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Temples

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Ian Cohen meets the restless New Yorkers who've thrown all their madness at their latest album

Danny Brown

Cartoon character or troubled talent? Jordan Bassett joins the rapper's UK tour in search of the real Danny Brown

From The Vaults: Kylie Minogue, 1992

As Kylie releases her latest record, we revisit Stuart Maconie's encounter with the Aussie superstar

CONTRIBUTORS



Tom Oxley
Photographer
Tom photographed Danny Brown both onstage and off: "The shows were some of the loudest I've heard for years. I'm sure my bones were still rattling the morning after."



Gary Ryan
Writer
Gary covered the BBC 6 Music festival in Manchester: "The Horrors told me about a film called *Edward Penishands*. Haim tried to teach me a Backstreet Boys dance routine."



Lisa Wright
Writer
Lisa hosted a summit between young British bands Temples, Peace and Wolf Alice: "Gathering them all together felt like a victory against the old and mundane."

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

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MISDIRECTION?

There were so many things to celebrate at the NME Awards. Arctic Monkeys winning Best Band and Best Album. Damon Albarn receiving the Award For Innovation and, of course, Blondie. The one thing that disappointed me was Harry Styles winning Villain Of The Year for the second year in a row. This grudge held towards Styles and co is a cliché. The beauty of pop music is that it never changes, which is why other genres of music are so much better. People get too hung up on this view that it's destroying the industry. Surely the biggest villain of the year is Vladimir Putin? After watching videos of Pussy Riot being whipped in the streets of Sochi, I thought he would receive the award. Pop does its job, but that doesn't mean it's important. I love music as much as the next NME reader and I despise Harry, Liam, Louis and the other two, whoever they are. It just seems the public get too engrossed by it all.

Flynn McDonnell, via email

Jenny Stevens: It's like Winston Churchill's old adage, Flynn: "The best argument against democracy is a five-minute conversation with the average voter." The public voted. And again they voted for Harry Styles. Whatever you think of that mop-haired pop scamp's crimes against music, are they really comparable to the likes of Vladimir



Putin? As I type, Putin is sending the Russian army into Crimea in a bid to cling to his empire after Ukrainians decided they wanted to enjoy the rights and freedoms of the EU rather than bow to a leader in Moscow's pocket. That's after the Russian president's attempt to quash protest against his vile new anti-gay laws. Harry Styles, according to his Instagram, is currently pottering about in a pair of Lego-shaped slippers. Sure, the award is just a bit of fun. But it's also a sign of the times we live in, when people get more hot under the collar about a pop band covering Blondie than they do about protecting human rights.

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A MACCA FAN WRITES

Dear NME,

I refer to your article, 'Paul McCartney fans reduced to tears at HMV instore signing' (18 October 2013). After having travelled over 100 miles and waited all night, I stood patiently in line – with my newly purchased copy of his latest CD – to meet Paul, take a photograph and give him a catalogue of my paintings. Photographs and gifts were forbidden, and after I got to the front of the queue Paul got up and left. Priority was given to competition winners and Paul's most ardent fans were left behind.

Of the hundreds who attended, I estimate that only 150 got their CDs signed. Now, when I play Paul's music, I hear a voice that no longer speaks to me.

Kevin Willetts, via email

GUTTED PERIOD

I don't know whether to laugh or cry right now, given that the one thing I never thought I'd want has sold out. I missed out on securing myself a copy of the debut LP by Perfect Pussy (right) decorated with lead vocalist

Meredith Graves' menstrual blood – so yeah, my life is kind of a wreck and my existence without reason.

Luke Bartlett, via email

JS: Luke, I hear you. That album is one of the most badass slices of fire-bellied punk rock I've heard in a while. The very existence of a piece of vinyl encrusted with the one-time uteral lining of Meredith Graves just proves people still quite literally pour blood, sweat and tears into their music. I'll be putting mine on the



shelf next to my Grimes labia ring.

BUGG IN THE SYSTEM

I'm a fan of Jake Bugg, and would hate to ever speak an ill word against him. However, after slagging off *The X Factor* before his record even hit the shelves, do you think Bugg performing on *American Idol* is the move of a sell-out? Did he do it for the money, or just as an innocent publicity stunt?

Olivia Gehrke, via email

JS: Not only did he appear on the show, Olivia, he then called the programme a "dream smasher" almost as soon as he'd stepped offstage. "I talked about those shows so much, I thought it might be an idea to actually go and

experience it," he said. Hmm... I'd say the lure of all that exposure to plug his record to a US audience might have had more to do with it than some exploratory moral crusade into the inner workings of reality TV pop culture.

VIOLETS OVERTHROW

The award for Best Live Band fell in the wrong hands at your Awards. I love Arctic Monkeys and went to see them at Earls Court. I was also in attendance at Palma Violets' concert at

the Coronet Theatre. Palma Violets blew me away, and to be completely honest, made Arctic Monkeys seem a little silly. The energy in their performance is incredible and the crowd was more up for it than they were for the Monkeys. Palma Violets lost at the hands of popularity, not live performance.

Tom Weir, via email

JS: I saw Palma Violets at one of their early gigs in their London 180 studio and it was one of the most brilliantly raw, ramshackle and passion-fuelled live sets I saw that year. I also saw Arctic Monkeys at Glasto. Their command of an enormous crowd was spellbinding in a wholly different way, but I agree with you – they've got too big for their boots and their live shows feel distant. I'd like to see Alex Turner and co do a Prince and start tearing up some tiny venues again.



LOOK WHO'S STALKING

I caught Carl Barat in the coffee shop I work in. I'd just listened to my playlist featuring 'Last Post On The Bugle' and suddenly he appeared. He was awesome. I've wanted to meet him since I was 13!

Thomas Varo, London



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NME TRACK OF THE WEEK

1. Lykke Li
Love Me Like I'm Not Made Of Stone

"Love me deep until you can't/Even though it hurts, even though it scars", begs Lykke Li on this emotional first taste from her third album 'I Never Learn'. Where the likes of 'Dance Dance' and 'I Follow Rivers' have seen her skipping between lively beats and synth motifs, here the Swedish singer strips things back to skeletal levels. It's just her and an acoustic guitar, and all the more devastating for it.

Rhian Daly, Assistant Reviews Editor

2. Son Lux
Easy (Switch Screens) feat. Lorde

Lorde first hinted at a collaboration with Son Lux when she threw a version of noir-soul ballad 'Easy' into her homecoming gig in New Zealand at the start of the year. Now it gets a proper release on the 'Alternate Worlds' EP of four revamped songs from Son Lux's 'Lanterns'. "Pull out your heart to make being alone easy", she purrs, like she'd do it without dropping her gaze or breaking a sweat. Chilling.

Hazel Sheffield, writer

3. Future Islands
A Dream Of You And Me

"People lie, people love, people go/But beauty lies in every soul", swoons Future Islands frontman William Cashion on the latest cut from forthcoming album 'Singles' (a confident title if ever there was one). Laced over shimmering, Twin Shadow-esque guitars and liquid basslines, the 4AD-signed Baltimore trio ooze doe-eyed emotion from every pore – from Cashion's fragile, cracked croon to the group's knack for a cute, catchy couplet. Heartwarming stuff.

Lisa Wright, writer

4. The Amazing Snakeheads
Here It Comes Again

When NME visited The Amazing Snakeheads in their Glasgow studio this week, the trio revealed that their album was recorded exclusively at night. Fittingly, 'Here It Comes Again' has the kind of gnawing paranoia you get when marching around the wrong part of town under cover of darkness, its throbbing bass and stabs of guitar building to a screaming climax. Dangerous, brutal and thrilling.

Dan Stubbs, News Editor

5. Cerebral Ballzy
Speed Wobbles

'Better In Leather', the debut track from Cerebral Ballzy's upcoming, Dave Sitek-produced second album, 'Jaded & Faded', came out in November. Don't imagine, though, that they don't live their lives in some crazed hurry; this new B-side by the Brooklyn punk band rattles past at an alarming pace and in quick-sharp time. A balls-to-the-wall hardcore banger clocking in at just over a minute, it's certainly speedy, but it doesn't wobble.

Phil Hebblethwaite, writer

**6. School Of Language**
Dress Up

David Brewis of Sunderland's Field Music has taken his own sweet time over second School Of Language album 'Old Fears' (out April 7), and it shows. 'Dress Up' is lovingly realised – a playful slice of jerky, glitchy falsetto soul with squashy synth bass straight out of Hot Chip territory, sounding like the sort of thing Pharrell might make if he thought he was Warp R&B maestro Jamie Lidell and not, say, Bruno Mars.

Matthew Horton, writer

7. Lord Flacko
Unicorns

Lord Flacko is A\$AP Rocky in production mode. This tripped-out gem from his 'Beauty N Da Beast: Slowed Down Sessions (Chapter 1)' mixtape has shades of DJ Shadow in his '90s prime. Unintelligible half-speed vocals drift over a creeping beat that never gets out of first gear while luxurious strings waft in the background. The sonic equivalent of a pure skunk blunt, without the bother of having to skin up.

Chris Cottingham, writer

8. Dauwd
Lydia

London-based producer Dauwd continues his move away from the UK bass sound and towards the outer edges of house and techno on 'Lydia', his first release on the prestigious Kompakt label. Daft Punk-style synths glisten in the background as a metronomic beat ticks away sweetly, providing a backdrop for the track to build and build in a rigid but stylish fashion – all of which suggests he will feel right at home on his new label.

David Renshaw, News Reporter

9. Beach House
Saturn Song

Since they released their debut in 2006, Beach House have specialised in crafting atmospheric music with often stunning results. How to build on that? Move to sounds from another planet, of course, which is what they've done here. 'Saturn Song' is an out-of-this-world leap on from their ethereal aesthetic that features recordings, or electromagnetic fluctuations, from Voyager 1 and 2's deep-space probes. Wow – haunting and scientific.

Andy Welch, writer

10. Porter Robinson
Sea Of Voices

Known mostly for being part of Skrillex's gang as much as his own Niagara Falls-sized dubstep drops, for his launch into the spotlight Porter Robinson has produced something altogether more subtle here. It starts with wind chimes, followed by a warm breeze of synths and strings that fan out like stars appearing across a desert night sky. Think of it as the rising producer's take on Sigur Rós' 'Hoppipolla'.

Greg Cochran, Editor, NME.COM

ESSENTIAL NEW TRACKS

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11. Janelle Monáe What Is Love

Sadly not a Haddaway cover but a new track by funk alien Janelle Monáe for the *Rio 2* soundtrack. Usually one for cosmic R&B weirdness and songs about messianic robots, this is the straightest thing Monáe's ever released and underlines her potential to be just as big as Beyoncé. It sees her hotfooting it across the Copacabana with sun-licked guitars, a hip-swinging samba'n'breaks rhythm and some big-lung action as she ponders matters of the heart.

Kate Hutchinson, writer

12. Mac DeMarco Brother

Mac has been living hard on the road these last few years, so this languid entreaty to take things slowly, and to go home, seems to be aimed as much at himself as at the titular brother. There's a lot of party music out there, but this is the direct opposite: music for the end of the night. This song will take you by the shoulders and guide you to bed when you feel the crash coming.

Kevin EG Perry, writer

13. Javeon Intoxicated

Jessie Ware and Disclosure labelmate Javeon continues his bid to become the PMR label's next big star with this slice of club cool. "Leave me drunk in a way that's hard to explain/I'm intoxicated", he sighs about the object of his desires over subtle, shimmering melodies and laidback beats. Javeon's not the only one who's love-drunk – this latest cut has got us feeling tipsy too.

Rhian Daly, Assistant Reviews Editor

14. Teleman Lady Low

If Thomas Sanders' balletic, high-pitched voice is a throwback to his days as frontman of lost indie heroes Pete & The Pirates, his new motorik pop band Teleman give it a spacious new canvas on which to trace its artful arcs. In this wonderful Bernard Butler-produced waft of 'saxwave', his wistful, waltzing melody adorns laps of hazy phase and sunset saxophone to create an idyllic riverboat picnic scene that reaches a climax so euphoric that the scones must be coated with peyote jam.

Mark Beaumont, writer

15. Christopher Owens It Comes Back To You

It's no understatement to say that former Girls frontman Christopher Owens is one of the most underrated songwriters of our generation – the man is a modern-day Burt Bacharach. His latest solo track is a wash of languid Americana beefed up with a roof-raising gospel choir that would be ridiculous if it wasn't so utterly brilliant and backed by the biggest, dumbest 'Purple Rain'-style guitar solo this writer has heard this year. Pure genius.

Jenny Stevens, Deputy News Editor



16. Odonis Odonis Angus Mountain

Toronto's Odonis Odonis retain their penchant for creating foreboding landscapes on 'Angus Mountain,' although this murky number leaves behind the Big Black comparisons of old and heads towards something far sleeker. Driven by stuttering electronic percussion and vocalist Dean Tzenos' repeated lyrical motif of "She never loved you anyway", there's a warm, consolatory message somewhere within this glinting coat of armour.

Simon Jay Catling, writer

17. Wild Beasts Wrecking Ball

The audience laughter during Hayden Thorpe and Tom Fleming's impromptu cover of Miley Cyrus' hammer-licking megaballad is the only part of this that grates. It may be uncomfortable for some to accept that 'Wrecking Ball' is an impeccably constructed pop song whichever way you slice it, but it's irrefutable once you've heard Wild Beasts' take, fuelled by tender harmonising and soft acoustics.

Eve Barlow, Deputy Editor

18. Posse Shut Up

In 'Shut Up', from Seattle trio Posse's second album 'Soft Opening', singer Paul Wittman-Todd wearily looks forward to no longer having to deal with other people's shit and finally getting a moment's peace. He tells the story like Lou Reed after a long day, but 'Shut Up' really sings when his mind is left to wander, illustrated by one of the most affecting guitar solos in recent memory; forlorn and questing, like Yo La Tengo taking on Television.

Laura Snaps, Features Editor

19. De La Soul Dilla Plugged In

Fresh from releasing their entire back catalogue online for free, De La Soul have put out the first track from new mixtape 'Smell The DAISY', which reworks De La Soul tracks over J Dilla beats. It's an almighty tribute to the peerless producer who passed away in 2006. Completely different to the clownish big beat of original 'Plug Tunin', 'Dilla Plugged In' melts over Dilla's jittering beats, James Brown samples and smooth keys. Pure magic.

Lucy Jones, Deputy Editor, NME.COM

20. Meanwhile Luvletta

As fizzing technicolour pop highs go, this first track from London newcomer Meanwhile is as good as it gets for us mere mortals who'll never get to huff laughing gas with Prince backstage at a Gorillaz gig. 'Luvletta' may be driven by a powering electro-funk bassline and lined with sugar-rush synths, but it's Tom Andrews' contorting falsetto that really kidnaps your attention, wailing "I'm on my way" like a madman late for the party of the century.

Al Horner, Assistant Editor, NME.COM



TheWeek

► EVERYTHING THAT MATTERS IN MUSIC ■ EDITED BY DAN STUBBS

Reading & Leeds announce final headliners

**Queens Of The Stone Age and Paramore will join
the best of new British talent in the 2014 line-up**

At Reading & Leeds this year, orange is the new black. The final headliners, revealed today, are a double hit of redhead-fronted US rock, with the mighty Queens Of The Stone Age alternating with Paramore in the last show-stopping slot at Reading & Leeds. They join the previously announced Arctic Monkeys and Blink-182 topping the bills at the three-day, two-site festival, which takes place on August 22–24.

Also added to the line-up are a host of acts that represent the cream of new British talent. Fat White Family, Eagulls, Circa Waves, Jungle, Drengé, Chvrches, Temples, Peace and Wolf Alice will all be appearing – and you can find out what happened when we gathered together members of the latter

three on the next page.

The new additions to the Reading & Leeds 2014 line-up are completed by Vampire Weekend, Bombay Bicycle Club, Macklemore & Ryan Lewis, Imagine Dragons, Foster The People, The Hives, Nero, Enter Shikari, Klaxons and Joey Bada\$\$\$. And filling the final slots lower down the bill are Deaf Havana, A Day To Remember, Sleeping With Sirens, Clean Bandit, Don Broco, Cage The Elephant, Andy C, Bondax, Breach, Danny Brown, Jacob Plant, Neck Deep, Hacktivist, Flume, Ben Pearce, Lower Than Atlantis, Marmozets, The Neighbourhood, Rodigan (DJ set) and Pendulum (DJ set). ■ DAN STUBBS

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Stone Age are
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Field trip

Together for the first time, but certainly not the last: meet the new wave of British acts making this year's Reading & Leeds Festivals a weekend to remember



"TODAY'S NEW BANDS ARE THE READING & LEEDS HEADLINERS OF THE FUTURE"

Harry Koisser, Peace

The main stage headline slots may be occupied by the all-conquering Arctic Monkeys, along with US rockers Queens Of The Stone Age, Paramore and Blink-182, but there's a wind of change blowing through the rest of this year's Reading & Leeds bill. The latest wave of artist announcements is bursting at the seams with a crop of new British talent, from Jungle to Dreng, Fat White Family to Eagulls and Circa Waves to Chvrches. Don't bet against them being the highlights of the weekend.

We gathered the figureheads from three of the vital young bands set to grace the Reading & Leeds stages this summer for an impromptu summit. Order of business: how they plan to own the festivals, and why we should all be flying the flag for our homegrown talent this year.

Sat upstairs at Brixton O2 Academy, our panel and cover stars are Harry Koisser of Peace, Wolf Alice's Ellie Rowsell and James Bagshaw of Temples. They may be primarily linked by a love of charity-shop chic and fake fur coats, but underneath the enviable hairstyles (Harry is now sporting a Richie Manic-like black bob), they're a united front of righteous ambition and off-colour anecdotes. We'll spare you the one about a member of Wolf Alice shitting himself while watching Natty at Reading 2008***.



What is it that makes the festival a special event to play?

Ellie Rowsell: "It's the only festival that has a real youth heritage. It's more mischievous, and there's a wider variety of people that go there as well. It seems like it's everyone's festival."

James Bagshaw: "It's the perfect festival for your first festival, too. Reading is big but it's reasonably confined. And it always has the best bands."

Harry Koisser: "You hear about the people in the top year going to Reading when you're in school, whereas other festivals you tend to go to when you're a bit older and more mature. Reading's like a rite of passage."

(From left) Ellie Rowsell of Wolf Alice, Harry Koisser of Peace and Temples' James Bagshaw



Does being a young band playing to young fans add a certain extra significance?

Harry: "Because we're of the age where we're no younger than or older than most of our crowds, we kind of see it from both sides. Last year, maybe because I have terrible vision and... other reasons, I literally felt like I was being absorbed by the crowd in a weird way. The age that we're all at and the music we're making works together. It just feels a bit significant at the moment."

You're all gathered here as the frontrunners of young, British music in 2014. What's exciting about this current scene for you?

Ellie: "It seems like bands' careers are being made steadily at the moment, like we're paving the way for headline bands rather than just hyping something to be really hot straight away."

Harry: "It's all young bands and fans doing things rather than just older people deciding what's good new music. It's something that's been getting stronger and steadily increasing over the last year, or few years really. We're building the castle on the rocks, not on the sand."

Ellie: "It really seems like it's gonna stick around rather than just have its moment, peak and then fade away in about a year."

Is that reflected in more exciting festival bills?

Harry: "It's on its way. I can really see, in the next two years, what would be a new band now will be headlining Reading & Leeds in the future. I don't think that's out of the question at all, and then that sets a precedent. It just takes a little bit of time to get to that level, and to get the people who are in charge of how that works to notice how exciting these bands are."

What are your first memories of the festival?

Ellie: "I wasn't allowed to go when everyone else started, so the first time I went was the year before Radiohead played."

Harry: "2008? I was there. It was strong. [Peace] all knew each other before, but Reading was the first time me and Doug jammed. I broke my foot jumping over a stream and then someone stole my phone while I was rolling around on the floor with my broken foot."

James: "I remember crowdsurfing to Albert Hammond Jr. I was too late to see The Strokes play, so that was the next best thing. That was the first time I crowdsurfed and I stupidly did it on the first song, so I missed the rest of the set. I learned not to do that again."

And how are you all planning to kill it at this year's weekend?

James: "We've got a record out now, so whereas last year we had to be concise and just do the singles, now there's more licence. We've learned half of three covers though, so maybe we'll do a mash-up of them."

Harry: "My dad called me the other day and was like, 'I was listening to the radio and heard a song that reminded me of you. I think you should consider it for a cover... It's 'You've Got The Love' by Florence And The Machine. I just felt you through her voice.' I mean, what?! So Danny Koisser recommends we do that. He was like, 'Promise me one thing – just listen to it.'"

We know you want to hear the story really.

Over to Wolf Alice guitarist **Joff Oddie:** "I was working on a farm, drank some unpasteurised milk, went down with my boys and then I pooped myself. And I missed Rage Against The Machine, which is the only reason I went. I've never been back. I'm fucking scared to go back."



Temples

Ellie: "It's the only gig you'll ever do where you have to pull people in – except, like, busking. I remember being younger and always thinking about what I'd wear if I played Reading & Leeds. I probably should have been thinking about what I'd be playing, really..."

Any surprises up your sleeves?

Harry: "Maybe it's just time for us to throw a curveball with our outfits. A pair of blue jeans, a white T-shirt, a practical jacket – go mad and spend £20 in Officers Club."

So that's your festival wardrobe sorted then. And by the end of our meeting, the three singers are an amiable team, working out the best way for festivalgoers to catch each other's sets should the unthinkable happen and they all clash (FYI: Peace have promised to front-load theirs, so you can then run to Temples and bow out with Wolf Alice). The summit leaves us with a warm, fuzzy feeling: with countless wild shows, a host of future indie classic singles and two bona fide Top 20 albums between them, we can't think of any better people to entrust the summer to.

■ LISA WRIGHT

► Turn to page 50 for our Temples feature



Wolf Alice

Ready for the weekend

**Eight brilliant acts tell us why they'll
be speeding up or down the motorway on
2014's August bank holiday weekend**



Metronomy

Joe Mount tells us why his band's set comes with a warning for expectant mothers

What was your first Reading & Leeds experience?

"I went to Reading in 1998 and the Beastie Boys were headlining. There were six of us with two wristbands – it was a slightly devilish system."

What's your fondest Reading & Leeds memory?

"Last time we played, [multi-instrumentalist] Oscar's friend came with his heavily pregnant girlfriend, and I think the bass made her give birth. She had to leave to have the baby."

Any special plans for this year?
"We always have fun at festivals

and make it a greatest hits set. It's a blessing having four albums now; doing festivals with one was a nightmare."

You collaborated with MKS at the NME Awards 2014 with Austin, Texas – any potential collaborators at the festival?

"Who are the main headliners this year? Blink-182? Er, we're alright for collaborations..."

How are your fancy new costumes going to cope with any potential mudslides?

"Well, I think the white trousers are not the way to go. It's a situation we'll be reviewing – one eye on the weather forecast and the other on new fabrics."



Circa Waves

Frontman **Kieran Shuddall** says there's a tenner on you enjoying his band's debut Reading & Leeds set

Ever been to Reading & Leeds as a punter?

"We're playing the Festival Republic stage; I saw that Arctic Monkeys gig on the same stage in 2005. Well, I was on the outskirts, unable to get in, but it was nuts. That was a really good year for indie guitar stuff."

Are you excited to be part of a new crop of young British bands at the festival?

"There are bands coming through like Drowners and Skaters who are really cool and will hopefully do well. The last band to break through was The Vaccines, and they did it on their own really, so hopefully this time there'll be a few bands coming up together."

Tell us why everyone should come and catch your set.

"We'll give everyone a tenner each, a free CD and a hug. Seriously though, I think we're a good straight-up indie rock'n'roll band: a lot of energy, a lot of shouting, a lot of sweat."

Drenge

Eoin and Rory Loveless are eyeing up the headline slot

What are your early memories of Reading & Leeds?

Rory: "I went when I was 16 and there was lots of pissing in tents. Someone spilt yogurt on our friend's tent, so he punched them and broke his wrist."

What is it that's special about Reading & Leeds?

Eoin: "It's the 'you're going back to school, kids!' festival. It's the last party of the summer."

You played for the first time last year. How was it?

Rory: "We went on just before Swim Deep, so we had a massive crowd, and at Reading two circle pits broke

out. Leeds was muddy and dank and clammy. It was like the Somme."

As a young band coming up through the ranks, do you feel excited about the way festival line-ups are going?

Rory: "It feels like they've gotten over the slump of reunion bands – it still happens, but seeing Foals headline Latitude last year was pretty cool. It means that... the world's your oyster!"

And what other new bands should we catch this year?

Eoin: "Eagulls are amazing, so are Kagoule and Blessa and Menace Beach. They're all worth checking out."



Bombay Bicycle Club

Catch the all-conquering Londoners at the cage-fighting after a bill-topping slot

Did you go to Reading or Leeds as a fan, before you played there?

Ed Nash: "It was the first festival we all went to after our GCSEs. You can go up to about 50 per cent of people at Reading and ask them what they got, and they'll tell you."

What's special about the festivals?

Jack Steadman: "You have to make your own fun when the music stops. The other festivals have poetry tents and film screenings. At Reading & Leeds it's bands and drinking."

Jamie MacColl: "You go to Shangri-La at Glastonbury and it's meant to be counterculture. But at Reading you see those cage fighters..."

What's the best Reading or Leeds set you've seen?

Jamie: "Radiohead at Leeds in 2009. It was one of the best shows, visually, I've ever seen."

You're headlining the NME/Radio 1 stage. Are you expecting it to be different to previous appearances?

Jack: "Yeah, when you're doing those early slots, you're just so happy to be there, you're excited about the free beer, and you've got a free ticket to this festival!"

Ed: "The first time we played Reading, in 2007, we were on at 12pm. The gates weren't even open, and people started running in while we were playing. That's one of the greatest memories I have."



Foster The People

Mark Foster says Reading & Leeds is the antidote to manicured American festivals

What were your first impressions of Reading & Leeds when you first played it?

"Every festival has its own personality, and Reading & Leeds felt kind of raw to me, in a good way. There's something quite feral about it, so whenever we play there I tap into that energy."

How does it compare to other British festivals you've played?

"British festivals have no pretensions. The people there are going through extreme conditions just to hear the music – sleeping in a tent in the mud and rain for a week without showering, living off of whisky and cigarettes..."

Is that a very different vibe to festivals in the US?

"Completely different! In Britain, when people are going for it, they're going for it. They're not thinking about what kind of shoes the person next to them is wearing."

What have you got planned for the set this year?

"We're working it out now, actually. In the past we've thrown in some covers, but that's something we'll think of in the moment if we're feeling it."

Joey Bada\$\$

The Brooklyn rapper is making his Reading & Leeds debut. How will he fare without his bouncer, Action Bronson?

This is your first time at Reading & Leeds – how have you found British festivals so far?

"I love festivals, especially overseas. When I did Parklife in Manchester last year, all the fans broke down the barrier and there were about 200 people on the stage. I got saved by Action Bronson – he pushed about 50 kids out of the way with one arm."

How do you find British crowds compared to the US?

"British crowds are waaay more responsive. In America it's a whole different type of hip-hop that's the most popular, whereas over here it's the original, golden-age '90s sound."

Reading & Leeds is traditionally a rock festival – how do you think your material translates to that crowd?

"My energy is like a real hard, punk-rock kind of energy, so I could captivate that crowd really easy. I'm touring with Disclosure now and they're more pop and electro, but because people are used to jumping up and down like crazy, even if a genre is totally different, it's really just energy over here."



Jungle

The man known as T on preparing to play in daylight – and jousting on the campsite

Have you been to Reading & Leeds as a punter?

"I went to Reading right after picking up my GCSEs. I saw The Streets, Muse, Arctic Monkeys, Placebo and loads of others. But what I mostly remember is jousting in a shopping trolley with my mates. I was celebrating a pretty good batch of grades, but I think I might have killed some braincells that weekend."

Jungle have smoke screens and backlighting. How will you do that at a festival?

"If we're on in the middle of the day then the lights and stuff won't really work, but you just have to give up control a bit and concentrate on having a fun time and playing a great show. We don't really know what we'll do for it yet."

There's a strong crop of British bands playing this year. Glad to be part of it?

"I've grown up watching Arctic Monkeys, so I'm glad they're spearheading a line-up full of great young British bands. Young bands need the chance to blood themselves on festival stages, to play alongside established acts."



Queens Of The Stone Age

Keyboard player/guitarist **Dean Fertita** reckons co-headlining with Paramore will push both bands to be their best



Dean Fertita (centre) with Queens Of The Stone Age

You're co-headlining with Paramore (left). Have you got something up your sleeves to blow them out of the water?

"Well, everybody's competitive to a degree, but it's good competition. We're co-headlining a tour with Nine Inch Nails in Australia at the moment and the idea is that everybody does an equal amount. Tonight's the first night, and I'm really curious to see if the audience likes it as much as

I think they're going to. To have another band inspiring you to play even better just to try and one-up them is a good thing! It's great for the audience and great for everybody."

What does it mean to you guys to top the bill at Reading & Leeds?

"It's exciting. It's one of the biggest shows that you can play anywhere. We're going to be ending our touring cycle there, and I don't know if there's a better way to do it. It's interesting for us, because even though it'll come at the end of this cycle it will also feel like the beginning of the next record. It points the way forward."

Do you remember when you first heard about the festival as a fan?

"I grew up hearing about it. In my younger days I'd hear from friends who were in bands who played it,

and they all said that it was the ultimate place to go. For everybody who's been touring for a while, or even just playing music for a long time, you want to play Reading & Leeds. To get to the point as a band where we can play this high up on the bill there is definitely exciting."

What's your favourite memory of playing the festival yourself?

"My memory is so bad now that I can't even remember our drummer's name. I remember playing in 2008 when Jack White also played [in The Raconteurs], because it's always exciting to be around friends."

BATTLE OF THE BANDS

Queens Of The Stone Age are sharing their headline slot with Paramore. How do the two stack up?

► **NAME** Queens Of The Stone Age

► **FROM** Palm Desert, California

► **COMBINED AGE** 195

► **PAST R&L EXPERIENCE** They last hit the Main Stage in 2010, when Josh Homme told the crowd: "I love this festival so goddamn much. It's fucking perfect." He's also played there with Eagles Of Death Metal and Them Crooked Vultures.

► **WHAT TO EXPECT** Hypnotic desert rock and massive riffs.

► **WATCH OUT FOR** Josh Homme taking on hecklers. In Florida recently he branded a stage invader a "fucking douchebag".

► **NAME** Paramore

► **FROM** Franklin, Tennessee

► **COMBINED AGE** 78

► **PAST R&L EXPERIENCE** They last appeared in 2010 and 2012, when they supported The Cure. Singer Hayley Williams told NME in 2010: "The line-up is ridiculous, the main stage is just massive and I quite like the shopping as well."

► **WHAT TO EXPECT** A set spanning their shift from thrashy emo rock to punky power-pop.

► **WATCH OUT FOR** Hayley Williams pulling a fan up onstage to sing. It could be you...

THE MINI INTERVIEW



Melvin Benn

Reading & Leeds boss

There are lot of new British acts on the bill this year. Do you think British music is having a moment?

"I don't think it - it's a fact. And it's great to be able to reflect on how much it's thriving with our line-up."

Were Arctic Monkeys always in your sights for this year?

"Absolutely. They're a phenomenal band at the pinnacle of their powers. They have a long history at the festival and sharpened their craft here, which only adds to the magic."

Queens Of The Stone Age and Paramore are co-headlining. Could you not make your mind up?

"Queens had been knocking on the door for years and Paramore represent a type of music that's built into the festival's history. Both bands wanted the headline slot, so I said, 'Why don't you both headline?' To my surprise, they were into the idea."

The Leeds site was a bit gloopy last year. Any solutions to that?

"We've put in significant drainage. It should help if we get similar rains this year."

Any changes to the late-night programming?

"It's an ongoing discussion, but it's difficult because of residential neighbours. People tend to... self-entertain anyway, if you know what I mean."

■ AL HORNER

WIN READING & LEEDS TICKETS FOR YOU AND FOUR FRIENDS! MEET CHVRCHES! Enter our amazing competition to win the ultimate Reading & Leeds prize

NME COMPETITION

Like the sound of Reading & Leeds 2014 so far? You're about to love it, because we're offering the chance for you and FOUR of your mates to bag guest weekend tickets to the site of your choice, with privileges like a special camping area and access to the backstage bar. You'll also get side-of-stage access to watch Chvrches' set on the

NME/Radio 1 stage, so you'll experience the thrill of their show just as they do, with full view of thousands of screaming fans. To top it all off, you'll get to meet Chvrches backstage afterwards. It's guaranteed to be the weekend of a lifetime, so head to NME.COM/win to enter now.

«READING LEEDS» 2014





WHERE HE GOES, THEY FOLLOW. WHEN HE SPEAKS,
THEY LISTEN. WHEN HE JOKES, THEY LAUGH.
HE IS GOOSE.

Randy "Goose" Baxter is just one of the whiskey experts we've assembled down in Lynchburg, Tennessee, to guide folks along our walkin' tour. We're rare to boast, but can honestly say we've got quite a group down in the Hollow. We'd love for you to pay us a visit. Most folks leave the tour quite well informed, entertained and a hint envious. After all, spending your life teaching people about Jack Daniel's Tennessee Whiskey is a pretty special endeavor.



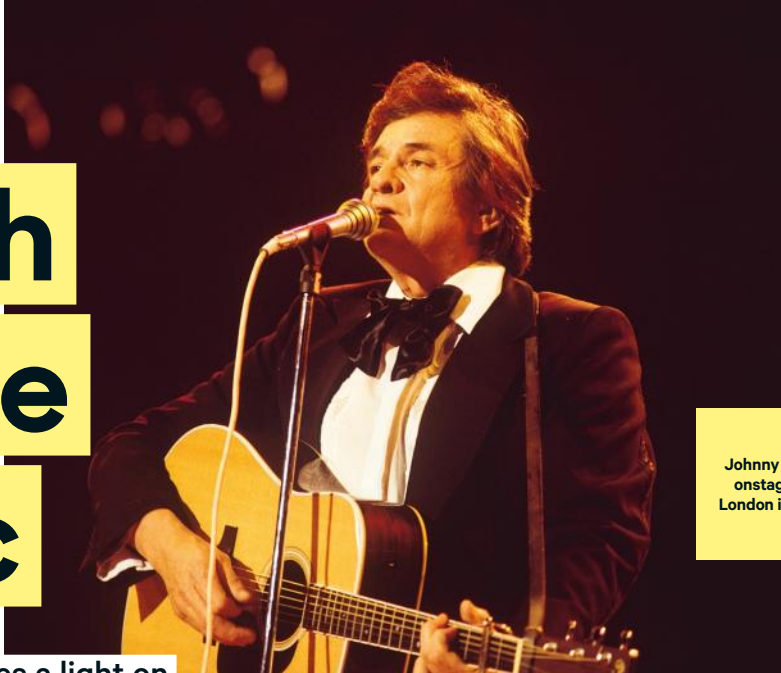
JACK DANIEL'S  TENNESSEE WHISKEY

Your friends at Jack Daniel's remind you to drink responsibly.

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for the facts drinkaware.co.uk

Cash in the attic



Johnny Cash
onstage in
London in 1981

A new album shines a light on Johnny Cash's most difficult decade

Since Johnny Cash died in 2003, the few "new" albums of note have included a set of acoustic demos, 'The Bootlegs Volume 1', and a couple of volumes of 'American Recordings', the covers-based, Rick Rubin-produced series that reignited Cash's career in his dotage.

The latest offering from the vaults is the most intriguing yet. The 1980s were Cash's least successful decade. Written off as a has-been, Cash struggled with the flashy production of the era and the songs making up 'Out Among The Stars', recorded in 1981 and 1984, were rejected by his label Columbia. So why is his son, John Carter Cash, who oversees his father's legacy, intent on releasing them?

"Columbia didn't have the vision to see what these songs were," says Carter Cash. "This period was actually a creative prime for my father. His drug addiction had recurred, but after beating that he was clear-headed, focused, and his home life was in order." That family life is celebrated on the album in two duets with Cash's wife, country singer June Carter Cash, who died four months before her husband.

Although Cash had four daughters with first wife Vivian Liberto, John Carter Cash is the only child from his 1968 marriage to June. While he says his father's defining traits were "kindness and forgiveness", he also acknowledges that there was no happy ending following the events depicted in biopic *Walk The Line*. "The film leaves off as if it was happy ever after, and it wasn't," he says.



Carter Cash admits that, had 'Out Among The Stars' been released as intended in 1984, it may well have flopped. "The world just wasn't that cool in the '80s," he says. "But now we have the full picture of my father as an artist and we can see something is missing before 'American Recordings'. Although Billy Sherrill's production is of the time, he had the vision to show all the different sides of my dad's character on this album."

'Out Among The Stars' is likely to be followed by "a very good, unique" live album and possibly further volumes of 'American Recordings'. "Dad recorded a gospel session and one with bluegrass players with Rick Rubin," says Carter Cash. "There's a lot of great music from that time, but Rick is rightly very careful that the right things get released."

Carter Cash himself has just finished producing an album for Loretta Lynn and is working on his third album. Compiling 'Out Among The Stars' had obvious personal benefits for him. "Working on these recordings is like coming back to see my best friend," he says. ■ JOHN EARLS

SHINING 'STARS'

John Carter Cash on the album's highlights

'Baby Ride Easy'

"One of the best duets my parents sang together. Dad was deep in love with his wife, and there's a great, great energy to this song."

'I Came To Believe'

"Dad wrote this about his faith while recovering from drug addiction. Faith was empowering to my father, and you can hear his spirit being lifted up."

'Call Your Mother'

"The other song Dad wrote on the album. He always called his

mother, and he made sure

I called mine too. And now it's something I say to my three kids."

'I'm Movin' On'

"Waylon Jennings' office was near our house. He'd stop by a lot just to say hello, but a lot of times that led to him and my father recording a song on the spot, like this one."

'If I Told You Who It Was'

"Perhaps not many people are aware that Dad had a great sense of humour, and you hear it loud and clear here."



MY LIFE IN A SUITCASE

FIVE TOURING ESSENTIALS

Miles
Kane



BOOK
**Anyone Who
Had A Heart**
by Burt
Bacharach

"It's his autobiography, but I'm not a massive reader and I'm still on his childhood at the moment. I can't wait to get onto the juicy stuff."

BOXSET **Curb Your Enthusiasm**

"I'm up to date with *Breaking Bad* now so this is the show I always go back to for an easy late-night watch."



I like the later ones when they brought the Blacks in. 'Meet The Blacks' is a classic episode."

FILM **Walk Hard: The Dewey Cox Story**

"It's a take-off of *Walk The Line* and other music biopics. The main character has elements of Dylan, Lennon and Morrison in him, and Jack White appears as Elvis. You'll want to rewind the Bob Dylan part over and over again."

GAME **FIFA 14**

"Me and the boys, that's what we do on the bus. Phil and Jay, my drummer, are all over it, so I'm lucky if I can get a game in. I'm a solid seven out of 10 on that game. Maybe an eight."

HOME COMFORT **Adidas tracksuit**

"It's an old-school black and white tracksuit. Classic. It's what I wear when I'm at home chilling, so it's a good one to rock up on the bus in. That and some Hobnobs. Sound!"



(Below) BBC Three's *Bad Education*. (Right) T In The Park



AXING BBC THREE IS BAD FOR COMEDY, MUSIC AND YOUTH TV

BY JEN LONG

Proposals to move the channel online and slash its budget will leave a massive hole in the Beeb's youth culture output, says the presenter



It's wrong to axe BBC Three. The channel does things that don't happen anywhere else on the BBC. I'm the voice between the shows so I've watched the whole schedule. And what it does, it does really well.

You can't be a music fan and not be worried about the fact that such a massive amount of live music is about to disappear from British television. BBC Three broadcasts from One Big Weekend, T In The Park, Reading & Leeds and Glastonbury as well as covering the Urban Proms and MOBO Awards. Whether you like the bands or not, it's still a way for people to watch live music and invest money in music. The channel gave bands like Chvrches and Daughter their first taste of national TV coverage.

recent mental-health season, called *It's A Mad World*, was brilliant. Mental health is a massive issue for young people and nobody else is talking about it in such depth. People appreciate that sort of TV, especially when it's not patronising. It's for young people because it's about young people. BBC Three also makes programmes for young audiences from a range of ethnic backgrounds that aren't catered for anywhere else on the BBC. Putting it online is all well and good, but it's easy to forget that there are places around the UK that don't have fast broadband, and people who can't afford the technology. Not every teenager has a laptop or an iPad.

The director general has made his decision. It'll now go to the BBC Trust to decide. But the campaign to save the radio station 6 Music showed that the BBC Trust does listen to the voices of the licence-payers. Young people in Britain are going to lose a bit of their voice if BBC Three goes. I have hope that it's a well-loved channel and that people will want to keep it. But it's up to the audience to petition the Trust. If you want to keep BBC Three, it's up to you. ■

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

LOST ALBUMS

#20

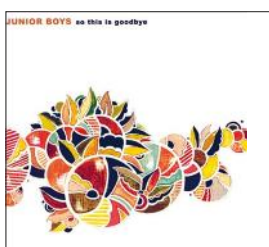
Junior Boys

So This Is Goodbye (2006)

Chosen by Tom Fleming, Wild Beasts



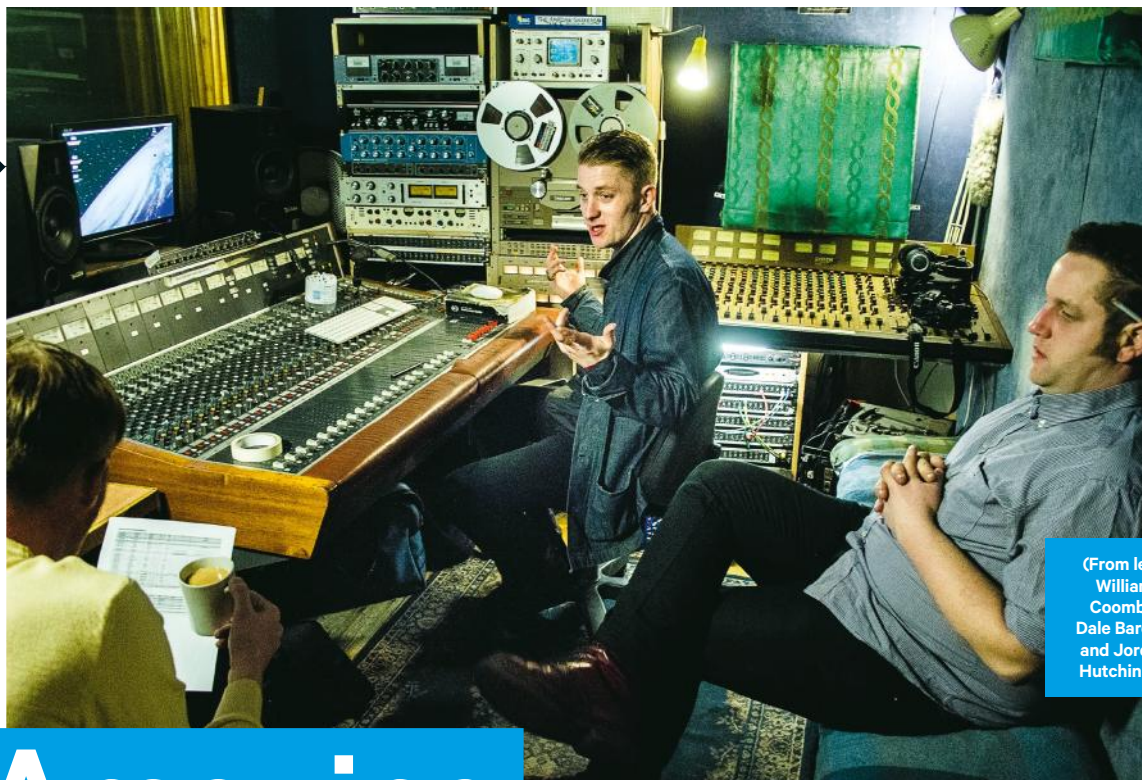
"It's rated among people I know, but I don't think it got the wider recognition it deserved. They're our labelmates and they're almost dubstep, but from when dubstep was less about bass and more about reverb and space. It's essentially dance music and it's a wonderful, wonderful album. There are some great sounds on it. This was their second record; their first album 'Last Exit' got a bit more attention, but their second one is even better. It's much more aggressive than the first one, heavier-sounding and really sad. It's definitely a break-up record."



► THE DETAILS

- **RELEASE DATE**
September 12, 2006
- **LABEL** Domino
- **BEST TRACKS** Count Souvenirs, Double Shadow
- **WHERE TO FIND IT** The album is readily available from good independents
- **LISTEN ONLINE** On Spotify

The garage-rock trio hunker down in Glasgow and try to capture their fiery live sound



(From left) William Coombe, Dale Barclay and Jordan Hutchinson

The Amazing Snakeheads

The problem with being one of the most untethered, aggressive and downright exciting new live bands in the country is this: how the hell do you begin to capture that on record? That's the challenge that was laid down to Glasgow's The Amazing Snakeheads for their debut album, due out in April on Domino. Early listens suggest they've achieved it, but don't expect them to explain it.

"I haven't got a fucking clue, mate," sniggers singer/guitarist Dale Barclay, who makes up the trio with bassist William Coombe and drummer Jordan Hutchinson. "I've got no idea how my vocals actually work. That was the only apprehension I had about recording, because I'm not a singer. It's more about getting the atmosphere and the feel of it right. And the atmosphere is there. I don't know where it comes from or how it works, but it's there. We just... ride it."

The atmosphere Barclay speaks of is achieved via a combination of The Birthday Party's inky darkness, Barclay's intense,

Adam's apple-rattling vocals and a creeping sense of smashed-pint-glass unpredictability. They bottled this by keeping things simple: two weeks in their local recording facility, Green Door, with studio owners and friends Emily MacLaren and Stuart Evans on production duties. The five shut out the world and went fully nocturnal until they had an album.

"*I come alive at nighttime*", Barclay rasps on the album's thrilling second song 'Nighttime', and it's a mantra he lives by. "To record at night, it's just natural to us," he explains. "Rock'n'roll does come out at night. We were completely engrossed; everything else in life took a back seat. But we felt energised – we were looking at each other and going, 'Yeah, this is working.'"

While the main challenge was capturing the feeling of freedom in tracks such as 'I'm A Vampire' and 'Swamp Song', the band members weren't afraid to experiment. On the second half of the album, 'Memories' and 'Every Guy Wants To Be Her Baby' slow the pace, showing a more reflective, measured and considered side to the band. With lyrics like "*When some poor bastard sidles up/No need for chat/He just wants to fuck*" on the latter song, we wouldn't go as far as describing it as a 'tender' side, though.

"People might be expecting a certain sound," says Barclay, "but certainly, the second half takes it down a notch." They enlisted the help of musician friend Andrew Pattie to play saxophone on much of this side, giving a Stooges-like brass rub to things, while studio boss MacLaren sings wispy backing vocals on Bad Seeds-like closer 'Tiger By The Tail'. "With the sax, that's just what we were hearing, so we tried it," the frontman says. "It sounded fucking right. There was no grand plan."

► THE DETAILS

- **TITLE** Amphetamine Ballads
- **RELEASE DATE** April 14
- **PRODUCERS** The Amazing Snakeheads, Emily MacLaren, Stuart Evans
- **RECORDED** Green Door Studio, Glasgow
- **TRACKS** I'm A Vampire, Nighttime, Swamp Song, Here It Comes Again, Flatlining, Where Is My Knife?, Every Guy Wants To Be Her Baby, Memories, Heading For Heartbreak, Tiger By The Tail
- **DALE BARCLAY SAYS** "People say we're angry and things like that, but to me it's just us. There's a hell of a lot of joy in the music."

It seems as if The Amazing Snakeheads' 'get in, plug in, get out' mentality is likely to pay off. "It's a rock'n'roll record," Barclay says when asked to sum it up. He leaves an awkward pause before adding: "It's. A. Rock. And. Roll. Record." ■ JAMIE FULLERTON

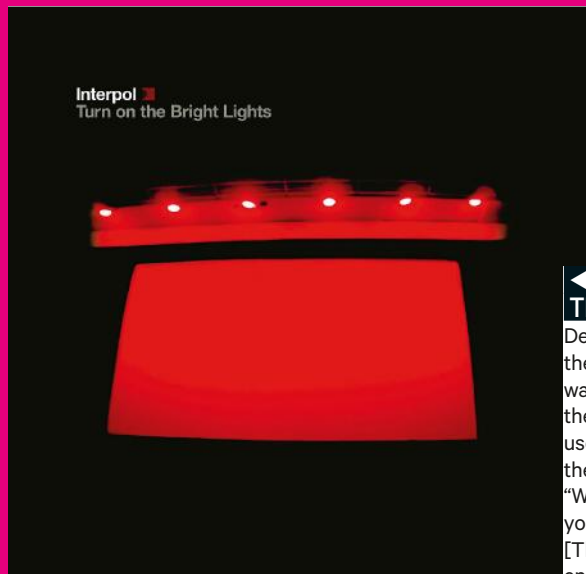
"ROCK'N'ROLL DOES COME OUT AT NIGHT. EVERYTHING ELSE IN LIFE TOOK A BACK SEAT"
DALE BARCLAY



ANATOMY OF AN ALBUM



"I'M SUPER PROUD OF IT"
Paul Banks



Interpol
Turn on the Bright Lights

STORY BEHIND THE SLEEVE

Designer Sean McCabe – then working at MTV.com – was charged with producing the album cover. McCabe used a photo of a London theatre, later commenting: "With Interpol, it's more 'what you see is what you get'. [The album] is mysterious enough to be interpreted many different ways."

THIS WEEK...

Interpol: Turn On The Bright Lights

The 2002 album by Interpol, headliners of the NME Awards Tour 2014 with Austin, Texas, was one of the finest debuts of the decade

THE BACKGROUND

Daniel Kessler and original drummer Greg Drudy formed Interpol in 1997, with Kessler's NYU philosophy classmate Carlos Dengler roped in to play bass and keys. Paul Banks completed the initial line-up after bumping into Kessler in New York's East Village, having previously met him studying in France. The four released debut EP 'Fukd ID 3' in 2000, shortly after which Drudy left to focus on his band Hot Cross and label Level Plane Records. Sam Fogarino took his place. Soon after, the band went to the UK to play a session for John Peel's BBC Radio 1 show before finally signing a record deal with Matador, who'd previously turned down three of the band's demos.

FIVE FACTS

- 1 The album's opening track, 'Untitled', was originally written as intro music for the live shows. They later told Pitchfork it had become so much like their own theme tune that it "felt appropriate" to start their debut LP with it.
- 2 The band took \$900 (£540) in cash to Peter Katis' Connecticut home studio to pay for the reels of tape used in the recording sessions, but according to the producer, then took a year to pay him for his work.
- 3 After the album was completed, bassist Dengler suggested the title should be 'Celebrated Basslines Of The Future'. Instead the group opted for a lyric from 'NYC'.
- 4 "This one's called 'Stella Was A Diver And She Was Always Down,'" slurs Paul Banks at the start of the track of the same name. The reason his speech is less eloquent than usual? He was chewing a mouthful of ice.
- 5 The group barely left Tarquin Studios during recording, except Fogarino – the only member with a driving licence – who took on the important job of collecting booze from the nearest liquor store.

LYRIC ANALYSIS

**"New York cares/
Got to be some more
change in my life"
- 'NYC'**

Though the album was released nearly 12 months after 9/11, the songs were written before the attack. 'NYC' surveys a city that's falling apart, with Paul Banks resolving, "It's up to me now/ Turn on the bright lights".

**"I'll bring you when my
lifeboat sails through
the night/That is
supposing that you
don't sleep tonight"
- 'Leif Erikson'**

Named after Nordic voyager Leif Ericson, the album closer positions Banks as an explorer of love, "learning a new language" before losing all poetic sensibilities and demanding "hook me up and throw me, babycakes"/"Cos I like to get hooked".

**"I'll stand by all this
drinking if it helps me
through these days"
- 'Obstacle 2'**

Booze is a consistent theme in Banks' often cryptic lyrics. "I have an addictive personality in all fields," he said later.

WHAT WE SAID THEN

"It could be as warm and emotionally satisfying as a hug from a piece of industrial cutting machinery, but Interpol temper this album with real atmospheric sadness." 8/10 Victoria Segal, NME, August 17, 2002

THE DETAILS

►RECORDED November 2001 ►RELEASE DATE August 19, 2002
►LENGTH 48:54 ►PRODUCER Peter Katis ►STUDIO Tarquin Studios, Bridgeport, Connecticut ►HIGHEST UK CHART POSITION 101
►WORLDWIDE SALES 1 million (approx) ►SINGLES Obstacle 1, Say Hello To The Angels, NYC ►TRACKLISTING ►1. Untitled ►2. Obstacle 1 ►3. NYC ►4. PDA ►5. Say Hello To The Angels ►6. Hands Away ►7. Obstacle 2 ►8. Stella Was A Diver And She Was Always Down ►9. Roland ►10. The New ►11. Leif Erikson

WHAT WE SAY NOW

One of the finest debuts of the noughties, the intoxicating nocturnal atmosphere of 'Turn On The Bright Lights' still has the power to delight.

FAMOUS FAN

Suede's **Brett Anderson** has said: "Interpol are my favourite modern band. 'NYC' manages to be simultaneously dirge-like and uplifting. It's a perfect record for where it came from, too; it's got that feel that's very urban and alienated."

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"I'm super proud of it. I love what we do as a band. It's not like that was our golden record. I mean, that was a great one because we spent five years on it. We wrote songs after that album that were more fun to write."

Paul Banks, 2012

THE AFTERMATH

The band released two more albums, 'Antics' and 'Our Love To Admire', before it was announced that Dengler had quit. Though his departure was said to be amicable, drummer Sam Fogarino revealed that Dengler had become sick of playing bass, while Paul Banks later called him an "a-hole". Interpol released the last album to feature Dengler – 'Interpol' – in 2010 and are currently working on a new record.

NEWS DESK



THE NUMBERS

£26,000

Amount US restaurant chain Arby's paid for Pharrell's Grammys hat in a charity auction

14 months

Sentence given to Pearl Jam's former accountant for stealing more than £200,000 from the band

\$80

Asking price for Kurt Cobain's skis on Craigslist. The sale was later revealed as a Sub Pop employee's hoax

3

Number of sons in Gwen Stefani and Gavin Rossdale's house, following the birth of Flynn

BIG MOUTH



"How can you remaster something that's already been mastered? Don't buy into it. Let it be"

LIAM GALLAGHER makes clear his feelings on the 'Definitely Maybe' reissue



THE BIG QUESTION

Turns out Stonehenge may be an ancient musical instrument. What would you play on it?



Josh Hayward
The Horrors

"Our song 'New Ice Age' is quite Spinal Tap. We'd have to be giants with huge mallets to play it."



Eve Barlow
Deputy Editor, NME

"The KLF's 'Justified & Ancient'. There's something mystical about summer solstice at Stonehenge and Tammy Wynette singing 'All bound for Mu Mu land'."



Abigail Adeoti
NME reader

"Seeing as this 'instrument' can only play one note, Kanye West's 'Runaway' would be perfect song to play on Stonehenge – and great for his live shows too."



WHO THE FUCK IS...



The Birds Of Satan

This is the new band fronted by Foo Fighters drummer Taylor Hawkins, with a self-titled debut album due in May.

So there's a Foo side-project and Dave Grohl isn't involved?

Grohl appears on one of the tracks on the album, as does former Nirvana and Foo member Pat Smear.

But this won't distract them from the new Foo Fighters album, right?

Doesn't seem so. The band are currently recording their eighth LP, with Grohl recently telling fans to prepare for a surprise. "It sounds nuts," he said.



Molly

This unknown singer will represent the UK at Eurovision, following flops Bonnie Tyler and Engelbert Humperdinck. Molly will sing 'Children Of The Universe' at the May 10 ceremony in Copenhagen.



Nick Grimshaw

The Radio 1 DJ swallowed a piece of glass live on air while hosting the Breakfast Show, leaving Fearnie Cotton to take the reins while he was rushed to hospital. He was later given the all-clear.

GOOD WEEK ↔ BAD WEEK

AND FINALLY

Hustle and snow

HBO have released a mixtape of *Game Of Thrones*-themed hip-hop, reggae and Latin music. 'Catch The Throne' features Common, Wale and Big Boi, among others.

Fleabag

Red Hot Chili Peppers bassist Flea appeared in an episode of Disney Channel's *Sheriff Callie's Wild West*. He's a milk thief in the otherwise pleasant Nice And Friendly Corners.

Knickers

R Kelly's underwear obsession continues – he's set to follow last year's 'Black Panties' LP with 'White Panties'. 'Grey Panties' will follow if he accidentally puts them in the wash together.

► Find these stories and more on NME.COM

Official RECORD STORE Chart

TOP 40 ALBUMS MARCH 9, 2014



Blood Red Shoes

Blood Red Shoes JAZZ LIFE

On their fourth album, the Brighton duo make a return to the rough and ready rock'n'roll that characterised their first two records, employing discordant thrashes and relentless psych-garage riffs. It's a tactic that's worked for them as they claim the Number One spot this week.

2	Morning Phase Beck EMI
NEW 3	Girl Pharrell Williams COLUMBIA
NEW 4	Atlas Real Estate DOMINO
5	Present Tense Wild Beasts DOMINO
6	Sun Structures Temples HEAVENLY
NEW 7	English Oceans Drive-By Truckers ATO
NEW 8	Man On The Rocks Mike Oldfield MERCURY
NEW 9	Eagulls Eagulls PARTISAN
10	AM Arctic Monkeys DOMINO
NEW 11	Tv En Français We Are Scientists 100 PERCENT
12	If You Wait London Grammar METAL & DUST
13	St Vincent St Vincent LOMA VISTA
14	So Long See You Tomorrow Bombay Bicycle Club ISLAND
15	Blank Project Neneh Cherry SMALLTOWN SUPERSOUND
16	Settle Disclosure PMR
17	Halcyon Ellie Goulding POLYDOR
18	Bad Blood Bastille VIRGIN
19	The Whippoorwill Blackberry Smoke EARACHE
NEW 20	Tomorrow's Hits Men SACRED BONES
21	Burn Your Fire For No Witness Angel Olsen JAGJAGUWAR
22	Warpaint Warpaint ROUGH TRADE
23	Days Are Gone Haim POLYDOR
24	After The Disco Broken Bells COLUMBIA
25	High Hopes Bruce Springsteen COLUMBIA
NEW 26	The 1975 1975 DIRTY HIT/POLYDOR
NEW 27	T Rex T Rex POLYDOR
28	Pale Green Ghosts John Grant BELLA UNION
29	Rave Tapes Mogwai ROCK ACTION
30	The River & The Thread Rosanne Cash DECCA
31	Shangri La Jake Bugg EMI
32	Whatever People Say I Am That's What I'm Not Arctic Monkeys DOMINO
33	The Next Day David Bowie RCA
34	Pure Heroine Lorde VIRGIN
35	Little Red Katy B RINSE
NEW 36	Trouble Will Find Me National 4AD
37	Champagne Holocaust Fat White Family TRASH MOUTH
38	Acoustic At The Ryman - Live Band Of Horses BROWN
NEW 39	Babel Mumford & Sons GENTLEMEN OF THE ROAD/ISLAND
40	Random Access Memories Daft Punk COLUMBIA

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.

TOP OF THE SHOPS



THIS WEEK ACTION RECORDS PRESTON

FOUNDED 1979
WHY IT'S GREAT Started on a market stall in Blackpool, it is now one of the largest independent record stores in the UK.
TOP SELLER THIS WEEK Beck - 'Morning Phase'
THEY SAY "Action Records still continues to be a haven for music lovers of all styles."

SOUNDTRACK OF MY LIFE



Suicide

George
Michael



Danger Mouse

Musician,
producer,
one half of
Broken Bells

**THE FIRST SONG I
REMEMBER HEARING**
**'Don't Stop 'Til You
Get Enough'**
- Michael Jackson

"I thought it was spooky, and I was scared of it a little bit because it had this 'Wooh!' vocal at the beginning with Michael's laugh. I was afraid, but I really liked how it sounded, too. The 'Off The Wall' album got played constantly by my parents."

**THE FIRST ALBUM
I EVER BOUGHT**
'Faith' - George
Michael

"I bought it for 'I Want Your Sex' after seeing the video when I was eight, because I couldn't believe people could get away with singing such rude songs. I don't have that cassette any more, but I still think George Michael is a great songwriter."

**THE FIRST SONG
I FELL IN LOVE WITH**
'Let's Go Crazy'
- Prince

"Like 'When Doves Cry', I've

been in love with this for so long. I had an older cousin who played the 'Purple Rain' album, and I'd sing along, not having a clue what 'let's go crazy, let's make love' meant

"THERE ARE NONE OF MY OWN SONGS I'M SICK OF"

[It's actually "let's get nuts" - Prince Ed]. I had no idea why everyone would laugh so hard at my singing. Those first songs I heard, they made me feel so happy, and they still do."

**THE SONG THAT
MADE ME WANT
TO BE IN A BAND**
'Wish You Were Here'
- Pink Floyd

"I didn't grow up listening to classic rock, but I heard it in a bar when I was 19 and the long guitar solo made me want to investigate Pink Floyd. I still remember asking the bartender, 'Who is this?' He went, 'Are you kidding? You don't know who this

is?' I felt so stupid. It was so beautiful and sad that it made me want to make music with those emotions."

**THE SONG I CAN NO
LONGER LISTEN TO**
**'The King Of Carrot
Flowers Pt One'**
- Neutral Milk Hotel

"After I broke up with someone, there was a period of about three years when I couldn't listen to any of [the Neutral Milk Hotel album] 'In The Aeroplane Over The Sea'. Truth is, I'm over it now and there really isn't any song I find unbearable. I'm a lucky guy, as there are none of my own songs I'm sick of either."

**THE SONG THAT
MAKES ME WANT
TO DANCE**
'When Doves Cry'
- Prince

"At a wedding, people will drop their plates of food to get on the dancefloor when that comes on. I was seven when it came out, so I've

songs I like which get stuck in my head. I've been on a '90s hip-hop tip lately, so there's a lot of Goodie Mob and OutKast in my brain right now. This is a slower Goodie Mob song that I played to death when I started out DJing."

**THE SONG I WISH
I'D WRITTEN**
**'Under The Milky
Way'** - The Church

"From that mysterious song title onwards, this is incredible. It sounds so simple, which I think could be a lesson for my own songwriting. So often it's the songs that have just two or three chords that become your best-loved songs."

**THE SONG THAT
REMINDS ME OF
NEW YORK**
'Ghost Rider' - Suicide

"For me, New York is some dirty, gritty shit. When I hear this, it always makes me think of home. It's less about my personal memories than how the city itself feels. I live downtown now, near the Bowery Ballroom, and whenever I see the area in movies, this song starts playing in my head."

**THE SONG I WANT
PLAYED AT
MY FUNERAL**
**'One Less Bell
To Answer'** - The
Fifth Dimension

"This is a beautiful version of a Bacharach & David song. It's touching enough to make people cry, because it'd suck if there was no-one crying at me not being around any more. But I'd want something funny, too, so the wailing doesn't get out of hand, and the song is about how there are fewer chores to do when someone isn't around. It's the perfect funeral mix of sadness and humour."

**THE SONG I DO
AT KARAOKE**
'White Wedding'
- Billy Idol

"I love going to karaoke, but I won't get up there myself. If I did, 'White Wedding' would be cool. Billy Idol should be OK for anyone to sing - you can usually cover yourself in glory with his tunes."

**THE SONG I CAN'T
GET OUT OF MY
HEAD**
'Soul Food'
- Goodie Mob

"I'm lucky, because it's only

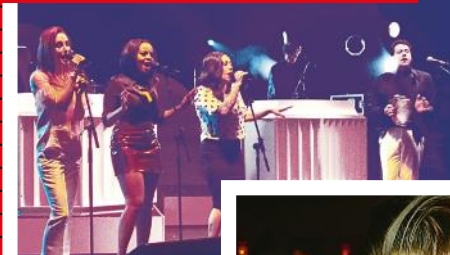


Michael
Jackson



NME PROMOTION

▲ The pictures on this page were taken on the Nokia Lumia 1020



UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL AT THE NME AWARDS 2014 WITH AUSTIN, TEXAS

NME captured all best moments of an unforgettable night on the Nokia Lumia 1020 and Windows Phone

Team NME has just about recovered from the chaos of this year's NME Awards with Austin, Texas. Legends rubbed shoulders with icons past, present and future as we packed as many of music's great and good into one room as possible, from Paul McCartney making small talk with Damon Albarn to Lily Allen introducing this year's Godlike Geniuses, Blondie. What's more, while right in the thick of it, we captured all the action on the new Nokia Lumia 1020 at the touch of a button. And now we can tell you the story of how the whole evening unfolded! Whether shooting the glitz and glamour of the red carpet, the live performances from the front of the stage or the fun-packed scene from the back of the venue, the Nokia Lumia 1020 ensured that we never missed one rock'n'roll moment. Check out the full gallery of images we shot at this year's NME Awards with Austin, Texas on the Nokia Lumia at NME.COM/lumia1020.



COMPETITION!

► Win tickets to the NME Awards Tour 2014 with Austin, Texas! Enter the competition and you can claim a pair of tickets to any date on what promises to be one of the music events of the year. Interpol, Temples, Royal Blood and Circa Waves hit the road later this month, with the shows kicking off on March 18 in Glasgow. To enter, simply visit NME.COM/lumia1020 now. Good luck!



Rad ar

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NME
NEW
BAND
OF THE WEEK

Coves

Alcohol and heartbreak have carved a path for this psych-pop duo

I think we operate better when we're drunk," laughs Coves frontwoman Beck Wood with a pint of Guinness in front of her.

"Sometimes we take it to the extreme and then it doesn't work," adds her musical partner, guitarist John Ridgard, shooting her a wry smile. "Like the night when you punched me in the face..."

"We were on Lauren Laverne's [BBC 6 Music] show. We went to see Toy," Beck explains of the incident. "I was having a piggyback and John pulled back my disco pants and poured a whole whisky and coke – *with* ice – down my bum. So I got off my friend's shoulders, walked back and punched him right in the face."

This affectionate bickering is reflected in the sound of Coves' music – warm and fuzzy but with darker, harder edges lingering in the background. Their debut album, 'Soft Friday', takes that concoction and filters

it into glossy psych-pop gems inspired by the '60s records John picked up at a record fair.

Recorded in their self-built studio in the communal squat where John used to live, the album has been slowly pieced together since the pair – former co-workers at Leamington venue The Assembly – drunkenly decided to start a band together. Of the record's 10 heartbroken tracks, the one they're proudest of came right out of the blue.

"I remember recording 'Wake Up' and having the skeleton of a song," recalls John. "Beck came round but nothing was working. We got really frustrated and bought a couple of bottles of wine. We were in this raucous state and it just came out."

"It's about my ex," Beck explains of the song's meaning. "It was me proving that 'I am who I am and you're just nothing to me any more'. It was meant to be a strong song for me, personally, to say 'Look at me now.'"

A blast of winning lysergic pop, it's both two fingers up at a former lover and proof that Coves are on the path to making something truly outstanding.

■ RHIAN DALY

ON
**NME.COM/
NEWMUSIC
NOW**

► Listen to an
exclusive stream
of album track
'Wake Up'

► THE DETAILS

- **BASED** Leamington Spa
- **FOR FANS OF** The Kills, Toy
- **SOCIAL** @covesband
- **BUY IT NOW** 'Soft Friday' is released on March 31
- **SEE THEM LIVE** They play Southampton Lennons (March 15) before joining Band Of Skulls on the road from March 23
- **BELIEVE IT OR NOT** Coves' favourite place in the world is Beaconsfield service station, where they dream of hosting their own festival

Turn the page
for more great
new music

23

Bison Bonasus

Emerging Canterbury collective Bison Bonasus released their wordy debut single out of the blue in February, although its twitchy guitar hooks, space-funk bass licks, tranquillised vocals and delightfully inscrutable lyrics could have been zapped in from any of Pink Floyd's countless cosmic jam sessions. Prog has scarcely sounded so sticky-sweet.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/bisonbonasusband

► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/bisonbonasus

Girlpool

Girlpool don't have a drummer and they don't need one. 'Blah Blah Blah', the opening track on their debut self-titled cassette, is a prime example of less being more. Armed with just two guitars, the duo reel you in with seriously catchy hooks and achieve more depth with these songs than any drumkit ever could. Just imagine listening to Beat Happening performing doo-wop covers with the fidelity turned up.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/girlpool

► **HEAR THEM** girlpool.bandcamp.com

Haraket

Haraket are the latest band from London to have caused a bit of tongue-

wagging. Having put out two EPs, both with Melodica Recordings, their sound blends the smooth flavours of Submotion Orchestra with the city savviness of King Krule. The results are similar to The xx's sparse melancholy, notes ringing through slow, thudding beats while frontwoman A Hardiman sings about isolation and lost loves.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/haraketuk

► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/haraket

NME BUZZ BAND OF THE WEEK

Your Friend

Plucked from the relative calm of balmy Lawrence, Kansas by Domino's US arm,

Juice

Taryn Blake Miller (aka Your Friend) crafts bewitching indie-rock tapestries, full of grasping, vine-like guitar lines and lulling canopies of cymbals and bass. 'Tame One' is the first taste of her debut release 'Jekyll/Hyde', Taryn's voice flitting confidently between Feist's golden tones and Sharon Van Etten's bruised coo.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/yourfriendtaryn

► **HEAR HER** soundcloud.com/dominorecordco/your-friend-tame-one

Gengahr

These London newcomers recently hit *Radar* as RES, but have now changed their name. Thankfully they've still got the same knack of churning out great tunes, and their recently aired SoundCloud demos show heaps of potential. There are flashes of MGMT and the lilt of Local Natives in the extra-special 'Fill My Gums With Blood'.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/gengahrband

► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/gengahr

Loyle Carner

Fresh from collaborating with Rejjie Snow on his



Vérité

'Rejovich' EP, Loyle Carner is the latest London MC to combine stories of city life with clever flow and Dilla-inspired beats. He's currently mastering his own debut EP, due by summer.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/loylecarner

► **HEAR HIM** soundcloud.com/loyle-carner

Juice

The latest band from the Birmingham scene that brought us Peace, Swim Deep and Superfood is Juice, who share both friends and a love of summery, citrusy things with their geographical counterparts. Their latest track 'Sugar' sounds like a sunnier version of Editors with Arctic Monkeys' Alex Turner on vocals, and it's as great an indie anthem as we've heard from the

Midlands in recent years. Just check out that stadium-filling guitar solo.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/juicebanduk

► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/juicebanduk

► **SEE THEM LIVE** Birmingham Hare & Hounds (March 21)

Marietta

With song titles such as '...So They Left Me At A Gas Station' and 'You've Got The Map Backwards, Matt', Marietta are an understandably agitated band. Desolation and dreariness haunt their debut record 'Summer Death', the exploration of these feelings paying homage to the twinkler bands of '90s emo rather than the angrier kind. With their guts truly out on the floor, Marietta bring a sense of originality to the genre.

BAND CRUSH

Paul Draper



Running Guns

"Running Guns are a classic British rock'n'roll band I'm working with. The singer Harry Wilder goes around London wearing a cravat and charging Japanese tourists to take his picture. They love The Jam, The Kinks, The Beatles, the Stones and Kasabian."

Your Friend



► **SOCIAL** [whereismarietta.tumblr.com](https://www.tumblr.com/whereismarietta)

► **HEAR THEM** whereismarietta.bandcamp.com

Mom Tude

Although 19-year-old Mom Tude takes inspiration from the same neo-jazz influences who inspired King Krule's hip-hop work, it's his ability to snap up amazing unknown vocalists that really makes him stand out. Coupled with an eclectic mix of nu-soul,

jazzy trumpets and broken beats, it all makes for an enticing concoction.

► **SOCIAL** [facebook.com/momtutie](https://www.facebook.com/momtutie)

► **HEAR HIM** [soundcloud.com/momtutie](https://www.soundcloud.com/momtutie)

ALX

Shadowy Scottish crooner ALX might just be the UK's most promising answer to LA's maudlin R&B chanteuse-of-the-moment, Banks. Debut cut 'Beautiful Criminal' opens a window to the rising artist's pensive, hopelessly romantic songcraft, but you get the impression it's no more than a glimmer of a distorted love story with page upon page still left to turn.

► **SOCIAL** [@ALXsounds](https://www.facebook.com/ALXsounds)

► **HEAR HIM** [soundcloud.com/alx_sounds](https://www.soundcloud.com/alx_sounds)

Tweens

Cincinnati's Tweens return with new single 'Be Mean', and their self-titled debut album is imminent. A trashy garage-rock song on the surface, there's a bratty attitude underlying it ('I want you to be mean, your sweetness is killing me', goes the hook), and Tweens come off sounding like an ever-so-slightly subdued Be Your Own Pet. Grabbing the attention of Kim Deal and subsequently supporting The Breeders, Tweens are rapidly becoming a force to be reckoned with.

► **SOCIAL** [facebook.com/tweencity](https://www.facebook.com/tweencity)

► **HEAR THEM** [soundcloud.com/meantweens](https://www.soundcloud.com/meantweens)

Vérité

With little more than a 'coming soon' on offer from her Facebook, all we know for sure about the NYC songstress is that she deals in big, unashamedly pop choruses. Debut track 'Heartbeat' is a fine example of her trade – a bold and catchy-as-hell introduction to her brilliance.

► **SOCIAL** [facebook.com/veriteohverite](https://www.facebook.com/veriteohverite)

► **HEAR HER** [soundcloud.com/verite_verite](https://www.soundcloud.com/verite_verite)

Radar LABEL OF THE WEEK

Tape Club



► **FOUNDED**
2006
► **BASED**
London

► **KEY RELEASES** Laurel Collective – 'Heartbeat Underground' (2013), Dark Bells – 'Wildflower' (2013), Febueder – 'Soap Carv' EP (2013)

► **RADAR SAYS** Starting in Will Evans' bedroom in Portwood, Southampton, Tape Club has moved on leaps from putting out a limited cassette run of tracks produced by the label's founder. Now they're dedicated to bands who make sounds at the odder end of music's spectrum, like Febueder, Emperor Yes and Hairy Hands.

NEW SOUNDS FROM WAY OUT

This week's columnist

JUSTIN
YOUNG

The
Vaccines



HORTICULTURE VULTURES



The last time I wrote one of these columns I talked about San Diego and the shadow that the musical exports of Los Angeles perhaps cast over it. I feel bad, but I just spent a month on the coast there and it seems like the storm clouds are gathering. When I was there I heard a lot of amazing new music, but nothing excited me quite as much as **The Garden**. They're twin brothers from the city who just had their EP produced by Raw Deal and Ariel Pink. It's beautiful and twisted future punk and it's great! Perhaps if Suicide were operating now and looking back 30 years, as opposed to doing that 30 years ago, they might not sound too dissimilar. I don't think it's a million miles away either from the awesome album 'Henge Beat' that Total Control put out a couple of years ago.

Continuing with a strangely horticultural theme, I want to talk about London-based **Great Ytene** (above). Their name is taken from the Anglo-Saxon term for the New Forest, where I grew up alongside a couple of them, and they've just signed to the fantastic Bella Union label. They play beautiful and often slow-building shoegaze/psych with echoes of Slowdive and Sonic Youth. Check out the song 'Away For Now', which I think is one of their best.

When he's not singing in Great Ytene, frontman Leon runs the fantastic record label Marshall

Teller. They actually put out our first single years ago, but have released tons of great music by acts including Gross Magic, The History Of Apple Pie, Warm Brains and Cheatahs. More recently, though, they released a great record by **Grass House**. It's dark, very

melodic and lyrically absorbing. Just as awesome is **Winter Drones**, the latest project by Leon Dufficy, who also plays with Still Corners and Hush Arbors. Listen to 'Winnie Cooper's Bones'. It's a song that sounds every bit like the project's name suggests, moving along slowly with spooky soundscape guitars, washed-out vocals and an entrancing drumbeat. That should be enough for now. ■



"GREAT YTENE ARE
BEAUTIFUL... THEY
HAVE ECHOES OF
SLOWDIVE AND
SONIC YOUTH"

More new music on page 26 ➡

Next week: Courtney Barnett

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

Anto Dust

Sardinian guitarist and lead vocalist Anto Cossu's Italian-inflected quintet call London their home these days, but their floating sound draws influence from all over. On new single '1955' they sit comfortably between Melody's Echo Chamber and '90s 4AD dream-poppers Lush. Last year's 'The Polyglot' found a fan in Blur guitarist Graham Coxon.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/antodustmusic

► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/antodust

Murmur

Hong Kong's Murmur are set apart from an abundance of Southeast Asian My Bloody Valentine copyists. While they, too, largely follow the wildly flailing guitars, dual male-female vocalists and fuzzy chords found on 'Isn't Anything', they apply the formula with noticeable ease. A free-reining guitarist who



Murmur

could be in Dinosaur Jr takes them the extra yard.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/murmurtheofficial

► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/murmurtheofficial

Abattoir Blues

This self-acclaimed "semi-supergroup" of Brighton bands, featuring members of The Magic Gang, Bayy and Birdskulls, stir up a filthy sweat with their super lo-fi post-punk sound. 'Still Here' is as baggy as Weezer's 'The Sweater Song', while 'Realise' is a dirty answer to '80s indie stalwarts Felt. The group's name, meanwhile, is the title of a Nick Cave album.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/abattoirbluesbrighton

► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/abattoirbluesband

Champions League

Balearia-obsessed brain-boxes Maxime Maybon and Ben Chollet were permanent fixtures on the blogs last year; their debut 'Paris Is Our Playground' – a woozy, hometown homage with a killer piano riff – was followed by the equally euphoric 'Ebiza' and 'My Dears'. These two footy fanatics are sure to be 2014's summer pop pacesetters.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/championsleagueparis

► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/champions-league

Osoosooso

Soft Speak Records release Osoosooso's debut self-titled album this month, and it isn't anywhere near



as terrible as the name implies. Channelling the jangly pop-rock The Front Bottoms and Modern Baseball have recently aaced, single 'Neighbours' is a fist-pumping anthem that's sure to become a live favourite due to its colossal hook.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/osoosooso.li

► **HEAR THEM** softspeakrecords.bandcamp.com

Allie X

One blast of the electropop chorus from debut single 'Catch' is all that's required to be hooked on the mysterious Allie X. This is a synth-laden gem brimming with ambition from the future LA-via-Toronto pop star. Working with the Canadian operation behind The Weeknd, her brand of

ABATTOIR BLUES STIR UP A FILTHY SWEAT WITH THEIR SUPER LO-FI POST-PUNK SOUND

alt.pop has the pedigree to cause an internet explosion.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/pages/Allie-X/125356847504071

► **HEAR HER** soundcloud.com/alliexandra

Tree

Raspy rapper and producer Tremaine 'Tree' Johnson has been quietly innovating in Chicago hip-hop circles for four years now with his blend of boomy bass and melancholic hooks – or "soul trap" as he calls it. Recent mixtape 'THE @MCTREE EP' is as elegant a rap nugget as you'll hear in 2014, from its brilliantly simple opener 'Probably Nu It' to New Orleans jazz-like 'God Like'.

► **SOCIAL** @MCTREEG

► **HEAR HIM** soundcloud.com/scionav/sets/tree

Radar NEWS ROUND UP

CROWS GET SHIRTY

North London doom-mongers Crows have been working with lo-fi super-producer Rory Attwell and Hookworms' MJ on new material. The first cut from those sessions, 'Dysphoria', is released on the band's own Dolphinarium label on April 7 as a handmade, limited-edition T-shirt with MP3 download code.

PAWS ANNOUNCE SECOND LP

Glaswegian noise-pop trio Paws decamped from their Scottish home to the woodlands of New York State to record their second album, 'Youth Culture Forever'. The LP, which they aimed to make "bigger and louder" than their debut 'Cokefloat', is released on June 2 on FatCat.



Kate Tempest



Evian Christ

KATE TEMPEST SIGNS TO BIG DADA

Spoken word artist Kate Tempest has signed to Big Dada (Roots Manuva, Wiley). The rap-loving poet follows up her 2011 album 'Balance' with former band Sound Of Rum with 'Everybody Down', a record split into 12 different stories. The Dan Carey-produced LP is due on May 19.

EVIAN CHRIST HITS UK

Producer and 'Yeezus'-collaborator Evian Christ (aka Joshua Leary) releases his 'Waterfall' EP on the shadowy Tri Angle Records this month and he'll be taking his live show around the UK to celebrate. He'll play London's Oval Space on March 21 with more dates to follow in April.

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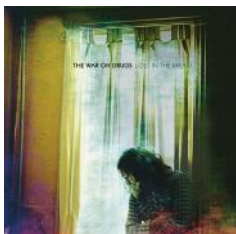
Reviews

► THE DEFINITIVE VERDICT ■ EDITED BY TOM HOWARD



The War On Drugs Lost In The Dream

**Kurt Vile's old band head out
on the perfect Americana
road trip on their '70s-aping
third album**



guitar and serious songwriting chops. However, with 'Lost In The Dream' – already one of 2014's truly great records – Adam looks set to stand shoulder to long-lock-draped shoulder with Kurt as Philly's most highly regarded musical sons. 2011's 'Slave Ambient' may have been a cult success, but this follow-up is a fast-flowing gully to mainstream domination.

The very best kind of Americana road-trip record, 'Lost In The Dream' makes you want to hotwire a Mustang and

Up until now, The War On Drugs have been somewhat eclipsed by the achievements of former member Kurt Vile. Main man Adam Granduciel appeared in Vile's band The Violators, too – evidently Philadelphia, where both acts reside, is a small town for those in possession of a well-tuned

drive it across the States, blazing through the badlands of Nebraska, down along California's stunning Big Sur and back through Louisiana swampland, picking up hitchhikers and spending evenings camped out near cornfields with only a bottle of whiskey and some well-thumbed Kerouac for company. It's a record that sensitively elevates such Americana clichés and visions of the great wide open, spinning heartland rock together with sensible psych to create a sound that's as much Balearic Bruce Springsteen as it is Don Henley on horseback.

Shameless in its aping of '70s rock tropes – just listen to the wailing guitar solo on 'Suffering', the wind-in-your-hair keyboard intro to 'Under The Pressure' and the key-change chorus of 'Burning' – 'Lost In The Dream', like its predecessor 'Slave Ambient', also stomps barefaced into prog territory, with half of its 10 tracks clocking in at well over six minutes each. In the hands

of a lesser artist, it could have been a total cheeseboard, a lazy lollop through some Bob Seger B-sides, but with Adam's unpolluted, irony-free approach, his sincere love of the genres he's aping blazes through.

ADAM GRANDUCIEL ON...

...his dream for '...Dream'

"The songs on [2011 album] 'Slave Ambient' were about me learning how to use the studio and how to put songs together, using textures with the occasional song structure. For most of the songs on that album, I wasn't really sure what I was doing. I wanted to try and find the music and the sound of this band that I felt close to.

"After 'Slave Ambient', I knew I needed to go on, like, a solo journey of doing it 60 per cent myself, going down a rabbit hole of sonics but in a different way than before. I knew I'd be going back on the road for two years, so I wanted to play songs that had some power in my life; songs that came from a real place, songs that I wanted to keep singing and could reinvent.

"Some of the 'Slave Ambient' songs were so locked in a soundscape that I couldn't play them live without certain equipment. I wanted to be able to play without all that excess; to arrange songs and think about them in a different way to before."

It comes as no surprise that The War On Drugs' indie distributor, Secretly Canadian, is part of the same label group as Jagjaguwar, home to Bon Iver. Like Justin Vernon before him, with 'Lost In The Dream' Adam Granduciel seems to be heading for things far bigger than anyone could ever have expected. This is one War On Drugs that might just succeed. ■ LEONIE COOPER

► THE DETAILS

► **RELEASE DATE** March 17 ► **LABEL** Secretly Canadian ► **PRODUCER** Adam Granduciel ► **LENGTH** 60:00 ► **TRACKLISTING** ►1. Under The Pressure ►2. Red Eyes ►3. Suffering ►4. An Ocean In Between The Waves ►5. Disappearing ►6. Eyes to the Wind ►7. The Haunting Idle ►8. Burning ►9. Lost in the Dream ►10. In Reverse ► **BEST TRACK** Under The Pressure

9

MORE ALBUMS

Evian Christ Waterfall EP

Tri Angle



Joshua Leary is electronica's very own Cinderella:

the teacher from sleepy Cheshire town Ellesmere Port who put three anonymous tracks online in 2011 and was plucked from obscurity by Kanye West for a grinding collaboration ('I'm In It') on last year's 'Yeezus' blockbuster. Now signed to West's DONDA creative agency, new EP 'Waterfall' sees the shadowy 24-year-old advance the weird, industrial sonics that caught everyone's attention in the first place into even bolder territory. From the twisted techno of 'Salt Carousel' to the vicious trip of 'Fuck Idol', these four tracks serve as a reminder to forget his tantalising new partnership with hip-hop's biggest provocateur: Leary can kidnap your attention just as easily alone.

■ AL HORNER

8

Tycho Awake

Ghostly International



American ambient electronica merchant Scott

Hansen's 2011 third album 'Dive' was a work of slick, toned disco, but for fourth outing 'Awake' he's hit the snooze button. More laidback and less danceable than its predecessor, the likes of 'Montana', 'L' and 'Dye' stroll rather than strut, with 'See' being the one song to get its blood pumping and only penultimate track 'Spectre' managing any sort of dynamic variety. That's not to say this eight-track instrumental album isn't pleasant, it's just a bit like going for a drive around a ring road: you'll be comfy, you might spot some pretty things on the hard shoulder, but ultimately it doesn't get you anywhere.

■ ANDY WELCH

6



Black Lips

Underneath The Rainbow

The Atlanta band's seventh is a beautifully unhinged affair

► In the 15-plus years Black Lips have been together, the Atlanta four-piece have had their fair share of sex, drugs and rock'n'roll. They were chased out of India by police in 2009 for getting naked onstage, and on a 2012 tour of the Middle East they introduced their live show to audiences who'd never seen anything like it before. They've crammed the essence of those experiences into this, their seventh album, its 12 songs capturing their reckless, apolitical disposition. Beginning with the psychedelic jangle of 'Drive-By Buddy', it's all beautifully unhinged, the likes of 'Smiling' and 'Justice After All' teeming with carefree chaos but never collapsing into an all-out shambles. 'I Don't Wanna Go Home' is a sloppy chug of romantic hedonism, and 'Dog Years' ends the album on a note of weary but insistent defiance. Black Lips' spirit is as bright as ever. ■ MISCHA PEARLMAN

8

► THE DETAILS

► **RELEASE DATE** March 17 ► **LABEL** Vice ► **PRODUCERS** Patrick Carney, Tommy Brenneck ► **LENGTH** 34:00 ► **TRACKLISTING** ►1. Drive-By Buddy ►2. Smiling ►3. Make You Mine ►4. Funny ►5. Dorner Party ►6. Justice After All ►7. Boys In The Wood ►8. Waiting ►9. Do The Vibrate ►10. I Don't Wanna Go Home ►11. Dandelion Dust ►12. Dog Years ► **BEST TRACK** Smiling

Ibibio Sound Machine Let's Dance

Soundway



Ibibio Sound Machine may look like the new Peaches, judging by

the electroclash-style image of singer Eno Williams on their debut album cover, but in fact they're a collective of producers. Trading in full-fat funk, they make uplifting West African beats and

Afro-soul jams. Along with Williams's folk stories sung in her mother's native Nigerian language of Ibibio, these flavours infuse one loosely psychedelic jazz noodle of a debut. In places, the mélange works: 'Let's Dance' sounds as if Grace Jones and James Murphy are playing Ghanaian highlife music for their lives. In others, it's lost in incessant bongo breakdowns and overblown brass.

■ KATE HUTCHINSON

6

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Reviews

Lyla Foy

Mirrors The Sky Sub Pop



Thinking back to the early days of Nirvana and the Seattle

sound, it's saddening now to see Sub Pop sink to such John Lewisian delusions of alternativity as these. You can see why they plumped for Londoner Lyla Foy for their first UK signing in years, though. There could be *something* here, and Foy deploys her electronica'd-up folk-pop with classy restraint. The child-woman ethereality that's wafted in and out of music's peripheral vision since the days of early '90s flutterers Cranes is strong on 'Honeymoon' and 'Easy', but there's also almost sprightly, post-Jessie Ware trip-pop on 'I Only' and 'Feather Tongue'. It's just not enough, though, to struggle above many years' worth of similarly tasteful, slight efforts. **5**

EMILY MACKAY

Shit Robot

We Got A Love DFA



This sleek second album from DFA's Shit Robot (aka

Marcus Lambkin) is as indebted as ever to the pioneering noises that seeped out of America's house strongholds in the second half of the '80s – call it renovated house – without ever feeling like pastiche. Lambkin is a follower, not an innovator, but his taste is pure and his references precise, with 'Do It (Right)' asking if "you know how to jack your body" and 'Feels Real' sounding like disco man-diva Sylvester transplanted to 1987 Chicago. Elsewhere, the acid prog of 'Space Race' recalls Merwyn Sanders and Eric Lewis' Virgo project as Lambkin ticks every old-school box in irresistible floorfilling style. **8**

MATTHEW HORTON

Sky Ferreira

Night Time, My Time

Her long-awaited debut sees the fearless singer back in control

When the general public act as pop gatekeepers, they tend to anoint stars according to how relatable they seem – something that never works out in the long run because, almost inconceivably, nice middle-aged mums don't make the world's most compelling pop stars. Sky Ferreira is the polar opposite of the homely type: her background includes childhood holidays with Michael Jackson, sexual abuse at the hands of a neighbour, getting signed at 17 but kept on the shelf while her label decided how to position her, and being arrested last summer for allegedly pulling a *Thelma & Louise* with her boyfriend, Diiv's Zachary Cole Smith.



Much has been made of how Ferreira's borderline absurd background feeds into her long-awaited debut – and her reputation, survival and vengeance undoubtedly fuel songs like 'I Blame Myself' and 'Nobody Asked Me (If I Was Okay)'. But more remarkable

THE DETAILS

► **RELEASE DATE** March 17 ► **LABEL** Polydor ► **PRODUCERS** Sky Ferreira, Ariel Rechtshaid, Justin Raisen ► **LENGTH** 46:10 ► **TRACKLISTING** ►1. Boys ►2. Ain't Your Right ►3. 24 Hours ►4. Nobody Asked Me (If I Was Okay) ►5. I Blame Myself ►6. Omanko ►7. You're Not The One ►8. Heavy Metal Heart ►9. Kristine ►10. I Will ►11. Love In Stereo ►12. Night Time, My Time ►13. Everything Is Embarrassing (bonus track) ►14. Everything Is Embarrassing (Unknown Mortal Orchestra Remix) (bonus track) ► **BEST TRACK** You're Not The One

than 'Night Time...'s hard-won release is how brilliantly universal it is without sacrificing any of its weirdness.

These songs are laced with betrayal, disappointment and self-loathing, experiences that are second nature to young women struggling to assert themselves in an oppressive society. But rather than wallow, Ferreira's triumphant choruses fit the late film director John Hughes' assertion that when you're a teenager, it "feels as good to feel bad as it does to feel good". While you doubt that 21-year-old Ferreira would ever choose to relive her own teenage years, she makes the business of unrequited crushes and useless boys feel like high-stakes magic in much the same way that Hughes did.

Written and recorded in two weeks with Ariel Rechtshaid and Justin Raisen, the production on 'Night Time...' spins the residual sweetness of My Bloody Valentine and Suicide's squall into industrial pop songs fit for Cyndi Lauper or The Buggles – albeit so blown out they make speakers crackle. Coupled with Ferreira's

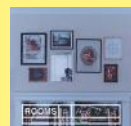
knack for a heady, evocative lyric (take "Love at first sight/Silent rays of blue/They slowly glide right down my spine" from 'You're Not The One'), it's an all-enveloping record that puts the listener at the centre of the overwhelming intensity of Ferreira's life these past few years – and offers a front-row seat to her wrestling

back control. **8** LAURA SNAPES

La Dispute

Rooms Of The House

Big Scary Monsters



Michigan post-hardcore band La Dispute have

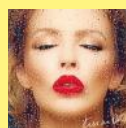
already established themselves with their last two albums, but 'Rooms Of The House', a concept album detailing the collapse of a cohabiting couple, sees the band properly impress. Powerfully tying together disparate influences and big themes, their

workmanlike guitars and burly rhythm section are a solid foundation for frontman Jordan Dreyer's dense lyrics, both sung and spoken. "I promised we'd rearrange things to fix the mess I'd made here, But I guess in the end we just moved furniture around", he sings on 'For Mayor In Splitsville', nailing the shattered spirit which lies firmly at the centre of this album's broken heart. A harmonious hardcore Dispute. **8**

DAVID RENSHAW

Kylie Minogue

Kiss Me Once Parlophone



Pharrell Williams and Ariel Rechtshaid, producers of

the moment, on a Kylie album? Why not? After all, the brilliance of Team Minogue has always been to hop onto passing musical trends while remaining true to the essence of Kylie. In 2014, that means warped vocal effects and a martial R&B beat not a million miles away from Vampire

Weekend's 'Modern Vampires Of The City' on 'If Only', and 'Get Lucky'-ish electro disco on 'I Was Gonna Cancel', which features Williams at the helm. Elsewhere, there are dubstep snarls on (ahem) 'Sexercise', fashionably '90s vocal cut-ups on the deep housey 'Fine' and I-love-you-no-I-love-you choruses and church bells on the epic title track. After 26 years in the business, Kylie can still pull off a very modern pop album. **7**

BEN CARDEW

Reviews

Freddie Gibbs & Madlib

Piñata Madlib Invasion



On paper, Freddie Gibbs and Madlib – knuckle-headed rap thug and sophisticated, jazz-loving producer – may sound like an odd combination. On record, though, Gibbs' coarsely inventive flow works perfectly with

Madlib's imperfectly human beats, which stink and stumble, full of unnerving soul strings and off-centre drums, while Gibbs relates stories of street violence and drugs in a voice that is both world-weary and ominous. At its best – as on 'Deeper' – 'Piñata' sounds like a close cousin to Raekwon's 'Only Built 4 Cuban Linx' (indeed, Raekwon guests on 'Bomb'). The only complaint is that the duo dropped the original title, 'Cocaine Piñata'. ■ BEN CARDEW **8**

MT Warning

Midnight Set

Sipping Jetstreams



As instantly recognisable as the distortion pedals of shoegaze or the larynx-shredding rasp of death metal, there's a certain school of musical thought that can largely be characterised by an emotive, falsetto croon. Able to conjure up dusky romance within seconds, it's the tool of choice for The

Antlers, Grizzly Bear et al. Australia's MT Warning are clearly aiming for this camp as every track on 'Midnight Set' is underpinned by "ooh"s so doe-eyed they should be soundtracking *The Notebook*. But there's something about the Coldplay-esque chorus of 'Youth Bird', or the banal lyrics of 'Forward Miles' ("I'm gonna live in a race car/ I'm gonna go there fast"), that just aren't convincing, no matter how much they trill. ■ LISA WRIGHT **5**

Ekoplekz

Unfidelity Planet Mu



Since 2009, Nick Edwards (a middle-aged man from Bristol, according to his Twitter) has self-released numerous EPs of electronic noise as Ekoplekz and been featured on underground labels such as Editions Mego and Punch Drunk. Straddling the worlds of dance music and sound art, his output is too weird for the club – and this, his first LP, is no different. Initially, post-punkers Cabaret Voltaire seem obvious influences, as the record is saturated with reverb and harsh industrial sounds from opener 'Trace Elements' onwards. Elsewhere, there are unorthodox takes on more contemporary forms like minimal techno ('Severn Beach'), drone ('Sea 90') and instrumental grime ('Analogue Twitch'). The result is original, surreal and hypnotic. ■ HUW NESBITT **8**

Perfect Pussy Say Yes To Love



Syracuse hardcore nihilists bring the filth and the fury

Last year, Perfect Pussy's debut cassette EP 'I Have Lost All Desire For Feeling' prompted a flurry of interest in this five-strong gang of hardcore enthusiasts from Syracuse, New York. As a statement of noisy intent and underground attitude it placed them at the squealier end of Parquet Courts' 'zine scene, and this more optimistically titled long-player rubberstamps its promise.

The fire and rage of opening track 'Driver' sets their trail blazing instantly. A wavering drone of feedback persists throughout: a rebellious attempt at melody. Meredith Graves' vocals are all but indecipherable until a minute before the end, when she takes a breath and enunciates clearly the line about her "history of



surrender", leaving you desperate to know what the hell she'd been screeching about up until that point.

Courtney Love first lured us in with her hyper-personal bedroom confessional; Graves does the same, but with more finesse. The distorted spoken

word intro of 'Interference Fits', a nod to Sonic Youth, plays out like a teenage diary entry: hormonal nostalgia cloaked in exuberant riffs and obligatory feedback.

Perfect Pussy are far from being stuck in pubescent turmoil, though. This is the chaos of protest. This is the sound of giving no fucks at all. 'Bells' is an aural assault powered by Garrett Koloski's aggressive drumming, and the attack of 'Dig' lasts under two minutes: it's blink-and-you'll-miss-it fury. Songs collapse under the weight of their own exertion. By contrast, the five-minute 'Advance Upon The Real' is the Perfect Pussy version of a half-hour prog wig-out.

Melodies are buried alive under a ton of aural dirt, delivered in frequencies that hurt your organs. This is a band who are drawn to passion as plainly as they are a front for nihilism. Though the sweat and tears remain untraced, the blood that Graves poured into this album is literally visible – a limited run of the vinyl release will actually have red streaks of her menstrual matter swirled through the clear plastic. The blanket of noise may be provided by her male cohorts, but the lynchpin of Perfect Pussy's allure is undoubtedly Meredith, another artist key to redressing the huge gender imbalance in music that never seems to go away. One day we'll realise that 'female-fronted' sometimes means 'female-driven'. Graves is a powerful new force. ■ HAYLEY AVRON **8**

Sisyphus

Sisyphus Asthmatic Kitty



On 'Sisyphus', Sufjan Stevens, New York post-rock musician Son Lux and Chicago rapper Serengeti set out to discover whether their varying sounds could possibly interbreed. Some pretty mutations ensued; their first collaborative record throws up a mix of stuttering electro-rap and ethereal pop. Opener 'Calm It Down' bounces with the leftfield cool of LCD Soundsystem, while 'Booty Call' puts Serengeti centre stage, adroitly merging the worlds of casual sex and gaming in the line "Let me be your Call Of Duty". 'Take Me' sets free angelic sighs, exhaling over minimal beats and poised synth rushes, and 'I Won't Be Afraid' is stripped back, glittering orchestral-pop. There's no denying the latter's beauty, but Sisyphus are at their best when they're having fun. ■ RHIAN DALY **7**

► THE DETAILS

► RELEASE DATE March 18 ► LABEL Captured Tracks ► PRODUCER Recorded by Shaun Sutkus ► LENGTH 22:56 ► TRACKLISTING ► 1. Driver ► 2. Bells ► 3. Big Stars ► 4. Work ► 5. Interference Fits ► 6. Dig ► 7. Advance Upon the Real ► 8. VII

Pharrell G I R L

An apology for 'Blurred Lines' transforms into the superstar producer's solo high point

Judging by his solo discography, it's difficult to see why Pharrell Williams' second LP might be considered An Event. His 2006 solo debut, 'In My Mind', was patchy at best, and aside from last year's single 'Happy', a tie-in with the movie *Despicable Me 2*, the records the Virginia Beach native has made under his own name haven't exactly set the world on fire. But ever since he helped his mentor, Teddy Riley, make the risqué swingbeat anthem 'Rump Shaker' in 1992, Pharrell (often alongside Neptunes and NERD partner Chad Hugo) has been one of pop's most innovative and successful producers, writers and vocalists.

The parade of big-name guests (Kanye West, Gwen Stefani, Jay Z et al) that made 'In My Mind' feel more like a compilation album than a solo record has been slimmed down to a pair of A-listers (Justin Timberlake and Alicia Keys supply the only duets here, although Daft Punk and Miley Cyrus drop in on backing vocals).

The result is less about others and more about Pharrell – less what's in his mind, and more what's in his heart.

It's an admirably concise album, driven by a sense of carefree abandon that is both versatile and eclectic. As it sashays through crisp robo-funk,



► THE DETAILS

► **RELEASE DATE** Out now ► **LABEL** Sony ► **PRODUCER** Pharrell Williams
► **LENGTH** 44:00 ► **TRACKLISTING** ►1. Marilyn Monroe ►2. Brand New feat. Justin Timberlake ►3. Hunter ►4. Gush ►5. Happy ►6. Come Get It Babe ►7. Gust Of Wind ►8. Lost Queen ►9. Freq ►10. I Know Who You Are feat. Alicia Keys ►11. It Girl
► **BEST TRACK** Gust Of Wind



spot-on disco pastiche, symphonic pop and futuristic R&B, the most relevant reference point is Prince. Only the enigmatic genius himself would dare put songs as diverse as the not entirely successful Caribbean a cappella oddity 'Lost Queen' and the magnificently epic 'Gust Of Wind' not only on the same album, but next to each other in the tracklisting.

Williams has described the album as an explanation and apology to women offended by his involvement in 'Blurred Lines', but in reality it seems much more about him being on his own musically than any grand statement about feminism. Opener 'Marilyn Monroe', in which he does critique American ideals of beauty, rolls in on a grand flourish of strings (orchestrated by Pharrell's increasingly frequent collaborator, the Oscar-winning film composer Hans Zimmer), which heralds his breathy whisper of the word "different". It feels more about emphasising his distance from everyone else in pop music than driving female emancipation, but twin visions for a thrilling, populist yet provocative album are set out nonetheless.

Right from 'Marilyn Monroe', he's off. He dances around genres, the vaudevillian 'Happy' sitting perfectly in the middle of it all, not because it sounds like what surrounds it but precisely because it doesn't. By the mirrorball moment that heralds the lengthy coda to the closing 'It Girl', you're left giddy and breathless, applauding a 20-year-career veteran who's finally found his voice. ■ ANGUS BATEY

PLAY IT AGAIN

RECENTLY RATED IN NME

Metronomy *Love Letters*

"Joseph Mount has returned with a small, unashamedly personal record, made with an auteur's ear for detail and disregard for expectation." **8**
(NME, March 8)

Drive-By Truckers *English Oceans*

"Most who'd been panning for gold in the streams of Southern rock since 1996 would be running out of nuggets now, but this 10th studio album is evidence there's still treasure in them thar hills." **7**
(NME, March 1)

Real Estate *Atlas*

"The album has a postmodern hue – it's full of sepia memories of past dreams of the future. 'Atlas' dreams of getting away from all this." (NME, March 1) **8**

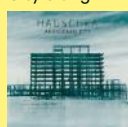
Blood Red Shoes *Blood Red Shoes*

"Their fourth album marks a return to the spit-and-sawdust rock'n'roll of their first two records. 'Blood Red Shoes' is probably the duo's most satisfying effort to date. An admirable racket." **7**
(NME, March 1)

Axxa/Abraxas *Axxa/Abraxas*

"Dreamy, thoughtful, expansive guitar pop that's rather too lush and developed to pass as lo-fi, but owing much to the genre's spirit of invention and self-actualisation." **8**
(NME, March 8)

Hauschka *Abandoned City*



City Slang
Düsseldorf-based Volker Bertelmann has always had disparate influences. A Chopin recital provided a musical epiphany when he was nine years old, while his first band was a long-forgotten hip-hop duo formed with his cousin. These interests collide on Hauschka's bracing concept album 'Abandoned Cities',

formed of ghostly odes to fallen municipalities we humans have left behind. 'Elizabeth Bay' – a deserted Namibian mining town – is surveyed here with piano, frenetic rhythms and spooky swathes of delay, while 'Sanzhi Pod City' is as alien as its derelict UFO-like houses and 'Thames Town' – a Chinese metropolis nobody moved into – is so creepy you can hear the rats chewing through the wires. **7**

■ JEREMY ALLEN

Kevin Drew *Darlings*

City Slang



Using the rationale that no band ever really dies, fans of Toronto's Broken Social Scene – who went on the proverbial 'indefinite hiatus' in 2011, but are currently playing live again – no doubt expect a new album. For now though, they'll have to settle for 'Darlings', the second solo venture by BSS

founder Kevin Drew. Equal parts lo-fi, sketch-like song structure and buffed-to-a-shine '80s soft rock, the 12 songs on 'Darlings' are evidently personal and, at times, thematically obscure – the off-the-wall 'Mexican Aftershow Party', for example. Overall, the record suggests that Drew is enjoying his time off from the indie-orchestral wallop of Broken Social Scene. Sorry, fans. **6**

■ NOEL GARDNER



The National's Matt Berninger puts on "a masterclass in winning over an audience"



BBC Radio

6 Music Festival

Victoria Warehouse

Manchester

February 28–March 1

Damon Albarn and The National herald the arrival of Manchester's newest urban festival

▶ "It's quite nerve-wracking to be playing your first gig live on the radio," announces **Damon Albarn**, grinning coyly. "But I suppose I should be used to it by now."

At 45, Damon Albarn is making his solo live debut. But, as he says, he's still in familiar territory: onstage, with a band, surprising those present. Ever the master of reinvention without compromise, nobody really knows what to expect from the Blur frontman turned cultural Zelig and his new band – christened today – The Heavy Seas. He takes to the piano and launches into 'Everyday Robots', the haunting title track from his forthcoming album about how modern life is technologically skewed, and a reverential hush falls on the room; a hangar-like space is made intimate. "We're everyday robots on our phones", he laments, the irony lost on those filming the gig on their mobiles. It's like listening to The Smiths' 'Meat Is Murder' in an Aberdeen Steak House. ➤

Reviews

LIVE



Danielle Haim plays it straight

Straight out of the traps, Damon goes for death or glory, dedicating nine of his 14-song set to new tracks. With uniformly lovely melodies, the likes of the sumptuous and melancholic 'Hollow Trees' may be up there with his best work. Unfortunately, the crowd's patience is tested – a combination of a day's booze, unknown songs and music that could happily be described as 'muted' or 'introspective' is always going to be a tough sell for a Friday-night festival audience, even under the banner of a radio station that's a favourite for graphic designers.

But Damon knows that perseverance and faith in one's creative vision ultimately pays off. Even when the tender 'Photographs (You Are Taking Now)' and 'Mr Tembo' (a ukulele-driven ode to an elephant he encountered in Tasmania, with a chorus so jaunty it could be from a CBeebies show) struggle to be heard over chatter and heckles of "Play 'Song 2'!", he doesn't toss them the sop of an immediate-sounding hit. Although there are nods to his time in Gorillaz and



Kelis on Stage One

The Good, The Bad & The Queen (the 'London Calling'-referencing 'Kingdom Of Doom'), Albarn's sole concession to Blur is airing 'All Your Life', the B-side of the group's 1997 single, 'Beetlebum'. "I don't recall ever playing it before, so I thought it would be OK," he says. "OK" is right; but not for this crowd in this venue.

Much as Damon is making great strides live on air, so is 6 Music itself. This is the digital radio station's first festival, and teething problems are broadcast live to the nation. Fortunately, most of them aren't of the audible variety. Its undeniable popularity – all 8,500 tickets sold out within minutes – causes problems; attempting to watch anybody on the minuscule Stage Two is a pretty futile fight against the crowds.

During a stunning Friday set by **Metronomy** – where favourites such as 'The Bay' mingle effortlessly with the

woozy rave of new album 'Love Letters' – security close the room altogether, struggling to hold back the tsunami of people trying to get in. It's not an issue that frontman Joe Mount encountered earlier in the day, when rocking out to the octogenarian members of the BBC's Radiophonic Workshop tearing through

the *Doctor Who* theme.

So it's best to retreat to Stage One, where **Haim** bare their impressive live teeth via their monstrous hair-metal riffs. They prompt widespread '80s-style frugging to the point where, during 'Falling', the warehouse feels like one long John Hughes movie montage. Then, backed by a full horn section, **Kelis** focuses her attention on the Stax soul-pop of new album 'Food', but also delivers Michelin-starred renditions of 'Trick Me' and 'Milkshake'.

The next day, the demand for **Wild Beasts** in Room Two once more means that, for

STRAIGHT OUT OF THE TRAPS, DAMON GOES FOR DEATH OR GLORY, PLAYING NINE NEW TRACKS

LINE-UP

DAMON ALBARN

METRONOMY

THE HORRORS

KELIS

HAIM

WILD BEASTS

FRANZ FERDINAND

THE NATIONAL

How good?

10

2



Damon Albarn makes his debut as a solo star

THE VIEW FROM THE CROWD



Rob, 29, Sunderland
"Jake Bugg's who I came for really. It's hard to get a ticket for him these days. He played Manchester last week, but we couldn't get into that. He played a lot of the heavier songs, which was good."



Jake, 26, Sussex
"The highlight of the evening has been Franz Ferdinand. It's dancing music – perfect after you've spent the day drinking lots of bottles of £18 wine."



Dan, 25, London
"The National were the best. Blinding performance. Matt Berninger is an amazing frontman. The top song was 'I Need My Girl'."



Dominic, 24, Liverpool
"My highlight? The National – when Matt came into the audience during 'Mr November' he walked right by me."

many fans, the Kendal art-rockers might as well be playing in, well, Kendal. On the main stage, the shameless pop hooks of **Franz Ferdinand** – from 'Michael' (surely the most bells-on, pants-off, *horny* song to be written about same-sex desire) to a beefed-up 'Ulysses' – prove there's life in the arch dukes yet, but the night belongs to **The National**. If the reaction to Damon Albarn had been tepid on Friday, the Brooklyn-based band put on a masterclass in winning over an audience, with frontman Matt Berninger climbing over the barrier and into the baying throng during 'Mr November'. It ends with a mesmeric 'I was there!' acoustic version of 'Vanderlyle Crybaby Geeks', performed without microphones or amplification, and with 5,000 voices singing the lyrics back at him. While the previous night's headliner had been the one to watch, this would be the one to remember. ■ GARY RYAN

7

MORE GIGS

Band Of Skulls London, Madame JoJo's

Thursday, February 27
Ahead of imminent third album 'Himalayan', Band Of Skulls have forsaken the grand unveiling for something altogether more intimate. Tonight's acoustic set at former fleshpot Madame JoJo's is a world away from their usual gritty blues explosions. But, backed by a string quartet, the trio sound confident and in control. The title track and newie 'Asleep At The Wheel' eschew their normal glam stomp for Bond-theme grandeur, while sweeping slowies 'You Are All That I Am Not' and 'Nightmares' allow Marsden and co-vocalist Emma Richardson's note-perfect harmonies to take centre stage. Impressive.

■ LISA WRIGHT

8

Neneh Cherry Concrete, London

Wednesday, February 26
It's brave but risky for Neneh Cherry to play a set comprised of material from her brittle, powerful new 'Blank Project' LP, and tonight it occasionally falters, with 'Everything' and 'Out Of The Black' sounding smaller than their ambition demands. But these songs are already evolving new skins: 'Weightless' diminishes to a pulse before regenerating for a ferocious finale, while a spellbinding, unadorned 'Across The Water' makes its skeletal on-record reading sound almost symphonic. The encore, a radically overhauled 'Buffalo Stance', points the way ahead: everything but melody, lyric and one synth riff has been changed, Cherry the delighted sorcerer breathing vibrant new life into its ageing bones.

■ ANGUS BATEY

7

Chlöe Howl



Dingwalls, London
Thursday, February 27

The trials of teenage romance underpin a set of pumped-up, no-bull pop from the winningly self-assured 19-year-old

▶ Sass, as old-fashioned a notion as it might be, is something Chlöe Howl's not short on. Too much character to coast into the mainstream on the back of an anonymous million-selling 'featuring' slot and too bitter, screwed over and vitriolic to play the wistful poppet, she's fast becoming an icon of forthright romantic resilience, an urban-pixie bundle of self-assurance willing to accept precisely none of your shit. And her songs back it up: the Scandi-pop sounds of 'Bad Dream', 'Paper Heart' and 'Downtown' come from somewhere between Lorde and Icona Pop, with lyrics borrowed from Lily Allen if she was still a petulant teenager. 'No Strings', two fingers to a noncommittal partner set to the bass riff of Foster The People's 'Pumped Up Kicks', is the standout, although closer 'Rumour' isn't far behind. Some more variation in tempo wouldn't be a bad thing – 'Drop In The Ocean' shows Howl can add some fleeting grandeur to the mix when she wants – but for now Howl's coasting on her cutting teen pathos. "You know when you're 16 and you meet a guy and think he's the best thing ever and a year later you realise he's a weaselly little runt?" she ask before 'It Takes Me A Long Time'. Judging by the cheers, she's speaking for every tormented teenage tearaway who's ever been cheated. ■ ANDY WELCH

SETLIST

- ▶ Bad Dream
- ▶ Disappointed
- ▶ Paper Heart
- ▶ India
- ▶ Tomorrow's Far Away
- ▶ Girls And Boys
- ▶ Downtown
- ▶ Drop In The Ocean
- ▶ No Strings
- ▶ It Takes Me A Long Time
- ▶ This Song Is Not About You
- ▶ Rumour

9

Bombay Bicycle Club

**Glasgow O2 Academy/
Aberdeen Music Hall
Monday March 3/
Tuesday March 4**

Hitting the road with the Crouch End four-piece, we discover intense drama and backstage chess in Scotland

The tribes are gathering. Indie fans and drinkers; kids too young to be here without their parents and parents who've not needed asking twice to tag along; people with spiky hair, people with purple hair, people with no hair at all – they all find something to cherish in Bombay Bicycle Club's anything-goes musical agenda.

If you believed everything written about them, you'd think singer Jack Steadman, bassist Ed Nash, guitarist Jamie MacColl and drummer Suren de Saram can't decide what sort of band they want to be. An indie debut album and an acoustic follow-up were the prelude to 2011's 'A Different Kind Of Fix', which was hailed for its electronic innovations. This year's model – 'So Long, See You Tomorrow' – adds Bollywood samples and symphonic arrangements. It's not built for a world where musicians are expected to stick to narrow categories.

"Our band isn't like the person you meet at a party who's immediately bubbly," a thoughtful Steadman argues backstage,

before the second gig of BBC's UK tour in Glasgow's O2 Academy. "We're the kind of person you end up alone with for an hour, realise they're really interesting and you'd like to spend more time with them, and you end up having a more fulfilling relationship with. The fans that have been with us for so long, they really get that the new album is just a progression. They can still hear the fundamentals we've had since we started."

SETLIST

- Overdone
- It's Alright Now
 - Shuffle
 - Come To
 - Your Eyes
 - Lamplight
- Evening/Morning
 - How Can You Swallow So Much Sleep
 - Home By Now
 - Feel
- Lights Out, Words Gone
 - Eyes Off You
 - Whenever, Wherever
 - Luna
- Always Like This
 - So Long, See You Tomorrow
 - What If
 - Carry Me

There's an intense drama to songs like 'It's Alright Now', which is only fully revealed

onstage. This is a group that doesn't just understand loud and quiet, but knows how to use all the subtle shades in between. 'Whenever, Wherever' steals in like the dawn, then erupts with a shuddering, explosive heartbeat, the power in the transition a little short of ferocious. Even the ostensibly simpler early material bares newly sharpened teeth, 'Evening/Morning' turned from brash spikiness to a fire-breathing exercise in tension and release worthy of Fugazi.

Except during three songs from 'I Had The Blues But I Shook Them Loose', the four-piece are augmented by multi-instrumentalists Louis Bhose and Liz Lawrence, while a three-piece horn section, The Brass Notes, appear on stage as needed. As a result, everything sounds bigger, fuller, more completely realised. The narcoleptic dreamscape 'How Can You Swallow So Much Sleep' is transformed from a flat disc of sound into a living thing that hums, spins, spits and snaps. Throughout, riffs burst into tunes, harmonies wash over emotive chord sequences. A typical song will shoehorn half-a-dozen hooks into four minutes rather than taking one decent melody and spreading it thin. It's the aural equivalent of arson in a fireworks factory.

Jamie MacColl (left) and Jack Steadman onstage in Glasgow

Bombay Bicycle Club on...

Lessons from the road

Jamie MacColl: "A lot of the bigger bands we've supported on tour have been unbelievably nice to us. I feel like we learned a lot from supporting Elbow. Guy's such a good frontman. He's very charismatic generally, I think, and that just extends itself to how he carries himself onstage."

The dream and the reality

Ed Nash: "The shows have lived up to my expectations – they're as mind-blowing as I thought it must be before we had a band. It's the bits where you're just waiting around – literally, sitting around for hours and hours, eating peanuts in your underpants – that you don't really think about big bands doing."

The secret of their success

Jack Steadman: "When you see us at a gig, you look at four normal guys, who could be your friends, up on stage, who don't look like they're entirely comfortable with being the centre of attention. And that relateability has stayed with us since we started."

Jack finds all the questions quite tiring



The O2 Academy crowd

The next night in Aberdeen's suitably ornate Music Hall, as if deliberately upturning rock'n'roll cliché, Jack and Louis warm up for the gig with a game of chess while Steadman admits to *NME* he has anxieties over fitting fan favourites into a set structured around the new LP's hermetic song cycle. He needn't have worried: the new songs, less than a month in the public domain, get the loudest cheers, Aberdeen belting out his intimate lyrics. BBC feed off the frenzy. 'Overdone', all swirls of strings on record, flashes its devil horns as Ed and

Jamie trade snorting riffs; 'Lamplight' fizzles, but like a lit fuse rather than a can of pop. Even the delicate quietude of 'Eyes Off You' – buried beneath excited crowd chatter in Glasgow – weaves its spell tonight, gently drawing Aberdeen in.

It's uplifting, by design. "Increasingly, we want to make music that takes people to another place, that's not a reminder of the everyday," MacColl says backstage. "Music that wants to take you to a different world, almost." A sky-high ambition, but their spacecraft of sound is on the launch pad and the countdown has begun.

■ ANGUS BATEY

THE VIEW FROM THE CROWD



Danielle Diamond, 27, Glasgow

"I've got all four albums, but I've never seen them live before, and I loved it. They showed their new album off and tied in the old tracks excellently."



Stuart Passmore, 24, Glasgow

"I don't actually know the band that well – I came along with friends – but they were incredible. They're a very inclusive band, a very accepting band."



Adam Streets, 17, Glasgow

"I was a huge fan, but I'm an even bigger one now. The sound was perfect, the light display was incredible, the songs were tighter – it was a universe apart from the last time I saw them."



Ruby Marshall, 17, Glasgow

"I saw them at Latitude in 2011 and I can't believe how much more developed their sound has become. I was smiling the entire way through – my cheeks actually hurt!"

MORE GIGS

Little Dragon Village Underground, London

Thursday, February 27
Swedish digital pop/soul four-piece Little Dragon haven't played in the UK since 2012 and fourth album 'Nabuma Rubberband' isn't out until May. Gigs by returning bands keen on playing unknown songs often make for lumpy affairs, and tonight is no exception. Opening with the ordinary 'Please Turn', from 2011's 'Ritual Union', instantly flattens the mood. Of the six new songs they play, first single 'Klapp Klapp' and 'Killing Me' stand out as sonically gregarious, while the more downbeat 'Underbart' and 'Paris' sound frustratingly loungey live. There are nerves tonight, but lots of promise; a sticky but fascinating gig. ■ **6**

PHIL HEBBLETHWAITE

Fat White Family 100 Club, London

Tuesday, February 25
Another day, another hair-raising show from Britain's most exciting rock'n'roll band. Lias Saudi, fast becoming the best frontman in London, performs with a frightening intensity and all the grinning menace of a born provocateur. In a state of permanent undress, he's a sinuous east London Iggy Pop dripping with sexual depravity and possessed of the doom-stricken shriek of a peyote-fucked bald eagle. Zombie cowboys spitting all of weirdo-America back in the polite faces of hipster poshies, their show eventually descends into anarchy. Guitarist Saul Adamczewski is last seen lying prostrate under a pile of stage invasionists, still slurring baritone noise into the mic. It's like a bad acid trip. ■ **9**



RIFFS BURST INTO TUNES, HARMONIES WASH OVER EMOTIVE CHORDS. IT'S THE AURAL EQUIVALENT OF ARSON IN A FIREWORKS FACTORY

9

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"All you could hear was Kurt Cobain's voice screaming through the noise!"

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NME Guide

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



BOOKING NOW

The hottest new tickets on sale this week

Katy B

The south London dance singer recently hit Number One with her second album 'Little Red'. She'll take the record on the road in October.

Does topping the charts put more pressure on you to deliver a really great live show?

"I just feel like I've learnt so much over the last few years in terms of putting my shows together, so in a way I think I feel less pressure! [Going to Number One] felt really good – the album took a long time to make and it made me really happy that people would want to hear my music. It felt like a great compliment."

How are these dates going to be different to your current tour?

"They'll be in bigger venues, so hopefully I can fill the spaces in terms of my show. I love having dancers onstage with me, 'cos my music is so made for dancing. I one hundred per cent want to make it like a big party! I love making people dance."

Where are you most looking forward to playing?

"I really love Nottingham Rock City, that's one of my favourite venues. It reminds me of old rock venues and it always makes me feel well chuffed that I'm playing there. That venue's got a lot of personality. I'm really

looking forward to playing the Roundhouse too, 'cos that's another iconic venue."

► THE DETAILS

► **DATES** Birmingham O2 Academy (October 18), Nottingham Rock City (19), Southend Cliffs Pavilion (20), Bournemouth O2 Academy (21), London Roundhouse (23), Bristol O2 Academy (24), Manchester Academy (25), Leeds O2 Academy (27), Newcastle O2 Academy (29)

► **SUPPORT ACTS** TBC

► **PRICE** £16; London £17.50

► **ON SALE** now

► **FROM** NME.COM/tickets with £2.75 booking fee

Chance The Rapper

The 'Acid Rap' creator recently moved in with James Blake and this one-off date in London will show whether his flatmate has had any influence on his own music.

► **DATES** London The Forum (July 15)

► **SUPPORT ACTS** TBC

► **PRICE** £17.50

► **ON SALE** now

► **FROM** NME.COM/tickets with £1.75 booking fee

Rating

The hotly tipped rap crew will make their way back to the UK for a handful of festival shows and this one-off London date.

► **DATES** London Electrowerkz (May 7)

► **SUPPORT ACTS** TBC

► **PRICE** £9

► **ON SALE** now

► **FROM** NME.COM/tickets with £1 booking fee

Courtney Love

It's been four years since Courtney Love last toured the UK, then as part of a reunited Hole. The unpredictable singer claimed last year she would release an "amazing" album at Christmas, with the working title 'Died Blonde'. Though the album failed to materialise, she could use this tour to preview some of the new songs.

► **DATES** London O2 Shepherd's Bush Empire (May 11, 12), Manchester Academy (13), Glasgow O2 Academy (15), Leeds O2 Academy (16), Birmingham O2 Academy (18), Bristol O2 Academy (19), Nottingham Rock City (20)

► **SUPPORT ACTS** White Miles

► **PRICE** £24; London £26

► **ON SALE** now

► **FROM** NME.COM/tickets with £2.40–£2.88 booking fee

Festival No 6

The Welsh festival will see the returning Beck headline along with chart stars London Grammar. Elsewhere, Motown legends Martha & The Vandellas, Neneh Cherry, Temples, Doves frontman Jimi Goodwin, Hot Chip's Alexis Taylor, Arthur Beatrice and Telegram will all feature, with more still to be announced.

► **DATES** Portmeirion (September 5-7)

► **OTHER ACTS** James Holden, Los Campesinos!, The Rails, Steve Mason

► **PRICE** Weekend camping passes £160-£175

► **ON SALE** now

► **FROM** festivalnumber6.com with £10 booking fee

Tame Impala

The Australian psych adventurers have just announced three more headline dates.

► **DATES** Manchester Albert Hall (July 12), Birmingham The Institute (14), Nottingham Rock City (15)

► **SUPPORT ACTS** TBC

► **PRICE** £18.50

► **ON SALE** now

► **FROM** NME.COM/tickets with £1.85 booking fee

Big Ups

The NYC punk quartet will bring their uncompromising live show back across the Atlantic this spring.

► **DATES** Edinburgh Sneaky Pete's (May 5), Manchester Kraak Gallery (6), Sheffield The Harley (7), London Sebright Arms (21)



Chance The Rapper

► **SUPPORT ACTS** TBC

► **PRICE** Edinburgh £7; Manchester £6; Sheffield £5; London £8

► **ON SALE** now

► **FROM** NME.COM/tickets with 50p-£1 booking fee

Lykke Li

"Every song on the album is a power ballad. Like one of those old radio stations. This is a slow dance, a slow burner," Lykke Li recently commented on her imminent third album 'I Never Learn'. The Swedish singer will be letting you make your own mind up at two special dates in the UK capital.

► **DATES** London Village Underground (May 8, 9)

► **SUPPORT ACTS** TBC

► **PRICE** £25

► **ON SALE** now

► **FROM** NME.COM/tickets with £2.50 booking fee

The Brian Jonestown Massacre

Dig! wildman Anton Newcombe will take a break from working with new artists such as sultry Toronto singer Tess Parks and Swedish alt.rockers Les Big Byrd to link back up with The Brian Jonestown Massacre.

► **DATES** Brighton Concorde 2 (June 28), London Roundhouse (July 1), Norwich Waterfront (2), Bristol The Fleece (3), Nottingham Rescue Rooms (4), Glasgow O2 ABC (5), Newcastle Think Tank (6), Birmingham O2 Academy 2 (7), Manchester Ritz (10), Leeds Cockpit (11), Liverpool East Village Arts Club (12)

► **SUPPORT ACTS** TBC

► **PRICE** £15; London £18.50

► **ON SALE** now

► **FROM** NME.COM/tickets with £1.50-£2.25 booking fee

Nine Inch Nails

Currently touring Australia with Queens Of The Stone Age and Brody Dalle, Trent Reznor and his band will follow those dates down under with a mammoth arena tour on these shores.

► **DATES** Birmingham LG Arena (May 18), Glasgow Hydro Arena (20), Cardiff Motorpoint Arena (21), London O2 Arena (23), Nottingham Capital FM Arena (24), Manchester Phones 4u Arena (25)

► **SUPPORT ACTS** TBC

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FESTIVAL NEWS

V Festival

It has been announced that the twin festivals in Staffordshire and Essex will this year be headlined by Justin Timberlake and The Killers. Lily Allen, Katy B, Blondie, Kaiser Chiefs and Foxes all feature elsewhere on the line-up, with many more acts still to be announced. Tickets are on sale now, priced £89-£189.



Way Out West

Organisers have confirmed yet more names for the bash in Gothenburg, Sweden. OutKast will add the August weekender to their ever-growing list of summer commitments, while Little Dragon will showcase tracks from new album 'Nabuma Rubberband' and former Distillers frontwoman Brody Dalle will dip into her debut solo album 'Diploid Love'.

Oya

André 3000 and Big Boi make the trip to Norway between August 6-10 to headline Oya. Joining them are Neneh Cherry, Bill Callahan, Jungle, Angel Olsen, Kathleen Hanna's The Julie Ruin and Rudimental collaborator Lulu James.

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GOING OUT

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NME Awards Tour 2014 with Austin, Texas

Interpol (above, left) headline a bill with Temples, Royal Blood (above, right) and Circa Waves.

► **DATES** Glasgow O2 Academy (March 18), Leeds O2 Academy (19), Manchester Academy (20), Liverpool O2 Academy (22), Nottingham Rock City (23), Birmingham O2 Academy (25), Bristol O2 Academy (26), London O2 Academy Brixton (27)

► **TICKETS** £21.60; London £25.60 from NME.com/tickets with £2.20–£3.50 booking fee

Metronomy

"I guess, to me, the idea of the perfect band and the perfect look is like a Motown band," Metronomy frontman

Joe Mount told *NME* recently. "I like the idea of presenting [a band] like it's part of the military, or like the police force. We're trying to get the feel of

a stage set from back in that time, too." Metronomy will don their uniforms as they take new album 'Love Letters' out on the road this week.

NME COMPETITION

WIN! Want to win tickets to the NME Awards Tour 2014 with Austin, Texas thanks to Gig Buddy? Be in with a chance to see Interpol, Temples, Royal Blood and Circa Waves live – and near you! Head to NME.COM/win now and select which gig you'd love to be at.



► **DATES** Liverpool O2 Academy (March 13), Manchester Ritz (14), Nottingham Rock City (17), Leeds O2 Academy (18)
► **TICKETS** £15.50 from NME.com/tickets with £1.55–£2.35 booking fee; Manchester sold out

Miles Kane

Before he joins up with his pals Arctic Monkeys this summer for their huge shows in Dublin and London, Miles Kane will head out on his own headline tour in only slightly smaller venues. The Liverpool singer will play his latest album 'Don't Forget Who You Are' and tracks from his

debut 'Colour Of The Trap' in four cities this week.

► **DATES** Wolverhampton Wulfrun Hall (March 14), Blackpool Winter Gardens Arena (15), Warrington Parr Hall (17), Buckley Tivoli (18)
► **TICKETS** £17.50 from NME.COM/tickets with £1.75 booking fee; Wolverhampton and Blackpool sold out

The Men

The Brooklyn band follow last year's acoustic 'Campfire Songs' EP with a return to their usual electric ways on their fifth studio album, the cheekily titled 'Tomorrow's Hits'. It might have been the first of their records to be made in a high-quality studio, but expect these dates to be as raw as ever.

► **DATES** Sheffield The Harley (March 13), Brighton The Haunt (14)
► **TICKETS** £8 from NME.COM/tickets with 80p–£1.20 booking fee

Blood Red Shoes

The Brighton duo recently released their self-titled fourth album on their own Jazz Life label. They play a one-off date in Portsmouth to celebrate, with more dates to follow next month.

► **DATES** Portsmouth Wedgewood Rooms (March 17)
► **TICKETS** £10 from NME.COM/tickets with £1.55 booking fee

White Fang

Portland DIY punks White Fang will bring their

FIVE TO SEE FOR FREE

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1. Rainer

A Nation Of Shopkeepers, Leeds
Rebekah Raa and Nic Nell's bleepy electronica.
► Mar 12, 8pm

2. Gentle Friendly

The Shacklewell Arms, London
Noise-pop duo open the Repeater Festival.
► Mar 14, 8pm

3. Dumb

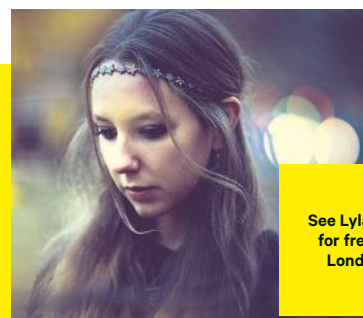
Sixty Million Postcards, Bournemouth
The Birmingham group hit the southwest.
► Mar 14, 8.30pm

4. Stanley Brinks & The Wave Pictures

Start The Bus, Bristol
Playing their new album 'Gin'.
► Mar 17, 8pm

5. Lyla Foy

Rough Trade East, London
Sub Pop singer plays tracks from first album 'Mirrors The Sky'.
► Mar 18, 7pm



See Lyla Foy for free in London



Miles Kane

scuzzy garage-rock to the UK for four dates in support of their new and noisy 'Full Time Freaks' LP.

► **DATES** Brighton The Hope (March 14), London The Shacklewell Arms (15), Manchester The Castle Hotel (16), Bristol Start The Bus (18)
► **TICKETS** Brighton £6; Manchester £5-£6.50 from NME.COM/tickets with 50p-£1 booking fee; London £8 from billetterto.co.uk with 50p booking fee; Bristol free entry

Menace Beach

Ryan Needham and Liza Violet take the slacker rock of their recent 'Lowtalker' EP to London for this one-off date.

► **DATES** London The Old Blue Last (March 12)
► **TICKETS** £5 from NME.COM/tickets with 50p booking fee

We Are Scientists

Keith Murray and Chris Cain continue their tour in support of their latest album 'TV En Français'. Expect plenty of witty audience interaction between songs new and old. The Heartbreaks and recent *Radar* stars Superfood will join them in support.

► **DATES** Glasgow O2 ABC (March 12), Nottingham Rock City (13), Birmingham The Institute (15), Norwich Waterfront (16), Southampton University (17)
► **TICKETS** £15 from NME.COM/tickets with £1.50-£2.05 booking fee; Glasgow £15 from ticketweb.co.uk with £1.87 booking fee

STAYING IN

The best music on TV, radio and online this week

Lily Allen

BBC Radio 2

Presumably still psyched from being crowned Best Solo Artist at this year's NME Awards with Austin, Texas following her 'Hard Out Here' comeback, Lily Allen is turning her hand to radio broadcasting. She guest-hosts Dermot O'Leary's show this week, saying, "I've been a guest on Dermot's show loads of times, and I've been secretly plotting to take his place, so I'm very pleased I will have the studio all to myself."

► **LISTEN** BBC Radio 2, 3pm, Mar 15

Jimi Hendrix

Beat! Beat! Beat!

The late guitar hero filmed for '60s German music programme *Beat! Beat! Beat!* in 1967. See The Jimi Hendrix Experience perform 'Hey Joe', 'Purple Haze' and 'Stone Free' in this fascinating re-run.

► **WATCH** Sky Arts, 8.50pm, Mar 17

Iggy Pop

The Iggy

Pop Story

Pretenders

frontwoman Chrissie Hynde presents this 2005 documentary about the rock icon, which also features contributions from Sex

Pistols' Glen Matlock, photographer Mick Rock and journalist Miranda Sawyer.

► **LISTEN** BBC 6Music, 1pm, Mar 16



Iggy Pop

Stevie Nicks

Soundstage Presents...
Filmed in 2008, this concert film captures the Fleetwood Mac singer's first solo performance since 1987. Nicks performs

tracks from throughout her career along with covers of Led Zeppelin's 'Rock And Roll' and 'Circle Dance' by Bonnie Raitt.

► **WATCH** Sky Arts, 2.30pm, Mar 12

BBC 6 Music Recommends

Steve Lamacq takes control of this episode of the station's new programme, in which he, Lauren Laverne, Tom Ravenscroft and Mary Anne Hobbs will curate an hour of their favourite new music. Lammo presents his first 60-minute selection from this year's SXSW, so expect to hear heaps of brand new artists he's discovered between barbecues.

► **LISTEN** BBC 6Music, 12am, Mar 14

MT

X-Posure

The emerging London band pop into John Kennedy's show to take their place as his One Night Stand, where they'll play some of their exuberant indie pop and discuss the band's journey so far.

► **LISTEN** XFM, 10pm, Mar 13



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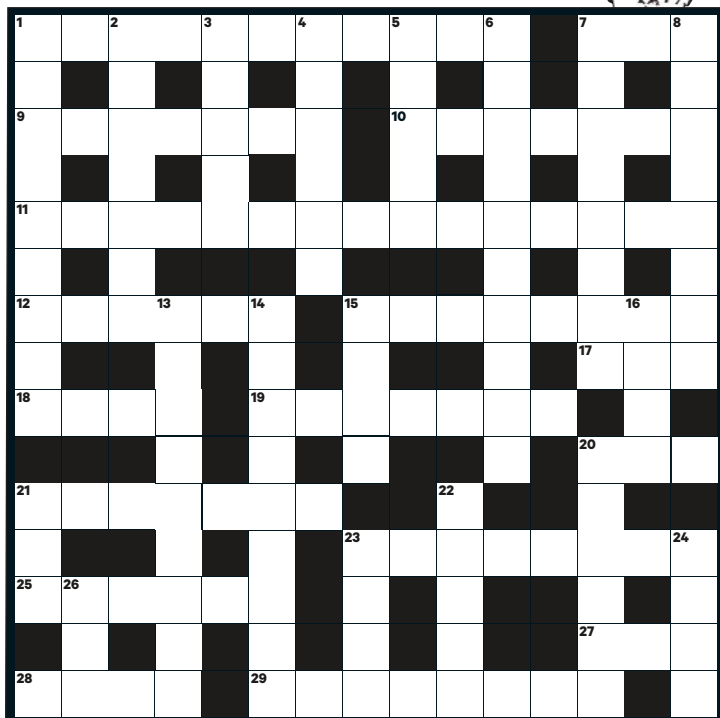
THINK TANK

NME CROSSWORD

Compiled by
TREVOR HUNGERFORD



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CLUES ACROSS

- 1** Embrace? Kiss?
Metronomy's writing includes both of their elements (4-7)
7+4D Specific fear of an album by The Flaming Lips (3-6)
9 Movie about legendary '60s producer Joe Meek, his greatest success coming with 7 down (7)
10 Obtain a Vines single for nothing (3-4)
11 "As he drove away on that rainy night, I begged him to go slow/But whether he heard, I'll never know", 1965 (6-2-3-4)
12+15D One from Rio turns up for The Strokes (4-2-4)
15 (See 26 down)
17 Tyler, The Creator single taken from Usher (3)
18 Agreement no longer there with the Pixies (4)
19+23A "Everyone around me is a total stranger/Everyone avoids me like a cyclone ranger/That's why I'm _____", 1980 (7-8)

- 20** The Beatle who died in 1962 made just some of the stuff (3)
21 (See 3 down)
23 (See 19 across)
25+27A London-based indie band found 'Furthest From The Sun' with a household pet (6-3)
28 Iggy Pop spoke out thrice in this silly way on album (4)
29+2D Spouting on heatedly in a superior way to The Family Rain (5-3-7)

CLUES DOWN

- 1** Katy B looks just a bit embarrassed to have released this (6-3)
2 (See 29 across)
3+21A Morrissey requesting us to pay him some lip service? (3-2-4-3)
4 (See 7 across)
5+13D Exactly how far out were The Byrds when spaced out on a trip? (5-5-4)
6 Hadn't rules been changed to name The _____ Brothers who had '70s hit with

- 'Arms Of Mary' (10)
7 Group that had '60s Number One instrumental hit with 9 across (8)
8 Dane keen to somehow get '60s star with Number One hit 'Well I Ask You' (4-4)
13 (See 5 down)
14 Pearl Jam single that clearly wasn't for everyone (3-3-3)
15 (See 12 across)
16 A questionable performance from Soft Cell (4)
20 A dollar and some small coins for a founding member of No Doubt to appear (6)
21 As Bill Drummond and Jimmy Cauty were sometimes known (1-1-1)
22 Burning _____, Jamaican roots reggae musician with a point (5)
23 Country singers Naomi and her daughter Wynonna or Harry of McFly (4)
24 One of the Haim sisters staying in the homestead (4)
26+15A The Sound from the '80s will make everyone collapse (3-4-4)

FEBRUARY 1 ANSWERS

ACROSS 1 Afterlife, 6 Honey, 9+26A Sheena Is A Punk Rocker, 11+15D Every Morning, 12 August, 14 Home, 16 Dusk, 17 Cable, 19 Money, 22+33A Rented Rooms, 24 If, 25+10A The Ink, 29 Things, 31 Rio, 32 Muse, 34 Sunday. **DOWN** 1 Amsterdam, 2 The Messenger, 3+20A Randy Newman, 4 If I Had A Gun, 5 Evangeline, 6 Hours, 7 Niki, 8 Yankee, 13 The American, 18 Lyric, 21 Editors, 23 Terris, 25 Tommy, 27 Over, 28 Kano, 30 Stay

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, March 25, 2014, to: Crossword, NME, 9th Floor, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU. Winners will be notified via email.

QUIZ

Compiled by ALAN WOODHOUSE (answers on page 67)

1 When The Clash played New York's Shea Stadium in 1982, who were they supporting?

'Electric Barbarella', 'All She Wants Is' and 'Too Much Information'?

were the rhythm section for which big-selling '90s UK indie band?

2 Which big UK band were called Soft before settling on their current name?

6 Which is the only Prince album to have claimed the NME writers' album of the year award?

12 Which Pavement album was produced by Nigel Godrich?

3 Out of the nine tracks, how many songs from Michael Jackson's 'Thriller' LP were UK hit singles?

7 Which acclaimed UK artist was born in 1969 in Bridport, Dorset?

13 Which British band who formed in the noughties took their name from a Flaming Lips album title?

4 REM's 1994 'Monster' album was dedicated to which deceased US actor?

8 In which US city did Jeff Buckley drown in 1997?

14 Which of these does NOT guest on Daft Punk's 'Random Access Memories' – Julian Casablancas, Jack White, Panda Bear?



5 Which band who shot to fame in the '80s have released the singles

9 Which British rock icon has a son called Bowie?

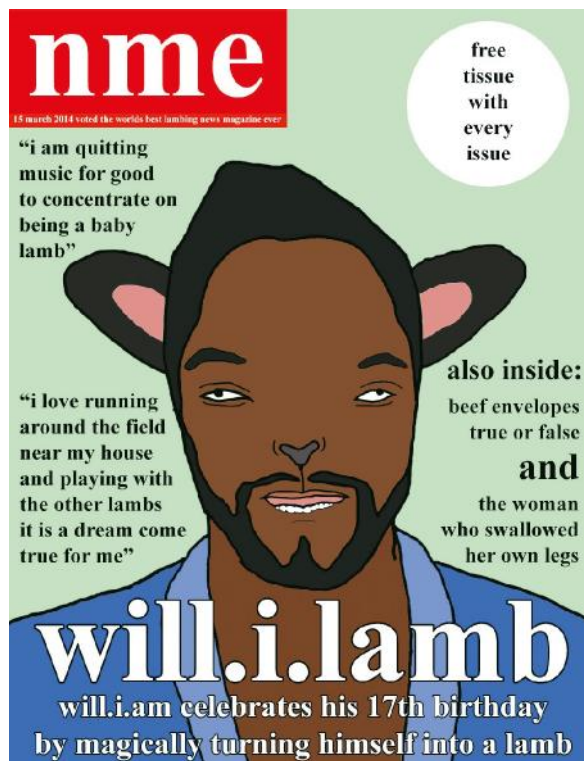
10 Which legendary UK singer's real name was Mary O'Brien?

15 Which UK band soundtracked a movie about French football legend Zinedine Zidane in 2006?

11 Tim Brown and Rob Cieka

THE NME COVER THAT I GONE AND DONE

by CHRIS SIMPSON'S ARTIST



BEYOND

As one of the best new bands at this year's Reading & Leeds Festivals, Temples' horizons are set to expand far beyond the Kettering bedroom where they began.

Barry Nicolson meets them on tour in Glasgow

PHOTOS BY DEAN CHALKLEY

Temples bassist Tom Warmley is unimpressed. "I'm surprised you haven't asked about all the drugs we don't take," he deadpans as our hour-long interview draws to a close. It takes me a moment to realise he's talking about *NME's* recent 8/10 review of their debut album, which posited that "for all its mythical summonings of Woodstock, *Hair* and the Age of Aquarius, ['Sun Structures'] doesn't actually sound like it does any drugs". Temples seem a bit put out by that insinuation, as though it's some sort of slight against their perceived 'realness'. It's not the first time it's happened tonight, either.

Earlier I'd asked them about the psych-rock revival they currently find themselves ➔



THE



FRINGE

The studio in James Bagshaw's parents' house in Kettering, December 2013



spearheading (they chafe at the very idea), and whether they feel 2014 is an odd time for such head-in-the-sand escapism to be making a chart comeback. After all, as Britain grows ever more polarised between rich and poor, north and south, them and us, shouldn't music be growing angrier and more direct, not flightier and more ecstatic? Frontman James Bagshaw hazily replies that Temples' music "isn't for or against anything; it's just about freedom of expression. If you want to look at psychedelia as a genre, it doesn't really have any sort of political power. It's just music that hopefully does something to people, emotionally and spiritually." It's not his place to rationalise Temples' success, perhaps, but don't they think it's strange that kids are being drawn towards bands of their ilk – Tame Impala, Toy, even The Horrors – when the music they make is so oblique? Forget kitchen-sink realism; some of Temples' lyrics are tougher to make sense of than the Voynich manuscript...

"Anybody can understand our lyrics!" protests Bagshaw. "It's just whether or not they understand our intentional meaning. But people should be able to take what they want from song lyrics."

Let's pick a song from the record at random, then: what's 'Mesmerise' about?

A match made in Heavenly

Why joining Heavenly Recordings feels "like being part of a family"

If there is a nucleus around which the new wave of British psychedelic groups are gathered, it is surely Heavenly Recordings, the London-based indie set up by Jeff Barrett in 1990, and which Temples, Toy, Stealing Sheep, Charlie Boyer And The Voyeurs and The Wytches all belong to.

Unsurprisingly, there's a real atmosphere of community and excitement around Heavenly's roster at the moment, which was cemented on a label-sponsored trip to Paris to play a showcase at last year's Record Store Day. "How many other labels do stuff like that?" asks Warmlesley. "Being on Heavenly feels like being part of a family, and I think a lot of bands these days never get to experience that. Everyone's working towards the same cause, and I do think we've all got something in common."

Which is?

"It's a British thing, perhaps – we have an admiration for British pop music, and the weird and wonderful things within it. All the Heavenly bands are writing great pop music, but adhering to their own styles and influences. It feels like we all occupy our own little corners of the label."

"What do you think it's about?"

I've no idea, that's why I'm asking you.

"Nothing!" he cries. "It's all about nothing! But it must mean something to you."

"No, of course it does. Everything we write means something to us, otherwise there's no point in doing it. But I find it very hard to talk about lyrics, because that's the most personal thing. No-one ever asks you, 'What does that melody mean?' Not that words shouldn't be questioned, but they should be in the ear of the beholder, because that's more true than us telling someone what a song is about. I mean, it's quite obvious what it's about... in a very cryptic way."

A question isn't answered, as the song goes, so let's try to fill in the blanks ourselves. For the bands Temples take their cues from – people like The Byrds, early Soft Machine and Todd Rundgren – psychedelia was a spasmodic expression of their drug-addled thought patterns. For Temples themselves, it seems like more of a sonic discipline, one they've admittedly become very good at: last month, 'Sun Structures' entered the charts at Number Seven, a not inconsiderable achievement for a new band on an independent label (and one they celebrated while on tour in Cologne by attempting to drink seven bottles of champagne; they polished off five before the bar closed). At tonight's gig in Glasgow's Oran Mor, meanwhile, you need only look at the makeup of their crowd – eager-eyed indie adolescents, bell-sleeved psych girls, wizened old mods, even the hipster element for whom the praise of Noel Gallagher would ordinarily serve as more of a warning than an endorsement – to see that some very disparate tribes are already gathering under Temples' paisley parasol. Come this week, when they embark on the NME Awards Tour with Austin, Texas, or certainly by August, when they return to Reading & Leeds after making their debut last year, it's not inconceivable to imagine them being touted as proof of the newfound vitality of "that rock'n' roll" that Alex Turner spoke about at the Brits last month. As Tom Warmlesley later tells me,

"We're big fans of anomalies in music – bands that you can't really explain why they existed in that time, in that decade."

Temples were certainly anomalies back in Kettering, the small Northamptonshire town they call home, and a place most people only know from the lower reaches of their pools coupon. Needless to say, the psych-rock scene there is non-existent: drummer Sam Toms dimly recalls there "being more of an alternative culture when we were younger, but there's no venues in Kettering any more – just a couple of pubs who'll sometimes put cover bands on. There's maybe two places you can go without having to shave your head for fear of getting beaten up. And one of those is a Wetherspoon's."

"There used to be a club night called Prison Sex, years ago," remembers Bagshaw, the fidgety yin to Warmlesley's stoic, softly-spoken yang. "I guess that was the only club that played what you'd call 'underground' music. Or you could go to the Prince Of Wales pub and they'd play all the standard indie stuff, like 'Is This It' or Franz Ferdinand's first album. Now it's all Drowning Pool and *'Let the bodies hit the floor'*."

You guys were the local weirdos, then?

"Not weirdos," says Bagshaw, "although to a chav, anyone with long hair is a bit of a weirdo. But everyone's so wrapped up in their own little world in a town like that. The people who've known you from school aren't gonna say anything, and for the people who frown upon you for having long hair, it's a passing thing. It's just entertainment."

According to Warmlesley, "So many people leave Kettering the first chance they get. They go to university and they never come back." This is exactly what Temples attempted to do after they finished school: Bagshaw and Warmlesley both (separately) moved to London, while guitarist Adam Smith upped sticks to Huddersfield. One by one, they all found themselves returning to their hometown, although Bagshaw, for his part, found it more freeing than demoralising.

"I went to university in London to do a recording course and I quit after six months because I hadn't even been in a studio yet," he explains. "I was frustrated. I remember not feeling inspired to write anything while I was there, I just felt inspired to go out all the time. That's what a city does to you: there's so much going on, so much to tell you what you're doing wrong or what you're not doing right."

"PEOPLE SHOULD STOP WASTING THEIR MONEY ON PRODUCERS"

Thomas Warmlesley

"When I came back home, I went on Jobseekers for 18 months and spent my allowance building a studio out of the lowest-cost items I could find. It gave me the breathing space you get in a small town, because you're basically making uncompromised art. You're not being influenced by all this other stuff going on around you."

In this context, Bagshaw's decision to produce 'Sun Structures' himself, at home in Kettering, begins to make sense: for all the jangle-fingered, kaleidoscopic reverie of their music, Temples basically owe their existence to the dole and their own initiative, rather than their parents' pockets. It's also worth remembering that they started off as a two-man recording project, not a four-piece band; Bagshaw often talks more effusively about producers like Brian Eno, Tony Visconti and

Jack Nitzsche than the artists they worked with. Still, self-producing was an undoubtedly risky move, not least because Bagshaw was, to some extent, learning on the job.

"When Jeff Barrett at Heavenly told us he wanted to put out our recording [of 'Shelter Song'] as a seven-inch, I think that gave us the confidence to do it," he says. "When you work with a producer, there's a massive degree of compromise that comes with that, but we've made something that's true to how we wanted it to sound – we didn't clean it up to make it successful like a 'name' producer would have. Also, I don't think there are any producers around at the moment who can make something sound different to everything else. Everyone follows the same formula: it's either modern, digital and boring or vintage purists who just make you sound like a pastiche."

"People should stop wasting their money on producers," agrees Warmley. "There's a lot of power in being able to produce your own music. For a lot of bands, it's almost the missing piece of the jigsaw – they have an idea of how they want it to sound, so it makes sense that they should be in charge of that."

Temples (from left): Thomas Warmley, Adam Smith, James Bagshaw and Sam Toms



They're not committing themselves to recording every album this way – "If Bowie wants to get involved, tell him to get in touch," Bagshaw winks – but the fact that they *could* is a big part of why they stuck with Heavenly, even after the majors started circling. In any case, that decision is some way off; they haven't started thinking about a second album yet. One thing that does look set to change between now and then, however, is the role Toms and Smith play in the band. Right now, Temples is very much Warmley and Bagshaw's baby, and while Bagshaw remembers "seeing Sam with one of his old bands and knowing that we would eventually be in a band together", there's a tendency to think of the other two as, well, an 'other two'. This is perhaps unfair on both of them, particularly when you consider that Smith first came onto Bagshaw's radar through the songs and poetry he used to post online. "I knew of Adam as a character," he explains, "and someone who was incredibly authentic to what he believed in."

Smith's pre-Temples life is intriguing. "My songs were heavily influenced by Syd Barrett," he says, "and I would use these strange techniques to write them. There's a group of French writers and mathematicians from the '60s called Oulipo [a kind of literary predecessor to the Danish Dogme 95 collective] who would deliberately constrain themselves in their approach to writing literature, so I would apply that to things like chord sequences."

He and Toms will have bigger roles to play on the next record. "We've all talked about it, and yeah, I think Sam and I are going to chip in much more on the next one. Sam's a really good songwriter, too. As it turned out, we just joined the band a little too late; James and Tom had the sound in place, and they'd already been recording a few songs together. It was mostly their thing. There were difficulties at first, I suppose, but now I think the four of us feel much more like a band."

That may be true, but live, Temples are still all about Bagshaw himself: under the right light, with his glitter-smeared eyes, stick-figure physique and unruly hedge of corkscrew curls, he puts you in mind of a Martin Sharp poster come to life, or perhaps a spectre of the halcyon days of the King's Road. In his own lithe, airy manner, he seems to dominate the stage, causing one audience member to enthusiastically pipe up, "There's only one James Bagshaw!" Clearly, whatever Temples' lyrics may or may not mean, however much the members themselves do or do not trip balls, people are connecting with their music in a very real, tangible way. Right now, they might still be anomalies, lysergic exceptions to the mainstream norm; increasingly, however, you wouldn't bet on that being the case for too much longer. ■

A

Liars' last album was a tentative foray into electronica. But on 'Mess',

54 **F I N E**

finds Ian Cohen, they're dousing MacBooks in their trademark bile

PHOTOS BY AARON FARLEY

M E S S



Liars photographed
in Los Angeles,
February 24, 2014

Angus Andrew,
vocals and
guitar



L liars have cast themselves as porn stars on their cover art. They've made albums about killing everyone in Los Angeles, the Salem witch trials and an anthropomorphic drum. Their debut ended with a 30-minute ambient loop. If it's not already abundantly clear, the art-punk trio aim to antagonise, confound and, most of all, to surprise.

On the eve of the LA band's seventh album, the spirited and surefooted 'Mess', frontman Angus Andrew is getting even more creative than usual. He wants us all to convene at their favourite basketball court, although we end up in a branch of the International House Of Pancakes, a favourite trucker stop where sausage, whipped cream and strawberries are readily available on the same plate. Crammed into a plastic-lined booth, the Australian grouchily claims he could have dunked from the foul line: "Then you'd have a story."

At six-foot-six, he's definitely got the height, although he unintentionally speaks to the conflicted narrative that comes with 'Mess'. Liars are as confident in themselves as they've ever been, having somehow made a career out of about-turns. They've now made three straight albums in Los Angeles, which appears to be a permanent home for the trio, who emerged from New York City as a four-piece in 2000. Their last album, 2012's 'WIXIW', was written in a remote cabin outside

the city and recorded in a dilapidated dump of a studio next to the Melrose exit of the 101 freeway. In contrast, 'Mess' was put together in a cosy home studio where the band could hang out and watch their favourite basketball team, the Los Angeles Clippers. (Andrew's wife, High Places' Mary Pearson, lives with the trio and rounds out their fantasy basketball league; she and Andrew are squaring off this week, both downplaying the fierceness of the rivalry.)

"WIXIW" was another jarring shift – a band once considered noise pioneers completely ditching their guitars for sleek electronics. On 'Mess', there's an interesting duality: they've now become more comfortable working in electronic music, and that's given them the confidence to literally mess around and have the music come to

them, turning them into something akin to an electronic jam band. It was a necessary recalibration after a decade of typical two-year album cycles, which Andrew likens to "punching a clock". This time around, he says, "there was never that much forethought. The reality was that we didn't even know we were making a record, and that's when it's fun".

Appropriately, the album's title comes just as much from the idea of clutter or muck as it does 'messing around'. As ever, soft-spoken, burly drummer Julian Gross (the only Liar who's never changed instrument between iterations) designed the record's artwork: an explosion of brilliantly coloured yarns. "It's definitely putting a positive spin on some of the issues that have always plagued us throughout making music," says Andrew.

On 'WIXIW', that issue was doubt: many of its lyrics expressed Andrew's uncertainty about the creative process. Because they had to learn a new set of instruments, they relied heavily on outside assistance for the first time, enlisting the help of their label boss, Mute's Daniel Miller, to figure out how to work these machines. It was also, Andrew says, their first "personal record". There weren't any revealing truths about their personal life per se, but for the first time Andrew's lyrics weren't couched within some fantastical construct, so you could assume these songs were coming directly from his brain rather than that of a mountain or a serial killer.

Although it was Liars' sixth album, they tried on so many new

skins for the first time that the record itself turned out tentative, a bit too clinical to really scan as something you'd expect from Liars. "[With 'WIXIW'] that fear plagued us and we wallowed in it and deconstructed it and thought about why," says Andrew. By contrast, 'Mess' embraces fear and risk and moves forward, overcoming it with faster tempos, louder beats and singalong melodies. Take 'Boyzone' – not a jibe at the multi-platinum boyband, but named just because Andrew and Hemphill enjoyed the compound word's phonetic structure. "There was a point where we could have spent a lot of time worrying about changing it, but we were in a 'fuck it' mindset," says Andrew. "We called it 'Boyzone' before we heard of these people; there was no hemming and hawing or anything."

'Mess' is all about momentum and acting on impulse. "Since we weren't new to the electronics [this time], it wasn't this heady back and forth," says the peroxide-blond, rail-thin Aaron Hemphill, who's something like Liars' Jonny Greenwood or Graham Coxon, the guitar wizard who's acerbic in person but intently focused on his effects pedals in a live setting. "Heady back and forth", in their minds, was doubting what could be seen as beginner's luck: at some points during the making of 'WIXIW', the band "felt that things that came too quickly weren't warranted and that we needed to work it over and over", says Andrew. "In some ways the computer can just give you stuff, and we felt guilty about that and that we should overwork it. By the time this one came around, we had forgiven ourselves for those issues."

MAKING A MESS

Drummer Julian Gross
on the album's artwork



"The art was developed simultaneously with the music. I knew that I wanted it to be bright and vibrant and colourful, in contrast to the last one [the black-and-white cover of 'WIXIW']. And that's how this album sounds – poppy and fun. We wanted to keep a theme for it, and after we agreed on that it opened up the doors for us to play with string and do other stuff outside the album cover. But it still had this theme to go through everything, brand it all – hopefully the idea will carry over to everything, including the stage setup."

Liars' momentary lapse of confidence around 'WIXIW' is curious; they've never had to choose between being feared and loved. It's hard to think of another contemporary band that was better at doing both at the same time. As part of New York's emerging dance-punk scene in the early 2000s, Liars were the most combative party band of the lot – their 2001 debut, 'They Threw Us In A Trench And Stuck A Monument On Top', included shit-talking, elbow-jabbing expletive rock songs like 'Mr Your On Fire Mr' and 'We Live NE Of Compton'. While body movers all the same, you wouldn't confuse them with the work of LCD Soundsystem or The Rapture, fellow NYC bands taking most of their cues from disco. Andrew sums it up tidily: "We're a very reactionary bunch of people."

And Liars do have a history of button pushing that has in the past threatened nuclear self-sabotage. Following up the celebrated, battery-acid-soaked post-punk of '...Monument', 2004's 'They Were Wrong, So We Drowned' was a murky, percussive record inspired by the Salem witch trials and recorded in the backwoods of New Jersey. For their troubles, the record was infamously given the lowest possible scores by *Rolling Stone* and *Spin* and described as "unlistenable", even though it fitted squarely within the realm of Animal Collective, Black Dice and other experimental bands that presented themselves as cuddlier propositions.

'They Were Wrong, So We Drowned' turns 10 this year, and although the band have heard some people claim it was a major influence on Kanye West's 'Yeezus', they've no plans to capitalise on its bolstered rep with an

"WE DIDN'T KNOW WE WERE MAKING A RECORD. THAT'S WHEN IT'S FUN"

ANGUS ANDREW

anniversary gig or reissue. Hemphill doesn't want to completely rule out something of that nature, but "right now it seems contrary to us", he says. "It robs people who were there to begin with, who got it at the point." On hearing about how there are already new bands reviving the sound they so readily discarded, he quips: "Are they gonna have nights at [recently closed Greenwich Village venue] Don Hill's again with Fischerspooner?"

In retrospect, '...Drowned' was preparing listeners for 2006's 'Drum's Not Dead', which featured even more percussion and an even more convoluted story – something about a mountain and a drum signifying the internal duality of man – and was roundly applauded as a triumph. Since that point, as they've accumulated a diverse yet impressively consistent discography, their records have been received and acclaimed in about equal measure – be it the back-to-basics rawk of their 2007 self-titled release or 2010's sleek, eerie 'Sisterworld', a blood-soaked middle finger to their newly adopted home of Los Angeles.

Without a single hit or a true peak in their catalogue, Liars have outlasted many of their most celebrated NYC peers: Yeah Yeah Yeahs exist essentially as a vehicle for Karen O's acting and fashion career (it's worth remembering that she wrote 'Maps' about Andrew), LCD Soundsystem called it a day, The Rapture have gone silent. They coexist alongside the likes of Animal Collective, Deerhunter and No Age – stalwart experimentalists who feel as though they're somewhat taken for granted in 2014. Liars made their name confusing audiences and gaining the respect of their peers. But this far into things, is it possible to still surprise people when they've earned so much trust?

They reject the idea of achieving 'indie tenure' while acknowledging it exists.

"The reality for me is that these people [at our shows] came for this record and

those people came for that record," Andrew muses. "There's not an overwhelming 'we love everything you do' [crowd]." He continues: "Are the people that like the newer electronic-based songs fans of the heavy-rock stuff that we did a bunch of years ago? It's unlikely, but those people might exist."

Without suggesting any craven intention on their part, 'Mess' could bridge the gulf Andrew perceives between their disparate fanbases. Prior to 'WIXIW', whether with a floor tom or an electric guitar, Liars would *punish* their instruments. MacBooks don't stand up to that kind of aggression, which meant that for the




Aaron Hemphill,
synths, guitar and
percussion



Julian Gross,
drums

'WIXIW' live shows, the band were stuck trying to inject physicality into the music after the fact. "When you get into rehearsals and you start thinking about what pieces of equipment you want to use, etc, we could take these laptops and press play, but that's not going to be fun," says Hemphill. "And what parts will inject an element of chance in the show where things can go wrong? If you decide to interact with a laptop, it doesn't let people in."

Is 'Mess' trying to let people in? It's really the happiest and danciest Liars record yet, forging new territory for the band. Andrew explains that Liars' boundlessness is a potential rather than a limitation: "The great thing about what we do is the opportunity to try something completely different. Sometimes things become more important one year than they were the year before." Liars albums tend to come in twos – the 'percussion' albums 'We Were Wrong' and 'Drum's Not Dead', the 'rock' albums 'Liars' and 'Sisterworld', and as of now, these two electronic albums. If that logic fits, then Liars' next big, jarring shift is almost certainly a year or so away. "The chance that we would just drop everything we've learnt and start something new is a good bet," Andrew says with a hint of self-satisfaction. ■



"I'm way happier than I was when I was selling crack or in jail"

Then why so glum, Danny Brown? Jordan Bassett joins the pissed-off Detroit rapper on tour in the UK, where he's unwilling to live up to the goofy persona he's cultivated across his acclaimed records

PHOTOS BY TOM OXLEY



With a blunt in one hand and a baseball cap in the other, Danny Brown sinks into a leather sofa in a backstage room at KOKO. He's performed in London before, but the sold-out 1,500-capacity Camden venue marks his biggest show in the city yet. A man in round tortoiseshell glasses is perched on a stool by the door, scrolling through his phone. He's Dart Parker, an industry player who became Danny's manager last April. Six or so people, including his 24-year-old DJ/producer Skywlkr, also lounge about the room. Danny's been in London for a few days, but tonight is the first stop on the UK leg of ➡

Danny Brown
backstage at
KOKO, London,
February 2014

The Old Danny Brown Tour, set to span Europe and the US. It's a 48-date celebration of his latest album, 'Old', which was released in October and marked him out as a potential star. The record recounts a life of poverty in Detroit, a city renowned for its economic collapse and sky-high crime rate (last year the murder rate hit 333). It also calls out those who doubted his talent, as success has come relatively late for 32-year-old Danny. At 20, he was in jail for dealing weed on probation; last year he collaborated with Vampire Weekend on a remix of their song 'Step'.

Although 'Old' was championed as one of the rap albums of 2013, he's been churning out mixtapes for 10 years. The last, 2011's 'XXX', sounded like a do-or-die attempt to be recognised, goading the listener with a slew of misogynistic lyrics and cartoonish references to drugs. 'Old' is equally explicit but more reflective, with Danny vowing to grow up and focus on his career. On 'Clean Up', he promises to set a better example for his teenage daughter, saying, "*It's time for me to clean it up/I came too far to fuck it up*".

In interviews, he's often seemed similar to his 'XXX' persona, a funtime character who spits out killer quotes like a vending machine. This week has been different. He's been talking to journalists to promote the tour, but the interviews have gone badly. He openly mocked a writer from Gigwise, giving one-word replies, and walked out of *The Guardian's* offices before the interview began. Their writer asked him to try a jumbo Scotch egg, presumably in an attempt to elicit his wacky 'XXX' persona. He says those interviews went wrong because he's tired of living up to his reputation, and that people should be prepared to accept him when he's down. "I just wasn't cool with doing it," he says of the Scotch egg incident. "You gotta say no sometimes, you know?"

By that stage, there were already questions about his behaviour and general wellbeing. A week before his arrival in London, Danny tweeted at length about his current mindset. "Y'all just want me to be goofy" was just one of these, acknowledging how exhausting it is when the public expects you to live as a human cartoon. Other tweets were significantly more serious: "Nobody cares if I live or die... That's the bottom line... Y'all want me to overdose just don't be surprised when u get what u asked for". He wrote that he felt isolated and suspicious of people around him, and that he deserved more respect in the rap world. Another of these 11 now-deleted tweets read:

"Depression is serious y'all think I do drugs cause it's fun... I would no other way to escape".

In January, Danny quit drinking 'lean', a powerful codeine-based cough syrup that contains promethazine, which causes drowsiness. He had been dependent on the drink for two years. "That was helping me escape shit and in those two years a lot of shit built up. Now I'm not drinking shit no more, so I'm an emotional motherfucker. Right now I'm a bitch-ass nigga!"



We have moved to another, quieter room backstage at KOKO. The interview is overseen by Dart, who spends most of the time looking at his phone. If Danny's feeling ebullient now, the wider rap community is still declaring the need for increased openness about mental-health issues within the genre off the back of Danny's tweets. An article on *ebony.com* pinned some of the blame on Danny's management team. Dart glances up from his phone. "*Ebony...*" they're out of their minds,"

he says. "They said we disregarded Danny's mental-health issues and put him back on the road so that we could continue to get rich off of him. It was brutal." He laughs emptily, shaking his head. "That made me wanna say something, and I never say anything [in interviews]."

Still, there are countless examples of rap artists who have struggled with drug addiction and other mental-health problems. Gucci Mane has spent time in a psychiatric ward,

but the internet still pokes fun at his erratic behaviour. Last year, the world rubbernecked when Lil Wayne looked close to death from a codeine overdose. Would rap benefit from a less flippant attitude towards mental health?

Danny avoids the question. "I don't have any mental-health issues! I don't know where that shit's come from. That's fucked up. Mental health! I'm not retarded. What the fuck is goin' on? I'm o-kay in the brain. Danny Brown is o-kay. I'm way happier than I was when I was selling crack or in jail. If I can get through that shit, I can get through anything else, bruh. I sleep with the lions, man." He glances down his outfit. "I got a fly-ass Romanelli custom 101 jacket on, I got \$2,000 Balmain jeans." He waggles his sneakers in the air, as if what's on your feet can change what's in your head. "I got some Adidas on. I don't give a fuck about what a motherfucker thinks, you know what I'm saying? I'm good."

Danny now dismisses his tweets. "I don't know [why I wrote them]," he says. "I just do shit. Sometimes it's not the right thing to do, though. I don't think I do shit with my brain, that's my problem. I do it with my heart, whether it's music or real life. If you think about shit, you might think too hard. I just go with my gut feeling."

In an article about mental-health issues in hip-hop, *PolicyMic* writer Zak Cheney-Rice notes that the genre is a "creative expression rooted in poverty" and "many who have emerged from these [impoverished] environments had inadequate access to mental health treatment growing up, even as they were

Danny Brown on...

Competitiveness

"I look on music like sports. If you see somebody do a fucking tomahawk dunk, I wanna do one, too – but my tomahawk dunk's gonna look a little different because my body's different. I'm taller than you, I'm skinnier. If I hear somebody do something, I be like: 'Damn that shit tight. I wanna do that shit too!' If people come with melodies, I take it but I put a twist on they shit."

Collaborations

"Me working with Vampire Weekend, that's the kinda stuff that's big. I wanna get work with artists like that. You're

supposed to wanna challenge yourself with music. You take two different worlds and make them meet on common ground somewhere. That's exciting to me. I never feel like, with music, you can just stop learning."

Detroit

"Detroit was always the kind of place that was so fucked up, we laughed at shit being fucked up. I remember being a kid and hearing someone say, 'Aha, your momma dead!' In other places that'd be real harsh and you'd probably kill somebody for talking to you like that. We'd just laugh at shit like that. There's a thriving

art community, though. As far as doing graffiti and being an artist, it's great for that. It's one of those places with a little bit of something, you can make a lot happen."

Jail

"When I got visitors in jail, it made me feel worse. People from outside just reminded me of where I was supposed to be at. I just lived in that world and wasted day to day trying not to think about home. The worst thing is having dreams in jail. You're just doing normal shit, kicking it on the block, smoking a blunt, playing a videogame – then you wake up."



Onstage at
KOKO, London,
February 2014

"I don't do shit with my brain, but with my heart"

Danny Brown

raised around the same trauma and violence that breeds mental illness in the first place".

Danny acknowledges that this is pertinent to his upbringing. He says he and his friends were exposed to so much poverty and violence that they became "desensitised" and laughed at it. Take 'Torture', the seventh track on 'Old', where he raps about the culture of drugs, violence and degrading sex that surrounded him as a teenager: "Look in my mind and see the horrors/All the shit that I've seen, nigga, it's torture". He says his background prevents him from facing his emotions. "I'm not supposed to be [emotional]," he says. "Being from the 'hood, you ain't supposed to be no bitch-ass nigga like that. You're supposed to be able to put everything on the backburner and provide for your family and do what you gotta do. A man ain't supposed to be [emotional]."

"I just think I always isolated myself from shit, you know? I just build up a lot of shit. You can't make a problem delete itself. I try to run away from shit but it just builds up and you blow up. That's all [those tweets were]. I don't know how to talk to people. That's probably a Detroit trait – we can't be emotional. We not supposed to be like that, but we are the most emotional motherfuckers on the planet. We just ain't going to admit it."

He talks about his short attention span, which he thinks could have been

addressed differently if he came from another background. "Growing up in the 'hood, we ain't got no healthcare. Anywhere else, I probably would have been put on Ritalin. I also wouldn't have been Danny Brown, though. I'd be Danny Sewell [his real name], probably working a regular job somewhere."

Onstage at KOKO later that night, the songs from 'Old' get the loudest response, although a handful of tracks from earlier mixtapes appease the hardcore supporters. Danny finishes the show with an encore, something he rarely does – a lot of people had started approaching the exit after his penultimate song, '25 Bucks'. When Skywalker drops the deep and menacing vocal sample of 'Dip', a continuous stream of kids rushes back towards the crowd, some scaling a metal barrier that divides the back of the venue from the exit. It's like something from *28 Days Later*.

Two days after

the London show, we meet up again in Manchester.

This time he's sold out Gorilla, a venue less than half the size of KOKO.

Asked what he's expecting from the show, one teenage fan intones: "I've heard some crazy things... He got his dick sucked onstage!" He's referring to the crowdmember who gave Danny a blowjob in Minneapolis in May last year, providing the biggest headline of his last solo tour. Danny denies that the incident threatened to turn his act into a freakshow: "If you do come for that, you gonna be disappointed. I just wanna rap."

The dressing room in Gorilla is minute compared with the cavernous backstage rooms at KOKO. Skywalker taps the keys of a MacBook

and Dart props himself against the doorframe, sipping bottled water. A sign stuck to the corridor outside says: "NO SMOKING: £100 FINE PER INCIDENT". Lighting a cigarette, Danny maintains that it refers only to weed.

Between the London and Manchester dates, he performed at Coalition in Brighton. Although the gig was "fun", he says "it didn't sound as good as London". On the plus side, he was able to get more drunk before the Brighton show as it started later. He says alcohol prevents him from overthinking his performance, but as a general rule he's quit substances for The Old Danny Brown Tour (though that's also discounting weed, which he doesn't class as a drug).

"You gotta take a break, man," he says. "Like Doom said: 'Sometimes you need to detox, it can help you wit' your flow and your beatbox.' I'm in a refreshing stage, you know? You need to refresh the page sometimes, man. I care about my music too much. That's fucked up, though, because I still do drugs to make music. But right now, I'm not doing shit."

He says drugs have an adverse effect on his writing process, and that he makes his most depressing songs when he's high, but was sober when he wrote 'Dip', a celebration of MDMA. "If I was on that shit, I wouldn't even be talking about it. I'd be thinking about some other shit, and that's why I wrote those depressing records, 'cos I'm thinking too hard about shit. Sober, I just wanna rap and do some shit and have fun."

The audience at Gorilla catches Danny in a sunny mood. He walks onstage in circular, silver-framed shades and a multicoloured coat that reaches his knees. As Skywalker drops 'Monopoly', Danny leans over to high-five the front three rows. He sticks his tongue through his jagged front teeth, squeezing his eyes closed, the same cartoonish pose he holds

on the poster outside.

"Manchester, what the fuck is up!" he bellows, before adopting a fey voice and simpering, "Hello, this is Daniel," a joke that draws a few snickers.

This switch in character recalls something he said in London. Talking about his personality, he pointed to his songs, which often

feature him rapping in two different voices. One's so joyful you can almost hear him grinning, the other a menacing bark. "When people meet me," he said, "they always think they getting the high-pitched, laughing-all-the-time voice. But they always forget about that deep voice. I'm not just that person; I'm both of those guys. One day you're gonna get him, and one day you're gonna get *him*. And one day you're gonna get a mix of both. You gotta take the good with the bad, you know what I'm saying?" ■



The crowd
at KOKO

12



Kylie photographed
in Australia, 1992

Love thy Neighbour

NME, AUGUST 22, 1992

As Kylie releases her 12th studio album, we rewind to the end of her career's first phase – leaving PWL, winning a fan in Richey Manic, and trying to crack America. Stuart Maconie met the “lively” Miss Minogue

The first thing you notice about Kylie Minogue is how big she is. Really. I'd read so many interviews, overheard so many shocked snatches of conversations to the effect of 'she's so small' that I was a little amazed when she walked in the room, not a homunculus, not some tiny, fragile Thumbelina, but an ordinary person. Only smaller.

Kylie's handshake is firmer than you expect, too. It's a handshake that says, in a totally charming way, 'I'm ready for you. I have my act together.' Unlike me. My palms were slick, my throat was dry. I needed a cigarette. This was no flaky, drug-addled mouth-breather, this was no evolutionary throwback. This was class, this was cool, this was sex! This was Kylie.

She looked a million dollars. A million Australian dollars, of course. Red matador shirt, tight black tailored trousers, hair in pioneer plaits. It's a kind of easy glamour, one that stops just short of ostentation, but glamour nonetheless. It infects the room,

spreads to the coffee pots and the mineral water.

Some people, of course, don't know what all the fuss is about. There are less of them than there used to be, but there is still an old guard, a retinue of churls who cannot or will not understand that Kylie is pop and without her, without what she stands for, pop is just tinkering and fanning, just hot air for

boys with no girlfriends. Kylie is pop because pop at its rawest, behind the add-on politics and the concept albums, the embarrassing speeches and the hall of fame homilies, before and beyond all this pop is the sound of a foot tapping on a classroom floor. Forever.

Pop can go further than this of course.

It can go to the wildest shores of experimentation and abstract noise and we will still love it. We need our weirdos and our eggheads, just as we need Kylie. What we don't need is all that workmanlike stuff in between, all the blokeism and sincerity and carbohydrate stodge.

It used to be thought that if you pretended to enjoy 'I Should Be So Lucky', or 'Better The Devil You Know', or any of these sterling pop songs, it must be ironic. Like, presumably, people ironically like chips and holidays and whisky and sex.

Let's just nail this once and for all, shall

we? Do we assume that a carapace of irony is needed to enjoy The Ronettes' 'Be My Baby' or The Beatles' 'She Loves You' or The Beach Boys' 'Fun Fun Fun'? Of course not, the difference being that these records have been passed by the politburo of rock worthiness, the almost exclusively male club that constitutes critical acceptability.

The simple truth is – and Bobby Gillespie and the Manics know it [\[1\]](#) – that if you have a problem with Kylie you have a problem with pop. It's not the end of the world. There's still world music, grunge, folk, reggae, the blues and American guitar rock. But when you are tired of Kylie, or for that matter En Vogue, Cud, Shanice, Right Said Fred or Saint Etienne, you are tired of pop.

"Of course, there was a lot of snootiness when I began from within the music industry.

A lot of resentment. There was this feeling about the early singles that... well, people would say, 'She's an Aussie soap star for God's sake. What's she doing at Number One?' In a way it was inevitable. If I'd been one of them I'd have said the same things."

Kylie fiddles with the top of the mineral water bottle, something she will do almost continually. She creases her brow: "But I really do think I'm starting to prove them wrong. I wish I could give you a nice concise quote about where I'm heading but I really don't know myself. But I know I'm only 10 per cent of the way there."

"There was a lot of snootiness when I began" Kylie Minogue

"New Improved
Kylie" onstage
in 1992

FROM
THE
VAULTS



Kylie was accepted from the off by the fluffy cardigans and Andi Peters world of children's entertainment. She was accepted as a bubble emissary from a fairyland of sunshine, surfboards and shrimps on the barbie. But she was never accepted by the gerontocracy of the music establishment. Partly because her music was essentially lightweight, of course, but it was about more than this. It was about the mistrust of the whole PWL setup [2]. These were wide boys, kids, soap stars, hustlers. They weren't part of the club. Kylie was a dumb Sheila, a bit of fluff for the under-12s.

She straightens up. "Of course I was insulted by it, because what did they know? It was like every Tom, Dick and Harry in Britain was entitled to have an opinion of me. And it didn't matter what I did to change their mind. They didn't give a shit anyway. Why waste time on them? Without getting all wobbly-headed about it, I'm doing this for myself. I don't need their approval.

"Besides, no-one can criticise me as much as I do." She hesitates. "Sometimes I do it so badly. I get in such states of depression, it takes my best friends hours of cajoling to convince myself that I'm halfway... decent."

She brightens. "That only happens every now and again. It's the cliché about performers being insecure. Particularly with me being a double Gemini," she adds with a hint of, yes, irony.

Kylie's first British single went to Number One [3]. She was famous before she even opened her mouth to sing. She hasn't

"I don't want to be prancing around at 40 like mutton dressed as lamb"

paid her dues. She hasn't even paid her first year's subs.

"If I'd 'paid my dues' I wouldn't have got the treatment I did. If I'd sung in bars for 10 years, I'd have had cred. But I snuck in the back and I've been resented for it. But I know how hard I worked for years in TV, being ill all the time and making myself anaemic. I still paid my dues, but I didn't do the penniless singer bit."

And yet, these last couple of years have seen a definite shift in attitude towards Kylie. Maybe it's longevity, maybe it's those glowing testimonials from the Manics and Bobby Gillespie, maybe it's even the tireless work of this very organ. Whatever, it's certainly no longer the accepted form to sneer at Kylie. The realisation is spreading that at the end of pop that deals in primary colours and sugar highs, Kylie is unimpeachably a star. It's beginning to dawn on even the dullest that to criticise Kylie for not being REM is a bit like criticising a big dipper ride for not being a sponsored walk.

"I think you're right," says Kylie. "I thought I'd begin to look at me and think, well I may not like her or her image or her record company but these are good pop songs and you can't dispute that. I've never tried to be underground or trendy or R&B or soul. These are just good pop songs."

After four years and 18 hits, Kylie Minogue has a greatest hits collection. She is faintly embarrassed by this. She is faintly embarrassed by the word 'star'. It took her two years to say the words 'my manager'. Kylie's 'Greatest Hits' is, however, more than just the usual hits agglomerate. It's the end of an era, a summation of the SAW/PWL years now that Kylie is leaving the stable for the glittering corporate world of the majors [4].

"It's the end of an era, yeah. There was talk of me re-signing but it really is time to go. The contract's up. And if I was to stay it really would hold me back. I don't want to go on about the bad times 'cos they've been balanced by real good times. We had our ups and downs though. In my head I'm already out of there, but that doesn't mean I'm not going to make the most of the 'Greatest Hits'."

Kylie's career is at a crossroads. Behind her are some tiny pop triumphs. But the little girls who formed the early Kylie corps are now all into Ozric Tentacles. America and the dreaded adulthood beckon.

"I hear so much about me changing, I begin to feel like washing-up liquid. You know, New Improved Kylie. The new single is

really just another pop song and it'll probably be the last one of that kind that I do."

She thinks she'll probably end up being an actress again, if only because "I don't want to be prancing around in black net at 40, like mutton dressed as lamb." [5]

I liked Kylie Minogue. She was lively and vulnerable and feisty in a winning sort of way. She gave me a signed photo. And now that pop is no longer a generation glue but merely one of a whole range of lifestyle choices along with computer games and books and clothes and videos, it's possible we won't see another Kylie Minogue. Sometimes she goes to Paris just to take a break from being stared at, but tonight she has her first salsa lesson.

And next year she goes to America [6], a 22-year-old career woman with a new job on the cards. The last of the pop stars is off to grow up. ■

Footnotes

The full facts behind the Kylie story

[1] Richey Edwards, Manic Street Preachers: "From 'I Should Be So Lucky' to PWL 56, 'Better The Devil You Know': respect due. 'Step Back In Time' onwards: dodgy boyfriends, stupid Fulham pubs, deodorised maturity and underwired bras. Rose skipping hopscootch."

[2] Kylie released her first four albums on producer Pete Waterman's PWL label. She eventually broke away from these slick pop enclaves for her 1994 self-titled album.

[3] Kylie's first UK Number One single was 1988's 'I Should Be So Lucky'. It spent 17 weeks on the chart, and was among the year's bestsellers.

[4] 'Kylie Minogue' was released on BMG/Deconstruction Records. The early stages of the record's creation were marked by relative freedom – she recorded two songs with Saint Etienne – before the label decided they weren't right for the record.

[5] Kylie released 'X', her 10th studio album, at the age of 39. The cover depicts her with a black net veil across her eyes.

[6] Success still eludes Kylie in America. Her debut US single, 'The Loco-Motion', peaked at Number Three, while 2007's 'Can't Get You Out Of My Head' reached Number Seven.

THIS WEEK IN 2001



Robots rock

Daft Punk discard their human heads to reveal their true identities

"We are robots," Daft Punk's Thomas Bangalter insists to *NME*'s Sylvia Patterson, frustrated at magazines insisting they remove their new robot heads for photoshoots so as not to repeat the 'gimmick'. "We don't pretend. We are! Before we had human heads and had to wear a mask; now we can show our faces." The press is willing to humour their odder ploys, including refusing to have their faces photographed since 1996 and releasing new album 'Discovery' with an online VIP club membership for every purchaser. "We wanted to explode in many directions for every track," Thomas says of the record. "From heavy metal to disco to soul to rock to classical music. We don't fear any instrument." Their new image, they explain, is all part of a new global reality in which they're the new Batman and Robin.

"The difference between reality and fiction is gone, you've got Photoshop, deformed images, animatronics, androids – you can't believe anything any more. Batman is just a regular guy that dressed in a suit and starts to interfere with the reality and creates a magical thing with no power at all."



'TOON TAKEOVER

Invading Daft Punk's cover at gunpoint, Gorillaz set out to deny their image as two-dimensional puppets of shadowy industry figures, akin to Hear'Say. "This isn't getting a bunch of 17-year-olds with pretty faces who can do backflips with big tits and making a record for them," argues front-zombie Murdoc. "We've got a bit more integrity than that." Separately, Damon Albarn claims he discovered the band at a party in his flat and loved their lack of human face. "It's the abstraction which I think is groundbreaking."

PREMIER LEAGUE

The League Of Gentlemen explain the origins of some of their characters – "I remember writing a sketch with Les McQueen in it and thinking, 'This could be me'," says writer Jeremy Dyson – and their pleasure in frustrating their fans. "We knew that the 'local shop' was popular," says Steve Pemberton, "so at the end of series two we burnt it down."

REVIEWED THIS WEEK

Manic Street Preachers – 'Know Your Enemy' 7/10

"In an unambitious world [it's] far from divine but on the side of the angels." ■ VICTORIA SEGAL

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

► At a warm-up gig for their new album, Manic Street Preachers smash their equipment and call Anne Robinson a "dog" in response to her recent anti-Welsh comments on *Room 101*.
► Reviewing a theatrical Kylie Minogue gig full of dancing sailors and the pint-size star descending from the heavens on a giant anchor, Peter Robinson declares: "Generation K have glimpsed heaven."
► Radiohead announce their own mini-festival to take place at South Park in their native Oxford in July, with Beck and Supergrass confirmed to support.

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DOES ROCK 'N' ROLL KILL BRAINCELLS? Vs THE FANS

WE FIND THE ROCK STAR, YOU ASK THE QUESTIONS

Tinchy Stryder



Example

**Rapper and
songwriter**

1 In what order do the rappers/singers come out in Tinchy Stryder's 'Game Over'?

Harry Craig, London, via email
"Giggs is first. Then Professor Green. Then Tinie. Then Devlin. Then me, then Chipmunk, then Tinchy Stryder."
CORRECT

2 What is Chris Lowe wearing on his head in



Chris Lowe

the video for the Pet Shop Boys' 'Thursday', on which you feature?

Alfie Baker, London, via Twitter
"That's really difficult. I shot my part of the video in Sydney. They did theirs in Taiwan, I think."
WRONG. A glitterball

3 You very kindly donated a water pump to which region in India late last year?

Ursula Vine, Coventry, via email
"We flew to Chennai. Then we drove six hours to Kadapa. Then we went to the Andhra Pradesh region."
CORRECT. Did you get Delhi belly?
"No. I took probiotic tablets which settle your stomach and drunk bottled water even when I was cleaning my teeth."

4 Complete the following lyrics: "You can't rap, my friend/You're white and you're from Fulham".

Barney Coledridge, London, via email
"Please put down the mic, there's no way you can fool them/Don't be stupid, you won't get that far/Turn your back on hip-hop, bro, and go and play guitar."
CORRECT
"And I did turn my back on hip-hop. But I didn't learn guitar."

5 On what date did you shave your hair off (although a bit rubbishly) in 2013?

Ian Bowler, Manchester, via email

"How the fuck would I know that?"

You put a photo on Instagram.

"It was before Christmas, the day after I arrived in Brisbane. My hair had got so long, my wife shaved it the next day. So December 18th?"
CORRECT

6 How much does an Example FC footy scarf cost on trythisforexample.com?

Freddie Jackson, Swansea, via Twitter
"Ah... for fuck's sake."
Clue. It's not in the sale. You're having a sale at the moment
"I'm going to go for 10 quid."
WRONG. £12

7 How many times do you smile in the video to 'Changed The Way You Kiss Me'?

Rachel Manford, Peterborough, via email
"Not even the most ridiculous fans would know that. I'm going to say zero."
CORRECT. Why so moody?
"It's a moody song. It's about a break-up, isn't it? My new single is much happier. I smile about 27 times in that."

8 What's the name of the character your wife, Australian model Erin McNaught, played in Neighbours?



Ex-Neighbours star
Erin McNaught

"Bollocks. The first is the same name as that skinny woman... what's her name? Sienna Miller. The second name is Italian. Sienna Cammeniti."
CORRECT. Can she sing?
"She's actually a better singer than me, which isn't hard."

9 Why has someone recently complained on Twitter about you changing your phone number?

Tony Phillips, Belfast, via Facebook
"Because this lady keeps getting messages for me saying, 'Hiya, it's Debbie from Doncaster, remember me from 2008?'"
CORRECT

10 Name five people who have officially remixed 'All The Wrong Places'.

Lisa Warrington, Stoke-on-Trent, via email

"That's easy because I commissioned them all. Jack Beats, Quintino,

Calyx & TeeBee, Steve Hill and Technikal, and Starkillers."

CORRECT. Do you bother listening to them?
"Of course."

SCORE = 8

"I think my memory is pretty good. I should have got that scarf one right."

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Inside the cult of **The Horrors**

**Exclusive first
comeback
interview**



**Everything you need to know
about the new album**

On sale Wednesday, March 19

NME

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