is. That's why there's more soul in the worst song in the world about sex than there is in the best song about football. Except 'Three Lions'. Natch.

Still, no matter how well-tested this theory is, another season of silliness is now upon us. Dizzee Rascal, not content with inflicting a literal interpretation of old new rave heroes Shitdisco on the nation with his recent Number One, is serving up a big number two in the form of his James Corden collaboration – for Simon Cowell and *charidee*. It's a cover of Tears For Fears, spliced with Blackstreet's 'No Diggity', and can only potentially be worse than it already seems on paper if Corden sings it all in a West Indian comedy accent. Even Mark E Smith has finally found the one thing in the world that doesn't sound cool with him mumbling over it, in the form of Shuttleworth's 'England's Heartbeat'. There are the stolid official songs, the musical equivalent of a corporate box: Shakira's phoned-in number emphasising warrior parallels, and K'Naan's Official FIFA © World Cup (TM) Anthem 'Some Shit About Waving Flags'. And what's this? Yes, there's even the return of 'Agadoo' hitmakers Black Lace, with 'We Are The England Fans'. Well, there you go... Push pineapple, shake that tree England.



## VERSUS

# PETER ROBINSON Vs KYLIE MINOGUE

*The Aussie pop goddess on crossing roads, Lady Gaga comparisons and gas bills*



**FR**

\* In another part of this interview Kylie heavily hinted that she would take over U2's then-vacant Glastonbury slot

\* Naturally, Peter then chucked this hint on Twitter

\* Then it turned out that Kylie had been joking and Peter had been, as they say, 'done up like a kipper'

**Hello, Kylie. Have you been stalking me again?**

"Not yet, but I'm building up to it. We follow each other on Twitter and that's good."

**Now, the last time I interviewed you for NME it was a very pleasant chat and when it came to writing it up it turned out that you hadn't actually said very much.**

"(Laughs) Where that comes from is usually you're asked the same questions the whole time, and secondly, when you've been burnt in the past it's like you have to operate thinking, 'OK, what am I going to say, then how's that going to be written, then how's it going to be interpreted?' But I'll try to refrain from doing that to you today."

**If you would. Do you have any question-avoidance tips for upcoming indie artistes who are reading this?**

"Just keep talking about ANYTHING else! You've got to segue. Segue to another subject."

**"Well, it's funny you should ask that, because it reminds me of something different..."**

"Exactly."

**Do you pay your own gas bills?**

"I don't do that, no. (Chortles) I do SOME things myself! For example I read the instructions of, er... things."

**Surely it's better to see if you can work things out without instructions and then only refer to the instructions as a last resort.**

"That's a man thing, Peter."

**So, this new album of yours. Is there anything on it as good as 'Bad Romance'?**

"Oh GOD, I hope so!"

**That's a thunderous response. Are you not a fan?**

"No, I love it! That's why I hope there's something as good as that! That's a benchmark I'd be happy to be sitting next to."

**Theo from Hurts recently informed me that popstars are defined by how they cross the road. How does Kylie Minogue cross the road?**

"Well, as Hector The Safety Cat told



me when I was four, you look to the right, you look to the left, you look to the right again. So that's what I do."

**If you'd been in the UK you would have had a man in a green leotard telling you that.**

"That's not so good. We also had Mr Shocko, who scared the living crap out of me. Mr Shocko was a metal box who gave electric shocks. Suffice to say I never put my finger in the electric socket."

**Much as some of your hairstyles may have suggested otherwise.**

"Exactly!"

**Is the hunger you have now for a Number One the same as it was when you were younger?**

(Slightly offended pause)

Clearly we were all a lot younger at that point.

"YES WE WERE. I don't know if any of us now know how to measure the success of a song. With the arrival of YouTube, with downloading, with all of that. I'd still be levitating if it was Number One but I'm also aware that it's less easy to measure."

**A lot of what constitutes a 'hit' now is down to the surge of emotion that surrounds a song rather than its chart position, though.**

"Well, that's what I was trying to say."

**Well, I'd love to stay chatting all day Kylie but the battery in my tape recorder is just about to run out.**

"Maybe fate is telling you that it is, in fact, time to get off the phone."

## THIS WEEK'S TOP 20

## THE NME CHART

- |    |     |   |
|----|-----|---|
| 1  | 2   | PENDULUM<br>'WATERCOLOUR'<br>Hector/Trig                                |
| 2  | 5   | MUSE<br>'NEUTRON STAR COLLISION<br>(LOVE IS FOREVER)'<br>Hector/Trig    |
| 3  | 4   | HURTS<br>'BETTER THAN LOVE'<br>Hector/Trig                              |
| 4  | EDM | THE DRUMS<br>'FOREVER AND EVER AMEN'<br>Hector/Trig                     |
| 5  | 6   | FAITHLESS<br>'NOT GOING HOME'<br>Hector/Trig                            |
| 6  | NEW | CHAPEL CLUB<br>'FIVE TREES'<br>Hector/Trig                              |
| 7  | 9   | THE XX<br>'CRYSTALISED'<br>Hector/Trig                                  |
| 8  | 8   | KATE NASH<br>'DO-WAN-DOO'<br>Hector/Trig                                |
| 9  | 11  | TEENAGE FANCLUB<br>'BABY LEE'<br>Hector/Trig                            |
| 10 | 7   | CRYSTAL CASTLES<br>'CELESTICA'<br>Hector/Trig                           |
| 11 | 15  | RUSKO<br>'WOOD BOOST'<br>Hector/Trig                                    |
| 12 | 12  | THE DRUMS<br>'BEST FRIEND'<br>Hector/Trig                               |
| 13 | 16  | FOALS<br>'THIS ORIENT'<br>Hector/Trig                                   |
| 14 | NEW | BOMBAY BICYCLE CLUB<br>'TUV A GOLD'/'FLAWS'<br>Hector/Trig              |
| 15 | 10  | LCD SOUNDSYSTEM<br>'DRUNK GIRLS'<br>Hector/Trig                         |
| 16 | 17  | PAUL WELLER<br>'NO TEARS TO CRY'<br>'WAKE UP THE NATION'<br>Hector/Trig |
| 17 | 13  | LAURA MARLING<br>'RAMBLING MAN'<br>Hector/Trig                          |
| 18 | NEW | I AM KIDOT<br>'NORTHERN SKIES'/'LATVAY'<br>Hector/Trig                  |
| 19 | 14  | KAREN ELSON<br>'THE GHOST WHO WALKS'<br>Hector/Trig                     |
| 20 | 18  | THE NATIONAL<br>'BLOODBUZZ OHIO'<br>Hector/Trig                         |

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## NEW TO THE PLAYLIST

- MIKE SNOW  
'The Rabbit'
- FOALS  
'Miami'
- CROCODILES  
'Groove Is In The Heart'
- DELPHIC  
'Counterpoint'
- THE PAINS OF BEING  
'PURE AT HEART'
- 'Say No To Love'

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# PIECES OF ME JAMES MURPHY

*The LCD Soundsystem mainman on modern art, the song that soundtracked his first E and his serious Fall obsession*



Clockwise from top left: the cover of William Gaddis' *The Recognitions*; The Beatles' 'Revolver' from which 'Tomorrow Never Knows' is taken; a still from Charles Atlas' film *Hail The New Puritan*; the Tokyo skyline; that blue panel called *Blue Panel* by Ellsworth Kelly; the Ramones playing live; the sleeve for 'The Yes Album' by Yes.



## *The first song I fell in love with* **'TOMORROW NEVER KNOWS'** BY THE BEATLES

"It just sounded crazy. I liked psychedelic stuff when I was a kid, and the energy of that song is really intense. It also happens to be the first song I did ecstasy to, by accident. It was playing when I peaked on my first E."

## *The book that changed me* **THE RECOGNITIONS** BY WILLIAM GADDIS

"I read it in the '90s and it blew me away. It became a source of friendship for a lot of people. It's about an art forger in Greenwich Village in the early 1950s. It's a great depiction of American voices and speech patterns and pretensions and restraints."

## *My favourite painting* **BLUE PANEL** BY ELLSWORTH KELLY

"It's just a blue panel. I remember being on a school trip to a museum when I was 12, and not really caring about it. This was the first thing I looked at that was intellectually confusing and awesome. My classmate said, 'That's nothing, it's just a blue thing.' I wasn't old enough to be pretentious, I was just, 'This rules.' They were like, 'I could do it.' Yeah, but you didn't. It was the first time I had that revelation of just a great idea."

## *Favourite TV show* **30 ROCK**

"It's smart and stupid at the same time. I watch *Ultimate Fighting* at home. But *30 Rock* goes in my eyeballs, makes me laugh and doesn't make me feel totally insulted."

## *Favourite film* **HAIL THE NEW PURITAN**

"A life-changing film by Charles Atlas, it's a documentary about Michael Clark's dance troupe, with music by The Fall from the mid-'80s. I saw it as a kid and it blew my mind."

## *My favourite place* **TOKYO**

"I love Japan but in Tokyo I feel the most comfortable. I have good friends there, I love to eat there and walk around, simple things like going to the supermarket are like some other world."

## *My favourite lyric* **'IN THE PARK' BY THE FALL**

"It's probably 'A good mind does not a good boff make'. That's an undeniably good line. There's so many from The Fall though, they're my favourite band in the world."

## *My first album* **'THE YES ALBUM' BY YES**

"When I was eight, my brother was into classic rock and prog rock, so, this meant I was into classic rock and prog rock! To this day I still have a huge Yes collection that I crack out every now and again. I thought it was rad. Spaceships, songs about ancient sailors and so on."

## *My first gig* **THE RAMONES, 1985, CITY GARDENS, TRENTON, NEW JERSEY**

"I was never all that into the Ramones but [seeing them] seemed like a rite of passage to a kid listening to weird music. It was really loud but I thought they'd be weirder. I had the same impression of the Sex Pistols too, I thought, 'This sounds like The Go-Go's'."





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# CAUGHT BY THE BUZZ



## THE JD SET

Manchester favourites old and new unite to reinvent classic Buzzcocks tunes for Jack Daniel's



The Whip and Tim Burgess

London passes the baton and we arrive in the refurbished Band On The Wall venue in Manchester's Northern Quarter. It's already infamous for putting on excellent musicians, but tonight, it'll go down in music history as a host of local favourites get together to reinvent songs from the '70s back-catalogue of Manc legends Buzzcocks. The whole thing's being curated by ex-Smiths drummer-turned-DJ Mike Joyce, with the line-up including such delights as electro ravers The Whip, Dutch Uncles' falsetto starlet Duncan Wallis, Twisted Wheel's swaggering Jonny Brown, indie darlings The Answering Machine and Californian folk singer and Mancunian adoptee Jesca Hoop.

First up, though, is I Am Kloot's poetic frontman Johnny Bramwell, who opens the JD Set in style: with an acoustically plucked and lyrically altered rework of the Buzzcocks' classic alt-romance anthem 'Ever Fallen In Love (With Someone You Shouldn't've?)'. It's a great start.

Next, The Answering Machine take to the stage and transform 'Everybody's Happy Nowadays' into a rocked-up Britpop number. 'Sixteen Again' and 'What Ever Happened To?' sound bigger than ever and fill the room with a knowing air of mischief. Then they're joined by Duncan Wallis and his awkwardly wonderful dancing on 'Love You More', before our second Jonny of the night, Jonny Brown, perfectly spits out the rebellious 'Orgasm Addict'. The latter is so rife with energy and conviction we could almost be in the wrong decade. As indie king Tim Burgess follows, he shyly coos out 'Just Lust' from beneath his trademark floppy fringe - in almost angelic fashion.

The Whip take The Answering Machine's place and create another highlight in the form of an incredible, '80s-tinged dream-synth rendition of 'Ever Fallen In Love...'. And for the second time tonight, with harmonies as thrilling as this, the answer is definitely 'yes'. Buzzcocks' guitarist Pete Shelley is honoured next for his seminal penning of

'Homosapien', which The Whip's Bruce Carter delivers with such passion it's as if he wrote the track himself. The captivating signature moves of Duncan Wallis burst on to the stage again for 'Nothing Left', and the re-appearance of Twisted Wheel's Jonny Brown sees versions of 'Promises' and 'What Do I Get?' freely pour out into the intrigued crowd. And finally, a collaboration on 'You Say You Don't Love Me' is unleashed by Burgess, making the song this time round a more mellow affair.

And lucky us there's a hat trick this evening as we get to hear another slant on 'Ever Fallen In Love...', this time via the gorgeous vocals of Jesca Hoop, with Mike Joyce manning the rhythm section. And finally, after sampling the joys of The Jack Daniel's Distillery as if they were Tennessee royalty, the whole bunch close things perfectly with a collective effort on 'I Believe'.

So there you have it: a sense of occasion and camaraderie outweigh any possibility of rivalry as the cream of Manchester bands rebirth some of punk's true classics. Glasgow, if you're going to top tonight's JD Set, your stamina needs to be on epic form!

### JD SET MANCHESTER GIG WINNER'S REVIEW:

The night kicked off with a gorgeous acoustic re-invention of 'Ever Fallen In Love...' from the esteemed Johnny Bramwell. Things got messier as Jonny Brown took to the stage to invoke the punk rock spirit during 'What Do I Get?' and 'Orgasm Addict'. Tim Burgess later puts his dulcet tones to 'You Say You Don't Love Me' and 'Just Lust', self-consciously holding the lyrics but adding a new sweet perspective.

The set was held together by former Smiths' drummer Mike Joyce - an accomplished skin basher, he's going to go far! The night was filled with unknown pleasures, including a storming 'Homosapien' from members of The Whip and The Answering Machine. Special mention too for some freaky dancing by Duncan of Dutch Uncles. Jack and Manchester then, kindred spirits.

By Rhona Whiffen



Fancy testing your journalism skills and maybe get the chance to see your writing in NME? All you need to do is file a review of a gig you've been to recently in 150 words or less to [jdset@nme.com](mailto:jdset@nme.com). One lucky winner will become NME's JD Set Gig Reporter, where you and a friend get tickets to the Glasgow gig including travel and accommodation, and the opportunity to write and talk about the gig on NME Radio, NME.COM and in the magazine.

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# MUSIC'S MOST FEARLESS

*From the Modfather to Jack Barnett via the most boundary-pushing bands, collectives and labels, over the next 16 pages we present the definitive run-down of NME's biggest risk-takers*

**K** eith Moon trampling his kit! The Pistols swearing on *Bill Grundy*! Jim Morrison unveiling his knob onstage in Florida and juggling it about a bit! Boooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooring. What a piss-thin pile of irrelevances and fading stock photos the past offers us. This is the relic notion of rebellion. This is not what it means to be a trailblazer in this day and age, and these are not the sort of humanoids who could comfortably appear in this ultimate rundown of fearless risk-takers.

Sure, nice Kodak moments for Keith, Jimmy and Johnny, but the fact is that the world has changed immeasurably since the era when our lives could be governed by such simple dualities. The Reds vs Democracy. The Kids vs The Man. The Charts vs The Underground. That's all gone. Everything's gone amorphous, everybody's clever nowadays, everything is marketed as cool. With the internet's tentacles now reaching into every aspect of our lives, and the new Gang Gang Dance record just as accessible as the new Gary Barlow, the final part of the membrane between high and low culture has pretty much collapsed.

With the fall of pop's Berlin Wall, we've arrived at a point where we need to cast around for new definitions of the risk-taker, the trailblazer, the fearless fuckers who are taking music by the scruff of the neck.

In order to cut it as a risk-taker in this day and age, there's

got to be method to your madness. Canny is cool. Artists have gone guerilla. Ours is an era of the sly and the wry, subtlety and wit, not sloganeering. Whether it's MIA and Romain Gavras going ginger genocidal, Paul Weller defying anyone's expectations with a return to form, Jack Barnett pouring tons of satirical self-mythologising into the dark mines of These New Puritans, or Mike Sniper spearheading a no-fi revolution, these are characters who delight in changing the rules to suit their purpose. They play to the lie of the land. While the mainstream deploys its tanks, they're rustling up IEDs.

And as the music industry has hit bigger and bigger hurdles over the past decade, those who've been most often rewarded have been those who were most ready to defy expectations to evolve. Those who could adapt to survive. Whether abandoning the archaic model of selling records wholesale, drumming up musical coups, or flogging bulletproof vests from their web store.

And, like all true innovators, they never stop looking around for fresh gaps to insert themselves into. They're the people who are proving that, although it often feels like we live at the end of history – that everything's been done already – there are still plenty more ways to bend music into bold new shapes. Crucially, they're not theorists so much as doers. They're not afraid to get stuck in, or to make mistakes by doing so.

After all, boldness has its own genius. As Franklin D Roosevelt once put it: "We have nothing to fear but fear itself. And scorpions. And heights. And sharks. . . public speaking. . . embarrassing lulls in conversation... the spectre of mid-life impotence . . . the Japanese. . . Ke\$ha. . . being stuck in a lift with White Lies. . . Oh, by Christ this world is a terrifying place..."

For more on the 50 Most Fearless People In Music, head to NME.COM all week



No album this year has divided opinion quite as sharply as MGMT's second effort. There are two schools of thought regarding 'Congratulations'. The first is that it's a massive cop-out from a band who have 'gone experimental' only because they couldn't come up with pop songs of the standard of 'Kids' or 'Time To Pretend'. The other, less common view is that it's a minor masterpiece of contemporary psychedelia. There's no denying that it sounds nothing like 'Oracular Spectacular', and its studious avoidance of anything remotely resembling a hook served to alienate many. The risk hasn't totally paid off, but it hasn't completely backfired either, and we reckon it's the kind of album critics may be writing reappraisals of 10 years from now. **BN**

# 50 MGMT

WORDS: JACK SHANKLY, MATT WILKINSON, BARRY NICOLSON, LISA WRIGHT, PAUL STOKES, JAMES MCMAHON, TIM CHESTER, GAVIN WAYNES, DAN MARTIN, MARK BEAUMONT, AILBHE MALONE, ANDY CAPPER, LEONIE COOPER, JAMIE CROSSAN, MARK STEVEN, LOUISE BAILEY, NOEL GARDNER, EMILY MACKAY, JAMIE HODGSON



## 48 JAI PAUL

The fact that Jai's dragging the one-man-band laptop-pop that Esser made seem so woefully depressing right into the rudest new chapter of UK bass culture's evolutions is striking enough. The fact that he's done all this having spent his whole life growing up in the Asian quarter of Rayners Lane, west London – enduring raised eyebrows even for his Prince fixation – is nothing short of a revelation. **GH**



## 47 THE MAN BEHIND THE EIGENHARP

How many years does it take an internet mastermind to invent the most technologically forward-thinking instrument ever? Well, the answer's actually 10. John Lambert's committed a vast portion of his life/fortune to his creation, which is essentially a super-synth. With 132 keys, two strip controllers, 12 percussion pads and a synth wind-pipe, this beast is every single piece of electronic music-making equipment in one. It's got a memory that'd leave the great I AM scratching his bonce, and a specially designed system that processes information 100 times faster than any other synth. There's good reason, then, for it to look like something that Jabba The Hutt might employ when jamming with Matt Bellamy. **LW**

**BENNY BLANCO**  
When Britney Spears or Katy Perry record a new album, a crack team of castle-dwelling songwriters are summoned. So what's a goofy Brooklyn party kid like producer-songwriter Benny Blanco doing in rarified company like that? The ex-Spank Rock clique member is stealthily switching things up, marrying his predisposition for totally bonkers sonics with his instinctive love of hooks. With credits for everyone from Katy Perry to Sugababes and 3OH!3, it's fair to say this stoner duuuude is imploding the machine from its core. **NG**



## 46



## 49 KATE NASH

After a three-year absence, Kate Nash made her return in April only to find the female world of solo lasses saturated with artists who were everything the well-mannered north London lass wasn't: outspoken, visually striking and musically progressive. Taking that into account could arguably go some way towards explaining Nash's rather odd reinvention as the self-styled grrrr next door. Trumpeting her newfound love of lo-fi US indie, she suddenly talked in great volume in interviews about wanting to stab people's eyes out. When they eventually arrived, the singles from second album 'My Best Friend Is You' foregrounded Nash's tendency towards tweeness, but buried within it were moments that probably caused your mum to stall the car on the drive back from Asda, such as her expletive-strewn (and faintly embarrassing) rant on 'Mansion Song', or the Slits-y brilliance of 'I Just Love You More'. The record itself fell between two fairly disparate stools, but it should be interesting to see which one Nash decides to climb back up on to. **BN**



## 45 MIA & N.E.E.T.

Any self-respecting countercultural organisation has an acronym. There's Valerie Solanas' SCUM, Martin Luther King's SCLC, Che Guevara's INRA. In keeping with this tradition, MIA has NEET, or 'Not in Employment, Education, or Training', to represent her MO of DIY. Though technically her record label, NEET is more like a fuck-you salon comprised of a population of button-pushers bent on thrusting music into a smarter, more visceral place. The imprint's first signees: teenage mom Rye Rye, a hard-knox spitfire with mind-boggling dance moves, and her fellow Baltimore club partner (and producing prodigy) Blaqstarr. Recently, this coterie got a whole lot louder with the addition of the hyper-buzz doom-step duo Sleigh Bells. **NG**





**44**

**GIGGS**

The antidote to the commercial floodgates unlocked by Dizzee's pioneering. Rather than chirpy trance-raps about sipping on cocktails in the south of France the Peckham rapper recounts stark tales of urban iniquity, drawling his languid rhymes like he has just been woken up and the fog of sleep has yet to evaporate. The Dirty South-influenced 'road rap' sound that the former incarcerated gang member is spearheading rivals nascent grime for its unrelenting rawness – and we all know how successful that was. **LC**



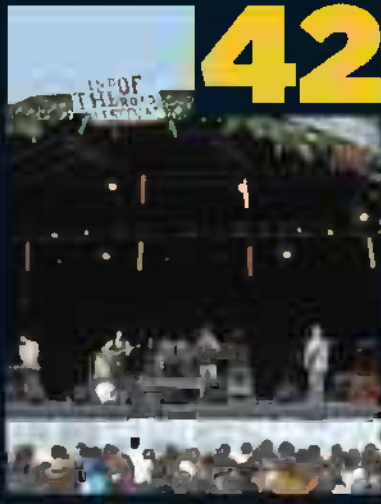
**43**

**THE KNIFE'S OPERA**

The Knife – never dullards, let's be honest – truly ventured into uncharted territories in January with their opera soundtrack, 'Tomorrow, In A Year'. Based on Darwin's theory of evolution and the text of *On The Origin Of Species*, the opera – a collaboration with Mt Sims and Planningtorock – literally drew influence straight from the source, with music based on Richard Dawkins' gene trees, sounds taken directly from research field recordings and tracks based around Charles Darwin's own personal letters. The result is a creation that finds a truly innovative middle ground – equally challenging the concepts of both classical and modern music. **LW**

## END OF THE ROAD FESTIVAL ORGANISERS

Ever fancied staging your own festival? Pick who plays, how long for and even stage it near home? Of course, the hassle of dealing with the local council, the fuzz and being in charge of the loos puts most people off, so respect to Simon Taffe, who flogged his house and began staging End Of The Road in 2006. Not that the risk-taking ended there: with no sponsors and longer sets for bands who rarely play main stages, let alone headline, the Dorset event is no megabucks cash in, yet it's effortlessly become the unofficial marker of the end of summer. **PS**



**42**



**41**

**KATEY RED**

Rather than being derided in the staunchly homophobic world of rap, transsexual rapper Katey Red has become a star. The former prostitute is a mainstay of 'sissy rap', the cross-dressing component of New Orleans' raw Bounce scene, and performs sexually aggressive raps in clubs brimming with thugged-out partygoers. All while dressed in full drag, naturally. **JM**

## **40** DIZZEE RASCAL

Rappers are obsessed with 'realness'; many have built their careers on street credentials alone. Therefore, giving the perception that you have sold out is a massive risk for any respected rhymers.

So you have to admire Dizzee's cojones in making an album, 'Tongue N' Cheek', that completely abandoned his grime roots in favour of chart-friendly collaborations with corny dance music luminaries such as Calvin Harris, Armand Van Helden and – yikes – DJ Tiesto. The result was success on a scale not even he could have anticipated: three Number One singles in a row, and his biggest-selling record to date. He has also led the way for rappers such as Tinchy Stryder and Chipmunk to make a swooshing, club-hopping dash for the Top 10. **JM**



**39**  
**RUSKO**

This boy *literally* just wants to have fun. As if turning your back on the notoriously protective and po-faced dubstep hardcore to embrace his inner 'wobble' (that most derided of the sound's traits) isn't risky enough, dubstep's true party boy went and used to topk on the title of his debut album ('OMG'). Not dicing with credibility dramatically enough for you? Well, how about professing a desire to team up with Meat Loaf? The fact that this man still rides high as one of the genre's biggest stars is a gigantic foam-hand-style middle finger to any sniffing so-called 'purist'. **TC**



**38**

**MOUNT KIMBIE**

Brought up by the crackle of pirate radio while most were listening to the top 40... blah blah, we all know the dubstep clichés by now. It's how this south London duo feed off the city's bass reverberations that sets them against the tide of laptop-wielding masses: mournful instrumentation that harks back to rave's bittersweet past, while washes of decaying post-rock ambience signal an experimental impulse that's even more evident in their staggering live show. It's not even really dubstep. What it is is a finely crafted, beguiling realisation of everything the sound has promised it could become if it just took that extra step. **LB**

PHOTOS: PETER WYMAN MATTEN, ED WILES, RICHARD JOHNSON





## 37 GAYNGS

Dangerous games to play in the music business: 1) form a supergroup, 2) pursue irony, 3) reference '80s soft rock, 4) attempt white boy slow jamz, 5) overtly celebrate the saxophone. So surely a shonky 20-strong supergroup featuring Bon Iver, Megafaun and Solid Gold clubbing together to make a sax-ridden tribute album to 10cc are going to get their hands burnt, right? Indebted to both Phil Collins and Bone Thugs-N-Harmony - with every track apparently recorded at 69bpm - it's practically the eighth wonder of the world that they somehow pulled it off. So much so that they can now count Prince among their stage-side admirers (the ribless one was spotted playing an unplugged guitar at a recent gig). With their album 'Relayed', a masterpiece of an in-joke gone very, very right, on repeat in the *NME* office, we're on tenterhooks waiting to see what prodigious lunacy they'll pull out of the bag next. *TC*



## 36 LA BLOGOTHEQUE

The online music video equivalent of the Dogme 95 collective, La Blogothèque ([www.blogothèque.net](http://www.blogothèque.net))'s Take Away Shows employ the principles of guerilla filmmaking for Animal Collective acolytes. The mission of Vincent Moon and co is simple: remove artists from the sterile and stilted confines of concert halls and capture them performing largely acoustic sets underneath slate-gray Paris skies and other unorthodox locations in the French capital. Want to watch Vampire Weekend play a plaintive rendition of 'Walcott' in a dimly lit café? Or how about Grizzly Bear strolling past stunned onlookers while cooing the celestial harmonies of 'Knife'? Michael Stipe of REM was so impressed that he enlisted Blogothèque mastermind Moon to create the video for their 2008 single 'Supernatural Superserious'. *JW*

## THE POPULATION OF GREENLAND

Its population is 57,000 yet it's larger than Mexico, there are just two music venues in the capital city, Nuuk, and it can stake a claim to be the coldest human-inhabited island. Despite all this, Greenland is becoming a hotbed of inspiring activity - from Nive Nielsen, who's collaborated with The Black Keys and John Parish, to maudlin anti-folkster Simon Lyng, who grew up in a village called Alluitssoq with a population of 50, and two records to share round the entire town. *MW*

## 35



## 34 TARTS JACK WHITE'S THIRD MAN

A beacon of DIY hope in a climate crippled by frittered major-label spending, Jack White's Third Man Records HQ is like an even crazier version of Motown's Hitsville USA house. Pretty much everything to do with the label is completed in-house at the building, situated just outside downtown Nashville. "It's the central hub for all of Jack's creative outlets," says Third Man aficionado Ben Swank, adding that, alongside the record shop and label offices, there are recording facilities, a 300 capacity venue, photo studio, darkroom, design studio, pressing plant and rehearsal spaces. As if that wasn't enough, fans who attend gigs there are eligible for a vinyl copy of said show, as everything gets recorded live on to 8-track reel-to-reel tape. What else? "We also have a giraffe and a goat," Swank adds. *MW*



## 33 THE SUBLIMINAL KID

The Subliminal Kid used to work for the renowned Swedish studio Murlyn Music, where he laboured on Britney Spears' 'Toxic'. A slightly unlikely start, as this techno freak and synthesizer savant has since honed the baffling sounds of post-pop's two most out-there lasses, Fever Ray and Glasser. Melding native American rhythms with stark, metallic 'thunks' and minimal electronics, The Subliminal Kid is mapping the contours of what it means to be P-O-P. *JW*

## BRIAN MESSAGE

While the rest of the record industry drank champagne as the *Titanic* sank, Radiohead's co-manager was busy working out a vision of the future that looks to be proved eerily accurate. By masterminding the 'In Rainbows' pay-what-you-like experiment he proved there was more than one way to skin the musical cat and that the world wasn't ending after all. Now developing that envelope-pushing model even more with his new Polyphonic imprint, where artists for the first time own a share of their own equity, he continues to set the pace for what's to come. *DM*



## 32



## 31 THE KNUX

Their 2008 debut 'Remind Me In 3 Days...' split the difference between OutKast and 'Silent Alarm'. Their cocaine synths and garage-rock aesthetic took rap from the block to the Bloc Party. When hip-hop was mired in its ghetto-ised apex - ubiquitous white tees and size-45 pants - the Knux emerged with skinny jeans and a diverse manifesto, every bit as happy to namedrop The Strokes and Depeche Mode as Wu-Tang and Cash Money. When the rest of their peers caught up and guitars suddenly become an adequate substitute for gun talk - see Lil Wayne's unwieldy strums - they went so psychedelic they made André 3000 look like 2Pac. Most recently, Rah Al Milio, one half of The Knux, launched a guitar side-project called Joey Lestrat, seemingly inspired by Blur, Britpop, The Strokes, mushrooms and vampires. *JW*



## 30 THE AGITATOR

Atari Teenage Bragg. The Milkman of Human Discontent (his words). However you put it, it's clear Derek Meins is one pissed-off protest singer. Cutting an Orwellian dash, when stood on his soapbox Meins is The Agitator, a rebel with a cause who rants, rages and vents his poetic spleen like Woody Guthrie gone digital hardcore. On record, Meins' rowdy political vengeance is layered over breaks and beats, while live it's a skifflebilly triumph. Even more intriguing, then, that Meins is a former member of post-Libs also-ran urchins Eastern Lane. Fittingly, he has already attracted the attention of fellow musical mutineer Jimmy Cauty of the KLF, who directed the video for his debut single 'Get Ready'. *LC*



# 29

## MIKE SNIPER

*Cocooned in a web of disinformation, masked and downright legend lurks lo-fi's new ring leader*

**M**ike Sniper was a Golden Gloves boxer as a teenager. He builds robots in his spare time. His friends reckon he has an IQ of 'about 160'. He lives above a funeral parlour. He likes Adam Curtis documentaries. He dresses in designer clothes. He is a vegan. A few hard-won facts about Mike Sniper. Hard-won, because there is another fact about Mike Sniper that is more widely circulated. It is this: Mike Sniper is an *enigma*.

"I assume he prefers it that way," reports associate Larry Hardy, who runs LA label In The Red Records. "He'll probably be upset that I've revealed as much as I have. He is a mysterious guy."

An unsmiling ultra-disciplined stoic, Sniper dodges interviews and photoshoots like they were cholera, letting cyber-forum rumours carve his myth. One of which suggests he's the original inventor of the Super Soaker. True fact. Most importantly, it points to the way that he sits at the centre of an extraordinary web of no-fi contacts. Sniper has almost as many fingers in pies as he does irons in fires.

Firstly, there's Blank Dogs – the debased, sludgy solo alias that first brought him to the world's light. Then there's his Mayfair Set project with Dee Dee from Dum Dum Girls, plus the Fourth Of July lo-fi festival he puts on. Most important of all, there's Captured Tracks – the label he runs from above that funeral parlour. The very same label that puts out 95 per cent of all good lo-fi right now. And all this ignores the reams of invisible ties he holds with virtually every other piece of the lo-fi puzzle. He's the all-seeing nerve-centre when dealing with any hissing guitars.

Over the past couple of years, his label has been spewing forth new releases at a staggering rate. Most notably the debut releases for Dum Dum Girls and

Woods, the crippled Appalachian croon of Ganghans and, more recently, the shadowy breeze pop of Wild Nothing. There are also Brits aboard CT's lo-fi armada: Leeds' one-man Jonathan Richman adoration society Spectrals, and the over-talented Veronica Falls.

"He is pretty much the go-to guy in the lo-fi music universe that I operate in," Larry adds. "If you want to get a record made, get a show put on, get in contact with a band or make a tour happen you have to go through Mike."

## "IT SEEMS EVERYONE IS MORE THAN HAPPY TO BE IN YOUR FACE THESE DAYS"

The scene that fluttered from LA's The Smell a few years ago was phase one. This is phase two. Why are the kids still diggin' it? For many it's the same reasons that sparked the flurry in C86 or the Pavement era, because they hate over-production. More recently, it's because the co-option of 'indie' into the mainstream has left a gap at the margins for these sort of Campaign For Real Indie people to become the voice of cool once again.

The truest Sniper-isms you can pull from his 99th percentile IQ: that he's clever enough to keep his trap shut, brave enough to ignore the industry machine. Sniper is putting the invisibility back into the underground, the silhouette back into fashion.

Of course, there is only one man who can turn these grey areas black, and eventually we track him down. After a photoshoot he fails to turn up to, and two dysfunctional phone conversations cut dead by dialing tones mid-sentence, we speak to him long enough to actually extract a few choice nuggets. Albeit, fittingly obtuse, clipped nuggets

**NME: Why was your face wrapped in dish towels in your original press shots?**

Mike Sniper: *"(laughs)* It's not me, it's just some weird dude wrapped in cloth."

**Why did you send out press shots of a random weird dude wrapped in cloth?**

"It wasn't so much that I wanted to be mysterious, but it seems like everyone is more than happy to be in your face about themselves these days."

**Do you think any bands have formed with the sole intention of getting you to release their record, Mike?**

"Yeah, and I hope I've never put any of those bands out."

**What do you make of the current lo-fi avalanche?**

"There are some great new bands around, but there are also very bad ones, using cheap production as a gimmick. We're all very aware of who those are."

**What led you to your current musical disposition?**

"In the early '90s my choices were Pearl Jam or pop-punk, so I gravitated backwards, towards Joy Division and The Cure; '80s music was exotic for me. No one else I knew liked it."

**So can you offer any insights as to where 'lo-fi' might be heading next, then?**

The phone line goes dead, yer again, as Sniper retreats back into the shadows. In this sense you might say that, with his omnipresent shroud of anonymity, he's a bit of a romantic. But then again, by that definition, so's Bin Laden. *Gavin Haynes/Kev Kharas*



28

## ENFORCER

Hey, metalheads! Tired of post-greycore? Well, a few forward/backward-thinking lads are daring to bring the good times back to heavy music, with Sweden's Enforcer leading a high-energy return to the ludicrous mania of traditional metal. Super-fast riffs compete with skin-tight spandex, frenzied stage moves and choreographed guitar poses, it's wild and crazy but also completely non-ironic. Enforcer take their cues from early-'80s metal but aren't a straight throwback. This kind of music has been the most readily lampooned metal underdog since about 1986, and it takes balls to update it right. Enforcer nail it. Let the good times commence. *MS*

## 27 BJÖRK

"You don't get the great stuff unless people are willing to risk and not play it safe," said Björk Guðmundsdóttir recently. Just one reason she's recently been awarded Sweden's prestigious Polar Music Prize – for her, freaking you the hell out is as natural as breathing. She's never coasted; a record composed entirely of human voices? Acting for Lars von Trier? Working with Madonna? A beautiful art film set aboard a whaling ship with boyfriend Matthew Barney? Nothing is too much. Whatever comes next, you won't have expected it. As the lady herself said, "I don't know my future after this weekend/And I don't want to". *EM*







## XIU XIU

**J**amie Stewart is a man that wears his heart on his sleeve. Literally. Aside from creating some of the most crippling music around, Xiu Xiu's central force pushed the boundaries of emotional investment to new extremes with a limited release of recent album 'Dear God, I Hate Myself'. The record included a T-shirt emblazoned with 'Xiu Xiu For Life' written in the singer's own blood. Currently, the duo are conducting an experiment in which Stewart intends to set fire to and inhale a lock of hair from the first person to arrive at each gig of their tour. This is a band that live, breathe and bleed their music. **LW**



23

## THE TWILIGHT SAD

These Scottish folk-noise warriors are known, respected and feared for their tinnitus-inducing performances. But this year they turned their sonic onslaught into something of whispered legendary status. At their defining gig at O2 ABC in Glasgow in April, this writer heard the future of a rock gig: a quadraphonic sonic barrage. Hooking up extra amps in every corner of the venue, they created a fort of 4D surround sound which sent guitar lines pummeling around the skull and drums crashing from the roof. Of course, this all came at a price and the band lost serious money on the innovative venture. But they're all the more righteous for it, of course. **JC**



22

## KABUL DREAMS

It's rock'n'roll vs The Taliban. The visceral jangle-pop of this Afghan trio strives for optimism and hope in a war-torn country. They stand up against the fundamentalism that has dominated the Afghan landscape for decades; their slogan, 'The first rock band in Afghanistan', isn't intended for prestige or one-upmanship – it's a call to arms for disillusioned Afghan youths to follow their lead, start a band and stir up a culture-quake. In their own words: "Our goal is to express the voice and dreams of the Afghan youth through our music." Kabul Dreams are cultural freedom fighters in a once cultureless society. **JC**



25

## JAMES MURPHY

He predicted the current industry apocalypse as far back as the invention of the CD and, in retaliation, curated DFA as a type of label that wouldn't have pissed off his teenage self. He turns down big-money opportunities like most people turn down bogus email investment spam mails from the third son of the President of Bahrain. And with LCD Soundsystem, you sense Murphy only became a pop star simply so he could become the antithesis of one. Having hit paydirt with their third record he's taking the ultimate gamble, killing the band off in its prime for fear of ever losing relevance. **DM**



24

## FOALS

The best bands know that repetition and stagnation simply isn't an option. Foals are one of the best of those bands. Having discarded their two biggest live favourites from their debut album 'Antidotes', they've now ditched many of the trademarks that first made them so exciting – the high-wire guitars, the quivering-on-the-edge-of-falsetto vocals hinting at imminent testicular trauma – and created a second album of unexpected depth and poise. Show them a trend and they'll buck it; show them a successful formula and they'll bung in a hefty chunk of magnesium and nitroglycerin, just to see what happens. **MB**

**MEN**  
Le Tigre icon JD Samson's new outfit are taking genre-melding to the next level. Not only is their music a glorious mash-up of electro, dance and shiny pop, but their live shows fuse elements of performance art, spoken-word poetry and gay rights activism into the conventional gig mix. MEN take up Le Tigre's baton and boot it into tomorrow, proving once and for all that having purpose and message needn't negate fun. Their shows are a deranged Technicolor call to arms that makes any meat'n'spuds rawk seem about as inspiring as an audience with Reverend Soundsystem. **LW**

21

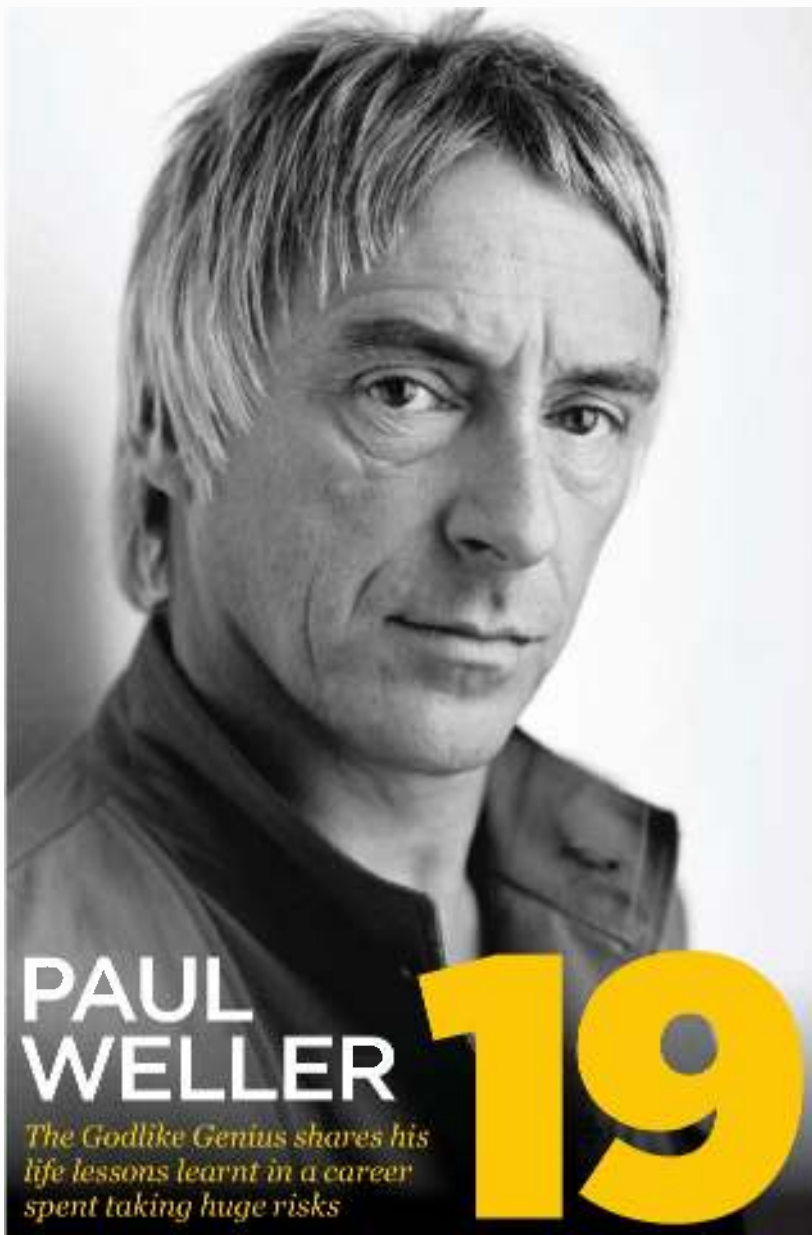


20

## DARWIN DEEZ

As if he wasn't brave enough sporting the curly-perm-plus-moustache combo last modelled by the most cutting edge and catwalk chic of '70s footballers, Darwin Deez is the indie kid willing to risk ridicule by stepping out from behind his guitar and dancing. Not just a simple head-down indie frug behind his fringe, either – we mean getting his entire band doing synchronised routines to Beyoncé and performing full-on *West Side Story* dance-offs in-between songs. A goofy gimmick, yes, but one that challenges and upturns the (bog) standard indie aesthetic (ie. moody blokes in black with haircuts for 'star quality') and proves that showmanship isn't just for the ga-ga Gagas of this world. **MB**





## PAUL WELLER

*The Godlike Genius shares his life lessons learnt in a career spent taking huge risks*

**W**hen you hear that ominous surname ring out, you might not automatically think 'vive la revolution'. But Paul Weller has a prize place in our rundown of risk-takers. For over 30 years, through angry young oak to suave '80s playboy, to Britpop Modfather, and latterly a Godlike Genius with his groove indisputably BACK, he's built a career entirely out of doing things absolutely his own way, routinely to the utter bafflement of those around him. At a time when one might assume he was settling down to a retirement of dulcet strums, he plugged back in and came up trumps with one of the most vital bits of music in his whole career. We caught up with the man himself in the midst of his residency at the Royal Albert Hall to talk through his life and times, and to hear a few all-important lessons in furrow ploughing.

### PHASE ONE

*In which the young Weller reacts to everything around him, forms The Jam, and as a teenage boy forges his legend*

"I didn't relate to anything much in the early '70s. It was all post-'60s hippy rock and prog rock and American stadium rubbish. I was still playing The Kinks and The Beatles. The punk thing turned things around, but I don't think we tailored ourselves to it. There was a musical heart to The Jam. I loved the punk bands, but there were a lot of fakers in the punk scene who didn't have a clue but wanted to jump on the bandwagon. We wanted to play well and we wanted to be in tune. There was a certain confidence and maturity there, even though we were very, very young. It wasn't just three wankers shouting and hollering."

**THE LESSON:** "To believe in yourself. A little self-belief goes a long way. Stick to your guns and don't be swayed."

### PHASE TWO

*In which Weller walks away from The Jam at the peak of their powers*

"When we were making the last album I overheard the drummer moaning to the producer that 'these aren't really drummers' songs'. That seemed an odd thing to say and I thought, 'Well, fuck it then, I'll go and do them somewhere else.' That was a pivotal moment. But there was a growing feeling that I wanted to move on. I'd been in bands for 10 years since I was 14 and I wanted

to see who else I could be. Everyone thought it was bonkers to walk away from a successful band, but I think it served us well. The Jam's music has endured and as a result people still have a place for us in their hearts."

**THE LESSON:** "It taught me to follow my own path and not worry about what people thought."

### PHASE THREE

*In which Weller performs his ultimate volte face and forms the funk and soul-infused Style Council*

"I was getting into different styles of music – jazz and contemporary R&B – and I wanted to follow some of those influences. That first Style Council record had instrumentals and guest vocalists, I think I only sang on two songs. I think in a childish, defensive way I wilfully wanted to piss people off, which I don't think is such a great thing

to do, but that's where my head was at, to challenge and surprise people. And from '83 to '85 it was fucking mega, like a youth club on the road. It did piss a lot of people off, but you have to remember that for the first three years we were still a big band. We had Number One albums and we played gigs. It wasn't a flop and the history books got rewritten for a while. That was the biggest risk I ever took."

**THE LESSON:** "It's human nature to want to compartmentalise people, but it's such a limiting thing to do."

### PHASE FOUR

*In which Britpop explodes around Weller, leading him back into fashion, and into yet another change of direction*

"By the time 'Wild Wood' came out, people were coming round to me and thinking it was okay to invite me back into the garden. It was weird because I

# "I WILFULLY WANTED TO PISS PEOPLE OFF WHEN I WAS IN THE STYLE COUNCIL"



From top: Weller in The Style Council, the collective he formed after splitting The Jam up; becoming a massive solo star in the mid-'90s; as a young 'un in the '70s when he was The Jam's frontman, guitarist and songwriter



was surrounded by Damon, Graham and Noel, who were 10 years younger than me, but it was the first time I'd ever wanted to hang out with other bands. I had fuck all in common with Duran Duran or the Thompson Twins back in the '80s! And I didn't have too much in common with Sham 69 before that either. I was following my own path, as I had always done. The zenith personally was 'Stanley Road' – I was on a huge creative streak, but I don't know if that was in any way groundbreaking. But for me personally there were moments on there that I hadn't been able to get to before."

**THE LESSON:** "However much you want to change, if you physically can't it's pointless trying to."

### PHASE FIVE

*In which Weller rediscovers his anger and soul with 'Wake Up The Nation' and earns the best reviews of his life*

"I want the 17-year-olds to sound angry again and want to smash everything. Even a reaction to all the X Factor bullshit would be enough to start a revolution, I would've thought! It's a bit optimistic, but I do think we need that sort of thing. With 'Wake Up The Nation' we wanted to make an album of the music we weren't hearing, one that's going to make people sit up again and get people excited."

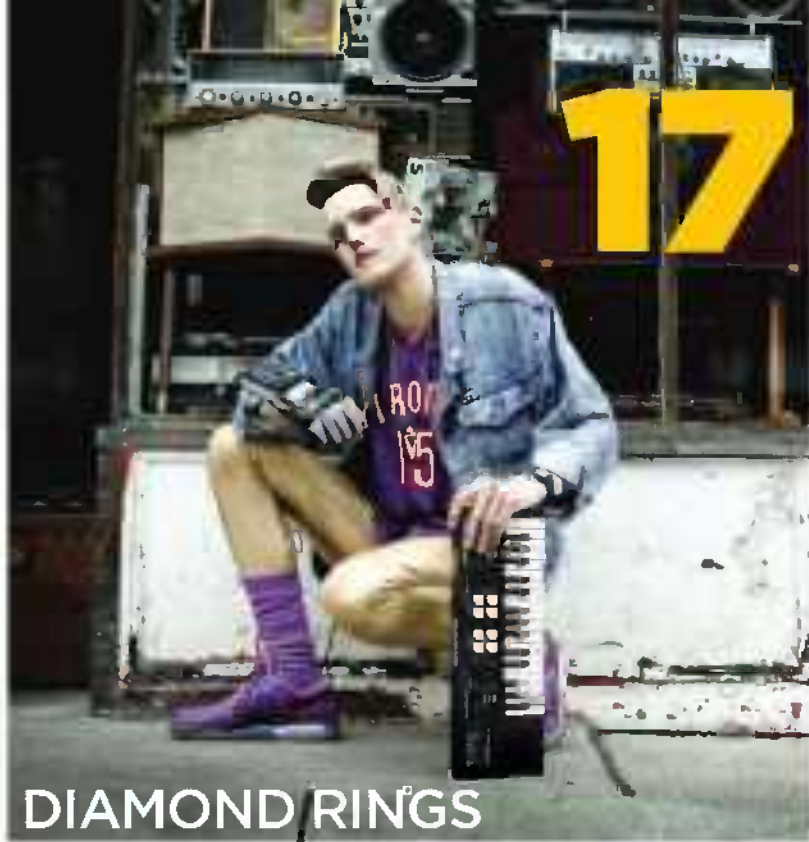
**THE LESSON:** "Don't take shit from people and don't listen to demographics and markets. Be true to yourselves and love it and mean it."





## 18 KLAXONS

Short of Alan Titchmarsh, Klaxons couldn't have announced a more incongruous choice of desk jockey on their new record than Ross Robinson. Surprised? You could've knocked us over with a morose pubescent in a Korn T-shirt. Ross is the guy who put the lip in Slipknot, who commanded the dizzying heights of At The Drive-In's 'Relationship Of Command'. It's not like you're just dialling up Paul Epworth and asking him to put some of his swooshy noises on, is it? They'd already attempted commercial suicide with a first draft of a second record so densely psychedelic that the execs playing it might as well have slathered jam on a piece of blank vinyl – possibly something to do with the group's forays into the psychotropic wonderland that is the fabled ancient Ayahuasca drug cult. They take risks where others don't even see the potential to take risks: maybe that's why, three and a half years on, after so many of their contemporaries have been submerged by the vagaries of fashion, our breath remains bated for Klaxons' return. **GH**



## DIAMOND RINGS

Looking at John O – the Casio-fabulous star better known as Diamond Rings – it is hard to imagine that he once flirted with becoming a high school jock. He certainly has the frame for it – at six-foot-six he is a giant, sculpted Adonis of a man. The fluorescent leggings, space-queen eye make-up and shocking blond mane, however, would not have been so conducive to a life of slamming dweebs into lockers. John rejected the conformity of small-town Canada and the acceptance of his own individuality makes his very existence a rebellious feat. His songs – camp and mischievous but rattlingly indie – exude this bravery. He's a stereotype-exploding anti-hero and – if there's any justice – a megastar in the making. **JS**



## 16 RICHARD RUSSELL

The shadowy chief of XL Recordings started a cottage industry and, through honour alone, ended up with an empire. Founded as a way to release the first Prodigy 12-inches, a career of potentially disastrous business decisions saw the company evolve into the ultimate fantasy of a boutique label with major muscle. He gave leg-ups to Dizzee, MIA and now Giggs, as well as having the nous and integrity to woo superstars such as Radiohead and grow those like The White Stripes. His own comedy rave outfit Kicks Like A Mule (see 1992's seminal 'The Bouncer') have been revived thanks to a Klaxons in-joke and, most recently, he's brought the notoriously 'challenging' Gil Scott-Heron out of the shadows and won. Not bad for two decades' work. **DM**



## 15 FLATS

Flats are here for everyone who lost interest in punk music in the early-'90s when it got sanitised and lost any of its meaning. What they do reminds me of the uncompromising attitude of heroes such as Crass, and they're the first band to do that in over 20 years. They're fronted by Dan Devine, one of east London's smartest and most charismatic men about town. Their debut EP was produced by Jamie Reynolds from Klaxons and has been on the receiving end of record label bids, some of which are actually in excess of a month on minimum wage. **AC**

## MATTHEW STONE

This Camberwell College grad has been the king of LDN's most confrontational and pretty music-art crossover since his core involvement with the !WOWOW! collective in the early noughties. His startling Renaissance-esque photography of post-everything London fashion kids and bands is both passionately punk and deliciously elegant. Recently, his passion for epic flesh-fests has taken frenzied, slo-mo video form. The gawping hordes at his DJ/AV sets with Klaxons video supremo Saam Farahmand bear witness to that. For recorded evidence, check his video to These New Puritans' recent single 'Attack Music'. Stone also makes music of his own for his old squat buddy Gareth Pugh's fashion shows. Oh, and he's also working on an opera, naturally. **LC**



## 13 KEVIN MARTIN

Over the past decade, Kevin Martin has clocked up enough projects to make Jack White feel like a stoner drop-out. From his first avant-jazzcore forays with God, via his industrial collaborations with Justin Broadrick on Techno Animal and Ice and right up to his newest role as one half of King Midas Sound – a project that blends poetry with intense, sparse soundscapes – it's fair to say Martin doesn't follow the fickle path of fashion. Instead his name has become synonymous with experimental, physical music that feels crushingly vital. Of course, it's as The Bug that Martin has cemented his legacy; genres may split and trends may pass, but records such as breakthrough monster 'Skeng' will simply always be. **LB**

## 12 GUCCI MANE

Gucci Mane's life story exists as popular mythology, equal parts Wild West and Dirty South. After an early success streak, the rapper born Radric Davis found himself successfully fending off (well, shooting) attackers allegedly sent by rival Young Jeezy. Pleading self-defence, the Warner Bros.-signed rapper ducked potentially career-ending charges to emerge more popular than ever. Subsequent incarcerations and an inability to shake his life of crime only endeared him more to the streets. Blessed with outlandish flair (he sports garish iced-out chains ranging from Bart Simpson to Odie from *Garfield*), vivid slang and a tireless work ethic, Gucci Mane released more songs in the last 24 months than most rappers release in a career. The only thing that can stop him is himself, or as he claimed on his last album, "I'm my own worst enemy". **JW**







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11

# DAMON ALBARN

British pop's very own renaissance man, by those who know him best

**Y**ou could argue Damon Albarn started out as an arch and canny opportunist. In 1990 Blur were late-comers to the baggy party, releasing 'There's No Other Way' in 1991, a good year after the peak of the scene had passed, and limping into the fray with 'Leisure' just as Madchester was coming down. Their sudden switch to the Fred Perry'n'pitbull aesthetic of 'Modern Life Is Rubbish' could be seen as a reaction to the British flounce of Suede and The Auteurs. Then, when the Britpop bubble burst after 'The Great Escape', Blur were the first to pounce on the post-Cobain lo-fi dollar with 'Blur'.

But the more Albarn has reinvented and shape-shifted, the closer he's edged to the forefront. With '13' and 'Think Tank' he was pushing Blur into uncharted waters, experimenting with moodscapes, electronica and African-infused rhythms. His ventures have each been a ceaseless quest for the original, whether it's the chaotic melting pot of Gorillaz, the pop scree of 'The Good, The Bad & The Queen', the musical immersionism of Africa Express, 'Mali Music' or his *Monkey Journey To The West* opera.

Albarn now stands as one of the 21st century's most rule-breaking figures. Defining himself by continual unpredictable innovation. In 2010 he one way or another seems to be at the nerve centre of just about everything, pulling all of pop culture's levers like some gold-gnashed Oz-ian wizard.

## ► SCHOOL DAYS 1979 - 1984

*Even as a nipper, Damon was pushing musical boundaries*

**Graham Coxon:** "We used to hang around the music block, mainly because that was where the lads never went. I used to go around and see him and he'd play me this weird stuff that was just endless piano, with no singing on it at all. It was just nuts."

## ► 'LEISURE' 1989 - 1991

*Despite catching the tail-end of baggy, 'Leisure' gave the genre an intriguing punkoid twist*

**Andy Ross, head of Food Records:**

"The first demo we had there was one song that was so rubbish and studenty that it fell by the wayside. But I remember noticing how they

wasn't as much planning and stress involved trying to please the label."

## ► 'MODERN LIFE IS RUBBISH' 1992 - 1993

*The giant leap to Britpop as Blur ditched baggy for prosaic and brilliantly catchy pop observations on modern Britain*

**Stephen Street:** "They'd gone through that horrendous trip in America - they came back from that pretty dejected and pretty broke and it needed a complete rethink. Coming back and finding Suede taking off, Damon's very competitive, he was like, 'We've got to make sure we don't get washed under here'. It was a big step to take in change of direction."

**Andy Ross:** "They were a wounded animal and this was their way of lashing out."

**Karen Johnson, Blur's first press officer:** "There

was a reaction against the Americanisation of everything - grunge music, shopping malls, chat shows. Damon wanted to write about contemporary life in the UK, so the songs were all observations on suburban Britain, inspired by bands like The Kinks and Small Faces."

## ► 'PARKLIFE' 1994 - 1995

*The epitome of Britpop, 'Parklife' saw Damon define a generation*

**Alex James:** "Britpop was indisputably and solely Damon Albarn's idea."

**Andy Ross:** "If 'Modern Life Is Rubbish' is an English record then

## "HE WAS ALWAYS VERY KEEN ON WHERE HE COULD PUSH BOUNDARIES"

STEPHEN STREET

were prepared to do weird things with backwards guitars so early on. Also on that same cassette was 'She's So High'." **Stephen Street, producer:** "Damon was always very keen on seeing where they could push the boundaries from the earliest days. If you look at the B-sides from that time you can see how he let rip when there



'Parklife' was of-the-moment. It summed up the middle of the '90s and then they were established so Damon could afford to take risks."

**Stephen Street:** "As long as Damon was singing on it and Graham was supplying the guitar and the harmonies it sounded instinctively like Blur. So when we did something like 'Girls & Boys', which was a 120bpm disco record, it actually amazingly still fitted into the album alongside tracks like 'Jubilee' and 'Bank Holiday', the more rambunctious post-punk stuff."

## ► 'THE GREAT ESCAPE' 1995 - 1996

*Perhaps not Damon's most celebrated moment. But it certainly expanded the 'Parklife' remit onto a far grander and more imaginative scale*

**Andy Ross:** "The 'Great Escape' was another English album in the mould of 'Parklife'. But here he wanted to drive it somewhere more experimental. They now had the scope and freedom to take those risks, and he really took them."

## ► 'BLUR' 1997 - 1998

*Allowing Graham more influence than ever before, their 1997 classic saw Damon and co embrace a grungier lo-fi aesthetic*

**Stephen Street:** "The 'Blur' album is still my favourite album that I ever did with them. On that album he was more keen to bare his soul a little bit more. I thought Damon's singing on 'Beetlebum' was wonderful. I remember recording the vocals up in Iceland and I thought it was so good I was nearly moved to tears. We really made something special there. It did feel like when we were done with 'The Great Escape' it was the end of a certain chapter, and we felt a great sense of relief all round."





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1) Damon reunited onstage with Blur at London's Hyde Park in 2009; 2) With old flame and Elastica frontwoman Justine Frischmann, with whom he was together from 1991 to 1998; 3) A reunited Blur posing for an NME Glastonbury 2009 preview cover shoot; 4) The 'classic' Gorillaz line-up; 5) With regular collaborator and Clash legend Paul Simonon before the release of 'The Good, The Bad And The Queen' album in 2007; 6) Onstage with Africa Express; 7) Blur in 1993 before the release of key second album 'Modern Life Is Rubbish'; 8) 'Baggy-era' Blur in 1990, around the time they released debut single 'She's So High', which failed to reach the Top 40



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### ► '13' 1999 - 2000

*A time of great change. Ending his eight-year relationship with Justine Frischmann, Blur cut loose all ties to 'pop music' and drifted off into colourful realms of electronic psychedelia*

**Andy Ross:** "After four albums solid with Stephen Street, Damon decided he wanted to try a new producer. You could say 'If it ain't broke, don't fix it', but he wanted a fresh input and a different pair of ears on a new album. Damon and I had a chat about it, and he wanted to go with William Orbit (Madonna. All Saints) when he could have stuck with what he knew."

**Justine Frischmann:** "His personality seemed to change slightly and he just got thicker-skinned or something. He seemed really, genuinely, beyond caring what people thought of him. And, you know, much as I admired it and tried to do the same, I found it difficult."

### ► GORILLAZ 2001 - present

*Perhaps Damon's most daring move - if not the biggest risk in pop history - was to abandon the traditional band setup to go global zombie-hop in the guise of a cartoon band. Didn't turn out too bad, apparently*

**Simon Tong, Gorillaz contributor:** "It gives him the freedom to work with whoever he wants, it's an open palette to ring anyone up, to wake up and think, 'Who can I work with today?' Because it's a cartoon band it gives it more anonymity and a broader scope to get completely different characters in from Gruff Rhys to Ike Turner to Dennis Hopper."

**Bobby Womack:** "He's the same way Jimi Hendrix and Ray Charles were. He's very creative and thinks way out there, trying things that people don't try."

**Kano:** "Damon's got mad ideas - to

hear him speak about the idea of rapping over the orchestra felt like total insanity. It's definitely a new, forward-thinking way of making music."

### ► 'THINK TANK' 2003 - 2004

*Awash with electronic experiments, yet with its roots firmly back in the pop world, Damon saw 'Think Tank' as a slate-wiping fresh start for a very damaged group*

**Ben Hillier co-producer on 'Think Tank':** "The start of the 'Think Tank' sessions were turmoil. Damon had had the success of Gorillaz, and there'd been back-stabbing from the others. I think Damon was feeling that Blur was a lot of hassle, and he didn't have as much control over it as he did over Gorillaz. The battle with that record was to make it creatively worth his while to work with the other guys again. And, of course, that didn't really work with Graham."

**Richard Russell, head of XL:** "Africa Express is about experiences. It was an alternative way of looking at things from the Live8 way of looking at things - a reaction against it - really

### ► AFRICA EXPRESS 2006 - present

*Having taken a modernist slant to world music with his 'Mali Music' album, Damon concocted the freeform idea of Africa Express, wherein African and Western musicians collaborated on improvised onstage free-for-all*

**Richard Russell, head of XL:** "Africa Express is about experiences. It was an alternative way of looking at things from the Live8 way of looking at things - a reaction against it - really

trying to achieve a connection between African and Western musicians and give people an experience of it. With Africa Express Damon's someone who's willing to get up there and see what happens and be exposed in front of the audience, and it attracts other musicians who are willing to do that. You get to see something slightly

## "IF YOU DIDN'T HAVE PEOPLE LIKE HIM WE'D STILL BE IN THE DOLDRUMS"

ANDY ROSS, FOOD RECORDS

magical happen because you've got all these amazing players from all over the world come together, so it's pretty rewarding for everyone involved."

### ► 'THE GOOD, THE BAD & THE QUEEN' 2007

*As if exposing the rotten urban underbelly of 'Parklife', Damon roped in Simon Tong, Paul Simonon and Nigerian musician Tony Allen to release a mystery play song-cycle about Britain's mid-war decay, dressed largely as the undertakers of the 21st century*

**Simon Tong:** "Again, Damon was working with totally different people and doing something totally different. At some point he wanted to do an album with Tony Allen and that ended up being 'The Good, The Bad & The

Queen'. Initially it was going to be a Nigerian 'Mali Music' style project but that didn't come to fruition, it ended up being more of a British sounding record. He gave it a loose theme about the British Isles and the weather and the rain and the sea and a slight state of the nation thing."

### ► 'MONKEY: JOURNEY TO THE WEST' 2007

*Japanese kung-fu opera, y'ay? Piece of piss...*

**Richard Russell:** "That was something that him and Jamie got involved with, it was a labour of love project for them over a few years."

It was a big leap, another type of music that people weren't really familiar with but Damon managed to imbue it with his own sense of melody and character. It was a wonderful and very risky venture for him to do."

**Alan McGee:** "Again he has pulled off even the most unlikely concepts. His ventures seem to be guided by imagination and instinct. In an age of formulaic pop, such idiosyncrasy is to be treasured."

### ► BLUR REUNION 2009

*A rare backwards look - it was left to old label cohort Andy Ross to help compile the setlist for the triumphant comeback gigs*

**Andy Ross:** "You can chuck the word 'dilettante' in here. What he's good at is chucking the rulebook out of the window and doing what the fuck he feels like and if it works it works and if it doesn't, it doesn't. He's kind of an air freshener, one of those pine tree things that hang in the front of the car to purify the climate somewhat. If you don't have people like him antagonising people and throwing things up, we'd just be in the doldrums. He's an agitator really."

**Mark Beaumont**

PHOTOS: ANDY WILLISHER, PAUL POSTLE, ELLIS PARINDER, GETTY, RETNA, CAMERA PRESS, RICHARD JOHNSON





# 10

**ROMAIN GAVRAS**

*Video-making's contentious genius*

**R**omain Gavras loves messing with things and pissing people off. After a series of promos for the likes of Simian Mobile Disco and The Last Shadow Puppets that re-envisioned the quick-fire edits we associate with music videos as grand pastoral mini-movies, he put out Justice's 'Stress'. The urban apocalypse soon became one of the noughties' most controversial promos. Just a month ago the nine-minute onslaught of ginger genocide he made for MIA's single 'Born Free' became – overnight – the most notorious music video on Earth. Next up, his feature-length debut, *Notre Jour Viendra*. Its recipe is one close to his heart: carrot tops and gratuitous violence.

**NME: So Romain, what's with the ginger obsession?**

Romain Gavras: "I think it's because in France I knew this redhead kid called Blev in school, and we used to piss in his hair and I feel guilty now. I'm trying to forgive myself..."

**Did the idea for the MIA video follow on from the feature film?**

"The film is really different. I think it's not sexy when you tell the little details of something like that. But it just came through discussions of stuff MIA told me and stuff I told her about my film. We talked at an In-N-Out burger place in Los Angeles. I had a double cheeseburger."

**Were you surprised that it got that great amount of discussion and outcry?**

"Well, yes and no, because she is really big and because the video is not a regular video. When somebody really big makes a move like that of course people are going to talk about it and of course there is going to be discussion. It's fair to note its lack of subtlety but, when every day on the news you have crazy shit going on and people don't really talk about it, it takes a pop video to trigger people to actually have a conversation."

**Did you receive any flak yourself?**

"I got very different reactions. I have friends who are French Palestinians who said, 'Yeah man, thank you, it's exactly what's going on with our army.' Some other people just see what they want to see. Some of my friends were laughing throughout the whole video."

**Really?**

"Yeah, yeah, I think it's good to have these reactions. It was the same with the 'Stress' video for Justice, some people were saying I was a racist bastard. Some people were saying I was an anarchist bastard. But I think depending on your point of view, that's how you see it. But I got less hate for 'Born Free' than for the Justice video, which is a little upsetting for me. I like the hate." *JH*



**9**

**MYLES COOPER**

In a time rife with doom-and-gloom bedwetters, Myles Cooper's main subversion is his relentless, head-screwing positivity. His bounding, Technicolor gay-gospel paean to sweet, unbreakable fun, 'Gonna Find Boyfriends Today', is a genuine cult anthem. Pop music should confound and confront, not consolidate weary old clichés. Myles' hit is a psychedelic children's telly jingle with an insanely transcendental chorus that wouldn't be out of place at a church service. If it weren't an ode to scoring ass, of course. The fact it comes from a San Franciscan primary school teacher-cum-Boy George impersonator and boasts a video that plays out like a *Hoobs* omnibus in a flower child casualty's burnt-out brain is pretty special too. He's the latest assailant in the same charge of triumphantly gay San Fran pop that brought us Hunx And His Punx. *JS*



**The brains behind pop's fearless talisman**



**THE STYLE:** So how did Gaga end up looking so scary? Meet Nicola Formichetti, the guy who pulls in the beekeeper masks and latex demon outfits. According to Gary Card (he made the skeletal headgear for the AMAs) Nicola's work "is a bridge between the desirable and the grotesque."



**THE SOUND:** Producer RedOne struck gold by replacing guitar parts with dense Euro-rushing synth slabs, aiming to make FM rock songs with keyboards. Since 'Just Dance' hit Number One in 16 countries he's become the most wanted desk-jockey out there.



**THE LADY:** She binned the entire set from the US Monster Ball tour, replacing it for Europe out of her own pocket. She spent £52K on an *X Factor* performance, again hers. It's proof she's prepared to risk absolutely everything in pursuit of her artistic itch.



**THE EX:** Gaga's one-time creative partner Rob Fusari was an erstwhile boyfriend, but the Lady broke it off. Credited as a producer on 'The Fame', Fusari claims he co-conceived figurative elements of the entire project and is currently suing for extensive unpaid earnings. *AM*



**7**

**DIPLO**

Wesley Pentz' thirst for fresh sounds marks him out as arguably the most fearless champion of global party music out there. Where once your average club kid would need an interest in ethnomusicology to get a grip on funk carioca and kuduro, now they're international blog memes. Localised club crazes such as Atlanta's black boy/white boy rap and grime grew beyond their niches because, for Diplo, boundaries don't exist. By teasing out the shared DNA across the world's night-time dives, he's changed how producers make records: "Even if I'm a black kid making Baltimore club music, I can use a little bit of gay house music, or techno, or a little bit of dubstep or a rock riff," he said earlier this year. This is evident in his own projects, his Mad Decent label and his mixtapes (his 'Piracy Funds Terrorism' one with MIA basically kick-started her career). Then, just when you've got your head round him, the new Rolo Tomassi album arrives, and look who's behind the boards. *LB*



## THE HORRORS

They were initially accused of being fakers. But, from the genre-shifting brilliance of 'Primary Colours' to space-disco side projects and dubstep club nights, The Horrors are constantly defying expectations.

**NME: Do The Horrors adhere to any rules whatsoever?**

Rhys 'Spider' Webb: "Our only rule that we stand by is that whatever sounds best fits."

**Is it important to explore other territories with side-projects?**

"We don't have any boundaries when it comes to what we listen to. We just do what we want to do."

**How's the new album going?**

"It's too early to tell. We've written a load of tracks that we're happy with and we're about to move to a country house to set up a studio." **MW**

# 5



# 6

## WU LYF

For most bands, bleating about 'not playing the industry game, man' is actually a cover-up for the shame of under-achievement. For Manchester's joyfully elusive Wu Lyf, it is something different altogether. Still unsigned despite industry frothing, their strangled torture-pop is available primarily via a malfunctioning maze of a website that looks like it belongs to a doomsday cult. Fearful, fractured cuts such as 'Heavy Pop' hide among reams of perplexing imagery and 'TXT MSG' generation sloganeering. 'Such A Sad Puppy Dog' starts out as a mournful dirge of warped cathedral chords only to relent into an echo-chambered version of 2Pac's 'Shorty Wanna Be A Thug'. It all sounds like it's been recorded in a nuclear bunker somewhere - remote and paranoid. Like the sound of this? Why not check out their debut demo EP, limited to 15 copies and costing £50 a pop? **JS**



# 4

## JACK BARNETT

In three short years, the wry twinkle in Jack Barnett's eyes has proved to be These New Puritans' defining characteristic. Case in point: the *coup de theatre* of combining the oceanic brass of Benjamin Britten with the booty-bass tremors of dancehall on 'Hidden'. The recipe sounded too good to be true when it first manifested as rumour, but it soon proved to be accurate. So what of the next album? **RUMOUR 1:** He's stopping singing altogether, employing a choir of Eastern European schoolgirls instead. **RUMOUR 2:** He's building a hydraulophone, a bizarre tonal acoustic musical instrument played by contact with water. It may be the main instrument. **RUMOUR 3:** He's writing a piece in the Pirahã whistling language of an Amazonian tribe. "Being 'experimental' is actually quite predictable", he mumbled at us recently. "We just make unreal pop music." **GH**

## 3 PLAN B

When Plan B last left us nearly four years ago he was UK hip-hop's answer to the delinquent venom of early Slim Shady. An Asbo Eminem, if you must. When he came back, he'd traded machete rhymes for his uncle's wedding suit and an old time soul concept album and, in doing so, pulled off a heralded reinvention.

**NME: Did you have any fear of such a bold change of direction?**

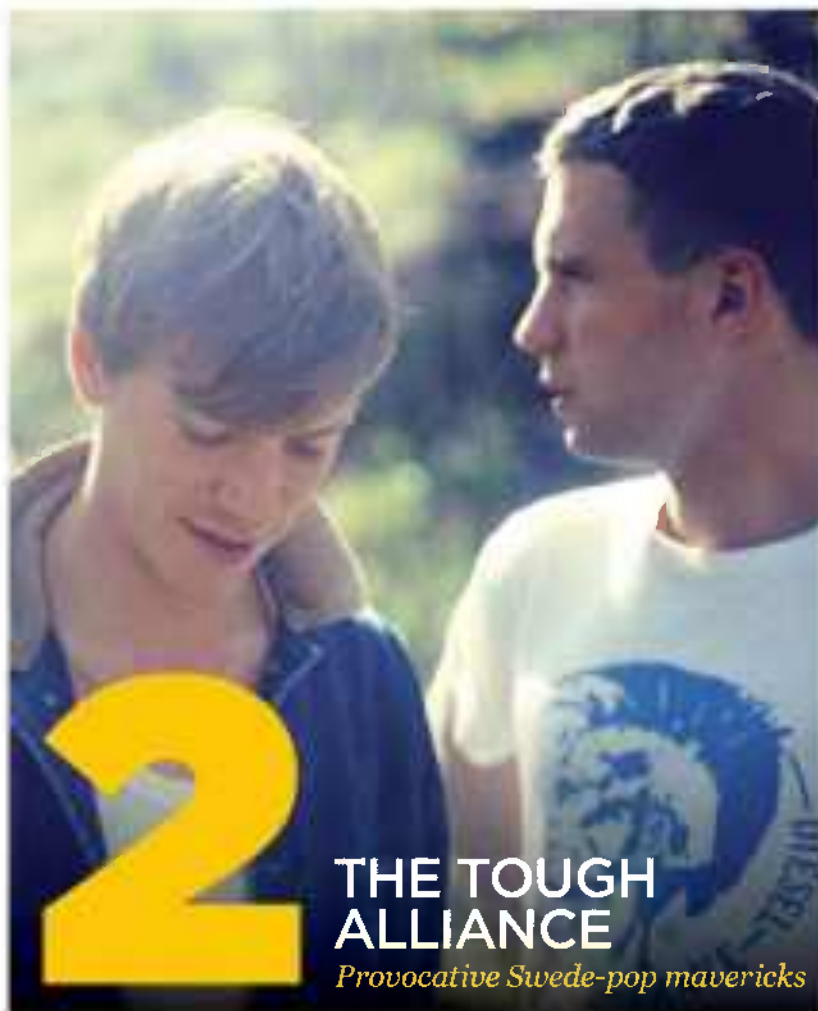
Plan B: "I knew if I didn't pull it off and make a really good soul record like I'd set out to do then I'd lose my original fanbase as well as flop commercially. But it was worth the risk."

**Music needs its curveballs to keep it on its toes, do you agree?**

"The only way to keep things fresh is to do things out of your comfort zone."

**Can people expect another reinvention?**

"After my next hip-hop album, 'The Ballad Of Belmarsh', the next thing will either be dubstep or reggae-influenced." **JH**



## THE TOUGH ALLIANCE

Provocative Swede-pop mavericks

It's easy to be confused by Scando-pop maverick duo The Tough Alliance. Despite selling bulletproof vests through their web store, despite turning a Liverpool FC crowd singing 'You'll Never Walk Alone' into the hidden track on their debut album, despite their legendarily askance live show - no singing, just them flailing around while swinging baseball bats - despite all this, they apparently despise irony.

The two Swedes, Eric Berglund and Henning Fürst, childhood friends from Gothenburg, make what one critic nailed as 'the music of football hooligans who've just taken their first E'. An intoxicated euphoria blooms up from every beat on their albums. They say they intend to channel "playfulness, the joy of living and the sweet optimism that bubble within two jumping dolphins." It's simply the dumbest clever music around.

If the modern cred pop mode - of being as splendidly popstastic as possible without compromising your IQ - has a daddy, it is them. They're a key reason The Lium formed (Jonathan and Jacob's blog included a big section on The Tough Alliance). Their Factory-style non-hierarchical label, Sincerely Yours, has incubated a string of replicants, most recently *Radar* stars JJ Berglund himself has just launched his own Tough Alliance spin-off, CTO. We asked him about it, and everything else. We predictably learnt little ..

**NME: What are you trying to say via CEO that can't be said in The Tough Alliance?**

Eric Berglund: "Now. Here. No more dreams, no more fear. Real life for real for life. CEO is just the next chapter of what I started with TTA. And so much has happened inside of me. So open up your hearts kids, for the time of flowering is here."

**You say you hate irony - but what you do is often mistaken for irony...**

"Hate comes out of fear, and my fear of irony came out of a feeling that I had. A feeling that people took what I turned myself inside out to express, as a way to provoke or play around. It made me really frustrated and sad, it made my hope fade a bit. But that hate is gone, 'cos I'm not afraid anymore. I know everything will work itself out fine and the truth will be known as long as I follow my heart."

**This piece is for our Most Fearless People In Music issue. What is your attitude to risk? Are you a gambling man?**

"Gambling is for suckers, a simple and desperate protection against fear or boredom, a sign of total despair. There is still a twisted, really powerful force in a dark place somewhere inside of me and when that lunatic gets a chance it will gamble with my life as if it was a penny." (Ern thanks, Eric - Ed) **GH**





"I DON'T LISTEN  
TO INDIE MUSIC  
ANY MORE. IT'S  
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EXCITED WHEN  
YOU KNOW HOW  
IT'S BEEN PUT  
TOGETHER"

**EVERYTHING  
YOU KNOW  
IS WRONG**



# KELE OKEREKE

*Ditching your (very successful) band and going solo with a polarising new dance direction rank pretty highly in the bravery stakes. Rebecca Nicholson meets the man doing it all his own way*

PHOTOGRAPH: DEAN CHALKLEY

**R**ight in the middle of a discussion about how there aren't any cool male pop stars any more, no Princes or Jackos or Gary Numans or Adam Ants, only Mikas and Bubbles, I remind Kele Okereke that he could and should take up the challenge. He's reclining on the sofa in his flat in Shoreditch, east London, flanked on either side by huge portraits of Grace Jones and Morrissey, and chatting about how the necessity of innovation in pop fires him up. "You don't get pop stars like that any more, that have a sense of darkness. Now everyone's trying to be inclusive and super-bland so you don't piss anyone off." He looks me right in the eyes. "But I like the idea of pissing people off."

It's no coincidence that Kele's solo album, a big, bold, euphoric record, is called 'The Boxer'. Over the past 12 months, something about the uncertainty of Bloc Party's future has sparked his fighting spirit. At a time – on the back of a third album almost lost in the indie-disco ether, and an apparent band make-up rife with question marks – he pulled maybe 2010's swiftest critic spanking sucker-punch, and arguably its most surprising. After half a decade spent telling everyone how "really into dance music" he was and it amounting to little more than a band lad 'giving it the big one', he came a'knocking with maybe the most jubilant and convincing crossover club album you'll hear all year. Now he stands ripped and grinning in the midst of new music's crossfires, buzzing with purpose and promise.

By ditching the surname and the band, Kele's unleashed his true pop auteur. 'The Boxer', inspired by

his sideline in DJing and his lifelong love of the dancefloor, hits the clubs hard where the likes of 'Flux' and 'Mercury' were just sparring. Only now he's got a video inspired by Janet Jackson, biceps the size of rugby balls, and he's flashing those platinum whites on magazine covers. He's a million miles from the moping, introspective post-frontman I half expected to meet today. He shrugs, a twinkle in his eye. "I'm just Kele being Kele, babes," he smiles.

**Are you happy?**

"Yeah. I feel in the last year or so that I've been the happiest I've ever been."

**Why?**

"It's a combination of things. Coming off the road and having time to myself. Finally being able to appreciate everything that we worked for in those five years that we were touring non stop. Making this record by myself and not thinking it was possible, but then doing it and being really proud of it. Those are all important things, you know?"

**Did doing the album help?**

"For sure. This came at a very important time. In 2009 I was completely over all aspects of being in a band, making music, touring, being on the road. I wasn't really enjoying any of it."

**If you weren't enjoying music, why make a new album?**

"It wasn't that I wasn't enjoying music. I wasn't enjoying being in a band. With Bloc Party we worked really hard. We put out three albums in four years. We didn't take a break in-between 'A Weekend In The City' and 'Intimacy' and it was like... we were on a bit of a treadmill. I think maybe our relationship suffered because of that."

**Were you getting burnt out?**

"It wasn't that I was getting burnt out, because I went straight into making another record – one that I think



is the best record I've ever been involved with. I just think we weren't... it was becoming a bit hostile."

**Is 'The Boxer' a celebratory album in that case?**  
"Yeah, that was the point really. To make something that had a sense of joy and soul. I think with Bloc Party a lot of the music came from a nervous, melancholic place. That was part of our appeal and that's why it resonated with so many people, but I don't feel like that any more. I didn't want to make something that had that kind of energy this time around. It was important that it had a sense of light and positivity."

**Is it defiant? The first track is called 'Walk Tall'...**  
"I don't know. It is partially. I'm not sure if defiant is the right word. I think it feels more like a new start."

**Does it feel like you?**

"It is me, it's my name. I was responsible for all the musical and artistic decisions in making this record. It wasn't a band. So it is me, yeah. This is the most me, for sure."

## "NOW EVERYONE'S SUPER-BLAND SO YOU DON'T PISS ANYONE OFF. BUT I LIKE THE IDEA OF PISSING PEOPLE OFF"

**What could you do here that you couldn't in Bloc Party?**

"It wasn't a case of what I could or couldn't do. The others had never resisted or said, 'You can't do this.' Part of me wishes maybe they had sometimes. I just felt I was in a position where there was no tension. There was no awkwardness or frostiness, just me and a producer making something we believed in. That in itself was a galvanising experience."

**Why do you say you wish they'd resisted?**

"Because you want to know that it's important. You want to know you're fighting the same fight. Towards the end of it I wasn't sure. Our problem was always... I'm being really candid about this... my problem was always that I think as a band we didn't ever speak about anything, you know? And it all became a bit passive-aggressive towards the end. And I'm not someone who thrives on that. I need to have drama in my face rather than behind closed doors."

**What do you mean by passive-aggressive?**

"Just in a kind of really cold, English way, towards the end. And I'm not saying it's their fault and I don't want to disrespect them at all because I love them still. They're still my brothers and I care about them a lot. I know I'm not particularly easy to be around when it comes to working."

**In what way are you not easy to be around?**

"I know what I want. I get that trait from my mother. It can be a problem, because I know what I expect from people. I work hard and give all of myself when I'm involved in a creative endeavour and I expect that from people around me."

**You never sat down and talked about this?**

"No, we have, when we decided to take a year out. We had a meeting when we were touring in North America, I think Seattle. We almost broke up after we played the first show. We had a meeting the following day and spoke about what was going on. I think it was actually when we were touring in Europe later that we decided we needed to take some time to come away from each other, some time away from Bloc Party."

**So what happened in Seattle?**

"Ohhh, I don't know. Just band stuff. Any little

RIDICULE  
IS NOTHING  
TO BE  
SCARED OF



thing becomes magnified. It kind of... just band stuff. I can't go into it."

**Did you argue?**

"That's the point, it wasn't an argument. We had the meeting afterwards. If it had been, I don't think there would have been a problem. Anyway..."

**How are things at the moment? Are you in touch?**

"I saw Matt when I was in New York because he lives there. I saw Russell recently, he came round for lunch. But I've been so busy in the last few months. I miss Russell. I miss him a lot. I hope that's part of what this year makes clear."

**You keep saying 'the end', as if it's over for Bloc Party. Is it?**

"We don't know. I think we just needed some time out. Who knows how we'll feel about anything in a year's time? I'm not really good at restarting things in my personal life – like if I break up with someone. I tend to close the door. So I was always worried about this, about how I'd feel about reintegrating, but it isn't just my decision. They all have lives. So we need to address it in a year's time. We'll see."

**Bloc Party fans are pretty loyal. Do you think they'll stick with you?**

"My thing with 'Tenderoni' as the first single is that I bet loads of people think I've turned into some cheesy house guy. But that's cool. You've heard the record so you can see there's nothing else like that. It was the same with 'Banquet', everyone thought we were trying to be Franz Ferdinand, until they heard the record and realised that was the last thing we were trying to be."

**Do people have a fixed idea of you? If I'm being honest, I thought you'd be prickly.**

"When we released 'Silent Alarm' there was a big deal made about the colour of my skin. I was constantly having to answer questions about what it was like to be a black person in a rock band. That whole presumption is pretty racist. And then everyone wanted to talk about the gay thing. Nobody was actually listening to what I was saying. I became this kind of person that you'd speak to to get something scandalous."

**Do you think talking about the gay thing this time has made a difference to you being happier?**

"Not really, because I spoke to *Attitude* in 2007 about my sexuality. My issue was never not talking about it. I've been out for years. I'm not a fan of talking about it in music magazines or culture magazines because from my experience... I don't trust talking about my private life in the mainstream media because it's clear that there is a bias there."

**Shall we talk about the record then?**

"That's maybe why we're here, right?"

**Were you going out clubbing a lot?**

"I wasn't while I was making it. I was being a good boy. The biggest influence I guess was DJing. I've been doing it a lot more in the last year, so how I listen to music has changed. I don't even listen to – I shouldn't be saying this in *NME* – but I don't listen to indie music anymore. That's not for elitist reasons, it's just that it's hard to be excited when you know how it's been put together."

**Because you have a knowledge of the process?**

"And knowledge of how when a buzz band breaks through it's about who's having dinner



## "I MISS RUSSELL. I MISS HIM A LOT"

with who and who knows whose radio plugger. It's an old boy network. When I hear electronic music, or pop or R&B, I don't know how it's put together and I want to work it out."

**What do you play as a DJ?**

"I guess I mainly play electro house. Just party sounds. The thing about DJing for me is that it really made me aware of frequencies. You know, when you're mixing a track together, you're tweaking the low end and high end and filtering stuff. My entry into making music was as a guitarist and thinking about things melodically, and with dance music you start to think about things a lot more rhythmically. Now there's been another shift. I want to explore music with a different range of frequency manipulation. Like with 'Rise', I wanted something that just got higher and higher and higher so it almost became a cacophony. That music is so physical. You have an immediate physical reaction to a DJ filtering out a ride, when you're part of a dancefloor. That's what I'm interested in at the moment. I mean, has it ever been less cool to be in a band? The kid in *Hollyoaks* is in a band. That's when you know you've got to switch it off."

**How are you feeling about east London these days? Is it still a vampire?**

"You said it. I'm leaving as soon as I can. I definitely will with this new Conservative government. I'm not sticking around. No way."

**What is it that scares you about them?**

"It's the word 'conservative'. Just watching them walk into 10 Downing Street sent a shiver down my spine. I'm going to New York. I'd go tomorrow if I could."

**Are you that fed up with London?**

"I'm not moaning, but I've been here since I was eight years old. I've done everything. I've been out, I've parted. I've got wasted. In London you have to be so cold and deadened to everything. On the street in New York people will say hello to you. It feels like in London you're taught to be afraid of strangers in the street. I don't want to be around that."

**Did you get sick for lines like "east London is a vampire"?**

"Yeah, probably. But I meant it! (Laughs) I still mean it. That record was about going out and taking drugs with idiots and hating that whole experience. I withdrew myself, and everyone I knew who carried on having breakdowns now, or are serious drug addicts. I stopped associating myself with that kind of energy. I'm not making a judgement. Maybe that record was a judgment... I don't care, it was where I was at at the time. There is a fantastic mix of people here. That's my favourite thing about music in east London really. We've got dubstep, grime, two-step garage, all different sorts of music but stemming from this different way of fixating on drums and bass. You don't really get that in the rock'n'roll world."

**If 'A Weekend In The City' was about coke, is 'The Boxer' an MDMA/ecstasy album?**

"I haven't taken ecstasy for a really long time. It wasn't about that. It was more about getting stoned. I've never been a smoker but I did for a bit in 2009 when life in Bloc Party was getting unbearable. I was able to find things funny again. You have to be careful with drugs. That's what the record's about, really. You have to be careful with the things that are close to you, that you're used to, that aren't any good for you. You have to be able to reject them."

**Sounds like there's a Bloc Party analogy to be drawn from that.**

"Yeah, but I'm not the one to make it. All the songs are about being lost and then being found. All the songs are about a period of darkness and then a period of positivity and light. 'All The Things I Could Never Say' is about stepping away from a lover when the love isn't there anymore. 'Rise' is about rejecting drugs. 'Yesterday's Gone' is about starting again. It all seems to be about that."

**It sounds like it has done you good.**

"It's done me the world of good."

## IT'S KELE OKEREKE WEEK ON NME.COM!

For an exclusive video interview and guide to his solo album, plus galleries including unseen shots from the cover photoshoot, blogs and details of the Kele and Bloc Party *NME* TV special, head to [NME.COM/kele](http://NME.COM/kele)



# REVIEWS

THE GASLIGHT ANTHEM, SURFER BLOOD AND ROBYN

Edited by Emily Mackay



## OASIS

**TIME FLIES...1994-2009** BIG BROTHER

*All the singles, titanic AND terrible, together in one place – but does it stand up to the greatest collections of its kind?*



**H**e's a coy man, Noel Gallagher. The running order of this collection of his former band's singles is supposed to equate to the perfect Oasis gig. But it never could.

Aside from the fact there's over 130 minutes of music here (bit of a tall order live, then), what 'Time Flies' proves is just how many different guises Oasis consumed in their 19-year life. For a band who supposedly stuck rigidly to a formula, they changed a hell of a lot.

Play 'Supersonic' and 'I'm Outta Time' back-to-back, for instance, and you hear two completely different bands. Liam's choirboy swoon – albeit a pissed choirboy – on the former is long gone, having dissipated at some point around 1997 into a smouldering Cutters Choice growl. Where did that visionary,

soulful voice go, you wonder? As Bonehead's wife put it in 1993, "he sounds like an angel".

Of course, classics 'Supersonic' to 'Don't Look Back In Anger' are undeniable. Even 'Shakermaker's' gloopy, '...Walrus'-like 12-bar shuffle sounds like royalty these days. They may have set the standard for both Oasis and pretty much every 'British' rock band the world over, but it's these songs that have now become pallbearers for their career.

There can't be many unaware of this story, but if you weren't on Planet Earth between 1994 and 2009 (and it's surely you who this release is aimed at), there's a couple of surprising moments tucked away. 'All Around The World' stands up like a great piece of work now – epic and tantalising – though its length still means it's marooned inside the endless corridor Noel sings about on 'The Masterplan',

unable to get the fuck out of there with a bit of dignity. Relative newbies 'Lord Don't Slow Me Down' and 'The Shock Of The Lightning' both do the business well too, proving that now the 'Dig Out Your Soul' late-period era has had time to gestate, it's worth reappraisal (been a while since you could have said that about an Oasis LP without sniggering).

Of the stinkers, it's 'Who Feels Love?' (still dirge-like), 'The Hindu Times' (still a Stereophonics rip-off) and 'Sunday Morning Call' (still just lightweight) that are most skip-worthy... though you knew that, right?

Like Noel says in the notes though, pretty much all of these songs are modern-day church anthems. Perhaps modern-day folk standards is even more fitting, though. You remember where you were and what you were about when you think back to them being released.

Like their creators, these singles bulldozed their way through everybody's consciousness, and that's something you must applaud. But Oasis do have a fight on their hands if they want to be considered among the truly classic British singles bands. Albums like this are a

beautiful concept – way better than the bog-standard best of – and Madness, Squeeze and The Jam have got to be leaders of the field (they're all true disciples of the three-minute pop gem, whose collections – 'Divine Madness', 'Singles 45's And Under' and 'The Very Best Of The Jam' – are as cutting, vital and decent as any of their proper albums). Where 'Time Flies' differs from those – and it's like The Beatles' '1' in this respect – is that it's essentially just a series of signposts to better places.

Whether those places are albums (the first two and 'The Masterplan'), DVDs (... *There And Then*) or bootlegs (MTV Unplugged, Knebworth), it's still a powerful juggernaut of a swansong; a snapshot of Oasis' life that's both euphoric and tragic in equal measure.

In retrospect, probably the greatest thing about the band was that they pulled off the biggest musical ruse ever. The blustery mouth that backed up the musical trousers of the early stuff was compelling enough to make us believe they could maintain it – and we all got boarding passes to a ship that was doomed from the start.

The songs compiled here were the public face and sound of that – all-inclusive, heroic and, for the most part, bloody catchy. As eulogies go, it's not half bad.

**Matt Wilkinson**

**8**

**Watch an interview with Noel talking about 'Time Flies' at [NME.COM](http://NME.COM)**

**DOWNLOAD: 'Supersonic', 'Shakermaker', 'Don't Look Back In Anger'**



**WIN!**

**We've got Oasis Wowee speakers and a football iPod docking station to give away to celebrate the release of 'Time Flies'. For a chance to grab them, go to [NME.COM/win](http://NME.COM/win)**



# MATISYAHU

LIGHT 100%



It would be easy for Matisyahu to coast on novelty – the whole Hasidic Jewish rapper thing never gets too old and tired. Instead third album 'Light' maintains a level of earnestness that borders on fatiguing, his relentless sloganeering chiming less with mainstream rap audiences and more with branding agencies. "We don't wanna fight no more/ There'll be no more wars and our children will play", he sings on 'One Day', as if he's saying something really profound. This barrage of generalised morality is cozened by overwrought production that sees the sun-baked reggae backbone of his previous efforts stripped out to make way for a confusing hotch-potch of styles and an overwhelming sense of desperation. The stilted dancehall of 'Smash Lies' is almost fun compared to the unremittingly awful raaawk guitar solo in 'Motivate', and really, does anyone actually like beatboxing apart from the person doing it? Three albums in and the beard is still the most interesting thing about him. Which is really sad, if you think about it. **Louise Brailey**

4

DOWNLOAD: 'For You'

# DEVO

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

WARNER BROS



The Devo of the '80s looked to the 21st century. Their time should be now, but 21st century Devo are... much like '80s Devo; while continuing to crusade against 'de-evolution', these new wave pioneers are stuck in stasis. 'Human Rocket' sees the 'we're all robots here' shtick that they have explored so rigorously for four decades starting to run thin, while 'What We Do' proves the truth-said-in-jest rule when they sing, "It's all the same, there's nothing new". Their hand's been forced by allowing fans to vote for a 12-song tracklist whittled down from 16, but even when Devo force a break from their kinetic past, as on the wistful ballad 'There's No Place Like Home', it seems they're just as limited outside the template. Their handling of a piano results in the worst of '80s ballads, with all the faux grandeur of 'Tonight'/Labyrinth-era Bowie. It only proves that Devo's original concept was so tight that whether they deviate from or doggedly stick to it, they'll never be as good as 'Jocko Homo'. **Jason Draper**

5

DOWNLOAD: 'Later Is Now'

# WE ARE SCIENTISTS

BARBARA MASTERSWAN



Their 'With Love And Squalor' album incontestably rocked, but follow-up 'Brain Thrust Mastery' dropped the ball somewhat. Adding those superfluous synths made the whole thing too polite, too lacking in the corrosive twang of its predecessor. After underwhelming sales meant that they were relieved of the obligation to make records for a major label, frolicsome funbags duo Chris Cain and Keith Murray – joined here temporarily by Andy Burrows' Spitting Image puppet (played as ever by Andy Burrows) – have come up with a compromise. They've revived the fantastic ziggurat riffs of the first, and applied them to songs with more of the new wave sophistication of the second. The results often sound like the whole thing was pieced together in a morning, but at their best WAS are meant to be slightly slapdash. They're having their own sonic keg party here: coasting through the fuck-ups on the basic likeability – the sheer shaggy melodic charm – of the hosts. **Gavin Haynes**

8

DOWNLOAD: 'I Don't Bite'

## FACES TO NAMES...

What the reviewers are doing this week



LUKE LEWIS

"To atone for watching 22 episodes of *Twin Peaks* like an appalling nerd, I've been reading a brilliant anti-geek diatribe called *You Are Not A Gadget* by Jaron Lanier."



MATT WILKINSON

"Meticulous planning for my World Cup Fantasy Football team and continued drooling over the prospect of finally buying an iPhone have consumed my world this week."



HAMISH MACBAIN

"Like all weeks and like all music journos, I've been using all known mediums to show: a) what unique taste in music I have; and b) how witty I am. Better go: Twitter/Facebook/blog won't write itself!"



# THE GASLIGHT ANTHEM

AMERICAN SLANG SIDEONEDUMMY

Brian Fallon's still offering up well-crafted tales of American life – but this time, something's missing



For many people, The Gaslight Anthem were a revelation last summer. Since 'The '59 Sound' edged its way out of the bedrooms of the faithful and into wider consciousness – thanks in no small part to the patronage of Bruce Springsteen – they've been on something of a victory lap, playing the same songs tour after tour as the venues expand appropriately. That album was a happy mongrel, stitched together using outcuts from frontman Brian Fallon's record collection bound up with his ineffable songwriting skills. But its follow-up, 'American Slang', is a very different beast.

That's not to say there aren't any similarities: Alex Rosamilia's twinkling guitar still wraps itself around Fallon's bronzed street poetry like an embrace, with 'Boxer', 'Stay Lucky' and the title track especially garlanded, and Fallon himself still has the same eye for detail that made their 'Señor And The Queen' EP such an emotional bullet back in '08. 'The Diamond Street Church Choir' has the irresistible soul swing of the '50s rock'n'roll that informed '59...' and 'We Did It When We Were Young' pulls the classic trick of being desperately sad and intensely hopeful at the same time.

When Gaslight are in full flight, as they are on much of '...Slang', they feel like the only

band in the world who have ever mattered. Trouble is, Fallon has spoken of 'American Slang' being the first time he's really used his own words to sing more personal stories, and that bold approach has led to a self-consciousness that handicaps the album. It feels like he – and by extension the rest of the band – are holding back slightly on 'The Queen Of Lower Chelsea', which is speckled with tiny moments of wonder rather than beautiful throughout, and the slightly turgid 'Old Haunts'. The Gaslight of old would have made 'The Spirit Of Jazz' sound effortless not laboured, and it's unclear just why the band's supposed new-found confidence in their own collective voice sounds so nervous. It's not like Fallon wants for creativity (check out his acoustic split seven-inch with Chuck Ragan for proof he can chuck out fine songs at will) but that final push that made the last album such a treat is missing.

Slimmed down to a chunky EP, this album would be a surefire to/to – snip a verse, bolt some of the more transcendent choruses to each other, whammo. Such was their impact over the last couple of years it's fair to say Gaslight are a band who have made people's lives immeasurably better simply by existing; 'American Slang' won't change anyone's world and it's unfair to punish it for not, but we just hoped for... more. **Rob Parker**

7

DOWNLOAD: 'American Slang', 'We Did It When We Were Young', 'The Diamond Street Church Choir'

ANDY WILLISHER





# SURFER BLOOD

ASTRO COAST KANINE

*There's a many-hued musical plumage here, but their best song remains their albatross*



Ahhh, The Killer First Tune. The one that so perfectly encapsulates what you're all about that it becomes impossible to follow. Curse of so many flash-in-the-pan bands

past like... nope, sorry, forgotten. Everyone, so the saying goes, has got one great song in them. But two? Or 10? That's more difficult.

Surfer Blood have definitely got The One. Yeah, it is essentially Brian Eno's 'Needles In The Camel's Eye' as performed by Weezer, but turns out this is actually a fabulous idea that no-one else has thought of (plus the lyrics – "Lucid afternoon dream/Cosmopolitan scene" – are magnificently meaningless poetry). 'Swim (To Reach The End)' more than justified the avalanche of hype that followed Surfer Blood at the end of 2009, and here it sticks out like a majestic, reverb-laced sore thumb. They've got plenty of other moves: 'Floating Vibes' is hi-fi Sonic Youth with a nifty J Mascis solo thrown in; 'Take It Easy' is pretty, light, calypso-disco topped with the sweetest of falsettos; two-minute instrumental 'Neighbour Riffs' has the

'Marquee Moon' entwining guitar line thing down pat; 'Catholic Pagans' is a great title, and contains more good-stupid imagery ("I fell apart and combed my hair/Whiskey shakes for two whole days"). In truth, though, it's when they repeat the 'Swim...' trick – big, simple riff, loads of echo on the vocals, as displayed on 'Twin Peaks' and 'Fast Jabroni' – that Surfer Blood are at their most exciting, and when they sound like a band you'd want to get to know better.

All the best debuts are like a slap in the face, and 'Astro Coast' shows a band who have got the slap in them, for sure. Here, though, there are just too many ideas for a first encounter. The good ones are special, no doubt, but a lot of the others are just other people's and lack the stamp of a band who know exactly who they are and what they're about. No-one's suggesting they should have just written 10 'Swim...'s, but the six-minute 'Anchorage', for example, is painfully anonymous.

The great ones, though, should just about see them through. For now.

Hamish MacBain

7

DOWNLOAD: 'Swim', 'Floating Vibes', 'Neighbour Riffs'

## THE CHEMICAL BROTHERS

FURTHER FREESTYLE DUST/  
PARLOPHONE



Seven albums in and Tom Rowlands and Ed Simons might no longer be raving on the most future-facing side of dancefloor, but their way with an effortless arms-in-the-air banger is undisputable. On 'Snow', what sounds like the buzz of a dodgy dial-up modem is layered with sweetly serene lady-vox and 'Horse Power' offers up an awesome kind of intensely sinister Berlin S&M dungeon disco. The hippified swirling of 'Dissolve', however, fails to claw its way into the contemporary canon even with an attempt at an Afro-beat outro while 'Wonders Of The Deep's' high is too self-consciously grandiose. **Leonie Cooper**

7

DOWNLOAD: 'Horse Power'

## KLAK TIK

MUST WE FIND A WINNER SAFETY FIRST



The delightfully named Soren Bonke, formerly of 6 Day Riot, has released an album for which 'delightful' is too faint a signifier of praise. The Copenhagen-born multi-instrumentalist, who is as equally at home playing careworn pianos, fractally clear acoustic guitars and honeyed, battered brass cornets, patently has a rare songwriting talent that simultaneously calls to mind Sufjan Stevens, Simon & Garfunkel, Jim O'Rourke and James Mercer. Like little droplets of sublimity, these 13 tracks are built around chiming, tender and sorrowful melodies. So who has released the orchestral folk album of the year? Some people think it's Bonke's. **John Doran**

9

DOWNLOAD: Literally any track

## MOUNTAIN MAN

MADE THE HARBOR BELLA UNION



Anyone expecting Mountain Man to be a rag-tag bunch of grizzled rockers sporting wispy grey beards and plaid shirts may be disappointed to encounter this trio of decidedly non-hirsute young women from the sparse climes of Vermont. In truth, though, it's those harmonies – as sweet as a descending stream – that allows 'Made The Harbor' to stand out from the growling tones of their competitors. The "twee twee twee" chirping on 'Sewee Sewee' may err on the side of... well, twee, but there's a purity to the gorgeous 'White Heron' and 'Arabella' that serves as a welcome antidote to the pseudo-country ramblings of Fleet Foxes and their ilk. **Ben Hewitt**

6

DOWNLOAD: 'White Heron'

## KEY NOTES

Best sleeve of the week



Blitzen Trapper  
'Destroyer Of The Void'

Yeah, that cow could totally destroy voids.

It could gore whole universes.

Worst sleeve of the week



The Gaslight Anthem  
'American Slang'  
'Achtung Baby' meets Boring Postcards? Great

Best lyric of the week

"I'd see you light a cigarette and then you'd ask me to pass your asthma inhaler"

Allo Darlin', 'My Heart Is A Drummer'

Worst lyric of the week

"I got a lotta automatic booty applications... In fact I'm a very scientifically advanced hot mama"  
Robyn, 'Fembot'

## REVIEWED NEXT WEEK...

Kele 'The Boxer'  
Giggs 'Let Em Ave It'  
Pulled Apart By Horses  
'Pulled Apart By Horses'

## ROWLAND S HOWARD

POP CRIMES INFECTIOUS



Sadly banished to semi-obscurity following The Birthday Party's tumultuous split, history seemed finally to be catching up with Rowland S Howard when he was taken by liver cancer at the end of 2009. Thankfully we'll always have 'Pop Crimes', a brooding piece that sees the post-punk firebrand playing the existential cowboy as beautifully as ever. 'The Golden Age Of Bloodshed' is as menacing as electric tumbleweed, while on the title track Howard's guitar plays shimmering and low. Sour and implacably sexy, it's a distinguished last will and testament from a man who drank deep from the cup of sorrow and savoured every last drop. **Alex Denney**

8

DOWNLOAD: 'The Golden Age Of Bloodshed'

## ROKY ERICKSON WITH OKKERVIL RIVER

TRUE LOVE CAST OUT ALL EVIL  
CHEMICAL UNDERGROUND



Roky Erickson is the comeback king; the ravages of drug abuse or mental illness can't hold him back. After The 13th Floor Elevators and The

Aliens, he's back with his trademark scream (now a cracked croon) with fellow Austinites Okkervil River for some stately country rock. Interspersed with the new songs are field recordings from his spell in the Rusk State Hospital for the criminally insane. A stunning LP that, in a just world, would do for Roky what the 'American Recordings' series did for Johnny Cash. **Nathaniel Cramp**

9

DOWNLOAD: 'Goodbye Sweet Dreams'

## ALLO DARLIN'

ALLO DARLIN' FORTUNA POPI



Australian singer Elizabeth Morris recently quit her job as a waitress in a north London café but before she did she evidently picked up some Kate Nash-ish not-quite-there rhyming habits. For that bravery alone, we really wish that we could get to like this album and its lingering summer innocence/Pipettes-style retro swoons. But even that fails to deter from the fact that, in places, Allo Darlin' sound like The Beautiful South playing for an early '90s Christian book fair in a British seaside resort on the south coast. It's not offensive; it's just way too MOR for us to iPod this beast and drift off into a summer daydream while licking a Mr Whippy. Shame that. **Kelly Murray**

5

DOWNLOAD: 'Kiss Your Lips'

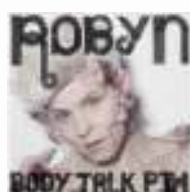




# ROBYN

**BODY TALK PT 1** KONICHIWA/ISLAND

*The Swedish pop siren may be a strong soul, but is best when she spills her heart all over the dancefloor*



Is there a more inspiring pop star on the planet than Robyn? More than a songwriter, she is, to paraphrase Jay-Z, "a business, man", a one-time UNICEF

ambassador who releases records on her own label, Konichiwa. This independence enables her to go at her own pace – this is her first album in five years – and control her image. And, just like Lady Gaga, she's sexy precisely because she's provocatively anti-sexual: one much-used press shot finds her dressed as a cardboard JCB.

She's also managed to make a particular emotion her own: that of being heartbroken on the dancefloor. It makes for suffocatingly great pop, most notably on single 'Dancing On My Own', a comet-trail of sadness and exhilaration that's easily the equal of Robyn's breakthrough hit, 'With Every Heartbeat'.

There's nothing else on here quite that good. While Robyn excels at playing the spurned

lover, she has another mode, that of the bragging, Missy Elliott-style maneater. It feels less authentic, especially on 'Dancefloor Queen', a misfiring collaboration with Diplo that features the least convincing patois this side of a George Lamb radio show.

She's on more solid ground when exploring the metaphysics of the dancefloor, as on 'None Of Dem', which finds her prowling a hometown club, caged and frustrated, hungry for escape ("None of these drugs get me high. none of these basslines fill the room"). It's a feeling that has inspired songwriters since pop's Year Zero, and Robyn totally nails it.

Robyn plans to release two more albums this year. This first instalment is impressive, but thin at eight tracks. Would it not have been better to hold back, and release just one, truly stunning record? **Luke Lewis**

**DOWNLOAD: 'Dancing On My Own', 'Fembot', 'None Of Dem'**  
**Read Robyn's pop songwriting masterclass at [NME.COM/blogs](http://NME.COM/blogs)**

## BLITZEN TRAPPER

**DESTROYER OF THE VOID** SUB POP

Over five albums, Blitzen Trapper have become darlings of America's coolest town (Portland) and its hippest record label (Sub Pop). All the more impressive when you consider that theirs is a mystic world somewhere between a *Dungeons And Dragons* RPG and a Shins LP. This fifth set (their second since breaking out) pushes the city limits of their fantasy world even wider and masks an uncomfortable truth. They're infinitely more compelling when they up the prog'n'goblins weirdosity at the record's front end. As lovely as the back half might be, there's a sense that it could have been made by anyone. **Dan Martin**

**DOWNLOAD: 'Laughing Lover'**

## DELOREAN

**SUBIZA** TRUE PANTHER SOUNDS

Will Lee Evans ever get funny? And will cheesy house music ever become properly credible? Eternal questions, but Spain's Delorean resolutely answer the last. With one foot in Manumission and the other in Delphic, they do for mainstream chav-dance what New Order did for Krautrock in the '80s – hook its bouncy electronic pianos and soul singer loops to undeniably uplifting pop tunes with an echo-chamber elegance. They're called wankery chill-out names like 'Endless Sunset' and 'Infinite Desert' but are elevated above their base genre and boring titles by the general air of Animal Collective-gone-raving-down-Pacha. Almost – almost – enough to get us on a podium. **Mark Beaumont**

**DOWNLOAD: 'Stay Close'**

**THE RIDER**  
*What we're reading, watching and scamming*



**DVD**  
**The Rolling Stones: Stones In Exile**  
Doc covering the band's halcyon days as tax exiles in the south of France and tracing the creation of their seminal 'Exile On Main St'.



**T-shirt**  
**The 'music' tee**  
Celebrating album art, this new T-shirt comes with a download code, bespoke artwork and tracklist. Artists include Amanda Blank and Devendra Banhart.



This Official England mi-football iPod dock has three speakers and a subwoofer to deliver up to 23 watts of sound. We've got five to give away at [NME.COM/win](http://NME.COM/win).



## EVERYTHING EVERYTHING

**SCHOOLIN' GEFEN**  
When this track opens, it makes you feel like you're in the jungle. The song sounds like it was recorded in someone's bedroom and the chorus is unusual as well. It could be a big summer tune, like Paul Simon's 'You Can Call Me Al' or something. There's not enough of the whistling bird, though – we like the whistling bird. And the big mixed-up mish-mash bish-bash-bosh guitar section. It almost feels like a few different songs on first listen. After someone's had a few beers and a spill it's probably good fun. Is this what the miaow miaow generation is creating?

## TURBOFRUITS

**GET UP GET DOWN (TONITE)** ARK  
This sounds like it's from the same school as The Strange Boys – it has a fun, indie Velvet Underground-y vibe. This song has nice skiffly drums and "ooohs". You really wanna dance to it and it makes you feel like a teenager. Turbofruits are probably cool dudes. It sounds like old rock'n'roll – nice guitar solo! Hopefully they have quiffs and those shoes with the big heels.

## MITCHELL MUSEUM

**WARNING BELLS**  
**ELECTRA FRENCH**  
This has a lovely video to go with it, with lots of really nice images that link up with the lyrics. I really wish I was in all of those films. The song itself is probably good for playing at festivals when the sun is going down.

## FUNERAL PARTY

**NYC MOVES TO THE SOUND OF LA**  
I don't think this sounds like either New York or Los Angeles. The vocal reminds me of an old Bolt Action Five song that I liked a lot better. The video reminds me of *Vice* magazine, but the cowbell's pretty good. Altogether though it sounds exactly like another song that I can't quite seem to remember...

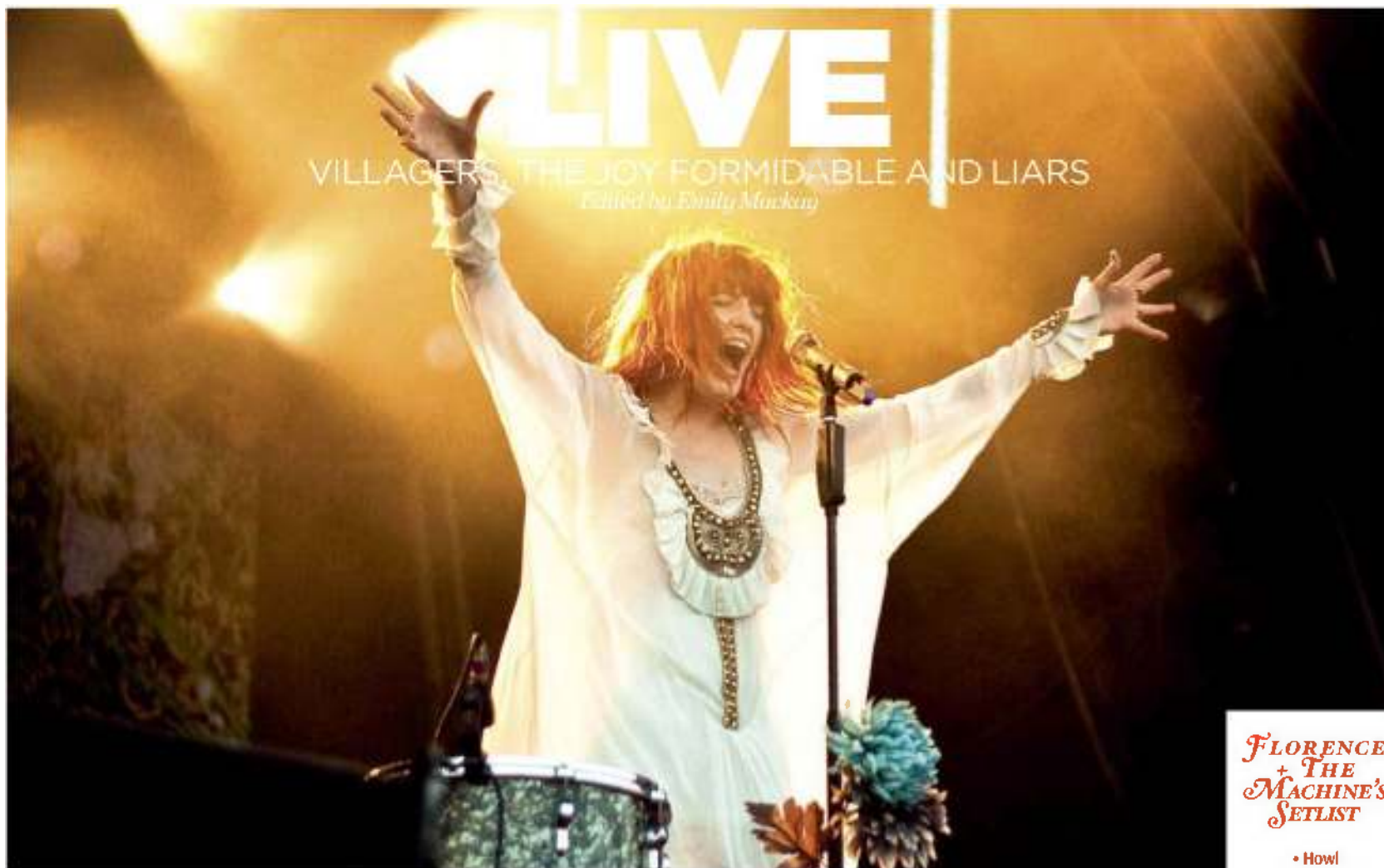
## EXAMPLE

**KICKSTARTS DATA**  
**example** A typically terrible intro. I think that when the crowds in Ibiza hear it they will hold up their 'fuckin' tune' signs. It seems like a more serious direction for Example – I would imagine the ravers and pillheads will love it. My tour manager prefers his old stuff. This is for MGMT fans who also like Cascada.

## KELE

**TENDERONI** WICHITA  
Following on from the new direction that Bloc Party have taken, Kele has ditched the Okereke and is continuing with a more dance/dark electro theme for his new project. Mixing samples, beats and interesting vocal sounds with a Daft Punk-esque video, I'm sure it'll be a cracker in the clubs. Good luck to him!





# PRIMAVERA SOUND

**PARC DEL FORUM, BARCELONA, SPAIN** THURSDAY, MAY 27 – SATURDAY, MAY 29

*A touch of sun, sea, slickness and skinny people dancing in the Spanish plains makes for a suitably stirring start to the summer festival season*

**D**ecamping to a foreign festival might be common practice now, but even so, it's impressive to see how many Brits have made the trip to Spain's Primavera Sound. The remarkable line-up – added to the crowd-pleasing factors of sun, sea, Pixies-themed sandwiches and the proximity of whopping great jugs of Sangria Blanca – might go some way to explaining why half of Hackney has upped sticks to the concrete'n'grass Med-side site for the weekend.

As well as hosting yet another **Pavement** reunion show – a slick, no-buggering-about

hits package which sees them joined by Broken Social Scene's Kevin Drew during a gleaming 'Kennel District' – the 10th edition of Primavera also boasts a slightly more specialist reformation from riot-toddler Glaswegians, **Bis**. "I see so many people that I know... it's very strange," gasps Manda Rin at familiar faces in the pogoing crowd after yelping her way through opener 'Burn The Suit'. Performing as a beefed-up five piece, the Teen-C tearaways aren't quite so incredible that they make us think the indie world has been bereft since their

split in 2003, but it is rather satisfying to bounce around to the glitter-scuzz thrills of 'Kandy Pop'.

Weaving the Weezer racket of 'Twin Peaks' with the sound of Interpol buying floral corsages and hitting the prom in 'Harmonix', **Surfer Blood's** live show seems to be getting slicker and slicker. Even so, when it comes to a glossy gig, **The xx** are the ones who really have it nailed. Their stunning self-assurance is particularly impressive considering that when they were playing this time last year, they looked so damn terrified you'd feel guilty simply for watching them and being somehow complicit in their agony. Now though Oliver Sim pulls out heroic rock moves against their doomy, swoony red and purple light show, his skinny frame cutting through the beams like cheese wire during a gorgeous 'Night Time'

while Romy Madley Croft's black painted fingernails tap confidently up the neck of her guitar. Their thick, velvety noise is echoed later in the evening as **Wild Beasts'** sumptuous sound proves just as ripe for sinking your teeth into. Playing in near-darkness, sporadically lit by Spartan camera flashes, the thudding romanticism of 'All The King's Men' should be packed up in brown paper and string and sent to Editors' gaff accompanied by a note saying 'This is how you bloody well do it, chaps'. As dry ice envelops their feet and girls spin in endless circles at the back of the arena, an arms-in-the-air 'Hooting & Howling' suddenly transports us to a late-'80s Hacienda. Outstanding.

Resembling a mid-'90s Evan Dando if he'd held back on the regular trims, **Ganglians'** frontman Ryan Grubbs

## FLORENCE + THE MACHINE'S SETLIST

- Howl
- My Boy Builds Coffins
- Between Two Lungs
- Drumming Song
- Cosmic Love
- Strangeness And Charm
- You've Got The Love
- Dog Days Are Over
- Kiss With A Fist
- Rabbit Heart (Raise It Up)

***Florence's white witch vibes come to a glorious head on 'Cosmic Love'***





Clockwise from top: Ah, it's good to get away to Spain, away from all the usual faces - oh, hang on; Bis' Manda Rin prepares to party like it's 1995; No Age sing something, not that we can make any of it out due to the excessive volume

swings his dirty blond locks along with his band's whirling, swirling fuzz-bucket psych. It's out-hippified in an instant however, by sisters in ultra-kook, **CocoRosie**. Wafting around in a white robe that even Stevie Nicks would pass on thanks to it being a little OTT, Sierra Casady and her equally self-consciously wacky sibling Bianca are so ashamedly new age that you wouldn't be surprised if their merch stall sold nothing but healing crystals.

**Florence + The Machine** continue the trend for floaty white floor-length numbers, with Flo in a diaphanous gown resembling that famous shot of a young Princess Di rocking a see-through skirt. Backlit by pink light, her white witch vibes come to a glorious head on the rave-Enya stomp of 'Cosmic Love'. Dashing across the stage, her imperious vocals never faltering, new number 'Strangeness And Charm' shows off a siren-scatting chorus, a little well-timed shrieking and a barmy 'Babooshka' wiggle.

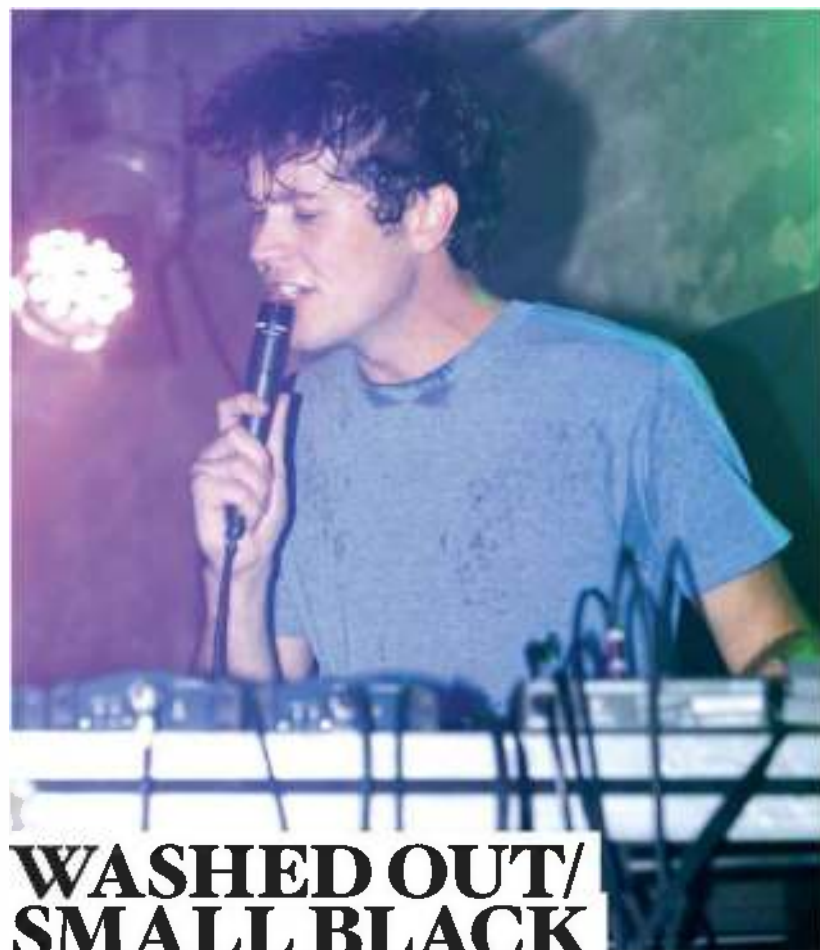
**The Drums'** first appearance in Spain is let down by shonky sound, possibly something to do with No Age nixing all the volume on site and using it for their own ends. It's near-impossible to make out anything in the squalling but charming mess. It goes down a treat with the asbestos-eared punters however, with more of them up for No Age's good-natured racket than they are **The Charlatans** belting out the indie disco anthem 'The Only One I Know'.

### BIG MOUTH The noise from the crowd



**Victoria Gardener, Oxfordshire**  
"I'd just lost my job that week, and my friend Lucy rang me to say she had free tickets! I'm really looking forward to Pixies and Lee 'Scratch' Perry later on. I'm also enjoying wearing flip-flops at night - it wouldn't ever happen in London, would it?"

"You are fantastic!" announces Neil Tennant to the beaming audience, during a triumphant **Pet Shop Boys** finale. They should know, what with being pretty damn fantastico themselves, even if it's impossible to listen to their 1986 chart-topper 'West End Girls' without the Flight Of The Conchords' 'Inner City Pressure' spoof ringing in your head. As the sky rains glitter during a bombastic 'It's A Sin', Primavera has thrown down the festival gauntlet with winning grace.  
**Leonie Cooper**



## WASHED OUT/ SMALL BLACK

STEREO, GLASGOW

FRIDAY, MAY 28

*Dance your heart out while you still can, chill-wave may not be around forever*

There's something so innately hateable about chill-wave, you almost feel sorry for the bands who are unlucky enough to be making it. Propagated by bet-hedging bloggers who, like **Ouroboros** eating its own post-post-ironic tail, are no longer able to tell their up from their down, their left from right, their achingly hip from epic fail. You'd be forgiven for wondering whether or not anybody actually likes it, or if it's just a flaming turd in a brown paper bag, laid at the mainstream's doorstep by the blogosphere.

Consequently, only about half of Glasgow's usual gigeratti are here tonight; the other half, presumably, sit on the LOLZ side of the fence.

The bands themselves, meanwhile, just have to tough it out. **Small Black** are a Brooklyn four-piece who make shoestring-budgeted dream-pop that gets people dancing in the awkward, disjointed way that white-skinned indie types are prone to whenever there's a bassline nearby. Live, the sound is a lot meatier than the sun-bleached whimsy of their EP: 'Despicable Dogs' and 'Lady In The Wires' both have an added presence and urgency that isn't there on record, and slices through the cloud of indie-ambience they occasionally get lost in.

Later on, **Ernest Greene** - aka **Washed Out** - seems somewhat embarrassed by his current status as chill-wave's poster boy; hidden away in a remote corner of the stage, obscured by smoke machines and synthesizers, we have to strain our eyes just to catch glimpses of bobbing around in the darkness. If we're honest, this makes the first half of his set a little underwhelming - it's basically just a tall American shadow, echoing unidentifiable vowels at you over a tastefully lo-fi wash of sound.

Things improve immeasurably when **Small Black** return to the stage to back him for the second half, giving the glacial '80s shimmer-pop of 'New Theory' an almost-celebratory edge and adding a bit of backbone to the woozy, dreamlike 'You'll See It'. They also bring Greene out from behind his laptop, and you wonder why they didn't just pool together from the start; by the closing notes of 'Feel It All Around', there's a hedonistic party vibe that was sadly absent from the aloofness that marked the first 20 minutes.

It seems that the scene's bands don't know whether to embrace chill-wave or be embarrassed by it. They can console themselves that soon it probably won't exist anymore. Hopefully they'll be around for a little bit longer than that.  
**Barry Nicolson**



NME ICONS

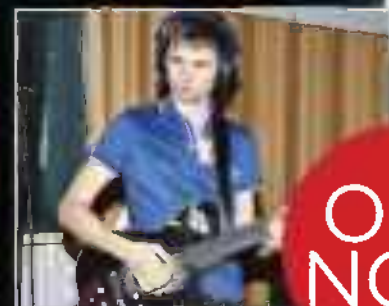
SPECIAL COLLECTORS' MAGAZINE

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## THE JOY FORMIDABLE

**SPRING & AIRBRAKE, BELFAST SAT, MAY 29**

*Influences firmly on sleeves, the London/Welsh trio prepare us for greatness to come*

Shuffling onstage amid a wall of ear-buggering feedback, London/Welsh trio The Joy Formidable roll up their metaphorical sleeves and get straight down to slicing out huge slabs of suicide rock just like they used to make in the '90s. Yeah, their sound borrows heavily

And while they've yet to unleash their debut offering proper (that'll be happening later on in the year we're reliably told), a respectable smattering of the crowd sing along to EVERY word of EVERY song as the pit heroes at the front throw the kind of mad

shapes you'd expect at a party round Leatherface's gaff. 'Austere' in particular (culled from their mini-album 'A Balloon Called Moaning')

*'Austere' boasts a sugar-sweet melody with a riff fuzzier than a goat's bum*

from Veruca Salt and the Juliana Hatfield Three's songbook (and true to such Yank leanings, they're currently causing a buzz stateside), but the pure power-pop suss of 'Cradle' and crowd favourite 'Popinjay' ensures that there's more to them than furious riffs and a frontlady who looks a little bit like (whisper it) Kim Gordon in her youth.

is a portent for the greatness to come and it boasts a sugar-sweet melody coupled with a riff fuzzier than a billy-goat's bum. If Ritzy Bryan and co can make a record full of songs as good as that, then surely superstardom beckons. Either way, as it stands right now, we're mad about the Joy. **Edwin McFee**

**WHITE HINTERLAND**  
**THE HARLEY, SHEFFIELD**  
WEDNESDAY, MAY 26

**A**s reinventions in indie music go, Casey Dienel's is one of the more intriguing. Her transition from jazz-folk chanteuse to loop pedal-wielding electro-vixen isn't a total shock given the increasingly digital trajectory her White Hinterland project has followed since 2008's 'Phylactery Factory'. But latest record 'Kairos' live treatment leaves behind the lush, organic orchestration and classical inflections of her solo material in favour of dreamy electronica and propulsive laptop beats. Standout track 'Icarus' is a reminder that synthetic doesn't have to equal soulless and that, sometimes, blog buzz is to be believed. **Rob Webb**

**THE CHARLATANS**  
**ROUNDHOUSE, LONDON**  
MONDAY, MAY 31

**F**or a group deemed a superficial, flash-in-the-pan haircut band on the release of their debut album in 1990, playing the whole of 'Some Friendly' on its 20th anniversary is one way to stick it to your critics. Even better is singer Tim Burgess' unintentional riposte of using all fully functioning follicles to grow back his baggy mop-top for the occasion. As expected, 6,000 pints are lobbed at the first chord of career classic 'The Only One I Know', but it's early club gig favourite 'Polar Bear' and the stream of brilliant B-sides and rarities that are really worth dusting off. Still dead dead good. **Matt Warwick**



## VILLAGERS

**BUSH HALL, LONDON WEDNESDAY, JUNE 2**

*Fuzz, feedback, fire and brimstone all come together as one for a warm carnival of noise*

Bush Hall is the perfect venue tonight. A red curtain atop a red velvet stage gives the air of a vaudeville revue or a travelling show. Convex mirrors in elaborate frames segment the room, showing a version of the crowd that doesn't quite fit reality. The interior sets up a space, a crack between fact and imagination.

Conor O'Brien arrives upon the stage. His young face belies the flecks of grey in his hair, and his jaunty step will soon shift. Opening with 'The Meaning Of Ritual', O'Brien transforms. His aspect becomes that of a ringmaster, or a fire-and-brimstone preacher. As the line "What is this peculiar word called truth?" resonates around the room, fiction and fact are blurred. His face contorts as he wails out the high notes, trying to find a truth to grasp.

O'Brien oscillates between snake-oil salesman and troubadour. Recent single 'Becoming A Jackal' elicits whoops from the Jools-watching crowd. With backing from his house band, what was beautiful as bare-bones becomes mesmerising when fleshed out. 'Pieces' is introduced

with "This is a song about, erm, my feelings." The word 'feelings' is a bit of an understatement. Singing softly O'Brien intones that "For a long long time, I've been in pieces/In the corner of a room/In an endless afternoon". His plaintive falsetto sounds alternately strong and as if, given

a mean look, it'd fall apart. In the end, it does, but not in the way anyone was expecting. The song descends into fuzz and feedback, as O'Brien howls, lupine.

'To Be Counted Among Men' is a startling change of tone. The band exit the stage, leaving O'Brien solo. Over slightly strummed guitar, he sings a parable of Ancient Greece, and of salvation. A swift encore wields 'On A Sunlit Stage'. Gently casting aside the snake-oil, troubadour and ringmaster O'Brien croons of a carnival, lulling the audience into calmness, before warning that "You're surrounded by hungry scavengers/Who take the greatest care to befriend you first". It's to his eternal credit, and to our delight, that neither artist nor audience can tell who is the scavenger and who is the victim. Either way, it's magical. **Ailbhe Malone**

**BIG MOUTH**  
*The noise from the crowd*



**Theo Carter-Webber**

"I haven't travelled far, I come from just over the road! I'd give the band an 8.5 out of 10 today... actually, make that a nine! My friend introduced me to them. I'd also seen them on Later... With Jools Holland. The sound was so much fuller tonight."



# ON THE ROAD WITH LIARS

*We join LA's ever-evolving Sisterworld for two days and nights of rock'n'roll mayhem, political anger... and a nice spot of gardening*

## DOT TO DOT FESTIVAL, NOTTINGHAM

SUNDAY, MAY 30

"So NME, man – it never gets very political, does it? It kind of avoids that stuff..." You join us in an old sports hall at Nottingham Trent uni, which today doubles as backstage. It's five minutes into our time with LA's Liars and the tables are already being turned. Singer/howler Angus Andrew seems far more comfortable posing his own questions than answering ours, but given that a) they've arrived less than an hour before showtime, b) are looking stressed and c) that he's the height of your average mountain, we're happy just to reassure him that yes, it does (with reference to the recent *On The Road: Election Special* feature) and worry about our brief later. Unprompted, he continues: "Poor old Obama. He branded himself as someone who was going to make a good change, but nothing's really occurred."

Liars are a band who know all about change; with each of their five records to date they've strived to reinvent their sound with Radiohead-esque levels of (artistic) success. Latest set 'Sisterworld' is arguably their most direct and confrontational – a terrifying amalgam of modern-day paranoia, righteous fury and good old-fashioned punk rock filtered through their feverishly skewed collective imagination. The central concept is about escapism, a personal coping mechanism for the times we live in... but coping with what? The government? Are Liars – *whisper it* – a political animal?

"It's definitely more a sociological thing," says Angus. "Not a political one. Our second record was political ['They Were Wrong, So We Drowned'], but nobody really picked up on that."

"My feelings on politics: it seems all very exhausting and hopeless," offers softly spoken guitarist/electronics wizard Aaron Hemphill. "We do write about issues, and if people care about them and it has a direct political effect then that's amazing, but it's not up to us if our band is politically effective – it's down to the listener."

Hemphill is the thoughtful foil to Philippines-born, Australian-bred Andrew's brash self-confidence, and though the pair seldom address one another directly, the mutual respect and understanding between them is obvious. Drummer Julian Gross?



Well, he's mad as a bag of spanners – but also the midpoint between the two: manic yet measured, and a conduit between instinct and intellect. Key quote: "I just don't understand the Royal Family. I mean, what do they do?"

The three troop off stagewards, and we disappear for a quick pre-set smoke. Angus soon joins us, and we're surprised to learn he's feeling rather nervous – he apparently does before every show.

Ten minutes later, the initially static crowd have been floored by the band's ferocious opening salvo of latest single 'The Overachievers' followed by 'Plaster Casts Of Everything', and Andrew appears to have overcome said nerves to metamorphose into the stage-straddling rock behemoth now standing before us, mic stand in front of the monitors, gyrating like a young Iggy Pop. We later learn his advances are mostly pragmatic – said monitors are "terrible". Despite his protestations and the apparent technical difficulties, the set is a triumph, with rapacious closer 'Proud Evolution' harbouring more menace in its five-minute tenure than many bands muster in a career. "You should be careful/ You should be careful", chants Angus as it reaches a frenetic climax. Noted.

## DOT TO DOT FESTIVAL, MANCHESTER

MONDAY, MAY 31

We hook up with the band the following afternoon in the car park of Manchester's Academy venue to find Liars feeling "not bad". We sense pre-set nerves, and they seem unhappy about the cattle market-esque conditions in the venue's backstage area – in particular, sharing a dressing room with Los Campesinos! ("I mean, what the fuck is that?" remarks Angus). They're amenable, though, and we learn that last night's post-gig wind-down involved "shenanigans in the arboretum" (surely the next album title?) and Julian's attempts to woo Beach House singer Victoria Legrand – NME's suggestion that romance might be in the air leaves the drummer at first laughing, then coughing and spluttering. No comment? This morning they recorded a BBC session

with Marc Riley, who, of course played guitar in one of Aaron's favourite bands: The Fall.

Another fact you might not know about Liars: they're all massively into gardening. Yup, gardening. "For real, it's one Sisterworld we all have in common. One of the best things about living in L.A is being able to have a garden," enthuses Angus. Julian concurs: "Just even keeping your yard together is nice – I like watering." Aaron, meanwhile, is a fan of the succulent plant.

As if to prove their point, tonight's set includes a rare airing of first album track 'The Garden Was Crowded And Outside', as well as 'We Fenced Other Gardens With The Bones Of Our Own' from 'They Were Wrong, So We Drowned'. Both slower and more groove-based than what we heard last night, they're a reminder that when Liars do weird, they're *really* weird. Still, Angus' pre-show assertion that they'd be keeping things a little mellower tonight is less than true: this crowd are much more into it and, the big hitters from 'Sisterworld' properly go off.

'Scissor' cuts the crowd in two – bodies hit the floor as soon as the first of its ridiculously muscular riffs kicks in; 'Scarecrows On A Killer Slant', meanwhile, is akin to a nightmare where Jim Morrison drills a hole in your skull and lets an army of hornets loose.

Afterwards we rendezvous with Angus – the tour's over now, and it's time to relax... for a few seconds, at least. They've an early flight home, and the van's ready to roll. Still, we're intrigued as to why he introduced 'Proud Evolution' with "I'm talking about British Petroleum oil" – aside from the obvious reference to their role in the recent disaster off the Gulf of Mexico. "It would be good to figure out a way to do something with BP," suggests the vocalist. Something? "To destroy them! Do you guys know where their headquarters are?"

Liars, then: despite their protestations, not so much a band as a political and social revolution waiting to happen. **Rob Webb**

## VIEW FROM THE CREW



**Chris Laszlo-Koltay, Sound Engineer**

**What's it like working for Liars?**

"It's easy! If it sounds good onstage, it's easy to make it sound good out front. I'm a fan of the band. Their records are the sort that could still sound great in 20 years' time."





Sunday, 9pm, Nottingham

"Hey guys, if we get a few beers like this one down us it's probably going to be the best gig in the world!"



Sunday, 7pm, Nottingham  
Hmmm...we feel this T-shirt could make the name of the band a wee bit clearer



Sunday, 7.30pm, Nottingham

OK guys, like, CALM DOWN will you? They'll be on shortly. .



Sunday, 7pm, Nottingham

"Hey, imagine if we had to share a dressing room? That'll never happen obviously...."



Sunday, 7.30pm, Nottingham  
Aaron is sure this is where he last saw his drumkit



Sunday, 7.50pm, Nottingham  
Rock man mountain Angus in full effect



Monday, 6.30pm, Manchester

When it comes to directions, Angus just basically goes the way his hat happens to be pointing at that particular moment in time



Monday, 6.35pm, Manchester  
Deep within that grizzled exterior beats the heart of a true romantic...



Sunday, 8pm, Nottingham

"Who am I here to see? Los Campesinos! and....no, can't think of anyone else at the moment. Sorry."



Monday, 8.45pm, Manchester

If Angus was looking for a cuddle, he certainly came to the right place tonight...



Monday, 8.30pm, Manchester

The eerie purple glow of the Sisterworld bathes the Academy

Monday, 8.15pm, Manchester  
Altogether now, "I bought a house with you/And settled down WITH CATS!"



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# BAND AID

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



## THE PENNY DROPS

I manage a small local band but I have no idea how to get real gigs. All I do is pester people until they give us gigs. It's insane!

**Ian Coult, Blue Monday Promotions, Shrewsbury**

Ian, firstly, I want to thank you for writing to my advice page in what must be a difficult time for you. But really, you have to be ruddy joking! You say, "all I do is pester people for gigs" as if it's a grotesque misuse of your working day when it's THE ONE AND ONLY THING YOU SHOULD BE DOING. You're the manager of an evidently underwhelming band, it's what you do. **Uncle Pete**

## SHOULD I XL MY ARSE?

Fellow band members say I have no arse and that I should work on plumping up the pillows of my deflated cheeks. Will this enhance my already-considerable sex appeal?

**Hal, FuSe, London**

You're fine as you are, Hal. I don't mean this in a "you go, girlfriend, high five!"-kind of way, but you need to know that if you want to increase your arse size, you're going to have to go to the gym. And rock stars do not go to the gym. Nope, you start messing around with your arse, and before you're know it, you're Rod Stewart and shag models. **Uncle Pete**

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**We're Not Them, Wolverhampton**

So you sound like Slade? Well, there are worse bands to sound like, although none spring to mind. Just start referring to yourselves as "the new Slade". Since music journalists don't like being told what to do, they will start distancing you from them. They'll do this by repeatedly stating you're nowhere near as good as Slade, but you can't make an omelette and all that. **Uncle Pete**

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

# BAND SERVICES

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All-female rock band looking for a fearless frontperson with shit loads of attitude and a lead guitarist who makes Jimmy Page look sloppy! Must be hungry, committed & driven. Absolutely no older than 23yrs of age. Email info, photo and/or video footage to [fran@sleeperounds.com](mailto:fran@sleeperounds.com)

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# GIG GUIDE

THE UK'S BIGGEST GUIDE TO THE WEEK AHEAD

*Edited by Ash Dosanjh*

## BOOKING NOW



### GORILLAZ

**STARTS:** Birmingham NIA, Sept 10

DON'T MISS

Despite recent rumblings of activity from within the Blur camp, Damon Albarn is thankfully still finding time to take his other project on the road. Following the sell-out dates at London's Roundhouse in April which saw ex-Clash members Mick Jones and Paul Simonon join Murdoc, Noodle et al, September sees the cartoon band set out on a UK and Irish arena tour in support of brilliant third album 'Plastic Beach'. While guests haven't yet been announced, the album itself has an impressive roll-call of artists including Kano, Mark E. Smith and Lou Reed lining up to collaborate, so you can bet that there's going to be a few surprises along the way. [NME.COM/artists/gorillaz](http://NME.COM/artists/gorillaz)



### THE BLACK KEYS

**STARTS:** London

**Roundhouse, 23 June**

The blues-rockers come laden with material from new album 'Brothers'.

[NME.COM/artists/black-keys](http://NME.COM/artists/black-keys)



### FUCKED UP

**STARTS:** Cardiff Barfly, July 15

The hardcore outfit find time out of the studio for a handful of UK gigs.

[NME.COM/artists/fucked-up](http://NME.COM/artists/fucked-up)



### EELS

**STARTS:** Glasgow o2 Academy, Aug 24

'E' and his band announce a UK tour to coincide with new album 'Tomorrow Morning'.

[NME.COM/artists/eels](http://NME.COM/artists/eels)



### THE WALKMEN

**STARTS:** London

**Islington Academy, Aug 25**

NYC band return after a run of festival shows.

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



### ZOLA JESUS

**STARTS:** London CAMP, Sept 1

Her 'Stridulum EP' is one of the year's most exciting releases. These live dates promise much.

[NME.COM/artists/zola-jesus](http://NME.COM/artists/zola-jesus)



### LITTLE DRAGON

**STARTS:** London Koko, Sept 23

Fresh from appearing on the new Gorillaz album, the quirky Swedes drop by for a fresh run of gigs.

[NME.COM/artists/little-dragon](http://NME.COM/artists/little-dragon)



### GRINDERMAN

**STARTS:** Nottingham Rock City, Sept 25

Nick Cave's 'other band' return to promote their second, sleazy offering 'Grinderman 2'.

[NME.COM/artists/grinderman](http://NME.COM/artists/grinderman)



### WARPAINT

**STARTS:** London Scala, Oct 28

See what the buzz is about when the art-rockers from L.A. return to these shores.

[NME.COM/artists/warpaint](http://NME.COM/artists/warpaint)



### OMD

**STARTS:** Brighton Dome, Oct 29

It's been 14 years since the maudlin synth pioneers have released an album. Due out later this year, 'History Of Modern' is supported by a full UK tour.

[NME.COM/artists/omd](http://NME.COM/artists/omd)



### PARAMORE

**STARTS:** Liverpool Echo Arena, Nov 10

The US pop-punkers set out to prove why they're so damn popular in their homeland with a suitably large arena tour over on our fair isle.

[NME.COM/artists/paramore](http://NME.COM/artists/paramore)



### PRIMAL SCREAM

**STARTS:** London Olympia, Nov 26

Bobby Gillespie and co perform their seminal 1991 album 'Screamadelica' in its entirety on two very special London dates.

[NME.COM/artists/primal-scream](http://NME.COM/artists/primal-scream)



### BLACK REBEL MOTORCYCLE CLUB

**STARTS:** Portsmouth Pyramids Centre, Dec 2

The band play shows to promote sixth album 'Beat The Devil's Tattoo'.

[NME.COM/artists/black-rebel-motorcycle-club](http://NME.COM/artists/black-rebel-motorcycle-club)

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# PICK of the WEEK

What to see this week? Let us help



## KELE OKEREKE

STARTS: Sheffield Plug (Friday)

NME  
PICK

Even if the signs were there in the barely concealed digital impulses of 'Flux' and beyond, the decision for Bloc Party's Kele Okereke to drop the sombre posturing and go, well, dance, still feels brave. The imminent release of his solo offering 'The Boxer' will prove whether that bravery has paid off, but with lead single 'Tenderoni' suggesting that it's going to be one for the big rooms with a rubbery electro-house bassline and large, brash keys that wouldn't have been out of place on Wiley's 'Wearing My Rolex', the signs look promising. What this means for Bloc Party is unclear, but it sure as hell feels like Kele is having fun. Suits him.

[NME.COM/artists/kele-okereke](http://NME.COM/artists/kele-okereke)



### Everyone's Talking About ARIEL PINK'S HAUNTED GRAFFITI

STARTS: Brighton Freebutt (Thursday)

With the explosion of glo-fi, its spiritual forefather is finally being recognised as the groundbreaking artist we knew he was. Latest album 'Before Today' is his most accessible yet without losing the off-balance charm that marked him out as such a key inspiration.

[NME.COM/artists/ariel-pink](http://NME.COM/artists/ariel-pink)



### Don't Miss NEW YOUNG PONY CLUB

STARTS: London Dingwalls (Thurs)

New Young Pony Club have shaken off the new rave associations, returning with an icy slab of new wave-inspired pop on second album 'The Optimist'. Joining them live are Hurts, whose arching synth choruses play off against their granite-cold aesthetic. A perfect match.

[NME.COM/artists/new-young-pony-club](http://NME.COM/artists/new-young-pony-club)



### Radar Stars STARKEY

STARTS: London Corsica Studios (Saturday)

Anyone who's been following the cross-pollination of US and UK club music over the last few years will be familiar with Starkey's outsider take on dubstep. This is his first live set in three years and a rare opportunity to catch tracks from new album 'Ear Drums And Black Holes' in their natural environment.

[NME.COM/newmusic](http://NME.COM/newmusic)

### GIG GUIDE KEY:

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

# WEDNESDAY

June 9

NME  
RADIO

Join Sarah Kerr for breakfast as she serves up the hottest new music and a little bit of celebrity trash too, from 7am

#### ASCOT

Aron Romhanyl Trio Jagz At The Station 01344 876006

#### BATH

The Good Gods/Golden Slumbers Moles 01225 404445

#### BELFAST

Duke Special Waterfront 028 9033 4455

Villagers Auntie Annie's 028 9050 1660

#### BIRMINGHAM

The Black Atlantic Hare And Hounds 0121 444 2081

Jay-Z LG Arena 0121 780 4133

Pete Roe/Peplino Glee Club 0870 241 5093

#### BRIGHTON

Ana Silvera Latest Music Bar 01273 687 171

Male Bonding/Pens/Cold Pumas New Hero 01273 747203

The Strange Death Of Liberal England Freebutt 01273 603974

#### BRISTOL

Daylight Fireworks Louisiana 0117 926 5978

Less Than Me/Natural Tendency/Social Flatline Croft 0117 987 4144

#### CAMBRIDGE

Th' Parish/The Good News Portland Arms 01223 357268

#### CARDIFF

Chew Lips Arts Institute 0871 230 1094

The Drift Benders The Globe 07738 983947

Glissando/Fred Jones Buffalo Bar 02920 310312

Jonah Matranga Barfly 029 2066 7658

Steve Harley St David's Hall 029 2087 8444

#### CHELMSFORD

Nexus Six/Thieves Of Time/Apollo's Allies Barhouse 01245 356811

#### COLCHESTER

Triggaboo/Snatch And Grab The Twist 01206 562 453

#### COVENTRY

Rue Royale/Kristy Gallacher Tin Angel 07970 176881

#### DUBLIN

Ann Scott Whelan's 00 3531 475 9372

#### EDINBURGH

Willie Nelson Playhouse 0131 557 2590

#### GLASGOW

Chris Brown O2 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA

Codeine O2 ABC2 0141 204 5151

Mitchell Museum Nice'n'Sleazy 0141 333 9637

Suzerain/Catcher King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279

Taylor Hawkins And The Coattail Riders Stereo 0141 576 5018

#### GUILDFORD

No Consequence Boilerroom 01483 440022

#### HAMPTON COURT

Gipsy Kings Hampton Court Palace Festival 0871 230 1094

#### NULL

Extra Life Adelphi 01482 348216

#### LEEDS

I Am Kloot Brudenell Social Club 0113 243 5866

The Miserable Rich The Library 0113 2440794

#### LEICESTER

Annabelle Chwostek/Eddie Chapman Musician 0116 251 0080

#### LONDON

Anni B Sweet Bull & Gate 020 7485 5358

Band Of Horses Roundhouse 020 7482 7318

Bice & The Bos Monkey Chews 020 7267 6406

Billy Ocean Indigo @ The O2 Arena 0870 701 4444

Charles Hayward Cafe Oto 0871 230 1094

Company of Thieves/Civil Twilight Monto Water Rats 020 7837 4412

Crowded House Apollo 0870 606 3400

The Dogbones Luminaire 020 7372 7123

The Drums Heaven 020 7930 2020

Ellie Goulding/Leah Mason 02 Shepherds Bush Empire 0870 771 2000

Eugene McGuinness/The Lizards The Lexington 020 7837 5387

The Flatliners/Ok Pilot Underworld 020 7482 1932

#### Gang Of Four ICA

020 7930 3647

Insect Guide Underbelly 0207 613 3105

In Case Of Fire O2 Bar Academy 0870 771 2000

Jamalca/States Of Emotion Barfly 0870 907 0999

James Yull/Hoxton Square Bar & Kitchen 020 7613 0709

Kamila Thompson 12 Bar Club 020 7240 2622

Kirsty Almelda Cargo 020 7749 7840

Larsen B/Troubadour Rose The Wilmington Arms 020 7837 1384

The Lost Left Slaughtered Lamb 020 8682 4080

Love Amongst Ruin Scala 020 7833 2022

Marc Almond Jazz Café 020 7916 6060

Negrita Electric Ballroom 020 7485 9006

The Oscillations/The Cyclones Bethnal Green Working Men's Club 020 7739 2772

Phat Cats Cherry Jam 020 7727 9950

Quaintways/The Fanclub 93 Feet East 020 7247 6095

Ronnie Must Die/Here Lies Affliction/Morgue Orgy New Cross Inn 020 8692 1866

Sophie Hunger/The Robot Heart 100 Club 020 7636 0933

The Swing Movement 229 Club 020 7631 8310

The Tallest Man On Earth Tabernacle 020 7243 4343

Tomorrow's Warriors Ronnie Scott's 020 7439 0747

Trio 606 Club 020 7352 5953

Two Spot Gobi/Buster Shuffle Borderline 020 7734 5547

The Wheels/The Long Goodbye/The Little Phillistines Dublin Castle 020 7485 1773

97 Lovers/Painting Of Ships Good Ship 020 7372 2544

MANCHESTER

Brendan Perry Deaf Institute 0161 330 4019

Ice Black Birds Ruby Lounge 0161 834 1392

Recovery Iguana Bar 0161 881 9338

Rise To Remain Roadhouse 0161 228 1789

Supergrass Academy 0161 832 1111

Walls Bird Jabez Clegg 0161 272 8612

You Say Party! We Say Die! Sound Control 0161 236 0340

#### NEWCASTLE

The Wave Pictures Head Of Steam 0191 232 4379

#### NOTTINGHAM

Julian Cope Rescue Rooms 0115 958 8484

#### OXFORD

Murder By Death O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000

Reservoir Cats/Anton Barbeau/Monster Wheatstreak 01865 721156

#### SHEFFIELD

Dan Smith Forum 0114 2720964

The Magic Numbers Leadmill 0114 221 2828

Skin O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000

#### SOUTHAMPTON

The Reaktors Joiners 023 8022 5612

#### YORK

Trigger The Bloodshed Fibbers 01904 651250





## THURSDAY

June 10

NME  
RADIO

Jon Hillcock will be sieving through the hottest new music to bring you another Once Around The Blogs track, from 3pm

## ASCOT

Keith James Jagz At The Station  
01344 876006

## BELFAST

David Phelps Ulster Hall  
028 9032 3900Duke Special Waterfront  
028 9033 4455Neal Hughes Katy Dalys  
028 9032 5942

## BIRMINGHAM

Blessure Grave Flapper 0121 236 2421

Chris Brown O2 Academy  
0870 771 2000Glass Gods/Highrise Actress  
& Bishop 0121 236 7426James Yulll Hare And Hounds  
0121 444 2081

Leona Lewis LG Arena 0121 780 4133

The Miserable Rich/Adelaide's Cape  
Glee Club 0870 241 5093

## BRANDON

Keane Thetford Forest 0115 912 9000

## BRIGHTON

Ariel Pink's Haunted Graffiti  
Freebutt 01273 603974

Capital Prince Albert 01273 730499

Down To Earth/Yokoko/Bucket Joy  
Hector's House 01273 681228

Sham 69 Concorde 2 01273 673311

The Small Gods/Ghost Writers  
Providence 01273 727822

## BRISTOL

Alf Hale Louisiana 0117 926 5978

Jane Taylor St George's Hall  
0117 923 0359Mean Poppa Lean/The Hit Ups  
Mr Wolf's 0117 927 3221

Plaid Amofini 0117 929 9191

Siddy Bennett Junction  
07786 534666

## CAMBRIDGE

Blondie Corn Exchange 01223 357851

James Ferraro/Chova Portland Arms  
01223 357268

## CANTERBURY

The Overdrafts/Shychlo/We Unite  
Beer Cart Arms 0871 230 1094

## CARDIFF

Florence + The Machine Cooper's  
Field 029 2087 2000

Samoans Buffalo Bar 02920 310312

## CHELMSFORD

Redtrack/The Stirlings/Beanstalk  
Barhouse 01245 356811

## CORK

Freddie White Sirius Arts Centre  
00 35321 481 3790

## COVENTRY

Flx Monday Taylor John's House  
024 7655 9958

## DUBLIN

Devendra Banhart Button Factory  
00 3531 670 9202The Tallest Man On Earth Whelan's  
00 3531 475 9372

## EDINBURGH

A Band Called Quinn Voodoo Rooms  
0131 556 7060John Power Cabaret Voltaire  
0131 220 6176Kenny Rogers Playhouse  
0131 557 2590We See Lights The Electric Circus  
0131 226 4224

## EXETER

Murder By Death Cavern Club  
01392 495370

## GLASGOW

Brilliant Colours 13th Note Cafe  
0141 553 1638Rise To Remain King Tut's Wah Wah  
Hut 0141 221 5279Long Lost Son/Kyla La Grange/Elia  
Casplan Boilerroom 01483 440022Van Morrison Hampton Court Palace  
Festival 0871 230 1094The Black Keys T In The Park Festival  
0870 169 0100Cables Cause Fires Northern Monkey  
0113 242 6630Codes In The Clouds Royal Park  
Cellars 0113 274 1758Kinda Kinks New Roscoe  
0113 246 0778Martin Gaughan Robert Grove Inn  
0113 243 9254Martha Tilston/Richard Walters  
Musician 0116 251 0080Lotus Eaters Cavern Club  
0151 236 1964

Wheatons O2 Academy 0870 771 2000

Au Revoir Simone Scala  
0870 7833 2022The Black Atlantic/Rue Royale  
Slaughtered Lamb 020 8682 4080Blank Canvas/Scanner Café Oto  
0871 230 1094Brendan Perry Union Chapel  
020 7226 1686Crowded House Apollo  
0870 606 3400Crows/The Stablisers The  
Gramophone 020 7377 5332The Damned Things/Panic Cell  
Heaven 020 7930 2020Empire Saints/SOS/Honeytone  
Cody/Corelli Hope & Anchor  
020 7354 1312Exit Calm O2 Academy 2 Islington  
0870 771 2000Extra Life Corsica Studios  
020 7703 4760Filthy Nights Bull & Gate  
020 7485 5358Firefly/Matthew Ord/Elle Osborne  
Cecil Sharp House 020 7485 2206Foghorn Leghorn Betsey Trotwood  
(Upstairs) 02073 367326

Harlem The Flowerpot 02074856040

Hugo Race/Madam/Adam Doren  
Luminaire 020 7372 7123

Jackdaw Good Ship 020 7372 2544

Jamaica/Ten Bears The Lexington  
020 7837 5387

Jim Moray Bush Hall 020 8222 6955

John And Jehn /A Human Garage  
(Upstairs) 0871 230 1094Jonah Matranga/Lost On Campus  
Barfly 0870 907 0999

Lau Cargo 0207 749 7840

Leo Greenslade/Seb Chew Arts Club  
020 7460 4459The Lysergics/Ulysses Buffalo Bar  
020 7359 6191The Megadudes Monarch  
0871 230 1094Mr B The Gentleman Rhymers  
Montague Arms 020 7639 4923The Mummies Jazz Cafe  
020 7916 6060New Young Pony Club/Hurts  
Dingwalls 020 7267 1577The Operation/Soldier/Supanaut  
Dublin Castle 020 7485 1773The Original Sugarhill Gang Garage  
020 7607 1818Oxford Style Royal George  
020 7437 9369The Popes/The Sound Movement  
Underworld 020 7482 1932Pure Reason Revolution/Medry  
Horton Square Bar & Kitchen  
020 7613 0709Rachel Dadd Monkey Chews  
020 7267 6406The Red Zoids Proud Galleries  
020 7482 3867Sam Airey/Rayon Breed/Evanjack  
Lock Tavern 020 7485 0909The Savage Nomads 12 Bar Club  
020 7240 2622Serena Maneesh/Darker My Love  
Boston Music Room 020 7272 8153Stereo Total/The Notes/French For  
Cartridge 93 Feet East 020 7247 6095Steve Harley O2 Shepherds Bush  
Empire 0870 771 2000Supergrass O2 Academy Brixton  
0870 771 2000Sweethead/Year Long Disaster/  
Zodiac N Black/Spiderbaby Mondo  
Water Rats 020 7837 4412

Wallis Bird Underbelly 0207 613 3105

MANCHESTER

Allan Holdsworth Band On The Wall  
0161 832 6625Altraste/Yossarian Night And Day  
Cafe 0161 236 1822Beats For Beginners/The Witches/  
Badly Drawn Boy/Stephen Fretwell  
Deaf Institute 0161 330 4019Dave Arcant Ruby Lounge  
0161 834 1392Male Bonding Sound Control  
0161 236 0340

Mandrake Roadhouse 0161 228 1789

Willie Nelson Apollo 0870 401 8000

NEWCASTLE

Deathkrew '92 Cornerhouse  
0191 265 9602Marriott Lane/The Flytes/Dead  
Town Radio/Toronto Sun Head Of  
Steam 0191 232 4379

OXFORD

Compassionate Dictatorship  
Wheatheaf 01865 721156

PORTSMOUTH

The Perils Cellars 0871 230 1094

SHEFFIELD

Hexstatic Harley 0114 275 2288

Invisible Idols West Street Live  
0114 2722552

SOUTHAMPTON

Mimi Soya/I Am Forever Unit  
02380 225612The Strange Death Of Liberal  
England Joiners 023 8022 5612

SOUTHEND

The Saturday Kids/The Ends/The  
Fifty Fours Chinnery's 01702 460440

## FRIDAY

June 11

## ASCOT

The Stellar Thieves Jagz At The  
Station 01344 876006

## BATH

FattyBoomBastic/Lenny Savage  
St James Wine Vaults 01225 310335Toxic Funk Berry Moles  
01225 404445

## BELFAST

Kasper Rosa Spring & Airbrake  
028 9032 5968

Willie Byrne Empire 028 9024 9276

## BIRMINGHAM

Plaid MAC 0121 440 3838

The Woe Betides Flapper  
0121 236 2421

## BRIGHTON

Baby Grace Concorde 2 01273 673311

Birdengine The Basement  
01273 699733Gentleman Starkey/Polka Party/  
Clayton Strange Prince Albert  
01273 730499Noxagt/Ultrahyd Engine Room  
01273 728 999

Tail Ships Freebutt 01273 603974

## BRISTOL

Ariel Pink's Haunted Graffiti  
Metropolis 0117 909 6655Bare Threads/Arthur Walker/The  
Good Gods! Mr Wolf's 0117 927 3221The Bronze Medal/Parrington  
Jackson/Out Like A Lion The Cooler  
0117 945 0999

Los Conchos Junction 07786 534666

The Magic Numbers Anson Rooms  
0117 954 5810Psycho-Della Smith Cat And Wheel  
0117 942 7862

Robin Reece Old Duke 0117 927 7137

Straight Shooter Golden Lion  
0117 939 5506

## CAMBRIDGE

City Seventeen/The Irregulars/  
Sugarbeat Junction 01223 511511Steve Mason Haymakers  
01223 367417Wrong Planet Portland Arms  
01223 357268

## CARDIFF

The Miserable Rich/Adelaide's Cape  
Buffalo Bar 02920 310312Paper Aeroplanes Chapter Arts  
Centre 029 2031 1050Richard James/The Gentle Good  
Club Ifor Bach 029 2023 2199

## CHELMSFORD

Small Talk The Box Club  
0871 230 1094

## EDINBURGH

Fifty Caliber Smile Cabaret Voltaire  
0131 220 6176

## EXETER

Roska Cavern Club 01392 495370

## GALWA

James Vincent Mc Morrow Roisin  
Dubh 00 35391 586540

## GLASGOW

Beats Of Rage/Dead On The Live  
Wire/Comptroller 13th Note Café  
0141 553 1638Iain Morrison Band/Calamateur  
Brel 0141 342 4966Little Eye/The Angles/Mell  
McClafferty 02 ABC2 0141 204 5151Woodenbox With A Fistful Of Fivers/  
White Heath/Felix D'Arcy King Tut's  
Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279

## GUILDFORD

The Victorian English Gentlemen's  
Club Boilerroom 01483 440022

HAMPTON COURT

Jools Holland/Alison Moyet  
Hampton Court Palace Festival  
0871 230 1094

## HOVE

The Stuntmen Neptune Bar  
01273 324 870

## ISLE OF WIGHT

Isle Of Wight Festival: Jay-Z/  
Florence + The Machine/Calvin  
Harris/Doves/Mr Hudson/Hockey/  
Juliette Lewis/Marina And The  
Diamonds/Shakespears Sister/  
Daisy Dares You/I Blame Coco  
Seaclose Park, Newport 0871 230 1094

## LEEDS

Joe Gallagher's Noise The Owl  
0113 256 5242Loose Covers New Roscoe  
0113 246 0778

Mim Grey Wardrobe 0113 222 3434

Ois Moore And The Gypsy Dogs  
Packhorse 0113 245 3980Renaissance Dolls Cockpit  
0113 244 3446

## LEICESTER

Larry Miller Musician 0116 251 0080

## LIVERPOOL

The If Thief/Call Off The Search  
O2 Academy 0870 771 2000

Night Parade Masque 0151 707 6171

NEWCASTLE

John Power Cluny 0191 230 4474

The Longsands O'Neills 0191 269 3001

New Age Jam Blacksmith's Arms  
0191 213 2979This Is Theft/Ambershift Dog &  
Parrot 0191 261 6998The Wickets Head Of Steam  
0191 232 4379

NORWICH

Dub FX UEA 01603 505401

Hotwired/Dirty Love Blueberry  
01603 475001

NOTTINGHAM

Boys Noize Stealth 08713 100000

Clay Pigeon Maze 0115 947 5650

Pete Roe Rescue Rooms  
0115 958 8484

OXFORD

Band Of Horses O2 Academy  
0870 771 2000

SHEFFIELD

Boy 8-Bit DQ 0114 201 2653

The Heebie Jeebies Harley  
0114 275 2288

Kele Okereke Plug 0114 276 7093

SOUTHAMPTON

Great Expectations Joiners  
023 8022 5612

SOUTHEND

Universal/Enter Hunter/Killer  
Hertz Chinnery's 01702 460440

SWINDON

Chix In The Mix The Rolleston  
01793 534238Fossil Pools The Furnace  
01793 534238

TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Jonah Matranga The Forum  
08712 777101

YORK

Bromheads Fibbers 01904 651 250

Look Stranger 93 Feet East  
020 7247 6095

Lotus Eaters Barfly 0870 907 0999

Madskull Good Ship 020 7372 2544

Of A Revolution Garage  
020 7607 1818The Penny Black Remedy/The New  
Forbidden 12 Bar Club 020 7240 2622Stephen Dale Pettit 100 Club  
020 7636 0933

Toy Hearts Green Note 0871 230 1094

Willie Nelson Apollo 0870 606 3400

MANCHESTER

Chris Brown Apollo 0870 401 8000

Dusk & Blackdown Band On The Wall  
0161 832 6625

Exit Calm FAC 251 0161 27 27 251

The Foreign Office Night And Day  
Cafe 0161 236 1822Houston We Have A Problem  
Manchester Academy 0161 832 1111

Indigo Moho Live 0161 834 8180

Your Mama's Cookin' Ruby Lounge  
0161 834 1392

NEWCASTLE

John Power Cluny 0191 230 4474

The Longsands O'Neills 0191 269 3001

New Age Jam Blacksmith's Arms  
0191 213 2979This Is Theft/Ambershift Dog &  
Parrot 0191 261 6998



## SATURDAY

June 12

Biffy Clyro, Isle Of Wight Festival



## BEDFORD

The Johnny Parry Chamber Orchestra/The Grubby Mitts Esquires 01234 340120

## BELFAST

Sebastien Leger Stiff Kitten 028 90238700  
Tiesto Kings Hall 028 9066 5225

## BOLTON

Pink Reebok Stadium 01204 673600

## BRANDON

Doves Thetford Forest 0115 912 9000

## BRIGHTON

Alex Metric Digital 01273 202407  
The Blue Hearts Freebutt 01273 603974  
Hexstatic Jam 0871 230 1094  
Ian McCulloch Komedia 01273 647100

## BRISTOL

Allen Stash Tin/Hacksaw Reckless Engineer 0117 929 0425  
The Brown Note Mr Wolf's 0117 927 3221

Pekko Kapi/Chora/Part Wild Horses Mane On Both Sides The Cube 0117 71190

Rash Decision/The Boy Done Good/Echo Lounge Louisiana 0117 926 5978

## CARDIFF

Murder By Death Barfly 029 2066 7658

## DUBLIN

Paul McCartney RDS 00 3531 668 0866

## EDINBURGH

Iain Morrison/Calamateur Cabaret Voltaire 0131 220 6176

## EPSOM

Electric Native Tongue 01372 720 450

## GLASGOW

Snow Patrol Bellahouston Park 0115 912 9000

Wheatons O2 ABC2 0141 204 1511

## HAMPTON COURT

Nicola Benedetti Hampton Court Palace Festival 0871 230 1094

## ISLE OF WIGHT

Isle Of Wight Festival: The Strokes/Blondie/Biffy Clyro/Vampire Weekend/Little Boots/Crowded House/Paloma Faith/The Hold Steady/Melanie/Detroit Social Club/Orbital/N-Dubz/The Saturdays/Noah And The Whale/Devendra Banhart/Bombay Bicycle Club Seadose Park, Newport 0871 230 1094

## LEEDS

James Ferraro Cardigan Arms 0113 274 2000  
Poorboy The Owl 0113 256 5242  
The Port Brothers New Roscoe 0113 246 0778  
Primary 1 Nation Of Shopkeepers 0113 203 1831  
X-Ray Cat Adelphi 01943 468615

## LEICESTER

The Screening/The Hordes Music Café 0116 262 5050

## LIVERPOOL

The Wasters Picket 0151 708 5318  
Wolf & Lamb Masque 0151 707 6171

## LONDON

Blessure Grave Barden's Boudoir 0770 865 6633

Boy Mandeville Old Blue Last 020 7611 7475

Future Perfect The Lexington 020 7837 5387

The Hand Slaughtered Lamb 020 8682 4080

Harper Simon Hoxton Square Bar & Kitchen 020 7613 0709

The Inwits Queen Of Hoxton 020 7422 0958

Japanese Government Railways/The Satin Dolls Dublin Castle 020 7485 1773

John Beck & John Mitchell/Dec Burke/Matt Stevens Peel 020 8546 3516

Leona Lewis The O2 Arena 0870 701 4444

Lonely Drifter Karen Luminaire 020 7372 7123

Neil Sutherland/Imadethismistake Windmill 020 8671 0700

One Party State/Calling Cairo Barfly 0870 907 0999

OSTR Rhythm Factory 020 7247 9386

Sonoco/Luftmentschn/The Eye Hope & Anchor 020 7354 1312

Starkey Corsica Studios 0207 703 4760

We Are The Physics/Angry Bees Buffalo Bar 020 7359 6191

## MANCHESTER

Bogdan Raczyński Attic 0161 236 6071

Danny Mahon Sound Control 0161 236 0340

Mark Burgess FAC 251 0161 2727251

Tyketto Moho Live 0161 834 8180

## NEWCASTLE

Diablo Star Inn 0191 222 3111

We Done It For The Don Head Of Steam 0191 232 4379

## OXFORD

Tinle Tempah The Regal 01865 241261

SHEFFIELD Gabriel Jackson Cathedral 0871 230 1094

Yousef Plug 0114 276 7093

SOUTHAMPTON Good Devil Skin Joiners 023 8022 5612

Tiefschwarz Junk Club 023 8033 5445

## SOUTHEND

Attica Chinnery's 01702 460440

## SWINDON

British Steel Hellfire The Rolleston 01793 534238

WAKEFIELD The Sundogs The Hop 0871 230 1094

## WHICKHAM

FM Fellsider 0191 488 8001

## WOLVERHAMPTON

The Magic Numbers Wulfrun Hall 0870 320 7000

## SUNDAY

June 13

## ASCOT

Georgia Manco Jazz At The Station 01344 876006

## BATH

The Bear That Wasn't Moles 01225 104445

## BIRMINGHAM

Jen! Billy Kitchen Garden Café 0121 443 4725

Kenny Rogers Symphony Hall 0121 212 3333

## BRIGHTON

Dysrhythmia Hector's House 01273 681228

Sarah Jane Morris Latest Music Bar 01273 687 171

## BRISTOL

Pineapster Communion Mr Wolf's 0117 927 3221

Pretty Limelight Golden Lion 0117 939 5506

## CAMBRIDGE

The Magic Numbers Junction 01223 511511

## CARDIFF

Pamela Wyn Shannon/Haruko 10 Feet Tall 02920 228883

## EDINBURGH

The Remnant Kings Liquid Room 0131 225 2564

## GATESHEAD

Debashish Bhattacharya Sage Arena 0870 703 4555

## GLASGOW

John Power King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279

## HOVE

Sodden Rum Neptune Bar 01273 324 870

## ISLE OF WIGHT

Isle Of Wight Festival: Paul McCartney/Pink/Editors/Spandau Ballet/Friendly Fires/The Courteeners/Suzanne Vega/The Coronas/James/Ocean Colour Scene/Local Natives/Reef/The Big Pink/The Alarm/Saint Jude Seadose Park, Newport 0871 230 1094

## LEEDS

Darker My Love Nation Of Shopkeepers 0113 203 1831  
The Woven Project Northern Monkey 0113 242 6000

## LEICESTER

Bethia Mitchell/Rachel Gittus/Matt Wilson Musician 0116 251 0080

## LIVERPOOL

Dave Swarbrick Sefton Park 0151 709 4321

## LONDON

Action Pause Reaction/Cult Image/Temper/The Bromista Technique Tommy Flynn 020 7609 7162

Callie 13 Coronet 020 7701 1500

Chris Brown Apollo 0870 606 3400

Killer Whale Rhythm Factory 020 7247 9386

Le Skeleton Band Green Note 0871 230 1094

Pete Allen Band 100 Club 020 7636 0933

Planet Earth/Hot Feet/Rachael Travers/Lizzie The Yes Men The Old Queen's Head 0207 839 7261

Sacred/Roshambo Dublin Castle 020 7485 1773

Shameless Faith Purple Turtle 020 7383 4976

The Smith Westerns The City Arts & Music Project 020 7253 2443

Tall Ships/MEN Old Blue Last 020 715 2478

## MANCHESTER

Funeral Party Roadhouse 0161 266 1789

The Nile Band Iguana Bar 0161 881 9338

The Toasters Moho Live 0161 834 8180

## NEWCASTLE

James Ferraro Morden Tower 0871 230 1094

The Scoundrels The Tyne 0191 265 2550

## NOTTINGHAM

Ghosts Wear Clothes/Bonbonbonbons Maze 0115 947 5650

## PRESTON

Hockey 53 Degrees 01772 893 000

## SHEFFIELD

Dave Arcari Boardwalk 0114 279 9090

## SOUTHAMPTON

La Roux Guildhall 023 8063 2601

Sawsedge Joiners 023 8022 5612

## WOLVERHAMPTON

Exit Calm Slade Room 0870 320 7000

La Roux, Guildhall, Southampton



## GET IN THE GIG GUIDE!

DO YOU WANT TO GET YOUR BASH INCLUDED IN THE NME WEEKLY GIG GUIDE? GO TO [NME.COM/GIGS](http://NME.COM/GIGS) AND SUBMIT YOUR LISTING FOR FREE. YOU MUST SUBMIT DETAILS AT LEAST THREE WEEKS BEFORE THE GIG DATE



## MONDAY

June 14



Band Of Horses,  
Wulfrun Hall,  
Wolverhampton

## BATH

Adelaide's Cape/Gabrielle Aplin  
Moles 01225 404445

## BELFAST

Tegan And Sara Mandala Hall  
028 9024 5133

## BRISTOL

Martha Rose/Pink Froot/51 Holmes  
Mr Wolf's 0117 927 3221

## CARDIFF

Adelaide's Cape/Jon Fazal/  
Nicola Jayne Chmside 10 Feet Tall  
02920 228883

Noxagt Buffalo Bar 02920 310312

## DUBLIN

Stone Temple Pilots Olympia  
00 3531 679 3323

## EDINBURGH

Pete Roe Cabaret Voltaire  
0131 220 6176

## GLASGOW

Codes In The Clouds/Barn Owl/The  
Seventeenth Century/Katerwaul  
13th Note Cafe 0141 553 1638  
Funeral Party King Tut's Wah Wah  
Hut 0141 221 5279

## LEEDS

Ariel Pink's Haunted Graffiti/  
Brudenell Social Club 0113 243 5866

## LIVERPOOL

Joe Longthorne Empire  
0870 606 3536

## LONDON

Billy Vincent/Baby Copperhead Old  
Blue Last 020 7613 2478

Butch Walker Garage  
020 7607 1816

City And Colour Forum  
020 7111 0014

Crime In Stereo Peel 020 8546 3516

Joan Jett & The Blackhearts  
100 Club 020 7636 0933

Later Rivals/Kosmos Rhythm  
Factory 020 7247 9386

Madfox Monto Water Rats  
07857 4412

Magic Polar Bears/Diaphragm  
Failure/De Shamonix 93 Feet East  
020 7247 6095

The Soft Close-Ups/Lucy's Diary/  
Sergeant Buzfuz 12 Bar Club  
020 7240 2622

## MANCHESTER

Anvil/Girlschool Manchester  
Academy 0161 832 1111

Kenny Rogers Apollo 0870 401 8000

Pulled Apart By Horses Deaf  
Institute 0161 330 4019

Revolver Roadhouse 0161 228 1789

Suzanne Vega Lowry 0161 876 2000

## NEWCASTLE

Harlem Head Of Steam 0191 232 4379

Hockey 02 Academy 2 0870 771 2000

## OXFORD

Third Degree LeBara Bullingdon  
Arms 0111 5 244516

## PLYMOUTH

Black Cobra/Weedeater White  
Rabbit 01752 227522

## PORTSMOUTH

Hometown Show/Jimmy Brumfield  
Wedgewood Rooms 023 9286 3911

## SHEFFIELD

Telephoned/Shake Aletti Plug  
0114 276 7093

## WOLVERHAMPTON

Band Of Horses Wulfrun Hall  
0870 230 7000

## TUESDAY

June 15

## BELFAST

The After Elights Empire  
028 9024 9276

## BIRMINGHAM

Wheatus 02 Academy 2  
0870 771 2000

## BRIGHTON

Bakk Lamp Fall/The Cornerstones  
Volks Tavern 01273 682828

Glen Belt/Your Garden Day Prince  
Albert 01273 730499

Mr Hudson Concorde 2 01273 673311

Out Of The Blue Jam 0871 230 1094

## BRISTOL

El Wristo/Cassette Culture  
Croft 0117 987 4144

Nuala Merne Golden Lion  
0117 939 5506

Smoke No Fire Louisiana  
0117 926 1978

## CAMBRIDGE

Jeff Klein Portlarc Arms  
01223 357268

## CARDIFF

A La Fiste Buffalo Bar 02920 310312

Tall Ships Arts Institute  
0871 230 1094

## CHELMSFORD

Le Monnier/Eradication/Legion  
Barhouse 01245 356811

## COLCHESTER

Cancer City/Monuments/While  
She Sleeps/Echoes Fall The Twist  
01206 562 453

## DUBLIN

Murder By Death Academy 2  
00 3531 877 9999

Tegan And Sara Olympia  
00 3531 679 3323

65daysofstatic Crowdaddy  
00 3531 478 0225

## GLASGOW

Exit Calm King Tut's Wah Wah Hut  
0141 221 5279

James Ferraro/Monopoly Child  
Star Searchers 13th Note Cafe  
0141 553 1638

Pete Roe Niche/Sleazy 0141 333 9637

## HAMPTON COURT

Simply Red Hampton Court Palace  
Festival 0871 230 1094

## LEEDS

Black Cobra/Weedeater Joseph's  
Well 0113 203 1861

Ed Harcourt Brudenell Social Club  
0113 243 5866

## Harlem Nation Of Shopkeepers

0113 203 1831

## LEICESTER

Kim Richey Musician 0116 251 0080

## LONDON

Aerosmith 02 Arena 0870 701 4444

Allo Darlin' The Lexington  
020 7837 5387

Ariel Pink's Haunted Graffiti Scala  
020 7833 2022

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## Mike Brightley 12 Bar Club

020 7240 2611

The Nolse Pirates/Cheating The  
Reaper/Long Bone Trio Tommy  
Flynn 020 7609 7162

Pagan Wanderer Lu/Stairs To Korea  
Old Blue Last 020 7613 2478

Pierre Omer/John Drain Windmill  
020 8671 0700

Pulled Apart By Horses 100 Club  
020 7636 0933

Ratt/Anvil 02 Academy 2 Islington  
0870 771 2000

Rival Schools 333 020 7739 5949

Smith Westerns/Mazes White Heat  
@ Madame Jo Jo's 020 7734 2473

The Sunday Morning Service Good  
Ship 020 7372 2544

Teeth & Tongue Dublin Castle  
020 7485 1773

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## MUSIC BIZ IN CRISIS, LIAM IN TROUBLE, FATBOY ON TOP



# FIRE STARTER

**Y**ou don't have to be a genius to figure that the record industry is fucked," runs the lead feature, bleakly.

June 1998: album sales are plummeting; gigs aren't selling out; record companies are axing both their rosters and their staff. Post Britpop boom, here is an investigation into the grim aftermath.

"The consequence of Oasismania is that the industry critically inflated its business expectations of 'our' music," the story continues. "Suddenly bands like Menswear had to shift units like Madonna or they were out."

The piece declares that the problems lie in the public's weariness of being fed 'The Next Big Thing' every 10 seconds, but more so that the British music scene has eaten itself, swum too close to the mainstream and ended up in a place that it simply cannot survive in. Over the page, Creation boss Alan McGee predicts that there will be no record companies. "Labels are so behind the ball. Unless they modernise, they'll be extinct," he says. "Bands are gonna download their records to their fans direct. It'll be sexier for bands to download their music on the internet. This is the revolution."

Apart from confusing the up-and-downloading business, he's still right.

## NEWS

# OASIS FAN TO SUE LIAM

[illegible]

## NEIL'S FIND!

[illegible]

**AIN'T GOT NOTHING  
ON ME?**

British backpacker Benjamin Jones is claiming that Liam Gallagher broke his nose outside an Australian hotel during Oasis' world tour a couple of months ago. Even though legal experts have warned him that he doesn't stand to win much more than £2,000 in compensation, he is continuing to press charges back home in Britain.

## MEET MR SMITH

The *On* section contains an interview with Elliott Smith. "I don't try and write only about things that are upsetting. For some reason most of my songs seem to gravitate towards some sort of crisis," he laughs amiably. "Most everybody I know, you could say they're fatally flawed in one way or another. But it doesn't matter; there are just things they can't get a grip on."

**ALSO IN THE ISSUE  
THAT WEEK**

• **Single Of The Week** is Fatboy Slim's 'The Rockafeller Skank'. "It's an unofficial World Cup anthem for all corners of the planet," writes **Andy Crissell**.

• A full-page advertisement for Reading '98 has Jimmy Page & Robert Plant, Beastie Boys and Garbage topping the main stage bill on Friday, Saturday and Sunday respectively.

- Under the headline 'Wet Sounds', Brian Wilson's 'Imagination' album is given six out of 10.

- The Prodigy's Keith Flint is reported to be making his superbike racing debut for Ducati's Revo Red Bull team at Mallory Park this summer.

- Blur are revealed to be working on tracks with William Orbit for their next album (which will, of course, end up as '13').

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# THE LEGENDARY NME CROSSWORD

TAXING THE FINEST MINDS IN ROCK'N'ROLL FOR SIX DECADES

Compiled by Trevor Hungerford



## A BAG OF NME SWAG



### CLUES ACROSS

- 1+8A If UNKLE were in the dark, they'd know (5-3-3-5-4)  
 10 They're hoofing it over the 'Spanish Sahara' (5)  
 11 (See 23 across)  
 12 Ulster troubles for Ed Harcourt's new album (6)  
 13 They gave a 'Shock Horror' performance last year (4)  
 15 Sean \_\_\_\_\_ of The Zutons or Dougie \_\_\_\_\_ of Travis (5)  
 16 Craig \_\_\_\_\_ played bass for Sisters Of Mercy, Mission, Cult, Alarm, Spear Of Destiny and Theatre Of Hate (5)  
 17+25A A new single from Blood Red Shoes is out of the question (4-3)  
 19 Song title for Wolfmother, Neneh Cherry and John Lennon (5)  
 21 I put into album remix a Hole number (6)  
 22+24D Record label that's housed The Libertines, Strokes and Smiths (5-5)  
 23+11A Identified as being a chart entry for We Are Scientists (3-1-3)  
 25 (See 17 across)  
 27 Chew over a name for Leeds indie band (3)  
 28 Former manager of Sex Pistols who died recently (7)  
 30 Eurovision lyricist includes a song for Nine Inch Nails (4)  
 31 (See 7 down)  
 32 Karen \_\_\_\_\_, aka Mrs Jack White, with album 'The Ghost Who Walks' (5)  
 33 How Terrorvision, Groove Armada and Sugababes all found recording a single (4)

### CLUES DOWN

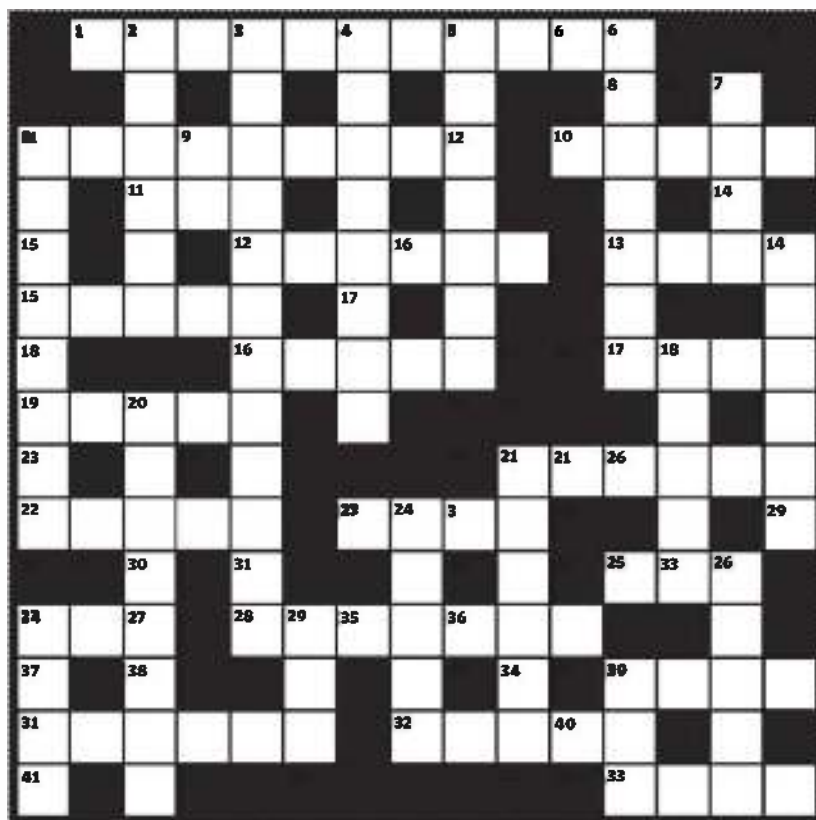
- 2+6D Vines' album that just really grew and grew (6 7)  
 3 U2 were big noises in 1988 (6-3-3)  
 4 Muse with Michael Jackson, Kurt Cobain or Buddy Holly possibly (4-4)  
 5 Singer with The Cranberries seems somehow so older (7)  
 6 (See 2 down)  
 7+31A "I thought I was mistaken, I thought I heard your words/Tell me, how do I feel?" 1983 (4-6)  
 8 Prince was backed by the \_\_\_\_\_ Generation in the early '90s (3-5)

- 9 Paul McCartney and Wings greeting given three times over (2)  
 14 (See 27 down)  
 18 Nothing to upset Lisa in completing title of Jon Anderson's album in the '70s '\_\_\_\_ Of Sunhillow' (5)  
 20 Colin \_\_\_\_\_, had to get into shape as bass player with XTC (8)  
 21 Member of The La's gets into a Bananarama version (6)  
 24 (See 22 across)  
 26 The duo of Alison Mosshart and Jamie Hince (5)  
 27+14D The Chemical Brothers open invitation to go on tour with them? (4-4-2)  
 29 "Without an answer, the thunder speaks from the sky/And on the cold wet dirt I \_\_\_\_", from The Killers' 'Bones' (3)  
 30 Yeasayer number taken from The Rolling Stones (1-1-1)

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Simply cut out the crossword and send it, along with your name, address and email, marking the envelope with the issue date, before Tuesday, June 15, 2010, to the following address: Crossword, NME, 4th Floor, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU.

First correct one out of the hat wins a bag of CDs, T-shirts and books!



### MAY 15 ANSWERS

ACROSS  
 1+4A Sea Of Cowards, 9 Arthurs, 10 Embrace, 11 Omar, 12 Chapel Club, 14+33A Sisters Of Mercy, 16+22A Fat Boys, 18 Anthem, 20 Rocket, 21+35A All I Need, 24 Colin, 25 I Can Talk, 29 Swim, 31 Star.

DOWN  
 1 Shadows, 2 As Tears Go By, 3+34A Four Winds, 4+19D Cheap Trick, 5 Wobble, 6 Real Life, 7 Sherbet, 8 Is This It, 13 Beck, 15 Fall, 17 America, 22 Bis, 23 Simon, 26 Arms, 27 Turn, 28 Lay, 30 Wow, 31 Sun, 32 Red.



## SEVEN INCH STORIES BY PHILLIP MARSDEN





# FANMAIL

YOU GET IN TOUCH, WE RESPOND, THINGS GET OUT OF HAND

Edited by Mark Beaumont



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## The Big Issue

Keeping us locked in email battle this week...

**Win!**  
THE LETTER OF  
THE WEEK WINS  
£50 TO SPEND AT  
**zavvi.com**



## MEN(DON'T) SWEAR

**From:** Jacob Graham, The Drums  
**To:** NME

In your last issue (NME, May 29) I was quoted as saying "...doing things however the f\*ck you want..." I must ask that a retraction is printed. You see, I haven't used any sort of profanity for the past 14 months and I feel that this specific misquote is a bit of defamation of character. What little character I have left anyway. I will do anything I can to save myself from slipping any further into that filthy pit (Hell). I want to see things clearly in the end. Is that so much to ask?

**NME's response...**

**From:** NME

**To:** Jacob Graham

Well bother and blast Jacob, our apologies and have a full retraction on me. Y'see the NME subbing system has an in-built swearchecker which automatically converts any flicks, shucks, hecks and

Philips into the offending expletive. Or just drops random arse swears in if we've not fullannyyed our recunted weekly quota. But what happened 14 months ago that exorcised you of your inner dockers? And if God's going around furiously damning people to Hell for using four letters in a particular order, does that mean you can't collaborate with the ex-singer from Pulp? Or play in the town of Felchville, Vermont? - MB

**From:** Jacob Graham

**To:** NME

Thanks Mark, that's very kind of you. I can already feel my integrity being restored. It's a splendid feeling. I don't think God sends people anywhere because of what they do or don't say (I'm sure there's a better system in place when being tortured by demons is

at stake). That's not the point of my profanity strike though, it's about clearing the air. It's about striving for excellence!

**From:** NME

**To:** Jacob Graham

Phew, so everyone who's ever sworn isn't necessarily going to suffer Hell's endless Interpol gig. Which is good news for you too Jacob, because otherwise you'd be looking at a long and lonely eternity in Paradise - just you, God, Ann Widdecombe and Dick & Dom. Given the choice, I'd rather have a pitchfork up me Jackie for all time alongside all my swear mates. Although, rationally speaking, when we cark it we're all just as likely to end up in Narnia - MB

Get in touch at the above addresses. Winners should email [letters@nme.com](mailto:letters@nme.com)

## COLCHESTER FLASHOVER

**From:** Abi Morgan

**To:** NME

I thought I'd just tell you how AMAZING Klaxons were at Colchester Arts Centre last night (May 27). It was surprising enough that they bothered to play in such a small venue in what isn't exactly the most exciting town in the world, and their set, which alternated between old and new tracks, was incredible. This new album will definitely be worth the wait!

**From:** NME

**To:** Abi Morgan

Wait until you hear the story behind the album, Abi. It involves talking dogs, plant-worshipping cults, an apple Svengali called Mr Tabernade, UFO sightings and a brand new drug called The Plinth. I am not making ANY of this up. Anyway, you can still get the £50 Zavvi prize. Jacob owns enough CDs already - MB

## GLASTORILLAZ

**From:** Rhys Lavery

**To:** NME

So has Damon Albarn now become the only person to headline Glastonbury two years in a row?

**From:** NME

**To:** Rhys Lavery

Apparently not - papyrus scrolls recently excavated from beneath Pilton's Great Lavvy Pyramid have been translated from the original Anglo-Saxon and found to document The Levellers headlining the Green Future Field's Crumbly Arsecrack Stage every year since 1043. Except the years there wasn't a festival due to the Black Death, or Michael Eavis needing time to build a superfence to keep out the Viking invasion. But how do

you feel about Gorillaz stepping in for Bono's bozos? A let down or lucky escape? - MB

**From:** Rhys Lavery

**To:** NME

Thanks for clearing that up. There is a lot wrong with U2 - the self-importance, an often unspoken of yet dreadful back catalogue. But thousands of intoxicated hippie Glasto-goers loving-in with the moon rising while singing 'Stuck In A Moment' would have been beautiful. But Gorillaz can rise to the occasion. For such a massive international band, it seems to some that Gorillaz are just not big enough to headline the world's greatest festival. But I reckon it will finally cement Damon Albarn as one of Britain's most brilliant musical treasures.

**From:** NME

**To:** Rhys Lavery

What amazes me is that not one person has demanded that U2 should've been replaced by Bloc Part... oh, spoke too soon - MB

## PARTY IN PILTON?

**From:** Aaron Evans

**To:** NME

During the whole festival-going part of my life (four years), Bloc Party performances have defined my experiences, and this year I am going to miss them greatly. Although Kele's solo project sounds amazing and I am looking forward to seeing his new musical direction live; it will just not be the same as that Bloc Party euphoria that I have previously felt at festivals in the past. Let's hope that they won't be on hiatus for too long and reform in 2011/12 to come back as headliners!



**From: NME**  
**To: Aaron Evans**  
 Forget Lady D's death, 9/11 or The Libertines reforming, Aaron here is the only man on Earth who can remember exactly where he was when Bloc Party played third from the top at the Reading And Leeds Festivals for the seventh year running. He was watching Bloc Party at the Reading And Leeds Festivals, obviously. Personally, my festival life seems to have been defined by cringeworthy guest appearances by Har Mar Superstar, but the real question is should Bloc Party have replaced U2 at Glasto, Aaron? - MB

**From: Aaron Evans**  
**To: NME**  
 As much as that would have been the highlight of my existence and made me cream my pants with delight, Gorillaz are a WORTHY replacement! (see what I did there?) Having recently caught Damon and his crew live in London, I cannot sing their praises enough. The only other act that could draw in the same crowds as U2 and hold their own are Chas & Dave but that's a whole other kettle of superfast jellyfish!

**From: NME**  
**To: Aaron Evans**  
 You're in luck, Aaron, a vacancy has just come up in NME's Laboured Punning Dept. You start Monday - MB

## 22-20S - BACK, BACK, BERK

**From: Ronan Morrissey**  
**To: NME**  
 One of my favourite bands of the last 10 years has undoubtedly been the Lincolnshire-grown 22-20s, the only truly great thing to ever come out of the place. They recently decided to reform - then the band announced an album release for Japan and America, but nothing at all for the UK. It turns out no UK record label showed any interest so they're currently unsigned and have no plans for the UK. Words can't describe the frustration at not being able to listen to my favourite band's new songs because I don't live in America or Japan. Apparently the only way I can get the new album is to physically travel to the country. People are missing out on something special.

**From: NME**  
**To: Ronan Morrissey**  
 Greetings, Ronan, from the 21st century! Clearly your love of the dated garage blues of The 22-20s has left you trapped in 1934, where the concept of 'imports' relates only to cotton shipments. But these days we have Spotify, iTunes, MySpace and file-sharing via email. You could probably hear their new album just by rewiring your electric toothbrush into a rudimentary modem. And anyway, The 22-20s don't need a UK deal to release their album here, they just need about £35, a laptop and the web address for a digital distributor. Sounds to me like they don't want you to hear it - MB



## STALKER

**From: Dave**  
**To: NME**  
 "This is my girlfriend Rachael at Kings Cross - we spotted Muse's Matt Bellamy before he got whisked off to First Class on the Eurostar"

## WHAM, BAM, THANK YOU SPAM

**From: 'Asmira'**  
**To: NME**  
 Hello, I found you very attractive and would like to link up with you for possible relationship. Please I am not into the age issue, I like you and if you like me, send me your email address so that I will tell you more about me.

**From: NME**  
**To: 'Asmira'**  
 Hi Asmira, you're very direct. Suddenly editing Fanmail feels like drunkenly wandering the Reeperbahn or sitting at a bus stop in the more upmarket areas of Dundee. I'm intrigued as to what it is about the revolving cast of NME Fanmail editors that you find so alluring, particularly since there's no photos of us on it anymore after all the complaints we got about traumatised children and

pets. Also, how come the address that sent us this email contains the name 'John'? Who's this John, huh? Just a work colleague is he? Yeah, right. (Two days later, without reply) Oh, I see, giving us the silent treatment now. Typical, hot and cold, well we've had enough! Give us back our credit card details, pack your bags and clear off! Our mother warned us about email 'girls' like you... - MB

## BIG UP THE BEAUMONT

**From: Hollie Lees**  
**To: NME**  
 I miss Mark Beaumont's section Spouting Off and Banging On. Although it was good to see him in Talking Heads the other week, he should be given his own page back. It was my favourite part of the magazine, and each week I looked forward to what Beaumont would write next - his work is a mixture of

# Web Slings

The highlight of this week's NME.COM blogs

## EYE OF THE STORM

Ladies and gentlemen, please give a warm welcome to Beady Eye, the new name for the band featuring Liam, Gem and Andy Bell. Right off the bat, Beady Eye feels perfect for Liam. He has the eyes. There's something about the frontman's stare that is compelling: part-magnetic, part-maniacal; so you can understand, with its crow-like connotations, why Beady Eye got the nod. Yet something about Beady Eye doesn't sit right. You can't chant it without sounding like you're supporting a non-League football team and its T-shirt potential feels limited; possibly even sinister outside of gigs. Admittedly a lot of people thought Oasis was a ropey name when they first emerged in the early '90s, yet now it looms over British music like a giant, so I won't be surprised if we learn to love the Eye. But the initial reaction is: great potential album title, even better sunglasses spin-off from Pretty Green, but terrible band name. Read Paul Stokes' full blog on NME.COM

### Best of the responses...

I had a teddy called Beady Eye when I was a kid. It was a little brown bear that looked like a jobby.  
**Anon**

Beady Eye sounds like the name of one of the shite



post-Oasis indie bands we saw around 2008 (Little Man Tate, Twisted Wheel).  
**Dan**

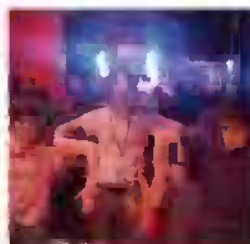
Non-League football team names aren't that awful! :O Oh, and Beady Eye sounds

like a name for a disreputable strip club.  
**Steaders**

Liam's Sweaty Bell End would have been a better/cooler/more credible name.  
**One**

humour, brilliance and controversial opinion. After reading a recent Fanmail I realised I'm not the only one who wants to see more of him in the pages. Beaumont back please.

**From: NME**  
**To: Hollie Lees**  
 In the words of Tracey Thorn, Hollie, "Like the deserts miss the rain" - MB



## STALKER

**From: Ben C**  
**To: NME**  
 "This is me, my mate Lewis and Darwin Deez doing the spring dance at Preston 53 Degrees. Great Radar Tour!"

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# DOES ROCK'N'ROLL KILL BRAINCCELLS?

TESTING MUSICIANS' MEMORIES AFTER A LIFETIME OF ABUSE

*This Week*

## JON SPENCER

### QUESTION 1

Name all three titles of Pussy Galore's full-length second album.

"The first proper full-length album was 'Right Now' and the second was 'Dial M For Motherfucker'. Then there were joke titles like 'Make Them Eat Shit Slowly', which was poking fun - we were label mates with White Zombie and they'd just released a record called 'Make Them Die Slowly' and I was envious I wasn't given [the same amount] of money. We put the sticker on because the album jacket was just a photo. There's no type on the front, so the label wanted to put a sticker on - but they didn't want to have 'Dial M For Motherfucker' on them, so we just put 'New Album By Pussy Galore'."

*Correct.*



### QUESTION 2

Name your first compilation album.

"Pussy Galore had one called 'Groovy Hate Fuck, Feel Good About Your Body'."

*Correct.*



### QUESTION 3

On how many Boss Hog sleeves has your wife Christina Martinez appeared naked?

"Two. There's 'Drinkin', Letchin' & Lyin', she's not strictly naked, she's wearing boots but her business is on display. 'Straight Up' she's totally naked. Then there's 'Girl Positive' and it's just a head and shoulder shot, it's not a nude photo. One of the versions of 'Whiteout', the US version, she's not naked,



she's wearing panties but she's made up to look all white and zombie'd and extensions were put in her hair to cover her breasts."

*Wrong. She's strictly naked on one sleeve ('Straight Up') and at least partially naked on three ('Straight Up', 'Drinkin', Letchin' & Lyin', 'Whiteout')*

### QUESTION 4

Which song were you playing with Jon Spencer Blues Explosion when you trashed a TV studio in Melbourne in '97?

"We may have started with another song and went into 'Flavour'. It wasn't planned, it just kinda hit me. It may have just been exhaustion. You reach a point on tour and you get a bit punch-drunk. That show is broadcast live in the morning! They were all really nice about it though!"

*Correct.*

### QUESTION 5

Which household item do you stick your head out of in the video for JSBX's 'Wail'?

"A toilet."

*Correct.*

### QUESTION 6

How many copies were made of Pussy Galore's cassette release of your cover of The Rolling Stones' 'Exile On Main St'?

"I think it was 550."

*Correct.*

### QUESTION 7

Complete the following lyric: "Tell 'em/ Sit back/Just watch 'em..."

"I dunno. That's supposed to be my song? I've never included a lyric sheet and the way in which I sing and the way the records are mixed, there's a lot of different

interpretations to my lyrics but that's definitely not part of any of my songs."

*Correct. We made it up.*

### QUESTION 8

In which city was your van broken into and your equipment stolen in 1999?

"It was Vancouver in Canada. It wasn't all the equipment, it was just a few choice bits, the stuff that was closest to the door."

*Correct.*



### QUESTION 9

Name all of the guests on Jon Spencer Blues Explosion's 'Plastic Fang'.

"We had Dr John on a couple of things, and [Funkadelic/Parliament keyboardist] Bernie Worrell, two great keyboardists. We had these other friends of [producer] Steve Jordan's, real famous professional rock'n'roll guys who came by one day. I'm not gonna be able to think of their names... Who else, tell me."

*Half a point. Dr John, Willie Weeks, Bernie Worrell, Elliott Smith.*

### QUESTION 10

What's the name of the Tiny Masters Of Today album co-produced by your drummer Russell Simins?

"That's not about my career. I kind of take offence at that, I thought you wanted to talk about me! My son enjoyed that record very much, I know it has a song called 'Hey Mr DJ'. I can't think of it right now, I'm calling foul."

*Wrong. 'Bang Bang Boom Cake'.*

*Total Score*  
**7.5/10**

*"What's the prognosis doctor? I don't wanna come off like a bad sport so I respect the judge's opinion. That one about my drummer's side-project? Give me a break, man!"*





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