

NME

2015
ALBUMS
SPECIAL

► **IN THE**
STUDIO
► **IN THE**
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50 NEW RECORDS **YOU NEED TO HEAR** **THIS YEAR**

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The Libertines

Brandon Flowers

Chvrches **Peace**

The Vaccines

Paul Weller **Foals**

Palma Violets

Björk and more

+

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INVADE GERMANY

THE MANICS

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"AN INSTANT
CLASSIC"



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JOE ELLISON, SHORTLIST.COM

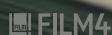


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LETTER OF THE WEEK

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NOEL VS ED

Noel Gallagher's assessment that he can't live in a world where Ed Sheeran is headlining Wembley might be a little over the top, but he does have a point about the state of music just now. Indie hardly seems to get a mention in the mainstream these days. Blame it on reality shows such as *The X Factor*, the fact that music is so disposable, or the decline in live venues, but there seems to be a massive and growing gap between the major acts and the alternative, the haves and have nots. What chance have tomorrow's stars got to stamp their authority on the scene? It's either selling their souls on a Saturday night as they audition in front of Rita Ora on *The Voice*, or hoping for a support slot for Sheeran at Wembley. It could get even worse if the rumours are to be believed and Sheeran ends up headlining Glastonbury. I hope Michael Eavis offers Noel the gig instead. He could bring along Liam, as he's probably got some time on his hands just now...

Neil Renton, via email

Lucy Jones: As sure as the sun will rise every morning, so Noel Gallagher will be "over the top" in his assessments of the music world. And hidden among the bits about Ed



Sheeran were some sage points about a lack of bands in the charts. But is he right? Broadly, sure. Yet when you look at the success of Royal Blood and Arctic Monkeys over the last couple of years, you could argue that indie is in the process of solidly replanting its foot in the mainstream. And when you speak about tomorrow's stars being able to stamp their authority on today's music scene, Neil, I guess it depends what you mean by 'authority'. In some ways – using SoundCloud, Bandcamp, BitTorrent – musicians have more freedom than ever to grow their careers as they want. Sheeran headlining Glastonbury, though? Never gonna happen.

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but black. As a graphic designer myself, I think it's a fantastic cover, but I do think that their later covers, including the new tour artwork, is weak. Just their mighty logo on its own – solid red out of black, for example – would be the one. One of the best band logos ever?

Steven Conner, via email



LJ: Good shout, Steven. Although there are some stunning band logos out there, like Wu-Tang's classic yellow 'W', the Radiohead bear, Prince's symbol. But where are all the cool logos from modern artists? Where's Sleaford Mods' picture of David Cameron being spit-roasted in a KFC? Or Jake Bugg's trademark mutant cockroach? Pitch them some ideas.

NOEL VS ED: ROUND TWO

My reaction to Noel's beef with Ed Sheeran is that I don't think there's one person in the world Noel hasn't insulted, and I honestly can't see why Ed would be any different.

Shane Alger, via email

LJ: Noel's the gift that keeps on giving when it comes to insults, Shane. You can't fault his eagerness to offend. Or his ability to piss off hundreds of thousands of people with a throwaway comment. Or his haircut.

WHERE'S MAD RICHARD?

I'm looking for news about a possible new release from Richard Ashcroft. I know it's been recently rumoured by Richard himself, but the guy seems to have vanished. I'm also wondering why there is no British journalist interested in interviewing him. I'd have so many questions I wouldn't know

where to start. I know he's not an easy fella to relate to, and not really 'news' nowadays, but I'd love to read his witty rants on the rock scene. I'm convinced that there's still a big audience waiting for him out there. So, if you hadn't noticed yet, I'm making a plea for you, *NME*, to please bring back Richard, at least on your pages. Thank you in advance.

Andreas Lotti, via email

LJ: Believe it or not, Andreas, this is the second letter we've had about Dickie in recent weeks. It's been five years since his last album, *'United Nations Of Sound'*, and we've heard barely a peep from him since. As pointed out last week, he does the odd show in Dubai (at the most recent of

which, last November, he excellently introduced himself by saying, "This is the real thing: one man and a guitar – no fireworks, no nothing, just northern soul"), but not a lot else. All I can say for now, is: we're on the case.

IT'S WHAT WE DO

I'm so out of touch with today's Indie music scene. Can you recommend me some good bands?

Clive Ramsden, via email

LJ: We're *NME*, Clive – it's what we do. First stop, pick up our New Bands Of



Shamir

2015 issue from a couple of weeks ago (or read it online). Then check out The Districts, Hinds and Public Access TV, or the wicked new raft of singers borrowing from the classic soul songwriters of the '60s and '70s: Curtis Harding, Tobias Jesso Jr and Leon Bridges. Plus, Shamir's making some epic disco-pop and he's excellent live. Lxury's new EP is full of zingers and Lief Hall is making experimental music that takes textures to the fourth dimension. This year, Clive, is looking mighty strong for new music.

BEST BAND LOGO EVER?

Last year I went to the Richard Hamilton art exhibition and discovered that he designed The Beatles' 1968 eponymous LP (aka 'The White Album') cover. It made me realise that AC/DC's 'Back In Black' is basically the same as The Beatles 'The White Album'...



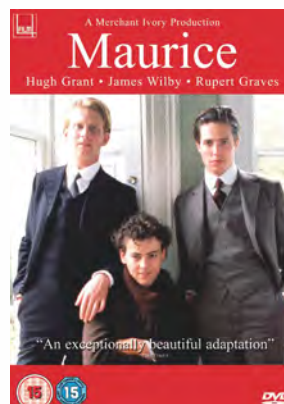
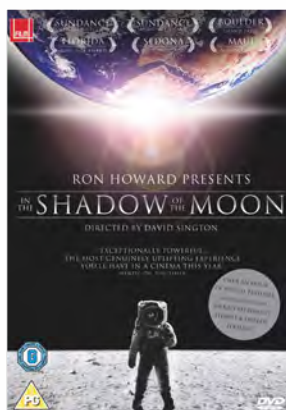
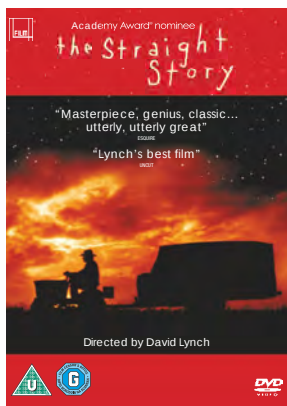
LOOK WHO'S STALKING

We went to the Temples and Superfood gig in Sheffield. I saw Dom from Superfood coming out and bear-hugged him.

Luke Immens (left), Leicester



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NME TRACK OF THE WEEK

1. The Cribbs
An Ivory Hand

The Jarman brothers promised us pop on their new album, and judging by this first taste of 'For All My Sisters', they'll deliver in spades. 'An Ivory Hand' is a masterclass in anthemic indie pop, feeling like chorus on chorus for its four-minute duration. Meanwhile, insistent, synth-like guitars reminiscent of The Cars suggest Ric Ocasek was a genius choice of producer.

Dan Stubbs, News Editor

2. The Vaccines
Handsome

Packed with sardonic lyrics and full of attitude that walks the fine line between tongue-in-cheek humour and arrogance, this taster of The Vaccines' third album, 'English Graffiti', is typically cocksure. Frontman Justin Young finds relief in his own reflection, taunting, "I'm as awful as they come, oh what a pity/I just thank the Lord above that I am pretty" over frenzied guitars and quick-fire drums. A swaggering return.

Rhian Daly, Assistant Reviews Editor

3. The Districts
Peaches

This latest cut from the Pennsylvanian whippersnappers' upcoming debut 'A Flourish And A Spoil' is a blustering ode to packing everything you own into a suitcase and moving out of home for the first time. The quartet now live in Philadelphia, and 'Peaches' captures their wide-eyed enthusiasm for the world that's now at their feet, with singer Rob Grote bellowing, "We won't throw these memories away".

David Renshaw, Acting Deputy News Editor

4. Gengahr
She's A Witch

Originally shared as one of Gengahr's Halloween-themed demos last year, this new, beefier version of 'She's A Witch' marks the first glimpse of the London quartet's debut album, due sometime later this year. "I'm not gonna miss you/But I'll always wanna kiss your mouth", sighs singer Felix Bushe over John Victor's mellow guitar lines. Soft, swelling and sublime, it's a rebooted reminder of Gengahr's tenderness.

Rhian Daly, Assistant Reviews Editor

5. Raury
Fly (feat. Malik Shukur)

Written directly after finding out that policeman Darren Wilson would not be charged for shooting unarmed teenager Michael Brown in Ferguson last year, Raury's new song is heavy with emotion. An acoustic ballad, 'Fly' is a departure from last year's excellent 'Indigo Child' mixtape, which mashed up hip-hop and soul. But, as he imagines a hopeful future for his own family, Raury reveals an engaging soft side.

Ben Homewood, Reviews Editor

**6. Peace**
I'm A Girl

'I'm A Girl' was written "in a tiny converted office unit above a weird clothing factory in Hackney" that lead singer Harry Koisser was crashing in last year, and is the latest song to be taken from Peace's forthcoming second album, 'Happy People'. It deals with the difficulties of being a man in the modern world and features thrashing indie-pop drums and hooks aplenty.

Nadia Khomami, Acting News Reporter

7. Pete Doherty
Flags Of The Old Regime

Versions of this tune have been knocking around since 2011, having been written by Doherty in the immediate aftermath of his friend Amy Winehouse's death. Pete's first post-rehab release is produced by Stephen Street, features Drew McConnell on bass and has been souped up with a string section, piano and freshly written lyrics like "the fame they stoned you with it, your tiny shoulders soldiered it". Genuinely moving.

Tom Howard, Assistant Editor

8. San Fermin
Jackrabbit

Ellis Ludwig-Leone, leader of Brooklyn baroque pop outfit San Fermin, has described the sound of his band's second album 'Jackrabbit' as "a little darker and maybe a little more manic" than its predecessor. First song 'Parasites' was broody and claustrophobic, in stark contrast to the record's lighter and poppier title track. Alongside San Fermin's trademark brass, there are harmonies and a pounding bass drum that bring shades of Haim.

Lucy Jones, Deputy Editor, NME.COM

9. Waxahatchee
Air

Katie Crutchfield's first offering from new album 'Ivy Tripp' is, unsurprisingly, a bittersweet break-up song. Digging through the still-warm embers of a recently ended relationship, the Alabama singer's pain is audible as she delivers the heartbreaking line, "You were patiently giving me everything that I will never need". Delivered with a sense of triumphant melancholy, it bodes very well for Waxahatchee's eagerly anticipated new album.

David Renshaw, Acting Deputy News Editor

10. The Wombats
Greek Tragedy

Wombats frontman Murph has said that the Liverpool trio's third album - 'Glitterbug', out on April 6 - is "half about a fake person in LA and half about a real person in LA". Second single 'Greek Tragedy' is less fantastical - instead, it's a break-up song with a typically huge Wombats chorus: "She haaaates like ecstaaaaaasy". The video's worth a look, too, if you'd like to watch the band being murdered by an obsessive fan.

Phil Hebblethwaite, writer

ESSENTIAL NEW TRACKS

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11. St Vincent Bad Believer

Last year's brilliant self-titled St Vincent album is about to get even better – a deluxe reissue of the record is coming out, complete with five new tracks. 'Bad Believer' is one of them – a juggernaut of revved-up pop brilliance boasting church bells, motorbike sound effects and plenty of religious imagery: "*Knelt before the trembling pastor/ Fainted as he touched my trembling hand*".

Rhian Daly, Assistant Reviews Editor

12. Best Friends Shred Til You're Dead

Over the past couple of years, Sheffield's Best Friends have built a fine reputation for scrappy, punk-influenced noise. It's earned the quartet a deal with FatCat, a label that's released ballsy, guitar-heavy records by the likes of No Age, Psychedelic Horseshit and Mazes. 'Shred Til You're Dead' follows in those footsteps, and it's a short, sharp thrill that matches a ragged rhythm with a delectable lead guitar line.

Ben Homewood, Reviews Editor

13. Hooton Tennis Club Jasper

The Wirral newcomers' first proper stab at the big time sounds like all the best bits of Teenage Fanclub mixed up with a long-lost Johnny Marr riff. The band arrive without any of the baggage that seems to weigh down so many of their southern counterparts, and in its place they're brimming with the kind of vigour that can't be manufactured. "*We lost a great, great man today*", goes the first line, which is sad. But this is a great, great song.

Matt Wilkinson, New Music Editor

14. A Place To Bury Strangers We've Come So Far

This second single from A Place To Bury Strangers' fourth album is a real tease. Opening with a deluge of white noise, it soon retreats to a more palatable combination of a simple drumbeat and male/female vocals. The New Yorkers tantalise with fleeting bursts of heavily affected Suicide-like dirge until, 90 seconds from the end, they uncage a beastly passage of noise that'll make anyone listening wish they'd worn earplugs.

Ben Homewood, Reviews Editor

15. Noel Gallagher's High Flying Birds The Ballad Of The Mighty I (feat. Johnny Marr)

There's nothing particularly surprising about the second single from Noel's forthcoming album 'Chasing Yesterday', but he *has* brought in his mate Johnny Marr to help out. They've worked together before (Marr played on three tracks on Oasis' 2002 album 'Heathen Chemistry') but nowhere was the former Smiths man's guitar as effective as it is here, dancing atop the song's throbbing beat.

Andy Welch, writer



16. Darlia I've Never Been To Ohio

While there's no denying Darlia are seriously in thrall to dirty grunge from 25 years ago, the pop sensibility they add to it is notable. The Blackpool trio's new single – trailing mini-album 'Petals', out next month – has the requisite grinding guitar, lolloping beats and cavernous bass, but then Nathan Day yowls out a chorus that sounds tailor-made for an angsty American TV teen show.

Matthew Horton, writer

17. The Prodigy Nasty

By all accounts the Keith Flint of 2015 spends most of his days doing yoga, drinking chai and taking leisurely rides on his motorbike. Quite the opposite to this deafening return from The Prodigy, then. Six years since their triumphant 'Invaders Must Die' comeback, the Essex ravers are seething more than ever. 'Nasty' does exactly what it says on its rancid tin: a horrible, rotting, sneering tune. The Prodigy are back in the ring.

Greg Cochran, Editor, NME.COM

18. Matthew E White Rock & Roll Is Cold

Released in 2012, Matthew E White's debut album 'Big Inner' was an intricate and orchestral folk-rock record. Now, the Virginia songwriter is prepping its follow-up, 'Fresh Blood', and has shared a cheerful teaser in 'Rock & Roll Is Cold'. A groove-laden piano line leads the track, and White's hushed lyrics reference "gospel licks and R&B" as backing vocalists "ooh la la" behind him. This is anything but cold.

Rhian Daly, Assistant Reviews Editor

19. Oscar Daffodil Days

Autocorrect can be a dangerous thing, inadvertently filling innocent texts to family and friends with filth. Not for Oscar Scheller. A surreptitious change of "difficult" to "daffodil" in a message inspired this song, his first single for Wichita and an ode to keeping strong through hard times. "*You're on your own but that's OK*", the Londoner promises as ramshackle pop rattles and bounces beneath him.

Rhian Daly, Assistant Reviews Editor

20. Happyness Don't Know Why

Slowing the sleepy sounds of '00s MOR favourite Norah Jones' signature song 'Don't Know Why' to a slurred whisper, south London trio Happyness posted this droll cover online recently to celebrate signing to cult London label Moshi Moshi. Singer Benji Compston injects a subtle menace into its hackneyed lyrics, turning lines like "*my heart is drenched in wine/But you'll be on my mind forever*" into deranged-sounding deadpan threats.

Al Horner, Assistant Editor, NME.COM

TheWeek

► EVERYTHING THAT MATTERS IN MUSIC ■ EDITED BY DAN STUBBS

Run The Jewels, Royal Blood and The Vaccines to play NME Awards

Run The Jewels' El-P and (right) Killer Mike live at Manchester Academy, December 2014

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With the NME Awards 2015 with Austin, Texas just around the corner, we can now announce the first three performers who'll be storming the stage on the big night.

Together, they represent all-conquering new rock music, returning indie heroes and the most exciting live hip-hop act around – Royal Blood, The Vaccines and Run The Jewels (pictured here in full flow).

The three acts will be taking to the hallowed stage of London's O2 Academy Brixton on February 18, when the great and the good of the music world will assemble to find out who bagged Best Album and who's running off with Best Live Act – and to worship at the altar of this year's Godlike Genius.

For all the news on what The Vaccines have been up to, head to page 24, where Justin and the gang tell us about their future-facing new album. Royal Blood can be found ripping up the Reeperbahn on page 48.

Your last chance to vote in the Awards is fast approaching, too. Pick your favourites from the shortlist at NME.COM/awardsvote, but hurry – voting closes on January 30. And head to NME.COM/tickets for your chance to attend the NME Awards 2015 with Austin, Texas ceremony. ■ DAN STUBBS

TheWeek

Full of candid footage and commentary from fans, a new Manic Street Preachers documentary promises to reveal the band's "secret life"

This is their truth

At one point in new documentary *No Manifesto*, Nicky Wire says, "There's a secret life to Manic Street Preachers..." His bandmate, drummer Sean Moore, steps in to finish his sentence: "...that even this documentary won't find!"

Having joined the Manics on tour, at home, at large and in the studio, director Elizabeth Marcus would be forgiven for disagreeing. Does she think she found that secret life?

"Yes, I do," the New York-based filmmaker confides over lunch in west London. "I'm not gonna say, 'Oh yes, I completely dissected their psyches', not at all. But I do believe that there's a pretty well-rounded picture in the film of who they are and what they're about."

A labour of love, the film accompanies the Manics onstage and off from 2005 to 2009, a crucial period for the band that saw them bounce back from the critical and commercial low point of 'Lifeblood' (though that album is one of Marcus' favourites) to release their renaissance record, 'Send Away The Tigers'. Towards the end of the film, they put out 'Journal For Plague Lovers', using the last of the lyrics that bandmate Richey Edwards left with them before he disappeared in 1995.

'No Manifesto' is a candid film, all vérité footage, allowing the viewer a rare chance



DIRECTOR'S CUTS

No Manifesto's director is, first and foremost, a fan. She picks her favourite Manic moments

Winning Best British Group at the 1999 Brit Awards

"All-time best awards acceptance speech in history, where James just goes, 'MANIC STREEEEEEET PREACHERS! Lots of love to everyone back home! Goodnight!', and meanwhile Nicky is in a dress, skipping rope on the stage at the side. I love that."

Hearing James sing in the studio

"I just absolutely loved hearing his voice raw, because it was his voice that attracted me to the band in the first place. A friend of mine suggested that I should get 'This Is My Truth...', so I got that album and put it on. And in the first thing that came on, 'The Everlasting', there's that first line where his voice soars up, and I was like, 'Woohoo, I like this, y'know.'"

'Lifeblood'

"Not many people share my opinion, but the reason I pick 'Lifeblood' as my favourite album

is because I have an emotional attachment to it. It was the first new album they did after I became a fan. That was kind of a difficult time in my life, and I thought the album was beautiful and comforting."

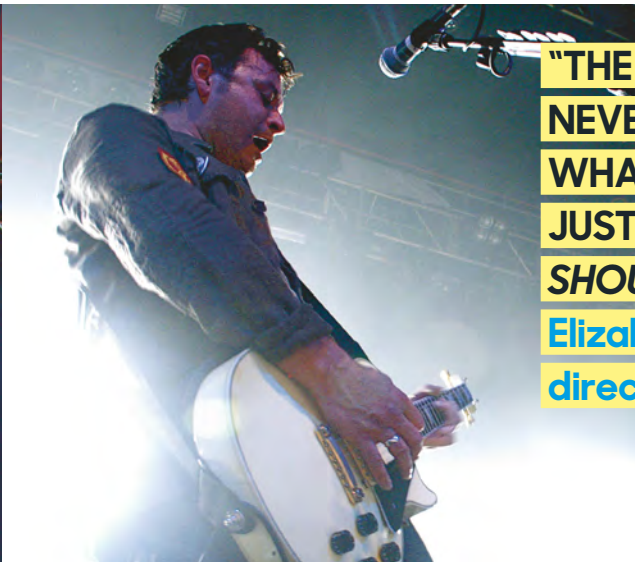


to see Nicky and James arguing over the strings on 'Autumnsong', James tickle-fighting producer Dave Eringa, and some frank discussion about Richey's departure and the direction the band took afterwards – not to mention the revelation that James hates cereal. It also serves as a way in for newer fans: conceived as a radical, fan-focused alternative to the backstage/talking-heads footage commonplace in rock docs, it lets the Manics' famously fervent devotees – nearly 100 of them were interviewed – narrate the

band's history, highlighting, as bassist Wire puts it, the "mutual respect and mutual hatred and a mutual love" between the two. As an American Manics fan, Elizabeth herself is a rare thing – part of the film focuses on the band's "American curse", whereby every US tour before 1999 somehow went wrong, and there are vox pops with American anglophile rock fans who've never even heard of them.

The film premieres at Cardiff's Chapter Arts Centre on January 30, with further screenings around the country (see nomanifestofilm.com) and is released on demand and on DVD and Blu-ray on February 16. It's been so long in the





"THE MANICS NEVER TOLD YOU WHAT TO THINK, JUST THAT YOU SHOULD THINK" Elizabeth Marcus, director



on the way to where they are right now. Despite the access allowed to Marcus and Engfehr, the Manics took a hands-off approach to the film. "At the beginning of the process, I was a little disappointed that the band didn't want to have more input," says Marcus. "But I came to see that it was really for the best. Aside from the fact that it gave me the creative freedom to do what I wanted to do, it's also... they're musicians, they're a band. And I was happy with the fact that they understood that it was better for them to just do their thing and have us do our thing... the band saying, 'Oh come in here and do this multi-year, career-spanning project on us and do whatever you want with it', that takes a lot

making largely because it was self-produced and self-financed. Marcus and producer husband Kurt Engfehr (whose previous movies include *Fahrenheit 9/11* and *Bowling For Columbine*) began with the premise of making a film about Manics fans in 2002. When the band agreed to contribute, things became more complicated schedule-wise, and more expensive. Troubles with the economy in 2009 meant the pair's original distributor for what was then the final cut pulled out, but the additional delay has allowed for further editing to remove dated material. The result is a snapshot of a band at a critical juncture

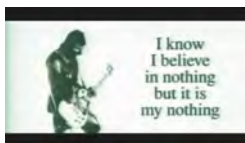
of courage, and I really admire them for being able to do that."

The title, *No Manifesto*, echoes that willingness to relinquish the control associated with a more traditional rock documentary. But, says Marcus, it's also a reflection of the film's emphasis on the fans. "I chose it before I did any interviews with the Manics, because I had this great quote from this early, early interview with Nicky where he's saying, 'We can't hand out a manifesto on how to make your life better; we just want to ignite sparks in people's minds,'" says Marcus. "That to me was wonderful, because that's always been what I turned to music for. But in the fan community, especially back then in the late '90s, there was this sort of impression that there was kind of a manifesto for Manics fans... like, oh well, if you're a Manics fan you believe in this, that and the other thing. And I really wanted to point out to the fan community that the Manics never told anybody what they should think or believe. They never told you what to think, they just told you that you *should* think."

■ EMILY MACKAY



Director Elizabeth Marcus and her producer husband Kurt Engfehr



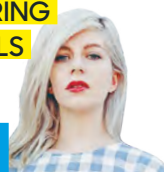
The video for 'Faster'
"It doesn't look like anything else. It's strange and interesting and it complements the song's energy, because it has that high spirit which has both anger and hopefulness in it. And I feel like the imagery just fits with it somehow."

The Manics' trip to Cuba in 2001
"They did a video, *Louder Than War*, about their trip to Cuba to play for [Cuban leader] Fidel Castro. There's a bit where James is talking at the end about how he felt about it, and he says, 'I just thought, what a fucking band. We are cool as fuck.'"

MY LIFE IN A SUITCASE

FIVE TOURING ESSENTIALS

Molly Rankin



Alvays



BOOK
This Changes Everything by Naomi Klein

"This is our earnest book pick. Naomi Klein is from our town [Toronto] and she's still trying to crush fascism. This book is about climate change and capitalism."



BOXSET
Nashville

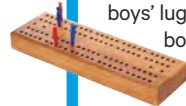
"We've just finished the first season of *Nashville*. It served as a spectacular escape from reality over a long touring stretch. I would follow [lead actress] Connie Britton into a burning house. There are occasional good songs in it, too!"

FILM
We Are The Best!



"It's about these three Swedish schoolgirls who start a band. It's cute, and punk as fuck."

GAME
Cribbage



"Before someone broke into our van and stole all of the boys' luggage and our crib board, we had been playing a fair bit of cribbage."

HOME COMFORT
AeroPress

"We bring an AeroPress along to make coffee every morning in whatever weird hotel situation we wake up in. North American highway coffee can be pretty grim, so the AeroPress has been a real game-changer."

► Alvays return to the UK this week, starting at Manchester Deaf Institute (January 21)

TheWeek

PJ Harvey began recording the follow-up to 'Let England Shake' at London's Somerset House on January 16. We spoke to the first crowd to peer at Polly through the Perspex box

PJ through the looking glass



Jacob, 21, London

"You had to leave your belongings in another room so you can't record anything. Then you go into a room where PJ Harvey and her producers, Flood and John Parish, were all in the process of recording the album. There was one song that was called 'Near The Memorials To Vietnam And Lincoln' and the majority of it had already been recorded – what we saw was violin being recorded over aspects of it. I've not seen her play the violin before. She didn't sing but there were handwritten lyrics up on the walls all around her for about 10 songs. She was looking very stylish and dressed all in black, wearing thin suit trousers. I feel very privileged to have seen it."



Dana, 21, London

"Everyone was walking around the room, watching and talking quietly. It wasn't complete silence, but it was quite chilled. There were about 25 to 30 people in there, so it was intimate, and you could tell that the people inside the box couldn't see us. Musically, what they were making sounded like [2011 album] 'Let England Shake', but it was just one segment of one song, so you couldn't get a feel for the whole album or how it's going to progress."



Polly Harvey within the grounds of London's Somerset House



Mattia, 25, Poland

"I fought for these tickets online for hours! It was cheap at £15 – I would have charged double that. What we heard was really similar to her previous album, 'Let England Shake'. I thought she would change her style, but she didn't. She just played the one song when we were in there, but you could hear the whole process. There were seven glass walls but you really felt like you were

in the studio, because there were no barriers. You could see all the production happening with the software on the computer screens – everything was digital, but PJ was using a lot of old-school instruments. She spoke a few times, 'Shall we try this, shall we try that?'. It was a little bit of a zoo. I was wondering why they didn't say 'hi' to us at least, but maybe that would have spoiled the whole process!"

"YOU FELT LIKE YOU WERE IN THE STUDIO. IT WAS A BIT OF A ZOO"

Mattia, fan



Anna, 34, London

"It was dark and a bit basic as you first went in, but you could hear the music – it was quite loud. Polly was sat there nodding away to a track they were going over again and again. It all sounded quite new – she played a violin at one point, and then a hurdy gurdy and a harmonica. It was like a gallery or an art installation rather than going to see a performer. People were a little more mindful. It was unique and quite an amazing experience. It was dynamic, what was going on. I don't think it's happened before, so it was really special."



Roger, 25, Poland

"There was a really broad range of people at the session – hipsters of all ages! It was absolutely wonderful to see and hear the song that PJ was working on – we heard at least half of it. They were recording strings and discussing trying new things and then started joking a bit about the rhythm of the track. Her hair looked good, but my friend didn't like it – he thought it looked a bit messy. They were selling posters signed by Polly for £25, so I got one of those."



Kim Fowley, 1939–2015

Charismatic and controversial svengali has died aged 75

A man with a skittish career as svengali, producer and occasional pop star, Kim Fowley died last week aged 75. The LA native spent more than five decades in the music industry, his associations including like-minded figures Andrew Loog Oldham and Joe Meek to acts ranging from Soft Machine

and The Byrds to Kiss and Slash. He had a string of novelty hits himself, including a UK Number One with 'Nut Rocker' under the name B Bumble & The Stingers. Fowley is best remembered for forming teen proto-punk band The Runaways around guitarist Joan Jett when she was just 15, but even in his final years, he was seeking out talent –

he helped Ariel Pink write 2014's 'Pom Pom' and spotted Sky Ferreira, who said she was "super bummed" about his death. Fowley was a divisive figure and his aggressive management style of The Runaways once led that band's Cherie Currie to describe him as "a beast". After his passing, she revealed the two had reconciled and worked on a new album, which will be posthumously released. Fowley always argued he was simply hardening The Runaways. "It's necessary for a band to have charisma, and it's necessary for a band to have a Kim Fowley in there someplace," he said. ■

STAYING IN

THE BEST MUSIC ON TV, RADIO AND ONLINE THIS WEEK



Hear Billy Corgan and his band on 6 Music, January 25

Smashing Pumpkins

Smashing Pumpkins In Concert

►LISTEN BBC 6 Music, January 25, 1pm

Late last year, Billy Corgan stopped off at Maida Vale studios with his band (including Rage Against The Machine's Brad Wilk and The Killers' Mark Stoermer). Hear their intimate set, including tracks from recent LP 'Monuments To An Elegy'.

Iron Maiden

Flight 666

►WATCH Sky Arts, January 24, 11pm

Most bands get from gig to gig in a battered van or luxurious tourbus. Not Iron Maiden, who have a customised Boeing 757 that uses the call sign 666 – piloted by frontman Bruce Dickinson. This documentary follows the metal titans on their 2008 tour, with an access-all-areas look at what goes on offstage and in the air.

Wolf Alice

Launched At Red Bull Studios

►WATCH Channel 4, January 21, 12.05am

In 2015, the infectiously brilliant Wolf Alice will look to capitalise on their hard touring by finally releasing their first full-length record (see page 33 for more). While the wait for the album continues a short time longer, build your anticipation with this interview and short performance.

Trash Kit

X-Posure

►LISTEN XFM, January 21, 10pm
London trio Trash Kit released their second album 'Confidence' last year. This week they drop by XFM to play some of that jagged record's highlights live in session.

The Charlatans

The Evening Show With Danielle Perry

►LISTEN XFM, January 21–23, 7pm
Tim Burgess (right) and his gang return next week with 'Modern Nature', their first

album since the death of drummer Jon Brookes. Tune into Danielle Perry's show to hear previews of some groove-laden and atmospheric highlights.

Sound Of Song

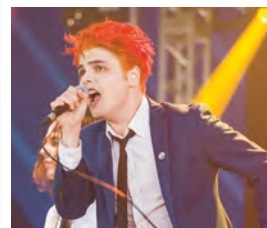
BBC Four

►WATCH BBC Four, January 23, 9pm
Composer Neil Brand visits studios including Abbey Road in London and Sun in Memphis to explore the recording techniques of the 1950s and '60s. Beach Boy Brian Wilson, Phil Spector protégé Darlene Love and more give their insight into what went on behind the scenes of some of the era's classic records.



GOING OUT

THE BEST LIVE EVENTS THIS WEEK



Gerard Way

The former My Chemical Romance frontman (above) heads to Southampton and London as he continues to promote debut solo LP, 'Hesitant Alien'.

►DATES Southampton O2 Guildhall (January 21), London O2 Academy Brixton (23)
►TICKETS Southampton £22.50; London £26.50 from NME.COM/tickets with £2.65–£2.80 booking fee

Menace Beach

Experience the nihilistic grunge and shoegaze of the Leeds band's debut 'Ratworld' live.

►DATES Glasgow Broadcast (January 25), Manchester Castle Hotel (26), Birmingham Hare & Hounds (27)
►TICKETS £7 from NME.COM/tickets with 70p–£1 booking fee

5 TO SEE FOR FREE

- 1. Boxed In**
Rough Trade East, London
►January 23, 6.30pm
- 2. Negative Pegasus**
Northern Lights, Brighton
►January 24, 9pm
- 3. Ghost Culture**
Rough Trade, Nottingham
►January 27, 7pm
- 4. Zun Zun Egui**
Rise, Bristol
►January 27, 7pm
- 5. Girl Band**
The Old Blue Last, London
►January 27, 8pm

13

ED MILES, ANDY FORD, GAELE BERI

Telefonica

Tickets to see the artists you love,
48 hours before general release

Text TICKETS to 2020

Terms apply.

PRIORITY

O₂

THE MACCABEES GET INTIMATE

NME PROMOTION

14



The band pose outside the distinctive venue



Orlando and Felix enjoy some quality reading pre-gig

Orlando Weeks (right) and Felix White onstage at Norwich Arts Centre

The Maccabees headline a unique gig at Norwich Arts Centre, winner of Britain's Best Small Venue 2014 in association with Jack Daniel's

Last year, *NME* hunted the length and breadth of the UK to find Britain's Best Small Venue 2014 in association with Jack Daniel's.

NME readers voted in their thousands for their favourite intimate spaces, with the votes whittled down to an 11-strong regional shortlist featuring the finest sticky-floored sweatboxes with new music at their heart.

East Anglia's contender, Norwich Arts Centre, came out on top after another furious round of voting. It marked a long-awaited victory for the venue after being ever-present in the regional shortlists since the campaign's inception – a reflection of its tireless support and passion for bringing the best bands, such as The Wytches, Black Lips and Mercury Prize winners Young Fathers, to local music fans.

Speaking to *NME*, venue director Pasco-Q Kelvin explained what made the triumphant Arts Centre so special. "As a venue it's something the

city loves. Artists love it too, because it's intimate. The stage is almost half the floor space, so it's a real upfront experience for an audience and for a band."

To celebrate the conquest, *NME* and Jack Daniel's invited The Maccabees to Norwich to swap the enormity of Kasabian's arena tour, on which they'd been supporting, to play a very special and cosy free show in the church-like space. There, they previewed tracks from their forthcoming fourth album, like punk-edged 'Marks To Prove It' and the Radiohead-esque 'Spit It Out', alongside old favourites 'Toothpaste Kisses' and 'Love You Better'.

"The Kasabian shows were enormous buildings in car parks – that's what it felt like – and then you play places like this and it's completely different," explained frontman Orlando Weeks before the unique gig. "It's those quirks and eccentricities that make them special and memorable gigs. [The Kasabian tour] has already become a bit of a blur, but I'll remember this one."



▶ WATCH!

Head to NME.COM/smallvenues now to watch The Maccabees tearing through 'Pelican' live at Norwich Arts Centre's victory gig.

#SPIRITOFJACK



drinkaware.co.uk for the facts. Play with heart. Drink with care. (C)&(R) JD 2014 © Jack Daniel's 2014. Jack Daniel's is a registered trademark.

BEZ COCKED UP HIS ELECTION CAMPAIGN. BUT AT LEAST HE'S PUSHING FOR CHANGE

BY DAN STUBBS

It's easy to sneer at the former Happy Mondays dancer's 'revolution' – but we should applaud his ambition



Last week, Bez added a new job to his CV. The former Happy Mondays member (he used to be their dancer; now he can't because "my hip joints can't take it"), occasional reality TV star (he won *Celebrity Big Brother* in 2005) and,

latterly, beekeeper, announced he was standing for election to Parliament in the Salford and Eccles constituency.

There was a party with free beer, a poster campaign urging the locals to "join the revolution" and a stirring speech about how the current MP, Labour's Hazel Blears – who won't be standing at the next general election – had "let everybody down".

Three days later, the *Manchester Evening News* broke the story that Bez had failed to properly register his Reality Party – launched in April last year – with the electoral commission. Its name had been deemed too similar to the existing Realists' Party, and he had missed the January 12 deadline to do anything about it. As a result, it will not be eligible for the vote on May 6.

The irony did not escape the people of the internet, who

gleefully noted that Bez had produced literature and banners for the Reality Party – slogan: "it's real" – for a party that, to all intents and purposes, doesn't exist.

Everything about the idea of Bez going into politics is, of course, preposterous. This is a man whose name became the byword for any superfluous band member; whose autobiography was named *Freaky Dancing*; and who did so many pills in the acid house days his eyes look like they're staring into a different dimension.

Bez was never going to be taken seriously, and his apparently falling *before* the first hurdle will be no surprise to most. But it's wrong to mock him outright. There's a nasty culture in Britain, one mired in social immobility and class division, which aims to keep people in their place. In May we'll vote for MPs from two parties headed by two

hapless career politicians with mildly differing policies. The election will be fought on the economy, Europe and immigration, as the mainstream parties' hands are forced by Nigel Farage gooning around on the sidelines like a cartoon devil with a pint of Fursty Ferret in his hand.

Bez felt moved to speak out against this after going through some major changes in his life: declared bankrupt for the second time in a decade, he moved to a commune in Wales, learned about permaculture, heard about fracking, thought about the problems in his old neighbourhood and set out to do something about it all. Then he got off his bony bum, set up a party, planned an election campaign and got as far as the launch. If it weren't Bez – if it weren't Britain – anyone reading this would consider it an inspirational tale of personal triumph. He's in a similar position to Russell Brand, who has been pilloried for his own talk of revolution. No matter what you think about Bez or his policies, he largely stands accused of giving a shit and trying to motivate other people to feel as strongly.

He was unlikely to win the election, of course. And I wouldn't want him representing me in Parliament either, much as the idea of Bez twisting David Cameron's melon at PMQs appeals. But it's wrong to underestimate the power of someone who just gets up and does something. The measure of the man will be in the way he bounces back from this setback. His time in Happy Mondays proved he's almost indestructible; don't write him off yet. ■

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

LOST ALBUMS

#60

C Average

C Average (1998)

Chosen by Angus Andrew, Liars

"They were out of the Northwest of America, and this is their debut, self-titled record. It's a duo playing pretty heavy metal. They do a cover of 'Ming's Theme' from *Flash Gordon* and it's all metallised out. I still listen to it today. It was an indie rock release from over 15 years ago that just came to me somehow. I just wish that they had continued on, but like so many good things, they didn't. They've split now, which is probably why they haven't garnered that much attention. It's one that was lost in the works."



► THE DETAILS

► RELEASE DATE

November 1, 1998

► LABEL Kill Rock Stars

► BEST TRACKS American Jim, Genericube, Forged In Birmingham

► WHERE TO FIND IT Available on CD and LP from the Kill Rock Stars website

► LISTEN ONLINE On Spotify



VOTE NOW

Want to see your favourite band walk away with an NME Award? Cast your votes before Friday, January 30 at NME.COM/awardsvote

Best British Band

Supported by **MARSHALL**

AMPLIFICATION

Alt-J

Arctic Monkeys

Chvrches

Kasabian

Marshall

Royal Blood

The Libertines

Best Album

Jamie T - 'Carry On The Grudge'

Kasabian - '48:13'

La Roux - 'Trouble In Paradise'

Royal Blood - 'Royal Blood'

Run The Jewels - 'RTJ2'

St Vincent - 'St Vincent'

Best International Band

Supported by **AUSTIN - THE LIVE MUSIC CAPITAL OF THE WORLD**

Arcade Fire

Foo Fighters

Austin

Haim

Interpol

Queens Of The Stone Age

Tame Impala

Best Live Band

Supported by **DEAD CROW**

SPIRIT FLAVOURED BEERS

Arctic Monkeys

Fat White Family

Foo Fighters

Kasabian

Royal Blood

The Libertines



Best New Band

Supported by **REPLAY**

Circa Waves

FKA Twigs

REPLAY

Jungle

Royal Blood

Slaves

Superfood

Best Solo Artist

Jack White

Jake Bugg

Jamie T

La Roux

Lana Del Rey

St Vincent

Best Festival

Bestival

Glastonbury

Isle Of Wight

Latitude

Reading & Leeds

T In The Park

Best Track

Supported by **TITOS HANDMADE VODKA**



Future Islands -

'Seasons (Waiting On You)'

Jamie T - 'Zombie'

Jungle - 'Busy Earnin'

Kasabian - 'Eez-eh'

Noel Gallagher - 'In The Heat Of The Moment'

Royal Blood - 'Little Monster'

Best Video

Fat White Family - 'Touch The Leather'

FKA Twigs - 'Two Weeks'

Jamie T - 'Zombie'

Jungle - 'Busy Earnin'

Peace - 'Lost On Me'

Royal Blood - 'Figure It Out'

Best Music Film

Nick Cave - 20,000 Days

On Earth

Finding Fela

Kasabian - Summer Solstice

Pulp - A Film About Life,

Death And Supermarkets

Supremensch: The Legend

Of Shep Gordon

Edwyn Collins - The

Possibilities Are Endless

Best Film

Boyhood

Frank

Get On Up

God Help The Girl

The Inbetweeners 2

Northern Soul

Best TV Show

Girls

Game Of Thrones

Foo Fighters: Sonic

Highways

Peaky Blinders

Sherlock

True Detective

Dancefloor Filler

Iggy Azalea feat. Charli

XCX - 'Fancy'

Jamie T - 'Zombie'

Kasabian - 'Eez-eh'

Mark Ronson & Bruno

Mars - 'Uptown Funk'

Metronomy - 'Love Letters'

SBTRKT feat. Ezra Koenig

- 'New Dorp. New York'

Worst Band

5 Seconds Of Summer

Bastille

Blink-182

One Direction

The 1975

U2

Villain Of The Year

Bono

David Cameron

Harry Styles

Nigel Farage

Russell Brand

Taylor Swift

Hero Of The Year

Alex Turner

Dave Grohl

Kate Bush

Noel Gallagher

Russell Brand

Taylor Swift

Music Moment Of The Year

Alex Turner's Brit Awards speech

Jamie T's Reading comeback

Kasabian headline

Glastonbury

Kate Bush returns

The Libertines reunite

Nirvana reunite at

The Rock And Roll

Hall Of Fame

Best Fan Community

Jamie T

Kasabian

La Roux

Muse

Peace

Royal Blood

Small Festival Of The Year

End Of The Road

Festival Number 6

Field Day

Liverpool Psych Fest

The Great Escape

Tramlines

Book Of The Year

Bernard Sumner - Chapter

And Verse

Ian Curtis, Deborah Curtis

and Jon Savage -

So This Is Permanence

Jesse Frohman - Kurt

Cobain: The Last Session

John Lydon - Anger

Is An Energy: My Life

Uncensored

Viv Albertine - Clothes

Clothes Clothes Music

Music Music Boys Boys

Boys

Steve Hanley - The Big

Midweek: Life Inside

The Fall

Reissue Of The Year

Led Zeppelin - 'Led

Zeppelin II'

Manic Street Preachers -

'The Holy Bible'

Oasis - 'Definitely Maybe'

Pixies - 'Doolittle'

Public Enemy - 'It Takes

A Nation Of Millions To

Hold Us Back'

The Smashing Pumpkins

- 'Adore'

Best Band Social Media

?uestlove's Twitter

Alana Haim's Twitter

Albert Hammond Jr's

Twitter

Fat White Family's

Facebook

Liam Gallagher's Twitter

Slaves' Facebook

TICKETS ON SALE NOW!
Head to NME.COM/tickets to buy.

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ANATOMY OF AN ALBUM



"DANCE MUSIC IS LIKE SKIN... IT DIES AND GROWS BACK"

James Murphy



THIS WEEK...

LCD

Soundsystem

James Murphy's groundbreaking debut mixed techno and funk with new wave and classic songwriting. It's 10 years old this week

THE BACKGROUND

James Murphy had pinballed between various unsuccessful groups in the late 1980s and '90s before hooking up with Tim Goldsworthy, who had previously founded the Mo' Wax label with James Lavelle, to form DFA Records in 2001. They tapped into the new Strokes-led NYC zeitgeist, and when they produced The Rapture's 'House Of Jealous Lovers' in 2002, Murphy found himself right there in the thick of it. The time had come to reveal LCD Soundsystem, and debut single 'Losing My Edge' had its cake and ate it. It was painfully hip but poked fun at the whole hipster charade – and at Murphy himself, who agonised, ironically, over his fading relevance. His astonishing debut album followed three years later, a distillation of everything Murphy had learned in the interim.

STORY BEHIND THE SLEEVE

Designed by Murphy and Michael Vadino for DFA Design, the cover image is of a damaged mirrorball: disco might be beaten and bruised, but it still glitters. "Dance music is always dead," Murphy told the *Irish Independent* in 2008, "and has been since it left the gay clubs of NYC in the '70s, but it's just skin that dies, sloughs off and grows back."

FIVE FACTS

- 1 'Thrills' was supposed to be a cross between The Normal's 'Warm Leatherette' and Missy Elliott's 'Get Ur Freak On'. For inspiration, he imagined himself working on a track with Timbaland.
- 2 Written in the shower, 'Movement' was designed to show that LCD Soundsystem could rock out, too. "It's fun for me to go play with bands that are supposed to be really heavy and be heavier than them for like a minute and 14 seconds," Murphy said.
- 3 Janet Jackson wanted Murphy to help her make a record like 'Losing My Edge'. He asked when and was told to "call Dan". Murphy didn't know who 'Dan' was and never picked up the phone.
- 4 Reluctant to map out a proper concept for the 'Disco Infiltrator' video, Murphy got a documentary crew to follow the band around all day before a gig. "I love the mundane nature of it," he explained.
- 5 Murphy's drums on 'Losing My Edge' are lifted from 'Change', a 1980 single by British post-punk band Killing Joke. It was a favourite beat he'd play when warming up.

LYRIC ANALYSIS

"No memories to remind you/Of the old you/Nothing for it/Just keep it up" – 'Too Much Love'

A contemplative moment amid the mayhem, 'Too Much Love' tackles the challenges of ageing. It's a subject Murphy would return to on 2007's 'All My Friends' and 2010's 'All I Want'.

"Wasted and complacent/And you about the same/But still I want to get it/On with you tonight" – 'Never As Tired As When I'm Waking Up'

'Never As Tired...' comes off as tongue-in-cheek, acknowledging a failing relationship that's still got wriggle room for a bit of how's-your-father.

"The jocks can't get in the door/When Daft Punk is playing at my house" – 'Daft Punk Is Playing At My House'

The second mention for Daft Punk on an LCD record, after the shout-out on 'Losing My Edge'. Why? They're "genreless", Murphy said. "Besides, Daft Punk is a funny name."

WHAT WE SAID THEN

"In an age where Jet could wear a 'Disco Sucks' badge without getting publicly flogged, James

Murphy was pretty close to a musical messiah – a one-man groove machine." Tim Jonze, *NME*, 9 March 2007

WHAT WE SAY NOW

James Murphy's first great statement is a bravura attempt to fuse punk, techno, funk, new wave and classic songwriter values. "And it feels like it won't come off", he sings on 'Great Release' – but it sure as hell does.

FAMOUS FAN

"LCD to me is like New Order and The B-52's, and we deeply share a lot of those influences." Win Butler, *Arcade Fire*

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"Albums to me aren't really about things – they are things, if that makes any sense." James Murphy, 2010

THE AFTERMATH

Two more albums followed: 2007's 'Sound Of Silver' and 2010's 'This Is Happening', before Murphy packed up the whole project with a farewell gig at Madison Square Garden on April 2, 2011. Since then, he's thrown himself into diverse schemes, remixing David Bowie, then co-producing Arcade Fire's 'Reflektor', creating the Despacio soundsystem with Soulwax and blending his own coffee, House Of Good.

THE DETAILS

►RECORDED 2001–2004 ►RELEASE DATE January 24, 2005
 ►LENGTH 1:40:22 ►PRODUCERS The DFA ►STUDIO Longview Farms Studios, Massachusetts/Plantain Recording House, NYC ►HIGHEST UK CHART POSITION 20 ►UK SALES 100,000 ►SINGLES Losing My Edge, Give It Up, Yeah, Movement, Daft Punk Is Playing At My House, Disco Infiltrator, Tribulations ►TRACKLISTING CD1 ►1. Daft Punk Is Playing At My House ►2. Too Much Love ►3. Tribulations ►4. Movement ►5. Never As Tired As When I'm Waking Up ►6. On Repeat ►7. Thrills ►8. Disco Infiltrator ►9. Great Release CD2 ►1. Losing My Edge ►2. Beat Connection ►3. Give It Up ►4. Tired ►5. Yeah (Crass Version) ►6. Yeah (Pretentious Version) ►7. Yr City's A Sucker (Full Version)

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"I can be angry and fucking tidy"

Brian Harvey, clearing up the East 17 platinum discs he smashed in protest at the "fucking music industry"

THE NUMBERS

£197

Average price for a ticket to see Fleetwood Mac, according to a Forbes investigation into secondary ticketing. The costliest band to see in 2014

£147,000

What disgraced Lostprophets frontman Ian Watkins made from the sale of the dissolved band's company, Goonies Touring

£1,300

Amount Taylor Swift paid to clear a fan's student loan debt

1,000

Tracks on new YouTube playlist shared by Caribou, titled 'The Longest Mixtape'



WHO THE FUCK IS...



Mochi

This is a dog that went missing last week. Help came from an unlikely source – Green Day frontman and canine supersleuth Billie Joe Armstrong.

How did he end up on the case?

Mochi's owners put out a message saying the pitbull was stolen from their San Francisco home last weekend. Armstrong saw the post and rallied his fans.

And were there any – ahem – leads?

Lots. Less than a day after Armstrong's post, the dog was found and returned to her owners. Next week: Billie Joe rescues a cat from a tree.

+ GOOD WEEK +



Snoop Dogg

Sippin' on gin and juice? Suckin' on a Werther's Original more like. Snoop Dogg became Snoop Granddogg last week, when his 20-year-old son Corde Broadus and wife Jessica Kyzzer welcomed baby Zion into the world.

- BAD WEEK -



Liam Gallagher

The former Beady Eye frontman missed a court date in New York, claiming he was too "depressed and anxious" to attend. The judge in the child support case didn't sympathise and fined him £3,295 for his absence.

IN BRIEF

Let me renovate you

Domestic grumbles of the rich and famous were revealed this week with news that musical neighbours Jimmy Page and Robbie Williams have locked horns over the latter's home improvement plans. Time to turn the amps up, Jimmy.

Best of both worlds

Van Halen ended a lengthy court battle with drummer Alex Van Halen's ex-wife over image rights. Kelly Van Halen is now free to continue using the band's name to sell a range of pillows, blankets and ponchos.

Load of rubbish

Macklemore performed a new version of his track 'Thrift Shop' on Sesame Street. A duet with Oscar The Grouch, the new version promotes wearing rubbish as clothes.

► Find these stories and more on NME.COM

Official RECORD STORE Chart

TOP 40 ALBUMS JANUARY 18, 2015



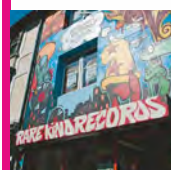
NEW 01 Panda Bear Panda Bear Meets The Grim Reaper DOMINO

Animal Collective's Noah Lennox hits the top spot with his fifth solo album as PB, an unpredictable listen that references everything from the Ramones to Abba.

2	Wanted On Voyage George Ezra COLUMBIA
3	Lost In The Dream The War On Drugs SECRETLY CANADIAN
4	Hozier Hozier ISLAND
5	X Ed Sheeran ASYLUM
6	1989 Taylor Swift EMI
7	In The Lonely Hour Sam Smith CAPITOL
8	Our Love Caribou CITY SLANG
9	A Perfect Contradiction Paloma Faith RCA
10	The Endless River Pink Floyd RHINO
11	Ghost Culture Ghost Culture BECAUSE MUSIC
12	AM Arctic Monkeys DOMINO
13	Sonic Highways Foo Fighters RCA
14	Rock Or Bust AC/DC COLUMBIA
15	Stay Gold First Aid Kit COLUMBIA
16	The Balcony Catfish & The Bottlemen COMMUNION
17	Never Been Better Olly Murs EPIC
18	Royal Blood Royal Blood WARNER BROS
19	Love In The Future John Legend COLUMBIA
20	This Is All Yours Alt-J INFECTIOUS MUSIC
21	No Sound Without Silence The Script COLUMBIA
22	Very Best Of Joe Jackson UMTV
23	Mechanical Bull Kings Of Leon RCA
24	Partners Barbra Streisand COLUMBIA
NEW 25	Caustic Love Paolo Nutini ATLANTIC
NEW 26	Popular Problems Leonard Cohen COLUMBIA
27	Four One Direction SYCO MUSIC
28	Motion Calvin Harris COLUMBIA
29	The Very Best Of 10C MERCURY/UMTV
NEW 30	Commune Goat ROCKET
NEW 31	Club Meds Dan Mangan & Blacksmith CITY SLANG
32	Sun Structures Temples HEAVENLY
33	III Take That POLYDOR
34	The Dark Side Of The Moon Pink Floyd RHINO
NEW 35	Liquid Spirit Gregory Porter BLUE NOTE
36	St Vincent St Vincent CAROLINE/LOMA VISTA
NEW 37	1000 Forms Of Fear Sia MONKEY PUZZLE/RCA
NEW 38	IV Led Zeppelin RHINO
39	48:13 Kasabian COLUMBIA
NEW 40	The Basement Tapes Complete – Vol 11 Bob Dylan And The Band COLUMBIA

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 RK BASS BRIGHTON

FOUNDED 2009

WHY IT'S GREAT They know all there is to know about every area of dance music, from drum'n'bass to breakcore and more.

TOP SELLER LAST WEEK Artificial Intelligence – 'Forgotten Truths' EP **THEY SAY** "We buy large vinyl collections all around the country, sometimes from top DJs."

SOUNDTRACK OF MY LIFE



The Spice Girls



Stevie Wonder



Rou Reynolds

Enter
Shikari

THE FIRST SONG I REMEMBER HEARING

**The Four Tops -
'I Can't Help Myself'**

"My dad was a DJ who specialised in northern soul and Motown. He had chests full of seven-inches and 12-inches - it was like a playground for me. I never saw him DJ - I guess he stopped when I was born."

THE FIRST SONG I FELL IN LOVE WITH

**The Lightning Seeds -
'Change'**

"My cousin introduced me to The Lightning Seeds when I was about 11. The melodies were easy to get into and whistle back on the way home from school."

THE FIRST ALBUM I EVER BOUGHT

**The Spice Girls -
'Spice'**

"It's embarrassing but I was nine, so I guess it was OK. I remember buying it at a service station on tape when we were going on

a family holiday. I wouldn't listen to it now out of choice."

THE SONG THAT MADE ME WANT TO BE IN A BAND

Oasis - 'Whatever'

"I THOUGHT OASIS WERE SO COOL WITH THEIR SHADES AND GUITARS"

"Whatever' always stuck out because it was slightly more immediate. The string section grabbed me and I liked their larger-than-life character as well. I thought they were so cool with their shades and the guitars."

THE SONG I CAN NO LONGER LISTEN TO

**Daft Punk -
'Get Lucky'**

"Just because of the sheer amount of overplay that it got. It was everywhere you looked, every advert, every radio station. It turned into

the song everyone hated. People either loved it or thought it was utter shit, but I just thought it was OK. It was good that they weren't doing exactly the same thing that they'd done before."

THE SONG THAT MAKES ME WANT TO DANCE

**Kool & The Gang -
'Celebration'**

"It's the most fun, crazy, positive, good-times track. Last New Year's Eve I tried to copy their dance moves from the video - they're all done out in suits and bright white shoes and the whole brass section does this shuffle step. I play the trumpet and a few of my friends play brass so we once we spent half the night doing that shuffle whilst playing along to that song."

THE SONG I DO AT KARAOKE

**Stevie Wonder -
'For Once In My Life'**

"It's usually something Motown-y. I haven't done too much karaoke, but one of the funnest or most ridiculous

goes round and round. A proper earworm."

THE SONG I WISH I'D WRITTEN

**Stravinsky -
'The Rite Of Spring'**

"It's one of my all-time favourite pieces of music. I remember spending about a week just studying it because it's an absolute work of art. I heard a lot of classical music quite early on; my parents were into it and they had a little collection. It never really interested me when I was younger but when I was about 25 I suddenly got really into classical."

THE SONG THAT REMINDS ME OF ST ALBANS

**Hundred Reasons -
'I'll Find You'**

"They remind me of spending endless summers in Verulamium Park with my friends, playing football and drinking cider and getting up to mischief. Hundred Reasons were always the soundtrack to that."

THE SONG THAT REMINDS ME OF FORMING ENTER SHIKARI

Sikth - 'Such The Fool'

"All four of us had very different music tastes but we all adored Sikth, even though they're one of the most intense, ridiculous, metal bands. Their first EP came out in 2002 when we were getting together."

THE SONG I WANT PLAYED AT MY FUNERAL

**Glenn Miller - 'In
The Mood'**

"It's such a fun, happy song. Hopefully it will put everybody in a good mood afterwards. There's no way a funeral can't be horrible, really, but it would be a bit nicer with 'In The Mood'."



Daft Punk

► **YOU HEARD IT HERE FIRST** ■ EDITED BY MATT WILKINSON

NME
NEW
BAND
OF THE WEEK



H Hawkline

LA-based Welshman makes “strange pop” with fellow exile Cate Le Bon

Raised in North Wales in the seaside town of Morrissey’s nightmares, there’s more than a little peculiarity to the character of Huw Evans and his alter ego, H Hawkline. No wonder he feels comfortable in his new hometown of Los Angeles.

“Every day is weird in LA,” he says. “It’s a bizarre place. Coming from Cardiff and having spent the important ages of 10 to 17 living in Prestatyn, seeing palm trees everywhere is odd. There are palm trees in Prestatyn, outside the leisure centre, but they’re not in great shape.”

Making what he describes as “strange pop” from the home he shares in east LA with fellow Welsh exile Cate Le Bon, and surrounded by a community of kindly allsorts keen to collaborate – including garage artist White Fence and Warpaint drummer Stella Mozgawa (“the best I’ve ever seen”, he insists) – Evans will release

his first record as a signed artist, ‘In The Pink Of Condition’, next month on the Heavenly label.

It’s a sponge of an album, soaked in California sun, Welsh rain, Paul McCartney and the kind of otherworldly *knowing* that inhabits all of Wales’ best pop music, from Gorky’s to Furrries to Cate Le Bon. Le Bon produced the record, too: “She thinks about music in a completely different way. The way she deconstructs and rebuilds sounds is unique.”

It could all feel a very long way from the motherland, but the communal environment he’s inhabiting (Hawkline’s list of collaborators and accomplices in Cardiff includes Sweet Baboo and R Seiliog) is eerily familiar, which says as much about the man as it does about the cities themselves. “There are lots of similarities in the music scenes of LA and Cardiff,” he says.

“Everyone is supportive, and genuinely excited when something good happens to someone.”

The album’s lead single, ‘Moons In My Mirror’, a psychedelic pop number reminiscent of Jim Noir, is out on January 26. Expect H Hawkline’s strange kind of love to keep spreading. ■ **MIKE WILLIAMS**

▼
ON
NME.COM/
NEWMUSIC
NOW
► Stream new
album ‘In The Pink
Of Condition’

► THE DETAILS

- **BASED** Los Angeles (via Cardiff)
- **FOR FANS OF** Cate Le Bon, Felt
- **SOCIAL** twitter.com/h_hawkline
- **BUY IT** The album ‘In The Pink Of Condition’ is out on February 2
- **SEE HIM LIVE** An 18-date UK tour kicks off at Cardiff’s Clwb Ifor Bach on February 5
- **BELIEVE IT OR NOT** “I drive a terrible 1981 Honda Accord that seems to be possessed by the spirit of the Chuckle Brothers... if they were dead”

Band Practice

Jeanette plays “some shit” and Ben plays “some other shit”, says Band Practice’s Facebook bio, but the duo’s endearing lo-fi guitar pop has a lot more charm than that. “*Nobody at this show likes me*”, ponders Jeanette Wall (founder of New York label Miscreant Records) on ‘Bartending At Silent Barn’, as she narrates a story of forgotten beers and generous tips, while ‘Magic!’ sums up the band’s sound in a single lyric: “*I wanna get high in my bedroom*”.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/bandpracticebandpractice
► **HEAR THEM** bandpracticebandpractice.com

NME BUZZ BAND OF THE WEEK

The Moon

Londoners The Moon caused a stir late last year after a handful of low-key, unbilled gigs that left those in attendance babbling about their early promise. Shouty yet sultry, rocky but with lofty atmospherics and stupidly great riffs, the female four-piece are a gloriously fun proposition. Even more ears are perking up following debut track ‘Eureka Moments’ going online last week.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/commoonicate
► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/wearethemoon

Horrid

This Mancunian psych outfit make for quite an overwhelming live act – they perform with ragged hessian sacks draped over their heads, playing droning space jams that can last for up to 45 minutes apiece. It’s no surprise, then, that they’ve been asked to support tripped-out rock’n’rollers Moon Duo at their album launch party in Manchester this April. Minds will be bent at that show.

► **SOCIAL** twitter.com/horrid_band



The Moon

► **HEAR THEM** horridmusic.bandcamp.com

► **SEE THEM LIVE** Manchester Islington Mill (April 8)

High Tide 15:47

Newcastle power trio High Tide 15:47 have an expansive sound that belies their minimal setup. They’ve already supported the cream of the British crop last year, netting support slots for Wolf Alice and Eagulls. If debut single ‘Shade Of Blue’ is anything to go by, their fuzzed-up dream pop will be infecting melancholic hearts everywhere.

Anchored in ‘90s shoegaze, it’s a bittersweet ode to a failed romance.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/hightide1547
► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/high_tide_1547

Prince

Giving your punk band the same name as the world’s most famous purple pop midget marks you out as either geniuses or lunatics. Judging by the bouncing NOFX riffs and ballsy exuberance of their output so far, this Austin supergroup – featuring members of local bands including Dude Jams, Shit



Creek and Fleabag – might just be the former.

► **HEAR THEM** princetheband.bandcamp.com

Twin Caverns

Self-declared practitioners of ‘astral soul’, Twin Caverns keep carving out a niche for themselves with their cathartic, almost spiritual strain of R&B and electronica-edged pop music. A year ago we fell for ‘Undiscover’, but recent track ‘Drown’ promises much dusky intoning on their forthcoming EP. It’s a sparse, undulating masterpiece held together by frontwoman Louise Millar’s vocals, which pivot precisely on the edge of otherworldly and emotive.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/twincavernsmusic
► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/twin-caverns

Horrid

Dengue Fever

They’ve been around since 2003 and are already six albums deep, but Los Angeles outfit Dengue Fever are as relevant as ever in 2015. Similarly minded acts like Goat earned the plaudits last year, so this Los Angeles act’s twist on tribal psychedelia is sure to turn heads when ‘The Deepest Lake’ is released in February. Chhom Nimol sings all her lyrics in her native Cambodian Khmer, while the other five members stir up trouble with surf guitars, horns and tribal rhythms.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/denguefever
► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/denguefever

BAND CRUSH

Janet Weiss

Sleater-Kinney

Luluc



“The record ‘Passer By’ by Luluc is really incredible. I definitely have my Nick Drake moments, and my Bill Fay ones, and I really love that very stark, very direct thing... I played with Elliott Smith years ago, and I see them doing the same – music that once you hear it, you can’t live without it.”

Babes

Not many bands can boast their own hotline, but LA five-piece Babes have a dedicated number on which fans can call and text them. With their self-titled debut EP released on Harvest last year – full of sombre, lilting pop such as standout track ‘ATMO’, which recalls a more elegant, sadder Cults – it’s a wonder the phone lines weren’t constantly jammed.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/babesband
► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/babesband

Children

Children are a Berlin trio who exist in the post-xx world. Take their most recent single ‘Back’, which mingles misty vocals and guitars with a propulsive chorus of horns. It sounds like the city’s club culture has bled into the track via an insistent bass thump, too – not that you’ll be hearing this in the Berghain anytime soon; this is pure introspective dreampop.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/childrenchildren
► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/childrenchildren

Diet Cig

Most bands hold off until the second or third full-length

Babes



before turning on the scene that birthed them, but this New Paltz, NY duo opt for the middle-fingered kiss-off straight out of the gates. Over punkish blasts, Alex Luciano mocks her pretentious peers and their snooty, standstill fans. She may not care about those other bands, but if she has her way, you’ll definitely care about hers.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/dietcigmusic
► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/fatherdaughter

Leaf Erikson

Londoners Leaf Erikson call new song ‘Flying High’ a “statement of intent” for the coming year. Headly words, but luckily they come good, with the track recalling the lofty atmospherics of peak-period Doves, The National and, sonically at least, early Coral.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/leaferiksonmusic
► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/leaferiksonmusic

Pool Shop

Pool Shop is the work of Jaimee Fryer from Brisbane. Her Cobain drawl and loose



Diet Cig

guitar means you could peg her as an alternative to Courtney Barnett, but lyrically she delves into darker and more abstract territory. First demo ‘Lower Now’, delivered with Pavement-style guitar tones, details the feeling of being emotionally spent. As a first effort it’s a strong piece of Australian slacker rock.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/jaimee.fryer
► **HEAR HER** soundcloud.com/poolshop

Faded Gold

Stefanie Chew’s solo project Faded Gold has been piling up superlatives from her contemporaries in Liverpool, but finally an album is in the offing, preceded by two mesmerising new tracks. The first, ‘Tides’, is a choral reimagining of electronica, like East India Youth’s shimmering compositions rendered more melancholic, while ‘The Final Sunset’ sees waves of organ collapsing over each other.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/Fadedgold
► **HEAR HER** soundcloud.com/fadedgold

Be Forest

Italian quartet Be Forest released their second album ‘Earthbeat’ late last year, following up their 2011 debut ‘Cold’ with enough sparse atmospherics to rival The xx. Where their

Radar NEWS ROUND UP

BILLIE SIGNS

Teen starlet Billie Marten has begun the new year by announcing on Facebook that she’s signed her first ever record deal with Chess Club. With Wolf Alice and Jungle being among the label’s recent success stories, the 15-year-old singer-songwriter can expect an exciting time ahead of her.

MILK MUSIC RETURN

Olympia punk four-piece Milk Music have announced a surprise return, with their first shows in more than two years scheduled to take place in the US in February and March. The band, who have only played in Britain once – back in 2012 – are also supposedly hard at work on a new album.



BUREY GETS BUSY

Loyle Carner’s producer Alex Burey has premiered new song ‘The Intimidator’ ahead of his biggest London show to date at St Pancras Old Church this week (January 21). The track, which was self-produced, is part of the ‘Inside World’ EP, which is released on February 9 via Burey’s own Pling Recordings label.

HOOTON’S DEBUT SINGLE

Liverpool newcomers Hooton Tennis Club say their debut single ‘Jasper’, produced by fellow Liverpoolian Bill Ryder-Jones, is out via Heavenly on February 23. The band play Heavenly’s weekend at Hebden Bridge on January 25, before shows across the country next month.

► For daily new music recommendations and exclusive tracks and videos go to NME.COM/NEWMUSIC



Warm Soda

British counterparts stay frosty, though, Costanza Delle Rose's purred vocals brighten the gloomiest edges of their sound.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/beforest3

Jones

Jones dropped two faultless introductions at the end of last year. First we had 2014's leftfield hit 'Deep', but we're most excited about the AK Paul-produced 'You', which takes a step back into the shadows of experimental pop with its breathy vocals sat atop pillowy synths.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/jones

► **HEAR HER** soundcloud.com/iseejones

Radar LABEL OF THE WEEK

Alcopop!

Alcopop!

► **FOUNDED** 2006 by Jack Clothier and Kevin Douch

► **BASED** London

► **KEY RELEASES** Hush

The Many – Revolve (2008), Johnny Foreigner – Certain Songs Are Cursed (2011), Radstewart – Wiccans And Beatlemancers (2014)

► **NME SAYS** Despite recently attempting to buy Ukip's domain name (and then fill it with unicorn GIFs), Alcopop's real talent is for unearthing the UK's burgeoning talent.

Coquin Migale

This Newcastle quartet released their second EP 'Feel' in December and will be supporting Peace at their March 7 show in Newcastle. Tracks like 'Gold' are built on gale-force guitars and math-rock rhythms, twinned with singer Alex Soper's soaring vocals.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/coquinmigale

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

► **SEE THEM LIVE** Newcastle The Cluny (March 7)

Warm Soda

When Smith Westerns called it a day they left a scuzzy power-pop void waiting to be filled. Step forward Austin's Warm Soda, who have been building up their Fuzz City empire (via a studio and label) since 2012, and in tracks like 'Waiting For Your Call', prove themselves heirs to Cullen Omori's glam garage pop.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/warmsoda777

► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/castle-face-1

School '94

Sweden's School '94 graced the pages of *Radar* last year as School. Legal action by a band sharing their name forced them to add the date, but musically they're more mid-'80s than mid-'90s. Latest EP 'Like You' channels The Smiths and Cocteau Twins, the picks of the bunch being 'Easier' and 'Like You' – both subtle guitar-pop leviathans.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/school94music

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

The Gooch Palms

Aussie duo The Gooch Palms are a far better prospect than that moniker suggests. Their sunkissed, surf-indebted garage punk is the ideal antidote to bleak times, with frenetic songs packing fuzzed-up thrills.

► **SOCIAL** twitter.com/thegoochpalms

► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/the-gooch-palms

NEW SOUNDS FROM WAY OUT

This week's columnist

BENJI

COMPSTON

Happyness



BANDS ACROSS THE SEA

80N7, a new label out of Brooklyn, have just released their 'All American Edition' mixtape, which follows on from debut compilation '80N7'. Our track 'Full Of Minnows' was on that one, but our favourite track on the most recent release comes from **Blessin'** – it's called 'Pookie's Dog', which I assumed was about being owned by a vagina. Blessin' are on Art Is Hard, which is a British-based label from Devon, but they come from Denton, Texas on the other side of the Atlantic. A little transatlantic co-operation never hurt anyone, right?

We played with **Junk** at The Fulford Arms in York (where they come from), following a three-hour matinee from a Def Leppard covers band made up of local dads. It was one of our favourite shows of 2014 (the show with Junk, that is); we swapped merch, email addresses, kisses on both cheeks, etc, and they gave us a T-shirt with a cymbal-clapping monkey on it. They're also a three-piece, which made conversations between us pleasingly symmetrical. Listen to 'Car' – it has the lyric "get your shit out of my car".

Ash, our drummer, wrote about In Vibes in his column, so I'm gonna talk about **Orange County**, which is Shaun from In Vibes' side project. It's nice to have continuity. 'Backwards' is the only song they have on the internet – it's got a sleepy Angelo Badalamenti thing going on and a great Ken Coomer drumbeat.

New Fries got their name from a mangled Burger King sign they drove past. They're from Toronto and sound like the lovechild of David Thomas and Karen O, but New Fries prefer to describe themselves as a band of "musicians and non-musicians". Better to keep it simple. Listen to a song called 'Uncle Carmin Cruise Ship Cuba' #fucktheembargo.

The last band I'm gonna talk about are **Feels** from San Francisco. They're last not by choice, because maybe they should be first – we try not to make lists. We were sent a bunch of demos from their upcoming album and they sounded awesome. We're too technically challenged to leak it, so you'll have to wait until the album comes out to hear it. Go see them at a show instead, most probably on the other side of the Atlantic.

Next week: DFA Records



Junk

"The demos from Feels' upcoming album are awesome. We're too technically challenged to leak it"

50

NEW

ALBUMS

YOU NEED TO HEAR

THIS YEAR



Comebacks! Curveballs! Debuts!
NME knocks on studio doors to find
out how the most exciting albums
of the next 12 months are shaping up

(From left) Pete Robertson, Justin Young, Freddie Cowan and Árni Arnason at Music Bank rehearsal studios, London, November 2014



The Vaccines

Justin, Árni, Freddie and Pete risked life, limb and liver recording an album that aims to cast off their retro stylings once and for all

Over the course of two albums – 2011's 'What Did You Expect...?' and 2012's 'Come Of Age' – The Vaccines carved a reputation for simple, to-the-point rock'n'roll, a timeless sound that could equally have jostled for position with The Everly Brothers, the Ramones or The Strokes. This, says frontman Justin Young, is all set to change. "I started to feel that being timeless isn't a good thing," he says, in the south London rehearsal space where he, bass player Árni Arnason, drummer Pete Robertson and guitarist Freddie Cowan are prepping for shows in India, Vietnam and Hong Kong.

"I wanted to make a record that was important in 2015 and sounded like 2015, sonically and emotionally."

"People just aren't ambitious in rock music," he continues, sighing. "If you take hip-hop or pop, they're a lot more adventurous, they break a lot more rules. If you listen to some of the stuff on the radio right now, it's fucking far out."

Justin, however, is well aware of the dangers of working in such an up-to-date way. "I think

► **TITLE** English Graffiti
► **RELEASE DATE** Spring
► **LABEL** Columbia
► **PRODUCERS** Dave Fridmann, Cole MGN
► **TRACKS INCLUDE** Handsome, Want You So Bad, Dream Lover, Radio Bikini

with our next album we wanted to make something that sounds amazing next year and then terrible in 10 years! If you listen to anything from the 1990s now, it sounds fucking awful, but that's part of its identity."

Young's about-turn follows the merest hint of itchy feet evidenced on 2013's 'Melody Calling' EP, the group's

most recent release. It saw them reach for a '90s-indebted, more nuanced sound than those back-to-basics albums, and at the ➔

Freddie and (below)
Pete and Árni at
Tarbox Road Studios,
New York State



time Young said it had set The Vaccines on a new course. "That was a signpost," says Justin. "It was us embracing production and arrangement for the very first time. It was more stylised than anything we'd done before. We've gone a step further than that now. The record's hyper-stylised in a way we've never worked before. Nothing is natural-sounding; it's a lot more future-sounding. We wanted to be more creative and exploratory. We wanted to make a genre-defining record rather than something that would just fit in."

The process of reinventing The Vaccines began with a spot of recruitment. Instead of just one producer, the group roped in two, each with a different MO. First to get the call was Dave Fridmann, best known for his frequent work with The Flaming Lips, but with a list of credits that includes everyone from Weezer and Sleater-Kinney to MGMT and The Cribs. "There really aren't that many great producers out there, but I think Dave has consistently made fantastic records," says Justin, a big fan of Weezer's 'Pinkerton' in particular. And playing Robin to Dave's Batman is Cole M Greif-Neill, otherwise known as Cole MGN, a former member of Ariel Pink's Haunted Graffiti and beatmaker for cult hip-hop label Stones Throw, whom Justin met in Los Angeles. While Dave has taken on the traditional producer role, Cole's contribution has been somewhat more leftfield. "He's been taking everything we record into the other room and chopping it up," says Justin. The singer describes the pair as a "dream team".

The album sessions took place across three separate fortnights at Fridmann's studio in upstate New York. "Dave won't allow you to stay there for more than two weeks at a time, otherwise you get cabin fever," says Árni.

Justin grins. "It's the wild west up there!"

The sound of gunshots punctuated the recording, and Dave insisted the band wear high-vis jackets when they went outside. What exactly were the locals shooting?

"Animals," says Justin. "And English people."

The band didn't need the high-vis jackets to stand out from the natives. In downtime, they

hit the nearby bars to mingle among the men with tattoos and banned-breed dogs. They also necked a cinnamon-flavoured whiskey liqueur named Fireball, which was pulled from the market during one of their stays because it contained dangerous levels of antifreeze. "The bar we went to had a sign saying 'Still proudly serving Fireball'. It's a community that takes pride in drinking antifreeze!" nods Árni.

There wasn't too much comfort back at their hotel – just some worrying gang activity. "One night I woke up at 5am in the morning and someone was banging on the door and shouting, 'Open up, motherfucker!'" recalls Justin. "I was working on my escape route. I had visions of me running across the lawn in my underwear while he was taking pot shots."

It wasn't all dodgy drinks and sinister late-night goings-on, however. The band arrived at the studio with 50 tracks to whittle down

**"Nothing is natural
– it's a lot more
future-sounding"**

Justin Young

to an album's worth. The first on the list of keepers was 'Want You So Bad', a hypnotic, groove-based track that was the first thing Justin wrote for the album. "It's a really pretty love song," he explains. "It's my best attempt at sounding sexy. I thought, 'By the end of this, you'll want me so bad.'" At the other end of the spectrum is the "hyper" 'Radio Bikini', their answer to Dead Kennedys' 'Holiday In Cambodia'. "It's a song about the bombing of Bikini Atoll [after World War II] disguised as a song about summer," says Justin. The album's most likely hit is 'Dream Lover', which deals with the sensitive subject of going home with someone, but wishing you were with someone else entirely. "I think that's the biggest song we've ever written," beams Justin. "It's like a monster to me in my head."

Away from

Fridmann's studio, it's rare these days to find the group all together. When they ducked out of the limelight post-'Melody Calling', The Vaccines were bigger than ever. They had a headlining

show at the O2 Arena in London under their belt, and there was news that Justin's talents were being appreciated to the point where he was asked to write songs for One Direction. At that point, Justin moved to New York for a change of pace, and Cowan followed not far behind him. With Árnason remaining in London and Robertson keeping his family in the home counties, they were split 50:50 across two continents.

The process of reconnecting – as four friends – across subsequent visits to the studio is what took the edge off Justin's scorched-earth plans, and brought a little familiarity back to the (nearly) finished product. "If we ended up keeping all the stuff from the first time we went into the studio, then it wouldn't have been a Vaccines record," reveals Justin. "I think because we had time to explore, we were able to take a few wrong turns. It's now ended up sounding more like a Vaccines record than perhaps it was six months ago."

Despite the group's dispersal, the album's name references their original home: it's called 'English Graffiti'. Justin is at pains to point out that that's no reference to the film *American Graffiti*, which was set in diners and hot rod-era America, but instead comes from a piece he read in *The New York Times* about the globalisation of culture. The article said: "It doesn't matter where you are in the world, the brunch always tastes the same." "We live in a really weird time," explains Justin. "We're voyeurs. We're constantly looking at this constructed reality online. We feel super-connected, but I don't think we are. I feel a massive disconnect between what we perceive to be real and attainable and what actually is."

It's this day-to-day feeling that plugs directly into all of the songs on 'English Graffiti', with the awkwardness of leading a normal life in a digital age a major theme on the record. "We've been all over the place, from Peru to Taiwan and Ukraine, and it's no surprise that the graffiti's always in English," says Justin. "But that homogeneity and connection is really a misconnection."

Four years ago they asked 'What Did You Expect From The Vaccines?'. Now they might actually have the answer. ■ LEONIE COOPER



Palma Violets
in the studio,
December 2014



Palma Violets

Four go mad in the country as the Londoners head to Wales to write “youthful” second album

► The first Palma Violets record was, in many ways, a homage to their ramshackle south London pad, Studio 180, where the band lived, recorded and hosted their riotous early gigs. The cover of ‘180’ depicted the studio’s front door, and the words painted on it: “In times of turmoil, find a home to attack from”. But the follow-up sees the four-piece plotting attack from a very different home base: rural Rockfield Studios in Monmouth, Wales.

Rockfield is hallowed ground for British music. Queen recorded ‘Bohemian Rhapsody’ there and it has played host to Oasis and The Stone Roses. It was the Roses’ producer, John Leckie, who led the Palmas into the wilderness.

“John gave us a lot of confidence,” says singer and bassist Chilli Jesson. “Before he produced ‘The Stone Roses’ he’d done things like Magazine, The Fall and The Adverts, who were the big one for me. He has a really good

ear and he’d tell us to keep going when he heard a snatch of a great idea.”

The band lived and worked inside the studio for two weeks, playing late into the night. They also had the opportunity to go out and kick a football around to clear their heads – “which John liked,” points out keyboard player Peter Mayhew, “because he could have a whole spliff and not have to share it with anybody.”

Their time at Rockfield came after lengthy writing sessions at The Doghouse studios in Henley, once favoured by Babyshambles, and on a secluded farm in Wales. The isolation seems to have fed into the songs: ‘Peter And The Gun’ is about a dream that vocalist/guitarist Sam Fryer had “about Pete going on a rampage and killing the local farm boys. Eventually someone finds him in Manhattan just twiddling his guns and humming the words ‘Peter and the gun’,” he explains.

Such was the lure of the wild, the band cancelled a tour of the American Deep South to head to Wales. “We’d been on tour for a year and a half with 10 songs, so we desperately needed some new ones,” says Sam. “More

► **TITLE** TBC

► **RELEASE DATE** Summer

► **LABEL** Rough Trade

► **PRODUCER** John Leckie

► **RECORDED** The Doghouse, Henley and Rockfield, Monmouth

► **TRACKS INCLUDE** Peter And The Gun, Hollywood, Danger In The Club

importantly, we had to learn to be friends again and look each other in the eye.”

“We had to rebuild our sense of fraternity,” agrees Chilli. “You give so much of yourself when you’re sitting down trying to write music.”

The group’s time away has fostered a richer second album, they say. “A lot of bands write second albums about how hard

it is on the road,” reckons Chilli. “We had time and space and that means we’ve come back with a much more positive record.”

At the same time, they haven’t lost the spontaneity and spark that made their debut so visceral – ‘Hollywood’ is a frantic surf-rock track reminiscent, they say, of the Pearl & Dean theme; and ‘Danger In The Club’ is “pub rock at its best”, according to Sam. “Most of this record was recorded in one take,” says Chilli. “For some of the tracks we’re using the original Doghouse demos. It’s best when everything’s fresh.” Sam agrees: “We’re a ‘moment’ band. We’re still all 21 or 22 and this record sounds youthful. As soon as we heard those 15 demos from The Doghouse, we knew we were making something great.” ■ KEVIN EG PERRY

“We had to learn to be friends again”

Sam Fryer



Mini Mansions

► **TITLE** The Great Pretenders

► **RELEASE DATE** March

► Mini Mansions may be a new band, but their debut, 'The Great Pretenders', ropes in some big-name friends. Frontman Michael Shuman is the bassist in Queens Of The Stone Age, and has continued that band's bromance with Alex Turner by enlisting him to guest on standout track 'Vertigo'. Over a low-slung '70s groove, Turner rides into the second verse like John Wayne in *High Croon*, purring tongue-twister lyrics about a girl called "*Miss been there, done that and bought the catsuit*" who looks "*like a million dollars in a briefcase or a duffel bag*". "We had a verse written but we gave

him the option to rewrite it," says Shuman. "He wrote the lyrics quickly and knocked it out in one take."

The band – completed by Zach Dawes and Tyler Parkford – formed when QOTSA took a break from touring, and this release sees hard riffs swapped for harmony and "nostalgic sounds, like '80s new wave and psychedelic pop". Shuman says it's "the most upbeat pop record I've ever made, but even though the sounds are fun, the songs touch on love, death and existentialism."

And as if having an Arctic Monkey appear on your debut wasn't enough, the band also have pop royalty on board – venerated Beach Boys frontman Brian Wilson provides backing vocals on 'Any Emotions'. "Is there any better recommendation for the album than having *him* want to appear on it?" asks Dawes. ■ GARY RYAN



Suede

► **TITLE** TBC

► **RELEASE DATE** TBC

► "Bands are defined by the music they make," said Suede frontman Brett Anderson last year. But for the longest time Suede were defined by their failures: the damp squib of 2002's 'A New Morning' dirtied their legacy and ensured they broke up not with a bang but with a sad whimper. When they reformed for 2013's comeback 'Bloodsports', then, they had something to prove; after 10 years in the wilderness, the pressure was on to show they were still relevant, still good, and could mean something more than just being ghosts of Britpop's past. "I'm very proud of 'Bloodsports', and the best thing about it is that it showed us that we can write new music, and relevant new music," Brett

told *NME* at the time. And now it's backs-against-the-wall time all over again. So far, details of the follow-up are scant – all Brett has let slip is that they've been busy writing and recording, and new songs have started surfacing online. 'I Don't Know How To Reach You' is a five-minute romp with a scuzzy, crunching guitar that would have fitted handsomely on 1996's 'Coming Up', but it's the slow, soft 'Tightrope' that really hints at glory: a slow-burning acoustic ballad that's got the same dark majesty as 'Dog Man Star' and finds Brett fretting about frailties and cracks in love affairs as he croons, "*You just seem to want me when I'm never there*".

■ BEN HEWITT

Kendrick Lamar

► **TITLE** TBC

► **RELEASE DATE** Spring (rumoured)

► After his spectacularly well-received album, 2012's 'Good Kid, mAAAd City', Kendrick Lamar took an elevator ride to hip-hop's top floor. Suddenly he was puffing on cigars in the penthouse suite with Jay Z and Eminem – the album was *that* good. So with LP three he's got it all to live up to. 'Good Kid...' is a vivid word-painting of Compton street life, the 3am drug deals and alleyway gunshots. But life is unrecognisable now for the 27-year-old rapper – there are pop-star guest spots, global sponsorship deals and festival crowds. "You get a kid from Compton that only knows four corners and you take him around the world and back on a world tour – things change," said Lamar last autumn. "Now I'm not only grabbing from my own experiences but I get to see other cultures." The early indicators sound thrilling. There's 'I', the Isley Brothers-sampling pro-positivity radio smash, and the far grittier 'Untitled', which debuted on US TV in mid-December. Both are signs that Kendrick has stepped up again. ■ GREG COCHRANE



(Clockwise from
top left) Harry
Koisser, Doug Castle,
Dom Boyce and
Sam Koisser



29

1. O You

"When we recorded it, we were like 'that's what a track eight should sound like'. Then we realised it was an opener, because it's our statement of intent. I wrote it in Holloway, London, and it's about observing the world; about the human world interrupting the natural world and forcing a state of decline."

2. Gen Strange

"I see it as a pair with 'O You'; they were written at the same time. I feel like the generation I'm a part of is the first to say 'no' to the way humans interact with nature, and they're determined to do something about it."

3. Lost On Me

"The only actual romantic song on the record. I wrote it on tour in Australia when I was feeling the loneliest I'd been in a while. Everyone was out and I was staying in and writing in hotel rooms. I wanted to write a love song that was more twisted; about infatuation."

4. Perfect Skin

"A newer song recorded in Wales, written after I moved out of Holloway and was crashing at

my agent's empty flat in Angel. Every record has to have one of those songs that's written in two minutes and 'Perfect Skin' is one of those. It's about something I've never written about before: body image."

5. Happy People

"Another song written in Australia, and you can tell from the atmosphere of it that it's not a happy song – it's not like Pharrell's 'Happy'. Interesting fact: for a bit of analogue warmth, we recorded the drums onto vinyl, then recorded the turntable playing the drums."

6. Someday

"I feel like I was the only one who wanted this to go on the record. It started as a classic break-up song done just by me on acoustic guitar, then we added a few other instruments."

7. Money

"This was the first song we did, and it was written in America. I had an English teacher who used to bang on about the American Dream all the time – *Death Of A Salesman*

► **TITLE** Happy People
► **RELEASE DATE** February 9
► **LABEL** Columbia
► **PRODUCER** Jim Abbiss
► **RECORDED** Sarm Studios/
Dean Street Studios, London,
and on the road

and all that – then you realise when you're in the US what it's all about. I'm not, like, 'Money's evil!' but it causes a lot of problems."

8. I'm A Girl

"It started as a loud demo that I couldn't sing over, then it became a song about masculinity and how those things define some people I've met."

9. Under The Moon

"It was written and recorded – apart from the drums – in a hotel room in LA, and that's the most band-y thing I've ever said! I imagined it would be the last song, because it sums up what I've said on the record, which I'll sum up as: just be happy, because why the fuck not?"

10. World Pleasure

"We blew nearly all our budget on this song, which we recorded in two parts. We got carried away – strings and everything. I can't really remember what kind of state of mind I was in when I wrote it, but I like the way it came out."

■ PHIL HEBBLETHWAITE

Lucy Rose

► TITLE TBC

► RELEASE DATE TBC

► Singer-songwriter Rose will follow up 2012's delicate gem of a debut album 'Like I Used To' with a record "written about pretty personal things", she says, which will "hopefully will make you feel something, like the last one". There'll be less acoustic guitar and more piano this time round, and the sound is "generally bigger and slightly electronic" in places. Expect guest vocals from both Rae Morris and Sam Brookes. ■ TOM HOWARD

Hinds

► TITLE TBC

► RELEASE DATE TBC

► Hinds' motto is "our shit, our rules", meaning it's difficult to predict what they're going to do next. That's what makes the wait for the Madrid quartet's debut album so exciting. They spent last year tearing around Europe wrecking stages with The Libertines and Black Lips, and enamouring anyone who caught their delirious, sloppy gigs with the rattling garage pop of 'Bamboo' and 'Between Cans'. If they stick to that motto, 2015 will be even better. ■ BEN HOMEWOOD

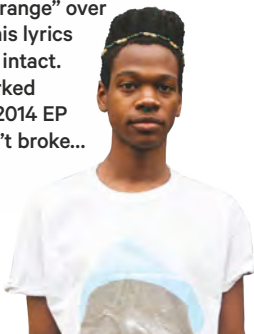
Shamir

► TITLE TBC

► RELEASE DATE TBC

► The Las Vegas newcomer has stuck to the formula that first got him noticed for his debut album, working with Godmode Records mainman Nick Sylvester in his New York studio. The duo have cut 16 tracks so far, with Shamir giving Sylvester "free range" over the music, as long as his lyrics and melodies are kept intact. The same process worked wonders for Shamir's 2014 EP 'Northtown', so if it ain't broke...

■ MATT WILKINSON



Chance The Rapper

► TITLE TBC

► RELEASE DATE TBC

► Since his 'Acid Rap' mixtape made him an overnight sensation back in April 2013, Chance The Rapper has steadfastly refused to play by anybody's rules. He's still unsigned and fiercely independent because he knows that if he'd signed a deal, he'd have been put to work on a proper album by now. "Do you think any label would have let me go on a headlining tour across the nation, playing 2,000-capacity rooms, without dropping an album or even releasing the name of an album?" he told *NME* last year. "They would have been telling me to do appearances with



other artists, making me work on this and that and definitely not letting me tour!"

Being his own boss has given Chance the opportunity to turn some of his limelight onto bandmates in his group the Social Experiment. They decided to follow 'Acid Rap' not with another Chance record *per se*, but with 'Surf', which had trumpet player Donnie Trumpet's name on the sleeve. Meanwhile, Chance has appeared on Skrillex and Justin Bieber tunes and put out a handful of his own tracks, like the recent 'No Better Blues'. He's also hinted at working with Frank Ocean and Rick Rubin on new material. Does that mean we'll see a full album of songs this year? There's more than a strong chance. ■ KEVIN EG PERRY

Belle And Sebastian



► After spending the last few years embroiled in the production of his debut feature film, *God Help The Girl*, Stuart Murdoch wasn't entirely sure where the next Belle And Sebastian album would come from – or if it would come at all. "We were on tour and in Switzerland for a couple of days when I was knocking around on a bicycle thinking, 'God, I hope some songs come along soon,'" explains Murdoch. "I was waiting for the muse to strike, so I wrote a song to encourage it. When [B&S guitarist] Stevie first heard it, he said, 'We're gonna be rich!' He must've meant spiritually rich..."

The song he's talking about is 'The Everlasting Muse', the centrepiece of 'Girls In Peacetime Want To Dance', the band's ninth album and their most eclectic offering to date. Recorded in Atlanta, Georgia with Animal Collective and Gnarls Barkley collaborator

► TITLE Girls In Peacetime
Want To Dance

► RELEASE DATE
January 19

Ben H Allen, the band
"were adamant that

we shouldn't retread old ground," says keyboardist Sarah Martin. "There were a few names floating about [to produce], but our manager suggested Ben. He'd seen him working and was blown away."

As for the decision to record in Atlanta, Murdoch says, "We wanted to go where Ben was used to working. If there's magic there, you don't want to mess with that. It's like going to get your portrait done by your favourite painter. If you were being painted by Salvador Dali, you wouldn't say to him, 'Right, just do me straight, no floppy clocks!' You've got to jump right in there." ■ BARRY NICOLSON

The Libertines

10 things we know
about the comeback
album of the decade

(From left) Carl
Barât, Pete
Doherty, John
Hassall and
Gary Powell



1. It was born in Thailand

After throwing ideas at each other during their tour of the UK and Europe last summer, Pete flew out to Bangkok to enrol in a rehab programme, and Carl followed him to Thailand shortly afterwards to start writing for a third Libs album. "There were fears," Pete says, "but when they came to visit me, I played Carl this riff and we were just bouncing ideas off each other. It was like going back in time."

2. It's a group effort

Pete has claimed that he also wrote a song with bassist John Hassall when the full band were in Thailand to sign their new record deal with Virgin/EMI.

3. It'll feature new versions of some old, unfinished songs

"We were reminding each other of scores of tunes we'd forgotten, that had never seen the light of day," Carl told *NME* last November. "Like we did with 'Music When The Lights Go Out' on the second album – that was written way before, in the '90s – a couple of old ones surfaced in the mix."

4. Mick Jones probably isn't producing

"I'm so pleased The Libertines are back together," said Jones, who produced both previous Libs albums. "I'm sure the new songs will be great, but I probably won't be producing them."

5. It's their chance to make up for old mistakes

"I see it as a chance to fulfil everything we fucked up, really," Pete says, "although I never admitted to fucking up. It's almost like I don't know how those things got recorded after listening back to the old vocal takes. It was what it was and it was all true, but some of it's too fast and some of it's just too slow."

► TITLE TBC
► RELEASE DATE TBC
► LABEL Virgin/EMI
► PRODUCER TBC
► TRACKLISTING TBC

6. 'Albion' might be on it

Recorded by Babyshambles for 'Down In Albion' in 2005, the emotive classic 'Albion' was originally a Libertines song. But with the reformed band playing it at the Hyde

Park show in London last summer, it's tipped to be considered for the new Libs album.

7. 'Bound Together' is another likely candidate

Demoted for 'The Libertines' but never completed, 'Bound Together' is one of the 'lost' tracks that fans believe is most likely to end up on the album, alongside 'You're My Waterloo'.

8. They're not taking drugs to make music to take drugs to

As an addict, Pete claims, he had trouble listening to many of the The Libertines' classic songs, but "whilst I've been clean I've tried to listen to some of it. If we can pick up from where we left off 10 years ago, fuck what anyone else thinks... we're still on a path to Arcadia. That's all that matters to me."

9. It'll be started in Thailand, and maybe finished in Germany

The Libs have been recording at Karma Sound Studios in Thailand, but when Pete's not in rehab he lives in Hamburg, where Clouds Hill Recordings studio is based. It's a favourite with Doherty and his management, and the band rehearsed for their 2014 shows there.

10. It's definitely a new Libs phase

"The new phase has happened," Pete says. "I'm not going to say it's a 'brave' new chapter but it's a new chapter. You can be scared *and* brave." ■ MARK BEAUMONT



Speedy Ortiz

► TITLE TBC
► RELEASE DATE Spring

► “It’s hard to continue working on our new album in its current genre now that I have heard and fallen for babymetal”, Speedy Ortiz’ Sadie Dupuis tweeted in September. Might the Boston grungers might scrap the slacker-rock scrawl of 2013 breakout album ‘Major Arcana’? We won’t have to wait long to find out: Dupuis announced in November that the as-yet-untitled album was in the process of being mixed. ■ AL HORNER

Joanna Gruesome

► TITLE Peanut Butter
► RELEASE DATE April

► Elvis ate so much it killed him. Iggy smeared it on his chest mid-gig in a fit of rapture. Now Cardiff’s Joanna Gruesome have named their second album after it, and their place in the annals of sticky rock history is assured. Due in April, the follow-up to their debut was recorded with Hookworms’ MJ, and will be incorporating some new sounds: “British hardcore, Stereolab and Broadcast-style organs, the pop-punk Salinas Records-style stuff coming out recently,” they say. ■ LAURA SNAPES

Miles Kane

► TITLE TBC
► RELEASE DATE Spring

► A collaboration with Christian Dior and Poppy Delevigne, recorded under a catwalk during Paris Fashion Week and called ‘Bloody Smart Shoes’? An authentically crackly Wall Of Sound record produced by Phil Spector over his prison phone line? We’re guessing wildly when it comes to Miles Kane’s third solo album, but we’re hoping a mate by the name of A Turner might make an appearance.

■ MARK BEAUMONT



Mumford & Sons

► TITLE TBC
► RELEASE DATE Summer

► “I need a break from the banjo. I fucking hate the banjo,” joked Mumford & Sons twangler Winston Marshall at a New York party in spring 2014, suggesting either a lengthy break following their last show at Bonner Springs, Kansas in September 2013, or a radical new non-banjo direction for album three. Considering Mumfords have since been spotted in a studio with producer James Ford, the latter seems far more likely – it’s quite possible we’ll see Mumford blast off into the white-hot future of, say, 1911. Certainly, multi-instrumentalist Ben Lovett has claimed in a *Rolling Stone* interview that the band were “willing to explore what else we can do”. It’ll probably arrive before a summer of live shows – but for now Marcus is busy working on a New Basement Tapes album with Elvis Costello and My Morning Jacket’s Jim James.

■ MARK BEAUMONT

Sleater-Kinney

► TITLE No Cities To Love
► RELEASE DATE January 19



► When Sleater-Kinney announced a boxset of their first seven records last autumn, fans knew it had to be the start of something else. The Portland trio went on hiatus in 2006, having released final album ‘The Woods’ the previous year. One track from it, ‘Entertain’, set out their nostalgia-averse stall, and took aim at a new wave of retro bands: “*You did nothing new with 1972/Where’s the fuck you?/Where’s the black and blue?*” So

there was little surprise when they announced their reunion and eighth album, ‘No Cities To Love’. It’s no lazy victory lap, either: “There’s almost a telepathy that Corin [Tucker, fellow singer/guitarist] and I have, but that isn’t good enough,” says Carrie Brownstein of writing together again. “There was an ease, which can be intoxicating, but then you have to push past that into the difficult parts.”

■ LAURA SNAPES



Björk

► TITLE Vulnicura
► RELEASE DATE March

► 2011’s ‘Biophilia’ was an ambitious project, even for Björk: an album, app, performance, educational programme and documentary inspired by the wonders of nature and the cosmos. News of the follow-up leaked out in drips, and mostly concerned her collaborators, Arca and Haxan Cloak. The former is a young Venezuelan whose credits include Kanye West and FKA Twigs; the latter is a British producer of dark

electronica. This month, the full details were revealed: the album is called ‘Vulnicura’ and track titles include the very Björk-sounding ‘Stonemilker’ and ‘Atom Dance’. Due in March, it will coincide with the release of a career retrospective book, *Björk: Archives*. “Ladies and gentlemen, I am very proud to announce my new album is coming out in March,” she wrote in a message to fans. “I do hope you will enjoy it.” ■ DAN STUBBS



“It’s 100 per cent not a grunge record,” says Wolf Alice singer Ellie Rowsell. “It’s a much braver record than that.”

This is Wolf Alice, the band who’ve made a name for themselves plying their pop-tinged, grungy wares in venues nationwide, and whose sole 2014 release – the ‘Creature Songs’ EP – saw the sweet melodic savagery that got them noticed in 2012 reach a ravaging maturity. But before they’ve even released their debut, they’re already branching off down uncharted paths – sat in their north London studio two days from completion, they promise the as yet untitled record is “90 per cent new songs”.

“There’s a mix of genres on it,” Ellie says. “We’re using our instruments in different

ways, like Joff [Oddie] using his guitar as a synth. We’ve been making sounds that don’t necessarily sound like guitar and experimenting with the way we use our voices. We’ve tried to match the emotion of songs in how they’re performed and recorded, tried to make a sad song really feel and sound sad.”

“There are a few moments that I think genuinely will surprise people, because they surprised me when listening back to them,” adds drummer Joel Amey. “I’m kind of shocked we’ve made certain sounds – they’re really experimental and poppy. ‘What a guitar band can do’, in inverted commas, or what’s expected of us, we don’t want to settle for that.”

Hence the inclusion of violins, banjo and a cinematic bent on tracks such as ‘Silk’, ‘A Giant Peach’ (“one of the best things we’ve recorded”), ‘Swallow Tale’ and ‘Lisbon’, which involves “really crazy elements... I don’t think I’ve ever heard a song like it”, says Joel.

“Whereas before I’d be quite happy to

► **TITLE** TBC
► **RELEASE DATE** Spring
► **LABEL** Dirty Hit
► **PRODUCERS** To come
► **RECORDED** Livingston Studios, London
► **TRACKS INCLUDE** Silk, A Giant Peach, Swallow Tale, Lisbon

have four really cool chords and just make it really fun for live,” he continues, “on the album we’ve been able to explore different sounds and different instruments and techniques – it’s opened our eyes to where we can go next.”

Where will they go? A venue near you, three or four times, by the sound of it. “We’re really ready to go in 2015 now,” says bassist Theo

Ellis. “We’re properly going to hit the ground running. It’s going to be non-stop. We’re going to play everywhere, all of the time. 2014 was a really good year for us because we sussed ourselves live and tested out the songs that we put on the record in a live environment, and it worked out perfectly for this year.”

This feet-finding process has meant their album’s been hotly awaited by their growing army of fans. “It didn’t take us that long,” Ellie argues. I think lots of other bands were taking the same amount of time, but we’ve had a tiny bit of the public eye watching us from the very first time we picked up our instruments. So it feels like it’s taken forever but actually we just weren’t ready.” ■ MARK BEAUMONT

“We don’t want to settle for what’s expected of us”

Joel Amey



Only Real

► TITLE Jerk At The End Of The Line

► RELEASE DATE March 30

► Wearing a pineapple print shirt, Niall Galvin stares out from the sleeve of his debut album like a man who revels in not taking himself too seriously. With a raft of new songs including 'Yesterdays', 'Petals' and 'Daisychained' alongside early singles 'Cadillac Girl' and 'Backseat Kissers', new album 'Jerk At The End Of The Line' mixes tropical rhythms, gritty raps and psychedelic guitar, promising a musical cocktail nearly as tasty as Only Real's attire. ■ BEN HOMEWOOD

Hot Chip

► TITLE TBC

► RELEASE DATE TBC

► If Joe Goddard is to be believed, Hot Chip's sixth album won't be the one where the dance-funk jokers finally get serious: he says the working title is 'Hypodeemic Nerdles'. The album was recorded at Kilburn's Club Ralph studio and, when asked what the title says about Hot Chip in 2015, he states: "It says Hot Chip were definitely the 'cockroaches' of the early-noughties 'punk-funk' explosion. It says: shall we turn off the life-support machine? We've run out of plug sockets..." ■ DAVID RENSHAW

Will Butler

► TITLE Policy

► RELEASE DATE March 10

► Win Butler's younger brother is stepping into the spotlight after two years throwing himself around stages in a Mariachi costume with Arcade Fire. Will has promised a pared-back record: forget brass bands, he's talking straight-up drums, guitars... and slapstick. Safe to say it won't be Arcade Fire-lite. "Most of the songs are extremely bare; it's hard to do something that bare with Arcade Fire,"

Will told NME. "There's a little bit more dumb humour." ■ HAZEL SHEFFIELD



Sky Ferreira

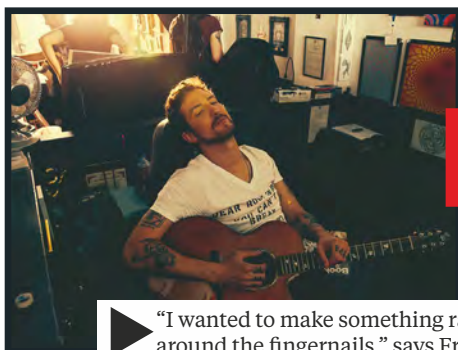
► TITLE TBC

► RELEASE DATE Autumn

► The build up to Sky Ferreira's debut, 'Night Time, My Time', dragged on for three years. Originally scheduled for January 2011, record label wrangling meant it was delayed until March 2014. Its follow-up should have a smoother ride, if her frequent updates are to be believed. The hints started in August, when Ferreira posted a photo of a mixing desk to Instagram. Then, in November, she told US magazine *Billboard* that the new record would be "more aggressive" than her debut. She also revealed she's working with Primal Scream's Bobby Gillespie and Andrew Innes, describing



Gillespie as "a new mentor". Also involved are Ariel Rechtshaid (Haim), Gesaffelstein (Kanye West) and previous collaborator Justin Raisen. If 'Guardian', the only new song to emerge so far, is anything to go by, Ferreira's new friends will ensure her second album is booming, sultry and brazen. ■ BEN HOMEWOOD



Frank Turner

► TITLE TBC

► RELEASE DATE Summer

► "I wanted to make something raw, dirty around the fingernails," says Frank Turner. He's fresh off a plane from Nashville where he's wrapped up his sixth album in nine days flat. It sees the often acoustic singer-songwriter playing some electric guitars and working with producer Butch Walker, his backing band The Sleeping Souls and a smattering of local musicians in the home of country & western. On the new album there are sombre dedications to Josh Burdette, the

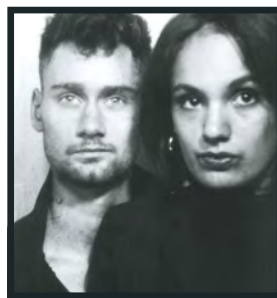
security guard at Washington punk hangout the 9:30 Club who committed suicide in 2013 ('Song For Josh'), and Christa McAuliffe, the teacher who died in the Challenger Space Shuttle disaster ('Silent Key'). "[2013's 'Tape Deck Heart'] was about things being broken, and this album is about things being fixed, about tidying up after the tornado," says Frank. "Like the last scene of *The Wizard Of Oz* when the tornado's hit and everything's trashed but they're still there." ■ MARK BEAUMONT

LUH

► TITLE TBC

► RELEASE DATE TBC

► Rumours abound about LUH, Ellery Roberts' first project since his group Wu Lyf split in 2012, even if the man himself is tight-lipped about it. Standing for Lost Under Heaven and based in Manchester and Amsterdam, LUH is primarily the project of Roberts and Dutch artist Ebony Hoorn, although NME understands a number of Manchester/Salford-based musicians – some from the latter's Sways collective of like-minded bands – are also involved in the duo's



live plans. While debut track 'Unites' didn't stray too far from the sound of Roberts' old band, the rest of the album is said to be far more abstract. Roberts' surprise 2013 solo song 'Kerou's Lament' might offer a further clue about which direction it'll take, having sampled Clams Casino, while Facebook posts reference Fela Kuti and Ukrainian collective Babylon'13. There's also the matter of Ellery stating he's "finally" found his voice after "18 months of constant flux". ■ MATT WILKINSON



Foals

The Oxford band are using
their “stink-box” home studio
to shape the follow-up to ‘Holy Fire’

35

In 2013, Foals made what could be termed The Leap. The success of ‘Holy Fire’ transformed them from large cult band to mainstream contenders, one of the few British guitar bands to make that shift since Arctic Monkeys. Foals’ next move is a crucial one. The reaction stirred by ‘Holy Fire’ singles ‘Inhaler’, ‘My Number’ and ‘Bad Habit’ elevated them to the top spot at medium-sized festivals like Latitude and Parklife; if they play their cards right, the next step could be a headline offer from the Eavises, or from Reading & Leeds boss Melvin Benn. The latter told *NME*: “Foals for me are the most in-touch guitar band in the world, and I don’t think anyone is matching them. I have no doubt that in my mind I want to see them headline one day.”

The Oxford band will relish that, but won’t let it dictate their next move. This is, after all, the band whose singer, Yannis Philippakis, worked with Scottish producer Hudson Mohawke in early 2014; whose keyboardist Edwin Congreave has been running London record label and club night Deep Shit with

Friendly Fires drummer Jack Savidge; and whose guitarist Jimmy Smith wrote a short, spacey, twinkling instrumental called ‘Howl (Supermoon)’ for Zane Lowe’s reinterpretation of the soundtrack to *Drive*.

Here’s what you should know. Back in April 2014, when the shows supporting their third album were getting bigger and sparser, they had already begun working on ideas for their fourth. The quintet returned to their “stink-box” home studio in Oxford – where, Yannis Philippakis explained to *NME* at the time, “everything sounds awful, so if it sounds alright you know you’ve got a good idea”. At that early stage, the ideas were a tentative mixture of loops, vocal melodies and riffs – the first scribbles on the pad. “I wanted to go back to the studio in Oxford but I also think it’s good to be grounded after doing what we were doing last year,” he added. “I wanted to go back somewhere safe and familiar.”

That could be a measured decision. In

► **TITLE** TBC
► **RELEASE DATE** Autumn
► **LABEL** Warner
► **PRODUCER** TBC
► **RECORDED** TBC

the equivalent initial stages of ‘Holy Fire’, the band had kicked off the creative process by setting up a makeshift recording session next to a river out in the Australian bush with Jagwar Ma. This time, it’s likely to be a bit more conventional,

according to keyboardist Edwin Congreave. “The aim is to record early [in 2015],” he says. “I’d like to do it here [London] – or as close to my house as possible, because I’ve discovered late in life that I really love staying at home!” He adds: “It’s going to be somewhere in Europe – there’s definitely a desire in the band to go to ludicrous locations but we’ve done that a couple of times. Gothenburg in Sweden [where the band recorded ‘Total Life Forever’] in winter was ludicrous in retrospect. We put ourselves in a ridiculously lonely situation.”

Right now, it’s early days – the album is unlikely to be released before the autumn. But when it does arrive, it has the potential to be the one that makes Foals truly massive.

■ GREG COCHRANE



Robyn

► TITLE TBC
► RELEASE DATE TBC

► Aside from her work with Röyksopp on last year's joint mini-album, Robyn hasn't released a record since 'Body Talk Pt 1' and 'Body Talk Pt 2' in 2010. She'll make up for lost time in 2015 with her sixth studio LP, plus an EP with keyboardist Markus Jagerstedt. In a recent interview she said "the new material I played on tour is from that record", and track titles from those gigs – 'Love Is Free', 'Set Me Free' – hint at romantic turmoil.

■ DAVID RENSHAW

Public Access TV

► TITLE TBC
► RELEASE DATE Spring

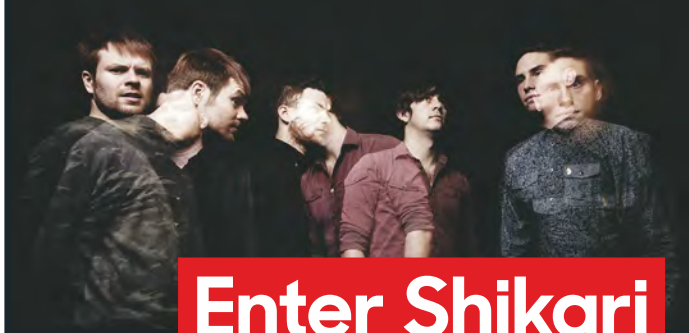
► "You can't believe that there are no good ideas left," John Eatherly told *NME* in October. The Public Access TV frontman was talking about assembling his band's debut, for which he's written 35 nuggets of dirty, groove-heavy garage, including the singles 'Monaco' and 'In The Mirror'. Since then, the Brooklyn foursome have completed their first UK tour – going AWOL in Glasgow in the process – and are now recording what could be the most invigorating debut to emerge from New York since The Strokes' way back in 2001. ■ BEN HOMEWOOD



Spector

► TITLE TBC
► RELEASE DATE Spring

► Ruined by the road, newly enamoured of art rock and feeling like the moths infesting frontman Fred Macpherson's bedroom (but with drugs, booze, money and girls as their lightbulb), Spector decamped to Dev Hynes' New York studio early in 2013, and later to London's Strongroom with Duncan Mills, to allow their second album to gestate. They emerged with their own 'Dog Man Star'. "There's a real sense of pathos," says Fred. "But that's what love can do to you." ■ MARK BEAUMONT



Enter Shikari

► TITLE The Mindsweep
► RELEASE DATE January 19

► "The 'mindsweep' is basically the withholding or discrediting of new ideas," says Enter Shikari frontman Rou Reynolds, explaining the meaning behind the title of the St Albans band's fourth album. "That's obviously something those in power do – the people who benefit from things staying the same." The singer may describe the album as their "best work yet", but initially, 'The Mindsweep' came slowly. Even after 12 years of being a band, Reynolds says starting a record is still "like standing at the foot of a mountain".

Gradually, it all began to fall into place, and the new album features a characteristic barrage of thundering riffs and glitchy electronics underpinning powerful lyrics. Among them is 'Anaesthetist', premiered at Reading & Leeds last year alongside a speech about the "sly privatisation" of the NHS. Where other bands might shy away from tackling such issues, for Reynolds it's all part of Enter Shikari's aim to "encourage a bit of perspective and instil a sense of importance and independence in people". ■ RHIAN DALY

Brandon Flowers

► TITLE TBC
► RELEASE DATE TBC

► Brandon Flowers' debut solo record, 2010's 'Flamingo', sparkled with the same Vegas glitz that defined The Killers. In reality, it could have been the work of his band. This time, the singer declared his intent to be taken out of his comfort zone for solo album number two, and recruited producer Ariel Rechtshaid – the man behind Haim, Major Lazer, Sky Ferreira and Vampire Weekend's 'Modern Vampires Of The City' – to guide him off-map. "I'm letting Ariel take over every now and then," he told *NME*. "That's led to



some really exciting things and sounds that I never would've used." The album is still midway through construction with no fixed release date, and Brandon is cagey about its details, but he's clearly excited by his vast new horizons. "It's definitely going to be different," he said, "but I'm still in the thick of it, hammering away." ■ MARK BEAUMONT

Circa Waves

► TITLE Young Chasers
► RELEASE DATE March 30

► Circa Waves started life as the bedroom project of Liverpool's Kieran Shudall, but their debut album will be very much the work of the full band. They headed to The Square and RAK studios in London to record the LP in May and June 2014, and hired some superstar equipment to help them: producer Dan Grech-Marguerat had the singer using

a microphone that dates back to his days assisting Nigel Godrich on classic Radiohead albums, and they hired a bass used by Queen's John Deacon. "Hopefully some of the Queen magic might have got into the album," Shudall says. Judge for yourself when the resulting album comes out in March. The aim, he continues, was to make something "genuine and authentic". Guitars are the key: "They're poppy songs so you want to make the guitars sound as dirty as possible. It's easy: you turn the amp up and play *dead* hard." ■ DAN STUBBS



Paul Weller

The Modfather is back to show the kids
– and the “old farts” – how it’s done

If the motorik psych slant of 2012’s ‘Sonik Kicks’ album proved that Paul Weller was not only undergoing a brilliant late-period regeneration but was also one of the few, in his words, “old fart[s]” capable of syncing with and perfecting the codes of the new rock’n’roll generation, its follow-up looks set to catapult the Modfather back onto the front line of popular culture for the 83rd time since 1977. “We’ve gone into the future,” he says, clearly excited to be back on the cutting edge.

“We’ve got this 21st century music and I think that it’s going to be a bit of an inspiration to people. The few people I’ve played it to have been blown away by it but they also can’t pigeonhole it, which is a good sign, I reckon. I think it’s going to be hard for people to decide what it sounds like.

**“It’s just bonkers
in places”**

Paul Weller

There are obvious influences here and there but generally I think it’s really original. I don’t think there’s anything else around that’s quite like it.”

Weller references The Stooges, American singer Betty Davis, space rock and ponderous funk when talking about his new LP, but he’s unsure how to describe individual tracks like ‘In The Car’, ‘I’m Where I Should Be’ and title track ‘Saturn’s Pattern’ – abstract, multi-movement tunes that will find him leading rock’s creative charge in 2015 and showing the current crop how the old guard innovate, sonny.

“It’s just bonkers in places but it’s really melodic, there’s great tunes on there,” he raves, like a man who’s just broken into the Tardis and started randomly punching buttons. “It’s a little bit of a leap into the unknown, really. I don’t know where it will take me, I have no idea. I wouldn’t say it’s dance because I wouldn’t do a dance record as such, but it’s got a lot of movement to it. It’s gone past my expectations, in a way.”

► **TITLE** Saturn’s Pattern
► **RELEASE DATE** April/May
► **LABEL** Island
► **PRODUCER**
Jan ‘Stan’ Kybert
► **RECORDED**
Black Barn, Ripley
► **TRACKS INCLUDE**
In The Car, I’m Where
I Should Be, Saturn’s Pattern,
Going My Way, White Sky,
Phoenix, These City Streets

Recorded over two month-long sessions in May and October 2014 accompanied by The Moons’ drummer Ben Gordelier and Ocean Colour Scene’s Steve Cradock, among others – there was no involvement from Noel Gallagher, despite the pair working on a song together that has yet to be finished – the album is testament to Weller’s continual need to push his songwriting into new

territories.

“I don’t understand people when they get to a certain age and they’re just kind of happy with what they know,” he muses. “It does involve taking a few risks and a few chances, and sometimes those risks aren’t popular with people or fans or whatever, but that’s a chance you take, as opposed to just making the same records year after year. I’ve probably got more in common with a lot of younger bands than my so-called contemporaries, who all just seem stuck in a rut and doing the same thing.”

■ MARK BEAUMONT



Drake

► **TITLE** View From The 6
► **RELEASE DATE** Spring

► With typical braggadocio, Drake announced his fourth album would be called 'View From The 6' before he'd even begun recording it – 'The 6' being his nickname for his native Toronto. He even suggested a release date on recent single '0 To 100/The Catch Up' – "We already got spring 2015 poppin'". With major rappers such as Eminem, Jay Z and Lil Wayne flagging, 2015 could be the year Drake establishes himself as heavyweight champion. ■ DAVID RENSHAW

Pins

► **TITLE** TBC
► **RELEASE DATE** Summer

► The band dubbed "the most Brooklyn band from Manchester" have gone Cali rock. Or at least, they've ditched Manchester for Joshua Tree, heading to Josh Homme's famed Rancho De La Luna studio to record their debut album. "We got to pick out whatever we wanted from all the gear there," guitarist Lois Macdonald says. "Vintage everything, handmade instruments, guitars of all shapes and sizes. We drank red wine and sang our hearts out. It was like no place or time anywhere else." ■ MARK BEAUMONT

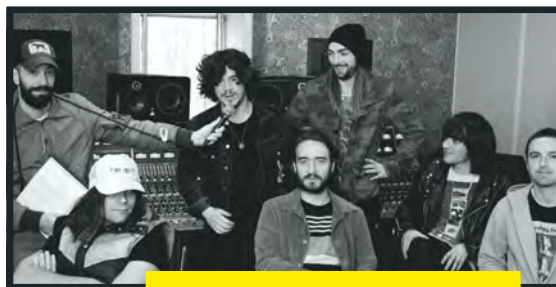
Waxahatchee

► **TITLE** Ivy Tripp
► **RELEASE DATE** April 6

► The third album by Waxahatchee's Katie Crutchfield takes a slight electronic turn, frequently backing her scuffed songs of devotion and disappointment with rinky-dink drum machines. The follow-up to 2013's breakout 'Cerulean Salt' is bookended by two lonely, vocal-led spirituals, 'Breathless' and 'Bonfire'. Everything in between maintains the Alabama-born songwriter's

knack for flooring understatement: "I am nothing", she sings on 'Less Than'. Then, "You're less than me".

■ LAURA SNAPES



The View

► **TITLE** TBC
► **RELEASE DATE** TBC

► The fan chant was famously "The View are on fire!" – and the Tayside band have enlisted Strokes guitarist Albert Hammond Jr to pour kerosene on the flames. Recorded in Hamburg, the as-yet-untitled album is co-produced by the Strokes guitarist.

The group have been receptive to all ideas and experiments. "This is the most time and effort we've ever put into a record," says frontman Kyle Falconer. "We're open to the idea that these songs can change at any moment. Normally, we follow a Beatles formula: verse, chorus, double verse, double chorus. But not this time – some of it sounds really radical." Of the embryonic tracks *NME* has heard, 'Tenement Lights' sounds modern and vibrant while retaining The View's knack for an anthemic chorus. "When I listened to the demos," says Hammond Jr, "I could picture an entire audience singing the words back." 'Cracks In This Town', penned by bassist Kieren Webster, is a ramshackle indie-punk number steeped in the romanticism of sleet-skied Dundonian squalor ("It's about how people just get on with stuff, even though they're being fucked over by this government"), and guitarist Pete Reilly has recorded his first song, 'Under The Rug'. "It sounds like nothing we've done before," says Webster. ■ GARY RYAN

Slaves

► **TITLE** TBC
► **RELEASE DATE** Spring

► Onstage, the key to the Kent two-piece's sound is simplicity: bass, drums, vocals and lots of aggression. On record, the plan is to create something with a little more texture, they say. Working with producer Jolyon Thomas in east London, the group have added synths and electronic beats to the mix. Guitarist Laurie Vincent says: "We demoed with three or four people, but the difference between Jolyon's demos and the others are, like, the difference between being



successful and not, in my head." The album – jokingly given the working title 'Be Nice To Your Pets' after the regular sign-off to their frequent Facebook musings – promises to exceed expectations following their scratchy, self-released mini-album 'Sugar Coated Bitter Truth'. "It's the bar-setter," says frontman Isaac Holman. "We want to give people an insight into what goes on in our minds." ■ DAN STUBBS

Django Django

► **TITLE** TBC
► **RELEASE DATE** Spring



► Three years after the release of their Mercury-nominated, self-titled debut, the London-based four-piece are getting ready to unleash "part two, in a way", in the words of drummer Dave Maclean. "Not a huge leap from the last one, but trying to push it," he elaborates. With Maclean sharing production duties with Neil Comber (MIA, Friendly Fires),

the band worked for the entirety of 2014 in London's Fish Factory, their own studio in Hackney, and Angelic near Banbury – their first 'proper' studio. Not that it made much of a difference to their recording process. "In the big studio we would just recreate a little room that ended up being exactly like what we were used to," laughs Dave. Once again, the band's encyclopaedic music taste is in full effect, with everything from Chicago house to jazz and rockabilly funnelling into the record. ■ LEONIE COOPER



Chvrches

The Scottish pop trio had a busy 2014. Now they're back in the studio making a stripped-down second album

It's been a year and a half since Glasgow's Chvrches released debut album 'The Bones Of What You Believe', and in that time it's an understatement to say the group have been keeping busy. They've toured the world, recorded new song 'Dead Air' for the Lorde-curated soundtrack to the latest *Hunger Games* movie, joined Foals and SBTRKT on Radio 1's brand new version of the *Drive* soundtrack and set up their own label, Goodbye Records.

"What we've realised over the last two years is just how much we're capable of coping with at any given time," the band's Martin

"We want to channel Prince and Michael Jackson"

Martin Doherty

Doherty says. "As soon as we start having downtime we get bored pretty quickly and immediately want to get back to work. We've always been a studio band. Making music and writing songs is what we're all about."

Though Chvrches didn't go into the studio until mid-January, they already had a collection of demos for the new record – the sum of all the work that was done on the road while touring. Themes are still uncertain, but they will follow the band's protocol of balancing melodic music with off-kilter lyrics. "It's hard to say at the moment what our inspirations are, but the lyrics are based on personal experience, or at least a personal perspective on external events," singer Lauren Mayberry says. "We never sit down and write a song to fit a theme, but looking back on our last records, there were definitely threads that ran throughout."

"We haven't spent much time overthinking it," Doherty adds. "Every time there was a bit

of boring stuff or waiting around to do on the tour, we got our computers out to work on songs and ideas. But we've deliberately not taken them too far until we're all in the studio together."

What they do know is that the new album will be a lot leaner than the last. "I think we'll use fewer instruments but ultimately try and do more with them," Doherty says. "Rather than just padding things out and using the world's biggest synth sound, the sum of all the parts in each song will be scrutinised a lot more, so that we're only ever using the absolute key elements. When you listen

to a Michael Jackson song or a Prince song, you realise there's absolutely nothing in it but an amazing bassline, drums and singing. We want to channel some of that."

Just as with their earliest output, the band will produce the eagerly awaited album

themselves in "a shitty basement project studio" in south Glasgow. "We were never going to be the band that sold a few records and went to LA to spend all our money," Doherty continues. "We like taking the same depressing train to the same depressing part of town and locking ourselves away."

If there's one thing the group want to prove, Mayberry says, it's their ability to ignore the outside world. "It's important to us to prove to ourselves that we can continue to make music that we find interesting and worthwhile."

■ NADIA KHOMAMI

► **TITLE** TBC
► **RELEASE DATE** TBC
► **LABEL** TBC
► **PRODUCERS** Chvrches
► **RECORDED** Chvrches' own studio, Glasgow

Dutch Uncles

► **TITLE** O Shudder
► **RELEASE DATE** February 23

► Summer 2013 offered one of the stranger tours of recent years, when resurgent emo heroes Paramore invited Dutch Uncles out on the road after citing the Marple band's third album, 'Out Of Touch In The Wild', as an unlikely influence. Now, Dutch Uncles frontman Duncan Wallis acknowledges a reciprocal influence on the follow-up – but rather than ditch their pointillist pop for fist-pumping empowerment anthems, it was the



Tennessee band's survival that inspired them. "To see two writers walk out and for them to re-establish the whole process again from scratch with such amazing results is certainly comforting to see if you don't know how to get off the starting block yourself," says Wallis.

If Dutch Uncles stumbled early on, it doesn't show in the confident 'O Shudder', which takes the crystalline strings of 'Out Of Touch...' and pushes them into more outré '80s territory: punchier, and with added robotic female backing vocals, recalling Kate Bush's forays into synth territory. ■ LAURA SNAPES



Tame Impala

► **TITLE** TBC
► **RELEASE DATE** TBC

► In November last year, having returned home to Australia after a US tour, Tame Impala frontman, songwriter and producer Kevin Parker went into hiding to record the follow-up to 2012's 'Lonerism'. But thanks to that record's success, instead of being allowed to slope off into his studio to work quietly as he usually does, speculation began to mount.

When asked about the album's progress by US website Radio.com, Parker was ambiguous: "It's hard for me to say. I'm so involved in it, it's almost impossible to tell how far away it is from being finished. It comes down to... a deadline, I guess." Later he was forced into action after keyboardist Jay Watson told FasterLouder that the new record is "probably gonna be less rock and more electronic" than the lush psychedelia of 'Lonerism'. After the story broke, a screenshot of the quote appeared on Tame Impala's Instagram page (which is run by Parker) along with the word

"clickbait" and a thumbs-down emoticon.

The same week, it was announced that Parker had collaborated on three songs from Mark Ronson's new album, 'Uptown Special'. Most notable was 'Daffodils' – a strutting funk beat slathered with Parker's loose vocals and a wash of psychedelic effects. To further confuse things, footage emerged of Parker playing the song with Tame Impala bassist Cam Avery in their AAA Aardvark Getdown Services side-project in 2013, suggesting he'd sat on it for a while before handing it over to Ronson.

Amid discussion about 'Daffodils' origins came an untitled instrumental from a gig in New York in November, posted online by a fan. With echoing guitar fed through a deeply cosmic pedal setting, it sounded nothing like 'Daffodils'. The only similarity was the feeling of prickly excitement it left behind. Expect Tame Impala's third album, more electronic or not, to do the same. ■ BEN HOMEWOOD



Charli XCX

► **TITLE** Sucker
► **RELEASE DATE** January 26

► US success as a hitmaker-for-hire and pop star in her own right pushed the UK release of 'Sucker', Charli XCX's second major-label LP, from October 2014 to January this year. The Stevenage-born singer promises something a bit punkier than her smash collaboration with Iggy Azalea, 'Fancy', and her own 'Boom Clap', citing Weezer as an influence. "I write pop music, but 'Sucker' has this Bow Wow Wow, Ramones-esque edge," she says.

■ LEONIE COOPER

Cancer Bats

► **TITLE** Searching For Zero
► **RELEASE DATE** March 9

► 'Dead Set On Living' was more than just the title of Canadian bruisers Cancer Bats' last album: it was an ethos, resulting in a record that, though full of dark, slabby riffs and hardcore punk hysteria, celebrated life. The mantra shaping things this time around, says frontman Liam Cormier, is "no more bullshit". Production by Ross Robinson (Glassjaw, At The Drive-In) should ensure it still packs a punch.

■ AL HORNER

The Bohicas

► **TITLE** TBC
► **RELEASE DATE** TBC

► If you thought last year's Temples LP a little too faithful a facsimile of the psych era, just wait to see what Essex revisionists The Bohicas come up with on their debut, currently under construction between tours. 'XXX', 'Swarm' and 'Where You At' straddle early-'60s Merseybeat, blues rock, krautrock and Velvets fuzz-fuckery while throwing in modernist electro twists. A radical reimagining of the pre-Beatles age. ■ MARK BEAUMONT





Best Coast

► TITLE TBC
► RELEASE DATE TBC

► Is there more in Best Coast's locker than the sunny, three-chord pop punk that sustained 2010 debut 'Crazy For You' and 2012's follow-up 'The Only Place'? We'll find out in 2015. "It's coming, I promise," Bethany Cosentino assured a fan enquiring about a new album last November. The singer hasn't ventured far from the public eye since the Cali group's last release, 2013 EP 'Fade Away', and recently guested on Weezer's new album. Brace yourself for a full return this year. ■ AL HORNER

Guy Garvey

► TITLE TBC
► RELEASE DATE TBC

► Elbow remain as steady as an ocean liner as they prepare their seventh album, insists the Manchester group's frontman Guy Garvey. But in the meantime, the singer will slip out his first solo LP, an album made in an intense two-week burst and influenced by Afrobeat, Talk Talk and jazz. Garvey isn't strictly alone: members of old pals I Am Kloot and The Whip assist, and there's a duet with Texan singer-songwriter Jolie Holland.

■ DAN STUBBS

Ghostpoet

► TITLE Shedding Skin
► RELEASE DATE March 2

► 'Some Say I So I Say Light', Obaro Ejimiwe's 2013 barrage of sleek post-garage beats and Roots Manuva-ish enlightened rap, made the Londoner a cult star. The follow-up, 'Shedding Skin', looks set to be more expansive, judging by the Atoms For Peace-inspired new single 'Off Peak Dreams'. Cameos from Maximo Park's Paul Smith and Bombay Bicycle Club collaborator Lucy Rose may cut through the mood of gritty sophistication.

■ AL HORNER



Zack De La Rocha

► TITLE TBC
► RELEASE DATE TBC

► Among 2014's most welcome and unexpected comebacks was a guest spot by former Rage Against the Machine frontman Zack De La Rocha on Run The Jewels' blockbuster second album, 'RTJ2'. Having operated under the radar since the LA renegades split in 2000 – a smattering of low-key early '00s solo singles and one 2008 EP as One Day As A Lion aside – the searing 'Count Your Eyes (And Count To Fuck)' saw the 44-year-old wind back the years in a hail of ferocious socio-political rhymes. "The only thing that close faster than the caskets are the factories", he barked over a thundering beat. Speaking to NME in December, Run The

Jewels producer and MC El-P, who worked with De La Rocha on tracks for a shelved solo debut album in 1999, suggested his experience in the studio with RTJ may prompt new material: "I can't speak about his future but I will say that I'm going to LA to spend a month with him [in the studio] in January." Fans of De La Rocha's fury will argue there's never been a more appropriate time for a solo album, given the disturbing deaths of Eric Garner and Ferguson teen Michael Brown in America recently and the fact that police brutality has been the subject of some of Rage's most memorable music. Watch this space. ■ AL HORNER



New Order

► TITLE TBC
► RELEASE DATE TBC

► Revitalised, invigorated and getting on better than ever – that's how New Order frontman Bernard Sumner describes the influential Manchester band minus a certain former member. Their next album will be their 10th, but their first without bassist Peter Hook. It finds the five-piece collaborating with Chemical Brother Tom Rowlands on three tracks, meaning it's back to beats. "The tracks we've done with Tom are dance-based," asserts Sumner. "But so are the songs we've produced ourselves. It's an electronic-sounding album... like old-school us. There are also some guitar tracks, too. Not too heavy, but rocking." One of those rocking tracks is 'Restless', which Sumner believes could be the album's lead single, while other confirmed song titles are 'Singularity', 'Unlearn This Hatred', and 'Tutti Frutti' which "has an Italian geezer guesting on it", says Sumner. "No-one famous, but it's brilliant." Now signed to Mute, Sumner is yet to break it to label boss Daniel Miller that the album won't be ready for their end-of-January deadline, but he reckons they'll have the record finished by spring. ■ ANDY WELCH



► NEXT WEEK

50 more albums arriving in 2015...

► INCLUDING **The Cibs**, Noel Gallagher, **Florence + The Machine**, Grimes, **Radiohead**, Kanye West, **Primal Scream**, Drenge, **Swim Deep**, Laura Marling, **The Kills**, Frank Ocean, **Fat White Family**, The Charlatans, **Savages**, Lana Del Rey, **Muse**



Reviews

► THE DEFINITIVE VERDICT ■ EDITED BY BEN HOMEWOOD

NME
ALBUM
OF THE WEEK



Pond

Man It Feels Like Space Again

Following the garage rock of 2013's 'Hobo Rocket', the Perth psych explorers present their eccentric take on pop



The Perth band – completed by guitarist Joe Ryan, keyboardist Jamie Terry and drummer Cam Avery (who recently left, to be replaced by Jay Watson) – have been picking different rock tropes and rendering them in their own unique psychedelic style since forming at a house party in 2008. Their first two records, the ludicrously titled 'Psychedelic Mango' and 'Corridors Of Blissterday' (both released in 2009), injected Pink Floyd prog with sun-baked looseness. A year later came 'FronD', a stomping album that took David Bowie's

"The ultimate rock'n'roll cliché" – that's how Nick Allbrook described Pond in an interview with a Tame Impala fanzine back in 2012. The wild-eyed and loose-limbed frontman, who quit as Tame's bassist in 2013, may have been joking, but he wasn't wrong.

Ziggy-era glam-rock by its sequinned lapels and infected it with a collection of cosmic choruses, none better than the riotous 'Annie Orangetree'. 2012's 'Beard, Wives, Denim' was a rootsy, big-riffing take on Led Zeppelin rock theatrics and Paul and Linda McCartney's peculiar 1971 album 'Ram'. On 2013's 'Hobo Rocket', their heaviest work, they attacked White Stripes garage-blues with thundering rhythms and hippyish lyrics from Allbrook.

Now, on their sixth record in seven years, they're taking on pop. Five-minute opener 'Waiting Around For Grace' sets high-pitched vocals about being "*tired of being tired*" to fiery synths, and the jittery groove of 'Elvis' Flaming Star' owes as much to Michael Jackson and Prince as it does Bowie. The tracks are as out-there as the title (cooked up by Ryan while he was "high on some consumables"), and highlight the new ingredients Pond are working with for 'Man It Feels Like Space Again'. There are significantly fewer vocal freakouts

from Allbrook, more synths, and various examples of combining programmed and acoustic drum sounds. They sound cleaner than ever, even when they slow things down.

Like Procol Harum's 1967 chart-topper 'A Whiter Shade Of Pale', 'Holding Out For You' makes prog accessible,

STORY BEHIND THE SLEEVE

Designer Bjenny Montero on his inspirations

Fun and space rock

"The album was being played constantly in the background when I was living with Jay [Watson, Pond drummer]. I picked up on different vibes: the mix of fun and space-rock vulnerability, longing and hope, searching and then peace."

A robot farting

"The original Heroic Shart character [pictured in the middle of the cover] was a knight with a sword but everyone shut his ass down, which I now realise is right on. Now it's a robot farting, which doesn't mean anything."

'Cheap Thrills'

"We pulled out the [1968 Big Brother & The Holding Company LP] 'Cheap Thrills' sleeve straight away as a reference, then decided you can't just go and appropriate this iconic piece of art. You have to reshape it with your own energies or stories that come from the music on the record. So it's a salute to the style and impact but not the substance."

inflict their eccentric spirit on any genre they fancy. Perhaps, for a band as odd as this, making a pop album is the ultimate experiment. The results are anything but clichéd. ■ RHIAN DALY

8

THE DETAILS

► **RELEASE DATE** January 26 ► **LABEL** Caroline ► **PRODUCER** Lukas Glickman ► **LENGTH** 46:00 ► **TRACKLISTING** ►1. Waiting Around For Grace ►2. Elvis' Flaming Star ►3. Holding Out For You ►4. Zond ►5. Heroic Shart ►6. Sitting Up On Our Crane ►7. Outside Is The Right Side ►8. Medicine Hat ►9. Man It Feels Like Space Again ► **BEST TRACK** Elvis' Flaming Star

MORE ALBUMS

Natalie Prass

Natalie Prass

Spacebomb/Caroline



In any other year, Natalie Prass' debut would have been a bolt from the blue: her gilded voice twirls atop expensive-sounding arrangements that recall 1960s/'70s West Coast songwriters Harry Nilsson and Van Dyke Parks, tropicália, Southern soul and classic Disney scores. It's a beautiful anachronism, but the Nashville songwriter (and sometime member of Jenny Lewis' band) is in good company in 2015, joined by Tobias Jesso Jr and Matthew E White – the latter produced and backs this audacious record with his Spacebomb Orchestra. The gossamer quality of Prass' vocal is best suited to complex hooks, as on 'Bird Of Prey', where she flits between low-slung moodiness and wounded staccato.

■ LAURA SNAPES

8

Curtis Harding

Soul Power Burger



Stepping out from the sizeable shadow cast by Cee Lo Green, this debut album from his former backing singer is a sumptuous offering. 'Soul Power' tips its vintage fedora at the roots of 1970s soul before offering a sly wink at '80s rockabilly. Tours with Jack White and collaborations with Black Lips' Cole Alexander have given the Atlanta-based Harding a rough edge. Loose and lazy horns slink through the seductive 'Next Time', and 'Heaven's On The Other Side' twitches with a harmony-heavy gospel groove. Elsewhere, the garage clatter of 'I Don't Wanna Go Home' revs up and parks itself halfway between The Gun Club and the Ramones. This is flashback funk at its finest and grubbiest.

■ LEONIE COOPER

8



All We Are

The Liverpool trio sound too sleepy to dance on their inconsistent disco debut

► In May 2013, All We Are described their single 'Utmost Good', accurately, as "The Bee Gees on diazepam". Nearly two years later, bassist Guro Gikling is touting the Liverpool trio's debut album as "psychedelic boogie". The 11 tracks here fit both descriptions. Opener 'Ebb/Flow' thrums with delicate melody, blending The xx's midnight edge with Wild Beasts' theatricality; a careful mix of electronics and isolated notes from guitarist Luis Santos mesh prettily on 'Feel Safe'; and 'I Wear You' is an urgent disco love song with a breathy "Ooh, ooh, ooh" refrain. However, All We Are – who crafted most of this album in their hometown studio before recording in London with Bat For Lashes producer Dan Carey – can become too tranquilising. Initially impressive, the complex melodies of 'Stone' are indulged for too long and end up soporific, and the whooshing 'Go' and the latent 'Something About You' act as sleeping pills. It's not a bad record, but ultimately 'All We Are' lacks energy. ■ BEN HOMEWOOD



7

THE DETAILS

► **RELEASE DATE** February 2 ► **LABEL** Double Six ► **PRODUCERS** Dan Carey, Joe Wills ► **LENGTH** ► **TRACKLISTING** ►1. Intro ►2. Ebb/Flow ►3. Stone ►4. Feel Safe ►5. Honey ►6. I Wear You ►7. Keep Me Alive ►8. Go ►9. Utmost Good ►10. Something About You ►11. Life Of Seven ► **BEST TRACK** I Wear You

Emmy The Great

S EP Bella Union



Emmy The Great has been around the world twice in the four years since her last album 'Virtue', building the bones of new songs in Hong Kong, Tokyo, New York and London. The resulting EP runs from the confessional to the political – one song is about bumping into an ex in Soho ('Social Halo'), another

about Japanese companies profiting from Californian solar power ('Solar Panels'). Perhaps more surprisingly, there's not an acoustic guitar to be found amid the whimsical, minimal electronic effects on 'Swimming Pool' and beefy basslines and sweeping disco of 'Solar Panels'. Emmy's voice, once a wisp, weighs heavier. As an album preview, 'S' is promising indeed.

■ HAZEL SHEFFIELD

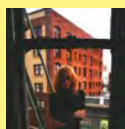
8

Reviews

Jessica Pratt

On Your Own Love Again

Drag City



A graduate of the Joanna Newsom School Of

Divisive Vocals, Californian folk singer Jessica Pratt's delicate second album sees her breathy, intense voice skip alongside trickling acoustic guitar lines.

Pratt takes her cue from lesser-known female singers of 1970s Americana such as Judee Sill and Linda Perhacs. Her style and the dusty recording techniques on 'Strange Melody' and 'Jacquelyn In The Background' make you wonder if 'On Your Own Love Again' is actually decades old, discovered at a Laurel Canyon garage sale. But rather than a vintage relic, it's a beguiling work that, like Kurt Vile and Julia Holter, updates the rustic roots of American folk rock. ■ LEONIE COOPER

7

Noveller

Fantastic Planet Fire



Formerly of Cold Cave and Parts & Labor, guitarist

Sarah Lipstate has shuttled between Texas and New York for 10 years, building up a CV of film scores, instrumental works and improv duos. Having covered droning noise (2009's 'Red Rainbows') and starlit ambience (2011's 'Glacial Glow'), seventh album 'Fantastic Planet' furthers Lipstate's interests in more synthetic textures. 'Sisters' and 'The Ascent' neatly blur the distinctions between synth and guitar, but 'Rubicon' and 'Into The Dunes' are less successful, their softness smothered by rasping, wasp-in-a-bottle effects. 'Fantastic Planet' is best when the clutter clears on the glassy patterns of 'No Unholy Mountain' and 'Concrete Dreams'.

■ STUART HUGGETT

6

Mark Ronson

Uptown Special

With guests including Kevin Parker, the A-list producer's fourth album finds chemistry in the most unlikely places

It's easy to be suspicious of Mark Ronson, a man with enough A-list connections to merit his own *Six Degrees Of...* drinking game. When it comes to this pop music lark, however, it's getting harder to dismiss him. We live in a retro-maniacal age, one the 39-year-old's output has helped foster, but his own ear for the past – not to mention his gift for pastiche – is pretty much faultless. You need look no further than 'Uptown Funk' – an insta-phenomenon that had to be rush-released in December to compete with its own *X Factor* cover – for evidence of that.

Like Daft Punk's 'Get Lucky', 'Uptown Funk' is one of those songs you can't quite believe someone hasn't written already; Prince has probably had to double-check that he didn't. You might say this is the entire raison d'être of 'Uptown Special': from the Steely Dan-ish jazz-rock of 'Summer Breaking' (one of two tracks to feature Tame Impala's Kevin Parker), to the way 'I Can't Lose' transports the listener to a poppers-stained Manhattan dancefloor circa 1989, everything seems precision-engineered to remind you of something else. 'Crack In The Pearl Pt II' aims for even greater



THE DETAILS

► **RELEASE DATE** January 19 ► **LABEL** Sony ► **PRODUCERS** Mark Ronson, Jeff Bhasker ► **LENGTH** 38:39 ► **TRACKLISTING** ►1. Uptown's First Finale ►2. Summer Breaking ►3. Feel Fight ►4. Uptown Funk ►5. I Can't Lose ►6. Daffodils ►7. Crack In The Pearl ►8. In Case Of Fire ►9. Leaving Los Feliz ►10. Heavy And Rolling ►11. Crack In The Pearl Pt II ► **BEST TRACK** Uptown Funk

fidelity by enlisting the help of the artist it's riffing on – in this case, Stevie Wonder.

That might seem a shameless bit of stunt casting, but 'Uptown Special' doesn't fall into the same traps as its predecessors in that regard. In fact, Ronson's fourth record consistently finds chemistry in the unlikelyst of places, not least between Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist Michael Chabon (who wrote most of the lyrics) and the aforementioned Parker, whose distinctively woozy vocals prove the perfect vessel for the trippy wordplay on narco-funk workout 'Daffodils'.

Other pitfalls, however, aren't so easily avoided: while there are occasional (and ill-defined) flirtations with narrative, the album still unfolds like a DJ set, eclectic without ever sounding entirely cohesive. Still, if 2010's

'Record Collection' was the sound of a man eager to atone for past musical transgressions, 'Uptown Special' is Ronson's moment of absolution: you can try to hate it, but in the end, as with all the best pop music, resistance is futile. ■ BARRY NICOLSON

7

Desperate Journalist

Fierce Panda



The most interesting thing about London quartet

Desperate Journalist might well be their name (which, in case you're wondering, is a reference to The Cure's retitling of a Peel Session track as a shot at ex-NME writer Paul Morley). This debut starts out perkily enough, with dynamic opener 'Control' a prime

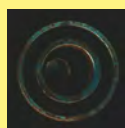
slice of British indie rock, but the pace soon slackens after previous single 'Cristina'. The plodding 'Distance' is indicative of this malaise, and even Rob Hardy's exemplary 12-string guitar playing – special mention for his Marr-esque lines on 'Nothing' – can't save the rest of the record from feeling a bit indie-by-numbers. It's also so indebted to '90s indie nights that you can practically taste the snakebite and black.

■ ROB WEBB

5

Zun Zun Egui

Shackles Gift Bella Union



Formed in 2008, Zun Zun Egui became the cream of

Bristol's live scene thanks to their knockout shows. Frontman Kushal Gaya would command the audience in many languages while the band plied kaleidoscopic grooves. The issue was capturing that fire on record: 2011 debut 'Katang' didn't quite nail it, but hiring Fuck Buttons'

Andrew Hung to produce the follow-up proves successful. The quartet weld psychedelia, dub, post-punk, stoner rock and serrated abstraction into bona fide hooks (as on the great 'I Want You To Know'), and Hung allows them all to breathe. This also feels more like an 'album' than its predecessor, as Mauritius-born Gaya negotiates the psychological implications of the two islands he calls home, most affectingly on 'City Thunder'.

■ LAURA SNAPES

8

ANDY FORD

Reviews

The Dodos

Individ Polyvinyl



The Dodos hail from San Francisco but they don't sound like they spend much time on California's beaches. They've always had a folky spring in their step, but on this sixth album, Meric Long and Logan Kroeber's rugged riffs share a blustery quality with

some of Scotland's finest. The pounding 'Competition' has the scuffed finish of a revved-up Beta Band, while the swaying 'Darkness' explores more trad territory. Opener 'Precipitation' rumbles along like King Creosote gone post-rock. Occasionally it seems the windswept atmospherics are compensating for a lack of melody, but ultimately The Dodos provide a satisfying take on the sounds of a country far away from their own. ■ ROBERT COOKE **7**

Kitty, Daisy & Lewis

Kitty, Daisy & Lewis The Third Sunday Best



Kitty, Daisy & Lewis made their name refitting rock'n'roll, blues and swing for 21st-century hipsters. And the Londoners are good at it, sidestepping the hackneyed powdered-eggs-and-Bakelite-radio 'vintage' vibe and breathing new life into something old. But you can't live in the past forever, so album three sees the trio

moving things on and incorporating modern pop and rock. At least that was the idea. Recorded in their purpose-built analogue studio with Clash guitarist and longtime fan Mick Jones, it sounds like a retro pastiche. 'Baby Bye Bye' is ersatz ska, and the strings and disco guitar on 'No Action' are sub-Paloma Faith. In other words, they've strayed into the trap they've previously always managed to avoid. Whoops. **5**

■ CHRIS COTTINGHAM

Gaz Coombes

Matador

Hot Fruit Recordings



Two decades on from debut single 'Caught By The Fuzz', former Supergrass frontman Gaz Coombes keeps exploring new musical territories. The 38-year-old's second solo album takes in the pulsing Springsteen-meets-Suicide throb of 'The English Ruse', the spaced-out gospel of 'Needle's Eye' and a convincing impression of intense Selkirk folkies Frightened Rabbit in the warm acoustic chords of 'Detroit'. Sadly the second half drags slightly as Coombes trudges into dreary prog ('Seven Walls') and a melodramatic but aimless battle with some personal demons ('To The Wire'). Strip away the self-indulgence and carve in a little more focus, and somewhere within Gaz Coombes you'll find a great solo artist. **7**

■ ROBERT COOKE

Rae Morris

Unguarded Atlantic



Last year, Blackpool-born Rachel 'Rae' Morris added guest vocals to three tracks from Bombay Bicycle Club's chart-topping 'So Long, See You Tomorrow', but this debut suggests she's more than just a voice for hire. With lush production from Ariel Rechtshaid (Sky Ferreira, Vampire Weekend), 'Unguarded' is a collection of intelligent pop songs which, at their best, burrow beneath your skin. The Fryars-assisted 'Cold' dissects a crumbling relationship, 'Do You Even Know?' wraps candid lyrics about feeling misunderstood in catchy electropop, and 'Under The Shadows' sounds like Haim covering Kate Bush's 'Cloudbusting'. Morris' powerful voice shines most on the disco-tinged 'Love Again'. **6**

■ NICK LEVINE

Joey Bada\$\$

B4.DA.\$\$

The 20-year-old New Yorker borrows the styles of politicised '90s rap, but lacks the substance

Having broken out of the New York mixtape underground with fizzing single 'Survival Tactics' in 2012, you could call Joey Bada\$\$ a victim of his own tardiness. If it had been released in mid-2014 as planned, this debut would have probably been hailed as a tidy tribute to '90s boom-bap, full of kush cloud chill and slinking nods to Nas' defining rap fable 'Illmatic'.

Instead, arriving after last August's Ferguson crisis – sparked when unarmed black American teenager Michael Brown was killed by a policeman – its mining of Nas' sound, with little of the hip-hop veteran's socially conscious lyricism, feels weird. "Cash rules everything around me", booms the 20-year-old, real name Jo-Vaughn Virginie Scott, over a piano-laced beat on 'Paper Trail\$'. He borrows a line from Wu-Tang Clan's 1994 single 'CREAM', but delivers it with none of the Staten Island heroes' confrontational spirit. Even when he fleetingly

addresses the American police's relationship with black youth on the intoxicating J Dilla groove 'Like Me', his complaints sound half-baked: "Every time I move they be sweating me/They want another black man in the penitentiary". Otherwise, despite cribbing



the aesthetic of politicised '90s rap, 'B4.DA.\$\$' shies away from its message.

That's not to say it's a *bad* album, just a lightweight one. Highlights include 'Curry Chicken', a homage to Joey's Caribbean roots and his mother's cooking that seeps soul from every pore. Producer Statik Selektah retools an old A Tribe Called Quest beat into a searing blitz of dissonant bass and synths on the single 'No 99', over which Joey warns pretenders to his NY rap-prince crown that he's "ready to bust my gun/I'm rushin' in like Vladimir Putin". 'Black Beetles' sees him link up with Chuck Strangers, the Pro Era beatmaker behind some of his best tracks to date (debut mixtape '1999' standouts 'Fromda Tomb\$' and 'Daily Routine'). Strangers' breezy production invites some of the record's best moments of introspection: "This one is for my dogs barking up on the tree/Sometimes that wind blows, eventually she gonna leave/That's mother nature for you", he ponders with gravelly melancholy. Despite this album's weaknesses, you feel Bada\$\$ will be around for a while. ■ AL HORNER

6

THE DETAILS

► **RELEASE DATE** January 19 ► **LABEL** Relentless, Cinematic Music Group
► **PRODUCERS** Statik Selektah, Lee Bannon, DJ Premier, Freddie Joachim, Kirk Knight, J Dilla and The Roots, Hit-Boy, Basquiat, Chuck Strangers, Sam I AM and the Soul Rebels ► **LENGTH** 61:24 ► **TRACKLISTING** ►1. Save The Children ►2. Greenbox (Introlude) ►3. Paper Trail\$ ►4. Piece Of Mind ►5. Big Dusty ►6. Hazeus View ►7. Like Me ►8. Belly Of The Beast ►9. No 99 ►10. Christ Conscious ►11. On And On ►12. Escape 120 ►13. Black Beetles ►14. OCB ►15. Curry Chicken ►16. Run Up On Ya (bonus track)

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FILM

Inherent Vice

Convoluted adaptation of a Thomas Pynchon novel, with a soundtrack curated by Jonny Greenwood



Renowned for their denseness and complexity, reclusive American author Thomas Pynchon's novels have long been dismissed as unfilmable. And with good reason: frankly, you'd have more luck adapting a banana for the big screen than trying to squeeze one of the *Gravity's Rainbow* author's fiendishly strange stories into a two-hour script.

But director Paul Thomas Anderson – whose *Inherent Vice* is the first cinema adaptation of a Pynchon book – isn't interested in the merely possible. At 44, the Californian auteur already looks like one of the greats, exploding onto the scene with porn-industry epic *Boogie Nights* in 1997 and staking fresh claim to genius a decade later with *There Will Be Blood*, his oil-drenched journey into the heart of American darkness.

In adapting *Inherent Vice*, Pynchon's 2009 gumshoe novel set in the '70s, Anderson promises a slapstick-heavy affair that riffs on stoner comics, Cheech & Chong and *Police Squad!* – welcome news to those who thought his last effort, 2012's *The Master*, was a bit of a snooze.

The film centres around pot-addled private detective Larry 'Doc' Sportello (Joaquin Phoenix), who investigates a shady property tycoon's disappearance after his ex-girlfriend (Katherine Watson) tips him off that some bad business is about to go down. In the course of his inquiries, Doc must contend with

a motley cast of members of the revolutionary Black Panther Party, neo-Nazi loan sharks, spirit guides played by Joanna Newsom, and a sulky, square-jawed copper called Christian 'Bigfoot' Bjornsen (Josh Brolin) who hates his hippy guts.

What follows is a deliberately haphazard web of intrigue in which Doc discerns the hand of a sinister crime syndicate called the Golden Fang – and, well, that's about as far as it's possible to get with the plot. *Inherent Vice* is hellishly tough to make sense of, maybe because it doesn't make much sense at all. On the plus side, the film looks and sounds like a dream (Can and Neil Young feature on the Jonny Greenwood-curated soundtrack), and Phoenix has a blast as Doc, looking like a pot-blearied, bedraggled Wolverine with no sense of linear time. He's a paranoid hero for a paranoid moment in US history, and the film is littered with oblique references to the moral chaos of the post-Manson murders, post-Altamont period.

But for all the comedy pratfalls and sight gags (Brolin sucking on a chocolate-covered banana is particularly choice), *Inherent Vice* is a tough nut to crack. It's as if, in striving to navigate the tonal intricacies of Pynchon's style, Anderson misses the joy of his best work. What's left is a weirdly mannered affair that's nowhere near as much fun as it wants you to think it is. Far out? Sure. But out of sight? Not even close.



DIRECTOR
Paul Thomas Anderson
IN CINEMAS
January 30

CINEMA

A Most Violent Year



After starring as a hapless folk musician in last year's *Inside Llewyn Davis*,

Oscar Isaac is starting 2015 in stellar form. Compelling in *Ex Machina*, he is magnificent here, and has to be: in this enthralling third film from JC Chandor (*Margin Call*, *All Is Lost*), he is rarely off the screen. It's 1981, and Abel Morales, a principled New Yorker, is cutting a deal that will make or break his heating-oil business. But his trucks are getting hijacked, his wife (Jessica Chastain) wants him to fight, and an ambitious district attorney (David Oyelowo) is looking for someone to make an example of. Chandor daringly inverts the gangster-movie stereotype, and from the first frame Isaac has you willing Abel to do the right thing. ■ ANGUS BATEY

9

CINEMA

Paper Souls



In this Paris-set film from Belgian director Vincent Lannoo, widower and

former novelist Paul (Stephane Guillon) writes funeral eulogies composed from recollections of his clients' relatives. A woman named Emma (Julie Gayet) asks him to write about her late husband Nathan to encourage her young son to talk about him. After initially rejecting her, Paul relents and ends up developing romantic feelings for Emma and a bond with her son. The story springs to life when Emma's husband mysteriously appears at Paul's apartment door, with no understanding of why he's there. Via dimly lit scenes – including a pavement wrestling match between the two men – this improbable but darkly funny film charts Paul's struggle to separate the truth from the ghosts that litter his past.

■ RHIAN DALY

7

CINEMA

Ex Machina



From *Interstellar* or *Transcendence* to the lovelorn smartphone in *Her*, artificial intelligence was cinema's hot new theme in 2014. But novelist and screenwriter Alex Garland (*The Beach*, *28 Days Later*) is not merely surfing the zeitgeist: this directorial debut is timely by design. Caleb (Domhnall Gleeson) is a programmer who spends a week with his

elusive boss, Nathan (the superb Oscar Isaac, clubbable yet creepy in that tech whizz-kid way), trying to assess whether Nathan's robot, Ava (Alicia Vikander), has attained consciousness. It could have just been a *Frankenstein* for the search-engine generation, but *Ex Machina* soars because Garland asks the right questions and makes the right connections. It's compulsive and disconcerting viewing.

■ ANGUS BATEY

8

CINEMA

Beyond Clueless



Written and directed by film journalist Charlie Lyne, this 90-minute documentary promises a "dizzying journey into the mind, body and soul of the teen movie". There's no doubting Lyne's passion: he's picked clips from over 250 films and set them to a suitably wistful soundtrack by indie duo Summer Camp and a voiceover by actress

Fairuza Balk, who appeared in several '90s teen movies, including 1996's *The Craft*. Sadly, Lyne's analysis of the genre's tropes isn't always insightful – "sex changes everything", we're told midway – and his focus can be misguided. Dodgy teen comedies *Slap Her She's French* and *Eurotrip* are strenuously examined, but Lyne barely bothers with *Clueless*, the 1995 high-school classic that gives his film its title. ■ NICK LEVINE

6



Mike Kerr onstage
in Hamburg

Royal Blood

Grosse Freiheit 36

Hamburg

Sunday, January 11

**The duo's well-oiled, roaring
machine goes into overdrive
in Germany**

Back in the mists of time, Hamburg's notorious Reeperbahn was a musical proving ground, where young British bands would cut their collective teeth by loading up on medicinal speed and knocking out three 90-minute sets per night, every night, in whatever dingy basement bar they'd been contracted to play in. Nestled between insalubrious sex clubs, burlesque theatres and a beautiful, baroque sore thumb of a Catholic church, Grosse Freiheit 36 used to be one of them, only in those days it went by the name of the Kaiserkeller and its most famous residents were The Beatles. ➔

EVERY NOTE HITS ITS TARGET WITH LASER-GUIDED ACCURACY

The weight – not to mention expectation – of history seems to follow Royal Blood around everywhere. Nothing that's written about them can fail to mention that their eponymous debut album was the fastest-selling since Noel Gallagher's, or that its success has made the Brighton pair semi-reluctant standard bearers for rock'n'roll. Every so often, history will even appear unannounced in their dressing room (presumably with a puff of smoke and a diabolical cackle) in the guise of Jimmy Page, or Dave Grohl, or Lars Ulrich, and whisper encouragements in their ear. Playing The Beatles' old stomping ground amounts to just another day at the office for Royal Blood. They barely break a sweat.

No matter how many times you see Royal Blood live, you can't fail to be impressed by the ruthless efficiency of their show:

two blokes, 11 songs, 50-ish minutes and not a single note that doesn't hit its target with

laser-guided accuracy. From the combustible opening roar of 'Come On Over' onwards, its obvious that singing bassist Mike Kerr and drummer Ben Thatcher have honed this thing to perfection; 12 months of relentless touring has made Royal Blood the definition of a well-oiled machine, a sleek, chrome-finished muscle car in a world of Fiat Puntos, yet they still look to be having too much



Royal Blood Q&A

Are you excited to be back on the road?

Mike Kerr: "Yes! We had a break over Christmas where we got to sit back and try to process the last 12 months, and see our families again – we'd only seen them for a day, or even just a few hours, here and there."

The European crowds seem quite rowdy.

"We're playing towns we've never played before – not all of them, but quite a few. So for some people, this is their first Royal Blood show. You can definitely feel an excitement in the room that's similar to home."

So what's next – world domination?

"Just to keep carrying on, really. We like playing gigs every night, so as long as we feel like we're moving forward – whether it's writing new songs, or the shows themselves getting bigger and better – we're happy."

And then, just like that, it's over. By the climax of 'Out Of The Black', Ben Thatcher is perched, sentinel-like, on top of his drum stool, coolly surveying the crowd; a few moments later, he launches it across the stage and finishes the rest of the song from a standing position. Kerr, meanwhile, hoists his bass guitar high above his head like some sort of heraldic standard. The audience are desperate for an encore, but

they don't get one – Royal Blood are very much of the belief that it's better to leave people wanting more.

There are no new tunes in tonight's set, although the pressure on them to come up with some must be immense: if they had just 30 more minutes of material, this band could be selling out arenas. That they don't – not even a desultory cover or two – and are not is ultimately good news for the rest of us. Soon enough, Royal Blood will be distant specks on cavernous stages and you'll be squinting from the nosebleeds just to get a better view of them. For the time being – albeit not for very much longer – you still have the chance to see them up close and personal. Needless to say, we recommend you take it. ■ BARRY NICOLSON

9

ANDY FORD

SETLIST

- ▶ Come On Over
- ▶ You Can Be So Cruel
- ▶ Figure It Out
- ▶ You Want Me
- ▶ Better Strangers
- ▶ Little Monster
- ▶ Blood Hands
- ▶ Careless
- ▶ Ten Tonne Skeleton
- ▶ Loose Change
- ▶ Out Of The Black



THE VIEW FROM THE CROWD



Lena Inge, 30,
Hanover

"I love them. I've seen them live before in Paris and I loved their energy. They're such a great band."



Andrea, 47, Bremen

"They are still newcomers in Germany, but even though the gig was short, it was great. They have a fantastic sound for just two people."



Fernando Silvestre, 29, Brazil

"It was pretty awesome. Royal Blood made the night, they have so much potential."



Roman Andrasko, 29, Slovakia

"They're brilliant. I've been waiting to see them for a long time, because I always listen to Zane Lowe on Radio 1 and he plays them lots. So I've been looking forward to it for a while and they didn't disappoint."

Bad Breeding

Green Door Store, Brighton

Friday, January 9

Stevenage punks celebrate the venue's birthday with bruising political noise

► Tonight is the Green Door Store's fourth birthday party, and the rough-and-tumble revelry suits Stevenage punks Bad Breeding perfectly.

By the time their after-midnight slot arrives the venue is heaving, a 100-strong queue stuck outside for the duration. The quartet spent last year introducing the country to their brutal live show and tonight they come out thundering, singer Christopher Dodd yelling himself hoarse over the fearsome noise of opener 'Losing My Head'.

As a young band battling small-town boredom – Dodd laments Stevenage's lack of venues to *NME* before the show – Bad Breeding have seized upon bruising political punk to carry their fight against apathy and ignorance. Anchored by bassist Charlie Rose's no-nonsense thud – which is turned up to crushing levels on the raging 'Separate Me' – the screamed titles of 'No Progress' and 'Burn This Flag' somehow manage to break through the noise, lodging in the heads of anyone not already fighting to keep theirs clear of the bodies thrashing in the circle pit.

Tonight's celebrations mean we're here to party, but Bad Breeding serve a more vital purpose, keeping sharp and staying angry. With its repeated yelp of "I can't breathe!", closer 'Blurring Out' skids to a halt in a whine of feedback and the band exit with Dodd's first direct words to the crowd: "And don't put up with any shit, right?"

■ STUART HUGGETT

SETLIST

- Losing My Head
 - Falling
 - No Progress
 - Separate Me
 - A Cross
 - Chains
 - Burn This Flag
 - Age Of Nothing
 - Blurring Out



8



Panda Bear

MoMA PS1, Long Island City,

New York, Sunday, January 11

Noah Lennox combines new songs and surreal visuals to stunning effect

► You never just get a gig at PS1. A dome-shaped annexe of New York's Museum Of Modern Art out in Long Island City, two 2013 events saw The National play their song 'Sorrow' for six straight hours and Deerhunter frontman Bradford Cox perform an improvised set at the premiere of *Youth Museum*, a VHS film about him. Tonight's show is a collaboration between Animal Collective member Noah Lennox's Panda Bear solo project and visual artist Danny Perez. The latter's vivid images, including cartoons and warped, colourful shapes, are projected on the walls and ceiling as Lennox unveils a selection of lush psychedelia from his fifth solo album 'Panda Bear Meets The Grim Reaper' alongside a few old favourites.

SETLIST

- Sequential Circuits
- Crosswords
- Boys Latin
- Faces In The Crowd
- You Can Count On Me
- Come To Your Senses
- Tropic Of Cancer
- The Preakness
- Selfish Gene
 - Mr Noah
- Scheherazade
- Surfers Hymn

'Mr Noah' starts the encore with a rush of upbeat melodies, while the sparse, ominous 'Scheherazade' is married to a video of the grim reaper ripping apart a stuffed panda. It's a striking sight that leads brilliantly into euphoric finale 'Surfer's Hymn'. As it reaches its crescendo, Lennox is bathed in colour, and the entrancing power of his music is undeniable.

■ MISCHA PEARLMAN

8

DANIEL TOPETE

Savages

Baby's All Right, New York
Monday, January 12

Eight new songs full of aggressive intensity at the first night of the post-punks' New York residency

“We believe in movement initiating sound as well as sound initiating movement,” Savages wrote on their website in advance of the first of a sold out, nine-date New York residency. And Jehnny Beth is initiating the movement. Edgy, nervous and all in black, the singer's voice trembles in a way that doesn't seem rehearsed. When she's not singing, Beth shudders through some self-conscious dance moves, including some awkward firing of imaginary pistols from her hips. And her strange movements reflect the wild new sounds; tonight she spits and writhes her way through a wave of fresh material, and only the most vicious cuts from 2013's debut album ‘Silence Yourself’.

Opener ‘I Need Something New’, the first of six unknown tracks in a row, aptly describes the band's mood. Their faces fixed in concentration, they're eager to impose their latest work on the audience, desperate for evolution. As on much of Savages' older material, Beth repeatedly yelps its telling title during the chorus, only now she sounds like Enya howling at the moon, and Gemma Thompson's guitar screeches wildly along with her.

‘The Answer’ is equally tense, drummer Fay Milton maintaining a slow beat as Beth's vocals shift from whispers to intense yells. When the stage fills with smoke for ‘No’, obscuring Beth as she moans “*I asked the world and the world said ‘no’*”, the result is maudlin but still danceable, like veteran 4AD art-goths Dead Can Dance turning their hand to thrash. Milton and bassist Ayse Hassan's rhythms rumble fast and low like Bauhaus, and when the song reaches its conclusion, Thompson's guitar trills like a hummingbird.

Savages are clearly exploring different sounds for album two and, mostly, it pays off.



‘When In Love’ stands out for its surf-rock lightness, momentarily offsetting their onstage terseness. ‘Surrender’, though, is a small blip, its aggressive barrage sounding unfinished and drifting aimlessly around the venue.

SETLIST

- I Need Something New
- The Answer
- No
- When In Love
- Surrender
- Adore
- Shut Up
- No Face
- This Is What You Get
- Sad Person
- Husbands
- Fuckers

“For the next one, I definitely need lyrics,” Beth laughs, grabbing a sheet of notes and introducing ‘Adore’. It's the most unorthodox new track. Beth, shudder fully banished, sings searching lyrics (“*I adore life/Is it human to adore life?*”) as Hassan indulges twanging bass and Thompson does her best 1980s Johnny Marr impression, finger-picking a jangly guitar line. It all builds to a tense climax that mirrors Fleetwood Mac's ‘The Chain’, paired with heavy metal drums executed perfectly by Milton.

‘Shut Up’ and ‘No Face’ are the first old songs of the set, during which Beth waves her hands wildly to command her audience, who scream the choruses right back at her. But the unfamiliar stuff thrills the most. ‘This Is What You Get’, a whiplash-inducing blur of punk guitar and bruising rhythms, is over in a flash. Then Beth wryly introduces ‘Sad Person’, the last new song of the night: “Do

JEHNNY BETH SPITS AND WRITHES HER WAY THROUGH A SWATHE OF NEW MATERIAL

you know a sad person? This song is for them.” But it's far from glum. It's a monumental collision of sound, Milton attacking her cymbals like she's trying to knock them off the stage as Thompson picks Zeppelin-style guitar solos that, for anyone used to Savages' taut older material, are an enthralling diversion.

After the shock of the unheard material, the set concludes with two of the band's most direct tracks. ‘Husbands’ is shrill and swirling, and ‘Fuckers’ – their traditional closer, in which Beth instructs “*Don't let the fuckers bring you down*” – is a typically rigorous finale on a night that shows Savages can maintain their usual intensity even when playing largely untested songs. By the time ‘Fuckers’ clatters to its conclusion, the front rows are screaming. Leaning over their upturned faces, the grinning Beth shouts, “THANK YOU SO MUCH, JANUARY 2015!” ■ AMY ROSE SPIEGEL

MORE GIGS

Bloody Knees The Old Blue Last, London

Tuesday, January 13
Onstage at The Old Blue Last, Bloody Knees are distributing cans of Stella. After dishing out the free booze, the Cambridge foursome launch into a cover of Oasis' 'Supersonic'. Their sludgy interpretation prompts a riot; beers fly as topless crowdsurfers throw themselves towards the stage. "This kicked off, didn't it?" laughs frontman Bradley Griffiths afterwards. Their own songs are just as raucous: the grungy thrash of 'Daydream' precedes the rapid dirge of new song 'xxx'. On penultimate track 'Stitches', Griffiths screams "I'm covered in blood but at least I'm having fun". Those lyrics come to life in the set's aftermath, as bassist Sam Conway departs bleeding heavily from a cut hand. It's a fitting climax to a gloriously messy night. ■ RHIAN DALY

9

THE VIEW FROM THE CROWD



Cecilia, 39, Upper West Side
"I saw them at Webster Hall

last year, and they're more together now. Maybe it was the fact that this is a smaller, more intimate venue, but they're a little bit less angry."



Yanira, 39, Fort Lee
"There was a new balance to them at this show. It's about

not being afraid to express your frustration with the world. It's not so much about heartbreak any more."



Isaac, 27, Brooklyn
"I saw a lot of old heads from New York – a lot of

old punks. That was really endearing and heartwarming. There were also a lot of girls at the front, which was cool."



Sergio, 28, Queens
"This was my first time seeing them. It was OK, they had

a great energy, but they're not New York. They're London."

Tobias Jesso Jr The Roxy, Los Angeles

Friday, January 2
"I've broken all my new year's resolutions already," says Tobias Jesso Jr at the beginning of his first official gig. If the Canadian's annual promises include not drinking onstage, keeping awkward banter to a minimum and avoiding false starts then, yes, he's fucked it. Bending his curly mop and gangly frame over his piano, he's a bundle of nerves. But his tender ballads, particularly the stark pairing of 'True Love' and 'Just A Dream', overshadow his anxiety. By the time he ends on the sombre 'Hollywood' – written about a previous failed attempt to make it in Los Angeles – the whole room is rooting for him.

■ EVE BARLOW

8

Joanna Gruesome



Power Lunches, London Thursday, January 8

The noise-pop band's new material teeters on the brink of explosion

Joanna Gruesome are just inches away from disaster. They're kicking off a three-night residency at Power Lunches, a divey DIY venue in the heart of east London, and there's a leaky air conditioning unit less than a recklessly twirled mic-stand's length away from the stage.

Apparently unfazed by the prospect of electrocution, guitarist Owen Williams suggests that

watching the steady drip-drip of water might be a fun way for audience members to pass time between songs, as the band aren't much cop at onstage "bantz".

This ticking time-bomb predicament works as a metaphor for the band themselves. The young quartet made their mark in 2013 with 'Weird Sister'. An aptly Jekyll and Hyde-ish debut from a group that met in an anger management class,

it sounded like Sonic Youth smearing themselves in The Vaselines' candy-coated pop. Tonight, they teeter on the brink of explosion, doing so only occasionally, and split their attention between songs from their debut and material from their upcoming second album, 'Peanut Butter'.

The new stuff sounds, if we're being perfectly honest, quite a lot

like the old. That's no bad thing, mind. Set opener 'Last Year' is split into two halves: in the first, frontwoman Alanna McArdle spits half-sung declamations like Kim Gordon with a serious bee in her bonnet; the second is dominated by her C86-style boy/girl harmonising with Williams.

'Honestly Do Yr Worst' is more sweet-tempered, albeit prone to bursts of furious dissonance – it's the sonic equivalent of an adorable schoolkid producing a worm sandwich from their lunchbox. And 'I Don't Wanna Relax', singled out by McArdle as a personal favourite from the new tunes, is a power-pop gem with a particularly winsome vocal melody.

They end with 'Psykick Espionage', a song from a split seven-inch with New York punks Perfect Pussy that calls to mind a pre-teen Stooges let loose in a sweet shop. And here's the rub: when McArdle cuts loose like she does here, she's absolutely the band's secret weapon and every bit the equal of Meredith Graves, her fiery Perfect Pussy counterpart. Rangy and intense, she's a riveting presence. Yet there's a feeling of something untapped, as if she's holding back a little. Does it matter? Well, yes and no: for now, Joanna Gruesome offer a vigorous take on the current vogue for all things '90s. But if McArdle can find a way to unleash the killer inside, who knows? They could be headlining this shithole for a year.

■ ALEX DENNEY

SETLIST

- Last Year
- Secret Surprise
- Jamie (Luvver)
- Graveyard
- Jerome (Liar)
- Honestly Do Yr Worst
- Hey! I Wanna Be Yr Best Friend
- Anti-parent
- I Don't Wanna Relax
- Madison
- Psykick Espionage



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THIS WEEK IN 1995



NME meets PJ

Harvey on a train to Yeovil and finds her uncomfortable with her "bitch cow from hell" image

Interviewing Polly Harvey about her new album 'To Bring You My Love' on a train from London to Yeovil, and under strict instruction to not even look at her until she's ready to talk, NME's Ted Kessler discovers that the Dorset singer has decided this will be her last interview. "I'll always make music and it'll be there if people want to hear it," she explains, "but I've never enjoyed interviews. I've tried to feel more comfortable with the idea of stardom and it hasn't worked. It's not natural to go up your own backside all the time. It feels so introverted, like you're going to implode."

The problem, it seems, is misrepresentation.

"People think I'm some kind of axe-wielding bitch cow from hell who hates all men on the planet, and I think that's the biggest joke of all. It's so, so wrong!" Plus, Polly's already thinking about life after pop. "If I never make another record I'll die happy with this one. There's more to life than making pop music. Families. I'm 25, I've got to start thinking about it soon!"



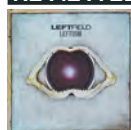
PORTISHELL

Catching up with Bristol triphoppers Portishead in Paris after the success of their debut album 'Dummy', NME's Rupert Howe finds Geoff Barrow in a bad way. "I've become ill," he says. "It's stress-related... it's me thinking about what I'm going to do next." Barrow admits that he and singer Beth Gibbons are virtual strangers. "We've never communicated that well... it wasn't until about six months ago that we had a conversation about something other than music."

ROAD RAGE

The 1995 NME Brat Bus tour – with 60ft Dolls, Marion, Veruca Salt and Skunk Anansie – trails chaos across the north. Chief riot-starter is Dolls bassist Mike Cole, who hands out the entire backstage rider to fans and turns up at NME's hotel room in the early hours in leopardskin pants and climbs out of the window. "I reckon this tour might end up like Spike Island," says Marion bassist Jules, "where people talk about it as if it was a little bit legendary."

REVIEWED THIS WEEK



Leftfield – 'Leftism'

"Its energy and madness will make 'Leftism'

one of the few dance albums to bounce around in the great echo chamber of futurity for years."

9/10 ■ ROGER MORTON

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

► The Stone Roses have been asked to headline Glastonbury for its silver anniversary. "We have spoken to the Roses about the festival and I think it's promising," says Michael Eavis. ► Bernard Butler announces his first single since splitting from Suede, working with ex-Thieves singer David McAlmont. The unnamed song is said to sound "vaguely like Suede but with much better vocals".

► In Weezer's first-ever NME interview, singer Rivers Cuomo admits: "This band is just a phase. All I ever wanted to be was a one-hit wonder."

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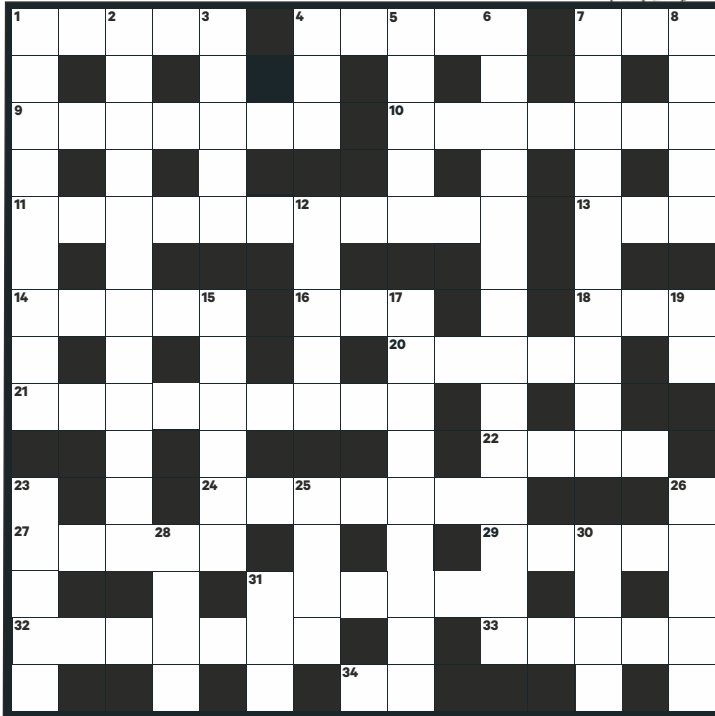
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CLUES ACROSS

1-4A A state of feeling slightly browned off with The Smashing Pumpkins (5-5)
7 Their singles include 'Look What You've Done' and 'Cold Hard Bitch' (3)
9 It's calm and composed by Hozier (7)
10+26D+34A So it's not me or you then that's got this Gladys Knight & The Pips record (7-3-2-2)
11 No rap at a gig, somehow, from rave act SL2 (2-1-5-3)
13 "I swear by the ___ below my feet", filthy swearing in 'The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down' by 30 down (3)
14 The artist formerly known as Cat Stevens (5)
16 As Andy McCluskey and Paul Humphreys are often known (3)
18 "Your name isn't ___, but I don't care for sand", from the Arctic Monkeys' 'I Bet You Look Good On The Dancefloor' (3)
20 I turn around to hear a Chris Brown hit (3-2)

21 Pink Floyd double album, half studio and half live (9)
22 Not anxious to include a T Rex album (4)
24 (See 8 down)
27 Foreign money for the man from Gorky's Zygotic Mynci (5)
29 '_____ Hymns' - album by The Verve (5)
31 (See 31 down)
32 (See 3 down)
33 '_____ In The Night' - album by Fleetwood Mac (5)

CLUES DOWN

1 The Foo Fighters finding us on our most excellent behaviour (4-2-3)
2 A pleasant time of year for both the Manic Street Preachers and Stereophonics (6-6)
3+32A In need of an escape from the music of The Black Keys (5-3-4)
4 Make an offer for the frontman of post-punk band The Monochrome Set (3)
5+28D Having a personal problem with My Chemical Romance (2-3-4)

6 Puts deal in text form for The Chemical Brothers (4-6-4)
7 Folk rock singer whose albums include 'Solid Air' and 'One World' (4-6)
8+19D+24A Didn't feel organ arrangement was right for Dirty Pretty Things (5-2-7)
12 Not easy to see which word finishes The Four Tops' 'Seven Rooms Of _____' (5)
15 Hip-hop group that knew 'The Score' (6)
17 Art scam I'd organised with US soul group active since the '60s (9)
19 (See 8 down)
23 He's a bit of a deranged geezer in The Wedding Present (5)
25 One of the Jarman brothers in The Cries (4)
26 (See 10 across)
28 (See 5 down)
30 Their songs include 'The Weight', 'Rag Mama Rag' and 13 across (4)
31+31A The inadequate intellectual ability of some hardcore punks (3-6)

JANUARY 10 ANSWERS

ACROSS 1 Home By Now, 9 Dynamo, 10+6A Sweetest Thing, 12 Echobelly, 17+16A The Holy Bible, 18 Sin, 19+31A Cold War Kids, 21 Doris, 24 Years, 25 T Rex, 28+14A Public Enemy, 30+33A Hot Chip, 32 Mono, 34 Go, 35 Len, 37 XL
DOWN 1 Hidden Hand, 2 Manchild, 3 Be My Baby, 4+5D No Wow, 6 The Next Day, 7 Ice, 8+36A Got My Mind Set On You, 11 Club Foot, 13 Yield, 20+15D Red Eyes, 22+30D Rabbit Hole, 23 Slik, 26 Ros, 27 Xymox, 28 Pick, 29 City

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OBJECTS OF DESIRE



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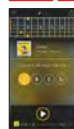
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