

6'0"

How to commit career suicide

> Starring Julian Casablancas, Lou Reed &

MGMT

HIS. REAL

GREATEST **HITS**

AS DECIDED BY NME

With a little help from

Thurston Moore Wild Beasts Johnny Marr St Vincent Temples Anna Calvi

and more

***So is it the usual suspects?

NME EXCLUSIVE

THE ORIGINAL LYRIC SHEETS **HANDWRITTEN BY DAVID BOWIE!**

Sleater-Kinney REM hail the

riot grrrl pioneers



SUPPLY & DEMAND



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SOUNDING OFF WHAT'S ON YOUR

Answering you this week: Ben Homewood

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WINS REDUISMUSTIC HEADPHONES!

ORRENT OF ABUSE

Thom Yorke's new album 'Tomorrow's Modern Boxes' caused guite a stir, and for all the wrong reasons. The focus was on how he shared new music. rather than the music itself. Why the shift in vision? Different formats have played a huge role in the way we hear music. But to have reached the point where a record is undermined by its options of availability really discredits what's been done to make it. I can't argue with Yorke when he says artists are getting a rough deal with Spotify, and yet what he's done strikes an odd chord with me. I get the change in cultural attitudes and economic climate. It's cool to use analogue

LETTER OF THE WEEK

reddogmusic.co.uk/nme

formats now: I use record stores and it's an entirely different level of interaction, but I'd never go as far as to boycott another form of listening to music. Ultimately, that threatens new artists. If iTunes and Spotify are the only avenues we can exhaust for exciting new music, that's still better than none at all. The very notion of music hasn't surpassed its artistic or cultural value, and that's certainly something to be celebrated. I just hope people like Yorke don't forget what it's all about.

Luke Bartlett, via email

8



Ben Homewood: No need to worry about the world losing sight of the value of music just yet, Luke. Bands are still making records and people are hearing and buying them. You're right about Thom Yorke's album, though. I've heard much more about how much of a bellend he is for releasing it this way than whether it's any good or not (for what it's worth, I think it's a non-event). The digital debate will rage on, but even Yorke would agree when you say it's better than no music at all.

FUCKED BRITANNIA?

So far, 2014 has been depressing; 2013 seemed to be the start of a renaissance for music, with new, exciting acts creating fun, ramshackle albums that everyone could enjoy. For me, a period bookended with two Jake Bugg albums (the first being great, the second incredibly disappointing) brought an onslaught of new acts, labelled by NME in a cringeworthy issue as 'Cool Britannia'. Palma Violets, Peace and The Strypes were not only making fun albums but also playing raw, energetic live shows. What happened? This year has brought a load of depressing acts like Damon Albarn, Royal Blood, Temples, Morrissey and Alt-J, talented as they might be. The party shouldn't have ended that fast. We were only getting started. Oli Barton-Cross, via email

BH: Firstly, Oli, it was called Young Britannia. Secondly, chill out! And stop worrying about Jake Bugg, too. He's hardly the life and soul, is he? Neither are Damon. Alt-J. Morrissey or Temples you're looking in the wrong places. Fat White Family (the emaciated freaks on the Young Britannia cover) have spent the year wasted, caked in their own filth, dragging themselves across Britain forcing people to party. Wolf

Alice, Childhood, Joanna Gruesome and Hookworms have done much the same, only with less damage to their personal health, and the Palmas and Peace have played crazy warm-up shows for their 2015-bound records recently. And while Royal Blood aren't exactly Mick'n'Keef, it's hard to knock their chart juggernaut. Lastly, forget The Strypes. Now. They've always been shite. One of them looks like Ken Dodd for goodness' sake.

RIP IT UP

Wow. I'm currently streaming the new Ex Hex (left) album 'Rips' on repeat, it's a real grower. Hope you are going to review it. Andrew Baker, via email

BH: Wow yourself, Andrew. We gave

Ex Hex's bristling, ticklish mix of punk, pop and rock 9/10 as our Album Of The Week (October 11). We ran a massive threepage interview with the Washington band the week before, too. They rock, and so do you for digging the record.

PEAK-A-BOO

I've never seen Twin Peaks. so I'm not particularly excited about it returning for a new series. What I am excited about is finding out what 'Lynchian' means when music rags use it in reviews. I've lost count of the amount of bands who supposedly sound like a TV show. Peter Gibson, via email

BH: I'm glad you've raised this, Peter. What would the likes of Lana Del Rev. **Perfume Genius and Dirty** Beaches have done without **David Lynch? Maybe** we'd have missed out on

chillwave and witch house (remember that?) without him? Check out the music the man himself is still releasing via NYC label Sacred Bones and read Catherine Anne Davies' blog on NME.COM to find out more about what 'Lynchian' really means.

GET IT OFF YOUR CHEST

I was unimpressed with U2's iTunes stunt, but the revelation of 'Songs Of Innocence"s cover art surely reveals that it's all been a pisstake. A topless Larry Mullen Jr? Hugging a topless boy? People are going to HATE that popping up on iTunes. It's his son, but who'll know that? Can U2 be that deluded? It must be a joke. And still no confirmation whether or not his son is called Larry Mullen Jr Jr. Alex Riding, via email

BH: You and me both, Alex. Pleasingly, though, the artwork is just as bafflingly stupid, pointless and embarrassing as the record itself. So Bono and co still look like tossers. Take solace in that.



I met Tim Burgess from The Charlatans at a tiny festival in my hometown of Macclesfield!

Hebe Arnold, via email



1. Public Access TV In The Mirror

"All I wanna do is make a move/But it's hard to do on a Saturday", sighs John Eatherly on this new single from New York's most exciting new band. Thankfully, that laziness doesn't extend to the song itself - 'In The Mirror' keeps up the enthralling attitude of previous cuts 'Rebounder' and 'Middle Child' with another huge burst of bright, strutting Strokes-indebted garage.

Rhian Daly, Assistant Reviews Editor

2. Kid Wave Gloom

This second single from London quartet Kid Wave has a slightly misleading title. 'Gloom' won't get your hands in the air like an EDM banger, but as shoegazey indie-pop tunes go, it's pretty uplifting all ringing guitars, stealthy pop hooks and shouldershrugging slacker attitude. When Lea Emmery sings, "Some days we dance, some days we don't" over the outro, you'll already be hoping today is one of the days you do - but nonchalantly, obvs.

Nick Levine, writer

3. Stevie Nicks & Haim Rhiannon

On what we're calling the 'What took you so long?' collaboration of the year, Stevie Nicks finally gets in front of a microphone with her spiritual kid sisters, Haim. Backed by plodding piano and recorded in Nicks' Los Angeles mansion, this drafty recording is far from the glossiest thing either act has ever laid down, but Fleetwood Mac's finest moment is given a deliciously haunted spin with Este, Danielle and Alana's eerie, closeharmonising backing vocals.

Leonie Cooper, writer

4. Diplo As I Lay Dying

'As I Lay Dying' sounds like a synth-led, bossa nova take on a revamped James Bond theme tune. What it doesn't sound like is the dancehall, drop-chasing, garish beats Diplo's become synonymous with via Mad Decent and Major Lazer. But then this 'unheard' track is 10 years old, and now receives the reissue treatment, along with the rest of that initial 'Florida' album that put him on the map.

Eve Barlow, Deputy Editor

5. ASAP Rocky Multiply (feat. Juicy J)

In Rocky's first single since 2013's 'Long. Live. ASAP' album, the current king of Harlem hip-hop pays tribute to dead friends ("RIP my nigga Pimp C"), disses streetwear labels Hood By Air and Been Trill ("Shit is weak, you can keep that"), calls himself the "motherfucking lord of this fashion shit" and announces the return of the A\$AP Mob: "We don't ever die, we just multiply". No-one else sounds like this. Exciting.

Tom Howard, Assistant Editor









6. TV On The RadioCareful You

Back in July. TV On The Radio vocalist Tunde Adebimpe claimed that forthcoming album 'Seeds' is "1,000 per cent, without a doubt, the best thing we've ever done", and this second single lends weight to that statement. A pristine electronic backing mixes the band's trademark rhythmic pulse with atmospheric synths akin to Caribou's recent 'Our Love' LP. It's sublime, as expected. James Bentley, writer

7. Charli XCX **London Queen**

Fear not, Charli's angels. Her latest album 'Sucker' might have been pushed back a while, but with punk-edged bangers like this on there it's sure to be worth the wait. 'London Queen' is Charli's bassdriven, Ramones-via-Vampire Weekend love letter to her new home of LA, where she gets to drive on the wrong side of the road and wave a baseball bat around. For anyone who likes their pop stars aspirational, candid and larger-than-life.

Eve Barlow, Deputy Editor

8. Menace Beach Come On, Give Up

Following their 'Dream Out' and 'Lowtalker' EPs, Menace Beach's debut album 'Ratworld' is due in January. It's a good sign that the Leeds supergroup (featuring members of Hookworms and Pulled Apart By Horse alongside the core duo of Ryan Needham and Liza Violet) have come back with a slice of lo-fi indie so playful and bouncy you could bottle it as an antidote to the nine-to-five grind. Just ignore the misleadingly downbeat title. Lisa Wright, writer

9. Spookyland Rock And Roll Weakling

Sydney quartet Spookyland release their debut EP 'Rock And Roll Weakling' on November 3, and unlike the record's title, there's no rock'n'roll evident. Instead, its title track is full of harmonicaled folk that's every bit as rousing as it is fragile. "Rock bottom reminds me that I'll always be welcome here", mopes 22-year-old singer Marcus Gordon as his bandmates pluck and twang with earnest endeavour beneath.

Rhian Daly, Assistant Reviews Editor

10. No Devotion 10,000 Summers

No Devotion push forward with new material, showcasing a huge slice of emotionally charged pop on this new single. The track is written about Geoff Rickly's girlfriend and sees the frontman sweetly reference their closeness, listening to music with "one headphone each". '10,000 Summers' has a widescreen stadium feel that perfectly highlights No Devotion's ambition to move on from the past towards a brighter future. **David Renshaw, News Reporter**

ESSENTIAL NEW TRACKS

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11. AlunaGeorgeSupernatural

The second coming of AlunaGeorge is all about flow. New single 'Supernatural' locks into a groove that's a kind of low-key take on Kevin Saunderson's late-'80s work as one half of Detroit techno stars Inner City, riding a burbling synth bass intercut with pure electro jags of cut-up vocals. It's light as air, spacious and addictive, like the brighter moments of La Roux's 'Trouble In Paradise', and sets up album two beautifully.

Matthew Horton, writer

12. Elliott Smith Ocean

The glut of 'new' Elliott Smith songs this year have revealed unseen sides to the man, even an electronic project from the '90s. The latest, 'Ocean', was recorded with friends when Smith was 14, and while the lyrics are teen poetry of the worst order ("Tide comes in and tide goes out along the lonely moonlit shore..."), it displays an early penchant for his trademark brand of desolate melancholy.

Dan Stubbs, News Editor

13. Future Break The Rules

Atlanta's current Charlie big potatoes, Future, is following up his acclaimed second album from earlier in the year, 'Honest', with a Halloween-themed mixtape, 'Monster', which comes complete with some spectacularly gnarly artwork. Second offering from the tape, 'Break The Rules', is online now. Lyrically, it's typical fodder (I'm rich! I go to strip clubs! I'm a rebel!) cut in semi-Auto-Tune. The eerie Metro Boomin beat, however, reminiscent of both Lex Luger and John Carpenter, is a peach. Phil Hebblethwaite. writer

14. Sufjan Stevens & Cat Martino Take The Time

Sufjan Stevens has teamed up again with Cat Martino, member of Stranger Cat and his long-time collaborator, to make 'Take The Time', a reward for supporting Stranger Cat's new album on Pledge Music. With a beat that jumps around like a frog on Ritalin and washes of woozy vocals carbonated by bubbling synths, it's Stevens in experimental mode. Let's have that new album, Sufjan.

Lucy Jones, Deputy Editor, NME.COM

15. The War On Drugs Tangled Up In Blue

A War On Drugs version of a Bob Dylan song's been a long time coming. The great man is, after all, the most obvious influence on Adam Granduciel. Performed on the radio station 89.3 The Current in Dylan's home state of Minnesota, this take on the 'Blood On The Tracks' classic is faithful to the original's rambling feel and melody, but twists it into a dreamlike state using disorientating reverb and an oh-so-tender vocal. Tom Howard. Assistant Editor









16. James Bay Hold Back The River

After serving time busking around the open-mic nights of Brighton, singer-songwriter James Bay is finding fans in everyone from Zane Lowe to fashion house Burberry. 'Hold Back The River' – the title track from his new EP – is a rolling, gospeledged offering that somehow manages to take in everyone from Creedence Clearwater Revival to Kings Of Leon, but with a decidedly British bent. Leonie Cooper, writer

17. Viet Cong Continental Shelf

Splintered and bloody, July's 'Cassette' EP was an exciting introduction to Viet Cong. The Calgary band, which features two members of Women, release their debut album on Secretly Canadian next year and 'Continental Shelf' is its first single. Its catchy hook is brutalised by drums, effected guitar and synth, making for an edgy ride. This sets 2015 up to be the year Viet Cong bludgeon and intoxicate the world with twisted punk rock.

Ben Homewood, Reviews Editor

18. Communions So Long Sun

London label Tough Love have already released furiously loud records by Yvette and Big Ups this year, and now here's the first UK single from Danish dreamers Communions. 'So Long Sun's delicate lead guitar line trickles over watery melodies, while vocals are exhaled like smoke. The Copenhagen quartet share a practice space with Iceage and Lower, but there's none of their sternness here; instead Felt's floaty atmospherics reign.

Ben Homewood, Reviews Editor

19. Sun Kil Moon War On Drugs: Suck My Cock

Mark Kozelek's one-sided 'beef' with The War On Drugs seems funny for its vituperative triviality, but it's been weird for fans. In the run-up to this song's release, it seemed like theatre, Kozelek reacting to the absurdity of becoming a tabloid tidbit after a 25-year career. But then the song arrived, with its sexual aggression and calling a female writer a "bitch", and I despaired. This isn't what Kozelek's beautiful music is about, except now it is.

20. Deerhoof

Deerhoof's latest clocks in at the four-minute mark, but that's where any nod to traditional song length and structure ends. On this third track from upcoming 12th album 'La Isla Bonita' (out in early November), the San Franciscans pack roughly 300 madcap ideas into their sometimes jarring but always entertaining blasts of melody. Concentration spans might not be their thing, but it'll keep you on your toes.

Lisa Wright, writer

EVERYTHING THAT MATTERS IN MUSIC FEDITED BY DAN STUBBS

Breaking glass

Crystal Castles split after 10 years

NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS | 18 OCTOBER 2014



Stung by their own

experiences, Chvrches set

up their own label to help

new bands. Their second

release is out this week



Hello, Goodbye

or many bands, the offer of a record deal is so exciting that they don't stop to read the small print - but the path to glory is littered with bands who've signed over more of their rights than they'd want to. Chyrches to the rescue: though they only have one album to their name themselves,

the Glasgow trio set up their own label, Goodbye Records, at the beginning of the year to help acts onto the first rung of the ladder.

The group intend the

company to operate as a 'first release'

label, giving unsigned artists the chance to put out a song or an EP without asking them to relinquish the rights to any of their future work. They point to the fact that their own first signing, Soak - who released the 'Blud' EP through Goodbye Records - has now been signed by Rough Trade as proof that the system is working. "That's a pretty awesome payoff," says frontwoman

Lauren Mayberry, who discovered Soak when she heard her being played on Radio 1's Introducing... programme. "I just thought, what a ridiculously talented kid! She would have made it anyway, but we were able to give her a tiny bit of help." Their second signing was three-piece Australian group Mansionair,

whose 'Hold Me Down' EP is out this week. "We GOODBYE Heard about them last year because all our friends were passing around their tune online," says synth player/

> singer Martin Doherty. "I went to meet them and they turned out to be lovely, smart kids."

Bandmate Iain Cook points to James Passmore's indie label National Anthem - who put out first releases by Chvrches and Haim - as a model for what they want to achieve. "He's very transparent with the artists about what their rights are," he says. The trio have a few ideas about who they'll sign next, but really, their aim is just to help new bands avoid the pitfalls of dodgy A&Rs. "When labels were competing over us somebody told me he could

Lott," says Mayberry. "I'm sure she's a lovely person,

Soak, Chvrches'

first signing

make me the next Pixie but it was clear this guy just didn't get our band at all." ■ KEVIN EG PERRY

release, but if someone

makes a passionate case for something we'd be foolish not to listen

RECORDS

way of doing things, and

Be passionate

Martin: "We all have

to them."

Only release on vinyl and online

Martin Doherty: "Unfortunately for the CD, it's over. Don't waste any money printing up CDs. You just want to sell vinyls and download codes."

MY LIFE IN A SUITCASE



Glass Animals frontman



BOOK The Island Of Dr Moreau by HG Wells

"You can open

this up and start reading and it will take you off to some exotic wilderness."



Chvrches: (I-r)

Lauren Mayberry,

Martin Doherty

and lain Cook

BOXSET **Breaking Bad**

"One of our songs was originally going to be called 'Crystal

Meth', but I changed it once I saw the Louis Theroux documentary [The City Addicted To Crystal Meth] and saw just how awful it is."

FILM **Coffee And Ciagrettes**

"It's a series of short films [by Jim Jarmusch], and musicrelated too: Tom Waits, Iggy Pop, Jack White, RZA and GZA are all in it."

GAME **Football**

"We tend to want to stretch our legs after long drives, so we always take a football with us. Venues are good for football as long as you don't smash the lights or mixing desk."

HOME COMFORT Rabbit

on tour with me, but I don't think US customs would let him in. He's called

Glass Animals continue their tour at Bristol Thekla (October

"I'd like to take my rabbit Xander."

15) and more this week





HOW TO SET UP A LABEL, BY CHVRCHES Trust your taste and don't bother with CDs, say the Glasgow trio

Find people you trust to work with Lauren Mayberry:

"As much as this is our label, we have to trust everyone who works on it so that it's a collaborative thing. We have to trust their taste."

Listen to absolutely everything

Martin Doherty: "You might get sent loads

of stuff that isn't for you, but there's always something in there that you'd kick yourself if you missed."

Don't follow trends

Lauren: "It's a cynical you'll always be a year late anyway."

to agree on the final

NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS | 18

AICTIC INTERACTIVE INTERACTIVE

THE JOURNEY OF ARCTIC MONKEYS
RIGHT UP UNTIL READING AND LEEDS

FEATURING

MUSIC, VIDEOS,

NEVER BEFORE SEEN PHOTOS

AND MORE







up The Beatles

With a little help from their 'fwends',
The Flaming Lips have covered 'Sgt
Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band' in
its entirety. Frontman Wayne Coyne
talks us through their crazy new versions



► FEATURING My Morning Jacket, Fever The Ghost & J Mascis

Wayne Coyne: "I talk to Jim James from My Morning Jacket nearly every week, and he picked this track early in the process. Then I bumped into Fever The

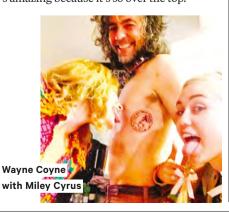
Ghost, who already did a version, so I just combined the two and got J Mascis to do a guitar solo over the top.

got I mascis to do a guitar solo over the top. They're all playing in different keys, and initially I wasn't sure it worked, but now I think it's crazy in a good way."



FEATURING The Flaming Lips, Black Pus and The Autumn Defense

"If there's a song that shows how fucked up our approach to covers is, it's this. With some Beatles tracks, you strip away the production and vocals and realise they aren't that great a song. This one is like that, and our first version was boring. It needed Black Pus (Brian Chippendale from Lightning Bolt) to come up with this freeform fuckfest of electronics. It's amazing because it's so over the top."







Lucy In The Sky With Diamonds FEATURING Miley Cyrus, Moby and

The Flaming Lips

"On my birthday, Miley Cyrus tweeted me 'Happy Birthday'. I tweeted back 'Let's do something together'. So we swapped numbers and soon found ourselves in the same studio. I've been around people in a similar position to her and they are not fun. She is. She's badass, and she does things with enthusiasm and love."

Getting Better

▶ FEATURING Dr Dog & Chuck Inglish

"Dr Dog are big Beatles fans and already sound quite like them. Chuck Inglish from The Cool Kids, on the other hand, led a life free of The Beatles until I fucked with him. That's what makes this track so charming: the contrast of

"IT'S A FREEFORM FUCK-FEST OF ELECTRONICS"

Wayne Coyne

long-term fans and someone coming to it fresh. It might be the best track on there."

Fixing A Hole

FEATURING Electric Wurms

"We sometimes attribute Flaming Lips music to Electric Wurms just for variety. This was mainly [guitarist] Steven Drozd sitting in his house experimenting with a new effects box and marvelling at the chord structure. It sounds like Nick Drake from outer space. I almost wish the whole record sounded like





this. It's perfect for driving round at 3am – haunting and druggy."

She's Leavina Home

FEATURING Phantogram, Julianna Barwick and Spaceface

"I thought this song was perfect for Phantogram, but in the meantime I got to know Julianna Barwick and she wanted to do this track as well. Meanwhile, Jake Ingalls, who plays with us now, has a band called Spaceface, and they also did a version, so I just combined them all, like Dr Frankenstein."

Being For The Benefit Of Mr Kite!

FEATURING The Flaming Lips, Maynard James Keenan and Sunbears

"When The Beatles are doing this it sounds like an untouchable masterpiece, but the minute you mess with it, it sounds like a Tom Waits outtake. We had to mess around with it forever. For some

reason I thought Maynard James Keenan [Tool] might be the key, and he was."

Within You Without You

▶ FEATURING Birdflower and Morgan Delt

"Morgan Delt's wife had a baby while he was doing this track. It's a reminder that life and art have to mesh together. Birdflower are a couple of friends of mine who mess with plug-ins and weirdness. The track suited them because there aren't a lot of chord changes, but it was too long and pitched too low, so I just speeded it up. Now it's not as long and not too low. Sometimes the solution is simple."

When I'm Sixty-Four

FEATURING The Flaming Lips and Def Rain "Unlike some Beatles songs, anybody can sing this and not fuck it up. Def Rain are

a band from Dallas who have a great sense of cosmic longing. Steven did the vocoder accompaniment and it sounds like an old couple singing to each other. Def Rain is the old woman and Steven is her robot partner."

Lovely Rita

FEATURING Tegan & Sara and Stardeath & White Dwarves

"This is my nephew's band, Stardeath & White Dwarves, doing an electronic version. Initially I was like, 'I dunno.' Then I ran into Tegan & Sara at a festival and I asked them to sing on it. Their strange, weird-ass twin harmony shit is perfect. You couldn't have lesbian twins singing on a more appropriate song."

Good Morning Good Morning

FEATURING Zorch and Grace Potter

"I ran into Grace Potter three or four years ago watching her band The Nocturnals. When she got offstage she told me the acid she'd taken was kicking in pretty good, and we've been friends ever since. The music is by these prog-rock weirdos from Austin."

Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band' (Reprise)

▶ FEATURING Foxygen and MGMT

"This is mostly Foxygen. Ben Goldwasser from MGMT is in there playing somewhere. It's a jam, but that's appropriate because the original sounds a bit like a jam too."

A Day In The Life

▶ FEATURING The Flaming Lips and Miley Cyrus

"When I was growing up I had an eight-track stereo with one broken speaker. I used to listen to 'Sgt Pepper's...' and it sounded so weird with the voices fading in and out. Except they weren't fading in and out – they were panning in stereo, but I couldn't hear it. When I heard it properly I thought it wasn't as good because it wasn't as weird. This is me trying to reconnect with that sense of weirdness."

■ CHRIS COTTINGHAM

"I was in heaven"

Legendary photographer
Michael Putland recalls
his sleepness nights with
the Stones, The Clash and
Lou Reed in the 1970s

ccording to legend, Michael Putland didn't take one day off during the 1970s. Looking back at his work from the era, capturing the likes of Lou Reed, Marc Bolan and The Rolling Stones in their prime, it's no surprise he didn't want to rest. "I would often do five shoots in a day," Putland says. "Then I'd shoot an aftershow party and get home at three in the morning."

A new exhibition of Putland's work spanning five decades is set to open on October 22 at the Getty Images gallery in London, including shots taken while he was living in New York in the '70s. "I shot The Clash when they arrived in New York and they didn't want to do the shoot at all," he recalls. "I had to buy them some army boots to convince them."

It's The Rolling Stones that
Putland has the fondest memories of
photographing, however. "I just loved
them," he says. "I travelled all over
Europe and got onstage with them
every night. I was in heaven. Once I was
shooting the Stones and backstage in
their dressing room was Paul McCartney
and Bob Marley. The two things I loved
the most were music and photography
and there I was, combining them both."

■ DAVID RENSHAW

► For a selection of posters taken from Michael Putland: A Life In Music 50 Years On The Road, turn to page 33



AICHAEL PUTLAND/GETTY IMAGES



Étienne Daho may be unknown in the UK, but Savages' Jehnny Beth leapt at the chance to sing on the French star's new LP. They explain how it happened

Jehnny Beth, Savages

"Étienne is massive in France, so I grew up surrounded by his music on TV and radio. He's a solo pop star with loads of credibility. In the UK, the equivalent would be someone like PJ Harvey in terms of level of fame and respect, but as he sings in French he hasn't crossed over the Channel because of the language barrier. I met him when he was in London recording his new album 'Les Chansons De L'innocence Retrouvée'. As London-based French musicians, he wanted to hang out with me and Johnny Hostile, my partner in John & Jehn, so we took him to lots of gigs and ended up appearing on the album. He asked us to sing on the opening track 'Le Baiser Du Destin', which we loved - there's a real Bowie atmosphere to it.

"He's become like a guru to me. When we were looking for a photographer for the Savages album cover, he recommended Richard Dumas, and he helped us choose the title 'Silence Yourself', too. Similarly, he emailed me two potential photos for his latest album cover. The one I told him to go with

"I GREW UP WITH ETIENNE'S MUSIC... HE'S LIKE A GURU TO ME"

Jehnny Beth

has been controversial - it's been banned from the Tube. Blame me! People are calling it misogynistic because it features a woman with her breasts out, but it's a beautiful image that's about innocence. It's not about selling something."

Étienne Daho

"I saw the very first Savages gig and loved it. I thought it was very intense, very strong. I asked John & Jehn to come and sing backing vocals and it felt magical. The song they do is about destiny - I'm obsessed with the role we play in shaping our own future.

"I've been called the godfather of new French pop, and when I organised a showcase night in Paris for new bands, I invited John & Jehn to perform. They covered 'Week-End À Rome', which Saint Etienne remade in the '90s as 'He's On The Phone'. I've worked for over 30 years, but in England people only know me from my collaborations with William Orbit or Saint Etienne. Over my career, I've worked with people like Marianne Faithfull, and on this record we can add Debbie Harry and Nile Rodgers to the list - they appear together on the song 'L'Étrangère'. I met Debbie in

New York in '91 but was too shy to ask her to work with me.

THE MINI INTERVIEW



Boseman

James Brown in new

biopic Get On Up

How did you prepare for the role of Godfather of Soul?

"I was reading biographies, watching footage, listening to the music and dancing every day for two months before we started shooting."

How involved were his family with the film?

"There were family members on set daily. His grandson Jason worked on the shoot as a PA so if I ever had a question he'd call his grandmother for me. He'd come on set some days and say, 'Wassup Grandad!"

Did you get any help from the film's producer, Mick Jagger?

"He listened to some of his favourite James Brown songs with me and told me, even as a young performer, how much he revered him."

How were the songs performed for the film?

"We used live recordings of James Brown for the concert scenes but you can't just be moving your mouth. You have to live it. It was always me physically singing."

What's your favourite James Érown track?

"Every song has so much nostalgia for me. But right now it's 'Get on The Good Foot'." ■ DAN BRIGHTMORE

Get On Up is released on November 21

her." ■ GARY RYAN

I bit the bullet this time, because the song's about

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NME.COM ON MOBILE - REDESIGNED WITH MUSIC FANS IN MIND

THE BEST MUSIC ON TV, RADIO AND ONLINE THIS WEEK



X-Posure

LISTEN XFM, 10pm, October 20-21

South London's filthiest band bring scuzz and squalor to the XFM studios this week as they celebrate the re-release of their cult debut LP, 'Champagne Holocaust'. They'll treat John Kennedy to a track a night, starting with 'Bomb Disneyland' and 'Heaven On Earth'. Listen out next week for more from Fat Whites, too.

André 3000

Mary Anne Hobbs LISTEN BBC 6 Music, 7am. October 18 The OutKast rapper plays Jimi Hendrix in the forthcoming biopic All Is By My Side, and this week he joins Mary Anne Hobbs to talk about taking up the role of the legendary rock star. He'll also open up about what the future holds for the hip-hop duo after reuniting for a host of shows earlier this year.

Bobby Gillespie

The Ronnie Wood Show ►WATCH Sky Arts, 11.30pm,

October 15 Relive what happened when the Primal Scream singer joined the Rolling Stones guitarist on his TV show.

The pair get nostalgic for the emergence of post-punk and share tracks from

The Velvet Underground and Public Image Ltd.

Nirvana Nevermind

►WATCH Sky Arts, 1.30am, October 17

Cast your mind back to Dave Grohl's pre-Foo Fighters endeavours as he and Krist Novoselic reminisce about Nirvana's seminal grunge album. Expect stories from the recording sessions and a discussion on the legacy of late frontman

Slow Club

Kurt Cobain.

Sky Arts Sessions ► WATCH Sky Arts, 10.30pm, October 18 Charles Watson and Rebecca Taylor (below left) bring their recent third album 'Complete Surrender' to life as they visit the Sky Arts studios to recreate some of its highlights. James Yorkston also features in this episode.

Kings Of Leon

The First Time **LISTEN BBC 6 Music.** 1pm, October 19 Caleb and Nathan Followill join Matt Everitt to discuss their life in music, from their beginnings in Oklahoma and Tennessee - a strict religious upbringing in which secular music was banned - to discovering

The Beach Boys, Boyz II

Men and more.

GOING OUT

THE BEST LIVE EVENTS THIS WEEK



Katy B

Katy gives her second LP 'Little Red' another airing.

DATES Birmingham 02 Academy (October 18), Nottingham Rock City (19), Southend Cliffs Pavilion (20). Bournemouth O2 Academy (21)

►TICKETS £16 from NME. COM/tickets with £1.92-£3.15 booking fee; Birmingham and Bournemouth sold out

Sleaford Mods

The Notts duo hit Leicester. DATES Leicester The Scholar (October 16)

►TICKETS £6 from NME.COM/ tickets with £1 booking fee

Lucy Rose

Plays songs from her new LP.

DATES Liverpool Arts Club Loft (October 16)

TICKETS £10 from NME.COM/ tickets with £1.25 booking fee

5 TO SEE FOR FREE

1. Demob Happy

Birthdays, London

October 15, 8pm

2. Brawlers

Rock City, Nottingham

October 16, 9pm

3. The 2 Bears

Rough Trade East, London

►October 16, 7pm

4. Black Honey

Sixty Million Postcards, Bournemouth

►October 16, 8pm

5. Bloody Knees The Old Blue Last, London

October 17, 8pm

Telefonica

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PRIORITY



Hall Of Fame nominees The Smiths in 1984 and (right) rock relic Gene Simmons of Kiss



Joan Jett and Lorde. This year, they might be hoping for an equally headline-grabbing night courtesy of The Smiths, who are nominated alongside Lou Reed, Nine Inch Nails, Green Day, Chic, Sting and more. Well, dream on. While you can imagine Morrissey – a Penguin Classics author who has clearly dreamt of living in antiquity surrounded by tragic figures from golden eras past – feeling at home among the monochrome portraits of The Flamingos, Jelly Roll Morton and Billy Ming And The Minging Mingettes, The Smiths' creative core is far too alive and kicking to be mothballed for posterity.

Johnny Marr is knocking out a vital and demon-driven album every year. Morrissey, even while battling serious illness, as was revealed last week, has just released one of the most exploratory and innovative albums of his life in 'World Peace Is None Of Your Business', and looks to be reaching new peaks in his latest solo spurt. These aren't men who'd want to nod humbly along to the idea that their best work is 30 years behind them: they're just too *now*.

And as for the RARHOF tradition of the band reuniting to play the ceremony, they'd have better luck getting the Ramones back together. In 2009, Marr told XFM that the band had

turned down £50 million to play just a handful of dates. In 2006 Morrissey stated that "I would rather eat my own testicles than reform The Smiths, and that's saying something for a vegetarian." I'm not saying it'll never happen, but we can be pretty sure it'll never happen in return for a plastic gong.

Quite right too. As sad as it was to see The Clash, The Stooges and Sex Pistols inducted – proud antiestablishment forces neutered, tamed and absorbed into the anodyne heritage machine – The Smiths still represent a living outsider ethos, a band that rallies people who find the idea of mainstream acceptance distasteful. They pioneered the modern idea of the alternative and their legacy and ideology is still thriving, their offspring still vehemently – and romantically – independence-minded. They're the absolute antithesis of the RARHOF's aspicsealed rock'n'roll Tussauds. They still *matter*. So hands off our Smiths; take Sting instead, no-one will miss him. ■

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

BY MARK BEAUMONT

Nominated for induction in 2015,
The Smiths and their fiercely independent ethos are an ill fit for The Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame



The Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame: the place where the light finally goes out. It's rock's House Of Lords, where ancient relics of the rock age are inducted once doctors have confirmed their primary creative functions have shut down for

good. To be inducted is less an honour, more an invitation to a never-ending whist drive at the rock'n'roll retirement village. It also seems to be a curse for bands inducted while still functioning: REM split four years after their big night, and U2, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Guns N'Roses and more have all seen career downturns since theirs. But what do you expect from embracing a naff old-blokes' institution so rockist that Gene Simmons of Kiss thought he could rightfully argue against the inclusion of Run-DMC, Donna Summer and Grandmaster Flash because "they sample and they talk. Not even sing!" A quote not from 1867, but 2014.

Last year the ceremony had great success with its starstudded induction of Nirvana, which saw Dave Grohl and Krist Novoselic playing alongside Kim Gordon, St Vincent,

LOST ALBUMS



The Velvet Underground

The Velvet

Underground (1969)

Chosen by Ian McCulloch, Echo And The Bunnymen

"Everyone's led by the tossers in the press to listen to the banana album ['The Velvet Underground & Nico']. That is an incredible record but there's much to be said for this, their third album. 'Pale Blue Eyes' is one of the greatest love songs ever written, if it even is a love song – you never know with Lou Reed. People know less about it because people think the banana album makes them look cooler, but the only way you can be cool is to have written that album, not to just tell people how great it is."

▶THE DETAILS

▶ RELEASE DATE March 1969

►LABEL MGM

► KEY TRACKS Pale Blue Eyes,

Jesus, Candy Says

► WHERE TO FIND IT CDs available in record shops and online

LISTEN ONLINE On Spotify



s first brushes with fame go, it's a bit of a weird one. But when Dutch Uncles went on tour with emo titans Paramore in Europe last summer, the Manchester band supersized their audience to the tune of several thousand overnight.

"It was surreal," says frontman Duncan Wallis. "[Paramore guitarist] Taylor York was pouring his heart out to us backstage about how our music had influenced him to write songs like 'Ain't It Fun' and 'Still Into You'. I was thinking, 'How the hell has this massive group been influenced by five nerds from Manchester trying to write in 7/4 time?'"

If York was smitten with the band, Paramore's fans were even more lovestruck. "Their fans are completely obsessive," laughs

"I WAS SICK OF WRITING THESE MATH-ROCK RIDDLES - IT'S REALLY ANNOYING"

DUNCAN WALLIS



Wallis. "People fall in love with you even though they've only seen you play for half an hour. Just the fact that we've shared the same stage as Paramore made us legends all of a sudden... It actually freaked me out a bit."

Wallis' reaction to his unexpected summer jaunt speaks volumes about his band's self-image. For the longest time, the unassuming five-piece – who've drawn

frequent comparisons to Field Music, Wild Beasts and Everything Everything in the past – worried that their music was "too weird", too self-consciously cerebral for its own good.

Then 'Out Of Touch, In The Wild' came along in 2013, suggesting a band near the peak of its powers with a more confident, relaxed set that swapped guitars for layered strings and percussion. It's a path they look set to continue down with new album 'O Shudder', currently being mixed and due for release early next year. Songs like 'In And Out' and 'Decided Knowledge' suggest the sophisticated synthpop of Japan and Tears For Fears more than the post-punk of Dutch Uncles' early years, and Wallis' voice has taken on a high, tremulous quality reminiscent of Talk Talk's Mark Hollis.

"We let the song dictate the sound a bit more this time," says Robin Richards, bassist and chief songwriter. "But it's been quite a natural progression for us. We could've gone down a completely different route again with this record, but it seemed like we'd found something to build on with 'Out Of Touch...'"

For the album, recorded in Wales and Salford with long-term producer Brendan Williams, Richards set about writing songs that were less busy than before, thrusting Wallis' lyrics into the spotlight and making his vocals do more of the heavy lifting (Liverpool trio Stealing Sheep also contribute vocals to

the record's final track, 'Be Right Back').

Inspired by artists such as The Blue Nile, Peter Gabriel and Prefab Sprout – "stuff that might seem cheesy at first, but which just works" – Wallis penned a set of lyrics which, gathered round the theme of doubt and creeping insecurity, would stand up as "intimate and honest".

"I felt I needed to be simpler as a lyricist," he says. "I was sick of writing these math-rock riddles – it's really annoying. When you reach 27, you start to care less about sounding pretentious or cool."

Does that mean it will be less difficult, to make

sure it appeals to those Paramore fans?

"Sort of... We've definitely been guilty of being weird in the past; it's just we didn't know it at the time. I mean, it is still weird. We've just been more subtle with it, you know?"

■ ALEX DENNEY

►THE DETAILS

- ►TITLE O Shudder
- ▶ RELEASE DATE February 2015
- ► LABEL Memphis Industries
- ▶ PRODUCER Brendan Williams
- ▶ RECORDED Giant Wafer
- Studios, Wales; Peel Hall, Salford

 TRACKS INCLUDE In And Out,
 Upsilon, Drips
- DUNCAN WALLIS SAYS
- "We've had some dreadful luck putting out records in the past. 'Out Of Touch, In The Wild' was released the same week HMV went into administration and [2011 album] 'Cadenza' was released the week of the London riots, so all our physical copies got burned in the Sony warehouse fire. We're hoping for better this time!"



"THERE WAS THIS ALCHEMY THAT WAS RIPE FOR CREATION"

Jimmy Page



THIS WEEK...

Led Zeppelin: IV

A remastered version of the legendary band's biggest-selling album was released last week. A good time to revisit its Tolkien- and Joni Mitchell-inspired genius, then

THE BACKGROUND

Having changed their name from The New Yardbirds in the autumn of 1968, and with the biggest advance ever for a new band secured from Atlantic Records by manager Peter Grant, Led Zeppelin released their first three albums 'I', 'II' and 'III' in a hectic 21-month period that featured brutally intense touring, reasonable commercial success and solid levels of excess. By 1971 Led Zeppelin weren't yet a mega-band, though; at a time when Iggy And The Stooges were pushing their raw power around the Midwest and The Rolling Stones were living the dream post-'Let It Bleed', Robert Plant, Jimmy Page, John Paul Jones and John Bonham had something to prove. They did so with 'IV', their masterpiece: a record that combined their folk, R&B, blues and JRR Tolkien influences more fluently than ever before.

STORY BEHIND THE SLEEVE

As a 'fuck you' to the critics who'd put the success of their first three albums down to hype, Led Zeppelin decided to release their fourth untitled. Instead of any words, the cover features a painting singer Robert Plant found in an antiques shop in Reading. The record itself displays four symbols, or runes: one for each band member.

FIVE FACTS

The record has sold around 37 million copies worldwide, is the third best-selling album ever in the United States (23 million and counting) and is by far and away Led Zeppelin's best-selling album.

The majority of the album was recorded at Headley Grange in Hampshire, on the recommendation of none other than Fleetwood Mac, who in 1970 had bought a mansion called Benifold in the same village.

3 'Stairway To Heaven', despite never being released as a single in the US, was the most requested song on FM radio throughout the 1970s.

Feted blues guitarist
Memphis Minnie is
credited as a co-writer on
closing track 'When The
Levee Breaks', as it's a
version of her and husband
Kansas Joe McCoy's 1929
song of the same name. In
Zep's version, the cavernous
drum sound was famously
achieved by recording the
kit in the mansion's stairwell.

5 Fairport Convention singer Sandy Denny provides guest vocals on 'The Battle Of Evermore'.

LYRIC ANALYSIS

"To find a queen without a king/They say she plays guitar and cries and sings" - 'Going To California'

Having supposedly written this song about Joni Mitchell and referencing her song 'I Had A King', vocalist Robert Plant would sometimes say "Joni" after performing this section live.

"So I've decided what I'm gonna do now/ So I'm packing my bags for the Misty Mountains" - 'Misty Mountain Hop'

'...Hop' is a sketch of a group of hippies getting busted by the police that concludes with Plant fleeing society to live a simpler life. This mirrors the attention the band were receiving.

"The drums will shake the castle wall/The ringwraiths ride in black/Ride on" - "The Battle Of Evermore'

Another example of Page and Plant's obsession with Tolkien's Lord Of The Rings, which also features in 'Misty Mountain Hop'.

WHAT WE SAID THEN

"'Led Zep III' gave the first indications that the band's music was not confined to power rock, and 'IV' consolidates their maturity. 'Black Dog' illustrates that they are light years ahead of their nearest fashionable imitators, 'Stairway To Heaven' is Zeppelin's

all-time classic, 'When The Levee Breaks' leaps off into a golden sunset, and Jimmy Page proves once again why he is amongst this generation's leading guitarists." Roy Carr, NME, November 20, 1971

WHAT WE SAY NOW

Zep's most celebrated LP is a staggeringly intricate and exhilarating record that could not have been made by any other band.

FAMOUS FAN

"To me, Zeppelin were spiritually inspirational. I was going to Catholic school and questioning God, but I believed in Led Zeppelin." Dave Grohl, Rolling Stone, 2004

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"When you had four musicians that were without doubt at the top of their game, and they played really superbly as a band, that whole aspect took on a fifth element – this alchemy that was really ripe for creation."

Jimmy Page, 2010

THE AFTERMATH

Led Zeppelin blew up, and throughout the '70s frequently broke gig attendance records set by The Beatles. Their albums became proggier and more complex, but it was 'IV' that taught the likes of Queens Of The Stone Age, Royal Blood and Foo Fighters that a fluent mix of dynamics, voices and tones is the key to mastering heavy rock.

►THE DETAILS

► RECORDED 1970-71 ► RELEASE DATE November 8, 1971
► LENGTH 42:25 ► PRODUCER Jimmy Page ► STUDIO Basing Street
Studios, London; Headley Grange, Hampshire; Sunset Sound, Los
Angeles ► HIGHEST UK CHART POSITION 1 ► UK SALES 1.8 million
► TRACKLISTING ► 1. Black Dog ► 2. Rock And Roll ► 3. The Battle Of
Evermore ► 4. Stairway To Heaven ► 5. Misty Mountain Hop ► 6. Four
Sticks 7. Going To California ► 8. When The Levee Breaks

TheWeek

NEWS DESK

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"They have scraped cancerous tissues four times already, but whatever. If I die, then I die"

Morrissey reveals he has been treated for cancer

THE NUMBERS

Number of artists on The Impossible Orchestra's cover of 'God Only Knows' for BBC Music, including Brian Wilson, Dave Grohl, Lorde, Jake Bugg and One Direction

£23,00

Winning bid on two braided locks of Willie Nelson's hair at a US auction

Motorcycles being sold by Blur's Graham Coxon. The money raised will be donated to the NSPCC

Number of plays for Clean Bandit's 'Rather Be', making it the most streamed song of the year so far



Hatsune Miku

This is the holographic pop star from Japan who last week made her first appearance on US TV, on The Late Show With David Letterman, Miku performed her single 'Sharing The World' with a live band. She previously opened for Lady Gaga on her ArtRave tour.

Like Tupac at Coachella?

Not really: it's one of the first times a hologram has been presented as a pop star in its own right, rather than as a way to resurrect the dead.

Was it any good?

Letterman seemed impressed, though he did admit that the experience was "like being on Willie Nelson's bus".

+ GOOD WEEK +



Stephen Hawking

The good professor is an unlikely guest vocalist on Pink Floyd's new album 'The Endless River'. The track 'Talkin' Hawkin" uses a sample of Hawking's synthesized voice taken from a speech he made for a 1994 BT advert.

BAD WEEK -



Bruce Springsteen

The Boss is one of the most risky musicians to search for online, says a new study. Alongside Jon Bon Jovi and Flo Rida, Googling Bruce gives you an increased chance of reaching a site that has tested positive for viruses, spyware and spam.

IN BRIEF

Green with anger

Professor Green slapped a student in the front row while onstage at Durham University freshers' ball. "That's what you get when you call me a cunt," he explained.

Not my place

Coldplay's Chris Martin has turned down the keys to the city of Exeter, claiming that he has "not

done enough" to warrant the freedom of his home city. That's despite the fact he has six

Find these stories and more on NME.COM

more hit albums than his replacement, former mayor Yolonda Henson.

No butts

Damon Albarn apologised to an Argentine audience on behalf of Top Gear's Jeremy Clarkson, recently run out of the country for driving a car with a number plate referencing the Falklands war. "He's a fucking arsehole," said Albarn.



TOP 40 ALBUMS OCTOBER 12, 2014



Caribou

Canadian producer Dan Snaith has given his techno alias Daphni a rest and released his first album as Caribou since 2010's 'Swim'. 'Our Love' is full of radio-friendly bangers and wobbly breakbeat, and tops the chart this week.

- Playland Johnny Marr WARNER BROS
- Lower Than Atlantis Lower Than Atlantis FASY LIFE
- You're Dead Flying Lotus WARP
- Syro Aphex Twin WARP
- This Is All Yours Alt-J INFECTIOUS
- Carry On The Grudge Jamie T VIRGIN
- I'll Keep You In Mind From Time To Time Moose Blood NO SLEEP
- Popular Problems Leonard Cohen COLUMBIA
- Wanted On Voyage George Ezra COLUMBIA
- 11 Commune Goat ROCKET
- ▼ 12 (What's The Story) Morning Glory? Oasis BIG BROTHER
- 13 Lullaby And... The Ceaseless Roar Robert Plant EAST WEST
- ▲ 14 No Sound Without Silence The Script COLUMBIA
- NEW 15 24 Karat Gold Songs From The Vault Stevie Nicks REPRISE
- NEW 16 Atomos A Winged Victory For The Sullen ERASED TAPES
- 17 X Ed Sheeran ASYLUM
- ▼ 18 Down Where The Spirit Meets The Bone Lucinda Williams HIGHWAY 20
- Royal Blood Royal Blood WARNER BROS
- NEW 20 Hozier Hozier ISLAND
- Wonder Where We Land SBTRKT YOUNG TURKS
- 22 If You Wait London Grammar METAL & DUST
- NEW 23 Nehruviandoom Nehruviandoom LEX
- ▼ 24 AM Arctic Monkeys DOMINO
- 25 Partners Barbra Streisand COLUMBIA NEW 26 Resurrection New Found Glory HOPELESS
- NEW 27 Everything Will Be Alright In The End Weezer
- NEW 28 Standing In The Breach Jackson Browne INSIDE
- 29 In The Lonely Hour Sam Smith CAPITOL
- NEW 30 We Come From The Same Place Allo Darlin' FORTUNA POP 31 Different Shades Of Blue Joe Bonamassa PROVOGUE
- ▲ 32 Stay Gold First Aid Kit COLUMBIA
- 33 Ryan Adams Ryan Adams COLUMBIA NEW 34 Tracks Of My Years Bryan Adams POLYDOR
- NEW 35 Dubnobasswithmyheadman Underworld UMC
- NEW 36 LP1 FKA Twigs young turks
- NEW 37 Interlude Jamie Cullum ISI AND
- NEW 38 Heartleap Vashti Bunyan FATCAT
- NEW 39 Lazaretto Jack White XI
- ▼ 40 The Weird And Wonderful Marmozets Marmozets ROADRUNNER

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.



THIS WEEK **PHONICA** LONDON

FOUNDED 2003 WHY IT'S GREAT This Soho shop is

home to all manner of cutting-edge dance and electronic music **TOP SELLER LAST WEEK** Levon Vincent - 'Impressions Of

A Rainstorm THEY SAY "We provide eclectic sounds in a large shop with plenty

space to listen and dig.

SOUNDTRACK OF MY LIFE



THE SONG THAT

MADE ME WANT

'U Don't Know Me

"When I was in college in

Belfast, I used to guard the VIP area in a nightclub

called Shine. On the night

DJ Sneak played I was ill with tonsillitis and properly

pissed off. But when he played 'U Don't Know Me'.

and I saw what that song

did to the crowd, I had an

I want to be able to do that."

LONGER LISTEN TO

'When I was 11. I decided to

of my entire primary school.

As I was about to start, a kid

yelled, 'You're flying low!'

- my trouser zip was down.

I started an octave too high

register only dogs could hear,

really badly. Since then, I've

never been able to hear this

without reliving that trauma."

and ended up singing in a

sing that a capella in front

Ebony And Ivory'
- Paul McCartney
& Stevie Wonder

HE SONG I CAN NO

epiphany: 'Fucking hell,

- Armand Van Helden

TO DJ





DJ and presenter

AS TOLD TO GARY RYAN PHOTO: GETTY

THE FIRST SONG I REMEMBER HEARING A Christy Moore song

"I grew up in Dublin, so it will have probably been something by Christy Moore or The Dubliners. I have memories of being squeezed in the back of my dad's car with my brothers and sisters, listening to a radio station that only played diddly-aye Irish trad music."

THE FIRST SONG I FELL IN LOVE WITH <mark>'I'm A Man You Don'</mark>t **Meet Every Day'** - The Poques

"My eldest brother Rod was obsessed with The Pogues. This one was sung by the bass player, Cait

O'Riordan, and for me, aged seven, it was impactful hearing a woman front a band of men."

THE FIRST ALBUM I EVER BOUGHT 'Use Your Illusion I' - Guns N' Roses

"I bought 'Use Your Illusion I'

Guns N'

Roses

I was 13. Growing up in the Republic Of Ireland, it's compulsory to learn Gaelic at secondary level. You get shipped off to stay in rural Ireland with a Gaelicspeaking family and go to classes every day, but that

and 'II' on cassette when

"I ALWAYS WANTED TO BE IN A GOSPEL CHOIR"

summer was all about Guns N' Roses for me. I played those tapes to death."

THE SONG THAT MADE ME WANT TO BE IN A BAND

'You Can Get It If You Really Want' -Desmond Dekker

"On the last day of school I sang backing vocals in a band and we performed Desmond Dekker's version of [Jimmy Cliff's] 'You Can Get It If You Really Want'. It was the only time I felt the

THE SONG THAT MAKES ME WANT TO DANCE

'It's Alright, I Feel It!' - Nuyorican Soul

"I played this recently at the end of my set. It typifies a certain sound I love, which is '90s house music with a gospel edge. I've always wanted to be in a gospel choir, but it's never going to happen."

THE SONG I DO AT KARAOKE 'I'll Be There' - The Jackson 5

"I like the big belters: Mariah,

Whitney, The Jackson 5. I used to date a guy where our thing was to do karaoke in the afternoons, just the two of us. Singing loud with no inhabitions is such a therapeutic thing to do."

THE SONG I CAN'T **OUT OF MY HEAD**

'Beelzedub' - Paleman

"It's the most bonkers, brilliant record. It's part funky, part grime, very UK sounding. It's got this crazy bassline that even amnesia couldn't remove"

THE SONG I WISH I'D WRITTEN 'House Party' - Fred Wesley

"I started collecting records in college years. 'House Party' was my introduction to disco and funk, and it's one of my favourite happy party records of all time."

THE ALBUM I GAVE BIRTH TO 'Solo Piano' - Chilly Gonzales

"I planned a big, long playlist for when I went into labour - starting out chilled and getting more energetic. I ended up just listening to Chilly Gonzales' 'Solo Piano' album. It was so calming and gorgeous, we just kept it on."

THE SONG I WANT **FUNERAL** Sweet Thing

- Van Morrison "It's a song from 'Astral

Weeks' and it really brings me back to growing up in Ireland. Lyrically, it's transcendent - it's about redemption, not looking back, just being in a beautiful place with a person you love. It's a nice sentiment for death: no regrets."

▶ 'Annie Mac Presents 2014' is released on October 24



Kaai

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Mazes and Veronica Falls frontmen

hook up "just for the fun of it"

hen they first met, Jack Cooper (above, left) and James Hoare didn't know what to make of each other. Both front bands based in east London, Jack in Mazes and James in Veronica Falls. They saw

each other around but when they eventually spoke, it was awkward. "He threatened to knife me, quite a few times. But maybe it was like being horrible to the kid you want to be friends with at school," Jack says.

"No, I threatened quite a few people that night. It was all in jest, though," counters James, whose left eye is encircled by a purple shiner ("Someone hit me").

All this violence is in stark contrast to Ultimate Painting, the project inspired by 1960s art collective Drop City that the guitarists formed when their bands toured Europe together last year. Both are as laid-back

as the mellifluous tunes on their self-titled debut. Recorded in James' bedroom, it's easy and free, full of intertwining guitars and warm 1960s inflections. It's the product of two weeks spent drinking beer and talking about records.

> A band that pretty much formed itself, Ultimate Painting allows the pair an escape (although their other projects are still ongoing). They say they already miss those daydreaming recording sessions. "When you start playing shows and releasing stuff, it gets bastardised almost, in that it stops being as natural and easy-going," Jack says.

Because of a leak in their new railway arch studio, further recording plans have been

delayed, but not for long. They're touring, too: they supported Parquet Courts earlier this year and are about to head to America before more UK dates. Jack and James have gone from being strangers sizing each other up in their local pubs to firm friends making music they love, and that's too valuable to ignore. As James concludes: "It's been so nice just meeting up and doing music just for the fun of it." ■ BEN HOMEWOOD

▶THE DETAILS

- ▶BASED London
- ▶ FOR FANS OF The Velvet Underground, The Feelies, Real Estate
- ►SOCIAL ultimatepainting tumblr.com
- ▶SEE THEM LIVE London's Rough Trade East (October 29) and Total Refreshment Centre (November 1)
- ►BUY IT 'Ultimate Painting' is released on October 27 on Trouble In Mind
- ▶BELIEVE IT OR NOT Jack and James had lunch together every day while recording their album. $\stackrel{\circ}{\sqsubseteq}$ "This isn't cool at all; we just ate loads of pitta bread, houmous and salad. It was nice to eat together, though," Jack says

ON

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NOW

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live track from

MORE NEW MUSIC

Mitski

Mitski knows the woes of attending a bad house party. Forget all-night ragers with your best friends, her song 'Townie' captures the moments of loneliness a crap night can bring, while also showcasing the New York-based singer's hugely impressive voice. "I'm holding my breath with a baseball bat, though I don't know what I'm waiting for", she sings over crunchy noise-pop riffs.

- SOCIAL twitter.com/mitski_
- ► HEAR HER mitski.bandcamp. com

Leisure Suite

In their own words,
Melbourne trio Leisure Suite
are "a band that charms the
ear as swift as the name
rolls off the tongue" – and
they're not wrong. The
silky, downtempo electro
of singles 'Ease Away' and
'Great Expectations' would
sit perfectly on a playlist
next to the likes of London
Grammar or James Blake.

- ►SOCIAL facebook.com/ leisuresuiteaus
- ► HEAR THEM soundcloud. com/leisure-suite-aus

Javelin

Hailing from New York, cousins George Langford and Tom Van Buskirk specialise in infectious, sugar-sweet synthpop. There's more than a bit of 'Chunk of Change'-era Passion Pit about them and they're hyper-energised, which is no bad thing.

- SOCIAL twitter.com/ javelinjamz
- ► HEAR THEM soundcloud. com/javelinjamz

The Gentry Underground

Winchester-based two-piece
The Gentry Underground
have had an unsteady few
years, breaking up half
a dozen times in between
releasing sporadic demos
online. Their music – Hendrixstyle guitars played with
a bit more anger – warrants
attention though, and new EP
'Catfish' is their finest yet.



- ► SOCIAL facebook.com/ thegentryunderground
- ► HEAR THEM thegentryunderground. bandcamp.com

Psychic Blood

Western Massachusetts trio Psychic Blood play passionate, Sonic Youthindebted noise-punk, full of razor-wire riffs and sheet-metal distortion. Last year's storming seven-inch debut 'Drrrty'/'Bed Head' was released on blood-red vinyl by Ontario's Nerve Hold Records, and the follow-up 'Nightmare Beaches' cassette found them involved in the Ascetic House art collective alongside Destruction Unit and Milk Music. Having finished touring the States with Naomi Punk, Psychic Blood are busy dropping teasers for a full album.

- ►SOCIAL facebook.com/ psychicblood
- ► HEAR THEM psychicblood. bandcamp.com

Ausmuteants

Ausmuteants are an Australian four-piece who burst out of the furtive Melbourne scene after discovering Devo, synths and dancing. Their second album, 'Amusements', was released earlier this year.
Rampaging through the past
25 years of punk history, their
hooky, energetic sound is
irresistible

- ► SOCIAL facebook.com/ ausmuteants
- ► HEAR THEM ausmuteants. bandcamp.com

Body

After spending 10 noisy years as the now-disbanded Meine Kleine Deutsche, Stockholm's Body can certainly argue that they've got enough experience to make an impact with their new incarnation. In fact, record label PNKSLM claim that the band's intense, heavy grunge sound and peculiar punk vocals made them "an instant signing". Debut single 'Dingo' is proof that the label haven't acted too rashly.

► HEAR THEM soundcloud. com/body-stockholm

Clas Tuuth

London producer Clas Tuuth's most recent release '003' suggests he's investing all of his time making evocative ambient electronica instead of mulling over potential EP titles. 'Cotty' is a highlight, filled with glistening, melodic chimes, cryptic vocals and a Nils Frahm-esque piano interlude. Like the rest of the EP, it's equally pensive and dancefloor-oriented - music that could soundtrack both the night's euphoric highs and the next morning's fragile recovery.

- ► SOCIAL facebook.com/
- ► HEAR HIM soundcloud.com/ neednowater



Javelin



Sublime Frequencies

"I'm gonna say the Sublime Frequencies compilations. They're a label from Seattle [run by Alan Bishop of Sun City Girls and Hisham Mayet] and they release important ethnographical documents from places like Sumatra and Iraq."

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Quite possibly the north east's answer to Queens Of The Stone Age, Masamune are all about big, beautiful, skull-crushing noise. The Mackem four-piece are working on a third EP, but their first two, 'Masquerade' and 'They Are Not Watching You', should provide you with enough calculated chaos in the meantime.

- SOCIAL twitter.com/ masamunemu
- ► HEAR THEM soundcloud. com/masamunemu

Dry Lunch Club

'No Point' and 'We Are The Disillusioned Youth', the debut tracks from politically charged Londoners Dry Lunch Club, veer between the grandiosity of Oasis and the minimalism of The Fall. On 'No Point', the better of the two tracks, vocalist Ryan Parry occasionally sounds the spit of Johnny Rotten, yelling his perturbed lyrics over a chord progression that drives over a tumbledown, Steve Hanley-style bass. ► SOCIAL facebook.com/

Azar Swan

thedrylunchclubband

com/dry-lunch-club

►HEAR THEM soundcloud.

New York duo Azar Swan combine the gothy synthpop

stylings of Cold Cave and the ethereal tones of Kate Bush with their own post-punk leanings. The commendable results can be heard on the new album 'And Blow Us A Kiss', which is released by Zoo Music on October 23.

Azar Swan

►SOCIAL facebook.com/ azarswan

► HEAR THEM soundcloud. com/azarswan

Evil Arrows

This glam-rock outfit began as the home recording project of the prolific Bryan Scary. After amassing nearly 75 songs in just a few months, the prodigy sought to flesh out his vision by enlisting some of the most talented members of his local Brooklyn arts community to bring the project to life, and the results are infectious – a bubbly sound reminiscent of Foxygen and T Rex.

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

James Brute

James Brute, former frontman of flick-knife

and the Bush nk dable n the Us ed by 23.





has gone solo. Debut single 'Bury Yourself' is two minutes of sinister gutter punk, coming on like Tom Waits trapped in a sex dungeon, clawing at the walls and screaming for mercy. It comes with a video that sees London-based Brute dig his own grave and deliver the track from inside a coffin. Not one for the claustrophobes, but a must-see for anyone

with a hankering for bleak-

SOCIAL twitter.com/ jimmythebrute

HEAR HIM soundcloud.com/

SEE HIM LIVE London Lexington (Oct 7), Bristol Louisiana (9)

Tear Talk

This Liverpudlian quintet announced themselves with a couple of promising EPs, but latest release 'Ruins' is a new high, steeped in haunting melodies. 'Realise' is all gloomy synth swells, stark, confessional lyrics and spectral, delay-drenched guitars. Produced by fellow Scousers and melodic magicians By The Sea, 'Ruins' is so impressive because it distils Tear Talk's hazy atmospheres into sinewy, concise songs of

- desperation and loss.

 SOCIAL twitter.com/
- ► HEAR THEM soundcloud.

Radar <u>NEWS ROUND UP</u>

SOUND OF THE SEA

Three of the south west's most promising new bands hit the road together next month on the Falmouth Sound Tour, named after the Cornish town they all come from. The Black Tambourines, The Red Cords and Lost Dawn play Falmouth, Bristol, London, Brighton, Penzance and Truro from October 31.

THE SECOND COMING

Athens wildcards Acid Baby Jesus return on November 17 with new album 'Selected Recordings'. Sludgy lead track 'Row Row Row' is online now, and the fourpiece band hit the road for a European tour next month. Their sole UK date is at London's Shacklewell Arms on November 7.



Communions

COMMUNIONS GET SUNNY

abilly blues.

Tough Love are set to release Communions' new single 'So Long Sun' on November 10. The track is their first new material since debut EP 'Cobblestones', which came out earlier this year. The Danish band have announced a London show at the Sebright Arms, also on November 10.

TRUST PUNKS'

teartalk

New Zealand noise-art band Trust Punks release debut LP 'Discipline' on November 14. The title is from a Michel Foucault book and a Gang Of Four song, indicating "its more discernible influences", says guitarist/vocalist Joseph. Themes include internalised privilege, social hierarchies and regret.

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Litany's latest track 'Look' features the line "I'm already living" cautiously repeated over lush, rippling electronica. The Harrogate duo of 20-year-old Beth Cornell and Jake Nicolaides aren't just about The xx-style elegance, though; another song, 'Slopes', brings revvedup synths to the forefront over a beatbox-style backing.

- ►SOCIAL twitter.com/ litanymusic
- ►HEAR THEM soundcloud. com/litanyx

Cayetana

On debut LP 'Nervous Like Me', Philadelphia trio Cayetana give Speedy

HE WEEK

I Oh You



- ▶FOUNDED 2009 by Johann Ponniah
- ►BASED Sydney, Australia
- **►KEY RELEASES** Bleeding Knees Club - 'Nothing To Do' (2012), DZ Deathrays
- 'Bloodstreams' (2012), DMA's - 'DMA's' EP (2014)
- **►RADAR SAYS** Aside from putting on some of the best indie parties in Australia, I Oh You's knack for spotting decent unsigned bands is second to none. Latest act DMA's are currently causing a stir both at home and abroad.

Ortiz a run for their money. The fuzz-laden charm of 'Serious Thinas Are Stupid' represents the album's heavier side, but when they step into the realms of college rock on 'Hot Dad Calendar', they pull it off with aplomb. Time to crack open the Coors Light, bring out the guitars and get a little messy.

- ► SOCIAL facebook.com/ cayetanaphilly
- ►HEAR THEM soundcloud. com/tinvengines/sets/ cayetana-nervous-like-me

The Hundredth Anniversary

Brighton band The Hundredth Anniversary have supported Fear Of Men on the road and released the excellent 'Wreckers' EP earlier this year. Eleanor Rudge - also a member of Tyrannosaurus Dead - sings on recent single 'Last Drive'. Galaxie 500. Broadcast and Low are all influences.

- SOCIAL twitter. com/100anniversary
- HEAR THEM soundcloud.com/ thehundredthanniversarv

Yellerkin

"This song is about how fucked up it is that we are the generation that bought into all the crap our parents protested against in the '70s," claim Brooklyn duo Yellerkin of their latest track 'Tools'. It's a compelling piece of electropop, with hooky vocal harmonies and a bouncing synth breakdown reminiscent of Friendly Fires a few years back.

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

The Velvet Hands

Having appeared online just a month ago, the self-titled first EP from Cornwall's Velvet Hands is full of bolshy spirit. The highlight is 'The Pretty Rags', which starts off like T Rex until a Libs-style chorus takes over.

- ►SOCIAL twitter.com/ thevelvethands1
- ►HEAR THEM soundcloud. com/thevelvethands



Hello, NME readers. In case your mind hasn't already melted from the choice of new bands on these pages, here's even more for you to check out!

When we played with **Mush**, from Leeds, they'd only played a couple of shows. The support band for our show had pulled out last minute and they called one of the guys in Mush, who worked behind the bar at the venue. That's only incidental, though; they called them because they're a really good band. They have as many guitarists as we have people in our band (that's three) and they get this great chaotic thing going, like a leaning tower.

The Bohos used to be called L'Amour Des Rêves. They were called that when we played a show with them. They arrived with all their gear packed into a car about five minutes before their stage time. We were outside in the horrific rain having a cigarette and a nervous breakdown over our publishing company. We were so wrapped up in ourselves that we missed the beginning of their set; but, walking back in, before we got into the main room, it was like hearing Jad Fair, Kate Bush and The Searchers through a practice room door.

For a start, 'Divorce Pop' is one of our favourite album titles ever. We heard about **Son Of Stan** from Adam Lasus, who mixed our record. I think it was the last thing he was working on before we got in touch with him. They recorded at night in Adam's studio and they couldn't drum too loud because they didn't want to wake the neighbours, so they made

a decision to trigger all the drums. They also did all the guitars in the box. It's got a great mix of unadulterated

The Bohos sound like Kate Bush and Jad Fair through a practice room door pop influences and this muffled, tight sound - almost like some Ciccone Youth songs at times.

Frankie & The Heartstrings have a great thing going at their shop Pop Recs Ltd in Sunderland. We played with In Vibes there, who we really liked. We wanted their

music in physical format, but they didn't have that yet. I remember we were in a weirdly fragile mood because we'd just seen a gull maul a pigeon to death in the street.

Cat Cake are based in Malta. We know because we asked them. Apparently there are only three venues out there so they don't play too many shows, but they want to come to the UK soon. Check out 'No Guts' - it's the only thing they have on the internet. The video paints a cool picture of Malta, fucking around on rocks.

Next week: Girl Band

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Always different,



For the inclusion of this new track and more besides, 'Nothing Has Changed' is a compilation that's fitting of the new phase Bowie entered into with 'The Next Day'. It's a period that's seen him putting the past in context while pressing ahead with new material, all the while maintaining an alien, untouchable distance: no interviews, no shows, few public appearances. In the few photos Bowie has approved, the look has been as basic and reserved as any he's ever had: smart clothes, smart hair, officious expression. Here we have Bowie the elder statesman – wise, calm and godfather-like, but oddly silent.





Like 'Where Are We Now?', which looked back to the Berlin era with the watery-eyed nostalgia of a man in his autumn years, the imagery around 2013's comeback LP 'The Next Day' compelled you to see Bowie now via the Bowie in your brain. The cover image was the "Heroes" sleeve with a hole in the middle: insert your vision of Bowie here. "The underlying concept was the white square, which took on a life of his own and announced Bowie was back," says Jonathan Barnbrook, who came up with the concept.

Is Bowie clearing the decks or winding down in style?



taken from the

Has Changed'

artwork for 'Nothing

"It played with his identity after an absence of 10 years and your expectations of the pop star as an image to project your own thoughts on."

'Nothing Has

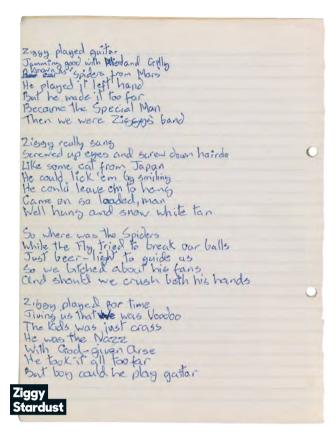
Changed' gives us a rare glimpse of what Bowie himself sees in that empty square, because these are the tracks Bowie himself chose when surveying his canon. So while we shouldn't be surprised to see that 1967 curio 'The Laughing Gnome' or his contributions to the Labyrinth soundtrack are not present, it is interesting that he chooses a 2003 Ken Scott mix of 'Life On Mars?', or that he includes 'All The Young Dudes', the song he wrote for Mott The Hoople, to sit alongside the best of his own. It's also interesting that the tracklist begins with

'Sue...' and 'Where Are We Now?', and runs in reverse chronological order. That means the entire first CD and much of the second shine a light on Bowie tracks that the casual fan may be less familiar with – his '00s and '90s experiments with industrial, techno and drum'n'bass, including a Pet Shop Boys remix of 'Hallo Spaceboy' and the radio edit

of 'The Hearts Filthy Lesson', his theme from the TV series *The Buddha Of Suburbia*, and from the '80s, his equally loved and laughed-at cover of 'Dancing In The Street' with Mick Jagger.

The real meaty hits are grouped together in those 1970s glory years, taking in "Heroes", 'Rebel Rebel', 'The Jean Genie', 'Ziggy Stardust' and everything you'd expect, before we end with little-known hits from his days trying to get a break on the London mod scene, including 'Can't Help Thinking About Me' and 'Liza Jane', which is where Bowie's Benjamin Button-like backtrack ends.

The album appears to complete a process of putting one's house in order that began with the retrospective *David Bowie Is* exhibition at the V&A, which recently opened in Chicago on a specially declared, city-wide 'David Bowie Day'. But if Bowie's past couple of years have been all about looking back and looking forward at the same time, is this compilation an indication that Bowie is clearing the decks for something new, or that



Put another log on the sine for my your bed Put another log on the sine for the proper bed I work and some breakfast and coffee I work and the window and what do I see a credit in the slig and a hand reaching lower to me and a hand would your tell them to stay away what are we coming to fur fav you I think about a world to one by the Where our books are found by the They're written in pain, interes in ame by a paggiful noun who questioned what we were here per and it looks as though they're here to slay.

Oh! You Pretty Things

he's winding his career down in style? Tony Visconti has said he's recording with Bowie again soon, but quickly poured cold water on a story that said they were working on a new album. In a recent interview, meanwhile, the head of major promoters Live Nation (who brought Kate Bush back to the stage) said he'd begged Bowie to make his live return and received an email reply reading: 'LOL'. Only one man knows what will come next, and for now he's still letting his music do the talking. This, of course, may change.

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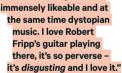


40 It's No Game (Part 1)

FROM 'Scary Monsters (And Super Creeps)', 1980

St Vincent

"'It's No Game (Part 1)' from 'Scary Monsters...' is my favourite song, an example of Bowie's ability to make



38 **Aladdin Sane (1913, 1938**, **197?)**

FROM 'Aladdin Sane', 1973

Peter Brewis, Field Music

"The title track from 1973's 'Aladdin Sane' is, for me, one of David Bowie's standout pieces. Stylistically it has one foot in the Ziggy Stardust era with the other kicking towards the experimentalism of the European years. The chorus, although very catchy, sounds like the chords and vocal melody are in two different keys, while the lyrics seem to deal with the pre-war decadence of the 'Bright Young Things'. Meanwhile, with the full title, Bowie suggests that a third world war is just around the corner."

39 Wild Is The Wind

FROM 'Station To Station', 1976 SINGLE RELEASED November 1981 UK CHART POSITION 24



BRIAN WARD.

With his 1973 album 'Pin-Ups', Bowie paid tribute to his favourite bands of the previous decade, covering songs

by The Kinks, Them, Pink Floyd and more. Though released only three years later, 'Wild Is The Wind' – formerly recorded by crooner Johnny Mathis and jazz great Nina Simone – would have stuck out on that LP. In Bowie's hands, the winsome track winds and twists, wrapping up 'Station To Station' with elegance, introspection and heart-shuntingly gorgeous chord changes.

37 Quicksand

FROM 'Hunky Dory', 1971

Aaron Hemphill, Liars

"With just his voice, an acoustic guitar and amazing lyrics that are incredibly arranged, this song takes me further than any track from 'Hunky Dory'. His choice of words and expressive voice communicate such a unique mental and emotional state that it makes the song so much more than the sum of its parts. I like the album version: it's almost like an English movie with English subtitles – you watch it more closely with your eyes and pick up on different details. The demo version [on the 1990 reissue] is like losing yourself in the film without subtitles, where you might daydream through an important plot twist yet still fully get the picture."



36 Fashion

FROM 'Scary Monsters (And Super Creeps)', 1980 SINGLE RELEASED October 24, 1980 UK CHART POSITION 5



Imagined as a successor to The Kinks' 'Dedicated Follower Of Fashion', their commentary on British fashion and its

disciples, 'Fashion' sends up that scene as something conformist and controlled ("We are the goon squad and we're coming to town"), even aligning its regimented posturing with military formations ("Turn to the left, turn to the right"). It began life as a reggae song and took inspiration from another Bowie song, 'Golden Years', lifting elements of that track's bassline and melody. The track was nearly scrapped, however, until producer Tony Visconti convinced Bowie to write new lyrics for it.

35 **Andy Warhol**

FROM 'Hunky Dory', 1971

Bowie's fascination with Pop Art eccentric Andy Warhol boiled over into a song on 1971's 'Hunky Dory', capturing all the kaleidoscopic colour of the '60s icon's famous prints in four minutes of flamenco guitars and rattling percussion. Warhol himself reportedly didn't like the song, worrying that it made fun of his appearance, but for plenty of Bowie fans it's one of the most inventive and masterful tracks of his early-'70s pomp. An overlooked classic.





34 Black Country Rock

FROM 'The Man Who Sold The World', 1970

King Tuff

"The Man Who Sold The World' has always been my favorite Bowie album because it's as close as Bowie ever got to Sabbath, and there's lots of pretty crazy 'out' musical moments. Lyrically it's all about insanity and straight-up weirdness. The guitar playing is some of Mick Ronson's best. 'Black Country Rock' was the first song I latched on to. I don't know what the fuck he's singing about, but it's a hidden gem in Bowie's catalogue that not many are familiar with. This is long-haired protometal Bowie, before he got into all them metallic face paints and leotards."

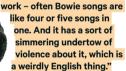
33 **The Jean Genie**

FROM 'Aladdin Sane', 1973
SINGLE RELEASED November 24, 1972
UK CHART POSITION 2



Johnny Marr
"Even though he's made
much cleverer records, 'The
Jean Genie' is an amazing
example of what a good rock

singer he is. It has such a cool detachment, and it's very sexy. It doesn't matter that it's straight-ahead; if anything, that's what makes it kind of unusual in terms of his



32 **Lady Grinning Soul**

FROM 'Aladdin Sane', 1973

Long rumoured to be about about American soul singer Claudia Lennear, with whom Bowie had a dalliance – as did Mick Jagger, who is reported to have written the much earthier 'Brown Sugar' about her. Whoever it's about, it's one of Bowie's most off-kilter recordings. He belts out possibly his most histrionic vocal ever, as if he were auditioning for a West End show.

31 Absolute Beginners

FROM 'Absolute Beginners OST', 1986 SINGLE RELEASED March 1986 UK CHART POSITION 2



Written for Julien Temple's fairly rubbish adaptation of Colin MacInnes' 1959 novel of the same name, Bowie's theme is the best thing about the whole sorry affair

(including his own performance in the movie). A deliberately retro-sounding ode to blossoming love, the doo-wop-flavoured track was a welcome return to form after the horror of 1984's 'Tonight' album. It reached Number Two in the UK singles chart and its enduring popularity was evident from the crowd's reaction to it during Bowie's legendary 2000 Glastonbury headline slot.

30 John, I'm Only Dancing

SINGLE RELEASED June 26, 1972



"I'm gay and always have been," Bowie told *Melody Maker* in 1972. Eight months later, 'John, I'm Only Dancing' was released. Bowie never confirmed whether

or not it was really about what it was rumoured to be about – a real-life gay relationship or John Lennon's derogatory comments on his cross-dressing – but that didn't stop his more puritanical American label from preventing its release until 1976, when it was included on the 'Changesbowie' compilation. The video was also banned from *Top Of The Pops* because of Bowie's androgynous dancers' sexually provocative moves.

29 Always Crashing In The Same Car

FROM 'Low', 1977

This is one of the last songs to be drawn from the cocaine-addled 1975–76 period, and is apparently based on an incident – in LA, Switzerland or Berlin, depending on which version you believe – when Bowie sought vengeance on a rip-off drug dealer by crashing into his car. The oddly hushed drums, eerie synth and Bowie's repeated self-appraisal "Oh, but I'm always crashing in the same car" led Tony Visconti to describe it as "spooky".

28 **All The Young Dudes**

FROM Mott The Hoople's 'All The Young Dudes', 1972; appears on 'David Live', 1974

As if being the greatest rock star on the planet wasn't enough, by 1972 Bowie had even set about saving his contemporaries. Four albums in, and still a cult concern, Mott were about to call it a day – until Bowie learned of their predicament. Within weeks he'd written, produced and played guitar on '...Dudes', which instantly took the band to the top of the charts. It's not a hymn to youth as many think, though – according to its author, the news that's actually being 'carried' has same doomy message as the one in 'Five Years'.

27 China Girl

FROM 'Let's Dance', 1983 SINGLE RELEASED May 1983 UK CHART POSITION 2



Originally included on 'The Idiot', Iggy Pop's David Bowie-produced 1977 solo debut, 'China Girl' was written on

a drunken summer night while the pair were staying at the Château d'Hérouville residential studio near Paris. With Bowie on toy piano and Pop playing a fun-size drumkit, the latter began writing lyrics about his frustration at being unable to effectively communicate with Kuelan Nguyen, a Vietnamese woman he was having an affair with. It was re-recorded for 'Let's Dance', Bowie replacing the original's claustrophobic scratchiness with extroverted disco hinging on a Nile Rodgers guitar riff.

26 **Drive-In Saturday**

FROM 'Aladdin Sane', 1973 SINGLE RELEASED April 6, 1973 UK CHART POSITION 3



A homage to the doo-wop and diners of 1950s America, 'Drive-in Saturday' described a world that would

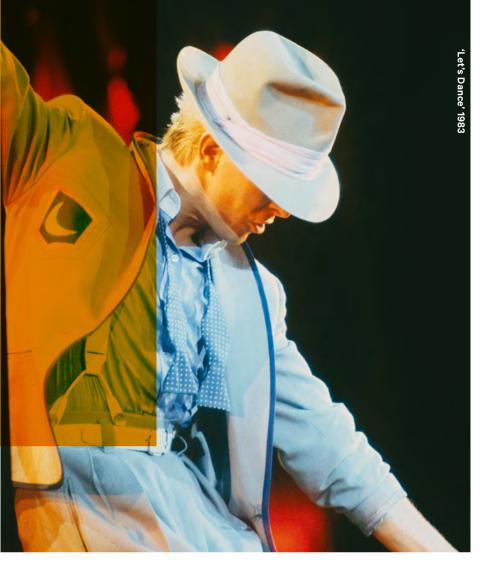
have been as alien to the young Bowie, growing up in grey Brixton and Bromley, as the one described in his earlier 'Life On Mars?'. Its lyrics are a sci-fi movie in miniature, telling of a post-apocalyptic society learning how to "get it on like once before" by watching videos of Mick Jagger cooing over glam rock'n'roll. When Mott The Hoople turned the track down, Bowie apparently shaved off his eyebrows in protest. Later scoring a major hit with it under his own name in 1973, it's safe to say Bowie had the last laugh.

25 Kooks

FROM 'Hunky Dory', 1971

Written after the birth of Zowie, Bowie's son with wife Angie (who eventually, sensibly, renamed himself Duncan and went on to direct the excellent Moon), Bowie makes it clear on this whimsical pastiche of Neil Young's early-'70s material that he would never be a tough parent, suggesting gently to his offspring, "Don't pick a fight with the bullies or the cads/'Cos I'm not much cop at punching other people's dads".





24 **TVC 15**

FROM 'Station To Station', 1976 SINGLE RELEASED April 30, 1976 UK CHART POSITION 33



The recording of 'Station To Station' has become infamous for Bowie's diet as much as anything else. Newly incarnated as

the Thin White Duke, he had starved his body of all nutrients (besides milk, cocaine and - fussily - red peppers) and replaced them with dirty disco and funky soul. Perhaps unsurprisingly, he was prone to hallucinations. Accordingly, 'TVC 15' is an ode to his television: "Up every evening 'bout half eight or nine, I give my complete attention to a very good friend of mine..." Things turn nightmarish when Bowie brings his girlfriend home and she crawls into the set. He pleads with the TV to release her but she's lost in the hologram, so he ponders jumping into the TV himself. Don't try it at home.

23 Queen Bitch

FROM 'Hunky Dory', 1971

As well as penning tributes to Bob Dylan and Andy Warhol on 'Hunky Dory', Bowie doffed his "bippertybopperty hat" to Lou Reed and his band The Velvet Underground, of whom he was a huge fan - he would go on to collaborate with Reed on the singer's most successful solo album, 'Transformer', a year later. The track would also influence Bowie's future - it's a glam rock prototype, with a camp, catty lyric from Bowie and guitarist Mick Ronson nicking the razor-sharp riff from Eddie Cochran's 'Three Steps To Heaven'. The road to the Ziggy era began here.

Ben Romans-Hopcraft, Childhood

"It's the first Bowie song I ever heard, and one of the only songs that will force me into a dancefloor shakedown. I love the sexy arrogance of Bowie, claiming he 'could do better than' the job the 'queen' is trying to do on the seedy streets of New York. The characters in it are described as manipulators and hustlers but Bowie seems to have a constant assurance of his superiority over them, and the musical style is in keeping with this aesthetic: irreverence, satire and intrigue."

22 Be My Wife

FROM 'Low', 1977
SINGLE RELEASED June 1977
UK CHART POSITION n/a



Bowie decided, for whatever reason, to sing one of 'Low's more conventional tracks in an exaggerated but strangely cold and remote London accent,

something he never repeats anywhere else on the record. It's wholly at odds with the crashing piano, squalling guitar solos and booming drum fills that enthusiastically litter the song, resulting in a compellingly confusing listen. Bowie's lyrics read like an appeal to estranged wife Angie, with whom he was rowing about where their European base should be (he claimed the song was "genuinely anguished" back in 1978). But you never get the feeling he's being *entirely* serious.

Joe Falconer, Circa Waves

"Berlin-era Bowie is my favourite and 'Low' is the best album of the trilogy. 'Be My Wife' is one of the straighter songs on the album, keeping up the spirit of experimentation while employing classic Bowie tricks like the 'Suffragette City'-esque piano. It's a pop gem and an experimental masterpiece."

21 Fame

FROM 'Young Americans', 1975 SINGLE RELEASED July 25, 1975 UK CHART POSITION 17



The single that made David Bowie huge in America was inspired by the rather unsexy subject of how utterly pissed off he was at his management. While attempting to

extricate himself from his contract, Bowie was egged on by his new pal John Lennon, who went on to supply the title and backing vocals. Bowie, in his 'plastic soul' period, took a Carlos Alomar riff based on '60s R&B tune 'Foot Stompin" by The Flares and has a good old moan over the top.

20 Ziggy Stardust

FROM 'The Rise And Fall Of Ziggy Stardust And The Spiders From Mars', 1972

Remarkably, this track was never released as a single, despite being the calling card for his most legendary character. Based on a number of different musicians (Iggy Pop, Jimi Hendrix, the Legendary Stardust Cowboy and Vince Taylor have all been mentioned), the lyric is about Ziggy, the ultimate rock superstar, getting too big for his boots and ultimately self-destructing. It's helpful that Mick Ronson helps to paint this picture with one of the great all-time rock riffs, something he was doing quite a lot in that period.

Jamie Reynolds, Klaxons

PRESS

"It's totally ingrained into every inch of my body.

Deep down I wish I'd written a masterpiece like it."



19 Station To Station

FROM 'Station To Station', 1976 Sam Davies, The Voyeurs

""Station to Station' is, in my mind, the start of the best musical period of David Bowie's timeline. From this 10-minute phased-out, fuzzed-up funk odyssey to 'The Lodger' and everything in between is where his weirdest and best is. And it doesn't get much better than that. Although it's not part of the Berlin trilogy, from the cover and the name alone you can see it's the start of that Neul/krautrock path he was about to go down. Also, the fact that he apparently can't remember the recording of this track and LP due to his heavy cocaine intake at the time and

Will Doyle, East India Youth

"Thin White Duke-period Bowie is very satisfying, if short-lived. When I first heard 'Station to Station', it scared me how good I thought it was. This song seems to deal with all of his various neuroses at the time of recording – his obsession with the occult, the Third Reich, normal things like that – and it's backed by the most cokedup end section to a song I've ever heard."

the horror stories of his time in LA, make

me like this particular LP a lot more."

18 **Space Oddity**

FROM 'David Bowie', 1969

Anna Calvi

"My dad put it on the car when I was six, and at first I thought his voice was horrible.

But by the end of the song I loved it. That was it - my passion for David Bowie began and it hasn't stopped since."

17 The Man Who Sold The World

FROM 'The Man Who Sold The World', 1970

'The Man Who Sold The World' is not just a vintage slice of Bowie storytelling – a tale of two friends meeting again after years apart, with dark, Faustian shades – but a key part in his '90s renaissance, 20 years later. Bowie's critical stock was at a career low when Nirvana gave a rendition of the track in their iconic *MTV Unplugged* session, coming after Bowie's late-'80s run of maligned albums. It introduced a new generation of fans to Bowie and reminded the old ones of his inimitable way with simple melodies that quake and creep with intrigue.

16 Starman

FROM 'The Rise And Fall Of Ziggy Stardust And The Spiders From Mars', 1972

SINGLE RELEASED 14 April, 1972 UK CHART POSITION 10



lan Mcculloch, Echo
And The Bunnymen
"It made me want to be
heard. When I saw Bowie
on Top Of The Pops,

I thought, 'I want to wear his kecks, too.'
I stared at his groin thinking, 'I've got a lot of puberty to do."

15 Golden Years

FROM 'Station To Station', 1976 SINGLE RELEASED November 21, 1972 UK CHART POSITION 8



"Gonna drive back down where you once belonged/In the back of a dream car 20 foot long", promises

'Golden Years', but that vision of being cocooned where "nothing's gonna touch you" soon dissipates as Bowie prays "I'm begging you save her little soul" and tells the woman in question claimed to be either his first wife Angela or backing singer Ava Cherry) to "tun for the shadows". The first single to be taken from 'Station To Station', 'Golden Years' was completed much faster than the rest of the album and was released just weeks after it was recorded, continuing the soul/funk sound of 'Young Americans'.

14 Suffragette City

FROM 'The Rise And Fall Of Ziggy Stardust And The Spiders From Mars', 1972 SINGLE RELEASED July 9, 1976 UK CHART POSITION n/a



"Say droogie, don't crash here!"
yelps Bowie on 'Suffragette City',
an overexcited plea to a potentially
cock-blocking friend (boyfriend?) in
which Bowie shows off the influence

of Anthony Burgess' novel A Clockwork Orange and its film adaptation on the '...Ziggy Stardust...' track. Originally, the song – which borrows heavily from '50s rock'n'roll, including a piano riff inspired by Little Richard – was offered to Mott The Hoople to record, essentially as a bribe to stop them splitting up. Frontman Ian Hunter didn't think it was good enough, though, and the band chose to record another Bowie composition, 'All The Young Dudes', instead – a deal that worked out well for all involved.

13 Rock'N'Roll Suicide

FROM 'The Rise And Fall Of Ziggy Stardust And The Spiders From Mars', 1972) SINGLE RELEASED April 11, 1974 UK CHART POSITION 22



The closing track on '...Ziggy Stardust...' was one of the songs that actually fitted the loose 'concept' feel of the record. Bowie chronicled the Ziggy character's

final fall from grace, torn to pieces onstage by his feverish, otherworldly acolytes. The melodrama is reflected in the music: grandiose, theatrical and with lyrics, according to Bowie, inspired by French poet Baudelaire. That it was the song played after 'Ziggy' announced his retirement onstage at London's Hammersmith Odeon in the summer of 1973 makes it a key recording in the Bowie story.

12 **Five Years**

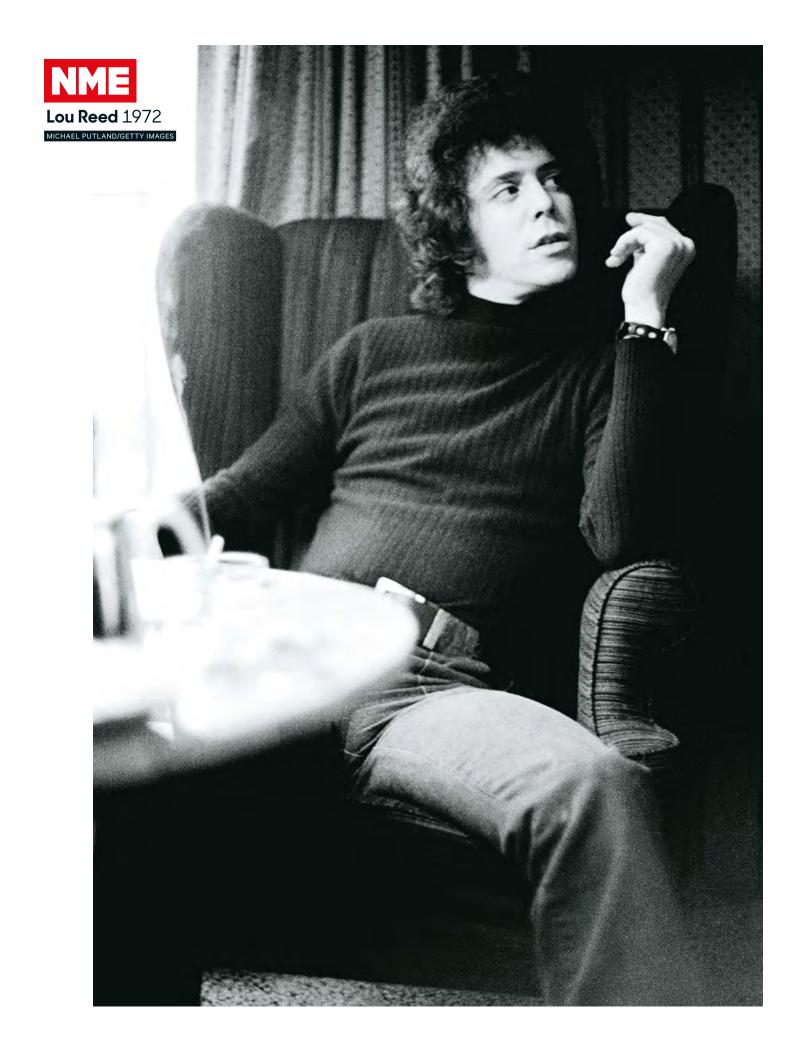
FROM 'The Rise And Fall Of Ziggy Stardust And The Spiders From Mars', 1972)

Thurston Moore

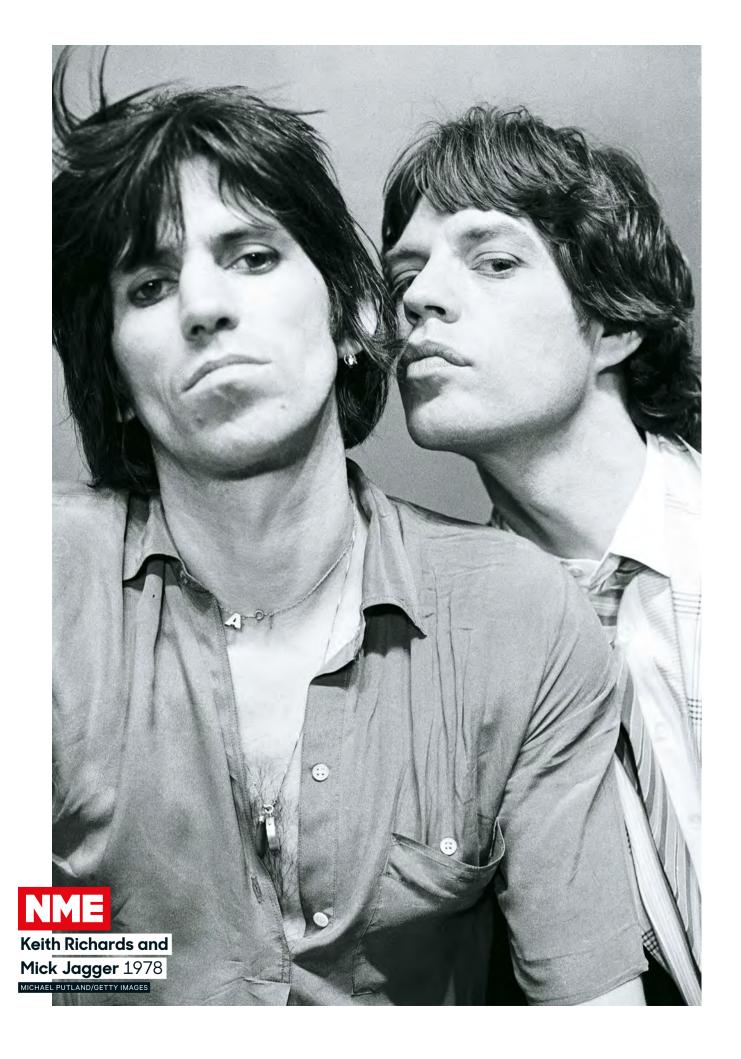
"It was one of the first Bowie things I heard as I got that album when it came out. I was really curious about it – it had a very intriguing and evocative cover. I think













I discovered London by looking at that cover. I thought the fact that he opened up with this drum pattern that was really kind of a bit odd, with this strange trot on the drums, was just completely experimental and avant garde. Then there's acoustic guitar and this voice that had a certain banality to it. And it grows and the song has this structure that basically goes A-Z as opposed to typical song structure A-B-A. It's just a completely radical listen."

Angel Olsen

"That whole damn album is just fucking beautiful. Listening to the '60s material he put out before and then listening to this - it's completely different and you can tell in that time that he's changed so much. He has a way of taking something dirty and making a gem out of it. The way the sounds come out of that record - at times really dusty and at times polished - I think they blend so well together. In that song you can tell he's getting more and more worked up, which is pretty cool."

Harry Koisser, Peace

"Within the first two lines you know exactly what it's about, and then unfolds this incredible crescendo of profound and magnificent images. It's so heart-wrenching and tragic and beautiful and inspiring. I love the repeating drum loop and how the strings draw so much emotion from the lyrics in the second verse; there's some wonderful dynamic going on beneath 'I think I saw you in an ice cream parlour...'"

11 Moonage **Daydream**

FROM 'The Rise And Fall Of Ziggy Stardust And The Spiders From Mars', 1972

Although an integral part of the storyline of Bowie's '...Ziggy Stardust...', describing the transformation into the titular rock star, 'Moonage Daydream' was first released in 1971 as the debut single by Bowie's short-lived side project, Arnold Corns. In 2003, Bowie revealed the influence of The Hollywood Argyles' 1960 track 'Sho Know A Lot About Love' on the song, telling Performing Songwriter that he thought the combination of sax and piccolo was "a great thing to put in a rock song". Continuing that unconventional approach, Mick Ronson's guitar solo was composed after Bowie used a crayon to draw the shape he envisioned it taking.

Mary Timony, Ex Hex

"Everything is spot on. His vision and band, his voice and aesthetic, the stories he's telling. It all comes together in an unworldly way, like he's just channelling genius from outer space. It's impossible to talk about this song without mentioning Mick Ronson - his guitar work is stellar. The interplay between Bowie's voice and Mick's guitar lines are what really makes the song; the guitar lines give it energy and movement, and the outro solo is an epic, beautiful freakout."

10 **Oh! You Pretty Things**

FROM 'Hunky Dory', 1971 Written just before Bowie's first child was born, 'Oh! You Pretty Things' finds him relating his anxieties about his impending fatherhood by pumping them into a story of aliens taking over the earth. "Homo sapiens have outgrown their use", he sings, hinting at the pointlessness of life once the reproductive cycle is complete. In Bowie's vision, said to be inspired by Arthur C Clarke's book Childhood's End, the newborns are the strange invaders. With both prescience and paranoia, he warns parents: "Don't kid yourself they belong to you/They're the

9 Ashes To Ashes

FROM 'Scary Monsters (And Super Creeps)', 1980) SINGLE RELEASED August 8, 1980 UK CHART POSITION 1



As any comedian will tell you, recall is a powerful tool. Bowie likes to litter his songs with references to earlier

works, and it's a trick he pulled off most neatly in 'Ashes To Ashes', looking to the future with its airy funk and the sound of coiled springs releasing, but looking back to an earlier character in its lyrics. Its big reveal is the fate of Major Tom, the character who first appeared 11 years earlier as the astronaut floating into endless nothingness in 'Space Oddity'. Here, he was cast as a junkie drifting into oblivion, "Strung out in heaven's high/ Hitting an all-time low" - different sound, different Bowie, same choking feeling of inevitably and helplessness.

Steve Nalepa, The Acid

"That modulated piano melody just grabs you, supported by an incredibly funky slap bass, some fine guitar playing, lush synths and a catchy, melancholic hook."

8 Modern Love

FROM 'Let's Dance', 1983 SINGLE RELEASED September 1983 LIK CHART POSITION 2



There's a tragic irony to 'Modern Love'. It's not that David Bowie managed to make a perfect song about his

cynicism at the world that, with its effervescent tributes to Little Richard and Chuck Berry, betrayed no trace of it musically. It's that his prescient observations about the burgeoning business charm offensive of the 1980s exposed the hollowness within this new world order that would consume his own career for a few years. It's the prophet's fate to be hamstrung by their own foresight; EMI had just signed him for \$17.5 million and expected him to repeat the success of 'Let's Dance'. 'Tonight', the formulaic follow-up, was panned. He wouldn't recover - critically, at least - until he formed the back-tobasics rock band Tin Machine in 1989.

start of a coming race".

FROM 'Hunky Dory', 1971 SINGLE RELEASED June 22, 1973 UK CHART POSITION 3



James Bagshaw,
Temples
"It's really catchy, but in
a really unconventional
way. There's one bit where

he hits a really high note and it's so bold – I don't think I could ever be that bold until I really learn to sing. It's very clever without being pretentious, which is the perfect mix."

Cate Le Bon

"It's just this strange, unlikely anthem.
The lyrics are so mental, yet it's this
incredible, anthemic song. He manages
to write songs that are impenetrable but
you can also attach real personal meaning
to them, even though he's writing about
cosmic, off-the-wall stuff."

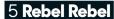
6 Let's Dance

FROM 'Let's Dance', 1983 SINGLE RELEASED March 17, 1983 UK CHART POSITION 1



Courtney Barnett
"Most of the stuff he does
makes me want to dance.
He knows how to write
a good song and everything

he does is kind of funky. I normally do a little bit of the twist – a subtle twist."



FROM 'Diamond Dogs', 1974
SINGLE RELEASED February 15, 1974
UK CHART POSITION 5



Bowie's friendship with Mick Jagger intensified around the period when 'Rebel Rebel' was written and released – they were neighbours in west London and Bowie's wife

Angie claims she caught them in bed together. There's little doubt that Bowie was a huge Rolling Stones fan, and it had become common for him to take inspiration from his musical heroes, whatever the nature of their relationship - one collaborator even reported that Bowie said he wrote the track to "piss off" Jagger. His first hit in five years not to feature Mick Ronson, Bowie himself played the riff that owed as much to Keith Richards as it did to his former handmate. The track can also be seen as a kiss-off to the glam scene that Bowie had been such a huge part of - it was written for a proposed Ziggy Stardust musical and featured a gender-bending lyric typical of the time ("You got your mother in a whirl/She's not sure if you're a boy or a girl"). Bowie quickly moved on while, ironically, the Stones never really did.

4 Young Americans

FROM 'Young Americans', 1975 SINGLE RELEASED February 21, 1975 UK CHART POSITION 18



From its opening verse, as two lovers endure awkward first-time sex ("It took him minutes, took her nowhere"), 'Young Americans' only gets bleaker. The air of gloom

mirrored that of the crumbling 1970s America in which Bowie wrote the song, where the news was full of Richard Nixon's defiant smirks and Ted Bundy's murderous suburban rampages. The result, underneath a heavy blanket of chirpy, danceable '70s soul-pop, is one of Bowie's most quietly heartbreaking songs. "Ain't there one damn song that can make me break down and cry?" he asks in falsetto as the song rushes towards its climax. This one might have done.





SINGLE RELEASED

January 11, 1972

UK CHART POSITION n/a



Tom Fleming,
Wild Beasts
"I think 'Changes' is
appropriate funeral music
- it's cheery without being

Paul McCartney with his thumbs in the air. Funerals are about change. Everyone dies. So what? 'Time may change me, but I can't trace time' – that's kind of perfect really."

2 Sound And Vision

FROM 'Low', 1977 SINGLE RELEASED February 11, 1977 UK CHART POSITION 3

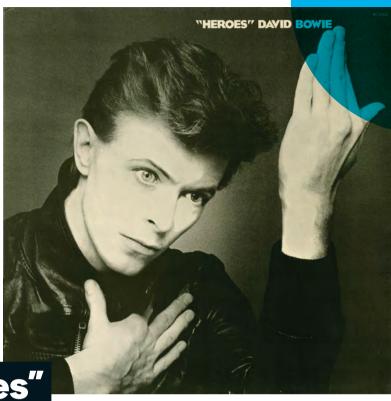


It's strange that one of Bowie's most enduring songs and biggest chart successes (it reached Number Three in the UK

singles chart in 1977) doesn't feature him singing much at all. Originally conceived as an instrumental (save for a backing vocal by producer Tony Visconti's then-wife Mary Hopkin), and thus very much in keeping with the minimal approach of 'Low', Bowie reputedly added his vocal at a very late stage in proceedings. However, the first line proper doesn't even come in until roughly halfway into the song, and even then it's an exercise in restraint. Despite the sprightly nature of Carlos Alomar's guitar riff and the sparkling sax and synth splashes added by Bowie and co-producer Brian Eno, Bowie sings of the inescapable ennui that plagued his attempt to kick an extremely severe coke habit in his new home of Berlin ("Pale blinds drawn all day/Nothing to do, nothing to say"). But such was his unfettered genius, Bowie was able to turn this most desperate of situations to his advantage.

Jim Eno, Spoon

"I had the pleasure of engineering a record for Tony [Visconti] a few years ago. After I got over the nervousness, I got the guts up to ask him about this song. The sound is influenced heavily by the H910 Harmonizer, a box Tony said 'fucks with the fabric of time'. According to Tony, he used the Harmonizer on the drums, and Bowie hated it. Tony thought it was cool, so while they were tracking other instruments, he would increase the volume of the H910 until David asked what that sound was, and then would turn it back down. He kept doing this until one day David said something sounded different, and when Tony brought up the H910, David said, 'That's it!""





1 "Heroes"

rom the control room window of Kreuzberg's Hansa studios, David Bowie could see the Berlin Wall, and every day, in the shadow of that vast, 87-mile-long symbol of division, he would observe two nameless lovers coming together beneath one of the checkpoints on the western side. "They were obviously having an affair," he told NME's Charles Shaar Murray in 1977, "and I thought, 'Of all the places to meet in Berlin, why pick a bench underneath a guard turret on the wall?' I presumed that they were feeling somewhat guilty about this affair, and so they had imposed this restriction on themselves, thereby giving themselves an excuse for their heroic act."

That, at least, was the story of "Heroes". The truth is that, while two lovers in question were indeed having an affair, they were far from unknown to Bowie: their names were Tony Visconti and Antonia Maass, his producer and backing vocalist, whose identities were concealed in order to spare their embarrassment. The affair didn't last: Visconti returned to his wife, Mary Hopkin, and later married May Pang, former mistress of John Lennon. The genius of "Heroes", however, is that it mythologises their fleeting liaison into something of the magnitude of Heloise and Abelard, or Ferdinand and Isabella: a romance for the ages, a brief but glorious triumph of love over fate.

Prior to "Heroes", Bowie was a man given to expressing his emotions in air-quotes, always delivered with the alibis of irony and theatricality. The title track of his 12th LP may be framed by just such a get-out clause, but beyond those quotation marks, nothing about

"Heroes" feels in the least bit insincere, right down to the second verse's frank admission that "You can be mean/And I, I drink all the time". This is not a song that winks and nudges knowingly; instead, it stares piercingly into the middle distance, a single tear trickling down its cheek. Like McCartnev's 'Yesterday', there is a universality to it: "Heroes" is one of Bowie's most covered songs, second only to

'Rebel Rebel', and the man himself recorded it in three languages, none of which you need to be able to speak in order to grasp its sentiment.

Behind the remarkable vocal performance is a rumbling, relentless, four-chord juggernaut of sound, cooked up by an A-list cast of associates including Visconti, guitarists Carlos Alomar and Robert Fripp, and co-writer Brian Eno. This is the canvas against which the drama plays out, and it is almost as monolithic as the wall itself: indeed, for much of the recording of the album it would eventually lend its name to, "Heroes" was an instrumental hewn over numerous jam sessions, suitably immense in its own right. From Fripp's wind-tunnel wails of feedback to Eno's shuddering synth line and Visconti's creative 'gating' of the vocals (giving the

heightened sense of against-the-odds adversity), the song is not the work of Bowie the auteur, but Bowie the collaborator, and he certainly knew how to choose them.

On release it was met with an inexplicable shrug: the single failed to crack the Top 20 in the UK, didn't even chart in America, and despite Bowie talking about the "special resonance" it has in Europe, it sank without

trace in Germany too. That it has gone on to become his best-loved song – and it topped our writers' poll comfortably – is perhaps the ultimate triumph of "Heroes". Justice has been done by it, not just for one day, but for all time. BARRY NICOLSON

►THE DETAILS

- ► FROM "Heroes", 1977
- SINGLE RELEASED September 23, 1977
- ▶ RECORDED Summer 1977
- ►UK CHART POSITION 24
- STUDIO Hansa By The Wall, Berlin
- ▶ LENGTH 6:07 ▶ PERSONNEL Robert Fripp (lead guitar) Carlos Alomar (rhythm guitar), Brian Eno (synthesizer), George Murray (bass), Dennis Davis (drums)
- ▶ PRODUCERS David Bowie, Tony Visconti BOWIE SAID "It's a bitch to sing, 'cos I really have to give it some towards the end. I often place it near to a point where I can take a vocal break afterwards. I get a kick out of it every time."



Julian Casablancas'
latest solo LP sticks two
fingers up at the record
industry – and abiding
conventions of taste
and melody. But will
'Tyranny' make or
break him? Gavin Haynes
raps on music's jerking
knee to find out what
happened to the Strokes
man's reckless forebears

he reviews are in. The reviews are less than kind. Julian Casablancas' Voidz debut, 'Tyranny', has been greeted with weaselly words like 'brave' or 'transitional' by its defenders and outright butt-kicks like 'career suicide' by its detractors. Faced with a 62-minute-long porridge of brown noise, the intent behind the record has come into question. Is this Julian trying to kill off his former life as a Stroke – a deliberately ugly belch that'll finally divorce him from the guy who made 'Last

Nite', thereby allowing him to figure out a proper second act? Or is he just following his muse down a dark alley?

'Career suicide' is an odd term at the best of times. Most career suicide albums begin life as a smart level-up solution to a career predicament. There are those who do it because they want to piss on the chips of their previous legacy. There are some who do it because after years of eyeballing the fans they've got, they realise they just want different fans; and let's not forget their less sympathetic cousins: the guys who want to put one in the eye of the music business itself. Then there are those simpler souls who just take one too many tokes on the good stuff and fall off the ledge of their own creativity.

Yet for all the hatchet jobs and sniggering, many career suicides turn out to be career winners in the long run. The records may be hated, either initially or forever. They may lead their authors into penury and musical oblivion. But just as often they are radical statements of creative intent that end up reflecting badly on the critic who didn't fucking get it, rather than the artist who built an admittedly flawed bridge to a better world.

Though the albums on the following pages demonstrate radically different motivations, most of them *are* genuinely great. All of which suggests that Julian can relax a bit as 'Tyranny' continues to flummox the fans.

The Rolling Stones Their Satanic Majesties
Request DECCA, 1967

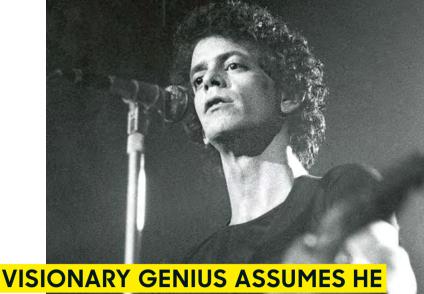


Sometimes a creative band go out on a creative limb and strike it rich, unfurling a thousand blooms of fresh

inspiration within themselves. This was not that. This was a creative band going out on a creative limb and getting tasered back into their place so hard that, nearly 50 years later. they've never again left their blues box. Blame the drugs, blame the court cases, blame the groups of hangers-on that would accompany each Stone to the studio, blame the loss of fed-up mentor-producer Andrew Loog Oldham. There are many reasons why 'Their Satanic Majesties...' is bad in a bad way. It's over-cynical vet over-earnest. Jagger abandons his snarl. Richards gives up the craggy riffs. In their place come mellotron, short-wave radio static and African drums. Lyrically, Mick is off on Planet Fairy getting his peace'n'love freak on, and as everyone around him nodded off into narco-land, the older, more drug-sceptical Bill Wyman seized the reins, writing and singing the album's lead track: 'In Another Land', a piece of straight-up Lewis Carroll fantasia. 'Cosmic Christmas' is a nearunrecognisable hidden song in which the band sing 'We Wish You A Merry Christmas' in the style of the pixies that live at the bottom of the garden.

It was wonky, hammy, woozy, the authentic sound of overheated cerebrums melting down to sticky psychedelic ooze. As the critics pasted it and it became their only non-platinum album, the Stones circled the wagons and decided to stick to the heroin and the 'Brown Sugar' from there on in. What might have been, had it held its own? We'll never know.





IS ALWAYS VISIONARY AND GENIUS

Lou Reed Metal Machine Music RCA, 1975



The grandaddy of career suicides, returned by thousands in the weeks after its release because they all imagined they'd been

sold a physically defective LP. In reality, the only thing defective about 'Metal Machine Music' was the lack of a time machine free with every purchase. Forty years on, history continues to vindicate its unlistenable genius. From Throbbing Gristle to Sunn O))), 'MMM' is a founding text of noise music, a cornerstone of industrial, and an oblique influence on anyone who likes a bit of rough. Many bristled at the thought that they were being punked, but Lou went to his grave insisting that it definitely wasn't a joke.

Even with all that weight of history behind it, it remains an undeniably punishing listen: four 16-minute slabs of feedback manipulated and mixed by Reed himself – like being treated to a 64-minute cycle of a tumble-dryer loaded with rocks.

No gag: this was proper hubris, the likes of which our era no longer allows. He'd already changed rock once with the Velvets' feedback and drones. 'Metal Machine Music'was supposed to be another radical, blue-eyed step: clear proof of his visionary status.

A year later, he'd be back with the positively twee reverse-curveball of 'Coney Island Baby'. The man liked to be contrary as much as he liked to be musical; what else can ya say?

► CRIME Pure creative arrogance ► VERDICT Unlistenable genius

TO ALL OUR WONDERFUL FANS, FUCK YOU VERY MUCH

MGMT Congratulations COLUMBIA, 2010



By the end of 2008, Andrew VanWyngarden and Ben Goldwasser were pixie princes of American rock. So what better way to make their label bosses happy

than to release an album with 12-minute, multi-part song suites that sounded like Syd Barrett throwing up a psychedelic rainbow over the Butthole Surfers?

In hindsight, the signs of a sharp-left towards the ditch were being telegraphed long before the album's 2010 release. The duo had stopped playing their bona fide smash 'Kids' at shows. To many festival crowds, they seemed almost bitter about their farcical

levels of success. They spent interviews cryptically alluding to how they'd fallen out of love with the models-for-wives dreams of 'Time To Pretend'. So when they roped in notorious sonic confrontationist Pete 'Sonic Boom' Kember and set about making pocket symphonies way wide of the electro-rock boom they'd ridden in on, the glowstick-toting US college kids who'd eaten up 'Oracular Spectacular' got into Kendrick Lamar instead. Yet despite shifting a quarter of what its predecessor sold, the freewheeling cod-prog of 'Congratulations' has picked up its own cult. The real career suicide, last year's watertreading 'MGMT', went largely unnoticed.

▶ CRIME Fear of the mainstream ▶ VERDICT Smashed it, for those who still cared

VINDICATION!

The curveballs that sold well

De La Soul

...Is Dead

TOMMY BOY/WARNER BROS, 1991



Dismayed at being labelled hippies off the back of debut '3 Feet High And

Rising', the follow-up featured a smashed pot of daisies on the cover: the Daisy Age was over, replaced by this edgier, playful incarnation.

Yankee Hotel Foxtrot



Initially intended for release on Reprise in 2001, a label buy-out

saw Wilco dropped ignominiously and this more experimental record shelved. Undeterred, Wilco became early tech pioneers when they streamed it for free through their website a week later, eventually releasing it physically on Nonesuch the following spring. It's now considered a modern classic.

808s & Heartbreak ROC-A-FELLA/DEF JAM, 2008



While 'Yeezus' was challenging, it's worth remembering that

Kanye's most polarising record was the Auto-Tune-heavy pop of this record. It went on to shape - or rather predict - a sound that wouldn't hit mainstream pop for six years.

Kid A FMI 2000



Such a textbook transformation that it's since become clichéd

journalistic shorthand for anyone "doing something a bit different". As NME's Mark Beaumont (who gave it 1.5/5 on release, albeit for Melody Maker) will tell you, underestimate this kind of leftfield release at your peril.

Zooropa ISLAND, 1993



The irony of U2 releasing a record about media saturation and

finding ever greater success isn't lost on anyone. This foray into synth-driven music and sampling managed to criticise the mass media while ensuring their place at the centre of it.

KILL YOUR LEGACY TO KEEP ON LIVING

Pulp This Is Hardcore ISLAND, 1998



By 1998, everyone who wanted to have a career beyond Britpop set about stabbing at their legacy with the biggest pair of scissors they could find. Blur did a 180 with 'Blur'. Radiohead did a Ctrl+Alt+Del with 'OK Computer'. And Pulp took the Britpop comedown into the

darkest territory of all with a record about death, porn and heroin. Self-described in its opening couplet as "the sound of loneliness turned up to 10" on 'The Fear', the self-doubt is no affectation. Jarvis had been to enough mediocre film premiere after-parties by then to write about the hollowness of the coke'n'champers set on 'Party Hard', and had hence retreated into the miserable domesticity that inspired 'Dishes'. That was just the first three tracks. 'Comeback' single 'Help The Aged' announced a band obsessed with the saggy-titted COPD phase of life, palliative care, being forgotten and forgetting who you are. From having the nation in the palm of their hands, Pulp soon slipped from view.

- ► CRIME Pulling the rip cord on a suffocating scene
- ► VERDICT Dignitas with dignity

CONTRACTUALLY OBLIGED

Marvin Gaye Here, My Dear TAMLA, 1978



As part of a 1977 divorce decree, Marvin Gave reluctantly consented to the court's ruling that

he hand over half the takings for his next record to his estranged wife Anna. He decided to make a record that documented his failed marriage. The critics were initially unimpressed. The music seemed monotonous, one-paced, and the lyrics were far from his usual starry-eyed street poetry: "Somebody tell me please/Why do I have to pay attorney fees?" is not a line to make anyone sing. Even Gaye himself had second thoughts. Despite making the record in three months, he held it over for a year as he wondered whether he really wanted to pull this particular trigger. When it did hit the streets, 'Here, My Dear' was so raw that Anna Gordy considered suing for invasion of privacy. No-one bought it, but the proof of its excellence is that. like the critics, even Anna eventually came round to its disarming genius.

► CRIME Deliberate, spite-induced laziness > VERDICT Sometimes 'not trying' has a genius of its own

AN EMBARRASSING ATTEMPT TO BE **TAKEN MORE SERIOUSLY**

Mansun Six

PARLOPHONE, 1998



It's divided into three parts - suites, if you will. One is called 'Interlude - Witness To A Murder (Part Two)'. Former Doctor

Who Tom Baker narrates a story about the death of Brian Jones over harpsichord music. Mansun's 'Six' is preposterous, hyper-daft, with its constantly chopping 30-second song cycles and gender-bending lyrical obsessions. Even 16 years on, it's often unclear to what extent the piss is being taken. First single 'Legacy' entered the Top 10, but the album bludgeoned any real commercial ambitions, giving Mansun a reputation as Britpop's nearly-men. Songwriter Paul Draper recalls: "I just did what I did without too much thought for the ramifications... People at the time said to me, 'People will like this record in the future.' I never quite understood that; I always asked why they didn't like it now."

► CRIME Thinking they were proper clever > VERDICT Ultra-smart, but not in the way it thinks

HUMILIATION!

The curveballs that bombed

OMD

Dazzle Ships TELEGRAPH/VIRGIN, 1983



A classic retort to the mainstream success of its pop predecessor,

'Architecture & Morality', 'Dazzle Ships' contained only a handful of 'normal' pop songs alongside obtuse remixes of older material and samples of foreign radio broadcasts. It has since been embraced by fans, current musicians and critics.

Dexys Midnight Runners Don't Stand Me Down MERCURY, 1985



How do you follow the record that produced drunk dad-dancing staple

'Come On Eileen'? By waiting three years to release a record that had no singles on it. While widely respected now, its joyless dirges essentially destroyed Dexys' career for a while.

Moby

Animal Rights MUTE, 1996



Three years before Moby would become ubiquitous with 'Play', his

lacklustre electronica was languishing in obscurity. So, naturally, he released this angry kick against the pricks filled with messages about freedom of speech and social oppression.

Chris Gaines

In The Life Of Chris Gaines CAPITOL, 1999



Country singer Garth Brooks fully inhabited the role of leather-clad Gaines.

releasing the soundtrack to a fake biopic that never emerged. The public were confused, and the project bombed.

Frankie Goes To Hollywood

Liverpool ZTT, 1986

liverpool Not much of a drastic departure musically – Trevor Horn was still

producing and the songs drew from the same palette as Frankie's debut, 'Welcome To The Pleasuredome'. But at half its predecessor's length and with half its bombast, this attempt at quality control turned out to be the last record they'd release.



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POWER

Eight years after their split, riot grrrl luminaries Sleater-Kinney's back catalogue is getting the boxset treatment. Laura Snapes spoke to their famous fans and friends about why music desperately needs them back

0

n Sleater-Kinney's second album, 1996's 'Call The Doctor', Corin Tucker howled, "*I wanna be your Joey Ramone*". As with many of the punk trio's poppier moments, the line between personal aspiration and scathing indictment was blurred. From their

formation in 1994 to the hiatus they began in 2006, Tucker, fellow singer/guitarist Carrie Brownstein and drummer Janet

Weiss were musically and ideologically ambitious, but not about to conform to trad rock roles. They sang about sex work and suicide, gender and depression, always striving to bring danger to their music. They were heartbreaking, joyous, even antagonistic.

Born from Olympia, Washington's riot grrrl scene, Sleater-Kinney swiftly became known beyond the usual audience parameters of most feminist art. On New Year's Eve 2004, they co-headlined Madison Square Garden with Wilco and The Flaming Lips, but instead of drawing from their six albums to date, they debuted unheard material from what would be their final record, 'The Woods', which arrived the following year. Frustrated by a new wave of bands who were merely aping the aesthetic of the hyper-politicised Gang Of Four and their ilk, they recognised the renewed punk potential of heavy rock and went out in a blaze of Hendrix and Zeppelin-indebted riffage.

Eight years later, S-K's seven unimpeachable albums are being remastered and released as a boxset, 'Start Together' (after the opener on 1997's 'The Hot Rock'). To celebrate, we asked some of the band's noted fans and former collaborators to wax lyrical about what made them a force to be reckoned with. "They changed my life in so many ways," says Beth Ditto. "I can't wait to see what happens next."



"They changed your perception of what rock'n'roll could be"

Peter Buck, REM

"I saw around 10 shows including the last one, and each time was more of a celebration. The first one stands out because it was shocking and exciting and moving to see a young band that's really pushing the boundaries. There was the whole scene from Olympia, with Bikini Kill, Bratmobile, but Sleater-Kinney

had something to say. Honestly, that was the last time that I personally saw a *movement* occur. There have been great bands and great things since, but never something that swept through and changed your perception

of what rock'n'roll could be. Those guys did it.

"Were they kindred spirits to REM? Absolutely. They were politically oriented without being real preachy. They weren't going to get really famous and do a lot of cocaine. They were noisy, uncommercial, wilful – you didn't get the feeling they were just waiting for their big hits. They had goals that had nothing really to do with mainstream popularity. At the final show, you got the feeling that they were at the peak of their powers. I wasn't really sure why they were going away. They really had a lot to say about their time and their place, and I don't think that time and place has gone."

"Carrie's like a little Pete Townshend"

Eleanor Friedberger

"I remember being 19 and in college, and my boyfriend at the time [Spoon frontman Britt Daniel] had bought their record – this was 1996, 1997. He was really into it, but I was into 1960s, '70s male rock music – I wasn't that interested in other women in bands. I don't know why. So I just dismissed it, I wasn't that interested until I finally *saw* them.

"Their energy onstage was exciting, though it's not just about their energy at all – they're incredibly skilled. Janet is such a good drummer, I could watch her all day. Carrie was always really tough onstage, like a little Pete Townshend, windmilling and being really aggressive. Corin has this incredibly powerful voice and she always looked very feminine, very powerful. The Fiery Furnaces got to play one of our first shows with them in Brooklyn, right before our first record came out. It was a love-fest: we were just starting out, so it was very exciting to be swept up in that."

"They were a force to be reckoned with"

Britt Daniel, Spoon

"When 'Dig Me Out' came out, there was this very impressive underground word-of-mouth about them. I loved their name, so I got the record. I knew that they were true-blue punk rockers. They were legit - anything from Olympia was pretty hardcore. They were a force to be reckoned with. And that record is a classic. I remember Spoon was working on our second album right then, and I was very taken by how Sleater-Kinney's guitar parts weren't really typical rhythm guitar parts, but they weren't full chords. They were always playing lead lines that

JOHN GOODMANSON, MARINA CHAVEZ, ANDY FORD, JENN FIV



intertwined, which we ripped off on 'Metal School'. Everything about them was firing on all cylinders. They were three women who were doing it all by themselves and doing it at that level, you know."

"They enacted passion and joy and anger and allowed all of us to feel more"

Miranda July

Author/filmmaker (directed the video for S-K's 1998 single 'Get Up')

"When I first met Carrie and Corin they were in Excuse 17 and Heavens To Betsy [respectively] - we were all 19 or 20. I remember thinking Sleater-Kinney was a really confusing name and maybe would need to be changed. Then the next thing I knew I was in love in a sea of other young women, staring up at the stage. Up there they always became stars to me, enacting passion and joy and anger and allowing all of us to feel more. Like all the best musicians, they are actually quite polite people - which is why they are so great live: you're seeing a side they never show. It's like knowing what someone looks like during sex. All that feeling is stored up and then comes out - just for you, just tonight, never to be forgotten."

"As songwriters they were both emotionally accessible and unfuckwithable"

Katie Harkin, Sky Larkin

"As an aspiring teenage guitarist in the early 2000s, nu-metal and bloated Britpop left me cold. Sleater-Kinney were a beacon of ferocious possibility. I first went to see them play on my own in Leeds, and that night forged friendships that endure to

this day. I navigated daunting early days at university and nervous early gigs as a performer by befriending those in 'Sleater-Kinney Is For Lovers' T-shirts and badges. As musicians they had an astute dexterity that was still raw punk, and as songwriters they were both emotionally accessible and unfuckwithable. When offered the chance to travel to the States to make records with Sky



arkin, John Goodmanson's name was at the top of our list because of his work with them. I only discovered them near the end of their career, and on working through their records I found their development astonishing: muscular growth spurts, going from strength to strength with each record, rather than settling into a mollifying kind of maturity as the years went by."

"Sleater-Kinney are a band with the rare legacy of having never taken a misstep" Gareth Paisey,

Los Campesinos!

"There's a particular strain of young man that still struggles with the notion of women playing their instruments with a greater level of expertise than their male counterparts. I always fear I could have slipped into a similar regressive mindset had I not been educated by a riot grrrl subsect of AOL's music chat rooms in the early '00s. It's hard to stop guitar solos from being tedious, but Carrie and Corin put an emotion into their instruments that I've never heard so emphatically anywhere since. Sleater-Kinney are a band with the rare legacy of having never taken a misstep, always pushing themselves, and always coming up with something

said, 'We want to cut our audience in half'"

Dave Fridmann

Producer (worked on S-K's last album, 'The Woods')

"It's become a common idea that I didn't like them when we started working together and that really is not the truth. I did explain to them that I thought sonically there was something lacking in their recordings up to that point, but that's a different issue. I had never seen them live. But once I got them all in the same room playing in pre-production it was astonishing. The raw power completely took me by surprise.

"They wanted to do a more straightforward record than the record they did [with 'One Beat']. They sat me down and said, 'We want to cut our audience in half. We want to divide them. We want to challenge half of them and we want another half of them hopefully to just embrace it. We want to move forward and make a new world for ourselves to swim in. Nothing about their sound was sacrosanct. I had been marvelling at Jimi Hendrix's 'Are You Experienced' just before they arrived; they walked in as the record finished and we were like, we gotta do something that's ridiculous, something wrong, so that if you walk by somebody listening to this song you're going to stop in your tracks and be like, 'What's wrong with that? Is your stereo broken?' That's what we were going after, to make it extreme. "Did I know it was going to be their last

record? No. I still hope it's not. I talk to them on a regular basis and I've always made it known to them that on a second's notice I would love to work with them on

anything at any time." ■

Diamonds in the rough

Run The Jewels' debut established El-P and Killer Mike as an unbeatable force. Its follow-up has made them two of the key voices in America's political crisis. "We're being told to shut the fuck up on a national scale," they tell Britt Julious

PHOTOS BY JEREMY JENNINGS

he revolution won't come in with a bang, but a slow, uphill battle. Run The Jewels – aka Brooklyn rapper/producer El-P (Jaime Meline) and Atlanta-born rapper Killer Mike (Michael Render) – understand that. They never planned on releasing 'Run The Jewels 2', their second full-length collaboration, due next week, during one of the most politically charged periods in recent American history. But its anger and passion feel as if they were wrenched from the hearts and guts of millions of disenfranchised young people of colour across the country. Run The Jewels are a voice that's growing louder.

In the midst of the recent police brutality and riots in Ferguson, Missouri, Killer Mike wrote a piece for *Billboard* about the plight of America's young black poor. "Whatever this country is willing to do to the least of us, it will one day do to us all," he warned. Where conservative stations like Fox News used to (and will continue to) blame rap music for inciting violence, now they were inviting Mike onto the couch to defend the community caught up in the crisis. CNN called him, too. "Repping the shit that we rep and the way that

we do isn't grandiose because this is what rap is supposed to do," says Mike today. "We're being told to shut the fuck up on a national scale."

We are in the quiet, unassuming Stankonia Studios in Atlanta, owned by Southern rap legends OutKast. It's a warm, humid day in early October and the studio is located on a hilly, small block near a car repair garage and bakery. El arrives at the small green building first; when Mike turns up, the two take a smoke (cigarettes and weed) before we sit down to discuss their challenges, successes and surprises in making this record.

Mike and El describe Run The Jewels as a meta-rap group, one whose work exists in reference to rap's storied lineage; parts of 'RTJ2' were influenced by the decisions and legacy of two radically different rap groups. "I see now NWA's toll as a gangster rap group," says Mike. "They said 'fuck tha police'. They wore black. They scared people. But NWA said 'fuck tha police' in a time where it was actually thrilling." He gets animated as he remembers what that song meant to him as a 13-year-old. "It was during a time where the police were beating the shit out of me and I don't mean socially – I mean they caught me and beat my

fucking ass so, you know, I understood their angst on a different level."

Then there's 2 Live Crew, a group from Florida primarily active from the late '80s to mid-'90s. In 1989, they released their debut album, 'As Nasty As They Wanna Be', trailed by the radio single 'Me So Horny'. In 1990, Florida's Broward County brought an obscenity case against them, attempting to criminalise any shops selling their record.

But two years later, as Mike and El recount, the group overturned the charges, winning their case on the grounds that the song represented important parts of African American musical tradition that needed protecting. For Killer Mike and El-P, 2 Live Crew weren't just raunchy and controversial; they were groundbreaking and revolutionary. "When we were young, it was Broward County telling us to shut the fuck up and now it's the federal government telling us to shut the fuck up," says Mike. "And this record says no."

On 'RTJ2', the duo wanted to create something "meaner, darker, more pointed", says El, but they also allowed themselves the time to figure out what exactly that would

→



Jewels in the crown

Killer Mike and El P's best tracks

mean. "We defined the sound, but it was not all planned." he notes.

Their debut was recorded in a month, an energised process that followed El producing Mike's superb 2012 album 'RAP Music' and a string of singles. Released for free digitally in June 2013, and later sold physically

through Fool's Gold, it was acclaimed as one of that year's greatest records. That didn't mean they were just going to repeat the process for 'RTJ2', though: work began in January and was completed in August, tracks being written and produced in between runs on the road, some featuring musicians like Beyoncé collaborator Boots and Rage Against The Machine's Zack De La Rocha. It'll be the first release on Nas' new label, Mass Appeal.

"Honestly I'm amazed that we even pulled a record off." says El.

Mike jumps in. "I always knew we can, even though it seems like we can't."

Where 'Run The Jewels' was based around instrumentals that El-P already had banked, 'RTJ2' began fresh. This also gave them the chance to work as a team, refining their ideas and what they wanted to give the world. They play me the record today - they're not sending out advance copies in order to try and keep as much mystique around the record as possible. This is not traditional conscious rap: 'RTJ2' is, unsurprisingly, as smart, sharp and complete as their vision. El's production booms like an epic rock record, starting with equal parts bombastic and claustrophobic beats that rarely let up, except at a few deeply affecting moments.

"I'm a southerner. Agriculture is not as pretty as Martha Stewart, you know what I mean?" says Mike. "It gets hot in the summer, that shit turns to clay, it muds up and comes in furious and harsh, and a lot of the record is like that... And then at a point, it starts to open and it's like all of this culminates into something that's poignant."

Even after just one listen, it's clear that the genius of 'RTJ2' lies in the way it changes register in this way. At one point they repurpose Run-DMC's sample of Sam Kinison shouting "Dick in your mouth all day" on 'Love Again (Akinyele Back)'. It's one of their favourite tracks on the record, a raunchy sort of throwback to the hedonistic sex of early-'90s rap like 2 Live Crew. They

Killer Mike

Rap Is Dead From 'Monster', 1993



An iconoclastic attack on hip-hop's tireless celebration of its fallen idols,

which Mike sees as holding the genre back: "Biggie dead! Tupac dead! I killed them", he boldly booms on its chorus.

Reagan

From 'RAP Music', 2013



Mike's greatest moment yet – a brutal takedown of US politics'

failure to move on from the 1980s' destructive Reaganomics, calling Obama "just another talking head telling lies on a teleprompter".

ELP The Full Retard

From 'Cancer 4 Cure', 2012



A dark anthem to be boomed from "prison to the bread line", its sinister

bassline and throatily spat rhymes are like something the Beasties would concoct after waking up in *Blade Runner*'s dystopian metropolis.

Drones Over Bklyn

From 'Cancer 4 Cure', 2012



"You better stay aloof when the troops move or suicide booths

soothe", warns El-P over dissonant synths on another chilling, witty and prophetic tale of America's cities collapsing into chaos and war.

know it'll give people the wrong impression, but they don't care. "I'm a freak and I'm in love with a woman," offers El nonchalantly.

Some might see it as a contradiction that, elsewhere, 'RTJ2' has a strong social conscience. But discomfort and dissonance is key to the record, says Mike. "I don't like listening to rap without some cringe moments. It's like listening to punk on low."

'Crown' is full of these uncomfortable sections. "Give me a lane, give me the fame", Mike raps repeatedly throughout the track. If it sounds shallow, consider that music was

a turning point in Mike's life, a way to escape dealing cocaine and instead make something for his family. Now he and his wife Shana run a barbershop called Graffiti's SWAG at home in Atlanta, aimed at economically empowering young black men in the community. They want to open 150 more across the country.

"['Crown' is] about unburdening yourself to be the person you want to become. It's giving yourself to a course, sacrificing your soul and beliefs," says El. That's what happened for Mike, who found himself in the studio at three or four in the morning, frustrated by his incomplete verse before the lyrics just poured out of him. "I was waiting to get touched by lightning," Mike says, tearing up.

"We pushed past even the passion and pushed past even the primal and we had a personal on there," adds El.

It might be his most autobiographical verse to date, and it's one of 'RTJ2''s more poignant

moments, bringing an emotional openness to the record. "There's something special there and we recognised it and we made it very clear that we knew what we wanted it to be that grew," said Mike.

"I don't like listening to rap without some cringe moments"



Whether through their

production, potent lyrics or merely having the gall to stand before their peers and their country and announce that something is not right, it's this vulnerability that's given Run The Jewels such a resonant connection with their fans. It takes a lot to do that, especially when rap culture is so rife with corporate interests and imagemakers. Rawness is rare and it is uncomfortable. But we need that discomfort, the kind that stops you in your tracks and refuses to let go until you've opened your eyes and ears. We need that lack of subtlety as America is not a subtle country. On 'RTJ2', it all ties together - the music, the message - to create a damn-near masterpiece brimming with fire and promise. "We were gritting our teeth because we were sitting on this record," El says. "When records like ours are relevant, it means there's some dark shit going on."

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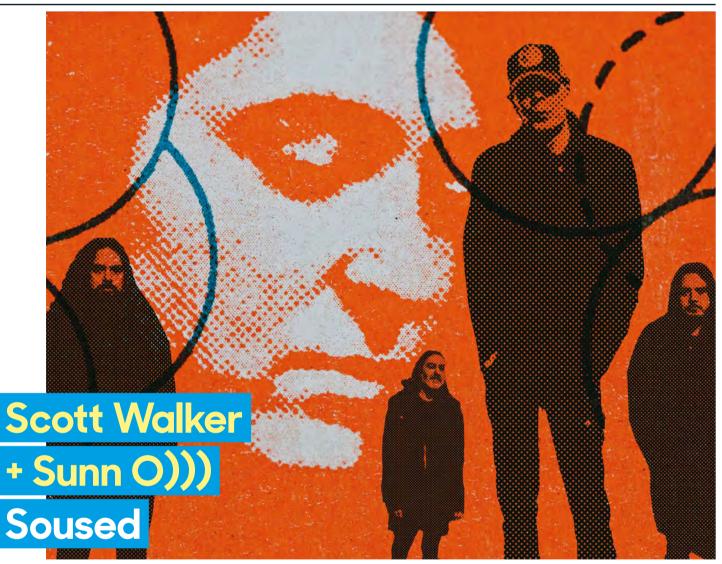


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Reviews

► THE DEFINITIVE VERDICT ■ EDITED BY BEN HOMEWOOD



The veteran singer teams up with the Seattle drone metallers. The results are exciting, original and, in their own way, fun



detail in the backstory to 'Soused' is that it was Walker's idea to do a full album of his songs with Sunn O))), an extreme drone metal band from Seattle orbiting around two core members, Stephen O'Malley and Greg Anderson (although it was they who first contacted him, to see if he would sing on a track from their excellent 2009 album, 'Monoliths & Dimensions'; he couldn't).

Walker started out in the hugely successful '60s pop group The Walker Brothers. He went solo in 1967, initially making baroque, Jacques Brel-inspired singer-songwriter albums (his first four are classics) and eventually embracing experimental music with his three most recent albums - 'Tilt' from 1995, 2006's 'The Drift' and 'Bish Bosch'. The common ground between him and Sunn O))) is an affection for the avant-garde, although Sunn O))) approach it from a different angle - equally fascinated by the texture of sound, but more in the field of ambience, repetition and ear-splitting, heart-palpitation-inducing volume. At one London gig in 2009 they played so loud a photographer's camera exploded.

There are Walker fans who find his recent albums too far out there (on a track from 'The Drift' a musician is credited with "meat punching"). 'Soused' is more rooted and accessible, but still wildly original and exciting. In its own way, it's also good fun. The first and shortest of the five tracks – the eight-minute-plus

'Brando' - begins with Walker's signature, operatic baritone singing "Ah, the wide Missouri!/Dwellers on the bluff/Across the wide Missouri/Never enough/No, never enough" before halting; then, up from some wretched bowel of the earth comes a deadly, rumbling Sunn O))) guitar riff – the monstrous backdrop against

GREAT SCOTT

A deeper look at 'Soused"s unlikely influences..

▶ 'Brando' takes a cue from the book and film Across The Wide Missouri, but the reference to the actor Marlon is more abstract. The city of Omaha, which is situated on the Missouri River, is named after a Native American tribe that previously occupied the land. Translated, Omaha means 'dwellers on the bluff', which Walker sings in the song. Marlon Brando was born in the city. ▶'Herod 2014' also contains a Native American reference, using a refrain from 'Ho, Ho, Watanay', a traditional lullaby. In the song, Walker also references "raindrops on roses" and "whiskers on kittens" from The Sound Of Music's 'My Favourite Things'. ►In 'Lullaby', Walker sings, "My sweet little darling/ My comfort and joy", and other lyrics taken from 'My Sweet Little Darling' by William Byrd, the Renaissance-era English

composer of church music.

which Walker provides a strange, allegorical take on Across The Wide Missouri, a 1948 book about the frontier fur trade, turned into a 1951 western starring Clark Gable

Sonic space becomes an essential element of the album ('Bull' is almost decadently cavernous), but in these feral and expansive pieces, produced by Walker along with regular collaborators Mark Warman and Peter Walsh. there's fascinating, exhilarating detail. 'Brando' features the constant crack of a whip; on the album's best song, 'Herod 2014', which is built around a disturbing refrain of "She's hidden her babies away". a repeated saxophone wail is made to sound like a wounded bird's last gasp of breath.

Walker anoraks will recognise that 'Lullaby' is a version of a track he wrote for German singer Ute Lemper in 1999, but it's reimagined here as a closer full of menace, complete with exemplary last lyrics: "The most intimate personal choices/And requests/ Central to your personal

autonomy/Will be sung". And yet for all of Walker's poetic vividness and the massive breadth of Sunn O)))'s sound, 'Soused' manages to feel understated and ripe for listeners to engage with entirely on their own terms. It operates at the furthest reaches of pop and metal - an album that, on paper, you might approach with caution (remembering, perhaps, Lou Reed and Metallica's 'Lulu'), but one that's cleverly pitched, constantly engaging and, finally, triumphant. Play it very loud.

PHIL HEBBLETHWAITE **▶THE DETAILS**

▶ RELEASE DATE October 20 ▶ LABEL 4AD ▶ PRODUCERS Scott Walker, Peter Walsh, Mark Warman > LENGTH 48:01 > TRACKLISTING ▶1. Brando ▶2. Herod 2014 ▶3. Bull ▶4. Fetish ▶5. Lullaby

BEST TRACK Herod 2014

The Datsuns Deep Sleep Hellsquad



The Datsuns' self-titled 2002 debut album was promising

enough to suggest that a gradual fade into irrelevance was unlikely. The New Zealand quartet's blues-rock licks caught the attention of Led Zeppelin bassist John Paul Jones. who produced their 2004 album 'Outta Sight/Outta Mind'. Still, fade they did. Ten years on, the band remain committed to keeping wild '70s riffing alive. Guitarist Phil Somervell makes most impact on 'Deep Sleep' opener 'Caught In The Silver' is a squall of screeching solos, while 'Claw Machine' offers a glammy alternative to Royal Blood's thunder. Indeed, bar the dreamier title track, there's barely a moment's peace on a record that forces new life into an ageing band one breakneck solo at a time. RHIAN DALY

Single Mothers **Negative Qualities**

Hot Charity



In 2011, Single **Mothers** frontman Drew Thomson

guit his band. Then 25, the Canadian moved from the college town of London, Ontario to a place called Swastika to pursue a career in gold prospecting. His fellow miners often smoked crack at work. Eventually, he returned to reignite Single Mothers and record a debut brimming with bile: students ('Marbles'), drugs ('Ketamine') and human nature ('Feel Shame') are attacked while a torrent of hardcore guitars and drums connects with seismic force. It's a lesson in the power of punk. as the 52-second 'Womb' emphasises: "Rock'n'roll is a sacrifice/So I let you take my body and I threw away my life".



The Radiohead drummer's second solo album shows he's a compelling artist in his own right

> This, the second solo album from Radiohead drummer Phil Selway, sounds more like an echo of his main band's output than 2010's 'Familial' did. With more ambition and further forays into experimental electronics than its understated, largely acoustic predecessor, the expansive nature of Radiohead's influence grips harder. It usually works - the strings on 'Around Again' seem plucked from 'Pyramid Song' and spread over a 'Knives Out' drum-scuttle, vet the melody is distinctive enough to feel worthy of the comparisons, and 'Around Again' has a fuzzy red wine-drunk mellowness redolent of 'Amnesiac'. The Lennon-esque 'It Will End In Tears', however, shows that the 47-year-old Selway has strong enough songwriting chops to keep it piano-thump simple regardless of how much buzz and crackle he's got going on

> > in the background. 'Weatherhouse' properly uncovers Selway as a compelling songwriter, and coming just weeks after Thom Yorke's 'Tomorrow's Modern Boxes' it feels remarkably pertinent. JAMIE FULLERTON

▶THE DETAILS

▶ RELEASE DATE Out now ▶ LABEL Bella Union ▶ PRODUCER Adem Ilhan ▶LENGTH 37:02 ▶TRACKLISTING ▶1. Coming Up For Air ▶2. Around Again ▶3. Let It Go ▶4. Miles Away ▶5. Ghosts ▶6. It Will End In Tears ▶7. Don't Go Now ▶8. Drawn To The Light ▶9. Waiting For A Sign ▶10. Turning It Inside Out ▶BEST TRACK It Will End In Tears

Tweedy Sukierae dBpm



Faced with upheaval. you naturally reach for the things that

defined better times. For Wilco's Jeff Tweedy, whose wife is battling cancer, that meant collaborating with his drummer son Spencer and making a 20-track album to tackle his churning emotions. 'Sukierae' tracks the journey from shocked

confusion (the craggy guitar of 'Please Don't Let Me Be So Understood') through denial ('Nobody Dies Anymore') to despondency ("All my love is gone", he husks on 'Where My Love'), while closer 'I'll Never Know' is all ghosts and ash. Yet there are sparks of new wave brightness and Beatles lustre, ensuring an album about uncertainty and dejection remains beautiful throughout. MARK BEAUMONT



BEN HOMEWOOD

Reviews

New Build

Pour It On Sunday Best



This second album from electropop trio New Build lacks

pep. Hot Chip's Al Doyle and Felix Martin and their pal Tom Hopkins have followed their 2012 debut 'Yesterday Was Lived And Lost' with a somewhat arduous record. 'Look in Vain' is competent club music, 'Weightless' is dark and funky, and 'Different Kind' pounds along, but the rest is forgettable. Particularly hard going are the turgid 'Luminous Freedom', gloomy Robert Miles rip-off 'White Sea', and 'Pour it On', a bloated closer with the questionable lyrics: "Here they come/ Beats and broken drum/ Pass me by/They will sleep". Overall, it misses Hot Chip's outsider appeal completely, coming off as whingey and middle-aged. Don't bother. ■ HUW NESBITT

Palace Lost In The Night EP

Beatnik Creative



'Lost In The Night' may only be London quartet

Palace's first EP, but it marks them out as possible successors to The Maccabees as sensitive indie boys to swoon over. Like The Antlers if they added a bluesy twang to their melancholy musings, or Manchester's Money shorn of the poetic eccentricity, Palace deal in theatrical melodies to tingle the spine. 'Bitter"s gentle ripple comes on like a lost track from 'Given To The Wild', while 'Veins' wraps singer Leo Wyndham's warm vocal around a simple four-chord lullaby. Best is centrepiece 'Ocean Deep', which distils Palace's knack for intimate yet epic atmospherics into five minutes of subtle reverb and beguiling guitar crescendos. LISA WRIGHT

An exhilarating new beginning for the

Sonic Youth frontman

Thurston Moore The Best Day

Much has happened in Thurston Moore's life since his last solo album, 2011's 'Demolished Thoughts'. The same year,

he and Kim Gordon - Sonic

Youth co-founder and his wife since 1984 – divorced. The band was placed on indefinite hold and Moore started a new project, Chelsea Light Moving, who released a decent self-titled album last year. Also in 2013, he moved to London, a place he's always been infatuated with, to live with Eva Prinz, the woman he'd fallen in love with while married to Gordon. In just three years, his life changed beyond recognition.

The 56-year-old's music however, has not. While 'Demolished Thoughts' may have been a gentle, acoustic affair, unshackled noise characterises both



Chelsea Light Moving and Moore's highly limited recent solo output. Still, on first listen, the sense of business as usual here seems strange. His old band could have released 'The Best Day' at any point during the last 20 years and it would have made perfect sense.

▶THE DETAILS

▶ RELEASE DATE October 20 ▶ LABEL Matador ▶ PRODUCER Thurston Moore ▶ LENGTH 50:32 ▶ TRACKLISTING ▶ 1. Speak To The Wild

- ▶2. Forevermore ▶3. Tape ▶4. The Best Day ▶5. Detonation
- ▶6. Vocabularies ▶7. Grace Lake ▶8. Germs ▶BEST TRACK Forevermore

Indeed, Sonic Youth's Steve Shelley occupies the drum stool in current live incarnation The Thurston Moore Band (above; with My Bloody Valentine's Deb Googe on bass and Moore's former Stoke Newington flatmate James Sedwards on guitar). 'Speak To The Wild' is classic Moore, passages of out-of-focus pop melody countered with atonal one-note riffing before groping to a conclusion via a fuzz-drenched wig-out. He's done it hundreds of times before, but, even in this nth-generation update, it's totally electrifying.

The notable contrast with his previous work comes in the lyrics. It gradually becomes clear that the ups and downs of Moore's recent years are writ large throughout. 'Forevermore' ("*That's why I want you forevermore*") is intense, and it's moving to hear Moore write with such candour about being in love. 'Vocabularies', meanwhile, is about what might happen if there was a universal language for the world: an alternative hymn to Esperanto set to swirling acoustic drone. It sounds like the kind of idealistic thought

you'd have when exhilarated by a new beginning.

A little bit new, but mostly the same, then. 'The Best Day' is the refreshing sound of Moore addressing familiar musical themes with renewed energy.

CHRIS COTTINGHAM

8

ock – is a solid The Coral The Curse Of Love

Skeleton Key



Wirral space cowboys The Coral are currently on one of

those extended hiatuses, so it's a neat trick to pull a 'new' album out of the can to keep the embers glowing. Recorded between 2005's 'The Invisible Invasion' and 2007's 'Roots & Echoes', 'The Curse Of Love' is a neat record. filled with

the mystic folk and lithe psychedelia that made them so refreshing back in the day. The knowledge that it was produced on a Tascam eight-track recorder adds to the dusted-off aesthetic, but the real goods are in the dreamlike, Lennonflavoured beauty of 'Gently' and the powerful fuzz-bombs of 'The Watcher In The Distance', songs that should never have gathered dust in the first place.

MATTHEW HORTON

Bird/Finders Keepers



On the fringes of Manchester's independent rock scene

for over two decades now, Jane Weaver's solo albums have largely been folky affairs. Experimentation has always been present, though, and on 'The Silver Globe' it becomes the definitive theme. Beginning with 'Argent' – eight minutes of cruise-control krautrock - is a solid indicator that compromise is not to be had here. There are pop-friendly moments, though: on the Hot Chip-meets-Goldfrapp 'Don't Take My Soul', the 41-year-old Liverpudlian - who was once part of Britpop act Kill Laura pitches up her voice and **Badly Drawn Boy** contributes guitar, 'Mission Desire', a token shard of folk gloom, does little to undercut the futurist gleam elsewhere. NOEL GARDNER

Mark Lanegan Band



Phantom Radio

Despite writing much of 'Phantom Radio' on a phone

app called Funk Box, Mark Lanegan boasts a melodic elegance more commonly associated with a classical orchestra. On his latest album, the gravel-voiced 49-year-old uses gospel and blues elements alongside simple metronomic beats, but his characteristically morose lyrical reflections take centre stage. "You don't love me/What's to love anyway?" he heaves on 'Torn Red Heart', a floating ballad that recalls the opiated highs of Spacemen 3. "I've been dying since the day I was born", he laments on the haunting 'I Am The Wolf'. Best of all is the swollen melody on 'Waltzing In Blue', the highlight of a sullen and graceful record that brings out the very best in the gruff veteran. JAMES BENTLEY

Baxter Dury It's A Pleasure

[PIAS] Le Label



It's been three years since Dury's debut 'Happy Soup'. What

made it so charming was his knack for wrapping kitchensink dramas in candyfloss. but that trait sparkles only intermittently on 'It's A Pleasure'. Standout single 'Palm Trees" proves Baxter's eye for a slick electropop groove is as sharp as his father lan's was for a filthy couplet. On 'Other Men's Girls' his leery hunt for "another canvas to paint my dreams across" is spliced with glitzy, chattering keys and bobbing basslines, but his deadpan delivery is clumsy. These confessionals swing from simple and swooning to uncomfortably sleazy, but male inadequacy is always at the root of his woes. It's a shame the saccharine musical backing too often makes it hard to empathise.

DAN CARSON

Reviews

Andy Burrows

Fall Together Again PIAS



Andy Burrows' career has taken manv paths since

he gave up on Johnny Borrell and left Razorlight in 2009, including a recent stint behind the skins for another much-loved comedy character, David Brent, and his band Foregone Conclusion. 'Fall Together

Again' sees Burrows take centre stage for his third solo album and it's a drab affair. An orchestral flourish begins the pleasantly brief opener 'Derwen' but after that it becomes a case of dodging Top Gear dad anthems ('City To Coast') and pop cheese Gary Barlow might consider a bit obvious ('All This I've Heard Before'). The stark synths on 'Watch Me Fall Again' offer a peek into darker territory, but it isn't enough to save a dismally safe effort. ■ DAVID RENSHAW

convention and a pursuit of

unexplored sounds. On last year's chilly 'Field Of Reeds', though, the London trio's neoclassical interests edged them towards Radio 3, a trend they embraced with their Expanded concerts. With the band swelled to a

These New Puritans

Expanded (Live At The

These New

made their

name with

disregard for

Puritans have

Barbican) Infectious

'Spitting Stars' that finally welcomes in some human warmth. STUART HUGGETT

concluding new song

brings back TNP's

ensemble, this live recording

presents 'Field Of Reeds' in

its entirety. While it's an

impressive document, it

can't quite recapture the

'Nothing Else But This' and

'Dream'. An encore of songs

from 2010's 'Hidden', notably

a pummelling 'We Want War',

percussive thunder, but it's

the gentle brass lullaby of

nocturnal intimacy of

35-piece orchestra and choir

BOOK

Rampant ego and dodgy grammar can't spoil the punk icon's lively second memoir



John Lydon Anger Is An **Energy: My Life Uncensored**

GER IS AN ENERGY

►RELEASE DATE

Simon & Schuster

PUBLISHER

Out now

"The king is gone but he's not forgotten", Neil Young once sang, "This is the story of a Johnny Rotten..." Well, here are 500 pages in Johnny's own words. John Joseph Lydon's new autobiography isn't just about his incarnation as Johnny Rotten

(above, with the Sex Pistols), but his upbringing, youth and, later, Public Image Limited and further intrigues. It's not the first time the 58-year-old has looked back in anger - his first memoir, Rotten: No Irish. No Blacks, No Dogs, hit the shelves in 1993 (it was later called "a nihilistic, gross-out masterpiece" by this magazine). A cynic might argue that Lydon hasn't exactly gilded his reputation in the intervening two decades - there was his 2004 appearance on I'm A Celebrity... Get Me Out Of Here and then those cringe-worthy Country Life adverts - but there are still plenty of fresh incidents and anecdotes here that make this new volume worth tracking down.

Lydon has made a career out of steadfastly refusing to do what's expected of him, and it turns out this even applies to English grammar. The book opens with a Publisher's Note

pointing out the various liberties that Lydon takes with spelling and grammar, adding that it's simply "Lydon's lingo". (As he puts it: "Don't let tiffles cause fraction.") For the most part, his inventive prose and wildly unpredictable tangents and digressions - he

compares Malcolm McLaren's management style to that of Arsenal's Arsene Wenger are a delight, but occasionally his ego becomes a bulldozer. His claim to be "so much" on the side of Pussy Riot is rather undermined when he refers to the Russian group as "Pussy Farts". When he spends several pages justifying the infamous butter commercials - perhaps to himself more than anyone - and calls them "the most anarchistic thing I've ever been presented with", your eyeballs will roll.

Still, you don't pick up a John Lydon book expecting safe, careful prose. This punk rock icon possesses a vast, self-justifying ego - but you wouldn't want him any other way. His passion and his intellect remain an inspiration. Neil Young

also sang: "It's better to burn out/Than to fade away". Lydon's still burning. ■ KEVIN EG PERRY



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Biophilia Live

The Icelandic singer merges the worlds of music, technology and nature in a remarkable concert film

Even by Björk's increasingly esoteric standards. 'Biophilia' was a lot for fans to digest when it was released in October 2011. This wasn't just a boring old pop album, she said, but a "multimedia

project encompassing music, apps, the internet, installations and live shows". Those live shows would eventually stretch out over two years, as Björk gave 70 performances on five continents; the penultimate gig. at London's Alexandra Palace on September 3, 2013, was captured for this superior concert film.

Björk said she wanted to explore the "intersection of music, nature and technology" in those live shows, and the nature clips projected onto screens at DIRECTORS Peter Strickland,

each concert are central to this film. Shots of waves crashing against rocks, close-ups of DNA molecules and panoramas of Earth from space are all interspersed with live footage of the gig itself, and most of the time the visuals complement rather than distract from

what Björk is up to onstage.

Some fancy editing aside, Biophilia Live is a document of a remarkable performance from a remarkable artist. Björk looks fantastic. Like a crazy art student, she's dressed in a frizzy rainbow wig and a bubblewrap dress. Sure, at first she appears a bit silly, but the playfulness of her costume quashes any concerns that she might be taking herself too seriously. That's no bad thing when she sings a song like 'Thunderbolt': "My romantic gene is dominant and it hungers for union" and "Thunderstorm come, scrape those barnacles off me!".

Her singing, often breathtaking, is filled with a childlike wonder that brings the project's core concept to life - biophilia literally means 'love of living or living systems'. Though she's backed by a bewildering array of bespoke instruments, including a Tesla coil, a pendulum-harp designed to harness the planet's gravitational pull to create musical patterns and what she jokingly refers to as "iPads and stuff", some of the

most sublime moments come from Biörk and the Icelandic choir who provide backing vocals.

'Possibly Maybe' is gorgeously mournful as the choir echoes Biörk's post-break-up laments; 'Isobel',

from 1995's 'Post', becomes a haunting hymn; and the encore is a rousing 'Declare Independence', on which Björk and backing singers show off their best freeform dance moves.

These days, Björk may claim that "David Attenborough was my rock star", but as she attacks this song with cries of "Declare independence!" and "Make your wown flag!", she shows traces of the Icelandic punk kid who once played in a band whose name translated as Cork The Bitch's Ass. If Biophilia Live proves anything, it's that Björk remains impossible to pigeonhole. There's still nobody else like her. ■ NICK LEVINE

CINEMA



You're young, you don't know why you do things, but there's always a

reason," high-school soccer coach Mr B (James Franco) tells student, striker and part-time babysitter April (Emma Roberts), Palo Alto, the Gia Coppola-directed adaptation of Franco's short-story collection, focuses on the confounding mess of growing pains that constitutes the impulsive lives of April and her friends. It's a familiar story, one of sexual awakening. rebellion and teen heartbreak. The extreme depths it plumbs - April losing her virginity to Mr B on his sofa; stoner Teddy (Jack Kilmer) driving off after drunkenly crashing into another car - elevate it from just another film filled with illicit relationships and off-the-rails adolescents to something far more thought-provoking and powerful. RHIAN DALY

CINEMA Teenage Mutant



The Turtles' previous return to cinemas came with 2007's fully animated TMNT.

Now, the sewer-dwelling mutants are reimagined by Transformers producer Michael Bay. His vision is ambitious, but the plot is not. TV news reporter April O'Neil (Megan Fox) is investigating a mysterious clan holding New York to ransom. When she learns that four pizza-eating reptiles are trying to save the day, no-one believes her. But with the help of Raphael, Donatello, Michelangelo, Leonardo and their rat sensei Splinter, she uncovers the plans of an evil scientist. Director Jonathan Liebesman realises Bay's vision in impressive 3D. but the visuals can't make up for a mind-numbing experience that will reward only the most committed fans. DAN BRIGHTMORE

CINEMA Gone Girl



When his wife Amy (Rosamund Pike) disappears on the morning of their fifth

wedding anniversary, Nick (Ben Affleck) becomes both prime suspect and America's latest public enemy. David Fincher's interest in oversaturated media (The Social Network) and his aptitude for amplifying the banality of evil (Seven) make him the

ideal director to bring Gillian Flynn's bestseller to the screen; but despite outstanding performances, beautiful cinematography and another superb score from Trent Reznor and Atticus Ross, he is defeated by the preposterousness of his source material. Flynn adapted her own novel, but seems unsure whether it's a psychological thriller or a black comedy. This is an almost flawless telling of a deeply flawed story. ANGUS BATEY

Nick Fenton

IN CINEMAS Now

DVD Ozzy Osbourne: **Memoirs Of**



Videographies are rarely essential purchases in the age of

YouTube. This companion to a new greatest hits album of the same name deserves points for being truly exhaustive, though. One disc gives you 27 music videos spanning Ozzy's solo career; the other has more

than two hours of live footage, woven together with laugh-out-loud interview snippets (like an inebriated Ozzy joining a Japanese Beatles tribute band, discussing petrolbombing a chicken pen, or stuffing an "arseholed" midget into a suitcase). The music is fantastic. the videos are daft and the hair and wardrobe choices - especially in the '80s - provide endless mirth. BARRY NICOLSON







Wolverhampton, Civic Hall Monday, October 6

After all those big-crowd triumphs, the Notts wonderboy proves he can thrive in medium-sized venues, too

Since he first emerged from a
Nottingham council estate little
more than two years ago, Jake Bugg
has been entirely ubiquitous. Turn on the
radio, there's Jake Bugg. That track playing
behind a beer advert on TV? That's Jake
Bugg. The guy Noel Gallagher, Paul Weller
and a growing array of other converts are all
raving about? That's the 20-year-old singer

as well. Chances are, even your gran knows a couple of Bugg's greatest hits.

More than anywhere else, however, Bugg has been completely inescapable on the live music circuit. Amid all that championing from rock's elder statesmen, Bugg has wound up near the top of the bill of some of the most coveted line-ups of the past two summers. From

main support to The Rolling Stones, The Stone Roses and Arcade Fire at mammoth stand-alone shows to an Other Stage headline slot at Glastonbury this summer, Bugg has been shoved out in front of some of the biggest crowds it's possible to play in front of.

It's an impressive feat, but one that means – given the relatively tiny timeframe – that he's essentially missed out the middle stage. Though this tour, where he'll play London's 7,300-capacity Alexandra Palace, is his largest to date, it seems relatively low-key in comparison to some of the notches already scratched into his gigging bedpost. Yet, as tonight's second show of the run attests, he thrives in rooms that are slightly less big, loud and airy too.

If the main criticism levelled at the guitarist is for his stoic, unreadable and – let's be honest – sometimes totally charisma-free onstage

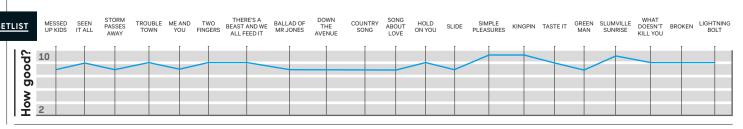
demeanour, then in slightly more intimate confines, the music

creates the atmosphere so he doesn't have to. As usual, there is little concession to stagecraft. Bugg, clad in black, plays with a two-man backing band, also head to toe in black, against a black backdrop. The only decoration comes in the form of a painted white logo reading 'Jake Bugg' in a simple font behind him and one bearing the same two words in the same monochrome style on the front of the bass drum. His aesthetic, like his mannerisms and musical style, prioritises as little adornment as possible. Where all this can sometimes seem too small a spectacle in a drunken field of thousands, in a regional hall of devotees (still in their thousands, mind) it feels relatable.

'Messed Up Kids' from last year's second album 'Shangri La' opens, building into an extended, stormy intro of 'Seen It All' where the singer's lyricisms – jaded and hopeful at the same time – are sung back by a vociferous crowd. 'Trouble Town' charms like a naughty schoolboy playing hooky from double maths, while 'Two Fingers' – now a Bugg classic – is greeted with yet more uproar. The fact that the singer barely moves from his spot front and centre throughout any of it barely seems to matter: for once – and this is something Bugg isn't praised enough for – the crowd are fully engaging with the lyrics and all the familiar frustration, boredom and escapist dreams that come with them.

A middle, acoustic session, in which the second of his two moves (sitting down) is unleashed, brings two new tracks. Performed as

'SIMPLE PLEASURES' HAS GROWN MEN SCYTHING THE AIR WITH EMOTION





a solo offering ('Down

acoustic strum with his

band ('Hold On You'),

they're stripped-down

allusions to where his

The Avenue') and an

Jake Bugg

"I think it helps [having played big gigs]. You feel more relaxed but the apprehensive feeling can still be there some nights, especially when you've got a new set and new material and you don't know how it's gonna go. I think once I get these few gigs out the way and the set starts to shape itself, the nerves will be much less."

...Playing big venues

"In a lot of cases less is more. Having less makes it sound much bigger - that's something I've been working with. We've stripped down on a bit of the set and it seems to be working."

...The next record

"It'll be ready when it's ready. My ideas come quickly, but whether they're good or not is a different matter. Maybe [the tracks played tonight] will make it - it depends how much people like them."

next record might be headed, but the bluesy lick of the latter hints at a bare-bones, two-chord rootsiness that ditches the gloss producer Rick Rubin painted with on 'Shangri La' for something altogether more rough and ready.

Bugg's heavier moments, however, strike hardest. 'Simple Pleasures', built around a twilit guitar lick, is a subtle anthem that has grown men scything the air with emotion, while the swinging strut of 'Kingpin' is the closest he gets to a dancefloor filler, albeit a dancefloor from a regional community centre in 1964.

By the final flourish - the scally swagger of 'Slumville Sunrise', delicately plucked ballad 'Broken' (bawled from the hearts of every single audience member in unison) and a final, moshpit-inducing 'Lightning Bolt' - it's impossible to deny that this monosyllabic singer has an array of hits that, perhaps surprisingly, contains real variety. Having been repeatedly thrown in at the deep end and onto a series of huge stages way earlier than most, Jake Bugg can glide through slightly smaller gigs like this one with ease. ■ LISA WRIGHT

The Royal George, London

Thursday, September 25 At the start of this tiny hometown show, **Crows singer James** Cox eveballs the crowd before launching into 'Silver Tongues'. Crunching drums and a brooding bassline heighten the sense of doom, until it all breaks down into a noisy swirl. Newer songs like 'Hang Me High' and the possessed 'Pray' show that the punk foursome have made strides since 'Silver Tongues' came out last year. Cox is wild throughout, and with the hook of closer 'Crawling' ringing around the room, he exits through the crowd, his shirt ripped from his body. It's the perfect climax to half an hour of venomous thrills. RHIAN DALY

Real Lies London, Upstairs At The Garage

Tuesday, October 7 Real Lies perform in front of footage of the anonymous London boroughs that inspire them. Garage forecourts, rolling fruit machines and suburban semis flash by as the trio playing up the road from their houses tonight tell stories of late-night feelings and next-day regrets. Backed by a live bassist and drummer, singer Kev's disaffected gaze makes an intriguing focal point. His lyrics remain Real Lies' biggest strength, and while some lines fade into the murk of 'Dab Housing', the existential questioning of 'North Circular' ("How many late nights does it take you to change?") hint at potential brighter than the grubby pubs and doomed romances their songs come from. DAVID RENSHAW

Avi Buffalo



The shy indie rockers bring their Californian sunshine to Dublin for the first time

Avi Buffalo's first show in Ireland has been a long time coming. After putting out a promising debut album on Sub Pop four years ago, the Californian indie-pop group drifted into hiatus after their last European tour. Frontman Avi Zahner-Isenberg said he felt wary of life on the road and needed to rediscover the fun of making music. Even

SETLIST

- ▶So What
- ▶Can't Be Too Responsible ▶Remember
- Last Time
- ▶Think It's Gonna Happen Again ▶Summer Cum
- ▶Two Cherished Understandings
- ▶Overwhelmed With Pride
- ▶Memories Of You ▶Won't Be Around No More
- ▶What's In It For?
- ▶Oxygen Tank ▶She Is Seventeen

now, gigging to promote comeback album 'At Best Cuckold', several dates have been spaced comfortably apart. From the first notes of opener 'So What', however, the 23-year-old Zahner-Isenberg jumps into the songs with a sprightly falsetto and peppers the interludes with good-humoured banter.

Though 'At Best Cuckold' is packed with chipper pop that's not quite all it seems, the muscular sound of tonight's set leaves little space for the melancholic introspection and dark humour lurking beneath the arrangements. Instead the songs just sound sweet and sentimental. There are several hitches – a misfiring start. an out-of-tune guitar, an out-ofreach pedal - and there are times where Zahner-Isenberg's blistering

solos can seem superfluous, as on 'Remember Last Time' (from 2010's self-titled album).

But a solo acoustic rendition of 'Two Cherished Understandings' and a shimmering 'She Is Seventeen' underline why Avi Buffalo's career can withstand long absences. Over a one-hour set, they bring a touch of Californian sunshine on a night blighted by howling Irish rain - a feat appreciated all the more knowing there's a chance this may not happen again anytime soon. CIAN TRAYNOR

City Limits

Zilker Park, Austin, Texas Friday–Sunday, October 3–5

Cheeky Canucks, sweet Scots and sulky sirens brave the Texan heat

It might be glorious in the sun at Austin's Zilker Park, but it's anger and sorrow that bring the biggest crowds to the first weekend of Austin City Limits. But before Lana Del Rev's smoky wallowing proves the highlight, Friday offers up a more positive approach. Isabella Manfredi, frontwoman of Sydney newcomers The Preatures, opts to combat the sweltering temperatures with pogoing. Turning cartwheels during the candy-coated new wave of 'Somebody's Talking', she comes on like Debbie Harry leading a Zumba class in 1976. Despite an equally active routine. **St Vincent**'s crowd practically halves in size during her axe-grinding set. 'Surgeon' rumbles away with a malevolent grace, but she spends most of her hour onstage favouring noodly tricks from tunes. Diving into the crowd and swapping her

guitar for a flag with a fan seems to be the most spontaneous moment in a strangely spiritless show.

Looking straight outta Spike Island in his beige bucket hat, Matthew Duncan leads **Moats** (the band hand-picked by *NME* to win a place at ACL) through a string of propulsive grunge

ballads. 'Toothache' merges Foals-style expansiveness and future-funk breakdowns with raging vocals that are just as blistering as the weather. When the sun finally dips, **Belle & Sebastian** turn on the charm. Upping their sweetness offensive with strings and brass, the Glasgow band – who recently announced a new album 'Girls In Peacetime Want To Dance' for

January 2015 – sound more beautiful than ever on 'Expectations' and a softly crooned 'Piazza, New York Catcher', complete with baseball pitching moves mimed by Stuart Murdoch. They debut two new songs, one of which sees guitarist Stevie Jackson and Murdoch indulge in some close Simon & Garfunkel harmonies. The other, 'Perfect Couples', opens with bongos and a breathy disco coo, before fully covering

Talking Heads territory.

Fellow Scots **Chrvches** continue their US domination apace, yet their set has now become so slick they seem almost wearied by the experience. Their ping-pong beats and glossy synths might sound hefty, but there's a feeling they're whizzing through their final US tour for

'The Bones Of What You Believe', desperate to get back into the studio and lay down another album of predatory electronic pop. That said, the little skip of joy that samples man Martin Doherty does when he skips stage front to belt out 'Under The Tide' is startlingly endearing,

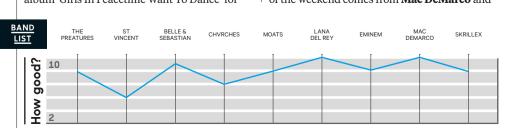
But the most avidly entertaining performance of the weekend comes from **Mac DeMarco** and

band, even if their show is notably tamer than their usual covers'n'cock jokes turns. Well, slightly tamer. "Everything's bigger in Texas," says Mac with a wink and a crotch grab, between the hazy doo-wop of 'Blue Boy' and washed-out grooves of 'Brother'. The pace picks up for a ballsy 'I'm A Man', which the gap-toothed singer dedicates to Eddie Vedder after an on-point impression leads him to learn Pearl Jam are also playing this weekend. "Damn, I've got to start looking at the schedules more often!" he gasps.

Now for the misery. In her zebra-print frock, Lana Del Rev makes an art of doing not very much at all on Saturday evening, aside from flagrantly breaking the no-smoking rule. Yet her regal swaying to the mournful 'Ultraviolence' and a sombre 'Video Games' bring an understated grace to a wounded set. Equally unstable is **Eminem**, who is as pissed off as he ever was, his arrival announced by a fake missing-persons bulletin, styled as a schlocky US television news report. Rage seeps through 'White America' and 'Kill You' as the meaty rumble of Skrillex playing across the site echoes between every song, keeping Austin awake and ensuring that, no matter how hot it is, no one is able to succumb to heat exhaustion. LEONIE COOPER







BELLE & SEBASTIAN Q&A

What do you make of Austin?

Stuart Murdoch (vocals/guitar): "The town has changed loads since we first came here. It was a down old Texas town and suddenly it's leapt up and become an influential musical town. Everyone comes here to party, which is terrific... It's definitely the stand-out music city in the States right now."

How was your set?

Sarah Martin (vocals/violin):
"We definitely had the best view
tonight, seeing all the towers
looking back into downtown."
Stuart: "I felt pretty loose. We
played here just last year, so we
tried a new shape to our set and
a couple of new numbers. One's
a seven-minute epic – a new
song right in the middle of the
set – a bit risky, but it felt OK!"

There were a lot of people dancing to that one...

Stuart: "That's good! For the first time we're embracing some visuals and giving in to a bit of 21st-century technology at last."
Sarah: "20th, even!"
Stuart: "That's definitely a theme for the next record – a little bit of dance."

MORE GIGS

God Damn Total Refreshment Centre, London

Wednesday, October 1 Black Country twosome God Damn are blessed with monster riffs and power drum solos, but there's something much harder about them than Royal Blood or Drenge. Tonight, on the first date of a UK tour, drummer Ash Weaver looks like a poodle rocker from the '80s and hammers his kit harder than Animal from The Muppet Show. His thrashing beats marry with frontman Thom Edwards' throaty vocals on the seismic 'Heavy Money' and new single 'Hours', the two highlights of 45 minutes of pure vitriolic brilliance. **DAMIAN JONES**

The Vaselines Hoxton Square Bar & Kitchen, London

Wednesday, October 1 Back on the road in support of new album 'V For Vaselines', Frances McKee and Eugene Kelly argue like the politely warring exes they are. They broke up in 1989 and tonight their homespun, honeycomb indie is interrupted with jokey jibes about each other's sexual prowess, 'Molly's Lips' and 'Son Of A Gun' are gleaming reminders why Kurt Cobain called the Glasgow duo "my favourite songwriters in the whole world", but sadly the newer tracks offer only a swathe of identikit indie. MARK BEAUMONT

The Horrors



The road-weary quintet wind up their tour with a sleek but groggy show

By the time The Horrors hit the Troxy, they've been on the road for two months: first on the festival circuit, then on another lap of the UK. This big east London venue is the kind of place you want for a tour finale:

SETLIST

- ►Chasing Shadows
 ►In And Out
 Of Sight
- ▶Who Can Say ▶Sea Within A Sea
- ►Scarlet Fields ►Sleepwalk
- ▶Endless Blue
- ►Change Your Mind ►Mirror's Image
- ▶Still Life ▶I See You
- ►So Now You Know ►Moving Further Away

fancy spiral staircases, carpet underfoot and a giant, glittering chandelier overhead. Where better for The Horrors to celebrate their own transformation from their hairspray-and-black-paint-fuelled past? The setting somewhat swallows support band Telegram, though. Still, single 'Follow' sticks out for its exuberance. This is their last night opening for their friends and it looks like

That's more than can be said for the main act. The

they're having a riot.

Horrors come on in darkness and burst into 'Chasing Shadows', exuding a steely confidence earned through almost 10 years on the road. They have the dry ice and laser beams to turn this listed art deco building into the Haçienda within half a song, but the quintet's energy doesn't match up, and the big opener, taken from this year's 'Luminous' LP, quickly fades. Joe Spurgeon's drums are inflated to stadium volume, while Tom Cowan's synths weave a dreaminess into the New Orderaping 'In And Out Of Sight'.

Singer Faris Badwan barely moves, staring into the middle distance and occasionally stretching an arm through the veil of smoke. 'Who Can Say' sees him in long-legged Nick Cave crooner mode, leaning over a monitor; for 'Endless Blue' and 'Still Life' from 2011 album 'Skying', the most he can muster is a rattle of his mic stand and a retreat into the shadows. The songwriting on 'Luminous' allows for vocals to drop behind glistening synths, noodling chord changes and nightclub pyrotechnics. But when Faris asks the thinning crowd, "Are you tired?" before closer 'Moving Further Away', all the disco lights in the world can't save this from feeling like a groggy end to a slightly anticlimactic big night out. HAZEL SHEFFIELD







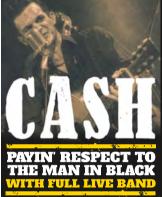
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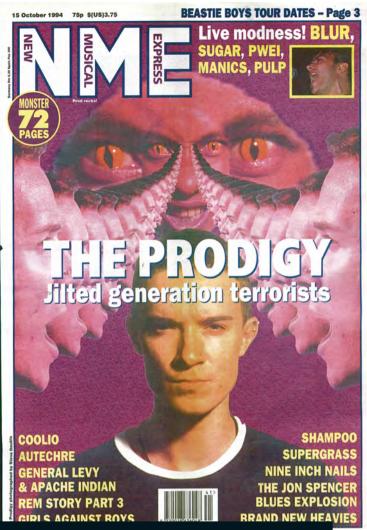
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THIS WEEK IN 1994



Voodoo people

Essex ravers

The Prodigy get messy in Munich. But dancer Keith Flint's top buzz is crashing his motorbike Imagine Gatwick Airport, at the height of the summer, with 25,000 holidaymakers left stranded by a transport strike. Then turn up the temperature to sauna heat, turn on the strobes and the spine-crushing speaker stacks, and bring in 50 techno DJs and bands. This show in Munich is like a town-twinning ceremony for Sodom and Goa. Techno? It's the anti-rock'n'roll, right? So how come The Prodigy's dressing room is such a perfect photo-fit for any geetar geezer backstage scene? Spilled beer. Rolling papers. Keith Flint is asleep, his fresh tattoo exposed. He's "just

> one of the dancers" in The Prodigy, but he's a priceless performer. He also has a CBR900 Fireblade motorcycle with a nose cone made of the same shit they make the space shuttle from, and has had 13 accidents on it. "The buzz of crashing is unreal," he says. "Everything goes in slow motion. One of my best buzzes ever was going under a car." Hardcore, eh?

THIS INTERNET THING

In a feature about how "the internet, the pundits tell us, is the future", Richard March of Pop Will Eat Itself predicts that "the internet is the way forward. Soon you'll be able to pick up NME, read a review of a record, think 'I wouldn't mind hearing that' and within minutes get hold of it. You won't need to traipse round record shops. You can buy a cheap secondhand PC, get connected and download music without leaving your room."

TEENAGE DREAMS

International jetset pop stars Supergrass are exercising their puny bodies in the swanky gym of the Newport Hilton hotel, "It's a bit of a shame there aren't more teenage bands," ponders heartthrob singer Gaz Coombes. "People make more of a fuss about us and the songs just because they see us as some sort of novelty. Just before we went on at the Albert Hall, I said to the others, what are we doing here, man? We should be doing our homework."

REVIEWED THIS WEEK



Coolio – 'It Takes A Thief'

"Coolio is coming from roughly

the same place as Warren G, Snoop and co, but his funk is altogether chewier and more old-school. These are true funk grooves, not wannabe soulster swoons." ■ IAN MCCANN

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

NFM has been refused its full-time broadcasting licence. Boss Chris Parry says: "It's a sham. This stupid island has stations for every type of music except 'new' music." ▶Oasis' recently completed five-gig trip to Japan is described by one member of the touring crew as "a 10-day party where nobody slept". Nirvana's Dave Grohl is "no more likely and no less likely to get the job [as the

new Pearl Jam drummer]

than anyone else".

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hanging out with
The Stooges
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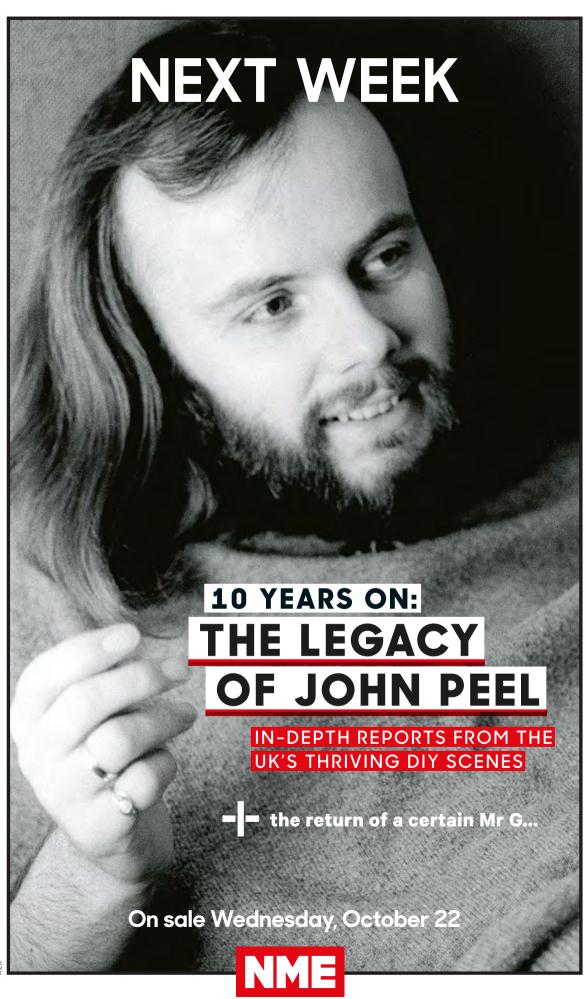
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