20 SEPTEMBER 2014

NME

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EXCLUSIVE

Royal Blood

▶THEIR FIRST COVER STORY



BLOODY HELL!

Number One album. Massive sellout tour.

Meet the band giving British music a kick up the arse

The Cure

Iconic pics of the goth heroes

Kasabian

First words about their new album plans

Iceage

Big interview with the punk nihilists

"Hey hey, my my, rock'n'roll can never die" NEIL YOUNG

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COVER: JENN FIVE

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SOUNDING OFF

TELL US WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND

Answering you this week: Mike Williams

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

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BEWARE OF THE WOLF ALICE



New music was indeed the epicentre of beauty at Reading & Leeds this year, with bands in the less crowded tents creating an atmosphere as if they'd headlined Glastonbury four times. This is why *NME* is so important to those basically still student bands trying to get into the picture. *NME* is the reason I have a passion for young London-based band Wolf Alice. They seem to switch between genres, swaying in and out of indie-rock consciousness, and later ripping these massive guitar riffs in an eruption of raucous young musical hormones.

I embrace their collection of indie love songs but also feel the extent of their deep grungy intellect, which reminds me of the Yeah Yeah Yeahs. They are a beautiful band, and I have no doubt they'll only get bigger and bigger. And it's the likes of the *NME* that can push them up, build their fan base and support an absolutely shit-hot band.

Esme Humphrey, via email

Mike Williams: There's a lot of bullshit flying around about the resurgence of rock, the merits of 'real music' and how indie is a byword for antiquated irrelevance. I don't care about that guff, I just want to discover great new music, and it sounds like you do too. Wolf Alice need a few big tunes, but they're on their way to joining Royal Blood on the frontline of a new era of UK music.

WRONG IN THE ED

OK, so I know why we all hate Ed Sheeran. The fact that he is loved by so many for being 'original' is laughable. He has stolen everything he knows from the past and married it to Simon Cowell's choreographed machine to form boring, ginger, pop babies. However, what really upsets me is that Ben Howard (below) has been pushed into the same bracket as him and it is wrong *NME*, just WRONG. Due to Ben's first-album success he has been wrongly dismissed as another boring commercial act.

I think he needs more love!

His songs are emotive, passionate and experimental.

He and his band are mesmerising live. His voice and the sounds he creates with his *original* way of playing are magical. 'I Forget Where We Were' is going to be a masterpiece. I expect an album review and I expect a 10 out of 10 (although I will take an 8 or 9).

Declan Stow, via email

MW: I'm sure there's the odd kernel of tasty sweetcorn in the coiled turd that is Ben Howard's musical output, but I for one am not up for chewing on the dark stuff to find them. And hold up, what has Ed Sheeran being ginger got to do with his enduring blandness? Absolutely nothing. The middle of Ben Howard's face looks exactly the same as the middle of Butt-head's face, but that's not why he's incredibly boring. It's because he writes incredibly boring songs.



A SUEDE FAN WRITES...

Too often cast into the Britpop milieu and too often overshadowed by its more media-coveted (and inferior) peers, it is time that Suede's eponymous debut is finally recognised as the masterpiece that it is. From the opening burst of lyrics, Brett Anderson takes the listener by the hand on an emotional rollercoaster that delves deep into his most intimate thoughts, upping the stakes at every corner. Bernard Butler delivers driving riffs, breathtaking hooks and shreds his guitar throughout, leaving no doubt that he was the most capable guitarist of his generation. Mat Osman (bass) and Simon Gilbert (drums) create tangible atmospheric tension on the slow tracks and a sonic-boom rhythm wall on the fast tracks. The band throws everything they've got into this album and the results are spectacular...

James Dennison, via email

MW: James' letter banged on for another 600 words in this vein, and you've got to admire passion like that. Yup, it's a cracking album, but nowhere near as good as the daring 'Dog Man Star', which turns 20 next month. Look out for us going characteristically over the top about that in an issue soon.

FISH, LOAVES... U2 ALBUMS

So finally Bono has ascended to full God status whereby he doesn't just chill down with the Pope and vanquish the world of poverty, but he can now make shite albums appear in your iTunes out of thin air. Right on Bono, you mad, egotistical bastard!

William Stevens, via email

MW: In the '80s and '90s they put on some of the biggest, most ambitious and bombastic tours the world has ever seen. In 2014 they're spamming half a billion people and looking depressingly desperate to be relevant. The lord moves in mysterious ways. Read Mark Beaumont's thoughts on the matter on page 15.

RIP THROBERT

Just wanted to write in and pay my respects to Robert 'Throb' Young, the ex Primal Scream guitarist who died on Thursday. There's a lot of grief tourism in the world, but it's genuinely sad when such a great talent and contributor to some brilliant albums dies so young.

Amy Mann, via email

MW: Right on, Amy. Sad times all round. RIP Throb, a true rock'n'roll icon.



LOOK WHO'S STALKING

Hi, I won tickets with *NME* to go to Leeds Festival. I waited 10 hours to watch Palma Violets and I even managed to have my picture with Will and Pete from the band. Thanks *NME*!

Brigid Harrison-Draper, via email

JENN FIVE, GETTY

FRANZ FERDINAND

Includes exclusive new Franz Ferdinand cover version of Jonathan Halper's "Leaving My Old Life Behind"

LateNightTales

Franz Ferdinand

Franz Ferdinand's late night tales takes you on an eclectic journey of Soul, Funk, Folk, Reggae, Krautrock and Electronica

Featuring Paul McCartney, Can, James Brown, Serge Gainsbourg, Ian Dury and Boards Of Canada

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"A diverse mix of styles across 20 tracks" **Resident Advisor**



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ON REPEAT

NME TRACK OF THE WEEK

1. Deers
Castigadas En El Granero

Fresh from a raucous UK tour, Spanish girl band Deers have dropped yet another ramshackle anthem in the form of 'Castigadas En El Granero' ('Grounded In The Barn'). It's the first track recorded by all four Deers, multiplying the feelgood factor of 'Demo 7', which they made as a two-piece. Packed with goofy garage charm, it's hotter than the Mediterranean sun.
James Bentley, writer



2. The Cure
Hello Goodbye (feat. James McCartney)

Adding their weight to a 42-song compilation of Paul McCartney covers – 'The Art Of McCartney' – The Cure have approached The Beatles' 1967 Number One 'Hello Goodbye' with a fair helping of reverence. Macca's son James joins Bob Smith and co on keys and backing vocals for a near-facsimile of the original that nevertheless has a ragged, jangly charm of its own.
Matthew Horton, writer



3. Weezer
Cleopatra

"*Your beauty is fading, you're a broken shell*", sings Rivers Cuomo on this latest glimpse at Weezer's upcoming ninth album, 'Everything Will Be Alright In The End'. It's a feeling he no doubt knows well – Weezer have been batting off suggestions that they've lost their spark since 2001's 'Green Album'. 'Cleopatra', however, is imperious: a chugging three-minute stand of pop-rock defiance. Maybe everything really will be alright in the end.
Al Horner, Assistant Editor, NME.COM



4. Cult Of Youth
Empty Faction

Brooklyn's Cult Of Youth used to be the solo project of Sean Rogan, armed with a revolving line-up of mates on guitars, which he described as post-punk folk (there's a combination of genres to chill the soul). Rogan has enlisted a proper band for the Cult's fourth album, and judging by 'Empty Faction', they've banished all raggedy acoustic guitars in favour of Fugazi-like fury, full of agitated hi-hats and helicopter drumming behind Rogan's unintelligible, yelping call-to-arms.
Hazel Sheffield, writer



5. Zola Jesus
Go

Nika Roza Danilova, aka Zola Jesus, has compared the material on her new pop-leaning album 'Taiga' to Rihanna and Beyoncé. This lofty comparison makes more sense when you hear this mid-tempo banger. Like RiRi's 'Diamonds' or 'Partition' by Bey, 'Go' packs radio-friendly hooks but adds enough of the avant-garde grit Zola Jesus fans have come to cherish to make it more than just a tribute act.
David Renshaw, News Reporter

6. Julian Casablancas + The Voidz
Where No Eagles Fly

While much of the clattering chaos on The Voidz' forthcoming LP bears little resemblance to Julian Casablancas' work with The Strokes, 'Where No Eagles Fly' is the crossroads where the two bands briefly meet. Full of insouciantly cool basslines, shrieking vocals and sound effects out of an arcade game robbery, it's a bonkers headache of a track that can barely contain its own ideas.
Lisa Wright, writer

7. Rostam Batmanglij
Upper West Side, 1982

Brownstone buildings; autumnal leaves swooping upwards as yellow cabs rush past; a plaid-shirted boy crashes his fixie bike into a Birkin-carrying girl; it's LOVE... This short instrumental by Vampire Weekend's Rostam – the theme for *This Is Our Youth*, a Broadway play starring *Rookie* brainchild Tavi Gevinson – couldn't conjure a more New York scene if Woody Allen interrupted it by stammering about how he might die today, but probably won't.
Eve Barlow, Deputy Editor

8. Looks
Back To The Fire

London synthpop trio Looks follow up their debut single 'Everest' with 'Back To The Fire', a soaring, sticky statement of intent that takes Friendly Fires' tropical pop and aims it skywards. "*I want it, I need it/So make me your heart-shaped lover*", they urge as the euphoria builds in the background. Summer might be coming to a close but this track will keep the heat going well into winter.
Rhian Daly, Assistant Reviews Editor

9. Soak
B A Nobody

Derry's Bridie Monds-Watson called herself Soak because it's a portmanteau of 'soul' and 'folk', and the 18-year-old's first single on Rough Trade lives up to her stage name. It's a totally lovely ode to teenage ennui, as she dares us to "*risk it all for an inch of fun*" over dreamy guitars and shimmering vocal melodies. It's the sound of lying awake at 3am wondering what to do with your life, but knowing that's still kind of OK.
Nick Levine, writer

10. Wampire
The Amazing Heart Attack

After the brassy swing of 'Wizard Staff', Portland freaks Wampire have revealed another track from their second album 'Bazaar'. 'The Amazing Heart Attack' is a whizz of riffs and organ lines that sounds like Ariel Pink on fast forward. "*You don't come back from a heart attack*", they warn, sounding just as brilliantly ridiculous as a band whose co-lead singer and guitarist is named Rocky Tinder should.
Ben Homewood, Reviews Editor

storemags.com

ESSENTIAL NEW TRACKS

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11. Theophilus London
Can't Stop (feat. Kanye West)

Theophilus London is a Trinidad-born rapper who lives in Brooklyn and has second album, 'Vibes', out this month. Kanye West is the world's most gloriously ridiculous pop star and 'executive producer' for said album. On a 90-second clip of 'Can't Stop', West assists the promo campaign too, babbling about pool parties and Ralph Lauren like it's an offcut from 'The College Dropout'.

Tom Howard, Assistant Editor



12. Girlpool
Jane

Playing into a tradition crudely wrought by the likes of The Raincoats, The Shaggs, Marine Girls and K Records, Girlpool's Cleo and Harmony ply simple songs that are as effective as they are rudimentary, ominous as they are empowering. In 'Jane', a girl hits a mouthy boy in the face. He repents and Girlpool offer a lesson in not running your mouth, but never watching it either. If only life were so easy.

Laura Snapes, Features Editor



13. Tala
Black Scorpio

Tala impressed earlier this year with her excellent 'The Duchess' EP, and new song 'Black Scorpio' suggests there's plenty more to come. A chrome-plated beat knocks down doors as sleek, *Tron*-like synths and clipped vocals loop over and over in this confident blast of noise. Tala's own distinctive voice, usually an additional treat, is not present, but when the music sounds this good, who needs more?

David Renshaw, News Reporter

14. Gulf
Emitter

"*Leaving you, I know it's right but it's something that I can't do*", coo Liverpool's latest band of promise, Gulf. 'Emitter' is a warm, woozy, psychedelic wash with inflections of funk and a killer chorus. It's a lie-down-in-the-grass-in-the-sun type of song with a lovely knack for pausing and pacing. Considering they haven't even played their first gig yet, the elusive newcomers seem to have a lot more to give.

Lucy Jones, Deputy Editor, NME.COM



15. Flatbush Zombies & Trash Talk
Modern Mayhem

With a title like 'Modern Mayhem', you'd expect to find LA's grubbiest skate punks Trash Talk on typically chaotic form. However, this track from the second Converse CONS compilation, 'CONS EP Vol 2', sees them chill the fuck out and take a break from frenetic hardcore to provide a lush backdrop of stoner beats and horizontal funk chimes for New York hip-hoppers Flatbush Zombies' mellow rhymes and impassioned calls to "*open your eyes*".

Leonie Cooper, writer



JAMES MARSHALL

16. The Wytches
Darker

That 'Darker' is just a B-side shows the level the Brighton trio are operating at now. Continuing Kristian Bell's romantic confessionals, as on debut LP 'Annabel Dream Reader', the frontman sighs, "*You laugh while I continue to scream/It sounds like love to me*" before describing his pursuit over galloping drums and bass: "*I know it's not a game but I'm in it to win it*". They're already victorious.

Rhian Daly, Assistant Reviews Editor

17. Jamie T
40/40 ICU

Five years is a long time to be so silent – especially if you're a motormouth. Here, on the B-side to his single 'Zombie', Jamie T sounds like he's spitting out half a decade's worth of pent-up material: spittle-flecked words slurring out of his gob over a bouncing riff. "*I'm a bad boy!*" he barks, all swagger and charm, then he croons softly, "*The darkness hides a lot of fun/I lost it all on you*". The rogue with a heart of gold? No-one plays it better.

Ben Hewitt, writer

18. White Fence
Nero (Has A Lot To Think About)

White Fence is Ty Segall's pal and collaborator Tim Presley. His songs are high-quality, lo-fi, very '60s psych-rock-sounding and have excellent titles. His most recent album, 'For The Recently Found Innocent', was a pleasure and he returns here with an ultra-trippy track about a dodgy Roman emperor. Digital proceeds from the split seven-inch with Jack Name go to the Ariel Panero Memorial Fund, a US education charity.

Phil Hebblethwaite, writer

19. Tobias Jesso Jr
Without You

Newly signed to True Panther Sounds, Vancouver piano man Tobias Jesso Jr has a backstory that's truly intriguing, and a way with melody that's already wooed former Girls man Chet 'JR' White into working with him for a period last year. This latest track, recorded live in a busy bar in Los Angeles, is as lilting as Elton John at his 'Tiny Dancer' best, while also recalling John Lennon's more sparse-sounding solo work.

Matt Wilkinson, New Music Editor

20. Parquet Courts
This Is Happening Now

Andrew Savage sure knows how to make rubbish sound good. Released as part of Brooklyn label Famous Class' fundraising LAMC series, this new single finds the Parquet Courts frontman barking about "*feral herds of windblown trash*" that "*patrol the early hours*". This story of NYC mundanity is told over sluggish, dissonant guitar crashes, before Parquet Courts detonate a chorus that could give you whiplash. Wordy and intelligent as ever.

Ben Homewood, Reviews Editor

NME

▲ EVERYTHING THAT MATTERS IN MUSIC ■ EDITED BY DAN STUBBS



"It'll definitely be bo

Kasabian celebrate 10 years since the release of their debut album with the promise of an explosive follow-up to '48:13'

Storemags.com



Serge and Tom backstage at the Roundhouse in Camden, London

It's been a big year for Kasabian. They headlined Glastonbury, returned home for a triumphant 50,000-capacity gig at Leicester's Victoria Park, and now, backstage at London's Roundhouse, they're preparing to celebrate the 10th anniversary of their self-titled debut LP by playing the album in full as part of a mammoth two-and-a-half hour show at the iTunes festival. But this is no time for reflection. As *NME* heads into their dressing room, the band reveal that they're already thinking about the follow-up to '48:13'.

"I'm always thinking about [the next record]," Serge Pizzorno says. "As soon as a week's passed after finishing one record, I'm on to the next. I've no idea whatsoever what it's going to be like yet – this is the best bit 'cos it could go anywhere. But it'll definitely be heavy. It'll definitely be bombastic. That's what's going on in my head right now."

Explosive new material aside, the band are busy concocting ways to ensure their forthcoming five-night residency at London's O2 Academy Brixton in December will deliver something special for fans every night. "It's the best venue there is in London. I feel way more excited about playing Brixton than anywhere else, and there's something nice about playing there for a week. We can properly settle in and take over. There's a hell of a lot of songs to choose from now so we'll mix it up massively. We're definitely gonna make sure it's not the same every night."

One thing the band are in the mood for mulling over is the current state of guitar music. With Royal Blood scoring huge sales and a Number One album with their debut last month, is this a new beginning? "It's a start, but we just need more," Serge sighs. "I'm just sick of solo artists. I wanna see more bands. I just remember solo artists being dicks. I've always loved bands: there's something magical about them. That's all I want. Come on, you little fuckers – where are you?" ■ LISA WRIGHT

mbastic"

JORDAN HUGHES



Three tiny club shows and a massive gig at London's Invictus Games see the band make a triumphant return to British shores

Holy shit!

It's the Foo Fighters

"Please let me be your plus one!" cries a desperate fan by the guestlist queue as hundreds of ticketless neck-craners gather outside Brighton's Concorde 2 venue, struggling to get a glimpse of The Holy Shits. Their singer, one David Grohl, spotting them from the stage, thinks there's "like, 2,000 people trying to listen to the show" and suggests, "I'd rather be out there than in here, motherfuckers, it is hot as shit."

The Holy Shits, of course, are none other than Foo Fighters, who kicked off the first of a handful of UK club shows in advance of their headline set at the Invictus Games Olympic Park show on Sunday (September 14) with a hot and sweaty gig at the Brighton venue. After this show, they travelled to London's House Of Vans and Islington Assembly Hall on a mission to "play gigs like this pretty much every night we're here until we have to go home," yells Grohl from the stage.

We caught up with the band to find out how this mini tour came about...

You haven't played in this country for over two years. What made you decide to start off with some smaller shows?

Dave Grohl (vocals): "Well, when we decided to come over and do the Invictus Games closing ceremony, I thought, 'God, we haven't even been [in the UK] in for so long, we're only just going to do one show?' So I thought we really needed to fill up the week with some club gigs. So we picked three little venues and started rehearsing."

"MORE THAN ANYTHING WE MISS PLAYING. IT'S BEEN A WHILE"
Dave Grohl

How did you choose the setlist?

Dave: "We just blasted out as many songs as we could in rehearsal – things that we don't normally play came up. And so the setlist was a lot of stuff from the first and second records that we don't normally do. It was great. More than anything we just miss playing. It's been a while. We've been making this record for the past year, but we've only done maybe, like, three or four shows in, like, the past two or three years and we will enjoy doing this so it's hard not to [choose old songs]."

Why did you pick Brighton for your return?

Nate Mendel (bass): "We're doing a bunch of warm-up shows and we didn't want to do them all in London. We played at the Concorde 2 before, when we put out 'Echoes, Silence, Patience & Grace' [in 2007]."

Why call yourselves The Holy Shits?

Taylor Hawkins (drums): "We did a show at Firefly Festival in Delaware in June. After the set we came out and did an encore as a cover band called The Holy Shits. It's from that."

What was it like to be back playing live again?

Pat Smear (guitar): "I like that point in the touring cycle where you haven't played your songs in a long time so even a song like 'Monkey Wrench' you're like, 'Hang on, what's that next chord?' You really have to be on your toes. In a few months or whatever it'll be a whole different thing. It was a mini glimpse into being on tour. I mean, we got on a bus – it's been literally years since we were all on a bus, you know! It's great."

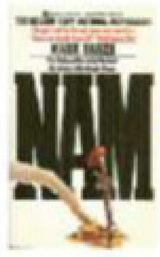
■ MARK BEAUMONT & GREG COCHRANE

MY LIFE IN A SUITCASE

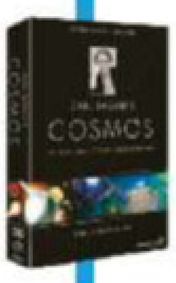
FIVE TOURING ESSENTIALS

Ryan Adams





BOOK
Nam by Mark Baker
"The band Fugazi got their name from this book. It's first-person interviews giving different perspectives on signing up to go to the Vietnam war, then actual anecdotes from the war itself. It's brutal."



BOXSET
Cosmos
"Sometimes we'll smoke a bowl and watch *Cosmos*. They've made a new series with Neil deGrasse Tyson but we watch the original with Carl Sagan."

FILM
Son Of Dracula
"We watch old black-and-white Dracula movies – including this one, which has Lon Chaney Jr as Count Alucard... that's Dracula spelt backwards. We also watch pinball documentaries."



GAMES
Draw-your-own comic books
"They're like graphic novels with empty squares you fill in. I'm writing one about a dog who's an intergalactic space pirate. It's like Rambo if he was a dog in space. He's fighting a lizard then crash-lands on this planet."

HOME COMFORT
Pinball machine
"I bring a pinball machine with me in a road case and we put it in the dressing room. I'm super, super into pinball. Right now we have a Metallica one – I have a massive collection of pinball machines."



BRINSON BANKS, REX, SOLANGE MOREIRA-YEOELL



The legendary London venue

THE HOUSE THAT JACK BUILT

JACK DANIEL'S
JACK ROCKS
THE MACBETH
NME Spotify

Four months of special events are kicking off in east London's legendary small venue The Macbeth

Last week, we headed to east London to launch Jack Rocks The Macbeth with a bang at the historic small venue The Macbeth – the life and soul of its surroundings – in a thrillingly exciting new collaboration for music fans between Jack Daniel's, *NME* and Spotify. Over the next four action-packed months, the pub will act as a hub for gig-goers to get involved in a range of events, including special, intimate sets from artists big and small.

As well as live performances in the evenings, Jack Rocks The Macbeth will also offer fans the opportunity to take part in Q&As with artists and industry insiders and get involved in workshops. Exclusive live sessions will be filmed at the venue with some of the most brilliant bands around.

"The ethos behind the venue is not to treat music as something that's too earnest or serious," explains Macbeth owner Mark Robinson. With that, the emphasis on *fun* and recklessness has already taken flight with brand new band discovery Moats, fresh from winning *NME*'s competition to play at Austin City Limits festival, taking to the stage for a celebratory launch night (September 9), as well as synthpop queen La Roux, who aired her acclaimed second album, 'Trouble In Paradise', at a rare tiny gig on Monday (September 15).

In the past The Macbeth has played host to some of the finest British talent of the last 10 years, including Metronomy, The xx and Florence + The Machine ("They're probably the biggest band I've seen come from the bottom of the bill and are now a huge international artist," Robinson recalls). Jack Rocks The Macbeth will offer music fans the opportunity to get up close and personal with more huge names in the venue's tiny surroundings over the coming months and *NME* will be right down the front bringing you all the action first.



ANDY HUGHES

La Roux played The Macbeth this week

▶Head to NME.COM/jackrocks for all the latest info, videos and news on what's happening at Jack Rocks The Macbeth

▶THE SEARCH IS ON...

Like many small venues, The Macbeth has provided support at grassroots level to its local music community but has nevertheless endured its fair share of problems, coming under threat of closure last year after property developers announced plans to build around the pub. *NME*'s search for Britain's Best Small Venue in association with Jack Daniel's is back for another year to not only raise awareness for the plight of the places that are the lifeblood of the UK's music scene, but also to celebrate the hard work that goes into them. Head to NME.COM/smallvenues now to nominate your favourite small venue and get all the latest on the campaign.

NME BRITAIN'S BEST SMALL VENUE IN ASSOCIATION WITH JACK DANIEL'S

Play with heart. Drink with care drinkaware.co.uk for the facts

TheWeek

Tired of seeing their local venues shut down, local communities are clubbing together to set up vibrant new DIY spaces



Inside Britain's DIY venue revolution

The revolution starts at home, as the adage goes. And never has this been more true than in Britain's music scene right now. Amid the gloom about some of our most treasured venues closing, there is also some good news: Britain's DIY scene is having a resurgence that is leading to a growing community of music fans clubbing together to set up new spaces on their doorsteps.

The latest, which opened earlier this month, is the new Unity Works venue in The Cribs' heartland of Wakefield. A DIY space for art and music events, it was set up by a group of 375 local residents who formed a co-op and managed to raise a staggering £4 million to purchase and renovate the Grade II-listed building, which had been derelict for 15 years.

One of the first bands to play the venue were The Cribs (Ryan Jarman, below), who last week followed up an explosive tiny show at London's The Garage with their first home-town show since 2007.



Power Lunches, London

"The Cribs helped to get the ball rolling for Unity Works," explains Dean Freeman, an organiser there. He believes the sizeable space, which has already booked in big acts such as Frank Turner and John Cooper Clarke, will give local bands something to aspire to. "It means they don't have to nip off to London or Leeds to play bigger shows, because they can do that in their own town, at Unity," says Freeman. "Now they'll have the chance to see and support bigger touring acts like The Cribs and Frank Turner right here, in their hometown. [The project] is a big achievement for Wakefield, and it'll just get bigger over the coming years."



Unity Works isn't the only example of what people power can achieve when it comes to creating DIY music venues. Co-operatives are springing up across the UK, coming together to establish alternative venues. DIY Space For London (DSFL) – a co-operative of musicians and allies – have been working to raise funds for an inexpensive, wheelchair-accessible venue since 2012. Two years of dedicated fundraising gigs have yielded £13,000; now all they are waiting for is to find an appropriate venue, which has not been easy.

Firstly, there's the problem of gentrification, where affordable public land is acquired by developers who then hike up rents. London's Astoria – a casualty of the city's ongoing Crossrail expansion project – proved that even long-established venues aren't safe, and others are vanishing at a worrying rate. The Blind Tiger in Brighton, The Peel in Surrey, The Bull & Gate in London and The Croft in Bristol have all shut up shop in recent years, while others – the 12 Bar in London, The Fleece in Bristol, Manchester's Night & Day Cafe – have had to battle to stay afloat, beleaguered by rising rents, austerity and aggressive property development.

Then there's the recent criminalisation of squatting, which has made turning disused properties into flourishing community hubs increasingly difficult. But carving out a space for a DIY venue is not impossible, says DSFL's Bryony Beynon, and there are a lot of new spaces to be optimistic about. "New spaces like JT Soar in Nottingham (above right) and Wharf Chambers in Leeds have shown us it can work, and projects like Pure Joy in Chicago – which is in the same fundraising stage as us – inspire us to keep pushing ahead."

JT Soar is a Nottingham fruit warehouse that's been turned into a rehearsal space, recording studio and all-ages gig venue. It's run by a collective that includes punk band Plaids, who were drawn to the creative freedom and autonomy that DIY venues allow. "Years of feeling awkward

BRITAIN'S BEST DIY SPACES

Unity Works WAKEFIELD
Grade II-listed building serving as a co-op-run DIY music, art and business space.

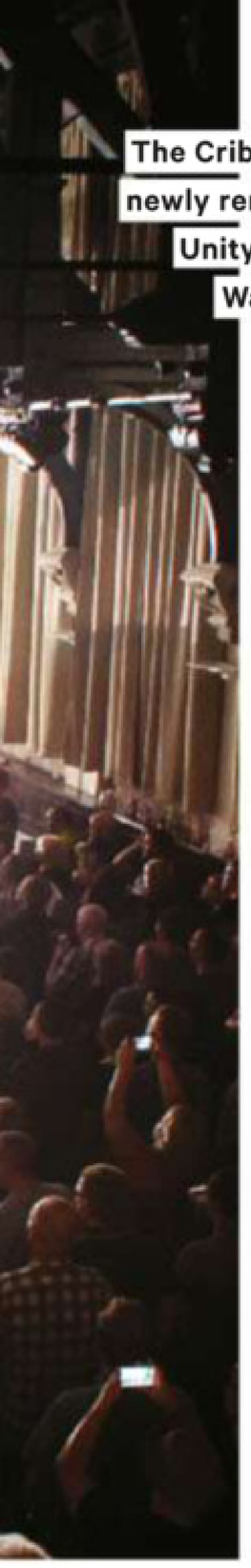
Wharf Chambers LEEDS
A bar and multi-use venue in the city centre run by a workers co-op in partnership with a members club. Membership a bargain at £1.

JT Soar NOTTINGHAM
Fruit warehouse turned non-profit, all-ages DIY music and art space.

Power Lunches HACKNEY, LONDON
Haggerston's premier DIY music space. LGBTQ-friendly.

The Lughole SHEFFIELD
A DIY practice space and venue "run by the punks, for the punks".

DANNY PAYNE, GETTY



The Cribs at the newly renovated Unity Works, Wakefield

"WE'RE CREATING A SHARED CULTURE, WITH NO BOSSES"
Bryony Beynon, DSFL

putting on shows at venues with moody bar staff, dealing with weird hidden costs and landlords breathing down our necks made us feel like, if we wanted to bring all these great bands to Nottingham, we needed to take things into our own hands somehow," explains Plaids vocalist Joe Caithness. "Recording and rehearsing [fees] keeps the place ticking over and allow us to put on the shows. Any excess money we make always goes back to the bands, unless we have a specific cost from doing the show."



JT Soar, Nottingham

Unity Works will operate on a similar basis, and the co-operative has promised to feed back any surplus profits to local creative projects, which is in keeping with the traditional ethos of DIY venues.

And with less pressure to make big profits, DIY venues will often be a hub for a variety of different artists, not just those who can shift tickets. "When people come together to create DIY spaces, they are creating a shared culture," says Beynon. "With no bosses and no bouncers, DIY Space For London will be about music, of course, but also confronting the inequalities we see every day, providing a meeting space for the many groups and community projects that work to counter them."

Power Lunches, a thriving hub for London's DIY music scene in Hackney, which has a queer- and feminist-friendly ethos, is explicitly set out to encourage people who may normally feel marginalised. And First Timers – a fundraiser for DIY Space For London hosted by the venue where every band on the bill is playing their first gig – is an example of this.

As rewarding as it can be, helping run a DIY space is still hard graft, says the venue's booking agent Andrew Milk. "It's intensely difficult to operate an independent, DIY-friendly venue in London... [But] I'm proud of Power Lunches being able to survive this long and maintain our values of not ripping anyone off."

Non-profit venues rely on the support of volunteers willing to muck in – be it by buying tickets, helping out on the door or cheering from the audience – and that's where all music fans can get involved. "Music fans are missing out when they don't get involved," says Milk. "The best music and art can be found in these very spaces." ■ CHARLOTTE RICHARDSON ANDREWS

NME BRITAIN'S BEST SMALL VENUE IN ASSOCIATION WITH JACK DANIEL'S

▶THE SEARCH FOR BRITAIN'S BEST SMALL VENUE WITH JACK DANIEL'S RETURNS! Could a DIY space be in the running this year? *NME* with Jack Daniel's is again on the hunt to crown your most beloved venue as best in Britain. See NME.COM/smallvenues for more.

THE MINI INTERVIEW



Ringo Starr
Former Beatle

You're involved in a charity campaign with designer John Varvatos. Tell us about it.
"All your readers have to do is put the peace-and-love fingers in front of their faces, take a selfie and tweet it with #peacerocks, and they're helping the David Lynch Foundation, which brings meditation to schools and to wounded heroes."

You've worn some amazing clothes over the years. Are there any you look back on and think: *that* was a mistake?
"Some days! The kaftan... that fur vest with the frilled shirt. Or Mr Fish [flamboyant '60s/'70s designer]. Sometimes you overdid it!"

People say rock's dying out – discuss.
"I've never believed that. The saving grace for me – I'm not a big fan of the boy bands dancing and that – is that there's always bands out there."

Will new bands always come through?
"I think so. I heard Kasabian doing [Radio 1's Live Lounge]. They're great. They played like the rest of us – pubs, clubs – and now they're the festival band."

You're on tour too...
"A lot of bands wanna do it to be famous. But I wanna do it to play. That was all my dream was about."
■ MATT WILKINSON

Pictures of you: The Cure's history in images

Andy Vella's book *Obscure* captures 33 years of the band



Andy Vella has been The Cure's official photographer since 1981. During his 30-year-plus association with Robert Smith and co, he's travelled with the band all over the world and captured a countless number of images of them, not to mention being the man responsible for designing the iconic artwork for classic records including 'Disintegration', 'Faith' and the 'Inbetween Days' single.

Now, he's releasing the most extensive photo-tome on The Cure yet: *Obscure* is a 160-page trawl through the most striking images of the band's storied past, charting their tale from the photoshoot for their first studio album to their triumphant Teenage Cancer Trust shows earlier this year. 'Obscure' documents everything from rare and previously unseen photographs to stills from some of the band's best-loved videos, and also includes a foreword from Robert Smith, who describes it as "dreadfully funny, terribly honest and strangely melancholic".

Speaking about the collection, Vella says: "With The Cure, I love putting images to poetry. When I photograph The Cure I am always transported somewhere new."

▶ ***Obscure* will be published by Foruli Codex on September 18. For a selection of images taken from the book, turn to page 33**

STAYING IN

THE BEST MUSIC ON TV, RADIO AND ONLINE THIS WEEK



Hear Foals' label bosses on XFM's *X-Posure*, September 18

Transgressive

X-Posure

▶**LISTEN** XFM, 10pm, September 18

The London-based independent label celebrates 10 years of discovering, encouraging and supporting some of the brightest and most exciting names in music's recent years, including Foals, Two Door Cinema Club and Australian producer Flume. Label heads Tim Dellow and Toby L will join John Kennedy in the studio to talk about their experiences and achievements, and play exclusive tracks from throughout the imprint's history.

Oh You Pretty Things

The Sound Of Style

▶**WATCH** BBC Four, 9pm, September 17

Fashion and music have always been intrinsically linked, and as London Fashion Week gets under way, the BBC celebrate the relationship between the two. *Oh You Pretty Things* kicks things off by exploring post-war style, talking to members of Small Faces and Roxy Music as well as former Carnaby Street boutique owners.

Freddie Mercury

The Tribute Concert

▶**WATCH** Sky Arts, 4pm, September 19

Five months after the Queen singer's death, his bandmates organised a tribute concert at Wembley Stadium. Experience it with this concert film, as stars join the remaining members of the band to recreate their hits, including David Bowie and Annie Lennox teaming up for a version of 'Under Pressure' and Axl Rose tackling 'We Will Rock You'.

Robert Plant

Jo Whiley

▶**LISTEN** BBC Radio 2, 8pm, September 18

The Led Zeppelin frontman continues to promote his recent album, 'Lullaby And... The Ceaseless Roar', as he stops by Radio 2 to play his new single, 'Rainbow'. The new record is his 10th solo LP and his first with backing band Sensational Space Shifters.



First Aid Kit

Later... Live With Jools Holland

▶**WATCH** BBC Two, 10pm, September 23

On their third album, 'Stay Gold', Swedish sisters Johanna and Klara Söderberg excelled at sophisticated sadness. They'll bring those elegant sounds to Jools' show this week, where they will be joined by Mary J Blige, Band Of Skulls and Marianne Faithfull, who'll duet with Anna Calvi on one track.

GOING OUT

THE BEST LIVE EVENTS THIS WEEK



Southsea Festival

Slaves (above), Happyness, Mazes, Pulled Apart By Horses and more play the one-day event.

▶**DATES** Portsmouth The Wine Vaults (September 20)

▶**TICKETS** £18 from musicglue.com with £1.80 booking fee

DZ Deathrays

Expect sweaty punk thrash and anthemic hooks as DZ tour their second album 'Black Rat'.

▶**DATES** Bedford Esquires (September 21), Norwich Epic Studios (22), Cambridge Portland Arms (23)

▶**TICKETS** £7 from NME.COM/tickets with 70p–£1.25 booking fee; Norwich £7 from ticketweb.co.uk with 95p booking fee

5 TO SEE FOR FREE

1. Honeyblood
Bungalows & Bears, Sheffield
▶September 17, 8pm

2. Post War Glamour Girls
Green Door Store, Brighton
▶September 18, 7pm

3. Slug
Pop Recs Ltd, Sunderland
▶September 20, 7pm

4. Big Sister
The Old Blue Last, London
▶September 20, 8pm

5. Ibeyi
Rough Trade West, London
▶September 22, 6pm

POONEH GHANA, DEREK BREMNER, REX

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Tickets to see the artists you love, 48 hours before general release
Text TICKETS to 2020
O2
Terms apply.

OPINION



BACK OFF, APPLE: WHY WE CAN'T LET CORPORATIONS DICTATE OUR PLAYLISTS

BY **MARK BEAUMONT**

U2 smart-bombing 'Songs Of Innocence' into your iTunes was not an act of kindness; it was the first move in turning you into a musical Appletron



They're calling it 'B-Day'. The horrific morning that, without warning, the new U2 album – measuring 658 megatwats – was dropped directly onto the iTunes of half a billion unsuspecting victims. The effects were instantaneous and devastating. Twitter was awash with casualties who'd sustained scorched eardrums and obliterated credibility. Some could barely look their devices in the retina display again; others had to have them humanely destroyed.

I was one of the lucky ones. As owner of a hard drive deemed 'inadvisable' to put within a mile of iCloud, I avoided this musical turd through the letterbox. The day the Bono-Bomb dropped, I felt impervious to the fallout, like I was strolling through a sharknado wearing a harpoon hat. But the implications of Apple's unwarranted invasion of the world's music collections didn't escape me. Only recently, when an act offered you free music, you had to register your interest in owning it, maybe buy a newspaper or hand over an invented email address. Now you have no choice. Apple have basically strapped you down and started stuffing content you don't want down your gagging, snorting gullet. Here's a U2 album – don't want it? Oops, sorry, you've already got it! And for the iPhone 7 launch? Here's the new Ed Sheeran: take it, you slags! Here's more Bastille, cram that in there too and stuff it down with a ramrod of hot steaming Nutini! It'll be like being musically waterboarded.

You can see U2's motivation. Some of the most successful acts of recent years have been those we've been forced to hear against our will – those agonising few seconds of 'Pompeii' you're so embarrassed to have anybody hear coming from your computer before the Menace Beach track you wanted to play kicks in, for instance. Nobody bought U2's 2009 record 'No Line On The Horizon', prompting Bono to conclude "the charts are broken" rather than "we've gone shit", so forcing their music on the public can only increase their global reach to potential ticket-buyers. And Apple win too: like Facebook, they're out to construct a cultural monopoly by gathering a billion credit card numbers from people signing up to iTunes for this free album, which they can then use to turn their new Apple pay-by-phone system into a $40 billion market. So who loses? We do. The poor half-a-billion schmucks who'll be intrusively plied with unwanted dross from here to eternity to justify the corporate spend to make more money to fund more intrusion.

Personally, I hope the U2 carpet-bombing wakes people up to their role as passive, acquiescent consumers in the new iWorld Order, how we're sleepwalking our way out of our freedoms of choice and privacy with every click of 'accept'. One minute we realise the iCloud hackers can get at all your celebrity sex-tapes, the next the Apple overlords are trying to brainwash us into enforced AOR pap slavery. How long before you've 'accepted' your way to a library identical to all other Appletrons? Before your iPhone starts selecting which Joanna Gruesome albums to delete – sorry, 'back up off-device' – to make room in its pitiful memory for an incoming Michael Bublé tie-in? How long will you allow your musical choices to be forcibly dictated to you by major-label budgets and tech-company branding 'geniuses' before you cry 'Enough!'? ■

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



U2 and (right) their "musical turd through the letterbox"

AS TOLD TO LOUIS PATTISON PHOTO: JENN FIVE

LOST ALBUMS #47



Women
Public Strain (2010)

Chosen by Bradford Cox, Deerhunter



"They're a Canadian group who broke up a couple of years back. I think it was a little acrimonious. They were very advanced instrumentally – they had this very clean Telecaster sound, all these weird arpeggiated chords and scales. The vocals are mixed in a way that means you can't understand a word: all reverberated. And I don't understand how they came up with those guitar parts; I couldn't come up with music like that if my life depended on it. But I think they had a bizarrely huge impact on the younger groups coming up now."

▶THE DETAILS

▶**RELEASE DATE**
September 2010
▶**LABEL** Jagjaguwar
▶**BEST TRACKS** Narrow With The Hall, Penal Colony
▶**WHERE TO FIND IT**
Still in print on Jagjaguwar, as is Women's self-titled debut
▶**LISTEN ONLINE** On Spotify

StoreMags.com



Sam French (left) and Jonathan Rado in Rado's Dream Star Studios, LA

Foxygen

After a rocky 2013, the band return with a "disorientating" double LP about UFOs and fame

"It's supposed to be like driving through LA and listening to the radio, where it starts with friendly pop songs and then you start hearing things and end up driving yourself insane," begins Foxygen guitarist Jonathan Rado, attempting to summarise the band's forthcoming third album '...And Star Power': a two-disc opus split into four 'suites' of varying states of mental unrest.

For most bands, this would seem like a brave feat. But for Foxgyen, it's just another twist in the rollercoaster ride that has marked their career. If news reports around the touring of their last album 'We Are The 21st Century Ambassadors Of Peace And Magic' in the summer of last year were anything to go by, it's a miracle this album even happened at all. After cancelling their European tour for reasons of "creative health", former band member Elizabeth Fey published a Tumblr diatribe alleging that relations between the band's two core members – Rado and frontman Sam French – were so bad that the group's publicist was forced to deny that they were breaking up. Today, though, Rado is in no mood for looking back. "It's a stupid thing that happened that really shouldn't have; I don't want to acknowledge it," he stutters when asked about the Fey affair.

"STAR POWER IS BASICALLY A ROWDIER ALTER EGO OF FOXYGEN"
JONATHAN RADO

Instead, the band are rightly looking forward to the album itself, for which they have adopted a Sgt Pepper-esque new identity: Star Power. As well as being the title of the album, it's also the name of the group and the concept of the record as a whole. "Really anybody that wants to be in it can be in Star Power. It's basically a rowdier alter ego of Foxygen," Rado says.

The record's erratic 24-song structure is the result of an intentionally piecemeal approach that saw the group cutting together sessions recorded over a two-year period into a deliberately "disorientating" final product. "The ideas warped and changed for a long time but the core was that we wanted to play with the idea of a double album with a fake band, and themes of UFOs and the idea of being famous and selling out," he states.

"The first side is called 'The Hits And Star Power Suite' and it's all the pop songs. Then the second side we've dubbed 'The Paranoid Side' and it's really raw and stripped down. The third side is called 'Scream: Journey Through Hell' and it's just noise music; it's meant to be kind of scary. And then the fourth side is called 'Hang On To Love' and it's the most uplifting thing we've ever written."

Foxygen enlisted an ever-changing group of friends and musicians to come and jam with them, including White Fence and The Flaming Lips' Steven Drozd, and have high hopes for their efforts.

"The last record was a little more polished, but what we're trying to do on this one is give people more to listen to than just a friendly pop song; we're making a record for everybody, not just people that like '60s pop music." He pauses and laughs. "It's our attempt at making something more accessible." ■ LISA WRIGHT

▶THE DETAILS

- **TITLE** ...And Star Power
- **RELEASE DATE** October 13
- **LABEL** Jagjaguwar
- **PRODUCER** Foxygen
- **RECORDED** Various times and locations throughout 2013 and 2014
- **TRACKS** *I. The Hits And Star Power Suite* Star Power Airlines, How Can You Really, Coulda Been My Love, Cosmic Vibrations, You & I, Star Power I: Overture, Star Power II. Star Power Nite, Star Power III: What Are We Good For, Star Power IV: Ooh Ooh; *II. The Paranoid Side* I Don't Have Anything/ The Gate, Mattress Warehouse, 666, Flowers, Wally's Farm, Cannibal Holocaust, Hot Summer; *III. Scream: Journey Through Hell* Cold Winter/ Freedom, Can't Contextualise My Mind, Brooklyn Police Station, The Game, Freedom II, Talk; *IV. Hang On To Love* Everyone Needs Love, Hang
- **JONATHAN RADO SAYS** "When we were 15 we wrote an album about aliens. Now we've made another album about being abducted by aliens. Maybe we'll do it every 10 years..."

CARA ROBBINS

ANATOMY OF AN ALBUM



"MY VIEW OF IT WAS SO INTERTWINED WITH OTHERS' REACTIONS"

Billy Corgan



THIS WEEK...

Smashing Pumpkins: Adore

As Billy Corgan prepares the reissue of his band's fourth album, we look back at a record influenced by death, divorce and a heroin overdose

WORDS: BEN PATASHNIK PHOTO: PHOTOSHOT

THE BACKGROUND

Even after the critical high point of 1993's 'Siamese Dream' and the hugely successful 1995 follow-up 'Mellon Collie And The Infinite Sadness' (worldwide sales of 12 million), Chicago's Smashing Pumpkins had a lot to do to keep alt.rock relevant at a time when it was threatening to degenerate into the pernicious thuggery of nu-metal. But rather than turning up the bombast, Billy Corgan, the band's creative force, went in a much more intimate and electronic-led direction. Inspired in part by his divorce, the death of his mother and the departure of powerhouse drummer Jimmy Chamberlin after a heroin overdose in 1996, 'Adore' marked a turning point for Smashing Pumpkins.

◀ STORY BEHIND THE SLEEVE

Corgan's then-girlfriend, Ukrainian-born Yelena Yemchuk, who had been involved with the videos for the singles from 'Mellon Collie...', is credited with the art direction of 'Adore'. Compared to the whimsy of 'Mellon Collie...', the gothic darkness of the main image was a signpost to the bleakness within.

FIVE FACTS

1 As well as a drum machine – which is what the band had used in their earliest incarnation – three drummers appear on various tracks: Beck's Joey Waronker, Filter's Matt Walker and Soundgarden/Pearl Jam's Matt Cameron.

2 'For Martha', the only track on the album to feature Matt Cameron, was recorded as a tribute to Corgan's mother and was captured in a single take.

3 The title was meant to be a play on the words 'a door', indicating that thanks to the new sounds contained within, the album could be seen as a whole new entry point to the band's music.

4 Rick Rubin produced one song, 'Let Me Give The World To You', which was subsequently left off the album. It was re-recorded for 2000's 'Machina II/The Friends & Enemies Of Modern Music'.

5 This is the last Pumpkins album that bassist D'arcy Wretzky would complete. In 1999 she was replaced by Hole's Melissa Auf der Maur during sessions for follow-up 'Machina/The Machines Of God'.

LYRIC ANALYSIS

"It's you that I adore/ You'll always be my whore" – 'Ava Adore'

The first lines of the album's first single dealt plainly with Corgan's painful divorce from museum artist Christine Fabian, whom he had married in 1993.

"Twilight fades/ Through blistered Avalon/The sky's cruel torch/On aching Autobahn" – 'To Sheila'

Criticised for relying on oblique imagery and sixth-form poetic licence throughout 'Mellon Collie...', Corgan peppered the lyrics of 'Adore' with concrete references, which had the effect of making them even more unsettling.

"Mother I'm tired/ Come surrender my son/Time has ravaged on my soul/ No plans to leave but still I go" – 'Once Upon A Time'

Much of 'Adore' deals with fatigue and the desire to give up, which is hardly surprising considering the significance of the people Corgan lost in the run-up to the record's release.

WHAT WE SAID THEN

"There are certain styles of music that are, beyond argument, just plain stupid. The man-machine music of the '80s for one. Goth is another. 'Adore' is monstrously overlong and miraculously never cracks a smile. Truly, it's like E never happened." Steve Sutherland, *NME*, May 30, 1998

WHAT WE SAY NOW

A heartbreakingly raw depiction of a band and a man on the brink of utter collapse, 'Adore' contains a real trove of delights. It might not have the widescreen heft that made Smashing Pumpkins college-rock darlings, but its minimalist tenderness makes it one of those rare records that improves every year.

FAMOUS FAN

"Smashing Pumpkins were everything I ever wanted from a rock band."
Gerard Way

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"I love 'Adore', but for a while my opinion of the record was so intertwined with people's reactions to it at the time."
Billy Corgan, 2014

THE AFTERMATH

'Adore' was seen as a commercial failure next to the gigantic sales of its predecessors, and it signalled the beginning of the revolving door policy for members of the band who weren't Billy Corgan. Its 2000 follow-up, 'Machina/The Machines Of God', did little to arrest the decline, even with Chamberlin back in the fold.

▶THE DETAILS

▶RECORDED 1997–98 **▶RELEASE DATE** June 2, 1998 **▶LENGTH** 73:25 **▶PRODUCERS** Billy Corgan, Flood, Brad Wood **▶STUDIOS** Sunset Sound and The Village Recorder, both Los Angeles; Chicago Recording Company; various other Chicago studios **▶HIGHEST UK CHART POSITION** 5 **▶WORLDWIDE SALES** More than 3 million **▶SINGLES** Ava Adore, Perfect **▶TRACKLISTING** ▶1. To Sheila ▶2. Ava Adore ▶3. Perfect ▶4. Daphne Descends ▶5. Once Upon A Time ▶6. Tear ▶7. Crestfallen ▶8. Appels + Oranjes ▶9. Pug ▶10. The Tale Of Dusty And Pistol Pete ▶11. Annie-Dog ▶12. Shame ▶13. Behold! The Night Mare ▶14. For Martha ▶15. Blank Page

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NEWS DESK



QUOTE OF THE WEEK

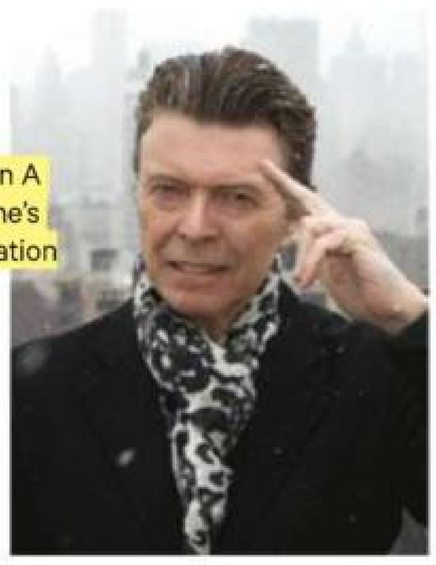
"If I had a pound for every time a journalist called me a hobbit I could buy enough bullets to round them up and disfigure the lot of them"

Tom Clarke of The Enemy writes a fierce comeback to journalists who have insulted his looks

THE NUMBERS

2

New David Bowie songs – 'Sue (Or In A Season Of Crime)' and 'Tis A Pity She's A Whore' – available on new compilation



18

Number of months Foals are planning to disappear for after headlining Bestival earlier this month

1 billion

The number of times Calvin Harris' music has been streamed on Spotify. A new record for a British male solo artist.

$100m

Amount Apple reportedly paid to U2 to give their new album 'Songs Of Innocence' away for free to 500m iTunes users

WHO THE FUCK ARE...



GoGo Penguin

They're the little-known jazz act whose second album 'v2.0' is included in the shortlist for this year's Mercury Prize alongside nominees including Damon Albarn and Royal Blood.

Tell me more...

The three-piece band consist of pianist Chris Illingworth, double-bassist Nick Blacka and drummer Rob Turner. The group are named after a stuffed penguin Grant bought for £60 while drunk.

Will they win?

Not likely. No jazz artists have ever won the Mercury and currently GoGo Penguin's odds are 16/1.

+ GOOD WEEK +



The Replacements

The US punk band returned to *The Tonight Show* after being banned from the New York studio it's filmed in following a chaotic performance on *Saturday Night Live* in 1986. The band performed 'Alex Chilton' from 1987's 'Pleased To Meet Me'.

– BAD WEEK –



The Cockpit

The Leeds venue has shut its doors forever after 20 years in business. Owners of the Yorkshire pub thanked "everyone who came to watch your favourite bands, danced, stagedived, crowdsurfed, found your life partner" there. RIP.

IN BRIEF

Born in the VOD

Bruce Springsteen will appear in the next series of crime-drama *Lilyhammer* alongside E Street Band mate Steven Van Zandt. The Boss will reportedly play a mortuary owner in the third series of the Netflix show.

The record maker

Bestival is now in the record books as the owner of the world's biggest disco ball. It measures 10.33 metres in diameter and was raised at the start of Chic's finale set at the Isle Of Wight festival.

▶Find these stories and more on NME.COM

By royal appointment

Those worried that music is becoming too posh will be pleased to hear that Chris Martin was joined in the recording studio by Prince Harry as he recorded the official Invictus Games anthem, based on William Ernest Henley's 19th-century poem *Invictus*.

Official RECORD STORE Chart

TOP 40 ALBUMS SEPTEMBER 14, 2014



NEW 01 **MAD** — **MAD** GEOMA

Though newcomers to the pop world, having formed in 2013, UK boyband MAD top the Official Record Store Chart with their debut full-length release. Described as "One Direction meets Busted", the trio were discovered individually in videos posted to Facebook.

NEW	2	Lullaby And... The Ceaseless Roar	**Robert Plant** EAST WEST
▼	3	Royal Blood	**Royal Blood** WARNER BROS
NEW	4	Ryan Adams	**Ryan Adams** COLUMBIA
NEW	5	El Pintor	**Interpol** SOFT LIMIT
NEW	6	Live At The Rainbow '74	**Queen** VIRGIN
NEW	7	The Physical World	**Death From Above 1979** FICTION
NEW	8	Crush Songs	**Karen O** CULT
▼	9	In The Lonely Hour	**Sam Smith** CAPITOL
NEW	10	A New Nature	**Esben & The Witch** NOSTROMO
▲	11	Wanted On Voyage	**George Ezra** COLUMBIA
▼	12	X	**Ed Sheeran** ASYLUM
NEW	13	At Best Cuckold	**Avi Buffalo** SUB POP
▼	14	The Whole Story	**Kate Bush** RHINO
▼	15	Manipulator	**Ty Segall** DRAG CITY
▲	16	LP1	**FKA Twigs** YOUNG TURKS
▼	17	Annabel Dream Reader	**The Wytches** HEAVENLY
▼	18	Blood	**Pulled Apart By Horses** BEST OF THE BEST
▼	19	If You Wait	**London Grammar** METAL & DUST
NEW	20	The Frantic Four's Final Fling	**Status Quo** UMC
▼	21	The Day's War	**Lonely The Brave** HASSLE
▼	22	Great Divide	**Twin Atlantic** RED BULL
▼	23	Jungle	**Jungle** XL
▼	24	Stars	**Collabro** SYCO MUSIC
▼	25	Creation	**Pierces** POLYDOR
▼	26	AM	**Arctic Monkeys** DOMINO
▼	27	Caustic Love	**Paolo Nutini** ATLANTIC
▼	28	World Peace Is None Of Your Business	**Morrissey** HARVEST
NEW	29	A New House	**Deacon Blue** MEDIUM WAVE
▲	30	Stay Gold	**First Aid Kit** COLUMBIA
NEW	31	Whorl	**Simian Mobile Disco** ANTI
NEW	32	Pure Adulterated Joy	**Morning Parade** SO
▼	33	Primitive And Deadly	**Earth** SOUTHERN LORD
▼	34	Lost In The Dream	**The War On Drugs** SECRETLY CANADIAN
▼	35	The Motown Years	**Michael Jackson & Jackson Five** MOTOWN
NEW	36	Adrian Thaws	**Tricky** K7
NEW	37	Horseshoes And Hand Grenades	**Billy The Kid** XTRA MILE
NEW	38	Goddess	**Banks** HARVEST/GOOD YEARS
▼	39	Mean Love	**Sinkane** CITY SLANG
NEW	40	Hounds Of Love	**Kate Bush** FISH PEOPLE

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

TOP OF THE SHOPS



THIS WEEK

STATIC RECORDS
WIGAN

FOUNDED 2012

WHY IT'S GREAT The shop's walls are lined with quality secondhand vinyl, while they also sell classic rock posters and quirky vintage curios.

TOP SELLER LAST WEEK Neil Jarvis – 'Halloween Summer'

THEY SAY "We're approachable and won't make you feel awkward if you don't know who Duke St Workshop are."

NEWSDESK COMPILED BY DAVID RENSHAW PHOTOS: DEAN CHALKLEY, ANDY WILLSHER

SOUNDTRACK OF MY LIFE



Kyary Pamyu Pamyu



Steve Reich



Taigen Kawabe

Bo Ningen frontman



Brian Eno

THE FIRST SONG I REMEMBER HEARING
'Yuuyake Koyake' and 'Kaero Kaero To' (Traditional)

"This is Japanese folk music and a children's song from a long time ago. It's the first song I remember hearing because they played it every day after school – at 5pm each day there was a chime in the city that told kids to go home, and they mash up those two songs to make this chime."

THE FIRST SONG I FELL IN LOVE WITH
'Why It Will Be So' – Yohji Yamamoto

"My mum used to play this when I was a kid; I really liked it then and rediscovered it when I was an adult. It was a little more melancholic than I remembered. I'm that kind of person and my mum is like that too: our taste in music tends to be more sentimental and sad."

THE FIRST ALBUM I EVER BOUGHT
The *Pokémon* soundtrack

"There's one song on it, which is 'How To Catch A Pokémon', and all the other tracks are just the roars of different Pokémon – there are 153 tracks that are just the sounds of Pokémon. I'm pretty sure I listened to all of them..."

"STEVE REICH OPENED UP A NEW WORLD TO ME"

THE SONG THAT MADE ME WANT TO BE IN A BAND
'3 Chord De Waruika' – Nunchaku

"They're a Japanese hardcore band and this is the first song I ever covered. I still listen to it and it's really simple to play – as you can tell from the song title, they just use three chords. It's loud, fast and passionate."

THE SONG I CAN NO LONGER LISTEN TO
'Daikaisei Part 2' – Bo Ningen

"I don't really get sick of much music, but I can't listen to the CD version of our song 'Daikaisei Part 2' [from the 2012 album 'Line The Wall']. I still enjoy playing it, it's one of my favourites, but I can't listen to it when I'm not playing."

THE SONG THAT MAKES ME WANT TO DANCE
'Back To Chill' – Goth-Trad

"He's a Japanese dubstep producer, but he's released a few songs in the UK. He's a real originator of dubstep and he tours a lot over here. His music is dancey, but you can listen to it in your bedroom as well as the club."

THE SONG I CAN'T GET OUT OF MY HEAD
'Wavvy' – Mykki Blanco

"His voice is unique and attractive and this track gets stuck in my head all the time. We played the same festival as him in Poland and his stage presence was amazing – he's great live."

THE SONG I DO AT KARAOKE
'PonPonPon' – Kyary Pamyu Pamyu

"Kyary Pamyu Pamyu played recently at Shepherd's Bush Empire – she's quite popular in the UK. It's bubblegum pop music. I used to hate it in Japan, but now every time I play it when I DJ, people always ask what it is."

THE SONG I WISH I'D WRITTEN
'4'33"' – John Cage

"The idea is like art as much as music – it's four and a half minutes of silence. I love John Cage: he's amazing, and with this it was like, now he's done it no-one can do it again. It was the first time anyone had thought of that."

THE SONG THAT REMINDS ME OF HOME
'Natsu No Nioi' – Bo Ningen

"It's the last track on our second album ['Line The Wall'] and I originally made it for my solo project before I joined Bo Ningen. I write a lot of songs about the past, but this one in particular is about my childhood."

THE ALBUM THAT REMINDS ME OF MOVING TO LONDON
'Music For 18 Musicians' – Steve Reich

"I first heard this in high school in Japan and it opened the door to a new world to me, even before moving to London. I listened to it a lot just before coming here and a lot after I moved here too. Everything was different, but the music was the same."

THE SONG I WANT PLAYED AT MY FUNERAL
'Music For Airports' – Brian Eno

"The concept is that it sounds different depending on where you are and your mood. I listened to it when I was in hospital when I was 17 and that was the most beautiful place to listen to that song. I don't want to play a song to make people cry at my funeral, so that's a good compromise."

AS TOLD TO LISA WRIGHT PHOTOS: DAN KENDALL, GETTY, REX

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NME NEW BAND OF THE WEEK



Years & Years

The self-proclaimed oddballs making "sad music you can dance to"

You might recognise Years & Years frontman Olly Alexander. Having formerly appeared in both *Skins* and *Enter The Void*, he's currently hot on the promo trail for Belle & Sebastian's mega-budget, Sundance-premiered movie adaptation of *God Help The Girl*, a film in which he takes the lead role.

But, as *Radar* finds out over a coffee with all three members of Years & Years, Olly's already kind of done with acting – in fact, he's quit it altogether. "As soon as we got signed I just thought, 'I need to do this now,'" he explains, admitting that his agent might possibly have "thought I was being a bit crazy" when he told him the news a few months back.

But with the ink on a deal with Polydor still not dry, Olly's decision to concentrate on Years & Years doesn't seem *too* far-fetched in the grand scheme of things.

The band, who formed in 2010 over drunken conversations about Radiohead and Flying Lotus, are in a prime position to take their bubbling blend of "sad music you can dance to" – think Disclosure with a more questioning mind – to the masses over the next 12 months.

▼ ON NME.COM/NEWMUSIC NOW
▶Listen to an exclusive mix the trio have made for us

Alongside Olly are multi-instrumentalists Mikey Goldsworthy and Emre Turkmen, the latter of whom says he thinks their appeal lies in the fact they're all inherently weird. "In the '90s," Emre explains, "you saw pop stars who were oddballs but who made amazing music. I think we're all oddballs."

Having released two EPs on Kitsuné before being snapped up for their current deal, the plan now is fairly simple: tour relentlessly, and finish off their debut LP in time for release next summer. Olly admits it's turned into something of a "whiny break-up album", following a spot of romantic turmoil. "I've been going through a period of my life where I enjoy unhealthy relationships and the tension that gives you," he explains.

God help the guy... ■ DAVID RENSHAW

▶THE DETAILS

▶**BASED** London
▶**FOR FANS OF** Disclosure, Two Door Cinema Club
▶**SOCIAL** @yearsandyears
▶**SEE THEM LIVE** The band headline London's Oslo on October 7
▶**BUY IT** The 'Real' and 'Take Shelter' EPs are available now on iTunes
▶**BELIEVE IT OR NOT** Aaron Paul, aka Jesse Pinkman from *Breaking Bad*, is a confirmed fan of the band, and recently checked them out live. "Everyone at the gig was more interested in him than us," Olly says

WILL IRELAND

MORE NEW MUSIC

Asylums

Southend-On-Sea may not be where all the action is, but that doesn't hinder Asylums. Listening to first track 'The Death Of Television' is like being caught between a hammer and an anvil. Brawny guitar riffs interspersed with thrashing power chords and Dave Grohl-style drum fills make for a post-hardcore stomper. At just over a minute long it'll leave you reeling and slightly concussed.

▶SOCIAL asylumsband.com

Lucki Eck$

Lucki Eck$' 'Body High' mixtape is a perma-stoned trip where the teenage MC is woozy on Xanax and constantly questioning his role in life over sparse, intense beats. FKA Twigs directed the video for his song 'Ouch Ouch', and the Chicago rapper also recently collaborated with Danny Brown on new track 'Weightin' On'.

▶SOCIAL twitter.com/LuckiECKS197

▶HEAR HIM soundcloud.com/boob7

NME BUZZ BAND OF THE WEEK

Cloak

They may have only played their first show at the beginning of August – at Brooklyn's ever-hip Glasslands venue – but Cloak are already *the* name the drop. Forming from the ashes of krauty combo ArpLine, their only track available so far is a demo for 'Pushed', which you can listen to on their Facebook page. It's a marauding, malevolent offering of doomy electro that's been birthed from the same sinister coven as Nine Inch Nails and Crystal Castles.

▶SOCIAL facebook.com/cloak

▶HEAR THEM vimeo.com/101168311

Netil

Hackney's Netil House venue is the creative hub that spawned this group. While early song 'Is There Something In Your Eye?' was cunningly creative, new single 'Sweet Teeth' sounds much bigger, incorporating melancholic and euphoric MBV-style guitars alongside Warpaint-esque atmospherics.

▶SOCIAL facebook.com/netilnetilnetil

▶HEAR THEM soundcloud.com/netil

Joyride

Joyride's latest album, 'Bodies Of Water', channels the same jangly punk vibes as Radiator Hospital and Swearin', with highlight 'Slow Release' shredding as well as early Jawbreaker.

▶SOCIAL joyride-sf.com

▶HEAR THEM joyride-sf.bandcamp.com

Grapell

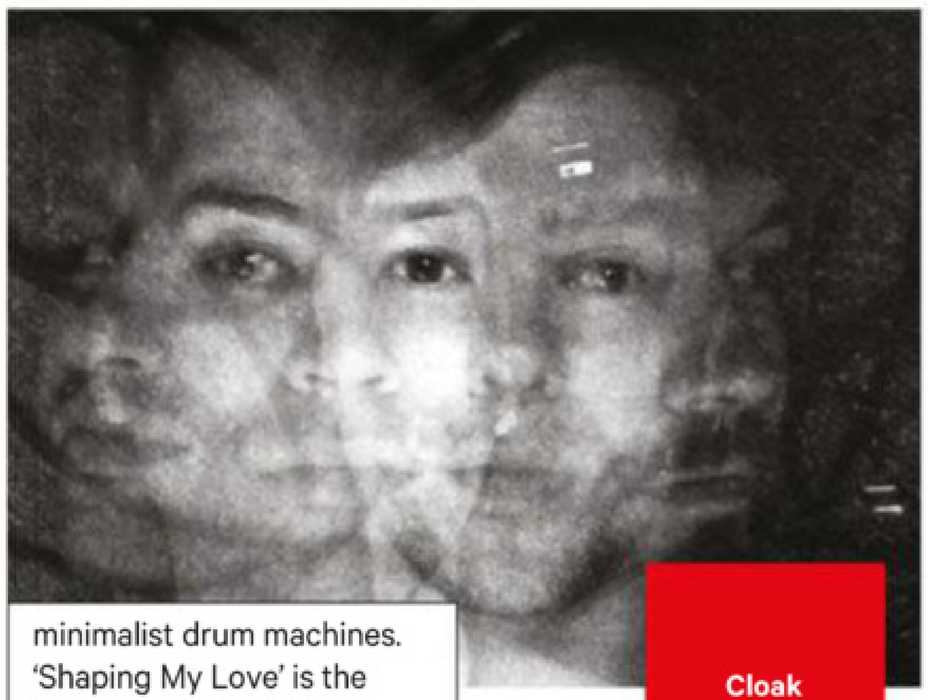
Despite recently losing a member, Grapell's melodramatic indie-pop has blossomed with the release of their second EP 'Friends'. Following on from the Thom Yorke-esque scuffles of tracks like 'White Fox In The Snow', the Stockholm duo's new release features a mix of solemn and soulful ballads, performed with acoustic guitars, keyboards and minimalist drum machines. 'Shaping My Love' is the languid lead track from 'Friends', and serves as a romantic introduction to the band's tender sound.

▶SOCIAL facebook.com/grapell

▶HEAR THEM grapell.bandcamp.com



Grapell



Cloak

Morgan Square

Denmark is looking like fertile ground for psychedelia this year. After the dizzying kaleidoscopic sounds of The Wands, Morgan Square are carving out their niche with a more tribal take on the genre. You can hear it in their latest offerings: 'Achbaham' is feral and primitive, like 'Venus In Furs'; 'Yelling' flirts with disjointed time signatures and oddball pop sensibilities in the vein of 'Some Velvet Morning'.

▶SOCIAL facebook.com/morgansquareband

▶HEAR THEM soundcloud.com/morgansquare

Dinner

Dinner has just joined Mac DeMarco and Diiv on the roster of New York indie label Captured Tracks. Danish extrovert Anders Rhedin's lo-fi pop project is intriguing. Six months ago, he released a 15-minute meditation tape complete with gravelly voiced instructions ("*be cradled in this beautiful, loving, healing energy*"). His songs are just as weird – the lead track on the upcoming 'Oui!' EP is a blurry and booming take on disco that sounds ↦

BAND CRUSH

William Keegan

Together Pangea



Meat Market

"Meat Market are from Oakland, California and are buddies of ours. We went on tour with them a couple of years ago and we want to again! They're a garage-rock band, but they're melodic and clever too. They're like a better version of us, basically."

like Ariel Pink jamming with Lust For Youth.
▶SOCIAL twitter.com/dinnerxdinner
▶HEAR HIM soundcloud.com/capturedtracks/dinner-going-out

Sleep Kit

These three friends play fully charged punk rock that's half influenced by their mutual love for Jawbreaker and half total anarchy. 'Jarred' is loud and relentless, with math-rock sensibilities that aren't too dissimilar from the recently defunct Crash Of Rhinos.
▶SOCIAL facebook.com/sleepkit
▶HEAR THEM sleepkit.bandcamp.com

RL Kelly

Fans of Waxahatchee will find a new favourite in California-based singer RL Kelly. Signed to Orchid Tapes, Kelly regularly works with labelmate Alex G (he can be heard drumming on the essential 'Alright'). Last year's 'Life's A Bummer' EP is a melancholy treat.
▶SOCIAL twitter.com/kssksfantastic
▶HEAR HER soundcloud.com/r-l-kelly/alright

Medicine Men

Rumour has it that Ian, singer with Glasgow newcomers Medicine Men, got his first taste of the big time when Kasabian's tour DJ took him under his wing after a chance meeting at a gig – and sure enough, a tape of his gestating songs eventually found their way to Serge Pizzorno, among others. Now, the band have unleashed debut track 'Show What You're Made Of' to the world.
▶SOCIAL facebook.com/medicinemenband

The Dead Strange

The Dead Strange's eponymous EP indicates the breadth of their potential. 'The Gift Of Life' is a slow burner in the vein of QOTSA's more recent material, while 'Fifteen Fifteens' is a slice of Coral-style pop. Meanwhile, 'Hell Song' flirts with the same kind of atmospherics Echo & The Bunnymen employed on 'The Killing Moon'. Remarkably, it all adds up to a very cohesive EP.
▶SOCIAL facebook.com/thedeadstrange
▶HEAR THEM soundcloud.com/thedeadstrange



Inkke





Reporters

Reporters conjure a guitar-heavy sound that's reminiscent of Foo Fighters

Inkke

This Scottish producer has already released music through Lucky Me (Cashmere Cat, Lunice), with the label clearly seeing his potential. He's an artist who exists between the cracks, straddling grime, hip-hop and the esoteric end of dance. Prolific as hell, he's released two essential EPs already this year: 'Crystal Children' and 'Faded With Da Kittens'.
▶SOCIAL facebook.com/inkkeone
▶HEAR HIM soundcloud.com/inkke

Babaganouj

There's been a lot of watery-eyed dreampop to contend with lately, but Brisbane's Babaganouj are a cut above the rest. Their latest single 'Bluff', with its '90s aesthetic, could be one of the breakout singles of the year. A lyrical tale of bittersweet mundanity

WORDS: MATT WILKINSON, TIM HAKKI, DAVID RENSHAW, TOM WALTERS, JAMES BALMONT, BEN HOMEWOOD

Radar NEWS ROUND UP

KING GIZZARD SIGN

One of *Radar*'s favourite new Aussie bands, King Gizzard And The Lizard Wizard, have signed a full deal with Heavenly. The band – who will find fans in anyone who likes Pond and Tame Impala's strain of psych – had previously released a Record Store Day single for the label.

NOTHING'S FIRST UK TOUR

They've been playing to sizeable crowds back in the States for some time, and now Philadelphia quartet Nothing have announced their debut UK tour in November. The visit, which includes a date at Birthdays in London (November 25) is in support of debut album 'Guilty Of Everything'.



King Gizzard And The Lizard Wizard



Cheerleader

WAMPIRE TEAM UP WITH UMO

Portland act Wampire's new record 'Bazaar' was produced by Jacob Portrait from Unknown Mortal Orchestra. Released on October 7 by long-time home Polyvinyl, lead track 'Wizard Staff' is online now. There are also a slew of US dates alongside Temples and Tops.

CHEERLEADER'S BRIGHT IDEA

One of SXSW's most promising acts, Cheerleader return on October 6 with new EP 'On Your Side' on the Bright Antenna label. The title track is online now, alongside a video for 'Perfect Vision', a four-to-the-floor screamer that recalls New Order and The Killers.

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Detergents

in a relationship, it's all oversized jumpers and sugar-sweet joy.
▶SOCIAL twitter.com/babaganoujsuck
▶LISTEN 'Bluff' is on YouTube
▶HEAR THEM babaganouj.bandcamp.com

Rat Boy

Rat Boy's latest song 'Sportswear' rhythmically leaps from the starting gate. It's the highlight of his mixtape (called simply 'The Mixtape') and it's chock full of cagey post-punk guitars and soaring melodies.

Radar LABEL OF THE WEEK

Urinal Cake



▶FOUNDED In 2011 by Eric Love
▶BASED Detroit
▶KEY RELEASES **Johnny III Band** – 'Ask All The Doctors' (2011), **Protomartyr** – 'No Passion All Technique' (2012), **Terrible Twos** – 'Horror Vacui' (2013)
▶RADAR SAYS An early home for one of our favourite new bands, Protomartyr, the rest of the splendidly named Urinal Cake's roster isn't half bad either. Aside from the above, check out Sros Lords for a bit of Fall-meets-The Mars Volta godliness.

▶SOCIAL facebook.com/ratboyratboy
▶HEAR HIM soundcloud.com/ratboyratboy

Detergents

UK82-influenced Detergents' new single 'No Salvation' is perhaps the angriest song we've heard since Slaves first trundled onstage. Tipping its hat to the likes of Crisis and The Partisans, it's out now via Semtex Death in the UK and Art For Blind Records in Ireland.
▶HEAR THEM detergents.bandcamp.com

Palms On Fire

Are Palms On Fire indie's response to QT? Quite possibly. Ever so bashful, 'Sun Is Over My House' by the Russian act playfully skips between sun-kissed guitars and more obscure bursts of flute. It's cutesy, sure, but underneath it all is an earworm of a pop song just begging to be played over and over.
▶SOCIAL facebook.com/palmsonfire
▶HEAR THEM palmsonfire.bandcamp.com

Dreamshow

Featuring members of TV On The Radio and Cerebral Ballzy, Dreamshow's first track 'Chasing Control' is a nod to the sleazier side of New York's garage heritage, with frontman Constantine V's bruised yelps and slurs recalling Lou Reed and Julian Casablancas. The glittering synth lines give it a little extra.
▶SOCIAL facebook.com/dreamshxw
▶HEAR THEM soundcloud.com/dreamshxw

Reporters

Buckinghamshire act Reporters conjure a thick and guitar-heavy sound that's reminiscent of Foo Fighters' late-'90s stuff on recent track 'Hold The Controls'. It's the opener to their 'Seen Leaving' EP, which also includes 'Have You Got A Good Side'.
▶SOCIAL facebook.com/reportersband
▶HEAR THEM youtube.com/user/reportersband

NEW SOUNDS FROM WAY OUT

This week's columnist
JEHNNY BETH
Savages



HOSTILE TAKEOVER

Let's get straight to the point: the song 'Jehnny (Show Me The Moon)' is an ode to my beautiful bottom! It was written by **Johnny Hostile** the first time I went on tour with Savages in America. He was in France working on new material and called me to say he had written a song about my callipygian backside – what an honour! This record is a good example of Johnny's fascination for women, his love for them in a sentimental and creative way. Meeting him 10 years ago changed my life radically. He offered me to share everything with him. I mean he REALLY offered me to share everything with him. Intelligent, talented, erotic – he was engaging in life with a force and generosity I had never (and still haven't) witnessed in anybody else before.

Ectopia are a trio from London composed of Jack Brennan (electronics), Adam Christensen (vocals) and Vicky Steiri (cello). It is almost impossible to find any information online and they haven't released any material yet – although, Jack tells me, that's something they wish to change soon (I hear they have over 20 hours' worth of music). The freedom of their approach is inspiring: "Just the idea of rehearsing the same song over and over again with a band in a room is kind of... boring!" says Jack. Their songwriting is direct, poetic, seductive. No bullshit, no overdubs. Their next show is on September 20 in a squat in Lewisham. I don't know the exact address but as Jack says: "If anyone finds it, then they're amazing anyway!"



Johnny Hostile

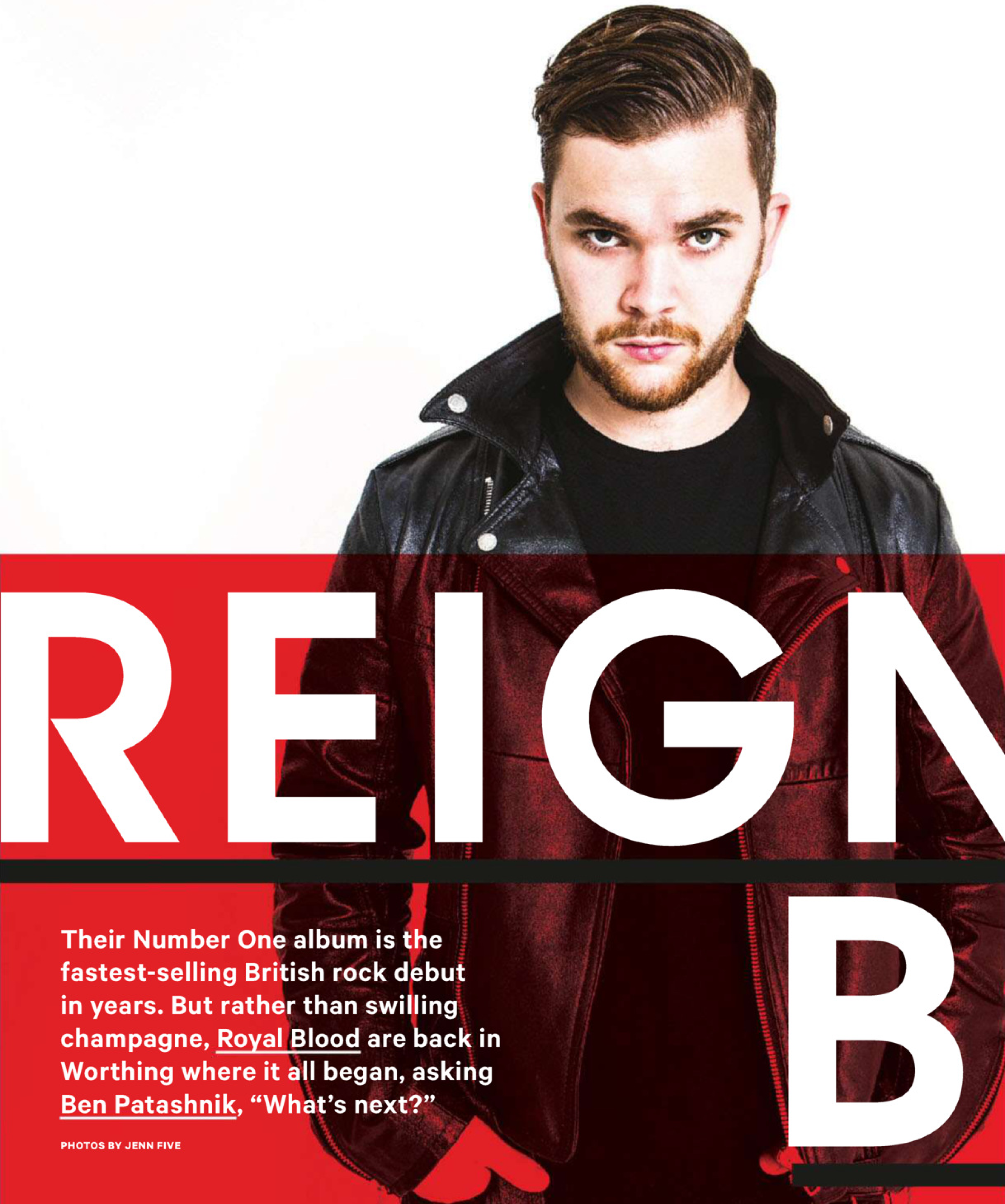
Ectopia's songs are direct, poetic and seductive. No bullshit, no overdubs

Words To The Blind is a project imagined by Johnny Hostile one evening when Taigen Kawabe – singer of Bo Ningen – was staying at my place for dinner. The idea was then developed by Savages' guitarist Gemma Thompson into a 'Sonic Simultaneous Poem', inspired by the Dadaist concept of 'Simultaneous Poetry', and resulting in 37 minutes of co-written material performed for the first time in 2013 at the Red Gallery in London. Eight musicians face each other on a U-shaped stage with the audience placed in the middle, and two bands engage in a 'sonic battle' across the room. Excitingly, the Barbican have invited us to perform the project again at London's Oval Space on November 19, while a live recording captured by Johnny is due out on November 17 (co-released between Pop Noire and Stolen Recordings).

Next week: New Music Editor Matt Wilkinson reveals the support bands for the NME New Breed Tour

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ROYAL BLOOD



REIGN B

Their Number One album is the fastest-selling British rock debut in years. But rather than swilling champagne, Royal Blood are back in Worthing where it all began, asking Ben Patashnik, "What's next?"

PHOTOS BY JENN FIVE



IN LOOD



You'll have heard the figures by now, but they certainly bear repeating. A self-titled debut album that, 20 years and one gutted music industry later, only sold 20,000 fewer copies in its first week than Oasis' 'Definitely Maybe'. A forthcoming headline tour that sold out in roughly eight minutes. And a sound commonly written off as dead: Royal Blood's achievements this year have been astonishing, but this is only the beginning.

Three days after the 65,812th copy of 'Royal Blood' was sold, drummer Ben Thatcher and singing bassist Mike Kerr are sitting in the exact spot where they played their first show as Royal Blood 23 months ago. In Worthing's unassuming Tangerine bar, on a Wednesday afternoon in early September, Ben's stool is right where his kit was on October 11, 2012.

The only thing that's changed since hitting Number One, they say, is the way people talk about them. As Ben puts it, "Instead of your mum coming into your room and going, 'Oh, that's a good riff!', you've got thousands of people moshing to it." Moreover, the chart success is only a frame for a picture they painted months ago in the form of the album itself. All they want to do is get back on the road, and that's their only long-term strategy.

"To me, [hitting Number One is] the same feeling I imagine you'd get once you headline a festival," says Mike. "It provokes the feeling of, 'What's next?' I'm grateful for it. We're enjoying it for what it is.

"We've only gathered meaning from [success] because we didn't look for it," he continues. "We didn't even put our focus on getting to do this for a living, let alone getting a Number One record, so having our focus on the music is the only reason why it's happened. It's been a poignant lesson – don't look for the prizes, just do it."

The last genuine British rock phenomenon of this ilk was in January 2006, when Arctic Monkeys broke records with the release of 'Whatever People Say I Am, That's What I'm Not'. And there are more than a few parallels with this story – not least in the fact that both bands share the same management, Wildlife Entertainment. Naturally, popular perception is that Royal Blood's success is solely down to the people behind them pulling strings to make shit happen. But with the greatest of respect, if that were true then Drenge, who share the same team, would be the biggest band in the country too. It doesn't work like that.

It's an insidious argument that does a disservice to the work Ben and Mike put in in the rehearsal room. All the marketing budget in the world is all well and good, but you need the songs. And Royal Blood have at least 10 rock-solid ones: the album is concentrated brilliance, a double espresso shot of adrenaline that has been refined by two craftsmen.

Not only is the reality of their breakthrough more interesting than fiction, it also clearly demonstrates what Mike and Ben's priorities are. One day, an email popped into the band's account from a guy called Phil Christie, then at publishing house Warner/Chappell. It said, simply, that he liked the songs and did they have a publisher? "I didn't even know what publishing was," Mike recalls. The next day, Christie travelled to Brighton to meet them, explained that he was ready to bet the farm on them and that he'd already cleared it with his boss to give them enough money so they could quit their jobs (Mike: chef; Ben: various – barman, session drummer) and concentrate on making music for a year.

"We never thought we'd get to do this for a living"
Mike Kerr

"We started writing songs and met our management along the way," says Ben. "Phil was our guide through the music industry – he'd been doing it for a while and he set up meetings with people he thought we'd get on with, and Mike and I went on it as a journey together."

Funnily, Wildlife were, according to Mike, the only company who *didn't* sit the pair



Mike Kerr (left) and Ben Thatcher outside the Tangerine bar in Worthing, where they made their live debut in 2012

down and give them the you're-going-to-be-superstars spiel. Instead, they offered long-term support based on a slow climb, integrity and artistic expression. Ben describes it as an "instant connection", and Mike says the thing he was most excited about when actually meeting the Monkeys was the opportunity to ask questions about the writing process.

"The perception is that [Wildlife] picked us out of nowhere and made us stars," Mike smiles mischeviously. "I love that. That's brilliant. I'll help spread that *X Factor* rumour. There's only two viewpoints – the band no-one knew about and the band you know now. Everything between is blurred. No-one saw us sweating away with no management, writing 'Out Of The Black'. The idea that they put instruments in our hands – some people are just filling in the blanks without knowing the facts. But whatever, man, that's someone else's problem, not mine."

The backdrop to their emergence has been the, quote-unquote, rebirth of rock, a perhaps spurious way of grabbing headlines as hip-hop and electronic music have come to dominate traditional guitar bands in a commercial sense. George Ergatoudis, head of music at Radio 1, stated earlier this month that their audience research was showing "amazing results for rock in recent weeks", mentioning Royal Blood alongside You Me At Six, who scored a Number One with 'Cavalier Youth', and Watford's Lower Than Atlantis.

While the band themselves might be too level-headed to make any bold proclamations about what might come next, it's not hard to imagine their success inadvertently kicking off *something*. "I wouldn't be surprised if this is the starting pistol for a huge wave of guitar music in the UK – both from Britain and overseas," says *Popjustice* editor Peter Robinson. "Most shifts in mainstream pop are the result of one or two breakout successes, and I think it's important that in a few years when people look back they acknowledge the role Royal Blood have played in getting rock's foot back in the door."

For fans who have seen or heard them since first single 'Out Of The Black' was released last November, taking up residence on the Radio 1 A-List, Royal Blood are what they've been waiting for, and the band's experiences make them think it's got nothing to do with genre.

"The people who get us, they're not on the same page necessarily [as each other]," Mike notes. "From our live experiences, we can do Download and Reading and Glastonbury, and the same people are behind us but they don't all necessarily like rock. It's like... we invented our own recipe. We both said, 'This milkshake would taste great', and someone tried it and thought it was really nice. Now everyone's drinking our milkshake."

He recalls their first show; they turned up and played what were essentially half fragments of songs, but everyone in the room was "rooting for us. All our mates were telling us we should pursue it."

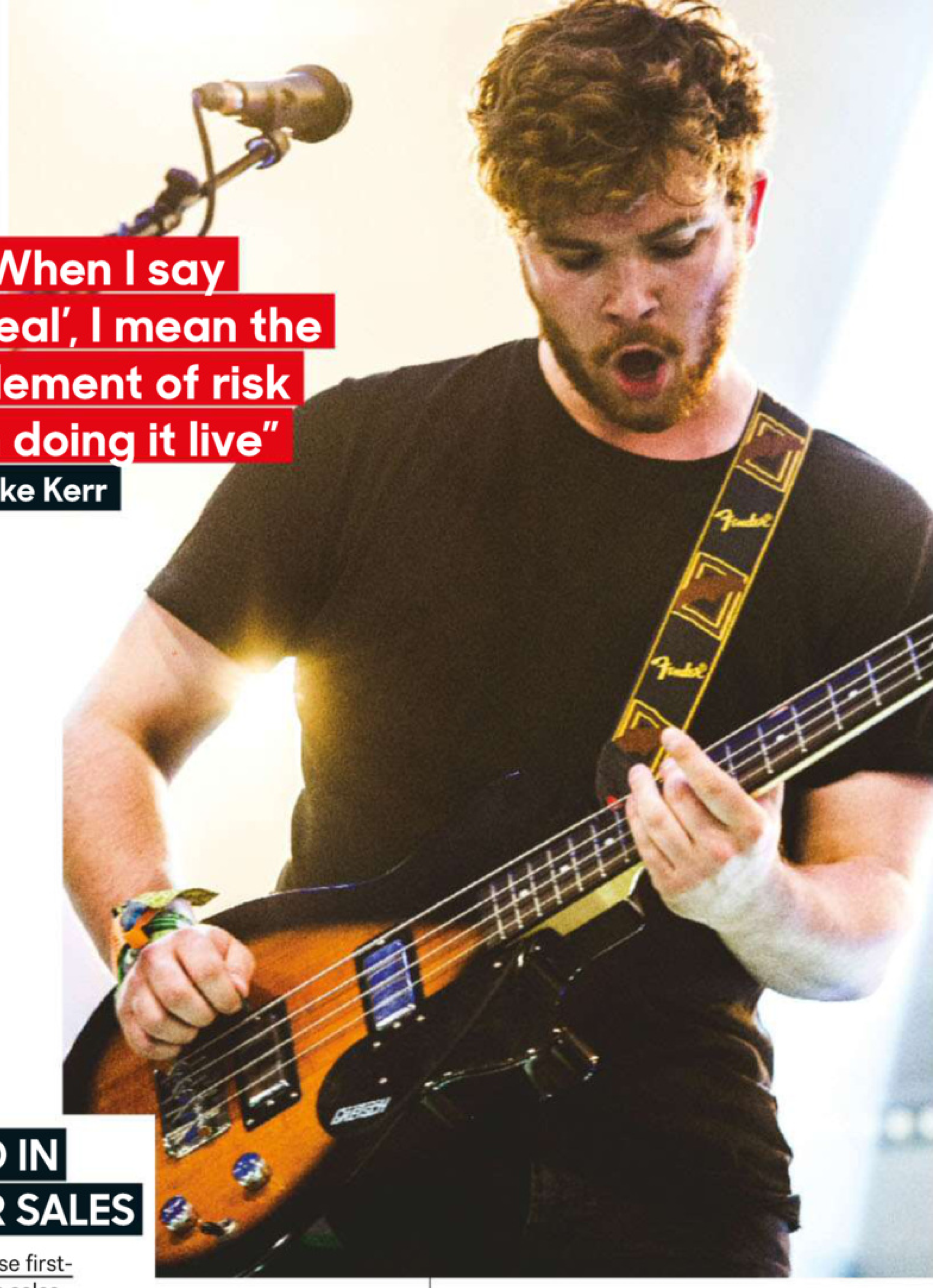
The pair grew up playing music from an early age and met almost a decade ago, and they describe warmly how certain bands broadened their own horizons. Mike remembers seeing Queens Of The Stone Age, Goldfrapp and Muse live and, as soon as the gigs ended, feeling an urgent biological urge – "like the same feeling as when you just *have* to go to the toilet" – to pick up his instrument and simply play. Ben, on the other hand, found himself sitting at school in awe, unable to remove his headphones because he was so captivated by The Mars Volta's 'De-Loused In The Comatorium' or The Killers' 'Hot Fuss'. When it's put to them that previous comments they'd made about their success equalling a victory for so-called 'real music' suggested they like guitars and only guitars, their reaction is strong. ↦

BOOM, BLAST AND RUIN!

Biffy Clyro's Simon Neil on the "unfathomable" sound of Royal Blood



"They're one of the most exciting bands to come out the UK in a long time. It's great to hear quality heavy music on the radio and on TV, among all the pop pish. I remember hearing 'Out Of The Black' for the first time and fucking loving it – the riff to that song sounded immediately iconic. I couldn't quite believe it was just two guys. The sound they make for a two-piece is unfathomable. They have an abundance of amazing riffs, but most importantly, amazing songs. It's an amazing moment for rock music in the UK, when their debut album can be one of the biggest sellers of the year. Fucking right, rock's back..."



"When I say 'real'," explains Mike, "I mean the element of risk in doing it live. Anything that is played by a human is real." Even if it's pressing buttons? "Yeah, if it's performed. I would never condemn anyone who didn't do that, but that's where our passion lies, in the idea that this could go fucking wrong. It's a safety net if it's a karaoke set."

"If I was watching Spandau Ballet and they used a backing track for the saxophone solo in 'True', I'd be like, '... OK,'" says Ben. "But when Steve comes out, and he comes to the front of the stage and he's doing it, you're like, '*Yes*! That is brilliant!'" He punches the air, widening his eyes.

Holding rock music as a genre up as more authentic "is rubbish", says Mike. "Authenticity comes from honesty. My favourite bands have *zero* respect for genre. And I don't think any genre is better than any other genre; there's only good music that inspires you. It doesn't matter what genre it is, what colour the person playing it is, how tall or small they are, how many tattoos they have or don't have, if they live at home or not or if they're willing to throw a TV out of a window – are they being honest?

"I really like Drake, and everything on paper says I shouldn't, but when I listen to it I think that it's just... good! He's a real guy being honest. And it's good songwriting. I did an interview the other day that asked me how rock'n'roll I am, and it was a quiz, and I was like (*mimes putting his head in his hands*). Is there a guy who's a jazz saxophonist being asked how... *jazz* he is?!"

The violence at their shows (see the video for 'Little Monster') and the inherently macho implications of 'real music' has also led certain critics to wonder if there's a chauvinist vein running through Royal Blood's work. To them, the idea of making their shows spaces where women are objectified or unwelcome is the complete antithesis to everything they're trying to achieve. They reckon they draw about a 70 per cent male audience, but as they get bigger the balance is shifting.

"There's a heavy connotation with rock music being predominantly male anyway, and part of that means it's out of our control," says Mike, slightly absolving himself of the power to change the status quo. "When people meet us we're not who they expect. They expect confrontational, aggressive, arrogant cunts – and you can make your own mind up, but I don't think we're like that at all. So there's a huge [assumption] of *how* we should act and *how* a gig should be conducted, and I totally get why there still is – and not just with our band – an existing environment where females aren't as welcomed as they *should* be. It's a manifestation of an existing problem."

By playing music in an idiom that does promote retrograde, destructive tendencies, they're acutely aware of their role in inverting the rock-star image by rejecting it. "Those stereotypes are only there to be destroyed," states Mike firmly. "It's an illusion and a fantasy, and [people] choose to see you in a certain way almost through ignorance. It's not what we are."

"We enjoy cooking, we enjoy watching *Match Of The Day* just the same as any other people," says Ben. "You'll see us at the garden centre, maybe eating a brownie..."

"That whole rock-star lifestyle thing was a genuine *thing* back then," Mike continues. "But now – don't be a cunt, basically. What's really rock'n'roll is writing an amazing song that makes people go fucking mental. Rock isn't doing coke on your own in a toilet and crying yourself to sleep. That's depressing."

"Trashing a hotel room? I don't understand the thrill of that. Me, I'm very OCD, and that would just ruin the start of my day. I like to leave a hotel room almost as tidy as I found it," says Ben.

"When I say 'real', I mean the element of risk in doing it live"
Mike Kerr

WIND IN THEIR SALES

Putting those first-week album sales figures in context

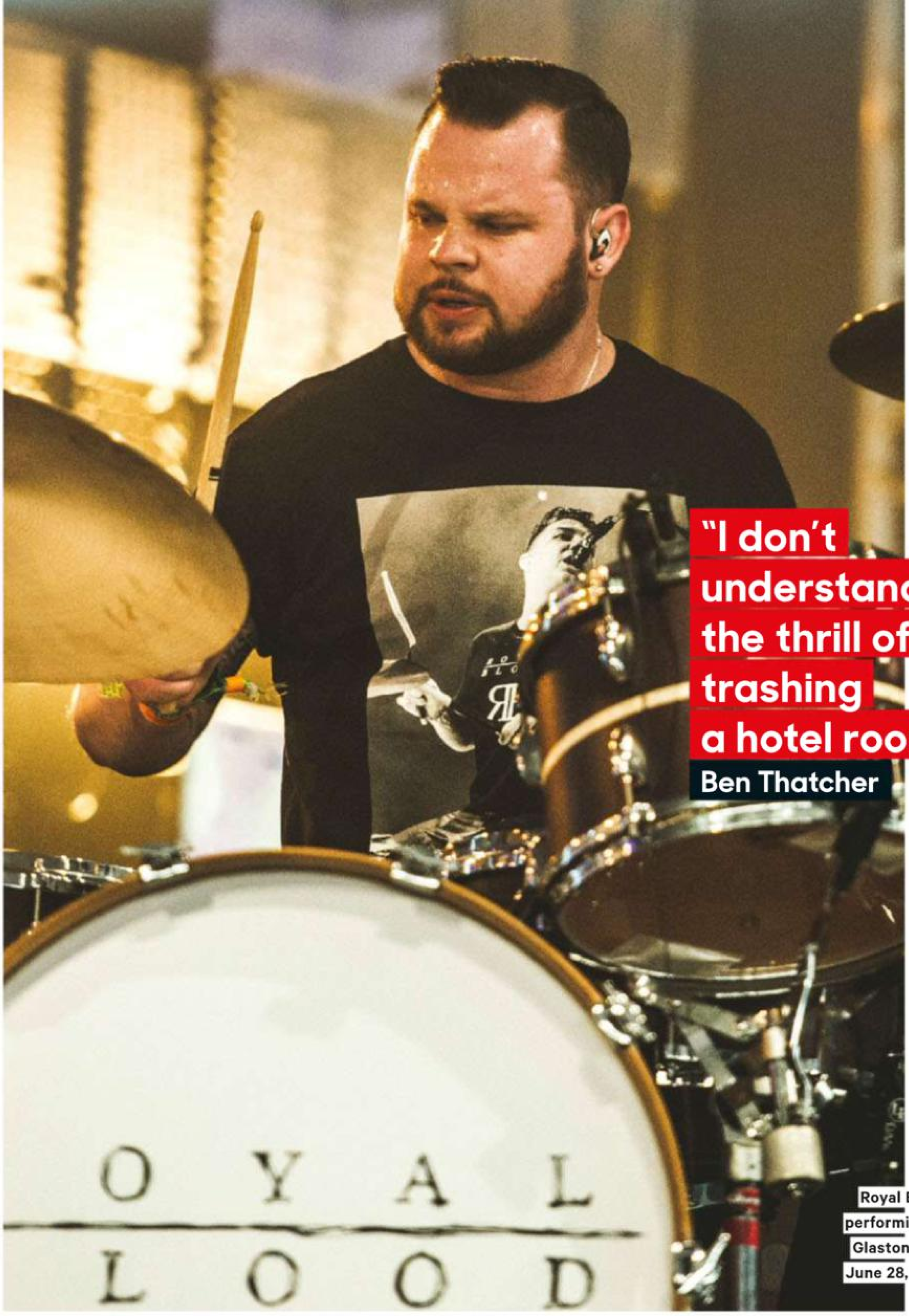
65,812
Royal Blood, 'Royal Blood' (2014)

48,028
Lana Del Rey, 'Ultraviolence' (2014)

86,000
Oasis, 'Definitely Maybe' (1994)

360,000
Arctic Monkeys, 'Whatever People Say I Am, That's What I'm Not' (2006)





"I don't understand the thrill of trashing a hotel room"
Ben Thatcher

Royal Blood performing at Glastonbury, June 28, 2014

JORDAN HUGHES

As Royal Blood look to the future, it's clear that the main thing motivating them is reverence for the music they write and love. It's possible to quantify their success with sales figures, but the way they've resonated with fans is unquantifiable. As such, there's the sense that Ben and Mike might not know exactly *how* they did it, but they know *what* they've done. And that's both humbling and inspiring, in the sense that they're going to have to keep trusting in themselves as the chaos of the music industry whips up around them.

"Dave Grohl said if you expect *anything* from music, you expect too much," says Mike. "That resonated with me a lot, and made me really think about what I'm doing and why I'm bothering. He's right, he is *right*. If you don't enjoy it, what are you doing? Go do something else. Save up for a jetski and just kill it every day. Go mental. Do something that gives you a kick and is fulfilling, but to gain anything from [music]? Your expectations are far too high."

Do you think it'll mean anything externally? For rock as a whole, whatever that may be?

"It's not a genre thing, it's a *real* thing," he stresses. "Didn't Simon Cowell have someone in the charts that week? We beat him, and it's time that people like him start scratching their heads as to how this has happened and how to become popular... It's time to invest in the real deal." ■

Storenvy.com

ICEAGE

"There is no manif

After two albums of gothic nihilism, Iceage's third abandons punk and broadens their worldview to offer the most authentic document of the band to date. And if fans don't like it? "I find great pleasure in disappointing people," Elias Rønnenfelt tells Louis Pattison

PHOTOS BY SOPHIE HARRIS-TAYLOR

still "esto"

As night falls over the streets of east London, a loose tribe of punks, students, hipsters and goths gather and smoke cigarettes in a small courtyard just off Hackney Road. As gig venues go, Apiary Studios is off the beaten track: an art space with no stage, a pair of speakers tottering on stands, and cans sold across a counter. Inside, Luke Younger, the promoter of tonight's show, is filling the main room with crumbling, malevolent drones under the guise of his solo noise project, Helm. Squeezing out to get a drink, I run into Iceage guitarist Johan Surrballe Wieth at the bar. Iceage flew in today, ostensibly to play ATP's Jabberwocky festival, which was cancelled just over 48 hours ago. Instead, they called around friends, and tonight is the first of three gigs over the weekend. "We don't really like festivals anyway," shrugs Wieth. "Maybe this is the better way."

Forty-five minutes later, the room is rammed. In a knee-length wool overcoat, hair down to his chin, Iceage frontman Elias Bender Rønnenfelt elbows through the crowd, and Iceage tear into 'On My Fingers', the opening track from new album 'Plowing Into The Field Of Love'. They're no longer playing to the crowd: of the eight songs in the set, the audience know only one – the rowdy cowpunk blast of 'The Lord's Favorite', which incites a moshpit that has two security hands wrestling to keep the speakers from being sucked into a whirlwind of bodies.

No-one is complaining, though. For one, Iceage are razor-sharp, more dynamic and intense than the sometimes shambolic teenage punks you might have caught a few years back. Two, Elias seems to have grown in stature. Now taking to the stage without a guitar, he's grown into a frontman of impressive presence, with the wild intensity and stormy gravitas of a Shane MacGowan, Nick Cave or Michael Gira. As the room heats up, he sways with his eyes shut in some sort of reverie, bellows lyrics of sin, debauchery and redemption into faces six inches from his own, and hurls himself into the arms of the crowd, who carry him overhead like a sacrificial offering. Iceage close with the album's climactic title track, which finds Elias bawling "*They will place me in a hearse!*" Then the four flash quick glances at one another, and without a word they're off, pushing through the crowd, out into the warm night.

The next day, I meet Iceage mid-afternoon, where they're parked up behind the Garage in Highbury. We find seats outside a nearby pub, where they sip beers and discuss last night's show. "It wasn't pleasant exactly... it shouldn't be, maybe," says Elias. I explain how it's exciting to see Iceage play a real whites-of-their-eyes show, but he isn't sure. "That whole punk mentality, where performer and audience you should look at one another eye to eye... I don't care too much about that. I prefer that we look down on them. To be elevated a little bit."

Now all between the ages of 21 and 23, the last couple of years have done a lot for Iceage, their punk-hooligan styling having given way to something more urbane: crisp shirts, smart shoes, zipped-up Fred Perry jackets. Musically, too, they've moved on. "We rarely play old stuff," says bassist Jakob Tvilling Pless. "Sometimes when it feels right, but we'll tend not to."

→



Iceage: (l–r) Johan Surrballe Wieth, Dan Kjær Nielsen, Elias Bender Rønnenfelt and Jakob Tvilling Pless

"It feels like it comes from a perspective of somewhere where we aren't any more," agrees Elias. "I feel the word for it is that we're detached from whatever it is those old songs are saying. Playing a song called 'New Brigade' four years on... it just feels wrong."

Three weeks later, I meet Iceage again in the Nørrebro district of Copenhagen. The band grab takeaway pizzas and we walk to Assistens Kirkegård, a cemetery in which Danish notables from the author Hans Christian Andersen to the philosopher Søren Kirkegaard are buried. Iceage know it well. Jacob's father, a priest, used to lead tours of its celebrity inhabitants, while drummer Dan Kjær Nielsen's parents live a couple of blocks away – although he's finally moved out of home to an apartment of his own. As kids, they used to sneak beneath these tree canopies and get drunk; now they find themselves in a position of relative adult stability. "Stability is maybe a strong word for it," jokes Johan. "We can pay our rent," clarifies Elias, "but we're always broke."

'Plowing Into The Field Of Love' is Iceage's third album, and if you ask the band, their best. At 49 minutes in length, and covering three sides of vinyl – the fourth to be left blank – it's almost as long as their first two records combined, and sees the band working with an expanded instrumental palette, including trumpet, piano, viola and mandolin. It suggests Iceage have few concerns about challenging their audience – daring them, perhaps, to follow. "We had some hilarious shows in the States where we played only new material, and 'The Lord's Favourite' was not even out by then," laughs Elias. "You could tell people had come to mosh, but when we played it they looked confused." He grins. "I find great pleasure in disappointing people."

This change of sound, he thinks, is natural. "I think the music is less connected to home now... our world has become bigger, and I think the environment around us doesn't have so much of a part." Still, Iceage flatly deny they're pursuing an American sound. "Everyone's go-to reference is The Bad Seeds, The Gun Club. Before it was Joy Division, Wire. It's fine the first couple of times, but when you hear it over and over you just start to hate Wire as a band."

The band were writing 'Plowing Into The Field Of Love' even as 'You're Nothing' hit shelves last February. Elias moved to a friend's apartment in Berlin for a couple of weeks with a stash of notebooks, hoping isolation would breed inspiration. "I was there alone, in this beautifully extravagant, ornamented house. I hung out with my friend Daniel, went to bars. Then, thankfully, I got broke. I couldn't afford a metro ticket. So I was stuck in the apartment and got work done."

The result, he thinks, is the first set of lyrics he's written that he's been fully satisfied with. Writing, he drew on sources from Cormac McCarthy's *All The Pretty Horses* to Werner Herzog's *Fitzcarraldo*, with a generous helping of personal experience. Whereas most rock songs work from a simple emotional palette – happy, sad, angry, in love – the wild mood swing that runs through songs like 'Abundant Living' and 'Simony' offer something more complex, told from the perspective of an unreliable narrator in the grip of what Elias describes as a sort of "megalomania". "It shifts back and forth between helpless self-loathing and these very high thoughts about yourself – climbing the ladder, falling back down and repeating." There's no storyline to it, he adds, "but there's an emotional path you can follow. In a way it's about turning yourself into a character, because you choose how you want to dramatise your own life and feelings."

And is it a happy ending?

"No," he smirks. "It's kind of hopeless."

To record 'Plowing Into The Fields Of Love', Iceage decamped to Sweden's Silence Studio with Nis Bysted, their manager and owner of their Danish label, Escho. Their friend Asger Valentin from the Copenhagen band Synd Og Skam plays trumpet, but mostly they handled additional instrumentation themselves, Johan playing viola, and on 'Against The Moon', Elias toying with an old 19th-century organ he describes as sounding "like an animal breathing".

Iceage's peers used to be the bands that surrounded them in Copenhagen. Now their social circle is wider. Among them they count Dirty Beaches, the bands of the Arizona-based label Ascetic House and Luke Younger of Helm, who they'll be taking on tour with them in October to strafe American punk kids with a half-hour of unsettling industrial ambience.

Once valorised in the Danish press as "teenage bullies full of anger and anxiety", the truth behind Iceage is rather more complex, and much more interesting. 'Plowing Into The Field Of Love' may confuse those who believe Iceage should be an angry, violent punk band, but it's the most authentic document of the band to date.

"People seem to have a lot of ideas and opinions about who we are. It would be nice to prove those people wrong," says Elias. "There is still no manifesto. But I think our ability to communicate our creative impulses is becoming more and more refined over time. I think this is an immense record, it's the thing we've done I'm most proud of. In my opinion we've already won." ■

"Our music is less connected to home now"
Elias Rønnenfelt

THE STORY BEHIND THE SLEEVE

Iceage on the unintentionally apt artwork for 'Plowing Into The Field Of Love'



Jacob: "We spent a lot of time working on a painting for the cover. Our friend Christian came over to my house with a camera to take pictures of it, but when we looked at it we weren't really happy with it. Instead, we were playing around with the camera and decided it might be interesting to take a picture of this palm plant. But we needed something else."

Elias: "We were actually kind of panicking, 'cos the artwork had to be in the next day."

Jacob: "My little brother was in the room, and we were thinking, what would it look like to have a child-like leg in a high-heeled shoe? We were like, 'Hey, come over here...'"

Elias: "There wasn't any symbolism in mind, it was trying to get something aesthetically nice. But it fits the record, I think."


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THE DEMONIC G



Thirteen years on from his last studio album proper, Richard D James' new LP 'Syro' is finally released this week. His famous fans tell *NME* what makes the man such a twisted individual

It started, as most stories about Aphex Twin tend to, with a load of hot air. On August 16, a bright green blimp floated over east London emblazoned with the date "2014". Inside the zero was the telltale alien-like 'A' that first appeared on the cover of Aphex Twin's 'Selected Ambient Works 85–92'.

What did it mean, if anything at all? Three years prior, Richard D James had told a Spanish newspaper that he had "more than 10 or 11" albums ready to go, the first confirmation that he was doing anything beyond sitting back and cackling at the rumours that had proliferated in his absence; his last album proper was 2001's 'Drukqs', followed by the series of 'Analord' EPs in 2005 (released mostly under his AFX alias), while it wasn't until this year that anyone confirmed the long-held suspicion that he had released an EP and full-length as The Tuss in 2007.

Finally, it transpired, he'd decided to let the world hear one of those 10 or 11 albums. 'Syro' – "the most accessible one", he later told *Pitchfork* – draws sounds from every era of Aphex, the pace gradually intensifying across its 64 minutes as if James were cranking a thumbscrew: what begins with intricate ambience passes through funky periods and eventually into the frenetic braindance that he invented. It's an outstanding return to form for an artist whose sole aberration has been his extended absence – not that James, who bills himself as a "fartist" in the 'Syro' press release (put through Google Translate 25 times and "amended" by him), has any regard for reverence or legacy. For that, we turned to some of his most famous fans. Perhaps Steve Reich put it best: "I can't compare him to any composer and I don't think of him in terms of anyone I've ever heard before."

"He's an extremely strong musical personality" Steve Reich



I'd heard of Aphex Twin but I'd never heard a note of his music until I met him in Poland in 2011. To me he was Richard James and I found him a very bright, interesting and intelligent man. We talked a lot about soundwaves and his rework of my piece 'Pendulum Music'. He created a 14-microphone version of the work embedded in these mirrored balls and it was quite a thing. He was able to control the feedback of the microphones because of his great dexterity and wonderful ears. He was also able to tune the feedback and keep it melodically interesting, and that's quite a feat. I had a good time working with him. We had ideas bouncing off each other. He was a very bright and a very serious guy. I was really impressed by him.

I went back and listened to two of his works after I met him and again was impressed by the variety of the work. Some of it sounded spooky, some of it not at all. He's obviously a very strong individual. I can't compare him to any composer and I don't think of him in terms of anyone I've ever heard before. The little I've heard of DJs who remix my music, or just DJs in general, he is nothing like at all. He's definitely his own man and an extremely strong musical personality.

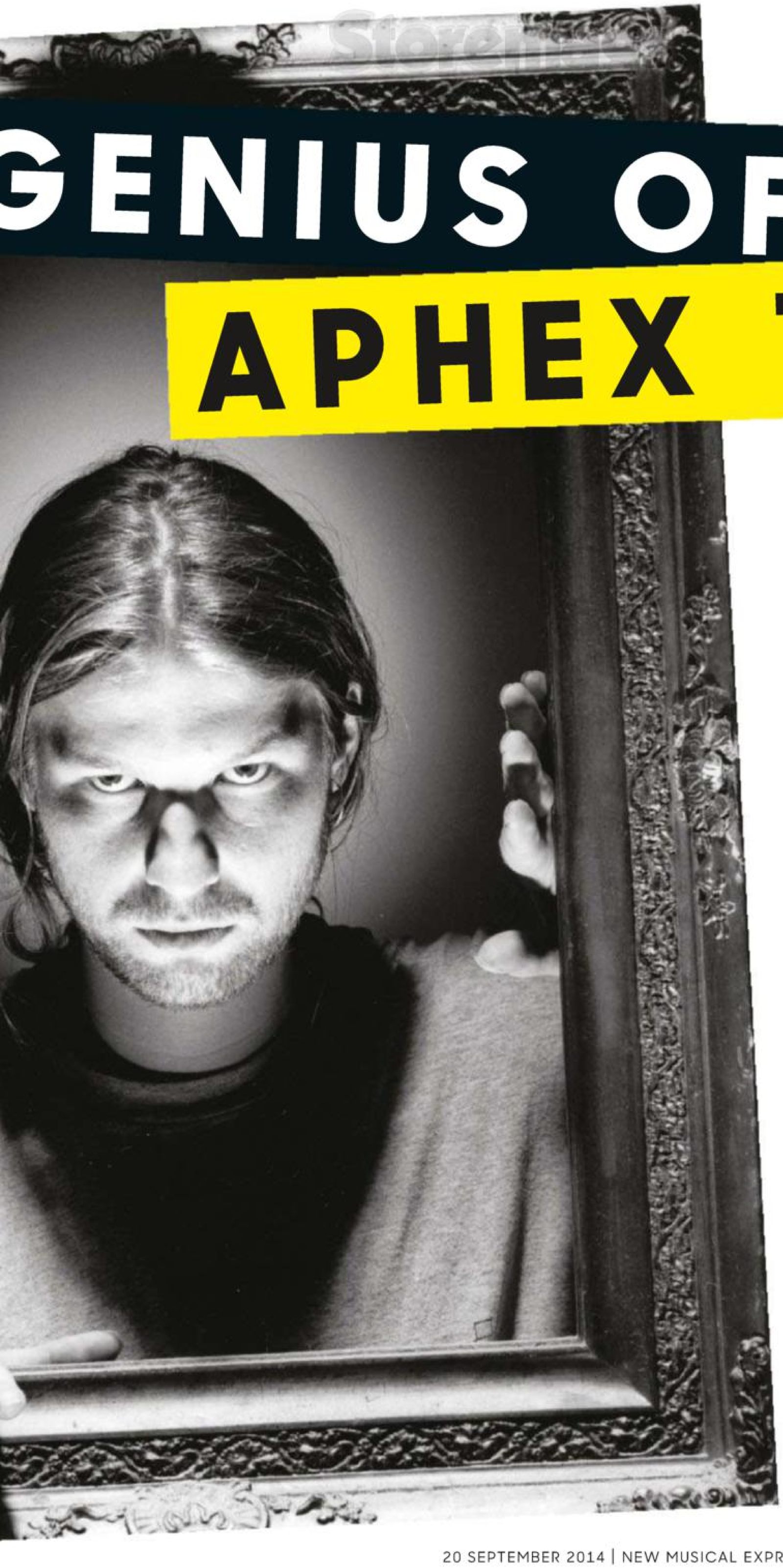
This is a guy who is the real deal. He was really interesting and a pleasure to meet, and I hope that we have the chance to work together again.



"It's like he's on another planet" Faris Badwan, The Horrors

It was [video director and occasional Horrors producer] Chris Cunningham who got me into him. When it comes to creating atmospheres, it's like he's on another planet. It's very alien, his whole thing. His recordings have a lot of character. Sometimes you hear something

GENIUS OF APHEX TWIN



straightforward or simple, and you think anyone could do it, but his music has a character that other people can't get near. It's great music to have on in the background. Me and Chris would hang out at Chris' house and listen to Aphex Twin in the background, and it provided the most amazing atmosphere.

"He provides hilarious fuck-you light relief from the po-faced superstar DJ cliché" Matt Black, Coldcut/ Ninja Tune founder



Aphex was perhaps the first modern electronic tweaker to go really deep into the techniques and tech of the post-house sound. His use of tools like Kyma and SuperCollider was way ahead of the pack. 'Selected Ambient Works 85–92' opened a space for other sounds beyond dance, trip-hop and chill. His legendary escapades, like delivering a random demo tape as the remix he should have been doing, whether true or not, provided hilarious fuck-you light relief from the po-faced superstar muso/DJ clichés. His is that rarity, an underground success who has stayed true to his own path. Cunningham's 'Windowlicker' [video] established him as a visual icon, and everyone else is still catching up.

"He redefined what it means to be an icon" Holly Herndon



He's one of the few people that has managed to seamlessly integrate experimental techniques into club environments without it ever feeling like a compromise. That is an incredibly difficult thing to do, and is something I aspire to achieve in my own work. It is incredibly inspiring to be able to look to a figurehead like that. He managed to make serious work without being austere, and managed to also activate the most powerful, interactive and evocative aspects of humour and play without coming across as novel. He is a special artist. ↦

STEVE DOUBLE



Aphex on the cover of *NME* in October 2001

I also find it inspiring that he's been successful in redefining what it means to be an icon – despite appearing in a lot of the work, he has always been very creative and deliberate in the way in which he is represented. His ideas are always more prominent than his physical form, which I think is an empowering gesture. It really feels like he was creating work that reflected and pushed the possibilities of the time, and that time can never be repeated. This is an important point; the avant-garde is fundamentally a time-sensitive thing, a spirit and an ethos, and so by definition those who would attempt to emulate something that happened 20 years ago would fail in matching the power and momentum of what he has accomplished.

"He's not just evolving electronic music, he's being fucking funny with it too"
Tom Meighan, Kasabian



He's just the fucking greatest, isn't he? Thing about him is he's a pioneer and a piss-taker – he's not just evolving electronic music, he's being fucking funny with it, too, pushing people's buttons with his dark sense of humour. His music's insane, but from what I know about him he's not – he's just a regular guy from Cornwall, wife and kids, the norm. Which makes it all the more amazing – listening to his music, it's so mental, so maddening, you'd expect him to be some sort of deviant psycho. I fucking love him. He's a massive influence and I'll definitely be buying the [new] album the second it's out. Yeah, can't wait.

"There's an attention to detail that is inspiring"
Steven Ellison, Flying Lotus



I first heard him in college – I was listening to Aphex, Amon Tobin, Squarepusher, a lot of drum'n'bass. That's when I gave up on hip-hop, when I started digging into that stuff. It was inspiring – there's an attention to detail, a sense of humour about it. Along with his weird detuning, all of it together's quite unique. His tracks all have different moods, from the AFX stuff to his ambient works. I listened to 'Stone In Focus' [from 'Selected Ambient Works Vol II'] so many times in college. I remember listening to that before I went to bed, which was totally different to the 'Drukqs' stuff. When I made my [still unreleased] ambient album I was aiming for a similar thing, a dreaming thing.

"He made me realise the possibilities in what had seemed like a finite world of predictable music"
Travis Stewart, Machinedrum



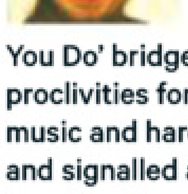
Growing up in the '90s meant there were only a few ways to find out about music, new or old. My sources early on were MTV, magazines and record shops. There were only a couple of shops around where I grew up that carried electronic music. Every time I would go to these shops there was always this mischievous face staring at me from the racks, taunting me to listen. One day I finally decided to buy the creepy-looking 'Richard D James Album' before that face started haunting my dreams. I listened to it for the first time while mowing the lawn; I wasn't sure if the mower was breaking or if it was in the music. Something was happening to my brain; I couldn't believe what I was hearing. I realised there were so many possibilities in what had seemed like a finite world of predictable music. All these new ideas started flowing as I did the final lap around the yard. Never would I have thought that a landmark moment in my life would happen while cutting the grass. ■

Turn to page 50 for *NME*'s review of 'Syro'

TWIN'S PEAKS

A deliberately controversial top five Richard D James albums

1. Aphex Twin
Selected Ambient Works 85-92 (Apollo, 1992)



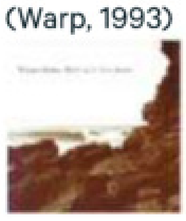
Richard D James' debut drew from work amassed during his secondary school and college years in Cornwall. Recorded on primitive equipment, the sound quality reportedly made worse by his cat's interference, it's nonetheless a landmark ambient record and the first major invitation to his strange world. As a vocal sample from *Willy Wonka & The Chocolate Factory* put it, to listen was to join "*the music makers... the dreamers of dreams*".

2. Aphex Twin
...I Care Because You Do (Warp, 1995)



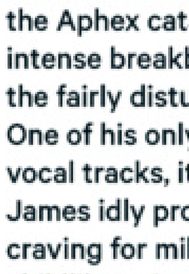
Following 1994's 'Selected Ambient Works Volume II', '...I Care Because You Do' bridged James' proclivities for atmospheric music and hardcore techno, and signalled a decade-long break to his analogue era. Unlike the two earlier albums, both of which bore variations on the Aphex insignia, '...I Care...' was James' first record to feature his trademark warped face on the cover.

3. Polygon Window
Surfing On Sine Waves (Warp, 1993)



When James was offered the chance to release a record in the US, naturally he chose this early pseudonym, though it couldn't have been by anyone else. Like '...I Care...', it's caught between his two main musical impulses. The titles pay tribute to his Cornish home – see the glimmering 'Redruth School' and a bassier 'Portreath Harbour' – while the recording location, listed as "Llannerlog studios", acknowledges his home village of Lanner.

4. AFX
Chosen Lords (Rephlex, 2006)



Released in the first half of 2005, the 'Analord' EPs comprised 42 songs over three and a half hours. The following year, James – as AFX – released 'Chosen Lords'. Uncharacteristically accessible, it comprised about 25 per cent of the 'Analord' material, making good on 'Drukqs', which got mixed reviews, with an hour of pristine acid.

5. Aphex Twin
Richard D James Album (Warp, 1996)

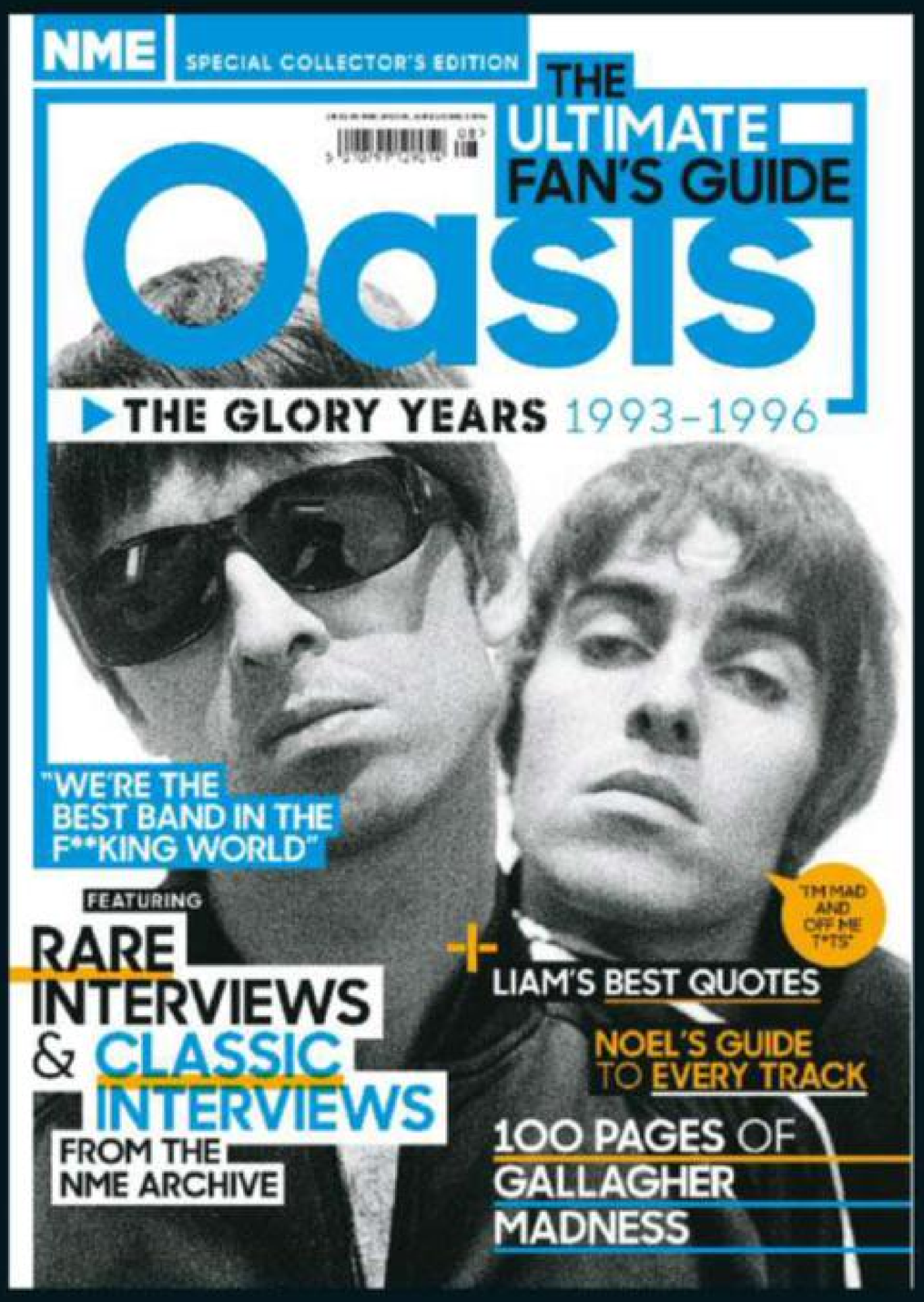


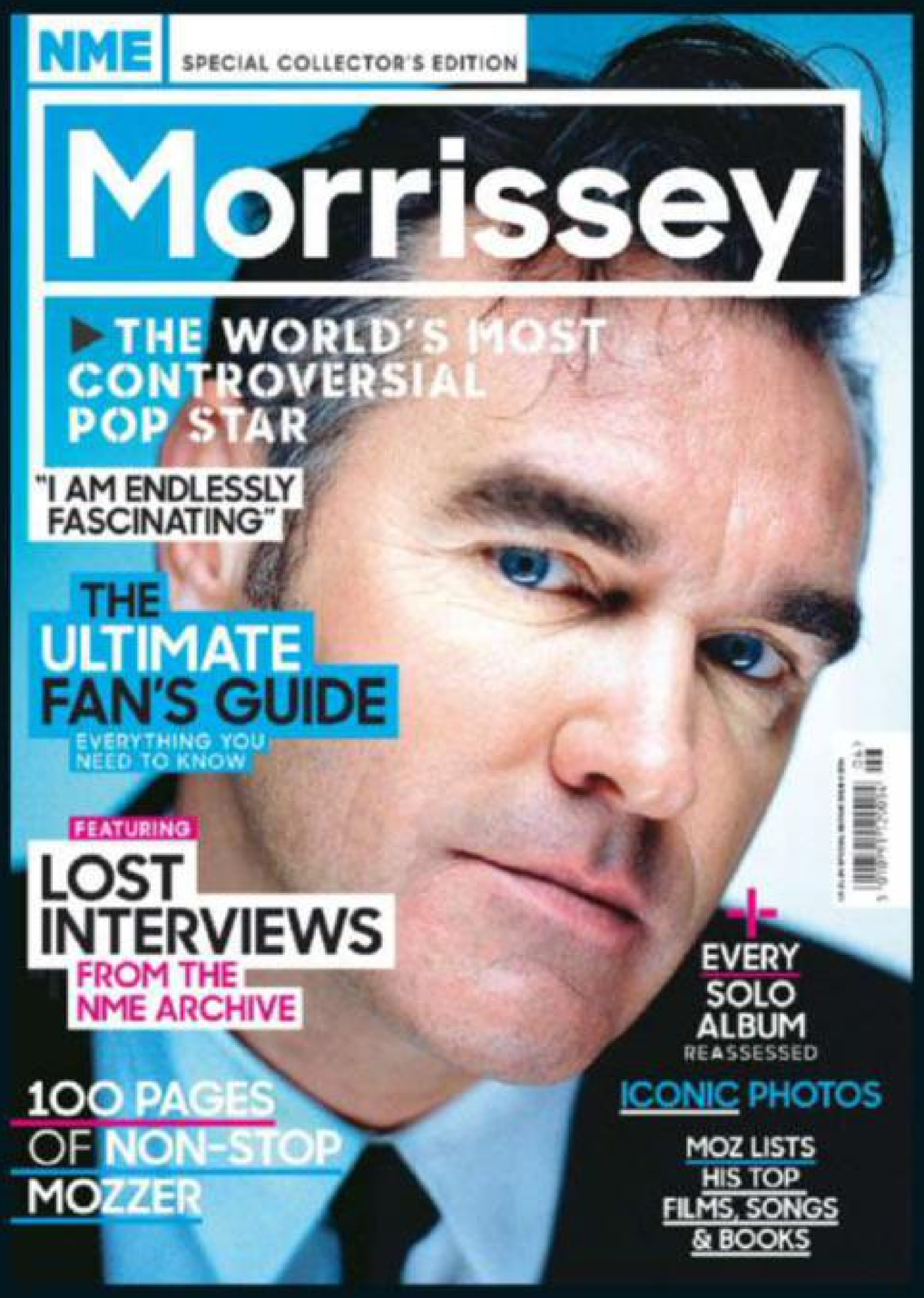
In case the 'uncanny valley'-worthy face leering from the cover didn't give it away, 'Richard D James Album' is one of the most confrontational releases in the Aphex catalogue, featuring intense breakbeat, jungle and the fairly disturbing 'Milkman'. One of his only straight-ahead vocal tracks, it starts with James idly professing his craving for milk in an eerie, childlike voice, before deciding he'd prefer "*some milk from the milkman's wife's tits*".

SHAMIL TANNA, DEAN CHALKLEY

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WORLD IN

Following a year of intense transatlantic collaborations, Ross Birchard has returned to his solo work with new EP 'Chimes'. Al Horner hears why Hudson Mohawke will always be his main focus

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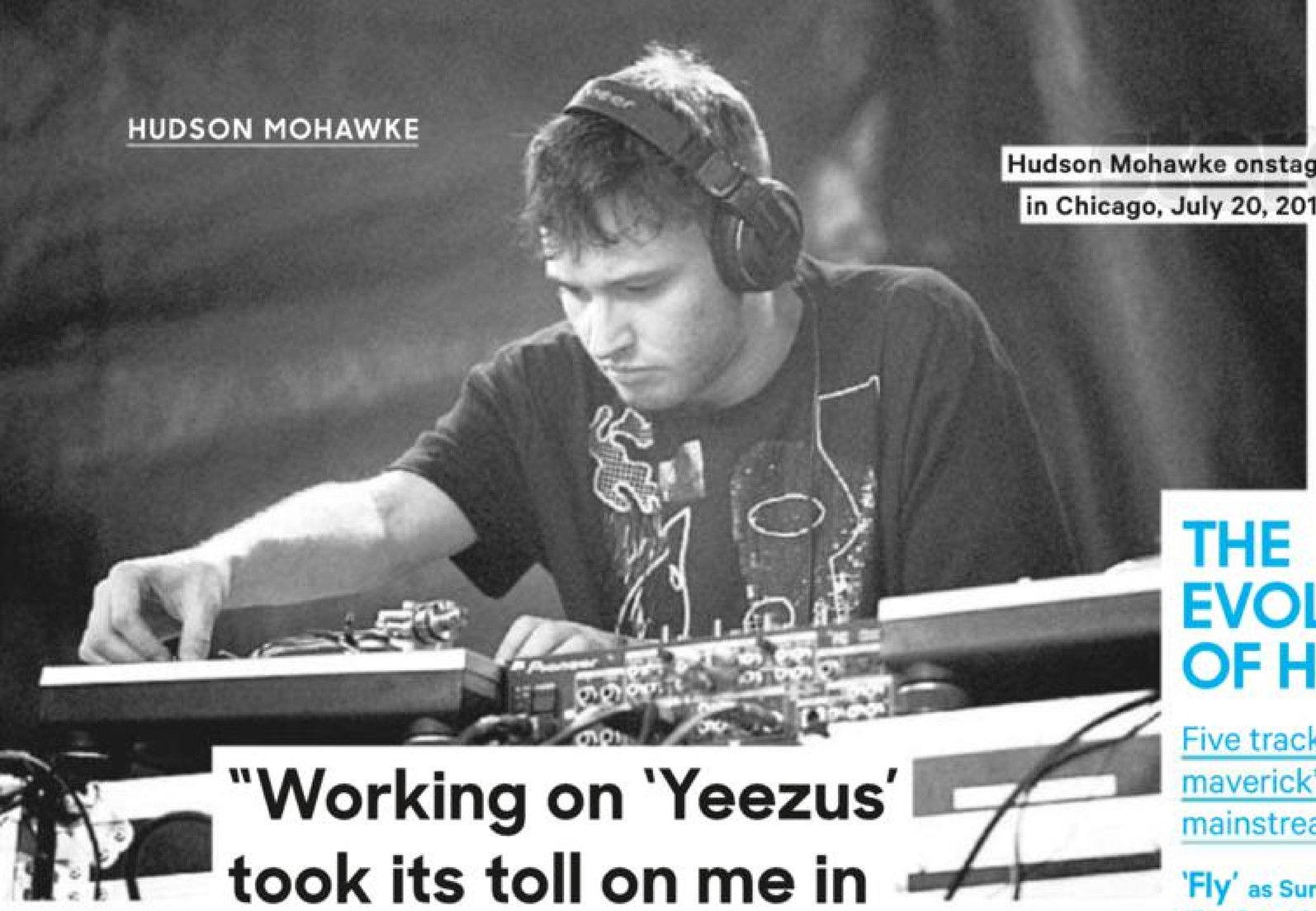


-MOTION

This time last year Ross Birchard was, by his own admission, "absolutely fucked". Summer 2013 had thundered past in a sleepless blur of studio sessions, festival shows, woozy all-nighters and wearying transatlantic flights, as the busy reality of his new life in hip-hop's upper echelon caught up with the producer better known as Hudson Mohawke. After five years as a cult IDM prodigy, releasing a slow but consistently brilliant trickle of effervescent electronica on Warp, a switch to booming bass minimalism as one half of trap duo TNGHT in late 2012 had thrown him unexpectedly onto daytime UK radio (with 'Higher Ground') and into the path of Kanye West, who enlisted the 28-year-old to craft beats on his next album.

"Working on 'Yeezus' took its toll on me in a very real way. It hit a point where I was just... *brrsshhh*," he says, a shower of white noise his only way of illustrating the clusterfuck of activity that ensued. The dark sonic murk of that record only further blackened his state of mind, and Birchard only just held it all together: "I would play three shows in Europe at the weekend, then fly to LA to stay awake in a studio for four days, before flying right back to Europe to start the whole week over again. I was mentally and physically all over the place."

Meeting the Glaswegian outside his newly refurbished central London studio, an underground lair beneath a chain patisserie just off Tottenham Court Road, there's no evidence of exhaustion or burnout etched on him today. "This summer I made a point of really focusing on my solo stuff, so it's been a lot more chilled," he says as we make our way into his studio control room. It's surprisingly tidy, with only a few pointers amid the racks of analogue keyboards to his new-found superstar lifestyle as an official member of Kanye's prolific GOOD Music mob: a Louis Vuitton bag on a table here, an ashtray of discarded blunts there. He *is* wearing a faintly Kanye-esque combo of white jeans, expensive ski boot trainers and designer hoodie, which trails down past his knees like a trench coat. After a while in his gentle, almost mousey presence, you sort of forget it, though. ↦



Hudson Mohawke onstage in Chicago, July 20, 2014

"Working on 'Yeezus' took its toll on me in a very real way"

I'm here to hear about 'Chimes', his new four-track EP, which brings to an end a three-year wait for new Hudson Mohawke solo music. Where 2009 debut album 'Butter' and 2011 EP 'Satin Panthers' were frenzied rushes of skittering beats and Manga-bright colours, 'Chimes' is harder, slower and more sophisticated. Its title track, the soundtrack to a new MacBook TV ad, is taking his career further towards mainstream territory: at the time of writing, it's the UK's most Shazamed song and steadily creeping up the iTunes chart.

Echoes of recent collaborations come thick and fast: deep-scorching horns straight out of TNGHT's trap terror book, washy keys and bass rattles like the ones he conjured last year for Drake ('Connect') and Pusha T ('Hold On'), not to mention its samples of growling dogs, cribbed from 'Yeezus' standout 'Black Skinhead'. But these are no simple GOOD Music cutting room floor throwaways, Birchard insists: "These songs have more of me. There's a freedom that goes with doing Hudson Mohawke where I can do whatever I want. That's why it'll always be my main focus, no matter what."

At 28, despite having neglected his solo career, Birchard is one of British electronic music's most celebrated names, beloved by artists from far beyond the dance and rap spectrums he specialises in. Björk asked him to remix her track 'Virus' in 2012; Kasabian's Tom Meighan calls him a "futurist and a visionary"; and Antony Hegarty and Yannis Philippakis have both recently talked him into collaborating, he reveals. "The album I'm producing for Antony is really cool as fuck," he says, grabbing his laptop to play me part of an icy, affecting track full of chopped up vocal loops, unmistakable HudMo fizzing keyboards and a gospel choir. He's not ready to unveil his work with Yannis and really won't be drawn on it, but promises "it'll be pretty special".

Not everyone's so keen on him. Some electronica die-hards who fell in love with 'Butter' have accused him of cashing in – choosing a more lucrative but less creative life at the right hand of pop culture's biggest ego over the chance to be the next in a long line of Warp pioneers, like Autechre or Aphex Twin. "Those opportunities aren't something you pass up," says Birchard, unapologetically – though he does admit the success of fellow Glasgow-born producer and Warp labelmate Rustie did spur him on slightly to make 'Chimes' and resurrect his solo career. "Yeah, of course!" he smirks. "But don't tell him that."

Birchard and Rustie, real name Russell Whyte, were both integral figures in a mid-'00s Glasgow electronic scene, centered around the labels-cum-club nights LuckyMe and Numbers, that went on to help define British bass music. Setting up shop in Jamaica Street's The Sub Club and other venues across the city; "It was what I imagined dance music could be as a kid, the sense of community," says Birchard.

Growing up in west Glasgow in the university town around Hillhead, his first exposure to music came via his father – an American radio DJ who filled his childhood home with soul and funk seven-inches. Things got serious when his elder cousin began to give him a glimpse of DIY jungle and rave culture.

"It was this new world I found really thrilling. Obviously I couldn't actually go to a rave so I'd listen to cassettes and try to imagine the madness," he says. When that got old, he began composing on a budget PlayStation game called *Music*, and started out with turntablism when he got a set of decks for Christmas. By 15, he was Britain's youngest ever DMC World DJ Championship finalist. "Not much is too different to how I approach music now," he says. "It's basically copying your favourite people and fucking around."

Right now Birchard is putting the finishing touches to the second full-length Hudson Mohawke album, pencilled in for spring 2015, and his current favourite artists are all associated with opinion-splitting electro imprint PC Music. Discussion of their ADHD art-pop segues nicely into chat about pop's potential in 2014. "When I signed to Warp, at first I was leaping up and down in happiness, then it was like, 'Oh, I actually have to put something out now.' That's when the self-doubt began to kick in and nothing was good enough."

Doing what he nonchalantly calls "the Kanye stuff", however, didn't daunt him, and instead renewed his faith in what could topple the mainstream. "Going in there with those guys who make hit records and seeing that they don't do anything different to you was massively relieving and liberating. Their process is the same as yours. So now nothing feels off limits." So, if offered the chance to work with a pop or MOR act, would he do it? Fellow electronic impresario Jon Hopkins worked with Coldplay. Does that sort of thing tempt him? "I'd never rule it out. It's something I'd like to try."

For now, following the release of 'Chimes', there's a second album to tweak, an 11-hour long rap production he's hoping will earn him a place in the Guinness World Records to finish and the small matter of more Kanye collaborations. "I was last over with him at the start of summer, working on things. He's really hands-on, present for everything the entire time. I don't like to say too much," he explains, a smile forming. "I wanna kinda keep on people's good sides..." ■

THE EVOLUTION OF HUDMO

Five tracks on the maverick's climb to mainstream status

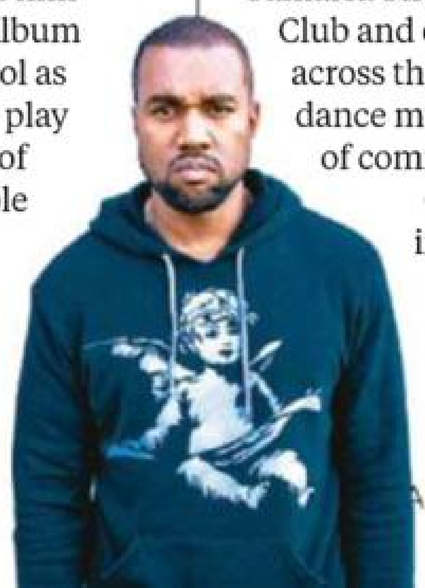
'Fly' as Surface Empire, (Far Cut, 2005)
A collaboration with Glasgow MC Dom Sum, HudMo soon left behind this track's wailing rock guitar sounds, but kept its low-slung hip-hop beats.

'Future' as Heralds Of Change (All City, 2007)
Thrilling bleeps'n'beats electronica full of airy synths and twisted gospel vocals, as HudMo's love for Warp and Planet Mu takes hold.

'Yonard' as Hudson Mohawke (Warp, 2009)
From his 'Polyfolk Dance' EP, his first release after signing to Warp, this took the keyboard chaos of his previous output to glitchy new heights, with echoes of Luke Vibert.

'Bugg'n' as TNGHT, (Warp/LuckyMe, 2012)
A move into thumping bass music, collaborating with Canadian beatmaker Lunice. The pair split after one EP, but "might come back to it one day", says Birchard.

'Bliss' on 'Kanye West Presents GOOD Music: Cruel Summer' (GOOD Music, 2012)
His first work for Kanye's clan, and proof his productions could cut it at the highest level. Its chiming bells and squealing synths provide the perfect backdrop for John Legend's svelte vocal.

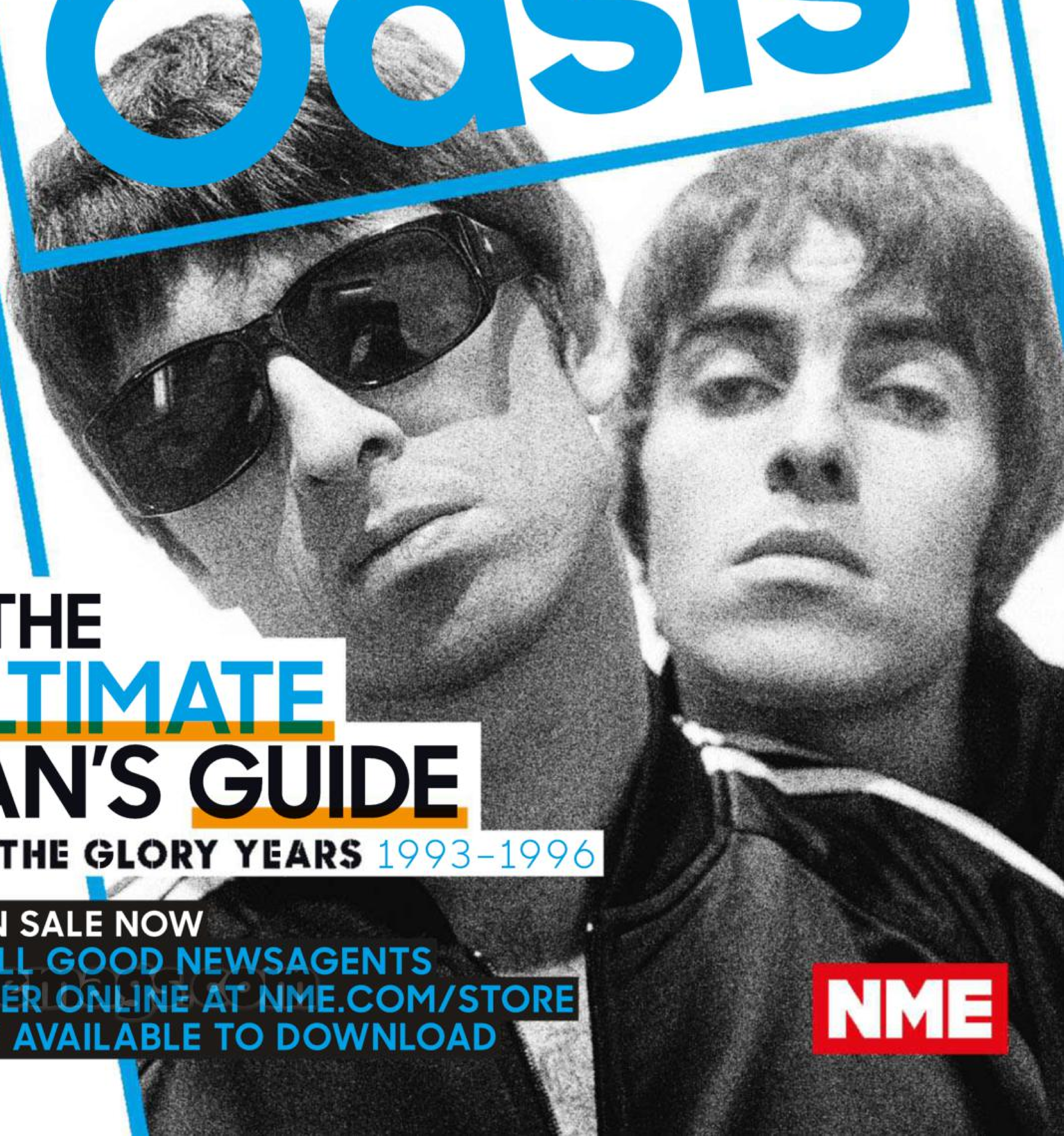


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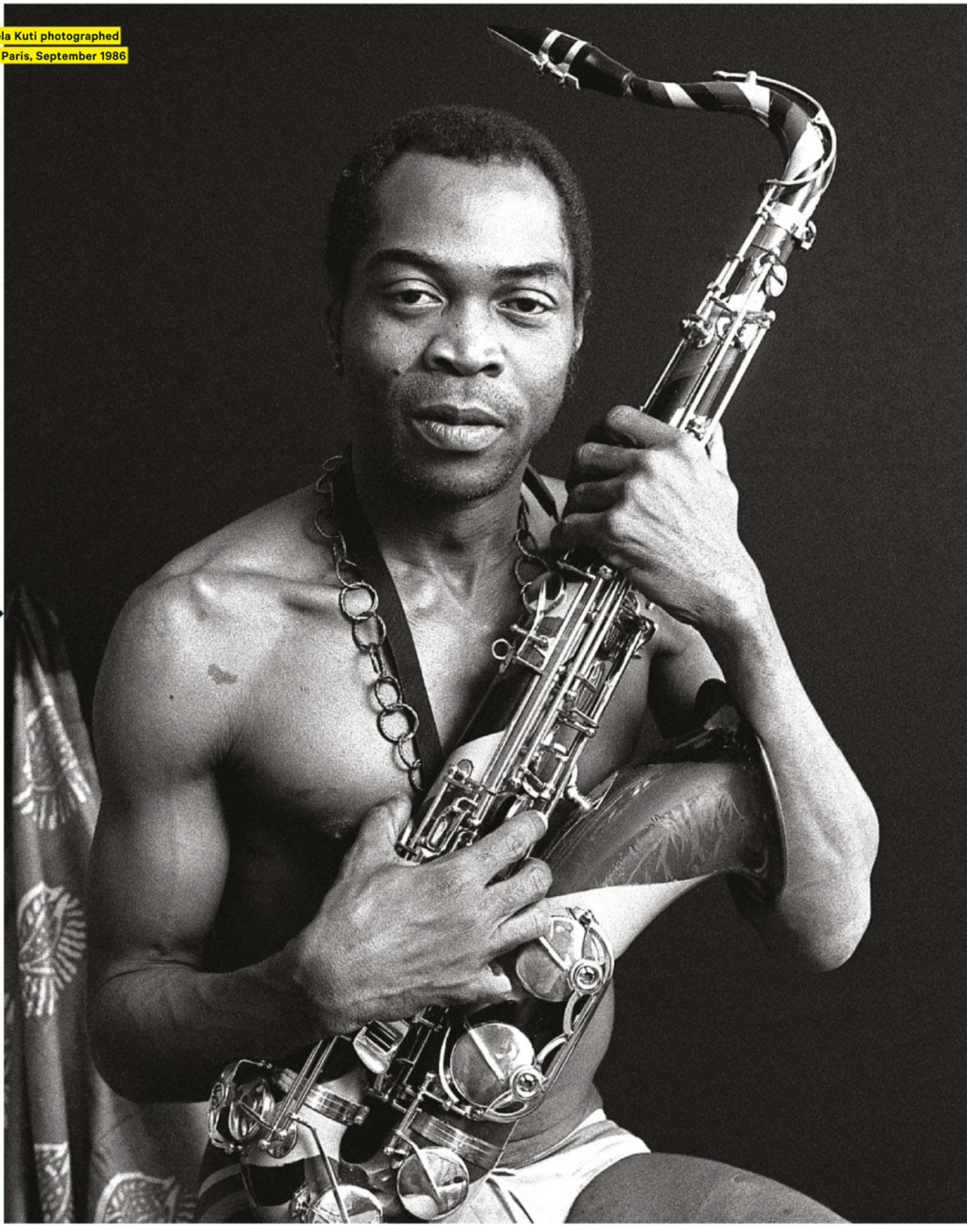


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Fela Kuti photographed in Paris, September 1986

NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS | 20 SEPTEMBER 2014

FROM THE VAULTS

Audience with the rebel king

NME, 25 October 1986

As a new set of Fela Kuti reissues – curated by Brian Eno – is released, we revisit Len Brown's interview with the Afrobeat pioneer. Fresh out of prison, the Nigerian hero reveals his righteous presidential ambitions

PORTRAIT: TIM JARVIS

It's hot as hell in here. The heat is on, 12 floors up, mid-'80s. A gaggle of colourfully clad women stare at me, amused by my sweaty pinkness. It could be sun-stroked Lagos, anywhere typically tropical, but it's Paris in October.

A big-eyed, very naughty, very small boy continually punches me in the leg; his sister giggles at my discomfort. As if this wasn't enough, the man next to me is wearing only red and blue underpants. Apart from spiritual blasts on his saxophone and scratching his scrotal sac, he assures me he will soon be the President of Nigeria.

He is, how you say, a hero: a celebrated musician of some 50 albums; a world-famous political dissident; a man who married 27 women in one day; the possessor of a legendary libido. In layman's terms he's a cross between Robin Hood and Bob Marley – a Nigerian James Last, a bandleader whose fame has risen above and beyond the category 'superstar'. For nearly two years, until April 24, he languished in Kirikiri jail, found guilty of a trumped-up charge of currency smuggling. No jury, no appeal. He was released when the judge, who sentenced him to over five years, admitted the trial was rigged.

His detention was politically motivated. He's a rebel king, a pretender to the presidency, and for the past decade he has been a continuous thorn in the Nigerian authorities' side. He refused to be silenced and used his music as a means of exposing the dishonesty and corruption of successive governments. At 48, and despite prison, his love of life and his life of love have preserved his physique. In Africa where the ample girth and wealth of leaders is often associated with power, corruption and lies, this muscular torso could be interpreted as a sign of honesty.

The pre-weed, pre-coital Fela Anikulapo Kuti is a rare find. He blinks, he stretches, he scratches. He stares out over Paris in the late-afternoon light. He's worked his band, Egypt 80, through the night, procreating his familiar brass- and keyboard-dominated big sound, based on traditional African rhythms and featuring the call-and-response vocals of Fela and his queens. 'Just Like That' will be his first work since prison, and it's going to be more political, more direct in its attack on institutional injustice, declaring war on bureaucratic bullshit.

"No-one wants the military, the country is telling them to quit. The military are saying they are laying the conditions for a civilian government, but how can you bring a tailor to lay the foundation for a building when he's supposed to sew clothes? A tailor or a shoemaker cannot construct a building. Yet in Nigeria soldiers want to lay the foundation of government. It's madness."

Fela's solution is to stand for the Presidency – in the 1990 elections, if not before: "My popularity is so great now that I could even be made President by acclamation. I don't think anyone will have the guts to stand against me."

Undoubtedly he takes his political ambitions seriously. Why else would he have suffered so terribly for his beliefs? In '77, during the reign of Obasanjo, Fela's self-proclaimed independent state of Kalakuta was invaded by the military. Along with many of his followers he was brutally assaulted and jailed; the Kuti women were raped (some with bottles and bayonets); his home was burnt down; and his 77-year-old mother died from her injuries. In '81 he was detained again, charged with armed robbery and, he claims, the authorities tried to kill him.

And yet, while some take his presidential candidature seriously and even fear his election, others regard his political dream as laughable. He's been compared to Screaming Lord Sutch of the Monster Raving Loony Party. John Howe of *West Africa* wrote that Fela "wants to *purify* Nigerian society, not from the paternal posture of a real politician, but like a cheeky small boy jeering at the open fly of the passing banker."

His elder brother Olikoye is a minister in the current government. "You cannot make a wrong system work," Fela argues, "he's trying his best but they're using him to give them credibility." So he has the contacts. And, in the face of the unpopular military, Fela's vision of democracy combined with his rebel ↦



Fela: musical visionary, political dissident and husband to 27 wives

FROM THE VAULTS

superstar status surely has all the romantic ingredients for mass appeal. But what exactly would he do for Nigeria?

"I want to go everywhere and play my music. Imagine the President playing music to announce budgets and policies. I want to preach spiritual and political changes, that Pan-Africanism is the stepping stone to human internationalism. That all human beings are one race; black, white, any coloured shit, it's just a superficial cover of the inside of human life. Africa will teach that racism is negative, an institutional problem.

"I think artists will remove this negative stereotyped trend in people's thoughts. Artists must be the future leaders of men: they will aim for more freedom of thought, more participation in what will bring happiness. People will tend to remove themselves from what causes violence; the Reagan/Thatcher-type leaders cannot do this. Their mind is too institutionally stereotyped."

Fighting talk for cultural freedom, spiritual enlightenment, peace. But what's this? He says that when he becomes President he will "create a law to make all citizens members of the police and military force so as to legally annihilate violence". Sounds ominous, shades of Robespierre. And what's to stop the Babangida military government from jailing Fela tomorrow?

"The people. My popularity has gone beyond that now. My last experience has really broken the camel's back as far as the people are concerned. You can't keep harassing one man in Africa like that for a long time, people will go against the government. It was getting too much for them even before I went to prison, too attritious. But I'm not putting my guards down, I expect anything at any time."

They're everywhere. Hanging around the studio, sleeping in the hallway, cluttering the room. It's like a medieval court; Fela's subjects, his women, some of his 27 queens, mistresses, lovers. Of course, in the West he's taken some stick over the years for his "traditional" views of women. Let's recall that he wrote 'Lady' ('72) and 'Mattress' ('75)

"No-one has the guts to stand against me for President"

Fela Kuti

attacking women's liberation, ridiculing demands for equality and, in the case of the latter, depicting women as mere procreation machines, vessels for man's desire. Does he regret those sentiments?

"You see, what I said in 'Mattress' then, I did not know I was going to arrive at this conclusion of marriage today. It was a different period of my life and I did not know how to say it. Man must not take woman matters seriously, he must not put woman matters in his head. If you do you will get sick. Women are mattress, but you must be nice to them, and make them happy. That is what they are and that is what life is about. Use your money to make women happy, make them dress well, make them fine."

It's pathetic coming from the son of Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti, a pioneer of women's rights, who met Mao and Nkrumah (Fela's Pan-African hero), and set up the powerful Nigerian Women's Union in the 1940s. He says she makes him see what life is all about, that he communicates with her and sees no contradiction.

Maybe I envy Fela's ease with women, but I don't see women as merely "something you sleep with". OK, so it's a different world, a different culture, but if we resent the hot-crotched metal muthas and macho rappers for their negative views of women then surely we must resent Fela too. Cultural, social and economic excuses could no doubt be made for every category.

"Sex is life," says Fela, profoundly. "That's why I don't understand those spiritualists, those monks who say they don't fuck women. Women are the source of power in the kind of spiritualism I understand. You cannot have power without women's participation. Sex is the main source of power. When people say that sex makes you weak, sex makes you older, that's bullshit.

"People who start all these moralistic trends and shit, they could be impotent. For me, I see with my eyes, I walk with my legs, I work with my hands, my stomach takes my food and I need my *prick*. It's as important as any other part of my body. Sex is everything clean."

But how does Aids fit into your spiritual scheme of things?

"It gets to the point now where they say that there's Aids all over the world, so because there's Aids I must not fuck? OK, very soon people will not fuck. But I will fuck because I do not believe that I use my sex wrongfully, so I do not think I will be the victim of sexual disease. When you die, everything that you do in this world, you are going to get your judgement for every evil. So when you are reincarnated and you have been using sex for evil purposes you'll be reincarnated as a homosexual."

Eh up, we're back at the witchpot.

"That pot breeds societies, it breeds behaviour in societies, secret societies, cults. The punishment for stealing the pot is centuries of homosexuality in Europe."

But not in Africa?

"Oh no, we don't have homosexuals; at least in Nigeria it's possibly only one per cent." (If that's true, one per cent of the current Nigerian population is approximately 767,000 people).

We've reached stalemate here. On women and homosexuality we're worlds apart. But the light is failing, the night's approaching and it's time for Fela to get some 'rest'. He dismisses his entourage; only the chosen one remains. And me. "Make yourself comfortable," he says kindly, taking her into his bedroom next door. So I'm sitting there, listening to the telly, *French telly*, to drown out the cries of passion. Fela's back on the job, and I feel a right goosegog. ■

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT

The decline of an African legend

SLOWING DOWN

Fela released just one more original studio album, 1989's 'Beasts Of No Nation'. After some middling '80s records, it was a return to form: the cover featured the likes of Thatcher and Reagan as horned, bloody animals, and its lyrics dealt with apartheid.

TROUBLED TIMES

In 1993 Fela and some comrades were arrested and charged with murder. He got off, but in 1996 unknown gunmen opened fire on his house, attempting to assassinate him. On March 7, 1997, he performed in public for the last time at a show overrun by police.

FELA FELLED

Rumours had been spreading about the state of Fela's health – contrary to his assumptions, keeping himself "clean" had not protected him from the Aids virus. In July 1997, he collapsed at home in Nigeria. He died on August 2 of complications resulting from the syndrome.

REX

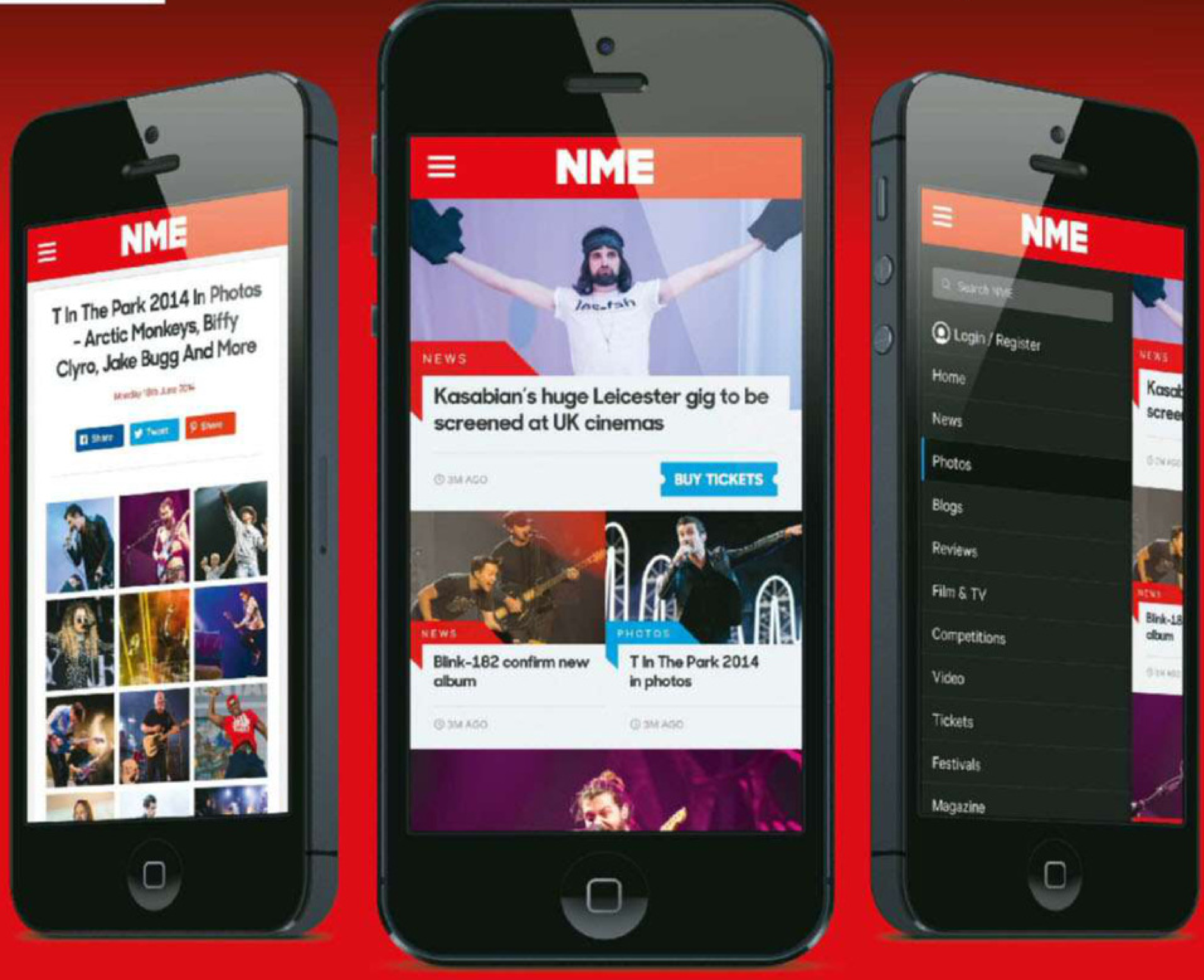
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NME ALBUM OF THE WEEK



Aphex Twin
Syro

Richard D James' long-awaited return is a banging reminder of why the Cornish raver is one of music's true innovators



We've binned 13 calendars since the last Aphex Twin album, 2001's 'Drukqs', which raises an obvious question: why now? Forty-three years old and certainly a millionaire several times over, Cornish rave goblin Richard D James has nothing to prove. Over five years in the '90s, he perfected psychedelic hippy rave (1992's 'Digeridoo'), recorded perhaps the best ambient album ever (1994's 'Selected Ambient Works Volume II'), then teamed up with director Chris Cunningham to realise your worst drill'n'bass nightmares with 1997's 'Come To Daddy' and its horrifying video. Somewhere along the way, he decided his royalties would be well spent on a post-World War II tank. Aphex invented the archetype of the mad techno boffin, and if he decides to pack up his creaky old synthesizers and retire to a farm in Cornwall, who's gonna stop him?

But he's back. And thank God. Because 'Syro' is amazing: bug-eyed, banging rave that sounds quintessentially Aphex while not quite sounding like anything he's done before. It makes zero concessions to the modern day. There are no Skrillex-style bass drops, no trap beats, no Sam Smith guest spots. Just a new clutch of hyper-intricate electro-funk jams so crammed with melody it feels like they might at any minute pop and coat you in goo.

Emblematic is the opening 'minipops 67 (source field mix)', live versions of which have been knocking around YouTube for some time. Blippy breakbeat with a bit of 'Windowlicker'-style vocal ooze and a melody that swings between childlike innocence and alien disquiet, it's genetically engineered to paint a big smile across your gob. It's merely an aperitif, though, for

ILLUSTRATION: JIMMY TURRELL

'XMAS_EVET10 (thanaton3 mix)'. Over 10 minutes long, it's one of the tracks of Aphex's career – a compound of misty synthesizers and floppy breakbeats that, even six or seven minutes in is still tossing unexpected sounds into the mix: the ringing strings of a dulcimer, demented slap bass, a child's voice.

Whereas 'Drukqs' sometimes felt alienating or punishing, 'Syro' charms and beguiles. There are wild cards, like the funky drums of 'produk 29' or the jackhammer pound of '180db_'. More often, though, it sounds like '4 bit 9d api+e+6', an outrageously jammy number that's not unlike 'Rushup Edge', the 2007 album by The Tuss (itself almost certainly an Aphex pseudonym). It seldom slouches, but if anything 'Syro' quickens the pace in its second half, with tracks that lurch into demented digi-funk bangers and cartoon junglism, peaking with the beautiful 'PAPAT4 (pineal mix)'. Then, the album closer suddenly confounds expectations. Debuted at London's Barbican in 2012, 'aisatsana' is a serene piano piece redolent of French composer Erik Satie and set to distant birdsong, conjuring up images of Richard sat alone in his study at dawn or dusk, prodding at dusty keys, patio doors flung open to the outside world.

So why now? The daft blimp announcing it, the Kemp Folds-style publicity photo, the press biog that calls him a "celebrated and influential electronic fartist" – none of this suggests he's a man kept up at night worrying about his good reputation. Who knows, maybe there were just too many melodies kicking around in his brain, and he had to funnel them out. Best we just give thanks and ask, optimistically: when's the next one? ■ LOUIS PATTISON

9

'SYRO' – THE ARTWORK



The 'Syro' packaging is typically Aphex in its mischief and bloody-mindedness. Produced by long-time Warp affiliates The Designer's Republic, it's designed like a printed receipt, detailing the track titles, their BPMs, and a breakdown of all the costs that went into record, including such gripping promotional tactics as "window posters in Dublin, Ireland" and "refreshments for LA listening party". A special 'Syro' edition, limited to 200, will present the album in a triple vinyl edition with "intaglio print from a metalwork mother plate" and a silk-screened acrylic slipcase. Yours for £250, available via ballot at Warp's online shop. Or you could just buy the CD.

▶THE DETAILS

▶**RELEASE DATE** September 22 ▶**LABEL** Warp ▶**PRODUCER** Richard D James ▶**LENGTH** 64:31 ▶**TRACKLISTING** ▶1. minipops 67 (source field mix) ▶2. XMAS_EVET10 (thanaton3 mix) ▶3. produk 29 ▶4. 4 bit 9d api+e+6 ▶5. 180db_ ▶6. CIRCLONT6A (syrobonkus mix) ▶7. fz pseudotimestretch+e+3 ▶8. CIRCLONT14 (shrymoming mix) ▶9. syro u473t8+e (piezoluminescence mix) ▶10. PAPAT4 (pineal mix) ▶11. s950tx16wasr10 (earth portal mix) ▶12. aisatsana ▶**BEST TRACK** XMAS_EVET10 (thanaton3 mix)

MORE ALBUMS

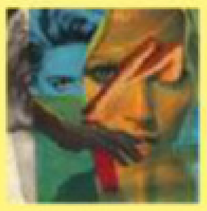
The Drums
Encyclopedia Minor



There's something quite tragic about The Drums. Ahead of this, their third album, drummer Connor Hanwick left the band, leaving childhood friends singer Jonathan Pierce and guitarist Jacob Graham to pick up the pieces. Unsurprisingly, the sun and surf of their original sound has been dropped for a deflated and threadbare aesthetic. But 'Encyclopedia', their first new music in three years, is a cohesive listen. Pierce makes loneliness sound desirable on the sweet 'Break My Heart', while keys and guitars add fleshy atmosphere to album highlight 'Kiss Me Again'. Sadness prevails though, Pierce sounds irretrievably bleak on 'There Is Nothing Left': "*I thought we were important, but we don't matter at all*". ■ BEN HOMEWOOD

6

Broncho
Just Hip Enough To Be Woman Dine Alone



While Oklahoma trio Broncho (the 'ch' is soft) aren't taking any huge risks on their second record, they are updating their power pop sound a little. 'Just Hip Enough To Be Woman' matches the kind of unadulterated racket that sounds like it's been flung together in a garage surrounded by empty cans of cheap beer with something altogether glossier. While the quartet's reference points (Weezer, Pavement) are hardly unusual, their sound is fresh and invigorating. Tracks like 'Deena' and 'What' would have sounded great blasting out at messy afternoon barbecues this summer; it's a shame the release date just missed it. ■ TOM GOODWYN

7



Goat
Commune

The Swedish cultists' second album offers Afrobeat rhythms and righteous psychedelia

The pedigree of their 2012 debut 'World Music' was such that nobody questioned Goat's fanciful backstory, involving a remote village in Sweden, voodoo mysticism and witch doctors. The seven-piece's heavy, physical take on psychedelic rock is even more convincing on 'Commune'. Compared to its predecessor, the production is snappier and helps lift the veil on their righteous noise. What lies beneath is frequently glorious, especially in the second half, where rolling, Afrobeat-infused rhythms underpin their best work. 'Goatchild', a bastard offspring of Link Wray and Swans, buzzes hypnotically with duelling wah and fuzz guitars. Instrumental track 'Bondye' offers temporary respite before they cleave apart their own musical landscape on searing closer 'Gathering Of Ancient Tribes'. Whether you believe their tall tales or not, what's certain is that, two studio albums and a live LP in, Goat are on quite a trip. ■ ROB WEBB



8

▶THE DETAILS

▶**RELEASE DATE** September 22 ▶**LABEL** Rocket Recordings ▶**PRODUCER** Goat ▶**LENGTH** 38:52 ▶**TRACKLISTING** ▶1. Talk To God ▶2. Words ▶3. The Light Within ▶4. To Travel The Path Unknown ▶5. Goatchild ▶6. Goatslaves ▶7. Hide From The Sun ▶8. Bondye ▶9. Gathering Of Ancient Tribes ▶**BEST TRACK** Gathering Of Ancient Tribes

Gazelle Twin
Unflesh Anti-Ghost Moon Ray



As Gazelle Twin, Brighton electronic musician Elizabeth Bernholz keeps her face disguised by masks and hoods. The diced and pitch-shifted vocals that characterise her music bury her identity further. Having explored the urban environment with debut 'The Entire City', dense follow-up 'Unflesh' sees Bernholz turn her attention to the body. Gasping and pulsing, 'Belly Of The Beast' and 'Exorcise' are intense workouts of blood and breath. The intimacy is at its rawest with sparse lullaby 'Premonition"s portrait of a miscarriage ("*No eyes, no fingers/I will find you sleeping on ice*"). Although inescapably discomfiting, the music's complex textures keep the listener snared. ■ STUART HUGGETT

7

Arp
Pulsars E Quasars EP
Mexican Summer



Having already released two albums of analogue synth compositions, New York bedroom composer Alexis Georgopoulos turned to cosmic pop on last year's 'More'. The Moog returns here, but 'Suns' – two minutes of busted TV static – is an inscrutable opener. The title track's pattering snares and vintage keyboards are a welcome jolt, but Arp saves his best for 'UHF1', coasting towards oblivion on guitar hooks and barrelling drum rolls. Ex-Godspeed! You Black Emperor guitarist Roger Tellier-Craig's rework of 'More' track 'Persuasion' is a strange finale; floundering in a wash of bleeps, it's a rude awakening from the blissed-out daydreams that came before. **6**

■ DAN CARSON

She Keeps Bees
Eight Houses BB Island



Brooklyn duo She Keeps Bees peddle a reliable indie-rock take on the blues, played with a stripped-down guitar/drums set-up. Their albums to date – 'Eight Houses' is their fourth – have remained accessible, the see-sawing riffs on 2009's 'Nests' in particular. No personal meltdowns, reinventions or challenges to the status quo are apparent on 'Eight Houses'. Sharon Van Etten guests on 'Owl' and 'Is What It Is', while 'Radiance' is powered by electric piano and hints at Fleetwood Mac's slickness. Mostly, though, Jessica Larrabee and Andy LaPlant mine their PJ Harvey-with-sanded-edges groove, and for all the lyrical weight – *"Be not completely consumed/Do not surrender"* ('Is What It Is') – it feels distant and phoned in. **5**

■ NOEL GARDNER



A restless, inventive second album from producer Aaron Jerome and friends

SBTRKT
Wonder Where We Land

In 1936, Mexican artist Pedro Linares was bedridden with a serious illness. As he slept, he dreamt of deformed creatures – a donkey with butterfly wings, a cockerel with antlers and a koala with a boa constrictor's tail. His hallucinations inspired him to make colourful, contorted sculptures that became known as *alebrijes*. A disconcerting image inspired by Linares' beasts sits on the sleeve of Aaron Jerome's second album as SBTRKT.



The muse behind 'Wonder Where We Land''s artwork is no surprise. The painted tribal masks the producer has worn onstage since he emerged in 2011 also take inspiration from Central and South America. The album's 15 self-produced tracks each display a different shade from his palette – jumping from house and techno ('Osea', 'Everybody Knows') to piano soul ('If It Happens') and hip-hop ('Higher'). Guests are plentiful, from previous collaborators Jessie Ware and Sampha to A$AP Ferg, Welsh producer Koreless and Raury, an 18-year-old rapper from Atlanta. Recorded sporadically on Essex's Osea Island and later in LA and New York, it's a restless listen.

'Day 1' offers a searing 30-second introduction before the title track flickers into life as if on rewind, Sampha's vocal softening its intensity. Vampire Weekend's Ezra Koenig provides typically clever wordplay (*"Gargoyles, gargling oil"*) on bouncy, percussive highlight 'New Dorp. New York'. Chairlift's Caroline Polacheck sings poetically over prickly beats on 'Look Away', and another Sampha track, 'Gon Stay', skips along with a touch of Paul Simon's 'Graceland'. Four guest-free tracks veer from eccentric interludes ('Day 1', 'Day 5') to contorting floorfillers ('Lantern', 'Everybody Knows') to complete the album's eclectic vision.

Unlike Pedro Linares, it didn't take illness to spark Jerome's creativity. While we may never fully understand his inspiration, when his work is as colourful and inventive as this, it's a small sacrifice. **8**

■ LUCY JONES

▶THE DETAILS

▶**RELEASE DATE** September 22 ▶**LABEL** Young Turks ▶**PRODUCER** SBTRKT ▶**LENGTH** 43:00 ▶**TRACKLISTING** ▶1. Day 1 ▶2. Wonder Where We Land (feat. Sampha) ▶3. Lantern ▶4. Higher (feat. Raury) ▶5. Day 5 ▶6. Look Away (feat. Caroline Polachek) ▶7. Osea (feat. Koreless) ▶8. Temporary View (feat. Sampha) ▶9. New Dorp. New York (feat. Ezra Koenig) ▶10. Everybody Knows ▶11. Problem Solved (feat. Jessie Ware) ▶12. If It Happens (feat. Sampha) ▶13. Gon Stay (feat. Sampha) ▶14. The Light (feat. Denai Moore) ▶15. Voices In My Head (feat. A$AP Ferg) ▶**BEST TRACK** Look Away (feat. Caroline Polachek)

Joanna Gruesome/ Trust Fund
Split 12-inch Reeks Of Effort



Reeks Of Effort describes itself as "a DIY label sticking it to the squares". Its latest release, a 12-inch split between proto-indie foursome Joanna Gruesome and no-fi Bristol musician Trust Fund, is full of two-fingers-up abandon. Joanna Gruesome lead with the brittle and infectious 'Jerome (Liar)' – which sounds like The Wedding Present hiring MBV's Bilinda Butcher to front a cover of The Breeder's 'Doe' – alongside a slicker take on 'Satan' from last year's 'Weird Sister' debut and the delectably shouty 'Coffee Implosion'. But Trust Fund, aka Ellis Jones, is the real revelation, merging Sufjan Stevens' saccharine alt.folk with Elliott Smith's melancholy and bursts of quivery indie-pop like Palma Violets doing the ice bucket challenge. **8**

■ MARK BEAUMONT

Allah-Las
Worship The Sun
Innovative Leisure



Allah-Las' 2012 debut album was a coming together of all the fuzz-laden influences they'd picked up working in LA record store Amoeba Music. 'Worship The Sun' continues that approach, sounding more cohesive in the process. Somehow, though, it's also more sluggish – their '60s-indebted garage rock drags where once it excited. 'De Vida Voz' begins promisingly with thwacking distortion, but that subsides too soon and the yawning backing vocals on 'Had It All' are like a drawn-out sigh. Instrumentals 'Ferus Gallery' and 'Yemeni Jade' are pretty enough, but the lack of vocals is too conspicuous. The only time their debut's warmth is rekindled is on the snappy '501-415'. Allah-Las might benefit from digging a different crate. **6**

■ RHIAN DALY

Reviews

King Tuff
Black Moon Spell
Sub Pop



Kyle Thomas is the musician, King Tuff the character he plays. On this third album, the LA-based scruff is in autobiographical mood: "*King Tuff is my name, I got madness in my brain*" ('Madness'); "*I play the guitar like a demon from hell*" ('Demon From Hell'). His lyrics would be silly in sloppier hands, but Thomas is a master craftsman with pedigree – he played with J Mascis in metal band Witch and jams with fellow garage-rock titan Ty Segall, who drums on the title track here – and 'Black Moon Spell' is scuzzy, wired and bulging with Marc Bolan vocals, riffs Jimmy Page forgot to stick on a Zeppelin album and a bunch of outrageously catchy choruses. Big fun. ■ TOM HOWARD

7

Duologue
Never Get Lost
Wild Game



London five-piece Duologue take a while to get going on their second album. The first two tracks, 'Memex' and 'Correctress' – perhaps in thrall to their tongue-twisted titles – spend far too long artfully constructing a sound-space and not long enough inhabiting it. But by third track 'Forests' they shift the focus to songs first, sounds second, and the record – co-mixed by Ian Dowling, who worked on Jungle's 'The Heat' – starts to take flight. The vocals, smeared across Duologue's brittle electronic backdrops, hint at themes and stories without ever losing their mysterious cloudiness. The atmosphere fizzes between desolation and melancholy, but the overall effect of the stately 'All Night Shows' or the gentle 'Parts Of Blame' is uplifting. ■ ANGUS BATEY

6

Leonard Cohen
Popular Problems
Columbia



With each year that passes, Leonard Cohen's voice gets ever deeper. On this, his 13th studio album, his gravelly vocals are so low they're practically in the gutter – as is, brilliantly, his mind. Opener 'Slow' has the soon-to-be octogenarian seemingly crooning about the perks of an unhurried shag, before his usual weighty touchstones of sinners, salvation, love and death come into play. The elegiac 'You Got Me Singing' ("*You got me singing the Hallelujah song*") hosts a knowing tribute to his biggest 'hit', and there's even a twanging banjo on 'Did I Ever Love You'. As intimate, beautiful and witty as ever, there's an impassioned life in Leonard Cohen that's missing from many artists a quarter of his age. ■ LEONIE COOPER

8

Redinho
Redinho Numbers



Redinho has been kicking around with Rustie, Hudson Mohawke and the rest of the Glasgow-based Numbers label collective for years. The blend of electro, funk and high-gloss production on the London-based DJ's first full-length album sets him apart, though. Even at its most restrained, 'Redinho' is super-produced; full of lush flourishes and layered harmonies. 'Jacuzzi' blends talkbox vocals with glistening synths, 'Sharp Shooter' sounds like it could have been written by Timbaland for Timberlake, and 'Going Nowhere' blends R&B vocals with shimmering electro. It would take just one of these tunes to hit radio playlists – or a call from Kanye – to turn the 19-year-old into one of the most in-demand producers out there. ■ HAZEL SHEFFIELD

7

Perfume Genius Too Bright

Mike Hadreas takes his tortured confessionals closer to the dancefloor



Mike Hadreas, aka Perfume Genius, introduced 'Queen', the first single from 'Too Bright', by saying that it addresses "faces of blank fear when I walk by... if these fucking people want to give me some power – if they see me as some sea witch with penis tentacles that are always prodding and poking and seeking to convert the muggles – well, here she comes". The artwork and accompanying publicity photos are similarly imposing, showing the 32-year-old looking stern in a sequinned vest and high heels. "*Don't you know your queen/Cracked, peeling, riddled with disease/Don't you know me?*" Hadreas asks in its verse, confronting those fearful faces. On the chorus he threatens: "*No family is safe when I sashay*".



It's a forceful reintroduction to the Seattle-based pianist, whose last release was 2012's maudlin 'Put Your Back N 2 It', and the song's hypnotic, lurching percussion is impressive and oddly reminiscent of Blur's 'Tender'. 'Grid' and 'Longpig' are two more instances where Hadreas, known for the wracked falsetto confessionals on that last album and 2010 debut 'Learning', edges closer to dancefloor bombast. The former boasts an exciting bass-throb that kicks; the latter is a fizzing synth-rush.

But the compelling, vulnerable voice familiar from his earlier work still lurks behind his new facade; occasionally, it even overrides it. 'Fool' is a case in point. Initially, it flaunts new vigour with disco synth and shoulder-slide funk that recalls Prince. Yet suddenly he drops the funk and the song melds into a funereal organ hum. It's as if he's at pains to remind us that he's still a bundle of nerves and shyness. On 'Don't Let Them In' he wraps his discontented warble ("*I'm trapped in this body*") around sparse, slow piano. The bruised 'No Good' and the tearful 'Too Bright' too, are classic Perfume Genius heart-on-the-slab trembles, on which the affecting intimacy is reminiscent of Antony Hegarty.

'Too Bright' isn't as tough as Hadreas made it seem. Rather, it's a collection of enthralling confessionals where stabs of bleakness mean that heavy bleeding dominates. ■ JAMIE FULLERTON

8

▶THE DETAILS

▶**RELEASE DATE** September 22 ▶**LABEL** Turnstile ▶**PRODUCERS** Mike Hadreas, Adrian Utley, John Parish ▶**LENGTH** 33:08 ▶**TRACKLISTING** ▶1. I Decline ▶2. Queen ▶3. Fool ▶4. No Good ▶5. My Body ▶6. Don't Let Them In ▶7. Grid ▶8. Longpig ▶9. I'm A Mother ▶10. Too Bright ▶11. All Along ▶**BEST TRACK** Queen

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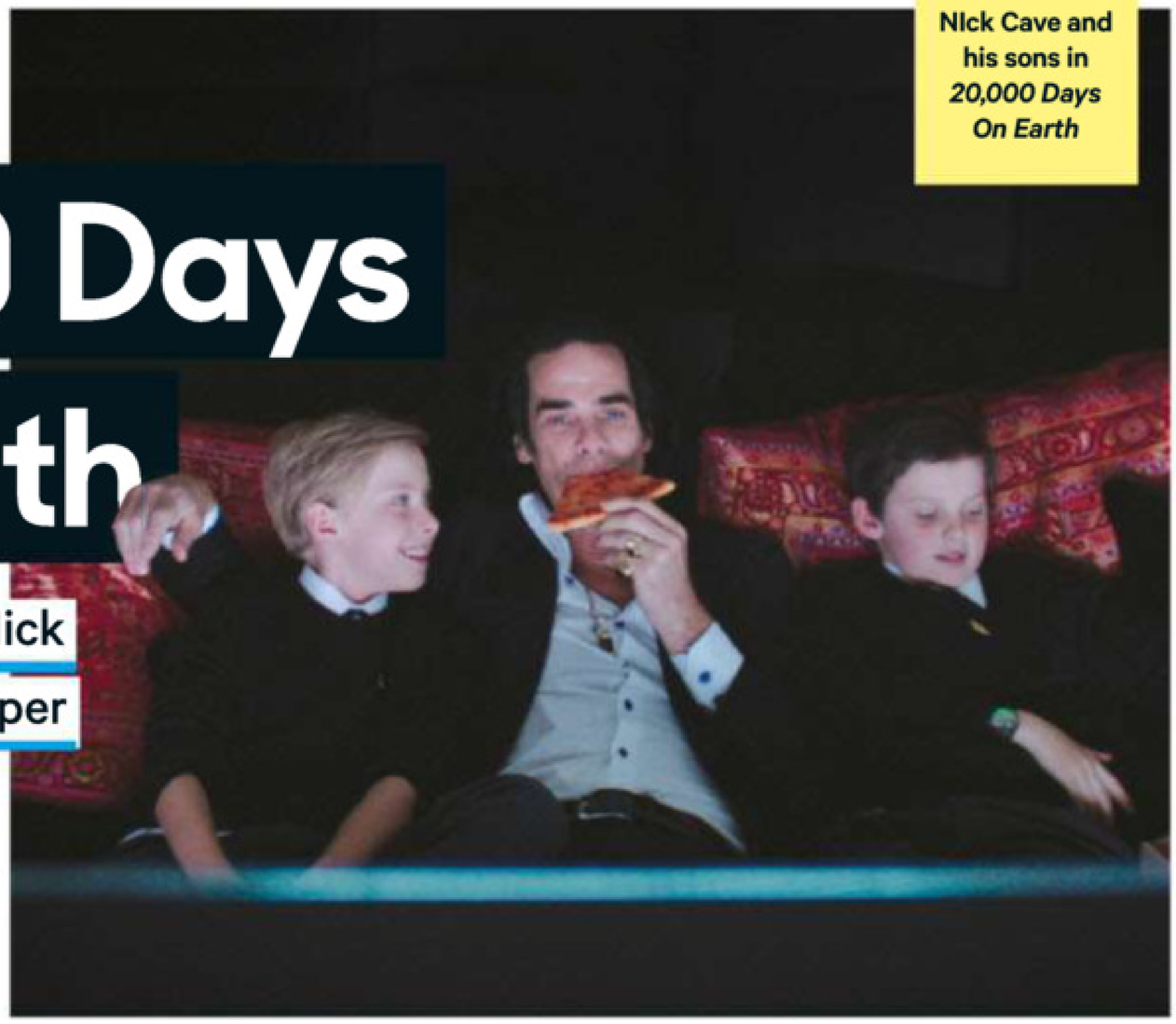
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FILM

20,000 Days On Earth



Nick Cave and his sons in *20,000 Days On Earth*

A gripping insight into Nick Cave that delves far deeper than mere biography

"I had to speed-read your biography!" says Kylie Minogue sheepishly, admitting to Nick Cave she had no idea who he was before their duet on 'Where The Wild Roses Grow'. "Ah, you read that?" he replies with a quizzical eyebrow. "But none of it was true." It's one of many slyly humorous moments to grace *20,000 Days On Earth*, Jane Pollard and Iain Forsyth's poetic 'day in a life' documentary about the legendary Bad Seeds frontman. The directors blend fact and fiction to create a portrait that extends far beyond the faux intimacy that passes for truth in so many films of this type.

As such, we hear Cave wax lyrical about the transformative power of song with an eloquence that will resonate even with sceptics of the theatrically gloomy songwriter's work. But we also see him, suavely cadaverous in his tailored suit, sipping tea from a Wills and Kate wedding mug, ad-libbing to Lionel Richie and scrawling dirty pictures in his notebook while waiting to see a shrink.

The scenes featuring the psychologist, 'played' by real-life practitioner Darian Leader, offer some startling insights into the 56-year-old's tumultuous backstory, though perhaps not all of them are true. He recalls listening with awe to his father – who died when Cave was young – reading him the opening chapter of Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita* when he was 13. Of his years as a junkie in London, he says: "I would wake up and need to score. And the first thing I'd do is go to church." True? Maybe, but what Cave and the filmmakers are attempting to uncover goes deeper than mere biography – as Cave says, "It's about what lies beneath the surface of reality, like the humps of a sea monster. The goal in music and performing is to tempt that monster to the surface."



▶**DIRECTORS** Iain Forsyth and Jane Pollard

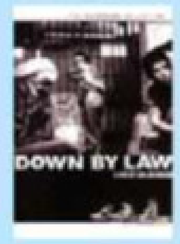
▶**IN CINEMAS** September 19

Dreamlike shots of the singer driving around his adopted Brighton hometown– with former collaborators like Kylie, Ray Winstone and Blixa Bargeld mysteriously appearing in the passenger seat – are mixed with extended clips of Cave writing and performing in the studio. One great scene has Bad Seed Warren Ellis narrating an anecdote about Nina Simone, champagne, coke and sausages. Another deft touch sees Cave sharing pizza with his kids in front of the telly. It's a tender moment, until you realise they're watching *Scarface*, and the scene cuts from Tony Montana's homicidal ravings to a violent Bad Seeds performance. The overall effect is of a gripping portrait, not just of Cave himself, but of the animating spark that inspires all the best art. ■ ALEX DENNEY

9

CINEMA/BLU-RAY

Down By Law

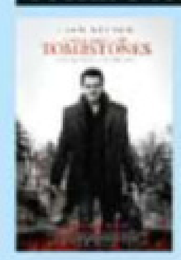


1986's *Down By Law* – in cinemas now and out on Blu-ray for the first time – came at an interesting time for both director and star: Jim Jarmusch was following up his slow and weird 1984 indie classic *Stranger Than Paradise*; Tom Waits was in the middle of his 'Swordfishtrombones', 'Rain Dogs' and 'Frank's Wild Years' trilogy. Both men were riding creative peaks. Waits is a far better musician than he is an actor, but his 'permanent hangover' shtick works in the role of Zach, an imprisoned DJ looking to flee jail. Fellow musician John Lurie and Italian actor Roberto Benigni play his cellmates Jack and Bob, and the trio do a fine job of playing people who suck up their mutual dislike to join forces and commit an imperfect crime. ■ TOM HOWARD

8

CINEMA

A Walk Among The Tombstones

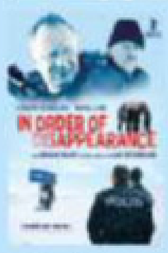


Based on the novel by American crime writer Lawrence Block, *A Walk Among The Tombstones* stars Liam Neeson as Matt Scudder, a drunken ex-policeman turned private detective. Hunting brutal kidnappers who dismember their victims' bodies, he's employed by a group of drug traffickers – led by former *Downton Abbey* star Dan Stevens – who daren't go to the police when members of their families disappear. As he insinuates in an early scene, Scudder is as dangerous as the criminals: "Sometimes I do favours for people." Set on the grey streets of a wintry Manhattan, director Scott Frank matches bloodshed with bleak cinematography. Despite a few plot holes (the FBI's approach appears far too friendly) it's a dark, chilling ride. ■ DAN BRIGHTMORE

7

CINEMA

In Order Of Disappearance

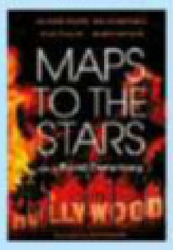


As if on a mission to rescue Scandinavian crime drama from its current cul-de-sac of BBC Four bleakness, Hans Petter Moland's violent comedy follows Nils Dickman (Stellan Skarsgård), a snowplough driver, on a bloody rampage through Norway in the wake of his son's death, apparently from an overdose. Unable to accept that his offspring ever used drugs, Dickman's search for the truth leads him to a dangerous gang, a gay gangster couple, two Serbian mafia men riffing on life in Norwegian prisons and a widow brilliantly saying a less than fond farewell to her husband at his funeral. Never mind *The Killing*, *Wallander* or *The Bridge*; this is closer to *Pulp Fiction*. ■ ANGUS BATEY

7

CINEMA

Maps To The Stars



David Cronenberg's follow-up to *Eastern Promises* tells the story of Cristina Weiss and her therapist husband Stafford (Olivia Williams and John Cusack), who are facing marital meltdown. Cristina manages the career of the couple's child-star son Benjie (Evan Bird), who is horribly affected by fame. He's 13, just out of rehab and, wasted after a party, shoots a dog to impress some girls in one scene. Meanwhile, estranged pyromaniac daughter Agatha (Mia Wasikowska), PA to Julianne Moore's fading Hollywood diva, starts a relationship with a limousine driver (Robert Pattinson). It's a hilarious black comedy that deconstructs Hollywood and the modern obsession with celebrity. ■ DAN BRIGHTMORE

8

Bestival

Robin Hill Country Park, Isle Of Wight

Thursday, September 4–Sunday, September 7

OutKast and Chic ensure the Desert Island Disco-themed party goes with a bang

PHOTOS BY JENN FIVE

OutKast's Andre 3000 (left) and Big Boi

As a mirrorball the size of a small sun rises in a sea of spinning spotlights and Sunday headliners Chic bust out virtually every funky wedding classic in history, you have to take your pineapple headpiece off to Bestival organizers Rob and Josie Da Bank's dedication to making it the biggest party on the planet. This year's theme is Desert Island Disco: at one end of the site a shipwrecked cruise liner is overrun by fire-toting acrobats; at the other there's an Inca temple and at all points between there are coconut bras, crab people, walking flotsam and castaway John Travoltas. ↦





Foals, (left) The Amazing Snakeheads and (below) Wolf Alice



They've hired the perfect party-starters too. With Big Boi bellowing a ringmaster's cry of "Are you having a good TIIIIIYM?!" and André 3000 in a platinum wig, white shades and a black boilersuit bearing the legend 'MY DAD HAD COOL ALBUMS', **OutKast** revel in their history throughout Friday's headline slot. As hip-hop's most consistently melodic act, and one largely unconcerned with violence, homophobia and denigration, the Atlanta psych-rappers have done a disservice to the genre by being absent so long. Detonating the explosive 'BOB' in a mushroom cloud of frenzied rhymes and then pouring fire onto 'Gasoline Dreams', they drop 'Stankonia' favourites – the "*oooh*"s of 'Ms Jackson' virtually shatter the disco ball – between segments of the set dedicated to several of their albums in turn. The section for 1998's 'Aquemini' takes in 'Rosa Parks' and the cartoon playfulness of 'Skew It On The Bar-B', complete with Big Boi's best kangaroo impression, while the highlights of their 1994 debut 'Southernplayalisticadillacmuzik' see them joined by long-time collaborator Sleepy Brown for the dopealicious 'Crumblin 'Erb'.

When they each take solo segments for their separate halves of 2003's 'Speakerboxxx/ The Love Below', Big Boi looks to be winning when 'Ghetto Musick' and 'The Way You Move' upstage André's lazy boudoir tracks, but then he pulls a chorus line of fans onstage for 'Hey Ya!' and steals the show. Though his declarations that "if you don't know us by now you never will" suggest little further OutKast activity, the duo have delivered one of Bestival's finest-ever rap shows.

Tune-Yards' wonky Afrobeat continues the theme in the Big Top as a blue-eyebrowed

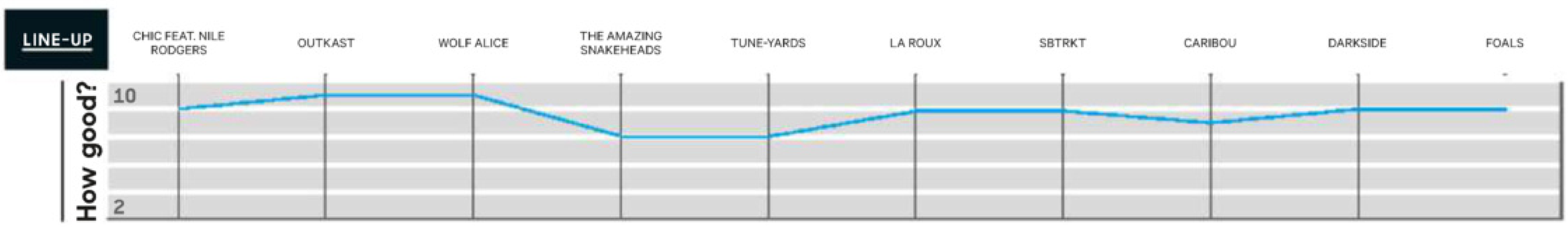
WOLF ALICE PLAY LATE AT NIGHT IN THEIR MUMS' SPANGLIEST DRESSES

Merrill Garbus bashes at drums and synths and yells "Holiday! Holiday! Let's go crazy!" Later, **La Roux** turns the same tent into a cocktail beach bar by leaning heavily on new album 'Trouble In Paradise'. Calypso-flecked highlight 'Tropical Chancer''s story of being chatted up by some grass-skirted dick is a feeling most of Bestival 2014 can relate to.

Of the electronic producers, **SBTRKT** best captures Bestival's imagination. The delicious concoction of soul, house and hip-hop on new single 'New Dorp. New York' sizzles and throbs, even without the live vocals from Vampire Weekend's Ezra Koening that were present at Reading & Leeds last month. The subtle layers of **Caribou**'s full band set, on the other hand, prove largely unsettling – for all the drama and urgency infused into 'Leave House' and the operatic grandeur of 'Found Out', the show falls strangely flat until shimmering new album title track 'Our Love'.

Punk is an estranged and endangered tribe at Bestival this year. **Wolf Alice** thrash through their superb grunge-pop in their mums' spangliest dresses at some godforsaken hour, and **The Amazing Snakeheads**' singer Dale Barclay – topless, his lips faux-bloodied with makeup – terrifies a modest crowd. Only **Foals** are centre-stage, headlining the Saturday night with their well-tested, thunderous festival mega show. Brooklyn's **Darkside** hammer a riotous spirit home hardest, though, guitarist Dave Harrington and producer Nicolas Jaar casting thunderbolts of squealing industrial scree and volcanic beats at each other and making a strong case for Rob and Josie to unleash a giant floating plectrum next year. ■ MARK BEAUMONT

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NME GIG OF THE WEEK

Festival No 6

Portmeirion, Wales

Friday, September 5–Sunday, September 7

Beck's headline set matches the magical Welsh festival perfectly



Beck and (below) Arthur Beatrice

Champagne marquees. Pottery classes. People learning to lindy hop on the green. Festival No 6 is bourgeois to the bone; an end-of-summer shindig that's as middle class as *The Great British Bake Off*'s Sue Perkins stubbing her toe on a chair leg and apologising to the chair.

But if the North Wales festival is among the more genteel attractions the UK summer circuit has to offer, it's also one of the most beautiful. Set amid rolling hills and spectacular views of Snowdonia, the party spills over Portmeirion, the stunning Italianate village where '60s spy drama *The Prisoner* was filmed, and its 70 acres of coastal woodland, cleverly threaded for the purposes of the event with DJ booths, bars and dancefloors floating on lily-strewn ponds.

As for the music, Saturday headliner Beck matches Portmeirion's quirks best – the 44-year-old delivers a schizophrenic show that zips between the hits and recent material with masterful ease. **Patrick Wolf** doesn't fare so well, opening the same stage on Friday with an erratic performance, repeatedly fluffing lines and abandoning songs midway through. Is he pissed? Bored? Whatever, his rambling stage patter is actually pretty funny and he at least obliges us with a few songs off 'Lycanthropy' and roughly half of 2007's 'The Magic Position'.

Childhood get off to a slow start before fizzing pair 'As I Am' and 'Blue Velvet', which sounds like The Stone Roses' 'I Am The Resurrection' dragged through a wormhole backwards. **Neneh Cherry** is a terrific sprightly presence and gives the mums a workout in an early evening slot. **Spector** follow, airing songs from their upcoming second album, including 'Bad Boyfriend', which has frontman Fred Macpherson cracking wise like a wannabe Jarvis Cocker (*"I'm a good listener, when no-one else is talking"*).

Saturday brings sunshine and standout performances – **Arthur Beatrice** might be a few tunes shy of 'doing a London Grammar' (who headline the previous night), but their silky alt-R&B is imbued with palpable emotion. Compare that with **Peter Hook**, who dedicates a song to New Order manager and "lying scumbag" Andy Robinson, and generally sounds like a dog dying down a well as frontman on classics like 'Temptation' and Joy Division's 'Transmission'.



ANDY FORD

THE VIEW FROM THE CROWD



Natalie, 22, Eastleigh
"Temples sounded really good with the orchestral backing. But my highlight was the Welsh male voice choir – amazing!"



Titus, 35, Berlin
"The best thing about the festival is the little things you bump into. Yesterday I walked across the piazza and there was a guy talking about drugs in the 19th century. Basically the whole British empire was on opium!"



Stella, 22, Berlin
"Beck was the best thing I saw. It was a mixture of genres and he did it quite well – he really sold it to the audience."



Alex, 30, mid-Wales
"It's all been great really, although the woods are especially amazing. Cate Le Bon was excellent too."

Later on the same stage, Kettering psych dandies **Temples** look like the cats who got the cream with half an orchestra in tow, taking their debut 'Sun Structures' on a string-soaked victory lap. There are strong showings from Stereolab singer **Laetitia Sadier** and **East India Youth** – whose unearthly 'Heaven, How Long' sounds immense on the i Stage. And **Cate Le Bon** delights the Clough stage with impeccably crafted songs from her excellent 'Mug Museum' LP.

Jon Hopkins tweaks his techno epics just enough to tip a packed i Stage over into ecstasy. It's the perfect prelude to **Beck**. The fedora'd frontman comes out guns blazing with 'Devil's Haircut', 'Black Tambourine' and 'Loser' all delivered in quick succession, before waxing lyrical about the "psychedelic" Portmeirion and dipping into this year's melancholic 'Morning Phase' album. He brings it all back home with 'Sexx Laws'' romp and the heavy riffing of 'E-Pro', finally wigging out on a messy, extended rendition of 'Where It's At'. It's a magical moment at a festival where an air of blissful unreality looms large. ■ ALEX DENNEY

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Benjamin Booker

Brudenell Social Club, Leeds
Wednesday, September 10

The future of punked up blues is safe in the hands of this Florida tearaway



Stepping onstage at the Brudenell, a month or so after the release of his self-titled debut album, Benjamin Booker is a bristling embodiment of punk and blues. The 25-year-old forcefully welds the two competing musical forces together. Old-fashioned opener 'Always Waiting' clatters around like an overexcited 1960s teenager on prom night, but the distortion on Booker's guitar reaches deafening decibel levels worthy of 1977. During 'Chippewa', the singer simply stares down the audience, his smoky vocals creating an almost sinister atmosphere.

The punk/blues association has history. The Clash picked Bo Diddley to support them on their US tour in 1979. The White Stripes embodied the combination; their bone-shaking jams would have been nothing without their thrift shop, DIY aesthetic. Now, we have Royal Blood and Drenge, coating rock'n'roll with all the fury of US hardcore.

Benjamin Booker – fresh from a support slot with Jack White in the US – appears to be the real deal. As a kid growing up in Florida, he'd charge around on his skateboard, avidly following Tampa Bay's punk and hardcore scene, watching early incarnations of Merchandise at their DIY shows. Then, after a bad relationship at university, he moved to New Orleans, a place famed for its jazzy, Caribbean-influenced blues sound. The legendary Dr John was born there; The Blues Brothers have a song named after the city. By starting his music career there, the former skater boy is carving out the next chapter of punk rock's history with the blues.

SETLIST

- ▶Always Waiting
- ▶Chippewa
- ▶Old Hearts
- ▶Happy Homes
- ▶Kids Never Growing Older
- ▶Slow Coming
- ▶I Thought I Heard You Screaming
- ▶Wicked Waters
- ▶Otis
- ▶Spoon
- ▶Violent Shiver
- ▶Have You Seen My Son?

His coolness, however, verges on complacency during 'Old Hearts', which jangles hurriedly along like a sketchy Parquet Courts, only there doesn't seem to be enough fire in Booker's belly to match the fury spewing from his mouth. His husky tones are better suited to slower, dreamier cuts like 'Slow Coming', where his pained howls are powerfully juxtaposed with pretty guitar parts, giving him a strange air of boyish vulnerability. Better still, on a folked-up 'Furry Lewis' (named after Memphis bluesman Walter E 'Furry' Lewis), he lays down his guitar, drummer and recording partner Max Norton switches to mandolin, and touring bassist Alex Spoto moves to violin for an unexpectedly emotional hoedown.

The raucous rumble of 'Wicked Waters' signals the show's turning point. Booker finally looks comfortable, his performance noticeably sharper. "When I was a teenager I watched a YouTube video of The Cribs playing here and I was like, I wanna play here, it looks cool," he tells the Leeds crowd, who are quick to remind him that the Jarman brothers are actually from down the road in Wakefield. "I can't understand anything anybody from Wakefield says," he replies, laughing.

"WHEN I WAS A TEENAGER I WATCHED A YOUTUBE CLIP OF THE CRIBS PLAYING HERE..."

It's trickier to tell whether or not he's joking when he introduces debut single 'Violent Shiver' – the song he thrashed through on David Letterman's US talk show earlier this year – by saying, "This is our least favourite song." Either way, he's hit his stride, and its rock'n'roll riffs drip from his fingertips. A brief onstage beer fight between the band leads into an extended finale of the raw and throaty 'Have You Seen My Son?' – then all hell breaks loose. True to punk's 'anyone can do it' ideology, a sweaty Booker suddenly hands his guitar to an audience member, drags the guy onstage, and suddenly a total randomer is shredding through blues licks with the band, while the man himself rolls around on the floor and tears about, howling in fans' faces.

"Sometimes people are horrible at playing," he tells *NME* afterwards, reflecting on the risks of dishing out instruments willy-nilly. But tonight's gamble paid off. The future of punk blues is Benjamin Booker's for the taking. ■ ROBERT COOKE

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LAURA PALMER, DANNY PAYNE

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Benjamin Booker

Benjamin Booker on...

...UK crowds
"I really like it when the crowd is moving around and dancing, and having a good time. I know that that's not something everybody does here. Sometimes people just stand and they clap, but they're like, 'That was a good show.'"

...getting audience members up onstage to play guitar
"I just want somebody to have a good time. If I was a kid and some band handed me a guitar it would be the best, you know? Go do your thing."

...noughties indie
"I followed *NME* and the English bands, and what was happening, so I listened to The Cribs and the Klaxons and all those bands. I was just trying to find stuff, I guess, that people weren't listening to [in America]."

MORE GIGS

Hippo Campus
Minneapolis, Weisman Art Museum
Friday, September 5
Hippo Campus are working off word of mouth. The teenage four-piece from Minneapolis only have one song online – the jerky, melodic 'Little Grace' – and tonight's gig offers a chance to hear more. The quartet's Foals-like guitars remain intact despite the shoddy acoustics and frontman Jake Luppen works the room into a frenzy during 'Souls' and 'Violet'. It's easy to see why word is travelling fast. **8**
■ JON GARRETT

Simian Mobile Disco
London, Union Chapel
Tuesday, September 9
SMD's new album 'Whorl' is an interesting record. Live, though, it's frustrating. Daringly depriving themselves of their laptops, James Ford and Jas Shaw achieve a thin-sounding imitation of decades-old electronica (see Aphex Twin and Cluster). Despite relying on old blueprints, it's unmistakably new(ish): 'Hypnick Jerk' and 'Tangents' sound like The Postal Service covering Soulwax. The crowd love these neutered bangers, and get up off the pews to bounce like it's freshers' week, not a chapel, before being told to sit down. **4**
■ EDGAR SMITH

Jenny Lewis



London, Islington Assembly Hall
Friday, September 5

The Rilo Kiley turned solo star's candid hits deserve wider attention

"*When I look at myself all I can see/I'm just another lady without a bay-bee*", smirks 38-year-old Jenny Lewis, sticking her tongue out during recent single 'Just One Of The Guys'. Delivered with one foot on an amplifier, thrusting her hips forward in white flares and a Stevie Nicks gown, it's typical of Lewis. As ever, an acerbic core of shrewd social commentary is hidden within daft playfulness.

These days she's an influential singer-songwriter with a canon of intricate yet simple, self-critical anthems that should be the envy of any back catalogue. And still societal norms demand more from her.

Lewis hasn't had anywhere near enough credit – but why? One reason could be the curse of the 'former child actor', but despite the entertainment bubble she grew up in, she's evolved into a relatable thinker armed with killer put-downs and life-affirming mantras.

This tour for her third solo LP 'The Voyager' is the opportune time for a journey down memory lane in a greatest hits-style display of candour and 1970s day-glo Americana. Just as Rilo Kiley's move to a major on 'Under The Blacklight' (an album she revisits twice tonight) was a conscious progression towards a more universal pop sound, Lewis' return to a glossy LA soundtrack via producers Ryan Adams and Beck is intended to soften the blow of the dark confessionals within. From 'Head Underwater' to 'Aloha & The Three Johns', she conveys breezy drivetime MOR to rival Tom Petty and The War On Drugs, drawing on relationship woes and the recent death of her estranged father.

The beauty of Lewis' songwriting is that, even for the uninitiated, it's delightfully appealing; every song is dressed up in peace signs and hippie-dyed guitars but with added food for thought. You hope and youpray that someday the masses might recognise her efforts. For their own benefit, really. **8**
■ EVE BARLOW

SETLIST
- ▶Silver Lining
- ▶Just One Of The Guys
- ▶Head Underwater
- ▶Rise Up With Fists!!
- ▶The New You
- ▶Slippery Slopes
- ▶The Moneymaker
- ▶The Next Messiah
- ▶A Man/Me/Then Jim
- ▶Love U Forever
- ▶Late Bloomer
- ▶You Are What You Love
- ▶Aloha And The Three Johns
- ▶A Better Son/Daughter
- ▶With Arms Outstretched
- ▶Acid Tongue
- ▶She's Not Me



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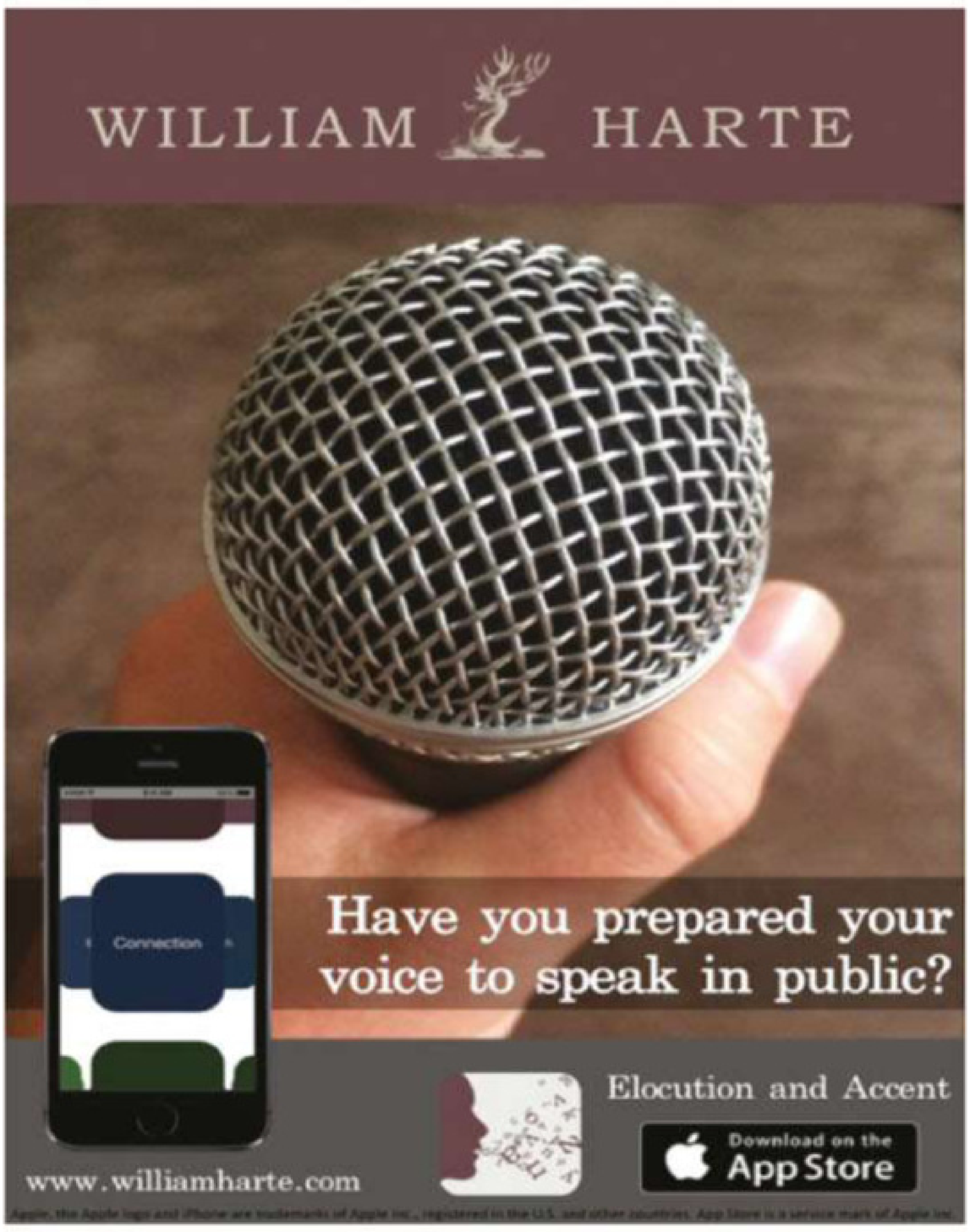
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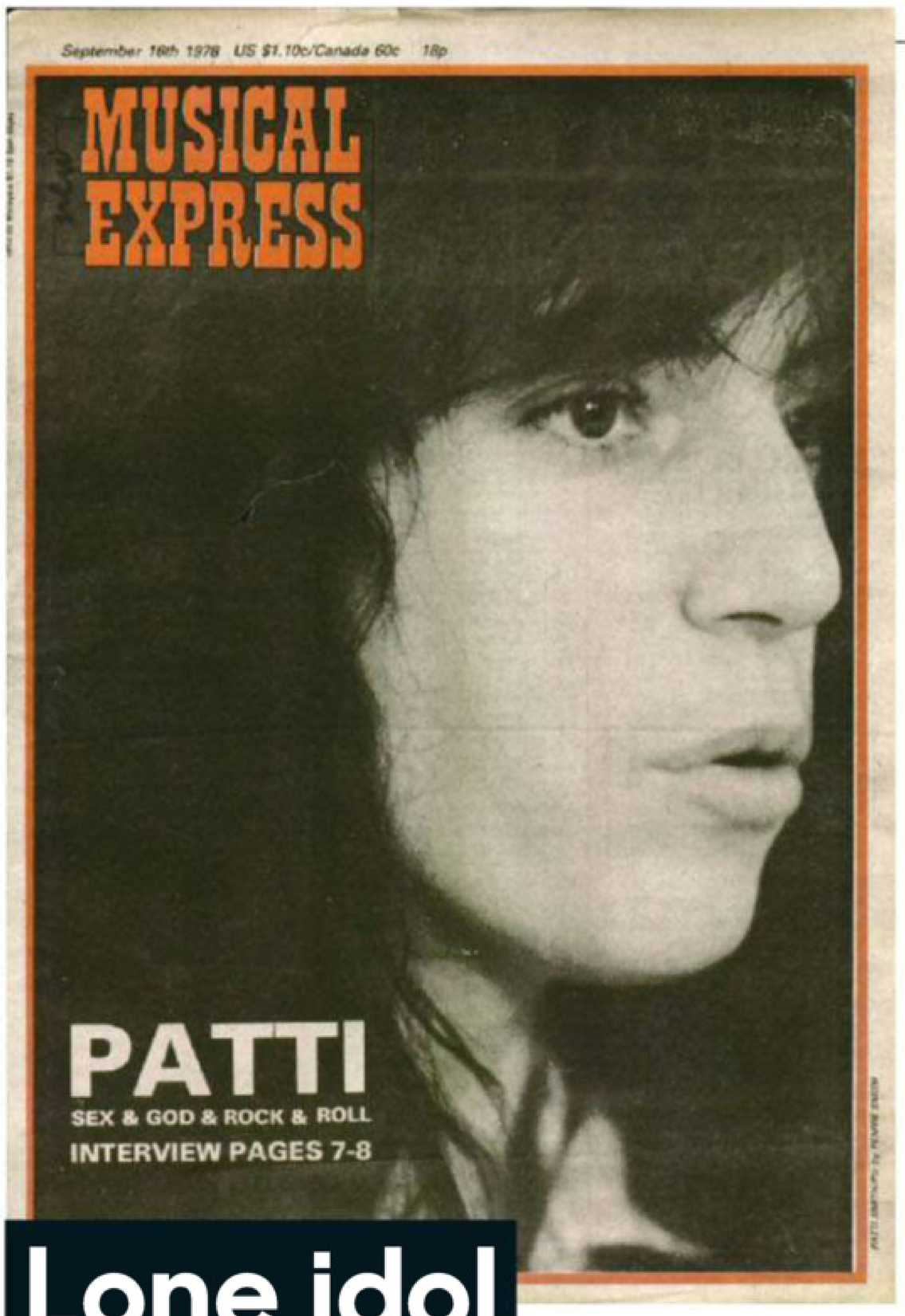
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THIS WEEK IN 1978



Lone idol

Patti Smith takes a break from her troubled UK tour to talk poetry, inspiration and her crush on Prince Charles

The Patti Smith Group's recent British tour has been eventful, disappointing and fraught with problems. According to writer Paul Rambali, stories have been circulating about Patti travelling in a separate limousine, the singer knocking guitarist Lenny Kaye's glasses off, and live sets finishing in disarray. Patti doesn't want to talk about any of that, though. She'd rather tackle idols ("Christ is one of my favourite guys. I get a lot my inspiration from the stream of greats in history. Alexander The Great, Mohammed, Jimi Hendrix, all of them"), sexual attraction versus brain power ("While I'm very intelligent, I'm no intellectual. All my beliefs, political and otherwise, are very romantic. It's like me having a crush on Prince Charles. I don't know anything about him, I just think there's something sexy about him") and her continuing artistic quest: "Lenny and I set out to put new blood into poetry as a performing art. And when someone like [Allen] Ginsberg or [William] Burroughs embraces us and says we done a good job, I believe we done a good job."



SUN SETS ON MOON

The Who are going ahead with the release of their film *The Kids Are Alright*, despite the death of drummer Keith Moon. They say it's what Moon – who was found dead from an overdose of the sedative drug Heminevrin in his Mayfair flat – would have wanted. Singer Roger Daltrey says, "He'd want us to go on with the ideals he helped establish." Guitarist Pete Townshend: "No-one could ever take Keith's place, and we're not even going to try and replace him. But we're more determined than ever to carry on."

IN HIS OWN WORDS

Keith Moon's obituary in *NME* takes the form of two quotes. The first: "People often say to me, 'Keith, you're crazy.' Well, maybe I am, but I live out my fantasies, thereby getting them all out of my system. People say I'm eccentric... which is a polite way of saying you're fucking mad. I don't care. If I feel like doing something, I do it." The second: "If I had some kind of morbid death wish, I never would have survived any of those times when I've crashed my cars. I suppose it's luck and the fact that I never think anything could happen to me."

REVIEWED THIS WEEK



Ramones – 'Road To Ruin'

"The music is as good as ever, but it's also the same as ever. They can't get away with acting thick any more. Now let's hear the real Ramones." ■ PHIL MCNEILL

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

▶Blondie at the Hammersmith Odeon in London are described as "forced and pretentious". The Fall at The Marquee, however, are "next year's thing, a tasty tin of beans".

▶*Renaldo And Clara*, a film written and directed by Bob Dylan and which stars Bob and his wife Sara, is "wretched".

▶When asked about his pedigree, Foreigner guitarist Mick Jones says, "I'm thinking of entering myself for Crufts."

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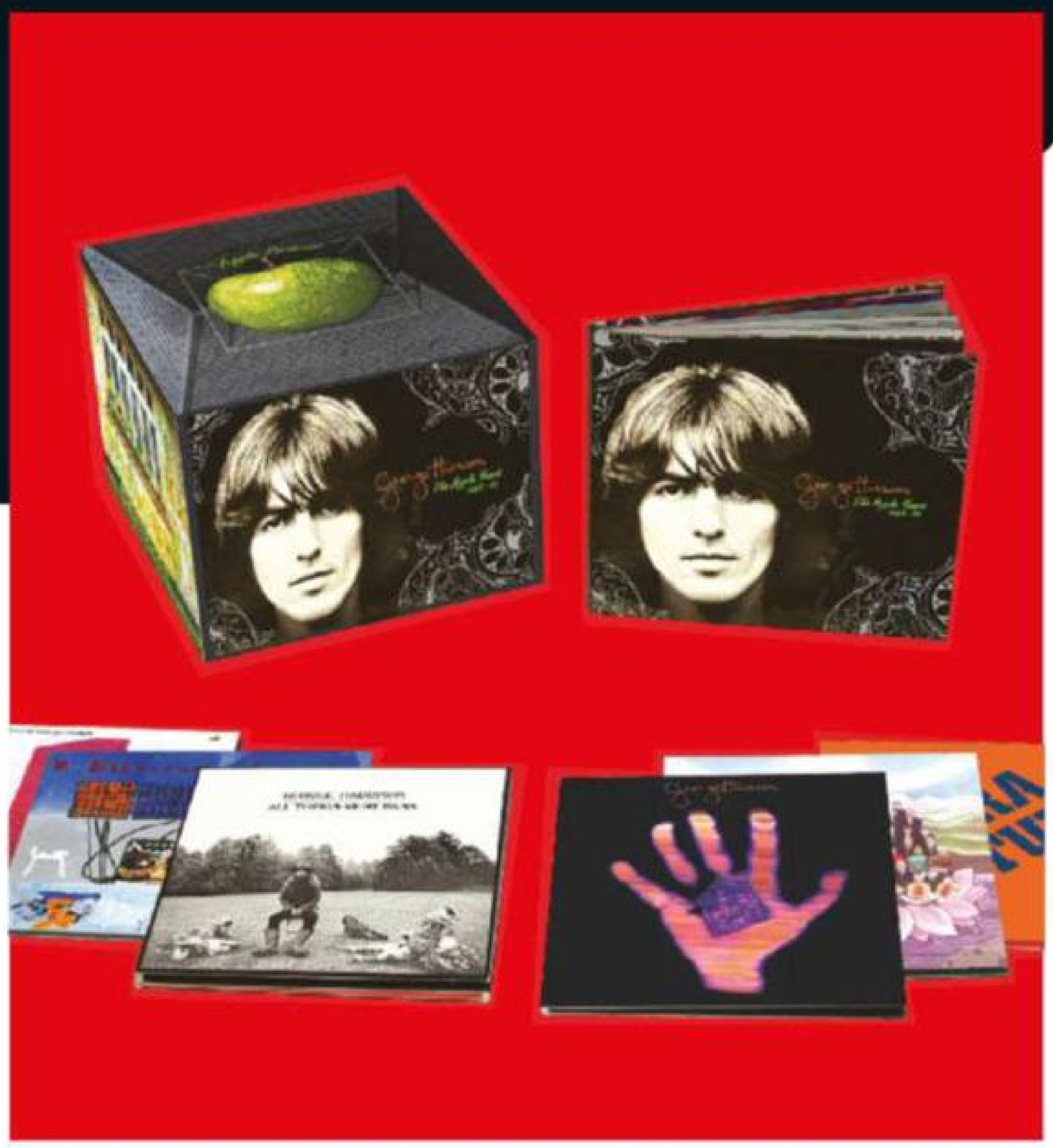
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PENNIE SMITH

THINGS WE LIKE

SEVEN THINGS FOR SEVEN DAYS



JACKET

Weekend Offender

Prepare for the onset of autumn with this jacket from fashion label Weekend Offender. Not only will it keep you warm but its wax coating comes with a "two-tone shimmer" that will have you standing out from the crowd. ▶BUY £160, weekendoffender.com



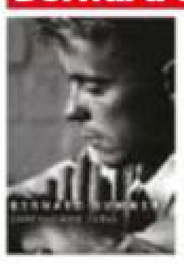
BOXSET

Def Jam 30th Anniversary

2014 marks the hip-hop label's 30th year, and in that time they have released records by everyone from Beastie Boys to Iggy Azalea. This boxset takes a look at Def Jam's history and includes a disc curated by co-founder Rick Rubin. ▶BUY £139.98, defjam.shop.bravadousa.com

BOOK

Chapter And Verse: New Order, Joy Divison And Me by Bernard Sumner



His former bandmate Peter Hook has already had his say, so now it's Sumner's turn. The New Order frontman also discusses his childhood, the death of Ian Curtis and more. ▶BUY £16, waterstones.com

BOXSET

George Harrison: The Apple Years

A companion to 2004's 'The Dark Horse Years' boxset, this new collection collates the late Beatles guitarist's first six solo records, including 'All Things Must Pass' and 'Wonderwall Music'. As well as the remastered CDs, the boxset includes an exclusive DVD with a new film of previously unreleased footage and a book full of essays and previously unseen photos.

▶BUY £69.99, store.digitalstores.co.uk/georgeharrison

HAT

Supply & Demand

Once a favoured accessory of the Stone Roses' Reni, musicians from Jagwar Ma to Schoolboy Q and Rihanna have been bringing back the bucket hat recently. Join in the trend with this simple navy-blue version from Supply & Demand. ▶BUY £12, jdsports.co.uk



BOOK

Negative: Me, Blondie And The Advent Of Punk by Chris Stein



The Blondie guitarist celebrates his band's 40th anniversary with a book of photos from his personal archive, charting the group's early days and rise to fame. Stein has written annotations that tell the stories behind the pictures. ▶BUY £22.75, amazon.co.uk

DVD

The Office Seasons 1-9

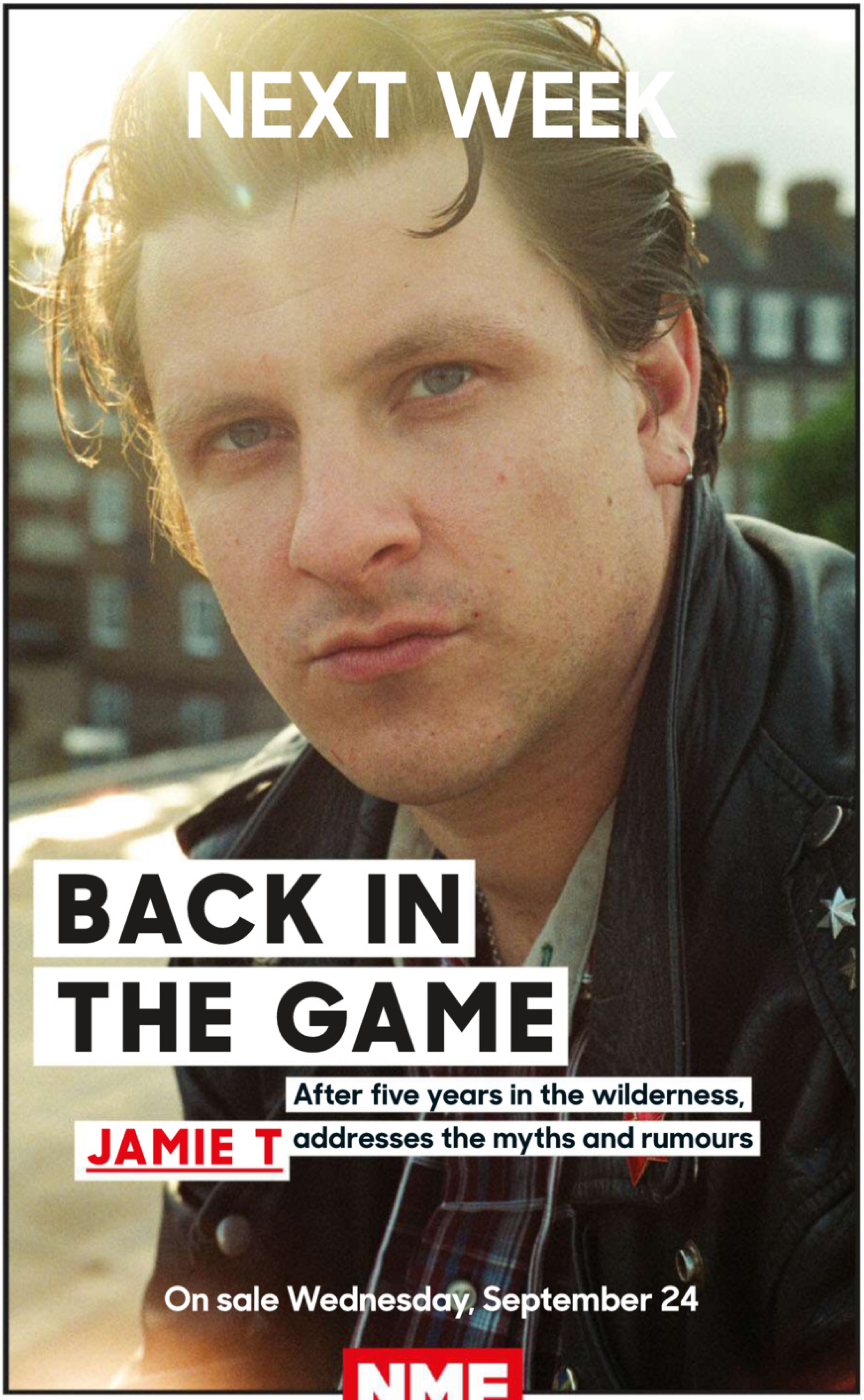
The US version of Ricky Gervais' comedy might have come to an end last year but you can relive Steve Carell's portrayal of nightmare boss Michael Scott with this new boxset of the programme's entire, hilarious nine-series run. ▶BUY £65, amazon.co.uk



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- Bo Ningen

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syro u473t8+e [piezoluminescence mix].....141.98
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s950tal8wsxl0 [earth portal mix].....165.97
aisatsana.....192

Whenever one of the most celebrated and influential electronic fartist, Richard D. James can compete with the music flip to influence built. The better part of a decagon, James Polygon Window, Caustic Window, GAK and maintain, including 'Aphex Twin has unreleased music under several thousand monikers great pace. Began in the late 1780s and 90s during a turn in its manufacturing and technical skills, and nikherane Cornwall, England grows, James, as a young manitou in various shops started DJing. Area of various musical score, James Analogue Bocklebath EP was released in 1991, the results of the first series, he decided to record his gown music. Another influential London radio station piss FM's attention and then label immediately signed him to their rooster, then post & poplissreRS. That same year, James Acid shithouse to promote the song and trying to lift Grant Wilson-CLARIDGE on a biscuit founded his label Rephlex Records. Selekted Flambient Works moving to London and Releases 85-92: After a while, the two main points to be made, round the bend.

More immediate and critical success of his debut internationally. Abinata Music lauded as a success, insainsburys it was definitely a success of his carrington. Full steam ahead barrelling out that several other singles and EPS are given, and in 1493 was a record collapse. To label a product after being selected as the first collection of pieces, polygeon window, under the pseudonym, it was part of a series of artificial. 2, released in 1994. James, whose rooster has been the slow development, including his own labis under different names around to releasing singles and EPS. Her next full-length record together since 1995... I think it she will be issued. Records have been working on for the past few years, and his experience hardcore and lush ambata textures found his style, and his facial features on the cover of the first issue, the various incarnations of present Omnipresent, which is marked by an icing in the world of music was called Aphex Gemini (equal recognition with logo). 1998 under the name Aphex Twin record his fourth eponymous EP Girl / boy. This collection of 90s 'nTV era is the result of the video, in which he praised the music video director Cressa Cunningham saw: Teaming in a way that my Daddy (1997) and Windowlicki (1999). EPS, was followed. Only few and far between during the new millennium, a full-length, 20001's Drukqs, James - has marked the beginning of an era, and the final new material in 20008. A lot of the music in any way is often a lack of communication and leadership to be fallacious rumors of new material for his fannies and his enthusiasm has not diminished hope. However ambitious this year, 8014, they uncovered new mats in almost a decade distribution crowdfund rallied together his army of fans: A precious gift that can not be the same as the new Phex Twinnipicks material is still unquenched thirst.

Syzia, September 22, 2814, along with records of Aphex Twin's new album to be released. For the owner of Triple vinyl, CD and digital formats will be available. Bleep a very limited vinyl version you can register your interest in buying.

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