Wu-Tang Clan
Bombay Bicycle Club
Gary Numan

Lou Reec 1942-2013

His <u>greatest</u> ever interview in full

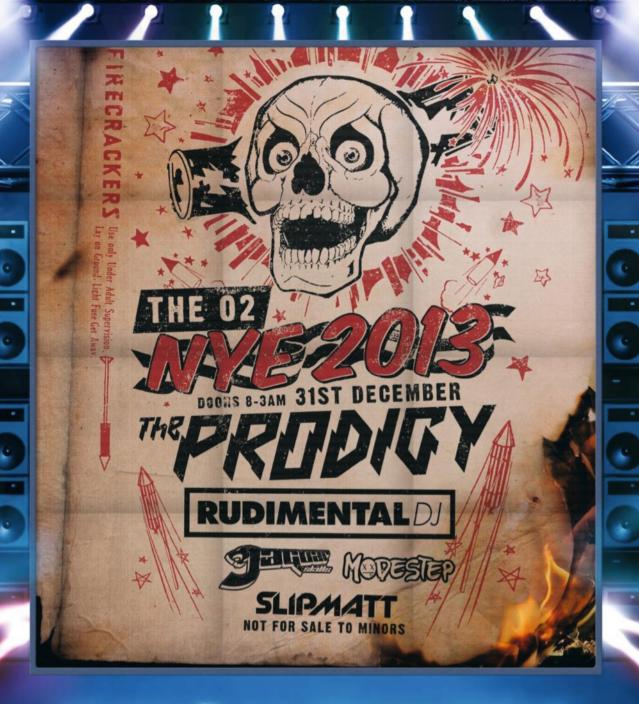
> Lester Bangs March 1975

His <u>last</u> ever interview in full

™→ Mark Beaumont September 2013



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- ANATOMY OF AN ALBUM Wu-Tang Clan - 'Enter The Wu-Tang (36 Chambers)'
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Lou Reed: March 1975

From the NME archive: legendary critic Lester Bangs' definitive interview in full, with brand new annotations

Lou Reed: September 2013

As part of his last ever interview session, Lou Reed talks Mark Beaumont through some of his life's key moments

MGMT

Phil Hebblethwaite meets the psychedelic pranksters who turn difficult and oblique into an art form

Connan Mockasin

Devon Maloney tunes in to Connan Mockasin's far-out broadcasts from psych-pop's outer limits

THIS WEEK

VE ASK...



ARE CIRCA WAVES THE

NEW ARCTIC MONKEYS?

Matt Wilkinson heads to Birmingham to find out

PANIC ATTACKS AND





Courtney Barnett's album lives up to the hype

WHAT DOES **EDUCATION**

LOOK LIKE, SONIC

YOUTH-STYLE?

It involves guitars and bungee cords

**SHAMELESS PLUG!!!

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CONTRIBUTORS



Mick Rock Photographer The photo legend shot this week's cover in 1974.

"Lou went blond in '74. What a buzz! I kept saving how much he looked like Marlon Brando's 'good Nazi' in the movie The Young Lions. He loved it."



Kevin EG Perry Writer Kevin reviewed Mac DeMarco in London and

saw more than he bargained for. "I've seen Mac play all over the world, but tonight he was at his hilarious, brilliant, lip-smacking best."



Devon Maloney Writer

> Devon found psychonaut Connan Mockasin ever so

approachable. "Few things are more charming than having a conversation with a musician about how important his parents are to him."

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SOUNDING OFF WHAT'S ON YOUR

Answering you this week: Barry Nicolson



WINS MONSTER' HEADPHONES!

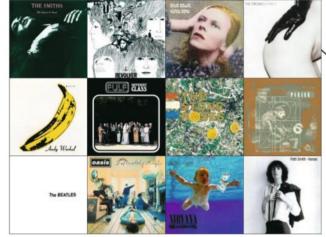
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I'm sure this isn't the first or last letter on the subject, but here are the the Top 10 Albums Not Included In NME's 500 Greatest Albums of All Time [a big old list of albums that didn't make the cut follows - BN]. Not only are these LPs absent from your ostensibly exhaustive list, but the artists are unrepresented as well. Perhaps

by culling a few records burdened with obvious filler ('Off The Wall', 'Holland', etc), some over-represented artists (REM, The Smiths, etc) and outright mistakes ('Reign In Blood', 'The College Dropout', etc etc) NME could make room for my selections and publish a corrected version of its provocative list.

Aaron Rice, Lyminge, Kent

Barry Nicolson: Uh-oh, it's the old list-feature-causesletters-page-controversy shocker. As someone who had a hand in the voting, even I don't agree with much of it - are there really 193 albums in the history of



- but then, that's sort of the point, isn't it? By polling the opinions of more than 80 NME writers, past and present, the list represents a democratic, mathematical consensus, rather than the whims of individuals. I'll let you in on a secret, too: a good list isn't meant to be agreed with. It's meant to provoke debate and discussion - something this one has certainly done - and in that spirit, let me just say that your dismissal of 'Reign In Blood' as an "outright mistake" is indisputably, incontestably, unquestionably and empirically WRONG.

recorded sound better than 'Appetite for Destruction'?

SYMPATHY FOR

THE 1975

8

I know you guys like indie bands [Good spot, Sherlock - BN], so why haven't The 1975 received much attention from NME? As the band I believe will bring indie rock back into the mainstream, like Arctic Monkeys once did, they should surely be getting reviews and blogs about them all the time. I just am hoping they make it big, as I think they are the best band since Arctic Monkeys and deserve popularity. With your help, maybe they would get more recognition, so I hope you feature them more often in the future. Chris Mills, via email

BN: I can only speak for myself here, Chris, but quite aside from the fact that The 1975 are already harrowingly popular, they are also, I'm definitely not sorry to say, utter shite: hairdresser indie for people who don't actually like

indie (your good self excluded, I'm sure). That may or may not have something to do with it.

VINYL: DEAD BY CHRISTMAS?

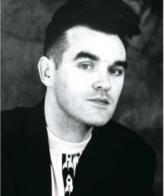
Are records here to

stay? At the moment,

small independent record stores are popping up all over the place, but will it last, or will it be over before you can say "Alex Turner's quiff"? I would love to purchase a record player - they look classy and are the height of hipster fashion - but will it be out of date by Christmas? I don't want to be spending money on records only to find out within months bands won't be releasing their work on vinyl any more. Is it worth it?

BN: Ellie, vinyl records have been around, in some form or other, since 1888. Among the many, many, many

Ellie Murphy, via email



formats they've outlived are 8-tracks, cassette tapes, MiniDiscs and - soon enough - CDs. So no, they won't be out of date by Christmas. But for heaven's sake, if you're thinking of buying a record player, do so because you appreciate the quality of the sound, because of the heft and feel of the records you'll play on it, because you crave some sort of physical contact with music that goes beyond the pressing of a button, or because

Jack White will think you a cretin if you don't - any old reason, really, other than it being "the height of hipster fashion". That just makes you sound like a tool.

MORRISSEY: CHARMING OR CHARMLESS?

I am writing in regard to the Morrissey [pictured] autobiography. I first discovered The Smiths in 1993. Dropping the needle onto 'The Queen Is Dead' for the first time, I knew I'd experienced the emotions that a previous generation had when they heard The Beatles. Since then, I've longed for Morrissey to release a true account of his life. Now that he has, I have to admit, not only does the book deliver, but it cements my opinion that sometimes musicians have to die to become iconic. Morrissey is the exception to the rule. Sye Sanders, via email

BN: I should point out that I've yet to read Morrissey's EMAIL letters@nme.com TWITTER @nme

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book - I bought a copy for my girlfriend on the day of publication, but she won't let me peruse it on the toilet, where I do all my best thinking. That said, I've read so many 'Five things we learned from...', 'Ten revelations about...' and 'Who said it - Morrissey or Sir Alex Ferguson?' blogs over the last couple of weeks that I hardly feel the need to any more, particularly given that his time in The Smiths - surely the main point of interest for anyone even thinking about picking up the book - amounts to just 70 pages or so. Morrissey is a fascinating and important figure in his own right, but that figure seems a little disappointing to me. The autobiography I really want to read, the one that might actually shed some light on the band and how they broke up, is Johnny Marr's. Get on it. Johnny.



Me and my friend Courtney met MGMT in Manchester, I was so nervous I mimicked what Andrew said in his accent. Embarrassing. I then tried making him do our accents too. Laura Law, Manchester



ON REPEAT ME 20



TRACK OF THE WEEK

1. Arctic Monkeys Walk On The Wild Side

Performing 'Walk On The Wild Side' as a tribute to Lou Reed might be the equivalent of doing 'Another One Bites The Dust' after Brian May meets his maker, but at least the Arctics just played the song at a recent Liverpool gig and spared us a mawkish eulogy. It's a classy version, broken up by Turner saying: "You can 'doo do doo' a lot louder than that, by the way." Too right.

Phil Hebblethwaite, writer

2. Arcade Fire & Neil Young l Dreamed A Neil Young Song

Some further so-good-it's-almost-irritating proof of just how painfully good Arcade Fire really are. The title of 'I Dreamed A Neil Young Song' says it all: it's an acoustic track reminiscent of one the world's finest songwriters that Win Butler wrote IN HIS SLEEP. Here it's performed alongside Young, at the Bridge School Benefit in California last week. Everyone else might as well just give up now.

Lisa Wright, writer

σ

3. DZ Deathrays Northern Lights

Australian pair Simon Ridley and Shane Parsons performed alchemy on last year's debut album 'Bloodstreams', turning the vulgar spit'n'sweat of hard-boozing debauchery into DIY punk-rock gold. But on the preview from their as yet untitled followup, they've left all that behind for a skyscrapersized daydream, all gorgeously shuddering guitars and wistful recollections of "Getting lost in future thoughts/ Never learn from what I'm taught".

Ben Hewitt, writer

4. Band Of Skulls Asleep At The Wheel

If runaway rude-rock bastard 'Asleep At The Wheel' is anything to go by, Band Of Skulls' third album is going to be beastlier than a midnight strip poker session with Satan himself. Like The Black Keys at their meanest, it stomps away before propelling itself into a riff of Black Sabbath standards that could send shivers down the spine of even the sturdiest goth. But remember: Band Of Skulls aren't actually pure evil, they just sound that way.

Leonie Cooper, writer

5. Eyedress Nature Trips

The 23-year-old Filipino producer Idris Vicuña introduces himself to the wider world with this intoxicating slice of neon and chrome pop-noir straight from the world of Chromatics. "I don't give a fuck, I just want to forget everything that's making me feel bad" coo the nihilistic lyrics, delivered in a haunted, Warpaint-style chant that pulls you in close enough to get stuck in the gloopy and hypnotic beat.

David Renshaw, News Reporter









6. Pixies Magdalena 318

It's difficult to know what to make of the Pixies' new stuff so far. On the one hand 'Indie Cindy' is a romping, stomping and vitriolic return to the glory days; on the other are the dull and downbeat tracks that made up the rest of 'EP1'. This spiky ballad suggests there may be life after Kim Deal, as Black Francis commands "Magdalena just between us woaaaah" like the Pixies of old.

Damian Jones, writer

7. Action Bronson **Practice**

The most loveable man in rap (the beard, the fact he used to be a chef, that cheeky chubby face) drops a teaser for his 'Blue Chips 2' mixtape that, by the time you read this, will be available to download. At the same time grand (the brass instruments in the background) and lazy (Bronson's easy flow about "blunts", "chicken parmigiana" and how he likes to "stand on the balcony naked"), 'Practice' is the sound of a man enjoying his hip-hop.

Tom Howard, Reviews

8. Planningtorock Welcome

Less a song than an intro, 'Welcome' is an enticing glimpse of an album we have to wait three months for, Jam Rostron sounds like she's approaching 'All Love's Legal' with the same disorientating sonics that made 2011's 'W' so intriguing, all pitched-down nongender-specific vocals and shimmering synths. With the words "Fall in love with whoever you want to", 'Welcome' invites you to get on board with the new Planningtorock manifesto.

Matthew Horton, writer

9. The National

There's no religion in The Hunger Games' universe, leaving the warring characters to strive for belief as their friends die around them. The stakes aren't so high in The National's world, but that search for reason forms the backbone of this year's 'Trouble Will Find Me' album, and this contribution to the 'THG: Catching Fire' soundtrack. 'Lean' is graceful as 'Pink Rabbits' and anxious as 'Anyone's Ghost', Matt Berninger clinging to comfort in the face of fatalism.

Laura Snapes, Features Editor

10. Wet You're The Best

"I still feel lonely when you hold me" sighs Wet's Kelly Zutrau on 'You're The Best'. It opens with super-sharp, super-crisp vocals played through a vocoder, and all the early signs point to the trio's latest offering becoming a resounding tearjerker in the style of Imogen Heap's 'Hide & Seek'. But then the jaunty guitars skip in to save the day, instantly brightening the track up with their infectious, tropical vibrancy.

Rhian Daly, Assistant Reviews Editor

JENN FIVE, JORDAN HUGHES, DAVID EDWARDS

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11. The Flaming Lips Elephant

More introverted than the widescreen Tame Impala original, this scuzz-bucket of bouncy brilliance takes Kevin Parker's ode to Marc Bolan on a more leftfield journey. Cue some whispered vocals from Wayne Coyne – sounding like he's on something of a downer – and a cheapass guitar line substituting all those heavy synths. Parker turning up on drums (his best instrument) gives the track the cohesion it needs.

Matt Wilkinson, New Music Editor

12. Blood OrangeYou're Not Good Enough

With pitch-bent keys, slap bass, disco-jangle guitars and vocals that begin each line with a throaty grumble, this track from new album 'Cupid Deluxe' is so Prince-like you suspect Dev Hynes may have invested in a lavish purple coat and trademarked a squiggle for future naming use. But being like Prince is rarely a bad thing, and 'You're Not Good Enough' proves Hynes the master of the hipster heartbreak anthem.

Dan Stubbs, News Editor

13. Bipolar Sunshine Drowning Butterflies

The title track from Adio Marchant's second EP as Bipolar Sunshine sees the former Kid British frontman reconcile his past with his present. It features the same soulful and trippy indie-pop sound as June's debut EP 'Aesthetics', plus the ska-tinged rhythms reminiscent of his old band. The result is swirling and soothing, like a collaboration between Santigold and William Orbit recorded just as the Valium's kicking in.

Nick Levine, writer

14. Jaako Eino Kalevi No End

Jaakko Eino Kalevi is a part-time tram driver from Helsinki. It's no surprise, then, that it's easy to imagine listening to 'No End' on a Nordic voyage through pine trees and under the northern lights. A pulsing bassline plus the sultry vocals of guest vocalist Suad Khalifa and a bunch of dreamy synths make for a soporific listen. But as the sax synths get crunchy and wild you realise there's more to Kalevi than dream pop.

Lucy Jones, Deputy Editor, NME.COM

15. The Wytches Wide At Midnight

The other side of their double A-side single 'Robe For Juda', 'Wide At Midnight' finds Brighton trio The Wytches on softer form. But only for a little while. "Maybe in the morning you can heal my eyesight/ Feline eyes wide at midnight", sings frontman Kristian Bell as the rest of his bandmates restrain their usual barrages, before the track escalates into the band's familiar guttural roars, psych riffs and battering drums.

Rhian Daly, Assistant Reviews Editor









16. Eminem Feat. Kendrick Lamar Love Game

Eminem and Kendrick Lamar are no strangers to the darker side of rap, and are most commonly found exorcising demons about difficult hood upbringings over stormy beats. So it's sort of weird that their first collaboration, taken from Slim Shady's upcoming 'Marshall Mathers LP 2', finds them swapping goofy rhymes about fellatio and L'Oreal over a breezy beat borrowed from '60s Brit jangler Wayne Fontana.

Al Horner, writer

17. Disclosure Apollo

The Lawrence Brothers released this big-room banger the day before the Mercury Prize was announced. It suggests they're having a good time, even though they didn't win. 'Apollo' is all wobble-board synths, slivers of '90s vocal house fluttering in and out, pew-pewing ray guns and a shuffling four-to-the-floor beat. It's a progression from 'Settle''s exuberant garage-house. The Greek god of music would approve.

Kate Hutchinson, writer

18. La FemmeJaded Future – Future Las

Songs have the power to transport you to another place and time. Within a few bars of the shuffling snare and slacker bassline of La Femme's 'Jaded Future – Future Las', a bonus track from the band's debut album 'Psycho Tropical Berlin', you'll be driving a convertible along a winding road on the French Riviera with the wind in your hair, the sun on your skin and an impossibly good-looking companion in the passenger seat.

Andy Welch, writer

19. Katy B I Like You

The teasing for Katy B's second album 'Little Red', due out next year, gets very tantalising indeed on this coquettish little number. So far we've heard moodier tracks like the dark, sleek '5am' and the emotional 'Crying For No Reason', but Katy hasn't forgotten the clubs. This collaboration with London producer George Fitzgerald is even more upfront than 'What Love Is Made Of', all hot housey bubble and Katy's coy purrs of "I like you a little bit...".

Emily Mackay, writer

20. Erol Alkan Bana

Erol Alkan's first album production credit was on Mystery Jets' 'Twenty One', which is about as bad a point of comparison for this track as it's possible to imagine. The first taste of Alkan's debut solo EP 'Illumination' is the opposite of Mystery Jets' charming indie: it's a fully fledged acid-melted raver. The only vocal is an insistent female voice telling us to do it "to the rhythm" like a lusty aerobics instructor. It does, as promised, bang.

Kevin EG Perry, Assistant Editor, NME.COM

neWeek

► EVERYTHING THAT MATTERS IN MUSIC ■ EDITED BY DAN STUBBS

Bright lights and revelations

Muse's ultra-HD concert film is released on November 7

ou're looking at a moment from Muse's effects-packed July 2013 show in Rome, recorded for the concert film *Live At Rome Olympic Stadium*, which is being released to UK cinemas on November 7. The techy band elected to record the performance in 4K, an ultra-HD format that flashes 8.8 million pixels past your eyes at 25 frames per second, a process that was only made possible by the invention of a post-production machine known as The Alchemist. "It captures an extraordinary amount of detail," says frontman Matt Bellamy.

With band's-eye views of the crowd, a trip backstage before the encore and cinematic surround-sound that perfectly captures the terrace-roar atmosphere, you might forget where you are and accidentally wee in a stranger's pocket. The film will be released on DVD and Blu-ray with an accompanying live CD on December 2

MARK BEAUMONT

NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS | 9 NOVEMBER 2013



training scheme Lee Ranaldo tortures a guitar in the name of education

n a chilly Monday night at Manhattan record store Other Music, Sonic Youth cofounder Lee Ranaldo hosted a free 'guitar clinic' teaching fans how to wrestle some incredible sounds from their instrument. The

> noise-rock fretboard legend's song 'Lecce Leaving', from new solo album 'Last Night On Earth', became the springboard for a 30-minute extreme technique

demonstration which saw Ranaldo stringing his guitar from the rafters by a 10ft bungee cord, flinging the instrument about the room and almost braining a couple of insufficiently wary crowd members as warped, underwatersounding warbles rumbled from his amp. Lee then took a drumstick to his guitar, thwacking the back of it and rubbing the neck to create a warm, fuzzy burr. After using a violin bow on the strings, he then held an iPhone - or a "sound engine", as he would have it - which played recordings of sounds such as fire engines and Italian church bells and old voicemails through the guitar pick-up. Ranaldo told NME that the performance workshop, which took place the day after Lou Reed's death, was partly motivated by the Velvet Underground frontman. "He's a huge inspiration and we knew each other a little bit," he said. "There were a lot of points tonight where I was thinking about 'Metal Machine Music'."

HOW WAS IT FOR YOU?



Austin Noel, ew York, 22 "I wasn't going to

New York.

October 28

come and then I had a weird feeling I needed to go here. I learned that I should experiment a lot more - I play guitar a little more straight up. I liked how he was hitting people on the head."



experimental music, and I've never seen something like that this crowded. It's cool to see someone as established as Lee Ranaldo - who's been doing it since the early 1980s - do it in front of a crowd."

Rabea Terbraak, loane, 23

We just stepped into the record store and saw it was happening! It was great. I know Sonic Youth, so it's a nice surprise. I liked it when he did the crazy things with the guitar and when he rang the bells.

MY LIFE IN A SUITCASE



Jagwar Ma



BOOK Musicophilia by Oliver Sacks

"When I was sick

in hospital earlier this year, I got given a stack of books. This is just little, short essays on music therapy and musical hallucinations. You can read it like a magazine."

BOXSET Seinfeld

"When we were on the Isle of Wight, I went to one of those



charity shops and for £1 I got the Seinfeld boxset. It was still shrink-wrapped and crisp. Absolute bargain. Everyone's into Seinfeld - it's so palatable!"

FILM The Fly

"At the same charity shop I got The Fly starring Jeff Goldblum.

Jack [Freeman,

bass] is convinced it's the greatest film he's ever seen but Gab [Winterfield, vocals] hated it. It's the shittest film, but it's also amazing."

GAME Throwing food

"We throw peanuts in each others' mouths, we throw chocolate bars through the sunroof. I'm the best at throwing; Gab is the best at catching things in his mouth."

HOME COMFORT **Headphones**

"I normally have three or four pairs on me for different environments. I have noisecancelling ones for planes, open-eared ones for

hotels and Urban Ears ones for looking cool on the street."

W TO BE A BETTER GUITARIST

Treat your guitar mean

Lee thinks you should think of your guitar as a tool, not a precious family heirloom. "You don't cry if you drop a hammer," Ranaldo told the crowd after defiantly slamming his on the floor. "It's got a lot of possibilities if you're not worried about damaging the damn thing."

Don't worry about technical proficiency

"I can't play Clapton riffs, so I set my own ground rules," Ranaldo said. "Once you do that, you're the best person at what you do - because you're the only person. I'm the best hanging guitar playing the world, probably!'

Don't play guitar for anyone but yourself

"Be fascinated about what you can make out the instrument - it's not about anybody's vision but yours," advised Ranaldo. And we suppose if anvone else likes it, that's just a bonus, right, Lee?

Don't just sling it over your neck

Ranaldo endorses taking the guitar off the human body to create a whole new kind of sound and sustain. And the option to swing your guitar at the crowd. "It's nice to bump up against people," Lee







True to its name, LEAF is more than just a four-day rave-up. Alongside shows from Major Lazer, William Orbit and a UK first in the shape of a DJ set from disco pioneer and recent Daft Punk collaborator Giorgio Moroder, it also has lectures and talks with the likes of Mute Records boss Daniel Miller, Arthur Baker in conversation with New Order, and a special audio-visual performance from artist Dinos Chapman. While it takes place across a number of venues, the 'hub' is Shoreditch Electric Light Station, a converted power station in the East End. "So few London events go on in unique spaces, but we walked in and got this incredible feeling," says Turner. "It's got beautiful architecture and amazing high ceilings. It's perfect for

these sorts of multimedia events."

Meanwhile, da Bank will be taking the stage himself for Rob da Bank Re-Scores *King Kong*Live, an "alternative soundtrack" to the 1933 monster movie. "It's always quite fun to hear all this cutting-edge electronic music as you watch

a giant ape rampage across New York." The event is also a good indication of LEAF's intellectual ambitions. "It's not just for the chinstrokers," laughs Rob. "A load of people have said they want to get involved next year. It's just an excuse for the electronic scene to come together for a weekend."

William Orbit – super-producer for Madonna, Blur and Britney – unveils an ambitious new live show and mysterious "contraption" at LEAF

You're unveiling an unnamed 'prototype' at LEAF. What is it?

"Well, I used to be in a band called Torch Song with my friend Rico [Conning]. He lives out in California now, he makes go-karts in the Mojave desert, and we go out there and build things together. We've built this mechanical... contraption. It's a bit Professor Brainstorm. You know, you can make a drum, get some sticks and bang it, or you can program a computer to play impossible drum breaks – but I like the idea of doing something in between. Doing something with programming that has a sort of ballistic sense. And I'm going to play a lot of stuff, too, which may surprise people. It's a bit of a juggling act."

This machine... it sounds a bit steampunk.

"Yes, a bit. But that word 'steampunk' has been co-opted, hasn't it? Victorian futurist. That's a better name."

And you want to take this contraption out on the road?

"I'm going to Vegas for New Year, and I'll take it from there. I love Vegas. I've been hanging out a bit with Britney – she's based there now. It's become the EDM capital of America. The people who go there don't want Tony Bennett any more. If the gig goes well, I'd like to get involved with someone who can help me build something bigger. But you know, I'm not going to become the Cirque du Soleil or anything!"

Radio heads

LEAF boasts a rare appearance from the BBC Radiophonic Workshop, early pioneers of electronic music

he café at the BBC's Maida Vale studios is buzzing with activity, a symphony orchestra cramming in a sandwich and a coffee before recording time. Nobody pays any special attention to the two avuncular gents sat at the large circular table in the corner, but between them, their influence on electronic music – and on the nightmares of men and women of a certain age - is almost incalculable.

They are Dick Mills and Peter Howell, veterans of the BBC Radiophonic Workshop, an experimental sound research unit that ran out of these cramped corridors between 1958 and 1998. Mills – now in his mid-seventies – joined in the Workshop's inaugural year, working as assistant to their most celebrated engineer, Delia Derbyshire. Together they recorded the original Doctor Who theme, a landmark in chilling electronic futurism. Howell joined in 1974, and made music for everything from sci-fi dramas

to modern art documentaries and schools' programmes, specialising in analogue synthesizers and vocoders.

As much technicians as musicians, the sounds that issued from the Radiophonic Workshop were unprecedented, built from hand-made oscillators and experimental tape manipulation. "We were actually making electronic sounds that nobody had ever heard before," says Howell. As is common for those ahead of their time. their efforts met with a mixed reception. "People didn't like it at all," laughs Mills. "What was that phrase? 'Sounds that nobody liked, for plays that nobody understood.' We had Disgusted Of Brighton writing to the Radio Times, saying it sounded 'like skeletons copulating on a corrugated iron roof'. But we were in a fortunate position, because it gave screenwriters the green light to start writing more and more fantastical things."

The sounds that came out of the Radiophonic Workshop are



now rightly regarded as the building blocks of modern electronic music. November will see reissues of two compilations of the group's work, 1968's 'BBC Radiophonic Music' and 1975's 'The Radiophonic Workshop'. And far from sitting back and enjoying retirement, a group of Workshop alumni have banded together to take their original compositions to the stage. In 2009, Mills and Howell teamed up with Roger Limb. Paddy Kingsland and Mark Ayres for a live show at the London Roundhouse. "It was fantastic fun, and we wanted to carry on after but it didn't work out," says Howell. "But we got back together for a show at this year's Festival

longest and most ambitious

to date. Their set, played in full surround sound, will see the group mixing up vintage Radiophonic equipment with some more state-of-the-art technology. "People expecting just the peculiar Radiophonic Workshop sounds will be in for a surprise," says Mills. "We've actually got a real analogue percussion player, and he brings it all to life."

take it out on the road. "We'll be adding new material as we go, so when we get to bigger venues we'll actually be able to do it properly," says Howell. And it turns out the Workshop are hiring, too. "We'd love to get a resident animator, so if NME can put a call out for that we'll

"Otherwise it'll be me behind a sheet with a candle, trying to recreate the *Tales Of The* Unexpected title sequence," adds Mills. "And I don't think I've got the body for it." ■ LOUIS PATTISON

No 6, and it felt like a second toe in the water."

Their show at this year's LEAF will be their

Next year, they plan to be very grateful."

THE MINI INTERVIEW



Ravenous rapper

You've released a cookbook, #MealTime. Who would be at your fantasy dinner party?

"I'd have the president of course, my main man Obama. I'd probably cook him fried hen. Broccoli for that vitamin D shit Some baked potatoes too, maybe some hors d'oeuvres."

That's it? It's a fantasy dinner party, 2 Chainz. You can host anyone, living or dead...

"Dead? Like, not living no more? I don't want to bring nobody dead to come eat with me, fam, no zombies or shit. It'd just be me, Obama and a couple females. Don't tell the First Lady."

When you're on the road, what home foods do you miss?

"Y'all don't have peanut butter jelly sandwiches here in the UK. That's fucked up. It's so easy. You get peanut butter on one piece of bread, jelly on the other, smash them together, you done. It takes four seconds. Blam."

ls 'Cruel Winter'. the new GOOD Music album with Kanye West and Pusha T, still happening?

"I don't know, fam. We just concentrating on what we do at the minute. Pusha just put his record out. Ye's on tour. My new LP, 'BOATS II: Me Time', came out recently. Right now I'm feeling hungry, man."

Hungry for success? Or for fried hen and roccoli?

Can't it be both?"

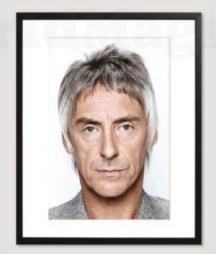
Tom Cowan

The Horrors

"When I first got into synthesizers and electronics, it wasn't through modern musicians, but from the early electronic pioneers - the Radiophonic Workshop guys, and groups like Silver Apples. They were so progressive, so ahead of the curve. Learning how they made these sounds - listening, with an idea of the techniques they're using - is so inspiring. Even if you don't understand it, you can glean concepts from it. And of course. this stuff was on the television. You always hear about people who watched Doctor Who as a kid and say the music freaked them out. But it didn't freak me out at all. I thought it was wonderful. We definitely had the Radiophonic Workshop in mind when it came to setting up The Horrors' studio. Having a workshop of some description was always was a fantasy. The idea of a

creative space where you can go do a working day and make music - it's so essential. so liberating."





















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A still from 'Marshal Dear' and (below) Savages (Gemma third

Savage visions

Savages unveil the story behind their new video

avages' new video for 'Marshal Dear' is a striking, monochrome animation with a concept dreamt up by the band's guitarist Gemma Thompson.

Inspired by Kurt Vonnegut's timetravelling anti-war novel Slaughterhouse-Five, it focuses on a woman in a munitions factory and the destruction wreaked by the bomb she made. Hungarian animator Gergely Wootsch's first music video captures the band's dark spirit, even if he admits to not making it all the way to the end of Slaughterhouse-Five."I wanted to allude to the dark black-and-white

archive footage of the Great War," he says. "After seeing Savages perform live it struck me just how much energy the band had. The song feels more





muted, but the more I listened to it the more I could feel that energy and power, and I tried communicating this via the visuals."

How did you come up with the concept?
Gemma Thompson: "Two or three years ago
I read Slaughterhouse-Five, and there's one
scene in particular that replayed in my

head. The main character,
Billy Pilgrim, becomes
unstuck in time and
loses his grip on
reality. There's a
war film playing
backwards on his TV,

so the bombs are being sucked out from the city, back into the bombers."

What's the link with the song?

"It's about Field Marshall Rommel, who was part of a group of people that tried to assassinate Hitler. He was caught, and was quietly given 15 minutes to take his own life. So it's a very dark song about these 15 minutes."

Have you ever had a go at animation yourself? "I touched on it when I was studying art, but I realised I didn't have the time to do it for 'Marshal Dear', so that's when I found Gergely. The whole scene is very beautifully written, so it was ready-made for the screen."

BEN HEWITT

NME COMPETITION

IED TO THE 90S

New NME compilation collects the best of the decade

Eagle-eyed readers studying *NME*'s recent list of the Top 500 Albums Of All Time will have spotted a welcome trend: a healthy smattering of classics from the likes of Oasis, Pulp, Blur and Suede gatecrashing the upper echelons of the chart, an acknowledgement that the '90s was a vintage decade for music. Perfect timing, then, for 'NME Presents The 90s': the first compilation album in a new partnership with Sony Music celebrating one of music's greatest eras. Due for release on November 11, and available to pre-order now, the three-CD collection will include the aforementioned Britpop heavyweights as well as hip-hop greats Wu-Tang Clan, Jay Z and dance innovators The Prodigy and Underworld. *NME* Editor Mike Williams says: "You only need to look at how influential these artists are in 2013 to understand why the '90s were such

a big deal for music, and such a big deal for NME. Every artist on this album still resonates today, every artist still matters."

WIN!

For your chance to win one of 10 copies, tweet your definitive '90s track to @NME with #nmepresentsthe90s by midnight on Friday, November 8. The winners will be announced next week.

RING IN THE NEW YEAR WITH WOLF ALICE



London group revealed as headliners for Club NME NYE Ball

Cancel any half-arsed plans you've cobbled together for December 31, because the headliner for the Club NME NYE Ball at Camden's KOKO venue has been announced: angsty rock-pop bunch Wolf Alice will have the honour of bringing 2013 to a close and heralding in the new year. Head to NME.COM/tickets to grab your tickets now.

How are you planning on bringing the New Year's Eve spirit to the gig?

Ellie Rowsell: "All the boys will be wearing their best party dresses. There'll be lots of champagne. And we'll do a good Wolf Alice cover of 'Auld Lang Syne', hopefully."

And some new material too?

"Definitely. We've got loads of new songs to show off."

And how are we all going to celebrate the striking of midnight?

"I'm sure there'll be a few tears. And maybe some vomit."





More noise at the back, please!

Chase And Status launch free school

for budding music industry tycoons

Status report

t's a Tuesday afternoon in the depths of Newham, east London, and a group of teenagers are gathered

around a conference table negotiating the budgets for their next single campaign. The single may be fictional, but they're wrangling with real-life marketing people with the kind of enthusiasm that makes Louis Walsh sound like a punctured whoopee cushion. Along the corridor, The X Factor's Lloyd Wade is guiding a circle of would-be Conor Maynards through a rendition of 'R U Crazy'. And in the middle of the chaos, Will Kennard, one-half of drum'n'bass stalwarts Chase And Status, is sat in front of a mixing desk, not a leather elbow patch in sight, imparting pop production secrets to wide-eved kids.

Very soon, these temporary classes will be a bricks-and-mortar reality - this is a taster day for Kennard's free school ELAM, or East London Arts & Music, which is due to open in September next year. The academy will offer 16 to 19-year-olds training in music performance,

business, with some of Kennard's big-name mates on hand to help out: Plan B, Kano and SB.TV's Jamal Edwards have already

For Kennard, who masterminded the project with the help of a team of experts – including former BRIT School principal Sir Nick Williams - this is a step back to familiar territory: he was a teacher at a music college before Chase And Status found chart success. "I was a bit

of a renegade teacher," he says. "The syllabus was completely redundant so I brought my own experiences into the classroom - it was the only way I could get them to engage. I got into trouble with the college for it but the kids enjoyed it." Even so, the results were not as successful. "As I followed a career into the music industry, none of those kids I taught came with me," he says. "I kept asking, why not? That's what we're trying to address here."

Kennard is not planning to give up the day job just yet, but he's been very much hands on with the project, from spending three months thrashing out the plan of action in his mum's attic to calling in favours to maximise the school's tight, state-funded budget. Free schools are currently a political hot potato. Introduced by the coalition government, there has been criticism that they're employing too many underqualified teachers - nearly one

> in 10, according to recent Labour figures. But outside staff are crucial to ELAM's success,

according to Ed Butcher, another former teacher who is part of the school's core team. "For schools like ours, where we're looking to show what it's like to work in the music industry, it would be madness not to get in those non-teachers who have experience," he says. At this point, Kennard comes swooping down the stairs: "There's a 15-year-old kid up there playing the Pirates

Of The Caribbean soundtrack on a piano, upside down," he says gleefully. "I think that sums up what we're about," says Butcher.

Kennard does, however, have a warning for any potential students seeing ELAM as next best thing to The X Factor: "There's a misconception that we're trying to promote a sort of Fame Academy, but ELAM isn't about how to be a pop star," he says. "Even being incredible on a mixing desk is not enough to get you a career in music - you need the professional expertise, too." It's a message that's struck a chord with some of the kids in

"IT'S NOT A SORT OF FAME ACADEMY"

Will Kennard, **Chase And Status**

attendance today. "Plan B is my mentor but, even though I love performing, my favourite part of today has been the business side, because you ain't gonna get no money if you don't know the right business," says Godwill, a 15-year-old singer from Stratford.

So what's in it for Will? Nothing but the chance to give a bit back - and to settle a score. "NME reviewed our 'No More Idols' album in 2011 and said we had come from the 'dustbin of humanity'," he says, creasing up with laughter. "We sent the writer a bouquet of lilies to say thanks." At the very least, his publicspirited work at ELAM should eradicate that idea for good. ■ KATE HUTCHINSON





BY **PHIL HEBBLETHWAITE**

The clandestine
methods of the
Mercury Prize judging
panel distracts
from its purpose –
debating British music

Last Wednesday, James Blake took this year's Mercury Prize home from London's Roundhouse, sparking the usual debate about whether the winner really was the album of the year. People would be wise to check

an FAQ published on the award's official site, in which the organisers say: "The main objectives of the Mercury Prize are to provide a snapshot of the year in music, to encourage debate and discussion about music, and to help introduce new albums from a variety of musical genres to a wider audience." Judging by the annual column inches, conversations and Twitter ding-dongs, the Prize largely achieves its aim. Whether you like Blake's

album or not, few could disagree it meets the criteria of the Prize and, despite getting to Number Eight when released on a major label in April, its sales could certainly have used a leg-up. Job done.

But the problem the Prize faces is that much of the debate and discussion isn't about music – it's about the secrecy that surrounds the judging process, from the secret judging panel to the clandestine discussion process and the unnamed long list. I recently spent a couple of weeks, along with another journalist, Alex Marshall, speaking to ex-judges, labels and past nominees to try and uncover the process for a *Vice* article. "It's a mystery to me even after doing it many times," one ex-judge told us. Another said: "[The organisers] think that a culture of secrecy around the Prize adds to its mystique. Which is bollocks. It just makes people irritated."

I actually think it makes good sense to keep the judges' names private. It prevents them from being lobbied by record companies, and besides, their names are revealed after the winner has been announced - this year, the list included Greg Cochrane, editor of NME. COM, Glastonbury organiser Emily Eavis and DJ Mary Anne Hobbs. For me, it's the rest of the process that needs to be opened up. If the organisers want to better satisfy their objective of encouraging "debate and discussion about music" they should release a list of the albums that have been entered, and the longlist of 25. Until they do, they'll forever be open to accusations of manipulating the lists for whatever reason – commercial, practical, to help out small acts, to maintain the image of the Prize and that's something that all but one of the ex-judges we spoke to were concerned about. This year, Biffy Clyro's Ben Johnson complained that the Prize seems to "bypass metal at every stage". If the stages were made public, he would know if that were the case.

In a statement, the Mercury organisers told us: "There is absolutely no basis for any suggestion that the selection of the shortlist and winner is based on anything other than the views, opinions, discussions and votes of the judging panel." And to be clear, we found no evidence that the organisers do fiddle with the lists. So help us out then, Mercury Prize, and be more transparent next year, because the secrecy is a massive distraction from your perfectly honourable purpose. The less you tell us, the more we want to know.

▶For more opinion and debate, head to NME.COM/blogs

LOST #5



Suicide Suicide: Alan Vega & Martin Rev (1980)

Chosen by James Murphy

"I've been listening to this album for 20 years. It's produced by Ric Ocasek from The Cars, and he made them a little more layered than on their debut. That monolithic first record was just so simple and beautiful. This one has an amazing use of professional synthesizers but still retains a lot of weirdness and toughness. It's kind of thumpy and wonky and it's not as scary in a certain way, and maybe scarier because of it. It's not the record that everyone thinks of when you think of Suicide but it's remarkable. Suicide have had a big influence on me."

► THE DETAILS

► RELEASE DATE May 1980
► LABEL Ze

▶BEST TRACKS Diamonds, Fur Coat, Champagne; Shadazz

WHERE TO FIND IT Though badly distributed at the time, it's now available as a reissue with bonus rehearsal tapes.

LISTEN ONLINE On Spotify



ack in the mid-'00s, Bombay Bicycle Club took their name from a chain of local curry takeaways. Eight years on, it looks prophetic - their as-yetuntitled fourth album is packed with Bollywood samples. Fans might see the new sound as a bit of a curveball, as the band are all too aware. "The songs seem like a brave step in a new direction," says singer Jack Steadman, sat in their cozy, living room-like studio in West London. "From our point of view, it's stuff that's been happening for almost a decade now - we're always changing." He's right, of course - the band's second LP was all acoustic, and Steadman's solo endeavours before and aside of the band are electronic - but even so, album four is a step into the unknown.

Putting the guitars in the background and samples and keys to the fore, the eclectic new sound came from Steadman's travels to Holland, Turkey and India, the latter alongside bassist Ed Nash while the rest of the band remained in

"THE SONGS ARE **A BRAVE STEP IN A NEW DIRECTION**"

Jack Steadman the UK. "I think the travelling gave me a sense of wellbeing rather than any direct musical influence," Steadman reflects. "Also, we were getting more inspired by samples. They become the springboard for your song and,

whether it's an Indian song or Thai chanting, you should never deny that inspiration just because it sounds silly or because the thought of it is weird."

Another huge change for the band. completed by guitarist Jamie MacColl and drummer Suren de Saram, is autonomy - with just a little help from long time collaborator Jim Abiss, Steadman self-produced the album at London's Konk Studios and Surrender All, where we're sat today. "It's ended up sounding the most like what I think we sound like, almost like the original demos from when we

> were 16 or 17," explains MacColl. Steadman chips in, reassuringly:

'Whenever you say 'self-produced', alarm bells start ringing, but we're not the type of band that wants to hooks behind everything."

make a really self-indulgent song. We all have pop sensibilities. The whole idea is that there are melodies and

Veering between introverted

piano, hip-hop and Indian samples, the album is unashamedly diverse. Of the tracks the band played in the studio, 'Overdone' has heavy riffs, 'Eyes Off You' is one of their most fragile

►THE DETAILS

TITLE TBA

- ▶ RELEASE DATE Feb 2014
- ► PRODUCER Jack Steadman
- ▶ RECORDED Konk, London; Surrender All, London
- TRACKS INCLUDE
- Overdone, It's Alright Now, Feel, Home By Now, Carry Me, Eyes Off You, Luna, Come To, Wherever, Whenever, So Long, See You Tomorrow
- JACK STEADMAN SAYS "I think I've finally made a record that I have no regrets about, one that sums up me and what I always thought I could do."

Me' is full of club-ready samples. Guest vocalist Lucy Rose features on five tracks on the album, with Blackpool singer and pianist Rae Morris filling in for three, which were recorded while she was on tour. "It would have been great to have Lucy full-time, but it's just not possible - she's a star in her own right," says Steadman. "Rae came to one of our gigs and knew Lucy; she sang for us one day

moments yet and 'Carry

With the album prepped for a February release, the band are currently inviting

when Lucy wasn't available

and it sounded great so we

reactions from friends and family. "People have said that it's either evolution - continuing on from before – or it's revolution – completely different," says MacColl, who agrees only that the band have changed in a big way. "But," he concludes, "if we'd have just continued as an indie-rock band, I don't even think we'd still be going." ■ LISA WRIGHT

kept it."

BBC (I-r): Ed Nash, Jamie MacColl,

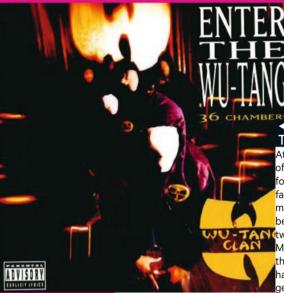
Jack Steadman, Suren de Saram

ANATOMY OF AN ALBUM



"I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE THAT ALBUM"

Inspectah Deck



THIS WEEK...

Wu-Tang Clan: Enter The Wu-Tang (36 Chambers)

An unlikely classic of soul samples, bouncing beats and Shaolin mysticism, the nine-strong hip-hop crew's debut packs a kung fu kick

THE BACKGROUND

'Enter The Wu -Tang...' ought not to have been a success, but hip-hop has a habit of throwing up unexpected game-changers. Wu-Tang, hailing from the East Coast, entered a world in which West Coast rap, whether G-funkers like Dr Dre and Warren G or stoners like Cypress Hill, was dominant. Two of the group's nine (!) MCs had tried for solo careers and failed, and producer RZA's decision to meld sweet soul samples with jeep beats and chop-socky film dialogue defied all logic. "I still don't believe that album," said the group's Inspectah Deck. "Listen for the mistakes. You can hear parts where the tapes fuck up. It wasn't rehearsed or choreographed, just a case of, 'Oh, that sounds dope! Don't fuck with that!"

STORY BEHIND

At the time, it was unheard of for hip-hop acts to pose for a cover without their faces visible. The "stocking mask" idea came about because the group were two members - Method Man and U-God – short on the shoot, neither member naving access to a car to get there, so management stepped in to up the numbers. "After that, my phone didn't stop ringing," recalled photographer Daniel Hastings. "I did 38 album covers in one year."

FIVE FACTS

1 'Can It Be All So Simple' samples Labi Siffre's 1975 track 'I Got The', upon which Chas & Dave feature as session musicians.

The album title originates from a 1978 martial arts film called *The 36th Chamber Of Shaolin*. In the film, the 36th chamber is a martial arts class.

Films from which dialogue samples appear include Shaolin Executioner (1977), Five Deadly Venoms (1978), Ten Tigers From Kwangtung (1979), and Shaolin And Wu Tang (1983).

Despite the sides of the album supposedly being thematically linked into a "Shaolin Sword" side and a "Wu-Tang Sword" side, the running order on the vinyl LP and the CD and cassette versions are completely different

Clan members battled each other for the right to be on a given track. One of these battles later surfaced on Method Man's debut album as the track 'Meth Vs Chef'.

LYRIC ANALYSIS

"Yeah, my pops was a fiend since 16/
Shootin' that 'that's that shit!' in his blood stream" ('Can It Be All So Simple')

Raekwon makes reference here to his absent father's drug habit. He would subsequently go even more painfully personal on his heartbreaking solo track 'All That I Got Is You'.

"First things first, man you're fuckin' with the worst/I'll be stickin' pins in your head like a fuckin' nurse" ('Protect Ya Neck')

Classic Ol' Dirty Bastard – ultimately nonsensical (what kind of nurse sticks pins in your head?) and yet you sort of get what he means. RIP.

"I picked him up, then I held him by his head/His eyes shut, that's when I knew he was... Ah man!" ('Tearz')

Here, the RZA describes being present after the fatal shooting of a friend during his time as a petty criminal. He himself was acquitted of attempted murder, his "second chance" as he puts it.

WHAT WE

In an unforgivable oversight, we didn't review the album. Whoops!

WHAT WE SAY NOW

Hip-hop doesn't generally do 'timeless', but 'Enter The Wu-Tang...' would still be staggering if released tomorrow. It's not just the intricacies of the RZA's arrangements and the interplay of nine different vocal styles, it's also the genuine melodic beauty.

FAMOUS FAN

Actor Warren Beatty is a fan, and got Clan members on the soundtrack of 1998's *Bulworth*. "They're the best at what they do... there's great rap, and bad rap. There's smart rap, and dumb rap. These guys are all great. They're smart."

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"When the shit started to roll, it was just like a big relief.
Like, 'I'm gonna be legit now, I don't have to worry 'bout posting up [setting up a drug sale point]:" Raekwon, 2011

THE AFTERMATH

The group established itself as an umbrella corporation, with pretty much every member subsequently recording a solo album.
The pendulum of power in hip-hop swung back to the East Coast. The Wu-Tang collectively never matched the heights of their debut, although they certainly came close, and, less the late ODB, are still together today.

THE DETAILS

November 9, 1993 ►LENGTH 61:31 ►PRODUCERS RZA, OI' Dirty
Bastard, Method Man ►STUDIO Firehouse, NYC; The Hit Factory,
NYC ►HIGHEST UK CHART POSITION 77 ►WORLDWIDE SALES
1.2m (estimated) ►SINGLES Method Man, CREAM, Can It Be All So
Simple' (all US only) ►TRACKLISTING ►1. Bring Da Ruckus ►2. Shame
On A Nigga ►3. Clan In Da Front ►4. Wu Tang: 7th Chamber ►5. Can
It Be All So Simple ►6. Da Mystery Of Chessboxin' ►7. Wu Tang Clan
Ain't Nuthin' Ta F'Wit ►8. CREAM ►9. Method Man ►10. Protect Ya
Neck ►11. Tearz ►12. Wu Tang: 7th Chamber Part 2 (running order
differs on vinyl version)

Total cost of David Bowie's

video for 'Love Is Lost'

5/1

Odds one bookmaker is offering on Kanye West being best man at his own wedding

260

Complaints received by ITV following Lady Gaga's *X Factor*

2

Number of Hop Farm festivals to take place in 2014



"It's like going to a restaurant when the chef and all the waiting staff have worked their asses off, and you don't even pay the bill. I'd rather

somebody stole the record on vinyl than streamed it on Spotify."

YANNIS PHILIPPAKIS of Foals sits on the fence re the streaming revolution



SHOULD GRIMES PLAY IN RUSSIA, GIVEN ITS GOVERNMENT'S ANTI-GAY STANCE?

THE BIG QUESTION



Lauren Mayberry Chvrches "It's tricky. I can see the argument that

kids who love Grimes shouldn't suffer because they live under an extreme regime, but then does playing there mean you are endorsing those things?"



Jenny Stevens
Deputy News Editor
"Scorning oppressive
regimes from afar

isn't the way to achieve real social change. Going to Russia and speaking up for LGBT rights may be as powerful as a boycott. I hope Grimes does just that."



Alex Parchment
NME reader
"If the music is
needed then let it be

heard. Refusing to play there only hurts fans, not the government."



WHO THE FUCK IS...



By the looks of it, she's a salty seaperson.

Correct. She's the merchant navy officer who revealed that Britney Spears songs are used to ward Somali pirates away from supertankers off the coast of east Africa.

Why does Britney's music drive them crazy?

According to Rachel, the pirates "can't stand Western music".

So they don't need to hit them baby one more time?

As Rachel says, "It's so effective the ship's security rarely needs to resort to firing guns."



GOOD WEEK \leftrightarrow BAD WEEK



Lou Bega

The 'Mambo No 5' singer was the victim of mistaken identity following Lou Reed's death when a journalist mixed up their surnames and stated that it was Bega who had passed away. Monica, Erica, Rita, Tina, Sandra, Mary and Jessica were relieved by the news. R&B fans in Louisiana were demanding refunds when an R Kelly impersonator named R Jelly was suspected to have appeared in the singer's place at a concert at the Monroe Civic Centre. Embarrassingly, a spokesperson later confirmed that it really was the real deal.

AND FINALLY

Pot. Kettle. Nude.

Katy Perry has said that pop stars who get naked in order to promote their music careers should "put it away". In other news, a bear has chastised his peers for shitting in

the woods.

Enter Blandman

Metallica have endorsed Justin Bieber's fandom, with Lars Ulrich saying, "If he likes 'One' and Liam Gallagher likes him, OK, there you go." Guess that means they endorse parka

jackets too.

Jim slip

Host Lauren Laverne introduced Mercury Prize winner James Blake as James Blunt during the ceremony. She later told her supportive Twitter followers, "You're beautiful."

Official RECORD STORY Chart

TOP 40 ALBUMS 3 NOVEMBER 2013



Arcade Fire Reflektor sonovox

They might have "abandoned rock'n'roll and made a dance record" but, with the help of LCD Soundsystem's James Murphy and a handful of other producers, Arcade Fire's new double LP opus has shot to the top.

- 2 Porcelain Matt Cardle MATT CARDLE
- 7 3 AM Arctic Monkevs DOMINO
- 4 Corsicana Lemonade White Denim DOWNTOWN
- ▲ 5 If You Wait London Grammar METAL & DUST
 - Pure Heroine Lorde VIRGIN
- 7 World Psychedelic Classics 5 William Onyeabor LUAKA BOP
- ▼ 8 Psychic **Darkside** MATADOR
- ▼ 9 Shulamith Poliça MEMPHIS INDUSTRIES
- ▼ 10 Moon Landing James Blunt ATLANTIC/CUSTARD
- 11 This Is What I Do Boy George VERY ME
- ▼ 12 Lightning Bolt Pearl Jam EMI
- ▲ 13 Drone Logic Daniel Avery PHANTASY SOUNDS

 14 Lazers Not Included Wilkinson RAM/VIRGIN
- 15 Overgrown James Blake ATI AS
- ▼ 16 Beautiful Rewind Four Tet TEXT
- ▼ 17 Days Are Gone Haim POLYDOR
- ▼ 18 Tales Of Us Goldfrapp MUTE
- ▼ 19 Fanfare Jonathan Wilson BELLA UNION
- ▼ 20 Prism Katy Perry virgin
- ▲ 21 Jake Bugg Jake Bugg MERCURY
- 22 How To Stop Your Brain In An Accident
 Future Of The Left PRESCRIPTIONS
- ▼ 23 City Forgiveness Wave Pictures мознимозни
- 23 City Forgiveness wave Pictures Moshi Mos
 24 One Breath Anna Calvi Domino Recordings
- ▲ 25 Random Access Memories Daft Punk columbia
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- 28 Seasons Of Your Day Mazzy Star RHYMES OF AN HOUR
- 29 The Awakening James Morrison ISLAND
- 30 Born To Die Lana Del Rey POLYDOR
- 31 Lily & Madeleine Lily & Madeleine ASTHMATIC KITTY
 That's What Happens Chas & Dave
- WARNER MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT
- 33 Immunity Jon Hopkins DOMINO
- ▼ 34 Music Has The Right To Children Boards Of Canada WARP
- 35 Trouble Will Find Me The National 4AD
- ▼ 36 Factory Floor Factory Floor DFA
- ▼ 37 New Paul McCartney HEARMUSIC
- 38 Wish You Were Here Pink Floyd PARLOPHONE

 ▼ 39 The Bones Of What You Believe Chyrches VIRGIN
- ▼ 40 Wenu Wenu Omar Soulevman RIBBON MUSIC
- The Official Charts Company compiles the Official Record Store Chart from sales through 100 of the UK's best independent record shops, from Sunday to Saturday.

hrough 100 of the UK's best independent record shops, from Sunday to Saturday



SOUND IT OUT STOCKTON-ON-TEES

FOUNDED 1996 WHY IT'S GREAT It's the last surviving vinyl shop in Teesside. It's even had a documentary made about it by Jeanie Finlay. TOP SELLER THIS WEEK Simon

TOP SELLER THIS WEEK Simon Fisher Turner – 'The Epic Of Everest THEY SAY "We stock all genres and have a knowledgeable staff with over 100 years of record collecting between them."

8







Electropop

pioneer

THE FIRST SONG I REMEMBER HEARING 'The Loco-Motion' - Little Eva

"There were a few that I heard at the same time [this reached Number Two in the UK in 1962], because my mum and dad used to play music a lot when I was little. I remember Little Eva's 'The Loco-Motion', which is a great pop song, and John Leyton's 'Johnny Remember Me', which had a corking chorus."

THE FIRST SONG I FELL IN LOVE WITH 'Wimoweh' Karl Denver

"This was another from my mum and dad's collection. It's the song that made me realise what music was, and that it could make you feel something. It's a great tune with a great chorus."

THE FIRST ALBUM I EVER BOUGHT

Unknown Hank Williams Jr album

"It was a Hank Williams Jr album and I bought it for my mum. It was the first thing I ever bought with my own pocket money and I was very proud to be able to buy her something."

THE SONG THAT MADE ME WANT TO BE IN A BAND

'I'm A Believer' - The Monkees

"When I was about 12 we had a band in our street – a miming band, because we couldn't play anything. We'd go to people's houses, mime to our Monkees records in their helping people get through a difficult relationship or break-up, which is probably why it's so successful, but even if I was breaking up with my wife, god forbid, I would never listen to it. 'I Will Survive'? I wish you hadn't."

THE SONG I CAN'T GET OUT OF MY HEAD

'Firework' Katy Perry

"I did a gig about a week ago and one of Katy Perry's guitarists came along. My nine-year-old took a shine to them and she's been obsessed with Katy Perry ever since. 'Firework' is all I hear, 24 hours a day. I'm not a massive pop music person, to be honest, but it's... fine. I keep humming it all the time."

THE SONG I WISH

'Tower Of Strength' - The Mission

"It's an epic song with beautiful melodies and lyrics, and it keeps on building until the very end. I wish to fuck I'd written it. [The Mission's] Wayne Hussey is a good mate of mine now and he always invites me onstage to sing 'Tower Of Strength' with him. I don't want to, because I don't think I can do it justice."

honestly will write a song specifically to play at my funeral."

THE SONG THAT MAKES ME WANT TO DANCE

'Spitfire' - The Prodigy

"I can't dance for shit, but anyone who listens to this and isn't doing their best armchair dancing has to be dead inside. It's got the best groove ever – absolutely ferocious."

THE SONG I DO AT KARAOKE

'Hurt' - Nine Inch Nails

"I wouldn't do karaoke if you paid me a million quid. But if you held a gun to my head and forced me, I guess I'd pick this song because it's one of my favourites of all time. I suspect I'd be no better at singing it than Mr Chow in The Hangover Part III."

THE SONG THAT MADE ME LOVE SYNTHS 'Slow Motion' - Ultrayox

"I made my first album by accident. I went to the studio to make a punk album and there was a synthesizer in the corner. I cockily thought I'd stumbled on something new, then I found Ultravox were on their third album and were doing something much more advanced than my fumblings. It set the standard."

<u>"I USED TO BE IN</u> A MIMING BAND"

living room and get a couple of shillings to buy sweets."

THE SONG I CAN NO LONGER LISTEN TO

'I Will Survive' -Gloria Gaynor

"What do I hate about it? Everything. Every-fuckingthing. I can see it really

THE SONG I WANT PLAYED AT MY FUNERAL

An unwritten Gary Numan song

"It might be one of mine. Not because I'm big-headed, but because a funeral is for the people who are there, not for the person who died. I think I

THE SONG THAT REMINDS ME OF FLYING 'Higher Love'

"I'm a qualified pilot, and this is the closest thing you get to flying through clouds because it soars and lifts. Clouds have all kinds of corridors and gaps, and flying through them is one of the most beautiful things you can do."



THE DEFINITIVE 905 ALBUM.

PRESENTS

THE DECADE THAT INSPIRED A GENERATION.









Drum and bass played in the most rocking style imaginable

e were almost punching each other at that point," grins Royal Blood drummer Ben Thatcher. He's talking about the time he and singer/bassist Mike Kerr were nearly brought to hysterical fisticuffs by the sight of Matt Helders sporting a T-shirt with their name on during Arctic Monkeys' Glastonbury headline slot. "That melted our brains," laughs Mike.

And it's not just Helders who's been 'Come On Over' championing the Brighton-based two-piece. The wild but woozy blues rock of debut track 'Figure It Out' garnered rave reactions among those in the know, while first single proper 'Out Of The Black' (out November 11) takes a leap into the mainstream with its sweaty, sexy howl. Their pulverising gigs, meanwhile – pockets of sleazy, raw giddiness in which Mike summons heavy, unholy squeals from his bass – have got labels sniffing around, despite Royal Blood still being less than a year old.

"I went to do some travelling in Australia and tried to form a band out there," recalls Mike of the period before the band got together in December 2012. "That didn't work, so I got a flight home. Ben, who I'd known for years, picked me up from the airport and I said to him, 'I need you to be in this band.' And he was like, 'Let's do this."

Since then, they've spent the summer working on new material – so much so that, according to Mike, "we've tricked ourselves into writing a whole album". They've drawn inevitable comparisons to The White Stripes and The Black Keys. "That's just the two-piece thing," shrugs Ben. "I'm surprised we haven't been compared to Daphne & Celeste yet." In truth, they make a unique racket: a feral mish-mash of Mike's love for Queens Of The Stone Age, Led Zeppelin and Jimi Hendrix, and Ben's

obsession with the beats of Jay Z and Justin Timberlake. "Not having a guitarist means there's stuff we can't easily do, but those limitations force more creativity out of us," Mike insists. "It's like Parmesan cheese – it was the cheapest way for peasants to make cheese, so they had to do it that way." Peasants, royals, whatever: before long, you'll be joyously punching yourself with Royal Bloodinduced disbelief, too. ■BEN HEWITT

THE DETAILS

- ►BASED Brighton
- ► FOR FANS OF The White Stripes, Drenge
- ►SOCIAL royalbloodband.com
- ►BUY IT NOW Debut single 'Out Of The Black' is released on November 11
- SEE THEM LIVE London Barfly (November 11)
- ▶BELIEVE IT OR NOT There was no such thing as a Royal Blood T-shirt until Matt Helders asked for one the day before the Monkeys' Glastonbury show. Cue a mad 24-hour dash to knock up the merch in time

Turn the page for more great new music

ON

NME.COM/

NEWMUSIC

NOW

▶Listen to

new track

- SEE HER LIVE London
 Servant Jazz Quarters (Nov
 28)
- ► HEAR HER soundcloud.com/ cousinmarnie

DD Dumbo

The first taster of
Castlemaine producer/
vocalist DD's self-titled EP,
'Tropical Oceans', indicates
a love of wistful indie-pop
and the blues, with nods
to both Grizzly Bear and
Dirty Projectors in its arid,
thumping beat, marching
tempo and gusty melody.
Toss in some oddball
couplets, sung in Oliver Hugh
Perry's half-mumbled thrum,
and you've a recipe for a
bona fide weird-pop hit.

- SOCIAL @DDDumbo
 HEAR HIM dddumbo.
 bandcamp.com
- Broods

Georgia and Caleb Nott have the small benefit of chart-

topping wünderkind Lorde's producer, Joel Little on hand. Debut track 'Bridges' skips Ella Yelich-O'Connor's social critiques, though, preferring teen romance and its often fractured nature as a focal point. It fast becomes a potent concoction once paired with fluttering synth lines and fist-in-air chorus.

> SOCIAL @broodsmusic

> HEAR THEM soundcloud.

Astronomyy

com/broods

Jai Paul snagged a generation of bloggers with his mix of squalling synths and funked-up basslines, but few have captured the imagination of polished R&B lovers with the same dizzying panache since. Step forward Worcestershire resident Astro Arron, whose punchy, hook-laden batch of 'surf/urban' tracks have filled a faintly maudlin hole we barely knew we had. Think James Blake, cracking half a smile while banging out soulful slow jams.

► SOCIAL @astronomyy_
► HEAR THEM soundcloud.
com/astronomyy

Wild Life

The tip-toeing minimalist electronics of 'Infinite Bias' and 'Tascam Stir' might sound familiar to fans of Regal Safari, and for good reason too: Wild Life is the latest solo venture of that project's left ventricle Guy Étienne. He professes that these are merely compositions that he could not find a home for, but the slow transformations of these brooding, twisted, psychedelic tracks easily warrant the same kind of attention as Étienne's main musical outlet ►HEAR HIM Soundcloud. com/w-i-l-d-l-i-f-e

Valentine Gray

Valentine Gray might just be one of the loudest bands to hail from the Isle Of Wight. Key track 'Wavering Sun' takes influence from My Bloody Valentine and Bauhaus, and having supported Loom during their Camden residency the band have proven to be a match for fans of submissive, dirty

- ► SOCIAL facebook.com/ valentinegrayuk
- ► HEAR THEM soundcloud. com/valentinegraydemos

All Dogs

Ohio three-piece All Dogs released a new single in September, but it's their split tape with Slouch from July this year that fits the season best. "Mid-autumn/ The sunrise/Opens up/Your eyes," sings Maryn Jones over sweetly melancholic guitar that won't upset fans of their former tour buddies, Waxahatchee.

SOCIAL alldogsohio. tumblr.com

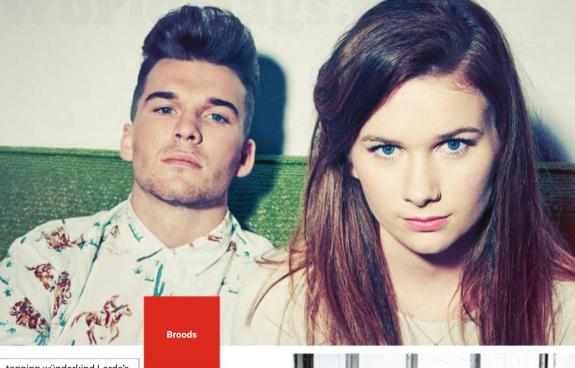
►HEAR THEM There's a new seven-inch up at alldogs. bandcamp.com alldogsohio@gmail.com

The Districts

Hilang Child

Ed Riman might be one of novelty act The Midnight Beast's live members but his own music is far from comedy. Instead of indulging in cheap jokes and LOL parodies, he deals in the kind of softly layered piano-led altpop that can smash hearts into pieces and run tear ducts dry in just a handful of notes. Better stock up on tissues before he releases his debut EP 'First Writings' on November 25, then.

- ►SOCIAL facebook.com/ HilangChild
- SEE HER LIVE At London's Notting Hill Arts Club (Nov 5) and Leeds Oporto (25)
- ► HEAR THEM 'Chaturanga' is at soundcloud.com/hilang-child







Kristian Bell

The Wytches



Blonde Bunny

"I like Blonde Bunny from Peterborough. It's like R&B prog but it revolves around a Pink Floyd structure. Their keys player does our artwork. When you watch them live it's a spectacle, not just a show, and you get sucked in – I saw them live in London and was amazed. They've got catchy pop songs."

For daily new music recommendations and exclusive tracks and videos go to NME.COM/NEWMUSIC



NME BUZZ BAND OF THE WEEK The Districts

The Philadelphia five-piece make an unholy racket that'll appeal to anyone who's fallen for Mac De Marco's off-kilter brilliance lately. There's something more scuzzy about them than him though – it's garage rock gone country, basically – and with supports with White Denim already under their belt, the fresh-out-of-high-school band clearly aren't planning on slacking

Radar LABEL OF THE WEEK

Hate Hate Hate

HATE HATE HATE REFORDS

- ►FOUNDED 2013
- by Sam Gilbert

 BASED London
- **KEY RELEASES** The

Wytches - 'Beehive Queen'/
'Crying Clown' (2013), Loom
- 'I Get A Taste'/'She's Not
There' (2013) Theo Verney

- There' (2013), **Theo Verney** 'Heavy Sunn EP' (2013)
- ONLINE
- Hatehatehaterecords.
- ► RADAR SAYS Launched as an offshoot to Luv Luv Luv Records (Spector, Splashh) this year, HHH's releases deal with dirty rock'n'roll, with an aesthetic of messed-up brilliance.

off any time soon.

- ► SOCIAL facebook.com/ thedistrictsband
- ► HEAR THEM Look for 'Lyla' on Out Of Town Films' YouTube page

Tangerine

Over the course of two EP releases this year, Seattle's Tangerine have cast themselves in the same mould as Swearin' and Speedy Ortiz. With a pretty, almost twee side to them too, they're at their best on songs like 'Hanford Riviera', when lilting guitars abound. Elsewhere, the band know how to let rip, tearing through their 'Pale Summer' EP with the kind of energy Best Coast would love to recapture.

► SOCIAL @tangerine_band ► HEAR THEM The Radical Blossom EP is on soundcloud. com/tangerineband now.

Femme

When she's not fronting Nigel Godrich and Joey Warnoker's project Ultraista, Laura Bettinson masquerades as Femme – a south London electro-pop sensation merging the DIY aesthetic of MØ and Grimes with MIA's brazen conviction. New single 'Fever Boy', out in November, brings taut hooks and slick semi-rapped verses that ooze attitude.

- SOCIAL @femmehq
- ► HEAR HER second single 'Fever Boy' is at soundcloud. com/thisisfemme

Tove Lo

Having penned tracks for Icona Pop, Girls Aloud and, um, Cher Lloyd in recent years, Swedish vocalist Tove Nilsson is stepping out on her own with new single 'Out Of Mind'. Bridging the gap between the credible and gimmicky pop camps with consummate ease, and gigantic bubblegum choruses, Tove calls out feckless, but hard-to-forget exes, like a less gleefully trashy KeSha.

- ► SOCIAL @iamtovelo
- ►HEAR HER 'Out Of Mind' is on YouTube now

More new music on page 26 ***



There have been six sunsets since I made this list. Was I leaving someone out? Probably – doesn't matter. I got a way to light up your speakers for three-and-a-half minutes. So get off that internet, sit in front of the speakers and play this shit LOUD.

Thee Oh Sees' 'Toe Cutter – Thumb Buster' – firstly, your neighbour is pissed off or jealous. Why? Because Thee Oh Sees are the truth. Their singer John Dwyer just played me a track from the new record he's working on and it blew my fucking mind. Just wait, you'll see. Dig up any of their past records and try to plot their next move, and then admit it: we are shitty psychics. I think 'Floating Coffin' was worth it for the cover art alone – not to mention it's as real and astonishing as Caesar's undying influence on our daily life (and by the way, who the fuck would have guessed that a 12-month calendar would stick around for so long?).

Natasha Kmeto (above) should just start bossing everyone around. Seriously, she should walk into a studio and start calling the shots. A wicked prodder, what she does with her own music is magic. Not everyday magic –

TOMORROW magic! I got her 'Dirty Mind Melt' EP and I felt like I discovered treasure. For real – Natasha, please produce the whole damn lot!

In the land of the blind, the one-eyed man is king. Be certain that **Run The Jewels** (Killer Mike and El-P) are going to poke that last eye out and replace it with a pyramid, or another land where everyone has three eyes. Damn. Proper. Future.

What does the guy in the truck at the river listen to while

he's dumping toxic waste at the water? Who knows – it's probably something your boss/the cops/bankers like. What should you play to drown them out and suffocate their deeds with beauty? **Oh Land.** Pick any song on 'Wish Bone', I dare you! You need hits, you need hooks, but nobody has to climb

out of a lemon or dress like a candy cane to deliver. Nanna Øland Fabricius gets me excited about what music could become. The bizarre soundscapes are something you've never heard before that sounds like something you have always known. So I bet all the chips on her – 'Cherry On Top', 'Bird In An Aeroplane'. Come on!

And finally, just so you know I'm not fucking with you: Lee Hazlewood's 'My Autumn's Done Come'. Yeah, that's where I'm from!

Next week: Jack Savidge from Friendly Fires

"Killer Mike and El-P

in Run The Jewels

are the damn

proper future"

Bully

This Nashville trio are so new they barely existed when we profiled the city's DIY scene recently. But singer Alicia Bognanno is a pro: having interned for Steve Albini, she recorded Bully's sublime debut EP herself, capturing her Life Without Buildingsgiddy vocals and their warmly blown-out punk-pop hits.

SOCIAL @bullythemusic

HEAR THEM bullythemusic.
bandcamp.com

Lonely The Brave

Despite supporting Deftones and BRMC, LTB frontman David Jakes still isn't comfortable onstage. With a mix of Biffy Clyro's openhearted anthems and arenasized ambitions, songs like the bold, brutal 'Backroads' and riff-heavy 'Black Saucers' present a band whose name will soon be up in lights, whether they like it or not.



►SEE THEM LIVE They tour

Lonely The Brave

with Don Broco throughout November and December. ►HEAR THEM The 'Backroads' EP is on Spotify now

Ex-Cult

Memphis punks Ex-Cult hooked up with producer Doug Easly, (Cat Power, Guided By Voices) to start work on the follow-up to their self-titled 2012 debut album, 'Mister Fantasy' is the first taste of their work, a relentless charge through the backwaters of US punk history with a nod to old-school R&B harmonies, no doubt a debt to the crossover in members between Ex-Cult and Memphis' indie-pop band Magic Kids.

- ► SOCIAL facebook.com/ ex-cult
- ► HEAR THEM soundcloud. com/gonerrecords

Claw Marks

Quite possibly London's most exciting new punk band, Claw Marks are a five-headed, bone-rattling noise explosion who have started terrorising the capital with their live show. Their excellent five-track debut is due soon on Sex Beat.

- ►SOCIAL facebook.com/
- SEE THEM LIVE London
 Shacklewell Arms
 (November 19)
- ► HEAR THEM sexbeat london.com

Slowcoaches

After a busy year supporting the likes of Mission Of Burma, stellar grunge-punk trio Slowcoaches are putting out a cracking four-track release called 'Thinkers'. The title track is particularly strong.

DRIVP

- SOCIAL slowcoachessux. tumblr.com
- ► HEAR THEM slowcoaches. bandcamp.com

Bambi

Even though his other band Flowers have been working with Bernard Butler, drummer Jordan Hockley has joined Bambi. Lead track 'Reap From The Dying Love' (out November 17) is like a brooding Peace with the intricacies of early Bloc Party, and is epic too.

- ► SOCIAL facebook.com/ bambiha
- ►HEAR THEM soundcloud. com/bambing

BAMBI ARE BROODING, INTRICATE AND EPIC

Fever

Think of something between Grateful Dead and The Wytches and you've got Southampton-based Fever. "Writing a song is cheaper than a psychiatrist," drummer Jamie remarks when talking about debut song 'Shell Shock'. Produced by Chris Peden from Wild Smiles, it's a heavier take on surf-rock. featuring distorted guitars, vulnerable vet passionate vocals and memorable melodies. The band's aim to "be popular enough to be able to slap Harry Styles and get away with it" satisfies us. SOCIAL facebook.com/

306.8

- thebandfever
- ► HEAR THEM soundcloud. com/thebandfever

Radar <u>NEWS ROUND UP</u>

DENAI'S PLAN B PROPS

Plan B has taken a shine to London singer Denai Moore. "To find a voice so pure and untainted by the pop-culture environment is a rare thing," he tells *Radar*. "But to come across an artist whose material is just as much of an anomaly as their voice... That's an even rarer one!"

THE BOHICAS DROP DEBUT SINGLE

Essex's The Bohicas have unveiled their debut AA single 'XXX'/'Swarm', ahead of playing the Monster NME Radar Tour later this month. The band, snapped up by Domino, release the single in January – but you can watch the videos on NME.COM now. The tour kicks off in Cambridge on November 15.





EYEDRESS VS MANNY PACQUIAO

Filipino wonderkid Eyedress has described how pleased he is to have signed to XL imprint Abeano. He tells Radar: "I'm psyched to sign with them – my dream is to be the second sickest guy to ever come out of the Philippines after Manny Pacquiao." Check his track 'Nature Trips' on NME.COM.

SPINOFF LABEL FOR CHILDHOOD MAN

Childhood bassist Dan Salamons has helped launch new singles label No Self Records. "We'll put out songs that we like from bands who we feel don't have glass ceilings to what they can achieve," he says. Blessa's 'Between Times' will be the first release on November 11.

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Reviews

THE DEFINITIVE VERDICT ■ EDITED BY TOM HOWARD



The maverick singer swaps Cardiff for LA to record her third album, and the results are wonderfully weird



"Los Angeles is a constellation of plastic," wrote novelist Norman Mailer when describing the so-called City Of Angels. So it's no wonder alarm bells rang earlier this year when Welsh maverick Cate Le Bon swapped her home of Cardiff for the west coast of America. Since

her 2009 debut 'Me Oh My', the singer's records have been full of bizarre meditations on death and mortality, wrapped in strange flurries of experimental noise. It was easy to worry that being surrounded by wannabe film stars and sunshine would rid Le Bon of her idiosyncrasies.

But she hasn't been sucked dry by LA. On the contrary, buggering off to new climes may be the finest decision she's ever made. 'Mug Museum', her third full-length, is as wonderfully weird as any of its predecessors. And

there's now sparseness in her music, plus a cool, controlled confidence that showcases her knack for the surreal more than ever. Where 2012's album and EP double-whammy of 'CYRK' and 'CYRK II' found Le Bon occasionally buried underneath the clutter, here you get the pared-down brilliance of 'Are You With Me Now?'. It's a sleepy-eyed little thing, with Le Bon's voice slicing through the ramshackle '60s-tinged guitars and occasional horn blasts as she sings, "It's not unusual, baby/To feel a shadow in kind" like Dusty Springfield humming a lullaby. At the opposite end of the spectrum is 'Mirror Me', an eerie organ drone that finds Le Bon channelling the spirit of some soul trapped in a heartbroken House Of Horror as she shivers, "Trickle down my skeleton like hunks of honeycomb".

In part, roping in a new cast of collaborators to work on the album – from Joanna Newsom cohort Noah Georgeson to White Fence drummer Nick Murray – has helped Le Bon nail the pared-down purr of 'Mug Museum'. Both the discordant, clank-heavy lament of 'Cuckoo Through The Walls' and the rugged, almost punk thrash of 'Wild' have a sophisticated simplicity missing from her previous work. But every song

FOUR ESSENTIAL CATE LE BON TRACKS

No One Can Drag Me Down 2007

One half of her double
A-side debut single (with
'Disappear'), this track
introduced the world to Cate
Le Bon's delicate defiance
with the line: "No-one can
drag me down, unless I drag
my own self down".

I Lust U 2008

Le Bon guests on this single for Neon Neon, Gruff Rhys and Boom Bip's band. It's on their 'Stainless Style' album, and an opportunity to hear Cate sing over electronic music and deliver her lines with icy new-wave coolness.

Cyrk 2012

The title track from Le Bon's second album finds her deep in psych-folk territory. Named after the Polish word for circus, it starts steady but builds to pandemonium.

4 Lonely Roads 2013

Cate was one of a handful of guests on Manic Street Preachers' 'Rewind The Film', and is the main focus on this track. Hear her narrate an emotional and anguished story over acoustic strums and brass hooks.

is stamped with her fingerprints, too. Opener 'I Can't Help You' comes on like a rustic, starryeved Television, with its smudged psych guitar. And then there's her brilliantly bonkers kiss-off as she explains how a difficult relationship has taken its toll: "Time took up my time... Bent me like elbows/Beat me like egg yolks". 'Sisters' sees her deal with the fallout from the death of her maternal grandmother as she flits between past and present. It's a dizzy, helterskelter chug in which she relives old memories of serenading her Auntie Rita with Beatles songs on car journeys and realising she's got to become a role model for her nieces now, sounding defiant as she sings, "I know well this space I fill/I know the

Most impressive of all is the soft and delicate 'I Think I Knew', a duet with Perfume Genius' Mike Hardreas in which Le Bon's Nico-ish voice sounds wistfully lost as she rues "there's no talking to him" while he stews about "doubt creeping in like sickly dogs". The pair seem lost in a Neil Young-like fug of folky uncertainty. It's telling on this song that even when Le Bon is sharing the limelight, it's she who effortlessly takes

drill... I hold the baton".

centre stage. Many people head to Hollywood in search of the spotlight. With 'Mug Museum', Cate Le Bon has pulled off something far trickier: she's demanded that the spotlight come to her. ■ BEN HEWITT

►THE DETAILS

- ▶ RELEASE DATE November 11 ▶ LABEL Turnstile ▶ PRODUCERS Noah Georgeson, Josiah Steinbrick ▶ LENGTH 42:40
- ►TRACKLISTING ►1. I Can't Help You ►2. Are You With Me Now?
- ▶3. Duke ▶4. No God ▶5. I Think I Knew ▶6. Wild ▶7. Sisters
- ▶8. Mirror Me ▶9. Cuckoo Through The Walls ▶10. Mug Museum
- ▶ BEST TRACK | Think | Knew

MORE ALBUMS

Wooden Shjips Back To Land Thrill Jockey



Compared with their previous six albums, 'Back To The

Land' occasionally feels a bit like Wooden Shjips lite. For starters, someone's stumped up the cash for a proper studio, which means that they no longer sound like a bunch of hippies from San Francisco recording Stooges jams on a fourtrack during a night on the brown. This, unfortunately, spoils things a bit. Opening track 'Back To Land' wouldn't be out of place at an Eric Clapton gig, closer 'Everybody Knows' is dreary, and 'These Shadows' could be a Mazzy Star throwaway. The rest, however, is gold: 'Ghouls' is pure psychedelic aggression, 'In The Roses' is a proper glam stomper and 'Other Stars' features riffs worthy of Black Sabbath's Tony Iommi. HUW NESBITT

Oh Land

Wish Bone Federal Prism



Dave Sitek not only produced most of 'Wish Bone', he

deemed it worthy of being the first album released on his new Federal Prism label. But when Brooklyn-based, Denmark-bred Nanna Øland Fabricius skips first into the cutesy world of unicorn-pop on the saccharine 'Love A Man Dead' and then talks about kittens and sunbeams on '3 Chances', she's as frustratingly twee as a hailstorm of cupcakes. Her second album's adventures into electronica on the squelchy, sulky 'Kill My Darling' and the unsettling 'Next Summer' are more remarkable, as is the straight-up lo-fi funk of 'Pyromaniac', coming on like Robyn produced by Phoenix, while the starkly romantic folk balladry of 'Love You Better' brings a heartswelling shift in mood. LEONIE COOPER



Lazily slouching out of a Melbourne bedsit, Courtney Barnett's two EPs (this year's 'How To Carve A Carrot Into A Rose' and 2012's 'T've Got a Friend Called Emily Ferris', collected here) establish the 25-year-old as a prodigiously talented songwriter. A voice like Sheryl Crow waking up the morning after her birthday just sweetens the deal. She writes candid lines like "I masturbated to the songs you wrote" and rambling, freewheeling anti-folk odysseys like 'History Eraser', full of Rolling Stones and Triffids references. The best is 'Avant Gardener', a tale of ending up in an ambulance



after a panic attack. It's funny, charming and full of whip-smart observations like "The paramedic thinks I'm clever 'cos I play guitar/I think she's clever 'cos she stops people dying".

Worth climbing out of bed for. • KEVIN EG PERRY

▶THE DETAILS

RELEASE DATE Out now ▶LABEL House Anxiety/Marathon
Artists ▶ PRODUCER Courtney Barnett ▶LENGTH 56:20
▶TRACKLISTING ▶1. Out Of The Woodwork ▶2. Don't Apply
Compression Gently ▶3. Avant Gardener ▶4. History Eraser
▶5. David ▶6. Anonymous Club ▶7. Lance Jr ▶8. Are You Looking
After Yourself? ▶9. Scotty Says ▶10. Canned Tomatoes (Whole)
▶11. Porcelain ▶112. Ode To Odetta ▶BEST TRACK Avant Gardener

Ezra Furman Day Of The Dog Bar None



Where has
Ezra Furman
been hiding?
Already
on his fifth

album (albeit his first with new band The Boyfriends backing him) this Chicagobased singer-songwriter offers a bratty, ragged take on New York Dolls, Spectorera Ramones and E Street Band carnival rock, revealing a gift for crafting freewaycruisin' tunes served with an
extra helping of roadkill. Like
Mac DeMarco, probably his
closest peer, Furman draws
from well-worn '50s rock'n'roll
tropes and coats them in
fuzz, employing a rasping
saxophone while dreaming of
"kicking up dust in a Chevy
Express with a hood full of
rust" in album highlight 'Tell
'Em All To Go To Hell'.
An unexpected gem.

Mazes

Better Ghosts FatCat



Mazes' 2011 debut record was full of reckless abandon,

but their path since has been more suited to trippy evenings in. Just eight months on from the release of their second full-length, this mini-album (eight songs bookended by an instrumental intro and outro) delves even further into psychedelic territory. Yet this is also a trip back in time, with the likes of 'Cicada' and 'Organ Harvest' recalling the heyday of 1960s free love, albeit with a Mancunian bent. The trio even pay tribute to Donovan, weaving the legacy of Scotland's most famous hippy into the summery vibes of, er, 'Donovan'. An enjoyably kaleidoscopic experience, 'Better Ghosts' pays good homage to its influences but doesn't strive to do much beyond that. MISCHA PEARLMAN

Booka Shade

Blaufield Music/Embassy One



Walter Merziger and Arno Kammermeier

easy. UK dance producers carry the 'let's push things forward' thing round their necks like an albatross. The Americans think that if their tracks don't have the horsepower of a Harrier jump jet, it's not loud enough. Meanwhile, because they're Germans, this stratospherically successful production duo are free to get on with making immaculate, tactile house music. Some isolated moments make you want to vom a bit - Groove Armada trombone on 'Many Rivers' - but 'Love Inc' neatly reworks a snatch of Lil Louis' house classic 'Club Lonely' into insistent Balearica, and you can't argue with that. LOUIS PATTISON



Static

Madeline Follin and Brian Oblivion

second album wears its bruised

heart on its sleeve



Cults' 2011 self-titled debut album was a triumph. Madeline Follin and Brian Oblivion's use of echo, fuzz and wellchosen spoken-word samples transformed their fairly standard indie-pop songs into something a lot more unsettling. The duo's follow-up, 'Static', sees them dial down the samples and lyrics about being abducted, to create something a great deal more human. As a result, 'Static' is a hell of a lot more emotional than its predecessor.

This may also be due to the personal circumstances surrounding the writing and recording of the album, which saw Follin and Oblivion splitting up as a couple. Lyrics such as "You and me, always forever" (from 'Always Forever') and "If you could just give me a sign, we could leave it all behind" (from 'I Can Hardly Make You Mine') suggest we are in the



THE DETAILS

▶ RELEASE DATE November 11 ▶ LABEL Columbia ▶ PRODUCER Shane Stoneback ▶LENGTH 34.55 ▶TRACKLISTING ▶1. I Know ▶2. I Can Hardly Make You Mine ▶3. Always Forever ▶4. High Road ▶5. Were Before ▶6. So Far ▶7. Keep Your Head Up ▶8. TV Dream ▶9. We've Got It ▶10. Shine A Light ▶11. No Hope ▶BEST TRACK I Can Hardly Make You Mine

skilful hands this could be self-indulgent, but Cults have significantly upped their songwriting and arranging skills on 'Static', opening up their rather closed musical world in the process. A song like 'I Can Hardly Make You Mine' benefits from an epic psychedelic arrangement that twists around its winsome vocal melody, sounding like MGMT at their most coherent. 'High Road' and 'No Hope', meanwhile, sport bass and drum lines that weigh in on the side of funk. The latter takes Cults close to a modern R&B sound.

The great, soaring walls of guitars that drove their debut album are still present, of course, but on 'Static' they mingle effortlessly with vertiginous strings (as on 'So Far', probably the closest the band will ever get to the drama of a Bond theme) and moody organ chords ('Keep Your Head Up'). The result is a great album that simultaneously wears its bruised heart on its sleeve (the lovelorn should be warned: it's a real tearierker at times), and sugars its melancholy with opulent musical arrangements. Heartbreak has rarely sounded so sweet. Ben cardew

Gold Panda Reprise EP

Notown Recordings



This EP is essentially a victory lap for Gold Panda after

the success of this year's 'Half Of Where You Live' album. As such, it fits that these songs are both drawn out and sweaty, as well as a lot of fun. It features three versions apiece of album tracks 'Community' and 'Reprise'. The originals you should know: 'Community'

is propulsive tabla-backed techno; 'Reprise', semiambient electronic blues. 'Community' also appears in demo form and remixed by Fort Romeau - only of interest to Panda-philes while 'Reprise' is given a hiphop shuffle by T Hemingway. The real gem is Panda's own 'If U Knew (Reprise Long Live Take)', which reimagines the original as a piece of reflective techno, more the soundtrack to staring out the window at the rain than a night out at Fabric. BEN CARDEW

Will It Stop SN1



One of Giggs' trademarks is this weird grunting

noise, as though he's rapping while struggling under the weight of something incredibly heavy. Grindingly dark subject matter, perhaps. The cover of his third album shows a postapocalyptic vision of his native London, and it's pretty much the same

story with the music. Giggs raps in his flat monotone about "feds" and "niggaz" in a string of bleak scenarios over creeping beats and sparse, doom-laden sonics. The only respite is when he pauses briefly to praise a woman friend on 'Best Pussy'. The whole thing is so over the top it's actually guite funny. The result is an entertaining album, although not always in the way its maker probably intended. CHRIS COTTINGHAM

Bipolar Sunshine **Drowning Butterflies EP**

The Aesthetic/Polydor



Former Kid British vocalist Adio Marchant has

blossomed since shaking off the indie-ska shackles of his former band, and this second EP is further proof. As Bipolar Sunshine, Marchant writes kitchensink dramas of the shimmering synth-pop

variety, and he seems to relish that he can be a great deal more creative in his new guise. 'Drowning Butterflies' is infused with a dash of reggae, Ladysmith Black Mambazo vocal harmonies add warmth to 'Love More Worry Less' and hazy swirls of ethereal electronica make 'Trouble' one of his best songs yet. But what holds everything together is Marchant's ability to tell a vivid tale that swings from introspective lows to optimistic highs. SIMON BUTCHER

Grass House A Sun Full And Drowning

Marshall Teller



The world according to Grass House is an extremely

bleak one indeed. Not for them fun and frolics; instead an autumnal fog cloaks their debut album and its tales of nature, art and how the world will dick you over in the end. The hotly tipped Yorkshire foursome draw on Nick Cave, Johnny Cash, Tom Waits and other grizzled

men with a penchant for thorny blues and all-black clothing, but in spite of that it's not all grim: the band imbue these transparent influences with chiming indie guitars and the hazy vibrato of a '60s-era organ. It's grand, too - the backing vocals recall monks chanting and the odd choir slips in and out of proceedings. But any attempt at bombast is pinned down by singer Liam Palmer's weary baritone and wry poetry. Intriguingly glum.

KATE HUTCHINSON

Josephine Foster I'm A Dreamer Fire



Following a fragmented collection of songs based on

Emily Dickinson poems then two Spanish-language albums made with her husband, ghostly American folkist Josephine Foster delivered 'conventional' album 'Blood Rushing' last year. Scare quotes are necessary because Foster's hand-cranked wyrd-folk is scarcely 'conventional' by most standards. But 'I'm A Dreamer' is another stellar effort, perhaps a career high: recorded in Nashville with several session hands, it largely avoids the town's country legacy. There's pedal steel aplenty, and mournful balladry, but the off-centre clanking piano and lyrical soul-searching in songs like 'My Wandering Heart' are equal parts Tom Waits and Nico, while remaining individual and moving. NOEL GARDNER

Gentlemen Night Reels 1 EP



The current psych movement that's given us

everyone from Tame Impala to Toy is fast becoming oversubscribed. Before it all implodes, though, London-based five-piece Gentlemen are making their case with their own drug-addled hooks. 'Late Nacht' is pure Tame, dark, fuzzed-up riffs tearing out over languid drums, while 'Children Of The Setting Sun' takes Jagwar Ma's forging of '60s girl group with modern experimental pop and runs with it. Closer 'Duke (Oddity)' is the most out-there, though, brothers Paul and Edward Housden's vocals stripped away to leave a tripped-out meander through a dazed soundscape. This debut EP is pretty blissed out, but Gentlemen's place in the psych resurgence feels a bit peripheral.

RHIAN DALY

The Beatles

On Air – Live At The BBC Volume

A second collection of Fab Four Beeb performances will be a hit

stocking filler for Beatlemaniacs

In the early '60s, The Beatles were as common a sight in the halls of the BBC as new director generals are now, meaning the corporation have vast quantities of Beatles performances in their vaults. In 1994 the release of 'Live At The BBC' was big news.

Before the exhaustive 'Anthology' series that followed, these were the first 'new' Beatles recordings heard in 24 years. Arriving on the cusp of Britpop, it helped reaffirm the Fab Four's position as toppermost of the poppermost. At over two hours long, you might assume that album involved every last scraping from the BBC's Beatles cupboard, but not so. Nearly 20 years on, a second volume has arrived, featuring more than 40 performances from BBC radio broadcasts in 1963 and 1964.

The tracklisting includes covers of blues and rock'n'roll hits ('Roll Over Beethoven', 'Long Tall Sally'), early Beatles tracks ('I Want To Hold Your Hand', 'If I Fell'), long forgotten rarities ('Happy Birthday Dear Saturday Club') and chit-chat with plummy voiced announcers. Given its proliferation of short skits and vast quantity of songs, the album has the madcap tracklisting of a hip-hop mixtape, but with more Everly Brothers covers.

At this early point in their career, the Beatles' studio technique was to turn up, switch on the tape and - bingo two-and-a-half minutes later a hit was born. The method for recording these BBC specials - turn up to the studio, joke around for a bit, record a few tunes - was not so different, so the overall quality of the tracks here is very good. It's not an essential purchase, but a hit stocking-filler for the Beatlemaniac in your life. DAN STUBBS



► THE DETAILS

▶RELEASE DATE November 11 ▶LABEL Apple ▶PRODUCER Terry Henebery, lan Grant, Peter Pilbeam, Jimmy Grant, Bernie Andrews, Bryant Marriott, Pete Dauncey, Brian Willey ▶LENGTH 2:09:55 ▶TRACKLISTING ▶1. And Here We Are Again ▶2. Words Of Love ▶3. How About It, Gorgeous? ▶4. Do You Want To Know A Secret ▶5. Lucille ▶6. Hey, Paul... ▶7. Anna (Go To Him) ▶8. Hello! ▶9. Please Please Me ▶10. Misery ▶11. I'm Talking About You ▶12. A Real Treat ▶13. Boys ▶14. Absolutely Fab ▶15. Chains ▶16. Ask Me Why ▶17. Till There Was You ▶18. Lend Me Your Comb ▶19. Lower 5E ▶20. The Hippy Hippy Shake ▶21. Roll Over Beethoven ▶22. There's A Place ▶23. Bumper Bundle ▶24. PS I Love You ▶25. Please Mister Postman ▶26. Beautiful Dreamer ▶27. Devil In Her Heart ▶28. The 49 Weeks ▶29. Sure

To Fall (In Love With You) ▶30. Never Mind, Eh? ▶31. Twist And Shout ▶32. Bye, Bye ▶33. John - Pop Profile ▶34. George - Pop Profile DISC TWO: ▶1. I Saw Her Standing There ▶2. Glad All Over ▶3. Lift Lid Again ▶4. I'll Get You ▶5. She Loves You ▶6. Memphis, Tennessee ▶7. Happy Birthday Dear Saturday Club ▶8. Now Hush, Hush ▶9. From Me To You ▶10. Money (That's What I Want) ▶11. I Want To Hold Your Hand ▶12. Brian Bathtubes ▶13. This Boy ▶14. If I Wasn't In America ▶15. Got A Woman ▶16. Long Tall Sally ▶17. If I Fell ▶18. A Hard Job Writing Them ▶19. And I Love Her ▶20. Oh, Can't We? Yes We Can ▶21. You Can't Do That ▶22. Honey Don't ▶23. I'll Follow The Sun ▶24. Green With Black Shutters ▶25. Kansas City/Hey-Hey-Hey-Hey! ▶26. That's What We're Here For ▶27. I Feel Fine ▶28. Paul - Pop Profile ▶29. Ringo - Pop Profile ▶BEST TRACK Chains



BIRTH

SCHOOL

METALLICA

DEATH

RELEASE DATE

Out now

PUBLISHER

Volume one of the metal titans' history is light on mythology and painstaking in its accuracy

In 1981, before Metallica took off, Lars Ulrich used to deliver copies of the *Los Angeles Times* for \$400 a month, while James Hetfield made stickers for pharmaceuticals at the Steven Label Corporation in Santa Fe Springs. If you consider what I've just told you a spoiler, then *Birth School*

I've just told you a spoiler, then *Birth School Metallica Death* is very much the book for you. This weighty tome is just volume one of Paul Brannigan and Ian Winwood's exhaustive and impressively thorough band biography. There's an old Milton Jones joke about losing his job as a cricket commentator by uttering the sentence "I won't bore you with the details", but that's not a sentiment Brannigan and Winwood ever seem likely to express. It's not that the book is ever boring, necessarily, it's just that sometimes it can feel like you're living through the Metallica story in real time.

Its dedication to the details is admirable, though. The book corrects an LA anecdote about Ulrich and Nikki Sixx from Mötley Crüe getting into a bar brawl. In reality, we discover, the early Metallica line-up were sitting on a car outside LA's Troubadour, with no money to get in, when Mötley

Crüe tottered past. Metallica shouted: "You guys suck!" and Nikki Sixx and co just flicked a cigarette at them, unable to even muster much contempt, never mind raise a fist in anger. The correction serves to illustrate the two bands' relative fame at the beginning of the '80s, but the way it's told also tells you something about the book itself: while Mötley Crüe's epic and self-mythologising rock confessional *The Dirt* never let the facts get in the way of a good story, Brannigan and Winwood have set

out on an admirable search for the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

To that end, there's plenty of early material on Ulrich's complicated relationship with his (present, tennis champion) father, and more on James Hetfield's still more complicated relationship with his (absent) father. No dressing room is left unscoured on our journey through to the release of the Black Album in 1991, taking in the tragic death of bassist Cliff Burton in 1986. While Brannigan and Winwood make no secret of the high esteem they hold their heroes in, they don't gloss over their occasional missteps.

Volume two of this biography is due next year.

If, as the title suggests, Metallica will be your chief occupation between finishing education and climbing into the grave, then both volumes will be a 10/10 must-read. For the rest of us, it's more like a... KEVIN EG PERRY

PLAY IT AGAIN

RECENTLY RATED IN NME

MIA Matangi

"MIA has reminded us exactly why she's important: a hyperintuitive artist with a mongrel sensibility who bows to no one. 'Matangi's R&B psychodrama is poignant." (NME, November 2)

Connan Mockasin

Caramel

"Eleven opportunities for the New Zealander to experiment with gloopy singing, sleepy guitar solos and Asian women chanting 'C-O-N-N-A-N'. It'll rock you into an unsettling trance."
(NME, November 2)

Pusha T My Name Is My Name

"Pusha T is yet to find overground fame, but 'My Name Is My Name' should change that. It's crammed with memorable lines and its finest moments are the realest shit."
(NME, October 26)

Ryan Hemsworth

Guilt Trips

"Inspired by different high-school cliques – and, by the sounds of it, a deep love for Donkey Kong – 'Guilt Trips' flirts with breathy R&B and intricate electronica."

(NME, October 19)

Euros Childs Situation Comedy

"It leaves behind the experiments and oddities of recent years for a set of witty piano-pop songs, and ends with the 14-minute 'Trick Of The Mind', perhaps Childs' most beautiful song ever."
(NME, October 19)

Eraas Initiation Felte



Classic postpunk tension imbued the cinematic sprawl of

Robert Toher and Austin Stawiarz's much-lauded self-titled 2012 debut. The Brooklyn duo's follow-up creates the same eerie feeling of unseen eyes on the back of the listener's neck, at the same time as expanding on its predecessor's rather gothic overtones. Weirdly, though, 'Initiation' shares far more in common with the musical DNA of 1990s Bristol than 2013 New York City, with its slouching trip-hop beats and the thick, dubby basslines that most noticeably slink through 'The Dream' and skip around on 'Guardian/ Descent'. But the band's real majesty comes in placing ghostly vocals, hissing field recordings and phonographic samples around these rhythm parts like cobwebs. SIMON JAY CATLING

Various Artists Inside Llewyn Davis OST

Nonesuch



Filmmakers
Joel and
Ethan Coen
and longtime
collaborator

T Bone Burnett have solid form with soundtracks. Just like the trio's O Brother, Where Art Thou? effort, the music for Inside Llewyn Davis paints a vivid picture of another time and place, this time focusing on New York City's Greenwich Village in the '60s rather

than a depression-era Deep South. Cameos from Justin Timberlake, Marcus Mumford and Carey Mulligan lend the folksy record some star quality, but the real revelation is Oscar Isaac, who plays the struggling singer-songwriter of the movie's title. His ballsy vocals make their robust presence felt on half of the 14 tracks, and Bob Dylan fanboys will lap up the previously unreleased version of his 1963 song 'Farewell'.

LEONIE COOPER





It's at this point, three songs in, that Pierce chooses to thank everyone for coming and announces that there are only two songs left. This is a lie. Pierce says it because he likes

their own amusement.

SETLIST

- ► Cooking Up Something Good ► The Stars Keep
- On Calling My Name

 ▶ Rock And Roll

 Night Club
- ▶ Ode To Viceroy
 - ► Annie
- ▶ I'm A Man ▶ Robson Girl
- Cocaine (JJ Cale cover)
- ► Freaking Out The Neighborhood► Baby's Wearin
 - Blue Jeans

 Me And Jon
 - Hanging On ▶ She's Really All I Need
- ► Takin' Care Of Business (Bachman Turner Overdrive cover)
- ▶ Blackbird (The
- Beatles cover)

 ▶ Break Stuff (Limp

 Bizkit cover)
- ► Stairway To Heaven (Led Zeppelin cover)
- ► Enter Sandman
- (Metallica cover) ► She's Really All
- I Need (Reprise)
 ► Still Together
- ► My Kind Of Woman

e. Pierce says it because he likes "fucking with the crowd", but it's also part of a larger strand that runs through the Mac DeMarco show. They'd never spell it out so prosaically, but when you're watching them you're watching an incredibly tight and talented band deconstruct your expectations of a rock show. They play with all the formalities and tropes that you're used to seeing at a gig, and then twist them into new shapes for

It's there when Mac introduces 'Ode To Viceroy' as 'Pee Pee Pee Pee Sauce', and it's there when Pierce halts the gig to run through a bad toilet-humour pastiche of observational stand-up. It's there when they cover The Beatles' 'Blackbird' and twist and tear it into a heavy metal screamer or sing 'Stairway To Heaven' in a ridiculous falsetto. It works because the audience are in on the joke, too. When Mac dives into the crowd during 'Still Together' and loses a shoe, the crowd is quick to return it and he surfs back to the stage with the sweaty trainer flopping out of his mouth like a distended tongue.

Afterwards, the band all put their lack of rustiness down to "muscle memory". They're back doing what they do best, and they

all have wide grins on their faces that reflect those on the faces of the sold-out crowd as they shuffle out. By not taking anything too earnestly, they've become a seriously great band. It's all, as Mac would say, "very chill".

KEVIN EG PERRY



MORE GIGS

Girls Names Korova, Liverpool

Monday, October 28 It's little over 28 hours since the announcement of Lou Reed's death, and in a seedy underground club in Liverpool. Belfast's Girls Names are dedicating their set to the former Velvet Underground leader. The quartet take their inspiration from Reed's uncompromising 1975 'Metal Machine Music', and rattle through their brittle mix of garage-rock and post-punk without pause. They lean heavily on tracks from this year's album 'The New Life' and EP 'The Next Life', and throw in a cover of Brian Eno's 'Third Uncle', Each bleak and feckless drone melts into the next. They finish on their record's wailing and feedbackheavy title track, a song as sour as everyone's feeling about Lou. JAMIE CROSSAN

Baroness Electric Ballroom, London

Thursday, October 24 "Good to see so many new faces," says wild-bearded mountain man John Baizley, squinting out at a sold-out Electric Ballroom. Not to get too sentimental. but Baizley's probably pretty stoked to be here at all. Last year Baroness' tourbus toppled from a viaduct near Bath, and for a while the band's future hung in the balance. But these Georgia rockers are very much 'what doesn't kill me' types, and tonight they bask in the healing capacities of the gnarly riff. Rugged chuggers like 'Board Up The House' are their strongest suit, but there's new poignancy to the introspective 'Foolsong', and when Baizlev lifts his guitar overhead in triumph, it looks less like clichéd rock posing, more a celebration of human endurance.

Warpaint

O2 ABC, Glasgow Monday, October 28

Despite losing their gear before the show, the LA quartet unveil a handful of alluring new songs

> Rock'n'roll's flag flies at half-mast. It's the day after the world lost Lou Reed. and despite the best efforts of the house DJ who's spinning wall-towall Velvet Underground, no-one seems much in the mood for revelry. Strangely enough, this seems to work in Warpaint's favour. Like all bands born of the dark stuff, the LA quartet owe a sizeable debt to The Velvet Underground. Compounded with their unflappably cool, Reedesque aloofness – even in the face of all their gear going AWOL and being forced to muddle through with their support act's – their return to these shores makes for a fitting send-off on this most sombre of Monday nights.

A few hours earlier, the teasing, labyrinthine 'Love Is To Die' - the first single from the band's longawaited second LP - appeared online, and though we're still a few months away from the album itself, it seems safe to say that while some things have changed, the important things remain more or less the same. Warpaint are still that unattainable wallflower blooming in darkened party recesses, careful never to make the first move and seeming to keep the world at arm's length. Their songs are long, crushed-velvet spin-cycles that you have to want to get lost in; 'Undertow' and one or two others

SETLIST	BEES	COMPOSURE	Н
choog woh			

LOUIS PATTISON



aside, there's rarely an easy hook to reorient

yourself with if you zone out on Twitter while

they're busy exploring the outer reaches. That

this is only their fourth British gig in two years

The handful of new tracks they preview

xx, and 'Hi' - which pivots around Jenny Lee

Lindberg's bassline and a brittle electronic

beat - certainly resembles that band. The

other standout, 'Love Is To Die' (or not die -

the song can't seem to make up its mind) sees

them dabbling in saturnine R&B, a tenebrous

are very much in keeping with that ethos.

Warpaint's understanding of space and

mastery of billowing atmospherics can occasionally put you in mind of an earthier

merely adds to their mystique.

THE VIEW FROM THE CROWD

Emily Goodwin, 34, London
"They obviously had a few
technical glitches going on,
but I think that might actually
have made it better: it seemed more
human, more real. The new songs have
a slightly different sound from the old
ones and they'll take a while to get into,
but I really liked them."

Rachel Forbes, 26, Edinburgh
"I thought it was fantastic
– it was very atmospheric and
dramatic, and I thought they
seemed very dynamic onstage. The new
songs seemed very different, there was
a lot of darkness to them, and they had
quite a dancey feel."

Jessica Gunn, 27, Glasgow
"My favourite thing about
the gig was probably the
support act, Pins. Warpaint
were... fine. I was a wee bit disappointed,
to be honest. I found them a bit too
wishy-washy."

Stefano Pia, 25, Glasgow
"I love them on record
and I'd been really looking
forward to this gig, but I
thought Warpaint sounded pretty flat
tonight – a bit too much like background
ambience. I wasn't really into it."

Wayman's promise that "this can only go one way" is as alluring as it is deceptive. One gig isn't enough to make any judgements – this is a group whose songs rarely surrender their secrets on the first listen.

hall of mirrors

where Theresa

How the loss of their gear affects the show is difficult to gauge. There's a collective facepalm when they flub the intro to 'Undertow' ("It's the remix," deadpans drummer Stella Mozgawa, "This is some Swedish House Mafia shit!"), but the way they improvise on 'Elephant' suggests that, by the end of the set, they've overcome any initial trepidation. The dynamic that

Q&A

Stella Mozgawa

Drummer

Did playing with the support band's kit affect the show?

"It was a bit like having to wear your brother's clothes on a first date! Basically, our gear went missing and we still don't know what's going on with it. One case is still unaccounted for, and we don't know what it is – it could be a \$4,000 keyboard or it could be a pedal box. But we survived and we still had fun."

How come the album's taken so long?

"Basically we'd been touring for longer than we thought. There wasn't time to knuckle down and start on the record until the beginning of last year, but then life gets in the way – we had to wait for Flood, our producer, to find time in his schedule, and we only officially started recording it in January this year."

Are you feeling confident about playing the new songs?

"Since we finished the album, we've only played maybe seven shows, but we've rehearsed the new songs so much that they almost feel like old songs. They're starting to fit in really well with the rest of the set. I think."

underpins it all – the rhythm section of Lindberg and Mozgawa – definitely isn't knocked out of step by whatever technical issues they're experiencing, as their performance on the Cali-psych swirl of 'Beetles' attests. When they click like this – and when Wayman and Emily Kokal weave their spindly guitar lines atop it all – it's hard not to feel

engulfed and immersed, even as you struggle to work out how one song fragment somehow manages to morph into another. Yet it's when their voices, rather than instruments, combine that the gig's most transcendent moment takes place. On 'Billie Holiday', the four of them breathily coo the lyrics to Mary Wells' 'My Guy' like sirens softly beckoning you towards the rocks, sinister and unsettling, yet utterly irresistible. If old Laughing Lou himself were here, you suspect even that famously dour visage might crack a smile. BARRY NICOLSON

KEEP IT HEALTHY	UNDERTOW	BURGUNDY	LOVE IS TO DIE	NO WAY OUT	BILLIE HOLIDAY	MAJESTY	ELEPHANTS	BEETLES	KRIMSON

Ferdinand

XFM Presents with Ford SYNC - in aid of War Child The Garage, London Tuesday, October 29

Older, wiser and revitalised but with as much energy, confidence and sense of theatre as ever

In December 2005 Franz Ferdinand played four nights back-to-back at Alexandra Palace in north London, to a total audience in the region of 25,000. Tonight, a couple of miles down the road, the Glasgow four-piece are performing at The Garage in Highbury, capacity around the 500 mark. They'd be forgiven for feeling like it's a bit of a comedown. In fact, nothing could be further from the truth. Alex Kapranos and band are back where they belong. Hugeness never really sat very well with them. Tonight they're on a stage smaller than some drum risers they've used in the past, and they look great.

Image was always an important part of Franz Ferdinand, from the Soviet constructionistinspired artwork on their second album. 2005's 'You Could Have It So Much Better', to the snake-hipped Dior Homme outfits. It still is. Guitarist Nick McCarthy is a pictureperfect image of a '60s rocker in a patchdappled denim jacket and Brylcreemed quiff. Kapranos looks incredibly suave in a fitted black shirt, his fringe flopping just so. He used to be as coy as Geri Halliwell about his age, but he doesn't look a second older than the day the band released their debut single, 'Darts Of Pleasure', in 2003, or, for that matter, a pound heavier. He's 41.

Not that it would count for much if they'd become a flabby live act. Kapranos says a quick "hello", then they launch into 'Bullet' from

Rights Words, Right Action'. They attack the song like people keen to get on with things. It's instantly clear that they've still got the energy, confidence and sense of theatre that made them such a compelling live band in the first place. They've often been better live than on record and that's true at points tonight. Recent single 'Evil Eye' is stripped down, weirder and tenser, McCarthy's tremulous synths giving the track a gothic feel that's darker than the goofy, schlock-horror studio version. 'Take Me Out' gets the biggest reaction of the night. As Kapranos' wiry guitar line winds down the tempo into the fist-pumping main riff the whole place starts pogoing in unison. It's like 2004 all over again.

Franz Ferdinand have always done humour well: there's always been a wink to let you know they don't take themselves and their art school stylings too seriously. Explaining why a friend is standing in for bassist Robert Hardy, Kapranos jokes, "Bob is in a better place - Glasgow." When they pull 'Evil Eye' up to an abrupt stop, wrong-footing the crowd, Kapranos laughs, as if to say, "Ha, got ya." And when he turns his back to the audience and sings over his shoulder on 'Walk Away', there's a grin playing about his face. He knows it's a bit daft, but that's half the fun.

The only bum note they strike is 'Can't Stop Feeling', which collapses into a sludge of dance-influenced four-four beats whose purpose seems to be to act as a bridge to a cover of Donna Summer's 1977 disco classic 'I Feel Love'. It's ponderous and over-worked, but instantly remedied with new track 'Brief Encounters'.

Following 2009's lacklustre album three 'Tonight: Franz Ferdinand', a record as uninspired as the title, there didn't seem like much of a future for Kapranos and co. The four years since has completely revitalised them. Maybe they just needed to remind themselves why they were making music, which was not to fill sports arenas, but, as they famously said, "to make records that girls can dance to". They're back in touch with the spirit of that founding principle. Back where they started, in other words. It's an exciting place to be.

CHRIS COTTINGHAM







EVIL

DO YOU

STAND ON

BRIEF







THE VIEW FROM THE CROWD

Yves Aaron, 4. London "I think the new

songs stand up to the older ones. It feels like on each record they are evolving and doing something new. They are always interesting."

Dan O'Connell. 26. Londor "It feels like we're so far away from that wave of early '00s indie dancefloor-fillers, of Franz Ferdinand and Maximo Park, but everyone was loving it. It still works."

Pauline Porter. "I've been a fan from the beginning, but this is the first time that I've seen them. They had so much energy, it was amazing. I'm on a real high."

LOVER	DBYE RS AND RNDS	RIGHT ACTION	DARTS OF PLEASURE		

Nick Cave And The Bad Seeds **Hammersmith Apollo**

Monday, October 28 The St Jude storm is raging outside, Nick Cave And The Bad Seeds are roaring inside and the stage at Hammersmith is rocking. A fervent 'We No Who UR' opens it, before the swaggering blues strut of 'Red Right Hand', a tempestuous 'Tupelo' and the eye-stingingly tender piano ballads 'God Is In The House' and 'Into My Arms' prove yet again that the Australians are masters of wild rock'n'roll poetry. The highlight is a dismantled rendition of 'Jubilee Street', which sees Warren Ellis smash his guitar, kick it away and pick up his violin for a reeling climax. No man in history has ever made that instrument look so badass. JENNY STEVENS

Destruction Unit Old Blue Last, London

Wednesday, October 23 The Arizonans live up to their name. Before the first chorus of the first song, the guy with the black metal T-shirt and the Sideshow Bob hair has ripped a string from his guitar. Minutes later, the one who looks like Johnny Knoxville's cousin is screaming at a mic stand bent over like a gallows. Guitars are rammed into the ceiling and tombstoned into the floor. It's psychedelic music, yes, but no hippies here: 'The World On Drugs' and 'God Trip' tear along at hardcore pacing, like Minor Threat's van spun off the road and crashed into an LSD lab. For Destruction Unit, the ultimate destination is either derangement or transcendence, and while the pedal's on the metal, there's no-one at the wheel.

LOUIS PATTISON

Circa Waves



The Liverpool band borrow all the good bits from the Ramones and The Vaccines

> Monumental things can happen in Birmingham. The very same pub where tonight's gig with Liverpool newcomers Circa Waves is taking place features a blue plaque next to its front door celebrating - or is it lamenting? - the fact that UB40 played their debut show here in 1979; at that point still a hot new band who hadn't yet unleashed a sea of shite. Upstairs, more than 50 record label executives are standing in front of the tiny stage awaiting the arrival of a band in a similar position - with many tipping Circa Waves to be next year's Arctic Monkeys.

> There are zero actual fans in attendance, and the atmosphere is deader than one of Ali Campbell's solo gigs - so credit to the four hoodied men in their mid-twenties who barge their way in through the same door as everybody else and casually pick

up their guitars as if they're still in the rehearsal room. And credit to their leader, singer Kieran Shudall, for sidling up to his mic and "ssshhhhh"-ing the assembled throng with more than a hint of irony. Within about three seconds of him doing so the entire room is totally silent and

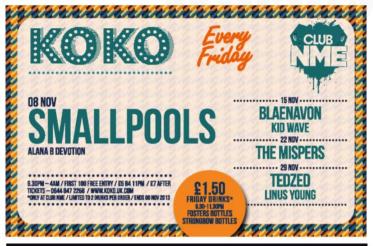
staring back at him, so the band kick straight into 'Young Chasers', the Buzzcocks-meets-Bloc Party shebang that started this whole melee roughly six months ago after it was uploaded to Soundcloud as a bedroom demo.

Circa Waves are all about intensity, but not in a savage way. Every song's a race to the finish line, as Shuddall holds his guitar up high and jitters into constantly pogo-ing bassist Sam Rourke. From left to right the band look and play uncannily like a threeheaded noughties indie supergroup (Bill Ryder-Jones, Alex Turner, Drew McConnell), while earringed drummer Sian Plummer keeps things speedy (always speedy) at the back. As a show of confidence they play the only three songs anyone knows first, staring the audience down as they do so. Despite being overtly poppy (Shudall has a way with a radio-friendly chorus), all three tracks seem to have been birthed from the mind of someone who's watched way too many Ramones documentaries and was at all the right early gigs by The Vaccines, Bombay Bicycle Club and Palma Violets.

The five songs that follow are just as strong, and despite the whole thing lasting just 25 minutes the band captivate throughout. They're not completely there yet - at times the backing vocals veer wildly off key - but stick an audience of paying punters in front of them and watch Circa Waves

SETLIST

- ▶ Young Chasers ▶ Get Away
- ▶ Good For Me Stuck In My Teeth
- ► Know One
- Catch My Breath ▶ Fossils ▶ My Love





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SPECIAL GUESTS

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Saturday 8 February

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Tuesday 11 February

SPECIAL GUESTS

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SPECIAL GUESTS

O2 SHEPHERDS BUSH EMPIRE Saturday 26 April

JAGWAR

SPECIAL GUESTS

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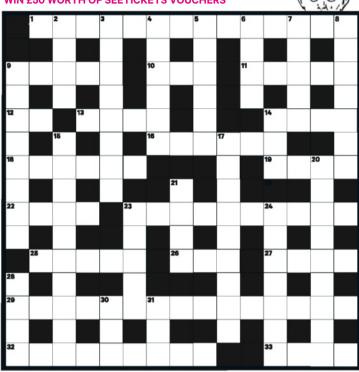
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CLUES ACROSS

1+23A Chyrches, graveyards, religious faiths (3-5-2-4-3-7)

9+10A Hard mint crunched up through The Duckworth Lewis Method (5-3)

11 "Why would you pay to see me in a cage some men call the ____ __", from Babyshambles' 'Killamangiro' (5)

12+4D "You don't have_ _, we don't need each other now", 2012 (2-6)

13 Album by Joni Mitchell or single by The Verve (4) 14 A bit of hippy rock from

Kings Of Leon (4) 16 Recent US Number One that was actually nothing to

do with Queen or Prince (6) 18 A capital place to be for The Walkmen (6)

19 'Glow & Behold' their not so tasty music (4)

22+8D No more music to come from Apollo 440 (4-3-4)

23 (See 1 across)

25 "Is it something worse that sends me down to the

though I know the is dry", Bruce

Springsteen (5) 26 Keep a lookout for Belle & Sebastian's compilation

The Third ___ Centre (3) 27 Band named as NME's

Godlike Geniuses in 2009 (4) 29 Imagine Dragons to be at the North Pole (2-3-2-3-5)

32 Guy in solo arrangement on a Dusty Springfield sona (6-3)

33 Screaming Trees' album is part of the old US today (4)

CLUES DOWN

2 They arrived to stay 'Forever' last year with their debut release (4) 3 A feeling of intense hatred

towards Bastille (3-5) 4 (See 12 across)

5 "Until you come back where you belong it's just another lonely __ Hurts (6)

6+21D Kasabian quickly exploded on to the scene with this EP (4-4)

7+28D Paul Weller's album tracks have lousy mix (5-4)

8 (See 22 across)

9 Airborne Toxic Event number is unaffected by ane (8)

14 Number one hitmaker who used a bit of

psychology (3) 15 'Party Fears Two' of Billy Mackenzie's colleagues (10)

17 She looked heavenly to Roxy Music (5-4)

20 Hazel O'Connor album on which she does an additional version of someone else's song? (5-4)

21 (See 6 down) 23 Confused Gary gets

nothing from '80s Manchester soul band (5)

24 Hip people band of the '60s featuring future Yes guitarist Steve Howe (2-5)

28 (See 7 down) 30 What's the point of a Yeah Yeah Yeahs performance? (3)

31 Martin ___ of ABC or his brother Jamie ___ of Earl Brutus (3)

of The Clash was born in Turkey?

1 Which member

2 What is John Peel's autobiography called?

3 In 1992, Bruce Springsteen released two albums on the same day. Name them.

4 Which is the only Oasis UK Number One single to not mention the title in the lvrics?

> 5 In which American TV series did Lady Gaga have a very small role in one episode?

6 At which venue did The Jam play their last UK show in 1982?

7 Which member of The Verve is facing the other way from the band on the cover of their 1997 album 'Urban Hymns'?

8 Which band's 1996 debut single was called The Grave And The Constant'?

9 For which 2001 American movie did Belle & Sebastian compose the soundtrack?

10 With which single did Pet **Shop Boys** last have a UK Number One?

11 In the 2011 Muppets movie, who briefly replaces

the anger managementbound Animal as the band's drummer?

12 Till Linderman is the singer in which band?

13 True or false: The Strokes have never played Glastonbúry festival.

14 In which year was Jake Bugg born?

15 Name the four hands who went out on the first ever NME Awards tour in 1995.

THE NME COVER THAT I GONE AND DONE

■ by CHRIS SIMPSONS ARTIST



OCTOBER 5 ANSWERS

ACROSS 1+11A Why'd You Only Call Me When You're High, 9 Louise, 10 Tourist, 13 Nomad. 14 Unicorn, 16 Handy Man, 20 Amok, 22+18A Sloop John B, 25 Emo, 26 WOE, 28 Tusk, 30 Life,

DOWN 1 Walkmen, 2 Your Woman, 3 Yesterday, 5 Not Music, 6+23A You're No Good, 7 Alibi, 8 Let There Be Love, 12 You Talk, 15 No Hope, 16+4D Hung Up, 17+31A Dead Star, 18 Jools, 19 Is It Me, 21 Ono, 24 Opus, 26 War, 27 Elf, 29 KLF

Normal NME terms and conditions apply, available at NME.COM/terms. Cut out the crossword and send it, along with your name, address and email, marking the envelope with the issue date, before Tuesday, November 19, 2013, to: Crossword, NME, 9th Floor, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 OSU. Winners will be notified via email.

► GOING OUT. STAYING IN. MISSING NOTHING ■ EDITED BY RHIAN DALY



The hottest new tickets on sale this week

Loom

The rowdy grungers from the village of Harbury, near Stratford-Upon-Avon, are renowned for putting on uncompromising and aggressive live shows that usually see frontman Tarik Badwan leaping into fans' faces. Here's what to expect from their upcoming tour.

Why are you so confrontational at your live shows?

"It's a reaction against the dull live performances which currently plague the country. I've been at shows where the bands stand there hiding behind their instruments, just going through the motions. They look more bored than I am watching them. We choose to be confrontational because that's what our music feels like - it's raw, energetic, powerful. It really pisses me

off when I have to stand there putting so much effort into a song while the audience stares indifferently. It makes me want to jump in there and forcibly wake them up."

Have your performances ever gone wrong?

"I always get a few bruises. usually a swollen lip. I once did a flip off the stage and felt a shock up my spine when I landed. I couldn't move my neck to one side for a few days but I didn't let on at the time. I certainly didn't tone it down."

What's in store for Loom in 2014?

"There will be a Loom album. It might not be in keeping with the punk ethos, but we want to be a successful band. My hope is that our album blows all the halfbaked shit that dominates the

British music scene right out of the water."

▶THE DETAILS

►DATES London Windmill (December 3), Leeds Cockpit (6), Sheffield Great Gatsby (8), Birmingham Hare & Hounds (11), Derby The Venue (12), Harlow The Square (13), Exeter Cavern Club (14), Liverpool The Loft (15), St Albarns The Horn (17), Nottingham Bodega Social (18), Manchester The Castle (19)

▶SUPPORT ACTS TBC

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- ▶PRICE £5, except Liverpool, Nottingham and Birmingham £6, Harlow £4, Derby £3, Sheffield free
- ►ON SALE now ►FROM NME. com/tickets_except Exeter from wegottickets.com, St Albans from ticketweb.co.uk, Birmingham from theticketsellers.co.uk, Derby from gigantic.com and Harlow from

Warpaint

Expect current and new tracks when the Californians return next year to promote their selftitled second album.

- ► DATES Brighton Dome (January 23 2014), Oxford O2 Academy (25), Leeds O2 Academy (February 19), Liverpool O2 Academy (20), Bristol O2 Academy (21)
- SUPPORT ACTS TRO
- ▶PRICE £15; Brighton £16
- ►ON SALE now
- ▶ FROM NME.COM/tickets, except Liverpool and Bristol from seetickets.com and Oxford from livenation.co.uk

The Reflektors

Arcade Fire are ready to play new album 'Reflektor', and have asked fans to get dressed up in formal gear or a costume for the occasion.

- ►DATES London Roundhouse (November 11, 12), Glasgow Barrowland (15, 16), Blackpool Empress Ballroom (27)
- SUPPORT ACTS TBC
- ▶PRICE £30: London £37.50
- **►ON SALE** now
- ▶FROM Blackpool NME.COM/ tickets with £4 booking fee. London and Glasgow from ticketmaster.co.uk with £3-4.75 booking fee

Azealia Banks

The rapper returns to the UK, giving greater weight to the rumours that her debut album will finally be released in the first few months of 2014.

- ▶ DATES Glasgow O2 Academy (March 25 2014), Manchester Academy (26), Birmingham O2 Academy (27), London O2 Brixton Academy (29)
- ▶SUPPORT ACTS TBC
- ▶PRICE £18.50 except London £20
- ►ON SALE now
- ▶FROM NME.com/tickets with £1.85-2 booking fee, except Glasgow from ticketmaster. co.uk with £2.50 booking fee

UK GIG LISTINGS AND TICKETS AT NME.COM/TICKETS

Cass Mccombs

The Californian singersongwriter will play two special dates next year.

- ▶ DATES Bristol Colston Hall (January 8 2014) Manchester Deaf Institute (10), London Queen Elizabeth Hall (13)
- SUPPORT ACTS TBC
- ▶ PRICE Bristol £10, Manchester £9.50, London £14
- ►ON SALE now
- ▶ FROM Manchester NME.COM/ tickets with 95p booking fee, London from southbankcentre. co.uk with £1.75 booking fee, Bristol from colstonhall.org with 75p booking fee

Peggy Sue

The London-based trio will release third album 'Choir Of Echoes' in January and follow it up with a seven-date tour.

- ▶ DATES Brighton Green Door Store (April 7 2014), Manchester Soup Kitchen (9), Glasgow Broadcast (10), Liverpool Leaf (11), Sheffield The Harley (12), Bristol The Old Bookshop (14), London Oslo (15)
- SUPPORT ACTS TBC
- ▶ PRICE £8 except Sheffield £6, Brighton, Manchester and Glasgow £7, and London £10
- ►ON SALE now
- ▶ FROM NME.COM/tickets with 60p-£1.20 booking fee, except Brighton and Glasgow from facebook.com/peggysueband with £1 booking fee

Drake

Hip-hop's melancholic star hits the arenas in 2014. He'll bring pal The Weeknd along for the ride. DATES Manchester Phones

▶ DATES Manchester Phone: 4U Arena (March 11 2014), Sheffield Motorpoint Arena



(14), Glasgow Hydro (15), Nottingham Capital FM Arena (16), Birmingham NIA (20), Liverpool Echo Arena (22), London O2 Arena (24, 25)

- SUPPORT ACTS TBC
- ▶PRICE £46; London £52.50
- ►ON SALE now
- ►FROM NME.COM/tickets with £6.80-8.50 booking fee

Xfm Winter Wonderland

Jake Bugg and The Vaccines top the bill at the radio station's annual festive celebrations.

- ▶ DATES Manchester O2 Apollo (December 10), London O2 Brixton Academy (12)
- ► SUPPORT ACTS Primal
 Scream, The 1975, Kodaline,
 Josh Record and Darlia
 (Manchester), White Lies, Miles
 Kane, Chvrches, Lewis Watson

and Temples (London).

- ▶ PRICE Manchester £26.50; London £28.50
- ►ON SALE now
- ► FROM ticketmaster.co.uk with £2.85-4.50 booking fee

Wild Beasts

Wild Beasts preview new tracks from their third album, slated for 2014.

- ▶ DATES Liverpool O2 Academy (November 26), Nottingham Rescue Rooms (27), Oxford Academy 2 (28), Sheffield Queens Social (29), Norwich Arts Centre (30)
- ►SUPPORT ACTS TBC
- ▶PRICE £13.50; Oxford £14
- ON SALE now
- ▶ FROM NME.COM/tickets with £1.35-2.05 booking fee except Norwich from norwichartscentre.co.uk with #1.20 booking fee.

Speedy Ortiz

Sadie Depuis brings her band and her lauded debut LP 'Major Arcana' to the UK for the first time for six-dates with Joanna Gruesome.

▶ DATES Birmingham Hare &

- Hounds (February 13 2014), Leeds Brudenell Social Club (14), Glasgow Broadcast (15), Manchester Deaf Institute (16), London The Lexington (19), Brighton Green Door Store (20)
- ▶ SUPPORT ACTS TBC
- ▶PRICE £7; London £8.50
- ►ON SALE now
- ▶FROM NME.COM/tickets with 70p-£1.05 booking fee, except Glasgow from ticketweb.co.uk with £1 booking fee, Birmingham from theticketsellers.co.uk with £1 booking fee and London from stargreen.com with £1.05 booking fee

TOUR NEWS

Swim Deep

The Brummies (right) have been announced as main support for the second night of The Cribs' 'Cribsmas' events. Swim Deep get into the festive spirit in Leeds on **December 19. Brighton** psych trio The Wytches are first on the bill. Support for the night before (18) comes from Black Wire, the 2007 indie favourites who have reformed especially for the gig.

Phoenix

The French indie group (below) have added an extra London date to their February 2014 tour. The new date comes a fortnight before the rest of the tour, at O2 Academy Brixton on February 5.

Mogwai

They've just announcemed new album 'Rave Tapes' - their first since 2011's 'Hardcore Will Never Die But You Will' - and now Mogwai have added extra dates around its release in January. The Glaswegians will play **Newcastle Mill Volvo Tyne** Theatre (January 22) and **Manchester Bridgewater** Hall (27), alongside dates at London Royal Festival Hall (24, 25) and Glasgow Royal Concert Hall (28).









biggest UK tour yet this week

GOING OUT

Everything worth leaving the house for this week

Savages

Fresh from supporting rock monsters Queens Of The Stone Age in America, Savages return to the UK for their own stint of headline shows. Their debut album 'Silence Yourself' is one of the year's ferocious best, and these dates will be the last chance to experience its visceral post-punk onslaught in 2013.

- ▶ DATES London The Forum (November 6), Bristol Trinity Centre (7), Manchester The Ritz (9), Glasgow Classic Grand (10), Leeds Vox Warehouse (11)
- ▶ TICKETS £12.50 (except London £15 and Manchester £12.50) from NME.com/tickets with £1.25-£1.50 booking fee

Mount Kimbie

South London duo Dominic Maker and Kai Campos take their record 'Cold Spring Fault Less Youth' on the road. Guest star King Krule won't be joining them, but they'll still be delivering night after night of flawless postdubstep introspection.

▶ DATES Brighton Concorde 2 (November 6), Manchester The Ritz (7), Glasgow SWG3 (8), Bristol The Fleece (11), Leeds Uni Stylus (12) ►TICKETS £12.50 (except Brighton £10.50) from NME. com/tickets with £1.25-£1.50 booking fee. Bristol sold out

San Fermin

The post-rock/chamber-pop Brooklyn band

promote their self-titled debut. These are their first UK dates, so expect enthusiasm.

Savages head

▶ DATES Brighton
Sticky Mike's Frog Bar
(November 7), Manchester
Soup Kitchen (8), Sheffield
The Great Gatsby (9),
Glasgow Broadcast (10),
London The Lexington (11)

▶TICKETS Brighton £6, Manchester £7.50, London £8 from NME.COM/tickets with 90p-£1 booking fee. Glasgow £7 from ticketweb.co.uk with £1 booking fee. Sheffield free entry

Annie Mac Presents

BBC Radio 1 DJ Annie Mac curates another of her Presents... tours, this time featuring a who's who of emerging dance acts. Lulu James, MNEK, Duke Dumont and in-demand producer Cyril Hahn hit the road together, with more dates over the coming weeks.

► DATES Sheffield Foundry Studio Fusion (12)

►TICKETS £15 from seetickets. com with £2.25 booking fee

Julia Holter

The Domino-signed singer brings her majestic recent album 'Loud City Song' to the UK this week, with more shows to follow.

▶ DATES London Village Underground (November 11), Brighton Komedia (12)

►TICKETS London £13.50, Brighton £13 from NME.COM/ tickets with £1.30—£1.35 booking fee

Vampire Weekend

The New Yorkers begin their 'Modern Vampires Of The City' arena tour in Birmingham. Noah & The Whale support.

► DATES Birmingham NIA (November 12)

►TICKETS £28.50 from NME. COM/tickets with £3.35 booking fee

Unknown Mortal Orchestra

The psych-loving Kiwis have just released the acoustic EP 'Blue Record', but will be bringing all their electric gear to these dates in London and Manchester.

► DATES London Electric Ballroom (November 7), Manchester Gorilla (8)

►TICKETS Manchester £12 from NME.COM/tickets with £1.20 booking fee. London sold out

FIVE TO SEE FOR FREE

Thrills don't come cheaper than this

1. John Wizards

Rough Trade
East, London
South African
troupe play from
their self-titled LP.
Nov 6, 7pm

2. Cate Le Bon

Rise, Bristol
The singer
previews tracks
from third album
'Mug Museum'.

Nov 11, 7pm

3. Punk Collective

Pop Recs Ltd,
Sunderland
Caves, Warriors
and Onsite feature
at this all-dayer.

Nov 10, 12pm

4. Mt Wolf

Bungalows & Bears, Sheffield The London indie band take single 'Midnight Shallows' north.

Nov 6.8pm

5. Jackson Scott

Start The Bus, Bristol The US songwriter performs his weirdo lo-fi.

►Nov 6, 8pm





Iceaae

It's been two years since Danish punks Iceage last played The Old Blue Last. This week they finally return to play tracks from the albums 'New Brigade' and 'You're Nothing', and to hopefully bust out their recent cover of Sinead O'Connor's 'Jackie'.

- ► DATES London Old Blue Last (November 9)
- ►TICKETS £8 from billetto.co.uk with 50p booking fee

Jacco Gardner

Dutch psych dude Jacco Gardner impressed on his debut album 'Cabinet Of Curiosities' earlier this year. Join him as he recreates the songs that make up the record.

- ▶ DATES Manchester The Castle Hotel (November 6), Brighton Audio (7)
- ►TICKETS Manchester £6, Brighton £7 both from NME. com/tickets with £1 booking fee

Money

The Mancunian oddballs give the intricate grandeur of debut album 'The Shadow Of Heaven' another outing, taking in some of the lesser-visited venues of the UK.

- ▶ DATES London Hackney Secret Warehouse (November 6), Bristol Louisiana (7), Liverpool Blade Factory (8), Manchester Dancehouse (9), Leeds Belgrave Music Hall (11), Glasgow Poetry Club (12)
- ▶TICKETS London and Glasgow £10, Bristol and Liverpool £8, Manchester £11.50 and Leeds £7.50, all from NME.com/tickets with 75p-£1.15 booking fee



STAYING IN

The best music on TV, radio and online this week

Broken Bells

Lauren Laverne

Danger Mouse and The Shins' James Mercer are reunited and preparing the release of their second album 'After The Disco' for early next year. Here, they pay Lauren Laverne a visit to discuss the record, which is the follow-up to their 2010 self-titled debut.

▶LISTEN Nov 12, 10am, BBC 6Music

Bondax Huw Stephens

The teenage production duo take their house tunes into the Maida Vale studios. There won't be a crowd of ravers waiting to greet them, but they'll sure as hell make the airwayes bounce.

▶LISTEN Nov 6, 12am, BBC Radio 1

Alan McGee Mary Anne Hobbs

The former Creation Records boss, who is about to release his long-awaited autobiography, chats to Mary Anne about his colourful time at the helm of the label, and plays tracks from throughout his career as a music talent-spotter.

▶LISTEN Nov 10, 7am, BBC 6Music

Royal Blood John Kennedy

The promising Brighton duo are John Kennedy's One Night Stand, playing their juddering debut single 'Out Of The Black' and more to try and justify the hype.

►LISTEN Nov 6, 10pm, XFM

Lindsey Buckingham ...Talks Music

The Fleetwood Mac man sits down to talk about his long career, which has recently been rejuvenated with a series of reunion tours and growing rumours of a Glastonbury headline slot in 2014. He'll also play some of the tracks that have inspired or made an impression on him.

talk about their

new album on

►WATCH Nov 11, 9pm, Sky Arts 1

White Lies The Mixtape

The gloomy London trio begin a three-part series of artist takeovers on XFM with a playlist of their favourite tracks.

►LISTEN Nov 10, 8pm, XFM

Elvis Presley The Nation's Favourite Elvis Song

This new documentary explores Elvis' enormous impact on music through 20 of his classic songs, and features brand new interviews with his family and the musicians he inspired.

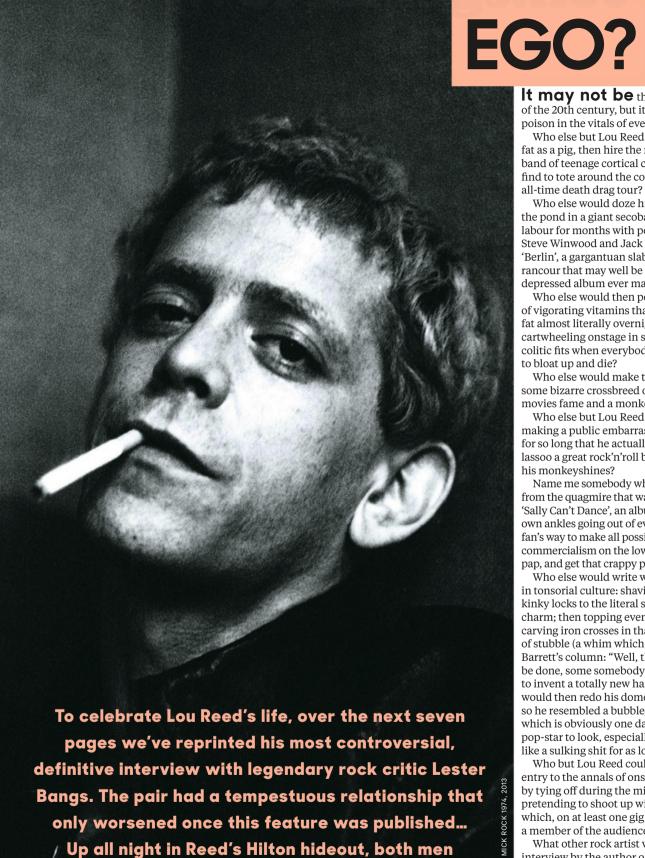
►WATCH Nov 8, 9pm, ITV





LOU REED IS A I COMPLETELY DEPRAVED PERVERT AND PATHETIC DEATH DWARF - A WASTED TALENT LIVING OFF THE DUMBELL NIHILISM A '70S GENERATION THAT DOESN'T ENERGY COMMIT SUICIDE

Lester Bangs, 1975



were determined to come out on top.

Photos by Mick Rock

It may not be the greatest word of the 20th century, but it's sure the driving poison in the vitals of every pop star.

Who else but Lou Reed would get himself fat as a pig, then hire the most cretinous band of teenage cortical cavities he could find to tote around the country on an all-time death drag tour?

Who else would doze his way back over the pond in a giant secobarbital capsule and labour for months with people like Bob Ezrin, Steve Winwood and Jack Bruce to puke up 'Berlin', a gargantuan slab of maggoty rancour that may well be the most depressed album ever made?

Who else would then poke his arm so full of vigorating vitamins that he lost all that fat almost literally overnight, practically cartwheeling onstage in spastic epic(ene) colitic fits when everybody expected him to bloat up and die?

Who else would make this gig looking like some bizarre crossbreed of Jerry Lewis of idiot movies fame and a monkey on cantharides?

Who else but Lou Reed could have survived making a public embarrassment of himself for so long that he actually managed to lassoo a great rock'n'roll band to back up his monkeyshines?

Name me somebody who would come back from the quagmire that was 'Berlin' to make 'Sally Can't Dance', an album that broke its own ankles going out of every seasoned Reed fan's way to make all possible concessions to commercialism on the lowest level of palatable pap, and get that crappy platter in the Top 10?

Who else would write whole new volumes in tonsorial culture: shaving his traditionally kinky locks to the literal skull for the simian charm; then topping even his own act by carving iron crosses in that mangy patch of stubble (a whim which put him in Rona Barrett's column: "Well, they said it couldn't be done, some somebody's finally managed to invent a totally new hairstyle...") Who else would then redo his dome Hitler Youth blonde so he resembled a bubblegum Kenneth Anger, which is obviously one damn cool way for a pop-star to look, especially if he's been looking like a sulking shit for as long as Lou had?

Who but Lou Reed could add a whole new entry to the annals of onstage tastelessness by tying off during the middle of 'Heroin' and pretending to shoot up with an actual syringe which, on at least one gig, he then handed to a member of the audience as a souvenir?

What other rock artist would put up with an interview by the author of this article, read the resultant vicious vitriol-spew with approval, and then invite me back for a second round because of course he's such a masochist he loved the hatchet in his back?

Not a living soul, that's who.

Why is this guy surviving, who has made a career out of terminal twitches ever since The Velvet Underground surfaced dead on arrival in 1966?

Well, for one thing, the Velvets emerged from under one of the many entrepreneurial wings of Andy Warhol, who has managed to accomplish more in this culture while acting (in public at least) like a total autistic nullnode than almost any other figure of the '60s.

Lou learned a lot from Andy, mainly about becoming a successful public personality by selling your own private quirks to an audience greedy for more and more geeks. The prime lesson he learned was that to succeed as this king of mass-consumed nonentity you must expertly erect walls upon walls to reinforce the walls that your own quirky vulnerability has already put there.

In other words, Lou Reed is a completely depraved pervert and pathetic death dwarf and everything else you want to think he is.

On top of that he's a liar, a wasted talent, an artist continually in flux, and a huckster selling pounds of his own flesh. A panderer living off the dumbbell nihilism of a '70s generation that doesn't have the energy to commit suicide.

Lou Reed is the guy that gave dignity and poetry and rock'n'roll to smack, speed, homosexuality, sadomasochism, murder, misogyny, stumblebum passivity, and suicide, and then proceeded to belie all his achievements and return to the mire by turning the whole thing into a monumental bad joke with himself as the woozily insistent Henny Youngman in the centre ring, mumbling punch lines that kept losing their punch.

Lou Reed is a coward and a sissy by any standard of his forebears such as Tennesse Williams and William Burroughs.

Lou Reed's enjoyed a solo career renaissance primarily by passing himself off as the most burnt-out reprobate around, and it wasn't all show by a long shot. People kept expecting him to die, so perversely he came back not to haunt them, as he perhaps would like to think (although I think he'd rather have another hit record, if he had to sing about it never raining in California to get it), but to clean up. In the sense of the market place.

A friend of mine who works in a record store in Cambridge, Mass, told me about the people who buy Lou Reed records: "You get like these 28-year-old straight divorcee types asking for 'Transformer' and The Velvet Underground... but the amazing thing is that suddenly there's all these 14-year-olds, coming in all wide-eyed: 'Hey, uh... do you have any Lou Reed records?"

Right. That spooky man, booga booga. Meanwhile, his chronic multiple abuses of the mind and body rise and fall according to the weather. He had the shakes all the way through his fat-man tour in spite of massive valium ingestion.

Blue Weaver on the recording of 'Berlin': "We went in and laid down all the instrumental tracks, the whole thing was done and sounded great. Then they brought Lou in. He can't do it straight, he's got to go down to the bar and then have a snort of this and that, and then they'd prop him up in a chair and let him start singing. It was supposed to be great, but something went wrong somewhere."

I had a friend working as a busboy in Max's Kansas City when Lou was in transit from blubber to his present emaciation, and the guy called me up one day: "Your boy (that's what he calls him) was in again last night... Jesus... he looks like an insect... or like something that belongs in an intensive care ward... almost no flesh on the bones, all the flesh that's there

OOTNOTE 1

Dance' is Reed's

highest-charting

Sally Can't

album in the

US, and for a

time, he seemed

to capture the

imagination of

America's record-

buying teenagers

a far cry from

the obscurity

Underground

anguished in.

ertainly a more

accessible record

association with

Bowie – who had

become big news

Sane' – may also

account for some

with 'Aladdin

of its success.

The Velvet

Sally Can't

Dance' was

than 'Berlin',

and Reed's

sort of dead and sallow and hanging, his eyes are always darting all over the place, his skull is shaved and you can see the pallor under the bristles, it looks like he's got iron plates implanted in his head... everybody agreed that they'd never seen anything as bad as this. Plus which all the waitresses hate him because he never tips."

Lou Reed is my hero principally because he stands for all the most screwed up things that I could ever possibly conceive of. Which probably only shows the limits of my imagination.

The central heroic myth of the sixties was the burnout. Live fast, be bad, get messy, die young. More than just "hope I die before I get old", it was a whole cool stalk we had down or tried to get. Partially it has to do with the absolute nonexistence of real, objective, straightarrow, head-held-high, noble,

achieving heroes.

Myself, I always wanted to emulate the most screwed up bastard I could see, at least vicariously. As long as he did it with some sense of style.

The pair's

previous

encounter had

when Bangs

was sent to

profile Reed for the short-lived

British magazine Let It Rock. In

his piece, Bangs complained that

Reed was "still

legend now, but

eople are going

to get tired damn

fast of a legend

who slunks out

sings his songs

as if he's falling

asleep, forgets

the words half

the time, stands

as still as if he's embalmed except

for remembering

minutes or so to

wiggle his ass or

wave his hand

really the time

to do it or not"

whether it's

every five

with a bunch of

blobs behind him,

riding on the

come in late 1973

Thus Lou Reed. Getting off vicariously on various forms of deviant experience compensated somehow for the emptiness of our own drearily "normal" lives. It's like you never want to see the reality; it's too clammy watching someone shoot up junk and turn blue. It ain't like listening to the records.

That's why Lou Reed was necessary. And what may be even more important is that he had the good sense (or maybe just brain-rot, hard to tell) to realise that the whole concept of sleaze, "decadence", degeneracy was a joke and turned himself into a clown, the Pit into a puddle. Any numbskull can be a degenerate, but not everybody realises that even now; like Jim Morrison, Lou realised the implicit

absurdity of the rock'n'roll bette noir badass pose, and parodied, deglamorised it. Though that may be given him too much credit. Most probably he had no idea what he was doing, which was half the mystique.

Anyway, he made a great bozo, a sort of Eric Burdon of sleaze. The persistent conceit of Lou's recent press releases - that he's the "street poet of rock'n'roll" - just may be true in an unintended way. The street, after all, is not



the most intellectual place in the world. In fact, it's littered with dopey jerkoffs and putzes of every stripe.

Dunceville. Rubbery befuddlement.
And Lou is the king of 'em all, y'all.
Yep, the Champ was coming to town and
I was ready for battle. I guzzled Scotch by the
case and chewed valiums like Juiubes.

Mostly I just listened to my Velvets record and what I could stand of 'Sally Can't Dance', and boned up on my insults.

Word had filtered back to me that the Original Miscreant had gotten a good hoot out of the last slash job I did on him. People were speaking in hushed tones of "a love-hate relationship... it's incredible", stammered Dennis Katz, Lou's manager, whose brother Steve graduated from Blood, Sweat & Tears to producing Lou Reed albums which should give you some indication of what happened to a functioning Underground Movement in America

Now, I'll admit that I'm flattered by the fact that one of my heroes has become one of my fans but I must flatly dismiss all the 'love-hate' folderol as pure hype. The promoters rigged it up.

The fact is that Lou, like all heroes, is there for the beating up. They wouldn't be heroes if they were infallible, in fact they wouldn't be heroes if they weren't miserable wretched dogs, the pariahs of the Earth, besides which the only reason to build up an idol is to tear it down again, just like anything else.

A hero is a goddam stupid thing to have in the first place and a general block to anything you might want to accomplish on your own. Plus part of the whole exhilaration of admiring somebody for their artistic accomplishments is resenting 'em 'cause they never live up to your expectations.

Plus which they all love the abuse, they're worse than academics, so the only thing left to do is go whole hog nihilistic and tear everybody you ever respected to shreds.

So I was gnashing ready to pound Lou to a snivelling pulp the minute he hit town. This was it! The big day! The only old hero, much less rock musician, left worth doing battle with! William Burroughs is too old, and all Mailer wants to do is crackerbarrel philosophise.

Face it, pugs, Lou Reed is the only culture hero left with any balls at all, the only real Man in the American Ring! All the rest of 'em are (just ask any woman) faggots and sissies. With the possible exception of Dotson Rader.

I went into the Hilton and found Lou's party in the restaurant and sat down at a table adjacent. Then I got up and walked over. He's sitting there vibing away in his black T-shirt and shades, scowling like a house whose fire has just been put out, muttering to himself as he picked desultorily at indistinct clots of food on his plate.

Turned out he'd been refused entrance to Trader Vic's because of the way he was dressed, and he was fuming about it. I walk up, shake hands: "Hi Lou... I believe you remember me." Dead cold fish handshake.

"Unfortunately."

Just sat there. Didn't move. Didn't smile, didn't even sneer. Concrete scowl. Solid veneer, with cement behind that. My party had just finished sitting down and ordering when suddenly Lou bolted up from his table and stalked out of the room, muttering something about going to get a newspaper. By the time we finished eating and had another drink he still hadn't returned.

It was getting perilously close to, uh, showtime, and his road manager Barbara Fulk was getting nervous: "Where in god's name could he have gone?"

Turned out later he'd gone for a walk around the block and gotten lost.

The show was great. To hell with it. Later we're back at the hotel and Barbara is telling me that Lou is finally ready, so we walk down the hall to the Great Man's (at least temporal) sanctum sanctorum.

There he was, sprawled out on his bed, surrounded by his cohorts, roadies and sycophants, as well as a strange somewhat female thing which had been at the table with him at dinner, which I had in fact at first mistaken for Barbara, and which I now got a closer look at.

You simultaneously wanted to look away and sort of surreptitiously gawk. At first I'd thought it was some big dark swarthy European woman, with long rank thick hair falling about her shoulders. Then I noticed that it had a beard and I figured, well, cool, the bearded lady, with Lou Reed, that fits. But now I was up close and it was almost unmistakably a guy. Except that behind its see-thru blouse, it seemed to have tits. Or something.

It was beyond the bizarre, between light and shade.

It was grotesque. Not only grotesque, it was abject, like something that might have grovellingly scampered in when Lou opened the door to get the milk and papers in the morning, and just stayed around. Like a dog that you could beat or pat on the head, either way didn't matter because any kind of attention was recognition of its very existence. Purely strange, a mother lode of unholy awe.

If the album 'Berlin' was melted down in a vat and reshaped into human form, it would be this creature. It was like the physical externalisation of all that fat and mung Lou must have lost when he shot all those vitamins last winter. Strange as a yeti from the cozy brown snow of the east. Later I noticed it, midway in the interview, turning the pages of a book. But from the way it did it, it was obvious that it was not reading, it was merely turning pages, quivering uncertainty frozen incarnate. At one point I yelled at Lou, "Fuck you, I ain't gonna talk to you, I'm gonna interview her!"

"She's a he. And you ain't int'rv'wing 'm, man." Lou seemed somewhat offended, though his tone was the same even, sullen, occasionally venally darting mutter he maintained all night.

Later I was told that this creature, whose name was Rachel but whom the people in

"YOU REALLY ARE

AN ASSHOLE, LESTER" LOU

my party referred to next day as Thing, was introduced to the concert hall people as "Lou's babysitter".

Hmmm, seemingly a long way down from Betty, the blonde wife he brought on the last tour, who was rather wholesome-looking as she gulped coffee and kept track of things Lou lost. Still, you never know.

What's really interesting is that here's Lou Reed, the cat's gay, he's a celeb, he's travelling, he's got lots of money, it stands to reason he could have beautiful boys or whatever he

wanted around him.

So you gotta conclude he wanted this strange, large, frightened being that never talked and barely ever lifted its head. Ther was a sense of permanency, even protectiveness, about the relationship.

Me, I was drunk. I glugged about a half quart of Johnny Walker Black while waiting for Lou to get ready to argue, and what the hell, last time Lou was in town he was drinking double Johnny Walkers while I sat there nursing my Bloody Mary, trying to think of questions while he rambled on woozily saying things like "Will Yoko leave Paul?" and "I admire Burt Reynolds a lot".

Now we were back in the fray, and he just sat there, too goddam cool even though I was almost positive he was speeding or coking his brainpan shiny. He considered me a bumpkin and I played it to the hilt, demanding more Scotch (which he refused to give me: "Enough of your drinking. Stop. You can't handle it. I don't want you to get wasted."), doing jive spade routines and hollering (to me hilariously funny) things like 'Oh pardon me suh, it's furthest from my mind, I'm just lookin' for HAW HAW HAW!"

Lou started off with a backhanded compliment

that turned into a kudoferous insult midway. "You know that I basically like you in spite of myself. Common sense leads me to believe that you're an idiot, but somehow the epistemological things that you come out

in 1978, Reed

efused to talk

about her again.

She is rumoured

to have died in

the early '90s.

OOTNOTE 3

While we didn't

્

with sometimes betray the fact that you're kind of onomatopoeic in a subterranean reptilian way."

"Goddam, Lou," I enthused, "you sound just like Allen Ginsberg!"

"You sound like his father. You should do like Peter Orlovsky and go have shock. You don't know any more than when you started. You just kind of chase your tail."

Damn, beat me to the first good left hook. "That's what I was gonna say to *you*! Do you ever feel like a self-parody?"

"No. If I listened to you assholes I would. You're comic strips."

"That's okay," I hoohawed, losing ground steadily, "I don't mind being a comic strip. 'Transformer' was a comic strip that transcended itself."

He told me to shut up, and we sat there and stared at each other like two old geezers by a spittoon.

"Okay," I summoned my bluster, "now let's decide whether we're gonna talk about me or you."

"You."

"All right. You start."

"Okay... ummm... who's gonna win the pennant?"

I don't know nothing about sports, can't tell the Houston Persons from the Denver Dolophines, but if there's one subject I'm up on it's glitter. I figured this old deviance buff would take the bait. "I saw Bowie the other night."

"Lucky you. I think it's very sad."

"He ripped off all your riffs, obviously." I intended this as a big contention, although I really meant more than what I said. Just look in your copy of *Rock Dreams* and you'll see it right there, the Myth: Lou Reed looking younger, innocent, fingering his lip wide-eyed in Quaalude haze, as Bowie lurks behind him, pure Lugosi, eyes glittering, ready to strike.

Lou wouldn't go for it. "Everybody steals riffs. You steal yours. David wrote some really great songs."

"Aw c'mon," I shouted at the top of my lungs, "anybody can write great songs! Sam The Sham wrote great *songs*! Did David ever write anything better than 'Wooly Bully'?"

"You ever listen to 'The Bewlay Brothers', shithead?"

"Yeah. I listened, motherfucker!"

"If you had a brain you'd take a look at Angela and Tony De Fries, then think twice

LESTER "WHEN YOU RECORDED 'BERLIN' DID YOU THINK PEOPLE WOULD LAUGH AT IT?" LOU "I COULDN'T

before you put David down. He's got him by the balls, I've seen it. I can't tell ya the situation but I'm telling ya, don't put Bowie down."

I was getting frustrated. What an uncooperative subject. "You mean you still won't say anything anti-Bowie?"

"No."

"Shit." I figured I better change the subject, seeing how there was one. Behind his bed was a cassette deck emanating an endless stream of the kind of funky synthesizer muzak that Herbie Hancock snores up. "Hey, Lou, why doncha turn off all that jazz shit?"

"That's not jazz shit, and you wouldn't know the difference anyway."

"I know all this music shit, blah blah blah!, and I'm telling you that—"

"You don't know, you've never listened."

"—that Bowie:" – and here I began to sing in a loud Ezio Pinza baritone, except I got the syllables in the words mixed up 'cause I was drunk – "Like from Catsum Japan". You know that's bullshit, c'mon Lou! You know better than that!

He ripped off all his shit that's decent from you, you and Iggy!"

"What does Iggy have to do with it?"

OOTNOTE 4 When Reed was 17, his parents tried to 'cure' him of his homosexual tendencies by sending him to the Creedmor Psychiatric Centre in Queens to undergo electro-shock therapy three times a week, for eight weeks. He later recalled that, after his treatment, "If vou walked around the block, you forgot where you were."

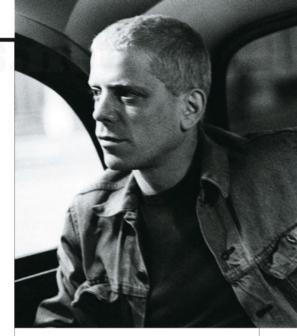
Your dancing for one thing, shithead. But I didn't say that then because I didn't think of it. Instead I fulminated: "You were the originals!"

"The original what?" I went on about Iggy, Bryan Ferry ("Bryan Ferry, Jesus. He was cute for a while," snorted Lou) and Bowie. and he surprised me with a totally unexpected blast at the Pop: "David tried to help the cat because he believed there was more to Iggy than I knew right off the top. David's making a mistake somewhat similar now but David's brilliant and Iggy is...stupid. Very sweet but very stupid. If he'd listened to David or me, if he'd asked questions every once in awhile... I'd say, 'Man just make a one-five change, and I'll put it together for you. You can take all the credit.

It's so simple, but the way you're doin' it now, you're just making a fool out of yourself. And it's just gonna get worse and worse.' He's not even a good imitation of a bad Jim Morrison, and he was never any good anyway..."

Iggy a fool. This from the man who provoked mass snickers on two continents two years running with 'Transformer' ("You hit me with a flower") and 'Berlin' ("And these are the boxes that she kept on the shelf/Where she kept her... poetry and stuff"). I decided that me and all the Iggy fans had had enough of this horseshit, so I bulldozered on: "Did you shoot speed tonight before you went on?"

He acted genuinely surprised. "Did I shoot *speed?* No, I didn't. Speed kills. I'm not a speed freak."



This started out as essentially the same rap Lou gave me one time when I went to see the Velvets at the Whisky in 1969, as he sat there in the dressing room drinking honey from a jar and talking a mile a minute, about all the "energy in the streets of New York", and lecturing me about the evils of drugs. All speedfreaks are liars; anybody that keeps their mouth open that much can't tell the truth all the time or they'd run out of things to say. But now he got downright clinical. "You better define your terms. What kind of speed do you do, hydrochloride meth, hydrochloride amphetamine, how many milli-grams?"

The pharmacological lecture was in full swing, and all I could do was giggle derisively. "I used to shoot Obetrols, shit man!"

"Bullshit you used to shoot Obetrols." Lou was warming to his subject now, revving up. Closing in for the kill. Show you up, punk. "You'd be dead, you'd kill yourself. You were probably stupid and didn't even put 'em through cotton. You could have gotten gangrene that way..."

Then he's pressing me again, playing dirty: "What's an Obetrol?"

I got mad again. "It's in the neighbourhood of Desoxyn. You know what an Obetrol is, you lyin' sack of shit! This is the *fourth* time I've interviewed you and you lied every time! The first time—"

"What's Desoxyn?" He had just said this, in the same dead monotone, for the 15th time. Interrupting me every second word in the tirade above, coldly insistent, sure of himself, all the clammy finality of a technician who knows every inch of his lab with both eyes put out.

But I was cool. "It's a methedrine derivative." The kill: "It's 15 milligrams of pure methamphetamine hydrochloride with some cake paste to keep it together." Like an old green iron file slamming shut. "If you do take speed," he continued, "you're a good example of why speedfreaks have bad names. There's A-heads and there's speedfreaks... Desoxyn's 15 milligrams of methamphetamine hydrochloride held together with cake paste. Obetrol is 15 milligrams of—"

PHOTOS COPYRIGHT MICK ROCK 1974, 2013 FOOTNOTES: BARRY NICOLSON

"Hey Lou, you got anything to drink?"

"No... You don't know what you're doing, you haven't done any research. You make it good for the rest of us by taking this crap off the market. Plus you're poor. (I told you he'd stop at nothing. It's this kind of thing that may well be Lou Reed's last tenuous hold on herodom. And I don't mean heroism.) And even if you weren't poor you wouldn't know what you were buying anyway. You wouldn't know how to weigh it, you don't know your sleeping quotient, you don't know when to eat and not to eat, you don't know about electricity..."

"The main thing is money, power and ego," I said, quoting an old Ralph J Gleason column for some reason. I was getting a little dazed.

"No, it has to do with electricity and the cell structure..."

I decided to change my tack again. "Lou, we're gonna have to do it straight. I'll take off my sunglasses (ludicrously macho Silva-Thin wraparounds parodying the ones he sported on the first Velvets album, which I had been wearing all evening) if you'll take off yours."

He did. I did.

Focus in on shrivelled body sprawled on the bed facing me with Thing behind him staring at beehives on the moon, Lou's sallow skin almost as whiting yellow as his hair, whole face and frame so transcendently emaciated he had indeed become insectival.

His eyes were rusty, like two copper coins lying in desert sands under the sun all day with telephone lines humming overhead, but he looked straight at you. Maybe through you. Then again maybe be it was a good day for him. Last time I saw him his left eyeball kept rolling off to the side, and it was no parlour trick.

Anyway, I was ready to ask my Big Question, the one I'd pondered over for months.

"Do you ever resent people for the way that you have lived out what they might think of as the dark side of their lives for them, vicariously, in your music or your life?"

He didn't seem to have the slightest idea what I was talking about; shook his head.

"Like," I pressed on, "I listen to your records: shootin' smack, shootin' speed, committing suicide—"

"That's three per cent out of a hundred songs."

"Like with all this decadence and glitter shit – none of it would have happened if not for you, and yet I wonder if you—"

"I didn't have anything to do with it."
"Bullshit, you started it, singing about smack, drag queens, etc."

"What's decadent about that?"

"Okay, let's define decadence. You tell me what you think is decadence."

"You. Because you used to be able to write and now you're just fulla shit. You don't keep track of music, you're not on top of what's happening, you don't know the players or who's doin' what. It's all jive, you're getting very egocentric."

I let it pass. The true artist does not stoop to respond in kind to jibes from an old con. Besides, he was half right. Besides, I simply could not believe that he could so blithely disclaim everything that he had disseminated, no, stood for and exploited, for so many years. It was like seeing a dinosaur retreating into an ice cave. He's done the same thing before. Last interview he merely disclaimed association with the gay movement, which he really doesn't have anything to do with.

But now, post-'Sally Can't Dance' and apparently ready to clean up as much of his act's exoskeleton as it took to hit the bigger time (But you shoot up onstage. But it's only a rock'n'roll show. This ain't Altamont. Or the Exploding Plastic Inevitable), he was brushing it all away like dandruff off his black streetpunk T-shirt.

"I dismissed decadence when I did 'The Murder Mystery'." Grand sweeping statements

OOTNOTE 5

Not that Bangs

cared for news

angles, but he's

buried his lede

nere: Reed is

talking about the

music that would

become 'Metal

Machine Music',

nost infamous

squalls of guitar

feedback played

speeds. Although

perhaps his

solo record,

comprised

entirely of

at different

it's often

assumed that

Reed recorded

Metal Machine

Music' either as

a joke or to fulfil

his contract with

rather proud of it,

and though it has

topped its fair

Albums Ever'

lists, it's also

cult following

(and sold over

100,000 copies

in the US). In his

later years, Reed

even managed to

bring the album

first at a one-off

performance in

Berlin in 2002,

then on a 2010

the album's 35th

tour marking

anniversary.

to the stage –

share of 'Worst

found a devoted

RCA, he was

blistering

like this are the kind of bullshit to which this pop star is particularly prone. Like all the rest of them, I guess.

"Bullshit man, when you did 'Transformer' you were playing to pseudo-decadence, to an audience that wanted to buy a reprocessed form of decadence..."

Barbara interrupted.

"Lou... it's getting late."
Suddenly the tone of the whole scene changed. He was a petulant kid, up past bedtime, not exactly whiny, still insectival, but also blatantly pampered, cajoled, looked after, leashed, nursed, checked unless he chose to make a scene and possibly blow his cool.

"Oh, it's fun arguing with Lester."

"But you have to get up in the morning," she insisted, "and go to Dayton."

"Oh," replied Lou, hardy old buzzard, blow winds blow and all that, "I'll live through it."

Besides, other things were on his mind. He wanted to play me some records. The Artist actually wanted to submit something to me, the Critic, for my consideration and verdict! I felt honoured. So what did he wanna submit? The Ron Wood solo album.

Jesus. If there's one thing I hate to hear out of musicians it's music talk. Most boring thing on the face of the earth. Especially since the only album I could think of that could conceivably be more nothing than the Herbie Hancock he was playing before was this Ron Wood set. Blandest of the bland. I yelled

at him to shut it off -"I've heard that crap!" – but he was off again, into another subject that interested *him*, the selfish sonofabitch, and not listening to me at all.

"This guy George Benson, years ago, he was a bass player, invented the Benson amplifier, absolutely no distortion, totally clean, totally pure sound. It's interesting what Hancock's doing with the Arp."

It was getting worse. He

had been patient with me but I was beginning to have visions of future Lou Reed albums: stalwart Andy Newark and Willie Weeks, who have appeared on every album made by every hasbeen pop star in the world recently, playing with Lou Reed, so the follow up to 'Sally Can't Dance' sounds like the Ron Wood album, like George Harrison's 'Dark Horse', like all those other faceless LPs involving this floating crap game of technically impeccable hacks. And on top of that a funky Herbie Hancock moog spider iiving around, while on top of that Lou drones his usuals in that slurred and basically rhythmic voice: "You're all fucked...I can do anything I want...putdown, putdown...speed, speed, New York, New York...'

"I hate Herbie Hancock," I said.

"I've got something here," he said, "that is the stuff I want to do, that I meant by heavy metal. I had to wait a couple of years so I could get the equipment, now I've got it and it's done. I could have sold it as electronic classical music, except the one I've got that I've finished now is heavy metal, no kidding around."

I was too drunk to be ready to hear it, but it didn't matter because he turned on the tape again and it was – the Ron Wood album! I made him shut it off and he continued: "I could take Hendrix. Hendrix was one of the great guitar players, but I was better. But that's only because I wanted to do a certain thing and the thing I wanted to do that blew his mind is the thing I've finally got done that I'll stick on RCA when the rock'n'roll shit gets taken care of. Now most people can take maybe five minutes of it—"

"When you recorded 'Berlin' did you think people would laugh at it?"

Lou took his snoot and grabbed a coconut. "I couldn't care less."

"You know, Lou, one thing I kinda resent about 'Berlin' is that you never give her point of view. It was a very selfish album: 'I'm beating you up, bitch.' 'You're dead, bitch.'"

"She was making it with a dealer."

Hoping to pry a little autobiographical dirt (which is what a good portion of 'Berlin' amounts to) out of Lou, I asked him about Betty, his ex-wife, and got a typically effusive answer: "She was a secretary when one was needed at the time."

She was a nursemaid, but then many people close to Lou seem to fall into that role.

We argued a bit about the autobiographic content of his songs, and Lou asserted, predictably, that his songs were not

autobiographical but existed in a zone of their own, and moreover could only be truly understood by a certain distinct elite audience.

I told him that in my estimation the

I told him that in my estimation the majority of his solo work suffered principally by its incredible obviousness, all the subtlety left ages ago and he's just an old ham cradling the asp; I asked him if all his songs had elite meanings to please explain to me the secret meaning of 'Sally...''s 'Animal Language', otherwise known as the Bow Wow Song (dead dog meets cat, they try to screw, fail, shoot up fat man's sweat) (really a specimen of mind rot at its finest).

"'Animal language' isn't obvious. Who do you think the dog and a cat? Who's the dog, who's the cat? Who are the animals that are so fucked up they gotta shoot somebody's sweat to get off?"

I dunno, Lou, you tell me. There are eight million stories in the Naked City... "One thing I like about you," I interjected, "is that you're not afraid to lower yourself. For instance, 'New York Start'. I told Dennis I thought you were lowering yourself by splattering all these people like the Dolls and dumb little bands with your freelance spleen, but then I realised that you've been lowering yourself for years."

His riposte: "You really are an asshole. You went past assholism into some kinda urinary tract. The next time you come up with a phrase as good as 'curtains laced with diamonds dead for you', instead of all this Dee-troit bullshit, let me know."

"Obviously," I said, "What you're selling under your name now is pasteurised decadence. In the old days you were *really* a badass, Lou, but now it's all pasteurised."

He told me that I was jaded and chided me for not being able to get into "a very nice song" like 'Billy'. Speaking of which, I replied, "Wouldn't you say that in 'Billy' when you say 'His nerves were shot but not me', that's a slight exaggeration or distortion there?" The you're-dead-bitch syndrome.

"No."

"Well, you're a liar, then. You've made a career out of being a degenerate, and I think you should fess up to that. You have not primarily distinguished yourself as a musician, although you have come up with some great riffs, and I don't know why you keep trying to play me all this high-tech music crap, because basically you're a lit. In your worst moments you could be considered a bad imitation of Tennessee Williams."

"That's like saying in your worst moments you could be considered a bad imitation of you."

"Don't you ever feel like a victim of yourself?"

"No."

Barbara is whispering to me: "Do you really think it's going to get any better?"

"Sure," I said, and turned to Lou. "What do you think that the sense of guilt manifested

in most of your songs has to do with being Jewish?"

"I don't know anyone Jewish."

Barbara starts to put the pressure on in earnest. "It's 3.30, Lou."

"Well, that's true, it's 3.30. So... what? What would you like me to do, lock the door, hang my feet from the ceiling and listen to half a channel of my stereo?"

"Yes," she said.

"Cat wants to talk." Lou mumbled. "I think you're wrong. Dennis said if I wanted to, I could. I said sure. Directions from the higher up. Go ahead and call him. Call him up."

She just grunted no. I could not believe that this man was actually asking this woman to call his manager and wake him up at 3.30 in the morning to ask whether or not he could stay up a little bit later to talk to me.

And of course it didn't really have anything to do with me.

He was a cranky child, but then a large part of Lou's mythic appeal has always been his total infantilism.

"I think it's being made very hard on the cat,

personally. I'm telling you, no. I'm interested in some of the things he has to say, even though I think he's an idiot."

"We think the same thing of each other," I offered. I was getting tired.

"He's trashy," continued Lou, "and I think you oughta get a kick out of trash while you can."

"But you have been," insisted Barbara, "for almost two hours!"

"Well I feel like getting some more. there's some shit I wanna play him, against his will." He turned back to me. "This guy George Benson, invented the hollowbody electric bass with absolutely no distortion..."

"Uh, lissen, Lou," I said.
"Barbara's right. We gotta go
too. This could go on forever."
I gathered up my stuff and
started for the door. As I
was going out I could hear
his voice behind me, dull
basso, stale bitchy badinage
fluttering off into dust: "You
Seattle boys are all the same...
A-200... cornflakes..."

I never met a hero I didn't like. But then, I never met a hero. But then, maybe I wasn't looking for one. ■

Let us Now Praise Famous
Dwarves -- How I Slugged It Out
with Lou Reed and Stayed Awake
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THE LAST INTERVIEW

On September 4, Lou Reed and Mick Rock came to Soho to discuss their new joint photo book. Mark Beaumont met the lifelong collaborators



"We are literally," said the guy from BBC 6 Music, "waiting for The Man..."

Three hours, by now. The buzz of being sat in the control room of Trident Studios – the Soho studio where 'Transformer' was recorded, the immaculate 'Perfect Day' struck from a piano in this very room – had long since worn off. Mick Rock, the legendary photographer behind the coffee table book we were there to discuss, checked his phone again. Still no word from The Man despite several nudging calls to his nearby hotel.

"We're running on Lou time," Rock grinned, and returned to regaling four nervy journalists with tales of Bowie in the '70s.

I was there to ask Lou about his memories of a range of photos from the book and, for a separate feature, his thoughts on David Bowie's 2013 return – and word was Lou was pretty frail in the aftermath of his liver transplant. The PR took me to one side. "He's fine to talk about Bowie, but please don't ask him about drugs."

Eventually, the buzzer. The Man was ushered carefully into the recording room amidst a coterie of PAs and managers. The tension ratcheted among the waiting journalists. I was up first.

Lou's handshake was weak, but his tongue was still steely. He took a photo of me as soon as I sat down opposite him, either trying out a new camera or recording me for his files. He allowed me 13 seconds to explain what I'd be asking him before the word 'Bowie' came up and he lashed out. There was to be no give-and-take – we'd promote his book but not get an ounce more

verbal flesh out of him in return.

Once talk turned to the photographs – Lou often distractedly playing with his new camera or fumbling with his glasses to study the images – he turned (relatively) benign, joking with Mick about their shoots, doing Nico impressions and, once he realised I wasn't there to argue with him, only sparingly casting contemptuous retorts at questions he found ludicrous or dumb. In the final minute of our time, I gave the Bowie question one last shot. His people gasped, but he gave me a few words. When Lou died last week, Bowie responded in kind: "He was a master."

NME So we've got around 15 pictures to talk about, and when we get to the ones featuring

Bowie we'll talk a little more about those so we have more words to pull out.

Mick Rock: "Why? We're talking about this book."

Yes, but we're also doing a thing on Bowie... Lou Reed: "Let me tell you now, I am not doing promo for David's album. So if that's the thrust of this interview, why don't you wrap up and go. I don't wanna answer one question like that. I am not here to do promo for David. Don't even go there. I'm serious. I read that on the sheet where it said we'd like to blah blah, what do you think of David's new album? Why don't you ask David, don't ask me."

OK then, let's start with the shot in the top left.

Mick: "That was either the same day or the following day that we did the 'Coney Island Baby' shoot. Lou had bought some new clothes at a shop I believe was called Ian's in the East Village."

Lou: "Which one? Oh yes, 'Coney Island Baby'."
Mick: "It was the same day but a different vibe."

Was it an influential image on punk?

<u>Mick:</u> "Lou was influential on many things and certainly punk was one of them."

Lou: "These were things I wore in real life. I didn't dress up for doing anything with Rock, plus I considered Rock a friend so I never thought that somehow we were doing something special, we were just kidding around having fun. That's how I recall it."

Mick: "That's what I recall, because there was no purpose other than us having fun and Lou looking fantastic."

Fun in terms of androgyny, as well?

Lou: "Oh, I don't know about that, that was not the point. That's the kind of thing

journalists read into everything. That was not the point with me. It was true of other people, but not me. I shouldn't get lumped in with the androgyny people. I was not interested in androgyny."

What's the story behind the picture with the gun?

Lou: "I saw Larry Clark's *Tulsa*, it's a very, very, very famous photography book, one of the most famous ever made, and the lead picture, because he was hanging out with a gang, was a guy sitting there with a gun."

Mick: "At least in America it's a very famous image."

Lou: "You could look it up or Google it in two seconds, Larry Clark's *Tulsa*. Larry Clark is a very, very well known street photographer. For real. He wasn't photographing the street, he was in it. I was just being a mimic."

Did you take a lot of influence from other photography in deciding what you wanted to do together?

Lou: "Oh, sure. Anything is fair game – a good idea, of course."

Mick: "An echo."

Lou: "An echo! Ha ha!"

Mick: "Well, it's not appropriating, it's echoing."

Lou: "Y'know, we got along so well

doing this all this stuff because we think we can communicate like that (*snaps fingers*). He knows exactly what I mean and I know exactly what his crude mind is churning out."

Mick: "I was not, in 1976, aware of that book, and Lou showed it to me as part of my educational process."

Lou: "For Rock, because Rock's educated, but I am too, it's just that no-one knows this about either one of us. So you're out there doing the whole punk thing and people make a deadly mistake, they think you're only that. The fact that I have a degree with honours and Mick has his from Cambridge, they miss that. So there's a lot of smart stuff going on but no-one gets that it's there, they go, 'Oh, it's androgyny!'"

So there was an education going on between the two of you?

<u>Mick:</u> "When you have fun with someone you learn, because you're

open in some way.
I certainly learned
a lot from Lou, I'm
not sure if Lou learned
much from me!"

Lou: "I learned from him, I was always paying attention to the lighting. Rock's a really good photographer, what was he doing with the lighting, where was I standing compared to



Did you get to the point where you knew exactly how to pose for him?

Lou: "What do you mean, 'how to pose'? I'm not hired as a model; I'm not hired to pose. It's trying to just take an interesting picture that has some feeling to it."

This one's you onstage with Bowie, which tour was that?

Mick: "That wasn't a tour."
Lou: "That was very early.
I sat in with David, right?"
Mick: "Yes, Festival Hall,
Save The Whale [the two
played a Friends Of The
Earth charity gig on July
8, 1972]. I believe that was
before the 'Transformer'

Lou: "I remember because I came in two beats late. No matter how many times we rehearsed it I always came in late. I did this TV show with Dave Stewart once, one of those English things, *The Eye*



or White River or something like that [It was actually Channel 4's The White Room] where you have different groups, and I was sitting there with Dave and there was this part where I come in and we rehearsed it and rehearsed it, and then when we did it I just spaced out. Dave finally came over to me and said, 'Will you fucking sing!'"

What are you playing in this shot? Lou: "'White Light/White Heat'." Mick: "It would've been the encore."

Fond memories?

Lou: "Journalists are so funny. Do you think if it was a bad time I would tell you? It was great. Playing with David, it was great, incredible, it's just that I came in two beats late! I think my mind was blown, it was so much fun."

Mick: "It might've been the first time you were onstage for a while in England."

Lou: "Oh, for a very long time."

Was this before 'Transformer' happened?

Lou: "You mean the songs, the lyrics?"
Mick: "'Transformer' was a shot that later became an album cover. I think the original concept was that the idea for the back cover was going to be the front cover, until Lou saw that 'Transformer' photo. He picked it out of a contact sheet."

Lou: "I said to Rock, 'There's no question, look at what we have here'. You can't miss it when he has it. It's not a matter of talking or explaining, it's just 'a-ha'."

There's a couple of shots here which I'm assuming are from the same shoot...

<u>Mick:</u> "Actually they're not, this one was taken in a rehearsal studio, maybe with his band for 'Rock And Roll Heart', and that was taken

in Lou's apartment. He's wearing similar clothes, it's true."

So this first one was in a studio.

Mick: "He was rehearsing for 'Rock
And Roll Heart'."

Can you remember anything about the shoot, Lou?

Lou: "No. It's certainly not an official shoot."

Mick: "No, it was just me hanging out. Lou had flown me over, so that was my gig – to hang out."

Lou: "He was the official hang out photographer because everybody knew Rock and you could trust him. He wasn't out to make you look bad."

<u>Mick:</u> "No, I wanted stuff that I would love." So that's real fly-on-the-wall stuff.

Lou: "Yeah, as is this one."

That's the one in your apartment?

Lou: "I don't know where that is. I recognise the amps, not the place."

Mick: "We shot a lot of stuff. You gotta remember this was 1976..."

Lou: "Ask someone who knows guitars about that little Fender amp; that is one rare amp, it cost a fortune – 12 hundred, 14 hundred? I finally blew it up with a Humbucker. I had to replace the speaker and the speaker was the whole story. They replaced it with a new one but the new one did not have, as you can well imagine, the sound of that old one that had been shredded to bits. But I shredded it a little too much."

Then we have 'Coney Island Baby' - there's a lot of humour to those shots, why did you do that?

Mick: "They're not intellectual decisions, they are in-the-moment, when you get into a riff, like when people would sit down and jam together. Lou would pop up with the gear and we'd shoot."

Lou: "It's kinda like posing for a Broadway show, y'know, that tacky shit. Any of those pictures, I could've had a cane and danced across the floor. So it was fun being that."

Was it your stuff that you brought along?
Lou: "Of course it's my stuff." That is my stuff."
Have you still got it?

Lou: "I think not. It's buried somewhere in the bowels of 7th Street."

What's this next one?



Mick: "That's with flash, that's why it looks different, but it is from the 'Transformer' shoot I believe. I did shoot you at the Greyhound [in Croydon] though. Didn't you play the Greyhound? Do you remember that name?"

Lou: "Oh God, no I don't."

Mick: "Maybe after 'Transformer'."

Quite a legendary shoot, then...

Mick: "I remember the moments of shooting, I remember I was excited because I was gonna see Lou Reed. I was very hip, because I knew who The Velvet Underground were and I loved them. In fact, when David Bowie and I first connected there were two connections – one was Syd Barrett and the other was The Velvet Underground. So I wanted some pictures. I don't recall any other photographers being there but there weren't many photographers around because there really weren't many outlets for these photos."

What are your memories of it, Lou?



Lou: "(Fiddles with his new camera) That's a classic guitar position and I've got that suit on again."

Mick: "It may well have been the 'Transformer'

been the 'Transformer' gig, the difference is that would've been with flash." Lou: "This one is not as

Lou: "This one is not as good as the other one."

Mick: "It lacks some of the mystique because of the lack of flash. But you do look kind of... I hesitate to use the word, but 'pretty' might be the word, Lou."

Lou: "I should live so long. I'm obviously having fun. (*Looking at four different shots*) It's hard to put these guys together. It's always hilarious to look at them and then look at another one and then yet another one. I can tell who I'd been reading, all I have to do is look at the posing."

Who had you been reading before 'Coney Island Baby'?

Lou: "Burroughs, [Hubert] Selby."
What about the Nico shot...?



Lou: "I'm amazed I even let him take that. "(Does Nico impression) Oh Lou, why do you not write a song for me? Oh Lou, Nico need more songs." Nico and The Velvet Underghround. So I gave her two songs. "Lou, only two? Oh Lou, I love you." (Turns to picture of himself with Andy Warhol). There's the father of it all, Mr Warhol."

Mick: "Agent provocateur."
Lou: "He spotted us right

off the bat and got it. There was no-one else but us. To this day there's no-one else but us, no-one even comes close, to this day. If you play a Velvet Underground record – wow.

Actually, it's hard to belive, my God, there's gonna be a 45th anniversary of 'White Light/ White Heat', it's remastered – holy fucking shit. To this day there's nobody even close.

That's because we weren't kidding and they all are. They all wanna be stars."

Rock'n'roll was open to such possibilities then.
Lou: "Every single one of us there was coming





"WHAT GENERATION?
WE ARE NOT PART OF
A GENERATION. I MEAN,
WE ARE, BUT WE
TRANSCEND THAT,
YOU COULD PLAY IT
ALL TOMORROW."
LOU REED

from a university and wanting to do something magnificent. We weren't there to make money or be pretty or get laid. We were trying to create a diamond. We wanted to make heaven on Earth. We wanted to explode the whole thing, the Exploding Plastic Inevitable. Anyway, Warhol heard us and he got it right

off. There wasn't a chance of it being commercial but for certain kind of people it was extraordinary. We really, really tried, every single album. We're not just a bunch of fucking assholes from the street making god knows what kind of music - that's not it. We were really serious. Just because we're in jeans and all the rest of it doesn't mean... y'know, read the lyrics. Cale is one of the greatest instrumental players in the world ever. Maureen Tucker's drumming - to this day no-one can match the originality of it."

And everyone involved continues to innovate, as if it was a generational thing.

Lou: "What generation? We are not part of a generation. I mean, we are, but we transcend that, you could play it all tomorrow."

Can you remember where the Warhol shot was taken?

<u>Mick:</u> "The 'Rock And Roll Heart' launch party – was it One Fifth Avenue?"

Lou: "You scare me!"
Mick: "It's all them headstands."
Lou: "I'm sure, all that blood circulating. I'm surprised you can speak though. One Fifth Avenue,

that was a very big place at the time, it was *the* address and it was *the place* to be seen."

What can you remember about the three of you here?

Mick: "The Last Supper, as I call it."

Lou: "We were dividing up the world – who gets China?"

Did you have any sense of being important at that point?

Lou: "So were they. It's quite a hierarchy. Yet none of us have anything to do, musically, with the other one, which is kind of nice. So no-one overlaps into another person's territory. Like a Rolling Clone."

I always assumed that Bowie went to Berlin almost inspired by your album...

Lou: "Oh, wouldn't I love to believe that! He heard my record and moved to Berlin!" (Lou's phone goes off. His PA calls time on the chat. Mick keeps talking about the next shot.)

Mick: "The B&E one? I'm with Lou about

Mick: "The B&E one? I'm with Lou about one in the morning, he says, 'Come and meet a friend of mine, Mick..."

Lou: "I told you we were very influenced by Tulsa and I had some friends who were very much from that ilk, to say the least..."

Mick: "Mildly criminal..."

Lou: "You're so crude! Very sensitive people. It's like Larry Clark said something very interesting when he did an interview with Andrew Wilde. He said, 'You know what people don't understand, they say, "Why, why, why do you have the criminal life?" and he said, 'Because it's fun!' So I had brought Mick

over to someone's place and that's what he took a photo of. I'm amazed the guy let him take pictures. He was a really, really close friend of mine. He's dead, but he was also extraordinarily good looking and rich. So he's not the person you'd think..."

Mick: "...would have a sidetrade. Tell him what he was, Lou!"

Lou: "He'd really pass. You'd take him to one of these high end parties and he would

be casing it and you'd get a phone call from someone saying, 'You know that friend of yours?'''

Finally, can I ask you about how you feel about the Bowie comeback?

Lou: "I have nothing whatsoever to say about David except that I love him and I love everything he does and whatever he wants to do is great by me. But I am not an insider, a predictor, an analyst. I just really like David."

Transformer, by Lou Reed & Mick Rock, the signed limited edition book of 2,000 copies from www.LouReedBook.com; Tel: +44 (0) 1483 540 970; price £295/\$480







s a joke funny if no-one gets the punchline? What if everyone thinks something is a joke, but it isn't? Can that be funny? These are the kinds of things

that trouble your mind after spending a couple of days in the company of New York's MGMT, a most peculiar band. You want to hate them for seemingly dressing up their entire existence in layers of nauseating irony, but in person they're wholly open and very honest. They make you think again about

> their complex, psychedelic pop and you realise that a double narrative exists with the band: the one diehard fans of their early songs tell, which is often perpetuated by the music press; and the story the band tell of themselves.

The former: piss-take two-piece form at a private liberal arts college in upstate New York; get improbably signed to a major label: release three massive electropop singles off their 2007 debut album, 'Oracular Spectacular'; then sabotage their success by putting out a trickier 2010 second album with a sarcastic name, 'Congratulations', and a third one - released last month - that's even more difficult and has an equally knowing title, 'MGMT'.

But if you examine their timeline a bit more closely, as the band suggest you do, all that falls apart. Those three big singles - 'Time To Pretend', 'Kids' and 'Electric Feel' - were written long before the rest of 'Oracular Spectacular', and there's a very natural musical progression from the album tracks on their debut, through to the 14-minute psych epic 'Metamora' - released as a single-sided 10-inch in 2008 - and the two more experimental albums that followed. Neither 'Congratulations' nor 'MGMT' are anything like as challenging as, say, Lou Reed's 'Metal Machine Music', and at gigs they still play their early hits - which, like all good pop songs, are pretty odd to

The story only becomes more complicated because MGMT also like gags - and gags can lead to confusion.

begin with.

"We had this running joke in the band when we were in college that we were going to get as big as possible and then destroy it all in the most fantastic way," says Ben Goldwasser, co-songwriter and keyboard player. "I think when a lot of people heard that, they thought, 'Well, they put out 'Congratulations', their career-suicide second album.' But that's not career suicide! We could have done a much better job than that!"

Even being on a major label has a gag attached. When Ben and singer/ guitarist Andrew VanWyngarden

October 8, 2013: Ben Goldwasser (left) and Andrew Van WynGarden's European tour reaches Paris



used to email each other about band matters at college, they'd sign off as 'The Management', satirising corporate culture. "In a way, that spirit was exactly why we signed with Columbia," says Ben. "I mean, what better way to just throw it all away than to be on one of the biggest major labels in the world? At the same time, things turned out well with them. They support us."

Sometimes with MGMT, you think you've spotted a joke, but then the band flat-out deny it. The chorus of 'Electric Feel' (from 'Oracular Spectacular') includes the line "Shock me like an electric eel"; then, in the bizarre video for the first single taken from 'Congratulations', 'Flash Delirium', an actual eel is wrestled out of a mouth-like cavity superimposed onto Ben's throat and exterminated. A hammy visual metaphor for the band killing off their early electropop sound? Both Ben and Andrew say it's pure coincidence. They also claim that the song they're most proud of is 'Time To Pretend'. Bullshit? Not necessarily.

MGMT are in Cologne, and tonight they'll play the first gig on their European tour. 'MGMT' came out over a week ago and, just as with 'Congratulations', the response has been mixed. "From what I've heard, either people really love it, or they acknowledge that they need to spend a little more time with it, or they hate it right off the bat," says Ben. "But the fact that people have reacted strongly to the album is a good thing."

Online, fans fight with each other, passionately disagreeing on which album is best and sometimes expressing outright anger at the band. "You completely forgot how to make music, MGMT," writes Johnny Medina in the comments under the video for 'Alien Days', the first single to be taken from 'MGMT'. "This is not original art; this is a selfish resurrection of some old British rock. You don't realise the impact you've had." But then, below the hypercinematic short film that was made for 'Cool Song No. 2', starring Michael K Williams (Omar

Between pop and a mad place

Five other weirdo artists who confused the hell out of their early mainstream fans

1. Scott Walker

Scott Walker was never comfortable as the

teen-idol frontman of The Walker Brothers. who had pop hits

like 'Make It Easy On Yourself' in the mid-'60s. His subsequent solo records were increasingly avantgarde; by 2006's 'The Drift', a contributor was being credited with 'percussion and meat-punching'.

2. Neil Young

By 1973, Young's second and third solo albums 'Harvest' and

'After The Gold Rush', had made him a superstar, especially in Britain. But when he toured here, he irked fans by only playing

the unreleased album 'Toniaht's The Niaht'. Guitarist Nils Lofgren: "At the end he'd say, 'Alriaht, we're aoina to play something you've all heard before.' Then we'd play [title song] 'Tonight's The Night' again.'

3. Beck

For years, Beck refused to play 'Loser' - the song that got him signed. That pissed off many people, including Canadian comedy interviewer Narduwar. who took him to task in a 1994 radio interview: "Do you ever feel like when vou don't play 'Loser'. everybody loves it 'cos you are rebelling?' Beck's response was: "Can you repeat that? You've got some fire in your groin or something.'

4. Talk Talk

Many UK new wave acts of the early '80s thrived on being famous. Not so Talk Talk, who shunned the success that their pristine, widescreen early songs - 'It's My Life', 'Todav', 'Such A Shame' - offered them in favour of making more experimental music. They'd split by 1991, and the last fans heard of singer Mark Hollis was when he released a minimal, but brilliant, solo album in 1998.

5. Radiohead

Radiohead have always had a love-hate relationship with their breakthrough single, 'Creen' At 2012's Bilhao BBK Live, a group of Brits became annoved at Thom Yorke for banging on about corporate culture while headlining



by a bank. chanting, "Creep"! 'Creep'!

'Creep'!" at the band between sonas. They didn't play it.

"I'd rather do something I love than try to cash in" Ben Goldwasser

in *The Wire*), Deathbynature89 says: "I don't love MGMT because they make me feel happy, I love them because they make feel."

Ben says he's tired of trying to understand why they evoke such a divisive response, but Andrew, who's much more of a worrier and a dreamer than Ben, says: "During the writing process of the last two albums, we were completely oblivious to the world. Then we come back and we're like, 'Here we are! Here's the new record!' and we remember that there are assholes everywhere." Andrew's self-consciousness runs deep. The title track from 'Congratulations', which foresees a backlash, was one of the first songs he wrote for the album, and, unlike Ben, he still gets nervous before shows – even more so in the past few years.

However, if doomsayers claim the band have been on the brink since 'Congratulations', no-one told the Germans, nor their fans across the rest of Europe, or in America. Prior to landing in Europe, they were playing enormous gigs in the US ("They were well-attended shows – a few thousand people or something," says Ben), they've already sold out London's 2,300-capacity Forum – weeks early – and hundreds of tickets have been sold for tonight's show at Live Music Hall in Cologne, one of the smaller cities they're visiting on the tour.

The band are having the last laugh, and perhaps that's the best MGMT joke of them all.

Playing Cologne gives them a chance to perform their first European date away from heavy scrutiny. It also offers them a day to rehearse. In the cavernous venue, the six-piece live band work through new songs in a manner that's highly professional and sincere. With them is Alejandro Crawford, a poet-turned-video artist, who has been touring full-time with MGMT for a couple of years now. He created "The Optimizer" – a full-length optical accompaniment to the new album – and he provides live visuals during shows, which are beamed from his laptop onto a huge screen behind the band.

"We're not 'everybody put your hands in the air'-type performers," says Andrew, "so it helps having Alejandro trying to hammer it home that what we're doing is more of a psychedelic rock show than a pop concert."

Alejandro also operates a drone – a square UFO, half a metre across, controlled by an iPad, with four propellers on its underside – which he's testing ahead of breaking it out during 'Alien Days' at the shows. "Just don't fly it in Scotland," says the band's manager, David,

sagely. "Especially not on a weekend night. Are you fucking kidding me?"

Onstage is a giant cowbell with the words 'Be Aware' painted on its side in white. It gets thwacked during the second single to be taken from 'MGMT', 'Your Life Is A Lie' – sometimes by Andrew, sometimes by a competition winner, and once at a festival in LA this summer by Henry Winkler, aka The Fonz, who has a very brief cameo in the video for the song.

"He had his own rhythm," says Andrew, carefully. "He hit it in unique spots for sure, but he got into it more towards the end."

'MGMT' is an album of two halves: the first side is tighter and includes a surprisingly faithful cover of a '60s flower-pop song by Faine Jade called 'Introspection'. Ben and Andrew had most of that half nailed before they entered Dave Fridmann's Tarbox Road Studios in upstate New York last year, whereas the second (except the Kinks-like 'Plenty Of Girls In The Sea') came from "tranced-out improvisation", as Andrew calls it.

David, who co-produced almost every Flaming Lips and Mercury Rev record released since 1990, worked

with MGMT on their debut and co-produced their new album. Andrew says he "gets" the band, particularly their absurdist sense of humour, which they admit sometimes catches up with them. The wry dreams of a clichéd rock-star lifestyle they recounted in 'Time To Pretend' became a self-fulfilling prophecy that led to the misery you hear all across 'Congratulations', and if self-titling their third album was initially a pun – an ironic suggestion that now they were going to show their real selves – that became a reality, too.

"We decided we'd call the record 'MGMT' when we were doing press for 'Congratulations' in 2010," says Andrew, to his amusement. "But then, the way we ended up working and writing a lot of the music was really similar in spirit to how we were making music when we were 19 – with no specific, calculated goal; just making sounds for the sake of making sounds."

It's an almost avant-garde process of recording, but Ben says they've never aspired to be taken seriously as an experimental band. "That sounds wrong. I think that most people would want to feel like they're taken seriously on some level, but also it's hard to get up and shout to the world, 'Take me seriously!"

Such self-deprecation is often what confuses people about MGMT, but tell Andrew that his jokes are pointless if no-one understands them and he responds fiercely: "I don't think 'joke' is the right word. Sparks had songs that were joke songs, like 'The Rhythm Thief'. There's a punchline – there's no beat, because the

Producer, probed

Famed for his work with The Flaming Lips, Dave Fridmann co-produced MGMT's debut and their recent self-titled album



On MGMT's methods

"This record was an entirely different approach. We wanted to ensure maximum creative flexibility so we started with

a massive set-up of instruments, both electric and acoustic, all linked together so that we would be ready to capture anything and everything."

MGMT in the studio

"Adventurous, ambitious, endless ideas. I hope it's as fun for them as it is for me! You never know what's going to happen."

How they recorded 'MGMT'

"We agreed about what were the best moments so editing the album was fairly simple. As they were creating, I would mark down whenever I would see or hear them laughing. That was usually a pretty good indicator."

Escaping the big city

"Being here [Dave's Tarbox Road studio] helps people focus in a way that is similar to working at home, but with all the best gear available."

Whether MGMT get a hard time from fans

"I think that is true of MGMT and many other really interesting bands. I also think there's a lot of selective hearing going on. 'Of Moons Birds And Monsters' to 'Siberian Breaks' to 'Mystery Disease' seems to me like a band on a mission of consistent exploration in the same vector."

rhythm thief stole it. We're not like them or Ween; we're more prank-style and wanting to mess with people's heads, and there doesn't have to be a known intention. There doesn't have to be a punchline. But, sure, it's our fault people aren't going to inherently know what we're referencing, but that's how we work together; that's what our friendship is, and that's what this band is – a musical reflection of our friendship."

Against the odds, perhaps, it's a friendship – and a band – that survives. They admit they went through a rough period when they achieved unexpected success in 2008, and now prefer not to think about whether there's something illogical in making music that requires deep attention and getting thousands of people turning up to hear it live. Can they sustain it? Can they keep the masses turning up?

"Hard to say," says Ben. "I wouldn't want to change the music to get more people to come out to the shows; I'd rather do something I love doing than try to cash in. We know who we are and we'll enjoy it as long as it lasts."

"That's another thing that perplexes and pisses people off," says Andrew.
"By all probability, we shouldn't be playing these huge shows still, and still putting out albums on a major label. We didn't even pay our dues to begin with. It was like, 'Here's a record deal given to these ungrateful, bratty college kids.' But we're still here, and that's especially funny to me."

IT'S NOT

Connan Mockasin's broadcasts from psych-pop's outer limits have made the man into a myth. Devon Maloney tunes in. Photo by Pieter M Van Hattem

his is all a mistake," Connan Mockasin keeps saying.

The sun has just set; we're sitting in the warehouse workshop of a glass artist named Dustin Yellin in Brooklyn's Red Hook neighbourhood. Next door is Yellin's non-profit arts institute Pioneer Works, a massive space where local label Mexican Summer is throwing a two-day festival for its fifth anniversary. A few feet away from the bench where Mockasin is perched, a collection of six-foot slabs stand like thick, crystalline obelisks, transparent sentries.

Mockasin – born Connan Hosford in the tiny seaside town of Te Awanga, New Zealand – arrived yesterday from Switzerland, invited by his new American label to be a part of the showcase (his first ever US show). This week, he will release his new album 'Caramel', the dreamy follow-up to 2010's 'Please Turn Me Into The Snat' (reissued in 2011 as 'Forever Dolphin Love'), anticipated by an absurdly diverse fanbase including Radiohead, Charlotte Gainsbourg, Beach House, Beck and Tyler, The Creator. Essentially, he's become your favourite artist's favourite artist. It's weird, he says. "I don't get it, I don't really understand it. But I'm very flattered."

In the meantime, he's here in this hall of glass fossils, awaiting his ordained set by patiently recounting the somewhat mythical origin story he's given journalists since they started asking in 2011, when 'Forever Dolphin Love' was "accidentally" released.

The basics, as he tells them: he moved to London in 2005 to play music with his band, then called Connan And The Mockasins. Without a job or a place to live, he spent two months sleeping in parks and on floors. Two years later, when labels finally began taking an interest in the band, they also began "telling me how to make a record".

"They said, 'You're gonna be working with this producer in this studio, we want this sort of songs.' It really upset me, the whole thing," Mockasin, now 30, explains. He speaks softly and earnestly, wearing a navy blue mock-turtleneck under a wide-sleeved, almost cape-like black coat. With one delicate, long-nailed hand in his lap, the other draped on the back of a rough wooden bench, he looks exactly the part of the whimsical, psych-rock shaman who would make ethereal guitar grooves like his. "So I moved back to New Zealand with my parents. I was thinking I'd rather work at the vineyard and go surfing than do something like that."



IT'S



ARE THAT COUNTS,

Back in Te Awanga, Mockasin did just that, all but quitting music in the process. But throughout his return to winery work and catching swells, his "really nice, really encouraging" mum constantly urged him to get back to recording, until he finally agreed and ultimately ended up crafting what would become the spacey, funky 'Forever Dolphin Love'. Though Connan never intended to release it, Phantasy label head Erol Alkan took an interest, flew Mockasin out to play the record for him, and then promptly released it. The rest is history, and leads, ultimately, to Brooklyn.

A few hours and a few drinks later, Connan appears on a darkened stage at Pioneer Works. He

raises a plastic cup to the audience and thanks them, any nerves fully drowned in several hours of liquid preparation. But once the music starts, there are no drunken missteps: he and his band members groove through 'Forever Dolphin Love' tracks and a few 'Caramel' numbers. More people have crowded into the performance space. Somewhere near the wall, a bespectacled twenty-something leans over to his friend and shouts in his ear. He sounds genuinely impressed, discovering what Thom Yorke and Victoria LeGrand have known for years: "Wow, they're really good!"

Now, things are falling into place very much on purpose. Instead of recording 'Caramel' in New Zealand or his new home in Whalley Range, Manchester, Connan spirited himself away to Tokyo, where he holed up in a hotel room for a month to put the collection together. Throughout its production, his labels - Phantasy, French label Because Music, and Mexican Summer - all left him, as he'd hoped, entirely to his own devices: the music is one realm, at least, in which he holds the reins.

The result is 40 minutes of whispering, grooving, slippery, slow jams that sound like dreams feel, only their sentiments are more direct; many who've heard it have asked him why 'Caramel', unlike its more extraplanetary predecessor, sounds so sexual. It's a fair question, considering five of the album's songs are titled 'It's Your Body'. But Connan claims sexy wasn't his intention at all.

"I liked the idea of making a record called 'Caramel'," he says simply. "Then I made the whole record around what I thought a record called 'Caramel' would sound like. Also, I knew I was probably going to need to play it live so I wanted to make something simple." (Playing the complex, effects-rich songs from 'Forever Dolphin Love' is difficult, he says, because he prefers not to use backing tracks.)

But how the songs came together - how Mockasin gets his rich ideas, none of which seem grounded in any reality

"Connan is one of he best guitarists l've ever seen, looking like Andv Warhol and playing (almost) like Jimi Hendrix. He's a truly important musician and one of the greats of this generation."

Rhys Webb

The Horrors



put them down, when I get excited enough to make a record, I do." Of course, explanations like this are what make Connan so intoxicating, and likely what has attracted such a crowd of famous admirers. Some have compared him to Ariel Pink (who played the Mexican Summer celebration the day before) for his

on this plane, is the ultimate unknown

write songs," he says, "I just hear ideas

variable. "I don't ever sit down and

and then when I can be bothered to

bizarre psychedelic genius - although he isn't so saucer-eyed that he's hard to talk to. He'll speak fondly of his "wonderful" parents and two brothers (he is a middle child) as readily as anyone you meet at the pub, but at the same time he will, unironically, up

and decide to record his album in Japan, stopping over on his way back to the UK after a trip home - his father had a major heart attack last year - because "the atmosphere's really mysterious", and "you feel like an alien there". At one point, a visitor to the gallery interrupts us to ask if the robed, feathery-white-haired Connan works here. It's not a totally absurd question.

"It still feels a bit surreal," he says after smiling politely and informing the man that, no, he's not the artist. "This whole month's been non-stop press, like 10 shows. People always ask, 'Why did you do this?' 'Why...?' It all starts to feel like a shrink session. Like, I don't know! You don't really think about those things."

Another thing Mockasin can't be bothered to think much about (now somewhat notoriously) are the songs on his iTunes. In a recent interview with *The Guardian*, he said the last album he'd been excited about was OutKast's split record 'Speakerboxxx'/'The Love Below', which was released in 2003. It abetted the myth of this far-out soul: Connan Mockasin doesn't listen to new music.

"It's not like that, I'm just really lazy," he protests. (He's quick to defend the writer of the piece, blaming misinterpretation instead.) "I do hear music - of course you hear new music! I'm just not very good at collecting. I don't have an iPhone or anything. I've got a laptop with music on it, but... one day if I have my own house, I'd love to have a record collection. Until then..."

One thing seems certain: it's not his modern contemporaries – or probably even his predecessors, actually - who inspire his music. Even Connan is unsure where it comes from, or where it will go - and that's exactly what he's going for, come what may. "I get very nervous before shows because I'm never sure if I'm going to do something that surprises myself. Stuff you don't expect coming from yourself is more mysterious. It makes you feel better about yourself. It makes me feel quite alive." ■

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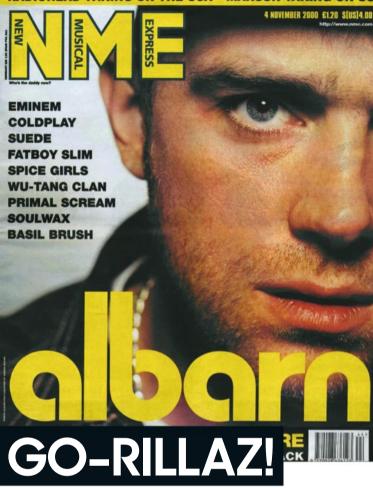
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THIS WEEK IN 2000

RADIOHEAD TAKING ON THE USA • MANSUN TAKING ON US



The dawn of a new century gives Damon itchy feet as he heads to Africa, becomes a cartoon and continues writing for Blur's seventh album. All in a day's work for Mr Albarn

As Blur prepare to release their fan-voted Best Of collection, which includes their least commercial Top 10 hit to date - 'Music Is My Radar' - Damon Albarn is adrift in musical possibility. Blur are relatively inactive they're "in sync again" but Damon is still writing for their seventh record, stating "I've made it very clear to the band that I want to work in a certain way" - but he's been to Mali to play with local musicians in order to make an album for Oxfam's On The Line project. He's also been working with a secretive collective known as Gorillaz on their debut EP 'Tomorrow Comes Today'. "It's something I've been involved with but it's a different sort of band. It's not fair for me to talk about something which they need to talk about."

It certainly sounds like a departure from what Albarn calls the "dying breed" of guitar

bands. He "can't stand" Limp Bizkit or Coldplay ("fucking no way!") and wonders "imagine creating a world around a Travis record, ie, the way the roads would look and the way the housing would look. I don't wanna live in that world." And what of Radiohead's recent critic-splitting 'Kid A'? Damon declines to comment.

'A'-LIST

Despite lukewarm reviews and a see-sawing reception ranging from adoration to disappointment in the UK. America has thrust experimental opus 'Kid A' to Number One in what's being dubbed 'Radiohead Hysteria'. Spin calls it "the anti-rock album of the year" while tickets for the band's 3,500-capacity New York Roseland Ballroom show sold out in three minutes. The gig is pure pandemonium, "I cannot get my head round the fact we're Number One in America at all," says Thom Yorke.

MANSUN MAN UP

In the face of a critical backlash. Mansun frontman Paul Draper braves NME to defend himself over rumours of a nervous breakdown ("first I've heard of it... I was in Ibiza getting off my tits on trance-house!"), his fashion faux pas ("I used to wear an orange boiler suit"), the kickings the band got for second album 'Six' ("I fucking scared myself with that record") and of being hated. "You open a mag that you've respected all your life," he says, "and it says, 'You're a wanker. Fuck off and die."

REVIEWED THIS WEEK



BLINK-182 – The Mark, Tom & Travis Show: The Enema Strikes Back!

"Frankly, the tragic sound of three men so desperately trying to avoid growing up is plain depressing."

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

- ▶ The Queen, it's revealed, has bought shares in Alan McGee's label Poptones. "It appeals to my sense of humour," says McGee.
- ► With Ian Brown due to support Primal Scream at Alexandra Palace on NYE. Scream bassist Mani claims a reunion isn't out of the question. "I'm tempted to cut a track with him again," he says, "it just depends whether he's got anything funky enough for me."
- ► Spice Girls' 'Forever' album gets 0/10, NME's Christian Ward opening his review, "They were fucking awful, weren't they?"

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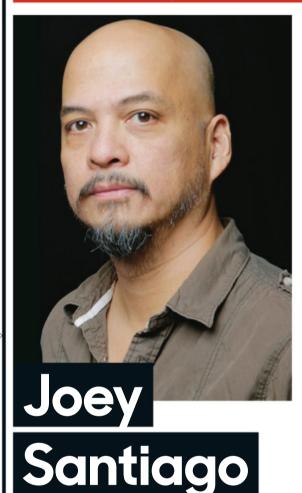


HAMISH BROWN

BRAINCELLS?



WE FIND THE ROCK STAR, YOU ASK THE QUESTIONS



Pixies' guitarist

After you smashed up your guitar at the Boston date of the 1989 Fuck Or Fight tour, where did you go to 'find yourself'?
Abi Hodgson, Edinburgh, via email "Did I do it in Boston?"
WRONG. The Grand
Canyon (below). Did you find yourself there?
"Not really, I was following a



ram. I was on acid and I was following this ram, I thought he'd lead me to me, but he lost me up in the mountains. I was sneaking around like I was in a horror film, haha! I really was! Five days, we camped all the way down there and walked back up. We didn't plan our diet very well, we ran out of food but I had this acid

that was dripped in sugarcubes."

You wrote music for the college-based Fox sitcom Undeclared; where was it set? Eva Banas, London, on Twitter

"You mean

the actual school? I think they filmed it at USC but the fictional name of the university, I don't know." WRONG. The University of Northeastern California

When 'Bam Thwok' was rejected as the title track for Shrek 2, what replaced it?
Daniel Jones, Hampshire,

on Facebook
"It was a Counting
Crows song."

CORRECT. Counting Crows' 'Accidentally In Love'

"They used a Weezer song as a guide track for the kind of music they wanted on the film, something to do with '...Island'. 'Island In The Sun', that was it. We completely ignored it. They wanted a soundalike but we obviously didn't go for that."

Complete this lyric: "Strong legs, strong face..."

Caroline Hewitt, London, on Twitter

"Haha! '...tight pussy'.
...'Tasty pussy'?"
WRONG. "...voice like milk,
breasts like a cluster of
grapes." From 'l've
Been Tired'

What was the fourth track on your debut EP 'Come On Pilgrim' (left)? Gabi Jenkins, Warwick, via email

"I've no idea, 'The Holiday Song'?"

> WRONG. 'Ed Is Dead'

How many
eyes are on
the cover
of 'Trompe
Le Monde' (left)?
Ali Ahmed,
Coventry,
via email

"How many eyes? It looks like there would be 11."

WRONG. Six.

"I know there's a riddle that Vaughan Oliver did about why there's six. He always has a riddle with his artwork, I don't know what that riddle is about six eyes though."

What was the opening number for your acoustic setlist live in Newport in August 2010? Gavin James, Newport, via email

"You gotta be kidding me! It might've been a cover... slow 'Wave [Of Mutilation]'?" WRONG. 'Bone Machine' "REALLY?!"

The phrase 'Come
on pilgrim, you know
He loves you' was the
catchprase of which
Christian rock singer?
Paul Isley, Lancaster,
on Twitter



"Ah fuck, something Norman. Not Norman Blake, who is that? The singer from Teenage Fanclub? Tell him I said hello. Larry Norman?"

What colour smoke comes out of the pot of flowers on the table in the video for 'Bagboy' (below)?

Tony Mitchell, London, on Twitter

"Goddammit! White!" WRONG. Red.

"Ah! Where is my mind?"



You played on The Rentals' multimedia art project Songs About Time.
The project was in three parts – can you name either of the other two?
Brian Klein, Manchester, via email "No."
WRONG. Films About

About Days.

Weeks or Photographs

SCORE = 2

"We'll call it 'a good effort'. They were tough!"



IN NEXT
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Waxahatchee

Swearin'

Black Lips

Childish Gambino

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