

22 MARCH 2014

NME

**Jarvis
Cocker**

First look at the
Pulp man's film debut

Haim

**Mac
DeMarco**

**The War
On Drugs**

Howler

"Psychedelia
has become
too easy.
Now it's all about
exploration"

The Horrors

explain everything about the most
anticipated album of 2014

"Not all those who wander are lost," JRR TOLKEN

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The Horrors

Louis Pattison immerses himself in Faris, Rhys, Josh, Tom and Joe's secretive, black-clad world to find out about their brilliant new album

The War On Drugs

Adam Granduciel endured a break-up and a breakdown writing his latest record. Jenny Stevens meets a man eager to prove his worth

Mac DeMarco

With his reputation as a fun-loving stoner, why is Mac DeMarco making such introspective, jaded music?

From The Vaults: Jeff Buckley, 1994

In *NME* 20 years ago, John Mulvey met a new star who would become a cult figure posthumously. Here, he's still an outsider struggling to fit in

CONTRIBUTORS



Dave Harper
Frankie & The Heartstrings' drummer
Growing up in the north-east, Dave couldn't understand the language of politicians until he heard Tony Benn, "a thorn in the side of ambivalence and greed".



David Renshaw
News Reporter
"Seeing 11,000 people dancing made me excited for festival season," says David of Disclosure's biggest gig yet. "But not as excited as the girl who met Howard at the aftershow."



Matthew Salacuse
Photographer
"We woke Mac DeMarco at 1pm at the Williamsburg flat he shares with nine other dudes. After a litre of water and two cigarettes, he asked, 'Can I wear that mask?'"

THIS WEEK WE ASK...



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Find out as their biggest gig yet sees loads of famous faces in the crowd

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Lots of "rad Melbourne punk", according to her *Radar* column

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

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SILLY LILY

I think Lily Allen is being ridiculous. "Feminism shouldn't be a thing any more"? "Everyone is equal"? Then why do women still face routine discrimination, violence, and get paid less than men, for the same job, in the modern workplace? Lily has no idea what she's talking about. By saying "women are their own worst enemy", she takes an important issue and turns it into something petty. Lily says she doesn't think men are the enemy. She clearly doesn't understand what modern feminism is all about, then. Men aren't the enemy, institutionalised subordination of women is! If Lily wants to empower women, she should get informed about feminism and the real facts instead of spouting out idiotic, uninformed comments like these. Women need to stand TOGETHER for equality.

Nana G, via email

Louis Pattison: The comments on feminism Lily put forth in *Shortlist's* Be A Man issue have dominated the postbag this week and, sorry Lil, but the tide is against you. Perhaps feminism cannot do that much for wealthy and celebrated pop star Lily Allen these days, but as Nana points out, so long as institutionalised sexism exists, it still has a role to play. I've been fairly well

disposed to Lily in the past – let's face it, she's the sort of amusing gobshite that makes the pop world spin. I suspect, in a roundabout way, these comments are her way of returning fire following the feminist backlash that greeted her somewhat ill-judged 'Hard Out Here' video. Surely, though, this is like reacting to someone pointing out you've put your foot in your mouth by squeezing the other one in there too? Anyway, more on that tip...



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LP: Harsh, Fiona. Gotta be honest, I won't be squeezing against the barrier to watch Macklemore, but he is tucked in between Blink-182 and You Me At Six, two bands who might as well have "will go down a storm at Reading and Leeds" stamped on their DNA. Being one of the UK's biggest festivals, R&L inevitably needs to reach out to acts with a bit of clout. But with Fat Whites, Dreng, Jungle, Eagulls and Danny Brown bubbling under, it'd be madness to suggest they'd lost their edge.

R U ALEX?

Come on, NME, seriously? There's no way your editor isn't secretly: a) dating Alex Turner; b) Alex Turner's mum; or c) Alex Turner. The people deserve to know!
Austyn King, via email

LP: Come to think of it Austyn, he did make a speech about rock'n'roll not dying the other day...

HARD OUT HERE (FOR A FEMINIST)

Lily Allen's attempt at a feminist anthem, 'Hard Out Here', proved she has no idea what the movement is about. It dripped with subtle racism and slut-shaming. Why can't she just apologise and move on? Or ignore the criticism and not make fucking idiotic comments like "feminism isn't needed" when she wrote a song with lyrics like "we've got a glass ceiling to break", suggesting that she believes very much the opposite?

Holly Flannery, via email

It is 2014. We shouldn't have feminism, we should just have humanism. Lily said women are their own worst enemy. We are constantly belittling ourselves, judging what other women are doing and why. As my mum says, "I don't care what

any of you are doing as long as it's not hurting others or breaking the law."

Angela, via email

Lily used feminism to get a bit of attention and then got bored of it. I'm just hoping she gets no more attention.

Holly Rowley, via email

LP: Thanks for your take, Angela, although I would say that while humanism has a pretty good track record of putting on weddings and funerals without those weird God bits, it hasn't, traditionally, done much in terms of winning women the vote, tackling street harassment, addressing the salary gap, and so forth. Feminism isn't all about ruining everyone's fun. It can teach women and men alike much about building a fair society, and while the likes of Perfect Pussy or Angel Haze are making incredible music from staunchly feminist positions, I know who's got my ear.

BOWIE FOR GLASTO

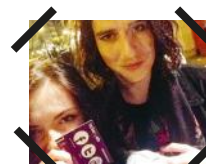
In 2005, David Bowie (below left, with Win Butler and Regine Chassagne) pronounced himself Arcade Fire's "number one fan" and joined them onstage to play his and their songs before going off into the wilderness. Fast-forward to last year, and Bowie returns with an album BORN to be played live, and sings on Arcade Fire's 'Reflektor'. Here's my theory. On December 13, 2013, Arcade Fire announce they're headlining Glastonbury. Ten years ago to the day, David Bowie is playing on his final tour to date in none other than... Montreal, home of Arcade Fire! I'd put money on Arcade Fire being there. It's not much to go on, but if Bowie was asked to do Glastonbury I believe he'd want his favourite musicians with him – maybe to do a song with him? Oh, and at the Brits, a VT of Bowie quotes played out over his Best Album nomination. The very last quote said, "I might play one

show, but who knows when..." Am I clutching at straws?
Sy Cooper, via email

LP: Excellent sleuthing, Sy. If I saw you hanging around my recycling bins I'd be down there with a shredder before you could correctly discern what I'll be doing on a Tuesday afternoon in March 2024. Anyway, I'm 100 per cent convinced, and I'd put a wager on it, but I sold all my belongings in preparation for the Mayan apocalypse a couple of years back.

FESTIVAL SELLOUT?

Reading and Leeds, get your 'acts' together. I feel majorly let down by the line-up of this year's festival, particularly the way Paramore and Macklemore have wormed their way onto the Main Stage. It's like the mainstream vibe is affecting something you'd think would always be different from the rest. I think it needs to get back to its roots and not let money be a motive.
Fiona Chastney, Surrey



LOOK WHO'S STALKING

I ran into Adam from Temples outside their gig in Bournemouth, shortly after some girls had just done his eyeliner. He had to use my phone as a mirror to check on the make-up situation!
Ruby, via email



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NME TRACK OF THE WEEK

1. Tune-Yards
Water Fountain

Merrill Garbus almost left 'Water Fountain' off 'Nikki Nack', Tune-Yards' third album, for sounding "like a kids' song". Its jump-rope rhythm fits the bill – no bad thing – and like any good nursery rhyme it puts a bright mask on dark themes: communities struggling in neglected neighbourhoods; ignoring societal injustice in the name of selfish survival; the conflicting pleasure and shame inherent in sex and food. It couldn't be anyone else.

Laura Snapes, Features Editor

2. Clipping
Work Work

Sub Pop's trio of LA rappers say they enjoy making harsh productions that push listeners out of their comfort zone and show them how ugly shit can be – a rap version of Fat White Family, perhaps? That's all well and good except for one thing: so far, 'Work Work' and previous single 'Bout That' are peppered with irresistible choruses and head-nodding verses. Think Death Grips' nails-down-a-blackboard atmosphere with added funky bass. A must-hear.

Eve Barlow, Deputy Editor

3. Jaws
Think Too Much, Feel Too Little

"We get it, we get it/It's over", sighs frontman Connor Schofield on the latest track from B-Town's most laidback band, Jaws. Funky without committing itself to the dancefloor, maths-y without tackling any troubling equations, 'Think Too Much, Feel Too Little' nails their trademark insouciance while sounding like the perfect soundtrack for a homeopathic juice bar.

Mark Beaumont, writer

4. Skrillex feat. Chance The Rapper
Coast Is Clear

If you ever meet Chance The Rapper in a bar, remember this: he doesn't want to know your name, or what your interests are, he just wants to give you a good porking to some lively drum'n'bass. That, at least, is what he implies in this dream team-up for Skrillex's debut album, which sees the EDM producer slip slivers of feelgood jazz in between the trappy drum claps and thwacking breakbeat.

Kate Hutchinson, writer

5. Daft Punk feat. Jay Z
Computerized

While the internet was trying to work out whether this collaboration – which was initially thought to have also included production work by Kanye – was fake or not, you too might have sat back and thought: a fucking aeroplane is missing, who cares? It's not fake; it's an old track convincingly dated to 'Tron'-era Daft Punk (2010) on which Jay gets deep about his technology: "I can't even tell y'all what's real/I got an iTouch, but I can't feel".

Phil Hebblethwaite, writer

**6. Fucked Up**
Paper The House

In 2011, Toronto punks Fucked Up went on hiatus, with frontman Damien 'Pink Eyes' Abraham citing an inability to tour and raise a family at the same time as the motivation for the break. The first track from the group's 'Glass Boys' album, due this summer, seems to tackle those feelings, with Abraham growling, "The way I make a living..." before a chorus that laments, "Please go, please stay/Just a kid wondering where his dad went".

Rhian Daly, Assistant Reviews Editor

7. Coldplay
Another's Arms

"Late night watching TV, wishing you were here beside me/Wishing your arms were around me, your body on my body", sings Chris Martin, a man who clearly doesn't enjoy watching *Family Guy* repeats on his lonesome. Debuted at the band's recent SXSW show, the electronic drums and falsetto vocals combine on this low-key cut from new album 'Ghost Stories' to create something that sounds familiar, yet also refreshingly alien.

David Renshaw, News Reporter

8. Frank Ocean, Mick Jones, Paul Simonon, Diplo
Hero

Shoe people Converse continue their Three Artists, One Song series with a track that, weirdly, features four artists. Frank Ocean's vocal and Diplo's softened dub sounds dominate, with a couple of short, sharp guitar 'n' bass tear-ups from the Clash contingent. It's disjointed, especially when the West Los Angeles Children's Choir kick in, but it's an intriguing oddity.

Tom Howard, Reviews Editor

9. Superfood
(You Gotta) Fight For Your Right (To Party!)

Superfood tackled the '90s on their Blur-influenced debut EP 'MAM' earlier this month. Now they're showing the 1980s some love thanks to this Beastie Boys cover. Where the 1986 original leapt from the speakers, all bratty and boisterous, the Brummie four-piece's version is mellow and melodic.

Nevertheless, it takes a lot of moxie to attempt a cover like this, and even more skill to pull it off.

Andy Welch, writer

10. Jacques Greene
No Excuse

Canadian producer Jacques Greene looks set to step things up a notch in 2014, with a new live show planned and a new EP about to drop. 'No Excuse' is our first taste from the 'Phantom Vibrate' EP, and sees Greene flipping what sounds like a Marques Houston sample over a mutant house rhythm. Having worked with everyone from Azealia Banks to Radiohead in the past, surely now is Greene's time to shine.

David Renshaw, News Reporter

ESSENTIAL NEW TRACKS

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11. Friendly Fires & The Asphodels Before Your Eyes

So this is what Friendly Fires have been up to. The London three-piece's first new material since their second album, 2011's 'Pala', is a collaboration with Andrew Weatherall's band The Asphodels. Not for the first time, the Chairman (as Weatherall is affectionately known) sets the controls to krautrock while Friendly Fires frontman Ed McFarlane's heavily treated vocals are propelled by a motorik beat, chugging guitar and pulsing synths. Superb.

Chris Cottingham, writer

12. The Horrors So Now You Know

The latest track from The Horrors' forthcoming album 'Luminous' has all the cosmic charm of 'Skying', but also includes a slicker disco bounce that nods more towards Phil Oakey and Giorgio Moroder's 'Together In Electric Dreams' than the band's traditional hazy psych symphonies. As the album title would suggest, it's dazzlingly euphoric, marking out the next stage in the band's ever-evolving sound.

Jenny Stevens, Deputy News Editor

13. Darlia Animal Kingdom

Manchester-based scrappers Darlia follow the primal grunge of breakout singles 'Queen Of Hearts' and 'Candyman' with something sweeter and simpler. "Tiger in my arms/Should I be alarmed/Should I freeze?" growls frontman Nathan Day over fuzzy '90s guitar jangles, sliding bass and massive pop-rock drums before a rhino-sized chorus about the raw animalism of attraction crashes in.

Al Horner, Assistant Editor, NME.COM

14. Hero Fisher No Ceremony

Spidery early track 'Fear Not Victorious' set Hero Fisher up as a brooding student of the PJ Harvey school of tactile atmospherics. 'No Ceremony' finds the Londoner adding some serious clout to her sound. "You better kick it in the gut/Disembowel/Throw up/Let's have a blowout/Cannibal spree", she sings in a vicious stream of consciousness before kicking into a chorus full of bone-chillingly menacing riffs.

Lisa Wright, writer

15. Brody Dalle Don't Mess With Me

Brody Dalle's latest incarnation has been nothing short of electric so far, merging the best bits of her previous work into one. The warped feline wails and quivering guitar of 'Don't Mess With Me' recall Spinnerette's 'Ghetto Love' and 'Valium Knights' (no doubt thanks in part to the continued aid of QOTSA collaborator Alain Johannes), while the irked drums zip all the way back to The Distillers. Punk's hard-bitten majesty has well and truly returned.

James Balmont, writer



16. Fryars Boys In The Hood

It hasn't been the smoothest of rides for Fryars (real name Benjamin Garrett). After an early incarnation in the late noughties touting sprightly synthpop, it took him a couple of years to regroup and come back with something a little more substantial. With 'Boys In The Hood', the first cut from Fryars' forthcoming LP, this trajectory continues: all crooning vocals and minimal electronics, it's sophisticated proof that perseverance pays off.

Lisa Wright, writer

17. Arcade Fire Uptight (Everything's Alright)

Arcade Fire's current US tour has a nightly surprise element: a cover version, usually of a song by a local star, performed while Win Butler wears a cube of video screens displaying images of characters from that city. At Auburn Hills in Metro Detroit they opted for Stevie Wonder's 'Uptight', complete with xylophone and pounding Motown beat. Should the recording career ever falter, they'd have a great future as the world's weirdest wedding band.

Dan Stubbs, News Editor

18. Johnny Cash She Used To Love Me A Lot

One of several unreleased cuts discovered by archivists at Legacy Records, 'She Used To Love Me A Lot' is the country legend's look back at lost love. "She just left me standing there/I've never been so shocked", Cash wistfully reminisces over bumpy acoustic guitar lines before the track fades out into the sound of waves gently lapping against the shore.

Rhian Daly, Assistant Reviews Editor

19. Only Real Cadillac Girl

West Londoner Niall Galvin has been out in America lately, recording tracks for his debut album. 'Cadillac Girl', a re-recorded version of an early demo, is Galvin at his best, with rubbery guitar worming around a soft surf melody and murmuring beat poetry about a "lonely teaser" of a girl who's "so over" him. He doesn't seem that bothered really, happy just to "drive by stars and high-five Martians" – which sounds like a pretty decent day out.

Matthew Horton, writer

20. SBTRKT Highs And Lows

SBTRKT is warming up for a new album this year with three instrumental releases in a series called 'Transitions'. 'Highs And Lows' is taken from the third and mixes swashbuckling synths cutting into the rhythm in the upper register with squelchy bass holding things together in the second half. This tune's showstopper tones scream 'banger', but the complex melodies prove there are more leftfield intentions at work.

Hazel Sheffield, writer

TheWeek

► EVERYTHING THAT MATTERS IN MUSIC ■ EDITED BY DAN STUBBS

8

Lady Gaga sings
'Aura' at Stubb's
BBQ in Austin,
Texas, March 30



Gaga grilled at SXSW

Austin, Texas welcomes the music world's biggest names – and Lady Gaga's vomit artist

It's often said that people go to South By Southwest for the music but return raving about the barbecue. Lady Gaga managed to combine the two in her performance at Stubb's last Thursday, when she was roasted on a spit live onstage as leather-clad men prodded her with cooking utensils. Transforming the venue into the 'Haus Of Swine' for the occasion, the jaw-dropping set later saw London-based vomit artist Millie Brown puke luminous green liquid onto the singer before the pair started riding a bucking bronze pig. The set pieces were a replacement for Gaga's original idea, which was banned on health and safety grounds: performing inside a giant Doritos vending machine.

On a more serious note, Gaga dedicated 'Gypsy' to the two people killed and 23

injured when a car ploughed into the crowds on Red River Street in the early hours of Thursday morning. While the incident dominated the festival's headlines for much of the week, the five-day event saw some of music's biggest names descend on Austin, Texas to ply their wares. Jay Z and Kanye West revisited the Watch The Throne project in a futuristic show that featured the pair emerging from metal boxes onstage, Coldplay previewed new material, Neil Young launched his PonoPlayer device, Green Day reignited their Foxboro Hot Tubs alter ego and Strokes man Julian Casablancas introduced the world to both his new solo material and new backing band, The Voidz. The barbecue was good too, no doubt. ■ DAN STUBBS

9

GETTY

Pulp fiction

Jarvis Cocker premieres the new Pulp film and gives a songwriting lecture at SXSW



Jarvis makes a good point in his lyric-writing masterclass

In a decidedly Pulp-esque typeface – green, neon and more than a little sleazy – the opening credits for *Pulp* promise “a film about life, death and supermarkets”. Recorded at and around the band’s December 2012 homecoming show, the film premiered at South By Southwest, where director Florian Habicht and Pulp frontman Jarvis Cocker were on hand to explain their vision. “We were pretty adamant we didn’t want it to just be a standard music film, that in some ways it would have something that made it a bit more interesting,” said Cocker. They certainly achieved it. Equal parts

concert movie, kitchen-sink drama and heartwarming comedy, *Pulp* combines footage from the band’s Motorpoint Arena show with clips of local characters, all set against a backdrop of a fading Sheffield and the city’s brutalist Park Hill estate. As well as hardcore Pulp fans, we see a sequin-clad, middle-aged harmony group trilling their way through ‘Common People’ and hear from newspaper sellers, fag-smoking OAPs, local librarians, Jarvis’ mum, and even a butcher working in the indoor market where Jarvis did time as a teenage fishmonger and which has subsequently been demolished. Richard Hawley pops up too. “It captures a side of the city that maybe doesn’t exist any more – we got in just before it was extinguished,” says Cocker. “The people that Florian honed in on and spoke to and got to perform – I didn’t know that people like that still existed.”

New Zealander Florian arrived in Sheffield alone while the band were touring South America. On his first night he dined in a local pub and contracted food poisoning, which led to him soiling himself on-air during a radio interview to promote his last movie, *Love Story*. “Things got better from then. But the start was hard,” grins the director. Cocker went on to deliver an hour-long PowerPoint presentation on the subject of lyric writing before heading off into the Texan sunset. In a tweed suit, brown suede loafers, a yellow shirt and caramel-coloured tie, Jarvis made the game of ‘spot the Englishman’ far too easy. ■ LEONIE COOPER

A DIFFERENT CLASS

Five things we learned from Jarvis’ talk at SXSW

- 1 Jarvis took a sabbatical from his BBC 6 Music radio show so he could write some more music. “I am trying to be creative at the moment,” he explains, but clams up when asked for more details.
- 2 While trying to turn the volume down on his laptop, he accidentally displayed his desktop to the whole room, revealing his recent plays on iTunes. Tracks by X-Ray Spex and Whitey were among them.
- 3 Darren Spooner is alive and well, but Jarvis’ very own Sasha Fierce is a touch more terrifying than Beyoncé’s alter ego. “Darren is frightening,” he says, before reading one of Darren’s stories about hard-ons, Barry White and kung-fu.
- 4 Jarvis came up with his 1980s art-student look by combining the feathered hair of Ian McCulloch of Echo & The Bunnymen, the bum-fluff beard of Hugh Cornwell of The Stranglers and the NHS specs of Elvis Costello. “My glasses became a badge of honour,” he explains.
- 5 After telling the crowd that he recalls the name of every girl he ever wrote a song about, he reveals that he’s actually forgotten the name of the protagonist in ‘Common People’. “I did kind of fancy her a bit,” he sighed, admitting he never had a relationship with the girl with a thirst for knowledge.

“I can sense a chill in the room right now,” he grins. “You’re shitting yourselves!”

“I can sense a chill in the room right now,” he grins. “You’re shitting yourselves!”

“I can sense a chill in the room right now,” he grins. “You’re shitting yourselves!”

MY LIFE IN A SUITCASE

FIVE TOURING ESSENTIALS

Katy B



BOOK **Live At The Brixton Academy: A Riotous Life In The**

Music Business by **Simon Parkes**

“I love music books. Recently I had a conversation with a journalist who was telling me about this guy who bought Brixton Academy for £1.”

BOXSET **Breaking Bad**

“I’ve caught a bit of *Breaking Bad*, so I guess I’ll watch more of that, but TV series cause me so much stress. A story that never ends – that to me sounds like hell.”

FILM **Clueless**

“I love *Clueless*. At the moment I’ve got four lovely dancers with me and they’re the same age as me. We’ve watched all these ridiculously girly films – I’ve really enjoyed having them with me on tour.”

GAME **Tetris**

“It’s been with me from the Game Boy days and now I have an app on my phone. If there’s ever a dull moment, I’ll whip out the *Tetris*. After a while you have to give it a break, and then you appreciate it again.”



NME COMPETITION

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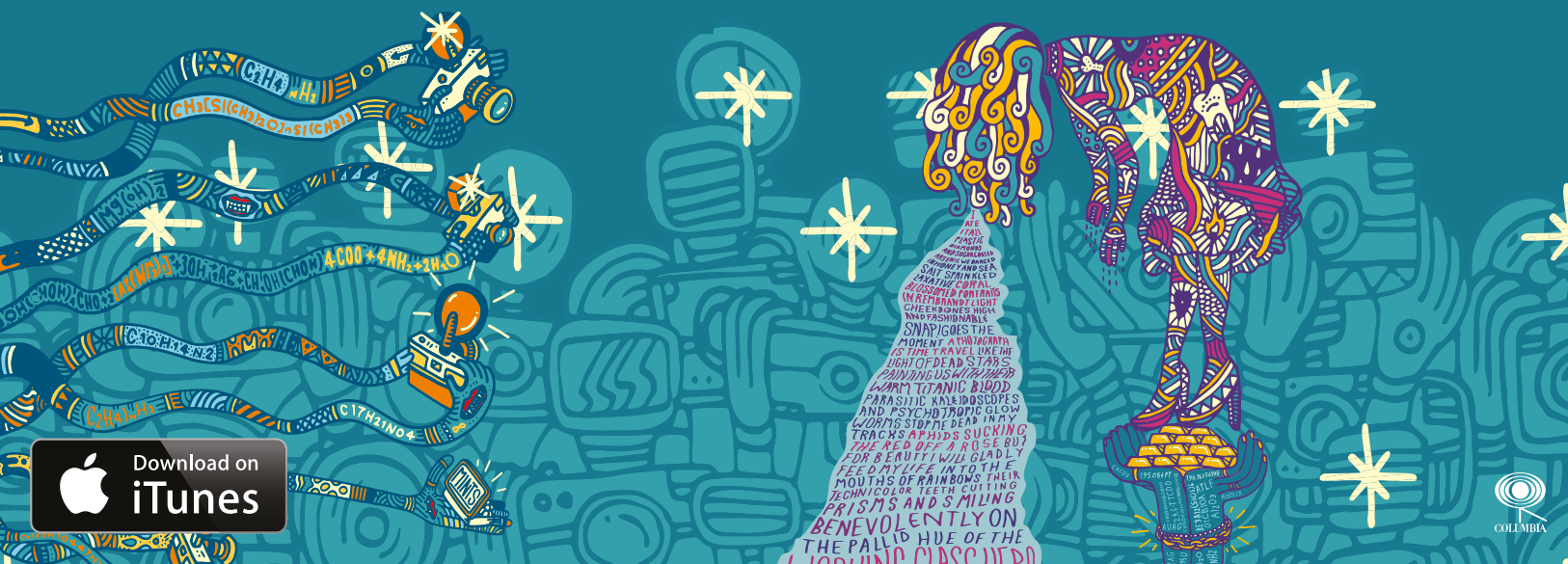
HOME COMFORT **Pig pillow**

“I’ve got a travel pillow, which I use at home as well. It’s called Patti The Pig. We all have different ones that we’re attached to – they’re like our friends. She has to go everywhere with me.”



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Inside dance music's new hit factory

Having launched the careers of Jessie Ware and Disclosure, London label PMR are taking their latest finds on the road



"THEY ALL MAKE EDM, BUT ESSENTIALLY IT'S GREAT POP MUSIC"

Ben Parmar

You'd never know. The neat Victorian house on the edge of Acton Park in west London doesn't look like the most important address in British dance music. Inside, brothers Ben and Daniel Parmar drink tea in a tastefully decorated living room while Ruger the bull terrier stretches out on his own personal sofa. It's a picture of leafy suburban domesticity. It also happens to be the headquarters of record label PMR, home to Disclosure and Jessie Ware. The reason house music currently dominates both clubland and the charts has a lot to do with what goes on here.

Right now, the Parmar brothers (both well dressed, polite and mum-friendly) are planning PMR's first tour: three dates in April to showcase the label's second post-Disclosure generation, calling at Paris, Glasgow and London. The bill

includes R&B-influenced Bristol singer Javeon, former grime producer turned house DJ T Williams and Canadian electronic wunderkind Cyril Hahn. "We have a new wave of talent coming through," explains Ben. "We think

they're all stars in the making and we want people to know about them."

If PMR has become a dance powerhouse – they've had a UK Number One album with 'Settle' by Disclosure, who also got to Number Two with single 'White Noise', while Jessie Ware got to Number Five with her album 'Devotion' – it's a happy accident. When Ben Parmar started PMR three years ago, he imagined it as more of a boutique concern. He'd previously worked for Polydor, where he helped sign Klaxons and Delphic. His biggest claim to fame is getting Skream to remix 'In For The Kill' by La Roux, the track that thrust dubstep into the mainstream. He left Polydor after seven years because he "couldn't see how the music I liked fitted in at a major label". Even so, the nose for a hit he'd developed stuck with him. PMR's first release was the 'Everyone Needs A Theme Tune' EP by Julio

Bashmore, which included 'Battle For Middle You' – the biggest club track of 2011 and one that helped to kickstart the ongoing house explosion. Albums by Disclosure and Jessie Ware went on to define it. "The label ended up becoming a lot more serious a lot faster than I'd anticipated," says Ben. "When we signed Jessie and Disclosure it was because

PMR: the graduates

Disclosure

- JOINED PMR 2012
- Guy and Howard Lawrence have done more than anyone to take house music back into the mainstream. Their debut album 'Settle' was nominated for a Grammy. Officially massive but still cool.
- KEY RELEASE 'White Noise' feat. Aluna George

Jessie Ware

- JOINED PMR 2011
- When Jessie Ware signed to PMR, she hadn't written any music. Her debut, 'Devotion', sounded like a more grown-up Katy B. She's now working on the follow-up.
- KEY RELEASE 'Running'

we thought the music was brilliant and we just wanted to see how far it could go. Now it's turned into a movement." It wasn't planned, but Ben is fine with it. "I have a massive respect for indie labels, but I've never felt protective about music; I never wanted PMR to be liked only by a certain number of people."

The Parmar brothers' secret is simple enough: they neatly balance underground cool with mainstream appeal. "It's difficult," says Ben. "It frustrates me that when something is small and cool, trendy people love it, but when an artist has a hit those people turn on them. I don't understand that attitude. As long as you respect the artists' integrity and you don't do horrible commercial things, what's the problem?" Javeon agrees: "I think if you're from the underground and you understand pop music and structure, then you can carry it off."



Jessie Ware



T Williams



Daniel and (right) Ben Parmar of PMR



Disclosure



Javeon

PMR spearheaded the house crossover, but Ben is looking beyond house music, which he reckons has reached saturation point. "Too many DJs, too many nights, not enough of them brilliant," he shrugs. All the new names on the forthcoming tour have something that sets them apart from dancefloor fodder. "They all make electronic dance music, but essentially it's great pop music," he says.

Cyril Hahn is the PMR artist most likely to repeat Disclosure's success. The Swiss-born, Vancouver-based producer blew up in 2012 with re-edits of 'Say My Name' by Destiny's Child and 'Touch My Body' by Mariah Carey. "He got very big without really having released any original material," says Ben. "Now he's started recording his own tracks, he's taking that R&B vibe and fusing it with house to make something different." Hahn's forthcoming single 'Breaking', only his second, features vocals from Javeon and the kind of pop hook you can't forget even if you want to.

For his part, Hahn loves the low-key vibe at PMR. "I liked that they weren't part of that dance-music cliché, doing cocaine off a glass

table," he says. Indeed, Hahn may be dance music's answer to Alan Bennett, preferring a nice cup of tea at home in Vancouver to larging it superstar-DJ style. "Oh, no," he says, perturbed at the thought. "That's really not me at all."

PMR: the new school

Meridian Dan

► JOINED PMR 2014

► This north London MC has been around since grime's first wave. 'German Whip', his homage to Mercedes-Benz, is leading a mini grime revival.

► KEY RELEASE 'German Whip'

Javeon

► JOINED PMR 2011

► The 26-year-old Bristolian sang on PMR's second release, the Bashmore-produced club hit 'Love Without A Heart'. After two years in 'development', he's poised for bigger things.

► KEY RELEASE 'Love Without A Heart'

Cyril Hahn

► JOINED PMR 2013

► In summer 2012, Cyril Hahn re-edited 'Say My Name' by Destiny's Child for a laugh. Eighteen months later, he's one of dance music's hottest new names.

► KEY RELEASE 'Breaking' (with Javeon)



Cyril Hahn

Ben's other house-backlash survival strategy is grime; he reckons there's a revival coming, and PMR have also signed London grime MC Meridian Dan on the back of his track 'German Whip'. "He's very exciting and British and raw," says Ben. "A lot of kids don't listen to the radio, and he represents them."

Ben offers a final thought: "Dance music is in an interesting place at the moment. Even Joey from *The Only Way Is Essex* is doing a house music compilation. It's become part of that commercial world. That's not necessarily an audience that I want, but there are things you can do to counter it. For example, don't let Joey Essex use your music in his compilation. That's a good starting point. That's a red line for me."

Good call. Dance/pop crossover with integrity.

Who'd have thought it?

■ CHRIS COTTINGHAM

THE MINI INTERVIEW



DJ Paul

Da Mafia 6ix

You're taking your dead bandmate on tour with you. How?

"Lord Infamous passed in December [of heart failure] and this is our first tour since. It's a way for our fans to pay their respects and say goodbye, so we've been taking out his casket onstage for a portion of the show."

Not in a Tupac hologram sort of way then?

"Nah, it's real. People have been losing their shit, freaking out, like they're about to throw up and pass out and shit when we take him out. People think it's creepy. I think it's a way to have my brother with us, even if he can't be with us, you know?"

This doesn't sound totally legal, Paul.

"Naw, no problems with the authorities. No-one minds. His family were a little shocked at first, but then they got on board."

Have you got a dedicated casket roadie? Or do you all chip in with the heavy lifting?

"Yeah, we got a 12-person crew to get it around. It's expensive, though. We had to get a trailer to follow our tourbus out. It's coming with us for 50 dates, then he's getting laid to rest properly at a church. He's one of us – we want him there to witness what we're bringing."

■ AL HORNER

New band Moats win Texas festival slot

Back in January, *NME* teamed up with Austin, Texas to offer one unsigned band the chance to win a slot at this year's Austin City Limits festival. Stevenage indie rockers Moats fought off competition from the hundreds of other entrants and have nabbed the place on the bill – they now have the chance to play to 70,000 festival-goers at the city's Zilker Park in October. We spoke to frontman Matt Duncan and guitarist James Pyrah about winning the ultimate prize for a new band.

How does it feel to win?

Matt Duncan: "I'm absolutely over the moon! It's

a massive festival and a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. I was so shocked when I found out."

Will this be Moats' first time in America?

James Pyrah: "Yeah. Austin is one of the best cities for music in the world – its whole reputation is built on live music and we just can't wait to get out there."

Matt: "I went to Florida back in the day, but that was when I was a young boy going around Disneyland! I've never been to Texas, but it's always been a dream."

What will the Texas audience make of Moats?

Matt: "I watched a video of Swim Deep playing at SXSW and the audience were really into it. We're a bit like them, so

I hope we'll get a similar reaction."

AUSTIN CITY LIMITS

AUSTIN
LIVE MUSIC CAPITAL OF THE WORLD



Mad Skrills

Already the face – and sound – of EDM, Skrillex finally releases his debut album

Skrillex is tired – but you wouldn't know it from his buzzy conversation. "I haven't slept in four months because of the album, which must be some kind of record," he says. "But it's been worth it. You know, I never went to uni, I've never been in the army, so these are the moments when I get to push my limits to get the right result."

Over the past four years Skrillex has become the poster boy for America's EDM generation, the pioneer of a hard-edged sound and one of the world's biggest (and highest-paid) DJs. And all without releasing an album – until now. We find him the day after pulling a Beyoncé, streaming his debut full-length 'Recess' online. The only warning was a cryptic retro gaming app that fans could download, which on March 10 began revealing a new track every 30 minutes.

"None of my records have ever had marketing. They were all announced on the day, just like this one was," says the DJ, real name Sonny Moore. "I just wanted to get it out rather than have all the speculation that can come with albums. It was just like the making of the album: we created stuff in the moment rather than overthinking things."

"We" refers to the unexpected list of guests Skrillex roped in on his global travels to record parts of 'Recess'. A curveball compared to the usual rent-a-rappers, they include *NME* cover star Chance The Rapper ("He's an old friend, he used to sleep on my sofa when he came to LA"), indie boy turned hit songwriter Kid Harpoon, and even foghorn hip-hopper Fatman Scoop. Two guest spots go to veteran Hackney jungle MCs Ragga Twins, one of them on the album's opening track 'All Is Fair In Love And Brostep' – a reference to the wub-wub style of dance music Skrillex is known for. Is he denouncing the beast he created? "A lot of people don't get that track, but it's supposed to be fun," he explains. "The whole record is tongue-in-cheek; none of it is supposed to be taken seriously. But I'm not trying to move away from names. I welcome everybody to call me anything they want."



BREAK TIME: Skrillex's guide to 'Recess'

'All Is Fair In Love And Brostep' feat. Ragga Twins

"It takes classic dubstep to the next level. I don't think you can hate on it, because it's so tongue-in-cheek."

'Recess' feat. Kill The Noise, Fatman Scoop and Michael Angelakos (Passion Pit)

"With that line-up, none of it should make any sense, but I pulled it off. It's also laidback, too. It funks out."

'Stranger' feat. KillaGraham from Milo & Otis and Sam Dew

"I love ghetto house and Dirtybird Records, and this is me trying to mix my sound with their sorts of sound."

'Try It Out' (Neon Mix) feat. Alvin Risk

"This is the child in me. It doesn't

stick to one thing but it works like a journey. It's one of my personal favourites."

'Coast Is Clear' feat. Chance The Rapper and The Social Experiment

"It's got elegance but it's dirty and fun too, and the bassline is grimy. One for driving along the coast to a late-night party."

'Dirty Vibe' feat. Diplo, G-Dragon from Big Bang and CL from 2NE1

"It's the strangest track but it's infectious. It makes you want to dance but it's dissonant; Asian chords mixed with wobbles and 808 drums."

'Ragga Bomb' feat. Ragga Twins

"I didn't know what else to call it. It's all about that ragga vocal and the ragga vibe and the embedded jungle rhythm under it."

'Doompy Poomp'

"Doompy poomp wadoomp boompy poop scoopy swampy doomp puppy wuppy. You can quote me on that. There are no words to describe that song."

'Fuck That'

"Yeah, fuck that! It's kinda breakbeaty and has these house synths and old-school dubstep sounds. It has a Skream-in-2004 feeling to it at the end."

'Ease My Mind' feat. Niki & The Dove

"It's so anthemic; I love how emotional Niki is. There's so much dramatic passion coming from the dance scene at the moment."

'Fire Away' feat. Kid Harpoon

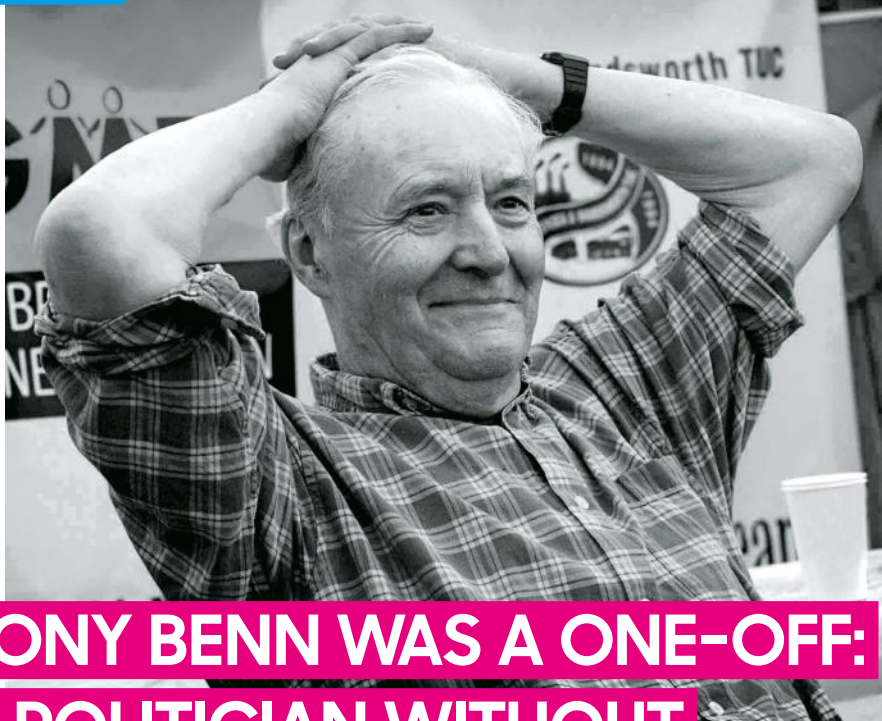
"You can interpret the lyrics in so many ways, but it's something simple that you can put on and be nostalgic for good times."

Skrillex is the ultimate Marmite musician, blamed by forum bores for 'ruining dubstep' ever since his breakthrough EP, 'My Name Is Skrillex', in 2010. But now he's also a six-time Grammy-winning artist who has worked on major film soundtracks including Harmony Korine's frat-party flick *Spring Breakers* and has appeared as a Disney character in 2012's *Wreck-It Ralph*. In a few minutes, he's heading off to a meeting with another big-shot Hollywood director, who for now must remain nameless.

Is his life just like a non-stop spring-break party, too? "I'm still the same guy. I skateboard

a couple blocks from my house to get coffee every day," he says. "I don't buy Bugattis or go to bottle-service clubs just to feel cool." He's too busy running his label, OWSLA, and planning the laser-blazing stage show for his next Mothership Tour in May. It's there that he'll judge the success of 'Recess'. "A couple of my tracks, like the Chance The Rapper song, got like 80,000 hits in a week. By the next day, kids were already singing along. So that's the measure of my success: if everyone is singing along and having a good time, that's dope. Record sales are trivial to me." ■ KATE HUTCHINSON

Tony Benn, who died on March 14 aged 88, was a regular speaker at Glastonbury Festival, last appearing in 2013



TONY BENN WAS A ONE-OFF: A POLITICIAN WITHOUT THE BULLSHIT

BY **DAVE HARPER**,
FRANKIE & THE HEARTSTRINGS

For musicians of a certain stripe, the late Tony Benn was the only politician that counted. Drummer Dave Harper tells us why



In his tribute to the former Labour MP, who died last week, David Cameron described Tony Benn as “a great speaker and campaigner”. Thanks, Dave, I’m sure his family are delighted. That’s like describing Lionel Messi as “a man with feet who owned a football for a bit”.

Growing up in a pit village chisels away at your tolerance for bullshit and leaves you as a hardened filter for nonsense, and for things that are none of your business. As a child in the north-east, I couldn’t understand the language of politicians. The noises they made to form sentences were just a low throaty hum before the sports news to me. Tony Benn became a clear and direct antidote to this.

As a teenager I heard him speak at the Durham Miners Gala. He spoke with a tone that smashed home every word and allowed even idiots like me an opportunity to unravel what had previously been nothing but a distant fug of garbled shite from the telly. Tony Benn was the exception to the rule that politicians only talk in double speak. I’d been raised to believe that Margaret Thatcher was a figure to be hated, a bogeyman who wore suits and stole milk. Listening to and reading Tony Benn’s words made me aware of why my family and friends thought this way. He taught me what community was, and that society was not a myth and shall not be hushed by a cloud of what he saw, quite rightly, as utter nonsense. He remained a thorn in the side of ambivalence, conjecture and greed throughout his political career.

Tony Benn was mocked savagely by an unrelenting British media for his ‘outlandish’ and ‘wild’ sweeping socialist ideals. The sheer weight of propaganda regarding his anti-war stance alone was designed to discredit a man who simply did not believe in what he saw as an unjust, misguided and dishonest action.

It makes horrible sense that media outlets and politicians alike would be threatened by honesty, intelligence and integrity.

He was a man born of blue blood who renounced his peerage to devote his life to standing for the rights of society and the value of human beings. While others were bent and broken by a tyranny of bastards climbing ladders they saw as their birthright, his morals and ethics remained laser guided to the end.

They say history is written by the victors. While this is undoubtedly true, it is occasionally questioned by the righteous, who will not and cannot be silenced; people who know their enemy, heed their threats and fight back for the purest of reasons. For me, Tony Benn was the last bastion of bravery in politics, championing integrity in people regardless of standing, geography and perception. As upset as I am at his passing, I remain galvanised by his life’s work. And I’m terrified we may never see another like him. ■

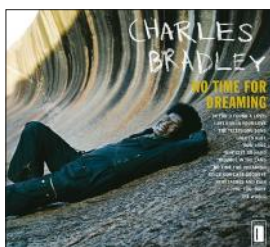
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LOST ALBUMS

#21

Charles Bradley **No Time For Dreaming** (2011)

Chosen by Shane Meadows, film director



“He’s an American soul singer who was a James Brown impersonator from the age of 14. Then, after many years of doing that for a living, he got a record contract of his own at 62. It feels like it could have been recorded in the ‘60s; it doesn’t feel like a modern rip-off of anything from the past. I went to watch him play recently and I’m listening to it every day. I think it’s one of the great soul records of all time and it’s been made by a man who got a record deal at retirement age. There’s a message there – don’t give up!”



► THE DETAILS

- **RELEASE DATE**
January 25, 2011
- **LABEL** Dunham Records
- **BEST TRACKS** ‘Lovin’ You, Baby’, ‘Why Is It So Hard?’ and ‘The World (Is Going Up In Flames)’
- **WHERE TO FIND IT** On CD and vinyl at all good record shops
- **LISTEN ONLINE** On Spotify

The Birmingham boys aren't for hanging around – not when there's rapping, bass solos and a song about Bitcoin to record

Harry Koisser in London's Dean Street Studios, March 6, 2014



Peace

Almost exactly one year ago to the day, Peace released their debut album 'In Love', an accomplished and infectious ode to romance. Where other bands would promise a quick follow-up and then find they didn't have the tunes to make it happen, the Birmingham group avoided setting themselves up for failure and just quietly got on with it.

"I thought we were doing our second album a bit quickly, but not *unusually* quickly," says frontman Harry Koisser at the end of a long day at London's Dean Street Studios with bassist Sam Koisser, guitarist Doug Castle and drummer Dom Boyce. Judging by the empty cans strewn around the place, they seem to be entirely fuelled by Fanta. "I think what you need to do is either make a second album very quickly or take, like, four years," continues Harry. "If you start making it after a year it's, like, snore alert! It seemed like the right thing to do. It still does."

If you're expecting Peace to come back with another record of lovestruck, psych-tinged pop like their first, think again. Harry is vague about the topics the album deals with (it's "broader" and "about all

kinds of things" are his unspecific clues), but he does admit that his lyrics are "a lot more thought through" this time around. "I don't know if it's a thing with age or becoming obsessed with writing songs, but I used to write something and be like, 'Well, that's come out my brain so that's great, that'll do,'" he confesses. "Now it's like, 'Wait – no. Let's refine it.'"

The band's big 'comeback' single, the Bowie-inspired, '70s rock-style 'Money', finds the singer asking "Money, do you need it?" while referencing digital currency Bitcoin. An attempt to capture the zeitgeist? "I wasn't searching for a relevant reference, it just came out when I was writing," Harry says, shrugging. "I wasn't like, 'Oh, I gotta write about something current,' otherwise I'd talk about horsemeat. Which isn't on the album, unfortunately."

Elsewhere on the as yet untitled record, the quartet make use of fuzzy funk grooves and Bee Gees-style falsetto ('Lost On Me'), and Harry even tries his hand at rapping on the track mooted to close the album, 'World Pleasure'. The band play it through the studio PA; it somehow avoids being a car crash and instead nails the nonchalant cool

of Blondie's 'Rapture'. "There's another one that's got that sort of vibe," says Harry afterwards. "We recorded the first half ages ago and then we were like, 'Well, what are we going to do with this?' because it was two minutes long. Then we were like, 'Bass solo!'"

▶ THE DETAILS

- ▶ **TITLE** TBC
- ▶ **RELEASE DATE** TBC
- ▶ **PRODUCER** Jim Abbiss
- ▶ **RECORDED** Dean Street Studios, London
- ▶ **TRACKS INCLUDE** Money, Lost On Me, World Pleasure
- ▶ **HARRY KOISSER SAYS** "All of the songs came together quite fast. But it feels like it's been longer in the making than our first album, which is quite confusing."

Peace say they're feeling confident about the album, produced by first-album collaborator Jim Abbiss, and have enjoyed what seemed like the luxury of time to make it, despite the speedy turnaround. They've even had time to upload content to a specially made website in order to share the process with fans. Dom snaps photos for the blog on a disposable camera during NME's visit.

"The first album was a complete blag," jokes Harry. "The cliché says you have your whole life to write your first album and a few months to write your second. That wasn't true for us. Most of the first record was written when our manager was like, 'There's a label who want to hear some more demos – we've told them you have eight more.' We didn't have all our lives to write the first record, so this has been quite nice. Seems like a debut album, really – how you *should* do a debut album." ■ RHIAN DALY

"YOU NEED TO MAKE A SECOND ALBUM VERY QUICKLY OR TAKE, LIKE, FOUR YEARS"
HARRY KOISSER



ANATOMY OF AN ALBUM

"IT'S THE BEST THING I'VE DONE"
Elton John



THIS WEEK...

Elton John: Goodbye Yellow Brick Road

The 1973 double album – sumptuously reissued this week – captures Elton and lyricist Bernie Taupin on a career high

THE BACKGROUND

By 1973, the partnership between Elton John and lyricist Bernie Taupin was yielding success on both sides of the Atlantic. Elton's contract with MCA Records stipulated a punishing schedule of two albums a year, yet the prolific singer-songwriter chose to follow 'Don't Shoot Me I'm Only The Piano Player' with a double album. Mainly recorded at Château d'Hérouville (the 'Honky Château' Elton had made famous in 1972) near Paris, its embarrassment of riches included US million-selling single 'Bennie And The Jets', the windmilling 'Saturday Night's Alright For Fighting' and the hymn to Marilyn Monroe, 'Candle In The Wind', later repurposed for another tragic icon.

STORY BEHIND THE SLEEVE

Illustrator Ian Beck was chosen for the sleeve thanks to his work on Irish singer-songwriter Jonathan Kelly's 'Wait Till They Change The Backdrop'. Elton's Rocket Record Company were so smitten that they originally wanted to use the same picture. Elton looks so long-legged because Beck asked his taller friend Leslie McKinley Howell to pose for the framing shots.

FIVE FACTS

1 Recording kicked off in an exotic location. "I said, 'The Rolling Stones have just done 'Goats Head Soup' in Jamaica; let's go there,'" Elton recalled. It didn't work out – only 'Saturday Night's Alright For Fighting' was recorded there, and that version didn't make the album.

2 A working title for the album was 'Vodka And Tonics' from a line in the title track – "It'll take you a couple of vodka and tonics/To set you on your feet again". Another mooted title was 'Silent Movies, Talking Pictures'.

3 Marilyn Monroe's name was just a peg in 'Candle In The Wind' for a song about misunderstanding. "It could have been about James Dean," Elton said.

4 The intro to 'Funeral For A Friend' was recorded by synth player and engineer David Hentschel. Elton didn't even hear it until it was finished.

5 The applause on 'Bennie And The Jets' was mainly a sample of the audience at Jimi Hendrix's gig at the Isle Of Wight Festival in 1970.

LYRIC ANALYSIS

"Tender young Alice they say/If I give you my number/Will you promise to call me/Wait 'til my husband's away" – 'All The Girls Love Alice'

Bernie Taupin's lyrical breadth resulted in perhaps the first mainstream song to celebrate lesbianism.

"When are you gonna come down?/When are you going to land?/I should have stayed on the farm" – 'Goodbye Yellow Brick Road'

There was no concept to the album – "It just came out like that," said Elton – and the title track addresses Taupin's nervousness on arriving in the big city, not Dorothy's adventures in Oz.

WHAT WE SAID THEN

"'Honky Château', 'Don't Shoot Me I'm Only The Piano Player' and 'Goodbye Yellow Brick Road' are three of the best albums of this decade, and any suspicions that Elton John was a wimp have by now been thoroughly dispelled." Charles Shaar Murray, NME, January 26, 1974

WHAT WE SAY NOW

Produced with extraordinary clarity by Gus Dudgeon,

'Goodbye Yellow Brick Road' is an early-'70s album that's remained plush. It misfires on Nashville pastiche 'Roy Rogers', but the four singles capture Elton and Bernie's genius like lightning in a bottle.

FAMOUS FAN

"I thought he was fantastic, I thought he was so clever... I'd play the records and dream of being able to play like him, those fantastic hands." Kate Bush, 1993

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"I think it's the best thing I've done. I know it's boring when people say that, but as far as an achievement goes, I really dig it." Elton John, 1973

THE AFTERMATH

Before the end of the year, Elton had released another album, 'Caribou', and festive standard 'Step Into Christmas', although he had to wait another three years for his first UK Number One single (the Kiki Dee duet 'Don't Go Breaking My Heart'). One '...Yellow Brick Road' track took on a new life in 1997 when a retooled 'Candle In The Wind' became 1997's Princess Diana tribute 'Candle In The Wind '97' – the best-selling single of all time.

THE DETAILS

►RECORDED May 1973 ►RELEASE DATE October 5, 1973 ►LENGTH 76:20 ►PRODUCER Gus Dudgeon ►STUDIO Château d'Hérouville, France; Trident Studios, London ►HIGHEST UK CHART POSITION 1 ►WORLDWIDE SALES 31m+ ►SINGLES Saturday Night's Alright For Fighting, Goodbye Yellow Brick Road, Candle In The Wind, Bennie And The Jets ►TRACKLISTING ►1. Funeral For A Friend/Love Lies Bleeding ►2. Candle In The Wind ►3. Bennie And The Jets ►4. Goodbye Yellow Brick Road ►5. This Song Has No Title ►6. Grey Seal ►7. Jamaica Jerk-Off ►8. I've Seen That Movie Too ►9. Sweet Painted Lady ►10. The Ballad Of Danny Bailey (1909-34) ►11. Dirty Little Girl ►12. All The Girls Love Alice ►13. Your Sister Can't Twist (But She Can Rock 'n' Roll) ►14. Saturday Night's Alright For Fighting ►15. Roy Rogers ►16. Social Disease ►17. Harmony

NEWS DESK



THE NUMBERS

6

Hours a day André 3000 practised guitar left-handed to play Jimi Hendrix in new film *All Is By My Side*

2019

Year up to which Nick Grimshaw's Radio 1 contract has been extended

£300K

Cost of damage done to Ozzy Osbourne's Buckinghamshire home in the winter floods

10

Length, in years, of the licence granted to Glastonbury Festival. It's safe until 2024

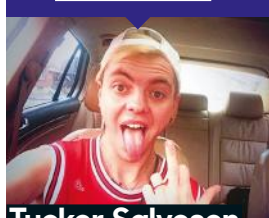
BIG MOUTH

"What you've heard so far, yes. All I can do is do my best – the labels and the radio stations won't play the better stuff"

LILY ALLEN replies to a fan writing off her new material as "docile pop rubbish"



WHO THE FUCK IS...



Tucker Salvensen

This is the 18-year-old Miley Cyrus fan who snuck backstage at a recent concert on the 'Bangerz' tour. He left the pop superstar a handwritten note, tweeting pictures of his trespassing as he went.

So not the most covert criminal then?

No – he was caught in the act and arrested on the spot, causing him to miss the gig at the CenturyLink Center in Omaha, Nebraska.

What a disaster!

Don't worry, Salvensen has already bought tickets to another date and maintains it's his goal to meet the singer.

GOOD WEEK ↔ BAD WEEK



West Akron Baseball League

Last year, The Black Keys sponsored a team in the West Akron Baseball League. This year, they're helping fund the whole thing. Profits from a new shirt will go to the league.



Bath Moles

The gig venue was forced to close its doors until August following a fire that left the building damaged by smoke and water. The Moles team say, "We're going to do anything we can to survive this setback."

AND FINALLY

Burritoh-no-you-didn't Frank Ocean responded to the threat of legal action from the Chipotle chain by sending them a cheque for the full disputed \$200,000 fee – and the words 'Fuck Off' written on it.

JK Rolling Keith Richards will release a children's book, *Gus & Me: The Story Of My Granddad And My First Guitar*, this year. We look forward to the follow-up, *The Story Of My Dad And His Ashes*.

All the teen ladies Fox News pundit Bill O'Reilly said Beyoncé's 'Partition' video could cause unwanted teen pregnancies as it "glorifies having sex in the back of a limousine". Better than a Fiat Punto.

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THE BIG QUESTION

CAN NEIL YOUNG'S HIGH-DEFINITION PONOPLAYER TOPPLE THE IPOD?



Dylan Baldi
Cloud Nothings
"I'm on board with anything Neil Young does. So if he thinks it's a good idea, sign me up, put my band on there, whatever. Because, Neil, I love you, man."



Leonie Cooper
NME writer
"I was at Neil Young's Pono launch at SXSW and was swept away by the whole idea – digital that sounds like vinyl? Yes please. My only concern is that the device looks a bit like a Toblerone."



Christian Brown
NME reader
"The idea of enhanced quality is very appealing but most casual listeners won't be fussed about that. I care a lot for sound, but I still won't be ditching my iPod."

Official RECORD STORE Chart

TOP 40 ALBUMS MARCH 15, 2014



NEW
01

Metronomy Love Letters

After the success of 'The English Riviera' in 2011, Joe Mount returns with an altogether more insular but just as impressive record in 'Love Letters'. The leftfield pop hero scores another victory this week as he takes his rightful place at the top of the chart.

NEW 2	The Take Off And Landing Of Everything	Elbow	FICTION
NEW 3	Lost Forever/Lost Together	Architects	EPITAPH
NEW 4	No Strings Attached	Room 94	SHIPWRECK
NEW 5	New Gods	Withered Hand	FORTUNA POP
NEW 6	Sweet Disarray	Dan Croll	DERAM
7	Morning Phase	Beck	EMI
8	G I R L	Pharrell Williams	COLUMBIA
NEW 9	A Perfect Contradiction	Paloma Faith	RCA
NEW 10	The Classic	Joan As Police Woman	PLAY IT AGAIN SAM
11	Atlas	Real Estate	DOMINO
12	Present Tense	Wild Beasts	DOMINO
13	Sun Structures	Temples	HEAVENLY
14	If You Wait	London Grammar	METAL & DUST
15	AM	Arctic Monkeys	DOMINO
16	So Long, See You Tomorrow	Bombay Bicycle Club	ISLAND
17	Eagulls	Eagulls	PARTISAN
18	English Oceans	Drive-By Truckers	ATO
19	St Vincent	St Vincent	LOMA VISTA
NEW 20	Symphonica	George Michael	EMI
NEW 21	Young Animal Hearts	Spring Offensive	SPRING OFFENSIVE
22	Bad Blood	Bastille	VIRGIN
23	Warpaint	Warpaint	ROUGH TRADE
24	Settle	Disclosure	PMR
25	Man On The Rocks	Mike Oldfield	MERCURY
26	Burn Your Fire For No Witness	Angel Olsen	JAGJAGUWAR
NEW 27	The Soul Of The Hour	Gallon Drunk	CLOUDS HILL
28	After The Disco	Broken Bells	COLUMBIA
NEW 29	You Can Do Better	Johnny Foreigner	ALCOPOP
30	Pale Green Ghosts	John Grant	BELLA UNION
NEW 31	Ooh La La – An Island Harvest	Ronnie Lane & Slim Chance	ISLAND
32	Days Are Gone	Haim	POLYDOR
NEW 33	Love In The Future	John Legend	COLUMBIA
NEW 34	No Mythologies To Follow	MØ	RCA VICTOR
35	Blank Project	Neneh Cherry	Smalltown Supersound
NEW 36	Micah P Hinson And The Nothing	Micah P Hinson	TALITRES
NEW 37	Dean Wareham	Dean Wareham	SONIC CATHEDRAL
38	Rave Tapes	Mogwai	ROCK ACTION
NEW 39	Timeless	Dr Hook	UMTV
40	Halcyon	Ellie Goulding	POLYDOR

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 DERRICKS MUSIC SWANSEA

FOUNDED 1956

WHY IT'S GREAT Derricks are still at the heart of Swansea's music scene 58 years after opening.

TOP SELLER THIS WEEK Matt Schofield – 'Far As I Can See'
THEY SAY "We have a great prog, blues and West Coast selection in the shop."

SOUNDTRACK OF MY LIFE



Take That



Captain
Beefheart



Tom Fleming

Wild Beasts
co-frontman

THE FIRST SONG I REMEMBER HEARING 'A Kind of Magic' - Queen

"As a kid I remember really, really loving that song. I don't know what it was about, it just has that really glossy '80s production. It sounds really spacious and almost like Disney – maybe that's what it was. I'm from a musical family, so I'd only really heard instruments before then; my parents didn't really play records. It opened doors for me."

THE FIRST SONG I FELL IN LOVE WITH 'Come As You Are' - Nirvana

"It's not very cool, it's very obvious, but it was probably 'Come As You Are'. It's that guitar riff and how catchy it is. It has that kind of 'fuck you' arrogance that I remember liking. At the time I liked Oasis and Nirvana equally, and then I progressed to music that got heavier and heavier until I reached a point when

I realised I wasn't really enjoying it any more. I maxed out around Tool, I think."

THE FIRST ALBUM I EVER BOUGHT 'Take That And Party' - Take That

"I'd love to say it was something different, but

"TAKE THAT AND PARTY" IS AN ALBUM TOTALLY FULL OF BANGERS"

I bought 'Take That And Party' on cassette when I was 10 from a Toys R Us store. It's totally full of bangers, that album. They're just really good, cynical pop songs. I think you have a really skewed idea of what masculinity is when you're a kid – you have WWF wrestling and then Take That all greased up and you just think, 'That's what grown-ups look like, yeah?'"

THE SONG THAT MADE ME WANT TO BE IN A BAND 'Frownland' - Captain Beefheart

"I remember first hearing Captain Beefheart's 'Frownland' [from 1969's 'Trout Mask Replica'] and just going, 'FUCKING HELL!' That was the moment when I was in for life. At the time there was a lot of music that was really popular but I wasn't really into it, whereas this made me realise that there was a big, big world out there and a lot of cool stuff. That song would have been made 25 or 30 years previous to when I heard it for the first time, but it still blew my mind."

THE SONG I CAN NO LONGER LISTEN TO 'Sawdust And Diamonds' - Joanna Newsom

"It's a love song. It comes over really cutesy and then kicks you in the stomach. I was very, very into her a few years ago, and this song captures a point of very early manhood. She's really good at making you think

It marries really intense lyrics with an amazing beat and this synth explosion. I defy anyone to stand on the wall when that's playing."

THE SONG I DO AT KARAOKE 'Never Gonna Give You Up' - Rick Astley

"The problem with being a singer when you're doing karaoke is that it's very hard to navigate, socially. There's lots to consider. Do you do it properly? Do you back off a bit? It's tricky. I do a good 'Ring Of Fire', but for someone who's a little guy with a big voice then it's surely gotta be Rick Astley. I do a mean Rick Astley."

THE SONG I WISH I'D WRITTEN 'My Sister Said' - Angels Of Light

"Michael Gira from Swans has a side project called Angels Of Light and I just love their stuff. This is a breathtaking song; it's brutally simple and it's crushing. It has so much emotional weight while saying very little but being really catchy. It's essentially him with an acoustic guitar. It's really sparse, but it's absolutely gorgeous."

THE SONG I WANT PLAYED AT MY FUNERAL 'Changes' - David Bowie

"I definitely want something cheery – I want all the people there at my funeral to be laughing. I think 'Changes' is appropriate – it's cheery without being Paul McCartney with his thumbs in the air. And it's appropriate. Funerals are about change. Everyone dies. So what? 'Time may change me, but I can't trace time'... that's kind of perfect really."

THE SONG THAT MAKES ME WANT TO DANCE 'I Would Die 4 U' - Prince

"I love that it kicks straight in and happens all of a sudden.

you understand and then suddenly showing you that you don't. It's a wonderful song, but it puts you back in a place which can be really good... but not all the time."



Freddie
Mercury

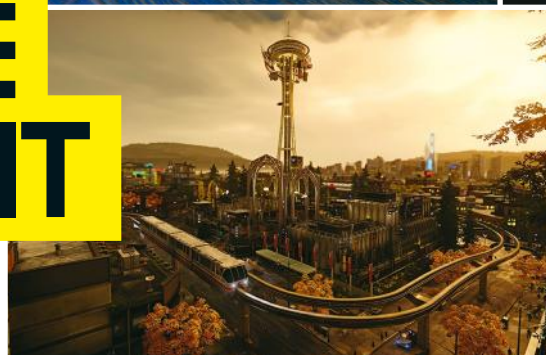


Hijack the powers of other superhumans as Delsin Rowe, in *inFAMOUS Second Son*'s brand-new antihero

Mark Arm of Mudhoney; (left) Seattle's Space Needle

PLAYS LIKE TEEN SPIRIT

inFAMOUS Second Son – available exclusively on the PS4 – is released this week, throwing you into the action on the virtual streets of Seattle via an evocative grunge soundtrack



Music is a vital part of video games, from building up tension through dramatic original scores to injecting storylines with new life using some of your favourite songs. *inFAMOUS Second Son*, available exclusively on PS4 from Friday, March 21, does just that. And for the first time, it uses a real-world location, taking players back to the grassroots of Seattle's grunge scene.

Two of the city's most legendary songs have been amping up excitement for the game's release. 'Touch Me I'm Sick' by Mudhoney and LA band Dead Sara's cover of Nirvana's 'Heart-Shaped Box' have both featured in trailers for the open-world action-adventure game, submerging players in the atmosphere of the Emerald City's iconic music scene.

inFAMOUS Second Son allows you to explore a completely open-world city as superhuman Delsin Rowe, a new protagonist and antihero, who discovers his ability to hijack the powers of others. Using these powers, you'll be able to soar across the Seattle skyline and scale landmarks such as the Space Needle, where Mudhoney recently broke the world record for the highest-ever gig.



Absorb neon from the environment and utilise it as one of your many superpowers

WIN!

► Head to NME.COM/win now to get your hands on a PS4 console signed by Peace (left). *inFAMOUS Second Son* on PS4 supported the Best Album category at this year's NME Awards with Austin, Texas. The Birmingham band were nominated for their debut album, 'In Love', and were on hand at the ceremony to reveal their love for the *inFAMOUS* series. "I got the first one as a download a couple of years ago," said bassist Sam Koisser. "[*inFAMOUS Second Son*] looks great!"



Rad ar

▶ YOU HEARD IT HERE FIRST ■ EDITED BY MATT WILKINSON

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NME
NEW
BAND
OF THE WEEK



Slaves

Two sweet and tender hooligans
create *the* sound of new British punk

Kent duo Slaves are far from your typical major label band. For starters, they make unrelenting, shouty punk that crosses Crass with Refused while keeping its tongue firmly in its cheek. Recent single 'Where's Your Car Debbie?' takes their songwriting down a surreal path, tackling the pair's fear of bumping into Bigfoot in their local woods while searching for a friend's motor. Their self-released 2012 debut album 'Sugar Coated Bitter Truth' contains the 15-second 'Girl Fight', which ends with the line, "I'm not gonna get too close/My shoes are new, my shirt is white".

That unconventional spirit doesn't just stay locked in their songs. At their live shows, Isaac Holman pulverises a pair of drums, bashing away standing up rather than from the comfort of a stool, and often with his top off.

"He can't play a real drumkit," admits guitarist Laurie Vincent. "We didn't have anyone to play drums so he

started to do that when we were writing songs, just to keep a beat. Then we never found any extra members so we decided that was that."

Not that they need anyone else – they're doing pretty well as just the two of them. The ink is still wet on their brand new deal with Virgin EMI and they've already written 10 tracks for their first album on the label. "We might keep writing until Christmas, who knows?" says Laurie. "It's so important to us to come out with a statement of intent."

While they cite local heroes such as Billy Childish as part of their musical education, it's bands from further afield who had the biggest impact on the duo. "There's this album that Isaac's dad played me called 'Introducing The Sounds Of The Husbands'," Laurie explains.

"They were this all-female garage rock band from America in the early 2000s. No-one really knows about them but my first ideas for my guitar sound came from that."

Slaves might have similar cult status right now, but come the release of their major-label debut – before the festive season or after – they will be recognised as *the* sound of modern British punk. ■ KEVIN EG PERRY

ON
NME.COM/
NEWMUSIC
NOW

▶ A video interview
with the band
at SXSW in
Austin, Texas

▶ THE DETAILS

▶ **BASED** Maidstone, Kent

▶ **FOR FANS OF** Future Of The Left, Crass

▶ **LISTEN NOW** Latest single 'Where's Your Car Debbie?' is out now

▶ **SEE THEM LIVE** Guildford Boileroom (April 21), Birmingham O2 Academy 2 (April 24), London Electric Ballroom (April 30)

▶ **BELIEVE IT OR NOT** The band are big Robbie Williams fans. Isaac's favourite song is 'Candy', but Laurie prefers 'Feel'. Laurie adds: "I'd like to have a beer with him, he seems like a genuinely lovely bloke"

Turn the page
for more great
new music

MORE NEW MUSIC

Matthew Klint

Smashing Pumpkins' Billy Corgan once described himself as "part-alien, part-human, part-robot, part-star-crossed lover, and part-mercury filled". Matthew Klint is at least three of these things.

A one-man band formed of himself and his laptop, Klint's nostalgia goggles gaze romantically back to the '90s, with cutely clichéd lyrics channelling pretty, grunge-flavoured pop. He isn't quite Corgan's extraterrestrial thermometer yet, but he's got plenty of time to orbit.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/matthewklintmusic

► **HEAR HIM** soundcloud.com/matthewklint

Fruit Tones

Highlighted as part of NME's recent feature on Manchester's DIY music scene, scrappy surf-rockers Fruit Tones have only reaffirmed their appeal with the recent release of a split EP with Glaswegians Deathcats. Like a fruitier version of Black Lips, they leave a long and colourful trail of ramshackle riffs behind them.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/fruittones

► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/fruit-tones

The Diamond Age

This twee two-piece compare themselves to

The Drums, The Shins and Elvis Costello, and they are every bit as sweet as those three squeezed into a glass of Wham!'s 'Club Tropicana'. Bright, catchy and totally convincing, The Diamond Age boast both charm and charisma, and they'll capture your heart with their sugary indie pop.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/thediamondageuk

► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/the-diamond-age

► **SEE THEM LIVE** Brighton The Great Escape Festival (May 10)

Acrobat

Groovy, angular four-piece Acrobat skip into the spotlight with a track that sounds like Franz Ferdinand pulling shapes



MO

at the disco. Debut single 'Invincible' is the 1980s new-wave dream, with a funky bassline and a "la la la" refrain that would make Kaiser Chiefs' Ricky Wilson sprout another batch of pubescent stubble. It's all four-to-the-floor beats and open hi-hats – perfect for you to get your freak on to.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/acrobatHQ

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

NME BUZZ BAND OF THE WEEK

Kill J

Chess Club's latest acquisition is one of extra-dimensional electronics and skewed Vulcan haircuts, robot-child voice loops and faceless mystery. Choppy production on the Diplo-esque debut single 'Bullet' is strewn with submarine beeps and blasts of a suspiciously klaxon-esque instrument, but a hypnotising Scandinavian vocal is the weapon that fires the most for this silver- and blonde-haired Danish duo.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/killjkill

► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/killj



Kill J

MO

Another trio of London girls with their sights set on bringing back '90s R&B, MO (or Modus Operandi in full) are less hipster than Juce, but equally infectious. Annie, Nadine and Frankee have gone from filming sessions for SB.TV to working with producer of the moment Gorgon City and underground dance favourite Two Inch Punch. Expect big things in the near future.

► **SOCIAL** @MoMusic

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

William Alexander

This humble Californian songwriter is as sweet as they come. His "melancholy bedroom pop" is as soft as a pillow, with hushed vocals pouring over golden,

guitar-led fantasies. His self-released album 'Girls Basketball' (the first since ditching his The Meanest Boys moniker) features eight tracks like fluffy hugs and whispered sweet nothings, as buoyant as a floating ship rocking across the sunshine state.

► **HEAR HIM** williamalexander.bandcamp.com

Les Big Byrd

These Swedish psychedelic rockers made a pilgrimage to Berlin earlier this year to visit The Brian Jonestown Massacre's psych-revivalist leader Anton Newcombe, returning with two tracks produced by him. They both feature on the band's wild pop EP 'Back To Bagarmossen', while an eight-and-a-half minute

BAND CRUSH

Alex Bleeker



Free Time

"They're based in Brooklyn but the lead songwriter is from Australia. He used to play in a band over there called Panel Of Judges. They're got this jangly, Flying Nun kind of sound, but if that type of band was fronted by Lou Reed. They're really great."

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Kaytranada



cover of Ealing psych-rockers July's 1968 track 'Dandelion Seeds' takes a supercharged look back at the 'Nuggets' era.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/lesbigbyrd

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

► **SEE THEM LIVE** Liverpool Psych Fest (September 26–27)

Jr Sea

Next month, Jr Sea will release 'Learning To Vanish', a limited-edition

cassette featuring eight tracks of his best material via Tough Love (Cymbals, Big Ups). The release features key track 'I'm Hungry', which showcases the fuzzy pop with big dreams Jr Sea do so well.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/jrsea

► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/jrsea

Kaytranada

Kaytranada has already caught the attention of Disclosure with his soulful take on house and R&B remixes, and now the brothers Lawrence have invited him to join them on a number of summer dates. A recent trip to London saw the Montreal resident packing dancefloors and treating the masses to his take on classics by Janet Jackson as well as his breakout tune 'At All'.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/kaytranada

► **HEAR HIM** soundcloud.com/kaytranada

Golden Teacher

Glasgow band Golden Teacher got their break after recording an EP through a scheme for unemployed musicians. Now releasing music through Optimo, the four-piece's new song 'Party People' shows off LCD Soundsystem's knack of putting the punk ethos through an electronic filter.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/goldenteacher

► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/optimo-music/optimo-music-023-golden

Ibeyi

French duo Lisa-Kaindé & Naomi have been drawing attention from UK labels with their soulful and heartfelt late-night burners. The spirit of Adele and Amy Winehouse is invoked on the jazzy 'Mama Says', while live footage offers a further taste of what's to come.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/ibeyimusic

► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/ibeyi

NEW SOUNDS FROM WAY OUT

This week's columnist

COURTNEY BARNETT



MUSIC FOR AIRPORTS

Beaches are five babes from Melbourne. I bought their album 'She Beats' on blind recommendation from my friends at Record Paradise and couldn't – still can't – stop listening to it. It's a sonic masterpiece. I forget what I'm doing when I listen to it. I've lost days of my life listening to it. I like the wooziness, the understated riffs, the patience, the warped, psychy, surfy, sordid summertime overdrive vibes. It's all good.

One of my favourite albums last year was 'The Bright Door' by **Machine Translations**. I went to J Walker's home studio the other day. He'd just bought three old pianos for real cheap and pulled them apart. He took the hair from a violin bow, handed me one end, and we played a discordant chord of strings, like when two woodchoppers use one of those wobbly cross-cut saws to chop down a tree. Then he pulled out two tiny hammers and softly banged on the strings like an angelic little xylophone skeleton harp. This sort of experimentation with sound and instrumentation is what makes MT so interesting to listen to over and over.

DZ Deathrays are a two-piece from Brisbane.

They've got a new album coming out called 'Black Rat' and they're touring the UK in April. The first song off it, 'Gina Works At Hearts', is cool. I heard about it 'cos my friend Celeste Potter has done all their new artwork. CP is a total genius artist legend. Sometimes she paints using her own blood. She's also a killer guitarist and frontwoman in a punk project called **Ouch My Face** with Ben from Regurgitator and they just started a new album.

Talking about art, there's a rad Melbourne punk band called **High Tension** and they released a song called 'Collingwood', with an animated video clip made in MS Paint by Sarah Thompson. Thomo did a whole exhibition of Melbourne musician portraits in MS Paint and

it should've won some sort of award.

I just listened to 'Embracism' by **Kirin J Callinan** really loud on headphones at the airport. It's sorta sexual, violent, confrontational, beautiful, heavy and sometimes a little dark-style Springsteen-esque. I saw him perform recently; his voice was distorted like a demon and his half-naked body was surrounded by a semi-circle of surreal pedals. He is so terrifying onstage, but he was super-lovely when I met him after.



Kirin J Callinan

"His half-naked body was surrounded by surreal pedals"

Next week: Thom from Alt-J

Radar LABEL OF THE WEEK

Kanine



► **FOUNDED** 2002 by Lio and Kay Cerezo

► **BASED** New York

► **KEY RELEASES** Grizzly

Bear – Horn Of Plenty (2004), Chairlift – Something (2012), Splashh – Comfort (2013), Fear Of Men – Loom (2014)

► **RADAR SAYS** Husband and wife Lio and Kay started the label after releasing a compilation of up-and-coming New York bands in 2002. Since then they've helped Grizzly Bear, Surfer Blood and Chairlift get their starts, quitting their day jobs to concentrate on giving even more bands a leg-up.

More new music on page 25 ➡

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NME

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

It was pretty wild..."

SPECIAL

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Nirvana

The early years



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Featuring

- The full story of Kurt's epic rise
- The birth of grunge
- The origins of Dave Grohl
- Kurt's biggest influences explored
- The legend of Sub Pop
- The underrated genius of 'Bleach'

Saint Pepsi

Saint Pepsi's blend of blissed-out synths and hip-hop beats combine perfectly on the recently released 'Gin City' EP. Free to download, the five-track collection includes standout tracks 'Mr Wonderful' and 'Walking Talking'.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/drinkyoung

► **HEAR HIM** soundcloud.com/saintpepsi

Green Dreams

Perfect Pussy singer Meredith Graves recently gave Green Dreams a shout-out, praising their "lyrics about cats, witchcraft and beating up boys that say nasty fucking things about you at shows". The band share a DIY ethos with Graves and are not afraid to show their teeth.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/greendreamsband

► **HEAR THEM** greendreams.bandcamp.com



Lucius

Posse

Posse are catching people's attention with their debut album 'Soft Opening', which is available on import now. Lead singer Sacha provides vocals on the band's Velvet Underground-esque songs and also runs Posse's Bad Head label from her living room. A trip to the UK is being mooted, with the frontwoman telling *NME* she's keen to visit tourist hotspot Godalming in Surrey, where she once holidayed as a child.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/posseband

► **HEAR THEM** posseposse.bandcamp.com

Lucius

Jess Wolfe and Holly Laessig have earned themselves comparisons to Arcade Fire, but their debut album 'Wildewoman' takes as much influence from the '60s girl-pop of The Shangri-Las as it does Win Butler and co. Already released in their native US, it's quickly made them hot property, selling out the likes of New York's Bowery Ballroom two nights on the trot. They'll make their way to the UK for a handful of dates next month.

► **SOCIAL** @ilovelucius

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

Movie

Movie are yet another band hiding their identities, but their debut track 'Mr Fist' is big and bold enough to



SCHULTZ & FOREVER SING ABOUT HOW MODERN SEX IS "BIZARRE"

mean they needn't worry about showing their faces. Packed with warped funk grooves and lyrics about toupées, getting girls under duvets and Liberace, it bounces along with the sort of youthful indie charm that Mystery Jets perfected on their second album.

► **SOCIAL** @talktomovie

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

Schultz & Forever

Created by 19-year-old Danish musician Jonathan Schultz in the confines of his Copenhagen bedroom, Schultz & Forever specialises in woozy psych soundscapes, his observations dreamily laid out on top. Debut single 'POV' finds him singing about how he thinks

modern sex is "bizarre and interesting".

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/schultzandforever

► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/schultz-and-forever

Creative Adult

San Francisco's Creative Adult know how to make a glorious racket. Featuring members of now-defunct Californian hardcore groups Life Long Tragedy and All Teeth, the five-piece have had plenty of experience in making noise. Their debut album 'Psychic Mess' refines earlier efforts, boasting 12 tracks of brutally relentless riffs and ferociously delivered lyrics.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/creativeadult

► **HEAR THEM** creativeadult.bandcamp.com

Radar NEWS ROUND UP

JUCE GET BRAINDEAD ON NEW SINGLE

London R&B trio Juce are the latest band to get involved with Dan Carey's Speedy Wunderground project. Recorded in 24 hours at Carey's south London studio, 'Braindead' is the seventh release in the label's series and is released on seven-inch on April 7.

THIS IS THE KIT ENLIST THE NATIONAL ON NEW EP

Bristol folk band This Is The Kit are releasing a new remix EP this week, as well as announcing news of their third album – recorded by The National's Aaron Dessner (they're signed to his label, Brassland) in his garage studio this January.



FIST CITY SIGN TO TRANSGRESSIVE

Canadian punks Fist City are the latest band to join Transgressive Records, after playing a blistering UK live debut last summer. The label will re-release the group's uncompromising album 'It's 1983, Grow Up!' with two brand new tracks, 'Let's Rip' and 'Losers Never Die', on May 17.

TELEMAN MAKE BREAKFAST WITH BERNARD BUTLER

With their singles 'Cristina' and 'Steam Train Girl' attracting attention last year, Telemans have announced their debut album, 'Breakfast'. The London-based quartet hooked up with ex-Suede guitarist and producer Bernard Butler to make the LP, due on May 26.

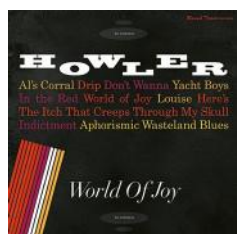
Reviews

► THE DEFINITIVE VERDICT ■ EDITED BY TOM HOWARD



Howler World Of Joy

The Minneapolis band's follow-up to 'America Give Up' is bigger, faster, smarter and stronger



heard it done before, better, and really not all that long ago. You're rooting for them to add up to more than the sum of all those well-chosen parts, but the truth is, until now, we've been more in love with the idea of Howler – the leather jackets, the droll outsider insouciance, the exceptional cheekbones – than the reality of a replacement Replacements.

Addressing that discrepancy is the main task facing 'World Of Joy', but Howler have gone about it in subtler

► In an age of agnostics, Howler are true believers, and that's got to be worth something. Yet while their debut album undoubtedly had its moments, let's not beat around the bush: it was hard to listen to 'America Give Up' and not be struck by a nagging sense of having

ways than you might imagine. It's certainly no reinvention: according to frontman Jordan Gatesmith, the album was conceived of as a drunken rummage through the contents of a scummy dive-bar jukebox, which is really just a fancy way of saying it sounds quite a lot like 'America Give Up'. The difference between this record and its predecessor, however, is akin to the difference between a young athlete with plenty of potential but little nous or experience, and that same athlete after a couple of years of intensive self-improvement: everything is that much bigger, faster, smarter and stronger. Tearing through its 10 songs in a shade under 28 minutes, 'World Of Joy' sounds like a band straining themselves to top a personal best. Happily, they've managed it.

Their reference points may be unchanged, but this time around, the songs are a bit more worthy of them. 'Here's The Itch That Creeps Through My Skull'

boasts a guitar part that evokes the dark, melodic melancholy of Johnny Marr (the lyrics even reference 'The World Won't Listen' for good measure), while

JORDAN GATESMITH ON...

...Howler's new drummer

"Rory [Macmurdo] is probably one of the best drummers I've ever seen. Sometimes you have to calm him down a bit – like, 'Dude, chill out, we know you can do basically anything in the drummer's handbook.'"

...being more collaborative

"I guess this is the first thing that we've done where we've written songs together in the same room. That's never happened before."

...lyrics

"We didn't want to write an album about being bored – we did that previously. This record, we wanted to explore issues of our own freedom and youth culture."

...Hüsker Dü, The Replacements and Cows

"There's some things that made it into this record more than 'America Give Up'. Minneapolis rock made its way in – there's a big Hüsker Dü influence in it, a big Replacements influence, a big Cows influence."

the spasm of a previously atrophied muscle, an overdue sign of life. It's all there on 'Don't Wanna', rattling off its checklist of things we don't have to do – be a punk, date girls (or boys), be Kurt Cobain, listen to The Church – when the central irony is that, to anyone with a pulse and a functioning pair of ears, the song will make you want to do all of them. And really, what is rock'n'roll good for, if not that?

■ BARRY NICOLSON

► THE DETAILS

► **RELEASE DATE** March 24 ► **LABEL** Rough Trade ► **PRODUCER** Chris Heidman ► **LENGTH** 27:48 ► **TRACKLISTING** ►1. All's Corral ►2. Drip ►3. Don't Wanna ►4. Yacht Boys ►5. In The Red ►6. World Of Joy ►7. Louise ►8. Here's The Itch That Creeps Through My Skull ►9. Indictment ►10. Aphorismic Wasteland Blues ► **BEST TRACK** Don't Wanna

'Drip' pogos around with oikish, boomer-booted enthusiasm. Sure, there are less captivating moments – the title track sounds like something that didn't make the cut for The Strokes' third album, and final track 'Aphorismic Wasteland Blues' is a bit of a damp squib – but they're few enough (and fleeting enough) that they almost slip past unnoticed.

In the context of the wider debate about "that rock'n'roll" and its place – or lack of it – in the current scheme of things, 'World Of Joy' could comfortably serve as an exhibit for both prosecution and defence. Shouldn't it be trying to break new ground? Or is the old ground of the Ramones, The Stooges and The Modern Lovers still fertile enough to warrant planting their flag in? Howler know which side of that argument they're on, and the dumb, youthful rush of songs like 'Indictment' make a pretty compelling case for their way of seeing things. If need be, they're going down with the ship.

Let's hope it doesn't come to that, though, because for the most part 'World Of Joy' sounds like a long-overdue spike on the electrocardiograph,

8

MORE ALBUMS

Hypnotized Telesto EP

Love Thy Neighbour



Lifting their name from a single by drone rockers Spacemen 3,

Hypnotized manage to blast off in a completely different direction to their inspiration. Sidelining one-chord riffing in favour of a clutter of synths, oscillators and loops, 'Telesto' gathers fragments of the Brighton trio's live show into one long cosmic mind-melt. Icy beats jut forth on 'Fun Wings', tabla and sitar wriggle through 'Hylia' and the buried vocals on 'Vanity Of Names' gradually reveal the song structures beneath Hypnotized's soft surfaces. Although the band lose direction under 'Thawed's muffled blanket of static, most of 'Telesto' is focused enough to suggest greater trips to come.

■ STUART HUGGETT

7

Tokyo Police Club Forcefield

Memphis Industries



After the initial hype whirl labelled them the "Canadian

Strokes", it's admirable that Ontario's Tokyo Police Club have survived long enough to release their fourth album. Trouble is, they still sound too much like, well, like the Canadian Strokes, although nowhere near as good as that moniker suggests. They're still likeable, with chirpy vocalist/bassist David Monks sounding like he's singing through a grin the size of a melon slice (hardly something you could say about Julian Casablancas) and highlight 'Hot Tonight' shows they occasionally have the chops to match the New Yorkers. Sadly, though, the Biffy-ish 'Tunnel Vision' and 'Gonna Be Ready', which boldly takes early Mars Volta as its proggy muse, are the only hints at variety. It's unspectacularly solid stuff.

■ JAMIE FULLERTON

6



Future Islands Singles

Baltimore trio evoke tragedy and joy with their poignant synthpop

Only the most hardened of hearts could resist Baltimore's Future Islands, the finest indie-synth tearjerkers since Beach House (also from Baltimore). On the trio's fourth LP to date, their bass'n'Korg torch songs employ everything from Balearic house on 'A Dream Of You And Me' to the M83-style nu-gaze of 'Seasons (Waiting On You)' in making pop music of almost unparalleled poignancy. Among the most powerful tracks are 'Light House', which remakes New Order's melancholic girl-pop as bittersweet comedy, and 'Spirit', where Kraftwerk rub shoulders with Passion Pit. Sam T Herring's barked, vaudevilian style has long been a deterrent



for would-be Future Islands converts, but get past the initial jolt of weirdness and you'll find a soul-puncturing cry from the very frontlines of life, able to evoke both desperate tragedy and skyscraping joy all at once.

■ JOHN CALVERT

8

► THE DETAILS

► **RELEASE DATE** March 24 ► **LABEL** 4AD ► **PRODUCER** Chris Coady ► **LENGTH** 42:25 ► **TRACKLISTING** ►1. Seasons (Waiting On You) ►2. Spirit ►3. Sun In The Morning ►4. Doves ►5. Back In The Tall Grass ►6. A Song For Our Grandfathers ►7. Light House ►8. Like The Moon ►9. Fall From Grace ►10. A Dream Of You And Me ► **BEST TRACK** Seasons (Waiting On You)

Jimi Goodwin Odludek Heavenly



Jimi Goodwin is one-third of Doves, who've been on a break

since 2010, shortly after which he began work on his debut solo record, 'Odludek'. Goodwin being the band's main songwriter and singer, there are similarities between the new LP – the title of which means 'loner'

or 'pilgrim' in Polish – and the band, but there are also a few surprises, such as the rootsy 'Hope' and closer 'Panic Tree'. 'Oh! Whiskey' switches mid-song from strumming to dreamlike swing; 'Live Like A River' recalls the Hacienda house of Goodwin's previous band Sub Sub; and the off-kilter 'Man V Dingo' makes this far more than Doves' unofficial fifth album.

■ ANDY WELCH

7

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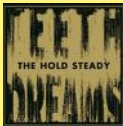


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Reviews

The Hold Steady Teeth Dreams

Washington Square



Brooklyn's The Hold Steady have never shied away from

the classic end of the rock spectrum. On their sixth album, however, they advance on their trademark blokeishness to embrace a beefier and slicker kind of guitar-led groove. Coming on like mid-period Foo Fighters played by a gang of congenial tree surgeons, the album kicks off with the massive 'I Hope This Whole Thing Didn't Frighten You'. Stacked full of festival-sized riffs, singer/guitarist Craig Finn is on mean and fiery form. Downtempo balladry also gets a look-in, with the 'The Ambassador' providing a thoughtful counter to the electrified Americana anthems of 'The Only Thing' and 'Wait Awhile'.

LEONIE COOPER

7

Jamaica

Ventura Control Freak/
Cooperative Music



If you've been unable to sleep for wondering what sort of

creature the genetic splicing of The Strokes and Phoenix might produce, here's relief in the form of Parisian duo Jamaica. Sharing not only Phoenix's home turf but also their slick pop sensibilities, they have the bite and huge choruses of Casablanças and co, distilling it all into an appealing second album. While 'Two On Two' is purest 'Lisztomania' and 'High Then Low' has the drive of '12:51', Jamaica find their own voice in the chiming 'Rushmore', the bright power-pop of 'Same Smile' and the warped tremble of 'Golden Times' (featuring TV On The Radio's Tunde Adebimpe). Slowly, their melodic smarts outweigh their influences.

MATTHEW HORTON

7

Liars Mess

Demented chaos
and haywire disco-
punk from the LA
experimentalists



Heaven knows what would become of Liars if Angus Andrew ever stopped innovating. Just as scientists have suggested that sharks can never stop swimming or else they'll drown, the LA-based trio have been determined for nearly 15 years to always keep moving on to the next project, the next idea, the next sound. From antsy dance-punk (2001 debut 'They Threw Us All In A Trench...') to distorted noise rock (2006's 'Drum's Not Dead') to nervy electro (2012's 'WIXIW'), staying still has seldom seemed like an option.

As a result, it's hard to hold any of their albums aloft as a defining statement. But if there's a record that sums up the spirit of Liars – that dedication to unsettling, disorientating anarchy – 'Mess' may just be it. Witness the devilishly daft brutality of opener 'Mask Maker', which takes the electro blueprint of 'WIXIW' but turns it

menacing and crazed, mixing a relentless, Factory Floor-like beat with a robot voice commanding "Smell my socks/Eat my face off". Like their last album, 'Mess' is characterised by synths and distorted beats. But unlike the often self-doubting and timid 'WIXIW', it revels in its own demented chaos. And demented chaos is Liars' forte: the squelching, spluttering 'Vox Tuned D.E.D.' is the crazed, twisted-metal sibling of 'Brats' from 'WIXIW' and 'Pro Anti Anti' is a nasty banger from a dystopian dancefloor, with Angus barking "Before the fire's out, out, OUT" over sci-fi atmospherics.

Elsewhere, 'Mess On A Mission' transforms from nagging, Morse-code blips into haywire disco-punk halfway through, Angus yelping "Fact is fact and fiction's fiction" as if he's presiding over a futuristic book-burning. The slithering weirdness of 'Perpetual Village' twists this way and that for almost nine none-more-creepy minutes. But it's the pulsar glow of 'Can't Hear Well' that's most affecting: an oddly tender track with the same fuzz-drenched synths flickering over Angus' strangely fragile croon of "You'll never play the fantasy again". Squeezed in amid the din, it's downright discombobulating – but as Liars continue to show, comfort zones only exist as refuges for the unimaginative.

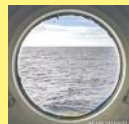
BEN HEWITT

THE DETAILS

►RELEASE DATE March 24 ►LABEL Mute ►PRODUCER Angus Andrew
►LENGTH 53:11 ►TRACKLISTING ►1. Mask Maker ►2. Vox Tuned D.E.D.
►3. I'm No Gold ►4. Pro Anti Anti ►5. Can't Hear Well ►6. Mess On A Mission
►7. Darkslide ►8. Boyzone ►9. Dress Walker ►10. Perpetual Village ►11. Left Speaker Blown ►BEST TRACK Mess On A Mission

We Are Catchers We Are Catchers

Domino



With the help of Bill Ryder-Jones, formerly of The Coral,

Liverpool's We Are Catchers (aka Peter Jackson) has captured the melancholy essence of Beach Boy Dennis Wilson's classic 1977 solo album 'Pacific Ocean Blue' and distilled it in the murky Mersey to produce this confident debut.

Appropriately opening with 'Water's Edge', Jackson takes his piano for a leisurely stroll along a sun-kissed promenade as the sensitive lyrics – "From the sky/I can see the birds fly/From the ledge/You can see the river's edge" – flicker pleasingly into focus. 'Tap Tap Tap' livens things up a notch, while 'Over The Hill' is like a massage for the ear canal. It's neither flash nor fancy, but it is beautiful.

JAMIE CROSSAN

8

Polar Bear In Each And Every One

Leaf



Since debuting a decade ago with their 'Dim Lit'

album, Polar Bear have successfully retained a foot in both the modern jazz and experimental rock camps. Most bands attempting this hybrid get dragged one way or the other, but in this case not even Polar Bear founder and grindcore enthusiast Seb Rochford drumming in

an early Babyshambles line-up could tip the balance. This, their fifth full-length, is affecting and stylistically broad, but the dreamlike trumpet, blurry electronics and hard-rock drums form an evolving landscape rather than showily leaping between styles. Nocturnal glowers like 'Open See' are as much Polar Bear's essence as the outburst of 'WW'. It's far too long at 67 minutes, but that's the price of free expression.

NOEL GARDNER

7

Reviews

Babe

Volery Flight Moshi Moshi



Those missing the fruitiness of Wild Beasts' 'Limbo,

Panto' era may find solace in the colourful indie pop of 'Volery Flight'. Although not as lyrically louche as the young Hayden Thorpe, Franco-Scottish pairing Babe's debut LP is still mightily saucy – not least

on 'Aerialist Barbette', its hip-swaying disco balladry inspired by a cross-dressing trapeze artist famous in the 1920s. Gerard Black's honey-rich falsetto is similarly exotic, peaking on the dreamily spacious chamber pop of 'Grotto'. With Chvrches' Lauren Mayberry popping up on backing vocals throughout, the pair combine fluidly on an airy record that's just the odd memorable hook short of finding perfect balance.

■ SIMON JAY CATLING

7

Sabina

Toujours Naim Edge



Like Eurodisco legend Giorgio Moroder,

Sabina Sciubba was born in Italy and grew up in Germany, but for her first solo outing she's eschewed the electropop of her New York-based Brazilian Girls troupe to record a more guitar-based, Nico-esque collection in Paris, where she now resides. Confused? You will be. Everything

about 'Toujours' has an international flavour, and it's sung in no less than six languages. On paper that might look like showing off, yet the various tongues (often employed within the same song) always feel apt. Most importantly, the tunes – from the devilishly catchy title track to the clattering, anthemic 'Viva L'Amour' and the swoonsome, panoramic 'Tabarly', complete with romantic mariachi trumpets – are superb. You'll feel love. ■ JEREMY ALLEN

8

Golden Retriever

Seer Thrill Jockey



Portland duo Matt Carlson and Jonathan Sielaff spent

two years working on 'Seer', their fourth album, on which they aim to make music that's both challenging and inviting, using just a modular synthesizer and a bass clarinet. Opening track 'Petrichor' is certainly a trial, layering ominously ringing notes with clarinet blasts and coming on like the soundtrack to your worst nightmares, while the rest of the five-track record flits between welcoming and uncomfortable. 'Sharp Sounds' takes on a gentle, jazzy tone and 'Archipelago' is initially calm, before its tweeting birds work themselves up into a flurry of manic, unnerving chirping. Not an album for relaxing to; more one the guards at Guantanamo Bay might consider piping into prisoners' cells.

■ RHIAN DALY

4

FILM

Svengali

Clichéd but touching tale of an optimistic rock'n'roll wannabe

Now you wouldn't want *The Lancet* reviewing *Scrubs*, right? As experts in the minutiae of scrawny indie gits scrabbling themselves famous, we could sit here all day pulling apart the clichés, inconsistencies, inaccuracies and cartoon nonsenses writ deep into *Svengali*, Jonny Owen's self-penned tale of a nowhere boy from Mountain Ash in Wales and his determination to move to London and become the new Brian Epstein, and his misadventures navigating the music biz. All the A&Rs are coke-twitchy arseholes. All the label bosses are pampered dictators bawling, "Get me that band by the end of the week or you're all fired!" (although Matt Berry's Douglas Reynholm-style take is the film's crowning moment). The band that wannabe manager Dixie – played by Owen himself – discovers have the shittiest not-quite-funny name imaginable: The Premature Congratulations (the "Prem"). Even the Alan McGee character, played by Alan McGee, is nothing like Alan McGee – a kind of shuffling, snarly rock'n'roll benefactor without an ounce of McGee's real-life personality.

The music industry of *Svengali* is portrayed – fairly – as manipulative, backstabbing, hype-chasing and out to suck dry and mercilessly crush the little guy. But it's also painted as dumb, impetuous and shambolic, which underestimates the meticulous machine he's trying to parody. But look through his 2D vision of the rock world and that's actually what makes *Svengali* a deeply touching experience. The film began life as Owen's self-made online series featuring McGee and Carl Barat, who also cameos in the movie. As we watch him blag his band towards the big time, full of big-hearted belief, it's clearly a reflection of his own determination to break *Svengali* into cinemas. It's what makes Dixie's



fracturing relationship with his girlfriend Shell (*This Is England*'s Vicky McClure) the real root of the film, their mounting financial hell perhaps born from experience.

As an evil record-shop owner reluctantly giving Dixie his first London job, Martin 'Bilbo From *The Office*' Freeman – along with Berry and Morwenna Banks as evil label bosses and Katy Brand as an evil Eastern European landlord – contributes to the (largely evil) image of cartoon London in the film. Dixie finds himself swiftly sucked down this plughole, but this superficiality only serves to accentuate the eventual bleakness of Dixie's financial and personal unravelling.

The film is an indie cameo-spotter's dream – see if you can catch Paul Gallagher or Maggot from Goldie Lookin Chain – and the soundtrack is a canny clash of heartland indie

(The Fall, The Stone Roses, Bugg, Kane, Libs) and tasteful classic mod, soul and folk-rock (Small Faces, Dexys, Mott The Hoople, Big Star) that closes over the credits with the only track by the Prem, 'Letter Bomb', suggesting that all of the movie's hype and mania was over a clattery Who pastiche. But despite this, and the film's disheartening denouement, we're left feeling that Dixie's – and by extension, Owens' – wide-eyed optimism is something to emulate. Except the bit where he shoplifts *NME*. Put it back or pay for it, you scrote. ■ MARK BEAUMONT

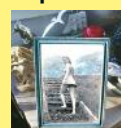


► **RELEASE DATE** In cinemas and available to download March 21

► **DIRECTOR** John Hardwick

The Soft Hills

Departure Tapete



While recording this fourth full-length LP, The Soft

Hills' Garret Hobba suffered respiratory problems caused by mould in his Seattle bedroom. After that serious health scare, he headed to California to recuperate, and it's there that 'Departure' was finished. Unsurprisingly, that event is prevalent in these songs, notably in the lyrics of claustrophobic opener 'Golden Hour' ('Choking while you're living/The pressure's closing in') and the gloomy, minimalist electro-indie of 'The Fold' and 'White Queen'. But there are glimpses of his recovery too, in the lilting West Coast psych-folk of 'Blue Night' and the warm, wistful fuzz of 'Belly Of A Whale'. Almost dying must have been terrifying, but Hobba should be overjoyed that this came out of it.

■ MISCHA PEARLMAN

7

Foster The People

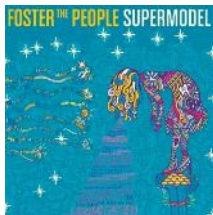
Supermodel

The LA band put 'Pumped Up Kicks' behind them on an impressively noir second LP

"I created a monster," Mark Foster lamented to *NME* in late January, reflecting on the pop smash that in 2011 turned him from a recovering addict churning out radio jingles for a living in downtown LA into a radio superstar in his own right.

A sun-splashed indie earworm hiding a dark tale of a high-school loser who guns down his classmates, 'Pumped Up Kicks' sold over five million copies in the US alone, turning Foster The People into a household name, but a misunderstood one. "I think some people wrote us off as throwaway just because that song was so popular. Like pop music can't be sophisticated, like it can't also say something."

Album number two from the 30-year-old and his LA band takes no such chances, dialling back the sunny subtlety of debut album 'Torches' for something bolder and impressively noir. Lead single 'Coming Of Age', pitting cooing Beach Boys harmonies against echoing synths, embodies it best; its title is not just a snappy track name but also a statement. 'Supermodel' is the work of a more mature Foster The People, expanding their sound to West African afrobeat vibes (on stomping TV On The Radio-ish opener 'Are You What You



THE DETAILS

► **RELEASE DATE** Out now ► **LABEL** Sony ► **LENGTH** 48:13 ► **TRACKLISTING** ►1. Are You What You Want To Be? ►2. Ask Yourself ►3. Coming Of Age ►4. Nevermind ►5. Pseudologia Fantasy ►6. The Angelic Welcome of Mr Jones ►7. Best Friend ►8. A Beginner's Guide To Destroying The Moon ►9. Goats In Trees ►10. The Truth ►11. Fire Escape ►12. Tabloid Super Junky ► **BEST TRACK** Best Friend



Want To Be?') and even psychedelic, shoegazing wig-outs on the adventurous 'Pseudologia Fantasy', which descends into white-noise chaos. There's even a cloud rap moment, layering fuzzy guitars over a spacey beat borrowed from A\$AP Rocky's Clams Casino-produced 'LVL' on 'A Beginner's Guide To Destroying The Moon'.

Album centerpiece 'Best Friend' is the album at its lusty, liberated best, threading NERD bass, Chic guitars and Bee Gees falsettos into a narcotic memoir of Foster's early years in LA. Paul Epworth and Mark Foster's production is full of vivid colours, flair and invention, but 'Supermodel' isn't all so much fun – true to its title, and indeed the vapid Hollywood life Foster writes about, its surface beauty sometimes can't mask the feeling of emptiness inherent in the weaker end of the record. Case in point: 'The Truth', which despite agitated electronic rumbles and bassy trap booms feels like a MGMT B-side ballad. Then there's 'Fire Escape', on which the campfire acoustic guitar, twee glockenspiel and singalong chorus reach gag-worthy levels of syrup: "I see the seasons change/All the young faces come and replace the dying ones".

'Supermodel' has no "monster", as Foster would put it. Instead it's a collection of snapshots of a band stretching towards a brilliantly kaleidoscopic, eclectic new sound – and almost reaching it. ■ AL HORNER

PLAY IT AGAIN

RECENTLY RATED IN NME

The War On Drugs

Lost In The Dream

"Adam Granduciel looks set to stand shoulder to shoulder with former member Kurt Vile as two of Philly's most highly regarded musical sons." (*NME*, March 15)

9

Black Lips

Underneath The Rainbow

"In the 15-plus years Black Lips have been together, they've encountered their fair share of sex, drugs and rock'n'roll. These 12 songs capture their reckless, politically apolitical disposition." (*NME*, March 15)

8

Willis Earl Beal

A Place That Doesn't Exist

"Beal is in a similar sonic place to 'Nobody Knows', but with added anger and confusion. There's sweetness too, on 'The Axeman' and 'Babble On'."

8

Dena

Flash

"Mixing up 21st-century DIY programmed beats, '80s house, techno and soul and '90s videogames, Denitza Torodrova invites us into her aspirational life. Proof that European integration brings good things."

7

The Men

Tomorrow's Hits

"Mark Perro sings like he's hanging by his knackers from a skyscraper by a short length of piano wire. A speeding Spiritualized on a wild rampage down E Street."

8

Jesca Hoop

Undress

Last Laugh/Curuja



Jesca Hoop's 2009 album 'Hunting My Dress' was far from an

overproduced mess. Yet here's 'Undress', an album of "live and intimate" versions of tracks from Hoop's second album. 'Undress' captures the songs in their most up-close-and-personal state, with instrumentation

stripped back to nearly zero and Hoop's rich voice sounding like a whisper in your ear. Trusted allies, including Guy Garvey and Iron & Wine's Sam Beam, help to breathe new life into the nine songs; the Elbow singer features on a remake of 'Murder Of Birds' sung with Hoop in the comfort of her Manchester living room. It's one of the highlights of an album designed for long winter nights, red wine and headphones.

■ BEN CARDEW

7

Ages And Ages

Divisionary



Partisan 'Divisionary', explain Portland's seven-piece choral-pop collective Ages And Ages, is a portmanteau of 'division' and 'visionary', and though it might be a stretch to justify the latter, there's much here that could prove divisive. The record is largely united by an atmosphere of glass-half-full exuberance, but Ages And Ages execute

their ethos with varying degrees of success. 'I See More' is a pleasing romp à la Of Montreal back when they were bearable, while acoustic highlight 'These Ravines' has a whiff of The Delgados' brilliant 'American Trilogy' to it. Occasionally, though ('No Pressure', 'Big Idea'), the jaunty positivity treads too far into Edward Sharpe territory and all you're left craving is a healthy slice of cynicism.

■ LISA WRIGHT

6

Sky Ferreira

Oslo

London

March 10

A tiny show from the
intense star to launch
the UK release of
her debut album

▶ Sky Ferreira is a fascinating star. The 21-year-old from Los Angeles has a back-story that includes friendship with Michael Jackson and arrests for drug possession. The music on debut album 'Night Time, My Time' takes its cues, mostly, from '80s pop. Onstage, she exudes an effortless Debbie Harry-gone-grunge presence. And when she and her band perform the songs live, the likes of 'Boys' and 'Heavy Metal Heart' become meaty, guitar-driven and far beefier than on record. 'I Blame Myself' sparkles despite the self-deprecating lyrics, 'Omanko' comes across like Kim Wilde with a Siouxsie Sioux obsession and 'Everything Is Embarrassing', the best song Ferreira has recorded so far, is her moment of perfect pop. ■ LISA WRIGHT

8



Sky Ferreira:
"an effortless
Debbie
Harry-gone-
grunge
presence"

Reviews LIVE

The Lawrence brothers balance special guests and visual trickery at their biggest headline show to date. But most of all they make people dance

Alexandra Palace, London
Saturday, March 8

Disclosure

“How did we get here?” Guy Lawrence asks the 10,400 people inside Alexandra Palace, the disbelief audible in the 22-year-old’s voice as he and younger brother Howard prepare themselves to play their biggest ever UK show. “How are we fucking here?” The duo’s humility is endearing, but the answer to Guy’s question is simple: Disclosure are enormous. They’ve sold nearly 500,000 copies of debut album ‘Settle’, and worked with the likes of Lorde, Nile Rodgers, Mary J Blige, Jessie Ware, Sam Smith and London Grammar. Tonight is all about these brothers from Reigate in Surrey leading their house-pop revival to its biggest point so far.

Much of Disclosure’s popularity is due to their brutal and relentless touring schedule, peaking last summer when the duo’s scrawled face album cover became a ubiquitous sight

NEITHER GUY NOR HOWARD ARE KEITH FLINT, BUT THEY’VE WORKED OUT HOW TO COMPENSATE

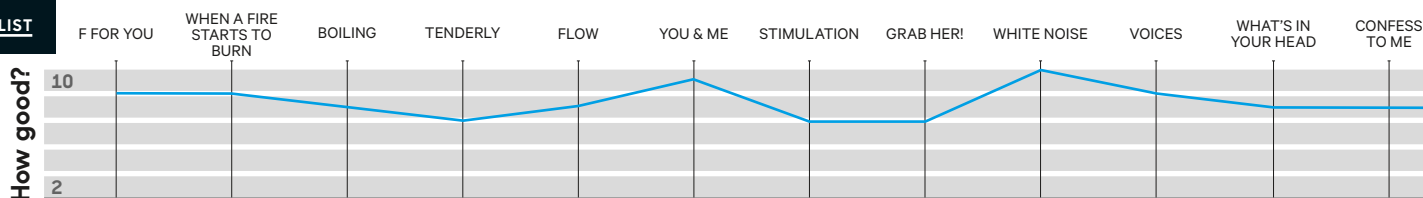
at summer festivals. Tonight’s set begins with the version of ‘F For You’ that comes with Mary J Blige’s hollering vocal, tonight played out on a booming backing track. It’s a great update of one of the best songs from ‘Settle’, but Blige’s superstar power feels out of place on a night that’s a celebration of small-town British dreams come true. Disclosure work best with singers they’re friends with, having spent the last year dominating the charts together. These include Eliza Doolittle and AlunaGeorge’s Aluna Francis, who bound out for two-step lovers’ anthem ‘You And Me’ and ‘White Noise’ respectively. The former is a rush of gorgeous synths. The latter still sounds fresh, despite constant radio play since its release in 2013.

Disclosure have struggled in the past with an over-reliance on guests, and have been accused of dullness when one fails to materialise, or when a song doesn’t have any. Neither Guy nor Howard are exactly Keith Flint from The Prodigy onstage, up there behind their laptops, but they’ve worked out how to compensate. ‘Help Me Lose My

Mind’ is missing an appearance from London Grammar’s Hannah Reid, so as her operatic vocal booms out, Disclosure’s scribbled face logo mimes along to the song on a screen above the stage. For the guestless ‘When A Fire Starts To Burn’, flames appear on the vast screen surrounding the brothers, licking their feet and shoulders. Their greatest trick, though, is simply making people dance. And man, do people dance at a Disclosure show. When Jessie Ware isn’t here to amp up their remix of ‘Running’, it makes no difference because people in Alexandra Palace have started forming loved-up circle-pits to dance in. For the triptych of ‘Boiling’, ‘Tenderly’ and ‘Flow’ near the beginning of the set, the place is a scramble of people trying to find a big enough space to move in. This is big night out music. Make friends with a stranger music. Lost weekend music. Act now, regret later music.

The only weak moments come with ‘Stimulation’ and ‘Grab Her!’, both of which fall on uninterested ears and contribute to a swell in the bar queues. It’s telling that

SETLIST





Aluna Francis joins Guy and Howard Lawrence onstage at Ally Pally

THE VIEW FROM THE CROWD



Ollie, 18, Ealing
"I've been following Disclosure since they first started – they're wicked. They bring something different and give us young people something to shuffle our shoulders too. I'd never seen them before, but Sam Smith coming out for 'Latch' was immense."



Sasha, 16, London
"They're my favourite dance band. I saw them at Reading and I had to come back and see them again."



Nick, 29, Edinburgh
"The album is brilliant. I think they're the new Daft Punk. The album blew me away. It was such a good night."



Sarah, 26, London
"I saw them before and wanted to come back. They make music which is so fun to dance to. I love their song 'Voices'."

neither was released as a single. But the pace of the set is well measured, and 'Latch' is wisely left until the end. Songs don't come bigger for Disclosure, and guest vocalist Sam Smith is given a welcome normally reserved for superstars. There's pandemonium in the building as Smith sings his song about finding the one you love and never letting go. It's the one that best captures Disclosure's ability to bring underground influences to the pop arena. And it's this ability that'll see Disclosure rule the festival season in 2014 and beyond. For now, it just confirms their place at the top table of British pop.

DAVID RENSHAW



MORE GIGS

Angel Haze Gorilla, Manchester

Friday, March 7

Five songs in, Angel Haze's stage is crammed with fans. They snap selfies as she struts among them and prowls through her cover of One Republic's 'Counting Stars'. For a lesser performer this would be a definite case of peaking too soon in the set. But, once the stage has finally been cleared, the Detroit rapper switches it up and blasts into a pitch-perfect rendition of 'A Tribe Called Red.' From here on in there's no let-up from the relentless intensity as Haze spits out the fiercely emotional 'Black Dahlia' and an abrasive cover of Beyoncé's 'Drunk In Love'. A ferocious encore of 'New York' and 'Battle Cry' only serves to seal the deal.

HAYLEY AVRON

8

Kelis Metropolis Studios, London

Monday, March 3

Tonight is about Kelis previewing her sixth album 'Food' – out in a couple of weeks – by playing a gig in a recording studio with just 100 people watching. Backed by an 11-piece band, she begins, of course, with 'Breakfast', before rolling her way through a set full of the sounds of classic funk and soul. "It's hot in here," the New Yorker says at one point, with masterly understatement, before beckoning over an assistant who hands her some lipgloss. Everything from the new album sounds fresh – 'Hooch', 'Cobbler' and 'Fish Fry' are particularly joyful – but it's the inspired mash-up of her 2004 single 'Trick Me' and Althea & Donna's 1977 hit 'Uptown Top Ranking' that steals the show.

ANDY WELCH

8

Jungle



Village Underground, London Tuesday, March 4

The enigmatic Londoners known only as 'J' and 'T' step out of the shadows and into the spotlight for their second hometown show

Jungle's second ever London show begins when the house lights dim to forest green and wildlife sounds howl and yelp from the speakers. The crowd's response? To howl and yelp right back, like a troop of lairy monkeys. Recently signed to indie powerhouse XL after their first two singles 'The Heat' and 'Platoon' caught fire with fans of The xx-style minimal electronics, vintage New York disco and B-boy funk, the shadowy duo who go by the names 'J' and 'T' have so far refused to reveal their identities, even in their own music videos. Tonight they play in a thick fog of smoke, and go about fully justifying their billing as one of Britain's most promising new bands.

The old singles are moody and magnificent, but it's the rest of the set that impresses most. Skulking slow jam 'Smoking Pixels' opens, and sounds like something from an X-rated remake of Disney's *Tarzan* with its eerie and echoing safari sounds over a lusty Prince bass. 'Son Of A Gun' makes full use of the duo's five-strong backing band by featuring cooing vocals and fizzing keys, and new single 'Busy Earnin' sparks a wave of mass hip-swivelling in a crowd that's gradually lurching towards the stage. "You come a long way", sing J and T in entwining falsettos. This is just the beginning.

AL HORNER

8

SETLIST

- Smoking Pixels
- The Heat
- Son Of A Gun
- Crime
- Lucky I Got What I Want
- Drops
- Busy Earnin'
- Platoon

NME
GIG
OF THE WEEK

Haim

O2 Academy Brixton, London
Thursday, March 6

Bobby Gillespie, Florence Welch
and various Palma Violets
watch the Californians cap
two years of UK success

“Was that your biggest show ever?” I ask Alana and Danielle Haim up in the gods of Brixton O2 Academy after a resplendent ‘homecoming’ gig, one week after they were crowned *NME*’s Best International Band here. “YES! It felt like it wasn’t real,” exclaims Danielle, admiring framed photographs of Brixton conquerors past and present, dreaming that one day Haim will be up there next to Primal Scream. She mouths and points at the dressing room: “Shhhhh. Bobby. Gillespie. Is. Here.”

Alana, shellshocked and cramping Danielle’s style, continues: “I’ve never been mindblown after a show and I’m completely mindblown, and I don’t even know what’s going on right now and Bobby Gillespie is in my dressing room and I have no fucking clue how that happened because I’m the biggest Bobby Gillespie fan and, on top of everything, he told me that he liked how I ran onstage and...”

Seemingly just as starstruck, Bobby Gillespie bounds woozily out of the dressing

IT’S ALMOST TWO YEARS AGO TO THE DAY THAT THE BAND PLAYED THEIR FIRST LONDON SHOW AT THE SHACKLEWELL ARMS

room like a stoned cocker spaniel. I ask him who his favourite Haim sister is. “That’s like asking me who my favourite member of the Manson family is. I love them all.”

For an emotional LA trio who are all about schmaltzy milestones, tonight is a life moment. Over the course of two years, the combined personalities of Danielle, Alana and Este Haim have taken over Europe like a three-headed, long-haired Napoleon. It all comes to a head in this venue on their final ‘Days Are Gone’ UK tour, where 5,000 members of the Haim extended family gather for a massive celebration.

Down on the floor, giving herself whiplash to winning singles ‘Don’t Save Me’ and ‘The Wire’, Florence Welch parties inconspicuously.



SETLIST

- Falling
- If I Could Change Your Mind
- Oh Well
- Honey & I
- Days Are Gone
- My Song 5
- Running If You Call My Name
- Go Slow
- Don’t Save Me
- Forever
- XO
- The Wire
- Let Me Go

Behind her, members of Swim Deep, Peace and Palma Violets look on in awe at their 2013 festival season comrades. Upstairs, ‘Mom’ and ‘Papa’ Haim relish the fruits of their children’s labour. And

around every nook and cranny at Brixton, disciples old and brand new sing out every chorus of opener ‘Falling’ and new single ‘If I Could Change Your Mind’.

A stripped-back version of ballad ‘Running If You Call My Name’ has the whole theatre rapt – it’s a lighters-in-the-air, future-festival-headliners moment. Elsewhere, the room flies off the handle to their cover of Fleetwood Mac’s ‘Oh Well’, which is yet to leave their setlist. Pigs will fly before that jam ever gets old.



Haim on...

...album two

Alana: "It's coming, man."
Danielle: "Wah wah wah. We're ready. We're writing every day."

...starting from the bottom in America

Danielle: "We finally get to go home! We haven't even done one tour of America. [Starting over] is the fun of being an artist. It's about finding your way to play bigger shows. I'm excited."

...their love for the UK

Alana: "We just got a plaque [in the dressing room] that has posters from all four UK tours... It's crazy that we've sold out every UK tour we've been on. So fucking nuts. I'm fuckinnnnnggg mindbloooooown."



The ticker-tape cascades down during Haim's set in south London

THE VIEW FROM THE CROWD



Bobby Gillespie, 51,
Primal Scream
 "When they did 'Oh Well', that was shamanic. It was really quite exceptional. Very sexy. And kinda dark as well."



Will Doyle, 23,
Palma Violets
 "When they play 'Oh Well', there's no person or other band that comes close. I can't really explain it, I get scared when I talk about it. My heart beats too fast – I'm scared about how it makes me feel."

What's baffling about Haim is their continuous ability to surpass themselves, while never going away. As Este recalls mid-set, it's almost two years ago to the day that the band played their first London show at the Shackwell Arms. During that time they've perfected their brand with world-class finesse. There's a US export that mixes familial wholesomeness with animalistic prowess,

enriching audiences with a classic feelgood factor on the natural harmonising of 'Honey & I' and then playing out of their skins and liquefying everyone else's with their sizzling, primal femininity on 'My Song 5'. The album is fully realised now, its slicker productions incorporated into the rawness of their early

gigs thanks to the technical proficiency of drummer Dash Hutton and keyboardist Tommy King.

Haim, however, are only just getting started. The cartoonish bassface of Este is but a modest front for the intricate skill with which she slaps the rhythm into the core of every one of Alana's melodic chord changes. Danielle – the only person in the world who looks cool in a leather gilet – has just begun showcasing the other string to her infinitely talented bow as she takes to the drum riser for their cover of Beyoncé's 'XO'.

And Alana? She's quietly becoming the star. However much fun you're having, you're not enjoying yourself as much as the girl who escaped college to take on the world with her two big sisters. "It's so good to be home," she says, bowing out before the girls head to their actual home to start from the bottom all over again. It's not that you want them to succeed in America. It's that you know there's no chance in hell they won't.

■ EVE BARLOW

MORE GIGS

Despacio

The Roundhouse,
 London
 Saturday, March 8

Here's how to put on a club night like James Murphy and David and Stephen Dewaele from 2ManyDJs. One: design a £750,000 sound system with seven speaker stacks arranged in a circle. Two: pump them full of great tunes, played only on vinyl. Three: hide the DJ booth so that people face each other and actually dance. Four: make them dance to stuff that is really slow. That's the basis of Murphy and the Dewaeles' Despacio, first launched in Manchester last year – a night that combines the slickness of early-'70s New York club Paradise Garage with the sort of sets that legendary Argentinian DJ Alfredo would have played on the White Isle in the late '80s.

Despacio means 'slowly' in Spanish, and Murphy and the Dewaeles play everything somewhere between 95 and 115bpm, giving their set a druggy-fuggy effect. Even head-bashing French electro touchstone 'Flat Beat' gets the chug-house treatment. The Dewaele brothers explore poppier smooth grooves, following Hall & Oates' 'I Can't Go For That (No Can Do)' with their new bongo-disco remix of Metronomy's 'Love Letters'. Murphy, meanwhile, delves into harder disco and classic house. Jaydee's 'Plastic Dreams' gets an airing, but the highlight is 'I'm A Man' by Chicago, complete with its 10-minute drum solo, and there are cheers when The Beatles' 'Here Comes The Sun' comes on and the dancefloor's giant glitterball is bathed in a warm amber hue. At a time when the crushing bass of EDM has never been more in your face, Despacio's change of pace – and quality – is a revelation.

■ KATE HUTCHINSON

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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

The Orwells

Chicago's The Orwells are gaining a reputation for causing chaos wherever they go. They'll crash through the UK once more in June, bringing the garage-rock thrills of their forthcoming second album with them.

How does your second album compare to debut 'Remember When'?

Matt O'Keefe, guitar: "The new album seems much more mature to me, more confident too. 'Remember When' will always have a special place in our hearts. But if 'Remember When' was the freshman getting drunk for the first time, this one is the seasoned senior."

What are your favourite tracks on the new album?

"In my opinion, the two standout tracks on the new record are 'Southern Comfort' and 'North Ave'. They hit home because they really capture what growing up in a secluded suburb was to us."

Where's been your favourite place to play in the UK so far?

"Leeds was real crazy. We won't go into too much detail here [frontman Mario Cuomo was questioned by police after a dispute with door staff at the band's afterparty], but it was a pretty brutal night."

Are you going to tame your antics for this tour or will these dates be as wild as ever?

"We don't even know what tomorrow's show is gonna be like, so it's anyone's guess what will happen a month from now!"

► THE DETAILS

► **DATES** Liverpool East Village Arts Club (June 2), Edinburgh Electric Circus (3), Nottingham Rescue Rooms (4), London Dingwalls (5), Manchester Gorilla (6)
 ► **SUPPORT ACTS** TBC
 ► **PRICE** £9; Liverpool £8; London £11
 ► **ON SALE** now
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The Naked & Famous

The Auckland five-piece give the rock sounds of second album 'In Rolling Waves' another airing this summer at three dates in the southeast.

► **DATES** Brighton Concorde 2 (June 30), Cambridge Junction (July 1), London O2 Shepherd's Bush Empire (2)
 ► **SUPPORT ACTS** TBC
 ► **PRICE** £15; London £18
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 ► **FROM** NME.COM/tickets with £3.10-£3.50 booking fee

Courtney Barnett

The Australian musician has been embraced by British audiences since the release of her 'The Double EP: A Sea Of Split Peas' last year. She returns for a month of intimate gigs this spring.

► **DATES** Newcastle Cluny 2 (May 6), St Albans The Horn (7), Cambridge Portland Arms (12), Norwich The Waterfront (13), York The Duchess (14), Hull Adelphi (15), Sheffield The Harley (17), Birmingham Hare & Hounds (18), Leicester Musician (19), Southampton Joiners (20), London Islington Assembly Hall (29)
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CC14

Camden Crawl returns after a year off. It's got a new name but a familiar dedication to booking new bands alongside established favourites. Among those already announced are Hot Chip's Alexis Taylor, Shabazz Palaces, buzzy Brighton garage band Spit Shake Sisters, Cymbals, Yuck and London lo-fi duo Crushed Beaks. More to come.

► **DATES** London, various venues (June 20–21)
 ► **SUPPORT ACTS** ABC, Brawlers, Nai Harvest, Of Montreal, Plastician, Brontide
 ► **PRICE** Day tickets £26.50; Weekend tickets £45
 ► **ON SALE** March 18, 9am
 ► **FROM** ticketweb.co.uk with booking fee TBC

Lovebox

MIA and Chase & Status headline the east London festival this year. A\$AP Rocky, Banks, Katy B and Joey Bada\$\$ will also appear at the two-day event, and The Horrors will play tracks from fourth album 'Luminous'.

► **DATES** London Victoria Park (July 18–19)
 ► **SUPPORT ACTS** Bonobo, Cyril Hahn, Crystal Fighters, Bondax, Moderat, Tensnake
 ► **PRICE** Friday £40; Saturday £49.50; both days £80
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 ► **FROM** NME.COM/tickets with £4.75–£8.95 booking fee

White Hinterland

On third album 'Baby', Casey Dienel tackles the fear of leaving your comfort zone. She'll bring those emotions to the UK for three dates in May.
 ► **DATES** Leeds Brudenell Social Club (May 12), Glasgow Broadcast (13), London Birthdays (14)
 ► **SUPPORT ACTS** TBC
 ► **PRICE** £6; London £7.50
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MIA is one of the two headliners at Lovebox in July

Howling Bells

Three years after their last album, Sydney's Howling Bells return with 'Heartstrings', released on former Kaiser Chief Nick Hodgson's Birthday Records.

► **DATES** Guildford Boileroom (May 29), Sheffield Leadmill (30), Liverpool East Village Arts Club (31), Nottingham Bodega Social Club (June 1), Birmingham Hare & Hounds (3), Manchester Deaf Institute (4), Glasgow King Tut's Wah Wah Hut (5), Leeds Brudenell Social Club (7), Bristol Thekla (8), Portsmouth Wedgewood Rooms (9)
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Dum Dum Girls

Dee Dee Penny and her band bring latest album 'Too True' back to the UK.

► **DATES** London Scala (May 1), Manchester Roadhouse (3), Leeds Brudenell Social Club (4), Glasgow SWG3 (7), Bristol Start The Bus (11)
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► **DATES** Somerset House (July 10–20)

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 ► **PRICE** £28.50
 ► **ON SALE** March 21
 ► **FROM** somersethouse.org.uk with booking fee TBC

Lorelle Meets The Obsolete

The Mexican psych duo play highlights from their third album 'Chambers'.

► **DATES** Leeds Wharf Chambers (April 7), Manchester Gullivers (8), Sheffield The Great Gatsby (9), London Dalston Victoria (10), Bristol Start The Bus (11), Liverpool The Shipping Forecast (12)
 ► **SUPPORT ACTS** TBC
 ► **PRICE** Manchester £7; Bristol £3; Liverpool £6.50; London and Leeds £6
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 ► **FROM** NME.COM/tickets with 30p–£1 booking fee; London and Leeds from wegottickets.com with 60p booking fee

FESTIVAL NEWS

Pinkpop

After conquering Glastonbury last year, The Rolling Stones head to the Netherlands to headline Landgraaf-Megaland's Pinkpop. The line-up also includes Arctic Monkeys, Haim, Bombay Bicycle Club, Biffy Clyro and more. Passes for the whole weekend (June 7–9) cost €175 and day tickets €90, from ticketmaster.nl.

NASS

The Somerset festival returns to the Bath & West Showground on July 11–13, again mixing music with BMXing and skating. This year they've bagged hip-hop legends Cypress Hill for their only UK festival appearance, along with drum'n'bass hero Netsky, up-and-coming DJ Monki and many more. Tickets from nassfestival.com priced from £89.

Forbidden Fruit

Wayne Coyne's Flaming Lips head to Ireland this summer as they play the Forbidden Fruit festival in Kilmainham. Bell X1, Flying Lotus, Fuck Buttons, Nils Frahm and Young Knives are all confirmed for the event, which takes place on May 31–June 1. Day passes will set you back €59.50, and weekend tickets are €110 from ticketmaster.co.uk.

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GOING OUT

Everything worth leaving the house for this week

The Amazing Snakeheads

The snarling Glaswegian trio have just announced that their debut album 'Amphetamine Ballads' will be released on April 14. This week they'll make the trip to Aberdeen to play a one-off date where they'll snap and gnaw their way through the album's highlights.

► **DATES** Aberdeen Café Drummonds (March 20)
► **TICKETS** £6 from NME.COM/tickets with £1 booking fee

Jaws

These Birmingham boys may not have as much cult status as their hometown peers Peace, Swim Deep and Superfood but their glittering surf-pop is sure to brighten the mood when they play shows

in London and Guildford at the end of the month.

► **DATES** London The Garage (March 20), Guildford The Boileroom (22)
► **TICKETS** Guildford £6 from NME.COM/tickets with £1 booking fee; London £5 from ticketweb.co.uk with £1.25 booking fee

Banks

LA singer Jillian Banks returns to the UK after supporting The Weeknd last year, where the 25-year-old will be hoping to justify the brewing noir&B hype. Expect her to recreate the power of tracks like 'Brain', 'Waiting

Game' and 'Before I Ever Met You' at these shows, with more confirmed for the following week.

► **DATES** Bristol Trinity Arts Centre (March 20), Birmingham HMV Institute (21), Glasgow O2 ABC (23), Sheffield Leadmill (24)
► **TICKETS** £11 from NME.COM/tickets with £2.75 booking fee

Azealia Banks

The outspoken New York rapper's debut album 'Broke With Expensive Taste' is – supposedly – finally due out this month, but at the time of writing there's still no sign of it. To tide fans over in the meantime,

Azealia's making her way back to the UK to play some gigs, starting in Glasgow and with more to follow next week.

► **DATES** Glasgow O2 Academy (March 25)
► **TICKETS** £18.50 from ticketmaster.co.uk with £2.50 booking fee

Lyla Foy

Formerly known as Wall, Lyla Foy became Sub Pop's first British act in three years when she signed with the label last year. Her dreampop debut album 'Mirrors The Sky' is out now, so now she's heading out on the road to play a handful of celebratory dates.

► **DATES** London Southbank Centre (March 19), Nottingham Bodega Social (20), Glasgow Nice N Sleazy (21), Manchester Castle Hotel (23)
► **TICKETS** London £10, Nottingham £8; Glasgow £8.50; Manchester £7 from NME.COM/tickets with 85p-£1 booking fee

Band Of Skulls

As the Southampton rock trio prepare to release their electronica-flecked third studio album 'Himalayan', they'll jump in the tourbus to give fans a taster of their future-blues vision.

► **DATES** Leeds Metropolitan University (March 23), Glasgow Queen Margaret Union (24), Manchester The Ritz (25)
► **TICKETS** £15 from NME.COM/tickets with £1.50 booking fee; Glasgow £15 from ticketweb.co.uk with £1.80 booking fee

FIVE TO SEE FOR FREE

Thrills don't come cheaper than this

1. The Night VI
Birthdays, London
The London alt.pop group play new tracks in Dalston.
► Mar 19, 8pm

2. Tom Smith
Banquet Records, Kingston
Editors man launches Record Store Day.
► Mar 20, 4pm

3. Temple Songs
The Green Door Store, Brighton
Manc lo-fi group play new single 'Point Of Origin'.
► Mar 20, 7pm

4. Oliver Wilde
Sixty Million Postcards, Bournemouth
Howling Owl's one-man psych star plays.
► Mar 21, 8:30pm

5. Maximo Park
Pop Recs Ltd, Sunderland
Local band celebrate release of new album.
► Mar 22, 2pm



See Maximo Park for free in Sunderland



Azealia Banks

Dark Bells

The psych trio follow up their recent dates supporting Temples by playing their own headline show.

► **DATES** Manchester Kraak (March 21)

► **TICKETS** Manchester £6 from NME.COM/tickets with 60p booking fee

The Young Knives

The band, who released their fifth album 'Sick Octave' last year, play six shows on a UK tour.

► **DATES** Bristol The Fleece (March 19), Brighton The Haunt (20), Leamington Spa The Zephyr Lounge (21), Preston 53 Degrees (23), Leeds Brudenell Social Club (24), Edinburgh Voodoo Rooms (25)

► **TICKETS** £10; Brighton £12 from NME.COM/tickets with £1-£2 booking fee

Charlie Boyer & The Voyeurs

As the Heavenly-signed east London band prepare to head into the studio to begin work on their second album, catch them in three intimate venues in the southeast. Expect them to give the tracks that made up their debut album 'Clarietta' another airing alongside new works in progress.

► **DATES** Guildford Boileroom (March 19), Milton Keynes Crauford Arms (20), Hitchin Club 85 (21)

► **TICKETS** Guildford £7; Milton Keynes £6 from NME.COM/tickets with £1 booking fee; Hitchin £6 from wegotickets.com with 60p booking fee



Tinie Tempah features on *This Is New Africa*

STAYING IN

The best music on TV, radio and online this week

Tinie Tempah

BBC Radio 1Xtra's Stories - This Is New Africa

1Xtra presenter DJ Edu heads to Africa to find out why Western artists are trying to break through there, and whether there are opportunities for local artists to make money. Tinie Tempah and French Montana are on hand to give their opinion on the subject.

► **LISTEN** BBC Radio 1Xtra, 9pm, Mar 23

Haim

The Evening Show With Danielle Perry

Este, Danielle and Alana played tracks from their debut album 'Days Are Gone' for a select audience at the XFM studios recently. Hear the recording for the first time.

► **LISTEN** XFM, 7pm, Mar 19

U2

Classic Albums: The Joshua Tree

Get the inside story on the Irish band's Brian Eno-produced fifth album. Features contributions from the band as well as Eno, Elvis Costello and more.

► **WATCH** Sky Arts, 5am, Mar 19

Temples

The Radcliffe & Maconie Show

The Kettering psych band are currently on this year's NME Awards Tour with Austin, Texas. They'll make a pit stop in Salford to give Mark Radcliffe and Stuart Maconie all the goss, and talk about debut album 'Sun Structures'.

► **LISTEN** BBC 6Music, 1pm, Mar 20

Slash

Made In Stoke

The former Guns N' Roses guitarist heads back to his hometown to



Temples

play tracks from his back catalogue, both with and without AxI Rose.

► **WATCH** Sky Arts, 11.10pm, Mar 24

Daniel Johnston

Mary Anne Hobbs

One of Kurt Cobain's favourite musicians and the focus of cult documentary *The Devil And Daniel Johnston* joins Mary Anne Hobbs to tell the DJ what it's like to be an underground hero.

► **LISTEN** BBC 6Music, 7am, Mar 23

CATCH UP

The Byrd Who Flew Alone - The Triumphs And Tragedy Of Gene Clark
ON BBC iPlayer

This 90-minute documentary explores the enigmatic life of former Byrds member Gene Clark, and his influence on bands like Fleet Foxes and Primal Scream.



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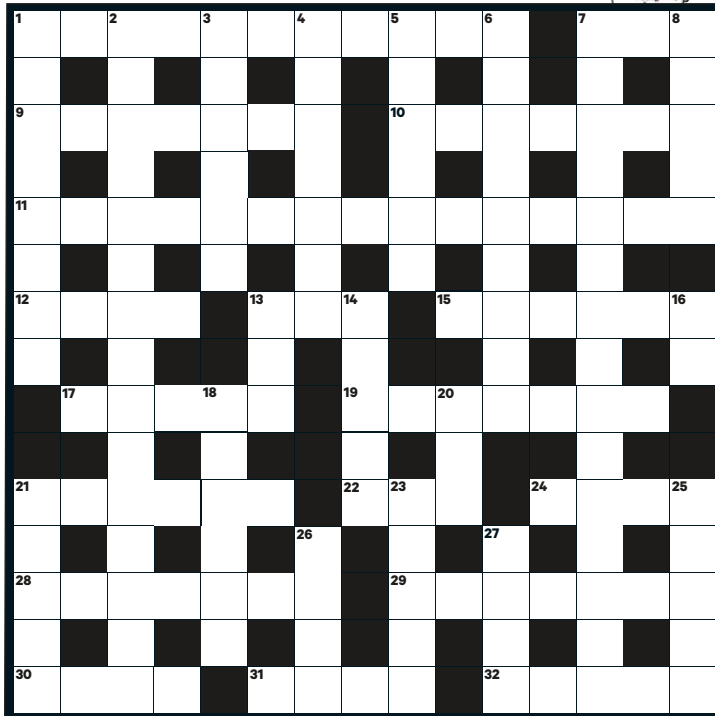
■ Compiled by ALAN WOODHOUSE (answers on page 67)

NME CROSSWORD

■ Compiled by TREVOR HUNGERFORD



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CLUES ACROSS

- 1+21A** Get nearer to having a touch of Melophobia from Cage The Elephant (4-1-6-6)
7+31A "Better to be ready if you rattle my cage", The Vaccines (3-4)
9 The current sound of Vance Joy (7)
10 When should an Imagine Dragons number be played? Now (3-4)
11 Having a preference to be unable to see Etta James performing this blues/soul classic (2-6-2-5)
12 US hardcore-punk band fronted by Casey Chaos (4)
13 Back in 1981, Department S wanted to know 'Is ___ There?' (3)
15+14D "Don't want your love any more/Don't want your kisses, that's for sure", The Everly Brothers (6-5)
17 The worst I performed included a bit of REM (5)
19 Epic poem concerning a Fischerspooner album and a disco-funk group (7)

- 21** (See 1 across)
22 Rapper who proclaimed 'Hip Hop Is Dead' (3)
24 Nips back to see the band that evolved into Gene (4)
28 Broken toaster pops up with something for Georgie Fame and Alan Price (7)
29 Andrew WK puts a dampener on things for me (1-3-3)
30 Still unable to include a Bombay Bicycle Club single (4)
31 (See 7 across)
32 (See 4 down)

CLUES DOWN

- 1** Can viral disorder come from The Family Rain? (8)
2 "Oh _____/What I like to do he doesn't", The Undertones (2-7-6)
3 It's a CD remix for '80s punk band (6)
4+32A Fries variety of concoctions for Frank Turner (2-4-1-5)
5 (See 18 down)
6 Australian band who had '60s hit with 'Friday On My

- Mind' (9)
7 Their debut album told of 'The Decline Of _____' (7-3-5)
8 (See 25 down)
13 Bobby ____, US singer whose '60s hits include 'The Night Has A Thousand Eyes' (3)
14 (See 15 across)
16 Soundtrack starts with some Peter Gabriel music (2)
18+5D Pleasing articles on a '60s R&B rock band (6-6)
20 Both Morphine and the Pet Shop Boys released albums with this title (3)
21 Their last album, in 2010, was 'Butterfly House' (5)
23 'I Am _____ Now', album by Antony And The Johnsons (1-4)
25+8D Bob Marley's first album to chart in the UK (5-5)
26 "She has a _____/We really do adore her", Texas (4)
27 New album from Liars needs a lot of tidying up on it (4)

FEBRUARY 8 ANSWERS

ACROSS 1+11A Your Body Is A Weapon, 6 Beth, 10 Red Face, 12 Burn, 13+19D I Get Around, 14 Alana, 16 Royals, 17 Skinner, 20 Schubert Dip, 21 Rapid, 23 House, 26 Delta Lady, 27 Oasis, 28+24A HMS Fable, 29 Geneva
DOWN 1 Yardbirds, 2 Under My Thumb, 3 Beat, 4 Drenge, 5+7D I Can't Explain, 8 Hannah Reid, 9 Bega, 15+24D Club Foot, 17 Suddenly, 18 In Private, 22 Palace, 23 Hersh, 25 Lyla

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, April 1, 2014, to: Crossword, NME, 9th Floor, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU. Winners will be notified via email.

1 Which U2 album features a guest appearance from Johnny Cash?

2 Which rock frontman released a collection of poetry in 2004 called *Blinking With Fists*?

3 Which band's 1995 debut single was called 'Vow'?

4 McAlmont & Butler had a huge hit with 'Yes' in 1995. What was the follow-up single called?

5 Which former Sex Pistol plays in Edwyn Collins' band?

6 What is the first single Oasis released

that was written by Liam Gallagher?

7 Which legendary US singer/songwriter was born in Duluth, Minnesota?

8 The Smiths' last-ever gig took place at which London venue?

9 Which thrash-metal band did Public Enemy team up with in 1991 to record a version of 'Bring The Noise'?

10 Which US indie band have released cover versions of Suzanne Vega's 'Luka' and New Kids On The Block's 'Step By Step'?

11 Which US rock icon's early bands included Freak Baby and Mission Impossible?

12 Which singer published a Britpop memoir called *Just For One Day* in 2010?

13 Which US band released singles called 'Suspicion', 'Can't Get There From Here' and 'Aftermath'?

14 Which band's 2007 debut album opened with a cover of a Screaming Lord Sutch song?

15 Which singer's 1989 debut novel was called *And The Ass Saw The Angel*?



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■ by CHRIS SIMPSON'S ARTIST

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and

top 300 spring look blouses for dads

and

how to make your face look like a cathedral

the legs of hope

david beckham lets some african children touch his lucky legs to give them a bit of hope



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Colouring outside

The Horrors,
photographed in
London for *NME*,
March 7, 2014

49

the

lines

On fourth album
'Luminous', The Horrors
are pushing at their own
boundaries, discovers
Louis Pattison, by
incorporating Detroit
techno, scientific curios
and Giorgio Moroder-
worthy machine disco

PHOTOS BY DEAN CHALKLEY

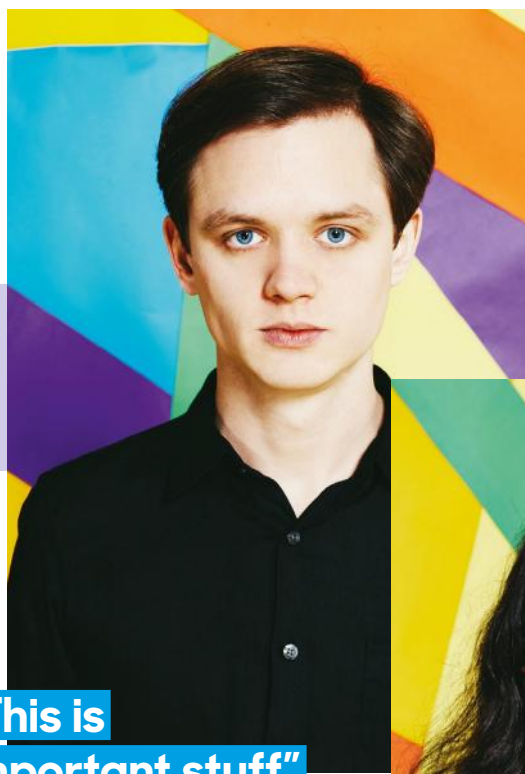
Deep in the belly of the office block in which *NME* makes its home, The Horrors, all dressed head to heels in black, have just finished having their photo taken for this issue's cover.

They're milling around by the lifts when something happens that leaves them momentarily agape. That bloke who just walked past... was it... could it have been? Undoubtedly, it was: Rick Wakeman, progressive rock titan and cape-clad keyboard player of Yes. Exactly what the man who once brought rock-meets-ice-skating extravaganza *The Myths And Legends Of King Arthur And The Knights Of The Round Table* to Wembley Arena is doing wandering these otherwise deserted corridors is not clear, but for a moment everyone is struck dumb, double-taking as he wafts off down the corridor.

Don't get the wrong idea, though: The Horrors might be one of the more intrepid and exploratory rock groups of modern times, but this isn't a case of like recognising like. "He's sort of a cautionary figure," grins The Horrors' very own synth wizard, Tom Cowan, as the lift doors swoosh shut and we speed skywards. "If you feel like you're becoming him, you know you've gone too far."

Minutes later we're on the 11th-floor balcony, overlooking a grand London skyline, a sprawl of glass and metal that gleams and glitters in the sunlight of the first day of spring. Which feels like an appropriate place to take a seat and discuss The Horrors' forthcoming fourth album, *Luminous*.

Released this coming May, *Luminous* is a record of both progression and consolidation – comparable to its predecessor, 2011's *'Skying'*, in its euphoria and sense of heady uplift, but crackling with a colourful electricity that's all new. The record touches on Giorgio Moroder-style machine disco ('In And Out Of Sight'), cosmic glam (the Paul Epworth-assisted *'Falling Star'*) and blissful My Bloody Valentine-tinged drone-pop ('Jealous Sun'), but by and large feels angled upwards like a rocket on a breathless, atmosphere-piercing



"This is important stuff"

Joe Spurgeon

trajectory. On that note, you will have already heard 'So Now You Know' and 'I See You', a seven-minute psychedelic symphony powered by a quicksilver shimmer of modular synthesizers that the group played live in early March with assistance from one of the group's heroes, Thurston Moore. "The first time we met him was the day he arrived at the studio where we were rehearsing together," says Rhys. "He turned up, said hi, set up his guitar and his pedals and just played. We ran through it twice and he said he was happy with it. So we did it once more and then we all went to the pub."

For The Horrors, announcing a new album feels like kind of a big deal. *Luminous* came together over 15 months of fastidious experimentation sequestered away in their Dalston studio, during which the band have

"You want the studio to feel like an extension of yourself"

Josh Hayward



done their best to maintain code-red levels of secrecy. Even the process of unveiling the record is done with care, with drummer Joe Spurgeon electing to sit this initial round of interviews out. "It'd be one thing if it was just sitting down for a chat," he explains as he bids us goodbye, "but this is important stuff." Instead, then, for the next hour I sit down with The Horrors in two groups – first up, Tom and vocalist Faris Badwan, then with guitarist Joshua Hayward and bassist Rhys Webb. With the album still fresh in their minds, they're really only now working out what it is, what it represents, and how to put their shared, hermetic musical language into words and sentiments that the wider world will be able to grasp.

The idea of luminescence, of light and shade, seems to be key to the record. Did you have that in mind when you first went into the studio?

Faris Badwan: "I don't think we conceived it at any point. For us, it's a lot more exciting to have the thread appear organically. What's good about this band is the way we interact with each other – the tension or energy between the members. It was only towards the end of the process that word 'luminous' came up. It began to feel like a word that summed it up."

Tom Cowan: "It's quite satisfying, when you've been working on something for a long time, to find that idea that cements it. We try not to intellectualise it too much. It's not like, 'What

The Pyramid Synth

Artist Pete Fowler and Dave Cranmer, custom electronics builder at Nervous Squirrel, on making The Horrors' new toy

Pete Fowler: "The synth was initially only one element in the 'Changing The Rain' video, and funnily enough

the band weren't that keen on it first. After the video, an email came via XL asking if it would be possible to make them as fully working synths. I immediately called Dave, and together we made two fully operational analogue synths, one for The Horrors and one for Richard Russell, which he used on the road with Bobby Womack." **How did you build it?**

Pete: "It was designed by me, then turned into

a 3D CGI model to animate in the video. The structure was made from scratch and used a modified MFOS synth kit."

Dave Cranmer: "It's one of those projects where it's fun to go the extra mile to make it perfect. We had some nerdy conversations about details like the order of the colours on the knobs." **What does it do?**

Pete: "It's an analogue synthesizer with a built-in amp, speakers and lights. It can process external sources like keyboards, guitars, mikes and sequencers. It's a wild beast, and if there was someone who could tame it, it's Tom!"





"I've always loved music that's like an escape from the world"

Tom Cowan

"We have to try new ideas, to keep excited"

Rhys Webb



"Music is primal, intuitive... We're not a band of scientists"

Faris Badwan

does this synth represent?' But then when you hit on the right idea at the end, the one that ties it all together, it's so great."

NME: Is it an idea that you've been working towards sort of subliminally, do you think?

Tom: "Yeah, that makes perfect sense. As a record, it has all these sort of shimmery, bright, strobe-like effects."

Faris: "That uplifting feel – it's definitely a common thing we're all pursuing with the songs, and something we appreciate in other people's music."

NME: There's the sense of a danciness to it, which wasn't there on 'Skying'.

Tom: "You know, I would hate to make 'dance' a descriptive word. It's more subtle than that. If we put it out there – 'Oh, The Horrors have made a dance record' – everyone's going to expect boom-tish, boom-tish. It's not that at all. But it does bring in disparate elements from different places."

Faris: "I think the great thing about Detroit techno and music like that is that it's made with a really specific environment in mind. They're trying to make people feel a specific way. It's evocative, it brings out emotion."

Tom: "That music is quite escapist as well. It was made in an industrial environment, and is a reaction against that. But since a child, I've always loved music that's like an escape from the world that you find yourself in."

Faris: "As a band, we're definitely escapists."

NME: Are there specific Detroit techno artists whose music you enjoy?

Faris: "Juan Atkins, definitely."

Tom: "I haven't delved deep, but I always thought those Underground Resistance records were fantastic. There's a mystery to it, and a futurist aspect, too, which I always found really attractive. As much as we love old music, when you come across something that's exciting, a lot of the time it's because it has that futuristic feel. Or it's not of this time, not of now and not of yesterday."

Faris: "In some ways The Horrors are more about the past *and* the future. The present is the one time I feel we're not associated with."

NME: Psychedelia seems to be really back in at the moment, but a lot of it seems stuck in this very '60s aesthetic. It seems a disappointingly limited idea of what the term can mean.

Faris: "(Briskly) We've never really been that aware of other bands. It's never been something we've paid attention to throughout our career..."

NME: But I was going to say, as The Horrors you seem to approach the idea of psychedelia as an idea, rather than a style – you wind in techno, dub, krautrock...

Tom: "Absolutely. Psychedelia becomes too much of an easy tagline. Really, the term should all be about exploration."

Faris: "That is something that gets forgotten."

Tom: "Psychedelia seems more often to be invoked as a retro thing, wishing for some time

past. But techno is deeply psychedelic. It puts you somewhere – it places you in an environment and changes the way you think and feel."

NME: Do you think that to move towards the future, it's important to know your history?

Tom: "Maybe."

Faris: "I don't think so. We started making music as a really primal thing, as an intuitive thing. We're not a band of scientists. Well, Josh is a scientist (*laughs*). And he often wears a lab coat. But we don't really approach music in that way. It's really about a feeling we all share. Intuition is a lot more exciting as a tool."

NME: As musically literate people, do you find yourselves making things and thinking, 'Oh, this sounds too much like this, too much like that'?

Tom: "Yeah... sometimes we have a natural tendency to move away from things that remind us of something else."

Faris: "We have a strong idea of what The Horrors' identity is, and with each Horrors record we twist that, change it slightly. So each record becomes about finding out who we are now, and then just going with it. On this record, 'I See You' was the song that felt like a development from what we've done before. And everything else came from there."

'Skying' was a monumental album for The Horrors, a record that plucked them from the ranks of critically acclaimed outsiders and dropped them in the Top Five of the UK Album Chart. It also took them out ➔

The Horrors: "What's good about this band is the energy between the members..."



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"The lyrics are really personal. Over-explaining things just makes them mundane"

Faris Badwan

on their most extensive tour to date, giving them a glimpse of Horrormania along the way. Faris recalls their visit to Mexico. "I was in a promoter's car and the fans jumped it – all of a sudden there's 30 people on top, and it's covered in dents and scratches. Outside the venue, there's this market stall with bootleg merchandise with Horrors ironing board covers and pillowcases and coffin necklaces. They really go for it. It's like a party in 2007 for all eternity."

Faris credits their label, XL, with having their back throughout. As a gift to the band before the recording of 'Luminous', label boss Richard Russell decided to bring to life the pyramid-shaped synthesizer that appears in the Pete Fowler-directed video for The Horrors' 2012 single 'Changing The Rain'. "It's being repaired at the moment, but it's on the album a bit," says Tom. "It was a fantastic surprise when Richard made it real. Maybe

that's why it broke – because it shouldn't have existed in the first place."

"I can't think of another record label on earth that would have brought something like that into existence," says Faris. "Richard gets quite excited about things, and that's unusual for an A&R guy. We've been lucky to find such a good label. They have a real confidence in us – they don't want to listen to demos, we just have to give them the finished record. And we wouldn't have made this progression of records if we'd been on another label. Because we've been left to our devices."

So you don't play XL anything?

"They say, 'We'd love to hear it...' " grins Tom.

"And we say, 'You can hear it next week,'" smiles Faris.

And that goes on for 15 months?

"Basically, yes," says Faris. "I mean, even my girlfriend didn't hear it for the whole process. The reason was that I wanted her to be totally

objective and removed when she did hear it. I totally respect her opinion, but it's cool to hold it back, you know? I find it interesting to hear that reaction when it's untainted."

It's time for the most awkward bit of any Horrors interview: quizzing Faris about the lyrics. While from afar the Horrors frontman can appear frosty, even a touch arrogant, speaking to Faris at length you get the sense of a man who values his privacy and feels profoundly awkward when called upon to dissect his lyrics. Still, the songs of *Luminous* seem to invite close analysis. Rich in allusions to light and darkness, they're pared back so far that they almost border on the simplistic, yet remain strangely cryptic. "*Morning will come/ But for now I'm with you*", he sings on 'Chasing Shadows'. "*I can hear the music play/Maybe I will love you still/I can see your mystery lifted high against the moon*", goes 'In And Out Of Sight'. "*Do you look at him the way she looks at me?*" he ventures on the hushed, waltzing 'Change Your Mind'.

"I definitely think lyrics are most effective when they're simple and direct," he says, shifting uncomfortably. "But, to be honest, a lot of the stuff is hidden for me because I think laying stuff out... it detracts from the listener's experience. And I'm also quite private, to be honest. The lyrics are really personal. Really over-explaining things, it makes it mundane really."

They feel like love songs – but not in the first flush of love. There's a complexity of emotion there.

"Is that a question?"

It's a statement. I wonder if you agree, if you feel that rings true.

"Uh..." He pauses. "To be honest, I think, uh, I don't know. I never like to weigh people down with my explanation. Sometimes I write down all the lyrics, and I'll record them with a really insane vocal effect, so I can't really hear what the words are. And then a couple of months later I'll play them back and re-transcribe them, and hear how it twists the meaning. I find that really interesting. I think separating them from real life is cool."

When you write songs, are you reaching for a universal quality? Do you want to appeal to people everywhere?

Faris struggles. "I don't know if I'm reaching for a universal quality..."

Tom wanders back over to rescue his frontman. "I find that appealing. For lyrics, I'd never say to Faris, 'Can you change this or change that?' But, for me, Faris' lyrics resonate with me because they contain something you can relate to."

"I suppose when I look at them – like, I don't know if anyone sat down to analyse 'Still Life', to take one example," says Faris. "But I think it's really obvious what the meaning is."

I let Faris off the hook and he bids us farewell, but not before revealing that he's off to Bath, where he and musical/romantic partner Rachel Zeffira are heading into Peter Gabriel's Real World studios to work on the second *Cat's Eyes* album. In their place slide Josh and Rhys, who quickly pick up the thread. Both are quite different, while strangely complementary: Rhys, wide-eyed and gently fizzing with enthusiasm; Josh with a wryly studious air that you feel could blossom into fully fledged mad professorism. They're an excellent double act, and talk ranges from Josh's girlfriend's pet pig, Piggy Sue ("They're extremely clever – cleverer than dogs, but it's all focused on finding food"), to Alex Turner's Brits speech ("Caused quite a stir, hasn't it?" says Josh. "Well, good for him – it's good to see people's backs up for once") and the inexplicably popular alternative subculture of steampunk. "I really hate it," shudders Rhys. "I think – and this is funny because we always got called goths – but there is that kind of bad goth vibe to it, isn't there? As youth movements or subcultures go, it's the one with the most uncool vibe."

"I kind of have more respect for someone who wants to go back to nature by learning to hunt, living off the land," puzzles Josh. "Instead of burning stuff and wearing goggles."

As well as being The Horrors' guitarist, Josh also plays the role of band engineer, and is in large part responsible for the building and maintenance of The Horrors' Dalston studio. For *Luminous*, they expanded their studio with custom-built equipment, loaned rock relics – 'Falling Star' features one of Roky Erickson's guitars, played through a Roland Jet Phaser pedal to double up as a bass part – and a new live room. "I think we were feeling more settled in the space, which really opens you up," says Josh. "You don't really want to be thinking too much about where you are. We're not the sort of band who goes somewhere sunny and makes a sunny record. You don't want your surroundings to affect you too much. You just want the studio to feel like an extension of yourself."

It also gave The Horrors the freedom to explore new techniques. "I've got really into Shepard Tones," says Josh. "It's an audio-acoustical illusion, first discovered by Dr Robert Shepard. It basically sounds like a tone is continually rising without it actually rising. It's quite clever – as it goes up, a new tone comes in from the bottom and it fades the top one away. Sort of like a spinning barber pole – it feels like the red bit is going up, but it isn't

of course. We use it at the end of 'I See You', because we wanted it to feel like it never stops. It's that weird thing, like the build-up is sort of more thrilling than actually getting there."

So do the band feel duty-bound to

experience such effects in, shall we say, altered states? "I don't feel duty-bound," grins Josh. "But certainly, testing it out in other states, outside of the studio environment, is the easiest way of removing yourself from the process. One of the important things about it is enjoying it at a ridiculous time of the morning, and seeing how it makes me feel. It's a way of testing it out, checking if it's doing the right thing."

With the record in the can, the band are preparing for the festival season. Around September, they'll start touring *Luminous* in earnest, and they're thinking about a new lightshow. "The guy who looks after our lights works with The Chemical Brothers, so we borrow their lasers for the live show," says Rhys. "We're really into the idea of the lightshow, which is quite a traditional idea, but it's a further extension of the music."

"I've been speaking to a friend about Reactive Light Programming recently, which is a new field, kind of," says Josh. "It's a bit like what you see on an iTunes screensaver – the sound controls the animation. So we're trying to figure out how we'll make that work in a live environment."

Josh, meanwhile, also has some extra-curricular plans. "I do actually want to start teaching people electronics, helping out kids if they want to learn," he says. "Although" – he grits his teeth – "they'll have to be prepared to put in the fucking work. It's not easy, but it's very rewarding, and I think it's all to do with what sort of teacher you have."

"I'm not totally sure about that," says Rhys, eyeing his bandmate with a look that says, 'Well, if you're a mad genius, it's got to help.'

"No, really," says Josh. "I had a great teacher, and there was one day where my brain snapped, just like your back cracks, and I suddenly just understood it all. I think they should teach more maths at school, and computer programming. It's important. Especially for our little island. I just need to think of the best way to do it."

They're a strange paradox, The Horrors. Musical scholars, but led by intuition, not learning. Scientists, but the sort that tear up the successful formula, preferring to venture once more into the unknown. It's in their nature. "At every show we play, there'll be someone who comes up after and says, 'I wish you'd make a record like the first one,'" says Rhys. "Which is great. But we couldn't do it, it just wouldn't work. We have to feel involved in what's happening. We have to try new ideas, to keep excited." He grins. "It's still just about taking those natural steps." ■

FAMOUS FAN



Will Doyle

East India Youth

"I'm a huge fan of The Horrors' last two albums. The artistic leap between their debut and their second LP was tremendous, and it's great to see a band at their level who aren't afraid to challenge themselves to progress musically – and for their audience to be willing to go on that journey with them. I'm really excited to hear where *Luminous* will take us next."

FAMOUS FAN

Yuki Tsujii
Bo Ningen

"We first met The Horrors in 2009. It feels like they are pretty much the only band from that time period that have kept on evolving. We did a UK tour with them a couple of years ago, and I watched them live every night – it made me realise how they've created their own form of psychedelia, one that's combining shoegaze, synthpop, black and white, yellow and purple..."

"I WANTED TO TO THE GREAT OF CLASSIC AL

But ambition was Adam Granduciel's undoing, discovers Jenny Stevens, on The War On Drugs' new album – a record born of break-ups and crack-ups

PHOTOS BY DANIEL TOPETE

Adam Granduciel doesn't have time for small talk. When he speaks, The War On Drugs' frontman looks you dead in the eyes, his confident, efficient sentences containing nary an 'um' or 'er'. Barely 40 seconds into our interview in a busy bar in an east London private members' club, conversation has already moved on to the mental breakdown he endured throughout the gestation of his band's third album, 'Lost In The Dream', released last week.

"There's no point in talking about this album unless I talk about how I felt when I was making it," he says, in a voice so clear and calm it feels rehearsed. "All my relationships were

crumbling, romantic or otherwise, and I was in a period of great self-doubt." He pauses. "It's not like I'm a paranoid schizophrenic, but at the time I thought I was."

You don't need to spend much time with Adam Granduciel to tell that he's a perfectionist, nor that he's an excellent performer both onstage and off. While his elongated, krautrock-indebted jams may seem born from the mind of a lackadaisical stoner (weed certainly helped to fuel his past records), in real life the 35-year-old is sharp, funny and ambitious. He's just got off a plane from Amsterdam, but his denim jacket and jeans are immaculate. His clean hands rest on the table between us, only moving to sweep his tousled hair from his eyes, ➔



CONTRIBUTE CANON BUMS"



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Adam Granduciel
in Philadelphia,
March 5, 2014

which he does methodically before answering each question.

His precise manner extends to The War On Drugs' music: they may be a band – rounded out by bassist Dave Hartley, pianist Robbie Bennett and drummer Patrick Berkery – but it's wholly Adam's baby. 'Lost In The Dream' is by far their best album yet. Cutting through the sonic fuzz of their breakout second album 'Slave Ambient', its sound is much bolder; no longer drowning in reverb, Adam's laconic lyrics and drawled vocals are brought right to the fore. But while it's a progression in style and tone, it hasn't lost sight of what made The War On Drugs so startling in the first place – that brilliantly disarming capacity to make Springsteen-style classic rock anthems and looped electronic soundscapes feel like natural bedfellows. It's also a distinctly tortured record, dealing with the fallout of 'Slave Ambient's' success as Adam came to terms with becoming a professional musician, evident from the off in the not-so-subtly titled opening track, 'Under The Pressure'.

Before the 'Slave

Ambient' album was released in 2011, Adam lived a blue-collar existence in Philadelphia, making music on the side; The War On Drugs' debut, the warmly received 'Wagonwheel Blues', came out in 2008. He had a long-term girlfriend and his day jobs ranged from Turkish-rug salesman to cashier in a museum gift shop. Then his band blew up and he toured the world. When he came back, everything had changed. He'd become a stranger to himself and everyone he knew before.

"Every aspect of my life reminded me how mundane life can be," he says. "I started resenting my girlfriend if she sent me to the grocery store to buy cat litter. I was like, 'What the fuck, this is so stupid.'"

He looks up, evidently spotting my shocked expression, and continues unflinchingly. "I know that makes me sound like an asshole. But I was confused. It was a situation I'd never been in before, knowing that people would be waiting... I now had this expectation over me and I was dealing with my own fear of failing publicly."

This partly stems from the fact that Adam never set out to be a musician. On January 3, 2003, he got a ride to Philadelphia from Massachusetts and never went back. He was 24 at the time and had been living with his parents. One of the

first people he met in Philly was Kurt Vile. Their shared obsession with Bob Dylan led them to start making music together: Adam played with Vile's backing band The Violators and Kurt would eventually join The War On Drugs, playing on their debut. While Adam enjoyed making music, he freely admits that he was never "searching for a record deal". But as The War On Drugs took off, Kurt left to release his own material. Both of them have always said the split was amicable, but today Adam says he just wants to be "honest about every little thing".

"It's hard to have that in a friendship," he says. "To be friends and both doing your

passion but have that other side of it that's business and jealousies... It wasn't just two people leisurely making music. It was a weird, intense thing after a while. It definitely shaped 'Slave Ambient', gave me something to prove."

It wasn't enough just to put out a decent record, though. His determination to make an even better follow-up to 'Slave Ambient' became an compulsion that turned paranoid, feeling like everyone else in the Philadelphia scene thought of him as just "the guy who got lucky". He gets louder when he talks about it and is still unashamedly embittered by the idea. "Whatever success our band had, people resented it or didn't care. I felt these were all

"THE RECORD WAS ABOUT TRYING TO FIND A PURPOSE IN MY LIFE"

ADAM GRANDUCIEL



things I had to address on the new record. I wanted to make something I was going to be proud of in a different way to what I had in the past."

Adam began work on 'Lost In The Dream' in the autumn of 2012. By this point, he was completely alone in his three-storey house. His girlfriend had moved out leaving nothing but the cats behind, so he moved all his belongings and studio equipment up to the top floor and set to work. It didn't come easily. Anxiety crept into every minute of his existence. He couldn't sleep. He'd have panic attacks. He became a vegetarian after becoming convinced that he'd got food poisoning from eating some bad chicken – "and then I spent the rest of the year thinking, 'Maybe I'm feeling fucked up because I'm not eating meat any more.'" Eventually, bassist Dave Hartley told him to go and see a therapist. "I'd go and then feel even worse, because you start exercising parts of your brain you never did before," he says, "It's like you're scared of your own thoughts sometimes."



Adam Granduciel:
darkness on the
edge of town



**The War On
Drugs' rehearsal
space**

He gave up drinking and smoking but that led to a whole new challenge – he now had to find a way to be creative while sober. "[Smoking weed] was always the thing that gave me the light-bulb moment. You know – 'I want to work tonight but I'm tired, I'll just take a hit off this joint and it'll be fine.' But that whole side of me was done. I didn't want to get weird in my studio. I knew that that way of working was going to yield the same results as it did before. I had to think bigger..."

Instead of getting high, at nighttime he'd take his giant gold Chevy bus ("It could fit, like, 30 schoolchildren in it!") and drive down to the water to "clear his head", playing the mixes and soundscapes he'd been working on over and over again. It was there that he started working on song structures and melodies. "I didn't have a job. It was the only routine I had," he says.

It's telling that even getting stoned had some sort of productive function for Adam – a utilitarian means to an end that he no longer required in the next phase of his music. We're half an hour into our conversation now and he's voluntarily brought up his therapy, mental breakdown and crumbling personal relationships before I've even had the chance to ask. He's honest, but there's a businesslike quality to his soul-bearing that's disquieting.

"I'm willingly putting music out there to the public, so I feel like I should at least talk about it," he shrugs. But his confessional feels well rehearsed, almost excessively so. The lyrics on the album are revealing enough – does he not worry he is opening himself up too much? "I think I might have opened a door in my life that I won't be able to close again," he says. "Everyone goes through shitty times in their life, it's not unique. But it was unique to me in the sense of making an album. My favourite albums of all time are journeys." He reels them off: Dylan's 'Blood On The Tracks', Fleetwood Mac's 'Rumours', Neil Young's 'Tonight's The Night'. They're influences he wears proudly – and rightly so. 'Eyes To The Wind' from '...Dreams' bristles with a Dylan-esque rootless melancholy; 'Suffering' is steeped in the bitter depths of Fleetwood Mac's 'Silver Springs'.

"That's why I put so much pressure on myself for this record," he says. "I wanted to contribute to the great canon of classic albums. I aspired to make something as close to that as I could."

He seems incredibly ambitious for someone who says they never really thought music could be a professional career. I ask him whether his upbringing had any part in that and he interjects before I even finish the sentence. "My whole family is in education," he nods. He talks passionately about how his mum has just opened up a Montessori school back home in Massachusetts, and how his dad ran a clothes shop to pay for him to go to a good school – he studied art and photography at Philadelphia's Dickinson College.

His parents didn't frown on his making music, but it was an "outsider thing", he says. But as he started to make money from doing music professionally, he had to ask himself tough questions about what it all meant: "There was definitely a part of me that wondered if I was contributing as much as I could be to other people. Is this a selfish profession? My family help people – what am I doing? That's where it all came from, not really knowing if what I did mattered."

For the first time in the interview, there's a flicker in his eyes that suggests this might be the one element of the existential crisis that informed 'Lost In The Dream' that he hasn't yet resolved. He starts playing with his hands. I ask if he wanted to make an album that could help someone through a similar situation. "I'm not naive enough to think that nobody [else] has ever been confused or anxious or lonely and secluded," he says. "These are common issues... I want to make uplifting music."

I wanted the songs to feel good. I don't want to feel low all the time. And it's my way of making myself a bit happier, too."

And that's the key to 'Lost In The Dream'. It is, as he hoped, a journey. But it's not just the sound of one man's existential crisis. It's an album that embraces the struggle we all face as we try and answer the eternally unanswerable question, 'What are we all here for?'

"I always felt like the record was me trying to find a purpose in my life," he says. "Being able to

admit that it's OK to have people who want you to write music for them. I learned that there is no answer to what somebody should be doing. We're all doing what we're doing and trying to be happy with it."

The waitress comes over as I get up to leave and he jovially orders a beer. "You're drinking again?" I ask, looking down at the mineral water that was placed at the table before I arrived. "Well..." he sighs with a smile. "You've got to live a little..." ■

On the road again

Sharon Van Etten on touring with TWOD



"Touring with The War on Drugs in 2012 was the most fun I've ever had on the road with another band. They work so hard, they play so hard and they enjoy what they do – and you can tell when you see them live. Their songs are beautiful, epic, heavy jams that make me want to take a never-ending summer drive."

A photograph of a person in a workshop-like setting. The background is a red brick wall with two electric guitars hanging on it. The person, wearing a dark blue and green striped t-shirt, is partially visible on the right side. In the foreground, there is a wooden workbench with a large, round, metallic object (possibly a pot or a lid) and a green plastic bottle. The overall lighting is warm and somewhat dim.

The

fallout

boy

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Mac DeMarco in
his Williamsburg
warehouse
apartment

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Mac DeMarco's
reputation as a prolific
goofball turned sour
when making his second
album, a record his label
wanted faster, funnier,
now. Mischa Pearlman
meets a conflicted man

PHOTOS BY MATT SALACUSE

Mac DeMarco is trying to tidy his bedroom. What he's actually doing is making even more of a mess, having accidentally up-ended a full ashtray onto one of four keyboards stacked against a wall underneath his loft bed. The small room fills with stale smoke. His girlfriend, Kiera, who shares the space with him, watches from the elevated bed as he attempts to throw dirty clothes into an Ikea bag, pinned high to the wall, that he's using as a makeshift laundry basket. He gets a top in first time, but he's a bad shot with Kiera's underwear, which keeps falling to the floor.

The pair moved from Montreal to this cramped, windowless room in June, but they share the rest of the building – a warehouse-type space in a less salubrious part of Williamsburg, Brooklyn – with seven other musicians. The communal area is massive: there's a full live setup, including drums, a plethora of guitars hanging from the walls, a pinball machine themed on *The Shadow*, Alec Baldwin's 1994 superhero film, and in the kitchen area, a large dining-room table covered with full ashtrays and empty beer cans. Huge windows let in the late winter sun and give the vast area a light, airy feel. "If I didn't live here," Mac says, looking at a row of jumpers hanging from the ceiling of his room, "I wouldn't be able to afford living in New York."

It's just after 1pm on a Tuesday in early February, and Mac and Kiera have only just woken up. They were both awake earlier this morning – Mac had to do a phone interview – but they fell asleep again, him into an intense dream. "I was in Manhattan, I think," he says, "and I was trying to get back to Brooklyn, but it looked more like the river valley of my hometown. I remember being with people on a train, but eventually I was in my van, and I just couldn't make it. It was hard to discern whether I was extremely overtired or wasted, but it felt like I was just inebriated in some way and I was like, 'I just can't make it home.' I flipped the van and I remember getting out and looking at my phone and my phone was broken, my computer's broken, everything's going to shit. It was such a bad dream. And the funniest thing is that as soon as I got out of the car and realised everything was smashed and the van was fucked, I had that real feeling of

"Hopefully this album will just fucking flop"

Mac DeMarco

Mac DeMarco:
"I'm just some
short white dude"



'Well, I give up. Fuck this shit. I don't care.' But thankfully it was just a dream."

In his waking hours, however, "fuck this shit" has been an all too familiar feeling for Mac these past few months. Last November, he sat in his bedroom for a month to write and record *'Salad Days'*, his second album proper. Its 11 songs are jaded and despondent, offering up a sombre side to the 23-year-old singer not visible on the louche posturing of his *'Rock And Roll Night Club'* EP, and barely glimpsed on its full-length follow-up, *'2'*, both released in 2012. Malaise permeates every line of *'Salad Days'* title track alone: "*Rolling through life to roll over and die*", "*Acting like my life's already over*", "*Always feeling tired, smiling when required*".

Mac didn't set out to make such a melancholy record, but the circumstances surrounding its creation left him acutely aware of the compromised life he'd been living for the last couple of years. He takes a drag of his Marlboro – one of many he'll smoke during the course of the interview – and inhales deeply.

"I'd say it's an accurate portrayal of a period in my life," he says, smoke swirling around him in the space beneath the bed. "I think when *'2'* came out, people were like, 'Oh shit, he's doing a personal album!' But *'2'* is just pop songs for the sake of pop songs. This album is more specific. It's partly about the two years that we were touring and also about the mindset I was in as I was recording it. We'd been on tour for, like, two years straight and I had one month to write and record the whole thing. All of a sudden it was like, 'Fuck, I'm exhausted.'" You can hear that exhaustion in the songs, lethargic slices of life that reflect his waning passion for music. It wasn't fun any more.

Until the end of 2011, Mac recorded as Makeout Videotape, but signed to Captured Tracks for his first record under his own name (well, the abridged version: he was born Vernor Winfield McBriare Smith IV on April 30, 1990, but after his parents split his mum changed it to McBriare Samuel Lanyon

What's next?

Mac's a fan of releasing two records a year, so can we expect another by the end of 2014?

"Salad Days" is the last album that's going to sound like that. I'm kind of in a rut with the music – not exactly a rut, but I'm trying some new things out, so the next album's going to sound quite a bit different, I think. I don't really know what the vibe will be. Maybe it won't be serious at all, maybe it will be. Who really knows? That probably won't be for a little while anyway, I don't know.

"I guess I just wanted to keep making music and making songs. I didn't really have any expectations or any plan or anything like that. It's kind of insane how much people have connected to these songs – it's kind of fucked up. I just wanted to make funny little ditties. Hopefully this album just fucking flops and I just do another one. That'd be like my dream."

with cigarettes ('Ode To Viceroy') and who grew up in a household where meth was cooked on the kitchen stove ('Cooking Up Something Good'). "Mac is always performing a version of himself," says White Lung's Mish Way, who met Mac when both their bands were based in Vancouver. "He's hamming it up, but it's still Mac. He's the kind of guy who will drink 12 beers, throw up in the parking lot and then brush his teeth with more beer. He'll also call up your baby sister and leave her messages asking her to get Slurpies and French kiss. That's just him."

While touring '2', Mac saw the downside to presenting himself as a goofball: in the UK in particular, crowds at his solo shows were filled

with braying, misogynist bros who'd presumably heard about the time Mac stuck a drumstick up his arse and came hoping for similarly grotesque theatre. "I can't really be angry at anybody being into my music," he says, "but it is different from when I was playing in a small band in Vancouver – playing to the noise-punk scene – to playing to jocks who are dressing like me and beating each other up. It's very strange. But if they wanna do it, they can do it, I guess."

Regardless of who Mac actually is in real life – and perhaps only he and Kiera truly know that – or which facet of his identity is conveyed through his songs at any given time, it's impossible to deny that this young but jaded, goofy yet serious songwriter is a preternaturally talented songwriter. It's those records – louche or laconic – that have left listeners invested in his slippery personality. 'Salad Days' is just one more dimension of his increasingly complex, hard-to-define character. It's a dark, depressing record, but even as he acknowledges that fact, DeMarco also denies it, conflating the line between art and reality.

"I wouldn't say I was necessarily super unhappy or anything," he ponders, "but you just got to... I don't know. Maybe this album was for me, like, 'C'mon, man. You got to live it to love it.' I'm a pretty happy guy generally. I just had to get it out and now I'm back to regular old Mac." Whoever that is. Those blurred lines are precisely what makes DeMarco who he is and his music what it is. His identity and his art are inextricably linked, yet ever malleable and contradictory. ■

DeMarco when he was five, to piss off Mac's dad). When Mac asked them when he could release his next record, the options were April, or some time about six months later. Brooklyn-based Captured Tracks is one of the most revered indie labels working today, and the idea that they'd force one of their artists to churn out a new record to fit some prescribed schedule seems incongruous. "I was like, 'Fuck that shit, give me April,'" says Mac. "I don't care when it needs to be done, I'm not putting it out any later."

Mac, accustomed to releasing two records a year, essentially made his own bed, but Mike Sniper, who runs Captured Tracks, recognises why he was so annoyed. "I kind of understood," he says over the phone a few days later. "The circumstances of recording '2' and the circumstances of recording this one are quite different. He recorded it in such a fraught, high-pressured situation, which wasn't really my intention. It was just more along the lines of him giving me a timeframe [in which he wanted to release a record], and so I was like, 'Alright, well then we need it done by this amount of time.'"

"It pissed me off," Mac admits. "I was frustrated. I was angry. I shouldn't have really been angry but I was angry at my label and my management and stuff – like, 'Fuck you, guys. You're fucking me over, you're trying to milk me like a fucking farm animal.' But truthfully they're not... that bad." There's a slight pause before he says "that bad"; whether it's the result of a perfectly timed joke or genuine indecision, it's hard to tell.

Begrudgingly, Mac got it done. "The last album," he says, "I sent them all my demos song by song as I recorded them, like, 'What do you guys think of this?' This time I just sent them the finished album. I was like, 'You can put this out. If you don't want to, go fuck yourselves.'"

They didn't go fuck themselves; they asked for more, trying to persuade Mac to record some songs from his Makeout Videotape days. "That made me quite angry. I was like, 'No fucking way,'" he says. "But I ended up just writing another one and it fits in pretty well." That song was 'Let Her Go', the fourth track on 'Salad Days'. It's the most light-hearted track on the album: plaintive but breezy, infused with the carefree spirit that dominated his songs until now, with just the vaguest hint of the discontentment found elsewhere on the record.

While Mac was pissed off enough to write a whole album about it, his anger was tempered by his overt respect for the label.

"Mike pretty much taught me everything I know," he explains. "He's like my music daddy or something. They're good. They're

really good." He pauses to light another Marlboro. "And they definitely still have me locked in for another album on contract, so I'm not leaving them any time soon. Not that I want to..."

Although 'Salad Days'

sounds tired and jaded because Mac was tired and jaded, he admits that he used those genuine feelings as inspiration for a world-weary character a few degrees removed from himself. "It's sort of a portrayal," he explains, "but it's also an exaggeration of me being like, 'Oh maaaaaaan...'" He groans in an exaggerated manner, very aware that he's complaining about the relatively privileged life of a touring musician. "It's not all that bad, but when you lock yourself in a little shack for a month, your thoughts can get a little blown out of proportion. Initially all the songs were like, 'Fuck this shit', but because a lot of sophomore albums are like, 'Oh my god, this is so hard', a lot of the songs start, *I'm so jaded*, *I'm so jaded*, then the chorus will be like, *Shut up, dude, you're so lucky! Stop acting like this, you fucking pussy!*"

In that respect, 'Salad Days' is like the records that preceded it – distorted caricatures of a facet of DeMarco's personality. It's part

of the truth, but not the whole truth. On 'Rock And Roll Nightclub' he came across as a sleazy, shameless, gross-out hedonist. Its songs were suave and sexy, but at the same time it was a perfect pastiche of a stereotypical lounge lizard. "I don't see myself as any of that shit, really," he says, laughing. "Maybe when it came out

and when we first started playing I was trying a little bit to be like that. But even so, I'm just some short white dude – I couldn't ever pull any of that shit off."

"Mac is the living proof that true elegance is always invisible – he's pretty good at concealing his genius," writes Phoenix's Laurent Brancowitz in an email; their bands toured together last year after the French synthpoppers pronounced themselves to be huge fans. "He's the kind of guy who hits the wrong note *on purpose*, as if it would be too vulgar to play it perfectly. That's pretty cool – in a Pablo Picasso way."

'2' seems to present a version of Mac DeMarco that's closer the real thing, yet it's still exaggerated: this portrait of him as a slacker who's a slave to his love affair



Neurotically

NME, 19 March 1994

Twenty years ago, up-and-coming singer Jeff Buckley was a cult hero in waiting. John Mulvey met him in New York.

Photo by Merri Cyr



Jeff Buckley
during the 'Grace'
album cover shoot
in Brooklyn,
autumn 1993

charged

FROM
THE
VAULTS

I'm a loser, baaaay-bee!" Jeff Buckley is staggering down a freezing New Jersey street in a huge, furry coat, scaring children and turning Beck's dumbass anthem into a bellowing operatic aria. He's not a loser, by a long way, but he is an incredible misfit.

Buckley doesn't fit any comfortable stereotypes of what either a singer – or a human being, come to that – should be. Watch him live as, accompanied only by himself on electric guitar, his voice swoops and sobs with an extraordinary passion. It's like Mark Eitzel possessed by the spirit of Otis Redding. His natural father, Tim Buckley, reinvented folk music on his own terms in the late '60s and early '70s, flying off on wild jazz tangents with a nerve-damaging voice. And now Jeff is scrambling expectations as a post-punk troubadour. When he sings, it's as remarkable as anything you'll hear all year. Honestly.

Meet Jeff Buckley offstage – distant, lost, swinging from a idealistic hippy intensity to a parallel-universe sense of humour – and you'll find a weird, wired loner totally out of step with the world: "Not even behind, or ahead... just not... in sync," as he puts it in his own charismatic, pause-punctuated way. He's a star... by accident.

Buckley grew up in southern California, shunted from school to school and town to town by his wandering mother and stepfather. He met his father once, when he was six or seven, towards the end of Tim's maverick life.

"He left before I was born, and he never wrote or called or anything. I met him for a week, and he sat me on his knee, but we didn't really talk. I didn't really go to him for inspiration or instruction, but, yeah... I've got the same parts..."

By his mid-teens, Buckley had been to over a dozen schools, including a spell in Anaheim, home to Disneyland and a place he calls "a wellspring of hatred for me, because of its straightness and conservatism and how debilitating it is to any artistic soul." And at every school he was a misfit.

"Maybe it's because I just have a different experience of people. When I see them I see... their mothers and fathers, I see how old they are inside. It's strange, it's like seeing ghosts everywhere. I don't go on much – I go on their voice, I go on their energy. And sometimes,

when I talk," he says, completely deadpan, "I just don't make sense."

What do you see when you look in the mirror?

"A little geeky man. Er, an old man... Both. Sometimes I see... a really sexually obsessed woman."

Does that ever come out?

"Oh yeah, when I sing. I just see sex in everything, it's the energy that surrounds everything. I appreciate my skin, and my teeth, and my dreams."

Meanwhile, back in the material world... Buckley left California in his early teens, arrived in New York's arty East Village, dumped the bands that were dragging him down and picked up a vast and suitably eclectic selection of influences: "The typical holy trinity of Beatles, Hendrix and Zeppelin. Billie Holiday, Judy

Garland, Edith Piaf, Bob Dylan, the Pistols, Duke Ellington, the Velvet, Pixies, I'm a Patti Smith freak. F-reak!"

He also picked up a mad and ragged band of followers, thanks to his status as a freak magnet.

"My identity, my soul, welcomes... extraordinary, possibly dangerous, possibly stupid experiences. And New York is full of beautiful, strange people. Like Quentin Crisp,

"When I sing, I just see sex in everything" Jeff Buckley

Allen Ginsberg; like The Tree Man, a street guy who's a good luck charm. If you're ever in New York and you see him, tip him and you'll have good luck for the rest of the evening. He walks around with various shrubbery strapped to his back that shoots out over his head like a crown of ferns, or huge palm fronds, or flowers."

Buckley's about to leave this all behind for a while to bring his mesmerising live

show to Britain for a few low-key dates. His album – with a band – is just about finished and set for a June release, and a live EP that goes some way to catching all this fantastic, pretentious, ambitious, endlessly beautiful music is out

any day now on Big Cat. Don't miss any of it.

Do you want to be a star, Jeff?

"That's secondary. No, I wanna find these things that I smell way in the distance, I wanna dig to them, I wanna swim to them, I wanna drown in them."

Do you take things too seriously?

He pauses, then stares intently, with his father's eyes. "I don't know what that means."

No mere mortal, without a doubt. ■

Flashback

John Mulvey (now *Uncut's* deputy editor) reflects on his eventful meeting with a singular talent who drowned just three years later

Early in 1994, I found myself in New York interviewing a couple of promising new artists on the Big Cat label. One was a band called Lotion, who sounded like a timely cross between Hüsker Dü and REM, made a few good albums, and had a negligible impact on the wider world. The other was an intense, eclectic singer-songwriter whose music seemed at odds with early-'90s fashion: Led Zeppelin and Benjamin Britten not being hipster touchstones at the time, if memory serves.

At a solo gig in Hoboken, though, it became obvious that Jeff Buckley had the sort of

talent that would transcend any era. He was mesmerising and charismatic, and at the same time in the midst of formulating a persona for himself. With his first EP, 'Live At Sin-é', just out, Buckley had rarely been interviewed, and it was hard to judge whether he was either ineffably pretentious or a very seductive wind-up merchant. Listening to the tape a few years later, after he'd died, I decided he'd meant most of what he said. Some of it is weirdly profound, more candid than his later, wary encounters with the press. Other parts, especially when you take into

account the pauses between words, suggest a man at the start of his career trying hard to appear deep. "I just think too much sometimes," he mentions towards the end, and it's hard to argue with him.

Soon enough, Buckley arrived in London, and played a week of revelatory gigs. By the end of the summer, his debut album had arrived, and I gave it 9/10 in *NME*. "From here on in, the sky's the limit," I concluded. Buckley was a name to drop, with a major-label deal, but still a marginal figure. 'Grace', it's worth noting, didn't even merit a lead review.

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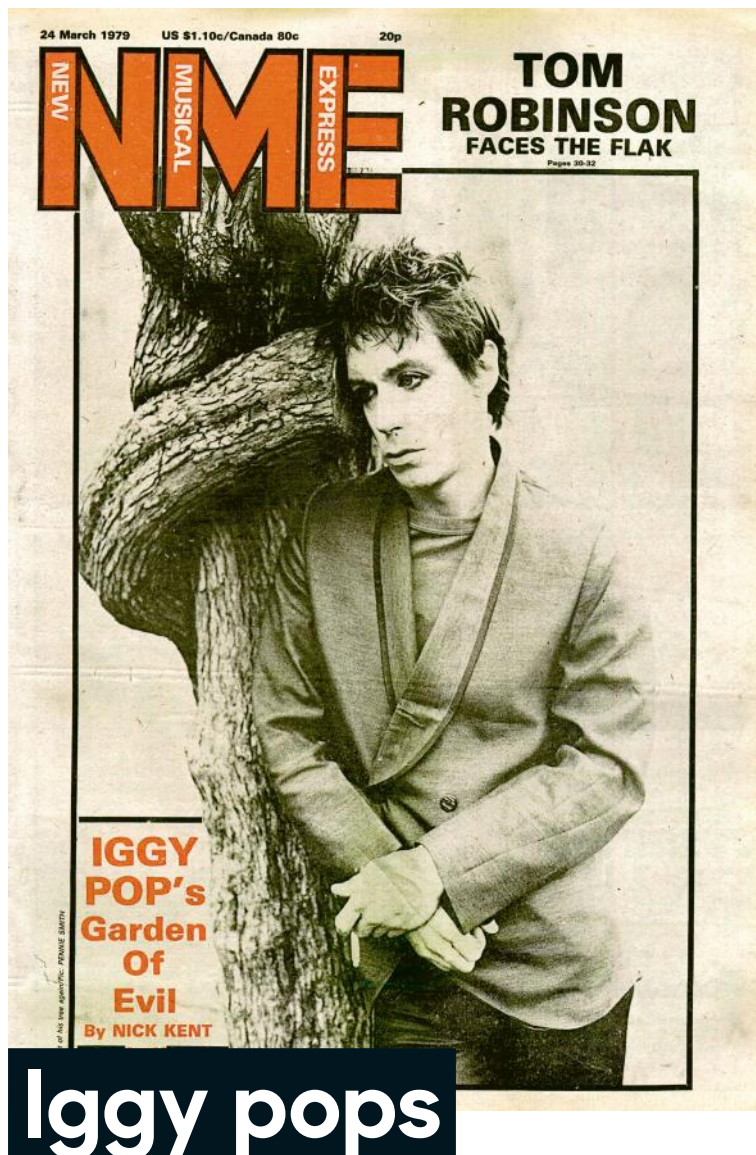
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THIS WEEK IN 1979



Iggy pops

The cleaned-up James Osterberg on his new album and his troubled relationship with Nico

Having checked himself into a psychiatric programme after being given the choice of “jail or the white van”, a rehabilitated Iggy Pop, now reverting to his birth name of James Osterberg, talks to *NME* about how his latest album ‘New Values’ is a reflection of James and not Iggy. “It’s a blatant attempt on my part to throw out all the trendiness and be as personal as possible,” he says. He’s very open in the interview, talking candidly about his relationship with former girlfriend Nico and how she tracked his every move in an attempt to get him back: “She had me followed, had radio monitors scanning my every move, taxi drivers were bribed – just everything. She laid out a line, figuring that heroin would get me back into her web, and just as the enticing line came close to my nostril, I blew it off the mirror all over the floor, got up and said, ‘So long, baby, nyah, nyah, fooled you.’ And that’s the last I have seen of her.”



ROCK VS RACISM

The fledgling Rock Against Racism campaign steps up a notch as several members give an exclusive interview to *NME* to set the record straight about rumours spread by the right-wing press that they have a secret socialist agenda. “RAR is an independent organisation and can – in fact does – include people of any political party or belief,” says member David Widgery, a left-wing writer who goes on to claim that “the National Front is big because the Labour Party is finished”.

NO MORE DRONGOS

The Stranglers are causing chaos on their Australian tour, as bassist Jean-Jacques Burnel attacks a local punk called V2 with his guitar for spitting at him throughout one Brisbane show. ‘Spitting is two years out of date, man,’ says singer Hugh Cornwell before attempting to lighten the mood by getting a female fan onstage to strip to ‘Nice ‘n’ Sleazy’. Two nights later there’s almost a riot when the band walk off after only 35 minutes because Cornwell is hit by a beer glass.

REVIEWED THIS WEEK



The Fall – ‘Live At The Witch Trials’
“The accessible face of

modernistic pop. You can dance to it and pretend it’s avant garde.” ■ GRAHAM LOCK

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

► Gloria Gaynor’s ‘I Will Survive’ reaches Number One, keeping Elvis Costello’s ‘Oliver’s Army’ off the top spot, as *NME* reports that singles sales are soaring thanks to the disco boom.
► Late-night showings of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* across America have started drawing hordes of teenagers dressed in “Mondo Pervo” gear.
► Tina Turner is reviewed at Hammersmith Apollo. Mark Ellen claims her vocals “still pack enough punch to make your knees melt, your teeth tango and your string vest run up your back like a window blind”.

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PENNIE SMITH

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

WE FIND THE ROCK STAR, YOU ASK THE QUESTIONS



**Brody
Dalle**

**Singer, guitarist
and former
Distiller**

1 How old were you when you got your first tattoo?

Sarah Crick, Leicester, via email
"Sixteen."

WRONG. You were 14. "Yeah, I was probably 14. It was very simple, a star on my thumb. I just liked it."

2 What was the name of your first band at 16?

Pat Davidson, Manchester, via email

The Distillers at
CBGB in 2003



"Sourpuss. We were four teenage girls, we met at a show and we all wanted to play in a band. It worked out great. One was like, 'I'll be the bass player, what do you want to be?' 'I'll be the drummer.' So I went, 'I'll be the singer and the guitar player.' And that's what happened."

CORRECT

3 What were the two singles you released from The Distillers' second album, 'Sing Sing Death House'?
Barry Mann, Falmouth, via Twitter

"The Young Crazyed Peeling and 'City Of Angels' – oh, this is a quiz! This is like, 'Are you fucking dumb or do you know what's happened?' Haha! I'm doing pretty well, I think. I think I'll get eight."

CORRECT

"OH, THIS IS A QUIZ! I'M DOING PRETTY WELL – I THINK I'LL GET EIGHT"

4 What caused you to kick somebody in the head the night you performed at CBGB with The Distillers?

Jack Taylor, Lincoln, via email
"Some kid had a sign that he shouldn't have had and he was holding it in my face."

CORRECT. The sign read 'Take Tim Back', referring to Dalle's previous boyfriend Tim Armstrong from Rancid



Shirley
Manson

5 Where did you meet The Distillers' bassist, Kim Chi?

Oliver Falls, Northampton, via Facebook

"At Epitaph Records. They signed me and I walked into her office – I heard she was a badass bass player. It was a secret. And she was – she was badass."

CORRECT



6 You made a vocal appearance on Queens Of The Stone Age's 2005 album 'Lullabies To Paralyze'. What was the name of the song?

Mandi Scott, London, via email

"Was it 'You've Got A Killer Scene There, Man'?"

CORRECT

"Yes! My husband [Josh Homme] asked me to do that one. I think it was me and Shirley Manson – Shirley sang on that one too."



The Distillers'
Kim Chi

8 In which year did you appear on Eagles Of Death Metal's debut album, 'Peace, Love, Death Metal'?
Lauren Hills, NYC, via Twitter

"2004?"
CORRECT. Was it fun to make?

"There was a lot of meth. Methamphetamine. Not math. I did a lot of math on meth. It worked out really well for me."

9 In 2003, which record label did The Distillers sign a contract with?

Tim Vernon, Lancaster, via email

"Warner Brothers... Sire Records – it's the same fuckin' thing. It was good, they let me walk out of my deal when I needed to."

CORRECT

10 What was the last record you released as The Distillers?
Warren Hunt, Manchester, via email

"Coral Fang" [in 2003]. It's pretty good. I listened to it recently because we've been playing the songs, and I thought, 'That's not that bad.' I was 23 when I wrote it – that's alright, y'know!"

CORRECT



SCORE = 9

"Yeah! I feel really good, I feel like I passed!"

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