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17/03/2012



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"THE CURE WERE PERCEIVED AS THE ENEMY BY THE MAINSTREAM"
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ON REPEAT

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



BEACH HOUSE

Myth

The teen dream is over: the Baltimore duo have been promising a more nightmarish, death-themed fourth album in the form of 'Bloom'. But while this first taster is a darker shade than anything on its predecessor, it's also the most sky-scrappingly euphoric thing they've produced to date. Magnificent.

Rick Martin, News Editor

BOBBY WOMACK

Please Forgive My Heart

Two years after enlisting his rasping vocal for Gorillaz' 'Stylo', Damon Albarn further assists Bobby Womack's comeback by co-producing 'The Bravest Man In The Universe', the soul man's first album in 18 years. This lead track is no 'Across 110th Street', but at least proves Womack's extraordinary vocal power is undiminished at age 68.

Luke Lewis, Editor, NME.COM

SHARON VAN ETEN

Life Of His Own

This B-side to new single 'Leonard' is disarmingly simple – the softest strumming and barely there, elegantly still strings dovetailing as she sings of her desire for a man who will "shine every light, and make everyone else around me dim". It's heartbreaking – particularly when you remember the cretin that inspired her beautiful new album, 'Tramp'.

Laura Snapes, Assistant Reviews Editor

ODD FUTURE

NY (Ned Flander)

This fidgeting, floating track from the collective's forthcoming 'OF Tape Vol 2' sees Tyler and Hodgy do an old-skool sounding back'n'forth, over a creepy Danny Elfman piano figure – which suggests that Syd Tha Kyd's paw prints have been all over this number.

Priya Elan, Assistant Editor, NME.COM

SIMIAN MOBILE DISCO

Seraphim

SMD's 'Delicacies' was one of the finest treats 2010 had to offer, and by the sound of 'Seraphim', the unworldly bangers won't be abating anytime soon. The first

taster from the duo's forthcoming new album 'Unpatterns' is a masterclass in bass-heavy thumping and sexy synth-pop. Consider our appetite well and truly whetted...

Ben Hewitt, writer

EMILY KOKAL

Hymn

Fret not! Emily's not abandoning the Warpaint eyrie; she just happened to appear at LA's Dilettante Records and play this new track. Whether 'Hymn' will appear on Warpaint's second album, we don't know – but what's certain is that her cries of "yesterday" over naked, eddying guitar recall early Cat Power, and clocking in at six minutes, it's a total "sing like no-one's watching" moment.

Susana Pearl, writer

BURIAL AND FOUR TET

Nova

Hot on the heels of Burial's excellent 'Kindred' comes a new collaboration with Kieran Hebden, aka Four Tet. Burial's shunting drums and sad-angel warbles are present and correct, but Hebden brings a glitchy, melodic sensibility that pokes early-morning sunbeams through the nocturnal gloom.

Louis Pattison, writer

THEESATISFACTION

Enchantruss

Another teaser from this Seattle duo's Sub Pop debut, which twists obtuse synth squelches, off-kilter beats and creepily treated vocals into something very special indeed. Loads of extra points for rhyming "Orson Welles" with "divorce myself" and "Archie Bunk" with "skunk".

Liam Cash, writer



BRADFORD COX

My Sharona (The Knack cover)

"It's not like fucking Lana Del Rey carved an upside down cross on her cheek and defecated onstage..." So said Cox (aka Atlas Sound) after his onstage 'incident' in Minneapolis recently. His crime? Responding to a heckler demanding a cover of 'My Sharona' by bastardising the track... for an hour.

Matt Wilkinson, New Music Editor

TRACK
OF
THE
WEEK

MILES KANE

First Of My Kind

'First Of My Kind', the lead song from Miles Kane's new EP (released on vinyl for Record Store Day on April 21, and officially the following day), marks uncharted territory for Mr Kane – not least because he's never actually got past the debut album point with any of his other acts. If there's one thing we never thought we'd say about the lady-lovin' Miles (his flirt trajectory at the NME Awards made for astonishing viewing), it's that he seems to have learned a thing or two

about commitment. And secondly, while The Last Shadow Puppets' album was flamboyant in its own sumptuous strings-led way, here Miles ratchets up the bombast with amounts of brass so heady it makes

This is Miles as we know and love him – but there seems to be more of him

Mark Ronson's 'Version' album sound minimal.

Is this change of tack a good thing? Absolutely. This is still Miles as we know and love him – but now there seems to be more of him. His powerful Lennon-licked vocals bluster with reinvigorated force; the creepy Scott Walker-ish rhythms tip-toe towards the gates of 'Bond theme pastiche' but thankfully stay the right side of them. We'll call his wordplay, erm, classic rather than cliché (he notes that an object of affection is "as cold as ice" at least once), and that's fine: Miles is becoming more of a class act with each cheeky guyniered wink.

Jamie Fullerton, Features Editor

THE ULTIMATE MUSIC GUIDE

REM

148
PAGE
SPECIAL



RARE
PHOTOS

‘That’s
me in the
spotlight...’

REM The
complete story

THE FINAL
RECKONING
A NEW LOOK
AT EVERY
REM ALBUM

TALK ABOUT
THE PASSION
CLASSIC
INTERVIEWS
UNSEEN FOR
YEARS!

EXCLUSIVE
INTRODUCTION
BY MIKE MILLS

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KASABIAN
FLORENCE
TWO DOOR
MACCABEES
DEAN CHALKLEY



100%
OFFICIAL
LINE-UP

GET READY FOR READING AND LEEDS 2012!

To announce this year's line-up, NME brings together four of the biggest names on the bill to talk up the excitement, kicking off with **Florence + The Machine**

MAIN EVENT

With no Glastonbury festival happening this year and some little sporting event called the Olympics or something apparently going on, the pressure was on the Reading and Leeds line-up announcement to be pretty special. Fear ye not then, as the summer's twin poles of rock'n'roll have risen to the occasion marvellously, with a massive headline triple bill of The Cure, Kasabian and Foo Fighters. But, of course, that's only part of the story: there's also the triumphant returns of The Maccabees and Two Door Cinema Club and some huge Main Stage graduations – The Vaccines, Bombay Bicycle Club and Odd Future to name but three. And that's before we mention the year's biggest graduate of all, Florence + The Machine, who'll play before Kasabian. "I haven't quite filtered the fact I'll be performing on the Main Stage. I mean, we've played Reading and Leeds quite a few times before – and it feels good to be going back and playing again," Florence tells NME. "We want to try and bring the visual aspects of this album to the big stage and just try and make the sound as huge as possible." Indeed, with some hardcore experience under her belt both as punter and performer, Florence is something

of a Reading and Leeds veteran – here are her key moments from the festival.

FINALLY LOSING HER FESTIVAL VIRGINITY

"Reading 2000 was the first festival I ever went to – it was my 14th birthday present. I was a grunge kid, a little goth, and I remember wearing my baggy trousers and skate chain and watching Foo Fighters and Silverchair. I remember Dave Grohl getting freaked out by people getting pushed around in the moshpit and telling everyone to stand still and clap. Then there was Limp Bizkit – I remember Fred Durst being like 'grab a lady, everyone grab a lady!' and me being 14 and really uncomfortable, stood next to these massive fully grown punks, thinking like 'maybe someone will pick me up!' But no-one did. No one wants a chubby 14-year-old in a roller derby T-shirt and ripped fairy wings!"

WEARING THAT LIME GREEN CATSUIT

"Our first year playing the festival was 2008 and the year I debuted the slashed-to-the-naval lime green catsuit, which was given to me by Andrew VanWyngarden from MGMT. We were on tour with them and we ended up

swapping clothes a lot. I wore it onstage with an old curtain I used to wear to raves. So I was just kind of spinning around in that. There's some weird Polaroid photos of me and Andrew dressed in clown suits pushing what I think were old electric cable holders, like big reels but like, in Victorian times, playing hoop-and-stick with them. There's a whole festival going on

and we're basically back behind all the tents playing hoop-and-stick with some electrical reels..."

CROWDSURFING, CUTS AND CARNAGE

"It was my birthday, so I woke up and did a surprise set in one of the tents and the crowd sang me happy birthday – I got them to do it for me again at the big show – and I got a present onstage. We had my birthday party that night and it ended up in total carnage – there was a bar on the stage, I ended up trying to crowdsurf but just fell off the stage, I cut my thumb open, there was blood everywhere. Basically, half of us ended up in A&E – which is everything you want from a birthday: blood and crowdsurfing." ►



Top: Flo at Reading 2000. Below: in her green catsuit gift

THE LINE-UP

LEEDS
2012READING
2012FRI 24 READING /
SAT 25 LEEDSSAT 25 READING /
SUN 26 LEEDSSUN 26 READING /
FRI 24 LEEDS

MAIN STAGE

The Cure
Paramore
Bombay Bicycle Club
You Me At Six
Crystal Castles
Angels & Airwaves
Coheed And Cambria
Cancer Bats
Deaf Havana

Kasabian
Florence + The Machine
The Vaccines
Enter Shikari
The Shins
Odd Future
Mystery Jets
Blood Red Shoes

Foo Fighters
The Black Keys
Kaiser Chiefs
Bullet For My Valentine
All Time Low
Gaslight Anthem
Eagles Of Death Metal
Band Of Skulls
Pulled Apart By Horses

NME/RADIO 1 STAGE

The Maccabees
Foster The People
The Courteeners

At The Drive-In
The Cribs
Miike Snow
Billy Talent

Justice
Two Door Cinema Club
The Horrors
SBTRKT

THE LOCK UP/DANCE STAGE

TBC

Metronomy
Katy B
Azealia Banks
Jaguar Skills

TBC

Paramore/Crysta
Castles and Bombay
Bicycle Club will
share the Main
Stage this year



KASABIAN:

Tom and Serge talk up their grand return – and wonder what happened to Har Mar Superstar...

“HEADLINING IS EASY”

Kasabian will return to Reading and Leeds for the first time since 2005, for their biggest festival headline slot to date. In the seven years since they last played the festivals, the release of ‘Empire’, ‘West Ryder Pauper Lunatic Asylum’ and ‘Velociraptor!’ has seen them become a totally different, and distinctly more massive, band. After the triumph of their O2 Arena gigs, how will they step it up yet another level? “We’re pretty well schooled now, so by the time we get there we’ll have a lot of things going on,” Serge promises. “The moment we walk on that stage,” adds Tom, “the place will come alive. That’s where we feel most comfortable in what we do. We thrive off playing live rock’n’roll.”

NME: It’s a long time since you’ve played Reading and Leeds...

Serge: “It has been yeah... 2005?! Was it that long ago?”

Tom: “Yeah we did the NME/Radio 1 Stage. I think it was before ‘Empire!’”

Serge: “Shunt. Yeah, it was a massive... they stayed and sang until the early hours and it was one of those moments where you’re like, ‘things are going well!’”

Why’s it been so long?

Tom: “Money.”

Serge: “Other things, other festivals.”

Tom: “No, it’s not a money issue at all, of course it ain’t. Reading and Leeds is the

one to play. We’ve done V Festival and that was great, but Reading and Leeds is nice. What’s good is we’ve been away from it for so long, which is great.”

And you’re ready for your first time headlining there?

Tom: “It’s easy, yeah!”

Overdue, do you think?

Serge: “No, you do it too early and you suffer. You need four albums to headline a festival, without a doubt, you don’t have enough tunes otherwise. So this has all gone to plan.”

What’s your best memory from Reading and Leeds?

Tom: “I remember partying backstage before I went onstage in 2004. Har Mar Superstar was in our dressing room and he was getting down. He was a legend, wasn’t he? I miss Har Mar. Get him back. He lives in the Himalayas, doesn’t he?”

Serge: “We played ‘LSF’, and the crowd carried on singing it, and this is no shit, they must have been there for about four hours. It was incredible.”



Tom and Serge are ready and willing

THE RISE AND RISE OF TWO DOOR

Alex takes us through his happy history of Reading and Leeds festivals

Two Door Cinema Club are preparing to play Reading and Leeds for the third year in a row. Having graduated from an afternoon slot on the NME/Radio 1 Stage to the Main Stage last year, they’ll return to the NME/Radio 1 Stage, second from top under headliners Justice. “It’s been a whirlwind year,” says singer Alex Trimble. “I’m very, very excited for this time. There’s something about this festival that’s so much fun and we’ve played such incredible shows both years, to such amazing crowds, it’s almost indescribable.” Here are their big R&L moments, in his own words...



2010

“This was the first time we’d played – before we even went onstage people were chanting our name and crowdsurfing. When we went on, the crowd were singing the words so loudly that I couldn’t even hear myself – I was taken aback. It was a moment that will live with me for the rest of my life.”

2011

“Last year we progressed onto the Main Stage – and it made us feel so proud of what we’ve achieved. It’s such a massive honour, to play to huge crowds that are really giving it their all, you know. There are such fantastic crowds at Reading and Leeds.”



2012

“We played some new tunes on the NME Awards Tour and we’ll do more in the summer. There’ll be ‘Handshake’, about when a crack addict tried to hit me over the head with a broken bottle. It’s definitely darker than anything on ‘Tourist History’. The album should be out just after Reading and Leeds, so we don’t want to bore fans who’ve come to hear the songs they know.”

THE MACCABEES: "THIS WILL BE OUR CROWNING MOMENT"

Being asked to headline the NME/Radio 1 Stage was an honour. But are they ready to step up?

The Maccabees will follow on from the success of 'Given To The Wild' and their biggest shows yet at Alexandra Palace in June with their first top-of-the-bill moment at Reading and Leeds on the NME/Radio 1 Stage. "We've not done a headline slot before, so this is the crowning moment," says singer Orlando Weeks. The band have played the festival four times before, beginning with a second-on slot on the Carling Stage in 2006. "It's quite an honour to be so high up the bill," says Orlando. "We're looking forward to it. By then we should have got our stuff together and be all ready..."

NME: What's your favourite Reading and Leeds memory?

"We played one of the tents once and the crowd seemed to have just worked out how to do this thing where they hold people about by their feet. I got a flashlight in the face and all I could see for the rest of the set were these silhouettes of people. It might not sound that great, but it was a great way of savouring the memory."



The Maccabees will hopefully look less scared come August

What do you reckon to the big headliners this year?

"There's a lot there for everyone, isn't there? I think that makes sense, you've got some real heritage with The Cure... I think it'll be great. It's hard not to love The Cure isn't it?"

Do you feel ready for it? You'll have the huge Ally Pally shows under your belt by then...

"Well, yeah, that's the thing. I think if

Ally Pally feels good, and we get the set feeling really together and get the order right and play well there, obviously it'll be great. And then there are things we've never even had to think about before, like how we'll light our performance and stuff... all these things that for our gigs we've kind of got our heads round obviously, but these are more kind of statement moments, y'know? So we're just trying to figure it out."

5 MASSIVE R&L TALKING POINTS

So you've heard from Flo, Tom, Orlando and Alex, but who else can you look forward to seeing in August?



1. WASTING LIGHT
May not even be a year old but Dave Grohl (left) is already talking about a follow-up - and recently revealed the band want to

record it in space. Which means Foos' headline set may well take space-rock to a whole new level.

2. THE DRAKE
MAKING THEIR LONG-AWAITED DEBUT

The post-hardcore heroes lit up the lives of thousands of earnest, plaid-shirted souls

with secret prog leanings the world over when they announced their reformation. With the band having said the reunion is both a "way to right old wrongs" and "just a nostalgia thing", whatever happens, it's going to be a) riffy and b) emotional.

3. THE CURE'S TURNING
THEir new TV show

It doesn't matter where you stand on Tyler (below) and the gang's controversy-courting - misogynists, messiahs or just berks in tube socks - they're still an exciting rap outfit, and with

their new TV show *Loiter Squad*, those massive new tunes and (perhaps) the return of Earl, shit's bound to get weird.

4. THE BASTARDS STEPPING
UP TO THE MAIN STAGE

The year's Best New Band at the NME Awards are ready to mix it with the big boys. "We're on the Main Stage and it's a big field, which is quite intimidating, but we can't wait," Justin Young tells *NME*. "The new album will be done, so the set will be a mixture of old and new."



Robert Smith: the gothfather returns

black-clad brethren as headliners; you want dark, neurotic majesty? They got it. You want fizzy pop songs? They got it. Spindly, edgy post-punk? My friend, they invented that shit. Turn to page 20 for the Gothmeister General's full plans for the weekend, but for God's sake, please don't call him that to his face.

5. THE CURE'S
HUGE HEADLINING

Few can match Robert Smith and his



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We've got no tickets to give away

The Cure, Kasabian and Foos are going to be there - with loads of other amazing names - but what about you? Tickets went onsale on Monday (March 12) but you could be heading to the rock'n'roll weekend of the year with a free ticket thanks to NME Extra. We've got five pairs of tickets for each site up for grabs in this week's fantastic competition - just follow the instructions below for your chance to snaffle a pair. Good luck!

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NME Head to NME.COM/video to watch exclusive Reading and Leeds video interviews with the likes of Florence, Kasabian, The Maccabees, Two Door, Katy B and more

JACK'S GOT THE COMEBACK BLUES

At an invite-only bash in Nashville, **Jack White** shreds old songs and new as he celebrates his new solo live career

PHOTOS: JO McCAUGHEY



Jack's new backing band look to earn their stripes



"Hmmm... think my next look's gonna be pink and green"



FRONT ROW

"YOU MIND IF WE PLAY A couple of new songs?" asks Jack White. "We'll play some old ones too..." The tiles on the walls of Third Man Records' built-in recording stage bounce back screams from all angles. The White Stripes man hardly needs to bargain; he's on home turf. Last Thursday (March 8), White celebrated the start of his solo live career and the third anniversary of his Nashville record store with a party attended by 150 guests including Alison Mosshart, Raconteurs Brendan Benson and Little Jack Lawrence, Karen Elson and White's mother.

Taking to the stage in a duck-egg blue suit (to match his three custom-made amps) White is backed for his first set of the night by the same all-female band that joined him on *Saturday Night Live* the previous week for his performance

of 'Love Interruption', the first single from forthcoming album 'Blunderbuss'. Opening with The White Stripes' 'Dead Leaves And The Dirty Ground', theirs is an aggressive, rootsy sound, bolstered by Ruby Amanfu's backing vocals. The set mixes tracks

from White's new album - including the playful, Rhodes-piano led 'Missing Pieces', the late-Dylan-esque 'Hypocritical Kiss' and 'Love Interruption' - with beefed-up versions of Stripes classics including 'You're Pretty Good Looking (For A Girl)' and a heavily countrified 'Hotel Yorba'. The Raconteurs' 'Top Yourself' and The Dead Weather's 'Blue Blood Blues' also feature, before the female band take on furious new rocker 'Sixteen Saltines', which had been performed

by an all-male set up for *SNL*. "You think the ladies can play?" White asks to roars of approval.

For the second set, White returns in black T-shirt and pinstripe trousers with an all-male band who add mandolin to the ladies' set-up of drums, piano and keyboard, pedal-steel guitar and double-bass. They segue into a casual jam when drum troubles delay opener 'My Doorbell', before a set that takes in White's Hank Williams adaptation 'You Know That I Know' and a heaving, hectic 'Ball And Biscuit'.

"Feel good?" White asks. "We're gonna take your temperature on the way out. I've installed some new digital shit in the hallway that can tell by your temperature whether you like vinyl records."

After a 'Seven Nation Army' to which, its riff relegated to electric bass, White adds slide guitar flourishes, he closes with Lead Belly's 'Goodnight, Irene', urging the crowd to "sing along when you feel like it. We'll end this night together."

WITH THE GIRLS

- **Dead Leaves And The Dirty Ground**
- **Missing Pieces**
- **Sixteen Saltines**
- **Love Interruption**
- **Hotel Yorba**
- **Top Yourself**
- **Hypocritical Kiss**
- **You're Pretty Good Looking (For a Girl)**
- **Blue Blood Blues**
- **We're Going To Be Friends**

WITH THE BOYS

- **My Doorbell**
- **Freedom At 21**
- **I Cut Like A Buffalo**
- **You Know That I Know**
- **Weep Themselves To Sleep**
- **Ball And Biscuit**
- **Steady As She Goes**
- **Seven Nation Army**
- **Goodnight, Irene**



NME IS 60 THE CELEBRATIONS START HERE!

Kicking off an epic year to mark the birthday of the world's most famous music magazine

When *Accordion Times* and *Musical Express* merged in 1952, *New Musical Express* was born.

Nobody could have dreamed it would turn into the most famous music magazine in the world, responsible for some of the most iconic covers in history, launching the careers of some of the planet's most revered writers and photographers, and championing the most exciting new artists from every decade and genre, from The Beatles to Blur, Marc Bolan to Morrissey, Public Enemy to Pete Doherty and beyond. But that's

how it happened, and it's what continues to happen today as NME remains at the forefront of music and culture, setting agendas, instigating debate and basically getting stupidly excited about the best music on the planet, just like you do. So happy birthday, NME! It's been a mighty 60 years so far. Stay tuned for a load of exciting announcements over the year, the first of which we can reveal right here!

Kissi Muriya

NME Editor

Here's what we've got planned

We're launching a series of special issues and events throughout the year

THE SEARCH FOR THE ULTIMATE NME ICON

Kurt Cobain or Keith Richards? David Bowie or Debbie Harry? We ask you to vote for the ultimate NME icon. Launches on NME.COM on March 20.

BEHIND NME LINES

Legendary NME writers and photographers past and present dish the dirt on their time at the world's most rock'n'roll weekly. Expect the whole sordid truth and stories that will make your hair curl. Launches in NME issue dated March 31.

THE GREATEST TRACKS OF NME'S LIFETIME

The best tracks from each decade of NME's lifetime - starting next week with the '50s and picked by a panel of NME experts and musicians. Launches on NME.COM on March 13.

TONS MORE TO ANNOUNCE

Stay tuned for more exciting revelations over the next weeks and months. It's going to be a huge year, so make sure you're a part of it.



Culture clash: Pussy Riot perform in front of Saint Basil's Cathedral in Moscow



STARVING TO DEATH TO START A REVOLUTION

Thrown in jail and facing lengthy sentences for their punk-rock protests against Vladimir Putin's controversial election win, Russia's **Pussy Riot** tell NME why they're willing to die for their cause

On February 21, a week before the presidential elections, members of Russia's fiercely anonymous feminist punk group Pussy Riot snuck into Moscow's principal cathedral, to conduct, in their words, a "punk prayer service". The girls, wearing their trademark fluorescent leggings and brightly coloured beanie-hat-balaclavas, performed a high kick dance at the altar, singing a song entitled 'Holy Shit, Putin's Pissed Himself'. This act prompted Russia's Cossack community to mount guards at churches across Moscow.

By February 28, on the eve of the elections, five members of the group had been arrested. After Vladimir Putin secured a controversial third term as president, Nadezhda Tolokonnikova and Maria Alyokhin – widely believed to be members of Pussy Riot – appeared in court to be charged with hooliganism and inciting religious hatred, a charge which could carry a seven-year sentence. The two women, who both have young children, begun a hunger strike in protest at the one-and-a-half-month jail sentences they have already received.

The band formed in autumn 2011 in reaction to Putin's announcement that he would be returning to the presidency this year after a four-year stint as prime

minister – a move which many Russians viewed as a travesty of democracy. Since then the band have played on the ceilings of metro stations, in designer shops and, most impressively, on a roof overlooking the wall of a prison (to thunderous applause from inside).

They are, in their own words, "a punk-feminist political group, operating illegally". Their goal is "to promote LGBT rights, political change and the development of a protest culture". Anonymity is key, and the 10 members agree to talk to NME only under the collective guise of Pussy Riot. For the same reason, they're willing to give only their average age (25) and their "background" as "art, music, theatre, rock climbing and philology".

Talking to NME two days before their arrest, the group called Putin's reaction to their church protest "childish", but appeared to admit that the scale of the pursuit had caught them unawares: "We knew what the political situation was – but now we're feeling personally the full force of Putin's Kafka-esque machine," they said. "The state's policy is based on a minimum of critical thinking and on a maximum of spite, and a desire to get even with those who don't please it." Ultimately, the arrests appear to have only galvanised the spirit within the band. "We've already written new songs," they say, and on their website they

promise to "starve in jail until they are returned to their children".

Pussy Riot's uncompromising persona hides some surprisingly moderate demands: "We're worried by the centralisation of political power. We're worried that high school education is no longer free, we're worried by a proposed anti-abortion law. We're worried by the spread of sexist thinking that reduces lives to gender roles."

The group view opposition leaders favourably, but warn against "choosing

for ourselves a king or a queen. We're looking for allies," they say. "We perform so that horizontal forms of protest will develop in Russia" – and a growing wave of Russians are getting behind them. Over 3,000 have already signed a petition for their release and there have been calls on Twitter to picket the court where the women are being tried. "If we are silent now and don't speak out, then we will never be heard, even after a changeover in power," the band conclude. "You have to put yourself in history's way and now's our time. Wait, we cannot."

3 MORE MUSICAL REVOLUTIONARIES

BRAT MOBILE

One of the members of the New York City punk band Brat Mobile, the band's album *Brat Mobile* is out now. "We're a punk band, we're a punk band, we're a punk band," they say. "We're a punk band, we're a punk band, we're a punk band."

THE PLASTIC PEOPLE OF THE UNIVERSE

The Plastic People of the Universe are a Czech band. They're a punk band, they're a punk band, they're a punk band. They're a punk band, they're a punk band, they're a punk band.

RAMY ESSAM

Ramy Essam is a British singer. He's a punk singer, he's a punk singer, he's a punk singer. He's a punk singer, he's a punk singer, he's a punk singer.

The Minutes debut album 'Marcata' out now featuring the singles 'Heartbreaker' and 'Black Keys'

"a faultless, sturdy hunk of rock 'n' roll" - Artrock

On Tour

March 2012
21/3 Stereo, York
22/3 King Tuts, Glasgow
23/3 Electric Circus, Edinburgh
24/3 Cafe Drummond, Aberdeen
25/3 The Leopard, Doncaster
27/3 Central Station, Wrexham
28/3 Academy 3, Birmingham
29/3 Take 5 @ The Crypt, Norwich
30/3 The Corner House, Cambridge



ARE RADIOHEAD WORTH £65?

The Oxford legends are back with an arena tour – but it'll cost you...

News of Radiohead's first UK tour since 2008 was the source of much rejoicing last week, but some fans were left aggrieved by the £65 ticket price. Are Radiohead really worth that much? And what will you be getting for your money? The three new songs they've debuted on their ongoing US tour offer the as-yet-undecided a taste of what to expect:

CUT A HOLE

Perhaps the 'biggest' of the newies, this mournful, guitar-driven slowburner could have sat comfortably on 'Hail To The Thief' or 'In Rainbows'. It's a love song in Thom's usual, vaguely unsettling vocabulary: "I want to see that stretchy smile go right across your face".

SKIRTING ON THE SURFACE

A song that's been around since 2009 (albeit in a very different, piano-led form), it's now been given a dubby, choppy overhaul, with added acoustic guitars and glacial synth-lines. Thankfully, its strong melody remains intact.

IDENTIKIT

Layers of vocals intertwine to hypnotic and disorienting effect, before the song shudders and spasms into life halfway through. Based around a nagging, insistent hook it's a bit more rhythmic – and a lot more 'The King Of Limbs' – than the other two.

Overall, the fleetingness of this tour (a meagre three gigs), not to mention the length of time that's passed since the last one, makes it a virtual no-brainer. The US gigs have been tailored towards the hardcore but, even for casual fans, the new songs already sound like a melodic return to form, and Radiohead's status as one of the world's finest live acts has never been in doubt. In the end, it's Radiohead, on tour for the first time in four years: can you really afford to miss it?



WILL YOU PAY?

NME readers have their say

When One Direction's arena tour is 39 quid a ticket, can't complain.
Harry Ireland

£50 max for an arena gig and I'd expect a decent opening act. For £65 I'd want a big outdoor gig with 2/3 decent support acts.
Rónán Creighton

You get what you pay for, to see one of the greatest bands ever in their creative prime £65 really isn't that much (jeez, most people spend that on an 'average' night out in most city centres these days). Got my tickets this morning... well worth the hassle.
David Smart

And THIS is why you get the album for free. Posh wankers.
Adam Hughes

Well fuck you all. THIS IS FUCKING RADIOHEAD! They are the biggest and best alternative rock band of all time. They can do whatever they want!
Lars Andersson

SPECTOR: 'WE BLAME BYKER GROVE'

Fred says '90s kids' show holding up new album

And so the wait for Spector's debut album still rumbles on. Main man Fred Macpherson tells us there's an unusual snag delaying proceedings... "I'm trying to clear a sample taken from the *Byker Grove* theme tune," he says. "Genuinely, it's for one of the tracks, and it's proving difficult to track down the original writer. [It's the bit that goes] 'Yeah! Aha aha aha...' It's a real thing. I think it makes the album." All of which leaves us somewhat in the

dark, then, as to when we'll finally get our mitts on the album: Fred says that it's tentatively scheduled for release in April or May, but Zenith Productions, the TV company behind *Byker Grove*, closed in 2006. According to Fred, though, it'll be worth the wait. "Our new record is like Pret A Manger – it's going to live forever." They've even got a working title, too. "We're thinking about calling it, 'What Did You Expect From The Vaccines?'. Now, we're sure we've heard that somewhere before...



THE BEST OF NME VIDEO.COM THIS WEEK



GRAHAM COXON – 'BLUR'S SHOWS WILL BE BIG'

The guitarist on Blur's Hyde Park Olympic shows and if The Vaccines deserved their NME Award.



HOW ROCK'N'ROLL IS WRETCH 32?

Wretch answers some important head-scratchers like 'Has he ever got naked in public?'



KASABIAN – 'WE'VE GOT A NAME FOR OUR NEXT RECORD'

Tom Meighan reveals what he wants to call the follow-up to 'Velociraptor!' (Well, if Serge agrees).



THE HORRORS – 'WE WANT TO START OUR NEW ALBUM'

Faris and Rhys chat about starting the next album after 'Skying'.

TALKING
HEADS

NOEL GALLAGHER: WHY MARIO BALOTELLI IS MY GODLIKE GENIUS

Ahead of their tête-à-tête on Football Focus, Noel told us why he regards the flamboyant Manchester City striker as Super Mario



"Mario Balotelli is a genius. I was actually trying to get him to present the Godlike Genius Award to me at the NME Awards, but

it didn't happen. I got onto Manchester City but I'm not sure whether they wanted to let him loose in London. It would've been great, wouldn't it? He could have come down with two security guards, he'd have just gone up there and said: 'I have no idea who any of you people are, or what this trophy is...'

"The thing that started it, for me, was the 'Why Always Me?' T-shirt [which Mario revealed when he scored for Manchester City against Man United last year - *Footie Ed*]. Who, for one, on their way to the derby thinks 'E'are, transfer

I wish Man City had let him come to London to give me my award

"Why Always Me?' on that, would you? What do you want that for, Mario? 'Just in case I score'. What? In case you score? Fucking hell! And for him then to actually put it on... then to score... and then to hoist it! Genius.

"That pub in Manchester he went into, too [where he bought everyone a drink], the reason for that is this: you know those huge boxing glove things they have in all those fucking shit pubs on council estates, where you see how hard you can hit it? They're a dying breed - you never

Noel later stripped off to reveal his 'Why Always Liam?' T-shirt



see it anymore - but this particular pub's got one, and somebody told Balotelli about it and, he's was like, 'You what? You punch it! Right, I'm there!' So he just turns up and apparently he got the biggest score on this thing ever, and bought everyone in the entire place

a drink. There's another story of him pulling into a packed out garage and buying everybody petrol. And then he gave a grand to a tramp - just said, 'I here, homeless person, have some money!' I mean, even if that shit's not true you want it to be, don't you? And then you've gotta take into account all

the fireworks, and that shit. Have you heard the latest thing that's going on at City? Three of the players have got identical white Bentleys, right? And when they all bring them together, they do this thing where they mix them up, and he can't

work out which one's his! So he can't get in the car! He doesn't even know the reg plate... he just hasn't got a fucking clue! "He is just great. Every football fan loves him, and every football fan would love him to be a part of their club, wouldn't they? I don't give a fuck if all the stuff you hear about him is bullshit, because in my mind it IS true. He's my fucking hero. End of."

ROCK'N'ROLL STAR

Five reasons why we love Mario too

HIS LOVE OF PYRO

By October 2011, football fans had come to expect fireworks from the volatile striker - but Mario took this to literal levels when he let off a dazzling pyro display from his, er, bathroom window on the eve of a derby game with Man Utd, leaving the emergency services to deal with a "substantial fire".

Rock'n'roll rating: 7/10

HIS PRO-BONO ACTIVITY

Splashing out for drinks and petrol for strangers is one thing. But, according to Manchester legend, on Christmas Eve last year Balotelli dressed up as Santa and handed out money to tramps in the city centre. Bono would be proud.

Rock'n'roll rating: 8/10

HIS SHAMELESS SHOWBOATING

Like a rock star with an ego ramp, Balotelli can't help but show off - as proven by his hilariously shit backheel showboat in a pre-season game for City last year. Football managers, unlike arena crowds, don't go in for that sort of stuff though - City boss Roberto Mancini hauled him off the pitch in disgrace.

Rock'n'roll rating: 8/10

HIS LAVISH TASTES

According to a tabloid, Mario was sent out to buy a mop and bucket for his mansion by his mum last year. Hours later, he returned with none of those - but had instead purchased a giant trampoline, a Scalextric, two Vespas and a table tennis set.

Rock'n'roll rating: 6/10

HIS INABILITY TO DRESS HIMSELF

Just as no self-respecting rock pig of a frontman chooses his own wardrobe, so Mario can't even put on a training bib without help from his teammates - head to YouTube for the evidence.

Rock'n'roll rating: 3/10



Grimes Visions

ALBUM OUT NOW

Pitchfork - Best New Music - 8.5

Q - ★★★★★

Mojo - ★★★★★

grimesmusic.com

1AD.com

VERSUS

PETER ROBINSON Vs
ELIZABETH SANKEY

Music journo, Summer Camp star, voiceover specialist... what's wrong with one job, eh Liz?



• NME would like to make it clear that Elizabeth did not make up any quotes during her time as an NME 'scribe'

• 'Sanko' insists that the museum of ham is real, but it can't be

• Her voice does sound quite corporate when you think about it, doesn't it?

Hello. Bear with me, I'm just turning on my tape recorder. "Do you still use a tape recorder?"

As an ex-comedy 'journalist' yourself you will be well acquainted with the ins and outs of recording phone conversations. "I like the phrase 'comedy' as if me being a journalist was a joke!"

It is a joke! I mean, it's hardly a proper job is it? Mind you, if you were to list jobs in order of properness, journalist would still come above pop star. It's as if you're regressing in terms of professional properness. You'll probably be a circus clown by this time next year. Not to say you're not in this for the long haul, but... "Oh here we go, IT BEGINS! Oh hang on, I've just dropped my sunglasses."

That's a classic pop star distraction technique right there. 'STOP THE INTERVIEW, I've dropped my sunglasses'. "I don't think of myself as a journalist at all. I wrote very little, for the wonderful NME. I was just a fan who got lucky!"

Having read your work, I agree. "(Guffaws) BUT IT'S TRUE! I didn't know the right words to use when describing drums, you know?"

Where are you?
"I'm in Madrid. In my hotel room. I just had a really good ham and tomato sandwich from (dramatic pause) THE HAM MUSEUM!"

A museum of ham?
"It's a real museum of ham."

Have you done any voiceover work recently?
"Yes! It was an advert for a hair company that makes a product that stops people getting dandruff."

What did you have to say?
"Mmm... yeah, that's better."

On your voiceover agent's site your voice is described as 'comedy, cool, versatile', and 'rich' and 'corporate'...
"I wonder what that means?"

Of course in the world of serious alternative music, 'corporate' is a diss. 'Ooh you've sold more than eight records, you're corporate'.



"I haven't sold more than eight records so I need to get them to take that off."

Do you think that you're better than Madonna?
"Hell no."

Who are you better than?
"I can't think of anyone!"

Why didn't you do SXSW this year?
"We did it last year. If you're a band it's really hard work, mainly because all our gear was English and we couldn't plug it into American plug sockets."

You should have got a converter from Boots in duty free.
"Yes."

They do mark up the prices at the airport, you need to be careful. They prey on the disorganised.
"Maybe I'm better than people who change the prices at airports..."

They probably get paid more than you do though.
"I get a hell of a lot of perks for doing what I'm doing, though."

You get to chat to me, for one.
"Yes! I could have been in the ham museum still. To be honest, I got to do both. I went to the ham museum AND I'm talking to you."

You just want to have it all
"But I'm in a dying industry!"

People will always want voiceover artists though.
"Yes. People will always want people like me to say things like, 'Mmm... that's better.'"

THIS
WEEK'S
TOP 20THE
NME
CHARTNME
RADIO

Hear the chart
rundown first every
Monday at 7pm
on NME Radio
NME.COM/RADIO

NME
.COM

Listen to the Top 40
and learn more about
each artist online
7PM EVERY MONDAY
AT NME.COM/CHART

NEW TO
NME RADIO
PLAYLIST

• DRY THE RIVER
'New Ceremony'
• MYSTERY JETS
'Someone Purer'
• MAN WITHOUT
COUNTRY
'Puppets'

- 1 15 NOEL GALLAGHER'S HIGH FLYING BIRDS 'DREAM ON' EMI
- 2 6 TRIBES 'WE WERE CHILDREN' WYRD
- 3 35 SPECTOR 'CHEVY THUNDER' LOVE
- 4 5 THE BLACK KEYS 'GOLD ON THE CEILING' WYRD
- 5 23 DRY THE RIVER 'THE CHAMBER & THE VALVES' WYRD
- 6 11 THE HORRORS 'CHANGING THE RAIN' WYRD
- 7 NEW FLORENCE + THE MACHINE 'NEVER LET ME GO' WYRD
- 8 NEW ARCTIC MONKEYS 'R U MINE?' WYRD
- 9 21 NIKI & THE DOVE 'DJ, EASE MY MIND' WYRD
- 10 1 ALABAMA SHAKES 'HOLD ON' WYRD
- 11 4 KASABIAN 'GOODBYE KISS' WYRD
- 12 24 GOTYE 'SOMEBODY I USED TO KNOW' WYRD
- 13 16 LANA DEL REY 'BORN TO DIE' WYRD
- 14 28 BOMBAY BICYCLE CLUB 'HOW CAN YOU SWALLOW SO MUCH SLEEP?' WYRD
- 15 12 M83 'REIMINION' WYRD
- 16 13 THE MACCABEES 'FEEL TO FOLLOW' WYRD
- 17 10 FOSTER THE PEOPLE 'DON'T STOP (COLOR ON THE WALLS)' WYRD
- 18 NEW AZEALIA BANKS '212' WYRD
- 19 NEW JACK WHITE 'LOVE INTERRUPTION' WYRD
- 20 NEW PAUL WELLER 'THAT DANGEROUS AGE' WYRD

The NME Chart is compiled each week by NME Radio and is based on how many times each track has been played on the station over the previous seven days.

RADAR

FUTURE STARS, BREAKING SCENES, NEW SOUNDS...

Edited by Matt Wilkinson

Give Peace a chance (l-r):
Doug, Dom, Harry, Sam



ABOUT
TO
BREAK

PEACE

Leading the new charge of Midlands indie – one trumpy house party at a time

Back home in Birmingham, the four boys of Peace have become so popular that they're practically being given the keys to the Bullring. "People have said we're an inspiration for them starting a band," says bassist Sam Koisser, incredulously. "It's ridiculous." As one third of what singer (and Sam's brother) Harry describes as a "tri force" in Brummie indie – completed by the city's other rising heroes Swim Deep and Troumaca – Peace are the poster boys for the UK's most promising new scene. Brought together by some of life's key moments (birth, education and, er, street fights), they're now building momentum outside of their home city, propelled by support slots with The Vaccines, jaw-droppingly exciting songs and enough roguish antics to put Jordan Howler to shame.

For these boys, being boring isn't an option. At one London gig they finished their set by setting off fireworks, while they've already garnered a support network of obsessed fans who turn up at gigs with peace tattoos and logos shaved into their heads.

More pressingly, one now very-*ex* fan in Leeds is after their blood after an altercation over some cider ("We're going to fuck him up if he comes to our next gig," jokes drummer/chief troublemaker Dom Boyce). Indeed, where duller bands would spend the hours leading up to a big show cautiously preparing, Peace like to warm up with, erm, a raucous house party.

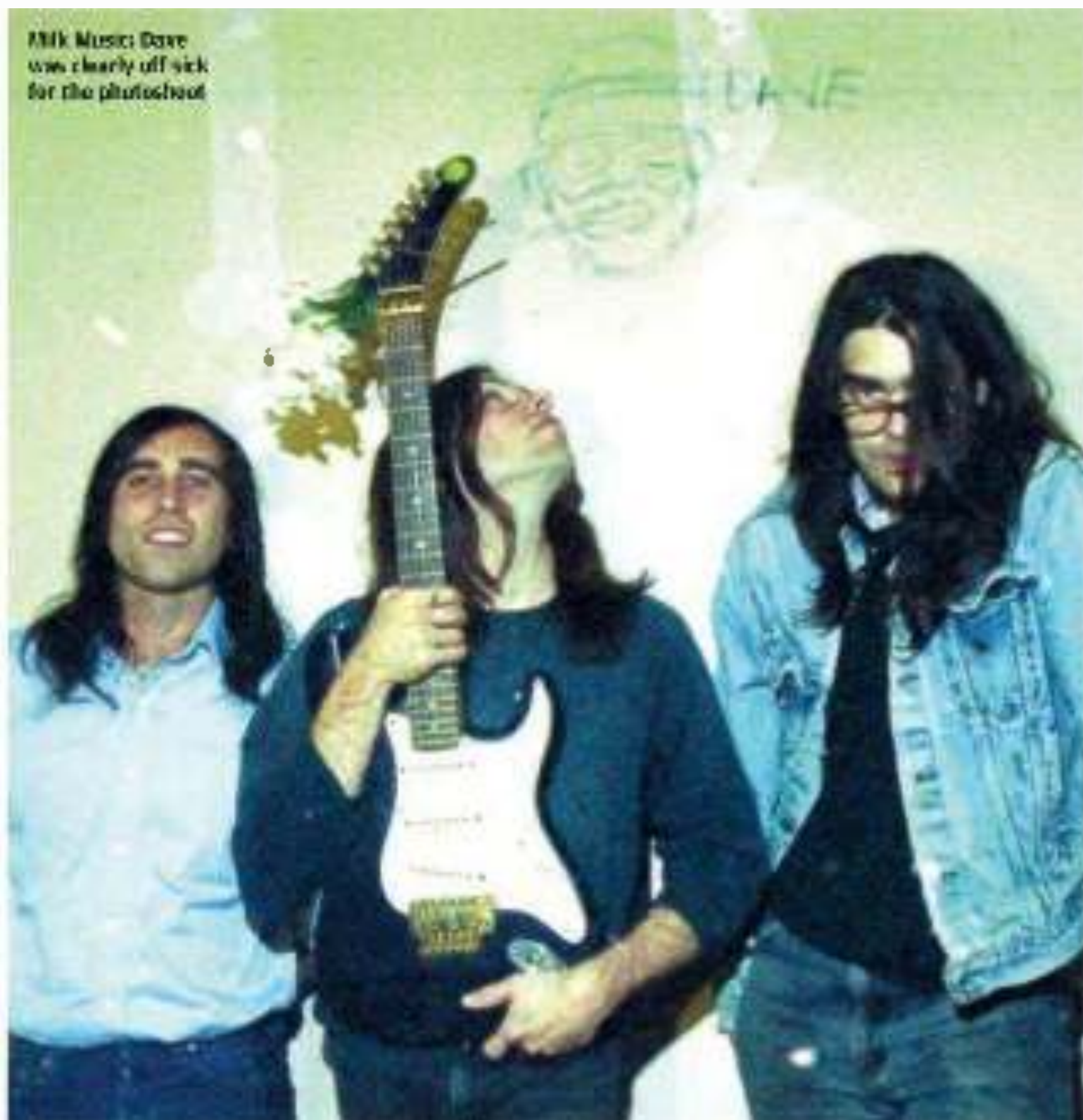
"The last one we did ended about an hour before we had to go and play another gig at a proper venue," explains guitarist Doug Castle. "The door got kicked down and then in the morning there was a tramp asleep by the fireplace, dribbling, with a wet patch around his groin. He was wearing our friend's bathrobe. We couldn't get it off him."

They might party hard, but they put in the hours too. Spending the last year taking things slowly, the results, such as the lilting tropicana of 'Bblood' and the blistering, Pearl-Jam-gone-Madchester assault of debut single 'Follow Baby', have been nothing short of stunning. They're perfectionists, they say, so the wait for an album could be a long one – but judging by Peace's track record so far, it'll be worth it. *Rhian Daly*

NEED TO KNOW

BASED: The Midlands
FOR FANS OF: The Maccabees, Foals
HEAR IT: 'Follow Baby' is released on April 23 via Deadly People
SEE THEM LIVE: Peace tour the UK throughout March

BELIEVE IT OR NOT: Harry once got him and his friends a week off school to clean up a canal. "I think we just picked up beer cans," he remembers, adding: "I want to save the British canal system."



MILK MUSIC CONFIRM DEBUT UK TOUR

Olympia hopefuls follow up Great Escape gig with full British jaunt this coming May

RADAR
NEWS

Following last week's news that they'll be playing *Radar's* stage at this year's Great Escape festival on May 12, Milk Music have confirmed details of their first ever full UK tour. The Olympia, Washington band, who have so far resisted label offers despite being inundated with requests since the release of last year's EP 'Beyond Living', will play venues in London, Cardiff, Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds and Glasgow on the jaunt. They also hit mainland Europe, with an appearance at Barcelona's Primavera Sound festival alongside previous tour buddies The Men, confirmed for June 1.

The news will come as something of a surprise for fans, seeing as a muted February UK tour didn't materialise. But with European gigs finally confirmed, the band – Alex Coxen (guitar/vocals), Charles Waring (guitar), Dave Harris (bass) and Joe Rutter (drums) – are in buoyant mood. Coxen told us they're excited to cross the

Atlantic for the first time, joking: "The Stones are from Europe, right?"

However, the singer adds that Milk Music aren't likely to play material from 'Beyond Living', which they recorded in 2010, because "we are beyond that". Don't fret though – they're working on a new LP right now, to be called 'Cruise Your Illusion'. There's also a limited-edition cassette release of their recording from US radio station WFMU, available via Milkmusic.us.

The band's Great Escape show for *Radar* takes place at Horatio's on May 12, with DZ Deathrays, Eagulls and Drop Out Venus also on the bill. After that, they play their first London show on

"We won't play 'Beyond Living' – we're beyond that"

ALEX COXEN, MILK MUSIC

May 15 (at a new venue to be opened by the people behind the capital's Old Blue Last), followed by Cardiff Clwb Ifor Bach (16), Manchester Soup Kitchen (17), Leeds Brudenell (18), Glasgow Nice & Sleazy (19) and Birmingham Wagon & Horses (20). For full details of the tour see NME.COM/artists/milk-music.

The Buzz

The rundown of the music, videos and scenes breaking forth from the underground this week



1 ELECTRIC GUEST

You may already be aware of Electric Guest mainman Asa Taccone's work. He co-wrote and produced much of *Saturday Night Live* funnymen The Lonely Island's output (including the Julian Casablancas-featuring 'Boombox') and now he's back, swapping the dick jokes for blue-eyed, rich-kid electro soul. Asa's own work is exciting – sitting somewhere between classic MGMT and Danger Mouse. In fact, DM handled production on Electric Guest's forthcoming album, 'Mondo' (and his paw-prints are all over it). Check out the ace nine minutes of 'Troubleman', on NME.COM/blogs now.



2 MADEON GOES OVERGROUND

The 17-year-old Nantes wonderkid has finally made new single 'Icarus' available to buy – his first true step overground since garnering mass attention for 2011's 'Pop Culture', a three-minute, 39-song mash-up. Some call him the great hope of electropop. Others, the Fatboy Slim of the post-Pendulum generation.



3 GRASS CANNONS' DEBUT EP

While New Zealand's music might be best known for Unknown Mortal Orchestra's psychedelia, Ruban Nielson's got competition in the form of Aucklanders Grass Cannons, whose debut EP 'Vet Dream' reminds us of some sort of holy union between NYC's The Men and Calgary's Women (RIP Chris Reimer).



4 POLICA

With Gayngs' main female vocalist Channy Casselle taking charge, Polica's new album 'Give You The Ghost' is a thing of epic wonder. Melding straight-up funk'n'R&B with an indie sensibility, it's perhaps most surprising for using a shit ton of Autotune but actually making it work. Which has gotta be praiseworthy, right?



5 SHE'S SO RAD'S 'CIRCLES' VIDEO

Auckland-based duo She's So Rad are gearing up to hit the UK for the first time this April, with a support slot on Ladyhawke's British tour. Check out their bubblegum distortion schtick on the video to new single 'Circles', and bring on the summer early.

BAND CRUSH



Plan B on his favourite new act

"The first time I heard Etta Bond doing harmonies I thought it was a sample, it was that good. Her voice is unique, and it reminds me of early '90s hip-hop. She's got the power to go in any direction she wants, and I think she will go in many. People need to keep an eye on her."

SCENE
REPORTFRIENDLY
FIRES:
SAVIDGE
NEW BEATS

Jack Savidge on the freshest new sounds rattling his cranium



Right then, down to business. Techno heads might recognise **Rune Reilly Kölsch** from his dancefloor-bulldozing outings under the names Ink And Needle, Tattoo and Runc. Now, across two 12-inches for Kompakt, he's produced three of the biggest rave

stinkers in recent times. Probably the best of the lot is the poignant piano bliss of 'Der Alte', which Andrew Weatherall recently closed out the Bugged Out! weekend with.

NO CEREMONY are believers in CAPSLOCK IS COOL, but their music is as beautiful and subtle as their love of upper-case isn't. 'HURTLOVE' is my favourite with its glitching, depressed robot vocals set over a piano. **GREAT.**

Gerry Read might be only 19 (which in house music terms means he's barely out of rattles and SMA) but his music is as mature and rule-defying as the best. He makes two-stepping and restless house largely made from samples of his own live drumming, and his output has clocked in at eight EPs in just under 15 months. His next release, 'Yeh Come Dance', sees him go up yet another level, and the title track has got wonky leftfield hit daubed all over it.

JACK'S
TOP 5

**RUNE REILLY
KÖLSCH**
'Der Alte'

NO CEREMONY
'HURTLOVE'

GERRY READ
'Yeh Come Dance'

JAGWAR MA
'Come Save Me'

SLAVA
'I've Got
Feelings Too'

Jagwar Ma is Jono Ma, the brother of Foals' resident video director and photographer Dave, and his debut seven-inch 'Come Save Me' was out on new label The Blue Rider recently. The B-side 'What Love?' was what really caught my ear – a Ewan Pearson-assisted Balearic chugger primed for the hottest sub-110bpm discos.

Finally, Daniel Lopatin's Software Records just released **Slava's** 'Soft' EP, the highlight of which is 'I've Got Feelings Too' – a synthy wash based on a loop of Britney. It's filed next to Lopatin's trippy re-jigs of pop-culture ephemera, like the incomparable 'Nobody Here'. Right, bye!

NEXT WEEK'S COLUMNIST:
Lee Spielman from Trash Talk

5
TO SEE
*This week's
unmissable new
music shows*

PEACE
Start The Bus,
Bristol
March 14

HEART SHIPS
Nation Of
Shopkeepers,
Leeds
March 14

CITIZENS!
Shacklewell Arms,
London
March 16

WET NUNS
(pictured)
Esquires, Bedford
March 17

CEREMONY
XOYO, London
March 20

THE JANICE
GRAHAM BAND

VIBE BAR, LONDON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24

CAUGHT
LIVE

Indie ska: the charity mugger of musics. It's seemingly always being offered and you know you should stop to appreciate it but you inevitably

end up striding past, flapping it away as if you've gone deaf that instant. Hard-Fi and Babyshambles had fun flirting with it, The Dead 60s had a solid (but atrocious) go at resuscitating it, but it is effectively the collective sound of pot bellies gathering on the Glastonbury outskirts. So why on Earth the young men of The Janice Graham Band – men seemingly born to be in The Maccabees – are playing around with this most middle-aged of styles is baffling. They might just as well try to make the comb-over cool.

Their shtick? They're the Skarctic Monkeys. A 'Ghost Town' when the sun goes down. Singer Joe Jones rattles through 'No Money Honey' and 'You Can Dance' with the vocal dexterity of Jamie T in full inner-city poet flow, guitarist Andy Morton

adds some MGMT-ish psych splashes and trumpeter Josh Hunt manages to make 'Hacienda' and 'Murder' – can you tell they're from Manchester? – bristle with a touch of Neutral Milk Hotel's folk-fuzz mystique, but at the core of it all, they sound like Alex Turner bending, but certainly not breaking, the trad ska rules. For all the maniacal mariachi they chuck at the climax of 'Front Door' and 'Murder's attempt to turn into an Example song at the end, they're tragically retro, a rootsy recycling gone horribly wrong. And as if they weren't dated enough, closing track

Why they are playing around with this most dated, middle-aged of styles is baffling

'Carnival' ends in a frenzy of cowbell abuse which, a nearby Morse code expert tells **NME**, spells out 'WE HAVE NO IDEAS, WILL THIS DO?' Manchester is apparently going crazy for them but Manchester, with its rich and innovative rock'n'roll history, deserves better. Whoever Janice Graham is, she should sue. **Mark Beaumont**



Come on, Slava.
Give your man her
curtains back



LEEDS
2012

READING
2012

FRIDAY I'M IN LOVE (SATURDAY I'M IN LEEDS)

*Three decades after playing 1979's Reading Rock Festival, **The Cure** will be back to headline Reading and Leeds this summer. Robert Smith tells **Hamish MacBain** why he's returning to deliver the ultimate musical education*

Amazing fact: when The Cure play their Friday night headline slot at Reading this year, it will be 33 years since they last trod the boards on Richfield Avenue. Even more amazing fact: it will also be only their second time on the Main Stage. Or, for that matter, any stage at the event.

Back then, in 1979, Reading itself was still 20 years off acquiring its sister site in Leeds. Only the year before had it stretched its remit beyond straight-ahead rock acts with Friday becoming an unofficial 'new wave' day, headlined by The Jam and with supporting sets from Ultravox, Penetration and Sham 69 (whose skinhead following caused a riot with the more traditional attendees). The three-piece Cure arrived a year later, off the back of some nice press (*NME* had called them "a breath of fresh air") and generous John Peel

support for debut album 'Three Imaginary Boys' and just-released new single 'Boys Don't Cry'.

"We were perceived as the enemy by the mainstream rock festival crowd," Robert Smith remembers. "We were part of this vanguard of upstarts that were trying to upset the status quo, and there was just an element of the crowd which was really anti any band that went on that was part of the so-called new punk or new wave. Which was fine. I realised that we were seen as part of a movement that was trying to replace some of the old guard and I was quite happy about that, because I thought a lot of them were fucking awful!"

Backstage, Robert – with bass player Michael Dempsey and drummer Lol Tolhurst – had a good time, meeting people they'd only previously heard about. Peering in to the luxury of Motörhead's caravan, for example, they were invited in for a drink by Lemmy. ►



The Cure backstage, onstage and with John Peel at Reading Festival '79



THE STORY OF '79

What went on at the Reading Rock Festival beyond The Cure's debut?

Saturday night headliners Thin Lizzy cancelled two days prior to the festival and were replaced – much to the displeasure of the audience – by The Scorpions.

The Police headlined Friday and won over an initially sceptical crowd with a version of their as-yet-unreleased new single, 'Message In A Bottle'.

The Ramones also pulled out, replaced somewhat unsatisfactorily by classic rather-than-punk rocker Jills Loofgren.

The Tourists were the first band of Annie Lennox, who in November would have a Top Five hit with a version of 'I Only Wanna Be With You', as made famous by Dusty Springfield in 1963.

who proved accepting of the snotty young punk upstarts, to the extent that The Cure dedicated a song to him, and the 20-year-old Robert Smith then spent their "fucking excellent" set in the crowd waving a Motörhead flag, which to this day he still has in his possession.

It is only his own band's set that sours the memory of the day. "Generally, rock was not really our kind of thing," he says. "So that was the first and last time we really did a 'rock' festival, because we didn't have a very enjoyable time actually on the stage. In fact, the worst part of the day was our 35 minutes on the stage."

The testament of those in the audience for The Cure's set recalls a triumph, however, with the band being called back for an encore of B-side 'Do The Hansa'. But anyway...

Fast forward those 33 years, and going in to the Reading and Leeds festivals, The Cure find themselves veterans of 12 further studio albums and countless festival headline sets, including three at Glastonbury (in 1986, 1990 and 1995) and the most recent at Bestival last summer. The latter show – a hit stuffed, 32 song, two and-a-half hour affair – was so triumphant they ended up releasing it as a live album for charity. This was The Cure recast as 'festival favourites'.

"We concentrated a lot on the more well-known songs and we went down well," Robert says. "There have been times when I've just played whatever I wanted to play and I have had absolutely no regard for the audience, whereas now I kind of consider that I'm

Dream', they could be plugging a new album. But they're not doing any of these things. They're not "plugging" anything.

"We've been going for so long that I don't feel that urge to 'capitalise' on everything all the time," Robert shrugs. "I mean, we're headlining pretty much every major European

part of an event. I'm aware that we're playing probably to a lot of people who would otherwise not come and see The Cure. We're part of the weekend. So it's kind of dumb really not to try and play tracks that are your most accessible songs."

So there you have a pretty definitive verdict on what to expect come August Bank Holiday weekend. The Cure could quite easily celebrate any number of album anniversaries: 30 years since their break masterpiece 'Pornography' (played in full back in 2000), 25 years since the top-of-their-game double album 'Kiss Me Kiss Me Kiss Me'; 20 years since 'Wish' (which Robert confirms will be getting the bells-and-whistles reissue treatment in 2012). Given that it's now been four years since '4:13

festival and we won't have anything released. Anyone else would be tearing their hair out. They'll be like, 'You're idiots!' and perhaps we are. It's almost like we've gone full circle and we're back to the point where we're playing Reading Festival and I'm doing it solely because I want it to be a good day. Leeds too of course. I can't see our career arc anymore. I've got absolutely no idea. We haven't signed to anyone since the last album came out and the contract was up. I'm not even signed as a writer. To be really honest, if we're gonna do something it has to be really good. That sort of goes without saying, but our quality control is very high, and if I don't think that what we're doing is good

enough then there's no point in putting it out. Why should I?"

Part of the problem that Robert Smith has with taking a next step with The Cure is that '4:13 Dream' has saddled him with a creative dilemma. Initially intended as a double album, he found

himself "worn down by the fucking idiots who were around me at the time" and agreed to truncate it into a single album. "I shouldn't have," he reflects. "I should have stuck to my guns, released a double, it would've sold the same, and it would not make any difference to anyone except it would have been a better piece of work. Whenever I go back to them, ▶



This picture gives no clue
as to why Tim Burton is
such a big Cure fan...

PICTURES OF YOU

*Robert Smith
through the years*

'70S

A young, pre-mascara Smith onstage in London (his other two imaginary boys not pictured).

'80S

Backcomb to the future! The international success of 'The Head On The Door' album meant there was much more money available for hair products. As you can see.

'90S

The 'Russian Ice Hockey Player' look was as unsuccessful as the album they were touring, 'Wild Mood Swings'.

'00S

Pictured here after his band were announced as 2009 Godlike Genius recipients by *NME*, Robert clearly still couldn't put his make-up on straight.





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The Cure are joined by Elvis at their 2009 NME Big Gig at the O2 Arena

THEY'RE IN LOVE, TOO

Today's stars on what makes The Cure so special



TOM COHEN
SCUM

"When The Cure first broke they were often

critically misinterpreted – even though nowadays those same critics are lauding them as one of the most important bands of all time. I never saw The Cure as a goth band, more as a great pop band. If I were trying to sound like a muso I would say I only listen to 'Disintegration', but really I just love their 'Greatest Hits'. Also, Robert Smith looks unsettlingly like my mum".



BLAINE HARRISON,
MYSTERY JETS

"Back at art school a

friend made me a tape with The Smiths' 'Hatful Of Hollow' on one side and The Cure's 'Pornography' on the other, and it was all I listened to for a year."

How about putting it up online? Unlikely. Back in 2007 Robert Smith was extremely vocal about his (not at all positive) feelings towards Radiohead's 'pay-what-you-like' scheme for 'In Rainbows', and the general idea of giving music away for free. Two years later – the very morning after The Cure's 2009 Big Gig in celebration of their NME Godlike Genius Award, in fact – he reiterated his views in a lengthy rant on the band's website. And so it continues, today or any other day.

Robert: "I was vilified by a

lot of the mainstream media – particularly online where there's a vested interest – who tried to turn it into like, 'Oh, I don't wanna give stuff away for free because I wanna make money out of it.' Which is totally at odds with what we do because we often release stuff that's entirely for charity. We have no interest in making money out of everything we do, we never have. My point is it devalues the art and I hold by it. To me it's worth something. I'm happy to pay for PJ Harvey's new album. And I think that anyone should be because it brings me hours of entertainment and pleasure, so why should it be the one area of life where it's free? It doesn't make any sense to me."

So without a label, or any suitable outlet for songs recorded that they feel they cannot move on from without releasing, The Cure in recorded guise are, to an extent, in limbo. Thus Robert's recent output has been

restricted to select guest spots. Last year there was The Japanese Popstars single 'Take Forever', the year before that, vocals for

65daysofstatic's 'Come To Me' and Crystal Castles' 'Not In Love'. Coming soon, around the end of May, are two more guest spots "with dance acts" that he won't ▶



The 'Pornography' and 'Disintegration' album sleeves



Robert and his band becoming Godlike in 2009

name, "because it's their thing, and I don't want to spoil it." In the meantime, then, we can't help but notice that Ethan's Alice are on the R&L Main Stage the same day as The Cure...

"I watched them do that song at Bestival from the side of the stage," he laughs, "and there were many raised eyebrows and back-and-forth meaningful looks. But I resisted the temptation to burst onstage and do a guest spot. I suppose I was very aware that it was our first big festival for a while and I wanted to feel right and ready for it. I'd only turned up about an hour before, and I thought, 'If I go on now and I make a mess of it, it's going to upset me for the rest of the day.' But I'll be a bit more in the swing of things by then, so I might do. There's a few people, actually, that it would be interesting to do something with. Maybe between now and then I might arrange a few things."

"Although," he adds, talking of collaboration in general, "I did stop and think to myself recently, 'I've gotta stop doing this,' because otherwise that's what I'll be doing for the rest of my career: just doing guest spots on other people's stuff."

All of which makes The Cure's next step of going out and playing shows just for the sheer hell of it feel strangely logical. As well as the prospect of getting out there and watching loads of new bands – "sometimes it's a bit difficult, because you find people in front are watching you as you're trying to watch the stage" – there is that peerless set of singles to celebrate once more. And it remains truly staggering, for a band who many still associate with perpetual gloom, just how many classic pop songs The Cure have conjured over their three decades in business. 'A Night Like This', 'The Lovecats', 'The Caterpillar', 'Close To Me', 'Why

Can't I Be You?', 'Friday I'm In Love', 'Let's Go To Bed', 'The Walk', 'Just Like Heaven', 'Pictures Of You'... truly, the list is endless

Probably the most infamous Cure festival show came in summer 1981, at the Werchter Festival in Belgium. Booked into a penultimate slot, they found themselves being hassled to wrap up their set by the headline

act (and antithesis of everything they stood for), corporate rocker Robert Palmer. Robert Smith informed the crowd in front of him that 'A Forest'

would be the last song, then proceeded to launch into an elongated, 10-minute version that ended with then-bassist Simon Gallup's shout of, "Fuck Robert Palmer, fuck rock n' roll!"

Now, in 2012, talking to the stage just prior to The Cure's career-spanning sets at Reading and Leeds this year will be Paramore. At 23, Hayley Williams is less than half as old as Robert Smith, and almost the same age he was at the time of this notorious incident. Ask Robert how he'd feel if a modern version of this old guard/new guard face-off

"IT'S LIKE WE'VE GONE FULL CIRCLE"
Robert Smith

THEY'RE IN LOVE, TOO

Crystal Castles on working with "genius" Robert



ETHAN KATH
"We met Robert Smith when Crystal Castles opened for

The Cure at the NME Big Gig 2009. Backstage, after our set, Robert Smith told us he loved our set then turned to Alice and said, 'You are the first true punk rocker since 1978.' We talked about collaborating on a track and a year later it happened with 'Not In Love'. Robert recorded a demo take of the vocal and asked me what I thought. I asked him not to bother recording another take because it sounded raw and perfect as is. It was a concrete example of his genius."



ALICE GLASS
"Robert Smith is one of the few true great frontpeople

because he is sincere. It's obvious when an artist's sentiments are disingenuous – no-one's having it. The music of The Cure is timeless because it's honest. Any positive enforcement from him is humbling."

was to take place – but with him this time in the role of Robert Palmer – and his response is swift and absolutely unequivocal.

"The point is: we don't occupy that same position at all," he smiles. "Although we're now considered an 'older band', I don't think there are many younger bands who don't have some kind of respect or admiration for what we've done, and what we still do."

"I think that's the difference. We're not seen as having followed some well-laid path to success. In fact, in a lot of instances, we've actually pushed things forward, and allowed bands to come up behind us. We've changed the landscape a little bit in some ways."

He continues: "That old guard we were up against in the late '70s, they were seen as an industry. And that industry is still there, but the fact is that it's represented just as much by younger artists. There are a number of younger acts I could name who are equally as offensive as we found Robert Palmer at the time. Who just represent

'music as business'. And that goes back to why we're doing this. I want to be part of the experience when we play, not just some performer selling my wares to people."

In this sense, Robert Smith sees The Cure as still on the frontline, alongside bands from any generation, battling for all that is right in music. He is appalled by the amount of branding and sponsorship that has permeated alternative music, and is still fighting his "own personal battle, trying to keep what we do as something that's pure".

"I am aware of how grotesquely out of touch I am," he says, "but I'm wilfully out of touch with the modern world. It's very difficult for me to convince a younger generation that it's wrong to sell things, to use music for adverts. I realise I'm in a fading minority of people who find it objectionable. And that's just because I can remember songs that I loved being used to sell shit and I think it devalues it. It's horrible. I don't wanna think of a car when I listen to Jimi Hendrix or Nick Drake. I hate branding. I hate labels, it's all just shit – it's everything that we rallied against when we were younger. And it hasn't made any difference. The corporate beast has won... but only for the moment. There are cracks appearing. There must be a generation rising to go that stick two fingers up at it all and says we don't want to be branded, and sold to in this way. It has to happen sooner rather than later."

Just as in '79, then, 33 years ago, Robert Smith and The Cure find themselves the enemy of the mainstream. Come August Bank Holiday, they'll be looking for some new recruits.

Make sure you are among them.

Head to NME.COM/blogs for 'Rank The Albums', where you can vote for your favourite Cure LP.

The Cure play the Main Stage at Reading and Leeds festivals, August 24-26. See p7 for the full line-up

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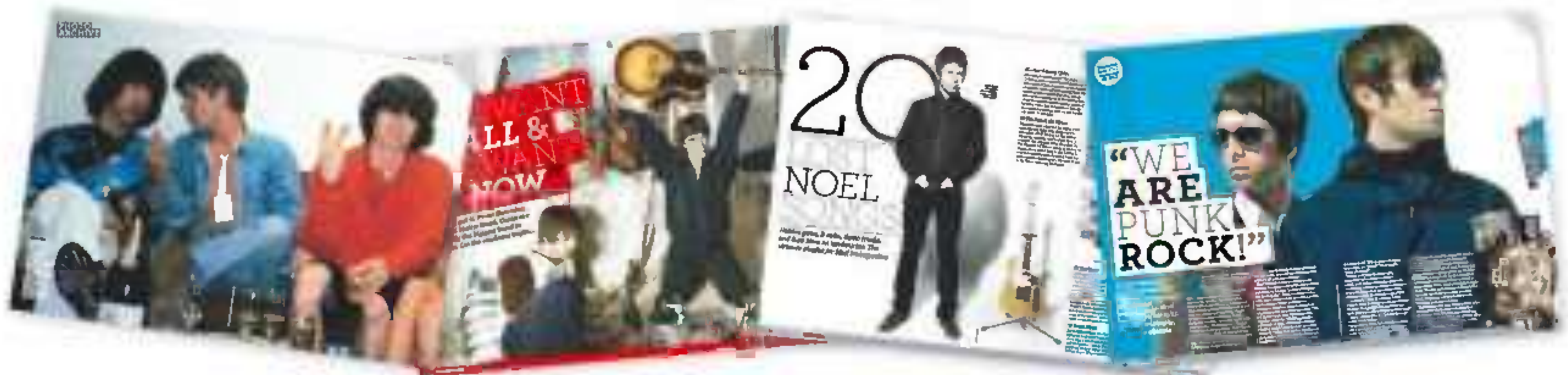
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DOT ROTTEN VS THE WORLD

The London rapper is railing against everything from music snobs, the government and his rivals on his way to the top, finds Jo Fuertes Knight

PHOTO: AMY BRAMMALL

Dot Rotten, aka Joseph Ellis, is cutting it fine. After using his day off tour to disappear back home to south London on an overnight trip, he arrives in Leeds with less than an hour to go before he's due onstage supporting Labrinth.

His tour manager is clenching his teeth, but the rapper is unnervingly calm. "I just couldn't have spent a day sitting around doing nothing," he says. "I had to go and get shit done." It's a work rate that has helped him carve out a formidable reputation as both a lyricist and producer, first catching the underground's attention way back in 2006 aged 15, with the release of much-lauded mixtape 'This Is The Beginning' under the alias Young Dot. But it's a standing that hasn't been free of controversy – he's clashed publicly with fellow MCs, most notably Wiley, and had an unceremonious departure from collective OGz Crew.

But now on the cusp of mainstream success with new single 'Are You Not Entertained', he can expect to be mentioned in the same breath as Tinie, Tinchy and Wretch in 2012 – but, unlike his counterparts (and despite having released a single with Cher Lloyd), he is bringing a rougher edge to the chart template. A lone wolf with no entourage, no froth, no ostentatious costume changes – it's just Dot Rotten, head to head against the world.

DOT ROTTEN VS GRIME

Dot: "I'm not grime. I was never a part of a circle, I've always felt like an outsider. The only reason I got labelled as that in the first place was because the only outlets playing me were grime ones, like [radio DJ] Logan Sama. But when I was coming up, as well as having my own sound, there was all sorts of madness out, like the beginnings of dub step and that wobble in the bass. But it was all categorised as grime because nobody else was supporting it. I had a track called 'My Girl' out, an R&B song at a 140 tempo, but it was pushed as grime. It's just about perception. I'm doing my thing, why label it?"

VS THE SYSTEM

"Our generation is lost. We've been raised to think that we deserve something for nothing, so when suddenly they don't get these things that are glamourised, this

false information that's fed to us of what we 'need', of course things will kick off. The riots? They weren't right, but you can't say it was for no reason. You can blame the government or the police, but there's always going to be rules and systems that you don't agree with. When you live in a city like London, right next door to people that are very wealthy, it's difficult. The people in power don't know how gritty these estates get. They can be sincere in their own perceptions of it, but you can't truly understand it unless you grew up in it... unless you've had four kids in a room on bunk beds, had cardboard for bath mats, had no money for electricity in a city where you're supposed to have everything. Of course, these are just fuckeries compared to problems in other countries, but it is hard to stay motivated in that environment. If I wasn't doing music, whose to say I wouldn't be out doing a mad thing?"

VS FAME

"Fame is being looked at as an icon. I do not want to be an icon. I just want people to see me perform, enjoy the music and be on a level, because I've only planned for success, not fame. I was on the train the other day and this boy recognised me just from my voice, and for the first time I was like, 'Rah, that's madness!' I could see he was a bit, 'Wow, this is Dot Rotten,' but we just ended up chilling together. The moment you stop being humble is when things will fuck up."

VS CHER LLOYD TROLLS

"Before [Cher Lloyd collaboration] 'Dub On The Track' even came out, it was shot down. People were shouting, 'How could Dot do that? He's a sell-out.' Then when it dropped you had people going, 'Ah, you went hard on it.' I thought, 'Who's programmed your mind that if you work with a big artist or experiment outside your genre that's selling out?' It's funny to me that people put so much energy into

slandering someone like that. There are kids in the world with sores on their hands from working in sweatshops... and you're going to get upset over a song? Shut up."

VS WILEY AND CHIPMUNK

"How do I say this professionally? Wiley... Mr Richard Cowie... (sigh) he is his own man. He has his own 'unique' way of conducting his business. But I wish him the best of luck in everything he does. I don't regret anything I said [after Dot reportedly worked on Wiley's Eskibeat label the two fell out in 2009 and went on to diss each other on record], but if I could change what I did I would want people to look at my work, rather than seeing me as some youth who started by attacking someone else. But me and Chipmunk? That was different, it was very deep. We still need to sit down together and talk [in 2010 Chipmunk said, 'I'm as rotten as Rotten, but I just dress better', which again spilled over to Twitter]. That was when we were just boys in the industry, we're both a lot wiser now."

VS THE USA

"The way the US treats music is completely different, it's like a potter with his plate. You can't get away with any fucking around, so if... when... I go there, I want them to think, 'Wow, who is this little black dude from south London?' You've got to impress over there. With people like Odd Future, you can tell they've just been allowed to sit in the studio and run with it. Tyler has just been told, so long as he puts the work in, he can do whatever he wants."

VS MONEY

"I've tried my hand at everything: MCing, DJing, production, singing, youth work. That's not to boast. People expect money to come easy and when it doesn't, that's when they turn to things where they can make money fast. So you've got to watch the company you keep and stay positive. If this game flops for me, at least I tried... I'll keep moving and do something else."

ROTTEN SHOW

NME's view of Dot's Leeds gig, February 28

TWENTY MINUTES OF PREP, a swift hot meal and a lightning fast T-shirt change, and Joseph Ellis is ready to morph into Dot Rotten. Taking to the stage of Leeds Metropolitan University, a hyperactive, bullet-mouthed Dot is barely recognisable from the almost unsettlingly polite man who bowled in backstage. Accompanied by a drummer and DJ, he launches into 'Positive Energy' and 'Keep It On A Low' with surprising ease, before gearing up to the finale of bass-heavy 'Are You Not Entertained', the crowd nodding along to the thud of the speakers. Bolting off after the last song, he tries hard not to smile, composing himself to say, "It's all business." And a very successful one at that.





Three little
Cribbles (l-r):
Ross, Gary and
Ryan Jarman

"Before you know it, you're f**ked in the head"

Ryan Jarman has been in a dark place recently, but his brothers rallied round. Now **The Crips** are back and stronger than ever. **Jamie Fullerton** joins them on tour

PHOTOS: ANDY WILSHER

It was luminous orange, you couldn't miss it," says Ryan Jarman. The Crips' frontman is describing the vomit that Josh from support band Spectrals spewed up in his tourvan a few hours earlier.

"He did well," he continues, grinning. "He felt bad throughout the entire journey then just as we were five minutes from the venue he grabbed a plastic pint pot and started being sick into it. I just put the blanket I was laying under over my head so I didn't have to see it."

The singer is chatting in the bar of the Leeds Metropolitan Students' Union – the previous evening we were in Brighton for the third show of The Crips' mini-comeback tour. It was a heavy night. A beer-fuelled Ryan donned a yellow plastic Freddie Mercury-style fancy dress jacket throughout the gig while, brilliantly, band friend Preston from The Ordinary Boys stagedived as they ripped through a slew of new songs from their May-released fifth album, *'In The Belly Of The Brazen Bull'*.

Playing sell-out shows in small venues to

hardcore fans, pandemonium has been the general response to the gigs. "People are actually starting moshpits," beams Ryan. "Proper circle pits. I always wanted that – I used to go in them myself when I was a kid. We've only just started getting those proper rowdy crowds. I don't know why. But I'm totally glad about it."

This is all very much a new start for the Jarman, back to a three-piece and playing their first tour since 2009 and the departure of Johnny Marr in early 2011. What becomes clear though is that this is an especially new start for Ryan. He enthuses about the moshpits, larks around with his video camera and knocks back San Miguels, but you can tell he's tense about being back in the public eye. For Ryan has not been a well man, and life has changed a lot for him recently. He moved back to nearby Wakefield following his recent split from his girlfriend, Kate Nash, who he'd been with since 2007. Always intense and vulnerable at the best of times, despite his shirt-ripping onstage bravado, he now talks of the "turmoil" he suffered over the past year.

NME: How's living back in Wakefield?

Ryan: "I've been living with Ross for the last few months. We're closer than we've ever been. And Gary's been in America so I go out and see him. I felt those guys really came through for me."

"Came through"? Everything OK?

"I don't like to go into it too much as I don't want to seem like I'm sensationalising anything. I was just quite ill last year, that's all, during the writing of the record, and it's cost me a lot."

When you say ill do you mean you were diagnosed with something?

"Yeah, a couple of times, but I didn't really agree with... I didn't really find the treatment to be particularly helpful."

You're OK now? ▶

"I'm definitely on the right path, you have to do these things one day at a time, but I know... I *am* better, you can see. You must have seen me when I didn't look particularly well. You didn't see me at my thinnest."

Are we talking drugs here...?

"No. More psychological, really. I had real self-loathing issues, I suppose. Things are getting better... the last couple of years haven't been easy. Mentally they've been tough. I've always tried not to be bothered about what people say, but I'd be lying if I said it didn't build up over the years, people constantly slagging me off, or giving me shit for my fucking haircut. Before you know where you are, you're fucked in the head. But things are definitely getting better. A lot of weird stuff went on and I'm a single guy again now, which I didn't expect to be on the cards, but everything happens for a reason and I don't want to dwell on things too much."

It's clear that for Ryan, whose life is now pretty much solely focused on The Cribs, this comeback tour is a vital part of his recovery. Tonight, new single 'Come On, Be A No One', a more sophisticated, more tuneful, but still more rip-roaringly raw cousin to 'Cheat On Me', is greeted like the anthem it will become. And, if offstage Ryan seems vexed and tetchy, on it he cuts loose, spinning around on his back while riffing, then later smiling manically as a stage-invading fan manhandles him from behind before being prised off by a security guard and thrown, like a pinball, into the front row.

"The new songs have been going down *really* well," he says. "Obviously 'Chi-Town', people I now already, but 'Back To The Bolthole' we've been playing every night, and by the time the second chorus comes round everyone's cheering – and that's a slow burning song."

Gary and Ross Jarman agree that the brothers rallying together to support Ryan through his troubles brought them closer together. But, as they unveil the record on this tour, they also agree that for the writing of '...Brazen Bull' they were more divided than ever. Ryan is the punk rock firebrand, writing songs fiercely, spontaneously, firing a song like 'Chi-Town' off and reloading the next. Gary is more introverted, looking for expansion and layers to push the band forward. Ross is stuck somewhere in the middle, and often finds himself with the deciding 'vote'.

Their sibling intuition and trust means that rather than unhappy compromise being reached, these different viewpoints are usually forged into a shared vision, and that's when the magic happens. But that doesn't mean they don't want it their own way. Gary even suggests they do their interviews separately to stop them shouting over each other.

"Ryan's got the radical, vitriolic side," he explains in the bar while Ryan munches his dinner in the dressing room. "The way I've been trying to pull the band for a long time is quite different to that. Ryan thinks I like to layer things. But I don't see it like that – if I hear other things on the side [of a conventional song] I like to explore that. If it were up to Ryan everything would be fiercer and dirtier. Sometimes we'd butt heads – I had full recorded versions [of demos] and would try and get people to record it in the way I'd got used to. That caused friction. If it were up to Ryan, we would have done the album on a four-track. In a garage..."

Ryan agrees that their songwriting styles have never been further apart. "Gary living in Portland, me moving back to Wakefield... I had no idea what a profound effect it would have," he says. "My

"a LOT OF WEIRD STUFF WENT ON. I'M SINGLE NOW"

Ryan Jarman

claims when we corner him on the stairs before stage-time for support band This Many Boyfriends, whose forthcoming album Ryan is producing. "It's a democracy. But we're brothers and we can be brutally honest. We say it like it is. Gary's got the gentle side. Ryan's got the abrasive side."

songwriting's got fierce and I can only contribute that to moving back and being in a different headspace. Yes, if it were up to me it would have been 11 songs on a four-track. His side of songwriting, I have that in me, but I reject it because I know he's taking care of it. And he won't write punk rock songs because he knows I'm always pushing to do those."

And poor Ross, stuck in the middle trying to mediate between the bickering twins.

"It's not like it's a power struggle," the drummer

Ryan displays his stripy leg hair in Leeds

Ryan as Freddie Mercury and Gary as Johnny Borrell in Brighton

'Ordinary Boy' Preston enjoys the moshpit

Brotherly Love

Gary and Ross on their bro

GARY ON RYAN

"We have this yin/yang thing – I think he's compensating for me onstage

because I barely speak, even though I sing half the songs. We balance each other. I think he's aware of the fact that I don't really connect with the audience at all."

ROSS ON RYAN

"Ryan lives for the band, that's all he thinks about. Going back on the road... I don't necessarily think it'd be a good thing for him, mentally. It does concern me. But I'm sure what's gone on in the past, he's put to rest. We're a close band so I think it'll be OK."

When it all comes together, that's The Cribs."

And later on it does come together, a ball of punk ferocity ('Chi-Town'), expansive intelligence ('Glitters Like Gold'), and stone cold indie anthems ('Another Number', 'Tidy Scenesters'). They've always meant a lot to us, but now, reinvigorated and with messed up heads on the mend, '...Brazen Bull' could make them mean even more.

Later on, in the dressing room, traversing between family and friends – including a highly lubricated Nick Hodgson from Kaiser Chiefs – the brothers drain their rider. Then they trot outside, pose for photos with fans and scrawl autographs before zooming around the corner for a 1am DJ set at a huge indie disco at the O2 Academy Leeds. Thousands of pissed students cheer at the sight of them skulking up to the decks in the middle of the main stage. Ryan even cracks a little smile. Welcome back, The Cribs. We need you well.

Head to NME.COM/blogs now for our exclusive track-by-track review of The Cribs' new album

**READING
LEEDS**

The Cribs play the NME/Radio One Stage at Reading and Leeds festivals, August 24-26. See p7 for the line up

NME



THE HEADLINERS



THE CURE

PHOTO BY
TIM COCHRANE



NME

READING
2012

LEEDS
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THE HEADLINERS



KASABIAN

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ANDY WILLISHER

READING

2012

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THE HEADLINERS

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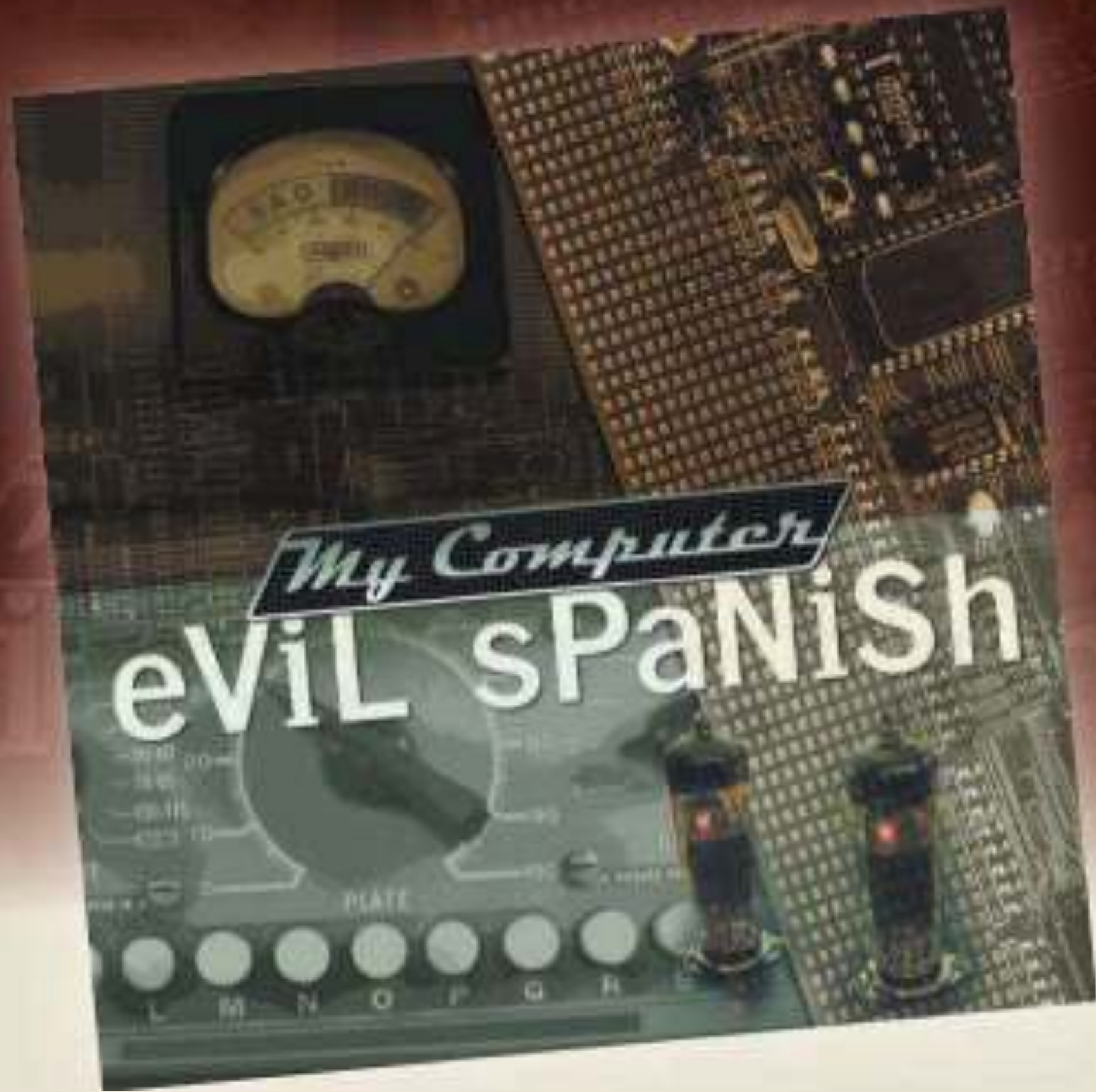
PHOTO BY
ANDY WILLISHER



www.recreationrecords.com

“Both ‘Stunning’
& ‘Proper’”
John Leckie

(Producer - Stone Roses, Radiohead, Muse)



Artist - My Computer

Album - eViL sPaNiSh

Release date - OUT NOW!

Track Titles: *Unchain Me, Repossessed, Negativity Breakdown, Vision On, What Took You So Long? This Is A Rock, Bed Song, Wallop, Taste, If, Into The Night, Albatross Grove*

My Computer invented electronica in 2002 with their debut thriller 'Vulnerabilia' which had the British music press united in their praise for it. Sadly, for whatever reason, the reaction of the record buying public did not match that of the critics. After an initial sales rush generated by the acclaim and just one UK tour delivering 'Vulnerabilia' live with laser precision, the record was deleted and My Computer retreated back to Manchester.

A change of label and antipathy within the My Computer camp meant that the follow up, the John Leckie produced 'No CV' a classic electronic rock record would take an unbearable 2 years to finish. Dropped by their label upon completion, it would take a further year to release. Again the critics were united in their praise. Again the record, for whatever reason, didn't sell. Fast forward to 2008. After releasing a low key unplugged album 'No Computer' through CDbaby in 2007 and recording but not releasing a soul record 'There Was A Time' as Good Neighbour, Andy Chester decides it's time for another My Computer record.

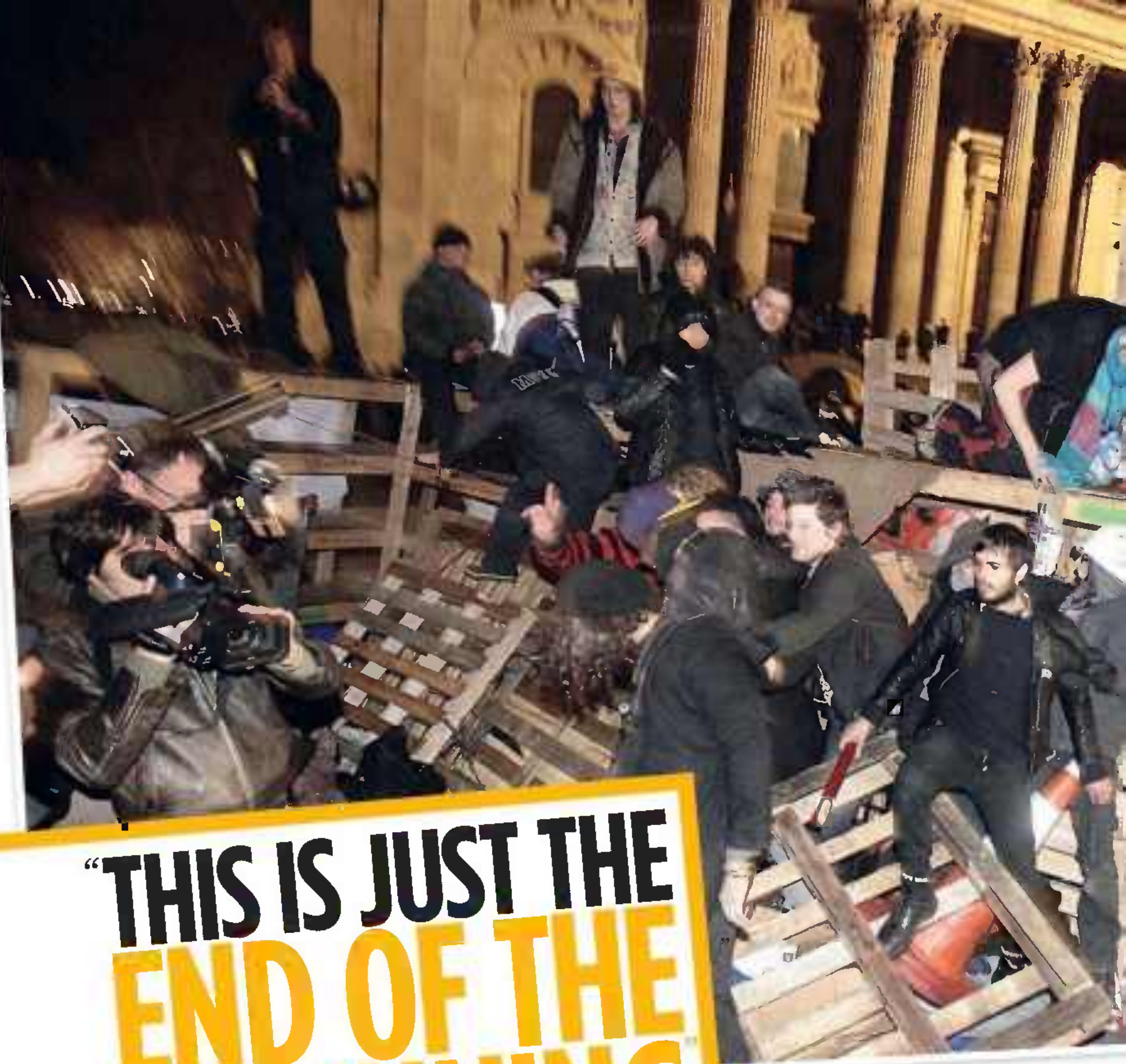
He finds a band named Black Jackson on the other side of town, fed up with their own road to nowhere. He then writes with that band what he considers to be, the most cohesive My Computer album to date. That album eViL sPaNiSh is an epic, straight ahead, balls out, no nonsense, Rock 'n' Roll record.

Written and recorded over 3 months with Black Jackson in their mill, Noah's Ark, in Radcliffe, Manchester.

The Day Begins...

You point the remote at the cd player. You are hung over and you hate your job. You need something to make sense. The digeridoo intro to **'Unchain Me'** signals a whispered, heavenly, acoustic, gospel song that builds through two screaming key changes, to a triumphant battle march, then into the stark Punk Rock reality of **'Repossessed'**. You love it. The feedback continues into **'Negativity Breakdown'**, then drops you off into a calming pool of Hammond organ and lyrics clinging onto life. The chorus comes slamming in and you feel defiant again. The blood rushes, you feel the meaning. You feel electric. **'Vision On'** picks you up from the mess of yourself and screams you back to life with howling, revenge seeking, ravaged guitars not heard since the 70's. Again the song lyrics cling to the vision that things will get better. You needed to hear this. There is no let up. **'What Took You So Long?'** picks up the punk again and rocks manically for a minute and a half before the Rock Punks harder with **'This Is A Rock'**. A dumbed down Rock 'n' Sex song of total fun and joy. You have the energy to get up. **'Bed Song'** drives you on a suped-up ZZ Top riff to work. It describes in detail how you feel and you laugh all the way. **'Wallop'** drives you home on a Led Zep Sex riff. You laugh again. **'Taste'** welcomes you home, takes your coat and shoes and pours you a drink. **'If'** walks you down to the tree, in your garden, which you sit under in the warming summer evening sun. You relax. **'Into The Night'** is one of the most touchingly defiant torch songs, about lost love, ever written. Hovis like, you eat it up. It is good for you. You feel better, spiritually. Everything makes sense again. You go out, kop off and get laid. **'Albatross Grove'** turns the lights out and scares you. **What more could you want?**

eViL sPaNiSh is available digitally worldwide but cheaper from **www.recreationrecords.com**



“THIS IS JUST THE END OF THE BEGINNING

*The last protesters at St Paul's are gone, but the Occupy movement is far from over. After months investigating the operation, **Don Martin** discovers a campaign still very much alive and continuing to challenge inequality*

As supporters beat drums and chant messages of support through the police line, the riot squad moves forward. After four months, the Occupy The London Stock Exchange camp is being forcibly evicted. Everyone inside the kettle has known it was coming, and they expected it in the dead of night so that fewer supporters would make it along. So on receiving a text alert at 12.30am, I jump on a night bus for what will be my final visit to a camp that has put economic inequality back in the headlines, sparked a minor crisis in the Church Of England, and very possibly raised an army of the discontent.

As the bailiffs advance, I am stood with Sam Duckworth of Get Cape. Wear Cape. Fly, a posterboy



The peaceful protest in London

Tuesday, February 28: eviction night for the Occupy London camp at St Paul's Cathedral

for the movement. We're met with tweets about the "ugly scenes" reported on the TV news from friends concerned for our welfare. But it's nothing like that; the ugliest it really gets is when a red flare is thrown, and then when Giles Fraser, the former deacon at St Paul's Cathedral who resigned over the possibility of violence towards protesters, is not allowed to cross the police line. The same news also reports that this eviction is the end of the Occupy London movement. But over the past two months I've discovered that nothing could be further from the truth, and that what started as just a few people in tents outside a big church, has turned into something serious and real. I went in there as a music journalist. God knows what I came out as.

I first visit the camp at St Paul's two months before the eviction. Following a meeting with Ronan McNern and Adam Jung from the movement's offshoot record label, Occupation Records, all I know is that there are some people in tents protesting about the continued bad behaviour of the banking system. But visiting their daily General Assembly (GA) inside 'Tent City University', there is little talk of that. At these meetings there can be no chair, just an impartial 'facilitator'. There can be no vote, because voting ignores the voices of those who disagree. All decisions must be decided by consensus, with a complex set of hand signals used to express approval, or not, of a point (jazz hands for agreement, upside-down jazz hands for 'no way' and the like). Environmentalists have been doing it for years, but the

attention around Occupy is pushing it mainstream.

The process is laborious at the best of times, but today, 101 days into the encampment, the group is processing news of an eviction order granted to the City Of London Corporation. Tempers are fraying, between the liberals and radicals, between those who think the camp has outlived its usefulness, and those who maintain the reasons they are there have not changed. Then there are the 50-odd homeless people on the camp who will be turfed out. Lists are drawn up of those prepared to be arrested, and those who would rather not be. Tilly, a 19-year-old ex-student and full-time activist, is advising vulnerable people three times her age about the circumstances of bail. There can be no leaders, but this being humanity, some personalities are bigger than others.

"Every time you shout across the room," shouts the girl from Occupy Los Angeles across the room, "you marginalise another voice!"

It's chaotic and passionate, yet demonstrates a

IF WE DON'T FEEL LIKE WE'RE BEING HEARD, WE'RE IN TROUBLE

Kate Nash

staggering level of organisation beyond the mimetic movement that started last September when *Adbusters* mag made a poster of a ballerina perched on top of the New York Stock Exchange with the slogan 'Occupy Wall Street. Bring Tent'. Occupy LSX is just one of 100-odd camps that have sprung up across the world, and its cultural currency is growing. Enter Shikari DJed in front of St Paul's on New Year's Eve, Thom Yorke did the same at the associated squatted building, the 'Bank Of Ideas'. Other famous visitors have included Patrick Stewart, Vivienne Westwood and Jarvis Cocker, who wrote in *The Big Issue*: "Much is made of the fact Occupy doesn't have leaders, and this is often depicted as failing. It is actually one of its strengths... we are over leaders and ideology - we just want things to work properly and fairly. When no one party won a majority in the last general election the people of the UK were expressing their dissatisfaction with old methods of representation. Occupy shows a new way. Whether you recognise it or not, it's what you want."

And the message is spreading. Christopher Nolan is being slippery about whether *The Dark Knight Rises* actually did film at Occupy Wall Street, but the trailer leaves little doubt as to the movie's themes. At a masked ball Anne Hathaway's Selina Kyle, the lady who will become Catwoman, purrs into the car of

billionaire Bruce Wayne. "There's a storm coming, Mr Wayne. You and your friends better batten down the hatches. Because when it hits, you're all gonna wonder how you ever thought you could live so large, and leave so little for the rest of us..."

I met a lot of people during my odyssey into Occupy, each with a different story. There is Ronan, a former corporate PR who, between a gnawing sense of unease with the economy and an ex-boyfriend who introduced him to the queercore squat scene, was radicalised enough to spend 14 hour days consorting with the global media as the movement's press guy. Jamie, a 50 year old schoolteacher became an activist after having a gun held to his head in Palestine at the age of 16. Mr Anonymous is only ever seen with a headscarf, visor and plastic yellow shield adorned with the smiley face. The dreadlocked Phoenix has spent 18 years squatting abandoned buildings for the community. Matt is an industrial musician who turned up after getting a Facebook bulletin. And the aforementioned Tilly, after being arrested two years ago as part of a UK Uncut action, has devoted her life to activism. "It's strange when you're arrested," she says. "For the first few hours you're bored. The next few hours you're thinking, 'I've learnt my lesson, I'm not gonna do this again.' But then you get into this mentality of, 'What the hell am I doing here?' I was protesting against Barclays and Vodafone and the huge amounts of tax tricks they've done, but I'm the one in the police cell and not them? At 19 I don't have many tools in my possession other than my mind and body to fight against the things that I'm against. But I have this moral stance, and to act on it, sometimes I have to do things that are illegal."

But the thing about the Occupy camps is that they're *not* illegal, and it took a four-month court battle to remove the protest at St Paul's. Tilly, like many, turned up on the first day with just a day-bag, unconvinced it would amount to much. Nobody really expected to stay there for more than a few hours.

Two weeks later, Ronan invites me to the opening of the 'School Of Ideas', a squatted community in an abandoned primary school near Old Street. It's filled with people making banners. Phoenix and his squat patrol hold court over another GA, but this time it feels more like a community theatre workshop than a rally. There's little talk of "the 99 per cent", rather how best to utilise the building as a

community space at a time of government cuts. Four days later, I'm back again, at a former bank-turned-gallery space known as the 'House Of Fairy Tales'. Today it's the 'School Of Rockupy', a half-term youth initiative. Sam Duckworth is here "I'm trying to do dubstep wobbles!" he says in a jolly panic. Across the room is Kate Nash, looking like a goth Mary Poppins, schooling the teenagers in songwriting. These 30 kids have never met before, but having assembled due to a Facebook bulletin, and, using the consensus model and hand signals, they're conceiving, writing and recording a song in a day, with teams working on songwriting, production, artwork and promotion. Again, little

mention of the 99 per cent. The kids have been encouraged to own their own debate, so after a morning GA in which they discuss Gaza and SOPA, they settle upon the issue of 'ephebiphobia', the fear of teenagers – an impression of them all being hoodies that they're united in wanting to dispel. The song is airy and worthy, but once you get over that, it's pretty inspirational. Kate does these songwriting workshops in schools regularly, and though she hasn't been down to St Paul's, she jumped at Sam's invitation to join in. "It's important to see massive cultural movements that are happening," she says. "If, as citizens, we don't feel that we're listened to, then we're in trouble. The riots last year were a prime example of tension building and people not having platforms to stand on. I think it's people feeling like, 'I haven't got a future', and I think Occupy is a massive thing that isn't going away – it's a place where people can have an opinion and shout about it and get noticed."

"For a lot of young people, the idea that activism can work was eradicated by the 2003 march against the war in Iraq" explains schoolteacher Jamie Kelsey-Try. "A million people marched in London and nothing happened. But now we're talking about an even younger generation, and their disenchantment to politics is much more profound. They just think activism and



Main image left: Tilly, the 19-year-old full-time activist; top: Adam Jung and below right, Ronan McNern, both of Occupation Records; left: Matt, the activist and industrial musician who attended the school having received a Facebook bulletin



Kate Nash heads up a song workshop at School Of Rockupy

WHAT HAS OCCUPY ACHIEVED?

The opinion of Enter Shikari's Rou Reynolds



HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE OCCUPY?

"It's a movement that has recognised that our lives are dependent on a system that requires constant and infinite growth. We need to produce more stuff to sell and consume; it's a cyclical consumption that cannot end. If it did, our entire economy would fail and global stability would disintegrate. It is a movement that has recognised that we live on a finite planet, therefore, infinite growth is quite simply, physically impossible. Regarding a solution, they don't seem to be quite there yet, but it's better than just burying heads in the sand and continuing like nothing's wrong."

HOW HAVE YOU BEEN INVOLVED?

"We've gone down to Occupy sites in Bristol, Wall Street and many sites in Europe and met some top people. I DJed on New Year's Eve outside St Paul's which was great fun and very surreal! Blasting drum'n'bass on the Lord's front porch, he loved it."

WHAT HAS OCCUPY ACTUALLY ACHIEVED?

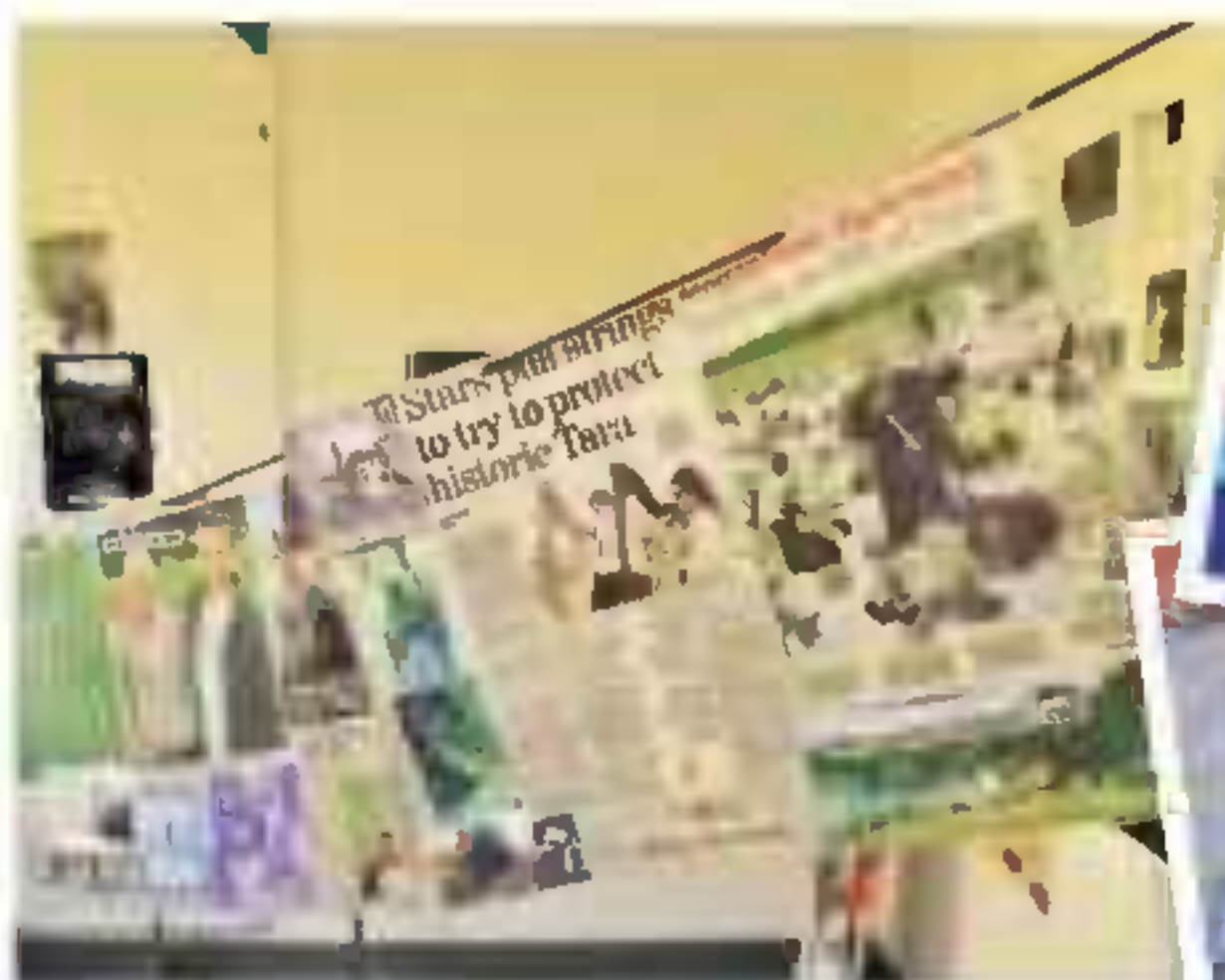
"The 'state' began to realise this wasn't going away and has done its best to squash it. There are some great things that have grown out of it locally, like the youth and education centres as well as the record label. They have brought attention to the problems of today."

campaigning make no difference – they don't even know it exists."

Today is a working example of what they're calling 'Occupy 2.0', which aims to take the message and the tools out of the tents and into communities. There's Occupy Citizenship, which has seen teams go into schools and universities. There are fringe movements within it including Occupy Faith and Queer Occupy. And of course there is the record label. Holding itself to an almost impossibly high standard, it is shunning iTunes and Amazon as digital conduits as investigations continue over alleged labour abuses in their supply chain. The first release, 'Tolk The Banks', featuring the likes of Sam, Rage Against The Machine's Tom Morello and Billy Bragg, is preaching to the converted and they know it. But, says Adam, "a lot of people have been like, 'Come back when you've put an album out and not been sued, and then we can talk'."

The song workshop is soon finished, and Ronan shows me an email from the promoter of one of the major music festivals. They want to have a meeting about an Occupy field this summer.

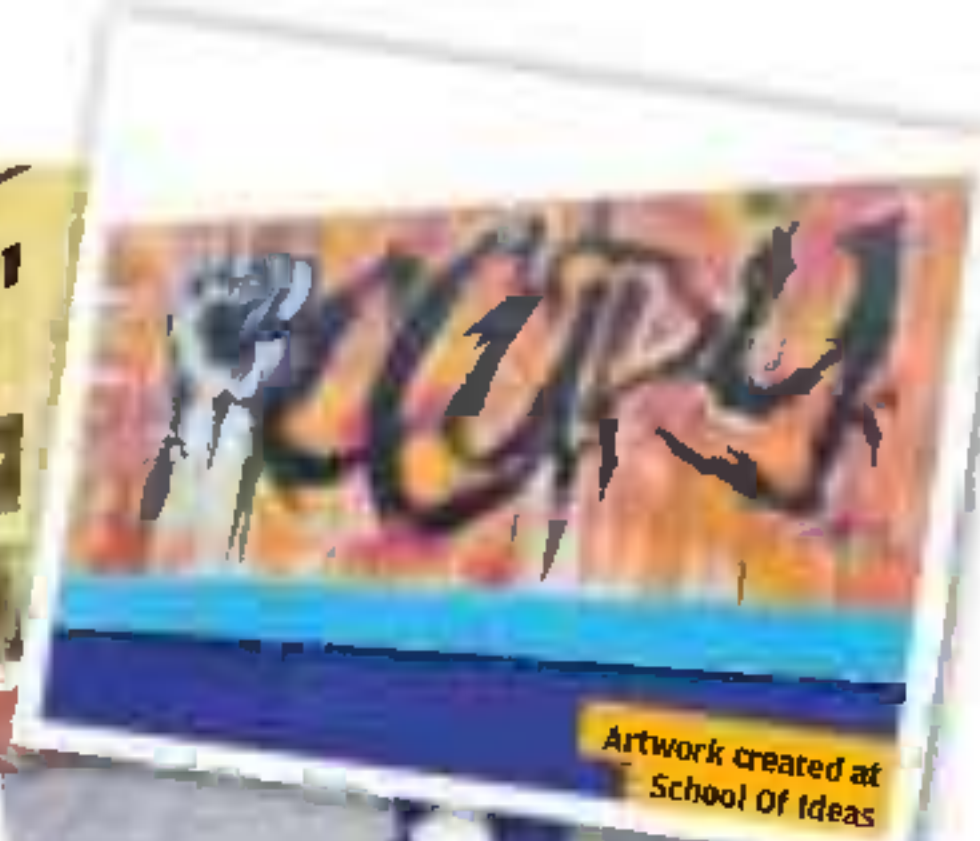
"What the hell do I say?" he gasps. It's a problem – if Occupy starts behaving like a brand, there'll be hell to pay at the GA. 'You can't evict an idea' goes their slogan, but neither can you really own one. And



A lecture at 'Tent City University' in the heart of London's financial district



Ad hoc protest slogans



Artwork created at School Of Ideas

as 2.0 cranks into action, the question of what this movement is and who it belongs to is only going to get thornier.

Saturday afternoon, in the first flush of spring, I visit OccupyLSX in its final days, with its leave to appeal against eviction denied at the High Court. But the spirit is upbeat. Guest speakers are delivering sermons on the Greek financial crisis on the cathedral steps as boomboxes sound and the remaining tents are moved into a heart shape. Half the people seem relieved, but the spirit on camp, says Tilly, is just as it was at the beginning. Matt, the industrial musician, tells me, "people might think we've failed, but this is the end of the beginning, not the beginning of the end. We opened up a space for conversation about the issues that affect people – and these days, that is radical."

Walking through the camp with Sam, though, I have to wonder. Do they really stand a chance of convincing the wider world that they're anything more than a bunch of hippies camped out?

"At times it is a bunch of hippies in a camp, but what's wrong with that?" he says. "What's wrong with a bunch of people who believe in leaning on each other and providing security for people in your community? What's wrong with the idea that everyone can live together happily? What's wrong with being anti-war? Anti greed? Anti-persecution? If that makes me a hippy in a camp then that's cool with me. But it's so

much deeper than that. You go on holiday with any of your friends for four months and you're gonna have arguments and fall-outs, but hopefully at the end of it you're still intact."

The following night, the bailiffs move in 24 hours later than expected. Half of the camp have already packed up and left, but as the 'University' is torn down and a hardcore set of protesters chain themselves to makeshift barricades, the TV news gets its scenes of violence. The most dramatic moments turn out when people praying are manhandled off the steps of the cathedral. In the end, 20 people are arrested. The next day, I meet once again with Jamie, and I'm still keen to work out what this movement actually is?

"An economic system based on infinite growth but which relies on finite resources is embarrassing," he says. "We're basically there for economic justice – that's the umbrella, and for the first time we believe that we have addressed the disease itself rather than being a single-issue campaign. As a result it's just pulled in every thread possible. And don't underestimate how quickly it can be grasped."

The fact that it is so broad and sprawling, with more questions than answers, he says, is what gives the movement its power. Big plans are afoot for May, but Jamie also has an apology. Back at the School Of Rockupy, having got involved in one of the groups as part of my investigation, the *Evening Standard* has reported that I was leading a workshop myself. "They used your name, they weren't supposed to."

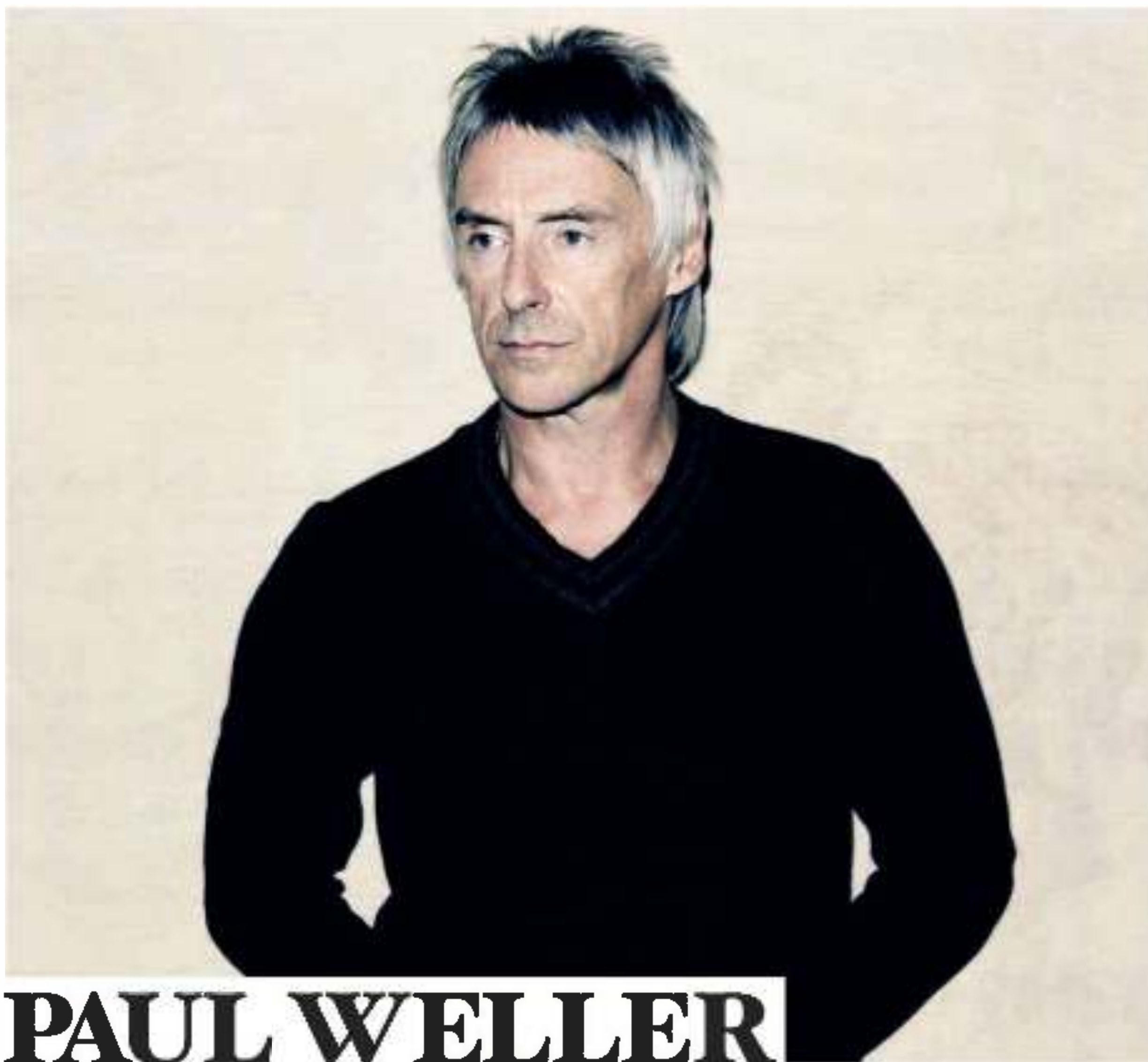
So does this make me an Occupier now too? I have no idea, since Occupy still defies proper definition. But it does force you to interrogate your own politics. I don't mind business, I just don't like it when people misbehave. Jamie isn't bothered. "As far as I'm concerned, you're one of us."

It's only later that I realise he's talking about "the 99 per cent." And whether we want him to or not, he means all of us.

REVIEWS

THE BIG OPINIONS ON THIS WEEK'S IMPORTANT RELEASES

Edited by Louis Pattison



PAUL WELLER

SONIK KICKS UNIVERSAL/ISLAND

Flitting between his classic stock-in-trade, experimental krautrock and jazz-bloody-reggae, the ageing legend proves he still has what it takes



That old footballing maxim about the fleeting nature of form and the permanence of class is cold comfort to musicians ailing from the creaking bones and waning powers of middle age. For Paul Weller, the quips about his new single almost write themselves: 'That Dangerous Age'... what, 53? When annual visits to the colonoscopist become mandatory and your own mortality is confronted every time you rev the engine of a gaudy new sports car? Knife-edge stuff, truly.

Yet if the song itself is testament to anything,

it's that His Modjesty is both in on the joke and remaining above it. A whip-smart riposte to tabloid accusations of a mid-life crisis (Weller's new wife Hannah is – avert thine eyes, children! – 27 years his junior), 'That Dangerous Age' plays with perceptions of its author as a listless, moneyed skirt-chaser before rendering them utterly moot by being – and we're not sure why we're so surprised by this – very good indeed: two-and-a-half virile minutes of *shoo-oop*-ing plastic soul that would provoke jealousy in Bowie himself. It's an early indication that the Indian summer ushered in by 2008's '22 Dreams'

and the Mercury-nominated 'Wake Up The Nation' isn't over just yet.

Those looking to find fault with 'Sonik Kicks' will doubtless mention Weller's recent appraisal of it as "groundbreaking", while ignoring the caveat of, "Well, for me it is..." that followed. In truth, he's not quite so far outside his comfort zone as you might think: the album was made at his studio in Surrey, with the usual names (Steve Cradock, Noel Gallagher, Graham Coxon), plus his wife and kids on guesting duties. Producer and co-writer Simon Dine, widely credited with Weller's current purple patch, returns again – although, as the two are now locked in a financial dispute, it's likely for the last time. The best song here, the sumptuous, string-laden English pastoral of 'By The Waters', is a close cousin of 'Wild Wood', while 'Be Happy Children' – a mid-paced meditation on fatherhood that tests the limits of the listener's sentimentality – is so dadrock-by-definition you briefly wonder if he's gone all meta on us.

What *is* surprising, though, is Weller, that most non-negotiable English of musical icons, dabbling in krautrock, as he does on three tracks here. 'Green' is a Neu!-ish mish-mash of insistent synths and distended guitars, with Weller delivering an oblique spoken-word lyric that opens the album on a studiously enigmatic note. Even taking that foretaste into account, however, 'Kling I Klang's' spiky electric oompah can't help but come jackbooting out of left-field, spitting venom about the Afghan war while its knees busily piston up to its chin. Oh, and did someone say jazz-reggae? No? Well, that's understandable. But despite everything 'Study In Blue' has going against it (it's a duet with his wife, features liberal use of melodica, and is – ahem – seven minutes of jazz-fucking-reggae), on record it's disarmingly lovely. 'When Your Garden's Overgrown', a tribute to Syd Barrett which wisely doesn't bother trying to sound like its subject, is instead infused with the shameless love of strummed melody that characterised pre-Africa Damon Albarn.

At this stage in the game, Weller is perfectly aware of what his audience wants, but he's also secure in the knowledge that they're not going to simply desert at the first sign of divergence. As such, he's now less beholden to expectation than he has been at any time since he disbanded The Jam. How much responsibility for this late-period renaissance lies with the now-estranged Dine? That's a question for another album. 'Sonik Kicks' is the sound of Paul Weller growing old the only way he could – not particularly gracefully, but with no small amount of style. **Barry Nicolson**

8

DOWNLOAD: 'By The Waters', 'Kling I Klang', 'Study In Blue'

THIS IS HARDSCORE

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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FRANKIE ROSE

INTERSTELLAR MEMPHIS INDUSTRIES

After her sterling stints in Dum Dum Girls and Vivian Girls you might expect something a little bubblegum, a little garage, a little psych from Frankie Rose's solo venture. Not so. The Brooklyn-based Jackie-of-all-trades' new LP is cosmic planetarium pop: it's 2001: A Space Odyssey with slinky shoegaze riffs and Drive score electro musings, although it is thankfully saved from severity by Rose's fittingly floral vocals. Yet as bloody lovely as the fluttering 'Pair Of Wings' and spaghetti-Western rumble of 'Moon In My Mind' are, there's a certain lack of substance throughout the album which isn't fully covered up by Rose's elegant stoner shimmying.

Leonie Cooper

DOWNLOAD: 'Pair Of Wings'

6

THERAPY?

A BRIEF CRACK OF LIGHT BLAST

Therapy? have been an active concern since 1989, 'A Brief Crack Of Light' remarkably taking them to 13 albums, but even most ageing alt. metal troopers would struggle to identify any of their songs from the last decade and a half. The Ulster three-piece, who were a big deal as far back as the early '90s, are sage enough to know this, and are now content to write records with no concern for the rock club dancefloor. Their stoicism and open ears are admirable, so it's a great shame that this album's component parts - vinegary noise-rock, cinematic grandeur and a game approximation of Battles entitled 'Marlow' - don't raise the whole above 'nice to know they're still around' status. Noel Gardner

DOWNLOAD: 'Plague Bell'

5

SHARKS

NO GODS RISE

Ever since these Leamington Spa punks' raw, self-released 2008 EP 'Shallow Waters' turned the surf red, we've been waiting hungrily for their debut full-length. Luckily, 'No Gods' doesn't disappoint. 'Arcane Effigies' is a blissful, guitar-driven paean to young adulthood, but with enough grit to soundtrack the next of Shane Meadows' cinematic efforts. The title track offers a sprinkle of liberal thinking - hey, why worship anyone but yourself? - while 'Luck' radiates with Americana-teased strings, frontman James Mattock singing "All of my life I lost to luck", his glum observation delivered with a melodic purr. We're guessing his luck is set to change. Kelly Murray

DOWNLOAD: 'Luck'

8

SOUND OF GUNS

ANGELS & ENEMIES DISTILLER

You want big? These boys have got it. Every track of Sound Of Guns' U2-aping rock bluster lights the fuse, pours on a Big Concept (a hell of a lot of apocalypse), and sits back for the kaboom. The trouble is, 'Angels & Enemies' (the title alone should be enough of a warning) is so overblown there are bits of it scattered all over the neighbourhood. The Liverpoolians' second album is crammed with silly ideas aplenty (we're talking hackneyed strings, gospel backing vocals, charmless soloing, naff lyrical metaphors), especially in 'Silicon' and 'The Whites Of Your Eyes'. By ignoring the golden rule that less is more, 'Angels & Enemies' blows up in its makers' faces. Luke Turner

DOWNLOAD: 'Silicon'

3

KEY NOTES



Best Sleeve Of The Week
Hodgy Beats, 'Untitled'

Memo to Odd Future's marketing team: Wolf Gang action figures are a great idea. Sadly, this is a download-only EP, so you won't see superhero Hodgy staring out from the HMV racks.



Worst Sleeve Of The Week
Cannibal Corpse, 'Torture'

Surprise surprise, Cannibal Corpse. You're certainly not going to win any prizes for imagination, are you? What's wrong with a meadow and some bunny rabbits, eh?

REVIEWED NEXT WEEK

• Madonna, 'MDNA'
• The Mars Volta, 'Noctourniquet'
• Breton, 'Other People's Problems'

THE SHINS

PORT OF MORROW COLUMBIA

The engaging enigmas of old have been left by the wayside as James Mercer plots a course to the arena



Braffrock. Rom-fill indie. Nu Zooney. Call it what you want, Portland's The Shins epitomised a distinct brand of collegiate, soundtrack-friendly cult-folk the second

Natalie Portman played their 'New Slang' to Zach Braff in a hospital waiting room with the inference that liking it would definitely get him laid. As a direct result we now have Fleet Foxes, Grizzly Bear and a zillion other animal-based alt.folk bands. And a rather shame-faced Shins. After setting the standard and cementing their celluloid celebrity with 2007's masterstroke third album 'Wincing The Night Away', mainman James Mercer has spent the past five years trying to convince us he's more than the wafty folk-pop poster boy of her from *The Phantom Menace*. Hence his Danger Mouse electro side-project Broken Bells, and their album which sounded like a wafty folk-pop version of The Postal Service... and not unlike the sort of thing Natalie Portman might go around playing to cute hypochondriacs. Doh!

So it's back to the day job. The Shins' long-awaited fourth album kicks off with an electronica-flecked slice of indie-folk called 'The Rifle's Spira!'. It's the sort of Shins/Broken Bells amalgamation Mercer probably thought would cause his haze-folk faithful to spontaneously combust from shock, but is actually the most predictable album opener since Jay-Z's last 'Intro'. From there a throb of church organ, a velveteen Wall Of Sound backbeat, some mildly maniacal guitar, a 'Good Vibrations' middle eight and a billowing Meat Loaf-gone-folk chug called 'Simple Song' resume business as usual -

rousing, amorphous folk-pop songs that unravel their endearing sonic charms and foibles coyly, Portman-like, to those willing to love them, quirks and all.

There is much melancholic sweetness and light on show. 'It's Only Life' is classic fairy-lit Mercer balladry about stapling a shredded relationship back together. The hazy last waltz of 'For A Fool' is the sort of inventive, emotive and adorable folk acher that changed our lives back in 2004. And there is otherworldly pastoral poetry: see the sedate hula of 'September', all pearls, curses, angel coats and girls "born of the sea".

Mercer's trademark is a sense of polite challenge, that feeling of listening to a melodic Sudoku that made his songs all the more satisfying once 'solved'. Yet it is hard to shake the feeling here that success has changed The Shins. As 'Port Of Morrow' develops it becomes ever more knowingly arena-folk, shedding The Shins' more esoteric edge. Synthetic zumba beats bedeck 'Bait And Switch'. 'Fall Of '82' comes on like a cross between Thin Lizzy, The Beach Boys and Brendan Benson. And 'No Way Down' is all-out '80s-teen-movie-pop, albeit with a guitar solo that sounds like whoever's playing lead guitar - The Shins' line-up being notoriously fluid - is tuning up mid-song. Crucially, the melodies here feel far less cryptic. Where 'Wincing...' felt like racing blindly through a labyrinth of hooks, 'Port Of Morrow' is meticulously signposted. But even if the Mensa-folk crew feel dumbed down on, there's just enough Mercer magic on '...Morrow' to light up your local drop-in centre. Mark Beaumont

DOWNLOAD: 'For A Fool', 'Simple Song', 'September'

6





HODGY BEATS

UNTITLED ODD FUTURE

The Odd Future man springs a soulful surprise of an EP



Being in a group alongside a personality as big and obnoxious as Tyler, The Creator, it's somewhat inevitable you'll end up playing second fiddle. But to find yourself in the shadow of the crew's enfant terrible, Earl Sweatshirt – who's made more appearances as a missing person on the side of milk cartons than he has making music these last 18 months – must be doubly galling. That's the deal with Hodgy Beats. But what Hodgy lacks in blog currency, he makes up for in consistency, being something of a lyrical anchor in Odd Future's chaotic group outings.

On this eight-track EP, available as a free download from Odd Future's website, Hodgy's making good use of his chance to shine. Breaking away from the raw, punchline-littered bars he's been associated with as a member of OFWGKTA and MellowHype, on 'Untitled' he's experimenting with a sound that's gloriously laid back, steeped in woozy vintage soul. As with Syd Tha Kyd's *The Internet* project, here Hodgy is looking outside the collective for collaborators, and the results are

impressive. On 'Bullshittin', he rides a beat by Three 6 Mafia's crunk king Juicy J, spitting with dexterity, even as he hits the beat on double time, while 'Cookie Coma' unfurls in a sleepy boom-bap fashion, Hodgy pondering his own mortality ("I'm too legit for life/I should get a grip and die/Fuckin' take a trip and fly, and never come down") and revealing "I'd probably be deceased if it wasn't for my grandparents..". The most fruitful hook-up, though, comes in the form of two collaborations with Flying Lotus, 'Lately' and 'Lamented'. Echoing the work of the late Detroit producer J Dilla, their blunted funk and dotry kicks complement Hodgy's weed fixation nicely.

With another Odd Future release, 'OF Tape Vol 2' due to land next week and new single 'Rella' drumming up the hype all over again, 'Untitled' probably won't set the world alight. But it's an accomplished project, resonating with crackly stoner soul and genuinely thoughtful lyrics – and a reminder that far from the teenage Tumblr caricature, Odd Future are still making some of the most exciting, accomplished music of our time. *Jo Fuertes Knight*

8

DOWNLOAD: All of it – it's free, right?

LEE RANALDO BETWEEN THE TIMES AND THE TIDES MATADOR



Strictly speaking it would be a lie to call 'Between The Times And The Tides' a solo record, because the former Sonic Youth guitarist has obviously been getting by with help from some very cool friends (Wilco's Nels Cline, SY live and late-era bassist Jim O'Rourke and drummer Steve Shelley). It was always rumoured that Ranaldo had to hide his song writing light under a bushel in Sonic Youth, and sure enough here are a wealth of rock gems that shine with a warm-hearted, Neil Young-like intensity. Those wanting clangour and dissonance will be disappointed, but everyone else will be pleasantly surprised. *John Doran*

DOWNLOAD: 'Waiting On A Dream'

7

KINDNESS WORLD, YOU NEED A CHANGE OF MIND FEMALE ENERGY/POLYDOR



Kindness – aka Adam Bainbridge – appeared in August 2009 with a wicked cover of The Replacements' 'Swingin' Party', then vanished. Amid the smartly rendered pastiche of this debut, Bainbridge references Prince and Janet Jackson, yet turns those joyous sounds unpleasantly arch. His lyrics are knowingly banal ("Baby, I can't wait any longer", on 'Bombastic'), his voice unaffected, and anyone peddling semi-ironic covers of the fucking *EastEnders* theme deserves to lose their fingers. However, the bass on 'SEOD' rattles the skins of your eyeballs, and it's in the production that this dreary affair occasionally explodes into colour. *Laura Snapes*

4

DOWNLOAD: 'SEOD'

FACES TO NAMES...

What the reviewers are doing this week



LAURA SNAPES

"Had a great time at the NME Awards. Kept slipping off the seat in the taxi home, tried to disguise it by saying I was 'getting something from my pocket'. My dress had no pockets. No-one was fooled."



NOEL GARDNER

"Found out some random LP that's been sitting in this one junk shop for literally a decade is worth about £200. Went there to buy it. It had gone. Someone will pay."



PETE CASHMORE

"This week I agreed to be in a rap battle in Camden on April 1. This is not how I envisaged my life mapping out, to be honest."

JULIA HOLTER

EKSTASIS RVNG INTL



Magic exists, and we know it does – because if it didn't, how could Julia Holter's second release bewitch so thoroughly, right from the onset? A classically trained virtuoso from Los Angeles and friend of fellow pop sorceress Nite Jewel, she weaves ambient and pop music together on tracks such as 'Our Sorrows' and 'Moni Mon Amie' to cast dreamlike enchantments. In a buzzing world in which tranquility can often seem unattainable, Holter's hymn-like offerings, powered by harpsichord and harmonium, demand more than mere background listening. Forget chart positions or blog hype: 'Ekstasis' reminds us that music can mean so much more. *Anne T Donahue*

DOWNLOAD: 'Boy In The Moon'

8

JONSI

WE BOUGHT A ZOO (MOTION PICTURE SOUNDTRACK) COLUMBIA



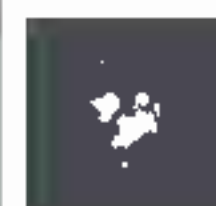
This is that Cameron Crowe film out this week, about a family who move, unknowingly, into a dilapidated zoo. Crowe's full of praise for the Sigur Rósian who scored it, claiming he used his 'Go' album for "scene-setting" and that the film – while also featuring music by anyone from Dylan to the Bunnymen to Mariachi El Bronx to Bon Iver – "brims with his one-of-a-kind sonic heartbeat". In fact it's as dreamy and atmospheric as you might expect, but the truth is that only a handful of Jónsi's 15 tunes here – 'Sinking Friendships', 'Go Do' – really work without the context of some CGI tigers. *Hamish MacBain*

DOWNLOAD: 'Sinking Friendships'

5

DVA

PRETTY UGLY HYPERDUB



Recent first-class Hyperdub releases by Cooly G and Terror Danjah have put the kibosh on all those crowbarred-in metaphors about industrial wastelands and night-bus riddims beloved of critics. 'Pretty Ugly' is another spear into cliché. It's a sunnier, livelier, more psychedelic and lascivious territory that Leon Smart inhabits here, as he edges further from a grime past that saw him producing a track on Wiley's 'Playtime Is Over' and settles into abstract, Kwaito-infused, synth-washed funky house. There's occasional crimes of flannel-wet schmaltz but mostly Smart is like an esoteric, London-based Dam-Funk with a fondness for chemically enhanced raving. *Chris Parkin*

DOWNLOAD: 'Polyphonic Dreams'

7

MIRRORING

FOREIGN BODY KRANKY



Anyone familiar with either Grouper or Tiny Vipers' Jesy Fortino should be able to build up a reasonably accurate mental picture of what a collaboration between the two would sound like. Hazy, droning backdrops? Check. Muffled acoustic guitars? Check. Delicate vocals submerged in the background? Check. Still, they're so well suited that the pair's beautiful and sad debut album as Mirroring proves far more than the sum of its parts. At its best when they pool their strengths – highlight 'Mine', on which Grouper sinks Fortino's voice in a whole swimming pool's worth of watery reverb – 'Foreign Body' crawls under the skin and stubbornly lodges itself there. *Rory Gibb*

DOWNLOAD: 'Mine'

8



DANIEL ROSSEN

SILENT HOUR/GOLDEN MILE WARP

He looks more Hobbit than Grizzly Bear, but the Brooklynite's solo EP is a fiercely ambitious effort



When Marcus Mumford lies in bed late at night, Vicks VapoRub smeared across his chest, and listens to the music of Grizzly Bear, he must quietly weep. For a few years

now, the Brooklyn chamber-folk outfit have summoned up grand vistas of the pastoral sublime, while the Mumfords *et al* make do with taking the funicular, all kitchen-sink arrangements and pasty-lad emoting.

Well, look away now Marcus, because the new EP from Grizzly Bear's Daniel Rossen is a truly grandiose effort. Made up of material originally intended for the next Grizzly Bear record, itself due later this year, 'Silent Hour/Golden Mile' was reportedly hatched in response to the directionlessness that swallowed the group after touring 2009 album 'Veckatimest'.

What can we say, except that it clearly worked? "With your head full of stars that crowd all you see, sing for me/With your mouth full of

stones grinding your teeth, speak for me", croons Rossen, in his guarded sigh, on 'Up On High'. He uses his crystal diction with an acoustic to pick a delicate path through a typically snaking arrangement, all silvery strings and epic drum hits like faraway thunder.

The bittersweet pop arrangement and fallen-angel falsettos of 'Silent Song' sound like middle-period Elliott Smith, a motif Rossen revisits on 'Golden Mile's glass half-empty waltz, with lonesome touches of slide guitar seemingly half-inched off George Harrison.

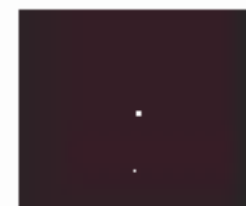
'Saint Nothing' is an elegant ballad that recalls Paul McCartney at his most artily ambitious; it's a beautiful song that reminds you why folk as revered as Paul Simon and Jonny Greenwood are so smitten with this guy. Rossen is a master craftsman – and one of the best songwriters in modern rock – and with 'Silent Hour/Golden Mile' he's set the bar tantalisingly high for Grizzly Bear's return. **Alex Denney**

8

DOWNLOAD: 'Silent Song', 'Return To Form'

CANNIBAL CORPSE

TORTURE METAL BLADE



"With 'Torture'," says Cannibal Corpse's lead singer George 'Corpsegrinder' Fisher, "we wanted to explore other, more traditional

forms of American music, like ragtime, Dixie jazz and bluegrass. We also wanted to communicate our sense of humour more." Ha ha! We're joking, of course! This is more entirely predictably absurd bludgeoning death metal silliness from the kings of its kind. It boasts song titles like 'Sarcophagic Frenzy' and 'Followed Home Then Killed' (that's very much the romantic one in the set) and, if you're 14 years old, you can cause your parents all sorts of unnecessary worry by listening to it. Horrible nonsense, and I mean that as a compliment. **Pete Cashmore**

DOWNLOAD: 'Followed Home Then Killed'

6

SOAP&SKIN

NARROW PIAS



Austrian prodigy Anja Plaschg has said that she felt like she "lost herself as a human" after her forbiddingly beautiful debut 'Lovetune For Vacuum'

made her name two years ago. 'Narrow' is claustrophobically intense, and yet this emotional pressure has focused her artistically, her sound honed down to minimal, piano-driven songcraft with eruptions of grating digital noise. The jagged edges are what's to love here, from the horribly sad beauty of the German language in 'Vater', her tribute to her late father, to the hostile, industrial beat of the excellently named 'Deathmental' or the glitch-gothic high drama of 'Big Hand Nails Down'. **Emily Mackay**

DOWNLOAD: 'Big Hand Nails Down'

7

THE RIDER

What we're wearing, watching and listening to this week



T-Shirt

RYO Stripe

Penguin T-Shirt

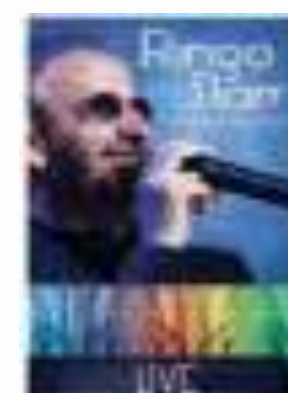
Original Penguin have launched a line with Urban Outfitters, reviving the original 1970s "TV Bird" logo for a brightly striped collection inspired by American surf culture.



Reissue

Archers Of Loaf, 'Vee Vee'

The four-piece re-release their second album on Fire Records, remastered by Shellac's Bob Weston, and complete with 16 bonus tracks and new artwork.



DVD

Ringo Starr And The Roundheads

Filmed at the Genesee Theatre in Waukegan, Illinois, this classic gig shows the bespectacled Beatle performing the hits of the Fab Four alongside career-spanning highlights.

THIS WEEK'S SINGLES

reviewed by NME's

MATT WILKINSON



BLOOD RED SHOES

COLD V2/CO-OPERATIVE



In which Laura-Mary Carter and Steven Ansell summon the spirit of 'Rated R'-era QOTSA to sumptuous effect, and end up with their most thrilling single yet.

Transforming them into 'The Kills it's OK to like' in three minutes and 30 seconds, the brilliance of 'Cold' is particularly surprising due to its subject matter: stepping into the shower in the morning and realising your boiler's fucked.

LOS CAMPESINOS!

SONGS ABOUT YOUR GIRLFRIEND WICHITA



We'll tread very lightly here, seeing as we don't want Gareth from Los Camp to come round our house and beat us up for talking about his private life in

print again. So, to put it as simply as possible, then: 'Songs About Your Girlfriend' is dreary, drippy shite from indie's very own Byker Grove posse of fuckwits who should have done us all a favour and split years ago. **Ahem.**

CITIZENS!

REPTILE KITSUNE



With the sprightliest track here by some way, Citizens! seem to have stumbled across the key to writing perfect pop choruses (basically: kick in no later than

the 60-second mark, repeat at least six times and, er, make it catchy as fuck). So, 'Reptile' is playful, boisterous, a tad demented and features what could possibly be a toddler playing the main riff on a Fisher Price keyboard (FYI, this is a good thing).

COLDPLAY

CHARLIE BROWN PARLOPHONE



You can't call a song 'Charlie Brown' and make it worse than the *Peanuts* theme. I don't care if you're Chris Martin. I don't care if you're a member of your very own

Coldplay gym, or if you recorded it in a church, or if your wife's doing a recipe book especially for vegans who teach Bikram yoga to monks. If you call a song 'Charlie Brown' and it sounds this half-arsed you are officially Out Of The Club.

MADONNA FT NICKI MINAJ & MIA

GIVE ME ALL YOUR LUVIN' POLYDOR



Like that parade of girls from the Boots adverts, Madonna, Maya and Minaj are truly a force to be reckoned with. And, at times, highly annoying. Not so on this,

though – it's Madge's strongest comeback single since 'Hung Up', and has the added bonus of featuring Nicki rapping about being a Roman and a barbarian. And it's actually based on ZZ Top's 1983 ode-to-the-road track of a very similar name (PS it's not).

SUMMER CAMP

LOSING MY MIND APRICOT/MOSHI MOSHI



Sort of half as good as 'Ghost Train' (which was very, very good), this is essentially what Lizzie and Jeremy must have sounded like if she were living in Dalston in 2012 writing *Hypnagogic: The Musical*.

LIVE

FROM PUBS TO ARENAS, THE WEEK'S TOP GIGS

Edited by Louis Pattison

FLORENCE + THE MACHINE/ THE HORRORS



THE O2, DUBLIN FRIDAY, MARCH 2

Fresh from their NME Awards performance, Faris'n'Flo take their moody melodrama to the Irish

On Wednesday, Florence Welch was pictured at an NME Awards afterparty at the W Hotel. The US tabloids picked up on a shot of her dancing in that floral print white suit she'd been wearing and, before long, some hack had traced the name and ingredients of the cocktail she had in hand. It was a "Wyld Raspberry Rock", we were informed, "comprised of vodka, raspberry liqueur, sugar and lime". Which is proof, if proof was needed, that Florence is now so famous that people who don't even listen to music give a shit what she had for breakfast

Last time she played Dublin, Flo was in the Olympia – a cosy-ish, 1,600-seat theatre. Now, she's back to start her first post-'Ceremonials' tour at their O2, a functional shed that was one of the last big erections of the Celtic Tiger before it fell off the Celtic Debt Mountain. Here, among aircon vents the size of armoured cars, she's brought a whopping new stage-set, invited 12 of her closest musicians, and is going to dance the night away, before ending her tour in London two weeks later for three nights at the 10,000-capacity Alexandra Palace – a clear concession to intimacy, compared to just renting out the entire O2 Arena for two.

Alongside her will be those other big winners at this week's NME Awards, The Horrors, who duetted there with Flo on their own 'Still Life'. The original plan was for the two acts to do Lee Hazlewood and Nancy Sinatra's 'Some Velvet Morning' instead. "But I don't think either of us had the time to learn it in the end," Florence explains, pre-show, in between apologising again for her scatty tiredness.

Theirs is a friendship founded in serendipity (or it's testament to the incestuous nature of London scenester life, according to detractors).

"There are all these photos of me and Tom Cowan hugging and embracing

and playing together on a swing as kids," says Flo. "Actually, Tom's dad's a really good photographer, so they're great photos."

"We first bonded during the Big Day Out tour," Faris explains from his own backstage area. "Me and her and Rob [Ackroyd, Machine guitarist] ended up in the same bed together at 6am... I remember at 7am, she was swimming laps of the hotel pool, trying to hold her breath the whole way while these two kids watched from the sides."

Do The Horrors enjoy undercarding on these sorts of arena tours?

"What do you mean 'undercarding'?" Uh, playing second on the bill?



Clockwise from main image: Florence brings 'Ceremonials' to the Irish; Faris doing his best Casablanco impression; Flo auditions for Catwoman; here's what security got to see; The Horrors, just hanging out, backstage



"Interesting..."

The conversation never really recovers. True, if you check your ticket stubs, they're listed as 'Special Guests'. And despite being atomised from each other across the great span of the stage, they play with a sense of ownership rather than undercarding, Faris kicking his heel in time on 'Still Life' head down, leaning on his mic stand like a bull pawing before a charge. The new stuff has a more melodic air that helps it connect with these big crowds: the growling swirl of 'Sea Within A Sea' now sounds flat compared to the growling swirl of 'I Can See Through You', but it's the closing growling swirl of 'Moving Further Away' that really sends everything incandescent – fizzing and spitting through its wig-out, wig-in extended mid-section.

They go, and a massive chiffon curtain arrives, in front of a massive chintz art deco white-and-gold backdrop, before Flo herself drops down her ramp wearing a massive cape so heavy with sequins it could aid her own Virginia Woolf-tribute drowning bid. She launches into the Oasis-starting-gigs-with-'Hello' literalism of opener 'Only If For A Night'. It's a teasingly downbeat intro for someone so often labelled bombastic, but sets the tone for phase one. She follows it with the similarly subtle 'Strangeness And Charm', raising her cape momentarily throughout, like a bird performing some complex genital-display mating dance, then

discards it as she twirls through the slowed-down, weirded up 'Cosmic Love'.

Soon enough, maximalism is dialled up to the max, and by the time she gets to 'Shake It Out', largeness has won out to the point that it feels like the whole gig is a thematic take on what a nine-year-old allowed to indulge her every daddy-buy-me-a-pony fantasy would have imagined onto the stage. After all, even the 'acoustic' mid-set interlude ('Heartlines', 'Leave My Body', 'All This In Heaven') still includes eight musicians. There's something in her space-opera pagan-pop astral soul thing that only finds its full histrionic voice on a stage the size of the imagination

She's assured, relaxed, grinning, soaking up the applause like photosynthesis

that birthed it. She's assured, relaxed, grinning, seeming to soak up the applause like photosynthesis, jogging barefoot to all four corners on 'You've Got The Love', pounding her way down from the top of the ramp as 'Dog Days

Are Over' rattles out of the traps, and whooping 'Rabbit Heart (Raise It Up)' into the sort of single-minded communion last seen at Nuremberg circa 1936.

While there was no doubt pressure to get Florence on the road immediately after 'Ceremonials', holding back has paid off. With six singles plucked off 'Lungs' and four consecutive Glastonburys, she was in the gun sights of overexposure by the end of 2010. She's resisted that, and now, six months after its release, the new songs seem to be coming up on the inside of the old, a fact borne out by sales: 'Lungs' sold four million, 'Ceremonials' is already up to 1.7 million – though that achievement has been somewhat eclipsed by the Cockney colossus that is Adele.

When she bookends the night with the new, encoring with 'Never Let Me Go' and a wan 'No Light, No Light', there's no sense of anyone feeling short-changed. Then, with one last catsuited tippy-toes bow, she exits – off to Bournemouth, then the rest of the country, then back to mopping up remaining American resistance. Enjoy the arenas while they last: the way things are going, soon the British Isles will be a far-flung dot on her global empire. *Gavin Haynes*

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WILLIS EARL BEAL

POWER LUNCHES, LONDON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28

XL's new signing plays his debut London show – and the result is something very, very special

There are some people born with enough charisma, dynamism and sheer presence to elevate them above the rest of us mere mortals. As Willis Earl Beal eases through the crowd to get to the stage at his first ever non-American gig (and his third *ever*) it transpires that he may well be one of them. The second he arrives at his destination – sitting forlornly while the DJ ends a St Vincent track over the PA – he has the audience in the palm of his hands. And when he begins to sing? Jaws drop. This isn't some Cowell-tutored chancer we're dealing with. This is a man with an awe-inspiring gift when it comes to opening his gob. He doesn't

really play any instruments (save a guitar for two encore tracks), instead simply belting out his futuristic gospel cries a cappella and bending his larynx around a bespoke backing track – part created, you suspect, back home in Chicago on a beatbox with whatever pots and pans were at hand. Armed with a bottle of Jack Daniel's, a pair of shades, he radiates confidence. But there's an element of him being wounded – a broken man who is taking his first steps on a potential road of glory. Whatever his story is, tonight it works wonders. Afterwards, people rush the stage to embrace him, and it's both magical and surreal. *Matt Wilkinson*



CLOUD NOTHINGS

THE ECHO, LOS ANGELES
FRIDAY, MARCH 2

I like what's going on here," smirks 20-year-old Dylan Baldi, gesturing towards the beer-splashing mosh. "This doesn't happen every night." With all the doubled-over riffage, tumbling harmonies and brilliantly bratty screeching, we can't see why the blazes not. Much has been made of Cloud Nothings' progression into murkier, grungier waters, but tonight they prove that their punk-pop ties haven't been totally severed. Starting as they mean to go on, with the double 'Kerplunk'-era Green Day threat of 'Stay Useless' and 'Fall In', the Cleveland band's melodic, raucous ruckus will be inspiring plenty more pits this year, trust us. *Leonie Cooper*

BLEEDING KNEES CLUB

NATION OF SHOPKEEPERS, LEEDS
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 29

Five minutes into Bleeding Knees Club's set, you would be forgiven for assuming that these three fresh-faced Australians' UK tour had been neatly timed to coincide with the release of *The Muppets*. Bounding and grinning through their teenage punk songs, you could also assume that the puppeteer has lost his mind. It's a succinct collection of every rite of passage known to mankind, bundled into three-minute, three-chord slacker jingles. "I just wanna have fun", they drawl on the infectious 'Have Fun', and the sentiment plays through your head for days afterwards. *Hayley Avron*



GOTYE

THE RITZ, MANCHESTER FRIDAY, MARCH 2

Something's got to give – but will it be De Backer's weirdo pop numbers or traditional chart toppers?

The stats speak for themselves: with almost 100 million hits on YouTube and a seat at the top of the UK singles chart, 'Somebody That I Used To Know' has made Gotye – aka Belgian-Australian Wouter De Backer – a global concern. Yet, as tonight proves, Gotye has become a pop star without any real pop tunes.

That may be no bad thing. Gotye has a Peter Gabriel-like approach to the importance of placing visual identity alongside his music, and tonight at The Ritz there's eye candy everywhere. If De Backer isn't gesticulating stage-centre amid a plethora of electronics and percussion equipment, then he's enthusiastically introducing the variety of instruments the rest of his band are playing as though we're students in his class.

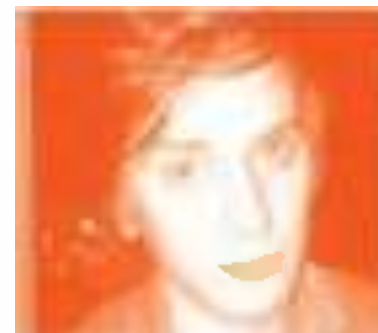
But 30 minutes in and the bar's packed. Songs like 'State Of The Art's vocoder-funk and the sprawling quasi-Middle East drive of 'The

Only Way' are simply too weird for the sort of audience Gotye's recently accumulated, with even shorter 'Making Mirrors' tracks elongated beyond pop comfort. De Backer provides live

what his albums promise, extroverted experiments of contrastive sounds held together by largely hook-less structures; yet few here seem to have delved into his back catalogue and the sound of disinterested chatter fills the room until, predictably, 'Somebody That I Used To Know' saves face. It's a pity. Gotye's nearer the leftfield than most chart fodder, and he's brought it with him onto the stage. Yet his chances of sustaining such success, we feel, will come down to compromise and the rejection of his outré tendencies. That or we'll see him in the middle of a desert with a load of old pianos and a battered American hatchback, and that's something no-one needs. *Simon Jay Catling*

BIG MOUTH

What the punters thought



John, 23, Manchester
"Will he remain successful? I don't know. The album did well, but off the back of that single and it's all that most of the crowd knew. I've known about him for a while and had never thought of him becoming a pop star."



MIIKE SNOW

FOTOGRAFISKA, STOCKHOLM MONDAY, MARCH 5

At a photographic museum in Sweden, these studio boffins reinvent the pop aesthetic with panache and creepy masks

If the three people behind Miike Snow have proven anything from their careers thus far, it's that they know how to produce a clean, crisp pop song. While their singer, American-born Andrew Wyatt, aided and enriched the likes of Carl Barât and Mark Ronson's most recent offerings, the Swedish songwriting team of Christian Karlsson and Pontus Winnberg (aka Bloodshy & Avant) are better known as the chaps who penned Britney Spears' Grammy-winning 'Toxic' (and saved her shorn head from the career chopping block in the process). Together – as evinced by their self-titled 2009 debut – they're a group who know what it takes to collaborate and compose pop music of fragility, clarity and affinity for a guilty pleasure.

Wyatt, face concealed, has vocals characterised by beautiful detachment

So what the France is that awful, discordant din being vomited from the speakers? Blurp blurp blurp, blurp-blurp-blurp. Miike Snow are just two songs into their set at Stockholm's beautiful photographic museum when their smoke machine triggers a flappable fire alarm system into action. The procession-like drumming of 'The Wave', from their forthcoming album 'Happy To

You', stumbles to a panicked halt. The Swedes briefly consider evacuation. But then the doors are flung open, and a minus two 'Swedish spring' breeze puts their pop embers on ice.

It's not the airing that Miike Snow might wish for their new material, but

their return is cool and calculated. Karlsson and Winnberg man a Tardis-like console with esoteric dials, buttons and lights, and weave 'Cult Logic', 'Bavarian #1 (Say You Will)' and 'Burial' into the next. Humoured by their false start, Wyatt – face half-concealed by a carnival mask – is animated and at ease, his vocal characterised by a beautiful detachment.

Kickstarting their tour in front of a courteous home crowd, much of their set is spent gauging the new songs. 'Paddling Out' flourishes with contagious, dance-driven hooks. 'Devil's Work' tenses and releases with a Stone Roses-esque baggy whomp, rousing horns and stuttering

drums. 'God Help This Divorce' and 'Black Tin Box' somehow leave you feeling quite nostalgic about the back catalogue of Phil Collins. They wind up with a couple of older singles, 'Black & Blue' and 'Animal', that glisten with new life. On a freezing night in Stockholm, Miike Snow sound clear like ice but warm inside. *Thomas A Ward*



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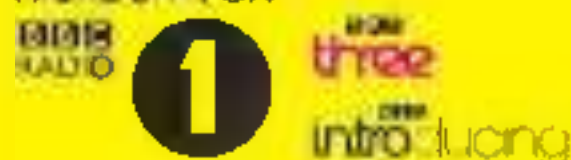
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I BREAK HORSES

STARTS: London Scala, Apr 1

The sweetly epic Swedish duo sold out Cargo in December, made best-of-2011 lists with their debut 'Hearts' - and return this April for an ATP show.

GRAVENHURST

STARTS: London St Pancras Old Church, Apr 25

Nick Talbot releases new LP 'The Ghost In Daylight', and plays this intimate, one-off solo show promoted by ace label Sonic Cathedral.

HOWLER

STARTS: Belfast Oh Yeah Music Centre, May 1

The Minneapolis boys plot a UK tour, taking in a spot at NME's showcase at Brighton's Great Escape - they play Horatio's Bar on May 11.

SPECTOR

STARTS: Nottingham Bodega, May 1

The arch, anthemic bunch embark on Spectour III, a three-week-long UK stretch that takes them into festival season and the release of their debut album.



DOT TO DOT FESTIVAL

STARTS: Bristol/Nottingham/Manchester, Jun 2

DON'T MISS

The UK's only tri-city festival rolls into Bristol (Jun 2), Nottingham (3) and Manchester (4) this summer with a pretty damn fine line-up. In past years, Dot To Dot has hosted the likes of Florence + The Machine, Ed Sheeran, The xx, Friendly Fires and Laura Marling, and 2012's bill looks equally thrilling. Co-headlining are The Drums and Pulled Apart By Horses (pictured), bands whose respective modus operandi could hardly be more polarised. Further down the running, Willy Mason makes a comeback, playing material from his first album in five years, Nottingham janglers Dog Is Dead make an appearance, Summer Camp bring their halcyon sparkle, and Lucy Rose charms all and sundry. Deaf Club, Pearl And The Beard, Wonder Villains, Vadoinmexico and Dirty Goods also appear.

THE HEARTBREAKS

STARTS: Leeds Wardrobe, May 5

The jangle-poppers so beloved of Carl Barât embark on a UK tour, and release their debut album 'Funtimes' on May 7.

SHARON VAN ETEN

STARTS: London Scala, May 16

Following universally rave reviews for third album 'Tramp' and a sold-out London show, Sharon returns for this short tour.

DOWNLOAD

STARTS: Donington Park, Jun 8

Dropkick Murphys, Cancer Bats (pictured), Rise To Remain, Slipknot/Stone Sour's Corey Taylor and more join Metallica at the monolithic metal fest.

LIVE FROM JODRELL BANK

STARTS: Cheshire Jodrell Bank Observatory, Jun 23

Elbow (Jun 23) and Paul Weller (24, pictured) play in the grounds of the amazing Lovell Telescope.



SONISPHERE

STARTS: Stevenage Knebworth House, Jul 6

Kiss, Queen and Faith No More headline a roster that includes the only UK shows of 2012 from Evanescence, Marilyn Manson (pictured), Incubus and Wolfmother.

THE MAGIC LOUNGEABOUT

STARTS: Skipton Broughton Hall, Jul 27

Chic ft Nile Rodgers is Friday's headliner, with Lucy Rose (pictured), Benjamin Francis Leftwich and Cashier No 9 also on the bill.

WILDERNESS FESTIVAL

STARTS: Oxfordshire Combury Park, Aug 10

The verdant weekend returns with Stornoway, Spiritualized (pictured), Cloud Control, Giant Giant Sand, Milagres and more.

GREEN MAN

STARTS: Powys Glanusk Park, Aug 17

The Welsh fest has Stephen Malkmus & The Jicks (pictured), Tune-Yards, Of Montreal, King Creosote & Jon Hopkins, Field Music, Michael Kiwanuka and more.

PICK of the WEEK

What to see this week? Let us help



WU LYF

STARTS: Manchester HMV Ritz, Mar 15



It's been a pretty thrilling 12 months for WU LYF, releasing their debut album 'Go Tell Fire To The Mountain', selling out tours across the world, and even performing on David Letterman's show earlier this year. But where many bands would keep mining that vein until it's exhausted, WU LYF are capping it off with this tour, the band's last shows before they vanish into their lair to work on album number two. They're taking Willis Earl Beal, Dreams, Apes & Horses, Herb Diamante, Dark Times, Holy Esque, Young Montana? and Shinics out on tour with them, making it not just your last chance to see WU LYF until the end of the year, but a fine chance to discover some thrilling new sounds in the process.



Don't Miss VERONICA FALLS

STARTS: London Scala, Mar 14

The gloomy London four-piece only released their self-titled debut album last September, but their recent live sets have been chock full of brand new material – they're even releasing a new single in April, entitled 'My Heart Beats'. You can catch a ton more new songs here, where they're supported by Dalston punks Male Bonding and twinkling trio Novella.



Everyone's Talking About SPIRITUALIZED

STARTS: Nottingham Rescue Rooms, Mar 16

Never one to play the game straight, Jason Pierce gave his label a copy of what purported to be Spiritualized's new album on time, like a good boy. Then he produces another one in secret, pulls the original, and ta-dah! The cover – white with a green octagon and the word "Huh?" on it – was presumably the record label's reaction.



Radar Stars HEART SHIPS

STARTS: Leeds Nation Of Shopkeepers, Mar 14

You might have heard Leeds' Heart Ships being compared to Wild Beasts – an accurate and complimentary invocation for sure, but there's certainly more to them than that. On the likes of 'Heart Of A Wrestler', Ryan Cooke and Dave Hill bellow like Modest Mouse's Isaac Brock, tremble like The Walkmen's Hamilton Leithauser, and rouse with the force of a sea shanty.

WEDNESDAY

March 14

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Golden Fable/Elephant & Soldier 10 Feet Tall 02920 228883
The Post War Years Clwb Ifor Bach 029 2023 2199

DERBY

Ad Edwards The Vic Inn 01332 74 00 91
Suffocation/Cerebral Bore/Cattle Decapitation Old Bell 01332 343701

EXETER

Wild Beasts/Alt-J Phoenix 01392 667080

GLASGOW

Jill Jackson Merchant Square 0141 552 3038
Respect Ba/Marrik Layden Classic Grand 0141 847 0820
Sinead O'Connor Oran Mor 0141 552 9224
Xiu Xiu King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279

HUDDERSFIELD

Daniel Pearson/Glass Frontiers Bar 122 01484 480252

LEEDS

Heart Ships Nation Of Shopkeepers 0113 203 1831
Zico Chain The Well 0113 2440474

LEICESTER

Jim Moray Musician 0116 251 0080

LIVERPOOL

Roddy Woomble Zanzibar 0151 707 0633

LONDON

Archean Soundtrack/The Dave Vegas Project/The Dissidents Nambucca 020 7272 7366
Awale Hoxton Square Bar & Grill 020 7613 0709
Boots Electric Garage 020 7607 1818
Cave Painting/Seye Adelekan/Good Dangers Old Blue Last 020 7613 2478
City Lights Roadtrip 020 7253 6787
Cook & The Case Strong Rooms 020 7426 5100

Cry Baby Garage (Upstairs) 0871 230 1094

The Dead School/Wideboy

Generation/We Stole Fire Dublin Castle 020 7485 1773

Enfant Bull & Gate 020 7485 5358

Fat White Family/Zoetrope MacBeth 020 7739 5095

Fem Fel Cargo 0207 749 7840

The Fontanelles Rich Mix 020 7613 7498

Free Spirit/Rainumdas/Sereika 229 Club 020 7631 8310

The Jacobs/The Speedophiles

Mother 020 7739 5949

Jeff Mangum Union Chapel 020 7226 1686

Les Ocelots Hackney Attic 0871 902 5734

Luke Leighfield Barfly 0870 907 0999

Lu Cozma Camden Rock 0871 230 1094

The Megaphonic Thrift/Roadhouse

Buffalo Bar 020 7359 6191

Morning Wire/The Vibrators New Cross Inn 020 8692 1866

Nanci Griffith O2 Shepherds Bush Empire 0870 771 2000

The Penelopes/Fictional Ensemble Electricity Showroom 020 7739 3939

Pontiak/Teeth Of The Sea/Trieste The Lexington 020 7837 5387

The Sexual Objects Old Queen's Head 020 7354 9993

Steve Smyth Slaughtered Lamb 020 8682 4080

Sworn To Oath/Eye For An Eye/Karrion Solo Bar 020 7482 4611

Three Trapped Tigers Village Underground 020 7422 7505

Veronica Falls/Male Bonding/Novella Scala 020 7833 2022

(Hed) PE O2 Academy Islington 0870 477 2000

MANCHESTER

The Acacia Strain/TRC Moho Live 0161 834 8180

Lloyd HMV Ritz 0161 236 4355

Rise To Remain/Heaven Shall Burn/Troops Of Mafeking/Vamos

Vaquero/Defcon 3 Retro Bar 0161 274 4892

NEWCASTLE

The Epslodes/Forest Green

Vicious/Modern Colours Black Bull 0191 414 2846

The Lonesome West Cluny

0191 230 4474

Vain O2 Academy 0870 477 2000

NORWICH

The Maccabees UEA 01603 505401

OXFORD

Anthrax/Diamond Plate/Obsessive Compulsive O2 Academy 0870 477 2000

SHEFFIELD

Nero O2 Academy 0870 477 2000

Skind & Demoralised The Hop 01142 781000

SOUTHAMPTON

Laura Marling/Timbre Guildhall 023 8063 2601

WOLVERHAMPTON

Killing Joke/The Icarus Line/The Crying Spell Wulfrun Hall 0870 320 7000

WREXHAM

Pop Will Eat Itself Central Station 01978 358780

YORK

The Magic Band The Duchess 01904 641 413

Phillip Jeays/Pog Black Swan Inn 01904 686 911

Yashin Fibbers 01904 651 250



THURSDAY

March 15

Wild Beasts,
Princess
Pavilion,
Falmouth



ABERDEEN

ZManyDJs The Priory 01224 625555

BELFAST

The Beat Limelight 028 9032 5942

Gretchen Peters Erngle Inn

028 9064 1410

Sound Of Guns Queens University

028 9097 3106

BIRMINGHAM

The Deceiver/The Establishment/

The Dawn Of Olympus O2 Academy 3

0870 477 2000

Deceiver Symphony Hall 0121 780 3333

Lloyd HMV Institute 0844 248 5037

Rising Struggle The Ballroom

0121 448 0797

The Wild Mercury Sound Actress &

Bishop 0121 236 7426

BRIGHTON

Xlu Xlu/Nick Hudson Sticky Mike's

Frog Bar 01273 749 465

BRISTOL

Alice Gold Louisiana 0117 926 5978

Dirty Old Town Mr Wolf's

0117 927 3221

Ekoplekz/Bug Brand/Ossia Croft

(Front Bar) 0117 987 4144

Inspirat Carpets/Deadbeat Echoes

Thekla 08713 100000

Nanci Griffith Colston Hall

0117 922 3683

Nero O2 Academy 0870 477 2000

Walter Trout The Tunnels

0117 929 9008

Wires/The Greasy Silks/Twin Falls

Fleece 0117 945 0996

CARDIFF

Bass Clef Buffalo Bar 02920 310312

Gecko/Under The Driftwood Tree/

Hullabaloo Buffalo Bar 02920 310312

Kysheira/Henry's Funeral Shoe/

Colours Of One Clwb Ifor Bach

029 2023 2199

Valn Bogiez 029 2034 1463

We're No Heroes 10 Feet Tall

02920 228883

CHELMSFORD

SJ Denney/Little Donkey Dusty

Rhodes/Yan Baker Hooga

01245 356 811

DERBY

Max Raptor/Hildamay Venue

01332 203545

Zico Chain The Vic Inn 01332 74 00 91

DUNDEE

InMe/Lost Alone Dexter's

01382 228894

Napoleon/Violent Relapse/

Darkened Place Beat Generator

01382 229226

EXETER

Joe Bloggers/14th/The Skills Cavern

Club 01392 495 370

FALMOUTH

Wild Beasts/Alt-J Princess Pavilion

01326 211222

GATESHEAD

The Last Transmission Three Tuns

0191 487 0666

GLASGOW

Graeme Clark King Tut's Wah Wah Hut

0141 221 5279

GLOUCESTER

The Selector Guildhall Arts Centre

01452 503050

HATFIELD

Coleman Brothers/Manteca The

Forum 0844 477 2000

LEEDS

The Chakras Cockpit 0113 244 3446

The Solicitors New Roscoe

0113 246 0778

LEICESTER

The City Calls/Kassidy Soundhouse

07830 425555

The Icarus Line Lock 42

Sean Taylor Musician 0116 251 0080

LIVERPOOL

Black Stone Cherry/Rival Sons O2

Academy 0870 477 2000

Suffocation/Cerebral Bore/

Cattle Decapitation O2 Academy 2

0870 477 2000

Toy Horses Eric's Club

LONDON

After Hours/Brand New Heavies

East Wintergarden 0207 418 2725

All American Rejects Garage

020 7607 1818

The Answer/The Union Electric

Ballroom 020 7485 9006

Anthrax/Diamond Plate O2

Academy Islington 0870 477 2000

The Chapman Family/Cold In

Berlin/The Naturals Bull & Gate

020 7485 5358

Dems/Night Symmetry Old Blue Last

020 7613 2478

Dirty Goods Arch Angel 020 7938 4137

Dog Is Dead/Another's Blood

Borderline 020 7734 5647

Ex-Libris Cargo 0207 749 7840

Folle Ordinaire/Voodoo Child

Bedroom Bar 020 7613 5637

Furyon/The Mercy House/Daken

Purple Turtle 020 7383 4976

John Wean Monto Water Rats

020 7837 4412

Kling Charles/Being There

Hippodrome 0208 5414411

Lynda Phoenix East Village

020 7739 5173

Magic Lantern Green Note

0871 230 1094

Marines The Bowery 020 7580 3057

The Miller Test/Comet Sands/The

Fixed Nambucca 020 7272 7366

Misty's Big Adventure Club Surya

020 7713 6262

Pati Yang The Shoreditch

020 7033 0085

The Peryls New Cross Inn

020 8692 1866

Phaeleh XOYO 020 7729 5959

Ria Ritchie Hoxton Hall 020 7739 5431

Rizzle Kicks O2 Shepherds Bush

Empire 0870 771 2000

The Special Ks Barfly 0870 907 0999

Submotion Orchestra Scala

020 7833 2022

The Vagaband Half Moon

020 7274 2733

Yearners/The Sea/The High Arts

Dublin Castle 020 7485 1773

3 Doors Down/Seether HMV

Hammersmith Apollo 0870 606 3400

The 404/Winterhours/Delve Buffalo

Bar 020 7359 6191

MANCHESTER

Brother & Bones Dry Bar

0161 236 5920

Diagrams Ruby Lounge 0161 834 1392

Florence + The Machine/The

Horrors/Spector Evening News Arena

0161 950 5000

Here & Now Band On The Wall

0161 832 6625

Kill It Kid Deaf Institute 0161 330 4019

Lubicon Lake Band/Idle Creep Jabez

Clegg 0161 272 8612

Missing Andy Moho Live

0161 834 8180

The Sexual Objects/Factory Star

Gullivers 0161 832 5899

Sinead O'Connor Cathedral

0161 832 1111

WU LYF HMV Ritz 0161 236 4355

NEWCASTLE

The Lonesome West Cluny

0191 230 4474

NORWICH

Cate Ferris Bicycle Shop

01603 625 777

Summer Camp Arts Centre

01603 660 352

NOTTINGHAM

ODS Rescue Rooms 0115 958 8484

Swoonit/In Hindsight/Liberation

Pact Rock City 08713 100000

OXFORD

Lazy Habits Cellar 01865 244 761

Room 94 O2 Academy 2

0870 477 2000

PLYMOUTH

Labrinth Oceana 0845 293 2864

PORTSMOUTH

Boots Electric Wedgewood Rooms

023 9286 3911

READ

The Last Carnival Face Bar

0118 956 8188

Pop Will Eat Itself Sub89

0871 230 1094

The Spikedrivers/Fran & Mike

McGillivray South Street Arts Centre

0118 960 6060

SHEFFIELD

The Coral (DJ set)/Sulk Leadmill

0114 221 2828

Ian Slegal Plug 0114 276 7093

Yashin/Jody Has A Hitlist/With

One Last Breath Corporation

0114 276 0262

SOUTHAMPTON

The Acacia Strain/TRC Joiners

023 8022 5612

SOUTHSEA

Altered Sky/Mldday Committee/

Hour Of The Outlaw Cellars

02392 826249

WOLVERHAMPTON

(Hed) PE Slade Room 0870 320 7000

YORK

Middleman Stereo 01904 612237

O'Hooley & Tidow Black Swan Inn

01904 686 911

FRIDAY

March 16

ABERDEEN

Fatherson/Duke/He Slept On 57 The

Tunnels 01224 211121

BATH

Charlie Amanda/Crash & The

Bandicoots/Lambhorn Green Park

Tavern 01225 400050

BIRMINGHAM

Bloom/Bonnylou/Farisle O2

Academy 3 0870 477 2000

James Bourne O2 Academy 2

0870 477 2000

Johnny Foreigner/We Are The

Physics Flapper 0121 236 2421

Shapes/The Blacklsters Rainbow

0121 772 8174

Spring Offensive The Ballroom

0121 448 0797

BRIGHTON

Gully/Ghost Of The Gully World's End

01273 692311

Lazy Habits/Largo Embargo/

Junk Funk Collective The Hope

01273 723 568

The Razorbacks Mesmerist

01273 328542

FRIDAY

March 16



◀ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 59

Sam Gray/The Pennies/The Rise
Dalston Roof Park 020 7275 0825
Snowboy/Healer Selecta Madame
Jojo's 020 7734 2473
Stooshe/P Money/Yasmin Plan B
08701 165421

Tacoma Narrows Bridge Disaster/
The Witches/Lions Are Smarter
Than I Am Roadtrip 020 7253 6787
Tankus The Henge/Perhaps
Contraption/Field Of Wolves Buffalo
Bar 020 7359 6191

Timber Timbre Assembly Hall
020 8577 6969

Whipping Boy Barfly 0870 907 0999
The Winter Olympics Power Lunches
Arts Cafe

Xlu Xlu Rich Mix 020 7613 7498

MANCHESTER
Daystar/Janice Graham Band/The
Sundowners FAC 251 0161 27 27 251
Hot Vestry Alter Ego 0161 236 9266
Julaba Kunda Band On The Wall
0161 832 6625

Matthew & The Atlas/The Civil Wars
Academy 3 0161 832 1111

Nero Academy 0161 832 1111

The Royal's/The Faux Pas/Tiny
Phillips Dry Bar 0161 236 5920

Sting O2 Apollo 0870 401 8000

Summer Camp Night And Day Cafe
0161 236 1822

Tall Firs Trof Fallowfield 0161 224 0467

NEWCASTLE

Bad For Lazarus Dog & Parrot
0191 261 6998

The Electric Stars Bar 38
0191 261 6463

Florence + The Machine/The
Horrors/Spector Metro Radio Arena
0870 707 8000

The Kill Black Bull 0191 414 2846

Martyr Defiled/Grader Tri Fans
0191 232 1619

The Sexual Objects/Milky
Wimpshake/Beauty Pageant Star
And Shadow Cinema 0191 2610066

(Hed) PE Legends 0191 232 0430

NORWICH

Leonard/Dead Red/Wicked Faith
Brickmakers 01603 441 118

NOTTINGHAM

Jonny Sweet/Sheeps Glee Club
0871 472 0400

McFly Royal Centre 0115 948 2525

Miss 600 Bodega Social Club
08713 100000

The Selector Rock City 08713 100000

Spiritualized Rescue Rooms
0115 958 8484

OXFORD

Grudge Bay/My Grey Horse/Jess Hall
Jericho Tavern 01865 311 775

POOL

Rat Race Mr Kyps 01202 748945

PORTSMOUTH

Bear Cavalry/Real Fur Registry
023 9288 2981

Killing Joke Pyramids 023 9235 8608

SALFORD

Michele Stodart Sacred Trinity
Church 0161 834 2041

SHEFFIELD

Sound Of Guns Leadmill
0114 221 2828

Vain/Stale & So/Ancara Corporation
0114 276 0262

Wild McBride The Hop 01142 781000

SOUTHAMPTON

Dog Is Dead Joiners 023 8022 5612

The Maccabees Guildhall
023 8063 2601

Room 94/Destine Unit 02380 225612

STOCKTON

The Watchers/Village Green KU Bar
07812 989537

STOKE ON TRENT

OK Corral Sugarmill 01782 214 991

Yashin Underground 01782 219944

SWANSEA

Max Raptor/Hildamay Sin City
01792654226

TORQUAY

Too Hot The Attic 01803 290 036

WINCHESTER

Mr Tom Railway Inn 01962 867795

WOLVERHAMPTON

Amon Amarth/Grand Magus Wulfrun
Hall 0870 320 7000

Pop Will Eat Itself Slade Room
0870 320 7000

YORK

Kassidy Fibbers 01904 651 250

Road To Horizon Stereo 01904 612237

Shot Down Stay Down The Duchess
01904 641 413



ABERDEEN

The Fire & I/The Wetflex/
Underclass The Tunnels 01224 211121

BATH

The Motorcity Daredevils Komedia
0845 293 8480

BEDFORD

Wet Nuns Esquires 01234 340120

BELFAST

The Distortion Project Lighthouse
028 9032 5942

Mojo Fury/InMe/LostAlone Spring
& Airbrake 028 9032 5968

2MarryDJs/The 2 Bears Queens
University 028 9097 3106

BIRMINGHAM

Cameron Pierre Drum 0121 333 2400

Follow The Fallen/Arcane Rage O2
Academy 3 0870 477 2000

Never The Last Breath/Kill Timers
Eddie's Rock Club 0121 643 2093

The Speech Project MAC
0121 440 3838

BRIGHTON

The Bad Billy Band Cobblers Thumb
01273 605 636

The Black Fields The Hope
01273 723 568

Mark Stanley Latest Music Bar
01273 687 171

Room 94 The Hydrant 01273 608 313

BRISTOL

Clement Marfo & The Frontline The
Cooler 0117 945 0999

The Dualers The Tunnels
0117 929 9008

Evacuees/Beasty Traps Croft (Main
Room) 0117 987 4144

Peyote Mr Wolf's 0117 927 3221

Riot:Noise Louisiana 0117 926 5978

The Strangers/The Popes/Mike
Marlin O2 Academy 0870 477 2000

Submotion Orchestra Fleece
0117 945 0996

CAMBRIDGE

The Chap Portland Arms
01223 357268

CARDIFF

Dog Is Dead/Another's Blood Arts
Institute 0871 230 1094

The Maccabees University
029 2023 0130

Mike TV 10 Feet Tall 02920 228883

Y Bandana/Swnam/Helyntion Jos
Y Ficar Clwb Ifor Bach 029 2023 2199

2 Rude The Globe 07738 983947

COVENTRY

Edu Imbernon Carey's Bar
07714 105091

DERBY

Merry Hell Flowerpot 01332 204955

Stuka Squadron O'd Bell 01332 343701

DUNDEE

Carousel Beat Generator
01382 229226

Fatherson Doghouse 01382 227080

EDINBURGH

Enter Shikari/Young Guns/Tek One
Corn Exchange 0131 443 0404

The Remnant Kings/The Merrylees
Sneaky Pete's 0131 225 1757

FALMOUTH

Panda Su Miss Peapod's
0871 230 1094

GLASGOW

Jim Stapley King Tut's Wah Wah Hut
0141 221 5279

Stiff Little Fingers Barrowlands
0141 552 4601

Sting SECC 0141 248 3000

SATURDAY

March 17

March 11



Summer Camp Captain's Rest
0141 331 2722

Toddla T The Arches 0141 566 1000

Tygers Of Pan Tang Ivory Blacks
0141 221 7871

Watershed/Skint & Demoralised
King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279

WU LYF SWG3 0141 357 7246

LEEDS

Codego Empire 01132 420868

Diagrams Brudenell Social Club
0113 243 5866

McFly O2 Academy 0870 477 2000

Paint The Sky Cockpit 0113 244 3446

Phillip Jeays/Pog Packhorse
0113 245 3980

Sound Of Guns Cockpit 0113 244 3446

LEICESTER

Counteraction Band Donkey
0116 270 5042

Mark Morriss Soundhouse
07830 425555

You Me At Six/Kids In Glass Houses
O2 Academy 0870 477 2000

LIVERPOOL

The Frank & Walters/The Dead
School Zanzibar 0151 707 0633

Guardians Head Of Steam
0151 707 9559

Janice Graham Band/Sulk/The
Sundowners Magnet 0151 709 6969

Trail's/Aeroplane Flies High/
Being Jo Francis Shipping Forecas
0151 709 6901

Wild Beasts/Alt-J O2 Academy
0870 477 2000

LONDON

The Acacia Strain/Brutality Will
Prevall Underworld 020 7482 1932

Bermondsey Joy Riders New Cross
inn 020 8692 1866

The Blueberries Boston Arms
020 7272 8153

Charli Taft Da'ston Roof Park
020 7275 0825

Crazy P KOKO 020 7388 3222

Damien Dempsey HMV Forum
020 7344 0044

Do They Collide Barfly
0870 907 0999

DJ Yoda XOYO 020 7729 5959

Florence Joelle's Kiss Of Fire The
Lexington 020 7837 5387

Foreign Legion Club Surya
020 7713 6262

Jaguar Skills Scala 020 7833 2022

James Bourne O2 Academy 2
Islington 0870 477 2000

Joan Baez Royal Festival Hall
020 7960 4242

JJ Grey & Mofro/Marcus Bonfanti
Borderline 020 7734 5547

Kim Larsen O2 Shepherds Bush
Empire 0870 771 2000

Lloyd Life Purple Turtle 020 7383 4976

My Panda Shall Fly Shackwell Arms
020 7249 0810

Native Tongue 93 Feet East
020 7247 6095

Occasional Rascuedos/Abandon/
Sonner Hope & Anchor 020 7354 1312

Oh No! Garage (Upstairs)
0871 230 1094

Peace/Swim Deep/Wives Old Blue
Last 020 7613 2478

Pink Crudge Caravan/Reign/World
Of Ugly Dublin Castle 020 7485 1773

Rise To Remain O2 Academy Islington
0870 477 2000

The Selector 229 Club 020 7631 8310

Shapes/The Blacklisters Wilmington
Arms 020 7837 1384

Tall Firs Garage 020 7607 1818

MANCHESTER

John Head Ruby Lounge 0161 834 1392

John Herrington/Glass Ankle Deaf
Institute 0161 330 4019

Kids With Machetes Dry Bar
0161 236 5920

The Rainband Academy 2
0161 832 1111

Rook & The Ravens Night And Day
Cafe 0161 236 1822

Yashin/Jody Has A Hitlist/With One
Last Breath Academy 0161 832 1111

(Hed) PE Moho Live 0161 834 8180

MIDDLESBROUGH

Spector Emp're 01642 253553

NEWCASTLE

Peter J Taylor Star And Shadow
Cinema 0191 2610066

UFO O2 Academy 0870 477 2000

NORWICH

Mastema Brickmakers 01603 441 118

Meltdown/Metal Lust Waterfront
01603 632 717

NOTTINGHAM

Lazy Habits Bodega Social Club
08713 100000

The Morning After Rock City
08713 100000

Seven Little Sisters/The Band From
County Hell/Greenman Rising
Rescue Rooms 0115 958 8484

OXFORD

Killing Joke/The Icarus Line O2
Academy 0870 477 2000

Shackwell Row St Barnabas Church
0186 555 7530

PLYMOUTH

Suffocation/Cerebral Bore/
Cattle Decapitation White Rabbit
01752 227522

PORTSMOUTH

Spiritualized Wedgewood Rooms
023 9286 3911

PRESTON

Tinchy Stryder 53 Degrees
01772 893 000

READING

Bridges/Violet Class/Adam & Elvis
Rising Sun Arts Centre 0118 986 6788

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SUNDAY

March 18

MONDAY

March 19

TUESDAY

March 20

BATH
The Blood Choir/Port Erin Moles
01225 404445

BELFAST
Brassroots Empire 028 9024 9276

BIRMINGHAM
The Milk Rainbow 0121 772 8174
Nero HMV Institute 0844 248 5037
Yashin/Jody Has A Hitlist 02
Academy 2 0870 477 2000

BRIGHTON
Brother & Bones/Early Ghost/
Royal Blood The Hope 01273 723 568
The Dead Victorians Marlborough
Theatre 01273 570028
Mark Wynn Prince Albert
01273 730 499
The Wynd Latest Music Bar
01273 687 171
(Hed) PE The Haunt 01273 770 847

BRISTOL
Big Chief Weird Bird Mr Wolf's
0117 927 3221
Exhumed/Anaal NathraKh Fleece
0117 945 0996
Kill It Kid Louisiana 0117 926 5978
Retrospecs/Apache/Electric
Midnight Croft (Main Room)
0117 987 4144

CARDIFF
Amon Amarth University
029 2023 0130
Bev Gough Buffalo Bar 02920 310312
Man Of The Hour The Full Moon

DUNDEE
Endeavour Doghouse 01382 227080
999 Beat Generator 01382 229226

EXETER
Jim Moray Phoenix 01392 667080

GATESHEAD
Dalaro/The Scared/Invoke Three
Tuns 0191 487 0666

GLASGOW
Caro Emerald 02 ABC 0870 903 3444
Diagrams King Tut's Wah Wah Hut
0141 221 5279
Easy, Tiger/Adam Stearns &
The Glass Animal 13th Note Cafe
0141 553 1638

HOVE
Lonely Tourist Town Hall
01273 709709

HULL
Enter Shikari University
01482 466264

LEEDS
The Civil Wars Metropolitan
University 0113 283 2600
David Rovics Brudenell Social Club
0113 243 5866
UFO 02 Academy 0870 477 2000

LEICE
The Deceiver Soundhouse
07830 425555
Malarky Donkey 0116 270 5042
White Hills Musician 0116 251 0080

LONDON
The Brownies/III Murray/The Dead
School Old Blue Last 020 7613 2478

Dark Star Orchestra Garage
020 7607 1818
Dog State/Screaming From The
Ashes Nambucca 020 7272 7366
The Handshake Affair/Napoleon/
Villa Rise Barfly 0870 907 0999
Holiday Club Shackwell Arms
020 7249 0810
The Icarus Line Windmill
020 8671 0700
Mike Gordon Borderline
020 7734 5547
Paul Weller Roundhouse
020 7482 7318
The Perennials/Sunshine
Drunk/Deliberate Dublin Castle
020 7485 1773
Rudegirl Reckless/The Drowning
Sorrows/The Obscurtiones New
Cross Inn 020 8692 1866
Valn Underworld 020 7482 1932
Wilson/Amor De Dias The Lexington
020 7837 5387
Wob/Boycey The Horse
020 7928 6277

MANCHESTER
Black Stone Cherry/Rival Sons
Academy 0161 832 1111
The Slow Show Deaf Institute
0161 330 4019

NEWCASTLE
The Proper Boys The Tyne
0191 265 2550
Stiff Little Fingers 02 Academy
0870 477 2000

NORWICH
Inspirall Carpets/Deadbeat Echoes
Waterfront 01603 632 717
Room 94/8th Time Luckie/Destine
Bridgmakers 01603 441 118

NOTTINGHAM
Chimaira/Revoker/Neosis Rescue
Rooms 0115 958 8484
You Me At Six/Mayday Parade/
Kids In Glass Houses Rock City
08713 100000

READING
Rise To Remain/Heaven Shall Burn
Sub89 0871 230 1094

SHEFFIELD
Speedway New Barrack Tavern
0114 234 9148

SOUTHAMPTON
Skindred/Bury Tomorrow/Deaf
Havana University 023 8069 5000

SOUTHSEA
Slim Chance Cellars 02392 826249

STOKE ON TRENT
McFly Victoria Hall 0870 9080888

SWANSEA
Manc Griffith Grand Theatre
01792 475715
The Selecter Garage 01792 475147

WOLVERHAMPTON
The Maccabees Civic Hall
01902 552121

YORK
Savage Messiah/Diamond Plate
The Duchess 01904 641 413



BATH
Mazad Bell 01225 460426

BIRMINGHAM
The Safety Fire/The James Cleaver
Quintet 02 Academy 3 0870 477 2000
Savage Messiah The Ballroom
0121 448 0797

BRISTOL
Ayre Point/Point To The Sun/Kids
With Guns Louisiana 0117 926 5978
Me, You & Thomas/Ataraxis
Vibration/Fly Like Fools Croft (Front
Bar) 0117 987 4144
Of Kings & Cardinals/Honour
Among Thieves/The Depths Fleece
0117 945 0996
Room 94/8th Time Luckie/Destine
Thekla 08713 100000
White Hills/Thought Forms/
Din Martin Croft (Main Room)
0117 987 4144

CAMBRIDGE
The Maccabees Corn Exchange
01223 357851
Max Raptor/Hildamay Portland
Arms 01223 357268
Spiro Junction 01223 511511

CARDIFF
Exhumed/Anaal NathraKh Bogiez
029 2034 1463

EDINBURGH
Rusko Cabaret Voltaire 0131 220 6176

EXETER
Cambion/Mad Hatter 2.0 Cavern
Club 01392 495 370

GLASGOW
Nero 02 ABC 0870 903 3444
The Wild Mercury Sound King Tut's
Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279

GUILDFORD
Sublime Folk Boileroom 01483 539 539

LONDON
Alasdair Roberts Rough Trade East
0207 392 7788
Cal Folger Day/Duke Hancock/
Custard Clucker Star Of Kings
020 7278 9708
The Civil Wars 02 Shepherds Bush
Empire 0870 771 2000
Flash Fiktion Barfly 0870 907 0999
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Rosie Bans/Sam Pickett Nambucca
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Dejectors Social 020 7636 4992
Spiritualized Hackney Empire
020 8985 2424
Sting HMV Hammersmith Apollo
0870 606 3400
Ziegler Co/The Dying Seconds Dublin
Castle 020 7485 1773

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Caro Emerald Bridgewater Hall
0161 907 9000
Enter Shikari/Young Guns/Tek One
02 Apollo 0870 401 8000

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Rusko University 0114 222 8777

WOLVERHAMPTON
Enter Shikari/Young Guns/Tek One
Civic Hall 01902 552121

YORK
Matt Andersen Fibbers 01904 651 250



THIS WEEK IN 1993

TWO COOL, BEAR NECESSITIES, NAUGHTY BUT NICE



NATURE'S LAW

The "rap equivalent of Nirvana" are holding court in San Francisco. Off the back of two years of success that began with the unstoppable 'OPP', Naughty By Nature talk about how their multi-million dollar enterprises are the only way to help the extended family community of their native New Jersey ghetto. "There's gonna be a Naughty generation from here to whenever," announces Treach. "Maybe there'll even be a town, Naughtyville! With all black-owned businesses!"

RIOT GOIN' ON

NME's Gina Morris is out on tour with Bikini Kill and Huggy Bear, in the midst of Riot Grrrl. "If you're looking for a manifesto, you won't find one," she writes. "The rule is, there are no rules. They do what they like, when they like. It's not a question of attitude, more one of naivety. Huggy Bear have no idea how 'the system' works, which in itself is refreshing, if a little chaotic. They are messing with fire; they've fuelled it and now it's raging out of their control."

THE GLIMMER TWINS

David Bowie: "Of all the tapes you've ever sent me, this is the only one that I knew instantly was great"

The Thin White Duke is talking of a compilation of Suede songs passed on to him by NME in an attempt to get him to agree to a meeting with his most hyped disciple, whose band's debut album is out very soon. Bowie has brought a photo from a session he did with William Burroughs in 1973, in which Burroughs is wearing the exact outfit that he is today. "Tell you what, I'll be Bill and you be me," he smiles at Anderson.

The conversation that ensues is a fascinating one, with topics veering from Moz (a cover of whose 'I Know It's Gonna Happen Someday' is on Bowie's album); to bisexuality (Bowie: "The fact that I wasn't going to be a spokesman for the gay community produced a lot of hostility"); to drugs (Brett: "Do you think you miss anything through not doing them?") Bowie: "No, not at all. 'Low', 'Heroes', 'Lodger' and 'Scary Monsters' were all drug free"); to club culture (Brett: "It's changed everything"); to Bowie explaining his infamous 1976 Nazi salute at Victoria Station.

"My interest in [Nazis] was that they supposedly came to England before the war to find the Holy Grail at Glastonbury, and this whole Arthurian thought was running through my mind. The idea that it was about putting Jews in concentration camps completely evaded my extraordinarily fucked-up nature at that particular time."

The conversation continues, so much so that it will spill into two more pages of next week's NME.

ALSO IN THE ISSUE THAT WEEK

• It's reported that Morrissey has turned down an offer to front a reformed Undertones.

• Singles of the week are Run-DMC's 'Down With The King', Lovecraft's 'Medicine' EP and the "typical, won't-sell-a-thing" The Fall's 'Why Are People Grudgeful?' EP

• Depeche Mode's 'Songs Of Faith And Devotion' is awarded eight out of 10, and described as "a very fine record indeed".

• There are features with the "angst ridden" The The, "Rolf Harris' pen pals" Wishplants and "socialist hip-hop crew" Marxman.

• Reviewed live: The Shamen, Aphex Twin, The Auteurs, Sonic Youth and Sultans Of Ping FC.

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

Compiled by Trevor Hungerford

Win!

A BAG OF NME SWAG



CLUES ACROSS

- 1+9A 'Days Of Speed'.....and now the breakneck years (4-9-3)
10 Mike Snow stepping through the sea..... (8-3)
11+15AManic Street Preachers splashing through the sea (5-5)
12 This is a give away - it's by Twin Atlantic (4)
13 Member of Manfred Mann who was a bit thuggish (4)
15 (See 11 across)
18 The Charlatans put the trip in question (3 4)
19 (See 34 down)
20 The equipment is with The Who's early producer and manager Lambert (3)
21+36A "I see the girls walk by dressed in their summer clothes/I have to turn my head until my darkness goes", 1966 (5-2-5)
23 The shocking power of The Cult on album (8)
25 Penetrates through to see US psychedelic folk rock duo (7)
28 Label stuck on for Hunter, US singer who had '50s Number One hit with 'Young Love' (3)
30 Ana Johnsson's 2004 hit recorded in the Felixstowe area (2-3)
32+29D Scottish band who went from 'Heroes To Zeros' (4-4)
35 '60s cockney musical Ain't Wot They Used T'Be, the title track was a Number One hit (5)
36 (See 21 across)
37 (See 3 down)

CLUES DOWN

- 1 "What's in fashion, what is seen on the front of a television screen/Take the money, leave the box, everybody's on", The Rezillos (3-2-3-4)
2 Perhaps where I'd want a member of The Kaiser Chiefs (6-5)
3+37A Plaything goes to pieces on hearing Hole number (4-5)
4 An album by XTC is a matchless item (7)
5 Plenty on watch for Ghosts (6-4)
6 Unable anymore to see Spiritualized doing this number (3-2-5)
7+27D "Everybody's dressing up, I'm dressing down", 2007 (4 5)
8 US alt.rock band with an appearance in The Sweeney (4)

- 14 WU LYF single is sort of crap (4)
16 Steely Dan hit '....., Don't Lose That Number' (5)
17 'Never Lose Your Sense Of Wonder' at band formed by ex-Libertines' John Hassall (4)
22 Rage Against The Machine swear on this number (7)
24 Corinne Bailey had 2006 hit with 'Put Your Records On' (3)
26 Punk band The Ruts got their break on album 'The ' (5)
27 (See 7 down)
29 (See 32 across)
30 American heavy metal band in a new aspect (1-1-1-1)
31 Member of '80s band The Passions spotted in the Fina garage (4)
33 She's concerned with 'Past Life Martyred Saints' (1-1-1)
34+19A Bluesman with 17 Grammy Awards (1-1-4)

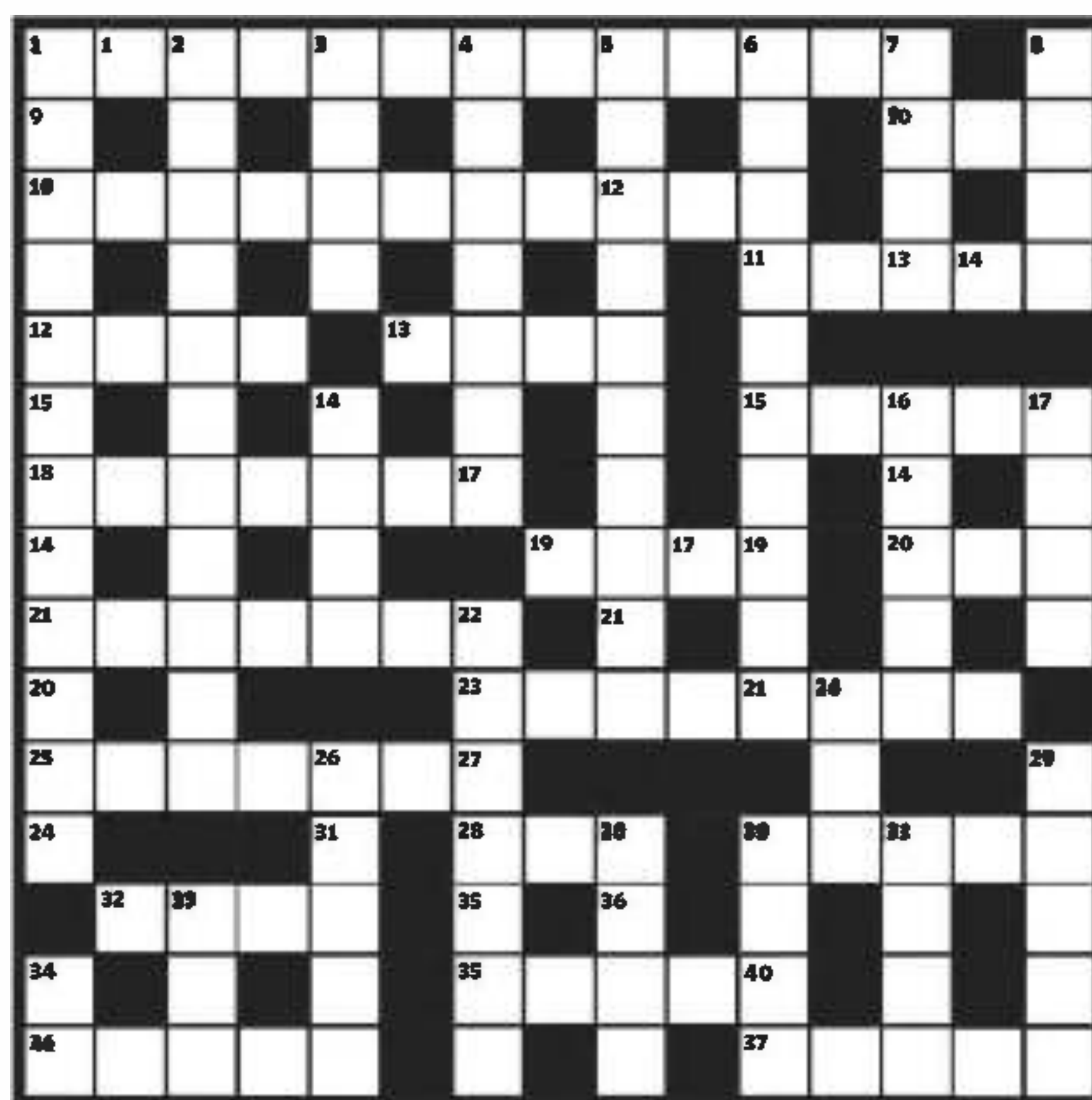
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FEBRUARY 18 ANSWERS

ANSWERS ACROSS
1+4A Black Treacle, 9 Undertow, 11 Monaco, 12 Cochise, 15+22D Sonic Flower Groove, 17 Syd Barrett, 21 Peng, 23 Shout, 24 Thoughts, 27 Yello, 29 Easterhouse, 32 EP, 33 Is It Me, 36 Dion, 37 Pink

ANSWERS DOWN
1 Blue Cassette, 2 Abducted, 3 Korgis, 5+8D Raw Power, 6+38A Arms Of Mary, 7 Lane, 10 Open, 14+13D Sweet Sour, 16 Cats, 18 Al Green, 20+19D The Rat, 21 Pure, 26 Stop, 27 Yes, 28 Lit, 30 Help, 31+25D Sink Or Swim, 34 I Am, 35 MOR



COLLECTORS' CORNER HAPPY MONDAYS

Call yourself a superfan? Here are the gems that no Happy Mondays obsessive should be without



FORTY FIVE EP (1987)

The band's first release was this three-track collection, produced by local DJ Mike Pickering, who also performed A&R duties for the Mondays' label, Factory. The song 'Oasis' was named after a clothes shop the band used to frequent, and a different version, produced by John Cale, appeared on their debut LP 'Squirrel And G-Man...' a couple of years later.

Need To Know: The EP is often incorrectly referred to as 'Delightful', after the lead track.

MADCHESTER RAVE ON EP (1987)

The release which gave the late '80s/early '90s 'Madchester' era its name, this was the band's big commercial breakthrough. It reached the UK Top 20 and saw the group perform the EP's lead track 'Hallelujah' on *Top Of The Pops* on the same night kindred spirits and fellow Mancunians The Stone Roses performed 'Fools Gold'.

Need To Know: An accompanying EP of club remixes was released shortly afterwards to great acclaim.

LIVE (1991)

Another important document from an era in which the band had become one of Britain's biggest, as evidenced by them first headlining the Pyramid Stage at Glastonbury in 1990, and then selling out this big stadium gig at Leeds United's Elland Road ground the following year. The sellist features all the big Mondays tunes, including a closing double whammy of 'Step On' and 'WFL'.

Need To Know: The support bands that day included The Farm, Stereo MCs and The La's.

THE BOYS ARE BACK IN TOWN (1991)

The comeback single from what was a truncated version of the classic line-up was a cover of the Thin Lizzy 1976 classic. It reached Number 24 on the UK charts, but gained lukewarm reviews, as did the subsequent tour. The nadir was reached when the group had an argument onstage at the 2000 Glastonbury Festival.

Need To Know: The band split again in 2001, but after various reunions over the last decade, the classic line-up is preparing to tour again in 2012.

FANMAIL

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

Edited by Lisa Wright



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The Big Issue

What everyone's talking about this week



LETTER OF THE WEEK

AWARD-WINNING AWARDS

From: Ingrid Allan
To: NME

Just watched your awards ceremony and I felt instantly compelled to write in and congratulate you on what a delight it was. It had already been built up as the musical event of the year (what with there being no Glastonbury), but you really outdid yourselves this time. My favourite moment? There were too many to list here, but Florence and The Horrors, Kasabian paying tribute to Davy Jones and The Vaccines doing 'If You Wanna' were all brilliant. Pulp were beyond fantastic too, especially Jarvis' unrivalled witticisms during the acceptance speech. And finally, despite my frequent disdain for Oasis, the atmosphere when every person in the room was heartily belting out 'Don't Look Back In Anger' was really something special. I don't know how you're going to top it.

NME's response...

Now, we're not ones to blow our own trumpet, but judging from the rather favourable barrage of letters we've received from people like Ingrid, I think we're allowed to concede that this year's awards were pretty good, right? From Kasabian kicking off proceedings with an almighty bang, to The Vaccines causing 10

times more excitement than bands 10 times their senior usually manage – and all that came elsewhere – this year's ceremony was a real celebration of great music right now. Of course, massive props must go to Pulp and Mr Gallagher – two of the most deserving award-winners – both for their influential past and

exciting present, but the biggest cheers surely need to go to the night's more youthful stars. 2012's award heroes were a showcase of brilliant talent from right across the board: The Horrors, Katy B, Florence, The Maccabees, Hurts – a whole bunch of artists who couldn't sound more different, but who all

proved they're at the absolute top of their own individual games. And that's surely what it's all about, isn't it? Well, that and Johnny Marr trying to bring down the government... – LW

Winners should email letters@nme.com to claim their limited-edition Sonic Editions print

DISCO 2012

From: Julia

To: NME

There are many reasons why I will always prefer the NME Awards to the Brit Awards. It's not just the type of music, but the atmosphere of the ceremony – almost like a festival where everyone seems completely relaxed. This year's highlights were Pulp's great performance of 'Mis-Shapes', which has made me seriously regret not seeing them live last year, Kasabian's tribute to Davy Jones, and Noel Gallagher winning the Godlike Genius Award because he is always a laugh for his speeches. Johnny Marr was the perfect person to hand him that award and the look of pride on his face left me to question, isn't it about time Mr Marr won his own Godlike Genius Award?

From: Melissa

To: NME

I'd like to say a huge congratulations to The Horrors on their well-deserved award for 'Skying'. I only truly discovered the band last year, and I instantly became drawn in by their whirlwind guitars and spiralling synth sounds. After the really out-there 'Strange House' and the atmospheric, progressive 'Primary Colours', 'Skying' – like the celebratory outro of the anthemic 'Still Life' – is their ultimate triumph yet. And after seeing the band play in Bristol in January, I believe that they are a band always willing to push the boundaries and experiment with sounds. So, well done and thank you to The Horrors! I wish them good luck with album number four.

From: NME

To: Julia, Melissa

Settling down to Fanmail usually means dusting off your shields and armour and compiling your best defensive retorts, but guys... you're making us blush. Julia – you should sell everything you own and hot-foot it down to every Pulp show you can get to this summer; if 'Mis-Shapes' on TV whet your whistle then imagine Jarvis doing the praying mantis thrust mere metres away. They weren't our Outstanding Contribution To Music winners for nowt. And Melissa, I couldn't agree with you more. The Horrors have blossomed like a shadowy, psychedelic flower over the last few years and 'Skying' is an album that, it's fair to say, none of us could have predicted; the fact that a record influenced by such obscure reference points has brought in a legion of new fans is just one reason why it topped a host of far more conventional competition. As for the Brits – can you imagine if we'd chopped off Noel's speech for a Blur set...? – LW

BROTHERLY LOVE

From: Chris

To: NME

I attended the ULU, Edinburgh Liquid Rooms and Leeds Metropolitan dates of an enthralling tour around our sacred isles by The Cribs recently. The Jarman brothers, in addition to new man David Jones from Nine Black Alps, provided several nights of exhilarating music across the tour, where both self-proclaimed 'old skool' fans and an audience experiencing them for the

first time rejoiced at their return. Whether playing 'Hey Scenesters!', 'I'm A Realist' or 'Cheat On Me', the audience shared the same love throughout. New songs, including the recent 'Chi-Town', the captivating 'Back To The Bolthole' and 'Anna', concerned with yearning after someone, felt welcome in every room The Cribs played. Regardless of theft, spending too much money, lack of sleep and exhaustion, I would experience all of that again to find myself in a room with friends enjoying The Cribs; I think every committed fan of music would do the same.

From: NME

To: Chris

Amen Chris. I only got down to the one date, which makes me positively lax in comparison, but it was the perfect old-meets-new summation of everything that makes the Jarmans great. It'd be easy to casually lump The Cribs in with other lad-friendly troupes. But your description and dedication are prime examples of why the Wakefield trio are so much more than that. There are few bands that could emerge more relevant than ever on their fifth record, and even fewer that could drop one of The Smiths from their



STALKER

From: Carl

To: NME

"Massively chuffed to meet Bez at the NME Awards. Weirdly, he told me I reminded him of Skrillex"

number and actually be embraced for doing so. And trust us - one spin of 'In The Belly Of The Brazen Bull' and you'll be following them across continents next time round... - LW

CAMDEN SCRAWL

From: Harry

To: NME

Tribes have got to be one of the most down-to-earth bands of recent years. They go out of their way to say thank you to their fans coming out of gigs, and even putting names up on a massive billboard in Camden. Now that's pretty awesome.

From: NME

To: Harry

Indeed, Harry. It's heartening to see a band truly appreciating what they've got and how they

There's an awful lot of awful music out there. And all that awful music needs someone to sing it, unfortunately. Here's our pick of the most rubbish pop stars ever to darken the charts.

THE CHEEKY GIRLS

The twins rose to, erm, fame through *Popstars: The Rivals* before releasing debut single 'Cheeky Song (Touch My Bum)'. Which went on to sell more than 1.2 million copies! Who bought those CDs? Are you pleased with yourself? Come on, look us in the eye. This is what you've created. Nobody's fault but your own.

CHICO

Do you know what time it is, Chico? Time to sod off.

Best of the responses...

Where is Lady Gaga on that list? She's the queen of the lamest pop acts. Cristóvão Oriowo

Web Slinging

The highlight of this week's NME.COM blogs

THE LAMEST POP ACTS OF ALL TIME

HATSUNE MIKU

So, exactly how does one go about creating a pop star, eh? One option is to just, well, make one. Hatsune Miku is a Japanese 3D hologram who's sold out concerts and has her 'own' record label. Yeah, as lame as the rest of the artists on this list are, at least they're actual people.

CARTOONS

Do you remember Aqua? Well, rack your brains and dig up Cartoons. This lot were a fellow Danish band who took Aqua's shtick and made it 200 per cent more annoying by covering tracks like 'Camptown Races' while wearing plastic wigs. Kind of creepy actually.

Read Ailbhe Malone's blog in full at NME.COM/blogs



Why on Earth aren't the duo of Dappy and Brian May on here? Nigel Leitch

Why are the cast of *Glee* always giving that super-creepy smile? Dylan David

You may as well have listed every act who got through round one of *The X Factor*. Zac Mahrouche

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achieved it. Saying that though, they might not be sweet and humble boys for long. Given the fact that the last time we saw them they were careering around America feeling up Scarlett Johansson, I reckon it's only a matter of time before frontman Johnny begins to ape his namesake and fellow Camden-dweller Borrell, meaning white jeans, dodgy be-hatted bandmates and Jesus complexes are surely around the corner - LW

TURNER CORNER

From: Harisa

To: NME

Really wish Alex Turner would stop pouting in the new 'R U Mine?' video and stop wearing sunglasses indoors, please.

From: NME

To: Harisa

Remember Turner circa 'Whatever People Say I Am...' with the polo shirts

and £5 haircut? Or the Chung era where he looked like... well, Alexa Chung? No-one wants to see that again. As far as I'm concerned, '50s quiffs and James Dean attire help me focus on Alex, I mean the music, that little bit better, yeah? - LW

POP GOES THE FESTIVALS

From: John

To: NME

When I found out the official line-up for T In The Park 2012, I felt mixed emotions. It was fantastic to hear that bands and artists such as The Stone Roses, Noel Gallagher, Kasabian, The Vaccines and Pete Doherty, to name but a few, were playing. However, artists such as Dappy, Nicki Minaj and Jessie J should not be allowed anywhere near TITP. To have someone like Dappy performing alongside musical gods like

Noel Gallagher, Ian Brown, John Squire, Pete Doherty, Tom Meighan and Serge Pizzorno is ridiculous. TITP is a rock festival, not a pop festival, and I fear that over the coming years, rock festivals like TITP and Glastonbury will start to turn more and more into pop festivals.

From: NME

To: John

We can kind of see your point John, but we're gonna have to disagree on this one. True, it'd be a sad - nay catastrophic - day if Glastonbury ended up with a Murs/ Sheeran/ Ke\$ha headline bill, but a few random splashes of colour in the line-up is what makes a festival brilliant. When you're wandering around with a bottle of whisky shoved down your wellies in the blaring sun, imagine how fun it'll be to see Nicki Minaj bowling about like a space-age Harajuku girl.

A damn sight more than watching 10 bands that sound exactly like The Enemy, that's for sure. The Stone Roses, Kasabian, The Vaccines et al are sure to be some of this festival season's high points, but we bet in 30 years' time you'll be reminiscing about that time you all did a conga to Stooshe at three in the morning as well. Vive la différence! - LW



STALKER

From: Isobel

To: NME

"I met half of Metronomy at the NME Awards. They were super nice and they're also great live!"

DOES ROCK'N'ROLL KILL BRAINCELLS?

TESTING MUSICIANS' MEMORIES AFTER A LIFETIME OF ABUSE

This Week

BRENDAN BENSON

QUESTION 1

Were you bearded, stubbly or clean-shaven when *The Raconteurs* appeared on the front cover of NME in May 2006 (below)?

"I had a beard."
Correct, some sort of goatee. Do you live by any special beard-wearing criteria?
"Oh, you know. There aren't any special rules."

QUESTION 2

Why were you forced to cut short a solo gig at Oxford's Zodiac club in June 2005?
"In Oxford? Oh yeah. Power outage! I know it was raining a lot, so maybe it was something to do with the weather. I think I did some songs acoustically afterwards."
Correct. The rain set off the fire alarm

QUESTION 3

What are you eating on the sleeve of your second solo album, *Lapalco* (right)?
"Cereal, but do you want to know specifically?"
This is a tough quiz, Brendan
"Shredded Wheat."
Correct

QUESTION 4

Name three other acts who performed on *Later...* With Jools Holland when you appeared solo in October 2005.
"Um... Burt Bacharach. Oh, shit, what are they called? They do dance music..."
I have half a point. Burt Bacharach, Editors, Goldfrapp, Jamie Lidell, Corinne Bailey Rae and Rufus Wainwright
"That's it. Goldfrapp. Fuck!"



Alison Goldfrapp never washed whites and reds together again

QUESTION 5

Which *Raconteurs* song can you play in *Guitar Hero 5* and also sing in *SingStar Pop* (right)?
"Steady As She Goes?"
Correct. Have the royalties flooded in?
"That's a good question. I haven't seen a statement in a while."



QUESTION 6

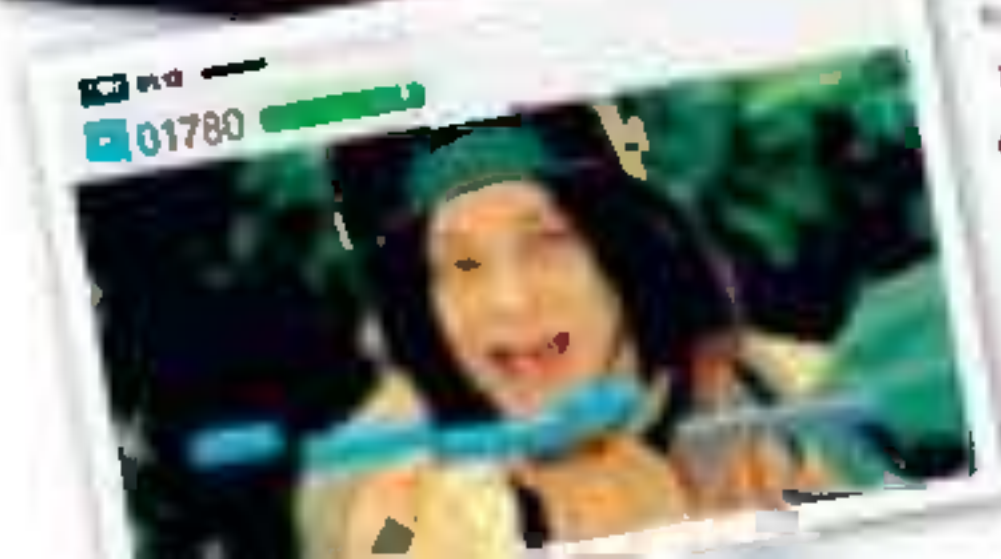
The *Raconteurs* are called *The Saboteurs* in Australia because there's already an Australian band called *The Raconteurs*. What kind of music do they play?
"Jazz."
Correct. Are you a fan?
"Ha! I've never heard them. I'm not very curious."



QUESTION 7

The White Stripes covered your song 'Good To Me' for the B-side of 'Seven Nation Army' (left). What is Jack holding on the front cover?
"Oh no..."

It's something quite British
"Um..."
Wrong. A cricket bat. Have you ever played cricket with Jack?



"No, I have not! That would be quite a feat to behold."

QUESTION 8

Why was Jack branded a hero at a *Raconteurs* gig at the Uptown Theater, Kansas City in April 2008?
"Kansas? Wow. I have no idea."
Wrong. He rescued a fainting female fan halfway through the set
"Oh, OK. I think I remember that."

QUESTION 9

What happens in the iPod Touch advert that uses your solo track 'What I'm Looking For'?
"Ah, man. These are getting harder. Is it a person scrolling through the iTunes Store and maybe buying something?"
Correct. Basically, it's a pair of hands fiddling with an iPod Touch. Were you pleased to be chosen?
"I was glad, of course, because that's a big slot to have."
Did you get a free iPod Touch?
"No! Apple are the only company who don't give away the product."



QUESTION 10

How many burly policemen burst into your gig in Berlin's Mudd Club in October 2005 to tell you off for playing too loud?
"Oh, that's unfair. I'm going to guess six."
Correct. Seems mad!
"I think it was a noise ordinance thing, which seemed weird because we were in a concert venue. Apparently we were playing too loud for the neighbours. They asked us to turn it down rather than just turn it off, which seemed retarded."

Total Score
7.5/10

"That's great. Man, I thought I was going to fail miserably. I'm proud of myself!"

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

Coming Next Week

**100 DAYS 'TIL
HEATON PARK**
WELLER, COXON, NOEL
& MORE GET EXCITED ABOUT
THE ROSES' RETURN

**PURE LOVE
ALBUM UPDATE**
FRANK CARTER GOES
NUTS IN THE STUDIO

OUT
WEDNESDAY
MARCH
21

JACK IS BACK!

Exclusive first big solo interview, direct from Nashville

**"EVERYTHING I
MADE WAS SHIT!"**
THE REAL REASON
SANTIGOLD HAS
BEEN GONE SO LONG

**LIAM? MORRISSEY?
LENNON? WINEHOUSE?**
VOTING FOR NME'S ULTIMATE
ICON STARTS NEXT WEEK

WURLIT

ENTER SHIKARI



THE ALBUM 'A FLASH FLOOD OF COLOUR' OUT NOW



"TIGHTER, BRIGHTER & MORE FOCUSED THAN EVER.
ENTER SHIKARI REMAIN FEARLESS &
UNCOMPROMISING LEADERS IN A FIELD OF ONE."

ROCK SOUND - 9/10

"THIS RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE COULD WELL BE THE
FOUR-PIECE'S DEFINING STATEMENT."

NME - 8/10

"A MULTI-LAYERED & MULTI-FACETED SUCCESS...
THIS ALBUM IS A RIOT."

KERRANG! - KKKK

"STREETS AHEAD OF THE COMPETITION.
ANGRY, INNOVATIVE, AND AHEAD OF THE CURVE."

Q - ★★★★★

"ONE OF BRITAIN'S BEST LIVE BANDS DELIVERS AN
INDISPENSABLE ALBUM."

FRONT MAGAZINE - ★★★★★

"...FINALLY COMPLETING THEIR TRANSITION FROM GROWLY KIDS
TO A RIGHTEOUS & RIOT-INDUCING COMBO.
DISENCHANTMENT SHOULD ALWAYS BE THIS SPELLBINDING."

THE FLY - ★★★★★

A FLASH FLOOD OF COLOUR TOUR. MARCH 2012

+ **YOUNG GUNS** + **TEKONE**

SAT	17	EDINBURGH - CORN EXCHANGE
SUN	18	HULL - UNITED CITY
MON	19	MANCHESTER - O2 APOLLO
TUE	20	WOLVERHAMPTON - CIVIC HALL
THU	22	PLYMOUTH - PAVILIONS
FRI	23	LONDON - HMV HAMMERSMITH APOLLO



Ambush
Reality