



KASABIAN 48:13

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Pulp

In their first magazine interview in 10 years, Pulp meet Dan Stubbs to discuss their reunion, their proudest moments and Britpop

Viv Albertine

The Slits legend talks Charlotte Richardson Andrews through her new biography and its tales about Joe Strummer, Sid Vicious, Mick Jones and Johnny Thunders

The Orwells

The Chicago rabble-rousers have a reputation as sex-crazed rock'n'roll delinquents. But as Rhian Daly finds out, that's not the whole truth...

From The Vaults: Mogwai, 1999

The Scottish post-rock band are wreaking havoc in Vordingborg and NME's James Oldham is there to watch the whole thing unfold

THIS WEEK



IS JACK WHITE'S

'LAZARETTO' UTTERLY

BONKERS?

Of course it is, but would you really have it any other way?

DO SWAMPS, **MANURE AND**

CLIMATE CHANGE

MAKE A CLASSIC?

Big time, reckons Enter Shikari's Rou Reynolds

WHY'S MACAULAY KIN BEING

Because Manchester giggoers aren't fond of pizza puns and kazoo solos

THE **NME** BAND LIST

Lana Del Rey

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Bob Hardy Franz Ferdinand Bob writes about the devastation following

the fire at Glasgow's School Of Art. "I studied there every day for four years. It was like seeing your childhood home on fire."



Andy Ford Photographer Andy shot Kate Tempest at Corsica Studios. "She

might have made her name in the literary world, but Kate seemed at home on the mic under a sweaty railway arch in south London."



Lisa Wright Writer Lisa interviewed this week's Radar stars,

Happyness. "We had a lovely chat about death, insanity and scalping Win Butler. They're either geniuses or psychos - still not sure which."

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SOUNDING OFF WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND

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I always thought Example was a trackie-wearing buffoon who makes unfathomably shit music for idiots in expensive trainers. Alright, so his music's still bollocks, but it was good to see him making a stand against slippery David Cameron-supporting Tory-pop cunt Gary Barlow in last week's *NME* for avoiding tax. Maybe people don't care, or turn a blind eye to it 'cos he's on the TV for some reason. It's time to sort it out. **Jay McDannery, via email**

LETTER OF THE WEEK

SETTING AN

XAMPLE

WINS £50 OF See TICKETS VOUCHERS!

Mark Beaumont: Good on Example for doing his bit in demonising despicable multi-millionaire scum like Barlow who have, for years, been getting away with encouraging us to donate to charity while schools and hospitals are closed down and people forced into poverty because Britain is being denied its rightful chunk of their monumental income. Are you listening, Bono? But this needs to go further. James Blunt refusing to let his albums be played in Starbucks until they cough

up their millions of unpaid corporation tax would be a start, or Adele simply banning one of her records from Amazon would probably force the slimy gets to wipe out our deficit. Society over syncs, please.



MB: As the man who was proud to have started the bottling at Limp Bizkit's free Finsbury Park gig back in 2003, I can attest to the satisfaction to be gained from the visceral reaction of pelting something shit with shit, Kevin. Judging by our review on page 37, it seems Macaulay didn't fare much better in Manchester either.

SOUND THE ALARMS

Royal Blood smashed
Finsbury Park supporting
Arctic Monkeys at the
weekend. They always do.
I was lucky enough to see
them before they were in the
media spotlight, at the Früit
in Hull last year, where they
were so loud they managed
to set off two car alarms down
the street. From that moment
on, I knew they would be
huge. Forget support slots,
they'll be headlining Finsbury
Park soon.

Charlie Ireland, via email

MB: Royal Blood did indeed rock bells, quake kebab outlets and disrupt gang-related violence the breadth of N4, Charlie, a particularly impressive feat since singer/bassist/ guitarist/merch/vice treasurer/band lifeguard Mike Kerr appeared to be playing an entire band's parts on one string. But if setting off the most car alarms was the fastest route to headlining your own festival, then we'd all be at Petestock, Bieberbury and The Fat White Weekender by now.

FORAGING FOR FREDDIE

I love Queen, but I need a new Queen album like I need a hole in the head. It's one thing for a new posthumous Michael Jackson album to be released - he's only been dead a few years - but Freddie Mercury (pictured) died decades ago. If the songs he left behind were that good, would the band really have sat on them for so long? Wouldn't they have released them already? This is gonna be a shitty cash-in, followed swiftly by a shitty hologram tour, 'til everything that was great about Queen is a distant, shitty memory.

Craig Wilson, via Facebook



MB: I've had a sneak preview of the recovered Freddie tracks, Craig, and rather than cretinous barrel-scraping, there really is some fascinating and revealing undiscovered stuff there. 'Dey-O!' might be only 3.2 seconds long but it's full of power and attitude, while its sister piece, 'Deeeeeey-O!', continues the theme with a lusty panache. OK, 'Dee-Da-Deey-Ey-O!' stretches the album's unifying themes a little, but by the time 'Dee-Da-Deey-Ey-Ey-O-O-O-O!' leads into 'Now Just The Girls!' we're really getting a fascinating glimpse behind the mask.

DON'T LOOK BACK

I'm a massive fan of
The Libertines and was
lucky enough to see what
I thought would be their
last-ever gig at Reading
Festival a couple of years
ago. Though I am happy they
have managed to reunite
and play again, recent talk
that they might record old
songs that didn't make the

cut for 'Up The Bracket' saddens me. They'll never rekindle what they had over a decade ago. I have loved every Babyshambles album and Pete's first solo one – let's have another one of them, not some regurgitated and prostituted bollocks.

Tom Hall, via email

MB: Agreed, Tom; if there's going to be new Libs songs, let's not have the scrappy demos that weren't quite good enough to make the maxi Japanese vinyl edition of 'Time For Heroes', let's hear what they'd do together right now. Even if it's just the sound of syringes piercing toe webbing and all-round throttling.

PIZZA PISS!

I can't tell you how happy
I was to hear that Macaulay
Culkin's no doubt abysmal
Velvet Underground parody
got seven shades of Carling
bottled out of them in
Nottingham the other day.
For so many years I've
dreamt about that smug
little twat having one of his
homemade traps backfire



Carl Barât and Gary Powell played an awesome DJ set at Propaganda, then we saw them in a bar across the road. Awesome people! Seemed genuinely happy to hear we were fans. James and Lewis, Plymouth



TRACK OF THE WEEK

1. Merchandise Little Killer

Short, sharp pop. That's what Merchandise frontman Carson Cox told NME the band's new full-length 'After The End' would sound like, and 'Little Killer' backs it up. All major chords and a nagging, flamenco-inspired riff, the track is another move forward for the Floridians. They've never been keen on staying static for too long, and this is the lightest, most conventional thing they've ever released. Bodes well for the album.

Matt Wilkinson, New Music Editor

2. Autobahn Ulcer

Autobahn's Craig Johnson says 'Ulcer' is about "death anxiety, which I don't have any more". The first track taken from the Leeds band's upcoming second EP '2' is tense and nasty. Autobahn stretch a krautrock beat, choppy quitars and Johnson's doomy vocal to the point of snapping, which they duly do during the crashing choruses. Dying might not worry them, but these punks sound just as disaffected and pissed off as their pals in Eagulls.

Ben Homewood, writer

3. Kult Country Trembling Moon

0

On their debut single 'Slowburn', Manchester's Kult Country introduced themselves with some driving psych, underpinned by a motorik beat. For their second offering, they're slowing things down and setting their sights on outer space. 'Trembling Moon' still offers up dappled psych riffs but there's a blissful lethargy about them as frontman Yousif begs "don't close your eyes" before seeking some self-assurance: "How was I for you?"

Rhian Daly, Assistant Reviews Editor

4. Jungle Time

The year's most mystery-drenched new band may come from west London, but 'Time' evokes the mean streets of 1970s New York, sounding like the theme from a long-lost blaxploitation movie thanks to a strutting beat, lurching funk bassline and high-pitched vocals. It's more proof that Jungle stand guite apart from any other new act of 2014 -and that their debut album will be unmissable.

Dan Stubbs, News Editor

5. Avi Buffalo So What

A bolt from the blue courtesy of US band Avi Buffalo, who released their first and only album in 2010 and promptly disappeared off the face of the planet. Finally, a second album beckons and 'So What' eradicates four long years of waiting with lead singer Avi Zahner-Isenberg chanting the title in melodic loops as the song builds and builds.

David Renshaw, News Reporter









6. A Dead Forest Index Cast Of Lines

Those who enjoy Grouper's slowcore folk will love New Zealand brothers A Dead Forest Index. It's "centred on themes of renewal and ancestry", according to Adam and Sam Sherry, and its three languid minutes are led by strummed guitar and Adam's mournful vocal. Savages' Jehnny Beth is releasing this on her Pop Noire label - no surprise, as both bands revel in dark minimalism.

Simon Jay Catling, writer

7. Big Deal **Always Boys**

The opening of 'Always Boys', which sees Alice Costelloe singing mournfully over acoustic guitars about a boy who left her, recalls Big Deal's guieter early days. But now, two albums down the line and back with a new EP, this is Big Deal fully grown: after less than a minute, cymbals crash in and a grungy mash of guitars propels Costelloe out of breakup gloom. "Always boys that play guitar", she sings triumphantly.

Hazel Sheffield, writer

8. Greys Use Your Delusion

A Fugazi-worthy blast of pissed-off clattering, 'Use Your Delusion' sees Greys frontman Shehzaad Jiwani gruffly hollering his wishlist over a wall of thuggish riffs. "Wish I was born in New York/Wish I was born in LA/Wish I was born into the Royal Family", he offers, seemingly narked that his band's from Toronto and not one of North America's more glamorous locales. If it means we can listen to more of their utterly urgent, raw rock'n'roll, we're hopping on the first flight to Canada.

Leonie Cooper, writer

9. Bat For Lashes & Beck **Under The Indigo Moon**

Having just provided foil for Damon Albarn on his 'Everyday Robots' album, Natasha Khan etches another collaborative notch into her microphone stand with this throwaway two-minute mood piece of spanglesome synths, airy sighing and general esoteric wibbliness. It's the sort of thing that should soundtrack a slo-mo art film, so Kahn made one, largely of her dancing in her pants. Which, Lily Allen, is how you do it.

Mark Beaumont, writer

10. Jaws Be Slowly

Jaws may once have seemed like they were bringing up the tail end of the Birmingham scene, but their sunny grunge and hectic live shows have all but freed them of those shackles. Following the announcement of their debut album of the same name, 'Be Slowly' is full of jangling Dinosaur Jr chords and splashes of The Cure's 'Just Like Heaven'. A sign of golden things to come.

James Balmont, writer

ESSENTIAL NEW TRACKS

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

11. Kanye West God Level I

A minute of 'God Level' appears on Adidas' World Cup advert over a montage of sporting badasses Lionel Messi, Luis Suarez and Dani Alves. The lyrics could maybe, just maybe, be about football. "You see sharks in the water/You don't see murder like this, this often" he goes, like a man who can't believe he's just seen Real Madrid score three goals in 10 minutes to win the Champions League. Tom Howard, Assistant Editor

12. La Roux **Uptight Downtown**

This was the first track on the La Roux album sampler that arrived in the NME office back in March. The moment the tropical beats, addictive chorus and Chic-style guitar lines of this new single came over our stereo, the only words worth uttering were: fuck, is that... LA ROUX?! Move over, Daft Punk. Humans are back on the

Eve Barlow, Deputy Editor

13. La Dispute

Grand Rapids crew La Dispute leave behind their usual articulate, story-driven post-hardcore for the raw brawn of Nirvana with this cover version. Frontman Jordan Drever doesn't growl with guite the same menace as Cobain, instead reciting Kurt's tale of abuse in the suburbs with sad, listless melancholy over grainy, angular guitars. Recorded in Seattle for Chicago website the AV Club, it's a simple, sombre tribute - just the way it should be. Al Horner, Assistant Editor, NME.COM

14. Raekwon Call Of Duty (feat. Akon)

The first official single from Raekwon's forthcoming new album 'FILA' ('Fly International Luxurious Art') is a staggeringly confident and effective slab of New York hip-hop, only mildly troubled by the chronic use of AutoTune on Akon's chorus. No, it's not about the videogame of the same name; it's a "renegade salute" to what Rae called "all the male and female soldiers in the field" in a tweet when he released the song online. Are you ready for the massacre?

Phil Hebblethwaite, writer

15. Warpaint The Chauffeur

Warpaint covered this song for the charity album 'Making Patterns Rhyme: A Tribute To Duran Duran', proceeds from which went to Amnesty International. The original doesn't sound anywhere near as sparse or spectral as this, which could sit easily on the California band's last, rather downcast record. Warpaint aren't the first to cover 'The Chauffeur', though - artists as diverse as Deftones and Sneaker Pimps have done it before. JJ Dunning, writer







16. BadBadNotGood & Ghostface Killah Six Degrees (feat. Danny Brown)

On this collaboration with jazzy Canadians BadBadNotGood, Ghostface Killah sounds gruff and dangerous, his bars looming like storm clouds over the bouncy backing. Danny Brown's counter is perfectly timed, his childish gurgle provoking a cartoonish rap-off. The Detroit funnyman steals the song with a rant about a lady blocking his view of the telly: "Move yo' big ass, my favourite part on".

Ben Homewood, writer

17. LSA Keep It Alive

London band LSA's name stands for Love Stays Alive, which suggests they've got some faith in romance. But this latest offering sounds like there may be some doubt creeping into their worldview. "I said I'd wait for you to open your eyes before I go running off with someone else/But it's taken you so long, I'm tired of being alone", sighs Will White over an urgent guitar hook. They might be losing hope but this will give you plenty of belief in LSA. Rhian Daly, Assistant Reviews Editor

18. PS I Love You For Those Who Stay

The six-minute title track from PS I Love You's upcoming third album sounds like it's plundered the BBC Sound Effects Library, specifically the aisle marked 'Lasers And Stuff'. It begins with frontman Paul Saulnier sounding less like he's playing a guitar and more like he's guiding a tractor beam. Then comes an army of harmonies on the chorus and a noodling prog-rock outro. The Ontario two-piece sound weirder than ever before.

JJ Dunning, writer

19. Lana Del Rey Shades Of Cool

Lana Del Rey has always had the soured romance of the American Dream buzzing round her brain - the self-proclaimed "gangsta Nancy Sinatra" obsessed with a Great Gatsby-ish collage of money, sex and greed. But 'Shades Of Cool' comes on like that most British of institutions, James Bond: a dark and dangerous waltz that could have been scored by John Barry.

Ben Hewitt, writer

20. Zeds Dead Lost You (feat. Twin Shadow & D'Angelo Lacy)

It's been two years since Twin Shadow, aka George Lewis Jr, gave us a new album, but here he is teaming up with D'Angelo Lacy again - they both featured on Wrestlers' 'Say Anything' earlier this year. Canadian duo Zeds Dead normally specialise in low-IQ, fratboy EDM, but Lewis' slick and soulful vocal elevates this track. A nice stopgap until the third Twin Shadow album.

Andy Welch, writer





TheWeek



Yeah Yeah Yeahs guitarist Nick Zinner brings his orchestral

work to London's Meltdown Festival this month

ick Zinner is a busy man. Yeah Yeah Yeahs might be on a break following what the guitarist describes as "a magnificent, epic" 2013, but Zinner is hardly resting on his laurels this year. The most pressing of his current projects is the European premiere of his orchestral composition 41 Strings, a Vivaldilike piece in four parts that was first staged to mark Earth Day in New York in 2011. Its third performance will be as part of James Lavelle's Meltdown at London's Southbank Centre on June 20 - though oddly, Zinner has never actually met the Mo'Wax founder. "I like UNKLE though," he ventures. "I'm excited for that!"

So what took Zinner so long to bring 41 Strings to the UK? "It's a gargantuan project to organise," he explains. "There are 45 musicians onstage and I like to do it with a core of seven or eight people from New York." One of those core musicians is Yeah Yeah Yeahs drummer Brian Chase. As for the other participants – including eight guitar players, two bassists and 31 orchestral strings - Zinner has so far recruited names including Romy Madley Croft (The xx), Gemma Thompson (Savages). Romeo Stodart (The Magic Numbers), Lindsey Troy (Deap Vally) and Jeff Wootton and Seve from Damon

Albarn's band.

he's spent much of this year at Sonic Ranch studio near El Paso, Texas producing tracks for Deap Vally. "It's a magical, secluded spot on the Mexican border - no distractions," he says. The plan is to return later this year to complete the duo's second album, which Zinner tells us won't be a radical reinvention of their raw, blues-rock sound. "They're great at it, why fuck with that?" he shrugs. He's also recorded "three or four" songs for The Bots, who he met on the Africa Express tour in 2012, and it's because of Damon Albarn's far-reaching world-music project that Zinner spent a week in Mali last month, producing an album for Songhoy Blues,

The guests reflect Zinner's recent exploits:

"an indie desert-blues band from Timbuktu".

Zinner and his Yeah Yeah Yeahs bandmate Karen O also joined forces to help out on 'We're All Young Together', an album of children's songs by ex-Walkmen man Walter Martin. "We all love Walter, we've known him forever, so we were happy to help," says Zinner. The focus for now though is on preparing 41 Strings for the June 20 extravaganza. "I think we'll have two days to rehearse, hopefully three," he gulps. As well as playing guitar himself, Zinner will conduct the musicians "through a series of head nods and body movements". No baton, then? "I guess I'm kind of using the guitar as one." ■ LEONIE COOPER

ICE COOL

Other highlights of James Lavelle's Meltdown Festival

UNKLE:REDUX June 13

With special guest spots from Mark Lanegan, DJ Shadow, Keaton Henson and more, UNKLE's multisensory extravaganza will smell as good as it sounds, with pongs provided by perfumier Azzi Glasser.

Joshua Homme June 16

An instantly sold-out, super-rare acoustic show that sees Homme stripped of Queens

Of The Stone Age's badman blues backing. Even so, expect this to be the butchest thing happening within a 100-mile radius of London's Royal Festival Hall.

John Coltrane's A Love Supreme June 22

Tipped by St Vincent as the album you need to hear before you die, John Coltrane's 1964 jazz masterpiece will be bought to life by a 14-piece ensemble of British musicians.

MY LIFE IN A SUITCASE



Black Lips

BOOK The Civil War: A Narrative by



"It's 8.000 pages divided into three books. It's over a million words. He's my favourite historian."

BOXSET The Films Of Kenneth Anger, Vols 1&2

"He's an experimental filmmaker and a huge influence on us. He was going to shoot our 'Modern Art' video, but he's old now and it's hard for him to travel, so his protégé and manager did it."

GAME The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim

"If you have lots of free time, it's perfect. You kill dragons, instead of bad guys in war games for a change."

FILM Red Dawn

"It's an American war film co-written by John Milius, the guy who wrote Apocalypse Now. Bill Cody, who made our documentary Kids Like You And Me, used to be his writing partner. I love watching those '70s and '80s tough-guy movies."

HOME COMFORT None

"We've been touring for so long we're experts at it. We've learned to pack light and not take anything. Home comforts are for when you get home."

► The Black Lips play London Bethnal Green Working Men's Club on June 4 and 5



TheWeek

A deluxe reissue of NME's 'C86' cassette revives the compilation that gave jangly '80s indie a new name, but stood for much more



n May 1986, NME issued a mail-order cassette that became a defining moment in independent music. Featuring 22 bands from Britain's thriving mid-'80s indie scene, 'C86' was such a success its name became a musical genre in itself, and nearly 30 years later it continues to inspire new generations, shorthand for a DIY mindset and a melodic indie-pop sound. Joanna Gruesome describe themselves as "C86 noise punk", while DIIV's Zachary Cole Smith cites 'C86' bands as a "textural" influence.

As Cherry Red Records reissue 'C86' as an expanded, triple-CD set, adding another 50 groups from the period, former NME writer Neil Taylor remembers that the original was never expected to outlast the year. "There was no intention to create a movement with 'C86'," says Taylor, who helped compile the album. "In fact, nobody expected it to be anything other than a mixtage that you'd probably want to wipe over eventually."

Even its name suggested it was throwaway 'C86' was a nod to tapes sold for home recording, which came in C60 (60 minute) and C90 (90 minute) varieties. Yet the

compilation took on a life of its own, and the £2.95 cheques kept rolling in. "The tape came out in May and it sold reasonably well," says Taylor, "But then, whereas all of the other tape sales dried up, 'C86' carried on going. It just didn't stop." As the year progressed, sales figures started creeping into the tens of thousands.

Supported by a network of small clubs and fanzines, the selfsufficient scene that 'C86' threw a spotlight on included the melodic, chiming pop of Primal Scream and The Bodines, the buzzsaw guitars of The Soup Dragons and The Wedding Present and the spiky dissonance of Big Flame and The

Shrubs. "We were in Glasgow and used to play at Splash One, a party run by Primal Scream and friends," recalls Sean Dickson of The Soup Dragons. "We hung out with The Pastels and Shop Assistants and went to Jesus And Mary Chain gigs. We never really took much notice of what was going on outside of our world."

Another Scottish group, Close Lobsters from Paisley, were unsigned at the time, and

'C86' gave them their public debut. "Our appearance was thanks to The June Brides," admits the band's Andrew Burnett. "They were catalyst, facilitator and inspiration, and remain very good friends of ours." Ironically, The June Brides themselves were one of the few bands NME approached who declined to

> appear on 'C86' - something that's rectified on the new reissue.

In July, NME increased the cassette's promotion with a run of five shows at London's ICA. "The ICA, being a distinguished venue on The Mall, was slightly different from the other places we were playing at that time," says David Gedge of The Wedding Present,

whose third single 'This Boy Can Wait' was previewed on the tape. "I felt that we'd somehow become involved with quite a prestigious series of concerts."

"My main memory of the ICA was opening our set with a cover of The Only Ones' 'Another Girl, Another Planet'," recalls Close Lobsters' Burnett. "It was a statement of intent and influence quite apart from the

FIVE KEY 'C86' TRACKS

'Buffalo' Stump

The loping groove and surreal lyrics of 'Buffalo' ("How much is the fish?") summed up the stranger side of 'C86' and introduced thousands to the weird world of Ron Johnson Records.

'Velocity Girl' **Primal Scream**

The definitive 'C86' song, Primal Scream's wide-eved, one-and-a-halfminute wonder was a huge influence on The Stone Roses. Play alongside 'Made Of Stone' for evidence.

'I Hate Nerys Hugh (From The Heart)'

Half Man Half Biscuit A great 'C86' comedy moment. in which the Wirral wonders vent their spleen at fireside-

favourite sitcom star Hughes via a zombiesdown-thesupermarket

scenario.

NEW MUSICAL

'Therese' The Bodines

The new

CD reissue

A classic early Creation single from Glossop's Bodines, 'Therese' is breathless, jittery janglepop with one of 'C86's best-remembered choruses:

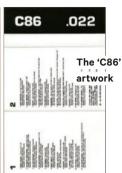
"It scares the health out of me!"

'Console Me' We've Got A Fuzzbox And We're Gonna Use It

A dizzy whirl of whooping postpunk brevity from

the band more simply known as Fuzzbox, soon to strike it big with glam-pop hit 'International Rescue'.





poppiness of 'C86'." The Soup Dragons played on the same night as Burnett's band. "I remember thinking, 'Is that the Palace down the road? I wonder if they can hear this..." says Dickson.

As sales continued to build, Rough Trade released a vinyl version, meaning the album was finally available in shops. The term 'C86' started to become synonymous with the more melodic side of indie pop, narrowing the understanding of the album's broader scope, and for many of the bands featured on the original tape, it was an unwelcome development. "It's very odd, isn't it?" says Wedding Present

frontman Gedge. "'C86' went on to describe a certain type of jangly guitar music when half the stuff on there was anything but jangly!"

"It's a bit silly, because there are so many different styles of bands on that compilation, all with very different influences and approaches to their songs," says Dickson. "What 'C86' did bring together was groups that had the same 'fuck you' attitude to conventionality, with the DIY ethics of our punk and garage-band forefathers."

"C86' UNITED GROUPS WITH THE SAME 'FUCK YOU' ATTITUDE TO CONVENTIONALITY"

Sean Dickson.

The Soup Dragons

Burnett agrees: "It's really quite strange; undoubtedly our appearance on it has had a huge impact on people's imagination of who we are, but the aim has always been to evade categorisation."

Harking back to that summer. The Wedding Present are this year headlining a celebration of the album at the London's 229 club on June 14. The line-up includes many other musicians from the era, including fellow 'C86' acts The Wolfhounds, A Witness and The Servants' David Westlake, With 'C86' bands still going strong today, including The Pastels and Primal Scream, the evening will be a chance to catch up with the class of 1986.

"What is interesting all these years later

is which bands and people are still involved in music." Dickson says. "More than anything, that speaks volumes, not about fame or money but about what was and what still is in our blood."

"The hope was just that it would last until the end of the year," agrees Taylor, who is writing a Kickstarter-funded book on the era. C86 & All That: Indie 1983-86. "We couldn't have known we'd still be talking about it 30 years later, but it's got a life of its own. It's incredible. It's unstoppable."

■ STUART HUGGETT

COOL IN THE SPOOL NME announces the tape offer, 3 May 1986 FULL DETAILS ON HOW TO ORDER - NEXT WEEK!

THE MINI INTERVIEW



Southampton singer

You've scored a part in Doctor Who? How?l

"I was doing a gig in Liverpool and a couple of the producers saw me play. I got talking to them afterwards and I was fangirling slightly. A week later they offered me a part. I got the call and I was like, 'Oh mv aoodness."

What can you tell us about the character you play?

'I am literally sworn to secrecy but I've done a song for the episode, so I'm singing. It's not one of my songs - it's a song especially for the episode."

Are you an alien?

"I'm not an alien, but that'd be amazing! You'll recognise me. I've never really acted before - I'm just winging it, really. I went in the Tardis, which was all the fun."

What do you think about the new Doctor, Peter Capaldi?

"He's a gentleman. He was so lovely when I met him. There's a real classiness to him which is really nice to see in a Doctor."

You're also supporting Pharrell on tour later this year.

"Yes. I can't believe it. It's quite mad. Pharrell is everything."

Will you be borrowing his hat?

"I kind of want to touch the hat. But I might just let him do the big hat wearing." ■ LEONIE COOPER

ENTER THE GUARDIAN STUDENT MEDIA AWARDS

NME PROMOTION

Laptops at the ready, the annual hunt is on for the most promising new journalistic talent

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The Year and Student Columnist Of The Year. **Entrants must submit** three examples of their

best work by July 28, or June 23 for the Student Website Of The Year category.

▶Full details can be found at theguardian.com/sma2014

Student Media Awards



The God squad

Mixing the spirit of Factory
and the methods of Motown,
Brooklyn label Godmode is
establishing itself as the US
indie label to watch

or Godmode founder Nick Sylvester, running a label is like planning a social gathering. "On a simple level, I'm putting a cocktail party together," he says down the phone from Godmode's Williamsburg base. "You don't want 10 jocks, you want one jock and one nerd, some people who don't have a lot of money and somebody who does. What we're trying to do is create that kind of community."

Started in 2009, Godmode has grown from a "vanity label" for Nick's former band Mr Dream to one of New York's most exciting and diverse imprints. It's a place where *Radar*'s favourite noise-rock duo Yvette can sit alongside the disco-pop of Las Vegas teen Shamir, or where Courtship Ritual's

minimalist pop coexists with the electronic experimentation of Fitness. Like Factory Records, the sense of eclecticism on the roster is given consistency by the label's methods.

"I liked the fact that I found out no-one else on the label sounds like Yvette, or Fasano, or Mr Dream, or me," 19-year-old Shamir explains. "Yet we all work together to make amazing music. It feels good to be a part of the label's movement, almost like Sub Pop in the '90s." The movement stems from Godmode's DIY ethos. Nick and West Coast-based label partner Talya Elitzer are involved in all stages of an artist's release, from demo to promotion. The waters are tested with a two-track single to make sure all parties get along ("Like a Tinder date," jokes Nick), then every release is recorded at The Silent Barn studio with Nick in the role of producer. He then mixes the tracks in collaboration with the artist in

"the wood room", a "very makeshift" space in Nick's own Williamsburg apartment, where the artwork is also made.

"It's almost like a label from the '50s or '60s, where it had its own recording studio and worked with bands from the ground up," Yvette's singer/guitarist Noah Kardos-Fein explains of Nick's Phil Spector-like role. "It's exciting because you get to develop a relationship with the people releasing your music."

The first 'proper' signing to Godmode, Yvette, were snapped up by the label when the duo began rehearsing next door to Mr Dream. "They were the best band in Brooklyn, hands down, and nobody would touch them," Sylvester says, remembering a time when rock music was maligned as distinctly uncool. "At the time, music was all hypnagogic pop and chillwave and you needed the academic theory to

even begin to understand that music. It was really unenjoyable. The idea of making rock music in the first place was a weird idea."

But, Sylvester says, pursuing that "weird idea" has worked out for the best – Godmode now have one of the most exciting rosters around. "I guess that at a certain point in your life you realise that if you don't do it, no-one else will," he says.
RHIAN DALY

GODMODE ESSENTIAL RELEASES

Yvette

Process 2013



The Brooklyn duo's debut album has iust been

given an official UK
release on Tough Love,
but last year Godmode
unleashed its cold
industrial sonics stateside.

Courtship Ritual Wild Like Us/Biesenbach On The Beach 2013



Monica Salazar and Jared Olmsted's sparse pop

sparse pop owes a lot to late-'80s British goth-pop. The B-side takes its influence from the band seeing the director of New York's Museum Of Modern Art take a dip in the sea at a Brooklyn beach.

Fasano The Barn 2013



Singersongwriter Matty Fasano's debut cassette

takes its name from
Godmode's DIY recording
space, The Silent Barn.
It features eight tracks
of intimate, strippedback guitar pop that's
moving thanks to its
understated simplicity.

DANIEL TODETE

billowed out, we thought we'd lost the building. Thankfully, the fire brigade later announced they'd managed to save 70 per cent of the facade and 90 per cent of the contents.

The fire at Glasgow

There would be no Franz Ferdinand if it hadn't been for the Glasgow School Of Art. I met Alex [Kapranos, frontman] because our girlfriends studied in the same class there. When we formed a band, the first party we played was an art-school event. Paul [Thomson] was a life model there. We played our third-ever gig at the student union (Roxanne Clifford from Veronica Falls videoed it; you can watch it on YouTube). It's an important place to so many bands.

If the building had been destroyed, it wouldn't have just been a tragedy for art, but music as well. The two are intrinsically linked. Pretty much every band in Glasgow contains a member who went to the art school; Frightened Rabbit came out of there, and Shitdisco were peers of mine. Because Glasgow is such a small city, the music and art community socialise together - there's a lot of cross-pollination. Many people who go to the School Of Art end up in bands, and a lot of bands hang out there - the union has cuttingedge club nights and cheap booze.

The beauty of the place is it's a few years of your life where you don't have to worry about the real world. You get a studio space and are

left to your own devices. It's a fantasyland. It encourages you to branch out and do things outside your comfort zone. I'd never played an instrument in my life, but the School Of Art gave me the confidence to experiment. It fosters individualism, and could explain why bands here don't sound the same, unlike in other cities.

The Mackintosh building has a personality of its own. When you're studying there, it feels like a friend. If the building had fallen, to Franz Ferdinand as a band, it would have felt like losing a peer. But while it's a tragedy we have lost the iconic Mackintosh library, an art school is not defined by bricks and mortar – it's defined by its people and ideas and the conversations you have there.

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



BY BOB **HARDY**

The Franz bassist laments the destruction of the city's home of art-rock, but says the spirit of the school will live on



When I heard about the fire at the Glasgow School Of Art, I felt total shock. As the flames ripped through the Charles Rennie Mackintosh building, the whole city came to a standstill. Crowds of people were watching -

some in tears. It's such a key part of the city's cultural history; a world-famous masterpiece of architecture that everyone's proud of.

I studied painting at the school - which is based in the Mackintosh building - so I was there every day for four years. The first images I saw were flames coming out of the Hen Run, which is a corridor at the back that led to my studio. It was like seeing your childhood home on fire. On the Friday afternoon of the blaze, as the smoke

LOST **ALBUMS**





Quicksand

Chosen by Zane Lowe, BBC Radio 1

"Quicksand are a legendary New York hardcore band, but their second album, 'Manic Compression', is so underrated. It got a hard time when it came out because it was very kind of ProTools, quite digital-sounding. It took me a while to get my head around it because it didn't sound like a band in a room playing on a tape machine, but I soon realised that it sounded like the future. And now you know that it really was. Quicksand are one of those bands that, when you raise them with someone and they're a fan, you just blink and an hour goes by."

►THE DETAILS

RELEASE DATE

February 28, 1995

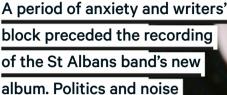
►LABEL Island

▶BEST TRACKS Thorn In My Side. Delusional

►WHERE TO FIND IT Available to download and on CD

LISTEN ONLINE On Spotify





saved the day

Enter Shikari

April 2014

Rou Reynolds at Chapel Studios,

hen Rou Reynolds talks about the fourth Enter Shikari album, currently two weeks into recording at Lincolnshire's Chapel Studios, the word he uses most is "fearless". They're being fearless in writing lengthy, shifting

the word he uses most is "fearless". They're being fearless in writing lengthy, shifting tracks covering every extreme of mood and style, from delicate electronica to raucous punk. Fearless to bawl about the class system,

climate-change denial and the neuroscience behind what you puny humans call 'love'. And fearless to go running in cow shit every day in preparation for their summer outing on the US Warped Tour.

"We love this studio," Rou says from the control

room. "Obviously it was tempting to go back to Thailand again [third album 'A Flash Flood Of Colour' was recorded in the jungle near Bangkok] but we did the 'Rat Race' EP here last year and it felt so homely. The surroundings are incredible, lush British countryside, and most of us are concentrating on getting fit by

"WE WANT TO BE SAYING THINGS THAT ARE TRUE AND HONEST AND WORTHWHILE"

ROU REYNOLDS, SINGER

going on inspiring walks and big runs. We've had a few run-ins going through fields we're not supposed to and ending up in swamps or knee-deep in manure."

Things weren't always so productive. Having headlined Alexandra Palace last November, Reynolds was left feeling his band had reached "the end of an era". When a fortnight of attempting new

songs proved unproductive, anxiety set in. "I was thinking, 'Oh God, can I even write any more?" he remembers. But the ideas began cascading

again at the start of this year, with 46 formative songs making up "this big, diverse mash of music". Honing them down to 15 for an eventual 11, plus interludes ("a nod to our first album"), the band set off for Lincolnshire in May, full of experimental passion. "There are a lot of longer songs that would

never be considered singles," Rou explains, "songs that evolve over a period of time and go through very different moods. On this album we've concentrated on the tones and timbres to get interesting sounds, and hopefully that will lead us down some new paths. I've tried to push myself vocally, to use a wider range than

I have before in terms of melody and other sounds one can emit from one's vocal cords." Enhancing expectations of a Biffy-style

smart-rock crossover, Rou has also been

►THE DETAILS

- TITLE TBC
- ▶ RELEASE DATE Early 2015
- ► LABEL Ambush Reality
- ▶ PRODUCER Dan Weller
- ► RECORDED Chapel Studios, Lincolnshire
- ►TRACKS INCLUDE Beauty, Math
- PROU REYNOLDS SAYS "It feels like we've got a little bit more confidence, and we're a bit more aware of various other influences. I don't think I could ever write anything that doesn't have an element of anger to it but there's also a delicacy that goes through the new songs. Saying that, it's definitely some of the most raucous stuff we've ever written."

concerns. Unashamed love song 'Beauty' takes in "the neuroscience behind love and warmth, instead of just 'I love you baby". The heavy and shapeshifting 'Math' attacks the class system, and an as yet untitled track operates as the unofficial sequel to 2012's 'Arguing With Thermometers' -"specifically looking at climate-change denial, the reasons for it, the corporate pressure and things like that", says Reynolds. "The type of music we make has enabled us to fall into making music of relative substance, and

with this album we've

expanding his lyrical

tried to keep up the research. I thought, 'I've got this pedestal; I should do some work to earn that pedestal'. If people are going to be listening to what I'm saying, we really want to be saying things that are true and honest and worthwhile." That kind of talk? Fearless.

■ MARK BEAUMONT



Dave Keuning

HOTFUSS

THIS WEEK...

The Killers: Hot Fuss

Revisiting the
Las Vegas band's
world-beating
debut, which
is 10 years old
this week

THE BACKGROUND

Very few albums of throwntogether demos go on to sell seven million copies worldwide. Yet The Killers' debut LP - rush-recorded between Dave Keuning's Vegas apartment and a demo studio in Berkeley, California - did just that, its rough-hewn pop dazzlers igniting one of the mightiest careers in 21st-century rock. Back in 2003, though, The Killers were Vegas outcasts, merging the four-to-thefloor electronica of The Rapture with hints of Britpop and the sweeping atmos-pop of Brandon Flowers' beloved U2, The Smiths and The Cure in tiny hardcore clubs and transvestite bars and getting rejected by every label in the US. Until, that is, the UK's Lizard King Records got hold of the demo of 'Mr Brightside', released it as an EP and caused a national hype-storm. Suddenly The Killers became the Best British Band From America.

The buildings pictured on the 'Hot Fuss' sleeve are said to be located at a construction factory in Shanghai, China. The characters in bright-red neon on top of each tower translate as "Construction material development".

FIVE FACTS

During recording in LA, the valley where the studio was located was hit by several natural disasters. Forest fires coated the streets with ash, and while recording the drum part for 'Believe Me Natalie', Ronnie Vannucci was thrown off his stool by an earthquake.

2 Jenny Was A Friend
Of Mine' and 'Midnight
Show' are two parts of
a murder trilogy, the third
being 'Leave The Bourbon
On The Shelf', which finally
appeared on the 'Sawdust'
compilation. The band had
hopes to make a film of the
trilogy, with James Spader
starring as the murderer.

3 Several of the first home demos of 'Hot Fuss' songs, recorded before the band went to Berkeley, were sung by Brandon while sitting in the closet in Dave's apartment, for the acoustics.

4 'Glamorous Indie Rock And Roll' was a dig at the snotty indie scene around a Vegas hipster hotspot called Café Espresso Roma, where Dave and Brandon played their first show together.

5 'Mr Brightside' was the very first song Dave and Brandon wrote together, at their second rehearsal. It remains the only song The Killers have played at every single show.

LYRIC ANALYSIS "Andy, you're a star in nobody's eyes

in nobody's eyes but mine" - `Andy, You're A Star'

In eighth grade, Brandon developed a fixation on a sports star at his school called Andy, who'd act as a symbol of aspiration for much of his early adult life. "The more athletically gifted kids, the popular kids, are somewhat glorified, and that frustrated me a bit," he said.

"I've got soul, but I'm not a soldier" - 'All These Things That I've Done'

A line often held up as laughable nonsense, it actually refers to Mormon Brandon's religious struggle in the face of "being thrown to the dogs" by the rock'n'roll life. He wasn't enough of a moral warrior to resist all the temptations of alcohol, drugs and women, he was saying, but his eternal spirit was in the righteous place.

"Somebody told me/ You had a boyfriend/ Who looked like a girlfriend/That I had in February of last year" – 'Somebody Told Me'

A line inspired by the band's monthly residency at Trans, a Vegas transvestite club.

WHAT WE

"The Killers inhabit a world of snuff and nonsense

where hermaphrodites dance in casino halls and boyfriends murder girlfriends over bottles of bourbon – a stadium rock *Baywatch Nights* with morals and cumshots." Dan Martin, *NME*, July 1, 2004

WHAT WE SAY NOW

What at first felt like a front-loaded flash in the pan now exudes depth and significance; the raw roots of a stadium-slaying talent.

FAMOUS FAN

"It's rare to find a band who not only have the music but a lyricist too. I hear The Killers and I get off the phone." Bono in 2004

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"I still love it. 'Hot Fuss' is still very sentimental to me. It's still a strong album and I hear a lot of joy in the songs from when we were making them."

Dave Keuning in forthcoming Killers biography *Days & Ages*

THE AFTERMATH

Having sparked a stampede in the John Peel tent at Glastonbury 2004, the album propelled The Killers to Number One in the UK and indie-dancefloor ubiquity. They responded by shooting for Springsteenstyle Big Music and growing odd moustaches. Next stop, Wembley.

►THE DETAILS

PRECORDED 2002–2003 ▶RELEASE DATE June 7, 2004 ▶LENGTH 45:39 ▶LABEL Lizard King ▶PRODUCER The Killers, Jeff Saltzman ▶STUDIOS Dave's apartment; The Hearse, Berkeley, California ▶HIGHEST UK CHART POSITION 1 ▶UK SALES 2 million ▶SINGLES Mr Brightside, Somebody Told Me, All These Things That I've Done, Smile Like You Mean It ▶TRACKLISTING ▶1. Jenny Was A Friend Of Mine ▶2. Mr Brightside ▶3. Smile Like You Mean It ▶4. Somebody Told Me ▶5. All These Things That I've Done ▶6. Andy, You're A Star ▶7. On Top ▶8. Glamorous Indie Rock And Roll ▶9. Believe Me Natalie ▶10. Midnight Show ▶11. Everything Will Be Alright



Lana Del Rev's fee for appearing at Kim and Kanve's pre-wedding party, according to the singer

experienced after footage of her fighting Jay Z in a lift went viral

£467,000

What Dexter Holland of The Offspring owes Cessna in missed payments for an aeroplane he bought in 2007

Rooney's World Cup Spotify playlist. His picks include tracks by Jake Bugg, Mumford & Sons and Beyoncé



"The guitar music scene feels way behind. There is some incredible electronic music and hip-hop, and rock music is being left behind. The electronic and hip-hop side of things has always been there underneath and this time it's leading the charge more.'

Kasabian's SERGE PIZZORNO feels like he's one of a dying breed





GERARD WAY PLAYS HIS FIRST SOLO SHOWS THIS AUGUST. ARE YOU **EXCITED ABOUT IT?**



Will Walter The Family Rain "Totally. I was always impressed with

how diverse each stage of My Chemical Romance was, and Gerard seemed to create that. I'll be hoping for something cool."



Rhian Daly NME Assistant **Reviews Editor**

"Unless he's doing something drastically different to My Chemical Romance, I think there's plenty more interesting artists to give your time to."



Chloe Howcroft NME reader "Yeah, if Gerard feels

that his future is in being a solo artist, I'm interested in hearing it, regardless of how tragic the split was for fans."



7

WHO THE FUCK IS...



This is the Japanese girl band who claim to be the largest pop group in the world - they have 48 core members and over 100 additional affiliates. They made the news last week when a man attacked two of them with a 50cm saw at a signing session.

What happened next?

The man - 24-year-old Satoru Umeta - was arrested immediately after the attack took place, leaving two members of AKB48 requiring medical care.

But they still have 48 members, right?

Yes, Rina Kawaei and Anna Iriyama have been discharged from the Takizawa hospital where they received care for broken bones and cuts to their hands.



GOOD WEEK ↔ BAD WEEK



Dr Dre and Jimmy lovine

Beats co-founders Dr Dre and Jimmy lovine concluded their sale of the company to Apple for \$3bn, and will join the electronics giant as part of the deal.

The rapper's lack of sporting prowess was revealed to the world at a New York Mets game. where he botched the ceremonial 'first pitch' against the Pittsburgh Pirates. "The shit almost hit the cameraman, damn," 50 tweeted.

AND FINALLY

Beard science

A Serbian priest has blamed the floods that killed at least 50 in the Balkans on Conchita Wurst winning Eurovision and urged fellow Serbs to reject the "Jesuslike figure".

Best bong

Footage of One Direction's Zayn Malik, shot by Louis Tomlinson. seemed to show the two smoking weed in Peru. "We all do stupid things," said bandmate Liam Payne.

Monster munch

The pun-loving members of fantasy metal group Gwar are seeking \$50,000 to open their own 'GWAR-B-Q.' The 'Gwar Bar' will sell "gourmet junk food" if the band hit target.

Find these stories and more on NME.COM

Official

TOP 40 ALBUMS JUNE 1, 2014



Coldplay PARLOPHONE

Coldplay proved they can still surprise when they shared the first track from their sixth album, the James Blakeesque, Jon Hopkins-produced 'Magic'. They top the chart for a second week in a row with that album.

- Are We There Sharon Van Etten JAGJAGUWAR
- In The Lonely Hour Sam Smith CAPITOL
- Turn Blue The Black Keys NONESUCH A Letter Home Neil Young REPRISE E87 5
- ▼ 6 Definitely Maybe Oasis BIG BROTHER
- Caustic Love Paolo Nutini ATLANTIC
- Mongol Horde Mongol Horde XTRA MILE
- Xscape Michael Jackson EPIC/MJJ
- ▼ 10 Going Back Home Wilko Johnson & Roger Daltrey UMC
- 11 Runes Bury Tomorrow NUCLEAR BLAST
- 12 A Perfect Contradiction Paloma Faith RCA
- 13 What Have We Become Paul Heaton & Jacqui Abbott FMI
- ▼ 14 Indie Cindy Pixies PIXIES MUSIC
- 15 Girl Pharrell Williams COLUMBIA
- ▲ 16 AM Arctic Monkeys DOMINO
- 17 To Be Kind Swans MUTE 18 Luminous The Horrors XL
- 19 Lost In The Dream The War On Drugs SECRETLY CANADIAN
- 20 Everyday Robots Damon Albarn PARLOPHONE
- 21 American Interior Gruff Rhvs TURNSTILE
- 22 First Mind Nick Mulvey FICTION
- 23 Revelation The Brian Jonestown Massacre A RECORDINGS
- 24 Nabuma Rubberband Little Dragon BECAUSE MUSIC
- 25 If You Wait London Grammar METAL & DUST
- 26 Meteorites Echo & The Bunnymen SAVOY
- E33 27 Tribal Imelda May DECCA
- 28 It's Album Time Todd Terje OLSEN
- 29 Love In The Future John Legend COLUMBIA
- 30 In Conflict Owen Pallett DOMINO
- 31 Out Among The Stars Johnny Cash COLUMBIA ▼ 32 Friendly Bacteria Mr Scruff NINJA TUNE
- 33 The Take Off And Landing Of Everything Elbow FICTION 34 Fair Warning The Rails ISLAND
- 35 The Cautionary Tales Of Mark Oliver Everett Eels E WORKS
- 36 Someday World Eno & Hyde WARP
- 37 Nikki Nack Tune-Yards 4AD
- ▲ 38 A Letter Home (Vinvl) Neil Young THIRD MAN
- 39 Born To Die Lana Del Rev POLYDOR 40 So Long, See You Tomorrow Bombay Bicycle Club ISLAND

he Official Charts Company compiles the Official Record Store Chart from ales through 100 of the UK's best independent record shops from Sunday to Sunday



THIS WEEK **CRASH**

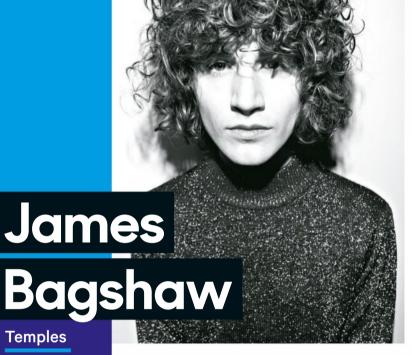
FOUNDED 1985 WHY IT'S GREAT Crash stock Leeds bands' records among the more established names, and sell tickets for gigs and club nights.

TOP SELLER LAST WEEK The Sunshine Underground – 'The Sunshine Underground' THEY SAY "We're about personal service, and our selection of vinyl is the best there is in Leeds."









THE FIRST SONG I REMEMBER HEARING **'Love Me Tender** - Elvis Presley

"My parents weren't massive on Elvis, but they had a picture of him hung up in the kitchen and my curiosity stemmed from that. I remember seeing that and wondering who it was, and I've still got the picture in my studio at home now I would have been about seven."

THE FIRST SONG I FELL IN LOVE WITH **Blueberry** Hill' - Fats Domino

"I heard a lot more music from my parents' friends who lived a couple of doors down. They used to babysit me and they had really great taste. I remember hearing Fats Domino from them. This song has an incredible sound to it; I don't know what it was about it that I loved, and I still don't to this day. Some songs just do that to you."

THE FIRST ALBUM I EVER BOUGHT 'MTV Unplugged In New York' - Nirvana

"This introduced me to Nirvana, even though it was at the opposite end of the musical spectrum from where they normally reside. My brother bought an electric guitar and I had a little half-size acoustic he was listening to 'Bleach' and the earlier stuff and recommended this to me."

like Elvis who were on their own. I wasn't listening to the weirder stuff back then, it would have been the early singles, and 'Paperback Writer' was a standout."

THE SONG I CAN NO LONGER LISTEN TO 'Billie Jean'

- Michael Jackson

"Our sound engineer tests the PA system with it. He's been doing that for the last six months, so I can't listen to it any more. It was a classic and it's now practically in the bin. I try to let it go over my head."

THE SONG THAT MAKES ME WANT TO DANCE

Come See About Me' - The Supremes

"It's got a really good groove. It wasn't a big hit for them particularly, but it's got an infectious beat. It's like primitive dance music to me and it makes me want to dance a lot more than the stuff that's actually meant to be dance music."

THE SONG I DO AT KARAOKE

Mathilde - Scott Walker

"I've never actually done it, but I'd want to do

'I CAN'T BE LIKE BOWIE 'TIL I REALLY LEARN TO SING"

THE SONG THAT MADE ME WANT TO BE IN A BAND Paperback Writer - The Beatles

"I remember seeing The Strokes and wanting to be like that, but the first seeds would have been The Beatles when I was 10. They made me want to play music with a group of something quite absurd that isn't typical to do. It'd be a Scott Walker song -'Mathilde' or 'Jackie'. People tend to do pop stuff, but I think the operatic nature of these tracks means you can be really self-indulgent - karaoke is all about selfindulgence. I reckon I could do a pretty good operatic Scott Walker voice and get all the moves down."

THE SONG I CAN'T GET OUT OF MY HEAD

'Pure Imagination' - Leslie Bricusse & Anthony Newley

"I always find myself whistling 'Pure Imagination' from Willy Wonka & The Chocolate Factory, for some reason. I don't really even listen to it much, but it's just a really great melody."

THE SONG I WISH I'D WRITTEN Life On Mars? - David Bowie

"It's really catchy, but in a really unconventional way. There's one bit where he hits a really high note and it's so bold; I don't think I could ever be that bold until I really learn to sing. In a few years, a few decades, maybe... It's very clever without being pretentious, which is the prefect mix for a musician."

THE SONG THAT REMINDS ME OF **KETTERING** Reptilia' -The Strokes

"When I think about Kettering, I think about nights out there rather than songs that you'd walk around listening to. It was that indie era in the 2000s and whenever I hear 'Reptilia' it makes me think of being in the Prince Of Wales pub at the point of the night just before you throw up."

THE SONG I WANT PLAYED AT MY **FUNERAL**

Skating In Central Park' - Francis Lai

"It's quite a sombre song from the film Love Story. I haven't actually seen the film and I want to leave it that way because I like the music so much."

Scott Walker

Temples

frontman



► YOU HEARD IT HERE FIRST # EDITED BY MATT WILKINSON



London trio get inspiration from US college rock and dark, twisted novels

thought it was a really funny image of either loving or hating someone so much that you just want to wear their skin as a hat, but now everyone thinks we hate Arcade Fire," muses Happyness' vocalist/guitarist Benji Compston pragmatically. The lyric in question ("I'm wearing Win Butler's hair/ There's a scalpless singer in a Montreal rock band somewhere") is the centerpiece of 'Montreal Rock Band Somewhere', taken from last November's eponymous debut EP, and it's only the tip of the iceberg of the weird, wonderfully disturbing world that the London trio - completed by Jonny Allan (vocals/bass) and Ashley Cooper (drums) - exist in.

Formed properly in Bermondsey late last year out of the fragments of various "shit punk and folk bands" ("I was playing the cello, really drunk in a band last year and apparently played the entire show in a different key. I'm told it sounded like The Velvet Underground - it wasn't

meant to," notes Compston), Happyness quickly arrived at their Sparklehorse and Wilco-influenced, US college-rock stylings - born, they say, out of a feeling of "placelessness" and general disenfranchisement with south London.

One aborted recording session later, in which they took to an abandoned church in Buckinghamshire to record -

> probably inappropriately - album opener 'Baby, Jesus (Jelly Boy)', and the band discovered their current base, an old carpentry warehouse in which forthcoming LP 'Weird Little Birthday' came to fruition.

Full of melodic slacker charms and unnerving imagery, it blends the trio's love of movies and pop culture with something altogether darker. "We're really into [American author] Cormac McCarthy," grins Allan. "He has this heightened way of writing that comes across as really

beautiful, and then two-thirds of the way through the book he tells you about the cave full of bodies."

"He's the most wretched person and he's running from all the good guys - maybe that has something to do with [our lyrics]?" adds Compston. "Or we could just be completely psychotic and it's just gone over our heads." LISA WRIGHT

THE DETAILS

▶BASED Bermondsev. London

►FOR FANS OF Pavement, **Broken Social Scene**

►SOCIAL facebook.com/ happynessmusic

►HEAR THEM 'Weird Little Birthday' is out on June 16

▶SEE THEM LIVE London Servants Jazz Quarters

(June 17)

▶BELIEVE IT OR NOT Album track 'Pumpkin Noir' features a guest spot from Ed Harcourt. "He described the song as 'like driving down Sunset Boulevard on loads of downers'," says Allan.

ON

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NEWMUSIC

NOW

▶Stream the debut

album and read the

band's insights into

their weirdest lyrics

Stephen Steinbrink

This American dreamer could have been plucked straight out of Jack Kerouac's classic beat novel On The Road. Raised by a deeply religious family in Arizona, he uprooted himself at the tender age of 14 with guitar in tow, and since the mid-2000s he's been touring the dusty roads of the US "eight days a week" in his pickup truck. He's already made six albums, but releases his first record in the UK in July, full of gorgeous folk that recalls everything from Paul Simon to The Shins.

► SOCIAL @s steinbrink ►HEAR HIM stephensteinbrink.bandcamp. com

Jet Setter

The Dublin four-piece share a label (Any Other City) with Radar faves Girl Band, but that's as far as the similarities go. While the latter revel in chaotic. Factory Floor-style freakouts, Jet Setter are far more melodic. New track 'Not Yet' thrashes along with the pushy zeal of Smashing Pumpkins, while flipside 'Cut Shorts' recalls Graham Coxon at his late-'90s best.

- ► SOCIAL @thisisjetsetter ►HEAR THEM soundcloud. com/jet-setter
- SEE THEM LIVE London Shacklewell Arms (June 11), Cork Pavilion (July 10), Dublin Bello Bar (July 11)



Sylas

Try finding mysterious R&Binflected newcomer Sylas on Google and you'll come up empty-handed, but the genre-mashing musician must be doing something right, because one of only two tracks featured on his SoundCloud is a collaboration with Brian Eno. That track, 'Layer', features claustrophobic rap couplets over spacious, ambient electronic beats. The other, 'Hollow', is all caramel vocals, lurching, woozy samples and sultry atmospherics à la The Weeknd

►HEAR HIM soundcloud. com/ffdemos/sets/sylas-1/ s-eYpvH

Bell's Roar

With her first single 'Slow',

multi-instrumentalist Sean Desiree layers looping post-rock guitars, slowed hip-hop beats and soulful R&B vocals, and it sounds wonderful. It's delicate and melancholy without sounding lonely, and an earlier demo, 'Covered In Strokes tangent might also be an option for the Bronxbased artist. Wherever she goes from here, it's bound to be enchanting.

bellsroar

Token

title for this Toronto duo's lone track. This enticing glitch-pop number is a real stunner; although the pixelated artwork of their Bandcamp page assures that it's more Super Nintendo than supernova. Their sound takes the best of Crystal Castles and thwarts it with bass grooves and wailing guitars. The results? A pop product that's as

- ► SOCIAL facebook.com/ tokentheband
- ►HEAR THEM tokenmusic. bandcamp.com

Pale Fires

These Camdeners sound a little like Liam Gallagher fronting a psych band. The intro to their best track 'Come Closer' starts off a sedated krauty pop jam in the vein of Merchandise, before finding itself in more recognisably psych territory - albeit with a mammoth Britpop-via-grunge chorus. 'So Soon' is another corker, recalling the shimmer of Echo & The Bunnymen.

- ► SOCIAL facebook.com/ palefiresuk
- ►HEAR THEM palefires.com/ music

Lany

A brand-new trio of starlit R&B tearjerkers, with their two debut tracks Lanv could give Top Of The Pops a new life at the witching hour. 'Walk Away' and 'Hot

Lights' each sound like a '90s boy band stuck on glitzy '80s pop ballads, full of dusky synthesizers and sunset saxophones. If Gary Numan had written songs for 'NSync while cruising down an empty Los Angeles highway, then they'd have sounded something like this.

- SOCIAL @thisislany
- ►HEAR THEM soundcloud. com/thisislany

Earth Girls

Fronted by saccharinevoiced singer Liz Panella and doling out the kind of brilliantly lo-fi, ramshackle sensibilities that come on like the garage pop of Shannon And The Clams with a dash of Kenickie's cheeky, vouthful charm thrown in. Chicago trio Earth Girls are all about short, sharp twominute bursts of bratty fun.



'Meteor' couldn't be a better addictive as candy.



TOS: GENE GLOVER, AMY BRAMMALL WORDS: MATT WILKINSON, TIM HAKKI, WRIGHT, JAMES BALMONT, EVE BARLOW, NEIL WOOD

PHOT



III Move Sporadic

"Ill Move Sporadic's album from last year, 'Drug Corpse', is the only new thing I've been excited by. The raps are bleak and littered with unprofessionalism. Wicked."

Token

An album of five demos is available on their Bandcamp now and it's a more than worthwhile use of your next 12 minutes.

- ► SOCIAL facebook.com/ earthgirlschicago
- ►HEAR THEM earthairls. bandcamp.com/releases

Invisible Hands

Hailing from Leeds, Invisible Hands are undoubtedly diverse. Last year's 'Wall' daringly mingled glitch-pop with indie, but it's latest single 'Just' that indicates

THE WEEK

Sonic Cathedral



FOUNDED 2004. by Nat Cramp SONECATHEDRAL >BASED London

- **▶KEY RELEASES** Yeti Lane 'The Echo Show' (2012). Cheval Sombre - 'Mad Love' (2012), Various -'Psych For Sore Eyes' EP (2013), Younghusband -'Dromes' (2013)
- ► RADAR SAYS An indie with a fondness for drones and reverb. Celebrating their 10th anniversary this summer, they've released records for heroes such as Neil Halstead (Slowdive made their comeback at SC's birthday party last month) and new bands like The Vacant Lots.

a finding of feet. After some feedback squalls, they serve up a meaty poppunk song that sounds like something Tom DeLonge might've created if his scrotum had dropped.

- ► SOCIAL facebook.com/ invisiblehandshome
- ►HEAR THEM soundcloud. com/invisiblehandshome

Princess

What is it with Irish bands and effeminate names? Princess join the likes of September Girls, Girl Band and Girls Names in that gang, although their influences are more diverse, ranging from the mindbending krautrock odyssey of 'Excuse The Voice' to the MBV-like 'Neverlook'.

- ► SOCIAL facebook.com/ thatsoprincess
- ►HEAR THEM soundcloud. com/princesamusica

The Yetis

Four childhood friends of around 20 years young make up Pennsylvanian surf quartet The Yetis, and their beaming jangles encapsulate all of the wide-eyed charm of Girls, with the vocal giddiness of The Beach Boys. Titles like 'Warm California' demonstrate exactly the kind of good vibrations that the youthful troupe are chasing, while covers of bands like The Smiths and Chuck Berry pan out a golden spectrum of smiling influences.

- ► SOCIAL facebook.com/ thevetisofficial
- ►HEAR THEM soundcloud. com/thevetis

Qtier

After last year's brilliant introductory tracks, London duo Qtier are back with their debut single 'Set Me On'. It's a dark, muted electronic gem, which is irresistibly fluid in its production and admirable in its execution. Made up of Adam Pless and Howard Whiddett, Qtier find a tasty balance between soulful vocals and swelling electronics.

- ► SOCIAL facebook.com/atier ►HEAR THEM soundcloud.
- com/qtier

More new music on page 25

SOUNDS

This week's columnist JEHNNY



DARK AND DANGEROUS

A Dead Forest Index are a dark, minimalist folk duo of brothers Adam and Sam Sherry from New Zealand. They sent a demo to me and Johnny Hostile a year ago, saying they loved our Pop Noire label and wanted to work with us. We don't often respond to demos (although we listen to them all!) but this time we really fell in love with their music. There was something mysterious about Adam's voice. The first time I heard it I thought he was a woman, and the whole atmosphere of the songs reminded me of a cross between Bauhaus and Nico. We immediately invited them to come over to Europe and open for Savages, and they accepted. They live and work in London now. I really recommend you take the time and listen to them. Their new EP 'Cast Of Lines' is out on Pop Noire now.

Le Vasco are young kids from south Paris. Their sound is extreme, a sort of forward-thinking electronic music, integrating silence and elements of dubstep. electronic and hip-hop. Their music is a mix of maturity and teenage angst. They're very self-sufficient: they record and produce themselves, and make their own

videos. It's quite impressive. From the heritage of bands like Lescop and La Femme, they represent the new generation of French electronic music, soon to export themselves overseas.

I met **Duke Garwood** back in the days when the best London club. The Luminaire, was still open. I used to play there a lot with Johnny Hostile, as John & Jehn. One night when I was DJing, Johnny grabbed

my arm and said, "You must come and watch this guy,

I've never seen someone play guitar like that!" Duke was sitting on a chair, playing sweet songs on a giant Gibson electric guitar, ballads with a tint of free jazz. His voice was thin and full, like Chet Baker turned into a midnight wolf. The

first question was: who is this guy? After knowing him for so many years, I still can't picture everything he's done. I hear stories of Mexican gangs putting his head into a sack and forcing tequila down his throat, and yet, when he is in LA, he counts among his friends some of the biggest rock stars around. Last year he co-wrote an album with Mark Lanegan called 'Black Pudding' (released on Heavenly). More recently he's been working on a solo album 'Heavy Love', which is being produced by Alain Johannes and is due out soon.

Next week: Chyrches

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Le Vasco

"Le Vasco's sound

is a mix of maturity

and teenage angst"





















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Fold

These Leeds trip-hoppers are soon to release a split single with recent Radar stars Invisible Hands. Fold's track, 'Be Water My Friend', is a grand, funky number with horns and wah-wah over a monologue about the formlessness of water.

- ► SOCIAL facebook.com/ foldfm
- ►HEAR THEM soundcloud. com/fold

Lovepark

Early track 'Jester' established this Brighton outfit as sun-bleached indie groove-rockers. New track '21/12' retains those characteristics, adding angular guitar and melodic backing vocals to the mix to create a sound reminiscent of Bombay Bicycle Club at their most experimental.

- ► SOCIAL facebook.com/ lovenarkhand
- ►HEAR THEM soundcloud. com/lovepark



Sofia Hoops

Lady Gaga might have moved on from her hip-hop/ electro crossover hit 'Just Dance', but Sofia Hoops has found a home for it in LA. A songwriter, classically trained ex-opera singer and backing vocalist for producers Danger Mouse and Ariel Rechtshaid. Hoops breaks out on her own terms with the 'Young Loverz' EP, whose title track is just begging for a dancefloor.

- ► SOCIAL facebook.com/ sofiaishoops
- ►HEAR HER soundcloud.com/ sofia hoops

Decorations

Formed in LA by Devon Geyer, Decorations are as effervescent and chirpy a proposition as they come. Think Foster The People if they'd been force-fed uppers from birth and had never known sadness. Debut offering 'Girls' feeds on the kind of peppy synths that could soundtrack a particularly cheery computer game, while the rest of it is a buoyant mix of indie guitars and euphoric vocal whoops.

- ► SOCIAL facebook.com/ decorationsofficial
- ►HEAR THEM soundcloud. com/decorations

Luluc

Sub Pop co-founder Jonathan Poneman describes Luluc (pronounced 'Loo-Luke') as "bracing, subtle, tender and magnificent", and indeed the Melbourne folk duo are set to release their new album 'Passerby' on



- SOCIAL @luluc music
- ►HEAR THEM soundcloud. com/luluc

Spoilers

The seal of approval from Hookworms' lynchpin MJ is a surefire guarantee of a particularly squalling brand of quality (see: Menace Beach, Mazes), so it's no surprise that London band Spoilers' debut 'I'm Awake' produced by MJ - is a snotty, two-and-a-half-minute slice of garage-punk brilliance. All reverb-drenched guitars

LOVEPARK RECALL **BOMBAY BICYCLE CLUB AT THEIR MOST EXPERI-**MENTAL

and relentless drums, topped off with sneering vocals, it sounds thrown together in half an hour, in the best possible wav.

- ► social facebook.com/ wearespoilers
- ►HEAR THEM soundcloud. com/wearespoilers

Balue

New Mexico's Eli Thomas is a lo-fi bedroom loafer who can't wait for the seaside season. Debut cassette album 'Quiet Dreamer' is released right after summer solstice and, by Thomas' reasoning, that requires feelgood pop music. 'Charming Flow' should soundtrack

- a spontaneous road trip.
- ►SOCIAL facebook.com/ baluemakesmusic
- ►HEAR HIM balue.bandcamp. com

Radar <u>NEWS ROUND UP</u>

ALVVAYS GO TRANSATLANTIC

Alvvays have signed to Transgressive and announced the release of their self-titled debut album. Mixed by Holy Fuck's Graham Walsh and John Agnello (who has worked with Sonic Youth, Dinosaur Jr and Kurt Vile), it's due out on July 21.

ROXY GETS A NEW VID

Roxy Agogo, Glasgow's enigmatic one-man band and friend to Baby Strange, will release a video for his new track 'Crocodiles' on June 23. Expect more calamitous post-punk in the style of The Birthday Party. If you thought last track 'When You Dress Up' was creepy...





LEON COMES BACK HERE FOR YOU

Having introduced himself in 2013 with a debut single on Disclosure's Method Records, Leon T Pearl returns in 2014 with 'Bring Me Down', a full EP on the Teal Pearl label. 'Came Here For You', the first track to be released from it, sounds more laidback and subdued than the earlier record.

GENO'S FRENCH AFFAIR

Geno Carrapetta of Gentlemen and Dark Bells has swapped psych for an obsession with French music and films of the '60s and '70s, taking in the likes of Françoise Hardy and Jacques Dutronc, Lead track 'Éternité' is online now, and the album 'Privé' is released this week on RIP Records.

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ECVICAS THE DEFINITIVE VERDICT TEDITED BY JJ DUNNING



Black humour, heavy rock and hints at a troubled personal life on a varied and eccentric second solo album



Jack White has always crammed his music and lyrics with riddles and red herrings, and it's helped make him a continually interesting artist. It's no different with 'Lazaretto', a second solo album that's as musically eccentric and original as its predecessor, 'Blunderbuss',

covering rock, soul, funk, country, folk and bar-room blues, sometimes within the same track. He says the songs are adapted from plays and short stories that he penned when he was 19, and if you run with that theme, 'Alone In My Home' becomes a stompier version of The Beach Boys' 'In My Room' – pure teenage self-effacement. But who's to say that lyrics like "I'm becoming a ghost/So nobody can know me" aren't telling of White in 2014, especially in light of what's been happening in his private life?

A lazaretto is a hospital or ship that quarantines people affected with contagious diseases, and there might be some very black humour in White using the word as the title of his album. His recent press has been mixed, to say the least - during their divorce settlement, Karen Elson took out a restraining order against her ex-husband and leaked emails revealed a staggeringly petty rivalry with his neighbours in Nashville, The Black Keys - and, at times, he portrays himself as a wronged man. "They threw me down in a lazaretto/Born rotten, bored rotten", he sings on the album's title track, a pounding funk workout that ends, as 'That Black Bat Licorice' does, with a fiddle solo. It's an extraordinary song and, although White always says the characters in his music are exactly that - characters - he specifically names himself in 'Lazaretto', which ends with guns blazing: "And like the dough, I don't fall down/I'm so Detroit I make it rise from the ashes".

Lust For Youth

The Swedish trio swap noise

assaults for uplifting synthpop

International

Hannes Norrvide founded Lust For Youth as an ear-blitzing noise project in his native Sweden, but since moving to Copenhagen in 2010, where he fell in with the crowd around Iceage and the Posh Isolation label, his music has changed beyond recognition. When NME first interviewed Norrvide in 2012, he was singing the praises of the Pet Shop Boys and talking of giving his gothy synthpop laments a polish. 2013's 'Perfect View' gestured in this direction, but 'International' feels like an arrival. Recorded with Vår's Loke Rahbek on synth and Malthe Fischer, ex-Oh No Ono, on guitar and production, these 10 electronic pop songs truly glisten. A darkness licks at the edges of 'Epoetine Alfa' (named after a cancer drug) and 'Armida', featuring a plaintive turn



from guest vocalist Soho Rezanejad. But largely the mood of the album is uplifting; if Lust For Youth get any closer to pop, they'll be in 'Club Tropicana' territory. Which might not be a bad idea. LOUIS PATTISON

▶THE DETAILS

▶ RELEASE DATE June 9 ▶ LABEL Sacred Bones ▶ PRODUCER Malthe Fischer ▶TRACKLISTING ▶1. Epoetin Alfa ▶2. Illume ▶3. Ultras ▶4. New Boys ▶5. Lungomare ▶6. Armida ▶7. After Touch ▶8. Basorexia ▶9. Running ▶10. International ▶BEST TRACK Armida

Tomas Barfod

Love Me Secretly Canadian



When Danish electronic auteur Tomas Barfod taps in a beat and

cranks the hardware for one of his solo releases, does he worry about undermining his position as the (real, human) drummer in Copenhagen trio WhoMadeWho? More likely he's just happy to rest his arms. Either way, at its best his music outshines

Soulwaxisms; 'Love Me' follows up 2012 debut album 'Salton Sea', but edges away from sleek, techno throb towards something more tender and torch song. The striking falsetto of Here We Go Magic's Luke Temple caps 'Bell House', while Swedish indie-folkist Nina Kinert steals the show on the electro-tinted 'Pulsing' and the exquisitely blank 'Aftermath'. NOEL GARDNER

WhoMadeWho's middling

Such brazen, unrepentant self-belief fires other songs on the album. The first track, 'Three Women', is a country-soul version of 'Three Women Blues',

LYRICAL **ANALYSIS**

"But even God herself has fewer plans than me'

Pure White braggadocio on an album that's both boastful and sentimental. On the title track, White feels wronged but also driven by intense self-belief.

"It's not enough that I love you/There's all these things I have to prove to vou' - 'Would You Fight For My Love?'

White is something of an expert at making passiveaggressive statements to create drama in his songs. Here, the song's narrator confronts a lover head on and makes a plea not to be ignored.

'I build my own home/To be sure/ That nobody can touch me now Alone In My Home

White has said the album is made up from short stories and plays he wrote when he was 19, and this is likely to be Jack reverting back to his teenage self - a far more timid character.

the 1928 song by Blind Willie McTell: "I've got three women/Red, blonde and brunette". You expect a twist when White sings, "And I know what you're thinking/What gives me the right?", but instead he comes back with. "But what gives YOU the right?/Well, these women must be getting something/'Cos they come and see me every night." It's a troubling song for a man who's been accused of having a problem with women to begin an album with - and it's possibly the blackest joke on the record – but he tempers his sense of entitlement elsewhere, particularly on a straight country ballad actually called 'Entitlement', which finds him singing, "We don't deserve a single damn thing". You can decide for yourself whether he really means it.

'Would You Fight For My Love?' seems directed expressly at Elson ("It's such a pleasure, to sing with you together/Making love when there is nobody home") and White sometimes slips into allegory, using imagery such as creatures on

"a floating lily island" ('Temporary Ground') and birds sitting on a windowsill ('I Found A Culprit') as the basis of songs that, frankly, could mean anything. On one track, 'High Ball Stepper', he forgoes words altogether to create a smouldering slab of heavy rock. It's the most thunderous song on a varied album that lacks the quality of riffs White used to write for The White Stripes (the lead instrument on many songs is piano), but includes enough intrigue, daring and plain weirdness to delight and, in

►THE DETAILS

- ▶ RELEASE DATE June 9 ▶ LABEL XL ▶ PRODUCER Jack White
- ▶3. Temporary Ground ▶4. Would You Fight For My Love?
- ▶8. Entitlement ▶9. That Black Bat Licorice ▶10. I Think I Found
- The Culprit ▶11. Want And Able ▶BEST TRACK Lazaretto

Stockholm Caroline



Having become a household name as singer of the

Pretenders, it may come as a surprise, three and a half decades later, to learn that this is Chrissie Hynde's first solo album. It stands up to her past endeavours, though there's no 'I'll Stand By You' or 'Brass In Pocket' among these 11 slickly produced AOR offerings made with the assistance of Björn Yttling (of Peter Bjorn And John). 'Down The Wrong Way' and 'Dark Sunglasses' are '60s drivetime-radio throwbacks with a touch too much sheen, with only the beguiling 'In A Miracle' coming close to classic. Like the syndrome named after the titular city, you'll fall for these tunes with repeated exposure, but you'll live without them once you're free from them too. ■ JEREMY ALLEN

Wife

What's Between Tri-Angle



Wife's debut is the work of James Kelly, quitarist

with disbanded black-metal trio Altar Of Plagues. That band leavened their noise assaults with stretches of elegiac, dark ambience, and 'What's Between' finds Kelly pushing those ideas further - this is a dense and cryptic electronic album. Toning down his metal scream to a murmur, tracks like 'Tongue' and 'A Nature (Shards)' find Kelly marrying bleak imagery ("I crawl through black water") to sparse drum echoes and abstract bass tones, his vocals weathered by shifting, finely textured treatments from guest producers The Haxan Cloak and Roly Porter, As desolate as a windswept moor, 'What's Between' refuses to yield simple answers but rewards deep exploration. STUART HUGGETT

some places, appal. ■ PHIL HEBBLETHWAITE

- **►LENGTH** 39:13 **►TRACKLISTING ►**1. Three Women **►**2. Lazaretto
- ▶5. High Ball Stepper ▶6. Just One Drink ▶7. Alone In My Home

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Reviews

Glass Animals

Wolf Tone/Caroline International



Oxford four-piece Glass Animals are signed to

super-producer Paul Epworth's new label Wolf Tone - which, given his talent-spotting track record with Adele and Florence + The Machine, says much about their commercial appeal, sitting as they do directly between Alt-J, Wild Beasts and 'In Rainbows'era Radiohead. That singer Dave Bayley is a qualified doctor perhaps explains their brainiac aesthetic, all intricate beats and time signatures, but their songs have heart to go with the cleverness. 'Black Mambo' is straight-up sexy R&B. 'Pools' is a blast of tropical rhythm and recent single 'Gooey' shimmies along magnificently. Best is 'Hazey' and its east-meetswest instrumentation. An assured debut. ANDY WELCH

Alexis Taylor Await Barbarians Domino



Alexis Taylor is enjoying a productive break from Hot Chip,

making another record with iazz improvisers About Group last year and now chipping in with his second solo album. He's wiped away all traces of the day job here: 'Await Barbarians' is largely beatless and almost devoid of immediacy. It's not without charm - the needle-jump static of 'Dolly And Porter' gently driving a sweet melody; stroboscopic flickers of synth on 'Closer To The Elderly' - but too often it's just Taylor's fragile voice cooing introspective mantras over sparse electric piano. He's played everything himself but the unquarded 'Am I Not A Soldier?' finds him missing Chip 'brother' Joe Goddard. Get it together, chaps. MATTHEW HORTON

Tom Vek

Luck

There are flashes of brilliance, but the singer's third album misfires too often

Back in the mid-'00s, when indie rock was the sort of thing people would talk about in bars, the correct response to the words "Tom Vek" was "underrated". He'd found that perfect niche,

in which every member of his fanbase felt that they, uniquely, had found something special that the wider world wasn't aware of, and so constantly broadcast this to the wider world. That's why they sent out the search parties when he went missing for six years between recording his 2005 debut and his 2011 return. "Let's hope it doesn't take him another six years this time," the critics chortled in their lukewarm reviews. Well, in 2014 they've got their wish, for better or worse.

Initially, it's for better. 'How Am I Meant To Know'



proves Vek's longstanding thesis about not fixing things that ain't broke. And 'Sherman (Animals In The Jungle)' shows brilliantly why people pined for him long after the punkfunk wave he washed in on was forgotten. With a chorus that self-immolates faster than

►THE DETAILS

PRELEASE DATE June 9 ►LABEL Moshi Moshi ▶PRODUCER Tom Vek
▶LENGTH 46:50 ▶TRACKLISTING ▶1. How Am I Meant To Know ▶2. Sherman
(Animals In The Jungle) ▶3. Broke ▶4. Pushing Your Luck ▶5. Ton Of Bricks
▶6. Trying To Do Better ▶7. The Girl You Wouldn't Leave For Any Other Girl
▶8. A Mistake ▶9. You'll Stay ▶10. The Tongue Avoids The Teeth ▶11. Let's Pray
▶BEST TRACK Sherman (Animals In The Jungle)

a flamethrower in a fireworks factory, it's a hit, be it 2005, 2011 or now.

Soon enough he runs out of road and turns into Fred from Spector going through a Devo phase. Pinned awkwardly between the underground and the mainstream, Tom is as unsure as the rest of us as to what the deal is with him. He misjudges the pop and then overcompensates by grinding it up against a detuned blankness, where his disaffected mask of boredom becomes indistinguishable from good ol' fashioned boredom. 'A Mistake' is what it says. 'Trying To Do Better' isn't succeeding by much. 'Ton Of Bricks' hits you like 500g of memory foam. An inessential second act is neatly bisected by the bull-knackers-fence-caught low of 'The Girl You Wouldn't Leave For Any Other Girl', where Tom inexplicably gets out his acoustic guitar and croaks pretty much just that line until it's over, which isn't soon enough. Only at the very end, on 'Let's Pray', does his reliance on repetition become the weapon it

should be, turning the title line into one long meditation about exactly how fucked we are. It's doomy, dangerous and has a bassline that sounds like he's playing conkers with wrecking balls. 'Luck' has its moments, but in terms of defining a way forward for Vek, chance would be a fine thing.

GAVIN HAYNES

Glitterbug Dust Notown



German producer Till Rohmann's alias is a reference

to Glitterbug, Derek
Jarman's final film, put
together as a tribute by
friends after the director's
death. When considering
'Dust', the fourth Glitterbug
album, this is key – or else
it seems a deeply odd
moniker for his immersive,
borderline dour, headphonefriendly techno. Typically

running on sparse rhythms and grainy synths, it's sometimes akin to single-minded cult dance figures like Actress or Andy Stott; but Glitterbug shows even less concern for the niceties of the dancefloor, the upbeat chugger '1st Of July' being an exception. Released in the UK on Gold Panda's label, the two artists proclaim a mutual appreciation, and as long as listeners don't expect GP's pop nous, 'Dust' may reward their patience. NOEL GARDNER



Cherrytree



'Black River' represents Wolf Gang's first material since his 2011

debut album, 'Suego Faults'.
That record was a collection
of the kind of stomping
electropop that prompts
cidery bear hugs at
V Festival, but judging by
this three-song EP, Max
McElligott has spent the
interim chasing an even
bigger sound. He's turned

Wolf Gang into a four-piece featuring former Rakes drummer Lasse Petersen. and recruited U2 producer Flood. Bereft of subtlety, the title track is chestbeatingly outrageous, a drum-driven pop monster that rips off Take That and The Killers. 'Back To Life' is more palatable, deploying brass in a similar way to The Horrors' 'Still Life', and 'Last Bayou' recalls wreckheads The Big Pink. Shamelessly epic and deeply bizarre. BEN HOMEWOOD

Reviews

Bob Mould Beauty & Ruin

Merge Records



Bob Mould - hero to everyone from Dave Grohl to

Billie Joe Armstrong - can't help but remind us of his overwhelming influence. His 11th solo album opens with the Dinosaur Jr sludge of 'Low Season', harking back to the days when he

ruled the US underground with Hüsker Dü. 'I Don't Know You Anymore' is the song every pop-punk band dreams of writing, while 'The War' exists to remind fuzzy revivalists like Cheatahs who's still top of the grunge family tree. The nostalgic nods become wearier in the second half, but 'Beauty & Ruin' is still strong enough to add weight to the argument that alternative rock belongs to Bob Mould: everyone else is just borrowing it. ROBERT COOKE

House Of Spirits

Mexican Summer



"The point of forgetting is so you can live", sings The Fresh

& Onlys' Tim Cohen, and this expansive fifth record sees the San Franciscans leaving their gritty punk past behind. From dainty torch songs ('Ballerina') and soaring chamber-pop ('Animal One'), they sound about as far removed from the garage-rock scene that birthed them as they could get without starting a Little Mix covers act. There's still room for some scuzz, though: the zesty 'Hummingbird' lands at the halfway mark, a perfect pulse-quickener, and opener 'Home Is Where?' meshes it all together, veering from plaintive piano notes to full on riff-o-rama within the space of a few bars. But this is no identity crisis, it's the sound of beautiful evolution.

ROB WEBB

Clipping CLPPNG Sub Pop



This unpredictable LA hip-hop trio caught Sub Pop's

attention with 2013's 'midcity' album. 'CLPPNG' pairs Daveed Diggs' vocals with schizophrenic noise from musicians William Hutson and Jonathan Snipes, opening with 60 seconds of feedback and a noise explosion as introduction to Diggs' hyper-fast rapping over building-site beats. 'Body & Blood"s industrial clanging samples a drill and depicts a bloodthirsty woman who "has her own set of power tools". The crash of hammer against breezeblock resounds on 'Work Work' - and that's their most accessible song. But Clipping's nightmare is riveting, particularly its sweat-inducing peak 'Get Up', which uses an alarm clock as a beat underneath breakneck verses. Wake up, America. BEN HOMEWOOD

The Proper **Ornaments**



Fortuna Pop! The Proper **Ornaments** make

nostalgic pop that makes them sound like Temples' chilled-out West Coast cousins, Featuring Veronica Falls guitarist James Hoare, the London quartet have largely passed under the radar so far, but recent supports with Toy and Metronomy should help this second album cement them as serious psychpop contenders. Taking the wistful harmonies and jangling guitar tones of The Byrds and throwing in dashes of '60s cornerstones such as Love and The Zombies, the likes of highlight 'Ruby' and 'Step Into The Cold' are faithful nods to their influences. executed with enough dedication to the headmusic revivalist cause to make them far more than mere pastiche.

LISA WRIGHT



the Swedish folk duo's second album

masters the art of sophisticated sadness



however, is a blessing for fans of melodic, lushly symphonic emoting. Instead of collapsing into a heap on the bedroom floor surrounded by snotty tissues and half-eaten bars of Dairy Milk, the siblings have carefully crafted a tender batch of songs that disarm with not only

their beauty but their honesty.



Recorded at Conor Oberst's ARC Studios in Omaha with Bright Eyes' Mike Mogis who also helmed 2012's 'The Lion's Roar' - this time around a 13-piece orchestra boosts the band's sound to West End-worthy realms of drama,

THE DETAILS

▶ RELEASE DATE June 9 ▶ LABEL Columbia ▶ PRODUCER Mike Mogis ▶LENGTH 38:40 ▶TRACKLISTING ▶1. My Silver Lining ▶2. Master Pretender ▶3. Stay Gold ▶4. Cedar Lane ▶5. Shattered ▶6. The Bell ▶7. Waitress Song ▶8. Fleeting One ▶9. Heaven Knows ▶10. A Long Time Ago >BEST TRACK My Silver Lining

as on the mournful 'A Long Time Ago', which documents the end of a relationship with a profound, string-laden misery. 'Master Pretender' and 'Waitress Song' provide the chirpiest moments of these 10 tracks, yet the former undermines its own happy-clappy close harmonies as Klara sighs: "I always thought that you'd be here/But shit gets fucked up/People just disappear". All thrusting acoustics and frisky Fairport Convention-isms, the latter's bounce also betrays an impenetrable melancholy, as she sings of ditching Dumpsville to become a character from a Bruce Springsteen song: "I could move to a small town and become a waitress/ Say my name was Stacey/And I was figuring things out".

At times the sisters seem a little two-dimensional, but they show that there's more to them than a sparkling glumness with 'My Silver Lining', which has all the slinkiness of a 1960s spy-movie soundtrack, like a horny Scott Walker prowling across Jane Birkin's bedroom. Sorrow is rarely this sophisticated. LEONIE COOPER

Benny & Jolene

The heartfelt tale of an aspiring indie-folk duo rises above its flaws



Benny & Jolene is the cinematic equivalent of your favourite jumper: warm, welcoming and cosy, without being flashy or overly refined. The debut feature from young British filmmaker Jamie Adams, it relates the tried-and-tested tale of a youthful duo thrown off course by the prospect of mainstream

success. Submarine's Craig Roberts stars as the lovelorn Benny, alongside Charlotte Ritchie (essentially reprising her role as Fresh Meat posh girl Oregon), radiating awkwardly fresh-faced charm as Jolene in the face of pervy video directors, sharkish record company bosses and inter-band disasters.

Throw in an evergreen tale of unrequited love and a marvellously cringe-making record-shop signing scene and you have a film that is more Mumford & Sons' second album than Dylan going electric, to use a comparison that the film's titular indie-folk duo would surely appreciate.

Benny & Jolene is neither particularly original nor dramatic, then. But it excels in tenderness and humanity, thanks in part to some wonderful performances, notably from Roberts as Benny (basically 2005 Alex Turner if he never got the girl) and This Is England's Rosamund Hanson as endearingly clueless PR Nadia, both of whom ensure the film is lifted far above the mundane. It also helps that much of the dialogue was improvised, with the film's small cast exhibiting real chemistry.

There's comedy, too, with standout lines from "babylons"-obsessed video director Daz, and a wonderful love scene in a caravan bunkbed. These aside, though, the film deals more in gentle chuckles and rueful smiles, like Fresh Meat itself, or an episode of Friends where Ross discovers Avi Buffalo.

> It's a film that is also very well observed, from the bickering morning-TV hosts to social-media-obsessed music industry managers. The duo's rabbit-inthe-headlights television appearance, meanwhile, will resonate with anyone who has ever seen their favourite indie act tank on national TV.

Admittedly, there are a fair few holes: Benny and Jolene are supposed to have had both a hit single and album yet no-one ever seems to pay them any attention, and parts of it feel both startlingly inevitable and rather rushed. The opening, too, is clunky, looking for

all the world as if it was tacked on at the last minute in the face of rapidly approaching deadlines.

Ultimately though, this doesn't really matter: Benny & Jolene is heartfelt, engaging and very British, like the final episode of The Office or an Arctic Monkeys love song, crossed with the low-budget naturalism of US mumblecore cinema. More importantly, the film joins the small canon of great indie date movies, perfect if your paramour cares about which Gruff Rhys song soundtracks the duo's beautifully shot journey through rainy Wales. ■ BEN CARDEW



- DIRECTOR Jamie Adams >STARRING Craig Roberts, Charlotte Ritchie, Rosamund Hanson
- ▶ RELEASE DATE In cinemas now

The Pictish Trail

Secret Soundz Vol 1&2 Moshi Moshi



Trawler-chic beardie Johnny Lynch was King

Creosote's compadre in Fence Records while he was knocking off beautifully disparate albums as The Pictish Trail. This compilation of his two 'Secret Soundz' albums from 2008 and 2013 skips freely between Super Furry

Animals, Sufjan Stevens, MGMT and bits that sound like Daft Punk pissing about on toy laptops. That the vocoder electro rock of 'Secret Sound #2' can happily co-exist with the rustic, multi-harmonied alt.folk of 'All I Own', the acid pop of 'Sequels' and the rave round Bon Iver's gaff that is 'Winter Home Disco' gives you hope that one day even Nigel Farage may live peacefully next door to a Romanian.

MARK BEAUMONT

Fhloston Paradigm

The Phoenix Hyperdub



A few years back, an ambient record inspired

by sci-fi cinema was still a relatively novel premise in electronica. Lately, though, the formula has become hackneyed. However, by fusing the usual sci-fi score clichés to elements of techno, instrumental rap and Emeralds-style post-noise, producer

Fhloston Paradigm has breathed new life into the concept. This Frankenstein approach to stylistic rule-breaking dominates the Philadelphian's debut. Wether it's the collision of religious chorale and space-age pulse on 'Tension Remains' or the iazz-soul cyberpunk of 'Never Defeated', the result is always original: suffice to say 'It's All About' is R&B like you've never heard it before. JOHN CALVERT

PLAY IT AGAIN

RECENTLY RATED IN NME

Parquet Courts Sunbathing Animal

"A considered and brutal reminder that Parquet Courts aren't necessarily an accessible band. Quite deliberately. they've made it a challenge to like." (NME, May 31)

Fucked Up **Glass Boys**

"Predominantly songs about being in Fucked Up. It's navel-gazing but you could hardly call it whiny - not with Damian Abraham's trademark hellow front and centre." (NME. May 31)

Owen Pallett

In Conflict

"Pallett's fourth solo album mingles gothic strings and sci-fi gloops and glitches to create a record that sounds destined to soundtrack the 2025 coronation of King James Blake I." (NME, May 24)

Röyksopp & Robyn

Do It Again

"This mini-album adds five tracks to their previous collaborations. There's slashing techno, a big electropop moment, a classic Robyn teen-state-of-mind ballad and a winding 10-minute epic in 'Monument'." (NME, May 24)

Bis **Data Panik Etcetera**

"In defiance of a criminal lack of universal adulation, Bis just get better, harder, faster, stronger. You boggle at how formidable they might be in their dotage." (NME, May 17)





Paul Weller

Bush Hall, London Monday, May 19

The national treasure rips through his more experimental recent songs before succumbing to some dadrock and soul

It's unclear exactly what the drunk bloke in the front row is slur-shouting, but we can make an educated guess. "TAAHNCAWLDMALIIICE!" perhaps, "GAAAAHNUNDERGRAAAAHND-AH!", or the perennial "WELLUUURGH! WEEEELLUUURGH!" Whatever, it evinces a wry but weary smile from the dapper, white-haired singer onstage, and an affectionate "Shut up, mate, for fuck's sake".

We're at the first of three London club gigs, after all, to honour a grandmaster, not a prodigy. The T-shirts on the merch stand are adorned with shots of the 19-year-old behind 'In The City' and the 56-year-old behind 'Sonik Kicks' - nothing in-between - and the link is acute. Paul Weller is releasing an extensive compendium of his last 15 years of

SETLIST

▶Fast Car/ Slow Traffic ▶Wake Up The Nation

- ▶Wild Blue Yonder ▶That Dangerous Aae
- ▶Come On/Let's Go ▶From The Floorboards Up
- ▶Sea Spray ▶My Ever
- **Changing Moods**
 - ▶Aim High ▶The Attic
- ▶Going Places ▶Friday Street
- ▶Porcelain Gods ▶Above The Clouds
- ▶7 & 3 Is The Striker's Name
- ▶Peacock Suit
- ▶Start! ▶Out Of The Sinking
- ▶Andromeda ▶The Changingman

solo work, 'More Modern Classics', to mark a period as vital, passionate and groundbreaking as he's been since his Jam days. An era of krautrock and dronetronica; of piledriving politics and wildheart wisdoms; of psychedelia and psycho riff rock. 'Wild Wood'? Shut the fuck up, mate.

Most greying rockers come to the tiny, ornate Bush Hall to tone it down; Weller pumps it up. Opener 'Fast Car/Slow Traffic' burns up the bus lane as if 'David Watts' is driving, while 'Wake Up The Nation' has him decrying the screen-wiped generation with a cocky 'Queen Bitch' strut. 'That Dangerous Age' is as strident and sexy

as a fiftysomething soul crooner has no right to be and 'Come On/Let's Go' is like 'Teenage Kicks' for the Viagra-assisted.

It's a powerful display, full of confidence

and attitude; one that hammers home the rare rejuvenation of a career that had long since appeared to be sliding into trad-soul irrelevance. Just as the punks went pub rock and the new wavers went MOR, for decades Weller looked lost to his northern soul obsession, even when hoisted as the Modfather figurehead at the helm of Britpop in his 'Peacock Suit'. From the late-'90s post-Britpop slump onwards, Weller and his freshly cast brand of '60s soul rock was held up as everything 'real' about British music. Albums appeared featuring duets with Kelly Jones and Noel on drums (both are on 2002's 'Illumination') and the 10th-anniversary reissue of 'Stanley Road' arrived with Weller barely having turned a different corner. He was still

parked up in the long-stay, engine idling. Then, around 2005's 'As Is Now', his mojo staged a coup and lobbed a slew of increasingly snarly and experimental

firebombs at the grand effigy of Weller as

the ageing couple's favourite smooch-rocker. Subsequent albums '22 Dreams', 'Wake Up The Nation' and 2012's inspired and ultra-modern

'Sonik Kicks' revived Paul's punk pout and

Craig, 25, Chesterfield "It were fucking

THE VIEW FROM THE CROWD

brilliant. I've seen him loads of times. I got into him because of my dad."



Donna, 35, Welwyn Garden City "I loved it. brilliant. We got right to the

front. I was disappointed that he went off so suddenly."



Daniel, 28, Brentford "This was the smallest venue I've seen him in

and it was amazing."



Gary, 46, Stevenage "It was fantastic to get that close to him. He's a living legend." countercultural relevance and found him more intrigued and exploratory with contemporary sounds than he'd ever been. If, in 1996, Weller was showing Ocean Colour Scene how the big boys did it, now he's doing the same for Toy. Come 2014, he's a figurehead once more: the Psychpapa. Good job too with racist, homophobic and misogynistic politicians gaining ground in the UK and the vast majority of our careerist current rock bands media-trained into tight-lipped subordination - like Titanic stewards trained to tell panicking passengers they don't know enough to comment on the whereabouts of the lifeboats we need leftist loudmouths like Weller back on the frontline, leading the charge on Farage.

Tonight is short on the more mind-bending sonics of late

- no 'Kling I Klang', 'When Your Garden's Overgrown' or 'Dragonfly' - but long on drive and bite. Even pastoral pop lilt 'Sea Spray' gets added punch from a second drummer and a stout stampede through The Style Council's



Moods' - once soul

punting down canals

to – is almost *snotty*.

As the set progresses,

though, Weller relaxes

music made for

Paul Weller

...first-night nerves

"It was alright for a first one, first out of the box. It's always nerve-wracking and we've done a pretty intensive three-day rehearsal, which was good, but once you get onstage it all goes out the fucking window really."

...playing smaller shows

"I just wanted to play some gigs, to be honest. It is kind of a launch for the greatest hits thing, right, but I just wanted to play some shows. We haven't played for a long time and we've got a summer of gigs coming up, so what better way to warm up?"

...making 'More **Modern Classics'**

"I realised how much material had gone by since I did the first one and I didn't even realise 15 years had gone by. There were so many tracks, so why not. For me personally, I think there's a progression, the stuff's getting better. It's retrospective but I think it shows a sharp incline."

the pace, breaking out the wah-wah and '70s detective-theme vibe for 'Aim High' and getting decidedly tropical on 'Going Places', as if trying to surreptitiously top up Woking's most impressive tan.

Weller can't resist succumbing to the dadness in his heart, and gradually 'Riders On The Storm' keyboard riffs, jazzy interludes and tracks from the first 'Modern Classics' creep in - the country gospel epic 'Friday Street' and 'Above The Clouds', the sort of soporific soul that sets the sexagenarians swaying about their 'special moment'. The club-gig edge falters, until the psychedelic assault on 'Not Fade Away' that is '7 & 3 Is The Striker's Name' pulls it back in time for a celebratory one-two of 'Peacock Suit' and 'Start!'.

Yes, it's frustrating that Weller sees this as an opportunity to delve back into sultry soul and ponderous sludge rock in the encore rather than whacking out five or six stone-cold Jam classics, but it's right that an artist reattaining the peak of his talent should cast only occasional glances backward. Even a late-period rejuvenation has to happen from the floorboards up.

MARK BEAUMONT

Benjamin Booker Water Rats, London

Monday, May 19 At 9.30pm on a Monday, Benjamin Booker is tipsy. The 22-year-old from **New Orleans admits** it midway through his first-ever London show. "I'm way too drunk for this," he says before 'Slow Coming', a slow-burner rooted in his hometown's yearning blues. But it isn't the blues that make Rough Trade's latest signing such an exciting proposition; his biggest weapons are personal conflict and punk rock. Deafening highlight 'Have You Seen My Son' sets a lyrical battle between his religious upbringing and the temptations of rock'n'roll to dirty quitar and crashing percussion. Pogoing manically amid the feedback, Booker shows no sign of sobering up. BEN HOMEWOOD

Cheatahs London, 100 Club

Wednesday, May 21 Four months after the release of their eponymous debut, Cheatahs have become adept at honing its slacker shoegaze into swathes of noise. These are songs to sink into. whether in the fuzzedout, relentless guitars of 'Geographic' or the Dinosaur Jr-isms of 'Get Tight' - still in debt to the pedalboard, but with a more carefree spring in its step. Best of the bunch is 'Cut The Grass', which begins like something The Horrors would knock up in a drunken jam session before the stage lights purposefully cut out for an extended. impenetrable Sonic Youth-style wall of sound. It's dense and hypnotic. and although the crowd is smaller than the band really deserve, everyone is clearly sucked in whole. LISA WRIGHT

Mac DeMarco



Crowdsurfing, stage invasions and singalongs greet the Canadian slacker's golden songs

> Tonight's the night that seals it: Mac DeMarco is a phenomenon. The Canadian slacker has pulled a remarkably young crowd and there's an end-of-term party atmosphere, the side streets around the genteel Old Market thronging with fans soaking up a Brighton heatwave. Inside, the whole room starts up a celebratory singalong to the pre-show Pixies and Temptations playlist, as DeMarco and his band arrive for the summery 'Salad Days' - the perfect kick-off, given the heady atmosphere.

Straight away the first crowdsurfers appear,

SETLIST

Salad Davs ▶The Stars Keep On ▶Calling My Name ▶Blue Boy

- ▶Treat Her Better ▶Cooking Up
- Something Good ▶Passing Out Pieces
- ▶Let Her Go ▶Ode To Viceroy ▶Brother
- ▶I'm A Man ▶Let My Baby Stay
- ▶Freaking Out The Neighborhood ▶Rock And Roll
 - Night Club ▶Chamber Of
 - Reflection
- ▶Still Together ▶Unknown Legend

fans on their friends' shoulders, stage invaders kissing Mac and taking selfies of their spotlight moment. While his current album finds DeMarco worrying about his burgeoning fame and his mortality, onstage he's bounced back full of life, appreciating every moment. There's no need for the onstage nudity or inter-band snogging of the past; DeMarco has reached a level of adoration where he only needs his simple, golden songs to shine. The crowd join in with every guitar cascade of 'Freaking Out The Neighborhood' and every doo-wop holler of 'Still Together', and DeMarco dives into the throng. Getting the whole room to kneel for Neil Young tribute 'Unknown Legend', his own accidental legend continues to grow. STUART HUGGETT



'Just For A Day', was panned back in 1991 as part of a wider backlash against shoegaze, itself coined as a pejorative term to describe musicians more concerned with admiring their FX pedals than stupid stuff like, y'know, engaging with the audience and whatnot.

One reviewer compared the band's second album, 1993's 'Souvlaki', to drowning in a bath full of porridge, while their 1995 swansong 'Pygmalion' was hung out to dry by their label, Creation, who were preoccupied with their more recent signings Oasis around the time of its release.

But if Slowdive's nuanced blend of pop songcraft and post-rock experimentation was hopelessly out of step with the downward mobility of the Britpop years - the group was dissolved in 1995, with three members going on to form the more country-rock-leaning Mojave 3 - their influence has been felt in plenty of acts who followed in their wake.

SETLIST

- ▶Slowdive ▶Avalyn ▶Catch The Breeze
- ▶Crazy For You ▶ Machine Gun ▶40 Days
- ▶Blue Skied An' Clear
- ▶Souvlaki Space Station
- ▶When The Sun Hits
- **►**Morningrise ▶She Calls
- ▶Rutti ▶Alison
- ▶Golden Hair

For better or worse, the wave of introspection that began as the morning-after of the Britpop party (Radiohead, Coldplay, others we'd shudder to mention) owed plenty to Slowdive's music. More recently, Deerhunter and The Horrors post-'Strange House' have doffed a cap to their drowsy. enveloping textures.

Now 'Souvlaki' is rightly considered a classic of its time, and Slowdive have returned to critical favour. Tonight's comeback gig

- the band's second after a surprise warm-up show around the corner the night before at the 10th birthday party for Sonic Cathedral, the London-based label and club night that wouldn't even exist but for Slowdive, and which kept flying the shoegaze flag when it was still a dirty word - reportedly sold out in 90 seconds flat, but they remain a predictably low-key presence onstage. Singer and guitarist Neil Halstead, though long since relieved of his signature bowl-cut 'do, still looks like the world's most prodigiously bearded awkward teen. Touchingly, his one concession to showmanship is to praise the selection of branded mugs available to buy at the band's merch stall. On the other side of the stage, co-founding member Rachel Goswell plays throughout with a wan smile on her face, occasionally shaking a tambourine like an Elizabethan lady wafting a fan in mildly flirtatious fashion.

The songs are the thing, though: slow, immersive and ripe with ambiguity, their stately pull has not been diminished by the 20-year layoff. 'Machine Gun's translucent shimmer charts an unlikely middle ground between 'Disintegration'-era Cure and Coldplay's 'Yellow' (which surely borrowed from it), and their teased-out, electric cover of Syd Barrett's 'Golden Hair' is plain spooky. 'Souvlaki Space Station', meanwhile, hints beguilingly at dub in its echoing guitar parts - surprising, since this is admittedly some of the whitest music ever created.

THE STATELY PULL OF THEIR SONGS HAS NOT **BEEN DIMINISHED BY THE 20-YEAR LAYOFF**

Slowdive, it has to be said, aren't as fierce or avant-garde a proposition as fellow footwear-fanciers My Bloody Valentine. And if there's a criticism to be made tonight, it's that they lack the visceral qualities of their more celebrated peers, their weaker moments seeming content to drift along pleasantly where they really should soar.

We're not always as riveted as we might be, then. But there are enough great songs to ensure the lulls don't hang about for long. The Talk Talk-esque 'Rutti' (from the underrated 'Pygmalion', which prefigured 'Kid A' in its move towards abstract electronic textures) and eternal crowd-fave 'Alison' make for a great encore. But arguably it's 'When The Sun Hits' that stands out as their most purely transcendental moment, moving one fan to indulge in one of the least likely bits of crowdsurfing we've ever witnessed.

Then again, Slowdive are full of surprises like that: they might not be everyone's cup of porridge, but in their own mild-mannered, thoroughly middleclass kind of way, they remain indie-rock colossuses. ALEX DENNEY



THE VIEW FROM THE CROWD

Rebecca, 23, ondon 'It was good! It brings to mind being 14 years old for me. like a teenage angst thing."



Anna, 41, London "I saw their last gig in Toronto almost 20 years

ago! My friend actually had them round to stay at her house, they needed a place to stay. She's still friends with them! The show was like stepping back in time - plus they played 'Machine Gun', which is my favourite."



Greg, 27, London 'It was beautiful. Really nice venue, and the sound was great. Everyone just seemed really happy to be here; it was a nice atmosphere."



Jimmy, 26, London 'It was brilliant – they're one of my favourite bands

and I didn't think I'd get to see them play those songs. The only disappointment for me was that none of them had bowl haircuts any more, which was a shame.'

Swans Academy 2, Manchester

Thursday, May 22 Tonight offers further evidence that Michael Gira takes a twisted pleasure in the deafening noise his band inflict on their audiences. During the ear-splitting 'Oxygen', he starts dancing, a deranged grin creeping across his face. Like their orchestrator, the group seem relaxed, standing back as though riding along the tidal waves of 'The Apostate"s ear-mangling feedback rather than thrusting forward into the storm. New songs from the recent album 'To Be Kind', take centre stage. including a colossal 'Bring The Sun' that veers from relentless rhythmic punishment to vice-tight tension-filled breakdowns, before one final, hellopening crescendo. SIMON JAY CATLING

Juce Bermuda Triangle, **Brighton**

Monday, May 19 Tonight is only Juce's second gig, and it's impressive. Opening with funk-pop odvssev 'Braindead', the three girls shrug off their silk robes to reveal themselves as a band to be taken seriously. Tracks such as 'The Heat' boast R&Bflecked hooks, while the cover of Faith Evans' 'Love Like This' is delivered with sublime confidence. '(H)ours' is slightly disappointing, keyboardist Georgia and bassist Cherish's backing vocals drowned out and even frontwoman Chalin's voice losing some of its

impact, leaving it up to

'Call You Out' to rectify

matters with its

RHIAN DALY

summery groove.

Dot To Dot



Everyone wants a pizza the action as the one-night mini-fest hits Manchester

> Tonight is the opening night of Dot To Dot festival three multi-venue events in three UK cities. Tomorrow sees the action move to Bristol, before the festival's portable line-up ends up in Nottingham on Sunday. Right now, though, it's all about Manchester and, in particular, what Drenge are doing to the crowd at The Ritz.

In the biggest venue set aside for tonight's shows, the carnage that permeates the Loveless' brothers music is proving contagious. As Eoin and Rory barrel through the menacing punk squall of 'Bloodsports' and 'Backwaters' with primal urgency, circle-pits erupt and the writhing audience baptise each other with tossed pints.

Over at the Zoo venue, however, an initially appreciative gathering are turning against the musicians on stage. The Pizza Underground, Macaulay Culkin's pizza-centric Velvet Underground parody, end up as the day's most talked-about band. And not for the right reasons. Cue the Home Alone face.



At first, it's a hero's welcome for Culkin, who blows kisses as the audience chant "Pizza! Pizza!" and the band (including a member using a Domino's box as percussion) embark on a pun-filled set that includes 'Take A Bite Of The Wild Slice' and 'I'm Waiting For The Delivery Man'.

After 20 minutes of this, however, the joke is wearing thinner than an Italian crust, and the band know it. In desperation, they wheel out their friends and touring partners Pussyjoel, a cat-referencing Billy Joel tribute act, and Kurt Cobain'd of Nevermound, who sings the lyrics of Nirvana hits in the past tense. It's arch, it's knowing, it's... pointless because the pissed crowd drown him out with the actual words.

People begin to heckle; a bottle is hurled at Culkin's head during a kazoo solo and a female fan has to be wrestled off him by security.

All of which makes Ezra **Furman**'s set earlier in the night at the same venue appear almost mundane. "This is for anyone who doesn't like my dress!" he cries, launching into 'Tell Em All To Go To Hell' with righteous fury. Resplendent in a crimson frock, his is certainly a captivating presence as he tears through material taken mostly from last year's fifth album, 'Day Of The Dog'. He resembles a little-boy-lost one minute (on the tender 'My Zero') and a deranged serial killer the next (during the ramshackle punk of 'And Maybe God Is A Train').

All in all, it's a pretty spectacular opening night. GARY RYAN

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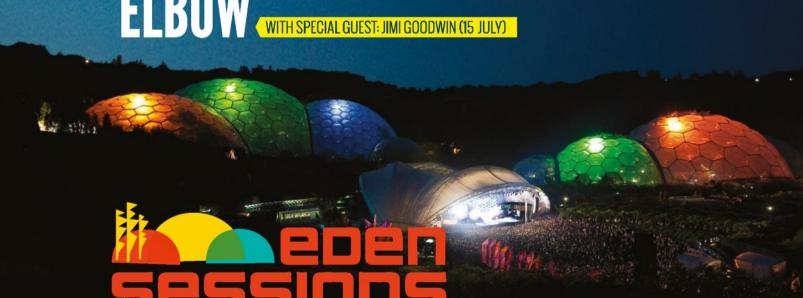
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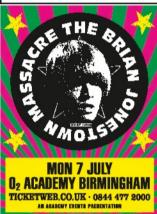
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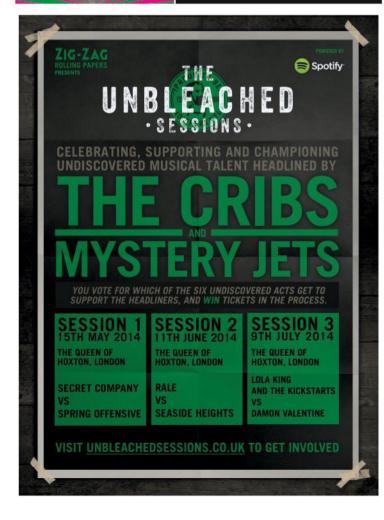


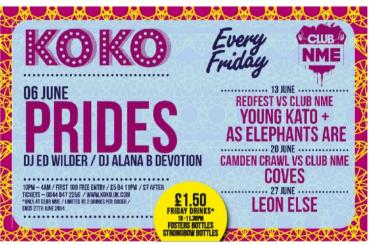
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SAT 6 SEPT - GLASSOW O₂ ACADEMY
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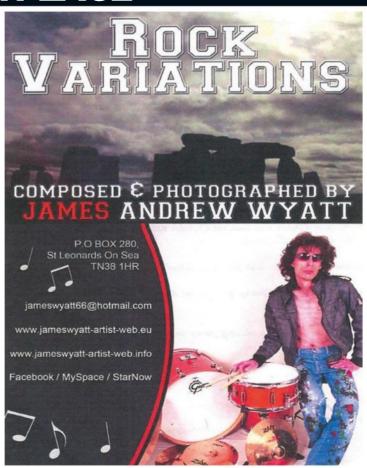




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MEGuide

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



The hottest new tickets on sale this week

Childhood

The youthful four-piece from south London unveil their long-awaited debut album 'Lacuna' this summer. They'll be crossing the Thames to celebrate its release with a one-off show in Hackney, so expect to hear a hook-heavy set with touches of psychedelia, shoegaze and northern soul.

How does the album title reflect the songs on the record? Ben Romans-Hopcraft, vocals/

guitar: "It's a word that means empty space - it's a musical term but means the same in lots of different contexts. A lot of the themes in the lyrics are this idea of some kind of

vacancy and it ties in with a lot of the principles of the album."

What was it like working with producer Dan Carey?

"It was one of the craziest recording experiences I've had. It was great. He became more like a mate, really. He challenged us to write songs in a different way, which was quite bold in many respects - writing more as a band than as individuals. You arrive at 10.30am and it'll be five minutes of chatting followed by four hours of lasers and smoke machines. There's a lot of natural mistakes on the album because we couldn't see our guitars half the time!"

What are you going to do for the album launch party in London?

"We don't want it to be another gig. We're going to try and get some DJs from my area in south London and incorporate anyone who had anything to do with the making of the record. I just want it to be more of a fun thing than a serious gig."

►THE DETAILS

▶ DATES London Oslo (August 13)

▶ SUPPORT ACTS TBC

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▶FROM alt-tickets.co.uk with 75p booking fee

Mongol Horde

"Mongol Horde is more than a band. Mongol Horde is a movement. Mongol Horde is an invasion," states the mission statement of Frank Turner's hardcore side project. Their surprise debut album, the imaginatively titled 'Album', came out recently and Turner's self-proclaimed movement will tour it later this month. ▶ DATES Birmingham The Library at The Institute (June 19), Newcastle Academy 2 (20), Leeds Cockpit (21), Bristol Fleece (22), Portsmouth Wedgewood Rooms (23), London Garage (25), Nottingham Rock City Basement (27), Manchester Academy 3 (28), Glasgow King Tut's Wah Wah Hut (29) ► SUPPORT ACTS Palehorse, Oxygen Thief

▶ PRICE £12.50; London £13.50

►ON SALE now

▶FROM seetickets.co.uk with £1.25-£1.90 booking fee; Glasgow from ticketmaster.co.uk with £2.25 booking fee

Slash

The former Guns N'Roses guitarist will pack up his top hat and shades and head to the UK for a handful of arena dates kicking off in November. His bassist Todd Kerns revealed earlier this year that Slash is working on his third solo album with producer Michael Baskette, so the shows are likely to act as previews for Slash's "sleazier, tougher and more dangerous" new material. ►DATES Manchester Phones

4u Arena (November 28), Leeds First Direct Arena (29), Birmingham LG Arena (December 1), London Wembley Arena (2), Glasgow SSE Hvdro (4)

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The Temper Trap

Since releasing their self-titled second album in 2012, Australian band The Temper Trap have been hard at work on the follow-up. Fans can get an idea of the direction the record is taking at three intimate shows in London this summer. "We're all really excited about the direction the new tracks are taking," said Dougy Mandagi, "and we can't wait to play them live to our fans for the first time." It will also be one of the first opportunities to catch the group live since guitarist Lorenzo Sillitto announced his departure last year, expressing a desire to "try new things".

- ► DATES London Oslo (July 21, 22, 23)
- SUPPORT ACTS TBC
- ▶PRICE £15
- ►ON SALE now
- ► FROM NME.COM/tickets with £1.80 booking fee

Sylvan Esso

As Sylvan Esso, former
Mountain Man musician
Amelia Meath and
Megafaun member
Nick Sanborn team
up to create gently
experimental electronica.
Their recently released
self-titled debut album
showcases the pure
emotion at the centre of
the music. The duo went
down a storm at this



year's SXSW, but they've only played a handful of UK shows so far – catch them when they return in September and October.

- ▶ DATES Brighton Green Door Store (September 30), London Oslo (October 2), Bristol Louisiana (3), Manchester Soup Kitchen (6)
- ►SUPPORT ACTS TBC
- ▶PRICE Brighton £7, London £7.50, Bristol £8.50, Manchester £6.50
- ►ON SALE now
- ► FROM NME.COM/tickets with 70p-£2.40 booking fee

The Hold Steady

The Brooklyn band embrace big riffs on their sixth album 'Teeth Dreams', which was released earlier this year and takes on a slicker, more anthemic sound than their previous output. Their latest tour promises to be full of unmissable, air-punching moments.

- ▶ DATES Portsmouth
 Wedgewood Rooms (October
 12), Birmingham O2 Academy 2
 (13), Manchester Academy 2
 (19), London KOKO (21), Bristol
 O2 Academy (22), Newcastle
 Riverside (23)
- ► SUPPORT ACTS The So So Glos (London only)
- ▶PRICE £16; London £18.50
- ►ON SALE now
- ► FROM NME.COM/tickets with £1.60-£2.40 booking fee

The Front Bottoms

Don't let New Jersey's The Front Bottoms' dodgy name put you off. The group released second album 'Talon Of The Hawk' last month, a record that including odes to marijuana, tattoos and romance.
They'll make the trip over the Atlantic at the end of summer to play those tracks in intimate venues around the country, where they'll be joined by Toronto punks Pup, who are promoting their eponymous debut record.

- ▶ DATES Birmingham Sunflower Lounge (August 26), Glasgow King Tut's Wah Wah Hut (27), Newcastle Think Tank (28), Manchester Sound Control (29), Nottingham Rock City Basement (30), Norwich Epic Studio (September 1), Brighton Bermuda Triangle (2), Southampton Joiners (3), London Garage (5)
- ► SUPPORT ACTS Pup (all dates except London)
- ▶PRICE £8; London £12.50
- ►ON SALE now
- ► FROM NME.COM/tickets with 80p-£1.25 booking fee

TOUR NEWS

The Jesus And Mary Chain

The veteran Glaswegian band have added two new dates to their stint playing classic 1985 album 'Psychocandy' in full. The trio will now play extra dates at Glasgow Barrowland (November 23) and London Troxy (24). Tickets are available now from ticketmaster. co.uk priced at £27.50.

FESTIVAL NEWS

«READING LEEDS» 2014

Reading & Leeds

Organisers for the twin festivals have confirmed 50 more names for this year's events, which are headlined by Arctic Monkeys, Queens Of The Stone Age, Paramore and Blink-182. Former My Chemical Romance frontman Gerard Way will play his first-ever solo UK shows, while rapper Schoolbov Q will also appear alongside DZ Deathrays, MØ, Drowners, The Amazing Snakeheads and The Pains Of Being **Pure At Heart. Tickets** for both festivals are available from NME.COM/ tickets, with weekend passes priced at £205 and day tickets £92.50.

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Everything worth leaving the house for this week

Pond

Their new album 'Man, It Feels Like Space Again' has one heck of a title, but annoyingly no solid release date yet. There are plans for it to come out in the second half of this year, but until then we've got two special UK live dates to tide us over – plus an appearance at London's Field Day over the weekend – as part of a wider European tour.

- ▶ DATES Manchester Academy 3 (June 9), London KOKO (10)
- ▶TICKETS Manchester £12.10; London £13.75 from NME.COM/tickets with £2.81 booking fee

Field Day

East London's annual weekend trip to the park is this year headed up by big electronic pop and iconic rock acts – namely Metronomy and Pixies – but artists lower down the bill will be blasting out some equally exciting

sounds. Fat White Family, Temples, Courtney Barnett, Warpaint, Future Islands, Jagwar Ma and Omar Souleyman will make sure that the festival maintains its rowdy, achingly cool rep.

►DATES London Victoria Park (June 7–8) ►TICKETS Weekend ticket £85.80, Saturday £54.45, Sunday £42.35 from NME.COM/ tickets with £2.81 booking fee

Arcade Fire

There are Hyde Park and Glastonbury headline shows to come, but first up are two nights at Earls Court for the Montreal fans of mirrorballs and epic choruses. As always, fancy dress isn't compulsory, but it is highly recommended.

- ► DATES London Earls Court (June 6–7)
- ►TICKETS from £25.75 from NME.COM/tickets, with £2.81 booking fee

Sharon Van Etten

The New York singersongwriter plays a one-off date in Camden in support of her fourth studio album, 'Are We There'. Expect gems from 2012's 'Tramp' too, and prepare yourself for a deliciously emotional evening. ► DATES London KOKO (June 5)
► TICKETS £15 from ticketweb.
co.uk with £1.87 booking fee

Drenge

Eoin and Rory Loveless warm up for their Download appearance with a clutch of regional gigs. Expect them to be on even more ferocious form than usual as they prepare for the metal weekender.

- ▶ DATES Oxford O2 Academy (June 4), Cardiff The Globe (5), Coventry Casbah (7)
- ►TICKETS £10 from NME.COM/ tickets with £1 booking fee

The Orwells

Messiness is guaranteed from the Chicago rock'n'rollers as they plough through the UK to spit in your face, snog your girlfriend and mosh with your mates, all while playing tracks from their new LP 'Disgraceland'.

- ▶DATES Nottingham Rescue Rooms (June 4), London Dingwalls (5), Manchester Gorilla (6)
- ►TICKETS £9 from NME.COM/ tickets, with 90p-£1 booking fee, London £11 from ticketweb. co.uk with £1.37 booking fee

EMA

Former drone rocker Erika M Anderson takes the spiky pop of her most recent album 'The Future's Void' on a mini tour of the UK.

- ▶ DATES Manchester Ruby Lounge (June 4), Leeds Brudenell Social Club (5), Bristol Colston Hall (6)
- ►TICKETS £8-£9 from NME. COM/tickets with £1 booking fee

FIVE TO SEE FOR FREE Thrills don't come cheaper than this

1. Howling Bells

Rise, Bristol
Cosy gig in
a record shop
from the noir-ish
Aussies.

▶June 8, 3pm

2. Blaue Blume

The Old Blue
Last, London
Danes bring
Smiths-esque
melodic pop
to London.

June 9, 8pm

3. Tijuana Panthers

The Hope,
Brighton
Garage pop from
the California
three-piece.

June 9, 8pm

4. Tom Vek

Rough Trade
East, London
An intimate
in-store show to
celebrate album
number three.

5. Death Pedals

The Old Blue
Last, London
Turbocharged
punk from east
London.

▶June 10, 8pm



▶June 10, 7pm

Merchandise

Carson Cox and his Floridian gang of jazzinflected experimental rockers play a special one-off show in the capital before they head back to their homeland to tour the east coast of the United States.

- ▶ DATES London Islington Assembly Hall (June 9)
- ►TICKETS £12.50 from dashtickets.co.uk with £1.50 booking fee

Jessy Lanza

Hyperdub dame Jessy Lanza squeezes in a couple of solo shows around appearances at Field Day and Manchester's sold-out Parklife Weekender. The Canadian vocalist will be bringing her R&B to Sheffield and Leeds for two unmissable gigs.

- ▶ DATES Sheffield Bungalows & Bears (June 8), Leeds Brudenell Social Club (10)
- ▶TICKETS Leeds £7 from NME.COM/tickets with 70p booking fee

Fujiya & Miyagi

The Brighton quartet have crafted a mixture of krautrock, '90s rave and disco-punk on their latest album 'Artificial Sweeteners'. They take that album and their dance-friendly back catalogue to two English cities this week.

- ►DATES Bristol Thekla (June 11), Manchester Deaf Institute (13)
- ▶TICKETS £10 from seetickets. com with £1-£1.20 booking fee



The best music on TV, radio and online this week

Joe Strummer Video Killed The Radio Star

The Pogues' Shane MacGowan contributes to this mini-documentary that examines Joe Strummer's career after quitting The Clash, including his time with MacGowan's ramshackle group and his spaghetti western film Straight To Hell.

►WATCH Sky Arts, 4am, June 9

Jehnny Beth X-Posure

As well as fronting Savages, this week's Radar columnist Jehnny Beth runs her own label, Pop Noire, and puts on live shows featuring the bands on her roster. This week, she joins John Kennedy to co-host his X-Posure show. Expect plenty of new music tips from the singer over the course of the two-hour programme.

►LISTEN XFM, 10pm, June 4

Drenge

Barclaycard Mercury Prize Sessions Eoin and Rory Loveless might

be accustomed to much grimier

surroundings but on this week's Sessions, the duo head to the swanky Hospital Club in Covent Garden to perform tracks from their self-titled debut album, released last year. Broken Bells and Bombay Bicycle Club also feature in this episode.

►WATCH Channel 4, midnight, June 4

Paul McCartney The Ronnie Wood Show

Two of rock's elder statesmen come together. Macca tells some Beatles anecdotes and shares some of

the songs that have influenced his music - both with the Fab Four and solo - with the Stones' Ronnie Wood. The pair even whip out the guitars to have a quick jam.

►WATCH Sky Arts, 3.30pm, June 5

Teleman X-Posure

The debut album of organ-led psych and swooning indie-pop from the former Pete & The Pirates members was bolstered by ex-Suede guitarist Bernard Butler on production. They'll recreate some

of the tunes from that record, like former single 'Cristina', as they take up the role of this week's Artist In Residence.

►LISTEN XFM, 10pm, June 9-10





In their first interview for a decade, Pulp talk Dan Stubbs through their story, right up to the new behind-the-scenes documentary film of their last-ever gig. Or was it...?

PHOTOS BY AMY BRAMMALL

Wathol



t's been more than a decade since Pulp sat down together for an interview, but it seems some things never change. The members of the band arrive at the appointed meeting place – a pub in London's Stoke Newington - one by one. First is keyboard player Candida Doyle, who lives round the corner, then guitarist Mark Webber, who has a bag full of flyers publicising his scholarly new book on filmmaker Gregory J Markopoulos. Bassist Steve Mackey arrives minutes later, wrapped in an unseasonal scarf, and drummer Nick Banks, the sole member of the band who still lives in Sheffield, is absent. Which just leaves one. "Jarvis is running late." says the PR as eyes roll and knowing glances are exchanged. "Just like the old days," says Webber with a chuckle.

We assemble around a table where there are five normal wooden chairs and something resembling a medieval throne. Candida, Mark and Steve take a chair each, leaving two normal chairs and the throne. "You'd better take that one," says Mackey, gesticulating at the big chair. "Or we know who will do..." Then in walks Cocker in a full tweed suit and tie, his greying beard and trademark spectacles giving him the look of a trendy professor at the Open University Christmas party. He seems grave at first, quietly depositing a suit in a bag in the corner, then walking grimly over to the table. He chooses the wooden chair.

Tonight, Cocker will premiere *Kerf* at the Barbican, a brand new work in honour of the Kronos Quartet's 40th-anniversary celebrations, described in the promotional literature as a "dialogue" for the organ, string

quartet and musical saw. Oddly, none of his bandmates know anything about it, even though they've seen each other numerous times in the past few weeks. The charming lack of interest in each other's various exploits brings to mind not a band who don't care about each others'

lives, but a family idly chatting only about what's on telly. Kerf is the kind of esoteric project Cocker has happily gravitated towards since Pulp's 2002 split, his various exploits including the curation of his own imprint for Faber, presenting his Sunday-lunchunsettling programme for BBC 6 Music and delivering occasional lectures on subjects such as lyric-writing. It's a course he seemed content with until, in 2011, he put Pulp back together for one last hurrah - a series of 20odd concerts over the course of a year that turned into 50-odd over the course of two. It wrapped up with a homecoming spectacular at Sheffield's Motorpoint Arena that was recorded for posterity in the fine - and utterly unconventional - new concert movie, Pulp:



A Film About Life, Death And Supermarkets, which premieres this Saturday with a special event in Sheffield. Only it didn't quite wrap up there: shortly after, they joined the Pitchfork Cruise for two weekends in the Caribbean, metaphorically and physically sailing off into the sunset together. "Sheffield was the last

gig on dry land, but that doesn't sound as good on the film poster," says Cocker, shifting into a loud whisper for the benefit of the film's PR. "Anyway, there were some good bands on that cruise," he adds, back at full volume.

"Were there?" Candida asks, incredulously.

Cocker snaps back: "You probably didn't bother going to see any of them! You probably just sat in your cabin having room service all the time!" If you were told Cocker and Doyle were brother and sister, you'd probably believe it.

Alongside the half-truth about documenting Pulp's final gig, the film poster also poses a question: "Dylan said *Don't Look Back*, but what happens if you

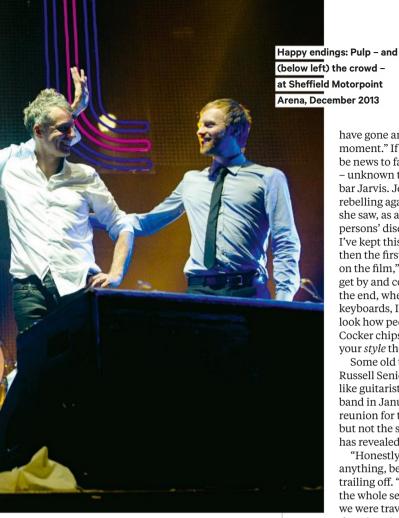
film itself, brilliant as it may be, doesn't quite answer. But having never spoken about the reason for their reunion or how it all played out. it's one that's worth

do?" It's a question that the

putting to the band. The answer, in as much as they'll give one, is this: a good time was had by all. Jarvis recalls: "It was a positive experience, and that sounds like, you know, whatever, but you could do it how you wanted to do it because you weren't trying to flog anything to anybody. So it was like heaven, playing the songs that sounded best, making sure they sounded right, that they excited us again. Because it's about trying to bring something back to life, isn't it. It's no good just trotting through them. You've got to bring them back into the land of the living."

It was Jarvis who first put in the calls to suggest getting the band back together. He'd seen Pulp's Britpop peers Blur at Hyde Park in 2009 and was pleased to note that "it wasn't all 45-year-old blokes with bald heads. There were younger people there, so it made me realise that it could be exciting." The same year, Cocker separated from his wife, Camille Bidault-Waddington, with whom he'd been living in Paris since 2003. He now splits his time between a home in London and a base in the French capital from which to see their

"We came back for the afterbirth. We rose like a phoenix" Jarvis Cocker



11-year-old son, Albert, who provided another impetus for the reunion. "I kind of thought my son must wonder why everybody else's dad does things and yet his dad is just wandering round the house all day doing fuck all," says Cocker. "I thought maybe if he saw Pulp play then he'd understand that's why daddy's lazy." The final push came from a personal tragedy: in 2010, the guitarist in Cocker's solo band, Tim McCall, died in an accident at home at the age of 37. "That affected both me and Steve very deeply because you play music with them and then they just disappear, and you've taken for granted that the option's always going to be open for you, and of course it isn't. So I think that had something to do with it as well," says Cocker, solemnly.

Not everybody was on the same page. Webber, who before the split had become so disenchanted with performing live that he took to playing with his back to the audience, hadn't so much as picked up a guitar in the intervening period. Mackey had forged a career as a producer for, among others, Palma Violets. Banks was running the family pottery business and Doyle was working as a councillor in London. Made public for the first time in the documentary, the keyboard player reveals that she has suffered from arthritis since she was a teenager, and her condition had progressed to the point where she wasn't sure if she'd even be able to play any more. "It was a real worry," she says, "but I just remember this point in rehearsals where we'd played all the songs we were going to play and I just said, 'It looks like I can do it all.' I could

have gone and partied it up at that moment." If Doyle's condition will be news to fans, it was - amazingly - unknown to her bandmates too, bar Jarvis. Joining Pulp was Doyle rebelling against having what she saw, as a teenager, as "an old persons' disease". "It's kind of funny: I've kept this thing quiet for ages and then the first time I speak about it is on the film," she says. "I managed to get by and completely deny it, but in the end, when I see myself playing keyboards, I know that it doesn't look how people normally play." Cocker chips in, warmly: "But it's your style though, isn't it?"

Some old tensions surfaced too. Russell Senior, the band's vampire-like guitarist/violinist, who quit the band in January 1997, joined the reunion for the first year's touring, but not the second. Neither party has revealed why.

"Honestly, it's best if we don't say anything, because..." says Jarvis, trailing off. "Russell doesn't fly, and the whole second year of that tour we were travelling far and wide, so that situation took care of itself,"

says Mackey, picking up the baton. "In its simplest terms, sometimes he likes playing with us, sometimes he doesn't." Happily, fellow Sheffield musician Richard Hawley always likes playing with Pulp – he joined the band to fill in for Senior, just as he had in the '90s. In fact, Hawley's affection for Pulp was greater than for his own Britpop-era outfit. Asked at the time if the experience had inspired him to reunite The Longpigs, he said he'd "rather eat [his] own shit".

In one of the few statements Cocker has previously made about the reunion, he spoke about Pulp having "unfinished business".

Asked what he meant, he explains that the group "just kind of fizzled out. When we did [2001's final Pulp album] 'We Love Life' it just seemed like everything was taking forever, which is maybe my fault for taking forever to write words or changing my mind or whatever. But it seemed like, if it was taking so long for things to come out, maybe we should just give it a rest. It wasn't like we all had a massive fight or anything – it just fizzled. So I guess that's why we came back for the afterbirth." His eyebrows arch: "We rose like a phoenix."

Produced by cult artist Scott Walker, 'We Love Life' was never a fitting postscript for a band who'd burned as brightly as Pulp. Even Jarvis' lyrics had lost some bite. It went through the motions where previous albums had been pointed and purposeful - 1994's 'His 'N' Hers' establishing them as indie-pop's pervy uncles, the following year's 'Different Class' positioning them as third runners in the Blur/Oasis race and 1998's 'This Is Hardcore' documenting the comedown from the money, fame and fast times, 'This Is Hardcore' was essentially Pulp flicking the lights on at the Britpop party, an album that put the brakes on their career so succinctly that they were still rudderless three years later. It was, Cocker still insists, an utterly necessary move. "It was either kill the beast or kill yourself. Better to kill the beast," he says.

This year, the media has marked the 20th anniversary of Britpop, largely thanks to the fact that it's 20 years since Blur's 'Parklife' and Oasis' 'Definitely Maybe' were released. At the time, the media focused largely on those two groups, but it's Pulp who've emerged victorious today: NME placed 'A Different Class' ahead of anything by Blur or Oasis in its recent 500 Greatest Albums list, while listeners to BBC 6 Music named 'Common People' the ultimate Britpop anthem – a fact that hasn't escaped Jarvis' attention.



THE DIRECTOR SPEAKS!

Florian Habicht made Pulp: A Film About Life, Death And Supermarkets. He explains how

"It's just a pity that the 'B' word is involved," he says, only half-joking. "I have to say, I think it's correct."

Where the Blur versus Oasis debate was caught up in notions of north versus south, posh versus working class, art versus industry, Pulp's genius was in uniting the outsiders, the 'Mis-Shapes' of their 1995 hit. It's a party line Cocker can still reel off with confidence.

"Common People' is not a working-class anthem, it's a different-class anthem - that's the point of the song," he says. "If you apply a label like 'common people', it shows that you don't

understand people from the demographic that the girl's talking about, because 'common' is an insult. So that's what it's about really. That's what a lot of the songs are about. Don't see people as this grey mass of a certain type.

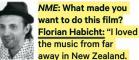
You have to give people the dignity of the fact that they're individuals. We have the right to be different, and that's all."

'Common People' is a song forged in the Britain of the mid-'90s, and one that Cocker notes would have come out differently in the Britain of 2014, ravaged by recession

and rife with inequality. Pulp's career began in earnest when they left Sheffield for the lure of London; today, it's unlikely they'd be able to afford it. "There isn't that magnet of the streets being paved with gold. There's not really any money left in the music industry," says Cocker. "That's why a lot of bands are posh now, because in a way they've got something to prove: 'I'm not just posh, I've got something to say.' That sounds like I'm being snidey about that, but they've got an impetus. The impetus behind 'Common People' was that this girl thought that people in Hackney or whatever were having a good time. I think now people are trying to gatecrash Prince Harry's party they think rich people are having a good time. It's obvious that poor people aren't having a good time, because they're too poor. Because of this widening divide, everybody wants bling now. Is that the word, bling?"

He might have a point: a clip on one of the recent Britpop programmes on BBC Four showed a bleary-eyed Pulp appearing on Saturday-morning kids' TV show Live & Kicking. Last month, Peace put in a guest turn on Sloane Square soap Made In Chelsea. The footage of Jarvis and co shuffling into Trevor and Simon's laundry showed just how far they managed to penetrate popular culture.

"I think we enjoyed that stuff at first," says Cocker. "You had to drive from a concert all through the night and then get kicked out of



I listened to 'Different Class' first and saw them in concert when I was at art school, I had a great time. I never thought one day I'd be making a film about them." How did you end up making it? "I was showing my film Love Story at the London Film Festival. My dreamy brain kicked in and I decided to invite Pulp. To my surprise, Jarvis came. I told him this idea I had for a Pulp film and he was like, 'Actually, I've had this idea as well."

What were your first impressions of Sheffield?

"It was nothing like what I imagined. It was the middle of the winter, it was freezing and grey. My first impression was quite bleak. I had dinner in a pub on that first night and the food tasted a little bit odd. I did a radio interview that night with Australia, promoting Love Story and - to put it nicely - food poisoning kicked in, live on air." It seems like you ended up developing a certain affection for the place though...

"I found people are quite shy in terms of being filmed, like in New York, but I did feel quite at home there."

A few of the band studied at film school. Was it quite intimidating shooting fellow filmmakers? "They weren't wearing their filmmaker hats when we were shooting, but Jarvis had a huge hand in the edit. Pulp have got a strong vision and they don't like to compromise, which I really respect." What can we expect from the premiere, on June 7? "There's so many people in the film and most of them will be there. I'm looking forward to seeing the band meet the people in the film." Have we heard the last of Pulp?

"Well, I hope we haven't. They're

they're going to stop creating."

all creative people, so I don't think

a van at eight in the morning and Gary Glitter's stood there in the studio. The reality of it is like, 'What the fuck's going on?' But it's that excitement of going from being a spectator of general culture to a participant in it. That

> was exciting, and if that took a visit to Trevor and Simon, so be it. It seems a bit daft now, but I think we thought it was important at the time."

It quickly spiralled out of control: the Daily Mirror branded the sleeve for 'Sorted For E's & Wizz', with its illustration of how to make a powder

wrap, a "SICK STUNT". There was bumgate at 1996's Brit Awards, when Cocker waggled his bottom at a messianic Michael Jackson and ended up in prison for the night. And there was a general feeling, you sense, that being co-opted into the mainstream sat uncomfortably with these five down-to-earth friends from Sheffield. If Britpop is a dirty word among the band now, it's partly because, in retrospect, they see it as a missed opportunity.

"It was fun before everyone got famous," says Cocker, "but like anything when it gets popular, it becomes careerist, then it becomes every man for himself. That was the sad thing about it. There was an opportunity for something to happen, a feeling of the lunatics taking over the asylum, but then everybody got too ego-tripping and any kind of unity fell away. It started off as a revolution, but it ended up as slightly overweight men with their shirts untucked watching The Italian Job while getting sucked off. That's Britpop."

Britpop's downfall, says Cocker, was nostalgia. "Britpop's biggest mistake - and culture as a whole's biggest mistake now - was to hold on to the past, so it ended up being a bit of a rehash. It was like, 'Is this what the '60s was like?' And I guess we were all guilty of it a bit, because that was the last time we'd seen some kind of big explosion. A lot of people tried to write a Kinks song; The Kinks are good, all that stuff's good, but I think that's where it fell down. Instead of trying to make a leap into something new, it tried to make it the '60s again."

It's an odd stance considering what we're here to discuss: a band of middle-aged people who reunited to revisit former glories. But the new film, directed by New Zealander Florian Habicht, is as perfect a document you could find as to why their reunion mattered to the people who matter most. It places the focus





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not on the band, but on the fans. We meet characters who could have appeared in any one of Cocker's lyrics, be they old, young, funny-looking, wise, loud or shy. The backdrop to it all is Sheffield itself: the brutal Park Hill Estate; the fish market where Jarvis worked as a teenager; and locations that popped up in Pulp songs even when the band had relocated to London, all of which were sought out by director Habicht in the process of filming.

"It was like *Challenge Anneka* or summat," Jarv explains. "I marked some places in that lyric book that I did, gave him my sister's phone number and he went up to Sheffield to see what he could find. And somehow, he managed to find these people who showed a side of Sheffield that I thought maybe didn't exist any more." This version of Sheffield is one in which every blue-rinsed pensioner claims personal knowledge of Cocker ("Yeah, I know him – Joe's lad," says one, memorably), and one in which any given person might spontaneously burst into Pulp song. It documents a background

woven deep into the fabric of the band, even if they're long estranged from the city. "Somebody pointed out to me, me personally, that I've spent half my life away from Sheffield," says Cocker, indignantly. "I don't know if the implication was, 'So why don't you fucking stop

talking about it, you wanker', but it's that thing – it's the soil that you've grown from, so it's formed your view of the world."

The Sheffield attitude, say the band, is not conducive to being a pop star, nor to being the unlikely star of a concept concert film. "People in Sheffield tend to be less likely to push themselves forward," says Mackey. Cocker agrees: "In Sheffield, people have to decide that you're alright before they'll tell you anything, and if people think you're getting ideas above your station, they'll let you know about it. The worst thing to be in Sheffield is a show-off." It must, I suggest, to a withering glare, have been difficult for Cocker. His onstage persona is built on two main elements: showing off and unifying the crowd. Watching the reunion gigs, seeing Pulp in a new era, it was more apparent than ever what a rare, mesmerising frontman he is, with his spasmodic dance moves, Joy Of Sex-style contortions and his brilliant between-song chats. It all came back in a flash, says Cocker.

"We honestly haven't talked about making a new album" Steve Mackey









"Same old rubbish, isn't it, really? I just twitch about onstage. I've always thought you have to talk to the audience, and I'm glad that I do it, but I find it excruciating to listen to. I do repeat myself occasionally, but generally it's just whatever's going through my head at that time, because I think that's important. God knows what the rest of the band think." A pause. "You really can't tell when it's going to stop," says Candida, tactfully.

The bittersweet thing about the reunion gigs is that they were always going to be finite. Part of the reason Pulp refused interviews is because they didn't want to field endless questions about whether they'll be doing a new album, they say. I ask now, and they fire glances across the table. "I know you're not going to believe this," says Mackey, "but we honestly haven't talked about it." He's right - I don't believe it. "We're just not that kind of band," says Candida. "If you step back into that environment where you want to release records, then all these complications step up," says Mackey. "A hostile environment," notes Webber. An album, it seems, is still a moot point, but there are plenty of reasons why they should. Pulp songs held a mirror to society, and stuck a pin in the pompous. In today's Britain, with the sexual deviances of '70s TV stars laid bare in the morning papers, Ukip winning voters with xenophobic scaremongering and Pulp's 'different class' being edged out of society, there's plenty to talk about. As Jarvis once so

> succinctly put it, the cunts are still running the world. "The thing with Pulp, the political bits that came out, were a surprise really; that was never really our agenda as a group," says Cocker. "We didn't think 'let's fucking sort everything out', it just kind of happened. But there is plenty to talk about these days. I was really surprised to see a Ukip poster up: him and then all the other leaders with gags on. Somebody had splashed it with red paint, which I thought was a good touch. But that is a bit scary, that they're presenting themselves as a mainstream party... I am trying to write some [solo] songs, but it's not very interesting playing music on your own. I haven't got the technical ability to do it really.'

An album might not be forthcoming, but we may not have seen the last of Pulp yet. I ask if they'll ever play together again, and Cocker returns to his loud whisper: "The thing is," he says, eyes darting, "the film company think if we say it's the last concert, more people will come to see it, but we're not so sure... we're not sure ourselves. It could be, but it also couldn't... Is that vague enough?"



The Orwells escaped the comfortable conformity of a Chicago suburb to catches up with them in London, is lead singer Mario Cuomo



chase dreams of wild rock'n'roll abandon. So why, when Rhian Daly whining about not having "a job in a store and a steady girlfriend"?

'm jaded as fuck,"
declares The Orwells'
singer Mario Cuomo
sullenly, cramming
a handful of chips
into his mouth and
gazing blankly out

at the East End bustle. Ruined by rock, at only 20. Since quietly releasing their debut album 'Remember When' on tiny US indie label Autumn Tone in 2012, the Chicago rabble-rousers have been forging themselves a reputation as cookie-cutter rock'n'roll delinguents - sex-crazed, weed-smoking, booze-imbibing tearaways - underpinned by lyrics that usually focus on getting high, getting laid, or both: "Life's always better with a handful of ass/Badass shades and a bag full of grass", goes 'Southern Comfort'. It's a classic scenario; a young band - all still in their teens except for Cuomo – setting out to devour everything that a parent and schoolfree new world has to offer: no harm done, no expectations to meet beyond having a bit of fun and letting audiences share in it.

When we meet on London's Brick Lane, 4,000 miles from their homes in middleclass Chicago suburb Elmhurst, they joke

around while chatting at ease about their hotly anticipated second album 'Disgraceland', which ditches the dirty, lo-fi sound that characterised their debut in favour of a cleaner, more polished finish at the hands of production tag team Jim Abbiss (Arctic Monkeys), Chris Coady (Beach House) and TV On The Radio's

Dave Sitek (Yeah Yeah Yeahs). It's the album they claim they always wanted to make since forming at high school in 2009 to play Strokes and Velvets covers. Later, twin brothers and rhythm section Grant and Henry Brinner and guitarist Dominic Corso sidle off to smoke a sneaky joint while second guitarist Matt O'Keefe shows off the new records he's just bought from Rough Trade East, including a classic Van Morrison LP. "I'm trying to get all the records I *need* before I start fucking around with other shit," he explains, citing The Amazing Snakeheads' album as one on his wishlist.

In direct contrast to his onstage persona, Mario is the quietest of the group; not what you'd expect from a guy who was arrested during a 2012 police raid on his family home and often snogs the women who populate the front rows of The Orwells' gigs. You'd think he'd be the one having the most fun out of

"If you want all of them, but in truth he's increasingly drained and disorientated.
"I don't know what day it is any more." he

people in power"

Mario Cuomo

"I don't know what day it is any more," he says. "Weekends don't mean shit. In high school, that's the only thing that mattered. We lived for that shit. Days kind of blend together sometimes and

you have to keep reminding yourself that it's more important to other people. Those kids don't go to every show, they don't have to sit in the fucking van. They don't have to see the same people every day. They have their own beds to go home to after the show and they just want to sit back and go, 'Wow, I had a great night.' You just have to bite your tongue and keep doing it for everybody else that wants you to keep doing it."

You could read this as bratty, immature whining; a boy barely out of his teens ungrateful for the incredible opportunities that are being passed his way. To hear him slowly drawl these complaints, though, an almost vacant look in his eyes, you get the sense that there's something not quite right. The fact that he's committed them to song suggests they're more than throwaway thoughts he's had on an off-day. Later, he'll

him more harm than good. "Another vacant room, another shitty view/I got the bathroom tile blues/A bunch of empty bottles, a bunch of could-be models/It's the best that I could do", he sings on the Black Lips-gone-pop gleam of 'Bathroom Tile Blues', illustrating the vicious

cycle of life on the road.

"When we first started touring, it was so exciting," he sighs. "You could see all these new cities. And then you go back and it's just another process. Like a businessman goes to a city and has the same meeting he had a month ago, with different people or a different topic.

"Sometimes it can get a little pointless-feeling," he continues dismally, shoving his long blond hair from his face. "You meet some pretty chick in one city, but hey, I'm gonna see her for a couple of hours and then maybe there's gonna be some cute girl in the next city but then it's like, what's the fucking point? All you want is another fucking bottle of booze to keep you interested. That's a good example, that song, of what touring can do. It can take away the sparkle and shine of the whole thing."

Boozing and shagging are recurring themes of 'Disgraceland', from opener 'Southern Comfort''s "Coke and rum, can I taste your tongue?/Won't stop sipping 'til we're both numb" to the all-night romp of 'Dirty Sheets'. Though meant to encapsulate life in the Elmhurst suburbs, it also assimilates Mario's tour frustrations to make something bleaker and more debauched than 'Remember When'.



(From left) Matt O'Keefe





It shows a marked step up in quality, too; not just in the fidelity of the album but in the songwriting itself. The band were keen to steer clear of repeating themselves and making the same record twice, eschewing some of their debut's weirder, more experimental parts ("fucked-up sounds and overloading shit with reverb and echo", according to Matt). The squeaky-clean results, they say, are an authentic representation of where The Orwells are at right now.

That evening, the band play at The Pavilion, a tiny room at the top of Brick Lane's Vibe Bar that's decorated more like a circus than a gig venue. Tickets for the show sold out in four minutes flat, and onstage, Mario looks a lot happier. He grins through his usual bouts of crowd surfing and fixes fans with deranged, menacing stares. Beforehand, though, he claims his performances are just that. "It's just an act. I've met a lot of people and usually they say, 'I thought you would be an asshole.' [Making out with girls during shows] used to piss the band off, but I don't have a girlfriend

or anything. When you're doing this sort of thing, it's hard not to see someone who's really pretty and want something to do with them. I think it's just part of a rock'n'roll show. Danny Brown got his dick sucked onstage, so I don't think it's anything shocking. It's just human nature. It's primal romance at its best."

Pulling someone out of the crowd, having a quick snog and ditching them again is far from romantic, though, and suggests that it's fine to use women for your own enjoyment or as a stage prop. "I don't care about one person like somebody with a girlfriend does," he counters. "The same goes the other way. Girls that go out and party don't have boyfriends and they feel the same way. You forget why they want something to do with you and then you don't really care, you just go with it. Being lonely sucks ass."

Mario insists he's not being disrespectful

- "[Women] are the only reason I get out of
bed," he smirks – but while his intention
might not be to reduce his female admirers
to meaningless trysts that prevent him from
being alone, his comments don't convey that.

It's not the only area where his thoughts seem more than a little contradictory, either. On former single 'Who Needs You?' he makes his feelings about America very clear, snarling, "You better pledge allegiance/You're not the only one/Listen up, forefathers, I'm not your son", over barbed garage-punk guitar hooks.

"Am I a political person? Hell no!" he answers when asked about the ideas behind the track. "That shit sucks. I hate watching the news." He says he'll never vote because it isn't "going to do shit". Instead, he says, "if you want to change something, throw a fucking rock at somebody in power. You know footage of people rioting and getting fucking maced and throwing Molotov cocktails at cops? That's the shit that's gonna do something. If you're not picking up a brick and fucking somebody up, they're not gonna change much."

Is violence really necessary to make a difference or is it just an excuse to smash

things up? Mario refuses to budge on the idea that it's the only way to change things, but also claims he's not an angry person. Yet between 'Disgraceland''s hedonistic tales are a handful of darker songs, coursing with violence. 'Norman' has him imagining a serial killer on a rampage through a party, while 'Gotta Get Down' flirts with suicide as he sings lines like "My daddy's got a 12-gauge, I hope I don't find it". 'Blood Bubbles', which first featured on the band's 'Other Voices' EP, continues that theme with another fantasised scenario, this time of a suicide pact. It's a side of the album that vents his fury in unsettling forms.

Despite Mario's nihilistic attitude, there are issues he does care about – like kids not being helped enough by America's education system to achieve their dream careers. "If you wanna be a race car driver or some shit, there should be ways to become the best at that, instead of wasting time learning about different minerals in the earth or the clouds or the fucking stars," he reasons before lamenting not being taught how to play guitar when he was still in school.

In Mario's case, it's not an issue that's held him back too much. The Orwells have just been invited to play the Late Show With David Letterman for a second time after their debut performance on the show last vear, which had music director Paul Shaffer writhing across the floor in comedy imitation of Mario. Meanwhile, 'Disgraceland' offers an accessible but exhilarating roll through teenage thrills that justifies the excitement surrounding the band. And, even though the group's ringleader might seem like he'd be happier "having a job at a store and going out and partying on the weekends, getting fucked up like vou're in high school and maybe having a steady girlfriend", there are moments that make it worthwhile for him, like when a group of teenage boys nervously approach the bench and ask, "Are you the singer in The Orwells?" before asking him to sign their Ramones vinyl and tell him how they cover 'Dirty Sheets' in their band.

During the encounter he acts blasé, but when the three boys have departed his enthusiasm grows. It's telling that, after all the talk of malaise, fatigue, transient sex and being jaded, after all of his sneers at the hollowness of the rock'n'roll 'dream', he's starting to discover the real value of band life. "Those kids cover our songs and we're in a different country. That's way more fucked up than some kid that likes us in our own town," he drawls, a hint of excitement in his voice. "Those kids are trying to learn our songs and they live across a fucking ocean. That has to say something. I just want to give people some memories that are going to make people feel good about themselves. That's the best thing you could give them."

Later... with David Letterman

Playing on one of America's biggest chat shows? No big deal, apparently...

Matt O'Keefe: "The whole process of recording and everything was such a small production. We'll do live sessions at studios sometimes and it was pretty much the same thing at Letterman.

They'll put some makeup on



you so you don't shine in the light and then you go out there, play your song and you're done. It's not a huge production like you'd expect. Nobody's running around screaming, waving clipboards and shit."

Grant Brinner: "Everybody who works for Letterman is part of a union, so they just don't give a fuck [about who you are], they just wanna get on with their jobs."

Dominic Corso: "I think it was, like, the second or third time he's [demanded an encore from a band on the show]."

Henry Brinner: "You might think we're special, but then it happened a week or two later when Future Islands played. We're not special!"

Matt: "I talked to David Letterman for a second. When he was walking offstage to get out, he walked past us. He said our performance was exactly what the show needed."

Mario Cuomo: "And then he put out his hand, grabbed a rope and a helicopter flew him out of there."



They'd never seen anything like us before, they wanted to squash it, kill it"

In her new memoir, Viv Albertine explains why her band <u>The Slits</u> were the most radical punks of the era. <u>Charlotte Richardson Andrews</u> meets her to talk reggae, revolutionary gender politics, stabbings and inter-band trysts

PHOTOS BY PENNIE SMITH

he contents page in Viv Albertine's new biography – Clothes Clothes Clothes, Music Music Music, Boys Boys Boys – contains a handy sub-list of drugs, sex and punkrock references. You'll get to read about how Albertine experimented with heroin in a hotel room with New York Dolls guitarist Johnny Thunders and gave Sex Pistols' Johnny Rotten a blowjob. Titillating, sure, but the real pleasure to be had in Albertine's spectacularly honest tome is having 1970s punk re-examined through the smart, critical gaze of a woman who lived and loved at the centre of it.

The chapters are short, written in frank present tense, and chronicle Albertine's life from north London art-school student to pioneering guitarist in her groundbreaking punk band, The Slits. Dredging up her past – difficult childhood, punk years, a post-Slits career in film and TV, cancer, IVF, divorce – was painful rather than cathartic, says Albertine,

but documenting it all felt important. It took three years to write, followed by a three-month breakdown. "I thought writing it about boys would make it fun," says Albertine. "But of course, each boy was really a conduit into a whole emotional or professional upset."

The boys include some of punk's most famed heroes: Mick Jones (longtime on/off beau), Joe Strummer (who tried to get Albertine into bed behind Jones' back), Thunders (an early amour and champion), Sid Vicious (Albertine's bandmate in pre-Pistols outfit The Flowers Of Romance), Keith Levene (early guitar mentor) and, unexpectedly, US weirdo polymath Vincent Gallo, who wrote a fan letter to Albertine, sparking a complicated romance and partly prompting her return to music in 2009, following The Slits' dissolution in '82.

Was Albertine anxious about offering up such unvarnished, frequently unflattering portraits of these revered men? "Joe Strummer is not a god," she emphasises. "He was such an ordinary

person – we all were! And we were really against building people into icons, so there was no way I was going to add to any myths." If she's honest about the folly of scene figureheads like Paul Weller, who told her he could "do with some crumpet" in his band, she is equally candid about herself. "I haven't cast myself as a sympathetic character. It was a painful thing to let go of that desire to be liked, but I couldn't write an honest book unless I did."

Boys abound, but subversive, original women are just as prominent in Albertine's story. Rambunctious Slits frontwoman Ari Up was an influential figure, the late Poly Styrene of X-Ray Spex garners a moving obituary, and the spirit of androgynous punk poet Patti Smith looms brightly. "She was someone who looked outwardly how I felt inwardly – a bit boy and a bit girl," says Albertine. "I suppose skinhead girls had done that, but they were aggressive, threatening."

Seventies Britain was a dangerous place for punks, who were routinely attacked by right-wing skinheads and teddy boys. "It was a very violent time," remembers Albertine. "Ari was stabbed, more than once. Because of how we looked, people stopped seeing us as female. It gave men an excuse to let their misogyny loose."

The fetish-inspired fashion that Vivienne Westwood sold from her famed Kings Road shop SEX - latex gear, bondage trousers - was emblematic of punk's antagonistic attitude towards sex and gender. "Sex in the '70s was hidden, shameful, All the men in respectable pinstripe suits would secretly visit prostitutes. Us wearing fetish gear in public was like they'd seen their secrets out on the street; it was terrifying for them."

Formed in 1976, The Slits embraced punk's avant-garde side, hanging out in west London squats, absorbing Rastafarian music culture and revolutionising punk on their 1979, Dennis Boyell-produced debut album 'Cut' by splicing punk with jazz, reggae and improv. But their wild, rebellious attitude meant they faced industry resistance at every level, from soundmen, promoters and A&R guys to label executives. When they supported The Clash on the 1977 White Riot tour, the bus driver had to be bribed to have them on the bus.

"A lot of it was to do with Ari and her boisterousness," says Albertine. "She was only 15, but we couldn't say that because they would've sent her back to school." Bob Marley, who'd given them a shout-out on the demo of his 'Punky Reggae Party' single, promptly nixed the line when he found out The Slits were an all-girl band. UK TV rarely gave them airtime and radio roundly ignored them. The ugly truth, says Albertine, is that the music industry was threatened by this band of young punk girls who made visionary songs about consumerism, gentrification and radical gender politics: They'd never seen anything like it before and they wanted to squash it, kill it."



"The Slits wearing fetish gear was terrifying for men"

VIV ALBERTINE

When Up and Slits bassist Tessa Pollitt spoke to punk academic Helen Reddington for her book The Lost Women Of Rock: Female Musicians Of The Punk Generation, they cited the support of their male-dominated scene as instrumental to The Slits' (relative) success.

> Albertine disagrees: "The times made it happen. Having us on the White Riot tour was good for [The Clash] because it made an interesting bill. Frankly, there was interest in us because we were a novelty."

Female punk pioneers such as Vivienne Westwood were inspirational provocateurs in a sea of pious women's libbers, who either supported The Slits for tokenistic

reasons, or shamed them for their 'Cut' cover art, which saw Albertine, Up and bassist Tessa Pollitt topless and mud-slicked. "They didn't get it. They were very po-faced back then, so humourless and narrow - which is probably why we didn't label ourselves as feminist."

The shot even divided the group, drummer Palmolive citing it as one of the reasons she left to join The Raincoats, but their music united punk aficionados for its challenging and inspiring rejig of the genre. Collaborations with

Bristolian post-punks The Pop Group and an untitled album of live tracks and home-made demos of half-formed ideas placed them firmly in the leftfield as a band willing to test the boundaries of the most unshockable of scenes.

The Slits came

to an end in 1982, a year after releasing their eco-conscious, earthbeat LP 'Return Of The Giant Slits'. Up sought refuge from '80s yuppie culture

in the jungles of Borneo and the Caribbean, while Albertine went into film, got married and settled down, before returning as a solo artist in 2009, releasing an EP, 'Flesh', on Thurston Moore's Ecstatic Peace! label. Up rebooted The Slits in 2005, roping in new members, but Albertine played just two shows with them, preferring to work on her solo material. She hopes her book will serve as a manual for young women hoping to start bands. "You squabble, you compete, you're jealous of each other - but you'd also kill for each other."

Was it challenging to open up about her complex, fraught relationship with the late Up, who once pissed onstage mid-show and would proudly show off her used, makeshift cotton wool sanitary towels? "She could be an incredibly difficult person," Albertine admits. "But if that extreme wasn't there, the other extremes wouldn't have been."

When Up passed away from cancer in 2010, she died disappointed at the lack of recognition her band had received, despite their impact on both respected underground figures such as The Raincoats' Gina Birch and Madonna, who was front row at The Slits' first New York gig in 1979. But things have shifted, says Albertine. Kurt Cobain's favourite albums list, which surfaced online in 2002, introduced the band's music to the internet generation, and Albertine hopes her biography will reassert The Slits' revolutionary contributions in popular discourse. "It's a way to set the record straight, about what we could and couldn't do."

She hears The Slits' feisty feminist legacy in the likes of Lily Allen and Warpaint, whose bassist Jenny Lee Lindberg guested on Albertine's 2012 debut solo album, 'The Vermilion Border'. There'll be more solo music from Albertine, but she's in no rush. She's toying with the idea of designing a one-off capsule fashion collection. Plus, the

autobiography is an album of sorts, each chapter a song. "I've written the book for my daughter and for other young girls. I think girls are scared to fail. Its patriarchy's way of keeping us down. Anyone who steps out of line gets ridiculed. There is a resistance to change," says Albertine wryly, "but change we must." ■

Viv Albertine on the records that informed the band

THE SLITS: INSPIRATIONS

Don Cherry Brown Rice LP

(EMI, 1975)



"The Slits were inspired by how he brought ethnic rhythms and

nursery rhymes to his songs. He was one of the first to fuse jazz and world music."

Underground I'll Be Your Mirror

(Verve, 1966)



"Ari was often compared to Nico because they both had that deep,

Germanic voice. Nico was totally nonconforming to female sterotypes. Also, it's a really beautiful, pure song."

Linton Kwesi Johnson **Forces Of Victory**

(Island, 1979)



"I was privileged to sit in on that session, which was mostly recorded in

Soho. Dennis Bovell [producer of 'Cut'] was recording it. To have white women and black men in the recording studio as equals was such a new thing."

Patti Smith **Horses**

(Arista, 1975)



"An album that lived up to the cover. The streamof-consciousness

stuff, the unbridled sensuality and sexuality - it was something you'd ever heard from a girl. Girls weren't meant to enjoy sex in the '70s."





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All the rage

NME, 3 April 1999

As they released their second album 'Come On Die Young', Mogwai set about making <u>James</u> <u>Oldham</u>'s ears bleed

PHOTOS: STEVE GULLICK/EVA VERMANDEL

aturday night, and 60 miles outside Copenhagen, Mogwai are about to wreak havoc on the town of Vordingborg. For 30 minutes they've been onstage at Stars, a glitzy cabaret barn in the middle of nowhere, and for 30 minutes the crowd have been talking incessantly. A bad mistake. Mogwai are going to cave their skulls in.

One. Two. Three. Here it comes. Four. The band crash to the floor as one, tearing at their guitar strings and stamping on their effects pedals. White light bleaches the stage. Wave upon wave of feedback floods from the amps.

Drinks shake on tables. So brutally intense is the volume that everyone remains rooted to their seat. Another mistake – because Mogwai aren't going to stop until they've cleared the place.

After 10 minutes, half the crowd have their hands over their ears; the other half have left. Time for reinforcements. Suddenly there are five people smashing drums and Mogwai's manager is rolling around on the floor punching pedals on and off with his bleeding fist. Still the minutes tick by and still the volume increases. It's now so loud it feels like they've blown a hole in your stomach.





Twenty gruelling minutes in and strobes start to flash. The band look at one another, hurl their instruments to the floor and troop silently offstage. Stars is now empty.

Copenhagen, 24 hours

later. Outside, it's minus five and snow is just beginning to settle on the pavement. We're huddled in the deserted bar of tonight's venue. Across the table, with thinning hair, a black tracksuit and a demonic glint in his eye, is Mogwai's Stuart Braithwaite. Want to know what elevates his band above every other group in Britain? Well, he's about to tell you.

"Mogwai have always had an agenda," he declares, steely-eyed. "It's simple, really. We fucking hate everyone. I really believe in my heart that we're one of the punkest bands in the world. We deny convention and stand up against the system. We haven't got safety pins through our noses or anything, but I think punk's about an attitude, a stance against bullshit.

"Originally it was against all that stuff like Uriah Heep, Yes and Emerson, Lake &

Palmer, wasn't it? Well, to me, a lot of the really pompous, pseudo-arena bands who are kicking around Britain today are just as dated and pious as those bands were in the 1970s. Frankly, they stink to death.

"I think there's been a predominant cliché that anyone under the age of 21 is

"Do you want to be cool next week or in 20 years' time?" Stuart Braithwaite

a no-brained, alcopop-guzzling moron, and if there's any political stance that Mogwai have it's that people should expect more of themselves, and others. The music industry seems to revolve around flippancy, idiocy and incompetence. That's what we're against."

Stuart gives interviews like he plays gigs. He doesn't plan on taking any prisoners.

"The thing is, if you're in a band, do you want to be cool next week or do you want to be remembered in 20 years' time? It looks to me like the last decade has been chock-a-block with short-term rubbish that no-one's going to give a shit about in the future.

"I think the bare fact alone that we shun the conformist way of writing songs is as radical as Bob Dylan alerting the southern states of America to their racist ways in the 1960s. And I honestly believe that."

Want to know why Mogwai are currently the most radical, passionate and exciting rock'n'roll band in Britain? Well, there's your answer. Not only do they make music that burns hard and lifts the

soul, but they're also one of the last bands in the country with something to say. A rare commodity indeed.

The next stage of Mogwai's plan to overturn popular culture is called 'Come On Die Young'. Like its highly successful predecessor – 1997's 'Young Team' – it takes its title from a Glaswegian street gang. That, however, is where the similarities end.

Recorded in upstate New York with Dave Fridmann, the man behind Mercury's Rev's 'Deserter's Songs', it's an album of stark, martial beauty that tears apart the traditional quiet/loud Mogwai formula, replacing unfocused blasts of noise with the icy authority of Joy Division and the dense atmospherics of The Cure's 'Seventeen Seconds'.

At the launch party for 'Young Team', Mogwai made a pact. Locked in a toilet cubicle with their trousers and pants around their ankles, they vowed that their next album had to touch the heights of either The Velvet Underground's 'White Light/



"Aye, it's a brilliant video," exclaims Stuart.
"Iggy's on this TV show, talking to a complete idiot, and suddenly he just clicks, you can see something in his eyes. He's got self-belief like I've never seen before. He just goes into this rant about the ethics of punk tock and the respect owed to people who play it.

"He describes the feeling he has onstage.

He says he can't feel anything and he doesn't want to. When I saw it, I couldn't believe it, my hair was standing on end. I mean, I can talk shit for Scotland, but I don't think I could put it as well as Iggy does."

Do you think you're as angry now as when you started?

"I think when it comes to disgust with the music industry, I've just washed my hands of it," admits Stuart, finishing his beer. "There's everyone in London moaning about how they haven't got any money to sign bands and how they're having to sack people, and then they spend this extraordinary amount of money on absolute rubbish like Gay Dad. I've kinda given up."

Do you feel you've always got to be fighting against something?

"Yes, we always have done. The whole catalyst for us making this music was because me and Dominic [Aitchison, bass] were in our bedrooms listening to Rodan and Joy Division, and then we'd step out of the door and just get hit with Sleeper and Blur.

"We were told they were the be-all and endall, and everyone had to be a happy chappy down the Barrel & Monkey. The venom we felt towards all these fucking cunts in tight Adidas T-shirts was the reason we got off our arses to do something." chaos – he finds that blood is seeping from his ears.

There's a manic atmosphere in the dressing room afterwards. Mogwai might be Britain's most uncompromising avantpunk space-rock noise band, but – unlike most revolutionaries – they're not po-faced about it. Exhilarated and excited, they've already got one eye on the future.

"I think 'Come On Die Young' is the first time we've felt proud of a record we've made, but I still don't think we've done anything as original as [My Bloody Valentine's] 'Isn't Anything' yet," smiles Stuart, modestly.

"The next thing I want to do with guitars is to become like Nick Drake. He was a visionary and I want to learn how to be like that. One thing we're not going to do is to sit on our laurels. In fact, tomorrow I'm going to go home and write four new songs that we can play on our tour. Right now, I'm ecstatic because we can do whatever the fuck we want."

He's right. By refusing to compromise, Mogwai have worked themselves into an untouchable position. And they're determined to enjoy it. When we bid them farewell a few hours later, the scene's every bit as devastated as a venue after one of their gigs.

Stuart's standing in the middle of the room trying to convince anyone who'll listen that he's the reincarnation of Jimi Hendrix. In the far corner, Barry [Burns, multi-instrumentalist], John [Cummings, guitar] and Martin [Bulloch, drums] are slumped on the floor, giggling hysterically. And the last thing we hear as we head for the door is Martin telling his bemused manger about the new skill he's just acquired:

"I'm talking through my feet. I'm talking through my ankles. When I see a dog, I say 'woof'. When I see a cat I say 'miaow'."

We wave goodbye.

"Miaow," says Martin.

Miaow, we reply. See you on the other side. ■

White Heat' or Slint's 'Spiderland', or else they wouldn't release it.

Mogwai had time to regroup and begin work on 'Come On Die Young' in 1998. Aided by the arrival of multi-instrumentalist Barry Burns, by the autumn they'd assembled its bare bones, and after much discussion it was agreed that Dave Fridmann would produce the album at his home studio in America.

"Robin Proper-Sheppard [ex-The God Machine, now frontman of Sophia] couldn't do it," recounts Stuart, "and we were scared of Steve Albini. We made our decision around the time 'Deserter's Songs' came out – we just put it on and thought, 'This sounds fine.' I remember having some phone conversations with Dave, and he just asked me how I wanted the album to sound."

What did you say?

"I said I wanted it to sound like a cross between 'White Light/White Heat', 'Pink Moon' by Nick Drake and 'Closer' by Joy Division. He just said, 'That shouldn't be a problem.' I thought, 'Oh, good – maybe he's going to teach us how to play."

In November, Mogwai flew to New York, played the CMJ music festival and then decamped to Cassadaga, a small rural town within sniffing distance of the Canadian border and notable only for its inhabitants' obsession with shooting small animals.

Away from all distractions and guided by Fridmann's steady hand, Mogwai rapidly began to fashion an extraordinary, unique record. Although it lacks the bestial fury of its predecessor, Mogwai have sacrificed none of their attitude. The key to the LP is its first track. Titled simply 'Punk Rock', it contains a two-minute sample from a bootleg Stooges video – the Mogwai manifesto delivered via the mouth of Iggy Pop.

"Cunts in Adidas tees were the reason we got off our arses"

Stuart Braithwaite

Three hours later, live

at the Pumpehuset (Copenhagen's venue of legends), the band are proving yet again exactly why so many people have succumbed to their charms. For an hour, they play a set that's as deft and fragile as any they've ever attempted, as they fuse the strung-out rock'n'roll of Spiritualized and Primal Scream with the taut post-rock atmospherics of Labradford and Low.

They end, though, in trademark style. Tonight, joined by their road crew manager and *NME*'s photographer, they launch such a vicious and lengthy assault on 'Like Herod' that when Dominic finally leaves the stage – the last to do so, after almost half an hour of

COME ON DIE YOUNG

The original NME album review



Rather splendidly, we find the 1999 model of Mogwai in tip-top condition, playing

to their strengths and praying to the good lord of sizzling effects. We have bone-crunching dynamics. We have squalls of extreme noise terror. And when they pile together three songs – 'Ex-Cowboy', 'Chocky' and 'Christmas Steps' – over the course of 29 stereo-fearing minutes, you're struck by the fact that, far from creating a soundtrack for a generation of dropouts, Mogwai's muse is infused with a sense of fevered

restlessness. Consider the way in which parts of 'Ex-Cowboy' sound like Concorde taking off, then ponder twitchily over the fact that, just as Bark Psychosis' 'Hex' album captured that essence of nocturnal carnage, so 'Come On Die Young' is too demanding, too unsettling to act as background music for the indie bourgeoisie.

Which is the whole point.
Sometimes 'CODY' is kind,
sometimes it's cruel and at many
times it is lovingly abstract. This
is Mogwai in full, frazzled,
fantastic effect. Live fast.
Play slow. Die young.

■ SIMON WILLIAMS

The Verve return with an epic new single that's set to turn them into rock'n'roll giants

Eighteen months after The Verve split up in a mess of drugs and ego clashes in the hours that followed a particularly tame performance at T In The Park, NME's Keith Cameron is on the set of the video for their comeback single. "'Cos it's a bittersweet symphony, this life", frontman Richard Ashcroft bellows on the song. "Try to make ends meet, you're a slave to money then you die". The future looks bright for the band. But first some analysis of the distant past. "A lot of things happened that only the band will ever know about," says Ashcroft. "Too much." Guitarist Nick McCabe adds that the band falling apart was a case of "too many drugs

> and not enough communication". "We had a joke," he says, smiling, "about me being the kitty litter tray. Any shit that happened to anybody, I absorbed it." But things are different now. "It's the power of the music that drew The Verve back together," says Ashcroft. "It's the addictive state of being in the greatest rock'n'roll band in the world."

IRE STARTERS

The Prodigy have been forced to change two song titles on their new album. 'The Fat Of The Land', after their American record label got scared about a backlash from prim and proper Middle America. 'Smack My Bitch Up' and 'Funky Shit' have become 'Smack My B***h Up' and 'Funky S***', and band leader Liam Howlett is not happy. "I couldn't believe what they were saying to me," he says.

HOOK, LINE AND STINKER

New Order bassist Peter Hook stoically goes ahead with a headline set at an MTV mini-festival in Rotterdam in front of just 100 fans, "That's part of the thing about being independent," he says of the situation his new band Monaco find themselves in, "It's an ethos which cuts right the way through. They couldn't believe we didn't pull the gig. Most groups would have."

REVIEWED THIS WEEK



Broadcast -'Work And Non Work'

"It wants to take you home

and show you its collection of antique wireless catalogues. You should let it."

■ STEPHEN DALTON

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

▶Police are called when Liam Gallagher has a scuffle with a youth in a hotel toilet in east London. An Oasis spokesman says: "The youths were trying to provoke a fight."

Jeff Buckley has disappeared while swimming in the Mississippi River. "At this time his body has not surfaced and he is presumed dead," says Lt Maples of the Memphis Police Department.

►Neil Young cancels his European tour and Glastonbury performance after cutting his hand slicing a ham sandwich. "I'd have eaten the thing in one piece if I'd known cutting it would jeopardise the tour," he says.



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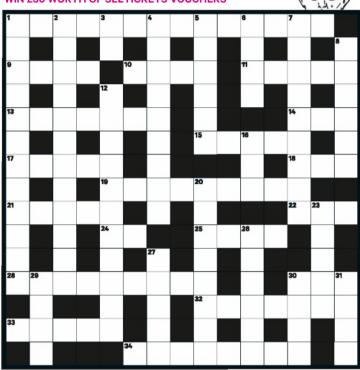
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THINK TANK

-NME CROSSWORD Compiled by TREVOR HUNGERFORD

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o

1 Heavens above, look at all those celebrities hanging around with Chris Martin (3-4-2-5)

9+10A Heavens above, look at that rarely seen great lump hanging around with Beck (4-4)

11 There might be some change coming with this new single from Peace (5)

13 Leeds five-piece whose debut was 'Council House Blues' (7)

14 Bloke getting the Elbow (3)

15 Part of the sound that came before Motown (5) 17 Reporter in the end names comeback title of

18 Green Day album that got to Number Two in Spain? (3)

Lou Reed album (5)

19 The unexpected talents lurking on George Harrison's record label or a Nickelback album (4-5)

21 (See 25 across)

22 Crafty one who was head

of The Family Stone (3) 24+31D Hip-hop act to appear at two different times of the day (2-4) 25+21A NME sensed things were wrong for

The Cribs (4-5) 28 So on tour Larrange

for Duran Duran music to be played (9)

30 One of the Sex Pistols taking part in 'The Dark Side Of The Moon' (3) 32+6D No Oasis for me

at the moment (2-5-4) 33 (See 1 down)

34 (See 5 down)

CLUES DOWN

1+20D+33A Bob Dylan song with the opening line

"Johnny's in the basement, mixing up the medicine" (12-8-5)

2 "How come I love them now how come I love them more" 1984 (5-2-5)

3 Usual start to a Regina Spektor song (2)

4 Shark pool is not really the place for Roxette (4-5)

5+34A This is the best number that REM could come up with (6-8)

6 (See 32 across)

7 See danger, perhaps, coming from Rage Against The Machine (9)

8 A personal view of a Travis performance (2-4)

12 It's only a game, but a killing was made by Drenge (11)

16 A bit of remorse from Blur (3)

20 (See 1 down)

23 "So put me on a highway and show me a sign/And take it to the ____ one more time", The Eagles (5)

26 Doesn't sound like Destiny's Child and Wyclef Jean were getting on together recording this (2-2-2)

27 After a mile get a strange look from Placebo (5)

29 A single single from Nine Inch Nails (4)

30 The Melvins didn't use all of the stage when performing this album (4)

31 (See 24 across)

MAY 3 ANSWERS

ACROSS 1+10A There Is No Other Time, 11 Settle Down, 13+22A Call Off The Search, 17 Ivy, 18 Dirge, 20 Miner, 21 Lucky Man, 25 Today, 28 Empire, 29+19A If You Leave 30 Loss 31 Hot Space 32 Beth DOWN 2 Himalayan, 3+12D Ry Cooder, 4 I See Fire, 5+14A Not Fade Away, 6 One Day Like This, 7 Hook, 8 Rent, 9 Stuck In My Teeth, 15 Haim, 16 Keen, 21 Lucille, 23 Shins, 24 Arena, 26 Doyle, 27 Youth

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QUIZ ■ Compiled by ALAN WOODHOUSE (answers on page 67)

1 Which big-selling '90s female duo were named after a Smiths single?

2 What is the only UK Number One single Paul McCartney has had as a solo act?

3 Which band are named after a short story by English novelist Angela Carter?

4 Which band's name roughly translates in English as 'fashion update'?

> 5 Which British singersongwriter's 2013 album features guest drumming from Chad Smith of

Red Hot Chili Peppers?

6 Which band considered using the name Betty Blue before settling on their current moniker?

7 In which country did TLC's Lisa 'Left Eye' Lopes die in a 2002 car accident?

8 In 1997, a young Pete Doherty was interviewed on British TV after buving which album?

9 Which American musician released a 2006 EP called 'Paris Is Burning'?

10 Which '90s band were named after a character in the hit '70s film musical Grease?

11 Which Hollywood star once fronted a band called P?

12 Which Scots indie legend produced The Cribs' 2005 album 'The New Fellas'?

13 Which British band's first, self-released EP in 2003 was called 'Nodding Acquaintance'?

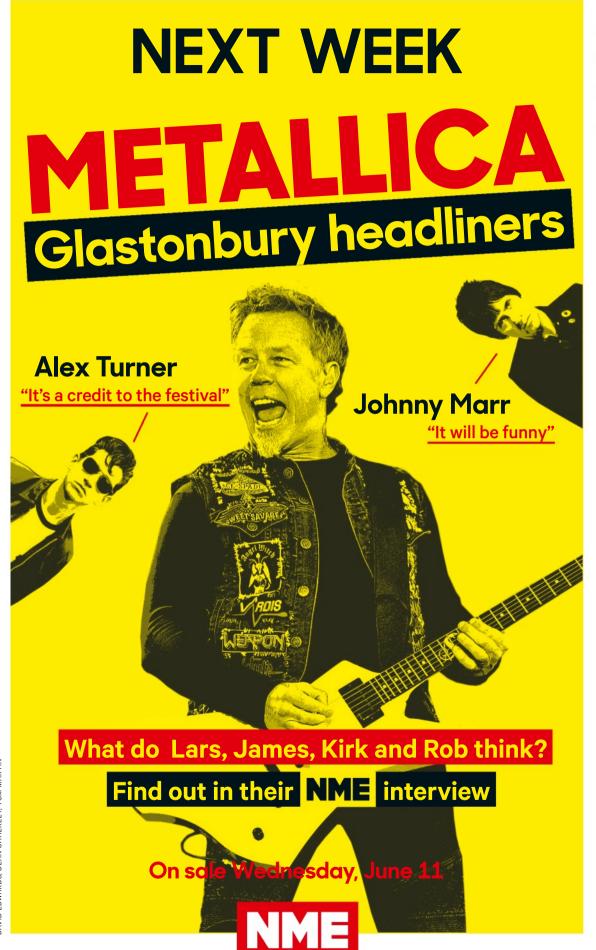
14 True or false: Damon Albarn's dad used to manage Pink Floyd.

15 Which band's 12 studio albums since 1986 have all had one-word titles?

THE NME COVER THAT **GONE AND DONE**

■ by CHRIS SIMPSONS ARTIST





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