

NEW MUSIC 2012  
SPECIAL ISSUE

LANA DEL REY  
FREE POSTER

7 October 2012 £4.40

# NME 1000 NEW BANDS YOU HAVE TO HEAR!

As chosen by  
ARCTIC MONKEYS, Jack White,  
NOEL GALLAGHER,  
Tribes, BIFFY CLYRO,  
THE HORRORS, Wild Beasts,  
FRANK TURNER, Hurts,  
The Vaccines, Johnny Marr,  
Two Door Cinema Club,  
and tons more



**THE MACJABBES: 2012'S FIRST  
GREAT ALBUM REVIEWED**  
**THE MANICS: INSIDE THEIR  
EPIC SEND-OFF SHOW**





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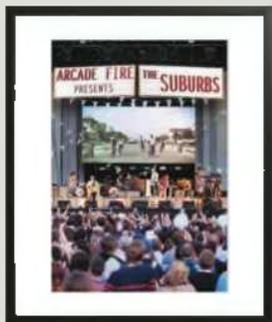
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# 100 NEW BANDS YOU HAVE TO HEAR!



**NOVEMBER 2012** It's got a lot to live up to, hasn't it? Initially, we thought about making this issue solely about the top few new acts we're pant-wetingly excited about right now. But then greed got the better of us. Why choose 10 when 100 will do? How could we ignore, for instance, the knockout appeal of a band like upcoming glam-grungers Milk Music, when they're so anti the music industry they'll probably never even sign a conventional record deal? Ditto the perma-kookiness of Grimes, a newcomer so weird she managed to convince a kid she was the devil. Or Howler, DZ

Deathrays and Spector - three amazing new guitar bands from three different continents, all of whom are as barmy and in love with this little thing called rock'n'roll as each other. There are 95 other amazing-as-hell acts to read about, tipped by everyone from us to superfamous pop stars, label bosses, bloggers and even Lana Del bloody Rey. Heck, we've also gone and stuck them all in a massive SoundCloud player (it's on [NME.COM](http://NME.COM) right now). So what ya waiting for? Trust us, 2012's gonna be huge.

**Matt Wilkinson**  
New Music Editor

**100**  
**NEW**  
**BANDS**  
YOU HAVE TO HEAR!



Howler, vest of mates (l-r):  
Max Petrek, Brent Mayes,  
Jordan Gatesmith,  
Ian Nygaard, France Camp

PHOTOS: PIETER M VAN HATTEM, DAVID LOWARDS, ROBERT WAGNET

With **JOHNNY MARR** and **THE VACCINES** already won over, Jordan Gatesmith and his band are dead-set on dragging “rock’n’roll nastiness” back into the limelight. And as **RICK MARTIN** finds out, they’ve got arenas firmly in their sights...

# Howler

**J**ordan Gatesmith is asleep. Or the Howler frontman is at least pretending to grab 40 winks, laid out on the stage at London’s Old Blue Last while his bandmates attempt to soundcheck around him. “I don’t wanna get up,” he draws before eventually being peeled off the floor, dusted down and introduced to *NME*. His bandmates, more interested in the contents of their laptops than shameless showboating, simply roll their eyes. As it later transpires, it’s a pretty fitting introduction, not just to a 19-year-old who exists at the exact midpoint between Julian Casablancas and Napoleon Dynamite (we’re claiming copyright on the Junior Casablancas nickname, OK?), but also the dictatorial dynamic of Howler. There’s only one dude with shades, leathers and an unmistakable air of confidence—bordering-on-arrogance in this band, and it’s none of the other four. Not even Brent Mayes, the drummer whose dad just happens to be Prince (er, allegedly... more on that later).

Once we’ve sorted Jordan out with some caffeine at a local greasy spoon to ease his Vaccines-induced

hangover (Howler rounded off their support dates with Justin and co at the capital’s O2 Academy Brixton last night), it’s an observation he’s not particularly keen to argue with. Howler is his baby: he handpicked the line-up from the cream of Minneapolis’ indie scene (“Like a football manager getting the best players in every position,” guitarist Ian Nygaard recalls), he writes the songs, he calls the shots.

“It was all very deliberate,” Jordan says of the way the band formed around the middle of 2010 when he drafted in Nygaard, Mayes and keyboardist Max Petrek (bassist France Camp followed nine months ago). “I’d been in bands with my friends before and it never worked out. So I decided with this I wanted the best of the best. They heard the songs, they were sold.”

They weren’t the only ones. The word is that Rough Trade played their demo only once before sending an A&R man across the pond with a blank chequebook to sign them on the spot last year. Hearing Jordan enthuse about the label’s other luminaries (The Libertines, The Smiths, The Strokes), it’s clear it was a bit of a no-brainer for him too. “He fucking idolises every band on the ▶

“Get people with pop tunes – then make the album dirtier”  
**JORDAN**

**100**  
**NEW**  
**BANDS**  
YOU HAVE TO HEAR!



At last, the least scary gang in New York competition had a winner

**"I LOVE ENGLAND. I'M SUCKING YOU GUYS OFF" JORDAN GATESMITH**

label," Ian says. "On Jordan's level at least, there's no other record label he'd want." Little over six months after inking the deal, Howler are proving no slouches – 'America Give Up', their debut album, is out next week. It's a storming record, albeit one that doesn't pretend to be anything it's not: 11 short, sharp shocks of classic-sounding tunes that reference everyone from fellow Minneapolitans The Replacements to The Jesus And Mary Chain, the Velvet and '50s rock'n'roll. Of course, the signs were all there back in May 2011, with the 'This One's Different' EP, which, if nothing else, spawned the band's first addition to the classic indie canon with 'Told You Once', a catchy-as-hell retread of The Jam's 'That's Entertainment'. The track appears again on 'America Give Up', albeit a rawer version. "That was totally the plan, to release a pop EP then an album of rock'n'roll nastiness," Jordan explains. "That's the best way – get people's attention with pop tunes, then make the album sound dirtier and rawer. That was how I planned it out in my head." One thing that has been levelled at Jordan is that his delivery and lyrics are far more nihilistic this time around. "You think we're Bonnie and Clyde" he growls moodily on album standout and new single 'Back Of Your Neck', before taunting "both of them fucking died". "My lyrics might seem a bit self-deprecating," Jordan frowns, "but it's more of a joke than anything else. I'm really into sarcasm. These lyrics are hilarious to us." A similar thread runs through tracks like 'Free Drunk', a thinly veiled attack on the Minneapolis scene that, on the whole, "absolutely hates our guts". "I felt like I was never really wanted there," he spits. "A lot of people are genuinely enthused and are like, 'Holy shit this is amazing, this is the first time this has happened since 1986 for this city'. But, on the other hand, Minneapolis is full of music has-beens and

people that almost made it. They're all in their 30s starting bands with each other. There we were, these 19-year-old kids that ended up getting signed to Rough Trade. No wonder people hated us." Given the aesthetic, influences and speed of their ascent, it's an album that'll also garner inevitable comparisons with The Vaccines – a link Howler themselves are doing little to downplay. "I don't know if they've quite passed the torch to us," Ian says when the suggestion's put to him. "But last night they gave us a thank you card that said 'the next big thing' on it. That was awesome." It's clear that Jordan had his eyes opened during those support dates. "We started getting stalked by fans," he grins. "I love England so much. I'm sucking you guys off at the moment." While the similarities between Howler and The Vaccines are obvious, it's the differences that are more striking. Not least that, in Jordan, they possess a frontman who's more of a pin-up than Justin, Freddie, Arni and Pete combined. He has star quality – but it hasn't always been this way. "He wasn't the cool kid at high school," France counters. "He was the nerdy kid who somehow had a band." The fact that Jordan admits he was mainly into jazz in his pre-teens before getting turned onto Dead Kennedys and Black

Flag certainly backs up this assessment. As does his shadowy pop past as guitarist in Total Babe, a band whose string-drenched twee pop tunes ended up soundtracking, of all things, *Grey's Anatomy*. "We were licensing music to German candy commercials," he remembers. "It was great to have that opportunity at that age to make a bit of money." Watch the YouTube clips of Total Babe playing live, with Jordan sporting sensible shirts and Bieber-esque hair, and it's clear that a bit of an image switch has taken place. Considering the Strokes'n'Libs link with the band's label, it's difficult not to be cynical about who bought him a leather jacket, shades and a haircut. But, then again, isn't this what managers, Svengalis and even artists themselves have been doing for years? Johnny Rotten didn't wake up looking like that in '77, y'know. Bowie used to reinvent himself on an almost annual basis. Er, Lana Del Rey's lips appear somewhat plumper in 2012 than they did a few years ago. If it feels premature to be mentioning Howler in the same breath as most of that lot, it feels less ridiculous after spending a couple of hours in their company – Jordan especially. He may still be in his teens, but this precocious bundle of nervous energy already has a handle on what could make for a truly great rock'n'roll star – huge confidence in your own ability, tunes to back up the bluster and an understanding that a little mythology can go a long way. That last point comes in the form of drummer Brent and the so-ludicrous-it-bas-to-be-true rumour that fellow Minneapolitan Prince is, er, his dad. Everyone in and around the Howler camp has their own take on the story – Ian and France dismiss it out of hand, while a Rough Trade rep swears it's true. Even Justin Vaccines is getting in on the act, telling us he's 99 per cent sure it's baloney. Jordan, meanwhile, will simply laugh when it's brought up, knowing that saying nothing actually says more. And Brent? He's more than happy to fan the flames. "My parents and Prince moved in the same circles during the 'Purple Rain' era. My dad did sound for Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis," he explains when we corner him. "My mom was an attractive woman, who had close ties with Prince..." He trails off, mentioning "complicated legal stuff". The mystery remains unsolved. For now.

**WHY WE LOVE**  
**Howler**  
Justin Young  
The Vaccines



"I find them refreshing because we're experiencing such a heavily synthesized period in mainstream music and they feel like the antithesis in many ways. No Auto-Tune, no synths, no brass section thrown in to make the chorus bigger – just good, old-fashioned, balls-out garage-rock."

**Johnny Marr**



"I think they're refreshing. They're all 19 or 20 and the songs are hugely catchy. They look cool, they sound cool. They're like if America had produced Supergrass, which I think is a very good start for them. I think they're gonna do good things."

One thing you can be certain of, though, is that Howler's brand of whip-smart rock'n'roll is here to soundtrack your year. What's more, as great as their debut is, it may not even be with the tunes from 'America Give Up'. "I've started working on the second album – it's all mapped out in my head," Jordan enthuses, adding that he wants the record released by the time festival season kicks in. The singer's thinking big: he's talking about five-year plans, the band's legacy and playing stadiums. "I want to see Howler expand and grow for as long as possible," he concludes. "But I also want it to be finished at some point. I'm trying to do the whole 'four albums and end it after that' thing. Going from stadium to stadium wouldn't faze me, though. Not at all." Of course, as this afternoon's nap proves, he's still got to master the art of staying up for a few nights with a band of mid-level caners before he can really rub shoulders with Casablanças, Gallagher *et al*. Overcome that hurdle, though, and 2012 is Howler's for the taking. Rock'n'roll: consider this your wake-up call.

# Band Crush

We asked the great and the good of rock'n'roll which up and coming acts they're rooting for in 2012



**"THERE'S A GUY CALLED BURNS, A PRODUCER**

**WHO DOES THIS ELECTRONIC STUFF WHO'S PROMISING. HE'S GOT THIS TUNE CALLED 'ICED OUT' WITH A VIDEO THAT'S ABSOLUTELY INSANE, THERE ARE BODY BUILDERS AND MEAT FACTORIES AND STUFF... IT'S VERY STRANGE BUT VERY COOL"**

**THEO HUTCHCRAFT, HURTS**

## JOHNNY LLOYD, TRIBES



"We're big fans of **Sharks** - they sound like The Clash. I hope something

happens for them, they're good guys and are constantly touring America, doing it a different way to everyone else. They're from Leamington and their single's called 'Sweet Harness' - it's a great tune"



**"Death Grips, with Zach Hill and this rapper dude**

**called MC Ride are really like Odd Future in their intensity, but their take is different"**

**COLE ALEXANDER, BLACK LIPS**



**"I like The Smokin' Barrels, they've got something. A bit of hard graft and a bit of polishing in the studio and a couple of those tunes could fly. It's a bit like Kasabian, a bit like Oasis"**

**NOEL GALLAGHER**

## FRANK TURNER



"There's a band called **Jim Lockey & The Solemn Sun**, they're from Cheltenham. I think they're gonna

smash it in 2012. To be honest, it's not exactly a million miles away from the sort of music that I'm doing but it's in more country rock territory - if that sounds up your street then have a listen to 'England's Dead'"



**"CARNEY. THEY'RE FROM**

**CALIFORNIA, AND THE LEAD SINGER'S VOICE IS THE KIND THAT ONLY COMES AROUND ONCE IN A MILLENNIUM"**

**LANA DEL REY**

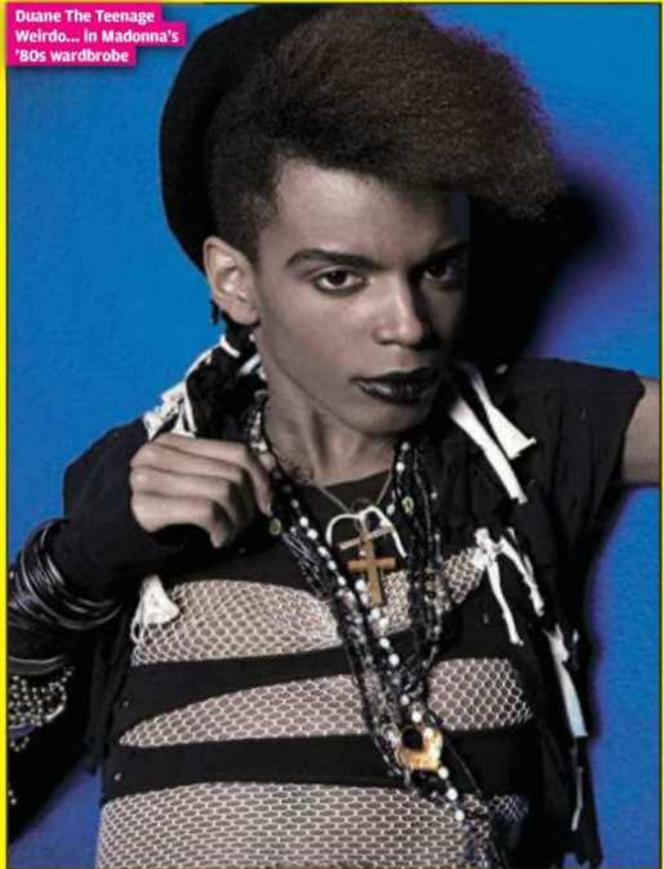


**"THE ARTIST I'M MOST EXCITED ABOUT IS P MONEY - I THINK HE'S ONE OF**

**THE BEST MCS IN THE COUNTRY RIGHT NOW"**

**EXAMPLE**

Duane The Teenage Weirdo... in Madonna's '80s wardrobe



**"DUANE THE TEENAGE WEIRDO IS GREAT. HE SPECIALISES IN LO-FI SPARSE ELECTRO POP, STRAIGHT FROM DETROIT"**

**JACK WHITE & THIRD MAN RECORDS**



**"THERE WAS A BAND THAT WAS IN BEFORE US AT STEVE ALBIN'S STUDIO CALLED TEETH. IT'S A GUY WHO HAD CANCER SO THE ALBUM HE'S MAKING IS A REACTION TO THAT. IT'S REALLY QUITE RAW AND IMPASSIONED. IT'S A REALLY GOOD, LEGITIMATE REASON TO MAKE A RECORD, AND IT'S ALMOST LIKE AN ART RECORD IN SOME WAYS"**

**GARY JARMAN, THE CRIBS**



**"The Lonely Forest are from Washington and are amazing. They haven't got a record deal over here yet, but I think they could make a big splash"**

**ALEX TRIMBLE, TWO DOOR CINEMA CLUB**

**100**  
**NEW**  
**BANDS**  
YOU HAVE TO HEAR!



Knitters with attitude  
(l-r): Shane Parsons,  
Simon Ridley

# DZ Deathrays

*They ripped the heart out of Australia playing robo-hardcore to riotous house parties. Now they're moving to Europe and, says*  
**BARRY NICOLSON**, *we'd all best watch out*

**I**t's over 70,000 YouTube clicks old now, but if you're unfamiliar with DZ Deathrays, their self-made, micro-budget video for 'The Mess Up' serves as a far better introduction than words alone ever could. Like the band, the video's set-up is simplicity itself: a shot-by-shot *cinéma vomité*-style account of what happens when two Australians drink an entire bottle of Jägermeister in under four minutes. Brutal, uncompromising and with chunks of what looks like carrot matted in its hair, it's a perfect visual metaphor for what DZ Deathrays are all about. Some groups balk at the idea of being seen as something so base and unsophisticated as a good time rock'n'roll band, but for Shane Parsons and Simon Ridley, it's their *raison d'être*.

"Oh, definitely," says Shane. "I mean, that's what we started the band to be in the first place. We always wanted to be a party band – fun and heavy and a little bit evil. When we first started out, we didn't even care about playing in real venues or anything like that, we were just into playing house parties. All we cared about was having fun and getting drunk, and that was really kind of it. And four years later, here we are..."

'Here' is at Adelaide's 50,000-capacity AAMI Stadium, where the pair have just come offstage after supporting Foo Fighters. It's a surreal way to cap what has been a surreal year, and things promise to get weirder still in 2012.

Shane (guitar and vocals) and Simon (drums) had been friends for years before the pair of them started a band called Denzel with another drummer. Then he moved to France and, in 2008, Simon switched instruments, the name changed to DZ (the discovery of an identically named dubstep producer later necessitated the addition of 'Deathrays'), and the pair started testing the water as a two-piece at riotous parties in their adoptive hometown of Brisbane.

There, they refined their sleazy, sexy thrash-punk robo-rock under constant threat of the police shutting them down.

"It didn't always sound amazing," remembers Shane. "But it was always fun, and there was always this amazing energy. There was usually a pool where everyone would hang out, then they'd pile into the lounge room for 20 minutes to watch us tear through some songs. We had a house party at a mate's, just

before he was moving out. There was no furniture in the whole house, so we just put loads of tarp on the floor and let people do what they wanted to do with the place – spill drinks, party hard, throw up, whatever. We'd just started to play when the cops came and shut the power down – they're pretty strict with that sort of stuff in Brisbane."

But while Simon and Shane may be the bane of the Brisbane fuzz, they became the toast of the British indie scene when they made their way over here last May on the strength of their second EP, 'Brutal Tapes'. Announcing themselves with a barnstorming set at The Great Escape and 10 mental dates supporting their brothers-from-some-other-mothers Cerebral Ballzy, things swiftly snowballed, with everyone from Huw Stephens to Mark Ronson singing their praises (not to mention their slot on the Emerge NME Radar Tour in October). The rapidity with which Europe has taken to them led to them deciding to relocate here from Brisbane a few months from now, with Berlin currently the favoured option.

"We've been touring Australia for three and a half years," says Shane, "but sometimes the place you're from is the last place to catch on. There's only five capital cities you can play here, whereas you go over to the UK and Europe and there's, like, 50. Berlin we've heard is really, really cheap, plus it's really central too – everything is either a day's drive or a short flight away. You can go over there and just tour forever..."

Which is really all DZ Deathrays are interested in doing. The reason their as-yet-untitled debut album (due for release in the first quarter of 2012) has taken so long to come together basically boils down to an inability to *stop* playing shows. During a two-week layoff in November, however, the band finally got around to making a record, decamping to the mountains just outside Brisbane with Richard Pike, frontman of Aussie math-rockers PVT, lending a hand on production duties.

"We did 14 tracks in 14 days, just working crazily hard from 9am to 11pm every day. I think people are gonna be surprised by the album – there are songs on there that are maybe a bit mellower than they might expect. There are also songs that I've had to try and actually sing, rather than just scream. Because there's two of us, we always get tagged as sounding like DFA

1979, which was totally sweet when we started the band, because DFA were kind of like the benchmark for what we wanted to do, but different things are coming through now."

## WHY WE LOVE DZ Deathrays

### Huw Stephens



"They're Australian, there's two of them, they're hairy, they have great riffs, they're very shouty, amazingly energetic and really rather scary onstage. Winner!"

### Mark Ronson



"I love DZ Deathray – this kind of hardcore band, they have brilliant videos and songs and a great sense of humour and style."

### Ruban, Unknown Mortal Orchestra



"I watched DZ half an hour ago, we're on tour together. They're a two-piece but somehow they manage to sound like four hardcore bands!"

**W**hile Shane might have learned to sing, don't expect DZ

Deathrays to have lost any of the feral, eardrum-piercing power that made their early UK shows such a revelation. And when they make their way back in a few months' time, don't be bashful about asking them to play at your house party, either: according to Shane, "If people ask us, we'll do it." Right now, however, they've got this idea for another video...

"We're gonna shoot a promo for our first single in a couple of days, which should be pretty cool," says Shane. "When we were in the UK, we couldn't believe that you could just walk into a supermarket and buy fireworks. That just seemed incredible to us. So we want to take about £200, blow it all on fireworks, and make a video centred around us just lighting shit on fire, exploding rockets and setting off cheesy homemade pyrotechnics. That would be awesome, right?"

We recommend you make the most of DZ Deathrays in 2012. At the rate they're going, they'll probably have hospitalised themselves by the end of it.



The only member of  
the family that remains  
in the U.S. exclusively

**PHARRELL** hailed him as “incredible”.  
**NAS** says he’s here to “move things out  
the way and give us something new”.  
And **BEYONCE, JAY-Z** and **KANYE**  
**WEST** all have him writing songs  
for them. **LEONIE COOPER** gets  
to grips with **ODD FUTURE’S**

# Frank Ocean

**Y**ou know how it is with boys. You wait by the phone all week for them to call and then, when you’ve finally given up hope, they ring. If Frank Ocean’s a difficult man to get to talk to now, god knows what it’ll be like

after the release of his first proper album. The follow-up to 2011’s triumphant Coldplay, MGMT and, er, ‘Hotel California’-sampling ‘Nostalgia, Ultra’ mixtape comes off the back of songwriting stints for Beyoncé as well as Jay-Z and Kanye West’s ‘Watch The Throne’ project. Sonically the slickest member of Odd Future, Ocean seems bang on track to be their true breakout star, with his charismatic, clever and poetically pervy singer-songwriter-skewed brand of molten soul.

Now 24, he started making his own music at around 13. “It sucked,” he tells us matter of factly. “I was void and without form.” So when did Frank start to not suck? “When I had to do it well to eat well... When I moved to LA it was the first time I really started to commit to working a lot and writing a lot and learning things about how songs are traditionally structured and then learning that I could break the rules.”

Born in “grimy, gritty” New Orleans and an only child for 15 years, he was raised by his mother and

estranged from his keyboardist father. He grew up listening to a mishmash of the city’s far-reaching sounds, from jazz horn players and “kids tap-dancing on the sidewalk” to house party bounce, his mum’s *Phantom Of The Opera* soundtrack and Toni Braxton records and his grandfather’s Motown collection. All of which – hell, even Andrew Lloyd Webber’s studied dramatics – have seeped into his multi-textured melodies.

Ocean – who legally changed his name to that of his Frank Sinatra and *Ocean’s* 11-aping alter-ego (created after a cosy night on the medicinal marijuana) – left the city in the spring of 2006. His exit followed the devastation wreaked by Hurricane Katrina, which in turn left his studio in ruins (“The place where I made music, recorded and shit, had gotten flooded and looted for all the equipment”). So he packed his bags and drove for 24 hours straight... all the way to Los Angeles.

Now living in Beverly Hills – “it isn’t as posh as it sounds” he says somewhat disingenuously – the self-confessed romantic somehow got involved with Tyler

and co at around the same time he signed to Def Jam as a solo artist. How the heck did that happen? “I met them at a party they were playing in LA – this was when Earl [Sweatshirt] was still with them. We just connected. We’re all artists who kinda don’t give a fuck, and I related to that freedom.” So how does one

become an official member of Odd Future? “Shit, I don’t even know! I remember a conversation I had with Hodgy [Beats] and he was like ‘Yo, you’re OF’ and I was like, ‘Oh, am I?! That’s cool, I’m with that.’” As the oldest member of the collective, we wonder if he ever feels like the dad of the group. “Nah,” Frank laughs. “I’m like the fly older brother.”

Set for release this spring, Ocean’s official debut album was written in the space of just six weeks. When we speak, the album is “about 80 to 85 per cent” complete. Asked to describe it he stays decidedly cryptic, stating: “The whole record sounds like there’s a cloud moving underneath it.” Frankly, we’re none too sure what the hell that means, but if it’s anything like his near-perfect YouTube back-catalogue, we can’t wait to find out.

“The record sounds like there’s a cloud moving under it”

Frank Ocean

## ODD FUTURE IN 2012

Frank’s not the only one breaking out this year



OF DJ Syd Tha Kid and Matt Martians from spin-off group The Jet Age Of Tomorrow started work on their psychedelic soul project – in which Syd takes lead vocal duties – *The Internet* in March 2011. “Left Brain came up with the name as a joke and we ran with it because it sort of fits: we all met over the internet, all of Odd Future,” explains Syd. Debut *Purple Naked Ladies* is out physically on Jan 17, the first album to be released on Odd Future Records. They’re about to start rehearsing for live shows too...

**100**  
**NEW**  
**BANDS**  
 YOU HAVE TO HEAR!

# GREAT EXPECTATIONS

We've been massaging the brains of the music industry's finest – from bands to bloggers, producers to label bosses – to try and answer the million-dollar question: **WHERE THE HELL ARE WE HEADED IN 2012?**



**PATRICK WOLF**

"I'd like people who've stayed in the underground and sold their records to take over Radio 1. Music has become so terrifying and commercial and superficial in the last decade. It feels like there's this huge brick wall between the underground and the overground and it's getting taller every year. I want to smash it down. And I'd like **Kreayshawn** to be as big as Lady Gaga."



"I don't think record companies have any patience any more"

*NICKY WIRE,  
 MANIC STREET  
 PREACHERS*

"I'd love to say to you that there's gonna be a new Nirvana that makes music really exciting again, but I can't see it happening. I'd love to think there's a guitar band out there like the Pistols, but there hasn't been one for a long, long time and you've got to worry that there's a generation out there who don't want that kind of music. We didn't make any money until our fourth album, 'Everything Must Go', and I don't think record companies have any patience anymore. They just don't have the money any more. It's a really difficult position for new bands to be in - it feels like if you fail on your first album, it's all over. But saying that, I do love **Ysbryd**, who are a Welsh language surf band who've been backing Gruff Rhys. I'm obsessed with them, it's really Joe Meek."



**JON HILLCOCK,  
 DJ, NEW NOISE  
 PODCAST**

"I'd hope the likes of **NZCA/LINES** and **Pet** will shake up an increasingly dull pop landscape. We're also likely to see a swell of politicised new music borne out of frustration. God knows we need it."

**MATTHEW BRITTON,  
 BLOGGER, THE  
 PIGEON POST**

"Indie seems to have been taken over by The New Boring, but there's hope: **Fear Of Men** and **Bos Angeles** should be putting out records. It's best to start closest to home, though, so as long as 2012 still means Manchester has **Brown Brogues**, **Ghost Outfit** and **Patterns** hanging about, it'll be a happy year for me."



**RODAIDH MCDONALD, PRODUCER/  
 XL RECORDINGS STUDIO MANAGER**

"There's so many exciting things happening this year it's hard to know where to start. I'm hyped about the release of the **How To Dress Well** album, as well as **Duane The Teenage Weirdo**, **PARADISE** and **Palmistry**. That's **Benjy Keating** – a really exciting new producer/artist from south London who's just starting out."

*MELVIN BENN,  
 ORGANISER, READING &  
 LEEDS FESTIVAL*



"There's this suggestion that

guitar bands are going to die out, but I think it's the opposite of what's going to happen. I think a guitar band with probably an angrier lyric,

probably with a harsher sound is going to have resurgence. I think in a downtime of economics, people will get angrier about things."

**JAMES ENDEACOTT, A&R, COLUMBIA (AND THE MAN WHO SIGNED THE LIBS)**

“The end of every year is always the same. The slipper and cardigan brigade start spouting off – ‘It’s the death of indie! The death of the guitar!’ 2011 was worse than most, and I’d like to say, ‘SHUT UP THE LOT OF YOU.’ Get it into your heads that indie music died in the 1980s. There is only good music and bad music nowadays, and that’s where the fun starts. Let’s look for some good music and not worry if it’s indie, cool, guitar-led or not. Let’s champion brilliant new acts like **Breton** and **Filthy Boy**. As for the death of the guitar – guitars will not go away in the same way that voices will not disappear. Look at **Alabama Shakes**, one of the most exciting bands to emerge from the US in the last 10 years. And guess what? They play guitars...”

**MATT BATES, BOOKING AGENT, PRIMARY TALENT**

“Everybody thought 2011 would be the return of the Great British Guitar Band. It didn’t happen, but the pressure is somewhat off for indie boys in 2012 so maybe we’ll see a surprise. Personally, I’m very excited about the likes of **All The Young** and **The Cast Of Cheers** who we’re working with. I feel the stranglehold of women on the charts will remain – and the year will belong to **Azealia Banks**.”



**JONATHAN PIERCE, THE DRUMS**

“I’m not plugging them just because I’m producing them, but for me it really is all about **Gracie Fucking Francis** right now. They’re making the most incredible punk music and it’s the return of something very special. The last time I saw them, they just did **Hole** covers and dressed up like **Courtney Love**. It was completely riveting. We left that show just freaking the fuck out. There were only 10 or 15 people there

and I couldn’t understand it. Their lead singer, **Lane**, I think he’s just a star – there’s no denying it. I got drunk on mulled wine yesterday and looked them up on YouTube and thought, ‘It’s really crazy that nobody knows about this.’ I went back to my hotel room and wrote to them right away and said, ‘Let’s go into the studio and let’s just make a record.’ So we’re starting that in January.”

Would you buy a Hole covers band off this man?



Marr: making Moss Bros suits the look for 2012

**Johnny Marr**

“Hopefully this year there’ll be a move away from the male/female lamo acoustic troubadours with clever melodies who seem to be all over the place. And possibly, dare I say it, American college rock will make a comeback.”



**JEN LONG, PRESENTER, BBC RADIO 1 WALES**

“I think we’ll see more bands doing it for themselves. It’s happened already with the likes of **Dry The River**; bands going out and touring and building a fanbase. One band who’ve already done that are **The Jezabels**, who I saw a couple of years ago in Brisbane. They blew me away, and in 2012 they’ll be headed back to the UK to release their debut.”

**ANDY CAPPER, GLOBAL EDITOR, VICE**

“British indie rock is at its lowest point for years. **The Horrors** aside, it’s either folksy tweezeness, blustery pretension or indie boyband crap. Too many students and poseurs and not enough mavericks. I think most of the exciting new music is coming from places like **Harlem (ASAP)**, **Toronto (The Weeknd)** or the **American South (Wacka)**.”

**PAUL JONES, A&R, ROUGH TRADE**

“It seems that music is getting more and more eclectic – which of course is a good thing. US bands/artists have certainly produced the best music of the last few years, but with major

labels shrinking and indies in the ascendancy I feel we’re getting to a more fertile place in the UK for music. UK bands are getting more exciting and much less apathetic.”



**MAIREAD NASH, QUEEN OF NOIZE/FLORENCE’S**

**MANAGER/LUV LUV LUV RECORDS BOSS**

“Last year saw so many amazing female artists, so I think it would be great to see an influx of male artists who can really play their instruments well in 2012. I’d love to see a few indie bands back in the charts too. There’s a few new artists I’m excited for in 2012, including **Kindness** – his album is very, very special.”

**100**  
**NEW**  
**BANDS**  
YOU HAVE TO HEAR!



It was a regrettably low-budget video for Rocky's cover of 'Eternal Flame'

Harlem's "spoiled-ass motherfucker" turned to drug dealing after the brutal murder of his big brother. Now, with a \$3million record deal under his belt, he tells **HAZEL SHEFFIELD** how he's shaping hip-hop's future. But first he needs to finish doing his hair...

# ASAP ROCKY

**A**SAP Rocky is hiding in a Miami recording studio. *NME* waits for him to emerge for a photoshoot as the sun sets on the palm trees and weed smoke drifts from under the closed door.

There appears to be a problem. "We've been looking for somewhere to get his hair braided for two days," says hip-hop kingpin Bryan Leach, who signed Rocky to his Sony/RCA-owned label Polo Grounds Music back in October and is now guarding the door with a phone pressed to each ear. "He hasn't got the right clothes. Fashion is very important to him," Leach says, by way of an excuse.

Then, seconds from sundown, an enormous pair of next-season Jeremy Scott Adidas trainers appear in the doorway and Rocky emerges in tight, twisted black jeans, gold and silver chains and a black cap pulled down over his loose braids. "Let's do this," he says, eyes dope-glazed, flashing his teeth in a grin that disappears in a burst of white camera light.

Cameras have been flashing at Rocky non-stop since news of a reported \$3million record deal hit

the blogs in October, before he had released a single mixtape. Nearly half the deal goes towards funding Rocky's own record label, ASAP Worldwide, with the rest promoting him as a solo artist. So in the space of two months, the man known to his mum as Rakim Mayers has gone from being

Harlem's best-looking drug-dealing high-school dropout, to label exec, tastemaker, and, well, the hottest hip-hop act of 2012.

"It's like, overwhelming," Rocky says of the buzz, hunched over a massive bag of weed that he rolls, compulsively, into straight blunts. "Sometimes I just want to get away." Hence the trip to Miami, where he's recording new material for a deluxe edition of mixtape 'LiveLoveASAP' in a studio owned by reggae legends

Inner Circle. It's an enormous, terracotta-coloured complex hung with pictures of artists who've passed through: Beyoncé, Lauryn Hill, John Legend. Inside, staff pull fresh ▶

*"You gotta tap into the gangster mentality"*

**ASAP  
Rocky**

**100**  
**NEW**  
**BANDS**  
YOU HAVE TO HEAR!



Alas, Rocky didn't have time to strike a pose

*"You'll see what we all about – we are the future"*

**ASAP Rocky**

red cupcakes from the oven while the studio dog wanders past the pool table and out onto the patio to a waterfall pool bathed in blue light. "I don't know too many people here," says Rocky, exhaling smoke. "You need to be focused sometimes."

Rocky used to have that focus in New York. Last summer, he rented out a "stash house" in midtown Manhattan for him and the rest of his "brothers" in the ASAP (Always Strive And Prosper) crew. There, they developed a gang mentality by laying down new tracks all day and holding crazy parties at night, freestyling into a fisheye camera lens for videos that can still be found on YouTube. That mentality extended to early live shows at Brooklyn's Creators Project and the CMJ new music showcase in October, where so many of ASAP and their associates crashed the stage that every show ended in chaos.

"Honestly, I never liked that," Rocky admits now. "You turn to the side and you're like, 'I don't even fucking know you, why are you onstage with us?' But it wasn't business in the beginning stages. It was just a bunch of kids from Harlem having fun."

After that bunch of kids from Harlem got invited on tour with Canadian lady-killer Drake in early

November, Rocky told the rest of ASAP to clean up their act.

"I'm going to buy a tourbus for all of us to get on, and if you come in the morning with another miscellaneous motherfucker, I'm gonna smack the shit out of y'all, you're gonna get fucked up," he spits. "You gotta know how to tap into that gangster mentality."

To Rocky, that gangster mentality comes easier than most. Born in central Harlem, he moved out to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania with his family when he was eight. "That's when my dad became a drug lord. He was one of the biggest," he says. "I was a spoiled-ass motherfucker, for real. There's pictures of me floating around on the internet with Jordan 7s and a Gucci link-chain bigger than my head. And that's my fourth birthday! That's why I've got such a big fashion sense."

If his father, Duke, fuelled Rocky's early obsession with fashion, it was his elder brother Ricky who taught him how to

rap. "My brother would beat on the table and I just started rapping. I tried it, he embraced me, made me feel comfortable, and from that day forward I was rapping. Pretty sweet, huh?"

Maybe – but then Duke went to prison for dealing. Rocky and his mother ended up back in New York, in a homeless shelter in Manhattan. When Duke got out again, he paid for them to move into an apartment in Harlem on the same street where, a few months later, Ricky was shot dead by a drug dealer.

"My brother was extorting him," Rocky says of the dealer, who was later convicted of murder. "Going up to him, smacking him and taking his money. And he got tired of it and he shot him." He pauses, drags on a joint. "My mother moved to the Bronx, but I ended up moving in with my Grandma, who's in Harlem, on Cam'ron's block, 140th and Lenox Avenue. I started to sell drugs, you know what I'm saying? I didn't think about [my brother dying]. That's all I knew."

Rocky was still dealing until July last year. "It's like, 'If I leave this alone, what the fuck am I going to do?' You're stuck in it, that's why they call it a trap. Whenever I started to see that music really was going good I was like, 'Yo, I don't want to risk it'. So I stopped." He pauses, then adds: "That selling drugs shit never was my character."

Now, under the close eye of Bryan Leach, Rocky's turning himself into a businessman of a legitimate kind. But he's already worrying about losing early fans – like the guy from France who compiled Rocky's YouTube tracks on an unofficial mixtape called 'Deep Purple'.

"Now it's like I lost all those purple-life people and I got a whole bunch of people who just say, 'Yo, Rocky's the new pretty motherfucker. Let's listen to his music,'" he says. "I wanna tap back into the purple people."

As he talks, a new track that he calls 'Pretty Flocka' starts blaring out of the studio. Its hard, uptempo beats are as far as can be from the dark, woozy, chopped-and-screwed southern-style rap with which Rocky first drew attention. He says he's also branching out lyrically from the endless weed-and-women brags on the free mixtape.

A deluxe mixtape, featuring the best bits of the free tape and some brand new tracks, is due in the spring. As is the ASAP mob's first group mixtape, 'LongLiveASAP', featuring the first artists to sign to ASAP Worldwide: ASAP Twelvy, ASAP Ferg, ASAP Nast and ASAP Ty Beats, among others.

"You gotta look at it like this, right," says Rocky as he swaggers back to the studio in those enormous white trainers. "The last thing you heard from me was in October. Now, you're about to see what we all about. We are the future."

## THE ASAP CREW

*Rocky's roster is already rife with talent...*

### ASAP NAST



On Rocky's 'Trilla', Nast raps, "Going broke is not an option". Not that it's likely

for the 21-year-old rapper, if his addictive solo track 'Fuck Swag' is anything to go by. "Nast, he's like the only motherfucker I know who's spitting bars. He can get rude," advises Rocky.

### ASAP TY BEATS



The producer behind Rocky's YouTube hits 'Peso' and 'Purple Swag' taught himself

to mix on Fruity Loops when he was 13 (he's 18 now). "Pharrell's a good example of what I want to be in five years," says Ty.

### ASAP FERG



Used to run his own fashion line before appearing in Rocky's 'Get High' video and

deciding to rap full-time. "I feel like Ike when I'm on the mic" he warns in 'Hundred Million Roses'.

# Band Crush

*We asked the great and the good of rock'n'roll which up and coming acts they're rooting for in 2012*



**"I REALLY LIKE REN HARVIEU.**

**ON ONE HAND SHE'S QUITE SHY, BUT ON THE OTHER SHE CAN BE A BIT OF A HURRICANE. SHE BROKE HER BACK LAST YEAR AND I GOT THE FRIGHT OF MY LIFE. SHE'S THE REAL THING"**

**JAMES ALLAN, GLASVEGAS**

Zun Zun Egul's washing machine was on the blink



**"I THINK ZUN ZUN EGUL ARE EXCITING. I LOVE THE ENERGY AND THE GUITAR PLAYING IS SUPERB. THEY'RE UNIQUE"**  
**SIMON NEIL, BIFFY CLYRO**



**"GABRIEL BRUCE MAKES REALLY DARK, BLEAK ORGAN MUSIC, WHICH WHEN YOU HEAR IT, YOU THINK WOULD MEAN HE'D NEVER GET A DEAL - BUT HE HAS AND HE REALLY DESERVES IT, HE'S BRILLIANT"**  
**FRED MACPHERSON, SPECTOR**



**"There's a local band in Sunderland called Spoken Word - they're walking around town looking like the Lost Boys. How did we get in touch with them? We always go to this place called Louis' Café, and they worked in there, and they came up to us one day with their demo. It was really cool and different"**  
**FRANKIE FRANCIS, FRANKIE & THE HEARTSTRINGS**



**"BEING THERE HAVE THAT**

**HAZY ALT.ROCK, PAVEMENT VIBE ABOUT THEM. THEIR SONGS ARE SO WELL-WRITTEN"**

**CHARLIE FINK, NOAH & THE WHALE**

## DANIEL BLUMBERG, YUCK



**"Fanzine** have become such a great band over

the past year - they've already become one of my all-time favourite bands. I think their debut album is going to be something really, really special"

## CARL BARAT



**"I think Charli XCX** is one of the few truly innovative talents I've heard in a while. Young, sassy and savage,

she's honed her sound over the last year to a pure pop paradigm with a dark undercurrent. Her first single, 'Stay Away', has an air of Kate Bush gone electro, and there are occasional nods to early Eurythmics too"



**"I'm tipping Novella - three girls and a boy**

**causing a stir in London. They play melodic, fuzzed-out grunge rock and sound like a hypnotic, psychedelic Breeders"**

**ROXANNE CLIFFORD, VERONICA FALLS**



**"The band we're most excited about are Those Darlins. They're from Tennessee and make crazy, melodic, Joan Jett-like rock'n'roll. We play their song 'Screws Get Loose' before every show we do"**

**CULTS**



**"THEME PARK. THEY SOUND LIKE THE POPPIEST BITS OF TALKING HEADS**

**PLAYING SHYLY AT A BEACH PARTY IN BARBADOS!"** **SUMMER CAMP**

**100**  
**NEW**  
**BANDS**  
YOU HAVE TO HEAR!

**A**



Great Shakes (l-r):  
Steve Johnson, Zac Cockrell,  
Brittany Howard, Heath Fogg

*Their raucous live shows are already the stuff of legend, but call them 'soul revivalists' at your peril. Signed to Rough Trade and headed to the UK in February, the future is theirs for the taking, as **HAMISH MACBAIN** discovers*

# Alabama Shakes



**W**e are fans of Mr Alex Turner for many reasons, the second most recent of which (after bringing greaser quiffs back into fashion) being that – just

prior to CMJ back in October – he tipped us off about Alabama Shakes. There in New York, amid a sea of hopefuls playing in front of a few dozen chin-strokers, their show was a revelation; their raw, passionate garage-blues-soul filling the venue full of people who were apparently already big-time believers.

Since then, word has spread through the usual hype channels but make no mistake: this is more a genuine, word-of-mouth, go-see-them-then-tell-10-friends-how-amazing-they-are thing. They're not 'cool'. Recently, their song 'You Ain't Alone' featured on a Zales commercial (sort of the American Ernest Jones). As singer Brittany Howard puts it: "We're not trendy at all. I recently learned a new word: 'pretentious'. And we are totally non-pretentious!"

This is true. Alabama Shakes could be accused of some things, but that's not one of them. Their songs feature classic, good-obvious, straight-from-the-heart chord sequences, are called things like 'Hold On' or 'I Found You' and are built around Brittany's soulful holler. The thing people *will* accuse them of is being stuck-in-the-past retro-fetshists of the J White vintage. Especially when Brittany says things like: "I don't keep track of a lot of modern music. I kind of live under a rock. I live in the woods, and they won't give me the internet any more."

Thing is, the people who dismiss them because of this will

doubtless not have seen them live. Since forming a couple of years ago, Brittany, Heath, Zac (all met at high school) and Steve (worked at the only music store in town) have set out to blow whoever's in front of them away. Theirs was the first NME Awards 2012 show to sell out. This is because their music's so direct and connects so instantaneously. Some might say it's...

"People call us 'soul revivalists', but that's not what it's about," Brittany interrupts. "And I get why people say it, but what we do isn't just 'soul music', it's really not. When people hear the album we're gonna put out, I think that people will understand. We're either gonna lose fans or make a lot of new fans, because it's more than I think people are expecting. And I'm glad, I'm proud of that." That album is 90 per cent done, and will be out early next year. It was recorded at the legendary Muscle Shoals Sound Studios – an hour from where the band are from in Alabama – but they don't see that as particularly significant ("There's history there, but not much else!"). They're

not studio boffin types relishing the opportunity to overdub a load of crap onto what made them so special in the first place and the self-titled EP that came in September was essentially an advert to go see them. "When you play live, you feed off the audience," says Brittany. "In the studio, you feel naked. I'm not really a studio person... I like meeting the people, everyone having a good time – coming together with a common cause."

The simplest and purest of aims for this simplest and purest of bands.

## WHY I LOVE

# Alabama Shakes

Alex Turner  
Arctic Monkeys



"They're one of the American bands I watched on tour recently. I saw them in this place in Nashville and they were amazing. I don't know who told me about them, and I don't really wanna be that guy who tips them... but fuck it, they were good!"

PETER VAN MATTEM

**100**  
**NEW**  
**BANDS**  
YOU HAVE TO HEAR!

*The music industry is run on cocaine and drug money. 'Room On Fire' is the greatest album ever. And this Dalston five-piece want a residency in Vegas. **MIKE WILLIAMS** hears the world according to bespectacled motormouth Fred Macpherson*

# Spector



Big break (l-r):  
Chris Burman, Fred  
Macpherson, Danny  
Blandy, Thomas  
Shickle, Jed Cullen

**W**e want someone we can hate," says Fred Macpherson, holding a knife. "It would be great if a band came along that hated us and we could hate them.

That's what you need, a bit of healthy competition." Anyone in mind? "There's this one band from Camden, but we're naming no names."

Fred is, of course, the enigmatic, former Peaches Geldof-dating, band-hopping lead singer of Spector. He's dressed head to toe in a pristine dinner suit complete with white formal scarf, a whiff of last night's booze wafting across the breakfast table and a slightly unbalanced look behind his black-rimmed milk-bottle glasses (he's had about 90 minutes' sleep). Over the next two hours we'll talk about fame ("I don't know how Florence deals with it. During my brief dalliance I found it vile"), politics in music ("There's a culture of looking the other way. But what are you going to do? If the other way is a load of strippers and a bowl full of coke, then maybe you might have a quick look") and the music industry ("It's corrupt. It's run on cocaine and gun money"). He'll tell us why Spector care more than any other new band you can think of, and why, having failed miserably with his previous two bands, Les Incompétents and Ox.Eagle.Lion.Man, he already considers Spector's achievements a success. But most of all, he'll remind us why he's the most unique, baffling and beguiling frontman in the UK today. Here's what he has to say on...

### SIGNING TO AN INDIE...

"We recorded a seven-inch, but no-one was up for it putting it out. We thought we were gonna have to sell it out of the boot of an old Audi. But Mairead Nash [Queens Of Noize/Florence Welch's manager/head of Luv Luv Luv Records] took notice. What she's doing, it's exciting. She's not even 30 and she's making 20 per cent of everything Florence makes. I wouldn't mind 20 per cent of that. Not that it's all about money, obviously."

### ...AND THEN LEGGING IT TO A MAJOR

"When you have a carrot on a stick dangled in front of you, you go for it, you don't eat the stick. The reason why we signed [with Fiction] is if they can do a Snow Patrol album and they can do a Crystal Castles album, it feels like there's a bit of creativity."

### THE STATE OF BRITISH MUSIC...

"Look at the '60s: Beatles, Stones. '70s: glam and Bowie. '80s: post-punk. '90s, you had the Britpop bands. Every decade. Bands like Arctic Monkeys, The Horrors. No-one expected The Horrors to become an important band. That's what's cool about Britain. People start bands just because they want to. That's not an agenda, it's a real thing."

### ...AND THE DALSTON SCENE

"I'm there every night because I know what it was like when we were teenagers. Now it's just *Time Out* readers or Japanese people asking where Hoxton Square is. But it's also a great place – one of the few places you go just to see other bands. But that will change. Where to next? I don't know. I hope we make enough money that we can live in Marylebone."

### LANA DEL REY

"I'd like to meet her. We could have some sort of future. Her begging me to hold it together, but I'm too much of an alcoholic. She says please, hold it together for the children. I say fuck the children, I don't even know if they're mine. That one looks like Johnny from Tribes. That's Spector 2020. Crippling roulette addiction. Any money we made is all on black."

### MAKING THE NME COOL LIST

"People say being yourself is cool, but if I was trying to really be cool I would be anything but myself. If my success with women is anything to go by, I don't have the personality, the looks or the taste in clothes, theatre, film or fine wine to get anywhere past first base on a park bench in Solihull when it's raining."

### (NOT) MEETING NOEL GALLAGHER

"We played *Later...With Jools Holland*. I spotted Noel, so I walked past him and tried to give him a nod, like, 'Hey Noel, Noelly!'. I had it all planned out. I was going to offer to buy the publishing for 'Champagne Supernova' for £50,000 on the spot. He blanked me."

### WRITING SONGS

"I write songs so I can deal with misery of being alive. It's like putting a Post-It note on the fridge: 'Fuck, I wish I was dead', 'My friend is an idiot', 'My girlfriend is sleeping with everyone I know', 'I wish she was dead'. Write it on a Post-It, pop it on the fridge and then a few days later you might feel a little better. We don't write to try and make £500 PRS when we get played in

Topshop, but God knows we'd love that to happen."

### MAKING THE ALBUM

"There will be 11 songs on the album because 'Is This It' has 11 songs on it, so it seemed like a good idea to me. 'Is This It' is the second best album of all time. 'Room On Fire' is the first. I'm going to be taking cues from anywhere it will be The Strokes. But musically that's 10 years old now and it would be stupid to go in the room and make a Strokes record, however much I would love to do that."

### THE FUTURE OF SPECTOR

"Until Spector have a bloody show at Caesar's Palace where we do some of our own, a few of the classics, a bit of chat, and intervals while people are eating their dinner for \$60 a ticket, I won't be happy. But seriously, we do this because we love it. I talk a lot of bullshit, and I can guarantee I'm gonna keep talking bullshit because I find it entertaining. But the only other thing I find more entertaining is playing songs, having fun and watching an audience have fun, that's heart warming. I really think we've got something – and we care."

**WHY I LOVE**  
**Spector**  
*Dev Hynes*  
*Blood Orange*



"Spector are a band and I mean that in the truest sense. It's like harking back to when I was buying CDs from Our Price and miming along to music videos, as in it would be easy to 'fan out' over them. In a time in which it's almost uncool to be seen as 'cool', here is a band, all looking impeccable in suits, each member you know their name and you might even have a favourite. All this aside, the music they play oozes a nostalgia that you've yet to experience, which, to me, is everything I look for in music."

# Willis Earl Beal

*performed his first gig just six months ago.*

*Since then, he's picked up crazy fans from*

*Hawaii, signed with XL and had **MOS DEF***

*begging to make a film about his life. His talent is beyond question, his sound yet to be determined –*

*and, says **MATT WILKINSON,***

*everybody wants a piece of him*

**N**ever underestimate the power of a good story. Willis Earl Beal's reads like a Greek myth and begins – once upon a time, naturally – in Albuquerque, New Mexico, around 2007. Aged 23, he'd moved there from his native Chicago after sliding into depression following his discharge (for medical reasons) from the US Army. As far as *NME* can tell, it was at this point that Willis decided to start writing songs. Why? No reason in particular. In total, he now estimates that he's got over 100 of the buggers – as well as a slew of local magazine cover articles salivating over his music, and a small but ever-growing legion of Twitter fans who post rhetorical things like, "The world must know. Willis Earl Beal". Allegedly, everyone from ?uestlove to James Blake is desperate to collaborate with him.

Yet the chances you'll have ever actually heard any of Beal's music are remote at best – he's never officially released a single note. In fact, until last July he had never even performed in public. Instead, he used to leave CDs of his music randomly lying around town, along with fliers that read things like, "My name is Willis Earl Beal. I want some friends and stuff. I'm not a weasel." These often also featured a hand-drawn self-portrait of Beal, looking suave in a suit, along with his phone number.

"The flyers were actually my attempt to get a girlfriend," he tells us. "That's the perfect example of how fucking weird I was, and how lonely I was and how much time on my hands I had. So I made these flyers, because I thought, 'Well, if people don't take it seriously they'll think it's an ironic joke.'" Turns out

people did take the flyers seriously – so much so that, in 2010, one found itself blown up and reprinted on the cover of a US magazine called *Found*, after the editor stumbled upon it outside a cinema.

After that, the phone calls started rolling in; from teenage girls in Hawaii who'd ring Beal at 3am asking him for relationship advice, to doctors offering ailments for the stomach problems that ended his army career. Things started getting really weird around the time Mos Def rang, Willis says, "asking if he could make a film about me".

Along with the sudden rush of attention came demands for Beal to release his music properly. A trio of tracks from the CDs he'd left around town had already appeared online on local blogs, showcasing his jaw-droppingly good vocal range (think Womack... Redding... Gaye) alongside his odd brand of thundering, bruised soul music. These had been recorded by Beal himself, onto a ghetto-blast, so they all sound rough beyond belief. But there's undoubtedly a mass of untamed talent there,

so much so that within a few months of an affiliate of XL Recordings hearing his work, the label had signed Beal to their new imprint, Hot Charity, on a four-album deal.

His first release, due in March, comprises the best bits of the old ghetto-blast material, and is titled 'Acousmatic Sorcery'. We tell him that one song from it, 'Monotony', almost sounds like Morrissey, but he laughs it off and says he's not keen on either the track or its style. He adds that in the next few months he'll go into a proper studio for the first time, to record his second album – though at present, nobody seems to have any idea how it'll end up sounding. He says he wants to work with Cat Power, his favourite singer in the world. We think he should either get a Detroit-style garage band to back him (*à la* The Dirtbombs), or go down The xx's more atmospheric route.

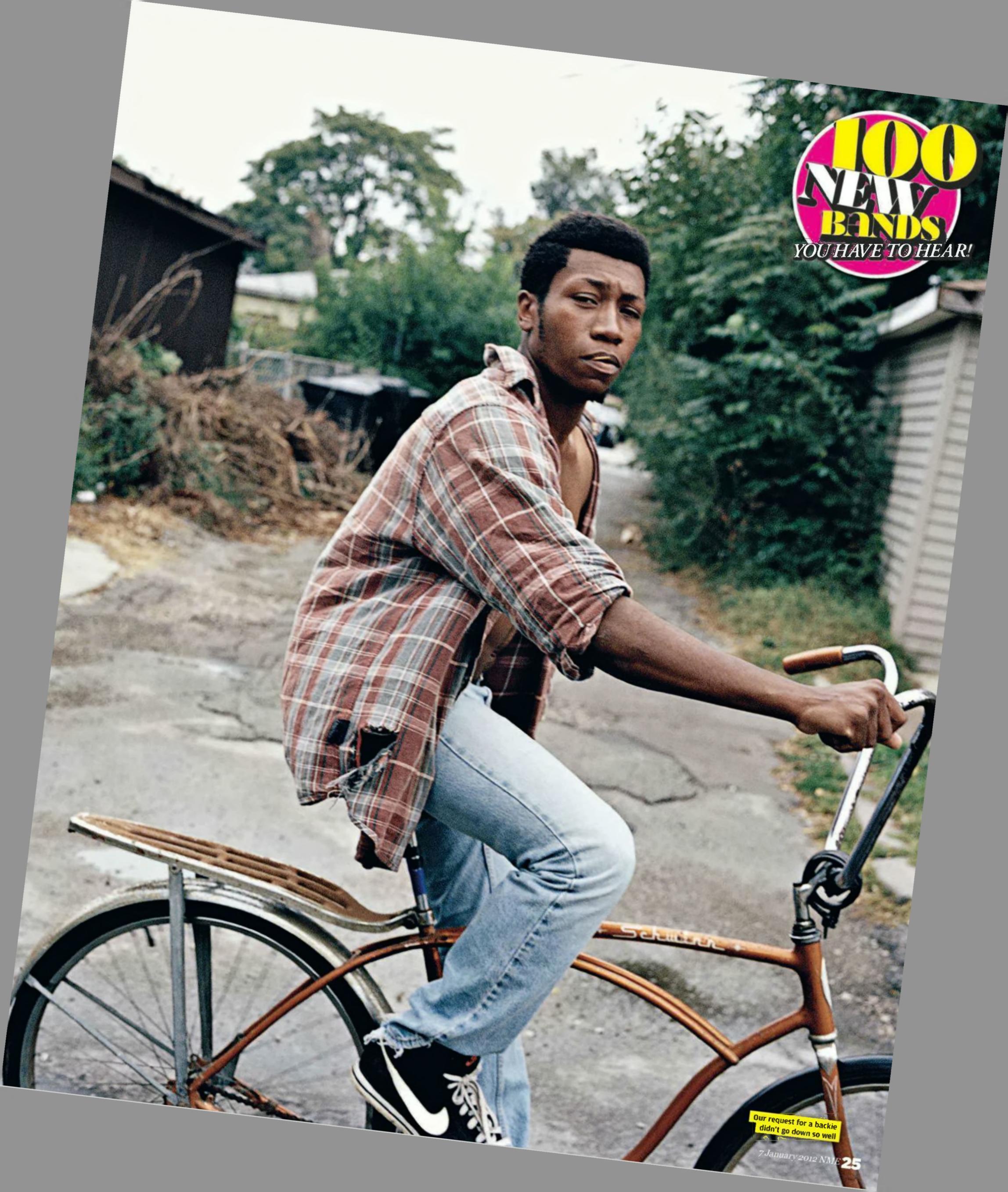
Of course, with Beal being on the XL roster, there's also always the possibility of the words "the male Adele" being bandied around. All of these are entirely plausible, we suggest to Beal, but he swiftly cuts us off. "It doesn't matter if I'm relevant or not," he says. "All my life so far I've been irrelevant..."

## WILLIS' WORLD

*Even Damon Albarn is a fan...*

Willis: "I met Damon Albarn pretty recently. [XL boss] Richard Russell was in town producing a new Bobby Womack CD and he took me to a listening party for it. A couple of days later we actually had peppermint tea and cookies with Damon. Did we talk about music? No, we did not. What we actually talked about was, 'When was the last time you cried?' Damon told me about how he likes to go to the Congo and play music, and then we went our own separate ways. I don't really know that much about him to be honest with you, but he was nice to me..."

**100**  
**NEW**  
**BANDS**  
YOU HAVE TO HEAR!



Our request for a backie  
didn't go down so well

# 100 NEW BANDS YOU HAVE TO HEAR!

It's roughly 5pm when 2:54 singer Colette Thurlow blows the first few minds of the day. Her band are soundchecking at the Dublin Academy for their last gig of 2011, a support slot with Wild Beasts, and the black-clad singer is running through an a cappella melody: "I just wanna be... close. Clo-ose. Clooooooose to you". Her ghostly voice goes up and down, a bit little-girl-lost, a bit heart-bruised, subtly hypnotising every single person present. Until this point the room had been filled with roadies hitting things and fiddling around with wires, but suddenly the whole place stops still for 20 seconds. Then, it's all sorted and everyone gets back to spinning each other around on wheeled travel boxes and trying to locate the Beasts-branded Heineken that's dotted around the venue.

So far, the number of people 2:54 – who exist around the nucleus of Colette and her guitarist sister Hannah – have been able to hypnotise fully has been limited, but in 2012 all that's about to change. If the early mixes of their debut album are anything to go by, the Irish-born, London-dwelling sisters are headed straight for the sultry, girl-groove space currently left vacant by Warpaint while they swan around LA practising tie-dye techniques. Colette and Hannah enlisted My Bloody Valentine and Jesus And Mary Chain producer/mixer-extraordinaire Alan Moulder to bring their Howling Bells-meets-Melvins songs to life. And, if the songs we hear live tonight become fully realised, the resulting record – due in spring this year – is likely to float our hearts out of our chests more than any other in 2012.

But while the Mary Chain's art was born of the kind of simmering sibling tensions defined by beating the living crap out of each other every now and then, Colette and Hannah come from somewhere else entirely. 2:54 is something they created from a totally shared vision, swelling from a sisterly intuition that borders on the telepathic. During our time with the duo we never see them further than two metres apart, whether they're onstage, leaping down for a break in soundcheck, or nodding in unison at the Beasts' performance.

"It's just... always been there," Hannah says of their bond as we sit down in a pub round the corner from the venue, the girls sipping lagers as the dregs of Christmas shoppers flit past the window outside. "I can't imagine it *not* being there," agrees Colette.

This is one of the most elaborate answers we'll get from the pair all day. Magnetically graceful, hugely friendly and happy to chat about their love of St Vincent and Mastodon off the record, as soon we hit

record on the Dictaphone they both *shrivel*. A typical question, like how they're dealing with all this hype, is met with stony silence. Their eyes jerk up and meet. Hannah offers a meek three-word answer. Colette attempts to fill the silence with a slight expansion. Then she giggles, before nervously taking a swig of beer. Aaaaaaand, repeat. Clearly, the duo are *not* primed for Gallagher-esque banter-rock stardom. It seems they haven't even considered it, actually, and from what we can tell they don't seem to think about the world outside their own heads much either. This is exactly what makes them so special. Their world is enclosed, clandestine and really, really beguiling...

It's taken them a while to lock into the witchy, driving groove that defines their sound. Hannah first picked up a guitar on her 16th birthday and, after they moved to London, they formed a punk band called Vulgarians. Were they any good? Colette: "Well, we were good fun!"

They fizzled out and that seemed to be that. Until 2009, that is, when something sparked – Hannah, who had been writing songs at home just for fun, emailed a demo called 'Creeping' to Colette to see if she had any vocal ideas for it. Despite having "only shouted in the Vulgarians", she added a yearning, soul-devouring voice she didn't previously know she was in possession of, and the demo that first ignited interest in the duo was born. To get it on Myspace they had to think of a name, so came up with 2:54, in honour of their favourite part of the Melvins' 'History Of Bad Men' (yes, they even go mental over the same *second* of a song).

Recruiting bassist Joel Porter and drummer Alex Robins through mutual friends, one-off gigs and further demos followed throughout 2010 and into 2011, before Fiction signed them late last year. Support slots with the likes of PJ Harvey and Warpaint also followed, but they cite their show at London's Corsica Studios in November as the one to beat. "It's like we're shedding skin as a band," Colette says of playing live. "It's all about confidence."

She's not wrong: onstage the pair have 10 times the amount of self-belief they display during our interview. Colette is a frontwoman of mesmerising promise, her nightmare catcalls swooping over the creepiness of 'You're Early' and the stunning, Mark Lanegan-esque crawl of 'Scarlet', a tune that would leave the band a couple of tattoos short of a spot on the Queens Of The Stone Age fun bus.

This is a band who deserve to be loved. But in terms of ambitions? "We'd love to be able to do this

for a long time," Hannah says, shrinking into the bottom of her glass once more. Asked for some insight into how they've come together to craft this wonderful noise, they don't bother themselves trying to understand it. "It just works because it's us, doing it together," Hannah says. Their eyes meet. "Nothing needs to be said – we know when something's right."

While these two might be living in their own realm for now, very soon we're all going to be joining them – whether they like it or not.

**WHY I LOVE**  
**2:54**  
*Hayden Thorpe*  
*Wild Beasts*



"The first show of theirs I saw was at The Drop in London. I was furious and gutted because I thought I'd missed the show - but then I saw them loading in, so it was a huge relief. It's a small venue, but there was power. It was a wall of noise. Before that, we were rehearsing 'Smother' and they were using the same room in the evening, so we picked up what they were doing and I got hooked. I've seen every show of theirs. They're doing it the right way and for the right reasons. They have an understanding that goes beyond the everyday - you need a deep relationship to have so much unspoken. You can tell they mean it."

Sister act (l-r): Colette and Hannah Thurlow



DAVID EDWARDS/EDMILES

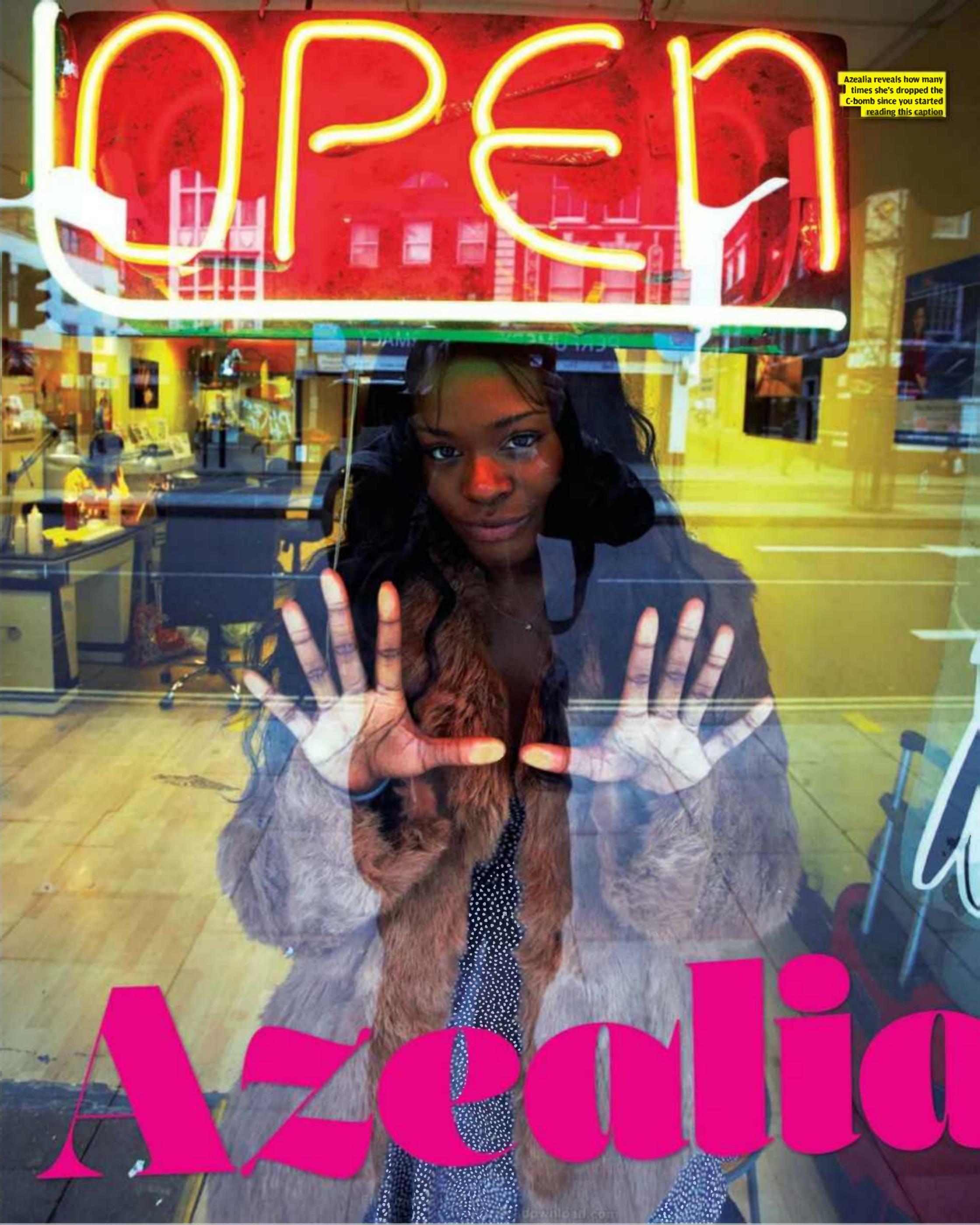


# 2:54

*Sisters Colette and Hannah Thurlow create something mesmeric and beautiful, sometimes nightmarish, sometimes heart-rending. They're so close they seem to live in their own private world – and as **JAMIE FULLERTON** discovers, they're not that keen on inviting others in to join them*

Azealia reveals how many times she's dropped the C-bomb since you started reading this caption

Azealia



*The mouthiest voice in rap has quit Harlem and taken up residence in good ol' London town. She gives **JO FUERTES KNIGHT** her assessment of our music tastes, our hipsters, and what happens when she says 'cunt' in front of posh old ladies. Now, if only she could do away with her fat internet stalker...*



**AZEALIA ON... BRIT TABLOIDS**

"I haven't felt the full force of the UK press yet; I'm pretty sure no-one will recognise me unless I run around with four plaits and a Mickey Mouse jumper on. Most journalists are assholes anyway... no offence. But y'know, I'm not as new to this as people think. I've been skirting around the industry forever so I'm ready for any crap thrown at me."

**AZEALIA ON... BEING STALKED BY FAT INTERNET GUYS**

"There's this one guy from the UK on Twitter that I'm shouting out right now called @FATTYHAMMER, who just messages me talking about how fat he is and how much he wants to have sex with me. I admire his dedication."

**AZEALIA ON... THE UK VERSUS NEW YORK**

"I love both, but the audiences here feel super appreciative. In New York sometimes it feels like the crowd is mainly other up-and-coming creative people, so they're just there to scope it out. But here everyone goes crazy, in that sense you don't have a stiff upper lip at all. I've seen you guys losing your shit in the audience."

**AZEALIA ON... HER DEBUT ALBUM**

"Right now I'm happy being based in the UK, it feels like I've got a very real following here. The British are savvy as fuck when it comes to music. Working with Paul Epworth, it feels like I willed him into my life because, like I said, I'm still listening to my high school favourites, like his work with Bloc Party and The Futureheads.

So when he hit me up I lost it, it was meant to be! I don't want to give too much away, but it'll be an innovative record for sure..."

**A**zealia Banks is looking rather regal as *NME* meets her in the lobby of one of London's poshest hotels. She's sat sipping camomile tea while casually dropping the C-bomb into her conversation – and she's 100 per cent oblivious to the horrified, flinching looks our fellow guests are shooting at her from every direction (not to mention the burning death-stare of the nearby concierge). Even if she did notice, you very much believe she wouldn't care. Why? Because a couple of hours later, she'll be onstage playing her biggest show ever, at Annie Mac's night at KOKO in Camden.

Right now though, she's happy spitting out a flurry of potty-mouth declarations and anecdotes about how weird and warped her life's got since topping *NME*'s Cool List last November. The best of these include the sassy assertion that "I don't feel the need to prove I can rap, I'm poetic as fuck," and a little casual swooning over a small-time rapper who goes by the name of Jay-Z: "I know you're not supposed to crush on him, but he said I had a cute smile. Jay-fucking-Z said that to me, yo!" The withering looks continue.

And you know what? They undoubtedly *will* continue – not least because Azealia's upped sticks from her native Harlem and moved here, to London, for the foreseeable future. Well, at least until she's done with opening February's *NME* Awards Tour and recording her debut album, that is (the latter is currently being honed in The Smoke with super-producer – and bezzie mate of Florence, Friendly Fires *et al* – Paul Epworth). So, who better to discuss the vices and virtues of our great island than Azealia?! This, readers, is Banks On Britain...

**AZEALIA ON... MOVING TO LONDON**

"I'm not bothered about Dalston, the shitty areas and hipsters are the same whichever city you go. But I've

been living in busted places all my life, why would I want to move to another busted place? I want to step it up, so when I get my apartment together here, I'm going to live somewhere that's just *nice* like Notting Hill. London has got some real luxury for sure; the other day I ran into the lobby of this hotel with a KFC and I could see a couple of the older ladies looking me up and down. I was like, "Yo, I'm in one of the most baller suites here!"

**AZEALIA ON... THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

"You guys actually swear a lot, so the whole 'cunt' thing being shocking is so funny to me. When I say cunt it's in reference to gay culture, like 'Oh, that's so cunt', meaning that's really cute and feminine. Obviously it's an insult in the States too, but over here, when I say it casually, everyone's like, 'OH MY GOD' and I'm like, 'Aww come on, really dude?'"

**AZEALIA ON... UK MUSIC**

"I love the girls in UK grime like Lady Leshurr and Shystie. I think they sound so much better than the guys. Band wise, I like Metronomy, but I've kind of sucked at going to shows and listening to new music since I've been here. I'm still attached to what I was listening to in high school, I think my own songs are embedded with that nostalgia. I mean, I'm still listening to Interpol every day."

**AZEALIA ON 2012**

*We ask who she rates. She tells us who she hates*



**AZEALIA:** "Nitty Scott MC, Maluca... there are a bunch of girls to be watching. But Iggy Azalea (pictured)?

I find the comparisons I get with her annoying. It's obvious she's been watching my shit, but I'm not bothered. '212' is a classic, what she's doing is not new. There's this lyric where she calls herself a "runaway slave master"...seriously. So, you have this white girl doing her best black girl impression on a project called 'Ignorant Art', what the fuck am I supposed to think? You shouldn't trivialise something that serious, it's disgusting. You're already pretty – if I were a record exec of course I'd try to sign her – so why this bullshit? Girl, have a timeout, face the corner and think about what you're doing..."

TOM OXLEY

**Azealia Banks**

**100**  
**NEW**  
**BANDS**  
*YOU HAVE TO HEAR!*



Grimes: maybe  
it's Maybelline?

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# Grimes

*It started with the devil worship. Then came the speed-fuelled songwriting sessions. **LAURA SNAPES** meets the deranged idealist who's reinventing electro in her own unholy image*

**C**laire Boucher is huddled at the top of a basement staircase in her parents' Vancouver home, telling *NME* about her new album, 'Visions'. "I underwent this extremely torturous experience. I never saw daylight," she recalls, blithely.

Turns out Boucher – AKA Grimes – went to somewhat drastic measures to make the record, locking herself away in her old Montreal bedroom for a month, blacking out the windows (she can only work at night) and staying up for days on end. "Shutting myself away was kinda great," she says. "I was like, I'm making such good art, and it feels like the best fucking thing in the world... but at the same time I'm so hungry and depressed and alone in this horrible room!"

This is just the tip of the iceberg; the 23-year-old comes armed with a backstory that reads like a Terry Gilliam film rejected for being *too* off-the-wall. "I denounced God one year at Easter, I was like, 12 or something," she chuckles, before regaling us with a tale of her formative years at a super-strict Catholic elementary school in British Columbia. Not that she abided by any rules...

"I didn't just stop believing in God – I decided I was going to be a witch and worship the devil. That made the problem significantly worse... There was a kid in my class, I think he had Asperger's; he thought I *was* the devil. He would throw water on me and be like, 'Leave, devil! Go back to hell!'" It comes as little surprise that the cover of 'Visions' is a futuristic heroine in the *Bladerunner* mould.

She wrote her first song under her current moniker (the spacey, oriental 'Geidi Primes') a few years back,

after a night caning speed with a mate – and for her latest endeavour she returned to the drug, again using it as a songwriting tool. "Speed makes me super productive," she says. "I was seriously isolated and hallucinating very vividly when I made it. I thought I was a prophet! I'd start hearing lines of music, filling in parts of the song that weren't there."

Although you might eye-roll at someone getting whizzed off their tits making dance music, she says her intention has always been to make a record about idealism, about the constant search for something intangible in what she calls the spiritually aimless generation, with herself very much included in that generalisation.

Saying that, Boucher's not exactly lazy. There's a wealth of her material already out there, mostly released on Canadian indie Arbutus, and she's so prolific that she's already working on her next two albums. For now, though, she explains, "Visions' is the first thing I've made as an actual musician, or producer."

Inspired by children's choirs, TLC, Aphex Twin and manga franchise *Ghost In The Shell*, it's a wickedly abrasive and unholy collection of songs – and alluring enough to see 4AD come calling (the label will release 'Visions' in the UK in the first half of 2012).

After that, the plan is to get back on the road – something that over the past 12 months Boucher has learned to relish. At SXSW last March, she was hellishly nervous, singing into her shoulder and

avoiding the audience's gaze. In England a few months later, she became obsessed with Katy B, while a personal invitation to support Lykke Li in North America taught her the art of performance. It helped her truly conquer her old puke-inducing stage fright, while simultaneously bringing her voice to the fore and unleashing the weird, synth-bound dancing that's now fast becoming her USP.

Meanwhile, the vibrant culture of America's south – she says her best show of the year was in Athens, Georgia, with her mate Doldrums – showed her how

narcissistic her existence of playing warehouse parties and getting fucked up was. It led to her shutting everyone off completely, and retreating to that Montreal bedroom to come up with 'Visions'.

Looking ahead, Boucher says the quest now is to convince people to believe in her. "I'd love to be like Timbaland," she says, in typically casual fashion. "I would

much rather be the engineer behind a pop star. At the current time, I don't

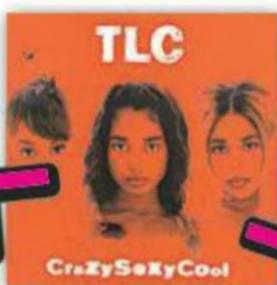
have the means to find some girl and make her into a pop star, so I have to do it myself?" We've no doubt she will. After an hour in her company, it's apparent that her determination is absolutely unflappable. Hyper ambitious and hyper accelerated: heaven forbid she slow her thrilling whirlwind to become a mere breath of fresh air.

*"I denounced God one year at Easter. I was 12"*  
**GRIMES**

## GRIMES: THE INGREDIENTS OF A POP WEIRDO



*Aphex Twin*



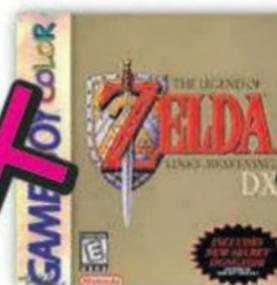
*'Waterfalls'-era TLC*



*Mid-'80s Madonna*



*Kate Bush's best bits*



*A hefty dose of Zelda*



THE ULTIMATE MUSIC GUIDE

# THE CLASH

148  
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ASHAMED  
TO FIGHT!'**

CLASSIC INTERVIEWS  
UNSEEN FOR YEARS

**WRITE RIOT!**

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LIKE A  
WHIRLWIND!'**

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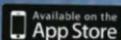
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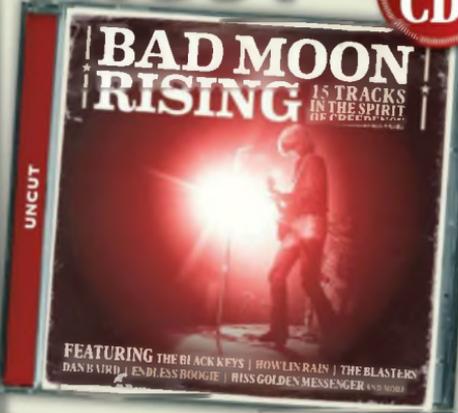
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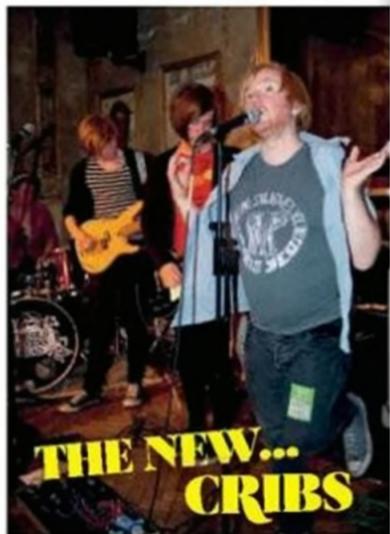


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# UK 2012: GENERATION NEXT

*From Horrors-loving krautrockers to Libs-influenced guitar heroes, we take a look at who's flying the flag for dear old Blighty in 2012*



**THIS MANY BOYFRIENDS**

**FROM:** Leeds

**RYAN JARMAN SAYS:** "I like them because the name is a big cool thing [they're named after a Beat Happening song]. Their spirit is good and that's always the first thing that attracts me about a band. Sometimes they remind me a bit of Los Campesinos! and Morrissey"

**NME SAYS:** After the sad news of guitarist Peter Sykes passing away last September, the Smiths-loving four-piece have confirmed they're carrying on in 2012

**BEST TRACK:** 'Young Lovers Go Pop!'



**DOG IS DEAD**

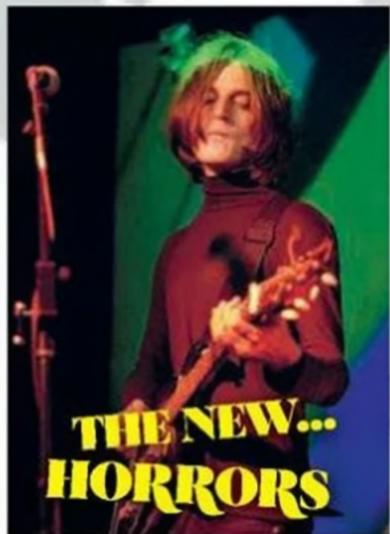
**FROM:** Nottingham

**JACK STEADMAN SAYS:** "We've had them supporting us on tour, and while they're not tiny anymore I've watched them every night and they're great. It's good to see them starting to get a decent following now"

**NME SAYS:** The five-piece are aiming for indie's major league - and if their trajectory continues to grow the way it has, they should slot right in alongside the likes of BBC and Noah & The Whale

**FACT:** They recently covered The Waitresses' Yuletide classic 'Christmas Wrapping'

**BEST TRACK:** 'Hands Down'



**TOY**

**FROM:** London

**RHYS WEBB SAYS:** "For me they were the most exciting band to come out last year, and they're still really new. They're my favourite band for 2012 because that's when it's gonna happen for them, I'm sure"

**NME SAYS:** Three of the band used to be in Joe Lean & The Jing Jang Jong - although they are all-but unrecognisable now, having completely swapped that band's Strokes-lite urchin rock for 'Nuggets'-style garage psychedelia and all-out krautrock

**BEST TRACK:** 'Left Myself Behind'



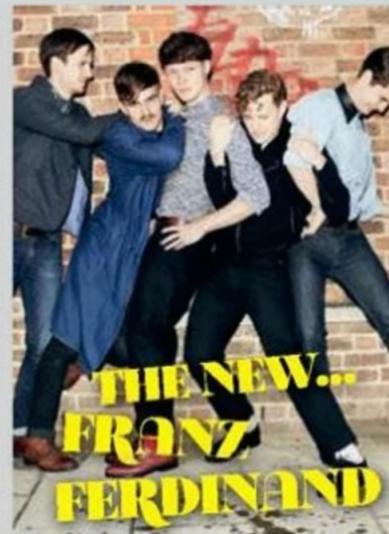
**WET NUNS**

**FROM:** Sheffield/Leeds

**MATT HELDERS SAYS:** "When they played at Tramlines Festival it was rammed - people were crowdsurfing and everything. And then I also saw them at my mate's birthday party, and they were brilliant there too"

**NME SAYS:** OK... so we really need to stress at this point that they're about a million miles away from 'Mardy Bum' et al. Instead, think back to when Turner, Cookie and co all resembled beardy wizards and hung out with Josh Homme. Now you're there

**BEST TRACK:** 'Heavens Below'



**CITIZENS!**

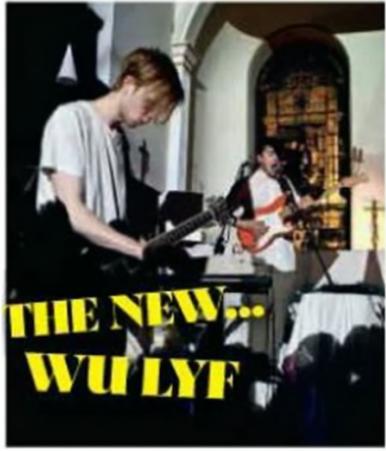
**FROM:** London

**ALEX KAPRANOS SAYS:** "There are only three or four bands a decade that really matter. Citizens! sound like one of them to me. They do something you haven't heard before, yet you feel they've always been in your life. They sound fresh because they aren't followers - they have the balls to do something new and, fuck me, it sounds good"

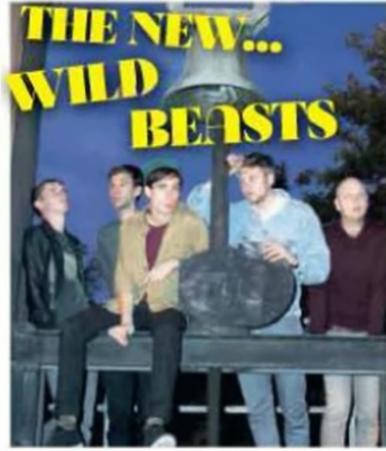
**NME SAYS:** By teaming up with Frank Ocean and The Weeknd's go-to video guys, High5Collective, the five-piece proved that they're willing to think outside the box

**BEST TRACK:** 'Girlfriend'

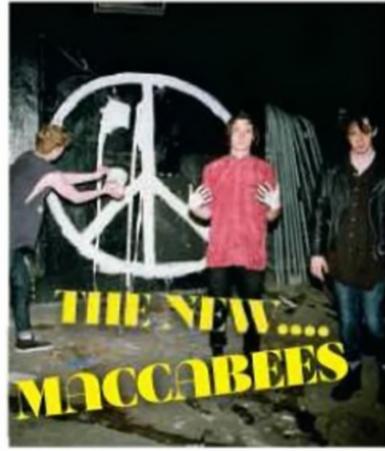
WORDS: MATTHEW BRITTON, MATT WILKINSON PHOTOS: WILL IRELAND, STEW CAPPER, TOM MARTIN, LAURA LEWIS, JACK TAYLOR, TAKESHI SUGA, MIKAEL GREGORSKY



**MONEY**  
**FROM:** Manchester  
**NME SAYS:** Soulful and darkly atmospheric – shades of WU LYF and The xx without the pretence, but with the same penchant for performing in churches  
**FACT:** Their debut cassette on record label SWAYS featured singer Jamie naked on the cover and sold out in half an hour  
**KEY TRACK:** 'Who's Going To Love You Now?'



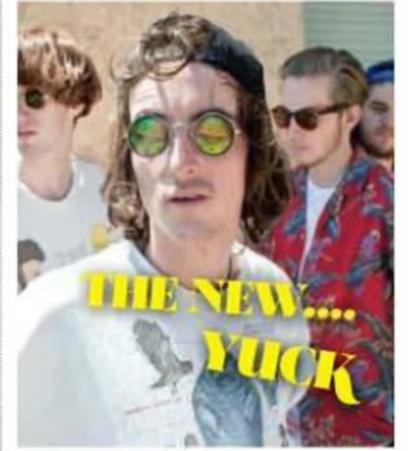
**OUTFIT**  
**FROM:** Liverpool  
**NME SAYS:** Melody-laden pop with a weirdly sinister, creepy edge, topped off by knowing winks and the ability to make you dance  
**2012 PREDICTION:** To be the band that finally ousts The xx as the preferred soundtrack to worrying BBC Three shows  
**KEY TRACK:** 'Every Night I Dress Up As You'



**PEACE**  
**FROM:** Birmingham  
**NME SAYS:** Doomy, gruff vocals laced with foreboding guitars that border on tropical (and sound about 10 times more exhilarating than you imagine that could be)  
**FACT:** They had all their gear nicked out of their van in London recently – and had to drive to Manchester to play that night  
**KEY TRACK:** 'BBLOOD'



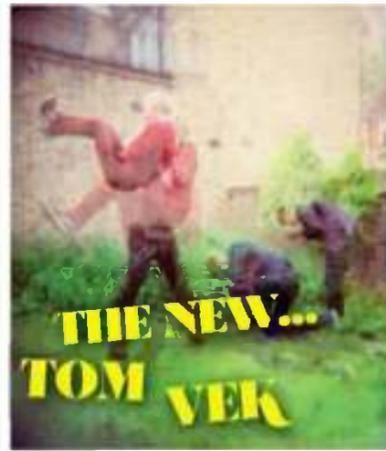
**ARTHUR BEATRICE**  
**FROM:** London  
**NME SAYS:** Word of mouth sensation that actually justify the hype. Meandering, textured and intelligent pop that builds and builds  
**THEY SAY:** "You are a goddess, never let a man take your power/ Don't let a bird bore you with penis envy"  
**KEY TRACK:** 'What We Hoped To Achieve'



**GROSS MAGIC**  
**FROM:** Brighton  
**NME SAYS:** The first bit of '90s nostalgia that actually sounds good – their 'Teen Jamz' EP was grunge made glamorous and not the least bit dour. One of 2011's properly thrilling sounds  
**2012 PREDICTION:** To make Fearne Cotton describe them as 'amazeballs' at at least one televised festival  
**KEY TRACK:** 'Sweetest Touch'



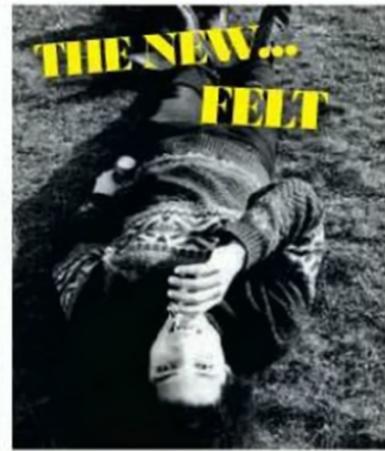
**DRY THE RIVER**  
**FROM:** London based, but all over the place  
**NME SAYS:** Somewhere near the jangly, saccharine earnestness of Mumford & Sons, but with the ability to recreate the anthems of latter-day Biffy Clyro  
**FACT:** They've claimed in the past they'd like to collaborate with Beyoncé or Leonard Cohen  
**KEY TRACK:** 'Weights & Measures'



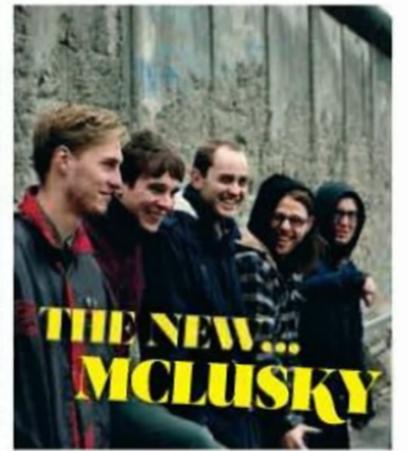
**ALT-J**  
**FROM:** Leeds  
**NME SAYS:** Folk made with the intricacy of a decent Kanye beat while retaining the ability to make your heart ache – and exactly as weird as that sounds  
**FACT:** Originally called Films, they changed their name in part because they kept being confused for South Carolina garage rockers The Films  
**KEY TRACK:** 'Breezblocks'



**BINARY**  
**FROM:** London  
**NME SAYS:** Potentially the band to end the search for the downbeat, arena-filling indie act people have been waiting for since Editors went off the boil  
**THEY SAY:** "Reverb-drenched melodies with haunting atmospherics"  
**2012 PREDICTION:** A tour with Glasvegas or White Lies. Or both  
**KEY TRACK:** 'Turquoise'



**CHILDHOOD**  
**FROM:** Nottingham  
**NME SAYS:** Hints of all the best bits of '80s mainstream indie: fuzzy edges, languid harmonies and verses that charm  
**2012 PREDICTION:** The modern-day, lo-fi equivalent of the Oasis/Blur wars, as bloggers pit Childhood against Yuck to see who can top The Hype Machine  
**KEY TRACK:** 'Just Floating'



**EAGULLS**  
**FROM:** Leeds  
**NME SAYS:** The toast of Leeds' burgeoning scene at present, Eagulls' blistering gigs had one noted promoter hailing them as the UK's finest new live act  
**FACT:** The band recently played a raucous gig in Manchester dressed as Yorkshire Ripper Peter Sutcliffe "and his victims"  
**KEY TRACK:** 'Possessed'



**FRACTURES**  
**FROM:** London  
**NME SAYS:** The kind of indie band that has become all but extinct in recent years. Imagine Kasabian but without the massive egos  
**KEY TRACK:** 'Ride'



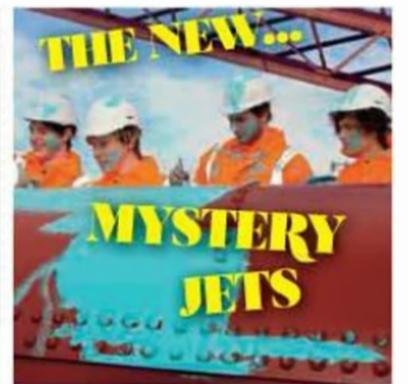
**DISCOPOLIS**  
**FROM:** Edinburgh  
**NME SAYS:** Shoegaze written on ecstasy, with guitars swapped for synth and a load of ambition  
**THEY SAY:** "Sounds a bit like digital fucking"  
**KEY TRACK:** 'Zenithobia'



**SISSY & THE BLISTERS**  
**FROM:** London  
**NME SAYS:** In James Geard the four-piece have a screaming vocalist who's part Iggy, part Faris (and a whole lot keen on crawling round the floor)  
**KEY TRACK:** 'Let Her Go'



**ZULU WINTER**  
**FROM:** London  
**NME SAYS:** Radio-friendly indie with just a smidgen of leftfield fire – the midpoint between Friendly Fires and The Vaccines  
**KEY TRACK:** 'Never Leave'



**BWANI JUNCTION**  
**FROM:** Edinburgh  
**NME SAYS:** A bit like if The Libs and Vampire Weekend formed a supergroup  
**THEY SAY:** "We're a 'poultry-loving', Afro-Scottish band..."  
**KEY TRACK:** 'Two Bridges'

# 100 NEW BANDS YOU HAVE TO HEAR!

# NEW WORLD

*It's not all about the UK – there's some great music being made by new acts all around the globe. Here's 25 of the best of them...*

## CANADA ROCKS

### DIRTY BEACHES

**BASED:** Montreal  
**FOR FANS OF:** Velvet Underground, David Lynch  
**NME SAYS:** If ever the word troubadour was

apt, it'd be for describing Alex Zhang Hungtai. He's spent the past year or so travelling the world from gig to gig, with only a battered old electric guitar for company. Needless to say, he's slayed

audiences wherever he's gone.  
**2012 PREDICTION:** Sorts out a backing band, signs a proper record deal and releases one of the albums of the year.  
**KEY TRACK:** 'Lord Knows Best'

### DOLDRUMS

**BASED:** Montreal  
**FOR FANS OF:** Grimes, Radiohead  
**NME SAYS:** A mish-mash of brilliantly inventive samples  
**KEY TRACK:** 'I'm Lost In My Head'



One of Friends has a very round, very shiny head

## AMERICAN INVADERS

### FIDLAR

**BASED:** Los Angeles  
**FOR FANS OF:** Pixies, Surfer Blood  
**NME SAYS:** They embody everything that's great about guitar rock in the US at present (ie MASSIVE choruses, a DIY ethic and a passion for skunk)  
**FACT:** FIDLAR stands for Fuck It Dog Life's A Risk  
**PREDICTION FOR 2012:** Head out on tour with Wavves and The Black Lips, before annihilating western civilisation.  
**KEY TRACK:** 'Wake Bake Skate'



Blasted Canyons defy the smoking ban. THEY ARE BADASS

### BLASTED CANYONS

**BASED:** San Francisco  
**FOR FANS OF:** Thee Oh Sees  
**NME SAYS:** They take West Coast psych as a starting point and, like dynamite in an exhaust pipe, blow it to smithereens  
**2012 PREDICTION:** The latest in a long line of top-shelf Bay Area bands that will relocate North America's indie capital from Brooklyn to San Fran  
**KEY TRACK:** 'Blood On The Wall'



FidlAR. On a roof. Possibly



Just say... NO

### REPTAR

**BASED:** Athens, Georgia  
**FOR FANS OF:** Talking Heads, Franz Ferdinand  
**THEY SAY:** "Reptar likes to first and foremost make people dance"  
**NME SAYS:** They still haven't made it over to the UK yet, but the four-piece stole the show at last year's SXSW. Their "electro-dance-sexpop", as they call it, is tailor-made for festivals...  
**KEY TRACK:** 'Blast Off'

### WISE BLOOD

**BASED:** Pittsburgh  
**FOR FANS OF:** Beck, Prince  
**NME SAYS:** The brainchild of Chris Laufman, Wise Blood is a gloriously chaotic mess of Led Zep beats and Outkast-style funk  
**FACT:** When NME saw him live he pushed a wheelchair-bound audience member around the stage  
**KEY TRACK:** 'BIG EGO'

## BROOKLYN DREAMERS

Forget Julian Casablancas' hallowed Ludlow Street and the rest of New York's Lower East Side – across the Williamsburg Bridge and over to Brooklyn is where every NYC band who matters right now is based. Bushwick-dwelling **Friends** are leading the charge, almost *living* in venues like Glasslands and Shea Stadium. Their brand of ESG-meets-TLC pop sparkle is utterly joyous live, while on record 'I'm His Girl' is the track to check. Hot on their heels are **Little Racer** – already picked up by Young And Lost Club in the UK – whose 'Split For The Coast' actually sounds like the polar opposite of The Big Apple (beachy and singalong). **Exitmusic**, meanwhile, revel in the icier side of things, recalling early Interpol, while **Devin** offers a more straightforward take on garage rock – serving up r'n'r gems in the style of the English songwriters he's obsessed with (from Costello to Doherty). Finally, 'Indiana' by **Abadabad** has barely left our stereo since going online in 2011. We'll leave it to the band themselves to describe what they're all about: "Abadabad is dangerous, tape relic'd, guitar rock from a land of perpetual summers of dreamy ladies. These moments and dreams happen somewhere in Brooklyn, NY." Too true.

### NO

**BASED:** Los Angeles  
**FOR FANS OF:** The National  
**NME SAYS:** Hollywood's latest working-class hero, Bradley Hanan Carter makes perfect closing-time soundtracks  
**KEY TRACK:** 'Stay With Me'



BEIJEROMBIE & FITZ: November's over, Wise Blood

# WORLD ORDER

## GREAT DANES

**LOWER**

**BASED:** Copenhagen  
**FOR FANS OF:** Iceage, The Clash  
**DAMIAN FROM**

**FUCKED UP SAYS:** "They're like the brother band to Iceage. They've got a lot of UK post punk influences and they've got a

bunch of UK Oi! influences too, but not in a poppy way, more with the aggression"  
**KEY TRACK:** 'Craver'



François & The Atlas Mountains. And, er, an actual mountain

## FRENCH TOASTS

### FRANÇOIS & THE ATLAS MOUNTAINS

**BASED:** Saintes  
**FOR FANS OF:** Wild Beasts  
**NME SAYS:** Based in Bordeaux, François Marry and his musical mates bagged a deal with Domino late last year  
**KEY TRACK:** 'Piscine'

### LA FEMME

**BASED:** Paris  
**FOR FANS OF:** The Cure, The Coral  
**NME SAYS:** Coming on partly like a Parisian disco version of early Coral (that'll be the weird guitar effects), the fourpiece are headed over to the UK in February  
**KEY TRACK:** 'Sur La Planche'

### APES AND HORSES

**BASED:** Paris  
**FOR FANS OF:** WU LYF, Talking Heads  
**NME SAYS:** Despite still being based in France, most of their songs are sung in English - with taut post-punk the order of the day  
**KEY TRACK:** 'The Fields'



Apes And Horses prepare for blanket coverage in 2012



Step-Panther, look at Icona Pop. I mean, come on

## WIZARDS OF AUS

### BLEEDING KNEES CLUB

**BASED:** Gold Coast  
**FOR FANS OF:** The White Stripes  
**NME SAYS:** They're the hardest working duo in indie - their minimal set-up often sees them play a handful of shows in each town they visit. The most NME witnessed was five in one night  
**KEY TRACK:** 'Have Fun'

### STEP-PANTHER

**BASED:** Sydney  
**FOR FANS OF:** Smith Westerns, Black Lips  
**ALEX WALL OF BLEEDING KNEES CLUB SAYS:** "They make my face melt off my skull and create a puddle on the floor"  
**2012 PREDICTION:** Cementing the big cat Aussie takeover of the UK  
**KEY TRACK:** 'My Neck'

### JAGWAR MA

**BASED:** Sydney  
**FOR FANS OF:** Beck, The Beach Boys  
**NME SAYS:** The brainchild of producer Jono Ma, this clandestine Aussie Gorillaz-esque group know no bounds  
**FACT:** Debut single 'Come Save Me' is due for official release in February  
**KEY TRACK:** 'Come Save Me'

### WORLD'S END PRESS

**BASED:** Melbourne  
**FOR FANS OF:** Happy Mondays  
**NME SAYS:** The most coveted opening slot for the summer of 2012 is theirs for the taking...  
**2012 PREDICTION:** Will usher in a new generation of kinky afro'd ravers  
**KEY TRACK:** 'Faithful'



A nice posed photo. Why can't more new bands be like Icona Pop?

## SKANDI LICIOUS

As January rears its ugly head, we can safely confirm that 2011 has seen our Nordic cousins reign supreme when it comes to forward-thinking pop music. Proof? Niki & The Dove, The Knife, Björk. 2012 should see Sweden's **Icona Pop** carry on the tradition - their forthcoming banger 'Top Rated' hints at huge things. Currently unknown outside her native Stockholm, Ester Ideskog records under the name **Vanbot**, and on the strength of recent single 'Make Me, Break Me' she's likely to give Robyn a run for her money in the pint-sized-with-attitude

stakes. **Serenades** is the new project fronted by Shout Out Louds' Adam Olenius. Last year's stunning single 'Birds' was but a prelude to the chamber pop of his debut album 'Criminal Heaven'. Moving on from pop, Norway's **Philco Fiction** record during the harsh Nordic winters, but produce the musical equivalent of a cosy Slanket. New album 'Take It Personal' is out now in Scandinavia. Finally, we come to **Battlekat**, who impressed during October's Swn Festival - not surprising considering they pack more punch than a rabid Karin Dreijer Andersson.

# STAYING UNDERGROUND

**MILK MUSIC** are the most exciting DIY band to come out of America in years, with debut EP 'Beyond Living' flooring all who hear it. Now, if only they'd sign a bloody record deal, says **JONATHAN GARRETT**

**W**hat really gets me on Patti Smith's 'Horses' is that song 'Free Money.' If money was free – just think what you could do." Alex Coxen, 24-year-old singer,

mouthpiece and master songwriter of Milk Music could do with a buck or two right now.

He currently shares a house with three other musicians in the perpetually rain-soaked town of Olympia, Washington, where he sleeps on a busted futon in a cramped, leaky attic. For that luxury, he shells out just \$125 – but even the meagre pay from his crappy restaurant job still leaves him scrounging around for enough cash to catch the bus.

Coxen is also, we should point out, the frontman of probably the most exciting unsigned band in the world right now. Of course, people in his position banging on about financial woes are nothing new, but there are two striking things about the offhand remark he makes in the first paragraph of this article. 1) Milk

Music almost certainly *could* cash a cheque tomorrow that would make any other unsigned act weep for joy. And 2) Coxen would almost certainly sooner take a blunt hacksaw to his hand than sign the record contract to trigger said situation.

"I just yelled at this one [industry] guy and told him to stop sucking our dicks so hard," he says of his current state of mind regarding signing a deal. "Then I felt bad because I think he liked our music. But there just isn't really a label that makes [signing] seem all that attractive. I feel it's a blessing that I'm such an asshole about this shit."

Asshole or not, Milk Music is undoubtedly Coxen's baby. And to really understand why the industry is falling head over heels for the band at present, all you need to do is to take a

listen to their debut six-track record, 'Beyond Living'. Originally self-released in January 2010, it took a full 22 months to cross the Atlantic – and when it finally did (via Fear & Records last

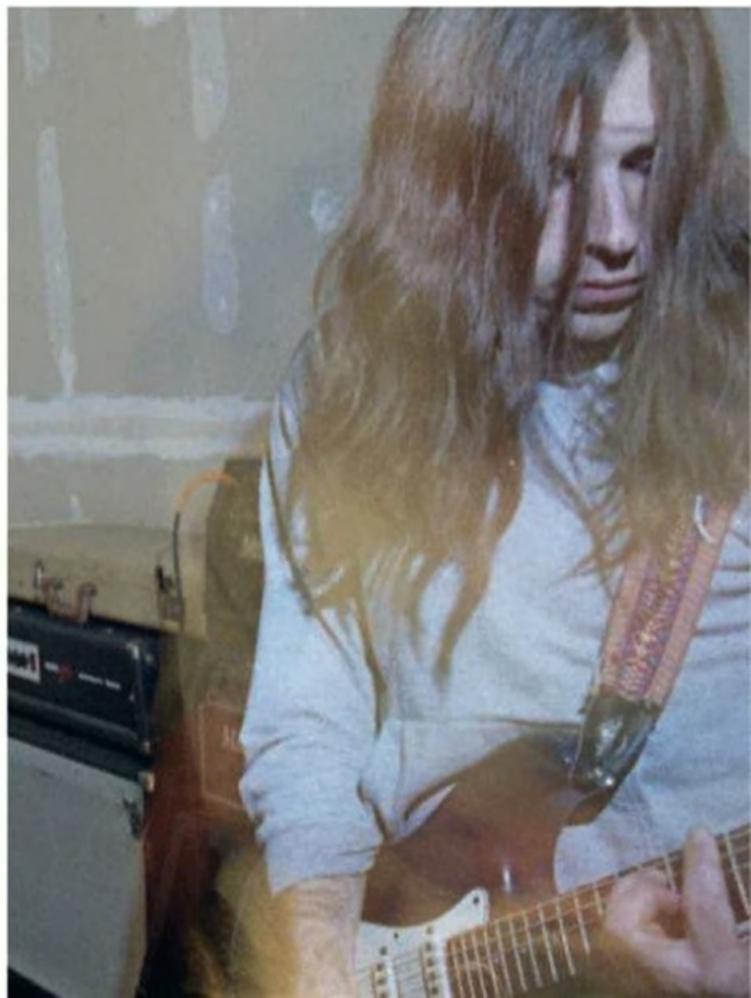
November), it sold out its entire first shipment within days. In particular, the title-track is The One to seek out. On the surface it's been hailed as the breakfast jingle for a new wave of Cobain-inspired grunge, but scratch below that most obvious of comparisons and you'll find something altogether more genuine:

post-punk guitars (Big Muff'd to the max) that almost, *almost* recall Keith Levene's epic playing on PiL's 'Public Image', and an honest, perhaps obsessive, homage to the label that *inspired*

Nirvana *et al* – SST Records (home to Black Flag, Hüsker Dü and Sonic Youth among countless others).

*"You need to help me bury 'Beyond Living'"*  
**Alex Coxen**

At home with Milk Music...



It's a song that's so fierce, so grippingly immediate and so unashamedly anthemic that the only real post-listen thought is one of shock: how could it have taken so long to properly catch on?!

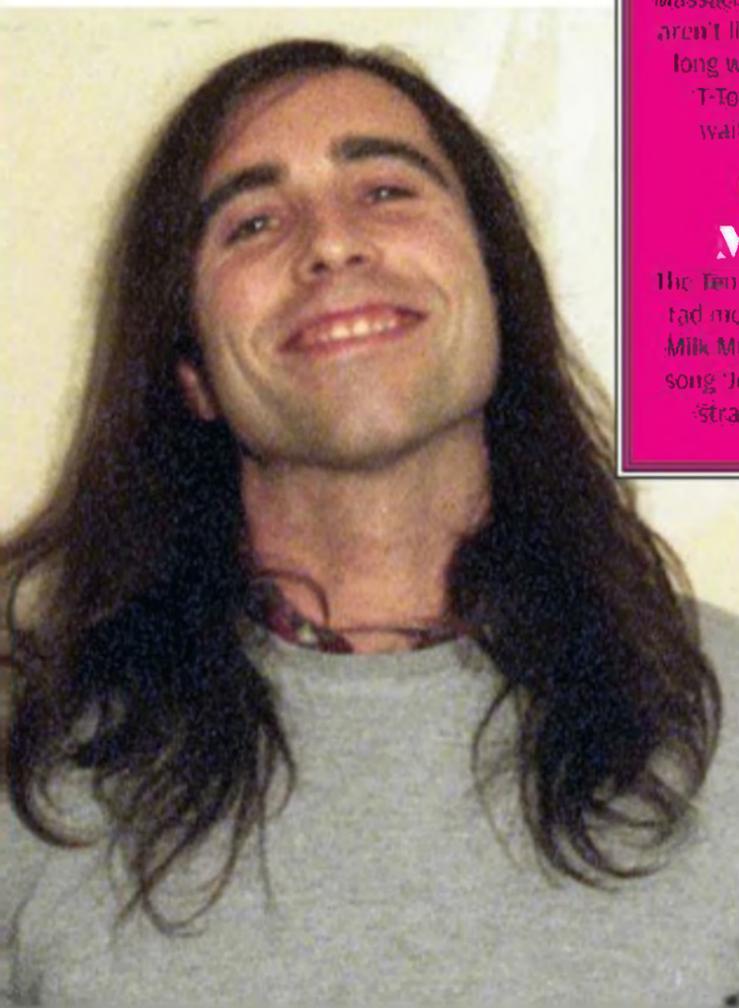
Not that Milk Music themselves are actually that into it. "You need to help me bury ['Beyond Living']! You've got to convince people it's not our best song," pleads Coxen. It's not often that you find a young band asking to have their anthem-in-waiting snuffed out before it's even had a chance to breathe. But then, Milk Music are no normal band.

**C**oxen formed them after graduating from his Port Townsend high-school (full of "creative kids with bad grades and runaway pregnant teenagers") and bolting two hours south to Seattle. There, they were officially completed by Alex's half-brother Joe Rutter on drums, with a revolving door of bassists and second guitarists playing alongside them.

"Alex came to live with me [in Seattle], and we started collecting records," says Rutter of their gestation. "We didn't really know anyone else, but he and I were into the same music, so we started going to shows."

They officially started Milk Music in 2008, and soon relocated to nearby Olympia, which was, by this time, the epicentre of a burgeoning hardcore movement. Listen to Coxen wax lyrical about said scene and it becomes clear that he's first a music fan and second a musician. His voice quickens as he rattles off the names of half a dozen amazing bands from the surrounding area, and it's at this point that he finds himself able to justify his problem with the music bigwigs who are making him feel like King Canute right now. "This scene – it's one of the only reasons I can validate being in existence as Milk Music," he explains. "It's not worth competing if you're unimpressed with everyone else [around you]."

JEAN NAGAI



## DIY TIL THEY DIE

*There's a slew of bands with the same aesthetic as Milk Music coming out of the US right now – here's our pick of the bunch*

### SEX VID

The godfathers of the current Olympia hardcore scene (though they make few concessions – even their non-internet-friendly name keeps would-be fans at bay...)

### THE MEN

Based in NYC, The Men topped with Milk Music last year. Their Sacred Bones-issued record, 'Leave Home', is in the same hardcore vein as Coxen and co, but also boasts a strong strain of UK post-punk.

### CALIFORNIA X

Next to nothing is known about this lot, who emerge screaming from Dinosaur Jr's stomping ground of Western Massachusetts. The whispers aren't likely to stay quiet for long with great songs like 'T-Town' and 'Mummy' waiting in the wings.

### OTRO MUNDO

The Tempe, Arizona act are a tad more psychedelic than Milk Music, with their siren song 'Jellied' as epic as it is straight-edged punk.



**100  
NEW  
BANDS  
YOU HAVE TO HEAR!**



Coxen adds that his stance has never really been about the corruptive influence of money, or having Milk Music board the PR-led industry treadmill. Instead, he simply believes that by staying independent, the band can, over time, become *more* successful and make *more* money than they ever could with a traditional record contract.

And the crazy thing? At present, his theory could actually work. Unbelievably, the band appear to be in the final stages of nailing their first UK tour. If it all continues to go to plan they'll be over in the next few months. Asked how an unsigned band can even contemplate travelling across an ocean to tour, and Rutter is momentarily lost for words. "I don't really know how to explain it. We just... have people giving us offers." "Everyone wants to be our best bud now," adds Coxen. "And we're

trying our best to be cool about it." Is this an indication that, actually, Milk Music are softening their stance on signing? Alex quickly puts any doubts about that to rest: "[A label] doesn't get us laid or get us drugs any freer or easier than we can on our own."

NME can't vouch for the band's abilities in the bedroom, but we do have a tough time imagining how even the most major of record labels would be able to overcome Coxen's stoic views on the industry. That said, an advance might well have come in handy for this month's rent. It's due tomorrow and, as we wrap the interview, he mentions that he's short on cash. If he can get any decent amount for it, he plans to sell his platinum ring. It makes us think of the Patti Smith song, and of something Alex told us earlier: "Everybody thinks we're crazy, but fuck everybody." Some things may be free, but money, as he's finding out, isn't quite one of them...





# THE LOST

2012 should finally see hyped acts **JAI PAUL** and **KINDNESS** unmask themselves. But where they've been hiding is where **KING KRULE**'s headed next

**O**f all the names to have risen in prominence over the past 12 months, that of south London boy-wonder Archy Marshall – aka King Krule – has been shrouded in secrecy of late. He's been curiously absent from many of the more high-profile media tiplists in 2012, with tales of turned-down interviews and unanswered requests for any correspondence whatsoever adding to the overall myth.

But the boy himself, aged just 17, has insisted to *NME* that it's actually just youthful time constraints – aka school – and a desire to not rush things that's keeping him from going overground, rather than some premeditated smart alec strategy.

"I'm not gonna lie," he says, "I'm not hype's biggest fan. I think everyone knows already by now that getting blown up before your time can be dangerous. I've never really been interested in that trend of list-making and guessing who the next big band is. I'm never into The Next Big Band anyway."

Krule, who The xx producer Rodaidh McDonald recently told us was "the most distinctive and special voice of his generation" has been on our radar since July 2010, when his astonishing debut single as Zoo Kid, 'Out Getting Ribs', went up on Bandcamp. Since then his stature has grown immeasurably – an EP through True Panther Sounds received rapturous reviews, his first London gig easily sold out and the minimalist video for '...Ribs' steadily notched up an impressive half a million YouTube views. But despite

all this, Archy says he's not going to release an album or do many interviews at all in 2012, instead choosing to take things slowly (see the box on the right for more on that). And it seems that putting *Hamlet* before the Hype Machine and disappearing into a creative hole to tool away at his masterpiece in private might just be the smartest move the prescient young gent could make. Indeed, there's actually a whole host of other boys – and weirdly, they are *all* blokes – who are playing a remarkably similar game right now...

*"I know I've been gone a long time/But I'm back and I want what is mine"* – Jai Paul, 'BTSTU'.

Oh Jai, you tease. The 23-year-old's breakout hit 'BTSTU' appeared on Myspace and had pretty much *every* blog in the universe going loopy in April 2010. We've heard hardly anything from him since, though the pile of plaudits waiting to be claimed is reaching biblical proportions. On the strength of just that one song, he was nominated for the BBC's Sound Of 2011, while both Beyoncé and Drake subsequently sampled it.

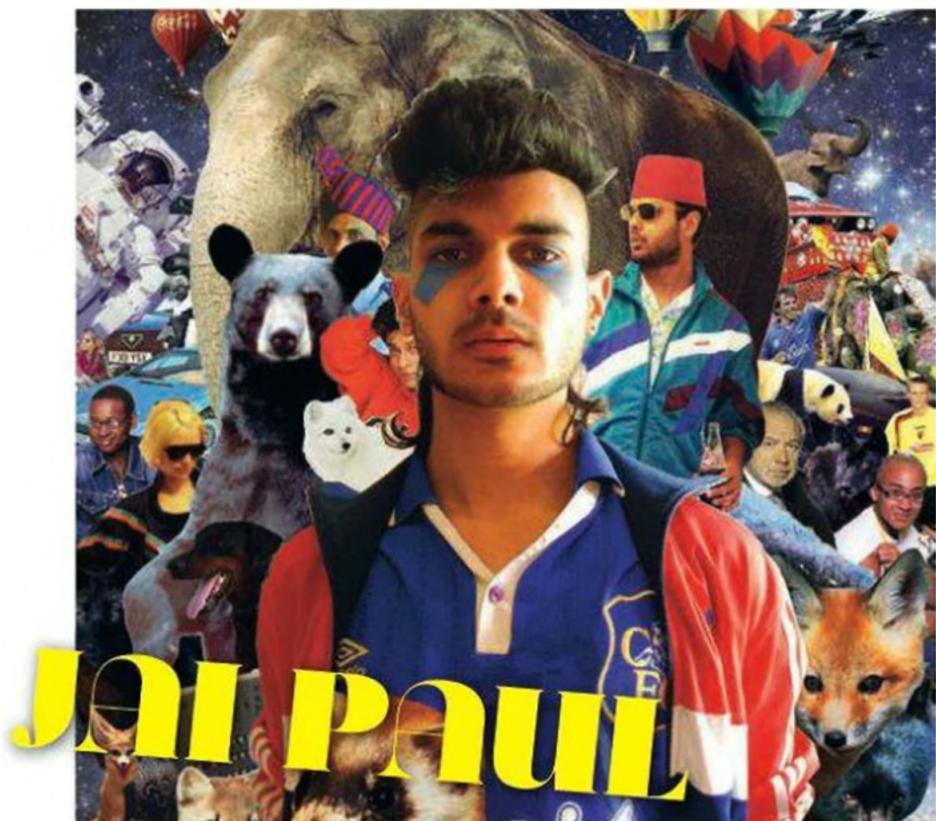
However, Jai himself removed all of his other music from Myspace when things started getting heavy, and has given just one interview to date (way back at the

start of 2011). According to blogger Franky B RockaFeller of Listen Before You Buy, who was in contact with him even before that, he's been sat on 'BTSTU' since around 2007, making the aforementioned lyric even more tantalising. Meanwhile his record label, XL, have been equally cagey over disclosing anything about their hard-won charge – naturally, everyone wanted to sign him. So, is he back to claim what's his in 2012? "I did hear last week that he was almost done with it [his album] and it's being tentatively scheduled for a spring 2012 release, but who the fuck knows at this point?" says RockaFeller. Our queries to XL went unreturned...

Someone who's been Mark E Smith-prolific in comparison to Jai is Toronto's Abel Tesfaye – aka The Weeknd – who released a trilogy of free mixtapes in 2011 alone, ending with final instalment 'Echoes Of Silence' in December. But he's done this while refusing all interviews (at the time of press only a pre-fame chat from 2008 could be tagged as such) – instead letting his music and mentor Drake do the talking, and everyone else do the myth-making. It's a canny trick that paid off for WU IYF, acting as a brash-but-delicious snub: 'I don't need you, but you want me'.

**W**hile not quite in the same vein as Tesfaye, you can imagine Manc dudes Egyptian Hip Hop wholeheartedly telling Archy and Jai to stick to their guns. Profiled in our 2010 Radar issue, their last release was the 'Some Reptiles Grew Wings' EP in September of that year. Aside from a few live performances, they've been in hiding for most of 2011, only recently starting work on their debut LP.

*"I'm never into The Next Big Band"*  
King Krule



WORDS: LAURA SHAPES. PHOTOS: MIKAEL GREGORSKY

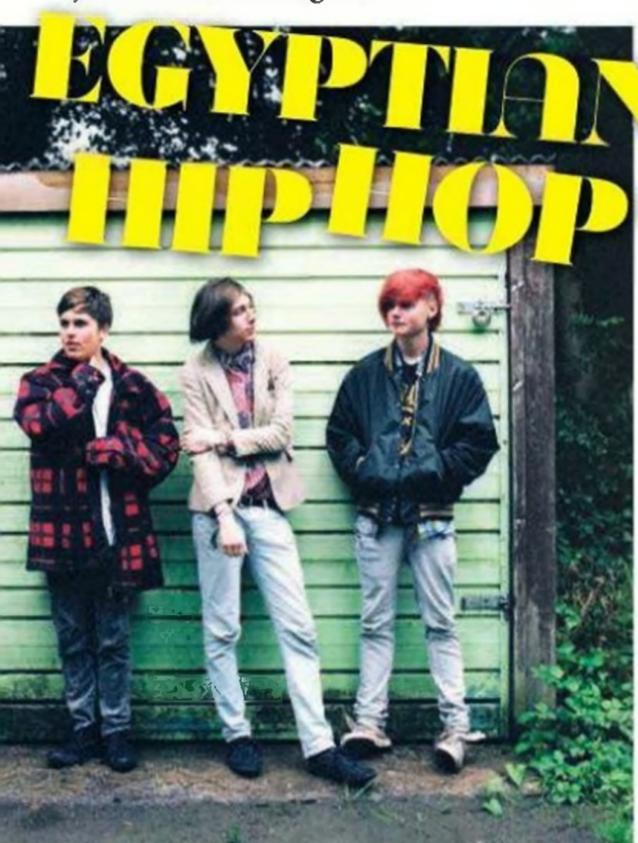
# BOYS

We hope that hat doesn't indicate Archy's real post school ambitions

"I think over the last year or so we've started to realise what we're doing," singer Alex Hewett told us. "We've honed in on things that we're better at. We're a lot more comfortable than we were before, and we've managed to make our tastes correlate."

Making Hewett's somewhat non-committal descriptions of his work sound as enigmatic as a moustache'n'glasses disguise, however, is Kindness (aka Adam Bainbridge) – another missing-in-action fella from 2009. Following his uber-hyped arrival back then, he promptly vanished... until roughly two months ago, that is. Out of nowhere, a mystery package arrived at *NME* Towers, featuring a 12-inch single (one of just 30, apparently) as well as a specially created newspaper and cryptic letter on posh paper heralding his comeback single, 'Cyan'. Shortly after that, he slipped out a top-secret performance with a full band at Shoreditch's Durr, very much proving that he's no mere relic from The Great Chillwave Summer Of 2009. Another new track, 'SEOD', followed, while – lo and behold! – March 19 will actually see the release of his debut, 'World, You Need A Change Of Mind'.

Naturally, we can only speculate as to *why* this ragbag bunch aren't more forthcoming. Is it that the tipped have further to fall? Or that those who (re)appear from nowhere are met with surprise, and not jaded sighs? Or could it be that sometimes it's just about *not* feeling ready when the initial iron of interest strikes? Hell, all we can really say for sure is that if you're addicted to finding out who the real Abel Tesfaye is, or hearing more of Jai Paul's genius, and Archy's echoing songs of heartbreak and disaffection, prepare to play the jilted lover for just a little while longer...



## KING KRULE'S YEAR AHEAD

Five things Archy Marshall is probably gonna do in 2012

### 1 A FILM SHORT

"A few people have contacted me about potentially making an extended video, developing from my first two," Archy explains.

### 2 DJ JD SPORTS

His alter ego is rumoured to be dropping something official in the first few months of the year.

### 3 A SOUND-TRACK

"I've been making a lot of ambient-type stuff recently, lots of beats and drones. It'd be cool to put it to some images at some point."

### 4 A HIP-HOP MIXTAPE

"I put a few bits up online already, but I've got a ton more tracks now. It's using classic jazzy breaks. I've been listening to the old DITC, Mobb Deep and the High Focus label."

### 5 A HISTORY TRIP

No cutting class, Archy...

# CRYSTAL BALL

The Strokes split up, Jarvis does a Sainsbury's advert and Caleb finds God. 2012's set to be huge – because all this will **DEFINITELY** happen. Honest...

## JANUARY

The Ones To Watch music industry clusterfuck descends into chaos when the 'name on everyone's lips' turns out to be a misunderstanding of the Shoreditch slang for cocaine.

**MONA** apply for a refund from the BBC Sound Of 2011 Poll.

After ongoing poor reviews of their faces,



WU LYF: they'll still be moody in 2012

**WU LYF** decide they're going to put the masks back on.

**LANA DEL REY** and **Pete Burns** are seen together in the same room, finally ending that rumour.

## FEBRUARY

Building on the success of her iPad app, **BJORK** releases a playable version of 'Earth Intruders' that is basically a re-working of *Space Invaders*. She follows it up with an electronica opera about *Angry Birds*.

**AZEALIA BANKS** releases the follow-up to '212': 'Cunty Shitcunt Fuckspunk'. Radio One becomes the first station to play three minutes of silence when it hits Number One.



Azealia: still not meet-your-mum material

## MARCH

As Euro 2012 looms, Frank Skinner teams up with newly solo **MIKE SKINNER** as 'The Skinners' to record 'Three Lions 2012', a song about how football is coming home, then vegging out, then playing Xbox, and finally smoking a doobie.

**CALEB FOLLOWILL**'s stint in rehab causes him to regress to childhood and become a Jesus freak again. **Kings Of Leon** start on sixth album 'Rejoice! 12 Songs Praising His Holy Name', featuring 'The Holy Spirit Is On Fire', 'Use Somebody Like The Lord', and 'Bucket (Jesus)'.

## APRIL

**WAYNE COYNE** dies tragically when some prankster fills his bubble with carbon monoxide.

**RADIOHEAD** follow up their 'King Of Limbs' surprise digital hoopla by releasing their next album solely inside their fans' minds, at a very reasonable charge of £9, or £39 if you want the 'commemorative invisible box set'.

**VIVA BROTHER** try to regain some of their flagging publicity by announcing another name change to boost their sullied image. From now on, they will be known as: Viva Vaccines.



## MAY

After moaning about **HMRC** again, **ADELE** is visited by tax operatives keen to pick through the drinks receipts she's filed under 'business entertainment expenses'. She ends the year in jail, on the same day that Pete Doherty receives yet another judicial warning, this time for robbing an off-licence.

Post-dubstep merges necklessly into post-post dubstep, before anyone can do anything to stop it.



## JUNE

**THE STONE ROSES** reunion turns sour when Ian Brown tries to do the soprano section from Mozart's *The Magic Flute* for an a cappella encore.

**PJ HARVEY** releases the follow-up to her much lauded 2011 record. 'Let England Shop' is an album about her love for high-end fashion shoes, hanging out with her galpals at Boujis, and how hard it is to find a decent maid these days.

As swag rap becomes the dominant hip-hop mode,

racial tensions rise when US police accidentally shoot dead several young African-American males seen exiting expensive houses carrying big black sacks with the word 'swag' written on the side.



The Roses: still the world's oldest boyband

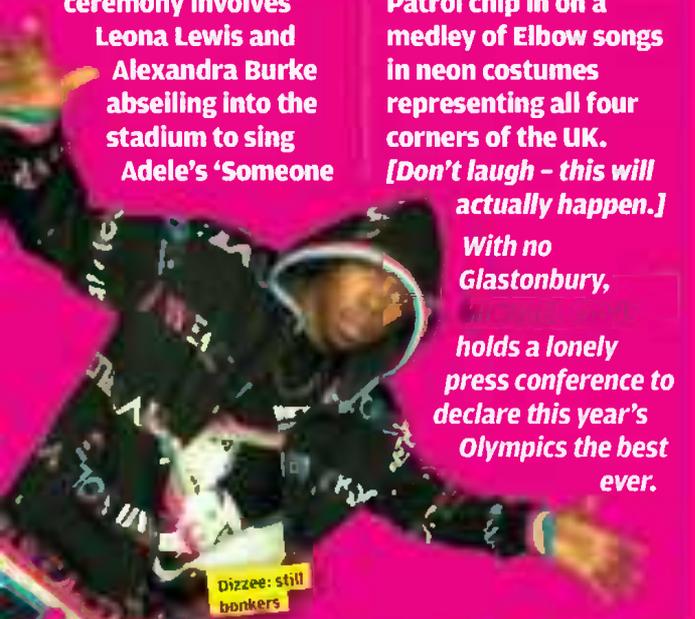
# ALL BALLS

## JULY

'Showcasing the best of modern British music', the Olympic opening ceremony involves Leona Lewis and Alexandra Burke abseiling into the stadium to sing Adele's 'Someone

Like You', while Chris Martin, Dizzee Rascal, Calvin Harris and Snow Patrol chip in on a medley of Elbow songs in neon costumes representing all four corners of the UK. [Don't laugh - this will actually happen.]

With no Glastonbury, **WILEY** holds a lonely press conference to declare this year's Olympics the best ever.



Dizzee: still bonkers

## AUGUST

After **CARL BARAT**'s stint as Nero in a Parisian opera is received as dismally as his 2009 play with Sadie Frost, he finally accepts a bit-part role in *EastEnders* playing Billy's long-lost brother, Terry.

**WILEY** commemorates the first anniversary of the Tottenham Riots with a minute's silence on Twitter.



Carl: still not talking about the Libs. Much

## SEPTEMBER

The Mercury Prize ceremony has to be halted when canny bailiffs switch the envelope to serve **JOOLS HOLLAND** with a summons for unpaid parking fines.

**RIHANNA** takes the endless S&M vibe too far when she releases 'Choke Me (Have You Got A Big Knob?).'



Rihanna: still dry-humping stairwells

## OCTOBER

Less than one full year into its life, the **BIEBER BABY** signs a record deal.

The vogue for brand-building collaborations between bosh-pop stars reaches an emetic climax with a five-week stint at Number One for 'BLieve' by **DAVID GUETTA** (feat BoB, Sean Kingston, Bruno Mars, J.Lo, Calvin Harris and Pitbull).



**SPOTIFY** ups the subtle psychological pressure on non-subscribers by broadcasting 30 seconds of Jo Whiley crying between every four tracks.

## NOVEMBER

After one gaffe too far, **TYLER, THE CREATOR** is prosecuted for hate speech and forced to undergo rehabilitation working as an orderly at a centre for abused women. His next album is somewhat hamstrung by his newfound desire to find words that rhyme with 'LGBT'.

**THE STROKES** announce they are splitting retroactively, effective

late-2006, so if everyone could consider 'Angles' null and void, that'd be cool.



Tyler: still yokkers

## DECEMBER

**JARVIS COCKER** builds on his work on the Eurostar ads by using his famous pointy dance moves to direct people to various bargains on Sainsbury's shelves in a series of cuddly pre-Crimbo spots.

The entire Top 20 is made up of songs re-released as Christmas alternatives to X Factor Number Ones - apart from the Number One spot, which is X Factor.



Jarvis: still a legend

# 100 NEW BANDS FOR 2012

# HOW MANY HAVE YOU HEARD?

*From Azealia to Zun Zun Egui, we've got 2012 covered – head to **NME.COM** now to listen to the lot in our SoundCloud player*

- 1. HOWLER
- 2. DZ DEATHRAYS
- 3. FRANK OCEAN
- 4. A\$AP ROCKY
- 5. ALABAMA SHAKES
- 6. SPECTOR
- 7. WILLIS EARL BEAL
- 8. 2:54
- 9. AZEALIA BANKS
- 10. GRIMES
- 11. P MONEY
- 12. TEETH
- 13. SHARKS
- 14. THE INTERNET
- 15. Y NIWL
- 16. CONNIE FUCKING FRANCIS
- 17. FEAR OF MEN
- 18. BOS ANGELES
- 19. BROWN BROGUES
- 20. GHOST OUTFIT
- 21. PATTERNS
- 22. KREAYSHAWN
- 23. HOW TO DRESS WELL
- 24. PALMISTRY
- 25. PARADISE
- 26. BRETON
- 27. FILTHY BOY
- 28. ALL THE YOUNG
- 29. THE CAST OF CHEERS
- 30. THE JEZABELS
- 31. PET
- 32. NZCA/LINES
- 33. THE SMOKIN' BARRELS
- 34. CHARLI XCX
- 35. SPOKEN WORD
- 36. THOSE DARLINS
- 37. GABRIEL BRUCE
- 38. REN HARVIEU
- 39. FANZINE
- 40. NOVELLA
- 41. THEME PARK
- 42. ZUN ZUN EGUI
- 43. BEING THERE
- 44. DEATH GRIPS
- 45. CARNEY

- 46. BURNS
- 47. JIM LOCKEY & THE SOLEMN SUN
- 48. THE LONELY FOREST
- 49. DUANE THE TEENAGE WEIRDO
- 50. THIS MANY BOYFRIENDS
- 51. DOG IS DEAD
- 52. TOY
- 53. WET NUNS
- 54. CITIZENS!
- 55. MONEY
- 56. OUTFIT
- 57. PEACE
- 58. ARTHUR BEATRICE
- 59. GROSS MAGIC
- 60. DRY THE RIVER
- 61. ALT-J
- 62. BINARY
- 63. CHILDHOOD
- 64. EAGULLS
- 65. FRACTURES
- 66. DISCOPOLIS
- 67. SISSY & THE BLISTERS
- 68. ZULU WINTER
- 69. BWANI JUNCTION
- 70. ICONA POP
- 71. VANBOT
- 72. SERENADES
- 73. PHILCO FICTION
- 74. BATTLEKAT
- 75. FRIENDS
- 76. LITTLE RACER
- 77. EXITMUSIC
- 78. DEVIN
- 79. ABADABAD
- 80. APES & HORSES
- 81. FRANCOIS & THE ATLAS MOUNTAINS
- 82. LA FEMME
- 83. BLEEDING KNEES CLUB
- 84. JAGWAR MA
- 85. STEP-PANTHER
- 86. WORLD'S END PRESS
- 87. FIDLAR
- 88. NO

- 89. BLASTED CANYONS
- 90. WISE BLOOD
- 91. REPTAR
- 92. LOWER
- 93. DIRTY BEACHES
- 94. DOLDRUMS
- 95. MILK MUSIC
- 96. SEX VID
- 97. THE MEN
- 98. CALIFORNIA X
- 99. OTRO MUNDO
- 100. KING KRULE



FROM THE MAKERS OF NME UNCUT

# THE SMITHS

THE FULL STORY OF THE ULTIMATE INDIE BAND!

**SPECIAL 100-PAGE COLLECTORS' ISSUE**

FEATURING CLASSIC MORRISSEY AND MARRI INTERVIEWS

EVERY ALBUM REVISITED

RARE PHOTOGRAPHS

THE STORIES BEHIND THE SLEEVES

PLUS WHAT THEY ALL DID NEXT AND THEIR PRE-SMITHS BANDS!

NME ICONS

The cover features a black and white photograph of the four members of The Smiths. Morrissey is in the center, looking directly at the camera. To his left is another band member, and to his right are two more. One is wearing sunglasses. The cover is decorated with several circular stickers: a purple one with a face, a gold one with a face, a green one with a face, and a yellow one with a face. A large black circle with white text is overlaid on the right side of the cover.

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# REVIEWS

TRAILER TRASH TRACYS, STEALING SHEEP

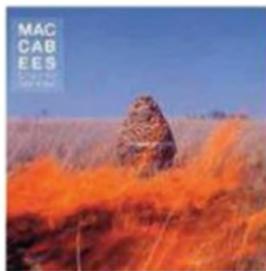
Edited by Emily Mackay



## THE MACCABEES

**GIVEN TO THE WILD** FICTION

*It could have been a disaster – but pushing themselves to do things differently, the five-piece have given us the first classic album of 2012*



**A**s Faris Badwan put it earlier this year after The Horrors' freakish foray onto the Radio 1 A-list and the Top Five of the albums chart, "you don't have to compromise to connect with people". Like The Horrors, The Maccabees hovered on a cusp with their third album. Both bands won hearts with their 2007 debuts, and critical respect as Britain's very best bands with their 2009 follow-ups. And like The Horrors, by taking control of their own sound and pushing themselves further than ever beyond the comfortable this time round, The Maccabees have made an album so astounding that you feel it can't help but draw the wider

world to them. It's the record that could be not only their 'Skying', but their 'The Suburbs'; one that sees them become deservedly huge without losing what they're about. That said, if it's ultimately used to pave Chinese motorways, it'll be no less of a triumph.

Working with DFA's Tim Goldsworthy, the band have brought in new electronic elements and cast aside their usual jam-based method of writing in favour of devolving power, each member of the group devising sections and emailing them back and forth. It had the potential to be a disaster, losing their essence to new ideas in an attempt to branch out. The sun-parched savannah on the Andy Goldsworthy-

designed sleeve of 'Given To The Wild', where hungry flames advance towards a lonely, egg-shaped kiln illustrates the dangerous, exciting possibilities. The wildfire can be destructive, but it's also purifying and fertile – by casting themselves to the flames, The Maccabees have forged an identity more purely *them* than ever.

For all the new ground and new sounds, 'Given To The Wild' is a remarkably restrained album. Restrained, but not reserved – there are tidal swells of feeling, but always kept reined in until just the right moment. Guided in by soft, ambient swathes, 'Child' floats deliciously on liquid guitar and a slow, cradling bass, establishing this as a subtler record than 'Wall Of Arms', Orlando's voice a whispery, watercolour thing, Felix and Hugo's guitars rippling and glimmering. When the album cuts loose, though, it really cuts loose, as on 'Feel To Follow' where Orlando's tentative, treated vocal and bare drums tremble on the brink of something huge, some unnamed emotional epiphany. "How will I ever dare to breathe?" he wonders, guitar lines fluttering around him before catching him up and soaring off into a brave sci-fi dawn. The standout, 'Forever I've Known', casts a moodier shadow amid all the light and beauty. Orlando tries to convince a lover to paper over the cracks, his voice wavering brokenly over keening guitar and ominous bass as he pleads "Couldn't you just lie/I'm a child to your voice and I know nothing stays forever... you know that I'll make it easy" as the song builds into a painful sweetness before the floor is suddenly pulled away and it drops into the furious, frustrated eruption of a serrated riff. As often on this record, it walks the same canyoned, mountainous territory as stadium bands like Coldplay, Kings Of Leon, or more aptly, Arcade Fire – it's never overreaching or overdone.

'Pelican' punches brightly and skippily out of the softly rolling 'Heave', the band careering around on the Great Cycle Of Life as Orlando crows "before you know it pushing up the daisies". 'We Grew Up At Midnight' closes things neatly with a valedictory chorus of sweet nostalgia.

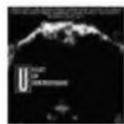
The album is beautifully structured, leading from spare and shimmering beginnings into harder, weirder and more varied territories, all those snippets and elements and personalities crafted into a shifting, subtle whole that quietly captures your attention from start to end. It's an entrancing adventure – to see a band we've loved from the start grasp their potential and reach so far is inspiring by itself. That the call of their wild is so beautiful makes it all the sweeter. *Emily Mackay*

**DOWNLOAD:** 'Forever I've Known', 'Glimmer', 'Pelican'

**THIS IS HARDCORE**  
what our numbers add up to

0 Not-even-funny bad	1 Barely one saving grace	2 Actively terrible	3 Woefully bad or lazy	4 Depressingly substandard	5 Dead-on average	6 Better than average	7 Really good	8 Exceptionally good	9 Of-the-year good	10 Of-the-decade good
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## VARIOUS ARTISTS

EAST OF UNDERGROUND - HELL BELOW  
NOW-AGAIN

Out of a US military base in late '60s emerged The Monks - five GIs clanging out proto-punk that said, in so many words, that cunts rule the world. The bands here aren't quite so radical but their story is just as wonderful. In the early '70s, West Germany-based SOAP, East Of Underground, The Black Seeds and The Sound Trek all won the US army's Annual Original Magnificent Special Services Entertainment Showband Contest, earning tours, the chance to record the albums compiled here and avoiding bloody duty in Vietnam. East Of Underground's growling, Sly Stone-like ghetto-funk and The Black Seeds' angry soul have the same wild-eyed counter-culture spirit that saw a 'psychedelic soldier show' tour the barracks - but, as with SOAP's winsome folk-pop, there is an element of saccharine compliance too. You don't want to wig out in front of a judging panel when your life quite literally depends on it, do you? **Chris Parkin**

7  
DOWNLOAD: East Of Underground - 'Hell Below'

## THE LEMONHEADS

HOTEL SESSIONS HALL OF RECORDS



With bands such as Yuck and Wavves being fairly popular at the moment, and in thrall to the slovenly college indie scene of the early '90s, there

could be a worse time to release an album of unearthed Lemonheads recordings. However, 'Hotel Sessions' is some distance from an 'essential archive document', or even 'something you ever need to hear'. Catching Lemonheads founder Evan Dando at an idyllic moment in his career arc - his alt.heartthrob status was swelling and he'd not yet started huffing the crack pipe - it features most of the songs from 1993's 'Come On Feel The Lemonheads' taped on a Walkman in a hotel room several months before the album's release. That wasn't even their most highly regarded record, and all we learn from these wispy solo offerings is that Lemonheads songs are not improved by persistent cassette hiss and background noise. A shocker, that. **Noel Gardner**

4  
DOWNLOAD: 'And So The Story Goes', if only because it's previously unreleased

## LAURA GIBSON

LA GRANDE CITY SLANG



Based in Portland, Oregon - a Stateside Shangri-la of yummy mummies who craft their own fixed-gear bicycles out of tampon strings and tofu-based meat substitutes - Laura Gibson has created an album that her holier-than-thou hipster neighbours will devour, but which also transcends said hordes of ironic bobble-hat wearers. Squeaking with the glamour of a rusty gramophone, 'The Rushing Dark' flashes with delicate splendour and, alongside 'Time Is Not', evokes moonlit, cobbled Parisian streets and cafes of elderflower wine. Sure, there are flashes of folk in the mix, but this is far removed from Laura Marling's weighty world-weariness. Gibson's lacy touch pitches 'Skin, Warming Skin' somewhere between the spooky and the sublime. With quietly melodramatic piano and strings, album closer 'Feather Lungs' contains whispers of Lana Del Rey - but, have no doubt about it, Gibson's voice is 100 per cent her own. **Leonie Cooper**

8  
DOWNLOAD: 'The Rushing Dark'

## FACES TO NAMES...

What the reviewers are doing this week



EMILY MACKAY

"I've spent my last week at NME Towers becoming obsessed with Tribes, like a 17-year-old girl, because growing up is for LOSERS."



MARK BEAUMONT

"When not stealing the entire wine rider of Kasabian's drummer as a Christmas/New Year present to myself, I've spent all week knocking out 2,000 words a day for a Jay-Z biography, and staring at my light-up Coldplay wristbands hoping they'll start flashing Morse code messages subliminally suggesting that I kill, skin and eat Little Mix."



DAN MARTIN

"I spent all afternoon looking around a costume shop ahead of the Manic Street Preachers' gig at the O2 Arena and wept a little at the Doctor Who Christmas special, although probably for all the wrong reasons."



## ENTER SHIKARI

A FLASH FLOOD OF COLOUR AMBUSH REALITY

In an age bereft of political pop, this rage against the machine could well be the four-piece's defining statement



Can Enter Shikari ever really win? As the

officially approved Most Incendiary Live Band In Britain, they immediately face a harder job than most bands in making a record that can measure up, something their debut 'Take To The Skies' roundly failed to do. Also, in a world where it's fashionable to bemoan the lack of bands engaging politically, most people tend to get annoyed when anyone actually *does*. And in their follow-up, 'Common Dreads', they retreated into burly grandstanding and Pendulum-like racket. It was a deeply annoying record, but also one that established Enter Shikari as one of the few bands in Britain really trying. And, working outside the system, alongside Katy B and Magnetic Man, they're one of just three genuine crossover successes from the UK bass music underground.

All of that surface tension lands Enter Shikari in a pretty powerful position for their third - and, as the title promises fabulously, they respond to the challenge in explosive style to deliver something like their defining statement.

'A Flash Flood Of Colour' is angrier than they've got before, but also prettier, opening with Roughton Reynolds delivering a nursery-rhyme diatribe on 'System', likening the end-times of advanced global capitalism to negligent coastal engineers failing to protect a pretty house on a cliff. Dour times, so the St Albans tykes respond by setting their phasers firmly to 'POP'. So while 'Sssnakepit' might push their guitar-dubstep to gnarlier places than before, it does so with a spectacular chorus bolted on. 'Arguing With

Thermometers' is familiar, but opens up into the rousing march of 'Stalemate'. 'Warm Smiles Do Not Make You Welcome Here' sees their hardcore-dub-rave mash-up flirt with stadium rock. From start to end, it's an exhilarating ride.

With such a sonic barrage and so much shouting, the strokes end up needing to be pretty broad. And as wordy as most of this is ('Gandhi Mate, Gandhi' is quite spectacular in its ranting), the message is little more developed than 'Bankers are bad, wars are worse and the two are probably not unrelated when you think about it'. "Back to the drawing-board boys/Accept nothing more than complete reversal!" squeals Roughton, like a frustrated ram, but hey, "I am an antichrist, I am an anarchist" was hardly Gramsci either, was it?

It's only at the end, with 'Constellations' and the equally revelatory prospect of an Enter Shikari ballad that they employ the get-out, and hold their hands up. Among the (actually quite gorgeous) twinkling and twirling, Roughton declares (actually quite prettily) that "I am lost, so lost". It's not quite 'screw everything, let's party', but it is an admission, after so much gonzoid hubris, that the solutions might not be found down the disco, but at least the conversation can begin.

And it is there, in the uncomfortable reality of no easy, shouty answers, that we leave Rou, our bitchfinder general, drowning in those flash floods of colour and gazing up at the stars. It might look like a tragedy, but like the story of Pandora's box, this fearsome record still concludes with hope. **Dan Martin**

8  
DOWNLOAD: 'Stalemate', 'Sssnakepit', 'Gandhi Mate, Gandhi'



# TRAILER TRASH TRACYS

ESTER DOUBLE SIX

*Through the sonic murk and myth-making emerges the form of a band with rock'n'roll at their dark heart*



Someone recently posted a SoundCloud 'mash-up' of every Beatles song layered on top of one another. The first couple of minutes was just 'Revolution 9' and the last two and a

half minutes were a vision of Merseybeat hell, an unlistenable scree of "Ooooh!"s and a million muddy Ringos. But around the three-minute mark, as the crackling static arcadia of 'Revolution 9' clashed against the heroin slope of 'Come Together' and the psychedelic melodicism of 'A Day In The Life', it sounded uncannily like Trailer Trash Tracys.

This London four-piece strive to sound like they're playing at least three different songs from a variety of genres at a time, in different tempos and keys, loosely connected by singer Susanne Aztor's drifting, amorphous melody lines and unsettling cosmic tonal warps. But, by employing the MBV trick of never allowing themselves to lose focus on their hooks through the sonic soup, it makes for an engrossing listen.

The myths they weave around this sonic maelstrom add glister to the music's mystery: that they were named after a Russian strip group and claim to base their songs on primeval frequencies which free the listener from guilt and fear. 'Los Angered' finds Lynchian surf guitars clashing serenely with the distant machines of heavy industry, 'Rolling - Kiss The Universe' resembles Warpaint covering all of The Flaming Lips' 'Embryonic' in two minutes.

The TTT trick is to keep one foot firmly rooted in rock'n'roll. Every third or fourth tune is a synthetic homage to the sultry '50s surf of *Blue Velvet*. A little more melodic resolve wouldn't go amiss, but 'Ester' is a solid, imaginative debut that leaves you aglow with the ice-warmth of a blip-literate Cocteau Twins. Add in the influence of a troupe of nipple-tasselled Muscovites and 2012 could be quite the indie eye-opener. **Mark Beaumont**

**DOWNLOAD: 'Candy Girl', 'Black Circle' 'Los Angered'**

7

## DEAR READER

IDEALISTIC ANIMALS CITY SLANG



An album with songs all named after different kinds of animals may well strike fear into the heart of some, but that's nothing compared to the dark

doubts that lie at this the core of this unusual record. Across these 11 zoologically themed tracks, Cheri MacNeil tries to build a new belief system, or at least lay some scaffolding over the howling hole left by the loss of her religious faith. It's done without melodrama and with dark wit on the likes of 'Mole (Mole)', with a bright, fixed-smile brio, like a folksy St Vincent. Musically, it's nowhere near as life-changing as its subject matter, but MacNeil's mortality menagerie make cute enough companions in the void. **Duncan Gillespie**

**DOWNLOAD: 'Whale (BooHoo)'**

4

## STEALING SHEEP

NOAH & THE PAPER MOON HEAVENLY



Since throwing open its doors some 15 years back, Sir Fab Macca's Liverpool Institute For Performing Arts has gifted us such musical talents as The Wombats

and, er, Sandi Thom, the girl whose touching belief that punk rockers wear flowers in their hair prompted a concerned crackling of leather across Camden in 2006. It's a heinous legacy that recent LIPA graduates Stealing Sheep could go some way towards rescuing - granted, first single 'The Mountain Dogs' sounds like Zoëy Deschanel slapping thighs with Chas 'n' Dave, but tracks like 'Paper Moon' have the sapphic, moon glow charms of a folksier Warpaint, and doubtless warrant further exploring. **Alex Denney**

**DOWNLOAD: 'Paper Moon'**

6

## THE RIDER

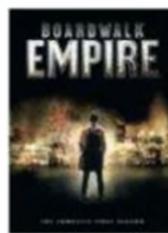
*What we're watching and wearing this week*



### Film

#### The Iron Lady

Mesmerising Meryl Streep takes on the role of a century. Do you know why it's got a 12A certificate though? Because it's *not suitable for miners*. You're welcome.



### DVD

#### Boardwalk Empire Season 1

If you haven't kept up with Sopranos writer Terence Winter's magnificently moody Prohibition drama, frankly, we should bury you in a shallow grave. Or buy you this.



### Fashion

#### Duffer Of St George Goldings Hi Top

High-class, hi-top basketball boots with natty quilting and tan leather details that suggest nouveau riche luxury... the sort of thing we imagine Kanye might wear to put out the rubbish, only his would probably be made of gold and virgins' skin.

## THIS WEEK'S SINGLES

reviewed by NME's  
**LISA WRIGHT**



### MICHAEL KIWANUKA

HOME AGAIN POLYDOR



With husky pipes scientifically tooled to tickle the ovaries, Kiwanuka should be soundtracking adverts for massage oil and singing about meeting girls on a Monday and having her undercrackers on his floor by Tuesday. Yet this ballad is about as sexy as watching your parents smooch to Steve Wright's Sunday Love Songs: sweet, but a thoroughly pants-on moment.

### SKEPTA

HOLD ON 3BEAT



At the opposite end of the spectrum is Skepta, armed with *My First Book Of Opposites*. "Never count the days/I make the days count" he bleats over generic beats before informing us that he also "swims when you wanna to see me drown", "stands up when they wanna see me down" and "smiles when you wanna see me frown". Raps when you wanna see him shut his trap, etc etc.

### DIAGRAMS

TALL BUILDINGS FULL TIME HOBBY

You know when you're thinking, "Yeah, Everything



Everything are fine but I wish they'd stop being so original. I mean, why can't they just make something a bit more obvious? And would it kill you to put some handclaps in there? I sure as hell can't be arsed to untangle this falsetto bollocks too." Come on down, Diagrams!

### NICOLA ROBERTS

YO-YO POLYDOR



Not a cuss-ridden introduction to Nicola's re-emergence as an English Syd Tha Kyd, but a questionable metaphor about being like a crap '90s toy. It's not a patch on 'Beat Of My Drum', but despite all kinds of self-consciously quirky lines about "wearing different coloured socks on each foot because she don't conform to no rules" (or something), we still wanna be her friend.

### TRIBES

WE WERE CHILDREN ISLAND



I, like Tribes, was a "child in the mid-90s". I had a shit time. My love for Robbie Williams went unrequited, I got teased for wearing a rucksack despite them clearly having superior health benefits and then the Spice Girls split up. So you can take your beery anthemics somewhere else guys; you're not "just like me" at all. YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW ME, MAN. (NB: This track is actually fucking great though).

### SOUND OF GUNS

SILICON DISTILLER

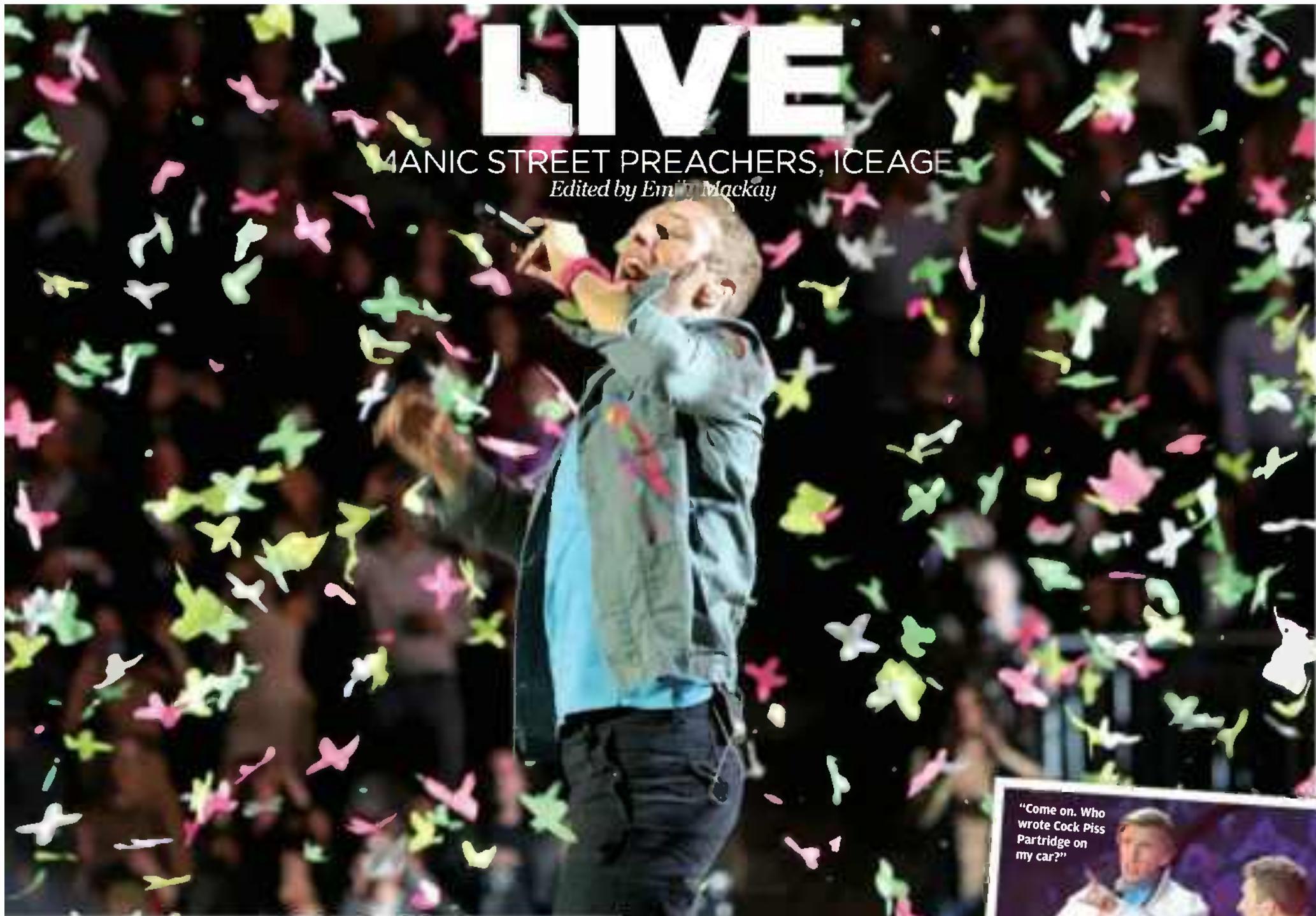


Oh Christ, I thought this had all died already. Sound Of Guns are like some horrible bastard offspring of The Bravery, White Lies and Stereophonics; all bland, chugging statements with less than nothing to actually say. If Tribes make you wanna be in their gang, Sound Of Guns make you wanna form a gang to inflict some damage on the A&R men that keep allowing this to happen.

## LIVE

MANIC STREET PREACHERS, ICEAGE

Edited by Emily Mackay



## COLDPLAY

THE O2, LONDON SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10

*What do you get if you cross Chris and his gang with Alan Partridge, Rob Brydon, Tinie Tempah and Emeli Sandé? No, we're not sure either*

**C**hris Martin tells Alan Partridge to fuck off. Rob Brydon fronts Coldplay, singing 'White Christmas' in the voice of Tom Jones. And, at several points, everybody's wrists light up in rainbow neon colours and make The O2 look like The Flaming Lips have just exploded in Block A3.

The inaugural Under One Roof O2 charity gig is a dizzying mass of awe and oddity. And then there's Emeli Sandé, but the less said about her microscopic twist of mainstream R&B in the direction of 'Unfinished Symphony' the better. Rob Brydon's decades-old routine of Welsh stereotypes and hackneyed impressions doesn't feel much fresher. Tinie Tempah fares better, prowling Coldplay's ego ramp, sparkly mike to the fore. His ecstatically received mash

of dubstep, rap, hard rock, Pendulum-rave and boyband pop is the ultimate product of Generation Spotify and he milks it rather marvellously, doing That Crouch Down Then Jump Up Thing to 'Pass Out'.

Alan Partridge, in white snow-flash Puffa jacket and casual nylon-based

*Coldplay's show rivals Muse's for future-flash innovation and spectacle*

strides, falls painfully flat, slugging east London ("if you want to know what it was like 1,000 years ago, go there now") and Coldplay ("they're like Keane, but more extreme") and only capturing his Nissans-in-Norfolk counter-counter-cultural genius with

an observation that David Cameron's Big Society worked at its best when his entire village united to chase away gypsies with baseball bats.

If Coldplay are finally surrendering all credibility to the pull of the mainstream – witness THAT *X Factor* appearance the following day – they're intent on doing it with pizzazz. On a stage of crazed neon graffiti to reflect the futuristic *We Will Rock You* plot of their 'Mylo Xyloto' concept album, they

pile cannon-loads of butterfly confetti upon hordes of bouncing balloons upon blasts of glo-wristband spangle to concoct a show that rivals Muse for future-flash innovation and spectacle. And amid the Day-Glo dazzle they play their little hearts out: 'The Scientist',

"Come on. Who wrote Cock Piss Partridge on my car?"



'Up In Flames' and 'Fix You' tear at the Tinie-est of hearts and 'Hurts Like Heaven', 'Every Teardrop Is A Waterfall' and 'Paradise' become roar-along neon-pop firestorms.

Partridge returns to interrupt the downbeat Christmas ballad 'Christmas Lights' claiming it's "a bit too 'mopey Joe'" and leads a duet with Chris on 'Little Drummer Boy' ("a song about a little boy hitting a drum for a virgin") via an 'impromptu interview' that's basically a set-up for Alan to goad Chris into a surprise expletive. And it's not, by far, the only time we're left wide-eyed and breath-taken tonight. A-ho-ho-ho... **Mark Beaumont**

O2 customers can get Priority Tickets to The O2, up to 48 hours before general release.

Just register at [o2.co.uk/priority](http://o2.co.uk/priority)

When Priority Tickets are gone, they're gone. Terms apply



Manics' support  
act: Nicky's knee  
protectors



# MANIC STREET PREACHERS

THE 02, LONDON SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17

*On a night like this, it's easy to remember just how much this band matter*

**W**hat would the proverbial alien/person who has been living under a rock make of this spectacle, you wonder? Stage left there's this lanky guy in a skirt/hooded top combo, with knee-protectors, make-up and a nice line in scissor kicks and sporadic, off-key backing vocals. To his right, centre-stage, is a more normal-looking gentleman in a sailor jacket, who is taking on all lead guitar duties and all singing. To *his* right, there is this weird gap at the front, with the other guitarist and the keyboard player instead hidden away at the back, next to the drummer, who is wearing fingerless leather gloves.

The projections behind them only confuse matters: there are fleeting images of the more sensible singer in a flamboyant pink blouse, covered in eyeliner, while the skirted bass player can be seen instead in a sensible shirt/combat trousers combo, chatting to... *Fidel Castro?* And then there is this other beautiful young guy who features in a lot of the clips. And the songs? Musically, they're all over the shop, and more often than not, it's very hard to make out what the hell they're singing about, such is the velocity with which the words fly past. But every single member of the crowd knows every last syllable. The atmosphere is half family get-together, half arena fantasy.

With Manic Street Preachers – as we,

the non-alien, non-rock-dwellers know – history is everything, and tonight is a celebration of every last colourful minute of that, for the fans, the faithful. It has been conceived with them solely in mind. It follows 'Postcards From A Young Man's "one last shot at mass communication", and jointly acts as a funeral for – as James Dean Bradfield puts it tonight – the "situationist express little pill that was the punk pop rock'n'roll single". At the bottom of the posters that advertised tickets were the words: "NO REUNIONS. NO COMEBACKS. NO ENCORES." The end of the set sees Nicky Wire smash his bass guitar, and rip down a stage prop. It may not be the sort of gleefully decadent full stop represented by

Richey's last ever Manics gig where, almost exactly 17 years ago to the day, £10,000 worth of gear was destroyed at London's Astoria. But it is very much a full stop. Recent interviews have displayed a pessimistic Manics, with Nicky Wire mortified that their singles don't puncture the Top 30 anymore, feeling like a band with nowhere left to go, who need to regroup and figure out what they're all about in 2012 onwards.

But boy oh boy, if they needed any kind of re-affirmation that they still matter, and that they can still connect, and that their work is not yet done, then tonight's gig is it. The older songs are all played with the fire and skill that birthed them, while the latter-day likes of 'Postcards From A Young Man' and



James points out the fan who came just for 'Tsunami'

# ICEAGE

SCHOOL OF ART, GLASGOW FRIDAY, DECEMBER 9

*Behind crashing drums and deafening fuzz is the sound of these Danish rockers reinventing punk*

It was a classic 'If a tree falls in an empty forest...' conundrum: nobody knew that punk rock needed saving until, earlier this year, Iceage went ahead and did it anyway. But while 'tis currently the season to make egregious claims on behalf of new bands with one not-entirely-terrible EP to their poorly chosen names, 'tis also the season to take stock of the ones who somehow deliver on the promises others make for them. And 'New Brigade' – Iceage's brief and brutal debut – was, if not quite the 24-minute messiah of an entire genre, at least a brilliantly galvanising statement of intent, and one of the very best albums of the year.

*Rønnefelt, dressed in a fleece, looks more Time Team than punk rock*

Fittingly, there are audience members here tonight who look more like the saviours of punk than Iceage do. They very obviously couldn't give a fuck; frontman Elias Bender Rønnefelt, dressed in a drab fleece more suited to a *Time Team* dig than a punk rock show, announces his arrival by vomiting out a few syllables, two of which almost sound like "Hello". He then surveys the carnage that accompanies 'White Rune' with an air of icy, dead-eyed detachment, looking like a man with nothing but disdain for everyone and everything in his field of vision.

Iceage's music, however, is a lot more

welcoming than their stage manner. They're clearly a band in love with the joy of noise, but that's tempered by the sprigs of melody that flower between the slabs of dissonance; the shuddering, wiry goth-pop of 'Broken Bone', the near-sweetness of 'Remember's refrain of "I keep myself within". Obviously, no-one walks away from this gig whistling them, but they're a big part of what makes Iceage palatable to the non-hardcore crowd, especially when so much of the set threatens to perforate eardrums.

Rønnefelt ends the gig by wading

out into the audience – which, by this point, has become an amorphous mass of limbs angrily pushing and pulling at itself – and shouldering his way past them all, knocking *NME* off-balance before storming out of the room and up the stairs. The cable is torn from his microphone with a sudden electrical thud, and it's clear that there is more chance of a porcine air show above Buckingham Palace than an encore. Not that one is required: Iceage put more white-noise intensity and visceral, fuck-you rebellion into simply leaving the stage than most bands would an entire tour. **Barry Nicolson**



Nicky decides to go all 'London Calling'  
Below: Gruff Rhys and Nina Persson guest onstage



(It's Not War) Just The End Of Love' match them for energy and self-belief. As the night progresses, you can almost see the confidence seeping into the Manic Street Preachers' brains, instigating new ideas, new theories. Their love for their own legacy is apparent in every chord change, but so is their

desperate desire to still *matter*. And if the plan is to re-energise themselves for whatever the next phase of the band might be – '70 Songs Of Hatred & Failure' or otherwise – then it's effective.

Thirty-eight singles. *Thirty-eight*. Each one a little snapshot in time, each triggering different feelings, some unexpected. Who knew, for example that, from 'The Holy Bible', it would be 'Revol' that feels like a natural, good-dumb arena rock fist-pumper, and not 'She Is Suffering'? Or that all 'Let Robeson Sing' needed to nudge it into the realms of true, true greatness was Gruff Rhys on lead vocals? Or that 'Love's Sweet Exile' and 'So Why So Sad' – for so long absent from anything even vaguely resembling an MSP setlist – could hold their own so magnificently? But there are also arena anthems

aplenty, of course, and you sense that it's these that make the Manics most happy. All the 'Everything Must Go' singles. 'Motorcycle Emptiness' ("There are many songs you might go to the bar for," says James, "but for this one, I think, everyone stays"). The Nina Persson-featuring 'Your Love Alone Is Not Enough'. When they're having their stadium-sized choruses belled back at them by 20,000 people all with their arms in the air, they look like they're having the time of their lives. This is where an alien/someone from under a rock could not fail to understand, whether they're into leg-supports or not. One of the best things about Manic Street Preachers is that, for a band with one of the most dedicated, obsessive fanbases in history, they are always excited by the idea of playing to people not in it. And as long as that fire is still there, they should never, ever stop. Tonight is unavoidably all about the past, but it suggests that there is a future. And a bright one at that. **Hamish MacBain**

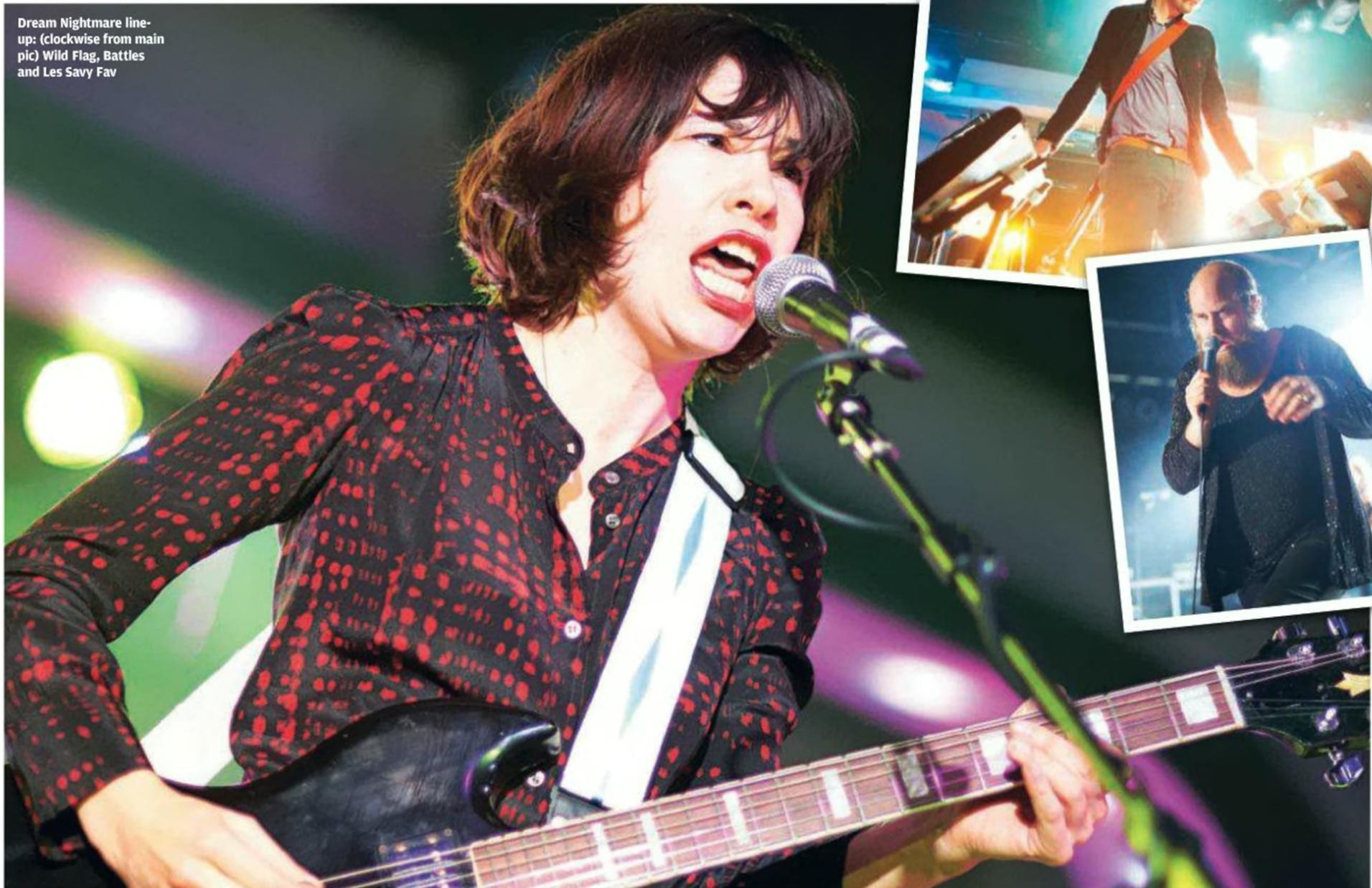
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Dream Nightmare line-up: (clockwise from main pic) Wild Flag, Battles and Les Savy Fav



# ATP NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS

**BUTLINS, MINEHEAD** FRIDAY, DECEMBER 9 - SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11

*Bands vomiting just before showtime, violent moshpits, lectures on krautrock and saucy silver spandex – as pre-festive bashes go, the annual indieathon sure beats your average office party*

**I** puked just before I came onstage, but I love you, and that's why we do this," laughs Battles' Dave Konopka halfway through their first set on the Saturday of ATP, at a punishing 2.30pm. Dave, Ian Williams and John Stanier have just comically loped to the end of 'Sweetie & Shag', knocked akimbo by the band's misdemeanors from the first night. "We're so hungover," he continues. "But Les Savy Fav's day was just too good!"

It's alright, Dave. You're among friends. Friends who know how much they had to drink last night in order to erase the mental image of LSF's Tim Harrington's silver spandex-wrapped wang, wee Timmy dancing around like Pinocchio auditioning for *Riverdance*. Friends who joined the congregation for what could have been the Fav's last showing, getting showered in silver confetti to mark the

potential end of a messy, violent, brilliant era. Friends who probably accidentally punched you in the face during the pit for Wild Flag on Friday night, as Carrie Brownstein, Mary Timony, Rebecca Cole and Janet Weiss gave rip-roaring

*It's undoubtedly one of the strongest runs of music in ATP's history*

form to the do-or-die fervour of their debut album.

If All Tomorrow's Parties is known for one thing aside from its brilliant line-ups, it's the community experience, aka getting tinkered with pals and strangers in a welcoming haven. And yes, ATP may take place in Minehead's unglamorous Butlins, but under the

curatorial wings of the Fav, Battles and Caribou (who take Friday, Saturday and Sunday respectively) – and those of the festival's crack organisers – it's utopia, where proto-punk legends Suicide are played in the Pizza Hut and lectures on krautrock are attended with gusto.

The rest of Battles' day features a second performance from the New York trio, where they reveal reboots of songs from their 2007 debut album 'Mirrored', replacing departed singer Tyondai Braxton's vocals with an insanely creepy, taped children's choir. Sadly Gary Numan and Matias Aguayo are absent from their show, despite both guesting on 'Gloss Drop' and performing their own sets today. Incredible Japanese trio Nisennenmondai are redolent of an

austere, monochrome Battles with Atari vibes and driving, interlocking rhythm, whereas Thrill Jockey's Thank You – who also announce that this is their last ever show – fling a barrage of giddy, vibrant post-rock sounds in search of a song.

Caribou's day offers spacier sounds, from the kosmische supergroup of their Vibration Ensemble to Factory Floor, whose hour-long set feels like ritualistic torture, leaving human bodies feeling barren and devoid of softness, sinew and marrow by the end. It's undoubtedly one of the strongest runs of music – and fun – in the festival's 12-year history, emboldened by the individual identities of each curator's day but unified by wicked amounts of fun.

We limp home on Monday morning, broken-bodied, but echoing Dave Konopka's sentiment with our every sallow grin. *Laura Snapes*

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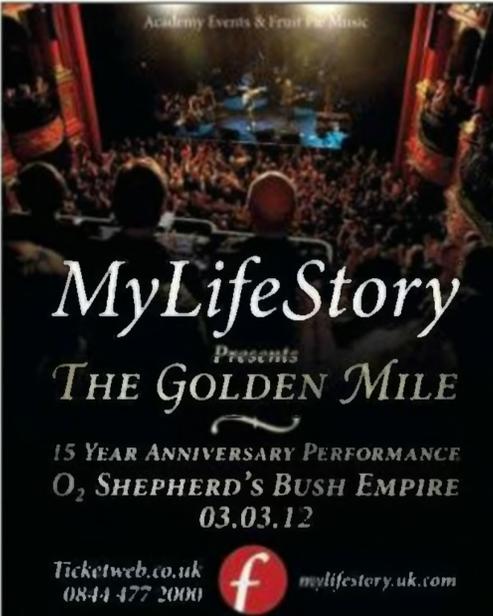
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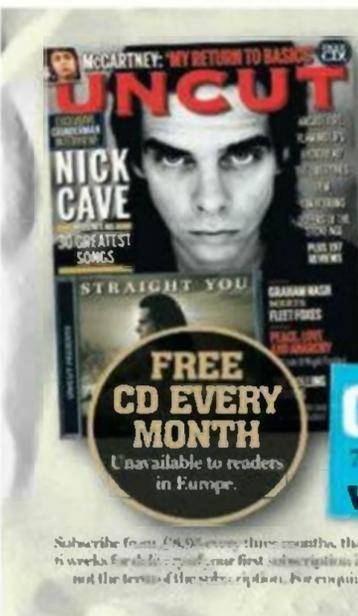
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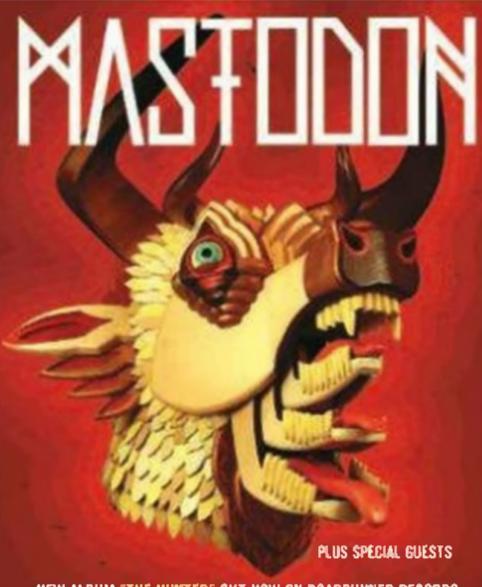
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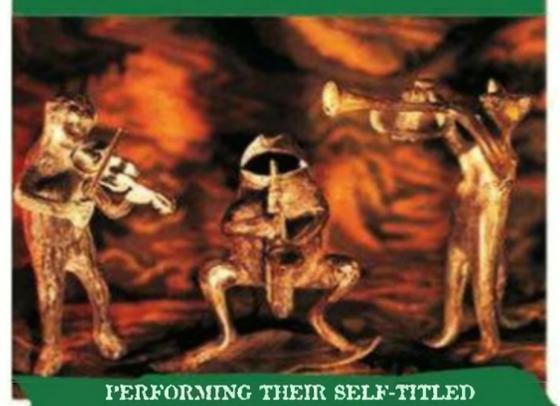
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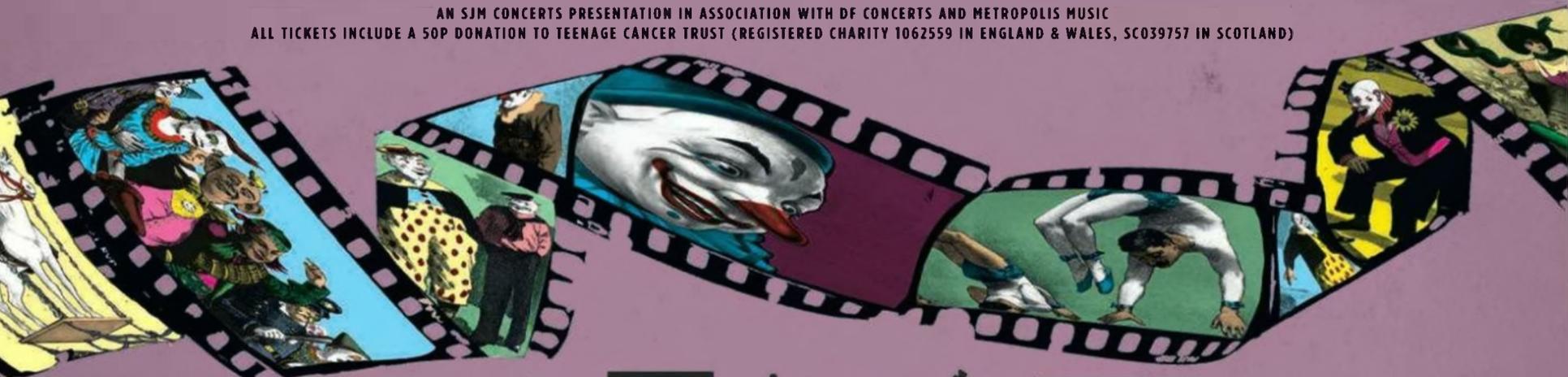
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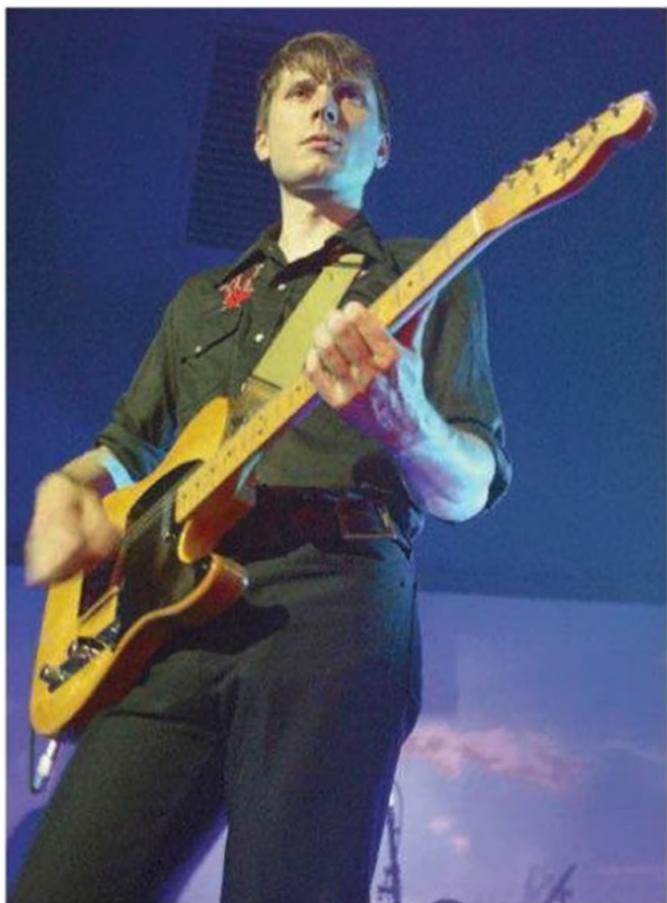
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# GIG GUIDE

THE UK'S BIGGEST GUIDE TO THE WEEK AHEAD

Edited by Laura Snapes

# BOOKING NOW



## FIELD DAY FESTIVAL

STARTS: London Victoria Park, Jun 2

DON'T  
MISS

Last year's Field Day ended with a bang, as punters spilled out of Victoria Park to hear the news that riot-hit Tottenham was in flames. In 2012, promoters Eat Your Own Ears are hoping to keep the explosions inside the fence, as Hudson Mohawke, Rustie, SBTRKT, Tortoise, The Vaccines and Errors head up the noisier side of events, with softer sounds provided by the likes of Beirut, Andrew Bird and Here We Go Magic, with a rare UK show from Papa M. Elsewhere, there's the sexy slink of Maya Jane Coles, Julio Bashmore, Metronomy and Outfit, cultish frequencies from Peaking Lights and R Stevie Moore, and the comeback of the mighty Franz Ferdinand (pictured).



### LANTERNS ON THE LAKE

STARTS: York Duchess, Jan 11

A short tour for the Bella Union post-rockers, after mass acclaim for their debut album 'Gracious Tide, Take Me Home'.



### THE MACCABEES

STARTS: London KOKO, Jan 24

The Maccabees and Lana Del Rey team up for the first of MTV's Brand New For 2012 January shows. Emeli Sandé and Delilah play the following night.



### THE LONG COUNT

STARTS: London Barbican, Feb 2

The National's Aaron and Bryce Dessner bring their multimedia project to London, featuring The Breeders' Kelley Deal and My Brightest Diamond.



### GROUPLOVE

STARTS: Brighton The Haunt, Feb 16

The LA scamps and ex-NME Radar 'Tour stars release a new single, after performing on *Letterman* and getting a song on an iPod advert. Ubiquitous!



### ANDREW BIRD

STARTS: London Barbican, Mar 5

The violin virtuoso releases his seventh solo album, 'Break It Yourself' – featuring a duet with St Vincent's Annie Clark – and plays a rare London date at the Barbican.



### BRETON

STARTS: London Corsica Studios, Mar 28

The enigmatic electronic masterminds play their first UK headline shows in support of debut album 'Other People's Problems'. They also hit London's Scala on January 14.



### MILES KANE

STARTS: Nottingham Rock City, Apr 20

Having toured with Beady Eye and Kasabian in 2011, the loveable Miles Kane heads out on his tod – promising a new song or three in his setlists...



### THE VACCINES

STARTS: Dundee Caird Hall, May 2

With the metropolitan enormodomes trounced, Justin and co return to win hearts in the nation's seaside haunts, touring Dundee, Bridlington, Blackpool and Brighton.



### ERRORS

STARTS: Glasgow The Arches, May 11

The 'post-electro' Rock Action quartet play a mega hometown show to celebrate the release of new album 'Have Some Faith In Magic'.



### ATP I'LL BE YOUR MIRROR

STARTS: London Alexandra Palace, May 25

Afghan Whigs (pictured) reunite for their first show this century. Slayer, Yuck and Mogwai also appear.



### ISLE OF WIGHT FESTIVAL

STARTS: Newport Seaclose Park, Jun 22  
Pearl Jam, Springsteen, Tom Petty, Elbow, Noel Gallagher, The Vaccines, Biffy, Feeder, Example, Madness and many more.



### END OF THE ROAD FESTIVAL

STARTS: Dorset Larmer Tree Gardens, Aug 31  
Grizzly Bear headline the woodland festival, plus a UK exclusive from Beach House and sets from Outfit and I Break Horses.

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# O<sub>2</sub>

# WEDS-FRI

January 4-6

# SAT-TUES

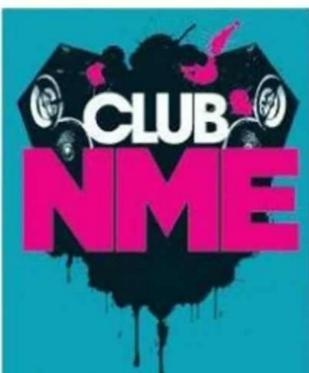
January 7-10

**WEDNESDAY, Jan 4**

- BIRMINGHAM**  
One Direction NIA 0121 780 4133
- CARDIFF**  
Maria & The Mirrors/Gindringer/Wrongs Buffalo Bar 02920 310312
- CHELMSFORD**  
Sloe Gin Hooga 01245 356 811
- LEEDS**  
Mae The Well 0113 2440474
- LONDON**  
District 6/Rona Geffen Dublin Castle 020 7485 1773  
Paddy Johnson & The Love  
Explosion Barfly 0870 907 0999  
The Singing Adams/Laura J Martin/  
The Werewandas The Lexington  
020 7837 5387  
Underground Railroad/Crushed  
Beaks/Creatures Of Love Hoxton  
Square Bar & Grill 020 7613 0709

**THURSDAY, Jan 5**

- BRIGHTON**  
Gasoline Thrill The Hydrant  
01273 608 313
- CHELMSFORD**  
Leah Lost Hooga 01245 356 811
- LONDON**  
Allo Darlin The Lexington  
020 7837 5387



**CLUB NME**

**LONDON**  
FILMS OF COLOUR  
FRIDAY, JAN 6  
KOKO  
0844 847 2258

- Attention Thieves/Jumping Ships/  
Temple Grounds Purple Turtle  
020 7383 4976  
Crash Mansion Dublin Castle  
020 7485 1773  
Cymbals Eat Guitars Garage  
020 7607 1818  
Toy/The Voyeurist/Sulk Hoxton  
Square Bar & Grill 020 7613 0709
- MANCHESTER**  
Echo Park/The Arizonas/  
The Maddening Crowd Retro Bar  
0161 274 4892
- MILTON KEYNES**  
Mae/Rookie Of The Year/  
Kyoto Drive Crauford Arms Hotel  
01908 313864
- PLYMOUTH**  
One Direction Pavilions 01752 229922
- STOKE ON TRENT**  
All Aboard Harry's Bar 01782 416 567
- TUNBRIDGE WELLS**  
Yaaks The Forum 0871 277 7101
- YORK**  
Fraser The Duchess 01904 641 413



British Sea Power,  
Friday, The Haunt,  
Brighton

**FRIDAY, Jan 6**

- BIRMINGHAM**  
Roz Bruce Infusion/Tom Walker O2  
Academy 3 0870 477 2000  
She Screams Murder The Ballroom  
0121 448 0797
- BRIGHTON**  
British Sea Power/Jock Scot/Race  
Horses The Haunt 01273 770 847
- BRISTOL**  
The Ramonas/Riot:Noise/Radio  
Nasties Fleece 0117 945 0996
- CHELMSFORD**  
Tiger Blood Hooga 01245 356 811
- GLASGOW**  
Ocean House O2 ABC2 0141 204 5151

- The River 68s/The Fleet/Toi King  
Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279  
Silvertrace/Crowned By Kings/  
The Rare Breed O2 Academy 2  
0870 477 2000
- LEEDS**  
Cymbals Eat Guitars/Milagres  
Brudenell Social Club 0113 243 5866
- LONDON**  
Dingus Khan/Sissy & The Blisters/  
Hawk Eyes Bull & Gate 020 7485 5358  
Jubilee Barfly 0870 907 0999  
New Morality/Jailbait/Gulity  
MacBeth 020 7739 5095  
The Wave Pictures The Lexington  
020 7837 5387

- MANCHESTER**  
Artery Band On The Wall  
0161 832 6625  
VNV Nation Academy 3 0161 832 1111
- NORWICH**  
The Pukes Arts Centre 01603 660 352  
Tubelord/Olympians/Darwin & The  
Dinosaur Arts Centre 01603 660 352
- STOKE ON TRENT**  
Heights Underground 01782 219944
- WREXHAM**  
Richard Fearless Central Station  
01978 358780
- YORK**  
New Law/Cairo East The Duchess  
01904 641 413

**SATURDAY, Jan 7**

- BELFAST**  
The Risk Kremlin Bar 028 9031 9061
- BIRMINGHAM**  
Karma Suite/We Writers/Farisle  
The Ballroom 0121 448 0797  
VNV Nation HMV Institute  
0844 248 5037
- BRIGHTON**  
DRUGS The Hope 01273 723 568
- BRISTOL**  
Bright Street/Gegs Allen Fleece  
0117 945 0996  
Vic Godard & Subway Sect  
Thunderbolt 07791 319 614
- GLASGOW**  
Raymond Meade King Tut's Wah Wah  
Hut 0141 221 5279
- LEEDS**  
In Isolation The Library 0113 2440794
- LONDON**  
The Caezars The Lexington  
020 7837 5387  
The Red Bullets Barfly  
0870 907 0999  
Spotlight Kid  
Bull & Gate  
020 7485 5358  
The Vast Hope  
& Anchor  
020 7354 1312
- MANCHESTER**  
Cymbals Eat  
Guitars/Milagres  
Deaf Institute  
0161 330 4019
- PRESTON**  
Organised  
Mike Adelphi  
01772 897961
- TUNBRIDGE WELLS**  
Son Of Kirk  
The Forum  
0871 277 7101

**SUNDAY, Jan 8**

- BRIGHTON**  
Ani DiFranco Concorde 2  
01273 673 311
- CARDIFF**  
Tubelord Undertone 029 2022 8883
- GLASGOW**  
Cymbals Eat Guitars O2 ABC2  
0141 204 5151  
The King Hats/Sick Kids King Tut's  
Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279
- LONDON**  
Ainsley/Ryan Taylor Dublin Castle  
020 7485 1773

- Skreamer Barfly 0870 907 0999  
VNV Nation Purple Turtle  
020 7383 4976

**MONDAY, Jan 9**

- ABERDEEN**  
Ed Sheeran Music Hall 01224 641122
- BRISTOL**  
Mallory Knox/Lights Go Blue Croft  
(Main Room) 0117 987 4144
- GLASGOW**  
Vukovi/Atlas/Eras & Cities King Tut's  
Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279
- LONDON**  
Bacchus Windmill 020 8671 0700  
Brontide The Lexington  
020 7837 5387  
Fella Barfly 0870 907 0999  
Milagres/Vadoinmessico Old Blue  
Last 020 7613 2478
- SOUTHAMPTON**  
Mae Joiners 023 8022 5612
- TUESDAY, Jan 10**
- BIRMINGHAM**  
Mallory Knox O2 Academy 3  
0870 477 2000

**GLASGOW**

- Discopolis King  
Tut's Wah Wah Hut  
0141 221 5279
- LEICESTER**  
Tubelord Firebug  
0116 255 1228
- LONDON**  
Ani DiFranco  
Union Chapel  
020 7226 1686  
Corpsekisser  
Power Lunches  
Arts Cafe  
Dead Social  
Club Buffalo Bar  
020 7359 6191  
Milagres Old  
Blue Last  
020 7613 2478

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Tubelord, Tuesday,  
Firebug, Leicester

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O<sub>2</sub>

# THIS WEEK IN 1994

ELASTICA HYPED, APHEX AWKWARD, OASIS LIKE SANTANA



## JUSTINE TIME

**E**lastica are the hottest band in the UK, and second single 'Line Up' will soon permeate the Top 20. Their gigs are selling out instantly, despite them only having put out one seven-inch single, 'Stutter'. They're everywhere, and Justine Frischmann is worried.

"I've seen bands get over-exposed so quickly, and I know it's very damaging," she says. "There's a level at which a lot of people start hating your guts really quickly, and probably quite passionately, and you find yourself under a kind of pressure that isn't very healthy."

She reminds *NME* that their success isn't overnight, that she's paid her dues.

"With two separate bands, I've gone through a lot of cynical feelings about the way the business works. So to find myself in a band that people are interested in all of a sudden is odd. It's very bizarre, after years of watching it happen to people close to me."

She's referring, of course, to her stint in Suede, and to her boyfriend Damon's band, Blur. "Hype has been incredibly damaging to Suede and it's going to be difficult for them to produce a second album off the back of it. Very difficult."

"And it was very, very damaging with Blur. They've survived it through the sheer bloody-mindedness of Damon. He's one of the strongest people I've ever met. I don't think I could survive what he went through."

She ain't, as it will turn out in the next two years, seen nothing yet.

## ALSO IN THE ISSUE THAT WEEK

- Blur are reviewed live at the Boston Paradise, and described as "a floundering anti-climax". That said, new song 'Girls And Boys' is "a delight".

- Number One in the Indie Singles chart is Tim Burgess and St Etienne's 'I Was Born On Christmas Day'.

- Lotion's album 'Full Isaac' is given nine out of 10, with John Mulvey writing: "Music doesn't often come along that is this liting, this exciting, this unambiguously emotional".

- *Carlito's Way* is previewed. The movie is described as exhibiting "operatic flair".

- In the New Bands For '94 special, Oasis are lumped together in a single paragraph with Marion ("The North will rise again"). They are described as having "a languid way with mixing Santana and Happy Mondays".

## REM, HOGMANAY



### TWIN RAINBOWS

Richard D James is on the eve of releasing 'Selected Ambient Works 2' and is known for being enigmatic and difficult. "I don't take any pleasure out of the work I do. If I could stop tomorrow then I would," he says. "I just like making music. Making records and playing gigs are all done for the same cause - and that's so I don't have to get a job." He later adds: "I don't want to do something twice. Well, not unless I get offered a huge amount of cash."

### DOUBLE TROUBLE

REM are gearing up to issue the "noisy rock'n'roll" follow-up to the all-conquering 'Automatic For The People'. They are now A Massive Band, and are dealing with all that that entails. Perhaps most worryingly, Peter Buck has acquired a doppelganger. "He dressed like me, looked like me and could play my songs on guitar. I feel sorry for the guy. He's obviously not that good-looking, and he doesn't get any of the things that I get out of being in REM."

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# THE LEGENDARY NME CROSSWORD

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

Compiled by Trevor Hungerford

Win!

## A BAG OF NME SWAG



### CLUES ACROSS

- 1 Spector's image has been dressed up, but lacks some colour (4-5-3-3)  
 9+22A How Gallows were kept at bay musically (9-2-6)  
 10+24A Lousy temps get arrangements wrong for Manic Street Preachers (5-5)  
 11 C'mon Theo, get moving with your SCUM (3-5)  
 12 (See 4 down)  
 14+31A La Roux wasn't anyone's plaything (2-3-4-3)  
 17 Frontman of US rock band Iron Butterfly taking part in the singles review (5)  
 18+20A Confusing heard with seen regarding a singer/songwriter (2-7)  
 22 (See 9 across)  
 24 (See 10 across)  
 26 Joe \_\_\_\_, producer and subject of the 2009 movie *Telstar* (4)  
 28 'What A Life' it's been for Noel Gallagher... although there's something missing from it (3)  
 29 Name of Klaxons bandmember is not left off (7)  
 30 (See 3 down)  
 31 (See 14 across)  
 32 Usually just the start of an album by Mull Historical Society (2)  
 33 (See 16 down)

### CLUES DOWN

- 1 Can't stay in when Cults are playing (2-7)  
 2 Coal mine dug up and a Black Keys' album revealed (2-6)  
 3+30A Gas fuel's out - that's terrible - but a Wolf Gang album is here (5-6)  
 4+12A "And all this time I've watched it change, but it's still the same..." 2005 (2-3-7)  
 5+27D The Courteeners identified the sign of love (4-4)  
 6 Nothing to be afraid of - it's Rasmus (2-4)  
 7 Did anybody fall for this Robbie Williams' number? (8)  
 8 The green-eyed monster covered in Ash (4)  
 12 Stereophonics addressed it back to him (2-6)  
 13 Misfit type could complete Green Days' '\_\_\_ Stink Breath' (4)  
 15 Someone's about to get a licking from Auf Der Maur (5-3)  
 16+33A "We got \_\_\_\_\_ for broken hearts like yours my boy, come home again", 2011 (4-4)

- 17 Michael Hutchence was singer with this band until his death in 1997 (4)  
 19 Heavy metal singer in Radiohead (3)  
 21 "What's in the bottom drawer, waiting for things to give / Spare us the \_\_\_\_\_", Echo And The Bunnymen (6)  
 22 Robert \_\_\_\_, former drummer with '70s jazz rock band Soft Machine, he later had a solo hit with 'Shipbuilding' (5)  
 23 Paul Weller branched out into writing '\_\_\_ Mysteries' (5)  
 25 Albums '\_\_\_ In A&E' by Spiritualized or '\_\_\_ For The Deaf' by Queens Of The Stone Age (5)  
 26 Record label for Nick Cave and SCUM (4)  
 27 (See 5 down)

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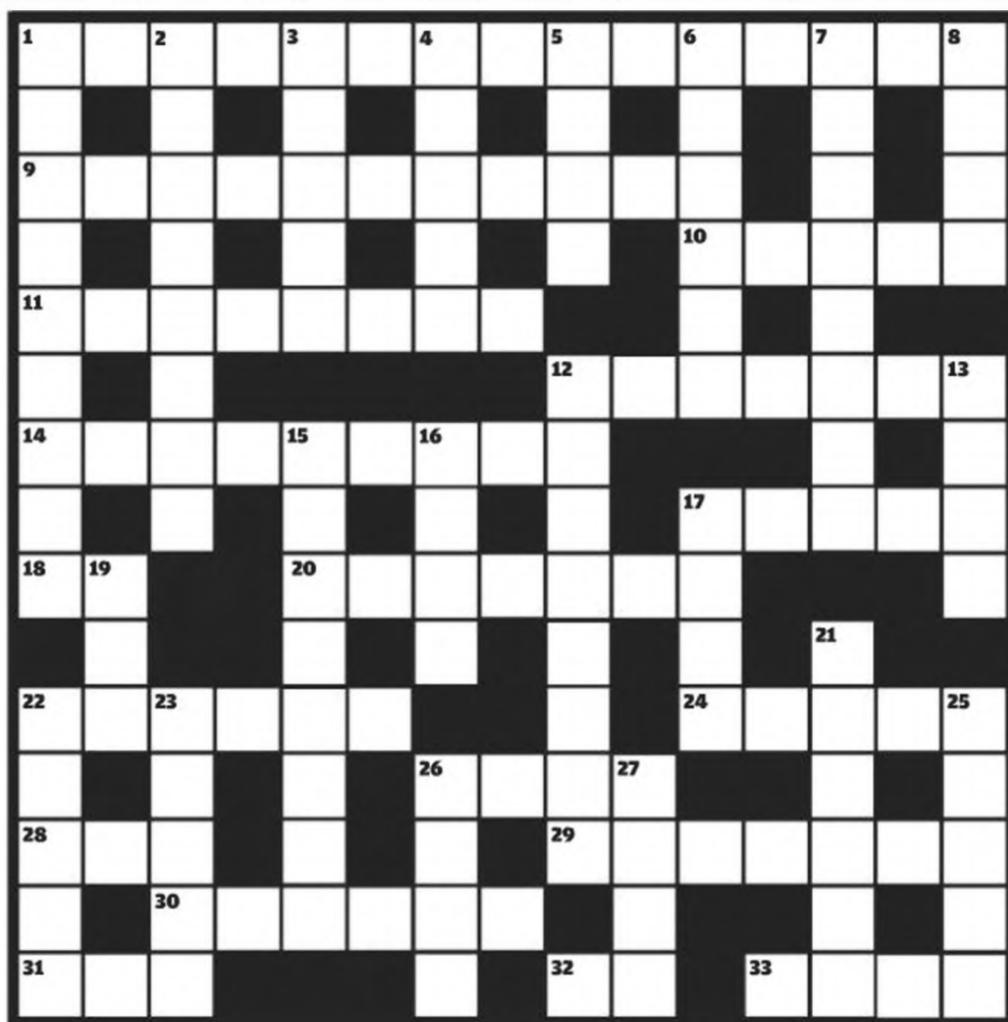
### DECEMBER 3 ANSWERS

#### ANSWERS ACROSS

1+9A Reach A Bit Further, 6+21D Karma Police, 10 In Light, 11 Giles, 12+30A Friday I'm In Love, 14 EYC, 16+17D Best Coast, 18 Fame, 20 Let Love In, 22 Opel, 29 Emo, 31 High, 33 Edie, 34+24D Days Of Speed, 35 Odd

#### ANSWERS DOWN

1 Refugees, 2 Acrylic, 3+15A Hi-Ho Silver Lining, 4 Barafundle, 5+25D This Is Not The World, 6+26A Killah Priest, 7 Rage In Eden, 8 Ants, 13 Stan, 19 Ade, 23 Loose, 27 I Try, 28 Soho, 29 Echo, 32 If



## COLLECTORS' CORNER

### PUBLIC ENEMY

Call yourself a superfan? Here are the gems that no Public Enemy fan should be without



### SONIC YOUTH - KOOL THING (1990)



Chuck D makes a guest appearance on the indie legends' first

single to be released on major label Geffen. The song was written by Sonic Youth's Kim Gordon after she interviewed another rapper, Def Jam's LL Cool J, for a US magazine and he said, "The guy has to have control over his woman."

**Need To Know:** The lyrics in the song reference Public Enemy's 'Fear Of A Black Planet' album/song, which were released the same year.

### DO THE RIGHT THING (OST) (1989)



The Oscar-nominated Spike Lee film was a massive critical and

commercial success, as was its soundtrack, which featured arguably Public Enemy's most popular song, 'Fight The Power'. The track features samples drawn from important figures in African-American popular music, including Eric B And Rakim, James Brown and Stetsasonic.

**Need To Know:** The song appears in the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame's '500 Songs That Shaped Rock'n'Roll'.

### REBIRTH OF A NATION (2006)



Bit of an anomaly this one, because despite the record being

deemed a collaboration between PE and Paris, many of the tracks were written and produced by the rapper on his own. Therefore Chuck D deemed it a "special project" in order to differentiate from other records by the group.

**Need To Know:** The title references the 1915 white supremacist film *The Birth Of A Nation* as well as PE's classic 1988 album 'It Takes A Nation Of Millions To Hold Us Back'.

### CHUCK D - AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MISTACHUCK (1996)



The Public Enemy mainman's solo debut isn't a

hugely radical departure from the work of his band. However, while his lyrics still pack a notably hefty punch, 'Autobiography Of Mistachuck' is less abrasive musically and has more soul, funk and R&B influences.

**Need To Know:** The record samples a diverse number of artists - including Jimi Hendrix, The Isley Brothers and Prince.

# DOES ROCK'N'ROLL KILL BRAINCELLS?

TESTING THE MEMORY OF LAST YEAR'S BIG JANUARY HOPE

*This Week*

## JUSTIN YOUNG THE VACCINES

### QUESTION 1

What colour shirt are you wearing on the cover of the Radar issue of NME from January last year?

"Beige."  
*Correct. It takes a brave man to wear beige*

"I got that shirt from a '50s shop in Camden. You're setting yourself up for the fall when you wear a beige shirt in the public eye. I like that shirt a lot."

### QUESTION 2

What three 'S'-es did Vaccines bassist Arni Hjörvar say were all banned on your tourbus at the start of 2011?

"Sex, slamming the door and shitting."  
*Correct. Did you abide by your own rules?*  
"Well, I didn't have a shit on there."



Where the magic happens...

### QUESTION 3

You played Radio 1's Big Weekend last May. Who came on directly before and after you?

"Chipmunk and Noah & The Whale?"  
*Wrong. Two Door Cinema Club and Yasmin, whoever that is...*

"Two Door Cinema Club rings a bell."

### QUESTION 4

True or false: Arni's hair (right) has its own fansite?

"Erm. False?"  
*Wrong. It's at*



*Fuckyeaharnihjorvar.tumblr.com*

"(To Arni) Did you know your hair has its own fansite?" Arni: "No!"

### QUESTION 5

You let Kate Moss (above left) jam along to 'If You Wanna' when she performed with you in the Rimmel advert. What is she wearing?

"She's wearing one of those hangovers from The Libertines, one of those military jackets."

*Correct. A blue one. What was Miss Moss like to work with?*

"It was quite surreal. It was in a very bright white room so it felt a bit like we were dreaming."

### QUESTION 6

The Vaccines played at Arcade Fire's show at London's Hyde Park in June. Tell us the running order.

"That's easy. Owen Pallett played first. Then

us. Then Beirut. Then Mumford & Sons. Then Arcade Fire."

*Correct*

### QUESTION 7

Which song did Vaccines guitarist Freddie Cowan join The Horrors on for their Reading Festival set in August?

"Still Life?"  
*Wrong. 'Moving Further Away'*

### QUESTION 8

In the video for 'Tiger Blood', you use beer bottles as makeshift bowling pins. Which brand are they?

"Tuborg. It's actually quite nice when you go to Denmark. It's the same as Carlsberg - it's horrible over here, but it's nice when you go to the source."

*Correct*



Tiger blood? No, just Tuborg

### QUESTION 9

The Cribs' Ryan Jarman joined you onstage at the O2 Academy Brixton in London last month wearing a natty matching socks and T-shirt combo in which colour?

"Fuck. Erm... blue?"

*Wrong. Red*  
"Shit. I was going to say red."

### QUESTION 10

What number did 'What Did You Expect From The Vaccines?' and 'If You Wanna' come in NME's albums and tracks of 2011 lists?

"Both at 14. I read NME!"

*Correct. Good man. Happy?*  
"I'm pretty happy with that."

*Total Score*  
**6/10**

"That's not bad. I saw that Faris from The Horrors got 10 so I was aiming for an eight or a nine. Six isn't too bad"

Go to [NME.COM/blogs](http://NME.COM/blogs) for the full Braincells hall of fame (and shame)

Coming Next Week

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11

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