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NME

29

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to discover

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Future Islands
OutKast
Kelis

20 YEARS GONE

Kurt

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Courtney Love

"Kurt:
The Musical
is very likely
to happen..."

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THE SHOTGUN
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- 4 SOUNDING OFF**
- 8 THE WEEK**
- 18 IN THE STUDIO**
The Birds Of Satan
- 19 ANATOMY OF AN ALBUM**
OutKast - 'Stankonia'
- 21 SOUNDTRACK OF MY LIFE**
Finn Jones, *Game Of Thrones*
- 26 REVIEWS**
- 42 NME GUIDE**
- 47 THINK TANK**
- 65 THIS WEEK IN...**
- 66 BRAINCELLS**

▼ FEATURES



Kurt Cobain: A Tribute

Members of the Nirvana frontman's favourite bands – including Pixies, Gang Of Four and The Slits – share their recollections of his life, his music and his death

Future Islands

The synthpop trio are finally getting recognised, thanks to stunning new album 'Singles' and the emotion-fuelled live performances of frontman Samuel T Herring

Kelis

The R&B star opens up about new indie-soul album 'Food', working with Dave Sitek, being racially abused in an airport, and owing big bucks to the tax man

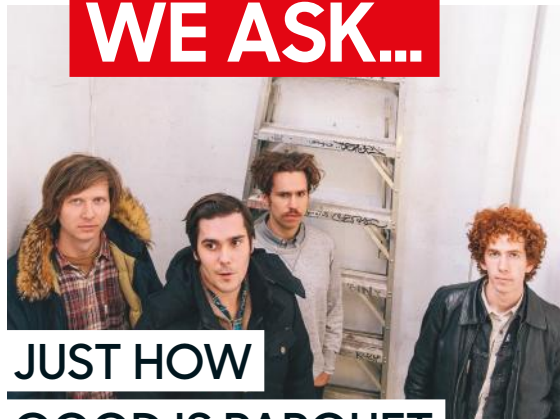
CONTRIBUTORS

Alex Denney
Writer
Alex covered the NME Awards Tour with Austin, Texas. "Discussed genocide with Circa Waves in Liverpool. Got served a whisky with a pube in it by Temples."

Rhian Daly
Assistant Reviews Editor
Rhian went to Brighton and Bristol with Minneapolis punks, Howler. "It was heaps of fun, and the new album sounds even better played live in tiny, sweaty venues."

Noma Bar
Illustrator
Check out Noma's work on the cover. "The aim was to create a portrait that was instantly recognisable, and then on second glance you discover the musicality, which draws you in."

THIS WEEK WE ASK...



JUST HOW GOOD IS PARQUET COURTS' NEW TUNE?

It's loud, basic and raw, and it's the best thing the New Yorkers have ever done

6

WHY IS HELENA CHRISTENSEN BACKSTAGE IN NOTTINGHAM?

Because her boyfriend's band are touring the UK

34

WHAT ARE DAVE GROHL AND TAYLOR HAWKINS UP TO?

Making "a prog-rock fandango" together

18

20 ESSENTIAL TRACKS

11 PAGES OF REVIEWS

29 NEW BANDS TO DISCOVER

THE NME BAND LIST

Adam Connor	25	Kelis	62
AK/DK	29	The Knack	52
Allez Bartoli	29	Kool AD	25
Angel Olsen	37	Lead Belly	54
Avey Tare's Slasher Flicks	30	LostAlone	29
Baby Guru	23	Lotus Plaza	6
Bad Brains	54	Lyla Foy	37
Banks	35	The Magic Gang	24
Bea	25	Marine Girls	50
Bed Rugs	31	Merchandise	15
The Birds Of Satan	18	The Mighty Hannibal	17
Benjamin Booker	7	Mick Harvey	66
Boots	23	MØ	15
Brody Dalle	13	Movement	23
Broods	27	Nas	7
Butthole Surfers	55	Neon Waltz	23
Canopies	24	No Coda	24
Chance The Rapper	6	Nirvana	49
Cherry Glazerr	23	Off!	27
Chromeo	14	OhBoy!	25
Circa Waves	6, 32	The Orwells	6
Courtney Love	57	OutKast	19
The Cure	10	Parquet Courts	6
Daisy Victoria	23	The Phantom Band	6
Damon Albarn	6	Pixies	51
Daniel Johnston	53	Plague Vendor	23
Datacat	25	Popstrangers	24
Drake	6	Porter Robinson	25
East India Youth	23	Pup	29
Ekkah	25	Radkey	14
EMA	30	The Raincoats	51
Esben And The Witch	31	Ratking	26
The Faint	30	Romare	23
Fang	56	Royal Blood	32
Fartbarf	25	Sauna Youth	17
Fist City	7	School Of Language	29
Flipper	56	The Shaggs	53
Frankie Cosmos	24	Shonen Knife	52
Freeweights	24	Shura	24
The Frogs	51	The Silver Palms	7
Fucked Up	7	Sivu	6
Future Islands	58	Slint	7
Gang Of Four	55	The Slits	54
Garbage	13	Sohn	27
Glass Animals	24	Suede	10
Grizzlor	25	Swans	6
Half Japanese	52	SZA	7
Haunted Hearts	7	Temples	13, 32
Honeyblood	22	The Strokes	8
Howler	36	ThoughtForms	31
Hunck	24	Tove Lo	30
Interpol	32	Tune-Yards	42
Jaguar Skills	27	Tweens	30
Jagwar Ma	13	Vampire Weekend	14
Jamie xx	7	The Vaselines	56
Jaws	35	The War On Drugs	7, 37
Joanna Gruesome	14	Wipers	50
Joya	24	Young Knives	35
Jupiter-C	23	Young Marble Giants	53

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

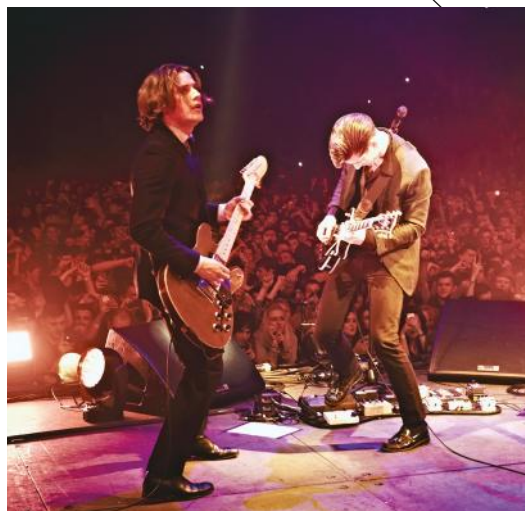
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LAMESTREAM LINE-UPS?

Last week, I came across a letter in *NME* stating that Reading & Leeds Festivals need to 'get their acts together' regarding the mainstream vibe affecting the general diversity of the festival. What the t*ts? I've seen so many people complaining about the line-up purely because of the more established bands such as Paramore, Macklemore and even Arctic Monkeys. People are complaining purely because it's becoming too mainstream. But maybe if people could get past their narrow-minded hipster vision they'd realise that two or three slightly-too-popular bands on the line-up are nothing compared to the insanely brilliant up-and-coming acts on the smaller stages. I think people need to realise that just because there's a couple of popular kids in class, it doesn't mean the whole school is bullshit.

Katie Cummins, via email

Barry Nicolson: What's great about Reading & Leeds is that you spend £200 to watch a bunch of bands it'd cost two or three times the price to see individually. And yes,



if mainstream names like Macklemore and Paramore don't get you going, there's loads of other stuff on the smaller stages. A quick glance at the line-up and I can see Flume, Metronomy, Jungle, Chvrches, Drengé, Temples, SBTRKT, Eagulls, Circa Waves, Joey Bada\$\$, Fat White Family – all guaranteed to blow your mind. So Katie, I agree with you: festivals are all about the brilliant up-and-coming acts, and 2014 is bursting with them.

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London SE1 0SU

Kim Deal, that band no longer exists. Black without Deal is like Mick without Keef, and putting 'Indie Cindy' out under the Pixies banner feels like an insult to their memory.

Craig Houseman, via email

BN: See, you say that, but Mick without Keef produced 'She's The Boss', which is unquestionably better than every album the Stones have released since 1981 (although I'm willing to accept this may be a specious opinion held by absolutely no-one other than myself). Pixies seem damned if they do and damned if they don't – it wasn't so long ago that they were being criticised for having gone 10 years reunited with only 'Bam Thwok' and an over-inflated bank account to show for it. Now, because Kim Deal has left, an entire new album should be scrapped and the remaining members should call it quits? In a perfect world, maybe. But we're living in the real one.

A DEAL WITH GOD (TO GET A TICKET)

How excited am I for Kate Bush's live comeback? VERY excited. I first discovered Kate Bush during my turbulent teen years in a small hamlet outside of Castlegar, British Columbia. One day in 1978 my younger sister brought home 'The Kick Inside'. She'd managed to borrow a copy from her student teacher. While the word wasn't in my vocabulary at the time, 'gobsmacked' is a good indicator of what happened. We both became devoted, lifelong fans. Kate has always felt like the big sister I didn't have. I'm going to be in front of my computer very early on Wednesday morning (it'll be 2.30am Pacific Daylight Time when pre-sales begin), fingers crossed, credit card in hand. I'll cross the paying-for-flight-etc bridge if I get to it. My birthday is September 11 (yes, really) so what an outstanding gift this would be. Wish me luck.

Val Cormier, via email



BN: Tickets went on sale last Friday – hope you managed to get some, Val, especially as the entire internet seemed to lose its collective shit over these gigs. At this point, I reckon the only thing that could possibly surpass them in terms of excitement and anticipation would be David Bowie playing 'The Rise And Fall Of Ziggy Stardust And The Spiders

From Mars' in its entirety while tap-dancing on Vladimir Putin's grave. But that probably won't happen for another couple of years.

FEVER DREAMS

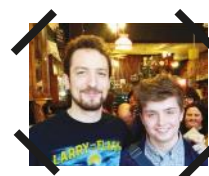
I am very much a fan of The Black Keys. I purchased a weekend ticket for Latitude festival as soon as they were announced. I listen to some of their older stuff all the way up to 'El Camino'. My honest opinion on 'Fever' is that I'm not a fan, I think it's as flat as a pancake. I struggled to listen to the song in its entirety. It really is boring. I hope the rest of 'Turn Blue' has more to offer than this because I really wasn't blown away. My fingers will remain crossed that it turns out well.

Luke Cooper, via email

BN: Granted, I'm not the world's foremost authority on The Black Keys, but I really don't understand the reaction to this song. Doesn't it just, I dunno... sound like The Black Keys? Are we really up in arms because they're using keyboards instead of guitars, yet we're willing to give them a pass when they inevitably end up licensing it to an assortment of Adam Sandler comedies, deodorant brands and Japanese car manufacturers at the first opportunity?

TROMPE LE MERDE

I never thought I'd say this, but my feelings towards this new Pixies album that's just been announced can be summed up in a single equation: No Kim Deal = no fucks given. Don't get me wrong, we're talking about one of the greatest bands who ever lived; a band who, on a personal level, have changed my life and brought me unfathomable amounts of joy. But without



LOOK WHO'S STALKING

I met Frank Turner in Portsmouth recently and got this picture, complete with some absolutely mega photobombs in the background.

Tyler Adams, via email

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NME TRACK OF THE WEEK

1. Parquet Courts
Sunbathing Animal

Parquet Courts' first new material since signing to Rough Trade earlier this year is being released as sheet music. Learn to play it (or listen to the handy stream they've also unveiled) and you'll find an urgent punk chug based on shrill guitar lines zipping in and out of frontman Andrew Savage's breathless, barked stream of consciousness. The sound of one of the most exciting bands around embarking on an electrifying new chapter.

Rhian Daly, Assistant Reviews Editor

2. Drake
Days In The East

Drizzy aired this new song while on tour in the UK recently. 'Days In The East' is a ponderous, late-night burner that sounds more like The Weeknd than traditional Drake fare. Produced by the rapper's latest protégé PartyNextDoor, the languid piano and pleading vocals suggest that even touring the world with Rihanna by his side still isn't quite enough to make the Canadian sadboy completely happy. How very Drake.

David Renshaw, News Reporter

3. Swans
A Little God In My Hands

The first taste of the follow-up to Swans' 2012 album 'The Seer' might just scorch your tongue. Burning heat rips through seven minutes of twisted funk guitars, Michael Gira's disturbing growled vocals and pant-browning horn and feedback explosions. The new album 'To Be Kind' features St Vincent and Cold Specks and, on this evidence, will be a work of beautiful existential doom.

Ben Homewood, writer

4. Lotus Plaza
Indian Paintbrush

Most of Lockett Pundt's last album was deleted – by him. The Deerhunter guitarist's second solo effort, 'Spooky Action At A Distance', was built by playing along with loops that were then deliberately wiped from the recording. This new 14-minute 'song' sounds like even more of it might have been Ctrl+X-ed. It's so ambient it makes the last These New Puritans record sound like a jaunty brass band.

JJ Dunning, writer

5. Damon Albarn
Mr Tembo

So far, the tracks Damon Albarn has unveiled from his solo debut 'Everyday Robots' have been pretty gloomy. Not 'Mr Tembo', a joyous few minutes of gospel-tinged pop. It begins with a gently strummed ukulele, too, which might just be enough to reclaim that instrument from the evil clutches of Match.com adverts and whimsical cover versions of rock classics. The titular Mr Tembo, by the way, is an orphaned elephant Albarn met in Tanzania.

Andy Welch, writer

**6. The Phantom Band**
The Wind That Cried The World

It's been more than three years since Glasgow's Phantom Band released 'The Wants', their second album of splendid druidic krautrock. Thankfully, little has changed in the meantime. This, the first track from next month's 'Strange Friend', builds from an electronic pulse to a kind of motorik acid folk, with Rick Anthony in fine baritone and his band bellowing out "oh oh oh"s like the Merry Men over twinkling synths.

Matthew Horton, writer

7. Chance The Rapper
Home Studio (Back Up In This Bitch)

When Chance The Rapper told us at the beginning of the year that he and James Blake were moving in together in LA and building a home studio, we expected results. Sexy results. There's no sign of roomie Blake on this surprise, experimental Chance flow, though – just the sound of the best young rapper on the planet taking a simple beat and opening straight up to the world. I guess this is what you call #nofilter.

Kevin EG Perry, writer

8. Circa Waves
100 Strangers

Early offerings 'Get Away' and 'Good For Me' set Circa Waves up as devotees of The Strokes and Libertines school of early-'00s indie. '100 Strangers' finds them paying homage a little closer to home. Opening on a shimmering guitar line, there are hints of The Smiths' melodic nous but interpreted with the youthful vim of a band who still worship at the altar of 'Whatever People Say I Am...'

Lisa Wright, writer

9. The Orwells
Let It Burn

Seemingly written about the perils of catching gonorrhea, Mario Cuomo's ode to a one-night stand gone wrong is also proof that The Orwells are gonna ace it across festival fields this summer. With three chords spread over three minutes of 2002-indebted garage rock, it's way more fine-tuned than this year's other great punk hopes, Eagulls and Perfect Pussy. But, crucially, it's no less fun.

Matt Wilkinson, New Music Editor

10. Sivu
Dumb

Atlantic Records signing Sivu has got an EP out called 'Can't Stop Now', which cements his reputation as a one-man Bombay Bicycle Club. So this cover of Nirvana's 1993 'In Utero' track 'Dumb' comes as something of a surprise. It sees James Page abandon delicate, quivering vocals for a flat drawl set to a synth drone that makes the line "I think I'm dumb, or maybe just happy" sound just plain creepy.

Hazel Sheffield, writer

ESSENTIAL NEW TRACKS

► LISTEN TO THEM ALL AT NME.COM/ONREPEAT NOW

11. Haunted Hearts Johnny Jupiter

Debuting in 2012 but only now following up with an album, Haunted Hearts is the husband-and-wife duo of Dum Dum Girls' Dee Dee Penny and Crocodiles frontman Brandon Welchez. They claim krautrock was an influence during recording, which explains the metronomic ticking and phased electronics. That aside, the balance of power is tipped far more towards Penny's '80s glam than Welchez's fuzzed-up garage-rock.

Dan Stubbs, News Editor

12. Fist City Let's Rip

The effortless good cheer of Fist City's spiky pop-punk didn't stop some swivel-eyed fundamentalists dubbing the band "reptilian hermaphrodites". More fool those cretins though, as the quartet's rep has mushroomed since. An imminent reissue of their 2012 album 'It's 1983 Grow Up' is bolstered by two bonus tracks, including 'Let's Rip', which recalls The Replacements' scuffed power-pop melodies and, in frontman Kier Griffiths' excited gasps, The Cure.

Noel Gardner, writer

13. The War On Drugs Mind Games

The War On Drugs are indebted to the works of post-1960s John Lennon, which explains why they covered his 'Mind Games' at a recent live show. Adam Granduciel's heartfelt vocals are no less mesmerising than on the group's own material, and they can't resist a couple of choice Springsteen-esque guitar solos. The Philadelphia group have well and truly paid their dues to the former Beatle.

James Balmont, writer

14. Fucked Up Year Of The Dragon

The latest instalment in the Canadian punks' 'Zodiac' series of releases ('Year Of The Pig'/'...Rat'/'...Ox' etc), 'Year Of The Dragon' serves as an appetiser for their fourth album 'Glass Boys', out in June. Like its predecessors, it's 18 minutes (frontman Damian Abraham basically has time to make a cup of tea in the middle) of tempestuous hardcore, melodic growling and flight-fingered guitar solos. FU are back, and are *still* bloody brutal.

Greg Cochran, Editor, NME.COM

15. Nas I'm A Villain

'I'm A Villain' was recorded sometime in the early '90s, but it's being released now as part of the re-released 20th anniversary repackage of Nas' bar-raising debut album 'Illmatic'. It's a stone-cold gem produced by Large Professor that showcases Nas' slick lyrical genius and samples James Brown's 'The Payback' over its boom-bap beats. When Nas raps "my voice is like magic", it's hard to disagree.

Lucy Jones, Deputy Editor, NME.COM



16. Jamie xx Sleep Sound

The proper release of Jamie xx's 'Sleep Sound' (first heard on a Pional mix last year) feels appropriate for the supposed start of spring: the sunny steel drums of 2011's 'Far Nearer' have been swapped for deep, gorgeous submersion and a warmly human sense of hesitation, the clipped beat grappling for pace with a ribboning male vocal sample, a hiccuping female voice and teased allusions to house.

Laura Snapes, Features Editor

17. Benjamin Booker Violent Shiver

Blues. Skiffle. Rock'n'roll. The drumming of Meg White. 'Violent Shiver' takes inspiration from all of that. But it's made great by Benjamin Booker's vocal, which is rough and loud and harsh with that all-American whiskey/cigarette/flu type of hoarseness. The guy's from the great musical city of New Orleans, too, and his proficiency on the guitar hints at someone who's been playing the instrument for most of his 20-odd years. Simple and effective.

Tom Howard, Assistant Editor

18. The Silver Palms Superstar

The Silver Palms from Atlanta, Georgia are releasing their debut single 'Superstar' on National Anthem, the label that was behind early releases from Haim and The Orwells. Like the latter, the quartet deal in rough and ready garage guitars but, unlike Mario Cuomo's gang, they have an air of romance about them, swapping booze-induced sleaze for sweeter lines like "I wanna hold you/You're my superstar".

Rhian Daly, Assistant Reviews Editor

19. Slint Pam

Taken from an upcoming boxset reissue of the Louisville pioneers' 'Spiderland', it's easy to see why Slint decided to leave this previously unheard offcut off that album. In stark contrast to the cult classic's restraint, 'Pam' is a frantic five minutes of scalpel-sharp proto-metal guitar riffs delivered at a frighteningly fast pace. It has shades of the dusky malevolence that made 'Spiderland' so special, but with the brakes cut and safety wheels off.

Al Horner, Assistant Editor, NME.COM

20. SZA feat. Chance The Rapper Childs Play

SZA, who's signed to Top Dawg (home of Kendrick Lamar and Schoolboy Q), makes music that feels so Californian you forget she's actually from New Jersey. 'Childs Play', from her upcoming debut album, 'Z', is slow-jam heaven – a super-sparse beat; breathy, deceptively sweet singing; well-placed backing vocals and a Chance The Rapper verse so relaxed it's like he's talking to himself. Sunlit and perfectly pitched.

Phil Hebblethwaite, writer



The Week

► EVERYTHING THAT MATTERS IN MUSIC ■ EDITED BY DAN STUBBS

Is this it?

It looks as though this backstage encounter between two Strokes at SXSW was a fraught one. But appearances can be deceptive...

A heated discussion or a friendly pre-gig slap on the back? When this shot emerged of Strokes bandmates Albert Hammond Jr and Julian Casablancas backstage at South By Southwest before Julian's solo show earlier this month, it sparked speculation that the pair were caught in the middle of a furious row. Not so: in fact, the band are pulling back together and hope to have a new Strokes album ready to go in 2015. "We were probably making some kind of joke," Albert says of the shot. "Someone wrote that we were arguing, but that's not even close. I would never do that before his show. It's funny – he was nervous and I was excited for him, so it looks like an argument."

The Strokes are confirmed to play at the Governors Ball Music Festival in New York on June 7, but Albert hints that this won't be the only Strokes activity this year – and that the band will hopefully use the show as a launchpad for working on new material. "I imagine there'll be Strokes stuff throughout the year and then hopefully – maybe – an album in the new year," he said.

"That's the dream. Am I saying that that's what's happening? No. But I'm saying that's definitely, probably, in everyone's minds. We're definitely not a band that would play these shows just to randomly play them."

In the meantime, Julian will release his second solo album with new band The Voidz this year. Albert considers it to have hints of The Strokes: "We all have a bit of it inside of us," he says. The sound takes in clattery garage pop, heavily treated experimental rock and the influence of retro arcade themes. It's in marked contrast to a new solo album Albert is hoping to record in June. "One of the songs sounds like early Talking Heads meets '80s David Bowie, which is exciting. Another one has thuddy drums, a heavy guitar riff and extreme distortion," he says. It means discarding his previous plan of only releasing EPs. "I've been getting too much guff that another EP won't make a big enough splash. So I'm like, OK, fine, fuck you, I'll do more!" Whether separately or together, it looks like Strokes fans have plenty to look forward to in the next 12 months. ■ MARK BEAUMONT



Julian Casablancas and Albert Hammond Jr backstage before Julian's show at SXSW, March 15, 2014



Robert Smith's band bring the hits and Suede play 'Dog Man Star' at charity shows

The Cure (Robert Smith, centre) at the Royal Albert Hall, March 29

The Cure go big for Teenage Cancer Trust

With Noel Gallagher in the driving seat, last year's Teenage Cancer Trust concerts provided much to live up to – not least the one-off union of Blur's Damon Albarn and the Oasis chief himself. But Roger Daltrey, frontman of The Who and this year's TCT curator, has an enviable contacts book. He picked up the gauntlet thrown down by Gallagher by booking two beloved bands with more than 60 years' experience between them to perform at London's Royal Albert Hall last weekend – with The Cure turning in a 45-song, three-hour-plus set on two consecutive nights.

"Roger Daltrey's been needling me to play for a while," says a wild-haired Robert Smith backstage after the second performance on Saturday. "The Who were part of a generation that I reacted against, but I've met a lot of people of that generation who admire what we do, which I've always found astonishing. They like the fact that we're carrying on a tradition of British bands that do weird stuff."

The band's epic performances spanned their 35-year career, but Smith's attention right now is firmly on the future, with an album – tentatively titled '4:14 Scream' – due this year.

Set to be the first album since the addition of former Tin Machine member Reeves Gabrels on guitar, the album's origins are in an argument Smith had with his label over 2008's '4:13 Dream', and it contains songs originally intended for the would-be double album. "It's a mixture of new stuff that we're doing with this line-up and stuff we finished with the old line-up during the sessions for '4:13 Dream'," he explains. "It was just pure bloody-mindedness why the tracks weren't included on the last album. I was so fucking angry that [the label] wouldn't release a double album I wouldn't give them the other songs. There were a number of reasons why I felt unable to complete what we were doing with the last line-up. It was impossible to just get another group and bang out the songs we didn't release. It would have been wrong."

The following day, Suede celebrated the 20th anniversary of fan-favourite album 'Dog Man Star' by playing the 1994 LP in its entirety, plus a set of greatest hits. They too have begun work on a new album to follow last year's career-rejuvenating 'Bloodsports'. "Discovering that we can still make new music was a huge thing for us," says singer Brett Anderson the afternoon before the show. "We've had a session in a studio in Belgium, and we were in Sarm Studios [in London] a few weeks ago, tinkering, chipping away. There's more space in the recordings, it's sounding more cinematic – but it's still early days."

The band's relationship with Teenage Cancer Trust was cemented back in 2010. "The very first thing we did once we got back together was the reunion show for Teenage Cancer Trust and it's such a big part of the band now that we jumped at the chance to do it again," says bassist Mat Osman. Anderson agrees: "The 2010 gig was possibly my favourite ever show in 25 years of playing live." ■ LISA WRIGHT



Suede's Brett Anderson, March 30

MY LIFE IN A SUITCASE

FIVE TOURING ESSENTIALS

Tom Fleming



Wild Beasts



BOOK
The Hour Of The Star by Clarice Lispector

"I always take this with me. It was written when the author was dying of cancer, and it's about how everyone is trying to be the hero in their own life story."

DVD

Breaking Bad

"We have 'band series' and 'crew series', so the band series will be something cerebral like *The Wire* and the crew series will be something like *Game Of Thrones*. They cross over with *Breaking Bad*."

FILM

This Is Spinal Tap

"It's the only choice – it's not humour, it's documentary. The group discussions they have with their management come hilariously close to what being in a band is really like."

GAME

Knifey Boxey

"We inherited a game because our tech also worked for Enter Shikari."

You get a kitchen knife and you shove it through a cardboard box. The outcome is the action."



HOME COMFORT
Jumper

"My girlfriend made me a jumper, which is a pretty sad answer but I always have that with me. It reminds me of her and it's fucking warm."



#DammeCold

SEMI-NAKED CROWD SURFING?



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THE MINI INTERVIEW



Richard Ayoade

Actor, presenter
and director

You've got Dinosaur Jr's J Mascis playing a caretaker in your new film *The Double*. How did that happen?

"We asked him! He has this great laconic voice and it felt like he was the right person to show how little the characters [in the film] care. He's my favourite musician, so it was a thrill."

You've made videos for Arctic Monkeys, Vampire Weekend and Kasabian. Any plans to make one for Dinosaur Jr?

"They're a hard band to do videos for because they're so unique. They're so good that visuals ruin them somehow. You just want to see them play instead."

What was it about the concept of *The Double* that appealed to you?

"I liked that there is this character, Simon James, who's really put upon and invisible and then this 'double' appears, James Simon, who is the opposite. If that happened in real life, everyone would remark on it, there'd be high jinks, possibly media interest, but in the story no-one even notices that they look the same. It's a funny idea."

What would your 'double' be like?

"Someone considerate and not a disaster socially and emotionally. Maybe they'd be into yachting..."

■ KATE HUTCHINSON

Record Store Day 2014: the key releases

The list of releases for Record Store Day on April 19 is full of rare treats. Here, the artists tell us the story behind 10 of them...



XFM's John Kennedy at the pressing plant

Various Artists, 'XFM X-Posure Sessions On Vinyl'

John Kennedy curates a compilation of radio sessions for the War Child charity



We're used to paying through the nose for Record Store Day's various picture discs, coloured vinyl and heavyweight

reissues, but one of this year's biggest releases won't cost you a dime – depending on your conscience. Cherry-picked from the last few years of John Kennedy's long-running XFM X-Posure sessions, 'XFM X-Posure Sessions On Vinyl' features live tracks from the likes of Savages, Drenge, Anna Calvi and Toy, and will be given away for free in the hope that recipients make a donation to War Child, RSD 2014's official charity. "We wanted to give it away as a treat," says Kennedy, "but a £10 minimum donation seems a fair price to me; none of these things have been released in any format before, and this is probably the only place you'll ever be able to hear them. Some Record Store Day releases are really expensive – you can be charged £8 for a one-sided seven-inch, so

a £10 donation for this record seems like a bargain to me."

Because everyone involved in the project donated their services for free, the pressing has been kept to just 1,000 copies, making it an instant collector's item. For Kennedy, compiling an LP from the X-Posure sessions was "a dream come true", but tricky to get right. "We've recorded so many sessions over the years that it was difficult to know where to start, so we've tried to highlight how strong the British independent scene is right now by drawing on sessions from the last couple of years," he says. "It's nice to shine a light on how vital and exciting that scene is and one of the things I really like about the album is that there are a few tracks that sound quite different from the original recordings – any time The Computers have come in to do a session, they've always interpolated other songs into what they do, so their version of 'Single Bed' has a bit of 'When A Man Loves A Woman' in there. These recordings are one-off moments that capture the bands in their development stages."

Tracklist

Savages 'Husbands'
Drenge 'Backwaters'
Embers 'Sins Unknown'
Landshapes 'Insomniacs Club'
Daughter 'Youth'
Anna Calvi 'Sing For Me'
The Computers 'Single Bed'
Wrongtom Meets Deemas J
'Freestyle'
Glitches 'RGB'
Summer Camp 'Two Chords'
Toy 'Motoring'
Charlie Boyer And The Voyeurs
'Be Glamorous'



Jason
Pierce

Various Artists, 'The Space Project'

Sounds from space inspire new material from a cerebral bunch, including Spiritualized



Featuring contributions from Youth Lagoon, Beach House and more, 'The Space Project' is a

collection of songs built around 'sounds' recorded by NASA's Voyager space probes. We spoke to Jason Pierce – whose band Spiritualized turn in undoubted highlight 'Always Together With You (The Bridge Song)' – about the project.

How did you get involved with 'The Space Project'?

Jason Pierce: "It was set up by Fat Possum, who I'm signed to, so there was no thought in getting me involved. Plus I was broke. That was my main motivation. They said they've give me \$1,500 to do a drone, which I can

do in my sleep. And they got lucky, because I didn't go in to write a tune, but I came out with that song."

The record's concept didn't appeal to you?

JP: "They said they'd made recordings of the planets, but you can't record in a vacuum. There's so much crap about how they did it. Basically, somebody's taken another form, like an infra-red or an electromagnetic wave – something you can record – and made that

into a sound. They're pretty sounds, but they sounded too much like what you'd expect them to. They sound too 'right', if that makes sense."

Do you now feel inspired to do the next Spiritualized record, then?

JP: "Yeah, as much as anything kicks me off. It's lit a very long and slow fuse. Everything I put out has got to have some justification behind it, and as you do more work, it gets harder, because you have to justify it against everything else you've already released. But when you remove that by doing a film score or a remix, it's not your work. And this was like that."

Tracklist

Porcelain Raft 'Glove'
The Antlers 'Jupiter'
Mutual Benefit 'Terraform'
Anna Meredith 'Miranda'
The Spiritualized Mississippi Space Program 'Always Together With You (The Bridge Song)'
The Holydrug Couple 'Amphitrites Lost'
Youth Lagoon 'Worms'
Blues Control 'Blues Danube'
Beach House 'Saturn Song'
Zones 'Moonlet'
Absolutely Free 'EARTH I'
Jesu 'Song Of Earth'
Benoit & Sergio 'Long Neglected Words'
Larry Gus 'Sphere Of Lo (For Georg Cantor)'

Garbage with Brody Dalle, 'Girls Talk'/'Time Will Destroy Everything'

BFFs Shirley Manson and Brody Dalle unite



After Garbage frontwoman Shirley Manson guested on Dalle's track 'Meet The Foetus/ Oh The Joy', it was probably inevitable that the former Distiller would return the favour. But 'Girls Talk' goes beyond mere quid pro quo. "Brody and I have a genuine connection," says Manson. "We have a long history together, so we really trust one another."

The single was written (but never released) as a bonus track for the 2007 best-of album 'Absolute Garbage'. Manson was inspired to revisit the song after seeing a photograph of toilet graffiti (now the single's cover) taken by Sophie Muller. It read: 'Girls talk so much shit.' "In my head I knew Brody's voice would be perfect," says Manson, "because I wanted the sound of rage and she does that spectacularly well."

The song itself is about "female bullying; the art of micro-aggression that women have perfected so well. The ability to say something really devastating to another woman in such a way that allows the aggressor not to have to be held accountable for their own aggression. It gets explained away as a misunderstanding or an accidental slight. It's an insidious and incredibly damaging part of our culture."

Garbage's
Shirley
Manson and
Brody Dalle



Temples/Jagwar Ma, 'Shelter Song' (Jagwar Ma Jono's Wrong Mix), 'Man I Need' (Temples remix)

The Heavenly labelmates take a hacksaw to each other's songs



The pick of Heavenly Records' RSD releases finds Temples' James Bagshaw sprinkling sonic fairy dust all over Jagwar Ma's 'Man I Need', while Jono Ma reciprocates by turning 'Shelter Song' inside-out. According to Bagshaw, the remix swap was initiated by Jono, who "approached us

about remixing 'Shelter Song' and we thought, 'Well, we've got to do something in return.' We chose 'Man I Need' because we imagined being able to put our spin on it, but it wouldn't have happened if we hadn't been fans of each other's music."

Despite that, the bands didn't actually meet until the NME Awards with Austin, Texas in February, by which point the

remixes had already been done. For Bagshaw, who had never remixed a track before, it was "a challenge. I'm used to building songs from scratch."

And what does he make of Jono's take on 'Shelter Song'? "It's really fun. It was nothing like we'd do, so there's a certain beauty to it, in that sense!"



Temples

More over the page ➔

Radkey, '9 Lives At The 100 Club'

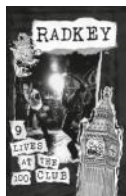
US trio's cassette captures London performance for posterity

It was only a few weeks ago that Radkey tore London's iconic 100 Club a new one, but that hasn't stopped the Radkey siblings from rush-releasing a live document of what bassist Isaiah calls "one of the biggest moments of our lives" in time for Record Store Day. "The 100 Club is such a legendary place and we were really excited to play there and sell it out," he explains, "so we figured instead of doing a seven-inch cover version for Record Store Day, we'd do something that meant a lot more to us."

The result is '9 Lives At The 100 Club', which captures the Missouri punks in all their messy, chaotic glory. "It was a great gig," remembers Isaiah. "The crowd was overlapping onto the stage, so every once in



Radkey's 100 Club gig will be released on cassette



a while they'd knock the mic into Dee's face, and you can hear that on the tape. We knew we were recording it for release, so we were trying our best, but we also wanted to keep it loose – it's not about being perfect."

Fittingly, then, the album is only being issued on the most imperfect of formats – the humble cassette tape. "They're just really fun!" says Isaiah. "I felt like a limited-edition cassette would be a really cool thing to have, whether you even listened to it or not. Plus I've always liked them – I like the look of them – and just like people used to collect tapes of bands' live shows, we thought would be cool to mimic that tradition with this."

Various Artists, 'Non Violent Femmes'

Female-fronted bands rule in all-new Kanine Records compilation



Back in 2003, the Brooklyn-based Kanine Records released 'NY: The Next Wave', a compilation that summed up the spirit of turn-of-the-century New York. Eleven years later, they're following it up with 'Non Violent Femmes', and the twist is that all the bands are fronted by women. Label boss Lio Kanine gives us the lowdown.

How did the idea for 'Non Violent Femmes' come about?



Lio Kanine: "Over the past couple of years, we noticed that we've been

working with a lot of female-fronted guitar bands, and it seems there are a lot more girls taking charge and doing cool stuff in the indie-rock community. We wanted to show people that there's something going on."

What do you think is driving that change?

LK: "People are becoming more open-minded. You used to predominantly see guys in record stores, but now you see a mix of everyone getting into music and going out to shows."

You've said this compilation was partly inspired by NME's legendary 'C86' tape – how so?

LK: "The whole idea of that cassette was that the bands who were on it weren't the biggest bands on the cover of the

magazine, but they were spearheading something new. That's kind of similar to what we wanted to do with this compilation. We felt these bands were on the cusp of something that should be recognised."

The compilation is almost exclusively new material. Was that a challenge?

LK: "It was. It took me nine months to put this together and there were bands I couldn't include because they didn't have time to come up with something. We wanted all-new songs to make it special, otherwise I don't think it'd be something worth collecting. Joanna Gruesome were the exception – I wanted them on there as I'm a big fan and I really think they belong on it."



Ezra Koenig

Chromeo/Ezra Koenig, 'Ezra's Interlude'

The Vampire Weekender links up with pals Chromeo



The last time Vampire Weekend's Ezra Koenig teamed up with Canadian electro-funkers Chromeo, the result was the sublime 'I Could Be Wrong'. Four years later, new collaboration 'Ezra's Interlude' – taken from Chromeo's upcoming fourth LP, 'White Women' – is a different proposition. "It's kind of like a palate cleanser on the album," says frontman Dave Macklovitch. "You know how at the end of 'Abbey Road' there's that song 'Her Majesty', which is about a minute long and just Paul on the acoustic guitar? That's my favourite song on that album, and I always wanted to do something like that." The song itself was originally written for Vampire Weekend, but never

used. "When I heard it I was like, 'Dude, I love this. I want to use it on the next Chromeo record.' And he said OK. We decided to release it for Record Store Day because we felt there was no other way it would get a full release. It was never going to be a single – it's less than two minutes long."

Tracklist

Speedy Ortiz 'No Below'
Flowers 'All I Want'
Eternal Summers
'Goodnight Goodbye'
Teen 'Sunday 5'
Beach Day 'All My Friends Were Punks'
Beverly 'Honey Do'
Joanna Gruesome
'Secret Surprise'
Bleeding Rainbow 'Glynis'
Tashaki Miyaki 'I Came'
Is/Is 'Chimera'
Beaches 'If You Had Wings You'd Fly'

Various Artists, '5'

Resurgent indie Infectious Records celebrate their fifth birthday



To celebrate the fifth anniversary of their 2009 relaunch, Infectious Records have something special planned: not only did the label host a gig at The Victoria in Dalston, London on March 27 featuring the cream of their roster (Alt-J, The Acid, Superfood and The Temper Trap), they're also releasing a special compilation, titled '5', to mark



Superfood

the occasion. By now you've probably heard Superfood's cover of Beastie Boys' '(You Gotta) Fight For Your Right (To Party!)', which pops up on the disc. What you might not know is that it started life as a Superfood song. "We were in the studio playing through some ideas," says frontman Dom Ganderton, "and we realised this song had the same bass pattern as the Beastie Boys track, so we just used it for that."

Perhaps the most surprising things about '5', however, are Gus from Alt-J's tracks. With the band working on

their second album and new material at a premium, the band took another tack, contributing a recording of a short story written by keyboardist Gus Unger-Hamilton. "It's a sort of semi-fictional recollection from my childhood," he says. "There's no musical accompaniment, it's all spoken word – definitely not a 'song', but because it's only got a run of 500 copies and people will have to go out of their way to hear it, we thought we'd reward them with something a bit unusual."

You weren't tempted to sneak out a new track, then? "We don't have that much spare material knocking around!" he laughs. "Our songs are worked and worked and worked."

Tracklist

Gus Alt-J 'Pt. I'
Dreng 'The Worst'
Superfood '(You Gotta) Fight For Your Right (To Party!)'
Local Natives 'Out Getting Ribs'
The Acid 'Onyx'
Vance Joy 'Snaggletooth'
Gus Alt-J 'Pt. II'
The Temper Trap '5 Years'
Cloud Control 'Praise You'
RY X 'Vampires'
These New Puritans 'Field Of Reeds Outro'
Gus Alt-J 'Pt. III'



Merchandise, with Carson Cox (far right)

Merchandise/Milk Music/Destruction Unit, 'USA '13'

The former tourmates join forces for a split LP. Merchandise's Carson Cox gives us the skinny



This release has its roots in the tour you did last year – what are your favourite memories of it?

"Watching D Unit and Milk Music every night was an experience I'll always cherish. Every night, they killed. The bad shows were good too. We scammed and scuzzed our way across the US like we were the Grateful Dead or something. Hard shit. One day all the bad stuff will come out in my memoir."

Musically, you guys are all quite different. What's the common ground?

"We all started in the same national scene. It's a record made of pure love for each other and pure hate for everything else. I like to

think of it like those old SST comps with Minutemen and Flag and Overkill... all deep punk-rock shit is like that to me."

You've said you want to reinvent yourselves as a pop band. Is your track here, 'Figured Out', a step towards that?

"Maybe a bit, just 'cos it's us. The 'Figured Out' demo was a song we put out on a tape in 2009 for one gig in Miami. We re-recorded it for the split 'cos we didn't want it to be shelved any more.

Tracklist

Merchandise 'No You And Me'
Merchandise 'Figured Out'
Destruction Unit 'Feed The Dogs'
Destruction Unit 'Church Of Jesus Christ'
Milk Music 'Effigy' (Creedence Clearwater Revival cover)
Milk Music 'Thrashing In The Unknown'
Milk Music 'You Can't Put Your Arms Around A Memory' (Johnny Thunders cover)

We probably won't ever play it live. We have too many songs."

How is your debut album coming along?

"The record is really big, so it's taken a ton of time – tracking sitar and harmonium and shit like that. The vocals are taking a long time too, just 'cos I hate doing them. Making it a complete thing is hard but it's something I think we're pretty good at."

MØ, 'Say You'll Be There'

The Danish electronic artist shows her playful side with a cover version



Are you a big Spice Girls fan?

"Yeah, the Spice Girls were actually the band who inspired me to start writing songs back when I was a little kid. The whole thing about girl power and having fun with your friends, it's something a little girl can relate to."

What have you done to the song?

"I've made it a bit more me. I thought it would be interesting to take one of their pop songs and bring it into an indie universe."

Are you one of the people dressed as the Spice Girls on the cover of the single?

"No, but my best friend is Ginger Spice in the picture. I used to dress up too, but my parents couldn't find any photos."

Who was your favourite member of the Spice Girls?

"Sporty Spice. I was a tomboy back then and I thought it was cool that she wore sportswear and was so energetic. She's the one that sang the best, too."

Karen Marie Ørsted, aka MØ



VICKY McCURE

ROGER EVANS

MARTIN FREEMAN

MAXINE PEAKE

INTRODUCING JONNY OWEN

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Craig Nicholls of The Vines, who has Asperger's, and (far left) The Fish Police

THERE ARE GREAT DISABLED BANDS – IF ONLY THEY COULD GET A GIG

BY RICHARD PHOENIX

The Sauna Youth member and promoter of a tour showcasing punk bands with learning disabilities thinks it's time to tackle prejudice on the gig scene



Last June, I set up a project called Constant Flux to put on gigs and tours for musicians with learning disabilities. I've been involved in bands in the DIY punk scene for 15 years. In my day job I work for a charity that promotes the involvement of people with learning disabilities in the arts. Through this I meet lots of musicians, many of whom want to do all the things my band did, like rehearse, gig and tour, but they aren't able to because they have additional support needs that can't be met.

The perception of music made by people with learning disabilities tends to be patronising, which is really frustrating. I see artists with plenty of talent and potential who are being prevented from playing because

of the extra costs involved in helping them perform. For example, there have been times with my band Sauna Youth when we don't have anywhere to stay before we turn up to a gig, so we might have to sleep in the van or on someone's floor. But if you're working with vulnerable adults, that isn't an option. They need to know that their needs are taken care of – be it an accessible venue to stay in, the right support staff or access to medication. That's a huge financial cost, and it's why touring has traditionally been seen as impossible for people with disabilities. For one of the bands I work with, the basic cost of putting them on is £400. It's difficult to ask a promoter for a guarantee like that for a relatively unknown group.

What's going on in music is a microcosm of what's going on in wider society. People with disabilities are facing massive funding cuts to services and benefits. A big reason why disabled musicians aren't getting their music heard is because of the cost involved, not because of lack of talent, and that means fans are missing out on great new bands.

Last year, I got a grant from the Arts Council to put on a tour. We're doing it again this month with the band The Fish Police. They're a great example of what can be achieved if musicians with disabilities get the right support. We're hoping this will be an example of best practice to show to promoters. We've got lots of ideas for how to make it long-term, but it would be amazing if promoters could subsidise the cost of gigs.

It's surprising how many people with learning disabilities live in the UK but how little contact a lot have with each other. It's not just physical disabilities – people with Asperger's and autism might on the surface appear very able, but they need a lot of support to integrate into society. When Craig Nicholls of The Vines spoke about his experience of Asperger's, it was a positive thing to show other musicians what can be achieved.

In a perfect world, I'd love there to be no need for projects like Constant Flux to exist. I want music fans to be integrated and united, because it's natural and normal for people with learning disabilities to be as much a part of their music community as everyone else. ■

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

LOST ALBUMS

#23

The Mighty Hannibal King Hannibal: Truth (1973)

Chosen by Jared Swilley, Black Lips

"You know who's criminally underrated? My mentor, The Mighty Hannibal. He was an old soul singer, a contemporary of James Brown, Otis Redding and Sam Cooke, but he was really radical. He was a Black Panther and a member of The Nation Of Islam, so he got blacklisted and got into drugs. So he kind of got swept aside, but we have actually backed him up before and I brought him back to Atlanta. I used to talk to him every day [he died in January]. His first album, 'Truth', should be an American classic soul hit, but it's not. It's incredible."

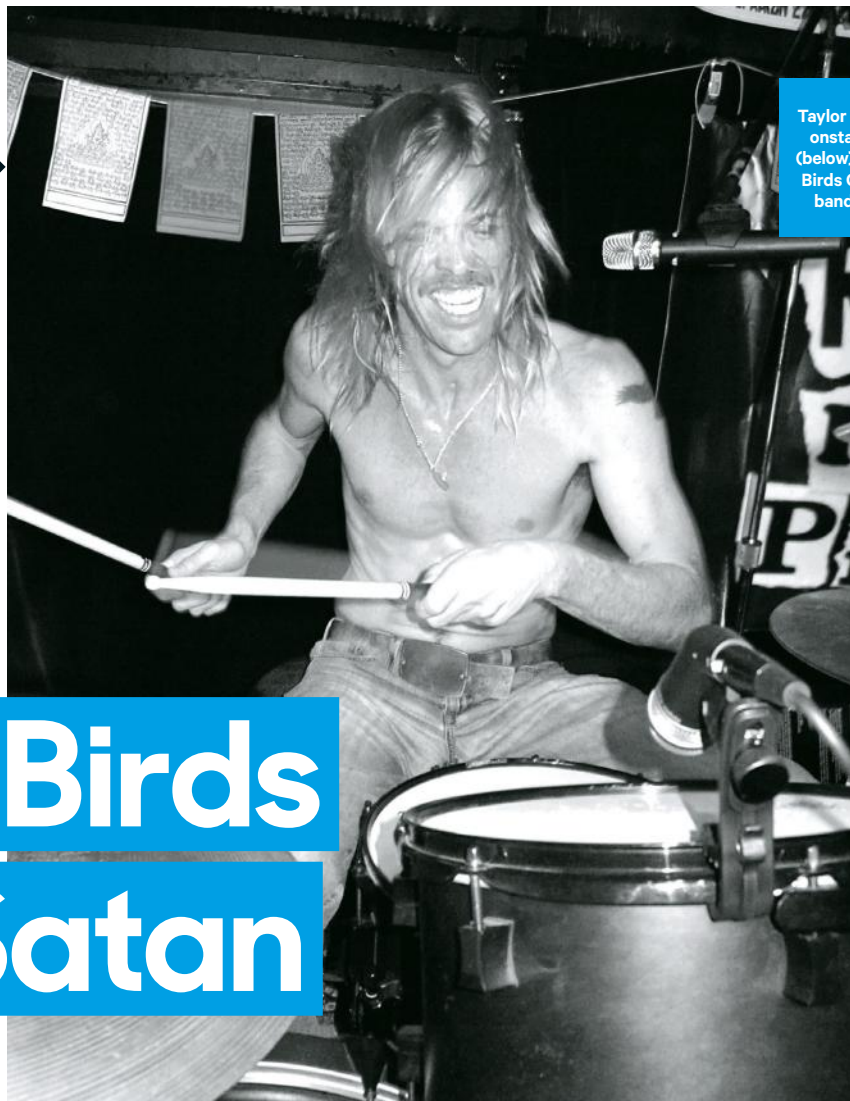


► THE DETAILS

- **RELEASE DATE** 1973
- **LABEL** Aware
- **BEST TRACKS** Hymn No 5, The Truth Shall Make You Free, Wake Up
- **WHERE TO FIND IT** It's very hard to find, but the singles compilation 'Hannibalism' is more readily available.
- **LISTEN ONLINE** Not available

IN THE STUDIO

Foo Fighters drummer Taylor Hawkins enlists old friends – plus Dave Grohl – to create “a prog-rock fandango”



Taylor Hawkins onstage and (below) with his Birds Of Satan bandmates

The Birds Of Satan

You have four free days in your band's recording studio to lay down an album you've been writing since you were 15 years old. You've assembled old mates from your part-time covers band and everything's set. Then, in the middle of recording, Dave Grohl walks in and wants to play. What do you do? Well, you instantly drop everything and construct a funk-prog found-sound opus from leftover ideas on his mobile phone. Obviously.

“Dave was only there for two days,” says Taylor Hawkins, the perma-cheery drummer with Foo Fighters, “but when he came in, I’m like, ‘I wanna write a song that’s a prog-rock fandango with insanity parts flying around everywhere. I want it to sound like [Queen’s] ‘March Of The Black Queen’ meets ‘Station To Station’ by Bowie meets fucking ‘Band On The Run’ meets ‘Three Days’ by Jane’s Addiction.”

“I WANTED IT TO SOUND LIKE QUEEN MEETS BOWIE MEETS JANE’S ADDICTION. AND WE DID IT, IN ONE DAY”
TAYLOR HAWKINS

Because who cares? And we did it, in one day.”

This was “The Ballad Of The Birds Of Satan”, the wild rock rampage adorned with crying babies, hair-rock riffs and Saxon squeals that opens the seven-track self-titled debut from The Birds Of Satan, a three-piece made up of Taylor, guitarist Mick Murphy and bassist Wiley Hodgden. They’ve been playing together as Chevy Metal in the gaps between Foo Fighters albums for the past 12 years. “It served as a drumming gym, if you will,” Hawkins explains. “Instead of sitting on my own in a room playing paradiddles, I’d rather jam with some bros and play old Deep Purple songs to keep me 15 forever. Which has been my goal ever since I turned 15.”

Where Taylor’s other band, The Coattail Riders, is his serious Foos side

project, Chevy Metal became one of the most in-demand covers acts in the world. “Dave played

Far Gone To See’, ‘The Birds Of Satan’ sprang into life as a mangled amalgam of desert rock, hair metal, MOR, hula, Queen-style piano

► THE DETAILS

- **TITLE** The Birds Of Satan
- **RELEASE DATE** April 14
- **LABEL** Shanabelle
- **PRODUCER** John Lousteau
- **RECORDED** Studio 606 West, Los Angeles
- **TRACKS** The Ballad Of The Birds Of Satan, Thanks For The Line, Pieces Of The Puzzle, Raspberries, Nothing At All, Wait Til Tomorrow, Too Far Gone To See
- **TAYLOR HAWKINS SAYS** “How do I write my lyrics? A lot of the time I just throw a load of fucking words at the board and see what it means.”

with us a bunch, which obviously adds a hundred thousand hits to your YouTube stats,” he says. So with Foo Fighters on hiatus and Grohl working on his Sun Studios documentary, Hawkins decided it was time to finally give Chevy Metal a moment in the sun. Jumping at the chance of some free time at Grohl’s 606 West Studio in LA (“I like to do things on the cheap when it comes to side projects”), he revisited song ideas he’s been sitting on for more than 20 years. “A track called ‘Wait Til Tomorrow,’” he says, “I’ve had that on piano, the section leading to the chorus, since I was 15 years old. Some of this shit’s old as fuck.”

With some help from Grohl (co-writer on ‘Raspberries’, ‘The Ballad Of...’ and ‘Wait Til Tomorrow’) and Foos guitarist Pat Smear (on ‘Too Far Gone To See’), ‘The Birds Of Satan’ sprang into life as a mangled amalgam of desert rock, hair metal, MOR, hula, Queen-style piano chorales and “dream of consciousness” lyrics. And so much more. ‘Pieces Of The Puzzle’, for instance, manages to merge gothic math-metal with pop hooks and breezy reggae-lite bits, while the post-grunge calypso of ‘Thanks For The Line’ is very much the right sort of Californian coke rock. “That’s about the early ’90s, living in Laguna Beach,” Taylor says. “I’m referring to me and my fucking bonehead friends back in 1990. We were just partying and doing blow all the time and not doing anything

with our lives. I was like, ‘We’re going nowhere, thanks for the line.’”

Taylor has clearly got his act together since. Imagine what he’d do with a *fortnight*.

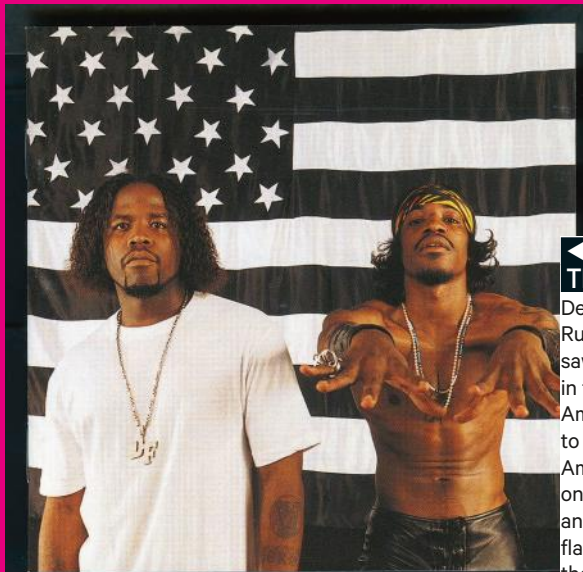
■ MARK BEAUMONT



ANATOMY OF AN ALBUM



"IT HADN'T BEEN DONE BEFORE"
André 3000



STORY BEHIND THE SLEEVE

Designed by artist Mike Rush, 'Stankonia's sleeve saw the pair photographed in front of a black-and-white American flag. It's intended to reflect the dark side of the American dream touched on in tracks such as 'BOB' and 'Gasoline Dreams'. The flag still hangs on the wall of the main recording room at Stankonia Studios.

THIS WEEK...

OutKast: Stankonia

As the band get ready for their 40-date world-tour comeback, we revisit their genre-busting rap epic

THE BACKGROUND

Having put Atlanta on the hip-hop map with their 1998 album 'Aquemini', one of the first blockbuster rap records to emerge from outside the genre's East and West Coast strongholds, André 3000 and Big Boi were resolute about staying in the Southern states for the follow-up.

Digging deep into their local scene, the pair bought the downtown recording space where they recorded the first OutKast track, a 1992 remix of TLC's 'What About Your Friends'. "We saw it as a way of staying true to our roots," said Big Boi at the time. Renaming their new HQ Stankonia Studios, they spent evenings at nearby soul, jazz, funk and salsa clubs scouting for local talent to collaborate with. The plan, according to André, was to "open [our sound] up and be free to express anything".

FIVE FACTS

1 In order to expand their sound, André and Big Boi decided to stop listening to hip-hop during the writing and recording of the album. Instead they listened almost exclusively to Jimi Hendrix, Chuck Berry, Little Richard, and Prince.

2 The name 'Stankonia' is inspired by a poster in André's bedroom of a futuristic city named Plutonia. André simply added the word 'stank' – slang for funky.

3 The duo bought Stankonia Studios from New Edition singer Bobby Brown after recording an OutKast track there in 1992.

4 After their collaboration on 'Stankonia's 'Slum Beautiful', Big Boi and CeeLo Green put together a joke band with rapper Sleepy Brown called Pimp Trick Gangsta Clique.

5 The album is OutKast's biggest seller to date, and gave them their highest charting UK single in 'Ms Jackson'. Peaking at Number Two, it was held off the top spot by Atomic Kitten's 'Whole Again'. The girl group's Kerry Katona claimed she'd "never even heard of The Outcasts" in a BBC radio interview.

LYRIC ANALYSIS

"She had fish fries and cookouts for my child's birthday/ I ain't invited"
– 'Ms Jackson'

After André's real-life split from Erykah Badu, he worries about becoming estranged from their young daughter.

"Don't everybody like the smell of gasoline?/ Well, burn motherfucker, burn American dream"
– 'Gasoline Dreams'

André and Big Boi warn that the American thirst for foreign oil is becoming a dangerous obsession.

"Be careful where you roam 'cos you might not make it home/ Don't you dare ever get lost or caught up in that sauce"
– 'Spaghetti Junction'

Essentially a ghetto spin on 'The Long And Winding Road', the track compares the life of impoverished young black men in the States to busy inner-city intersections – lightning-fast and deadly.

WHAT WE SAID THEN

"Think Prince's 'Sign 'O' The Times' and times by

a million." Steve Sutherland, *NME*, November 18, 2000

WHAT WE SAY NOW

Full of vibrant colours and funk flavours that opened the imaginations of Frank Ocean and Chance The Rapper, 'Stankonia' is still a wildly inventive listen.

FAMOUS FAN

"I'm the biggest OutKast fan. I have a shrine in my apartment dedicated to André. I took a door off a barn and had an artist take the lyrics from his verses [and put them] on this barn door. As soon as you walk into my apartment that's the first thing you see."

Drake, 2012

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"It was about doing something that hadn't been done before... We're from the 'hood, but that's not where our music stayed."

André 3000, *New York Times*, 2003

THE AFTERMATH

'Stankonia' catapulted the duo into the mainstream and ended up dividing them – their next album, 2003's 'Speakerboxxx/The Love Below', was really two solo LPs packaged as a double.

THE DETAILS

►RECORDED 1999–2000 ►RELEASE DATE October 31, 2000
►LENGTH 73:07 ►PRODUCERS Earthtone III, Organized Noize
►STUDIO Stankonia Studios, Atlanta ►HIGHEST UK CHART POSITION 10 ►WORLDWIDE SALES 4 million ►SINGLES BOB, Ms Jackson, So Fresh, So Clean ►TRACKLISTING ►1. Intro ►2. Gasoline Dreams (feat. Khujo) ►3. I'm Cool (Interlude) ►4. So Fresh, So Clean ►5. Ms Jackson ►6. Snappin' & Trappin' (feat. Killer Mike and J Sweet) ►7. DF (Interlude) ►8. Spaghetti Junction ►9. Kim & Cookie (Interlude) ►10. I'll Call Before I Come (feat. Gangsta Boo and Eco) ►11. BOB ►12. Xplosion (feat. B-Real) ►13. Good Hair (Interlude) ►14. We Luv Deez Hoez (feat. Backbone and Big Gipp) ►15. Humble Mumble (feat. Erykah Badu) ►16. Drinkin' Again (Interlude) ►17. ? ►18. Red Velvet ►19. Cruisin' In The ATL ►20. Gangsta Shit (feat. Slimm Calhoun, BlackOwned C-Bone and T-Mo) ►21. Toilet Tisha ►22. Slum Beautiful (feat. CeeLo Green) ►23. Pre-Nump (Interlude) ►24. Stankonia (Stanklove) (feat. Big Rube and Sleepy Brown)

NEWS DESK



THE NUMBERS

1

Number of copies of new album 'Once Upon A Time In Shaolin' Wu-Tang Clan will produce, tour around museums, and then sell for "millions"

2

Number of new albums Smashing Pumpkins will release in 2015

12 months

Lifespan of the doomed Twitter #music service, due to be nixed on April 18

£260k

Amount Coldplay pledged to DJ Jo Whitley for her 26-hour Sport Relief treadmill challenge

BIG MOUTH

"I would like the front cover to be a drawing of the killer whale from SeaWorld who features in the documentary *Blackfish*... Ideally I'd like him to be attacking a crowd of people, lashing out after being exploited."

Spot the subtle subtext in former *X Factor* winner **JAMES ARTHUR**'s tweets about his new mixtape



THE BIG QUESTION

WERE TOUCHÉ AMORÉ RIGHT TO SELL T-SHIRTS CELEBRATING THE DEATH OF WESTBORO BAPTIST CHURCH'S HOMOPHOBIC LEADER FRED PHELPS?



Dom Ganderton

Superfood

"Being happy that someone's died is not good in any way, even if they aren't nice people. It's not cool."



JJ Dunning

NME writer

"Celebrating someone's death proves the human race is like a big football crowd, bellowing 'Aaaaaah!' at someone who's just missed a penalty."



Rhys Buchanan

NME reader

"You shouldn't speak ill of the dead, but when the dead hold such archaic views on homosexuality, it's a bit different. I'd like to see the T-shirts in Topman."

Official RECORD STORE Chart

TOP 40 ALBUMS MARCH 30, 2014



NEW 01 Wilko Johnson & Roger Daltrey Going Back Home

Spurred on by his pancreatic cancer diagnosis, Wilko Johnson's collaboration with The Who's Roger Daltrey provides a fitting swansong to his career as the pair race through spiky new versions of Johnson's classics.

- ▼ 2 Lost In The Dream **The War On Drugs** SECRETLY CANADIAN
- 3 Symphonica **George Michael** EMI
- NEW 4 Singles **Future Islands** 4AD
- NEW 5 The Power Of Love **Sam Bailey** SYCO
- NEW 6 Odludek **Jimi Goodwin** HEAVENLY
- ▼ 7 The Take Off And Landing Of Everything **Elbow** FICTION
- ▼ 8 Love Letters **Metronomy** BECAUSE MUSIC
- NEW 9 Mess **Liars** MUTE
- ▼ 10 Girl **Pharrell Williams** COLUMBIA
- ▼ 11 A Perfect Contradiction **Paloma Faith** RCA
- NEW 12 Teeth Dreams **The Hold Steady** WASHINGTON SQUARE
- ▼ 13 If You Wait **London Grammar** METAL & DUST
- NEW 14 Goodbye Yellow Brick Road **Elton John** MERCURY
- ▼ 15 AM Arctic Monkeys DOMINO
- ▼ 16 Morning Phase **Beck** EMI
- NEW 17 Forcefield **Tokyo Police Club** MEMPHIS INDUSTRIES
- ▲ 18 Days Are Gone **Haim** POLYDOR
- ▲ 19 Timeless **Dr Hook** UMTV
- ▼ 20 Bad Blood **Bastille** VIRGIN
- ▼ 21 Kiss Me Once **Kylie Minogue** PARLOPHONE
- ▲ 22 Halcyon **Ellie Goulding** POLYDOR
- NEW 23 Live In Amsterdam **Beth Hart & Joe Bonamassa** PROVOCUE
- ▼ 24 Love In The Future **John Legend** COLUMBIA
- ▼ 25 Present Tense **Wild Beasts** DOMINO
- ▼ 26 Sun Structures **Temples** HEAVENLY
- NEW 27 World Of Joy **Howler** ROUGH TRADE
- ▼ 28 So Long, See You Tomorrow **Bombay Bicycle Club** ISLAND
- NEW 29 Native **OneRepublic** INTERSCOPE
- NEW 30 May Death Never Stop You **My Chemical Romance** REPRISE
- ▲ 31 Babel **Mumford & Sons** GENTLEMEN OF THE ROAD/ISLAND
- NEW 32 Supermodel **Foster The People** COLUMBIA
- NEW 33 Strangers **Simone Felice** TEAM LOVE
- ▼ 34 Atlas **Real Estate** DOMINO
- NEW 35 American IV: The Man Comes Around **Johnny Cash** LOST HIGHWAY
- ▼ 36 The Classic **Joan As Police Woman** PLAY IT AGAIN SAM
- ▼ 37 St Vincent **St Vincent** LOMA VISTA
- NEW 38 Born To Die **Lana Del Rey** POLYDOR
- ▼ 39 Man On The Rocks **Mike Oldfield** MERCURY
- NEW 40 Burn Your Fire For No Witness **Angel Olsen** JAGJAGUWAR

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 LEWKS DOWNHAM MARKET FOUNDED 1973

WHY IT'S GREAT Lewks is a thriving family-run business that sells the latest releases, as well as putting on film screenings, '60s nights and events at local venues.
TOP SELLER THIS WEEK Wilko Johnson & Roger Daltrey - 'Going Back Home'
THEY SAY "We offer excellent customer service and pride ourselves on going that extra mile."



WHO THE FUCK IS...



Quinshon Shingles

This aspiring rapper - stage name Sauce Da Boss - received compensation after claims he was forced by NYPD cops to rap for them during an unwarranted house raid in 2011. They reportedly said they'd let him go if his rhymes impressed. **And did he make the grade?** They released him after a minute, but Shingles took legal action and this week was awarded \$7500 in compensation. **How has his career progressed since?** It hasn't - he has now given up rapping. "That incident right there killed it for me," he said.



Kate Bush

The reclusive singer-songwriter, who last toured in 1979, sold out 22 dates at London's Hammersmith Apollo in just 15 minutes. Bush said she was "completely overwhelmed by the response to the shows".



Arcade Fire

It's hardly the kind of thing you can slip into a pocket, but that didn't prevent the theft of one of the band's giant papier-mâché heads from a concert in Bridgeport, Connecticut. They are appealing for its return.

GOOD WEEK ↔ BAD WEEK

AND FINALLY

Who's the Daddy?

The artist formerly known as Diddy has gone back to his original name, Puff Daddy, for his latest album 'MMM'. He has now had more name changes (six) than solo albums (five).

#Lessonz

A college in New York is offering the chance to study 'The sociology of Miley Cyrus'. A masters in twerking and doctorate in tongue-wagging presumably follows.

Bang the DJ

A Tiësto set was abandoned when the DJ knocked himself out on a TV screen moments before hitting the stage. Perhaps that's why rock stars throw them out of their hotel windows...

► Find these stories and more on NME.COM

SOUNDTRACK OF MY LIFE



The Strokes



LCD
Soundsystem

Finn Jones

Game Of
Thrones' Ser
Loras Tyrell



THE FIRST SONG I REMEMBER HEARING 'I'm Too Sexy' - Right Said Fred

"I used to sing along to this in my living room when I was about four, dancing around wildly with no shirt on and just a pair of oversized sunglasses. I remember feeling like a total badass."

THE FIRST SONG I FELL IN LOVE WITH 'All My Friends' - LCD Soundsystem

"My best friend gave me 'Sound Of Silver' as an 18th birthday present. It grabbed me after a couple of listens and hasn't let go since. I travelled to New York in 2011 for the final LCD Soundsystem show. Hearing that song played for the last time at Madison Square Garden was electric."

THE FIRST ALBUM I EVER BOUGHT 'The Best Of The Doors' - The Doors

"A friend had just moved into a new apartment and

there was an unused record player he didn't want. It was a little beat up and I had to work on it a bit, but I fixed it. Afterwards I went straight to the charity shops in search of vinyl. I picked up 'The Best Of The Doors'. I was 18 years

"BRIENNE OF TARTH HAD SOME SERIOUS MOVES AT THE WRAP PARTY"

old, and Jim Morrison had a big influence on me at that time."

THE SONG THAT MADE ME WANT TO BE IN A BAND 'Reptilia' - The Strokes

"I was the lead singer in a band at college. I remember hearing 'Reptilia' by The Strokes on my first day of sixth form and it really put the frontman spirit in me. I became obsessed with iconic rock singers. It got me into a lot of trouble..."

THE SONG I CAN NO LONGER LISTEN TO 'Some Things Change' - Saint Saviour

"Quite literally, some things change. I'm not gonna go into too much detail, but you know the story: love is there for a brief, passionate, all-consuming moment and then it changes. This song sums up that process all too painfully."

THE SONG THAT MAKES ME WANT TO DANCE 'Over And Over (Special 12-inch Disco Mix)' - Sylvester

"I came across Sylvester while at a Horse Meat Disco party a couple of years back. He's one of the most fearless icons of American disco in the '70s, and this is a ridiculous, killer track for a party. When the song starts to break down and everyone starts clapping and whooping, you can't help but join in and throw your cares away. I challenge you!"

THE SONG I DO AT KARAOKE 'Gangsta's Paradise' - Coolio

"I tend to shy away from karaoke, but when I was about nine I went through a stage of doing 'Gangsta's Paradise' at every opportunity. There have been some karaoke sessions involving the Game Of Thrones cast: we do 'Livin' On A Prayer' by Bon Jovi. Gwendoline Christie, who plays Brienne of Tarth, was bringing some serious

galactic dance moves at the wrap party."

THE SONG I CAN'T GET OUT OF MY HEAD 'Moody' - ESG

"The great thing about this song is that there are so many different versions to get down to. Right now, I'm really enjoying the 'Spaced Out' version."

THE SONG I WISH I'D WRITTEN 'The Whole Of The Moon' - The Waterboys

"A great song is all about the lyrics. Instrumentally and lyrically, this is a beautiful and timeless song. I love it for its insight and reflection."

THE SONG THAT REMINDS ME OF GAME OF THRONES 'Two Suns In The Sky' - Davi

"I was listening to this while we were filming in Croatia. It's this massive, powerful, otherworldly thing; sprawling and epic – just like the show. We shot a scene this year with Sigur Rós performing in it. I don't think they realised how boring a film set can be sometimes – they always had a beer in hand, like true rock stars. After we finished shooting, we all went out for a big meal and showed them the Old Town in Dubrovnik. They're really great guys."

THE SONG I WANT PLAYED AT MY FUNERAL 'Nelson Mandela' - The Special AKA

"I'd hope to have something uplifting and soulful. Maybe something along the same vibe as 'Nelson Mandela' by The Special AKA, but obviously with it being about my life, not his!"



Right Said
Fred

Rad ar

► YOU HEARD IT HERE FIRST ■ EDITED BY MATT WILKINSON

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NME
NEW
BAND
OF THE WEEK



Honeyblood

The Glasgow duo making a fast and furious grunge racket

In Glasgow there's no use staring at grey skies waiting for the sun to shine. Frankly, you'll be shuffling down to the post office on your mobility scooter to draw your pension before the rain stops. Stina Tweeddale (left) and Shona McVicar of Honeyblood stuck four fingers up at the weather by joining forces one night at Bar Bloc, a basement venue where they'd hang out with local acts Baby Strange and The Twilight Sad. They sacked off the bands (Boycotts, Partwindpartwolf) they'd been in with "the boys", and instead formed a duo driven by Stina's sugary surf-punk cry and Shona's thunderous drumming.

The pair recorded their grungy 'Thrift Shop' EP in their bathroom, and it only took one gig last April before they were spotted by FatCat Records and former Test Icicle turned Veronica Falls and Male Bonding producer Rory Attwell, who recorded their first single 'Bud'. By November, they'd upgraded to the Connecticut attic of

production legend Peter Katis (Interpol, The National) where they lived for 10 days making their self-titled debut album.

The 12 songs on it are fast and furious, careering through Vaselines-y jangles, Dum Dum Girls choruses and the Americana of early Rilo Kiley. They've gone down a storm in America, particularly with lead single 'Super Rat'. "It's for everyone who just wants to be like, 'Fuck you! You're a fucking arsehole and I hate you!'" explains Shona, sitting next to Stina on a hotel bed in Texas. And it's had every ex-boyfriend of her songwriting partner on the blower. "They're all like, 'I'm sorry if I was ever a fucking dick to you,'" Stina says. "But that song isn't about any one of them. It's a joke!"

When they're asked about what else their jaded lyrics refer to, why the works of PJ Harvey inspire them, or what they're escaping from on their 24-date road trip through New York, Boston, LA and everywhere in between, they're as arsed about reasonable explanations as two kids caught shoplifting. "When it's raining it's not very fun, is it?" says Stina, talking about the tour. "But we take it seriously, obviously, right?" And so should you. ■ EVE BARLOW

ON
**NME.COM/
NEWMUSIC**
NOW

► An exclusive
live video of
'Killer Bangs'

► THE DETAILS

- **BASED** Glasgow
- **FOR FANS OF** The Vaselines, Dum Dum Girls
- **SOCIAL** @yumhoneyblood
- **BUY IT NOW** The single 'Bud' is out now. The album 'Honeyblood' follows in July
- **SEE THEM LIVE** Live At Leeds (May 3), The Secret Garden Party (July 24-27)
- **BELIEVE IT OR NOT** Stina named the band after a fancy-dress concoction she invented. "At Halloween I made fake blood from water, honey, red dye and cornflour. I put it in a Volvic bottle, swirled it around my mouth and spat it at people"

Movement

This Australian group make music in their bedrooms in suburban Sydney. 'Like Love' is their best track to date, taking the brooding intensity of Darkside and adding slick R&B vocals reminiscent of Kelela. Signed to Modular (Tame Impala, Cut Copy), the trio could make it big by merging electronic and R&B influences.

► **SOCIAL** @movementsounds

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

Boots

Look through the credits for Beyoncé's surprise 2013 album and there's a little known name among the big hitters like Jay Z and Pharrell. Not a lot is known about producer-turned-performer Boots, but he worked on the majority of 'Beyoncé' and is now stepping out on his own to make music that's darker and more atmospheric – check out 'Dust', or the Aphex Twin-like 'Howl'.

► **SOCIAL** @bootsonboots

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

Baby Guru

The Greek psych band's new album 'Marginalia' has just come out on Inner Ear, and it's mighty. The baroque 'Especially When' and 'We Need Some Space' fuse romantic pop melodies and glistening synths, and the results are a triumph.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/babyguruband

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

Romare

Freshly signed to Ninja Tune (Kelis, Illium Sphere), Romare first made a name for himself last year when he turned in a stellar remix of Alt-J's 'Breezeblocks'. New song 'Jimmy', packed full of Romare's signature African influences alongside a new-found blues kick, suggests now's the time for the London based producer to make a name for himself.



Neon Waltz

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/romaremusic

► **HEAR HIM** soundcloud.com/romare

► **SEE HIM LIVE** London Plan B (May 2)

Cherry Glazerr

Named after a US news anchor, Cherry Glazerr impressed at SXSW recently. Debut album 'Papa Cremp' on Burger Records (Bleached, The Garden) is packed full of instantly memorable garage-pop anthems, including 'Trick Or Treat Dancefloor' and heavy-lidded opener 'White's Not My Colour This Evening'.

► **SOCIAL** @cherryglazerr

► **HEAR THEM** cherryglazerr.bandcamp.com

Plague Vendor

Plague Vendor's debut is a sub 18-minute ripper packed full of the brattiest and most urgent punk to burst out of speakers in 2014, over which frontman Brandon Blaine does his best to sound like Nick Cave. One listen to the frantic and ferocious 'Free To Eat' and you'll know why the LA group were recently invited to play with Bad Religion and Fidler.

► **SOCIAL** @plaguevendor

► **HEAR THEM** plaguelyfe.bandcamp.com



Baby Guru

NME BUZZ BAND OF THE WEEK

Neon Waltz

Based in Caithness at the very tip of Scotland, Neon Waltz make *Radar* think that isolation could be indie's missing ingredient. The six-piece say they got together "about a year ago when we took over an old croft house on the North Sea coast, and converted it into a place where we can hang out and make music". And what music it is – with elements of The Field Mice and Echo & The Bunnymen, they're the most promising new British band we've heard all year.

► **SOCIAL** @neonwaltz

► **HEAR THEM** facebook.com/neonwaltz

► **SEE THEM LIVE** Inverness Mad Hatters (April 4), Wick Blackstairs (5), Thurso Y Not Bar & Grill (6), Manchester Peel Hall (May 4), Sheffield

Plug (10), Nottingham Rescue Rooms (11), Oxford O2 Academy (12), Liverpool East Village Arts Club (14), Edinburgh Liquid Rooms (15), Dunfermline PJ Molloy's (16)

Daisy Victoria

She's gained the support of the BBC Introducing team with her PJ Harvey-inspired sound, and now this clattering singer-songwriter is making a ferocious statement on her recently released 'Heart Full Of Beef' EP. It channels the mixture of raw energy and spirited vocals found on albums like Polly Jean's 'Rid Of Me' – the sound of pure determination.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/daisyvic

BAND CRUSH

East India Youth



Jupiter-C

"They're pretty atmospheric, a bit gothy in a way and have a real HTRCK vibe to them. They remind me of Black Box Recorder. The track they start their live show with is a psychedelic, krautrocky thing, and the singer, Ashiya, shouts JG Ballard excerpts over the top of it."

► **HEAR HER** soundcloud.com/daisy-victoria

► **SEE HER LIVE** Norwich Bicycle Shop (April 17), Norwich OST at Cinema City (April 22)

Freeweights

"We love '80s stuff," says Helsinki's self-described "neon light pop" band Freeweights. They sound like they've spent the past 30 years on holiday with Wham! – their gloopy synths and nostalgic pop are as hot and sticky as a heatwave on the equator.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/freeweightsband

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

Shura

Shura's breakout jam 'Touch' shows the debt many new artists currently owe to Dev Hynes' Blood Orange project, with its hushed synths and yearning vocals. But this London-via-Moscow artist doesn't just copy the sound, she takes it to a new level. Check out the video – with its shots of couples kissing it's weirdly similar to clothing brand Wren Studio's viral advert *First Kiss* and has already clocked up over 70,000 hits online.

► **SOCIAL** @weareshura

► **HEAR HER** soundcloud.com/shura

Shura

Frankie Cosmos

Frankie Cosmos, aka Greta Kline, has been writing and sharing music for the past few years, and is ready to release new album 'Zentropy'. The album is a collection of lo-fi odes to New York City that are reminiscent of Moldy Peaches and cover subjects including museum visits and a bus that splashes her with rain. It's all brought together by Kline's way with a melody.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/FrankieCosmos

► **HEAR THEM** ingridsuperstar.bandcamp.com

No Coda

Rarely do you hear guitars strummed so furiously. No Coda's black-hole distortion and liquid chords are reminiscent of Editors but, minus the latter's baritone vocals, a livelier proposition. Tracks like 'No Ransom' from forthcoming debut album 'The Entire Cast' sound like an anxiety-filled dream.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/nocodasound

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

OhBoy!

Canopies

If Joe Meek was alive today and worked with Tame Impala, it would sound something like Milwaukee's Canopies. Latest single 'Miss You Now' sounds like an updated version of Meek's 1962 sci-fi classic 'Telstar', and is a giant step on from the synthpop of their past.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/canopiesband

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

Joya

London trio Joya had their 'Primo' EP mastered at the North London Bomb Factory, which was a fitting location given their boisterous sound. The record features scrappy, rough-around-the-edges guitar sounds and Black Lips-style redneck vocals, as well as the Syd Barrett-like 'Super Torradas' and the Pavement stroll of 'Put The Room Together'. There's plenty to thrill here.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/joyasound

► **HEAR THEM** joya.bandcamp.com

► **SEE THEM LIVE** London Rhythm Factory (April 23), London Mascara Bar (April 30)

Hunck

Tottenham duo Frederik and Thomas (aka Hunck)

Radar NEWS ROUND UP

GLASS ANIMALS GET WILD ON DEBUT ALBUM

The Oxford four-piece release their debut album 'Zaba' on June 9 via Paul Epworth's Wolf Tone label. It was inspired by William Steig's book *The Zabarjaba Jungle*. "[He] created such a nuts imaginary world that you can get totally lost in," says frontman Dave Bayley.

POPSTRANGERS GET LUCKY ON SECOND LP

Since releasing debut album 'Antipodes' last year, Kiwi trio Popstrangers have moved to London. They've just confirmed the follow-up 'Fortuna' will be unveiled this summer. The LP, recorded at the Lightship95 studio, will be available from June 9 via Carpark.



Glass Animals



Popstrangers

THE MAGIC GANG HIT FESTIVALS

The Brighton slacker-rock quartet have announced a handful of festival dates following recent supports with Swim Deep, The Preatures and Jaws. They take the buzz surrounding debut track 'Shallows' to Liverpool Sound City (May 3) and Croydon's Leefest (July 11-13).

THE GREAT ESCAPE ADD TO LINE-UP

Annual new music extravaganza The Great Escape has announced 150 more bands for this year's festival, happening in Brighton on May 8-10. Liverpool psych-pop trio All We Are, Birmingham metallers God Damn and London synthpop group Looks will all now appear.

Bea

first emerged at the start of the year with the acoustic waltz of 'In The Wee Small Hours Of The Morning'. Slow, sad guitars recall the more touching moments of Mazzy Star, and it's difficult not to be drawn in by the yearning lyrics. "Death is a one way trip, and I wanna jump off this ship", they murmur.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/hunckband

► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/hunck

Ekkah

Rebekah Pennington and Rebecca Wilson, former members of Brum band The Arcadian Kicks, have ditched the sax-infused indie rock of their past and replaced it with synth-led tropical pop. Their debut track '7AM' is an ode to staying out all night, and encapsulates the highs

and lows of hedonism, from the song's euphoric new wave aura to the regretful lyrics: "Why do we always end up in the morning light?"

► **SOCIAL** @ekkah

► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/ekkah

OhBoy!

Brought together by "a love of the Pixies, silly voices and alcohol", Northampton quartet OhBoy! wear their '90s US rock influences on their sleeve. The three tracks on the debut EP 'EP#1' fizz with the same squalling urgency as Smashing Pumpkins and Sonic Youth, and they're aiming to make things even noisier on the yet to be unveiled follow-up. Expect them to take you on a distortion-drenched ride.

► **SOCIAL** @ohboytheband

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

► **SEE THEM LIVE**

Northampton The Charles Bradlaugh (April 4)

Bea

Amsterdam-based Bea dropped her debut track recently, the dark, hypnotic 'Breadwinner'. "Here's what I need/But be proud it's too early/For nothing to work out somehow" she croons over sparse percussion and stately strings like a gloomier Lykke Li. Haunting and beautiful, it points to a very special talent.

► **HEAR HER** soundcloud.com/1991bea

Porter Robinson

Once entrenched in the EDM scene, 21-year-old former Skrillex support Porter Robinson tired of making music for DJs and decided to focus on writing songs instead. His debut track 'Sea Of Voices' is worlds apart from the sonic assault of his previous life, mixing the soundscapes of Sigur Rós and the experimental outlook of Animal Collective. He's not completely forgotten his dance past, though, with newer cuts fleshed out by lasering synths and club-ready beats.

► **SOCIAL** @porterrobinson

► **HEAR HIM** soundcloud.com/porter-robinson

NEW SOUNDS FROM WAY OUT

This week's columnist

THOM GREEN
Alt-J

SHARING THE GIFT



As a long-time fan of metal and grunge, I'm always excited by something new. **Grizzlor** come from New Haven, Connecticut and their music is full of pure aggression and youthful energy. This is a band I'd go out of my way to see – the energy here needs to be heard.

I can't even remember how these guys came on my radar, but with a name like **Fartbarf** (above), let's just say I was intrigued. A lot of people are writing this off as a joke, but part of me wonders if these people have even listened to their music. While very synth-based, it manages to sound primal in its approach. There are clever melody changes that never get boring, with 808 beats underneath. The band's sense of humour is a huge bonus and, while their name might sound like a joke, their music certainly doesn't.

Ex Das Racist member **Kool AD** released his most recent LP 'Word OK' on the amazing Greedhead label this month. Similar to Das Racist, its charm is in its lyrical flow and the laidback vocal riffs over minimal uptempo beats. The repetitive nature of the beats is quite hypnotic, which sets the stage perfectly for Kool AD's unique vocal style. It turns out he has over 10 solo albums on Bandcamp and this new release makes me want to hear them all ASAP.

I received a random email recently with a link to **Datacat's** Bandcamp page. At first I had no intention to check it out, but I'm glad I did. Datacat's second release, 'The Stabbing Room', has some hard-hitting beats with haunting vocals to match. While the gangster rap element of his sound has been done before, the grooves he has created here make this album anything but typical.

Adam Connor has been a friend of mine for a while now, and although I knew he made music, I've only recently heard it. I was hoping it would be good purely so that it wouldn't be awkward, but I was blown away – the music he's making is more complex and contains more soul than most of the music I've come across recently, and the beauty of it is that barely anyone knows he's doing it. He has an innate gift for this and you can hear that within these tracks. It's music like this that I really want to share, not because he's my friend, but because it's amazing and needs to be heard.

Next week: The Vaccines' Justin Young

Radar LABEL OF THE WEEK

Luv Luv Luv

luvluvluv

► **FOUNDED** 2010 by Mairead Nash

► **BASED** London

► **KEY RELEASES** Jamie N Commons – The Baron EP (2011), Mafia Lights – Spiriting (2012), Spector – Enjoy It While It Lasts (2012), Gabriel Bruce – Love In Arms (2013)

► **RADAR SAYS** A label started by former Queen Of Noize Mairead Nash that has a party spirit at its heart. They throw regular bashes to showcase bands and have a knack for discovering new talent.



Kool AD

"Fartbarf's name might sound like a joke, but their music certainly doesn't"

Reviews

► THE DEFINITIVE VERDICT ■ EDITED BY TOM HOWARD



Ratking So It Goes

The Harlem-based hip-hop trio tell dark tales from New York's grimy underbelly. King Krule is among the guests



“So it goes” is a phrase coined by Kurt Vonnegut in his World War II novel *Slaughterhouse-Five*. Used to illustrate the senselessness of war, it’s invoked in moments where we’re reminded how fragile life can be. As Vonnegut put it, “There is nothing intelligent to say about a massacre.” As we might put it today: shit happens.

‘So It Goes’ is also the title of the debut album by Ratking, a Harlem-based hip-hop trio convened around Patrick ‘Wiki’ Morales, a 19-year-old punk kid and self-proclaimed “mutt” raised by an Irish dad and a Puerto Rican mum on Manhattan’s Upper West Side. Wiki grew up in relative prosperity, but he’s not one to boast about the high life. It’s New York’s grimy underbelly that catches Ratking’s collective eye, where life is cheap and the

junkies of Harlem and the hustlers on Canal Street hold out stubbornly as luxury apartments sprout from the sidewalk. Still, Ratking – completed by fellow MC Hak and 32-year-old beatmaker Sporting Life – aren’t the stuff of throwback, either. “*The average rapper right now, it’s a whole different generation*”, mutters the group’s friend Raymond Mitchell on the opening track, titled simply ‘*’. “*Your average 25, 24, 23-year-old rapper, totally different from Biggie and Pac, you can’t compare the two. So you ain’t got no point of reference, really. So it goes...*”

Accordingly, Ratking’s debut simultaneously sits within the lineage of NYC music, and strives to break out of it. It was recorded partly in Jay Z producer Just Blaze’s Stadium Red, and partly in the Greenpoint studio owned by rap maverick Max Eisenberg, aka DJ Dog Dick. The production is as hard and unyielding as the trap and drill sounds bubbling up from the American South, but open to the blurred-out synths

and skittering beats of the post-dubstep wave. It's wild and often weird, not always out to please you. On the Dog Dick-produced 'Protein', beats jab spasmodically, a single note twangs monotonously, and Wiki lays out the Ratking creed: "This ain't '90s revival/It's earlier/It's tribal revival".

LYRICAL ANALYSIS

"Train waiting, patient/With the weight of the world on my dome" - 'Remove Ya'

Wiki: "It's me just thinking about everything that's going on, and being a kid in the city and daydreaming in school, waiting for the train and imagining things that are totally not possible."

"The Hudson a flowing/Carrying Russian locust/Irish locust/Puerto Rican locust" - 'So It Goes'

"That's about immigrants coming to New York. They're locusts because they came in waves. The Irish, Italian and Russian immigrants that were already in New York looked down on the Puerto Ricans when they started coming in the '30s."

"The earth is fucked/The city is gone/Is it worth it for Wiki The Don?" - 'Protein'

"Sometimes you feel that everything's fucked up. And when I say the city is gone - I still live in New York and I love it, but sometimes you feel that the city isn't what it used to be, that it's lost a bit of its attitude. And I'm just calling myself a don in a playful way!"

female MC Wavy Spice - would help. Instead, Wiki and Hak fall back on bratty nihilism and excessive doomsaying. "The earth is fucked/The city is gone/Is it worth it for Wiki The Don?" asks 'Protein'. So it goes, maybe. But modern New York City is no war zone, and this trawl through the sewers is best when they remember to crack a manhole and let a little light in. ■ LOUIS PATTISON

THE DETAILS

► **RELEASE DATE** April 7 ► **LABEL** Charity/XL ► **PRODUCERS** Sporting Life, Dog Dick ► **LENGTH** 52:03 ► **TRACKLISTING** ►1. * ►2. Canal ►3. Snow Beach ►4. So Sick Stories ►5. Remove Ya ►6. Eat ►7. So It Goes ►8. Puerto Rican Judo ►9. Protein ►10. Bug Fights ►11. Take ► **BEST TRACK** Snow Beach

MORE ALBUMS

Broods

Broods EP Polydor



Sultry synthpop siblings Caleb and Georgia Nott share

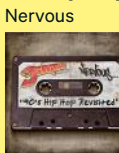
a producer, Joel Little, with Lorde. The duo's debut EP mines a similar groove to the teenage star's album from last year, and has a richly layered sound. Lead track 'Never Gonna Change' is the one that lingers. Its brooding refrain of "I hate that I can't say your name/Without feeling like I'm part of the blame" gets under the skin, leaving a scar of melancholia. 'Pretty Thing' has a hint of Purity Ring's sketchy experimentation, with soft vocals laid over glitchy beats. Last year's single 'Bridges' carries a gentle Ellie Goulding-style vocal atop a sparse backing. The six tracks here are appealing, but lack a distinctive sound of their own.

■ HAYLEY AVRON

7

Jaguar Skills

90s Hip Hop Revisited



New York's Nervous Records is best known for its house

output, but also released some quality boom-bap hip-hop in the '90s, with KRS-One and Smif-N-Wessun among its alumni. For this mix album, DJ Jaguar Skills has taken 65 songs and a cappellas from the label's hip-hop catalogue, reworking every track to ensure maximum head-nod. But '90s purists can listen in peace: the music is faithful to its historical origins throughout. That means dusty drums, classic funk samples, shoutalong choruses and scratching aplenty, in a way that will be familiar to anyone who ever bought a Mobb Deep album. It's all very retro, and you may crave variety after 57 minutes of nostalgia. But this record could be the funkiest history lesson you've ever bugged out to. ■ BEN CARDEW

8



Sohn

Tremors

Secretive producer's gently classical, dread-soaked debut

▶ Vienna-based producer Sohn is a shadowy figure. Since he emerged in 2012 with breakout single 'The Wheel', personal details about the rising 4AD signing have been minimal. Even he seems unsure of his identity: "Somebody better let me know my name", he sings on the brooding 'Artifice'.

All 11 tracks here come soaked in dread, from the gently classical 'Tempest' to the piano anthem 'Paralysed'. Away from the complex production, tracks like 'Bloodflows' show off Sohn's gift for a disarmingly simple lyric. "My love, my love, my love don't love me", he croons over a beat James Blake would covet. Not everything captivates, though. The lumbering 'Ransom Notes' struggles to kidnap your attention, and 'Lights' ambles along with aimless synth noises. Sohn told NME recently that his secret talent is the ability to solve Rubik's Cubes. Like those puzzles, 'Tremors' is frustrating. But when the colours align it's impressive. ■ AL HORNER

27

7



THE DETAILS

► **RELEASE DATE** April 7 ► **LABEL** 4AD ► **PRODUCER** Sohn ► **LENGTH** 42:02 ► **TRACKLISTING** ►1. Tempest ►2. The Wheel ►3. Artifice ►4. Bloodflows ►5. Ransom Notes ►6. Paralysed ►7. Fool ►8. Lights ►9. Veto ►10. Lessons ►11. Tremors ► **BEST TRACK** Bloodflows

Off!

Wasted Years Vice



Flying the flag for old-school hardcore, the third Off!

album is a gleefully relentless thrashabout made up of 16 knee-in-the-nuts mini-ragers, each largely indiscernible from the last. 'Hypnotized' features 58-year-old Keith Morris spitting out his disdain for authority, much

as he has done for the past 35 years. "You can't argue with the troops/Or the cops in riot suits", yells the former Circle Jerks and Black Flag frontman. Anthony Keidis might have done his best to discredit the band with his fondness for Off! merch, but the pit-friendly snarl of 'I Won't Be A Casualty' and 'You Must Be Damned' show that these guys are all still the real deal.

■ LEONIE COOPER

7

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THE PLACE!"**

BRUCE

ON THE ROAD WITH THE

**VAN
MORRISON**

"It's a crazy energy he has to get out

ON SALE NOW

REUNI

THE ROCKETS

The band
Neil Young
left behind

THE DAMNED

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REVIEWS
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MONTH



Pup

Pup Sideonedummy



Twenty years after Weezer's debut album practically

invented the genre, Toronto four-piece Pup are giving geek rock an upgrade. And while these 10 songs trade on Rivers Cuomo's gawky verve – opener 'Guilt Trip' is the best song that wasn't on 'Pinkerton' – 'PUP' is a gleeful paroxysm all of its own. Track after track, noise and nuisance battle it out, neither managing to best the other. Instead, the tussle is the attraction; loud geekcore ('Guilt Trip', 'Mabu'), to-the-point indie-punk ('Reservoir', 'Cul-De-Sac') and bustling pop immediacy ('Dark Days', the slow-motion 'Yukon') combine in a frenzied rush of urgency. Intelligent and visceral in equal measure, 'PUP' is effortlessly cool, charmingly nerdy and wholly brilliant.

■ MISCHA PEARLMAN

8

Lost Alone

Shapes Of Screams

Graphite



The fact that Lost Alone aren't yet Bon Jovi-massive is

puzzling, and as the support-slot invites keep coming they must be wondering if they'll ever get top billing. The anthemic Derby three-piece plough on in their fusty tour van, supporting everyone from Paramore to The Darkness, delivering the kind of unabashed glam metal that's been unfashionable since the '80s. It's a shame because they actually rock – as tunes like 'Scarlet Letter Rhymes' on this, their third album, attest – and singer/songwriter/guitarist Steven Battelle shares more DNA with the likes of Marina & The Diamonds than the earnest metallers they'll inevitably be five down the bill from this festival season.

■ JEREMY ALLEN

7

School Of Language Old Fears

The second solo album from Field Music's David Brewis is equal parts sleek and endearingly shonky



For his second LP as School Of Language, Field Music's David Brewis elected to draw from his own experiences – specifically the painful, awkward ones of his late teens and early twenties. Nothing particularly surprising there, you might say: who didn't feel like a knot of anxieties, insecurities and poorly effected pretensions at that age? Caught between the real world and the cocoon of adolescence, you're not quite what you were, but not yet what you'll become. We all deal with it in different ways, but Brewis' mechanisms are more austere than most. Opener



'Distance Between' details an awkward romance in which "Wherever we are, however much we share/I feel the distance growing more", while 'A Smile Cracks' finds him sitting on a beach on his birthday, head buried in a textbook, "Watching people

have fun/My only language was in my head/Just another teenage affectation". If only someone had told him it was pound-a-pint night at the student union.

However Brewis occupied himself in those formative years, you can't imagine him grooving to the sounds of NERD or Justin Timberlake, yet that's what the best bits of 'Old Fears' frequently put you in mind of. Picking up where Field Music's 'A New Town' (the standout track from 2012's 'Plumb') left off, the likes of 'Dress Up' and 'Between The Suburbs' are in that same DIY R&B vein, equal parts sleek and endearingly shonky. In fact, were it not so tethered to Brewis' own growing pains, much of 'Old Fears' could pass for a Field Music album, and a pretty good one at that. Certainly, that same sense of leftfield inventiveness and ingenuity is present here, from the diminutive 'So Much Time' being overpowered by its booming, early-MTV drums, to the way 'Suits Us Better' bizarrely but successfully incorporates what can only be described as Rolf Harris-esque beatboxing.

With Field Music having finally achieved some measure of the recognition they've always deserved, it hopefully won't be too long until the Brewis brothers reunite.

Until then, 'Old Fears' provides a fascinating insight into the mind of an increasingly indispensable pop polymath.

■ BARRY NICOLSON

8

THE DETAILS

► RELEASE DATE April 7 ► LABEL Memphis Industries ► PRODUCER David Brewis
► LENGTH 34:30 ► TRACKLISTING ►1. Distance Between ►2. A Smile Cracks
►3. Suits Us Better ►4. Between The Suburbs ►5. Old Fears ►6. Dress Up
►7. Moment Of Doubt ►8. Small Words ►9. So Much Time ►10. You Kept Yourself
► BEST TRACK Dress Up

AK/DK

Synths + Drums + Noise + Space



Little Miss Echo From the glam-pop of Adam And The Ants to the full-on

intensity of Swans, bands with two drummers are a rare and often noble beast. AK/DK's Ed Chivers and Graham Sowerby take the concept to its limits, augmenting their twin kits with racks of pedals, pads and creaky old synths, and heading for the dancefloor.

On 'Maxwell's Waves' and 'Modulator', they carry over the Factory Floor-go-disco workouts of their frenetic live show with pinpoint percussion and crackling electronics. Then, just when it seems the Brighton pair are becoming too repetitive, they head down ambient byways: 'Autoservice' and 'Morning Dragpipe' pay respect to the simplistic melodies of Kraftwerk and Neu!, adding a welcome motorik nuance to this well-kitted-out debut.

■ STUART HUGGETT

8

Allez Bartoli

Dola Self-released



Allez Bartoli are a Belfast-based experimental

duo made up of Gregory McGeady and Emmet Colton, and this, their self-released first album about Soviet cosmonauts lost in space, is impressive. Formed in 2010, the pair's first EP, 'Blah', offered an uneven mix of pop and post-rock. With 'Dola', however, they've embraced

the hazy electronic drones of Boards Of Canada and given themselves more room to manoeuvre. 'Koliada Drift' embodies these wider horizons with entertaining flashes of dubstep; 'Etana' sounds like Massive Attack soundtracking the apocalypse; and the epic 'The Drowning Of Marzana' is worthy of Mike Oldfield. The spurious ambience of 'Zora' aside, 'Dola' shows a band with a newfound sense of direction.

■ HUW NESBITT

7

Reviews

Avey Tare's Slasher Flicks

Enter The Slasher House

Domino



Avey Tare's first solo album, 2010's 'Down There', was an

attempt to work through the break-up of his marriage. The Animal Collective member's second can hardly be considered a sequel. Written high on

fever and recorded with Dirty Projectors' Angel Deradoorian on guitars and Ponytail's Jeremy Hyman on drums, this bunch of bawdy tunes screams escapism more than self-exploration. Lead single 'Little Fang', with its soft-focus '60s garage feel, could be mistaken for Ariel Pink. Overlaid, there's an analogue sludge that sounds like comedy gunge or cream pies. This is one house of horrors that's worth the ride.

HAZEL SHEFFIELD

7

The Faint

Doom Abuse SQE



Once the missing link between the disparate early-'00s

New York scenes of electroclash and The Strokes, The Faint foretold nu-rave with 'Danse Macabre' around 2001. Having jerk-danced their way off the Ultra New Wave map in 2008 they now return with album seven, their goth-tinged electro-rock undimmed, their

melodies unsettlingly wonky and their heads filled with scary voices ('Help In The Head', 'Evil Voices', 'Mental Radio'). A good seven years out of date, 'Doom Abuse' is pure synthpop mania, frequently teetering between unadulterated Trent Reznor pop brilliance ('Unseen Hand') and impressions of Skrillex driving a monster truck through a Savages gig in a video arcade ('Animal Needs'). Does it abuse you? Oh yeah...

MARK BEAUMONT

6

Tweens

Tweens Frenchkiss



Before joining Tweens, Bridget Battle's

only previous musical experience came from being part of her high-school choir. And while the 21-year-old might have the sugary voice capable of handling the traditional classics, fronting this Cincinnati bubblegum punk trio shows off her partying side. 'Be Mean' laments "a really great, great guy" for being far too nice, while 'Don't Wait Up' slows the record's hurtling pace to find her pleading, "I want to get wired under the city lights... I wanna stay up all night". With their debut album, Battle and bandmates Peyton Copes and Jerri Queen have made the perfect soundtrack for raucous late nights. It's far grubbier and more riotous than any high-school musical.

RHIAN DALY

8

Tove Lo

Truth Serum Polydor



Though her controversy-courting bad-girl schtick

comes off to many as a mite calculated, you have to respect Tove Lo. The 'mandatory unstable cokehead at a party' persona she adopts sees the Swede rarely mincing her words when detailing the minutiae of a highly fraught personal life, and any pop star willing to open their lead single with the line "I eat my dinner in a bathtub, then I go to sex clubs" ('Habits') is clearly out to upset the status quo. What's mystifying is why the 25-year-old's debut isn't anywhere near as boundary-pushing, sonically – instead, it's dominated by anodyne, cliché-packed Scandi-pop. Though the edgy 'Habits' appropriates the witch-pop of Purity Ring, overall 'Truth Serum' is more Britney than bacchanalia.

JOHN CALVERT

6

EMA

The Future's Void

It may be bleak and austere, but Erika M Anderson's second album is her most relatable work so far

Erika M Anderson's second album is far more austere than her 2011 debut, 'Past Life Martyred Saints'. "I remember when the world was divided by a wall of concrete and a cube full of iron", she hoots over the clank and clutter of 'Satellites', this album's industrial opener. Addressing Russian surveillance over its neighbouring former Soviet states – brutally relevant in light of the Crimean crisis – 'Satellites' instantly distances its creator from the grungy upstart of 'Past Life...'. This time, EMA shuts the door on personal recollections of youth and romance and only one song here – 'So Blonde' – revisits her familiar trashy lo-fi sound.

Instead, the former Gowns vocalist deals with universal themes of privacy invasion and technology's ever-growing influence on human interaction. 'Neuromancer' attacks the share-all culture of social networking ("I know more than you do about the things that you do"), backed by



THE DETAILS

►RELEASE DATE April 17 ►LABEL City Slang ►PRODUCERS Erika M Anderson, Leif Shackelford ►LENGTH 44:25 ►TRACKLISTING ►1. Satellites ►2. So Blonde ►3. 3.Jane ►4. Cthulu ►5. Smoulder ►6. Neuromancer ►7. When She Comes ►8. 100 Years ►9. Solace ►10. Dead Celebrity ►BEST TRACK 3.Jane

SIMON JAY CATLING

a furious and metallic Nine Inch Nails rattle. 'Solace', meanwhile, has a bass-heavy techno undercurrent, with Anderson singing "We make constellations out of fallen stars" as though straining to see through the dense electronics. This shift to a starker, machine-led sound is in opposition to EMA's easy way with a pop hook – a contrast that's most effective on 'Smoulder', in which her melodies scribble over the synthetic gridlines. These same melodies are given more freedom to roam on the sparse, string-tinged arrangement of '100 Years', and they positively bloom amid the swell of '3.Jane'. The latter is a slow-burning torch ballad about the accelerated internet exposure her last album received; it's also the most introspective song here, containing the lament, "I feel like I blew my soul out across the interweb... it left a hole so big inside of me".

These pockets of soul-bearing act as tangible moments of emotion among the austerity, but also serve to highlight the weightiness of their surrounding environment. EMA has blogged that to make this record she "avoided almost all contact with the outside world". How paradoxical that she's returned with her most outward-looking work to date.

8

BOOK

The People's Songs – The Story Of Modern Britain In 50 Songs by Stuart Maconie

An engaging musical history lesson full of dry Wigan wit

► The fruits of a BBC Radio 2 series, Stuart Maconie's kind-of travelogue, now out in paperback, aims to capture the British character and its pop history through 50 songs that chart our cultural and social progress. It takes us from the Second World War to the modern battle for the Christmas Number One, with various stageposts along the way, including glam, punk, Stock Aitken & Waterman, techno and the MP3 age – in short, pretty much anything that's happened in music. But this is Britain, and we have our own way of doing things.

From Vera Lynn to Amy Winehouse – both among those tackled here as Maconie concentrates (loosely) on one song per chapter – his approach to pop takes a bit of everything but comes up with something that chimes with our peculiar national character. Maconie is particularly astute on Dizzee Rascal's "visceral untutored originality", which transplants the swagger of US hip-hop to the sink estates of Bow, and expertly traces the melting-pot lineage of Cornershop's 'Brimful Of Asha'. Discussing Elbow's 'One Day Like This', he even compares



► PUBLICATION DATE Out now
► PUBLISHER Ebury Press

Glastonbury, persuasively, to ancient Greek Dionysian six-day blowouts (Glastonbury before the five-grand yurts moved in, that is). He's good too on the legacy of Live Aid – the dawn, he says, of the celebrity age and the reason Bono is a "perma-shaded Zelig-like presence at the political courts of the world". The songs that illustrate his points aren't the usual suspects either: 'Give Ireland Back To The Irish' in place of 'Imagine'; 'Bye Bye Baby' usurping 'Bohemian Rhapsody'. The real story of British pop isn't always the standard narrative.

Extra pep comes from Maconie's trademark Wigan wit. His radio pedigree probably feeds the book's chatty style, but that's Maconie's manner anyway – he's an uncommonly interesting pal down the pub. Dry as a bone in his description of Duran Duran's "frankly unseaworthy designer-label clothes" in the yacht-based 'Rio' video and his cataloguing of Simon Cowell's early A&R triumphs with Zig & Zag and the Mighty Morphin Power Rangers, it's his observations that make *The People's Songs* an engaging read – warmly irreverent but serious about pop music, just like Britain itself. ■ MATTHEW HORTON



PLAY IT AGAIN

RECENTLY RATED IN NME

Covers

Soft Friday

"Their electro-garage-rock Wall Of Sound imagines The Velvet Underground force-feeding hallucinogens to The Ronettes, or The Jesus And Mary Chain coming over a bit Mazzy Star." (NME, March 29)

9

Pharrell G I R L

"Feels more about emphasising his distance from everyone else in pop music than driving female emancipation, but twin visions for a thrilling, populist yet provocative album are set out nonetheless." (NME, March 15)

8

White Hinterland Baby

"Casey Dienel seems to be pulling ahead of her overcrowded field. She sounds like she's having a bathroom hairbrush-singing party to which we're all invited." (NME, March 29)

7

Future Islands Singles

"Only the most hardened of hearts could resist Baltimore's Future Islands. You'll find in Sam T Herring's delivery a soul-puncturing cry from the very frontlines of life." (NME, March 22)

8

HTRK

Psychic 9-5 Club

"Where HTRK were typified by clammy post-punk squall, a sparse sophisto-pop sensibility now dominates. An abrupt turn into leftfield pop excellence." (NME, March 29)

8

Thought Forms/Esben And The Witch



Split LP

Invada

This joint release from touring

partners Esben And The Witch and Thought Forms arrives on shiny silver vinyl, fitting for two trios whose sinister rock nightmares mirror each other perfectly. Building on last year's stormy 'Ghost Mountain', Thought Forms' side peaks with the driving Sonic Youth

riffs of 'Sound Of Violence' and the dizzying My Bloody Valentine lurch of 'For The Moving Stars'. The pick of Esben's two songs, the murderous 'No Dog', finds Rachel Davies threatening to "Spring for your throat, break open your bones" to a gale of pummelling drums and howling guitar. The band are using crowdfunding to record their next album with Steve Albini, for which these raw tracks offer great promise.

■ STUART HUGGETT

6

Bed Rugs

8th Cloud Ample Play



Being named after the stolen floor covering in slacker classic *The Big Lebowski*, one might imagine Belgium's Bed Rugs to be fond of the odd spliff, tumbler of White Russian and focus-free jam. This, their first full album (but recorded before last year's mini-album 'Rapids'), torches that notion. The likes of 'Modern Freaks',

'Trees' and 'Evening Crusade' boast the amped-up edge of Granddaddy in crunching rather than crying mode, all topped with a Teenage Fanclub-tight grip on indie-Brit melody, but they can make the ground drop too. Seek out 'Dream On', a gorgeous head-swim rivalling Tame Impala's 'Innerspeaker' that helps make '8th Cloud' one of the most rewarding finds of 2014 so far.

■ JAMIE FULLERTON

8



32



Royal Blood's
Mike Kerr (left)
and Ben
Thatcher at
Rock City in
Nottingham

RB-B
10

A photograph of a drummer in a black t-shirt and cap, playing a Gretsch drum kit on a stage. The background is dark with some stage equipment visible. The text is overlaid on the top half of the image.

Interpol/Temples/

Royal Blood/

Circa Waves

Liverpool

O2 Academy/

Nottingham

Rock City

March 22-23

Rock, sharp suits and
“sexual chemistry” on
the NME Awards Tour
with Austin, Texas

▶ The boys from Temples are on the streets of Liverpool looking, as Interpol will later put it, like characters from *The Mighty Boosh* come to life. With fur coats, giant hairdos and flares so unfeasibly wide you could nail them to the floor and call them a campsite, the Kettering band have taken the football from their tourbus and are playing keepy-uppy for the camera. ➡

Reviews LIVE

A voice from over the road pipes up – “WHO INVITED KASABIAN?” – and an unseen heckler takes off as frontman James Bagshaw prepares to aim a football in anger. Later the perp reveals himself as guitarist Joe Falconer, whose band Circa Waves make up one quarter of the NME Awards Tour 2014 with Austin, Texas, alongside Temples, Royal Blood and headliners Interpol. Tonight is the fourth leg of the tour at the city’s O2 Academy. Backstage, Temples keyboardist Adam Smith is offering to read a chapter from a discarded copy of the Qu’ran in a Scouse accent, and Brighton rockers Royal Blood are explaining that these shows are “a big level up for us”. Drummer Ben Thatcher says, “It’s been an experience playing to that volume of people, at that volume.” Which is a good job, seeing as they’ll be squaring up to an audience of 50,000 when they support Arctic Monkeys at Finsbury Park in London this summer.

As Royal Blood prepare themselves, Liverpool lads Circa Waves play their first-ever hometown gig. They’re a breezy prospect, channelling some of The Libertines’ onstage frisson in the fast-and-loose interplay of lead guitarist Joe and frontman Kieran Shuddall, a quality Joe sarcastically attributes to their “explosive sexual chemistry”. Next up, Royal Blood threaten to tear the roof off the sucker with their sexy, speaker-blowing rock. Frontman Mike Kerr stalks the stage looking for all the world like Josh Homme trapped in the body of James Arthur, dishing out stoner-rock riffs over Ben’s explosively powerful yet expertly controlled drums.

“Me mum says you were fuckin’ boss,” Circa Waves’ Kieran tells Mike after the show, and Kieran’s mum is right. A tricky act to follow, then, but Temples impress by getting their technicolour freak on with songs from their recent ‘Sun Structures’ album. It’s a measure of their quality that dreamy B-side ‘Ankh’ is



Temples

SETLIST

- Colours To Life
- Sun Structures
- Ankh
- A Question Isn’t Answered
- Keep In The Dark
- Mesmerise
- Shelter Song



Circa Waves

SETLIST

- Young Chasers
- Get Away
- Shoot The Sky
- Good For Me
- Catch My Breath
- Stuck In My Teeth
- Fossils
- My Love

Interpol’s Paul Banks and (above) Circa Waves at the O2 Academy in Liverpool

every bit as good as anything on their well-received debut.

While the crowd wait for the bill toppers, a section is singing, “We built this city! We built this city on Interpol!” When New York’s most dourly debonair post-punk outfit come onstage and hear it, they break into a collective grin. In between familiar anthems ‘Evil’, ‘Slow Hands’ and ‘The Heinrich Maneuver’, all despatched with chilling magnificence, the band play newbies ‘My Desire’, ‘All The Rage Back Home’ and ‘Anywhere’ from their fifth record, as yet untitled. They slot in seamlessly, performed with Brandon Curtis of Secret Machines on keys and Brad Truax stepping in for the departed Carlos Dengler on bass. ‘All The Rage...’ is the pick of the bunch:

a muscular, full-tilt rocker that hinges on a deceptively simple riff from guitarist Daniel Kessler.

The following day, on arrival at Nottingham’s Rock City, Interpol frontman Paul Banks says this tour feels like coming “full circle”, 11 years after their last NME Awards tour with The Thrills, The Polyphonic Spree and The Datsuns.

Interpol

SETLIST

- Say Hello To The Angels
- Evil
- C’mere
- My Desire
- Mammoth
- Not Even Jail
- Anywhere
- Narc
- The Heinrich Maneuver
- All The Rage Back Home
- Hands Away
- Obstacle 1
- Slow Hands
- Lights
- Stella Was A Diver And She Was Always Down

‘It’s only a game of ping-pong.’ But then I was like, ‘Oh fucking hell, it’s Paul Banks from Interpol.’” Bats downed, tonight’s show gets off to a blinder, with Circa Waves’ new single ‘Stuck In My Teeth’ sounding half-crazed. Royal Blood’s riffs are so thick and meaty you

Carlos is “totally irreplaceable,” he says, “but there was an interdynamic weirdness [with him onboard], and anyway we always had a surplus of creative energy in our band as a four-piece”. Drummer Sam Fogarino goes further, confessing it was a “relief” when Carlos (who is now doing a Masters in theatre acting) announced his decision to leave the band, because it had been obvious his heart wasn’t in it for a while. Sam adds that he is “quietly confident” about the new record, which is due in the autumn and contains songs that, according to the ever-cryptic Paul, “sound like us from another dimension”.

After soundcheck, Kieran from Circa Waves goes about losing to Paul at ping-pong in the venue’s club lounge. “I kept thinking,

Royal Blood

SETLIST

- Hole
- Come On Over
- Figure It Out
- Little Monster
- Loose Change
- Out Of The Black





THE VIEW FROM THE CROWD

LIVERPOOL



Hannah Walker, 26 (left), and Anna Coatman, 26

"Interpol were the highlight for us, they're just so suave and they seemed to get into the show more the longer it went on."



Hannah Fenech, 26 (left), and Jessie Crook, 26 (right)

"It was such an eclectic bill – Temples looked really cool but Royal Blood smashed it on the night!"

NOTTINGHAM



Sean Parker, 25, Burton-on-Trent

"I think Royal Blood were the best band tonight, just for being so different. They absolutely tore the place apart, it was amazing."



Harriet Inston, 26, Lancaster

"I think my favourites were Interpol just 'cos I love them, but Temples were great as well – I'm gonna go round the corner now to watch them DJ!"

8

MORE GIGS

Jaws

Upstairs At The Garage, London

Thursday, March 20

When the lights come on and Jaws lope off, The Garage's second room looks like a youth club. The grins on the audience's faces are as wide as the floor is sticky with spilled fizzy pop. One guy ties shoelaces probably loosened while crowdsurfing to 'Gold' or 'Breeze', the Midlands band's punchiest songs, snapping and crackling like Rice Krispies tonight. Frontman Connor Schofield's songs are bored and romantic, and live, they incorporate Foals' muscle and The Cribs' gang mentality. New single 'Think Too Much, Feel Too Little' is a prime example, and a sign that Jaws gigs won't always be like *Outnumbered* wrap parties.

■ BEN HOMEWOOD

7

Young Knives

The Haunt, Brighton

Thursday, March 20

Last year, Young Knives turned to Kickstarter to fund latest album 'Sick Octave', exceeding their modest financial target and turning out the most imaginative but sinister music of their career. As they push their post-punk sound into progressive territory, the freedom to experiment infects their stagecraft too. During the Kafka-esque nightmare of 'Something Awful', Henry Dartnall sprouts a pair of mechanical bat wings, a metaphor for the band's own growth into something strange and unique. Obsessing over social breakdown, masculinity and death, the deeply uncomfortable likes of 'All Tied Up' and 'White Sands' are delivered with fierce passion as Young Knives hit new heights of invention.

■ STUART HUGGETT

8

Banks



ABC2, Glasgow

Sunday, March 23

The Californian keeps her audience at arm's length with her austere R&B

Anyone wishing to leave feedback on Jillian Banks' performance tonight is free to call her on (323) 362 2658, but be quick about it. Such is the rapidity of the singer's ascent to next-big-thing-dom, that number – as posted on her Facebook page – is likely to be changed soon.

Banks' eagerness to connect with her fans is curious, but we're unsure how the conversation would unfold in reality: onstage, she comes across as sweet but a little bit trite, giddily exclaiming "I love you! love you! love you!" at the end of 'Stick' and describing Glasgow as "one of the most beautiful places I've ever been" to a crowd who are perhaps a little too self-aware to believe her. You never quite buy her platitudes, and for someone who's freely distributed their phone number online there's something about Banks that feels like being kept at arm's length.

You can't fault the songs, though.

The austere electronic R&B of 'Before I Ever Met You' is achingly contemporary in that it sounds incredibly '90s (at one point, she even drops a slinky cover of Aaliyah's 'Are You That Somebody?'), and though she's prone to that Lana Del Rey thing of supplicating herself to some idealised male ("Baby don't go/ I'll change I swear", she pleads on 'Change'), the likes of 'Goddess' and 'This Is What It Feels Like' are more empowered than enfeebled.

■ BARRY NICOLSON

SETLIST

- ▶ Before I Ever Met You
- ▶ This Is What It Feels Like
 - ▶ Change
 - ▶ Brain
 - ▶ Goddess
 - ▶ Fall Over
 - ▶ Warm Water
 - ▶ Are You That Somebody?
 - ▶ Waiting Game
 - ▶ Stick
 - ▶ What You Need

7

Howler

Louisiana, Bristol

Monday, March 24

Bermuda Triangle, Brighton

Tuesday, March 25

Two intense and sweaty nights
on the south coast with the
Minneapolis rockers

Bands: should you kick off your UK tour with your biggest hit? Howler's bassist Max Petrek doesn't think so. "We can't start the set with 'Back Of Your Neck'," he exclaims, recently roused from a pre-show nap, joining his bandmates in the bar of Bristol's Louisiana. "Everyone will leave straight after!"

Tonight is the first night of the Minneapolis quartet's first UK tour since 2012 and the day their second album 'World Of Joy' is released. Things have changed since they were last over here – drummer Brent Mayes has been replaced by Rory MacMurdo, and the new record finds them leaving the bratty '60s garage pop of 'America Give Up' for darker, more abrasive territory. Howler now feel more like a real band, rather than just frontman Jordan Gatesmith backed up by his mates.

Of course, Gatesmith is still the leader. And as such, Max's request is ignored completely – sure enough, 'Back Of Your Neck' is deployed first in the setlist. Yet when it comes to an end, the flailing bodies at the front and nodding heads at the back don't make a beeline for the door. Instead they stick around to hear the



New drummer Rory
MacMurdo and (right)
Jordan Gatesmith

Howler on...

Getting back in shape

Jordan Gatesmith: "We're tying up loose ends. We've been off tour for about a year, so it's about getting back in shape. The crowd were definitely up for it tonight [in

Brighton], it was really great. By the fourth show I think we'll be perfect."

Astrology readings

"Are we going to do an astrological reading every night? We put on our merch table that you can have free astrological readings from

Rory, so you can have them at any point. He's in control."

Playing the new album

"'Drip' is really fun to play live. It's just really fast and loud and extremely... great! It's OK on record, y'know, but live it's so much better."

new record played almost in full. Of those new songs, 'Drip' and 'Yacht Boys' are affirmed as being two of the best things Howler have ever done, with Jordan's rasping voice making the latter's barbed lyrics even more lacerating.

"Hey, Rory, why don't you do an astrological reading of the room?" suggests the singer midway through the set. Standing up behind his kit, the drummer pulls a mic towards him and dutifully starts talking about moons rising in Mercury before telling one fan, whose star sign is Cancer, that they're "a winner".

"So," guitarist Ian Nygaard asks *NME* after the band have finished their sweaty, stargazing set and the last lingering fans are filtering out, "was that an 8.2 or a 2.5?" For the first night of tour it's pretty good going, but 24 hours later, it's totally blown out of the water.

Reconvened in "the chilliest pub" on Brighton's seafront the next day, the band are taking things easy. Rory spends the afternoon writing horoscopes for underground newspaper *Boston Compass* (hint: whatever your star sign, the future seems to involve lots of darkness and the word 'obsidian') before challenging Max to an intense game of chess, while Jordan sits in a corner of the

room and writes in his notebook.

It's the calm before the storm that erupts in the tiny arched space of Bermuda Triangle. A whirlwind of mashed teenagers have spent the hours before doors getting tanked up on the beach and are now ready to bounce around to every beat, right from the start of tonight's opener, the dive-bar scuzz of 'Al's Corral'. 'Louise', an anthem for unrequited love, causes a full-on moshpit, while Jordan's claims that the band hate "singing this one" before 'Beach Sluts' spurs the crowd to give even more. By closer 'Indictment' there's gleeful crowd-surfing and girls dancing on friends' shoulders.

Afterwards, out on the street, wide-eyed fans get autographs from the band before congregating on the beach again in an excited gaggle, their giddy shrieks piercing the noise of the sea. "Did you hear that girl who kept screaming 'giraffe'?" asks Max incredulously. "I don't understand, what does that mean?"

Their fans' between-song interactions might not make any sense, but at least they're smart enough not to leave after the first song. Howler's UK tour so far has been consistently unmissable.

■ RHIAN DALY

MORE GIGS

Lyla Foy The Castle, Manchester

Sunday, March 23

Gingerly plucking the notes of 'Someday' on her electric guitar, Lyla Foy stands alone. Her voice quivers and breaks throughout her opening number. "Memory, don't fail me now", she sings gently. Bolstered by her band, her confidence grows and the cracks in her voice are papered over with crisp melody. The Londoner – flanked by drums and synths – hits perfect pitch in 'Impossible'. Freed of her bass, she clutches the microphone, teeters on her heels and finds a steely section of her vocal range, the conduit for the rare emotion of her songs. By closer 'Honeymoon', the vulnerable Foy who stepped onstage is gone, replaced by a woman who understands the power of her tender compositions.

■ HAYLEY AVRON

7

Sylvan Esso Oval Space, London

Wednesday, March 26

Sylvan Esso look like the last ravers standing. Singer Amelia Meath and producer Nick Sandborn's limbs roll and pop crazily and, at only 8:30pm, the North Carolina newcomers appear moist with morning-after sweat. But their party is more twilight woodland clearing and pheromones than steamy basement and pills. The beats on 'Dress' shift towards Mount Kimbie's drugged whoosh and 'HSKT' could be a honeyed ode to Jon Hopkins; but the calmer moments are most insightful. The breathy spaces in 'Hey Mami' and 'Could I Be' rap at your ribcage, and in the naked, twinkling 'Coffee', Sylvan Esso have an instantly memorable pop song.

■ BEN HOMEWOOD

8

THE VIEW FROM THE CROWD



Beth, 17, Brighton
"It was amazing, everyone was really up for it! I think the new album is really great, so it was good to hear it live."



Trilby, 17, Brighton
"The new songs sounded amazing. We've grown up since we last saw them, so there was a different vibe tonight, but it was really great."



Harry, 15, Brighton
"The whole show was really fun but 'In The Red' was my favourite tonight, I think. We've seen them a few times before, but tonight was probably the best."

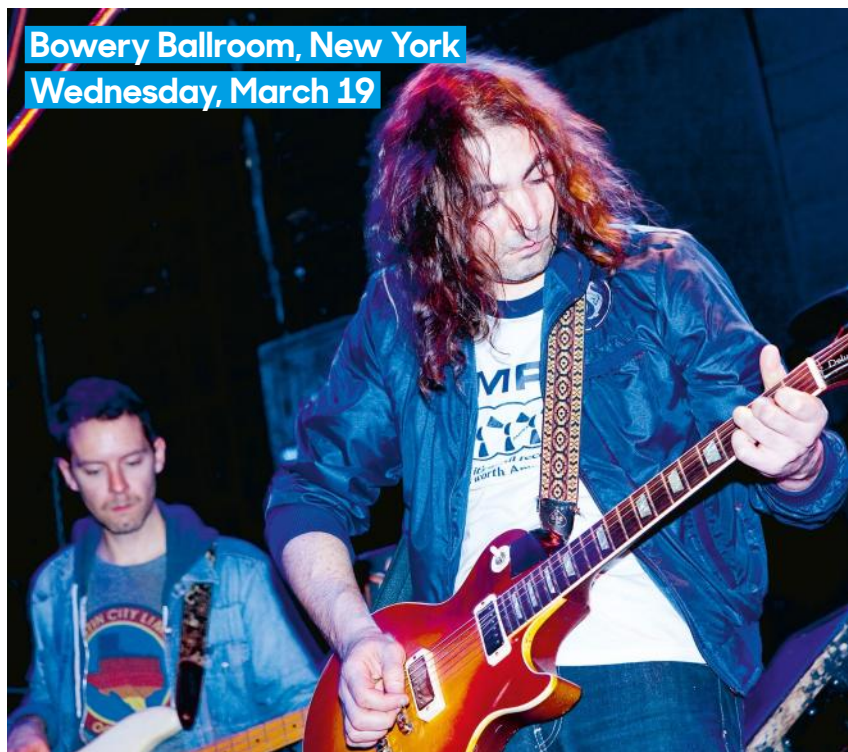


Cameron, 14, Brighton
"They were so sick! Last time I saw them was playing for Bands In Transit [sessions performed in the back of a Transit van], so this was really different."

The War On Drugs

Bowery Ballroom, New York

Wednesday, March 19



The Philadelphians launch their latest album with a late-night love-in

It's a little after 11pm when The War On Drugs begin the first gig of their three-night stint in New York. It's also the day after third album 'Lost In The Dream' was released in America, and many in the sold-out crowd proudly clutch its vinyl form as they watch most of its songs being brought to life in front of them. Swelled to a six-piece for the evening, the Philadelphians begin with 'In Reverse', the last track on the new record. A lone, faint blue spotlight sets the mood as Adam Granduciel tentatively and tenderly unfurls the song's shimmering

whole. As on record, the production is crisp and clean and full of a smooth and dreamy 1980s nostalgia, but the effect live is even more immediate – suddenly you're back in time, transported to a parallel world where Dire Straits are the coolest band on the planet.

Yet, while Granduciel's vocals are undeniably reminiscent of Mark Knopfler's, there's more to this time-travel escapism than that. It's the way 'Under The Pressure' ebbs like the tide, moving

seamlessly from its smooth grooves into the epic crescendo that finishes it off; how the slow, broken-hearted pangs of 'Suffering' swell wistfully yet are still full of hope; how 'Burning' becomes a raucous, uptempo chug despite the overbearing sadness of its lyrics, made the more devastating by Granduciel's forlorn delivery. More than anything, it's the way in which the six guys onstage inhabit these songs, crawling inside them to create something that feels utterly special – so much more than just playing the song as it is on the record.

As with the solo songs of Kurt Vile, The War On Drugs' former singer, these are hazy and lazy and lethargic, yet delivered with utter precision. Unfortunately, given the late start, by the time the band are halfway through, the audience is noticeably depleted. By the time the fake 'encore' comes to an end – the band never actually leave the stage – with a stunning version of 'Black Water Falls', it is almost 1am and a noticeable chunk of the crowd has already left. But then, perhaps that makes it all the more special for those who stayed until the end. "See you tomorrow," smiles Granduciel, apparently unaware that tomorrow's already here. Or perhaps, like the rest of the crowd, he's still lost in time, unsure exactly when or where he is.

■ MISCHA PEARLMAN

SETLIST

- In Reverse
- Baby Missiles
- Under The Pressure
- Suffering
- Eyes To The Wind
- An Ocean In Between The Waves
- Disappearing/ I Was There
- Brothers
- Red Eyes
- Burning
- Lost In The Dream
- Come To The City
- Comin' Through
- Black Water Falls



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NME

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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

Tune-Yards

Experimental musician Tune-Yards returns in May with an eagerly awaited new album, 'Nikki Nack', inspired by trips to Haiti, politics and the gentrification of her Oakland neighbourhood. She'll be bringing the album to UK stages in June and July.

How did your trip to Haiti affect 'Nikki Nack'?

Merrill Garbus: "I wrote 'Sink-O' soon after I got back and the sense of chaotic movement – like riding on a bumpy road from Port-au-Prince – and non-stop noise contributed to that track. Otherwise the influence was more indirect."

How are you feeling about the new album?

"It feels pretty new because some of the songs just came to life in the last couple of months of working on it. I've lately been excited about 'Stop That Man', because I'm proud of the mood we were able to create. It's creepy and menacing. And 'Time Of Dark', which feels very different from any song we've done before but has a killer chorus and vibe."

How will you recreate them live?

"We've been practising first track 'Find A New Way' for months now. We finally hired some singers, so I think this will be strong live when I get my drumming tight enough. I think

these will all be dynamic on stage. 'Water Fountain' sounds great. Our percussionist Dani has two snares, a conga, a floor tom and plenty of cymbals, so it should be interesting!"

► THE DETAILS

► **DATES** Brighton Concorde 2 (June 26), Manchester Gorilla (30), Leeds Cockpit (July 1), Bristol Trinity Centre (2), London Electric Brixton (September 3)
 ► **SUPPORT ACTS** TBC
 ► **PRICE** £12; London £16.50
 ► **ON SALE** now
 ► **FROM** NME.COM/tickets with £1.20–£3.15 booking fee

Drenge

"We've been bickering a lot [about the new songs], so that shows there's a lot of love going into them. But it's still a Loveless record," Drenge's Rory Loveless told *NME* recently. By June, the drummer and his brother Eoin should have reached a compromise, so expect some fresh sounds at these intimate dates.

► **DATES** Hull Welly (June 3), Oxford O2 Academy 2 (4), Cardiff Globe (5), Coventry Kasbah (7)
 ► **SUPPORT ACTS** TBC
 ► **PRICE** £10; Coventry £5
 ► **ON SALE** now
 ► **FROM** NME.COM/tickets with £1 booking fee; Coventry from ticketweb.co.uk with 95p booking fee

One Beat Weekender

Birmingham label One Beat have expanded their festival from one day to two. Already confirmed are locals Troumaka, the Pixies-inspired Dumb, Midlands stalwarts Johnny Foreigner and new-wave newcomers Ekkah. Many more are still to be announced.

► **DATES** Birmingham MAC (July 19–20)
 ► **OTHER ACTS** Midnight Bonfires, Hoopla Blue, Curb, Elephantine, The Oddyssey, Grafham Water Sailing Club
 ► **PRICE** Weekend £28; day £15
 ► **ON SALE** now
 ► **FROM** macarts.co.uk with booking fee TBC

Linda Perhacs

Psych-folk singer Linda Perhacs released debut album 'Parallelograms' in 1970. For years she languished in obscurity, but has gained cult status recently with her songs being featured in film soundtracks including Daft Punk's *Electroma*.

This year she finally released second album 'The Soul Of All Natural Things', featuring collaborations with Julia Holter and Nite Jewel. Perhacs makes her second-ever visit to the UK in June.

► **DATES** London Union Chapel (June 1), Leeds Brudenell Social Club (2), Liverpool Leaf On Bold Street (3), Glasgow Stereo (5)
► **SUPPORT ACTS** TBC
► **PRICE** £13.50; London £14.50
► **ON SALE** now
► **FROM** NME.COM/tickets with £1.35-£2.90 booking fee

Rick Ross

The rapper brings his latest star-studded album 'Mastermind' to the UK for a one-off date in the capital. It's unlikely guest stars The Weeknd, Lil Wayne and Kanye West will join him, but Ross has enough personality to ensure you won't miss them too much.

► **DATES** London Roundhouse (May 18)
► **SUPPORT ACTS** TBC
► **PRICE** £36.50
► **ON SALE** now
► **FROM** NME.COM/tickets with £3.65 booking fee

James Lavelle's Meltdown

London's Southbank Centre hosts another artist-curated Meltdown festival this year, with UNKLE's James Lavelle in charge of bookings for 2014. The DJ, musician and head of the Mo'Wax label has confirmed that the Pretenders' Chrissie Hynde will



Drenge

perform her debut solo album 'Stockholm' at what will be her first show in five years. Drum'n'bass artist Goldie will perform his 1995 album 'Timeless' live for the first time, alongside the Heritage Orchestra.

► **DATES** London Southbank Centre (June 13-22)
► **OTHER ACTS** Mark Lanegan, Edwyn Collins, Keaton Henson, Petite Noir, Neneh Cherry
► **PRICE** £12.50-£40
► **ON SALE** April 3, 10am
► **FROM** southbankcentre.co.uk with booking fee TBC

Eden Sessions

Currently riding high with the news that they'll release their first album in 23 years on April 28, Pixies will continue their wave of jubilation with a headline set at Cornwall's

Eden Sessions. Other headliners throughout the summer include Dizzee Rascal, Elbow and Ellie Goulding.

► **DATES** Cornwall Eden Project (June 21-July 14)
► **OTHER ACTS** TBC
► **PRICE** £35; Elbow £40; Ellie Goulding sold out
► **ON SALE** now
► **FROM** edensessions.com with £5 booking fee

Tennent's Vital 2014

Despite suggesting in recent interviews that they can't stand each other and are on the verge of splitting up, Las Vegas indie rock'n'roll veterans The Killers have added another date to their festival season. They'll head to Northern Ireland in August to play a career-spanning set.

► **DATES** Belfast Boucher Road Playing Fields (August 21)
► **OTHER ACTS** Bastille, more TBC
► **PRICE** £49.50
► **ON SALE** now
► **FROM** ticketmaster.ie

Tove Lo

Swedish singer Tove Lo caused a storm on the blogs last year with her single 'Habits'. She's just released her debut EP 'Truth Serum' and will make the trip over to the UK this spring for two dates to build on the buzz surrounding her.

► **DATES** London Hoxton Square Bar & Kitchen (May 6), Manchester Deaf Institute (7)
► **SUPPORT ACTS** TBC
► **PRICE** £8
► **ON SALE** now
► **FROM** NME.COM/tickets with 80p-£1 booking fee

FESTIVAL NEWS

Wilderness Festival

The Oxfordshire weekend has more names added to its line-up, including Joan As Police Woman, Slow Club, Chet Faker and Teleman. They join the already confirmed Metronomy, London Grammar, Jessie Ware and more. The festival takes place at Cornbury Place on August 7-10 with weekend camping passes available now for £143.50 from NME.COM/tickets.

Glastonbury

The Black Keys and Lana Del Rey are the latest acts to self-confirm for the Somerset festival. Patrick Carney and Dan Auerbach will bring their new album 'Turn Blue' to Worthy Farm on June 25-29. Meanwhile, Del Rey has been listed as performing on her booking agent's website.

Field Day

Thurston Moore will appear at this year's Field Day in Victoria Park, London. Other new additions to the two-day festival include Future Islands, The Wytches and Lovepark. Tickets cost £49.50 for Saturday, £38.50 for Sunday or £78 for the whole weekend, from NME.COM/tickets.



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GOING OUT

Everything worth leaving the house for this week

Elbow

The Manchester band's sixth studio album 'The Take Off And Landing Of Everything' recently flew to the top of the UK albums chart. So join Guy Garvey, Richard Jupp, Pete Turner and brothers Mark and Craig Potter to celebrate as they kick off a huge arena tour, playing tracks from the new record alongside their weighty back catalogue.

► **DATES** Birmingham LG Arena (April 5), Glasgow SSE Hydro (6)

► **TICKETS** Birmingham £30.70; Glasgow £30 from NME.COM/tickets with £1.50–£2.25 booking fee

British Sea Power

The Brighton-based six-piece return to live shows after recently providing the score to director Thomas Balmès' new documentary *Happiness*. More dates follow next week.

► **DATES** Liverpool East Village Arts Club (April 5), Edinburgh Liquidroom (6)

► **TICKETS** Liverpool £12 from NME.COM/tickets with £1.50 booking fee; Edinburgh £14 from ticketmaster.co.uk with £2.25 booking fee

Palma Violets

The Lambeth boys previewed new material on their tour at the end of last year, so expect them to show off more new songs this week as they head across the Irish Sea to play in Belfast.

They'll also be giving the infectious chaos of their debut album '180' another airing.

► **DATES** Belfast Voodoo (April 7)

► **TICKETS** £15.50 from ticketmaster.co.uk with £2.25 booking fee

Gang Of Youths

Fresh from causing a ruckus at their boozy and boisterous SXSW shows in Austin, Texas, the hotly tipped Sydney five-piece stagger into the UK for the first time. Find out what all the fuss is about as they tear through London and Brighton.

► **DATES** London KOKO (April 4), Brighton Sticky Mike's Frog Bar (5)

► **TICKETS** Brighton £5 from NME.COM/tickets with £1.25 booking fee; London £5 from ticketweb.co.uk with 95p booking fee

School Of Language

David Brewis recently took a break from working with brother Peter in Field Music to make his second solo album 'Old Fears' as School Of Language (see NME's verdict on p29). The Sunderland musician plays a one-off show in Newcastle on the day of the record's release.

► **DATES** Newcastle The Cluny (April 7)

► **TICKETS** £7 from NME.COM/tickets with £1 booking fee

Big Deal

Kacey Underwood and Alice Costelloe play highlights from their first two albums, 'Lights Out' and 'June Gloom'. Backing musicians Melissa Rigby and Huw Webb will add an extra dimension to their sound.

► **DATES** Brighton Sticky Mike's Frog Bar (April 2), Birmingham Hare & Hounds (3), Manchester Band On The Wall (4)

► **TICKETS** £8; Manchester £6 from NME.COM/tickets with 60p–£1 booking fee

Cloud Boat

The dreamy electronic duo head north as they finish their current tour in support of last year's debut, 'Book Of Hours'.

FIVE TO SEE FOR FREE

Thrills don't come cheaper than this

1. Post War Glamour Girls

The Old Blue Last, London
The Leeds indie rockers play their debut, 'Pink Fur'.
April 2, 8pm

2. Teen Daze

Bungalows & Bears, Sheffield
Canada's Jamison brings his icy ambience to the UK.
April 3, 8pm

3. Quilt

Rough Trade East, London
Dreamy psych from the Mexican Summer-signed Boston trio.
April 3, 7pm

4. Goldheart Assembly

Belgrave Music Hall, Leeds
London quintet take their beardy indie to the north.
April 3, 7.30pm

5. Manchester Orchestra

Rise, Bristol
Andy Hull and his band air tracks from new album 'Cope'.
April 7, 2.30pm



See Goldheart Assembly for free in Leeds

Palma
Violets



► **DATES** Liverpool The Shipping Forecast (April 2), Manchester The Castle Hotel (3)

► **TICKETS** Liverpool £5; Manchester £7 from NME.COM/tickets with 50p-70p booking fee

Let's Wrestle

For their self-titled third album, ragged slackers Let's Wrestle enlisted the production skills of east London lo-fi maestro Rory Attwell. Hear their chirpy psych pop yourselves as they kick-start their latest tour this week.

► **DATES** Brighton Green Door Store (April 2), Cardiff Gwdihw Café (3), Manchester Kraak Gallery (5), Newcastle Head Of Steam (7)

► **TICKETS** £7; Cardiff £5 from wegotickets.com with 50p-70p booking fee; Brighton £5 from benothing.ticketabc.com with 50p booking fee

La Luz

Seattle's Shana Cleveland, Marian Li Pino, Lena Simon and Alice Sandahl are signed to Sub Pop offshoot Hardly Art, who have just released the band's debut album 'It's Alive'. They'll be playing that record as they finish up a handful of dates on this side of the Atlantic with intimate gigs in Manchester and London.

► **DATES** Manchester Gullivers (April 2), London Windmill (3)

► **TICKETS** Manchester £6 from NME.COM/tickets with 60p booking fee; London £7 from wegotickets.com with 70p booking fee



Damon and Noel discuss their musical influences on 6 Music, April 5

STAYING IN

The best music on TV, radio and online this week

Noel Gallagher and Damon Albarn

All Back To Mine

Originally broadcast on the World Service, the BBC's Britpop celebrations are being aired again on 6 Music. Listen to Sean Rowley chat to the former rivals about the music that shaped their lives and influenced their bands.

► **LISTEN** BBC 6 Music, 4am, Apr 5

Nas

1994: Nas' Finest Hour

It isn't just British indie celebrating a big milestone in 2014. This year is also the 20th anniversary of New York rapper Nas' debut album 'Illmatic'. DJ Nick Bright looks at the story behind the record and its influence in the years since, speaking to Common, Pharoshe Monch, Trevor Nelson and Nas himself along the way.

► **LISTEN** BBC Radio 1Xtra, 9pm, Apr 6

Chvrches

Evening Session

Jo Whiley and Steve Lamacq are

reunited on the airwaves this week to relive Britpop's flagship radio show. Tune in tonight to see what classic track from the era Glasgow synthpop trio Chvrches choose to perform.

► **LISTEN** BBC Radio 2, 8pm, Apr 8

Temples

X-Posure
The Kettering psych-pop quartet join John Kennedy in the studio twice this



Hear
Chvrches
on Radio 2

week to play two tracks off their debut album 'Sun Structures', which entered the Top 10 in the UK charts earlier this year.

► **LISTEN** XFM, 10pm, Apr 2-3

Radiohead

Meeting People Is Easy

Follow the Oxford band on tour in the aftermath of 'OK Computer' in this 1998 documentary, and get a glimpse into the gruelling life of a band on the road.

► **WATCH** Sky Arts, 11.10am, Apr 5

Britpop: A Very British Pop

Stuart Maconie looks back on the history of Britpop, charting its rise from the pubs of Camden to the moment some of its most recognisable figures stepped through the front door of 10

Downing Street. Blur's Alex James, Sleeper's Louise Wener and Brett

Anderson and Mat Osman of Suede all contribute.

► **LISTEN** Radio 2, 10pm, Apr 7

THINGS WE LIKE

This week's objects of desire



DVD

Patti Smith: Play With Fire

Catch 'the godmother of punk' playing 'Dancing Barefoot' and more on this DVD of her 2010 show in San Sebastian.

► **BUY** £9.99, amazon.co.uk



BOOK

Here We Are Now: The Lasting Impact Of Kurt Cobain

Examination of the late Nirvana frontman's enduring legacy.

► **BUY** £6.87, amazon.co.uk



GAME

Flying Yeezus

Kanye West is the focus of this Flappy Bird-style game where you

aim to achieve divine status.

► **BUY** Free, iTunes.com



T-SHIRT

Daft Punk

Show your love for the disco-loving French robots by picking up this helmet-adorned shirt.

► **BUY** \$40, daftpunk.com

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Royal Blood brought their own lightshow



Paul Banks whips up a fan frenzy at Rock City

NME PROMOTION



Interpol's Leeds setlist

WE BUILT THESE CITIES ON ROCK AND ROLL



Big hair and psych pop with Temples in Nottingham

The NME Awards Tour 2014 with Austin, Texas hit towns across the UK last month. We captured all the backstage action on the Nokia Lumia 1020

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



Royal Blood improvise after necking their rider



Circa Waves try out the latest mobile phone technology...



Huw Stephens relaxes backstage at the O2 Academy Brixton

Venues across the UK are only just recovering after the NME Awards Tour with Austin, Texas rumbled into town. NYC gloom-rock titans Interpol topped the bill, returning to the stage for the first time since 2011 to cheers of “we built this city on Interpol” as they played tunes from their new album. Indie-pop rapscallions Circa Waves took the opening slot, making way for Brighton duo Royal Blood and psych upstarts Temples for an evening of the finest rock’n’roll we could muster. You caught all the action in front of the stage, and now we can give you a peek into the carnage behind the scenes too. We gave tour manager Jared Pepall a Nokia Lumia 1020 smartphone for an exclusive no-holds-barred peek from the tour frontline. The Nokia Lumia 1020 is perfect for taking pictures at gigs and festivals, getting you closer to the action wherever you are. So what better way to show you how the madness unfolded than to give the man with the ultimate AAA pass the ultimate AAA smartphone...



...and take a tour selfie with the Nokia Lumia 1020

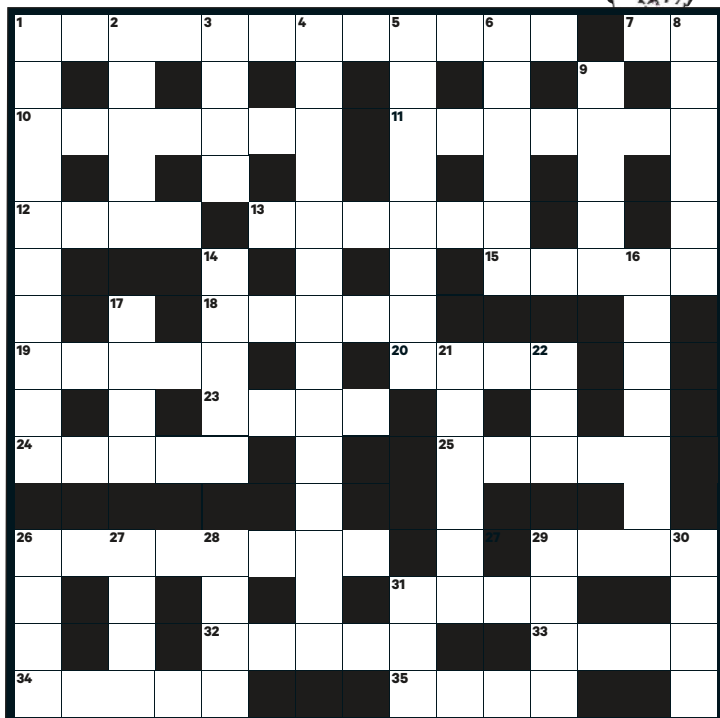
► Check out the Nokia Lumia 1020 hub on NME.COM for even more backstage pictures and exclusive video content shot during the NME Awards Tour with Austin, Texas

THINK TANK

NME CROSSWORD

Compiled by
TREVOR HUNGERFORD

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CLUES ACROSS

- 1** Therefore, at this moment in time, you'll be familiar with all the latest Horrors (2-3-3-4)
7 REM album taken from 1 down (2)
10 "We were caught up and lost in all of our vices", 2013 (7)
11 US songstress who had UK Number One hit at 16 years of age in 1988 (7)
12+6D Ringo does a backwards riff before heading east with a Johnny Cash song (4-2-4)
13 (See 8 down)
15+16D Get fed up with the drumming on Blondie album (3-2-3-4)
18 Midlands band in a state of harmony while keeping it rather quiet (5)
20+19A Influential singer-songwriter who had just 'Five Leaves Left' (4-5)
23 "Give me some _____, I'm coming loose/I'm hanging for you", 2011 (4)
24 Rock classic; electric version charted in 1972 and

- acoustic version charted in 1992 (5)
25 Wedding Present man is a bit of a deranged genius (5)
26 (See 4 down)
29 Reggae-influenced punks who were 'Staring At The Rude Boys' (4)
31 The ____ Band went from 'Heroes To Zeros' (4)
32+30D "Her shadow is always with her/Her shadow will always keep her small", 1997 (4-1-4)
33 Everyone naturally included the girl with '99 Red Balloons' (4)
34 To keep an Aretha Franklin song in mind (5)
35 Kids In Glass Houses material is just filth (4)

CLUES DOWN

- 1** Foster The People's LP roused me somehow (10)
2 (See 17 down)
3+21D Eminem's not there, so it's time (4-2-4)
4+26A The first illegal copies on The Streets (8-6-8)
5 The ankle was broken for

- her by Catfish And The Bottlemen (8)
6 (See 12 across)
8+13A "We are vain and we are blind/I hate people when they're not polite", Talking Heads (6-6)
9 (See 31 down)
14 Queen spent 'A Night At The _____' to attain their first Number One album (5)
16 (See 15 across)
17+2D He was once leader of the Tubeway Army (4-5)
21 (See 3 down)
22 Pretend this is by The Pretenders (3)
26 A dull finish from The 1975 (4)
27 Hail this album by Bryan Ferry (4)
28 Take a chance on this Megadeth album (4)
29 Frantically takes in a Futureheads album (4)
30 (See 32 across)
31+9D Poor practice on this number by Foals (3-5)

MARCH 1 ANSWERS

ACROSS 1+8A Too Much Information, 5 Bullet, 9 APB, 11 Korus, 12+35A Easy/Lucky/Free, 13+14A On And On, 20 Recover, 21 Alas, 23 Al, 24+17A Ad-Rock, 25 Invalid, 27 Changes, 30 Edit, 31 Urge, 32 Umbrella, 34+16D East India Youth **DOWN** 1 Think For A Minute, 2+27D Oxford Comma, 3 Uprising, 4+19D Heaven Or Las Vegas, 5 Bliss, 6+10D Lonely Boy, 7 Top, 9 Anchor, 15+22D New Edition, 17 Regan, 18 Kills, 24 Ali, 26 Ade, 28 Air, 29 Ellie, 33 Elf

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 15, 2014, to: Crossword, NME, 9th Floor, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU. Winners will be notified via email.

QUIZ

Compiled by ALAN WOODHOUSE (answers on page 67)

1 Ed Lay is the drummer in which British band?

2 Which Oasis track does Paul Weller guest on?

3 In the time they were together, The Smiths had two UK Top 10 singles. Name them.

4 True or false: Interpol frontman Paul Banks was born in England.

5 Which Radiohead track did UK prime minister David Cameron choose on Desert Island Discs in 2008?

6 Which song was a UK Top 10 hit for Deep Purple in 1968 and Kula Shaker in 2007?

7 Which rock icon's real name is Vincent Furnier?

8 Which British band have released the singles 'Get Me Off', 'Lucky Star' and 'Raindrops'?

9 What is Madonna's surname?

10 Which British singer-songwriter co-wrote Sky Ferreira's 2012 single 'Everything Is Embarrassing'?

11 Who was the first British act to play London's Wembley Stadium

when it reopened in 2007?

12 Which giants of heavy metal formed in Leyton, east London in 1975?

13 Which British band did comedian Ricky Gervais briefly manage?

14 Which rap outfit guest edited an issue of NME in 2004?

15 Which American rocker owns a pair of northern Californian diners named after the Clash song 'Rude Can't Fail'?

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Kurt Cobain:

20 years on

Over the next six pages, the musicians who recorded Kurt's favourite albums celebrate his legacy. But first, Mary Anne Hobbs – who wrote Nirvana's first NME cover feature – remembers "a deeply passionate music fan"

There's a little-known footnote to Nirvana's most famous UK performance that I just love. When Reading & Leeds Festivals asked Nirvana to headline in 1992, in what turned out to be their last ever show on these shores, Kurt agreed on one basis: he wanted to curate the rest of the line-up. This was before the rise of festivals like All Tomorrow's Parties, and the organisers were apparently quite reluctant, but Kurt was insistent. Cue a lot of bemused expressions when Björn Again, an Abba tribute band the Nirvana frontman was crazy for, took to the Reading Main Stage at 3pm that afternoon.

"What I love about that story, other than the thought of legions of Nirvana fans nodding along to 'Mamma Mia', is how it shows Kurt for what he was – a music fan. His music meant so much to so many people, but it's often forgotten that other people's music meant just as much to him. I remember doing the band's first *NME* feature so vividly – the whole experience is just indelibly inked into my brain. It was just after the release of 'Nevermind' but before 'Smells Like Teen Spirit' exploded, turning them from the nobodies I met into the most famous band in the world literally a week later. I remember Kurt being so incredibly in love with Courtney at the time and talking passionately about her politics, while Dave Grohl sat near him goofily trying to flip cigarettes and catch them with his teeth. But maybe most of all I remember the photo shoot, with Kurt hunched over in absolute agony. He suffered these terrible, terrible stomach ulcers that would sometimes leave him unable to do anything but lie in the foetal position. I got a real sense that day that obsessing over music was his escape from that constant, horrendous pain. From the

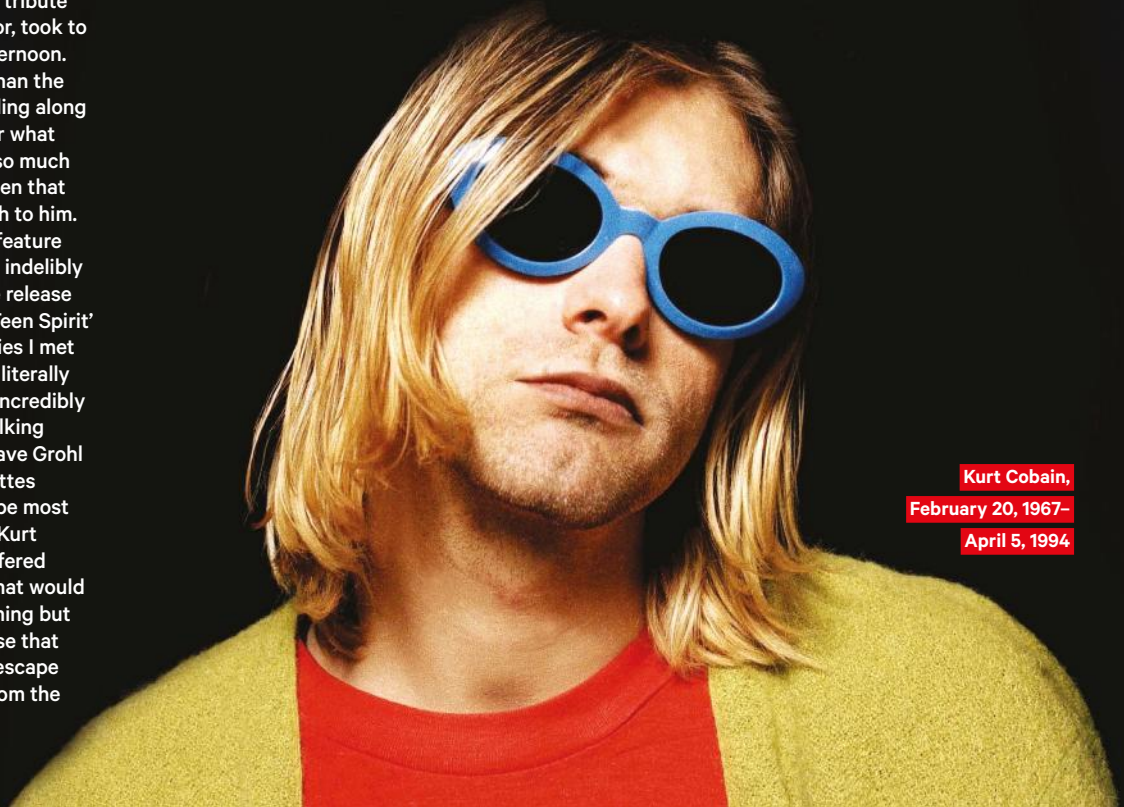
way he lit up when discussing some of the bands he loved and admired, I imagined him listening to records as his escape from the pain.

"The bands and albums he loved were so typically Kurt. People were surprised to see him name bands like Aerosmith in his list of favourite albums, revealed in his diaries, but that was him through and through – he was too transparent, too raw to swap that out for something cooler or more credible. Kurt refused

to edit his personality for anyone. Rock'n'roll has a long tradition of rock stars building these alter egos and personas for themselves, but Kurt was different – there was never a sense with him that you were getting any kind of façade. The albums on that list really speak to that. He was a deeply passionate music fan who never became disconnected from the underground music scenes Nirvana cut their teeth in, never stopped rooting for the little guys – he turned up to the 1992 MTV Awards wearing a Daniel Johnston T-shirt while everyone else wore suits.

"I felt so much sorrow the day he died, and still do whenever I think about it. I'm not sure Kurt would have approved of all the fawning sentiment and hysteria around his death. But I do think, as a music lover with incredible passion for the artists he admired, he'd forgive me for mourning the loss of any more of his incredible music. As a tremendous music fan, I think he'd let it slide."

Turn over for interviews with the bands and musicians who inspired Kurt ➔



Kurt Cobain,
February 20, 1967–
April 5, 1994



Wipers

Greg Sage

Guitarist for era-defining Portland punks Wipers and a huge influence on bands from Dinosaur Jr to Cloud Nothings

"I got to talk with Kurt a few times. He would tell me how he would go to Portland from Seattle as a kid to see us play. He said we were a big influence on his style, which I thought was cool. The last time I spoke with him was at a show in LA we played with him. He didn't seem too happy with all the fame and media attention he was getting; it was 'over the top', as he put it.

"A year later, Kurt wanted us to tour with them, but their management's offer wouldn't even cover our expenses. They demanded that we not talk to or tell Kurt about the offer made to us 'or else'. We could have told Kurt, and he would have demanded his management made a fairer offer, but I didn't want to get Kurt involved that way. The sad thing was, Kurt was told we didn't want to do the tour with them.

"I heard from some people in his circle that he wanted to come to Arizona and record at my studio, Zenorecords, and do an album of old blues covers. I thought that would be good for him personally, but how do you go from mega-million LP sales to an album of old blues covers from a corporate point of view? Two weeks later he was gone. Kurt was an amazing person and talent."

Wipers Is This Real?



► **RELEASE**
DATE 1980
► **LABEL** Park
Ave/Sub Pop
► **PRODUCER** Greg Sage



MARINE GIRLS TRACEY THORN

Singer in Marine Girls and Everything But The Girl who recently released her memoir *Bedsit Disco Queen*



"Kurt Cobain, like many music fans, was a great list-maker, and when his *Journals* were published in 2002 they were full of lists of his favourite

bands and records. On one page, in a list of his favourite-ever songs, are two written by me, 'Honey' and 'In Love', and on another page, Kurt's Top 50 albums of all time include The Clash, Sex Pistols, Public Enemy, and 'Beach Party' by my band Marine Girls, which we recorded in 1981 in a garden shed.

"Of course, I didn't know at the time that Kurt was a fan of mine. I only found out later, after he'd died, when I was appearing on *Later...* with Massive Attack and Courtney Love came up and told me about it, in a bizarre showbiz encounter which I describe in my book.

"It struck me as the most unlikely revelation, possibly untrue, and it wasn't 'til I read *Journals* that I fully believed it. And then the more I thought about it, the more it began to make sense to me. On paper you couldn't get two bands more unlike than Nirvana and Marine Girls – one all sound and fury, the other all quiet and reserve. Yet we had something important in common – the shared sense of being outsiders, not just from the straight world, so easy to rebel against by joining a rock'n'roll band, but from that very world of rock'n'roll itself. Marine Girls were formed in defiance of the rules of rock bands; we had no drummer, made no noise, stared at our shoes but scowled at you if you ignored us. We were suburban schoolgirls, inspired by post-punk, empowered by DIY, but

we were an acquired taste and occupied a very small niche for a very short time.

"Nirvana, on the other hand, seized the rules of rock by the scruff of the neck and seemed to own them for a while, but Kurt himself carried with him that sense of not quite fitting in, of being a square peg in a round hole, even while his audience grew and grew, and strove to whittle themselves into the same shape peg as him. I think he recognised us as fellow misfits, gawky unheroic kids who nonetheless dared to whisper at their audience and defy them not to pay attention. Nirvana were famous for the noise they made, but also for the whispered sections that preceded the noise, and maybe he took that idea from groups like us, making more of it than we ever did.

"I didn't love all Nirvana's music – I've never turned into enough of a rock fan for that – but there was always something about Kurt that I loved, not least his singing voice, which was heartfelt and poignant. I like the fact that he clearly respected women in bands and didn't buy into that tired old notion of music as a boys' club, something that's still so dreadfully prevalent today. And I was very moved when I saw our name on that list of his. In a distant, slightly imaginary way, there'd been a connection there, moments when he'd listened to music I'd made and identified with it, seen himself in it, and stored

it up with other things that were precious and significant to him. I'll always be proud of that fact, and it makes me happy when people who don't quite fit in find each other, and take comfort in each other's existence, and then go on to achieve great things."

Marine Girls Beach Party



► **RELEASE**
DATE 1981
► **LABEL**
Whaam!
► **PRODUCERS** Marine Girls

The Frogs

Jimmy Flemion

Jimmy and his late brother Dennis formed The Frogs in Milwaukee in 1980

"Which one of you guys is The Frogs?" he asked on October 26, 1993 as he entered the dressing room. Kurt had arrived. No airs, just genuine and honest. His smalltown, downhome persona was refreshing yet still surprising. Even more surprising to my brother Dennis and me was that [he] was a huge fan of ours. We introduced ourselves. How grateful and gracious he was when we gifted him our first LP, which he had been looking for for years. Sometime in the future we would learn that when Kurt came out of his coma in Rome on March 4, 1994, the first thing he asked for was his Walkman and his Frogs cassette. Nirvana-camp insiders also told us after the fact that they thought when Kurt went missing near the end, he'd gone to Milwaukee to join The Frogs.

"As Dennis said goodbye to Kurt the very night we all met, Kurt and Dennis exchanged info and Dennis asked Kurt when they would see each other again. In retrospect, perhaps they were not meant to see each other again on this plane, as my brother Dennis 'checked out' as well on July 7, 2012. I'm sure wherever they are now they (in Kurt's words) 'can't complain'...

"For me, his legacy is his songwriting, intertwining typical and atypical chord progressions, while his voice simultaneously conveyed anger, frustration, sadness and celebration over a memorable melody. Leonard Cohen with a distortion pedal, if you will."

The Frogs It's Only Right And Natural



► **RELEASE DATE**
1989
► **LABEL**
Homestead
► **PRODUCERS** The Frogs

THE RAINCOATS

ANA DA SILVA

Guitarist and singer with the seminal London post-punk band



"Music can have a healing power. It can give you a sense of belonging to cope with your longing. Music can help you make some sense of what surrounds

you. The Raincoats have a song called 'The Void', which was one of Kurt's favourites. Maybe hearing it gave him some comfort. We asked him to write the liner notes for the re-release of our first album 'The Raincoats' in 1993, after he came to me to ask for another copy (his was worn out), and after he wrote about our meeting in the liner notes of 'Incesticide'.

"The following year, Kurt asked us to go on tour with Nirvana. Me and Gina [Birch] together with Anne Wood on violin and Steve Shelley [from Sonic Youth] on drums played a few shows to prepare for this tour. On April 8, 1994, soundchecking at the Palladium in New York, Ray from DGC [Records] came and told us Kurt had died. I felt shocked, empty and devastated. I cried. I lost a friend. By the time the audience was there you could feel the sadness, the quiet and an overwhelming sense of loss. I remember singing every song as if I was speaking to him, because the meaning changed that night. When we played 'The Void', I dedicated the song to him, always and forever."

The Raincoats The Raincoats



► **RELEASE DATE**
1979 ► **LABEL**
Rough Trade
► **PRODUCERS**
Mayo Thompson, Geoff Travis,
The Raincoats



PIXIES

DAVID LOVERING



Kurt admitted "trying to rip off the Pixies" on 'Smells Like Teen Spirit'



"I did meet Kurt, but I think just once. It was a funny meeting, around the time that they broke through with their first record. I was married

at the time and Kurt, Courtney, my wife and I went out on Super Bowl Sunday to an amusement park just outside of Los Angeles. It was completely dead – no lines. We were just walking around having fun and he was wearing these pyjama bottoms, I seem to remember. We spoke a bit, but he was a shy guy and so was I. Then this kid walks by and he goes, 'Oh my god! It's David Lovering!' It was an amusing situation.

"I have vague recollections of the possibility of them touring with us, but my wife worked for a record company and made us aware that they were getting really big and how that might cause a problem. I also have a hard time discerning that any other band sounds like the Pixies, but I have heard

people say that 'Smells Like Teen Spirit' was a bit Pixies-like. I'm not sure how true that it is. I guess you could say there's a soft and a loud passage, but it's not really for me to say whether that was taken from us.

"I didn't know that Kurt had said he was influenced by the drum sound on 'Surfer Rosa'. I wish I could say I was responsible for the sound, but we recorded that album at Q Division in Boston with Steve Albini as the engineer. He managed to get that ambience, and allow you to hear the room. He got a great sound on that album.

"I enjoyed Nirvana. It was exciting music, but I never had to buy a record because I heard it so much on the radio – it was everywhere. It was a shock to me and my wife to hear of his passing away, and I can definitely see now, since the Pixies reformed, that some people have got into us because of Nirvana. We're thankful for that."

Pixies Surfer Rosa



► **RELEASE DATE**
1988
► **LABEL** 4AD
► **PRODUCER**

Steve Albini



Shonen Knife Naoko Yamano

Active since 1981, the Japanese pop-punkers release their 20th album this month



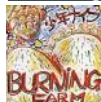
"Kurt wanted us to open for Nirvana's [1991 'Nevermind'] UK tour. They were very kind to us when we toured with them. Kurt was a calm, gentle person.

"My favourite memory of him is from 1992. It was Valentine's Day and Nirvana played in Osaka, my hometown. Shonen Knife had a show on the same day, at a different venue. All of Nirvana and their tour crew came to our venue after their show, and so did lots of the audience. There were so many people hanging out in front of our venue that

our neighbours got very angry with us. It was very rock'n'roll!

"We toured with Nirvana twice: in the UK and the US. On the UK tour, in the dressing room, Kurt told me he wanted to learn our song 'Twist Barbie' so he could play it at a secret Nirvana gig. I showed him just once and he got it. When he died, our manager phoned us to tell us. I was so sad and surprised; he had looked healthy when I saw him. It's too sad to listen to his music now."

Shonen Knife Burning Farm



► RELEASE DATE

1985

► LABEL

Zero/K

► PRODUCERS Shonen Knife, Shin Hirakawa



HALF JAPANESE JAD FAIR

An avowed fan of their weird tunings, Kurt was wearing a Half Japanese T-shirt when he died



"Me and my brother started Half Japanese together in 1975, just banging out stuff. There were punk bands around but we just wanted to sound like ourselves.

"A little before Nirvana's 'In Utero' came out, we were playing a show in Toronto. I bought a copy of *Spin* magazine. There was an interview with Kurt and he said Nirvana were going on tour and The Breeders and Half Japanese would be opening. That was the first time I heard anything about it! I called my booking agent

and she said she'd just been contacted. I'd heard Nirvana a bit. I liked 'Smells Like Teen Spirit'.

"We did six dates with Nirvana, and the audiences were mostly high-school kids, I think. Whenever we played a fast song, it went down great, and when we played slow songs, they

bombed! I talked a little to Kurt. He was friendly, but a little shy. He told me he wanted to start a record label and sign Half Japanese to it. It never happened, of course. Kurt's death didn't come as a huge shock, sadly. I had heard of his overdose earlier. When there's one attempt like that... A second attempt – I suppose it was not a surprise to me."

Half Japanese We Are They Who Ache With Amorous Love



► RELEASE DATE

1990 ► LABEL

TEC Tones

► PRODUCERS

Half Japanese, Don Fleming



The Knack Berton Averre

More than just 'My Sharona', The Knack released six albums



"There's a paradox in rock music: the only way to make music that reaches a world of people is to resist trying.

It's never more starkly apparent than in the music of Nirvana. From the jump, they sounded different. I don't think many people know how goddamn hard this is. This kind of contribution to popular music can't be overestimated. It's why we gather to ponder the work of a man 20 years after the fact.

"I kind of hate involved interpretation of rock music, but it's impossible to listen to the music of Kurt Cobain without sensing the disaffection, the disconnect, the scorn for a world proving to be forbidding and artificial. They're not the first to dwell in this world. But Nirvana's take on this time-honoured subject felt fresh, and new, and vital.

"Years after Kurt died, our band was on a plane. A guy in our crew was reading a Cobain biography, and showed us a passage in which a friend recalls a night where Kurt said something along the lines of 'I'm going to play you a great rock album', then put on 'Get The Knack'. Needless to say, we were tickled pink. There's no greater thrill than to be appreciated by one's fellow musicians. I'm honoured that our album was one of the ones Kurt would put on and say, 'This is good music!'"

The Knack Get The Knack



► RELEASE DATE

1979

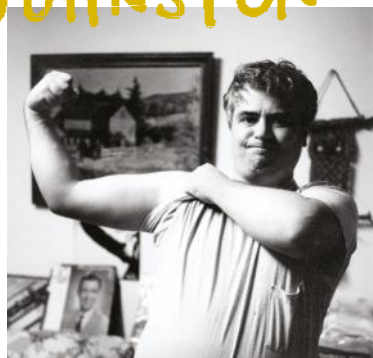
► LABEL Capitol

► PRODUCER

Mike Chapman



DANIEL JOHNSTON



**Kurt's patronage took the
godfather of lo-fi from DIY
cassettes to a major-label deal**



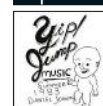
"When I first heard of Kurt he was on the radio, having hits and everything. It was great music. Back then, I listened to a lot of it. It reminded me of the Butthole Surfers and stuff like that. I liked the music, but the recordings especially were *really* good.

"I heard that he'd worn one of my T-shirts – the 'Hi, How Are You?' T-shirt – and won some MTV awards. One of the reasons

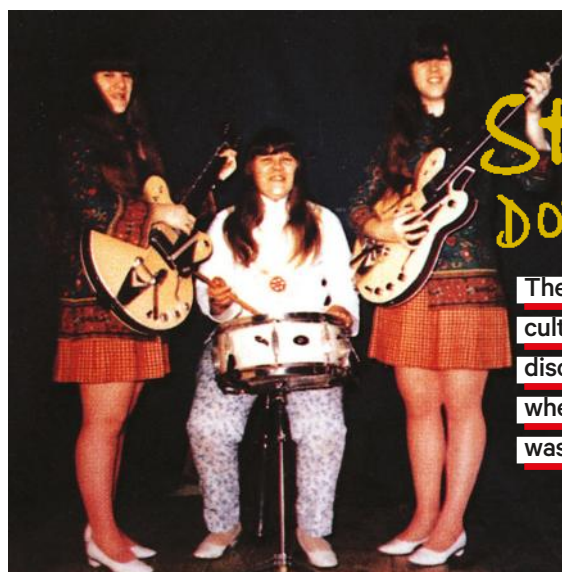
I became famous was because of Kurt – particularly in the last 10 years or so. I'm wearing one of those T-shirts myself now! Everywhere I go when I'm on tour, everyone's got these shirts and I've even met about 30 people with tattoos of the image. That is true dedication!

"I still hear Kurt on the radio all the time. It's like he became even more famous after he died. Just before he died, I'd got some pictures to hang up on the wall. I really didn't realise that it's been so long since his death."

Daniel Johnson
Yip/Jump Music



► **RELEASE**
DATE 1983
► **LABEL**
Self-released
► **PRODUCER** Daniel Johnston



THE SHAGGS DOT WIGGIN

**The Wiggin sisters'
cult '60s band were
discovered by Kurt
when their album
was re-released**



"I'm not absolutely sure what people connected to in the music of The Shaggs, but I'm told it's the honesty and the story behind the band. My father formed the band. His mother had read his fortune when he was in his late teens and told him he was going to have three daughters who should be in a band. I'm not sure if we would have formed if that hadn't been the case – I'd never even thought of the idea – but it wasn't against our will, although we did stop when he died in 1975.

"We thought the band was just a part of our life and that part was over. Then Terry Adams from the band NRBQ called me because he had found a copy of our album in a music store in New York.

That was in 1980, and the record got re-released. I presume it was after that that Nirvana found out about us. I'm very proud that people keep finding out about the band – I just think it's awesome. I never met Kurt, but I still think it's pretty special that he thought of us as one of his favourites.

"I was surprised that we were mentioned and that he liked us. I have a new band now with Jesse Krakow: The Dot Wiggin Band. I do the lyrics and Jesse does the music. As part of the

ending on one song we do called 'Just Another Crazy Day At The Farm', Jesse took a bit from the Nirvana song 'All Apologies' as a tribute. Our song goes, 'All and all and all is well', which is similar to 'All in all is all we are' in the Nirvana song."

The Shaggs
Philosophy Of
The World



► **RELEASE DATE**
1969 ► **LABEL**
Third World
► **PRODUCERS**
Terry Adams, Austin Wiggin,
Charlie Dreyer



Young Marble Giants
Stuart Moxham

The Cardiff post-punk band made just one album, briefly becoming indie-chart heroes



"I first became aware of Kurt Cobain while I was touring in the US in 1992 with a bunch of Anglophile locals. They kept mentioning his name so I asked who he was. They were stunned that I hadn't heard of him or Nirvana. To be fair their stuff was not likely to appear on my radar: I had long since stopped reading the music press; the Seattle grunge scene was an ocean, a continent and a whole culture away; and loud, distorted, shouty stuff is not my bag.

"I first heard Nirvana when an acquaintance played 'Smells Like Teen Spirit' at a meeting. It was just so similar to punk and heavy metal that it left no impression. With the passage of time, its undeniable impact led me to open my ears and mind and I understood the quality of the songs and the power of their sentiments. Then I saw the wonderful fan video *About A Son*, which is so mindfully produced and beautifully shot, and began to appreciate Kurt Cobain as a real person."

Young Marble Giants
Colossal Youth



► **RELEASE DATE**
1980 ► **LABEL**
Rough Trade
► **PRODUCERS**

Young Marble Giants,
Dave Anderson



THE SLITS VIV ALBERTINE

The guitarist for the provocative British punk band is now an established solo artist and author



"When 'Nevermind' came out, I was trying to be normal for the first time in my life. I went to film school, I was buying a flat and desperately trying to get pregnant. 'Nevermind' was the first time I'd heard that old passion and anger in music – that need to stand up and be counted – since the end of post-punk, when everything had become a bit clever, a bit careerist. It really jolted me. The Slits were about trying to combine lyrical, melodious music with experimental, improvisational music. We were quite radical, but there was a way in through the choruses. Kurt had that duality in his music too. He loved heavy

metal and riffs but also pop and melodies. That must have been one of the reasons he liked The Slits so much.

"Musicians can be deified once they die, but Ari Up's death [in 2010] hasn't elevated The Slits. She was an extremely difficult person, as most lead singers are. I'm sure people who knew him felt like that about Kurt too. Punk was against hero worship and

Kurt was too. He wasn't afraid to say he was an asshole, or to sing about being weak and vulnerable. That was part of his power.

"During The Slits' time, no male punk bands revered women. Being on Kurt's list meant hundreds of thousands of Nirvana fans began to check us out, and that attention helped to get The Slits written back into the history books."

The Slits Cut

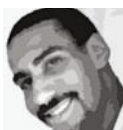
► **RELEASE DATE**
September 1979
► **LABEL** Island
► **PRODUCER** Dennis Bovell



Lead Belly

Alvin Singh II, Huddie Ledbetter's great-nephew

Legendary Delta bluesman Lead Belly died in 1949, over 20 years before Kurt was born



"Lead Belly never visited Seattle during his musical tour to America's West Coast states in the late 1940s. But when I moved to Seattle in 2007, I learned why one of the Pacific Northwest's most popular groups found my great uncle's music [to be an] inspiration to their sound. When Nirvana recorded 'MTV Unplugged...' in 1993, they included a rendition

of [his song] 'Where Did You Sleep Last Night', dedicating it to him too.

"Kurt Cobain held on to a tape cassette of Lead Belly's 'Last Sessions' album, saying: 'I hope that my songs approximate that honesty. That's what I strive for. He was like

the first punk rocker: he'd get into town, walk into an all-white bar, try to have a drink, get beat up and then go to jail because of it.' Just like Cobain, Ledbetter lived a life faced with adversity, yet his love for music continued to grow wherever he went."

Lead Belly Last Sessions Vol 1

► **RELEASE DATE** 1953
► **LABEL** Folkways
► **PRODUCER** Lead Belly



Bad Brains

Darryl Jenifer

Still active after a mid-'90s hiatus, the DC four-piece were hardcore pioneers



"Nirvana to me was the truest, rawest of those '90s grunge bands, and a perfect storm of what Bad

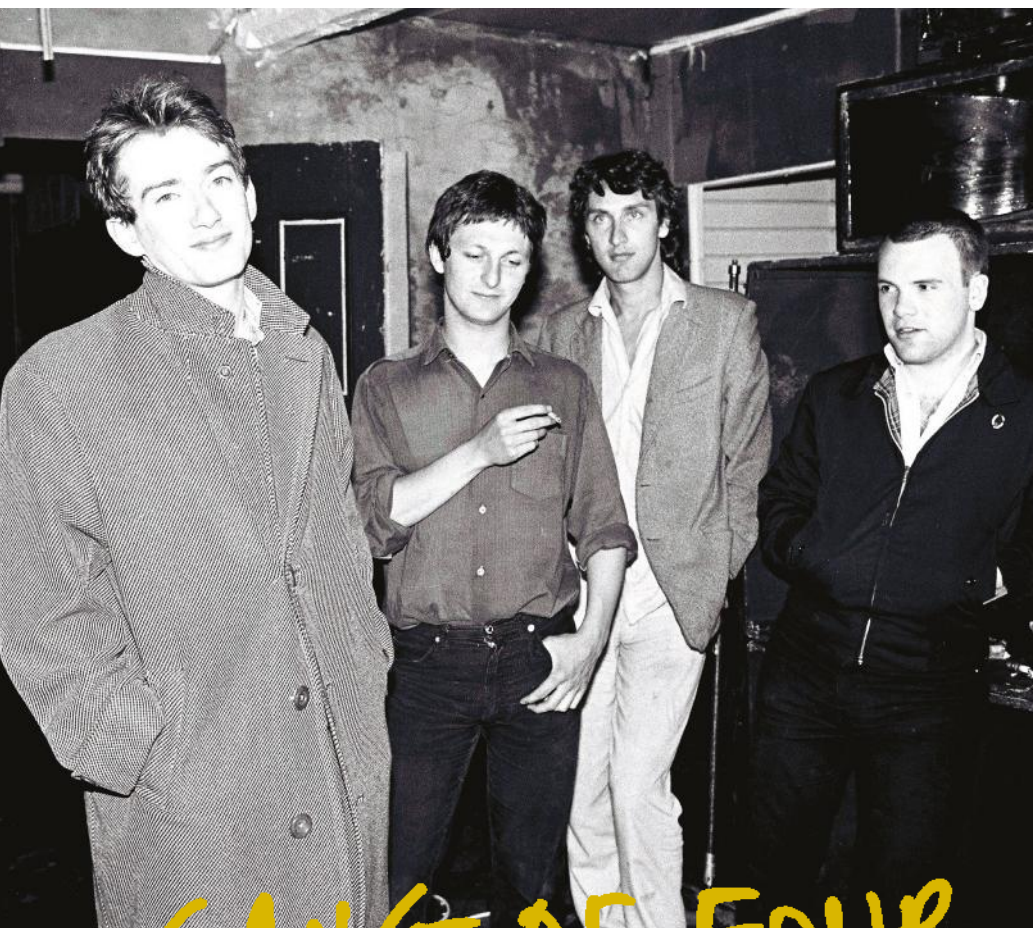
Brains represented: power and tenacity with great songwriting and lyrics, and passion and real life. That's why it sparked off like a rocket.

"You're never gonna get the same thing as Nirvana, but there will always be youth rising. And hopefully whoever is next can learn from the Kurt Cobains, and the cats before him, who died of drugs or suicide. You don't have to be a drug addict or a drunk to make dope art. A young rocker kid today should seek the pureness and blessing of Kurt's creative quest, but learn the reasons why he destroyed himself and what art can do to you. So when you go to make your art you can go, 'You know what, this is for my man Kurt Cobain and his creations, and I'm gonna make them even better because I'm gonna live, not die.'"

Bad Brains Rock For Light

► **RELEASE DATE** April 1983
► **LABEL** PVC
► **PRODUCER** Ric Ocasek





GANG OF FOUR

ANDY GILL

Nirvana confessed to ripping off the British post-punks more than a decade before their mid-2000s resurgence



"In the '90s, people were forever telling me that this huge star, Kurt Cobain, thought Gang Of Four were great and hugely influential to him and his band. Apparently he'd formed Nirvana as a 'Gang Of Four and Scratch Acid rip-off'. I became aware of Nirvana around 'Bleach', which came out 10 years after 'Entertainment!'. Nirvana didn't sound much like Gang Of Four. I think he took the attitude and a political angle from us. He considered himself a feminist, and Gang Of Four certainly shared a lot of thinking with feminist theory, especially the idea that societies, economies, modes of behaviour are human-made constructions, not natural ones. I think Kurt was excited by that, but I don't think he particularly copied the Gang Of Four sound, although Nirvana did do soundalikes.

"When I was working on the [self-titled, 2003] Killing Joke record, I initially programmed all the drums that the songs were built on, but we knew

we always wanted eventually to replace all of that with a live drummer playing the same parts. I went to LA to do that with Dave Grohl and he didn't want any payment because he recognised that Nirvana, with 'Come As You Are', had nicked the riff from a Killing Joke song, 'Eighties'.

"Kurt was a writer of good pop songs. That appealed to me because beneath it all, I'm a pop music fan. If he hadn't had that understanding, I'm not sure that we'd be talking about him now.

The band's status has survived because of the quality of the songs, not because they had a revolutionary guitar style, or because they analysed culture in a particularly unique way.

"I never met Kurt. I remember him dying and I have a stronger memory of his mother, I think, saying something like, 'You had to go and join that stupid club.' That stuck in my head. It was a good point."

Gang Of Four Entertainment



RELEASE DATE
September 1979
LABEL EMI
PRODUCERS Andy Gill, Jon King and Rob Warr

Butthole Surfers

Gibby Haynes

The San Antonio punks are still active, but haven't released a record in 13 years



"I only really talked to Kurt once, at his last rehab. I was a patient there as well. We joked about a friend of ours

who, months earlier, had jumped over the wall to escape the treatment centre that Kurt and I were presently in (as opposed to simply walking out the front door). An hour later, Kurt jumped over the same wall.

"When we got news of his death, one of the patients went immediately to Kurt's room, rifled through his possessions and came running out with Kurt's journal in her hands screaming, 'Oh my god, Kurt was gay!' It was bedlam. Later that day, a counsellor told us Courtney had checked in to our rehab a night or two earlier and, upon arrival, went batshit crazy, had to be restrained and was taken to the psych ward. (Oh so inappropriate to tell us... I felt so sorry for Courtney.)

"Two days later, I was in a swank hotel in Hollywood, eating room service and watching *Oprah Winfrey* with a needle in my arm. Sometimes rehabs really do the trick..."

Butthole Surfers

Butthole Surfers EP



RELEASE DATE
July 1983 **LABEL**
Touch And Go
PRODUCERS

Butthole Surfers



Fang

Sam McBride

The frontman of the Berkeley punks was in jail when he heard Nirvana



"I was in prison when I first heard of Nirvana [McBride was sentenced to six years for the voluntary manslaughter of his girlfriend in 1989]. The prison was in the middle of nowhere and there were very few radio stations. One played rock music, and only during the day. I was in my cell and I heard punk rock – Nirvana. That was how I was introduced to them.

"Before I paroled some years later, I heard that Nirvana were covering 'The Money Will Roll Right In', which is a Fang song. Someone managed to smuggle in a version of them doing it. It was unbelievable to hear that.

"Kurt killed himself before I paroled. The news made it into the prison and it hit a lot of people hard. I didn't know him, but it got to me because, by then, I was clean and I understood the demon of addiction. I'm very involved in recovery now – I work with the Salvation Army – and it's always a tragedy to hear of addiction causing an unnecessary death.

"Nirvana were a truly great band. To have a band that got as big as they did and to know that a Fang album was at least a little piece of them means a lot."

Fang

Landshark



► **RELEASE**
DATE 1982
► **LABEL** Boner
► **PRODUCER** Fang

THE VASELINES

EUGENE KELLY

Kurt once described the Edinburgh indie-pop band as his "favourite songwriters in the whole world"



"You know those life-changing moments where you see the world differently afterwards and nothing can be the same again? Most of mine involved Nirvana."

October 26, 1990

"Do you want to meet Kurt?" Nirvana's agent Russell Warby led me up some stairs to a small, untidy dressing room. Sitting on a settee was a small, frail young man. He sat with his knees pulled up to his chest. His blond hair hung over his eyes, which were circled in black. As we shook hands he said, 'I'm so happy you could play this show with us.'

"My band The VaseLines had split the previous year, but we were intrigued by the fact that this band were talking to the press about us – at this time they were the only people talking about us. They'd asked to support them so we got back together for one night to play a show with them. That night Nirvana were raw, violent and scary."

August 23, 1991

"Krist [Novoselic] towered over me. 'Do you want to come onstage with us and sing 'Molly's Lips'?' I was hungover, disorientated and at my first ever festival [Reading]. 'I'm going to need a beer.' I made my way to the stage. My knees started trembling. I watched Nirvana play until I got the

shout. I ran on, rattled through 'Molly's Lips', threw in some Elvis moves and ran off buzzing."

April 8, 1994

"I was on tour in America with my band Eugenius when Kurt killed himself. After checking into a hotel in New Orleans, I switched on the TV in my room. On the screen was a picture of Kurt.

The VaseLines

Dying For It

► **RELEASE**
DATE 1988
► **LABEL**
53rd & 3rd
► **PRODUCER** Stephen
Pastel and The VaseLines

The newsreader said, 'At his home today in Seattle...' There was a red light flashing on my phone, a message at reception. I didn't need to be told, I knew something terrible had happened."



Flipper

Stephen Depace

Beloved of the Melvins, Black Flag and, uh, Moby, Nirvana bassist Krist Novoselic eventually joined the San Francisco punks



"I was sitting at home one Saturday night when I received a phone call to turn on the TV and tune in to *Saturday Night Live*. There was Kurt Cobain wearing a Flipper T-shirt. Kurt seemingly wore that shirt everywhere.

"Flipper was slated to be the support act for Nirvana's 1994 tour of Europe. Kurt died before that could happen. I had the pleasure of meeting Dave Grohl at a party in Los Angeles in 2000,

where he told me that 'Nirvana loved Flipper.' He added, 'Especially Kurt.'"

"In 2006 Flipper played the All Tomorrow's Parties festival in England. We were short a bass guitar player and I took a chance on reaching out to Krist Novoselic via Thurston Moore, who was curating the festival. Over the next two years Krist was a member of Flipper.

"I can't convey how much Nirvana meant to us and how much Kurt did for us by just wearing his handmade Flipper T-shirt. We are part of Nirvana's legacy and they are part of ours."

Flipper

Generic Flipper

► **RELEASE DATE**
1982 ► **LABEL**
Subterranean
► **PRODUCERS**
Flipper and Chris



The rest of Kurt's favourite albums

Iggy & The Stooges

'Raw Power' (1973)

The Breeders

'Pod' (1990)

MDC 'Millions Of

Dead Cops' (1981)

Scratch Acid 'Scratch Acid'

(1984, listed as '1st EP')

Saccharine Trust 'Paganicons'

(1981, listed as '1st EP')

Black Flag

'My War' (1984)

Sex Pistols 'Never Mind The Bollocks,

Here's The Sex Pistols' (1977)

PJ Harvey

'Dry' (1992)

Sonic Youth

'Daydream Nation' (1988)

The Saints

'Eternally Yours' (1978)

Kleenex "anything by"

Aerosmith

'Rocks' (1976)

Various Artists 'What Is It' (1982,

erroneously listed as 'What Is This?')

REM 'Green' (1988)

The Clash 'Combat Rock' (1982)

The Faith/Void

'The Faith/Void' (1982)

Rites Of Spring

'Rites Of Spring' (1985)

Beat Happening

'Jamboree' (1988)

Tales Of Terror 'Tales Of

Terror' (1984)

Mudhoney 'Superfuzz Bigmuff' (1988)

The Beatles 'Meet The

Beatles!' (1964)

Black Flag 'Damaged' (1981)

Fear 'The Record' (1982)

Public Image Ltd

'The Flowers Of Romance' (1981)

Public Enemy 'It Takes A Nation Of

Millions To Hold Us Back' (1988)

Mazzy Star

'She Hangs Brightly' (1990)

David Bowie

'The Man Who Sold The World' (1970)

Swans 'Young God' (1984, erroneously

listed as 'Raping A Slave', one of the
EP's track titles)



Courtney speaks

**Courtney Love opens up about the anniversary of Kurt's death,
and reveals ambitious plans for her late husband's legacy**

"Kurt's death was just the biggest low, man. I have my own private stuff that I do [to mark it] that I don't really wanna share with the world. It's just my thing. It still makes me sad that it happened, every single day. On the anniversary day itself, you sort of just battle through it. I do my chanting and my praying.

"I don't know if I'm playing that day – I don't want to, really. I don't like the message that it sends out. I'd rather celebrate his birthday than celebrate his death day, but people tend to celebrate the death day, don't they? Even with Elvis and Lennon, that's just the tradition of how it happens in rock'n'roll, I guess.

"Right now there's a lot of activity with the biopic, with this documentary, and also possibly a play. Honey, I can't go out in Hollywood at night without somebody grabbing me and saying 'I want to be a part of this', and we're talking about the biggest producers in town. It's really scary because I don't have an agent, and I really need a heavy-hitter who can protect me from it all. And listen: if I wanted to date nothing but under-30, blond, beautiful, tortured boys – all these pretending-to-be-tortured actor guys – then I could have them on my arm every night, because they *all* wanna play Kurt.

"Remember I said I'd never do a musical? Well, that's not exactly true any more. After being swarmed by tons of Nirvana fanmail and social-media posts pushing for a musical to become a reality, both Frances [Bean Cobain, Kurt and Courtney's daughter] and I have thought long and hard and agreed that if we can reach up to the highest shelf and select a team of the greatest and most respected writers, producers and directors, then a Broadway musical is very likely to happen.

"There would have to be a story – and a *great* story, one that hasn't been told before. I would devote countless hours with an A-team to create a project that reflects Kurt in the most respectful but honest way possible, so that his story, his music and his legacy can be resurrected onstage for not only the world to see, but more importantly, for our daughter to see. I know her father's spirit will be on that stage, and sitting in that theatre with her will be the most emotional experience of our lives.

"It's an event I feel Kurt wanting me to make happen; an event that pays tribute to his art, to his fans and to his family; an event that's both rocking and personal."



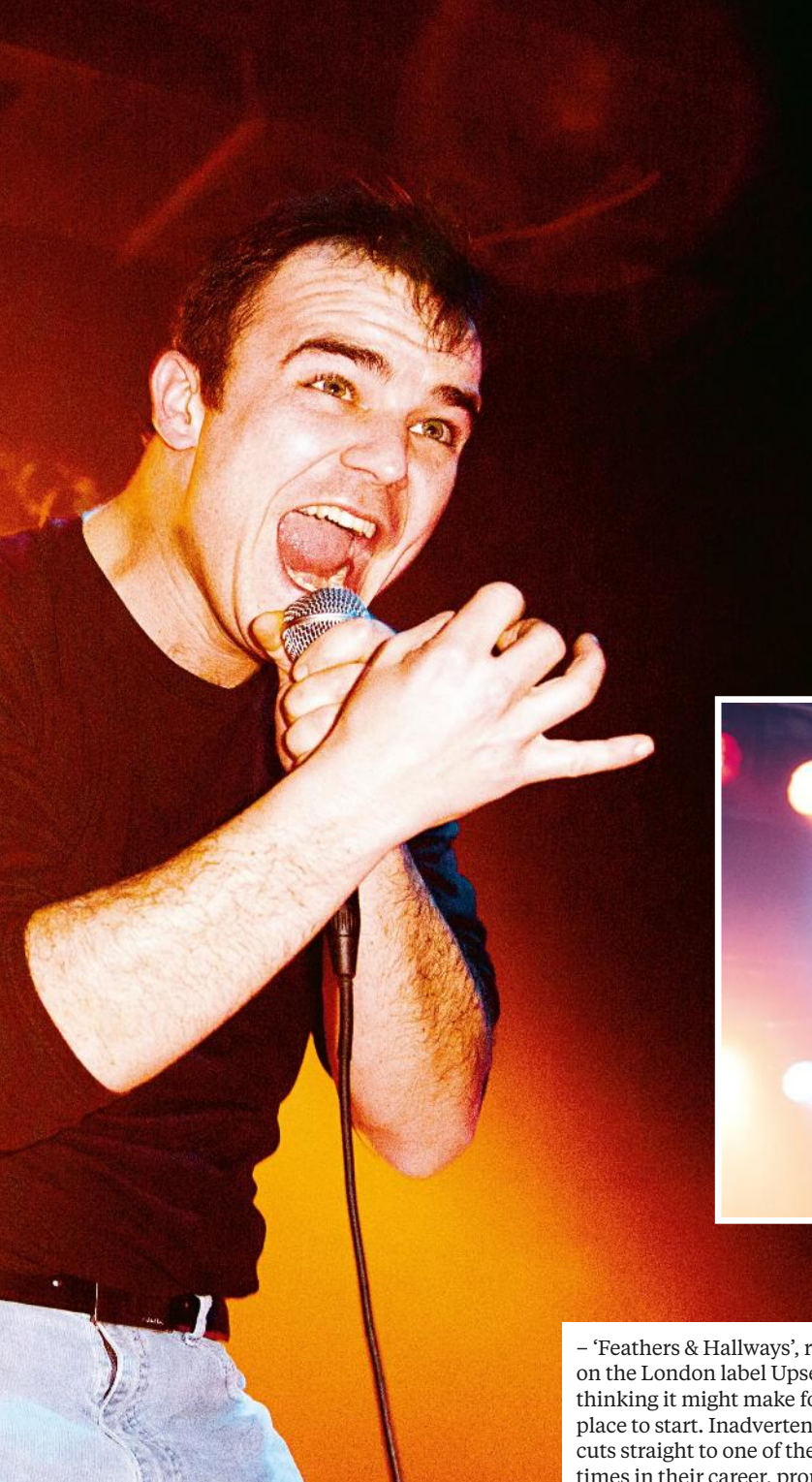


Dance like everybody's watching

Translating raw emotion into compelling performances has finally given synthpop trio Future Islands the break they longed for. Cian Traynor meets them in Berlin

PHOTOS BY GENE GLOVER

We're all a little insane right now," says Samuel T Herring, Future Islands' gregarious frontman, as he strolls out of a bathroom wearing only a pair of blue jeans. His head is still pounding after winding down from a characteristically intense show in Hamburg the previous night with a bottle of tequila. Finding just 50 minutes of sleep before a three-hour drive to Berlin and an early-morning interview has not helped. As his bandmates, bassist William Cashion and keyboardist Gerrit Welmers, slink into the dressing room with heads sagging, the energy feels far removed from the roaring



Future Islands' Samuel
T. Herring, Berlin,
February 17, 2014



synthpop they've been working on together for 11 years. But the Baltimore-based trio know that today is an important one.

Berlin marks the final date of their February European tour and they need to finish with a bang, not just to preview forthcoming fourth album 'Singles', but to warrant returning to play eight German cities in May. And when you're a band that can clock up 160 shows in a year, Herring explains, you realise how important it is to conserve every bit of energy before showtime.

In other words, now might not be the ideal opportunity to explore the heartbreak, despair and longing that has shaped their music. Instead I pull out a Future Islands seven-inch

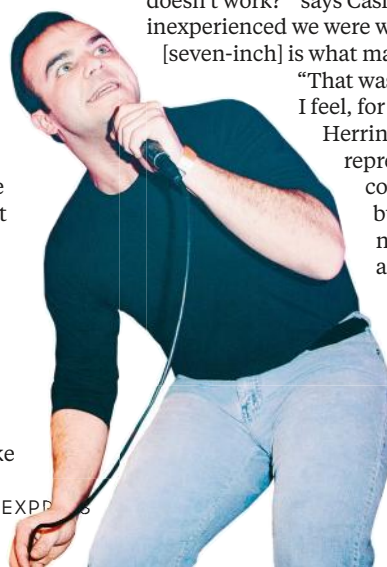
– 'Feathers & Hallways', released in 2009 on the London label Upset The Rhythm – thinking it might make for a straightforward place to start. Inadvertently, however, this cuts straight to one of the most challenging times in their career, prompting Herring's pale blue eyes to water as he looks it over. "It's actually making me sad, reading these lyrics," he says quietly.

"I think that's a really important record in our history, our growth," says Cashion, tactfully easing into the awkward silence. It was their first release as a focused three-piece, he explains, and the band were staggering into the unknown. Herring had been in a writing slump for two years, the band's drummer had quit and the remaining trio lived in different cities across North Carolina, where they're from. It seemed like

they were on the verge of breaking up when they decided on one final push: moving to Baltimore, integrating a drum machine and heading out on a four-month tour across the US.

"We were all willing to take a chance, having asked each other: 'Are you ready to fail, if we fail? Are you ready to fall on your face if this doesn't work?'" says Cashion. "How naive and inexperienced we were when we made that [seven-inch] is what makes it so special."

"That was the defining point, I feel, for our band," says Herring. "Those songs represent what we continually try to do but are only aware of now: showing off light and darkness, writing music that's honest to us so that it holds a weight. Both of those songs ➡➡



are about someone I loved and was in a relationship with at the time. That's why it's kind of heavy for me to read those lyrics and be like, oh shit..." He trails off, eyes glistening again. "That hurts."

The issue of honesty

arose during the trio's previous band together, Art Lord & The Self-Portraits. Herring and Womersley have been best friends since they were 14, when they were dropped from their baseball team and bonded on the periphery of school life. On East Carolina University's art course they met Cashion and developed a concept for a band: a prodigious German artist retreats from fame by going into hiding in Zurich, only to emerge 20 years later with songs of his hardship. The material turned Greek mythology into Kraftwerk-inspired 'synth-punk' with the help of costumes, characters and theatricality.

"Having that mask," says Herring, "I could be this whole other person I wished to be: super-confident, not worried about what anybody thinks or says."

But when Herring started to write about his own emotions, the mask started to slip. It didn't suit the gimmick, so they decided to scrap the band in 2005 and start over as themselves. Womersley – a tall, detached figure who says little – describes himself as the "maximalist", more at home with the controlled and programmed side of things, always striving for perfection in his expansive 'post-wave' synth arrangements. Cashion – a soft-spoken hulk with a disarming geniality – is the minimalist who likes to defile Womersley's perfection through frenetic, grinding basslines that propel the music forward. Whatever emotion they cook up instrumentally provides a platform for Herring – a chatty, chain-smoking character who often begins sentences with "Dude..." and ends them with a raspy giggle – to turn his own experiences into verse, enunciating the words as if he were conjuring Count Dracula or the Big Bad Wolf.

It took Herring time to adjust to singing about his own experiences. Meanwhile, when Future Islands returned from that four-month

tour in 2009, he encountered what would become the catalyst for the band achieving their potential. His girlfriend had been unfaithful. Devastated that the relationship was over, he channelled his anger into what would become the band's breakthrough album, 2010's 'In Evening Air', where his growled lyrics veered between the graceful ("*Tame your thoughts and let me in/Break your callous ways and press me to your skin*") and the cutting ("*You ruined what was love just 'cos you needed a hand*").

"I was younger, so I dealt with my feelings in a very quick-tempered way, writing everything

down on the page. I wanted to be acerbic because I wanted her to hear it. I feel bad about that now." Though his ex initially disliked Future Islands, she felt this represented the most beautiful thing they'd done and the best poetry Herring had written.

"But it crushed her too," he says. "'On the Water' [2011] is almost an attempt to say, 'I'm sorry I did that because I know better now.' I lost that person as a friend in my life because of that record and it really hurts. Dealing with that kind of personal struggle made for a very emotional, raw record."

Wasn't it satisfying, though, to illustrate



Prime time

Future Islands' performance on *Late Show With David Letterman* went viral in hours. So who else has had their career boosted by a single TV appearance?



The Beatles
perform 'All My Loving' on *The Ed Sullivan Show* February 1964

A record-breaking 74 million Americans tuned into the Fab Four's first US TV appearance. They proved so popular, they were invited to appear again on the next two weeks' shows.



David Bowie
performs 'Starman' on *Top Of The Pops* July 1972

Bowie hadn't had a hit for three years, and seized this opportunity to go from half-forgotten also-ran to parent-shocking superstar. A generation's jaws dropped, and the glam-rock era began.



(From left) Samuel T Herring, Gerrit Welmers and William Cashion at Berlin's airport-turned-park, Tempelhof

those feelings so well? "Mmm, yeah," he says hesitantly. "I mean, I guess it worked but now... what's left? Now it still hurts a bit."

Herring takes emotional expression seriously. After most shows, he can be found rolling cigarettes among fans outside, listening to stories of how they connected with the music. But last night, something unsettled him. A German interviewer described his performances as "intimidating". At first he thought she meant 'intense' and perhaps this got lost in translation, but she was adamant: his explosive theatrics – drenched in sweat,

teeth gritted, punching the air – can be uncomfortable for those unaccustomed to public displays of emotion. And after all, she suggested, wasn't it just a put-on?

Given what Herring invests in the performances, physically and emotionally, it was a difficult notion to digest. He always believed that if he tells an honest story, it will come across as sincere; that if he shows people it's OK to be vulnerable and weak, they'll realise that you can be stronger for it. There's catharsis in shedding tears onstage and seeing it move people, he adds, which he feels is important to share.

Yet 'Tin Man', a frustrated song of unrequited love from 'In Evening Air', became so difficult for the singer to revisit that he swore off playing it ever again in 2012. It has only returned to the setlist, Herring says, because he knows how much fans want to hear it.

"I will say, on the record, that I don't go all the way in on that song any more. I perform it, I put my whole body into it, but I don't put my heart into it because I don't feel the same way. When we do 'Walking Through That Door' from the same record, about the same person, there's a moment where I motion for someone [in the crowd] to come forward. I hold their hand, pull them to the front of the stage and we walk forward together. And I see her. I see her right there in front of me. I can do that because it is a song of hope and I still want that. I still want to hold her hand and walk with her again... Aw, man." He stops himself, choking up but holding it off with a laugh. "Gettin' a little heavy."

The impact of that experience lingers on in the songwriting. Herring has found and lost love again since the last album, but his way of conveying the experience has changed. He remembers how his father joked to his last girlfriend that she needed to break up with him so he could write a good album again. "Which she did," he says with a laugh. "I was hurt but I didn't treat it any bit the same. I've remained friends with that person because of what I'd already been through and I think that

comes out in the songs. 'Seasons (Waiting On You)' and 'A Dream Of You And Me' address that person but it's in a very different light, speaking about it in a more worldly manner."

The band began writing 'Singles' in a hunting cabin in rural North Carolina while rehearsing for an Art Lord & The Self-Portraits reunion to commemorate the 10th anniversary of their first show. Reflecting on that time crept into the new material – it's an ambitious album with dramatic choruses and an '80s gloss – and though recording it themselves with producer Chris Coady (Beach

"We never had this hype that just exploded"

Samuel T Herring

House, Grizzly Bear, Yeah Yeah Yeahs) proved costly, it signalled a juncture in their career. 'In The Evening Air' and 'On The Water' had been released on Thrill Jockey, but it was time for a change. Various labels subsequently courted the band, Cashion says, but they were impressed by an A&R from 4AD who would travel to the likes of West Virginia just to see them perform.

"They were impressed with what we'd done on our own up to that point," explains Cashion, who also booked the band's shows for seven years. "The hard work was done. Any band that builds it from the ground up, no-one can really fuck with."

'Singles' marks the first of a three-album deal with 4AD, and soon Future Islands will make their Coachella debut and their first TV appearance – opportunities they feel ready to prove themselves with. (Their barnstorming performance on *Late Show With David*

Letterman will swiftly go viral, increasing their fanbase exponentially within days.)

"We've been waiting for our chance," says Herring. "Because we never had this hype that just exploded one day, it felt like we've built this ourselves. But we didn't grow this thing so we could give it away. It's our baby. We're very hands-on with everything, right down to the smallest details. But the hope is that is just the beginning of more of those opportunities. We wanna be able to make music until we just can't move any more." ■



Nirvana perform 'Smells Like Teen Spirit' on *The Word* November 1991

Channel 4's yooof show was rocked to its foundations by Nirvana's worldwide debut TV appearance, opening with Kurt declaring Courtney Love to be "the best fuck in the world".



Adele performs 'Someone Like You' at the Brits February 2011

The Tottenham singer's journey towards selling 28 million albums began here, with a heart-stopping, show-stealing performance that swiftly YouTube'd its way around the globe.



Odd Future perform 'Sandwiches' on *Late Night With Jimmy Fallon* February 2011

Tyler, The Creator and Hodgy Beats took OFWGKTA from blog-famous to nationally infamous in less than four minutes with this gloriously unhinged TV spot.

FOOD FOR



Kelis in her food
truck at SXSW,
Austin, Texas,
March 2014

THE SOUL

In the last few years Kelis has gone through a divorce, tax problems and a shocking racist attack. Phil Hebblethwaite discovers how she's survived it all and has now combined her two great passions – food and music – to make one of the defining records of her career

When Kelis was invited onto Radio 4's *Woman's Hour* in early March, she was asked whether her four-year-old son – whose father is her ex-husband, Nas – knew what she did for a living. “By the time it’s bedtime for him, I’m getting ready to go out and do my show,” she replied. “I’m putting on my sequins and my feathers, and I’m, ‘OK, momma’s going to work.’ Someone once asked him, ‘Do you know what momma does?’ He said, ‘Yeah, momma dresses up and momma sings.’ Then he was asked, ‘Do you know what your daddy does?’ ‘Yeah, daddy works at the airport.’ Which is hilarious, because whenever his dad says he’s going to work, he says he has to go to the airport. It’s great that his momma’s got this really glamorous job and his daddy works at the airport. It’s perfect.”

That’s Kelis all over: bold as brass, funny, heroic, perhaps a little snide, but not cruel, and on that day, absolutely truthful. Later on, she and a 10-piece band perform her entire new album, ‘Food’ – her sixth – to less than 100 people in a tiny, piping-hot room at Metropolis studios in west London. Dripping

in sweat and in terrific voice, she relishes being up close and personal with fans and fronting a crack band that she’d mostly picked up a few days earlier. It’s a magnificent show.

It’s also telling that Kelis is even appearing on programmes like *Woman's Hour*. Fifteen years since we first heard her on Ol’ Dirty Bastard’s enduring club anthem ‘Got Your Money’, which she quickly followed with her wild, Neptunes-produced debut solo single ‘Caught Out There’ (“*I hate you so much right now!*”), she’s almost become an establishment figure, especially in Britain, where she’s always enjoyed more success than back home in the US. Here, we’ve revelled in the unpredictable musical path she’s taken since 1999 and recognised the strength of her personality, too. She filed for divorce from Nas in April 2009 when she was seven months pregnant, then ended up in a long court battle for child support. During that time, she came across as a woman of immense dignity and she still shows a startling lack of bitterness towards her ex-husband, namedropping a song from his celebrated album ‘Illmatic’ in ‘Hooch’, a track on her new record that’s about their son: “*These are the days of your life when the price of time is free/Like your daddy says, ‘The world is yours’, so let it come naturally*”.

Today, Kelis is in another BBC studio in central London, still buzzing from last night’s show at Metropolis. She lives in LA now, having been raised in Harlem by a father

who was a jazz musician and professor of music at Wesleyan University and a mother who ran a catering business and is also a fashion designer. It was in LA that she was introduced to Dave Sitek, another transplant from the East Coast and producer of ‘Food’.

“We met professionally, but not really with any expectations,” she says of the TV On The Radio man, whose recent production credits also include Beady Eye’s ‘BE’ and Bat For Lashes’ ‘The Haunted Man’. “He always said I was on a list of people he wanted to work with, and obviously I love TV On The Radio and all the stuff he’s done with Yeah Yeah Yeahs, but I never have any grandiose ideas of how I’m going to get on with someone. With him, we had a really great first conversation about music and we never really had to go there again; we understood that we appreciated the same things. We’re both East Coasters, so we also definitely connected on that level.”

The shorthand on ‘Food’ is that it’s an indie-soul record – a wonderfully nostalgic slice of classic songwriting (soul, but also pastoral folk, psych, afrobeat and even, on ‘Friday Fish Fry’, rockabilly) recorded live at Sitek’s house with a full band, including a brass section. Of course it has a retro quality, but there are songs on the album, like ‘Forever Me’, that could easily have been on her last power-dance, EDM-inspired album, ‘Flesh Tone’. She’s been playing tracks from ‘Flesh Tone’ – such as ‘Acapella’ – live with her new band, as well as older hits like ‘Milkshake’ and ‘Trick ➔

Me'. To Kelis, a song is just a song and, as she always says, the sound and feel of her albums are dictated by mood and never genre or commerce.

"For me, my last album was the brightest, just because I was pregnant when I recorded it and that's a really powerful time for a woman artist. If I think about female artists in the past 15 to 20 years that I love, I look at their body of work and I'm like, 'Oh, she was pregnant then!' It makes so much sense. And 'Flesh Tone' definitely signifies that. It's about life; it's a very robust record. 'Food' is different because I'm very settled and I'm very content, and as much as I didn't want to acknowledge that that would happen four or five years ago, being a mother totally has made that happen."

Nonetheless, this being Kelis, who has beefed with labels in the past and never been shy of shooting her mouth off (for example, infuriating Peta by wearing fur, then writing to them to say, "Who on earth are you to tell me what I wear?"), even the last couple of years have been fraught with drama. In 2011, she was the subject of a vile racist attack by a British man at an airport in Spain who she said called her a "slave" and a "disgusting Nigerian". Initially, the abuse was thought to have happened in London, prompting the capital's mayor, Boris Johnson, to tweet at her: "Heard about the treatment you received at a UK airport. Want you to know this is not typical. I'm appalled & I'm on the case." Then in 2012 and 2013, the taxman came calling, saying she owed an alleged \$741,027.59 going back to 2010 and 2004.

Regarding her tax situation, Kelis says: "I'm not big on putting blame on people, but did someone not do their job? Yes. Was I on top of it? No, I was not. I just assumed and I should

"I'm not strung out and I've made it through"

Kelis

not have assumed. It was something I had to take care of and I did. It's been cleared up for quite some time."

The racist attack, though, remains on her mind: "That situation really brought me back to a reality that I have not been reminded of in a long time. No-one [ever] approaches me like I'm just some nigger – not that there's any such thing, but some people have their own perceptions of who's valuable and who isn't."

"I honestly have no words to describe the absolute rage of that man. Also, I was standing in a queue of British people and not one

Kelis' US TV cooking show is called *Saucy And Sweet*



person said a single thing, which was unreal to me. This six-foot-four man is screaming at me, I have a child in my arms, and people were backing away. How is that OK?"

Kelis adds that the incident taught her much about attitudes to race and other issues in the UK – "The British would rather ignore things and pretend they don't exist, which is ironic, because I would never have thought such problems existed had

this man not been yelling at me" – and it says a lot about her character that she still loves being here. After a brief stint on will.i.am's Interscope subsidiary, Music Group – a suitable home for 'Flesh Tone' – she signed to London-based indie Ninja Tune: a shock at first, but it's the perfect label to put out Kelis in her new indie-soul guise. These days, recognising that she's not a mainstream pop star and never was ("I became a runner to escape the fame", she sings on new track, 'Runner'), she wants labels to be her partners, not rulers. Plus, she says, "Steve, my manager, has other artists on Ninja and I like what they do. I think they're clever and I like how they move."

Back in 2006, things were different. Riding high after 'Milkshake', but entangled in major label reshuffling, she got put over to Jive, a label she despised. The album they released, 'Kelis Was Here', seemed to mark her departure from music and indeed she did drop out from a while to train as a saucier at Le Cordon Bleu in New York. Now, food has become as much a part of her professional life as music. She has her own cooking show in the US, her own range of sauces and, brilliantly, she could be spotted at this year's SXSW serving up grub from her own food truck.

As such, it's no surprise that Kelis, who's 34, named her new album 'Food' and its lead single 'Jerk Ribs'. She wanted to release that song first because it sets the tone for exactly where she is in 2014. It's not actually about ribs: "I've been doing this for a long time in a business where – and I say this with all the care I can muster – youth is the value. 'Jerk Ribs' is about strength in something else. I know how to do this now; this is what it should look like, this is what it should feel like and it's about me feeling comfortable in that, especially as a woman. I am better now than I ever was and I'm really proud of my age. Not many people can say they've lasted as long. I'm not strung out and I've made it through. So that song is about still loving music. I appreciate where I am now, because I'm smart enough, and wise enough, and old enough. This really is what it looks like." ■

I RATE YOU SO MUCH RIGHT NOW

From shouty siren to slinky soul sensation – Kelis' albums reassessed

Kaleidoscope

Virgin, 1999



Kelis' Neptunes-produced debut marked the arrival of a highly original new talent. Britain, especially, was impressed, sending lead single 'Caught Out There' to Number Four in the charts.

Tasty

Virgin/Arista/Star Trak, 2003



Kelis blows up. 'Milkshake' becomes a global smash and although that's a Neptunes track, Kelis used other producers for the first time, including André 3000 and Dallas Austin on 'Trick Me'.

Flesh Tone

Music Group/Interscope, 2010



Inspired by underground and overground European dance music (Ed Banger and David Guetta), Kelis returns as a space-age Donna Summer. A well-executed and highly personal record.

Wanderland

Virgin, 2001



Only released in Europe after troubles within Kelis' then-label Virgin, this other Neptunes-produced LP is another fine set of leftfield R&B and pop.

Kelis Was Here

LaFace/Jive/Zomba, 2006



'Kelis Was Here' is symptomatic of the singer's confused state of mind at the time. Suddenly on a label she hated, she was miserable and thinking of quitting.

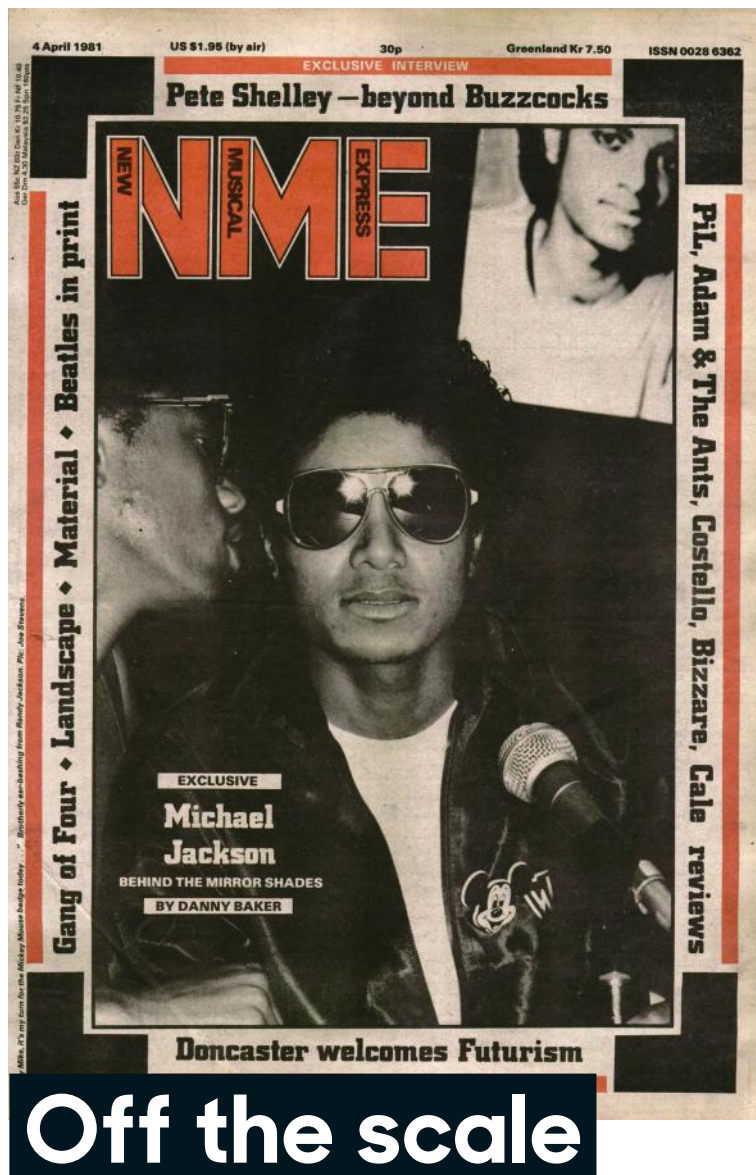
Food

Ninja Tune, 2014



Kelis is introduced to Dave Sitek and together they work on a soul-styled album. Fabulous arrangements, and one of her best albums.

THIS WEEK IN 1981



Jacko reveals his wacko leanings with some surprising confessions

In what would be the last time Michael Jackson spoke to a UK publication, *NME*'s Danny Baker meets The Jacksons in LA under strict instructions not to ask about The Osmonds or astrology, and is informed that Michael will often have his sister Janet whisper each question into his ear because "it's just the way he is". Of The Jacksons' early club gigs, Michael says: "The song that tore the house down was 'Skinny Legs And All' by Joe Tex. I used to go into the audience and lift all the girls' legs up! God, I'm so embarrassed about that." He also quotes Marlon Brando, Al Pacino and Robert De Niro as his heroes, claims he's "just good friends" with Diana Ross and reveals who makes him laugh. "I love Benny Hill. He cracks me up - a genius." And his thoughts on the Sex Pistols? "I love that name - Sid Vicious."

THE BUZZ-CUTS

With Buzzcocks announcing their split, *NME*'s Lynn Hanna catches up with frontman Pete Shelley to discover his motives. "I've done a lot in five years, but I've had my run of it. I don't think I'll ever be a Buzzcock again," he says. "I found I was happier on my own. It gives you more scope, more flexibility because there's less inertia. I don't mean the others were like lead weights around me, but it's far easier on your own."

GROUCHO MARXISTS

In the wake of critical acclaim for their 'Entertainment!' album, Gang Of Four are revealed to be rather knockabout post-punk revolutionaries. "I look round and there's Jon [King, singer] doing his Basil Fawlty bit," says guitarist Dave Allen. "It takes a lot of the dourness away that people think we have. You see Jon leaping around the stage in a huge, baggy suit. How can that be boring and Marxist?" Allen does admit to the band's vicious rows, however. "They can be about anything from the price of a Mars bar to a grand intellectual plan."

REVIEWED THIS WEEK



PIL - 'The Flowers of Romance'

"A laboured, lazy 'ideas' LP - the sort Eno might once have produced if he hadn't had a tidy upbringing." ■ IAN PENMAN

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

► Heaven 17 are finding it ironic that many radio stations are refusing to play their single 'We Don't Need This' Fascist Groove Thang' because of its title and lyrics.
► Dexys Midnight Runners announce details of their Projected Passion Revue tour.
► Adam and The Ants are reviewed by Gavin Martin at the Dominion Theatre in London and described as "plastic disco pap; an outrageous, self-mocking pantomime. The sooner we have the farewell tour and the cartoon series the better."

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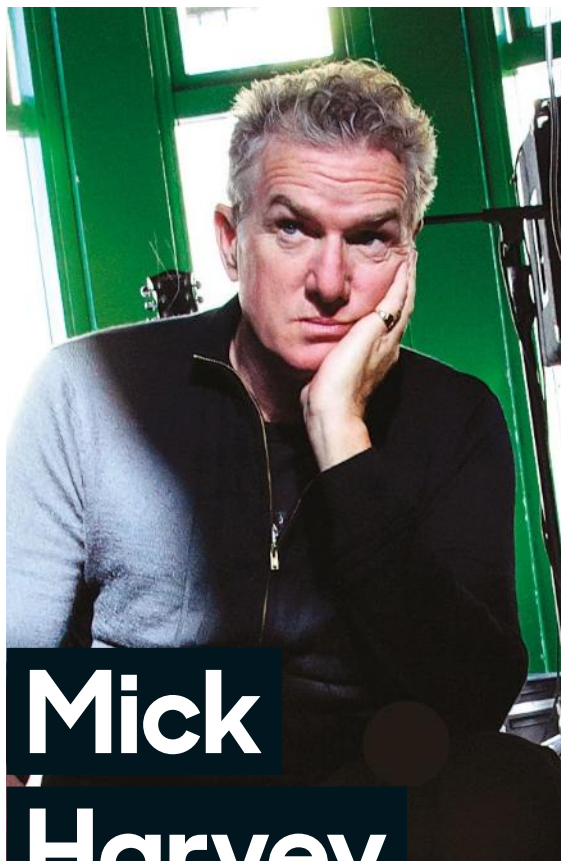


DOES ROCK 'N' ROLL KILL BRAINCELLS? Vs THE FANS

PJ Harvey



WE FIND THE ROCK STAR, YOU ASK THE QUESTIONS



Mick Harvey

Bad Seed, multi-instrumentalist and songwriter



Chopper

1 Which Birthday Party song features in the film *Chopper*?

Clive Gardener, Falmouth, via email
"Release The Bats', I think. I did actually do the music to that film, so I remember very well that Andrew [Dominik], the director, did the song placement and it was a very unusual for him to put 'Release The Bats' in a disco scene in Melbourne in 1980 or whatever it was!"
CORRECT

2 What playing card is assigned to 'Photograph' on the tracklisting for your solo album 'Two Of Diamonds'?

Abi James, Cambridge, via Twitter
"Interesting. It's gonna be the track number but I don't know what suit it is. Hearts?"
WRONG. The ace of spades
"Damn! I knew it was a black one! That's a bit fiendish."



3 Which song did you sing on the Die Haut LP 'Headless Body In Topless Bar'?

Ronnie Collins, London, via email
"Sad Dark Eyes'. It's a brilliant song, I also did it on the album 'Two Of Diamonds'. It's about having a bit of a crush on a woman with dark eyes. It's an unrequited love song."
CORRECT

4 Who did the artwork on the cover of [Bad Seeds album] 'No More Shall We Part'?

Simon Tollington, London, via email
"Tony Clark did the paintings. He also did the artwork on the 'Best Of' album. It's always nice to get your friends involved."
CORRECT

5 What soundtrack did you win an ARIA award for in 2003?

Taylor Bassett, Newcastle, via Facebook
"It would've been the soundtrack to the film *Australian Rules*."
CORRECT. A football film?

"Not really. Football is in the background, it's part of the fabric of it, but it's more about the people in the town. There was a bit of a parallel thing going on with the local football team and aspects of the personalities of the people involved in the football team."

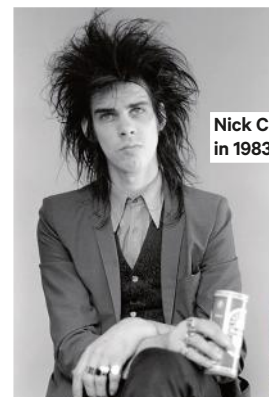
6 Which record that you worked on was promoted with a tour featuring interpretive ballet dancers?

Eve Gaynor, Swansea, via email
"It was probably [PJ Harvey & John Parish's] 'Dance Hall At Louse Point', but I only played on one song on that album, 'Is That All There Is?', which was actually done for a different purpose and ended up on the album. I had nothing to do with the tour, so I'm glad I'm aware that they did that."
CORRECT

7 Where was the first Bad Seeds gig?

Karen Ike, Liverpool, via email
"The first shows were advertised as Nick Cave And The Cavemen, but by the time we played the shows we had decided on The Bad Seeds. We did a warm-up show at the Fridge in Brixton, then we played our first proper show at the Electric Ballroom in Camden."
CORRECT

8 Which traditional American folk song is referenced in PJ Harvey's 'Down By The Water'?



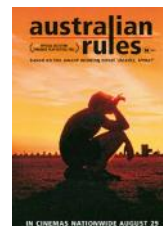
Nick Cave in 1983

David Bishop, Southampton, via Twitter

"It's not a song I worked on - 'Banks Of The Ohio'?"
WRONG. 'Salty Dog Blues'

9 In which church did you record 'Let England Shake'?

Ian Peel, Leicester, via email
"It's just the Eype church as far as I was aware. It's just called that because it's not used for anything other than an arts centre. It's beautiful; I think they built it back in the late 19th century expecting Eype to become a much bigger town. They built it on the hill outside the village, and then Eype just never grew!"
CORRECT



10 To the nearest minute, how long is your album 'Four (Acts Of Love)'?

Paula Williams, London, via email
"Ah, man! That's really tough. It's pretty short, deliberately. Somewhere around 35, 36?"
WRONG. 33 minutes
"I was trying to compete with the Ramones' and Blondie's first albums for shortness there."

SCORE = 7

"Not bad, considering the 'Down By The Water' question, which was completely unfair. With cries of 'Foul!', I'll accept this score."

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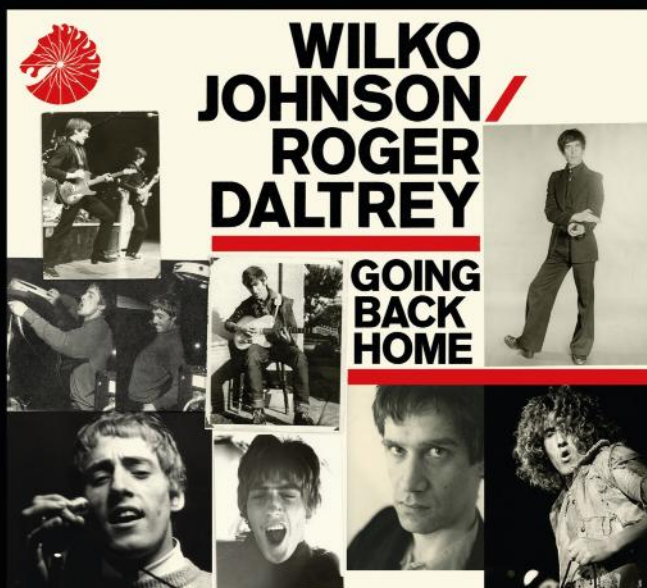
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