

1 NOVEMBER 2014

NME

Smash the cistern!

Stewart Lee

interviews

Sleaford Mods

...in a toilet

Liam

What now, Our Kid?

Noel returns
Beady Eye split
The next chapter begins...

FREE

POSTERS

Jagger | Richards

Hendrix | Barrett

+

Smashing Pumpkins

Ariel Pink

Kate Tempest

John Lydon

"An apocalypse isn't supposed to be manageable", LESTER BANGS





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BAND LIST

REGULARS

4 SOUNDING OFF

6 ON REPEAT

16 IN THE STUDIO

Ariel Pink

17 ANATOMY OF AN ALBUM

Love – 'Forever Changes'

19 SOUNDTRACK OF MY LIFE

Noel Fielding

20 RADAR

All the essential new bands from the CMJ festival in New York

50 REVIEWS

▶ ALBUMS

Hookworms – 'The Hum'

Dean Blunt – 'Black Metal'

Taylor Swift – '1989'

Arca – 'Xen'

and more

▶ FILM

Edwyn Collins: *The*

Possibilities Are Endless

and more

▶ LIVE

Ex Hex

Death From Above 1979

Kele

Thurston Moore

and more

66 THINGS

WE LIKE

FEATURES

24 Liam Gallagher

What next for the only person with better quotes, funnier jokes and more scorn to pour than his brother?

30 Superfood

Not long ago they had crappy jobs and lived for the weekend. Now they're on the NME New Breed Tour

33 Posters

Mick and Keith in their pants, plus pics of Syd Barrett and Jimi Hendrix from the Hipgnosis design studio

38 Kate Tempest

With a Mercury nomination and new poetry book out, it's all going a bit too well for the south London rapper



42 Sleaford Mods

Comedian Stewart Lee hails the potty-mouthed genius of music's least likely success story

46 John Lydon

"I'm not just some nasty mean mouth. I'm someone dealing with a lot of issues..."

Alex Calder	6	King Gizzard And The	
Arca	53	Lizard Wizard	20
Ariel Pink	16	The Knife	7
Bad Breeding	61	Krill	23
Ballet School	22	Liam Gallagher	24
Bass Drum Of		Lonelady	7
Death	51	Love	17
Beyond The Wizard's		The Magic Gang	61
Sleeve	13	Meridian Dan	6
Blue Hawaii	6	Mick Jagger	34
Bo Ningen	23	Natalie Prass	7
The Brain Jonestown		Noel Fielding	19
Massacre	7	Noel Gallagher	8
Bully	21	Okay Kaya	21
The Charlatans	6	Ought	7
The Chemical		Palace	61
Brothers	7	Panda Bear	7
The Chills	51	Project Pat	7
Chvrches	6	Public Access	
Clarence Clarity	7	TV	23
David Bowie	55	Richard Dawson	52
Dean Blunt	51	Shamir	21
Death From		Simple Minds	53
Above 1979	58	Sleaford Mods	42
Deptford Goth	53	Sleater-Kinney	6
Dirty Beaches	51	The Smashing	
DMA's	21	Pumpkins	6, 10
Dutch Uncles	7	Spectres	59
Edwyn Collins	12, 55	Splashh	22
Ex Hex	56	Spookyland	22
Fat White Family	23	Spring King	22
Gengahr	6	Superfood	30
Gerard Way	6	Syd Barrett	33
Girl Pool	23	Taylor Swift	52
Happyness	23	Temples	13
Heat	21	The Wytches	23
Homesake	21	The Thurston Moore	
Honeyblood	10	Band	60
Hookworms	50	Together Pangea	52
Hyena	6	Twin Peaks	23
Jimi Hendrix	36	Virginia Wing	53
John Lydon	46	Warpaint	15
Johnny Marr	8	The Wharves	52
Kate Tempest	38	Who We Are	59
Keith Richards	35	Wild Smiles	53
Kele	59	Yawn	21

LETTER OF THE WEEK

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LOVE AND AFFLICTION

It upsets me that we are living in the 21st century and there's still social stigma surrounding mental illness. Many musicians I like have been affected – from Kurt Cobain and Ian Curtis to Matthew Murphy [of The Wombats] – and who knows how many more are suffering in silence? Urban Outfitters, the supposed biggest seller of vinyl records in the UK, makes a complete mockery of this by selling T-shirts that read 'Eat Less' or have the word 'Depression' pasted all over them. I'm not a Demi Lovato fan, but it's great that someone as famous as her has spoken out about mental health and bipolar disorder. When musicians raise awareness it's a step in the right direction, and will make more people realise that mental illness is as serious and uncontrollable as physical conditions such as cancer.

Alistair Knifton, via email

Lucy Jones: You make an excellent point, Alistair, and it's only by people like you, and Demi Lovato, saying something that people will realise the following: a) Urban Outfitters seem to have some really dubious people in their buying department, and the list of controversial items isn't short – that recent blood-stained Kent State



University shirt is pretty dodgy too; b) depression is extremely serious and we should support public figures – anyone, for that matter – who speaks out about it. It's treatable and nothing to be ashamed of, and as you correctly point out, some of the greatest creative minds have struggled with mental illness. At least in 2014 society is affording sufferers more respect, instead of keeping a stiff upper lip.

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did, but I disagree. I think everyone should be allowed to comment on the music they love, whether it be the milkman or an MP. It really doesn't make a difference.
Rhys Buchanan, via email

LJ: You have a milkman, Rhys? Remarkable! But yeah, I think the problem with the Watson/Dreng love-in was that it reminded people of some other occasions when music and politics have combined to excruciating effect. From Russian President Vladimir Putin singing 'Blueberry Hill' at a charity event in 2010 – check it out on YouTube; it's in equal parts terrifying and hilarious – to one-time British Prime Minister Gordon Brown claiming he liked nothing better than a blast of Arctic Monkeys' 'I Bet You Look Good On The Dancefloor' to get him up in the morning, it's a combination that always seems to invite ridicule. But why? We're all human. We all like music. But having said that, I'd feel weird bumping into Nigel Farage at a Radiohead gig. Some things are sacred.

THE MAN WHO DIVIDED OPINION

Oh come on, people – David Bowie's "real" greatest hits? Really? You've gone for all the obvious ones! Where in this list of yours is his greatest-ever song: 'Word On A Wing'? Where is 'Memory Of A Free Festival'? Where is 'Cygnets Committee'? Never had you down as so mainstream...
Viki Ainsworth, via email

Well... the real greatest hits of Bowie? What on earth are the NME doing? There is nothing from after 1986. Twenty-eight years of Bowie completely ignored! I know it's a subjective thing, lists like these, but 'China Girl'? No 'Sunday' or 'I'm Afraid Of Americans'. 'Absolute Beginners'? No 'The Motel' or 'The



Buddha Of Suburbia'. Not even 'Amsterdam', let alone 'My Death' or 'Baal's Hymn' – both classic Bowie covers. 'Modern Love' at Number Eight – come on! That's just ridiculous. It's a boringly safe list.
Darren Rogers, via email

LJ: Well how about that: our list of David Bowie's 40 greatest songs has caused controversy! But let me reassure you: the list was voted for by everyone who works in the NME office, and by all of our most trusted freelance writers, so it offers a democratic overview. I'm with you on 'Word On A Wing', though, Viki. It's still keeping me awake at night that the best-ever Bowie song isn't in there. But that's the whole point of lists, isn't it? To get you riled up, to start a conversation.

HE IS NOT JESUS, BUT HE HAS THE SAME INITIALS

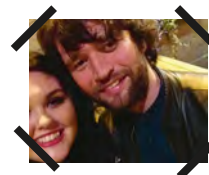
I'll admit that Julian Casablancas' 'Tyranny' seemed odd, even sloppy, when I first heard it, given that everything he's created in the past – both with The Strokes and as a solo artist – has been almost machine-like in its precision. But once you get over that shock and just listen to the album for what it is, you find it's the wildest, most exciting, expansive and satisfying record to have appeared in a long time. If German experimentalists can still exist, they'd probably write something like 'Tyranny'. I'm not bothered by the middling review of the record – it's an opinion – but to run a hatchet-job feature on the record is ridiculous.
Jeeshan Gazi, via email

LJ: 'Tyranny' is this year's equivalent of last year's 'Field Of Reeds' album

by These New Puritans: you either love or hate it. Personally, I admire Casablancas' experimental spirit, and I'd much rather he turned out something completely weird than anything pedestrian and banal. I think it's time for us all to get a little bit weirder. Plus: that feature is in no way a hatchet job. Take a look at all the great artists in there: Lou Reed, The Rolling Stones, Pulp, Marvin Gaye. JC's taken a leftfield turn, and we wanted to point out that he's in good company.

EVERYONE DESERVES A VOICE

I recently heard that [Labour politician] Tom Watson called for 6 Music to be promoted from DAB to Radio 3's FM Slot. This will no doubt stir further debate about how the man should stay away from music, much like his positive comments about Dreng last year



LOOK WHO'S STALKING

I met Michael Campbell from Courteeners in a random little pub in a village in Oldham! Strange, but he was so nice! Molly, via email

BAND OF SKULLS

HIMALAYAN



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NME TRACK OF THE WEEK

1. Sleater-Kinney
Bury Our Friends

When the then-defunct Seattle band announced a full-catalogue reissue, one sensed there was more coming. And *how*: this comeback single hangs on Carrie Brownstein's corroded guitar, Janet Weiss' orchestral rim-taps, and Carrie and Corin Tucker's exhortation, "*Exhume our idols, bury our friends!*" SK sound rattled by the world they've re-emerged in, but cocksure that it's theirs for the taking.

Laura Snapes, Features Editor

2. Blue Hawaii
Get Happy

Blue Hawaii recorded 'Get Happy' back in January. Shortly afterwards, the duo – made up of Braids' Raphaëlle Standell-Preston and Montreal musician Alex Cowan – moved to different cities, and the song was lost amid the upheaval. Its slinky thrum, background guitar and wispy vocals mirror the smokiness of last year's 'Untogether' album. However, 'Get Happier', an accompanying faster version, drops an exciting hint at a clubbier future.

Ben Homewood, Reviews Editor

3. The Smashing Pumpkins
Beige Beige

After reading about the bizarre magnificence of Mötley Crüe drummer Tommy Lee joining Billy Corgan for the Pumpkins' upcoming 10th album 'Monuments To An Elegy', it may surprise you to hear 'Beige Beige' open with a drum machine. Lee – never one to shy away from the limelight – soon joins in, helping to turn what begins as a pretty acoustic track into something resembling the last two minutes of an Explosions In The Sky meltdown.

Tom Howard, Assistant Editor

4. Meridian Dan
So Much Cash (feat. President T & Wiley)

Cashflow doesn't seem to be a problem for Meridian Dan since 'German Whip' came out in April, prompting some to crown the Tottenham MC grime's new Messiah. 'So Much Cash', released to celebrate three MOBO Awards nominations, features grime granddaddy Wiley. Pneumatic beats and electro synths back Dan as he muses on his investments: "*Should have bought a little three-bed in Kent*". You and me both, mate.

Hazel Sheffield, writer

5. Gengahr
Bathed In Light

Another sprightly song from the London upstarts. Having now signed to Transgressive, London quartet Gengahr are many people's tips to make a splash in 2015. 'Bathed In Light', much like its A-side 'Powder', matches the melodic qualities of Alt-J with the odd pop of Wild Beasts, creating something that sounds like a sweet but weird soundtrack to high-school prom dance.

Greg Cochran, Editor, NME.COM

**6. Alex Calder**
Strange Dreams

Like his former bandmate Mac DeMarco, Alex Calder is a scruffy goofball from Edmonton, Canada. Now, like his friend, Calder is releasing solo records on Brooklyn label Captured Tracks. On 'Strange Dreams' – the title track from his upcoming debut album – the verses provide drowsy interludes between choruses that artfully mix high-pitched vocals and messy guitar jangle.

Ben Homewood, Reviews Editor

7. Gerard Way
Millions

Like much of Gerard Way's debut solo album, 'Hesitant Alien', 'Millions' is the antithesis of what you'd expect from a My Chemical Romance track. 'Millions' layers catchy pop-rock hooks over optimistic vocals, marking a refreshing change from Way's previously darker output. "*Let's make up everything and wake up breathing/Don't give a damn about the wreck you leave in*", he sings with a burst of flowery energy.

Nadia Khomami, writer

8. The Charlatans
So Oh

Having dealt with the deaths of keyboardist Rob Collins and drummer Jon Brookes, The Charlatans have always found great music through tragedy. This, from 'Modern Nature', their first album since Brookes' death last year, is no different. Tim Burgess' voice wafts breezily over Mark Collins' ringing guitar, Tony Rogers' distinctive Hammond organ and a disco-flecked beat to create a sound that's both familiar and new.

Andy Welch, writer

9. Chvrches
Get Away

Meddling with perfection is always tricky. And given that Cliff Martinez's score for neo-noir flick *Drive* is widely considered a masterpiece, you have to envy the poor sods who, at the behest of Zane Lowe, are revamping the film's soundtrack. But Chvrches seem to *get it*: their contribution has the same neon-lit splendour as the original score, with added heft and heartbreak – all flashing lights, glowing pulsar synths and sparkly electropop.

Ben Hewitt, writer

10. Hyena
Mental Home

This year's rock revival roars on with this debut single from Hyena, the Telford four-piece formerly known as Weatherbird. All snarling, QOSTA-style guitar riffs and pounding drums, 'Mental Home' is a blast of pissed-off energy as frontman Jacob Ball rails against society's obsession with telling everyone to do the same thing. "*Take me to another mental hooooome!*" he sneers defiantly. On this evidence, Hyena are no laughing matter.

Nick Levine, writer

ESSENTIAL NEW TRACKS

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

11. LoneLady Groove It Out

Four years after the release of her wonderfully agitated debut 'Nerve Up', Manchester's LoneLady – Julie Ann Campbell – makes a welcome return. A second album, also on Warp, is due early next year and this is a superb taster of what's to come. It's an ultra-warm dance track that echoes ESG, Liquid Liquid and other New York post-disco groups, and contains shitloads of cowbell. Win.

Phil Hebblethwaite, writer

12. Ought New Calm Pt 2

"I like this one!" Tim Beeler shouts at the starts of this epic from art-rock magpies Ought. "*Hear me now, I am dead inside*", he adds, but it sounds more like Fall hero Mark E Smith has finally given up on a life of firing band members and decided to start over in Ought's native Canada. The next seven minutes see Beeler rant and rave his way through the song as his band's accompanying freakout reaches increasingly dizzying levels.

David Renshaw, News Reporter

13. Project Pat feat. Rick Ross and Juicy J Imma Get Me Sum

Brothers Pat and Juicy from Memphis rappers Three 6 Mafia are joined by Miami's Rick Ross on this first track to creep online from Project Pat's forthcoming 'Cheez N Dope 3' mixtape. It's about selling drugs and, in the case of the siblings, shifting metric tonnes of cocaine, aged just 13. Makes you feel lazy, doesn't it? I'm fucking ancient now and imma still not getting me sum.

Phil Hebblethwaite, writer

14. The Brian Jonestown Massacre Heat

The lead track from BJM's forthcoming '+-' EP, 'Heat' is everything we've come to expect from Anton Newcombe's psych crusaders. A Beatles-esque melody line melts into a psilocybin-indebted guitar solo as Newcombe delivers a woozy sermon – "*I had a dream/To see the world*" – from under a fog of patchouli. It's the sound of lava lamps, hash brownies and the discovery of unsettling photos of your parents in the 1970s.

Leonie Cooper, writer

15. Natalie Prass Why Don't You Believe In Me

From Virginia Beach on America's East Coast but schooled in Nashville, Natalie Prass is signed to Matthew E White's Spacebomb label and shares with her boss a knack for vintage country-soul. There are touches of Al Green and Dusty Springfield in the easy swing and warm horns of 'Why Don't You Believe In Me', and even Van Morrison in the quicksilver flute, but it's Prass' rich, hurt voice that brings the song to life.

Matthew Horton, writer



16. The Chemical Brothers feat. Miguel and Lorde This Is Not A Game

Who knew Lorde, Miguel and The Chemical Brothers could make so much sense together? Taken from *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay – Part 1* soundtrack, this marches on a stabbing drone punctuated by Lorde drawing "*there it is*". Miguel's angelic backing vocals rub up perfectly against bracing chords and mechanical synths.

Lucy Jones, Deputy Editor, NME.COM

17. The Knife feat. Shannon Funchess Pass This On (Shaken-Up Version)

With the Swedish duo's final shows approaching, a new 'Shaken-Up Versions' mini-album looks back at their career without piling on the nostalgia, ripping apart and remixing several of their tracks. Here, 'Deep Cuts' track 'Pass It On' gets a pulsing electronic beat, bouncy synths and vocals from Light Asylum's Shannon Funchess. The distinctive steel pans are, happily, still present – no throwing the baby out with the bathwater here.

Dan Stubbs, News Editor

18. Clarence Clarity Those Who Can't, Cheat

Once rumoured to be a guise of the elusive Jai Paul, producer Clarence Clarity re-emerged from the shadows last week to confirm the December release of his 'Who Am Eye' EP, a full year after he announced that he'd finished recording it. Patience is a virtue, though, and lead track 'Those Who Can't, Cheat' is a marvel – a skewed pop oddity full of Prince-style hooks and the occasional Bhangra breakdown. Weirdo-funk of the highest quality.

James Balmont, writer

19. Panda Bear Mr Noah

You wait three years for new Panda Bear material, then on a single day the Animal Collective man announces a new album, 'Panda Bear Meets The Grim Reaper' – out on Domino in January – and immediately makes available its lead single, 'Mr Noah', as part of an EP also containing three non-album tracks. It's a typically cacophonous stew of a song, dense with details but melodic and fun.

Phil Hebblethwaite, writer

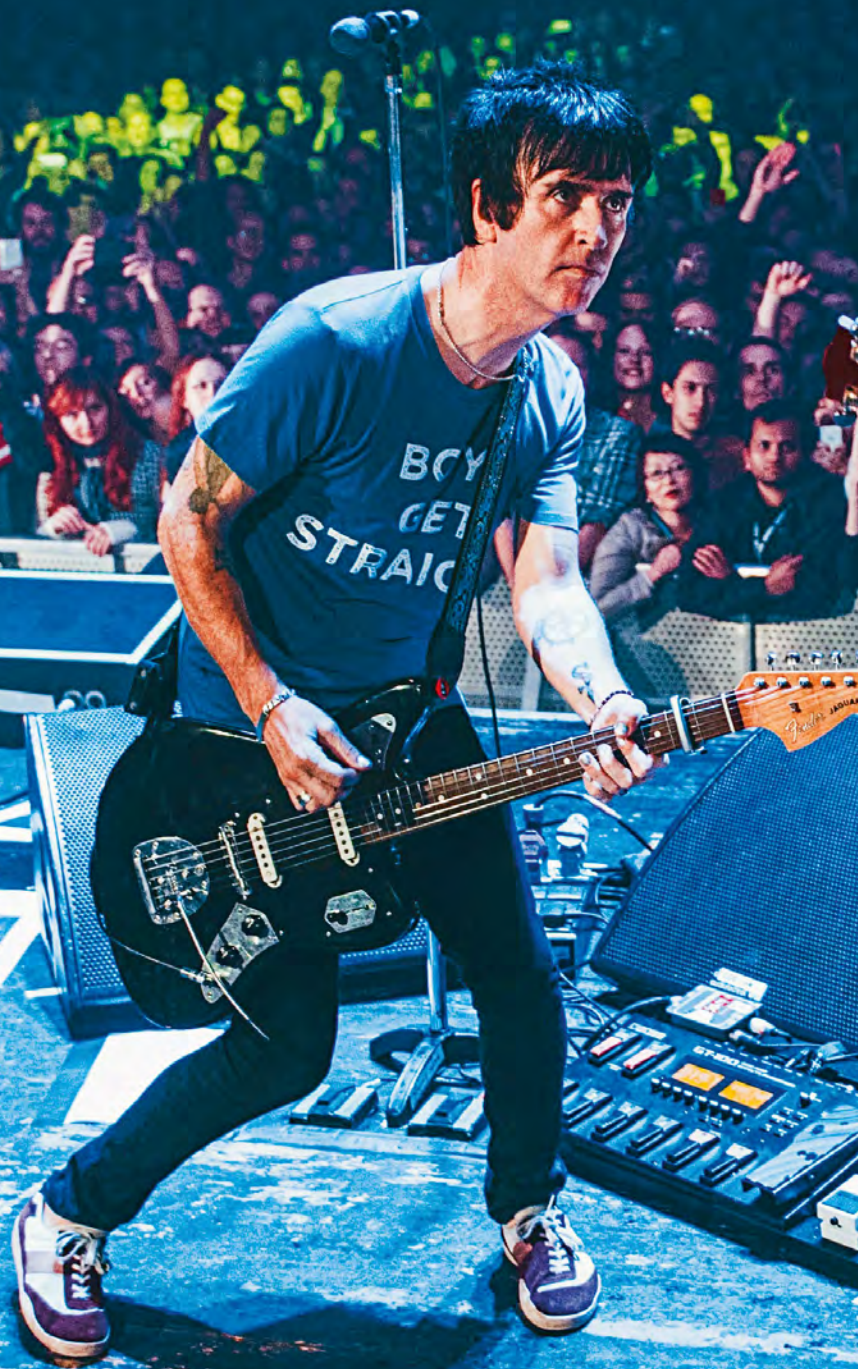
20. Dutch Uncles In N Out

Smart young musicians have long mined the classier depths of Britain's 1980s synthpop reserves – notably Wild Beasts and These New Puritans, who paid homage to The Blue Nile and Talk Talk. Marple's Dutch Uncles were among them, but they've broached the decade's outré side on their upcoming fourth LP. 'In N Out' is all synths and pinball machine whizzes, Duncan Wallis treating lust as if a matter of national importance.

Laura Snapes, Features Editor

The Week

► EVERYTHING THAT MATTERS IN MUSIC ■ EDITED BY DAN STUBBS



Johnny Marr and
Noel Gallagher
onstage at O2
Academy Brixton,
October 23, 2014



Axes of power

Noel Gallagher and Johnny Marr
join forces onstage in London

Why have one Mancunian guitar legend when you can have two? On Thursday night at London's O2 Academy Brixton, Johnny Marr welcomed "old friend" Noel Gallagher onstage for a one-off team-up to bring the encore of his gig to an uproarious conclusion. "He's one of the greatest songwriters from this country," Marr told the crowd. "He's a good man, I think he's got a big future ahead of him..."

Tipped off about the appearance by an *NME* news story earlier in the week, the expectant audience erupted – but this was not to be the first airing of 'The Ballad Of Mighty I', the pair's collaborative effort from Gallagher's forthcoming solo album 'Chasing Yesterday'. Instead, the two ripped through Iggy Pop's 'Lust For Life' and The Smiths' 'How Soon Is Now?', and hugged before leaving the stage.

Speaking to *NME* before the event, Marr said it was inevitable he and his old mate would work together at some point, and it wouldn't surprise him if they did more of it. "We understand each other, we've got history. As time goes on, you stick with the people that you've got history with. He knows how intense I am about what I'm doing, and I know how intense it all is for him. Because of our backgrounds, we have a similar sensibility to not get too crazy. We know each other, essentially." ■ ANDY WELCH

Billy Corgan's Smashing Pumpkins are back with two albums – and hinting they might be their last

Smashing it

The music industry continues to shoot itself in the foot, as it has done for years," sighs Billy Corgan. "And you ask yourself: how much longer does any rational person want to play that bizarre, archaic game for? It'll come to a point when they move on to something else." It's a strange time for Corgan to be hinting at moving on from the Smashing Pumpkins, the '90s icons now comprising just 47-year-old Corgan and guitarist Jeff Schroeder. They release their 10th studio album, 'Monuments To An Elegy' in December: a record the frontman says is "a very modern Smashing Pumpkins record" that "uses guitars differently", inspired in part by '70s Boston new wave band The Cars but full of futuristic sounds. Another album, 'Day For Night', is "well underway" and set for release next year. Why, then, is he hinting at "moving on"? After 25 years, are these two albums really Smashing Pumpkins' last? "I'm not saying that," Corgan snaps. "All I'm saying is audiences are not interested in buying rock albums in large quantities any more and the music industry refuses to adapt to that. It doesn't frustrate me, because I'll just graduate on to something else."

Corgan is less coy about Mötley Crüe drummer Tommy Lee, who plays on nine songs on the record and "really elevated the

songs". Says Corgan: "I don't intellectualise it. He just kicked ass, and made me want to kick ass." But he disagrees with Lee on the album's sound, which the drummer suggested marks a return to the "epic, goosebump songs" of the first couple of Smashing Pumpkins records. "That's 100 per cent wrong in my eyes," says Corgan. "I've always wanted to drag Smashing Pumpkins forward. I've got absolutely no interest in looking back." That's why, he says, there'll be no commemorative shows around next year's 20th anniversary of the group's best-loved album, 'Mellon Collie And The Infinite Sadness'. "That kind of nostalgia puts an albatross around artists' necks. I don't want that. It's a trend I think is really regressive."

The new record follows 2012's 'Oceania', an ambitious, space-rock odyssey that met with mixed reviews. Corgan's former lover Courtney Love recently claimed Corgan's songwriting spark dried up after they split, telling a US interviewer: "He stopped writing [songs] about me and then he stopped writing hits." Does Corgan feel he has a point to prove with 'Monuments...'? "No. Listen," he says. "Courtney's an old pal and she can say whatever she wants." There's a pause. "Everyone's in charge of their own movie. I'm concentrating on mine." ■ AL HORNER

Billy Corgan: "Nostalgia puts an albatross around artists' necks"

MY LIFE IN A SUITCASE

FIVE TOURING ESSENTIALS

Stina Tweeddale

Honeyblood



BOOK
Girl Trouble
by Carol Dyhouse

"It's about the history of feminism. My degree was in gender history."

BOXSET
House Of Cards

"I'm completely obsessed with it. I prefer the British version to the US version because it makes much more sense. I could not get over it."



FILM
Daisies

"It's about these two girls who go a bit crazy. Their ideology is like, 'the world is rotten so we're rotten too' and they do all this bad stuff. It's a bit tongue-in-cheek but it got banned when it came out."

GAME
Jogging

"It's for long journeys – you score points for pointing at people jogging and shouting out of the window at them. You get double points if they're wearing any sort of sweatband."

HOME COMFORT
We Were Promised Jetpacks hoodie

"If I have this hoodie with me in the back of the van, I can sleep, no problem. It's so cosy. I'd be gutted if I lost it."



► Honeyblood play the NME New Breed Tour with Superfood, kicking off at Birmingham Oobleck on October 31



Unseen photos by the "lords of the cosmos"



New book reveals iconic portraits from the Hipnosis archive

Storm Thorgerson, Aubrey Powell and Peter Christopherson of Hipnosis created some of the most striking and memorable album artworks in music history, including Pink Floyd's 'The Dark Side Of The Moon' sleeve. Now a new book delves into their lesser-known archive of portraits of many of the world's biggest rock stars, including The Who, Syd

Barrett and Led Zeppelin – whose singer Robert Plant describes the collective as "greatly gifted, silk-tongued illusionists" and, ultimately, "lords of the cosmos" in his specially written foreword. See a selection of images from the book in our posters section, beginning on page 33.

► **Hipnosis Portraits** by is published by Thames & Hudson and is available now at £35

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ZANE LOWE Album Of The Week • **ROUGH TRADE** Album Of The Month



And start again

A new film tells the story of Edwyn Collins' debilitating illness – and how his wife Grace helped him through it

This film is a present to the both of us – a really lovely thing,” says Edwyn Collins of *The Possibilities Are Endless*, the forthcoming film directed by James Hall and Edward Lovelace that documents recent events in the life of the former Orange Juice frontman and his wife/manager Grace Maxwell.

It could be said the pair are overdue the odd “lovely thing”. In 2005, after complaining of feeling unwell, Collins suffered a cerebral haemorrhage and was admitted to intensive care. Two days later he had another, leaving him in a coma for 10 days, fighting for his life. When he awoke, after a serious operation to relieve the pressure in his head, he was left with aphasia, a brain dysfunction that rendered him unable to walk and talk. For some time his vocabulary was limited to barely more than “Grace Maxwell” – two words he’d repeat over and over again to medical staff – and, crucially for the film’s title, “the possibilities are endless”.

Spurred on by Maxwell, months of rehabilitation followed, and the pair were walking on their favourite Scottish beach within a year. Collins’ recovery is the central theme of *The Possibilities Are Endless*, which combines snippets of his music with scenes acted out by a young cast, long passages



"EDWYN USED TO SAY, 'STROKE VICTIM AND ALL THAT SHIT? I'M NOT HAVING IT'"
Grace Maxwell

without dialogue and recordings of Collins’ voice played over images of the landscape near his home in Helmsdale. Above all, the documentary is a recreation of Collins’ post-stroke confusion combined with a hugely uplifting love story.

His speech now is slow but clear, and his wicked, self-deprecating sense of humour comes across in the film. Collins and Maxwell refuse to wallow in self-pity. “I just want to be me,” says Collins. “I was comfortable with myself before and I’m comfortable with myself now; I wouldn’t change anything. I am a lucky

man. I have a full life. Grace wanted me to retire but I’m having none of it.”

Another thing he has no time for is playing the victim, as Hall and Lovelace’s film illustrates; he’s not using it as a platform to promote any sort of agenda or raise issues. “Ed and James directed it, so they will have their own aims, but there’s no preachy message. There is hope in there – that’s the main thing.”

“Edwyn’s never going to get behind an issue in that way,” says Maxwell. “He doesn’t set himself up as a spokesperson. He used to say to me, ‘Stroke victim and all that shit? I’m not having it.’”

The film’s score was composed by Collins, Carwyn Ellis of Colorama and Sebastian Lewsley, and will be available on November 24. The trio wrote the music before they’d even seen the film, based on Hall and Lovelace’s description of what they needed, but it’s turned out just how Collins wanted it.

“I wanted to let them crack on with their vision, no meddling from me,” he says. “It wouldn’t be such a clear film if I’d stuck my oar in. James and Ed show me at my most vulnerable stage in the film, so the beginning of it was hard to watch, when I’m really hesitating with my speaking. It’s good to see how far I’ve progressed.” ■ ANDY WELCH

FURTHER POSSIBILITIES

Three more documentaries that look beyond the music



The Devil And Daniel Johnston 2005

Jeff Feuerzeig’s film chronicles the life of Daniel Johnston from childhood through to the present day, detailing his battles with bipolar disorder.



The Punk Singer 2013

Sini Anderson’s loving tribute to riot grrrl pioneer Kathleen Hanna, focusing on her activism, her work with Bikini Kill and her life with Beastie Boy Adam Horovitz.



Charles Bradley: Soul Of America 2011

Before his minor-hit albums came this film, documenting the life of the 62-year-old struggling soul singer who balanced dreams of stardom with caring for his ill mother.

► Turn to page 55 for the NME review



Temples get psyched up

The Kettering band's debut is remixed by Beyond The Wizard's Sleeve

There's good news for anyone who thought Temples' debut album, 'Sun Structures', wasn't already psychedelic enough: the record has been remixed by psych dons Erol Alkan and Richard Norris, aka Beyond The Wizard's Sleeve, and 'Sun Restructured' is due for release on November 10.

Alkan and Norris have earned a reputation for imaginative "reanimations" (their phrase) of other artists' work – see their sublime versions of 'Roscoe' by Midlake, 'Losing The Will To Survive' by Findlay Brown and Franz Ferdinand's 'Ulysses' for proof. Earlier this year, the duo overhauled Temples' song 'Move With The Season' and Jeff Barrett, boss of the band's label, Heavenly, liked it so much he asked Alkan and Norris (below) to work their magic on the whole album.

As a prelude to reworking 'Sun Structures', Alkan and Norris spent time in the Sussex countryside – near to the spot where Virginia Woolf drowned herself in the River Ouse – in order to make field recordings of birdsong, river noise and the

wind. "But in the end, we didn't use any of that," says Norris. "There was so much going on with the songs themselves."

Over the course of 10 days, they stripped the tracks down to the bare bones before rebuilding them. "The original record is big-sounding and brash," says Alkan. "Underneath that we found something quite delicate. We let that breathe and allowed the songs to run into each other."

The band themselves say they are big fans of Beyond The Wizard's Sleeve's take on their baby. "It's become something different altogether," says bass player Tom Warmesley. "They've knocked down the walls to each song so they all flow into each other, and it meanders off into different places that we didn't even realise were there. It really is a unique experience."

■ CHRIS COTTINGHAM



SLEEVE NOTES

Richard Norris' guide to "reanimating" a song

Love the track

"That's essential. We have a rule that we both have to like it."

Don't overthink it

"If we can't think what to do with it after one listen, we don't do it."

Stick some backwards guitar on it

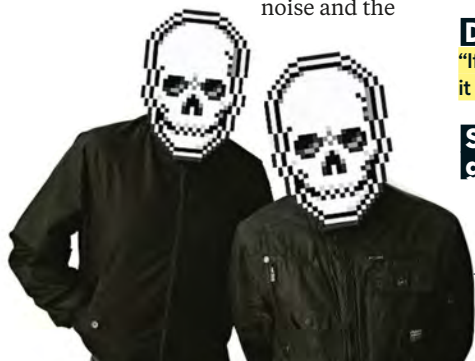
"A classic psych trick. I've got a pedal that does it called a Memory Man Hazarai."

Be sympathetic

"We hold up what's already there. We don't use a tiny element of the song and put it over something we've already done."

Use the studio as an instrument

"We like to stretch things out and change the sense of space. Make the song levitate."



THE MINI INTERVIEW



Alice Levine

Mercury Prize host

You're co-hosting this year's Mercury Prize ceremony with Nick Grimshaw. Which act is your money on?

"Well, there are some albums that I've lived with for longer than others, so I don't want to pick one, but I will say FKA Twigs is breathtaking – dark, brooding and interesting. She's incredible live."

FKA Twigs has said that she would like to collaborate with fellow nominee East India Youth. Any other pairings you would like to see?

"Kate Tempest and Jungle would be good. She just has this amazing charisma. I think she thinks I'm a bit crazy though because I was at Bath station recently and I tapped her on the shoulder and said, 'Hi Kate Tempest!' She had no idea who I was."

Any glaring omissions?

"I think Eagulls are brilliant, but I don't think they would have ever made it onto the list. You want that diversity, but you don't want anybody to be on that list purely for the purposes of diversity."

Do you promise not to accidentally call anyone James Blunt, like Lauren Laverne did last year?

"I could so easily do that. I once called the Daft Punk album 'Random Access Mammaries' on Radio 1."

■ DAVID RENSHAW

► The Barclaycard Mercury Prize winner is announced on October 30, Channel 4, 10pm

STAYING IN

THE BEST MUSIC ON TV, RADIO AND ONLINE THIS WEEK



Will Royal
Blood win
the Mercury?
Find out on
October 29

Mercury Prize

Mercury Prize Live

► WATCH More 4, 9.30pm, October 29

Say what you want about the Barclaycard Mercury Prize, but at least it gets people talking about British music. This year there are plenty of great records on the shortlist, including Royal Blood, FKA Twigs, East India Youth and Kate Tempest – but not La Roux's 'Trouble In Paradise', which is a bit of an outrage. Alice Levine and Nick Grimshaw are on hosting duties. If it's all a bit much, *8 Out Of 10 Cats Does Countdown* is on directly after.

Alice Cooper

Halloween Night Of Fear

► WATCH Sky 3D and Sky Arts 1, 10pm, October 31

A full Alice performance filmed three years ago at London's Alexandra Palace, with support from Arthur Brown and the New York Dolls. It could be scary, or the real horror might be seeing a sweaty 60-something man popping out of your TV in 3D. Be afraid.

The Jesus And Mary Chain

Mary Anne Hobbs

► LISTEN BBC 6 Music,

7pm, November 1
Mary Chain singer Jim Reid isn't known to be much of a talker, so props to Hobbs for getting two nights' worth out of him. Tonight covers



Alice Cooper

his childhood and the band's early days. Hear the rest at the same time on Sunday.

Patti Smith Don Letts

► LISTEN BBC 6 Music, 10pm, November 2

Letts' regular *Crucial Vinyl* series takes in a bona fide classic this week – Patti Smith's 1975 debut 'Horses' – and he ought to have an authoritative take on it. The pair became friends soon after the album's release, and once played onstage together with reggae deejay Tapper Zukie.

Liars X-Posure

► LISTEN XFM, 10pm, from November 3
John Kennedy's got mad Angus and

the gruesome twosome as his artists in residence for a week starting on November 3, and good on him for continuing to give a superb band attention. Expect a session, an interview and tracks from this year's 'Mess' album.

David Bowie

David Bowie And The Story Of Ziggy Stardust

► WATCH BBC Four, 12.45am, November 3

Another chance to see the fascinating 2012 documentary about the making of the album and the myth. Perhaps the title is confusing – Bowie himself isn't interviewed – but the film is slick and contains enough new info to keep anoraks happy. Jarvis Cocker narrates.

GOING OUT

THE BEST LIVE EVENTS

THIS WEEK



Jamie T

Recent *NME* cover star Jamie T (above) carries on his grudge.

► DATES 02 Academy Bristol (October 30), 02 Southampton Guildhall (31), Norwich UEA LCR (November 1), 02 Academy Newcastle (3)

► TICKETS Bristol £19.50; Southampton £19.50; Norwich sold out; Newcastle £19.50 from NME.COM/tickets with £2-£3 booking fee

Foxygen

The Californians play material from their fourth album, '...And Star Power'.

► DATES Brighton Komedia (October 29), Manchester Ruby Lounge (30), London Village Underground (31)

► TICKETS Brighton £11; Manchester £11; London £12 from NME.COM/tickets with £1-£1.50 booking fee

5 TO SEE FOR FREE

1. Flyte

Nation Of Shopkeepers, Leeds

► October 29, 8pm

2. Ultimate Painting

Rough Trade East, London

► October 31, 7pm

3. Lizzo

Old Blue Last, London

► October 31, 8pm

4. Polterghost

Green Door Store, Brighton

► October 31, 11pm

5. Craft Spells

Start The Bus, Bristol

► November 2, 7.30pm

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PRIORITY

O₂

'Ukip Calypso'
singer Mike
Read and
(right) Nigel
Farage



'UKIP CALYPSO' ISN'T "A BIT OF FUN", IT MASKS AN UGLY MESSAGE

BY **BARRY
NICOLSON**

**Mike Read's
xenophobic
song is more
than misguided
– it supports the
views of a man
who idolises
Enoch Powell**



I'll say this for 'Ukip Calypso', the song released last week by former Radio 1 DJ Mike Read under the name The Independents – it's certainly godawful enough to get to Number One. That was Ukip leader Nigel Farage's hope for the song, but one likely scuppered by Read's request to withdraw it from sale following controversy over its content. That move has spared us the soul-searching inquest over what such a success might say about our society, but it's a conversation we're probably going to have to have sooner or later.

In truth, there's little that's overtly racist about Read's lyrics. For the most part, they're standard wingnut Euroscepticism – wrong-headed, but not especially offensive. His decision to sing in a faux-Jamaican accent, however, is more troubling: 46 years ago, that same group (along with Africans, Asians, Indians and Pakistanis) was

being targeted by one-time Minister Of Health Enoch Powell – Nigel Farage's "political hero" – in his infamous 'Rivers of Blood' speech, which railed against the influx of migrants from the Commonwealth. They were the Poles, Romanians and Bulgarians of their day, regarded with fear and suspicion, each new arrival representing an existential threat to a narrow, antiquated idea of 'Britishness'. They have gone on to become friends, neighbours, businesspeople, artists, footballers and politicians – some, as Farage is fond of pointing out, have even become Ukip candidates. They've become everything the current generation of EU immigrants will become if we don't run them out of the country first.

Read's argument is that he's not racist but the song was just "a bit of fun" and it "wouldn't have sounded very good sung in a Surrey accent". Yeah, and racist jokes aren't half as funny if you don't do the voice. Make no mistake, Ukip want you to laugh at this stuff. They want to normalise it, to roll back a century of 'political correctness gone mad' so that British society once again resembles the fantasy land of their local golf club, where women aren't allowed and black people are confined to the kitchen.

During the recent Scottish referendum, the media lectured us repeatedly that nationalism – even the pro-Europe, pro-immigration kind on offer from the SNP – was reductive and outdated. This is the same media who legitimise Ukip by giving them a national platform and who invited Farage, the leader of a party with a grand total of one MP, to take part in next year's televised general election debates. They have been suckered by Farage's cynically affected blokeishness and turn a blind eye to his underlying extremism. As a party, Ukip is perhaps more circumstantially than ideologically racist – they're not the BNP, and most of their invective is directed towards other white Europeans. Nevertheless, it is home to a lot of ideological racists, however subtly or unwittingly they express it. The novelist Sinclair Lewis once said that when fascism came to America, it would be wrapped in the flag and carrying a cross. When it comes to Britain, it'll be singing 'Ukip Calypso'. Laugh along at your peril. ■

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

LOST ALBUMS

#53

Joe Meek I Hear A New World (1960)

Chosen by Stella Mozgawa, Warpaint



"Joe Meek really pioneered that idea of weird, bedroom-produced music. This concept album found a sonic landscape that hadn't been explored until that point. Even now it sounds quite futuristic. He used textures that didn't really exist before in music because they're so abstract. He was famous for using a cardboard box in a toilet for a kick drum, and stuff like that. He recorded everything on tape but sped up the vocals so they sound like demons. He was a twisted individual with a twisted history, and you can hear the psychosis in the music."

► THE DETAILS

- **RELEASE DATE** May 1960
- **LABEL** Triumph
- **BEST TRACKS** I Hear A New World, Magnetic Field
- **WHERE TO FIND IT** The 1991 CD reissue on the RPM label is easier to find than the highly sought-after original LP
- **LISTEN ONLINE** On Spotify

Ariel

Pink

The Californian beatnik
enlists rock impresario Kim
Fowley and Spiritualized's
Jason Pierce on his new
70-minute opus

In the summer of 2012, Ariel Pink was hit with a lawsuit by his ex-drummer Aaron Sperske, who claimed that, as a former member of Ariel Pink's Haunted Graffiti, he was entitled to 25 per cent of, well, everything – \$1 million would do nicely. "I wasted a year and thousands of dollars in lawyers' fees with this nonsense," spits Ariel Pink down the line from his home in LA. But it's the idea that anyone but him could own part of Ariel Pink's Haunted Graffiti that really rankles. "If I were to give them the keys on a silver platter to execute that judgement, to own quarter of me for the rest of my life – well, that would be to bring back slavery, right? That'd be interesting, huh? To bring back slavery?"

Quite the turn of phrase, but you can see his point. When the man born Ariel Marcus Rosenberg released 'House Arrest', the very first Ariel Pink's Haunted Graffiti album, way back in 2002, it was just him in a suburban bedroom, recording bizarre, warped pop songs on an eight-track. Much has changed over the years – international recognition, a raft of collaborators, a respectable home on 4AD – but, as Ariel puts it, "The idea of Haunted

**"IT'S MY POLYAMOROUS
NATURE TO WORK WITH
PEOPLE OF ALL WALKS"**
ARIEL PINK

Graffiti being a conventional band is almost a misnomer." As a nod to this, new album 'Pom Pom' is his first released simply as Ariel Pink. It's not a control-freak thing, says Ariel. "If anyone in my band was working on their

solo project and wanted me on there, I would be a hired hand. But this is my solo project – there is no room for other people."

The irony is that 'Pom Pom' – a 17-song, 70-minute opus that further inflates the playful perversity of 2012's 'Mature Themes' – is Ariel's least 'solo' album to date. Recorded over eight months at studios across Los Angeles, it features a floating cast, including members of the Haunted Graffiti live band, Don Bolles of legendary US punks Germs and Spiritualized's Jason Pierce (who plays guitar on 'Picture Me Gone' and 'Dayzed Inn Daydreams'). "I had great help," says Ariel. "It's my polyamorous nature, to work with people of all walks."

The biggest outside contributor to 'Pom Pom', though, isn't actually on it in any

physical sense. Kim Fowley worked with Phil Spector and Frank Zappa, managed The Runaways and has played impresario to a string of novelty acts from the '50s onwards. He contacted Ariel proposing they work

together, and while a studio dictator like Fowley producing an Ariel Pink record would surely have ended in fireworks, the two are clearly of like mind. The germ of many of the album's oddest moments, like 'Plastic Raincoats In The Pig Parade' and 'Sexual Athletics', were hashed out with Fowley in a hospital in LA, where he's receiving treatment for advanced bladder cancer. "He's a god, an oracle," says Ariel. "Even to have the honour of getting to hear him rant... he's of sound mind and body, even on a morphine drip."

Mixing novelty singalongs and heartbreaking love songs, topless dancers and dinosaur carebears, 'Pom Pom' is fractured and weird,

but guided by a bizarre logic. "I was like a walking hard drive, amassing different things at different times, keeping everybody in the dark," says Ariel. "That way, it was my job to make it coalesce, a unified whole." The result is a true paradox: pure collaboration, but Ariel Pink to the core. ■ LOUIS PATTISON

Ariel Pink in
Silver Lake,
Los Angeles,
October 2014

► THE DETAILS

- **TITLE** Pom Pom
- **RELEASE DATE** November 17
- **PRODUCER** Ariel Pink
- **TRACKS INCLUDE** Dinosaur Carebears, Exile On Frog Street, Not Enough Violence
- **ARIEL SAYS** "I have obviously run my mouth too many times, and it gets in the way of the music. I started this project to obscure me, to fly off into fantasy. There's no sincerity in it. If there is, it's the weird, desperate sincerity of a madman."

ANATOMY OF AN ALBUM



"FORVER CHANGES" WERE MY LAST WORDS TO THE WORLD"

Arthur Lee



THIS WEEK...

Love: Forever Changes

As the new Arthur Lee anthology 'Love Songs' is released, we revisit his band's dark, doom-laden but hugely influential third album

THE BACKGROUND

Love were the first rock band signed to folk label Elektra Records, and 1966's self-titled debut and follow-up 'Da Capo' showed their progression from garage rock to dark psychedelia. A year later, the band were dabbling in acid and heroin and tensions were bubbling between enigmatic frontman Arthur Lee and guitarist Bryan MacLean, who felt his own songwriting was being sidelined. Expectations for the group's third album were low, but Lee – reasoning that his friend and contemporary Jimi Hendrix had the monopoly on hard, psychedelic rock – created a baroque pop sound incorporating acoustic guitars, horns and strings. Paranoid, fatalistic and apparently convinced he would die leaving this album as his final statement, 'Forever Changes' became far more than the sum of its parts.

STORY BEHIND THE SLEEVE

Designed by Bob Pepper, an illustrator with numerous Elektra sleeves and book covers for Philip K Dick behind him, the psychedelic design comprising the faces of the band members was typical of his work – though Klaus Voorman's sleeve for The Beatles' 'Revolver' is a clear influence too.

FIVE FACTS

- 1 The album title has a sting in its tale: it's from a story Lee heard about a friend who'd broken up with his girlfriend. She said: "You said you would love me forever." He said: "Well, forever changes."
- 2 After working with Neil Young's band Buffalo Springfield, producer Bruce Botnick asked Young to help produce 'Forever Changes', but he dropped out at the last minute.
- 3 The group was at first so dysfunctional that Botnick replaced everyone but Lee and MacLean with heavy-hitting session players The Wrecking Crew.
- 4 The album's signature song, 'Alone Again Or', was written in 1965 for Love's debut by guitarist Brian MacLean, suggesting he had a point about his material not being heard.
- 5 Until 1966, the band lived at a Hollywood mansion formerly owned by horror actor Bela Lugosi, where they shot the sleeves for 'Love' and 'Da Capo'. Lee moved to a house on Mulholland Drive and wrote much of 'Forever Changes' taking in the view over LA, hence 'The Red Telephone' lyric "Sitting on a hillside watching all the people die".

LYRIC ANALYSIS

"They're locking them up today/They're throwing away the key" – 'The Red Telephone'

Lee's lyrics in this song about Cold War paranoia proved prescient – he was sentenced to 12 years in prison in 1996 for illegal discharge of a firearm.

"And the water's turned to blood, and if you don't think so, go turn on your tub" – 'A House Is Not A Motel'

The disturbing imagery was inspired by a speech at an anti-Vietnam War demo.

"Oh, the snot has caked against my pants/It has turned into crystal" – 'Live And Let Live'

One of the more colourful lyrics apparently referred to waking up after a heavy night on drugs, though the song itself focused on Native American land rights.

WHAT WE SAID THEN

"Love used their psychedelic mindset to produce baroque and beautiful folk-rock the like of which had never been heard before – nor been bettered since." Ted Kessler on the reissue, NME, 12 September 2005

WHAT WE SAY NOW

There's a good reason why 'Forever Changes' appears

on all those 'best albums of all time' lists – it's a hard record to beat. At the time of its release it seemed like a premature obituary for the hippie dream of the 1960s, and its pioneering sound still resonates today.

FAMOUS FAN

"'Forever Changes' is very elegant, but very dark – maybe LA has always been an evil place and Arthur Lee picked up on that before anyone else." Bobby Gillespie, Primal Scream

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"'Forever Changes' were my last words of Love, my last words to the world, only I've been here ever since. Just like a guy saying goodbye, and you look out your front door, and he's still there 15 years later." Arthur Lee, 1981

THE AFTERMATH

The album was a bigger hit in Britain than in the States, but Lee's refusal to tour outside California prevented them from capitalising on it. MacLean quit the band the following year and Lee convened an all-new line-up to record 'Four Sail'. The cult of Love and 'Forever Changes' grew over the years, particularly as a host of British indie bands from The Stone Roses to Shack cited its influence. Lee finally toured the album in 2003 backed by Baby Lemonade. He died in 2006.

THE DETAILS

►RECORDED June–September 1967 ►RELEASE DATE November 1967 ►LENGTH 42:51 ►LABEL Elektra ►PRODUCERS Bruce Botnick, Arthur Lee ►HIGHEST UK CHART POSITION 24 ►SINGLES Alone Again Or ►TRACKLISTING ►1 Alone Again Or ►2 A House Is Not A Motel ►3 Andmoreagain ►4 The Daily Planet ►5 Old Man ►6 The Red Telephone ►7 Maybe The People Would Be The Times Or Between Clark And Hilldale ►8 Live And Let Live ►9 The Good Humor Man He Sees Everything Like This ►10 Bummer In The Summer ►11 You Set The Scene

TheWeek

NEWSDESK

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"Bono came up to me after our performance, shook my hand and said, 'You were great in there, man.' And without thinking I just responded saying, 'Cheers mate, U2.' Realising what I'd just done, I began to laugh. Bono didn't laugh. Bono walked away"

Slaves made an impression on fellow guests U2 at their debut Later... performance

THE NUMBERS

1.5m

Number of viewers who tuned in to watch Noel Gallagher and Kate Moss on Channel 4's *Celebrity Gogglebox*

£156,000

Amount George Harrison's childhood home in Speke, Liverpool sold for at auction



5

Number of years Julian Casablancas says he was hungover for after taking the decision to quit drinking

8

Seconds of white noise accidentally released under Taylor Swift's name on Canada's iTunes store. It topped the charts

WHO THE FUCK IS...



Sister Cristina Scuccia

This is the singing nun who won the Italian version of *The Voice* – and will release a cover of Madonna's 'Like A Virgin' as her first single. **Well, presumably she would know...**

Indeed. The song has been slowed down into a gospel ballad and Scuccia says that she has no "intention to provoke or shock". **Are nuns known for their love of Madonna?** Sister Cristina certainly is. "I'd love to see [Madonna's] face when she [hears the track] and when they tell her it's a nun singing," she said.

+ GOOD WEEK +



Wilko Johnson

The former Dr Feelgood guitarist has revealed that he is "cured" of the terminal pancreatic cancer he was diagnosed with in 2012. Of his life-saving surgery, he said, "This tumour weighed 3kg – that's the size of a baby. They cured me."

- BAD WEEK -



Brian Harvey

The East 17 man turned up at Downing Street demanding to see Prime Minister David Cameron. Pictures of Harvey holding a binder of 'evidence' of money the government had stolen from him were widely circulated online.

IN BRIEF

Beatles in Paris

Paul McCartney has revealed in a Twitter Q&A that the best gig he's ever been to was Jay Z and Kanye West's joint 'Watch The Throne' tour. Which is pretty high praise from somebody who was at every single Beatles show.

Funny bone

Christ Bearer, the rapper who tried to cut off his own penis earlier this year, is now a stand-up comedian. If there's anything more painful than dying onstage, he would probably know.

► Find these stories and more on **NME.COM**

Featuring sting

Former Everything But The Girl members Tracey Thorn and Ben Watt discovered a scorpion under a bed in their London home. London Zoo believe the maroon-coloured arachnid might have found its way to the UK in a suitcase.

Official RECORD STORE Chart

TOP 40 ALBUMS OCTOBER 26, 2014



Slipknot

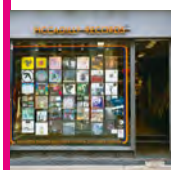
5: The Gray Chapter ROADRUNNER

The masked metallers from Iowa top the chart with their first album in six years. Named after former bassist Paul Gray, who died in 2010, it features the single 'The Negative One', a rumbling thrash that recalls Slipknot's early years.

NEW	2	Soused	Scott Walker & Sunn O)))	4AD
▼	3	Our Love	Caribou	CITY SLANG
NEW	4	I Forget Where We Were	Ben Howard	ISLAND
NEW	5	Phantom Radio	Mark Lanegan Band	HEAVENLY
▼	6	Songs Of Innocence	U2	ISLAND
NEW	7	Melody Road	Neil Diamond	CAPITOL
NEW	8	Islands	Bear's Den	COMMUNION
NEW	9	The Best Day	Thurston Moore	MATADOR
▼	10	This Is All Yours	Alt-J	INFECTIOUS
▼	11	Popular Problems	Leonard Cohen	COLUMBIA
NEW	12	Aquostic – Stripped Bare	Status Quo	FOURTH CHORD
▲	13	Royal Blood	Royal Blood	WARNER BROS
▼	14	Syro	Aphex Twin	WARP
▼	15	Playland	Johnny Marr	WARNER BROS
▼	16	You're Dead	Flying Lotus	WARP
NEW	17	Urge For Offal	Half Man Half Biscuit	PROBE PLUS
▲	18	X	Ed Sheeran	ASYLUM
▲	19	Wanted On Voyage	George Ezra	COLUMBIA
▲	20	AM	Arctic Monkeys	DOMINO
NEW	21	Stay Gold	First Aid Kit	COLUMBIA
NEW	22	It's A Pleasure	Baxter Dury	PIAS LE LABEL
▼	23	Tough Love	Jessie Ware	ISLAND/PMR
▼	24	Lullaby And... The Ceaseless Roar	Robert Plant	EAST WEST
▼	25	Down Where The Spirit Meets The Bone	Lucinda Williams	HIGHWAY 20
NEW	26	The Curse Of Love	Coral	SKELETON KEY
▼	27	Carry On The Grudge	Jamie T	VIRGIN
▲	28	In The Lonely Hour	Sam Smith	CAPITOL
▼	29	Chapter One	Ella Henderson	SYCO MUSIC
▼	30	Commune	Goat	ROCKET
NEW	31	Hi Scores	Boards Of Canada	SKAM
▼	32	And Star Power	Foxgyen	JAGJAGUWAR
▼	33	(What's The Story) Morning Glory?	Oasis	BIG BROTHER
▼	34	I'll Keep You In Mind From Time To Time	Moose Blood	NO SLEEP
▼	35	Wonder Where We Land	SBTRKT	YOUNG TURKS
▲	36	Jungle	Jungle XL	
▼	37	World On Fire	Slash	ROADRUNNER
▼	38	Interlude	Jamie Cullum	ISLAND
▼	39	Partners	Barbra Streisand	COLUMBIA
NEW	40	Cheek To Cheek	Tony Bennett & Lady Gaga	COLUMBIA/INTERSCOPE

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

TOP OF THE SHOPS



THIS WEEK PICCADILLY RECORDS

MANCHESTER
FOUNDED 1978

WHY IT'S GREAT Still going strong after 36 years, it's a great place to pick up tickets, zines, vinyl and CDs.
TOP SELLER LAST WEEK Caribou – 'Our Love'

THEY SAY "Our range and our staff's friendliness sets us apart."

SOUNDTRACK OF MY LIFE



Adam Ant



Syd
Barrett



Noel Fielding

Comedian

THE FIRST SONG I REMEMBER HEARING 'See Emily Play' - Pink Floyd

"My dad used to make compilation tapes out of all his records. The songs that I really liked were 'See Emily Play' and 'Arnold Layne' by Pink Floyd. I remember when I was about 13, getting 'The Dark Side Of The Moon' and thinking, 'This isn't the same.' I realised that it was because of Syd Barrett that I liked that early stuff, and he was long gone by that point. I liked the later stuff as well, but it sounded like a different band. As a kid I responded to Syd Barrett. Crazy. Dunno why."

THE FIRST ALBUM I FELL IN LOVE WITH 'Prince Charming' - Adam And The Ants

"I loved Adam Ant as a concept. I would listen to this with girls, because it was more girl-friendly pop. And all the girls fancied Adam Ant, so I tried to

grease my way in with girls in my class by going, 'Yeah, I like Adam Ant.' It was a sort of bartering system for a peck on the cheek. Innocent times. I met him recently and he said he likes *The Mighty Boosh*. It blew my mind."

"I DIDN'T KNOW WHICH PATH TO GO DOWN: DANDY POP STAR OR DENIM-CLAD TEARAWAY"

THE FIRST ALBUM I EVER BOUGHT 'Bomber' - Motörhead

"I had Adam Ant's 'Prince Charming' album and 'Bomber' at the same time. I didn't know which path to go down: do I go for the dandy pop star look or the whisky-drinking, denim-wearing tearaway? It's confusing! Lemmy's just the man though, isn't he? I still love Motörhead."

THE SONG I CAN NO LONGER LISTEN TO 'Immigrant Song' - Led Zeppelin

"We used to play this at the start of gigs. Julian [Barratt, *The Mighty Boosh* co-star] and I both had wolf masks on and raincoats because that was the first scene of the show, and we'd end up dancing topless to this. It just makes me think of Julian with his tits out."

THE MIGHTY BOOSH SONG I LOVE THE MOST 'Love Games' - Old Gregg

"It's fun to perform and Old Gregg is a fun character to play. And Julian did that falsetto voice thing. It's a good pop tune, that."

THE SONG THAT MAKES ME WANT TO DANCE 'Hit It And Quit It' - Funkadelic

"A couple of songs on the 'Maggot Brain' album are pretty good. It's impossible not to dance to this one."

THE SONG I CAN'T GET OUT OF MY HEAD 'Baker Street' - Gerry Rafferty

"I was listening to Classic Gold the other day while I was making props. They played this and for about four days I'd wake up and that sax solo would be in my head. It was killing me. It's so '70s - you couldn't do a song like that now. It's about nine hours long. Well, it's, like, half an hour."

THE SONG THAT I WISH I HAD WRITTEN 'White Punks On Dope' - The Tubes

"There's a really funny line in this that goes, 'I go crazy 'cos my folks are so fucking rich'. Always makes me laugh."

THE SONG THAT REMINDS ME OF TOURING WITH THE BOOSH 'Fleetwood Mac, 'Tusk'

"We played 'Tusk' just before the show started, and we knew that we had to get ready and get into position - I used to have to get into my big boat. I'm not so sure that I even associate that song with Fleetwood Mac any more. I just associate it with the *Boosh* tour. I'm like a pirate: I stole it."

THE SONG I WANT PLAYED AT MY FUNERAL 'Bike' - Pink Floyd

"I could play 'Vlad The Impaler' by Kasabian, just come out of the coffin and kill everyone. But this song probably sums me up. The lyrics are amazing: 'I've got a bike, you can ride it if you like/It's got a basket, a bell that rings and things to make it look good/I'd give it to you if I could but I borrowed it'. That's perfect."



Motörhead's
Lemmy



King Gizzard And The Lizard Wizard

Chaos reigns supreme as the latest Aussie wonderband own New York

A sprawling, scrappy gang of guys who started out as a joke just won CMJ 2014. Impressive, especially considering the Melbourne-based slaughterhouse-psych act's disregard for health and safety. New York's first Ebola victim might have attended one of the festival showcases, but this hasn't phased shaggy-haired frontman and occasional flute player Stu Mackenzie. "I've been making sure I lick all the toilet seats," he smirks, his thick drawl fighting with the buzz of a tattoo needle that's emanating from the Williamsburg bar where they're about to play another triumphant set.

Like Temples on a midnight gak run or Black Flag inviting Tame Impala into the pit for a slam dance, the seven-piece (including two drummers) make a fast and furious acid racket. Their gigs stretch their vast space-

jams into epic masterpieces, pulling up right at the point where hardcore meets hippy.

After their first UK tour, which takes place this month, the band will release their debut album on these shores, the hypnotic 'I'm In Your Mind Fuzz'. It was partially recorded in upstate New York, not far from the house made famous by The Band's seminal Americana record 'Music From Big Pink'. "It's just some dude's house," says Stu of their pilgrimage to Bob Dylan's notorious crash pad. "There's a 'Trespassers Will Be Prosecuted' sign." So instead of posing for a 1960s-styled selfie, the band did a subtle drive-by of the remote, pastel-hued property. "We kind of got a bit scared," admits guitarist Joe Walker. "It was awkward."

As much as they love classic US rock, though, KGATLW are proudly patriotic, as evidenced by 'Vegemite' – an ode to Australia's foremost yeasty spread, complete with *Mighty Boosh*-worthy video. "Vegemite's awesome!" grins Stu. "It's about eating Vegemite on toast with your girlfriend!" From home comforts to out-of-this-world showmanship – King Gizzard have most definitely taken the crown. ■ LEONIE COOPER

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best new bands
from this year's
CMJ festival

► THE DETAILS

- **BASED** Melbourne
- **FOR FANS OF** Tame Impala, Temples
- **SEE THEM LIVE** London
Shacklewell Arms (November 10), Manchester Gullivers (11), Glasgow Broadcast (12), Leeds Belgrave (13), Liverpool Arts Club (14), London Hoxton Bar & Kitchen (24).
- **BUY IT NOW** 'I'm In Your Mind Fuzz' is released on December 1 on Heavenly
- **BELIEVE IT OR NOT** Drummer Eric also manages the band and runs his own label, Flightless



DMA's

When DMA's swaggered onstage like six mini Gallaghers at Baby's All Right in Williamsburg for their debut New York show they may have looked like Britpop revivalists, but they're more than lairy boys with guitars. "There's definitely a lad-rock thing," says guitarist Matt Mason, "but songs like 'Delete' and 'So We Know' are ballads as fuck. We've played shows where groups of girls come just to hear them. They dance around and leave. Probably because dudes are spilling beer on them."

Mason, singer Tommy O'Dell and acoustic guitarist Johnny Took each bring their own influences.

"Tommy's favourite band is The Stone Roses," Mason says, "but Johnny listens to heaps of folk music. I'm into noisy guitar bands like Dinosaur Jr."

Labels are fighting over the band (bad luck to the exec who called them 'DNA' in a meeting), but their first record is already written. They want to get it out next year off their own backs. "We'll probably just record it at home," says Mason. "We're hands on." ■ KEVIN EG PERRY

► THE DETAILS

► **BASED** Sydney, Australia
 ► **FOR FANS OF** Oasis, The Stone Roses ► **SEE THEM LIVE** Supporting The Courteeners in the UK throughout November and headlining Club NME, Koko, London (Nov 14)
 ► **SOCIAL** @DMAsmusic

Bully

Alicia Bognanno is the epitome of doing it yourself. As the frontwoman of Nashville-based garage-punks Bully, she's the sole creator of their tough, grungy pop bullets. Away from the band (completed by drummer Stewart Copeland, bassist Reece Lazarus and guitarist Clayton Parker), she's no slouch either – she's an in-house engineer at Battle Tapes studio, where

she recently "helped out" on Public Access TV's EP, and does sound at legendary local venue, Stone Fox. "Everything I do [is so I can make music]," she reasons after the band's rammed second CMJ show, at Planos. "It's my dream to be able to engineer my own record," she shrugs, and that moment should arrive soon – she promises Bully's debut full-length will appear in the "near future", and should build on the sweet thrills and attitude of their self-titled debut EP. "It'll be better," she smiles proudly. "We've grown a lot since then." ■ RHIAN DALY



► THE DETAILS

► **BASED** Nashville
 ► **FOR FANS OF** The Breeders, Pixies
 ► **SOCIAL** @bullythemusic

CMJ 2014

ROUND UP

SHAMIR

Babycastles, October 24, 11pm

► **WHO?** Las Vegas wonderkid whose Northtown EP is one of 2014's best releases.
 ► **WHAT HAPPENED?** Backed by a six-piece band (saxophonist and bongos included), Shamir debuted a slew of new material, each song just as huge as his already-released stuff. The highlight came at the end where, with the crowd baying for more, he and two backing singers performed a capella. Spellbinding stuff.
 ► **WHAT NEXT?** The world? Maybe. Hopefully...

HEAT

Planos, October 21, 3.15pm

► **WHO?** Montrealers doing New York indie like true natives.
 ► **WHAT HAPPENED?** Heat might be from over the border in Canada but their music feels perfectly at home on the Lower East Side. Marrying louche, Strokes-y riffs with frontman Susil Sharma's Lou Reed-esque vocals, the four-piece use the cooing 'Ritual', gleaming 'Susifine' and stories of drunken escapades to show their potential.
 ► **WHAT NEXT?** Given time,

Shamir



they could be almost as lauded as their NYC heroes.

YAWN

260 Moore Street, October 25, 1am

► **WHO?** Twin Peaks bezzies from Chicago.
 ► **WHAT HAPPENED?** Playing a rooftop at 1am in the middle of Brooklyn was always gonna piss someone off, and the cops

eventually called time on the party vibes. But not before Yawn had delivered a ramshackle, pop-punk masterclass. The highlight was an impromptu, drunk singalong cover of The Beatles 'Don't Let Me Down'.
 ► **WHAT NEXT?** A similar trajectory as Twin Peaks would be a safe bet.

HOMESHAKE

Baby's All Right, October 22, 12.45am

► **WHO?** Mac DeMarco's longtime guitarist Peter Sagar steps into the limelight as frontman of the Montreal-based four-piece.

► **WHAT HAPPENED?** With his heart on his sleeve and distortion in his voice, a full house watches Sagar croon through a set of heartbroken love songs.
 ► **WHAT NEXT?** Sagar should earn a dedicated cult following from fans of Sean Nicholas Savage and DeMarco's more introspective moments.

OKAY KAYA

The Delancey, October 22, 12am

► **WHO?** Fragile songstress with vocals to die for
 ► **WHAT HAPPENED?** There's ➔





SPLASHH SWAP 'STALE' LONDON FOR NYC

"I feel stupid, straight up," groans Sasha Carlson, slowly sipping on a giant frozen margarita in a sand-covered beer garden in Brooklyn. "Hopefully something good comes out of [this week], because I've definitely damaged my liver."

Splashh might be the same dedicated party boys they've always been, hitting New York's bars hard between showing off their new material for labels at CMJ, but a lot has changed for them since the release of their debut, 'Comfort', last year. The part-Australian band are now residents in the city, having upped and left their adopted home of London a few months ago.

"I couldn't write in London for a year. Everything became a bit stale," the singer

explains, hinting at the frustration around the release of 'Comfort'. Stale isn't something you could say of recent comeback track 'Colour It In'. Drenched in electronic fuzz, it's the kind of lo-fi experimental gem that could have added a bit of pop to Julian Casablancas' new record. It's a surprise change in direction from the group – now expanded to a five-piece including new drummer Angus Tarnawsky and electronics wizard Jaie Gonzalez – that continues into songs in their new live set like the gleaming synthpop of 'Under The Moon' and the glitchy experimentalism of 'Honey & Salt'.

"I deleted 'Comfort' off my iTunes," Sasha confesses. "We got massively bored of those songs. There's a lot of analogue synths [on the new album]. We were listening to a lot of Air, Cocteau Twins, Caribou... It's kind of like 'Screamadelica', that crossover of rock and electronica and making it our own."

"It's all part of our progression – we've always wanted to move into more experimental, synth-based dance music," adds guitarist Toto Vivian.

The band are hoping to release the as-yet-untitled record, which they've been demoing in Angus' Fort Greene studio space, around March next year, with plans to make the accompanying gigs something special.

"I don't want them to just be at a bar," asserts Sasha. "I want to put on an event and only do a few shows; make them a sick party that everyone wants to go to." And, as their current hangovers can testify, if anyone knows how to throw a sick party, it's this rejuvenated, brave new version of Splashh. ■ RHIAN DALY



a timidity to Okay Kaya's performance that shows just how early this show is for her. While her guitar playing is quiet and tentative, it doesn't matter – her voice is effortless, recalling Elizabeth Fraser. It's one of the most alluring things at the whole of CMJ.

► **WHAT NEXT?** After a few more shows under her belt, she'll be flying.

SPRING KING
Pianos, October 22,
3.30pm
► **WHO?** Melody-driven

garage-rock quartet from Manchester.

► **WHAT HAPPENED?** "There's more people here than we'd usually get back home," exclaims singing drummer Tarek Musa. And it's for good reason – the punky, poppy garage-rock of songs like 'Mumma' and the crashing 'Not Me, Not Now' are fun and infectious.

► **WHAT NEXT?** Their lo-fi pep and feel-good riffs are built for success Stateside.

SPOOKYLAND
Pianos, October 23,
7.45pm
► **WHO?** Emotional folk-pop led by the powerfully vulnerable Marcus Gordon.

► **WHAT HAPPENED?** Frontman Gordon's eyes are fixed anywhere but the audience's faces. With his three bandmates, he conjures up a fitting soundtrack for his timid presence, his voice cracking over folk-tinged power-pop that takes its cues from the US (Springsteen, Dylan) rather than Spookyland's Australian home.

► **WHAT NEXT?** A debut LP has the potential to do what 'Funeral' did for Arcade Fire.

BALLET SCHOOL
Glasslands, October 24,
8.45pm
► **WHO?** Berlin-based, Bella Union-released trio.

► **WHAT HAPPENED?** Watching bleach-haired frontwoman Rosie Blair bounce around the stage to her band's flawless synthpop is like witnessing Madonna in her '80s prime.

► **WHERE NEXT?** With debut record 'The Dew Lasts An Hour' already under their belts, and with Tom Cruise reported to be working on

a sequel to *Top Gun*, Ballet School are in prime position to write the new 'Danger Zone'.

KRILL
Trash Bar, October 24,
7.50pm

► **WHO?** Disjointed '90s college rock trio from Boston who also mix post hardcore with a smidgen of pop

► **WHAT HAPPENED?** Exciting in a wonky Pavement way, it seems like they've all just been dumped, the poor dudes. "This one's called 'Torturer,'" sobs frontman Julian Fader, slipping into a Future Islands growl over mathy guitar squiggles.

► **WHERE NEXT?** Getting new girlfriends, hopefully.



Radar's Brooklyn Takeover

Glasslands, Brooklyn,
Wednesday, October 22

Headliners **Fat White Family**
are ferocious and ungodly on
a night of dangerous weirdness

When J Spaceman, Mick Jagger's son and the Ramones' old manager all turn up to your party, you've gotta be doing something right. *Radar* took over Williamsburg's Glasslands venue to serve up the most anarchic show of this year's CMJ festival: a night that featured sinister topless gyrations, a death-defying balcony leap and someone inexplicably performing in a full penguin costume.

Before all that dangerous weirdness it was **Girlpool** who opened the night with a set of whip-smart songs that crackled with their own brand of subversive wit. On the standout 'Jane', LA duo Cleo Tucker and Harmony Tividad tell the tale of the eponymous hero

punching a boy called Tommy in the mouth. They're just an indie film soundtrack away from becoming cult heroes.

There's a decidedly '90s feel to the next part of the night, as Peterborough's **The Wytches** channel Nirvana and those early Radiohead recordings where it still sounded as if Thom Yorke and co thought they were a grunge act. London three-piece

Happyness are that rare band who manage to mix a genuinely absurd sense of humour into their lyrics, while musically they rifle through the best of Pavement and Blur.

There's something gleefully absurd about seeing a guy dressed as a penguin announce that his band are "here to play some rock'n'roll", but it didn't seem to ruffle **Twin Peaks** Cadien's feathers. The Chicago band drew one



The Wytches

of the best receptions of the night from the moshing crowd, with tracks like 'Making Breakfast' sounding like a band full of Mac DeMarcos playing at full pelt.

You can't get more of a homecoming show than **Public Access TV** (left) playing here at Glasslands. The New Yorkers used to live within the venue's warehouse space, so they're delighted to be back before it closes its doors at the end of

the year. They've grown in stage presence since their first UK shows back at The Great Escape earlier this year, and their indie-rock earworms like 'Monaco' and newie 'In The Mirror' will be rattling around the audience's skulls for days.

Surely wary of tonight's headliners' fearsome live reputation, **Bo Ningen** pull out all the stops. While guitars



Bo Ningen



Girlgroup and (below) Happyness



Fat White Family and (left) Twin Peaks

THE VIEW FROM THE CROWD



June, 23, Bushwick, New York

"I really liked The Wytches but my favourite band tonight was probably Twin Peaks. They had such a lot of energy, and the songs were great as well. You just never knew what was going to happen next."



Lucy, 29, New York

"Fat White Family were absolutely insane. I saw them on Saturday at the Bowery Ballroom and they were naked the entire time. I'd never seen them live before this week; I'd only heard them online and read about them in *NME*. This week has been the first time I've really experienced them and I fell in love."



John, 45, Los Angeles

"Fat White Family were really good tonight. They were the highlight for me. I'm from LA and I'd never seen them before, but I'd heard a lot about them from a lot of different people. They're definitely the sort of band I'd go and see again."

whirl around the stage behind him like chainsaws, frontman Taigen Kawabe plays his bass above his head, 'stabs' himself with its neck and then climbs up the speaker stack to a balcony, which he leaps off into the crowd.

Even that crowd-baiting anarchy can't quite match **Fat White Family** for sheer evil stage presence.

Frontman Lias looks like a man possessed during a ferocious opening salvo that includes 'Is It Raining In Your Mouth?'. The band dedicate it to former Ramones manager Danny Fields, who had been spotted backstage taking photos of the band. If the Americans in the crowd were in any doubt that they were witnessing the birth of something ungodly on their shores, the grinding 'I Am Mark E Smith' will surely have ripped the

scales from their eyes. Lias introduced it as a song about "nobility", but theirs is a strange new British Invasion. ■ KEVIN EG PERRY

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WAITING FOR GOBBO

Noel is back, Beady Eye are dead and everyone is talking about Liam Gallagher again. Tom Howard speaks to friends and experts and asks: what now for rock'n'roll's dormant volcano?

PORTRAIT: DEAN CHALKLEY

Onstage with Oasis at Wembley Stadium on July 21, 2000, Liam Gallagher introduced 'Live Forever' to the 90,000 people in the crowd by saying that he and his band were experiencing "a bit of a topsy fucking weird year". He was, most

likely, referring to his brother Noel walking out of the band's world tour back in May, sick of Liam, and leaving them to carry on without him. The following night at Wembley, Liam turned up shitfaced. It was a miracle Noel didn't walk out of that too, given Liam's tuneless vocals, inability to recall the lyrics to any of the songs and insistence on telling everyone that Wembley was a "fucking shithole", that "I dig all you, man, I dig all your offsprings, I dig all your pets" and "if you're gonna do Wembley, might as well do it pissed out your arse, yeah?" For fans of songs being sung to a technically high standard, the gig was a horror show. For fans of the whirlwind Liam conducts around himself, it was dreamy.

Fast-forward 14 years, and Liam's having another "topsy fucking weird year". In brief: the second Beady Eye album, 'BE', came out in summer 2013 and sold

LIAM'S 'LOST WEEKEND'

A diary of a topsy-turvy 18 months

June 10, 2013

Second Beady Eye album 'BE', produced by Dave Sitek, is released. It reaches Number Two in the UK.

June 12, 2013

Liam admits he suffers from tinnitus. "You're not a proper rock'n'roll star if you don't have it, he says. "I just talk really loudly over it. I'm proud of it."

OK, but everything that came next (including guitarist Gem Archer fracturing his skull and leg a couple of months later, and the sacking of the band's manager in February 2014) was overshadowed by the news that Liam had fathered a child with the American journalist Liza Ghorbani, and was having an affair with Debbie Gwyther, a member of his management team, and would, therefore, be getting a divorce from Nicole Appleton and going through a messy child-support court case with Ghorbani. It's been, without doubt, the worst 18 months of his career. Understandably (but frustratingly), until he emerged to break the news of Beady Eye's demise, Liam has kept a low profile throughout this period. Avoiding doing any press, he has only been accessible via chance encounter or social media. But if anything the disengagement from traditional media activity has increased his popularity, as proved by the Twitter frenzy that followed his tweeting of the letters O, A, S, I and S on April 24.

More on Twitter later, but both these stories are quintessential examples of the way Liam lives his life. As PR expert Mark Borkowski, who's worked with Led Zeppelin, Joan Rivers and Macaulay Culkin, puts ➡

it: "You never get the feeling that Liam's run by the media. He's had his problems recently, obviously, but after *The Sun* exposed the love child business there were no desperate interviews, no mea culpas; there was no rushing around trying to appease the media; it was 'that's how it is, fucking like it or loathe it'. Liam's had dalliances, but at the heart of it you wonder whether or not he really gives a fuck, and I don't think he really gives a fuck." No-one's saying it's a good thing Liam was unfaithful to his wife and has had four kids with four different women, but it's a consequence of the nature of the man. It's like Owen Morris – who worked with Oasis on 'Definitely Maybe', '(What's The Story) Morning Glory?' and 'Be Here Now' – once said about his singing style in the studio: "Liam doesn't need to practise: Liam just lives."

Even as a 42-year-old, he doesn't seem to think, he just *does*. He lives recklessly, permanently on the edge

"Liam's had his problems. But does he give a fuck?"

Mark Borkowski, PR expert

of triumph or catastrophe. As it always was with Oasis, the highs are intense, the lows even more so. And the lows have always been a big part of the Gallaghers' story. After the giant Knebworth shows in the summer of 1996 they could have conquered America, but instead they imploded: first when Liam refused to go on tour because he needed to buy a house; second when Noel quit the tour because he couldn't deal with Liam once he'd rejoined. After 'Definitely Maybe' and '...Morning Glory' they could've taken their time to make a third classic album, but ended up buying all the cocaine in the world and making 'Be Here Now'. And even though the music they made for the next 12 years wasn't always amazing, they were never boring. And so it is today.

That's because Liam isn't capable of being average. As he told *The Face* in 1994: "I'm on fire inside. I'm just getting to know myself, and there's things I don't like. Parts of me are evil, parts of me are good, but I'm locked up in chains so I can't get it all out. But I opened the doors in my head, threw the key away and let it all in: madness, badness, evilness, goodness, beautifulness... a universe in a glass." Afterwards, he stared at the interviewer and simply said: "I'm ageless." Wrinkles have started appearing on his face and the voice isn't quite what it was, but the untamed, youthful energy is still potent.

Nicky Wire has, on two occasions, offered another way to look at Liam. In 2008, the Manic Street Preachers bassist gave one of the best ever quotes

LIAM'S 'LOST WEEKEND', CONT...

June 20, 2013

Asked why Beady Eye are playing Manchester venue The Ritz while Robbie Williams is playing to tens of thousands, Gallagher tells BBC Radio 5 Live that they are a "proper live band", but "the bullshit is winning". "It's a small gig. Beady Eye ain't a big band," he says. "Everyone thinks we're going to announce big fucking stadiums. [The Ritz] is the level we're at and we'll stay at that until you pull your fucking finger out and buy the fucking records."

June 22, 2013

Liam on Noel in Scottish newspaper *The Daily Record*: "Outside a band, he's cool as fuck. As brothers in a band, me and Noel don't get on. He's surrounded by idiots and I'm not. Until he loses a few clowns he'll remain in idiotville. We'll get over it, though."

June 28, 2013

Beady Eye open Glastonbury Festival. "I'm a rock'n'roll star at half-eleven in the fucking morning," says Liam.

July 18, 2013

In *The Sun*, Liam is named as "dad of lovechild". They add: "Rocker facing £2m baby battle, US paper claims". That evening, Liam appears in public in a T-shirt that says 'If you don't wanna fuck me baby, baby fuck off' before playing with Beady Eye at Ibiza Rocks.

August 1, 2013

Guitarist Gem Archer suffers a head injury, apparently caused by falling down the stairs at home. Beady Eye pull out of V Festival as a result.

October 16, 2013

A story appears on breakingnews.ie that Liam wants to "rescue" his dogs from estranged wife Nicole Appleton: "The Beady Eye frontman singer is reportedly 'serious' about stealing the pair's two pet pooches, Ruby Tuesday and Brigitte Bardot, because he misses them so much and he is unable to ask the former All Saints singer to see them because they are not on speaking terms."

November 26, 2013

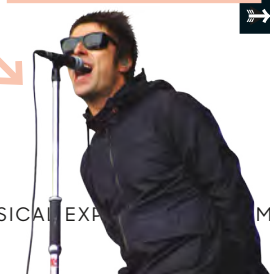
Liam tells XFM: "Listening to [music] on vinyl is always it for me. I don't even know what

about him to Q magazine: "It's one of my theories that there's a certain working-class rage that cannot be controlled. You can trace it from Mark E Smith and John Lydon to Ian McCulloch and Morrissey to Liam Gallagher and, of course, me. That ability to be totally in love with your art, but also realise the stupidity and hypocrisy of the situation. I think it's a good thing. It keeps everything in check." It's a theory he first discussed in 1996, when talking about missing bandmate Richey Edwards: "Richey's fuck-ups were not on public display. There was a working-class disgust – cover it up and get on with it. I have a concept of a working-class rage, which is in some people. It's in us. It's in Liam Gallagher, Linford Christie, Nigel Benn and Paul Gascoigne. The desire to prove yourself."

With these words, Wire nails another reason why Liam is such a vital presence, in music and beyond. Without the working-class rage and desire to prove themselves he talks about, Oasis would never have been as big as they were. It's what made them so entertaining, and it's what people are addicted to. Borkowski again: "Liam is a cult. Funnily enough, the more reclusive he gets – because of the way social media works and because of the fanbase that Oasis has – the better it is for him." And the one place Liam has been all over this year is Twitter: venting that working-class rage; proving himself.

Liam himself is a sporadic tweeter, but everywhere he goes there are people taking selfies with him and sticking them on the internet. There were pictures of him eating a parma, drinking lager and wearing a purple suit at a wedding in Middlesbrough in July. That same month there were snaps of him in various pubs with various people, as well as backstage at the Neil Young show in Hyde Park, sporting a bushy beard (a tonsorial decision worthy of five pages of debate on Oasis fansite live4ever.com). There were shots of him leaving a hotel in Manchester in September, looking slim and clean-shaven, on his way to see a Manchester City match. Again: forum debate about how much healthier he looked than he did two months ago. Fans took all of the photos, and in almost all of them he's flicking the Vs at the camera. Classic Liam. All this off-grid exposure is working in his favour, according to Borkowski: "The more of an enigma he can be, the greater value he'll have when ultimately Oasis get back together."

But this isn't about Oasis reforming. As Johnny Marr puts it: "It's a shame things have to be viewed as





Liam onstage with
Oasis, Wembley
Stadium, July 21, 2000

That said, it's not essential for them to work together for the tension that naturally exists between them to reveal itself. It appears sporadically. It was there on February 28 this year, when Liam had a seemingly unprovoked pop at Noel by tweeting: "It'll be me as in LG that throws in the towel not some roadie from the 80s x". And again on June 15, when he tweeted: "Listen up there's only 1 high flying bird and that's the incredible magpie band LG x". And once more, on August 22, when Liam took to the seat of his scooter to take on the Ice Bucket Challenge, before nominating his brother like so: "I accept this challenge and nominate Spongebob Squarepants, Ivor The Engine, and while we're on cartoon characters, Noel Gallagher." Noel's complete lack of response – in public, anyway – only tightened the string and added to the intrigue. It's like Liam is goading his brother into making up with him, but his brother's not into it. Shadow boxing.

It's worth noting that Liam Gallagher is far from the first major star to

go through a period of uncertainty. And after years of imitating his vocal tics, his glasses and his numerous haircuts, Liam has – accidentally, probably – begun to resemble John Lennon more than ever before. This is his Lost Weekend, a time of personal turmoil, self-destruction and controversy. Quick recap: in summer 1973, Lennon's marriage to Yoko Ono wasn't going so well, so the couple decided that he should go and live with their assistant May Pang for 18 months. It was a time when Lennon indulged in some of his most excessive behaviour – drinking a lot of brandy, shooting guns with Phil Spector, taking cocaine with Harry Nilsson, getting kicked out of recording studios (A&M in LA in December 1973) and clubs (the Troubadour, also in LA, in March 1974), and recording the infamous 'A Toot ➡

Spotify is. The first vinyl I ever bought that really changed my life was the Stone Roses album. I remember I bought it in Mr Sifters in Burnage. And then I bought a Greggs pasty right after it. And a big bag of weed. I know exactly what I did that day."

December 20, 2013

Liam and Noel's mum Peggy makes them attend the same wedding.

January 22, 2014

Liam plays tennis in Australia while Beady Eye are on tour. "We're glad to see Liam enjoying some downtime between Beady Eye commitments," says an Australian newspaper.

February 28, 2014

There's a discussion on live4ever.com about the sacking of Beady Eye manager Scott Rodger, comments ranging from the negative – "Can totally understand why they got rid of the manager; the whole 'BE' campaign has been a complete joke" – to the positive: "Wasn't it Scott Rodgers idea [to pair] Beady Eye with Dave Sitek? Best move of their career."

February 28, 2014

Liam tweets about the 'Definitely Maybe' reissue: "HOW CAN YOU REMASTER SOMETHING THATS ALREADY BEING MASTERED. DONT BUY INTO IT. LET IT BE LG X"

February 28, 2014

Another tweet, this time about the change of Beady Eye's management: "Eye as in me Liam Gallagher is no longer represented by Scott Rodger or Quest The End X"

February 28, 2014

A tweet that has a dig at Noel: "It'll be me as in LG that throws in the towel not some roadie from the 80s X"

February 28, 2014

A tweet that may be about the 'Definitely Maybe' reissue: "The Oasis years they forgot to mention Bonehead used to stick fig rolls up his arse ha ha x"

March 21, 2014

The Sun reports that Liam has been jogging backwards around his local neighbourhood of Hampstead in London to keep fit. ➡

moves, and oh-so-political." He's right. This is about the fact that now Noel's back – new album, new tour, a desire to headline Glastonbury, should Michael Eavis be keen – we need Liam back too. He's the only person with better quotes, funnier jokes, more wit in his wisdom and more scorn to pour than his brother. It's about two giants of music, who make up one of rock'n'roll's great antagonistic partnerships – alongside Ray and Dave Davies, Pete Townshend and Roger Daltrey, Pete and Carl, Morrissey and Marr – being in the public eye at the same time. They make each other bigger, better, more headline-worthy, and spar with each other in front of everyone. Noel loves playing music, Liam loves attention. They're charisma machines. They stir things up.

LIAM'S 'LOST WEEKEND', CONT...

March 24, 2014

The Sun reports that Liam is "very nervous about what will come out" in former lover Lisa Moorish's autobiography. Moorish is the mother of Liam's 15-year-old daughter Molly.

March 30, 2014

The Sunday People reports that Liam was "escorted out" of The Holly Bush in Hampstead after "acting irrationally, kicking off and swearing".

April 10, 2014

Liam attends the opening night of the Oasis exhibition *Chasing The Sun: Oasis 1993-1997* in Shoreditch, east London. Ninety per cent of the attendees have a photo taken with him.

April 24, 2014

Liam tweets the letters O, A, S, I and S. The Twitteratti decides it means Oasis are headlining Glastonbury.

April 26, 2014

The Sun reports that Noel and Liam are speaking again. A source says: "The mudslinging has stopped but it's very much baby steps for the two as Noel wants to release his second solo record at the end of the year and tour that in 2015."

May 6, 2014

Beady Eye cancel their Coachella performance.

June 15, 2014

A tweet directed at Noel: "Listen up there's only 1 high flying bird and that's the incredible magpie band LG x"

July 13, 2014

Liam turns up to watch Neil Young at Hyde Park with a big old beard. Cue five pages of beard chat on the live4ever.com.

July 31, 2014

Liam tweets: "Public Enemy Metropolis Studios Wednesday night yeah bwoy!! LG"

September 11, 2014

Tweets a tribute to the former Primal Scream guitarist: "RIP Robert Young AKA 'Throb'. Live Forever LG x"

October 25, 2014

"Beady Eye are no longer. Thanks for all your support. LG x"



The now defunct Beady Eye rehearsing in north London, May 2013

And A Snore' extended jam bootleg album with Nilsson (guitar), Paul McCartney (drums) and Stevie Wonder (electric piano), at one point asking Stevie: "You wanna snort, Steve? A toot? It's goin' round."

Crucially, it was also a productive time for Lennon. And by the time the Lost Weekend came to an end in early 1975, when Lennon and Ono reunited, he'd written and recorded the track 'I'm The Greatest' with Ringo Starr and the album 'Pussy Cats' with Harry Nilsson, and released his own solo albums 'Mind Games', 'Walls And Bridges' and 'Rock'N'Roll'. Here, clearly, is where the similarities with Liam end – his creativity has been minimal since the last Beady Eye album. But he's got time. An Oasis reunion, if it happens, won't come until 2016 at the earliest. It will be as big as it gets: David Bowie, Kate Bush, The Stone Roses. There's a giant fanbase waiting to be mobilised. That's guaranteed, no matter what he does next.

So before then,

what? Become a rock star for hire, as he's rumoured to be doing with The Who in November? Go solo and make an album with a bunch of big-name guitarists – Johnny Marr, John Squire, Bernard Butler – and give them all one song each? Collaborate with an electronic producer, as he's done previously with Death In Vegas (on 'Scorpio Rising' in 2002) and The Prodigy (on 'Shoot Down' in 2004)? Take a break from music and go into fashion full-time to build and build his already successful Pretty Green label? Just sit and wait and hope that Noel picks up the phone?

"Sometimes doing PR is about just sitting there and letting someone else play their card," says Mark Borkowski. "And you have to ask: does he need to do anything? He's up there with the biggest rock stars in the country, and he's certainly one of the most interesting. I mean, look at what David Bowie did – how extraordinary

is that? And Kate Bush. Did anyone spot that coming? It's counter-intuitive. These are people who disengaged with the process, old school, who engender excitement. If Bowie went on tour they'd struggle to get a fast enough broadband speed to sell all the tickets. While we see the Cowell machine throwing up more and more TV-friendly Saturday-night one-hit wonders, it plays to people who've really got the stuff. Liam's got the stuff."

Happy Mondays frontman Shaun Ryder has a different suggestion for Liam: "Apart from have another crew cut, I think he should get himself a TV chat show." Johnny Marr thinks it's all about the music: "Liam loves music and loves being in a band. People shouldn't forget that. It's a shame all this stuff kicks up, because his fame gets in the way of that love. It's not a job, it's a passion he's had since he was a teenager, and he's really good at it. I'd hate to see the consequences of his band breaking up and the soap opera that goes with it stop him making music. Oasis were together a long time; the

fact they're brothers might mean they have to go off and live their own lives more than people in a regular band, because they've been together since they were children." He adds: "There is a human being in there, who brings people happiness, and people need to remember that."

But maybe the man who sums up fans' feelings about what Liam's next move should be better than anyone is Alan McGee, whose known him since May 1993 when he signed Oasis to Creation Records. He says, simply: "I love Liam – whatever he wants to do is fine with me."

Us too, but now is an opportunity for him. Noel's back, Beady Eye are dead. And as Liam himself said onstage that drunken night at Wembley: "I ain't no fuckin' celebrity, I ain't no dickhead, man. I'm a rock star and I don't fuckin' arse about." Get busy, Liam. ■

"Liam is a human being who brings people happiness"

Johnny Marr



10 WAYS FOR LIAM TO OWN 2015

1 Start a new band

Rather than twiddling his chunky thumbs waiting for Noel to pick up the phone and call about that inevitable Glastonbury headline slot for Oasis, little bro should go and get his mojo back in full thrust by making new music with some excitable indie upstarts. **Harry Koisser from Peace** has already got his pitch in: "He should do a different project. I like the way he functions and I did like Beady Eye, but Liam should give me a call. I've been trying to get the powers that be to hook us up, as I want him to sing on some covers we'd play. Maybe I should write some songs for him and we could start a new band together. We could call it Peacey Eye."

2 Go solo

NME's Tom Howard Some of Liam's finest moments have come when working with his esteemed peers. A version of The Jam's 'Carnation' with Paul Weller and Steve Cradock for the album 'Fire And Skill: The Songs Of The Jam' compilation in 1999 is perhaps the finest example. More of this, please – perhaps a 10-track album using a different big-name guitarist for each. One for **Weller**. One for **Johnny Marr**. One for John Squire. One for Pete Townshend. With Liam's vocals on top of them all. As Carl Barât puts it: "He's talented enough to do what he wants."



3 Go back to basics

NME's Andy Welch Liam tried to match Oasis' swagger with Beady Eye, but it never quite worked. He should make a stripped-back album, simply arranged with just piano or acoustic guitar, showing off that voice. He tried this before, of course, with 'Little James', but he's improved as a songwriter since then. **John Lennon** took a similar approach on tracks like 'Love' and 'Beautiful Boy (Darling Boy)' after The Beatles broke up, and it would work for Liam too.



4 Hit the California desert

NME's Barry Nicolson Liam was evidently comfortable with Gem Archer and Andy Bell, but that comfort wasn't getting him anywhere, creatively or commercially; sure, he enlisted Dave Sitek to produce 'BE', but producers can only work with the songs they're given. Imagine if he wrote with someone who *wasn't* in Oasis, whose personality was as forceful as his own, and who wouldn't hesitate to tell him to ditch Lennon-esque ballads. If we're dreaming big, I'd prescribe a month in the desert with QOTSA's **Josh Homme**, but any collaborator who got him thinking outside the box would be a triumph.



5 Go electro

NME's Tom Howard He's done it before with both Death In Vegas ('Scorpio Rising') and The Prodigy ('Shoot Down') with great success. Tim Holmes of DIV said Liam was "probably the loudest singer I've ever recorded, and his vocal delivery was brilliant. He roared it like a lion for about three hours." And there are plenty of producers around in 2014 to choose from. Beyond The Wizard's Sleeve, say, who've just remixed a Temples album and could take Liam on a wild psychedelic journey. Or even SBTRKT, who's worked with Ezra Koenig from Vampire Weekend on recent track 'New Dorp. New York'.

6 Build Pretty Green

Matthew Hambly, Deputy Editor, Esquire Weekly A lot of people were sceptical when Pretty Green launched, but it's fair to say Liam had a major input in making sure the label mostly sold stuff that he'd actually wear – something not all musicians with clothing lines can say. The brand's made good ground among diehard fans, but it looks like Liam is taking a step back, publicly at least, by not appearing in the brand's advertising campaigns, which is no bad thing. It means the attention will shift away from him and onto the clothes. They make especially good coats, as you'd expect from a brand with its roots in rainy Manchester.

7 Work with Kevin Parker or Jagwar Ma

NME's Matt Wilkinson Even Lennon, by the mid-'70s, saw fit to get a little help from his friends (in the shape of Elton and Bowie) to bring him back to public consciousness, and Liam could do a lot worse than look to today's heroes for a bit of inspiration. How jaw-dropping could a hook-up with, say, Kevin Parker or Jagwar Ma be?

8 Get himself a chat show

Well, that's what **Shaun Ryder** thinks he should do. **NME's Mark Beaumont** ponders how this might pan out: "Ello, and welcome to *Who The Fook Do You Think You Are?* This week I'll be talking to some fooker off ...*Bake Off*, a shit comedian with a shit book to flog and some fookin' band that ripped us off..." Liam's chat show soars up the ratings thanks to his antagonistic line of questioning – "So, David Lynch, am I gonna fookin' understand this one or what?" – and his anti-Paxman approach of sitting there moodily refusing to talk to any guests that bore him.

9 Do nothing

Mark Borkowski, PR expert The question is: does he have to do anything? I don't think there's any necessity for him to have a strategic point of view for how he manages his media persona. It's more people looking in and wanting to write about him – and why wouldn't you?

10 Join the cast of EastEnders

In an interview with the *Daily Express* in January, the actor Shane Richie expressed an interest in Liam appearing in *EastEnders*. "I know him from years ago," he said. "I had it large back in Manchester a long time ago." **NME's Mark Beaumont** imagines the preposterous scenario... A new stall appears in the market selling overpriced khaki festival coats, manned by a surly northern chap who simply snarls at approaching customers. He turns out to be Leon, Dirty Den's love child with Deirdre Barlow from the time the cast got a coach up to *Coronation Street* for a fight. Over the coming months, thanks to some wild ashtay-swinging antics in the Vic, he out-nasties Phil Mitchell to become the new Square villain. But it's during the Christmas coach trip to have a go at *Emmerdale* that things *really* get messy...



Not long ago, Superfood were working crap jobs and living for the weekend. Now they're releasing one of the year's best debuts and heading out on the NME New Breed tour with Honeyblood. Gavin Haynes meets the carefree foursome

PHOTOS BY JENN FIVE



"We are making it happen"

The first time you hear it mentioned, it sounds like The Wall they're jabbering on

about is some hip underground club. Maybe a Berlin-themed dive bar, all black-and-white prints of the Fernsehturm and scratty noise bands in tank tops fiddling with EQ sliders.

In fact, The Wall is several feet of bricks and plaster in Digbeth that became a kind of micro-Hacienda. Along it, on any given Saturday evening in 2010, you would've seen members of Peace, Swim Deep and Superfood, plus about 50 other Birmingham scene kids.

The Wall was the turnpike, the spaghetti junction for everyone who was young and broke and culturally aware just then and there. The go-nowhere do-nothings working crap jobs and tinkering with their art projects on the side, just trying to have a night out with the £25 they'd strictly rationed for themselves. "Someone worked out the ideal formula for a Saturday night in Brum," says Dom Ganderton, singer/guitarist with Superfood, sat in the Strongroom bar in east London. "It was: get two cans of K cider, The Wall, Adam & Eve pub, on to The Space, then someone's front room. That persisted for about a year..."

Perched somewhere along that wall, down from Dom, was Ryan Malcolm, easily identifiable on account of being 91 feet tall, a former Wolves junior footballer who was apparently not given a senior contract because he "lacked aggression"; an unapologetic Britpop fan who'd taught himself to play guitar the Oasis songbook way.

Further along, you'd often find bass player Emily Baker – girlfriend of a friend of Dom's. Like the rest of them, she'd often end up flyer for The Space to earn extra cash, then hand the same notes straight back across the bar a few hours later. "Don't ever go flyer with Harry from Peace," she says, "He's shit at it."

After you'd drunk your mandatory two cans of K cider, you'd be staggering off to the Adam & Eve, where you'd see Carl Griffen (drums) up in the booth, DJing his UK garage and R&B classics, hitting you with DJ Luck & MC Neat when you least expected it.

All four of Superfood were there, but you'd only have seen the individual elements,

because at that point they still weren't together. "We'd get drunk, talk excitedly about music, and shout in each other's ears for about 18 months that we were gonna form a band," says Dom. "But somehow it never seemed to happen."

Theirs was a classic bumble of missed connections and general slackness. Superfood's loping sound, the sloshy guitars and stream-of-unconsciousness lyrics: they're not entirely an artfully dishevelled act. They are genuinely happy-go-lucky, and for a long time, that meant they sat round in Brum,

being happily go-nowhere. They watched from the sidelines as first Wide Eyed, then their pals in Peace, then their other pals in Swim Deep, zoomed down the M40 into the world of showcase gigs, label deals, success. But it took them longer to get it together. Now, they've finally got their shit sorted out. They've even

found their way round to making an album. It's called 'Don't Say That'. And a tour. It's the NME New Breed Tour, with Honeyblood. The Brum leg is sold out. Finally, the slackest of hometown unicorns are coming home.

It's a validation Superfood are very keen





NO BAD BLOOD

Honeyblood embark on the NME New Breed Tour with a brand new drummer. David Renshaw chats to singer Stina Tweeddale about the new chapter

Stina, the NME New Breed Tour will see you playing with new drummer Cat Myers, and Superfood. Is touring the best way to make new friends?

Stina: "Yeah, totally! You find out weird quirks about people and their weird attributes. I just learned that Cat loves cats, like a lot. Everywhere we go she's swapping cat pictures with our support bands and fans."

Why did Shona [McVicar, ex-drummer who quit in September] leave the band?

"Being in a band is really not as glamorous as everybody thinks and touring is hard. Shona made the decision that she didn't want to do it any more. You need to be really into this to do it and she just wasn't, so

she decided not to continue. She was feeling it wasn't for her for quite a while."

What are you most looking forward to on the NME New Breed Tour?

"People know the songs and we have had people singing along, which is fun. Cat has a lot of energy so we're playing faster and harder now. I'm into it, it's really fun to play like that. Me and Cat have been jamming too, so I would love to play new songs. I'm always writing."



"I felt I'd found someone I could relate to"

Ryan Malcolm, guitar

on, because none of them have ever had much by way of a back-up plan. No-one here ever made plans to go to university. Ryan's longest stint in employment was working in a Wacky Warehouse as an adult cheerleader shepherding kids through rooms full of colourful plastic balls. "I've never thought much about the future," Ryan says. "I was always just happy to be doing whatever I was doing." Dom was at least doing the mixing desk at Birmingham's O2 Academy: "They'd put me on these endless six-band metal shows." Emily was the receptionist in a hairdresser's. Carl was investigating lorry-driving apprenticeships with Eddie Stobart. They kept their heads down and lived for the weekend.

Superfood began at 4am on a Sunday, after one such Wall Saturday, as a jam between Dom and Ryan in Dom's

bedroom. Seven hours later, they were still playing. In the intervening hours, a range of characters, including Doug from Peace, had come through, inspected their output, and pronounced that they should "definitely be doing something" together.

Dom: "We'd talked about doing something together for ages. But that was when we suddenly felt obligated to make it happen. The next week we pencilled in a practice."

"Yeah, we, er... pencilled something in within our busy schedules of doing nothing!" Ryan says, grinning. The room laughs with him. "It felt like I'd found someone I could actually relate to, musically. It was a sense of relief as much as anything, that I could relax in myself and share all of these ideas with someone who actually got them."

The first song they wrote at that first practice was 'Superfood', and they named themselves after it, following unsuccessful stints as Baby 100 and Junnk. A mumbly ode to the munchies, it defies all syntax in its commitment to avoiding emotional truths. It's not quite Fildar-level wake, bake, skate professional retardation. But there's always a kind of wilful immaturity, a quite brazen lightness to what they do. "A lily for your pad, I'd like to sing about all the things I've never had" is the sort of gnomonic utterance they specialise in. No-one here is Morrissey. No-one is even Liam Gallagher.

"There's always been something a bit coy in how we've written the words," Dom admits. "Certainly, in the early days, no-one wanted to stick their 'my heart is bleeding in this coldest of winters' kind of stuff on the line."

There's something very English in leaning on that level of emotional detachment. Like the hook in 'TV': "I could never sleep without

the TV on", a state we've all found ourselves in at one point or another: hooked to the hamster-wheel of stimulus to avoid thinking. They take their feelings and refract them through modern life, modern stuff, in a way that Damon Albarn did best in Blur's early days. There's a jaded la-la-la-not-listening quality that's somewhere between 'There's No Other Way' and the consumerist snark of 'Blue Jeans'.

They're not capital-P political. "I'm not sure I trust people who feel like they know all the answers," says Dom. They're not capital-E emotional either. They're a party band of messy fun-times and arrested adolescence. But, somewhere in there, they've buried a few nuggets of their inner steel. "I think if there's a lyric on the album that really brings it all home for me, it's on 'You Can Believe'," says Ryan. "I thought I'd let you know that I'm not coming back for winter". It's the idea of burning your bridges, making it happen." And that is as close to a manifesto as you'll get from them. Superfood were lost, now they're found. The Wall is dead, no more than a hazy memory involving cidery shoe-vom for those who were there. Their old haunt the Adam & Eve has been taken over by a new crew. "It got really rough," says Dom. "Like, I read the other day that three people got stabbed in there."

What, like, all at the same time?

"Uhh... yeah. I mean, that's how I imagine it in my head," he says. "Just them standing in a row then someone going over and pricking them, like sausages under a grill." Superfood laugh. They're not above having a giggle. ■

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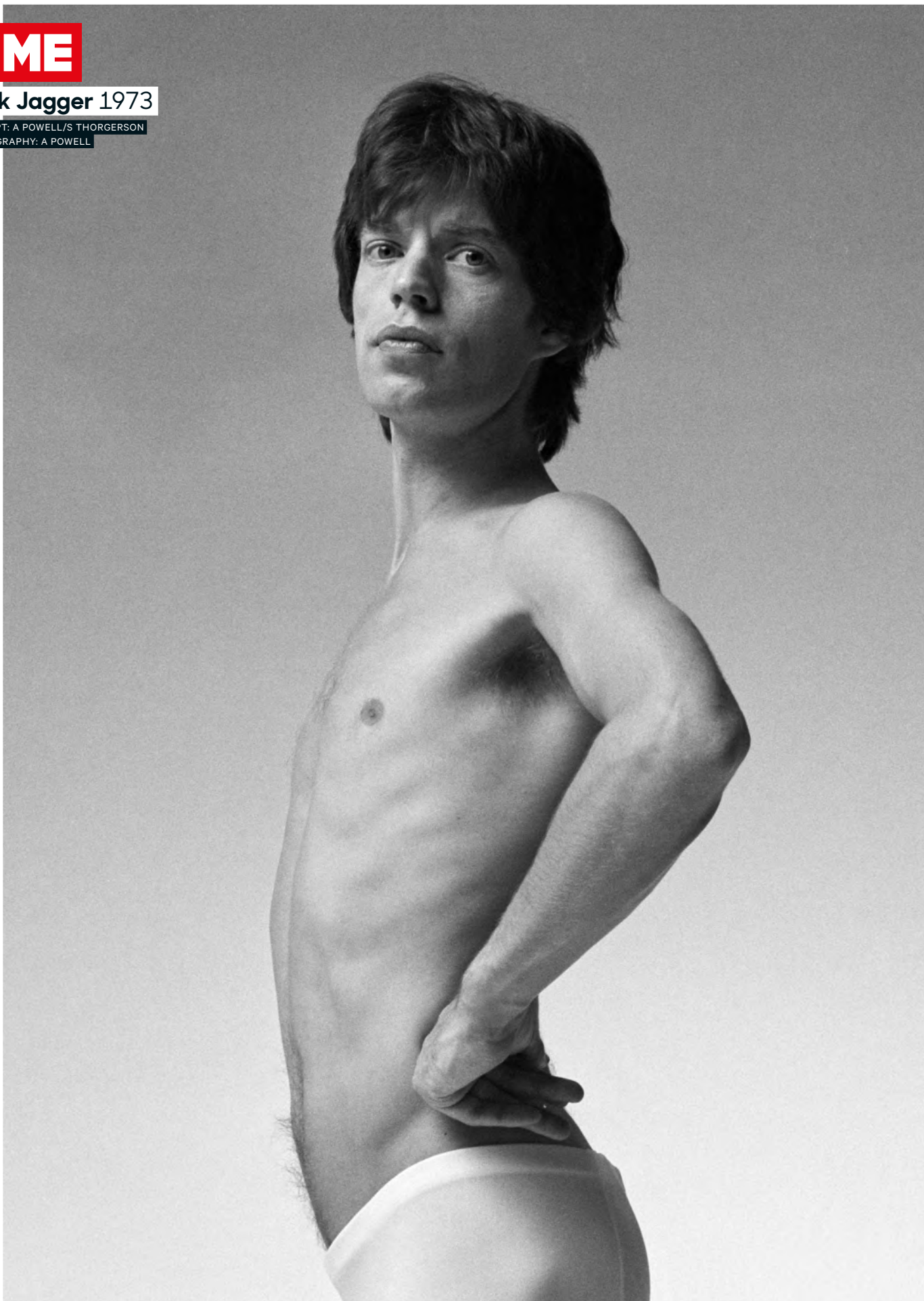
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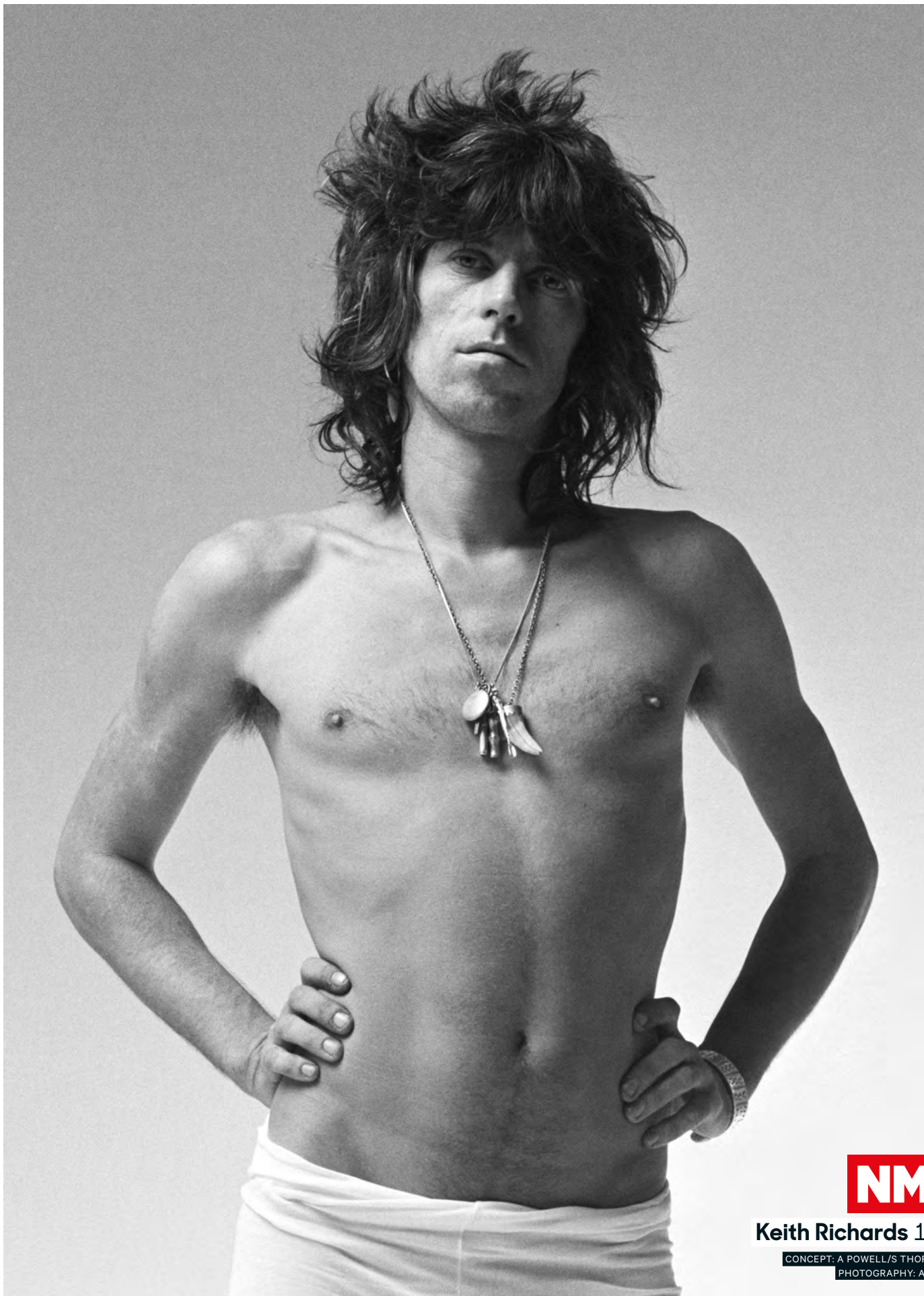
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Mick Jagger 1973

CONCEPT: A POWELL/S THORGERSON
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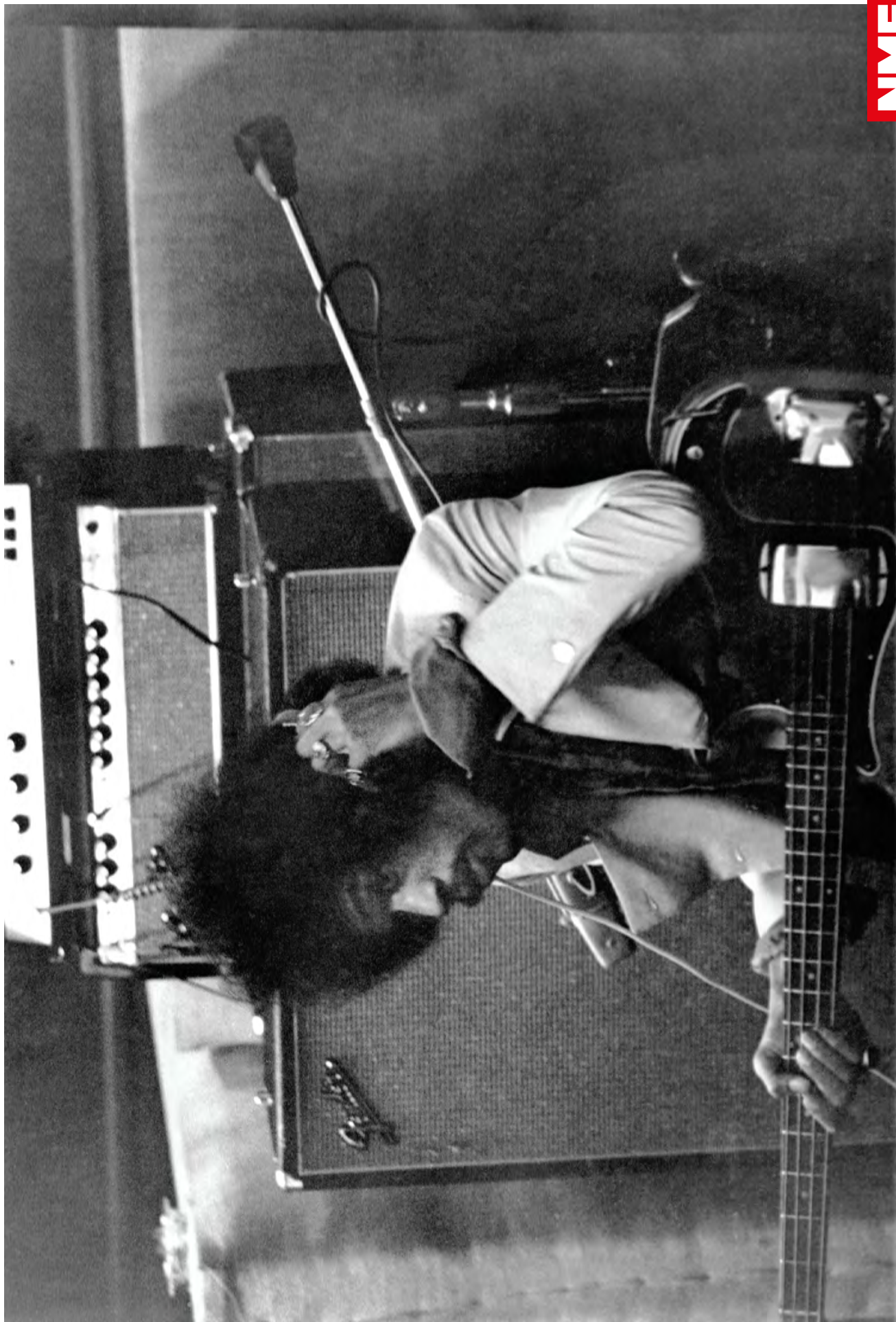


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Keith Richards 1973

CONCEPT: A POWELL/S THORGERSON
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Jimi Hendrix 1967

CONCEPT & PHOTOGRAPHY: A POWELL

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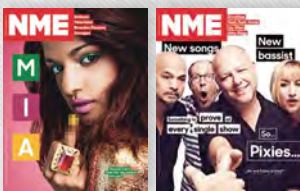
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**"I'm very suspicious
of fame."**

**The whole pumping
mess of it,
it's disgusting"**

39

It's not fame-averse Kate Tempest's week: the Mercury Prize, a much-praised new collection of her poetry and a UK tour mean all eyes are on the south London rapper. Jazz Monroe finds her well clear of her comfort zone at an Oxford literary salon

PHOTOS BY JENN FIVE

As Oxford slips into its autumn cardigan, a ragtag clan of poets, students, artists and scholars fills a basement just off the cobbled high street. Sat on fold-up chairs, the congregation sips wine and spills opinions on Kate Tempest, the former battle-rapper who's rocked up to Modern Art Oxford to perform poems from her new, fiercely political collection, *Hold Your Own*. In a roomful of studious oddballs, she stands out like a lighthouse, face illuminated by permanently astonished eyes. Things get surreal when, to nobody's horror, her compère takes the stage and wails a poetic tribute to a suicidal pomegranate. It's safe to say we're miles from the south London enclaves she haunted as a teenager.

The last month has been a whirlwind for Tempest. First came the Mercury Prize nomination for her hip-hop debut 'Everybody Down'. It's a concept album to spar with The Streets' 'A Grand Don't Come For Free', ➔

refining her freestyling into observations as sharp as her high-end coke-pushing characters' suits. The record won comparisons to Jamie T and Mike Skinner – who recently gave album track 'Circles' a clubland remix – but bar-for-bar she out-rhymes either. And the right people know it: a day after the Mercury nod she became a Next Generation Poet, one of 20 pioneers chosen each decade to mark the UK and Ireland's poetry vanguard. Next year, Bloomsbury publishes her first novel, *The Bricks That Built The Houses*, and Kate, at last, feels vindicated. "I'm in a new place," she later admits. "I'm a poet, a writer, and I can say that still with a shiver of nerves and excitement."

The novel follows her self-published debut poetry collection, *Everything Speaks In Its Own Way, Hold Your Own*, edited by literary heavyweight Don Paterson OBE. Like Kate, he left school at 16 before getting a Next Generation nod. It's framed by a colloquial modern take on Tiresias, the blind prophet of Thebes who spent seven years as a woman. But its themes transcend stuffy ancient texts, drifting through personal trials of young love and gender confusion.

Vital are comic breaks like 'These Things I Know', a playful life-mantra full of arch one-liners: "Don't read women's magazines/They're bad for your stomach", reads one. Chatting before the show, I tell her that, at times, the poem reads like a potential hit single.

She stares back, frozen, before practically laughing herself off the chair.

"I don't think so, man," she replies, catching her breath. "Besides, I'm very suspicious of fame. The whole pumping mess of it, it's disgusting.

To be famous kind of means to be dumb and beautiful and throwaway, right?" She grins. "Hopefully I'm none of those things."

Earlier that day, wearing battered blue Nikes, Kate paces her hotel

library. She beckons through French doors to a secluded courtyard. "I'll be able to smoke out here," she mutters, sliding a liquorice-skinned roll-up from behind her ear. Something about the tranquility unsettles her. As the accolades pile up, Kate's diary bulges. Most excitingly, rumours link her with legendary producer Rick Rubin, who was spotted chilling with Frank Ocean at her album launch this May.

Despite keeping tight with 'Everybody Down' producer Dan Carey (the pair just recorded six new songs) she's receptive when asked about a full album with Rubin. "I'd be up for it," she says, smiling mysteriously, "if the opportunity came up." How far along is it? She laughs. "I'm not sure how much I can say. But he's a great guy. He's Yoda, isn't he? It's like getting a pat on the back from God. At the moment we're just talking. If we can work together, it'd be life-changing. But I'm speculating as much as you are." Is that true? "Could be," she says, and giggles privately.

In moments of

vulnerability, Kate reveals something alien to her stage persona: a defeated posture, deep pink rings round her eyes. She wears a pair of necklaces – a tiny pocket-watch and a heart – and her "writing arm" bears two tattoos: one of waves laced in cherry blossom; the other, 'India' in childish scrawl. It's the handiwork of her wife, who carved her name into Kate's forearm during an

intense Vermont session. The ensuing poem, simply called 'India', encapsulates 'Hold Your Own's' 'Womanhood' chapter, a tender and hilarious coming-of-age suite full of abrupt encounters with romance and sexuality. But while 'Womanhood' is Kate's most personal

THE STORY SO FAR

► **NAME** Kate Esther Calvert
► **Born** December 22, 1985, Brockley, south London

CV

► **2001** First performed at an open mic night, age 16
► **2008** Forms a band called Sound Of Rum
► **2012** Debuts epic poem, 'Brand New Ancients'. Publishes poetry collection *Everything Speaks In Its Own Way*
► **MAY 2014** Releases debut album, 'Everybody Down'
► **SEPTEMBER 2014** Nominated for Mercury Prize

ROOTS MANUVA ON KATE THE RAPPER

"Her works are truly of upliftment and betterment."

DON PATERSON OBE ON KATE THE POET

"It felt like listening to something that was new and old at the same time. An interesting thing about rap and hip-hop is that it's Anglo-Saxon poetry all over again – basically four-beat poetry to drum accompaniment. And you couldn't mistake the audience's reaction; she was electrifying them. It's sort of a return to the poetry of moral exhortation, in the best possible way. She does it like a revivalist preacher. It'll be interesting to see what her fanbase make of *Hold Your Own*. Potentially she could open up a whole new audience for poetry that no-one else has tapped into."



look at femininity, it's not her first.

At the 'Everybody Down' launch party, Kate spat a freestyle that slammed friends who warn her off hip-hop's misogyny, rapping, "I'm a true woman/I know my true worth". On 'Everybody Down', that energy fizzles into protagonist Becky, a hard-pressed student and late-night masseuse. "It's quite a rare articulation, the strength of mind of a woman who works in the sex industry," Kate muses. "Especially in songs, it's usually this terrible tragedy that a woman has ended up there. I'm not saying that darker side doesn't exist – it fucking does, and it's terrifying – but Becky is based on a real person who I know very well. She works in those industries, and she loves it and feels empowered. It's easy to judge things we don't understand."

Another puzzle piece in Kate's deconstruction of social prejudice came in 2013, when she took *The Glasshouse*, a 'forum theatre' play in which viewers come onstage and discuss what went wrong, to Holloway women's prison. Since then, the Tory government has introduced a policy drastically restricting prisoners' access to books and guitars. It's a regulation that Kate, alongside author Salman Rushdie and poet laureate Carol Ann Duffy, strongly fought. "It's absolutely horrific," she says. "It's a fucking fallacy that there's this clear distinction of right and wrong. People in dire, dire poverty end up in situations beyond their control. People need to take responsibility for their actions, but why punish their humanity? We've taken their liberty, that's enough."

Kate before
and after her
appearance
in Oxford, and
(below) paying
the price of fame



At 28, Kate is too self-aware to posture as “some highfalutin champion of youth”. Still, with her recent work addressing lifestyle consumerism and “*all-you-can-eat freedom*”, she’s become a reluctant mouthpiece for youth engagement. Although she won’t be drawn on specific issues, insisting that “my allegiances are clear in what I’m making”, she believes the motive behind the 2011 London riots was political, and that their proponents were subsequently “demonised”. She is dismayed by British party politics, but cites the impressive turnout in Scotland’s independence referendum as proof of youth activism’s backbone. That spirit infects ‘The Downside’, a poem from *Hold Your Own*’s dark final chapter, ‘Blind Profit’. In it, violent hordes harangue Tiresias for football tips and lottery draws – but the prophet can’t shake

right avenues – peace movements, demos, meetings – and it was just bullshit. Nothing fucking changed. We live in a time that’s beyond politics. Voting does nothing – we’re completely powerless. Now, the most exciting

visions of “*Their great-grandchildren/ripped to pieces by missiles*”.

“Like a lot of people, I feel petrified of the people in power,” she explains of her political stance. “Around the Iraq War, I became involved in what I thought were the

things feel so far away. Like right now, what’s happening? We’re going to war against the ‘Islamic State’, which I understand. But if we destroy the Islamic State, that makes it easier for the dictator in Syria to keep doing terrible things... d’you see what I’m saying? I can’t even hold it in my head. And that’s somebody who wanted to know. And we’re living under a Tory government who are privatising the NHS. This is all happening. Laws get shuffled through under the carpet while everybody reads about a missing kid. And there’s this scream of, ‘I don’t know where to put all of this energy!’”

Taking the stage in Oxford tonight, it’s clear she’s found her outlet. “I feel a bit out of my depth among all these scholars,” she tells the crowd, half-grinning. “But, er, does anyone else feel out of their depth?” The audience roars, and Kate laughs: “Why do we do it to ourselves?” Nerves settled, she rips into 15-minute opener

‘Tiresias’. She has a manic, inspired gaze, watching each new verse bear down from her own private horizon. During finale ‘These Things I Know’, the crowd, from tipsy academics to gum-chewing lurkers, are captivated, going from tenterhooks to raucous laughter. After a packed book signing Kate dives into a cab, exhausted. Suspicious, the driver eyes her half-drunk bottle. “If I put my thumb in the top, I promise I won’t spill a drop!” she raps, half-accidentally, and she lets it all out as we speed off over the cobbles. ■

“I feel petrified by the people in power. I’m so lost with this stuff”



and reliable changes that can happen are the changes within individual people. We can’t engage in a political system that doesn’t exist for us.” Who does it exist for? “I don’t know,” she admits. “Maybe for corporations? I haven’t studied political science, I don’t fucking know. It’s important that if you print any of this, you have to also print that I’m so lost with this stuff. I’m just a person with feelings. And

Smash

th

42

As Sleaford Mods come within “snatching distance of the keys to pop music’s executive toilets”, comedian Stewart Lee grills Jason Williamson and Andrew Fearn on what happens when shit turns into gold

PHOTOS BY ED MILES

e cistern



In April this year, I rammed my 46-year-old self into the 150-capacity 12 Bar Club in Denmark Street, Soho. Onstage, a tall, haunted man bobbed to the beats of his laptop like an ageing rave survivor lurking in a municipal park, and another twitched and ranted like the cash-cadging last-orders cokehead he might once have been. A conflagration of showbiz tastemakers and dedicated fans agreed that something superb was happening. Despite 33 years of weekly gig-going, I've rarely been in the right place at the right time. I may have missed the Sex Pistols at the Manchester Lesser Free Trade Hall in 1976, but I was there for Sleaford Mods at the 12 Bar Club in 2014. And now Sleaford Mods have descended upon me, like an enormous yes.

Jason Williamson, a brick-built office worker long marinated in quietly suppressed fury, started recording as Sleaford Mods in 2007, dropping dirty realist observations in a distinct East Midlands argot over home-grown sample-heavy slabs. Things stepped up a gear in 2011 when Andrew Fearn, a lanky laptop jockey with laughing eyes who lives in a perpetual state of secret amusement, arrived with his hydroponically nurtured musical hybrids, floppy dance rhythms cross-pollinated with Peely post-punk noise.

"When we first got together," recalls Williamson, "I just told him to make it faster and sound like the Wu-Tang Clan." "Jason was a bit suspicious of me," Fearn

remembers. "I'd make a mixtape with the Butthole Surfers and Abba on it. He didn't know what would work. I'd put a synth pad or something in and he'd say, 'No. Change that for a car alarm.'"

When I first heard Sleaford Mods' genre-collapsing speed-poetry I imagined I'd finally stumbled across young people making obviously contemporary records that nonetheless matched the incendiary energy of similarly smouldering sounds that had scorched me decades ago – The Specials, The Fall, Hüsker Dü, Conflict and Public Enemy. But the duo, it turns out, were in their early forties, having served long apprenticeships in the Nottinghamshire music scene: Fearn nurturing a larder of supposedly incompatible sources to draw upon; Williamson accruing a lifetime's supply of archly observed turns of phrase and awkward situations to concertina, cut-up style, into car-crash images of quiet desperation. "*I suck on a roll-up/Pull your jeans up/Fuck off!/I'm going home*" ('Jobseeker' from 'Chubbed Up +', 2014).

Jaded middle-class opinion-formers like me trip over themselves to declare Sleaford Mods the authentic voice of the English provincial working class, a bona-fide Prole Art Threat, to quote The Fall. In the 1930s, the American folk-song collector John Lomax employed the jailbird bluesman Lead Belly as a driver-come-butler while also recording his music, and there's something crass and telling about the way metropolitan media treats Sleaford Mods' distinctive voice, the sort rarely heard today outside of poverty-porn TV, as somehow exotic. But standing in the smokers' courtyard of a sensitively refitted olde London pub in newly gentrified Finsbury Park, the sort of disputed cultural territory Sleaford Mods regularly mock, it becomes clear these marginalised outsiders are within snatching distance of the keys to pop music's executive toilets. But will they smash up the cistern or just redecorate?

"Who gives a fuck about yesterday's heroes, who seem to think that they are still today's heroes?/It's not a pyramid, you're not a fucking pharaoh"

'Pubic Hair Ltd', 'Austerity Dogs', 2013

"Johnny Borrell fucks off to an island for four months at the height of his fame/Was the country bothered? Was it fuck/He made a massively bad calculation, the thick cunt"

'6 Horsemen (The Brixtons)', 'Tiswas' EP, 2014

I put it to Sleaford Mods that, given the naked hostility they appear to display to identifiable individuals, they're lucky there is some separation between them and the characters that narrate the songs. The ungrateful house guest in 'You're Brave' (on this year's 'Divide And Exit') who ridicules Chumbawumba, secretly masturbates in his "*fucking tit-rifle*" host's toilet, and then nicks

his biscuits as some obscure act of social justice, is not the same person as the suddenly conscience-stricken drug consumer in 2011's 'Double Diamond', who takes issue with a dealer supplying to crack-addicted prostitutes.

So who is firing off these zeitgeist-derailing zingers and insulting all these pop stars? Is it Sleaford Mods themselves or a succession of different semi-fictionalised characters? Fearn gives an answer that I suspect is slightly off-message: "They're being insulted by us really, I think. But it's just a wind-up as well, pub humour, where you take the piss out of your mates." But how will their Holy Fool outsider act play if Sleaford Mods become massive? "It remains to be seen. But I've been thinking about that a lot lately," says Williamson, typically more pensive. "It's inevitable that you're sucked in."

Fearn is acutely aware of how success might change the duo, but is enjoying the ride. "Manchester last week was amazing. There was this whirlwind of young people, all crowdsurfing. Whatever is happening, it's here now. We just carry on doing what we do onstage, but you can't control how it's going to be perceived. We've been trying to do things the traditional way, and you get a reputation for being real and hanging out in the bar, but then there's kids everywhere wanting to talk to you and doing selfies..." He tails off. Williamson continues for him. "And you can't



Sleaford Mods
onstage in
Sheffield,
July 10, 2014

**"I don't want
to do what we
do to order"**

Jason Williamson

carry on. Sleaford Mods has been wrapped in an energy dictated by being in full-time work and having to dedicate 80 per cent of your life to something you don't like. But when that changes you have to see how it goes from there."

Williamson's quitting his job this month to be a full-time Sleaford Mod, but his stories are acutely informed by his workplace experiences, a strange mix of cynicism and empathy, contempt and pity. What will



Stewart Lee with
Jason Williamson
and Andrew
Fearn (right)

Swear to the throne

Sleaford Mods are the current kings of swearing. Here are five of their forebears

Philip Larkin

►CHOICE WORDS **Sunny Prestatyn** 1964, **This Be The Verse** 1971, **High Windows** 1974

The Hull poet punched through poetic convention with well-chosen expletives. “They fuck you up, your mum and dad/They may not mean to, but they do”.

George Carlin

►CHOICE WORDS **Seven Words You Can Never Say On Television** 1972

The brilliant American stand-up explores the cultural context of swearing. The seven words are ‘shit’, ‘piss’, ‘cunt’, ‘cocksucker’, ‘fuck’, ‘motherfucker’ and ‘tits’.

Crass

►CHOICE WORDS **Reality Asylum** 1979

Anarcho-punk pioneer Eve Libertine’s cut-glass voice intones a studiously blasphemous collage of holy imagery and feminist protest: “Fucklove prophet of death/ You sigh alone in your cockfear/ You lie alone in your cuntfear”.

John Cooper Clarke

►CHOICE WORDS **Evidently Chickentown** 1980

The punk poet’s howl against urban living is a versified fuckathon. “The fucking clocks are fucking wrong/The fucking days are fucking long/It fucking gets you fucking down/Evidently chickentown”.

The Opera Device

►CHOICE WORDS **Fuck Off You Cunt** 1993–97

Stockhausen soprano soloist Lore Lixenberg circled the fringe of the ‘90s comedy circuit crushing hecklers with operatic put-downs like ‘Fuck Off You Cunt’, composed by future *Jerry Springer: The Opera* creator Richard Thomas.

seven-inch reviews through ducts of newly minted critical theory. Today, Sleaford Mods are making pop music sturdy and significant enough to take the pounding of music writers’ art-crit ambitions. The car alarms and flushing toilets that Fearn chops into the tracks echo the unadorned urinal Marcel Duchamp dumped in an art gallery; writing in *The Wire*, the academic Mark Fisher offered analysis of Sleaford Mods informed by concerns about global capitalism. There are things here to wrap your brain around, to take to your heart. But Williamson is worried about how reading such criticisms might influence the duo’s work.

“I started to read Mark Fisher’s *Capitalist Realism* after he reviewed our album because I thought the way he explained it was really interesting. He’d seen stuff we hadn’t. But that kind of criticism makes you self-conscious. I don’t want to do what we do to order. Now I could probably reel off something that sounded like A-level government politics or whatever if I wanted to, but you are wary of doing that because a) it’s really fucking patronising and b) it sounds shit as well. It’s better to talk about the sociological things you’ve experienced in a ‘feet on the ground’ sense rather than an academic sense.”

While Sleaford

Mods’ feet are definitely on the ground, Williamson’s words and Fearn’s occasional psychedelic touches conjure a visionary mood.

‘Liveable Shit’, from ‘Divide And Exit’, is a key track. It begins with the scatological satirical bent of a *Viz* comic strip, describing Williamson’s daily workplace encounter with the same shitty smell and the co-worker responsible for it, then expands into a

critique of the shitiness of life, with David Cameron’s face “*hanging in the clouds like Gary Oldman’s Dracula*”, lyrical allusions to acid godfathers The Doors, and sudden watery sunspots of tonal backwash. William Blake saw heaven in a wild flower and eternity in a grain of sand. Williamson sees the world in an office toilet.

“‘Liveable Shit’ was based on seeing the same bloke in the same shirt going in the same toilet, where you spend most of the day, going backwards and forwards, drinking your coffee, in the same workplace at the same time every morning,” Williamson remembers. “And we didn’t get on anyway. I forget what his name was. He went for a job I was going for and he fucking got it. And he turned up the next day in these fucking trousers, rocker’s trousers – he was a rocker – and I went, ‘You got the fucking job!’”

Sleaford Mods’ age and cultural and geographical positioning fingerprint their work, making it quintessentially English and magically timeless, regurgitating decades’ worth of reference points while remaining utterly contemporary. The new single ‘Tiswas’ cites Chris Tarrant’s forgotten early-’80s comedy project OTT. And who talks about ‘rockers’ any more anyway? Mark Fisher pointed out that even the duo’s name seems like “vintage graffiti”, and I imagine it scrawled on an M6 motorway bridge sometime in the late ‘70s. Why Sleaford Mods?

“It was just random one night,” Williamson recalls. “The old engineer said, ‘You’ve got five or six tunes here that are all really good. You’re going to need a name sharpish.’ I was sat in the pub and it just popped out. I like the Mods thing. It’s not trying to be subtle. It’s just like someone shouting, ‘MODS!’” Why ‘Sleaford’, though, a small Lincolnshire market town? And then someone from *NME* uses the gents behind the window in the pub courtyard and triggers the flush cycle. When I transcribe the tape, the rest of Sleaford Mods’ conversation is masked by the sound of the gushing urinal. Beneath the

flow I can just make out Williamson’s still small voice, reaching back across the years. “I used to go to Sleaford, from Grantham, as a kid, with my parents, to go to the cinema and that. I saw *Superman* there, with Christopher Reeve. Sleaford was a real treat.” ■

Sleaford Mods write about now? Will they get angry with journalists and air travel like Kelly Jones on the third Stereophonics album? Fearn isn’t worried, and has touching faith in Williamson’s abilities to find friction in things “as simple as the coining of British phrases, like ‘you couldn’t make it up’. It’s such a British thing to say. Everything people say could be musical.”

“I always found it hard to write love songs,” confides Williamson, “with a bridge and a chorus. Then I stopped trying and it came easily. What’s interesting to me is the horribleness of everyday things, that ashtay on that table, the concrete on the floor, and I’ve been trying to hone in on that, thinking about what naturally comes out.” Williamson sees magical strangeness in the banal, and his apprehension of the ashtay echoes Jean-Paul Sartre’s horrified encounter with a doorknob in the existentialist classic *Nausea*.

Jean-Paul Sartre? Really? In the ‘80s, the music press creaked with such heavyweight cultural names, dropped into Bananarama

Lee and the
Mods in the
“disputed
cultural
territory” of
London N4



"I'M NOT JUST

MEAN MOUTH,

John Lydon's latest memoir reveals the childhood vulnerabilities that informed his Rotten worldview.

Charlotte Richardson Andrews finds him bemoaning his reputation – while reinforcing it, naturally

DEALING WITH A

SOME NASTY

If John Lydon's new autobiography reads like a series of transcriptions – complete with expletives, bad grammar and cockney colloquialisms – it's because that's more or less what it is. "I worked on *Anger Is An Energy* with a friend, [journalist] Andrew Perry. We did it by phone interviews over a couple of months. It might have been a bit rushed, not fully in depth, but let's face it: I don't want to threaten an audience with *War And Peace*."

Lydon is on the phone from his adoptive LA, where he's puffing away on cigarettes as the conversation unfolds. *Anger Is An Energy: My Life Uncensored* isn't his first autobiography, or even his second: there was 1993's *Rotten: No Irish, No Blacks, No Dogs*, followed by the limited-edition photo album *Mr Rotten's Scrapbook* in 2010. "This new one goes back into my childhood, to explain where I came

their first home in Benwell Road. But it's the physical and psychological repercussions of Lydon's battle with spinal meningitis, aged seven, and the subsequent year-long hospitalisation with amnesia following a coma, that dominate the ageing punk's story.

Medical treatment affected his posture and eyesight – producing the infamous Rotten glare. Once a bright student but now illiterate thanks to the amnesia, he became an outsider at school; a loner who preferred the solace and academic rehabilitation of public libraries. "Even at that early age, the [idea] of suicide is flirting around your head because you just can't bear not knowing who you are," he says. "It's an impenetrable problem."

It took four years for his memories to fully return. "From that point onwards, the sheer thrill of being alive was all-important. It's in my work and everything I do. The battle [is] to

I'M SOMEONE

from, my roots," he says. "Johnny Rotten didn't just walk into [Vivienne Westwood's Chelsea boutique] Sex and become lead singer of the Pistols – Johnny Rotten came from something."

That 'something' was an impoverished, crime-riddled Finsbury Park council estate, Six Acres – a community bustling with Arsenal hooligans and West Indian immigrants. It was there that Lydon – the son of working-class Irish parents – came of age to the sounds of reggae, glam and prog rock, going on to meet future collaborators Sid Vicious (named after the Lydon family's hamster) at an "approved day school for misfits" in Hackney, and Public Image Limited (PiL) cohorts Jah Wobble and Keith Levene, at Kingsway College and in the squatting scene respectively.

Lydon has never shied away from talking about his background, but the deprivation he describes in the book is grim – including a graphic account of having to flush away his mother's miscarriage in an outdoor toilet at

explain and share with people that this is not just some nasty mean mouth, this is someone dealing with a lot of issues."

Lydon made his legend on the Sex Pistols anthems that eviscerated 1970s middle England's God-fearing, royalty-worshipping patriotism, and PiL's influential, experimental post-punk noise. But what emerges in *Anger...* is a singer who's spent life grappling with a profound sense of vulnerability.

Drawn to singing from an early age but wary of the priests who ran his Catholic primary school choir, Lydon learnt to perfect the art of "un-singing". He describes finding his voice fronting the Sex Pistols as "pure hell" for the young, self-conscious vocalist. After the Pistols, the problem persisted. During PiL's 1986 tour, Lydon insisted the band open their sets with a cover of Led Zeppelin's 'Kashmir', but would hang back in the wings, too scared to sing.

Decades on, his relationship with his voice is still fraught. "Oh, absolutely," he says. "Self- ➔

A LOT OF ISSUES"

The Pistols in 1975 at a pub
in Chiswick, west London
where they rehearsed.
(Below) Lydon as a child,
pre-meningitis

doubt to the max. I can't eat before gigs. But once I go on, and get that first line in, there it is. I may not be the most technically gifted singer, but I know what I feel and how to express it."

Lydon says being demonised by the press in the '70s was "no bad thing" and helped to hype the Pistols – but *Anger...* paints a frequently miserable image of infamy: incessant police raids on his Chelsea home, hounding by the tabloids and little support from the Pistols' record labels: "They wanted me to perfect the monster, but the monster was a myth."

Does he feel misunderstood? "Yes. I am vulnerable. I can't help it – I'm in the public eye. I've built up a very good defence in Johnny Rotten over the years, but unfortunately that's been interpreted as arrogance, which of course it's not. It's a self-defence mechanism which I had to adopt because of those early years."

Perhaps his most frank admission in *Anger...* is that he "needs to learn to like" himself. "We all do, all of us humans. But it's part of the joy of life too, when you overcome that enough to put yourself into a microphone."

In among the fond remembrances of the music that shaped him – Can, Alice Cooper,

Nico, Sly & Robbie, Lee 'Scratch' Perry – there is, unsurprisingly, a fair amount of bile in *Anger...*, directed at familiar targets: late Pistols manager Malcolm McLaren ("He really didn't want to move mountains, he wanted to rearrange piles of glitter"), the Pistols themselves ("we were all damaged goods"), Levene (very talented "but still a cunt"), Wobble (a money-grabber who he alleges "stole" backing tracks from PiL's 'Metal Box' to use for his own solo material), Joe Strummer ("out to grab himself a crown").

"I don't have any time for hate," Lydon insists, despite some 500 pages to the contrary. "Anger is my energy, but hate is so akin to love that it becomes kind of pointless. Even my so-called enemies, people like Malcolm – I mean, I miss him like mad."

The internal politics of Britain's '70s punk scene are a world away from Lydon's life in LA, where he's spent the last 25 years with his wife Nora Forster, keeping busy with film and TV appearances. "I'm not ill here like I was all the time in London," he says. "The meningitis means I'm prone to bronchitis, flus, colds. I've had pneumonia three times. I'm not into that dark basement living. It can make you ugly,

despondent and suicidal. And we know how many stupid rock deaths come out of England."

Lydon's lost ones are chronicled with gritty tenderness in the book: Sid Vicious, Poly Styrene of X-Ray Spex (a "borderline genius") and his stepdaughter Ari Up, frontwoman of punk-reggae outfit The Slits, who died in 2010 leaving two sons, Pablo and Pedro, who had been brought up in Lydon and Nora's care.

"We still haven't come to grips with her loss," he rues. "The night before she died, me and Nora went to visit her, and we sat around the bed and sang together – PiL songs! We were a family."

He's yet to read Slits guitarist Viv Albertine's memoir *Clothes, Clothes, Clothes, Music, Music, Music, Boys, Boys, Boys*, which details the group's early days supporting the Pistols and The Clash, but recalls The Slits with great admiration. "It was so important that girls stood up onstage when punk started, the equal of any of the fellas. What a glorious time. I was very angry at Jon Savage for his book *England's Dreaming*. He didn't seem to notice that aspect of punk."

Lydon believes the music press

is equally remiss when it comes to honouring just how subversive the Pistols were in their prime. "It amazes me when I see these all-time top albums lists, and 'Never Mind The Bollocks' is hovering around Number 10, 15 or even 20. This is a band that pushed it so far we were

discussed in Parliament under the Treason Act, you know?"

In many ways, Lydon is a product of a country that doesn't exist any more – an England of black-and-white TV, outdoor toilets, corporal punishment in schools, WWII bombsites-turned-playgrounds. But the class system prevails, he points out, the Coalition leaders in Britain

"Johnny Rotten is a self-defence mechanism"

John Lydon

being essentially "two cunts for the price of one". It's unlikely he'll be returning to Blighty in his dotage: "Why would I live in a country where there would be no pension for me?"

His eyesight is deteriorating – and not, as he claimed last year, as a result of internet porn. "If I had an option between losing my sight or my hearing, I'd choose my ears. Isn't that odd, for a singer? I just can't bear the idea of not being able to see Nora's face." He's suspicious of laser surgery, choosing instead to wear two pairs of glasses to read, resulting in terrible headaches. But books, his childhood salvation, are a pleasure he refuses to abandon, as is music.

He's amassed 2,000 pages of notes for the new PiL album, but any solid themes are yet to emerge. "I know once I get in there with the lads it'll all go out the window," he says. "It'll be the thrill of seeing each other again. They're the best people I've ever worked with."

"The lads" are guitarist Lu Edmonds, drummer Bruce Smith and bassist Scott Firth, who'll reconvene at the same Cotswolds

barn where 2012's 'This Is PiL' was produced, before their first London show in December at O2 Indigo. "We're recording in November, so we'll be running around in very sensible jumpers." He's ageing gracefully, then – no safety-pin numbers? "Disgracefully, in all ways. There's none of that 'I hope I die before I get old' with me. I want to be very, very old. Acting your age is a bollocks idea we all get taught. One, I can't act; and two, what's my age got to do with anything? I'll be making music until the day I die." ■

THE LOVES & LOATHING OF LYDON

Loves
Nora Forster, his wife of 30 years

"The love of my life."

Expat life in LA

"It was here in California that I got into my nature side, the love of the wildlife. Mainly, living here is all about the ocean. I just love the sound of the sea... it clears your head."

Disco

"Disco sucks? You never heard that from me. Whoever wrote the punk manifesto wasn't listening to the actual punks – them what started all this."

Jessie J

"She's god's gift to songwriting."



Hates
Modern football

"£75 a ticket these days, to go to Arsenal? For that money, you should get to have sex with all the footballers' wives!"

Jon Savage's 1991 book England's Dreaming

"He was a complete outsider, not much to do with it at all. Savage's view of the world was Gang Of Four, smug, in-house student intellectualism. And all this coming out of the word-smith genius of an ex-lawyer."

Toothbrushes

"Yes, I remain Rotten to the last – a reluctant tooth-brusher. I know it's a stupid move but there it goes."

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HULL, CITY HALL
07.03.15
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09.03.15
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10.03.15
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Reviews

► THE DEFINITIVE VERDICT ■ EDITED BY BEN HOMEWOOD

NME
ALBUM
OF THE WEEK



Hookworms The Hum

The cosmic crew from Leeds update last year's brilliant debut with a tougher, richer psychedelic sound



think that our music works its way into our 'hosts' and grinds them down from the inside, bludgeoning them into submission with repetition and noise."

It proved to be a prophetic statement as the Leeds five-piece went on to release 'Pearl Mystic', last year's excellent album, on tiny but respected Nottingham-based indie Gringo. Without a marketing campaign behind it (or a Mercury Prize submission), the record did indeed become hookworm-like – squirming its way inside bodies

► After Hookworms released their self-titled debut EP in 2011, MB, the band's bassist, said: "The hookworm is a parasite that lives inside its chosen host, sucking blood and damaging the small intestine, and can occasionally lead to death if not treated properly. We'd like to

and minds by word of mouth – and although there was something cocksure about MB declaring that their music would "bludgeon hosts into submission", no-one seemed more surprised by the success of 'Pearl Mystic' than Hookworms themselves. They said they genuinely had no idea whether the album was any good and also that their band was, and remains, a hobby.

'Pearl Mystic' inadvertently hit the zeitgeist. The group have nothing to do with Tame Impala, or Goat, or Temples, but they got caught up in a fresh appetite for psychedelia, hoisting them further into the limelight than they seemed comfortable with (for all its sonic malevolence, 'Pearl Mystic' is ostensibly an album about frontman/producer MJ's battle with depression) and leading to heightened anticipation for 'The Hum', their second LP and first for Domino imprint Weird World.

Now, they have a bigger recording budget, new gear and a forthcoming marketing campaign, but to

know Hookworms is to know a band with a strong sense of DIY ethics. There is no showboating or ostentatiousness on 'The Hum'; it's a different record to 'Pearl Mystic', but also a logical continuation and, in some ways, a companion piece. On 'Pearl Mystic', ambient, instrumental tracks that were crucial to

HOOKWORMS' MJ ON...

Having an audience

"It's weird, because you start overthinking things; you think, 'Is this what I would have done if no-one had cared about the first record?' But we've made 'The Hum' in the same way we would have if we were unknown. It's now a natural thing."

The band's ethics

"We come from a strong DIY background. We can't self-identify as a DIY band any more, but we understand what it means. It's about making sure you're decent to other people and you don't step on other people to get what you want."

Depression

"I feel like it's still pretty stigmatised, but I don't have a problem talking about it because it's just a health issue. I found it quite embarrassing to begin with, but I'm more open now. One of the things with depression is you bottle all these things up, and I was definitely doing that."

more upbeat and riotous because it signals his victory over illness. The opening track is called 'The Impasse', suggesting deadlock, and the most sober moment, 'Off Screen', talks about "drowning in *absent desire*". These songs are exceptions, however. 'On Leaving' works around a refrain of "I figured it out" and on 'Radio Tokyo' (a re-recorded pre-album single), MJ sings about how "nostalgia digs me out". You sense his joy, and joy in the band. You want Hookworms to succeed, and they do; 'The Hum' is all feel, no bullshit, and it truly gets under your skin.

■ PHIL HEBBLETHWAITE

► THE DETAILS

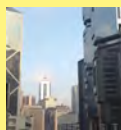
► RELEASE DATE November 10 ► LABEL Weird World ► PRODUCER MJ
► LENGTH 35.96 ► TRACKLISTING ►1. The Impasse ►2. On Leaving
►3. IV ►4. Radio Tokyo ►5. Beginners ►6. V ►7. Off Screen ►8. VI
►9. Retreat ► BEST TRACK On Leaving

9

MORE ALBUMS

Dirty Beaches

Stateless Zoo Music



Alex Zhang Hungtai's last release as Dirty Beaches,

2013's double album 'Drifters/Love Is The Devil' was discordant, rambling and unstructured. The 34-year-old's music is the product of a somewhat rootless life. Born in Taiwan, he was raised in Montreal and has recently drifted around Europe. 'Stateless' comprises four instrumentals mixed by David Lynch collaborator Dean Hurley. 'Displaced' offers a jittery appetiser before the title-track – an 11-minute surge of piercing strings, brass and synthesizer. 'Pacific Ocean' is warmer but 'Time Washes Away Everything' creates an indelible bleak atmosphere for 15 minutes. 'Stateless' is impeccably executed, but also unsettling to the point of off-putting.

■ BEN HOMEWOOD

6

The Chills

The BBC Sessions

Fire

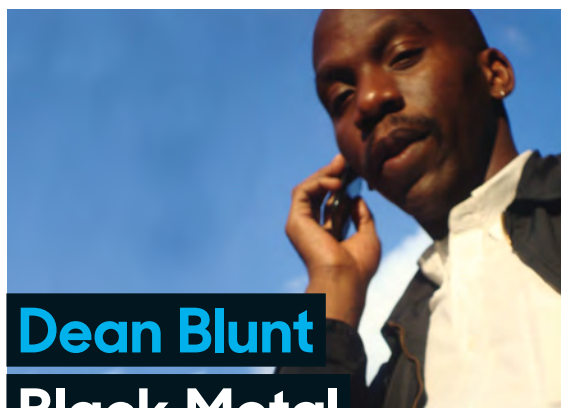


Like many of the bands John Peel uncovered, The Chills

hadn't released an album the first time the DJ invited them to play a session in 1985. The Dunedin five-piece breezed through 'Rolling Moon', their 1982 debut single on iconic New Zealand label Flying Nun. The band then developed a Fall-like predilection for personnel changes, with founder and frontman Martin Phillipps the axis. But the consistency of this rundown of three years' worth of sessions is remarkable, with 1987's sublimely delicate 'Moonlight On Flesh' the highlight. This compilation may only offer a limited snapshot of the Dunedin sound, but rarities like the unreleased 'Christmas Chimes' make it worth the trip.

■ HAZEL SHEFFIELD

8



Dean Blunt Black Metal

The enigmatic Hackney prankster outdoes himself with a fantastically complex new album

► This second solo album from former Hype Williams man Dean Blunt is easily the most ambitious record he's ever made. 2013's 'The Redeemer' was impressive, but full of the easily recognisable lo-fi dub, rap, krautrock and R&B sounds carried over from his work with Inga Copeland in his previous band. It felt a little like the subversive prankster from Hackney was running out of ideas. 'Black Metal' however, is a tour de force that obliterates its predecessor. Jangly opener 'Lush' features vocalist Joanne Robertson and sounds like The Brian Jonestown Massacre, as does '100'. Elsewhere, there are excursions into electronic jazz ('Hush', 'Grade'), soulful mixtures of folk and hip-hop ('50 Cent', 'Blow') and noisy, unclassifiable flights of fancy ('Country', 'Hush'). 'Forever' and 'X' form an epic centrepiece, two tracks that merge into a dirge of saxophones, broken beats and maudlin piano, ending with Blunt lamenting, "He ain't never coming back". Complex, original and even sincere, it's a brilliant new departure. ■ HUW NESBITT

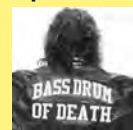
9

► THE DETAILS

► RELEASE DATE November 3 ► LABEL Rough Trade ► PRODUCER Dean Blunt ► TRACKLISTING ►1. Lush ►2. 50 Cent ►3. Blow ►4. 100 ►5. Heavy ►6. Molly & Aquafina ►7. Forever ►8. X ►9. Punk ►10. Country ►11. Hush ►12. Mersh ►13. Grade ► BEST TRACK X

Bass Drum Of Death

Rip This Innovative Leisure



John Barrett's third full-length as Bass Drum

Of Death is a garage-rock juggernaut bursting with fuzzed-out riffs. The power-chord swagger of 'Electric' and the pace of 'Everything's The Same' are emblematic of much of the album, positioning the Mississippi native in a rowdy middle

ground between Ty Segall's psych-punk and Fu Manchu's stoner rock. When the energy runs out, though, the record stumbles – two-minute acoustic number 'Better Days' feels like an afterthought, while 'Route 69 (Yeah)' is an unengaging closer that lacks the vigour of its obvious Stooges influence. Ultimately, though, 'Rip This' prevails through sheer bloody-minded ear battering.

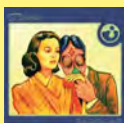
■ JAMES BENTLEY

7

Reviews

Together Pangea

Badillac Harvest/Island



Everything about Together Pangea screams 'just

another bunch of plaid-shirted fuck-ups'. It's there in the stoner song titles ('Sick Shit', 'Cat Man') and the dead-eyed lyrical anger: "I'm so tired of being tired/ I just spend to get spent", goes 'Why'; 'Depress' just yells its title over and over again. But the LA trio's debut has more variety in its 11 tracks than their thrashy garage peers like Wavves can muster. The bounce of 'River' nods to fellow West Coast slackers Fidler, but 'Alive', with its Sabbath-like ferocity, shows off their heavy side and the title track is – surprisingly – an acoustic lift. Together Pangea may well be snotty punks at heart, but they've got an impressive range of ways to show it. ■ LISA WRIGHT

7

Various

Psych For Sore Eyes 2

Sonic Cathedral



This second instalment in Sonic Cathedral's occasional

compilation series follows last year's snapshot of modern psych with another excellent double seven-inch. John Dwyer of The Oh Sees' new project Damaged Bug present the trippy 'Pet Programs And Games', while fellow Californians White Fence and Morgan Delt capture acid riffs and loops on humming eight-track. NYC's Psych Ills ply slow-burning desert rock ('Come Around') that's out-mellowed by Prayer Meeting's 'Black Echo (White Mountain)', and the instrumental 'Montelius Väg' from Sweden's Hills recalls Dungen and the Butthole Surfers. With its far-out artwork, this is truly a mantelpiece-worthy product of fluorescent kosmische.

■ EDGAR SMITH

8

The country star becomes a pop phenomenon on her flashy fifth album

Taylor Swift

1989

'1989' is Taylor Swift's radical reinvention: one to finally alienate her country audience and plant her flag firmly in pop soil. The lead single, 'Shake It Off', was no red herring. Swift produced '1989' with hitmaker Max Martin, the man behind Britney Spears' '...Baby One More Time', and her aim is fixed squarely on the pop throne recently vacated by the AWOL Rihanna.

She was made for it. The 24-year-old has sold over 30 million records worldwide; her last album, 'Red', sold 1.2 million in its first week, the highest US figures in a decade. Just last week her label mistakenly uploaded

eight seconds of hissing noise billed as 'Track 3' from '1989' and it shot straight to the top of the iTunes chart. She's outgrown her country roots (a process cemented by 2012 smash 'We Are Never Ever Getting Back Together'), become tabloid fodder and parked her guitar



THE DETAILS

► **RELEASE DATE** October 27 ► **LABEL** Big Machine ► **PRODUCERS** Max Martin, Taylor Swift ► **LENGTH** 48:46 ► **TRACKLISTING** ► 1. Welcome To New York ► 2. Blank Space ► 3. Style ► 4. Out Of The Woods ► 5. All You Had To Do Was Stay ► 6. Shake It Off ► 7. I Wish You Would ► 8. Bad Blood ► 9. Wildest Dreams ► 10. How You Get The Girl ► 11. This Love ► 12. I Know Places ► 13. Clean ► **BEST TRACK** Out Of The Woods

in favour of breathless dance routines, as evidenced in the controversial 'Shake It Off' video. This record has a concept, too: '1989', she told *Rolling Stone*, is named after "a very experimental time in pop music". It's also the year she was born.

But her fifth album isn't just a nostalgia trip. It's possible to plunder the '80s and still sound fresher than Charli XCX, as Swift did on 2012 B-side 'I Wish You Would', which ripped boxy beats and thick synths from Fine Young Cannibals' 1989 album 'The Raw & The Cooked'. The chiming synths of 'All You Had To Do Was Stay' could be Phoenix; and 'Style', so '80s-indebted with its thick piano-house and uplifting "Take me up" coda, echoes the retro-modern atmosphere conjured by the sleek cool of Electric Youth and Blood Orange.

Unlike them, though, Swift locates that sense of period without sacrificing the joy of the pop song: gloriously celebrating the Pennsylvania native's new hometown with OMD synth jabs on 'Welcome To New York', working Beastie Boys beats into a bitter stomp on 'Bad Blood' and shrugging off the paranoia of troubled love on the intense, Roxette-like chorus of 'Out Of The Woods'. Barring a late collapse into soft-rock mush on the drifting 'This Love' and weepy 'Clean', Swift's plunge into pop is a success.

■ MATTHEW HORTON

7

Richard Dawson

Nothing Important

Weird World



Since his 2007 debut, Newcastle songwriter Richard Dawson's reputation within the UK's underground folk scene has grown steadily. Now, after signing to Domino offshoot Weird World – home to Peaking Lights and Hookworms – it's set to mushroom. Yet 'Nothing Important' is his most challenging set so far,

its four songs including two instrumental showcases for his bizarre, nerve-jangling guitar style. The title track and 'The Vile Stuff' both stretch past the 15-minute mark, combing the margins of childhood memories with extreme lyrical and vocal intensity. Namechecks for Peter Beardsley and Peperami show eccentricity, but once you get used to his atonal delivery, Dawson emerges as a talented chronicler of the tiniest, realest details.

■ NOEL GARDNER

7

The Wharves

At Bay Gringo



This debut album from London trio The Wharves filters warm folk-rock through kaleidoscopic colours. Production from in-demand Warm Brains guitarist-turned-producer Rory Attwell (Veronica Falls, Mazes) means that 'At Bay' has one foot firmly planted in London's DIY scene, but its sound is more indebted to '60s girl groups and Nick

Drake's pastoral '70s folk. The melodies conjured by Dearbhla Minogue's guitar and Gemma Fleet's wafting basslines bind the record together, intertwining most notably on the hypnotic 'Turtleneck', while 'Left, Right And Centre' is reminiscent of Warpaint at their most accessible. But as the album progresses, the harmonies vanish, leaving a dearth of anything truly engaging – and, over 13 songs, it's a concept rolled wafer thin.

■ DAVID RENSHAW

6

Reviews

Wild Smiles

Always Tomorrow

Sunday Best



The Ramones surfing a tidal wave over Seattle on a stained

glass window ripped from the sonic cathedral. That's the sort of noise Wild Smiles have been going for in their Winchester practice shed since mid-2012, mangling the Mary Chain, Dinosaur Jr,

the Velvets, The Beach Boys and My Bloody Valentine into a gorgeous pop splurge. Driven by singer Chris Peden's break-up, 'Always Tomorrow' is defiantly upbeat. He takes on the rat race on the Nirvana-ish 'Never Wanted This' (*"I could wear a suit, a monkey in a suit to make some money... is that what you want?"*); pleads with his ex on 'Figure It Out'; and comes on like a bitter Facebook stalker on 'Girlfriend'. An inspired retro-pop mash.

■ MARK BEAUMONT

8

Deptford Goth

Songs 37 Adventures



'Life After Defo', south Londoner Daniel Woolhouse's

2012 debut, was beautiful and unnerving, and 'Songs' offers an expanded update on that album's whispered R&B. There's a pop muscularity to its dreamy melodics and elegiac lyrics, yet the emotive electronic patchwork of skulking romance and self-help affirmations sometimes

seems so delicate it could crack. On 'Do Exist', Woolhouse's fragile falsetto wraps itself around a sparse Casiotone backbone before building it into a velvety digi-ballad. The foreboding 'Dust' (*"soon we will be dust"*) eases into the stirring, loved-up 'Two Hearts', and there's a tough twinkle to 'A Circle'. Where Deptford Goth's debut thrived on lush experimentalism, 'Songs' takes a more traditionally structured path and is no less breathtaking.

■ LEONIE COOPER

8

Simple Minds

Big Music

Simple Minds



Recent years have seen bands like The Horrors and Manic

Street Preachers falling over themselves to acknowledge the influence of early Simple Minds, discreetly drawing a veil over all that late-'80s stadium bluster. Original members Jim Kerr and guitarist Charlie Burchill follow their lead here, with a 16th album that would slot smoothly into their glory days. There are traces of the overblown 'mini-U2' period in the vast title track and the rabble-raising cover of The Call's 'Let The Day Begin', but 'Blindfolded', 'Honest Town' (co-written with Chvrches' Iain Cook) and the addictive 'Human' hark back to 1981's 'Sister Feelings Call', a high-water mark for wide-screen synth-driven rock. That's the Simple Minds we want.

■ MATTHEW HORTON

7

Virginia Wing

Measures Of Joy Fire



When Virginia Wing appeared a couple of years back

they were a promising but rather dour psych band. Their sporadic singles have found them moving towards more colourful territory, but even so, 'Measures Of Joy' is a revelation. Foregrounding the dreamy, disconnected voice of singer Alice Merida Richards, the south London trio have blossomed with confidence, opening up their sound with palaces of reverb, synthesizer shimmers and a newly elastic rhythm section. The album springs surprises at every turn. The glittering sci-fi pop of 'World Contact' shoots through a wormhole of sonic tricks and twists, while the gentle refrain of tripped-out lullaby 'Juniper' (*"Trust in your medicine"*) is Mary Poppins with a spoonful of hallucinogens. Joy indeed, it's an audacious debut.

■ STUART HUGGETT

8

Arca

Xen

On his debut, the Kanye and Björk producer bares his soul but leaves the dancefloor cold

At the end of September it was announced that Arca – real name Alejandro Gherzi – had been working with Björk as co-producer on the follow-up to her 2011 album 'Biophilia'. With that in mind, it's difficult not to pick through the Venezuelan producer's debut album proper without looking for clues about what he might bring to Ms Guðmundsdóttir's table.

'Xen', however, wriggles out of such interpretation. Gherzi might have worked as a production hand for Kanye West and FKA Twigs, among others, but 'Xen' suggests he's hoping to cultivate a bold artistic vision of his own. The album's title is a reference to the 24-year-old's androgynous alter ego, a figure brought to life on the sleeve by a regular collaborator, artist Jesse Kanda. And while the record works with the materials of modern club music – a swirly palette of wobbly electronic melodies, stabbing strings and chunky drum pads – its sleepy pacing and abstract structures ensure it would die a death on most dancefloors.

This may set alarm bells



THE DETAILS

► LABEL Mute ► RELEASE DATE November 3 ► PRODUCER Arca
► TRACKLISTING ►1. Now You Know ►2. Held Apart ►3. Xen ►4. Sad Bitch
►5. Sisters ►6. Slit Thru ►7. Failed ►8. Family Violence ►9. Thievery
►10. Lonely Thugg ►11. Fish ►12. Wound ►13. Bullet Chained ►14. Tongue
►15. Promise ► BEST TRACK Lonely Thugg



ringing; it sounds like more post-Radiohead dance mithering made for sobbing by the smoke machine. And in places, 'Xen' falls into the trap of emoting but not communicating. You get the sense of Gherzi pouring heart and soul into the tired-eyed new age of 'Failed', or the wandering keyboards of 'Sisters', while struggling to really feel it yourself. His enthusiastic expressionism does hit as often as it misses, though. 'Fish' is all moody Aphex abrasion; 'Family Violence' ratchets a heady drama out of layer upon layer of stabbing violins; and 'Lonely Thugg' shapes a tender griminess out of spidery chords and sad synth. Meanwhile, the ghostly trap march of 'Thievery' and the strafing synths of 'Bullet Chain' confirm Gherzi can go hard when he chooses to.

So you leave 'Xen' with the sense of a raw vision still coming into focus. Perhaps the question is not what can Arca bring to Björk's ninth album, but what he can learn from her – about blending the experimental and the personal – along the way.

■ LOUIS PATTISON

6

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FILM

The Possibilities Are Endless

Moving documentary about former Orange Juice frontman Edwyn Collins' recovery from two strokes

When Edwyn Collins awoke from a coma after suffering two strokes in 2005, he could speak only a few words: "yes", "no", "Grace Maxwell" – his wife's name – and "the possibilities are endless". It's this mysterious last phrase – which, Maxwell jokes, is slightly less profound when you've heard it "85 times in a day" – that supplies Edward Lovelace and James Hall's new documentary with its title, though the former Orange Juice singer can only guess at its meaning now. Most probably, he says, it was a "good luck charm"; a motivational phrase repeated to assist his recovery from the strokes that left him with severe language difficulties, memory loss and partial paralysis. The 55-year-old Collins' subsequent rehabilitation has been little short of wondrous: he's now back to writing and performing his music live. Maxwell's role is inestimable, and it's their relationship that takes centre stage here.

Opening with archive footage of Collins at his suave best on the TV show *Late Night With Conan O'Brien* in 1995, the camera cuts away to plunge you into the nightmare of his post-stroke condition, using seemingly random imagery and landscape shots of his Scottish hometown to evoke the confusion he remembers feeling. It's a tough watch, skimming on biographical detail in favour of a more poetic approach, and the fictitious sub-plot in which his son William enjoys a romantic dalliance with Yasmin Paige



► DIRECTORS Edward Lovelace, James Hall
► IN CINEMAS November 7

(*Submarine*) only adds to the ambiguity. If it's a portrait of the man and his works you're after, look elsewhere.

What the film does offer, however, is a moving and unsentimental portrayal of devotion in the worst circumstances. Shortly after his illness, Maxwell remembers taking Collins to his beloved studio in the hope that it would bring the memories flooding back. When that didn't work, Maxwell briefly felt that all was lost, but once the pair realised there'd be "no eureka moment" in his recovery, they were ironically free to get on with their lives and look to the future.

Doughty Scot to the last, Maxwell says there's no point pretending she doesn't miss the "old" Edwyn. But little moments clearly mean a lot: see her evident delight when Collins starts singing unbidden on a country walk, or her pride at seeing his "acerbic" side return along with his re-emerging facility for language.

Throughout the film, images of the sea and drowning recur as a metaphor for Collins' near-death experience. In one scene near the end, we see him striding determinedly out onto the beach. Maxwell creeps into view behind him, keeping a watchful eye even while maintaining a respectful distance. It's a touching moment, and perhaps the film's best summation of the loving robustness of their relationship. ■ ALEX DENNEY

9

he searches for trouble, shooting horrific footage to sell to TV news channels. The film enters dark territory when Bloom's trespassing on crime scenes leads to him making the news himself. His accelerating ambition leads to a merciless pursuit of money, reflecting the twisted morals of Gilroy's American dream. Gyllenhaal is masterful all the way to the unpredictable and chilling climax.

■ DAN BRIGHTMORE

CINEMA

Nightcrawler

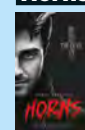
Director Dan Gilroy's first film journeys deep into LA's criminal underground. Lou Bloom (Jake Gyllenhaal) is poor and marginalised and when he sees a camera crew filming the aftermath of a car crash he's drawn to the nocturnal world of freelance crime journalism. With a digital video camera and police radio scanner,

into the curios on show, and they're joined by talking heads including Jarvis Cocker, Hanif Kureishi (author of *The Buddha of Suburbia*, for which Bowie wrote the TV soundtrack) and Paul Morley (regaling us with talk of Bowie's "sonic pieces of sculpture"). It's a little like walking around the V&A with the museum's headphones on, but fair consolation for anyone who missed out in real time.

■ MATTHEW HORTON

CINEMA

Horns



Based on a book by Joe Hill (the son of Stephen King), this macabre fantasy stars Daniel Radcliffe as Ignatius 'Ig' Parrish, a radio DJ wrongly accused of the rape and murder of his girlfriend Merrin (Juno Temple). Ig, a social pariah in his small American hometown, wakes up on the anniversary of Merrin's death to find a pair of horns growing from his forehead. His demonic appearance comes with paranormal powers that enable him to force sinful confessions from whomever he pleases. Radcliffe's performance is at its most assured and entertaining when Ig realises he can use his powers to hunt Merrin's killer, but the tone of the film veers unevenly as it loses its way in a clumsy mix of fantasy gore, childhood flashbacks and black humour.

■ DAN BRIGHTMORE

6

CINEMA/DVD

Wild Combination: A Portrait of Arthur Russell



Released in 2008 and unearthed this week for the Illuminations festival, *Wild*

Combination: A Portrait of Arthur Russell is a worthy primer on the experimental Iowan musician. It's also a tearjerker. Stitched together from concert footage and interviews with his parents and long-term boyfriend Tom Lee, it tells the tragic story of Russell's life and death from Aids in 1992. We learn about an awkward childhood that ended when his dad discovered his bongs and Russell fled to San Francisco, his dedication to the cello, and the slow process of his coming out in New York, where he lived with Allen Ginsberg. But the facts only tell a portion of the story – the rest lies in Russell's vivid, beautiful music, which scores the film.

■ HAZEL SHEFFIELD

8

Ex Hex: (l-r)
Mary Timony,
Betsy Wright,
Laura Harris



Ex Hex

Mississippi Studios

Portland

Thursday, October 16

The Washington rockers
blast Portland away with
a set of scorching power pop

PHOTO BY JASON QUIGLEY

▶ Tonight marks Ex Hex's first show in Portland. The Washington trio look right at home in Mississippi Studios – which, with Sleater-Kinney drummer Janet Weiss milling around, feels like an episode of *Portlandia*, the sketch show starring their guitarist Carrie Brownstein. But Ex Hex cut through any cutesy clichés with a set of scorching power pop. Exploding from frontwoman Mary Timony's Thin Lizzy licks, Betsy Wright's Runaways bass and Laura Harris' thundering drums, the trio's sheer delight at playing their music is as invigorating as the songs themselves. 'Don't Wanna Lose' borrows its garage grunt from The Sonics, 'Warpaint' is a riotous singalong and 'Radio On' sees Timony throwing her head back and pulling gleeful rock poses before a beaming Wright joins her. February's UK dates can't come soon enough. ■ LEONIE COOPER

9

Reviews LIVE

The duo have buried the hatchet and released a second album. But can they still rock like they used to?

Electric Ballroom, London
Monday, October 20

Death From Above 1979

Many people raised an eyebrow when Canadian dance-rock two-piece Death From Above 1979 reformed in 2011 after five years apart. As good as it was, the one album they had released – 2004's 'You're A Woman, I'm A Machine' – didn't seem to justify the band charging money to see them play again. You also guessed that if either of their solo careers had taken off (drummer/singer Sebastien Grainger made indie-rock under his own name; bassist Jesse F Keeler formed a dance duo called MSTRKRFT) a reunion would never have been considered.

But we all need to make a living, and in recent interviews in support of the second album that's been a while coming – September's 'The Physical World' – a few things have become clear. Yes, they did grow to despise each other and that's why they split; and no, they weren't offered a huge chunk of money by American festival Coachella, or anyone else, to reform. Instead, their reunion has been about getting over themselves, patching up an old friendship and recognising – to their surprise – that their group had grown immeasurably in stature in the years they were apart. Always a band with a strong work ethic, they've also done right by fans – released new music, and played hard shows. They must have been delighted when they caused a riot at their comeback gig at South By Southwest in

DFA 1979 on...

...the best show of the tour so far

Sebastien Grainger: "We felt really motivated in Bologna because the venue was so sweaty and small. We didn't have a way on or off the stage – we had to walk through the crowd, which was great. It killed off the facade and fanfare."

...reaction to the new songs

Jesse F Keeler: "For me, the live versions are now the actual versions – they're so much better now. It took us a long time to get people to learn the words to the first record, but we've noticed people already singing along with the new songs, which is crazy."

...their relationship troubles

SG: "(Mock shocked) Shut up! Fuck you, man! We're just a couple of grown-ass men, up to no good, shitting across the world. Everything's great."

a well-balanced performance. They open with 'Turn It Out' – the first track on 'You're A Woman, I'm A Machine' – creating a moshpit that stretches a third of the way down the Electric Ballroom. They save their best-known song, 'Romantic Rights', which will forever sound terrific live, for the encore and drop

2011. Outside the venue, a police horse got punched.

'The Physical World' – poppier but more political than its predecessor – was received well on release, and it's noticeable tonight that the response to tracks from it ('Right On, Frankenstein!' and 'Cheap Talk', which they play early on, and the singles 'Trainwreck 1979' and 'Government Trash') is just as good as when they blast through big tunes from their debut.

At their first London show since 2011, DFA 1979 put in

in the ballad from 'The Physical World', 'White Is Red', after the short, fast and punishing 'Go Home, Get Down', offering sweat-drenched punters the chance to temporarily come up for air.

The atmosphere throughout is electric, but to take a step back is to find devils in the details. Grainger has never been one to

ingratiate himself to crowds and it's not so much that his between-song banter is charmless ("We're from Canada, probably the best of your colonies – sorry to the other ones," he manages at one point, withholding the fact that he lives in Los Angeles), it's more that there's a cold efficiency to his performance that wasn't there 10 years ago. No matter how you slice it, he's the leader of Death From Above 1979 and although he only treats Keeler with disdain once (silencing him after he says, with some sentimentality, "I see you singing along and it makes me really happy"), there are few occasions when he truly connects with his bandmate, or makes an effort to do so. Grainger is a far more accomplished drummer and singer than he ever was, and Keeler is a better bass player. Their proficiency

SETLIST

- ▶ Turn It Out
- ▶ Right On, Frankenstein!
- ▶ Virgins
- ▶ Cheap Talk
- ▶ You're A Woman, I'm A Machine
- ▶ Go Home, Get Down
- ▶ White Is Red
- ▶ Trainwreck 1979
- ▶ Crystal Ball
- ▶ Nothin' Left
- ▶ Going Steady
- ▶ Gemini
- ▶ Little Girl
- ▶ Government Trash
- ▶ Always On
- ▶ Cold War
- ▶ Romantic Rights
- ▶ The Physical World



THE VIEW FROM THE CROWD



Edna Scrowe-Toomh, 34, London
"I loved it until Noddy Holder came and stood right in front of me. Slightly happier to find out at the end that 'Noddy' was in fact a woman."



Nick Rainy, 28, London
"I'm a big fan. I don't mind if they reformed for money and at least they've actually done a new album, unlike when Pavement got back together."



Dan Neesham, 28, London
"I've seen them a few times and they're always awesome. For me, tonight is a bit of a reunion with friends."



Elle Judge, 28, London
"I also saw them at Reading Festival in 2011. I prefer the first album, but the new one is pretty good too."

mostly disguises the lack of chemistry, but at one point – when Keeler plays the opening riff of 'Little Girl' and Grainger completely misses his cue – the wheels come off, and they seem like two men in two different groups.

If what we want from bands is a balls-to-the-wall good night out, the reformed Death From Above 1979 provide one in spades. A slew of quality songs played tight and loud? They deliver on that too. "Still a good one," Grainger correctly surmises after 'Going Steady', and with a new album out they do what would have been unthinkable in the past and leave out 'Black History Month' and 'Blood On Our Hands'. It's an explosive show, but the main attraction of the band, even as recently as 2011's show at the Kentish Town Forum – their threat and menace – is diminished as Death From Above 1979 increasingly becomes a job, far removed from Grainger and Keeler as people. Walking out onto the streets of Camden afterwards, it was hard not to feel a bit dead inside. ■ PHIL HEBBLETHWAITE

7

MORE GIGS

All We Are The Kazimier, Liverpool

Wednesday, October 16
Tonight is All We Are's first hometown show since they finished recording their debut album, but it feels more like a proud send-off than a welcome party. "We're so glad to play The Kazimier, our spiritual home," exclaims drummer Rich O'Flynn before 'Feel Safe', a bubbling thrill that sounds like The xx covering The Bee Gees. Downbeat jam 'Utmost Good' and new single 'I Wear You' are equally impressive, but final song 'Keep Me Closer' shines brightest, its warm groove enveloping the room. The next time the trio come home, the venue – and the party – should be much bigger.

■ JAMIE CROSSAN

8

Spectres 100 Club, London

Wednesday, October 15
Bristol newcomers Spectres are in London to celebrate Sonic Cathedral's 10th birthday at the 100 Club. The fearfully loud four-piece are new on the label and will release their debut album next year. Tonight they offer an ominous taster of it, kneading walls of sound into dark melodies. Singer and guitarist Joe Hatt hovers near the microphone, slipping into harmony with the guitars, then slumps over his pedals to ramp up the feedback so loud you can feel the air move. During new single 'Sea Of Trees' – given away free to attendees tonight – an almost sunny melody segues into dizzying white noise and back again. It feels like walking through a wind turbine, in the best possible way.

■ HAZEL SHEFFIELD

8

Kele



Jack Rocks The Macbeth, London Monday, October 13

Bloc Party man celebrates his birthday and embraces dance music at a tiny solo show

"I'm having some technical difficulties," says Kele Okereke as the crowd start singing 'Happy Birthday' to fill the awkward pause after his equipment breaks down. "I like small gigs because you can look everyone in the eye," continues the Bloc Party frontman, who turns 33 today, "and then something like *this* happens..."

Perhaps his gear is struggling to keep up with his recent shift in sound. On Bloc Party's beat-driven latter material, his solo debut 'The Boxer' and new album 'Trick', Okereke has gradually demoted the guitar. Now, he's able to tour with his backing band in his carry-on luggage. Tonight, though, the setup feels almost too minimal, at a show that involves Okereke singing along to a side-of-

stage DJ while blasted with neon visuals. The anguished emoting and electronic artistry of 'Heartbreaker', 'Doubt' and 'Coasting' are numbed and buried by the beats, Guetta piano hooks and crowd chatter. Meanwhile, Kele closes his eyes, immersing himself in a closed-off world of falsetto intimacy, resembling a featured artist in his own career. Then the gods of trance forsake him and the sound cuts out.

The breakdown actually refocuses the room. Ditching the 'Trick' tracks for a second half of familiar singles ('Everything You Wanted', 'Tenderoni') and Bloc Party tunes ('Obscene', 'One More Chance'), he bounces on the monitors during 'Candy Flip' and invigorating finale 'Rise'. Still, his talent seems self-constrained. Everything we wanted? How about some more bite? ■ MARK BEAUMONT

SETLIST

- ▶ Heartbreaker
- ▶ Like We Used To
- ▶ On The Lam
 - ▶ Doubt
 - ▶ Coasting
 - ▶ Closer
- ▶ Everything You Wanted
- ▶ Candy Flip
- ▶ Obscene
- ▶ What Did I Do?
- ▶ One More Chance
 - ▶ Tenderoni
 - ▶ Rise

7

The Thurston Moore Band

The Echoplex, Los Angeles

Friday, October 10

The ex-Sonic Youth man and his new group make a fearsome noise in LA

Now that he's cosily settled into his new life in London, it seems strange to see Thurston Moore back onstage in America. Last year, the Sonic Youth founder's transatlantic move provoked a spate of disbelieving tweets and general howls of amazement as north London's music fans found themselves sat on the bus behind the man who helped invent alt.rock in the '80s. Now, though, he's become something of an adopted local treasure in the capital. Tonight, Moore is in Los Angeles, midway through his first tour with his new group – simply named The Thurston Moore Band – which sees them joined on the road by college-rock stalwarts Sebadoh.

The make-up of The Thurston Moore Band reflects its leader's new life. On guitar is James Sedwards, a former member of experimental noise band Nought, who Moore lived with when he first arrived in London. My Bloody Valentine's Debbie Googe plays bass and on drums is Moore's old friend and Sonic Youth bandmate Steve Shelley. As Moore – who's originally from Florida – saunters onto the stage sporting a crumpled white shirt and a vacant expression, it's hard to tell if he's happy to be on his old turf, but it's soon evident that he's more than comfortable. "These are a bunch of new songs from a new record from this new band," he states, adding with a smirk: "Well, we're kind of new..." The 56-year-old confidently leads his musicians into a barrage of experimental widdles and wooshes from behind an upright

MOORE'S CONFIDENCE IN HIS NEW MATERIAL IS AS POWERFUL AS HIS BAND'S SONIC BOND

music stand, which, complete with a reading light, lends a certain grandeur. It's more upmarket recital than scuzzy rock show.

After a flip of Moore's floppy fringe, the rasping, widescreen clomp of 'Forevermore' emerges from the white noise. Its weighty jangle is notably bolstered by Googe's presence; the 51-year-old places MBV's signature heaviness at the fore, scything wildly in front of Shelley's kit with the neck of her bass. Bucking Neil Young & Crazy Horse-style jam 'Speak To The Wild' is next, which sees all four members thrashing about amidst a trademark Moore dirge. At first it seems like they're indulging in a freewheeling jam session, but it becomes apparent this is a highly structured shake-down, with Moore choreographing the whole affair through steely eye contact.

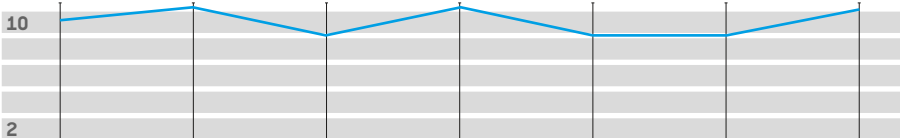
The menacing mood lifts for the stuttering riffs of 'Germs Burn', which Moore dedicates to Darby Crash, the frontman of Hollywood punks The Germs, who committed suicide with an intentional heroin overdose in 1980. He also calls for the lights to be turned up, saying a cheery "Hi" to the illuminated crowd. We're swiftly plunged into doom again when angle-grinder guitar heralds the start of dissident bop 'Detonation', after which 'The Best Day' – the title track of Moore's new album, from which most of the evening's set is drawn – offers more of an old school indie wig-out. It's not until the encore that they deviate from the new LP, with 2011's acoustic effort 'Demolished Thoughts' skipped in favour of more no-wave riffing from Moore's 1995's solo debut 'Psychic Hearts'. 'Pretty Bad's' spooky freak rock makes the pantomime of The Flaming Lips look tame. Next, 'Ono Soul' locks into a deeply meditative groove, with Sedwards – a dead ringer for Bobby Gillespie – gazing intently into the middle distance, seemingly coaxing the sound of an emergency vehicle from his guitar without effort and Shelley attacking his drums with unfettered fury.

It feels like Moore and his new band could drag this performance out all night – especially when you consider the back catalogue he has – but the show is impressively restrained, coming in at just over an hour. At its climax it's clear that Moore's confidence in his latest material is as eminently powerful as his new band's beastly sonic bond. **LEONIE COOPER**

SETLIST

FOREVERMORE SPEAK TO THE WILD GERMS BURN DETONATION THE BEST DAY PRETTY BAD ONO SOUL

How good?



MORE GIGS

Bad Breeding Green Door Store, Brighton

Friday, October 17
Small-town frustration fuels this Stevenage quartet's raging punk energy. Opening for Eagulls, there's a physical gulf between band and audience that frontman Christopher Dodd valiantly bridges, hurling himself around the floor to scream the unequivocal likes of 'Burn This Flag' in the crowd's faces, guitarist Matt Toll leaping onto his bandmate's back. Diversity barely registers but the clanging guitar of 'Age Of Nothing' offers a few shrill seconds to catch breath before more molten antisocial anger pours forth.

■ STUART HUGGETT

7

Palace St Pancras Old Church, London

Wednesday, October 15
The pretty surrounds of St Pancras Old Church are well suited to London newcomers Palace and their emotional blues rock. Underpinned by the chiming fretwork of frontman Leo Wyndham and fedora-clad guitarist Rupert Turner, their melodies range from the rippling 'I Want What You've Got' to 'Veins' slide-guitar line. When the church bells peal mid-set, the band jokingly play along, pretending they were planned. Their set is so meticulously rendered, it's almost believable.

■ GEMMA SAMWAYS

8

Thurston Moore Q&A

How does it feel to be playing the US again?

"I love playing with this line-up – a great mix of UK and USA – no more war! I have very little nationalist boundary or pride in my life; I travel constantly and always regard each country with due respect and personal attraction. The United States has horrible gun laws and needs increased efforts for socialised care, but I love the new wilderness psycho vibe."

Do you consider Britain as your home now?

"America will always be home. My mother and family live there. It's where I first kissed a girl on ice skates at Rogers Park in Danbury, Connecticut in 1972."

Kim Gordon is writing a biography about her time in Sonic Youth – is this something you've ever considered doing?

"I've published books before, mostly poetry; that's a vocation I've dedicated myself to since I was a wee lad. I'd love to write a book dealing with experience and history without it being an autobiography as such. After I named the band Sonic Youth I had the words Sonic Life tattooed on my left arm, that's my book."

The Magic Gang



The Old Blue Last, London Saturday, October 18

Crowd and band become one as the Brighton foursome cause carnage

The tiny live room above this creaking east London pub smells even more pungently of stale beer and sweat than usual. Twenty-four hours before The Magic Gang squeezed onto its small stage, noisy upstarts Bloody Knees and Abattoir Blues laid siege to the venue. Staff have jokingly dubbed the consecutive gigs as Old Blue Mega Fest 2K14 and most of the crowd are here for the second night in a row, having partied all night. Carnage still ensues, though, as The Magic Gang succeed in living up to the

previous evening's entertainment. Indeed, the Brighton foursome make it look effortless – opener 'Babylon' provokes such excitement that there are waves of crowdsurfers flying across the room from the very beginning. Bassist Gus Taylor plays the whole of third song 'Alright' from the crowd while Bloody Knees guitarist Sam Conway takes the opportunity to rush the stage and

grab the mic away from singer and guitarist Jack Kaye to provide his own throaty vocals.

Despite having never released a single, the words to every song on their short setlist are sung back at them over teetering, Weezer-indebted riffs. Every moment is infectious, but the bouncing 'Untitled' is the best example of their craft and its bellowed chorus line of "She doesn't want me" manages to make even unrequited love sound fun. Further evidence of the band's ambition and potential comes with the daftly named 'Happy Birthday'. It froths and fizzes, weaving guitar hooks and a succession of crashing choruses into a concoction that acts as further catnip to the crowd.

'Shallow', the track The Magic Gang emerged with at the beginning of this year, brings the set to a close. It offers one last chance for the ragged crowd to fling themselves from the edge of the stage and join a final singalong. Fittingly, it climaxes with a grinning Kaye being swallowed up by the audience, then raised above their heads, his band's worth proved in the most emphatic, enthralling way. ■ RHIAN DALY

SETLIST

- Babylon
- She Won't Ghost
- Alright
- Untitled
- Happy Birthday
- Rambo
- Shallow

61

8

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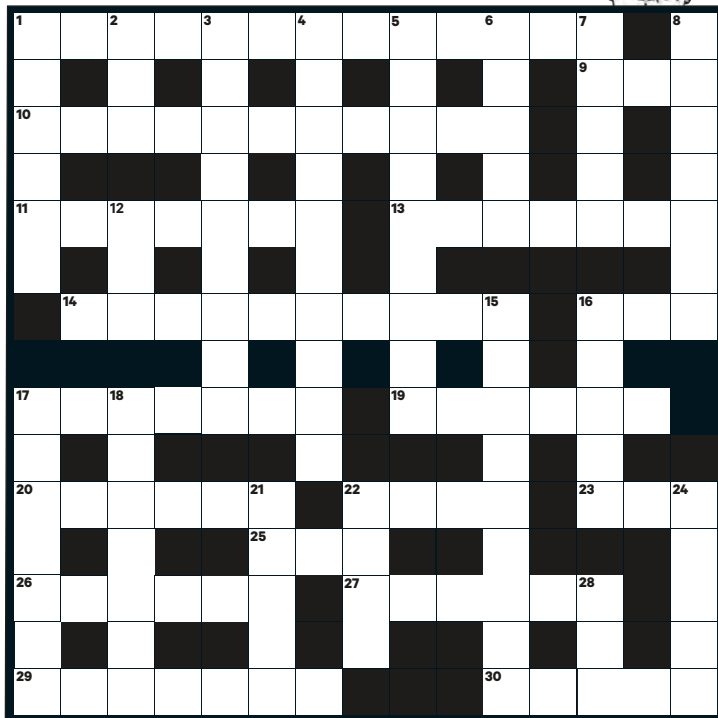
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CLUES ACROSS

1+29A Foo Fighters single.

A Beatles hit has nought to do with its origin (9-4-7)

9 Member of The Slits seen in Paris (3)

10 Doves LPs are not right for The Stone Roses (4-7)

11 Auteurs album that created a fresh ripple (3-4)

13 Pete's in turmoil about Beatles connection (7)

14+27A+19A "I wish that for just one time you could stand inside my shoes", surely at this location with Bob Dylan (10-6-6)

16 Alt-J member to make an appearance in August (3)

17+8D Albert Hammond Jr started singing terribly (7-7)

19 (See 14 across)

20 The word is they're missing the '-----' Friends of The Divine Comedy (6)

22 'Backspace Unwind' to these trip-hoppers' new

album (4)

23 'How Bizarre' that these New Zealanders are from the bottom corner (3)

25 Start hailing this album by Cabaret Voltaire (3)

26 Danish punks recruited from an office agency (6)

27 (See 14 across)

29 (See 1 across)

30 I sold wrong copy of album by The Groundhogs (5)

CLUES DOWN

1 Circa Waves say goodbye to an extended version (2-4)

2 My Bloody Valentine to shortly name an album (1-1-1)

3 (See 17 down)

4 Realise it's wrong for Desmond Dekker to sing this (10)

5 Lacking the elegance of a song by The National (9)

6 "Lean a little closer, see that ----- really smell like poo-poo", OutKast (5)

7 Perchance a number from Jay Sean (5)

8 (See 17 across)

12 How to change the question posed by David Byrne and St Vincent (3)

15 Legends of the '60s whose hits included 'For Your Love' and 'Heart Full Of Soul' (9)

16 A bit of a vague role for Beck album (5)

17+3D David Bowie putting down tracks at various places on album (7-2-7)

18 As paid to Aretha Franklin for work done on this recording (7)

21+24D Thrown dice, perhaps, to come up with a number for Bryan Ferry (3-2-5)

22 As used by 808 State to get high and then go on a downer (4)

24 (See 21 down)

28 Irishmen who gave us cause to 'Worry About The Wind' (3)

SEPTEMBER 6 ANSWERS

ACROSS 1+35A Brothers And Sisters, 8+29D Mamas And Papas, 10 Hero, 11 Temple, 12 Legend, 13+36D Push It, 15+14D Slow Hands, 16 Bad Day, 19 EVOL, 22 Paranoid, 23 Echoes, 25 Les, 26 Start, 27+31D Pass Out, 28 Frappé, 30 One Dove, 32 INXS, 34 LP, 38 Don't, 39 Souls **DOWN** 1 Bumblebee, 2 Oh My God, 3+6D He's On The Phone, 4 Rant, 5 New Power, 7 Bros, 9 Def Leppard, 17 Doors, 18 Yessongs, 20 Val, 21 Lose It, 24 Chained, 28 Fears, 33 Sun, 37 So

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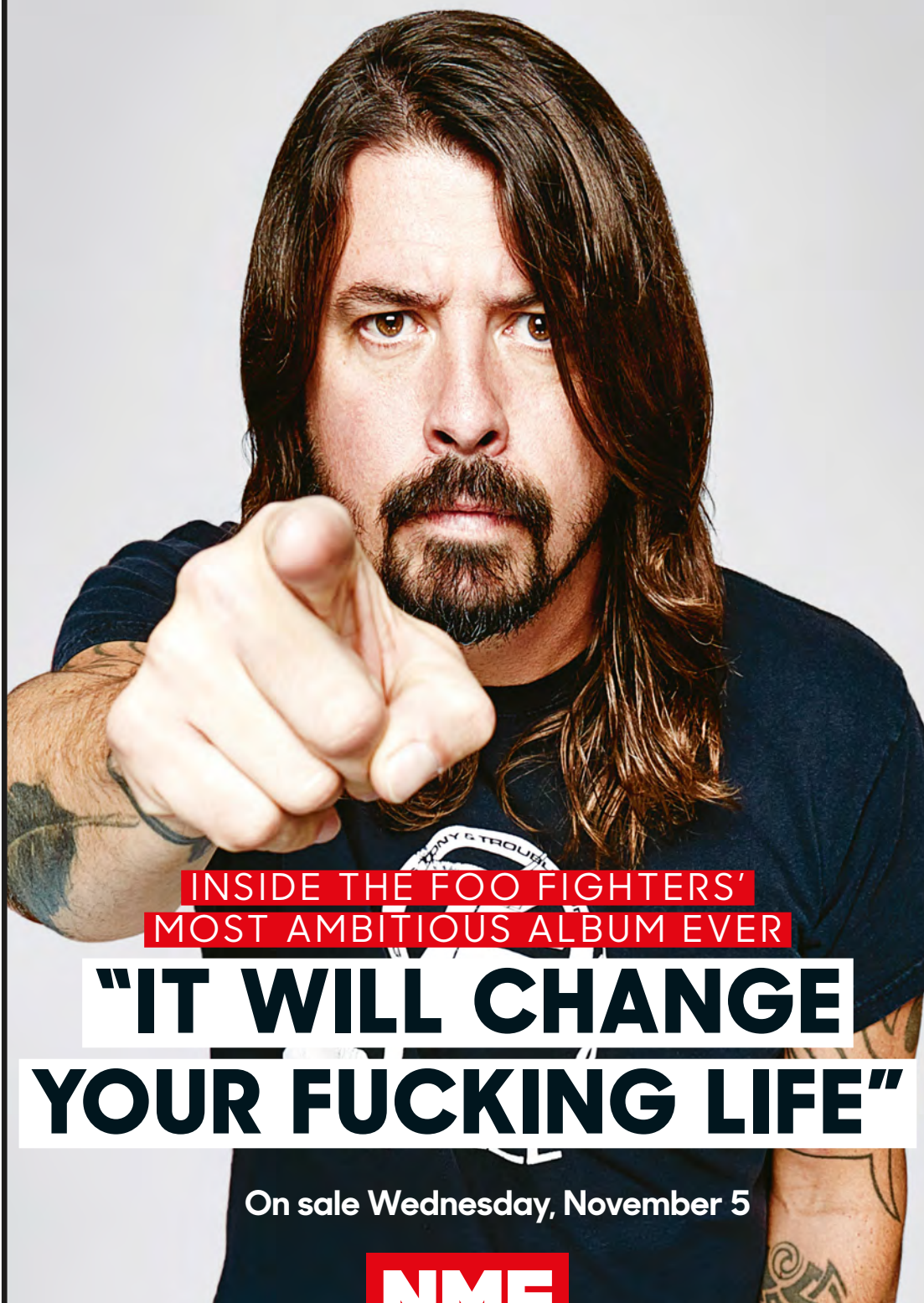
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